

# THE CZECHO-SLOVAK SPECIALIST



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

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Editor Frank Kovarik, 2502 So. Kedzie Ave., Chicago, Ill.

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## FROM THE EDITOR

As in the past, the Specialist will not appear during the months of July and August. It is our intention to make up for it in contents and quality in the remaining months of the year.

The September issue will contain an article on the essays and designs of Czechoslovak stamps from the pen of our genial secretary, Mr. Lowey. We are promised two or three other articles from various authors; if all goes well, the Specialist shall have enough good material to last a long time.

We are sorry to have made an error in copying names. Our member #61 is named Wm. Bruce Bryant. Glad you called our attention to this, Mr. Bryant.

No questions to our question box reached us as yet, but our treasurer has a very good suggestion. In the foreign language press may appear articles on Czechoslovak stamps that are of great interest and importance. Some member may translate this (with permission of author or publication, of course); this would then be sent to members who are specialists in the particular issue dealt with and these would leave the article intact but could present their views or criticisms as a postscript to the article. If no comments are necessary, then it means our specialists agree with the author. We have received assurances from some of our members to pass on such translations; due credit being given all co-operators.

This would give us a cross-section of opinion; the translator would be responsible for the translation only.

We had several inquiries about the authorship of the article "I am a specialist". Two of the members recognized your editor as the author; one member asked: "who told you about me?" In this short story we tried to point out some of the hardships of specialization in the stamps of Czechoslovakia. If we succeeded in showing some of the common errors in specialization, our work was crowned with success.

F. J. K.

## WE LOSE OUR PRESIDENT

With much regret it must be announced that the society temporarily loses another of its key members—in the person of our President, Dr. Reiner-Deutsch. The Doctor took leave during the last meeting of the New York Chapter since he is being called into military service, holding the rank of major. At this moment his place of station is not known but we will be able to announce his permanent address in the next issue.

The society owes much to the Doctor and it is our duty at this time to pay tribute to his splendid work in helping build up our organization. Especially the New York members and all those who have worked with him will miss him for he was a kind and cheerful personality and has an easy way to make instant friends.

Well, —lots of luck, Doctor and needless to emphasize that we will be glad to hear from you often.

## JUNIOR UNIT

Realizing the necessity for the organization of a Junior Unit within our society initial steps for the creation of such have been taken and it is hoped that this new section will appreciably grow in the near future. Mr. Lowey has volunteered to serve as temporary Chairman of the Junior unit until such time when a permanent chairman will be appointed. The secretary would like to hear from those members who would be interested to take over these duties in order that our juniors have a sympathetic and educational guidance.

The Rules Committee has formulated the following rules pertaining to Juniors:

Any Junior who is a collector or specialist of the stamps of Czechoslovakia or who wishes to form a collection and who is not over 21 years of age is eligible for membership.

Juniors enjoy all the privileges of adult members, such as receipt of the Specialist, access to our library, permission to attend meetings and conventions, space in the Specialist for discussion of their problems, etc.

They are, however, not permitted to vote or take part in the election of officers of the society. Likewise, they can not participate in the sales and exchange department. In order to enjoy this privilege they must submit to the secretary of the society a statement signed by their father or guardian who will permit them to sell, buy and exchange stamps through the department. The statement must precisely contain the guarantee that possible losses sustained by the Exchange and Sales Department or individual members in deals with Juniors will be compensated in full to the society by the signee.

## NEW YORK CHAPTER

The chapter has held its last monthly meeting of the season and will again resume its activities in September. In summing up it can be said that it was a fine idea to hold the meetings in the office of Alfons Stach and has proven advantageous. The exceptions regarding possible attendance figures were fully realized. Members who previously had attended only now and then put in their appearance regularly. It is a definite fact that most members regret that the gatherings will now for some time be interrupted but the coming of hot

summer days leaves no other choice.

Special thanks should be expressed to Alfons Stach for having enabled us to make use of his facilities. Everyone has felt at home in an atmosphere which hardly could be duplicated in the usual meeting places. Alfons Stach is one of those rare fellows who, in spite of a large business and much personal preoccupation has remained a philatelist himself. He likes to be among collectors, to discuss problems and to give unselfish advice to anyone who will ask for it. As top notch expert of the stamps of Czechoslovakia his aid and advice has been invaluable to many of us. More power to you, Alfons!

## SALES AND EXCHANGE DEPT.

With the hopes that some of our members will read this page, I want to remind the participants in the exchange to obey the rules and regulations which accompany each circuit. **Do not keep the books too long**, always remember that others are waiting for them. The strange part is, that those who keep the books for several weeks are those who take out the least. So please speed up the circulation.

Another thing: when sending the circuit to the next member make sure to wrap the books well, use good wrapping paper to make a neat package and use string to tie it. And don't forget to have insurance on the package. A short time ago one of our circuits got lost in the mails. The recipient only received the outer envelope without any books in it. Fortunately the Post Office Dept. recovered the books intact without any loss at all. This shows how important it is to have the circuit insured when sending it to the next member and also how important it is to have it properly wrapped and tied with string. I think it was sent in one of those patent envelopes and the booklets fell out. So please: everyone, remember this, each member is responsible for the booklets as long as he keeps them and up to the time he receives the insurance receipt from the post office.

Starting in May I will take out of each book, after it has been retired from service, 1% of its original value for an insurance fund. Should a book be sold out, then it will be taken out in cash, the minimum in each case will be 5c per booklet.

Wolfgang Fritzsche.

## Sudeten Surcharges and Overprints

by J. W. Lowey



It will be remembered that during the Czechoslovak-German Crisis in the Fall of 1938 there appeared in this country several Czechoslovak stamps which were surcharged with large numerals. Available stocks were quickly gobbled up by American collectors, regardless of prices asked.

Some of those who at that time, or subsequently, acquired these stamps have probably by now realized that they were handed a "Gold Brick" and have again, as on previous occasions, found out that Barnum was right.

To me certain facts in regard to the exact status of the issue was known when they appeared, though my evidence was not sufficiently complete to give a timely warning. However now, after several years, I am in a position to give the background and circumstances which will clarify this chapter conclusively.

Some time ago one of my friends acquired, in an auction sale, a specialized collection of Sudeten issues which also contained literature and official bulletins and proclamations pertaining to it. By chronologically piecing together the material, I have obtained the following account.

Between September 21st and October 1, 1938, certain sections of the Sudeten territory had been partly or entirely abandoned by Czechoslovak military and civil authorities, as for instance, in the towns of Asch, Eger and Rumberg, since the overwhelming German majority had begun a systematic murder and destruction of Czechoslovak officials, citizens and institutions. During these days of

evacuation (actual occupation by German military and civil authorities took place much later) the German (Henlein) Sudeten Party had forced itself into power, installing its own postal personnel.

In most of the communities the Czechoslovak postal employees had, upon leaving their posts, also taken along stocks of stamps, cancelling devices, and all other postal matter. This is proven by the fact that large quantities of mails of this period show instead of stamps or postmarks, inscriptions by hand or rubber cancellations reading "Franko" or "Bar Bezahlt" and various slogans, most of them containing the Swastika.

This system prevailed until postal service was taken over by post office officials of the German Government. From that day on all mails have been franked with German stamps and postmarks.

In certain places where Czechoslovak officials had to flee for their lives, stocks of stamps had to be left behind.

Since the start of the crisis delivery of mails from certain sections of the Sudeten territory to other parts of Czechoslovakia had either subsided or entirely ceased. On the other hand, communications with the German Reich had vastly increased. It now became necessary to issue certain denominations which were not available, as for instance, the K 1.20 value, needed for franking of post cards. Therefore these denominations had to be "created." In Asch and Rumberg, just to mention two ex-

amples, all regular, airmail, newspaper and Postage Due stamps were surcharged or overprinted.

Herman E. Seiger, world renowned German philatelic authority has this to say in his article "Eln Neues Markenland—Sudeten-land" in the December, 1938 issue of "Der Deutsche Sammler":

"The motives behind the issuance of these stamps were various ones. Admittedly a necessity existed for additional values, hence the surcharges. The overprints, such as 'Wir sind Frei' 'Tag der Befreiung' and many, many others are the expressions of elation over the liberation of Germans. It should, however, be emphasized that these overprints were suggested by stamp collectors. As interesting as these stamps may be in the light of events, it should nevertheless be made clear at the outset that they are only local issues. They were to serve until the post offices of the new territory would be taken over by German officials. By no stretch of imagination are they stamps of the Third Reich. They were not issued by the Reich post, not even sanctioned. It is my personal belief that our authorities, were they to have an inkling of the contemplated issuance, they would have nipped the idea beforehand."

Sieger is upheld and corroborated in the official Bulletin of the German Reichspost Ministry which states:

"The stamps issued in the Sudeten territory, consisting of surcharges and overprints in between the evacuation of Czechoslovak Authorities and taking over by German Officials are of purely local character and are not to be taken as issues of the Reich."

The announcement printed on posters of the German Sudeten Party and displayed in post offices and public buildings within the Sudetenland reads as follows, translated:

#### Announcement

It is hereby made known that outside of various Czechoslovak stamps at present in circulation the follow-

ing Provisionals surcharged in black, green or red were issued by the Post Offices Asch, Eger and Rumberg.

50h on 25h\*  
Kc 1.20 on 10h\*  
Kc 1.20 on 20h\*  
Kc 1.20 on 50h\*  
Kc 1.20 on Kc 1.00\*

and that their use on mails is hereby authorized.

Seal of the Sudeten Party.  
Two signatures  
(illegible)

\* Scott numbers (reading down)  
156, 153, 154, 227, 212.

As to whether these stamps should be placed in collections, I should say that specialists of German issues should do so. However, Czechoslovak specialists will avoid them for reasons of fact and sentiment. Regarding the value or "future" of these adhesives I can voice no definite advice though I can point to their basic value and an allowance of a fair profit for the seller. Under no circumstances are they worth even a fraction of what they were offered at to collectors.

\* Permission for reprint, courtesy of Mr. H. Lindquist, as published in Stamps, April 4, 1942.

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