

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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## EDITORIAL

We have received a letter from our treasurer in which he tells us the dues are coming in slowly, but that most of the members are becoming associate members at two dollars per year instead of ordinary members at one dollar. We realize that many of us are engaged in war work of one sort or another; it is not that we lack the cash but we lack the time (and often ambition) to remit to the treasurer the dollar plasma so vital to our organ. Dear Member, we do want to serve you with well selected, well balanced articles on Czechoslovakia. We would like to have these articles illustrated by other than standard ready-made illustrations. In order that we know how much money we can spend on the Specialist we must know early enough whether you want to continue your membership or not. Will you please cooperate? Your officers are giving freely of their time—it doesn't take long to make out a check or buy a money order, only once a year. So, please, help! And help Uncle—Buy more bonds and stamps.

—FJK.

## NEW YORK CHAPTER

The last meetings have shown a marked falling off in attendance. This, of course, is due to many members working overtime or finding it impossible to appear.

In the last get-to-gether those present decided, that for the duration monthly meetings will not be held but instead quarter-annually. In consequence, the next one will be held in Stach's place, 99 Nassau Street on Monday, March 8th at 8 P. M. Mem-

bers will please make a note of the date, since the usual cards will not be sent out this time.

The following meeting will be held some time in June. Place and day will be announced later.

—Lowey.

## CHICAGO CHAPTER

The next meeting of the Chicago Chapter, Sunday, March 21, 1943, 2:30 P. M. at the home of A. J. Hrivnak, 174 Addison Rd., Riverside, Ill. All members are welcome.

## SALES & EXCHANGE DEPT.

ATTENTION. Everyone who has at present circuits #14, 15A and 16. Please return these circuits to me immediately; do not send them to the next member on the list. Those circuits have been in circulation much too long because some members have kept the books for many weeks, also some of the owners of the books want them returned. So please cooperate.

At the same time I again have to ask everyone to speed up the circulation, lest some one may be left out as will be the case with the above mentioned circuits. Anyone wanting to dispose of duplicates please send them in. The circulation is speeded up now and you may get your books back in about 6 months, as against 9 months to a year as in the past.

Please report any change of address; also let me know should you go into the army or if you wish to be dropped from the list. All this helps to speed up circulation.

Wolfgang Fritzsche,

P. O. B. #175.

Valley Stream, L. I., N. Y.

## LITTLE ENTENTE ISSUE

By F. J. Kovarik

Announcing these stamps, the bulletin of the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs (#40, 1937) carried an article written by Dr. Kamil Krofta, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, in which the author not only explains the significance of these stamps, but presents a picture of the political situation of the time. Most of the commemorative stamps issue after this series were an urgent plea for protection which alas, never came. We translate from Dr. Krofta's article:

"The issuance of Little Entente stamps (Yugoslavia and Roumania also issued Little Entente stamps. Ed.) is a beautiful manifestation of the political unity of the nations of Yugoslavia, Roumania and Czechoslovakia. As a society of three states which emerged out of the World War and Revolution in their present status and embodying the great ideal of liberty to all nations, the Little Entente follows the old tradition of solidarity and cooperation of representatives of the nations which were in the past contained in the old monarchy of Austria-Hungary. More than 40 years ago the political leaders of the three nations joined hands in the Budapest Parliament and in the Vienna Parliament of the Empire which brought so much good, especially to the Czechs and Slovenes.

"After independence was achieved, these free states united themselves in a political 'Little Entente', whose foundation today is the organization pact of 1933 which strives to preserve peace for themselves and their neighbors. The chief aim of the Little Entente is to guarantee to its nations the precious gift of absolute freedom and independence gained after so much hard work and so many sacrifices. They have promised one another help against any possible enemy who would try to deprive them of this treasure; they have agreed to help one another in promoting commerce and agriculture and decided to bind themselves into a unity which would promote the same culture, same feeling not only within their boundaries but in international politics as well. The Little Entente from its very inception embodied the great ideal of liberty and equality for all large and small nations and thus became a power which gained for its members in-

creased significance in international life and was also one of the mightiest factors of European Peace."

More than 16 years have elapsed since the first convention which gave the foundation to the Little Entente in its present form. In the early days of the Little Entente doubts arose among those without as to the durability of such an alliance. History of almost 17 years duration has completely stilled the voices of the sceptics. If prophecies from time to time predict the end to the Little Entente it only proves the complete ignorance of the prophets. It also shows the vivacity and strength of the Little Entente. It is evident that the Little Entente is a perfect barrier to those who try to mar the peaceful evolution of Central Europe. The Little Entente shall continue to be such a bar because the three states are agreed to protect their rights with all their might. The policy of the Little Entente was from its very beginning and is even now one of peace. That means that the Little Entente is intended to cooperate effectively with all its neighbors in Central Europe and the beginning can be done especially in the field of commerce. The more recent evolution of the situation in Central Europe shows this is possible and the Little Entente is ready and desirous of furthering this goal."

In the first part of the bulletin dealing with these stamps we read:

"One of the primary and outstanding results of the political and commercial cooperation of the Little Entente is shown in the work of their posts, telegraph and telephone. The successful evolution of the communications systems of Yugoslavia, Roumania and Czechoslovakia has been increased by the inclusion of two more states, Greece and Turkey, who joined the pact October 12, 1936.

"The culmination of the Little Entente have been conventions which lowered the tariffs between these states and made inter-communication cheaper among them than with other nations. To commemorate the accomplishments of the Little Entente the postal authorities of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Roumania are issuing on July 1, 1937 postage stamps incorporating the same symbol, three rings linked, emblematic of the close unity yet complete freedom of each of the three nations." (The Yugoslav

## JUBILEE ISSUE 1923

Guy Greenawalt and F. J. Kovarik

Little Entente stamps are Scott numbers 138 and 139 and the Roumanian are Scott numbers 467 and 468).

These stamps were issued July 1, 1923 and comprised two denominations of one design: 2K green and 2.50K blue. The design represents the Cathedral church of St. Vitus, an integral part of the Hradcany group of government buildings as seen from the Northeast. Rays of sunlight piercing the clouds are shown at the left of the stamp. It is significant that all three countries have used churches as central motifs of these issues. The design is the work of John C. Vandrous; the engraving was done by Charles Seizinger. The top of the stamp bears the legend "Ceskoslovensko" and immediately below that "Petite Entente." In the upper right corner of the central design is the word "Praha." The monetary value is found in shields at bottom of stamp to right and left respectively. Three rings—emblematic of the Little Entente are between these shields.

The stamps were printed on white, unwatermarked paper from steel engraved curved plates on the rotary press and perforated  $12\frac{1}{2}$ . Size of the printed surface measures 19.2 x 23.2mm. No plate numbers were employed and, as has been the custom with stamps of this size, one plate consisted of 100 subjects and one of 50 subjects. Stamp collectors could obtain for a very limited time complete sheets of 150 subjects which gave them the variety known as "gutter between." This variety could also be had by purchasing two complete rows of 20 stamps at the post office philatelic agency.

This issue met with immediate favor with stamp collectors. It is without doubt one of the most beautiful stamps of Czechoslovakia. While as a rule we do not discuss the esthetic value of stamps, we cannot pass up the opportunity in letting our readers know how we feel when we view this stamp issue.

### NEW MEMBERS

- 114. Thomas Buresch, 201 Amboy St., P. O. Box 123, Vauxhall, N. Jer.
- 115. Wm. J. Kotab, 12706 Melgrove Ave., S. E. Cleveland, Ohio.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- Pvt. R. R. Langer, 622 Squadron Barrack 1947, A.A.F.T.S., Madison, Wis.

Official Order No. 74 in the Bulletin of the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs No. 62 of October 4, 1923, announced as follows:

"1. In Commemoration of the 5th anniversary of the Independence of the Czechoslovak Republic, a series of jubilee stamps with the portrait of the President of the Republic, according to a new design by Prof. Max Svabinsky, shall be issued October 28, 1923. These stamps shall be valid for use in the mails from October 28, 1923 to December 31, 1923, both in domestic and foreign use. They are (to be) sold with 100% increase in price. After deducting the cost of production from the net overcharge, the balance shall be distributed among the following social and humane organizations; Czechoslovak Red Cross, Care for the Youth and Fund for the Social Care of the Postal and Telegraphic Institution.

"2. . . . Every post office employee is urged to do his utmost to sell these stamps. Every post office shall receive an official announcement of the issuance of these jubilee stamps which shall be placed in a conspicuous place in the post office. Advise carriers who sell stamps to patrons on their routes to urge the sale of these stamps. . . ."

A later Order published in the "Bulletin" (dated October 10, 1923) announced that two types of advertising leaflets were being distributed to the post offices. One of these urged the patrons to buy the jubilee stamps and copies were ordered posted in conspicuous places in the post offices. The other of these urged the postal employees to use every means to place before the patrons these special stamps and copies of this leaflet were ordered circulated among the post office personnel.

This issue was the first Czechoslovak issue produced by the improved methods which the authorities had decided were necessary to prevent counterfeiting. The stamps were printed on a special watermarked paper from line engraved steel coated galvanic plates.

The original design for the portrait of the President was a crayon drawing by Prof. Max Svabinsky made in April 1923. For the use of the engraver, Svabinsky prepared a copy repro-

duced in reverse which was a mirror production. When compared with the earlier Svabinsky portrait of Masaryk (see the Masaryk stamps of 1920) the design appears to be very poor. The reason for this has been attributed to the necessity for reducing the original in size and the lack of skill in the new production methods. The portrait of Masaryk occupies a central shield. The legend "POST CESKO-SLOVENSKA," double lined and shaded, appears in a top horizontal shield.

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The dates "1918—1923" appear in X

solid color in a central bottom shield. The value in hellers (without coinage), double lined and shaded, appears in each bottom corner shield. Linden leaves decorate a vertical shield at each side of the portrait. The background of the portrait shield is lined with closely spaced fine horizontal and vertical crossed lines giving a dark effect. The background in all other shields is lined with wider spaced fine horizontal lines giving a lighter effect.

The stamps were printed by the firm of A. Haase in Prague. The original die, which was numbered 200, was engraved by Karel Wolf, using Svabinsky's motif. Plates of 100 subjects (10 x 10) were prepared from matrixes which were originally blocks of 10 subjects (2 x 5) made by galvanoplasty. Trial printings were made from these original small plates of 10 in various colors, some of which later came into the hands of collectors. The use of the small plates of 10 in the production of the 100 subject plates can easily be seen by examination of a complete sheet. The normal width between stamp subjects is 3½mm., but the width between the blocks of 10 varies between 3mm., and 4mm. and the blocks are quite obvious. Only one plate at a time was used in the press. The plates were numbered with Roman figures under each 100th stamp. For the two high values only Plate No. I is known. For the two lower values 4 plates, Nos. I, II, III, IV, are known. The printing appears to have been carefully done and the shades in these stamps are not very pronounced.

The paper upon which the stamps were printed varied in thickness. Stamps on paper of medium thickness are most common, but neither thick nor thin paper is scarce. The paper contained the watermark which

consisted of a continuous design of stylized linden leaves. The exact picture of the watermark was not known at first because the type of paper and the gum used had a tendency to obscure the watermark. Thorough study of the watermark has since determined that only positions 5 to 8 of the watermark exist in this issue, with positions 6 to 8 apparently scarcer.

The gum applied to the stamps was yellow brown and the method of application was unique. The gum was placed on the stamps in a special manner so that each stamp has the monogram C P S on a dotted field. The monogram usually appears in the center of the stamp but the 100h is known with inverted monogram and the 50h and 100h are known with misplaced Monogram. The 50 h is known to exist without the monogram.

The stamps were line perforated to gauge 13¾ but the pins were not evenly spaced and considerable differences in the spacing of perforations have been found. Other irregularities in the perforations which have been found are the 50h, 100h, and 200h with double lines of perforations, and the 100h with horizontal perforations missing. The 100h has been reported imperforate.

Considerable care was exercised in the production of this issue and every effort was made to issue only complete and perfect specimens, but some items of interest to the specialist, in addition to those already noted, did reach the public. Unwatermarked paper gummed but not printed and perforated 11½ has been reported. The trial printings from the small plates, which were mentioned, found their way into the hands of collectors. They have been reported as follows, all on paper with vertical type watermark:

200h blue, red and light brown—perf. 11½—no monogram.

200h green.

200h brown—perf. 13¾.

200h brown blue—perf. 13¾—no monogram.

No special cancellation devices were provided for use with this issue. Most of the higher values which were used were sent by philatelists to themselves on October 28, 1923. The stamps were obligingly cancelled with this date by many postal clerks, and cancelled stamps could always be obtained at the Philatelic Agency, invariably cancelled October 28, 1923. More of the small values saw regular postal use.

This issue did not prove to be popular with collectors, probably because of the high surcharge and the resentment caused by the methods employed by the postal officials to promote their sale. The period provided for their use was twice extended and they were valid for postal use until the end of February 1923. However, considerable stocks of remainders were on hand when they were withdrawn and these were later disposed of by overprinting them for the International Olympic Congress in 1925 and the VIIIth All-Sokol Meet in 1926.

The quantities originally printed and the number sold has been reported as follows:

	Original issue	Final issue
50h green	1,500,000	920,000
100h red	1,000,000	655,000
200h blue	300,000	160,000
300h brown	200,000	140,000

#### OLYMPIC CONGRESS ISSUE OF 1925

Guy Greenawalt & F. J. Kovarik

The International Olympic Congress which was held in Prague from May 24th to June 6, 1925, was a convention of little interest to the general public. Many more important meetings were held in the Republic before and after it. However, the Post Office Department found in this relatively unimportant meeting an opportunity to dispose of some of the remainders of the 1923 Jubilee stamps.

The three lower values of the 1923 Jubilee issue were overprinted with the legend "CONGRES. OLYMP. INTERNAT.—PRAHA 1925." The following quantities were prepared:

50 h green (overprint in blue)	280,000
100 h red (overprint in blue)	110,000
200 h blue (overprint in red)	50,000

The bulletin of the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs Decree No. 49, dated May 4, 1925, which announced the issuance of these stamps, stated that the stamps would be put on sale at the Post Office (Praha I) on May 11, 1925; that during the Congress meetings they would be sold at a temporary Post office in the National Museum, (Praha II) as well as the Agency in the Tyrš home (Praha III); that the stamps were to be sold at 100% surcharge and to be valid for postage until the end of June. The decree gave no reason for the 100% surcharge. It was said the extra sum realized from the sale of the stamps was to be used to send Czechoslovak

participants to the Olympic Games in Amsterdam.

Since this issue consisted in merely overprinting the three values of the 1923 Jubilee issue, the paper, watermark, perforations, plate numbers, et cetera are the same as for the Jubilee issue.

The overprint was applied by steel die engraving. Two steel dies were prepared, one with the legend "CONGRES. OLYMP. INTERNAT." in a bottom half circle, the other with the legend "PRAHA 1925" in a straight line. These were then rocked in onto a steel plate, in the proper position to fit the dimensions of the stamps, with the half circle legend at the top. The same plate was used on all three values, blue ink being used on the 50 h and 100 h and red ink on the 200 h. The overprint was applied using a heavy ink and considerable pressure to obtain a relief appearance.

In an effort to stimulate collector interest in the issue, special cancelling devices bearing both Czech and French legends were used during the Congress, May 24 to 29. These devices comprised, within a circle, the legends "PRAHA" and in two lines "Mezinárodní Kongres Olympický—Congres Olympique International" and within the bridge in a straight line the day, the hour, and the year, 1925. Three cancellers were used. They were alike except for the form of the numerals and lettering and the position of the following: (1) the "5" in "1925" is above the "R" in "CONGRES"; (2) the "5" is above the "E"; (3) like (1) except the left star has 9 points while the right star has 8. Used copies bearing other cancellations are relatively scarce since most used copies were canceled for philatelic purposes.

Minor differences in the spacing of the overprints may be found. Defects in the overprint due to too little or too heavy inking have been found. Imperfections such as misplacement of the overprint do not appear to exist.

The 50 h exists with double perforations. The 100 h exists with misplaced monogram. A trial printing of the 300 h brown with a red overprint is also known.

The stamps were placed on sale in Praha I on May 10, 1925. These stamps were not well received by collectors because of the high surcharge and the limited number of places where they could be purchased. The 200 h value was on sale at the

Philatelic Agency up to April 1927 and the two lower values up to August 1930. It was not until the specialists began their search for watermark types that the scarcity of the issue was realized. The watermark types 6 and 8 appear to be the rarest.

#### VIII ALL SOKOL MEET 1926.

G. Greenawalt & F. J. Kovarik

The VIII All Sokol Meet in Prague in 1926 provided an opportunity for the Post Office Department to use some more of the remainders of the Jubilee issue of 1923. With the exception of small quantities of each value which were left on sale at the Philatelic Agency, the remaining stock of Jubilee issues was overprinted for this occasion.

The official decree No. 48 is the Bulletin of the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs of May 20, 1926 announced this issue of stamps as follows:

"The sale of these stamps will commence in the early part of June 1926, at Praha I, Brno I, and Bratislava I, also at the temporary post office branch which will be opened for the duration of the meet at the Slet Grounds (at Lisna). These stamps will not be sent to any other post offices, because the quantities issued are small. The stamps are (to be) sold at 100% over face and they may be used for inland as well as foreign mail to the end of July 1926."

Since this issue consisted merely in overprinting the 1923 Jubilee stamps all data relating to printing, gumming, and perforating is the same as for that issue. The overprint consisted of the legend "VIII SLET VSESOKOLSKY" in a lower semi-circle and beneath it in a straight line "PRAHA 1926." The arrangements and the method of application were the same as the overprint on the Olympic Congress issue. The two low values were overprinted in carmine and the two high values in blue. Printing imperfections are more numerous in this issue.

The 50 h green exists with double horizontal perforations.

The 100 h red exists with misplaced monogram and with inverted monogram.

The 200 h blue exists in an ultramarine shade. It has been reported with the following varieties in the overprint: overprint without "VIII"; overprint without "SLET"; overprint without "SOKOL"; 2 incomplete over-

prints on one stamp; overprint "PRAHA 1926" dropped lower; overprint divided by sidewise shifting; pair, one without overprint; double overprint.

The 300 h exists in a black brown shade.

A commemorative cancel was provided for use at the temporary post office at the Slet Grounds, during the days of the meet. It consisted of the legend "PRAHA VIII. SLET VSE-SOKOLSKY" in the circle with the date and hour in the bridge. Three cancellers were used which differed only in that they were designated as a, b, and c. Obliging clerks applied the cancel to these or any other stamps handed into them, which were attached to letters or sheets of paper (now known as "favor sheets"). Used copies of this issue with ordinary cancellations are scarce.

The following quantities of each value were issued:

50 h green (overprint in blue) 300,000  
100 h red (overprint in blue) 235,000  
200 h blue (overprint in red) 90,000  
300 h brown (overprint in red) 60,000

The surcharge proceeds were reported to have been given in part to finance the Meet and in part to the social fund of the Post Office employees.

The issue was valid for postage from June 1, 1926 to July 31, 1926, but only small quantities were sold during that time. The issue was on sale at the Philatelic Agency until the end of 1931.

This set was not well received because there was little interest in the Meet, the stamps could be purchased at only four places and the high surcharge was objectionable.

#### FROM OUR LIBRARIAN

The following new books have been added to the Library since the publication of the last list:

2 V—Printing Postage Stamps by Line Engraving.

3 h—Postage Stamps and Air Routes 1920 (In German).

Also a few of the later issues of the Czech philatelic magazine "Filatelistická Revue."

Mrs. M. Glawe.

#### THANK YOU!

The cut illustrating the watermark positions used in last month's issue has been loaned to us by our member, Alfons Stach. Mr. Stach never fails to offer a helping hand. We appreciate his cooperation.