

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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No. 11

EDITORIAL

Your editor had three grand opportunities to publicize our Society. The first was on the occasion of the special issue of the magazine "Stamps" of October 30, 1948, in celebration of the 30th anniversary of Czechoslovakia's Declaration of Independence. With the permission of the publisher of "Stamps," Mr. H. L. Lindquist, all this material will eventually be reprinted in the "Specialist." The second occasion was the opening of the philatelic exhibition of the "First Czechoslovak Philatelic Club of America." There your editor was guest speaker; he put in a big plug for our Society and decried world conditions as they are, especially in Czechoslovakia. The third occasion was his talk on the stamps "Posta Ceskoslovenska 1919" at the Garfield Perry Club meeting on November 5. There he had occasion to speak to a full house; the question period took more time than the lecture, proof that the talk was heard by collectors enthusiastic or at least mildly interested in the stamps of Czechoslovakia. We take this opportunity to thank Mr. and Mrs. Blizil and Mr. and Mrs. Hubert, who were our hosts during this wonderful week-end.

QUESTION BOX

Last month we told our members that member Milo Barry took time out to correct us on some of the statements we made in this column. We again thank Mr. Barry for his evident interest. We often stressed the point that this is a cooperative society. If any misinformation appears in this paper, we trust the readers correct us. Herewith are excerpts from Mr. Barry's letter:

"When Germany took over the Sudetenland it at once furnished the area with their own stamps, in a very few instances they used up some remainders and we find mixed franks, but most of these are philatelically manufactured. Stamps of Germany with cancellations of former Czech towns but with German names are available and every specialist should have some of these in his collection. The Czech stamps lost their validity in one week. All overprints are either fakes or manufactured "rarities" and were not authorized by German nor Czech postal authorities. The same answer covers that territory taken by Poland and Hungary. Hungary did things a little differently for they used a special cancellation "VISSZATERT" in oval shape, the center design consisted of two folded oak leaves from which radiate five lines to the Hungarian crown above and with the numerals "19" at left and "38" at right, for the year "1938." I am willing to submit copies for inspection.

When Hungary acquired Carpathia, they did not overprint any of the issues but used a round purple cancellation, which was most likely used for fiscal purposes. The center design is the coat of arms of Hungary, inscribed "Magyar Kir. Posta" and lower central numeral "102," then they used a cancellation as explained in previous paragraph with the addition of "HUSZT VISSZATERY."

Q. 7. I have in my possession a map in color showing what was left of the country after the big grab.

The first stamps of Slovakia, the overprinted issue "Slovensky Stat," were issued March 21, 1939, whereas the Bohemia-Moravia stamps were first issued July 15, 1939. All remainders were valid for postage until the end of the year; the overprints were valid to December 15, 1939.

Q. 8. The boundaries are not the same, some parts of Hungary and Austria were annexed to Czechoslovakia and Carpathia was annexed to Russia. No overprints were made as stamps were carried by the advancing armies. Numerous overprints were made during the revolution, but none is official despite the fact that individual postmasters gave their approval and permitted their use for a very brief period of time."

Mr. Milo Barry then presented other information on another item. He refers to the Miller ad which had appeared in several issues of the Specialist. He assures us that the stamp advertised by Mr. Miller is a proof and not an error. As a result we have withdrawn Mr. Miller's ad for the time being, until we communicate with Mr. Miller.

Last, but not least, Mr. Barry gives his opinion on the 8 Kcs Benes mourning stamp. We quote: "The new 8 Kcs mourning stamp is a very poor design and I would say unethical to the great man whom it portrays. I have several copies and found it issued on two different papers. One is WHITE, the other is MOIREE, with diagonal stripes from upper left to lower right, giving the impression that the stamp is somewhat darker. The first day of issue was September 28, 1948, and it is valid for postage only to October 28, 1948. Well, the reason is quite obvious; the communists don't want to give Benes or his ideals too much of any kind of advertising.

While on the subject of QUESTIONS, Mr. W. L. Russell submits the following: In the Kosice issue there are four types of each value. These are fairly easy to distinguish in the 5K and 6K, but can any one tell me how to pick out the other values? Also—did each of the four types appear on the one sheet, or were there four printings? Who knows the answers?

NEW MEMBERS

357. Joseph Jiranek, 5032 W. 25th St., Cicero 50, Ill.
 358. Frank Bardoun, 3877 E. 123rd St., Cleveland, Ohio.

REINSTATEMENT

48. Walter Veselsky, 2424 S. Springfield Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

196. Dr. Jerry R. Hora, 412 W. Walnut St., Hinsdale, Ill.
 201. Charles Waldman, 2747 Western Ave., Park Forest, Chicago Heights, Ill.
 295. Ray Van Handel, Jr., 931 N. 5th St., Sheboygan, Wis.

NEW ISSUES

Two commemorative stamps for the 30th anniversary of Czechoslovakia's Independence will be released on October 28, 1948.

The artistic stamp design used for this issue was created by Vaclav Sivko, the engraving was done by J. A. Svengsbir.

The stamps will be issued in denominations of 1.50Kcs blue and 3 Kcs carmine red and will remain valid for postage until June 30, 1949. The stamps are horizontal rectangle of the large format, rotary perforated and printed by steel engraved process.

A first day cover will be issued for this occasion. The design on the cover was prepared by the author of the stamp and engraved by Svengsbir.

At the same time three denominations of postage stamps bearing the portrait of the president of the Czechoslovak Republic Klement Gottwald are due to go on sale.

The denominations are 1.50Kcs brown, 3.Kcs red and 5.Kcs blue.

The stamp design and the engraving is the work of the artist Jindra Schmidt.

The stamps are printed by the steel engraved process in the middle size.
A special cancellation on the first day of issue, will be used.

According to order no. 255, Bulletin of the Ministry of Posts of September 30, 1948, three new values will be added to the present series of postage due stamps.



1.50, 2. and 6.Kcs, all red.

The stamps contain the same ornamental design as on the previous issue from a design by A. Erhardt. These were printed in Bratislava in the "Pravda" printing works from recessed plates.

Sheets consist of 100 subjects and have no plate markings. The stamps seen to date are abominably perforated.

• • •

Just as we were ready to close our copy for the printer we received the following information from the Ministry of Posts in Praha.

COMMEMORATIVE SOUVENIR SHEET TO CELEBRATE BIRTHDAY OF
PRESIDENT KLEMENT GOTTFWALD

For the birthday of the president of the Czechoslovak Republic, K. Gottwald, the Post Office Department will issue a postage stamp with a value of 20.Kcs on November 23, 1948. The portrait will be the same likeness as the stamps previously issued, but will be of a large format.

Besides that the Ministry will issue on that day a commemorative sheet with same type of portrait, decorated with the presidential flag and a quotation from one of the president's pronouncements. The value of the sheet will be 30.Kcs and shall continue on sale until the entire supply is exhausted.

We are also enclosing a photo of a stamp design to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Pact, which will take place December 12, 1948.



ISSUING A REPRINT OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S FIRST POSTAGE STAMP
THE HRADCANY, 5 HALERU

1. Following the many requests received from philatelists, the Ministry of Posts decided to reprint the first Czechoslovak stamp in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the issue of this stamp, December 18. It hopes to remind us of its debut and show the original primitive manner employed in the production of the first stamps and present it as a comparison with the present engravings and stamp reproductive techniques. It will enable especially the younger collectors a study of the entire sheet.

2. The reprint will be produced from the original zinc plate in a light green color on fine ungummed paper. The sheets will be issued only entire and the cost per sheet will be 100.Kcs.

3. The Post Office Department reminds those interested that due to the wear on the plate, only a limited number of sheets can be pulled. These sheets or stamps from these sheets have no postal validity.

4. These stamps will not be sent to new issue subscribers, unless they order them separately. The stamps will be on sale at all philatelic windows as long as the supply lasts.

• • •

Editor's note: We thought our Congressmen were ambitious when they presented U. S. collectors with such a large and varied philatelic program, for the second half of 1948. Ah, they were pikers! By gum, the stamps they issued are and will be good for postage!

HELP!

We are still looking for addresses of the following members whose mail is being returned to us by the post office: Geo. Krupicka, Sam Cernek, Miller Lee and A. A. Wasserschied.

WHAT THE CZECH PHILATELIC PRESS SAYS OF THE NEW ISSUES

Stamps portraying president K. Gottwald are the most perfect stamps yet. Their format suggests that the small size heretofore used for portrait stamps is to be abandoned.

What can be said of the Mourning stamp? There is not a serious collector who does not desire that the stamps of his country rank among the best. Even gentlemen high in government admit that the stamps of the country are its best advertisements and for this reason we want our stamps to excel in every respect. It is therefor strange how a mourning stamp in such a design could be issued. A reality which surprised us.

COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS FOR THE 30th ANN. OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The author of these stamps is Academic artist Vaclav Sivko and the engraving is the work of J. A. Svengsbir. At present we can only look at the photograph from which it is evident that aside from the year dates, there is nothing in the design suggesting a 30th anniversary. The design seems to present a social security of a worker.

In its composition the design is tragic. To the left one sees a "desert," to the right a dreadful crowdedness. For his picture of a father the author thought out an ugly and grotesque southpaw, whose fist is bigger than his head, though it must be admitted not all of the head fit into the picture. The mother's arm is dreadfully abnormal; the whole design will not appear tasty to our people.

THE CZECH PHILATELIC PRESS

We have it on good authority that the government decided to cut the Czechoslovak philatelic press down to three publications; one in Praha, one in Brno and one in Bratislava. The reason given is the scarcity of printing paper. We are sure we could make better choice of retained publications; it is evident that politics had something to do in the selection of those publications which are permitted to survive.

CONCISE CUMULATIVE INDEX OF THE SPECIALIST

Compiled by Wolfgang Fritzsche

The Roman numerals denote volume, the Arabic numerals denote the issue in that volume. As the early issues of the Specialist had not its pages numbered, the author thinks it best to use this system throughout. Care must be taken in the 1945 group when, through error all numbers 1 to 8 were marked Vol. VI instead of VIII. All 1945 in this index is considered Vol. VII.

There may be some pros and cons about a cumulative index, as the older volumes are no longer available. Its advantage lies in the fact that members wishing to borrow the older volumes may do so by contacting the Librarian, Mrs. Mildred Glawe, 9640 S. Seeley Ave., Chicago 43, Ill. May we remind those who borrow these scarce and precious volumes to return them as soon as possible so that other new members could gain the same advantage accorded them.

Also, in this index we omit the titles and authors, as well as such material which had no direct bearing on stamps. This index is prepared to give the student, in chronological order as much as possible, an idea where to find literature which was published in the Specialist on certain stamps or groups of stamps, in a concise, clear manner.

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MEETING OF THE CHICAGO GROUP

Work on the coming spring exhibition and benefit auction is progressing slowly but satisfactorily. Some are of the opinion we started preparations too early, but we feel it is the early bird that gets the worm. A member reminded the others that this spring marks the Society's tenth anniversary and it was unanimously decided to call this show and auction "The tenth anniversary celebration of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society."

CHECK LIST

Continued

Karel Havlicek Borovsky Issue

Karel Havlicek of Borovy was a newspaper man in the stormy days and years which in the 1840's took all of Europe in a tempest and in 1948 culminated in the abolishment of serfdom in Austria. In that year every man, woman and child became free, yet we, in these modern times, fail to grasp the import of this sudden reception of freedom. Havlicek was largely instrumental (through his newspaper) in bringing about this mass liberation; he also fought for the permission to use Czech in schools (the Austrians tried to germanize all Slavs); the authorities hated him for all this and found it easy to try him for treason and exile him to the Tyrol, where he died a victim of consumption.

On the 90th anniversary of his death a commemorative stamp was issued July 5, 1946. It was printed from steel engraved plates in the large format and each sheet consisted of 100 stamp subjects and 12 ornamental coupons; the coupons showed Havlicek's birthplace and the text: "1856 - 1946 - Karel Havlicek-Borovsky." The stamp was designed and engraved by Jindra Schmidt

from an original daguerotype. Printed from the rotary press on white unwatermarked paper and perforated 12½. Total number issued: 3,000,000 pieces.



28

CHECK LIST

| Our no. | Scott no. | Drufila no. | Value | Type | Color |
|---------|-----------|-------------|-------|------|------------------------------|
| 76 | 315 | 436 | 1.20K | 28 | Black green a with coupon |

Views 1946

The first stamps of a series planned showing views of Czechoslovakia were issued August 3, 1946; the central motifs were a view of Brno on the 2.40Kcs carmine rose and a view of Hodonin, Masaryk's home town, on the 7.40Kcs dull violet. Both stamps were designed by J. C. Vondrous and engraved by Jindra Schmidt. Because political themes had priority, no new view stamps were issued after these two stamps. Both were printed from steel engraved plates on the rotary presses and perforated 12½.

The Brno design was used for a souvenir miniature sheet to honor the National Exhibition of Postage Stamps held in Brno. The sheet sold for 10.Kcs; the surcharge was given to the Exhibition Committee to offset some of their financial losses. The full sheet measured 69x89mm and was printed from flat press engraved steel plates in the "Unie" in Praha. Issued imperforate with a total of 700,000.



29



30



31

CHECK LIST

| | | | | | |
|----|------|-----|------------|----|--------------|
| 77 | 316 | 438 | 2.40K | 29 | carmine rose |
| 78 | 317 | 439 | 7.40K | 30 | dull violet |
| 79 | B159 | 437 | 2.40-7.60K | 31 | carmine rose |

Return of Slovaks Issue

Three semi-postal stamps were issued October 15, 1946, for the benefit of repatriated Slovaks. The design is the work of A. Kajlich and the stamps were printed in the "Pravda" printery in Bratislava from photogravure plates, rotary press and perforated line 14. Quantity issued 800,000 sets.



32

34

33

CHECK LIST

| | | | | | |
|----|------|-----|------------|----|-----------|
| 80 | B160 | 440 | 1.60-1.40K | 32 | red brown |
| 81 | B161 | 441 | 2.40-2.60K | 33 | scarlet |
| 82 | B162 | 442 | 4. -4. K | 34 | deep blue |

Dr. Benes Engraved Issue

For the Independence Day celebrations, October 28, 1946, four stamps portraying president Dr. Eduard Benes, were issued. Designed by Max Svabinsky and engraved by Jindra Schmidt. Printed in the small format from steel engraved plates on the rotary press and line perforated 12½.

On this occasion the government prepared a beautiful engraved envelope showing a view of the Hradcany palace with Charles bridge in the foreground. A special cancellation was also prepared and applied to these on the first day of issue of this series. This cancellation announces the "Two Year Plan" which was later advertised with a special stamp issue.



35

CHECK LIST

| | | | | | |
|----|-----|-----|-------|----|------------|
| 83 | 318 | 443 | 60h | 35 | indigo |
| 84 | 319 | 444 | 1.60K | 35 | dull green |
| 85 | 320 | 445 | 3. K | 35 | red violet |
| 86 | 321 | 446 | 8. K | 35 | sepia |

First day cover on special envelope

Two Year Plan Issue

To inaugurate and advertise the "Two Year Plan" which was to bring the country out of its financial misery and back to normalcy, the Post Office Department issued three stamps on January 1, 1947. The stamps were of the large format and the sheet contained 100 stamp subjects and twelve ornamental coupons. The coupons have the two year plan trade mark with posthorn to show that the Post Office, too, is working for the success of the plan and the plan's motto (translated) "Two years of work, two steps toward prosperity."

Designed by L. Horak and engraved by J. Schmidt. The printing was done at the "Unie" in Praha from steel engraved plates on the rotary press and perforated line 12½. These stamps are to be demonetized December 31, 1948.

A specially prepared first day cover was prepared by the Post Office Department and received a special commemorative cancellation on first day of issue.



36

CHECK LIST

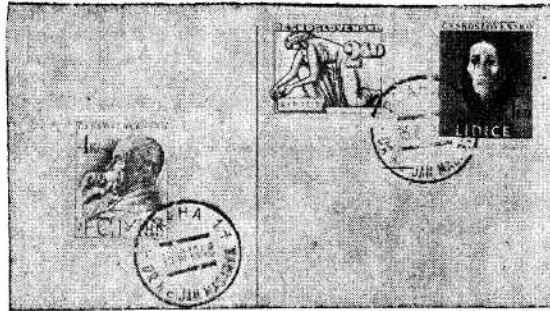
| | | | | | |
|----|-----|-----|-------|----|---------------------------------|
| 87 | 322 | 447 | 1.20K | 36 | Prussian green a with coupon |
| 88 | 323 | 448 | 2.40K | 36 | deep rose a with coupon |
| 89 | 324 | 449 | 4. K | 36 | deep blue a with coupon |

First day cover on special envelope
(to be continued)

MOURNING CANCELLATIONS

Herewith we present to our members two covers which bear mourning cancellations; one for Jan Masaryk, the other for the late president, Eduard Benes.





When the Czechoslovak Specialist, like many other publications, is barred from that country, we may be tempted to tell the truth about the coup which placed the present regime in power, of the tragic death of Jan Masaryk, of the losing battle fought by Benes for prolonging democracy in the country and finally of the circumstances which led Dr. Benes into retirement and an untimely death.

One member of our Society took us to task for a very mild statement we made some months ago which showed that politically and ideologically we are not in sympathy with the present regime in Czechoslovakia. We are convinced that the present government holds itself in power through force and not through the will of the people. Yet, our pronouncement did not irritate the government in Praha; we send the Specialist to the Ministry of Posts and we are sure it goes through the hands of the censor just like all publications. The Ministry continues to send us information we ask. We must admit that as far as "service" is concerned we get as little from the new politicians as well as from the old. We get photos of "new stamps" from Praha after the stamps have been placed on sale by even the most obscure dealer in the U. S. Sometimes we get duplicate information; by air mail first and followed by ordinary post. At other times, no information at all. Sometime we get information in almost flawless English, sometimes it is a queer language no Englishman could recognize, in fact, it could approximate pigeon English. Most of it comes in Czech; if it is a last minute item, we are compelled to work long hours translating it or at least some of its contents; much of it we must ignore because it is mostly propaganda. Not that we fear it would harm a true democrat, but we hate to waste good paper that way.

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NEW ADVERTISING RATES

Due to the steadily increasing cost of printing and even the postage goes up! we find it necessary to increase the advertising rates. Beginning January 1, 1949, the new rates are:

| | 1 insertion | 5 insertions | 10 or more |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 page | 5.00 | 4.75 | 4.50 |
| ½ page | 3.50 | 3.35 | 3.15 |
| ¼ page | 2.15 | 2.00 | 1.80 |
| ⅓ page | 1.50 | 1.35 | 1.25 |
| 1/16 page | 1.00 | .85 | .75 |

10% discount to members.

TALES FROM CZECHOSLOVAKIA

by Joseph B. Phillips

One of the few really humorous books which came out of the first world war was "Good Soldier Schweik," by Karel Hasek. Schweik was a little Czech mobilized in the armies of the Hapsburgs. He suffered all the misadventures which could possibly befall an unwilling private in an unwilling army, and met them with the pawky humor characteristic of his people. Schweik's story came to what passed for a happy ending in those days—he escaped to the Russians.

The late Jan Masaryk was far from a simple little Czech; he was one of the most sophisticated and cultured representatives that any nation could produce. Nevertheless, in the postwar period of fear and tension Masaryk did become a sort of latter-day Schweik, in that he was the symbolic expression of the wit-in-adversity of his people. "Did you hear the latest one from Honza (Little Jan)?" became the normal prelude to a political joke. No one wit could have invented all the stories attributed to Masaryk, but the attribution to him gave the stories a sort of added force. Here are some of the most typical:

When the Russians liberated Prague, Marshall Koneff gave a great party for those who had worked in the underground. At midnight everybody was startled by a great clatter from the next room. "Don't be alarmed," Masaryk said, "the cuckoo clocks liberated by Marshal Koneff are sounding midnight."

The behavior of the Red troops in Prague was such that Marshal Koneff finally allowed the Czechs to organize a city police force. One morning five stripped and beaten men were found in a public square. "The Russians stripped and robbed us," they said. "Why didn't you call the police?" they were asked. "We ARE the police," they replied.

When somebody asked Masaryk what happened when he was told in Moscow that Czechoslovakia could not join the Marshall plan, he replied: "Nothing happened, except that we did not know whether we had to sign up with Marshall or the marshal. Now we know . . ."

The Russians were having a great competition, according to Masaryk, for a statue of Tchaikovsky. Hundreds of models were submitted, showing Tchaikovsky at the piano, Tchaikovsky standing, Tchaikovsky seated, etc. But the first prize went to a statue of Stalin sitting in an armchair, listening to Tchaikovsky's music.

Since Masaryk's death these "Honza" tales are serving as something more than memorials to a witty man. They are part of the evidence used by the considerable number of Czechs who believe that Masaryk did not commit suicide. For the butt of Masaryk's wit was the Great Russian Friend. The Soviet with-us-or-against-us mentality has no taste for Hamlets and notoriously dislikes being the butt of jokes. Masaryk's torn allegiance and incorrigible sense of humor is said to have made him an especial anathema to the Kremlin and Stalin disliked him personally and strongly.

The manner of Masaryk's death has cast some suspicion on the theory of suicide from the start. Defenestration—the throwing of unpopular rulers out of windows—is a historic Czech custom. Jumping from windows is a not uncommon form of committing suicide. Nevertheless, a number of Czech friends of Masaryk who have succeeded in getting out of the country claim that such a means of death was out of his character. Moreover, they say that the window from which he was supposed to have jumped was not high enough from the ground to make death a certainty.

The imagination of political exiles is often fertile. Probably it will be a long time before anyone can positively prove whether Masaryk's death was suicide or not. Nevertheless, those who do not believe it was suicide have an alternative theory which is plausible and in keeping with the end of such a character as his—certainly no less in character than the suicide theory. It is that the Communist Premier Gottwald insisted on throwing Masaryk out of the government, along with the other non-Communist ministers, but that President Benes drove a desperate bargain and kept Masaryk as the price of agreeing to the other resignations. However, according to this theory, the Communists feared and hated Masaryk so that they had to get rid of him.

—Reprinted from Newsweek



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