

MICHAEL KOVÁTS DE FABRICZY WAS BORN 300 YEARS AGO



Magyar Posta is commemorating the tercentenary of the birth and the 245th anniversary of the heroic death of Michael Kováts de Fabriczy by issuing a promotional personalised stamp. Born Mihály Fabriczy Kováts, he was among the émigré Hungarian military officers who became internationally known, taking the Anglicized name Michael Kováts de Fabriczy. He built up a huge cult following in the United States of America as a volunteer in the American War of Independence, but his name was also highly regarded among the Hungarian Hávör Hussars, the French Hussards de Bercheny, the Prussian Székely Hussars and the freedom fighters of the Polish Bar Confederation. The new issue, made by printing on the label of the personalised stamp, was produced in 35,000 copies by the banknote printing company Pénzjegynyomda and can be purchased at Filaposta and designated post offices in Hungary, or ordered from Magyar Posta's online store from 9 May 2024.

Mihály Fabriczy Kováts (Karcag, 1724-Charleston, South Carolina, 11 May 1779) was a Calvinist nobleman from Nagykovács, who, together with his comrade-in-arms of Polish origin Casimir Pulaski, is known as the "father of the American cavalry". During his eventful career as a hussar lasting for more than 39 years, he served first as a warrant officer in the Jasz-Cumanian Redemptive Regiment of the Hussars for the Austrians in the War of Austrian Succession, then as a mercenary in the French Bercheny Regiment, while in the Seven Years' War, holding the rank of lieutenant, he commanded the Prussian 1st Hussars as a separate corps. In 1761, he left the Prussian army. Returning to the Kingdom of Hungary, however, Kováts was remanded in custody and was taken to Vienna by order of the Imperial War Council. There, thanks to a letter of pardon from Maria Theresa, his identity was clarified and he was promoted to the rank of retired major. In the years that followed, he married Francesca Szinyei-Merse in Eperjes, but instead of nurturing his marriage and private life, he joined the Polish struggle for independence as an instructor for the Bar Confederation, training soldiers for the fight against the Russians. It was here that he formed a lifelong friendship with the young Count Casimir Pulaski. In August 1776 he left for Italy and then journeyed on to France. On 13 January 1777, he wrote a letter in Latin to Benjamin Franklin, the United States ambassador in Paris, and arrived in Boston in the spring of that year. He enlisted in the American Continental Army and was received by Commander-in-Chief George Washington. In 1778, on the recommendation of the Continental Congress, Kováts was appointed a training officer in the Pulaski Cavalry Legion. Michael Kováts de Fabriczy drafted the first regulations for the American cavalry. He first fought against the British and the Indians incited by them in north-western New Jersey, and was then ordered to go to South Carolina to support General Lincoln. He fell at the siege of Charleston.

The main element of the label of the stamp is a painting by Aurél Raskó. The commemorative first day cover features an oil painting by Sándor Bodó, with Brigadier Casimir Pulaski on the left and Colonel Michael Kováts de Fabriczy on the right. The imprint of the postmark on the commemorative first day cover shows the handwriting of Michael Kováts de Fabriczy.

Order code:

2024110010031 (stamp with label)
 2024110060032 (FDC)
 2024111040031 (stamp sheet)

Issued on: 9 May 2024

Face value: Domestic (On the date of issue equivalent to postage of HUF 230 paying for a domestic non-priority letter up to 50 g, or a postcard or picture postcard.)

Printing technique: offset

Number of copies: 1,000 sheets (35,000 stamps with a label)

Perforated size of stamp: 18 x 25.2 mm

Perforated size of label: 36.25 x 25.2 mm

Imperforated size of sheet: A4

Paper type: White, wood-free, surface-treated, gummed stamp paper with optical whitener

Printed by Pénzjegynyomda Zrt. (stamp), Codex Zrt. (FDC)

Source: Kossuth Foundation, Washington; Municipality of Karcag

Designed by Imre Benedek