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THE CZECHO-SLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Secretary has received a letter from Mr. Novotny, Editor of the "Filatelisticka Revue" of Prague. A paragraph contained will be of interest to those of our members who are subscribers of the magazine. Says Mr. Novotny: "Please inform your members that up to now it has been impossible to send printed matters from the protectorate by regular mail. The only other channel open is the use of airmail transportation. However, due to the exorbitant cost we are unable to do so. At the same time we are informed that our postal authorities are making arrangements for the near future to provide postal channels for printed matters to the United States via Russia and as soon as this becomes a fact all back numbers will be mailed to our subscribers."

NEW MEMBERS

#83—Bohumil Dub, 38 Capen Street, Hartford, Conn.

#84—W. F. Barden, 198 S. Main St., Attleboro, Mass.

Welcome Gentlemen

APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

President Reiner-Deutsch has appointed the following members to serve as trustees: George F. Smyth, Bridgeport, Conn., L. M. Horechny, Newark, N. J., and Rudolph Secky of New York.

PUBLICISTS

Harry A. Hollman has volunteered to publicize our Society regularly thru the leading stamp journals of the country. Likewise member Bert Zenaty is taking over the publicity for the Czechoslovak papers of Greater New York. His "Opening gun" a well written, satyric description of a meeting of the New York chapter has appeared in the Sunday magazine of the "N. Y. Listy" covering a full page.

Member J. Leo Chapman is the first member of our Society to be called by the U. S. Army for active duty. A lawyer by profession, Mr. Chapman is holding the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel from the first World War. At present he is instructor of Reserve Officers at Spartanburg, So. Carolina. Are stamps included in the curriculum, Lieutenant-Colonel?

Felix Brunner who with his family had to take up residence in Mexico in order to await there re-entry permission into the United States has already received the permit and is now temporarily residing in California. However his permanent home is to be again New York City and he is slated to arrive there early in April. "Welcome Home!"

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.

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COMMEMORATIVE POSTMARKS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND THEIR HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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

Continued from last issue.

During the last two years the collecting of Favor Sheets has become quite popular in the United States. It should not be denied that it is a fascinating sideline of philately and we would definitely put it high above some of the other groups, as for instance philatelic seals, labels, etc., etc.

We do not wish our analysis to be misconstrued. Our opinion is merely that of an old-fashioned stamp collector who sticks to mint stamps and such properly cancelled on covers or cards.

Finally, a word of advice to American collectors of foreign Favor Sheets especially to those who must have anything "that would look nice in their collection." There have from time to time appeared "re-issues" of Czechoslovak Favor Sheets whose originals were put out years ago in very small quantities, the original issue probably not having exceeded one hundred. An example is the appearance some two years ago of a set of sheets, fairly attractively printed in half tone, each having affixed to it a block of four of a set of semipostals, the stamps cancelled. These sheets are Fakes. Actually printed in the United States, the cancellation was accomplished with a rubber facsimile of the original steel cancelling device.

Some letters and cards with commemorative postmarks of the early period are very scarce and will bring any price if the item must be had. The author prides himself on having had the best possible connections among collectors and dealers in Czechoslovakia but it took a serch of years to acquire a certain wanted postmark. (Fig. 12). We have looked for a duplicate copy ever since but without results. That, of course, does not mean that we are the sole possessor of this "piece de resistance" but it should be taken into consideration that similar items are not and never were plentiful and that the few which exist are found in collections whose possession is cherished by the owners who will only part with them if they are forced to do so. In this particular case we acquired the item from a refugee who had come to the United

States shortly after the seizure of Bohemia-Moravia and circumstances forced him to sell his collection.

There are about 750 different commemorative postmarks which have been applied to mails from 1918 to 1938. It would be impossible within the scope of this article to list, describe and illustrate each one. Especially is it to be regretted that reproduction of the cancellations in their original color can not be made. In consequence we have picked from our collection a few of the rarer and important postmarks which depict the rich story of a glorious people and its never-ending political travail. With the sad fate of Czechoslovakia the interesting chapter of its commemorative cancellations was also culminated.

Legion Issues

On October 28th, 1919 the young republic of Czechoslovakia celebrated the first Anniversary of its Independence. On this day the postal authorities issued a set of semipostals (Scott B124-129) part proceeds of which went to the fund for orphans of legionnaires who had fought on the side of the Allies in the World War. Simultaneously the Main Post Office at Prague applied a commemorative postmark. Letters and cards franked with these stamps were to be deposited in a special box at the Main Post Office. However, a quantity of mail franked with regular issues then valid were dropped into the receptacle either by purpose or oversight and this accounts for the fact that the cancellation is also found on other stamps than the semi-postals.

Cancellations of two different shapes were used (Fig. 1 & 2), also various colors of inks and in consequence, the postmarks are either blue or red or green or black.

In later years the Czechoslovak Legions were commemorated with various postmarks (Fig. 3 & 4).

Figure 1. Figure 2.
Applied at Prague. Colors: Blue, red, green, black.

(Continued on page 4)

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76. L. E. Krivohlavy, Plainfield, Iowa.
77. Lieutenant-Colonel J. Leo Chapman, P. O. Box 1126, Spartanburg, So. Car.

78. Arthur H. Moser, 652 Bellevue Street, Knoxville, Tenn.
 79. Jos. H. Trengrove, 79 E. Central Ave., Wharton, N. J.
 80. Emery A. Bauer, 32 Menand Road, Albany, N. Y.
 81. Oscar Gregor, M. D., 233 W. 83rd Street, New York, N. Y.
 82. O. M. Tischlarich, 230 W. Riverview Ave., Bellevue, Pittsburgh, Pa.
 83. Bohumil Dub, 38 Capen Street, Hartford, Conn.
 84. W. F. Barden, 198 So. Main Street, Attleboro, Mass.

(Continued from page 2)

Legend: "Sirotam po Legionarich".

Translation: For the orphans of Legionnaires.

Figure 3.

Applied at Prague. Color: Black.

Legend on left: "20. Vyroci zalozeni csl. armady"

Translation: 20th Anniversary of Foundation of the Czechoslovak army.

Legend on right: "Ceska Druzina, Rota Nazdar"

Translation: Czech Brotherhood, Na Zdar Company.

Figure 4.

Applied at Prague. Color: Black.

Legend on left: "20 Vyroci bitvy u Arrasu"

Translation: 20th Anniversary of the Battle of Arras.

Legend on right "Zvolili zemriti za svobodu" (also French)

Translation: They chose to die for liberty.

Sokol Festivals and Congresses

Sokol means Falcon. It is the name of an organization which was founded in 1862 at Prague by Dr. Miroslav Tyrs (Scott 191) in conjunction with Jindrich Fugner (Scott 246). Then the Czechs were subjects of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and as such restricted in their struggle for national independence.

Dr. Tyrs was positive in his belief that this dream of the Czechs would inevitably be realized and planned to prepare the nation for that day both spiritually and physically. He knew that his program would be dangerous due to the fact that the ruling authorities would be suspicious of an open mass movement. He therefore at first organized a small unit of trusted and trained friends which they named "Sokol Union," a name which has never been changed. They indulged in gymnastics, calisthenics and various sports but political education was the paramount issue. The gospel of the new movement spread and other nationally minded Czechs joined. Due

to rapid expansion it became necessary to form a second unit, then a third, fourth, fifth and so forth. Thru these ever-growing units the idea was carried into other cities and places of Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia and finally into Slovakia. Members of the Union were of all classes and both sexes, rich and poor, young and old. Within a few years the Union spread beyond the borders into Slav countries such as Poland, Servia, Bulgaria and Russia. Czechoslovaks who had emigrated to foreign countries formed Sokol units in the countries of their adoption. The Union is numerically very strong in the United States, especially in places with large Czechoslovak population, such as Chicago, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and New York.

The idea for which Dr. Tyrs and his disciples had worked, namely, fitness of soul and body at all times, was proven in latter years on several occasions. When Czechoslovakia declared its independence in 1918 it had no army. Overnight the Sokols took over this authority until the Czechoslovak Legions had returned from the Allied battle fronts to the homeland to relieve them. Again in 1938 when fate overtook their country, the teachings of Dr. Tyrs were with the nation. Though ready at a command to sacrifice their lives in the defense of liberty, organized and armed to perfection, they nevertheless bowed to the order of superior force in perfect discipline.

At the beginning of the 20th century the Sokols commenced holding annual congresses at Prague or other Slav capitals. Also, every fourth year an All-Slav Sokol Sports Festival was held at Prague in which thousands of participants performed. These affairs grew in time both in quality of performance and in attendance. The last festival was staged in Prague in 1933, was a gigantic and dazzling affair. Daily for one full week 30,000 athletes of both sexes and many nationalities gave spectacular performances in a specially built stadium, holding 200,000 spectators.



1



2



7



3



4



5



6

Cancellations of Sokol Festivals

Figure 5.

Applied at Prague. Color: Black.

Legend: "VII Slet Vsesokolsky."

Translation: 7th All Slav Sokol Festival.

(On the right side of the postmark is the Sokol emblem and Linden Leaves.)

Figure 6.

Applied at Prague. Color: Black.

Legend: "IX. Slet Vsesokolsky"

Translation: 9th All Slav Sokol Festival.

Figure 7.

Applied at Prague. Color: Blue.

Legend: "X. Slet Vsesokolsky"

Translation: 10th All Slav Sokol Festival.

Zionist Events

With a predominantly Catholic and Protestant population Czechoslovakia nevertheless followed democratic principles in using bilingual postmarks in honoring events of its minorities. The first such was used in 1921 on occasion of the 12th Zionist Congress held at Karlovy Vary (Karlsbad). Others followed at intervals at various places in the country.

To be continued

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