

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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Editor Frank J. Kovarik, 2502 So. Kedzie Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.

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EDITORIAL

A short time ago we received from Mr. James B. Hatcher, Stamp Editor of the New York Journal-American, a "Breakfast Dividend," an "overflow of interesting remarks prepared for the Philatelic Writers' Breakfast at the 10th American Philatelic Congress in Philadelphia, December 1-3, 1944." The theme suggested by Mr. Hatcher, chairman of the Writers' Breakfast, was "The Place of Philately and of Philatelic Literature in the Postwar World." Ten papers were submitted at this breakfast; each of these was interesting because it shows that Americans are now leaving their old shell of isolationism and are looking forward to a world of co-operation not only in the realm of stamps but in all phases of world intercourse.

Several of the speakers tried to show that philately is a means of better understanding between the different peoples of this globe. We have been and are interested in this; we sincerely believe that diplomats and international politicians cannot continue dictating policies for their country; policies which all too often had but one aim and that to increase the power of these men and thereby fatten their already bulging purses.

All great movements strive for the same end and all are sincere in believing that if everybody could see their point there would never be another war. Christianity teaches the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man; how many of us are willing to consider the Negro a brother? It is not Christianity's fault; the fault is in our hearts. We are exceedingly selfish; we think only of ourselves and fear to go farther. We belong to International Societies and Fraternities; at international conventions of those orders we blow off our tops telling all the brothers we are one and then look for an opportunity to stab him in the back or at least take a few pennies out of Brother's pocket. Of all the movements one comes nearest to this ideal of world peace (this is, of course, a personal opinion) and that is an international language. Even this is not perfect because we know of fratricidal wars (our own Civil War comes into this category) but it is a step in the right direction. To understand our neighbor we must know the language he speaks. It is impossible to learn all the languages of the world; why not learn one which is so very easy yet so astonishingly clear as Esperanto? It is not here to supplant any native tongue; it is an auxiliary language designed scientifically and as a result one can express oneself more easily and more clearly than in any other language. We know that Basic English is so poor a medium of intercommunication that no American could learn it and use it to advantage. But this is not to be an editorial on the value of an international help language. What we are trying to say is: we don't believe that Philately, per se, can be a means of understanding between peoples because not everybody can learn to love stamps.

Then what is the place of Philately and Philatelic literature in the post war world? Let us look at the situation as it is in our country.

We, in the United States, have three grades of philatelic literature at our

disposal; elementary, advanced and specialized.

In the first group we have most of our weekly philatelic magazines such as Gossip, with its Beginners Page and with Harry Weiss, who promises a series of 52 articles on stamp collecting; Stamps, which occasionally gives something specialized; Mekeel's, an excellent medium for acquainting us with new issues of the world; Chamber's; Linn's; Western Stamp Collector and others.

In the advanced group we have the Collectors Club Philatelist, The Stamp Specialist and The American Philatelist. These magazines are gems but in the hands of a novice become poison; the novice gets scared there is too much to stamp collecting and leaves the hobby in disgust.

Now we come to the third group. Here we have the specialized treatment of stamps and literature is plentiful (even though we do complain we do not get enough). The magazines in this group are not large nor are they supported sufficiently by those interested, but they do give the reader more for his money than the other magazines because they are packed with the information he seeks. In this group we find the following: Bureau Issues; Cancels; Proofs and Essays; Polonus Bulletin; Czechoslovak Specialist; Russian-American; Philatelic Literature; and study groups of: China; Australia; South America; Switzerland; Holland; etc.

From the foregoing it is plain that we do not suffer from a lack of philatelic literature, on the contrary we may think we have too much of it. What we really need is a stamp-magazine house-cleaning. Too much stress is placed on the value of stamps as an investment. The present prices brought by the Famous Americans and the Overrun Nations issues reminds us of the Tulip Bulb Boom in Holland several centuries ago; it is no different than the Stock Market Boom just before the Big Crash in 1929. Philately will lose many adherents when the house-of-cards price structure of stamps collapses. We do not know who is responsible for this marking up of prices, but we do know that these prices cannot last. It is up to the editors of Stamp Columns in our secular press and up to the editors of the philatelic periodicals of the first group to explain to the neophyte that stamp collecting is a recreational hobby and not a miniature Wall Street.

The periodicals of the second group are doing fine and we sincerely hope they continue as heretofore. They have been improving right along.

The third group is doing fairly well; it needs more workers. Those collectors who are specialists in a certain group should get busy and prepare articles or at least notes of their findings and thus preserve the fruits of their labor for posterity. Editors of this group are doing their job gratis and must earn their living same as the rest of you in some other line of endeavor. Why not help them out now? After this war is over, these will be the first to make contacts with specialists of the old world and thus bring to their readers works of those well qualified writers of Europe.

We in America have never worked in close harmony with stamp organizations of the other hemisphere and it is only recently we made contacts with stamps collectors of the Republics to the south of U.S. In the postwar world we should institute closer co-operation with collectors everywhere; we'll all benefit in more ways than one.

We must realize that the world is making such great strides in shortening space between countries; technology is doing so much work for us; leisure time will spoil us unless we do something with it. Every avocation is beneficial and we should advertise the benefits of stamp collecting to others and thus create more friends not only for our hobby but for ourselves. We should correspond and exchange stamps with collectors of other countries and thereby learn that people of other lands are just as human as we are. We should promote stamp exhibitions which will advertise our hobby to noncollectors and thus show them what fun stamp collecting can be, if we but choose to get away from the chore many are making of their hobby.

What is the place of philatelic literature in the postwar world? As in the case of all literature, its aim is to bring truth to its readers. Do not exaggerate nor minimize the value of the hobby, just keep a steady course. If the philatelic press does the right thing, then stamp collecting must continue to be the King of Hobbies and the Hobby of all men.

OVERSEAS

Our good friend, Maj. William Reiner-Deutsch, past president of our Society, is now overseas with Uncle Sam's Armed Forces. We wish him the best of luck and plenty of health and we hope he returns soon.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Wm. Bauer, 19 Holden St., Clifton, N. J.

REAL NEWS

Alfons Stach, 99 Nassau Street, has a very large selection of postmarks of the Czechoslovak Army in France and England. There are very many choice items. This material is scarce and does not remain unsold very long, so we would suggest that interested members contact Alfons as soon as possible. Please mention the Specialist.

In this connection we might mention that during our visit Stach wore what we would call the most unique tie we have ever seen. It is a hand painted cravat of excellent workmanship and though he would not tell us the price we would appraise it highly. It is of a very heavy black silk showing the exact reproduction of the Czechoslovak Flag stamp released in this country in 1943.

J. W. L.

NOTIFY US OF YOUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS

We are now trying to locate the following members: Mrs. Olga Strnad and Messrs. Emil Burger, Geo. Baltheiser and Anton Katochvil. Any member knowing the whereabouts of these members should notify the editor immediately. Thank you.

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR YEAR 1944

Balance as of Jan. 1, 1944	\$160.54
Receipts:	
Total dues payments received during 1944	\$146.80
Total comm. on sales circuits during 1944	12.72
Total advertising in Specialist during 194475
Total receipts	160.27
Total balance and receipts	\$320.81
Expenditures:	
Total payments to printer for printing	\$111.12
Total expense of editor	35.63*
Total expense of Secretary	2.00
Total expense of Treasurer	1.00
Total expenditures	\$150.75
Balance as of Dec. 31, 1944	170.06
Total expenditures and balance	\$320.81

* The editor's expenses included the binding of Specialists which were mailed to patron members and included all mailing expenses.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES?

Your treasurer has mailed requests to all delinquent members to pay their 1945 dues. Those who have not yet met their obligation to their Society are requested to do so now. The April issue of the Specialist will be mailed only to those members who are in good standing.

Posta Ceskoslovenska 1919

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

(continued from December, 1944 number)

ILLUSTRATIONS

PLATE I (Type C)

Row		
1	3 2 1 1	3 2 2 1
2	2 3 3 3	1 3 1 1
3	1 3 2 3	1 2 1 3
4	1 2 2 3	3 3 1 2
5	3 1 1 1	1 1 3 3
6	3 1 3 3	3 1 1 2
7	2 1 2 1	2 2 2 2
8	3 3 1 2	2 3 1 2
9	2 1 1 2	1 3 3 2
10	3 2 2 2	2 1 1 3
11	3 3 1 1	2 3 3 1
12	3 3 2 3	1 2 2 3
13	2 1 x x	x x 2 2

PLATE II (Type C)

1 3 1 3 2	2 1 3 3 1
1 2 3 1 2	2 3 3 1 3
2 3 1 2 1	1 2 3 3 1
1 2 1 1 3	2 2 1 1 1
2 3 2 3 1	2 2 2 1 3
2 1 3 3 2	1 2 2 3 2
3 1 2 1 2	3 3 3 2 1
3 3 3 3 1	1 1 2 1 3
2 1 1 2 3	3 3 2 1 3
3 2 2 1 1	1 3 2 1 1

ONLY PLATE (Type D)

1 3 1 2 2	3 3 1 3 3
3 2 1 2 1	3 2 2 2 1
1 3 1 1 2	3 2 3 3 3
3 3 3 3 2	2 1 2 1 3
3 3 2 3 3	3 1 2 2 2
1 3 3 3 1	3 1 3 2 2
1 1 3 2 3	1 1 3 2 2
2 1 3 2 2	2 3 1 3 2
1 2 3 1 3	1 1 2 1 1
1 1 1 2 2	1 2 3 1 3

PLATE I (Type F)

2 2 2 2 2	1 1 2 1 2
1 2 2 2 2	1 2 1 2 2
1 2 2 2 1	2 1 2 2 2
2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2
2 2 2 2 1	2 1 2 2 2
1 2 2 2 2	2 1 2 1 1
2 2 1 2 2	2 1 2 2 2
1 2 1 2 2	2 2 2 1 1
2 2 2 2 2	2 1 2 1 2
1 2 2 2 1	2 2 2 1 1

PLATE II (Type F)

2 2 2 2 1	2 2 1 2 1
2 1 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2
2 2 1 2 1	2 2 2 1 2
2 2 2 2 2	2 2 1 1 2
2 2 1 2 2	2 2 2 2 2
2 2 1 1 1	2 2 2 1 1
2 1 2 2 2	2 1 1 2 2
1 2 1 2 2	2 2 1 2 1
1 2 1 2 1	2 2 2 1 2
2 1 2 2 2	1 2 2 2 2

OVERPRINT "G"

This last overprint was made for overprinting all Hungarian Postage Dues, (with both black and red figures) all of which have broad rectangular format. After examination of the various overprints we have established that four hand-settings were used for the stereotyped production of printing blocks, so that four types of overprint may be distinguished. Their less striking differences are shown in the sketch on page 194, and exist partly in the somewhat varying relative positioning of the words, partly in that three of the types (2, 3, and 4) show the second "9" in "1919" diagonally cut at base before the stereotyping, whilst it is always intact in Type 1; and finally in an unimportant variation of angle (in the first three types it is about 36 degrees, whilst in Type 4 is 35 degrees.) Type 4 shows still another characteristic, namely a flaw in the inner part of the second "O" in CESKOSLOVENSKA, which shows as a white horizon-

ONLY PLATE (Type G)

2 2 1 4 3	3 4 3 4 4
1 4 4 3 3	4 4 3 2 1
2 2 2 2 4	1 1 2 2 3
1 3 1 1 1	2 1 3 2 4
3 3 3 4 2	1 3 2 1 4
3 3 2 1 3	3 4 2 3 4
3 3 4 3 3	4 4 4 1 2
3 3 3 1 4	4 1 4 1 2
3 4 3 1 1	2 1 4 4 4
2 1 4 1 1	2 2 2 4 2

Editor's note: These illustrations have been omitted from previous installments of the translation and we are sure the readers will forgive the editor. It has been called to the attention of the editor that this translation should have been illustrated same as the handbook. True, many of our readers had the handbook in Czech or German but lack of knowledge of the language prevented their complete enjoyment of this work. It is for these that the present translation is intended. Others tell me that now they understand the stamps better; even without the illustrations.

tal line. This was caused by a short thread on the hand setting which was squeezed into the matrix, and therefore caused a distinct mark on all clichés cast from it.

The Types are about equally represented, as follows: Type 1 (23), Type 2 (23), Type 3 (27), Type 4 (27), or roughly about a quarter of the whole to each type of overprint.

VALUE OF THE STAMPS

In the foregoing paragraphs we have discussed all the stamps issued with overprint "Posta Ceskoslovenska 1919," and also deal with the printing itself. By means of our discussion of the individual kinds of overprints, and also the separation of the various types, we have indicated a new way to specialize this particular issue. General collectors, of course, only interest themselves in these stamps according to the catalog, and pay no attention to these philatelically interesting varieties.

The centering of both overprints, and the stamp itself, have a great influence on the value of perfect stamps. There are two stamps (Hungarian 2f Newspaper stamp with Watermark "C" and 50f P. Due with black figures, Watermark "B") which are invariably received in poor condition, since the greater part had been sold already by the post in damaged (broken) condition. Such damage naturally reduces the value of the stamp considerably, just as does the firm's punctured "GSt" found on the 10f Reaper (white figures). Consequently, collectors should regard the stamps with firm's punctured initials as valueless.

Blemishes, such as damaged gum, skinned spots, paper folds, stains, tears, etc., were usually easily concealed by taking a mass of unused low value stamps and, by pasting them on small bits of paper and canceling same, making apparently used stamps of them, the cancellation covering the damaged spot. In these deceptions the P. O. (Collectors' Counter) was for a long time helpful, since, up to

Sept. 1930 they not only gave genuine but current, cancellations on stamps already out of circulation, but also regarded the applicant's wishes with regard to the date of cancellation. On this occasion the general principle can be expressed that the stamps were postally used in quite insignificant quantities, and only then those of which a greater proportion had been sold and the surplus of which (values such as 15 and 20h) people wished to use; or by philatelists, principally because the manner of the sale and the 50% surcharge excluded them from normal use. In other words, some philatelists felt that they were more valuable used than unused.

The greater part of the used stamps — not only those on letter-pieces, but on envelopes and registered covers — were canceled to order. It can be stated conclusively that cancellations on this issue are not genuine, because the postal officials were not in a position to prove the genuineness of the overprints that were submitted to them for cancelling. The catalogs, you will note, quote used stamps in the main at the same prices as unused. An exception is the 2K dark blue, with which we shall deal in the next installment.

2K AUSTRIAN POSTAGE STAMP, DARK BLUE

In discussing the used 2K dark blue, one should distinguish between two entirely different classes of cancellations. The first is the cancellation "de complaisance," which is also found on all other stamps of this issue, usually stuck on a small piece of paper or an envelope. This case is just such an example, as with all dearer stamps, and usually has the same object — to conceal a blemish. Frequently with this value are found cancellations of which the name-place cannot be confirmed, because the cancellation is blurred or else only a small part of it shows on the stamp. Such used stamps — and they predominate in this value — cannot be taken at full value from a philatelic point of view, as may be realized from the following. The overprint on this value, of course, came from the printery of A. Haase during the period of the production of the issue, but on stamps (in some cases) that had already been used, and which naturally could not again serve in a postal capacity. Again, a report (naturally not official) stated that prior to the issue of the overprints of all stamps, the Postal dept. assembled stocks of unused stamps of the darker shades (which included the 2K dark blue) in the form of complete sheets stuck on paper, and overprinted them with Type A overprinting partly in red and partly in black. This was to test the suitability and readability of the overprint on dark stamps. Such proof overprints of course, should never have emerged from the printery, but should have been destroyed. They arrived in the hands of the trade, however, just as other proof prints and printer's waste did, and soon found themselves in great demand, as it was found that the unused 2K dark blue was a rarity. The endeavor to gloss over the irregular origin of this stamp led to them being stuck on covers or bits of paper and canceled with a current CSR cancellation, so that the earlier Austrian cancellation was covered over. Such productions are to be considered as forgeries, notwithstanding that each individual part (gumming excepted) is genuine. The union of these individual parts, however, constitute a philatelic deception and a fraud to the buyer, who is unaware of the manipulation of the swindle.

In addition to the foregoing, another rather harsh version of these 2K stamps is in circulation. It is to the effect that overprints "de complaisance" were made on stamps which had previously been used, and these were sold by dealers as used copies of the overprint. This explanation, however, sounds less convincing, but if it is true then we reiterate that such previously used 2K dark blue stamps do not rightly belong in a collection of CSR. The fact that such prints reached the public in quite the reverse of small quantities speaks volumes regarding the carelessness with which the inspection and control of the printing proceedings was carried out, and is also one of the reasons why the collector does not look with favor upon these philatelic speculations of the Postal Authorities.

STAMPS ISSUED WITH INCOMPLETE OVERPRINTS

In this review of the overprint types we have already mentioned some occasional or constant overprint blemishes, i. e. those caused by damaged, or progressive wear-and-tear of the printing blocks (broken or missing letters, or figures or the year-date), and the white or black flecks in the overprint caused by

the waste from the perforations fastening on to the metal of the printing blocks. Incomplete overprints were now and again caused by small pieces of paper, which prevented part of the overprint from appearing on the stamps. The greater part of the overprint blemishes, however, were caused through the older sheets of stamps which arrived for overprinting, and which, when being counted, folded, and stuck together by the P. O.'s, became broken. Overprinting such sheets was very difficult and caused lots of blemishes, folds, out-of-position prints (due to the turning up of sheet or stamp border, some parts of the overprint were on the reverse of the stamp), incomplete prints (when only a part of the overprint appeared owing to a corner of the sheet being turned **back**), overprints on rubbed-through stamps etc. Sometimes through incorrect feeding in of sheets to the machine overprints were off-centre, in either horizontal, vertical, or sloping positions, causing from 2 to 4 defective overprints to appear on a stamp, either too high or too low, and with the degree on angle always tending to vary.

Such out-of-position overprints, in which one or more of the vertical or horizontal stamp rows of the sheet were left unprinted, belong in the class of "stamps not issued," just as do inverted overprints, overprints on the back, double overprints etc., which were held back by the control. It is conceivable that only the less striking overprint blemishes could escape the control, as for example offsets of the overprint on the reverse of the stamp, and such like. Even if it is granted that far more incomplete prints arrived at the Collector's Counter with this than with later issues, still we insist that all thick, ill turned-out prints should be classed as "unissued."

STAMPS NOT ISSUED

The different sorts of unissued stamps may be classified into 3 principal groups, as follows:

1. Proof Overprints.
2. Values other than those listed, and overprints on irregular stamps, or in irregular colors on the values issued.
3. Stamps damaged by the overprints, faulty, duplicated, or badly executed overprints (Printers' Waste).

1. To this class belong on the one hand the black and red overprints on those DARK blue Austrian 2K stamps which had already been used. On the other hand, proof overprints on unprinted paper. Whilst a great quantity of the used 2K stamps exist in the trade, the overprint proofs on white paper are very scarce.

2. Besides the stamps which were sold at the Collectors' Counter or in the Central Administration, other kinds of Austrian and Hungarian stamps became overprinted. These, however, one must reject, since such a quite insignificant number of them were handled. They are stamps which were definitely obsolete before the Revolution, or were only issued in foreign territory (such as the Koztarsasag issue), namely:

AUSTRIAN

Postage; 1 h Karl VI (1913) without PORTO (overprint B).

Newspaper: 2h 1910 (head facing right) (Overprint D).

P. Dues; Large figure 1 (B), 10, 20, 100 (D), 100 and 5K Violet (E).

HUNGARIAN

Postage: Turul 20, 25, 30, 35, 80f (overprint F)

Franz Josef 1 and 2K (F); Second War Issue

(Hadi Segely) 5, 10, 35f (F); Savings Bank Stamp 10f (F)

Stamps with overprint Koztarsasag; Reaper 2, 5; Karl 10, 15, 20, 25; Zita 40f (F)

P. Dues; Black figures 6 10, 20f with various Wmks (G)

The extraordinarily rare appearance of some of these stamps shows that either only a small number were overprinted, or else only a small number were retained from the stocks overprinted and the rest destroyed. In both cases, philatelic consideration would be the motive.

(Continued next issue)