

Bruckner: August 1873

A photo essay by Gilles Houle

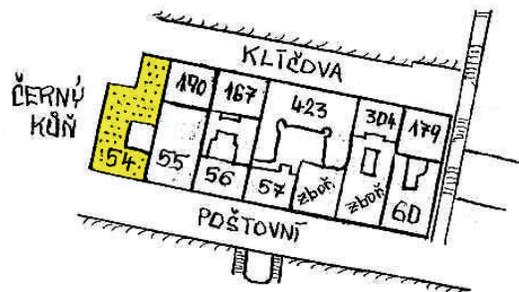
On the 18th of August, 1873 (the Birthday of Franz-Josef) Anton Bruckner was sitting at the organ loft during the celebration of the solemn Mass in honor of the Emperor of Austria. It always ends with a fantastic organ improvisation on the theme of the « Kaiser » .

But during the Summer of 1873, a serious cholera epidemic eventually drives Anton Bruckner out of Vienna.



The White Horse Inn in Marienbad

Towards the end of August, 1873, Bruckner makes his stop in Marienbad (Mariánské Lázně) for a mineral water cure, Bruckner was staying at the « White Horse Inn » (« Weißen Rössl Inn ») , located at Number 5063 Kurgast (today, Černý kun) . Its brasserie-restaurant welcomed the public on the ground-floor. The building (with 2 upper-floors) is L-shaped and accessible on 2 perpendicular streets. (It is just opposite the sumptuous Hotel « Excelsior », which was only a few steps from the famous « Colonnade » .)



Site plan for the White Horse Inn

At that intersection (also on the ground-floor of the same building) was the popular local grocery-store owned by Mister Friedrich Benisch (at Nummer 54 Poštovní Street) . He could, among others things, buy smoked meat, coffee, and paper. Bruckner enjoyed the quiet of his

hotel-room, allowing him to polish-up the manuscripts of his 2nd and 3rd Symphonies which he hoped to present to Richard Wagner. The first draft of the 3rd Symphony had already been completed in Vienna, on 23 February 1873. He finished the Adagio on the 24th. The instrumentation of the Scherzo in March.

On 31 August 1873 , Comfortably installed at the inn's brasserie, Bruckner completed the sketch of the Finale of the Symphony. Nr. 3.

The « White Horse Inn » will later display this inscription (in gold letters) on a marble memorial plaque :

*It was in this house that lived during the month of August 1873,
Doctor Anton Bruckner.
Here, he composed the Finale of his 3rd Symphony.*

At the end of World War II, the inn is renamed « ěrný Kuo » . The building was demolished in 1956-1957.

Bruckner took time to play the organ at the Roman Catholic Church of the Ascension of the Virgin Mary (« Dekanatskirche Mariä Himmelfahrt ») located on the Stadtplatz (today, the « Gøtheplatz » (Gøthovo náměstí)) .



The Organ at the Dekanatskirche Mariä Himmelfahrt



Marienbad (1872) - Catholic Church and the Imperial and Royal Post-Office, near the Hotel Weimar



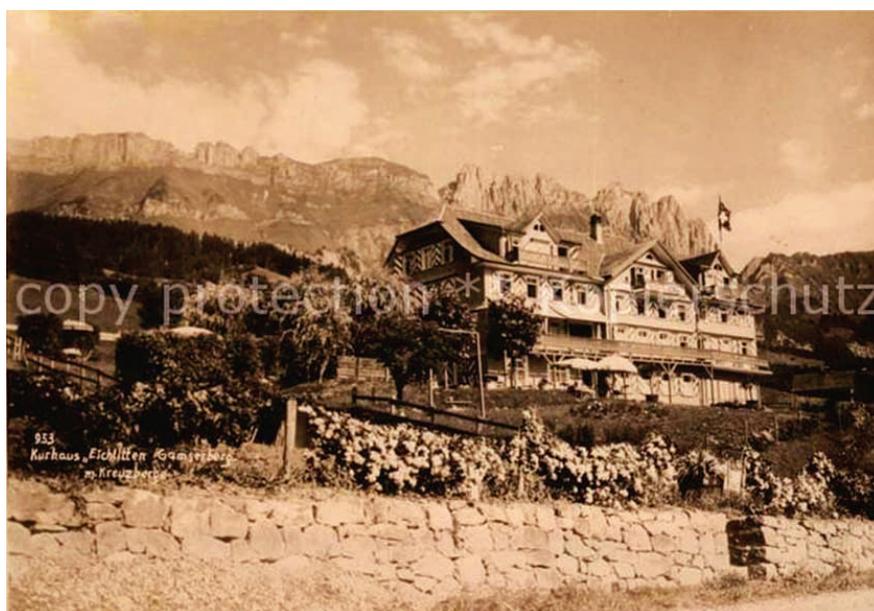
Jägerstraße, The Street of the Hunters and, in the background, the Catholic Church.

He also visited the Premonstratensian monastery in Teplá, just a few kilometers from Marienbad.

On his way, he decided to have his picture taken (finalized in a business-card format) at the studio of photographer Wilhelm Jerie located on Mount Křížového, near the old station, so that at his arrival in Bayreuth (at « Wahnfried ») , the humble composer would provide as a small gift a sample of his new portrait to his « beloved Master » , Richard Wagner.



Wilhelm Jerie also photographed Anton Bruckner near the old bath-house (« Kurhaus ») in Kreuzberg.



The Bath House in Kreuzberg



1872 - Marienbad : The Old Bath-House at Nummer 1 (later called the Central Bath-House) .



1872 - Marienbad : The fountain on Kirchenplatz.



A slightly different pose of Bruckner taken by Wilhelm Jerie