

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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Editor Frank J. Kovarik, 8748 Rockefeller Ave., Brookfield, Illinois

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EDITORIAL

This is the last issue of the year A. D. 1957 and we take this opportunity to wish you and yours, on behalf of all the officers of your Society, a very bountiful Christmas, abounding in joy and health and a New Year brimful of fine Czechoslovakian stamps and at least one each of B24 and B25, fully guaranteed.

It is quite likely that the above unusual wish would not dawn upon us had not one of our members sent us a group of Pošta Československá 1919 for expertizing. We found 80% fakes in the lot and recall our own early days of collecting these intriguing stamps. About 1939 the late Ernest Berka visited with us and we proudly showed him our treasures. Our friend made no comment until he passed the last of the Hungarian Postage Dues, then looking up at us asked: "Where did you get all this junk, Frank?" From that day on we decided to make a thorough study of these overprinted issues and even now dread to expertize some copies. Let us remind our members to be careful who sells these stamps to them. A written guarantee of genuineness should be obtained with every higher priced stamp with assurance money will be refunded if the item is found to be a forgery. We are sure that this issue as also the overprints for Poland of the same era have been faked more than most others. The disturbing fact is that even the penny items have been faked.

We are frequently asked about a good English-Czech, Czech-English dictionary. In the past month we had three such requests. Over the years we used three dictionaries, not one of which satisfied us. They are excellent for everyday home use but totally inadequate for higher purposes. We have visited one of the best Czech bookstores in the Chicago area and there examined and purchased two dictionaries which are quite good. They do not contain philatelic terms but they are far better than the old run of the mill vocabularies. If interested, write to F. Pancner, 6514 Cermak Road, Berwyn, Ill. The Prochazka dictionary costs \$4.00 postpaid and the larger and better one by A. Osička and I. Poldauf is \$7.50 postpaid. We can recommend these to our members.

With this issue of the Specialist all members will receive a mimeographed copy of the revised Constitution and By-Laws. Members are urged to vote on this new set of Society rules by sending a postcard to the secretary, Melvin F. Klozar, 60; Tuxedo Ave., Cleveland 29, Ohio, either accepting or suggesting changes, revisions or corrections. Since the war our Society just existed, but from now on proposes to be run by the book.

A nominating committee will propose a set of officers for the next sea-

son, this to be published in an early issue of the Specialist. This does not mean that your officers place a rigged ticket before you and compel you to vote for it or else. Members desirous of nominating another member or members may do so providing they follow the Constitution and By Laws. These nominations must be in the hands of the secretary not later than February 1, 1958. According to the Constitution, new officers should begin their term of office January 1 of every even year but due to circumstances the present officers should serve until May 31, 1958, and the newly elected officers will guide the destinies of the Society from June 1, 1958 to December 31, 1959.

We received an amusing yet not so funny letter from our librarian Frank Kosik who writes: "I have preached to my correspondents that the membership in the Society is worth at least five bucks as an associate member. Looking at the latest Membership List published in the September issue I became mighty faint; lo and behold, the booster of the five buck membership is listed as a two buck member. My membership card shows "ASSOCIATE." How about calling attention to this mistake in the next issue of the Specialist; got to save face somehow. Am sending Kobylka five bucks dues again for next year." We are glad to make amends and if we who make mistakes because we are human goofed with you, please let us know and we will make corrections with sincere apologies.

Frank also sent us a short verse which is quite good and we are sure you'll like it.

"To have a thing is nothing
If you've not the chance to show it.
And to know a thing is nothing
Unless others know you know it."

We are sorry if Frank felt he lost face but we apologize and trust he has pardoned us. We hope all our members will heed the example of our librarian. We again wish to commend the good work done by our librarian and by member Jos. J. Jiranek, who work tirelessly for the members of the Society. There is a wealth of information in our library but much of it is in Czech. Frank not only digs it out of the magazines or books but translates it and sends it on to the member making the request. He is willing to contribute his time; the member requesting the info should pay the postage. He, like most of us, is not endowed with an overabundance of material wealth and though his expenses with every individual request may seem negligible, multiplied 10 to 20 times a month, it eventually turns into real money. The same is true about requests from Jiranek. Please do your share in carrying your own financial burdens. Until these two members came along and offered their services your editor did all this work and you wonder why at times we were as much as eight months behind answering our mail?

One of our very interested members in Australia is John Watson, who joined the Society while serving in the Commonwealth's Armed Service. He asks us to contact the organization of Czecho refugees in Brisbane firmly believing we may gain a member or two. We send the request to our international secretary.

Our Sales Manager Wolfgang Fritzsche writes: "Just got a big package from Baltimore and to my surprise found a beautiful silver plate from POSTEX. I had won a bronze award for my Czech Tvar cards (postal stationery). It was a very fine prize indeed. At least one part of my Czech collection received some recognition. At present have a section of Czecho material in Berlin."

Another member who is ready to advertise the stamps of Czechoslovakia without apology and thus placing your Society onto a higher niche in the Hall of Philately.

NEW YORK GROUP MEETING

The group met at the Collectors Club, 22 East 35th St., Friday evening October 18th and the following members were present: Dr. Wm. Reiner-Deutsch, L. M. Horechny, E. Michaelson, Wm. Schoenig, Rud. Secky, J. J. Kolody, N. Feiwelsohn, G. Koplowitz, A. I. Kessler, P. L. Flynn, D. White and J. Stein.

Member Rud. Secky showed his collection of "Commemorative Sheets of the World's Fair 1939 and 1940 and the Toronto Fair of 1940." The sheets with their colorful imprints were beautiful. The purpose for the issuance of these was to help finance the Czechoslovak Pavilion during the New York World's Fair in 1939 and 1940. Member Kessler explained how they came into being and promised to bring some additional overprints, misprints and shifts to the next meeting. (Editor's Note: These sheets have gained much in popularity in the last year or so and though they are not strictly postage stamps after the application of the overprint, they are a reminder of Hitler's grab in 1939. An article on this material has been prepared and will appear eventually in the pages of the Specialist.)

Member Reiner-Deutsch brought up the election of officers for the next year and was unanimously elected chairman again. During the meeting we have collected enough dues to pay our contribution to the Collectors Club.

A short discussion on the progress of the Society took place and it was decided to propose several changes to the Constitution and By Laws for a more facile organizational operation.

Schedule of meetings for the immediate future: L. M. Horechny to show his Newspaper Stamps on Nov. 15th.

Due to the Christmas holidays there will be no meeting scheduled in December. On January 17th member Wm. Schoenig will show his Collection of Czechoslovakia.

The last part of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of several individual issues or phases of Czechoslovakian philately.

CHICAGO GROUP MEETING

The group met Sunday, October 20th at 2:30 p.m. in the home of member Egon Berka and the following members were present: R. L. Spofford, F. J. Rosner, G. Havlik, J. J. Jiranek, J. Janecka, J. Velek, J. J. Matejka, F. Zaviska and F. J. Kovarik.

Member Kovarik presented a report on the Handbook devoted to Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia. (It is apropos at this time to mention that this item was discussed at almost every meeting of the group, but all attempts at any kind of materialization of the idea stopped at some dead end street and it was decided not to raise any hopes in the members until something fruitful comes up.)

Member Ray Van Handel has written to Velek we should give thought to vari-typing the manuscript and then producing the work by the offset process. Some of the members expressed a fear that the illustrations reproduced by this process may result in a smudgy and uncouth job. (Since the last meeting, a letter from Ray counteracted this fear and he submitted a sample showing more than satisfactory results.) Originally your editor followed the lead in Chicago but the results were far from satisfactory from a financial standpoint. Ray is in the lithographic trade and an artist in his own right. He proposed to do the lay-out and the art work gratis and later contacted a printery in his home town, Sheboygan, Wisc. and between the two a deal could be made which may eventually result in a handbook costing less than half the original estimates and thus more close to the average member's buying potential.

Member Matejka suggested that an additional financial benefit could accrue if this handbook could be placed on sale for the first time during our exhibition within the framework of Compex. To accomplish this purpose an active committee must be selected immediately to work on the project. The following members are to work out the editing project: J. J. Jiranek, G. C. Kobylka, R. Van Handel and F. J. Kovarik.

Member Velek reminded the members present that each segment of the handbook was written by a different author and coordination of efforts is essential to present a good work. This has been placed into the lap of the editing committee.

The second and most vital task is the raising of the funds. Subscriptions cannot be honored, only hard, cold cash. We must be prepared to pay for the printing job, about \$1400.00 for 400 copies (all cloth bound). When we last sounded the call we raised \$30.00. We are certain that Chicago can raise about 35%, yet the percentage of members in the Chicago area is less than 20% of the whole. We are more than certain that the New York group will do their share; it is up to the lone wolves in scattered areas and in districts which could organize groups around the globe to really show their desire for this work. Kindly contact your editor and let him know how much faith you have in a book you really want.

The committee for Compex presented its report. It has been decided definitely to permit the showing of Czechoslovakian stamps in preference to any others. ONLY if not enough Czechoslovakian exhibits are available will exhibits of non-Czecho material be accepted.

It is not too early to choose committees for Compex and the following Chairmen were elected: General Chairman of the Exhibition, J. J. Jiranek; program chairman, Geo. Havlik. Trophy Committee, Mail Auction Committee, Publicity, Judging, Entertainment, Housing and Special Services Committees are to be elected at the November meeting.

The December meeting will take place in the home of F. Kovarik, 8743 Rockefeller Ave., Brookfield, Ill., Sunday, December 15, at 2:30 p.m. For directions on how to get there please refer to the instructions published in the October Specialist, page 115.



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NOTICE

It has been called to my attention by several members that the Constitution and By-laws of our Society are in many respects obsolete and rather inadequate for the proper operation of the affairs of our organization. So therefore, I am appointing a Committee of members of long standing, who have demonstrated an exemplary interest in the Society, for the purpose of revising the Constitution and By-laws. Upon the completion of the draft of their revisions they are to be published in our Official organ, the Specialist, and be voted upon by the membership.

The Committee shall consist of: Dr. William Reiner-Deutsch #27, Chairman; Joseph Stein #330, Member; L. M. Horechny #34, Member.

Said Committee is to proceed with all possible speed, and to make their report and recommendations directly to the Editor of the Specialist, for publication in a regular issue of the Specialist.

James W. Adler, President
6452 Nashville Ave., St. Louis 10, Mo.

BEDŘICH SMETANA (1824-1884)

With Smetana Czech music reached its peak. Of his operas the best known are "Prodaná Nevěsta" (Bartered Bride), "Libuše," "Hubička" and others. The "Prodaná Nevěsta" has been produced all over the music loving world and is known by all levels of people of the nation. In his youth he took an active part in the 1848 revolution and his "Libuše" is more than a prophecy. Unlike Dvořák, Smetana dedicated himself strictly to national music, which was always firm and original, his harmony simple and original. He planned for himself a life task—to depict in music the soul of the Czech people in all its moods. In this great great aim he succeeded beyond belief. He was the rhapsodic prophet of his country. In broad reality the two composers complemented each other in Czech music. So, for the music lovers it should be "Smetana and Dvořák and not Smetana or Dvořák."

The 50th anniversary of his tragic death was commemorated with a 50h stamp, in the frame of which are four notes of his opera "Libuše". His 150th birthday in 1949 was commemorated with a beautiful large stamp, the vignette of which was originally engraved by the deceased B. Heinz and the frame by Jindra Schmidt. This is one of the most beautiful stamps issued by the Czechoslovak Postoffice. In 1944 during the German occupation a stamp engraved by J. Sejpka was issued and for the 1951 Spring Music Festival he is on two stamps.

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2. Czechoslovak Field Post in Siberia 1917-1920.
3. Czechoslovak Field Post in France 1939-1940.
4. Czechoslovak Field Post in Britain 1940-1945.

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Parade Of New Issues

"XXXII International Six Day Motorcycle Race"



On the occasion of the XXXII International Motorcycle Race the Ministry of Communications issued on July 5th, 1957, a single commemorative stamp showing two motorcyclists. This stamp belongs to the series of the stamps showing sport motives, issued on 30th April, 1957.

The denomination of the stamp is 60 hal. The recess print is dark grey, the photogravure blue. The author of the design is Zdeněk Brdlík, painter artist, the engraving is by Jan Mráček.

The stamp was printed by the Post Printing Office in Prague in recess print combined with photogravure in sheets of 50 copies, vertical form, 23mm by 41mm in dimension.

Validity of the stamp from July 5th, 1957.

The design of the First Day Cover is by Zdeněk Brdlík, the author of the stamp, the engraving is by Jaroslav Goldschmied.

New Commemoratives with the portraits of Josef Ressel and Karel Klíč



The Ministry of Communications issued on 5th July, 1957, two commemorative stamps showing the portrait of Josef Ressel, the inventor of the screw-propeller (1793-1857, the centenary of his death) and the portrait of Karel Klíč, the inventor of heliogravure printing (1841-1926).

The stamps are of the following denominations and colors:

30 hal., Karel Klíč, dark grey 60 hal., Josef Ressel, blue

The author of the first stamp is Jaroslav Poš, painter artist, the engraving is by Bohdan Roule. The design of the second stamp is PhDr. Karel Tondl, painter and graphic artist, the engraving is by Jan Mráček.

DECEMBER MAIL AUCTION

Lot No.	★—mint	○—used	Suggested Minimum Bid:
1	★		307-309 Gutter pairs, vertical and hor., with 2 stamps ----- \$12.50
2	★		307-309 Gutter pairs, same as above only with 4 stamps ---- 13.75
3	★		307 and 309 (less 308) gutter pairs with 4 stamps, vert. ----- 1.50
4	★		307 and 309 (less 308) gutter pairs with 4 stamps, horiz. ----- 3.50
5	★		343-5 Sokol with coupons left and right ----- .50
6	★		357-9 Insurrection with coupons left and right ----- .40
7	★		Reprint of No. 2 issued 1948 at the 30th Anniversary of the first Czechoslovak stamp—original sheet of 100 ----- 2.50
8	○		719 a-e Int. Ph. Exh. nicely cancelled perf. stamps ----- 2.50
9	★		719 a-e Int. Ph. Exh., mint imperf stamps from the sheet ---- 2.50
10	★		776-779 Nat. Costumes, sheets of 10 ----- 7.50
11	★		791-794 Komenský sheet of 4 ----- 1.50
12	★		Lidice Memorial, sheet of 10 ----- 2.00
13	★		Pardubice Ph. Exh. sheet of 10 ----- 2.00
14	○		FDC 3 latest issues, actually mailed ----- 1.00
15	○		FDC 5 diff. from latest issues, actually mailed ----- 1.50
16	○		FDC 10 different issues, actually mailed ----- 3.00
17	★		B1-3, 5-16, 18-20, 18 values of Posta 1919 ----- 3.90
18	★		B22, 23, granite paper ----- .75
19	★		B36 5h GREENBLACK overprint (Rare) ----- 6.50
20	★		B56 5K Postage Due ----- 2.00
21	○		B62 20h on 54h orange, lightly cancelled, VERY FINE ----- 8.50
22	★		B127 75h value, 5 diff. proofs ----- 3.75
23	★		B128 100h value, 5 diff. proofs ----- 3.75
24	★		B129 120h value, 5 diff. proofs ----- 3.75
25	★		B125 25h value, black color proof, imperf. ----- 1.25
26	★		B133-136 Upper right corner block of four ----- 8.75
27	★		C1-3 Airmails Imperf. ----- 7.50
28	★		C4-6 Airmails Perf. ----- 10.50
29	★		Airmails Perf. 12¼ (50h, 1K, 2K, 4K, 20K) 13¼:12¼ (1K, 2K) 12.50
30	★		C28-35 Marginal edge set (upper OR lower) ----- 2.50
31	★		C40-44 Airmails, block of four ----- 11.00
32	★		B144-146 2 sets of blocks of four, plate 1 and 1A ----- 4.50
33	★		J14 Vertical pair, rouletted perforation ----- 4.50
34	★		J49 100/600h, Comb perforation 13¼:13½, rare ----- 4.50
35	★		J53 50/150, line perforation 13¼ ----- 1.00
36	○		Eastern Silesia, 24a, lightly cancelled ----- 22.50
37	★		Eastern Silesia, 31-32 Masaryk S.O. ----- 17.00
38	★		Eastern Silesia, E1-2, J1-11, P1-5 ----- 1.60
39	★		Siberia, 31-33, perf. 11½ originals ----- 7.50
40	★		Siberia, 31-33 perf. 14 ----- 1.25
41	★		Sudetenland—Aš 50h-120K, Michel 1-5 ----- 4.50
42	★		Maffersdorf, Michel Nos: 1-5, 7 8 9 10 11 13 14 15 82 88 89 -- 5.50
43	★		USA Army in Plzen, Local overprint on Hitler stamps ----- 2.00
44	★		Printers waste, 10 diff. Hradčany and Dues ----- 1.00
45	○		Slovakia 2-23 Overprint on Cover, very fine and rare ----- 25.00
46	★		Slovakia 22 5K with left Coupon ----- 2.50
47	★		Slovakia, 24 gutter pair, four stamps ----- .25
48	★		Slovakia, 24 horizontal pair WITHOUT OVERPRINT, RARE 15.00
49	★		Slovakia, 25 IMPF copy WITHOUT OVERPR. (Nov. 1.500 Kč) Open
50	★		Slovakia, 33 3Ks perf. 10½ ----- .50
51	★		Slovakia 115 10ks Tiso, gutter pair ----- 2.50

All bids must reach us latest on December 28th, 1957

FLEM STAMP COMPANY 5921 33rd Street, N. W., Washington 15, D. C.

Both stamps were recess printed by the Post Printing Office in Prague in sheets of 50 copies. Dimensions of the stamp's picture, 23mm by 30mm. Validity for postage from July 5th, 1957.

The design of the First Day cover and the engraving as well are by Bohdan Roule.

Issue of special postage stamps "The National Park of High Tatra"



The Postal Administration of Czechoslovakia issued on August 28, 1957, on the eve of the XIII anniversary of National Insurrection of Slovakia, one set of special postage stamps "Tatra National Park" picturing mountain animals and flowers and a view on Tatra mountains.

The denominations, the subjects and the colors of the stamps will be:

- a) 20h, Chamois, green and grey
- b) 30h, Bear, brown and yellow
- c) 40h, Gentian, blue and grey-green
- d) 60h, Cudweed (Edelweiss), orange and green
- e) 1.25c, Tatra mountains, dark green and ochre

The first three stamps designs were prepared by painter artist Jozef Balás, the other two are by Anton Holly. The engravings were executed by these engravers: a) by Bohdan Roule, b) by Jindra Schmidt and Jaroslav Goldschmied, c) and d) by Jiří Švengsbir and the last one by Jindra Schmidt.

The stamps have been produced by the recess and photogravure printing process by the Post Printing Office in Prague (recess printing combined with photogravure process) in sheets of 50 copies (first four stamps) and the 1.25c stamp in sheets of 25 copies.

The dimensions of stamps: First four stamps 23mm by 41mm or 41mm by 23mm respectively, the 1.25c stamp 49mm by 30mm.

Validity of stamps from August 28th, 1957 until further notice.

Two First Day covers will be put on sale. The covers were designed by Mrs. Marie Helena Štecherová, the engravings are by Ladislav Jirka.

NEW MEMBER

598 Mrs. Washington Dodge, 417 Park Ave., New York 22, N. Y.



10th MAIL SALE

We are selling a collection of Czechoslovakia coming from Frankfurt am Main, belonging to a Sudeten German. Here are our suggested bids:

1	Scout stamps on 2 covers -----	10.00
2	Same used on pieces -----	4.00
3	Budejovice compl. set HORNER used on pieces incl. postage dues -	7.00
4	Different labels, some 35 all ★ -----	3.00
5	Emergency newspapers, 14 (some bl.) -----	3.00
6	Siberia 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ signed Gilbert -----	1.00
7	Siberia, compl. set of LIONS up to 1 Rubl, all signed -----	18.00
8	15 stampless covers, Czech cancels before 1850 (Czech territory) --	8.00
9	46 postcards with stamps of Czech cities -----	4.00
10	41 postcards UNused (Czech cities) -----	3.00
11	82 postcards and stationery ALL used in Czech territory before 1918 all Austrian stamps with Czech cancels -----	8.00
12	65 postal stationery, all used -----	6.00
	Hradcany	
13	All unused part sheets, about 550 stamps -----	5.00
14	500 copies of the 1.000h USED -----	10.00
15	Waste prints, etc., 38 stamps -----	4.00
16	350 covers, all with Hradcany stamps -----	11.00
17	6.000 stamps Hradcany, all used -----	16.00
18	different flaws and smaller plate varieties -----	5.00
	Different issues	
19	1930 UPPER coupons, compl. ★ -----	2.50
20	1930 LOWER coupons, complete ★ -----	2.50
21	1919 Posts 1919 complete set of AIRS, signed -----	75.00
22	1920 AIRS, imperf set ★ -----	6.00
23	1920 AIRS, perf set ★ -----	8.00
	Collections:	
24	Boh. Moravia complete with gutters, and other items -----	8.00
25	Czechoslovakia in album, nice collection, net value -----	15.00
26	Collection of World's Fair sheets, 16 different -----	10.00
27	156 covers of Czecho and Boh. Moravia -----	10.00
28	88 cards of the SUDETEN period -----	9.00
29	Balance of this collection -----	?

Bids received until December 28th

ALFONS STACH

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A SECRET MARKING ON THE 50h BOHEMIA & MORAVIA

The spirit of intense Czech Nationalism and defiance against the Nazi-German Occupation and the subjugation of Bohemia and Moravia manifested itself in the design of secret marks inserted by the designer J. C. Vondrouš. The Academic artist was born in Chotusice near Čáslav, Czechoslovakia and at the age of nine years immigrated with his parents to New York where he studied under some of the world's famous artists. In 1920 after the liberation of Czechoslovakia he returned to Praha.

During the occupation he saw the crucifixion of the nation and saw more need to keep the items the Czech people cherish always before them. On the 1 Crown stamp Vondrouš sketched into the clouds above St. Vitus Church the outline of St. Vaclav, the Czech Patron Saint, on horseback, to represent the spiritual treasure of the Czech Nation.

Upon the 50 hal., Karlův Týn Castle stamp Vondrouš engraved the political symbols of the Czech Nation by changing the clouds and the cliffs below the castle to form the overall outline of the map of the Province of Bohemia. Not satisfied, Vondrouš designed the cliffs so that by a slight of imagination the faces of Thomas G. Masaryk, founder and first president of Czechoslovakia, and Edvard Beneš the second president and at that time president in exile who directed the Government from France, England and the United States, and General Milan Stefanik, Great Slovak Patriot.



That this secret mark was able to get by the German Censors and become the most widely used stamp of Bohemia and Moravia is really an unusual example of passive resistance.



CHANGE OF ADDRESS

262 Geo. L. Schwartz, 6539 Channing Dr., No. Highlands, Calif.

395 James G Zdenek, 8208 So. 36th St., Tacoma 66, Wash.

451 L. Kugelman, c/o Carpetland, Inc., 1548 Walden Av., Cheektowaga, N. Y.

Kindly turn to the November issue of the Specialist, page 132 and in the New Members column change member Jasinski's roster number from 297 to 597

Members contemplating removal to another address should notify the secretary or the editor immediately so you don't miss out on even one issue of the Specialist.

Members who failed to receive any issue should contact the editor immediately and a sincere effort will be made to keep you up to date. Remember the fault does not always lie with your officers.

The Great Controversy

REVOLUTIONARY STAMPS OF 1918

(Continued from last issue)

This same year "Český Filatelista" stirred up another storm about the stereos, with an article "A few questions". This article, mentioned and expanded by the "Tribuna Filatelistů," impelled Rössler in May 1932 to hand over to the Liberty Memorial 2 stereos of Type I, 2 stereos of Type II of the Praha Revolutionary overprints, 2 stereos of Skalice and 2 stereos of Scout overprints, all of them damaged by filing. So, it was not in 1919 as Rössler formerly claimed. The lithographic stones of the Irkutsk stamps were left in Russia on account of their weight.

The fate of the Šřobár stereos is not known.

The die of the Siberian Lions is still in the possession of Ant. Novotný—who keeps mum.

Rössler died in 1933 and in the memorial article "Český Filatelista" eulogized his patriotic motives and disavowing that his motives were for profit. It so happened that he was my chief, beside being a business associate of my father-in-law and would not permit anyone to pass judgment on the Revolutionary stamps.

I now believe that it is the proper time to end this inglorious chapter of the Revolutionary stamps in the Czechoslovak Philately. Strike out all Revolutionary overprints, Siberian Lions and the Russian overprints and forgive the originators.

Jaroslav Franěk,

Rakovník.

The Franěk article is supplemented by an article by E. Hirsch, which will be published in the Study of Philatelic Collections of the Postal Museum.

WHAT IS MISSING IN A MODEL COLLECTION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

An observant visitor to the philatelic section of the Postal Museum certainly noted that a part of the Czechoslovak stamps were left out, either by accident or by design. This part, to which up to now every publisher of albums gave more or less attention, contains the Revolutionary stamps. It includes the various groups of stamps which made their appearance at the dawn of our independent stamp issuing, put on the philatelic market with the explanation that by their peculiar origin, they belong to a specialized collection of Czechoslovakia as interesting and philatelically authorized curiosities.

As time passed, it was discovered that the mixture of information about them was created for only one purpose—profit. With this knowledge, the author decided to place these stamps in their proper light and tell what he knows about them.

In the projected extensive monograph on Czechoslovak stamps, I treat their origin and the method by which they invaded the contemporary collections. At the same time I do not hide my condolence of and participation in the myths which were fabricated around these stamps. The whole thing was nothing but an abuse of philatelic confidence and a semi-official operation of a small band of profiteers. To this group of stamps also belong the so-called SIBERIAN ISSUES. Of these I will write later, but in the same vein. It is better to tell the truth late than never and I hope that my exposure will be judged from that standpoint.

Revolutionary Stamps.

(Scout, Praha I and II issues, Budějovice, Skalice, Šřobár)

I am listing these stamps with their original names and a touch of irony, the names with which the period adorned them and of which time has shorn them. Why, these things are not stamps and least of all Revolutionary stamps! They are only proofs of either a great confidence or a great un-

scrupulousness according to whether we think of their manufacturers, dealers Czechoslovak collectors or a few officials with a flair for business.

We at one time helped to inculcate the Revolutionary stamps myth and for that reason our conclusions may be much more severe and uncompromising, because disappointment makes one somewhat bitter. To those who accuse us of being too late, we must say that only after the sales of private and commercial holdings and uncovering of the information contained in private correspondence were we able to come to such lamentable conclusions regarding this group of imprints, which was so long cherished by collectors and dealers.

Although we never were too enthusiastic about these products, our real fault was in not rejecting them more firmly! As proof, we quote the introductory passages of our monograph *Czechoslovak stamps*, written more than twenty years ago, as an introduction to this group, which we today exclude from our studies.

"The name Revolutionary Issues, which name would hardly stand very close scrutiny, is in Czechoslovak Philately, that group of stamps, which owes its origin to the national enthusiasm during the transition period. Later, another motive was added—profit—directly or indirectly.

A collector who has the mistaken idea that his philatelic interest should be only in the official issues will not be willing to include in his collection the stamps of these issues, because they do not show certain characteristics which we demand from real stamps. On the other hand, he who builds his collection on a broader plane, especially a Czechoslovak specialist, will come to the conclusion that even the stamps not issued officially but passively tolerated can form an important and typical part of his collection. The main idea of such a collection is to assemble not only what was officially issued, but a complete and comprehensive picture of events. There is no doubt that the Revolutionary issues are a part of the Transition picture.

Let us first consider the arguments against the philatelic value of these stamps:

- 1/ They were not officially issued, nor were they officially accepted.
- 2/ Not necessary.
- 3/ Not very widely used, nor easily bought.
- 4/ Issued by a private person, who was not interested in the postal transportation, but only in overprinting existing stamps.
- 5/ Dies and stereotypes used for printing and overprinting were in possession of individuals, preventing control.
- 6/ Foreign catalogues do not list or price them now, so they have no international value.

On the other hand, there are some favorable contentions, showing justification in their collecting:

- 1/ Letters, even registered, franked with these stamps, were actually passed through the mail, although it cannot be denied that most were of philatelic nature.
- 2/ Stamps were listed and priced in foreign catalogues and the Czechoslovak catalogues still list them.
- 3/ Czechoslovak and some foreign albums provided whole pages for them.
- 4/ In all Czechoslovak larger auctions they were offered and sold for high prices. Dealers offer them even now.
- 5/ Only a small number of stamps of this group show any appreciable drop in price, while our regular high priced stamps, especially Pošta Československá 1919 show a considerable loss.
- 6/ Philatelic and other journals reported and recommended them and experts certified their genuineness.

(To be continued)

We just bought a big stock of

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

and

Slovakia

and

Boh Moravia

and a VERY Specialized Collection
of these countries

WE FILL WANT LISTS

Alfons Stach

LENOX, MASS.