

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE  
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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## EDITORIAL

"La guerre est finis!" We recall our Armistice Day in France back in 1918. Our outfit was on its way to Metz when Kaiser Bill's men signed the Armistice . . . . This historic act took place in a car of a railroad train; this car was on exhibition in Versailles (if we are not mistaken) until the Germans took Paris in 1940. Der Fuehrer had it removed to Germany, possibly for destruction, so the French could never boast: "Here beaten Germany asked for terms of peace." And less than 25 years later this "beaten Germany" again lifts its sword, with a new belief, a new doctrine. The German is the Superman! Its leader is the super-super! It looked as though the world must bow to these supermen; one country after another becomes enslaved until only England remains. On the other side of the world emerges a second superman, Japan strikes the United States at Pearl Harbor crippling Uncle Sam's fleet. It strikes at our Pacific outposts: Guam, Wake, the Philippines. One by one they fall — our forces are constantly retreating. British outposts in the Far East are tumbling down like castles built of a deck of cards. Malay, Burma, the Solomons. Holland's outpost (Dutch East Indies) is in the way of the ruthless foe — that, too, must fall prey to this yellow superman. Australia is attacked from the air!

The European war is over; Germany is thoroughly beaten and we hope those who are to safeguard our future peace, do so well. We must not have another war 25 years from now! As we did to Hitler's Germany, so we must do to Hirohito's Japan. We must continue to sacrifice lives and money and materials. We may hope for peace over all the world, but we must not forget a price must be paid to earn that peace. Give your money to the United States Treasury for safekeeping; give your blood to the American Red Cross to save a fighters life; work as hard as you did until now so the material so necessary over there may help bring not only victory but a lasting peace!

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF LONDON

Word has been received from England that the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of London has been "disbanded." We presume that members of this Society — most of them actively participating in some phase of war work connected with the eventual liberation of Czechoslovakia, have left for their homeland and no one remained to carry on the work of the Society. Some time ago Mr. Lowey transmitted an invitation from the London group to our Society to actively participate in the London Society, thereby acquiring some, if not all, the postmarks of the Czech Army in England. Several members accepted this invitation but due to circumstances, never received any benefit from their affiliation with the London Society. We are sorry for this, but if the earlier end of the struggle in Europe has caused this financial inconvenience to our members, they have more cause for joy than sorrow.

### THE ADVERTISED "RUSSIAN-CZECH" STAMPS!

Some of our members have called our attention to a short series of stamps to be released in territory formerly part of the Czechoslovak Republic. Some inquiry has been made about these stamps and we herewith present what we know of these and leave the rest to our members.

These stamps have a face value of 8 Czech crowns — roughly 30 cents. These three stamps cost the dealer selling them here (when they come) 12 shilling 6 pence in England and he is to sell them at \$2.50.

One hundred fifty thousand (150,000) sets are to be overprinted and used on the day the authorized Czech government enters Slovakia. (Possibly another overprint "Prijezd Presidenta Benese") (Arrival of President Benes) such as was used on the Scout stamps when Masaryk arrived in Prague. Whether the overprinted and unoverprinted stamps cost the \$2.50, we do not know; in either case the price seems much too high. Caveat Emptor!

P. S. — When more information is received about these stamps, the members may rest assured we'll give them what we consider the best and most reliable information.

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### DRESSING UP A COLLECTION

Many of our members recall the illustration appearing in the September, 1943, issue of the Czechoslovak Specialist. It pictured our late president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, receiving a sheet of the then issued stamp honoring Czechoslovakia, the second of the Overrun Nations series, from Postmaster General Frank Walker, in the presence of Mr. Vladimir Hurban, Czechoslovak Ambassador to the United States. Reproduction of this photograph measuring 7 X 9 inches, can be had from our secretary, Mr. J. W. Lowey, 201 Marcy Place, New York 56, N. Y. for the sum of one dollar.

Incidentally we may mention that your secretary injured his right hand, so if your answer from him does not come in as quickly as usual, you may forgive him. We hope that by now he has been able to regain the use of the injured limb again.

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### SOME MORE COLLECTION DRESSING

A short time ago we received from our member Mr. C. J. (Bud) Pearce of 2833 N. W. 13th St., Oklahoma City, Okla. a Mat illustrating Type I Hradcany Issue, minus the figure of value. We have been a member of the Bureau Issues Association almost from its incorporation; we have collected United States varieties and have purchased all kinds of mats to illustrate our U. S. varieties. Most of these mats have been printed in a light ink and illustrations shown by the use of red ink. Bud uses something new to us; and we have collected stamps longer than we care to tell. With the aid of a quill pen, India ink, white show-card paint and a small brush, he can duplicate every and any plate variety. We were so enthusiastic about this idea — we not only ordered 100 prints — but also suggested to Bud that he should get mats made for the Postage due, Special Delivery, Newspaper and Allegories. As you know, the type of printing used for all these stamps is the same — and a good start showing these interested plate varieties can be made.

We doubt Bud knows stamp collectors as well as he knows his stamps. He writes "If 25 members subscribe to 100 sets of these 5 types, the cost should not be over \$2.50 per set." We doubt there are 25 serious students of Czech varieties in America. If you want to prove us a liar (and we hope you do), send your order in to Bud and do it now! A sample of the mat is enclosed (and Bud promises, if he has time, to send a sample of an illustrated mat also with this issue of the Specialist). It is natural that if there are fewer subscribers, the price will be higher. That is the reason of our fervent hope, that we are wrong in the number of serious students of Czech stamps.

### OUR MARCH EDITORIAL

We have written many editorials but we have never had as many comments on one as we did on the March, 1945, editorial. We enjoyed the comments very much, especially the fact that the percentage of those who agreed with us was 50% — those disagreeing made up the other half. The editor of the Philatelic Literature Review asked, and received, permission to reprint the editorial. Only one member wrote: "I think you could have more to say about the possibilities of promoting more international co-operation among collectors by means of philatelic literature."

Originally we planned an editorial on this editorial for the September issue. (Oh, yes) we presume all members know that the editor gets a two (2) month vacation. So much has transpired recently that we believe an answer to this member is proper — now.

Since 1913 we have been interested in international affairs. Though only 17 years old then, we helped former president Taft in his magnanimous effort of a "United States of Europe." In 1914, the first World War started and by 1917 we were in it. One month after the war was declared we were in part of Uncle Sam's Uniform (we didn't get the balance of our equipment until four months later). We were in direct contact with soldiers of almost all allied nations—stamp collectors and Esperantists all. By means of stamps and using a neutral, international idiom, — we could, we had to conquer the world. We were supported by great men: Baden-Powell, Gen. Bastien, Jakovlieff, Collinson and others (of these, only Bastien is left — a very old man now.) Our enthusiasm was high. We were promised much, we received — nothing.

The war ended. We contacted stamps collectors and Esperantists, often the two in combination, everywhere. All agreed the idea of a close cooperation among all peoples is a wonderful idea and worthy of help. Agreements without action are dead! Who cares if you love Czechoslovak stamps? Who cares if you love your neighbor as yourself? Who cares if you live or die?

Yet, we need not despair. The world is young — geologists tell us. The universe is young, we are told by the astronomer. The Bible tells us about Babylon — The Bible tells us about the wars of the Jews — the Bible tells us of the destruction of Jerusalem. Yet — we have a large conglomeration of languages; we have Jews and Gentiles everywhere, and Jerusalem is still on the map. Let us get down to earth! We can all be brothers — if we but so desire. We need not fight because of one's nose or color of one's skin. We need not argue about space in which to live. The world is not overpopulated. All we need is a little charity. Concede to your neighbor the privilege you want to enjoy — and all is well!

Is philatelic literature necessary for this? No! But it will help! What we need more than anything else is a firm belief that our neighbor is our brother no matter what his race, creed or nationality. We have fought a war to realize that we are all humans even if not always humane. Let us not forget that! Christianity teaches, "love thy neighbor as thyself." Can anything be more important? If we do that, if we practice what we preach, there can be no **WARS**

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### PATRON MEMBERS, ATTENTION

Due to the illness of our bookbinder, it may take some time before the bound volumes of The Czechoslovak Specialist reach you. We therefore ask your forgiveness and assure you that as soon as the binding of the volumes is accomplished, they will be mailed to you.

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*Help Win the War*  
BUY MORE BONDS

## Posta Československa 1919

Translated from Franek-Hirsch Handbook

by W. L. Russell

(Continued from April 1945)

### FORGERIES

Within the orbit of the whole series of Cz stamps, the "Posta Československa 1919" issue embraces not only the greatest number of values, but exhibits amongst them also the greatest rarities, therefore from a commercial point of view the dearest stamps. It is not strange, therefore that forgers concentrated their efforts to the greatest extent on this issue, particularly since the counterfeiting of the individual overprints apparently offered no difficulties and the procuring of the original Austrian and Hungarian stamps was easy and cheap. We also have the fact that practically all stamps with the overprint "Posta Československa 1919" were counterfeited, with the astounding further fact that even the cheap values were forged. This is because the forgers wished to issue whole sets, thus avoiding the suspicion which would naturally arise if the purchaser received genuine overprints to compare with the forged ones. Naturally, forgeries of the rare values predominated and it can be said that the forgeries hitherto confirmed are not particularly well done, although many of the producers of them (who have, as a rule, remained unknown) have tried hard.

Nevertheless, we find in CSR collections, and even in great specialized collections, an abundance of forgeries which for a long time remained unrecognized, not indeed because of their excellent execution, but rather because of lack of knowledge of the genuine overprints and their various characteristics (types, angles, etc). In regard to this, the viewpoint of the earlier experts must be rejected, for they took the standpoint that collectors should be given no facts which would help them to form an opinion and so be independent of the experts and thus able to distinguish a forgery from a genuine stamp. Even so distinguished an expert as the late Ing. Jar. Sula could not detach himself from this dangerous view. He frequently contented himself with establishing the existence of a forgery without quoting a single detail that others might make use of in comparison and criticism. It makes one wonder about the actual or supposed knowledge which such experts concealed, since they did not use it in the service of the public, but only in order to exploit their relative knowledge professionally.

When we speak of forgeries of the "Posta Československa 1919" issue, we refer particularly to genuine stamps with forged overprint. But, by way of exception, it is possible to discover forged stamps with genuine overprints; for example, the Austrian postage stamps 20h light green (chemically created from the dark green), or the 4 and 10K, the paper of which was subsequently made "granite" by mechanical means.

In the category of forged stamps are also placed such stamps, on which later manipulation was intended, in order to conceal blemishes, either through the application of forged gum, or through sticking the stamp on a piece of paper and subsequently canceling same (possibly with a back date). Just here, let us again emphasize that a genuine cancellation is not always proof of the genuineness of a stamp (or of the overprint), since cancellations are provided by the postal officials at the request of the parties concerned, and they give no thought to the question of whether the stamp is genuine or not.

Now that we have a bird's-eye view of the overprint forgeries of this issue, let us theorize about 4 kinds of their reproduction, namely: 1. Reproduction by means of handsetting, 2. By means of stereotype, 3. By the photographic method, 4. By means of lithography.

1. Even though a sufficiently unusual type was chosen in the Printing establishment for the overprint, the possibility cannot be excluded that the same font could not get into the hands of intruders who, equipped with typographical knowledge, reproduced therefrom the three lines of type, and from common stamps reproduced rare overprinted stamps. The risk of such forgeries is, however, only apparent. As we have already fully explained, the overprints were made from stereo'd clichés, which in turn were produced from matrices of the handsettings.

This proceeding always produces a shrinkage of the measurements of the original handsetting — insignificant, it is true, but sufficient, in common with other variations (relative position of the letters!) to enable one to discover same by means of an accurate measuring scale.

2. Not even those who were familiar with the overprint proceedings and endeavored to copy it, could work successfully, because the forged stereotyped overprint permits of a whole lot of variations and contingencies, which are characteristic of the original overprints, to be missed.

The reproduction of overprints by stereotypy presupposes the co-operation of a greater number of expert specialists, so that greater possibilities exist of one's activities being betrayed: (as a matter of fact, one such cliché was actually stolen shortly after the finish of the overprinting. However, the culprit was discovered before he became dangerous with his products, and the means of production was seized). Here also, however, one knew that any clever and competent expert could detect the forgery, because the machine-produced overprint showed a lot of individual idiosyncrasies which it is not possible to imitate with a private hand-plant, apart from the difficulty of producing the correct angle and the still greater difficulty of imitating colors, especially with regard to their chemical formation.

3. The majority of forgers chose the easiest method and forged with the help of line-engraved blocks, for which a genuine overprint served as the original, and of which the producer was usually a process-engraver who did not suspect the uses to which his block was to be put. The orderers usually demanded the strictest observance of the measurements, and spread their orders amongst a great number of engravers. Nevertheless, despite the greatest care devoted to the production of these blocks, the forged stamps produced from them show a whole row of variations in the contours, the angle, the color, and principally in lack of the characteristic details of the originals.

4. The most accurately produced forgeries so far as measurements and design are concerned, were perhaps those done by lithography. With this method, however, the forgery and its origin are easily betrayed by the flatness of the print.

We don't think it necessary to make mention of those forgeries which were made in primitive manner with Indian Ink or colour by hand, and which could deceive only the merest tyro.

Collectors have many practical and theoretical opportunities of guarding against the risk of forgeries, which — more by their large numbers than by the excellence of their execution — threaten him. Although it is a fact that the establishment of forgeries can only be made by comparing them with originals, we would stress again that the most important ingredient in the building up of reliable knowledge respecting genuine stamps or overprints lies not only in research amongst the stamps themselves, but also in the study of stamp journals and the pursuit of information contained therein.

The best guide in this respect is the description of the individual overprint types in the foregoing chapters, plus a rudimentary knowledge of printing. To any theoretical knowledge a collector may possess it is necessary to add the knowledge which comes from a study of actual originals, and this may be easily obtained by the purchase of the cheaper overprinted stamps. Further, one needs first-class measuring instruments and enlarging apparatus, the accuracy of which is a *sine qua non* in the work of verification.

As already stated, the best protection against forgeries is a closer attention, more critical comparison, thorough knowledge of the theory, and the application of all these elements in practice. To beginner-collectors we advise, in the early stages of their activities, that they avoid the acquisition of the rarer stamps, and on principle not to buy from unknown people, or from such dealers who refuse to give a money-back guarantee in the event of the stamp or its overprint not proving to be genuine. Also, it is not recommended that a beginner purchase whole collections at mark-down prices, because often the greatest rarities are forged therein and — even if for no other reason — the vendor is not obliged to refund money, or cancel negotiations, if it is proved that some of the stamps are forgeries.

The expert's mark on the back of a stamp is generally a safe protection. It must be unconditionally established however, that the mark is genuine (by questioning the expert concerned). One should also carefully weigh the value of



the expert's sign according to the known ability of the expert.

To finalise, we quote the things a collector should look for if he proposes to form his own opinion of an overprinted stamp's genuineness. First of all, devote attention to the stamp itself. The majority of the Austrian and Hungarian stamps which were overprinted are still obtainable, cheaply and without trouble, so that forgery of the stamp itself is unlikely. Next, look to the gum — is it original? The color of the overprint, and whether its impression shows through on the back of the stamp, and finally the form of the overprint itself, whether it is the kind and type which is usually found on the stamp in question.

Upon the whole, one may say that there are far fewer forgeries of the cheaper stamps than is generally supposed, and that detection of a forgery is not nearly so difficult as earlier was always asserted.

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### A STAMP SPEAKS!

By W. L. Russell

I am just a small piece of paper, printed and perforated and postmarked. I was born at the end of October 1918, just a few days before men put back the sword into its scabbard, hung the buckler on the wall, and ended "the war to end war".

I saw the birth of a nation. I portrayed the fierce upsurge of patriotism that accompanied that birthday.

I marched with the men of my country — seventy thousand of them — as they crossed two continents.

Whilst an uneasy world settled down to the pursuit of peace, I pridefully pictured the achievements of a race that refused to bow its neck to the yoke of the oppressor. I showed its Art, its music, its architecture. Upon me appeared its leaders, its men of letters, its warriors. In my time I have limned the national hymn, shown the glories of the countryside and the majesty of the mountains. I have carried the coat-of-arms.

I was one of the first of my fellows to take to the skyways, and raced across the heavens with the pilots of the purple twilight.

I saw the triumph of my country's liberator. Later, I mourned his death.

In my early days I was an ugly duckling, but quickly outgrew such manifestations of youth, and became one of the best-dressed stamps in the world. Nor did I lose that honour whilst I lived.

I felt a blush of shame when, in 1919, I was prostituted for philatelic profit, but that was a little thing compared with the agony of humiliation I suffered in 1938. Then I was defaced with Hunnish words and the hated hooked cross. I was forbidden to appear in my own garb, and was dressed as the oppressor willed.

I witnessed the degradation of my people, the partitioning of my country, the torment of the concentration camp, the murder of innocents, the indescribable horror of Lidice. I have borne the symbol of the Cross upon my face, in token of my country's crucifixion.

And then, I think, I must have died. For thenceforward I was not found in the albums of the outside world. Free peoples would not buy me, lest the hated Nazi benefit.

My ghost existed in Britain, whence many of my people escaped, and manifested itself in military postmarks on British stamps, but couched in our beloved tongue.

Then, as the blood-stained curtain commenced to fall on the drama that had held the stage for seven shameful years, I was reborn.

My garb is new, supplied by De La Rue of London, and even now I am on my way east to await the liberation of my land. For the Hun is on the run. The regaining of our lost liberty is at hand. And when that day dawns I shall make an immediate appearance, not merely to celebrate the ending of the long and frightening night, but to symbolize the national motto, "Truth Prevails".

Who am I? I am a Czechoslovak stamp!