

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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## EDITORIAL

Six months ago the war seemed nearer its end than now. Many of us were making plans now to employ the leisure which is to be ours again. What a rude awakening! The Nip has taken our last air field in China; he has brought reinforcements into Leyte; the German is fighting fiercely at his back door, east, west and south. We must fight not only as hard as the enemy; we must put in more punches and the punches must be harder than ever before. We've gone far in our all-out effort but not far enough. We owe it to the men at the fronts as well as to ourselves. Let us resolve now, to keep hammering away and taking less time out until this dirty business is done. Buy more bonds than ever before; if you can, give your blood to the Red Cross; support the USO and every war effort and in the end victory must be ours. We have been retreating long enough; we have taken it on the chin plenty since Pearl Harbor; now that we are on the offensive let us not think of what to do when this job is done; let us finish the job first.

## CONGRATULATIONS

Two of our members, Emil J. Michaelson and Robert R. Langer have been promoted to Staff sergeants, the one is at Houlton, Maine and the other at Madison, Wisc.

## APOLOGY

Due to reasons beyond our control, this issue of the Specialist is delayed. When sickness ceases to dog those responsible for the appearance of your paper, the members will get it on time again.

PAY YOUR 1945 DUES NOW!

## STAMPS FOR LIBERATED CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The magazine "Stamp Collecting" of London, brings the following information: Two series of stamps for Liberated Czechoslovakia are already being printed. The first consists of 16 values in eight different designs depicting members of the Czechoslovak forces fighting with the Allies — fighter pilots, soldiers, etc. They are being prepared by De La Rue & Co., Ltd., and the values range from 5 haleru to 10 koruny. These will be put into circulation upon the return of the national government to Prague. A second set, to provide postage in those parts of the country about to be liberated by the Russian armies, is being printed in Moscow from plates flown from England. It consists of 3 values, 50 haleru, 1 and 2 korunas, and portrays the late President Masaryk.

## THE STORY OF A MAP

We have come into possession of Release No. 251 of the Czechoslovak National Council of America wherein is reproduced the correspondence between Dr. Jan Papanek, Czechoslovak Minister Plenipotentiary and Rand McNally & Co., of Chicago, makers of maps. The correspondence is in consequence of the status Rand McNally have accorded to Czechoslovakia in their newest Atlas.

Since the majority of our members collect the stamps of Czechoslovakia we are certain that they will want to know of the unbelievable argument with which the map makers defend their unjustified stand. It would be impossible to reproduce here the entire correspondence but the gist of the matter is this. A leaflet which is issued with each Atlas has this first paragraph: "Is this Rand McNally Atlas up to date? Yes, — it shows the present national boundaries. It shows the present national boundaries. It shows Czechoslovakia as part of Germany, etc., etc...."

Dr. Papanek points out that though Czechoslovakia in the Atlas is incorporated into Germany, it on the other hand shows countries such as Denmark, Albania, Norway and others in colors distinct from Germany. Why a different treatment for Czechoslovakia since other countries are likewise occupied by German forces? The publishers push this and other valid arguments simply aside with the remark that "...since Czechoslovakia has been declared a protectorate by Germany it has ceased to be an independent country."

The entire correspondence shows the incorrect and downright prejudiced attitude on the part of Rand McNally Co., in regard to Czechoslovakia. Its full extent can only be realized by reading the complete correspondence. We would earnestly urge members to do so. Write for your copies to the Czechoslovakia National Council of America, 4049 West 26th Street, Chicago 23, Illinois. Ask for Release No. 251 and subsequent releases dealing with "The Story of a Map."

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## Posta Ceskoslovenska 1919

Translated from the Hirsch Franek Handbook  
by W. L. Russell

(Continued from November number)

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### Overprint "F"

Of quite similar format, and almost the same size, are the Hungarian Postage Stamps, Turul 1, 2, 3, 6, 50, 60, 70f; War Issue 10, 15, 40f (note: the surcharge of 2h on each value of the War Issue was disregarded in the overprinted issue); Reaper 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 40f; Karl 10, 20, 25f; Zita 40, 50f, and the Newspaper and Express stamps. Therefore, one overprint of the same sort could be used for the lot, with an angle of 55 degrees. An examination of the overprints of these stamps leads us to the conclusion that the clichés were probably produced from matrices which were made from repeated use of a single hand-setting, since we can discover no typical variations.

The sole clear and typical sign which permits of the differentiation of two overprint types is the shape of the second "9" in "1919." In type 1 this is normal, whilst in type 2 it is cut diagonally at base. This difference, however, is not due to the hand-setting, but to the casting from one or more matrices, because the diagonal cut is not always the same.

The same plate was used for overprinting all the previously listed Hungarian stamps. On it, however, various alterations were made from time to time, which exhibit on the one hand a different type of overprint, and on the other hand various bleached letters when a battered block was replaced by another of the same type.

Except Overprint "B," Overprint "F" probably displays the greatest number of imperfections and printing faults of the whole series, since far too large a number of sheets were overprinted with it. In so far as these blemishes are constant, they must be regarded as distinguishing the blocks, since the trivial varieties of the overprint itself are no reliable test.

PLATE 1. The 2f Reaper Stamp with its good condition and cleanly accomplished overprint, may be regarded as the first printing stage of this plate.

But even with this value, of which very many sheets were overprinted, it is possible to follow the origin and evolution of some printing flaws, and draw conclusions therefrom on the further printing proceedings. Besides the 2f Reaper the following were overprinted with plate 1:

Turul 2f; War Issue 10f; Reaper 5 and 10f; Karl 10f, of characteristic defects — so far as they are of importance in later stages of printing — we quote:

(a) On 19th stamp. Second "E" in CESHOSLOVENSKA is damaged. This letter we found at first undamaged on the 2f Turul and in a part of the 2f Reaper issue.

(b) On 45th stamp. Second "T" in "1919" damaged.

(c) On 46th stamp. "P" in POSTA damaged inside on the upright stem of the P.

(d) On 68th stamp. "P" in POSTA damaged on the outside of the curve.

(e) Numerous defects show themselves progressively on the 47th, 55th, 56th, and 58th stamps (on the 55th and 58th stamps the overprints are indistinct, whilst on the 56th stamp we confirmed by some sheets of the 10f War Issue an incomplete overprint reading CESHOSLOVENSZY).

Temporary alteration of Plate 1. For overprinting the 5f Reaper stamp, the stereos which caused defective overprints on the 47th, 55th, 56th and 58th stamps were replaced by others. The replacements, however, whether by mistake, intencion, or makeshift, were of Type "D," such as were used for overprinting the quadrilateral Newspaper Stamps and Postage Dues, and which are easily recognizable both by the difference in angle and the different positioning of the letters. Although these 4 overprints cannot be said to be wrong, since nowhere was it expressly stated which angle the overprint should take, nor how the 3 lines of letters should be spaced, yet we may rightly regard them as errors, because they differ so strikingly from the overprint always used for these stamps. Of these 4 wrong overprints, two belong to Type 1 (on the 56th and 58th stamps), one to Type 2 (55th stamp), and one to Type 3 (47th stamp). Only a small lot of the 5f Reaper issue was overprinted with this wrongly repaired plate. This is confirmed by the scarcity of them, as we shall show in the following:

PLATE 1 REPAIRED. Besides the exchange of the above mentioned 4 imperfect stereos, there were in the original Plate those of the 45th and 46th stamps still to be exchanged for unblemished ones, so that in this repaired plate we find the following alterations:

On the Sheet places: 45 46 47 55 56 58

New Stereos of Types: 1 1 2 2 2 2

The connection of this repaired plate with the original confirms a whole series of overprint faults, namely on the 19th and 68th stamps. According to the overprint faults we are able to differentiate, by the overprints of this plate, the two principal printing periods. In the first comes the overprint of the Turul 6f and 50f stamps, the 6, 15, 20f Reaper, and the 15f War Stamp; in the second printing period with this plate we find the 40f War Stamp, Reaper 3, 25, 35 and 40f, Karl 20, and 25f, Zita 40f, and the Express Stamps. The second printing period is characterized by the typical overprint breakages on the 45th stamp ("T" in POSTA), on the 47th ("S" in POSTA), on the 56th ("O" and "N" in CESHOSLOVENSKA), and in particular on the 96th stamp, ("P" in POSTA) and others. That not all these faults came at the same time is shown by the 15f War Stamp, which came on the border of both overprinting periods, and which exhibits all the above-mentioned flaws except that on the 47th stamp.

We have not seen complete sheets of the dearer stamps — 1, 3, 60, and 70f Turul, and the 50f Zita. Of these, the 1f and the 70f were certainly overprinted in small blocks only. The relative numbers of both types of overprint were not altered by the afore-mentioned repairs, and in the repaired plate (as in the original) there are 27 of Type 1 and 73 of Type 2.

PLATE 2. The Hungarian Newspaper stamps required a special plate, because here the stamp sheet is broader than the postage stamps, although the perpendicular measurement is the same. As may be seen from the plan (on page 193) the sequence of types is quite altered, although the relative number of each is almost the same — 28 of Type 1 and 72 of Type 2.

(To Be Continued)

# Military Postal History of Czechoslovakia

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

The following two issues were released by the Czechoslovak Government to commemorate the Legion in Russia.

## Zborov

On June 15, 1937 two stamps appeared which were of identical design. (Figure 23). They show a group of Legionnaires:—50h deep green, and 1Kc rose lake.

The stamps were designed by J. Vleck, and were engraved by B. Heinz. Perforation 12½. The printing arrangement is the same as in the case of the Arras issue, previously mentioned.

On June 29th the main post office at Prague applied a special green postmark to mails bearing the legend "20th Anniversary of the Battle of Zborov."

## Bakhmatch

A single 50h denomination was released on March 10, 1938, which was also designed by J. Vleck and engraved by B. Heinz. Again, the design shows a group of Legionnaires. Perforation 12½. (Figure 24)



Fig. 23



Fig. 24

The basic printing arrangement is the same as that for the Zborov issue. However, the blank space shows a design in the form of stacked rifles and bugle. On top is the word "Bachmac" and on the sides appear the year dates "1918-1938."

A commemorative cancellation was applied on March 12, 1938 in the town of Olomouc. The blue double circle has the rose carmine inscription "20th Anniversary of the Battle of Bakhmatch."

## LEGION ISSUES

### SEMI-POSTALS OF 1919

Celebrating the first anniversary of the republic, the postal authorities issued a set of six stamps which, although they are known as a charity issue, are more of a military character by virtue of their design and inscriptions, and because part of the proceeds were donated to the Fund of Orphans of Legionaries.

The set consists of the following six values: 15h gray green; 25h dark brown (light brown); 50h dark blue (light blue); 75h slate; 100h brown violet; 120h violet (yellow paper). (Figures 25, 26)

The three lower denominations show the allegorical design of the Bohemian Lion breaking the chains of enslavement, and date of liberation. The other three values also have an allegorical design, showing "Mother Republic with Child," and the inscription "For the Orphans of Legionaries."

The design is the work of Professor Jacob Obrovsky. The three lower values were printed by typography, and the higher ones by the recess method. The stamps are both line and comb perforated, and show various gauge measurements, including compound.



Fig. 25



Fig. 26

Simultaneously, the main post office at Prague used a special cancellation. Letters and cards franked with these stamps were to be deposited in a special box at the main post office. However, a quantity of mail franked with regular issues then in use was dropped into the receptacle, either intentionally or by oversight, and this accounts for the fact that the postmarks are sometimes found on other stamps than the issue for which they were intended.

Cancellations of two different shapes were used—one a double circle, and the other, a linden leaf. Also, various colors of ink were used, and consequently, they are either blue or red or green or black, with the legend, "For the Orphans of Legionnaires." The postmarks were applied from October 28 to November 3, 1919.



Fig. 27



Fig. 28

#### ISSUE OF 1934

On July 15, 1934 a set of four stamps appeared, designed by Vaclav Fiala and engraved by K. Seizinger. They were printed from rotary presses, and perforated 9%. The four adhesives have the following designs:

50h—The "Ceska Druzina" taking the oath on October 28th 1914, at St. Sofia Square, Kiev, Russia.

1Kc—The "Nazdar" Company giving the oath on October 12th 1914, at Bayonne, France.

2Kc—The figure of Jaroslav Heyduk, a Czech resident of Kiev, holding the colors of the Druzina, its design consisting of the Crown of St. Wenceslas as the central motif, with the emblems of the four provinces of Czechoslovakia: Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Slovakia, in each corner.

3Kc—Legionnaires in Russian, French, and Serbian uniforms.



Fig. 29



Fig. 30



Fig. 31



Fig. 32

In honor of the Czechoslovak Legion the following commemorative postmarks were applied to mails.

On October 22, 1934 and for some time thereafter the post offices of Prague used a machine cancellation. Its central section showed the date postmark. To the left is a French helmet and laurel branch and the inscription, "20. Vyroci csl. armady 1914-34." (20th Anniversary of the Czechoslovak Army 1914-34). To the right is a Russian military cap, and the words, "Česka Družina, Rota Nazdar 1914-1934" (Czech League, Nazdar Company, 1914-1934.) (Figure 33)



Fig. 33

On October 28, 1934, a round, double circle postmark in gold was applied by the post office at Prague-Hrad (Presidential Residence) with the legend "20. Vyroci zalozeni csl. armady 1914-1934" (20th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Czechoslovak Army 1914-1934).

From July 7th to 9th 1935 the post office Prague-Hrad cancelled mails with a blue, double circle postmark, bearing the legend "III. Manifestacni Sjezd csl. legionaru" (Third National Convention of the Czechoslovak Legion).

#### JOHN ZIZKA OF TROCN OV

On June 30, 1924 Czechoslovakia commemorated the 500th anniversary of the death of one of its greatest warriors, John Zizka, of Trocnov.

For an appreciation of his significance it is necessary to mention other contemporary figures. In 1403 the Englishman, Wycliffe, a teacher of theology at the University of Prague, had lost favor with his superiors owing to his teachings of Catholic reform. He was ousted and succeeded by JAN Z. HUSINEC, more familiarly known to history as John Hus. A searcher after truth himself, he took up the defense of Wycliffe and continued the latter's teachings of reform. Like Leonardo da Vinci, he spent part of his time in the construction of mechanical devices, some of which models were perfected in later centuries for practical use. He also gave the Czechs the first dictionary of their language, which has never been changed up to this day.

In consequence of his continuing to embarrass his superiors at Avignon (France), then the seat of the Popes, with his reformative teachings, he was ordered to appear before a Papal council. He refused at first, but finally consented, having been persuaded by Emperor Sigismund of Bohemia, who promised

him protection. The promised aid never materialized, however. On the contrary, at the trial later held at Constance, in which the Emperor personally appeared as prosecutor, Hus was pronounced a heretic and was sentenced to be burned at the stake immediately.

As soon as his martyred death became known in Bohemia, the nation revolted against the Catholic church and the Emperor. Jan Zizka, a man of wealth, became the leader in the uprising, and formed a tremendous army of followers, which he equipped. His legions became known as "God's Warriors," and he led them from victory to victory against the armies of Emperor Sigismund, finally forcing the Papal authorities and the Emperor to recognize Hus's reforms for the kingdom of Bohemia.

It is interesting to note that the tactics which Zizka used in his campaigns were new then, and many of his weapons can be classified as forerunners of modern war equipment, such as a type of armored wagons, drawn by horses, which was used for the same purpose as the modern tank.

In the struggle for national independence Jan Zizka became the spiritual leader through centuries, and for this and many other reasons, it has been a puzzle to historians as well as collectors why the Czechoslovak Government has never honored him on its stamps. In 1921 the postal authorities prepared a set of two stamps showing the portraits of Hus and Zizka. For some reason, the designs of Zizka were not approved, and instead, two adhesives were released, both showing the likeness of Hus as a young priest.

In 1924, with the approach of the 500th anniversary of Zizka's death, the postmaster announced plans for a "Jan Zizka Commemorative Issue," and designs by government artists, as well as independent designers, were submitted. Some of these are unusually striking, as shown in Figure 34. The government itself prepared the following eight designs: (1) The birth of Zizka (2) Zizka's fortified camp at Tabor (3) Zizka at Rabi (4) Zizka dictating terms to Korybutovic (5) Map showing the conquest of Slovakia in 1423 (6) Battle at Lipan (7) Zizka in full battle armor in 1424 shortly before his death (8) Zizka's grave and view of the town Caslav where he is buried.

However, the set never was issued. Instead, on June 30, 1924 (the day of the anniversary) a special cancellation in red violet was used at Trocnov, Zizka's birthplace. (Figure 35)



Fig. 34



Fig. 35

STEFANIK



Fig. 36

In memory of General M. R. Stefanik, co-liberator and first Minister of War, who tragically lost his life in an airplane accident in 1919, the government issued a single stamp with his portrait on May 13, 1935. It was of green color, steel engraved by B. Heinz, from a photograph. Perforation  $9\frac{3}{4}$ . (Figure 36)

In 1936 the stamp was re-issued in violet color. Although the portrait is identical with the previous issue, the value was changed to 60h, and instead of the word "haleru" between the two numerals, there now appears an ornamental design.

In 1938 it again was released as a 50h value, in green, retaining all other characteristics of the 1936 issue.

On August 13, 1938 a special postmark was applied at Komarno, a double blue circle with the rose carmine legend "20.VyrociP.Pl.12\*Gen.M.R.Stefanika\* Zenijni pluk 3" (20th Anniversary of the 12th Inf. Regt. and Engineers Regt. No. 3, Hon. Commander General M. R. Stefanik).

#### NATIONAL GUARD OF THE CITY OF PRAGUE

The history of the National Guard of Prague is a very rich one, and would require a chapter of its own to do justice to its record. It was the only organized force which, during the middle ages, played an independent role as militia. During the turbulent days of 1918 when the armies of Czechoslovakia still were in Allied countries it and the Sokols were the only semi-military forces to keep order in the capital of the new republic.

Since then, however, it has lost its original significance, although its tradition is revived annually by parades in which its members march through the streets of Prague, clad in colorful uniforms. The members participate in special events and also serve as an auxiliary police force in local emergencies.

On June 10, 1935 the main post office at Prague applied to mail a special double circle green cancellation with the legend "1360-1935 \* 575-Vyroci zalozeni narodni gardy hl.mesta Prahy" (1360-1935, 575th Anniversary of the Foundation of the National Guard of Prague.)

#### LITTLE ENTENTE

To express their solidarity the three nations forming the Little Entente — Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania — decided to issue in 1937 simultaneously a set of two stamps. Although each country used a different central design, all of them had three interlocking rings on the bottom, which were to symbolize the unity of the three countries.

Czechoslovakia was the first to release the stamps. They were issued on July 1st. They had been designed by J. C. Vondrous and engraved by B. Heinz. Perforation 12½.

The adhesives show a view of Hradcany and St. Vitus Cathedral. On top is the inscription "Petite Entente" and on the bottom, between the numerals, the three rings. The denominations were: 2Kc green; 3Kc blue. (Figure 37)

Again in this instance a novel printing arrangement was used. The stamps were printed in sheets of sixteen rows of ten subjects each. The fifteenth row shows blank spaces, so that in each case where a single stamp of the fourteenth and sixteenth row, respectively, is separated from the sheet, a so-called gutter pair is obtained.

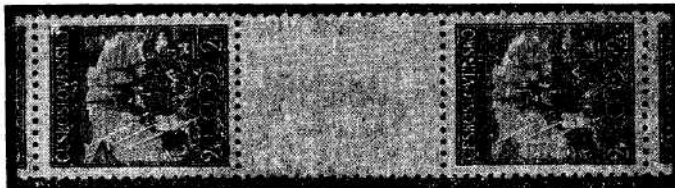


Fig. 37

In the fall of the same year the Czechoslovak Army held its annual maneuvers. Yugoslavia and Romania were invited to send contingents of their armies, and it was proposed as a special feature to arrange for a friendly competition among the various units. To commemorate these events, the postal authorities ordered special postmarks applied in the respective areas and in consequence, the following ones were used.

(To be continued)