have ever been in actual use. As stated by the Williams brothers, only one example of the 2-h stamp on piece with cancellation is known but this can be cancelled to order*. Even mint copies of this stamp are very scarce: a block of 16, a block of four and a few other multiples as well as a few copies are known to exist only.

In 1912, the local rates were unified to 6 h for any kind of mail. At this time, the remaining 2-h stamps were withdrawn (stored at the resort).

The stamps were sold at the resort and also at the general store of Johann Rilki, a general store in Szász Sebes; he handled the mail service to and from the resort and he also served as the local mailman at Szász Sebes. As a conclusion, we have a basic difference between the Bistra service and the service at Hohe Rinne: at Hohe Rinne the mail was carried directly to and from the post office and thus, even "local" letters (i.e. mail addressed until 1908 to Keresztényszigeti and after 1908 to Nagy Szeben) needed the regular Hungarian postage stamps in addition to the hotel post stamps. On the other hand, in case of Bistra mail, those which were addressed to Szász Sebes or mailed from Szászsebes, needed only the hotel post stamps: evidently, mail to the resort was simply dropped at Rilki's store while mail from the resort to Szász Sebes was either delivered by Rilki or could be picked up at his store. Thus, only mail from or to outside Szász Sebes needed additional Hungarian stamps.

Three types of cancellers were in use. At the resort, they used oval or circular cancellers while mail sent up to the resort bears an oblong single-lined cancellation having the name Johann Rilki in script letters. These markings show no date; thus only mail addressed outside Szász Sebes (or from there) has cancellation dates, in the Hungarian post office canceller.

The local postal service of Bistra was in use only for a few years. We have information about its ending with conflicting dates. First, let us see the story according to the Williams brothers.

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* When speaking about this period, one should never forget that at this time, stamps with cancellation were much more important for collectors than mint stamps.

Evidently, the Hungarian Postal Service in some way started to object to the local service. According to the Williams' brothers the main reason for this was that the stamps had the inscription "Bistra Post" and only the official government service was permitted to use the term "post". In my opinion, however, the fact that local service to and from Szász Sebes was handled directly might have also contributed to the objections. Anyway, in 1912, one day, two officials of the Royal Hungarian Postal Service arrived at the resort and confiscated the entire supply of the local stamps most of which consisted of the already withdrawn 2-h stamps. The confiscated stamps were sent to Budapest, to the central office of the Royal Hungarian Postal Service where they were later destroyed.

After these events, the Carpathian Society of Transylvania submitted a claim to the Hungarian Postal Service for compensation for the loss in revenue in operating the local mail service. The claim was accepted and, in 1913, the sum of 150 K was paid; evidently further compensations were also promised. However, in 1914, upon the outbreak of the World War, the resort's horses and vehicles were confiscated for military service and no more compensation was paid.

So far the story of the Williams brothers. I don't know their sources and certainly, there is a problem with the dates. Jászai, in his quoted book, states that the service was in operation until July 26, 1913, and he shows the photo of a piece containing a 5-f Hungarian stamp plus a 6-h Bistra stamp, cancelled on July 26, 1913, at 7 PM at Szász Sebes. This is one year after the alleged confiscation!

Discussion of the Bistra Stamps

As already mentioned the design of the stamps consisted of a fir tree and the texts "S.K.V. - Section Mühlbach" and "Bistra Post". The stamp was designed by Dr. Ernst Krauss, the president of the Szász Sebes Branch of the Society; the die was prepared by Angerer and Goschel, in Vienna while the printing was done by lithography in Szász Sebes. The stamps have Perf. 11 1/2. A total of 5,000 of each denomination was printed but we don't know how many were destroyed later. The 2-h stamp is brown on yellow paper while the 6-h stamp is brown on white paper.

PART FOUR: PHILATELY RELATED TO OTHER RESORTS OF THE CARPATHIAN SOCIETY OF TRANSYLVANIA

Hohe Rinne and Bistra were not the only resorts of the Siebenbürgischer Karpathenverein: as mentioned in the Introduction, they maintained a total of 22 shelters and cottages. Thus, it is most likely that other resorts also had some kind of special postal service. I know of two.

In 1938, the Bélyeggyüjtő, a Hungarian monthly philatelic journal published an article on Hungarian private cancellers.* Here, they dealt with fifteen cancellers all from mountain shelters and cottages. From these three were related to the Siebenbürgischer Karpathenverein. One of these has already been shown (Figure 11) while the other two refer to resorts other than Hohe Rinne or Bistra.

Figure 19.
The cancellation of Negoihütte of the S.K.V.

Figure 20.
The cancellation of Bulleahütte of the S.K.V.

The two additional resorts are "Negoihütte" and "Bullea-hutte". "Hütte" means cottage. As reported in the quoted article, both used a special canceller on letters or cards mailed at the resort. Figures 19-20 show the two cancellations.

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* Anon., "Magyarországi Magánbélyegzők." (Hungarian private cancellers), Bélyeggyüjtő 17, 216-218 (1938).

I don't know where these cottages were located. The only information published in this article is that every letter from both places was forwarded by the mobile railroad post office on the Nagy Szeben - Kiskapus (today: Sibiu - Copsa Mica) line. Naturally, a Hungarian stamp was needed on the mail and this was cancelled by the railroad post office.

As shown in Map No. 3, the Nagy Szeben - Kiskapus railroad connects Nagy Szeben with the Gyulafehérvár - Balázsfalva - Medgyes - Segesvár (today: Alba Iulia - Blaj - Medias - Sighisoara) line which in turn is part of the main Budapest - Brassó (today: Brasov; in German: Kronstadt) railroad line. This means that these two resorts had to be located somewhere in this area.

According to the quoted article, both cancellers were in use in 1906.

Except the quoted article, I don't know of any more information about these two locations or about any other resort, shelter or cottage of the Society.

S U P P L E M E N T

Through the courtesy of Dr. Ferenc N a g y of Vienna, a well-known expert of Hungarian stamps, I obtained a copy of the original printed regulations of the Carpathian Society of Transylvania concerning the mail service to and from Bistra. This announcement is dated June 1912 when the rates for letters and newspapers were already unified. However, as it will be seen, the "mail service" was much more than a mail service: it handled food purchases, shipment and delivery to vacationers and even carried passengers. It was a real mail coach service!

A number of interesting information can be found in the announcement. First, as already mentioned, the "Bistra coach) ("Bistrawagen") also carried passengers, 2-3 people. It was clearly a long journey, took about 13 hours, and I am sure it was not very comfortable. Also, evidently, there was no food service or restaurant up on the mountains, everybody was cooking for him or herself and food supply - particularly that of meat - was a problem handled happily by Mr. R i l k i who certainly was a good businessman. It is also interesting to note that there was a 5-K "entry fee" for using the mail service. It is sure - after all, this was the custom of the period - that most vacationers spent many weeks, probably the whole Summer, up on the mountain, and they needed a continuous supply of foodstuff. The announcement does not say anything about occasional mail. It would be interesting to find out, what happened if somebody who did not pay this "entry fee" received a mail through the Hungarian mail service, properly delivered to Mr. Rilki.

As seen, the service was also available to other vacationers between Szász Sebes (Mühlbach) and Bistra. Sugag is Sugág and it is indicated in Map No. 3. I do not know the Hungarian (or Romanian) name of "Teu" mentioned in this announcement; could it be Zsinna? This is the only other place fairly close to the Szász Sebes - Bistra route.

Below, I give the translation of the regulations concerning the "Bistra mail" service. The original was written in German and I tried to follow the original text as closely as possible. Here, I am using abbreviations for the currencies: K for "Krone" (in Hungarian: korona) and H for Heller (in Hungarian: fillér).

I have one more interesting observation. In the discussion of the Bistra stamps, I gave the name of the president of

the Szász Sebes Branch of the Carpathian Society of Transylvania as Dr. Ernst Krauss. This was based on the handbook of the Williams' brothers. However, in the original German text of the present announcement, his name is given as Dr. Gustav Krauss. Somewhere, there must be an error.

Translation of the German original:

"B I S T R A M A I L" R A T E S

1. The mail coach leaves every Tuesday and Friday at 6 o'clock in the morning from the store of Mr. Johann R i l k i (Mühlbach, Sikulorum Street 5) and arrives at Bistra Colony at about 7 o'clock in the evening; it leaves from there next morning at 7 o'clock in the morning.

   It should be mentioned that if notified earlier, the coach would wait for tourists arriving in Mühlbach with the train of 6:43; in this case, the coach leaves at 7:15.

   The Bistra-coach is also at the disposal of the vacationers living in the vicinity of Bistra (Teu, Sugág), by payment of the rates given below. However, due to the special regulations concerning the delivery of their mail, these vacationers are requested to contact the management of the Society.

2. All parcels, letters, newspapers, etc. should be delivered to the store of Mr. Johann R i l k i latest at 6 o'clock the previous evening. The only exception is meat which can be delivered up to 5:30 in the morning. It should be noted that upon proper ordering, Mr. Rilki would directly purchase the meat and deliver it to Bistra. However, in case of meat shipment, a special bag made of linen and having an identification mark must be used.

3. In Bistra Colony, a person is assigned to handle the mail and take care of obtaining and delivering it. Mail sent from Bistra can be given to him until 6:30 in the morning of the day when the coach is leaving.

4. Passenger Rates:

   (a) Members of the Carpathian Society, travelling to

or from Bistra: 6 K per person. Roundtrip tickets valid for eight days: 9 K per person.

(b) Non-members, travelling to or from Bistra: 8 K per person. Round trip tickets valid for eight days: 12 K per person.

5. Parcel and Mail Rates:

(a) For members of the Carpathian Society: 15 H per kilogram.

(b) For non-members: 19 H per kilogram.

(c) Letters and newspapers have to be franked with a 6-H stamp which can be purchased in Mühlbach at Mr. Rilki and in Bistra from the person handling the mail.

(d) In case of meat shipment, the rate is increased by 5 H per kilogram as payment for the ice.

(e) Orders sent to Mr. Rilki or return shipment of empty boxes, crates, etc. are free of charge.

6. General Conditions:

(a) For the use of Bistra mail, a basic tax of 5 K is to be paid for each permanent dwelling. This basic tax is also to be paid by the vacationers in the vicinity of Bistra (Sugág, Teu) who are using the Bistra mail service.

(b) Orders made through domestic servants for whom their employer is in all cases fully responsible, will only be fulfilled if they are signed by the employer.

(c) The employees of the Imperial and Royal Forest Service enjoy free franking for mail and pay for parcels the rates specified for the members of the Carpathian Society.

(d) The public is reminded that the only obligations Mr. Johann R i l k i has are the delivery of mails and parcels given or sent to him and the purchase of meat. Mr. Rilki is also happy to procure other items, however, he is doing this as a favor and the public should recognize this.

(e) Letters and newspapers cannot be included in the parcels.

(f) According to the resolution of the General Meeting of the Society, the head of Bistra mail has the right to open and control any suspicious parcel in the present of addressee.

(g) If somebody deceives or damages the Bistra mail service, he will pay as penalty ten times the corresponding rate. In repeated cases the head of Bistra mail has the right to exclude the person from any further use of the service.

(h) The public is reminded that the Bistra coach has only two places available when travelling from Mühlbach to Bistra and maybe three places when travelling down from the mountain. The seats are to be paid upon reservation and the payment will not be paid back under any circumstances.

Mühlheim (Szász Sebes), June 1912

The Section Management of the Carpathian Society of Transylvania:

Dr. Gustav K r a u s s
President

Heinrich G o o s s
Secretary

(seal of the Society)

Printed by Johann Stegmann, in Mühlbach.