



Prijezd presidenta Masaryka



Letter to J. Rossler-Orovsky in Prague franked with one 10-heller and a 20-heller stamps with the handstamp "POSTA SKAUTU Praha 1918." dated "21/XII"(by hand) and the linear handstamp "Dopis od skauta(signed) Strettiho / převzal ...Ry " (Rossler-Orovsky's initials)

This exhibit (16 pages) refers to the auxiliary Scout Post Service that was created in Prague to assist the National Committee during the first days of the Independence of the Czechoslovak Republic. The Scout Delivery Service was revived on Dec. 21 when Prague welcomed the Republic's first President Thomas G. Masaryk.

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T.G. Masaryk

Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk sometimes called Thomas Masaryk, (7 March 1850 – 14 September 1937) was an Austro-Hungarian and Czechoslovak politician, sociologist and philosopher, who as an eager advocate of Czechoslovak independence during World War I, became the founder and first President of Czechoslovakia, also was Moravian patriot. He became Professor of Slavic Research at King's College in London lecturing on "The problem of small nations".



During the war, Masaryk's intelligence network of Czech revolutionaries provided important and critical intelligence to the Allies. Masaryk's European network worked with an American counterespionage network of nearly 80 members. In 1916, Masaryk went to France to convince the French government of the necessity of disintegrating Austria-Hungary; after the February Revolution in 1917 he proceeded to Russia to help organize Slavic resistance to the Austrians, so-called Czechoslovak Legions.

In 1918 he traveled to the United States, where he convinced President Woodrow Wilson of the rightness of his cause. Speaking on 26 October 1918 from the steps of Independence Hall in Philadelphia as head of the Mid-European Union, Masaryk called for the independence of the Czechoslovaks and other oppressed peoples of Central Europe. He had strong personal links with the U.S. since 1878 through his marriage with an American citizen Charlotte Garrigue and friendship with Charles Crane a Chicago industrialist, thanks to him, Masaryk was invited to the University of Chicago and introduced into highest political circles, including to Woodrow Wilson.





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T.G. Masaryk

President T.G. Masarik and Scouts in a 1932 post-card



Post-card of the Austrian Empire franked with a 20 haleru overprinted red stamp to hide the image of the Kaiserliche Koningliche Osterreichische Post Emperor.



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J. Rossler-Orovski

Josef Rössler-Ořovský (1889 – 1933), had always enjoyed physical activity since he was a boy. He was a member of the rowing club BLESK (founded in 1876) and the first to win a championship title for his club. He wanted others to take part in sports as well, and personally helped to give young people of the time the opportunity to practise sports. It was in France and in England where he was sent to work in a pharmaceuticals factory, then he spent more time than ever around water, and especially the sea. In the Czech lands, he set up canoeing, water touring, **water scouting** and other sports activities. Testament to his organisational skills is that he established the first Czech lawn tennis club, the first in the Austro-Hungarian empire, and just four years later, registered this club with the International tennis centre (FILT) in London. He was a keen and proficient player of tennis, football and hockey, as well as being a first-rate swordsman. In order to promote skiing, he set about organising an improvised race on Wenceslas Square, and in 1897, he helped to set up the first skiing races at Jilemnice. He had already brought his first skis from Norway and was involved in the domestic production of racing skis. He enjoyed competitive rowing and speedskating; he acted as referee in the first football match between traditional rivals Sparta and Slavia.



Rössler-Ořovský died 17.1.1933 and was buried at Vyšehrad.

Rössler-Ořovský genuine signature dated 3/XI/1918,





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Prague scout post : 7/XI-25/XI 1918

-Organization

During the first days of Independence of the Czechoslovak Republic (at the evening of 28th October 1918) an auxiliary Scout Post Service was created in Prague to assist the National Committee. The then Deputy Chief Scout and Member of the Government J. Rössler Orovsky offered in organizing this Service as well as in designing and printing suitable stamps and cancellations. Between the 7th (official start of mail delivery) and the 25th November 1918 (last day), official correspondence from and to the Members of the National Committee, the Police, different organizations and government stations, as well as individual personalities was guaranteed a rapid, secure and discrete delivery made on foot or with a bicycle by the Sea Scouts having their Headquarters at the Czech Yacht Club, in the centre of Prague. Main destinations, apart of the National Committee's Headquarters at Harrachovsky Palace, were the Ministry of Justice, the Prague Fortress, the Parliament and the Telegraph Office at the west bank of the Vltava river and the Rail Station, the Post and Telegraph Office and other places in the east bank.

-Stamps

The idea of printing Scout stamps was first put in September 1918. On October 20th a design depicting the national character of the Service was adopted and 30000 stamps of the blue 10 H and 50000 of the red 20 H values plus 1000 pieces of a blue 10 H stationary forming all colours of the Czechoslovak flag were printed. They were engraved by J. Panenka and printed by Kolmar House, while the relevant postmarks and marks were made by Karmet & Kysely. All stamps were printed one by one, so there is no block or sheet in existence whatsoever. The 10-heller value was needed to pay for delivery of postal cards and printed matter and the 20-heller for letters, telegrams, newspapers and parcels. The collection of these fees was necessary because the Scouts were paid a lump sum for their services from a special National Council fund.



Since the stamps were not sold publicly, they must be considered official delivery stamps. They were officially valid from November 7th to November 25th, 1918, but are known on a few covers which were delivered during the period of November 3th-7th. The official service of the Scouts stopped by order Rossler-Orovsky on the evening of Nov. 25th. The great majority of the Scouts had to return to school or their jobs and by that time the individual ministries had their own dependable employees.



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Prague scout post : 7/XI-25/XI 1918

-Handstamps : as we can see on the letter, four main handstamps were used :

- N.V. (Narodny Vibor) Circular , black or red, mainly used to mark the stamps
- POSTA SKAUTU Praha -date by hand- 1918. Circular , black , red, green or violet, used to indicate the date of mail
- Dopis od skautaprevzal.... (Delivered by scout.....received by....) linear on two lines black , red, green or violet, for the signature of the scout delivering the mail and the signature of the recipient.
- NARODNY VIBOR V PRAZE CESKOSLOVENSKY, elliptical , black, red, violet frequently added from the sender office (seldom it marks the scout stamp)
- PRESIDIUUM MINISTERSKE RADY Circular, violet without any additional handstamp, with the time of the delivery written by hand on the mail.



Letter from Narodni Vibor to Smichov franked with a 20-heller stamp, handstamped with "N.V.", with "POSTA SKAUTU 18/XI 1918." and a black elliptical "NARODNI VYBOR"



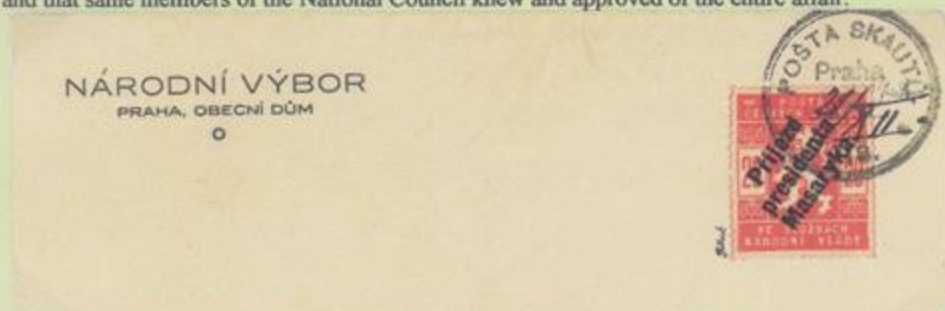
Příjezd presidenta Masaryka

Příjezd presidenta Masaryka : 21/XII/1918



The return of the President to his homeland was considered a great state-political event. The Scouts also participated in the arrangements for this event and were entrusted with the delivery of important telegrams between the Castle, the Parliament and Wilson Station. For this occasion a small number of Scout stamps (600 pieces each) were overprinted "Příjezd presidenta Masaryka" (Arrival of President Masaryk), and then affixed to the communications delivered by the Scouts.

Today it is not possible to determine who gave official approval for the overprinting and use of those stamps, since the written documents have not been preserved. However, it is known from the testimony of participants that the idea of overprinting the stamps came from the Scout leadership and that same members of the National Council knew and approved of the entire affair.



A Narodni Vibor letter with a 10-heller overprinted stamp and POSTA SKAUTU handstamp

Test of the overprint (on white paper)





Prijezd presidenta Masaryka

Prijezd presidenta Masaryka : 21/XII/1918

Telegram from minister Zeleznic announcing, from Budejovice, the arrival of President J.G.Masaryk, with a stamp of 20-heller, the handstamps "POSTA SKAUTU Praha 1918." without date and the linear "Dopis od skauta ... prevzal..."

<p>Die Daten im dienstlichen Eingange der mittels Typendruckapparates ausgefertigten Telegramme bedeuten: 1. den Namen des Aufgabesamtes, 2. die Aufgabenummer, 3. die Wortzahl (eventuell in Bruchform), 4. den Monats- und die Stunde und Minute der Abgabe in dienstlichen, zählbar in cyklovených strojích pismem, nach: 1. ježno úřadu podarilo, 2. číslo odací, 3. počet slov (případně ve způsobu slovníku), 4. měsíc a den a 5. hodinu a minutu podání.</p>	<p>Gattung: Príjezd presidenta Masaryka</p> <p>Posta Skautu Praha 1918</p> <p>Príjezd presidenta Masaryka</p> <p>Eingangsnr.: 6600</p> <p>Dotel pod čís.: 1831</p> <p>redakce ministerstva rady praha hrad =</p> <p>Dopis od skauta prevzal.</p>	<p>Die Telegraphenverwaltung übernimmt hinsichtlich der ihr zur Beförderung oder Bestellung übergebenen Telegramme keine wie immer geartete Verantwortung. Správa telegrafů vůbec neručí za telegramy odevzdané jí k dopravě a ku doručení.</p>
<p>Dienstliche Angaben: Služební udání:</p>	<p>Telegramm — Telegramm</p> <p>aus — 2</p>	<p>Aufgenommen von: / auf Eig. Nr. /</p> <p>Prüfer: / aus dem Amt: /</p> <p>am / Uhr /</p> <p>bei /</p> <p>durch: /</p>
<p>s c budejovice 1 2973 30 19 11 45</p>		
<p>president masaryk odjel ve ctvrtek vecer 10 hod</p>		
<p>35 m ze salzthalu prijede v patek ve 3 hodiny</p>		
<p>20 minut odpoledne do budejovic = minister zeleznic = "</p>		



Prijezd presidenta Masaryka

Prijezd presidenta Masaryka : 21/XII/1918

Letter to J. Rossler-Orovsky in Prague with a 20h red stamp and a 10h light blue stamp, two handstamps "POSTA SKAUTU Praha 1918." dated "21/XII" (by hand) and the handstamp "Dopis od skauta (signed) Friedla / prevzal (signed by the receiver) Chrela (?)"



Dopis od skauta Friedla
převzal: Chrela

Krou
J. Rossler - Orovsky
Praha II
Štěpánská 18.

Letter to J. Rossler-Orovsky in Prague with a stamp of 10-heller, two handstamps "POSTA SKAUTU Praha 1918." dated "21/XII" (by hand) and the handstamp "Dopis od skauta (signed) Bares / prevzal"



Dopis od skauta Bares
převzal: _____

J. C. Rossler Orovsky

Bares



Prijezd presidenta Masaryka

Prijezd presidenta Masaryka : 21/XII/1918

Letter to Antonín B. Svojsík, chief scout, in Prague with the handstamp "POSTA SKAUTU Praha 1918." dated "21/XII" (by hand) and the handstamp "Dopis od skauta (signed) Baura / převzal (signed by the receiver) 21.XII.18"

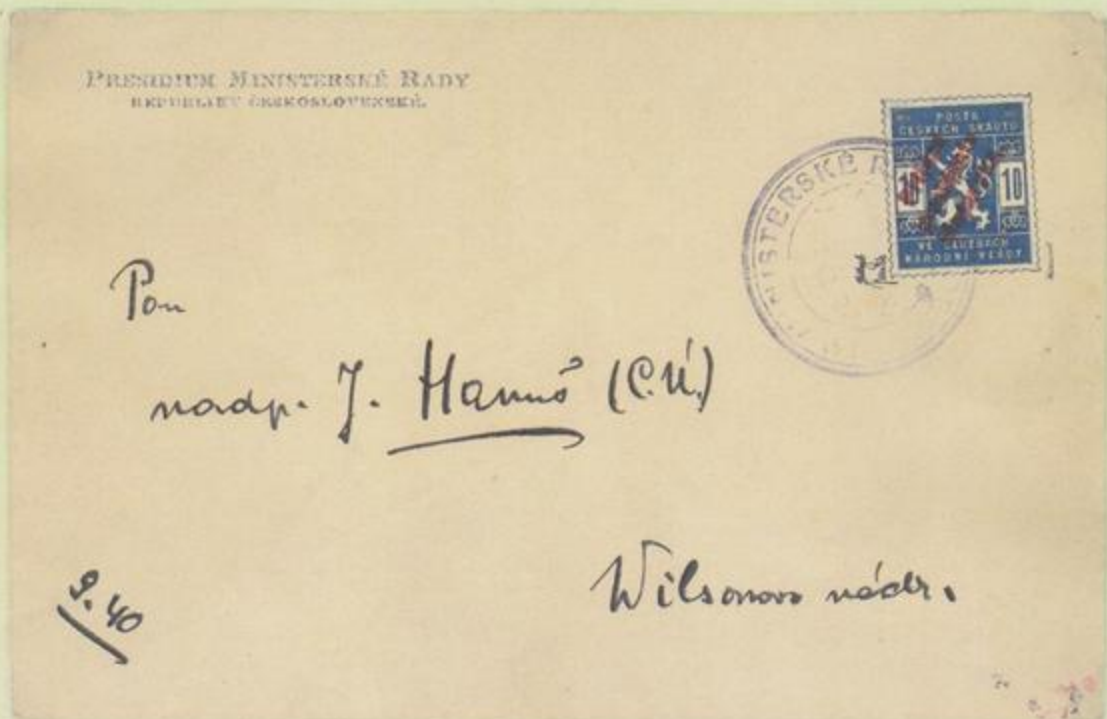




Prijezd presidenta Masaryka

Prijezd presidenta Masaryka : 21/XII/1918

Letter from the Presidium Ministerske Rady to Mr. J. Hanno (?) in Prague accepted by Scout Post at 9:40 a.m. (without any further handstamps) as written by hand on bottom left of the letter.





Prijezd presidenta Masaryka

Prijezd presidenta Masaryka : 21/XII/1918

Letter from the Presidium Ministerske Rady to Mr. Liska (?) in Prague accepted by Scout Post at 8:30 a.m. (without any further handstamps) as written by hand on bottom left of the letter.





Prijezd presidenta Masaryka

Prijezd presidenta Masaryka : 21/XII/1918

Letter from the Narodni Vybor to Mr. J. Brabee (?) in Karlin by franked with a 20-heller stamp with the handstamp "POSTA SKAUTU Praha 1918", dated 21/XII by hand.





Prijezd presidenta Masaryka

Prijezd presidenta Masaryka : 21/XII/1918

Letter to F. Novak in Prague franked with a 20-heller stamp, a handstamp "POSTA SKAUTU Praha 1918." dated "21/XII" (by hand) and the handstamp "Dopis od skauta (signed) Stretti / prevzal 21.XII"

Note : really in *Dopis od skauta* is written "Strettiho" instead of Stretti (the real scout name). It means that the mail was given to the scout Stretti with his name already written. Strettiho means simply "from Stretti"





Prijezd presidenta Masaryka

Prijezd presidenta Masaryka : 21/XII/1918

Letter to the "Narodni Vybor, Praha" franked with a 20-heller stamp with the handstamp "POSTA SKAUTU Praha 1918. ", dated 10.XI by hand. The signature of the scout delivering the letter is unknown. The black overprint on the red stamp cannot be genuine either because is over the postmark either because cannot be printed more than one month early.





Příjezd presidenta Masaryka

Příjezd presidenta Masaryka : 21/XII/1918

Letter to Mr. F. Straka in Zizkov, franked with a 10 heller stamp with genuine postmark "POSTA SKAUTU Praha 1918.", dated 21/XII by hand. The red overprint of the stamp is forged. The signature of the scout delivering the letter is unknown.

