

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE  
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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## EDITORIAL

In the last issue of the Specialist we asked you to mail your dues to Ed. J. Sabol, our treasurer. He has returned to Bristol, so mail your dues to him to: 237 Radcliffe St., Bristol, Pa. Remember, this year we make no limits; you may send more than 5 dollars without angering your officers, especially your editor. A little hint cannot be amiss; you have seen the many cuts we had to use in this issue and in February, too. If our members contribute enough, we hope to launch something new, very new; costly, yes—, but you will flood us with letters of appreciation.

We hope you noticed your modest publication's "new look." Our printer has joined your editor in giving you something really worth while; your treasury has also contributed, albeit very modestly, but you gain! With this innovation we may embark on something we could not try before.

We visited with a friend who spent some time in Czechoslovakia. The tales he told of conditions over there are almost unbelievable. If we published only one-half we heard, our little paper would be banned from the mails over there, even as most of the Czech-American publications. Only the absolutely communist paper (we understand there is only one) and one or two others who are ready to sell their birthright for a pot of porridge, gain admission through the mails over there.

To you and yours  
a Verry Happy and Enjoyable New Year  
is the wish of your officers and editor.

## OUR PRAHA LETTER

The week beginning October 28 and ending November 5 was a week of joy and partial disappointment to most of our collectors. Joy in viewing stamps of all the friendly nations, the cultured Democratic Republics of USSR, China, Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, Rumania, Albania and Eastern Germany. All of the governments' exhibits were located in the main exhibition hall of the Home of Creative Arts Building. The collections of exhibitors, not as individuals but as members of the various ROH groups or of philatelic societies were housed in the nearby Community House of Greater Praha.

In a speech on the opening day the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs (Dr.) Neuman, said truthfully, that in view of the large number of guests

from all the friendly nations and representatives from all progressive states except two Asiatic countries, the 1950 PRAGA EXHIBITION is not a national but an international exposition. This exhibition was visited by many members of the government, headed by the president of the Ministry, Mr. Anthony Zapotocky. Mr. Adverse has shown considerable interest in the show where he spent almost three hours viewing the frames and visiting friends. Not including the last day, more than 50,000 spectators have filed into the buildings (some discount must be made for those who "filed in" merely to get the souvenir sheet for other collectors; you understand, one to a customer). Our collectors are doing a big job in fulfilling the new slogan "stamp collecting, the workers' recreation."

While the government exhibits were elaborate and well presented, those of the collectors were definitely unlike any philatelic exhibition we were accustomed to see. There were no philatelic studies; it was primarily a showing of labels and only the most common ones at that. It seemed to show the fear that some foolish collectors possess, that if better items are shown, they stand a good chance of governmental confiscation. Many of our collectors have not yet grasped that they live in a people's democracy and still think as they did when throttled by capitalists and each individual thought he was the state.

Among the many stamps which have rolled off the presses over here is one outstanding example of our new art. It is the motif for the stamp commemorating the Second Convention of the Friends of the Soviet Union and shows a Russian and Czech workers in a friendly pose. The Russian worker has two medals as Hero of Work; he is well known to Americans in the cartoons entitled Grin and Bear it.

#### SHOW AND AUCTION

Many members have written to us asking if the Chicago group will again stage a show and auction. To all the members of our Society we communicate this answer:

Our big show last year was a tremendous success but the auction was a total flop. The complete auction results were about \$50 gross; the Chicago group decided to turn over the entire sum to the treasury and absorbed the deficit which amounted to about \$45. However, the gang feels that with the very small interest shown by the membership at large, it need not deter the Chicago group and consequently plans have gone ahead for only a local show and a local auction, the entire proceeds to go to the Chicago group. In the past, the Chicago group was compelled to borrow frames from several philatelic societies. If, after the last deficit and new expenses are paid some money is left over, it shall be used for the purchase of frames. This practice is to continue until the group owns about 100 frames.

Despite the fact that this show and auction will not bring a penny to the Society treasury, the group feels that the few members who have supported these affairs in the past may want to do so again. In the first years of our Society, the New York group raised enough money to supply the momentum to forge ahead. During the war years, only a few members carried on with labor and financial sacrifices. In the years after WW II, Chicago helped the treasury in a substantial way. It continues to help the Society by the lively interest exhibited by its members. It is your Chicago group's work that your Society is so well known and respected. When the deficit of last year is paid and the frames are purchased, the Chicago group assures you it will continue to help the treasury.

No definite date was set for the next show. The following committee chairmen were elected: Auction: Kobyłka; publicity and exhibition: Kovarik;

arrangement: Reinowski.

If you want your Society to gain in prestige, you will do your utmost to make the Spring Show and Auction a complete success.

**NEW MEMBERS**

433. Fred A. Gubler, 64 1/2 Lyndhurst St., Rochester 5, N. Y.

434. Wm. C. Thorne, 4827 Water Lane, Caulfield, B. C., Canada.

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

366. G. P. Glanton, 118 East 111th Pl., Los Angeles 61, Calif.

**PARADE OF NEW ISSUES**

**Commemoratives Honoring the Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship**



The 2nd Meeting of the Union of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Friendship has been celebrated by the Czechoslovak Post on November 4, 1950, by issuing a set of two commemorative stamps

Kcs 1.50 brown and Kcs 5.- blue

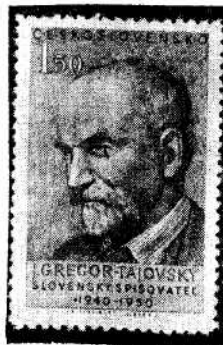
after the design by František Hudeček.

The slogan of the meeting "With USSR for Peace and Socialism" was expressed by the author of the stamps by two figures of workers symbolizing the victorious working classes of USSR and Czechoslovakia and by a modern factory with a combine-reaper and harvester also depicted on the stamps, featuring the fundamental means of production in the higher economical system—Socialism.

Both stamps are in the horizontal format 37x23.5 mm, recess printed in sheets of 55 and 25.

A cacheted First Day Cover designed by the author of the stamps and engraved by Bohdan Roule as well as a Collection Sheet have been also issued.

**Commemoratives honoring J. Gregor Tajovský**



On October 26th, the Czechoslovak Post issued a commemorative set honoring the 10th anniversary of the death of the Slovak writer J. Gregor Tajovský, depicting the portrait of the writer after the design by K. Svolínský. The denominations are:

Kcs 1.50, rusty brown and Kcs 3.00, violet blue.

The stamps have been engraved by Jan Mráček and are recess printed in sheets of 50 and 25. Format 23.5x37 mm.

A cacheted First Day Cover, designed by Prof. Svolínský and engraved by Jan Mráček together with a Collection Sheet, have also been issued.

#### Souvenir Sheet to the National Philatelic Exhibition



On the occasion of the National Philatelic Exhibition, held in Praha from October 28th to November 5th, 1950, there has been issued a special SOUVENIR SHEET with imprint block of four, imperforated, bearing 4 stamps each of Kcs 1.50, totalling Kcs 6.-, picturing the modern Praha (a construction of the Štefanik bridge over the river Vltava) and with a red inscription: CELOSTÁTNÍ VÝSTAVA POŠTOVNÍCH ZNÁMEK PRAHA 1950 on the top of the sheet.

This souvenir sheet has been printed in the exhibition hall during the Philatelic Exposition and has been available to each visitor at face of Kcs 6.- against submitting of the entrance ticket whereby only 1 copy could be obtained.

The format of the sheet is about 120x100 mm, recess printed from flat plates, the format of each stamp is 37x23.5 mm.

### A Second Set in Commemoration of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Exhibit



Following the Exhibition block of four depicting old Praha, the Czechoslovak Post issued on 28th October on the occasion of the opening of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Exhibition, the second commemorative set, bearing a picture of Praha 1950—in reconstruction—consisting of two values, viz.

Kcs 1.50, blue, and Kcs 3.00, red.

The stamps depict the Prague Castle with the construction of the Štefanik bridge in the foreground.

The design as well as the engraving have been done by the stamp-engraver J. A. Švengsbír.

The stamps are recess printed in sheets of 50 and 25. Format 37x23.5 mm.

A cacheted First Day Cover, designed and engraved by J. A. Švengsbír together with a Collection Sheet, have also been issued.

### A Set in Commemoration of the 1st Anniversary of the Foundation of the International League of the PTT Employees



Honoring the First Anniversary of the Foundation of the International League of the PTT Employees, the Czechoslovak Post issued on October 25th a commemorative set from the design by Peter Dillinger, consisting of two values

Kcs 1.50, red brown, and Kcs 3.00, red.

The stamps have been engraved by J. A. Švengsbír and are recess printed in sheets of 70 and 35. Format 30x23.5 mm.

A cacheted First Day Cover, designed by prof. Peter Dillinger and engraved by Bohdan Roule, as well as a Collection Sheet, have also been issued.

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A very interesting block of 20 without figure of value in the shield.  
Only large block known. Left out of last issue's "1920 Masaryk Issue" article.

## A Castle and Two Churches

The Story Behind the Design Portrayed  
on the Hradcany Issues of Czechoslovakia  
by Mildred A. Glueck



Plate Proof of the 3h  
Hradcany, Type I



Die Proof of Type V on  
the Hradcany Issue

Every stamp collector, even from his very beginning in the hobby, has probably been familiar with the first issues of Czechoslovakia. These issues, consisting of thirty-seven stamps, and comprising Scott's numbers 1-53, inclusive, have one central design—that of the Hradcany Castle and the St. Vitus Cathedral.

He may never have realized that the subject depicted on these stamps is one of the most beautiful spots in Europe, a constant object of wonder to the stranger, and a place of national veneration for the Bohemian nation.

What we see on the stamp design is only a portion of the huge group of buildings known as the "Hradcany," built on Hradcany Hill. They consist of the Royal Castle, St. Vitus Cathedral, Basilica of St. George, and other churches, monasteries, arsenals, and parks.

One of the first tasks of the new republic of Czechoslovakia was the re-organization of the postal system and the issuance of new postage stamps. The Members of the National Committee asked Professor Alfons Mucha, a distinguished artist and student of Czech history, to design a stamp symbolic of the newly-formed republic.

In one day he created a suitable drawing, Hradcany Castle, with the spires of St. Vitus Cathedral beyond it. To the right he put in the cupola of the Church of St. Nicholas. The budding leaves in the upper corners were used to depict the freshly awakened national life. After three hundred years, the Czechs and Slovaks were again free. The two little dove-like roosters in the lower corners herald the coming of a new day, as does the sun rising behind the cathedral. (First issue and Type II of the second issue.)

Much of the beautiful detail of the original design is lost in the finished stamps due to the method used in printing. The stamps were typographed from zinc plates, made by the photographic process. The Graphic Union, although Prague's largest printing concern, was not experienced in the printing of stamps. This, in addition to the speed with which they had to be put out, plus the use of wartime materials, resulted in a regrettable product.

The chronicler Hajek of Libocan gives the year 752 as the date of the foundation of a castle (in Bohemian "hrad") on the spot where the present palace now stands. Hradcany Hill has been the site of the castles of the Bohemian rulers ever since.

When Charles IV first arrived in Prague, he found the Royal Palace "deserted, ruined, almost leveled to the ground." Charles, who delighted in building, immediately began the erection of a worthy imperial palace, using



Reproduction of a colored print showing a view of Hradcany similar to that seen on the Hradcany issue of stamps.

the Louvre Palace in Paris as the model. As a result of the many civil wars, much of the castle was destroyed, so that few traces of the original building remain. The steep access to the Hradcany in the direction of Mala Strana (Small Town) is a remnant of Charles's fortifications.

The castle has undergone many changes as a result of the many wars and civil uprisings. It remained uninhabited by the Bohemian Kings until the time of Vladislav II (1471-1516). He restored parts of the Palace and built the mammoth Gothic hall that bears his name. Some additions were made by Ferdinand I (1526-1564) and Matthias (1612-1619), but the largest additions and restorations date from the reign of Rudolph II (1576-1612).

Like Charles IV, Rudolph made Prague his permanent residence. Being a man of scientific and literary tastes, he gave personal attention to the embellishment of the Palace. He lived in the north wing where he established an observatory and a vast chemical research laboratory. He neglected the portion that had been built by Vladislav II, and allowed the far-famed hall of Vladislav to be turned into "a bazaar where various tradesmen exhibited their wares and met to discuss their business."

Rudolph accumulated in the castle vast collections of art works, part of which disappeared during the Thirty Years War, and the balance of which were sold by Joseph II in 1782 when he contemplated turning the Hradcany Castle into barracks, a plan which was never carried out.

Since Rudolph's time, the rulers of Bohemia have rarely occupied the palace. Marie Theresa finished the whole of the present castle, and rebuilt that which was damaged after the Prussian bombardment of Prague by Frederic II in 1757.

From his abdication in 1848 to the time of his death, Emperor Ferdinand made the Hradcany Palace his residence. Crown Prince Rudolph resided there for some time, and Emperor Franz Joseph received the Bohemian nobility there during his visits to Prague.

The castle contains 868 rooms and three large halls. Prior to the Sec-



and World War, visitors were permitted entrance to the principal halls in the Royal Castle. In the north wing of the first courtyard are the German and Spanish Halls, the latter being one of the largest rooms in Europe, which were built during the reign of Emperor Ferdinand I, and where balls were given during Crown Prince Rudolph's stay.

A passage leads to the third court and to the Cathedral of St. Vitus and the part of the palace built by King Vladislav. Here is the large "Hall of Vladislav" where the Bohemian nobles did homage to their new sovereign after his coronation and where the coronation banquet was held. So immense is this hall that cavalry tournaments sometimes took place here, and at the banquets, it is said that the stewards and cupbearers on horseback waited upon the assembled nobility of Bohemia, who were perhaps the richest and proudest in the whole of Central Europe.

Of historical interest is the chamber where the Bohemian Estates met up to 1848. It clearly indicates their relative position in that the nobles and clergy (who became one of the Estates only after the Battle of the White Mountain) occupied the benches to the right and left of the throne, and the few town representatives were placed on an isolated platform surrounded by a wooden railing.

In 1618 the Royal Governors were thrown out of the windows of the old council chamber on the first floor, an act which gave the signal for the disastrous Thirty Years War. Under the windows two sandstone pyramids mark the place.

The Cathedral Church of St. Vitus is one of the finest monuments of Gothic Art. In it repose the remains of the Bohemian Kings and Queens. Of the many chapels the most notable is that which contains the remains of St. Vaclav. The exterior wall is ornamented with mediaeval mosaics representing the Last Judgment, and the interior is sumptuously decorated with gold, silver, and precious stones. Of the many tombs one of the most interesting is that of St. John of Nepomuk, made of 3,700 pounds of silver. Also within the Cathedral is a large room in which are kept the regalia, crown, and Coronation jewels of the Kings of Bohemia.

The German King Henry I gave King Wenceslas a precious relic, an arm of St. Vitus, which induced him in 1628 to erect a small Romanesque Church. It was not finished when Wenceslas was cruelly murdered by his brother. The church soon became too small for the pious visitors, even after an adjoining chapel had been erected. King Charles IV began the erection of a new, and the present cathedral. Hussite troubles and frequent wars interrupted the work, but in 1858 a society was formed for the purpose of restoring and rebuilding it. The work progressed slowly, and only in recent years has it been completed.

The Church of St. Nicholas, built in the Seventeenth Century by the Jesuits in the style of the Italian Renaissance, has a gigantic green dome which is conspicuous from a great distance. The interior is dazzling with rich marble pillars, gold ornaments, colossal statues, and frescoes.

This is an outline of the history behind the design of the first two regular issues of Czechoslovakia's stamps, the Hradčany Issue. They consist of the first issue with ten values imperforate and five values perforated in two types, and the second issue with thirteen values imperforate and nine values perforated with three types.

These stamps are very inexpensive and therefore a rich field for the real collector. He will find in it plate varieties, printer's waste, proofs and color trials, specimens, color varieties, various kinds of perforations, cancellations, gutter and tete beche pairs, overprints for airmails, postage due, semi-postals, and Eastern Silesia, many of which exist inverted.

## The Czechoslovakian Crisis in Philately

By William D. Kuhns

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(EDITOR'S NOTE: An article under the same title as this, and by the same author, appeared in the June 22, 1940 issue of STAMPS. The present article was written in May 1948, and is a sequel to the first article. A third section will appear at a later date.)

The stamps of Czechoslovakia mirror to a remarkable degree the significant political changes which have taken place in the country since its foundation in 1918. This was notably true during the period of the Munich Crisis in 1938, and again the following year, when by action of Hitler, the Republic was divided into the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and the independent nation of Slovakia, under the so-called "protection" of Germany. Each of these new political units then proceeded to issue postal paper until the Czech Republic was restored following World War II. That event and the recent capitulation to Soviet influences have also been duly recorded on the little country's postage stamps.

In a former article for STAMPS appearing in June, 1940, this writer traced the effects of Munich, the consequent collapse of the Republic, and the establishment of the two separate political regimes under the Nazis, on the contemporary stamp issues. The new status of Bohemia and Moravia after the middle of March, 1939, was indicated by overprinting the German and the Czech equivalents of Bohemia and Moravia thus: "BOHMEN u. MAHREN" and "ČECHY a MORAVA," on available regular issues of the late Republic.



Stamps of Czechoslovakia overprinted Böhmen u. Mahren - Čechy a Morava.

The separation of Slovakia was indicated at first by overprinting "Slovenský štát 1939" on certain stamps of the Republic, until definitives with either the designation "SLOVENSKÁ POSTA" or "SLOVENSKO" were released. It is important to observe that insofar as political inscriptions are concerned, the stamps of Slovakia recorded the alleged independence of the country, and reflect in any direct way but little of the actual German controls which characterized the regime from mid-March 1939 until the end of the war. Some of the subject matter used on these emissions, however, does suggest that totalitarian influence and concepts were indeed operating within the little puppet state, and these we shall note later.

In decided contrast to Slovakian postal paper, that of Bohemia was keenly sensitive to the progressive Germanization of the area. In the beginning, however, a rather extensive autonomy allowed the Protectorate is suggested by the fact that Linden Leaves, a national symbol, formed the basis of one of the stamp designs. And at the same time (1939-1941) pictorials were released, the vignettes of which, with few exceptions, had been used on the issues of the Republic, although the familiar inscription, "ČESKOSLOVEN-



The Linden Leaf Design.

SKO" was replaced with "BOHMEN and MAHREN" and "ČECHY a MORAVA." Further, a wide measure of cultural autonomy would seem to be indicated in 1941 with the appearance of two items to mark the centenary of the birth of the noted Bohemian composer, Antonin Dvořák. And indeed, other stamps in the same vein, to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the death of Friedrich Smetana, another popular Czech composer, whose music exalted the nationalistic spirit of his countrymen, appeared as late as 1944.



The Dvořák and Mozart stamps and their coupons.  
(to be continued)

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