

# BROTHERS PROSHEK – BUILDERS OF EUROPEAN SOFIA AMONG THE DOCUMENTS OF STATE ARCHIVES – SOFIA AND CENTRAL STATE ARCHIVES

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LILYANA VANOVA

During the period 1910–1911 the eminent Bulgarian publicist, diplomat and historiographer Simeon Radev<sup>1</sup> works on his masterpiece – the three volumes of “Builders of contemporary Bulgaria”. This work is devoted to the building of the Third Bulgarian State and represents a peculiar pantheon of notable figures in the field of the politics, history and economics, who after the Liberation of Bulgaria in 1878 lay the foundation of contemporary Bulgarian state. Unfortunately in this book are missing the names of brothers Irschi (Georgi) and Theodore (Bogdan) Proshek<sup>2</sup>, as well as the names of a number eminent persons away from this epoch, who made a start of new Bulgaria.

The present publication is not in a position to compensate this absence; its modest purpose is to exhibit a small part of documents, preserved in Bulgarian state archives, which evidence about the large scale of Proshek Family<sup>3</sup>, Czech engineers and contractors, whose roots are in the town Beroun near Prague, who emigrate in Bulgaria in the end of 19th c. The archival documents survey undoubtedly points the truly rich base for the researchers, which allows interesting and contributive studies in some different areas.

In State archives – Sofia as well as in Central state archives are preserved documents which give a proof concerning their indisputable virtue as modern Sofia builders, their enterprise, responsibility and good will. Bulgaria forever and aye is joined to the enterprising mind of brothers Irschi, Theodore and his cousin Vatslav Proshek. In both archives wherever are preserved valuable certificates concerning their work and their merit to Bulgarian capital city and its inhabitants. Both archives keep a row of drafts, projects and blue-prints which are of interest not only for urbanization experts but also for the researchers within the framework of the relations between Czech republic and Bulgaria, in a particular kind of way active and constructive already at the time of country Liberation and its revival.

The fact that both brothers Georgi and Bogdan Proshek construct their first aristocratic home on the 5, “Moskovska” street is symbolical and intriguing. Today upon the building plot in question raises the edifice of Archives state agency, the State archives – Sofia and the Central state archives, wherever are preserved crucial certificates about their work and merits to Bulgarian capital city and its inhabitants. The reminiscence of Proshek brothers lingers on the memory of Sofia inhabitants, as proof in 2011 in the presence of public

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<sup>1</sup> Simeon Traichev Radev (1879–1967), diplomat, journalist, publicist and historiographer.

<sup>2</sup> Irschi (Georgi) Proshek, engineer, born in Beroun, near Prague (1847–1905); Theodore (Bogdan) Proshek, architect (1858–1905), Georgi’s brother.

<sup>3</sup> Vatslav Proshek, (1860–1913); Josef Proshek, (1861–1928) Georgi and Bogdan’s cousins.

was submitted the documentary “Brothers in loves with Bulgaria”, director Anastas Djidrov, which has been welcomed with enormous public interest. Prior to one year under the passed decision of Sofia municipal council on 20 December 2010 the place in front of the former brewing factory, locked between the streets “San Stephano”, “Tulovo” and “Sheinovo”, was called after the Proshkek brothers. That arrived at decision as a result of unanimous public request. As motive serve also the multitude buildings symbols in Sofia, which has been constructed owing to their financial help. That's enough to particularize some symbols projects and buildings in the new capital city in purpose to estimate the value of their activity for the transformation of Sofia into European capital city. They take part, along with their cousins Josef and Vatslav Proshkek during the building of the most important construction not only in Sofia but also in Varna etc.

Suffices is to enumerate the construction sites and buildings in Sofia in order to estimate the importance of Proshkek family activity. They joint in the construction of Central railway station, the National assembly, of both entrance doors – Eagle's and Lion's bridges, the harbor of Varna, sea capital of Bulgaria, establish the society “Slav lecture” and Bulgarian engineering-building society which gave assistance to numerous Bulgarian during their studies of engineering sciences in foreign parts.

With relation to the rest of the Proshkek family, Georgi Proshkek came first to Bulgaria. In 1870 he began his work as engineer in the Society for construction and running of railways lines in European Turkey of Baron Maurice (Zvi) von Hirsch<sup>4</sup>. During the Russian-Turkish war of Liberation (1877–1878) he became correspondent about row Czech newspapers and wrote the hostilities. In 1876 Georgi Proshkek vacates the Baron Hirsch Company he becomes a war correspondent about numerous European newspapers and acquaints the public with the Bulgarian people condition. Large part of his reports is devoted to the crushing of April and Stara Zagora uprisings (1876).

The events have a strong effect on him ant he decides to give his forces to the advantage of Bulgarian people. From them on dates back his strong adherence to Bulgarians and Bulgaria proved to demonstration trough his life as well as his desire for funeral in the soil, chosen as second mother country.

At once after the Bulgaria Liberation<sup>5</sup>, when Professor Marin Drinov<sup>6</sup> made an offer and Sofia became capital city, engineer Georgi Proshkek is appointed in the Sofia governor office. He works for count Peter Alabin<sup>7</sup> initially as interpreter, but very soon he cross into the City technical service. In a couple of ticks Georgi Proshkek becomes a first stenographer of the National assembly, draws up the first cadastral photo of Sofia' center and joins in the compilation of town planning scheme.

In 1878 his brother Bogdan Proshkek gets to Bulgaria. Both brothers Proshkek take an active part in the emergent state life and by virtue to their enterprise start rush work about the Sofia urbanization. In State archives – Sofia, archival fund 1к, “Sofia town municipal administration”, inventory 3, a.u. 6, p. 1-5, are preserved documents from 12 September 1878 among them is able to point letter № 495 of Sofia police master, second lieutenant of the Guard Ralkov, concerning the sum payment to architect A. Koler<sup>8</sup> and Bogdan Pro-

<sup>4</sup> Baron Maurice (Zvi) von Hirsch (1831–1896), German factory owner and philanthropist.

<sup>5</sup> Liberation of Bulgaria among the Bulgarian historiography means the recovery of Bulgarian state organization as result of the successful for Bulgarians Russian-Turkish war (1877–1878), called in Bulgaria a war of Liberation.

<sup>6</sup> Marin Drinov (1838–1906), Bulgarian writer of the Bulgarian national revival, historian and philologist.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Alabin (1824–1896), Russian aristocrat, military man, governor of Sofia (1878–1879).

<sup>8</sup> Antonín Kolár or Adolf Vazlav Kolar (1841–1905) Czech architect who works actively in Bulgaria after the Liberation. He is the first head architect of the new capital (1878). Author of the first urban development plan of Sofia (Battenberg's plan), designs the Vasil Levski monument, (1878), the basic edifice of the Military aca-

shok for materials delivery. Enclosed herewith are bills with the Bogdan Proshok own signature, filled in a form of “Popular lithography and presses Bogdan Proshok”. In f. 284K, inv. 1, a.u. 1832 of Central state archives is preserved the written statement from the Council of ministers meeting from 1903 with permission about payment on the half of the treasury, the value of the printed in private presses of Proshok brothers, official programs and invitations to the welcome of His Majesty the king of Rumania as well as the Russian minister of foreign affairs.

In State archives – Sofia at the given up archival fund 1K, “Sofia town municipal administration”, inventory 3, a.u. 651, are kept applications, petitions, as well as suggestion about regulation of the ground round about Bulgarian national bank from 22 February 1882 to 25 November 1882.

Truly interesting documents (p. 8) represents hand-made sketch with precise description of estates distributed between applicants V. Kile, D.Batulov, Bohar Haim and K. Bosilkov, make and signed with Bogdan Proshok in Sofia on 21 June 1882.

Bogdan Proshok files a petition with Sofia town municipal administration concerning the publication of a record in the Bogdan and Georgi Proshok’ name as owners of estate located on the “San Stephano” street. This document is preserved in the mentioned higher up fund, a.u. 619. (*application 1*)

Archival unit 27 keeps a certificate with Sofia town municipal administration №3553 from 24 April 1891 that point at the Josef Proshok as architect as well as that “his presence is necessary to the assigned tasks and his long-term absence is impossible”. (*application 2*)

Georgi and Bogdan Proshok stick in the country economic history in the main with their success in the frameworks of brewing, which is clearly by reason of the large application of the Proshok’s beer. The Brewery built and developed by both brothers becomes one of Sofia badge and practically ensures the immortality of its creator’s names. The family company “Brothers Georgi and Bogdan Proshok” is founded in 1895 and till the nationalization in 1947 more than 40 years after the death of its creators in 1905 advances extremely successful with a point at activity beer and ice production and sale, printing and building company.

Today, among the documents preserved in f. 1165K in State archives –Sofia are available interesting pages concerning the brewery construction, which till its demolition is one of Sofia symbols and nowadays still has reserved space in city legends transmitted from generation to generation. Preserved are brewery building plans with equipment sketches, of the main facade, and numerous other certificates for the building talent and enterprising spirit of the Proshok family.

Before in Bulgarian lands the beer has been prepared and preserved under the primitive conditions. Both brothers Proshok are the first who work professionally and observe the European quality exigencies and standards.

They began their brewery activity with small enterprise in outskirts of the town creating during the period 1881–1882 a so called beer workshop.

In 1881 on the 22, “San Stephano” street, starts the construction of one of the most modern brewery in the Balkans. According to Georgi Proshok’ opinion Bulgarian beer production goes back to the epoch before the Liberation. Creator is the Frenchman Dukorp an engineer, who works on the railroad construction in Sofia district during the period 1873–1876. He establishes the first brewery in Bulgaria. Bogdan and Georgi Proshok con-

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demy, (1888–1894), The Military club (1895–1897), the old hotel “Bulgaria” (1880–1890), the Ministry of war, the Royal palace enlargement (1893/4–1896), the Central railway station, etc. As architect he defends the strict classic forms with rich diversity of classic and baroque details and ornaments.

tinue the production and involve the Czech master brewer Martinek. But in the old enterprise are missing elementary conditions for good production. Bogdan and Georgi Proshkek take a strategic decision and start the construction of modern brewery. In State archives – Sofia, Fund “Brewery Brother Proshkek-partnership” (f. 1165K, inv. 1, a.u. 2) are kept building common plans with equipment sketches as well as selected passages from the bills. Those documents belong to the period 1885-1889 and the great mass of them are work of Prague firm “Novak&Jahn”, made especially by order of brothers Proshkek. In a.u. 7 is preserved detailed factory plan with all premises and the equipment; translated in Bulgarian language upon the plan is available detailed explanation about each premise purpose.

The indicated fund, inv. 1, a.u. 1 of State archives – Sofia preserves 25 documents which concerns the terms of agreement for the factory construction. They refer to the period to 1 August 1884 till 12 November 1895 and are entitled by the brothers themselves “Bill for mason’s work, completed by the entrepreneur Milosh for the G. and B. Proshkek’s brewery reconstruction. “San Stephano” street Sofia”. Detailed and strict are described each building, floor and premises measurements. Georgi Proshkek in person carefully audits all bills and data. Upon the recapitulation are readable his red ink corrections as well as his own signature. The bills about each expense, the masters’ names and their own signatures are also kept. That carefully prepared documentation allows original dimensions recovering of each premise, as well as the garden building, the first and the second floor, the cauldron premise, the arcs between the iron beams of the lavatory and the used building materials. In pp. 6-12 is kept the Rusalín Arsov own signature upon bills for received sums for the period to 11 August till 19 October 1885. On page 6 for example is available the next: “The undersigned had drowned by Mr. Bogdan Proshkek 200 (two hundred) leva for chair’s works for the new brewery, Sofia, 11 August 1885”. The same archival unit preserves a bill from 26 October 1884 concerning the purchase of 13 carts timbers for 600 pennies paid by Mr. Proshkek. The bill with the enumerated names of Doncho Ivanov, Georgi Kotsev, Peter Angelov, Ivan, Andon, Lazar Kostov as well as the number of the carts with timbers and the sums is signed by the “humble servant” Georgi Mladenov. At archival fund 1165K, inv. 2 are available interesting pages concerning the construction of brewing factory which up to its demolition is one of the symbols of Sofia and today still holds a central place in cutie’s legends. In a good shape are the brewing factory’ plans with sketches of the equipment, of the façade as well as other certificates for the enterprising mind of Proshkek family.

All construction is subordinate to enterprise and the re-arrangement principles; it means that the work is paid up after the full completion. In the mentioned above f. 1165K, inv. 1π, a.u. 1, pp. 13-18 are preserved the so called “Conditions”, (preliminary contracts) with the masters. For example upon the condition concluded in 12 May 1885 is available the text that the masters Neno Christov and Georgi Nikilov undertake to produce 100 000 bricks at price 16 silver leva for each 1000 bricks. On his part Mr. Bogdan Proshkek undertakes to supply the wood and the coal for fuel. Brothers Proshkek’s foresight regarding all possible risks, frequently becomes visible even through the little details. In the Condition, point 6 is putted down that: “At the beginning will be produced one oven of 20 000 bricks well backed in purpose to check up, if the bricks are a peace of good work. In other case Mr. Proshkek has right to stops the work and Christov and Nikolov do not have right to take exception. The payment is expected after the acceptance of each 10 000 (then) thousand backed good bricks on the part of B. Proshkek”

A separate contract has been concluded on 15 April 1885 with Arso Mitrev and Jovo Stephanov for well dig and the demolition of the former. In the Condition is underlined that “about each meter depth the masters will receive 12 (twelve) leva, and they are obliged to bring all needed workers”. Point 10 determines that the payment and the very work will

be in progress under friendly contract and mutual agreement” which shows thrust as regards the executors. On 1 August 1884 has been concluded a contract about cellar digging with Savo Boshkovich and Jako Konstantinov.

Towards the Conditions are preserved bills concerning the stone and brick masonry, ceiling plaster, flooring, joiner’s works, wages, etc. In the Condition is mentioned also that “the soil transportation must be directed to the river waterside”. In general all works have got to be done on the order of Mr. Proshk or his intercessor”. Masters stand proxy for take on 20 persons at least and the work death line is punctually three weeks. The disbursement is strictly determined: “For the time being the discharge about each meter cube, till 2 meters depth – 80 stotinki”, on his part Mr. Proshk can get then little wheelbarrows, five pick axes and five spades. In pp. 19-29 are preserved numerous bills, p. 19 is in Czech language and others are in Bulgarian.

It is of great interest to read today the prices of stone and brick masonry, the outside dry plaster, the flooring, the different materials transport, the woodwork, etc from 15 May 1898.

In the indicated above f. 1165K “Brewery Brother Proshk-partnership” № 1165K, inv. 1, a.u. 23 of State archives – Sofia are preserved vouchers and bills about materials, most of them supplied by foreign firms during the period 1884–1891, some documents are in Czech language. Greatest part of the firms as “Cservenka&Grossmann” from Budapest, “Schenker&Co” and “Emanuel Barth” from Prague, “Josef Havel” from Kiev, “Schmidt, Kranz&Co” from Germany, dispatch their business correspondence upon nice forms supplied with all insignia of honor, obtained in the course of the years. Very often they are attended with advertising brochures which are particularly interesting. (*applications 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d*)

On p. 13 is possible to find that Bogdan Proshk has refunded to Ivan Lazarov two thousand and one hundred leva, silvers, for the supplied bricks. According that document on 17 August 1885 masters stand by their obligation after the Condition mentioned above. It is truly curious the text of a letter from 8 January 1891 (pp. 45-47) concerning mistake in the range of 110 stivers which has been noticed by Bogdan Proshk in wrong account. The letter’ author P. Ivanov explains in full the reason about the confused account and argues with the variable rate of exchanges of golden Napoleons. That letter represents fascinating source of information about the differences of varied currency value in that epoch, the author tries to make original cross rate between Turkish liras, golden Napoleons, the barley prices etc. “at home the money rate is different, writes the author, somewhere they get the Napoleon about 120 stivers, but elsewhere about 122 stivers. In conclusion of my letter I will tell you that I agree absolutely with you to send back all golden leva and that you shall pay my bill with Turkish liras under calculation one Turkish lira about 140 stivers, and then I am ready. Please send back to me, the voucher about 10 500 golden leva which I had peed in kind with barley”. In a letter from 25 November 1891 (p. 50) M. Djengozov writes to Brothers Proshk: “Today I will entrain one wagon with barley, please send back the sack in purpose to entrain one more wagon”. Are preserved a considerable quantity bills, which were produced by Vatslav Keberdle, princely a court carter in Sofia and Ernst Kale a court tinker and smelter, Sofa, Dondukov boulevard in 1891, “Anton Mahler” smithy in Sofia; the pharmacy of “Kolar and sons” about drugs, as well as a rich correspondence with the store for construction timbers of N. D. Mishaikov and sons who supplies planks and beams to Mr. B. Proshk. The greatest part of the forms used by foreign firms with Bulgarian branches has been printed at the press of Proshk brothers in Sofia.

Thanks to the 126 pages preserved in the mentioned above archival unit today is in full possibly to restore the picture of brewery building, its equipment, the supply with

stuff for beer production, the prices of different materials and products etc., as well as to make in a peculiar manner a panorama of the leading European firms, which suggest their services and goods as well as about the that time business moral. The responsible attitude of Proshek Family towards the money, the work, the death lines, material's quality, the attentive selection of the best proposed on the market creates an impression. That tradition is strongly rooted in firm's policy because it continues to act even after the creators' death and the proofs are hidden in the business correspondence and book-keeping documentation.

In 1884 the brewery opens the door. On the instant after the inauguration Proshek's brewery gets a top level acknowledgment for grade and becomes a court deliverer. In the mentioned above archival fund, a.u. 28, p. 1, is kept a letter from 7 May 1901 to the Royal palace supply officer about direct delivery of Proshek's beer right ahead from the brewery without jobbers. In that letter is mentioned that: "Already many years ago in the Royal palace, Mr. Moritz Rat sells our factory beer. Because by so doing it is not possible to make always delivery of highest quality beer as well as the some beer becomes more expensive by means of mediators, we beg you in the future to order beer not trough Mr. Moritz Rat but directly in our factory in purpose to know that the beer is addressed to the Royal palace and you will have all the time our best beer with the lowest prices in comparison with the present. In attendance of your orders, sincerely yours, Georgi and Bogdan Proshek".

During the next four years Prosheks bring row of technological improvements and are in correspondence with leading European firms in the special field of brewery equipment and beer production. The brewery was the first building in Sofia furnished with electric plant. It is curios the fact that Proshek brothers anticipate even the Royal palace in the frameworks of electrification. There is the second electric plant in Sofia, and up to that period for the balls they build electricity from the factory. In 1894 the Proshek's beer gains a diploma of honor as well as a golden medal during the international presentation in Antwerp, Belgian, visited by 3 billions of people.

In the mentioned above archival fund, a.u. 3, p. 1 is preserved the main façade original blue-print, its outlines, as well the building location. Blue-prints author is G. Proshek, which has been approved by the Sofia principal architect in 18 May 1885. (*application 4*)

Among a.u. 31 is kept the outhouse blue-print towards the Proshek brother's town-house made during the period 15 July 1895–19 July 1896 upon the blue-print signed by Georgi Proshek are arranged the house, the floorages, which are represented in profile and also brewery sketch. In a.u. 9 is kept blueprint of the pavilion, elevated in Proshek's garden from October 1896.

In a.u. 6 exists 29 sketches, blueprints and plans of the building and the factory equipment made during the period to 24 August 1895 till 17 February 1925. Some of them were elaborated in Vienna, others in Offenbach on Main, Augsburg, Wiesbaden, and row others European towns. Today are truly fascinating the design of the special cart for bottle transportation and the scheme about beer bottle setting in order in purpose to avoid the damages. (*application 5*)

In a.u. 32 is available the blueprint for Brothers Proshek's plot regulation, situated between the streets "Sheinovo" and "San Stephano". The blueprint bears the date 30 June 1905 and the signature of Ivan Petrov, engineer, and gives information concerning the area – 6538,04 square meter (in the scale one of two hundred and fifty).

Proshek Brothers do not restrict their activity only in the area of constructions in Sofia. In the Central state archives (f. 3K, inv. 8, a.u. 125) are preserved their statements, letters, telegrams from 1900 upon the transferring of the Varna harbor construction firm from "Mihailovski and Garabedian" to anonymous joint stock association. By virtue of the

documents it becomes clear that the minister of interior Vasil Radoslavov<sup>9</sup> disagrees that enterprise transferring, as well as it was issued a prohibition regulation for construction stopping etc. applied are copies of statements and reports of the Ministry of social buildings, the roots and the planning of the public services, concerning that question. Part of the documents is in French and German languages.

Unfortunately in 1905 during a truly short period of time both brothers deceased one after another but their brewery continues to work. The inheritors retain all traditions of their firm policy. In the mentioned f. 1165K, inv. 1п, a.u. 34 is preserved document of “Stone mason’s workshop and store about different tombstones” of Vatslav Batek in Sofia, bearing date 1 September 1907. It is pointed that the price is 1900 leva, and the Czech granite tombstone is about deceased Bogdan Proshke.

In spite of the creators death the dynamics and the correctness in the firm work remain the same. Specific averment is the preserved in a.u. 24, report under date 19 October 1909 of Ivan Hadjirachev brewery manager concerning the market conditions, the progress of different restaurants, where is offered beer for sale as well as the firm store in Pleven. The author quotes complaints of dealer and owners of restaurants and wordily compeers the sales of broached beer and bottled beer.

An averment concerning the intensive firm work is also the enormous correspondence from 1908–1915 with German and Czech firms and deliverers. All letters both together with the advertising materials and the prices tickets are preserved in the same archival fund (a.u. 7, 8, 11, 15). For a short example, only 8 archival units preserve 373 pages correspondence leaded in German language. Among them are in evidence the names of the big producers of beer taps, beer casks, as “Josef Strobl Fass fabric” from Munich, “Philipp Stein Fass fabric und Holz Handlung” from Freedenberg. An animated correspondence on production and trade questions in Czech, German, Serbo-Croatian languages has been leaded with “Ant. Jehlicka”, “H.Roedl” and “I.J. Rousek” from Prague, Otto Roter from Vienna, “Hallaji Janos” from Belgrade, “Jirat & Nasttermuller” from Germany, “Societe metallurgique de la Seine” from Paris. With firms as “Severin Senator” from Berlin, “Brothers Proshke – partnership” negotiates an agreements about electric bulb and lighting fixture delivery; with the Rumanian association Trajan” about petroleum supplies, with “Johann Rockinger” from Munich about delivery of special carts for beer bottles transportation, etc. (*application 6*)

Fascinating is also the large correspondence leaded with Prague firm “Fischman&shone” concerning the supply of beer bottles in definite rate and glass color preserved in the same fund, a.u. 15. Negotiator between “Brothers Proshke” and the mentioned above firm from Prague was the Auction office of A. P. Alkalay from Sofia which is simultaneously deputy of the Czech firm in Sofia and often settles strife situation between both sides. One letter dated in 12 February 1909 makes available protest against the low quality consignment of bottles. The author stresses strongly that “Brothers Proshke” will hold back 500 leva for the sake of the low quality bottles, which are far away from the conditions; part of supplied bottles are with thin mouth and during the cork up they always break.

Another letter from 23 February 1909 points at the new mistakes concerning the performance of bottles’ order regarding the color and the quality. In the end “Brothers Proshke” grumbles about the technical troubles and demands on the factory to rectify the mistake without production postponement because that mistake already causes delay, which

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<sup>9</sup> Vasil Radoslavov – Bulgarian politician, leader if liberal party to 1887 till 1918, Deputy, two times premier minister of Bulgaria, after the abdication of the Royal prince Alexander I (1886 – 1887) and during the World war one (1913–1918).

is a disturbing circumstance. In 3 April 1909 “Brothers Proshke” stresses strongly that the delivered by wagon shorts bottles are not conform to the order. Their content is insufficient which is obviously after the measuring of twenty bottles. But unfortunately the next wagon brings the same, as the first. All bottles are unusable and now they are stored back at Mr. Fishman in Prague. “Brothers Proshke” approves the large bottles and contented with them.

In a.u. 8 is preserved significant quantity advertising materials concerning the illuminants as well as correspondence leaded with the generative firm “Elektrotechnicka akciová společnost Kolben a Spol” from Prague. Preserved are offers and prices lists for dynamo machines and electric motor which belongs to the firm producer “Brigittenuer elektrotechnische fabrik” from Vienna. It is obviously that the tradition to investigate attentively the market, to buy the best equipment and the most modern achievement brewery technique gives good results and represents unchanging guarantee about good quality of the factory production. The enormous business correspondence preserved in State archives – Sofia represents a specific averment about the “Brothers Proshke” popularity outside Bulgarian borders as well as about the good name of the firm as promising and correct partner.

The family firm participates actively in different aspects of the country life and during almost events in Sofia, “Brothers Proshke” are active in the frameworks of charity. In the mentioned repeatedly archival fund, in a.u. 1 are available a letter of thanks from Virtuous association “Mite about most pours”; the Sofia association of beer vendors and restaurant keepers “St Triphon”, etc. Owing to the letter of “St Triphon” from 16 January 1924 today is known that the association confirms the check receiving and thanks for the dispatched ten thousands leva, intended for the weak and pours association members in the eve of Christmas holidays. The association is grateful concerning all reinforcement morals and materials. The family firm “Brothers Proshke” made donations to Caucasian international committee which aids the war victims and the editors’ office of Sofia periodical “Balkan magazine”, among their testimonial of thanks they make “Brothers Proshke” believes that the money has been giving to Bulgarian refugees, the war victims and starving children.

In the many times mentioned archival fund 1165K, inv. 1, a.u. 27 is kept the agreement between “Brothers Proshke brewery, Sofia” on the one hand and Ilia Avramov landlord of the restaurant named “Deep cellar” on the other hand. As stipulation number 1 of the agreement, is specified that “Brothers Proshke” will deliver at Ilia Avramov’s restaurant, for retail in his refreshment bar and the garden, fine beer till 1 March 1918. Ilia Avramov pledges on the other hand during the entire period, namely till 1 March 1918 to sell at the refreshment bar and the garden solely Proshke’s beer. In that agreement are described all details of the restaurant furnishing even the clocks, tablecloths, pint pots, dessert spoons, children’s beer tumblers, as well as 84 round tables, 302 iron garden chairs, 1 hearth and chimney about clamp firing of grilled rissoles. The described property costs 4587 leva and 91 stotinki. Ilia Avramov undertakes to stand guard over all that as good inn-keeper and to return in good condition on Brothers Proshke after the agreement expiration or spoiling. “He is obliged to repair at his own charge and the mislaid to pay up in accordance with their described price. The stock in trade remains Brothers Proshke’s property and Ilia Avramov not has got rights to sell or put in pawn that property.

As agreement stipulation number 3 is underlined that Brothers Proshke will sell to Ilia Avramov the beer at 48 leva about the hectoliter in casks, free on his restaurant for cash and simultaneously they are within rights to increase or reduce that price when they make common raise in all customers. Brothers Proshke will deliver the beer to Ilia Avramov by means of their own factory casks but he is obliged to keep well the property and to return



the casks right after their emptying. If Ilia Avramov sells per annum not less than 300 hectoliters beer, Brothers Proshok will endorse in the end of each year the sum of 1 leva per hectoliter from the pointed above price and will deduct that some among the price of liability payment in front of Brothers Proshok. In stipulation 4 is mentioned that Brothers Proshok do not take on a responsibility if some time or other because of war, mobilization, communications stopping, lacks of materials or fuel, delivery stopping of the beer for consumption or other unforeseen obstacles, will be place at an impossibility to supply the beer to Ilia Avramov for a time he keeps the right during that obstacle as long as Brothers Proshok do all over again the beer delivery to provide itself beer from another brewery”.

Almost hundred years after the agreement conclusion precipitates an interest the “Deep cellar” restaurant and garden inventory. That inventory enlists as the compulsory portraits of the royal family, similarly salt works, knives, children’s tumblers, 377 pint pots, laminated iron buffet, Japanese umbrellas, 149 china mats, iron tables with hole about umbrellas, 12 iron sofas, 31 round tables etc. It is evident that the firm servants continue pedantically to hold on the good managing without retreat towards the clear and precise business relations which were leaved by the creators, as well as the assiduously preparation of documents under revive and the different kinds of agreements. The partnership continues to improve the brewery in 1924 was made project about the sewerage of the farmyard, concluded in an official capacity on 26 august 1924 (f. 1165K, inv. 1, a.u. 21).

In 1925 the partnership tells the elaboration of project concerning gambling house-restaurant in the sea garden in Varna. The project encloses yard, small hall for dances and banquets, restaurant terrace, hall-beer house tea coffee and sweets hall, staff premise, and control point comfortable situated in purpose to have always sea vista. In a.u. 36 in conjunction with the situation plan of the Varna sea garden section is preserved also a receipt № 25 688 from 25 August 1926 issued by Varna town municipal office concerning the received from Mr. Proshok 40 leva as share charge to enter in a competition for gambling house-restaurant in the sea garden.

In a.u. 25 is kept Dr. Josef Urban’s application about his trade activity prolongation as Brothers Proshok’s partner. In the letter dispatched to Sofia county court is stated that dr. Urban as guardian of his underage children Lubitza, Vladimir and Radimir, heirs at law of their decease mother Bojena dr. Urban who was partner, demands to get permission for partnership in the firm “Brothers Proshok”, (Prague, June 1927).

In the Central state archives, Fund “Ministry of finances” 159K, inv. 13, a.u. 1 and 2 are preserved the books, which reflect the beer transportation to breweries till the country corners during the period 1909–1917. In inventory 4, a.u. 243-247 is kept the file of Proshok Brothers’ brewery in Sofia, concerning the period 1939–1943.

In the period 1933–1934 the financial crisis reflects upon the good managed partnership established by Georgi and Bogdan Proshok. In the mentioned above archival fund 159K, inv. 4, a.u. 244 exists application form from 16 November 1933 to the minister of finances about revaluation concerning the property “Agricola” which belong to the family; request about prolongation of the period for payment of 87 631 leva till the end of January 1934; request for prolongation of patent payment for the beer production right about 1934, as well as for the given them credit. Here is kept a state control certificate towards the Proshok factory about the produced quantity beer; the needs to take out a patent and letter to the Ministry of finances which shows that the patent was paid. Here is available a letter from 7 March 1934 to the Ministry of finances about term prolongation for the payment of credit at the rate of 3 987 960 leva because of the season of low sales. Firm application from 17 January 1934 to the Sofia excise man in connection with the produced small quantity

of beer in 1933 and request to get back the sum of 33 520 leva from the patent about the right for beer production.

In 13 April 1934 the Ministry of finances dispatches to Sofia county taxation agent permission about expropriation a vacant lot of approximately 1300 square meters on the corner of “San Stephano” street and the Tzar Osvoboditel (Liberator) boulevard, without charges payment, the collecting will be provided from the rest immovable property of “Brothers Proshkek” firm. (f. 159K, inv. 4, a.u. 244, p. 137).

In 16 May 1933 the brewery “Brothers Proshkek”, royal palace supplier, sends a letter to the Ministry of finances, section for state privileges with request about permission to cool temporarily the beer from Plovdiv firm storage in the ice factory of Chernozemski and Karladinov in Plovdiv, as well as about consent to fill the bottles in the firm storage in Plovdiv. In 4 April 1938 “Brothers Proshkek” firm demands permission about store and cool the beer in casks at the private cold stores in Burgas because of lack of public cold stores. (f. 159K, inv. 4, a.u. 246, pp. 18-21)

In the archival fund 1165K “Brewery “Brothers Proshkek – partnership”, inv. 1п, a.u. 25 is available project and offer about automatic dry house, works of Umberto Guidetti, engineer. His firm has a branch in Sofia for trade and representation with machines, chemicals, and aniline dyes. The offer is performed in French language and consigned in 15 December 1941.

In Central state archives F.163, inv. 26, a.u. 53 are available documents for the period 1941–1945 and among them is the letter from July 1944 of the Ministry of finances to the German minister plenipotentiary in Sofia Adolf (Heinz) Bekerle about beer exportation in Germany. An exchange of letters from 1944 between the Ministry of finances and Sofia brewery “Brothers Proshkek”, about hop vine import from Germany. Letter wrote in august 1945 from the brewery “Brothers Proshkek” to the management of the illumination and the water supply system at the capital city popular municipality with request do not bring to a stop the water in the factory in purpose to assure regular activity of a cooling system. An exchange of letters between the Ministry of trade and the Ministry of finances concerning the supply of 20 tones hop vine from Yugoslavia in return of import of 60 tones sugar, from the period May–June 1945. Letter of the brewery “Brothers Proshkek” to the department on excises at the Ministry of finances with request for stopping the beer selling till 10 Junes 1945 because of hop vine luck.

In f. 145к, inv. 1, a.u. 2872 of the Central state archives are preserved documents from 1947, mainly correspondence exchanged with the Bank Bulgarian credit about credit issue for the firm “Brothers Proshkek”.

That enormous quantity of documents mentioned in the current publication far away does not use all aspects of Brothers Proshkek’s activity in Bulgaria. The family reminds for ever connected with the building and the modernization of Sofa as capital city as well as with somebody truly important construction on the Bulgarian territory. During the period 1888–1891 Georgi and Bogdan Proshkek work for the building of Eagle’s and Lyon’s bridges, both famous doors of Sofia. They tell the iron parts in Vienna which has been elaborated, mould and supplies by „Rudolf Philip Wagner&Biro“ from Vienna (1891). During that time main architect of Sofia is Antonin Kolar who both together with architect Vatslav Proshkek participates directly in the contemplation and the construction of the equipments.

Proshkek family is originator of the idea concerning the raising of monument of Vasil Levski<sup>10</sup>. Georgi Proshkek has been known with Bulgarian national hero in person. Thanks

<sup>10</sup> Vasil Levski (1837–1873), Bulgarian revolutionist, ideologist and organizer of Bulgarian national revolution, national hero and national symbol.

to the family enterprise today that monument is one of most important and honoring symbols of Sofia and Bulgaria. The Levski' monument is produced under the project of the Czech architect Antonin Kolar and the Italian sculptor Abramo Perukelli. The Proshkek family walls up his name also in the construction of Central railway station Sofia, raising under the project of three architects Kolar, Proshkek and Marinov.

Sofia will be a candidate for European cultural capital city in 2019. Parts of its history as well as part of the modern Bulgarian culture undoubtedly are connected for ever and ever with Brothers Proshkek and their contribution to the modernization and the development of the town. That family is part of the Czech main body inextricably bounds up with Bulgarian fate. The contribution of the Czech representatives about the material and intellectual development of newly liberated Bulgaria is truly considerable. More than 25 000 Czech experts have come in Bulgaria at the end of 19 c. under the device: "We must help the fraternal Slav people!" Among them are people as Professor Konstantin Josef Jrecek, Ivan Mrkvicka, Jaroslav Vesin, Lubor Bayer, Antonin Kolar, brothers Hermengild and Karel Skorpil, brothers Proshkek who will have for ever the gratitude of Bulgaria.

### ***Bratři Proshkovi – stavitelé evropské Sofie ve světle dokumentů Státního archivu v Sofii a Ústředního státního archivu***

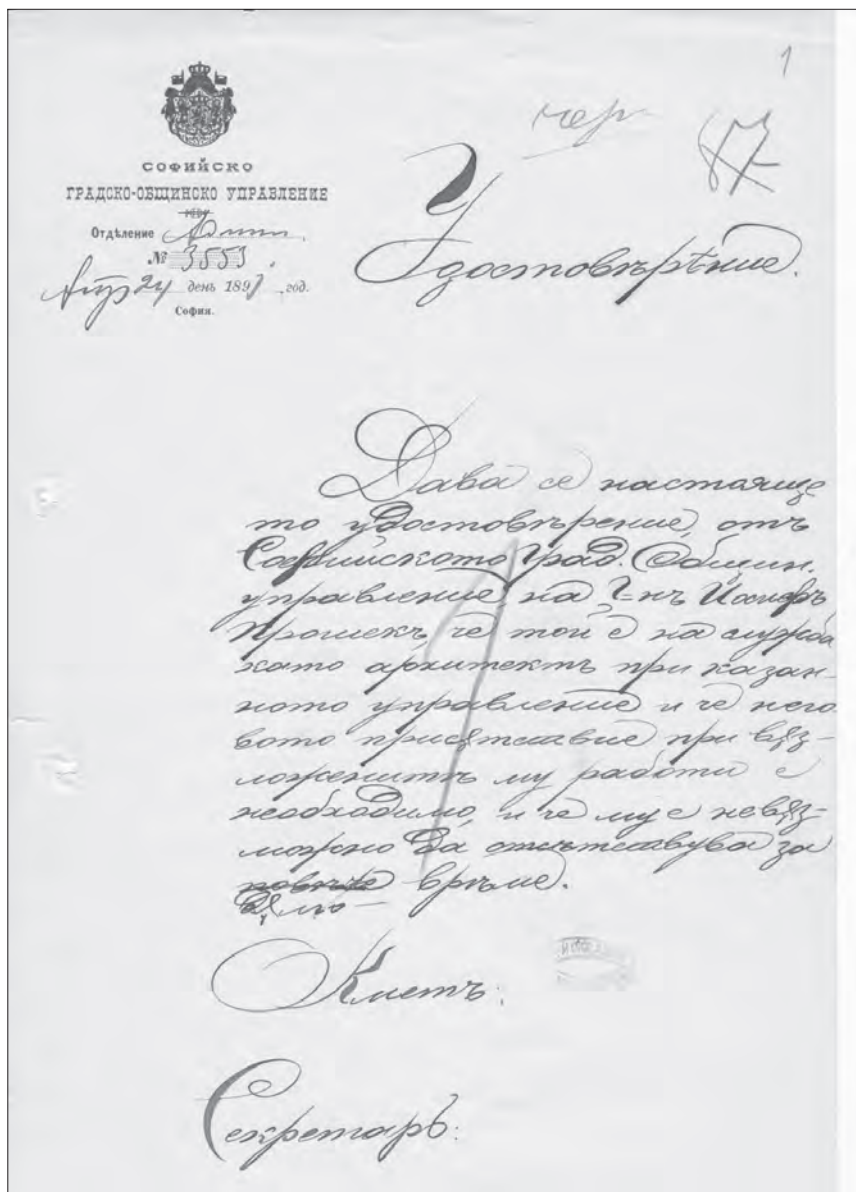
*Růst Sofie, která byla vybrána dne 3. dubna 1879 navždy za hlavní město nově osvobozeného Bulharska, je spojen s podnikatelskou aktivitou bratrů Jiřího (Irschi), Teodora a Václava (Vatslav) Proškových (Proshkek) pocházejících z českého města Beroun. To je dostatečný důvod k tomu, aby byly konkretizovány jejich některé projekty a stavby v novém hlavním městě a aby byl zdůrazněn význam těchto aktivit pro transformaci Sofie na evropské hlavní město. Podíleli se, společně se svým bratrancem Josefem Proškem, na stavbě hlavního vlakového nádraží, Národního shromáždění, Orliho a Lvího mostu, na vytvoření společnosti „slovanských přednášek“, bulharské inženýrské společnosti atd.*

*Ve státním archivu v Sofii jsou dochovány dokumenty, které dokazují jejich nesporné kvality jako stavitelů současné Sofie, jejich odpovědnost a dobrou vůli. Je zajímavé, že jejich první dům v Sofii byl postaven na Moskevské ulici 5, tedy na místě dnešního sídla Státního archivu v Sofii, kde jsou dochovány cenné doklady týkající se jejich práce a jejich zásluh o bulharské hlavní město a jeho obyvatele.*

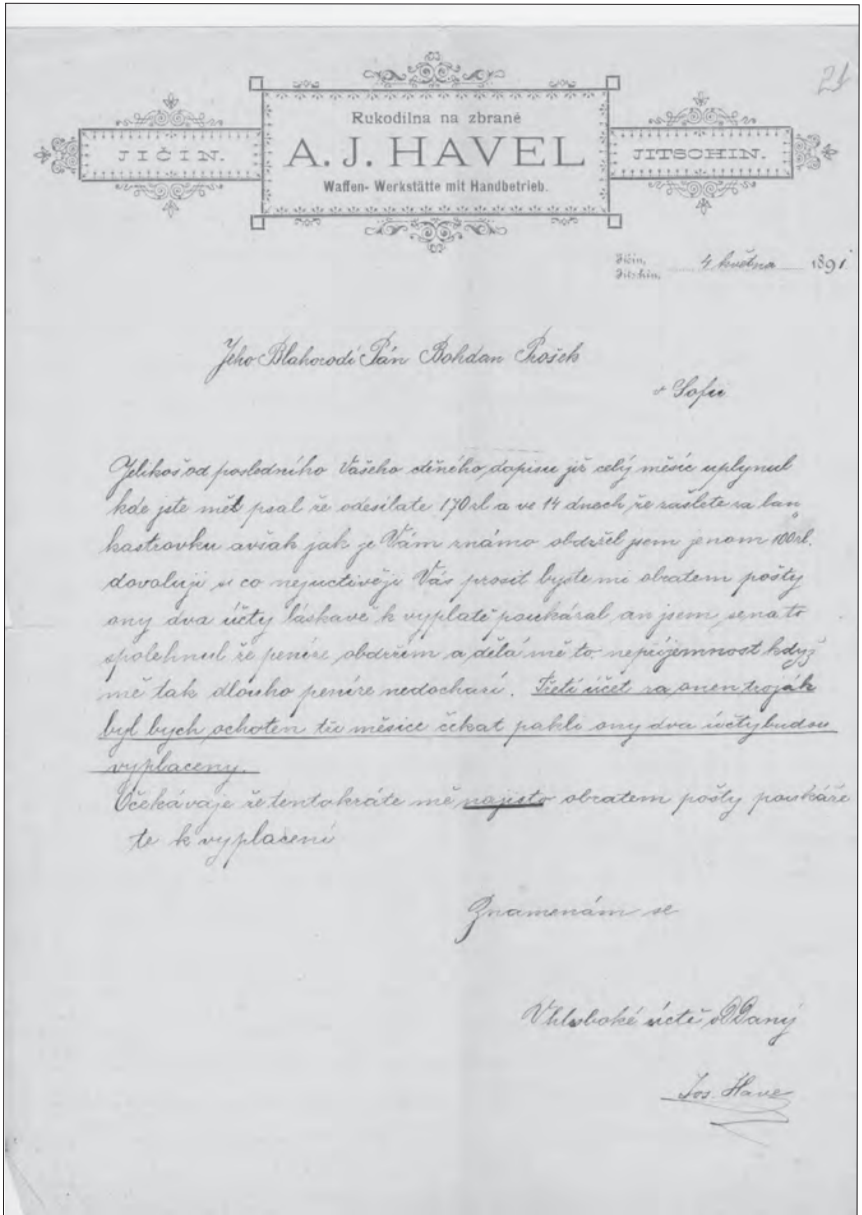
*V archivním fondu 1165K fondu, inv. č. 2, jsou uloženy zajímavé dokumenty o stavbě pivovaru, který až do jeho zbourání byl jedním ze symbolů Sofie a dodnes je dle něj pojmenováno náměstí. V dobrém stavu jsou plány pivovaru s náčrtky zařízení, fasády, jakož i další doklady o podnikavosti rodiny Proškovy.*

*Občané Sofii nejsou lhostejní k účasti bratrů Proškových na poevropštění města, dodnes jsou v archivu dochovány doklady spojené s myšlenkou na památníku Bogdana Proška, stejně jako nabídky Václava Babka na stavbu tohoto památníku. Ve Státním archivu v Sofii je dochováno velké množství plánů, skic a projektů, které jsou zajímavé nejen pro odborníky v oblasti městského plánování, ale i pro výzkum česko-bulharských vztahů, které byly skutečně aktivní a konstruktivní i v období národního osvobození.*





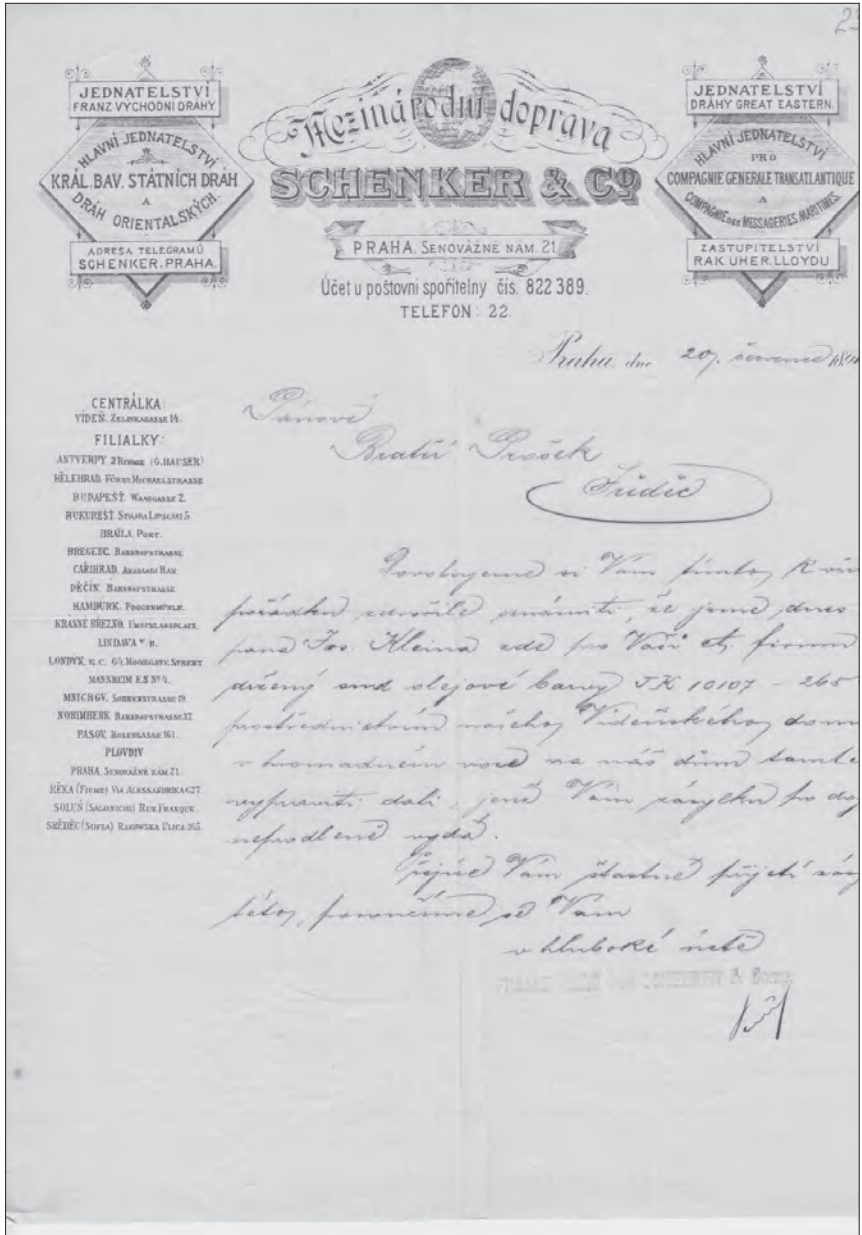
Certificate № 3553 of Sofia urban municipal government from 24 april 1891, in stating that Joseph Proshek has served as an architect, and that “his presence in assigned work is necessary and that it is impossible to be absent for long time”. State archive Sofia, Fund 1K “Sofia urban public management”, inv. 3, a.u. 27, p. 1.



Letter from the company "Josef Havel" from Kiev to Bogdan Prošek concerning the financial obligations of the brewery. Kiev, 1891.

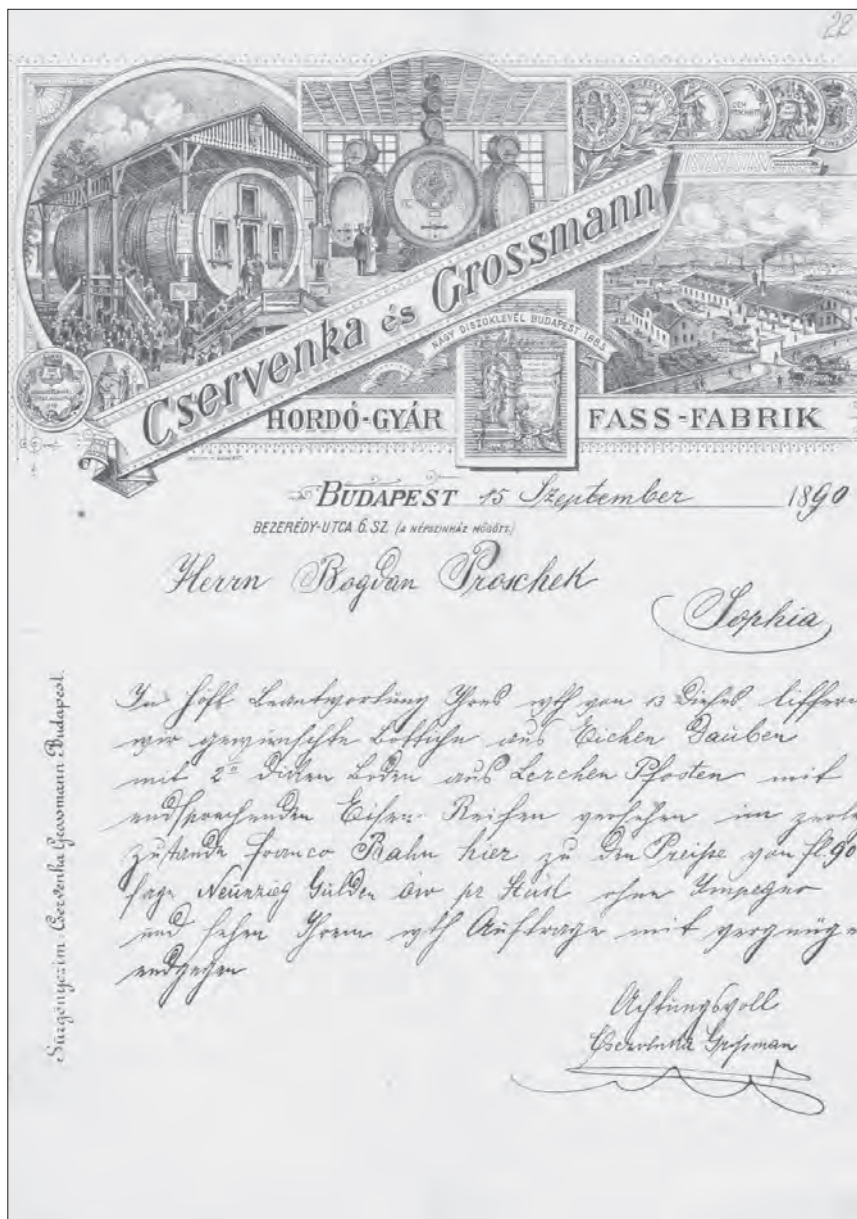
State archive Sofia, Fund 1165K "Brewery" Brothers Prošek" – General partnership", inv. 1P, a.u. 23, p. 21.





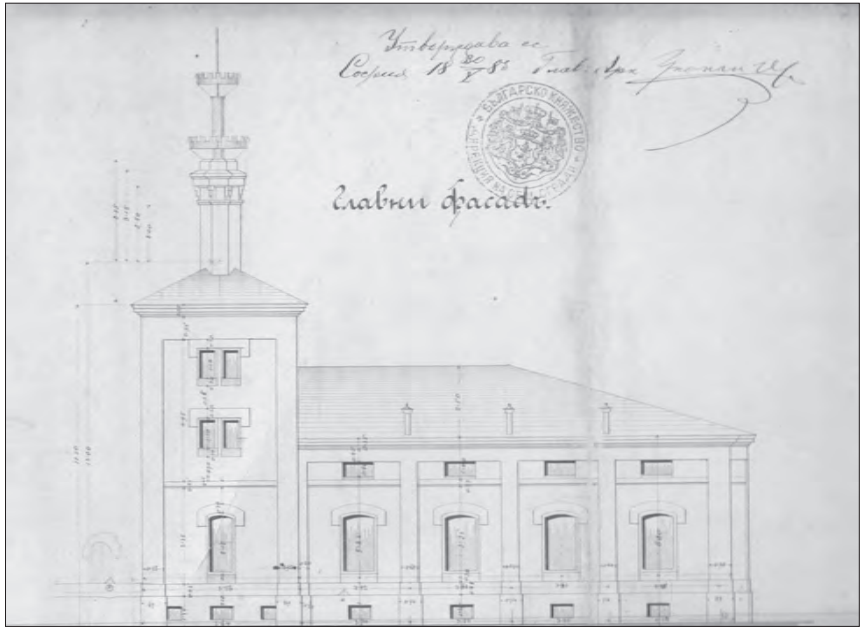
Letter from the company "Schenker & Co" from Prague to Proshek brothers, 1891.  
State archive Sofia, Fund 1165K, "Brewery" Brothers Proshek" – General partnership", inv. 1P, a.u. 23, p. 28.





Letter from the company “Cservenka&Grossmann” from Budapest to Bogdan Prošek. Budapest, September, 15, 1890.

State archive Sofia, Fund 1165K, “Brewery” Brothers Prošek” – General partnership”, inv. 1P, a.u. 23, p. 22.



Plan of the main facade of the brewery of brothers Proshek approved by the chief architect of Sofia 18 may 1885, with print of the Management of public buildings. State archive Sofia, F. 1165K, 2, inv. 1.



Two advertising photos attached to offers of manufacturers of special wagons for securing and carrying beer bottles.

State archive Sofia, Fund 1165K, "Brewery" Brothers Proshek – General partnership", inv. 1P, a.u. 6.

