

THE CZECHO-SLOVAK SPECIALIST



OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
THE CZECHO-SLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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Vol. 3

October 1941

No. 8

CZECH ARMIES IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND

Our Secretary reports that he has received, from the Czech authorities, the entire story of the Czechoslovak Fieldpost in France and England, with reproductions of all the Postmarks used. This story will appear in an early issue of "Stamps" magazine and for the benefit of those members who do not receive this publication, the story will be reprinted in the "Specialist".

With this issue of the "Specialist" we are beginning the article on the Postage Due issues of Czechoslovakia as prepared by our fellow member, Frank Kovarik, Chicago. Mr. Kovarik has made extensive studies of these issues and gladly imparts all information for the benefit of those who may be interested.

NEW MEMBERS

- #87—Dr. Martin Seligmann, 505 West End Avenue, New York, N. Y.
- #88—Frank J. Kaps, 434 Scranton Avenue, Lynbrook, L. I., N. Y.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- #9—A. J. Hrivnak to 174 Addison Road, Riverside, Ill.
- #14—Dr. S. Hoechstetter, to 1434 48th St., Des Moines, Iowa.

WHEN IT RAINS IT POURS!!!

Our Secretary has had the misfortune of having "lightning strike in the same place twice" so to speak. First the use of his left hand has been impaired by an infection and then at the time Mr. Lowey and his family were preparing to enjoy a long awaited vacation, young Mr. Lowey, aged 12, suffered a broken leg when he was struck by an automobile. Our sympathies to you, Mr. Lowey. "Every Cloud has a Silver Lining."

CHIPEX IN MARCH 1942

From member Fred Peters comes an announcement that the Central Federation of Stamp Clubs (Chicagoland) will sponsor the second "CHIPEX" Exhibition on March 20-22, 1942. To every members is extended a cordial invitation to exhibit. Dealers are invited to come to Chicago and "Dealer's Tables" will be available, though they will be assigned in the order applications are received.

Further information may be had from Mr. Peters, as Chairman of the Exhibition.

WANTED, for Cash, complete set of corner blocks, with labels, of the new Semi-Postal issue of Bohemia-Moravia. Peter Kreischer, 6616 S. Marshfield Ave., Chicago, Illinois.

Officers of the Czecho-Slovak Philatelic Society of North America

President: Dr. Wm. Reiner-Deutsch, 41-31 77 St., Jackson Hgts., L.I. N.Y.
Secretary: J. W. Lowey, 201 Marcy Pl., New York, N. Y.
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The Postage Due Stamps of Czecho-Slovakia

By Frank Kovarik

The Postmaster's Provisionals

The first postage due stamp of the new Czechoslovak Republic were issued February 1, 1919; before that day and even for a considerable period after that, postage due stamps of Austria or Hungary were used on unpaid or insufficiently prepaid postal matter. However, quantities on hand were short and postmasters helped themselves in whatever way they could. With hand-stamps, often quite crude, they would overprint postage stamps, newspaper and special delivery stamps, to answer the purpose. They used not only Austrian stamps (in parts of the country formerly ruled by Austria) and Hungarian stamps (in Slovakia and Ruthenia), but also the postage stamps of Czechoslovakia. The words "DOPLATIT", "DOPLATNE", "DOPLATEK", "PORTO", "TAXE", and "PORTOMARKE", as well as the initials "D", "T", and "P" were employed for this purpose. It is estimated that these provisionals were used in about 200 localities. In the Hirsch Franek book "Czechoslovak Stamps" is a note that a complete listing of these provisionals dues can be found in the 1924 Catalogue of Hirsch. Unfortunately the author of this article has not seen this catalogue; it would be interesting as well as instructive.

Unused postage due postmasters provisionals are interesting but worthless. Only such as are on original covers with a clearly legible postmark can be considered as bona fide. Let us not forget that many unscrupulous persons try to make a little extra pocket money by counterfeiting postmarks—so again—caveat emptor!

Issue of 1919-1920

The first values of the Postage Dues issued by the Republic were announced by the Post Office Department on December 17, 1918 and these comprised the values 5, 10, 15, 20, 30, 50 and 100 h. The 25, 40, 500 and 1000 h were announced March 27, 1919 and the balance of the issue: 250, 400 and 2000 h were announced August 7, 1920. The actual dates of the issue were:

5h, olive,	February 1, 1919
10h, olive,	February 1, 1919
15h, olive,	February 1, 1919
20h, olive,	February 5, 1919

25h, olive,	March 22, 1919
30h, olive,	February 17, 1919
40h, olive,	February 24, 1919
50h, olive,	February 11, 1919
100h, brown,	March 6, 1919
250h, orange,	October 25, 1920
400h, carmine, red,	Oct. 21, 1920
500h, gray, green,	April 24, 1919
1000h, violet,	March 20, 1919
2000h, blue,	October 20, 1920

The designer of these stamps is Alfons Mucha, internationally known artist, most famous in our country for his "Four Seasons". Mucha was responsible also for the first postage stamps, special delivery and newspaper stamps of the newly created Republic. In an article by Mr. Lowey is told how the first postage stamps, the Hradcany issues, came into existence, the manner of printing, etc. Almost the same could be written of these, so I shall limit myself to a description of the stamps and to statistical information.

The printed surface of these stamps measures 22½ x 27 mm. In the upper half is a colorless ribbon with the legend "DOPLATIT" (due), surrounded by conventional Linden leaves. In the lower half is a large shield with a colorless numeral signifying the amount due in hellers. The frame around the stamp is composed of the legend "CESKO" at left, "SLOV" at the top and "ENSKA" at the right while the bottom contains the word "POSTA". The design is quite pleasing but the color chosen for the lower values is too dull to bring out the artistry of the author. The brighter colors of the higher values makes up for the brilliance lacking in the lower values.

The 250 and the 400 h were withdrawn from circulation on July 31, 1924; the balance of the stamps were withdrawn August 31, 1928. These stamps were in use for almost a decade and in that time were issued in such large quantities that in used condition even the scarcest value is very common. Below are given the statistics of the total number of stamps that were issued.*

5 h,	14,235,000
10 h,	21,970,000
15 h,	9,330,000
20 h,	15,700,000

25 h.	8,330,000
30 h.	27,690,000
40 h.	7,260,000
50 h.	11,920,000
100 h.	7,650,000
250 h.	1,840,000
400 h.	3,587,000
500 h.	4,300,000
1000 h.	2,910,000
2000 h.	2,520,000

* These figures were taken from Ekstein's catalogue, 1939, and differ considerably from all known statistics. A revision of these quantities must take place after this war; when direct contact with authorities can be resumed.

At the time these stamps were withdrawn from circulation large quantities were still on hand, especially the 5, 15, 250, 400 and 500 h; these were overprinted with new values and so used up. These will be dealt with later.

Some of these stamps were sold out before withdrawal—others, especially the 250, 400, 500, 1000 and 2000 h were on sale at the philatelic agency in Prague for many years. As a result all these stamps should be comparatively common in both used and unused condition.

When these stamps were printed, plates of dues stamps were sometimes printed from simultaneously with the postage stamps. For instance, it is known that the 500h due and 300h postage stamps, being similar in color, were printed in one operation, though se-tenant pairs with gutters between are not known.

According to Hirsch-Franek various plates used in the manufacture of dues stamps had certain types of markings. These authors mention the 5h stamps in particular and state, "We have noticed sheets with no particular markings, sheets with dot above the 5th and below the 95th stamp and finally sheets with dot in the space between the 95th and 96th stamps." The Ekstein catalogue of plate numbers and plate markings omits this issue without comment.

Imperfections of printing are as numerous as on the Hradcany issues. Knowing how these stamps were printed, we should not be surprised.

The lower values show many shades of color ranging from olive yellow to olive brown. The 100h ranges from light brown to a blackish brown. As the printings of the higher denomina-

tions were fewer than the lower denominations, the shades are not so many and less pronounced.

The paper used is of the same quality as that used for the printing of the first two issues of postage stamps; thin and thick, transparent and opaque, white, yellowish and lastly of white smooth texture. The gum was brownish, yellowish and lastly colorless.

The stamps were issued imperforate. According to Ekstein, "some values received a perforation, line 11½ or line 13¾." They are known as the "Ministerial Issue." These perforations are known on the 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 50, 100, 250, 400, 500 and 1000h. The pin perforation exists on the 5h and was applied at the Prague Post Office; all other perforations are bogus and should be shunned.

Proofs printed in black on white or yellowish paper of plain or chalky finish exist as well as proofs in various colors (color trials). The 400h is known printed in orange (the color of the 250) on regular postage stamp paper; it is a proof and not an error of color. Printers' waste on cardboard paper in conjunction with postage stamps, newspaper or special delivery stamps exists in all values.

Specimen stamps overprinted "VZO-REC" in black exists on all stamps except the 250, 400 and 2000h. This overprint is either horizontal or vertical, the latter reading either up or down.

The perforated proofs are perforated privately and have no value. Regarding the regular postage due stamps perforated, we can safely say that regardless of their high catalogue value, a bogus perforation cannot be recognized from officially issued perforated stamps.

Postage Due Provisionals

Currently with the use of the regular postage due stamps of 1919-20, the government decided to use up large remainders of postage stamps of the Hradcany and Allegory Issues suitably overprinted, as well as some of the less frequently used denominations of the postage due stamps surcharged with a new value. The first notice regarding these provisionals appeared in the Post Office bulletin #95, dated December 30, 1921:

"For economic reasons it is necessary that some values already demon-

itized and of which large stocks are still on hand, be again issued and so used up. Postage stamps of the Hradcany issue will be overprinted 'DOPLATIT' and surcharged with a new value."

Little by little, large remainders were issued in this new form. It is not deemed necessary to describe the printings of the stamps themselves; the Hradcany issues have been ably written up by Mr. Lowey and the Allegory issues will certainly be handled by some writer in the future. In this article we shall devote all space to the overprints only.

All overprints were printed by the Czecho Graphic Union in Prague by means of zinc or steel plates, photochemically produced.

The color of the overprint was dark blue or violet, the latter with a metallic lustre. Certain imperfections have been noted on all overprints such as offsets of the overprints, shifted overprints to left or right, spots in the color of the overprint, colorless dots in the overprint on the perforated stamps which is caused by small particles of paper punched out in perforating, etc. Inverted overprints, double overprints, overprints shifted so much that the word "DOPLATIT" appears at the top and value at the bottom of the stamp are really printers' waste and reached the collector clandestinely.

Provisionals Overprinted On The Hradcany Issue

The following stamps of the Hradcany Issue were overprinted: The first column shows the value, the second the color, the third the date of issue and the last the total number issued. The latter is furnished by Ekstein and differs from statistics of other compilers. Imperforate:

10 on 3h red violet
20 on 3h red violet
30 on 3h red violet
40 on 3h red violet
50 on 75h dark green
60 on 50h violet
60 on 50h blue
60 on 75h dark green
60 on 80h olive
100 on 80h olive
100 on 120h dark green
100 on 400h blue violet
100 on 1000h red violet
200 on 400h blue violet

Perforated:

30 on 15h brick red
40 on 15h brick red

These were announced by the Post Office department as follows: 20/3, 50/75, 60/80, 100/80 and 200/400h April 7, 1922; 100/120h March 20, 1923; 10/3, 30/3, and 40/3 June 6, 1923; 30/15, 40/15, 60/50, 100/1000h January 1, 1926.

The perforated stamps 30/15 and 40/15h were issued perforated line 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ or comb 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ or 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$. The latter is more scarce than the other two. The 40/15h was found in used condition perforated line 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ and 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$. Imperforate stamps of the 15h were also overprinted, but because the quantity was very small (although announced as "to be issued") all impressions were destroyed. At one time we read of a 40/15h found imperforate on a letter but after an investigation it was learned the copy came from a sheet when the vertical perforations were left out and the perforated portion of the stamp was removed by cutting. All other stamps of this issue found perforated obtained their perforations privately and have no philatelic value.

All these stamps except the 60/80 and 200/400h were overprinted with a dark violet ink with a metallic lustre. Besides these two mentioned in the first printing of 20/3, 50/75 and 100/80h the overprint was a light blue. The overprints in a very light blue and the 10/80h in violet are scarcer.

The control markings at the bottom of the sheets were covered by a stripe 9mm wide in the color of the overprint.

These sheets as well as those of the other overprinted postage due stamps were tacked down to the printing bed; the tacks at the bottom were in the margins but those at the top were right through stamps 1 and 10.

(To be continued)

June 15, 1923	3,995,000 copies
Feb. 10, 1922	10,560,000 copies
June 15, 1923	3,050,000 copies
June 15, 1923	11,595,000 copies
Jan. 20, 1922	18,214,000 copies
Feb. 2, 1926	466,300 copies
Feb. 2, 1926	331,000 copies
May 15, 1923	3,890,000 copies
Feb. 17, 1922	2,740,000 copies
Jan. 18, 1922	8,270,000 copies
April 1, 1923	14,960,000 copies
Feb. 2, 1926	2,190,000 copies
Feb. 2, 1926	782,000 copies
Feb. 18, 1922	2,930,000 copies
Feb. 2, 1926	1,037,000 copies
Feb. 2, 1926	2,200,000 copies