

THE CZECHO-SLOVAK SPECIALIST



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BIPEX

Another successful Exhibition has passed, one in which some unusually fine material was shown and in which Foreign countries predominated. Perhaps the sensation of the show were the five large frames of early Austrian cancellations shown by member Felix Brunner. This exhibit has won Grand Awards and Gold Medals at the International Exhibitions in Europe and consequently was shown in the Non-Competitive Section of the BipeX Exhibition. Nevertheless, Mr. Brunner is to be congratulated for his part in the Exhibition as is our Secretary, Mr. Lowey, who received a First, Gold Medal, for his six frames of Specialized material. Mr. Alfons Stach, his brother and their assistants were unquestionably the most active booth holders at the Exhibition. At times one could hardly get to their tables.

Inasmuch as this issue goes to press before the Convention is held there will be no report available. However, the next issue will carry all the details of what has transpired.

THIS AND THAT

Congrats, Brickbats, or bouquets or what have you are in order for our erstwhile Editor who has blossomed forth to greater extent in the Literary world of Philately and has compiled and Edited the material which made up the recent Australia Issue of STAMPS magazine, the May 10th issue. Undoubtedly he has been hiding the proverbial light under the

bushel as he is also Secretary of the Society of Australasian Specialists, a group of Specialists similar to our own C S P S N A.

THE ARRAS COMMEMORATIVES!

By W. L. Russell #42

The beginning of the second battle of Artois (also called the battle of Arras) which took place on May 9 1915, was of great importance to the Czech people in their fight for freedom. It helped in no small measure to put them "on the map" with the Allies.

The "Na Zdar" company of Czech legionaries consisted of Czech volunteers who reported for service in Paris at the beginning of the war. They had undergone training at Bayonne and were hardened during six months on the Champagne front where they fought with the Moroccan divisions. After the first winter of the war, when the French decided to stop the German advance and to penetrate their lines in the vicinity of Arras, the Czechs played a magnificent role. They formed part of the 10th French Army Corps, whose objective was the timbered hills, the crest of which controlled the country east and north-east in the direction of Lille and Douai.

It is hardly credible, but nevertheless true, that only the Czech regiment reached its objective in the important encounter on the first day. Reached it, too, after only 90 minutes, with most of their officers gone, rows of wounded and many killed, fighting with indescribable elan, and sacrific-

ing themselves without stint.

To-day, near Arras, a memorial stands, almost in the middle of the battle field, dedicated to the Czech volunteers. Eternal lights shine from it—or they did up to the time of the German occupation of France—to remind the passersby of those who fell. On it is a tablet bearing the names of the dead, and this inscription in French: "Here, on the 9th May, 1915 the Czech Volunteers fought for their Country and for France."

The monument, which is the work of the Czech sculptor Jaroslav Hruska, is depicted on the two stamps which Czechoslovakia issued 20 years later to commemorate the battle.

These stamps were rotary printed from steel engravings on white, unwatermarked paper. There are 100 stamps to the sheet, which was printed in a peculiar format of sixteen rows, the first and last of which had only one stamp, and fourteen rows of seven, making the 100 stamps. The six stamp places on the first and last rows were left blank. This format is the same as that used for the 1935 issue commemorating Dr. Masaryk's birthday. In that case, however, the sheet was turned round and the row of 16 stamps formed the top of the sheet, with the 6 blank spaces down each side. One finds the same style of make-up in later issues—the Purkyne commemoratives, the Sokol issue, and the three issues dealing with the battles of the Legion. In these issues the blank spaces, or "coupons," carry a design.

Reverting to the Arras stamps: there were two values issued, 1K red and 2K. blue, and they appeared on May 4, 1935, remaining valid until February 28, 1937. The size of the design is 29½ mm. x 22¼ mm. Rotary perforated 9%. The engraving was carried out by Karl Seizinger (you can find his sign S at the top of the first tree on the left hand side, if you've a good glass!) and the printing by the United Czech Printing Co. of Prague.

A special cancellation in blue was

provided by the Post Offices at Prague and Trutnov, which were the headquarters of the "Na Zdar" battalion of the recently disbanded Czech Army.

These stamps are becoming increasingly hard to pick up in mint condition, particularly the blocks of "Three's" (three stamps and one blank space) from the top and bottom left corners of the sheet.

Editors Note:

The forgery of the 1 Kc stamp of this issue appears to be printed by the photogravure process or what may be termed surface printing. The color is very nearly the correct color, being just a shade darker red. It is believed to have been printed across the border and whether more copies exist, used or unused is at the present time, not known. This copy has been postally used and bears an incomplete cancellation, one who is familiar with the country may be able to decipher the markings. The town reads, ERACHOVICE, possibly the R is a P, the date appears to be 28. VIII. '13, the 8 in 28 is broken as are the three I's in VIII so that they look like thus :::. Has any one seen similar copies of this forgery which may have been cancelled the same way or perhaps in other towns?

INTRODUCING OUR FRIEND FROM "DOWN UNDER"

This issue of the Specialist features an article by our member Mr. Russell from down Australia way (we're bound to get Australia into this issue) who gives us an interesting article on the Arras Commemoratives with an appendage on the forgery of the 1 Kc of this issue which is in the possession of member Kovarik. Also in this issue is the first of the personalities received for our "Who are We" column. Response to requests for this column has not been gratifying, perhaps this will serve as an encouragement to others. I am most grateful to Mrs. Dickinson.

Ye Ed.

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THE HISTORY OF AN EX-STAMP COLLECTOR

by Mrs. Wm. W. Dickinson, #35

Many of our family have been collectors, so it was natural for me to gather stamps, but to be an ex-collector is another matter. Great-grandmother began the first collection, she never threw away any of her house-keeping accounts. Then came Grandfather, he was an Indian man. He plastered the ancestral hall with arrowheads and tommyhawks. And even in my day you couldn't take anything out of the hat-rack without the danger of a concussion from an artifact. (These "facts" are harder and heavier than "bare facts" or even the "facts of the case.") Father was the first stamp collector, but he gave them to a younger brother and went to the East. Brother sold the Provisionals—later—and went to Mexico. Father returned from the East, not laden with rare stamps, but Molluska, Crustacea, and what-not. (Lots of what-not.) So my early life was fraught with danger. There was always the possibility of being scalped with a six-foot Crab, socked by a seventeenth century armour, or being bitten by an extinct mamora.

But when Father took under his roof all of Great-grandmother's house-keeping accounts, and all the family correspondence of the past hundred years, something had to give somewhere, so I did. I left. I took with me a copy-book of scattered stamps (Helvetia under Greece) and a booklet of early Chinese stamps signed, "Your friend, Ting Fang Lew." (I must have been unconscious when I made this collection for I remember no details.) These stamps, though, became the nucleus for my present collection. To them I added another youthful effort whose leit-motif was—just stamps and flour paste—and sometimes only flour paste.

So when I saw a friend's neat collection, it must have been a very optimistic Scotch Great-grandmother that whispered in my ear—I thought, "Lass, use those stamps of yours. You can have a nice album, too, some day." So I called on all the Sisters and the Cousins and the Aunts. But someone had snipped through all the old letters. Drat that peregrinating brother! Then about the time I learned to tell carmine from carmine-lake, Jim

Farley started stamps fluttering down like leaves after the first frost. I had enjoyed buying my own stamps, but now the moon-faced man at the stamp-window began to murmur, "Manana," when I asked for the new issues, and even "Hasta la vista." For J. F. had said, "Be kind to stamp collectors, they might balance the budget." But kind thoughts never filled an album, though they might begin one.

Then I skidded out into the hinterlands to catch up on past and present issues. I thought I had found a source of supply, but I soon learned a collector more erudite than I lived across the street from that Postoffice. So the polite Post-Mistress often could make only sad noises, when I called. Is it better to be later than sooner? Well, it doesn't fill an album, either.

That was when I turned to Czechoslovakia. Its stamps were colorful well engraved, collectable. I had heard the voice of Benes from Geneva. I had read of the early struggles of the patriots in Italy. Czechoslovakia was the country for me, if I could spell it! I collected packets and single stamps, a treasured few from Prague itself. My stamps over flowed into Dahomey, they reached Danzig. Prophetic Danzig!

I think I might have been happy about my collection if I hadn't read Mr. Lowey and The Sepcialist. I had my stamps properly mounted and lettered, and people said, "Oh" and "Ah," when they looked at them. But erudition does not sit lightly on my shoulders. I find I have catalogued all my Delphinium shades by Ekstein, and I wander about measuring the perforations of the Achillea. And now that the Wrens have begun to hatch tete-beche pairs, I shall return not to the example of my Great-grandmother, but to that of my Great-great-Grandmother. She did not collect anything.

M. D.

Advertising Rates

Adlets (for members' wants, exchanges, sales, etc.): 1 cent per word. Stamps accepted in payment under 25 words; over 25 words, cash, money order, etc.

COMMEMORATIVE POSTMARKS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THEIR HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

by J. W. Lowey, A.P.S. 15442

Continued from last issue.

St. Wenceslas

Duke Wenceslas, descendant of the Premyslides Line of Bohemian Kings, ruled the country from 921 to 929. Under his reign the foundation for the future greatness of the Kingdom was established. Due to the many reforms which he applied and which were to benefit the lower masses he acquired enemies at his court and even within his own family. In 929 while entering the church at Stara Boleslav he was stabbed in the back and killed by his step-brother Otakar. Due to his noble character and having died a martyr he was subsequently sainted.

In 1929 Czechoslovakia commemorated his 1000th Death Anniversary by issuing a set of 5 stamps (Scott 159-63) depicting scenes from his life. Cancellations were applied at Prague and Stara Boleslav.

Figure 14.

Applied at Prague. Color: Black or Carmine

Legend: Vystava Svatovaclavska.

Translation: St. Wenceslas Exposition.

Figure 15.

Applied at Stara Boleslav. Color: Red Violet.

Legend: "Tisicileti Mucednicke Smrti Knižete Sv. Václava".

Translation: 1000th Martyr Death Anniversary of Duke St. Wenceslas

Mayor Cermak

On February 15th, 1933, Joseph Zangara fired the fatal shot at Miami which was intended to assassinate President Roosevelt, then on a tour of the country. Mayor Cermak of Chicago, who was riding with Roosevelt in his car, threw himself in front of the President thereby saving the life of the chief executive and paying with his own.

Cermak was a native of Kladno, important coal mining town of Bohemia, called the "Bohemian Cardiff." On June 16th, 1935, the citizens of Kladno honored their famous son with the erection of a marble memorial, and the postal authorities commemorated the event with a special postmark (Fig. 16).

Figure 16.

Applied at Kladno. Color: Blue.

Legend: "Oslavy zasazeni pametni desky Chigagskemu mayorovi Cermakovi".

Translation: Erection of Memorial to Cermak, Mayor of Chicago.

Presidential Anniversaries

Due to his greatness President Masaryk has been commemorated a great many times both on stamps and thru cancellations. In most instances the postmarks were applied in key cities. Usually these are in various colors but an exception was made in 1935, when the country celebrated his 85th birthday and when the Post Office Hrad, the Presidential residence at Hradecany castle, used Gold for the first and last time.

Figure 17.

Applied at Prague-Hrad. Color: Gold
(To be continued)

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sets, singles.

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