

The Czecho-Slovak Specialist

Official Publication of
THE CZECHO-SLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA
Editor: Tod Raper, 1553 Clifton Ave., Columbus, Ohio

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No. 5

RARITY DISCOVERED IN NEW OVERPRINT

By now probably all or most of our members have put into their collections the latest issues from Bohemia-Moravia.

In our previous issue we listed the 19 current stamps to be overprinted. The overprints are applied in deep black as follows:

The word *Ceskoslovensko* is crossed out and beneath the name of the protectorate "Bohmen u. Mahren" is printed. On the bottom, above the values, the new name of the territory is printed in the Czech language, "Cechy a Morava".

Some very interesting plate varieties resulted from the hasty overprinting. The most striking one is found on Scott 240 which is a major variety. In each sheet of 100 items the 26th stamp shows an N instead of an R in the word Mahren, now reading *Mahrenen*. This error is contributed to the fact that the letter R did not show up well enough on the plate and in retouching it the engraver made the mistake of substituting an N. Since the entire issue of the overprints is 400,000 sets there will be about 4000 of this variety, which therefore is bound to become a rarity. Besides, there are various other shortcomings of the overprints, like dots, spots, dashes, incompletely printed letters, offsets, etc. etc.

Nothing definite is heard from Slovakia as to future issues. The Hlinka set, issued several months ago still is in use. To repeated inquiries from several members regarding the Stefanik set of 4 values issued some time ago, we again repeat, that,

"OVERPRINTS"

By the Editor

We belong to a grand society.

Established only five months ago, and organized at the worst moment of Czechoslovakian history, it has thrived and grown until now 46 members are on the roll.

And it is no ordinary membership roll. Leafing through the applications on file, you can find many occupations represented—patent attorneys, government employees, artists, engineers, a publisher, a newspaperman, accountants, a high school principal, dentists, a bacteriologist, a business executive, a surgeon, an architect—the list goes on and on. We are no ordinary society.

The life of any organization is determined by the activity and participation of its members. So far, the participation has been rather weak, but that is to be expected in the summer months.

With the approach of autumn and winter, however, stamps again become paramount as outdoor attractions wane. So also should activity in the Society boom.

We urge more use of the Society

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though this set was on sale, its use for postal purposes was forbidden for reasons which are not published. We were shown several covers with single items and the whole set affixed to plain and registered covers. In every case the postmarks were fakes and where a registration label was found on a cover, such was probably taken from a genuinely registered cover and simply pasted upon the fakes—J.W.L.

Officers of the Czecho-Slovak Philatelic Society of North America

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New Issue Service (Bohemian-Mor-
avia)—C. J. Pearce, 2833 N. W. 13th
St., Oklahoma City, Okla.

DESIGNER IS DEAD

Alfons Mucha artist designer of
the Hradcany and other subsequent
issues, has passed away on his estate
near Prague, at the age of 80.

"OVERPRINTS"

Continued from Page 1

library and new issue service. We
urge occasional consultation with the
Society expert committee. We urge
the use of the Specialist adlets, and
the sending of occasional items for
publication in the Specialist. Try to
get some new members.

Here's a bargain: To the member
who send the first adlet to the edi-
tor, Mr. Lowey will send a personal
present in the form of a desirable
philatelic item, depending upon wheth-
er the advertiser is a specialist or a
collector. To the member sending
the name of a prospective member
the editor will present him or her
with a pair of Plzen-Kosice blocks
when the applicant joins.

The race is officially on when you
read this. Earliest postmarks arriv-
ing at 1553 Clifton Avenue, Columbus,
Ohio, win. Let's go!

Advertising Rates

	One Insertion	Six Insertions	Twelve Insertions
1 Page . . .	\$6	\$5.50	\$5.00
½ Page . . .	\$4	\$3.75	\$3.50
¼ Page . . .	\$3	\$2.75	\$2.50
1/8 Page . . .	\$2	\$1.85	\$1.75
1/16 Page . . .	\$1	.85	.75

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

PAVILION OVERPRINT PRAGA 1938 SHEET

After the opening of the Czecho-
slovak pavilion at the New York World's
Fair the Czechoslovak Participation
overprinted miniature sheets of Bratis-
lava, as listed in the Scott's cata-
logue under No. 239, with the coat
of arms of Czechoslovakia and the
words "Czechoslovak Participation
New York World's Fair 1939 Czecho-
slovak Pavilion".

The sale of these sheets proved a
full moral and financial success. The
supply is practically exhausted and
no more sheets will be overprinted.
The remaining few of this issue can
be had at the Czechoslovak pavilion
or through mails at 75 cents each.

Due to large demand the Commis-
sioner General decided to overprint
the sheet Praga 1938, as listed in the
1940 Scott's catalogue under No. 251.
These sheets are placed in the same
type of folder as the Bratislava is-
sue and will be on sale beginning
Sept. 3 at the Czechoslovak pavilion.
Friends of Czechoslovakia and philat-
elists can purchase these sheets for
75 cents apiece. It is expected that
due to a small supply these over-
prints will be quickly sold out. Deal-
ers may purchase these sheets at a
special discount directly from the
Czechoslovak pavilion. The net pro-
ceeds of the sale of these issues are
used to maintain the Czechoslovak
pavilion.

These sheets will be sold together
with a Bratislava newspaper sheet
for the total price of \$1.40. Singly the
Bratislava newspaper sheet is sold
for 75 cents.

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43. Bohumil Seger, Plzen, Skretova 38, Bohemia-Moravia.
44. Gustav x Kopta, 1636 Woodview Ave., Lincoln, Neb.
45. Mrs. G. R. Skopecek, Box 232 Colfax, Calif.
46. Vincent Domanski, Jr., 4545 N. Carlisle St., Philadelphia, Pa.

Deceased: V. Losa, D. D., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Members are asked to keep the above list confidential.

**Any change of address should be reported to the
editor of The Specialist immediately.**

FIELD POST

Of Czecho-Slovak and Allied Armies in Siberia and Their Postage Stamps

Translated By Frank J. Kovarik

Continued from Last Month

Couriers who rode from Samara on the Volga to Simbirsk and Kazan, from Chelabinsk to Ekaterinburk and from Ekaterinburk to the front carried the entire mail in knapsacks, bags, or packages whereas the courier from Irkutsk to Chita had an entire freight car at his disposal.

Field post offices were organized as follows: in Syzran (conducted by O. Jankovec) near the battle lines; divisional field post office in Samara (br. Likar); army office in Chelabinsk (br. Cervenka, later my successor); divisional office in Ekaterinburk (br. Lebl); postoffice in Omsk (pmg Zilvar); office in Krasnojarsk (br. Tenca); in Irkutsk (br. Schedlwy); and in Chita (br. Z. Oplustil). Sometime later an office was opened in Novonikolajevsk (br. Skipecek, later br. Syrový).

Only one postoffice (the one connected with the National Council in Ekaterinburk, was housed in a building, all the others were housed in railroad cars commandeered from the Czech station masters for this purpose. In these cars was not only the home of the "resident postal official" but also the night quarters of the railway mail clerks. Except for salary, the personnel of all post offices was attached to the nearest military units (such as commissary, ordinance, quartermaster, etc.)

As far as an inventory of each station's necessities all depended on the individual postal officials to get what they needed locally. No lamps were had and illumination most often depended on candles and in the mail cars on torches. Work done by the light of an open stove door on night trips was not unusual. As far as office equipment was concerned, paper, pencils, ink—these things were unobtainable. At one time one of the heads of a local office wrote out his report to me with chalk on the side of a mail car.

From the beginning the field post office limited itself to the handling

of the couriers' pick-ups from Ekaterinburk and the front lines! that is, only first class mail matter. It was impossible to do better when we take into consideration that of the 56 postal volunteers only 5 were postal officials and 4 postal employees. This condition changed within a month when with additions my personnel rose to 86 members of whom 9 were experienced post men. (Here the author gives names of the experienced personnel and where they worked—unnecessary here.)

All first class mail was handled in the simplest manner, official mail (equivalent to registered mail) was recorded by number and address. Every trip of the ambulant posts was announced telegraphically and military handlers of mail were requested to meet the train to accept mail for their station and turn over the pick-up, except where a stationary office was located which took care of this detail. In such instances the mail was delivered by letter-carriers.

As soon as the volunteers of our army got accustomed to the services of the field post, the volume of mail began to increase. The information bureau began to work harder, printed matter and newspapers began to multiply. Br. Kudela simplified things for the central office by preparing forms for us so that preparing them by hand dropped off. Quartermasters began to look around for material we could use. The first mail cars were soon too small and we looked around for better cars. What success! The Technical branch of the Army placed at my disposal 10 fine freight cars and equipped and prepared them according to my plan. They had several advantages, chief of these being automatic brakes which enabled us to couple them with passenger trains and thus they did not have to be cabooses of trains. The last finished car was ready for us in January, 1919.

The greatest success of the field post office came when the service

was transferred to the General Staff under the direct command of Quartermaster General br. Klecanda. He substantiated my independent work and under his leadership nothing seemed impossible. On October 18, 1918, he ordered that at least once each week a railway mail car must make a trip to Vladivostok (one and one-half months after the western and eastern parts of the Czech army joined) and asked immediately for a plan for a complete trip from Chelabinsk to Vladivostok. I submitted my plan Oct 21, and on Oct 24, the first railway mail car left Chelabinsk for Vladivostok with br. Kalous, a very energetic and conscientious postal official as chief clerk with orders to learn all that would be necessary to put this line on a well functioning basis. Whereas at this time I had only five cars, and these were constantly rolling along the rails, whenever a longer stop was made, repairs were possible.

With the expansion of the line all the way to Vladivostok it was imperative that new post offices be established. It was necessary to act quickly and by telegraph. On the day the mail car left Chelabinsk, br. Schedivy of Irkutsk were requested to proceed immediately to Vladivostok and open an office there. Br. Tenca in Krasnojarsk was ordered to proceed immediately to Vladivostok and upon the arrival of br. Kalous in Vladivostok to return with the mail train west. The telegraphic orders were promptly obeyed, and the post office in Vladivostok was open 24 hours before the arrival of the Chelabinsk mail and br. Tenca, after a few hours rest in Vladivostok, proceeded westward having been informed of the various handicaps to be met enroute by Br. Kalous.

The distance from the west, Chelabinsk to Vladivostok, is about 7000 km. and our Czech field post, which on its first trip to Vladivostok became also the field post of the Allied Armies, attained a world record in postal transmission. The time of the trip, 10 to 14 days without changing cars or personnel and subsisting on tea, bread, and canned meat, was really spectacular. I believe that no one will ever exceed our record. Our accomplishment, Czechoslovak postmen, who at the commencement of the field post were Austrian traitors,

we were at that time the first postmen of the future Czechoslovak Republic.

At the time of the extension of the service to Vladivostok post offices were opened in Harbin, Chita, and Barnaul, to the west in Ufa, Zlatoust, Tumen, and Kurgan, a courier station in Chishma and a courier trip to Trojecko. Beginning November 1, 1918, parcel post and money order service was organized. In 1919 additional offices were organized in Tajga (under the supervision of br. Schovaneck), Achinsk, Marijinburg (br. Tenca), Nizni Udinsk, and Tomsk. Upon the request of the National Council I worked out a plan for the transportation of mail to the homeland (Czechoslovakia) and our first correspondence reached there in the spring of 1919. Mail to the homeland was transported on ships on which our invalids were returned, after making connections with Praha through Canada. A special post office was organized in Vladivostok to care for the foreign mail, and it was conducted ably by br. Emr.

With the departure of the Czech regiments eastward, the post offices on the west were being discontinued and others, between Irkutsk and Vladivostok, were established. Besides the office in Imnokentjevsk new offices were opened in Cicikar, Chand-Achedzi, Nikolsk, Ussurijsk, First River, Russian Island, at the Military Staff of the Far East, and in the Financial Department. The Propoganda and Information Council had its own post office in their train, which was fully occupied in working the mail handled by this unit.

According to the new organization of the field post approved in the fall of 1919 new offices within the field post were established: assistant to the chief postmaster (br. Cervenka), chief of the Railway Mail Service (br. Schovaneck, later br. Kopecek), controller of the Foreign Mail (br. Lebi), later br. Vidimsky), headmaster of the office (br. Kula, later br. Vincent).

Upon ships at the time of the evacuation of the homeland, a field post station was set up under the supervision of a ship postmaster. There were in all 16 of these, the last of them having a cancellation with the legend "President Grant XXXV."

An attached table shows the growth of the field post in its individual per-

iods with statistics of mails handled, and it may be added, that of all parcels sent (except two which fell into the sea and could not be rescued) and all money orders, not one was lost.

As for newspapers and pamphlets, I will repeat the words of br. Kudela who, in Manchuria, said: "Almost everything we printed was carried by the field post and almost everything was safely delivered." Considering the conditions then existing in Siberia, I can well be satisfied and this satisfaction was heightened in an article which appeared in the daily newspaper "Czech Daily" under the caption "Good-bye": the field post often worked under such trying conditions that often it seemed an impossible task.

Continued Next Month

NEW CATALOGUES ON WAY

The 1940 editions of the various catalogues published in Bohemia-Moravia, which will list issues of the former republic of Czecho-Slovakia and the issues of Bohemia-Moravia, will appear sometime in October.

Outstanding point about these catalogues will be the price revisions, with price marks skyrocketing during the last year. Since it is expected that the better items will still go higher, some catalogue compilers are arguing that it might be better to omit pricing in the coming editions until the market again stabilizes.

NEW YORK CHAPTER PLANS

At the last get-together of the New York chapter, held Sept. 1, it was decided to hold these meetings hereafter every first Monday in the month. The group will gather at Mike Lindenfeld's restaurant 1528 Second Ave., near 79th St., in New York City. In case of a holiday falling on Monday, the meeting will be held on the following day. All members living in the vicinity of New York are cordially invited and urged to attend these gatherings.

AUTHOR PREDICTS FATE OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Recommended for interesting reading is an excellent article published in the November, 1938, issue of "Hobbies", and written by Vincent Domanski, Jr., America's foremost specialist in the issues of Poland.

Mr. Domanski dwells in very forceful language upon the betrayal of Czechoslovakia and with marvelous vision predicts the dissolution of the country in the near future. The balance of the article is a description of the highlights of Czecho-Slovak postal issues from 1918 to 1938, with details given as to the artists who created them.

The Secretary is happy to announce that Mr. Domanski is one of the Society's newest members. We are indeed glad to be able to welcome such a prominent collector to our ranks.

NEW SLOVAKIA CATALOGUE

A catalogue listing and pricing the postal issues of Slovakia since its separation from the mother country has been compiled by Lad. Novotny, who arranged the 1937 Bratislava exposition.

It consists of 32 pages and is written in the Slovak language. The price is three koruny, which is approximately 10 cents in American money. Members wishing a copy should send, we believe, about 20 cents in United States commemorative stamps to the publisher, Mr. Fr. Borovy, akademiske knihkupectvi, Bratislava, Slovakia.

NEW SCOTT LISTINGS

According to Member Alfons Stach, the coming addition of the Scott's Standard Catalogue will contain several listings omitted up to now. However, Hugh Clark, editor of that book, has not yet divulged which items will be added. The additions were discussed in the July issue of the Specialist by J. W. Lowey.