

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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EDITORIAL

It is hard to write an editorial when the sun shines bright outside; it is no easy task when the thermometer hovers above 90 degrees F.

It is hard for the soldier to fight in extreme heat; it is hard for the marine in jungle rains; it is hard for the sailor in a driving gale.

It is not an easy matter to pay for the war in taxes; it seems so hard to buy war bonds till it hurts.

The soldier, the marine and the sailor want this war over sooner, so, they not only fight in every kind of weather, but spend all their money to buy bonds to get the stuff needed to end this war. Let us help our fighting men by buying more than our share; more than we think we can afford; let us buy until it really hurts. Once bought, put them away; don't cash them; one who buys bonds to show his employer his patriotism and then cashes them is far worse than the enemy (unless he really needs the money). Remember - if the bonds you hold are worthless, everything you own is worthless, because then, America has lost the war. Don't be a slacker - BUY and Hold!

NEW MEMBERS

151. Anthony Schwanderla, 108-05 Spa Pl., Jamaica 4, L. I., N. Y.
152. Anthony Samuels, 8729 Houston Av., Chicago 17, Ill.
153. Leo Goldman, 1586 Church St., Windsor, Ont., Canada.

CORRECTION

An error crept into our membership list in the last issue. The address of Mr. Weiner should read:

107. A. N. Weiner, 5056½ N. Kenmore Ave., Chicago 40, Ill.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- Capt. Irvin Neufeld, M. C. Hoff General Hospital, Santa Barbara, Calif.
Geo. F. Smyth, 325 N. Fairview Blvd., Inglewood, Calif.
Bert Zenaty, 394 Burns St., Forest Hills, N. Y.
Jos. Strnad, 1160 Wilshire Av., University City, Mo.

THANK YOU

Mr. Tauber, secretary of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of London, sent a souvenir cover bearing the commemorative postmark of the 25th anniversary of the death of Gen. Stefanik.

THE STORY OF A ONE-DAY STAMP

W. L. Russell

"Marshall Zhukov's army, driving into the heart of the Carpathians, has reached the borders of Czechoslovakia." So read the cables as this article is being written, and, since it looks as if Ruthenia will be the first portion of Czechoslovakia to be liberated, let's take a look at the country and its one-day stamp.

Ruthenia, which prior to 1918 was part of Hungary, forms the rump of the Czechoslovak republic and, in quite another sense, is the most backward part of that go-ahead nation. It is inhabited by peasants mainly, shepherds, timbercutters, mountaineers and the like and its few towns are not by any means the modernized communities that the rest of Czechoslovakia boasts.

The Ruthenians speak a dialect of the Ukrainian tongue, and use the Cyrillic alphabet. They have their own religion, which is an offshoot of the Russian Orthodox Church, and life in the villages centers round the wooden Church, which invariably shows a form of architecture found nowhere else.

Who are these Ruthenians? And how did they come to issue a stamp? The answer to both questions may be found in the fact that there has always been a Pan-Ukrainian movement in Ruthenia. In fact, the people interested in that movement have always referred themselves as Carpatho-Ukrainians.

Following the Munich Conference and its aftermath, when the Slovak separatist movement was raising its head, the Pan-Ukrainians thought they saw their opportunity. Prague had troubles of its own; Bratislava was like a schoolboy with his first pair of long pants, and was interested in its own affairs only. So in Ruthenia the wheel of political fortune turned, and the Pan-Ukrainians assumed control. One of their first acts was to order a national stamp, and it is typical of the tolerant view taken by Prague of these resurgent phenomena that the stamps were actually printed by the National Stamp Printing Bureau in Prague! This was probably due to the fact that, in the early stages of planning their own stamps, proceedings were on the basis of the continuance of the Czechoslovakian Republic, even if continued on a Federal basis.

For the design of their first stamp, the Ruthenians chose the same illustrations as was used by the Czechs in their issue celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Republic. Do you remember the 60th stamp showing the wooden church at Jasna? That design is so typical of the country that it was adopted and with suitable alterations in the lettering and value - was printed in Blue on Yellow paper, the Ukrainian national colors. These stamps, although on sale at the Philatelic Bureau in the GPO at Prague, were only valid for use in Ruthenia, and were intended to be used for the first time on the opening of the Carpatho-Ukrainian Parliament in Chust, the capital.

In order to meet the wishes of collectors, the P. O. in Chust took orders for first-day covers from all over the Republic, for from no other place could the commemorative cancellation be obtained. The stamps were sent to Chust in good time for the big event, which was originally planned for March 21st, 1938. However, political events took an unexpected turn, and the date was advanced to March 6th. This date, however, was not kept by Parliament. It is mere conjecture to say what went wrong! The cancelling stamp bears this date, for it was a fixed one, and could not be altered, although Parliament did not actually meet until March 15th. On that date the Postal Authorities began the issue of stamps in Chust, and cancelled them with a red postmark. On that date, too, the Carpatho-Ukrainian Parliament announced, as did Slovakia, complete severance from the Union of Czechoslovakia since on the same day Nazi troops were marching into Prague and Brno. The Carpatho-Ukrainian independence, however, did not survive 24 hours, because on the same day Hungarian troops occupied the country, bringing to a sudden end both Chust and the wider activities of Parliament, including the issue of stamps. There were, indeed some registered letters dispatched. The rest, packed in chests, were taken by the Hungarian troops, and the Hungarian authorities forbade the use of any but Hungarian stamps. So there remains but one stamp to commemorate the one-day state!

Accurate estimates of the issue are impossible. "Tirbuna Filatelistu," in Prague, says that 200,000 stamps were sent to Chust ready for sale on March 2nd. This quantity, with the exception of those dispatched from Chust on March

15th, was seized by the Hungarians. What happened to them is not known, but it is assumed that they were destroyed. Whether the plates, back in Prague, were also destroyed by the Germans is another question that will have to wait till the end of the war for its answer. In the meantime, as stated in the beginning of this article the Ruthenians look like being the first to be liberated, and their treatment by the Hungarians during these past five years will be a factor that will incline them towards reunion with the Czechoslovak Republic.

And the one-day stamp? I consider it is undercatalogued by Scott at 4c - and worth buying - If you can get it!

NEW YORK CHAPTER

Due to steadily diminishing attendance at meetings last fall, it was decided not to hold any further get-togethers until more favorable times. I have since received inquiries from three local members whether meetings will be held in the coming fall season. In answer I wish to state that I will gladly call the members together again if a substantial number will write to me and request meetings. A post card will suffice.

J. W. Lowey

POLONUS

The June bulletin of the Polonus Philatelic Society contains a feature article by Vincent Domanski, Jr., dealing with the 1920 Plebiscite issues of Eastern Silesia. As will be remembered the author had an article on this issue some time ago in the Sepicalist. The one appearing in the Polonus bulletin is more detailed and complete and especially does the author give a very fair review of the history which led to the Plebiscite.

FROM LONDON

The latest bulletin of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of London is at hand.

Two more commemorative postmarks have been applied to mails by the Army in England, namely: On May 5th in honor of Gen. Stefanik showing the emblem of Slovakia and linden leaves. Color: blue. The second which appeared May 28th commemorates the 60th anniversary of Dr. Benes. Color: pink.

GOOD NEWS

Your editor is happy to announce that the members may be assured of an eight-page Specialist for many months to come. Today's very timely article on the Carpatho-Ukrainian stamp by Mr. Russell is very interesting and we thank him. Mr. Lowey's article on "Military Postal History of Czechoslovakia," currently appearing serially in the American Philatelist, is hereby presented to our members through the courtesy of Mr. Brookman, editor pro tem. We thank the American Philatelic Society for the privilege of reprinting this very interesting story and for the loan of the cuts to illustrate it.

Thanks to Mr. Meisel and Mr. Zahradnicek for a cacheted cover commemorating Sokol Day at Batawa, Canada.

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Military Postal History of Czechoslovakia

By J. W. LOWEY, A. P. S.

Foreword

During the past I have had published in philatelic magazines articles pertaining to the Czechoslovakian postal issues which commemorate the military history of that country. These articles have invariably brought letters from collectors requesting that I write the complete history of all military issues of Czechoslovakia. Many of my correspondents have mentioned that a reference volume containing all information is needed. Although I, too, have realized this, I have up to this time abstained from undertaking such a work, since to me it seemed that it would be somewhat premature. Much military postal history about the Czechoslovak Armies, which rightfully belongs in such a volume, is still to be enacted. However, as it now appears that the struggle between the Axis forces and the United Nations may be of long duration, I have decided to follow the advice of my fellow philatelists and give the story so far as it is now available.

Its chief purpose is to present, as concisely as possible without sacrificing essential matter, the facts which will enable the collector to become acquainted with the tremendously interesting, but generally unknown, historical facts and subject matter behind the postal issues of Czechoslovakia, issued both at home and abroad. It should be realized, however, that it would be impossible within the scope of this work to tell the entire history in minute detail. To do this would require several large volumes. Despite the fact that I am limited by space, however, and can therefore present only a condensed version of the historical aspects, I believe that I have nevertheless included all necessary information.

I assume that most of my readers are acquainted with the story of Czechoslovakia's past and present struggle for national liberation. I would hardly expect that in these enlightened times there would be any who do not know the significance of men like Masaryk, Benes, and Stefanik, who, foremost among other Czechoslovaks, have given or are now giving their all for the liberation of their homeland.

However, there are a great many others besides these more famous ones who have played important roles in the cause, both as soldiers and statesmen. In telling this story I have sometimes wished to give more information about these men, in order that their individual achievements and their daring deeds might be more broadly recognized. But I have refrained, realizing that in doing so I would then still be slighting many others who would equally deserve mention in the Czechoslovak Hall of Fame.

Introduction

The declaration of Czechoslovakia's independence in 1918 was the culmination of a four year struggle which had engaged the full-time efforts of Czechoslovakia patriots. Everything was in preparation for the new independent state—a nation, a territory, and a government. However, the new state was faced with an immediate problem.

Being inhabited by minority groups who were not Czechoslovaks and who were not in sympathy with Czechoslovak aims, early resistance rose against the Prague government. The Germans who had settled in the Czech historic lands fomented trouble, and strong Hungarian opposition, in view of the claims of the new state to the Slovak territories, played a strong part in stirring dissension. German politicians in the Czech territory refused to recognize the Prague government which had been established on October 28, 1918. Interpreting Wilson's Fourteen Points to their own advantage, they claimed the right of self-determination for the districts inhabited by the Germans, and demanded union with Austria. The Germanized districts of the Czech land were to be autonomous provinces of the new Austrian Republic. Thus, during the first days of the National Revolution, "Deutsch-Boehmen" and "Sudetenland" were formed into independent administrative units. A little later two smaller districts were added, making a total of four administrative units. Together these provinces formed about one-third of the historical lands, but they were not con-

necte dterritorially, nor were they for the most part even linked with the state of which they claimed to be a part.

The Austrian Republic, which had declared its sovereign rights to these provinces, was unable to support its claims with force, and thus, the Prague government was gradually able to carry out the occupation of the German districts successfully, even though the forces at its own disposal were then insignificant. This occupation, incidentally, bore the character of an administrative measure, rather than that of subjugation of insurgent territory. The sporadic conflicts with the state power which afterwards arose were not greater than those occurring in other lands during that reconstruction period.

Postally this period is interesting because during this time the military authorities applied censorship in the dissenting area of the country, as can be seen by the cover shown in Figure 1.



Fig. 1

The Prague government met with greater difficulties in the application of its authority over Slovakia than it did over the German-inhabited sections. Unreconciled to the fact that losing the war meant the end of Magyar lordship over the other nationalities inhabiting Hungary, the ruling classes of that country sought to maintain the Kingdom of St. Stephen. In spite of the fact that the war had gone against them, they still were able to muster sufficient military strength to put up a successful fight.

Czechoslovakia, on the other hand, was not equipped to defend itself with arms against this adversary. Its chief weapon was a moral one—the recognition of the Czechoslovak state by the Entente. True enough, the new state had at the time of its inception three armies composed of remarkable men who had voluntarily taken up arms within Allied countries during the war, thanks to the

revolutionary leaders abroad. They had made the Czech name famous throughout the world for the heroic deeds they had done on the battlefield. But these men were at this time stationed side by side with the Allied troops in France, Italy, and Russia. The government had to depend upon the Czechoslovak Citizen Guards who were organized in the local committees, or military volunteer organization, and on the "Sokols" for whatever policing was necessary.

As a consequence, the part of Slovakia which had been taken over by the Czechoslovak authorities during the early days following the national revolution was again lost. The subsequent months brought large contingents of Czech Legionaries back from the Allied countries, however, and these troops were rushed into Slovakia, so that it was again wrested from Magyar rule.

CZECHOSLOVAK-HUNGARIAN CRISIS 1918-19

Although official records which would enable us to obtain all necessary information do not exist, sufficient light is thrown on the postal history of the Czechoslovak-Hungarian conflict by means of covers and cancellations.

On January 1, 1919 the military authorities took over the postal system in the war zone by establishing the Main Sorting Station at Uherske Hradiste. The postmark of the station (Figure 2) has the inscription "Tridirna Cs. Polnich Post," which means "Sorting Station of the Czechoslovak Fieldposts."

Among the things which we do not know is the exact number of post offices which were installed, though the following number are known to exist on entireties: 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 20, 22, 25, 28, 32, 35, 38, 44, 46, 50, 63, 74 and 75. This would seem to indicate that at least 75 Field Post Offices were in use. What became of the missing stations—those preceding "5" and those interspersed between the other figures—remains a mystery to students of this postal period. It seems hardly possible that not even a single proof of the existence of all those missing Field Post numbers would have turned up in all these years on some cover or card; perhaps it is reasonable to assume that the military authorities simply picked the known numbers at random.

The postmarks, which were applied in black ink, show differences in size and inscription, and these can be classified in five main types as follows:



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

Type One: Diameter of outer circle 27mm. The word "Ceskoslovenska" is spelled without hyphen. The year in between the two horizontal crossbars is indicated only with the last two numerals—"19." Number of Field Post Office is on the bottom between two dots. Fig. 3.

Type Two: Diameter 32mm. "Ceskoslovenska" is hyphenated. Year is abbreviated, as before. Instead of dots on either side of the Field Post number, there appears small ringlets. Fig. 4.

Type Three: Diameter 32mm. "Ceskoslovenska" is unhyphenated and the year is printed in all four figures. Asterisks on sides of Field Post number. Fig. 5.

Type Four: Diameter 30mm. "Ceskoslovenska" is omitted and now replaced by "Polni Posta" and Field Post number. On the bottom, flanked by asterisks "C.S.P.," denoting "Czecho-Slovak Posts." Fig. 6

Type Five: Diameter 30½mm. Identical inscriptions with Type Four, but a "C" has been inserted between "Posta" and the Field Post number. "C" indicates "cislo" (number). Fig. 7.



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig 7

In addition to Field Post cancellations, many covers show the rubber stamps of the various military units, as for instance, "Ceskoslovensky Strelecky Pluk II" (Czechoslovak Infantry Regiment No. II), or "Ssl. pancеровy vlak" (Czechoslovak Armored Train), and many others.

In addition to these, some of the entires also show the rubber stamps which were used by the army while it was still in France. For instance, I have in my collection a card showing the cancellation, Type One, dated July 27th, 1919, which has in addition the double circle rubber stamp in rose carmine with the following bi-lingual French-Czech inscription: "22. Regiment Tcheco-Slovaque *22. Cesko-Slovacky Pluk*" in the outer circle; and "Le Bataillon Vagemestre—Velitel I. Praporu" in the inner circle.

The members of the army, of course, enjoyed free franking privileges, but that there were philatelists among them is indicated by the fact that covers exist which were franked with stamps then in use. Such items are considered very rare by specialists.

An interesting fact is the existence of Hungarian Field Postmarks, which are occasionally found on covers. They are of circular shape, and bear the inscription "Tabori Postihivatal," which might indicate that some Hungarian Field Post Offices were captured by rapidly advancing Czechoslovak units. And since, in this case, their own cancelling devices might not have been as yet available, it is possible the Czechoslovaks may have resorted to temporary use of the Hungarian cancellations. Items with such postmarks are very rare.

It might be mentioned here that the Italian government dispatched several of its army units into the Slovakian battle zone in order to help clear the territory of Magyar troops. However, the Italians were an independent force entirely under their own commanders. Likewise, they had their own postal service, which is indicated by the postmark shown on Figure 8.



Fig. 8

It was late in July of 1920 when the Czechoslovak Field Posts were disbanded.

THE CZECHOSLOVAKIA LEGIONS IN FRANCE, ITALY, AND RUSSIA

France

On the day when the Austro-Hungarian monarchy ordered mobilization of its army to march against Serbia, the Czechs and Slovaks living in Paris staged a spectacular demonstration, ripping the black-yellow flag from its pole above the entrance to the Austrian Embassy. This spark of resistance caught fire among Czechoslovaks all over the world, and marked the beginning of their struggle for liberation from Austrian rule.

(To Be Continued)

FOR SALE

1. Collection of used Canada—almost all from 1869 to date—188 stamps—few early ones—\$1 and \$5 Jubilees.
2. Collection of Newfoundland—used or mint—149 stamps—from first penny stamp to recent stamps—Most of Royal family including 110a and all of 1923.
3. All mint Slovakia from overprints thru 1946 including newspaper and Dues
4. Collection of Czechoslovakia-Scott listings only-complete except for semi-postals—used to 1928—both mint and used from 1929. All Bohemia and Moravia overprints and stamps through #40 1939
5. Collection of Japan—mint or used—mostly mint from 1916—all mint Parks-First set of Airs only. 273 stamps from #1 to date—most of early ones before '75.

* * * * *

All stamps mounted in Scott Specialty Album on either special sheets or quadrilled paper—Some Czechoslovakian stamps and some Japanese stamps written up. All mint stamps and most of used stamps are in crystal mounts. Recent mints have never been hinged. All stamps from reliable dealers and in better than average condition—well centered and light cancellations.

Will break up Newfoundland collection and **sell complete sets or any part** of broken sets. Will sell other collections only by country—Price on request.

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