

Removal of Czech Markings from Postal Cancellers in the Slovak State

Alan Soble

(In most cases the illustrations have been considerably reduced or enlarged – Editor.)

In 1939, the new country Slovakia had to perform a task which other countries in the tumultuous twentieth century were invited and impelled to undertake: the nationalisation of the post. This essay illustrates specific Slovakian nationalising modifications made to Czechoslovak cancellers – which were currently obsolete, for in 1939 the country no longer existed. I focus on two sufficiently repeatable (i.e., not incidental) variations of these nationalising changes. The canceller alterations also confirmed the break-up of the 1918 merger between the Slovak and Czech lands and supported Slovakia's stature among European nations.

One change has been remarked upon in *Czechout* but, for understandable technical reasons, insufficiently displayed; the other has also been broached in *Czechout* and deserves more analysis.[1] A good number of articles in *Czechout* and *Czechoslovak Specialist* studied the post-WWI transition: Austrian and Hungarian cancellers temporarily used in early Czechoslovakia and their nationalising alteration, followed by replacement by indigenous cancellers.[2] Features of cancellers used in the WWII Bohemia-Moravia Protectorate have also been studied.[3] Here I treat the WWII canceller transition in Slovakia.

I. Background

After the collapse, by the end of WWI, of the Austrian Empire and the Kingdom of Hungary, a handful of territories in Central and Eastern Europe, often referred to as successor states, were concerned to distance themselves postally from their national, political, and ethnic predecessors and, at the same time, to employ the post to announce their birth and promote their independence.

Well-known cases occurred by the division of the Kingdom of Hungary, accomplished *de jure* by the Treaty of Trianon (1920), into a handful of pieces which eventually manufactured their own panoply of nationalistic postal accessories. In late 1918 Croatia overprinted Hungarian postage stamps and postal stationery with 'S.H.S.' and 'Hrvatska' to blot out the old regime and proclaim the new.[4] Croatia soon emitted newly designed (local) stamps inscribed 'S.H.S.' and 'Hrvatska'. Despite having new adhesives, Croatian (ex-Hungarian) post offices possessed only currently obsolete Kingdom of Hungary cancellers (*survivors*) which had to be modified to mask (*obliterate*) their origin. Some survivors were obliterated by the removal of a historically significant Magyar insignia, the Szent István Korona (*Figure 1*, left). The excision was instant deMagyarisation. Other cancellers were modified by changing the date format from Hungarian to the local format, a change in the spelling of a town name, or the replacement of an exonym by an endonym. The S.H.S. Kingdom (composed of Croatia-Slavonia, Slovenia, Serbia and Bosnia) eventually produced its own Kingdom-wide stamps. Engraved by the American Bank Note Co., they were being cancelled in 1922 (two years after Trianon) by Hungarian survivors.



Figure 1. A 2 K Postal Card Cutting.

Right: a Brünn 1/Brno 1 cancel 6 October 1898.

Left: An OKT 7 receiving Hungarian strike, Pöstyén, Slovakia.

In the final months of 1918, after the declaration of a joined Czechoslovakia, branches of the new postal service had stocks of left over Hungarian and Austrian stamps as well as freshly designed indigenous stamps, the Hradčany of Alfons Mucha. Post offices in Bohemia and Moravia (*qua* Czechoslovakia) continued to use, for several years (depending on location), obsolete Austrian cancellers, i.e., survivors. In the Czech lands, surviving Austrian cancellers were obliterated in various ways to deHabsburgise them. One straightforward way to deHabsburg the cancellers and to nationalise

the cancels as Czech – which cancels were destined to be seen far and wide and hence were propagandistic slogan or ideological advertising cancels [5] – was to excise *en masse* German names from bilingual cancellers, to abolish a linguistic representative, the exonym, of the old regime. Of course, German names were often sustained or reinserted (*Figure 19*). In Slovakia, the obliteration of surviving Hungarian cancellers did not occur with as much frequency, urgency or dedication; untouched survivors were used in 1920–21. The failure of the Č.S.P. in the country's eastern part to deliver a crushing blow to the postal apparatus of the Hungarian regime, while in the western part German names were being noticeably jettisoned, is somewhat puzzling.[6]

An example of the Czech obliteration of bilingual cancellers is helpful.[7] *Figure 1* displays a German/Czech Brunn/Brno cancel. In the circular centre are found, top to bottom, numerical day, numerical month, time of day, and the year's last two digits (1898). *Figure 2* shows two examples of cancellers made by obliterated Austrian survivors. 'Brunn' is missing, leaving a palpable gap. Germany annexed the Sudetenland on September 29–30, 1938, by the terms of the Munich Agreement. It then created the Bohemia-Moravia Protectorate on March 15, 1939, when its army entered and occupied Praha. Also on March 15, in Bratislava, the Slovakian Parliament, playing its own role in the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, declared the independence of Slovakia, i.e., the budding of Slovenský štát, later the Slovenská republika, the [First] Slovak Republic.



*Figure 2: Brunn Excised Monolingual Cancels.
Left: 14 February 19??. Right: 18 June 1919.*

Postage stamps for use in the Protectorate soon replaced adhesives inscribed Československo. The bilingual design of the new issues included Čechy a Moravia and Böhmen und Mähren (*Figure 20b*), which made the death of Czechoslovakia postally obvious and confirmed the distinction between Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia. Similarly, monolingual Praha cancellers were replaced by Prag/Praha bilinguals (*Figure 20b*) – thereby (coincidentally?) returning to a fin de siècle pattern of town names on German/Czech cancellers, as in Brunn/Brno (*Figure 1*).[8]

The disintegration of Czechoslovakia and the appearance of Protectorate stamps was accompanied by the issuing of hitherto nonexistent Slovakian stamps. My topics are not the Czechoslovakian stamps overprinted *Slovenský štát* or the emission of newly designed Slovakian stamps.[9] Instead, I consider Slovakian cancellers used in/after 1939 to which the concepts *survivor* and *obliteration* apply, i. e., the two or three types of nationalising alteration made to obsolete Czechoslovakian cancellers by the Slovakian post.

II. Type 1

In many cancellers used in Czechoslovakia 1918–1938, the country identifier Č.S.P. appears in the design, either squeezed into the semi-circular space above the bridge under the town name (*Figures 24b, 25, 28, 29*), or situated comfortably in the bottom arc of the canceller's ring. The latter format (*Figure 3*) is, for now, the important one.



Figure 3: Slovak Interwar Cancels.

Č.S.P. fills the bottom arc, stars at roughly:

*Left: 3:00 and 9:00 (Parkan, now Štúrovo, 19 September 1931). Right: 3:30 and 8:30 (Tisovec, 17 May 1930).
Keep star positions in mind for Section III.*

Suppose you were Postmaster in a Slovakian town in mid-1939 and had a sudden need for new cancellers. We know from events in late 1918 and in 1919 (Czechoslovakia, the S.H.S. Kingdom et al.) that new stamps, even if not gems, can be quickly obtained. Hence they come first while assembling a nationalised postal menagerie. New cancellers, by contrast requiring demanding and expensive labour, come later. That explains the usefulness of survivors, which lent themselves to uncomplicated modifications to bring them close to national snuff. As postmasters did in 1918, you'd use survivors (left over from dead Czechoslovakia, and which you had been using all along), obliterating them to carry out their duties. See *Figures 4 & 4a* through *13a & 13b*, which illustrate Type 1 obliterations: the Č for Česko in Č.S.P. has been excised, leaving an asymmetrical, but on message, S.P., i.e., Slovenská pošta. You'd be excising the Č not for convenience; the Č has become a false and offensive feature of the canceller and must be convincingly dealt with.



Figures 4, 4a, 5, 5a, 6, 6a: Type 1 Obliterations.
 Stars at 3:00 and 9:00, S.P. in the 5:00-6:00 slot.
 Top: Rakovice to Velká Bytča, 21 July 1939.
 Centre: Čachtice to Chemnitz, Germany, 24 August 1939.
 Bottom: Velké Uherce to Praha, 29 November 1940.



Figures 7, 7a, 8, 9, 9a, 10, and 11: Type 1 Obliterations.

S.P. in the 5:00-6:00 slot.

Top: Staškov to Radvanice (Protectorate), 12 November 1942.

Upper centre left: Incomplete excision in right-hand stamp; period remains in front of S.P. Herľany, ?2 July 1941.

Upper centre right: First stamp—the S is at 6:00, Smižany, 22 July 1943. Second stamp – Ghost of Č remains.

Lower centre: Two stars at 3:30 and 8:30, S at 6:00, Sliáč kúpele to Wien, 28 September 1942.

Bottom: Rosina to Užice u Kralupy (Protectorate), 9 March 194?.

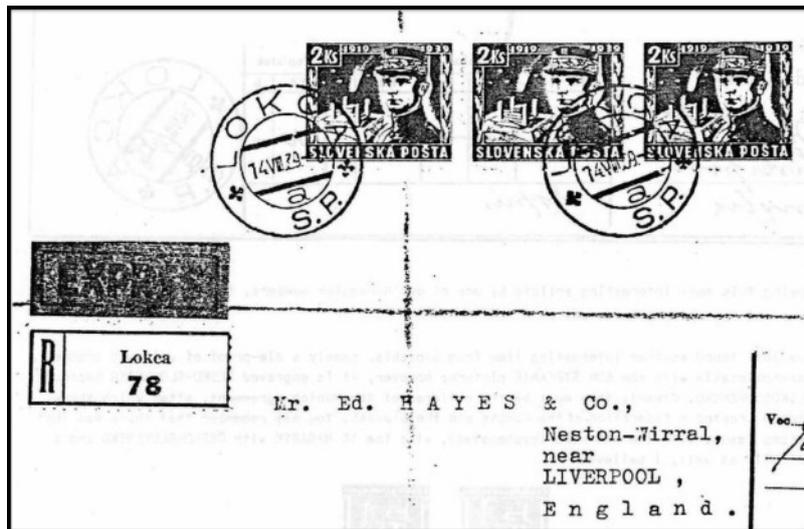


Figure 12: Type 1 Obliteration.
Stars at 3:00 and 9:00, S.P. at 5:00-6:00.
Lokca to Liverpool, 14 August 1939.

An interesting example of a Type 1 obliteration was displayed thirty years ago by Paul Jensen in his 1987 *Czechout* article, 'The Unissued Štefánik Stamps of Slovakia' (see endnote 1). Both sides of Jensen's cover are franked with Štefániks and both sides exhibit the S.P. cancel. (*Figure 12* shows the front, grayscale.)[10] The canceller identification letter is 'a'. Jensen's purpose was to explain why he considers this cover to be a genuine postal use of the Štefánik stamps, which is not here in question. Fortunately for his audience many years later, the fascinating Štefánik cover which he came across also exhibits a superb Type I obliteration. (My own four-denomination Štefánik cover is philatelic in origin, contains a full Č.S.P. cancel, and bears an illogical or impossible date line.)

Summary: First, in Type 1 obliterations, the Č in Č.S.P. is excised, leaving an off-centre S.P., with the S at 6:00 and P at 5:00. Second, the two ornamental stars which had surrounded the Č.S.P., one on each side, persist when the Č is removed (*Figures 4–13*). It would have served no purpose, and would have been wasted effort, to fool around with the decorations. Third, in some excisions the full stop (period) which follows Č has not been excised, neither for the sake of grammar nor for aesthetics. Fourth, all the S.P. cancellations I have seen (except one, *Figure 13a*) were struck by the post office's 'a' canceller. The canceller ID letter is located in the semi-circle below the bridge; examine the ID letters in *Figures 4–13*.



Figure 13 and 13a: Type 1 Obliterations.
Stars at 3:00 and 9:00, S.P. at 5:00-6:00.
Left: Novot', 8 December 1941 by an 'a' canceller.
Right: Vondrišli, 31 December 1940 probably by a 'b' canceller.

I have come across one Type I obliteration in which the cancel was struck by the post office's 'b' canceller. *Figures 13 & 13a* allow a comparison of an 'a' (left) and a 'b' (right) canceller identifier in cancels made by obliterated survivors. *Figure 3* allows a comparison of the 'a' and 'b' ID letters in cancels made by non-obliterated cancellers. The point of these comparisons is to block the suggestion that the apparent (and under-inked or ill-struck) 'b' in *Figure 13a* is a dramatically broken 'a', perhaps nicked by a slip while the Č was being chiseled out.

II. Type 2

There is evidence for a second type of obliteration: the entire label Č.S.P. was eliminated from some Slovakian cancellers which were derived from Czechoslovakian survivors. To begin the empirical, observational case for this second type of obliteration, I display some Slovakian cancels (look at *Figures 14 & 14a* through *18 & 18a*) in which exactly *two* ornamental stars are separated by a large gap, an empty space. The characteristic of a Type 2 obliteration is that this gap formerly contained an excised Č.S.P.



Figures 14, 14 a, 15, 15a, 16, and 16a: Type 2 Obliterations.

Stars at 4:00 and 8:00 (3:30 and 8:30 in the bottom piece).

Note empty space between the stars, nothing in the 5:00-7:00 position.

Top: Bratislava to Praha, 27 April 1940.

Centre: Bratislava to Třebechovice p O (pod Orebem), Protectorate, 4 December 1940,

Bottom: Leopoldov to Landsberg am Lech, 3 September 1939.



Figure 17, 17a, 18, and 18a: Type 2 Obliterations.

Stars at 4:00 and 8:00, nothing between them.

Top: Starý Smokovec to Budapest, 12 August 1940.

Bottom: Starý Smokovec to Moravská Ostrava (Protectorate), 20 July 1943.

My immediate reaction, seeing – repetitively – a gap between two distant stars, was: in some cases the Slovakian chisel excised the entire Č.S.P. from the canceller. Large gaps of this sort in ring cancellers occurred decades earlier in obliterated Austrian survivors used in Czech lands (Figure 2). They occurred in Austrian survivors used after WWI in Galicia, Slovenia, and elsewhere. They also exist at the start and end of WWII in Czechoslovakia (Figures 19 & 20c). Gaps are not unusual and it is no reason for shock when seen in WWII Slovakian cancels.

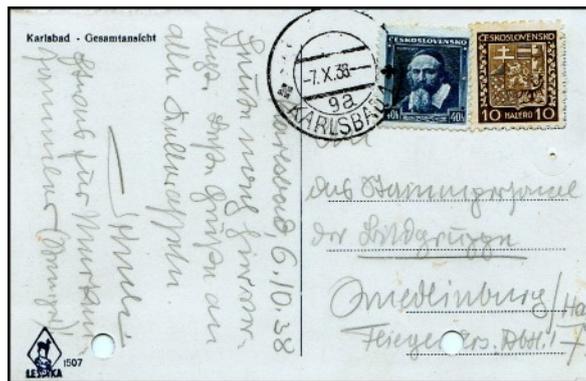


Figure 19. Czech Endonym Excised.

This had been a Karlov Vary/Karlsbad bilingual cancel.

Cancelled a week after the Munich Agreement by a canceller with a shadow of the Czech endonym, 7 October 1938.

Stars at 3:00 and 9:00 separated by an upper empty arc, no star in the ring's bottom occupied by the German exonym.

To Quedlinburg, Germany.

The considerations which lead to the conclusion that Č.S.P. has been deleted from gapped two-star Slovakian cancellers are different in kind from the evidence for Type 1 obliterations. For the latter, the presence of a directly observable S.P. country identifier provides sufficient warrant. But the thesis that the country identifier is absent requires a different approach, which is why I defend the existence of Type 2 obliterations by a process of elimination.



Figures 20a, 20b, and 20c: Excised Cancel Names.

Left: Praha in upper arc before the Munich Agreement, 2 August 1938.

Centre: Protectorate, Prag 3/Praha 3 cancel 31 December 1940; Praha moved to the bottom under German exonym.

Right: Post WW II Praha cancel with Prag removed, 3 June 1946.

If we assume that something has been removed from the bottom ring of Slovakian two-star gapped cancels, there are five possibilities for what was removed:

- Č.S.P.
- A town name in bilingual cancels.
- An ornament or decoration.
- Canceller ID marks.
- A third star.

Let's contemplate, first, the possibility of a third star. Examine the three-star cancels (seven Slovakian, two Bohemian) shown in *Figures 21a–24a*. Depending on several factors – for example, the length of the town names across the top arc of the ring or along the bottom – the positions of the two outer or terminal stars are not always 3:00 and 9:00. Also found are 2:00 & 10:00, 3:30 & 8:30, 4:00 & 8:00, and 5:00 & 7:00 (*Figures 24a & 24b*). Regardless, a third star would be at 6:00. Imagine that a canceller has three stars at 3:00, 6:00 and 9:00. Could there be any sensible reason to eliminate the star at the 6:00 position in order to produce stars at 3:00 and 9:00 with a gap between them? None that I can think of, *except* that the star at 6:00 was removed because the intention was to insert, eventually, an S.P. at 5:30–6:30, which would turn out to be balanced. I wish that had happened, but every S.P. which I have seen is imbalanced. I conclude that the Slovakian two-star gapped cancels in *Figures 14-18* did not arise by [e], the elimination of a single star at 6:00.



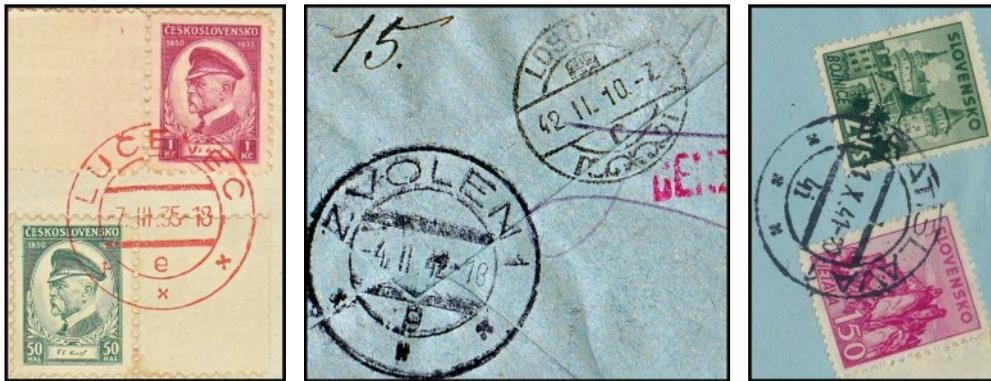
Figures 21a, 21b, 21c and 21d: Three-Star Czechoslovak Cancels.

Top left: Michalovce, 27 September 1932. Top centre: Beroun, Bohemia, 8 February 1937. Top right: Nitra, 24 September 1934.

Bottom: Košice, 14 July 1938.

Eliminating bottom-arc town names also fails to explain two-star gapped Slovakian cancels. Although cancellers in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia were frequently Czech/German bilingual, relatively few Slovak/Hungarian bilingual cancellers existed, and some were used sporadically.[11] (*Figure 25* shows a bilingual entire.) Indeed, cancels made by bilingual cancellers are difficult to find. Hence removal of a bilingual name from the bottom arc would produce few two-star gapped cancels. Bratislava/Pozsony bilinguals never existed but this city, by far the largest in Slovakia, introduced

into the mailstream a hefty percent of Slovakian cancels. Arriving at two-star Slovakian cancels by [b], removing a bottom-arc town name, is therefore even less likely.



Figures 22a, 22b, and 22c: Three-Star Slovak Cancels.

Left: Lučenec (Losonc), 7 March 1935.

Centre: Two backstamps – Zvolen, 4 February 1942 and Losonc, 10 February 1942 with different date formats. The Hungarian canceller was newly-made for this Visszatért town transferred to Hungary in 1938.

Right: Bratislava, 1 October 1941.

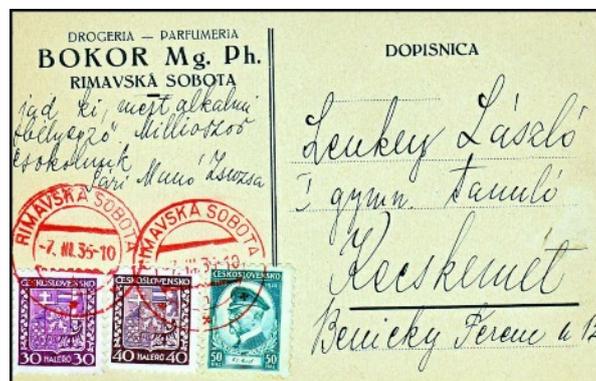


Figure 23: Three-Star Slovak Commemorative Cancel.

7 March 1935 – Masaryk's Birthday.

From Rimavská Sobota to Kecskemét, Hungary.



Figures 24a and 24b: Three- and Two-Star Cancels.

Left: Stars at 5:00, 6:00, and 7:00, TPO cancel, Tanvald-Šumbruk n D.-Liberec, 20 October 1930.

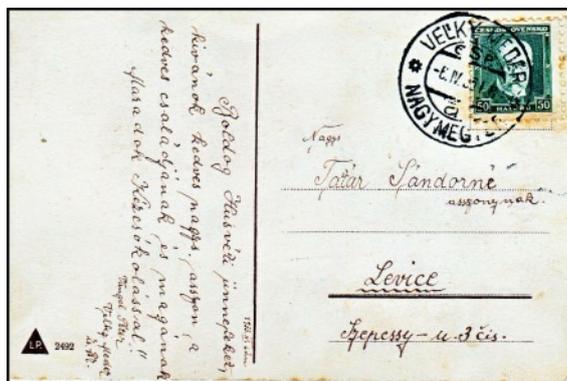
Right: Two-star (at 2:00 and 10:00) non-gapped bilingual cancel from Děčín/Tetschen a.d. Elbe, 26 August 1925.

Excising canceller ornaments [c] also fails. Czechoslovakian cancellers didn't have, beyond stars, any bottom arc ornaments to speak of. Hungarian survivors were decorated with ornaments in the bottom arc (Figure 22b, Losonc), but these weren't being used in 1939 during the nationalisation of the Slovakian post. Invoking Austrian survivors as a source of two-star Slovakian cancellers is similarly inadequate. True, their stars were often asymmetrical and the cancels were graced with ornaments, but these survivors were used for only a couple of years after 1918 and were not used in Slovakia. Finally, regarding [d], Czechoslovakian canceller ID marks are located in the semi-circle in the bottom half of the cancel, not in the ring. If all this reasoning is correct, it follows that the only process which explains gapped two-star Slovakian cancels is [a], the removal of the Č.S.P. country identifier – the whole thing.

A minor point: Č.S.P. could have been excised to leave a gap between two stars only if some Slovakian cancellers had included a town name, two and only two stars, and Č.S.P. between the stars in the bottom arc. This is elementary, but nothing displayed here, other than the two cancels in Figure

3 (which were employed for a different purpose), fulfils this requirement. Three more examples are shown in *Figures 26a & 26b*. These cancels, which are legion, could be turned into two-star gapped cancels by removing Č.S.P.

One direct piece of evidence may confirm the existence of Type 2. Recall the ghost or shadow Č that is visible in an obliteration that was incompletely carried out (*Figure 9a, the 10 Ks postage due; perhaps 19*). A gapped two-star Slovakia cancel that contained no full-bodied Č.S.P. but only a ghost would be a candidate Type 2. *Figures 27a-27b* may exhibit a shadow of the identifier. I leave it to the reader to judge. I also leave the task of finding another shadow produced by the same canceller.



*Figure 25: Two-star with Hungarian Exonym.
Easter postcard sent from Velký Meder/Nagy Megyer to Levice, 6 April 1933.
Levice (Léva) and Nagymegyér were temporarily returned to Hungary in 1938.*



*Figures 26a and 26b: Two-Star Cancels.
Potential two-star gapped Slovak cancels by excising Č.S.P.
Left: Hnúšťa, 24 December 1930.
Centre: Smrečany, 16 January 1933.
Right: Udavská, 19 December 1934.*



*Figures 27a and 27b: Philatelic Cover cancelled in Turčianský Svätý Martin, 2 June 1941.
Left: The cover. Right: Enlarged views of the upper-left cancel.*

IV. Type 3

Another type of nationalising obliteration is possible, by removing the Č.S.P. (or only the Č) which appears in the semi-circular space above the bridge and under the town name. We have already seen this feature of canceller design (*Figures 24b [Děčín] & 25 [Velký Meder]*). *Figures 28 & 29* show more examples, both from Zakarpattya. Removing the high Č.S.P. may be called a Type 3 obliteration. I do not know of any empirical, observational method (i.e., just looking at stamps and covers alone,

and ignoring shadows) to prove that a particular postal item underwent a Type 3 obliteration, except to find a letter-identified canceller in a Slovakian town prior to March 1939 which had a high Č.S.P., and also find a use of this same letter-identified canceller sometime after March 1939 in which the high Č.S.P. has been replaced with a blank under the town name. (That semi-circle may contain any substitute for Č.S.P., including S.P.) This before-and-after, constant-identifier technique could also be used to demonstrate the occurrence of Type 2 obliterations. This method, whether used to show Type 2 or Type 3 obliterations, is difficult to carry out: it depends greatly on the luck of the lot. But it provides powerful empirical evidence if accomplished. [12]



Figures 28 and 29: High Č.S.P. Cancels.
 Left: Kiral'haza/Kupal'gaza, 4 July 1922.
 Right: Rákošín/Pakouzi, 6 June 1925.

Notes

1. See Ron Hollis, 'Slovakia. Query Corner', *Czechout* #59 (June 1990), pp. 40–41; Seppo Laaksonen, 'Reply to Hollis', *Czechout* #60 (September 1990), pp. 50–51; E. Skovbo Jensen, 'Reply to Hollis', *Czechout* #60 (September 1990), pp. 52–53; and Paul Jensen, 'Reply to Hollis', *Czechout* #60 (September 1990), pp. 53–55. See also Paul Jensen, 'The Unissued Štefánik Stamps of Slovakia', *Czechout* #47 (Summer 1987), pp. 19–20. (Mr. Jensen is deceased. Yvonne Wheatley wrote his obituary, *Czechout* #117 [December 2004], p. 97.)
2. Chronologically: Zdeňek Kvasnička, 'Stamps, Postal Stationery and Cancels of Austria-Hungary in Czechoslovakia', *Czechoslovak Specialist* 14:8 (October 1952), pp. 120–26; continued in *Czechoslovak Specialist* 14:9 (November 1952), pp. 133–42; *Czechoslovak Specialist* 14:10 (December 1952), pp. 148–57; *Czechoslovak Specialist* 15:2 (February 1953), pp. 6–15; and *Czechoslovak Specialist* 15:3 (March 1953), pp. 32–34 & 40–42; Kvasnička, 'Austro-Hungarian Postmarks Used in Czechoslovakia', *Czechoslovak Specialist* 15:9 (November 1953), pp. 138–39; continued in *Czechoslovak Specialist* 15:10 (December 1953), pp. 151–54; and *Czechoslovak Specialist* 16:1 (January 1954), pp. 11–14; Kvasnička, 'Cancellations', *Czechoslovak Specialist* 17:7 (September 1955), pp. 108–10; continued in *Czechoslovak Specialist* 16:8 (October 1955), pp. 118–26; Kvasnička, 'Commemorative Cancels of Austria-Hungary Used in Czechoslovak Areas', *Czechoslovak Specialist* #271 (March 1967), pp. 33–38; Otto Hornung, 'A Glimpse at Old Carpatho-Ukraine's Mail', *Czechout* #56 (Autumn 1989), pp. 57–66; Tadeusz Wincewicz, 'Dual-Language (Czech-Polish) Postmarks of East Silesia', *Czechout* #82 (March 1996), pp. 5–10; Alan Soble, 'Obliterations and Their Absence: Elaborations, Emendations, Extensions (Part 4)', *The News of Hungarian Philately* 41:4 (October–December, 2010), pp. 3–24; Johan Sevenhuijsen, 'A Rare Backwater', *The News of Hungarian Philately* 45:2 (April–June, 2014), pp. 20–21; Sevenhuijsen, 'A Rare Backwater', *Czechout* (September 2014), pp. 18–19; Sevenhuijsen, 'Nationalized Circular Date Stamps in Early Czechoslovakia', *Czechout* #159 (June 2015), pp. 17–18; Robert Lauer and Johan Sevenhuijsen, 'The Usage of Hungarian Stamps and Postal Stationery in Post-Independence Czechoslovakia', *The News of Hungarian Philately* 47:1 (January–March, 2016), pp. 20–29; Lauer and Sevenhuijsen, 'The Usage of Hungarian Stamps and Postal Stationery in Early Czechoslovakia', *Czechout* #164 (September 2016), pp. 11–17.
3. See K. F. Pesak, 'Czechoslovak Postal Cancellations During Nazi Occupation', *Czechoslovak Specialist* #398 (March 1985), pp. 8–10; and Ernest G. Taylor's study, which begins in *Czechout* #34 (1984), pp. 54–56, continues through #35 (pp. 64–66), #36 (pp. 69–74) and #37 (pp. 79–85), and which focuses on 'Special and Commemorative Postmarks of Bohemia and Moravia'.
4. See these recent articles: Robert Lauer, 'The Overprinting of Hungarian Postal Stationery in the S.H.S. Kingdom', *The News of Hungarian Philately* 48:4 (October–December, 2017), pp. 26–28; and Roger Morrell's series in *Stamps of Hungary*, including 'On the Trail of the 1919 Overprints, PART 15 – Overprinted Hungarian Stamped Postal Stationery' (June 2017, #209, p. 6) and 'On the Trail of the 1919 Overprints, PART 16 - Hungarian Fieldpost Cards for the SHS' (September 2017, #210, p. 8).

5. See 'Editorial', *Czechout* #47 (Summer 1987), p. 11; and Rex Dixon, 'Review', *Czechout* #161 (December 2015), p. 9.
6. See Lauer, 'Hungarian Survivor Cancels in Slovakia: Further Evidence', *The News of Hungarian Philately* 43:3 (July–September, 2012), pp. 32–35.
7. I have been writing about survivors and obliterations since 2009. The articles cover Fiume, Croatia/Slavonia, the S.H.S. Kingdom, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Vojvodina, Romania, Ruthenia/Carpatho-Ukraine, Slovakia, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary. See *The News of Hungarian Philately* [= *NHP*] 40:1 (January–March, 2009), pp. 17–32; *NHP* 40:2 (April–June, 2009), pp. 3–11; *NHP* 41:3 (July–September, 2010), pp. 2–17; *NHP* 42:1 (January–March, 2011), pp. 4–15; *NHP* 43:1 (January–March, 2012), pp. 14–29; *NHP* 45:4 (October–December, 2014), pp. 10–19; *NHP* 48:2 (April–June, 2017), pp. 11–26; *Stamps of Hungary*, issue #178 (September 2009), pp. 11–28; *Stamps of Hungary*, issue #179 (December 2009), pp. 10–22; and *Philatelica*, issue #14/2 (2014), p. 37.
8. For an account of the town-name placement vicissitudes of Czechoslovakian cancellers, see Karel Vsetecka, 'Postal Cancellations and the Language Question in the Czech Lands', *Czechoslovak Specialist* #291 (March 1969), pp. 33–39.
9. One study is George A. Blizil, 'Early Postal History of Slovakia', *Czechoslovak Specialist* 10:3 (March 1948), pp. 28–32.
10. Now you may comprehend why I wrote in the first paragraph, 'for understandable technical reasons, [the truncation S.P. has been] insufficiently displayed' in *Czechout*. I paste here some hand-drawn images which appeared in the *Czechout* issues cited in Note 1.



Left: There are three noteworthy things about Laaksonen's drawings of post-modification Slovak cancellers other than they seem to be copies only of 1946 strikes. First, the single S cancel is astounding – I wish I had one on cover; second, the gapped two-star cancel in the lower right pushes us forward to Type 2 obliterations; and third, all the cancellers are identified as 'a'. Right: Hollis' Ratková. Note the 'a' canceller.

Six interesting Slovakia covers are displayed by Rex Dixon in his 'Slovak State Inland Mail Exemplars', *Czechout* #166 (March 2017), pp. 14–16; eight more are displayed in his 'Slovak State Foreign Mail Exemplars', *Czechout* #167 (June 2017), pp. 23–25. None of these 14 covers contain the S.P. cancel. Two S.P. cancellers are displayed (but not pointed out) by Michael Furfie in 'Some Slovakian Postage Due Topics: 1939–1945', *Czechout* #150 (March 2013), pp. 20–24. The cancellers are from Piarg (see Laaksonen), February 6 and 11, 1943; both were struck by the 'a' canceller (Furfie's *Figure 4*, p. 21).

11. A Slovak/Magyar bilingual cancel is an illustration in Alec Page's comments (on a different subject), *Czechout* #87 (June 1997), p. 43. On bilinguals, see Soble, 'Obliterations and Their Absence: Final Words, with Special Reference to "The Slovakia Question",', *The News of Hungarian Philately* 42:2 (April–June, 2011), pp. 14–37; Soble, 'Postscript to "Obliterations and Their Absence". A Note on Slovak-Hungarian Bilingual Cancels', *The News of Hungarian Philately* 42:3 (July–September, 2011), pp. 2–3; Sevenhuijsen and Soble, 'Hungarian Names Used in Slovak Cancels', *Czechout* #151 (June 2013), pp. 22–24; and Sevenhuijsen, 'Hungarian Language Maimed in Slovak Cancels', *The News of Hungarian Philately* 45:4 (October–December, 2014), p. 4.
12. Many thanks to Roger Morrell for suggesting I write an article on this topic.