

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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Vol. 5

February 1943

No. 2

EDITORIAL

In our introduction to the stamps of the watermark period we state that it is our plan to prepare articles based on knowledge gleaned from Czech and German publications which are a closed book to most of our members. In the past, articles on Czechoslovak stamps appeared in some English language publications, notably the Australian Stamp Monthly. We have obtained permission to reprint many of these articles; those who save their Specialists will thus have an opportunity to amass this knowledge into one series of volumes, a veritable encyclopedia on the stamps of Czechoslovakia.

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

Among the Christmas cards received by your editor was a V-mail letter from our member Lt. Luther L. L. Dilley, mailed from Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1942. Lt. Dilley pictured an American battleship, above it flies an American Eagle, in his talons a Jap held by the seat of the pants. "This and a Merry Christmas to you" expressed something we all feel. Thank you Lt. Dilley. And may we promise to continue in the work we are doing, doing even better than in the past? All V-Mail letters are worth saving—this one more than others.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Maj. Wm. Reiner-Deutsch, Station Hospital, Camp Van Dorn, Miss.
Albert M. Pratt, Co. A. T., 120th Inf.,
A. P. O. #30, Camp Bandning, Fla.

SS. CYRIL AND METHODIUS ISSUE

F. J. Kovarik

Collectors of hageographic stamps as well as those who include Czechoslovakia in their collection received a surprise when the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs announced the SS. Cyril and Methodius stamps to commemorate the 1050th anniversary of the death of St. Methodius on the occasion of the first Catholic Congress held at Prague, in June, 1935.

In the bulletin of the Ministry (No. 20/1935) a very interesting though brief description of the work of these zealous monks among the Slavs of Central Europe can be found. We are sure that a translation of the entire bulletin will be invaluable to those who really want to know their stamps.

"Christianity was the foundation of the culture of most European nations. For the Slavonic tribes, settled in the neighborhood of the warlike German Empire who accepted the Western Christian culture, it was important to accept Christianity from the East and thus prevent the danger that the German Empire, under the guise of spreading Christianity, might deprive the people of their national and political independence.

"The great Moravian nation, founded in the ninth Century under the reign of Prince Mojmir (Moymir) who knew how to combine and hold together the many Slavonic tribes in one political and economical unit; was the nucleus of the present Czechoslovak state. This union was a bulwark against a possible Germanic invasion. As early as the year 830 A. D., Mojmir added all of Slovakia to his

realm. But the height of power of the nation was reached under Svato-
pluk (871-894) when all the tribes of
Bohemia, some of the tribes of Poland
and all of the Slavs occupying the
right bank of the Danube (known as
Panonia) joined his empire.

"Besides the formation of a political
Czechoslovak unit the Moravian Em-
pire, thanks to the foresight of Moj-
mir's successor Prince Rastislav (846-
870), effectively introduced and spread
Christianity and Christian culture
among the Slavs of Central Europe.

"For political reasons Rastislav did
not favor the idea that German priests
propagate Christianity in his land
and therefore asked for Slav mission-
aries in Constantinople, then the re-
ligious and cultural center of the East.
His request was granted and by order
of Emperor Michael III in the year
863, brothers Constantine (Cyril) and
Methodius, known for their religious
zeal, their very high education and
their knowledge of the Slavic tongues
and customs, were sent to Moravia.
They were best fitted for a hard mis-
sionary activity in such far away
lands.

"Cyril's thorough knowledge of the
Slavonic tongue enabled him to con-
struct the first alphabet, translate the
gospel and other religious books into
the slavic language and in that way
he gained the title of the founder of
Slavic orthography. The work of both
priests who not only preached but
said the Mass in slavic had great re-
sults but created jealousy and hatred
among the German priesthood who
considered the Czechoslovak lands as
their rightful domain and constitu-
encies and accused falsely Cyril and
Methodius to the Pope.

"In the year 867 both went to Rome
to acquaint the Pope of their work
and receive permission for the use of
the Slav liturgy. It was their desire
as well as Prince Rastislav's that the
Church affairs within the confines of
Moravia remain independent of the
claims of German religious groups,
whose aims were more or less political
and aimed at the very independence
of the nation.

"Pope Hadrian II received both
missionaries very kindly, approved of
their activities as well as the Slavonic
services.

"Cyril, exhausted by his difficult
missionary tasks and the long tiring
trip to Rome died in the year 869 and
was buried with great honors.

"The death of Cyril was a great
blow to Methodius; in spite of this
he decided to continue in the work
already begun and succeeded, for the
Pope, disregarding the claims of the
German Bishops, created an Arch-
bishopric within Greater Moravia, ele-
vated Methodius to the rank of Arch-
bishop and named him Pannonian Arch-
bishop with authority to spread Christ-
ianity among the Slavs.

"When Prince Svato-
pluk, who was
not much interested in the Slavic
services, became ruler, the work of
Methodius became more difficult and
though he withstood the attempts at
removal, the lack of appreciation for
what he has done and the sorrow of
being misunderstood brought him to
an untimely death in the year 885.

"After the death of St. Methodius,
his scholars were insulted and finally
exiled out of the land. They fled to
the Balkan Slavs, mostly to Bulgaria
and from there spread Christianity
into Russia.

"The Slavonic ritual in Moravia did
not die out with the death of the saint
and its last stronghold was in the
Monastery on the Sazava River, found-
ed by St. Procopius. These monks
were exiled in 1096 by Bretislav II.

"It is with a sense of gratitude the
Slavs everywhere honor these two
saints as the founders of Slavonic
writings and Slavonic rituals. It is only
to be regretted that the Slavs, es-
pecially the Eastern Slavs, do not
sufficiently estimate and appreciate
these great men."

The second part of the bulletin
deals with the technical aspect of the
stamps and we borrow the most perti-
nent information therefrom.

1. In commemoration of the Slav-
onic missionaries and in memory of
the 1050th anniversary of the death
of St. Methodius, a series of postage
stamps of one design is issued by the
Post Office Department in the follow-
ing colors:

50h green
1K agate red
2K steel blue

2. These commemorative stamps
are issued to post offices with their
regular stamp receipts. They are sold
at designated values and shall be valid
for postage until all are sold out.

3. The stamps are made from steel
engraved curved plates printed on the
rotary press on white paper. The
shape is a vertical rectangle and the

printed surface measures 21 x 23¼mm. Perforated 9½.

4. The stamp design portrays both missionaries, St. Cyril in the habit of a monk and St. Methodius in the habit of an Archbishop taken from the original lithograph by John Kohlec.

5. The frame of the stamp consists of a colored border, at top with white lettering bearing the legend "CESKO-SLOVENSKO"; at sides are ornamental wavy lines; at the bottom in both corners are colored shields with white figures and monetary abbreviations; between both these is a white band with colored lettering: "Sv. Cyril a Metodej."

6. Both the designing of the stamp and the engraving is the work of Bohumil Heinz.

These stamps were printed from curved plates of 150 subjects numbered as is customary 1 and 1A; sheets from plate 1 consist of 100 subjects, sheets from 1A consist of 50 subjects. Shortly after the appearance of the stamps it was learned that a favored few received uncut sheets of 150 subjects thus producing a variety of pairs with unprinted tab between the lower row of plate 1A and the top row of plate 1. Naturally this resulted in a protest from the collectors and in a short time the government announced that these stamps will be sold at the Philatelic Agency from Nov. 1 to Nov. 15 at face in complete sheets of 150 subjects. They were not sold by mail to foreign countries.

A SERIES OF FUTURE ARTICLES

It has been the desire of the editor to work out a program which would provide a constant supply of material for printing in the "Specialist," of a nature which would meet with the general approval of the membership. All of the members know that there is much data of interest to the Czechoslovak specialist which has been published in the Czech or German languages only. Many of our members can read either or both languages but a good number can not read either. It is felt that all the members will approve of a program which will make this data available in English. A series of articles is being prepared which involves the following procedure: the translation of articles from Czech and German publications, par-

ticularly, the Hirsh-Franek handbook, Ekstein's catalogues and Czech philatelic magazines; comparison of these translations with any catalogues or articles which are available in English; writing an original article using all the data obtained; and submitting each article to one or more of our specialist members, for checking. To aid in preparing these articles one of the largest and most outstanding specialized Czechoslovak collections has been placed at the Editor's disposal.

It is not intended that these articles shall be complete. It is obviously impossible to make them so. It is intended that they shall be reasonably comprehensive, as highly specialized as possible and as accurate as possible. Every effort is being made to make them complete as far as our present knowledge will permit. As new material comes to light it is hoped that it may be reported by special articles. The members are urged to express their opinions as to the value of these articles by card or letter to the editor.

G. G. & F. J. K.

**AUSTRIA
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GERMANY
HUNGARY
POLAND
BALKAN
and
BALTIC STATES**

Always of general interest.

Will fill want lists or send on approval.

References, please!

JOHN H. BEERMAN
23 Frost Lane, Hewlett, L. I., N. Y.

CZECHOSLOVAK WATERMARKS 1923-1927

G. Greenawalt and F. J. Kovarik

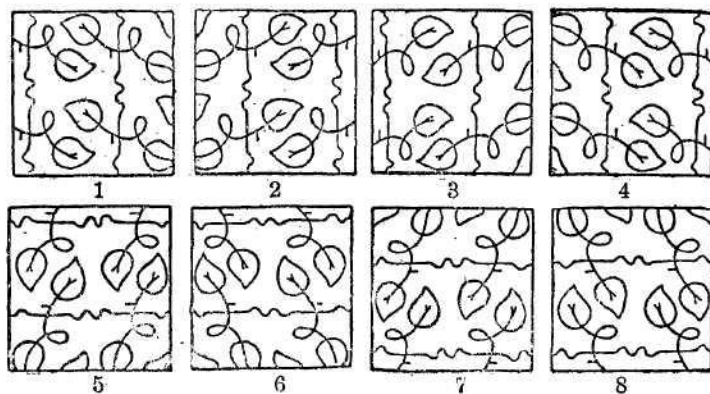
The early issues of Czechoslovak stamps from 1919 to 1923 were printed by the book-print method. This method was selected because it was cheap; it required little workmanship; large quantities of stamps could be quickly produced; and the printing equipment for this method was readily available in Prague. The obvious imperfections in the process when used to produce stamps were objected to but it was not until the ease with which counterfeiters could produce good imitations of the stamps to cheat the Post Office department, became apparent to the authorities that a change in the method of manufacture which would make counterfeiting more difficult, if not impossible, was decided upon.

To obtain the desired results the more expensive method of recess printing was adopted, in its stages of steel die engraving, galvanoplasty (copper plates are produced by electrolytic process and can be printed from in the same manner as engraved plates), flat bed printing, and finally, the Stickney rotary press printing from steel engraved plates with continuous paper web. (This type of press was developed by Benjamin R. Stickney and has long been used by the U. S. Bureau of Printing and Engraving to print most United States stamps.) As a further means to prevent counterfeiting, watermarked paper was adopted. These changes in the method of manufacture of stamps were felt in the field of philately. Philatelic interest in the printing defects and omissions which characterized the book-print issues

was centered mainly in Czechoslovakia. The introduction of recess printing and watermark paper resulted in important differences in types and watermarks which were of philatelic interest to collectors outside the country.

The Jubilee stamps of 1923 were the first stamps produced on watermarked paper. It was used for all issues from 1923 until 1927 when the authorities concluded that printing directly from line engraved plates (recess printing) was sufficient safeguard against counterfeiting. The fine lines of an engraved plate are extremely difficult to duplicate even by the most skillful engraver and attempts at counterfeiting are easily detected and seldom successful.

The watermark applied to all the stamp paper was the same design. It was applied during the process of manufacture by the use of a large metal roller (egoutteur) about 2 m. long. The design was applied to the surface of the roller to a width of about 1½ m. by means of a slightly raised wire. The design was pressed into the paper while it was wet and where the raised wire contacted the paper it was made thinner and caused to appear darker than the rest of the paper. The design applied comprises a series of parallel lines or twigs about 21 mm. apart having spaced straight portions separated by undulated or wavy portions. Two stylized linden leaves, one on each side, are attached by stems to the straight portion. On the one side the stem is looped, on the other side it is curved slightly



and has a short line branching away from the leaf attached to it. This design was repeated on the roller so that in one revolution of the roller there were 60 such designs (each comprising a line having a straight portion, a wavy portion and a leaf attached to each side of the straight portion by a stem) impressed on the paper. Variations resulted in the size and shape of leaves and loops resulted from unevenness in the details of the original design on the roller. The watermark is clearly visible on the gummed side of the stamps printed on thin smooth paper. On the stamps printed on heavier rougher paper and especially the unused Jubilee stamps, it is seldom clearly visible.

Pure benzine may be used to aid in the search for the correct watermark positions. (Place the stamp printed side down on a black glass or watermark detector, drop a few drops of pure benzine on the stamp and the watermark will appear more plainly. The stamp will quickly dry when removed from the benzine.) A short bath in pure benzine will not harm unused fully gummed stamps of most issues, but extreme care should be used in applying benzine to the 1925 Masaryk 40h, 50h, 60h issue, the colors of which are very fugitive and easily dissolved.

The watermark was applied to all the paper in the same manner but sheets for printing were cut from the rolls of paper stock in different directions with respect to the watermark and this resulted in the watermark appearing on the printed stamps in 8 different positions. Sheets cut from stock so that the twig lines ran in the same direction as the length of the cut sheet could be fed to the press in four positions, that is, forward, backward, turned, and turned backward (relative to the original direction of the twig line). In each position the details of the watermark design would appear in a different position relative to the design of the stamp. Sheets cut so that the twig lines ran in the direction of the width of the sheet could be fed to the press in the same four ways to produce four

different watermark positions. There were no official orders governing the cutting of the sheets and, consequently, it is not proper to say that any one position is normal and the others errors or deviations.

It is obvious from the process employed in cutting the sheets and feeding them to the press that the different watermark positions varied in each printing and specialists who became interested in obtaining specimens showing all the watermark positions for each issue soon discovered some positions were rare. This difference in the scarcity of some positions with respect to others is reflected in the pricing of these items.

In order to more easily identify the various watermark positions an arbitrary numbering of 1 to 4 on the vertical and 5 to 8 on the horizontal positions has been adopted and is illustrated in the catalogues by drawings showing each position. (Ekstein, 1939 German, page 77; Cross, 1942, page 9; Stach, 1941, page 36).

To identify the watermark positions the stamp should be placed printed side down with the words "Posta Ceskoslovenska" at the top and the watermark observed as it appears on the unprinted side. Note first whether the twig appears horizontal or vertical. Then observe the position of the leaves, the loops, and the lines from the leaf stems. Compare the position of these details with diagrams given in your catalogue and you can easily determine the number of the position.

Stamps printed by the Stickney rotary press resulted in only four watermark positions. The twigs in the design of the watermark on the paper web ran in the direction of the web. The stamps were arranged on the printing plate so that the design was transverse of the direction of the web and consequently, only horizontal positions resulted.

All the watermark stamps do not appear with all positions of the watermark but from study and experience we know, today, which positions appear on each issue, which of them are common and which are rare.

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IT CHANGED ITS
VALUE FROM
3 MILLIEMES TO
3 BEDS, INSTEAD!



1775
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Reg. U. S. Pat. Office 334-566, May 5, 1936, by National Federation of Post Office Clerks

So well known is one of General Electric's scientists that a letter mailed in Los Angeles to "Dr. Langmuir" with no city or state address given was delivered to Dr. Irving Langmuir in this city. The letter contained a question regarding the argon gas-filled incandescent lamp, and Dr. Langmuir was the proper person to whom to write about this subject, for he developed the lamp.