

Back Issue of Military Postal History Society 'Bulletin': (War Cover Philatelist Mar 1939)

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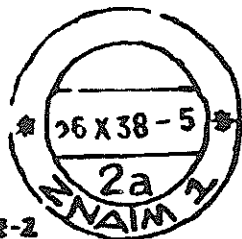
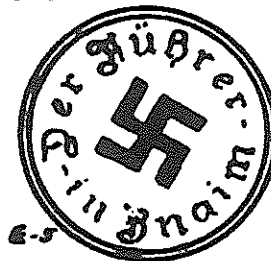
THE WAR COVER PHILATELIST

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March, 1939

Whole No. 9

POSTMARKS FROM THE SUDETENLAND

By J. O. Rohwer, Box 917, Santa Cruz, California

The annexation of the Sudetenland by Germany caused the issuance and use of many interesting postmarks. To get the right slant on them one must realize that the Sudetens desired annexation by Germany. The population is German in race, language and customs. And most of them are Nazis. The few Czechs living in that territory were mostly officials, who had moved into that part since 1918. The populace therefore welcomed the German troops not as conquerors but rather as liberators from Czecho-Slovakian oppression. One must realize this fact in order to understand the many postmarks.

There were three reasons for the use of these special postmarks:

- 1 - Most of the postal officials were Czechs and evacuated before the arrival of the German troops. Whenever possible they took all supplies and equipment with them, which left many of the post offices without cancelers;
- 2 - The population did not want to use Czech postmarks, etc., without some indication of the changed status;
- 3 - Collectors and dealers tried to profit by the annexation, and caused the issuance of many unnecessary postmarks.

But it can be safely said that profiteering played only a small part in issuing these special postmarks. Because the Czech officials had taken away with them the supplies in many offices, we can find all kinds of emergency cancels. Some are very primitive, while others were very elaborate. So far, the most important point which has not been clarified is the exact time during which each special postmark was used. The German Post Office Department ordered under date of November 1st that the use of all cancels which contained slogans referring to annexation be discontinued. The reason for this order is most interesting. The request for this order came from the post offices in the Sudetenland themselves. The reason was that the many requests for these special postmarks interfered with the regular work of the post offices, especially the smaller ones, where there was still a shortage of trained help. It can be definitely said that after November 5th special postmarks were no longer used FOR regular mail, although some offices still complied with collectors' requests. I have a number of these postmarks in my collection. But there must have been a lot of back-dating. Most of my postmarks have the date of the arrival of the German troops, and I know that my requests could not have gotten there by that time; and I have several postmarks in my collection dated October 3rd although the particular types were not issued until October 11th and 15th.

(continued on page 19)

THE WAR COVER CLUB

(in New York)

Important Notice: The Annual Meeting of the Club/has been fixed for May 12th to 14th in order to give members an opportunity of also taking in the big Fair. Place of meeting has not yet been set, and those planning to attend are urged to write Secretary Maxwell Halpern for particulars, at once.

Your Editor regrets exceedingly that he cannot attend, and takes this opportunity to state that should the Club desire, we are ready to continue the W.C.P. as the official organ. As stated repeatedly, the War Cover Philatelist is not paying its way, and can be continued only if the Club will guarantee a minimum of seven dollar advertisements per issue. If seven members or readers will each contribute a dollar ad per issue, there will be no need to draw on the club's funds. To those who cannot attend, please write the Secretary pledging a definite number of advertisements for the 1939-40 club year. In the unlikely event that circulation is increased to the point where income equals outgo, then club funds will not be drawn upon, so, every reader be a booster and get a new subscriber. We plan to give a minimum of six issues of eight pages each for the club year.

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Our attention was called to "Stamps and Postmarks from the Sudetenland" by Mr. J.O. Rohwer in the Western Stamp Collector of February 8, 1939, and on solicitation he was good enough to submit the article which appears in this issue. The account is printed in an endeavor to present a matter-of-fact philatelic article on a subject of timely interest.

Any statements which might be construed as an expression of sympathy or prejudice in this, or in other articles which may appear in the War Cover Philatelist, will be those representing the opinions of the writers, and not necessarily that of the Editor.

- o -

The booklet on A.E.F. covers by Mr. Hennen Sanford will soon be ready for distribution. The price will probably be One Dollar, and you may order from the Editor now.

WANTED, to exchange A.E.F. covers generally. I particularly want any showing APO substation numbers for which I will give six regular AEF covers for any I can use. HOMER G. ARTIST, Adair, Iowa.

A.E.F. COVERS WANTED with postmarks showing APO numbers. Will pay cash. Send on approval. Maxwell Halpern, 1351 Noble Ave., New York City.

WAR COVERS WANTED, all countries, all wars. Cash or exchange. For the beginning collector: 10 different War covers for \$1.00. Delf Norona, 315 Seventh St., Moundsville, W.Va.

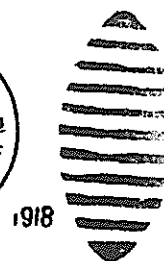
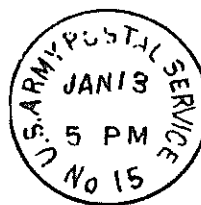
AGAIN, please submit your Type A-10 covers to the Editor for recording; also your Type A-13 to A-19 covers. In our next issue we will list and identify all known type A-10s, list and illustrate a number of additional Type A postmarks discovered, and present an account of the latest use of an A.E.F. postmark in Europe



A.E.F. ARMY POST OFFICES

(Type A-9)

This is the first type of steel postmark, replacing Type A-1 about the middle of October, 1917.



Earliest known use: Oct. 16, 1917 (R.R. Safarid) APO No.9
Latest known use: Jan. 13, 1918 (S.W. McCune). APO No.15
 Type A-9 is always in black. It was superseded by Type A-13 towards the latter part of December, 1917, by reason of the Army Post Offices being renumbered in the 700's.

APO NO. 1 (St. Nazaire)

Early OCT 19 3 (?) PM 1917 (Eva Gray)Late DEC 31 8 PM 1917* (H.A.Coleman)

APO NO. 2 (Paris)

Early OCT 31 ? PM 1917 (W.Grandy)Late NOV 26 ? PM 1917* (H.Crowell)

APO NO. 3 (Gondrecourt-1st Army Corps School)

Early OCT 19 6 PM 1917 (H.K.Robinson and Editor)Late DEC 19 8 PM 1917 (H.K.Robinson)

APO NO. 4 (le Valdahon)

(This has not been seen.)

APO NO. 5 (Bordeaux)

Early DEC 18 5 PM 1917 (H.K.Robinson) (The only one seen)

APO NO. 6 (Chaumont)

Early OCT 29 5.30 PM 1917 (M.Hunt)Late DEC 18 5.30 PM 1917 (Editor)

APO NO. 7 (Mailly)

Early OCT 18 6 PM 1917 (Editor)Late DEC 11 7 PM 1917 (Editor)

APO NO. 8 (Nevers, Nièvre)

Early NOV 29 6 PM 1917 (Editor) (The only one seen)

(We are not quite sure of this. The APO No. is not quite distinct.)

APO NO. 9 (26th Division, Yankee)

Early 4 PM OCT 16 1917 (R.R. Safarid)Late 4 PM DEC 20 1917 (Editor)

All copies seen have the hour slug 4 PM before the date

APO NO. 10 (2nd Division)

Early DEC 12 2 PM 1917 (M.Hunt) (The only one seen)

APO NO. 11 (Coetquidan, Morbihan)

Early 3 PM NOV 3 1917 (M.Hunt)Late DEC 21 1917* (H.Crowell)

APO NO. 12 (Is-sur-Tille, Cote d'Or)

Early NOV 24 5 PM 1917 (Editor) (The only one seen)

APO NO. 13 (Gievres, Loir-et-Cher)

Early 5.30 PM NOV 8 1917 (Editor)Late DEC 18 5.30 PM 1917 (Editor)

(All have the hour slug 5.30 PM)

APO NO. 14 (Langres, Haute-Marne. Army Schools)

(This has not been seen)

 APO NO. 15 (42nd Division, Rainbow)

Early DEC 6 ? PM 1917 (M. Grandy)

Late JAN 13 5 PM 1918 (S.W. McCune)

APO NO. 16 (Brest, Finistere. Base Section No. 5 S.O.S.)

Early DEC 6 1917 (Editor) (The only one seen)

The hour slug omitted.

APO NO. 17 (Tours, Indre-et-Loire. Hdqrs S.O.S.)

Early DEC 4 ? PM 1917 (M. Hunt)

Late DEC 14 6 PM 1917 (Editor)

APO NO. 18 (Saumur, Maine-et-Loire (Villebernier))

Early DEC 4 5 PM 1917 (S.W. McCune) (Only copy seen)

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THE MYSTERY TYPE A-10 POSTMARKS

The 800 series of AKF postmarks have been referred to as the mystery series. But here is another group of postmarks far more puzzling and perplexing--the Type A-10 postmarks.

A Type A-10 postmark is the basic Type A-9 from which the APO number has been removed. Inasmuch as they do not show an APO number, practically all A.E.F. cover collectors pass them up as being simply poorly struck impressions of Type A-9 postmarks in that the APO number does not appear, and consequently discard them as not worth saving. Dr. H. A. Coleman in his brochure U.S. Army Post Offices Overseas absolutely ignores them, likewise Mr. Hennen Sanford in his series of articles in The American Philatelist (which will soon be published in book form--order from the Editor,--Advt.) Both these gentlemen stress "Provisional" markings, and to our mind the A-10 postmarks are the most interesting provisionals, in that they present a really difficult philatelic problem, and on which your Editor has worked for some years, and results are only just beginning to show.

From the check-list of Type A-9s it will be noted that APO 18 is the highest number found in a Type A-9 postmark. Presumably many more Type A-9 postmarks were made, possibly 30 or 40 or more. When the Army Post Offices were renumbered from 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. to 701, 702, 703, 704, &c., a new type of postmark, A-13 was introduced and replaced the old Type A-9s containing low numbers. As the A-9s were obsolete they were no longer used.

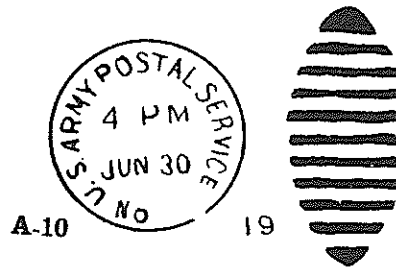
The supply of A-9 postmarks bearing numbers higher than No. 18 were not issued and they were laid aside as obsolete equipment, together possibly with the A-9s numbered from ~~1~~ No. 1 to No. 18 which may have been returned to postal headquarters.

Now, from time to time a regular Army Post Office was in urgent need of a new postmarking stamps, for possibly the following reasons: (a) The regular postmarking stamp may have gotten lost or destroyed; (b) an additional stamp was necessary to handle an increasing amount of mail; or (c) a postmark was required for a station or branch of a main A.P.O.

To meet the need for a postmarking stamp in a hurry, some postmasters manufactured their own provisional postmarks, (Types A-78 to A-92), while in other cases, postal headquarters took the obsolete Type A-9 postmarks, filed or cut away

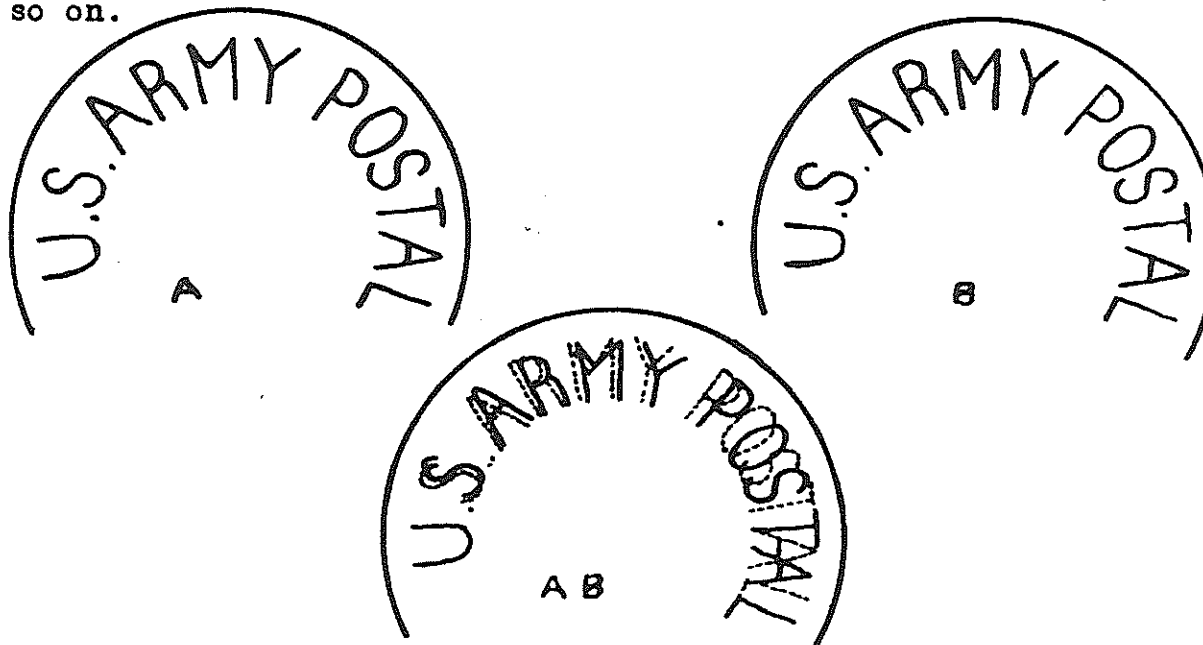
the low number in the postmark, and sent it on to the A.P.O. where needed, and we collectors designate these mutilated postmarks as Type A-10. In filing out the A.P.O. number a portion of the circle was also filed away at the same time, but more about this later.

The result is that there is nothing about the postmark itself to show its use at any particular A.P.O., and this is where an interesting philatelic problem presents itself: At just what A.P.O. was a given Type A-10 postmark used?



Since a number of these Type A-10 postmarking stamps were used at different A.P.O.'s, one may say, "Type A-10 postmarks are all alike, so how can I tell at which A.P.O. this cover with a Type A-10 postmark was used, unless the writer made a notation in his return address indicating the A.P.O. at which the letter was mailed?"

But, are all Type A-10 postmarks alike? No. And here is something which is news to postmark collectors generally: Steel postmarking stamps are engraved by hand, and no two postmarking stamps similar to these under consideration are exactly alike. The size of the circle and the wording may be the same, they may appear identical to the eye, but careful measurements will show marked differences, particularly in the spacing between letters, the slope of the letters, and so on.



An illustration of what we mean, the postmarks A and B appear identical. However, take a piece of tracing paper, make a careful tracing of Postmark A, lay it over Postmark B, the result will be Figure AB. Just try this for yourself.

By using this technique of superimposing tracings, if we find that two Type A-10 postmarks are identical, then we know they were both applied by the same postmarking stamp and were presumably used at the same APO. Then if it can be proven that one of these covers was postmarked at a given APO then we can say positively that the second was also used at

that particular APO (unless, of course, in the unlikely event that a particular Type A-10 was recalled and reissued to and used at another APO!)

There are other features about A.E.F. covers which are of value in this study, such as the use of the Censur number, the date of use, the state or city in the United States to which the letter was addressed, and so on. In our next issue all Type A-10 postmarks which have been positively identified, will be illustrated actual size and detailed descriptions and data given.

As a last appeal: Please send in all your Type A-10 covers for this study. (Also new dates of use of Types A-1 to A-9, and all your Type A-13 to A-19 covers for future lists.) The Editor will gladly pay your postage if requested, and make immediate returns if you are in a hurry.)

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THE OCCUPATION OF VERA CRUZ IN 1914

Vera Cruz was occupied by our forces from April to November, 1914. A U.S. Postal Agency was established there early in May, and operated until November 22nd of that year. The illustration, Figure 4 is of a postmark used on the last day of occupation.

The postmarks illustrated are from an article by your Editor appearing in Volume 2 of the Cyclopedia of U.S. Postmarks on the subject. A copy of the article may be had for 25 cents.

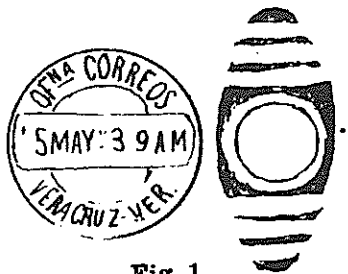


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

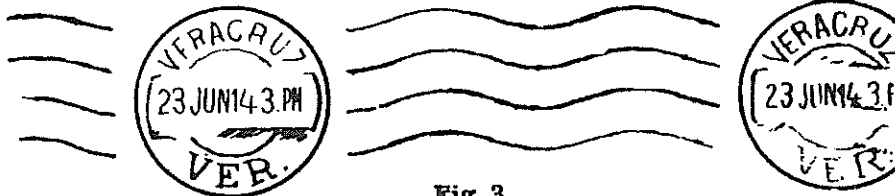


Fig. 3

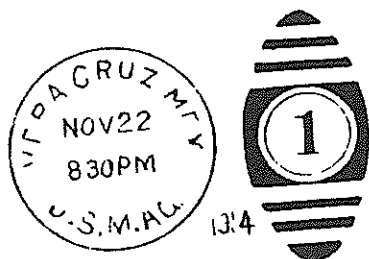


Fig. 4

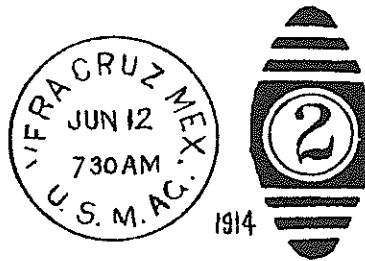


Fig. 5

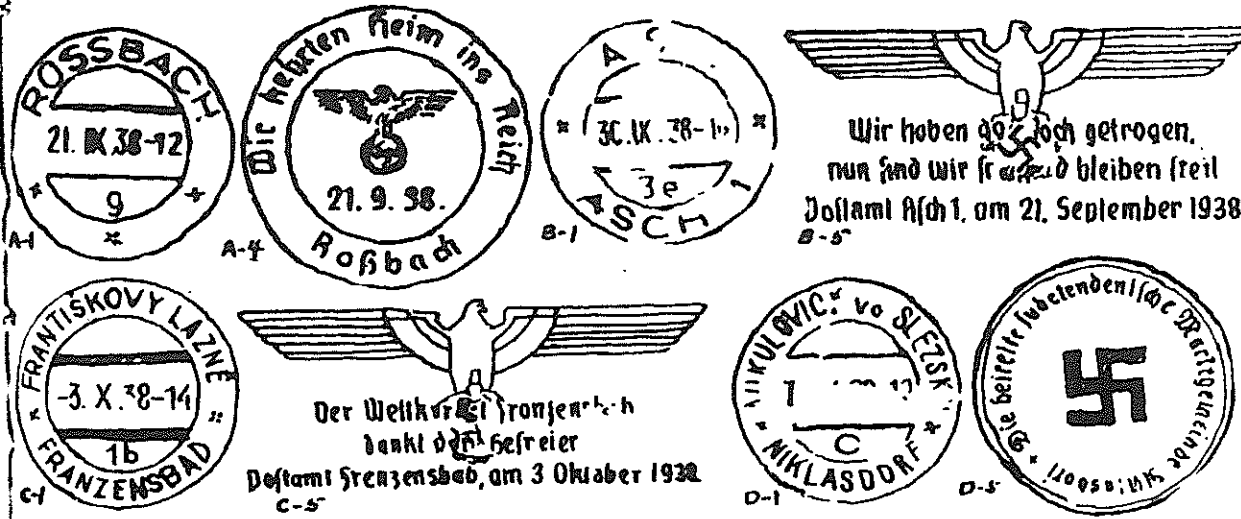
POSTMARKS FROM THE SUDETENLAND

(Continued from page 13)

It is impossible to make a complete list of all special postmarks issued. But it is possible to make a rough classification. During the annexation period, which lasted until about November 5th, the following types of postmarks were in use:

- 1 - Old Czech postmarks as before;
- 2 - Same as No. 1, but with the Czech spelling of the post office name filed out. (ED.- Like the AEF Type A-10)
- 3 - Emergency postmarks to cancel stamps on letters, etc. These are mostly straight line rubber stamps;
- 4 - Special postmarks. (These are cancellations which contain something in addition to date and town name. Sometimes it may be only a Swastika. I have a list of over 250 offices with these special postmarks. I also have a list of about 200 offices which issued postmarks which classify under No. 3.)
- 5 - Cachets. These are usually used in combination with Nos. 1 to 4. As a rule Nos. 1 to 3 are seldom used without a cachet classifying under No. 5. Cachets were sometimes used as postmarks.

This about concludes the general remarks which can be made about the postmarks of the Sudetenland. I am giving below only a few examples of the many postmarks used:



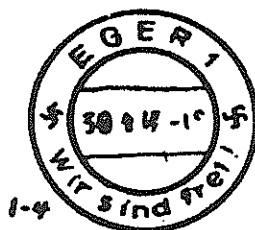
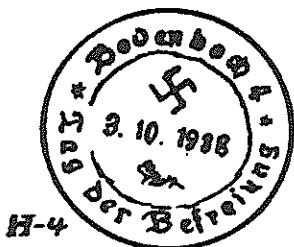
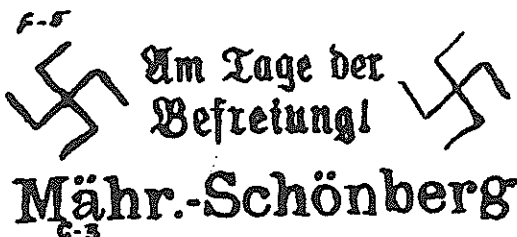
A - Rosßbach. I do not quite understand this postmark. It classifies under #1, but it has only the German form of the name. I consider it possible that Rosßbach has no Czech form of its name. In addition, a cachet was used. It really is a postmark classifying under #4, used as a cachet. It reads, "We returned home into the REICH - Sept. 21, 1938," and shows the Nazi emblem.

B - Asch. A regular old Czech postmark. In addition a cachet was used, which can be classified under either #4 or #5. I favor #5 because it has never been used as a postmark. It reads, "We carried the yoke, now we are free and remain free." Post Office ASCH 1, on September 21, 1938."

C - Franzensbad. #1 type. Cachet, "The world Health Resort Franzensbad, on October 3, 1938, thanks the Liberator."

D - Niklasdorf, Oktober 7th. #1 type postmark. Cachet,

"The liberated Sudetengerman Community Niklasdorf."

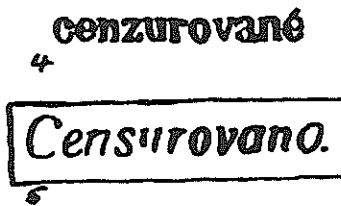
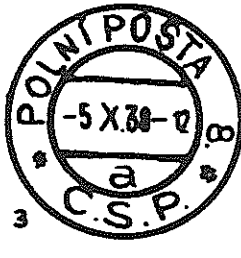
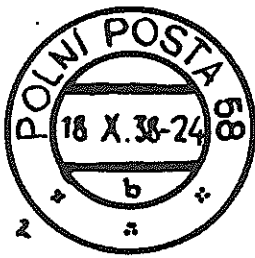
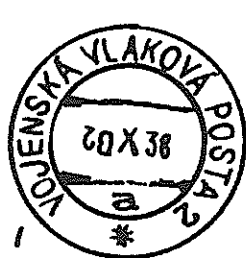


E - Znaim. October 26th. #2 type postmark. Cachet, "The Fuehrer in Znaim." (illustrations on title page.)
 F - Jaegerndorf. #3 type postmark. Two #5 type cachets, one, "Our Fuehrer, the Saver is here," (not illustrated), the other, "On the day of liberation."
 G - Maerisch-Schoenberg. #3 type postmark. Straight line rubber stamp. Also a #4 type postmark, "Maehr. Schoenau in the days of liberation."
 H - Bodenbach 4. #4 type postmark, "Day of Liberation."
 I - Eger 2. This is a #5 type cachet used as a postmark. Has no date. Reads, "The Truth has Won." In addition a #4 type postmark is used as a cachet on the same cover, reading, "We are free," dated October 3, 1938. This is obviously back-dated. The postmark used as a cachet was not available until October 11th. This is the regular German type hand-canceller which was supplied to post offices in the Sudetenland. Only the two swastikas and the inscription "Wir sind frei" has been added.
 J - Troppau. October 8, 1938. #4 type postmark. Reads, "Day of Liberation."

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CZECH POSTMARKS OF THE SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1938, CRISIS

From Your Editor's Collection



No. 1, Military Railway Post Office; Nos. 2 and 3 Military Field Post Offices; No. 4, censor mark on civilian mail applied at Komarno, Oct. 18th. (Komarno was annexed by Hungary in October, 1938.) No. 5 applied at Zelesce (Scholl-schitz) September 19, 1939.