

# THE CZECHO-SLOVAK SPECIALIST



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THE CZECHO-SLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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## EDITORIAL CHIT-CHAT

If it is as hot in your part of the country as it has been in Chicago this past week you probably won't have any more ambition to read this issue of the "Specialist" or to work on your stamps than I had in making up this issue.

With the coming of August the so-called dog days will be upon us and with summer activities such as swimming, golfing, tennis etc., stamps will perhaps be furthest from your mind.

A glance through this issue will reveal an article on the guarantee marks used on Czechoslovakian stamps and by whom most of them are applied. This article may be of great interest to many since we have had several requests for information on this angle of our hobby.

Even though vacations and hot weather are here, don't forget your stamps altogether, take them with you when you are going away and if you are staying home perhaps there is a cool spot around the house where you can play with your stamps and also enjoy an appreciable amount of relaxation.

## BITS ABOUT THIS AND THAT

Member Felix Brunner has moved to Mexico City. Some time ago he sent us a post card giving his new address but unfortunately we have mislaid it. Will Mr. Brunner please send his address again to the Secretary. Thank You!

Member Wm. Kuhns had a very interesting article about Czechoslovakia published in "Stamps" a few weeks ago. Good work Mr. Kuhns.

B. Heinz, master engraver and designer of many issues of Czechoslo-

vakia died recently in Prague at the age of 46.

The next get-together of the Chicago chapter will be held September 8 at the home of Mrs. Glawe. Members and collectors in this area are cordially invited to attend.

Don't forget that this is your "Specialist" and that it becomes only what you make it. We'll produce bigger and better issues in proportion to the support given us.

## NAMES AND MEN BEHIND GUARANTEE MARKS

By Peter Kreischer and J. W. Lowey

When examining the reverse side of stamps, especially rarities of the 19th century, collectors will often find tiny marks in the shape of initials, names or ornaments. These are guarantee marks affixed by experts which are to show that the items so marked have been examined by them and were found to be genuine.

In every country there are usually one or more men who have given a lifetime to the study of its stamps and who therefore are well qualified to pass judgement upon items submitted to them. Many have world wide reputation, such as for instance the late Luff of New York, Mueller of Vienna, Diena of Rome and many others.

Czechoslovakia too has its experts of which Jaroslav Leseticky was dean. He was not only the first and one of the foremost experts of Czechoslovakian stamps issued during the early years of the Republic, but also a recognized authority of the stamps of other countries as well. A reputation gained as a collector and philatelic writer for over 50 years.

Expertising of stamps, some 15 or 20 years ago in comparison with today has undergone vast changes. Today the student of stamps has a world of technical knowledge available; methods of detecting counterfeits, fakes, re-perforation, fake cancellation, repaired stamps, etc. etc. To illustrate; several of the top flight rarities of the "Posta Ceskoslovenska 1919" overprints which were submitted to Leseticky years ago and which he found to be genuine in every respect and to which he accordingly affixed his guarantee marks were some years later pronounced to be counterfeits by another expert. Subsequent re-examination by several other experts acknowledged the opinion of the latter. This reversal of Leseticky's opinion by another group of experts did in no way put him in a bad light. It is simply explained by the fact that Leseticky formulated his opinion upon a basis and in comparison with material available at the time and with which any expert was to judge this particular issue. It must be added that the 1919 overprints are one of the most difficult groups to be expertized, chiefly because the overprint was done with set type, a type so common that any printer had an identical set of type in his own shop.

Another group of stamps which is difficult to expertize is the imperforate "Dove" and the "Liberty" issues and the 125, 500 and 1000 denominations of the Masaryk portraits of 1920. A collector who wishes to be sure that his imperforates are genuine will buy either in blocks or in pairs. Yet a great many are unable to afford more than a single. They may well do so, especially in cases where the mark of a well known expert appears on the back. It should be said that no expert will attempt to pronounce a single imperforate stamp as such. Usually they are handed full sheets or large blocks for all around examination and after having found them genuine in every respect they then apply their guarantee mark upon each stamp.

Not all symbols, initials or signatures found upon the stamps of Czechoslovakia are those of experts. the majority of stamps bear the facsimile of signatures of dealers. The dealer does this for self protection and will, if he is reliable, take back and make refund on any stamp that turns out to be unsatisfactory to the

purchaser, providing the reverse of the stamp bears his signature.

As stated before, experts have made mistakes, and rivalry between experts is very keen. Some claim to be better than others, pointing to their longer and wider experience, personal ability and knowledge. In most instances these rivalries are harmless "lip warfare" and seldom mean anything.

In speaking of mistakes and rivalry one particular case should be mentioned, that of Ervin Hirsch, Editor

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of "Tribuna. Filatelistu" and Rudolph Gilbert, Professor of the Academy of Graphic Arts at Prague. For the past ten years these two men were the acknowledged top experts of Czechoslovak issues. Both have an equally large following and in order to retain the following have trespassed the borders of accepted ethics on several occasions. Their clashes in the courts have been numerous. The reason for the rivalry between these two men is due to the fact that several years ago one of them made an error in examining a stamp and pronounced it as genuine. The other exposed the mistake and on every occasion played it up. Ever since, the two men have been locked in a deadly feud.

If an impartial judgement should be rendered as to the relative ability of Leseticky, Hirsch and Gilbert it would be difficult to decide. All three have devoted a lifetime to philately and have written extensively. Leseticky as the first editor of "Cesky Filatelista," Gilbert as his successor and Hirsch as editor of "Tribuna Filatelistu." If however, judgement should be awarded on literary merit such would have to go to Hirsch, since he is the author of "Monografie Ceskoslovenskych Znamek," published in 1935, a monumental work which has no equal in contemporary philatelic literature in Czechoslovakia.

Two more experts should be mentioned. First, there is A. Sula, who

unquestionably is the foremost student of the early air mail issues and whose opinion and writings have never been questioned after these 20 years. The other is Franek, co-editor of Hirsch. Franek is an all-around expert, his particular field being the issues of the Czechoslovak Army in Siberia and its covers.

Stamps examined by Leseticky are signed with a rubber facsimile of his signature. Hirsch's likewise and will also use Hirsch-Tribuna. Rudolph Gilbert signs in script and Franek uses block letters.

As to identification marks by dealers. The reason for their application has been stated above. However many dealers are experts in their own right due to a long experience. Our dealer members, Stach, Kessler and Brunner for instance, were recognized as such in Czechoslovakia and their signature, if affixed to stamps, was a sufficient expert guarantee. It would be impossible to list every dealer of Czechoslovakia who signs or has signed his stamps. Most of the noted dealers are refugees from the country and are scattered to all parts of the world. The new names which we hear of and which have established themselves in Bohemia-Moravia are in most cases unknown to us. Of the old ones which however were reliable and whose signatures will often be found on Czechoslovak stamps are Kaplanek, Ekstein, Nohejl, Stedry and a few others.

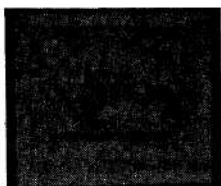
## THE "HRADCANY" ISSUE OF CZECHO-SLOVAKIA OF 1918

By J. W. LOWEY

Reprinted from The American Philatelist, Vol. 52, Nos. 6, 7.)  
(Continued from last month)

### TYPE II

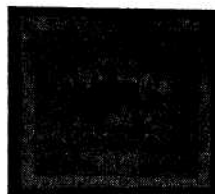
(Original Engraving.)



In Type II, same as before, the only difference being the lettering which is now in color on white background.

100 haleru, brown.  
200 haleru, blue.  
400 haleru, purple.

### TYPE III



Type III has inscription Posta in upper panel in large type. The word Ceskoslovenska is now placed horizontally between the design and the value. Side ornaments have been changed.

1 haleru, brown.  
50 haleru, violet.

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA FOR THE SPECIALIST

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### HRADCANY ISSUE

25 h. (5b) Ultramarine ..... \$2.50  
 10 h. (43a) Green, Imperforate ..... 1.00  
 20 h. (45a) Rose, Imperforate ..... 5.50  
 30 h. (47a) Light Violet, imperf. .... 8.00  
 30 h. (47a) Dark Violet, imperf. .... 8.50

### PIGEON ISSUE (HOLUBICE)

5h. (82a) Violet, Tete Beche Pair ..... .40  
 5h. (82a) Violet, Tete Beche Pair, with gutter .. .45  
 10h. (83a) Olive, Tete Beche Pair ..... .70  
 10h. (83a) Olive, Tete Beche Pair, with gutter ... .80  
 20h. (84a) Orange, Tete Beche Pair ..... 3.00  
 20h. (84a) Orange, Tete Beche Pair, with gutter . 4.50

### FREEDOM ISSUE (Osvobozena Republika)

40h (71a) Brown, Tete Beche Pair ..... .80  
 40h (71a) Brown, Tete Beche Pair, with gutter . 1.00  
 50h (86a) Green, Tete Beche Pair ..... 7.00  
 50h (86a) Green, Tete Beche Pair, with gutter 11.00  
 60h (73a) Blue, Tete Beche Pair ..... 1.20  
 60h (73a) Blue, Tete Beche Pair, with gutter .... 1.80

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 The complete collection (4 sets) in all four existing watermark positions 60.00

I also have the Jubilee 1923 Issue, The Olympic and Sokol Issues used, on cards and letters with Special Cancellations.

Want lists of collectors specializing in Czechoslovakia will be appreciated and filled at reasonable prices.

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