

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

Copyright 1942, The Czecho-Slovak Philatelic Society of North America
Editor Frank Kovarik, 2502 So. Kedzie Ave., Chicago, Ill.

Vol. 4

September 1942

No. 7

EDITORIAL

An orchid to our ever-willing secretary. If you look carefully at the top of this page you will notice a new mast-head; this is Joe's work. When we took over the editorship, we discussed this mast-head with Mr. Lowey; this is the result of our discussion. Hope you like it.

The war continues; many of our members may be called to the colors. Your editor received his questionnaire; he is single, no dependents, past experience in World War I; physically a pretty good specimen of humanity; he has chosen as his successor (should Uncle Sam need him and want him) a father of twins; don't fear, your editor refuses to give up the job unless he is called! But, it is worthwhile to be prepared. We have been connected with the Boy Scout movement since 1920 and know the value of the Scout motto: Be prepared! F. J. K.

NEW MEMBERS

104. Howard Lee (Junior), 225 Mamaroneck Ave., Mamaroneck, N. Y.
105. W. F. Barden (Reinstated), 198 Main St., Attleboro, Mass.
106. K. Zahradnicek (Assoc. Member) 13306 Bartlett Ave., Cleveland, O.
107. A. N. Weiner (Junior), 938 Fullerton Ave., Chicago, Ill.
108. John H. Beerman, Box 723, Hewlett, L. I., N. Y.
109. Roger E. Hill, 155 Harrison Ave., Fitchburg, Mass.

With deepest regret we are compelled to announce that member Russell, Melbourne has suffered a terrific loss. Of his two sons, who fought in the same batallion at Rabaul, the elder was killed in action and the younger made a Japanese prisoner. The Society in the name of all members expresses its heartfelt sympathies to Mr. Russell.

We have been asked to announce that an Association of Alumni of Charles University of Prague, who reside in this country, is in formation. Those of our members who are Alumni of that Institute and who wish to obtain details are advised to contact either of the following gentlemen: Dr. L. Stolfa (our member) 2401 Gunderson Ave., Berwyn, Ill., or Prof. Otakar Odlozilek, John Jay Hall, Columbia University, New York, N. Y.

NEW YORK CHAPTER

Due to the first Monday of September falling on Labor Day the opening meeting of the Fall Season has been set ahead one week and will be held at the office of Alfons Stach, 99 Nassau Street, on Monday, August 31st.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Major Wm. Reiner-Deutsch (SPMC) Lawson General Hospital, Chamblee, Georgia.

George F. Smythe, Clover Road, Pittsford, N. Y.

Dr. L. Stolfa, 2401 Gunderson Ave., Berwyn, Ill.

Bohumil Dube, East Granby, Conn.

Artists and Designs

by J. W. Lowey

Foreword: It is an acknowledged fact that the majority of stamps issued by the republic of Czechoslovakia from 1918 to 1938 are beautiful examples of graphic artistry. Quite a few of them rightfully deserve to be called absolute masterpieces, due to the following facts: 1) choice of subject matter; 2) application as a whole or part of paintings, etchings, lithographs, sculpture, photography, etc.; 3) use of steel gravure; 4) careful printing by employing the most modern methods and machinery available.

It can be boldly stated that in the choice of subject matter very few countries or nations equal or surpass the rich history of the little Slav nation. We know that during the past 1400 years the soil of the land has become literally soaked with the blood of its heroic and freedom seeking sons. Ever since the advent of the Huns the Bohemian Kingdom has been incessantly ravaged. And yet it has survived and has built anew what invaders destroyed,—rebuilt more beautiful as inspiration for generations to come. The men who have guided the destiny of the nation in past history have remained spiritual symbols through the ages up to this day. When we think of King Wenceslas and the many Premyslide Kings who have followed him on the throne of the Kingdom of Bohemia,—of Charles the Great and George of Podebrad, of John Hus, John Zizka, John Amos Comenius, Francis Palacky, Havlicek Borovsky and finally after three centuries of enslavement again find the nation liberated by Thomas Garigue Masaryk,—when we realize how magnificently these men have built, have preached and what they have accomplished, only then do we know that their nation can not and never will perish. It will rise again like the legendary golden Phoenix.

The history of the Bohemian King-

dom has perpetuated itself to our present generation through literature and all forms of art. The names of all men who have preserved and handed to us the heritage through their works is legion. Many of them stand high up on the loftiest pinnacle with the very greatest of other nations.

After the establishment of the republic of Czechoslovakia in 1918 it had been planned by its postal authorities that the stamps of the country would show its history and the men who had played their part in it. Unfortunately the cycle of events destroyed intentions. In the short span of 20 years of its independence Czechoslovakia did show part of its glorious past,—alas it was only a fraction of what was intended to be accomplished.

During the years from 1918 to 1938 many designs were submitted to the Czechoslovak postal authorities, some of them by well known artists and designers but the majority being works of the less known.

The originals were usually paintings, etchings or drawings and in most cases executed in large sizes. That is one of the chief reasons why practically none of the originals were ever used, though as we will see later there were exceptions when at times some of the designers were asked to make changes on previously submitted items and these subsequently were accepted.

In order to visualize the approximate appearance as to how a design would look on a stamp it becomes first necessary to make photographs from the originals and in turn bring them down to the contemplated size in which they were to be printed as adhesives. In most instances this stage showed that the originals were not suited for postal use, regardless of all possible merits. It was realized that even the finest example of art appeared in an entirely different light

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.
Secretary: J. W. Lowey, 201 Marcy Pl., Bronx, N. Y.
Treasurer: Guy Greenawalt, 4506 Monument Ave., Richmond, Virginia
Editor: Frank Kovarik, 2502 S. Kedzie Ave., Chicago, Ill.
Librarian: Mrs. M. Glawe, 9640 S. Seeley Ave., Chicago, Illinois
Sales and Exchange Mgr.: Wolfgang Fritzsche, P. O. Box 175, Valley Stream, L. I. N. Y.

when brought down to the small size of a postage stamp.

These occurrences, of course, were inevitable. All the men then involved in the creation of postage stamps, beginning with artists down to the last printer's apprentice were in the majority practically unacquainted with the prerequisites of an entirely new field. As a result large scale experimentation had to be resorted to until it was realized that the designing and printing of stamps was a distinctly separate chapter of graphic arts and as such required the execution by men who made it their sole and special field.

Since the majority of collectors and even quite a few specialists do not have minute knowledge of the various stages of printing a short explanation is in order.

From the moment a subject is considered and decided upon until the finished product comes off the press—the stamps themselves—it takes anywhere from days to several months before the process is finished. First the artist makes the sketch. It is either approved or rejected or changes are suggested. When finally accepted it is being photographed in various measurements in order to arrive at the actual size. This having been ascertained the engraver is called in who will make the engraving in the actual size in which the stamp is to be printed. From the finished engraving result the various stages of dies which in turn lead to the final phase before actual printing is begun—the plate. But still the printing is not commenced. In order to find out how the finished product will look the printer will make sets of proofs, color trials and essays on various papers, gummed and ungummed. These are then submitted to the Postmaster General and only when he has approved all details then finally the actual printing of the issue is started.

Designs are classified in three groups, namely: 1) Designs which were obtained by the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs by either inviting certain artists to submit sketches or designs which are suggested to them, or designs of their own choice or by competition, in which a group of artists and designers will participate. Usually either financial compensation or some sort of prizes are awarded to those whose designs were

submitted or, as was the case in the first two competitions of 1919, all participants were awarded prizes by the postal jury, regardless whether their works were accepted or rejected.

2) Designs submitted by private printing concerns who of their own free will had decided to show samples of their work by either employing their own staff or by commissioning independent artists.

3) Designs which were submitted by independent craftsmen.

Group One

The first competition which was announced on January 24th, 1919 prompted four nationally known artists to participate. Though none of their original designs were ever used on stamps prizes were awarded to them. The first went to F. Kysela, the second to Alfons Mucha, the third to Kysela and the fourth to J. Benda. (We illustrate the first two awards; see figures 1 and 2.)

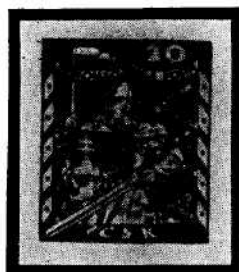


Figure 1



Figure 2

The second competition which was opened in July 1919 brought better results. Among the participants we find V. H. Brunner with his design called "Liberated Republic." Upon

suggestion Brunner made some minor changes and his drawing then was accepted. (Scott 68) Also participating was J. Benda whose designs though were unfavorably commented upon by the Jury. However, this body suddenly reversed its opinion and decided that his design which he had sent in during the first competition would be suitable if certain changes were made. The altered design of a Dove, symbol of the postal institution, was accepted and used for the small denominations preceding Brunners set. (Scott 65).

Group Two

During the early years the government did not have its own printing establishment. Therefore several private plants tried their utmost to obtain government contracts, for good reasons. It was obvious that such would enhance their reputation; at the same time, due to the size or orders to be expected, substantial profits would result. Most of the printing concerns simply submitted bids without taking the trouble to show samples of designs. Only two also included samples of work. First there was the Graficka Unie which later became the Government owned plant, due to its facilities and superior work. Already the initial examples submitted were of pleasing character, these being creations of the well known artist Mudrunka. (Figure 3). The second plant which was owned by the Haase family, which concern, besides publishing one of the two best newspapers of Prague, also had a fine all around reputation as a graphic institute, presented designs executed by Jachym and Carmine.



Figure 3

Group Three

Though it can not be denied that

the designs submitted by some independent artists were really beautiful the opinion prevails that the motives which prompted them to have their designs printed were not always within the boundries of accepted ethics. Some perhaps wanted to show to postal authorities that their designs would look well on stamps. Others, knowing that the collectors in those days paid high prices for anything that either directly or indirectly was connected with stamps, especially designs, took advantage of the situation. That is the reason why we find in this group not only designs of striking appearance but also such which do not even remotely resemble art. Some of the less scrupulous "designer" simply used as central motif the work of some known artist and only applied the lettering "Posta Ceskoslovenska" and values.

When the authorities realized that the free use of the name of the country was detrimental and that many collectors thereby became victims of this practise did they put an end to this. Several of those who had taken advantage of conditions were given stiff court sentences or fines.

However special mention should be made of one more of those artists, who, though financial rewards were not entirely overlooked, had submitted their designs primarily with true intentions. Foremost among them are Matousek, Kupka and Rijacek. (See Figures 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8).



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

A Personal View

Our able editor Frank Kovarik has in his article "The Hradcany Issue" which was published in the March-April issues of the Specialist made certain statements which have an analogy with a paragraph above. He pointed out that collectors in Europe do collect and pay prices for items which we here simply overlook, such as offsets, printers waste, etc. This should also apply to some of above described designs of group three.

Generally speaking I agree with the editor. But how about the Specialist, (Continued on next page)

HANDBOOKS WANTED

Ekstein: Plate Marking Catalog 1938
(German text preferred)

Sberatel: Plate Marking Catalog

Leitenberger: "Postal Cancellations of
Czechoslovakia" (German text)

W. B. BRYANT

1661 Spruce St., So. Pasadena, Calif.



I wish to acquire of Scott No. 86 a vertical block of ten (two in each row) showing the column total 30.— Also cards or covers of the Csl. Army in England with postmarks 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11. (See article in December 1941-January 1942 Specialist). Also Souvenir Sheet with Cancellation No. 10. Will either buy or exchange similar items.

J. W. LOWEY

201 Marcy Place
Bronx, N. Y.

Advertising Rates

	One Insertion	Six Insertions	Twelve Insertions
1 Page .	\$3.00	\$2.75	\$2.50
½ Page .	1.50	1.35	1.25
¼ Page .	1.00	.85	.75
⅓ Page .	.75	.65	.50
1/16 Page	.50	.40	.30

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

--shall he restrict himself? The majority usually does extend the field of specialization up to certain limits, depending on individual means.

I may be speaking for a very small minority,—for all I know I may be the sole member of that minority,—yet I can not refrain from exposing myself to criticism when I state that the extreme specialist will collect anything and everything which pertains to stamps, even when sometimes the status of this or the other item is in doubt and for this reason shunned by the majority. If some of us have payed more for a certain item than it is approximately worth—and that has probably happened to every stamp collector—then we have simply learned one more lesson.

I am not ashamed to confess that

I have on several occasions made mistakes, big and small ones, but today I realize that that is all part of the game called stamp collecting.

Following is a list of stamps and issues and the names of the artists who created their designs. Though not all stamps were printed from original designs. In several cases paintings, etchings, lithographs and other subjects which had been made in another era, were either as a whole or partly photographed and from these reproductions the engravings made. A large percentage of the stamps of Czechoslovakia has been produced from photographs which were made of the various landscapes of the country or of President Masaryk during the years of 1925, 1930 and some other issues. These we do not list.

Scott #	Subject	Designer
1-56	Hradcany	Alfons Mucha
E124-29	Legion	Jacob Obrovsky
61-63	Masaryk	Max Svabinsky
65-67	Dove	Jaroslav Benda
68-73	Liberty	V. H. Brunner
74-75	Hussite Clergyman	Alfons Mucha
76-81	Science & Agriculture	Jacob Obrovsky
B130-32	Red Cross Overprints	Alois Mudrunka
92, 108, B133-43	Masaryk Portraits	Max Svabinsky
159-63	St. Wenceslas	Ales, Jenewein, Manes
185	4 K value	J. Vaic
189-90	Tyrs	Frank Zenisek
200-1	National Anthem	Joseph Manes
209-11	Cyril & Methodius	J. Koehler
B144-6	Welfare	Joseph Manes
218-26	Views	Charles Vik
B147-49	Welfare	Stanislav Sucharda
228-9	Zborov	J. Vlcek
230-1	Little Entente	J. C. Vondrous
232-3	Purkyne	O. Spaniel
239	Bratislava Sheet	Charles Vik
241-2	Sokol Games	Cyril Bouda
243-5	Bachmac, Vouziers, Doss Alto	J. Vlcek
246-8	Fuegner	Max Svabinsky
249	Plzen	V. Silovsky
250	Kosice	Charles Vik
251	Praha Sheet	J. C. Vondrous
E1-6	Special Delivery	Alfons Mucha
P1-8	Newspaper	Alfons Mucha
J1-14	Dues	Alfons Mucha

Buy War bonds and stamps NOW!
