

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

In one of Oscar Hammerstein's smashing hits we hear "Oh, what a beautiful morning, oh, what a wonderful day"; that's how we felt in the past two and a half months. Traditionally the editor has two months vacation, if he prolonged it by an additional two weeks, the member is not the loser! Many changes have taken place since we edited the June issue of the Specialist. The cold war has changed into a hot war. Its effects have not materially changed our country except in homes where men have been called to active duty. Your editor is one of the very minor officials in the Chicago P. O. In his department numbering some 200 men, three reservists were called to the colors and all three returned to work. The U. S. Army, subject to the U. N. Military Command, does not think they are more important to the war effort than they are to the pursuit of happiness, traditional to America. So far, this is heartening news.

This is the first issue of the Specialist under the new leadership. No provision was sanctioned to change the policy of the publication. Your editor has been renamed by the new president. We urge you to read the messages of the retiring and the newly elected prexys of our Society. There is a change in the name but not in quality of your paper.

Since the last issue of the Specialist we made no noticeable inroad into our "Handbook" project. But, as we promised, the "Dictionary" project has gained momentum to insure its publication much sooner than our footed handbook. Every participant of our convention in June agreed there is a greater need for a dictionary than for a handbook.

Your editor received many letters from Czechoslovakia in which the writers express a wish to exchange stamps. Since 1948 there have been so many laws and rules governing the exchange of stamps that we hesitate to answer these; furthermore, your editor has so much work, he must of necessity ignore all this mail. We ask our members, especially those in Czechoslovakia, to curb their desire to write to us unless their letter contains information of interest to our members.

OUR AUCTION 1950

In his report elsewhere in this issue Mr. Weiner presents the financial report on the auction which enhanced our treasury by a tidy sum. It is only right to let the members of the Society know who contributed materially to the success of our auction. Briefly they are: Leo Goldman, Leo Goerth, Rud. Novy, W. D. Knox, Mildred Glueck, A. N. Weiner, Earl Fein, John Velek, Frank Kovarik, Roman Reinowski, Emil Zaludek, Geo. Kobylka, Geo. Skopecek, B. J. Miller, and Wm. Sporka. It is possible your editor forgot someone; accept his apology. It is impossible to mention all the successful bidders who helped make the auction what it was. To all, donors and bidders both, a hearty thank you.

OUR SHOW IN 1950

Mr. Velek's brief report on the show was truly modest. This report supplements Mr. Velek's words. The exhibitors were: In the Championship class: Miss Mildred Glueck (Championship High Award winner) and Frank Kovarik. Miss Glueck showed Hradchany issues; Kovarik showed Masaryk issues. Exhibitors of Czecho material: Lolly M. Horechny (Grand Award winner) showed Masaryk stamps; Oct. 23th by Leo Goldman; Proofs and Printers waste on the 10h Hradchany, John Velek; study of Hradchany miniature sheets, George Kobyłka; Postal Stationary, George Blizil; Descriptive Favor Sheets, Geo. Kobyłka; Czecho Field Post in Great Britain, C. Aikins. Canadian varieties, Leo Goldman; Australia, Peter Kreisler. All members expected a deluge of U. S. material; Mr. Vojta of the Berwyn Stamp Club showed covers of the U. S.

CONVENTION REPORT

The annual convention of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society, held on Saturday and Sunday, June 10-11, 1950 met with considerable success.

An exhibition of about one hundred frames was set up before noon on Saturday, and was viewed by Chicago and out of town visitors over the weekend. On Saturday, more than sixty members and guests attended a "Get-Together Supper," which was highlighted by a short talk by the Chairman of the Judging Committee, Ben Reeves. Mr. Reeves, at this time announced the winners of the exhibition awards as follows: Grand award, L. M. Horechny of New Jersey. Championship award, Miss Mildred Glueck of Chicago; First awards, G. Kobyłka and J. Velek of Chicago, and L. Goldmann of Canada; Second awards, P. Kreisler of Chicago, C. Aikins of Canada, and G. Blizil of Cleveland; Third awards, G. S. Glanton of Tacoma, Wash., J. Vojta of Berwyn, Ill., and L. Goldman of Canada. The Chicago Philatelic Society Educational Award went to Miss Glueck, and the Central Federation of Stamp Clubs Historical Award was given to Mr. Glanton.

The convention meeting was held on Sunday afternoon. Ballots were counted with the following results: President, John Knollmueller of Salt Lake City; First Vice President, W. B. Bryant of Pasadena, Cal.; Second Vice President, R. Secky of New York; Secretary, J. Velek of Chicago; Treasurer, E. Sabol of Bristol, Pa.; Librarian, Leo Goerth of Cincinnati, who offered to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of the past librarian, and who was voted in by the convention.

It was decided, at this time, to publish an English-Czech, Czech-English Philatelic Dictionary, to appear before the long awaited handbook.

An honorary life membership was bestowed upon Mrs. Joe Lowey, widow of one of the organizers of the Society, and for many years, its "mainspring." The Society's name was simplified to "The Czechoslovak Philatelic Society," eliminating the cumbersome "of North America." As his first duty, the new president was asked to appoint a committee to revise the by-laws of the Society.

Following the meeting, the annual benefit auction was held and although not as successful financially as last year, those who donated material contributed a substantial sum to the treasury.

All in all, the convention was both enjoyable and informative, and we urge everyone to participate in the society activities so that they too may receive the full benefit of their membership.

A MESSAGE AND GREETINGS TO THE C. P. S.

It is with great pleasure that I extend personal greetings to my fellow members at the 1950 Convention (or get-together). I fully intended to get to Chicago to join you, but circumstances beyond my control would not allow it. My inability to attend is a great personal regret. I had looked forward to meeting you all and possibly extend my personal congratulations to the new President.

Our Society has set the pace for philatelic specialization for years. Its "live-wire" reputation is known from coast to coast. The organization is unique, inasmuch as its membership extends all over the world. No regular meetings are possible. Most of the credit for this wonderful reputation is centered around our "pace-setter" and editor, Frank J. Kovarik, whose tireless and inspirational efforts have kept us together through the medium of the SPECIALIST. Other than interest in Czechoslovak philately we have nothing else to keep us together.

Sometime in the near future we are to have a specialized handbook printed in English. This is another accomplishment of Frank's who conceived and developed the project. The philatelic world is looking forward to the handbook, which will be another major milestone in the history of the Society.

In the future I urge all members to increase their support of the Society. "Increased Support" means several things; participate in the exhibitions, donate to the auctions, publicize the forthcoming handbook, respond with your dues promptly, assist the editor with items of philatelic interest, try to increase our membership, etc. Our activities and SPECIALIST are unparalleled in the philatelic world. Sometimes we overlook the fact that the Society has become one of the country's leading organizations of its kind. We want to keep it so. With your participation we will.

It was indeed an honor to serve as your president. I am sure the new administration and myself will do everything possible to provide you with the best we can.

The Torch of the C. P. S. N. A. flames very high in the philatelic world. Let us keep it there!

George A. Blizil

REPORT OF THE SALES & EXCHANGE DEPT. ACTIVITIES FOR 1949

For reasons unknown to me, the year 1949 was a boom year for the sales department. 20 circuits went out that year, containing 179 books valued at \$3200. During the past year I also (included in above) sold a collection for the widow of one of our former members. So far over \$300 was turned over to her and more is to be sold yet. During 1949 the sum of \$31.28 was turned over to the treasury, representing commissions from circuits which were retired during 1949.

This is the 10th year of our sales department, 116 circuits had been sent out during that time and some of our members have seen them all, they are still with me, since the sales department started. During all that time, only 2 circuits were lost in the mails and although not properly insured by the sender, a fair settlement was reached with all concerned, the Society however lost the commissions on those 2 circuits.

We now have our own sales books, which already have been in use for some time. Our member Ives did the printing and did a good job for a very reasonable price. The books sell for 6c each.

All members, participating in the sales service, have cooperated splendidly and it is because of their cooperation that we have had such a success within such a small group.

Wolfgang Fritzsche (6/5/1950)

AUCTION REPORT

Below is a final report on the Auction. The delay is due to the length of time in collecting payments on mail bids.

56 Lots \$57.45, 1 check \$5.00 (donated by a member), total \$62.45.

Of the total of 56 lots: 52 sold on the floor during the show, 4 sold to mail bidders.

Alfred N. Weiner, Auction Chairman

NEW PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thanks for the confidence you have expressed in electing me as President of our Society for the forthcoming term, I only hope that I can justify that confidence during my term in office.

Following in the wake of our past presidents will be no easy task and I feel that only through your cooperation can I hope to guide the Society through these troubled days on an even keel.

Much of my anxiety for the success of the organization is unfounded, I feel certain, because Frank J. Kovarik will continue with his excellent job as editor of the SPECIALIST and I feel much the same as Past President Blizil when he said "as the SPECIALIST goes so goes the Society."

I am looking forward with anticipation to the publication of the Handbook which is to come off the press soon. Editor Kovarik has worked unceasingly for a number of years to compile the best information available on Czechoslovakian history and its postage stamps and its publication will be of valuable help to each member of the Society. May I suggest that you plan to get a copy of this book which will be ready soon?

May I also suggest that we make a concentrated effort to enlist new members into our Society? It is not impossible to double the membership this year. If each member would bring in a friend the job would be done.

Some of our members may be leaving soon to join the armed forces. They can remain posted on the activities of the Society through regular deliveries of the SPECIALIST and the only way they can be assured of regular deliveries is by notifying the secretary of any change in address.

I was sorry that I could not attend the annual meeting but my work kept me in Salt Lake City. I hope to visit members of our Society on the West Coast soon and will let you know how things are progressing there.

Each of the officers that you elected has pledged his support to the Society and they join me in saying that we will do all in our power to maintain the leadership and high standards set by our predecessors.

John Knollmueller

THE CZECHOSLOVAK LIBRARY

For the present time there will be no change except as noted below in the operation of the Library dept.

The one exception is that now, the members of the society have at their disposal an entirely larger library to draw from...as the new librarian has a philatelic library of several hundred catalogues, books and pamphlets. As long as the new librarian holds his position any member of the society can borrow any books from his personal library.

I have one proposal to make to the members of the society and the comment of the members of the society will be appreciated. The proposal is this... The librarian has access to a dealer who can secure subscriptions to all the philatelic magazines, (all give rebates to dealers for subscriptions), purchase any philatelic items like catalogues and albums here in the states and also from abroad. Any member wanting anything along this line can purchase thru the librarian at the normal retail price...the profit will be deposited in a fund to build up the library. In this manner any member can secure any items but stamps at the normal retail price and still give his society some needed funds for building up its library.

Leo F. Goerth, Librarian, 1850 Brewster Ave., Cincinnati 7, Ohio

FELIX BRUNNER

Authority on First Issues of Austrian Stamps Dies—Won Awards Here & Abroad

Felix Brunner of 900 West End Avenue, stamp dealer and philatelist, with offices at 505 Fifth Avenue, died on Wednesday of a heart ailment in Royal Oaks Convalescent Home, Madison, N. J. His age was 57.

An authority on the first stamp issues of the Austrian Empire and Lombardy-Venice, Mr. Brunner had a collection of rare cancellations, especially of Bohemia and Slovakia, which won many prizes.

Born in Brno, Czechoslovakia, then part of the Austrian Empire, he was graduated from Brno Textile Institute and pursued a textile career until the first World War. Mr. Brunner had begun to collect stamps at the age of 7, and, instead of following in his father's footsteps, made a stamp collector of his father.

Becoming a stamp dealer in Prague in 1922, he began philatelic studies and specialization in early Austrian issues and postal history in 1925.

Mr. Brunner exhibited his collection of rare Austrian cancellations at the Vienna Philatelic Exhibit in 1933, when he won the gold medal, and at the Paris Exhibit in 1937, when he was also gold medallist.

A refugee from Hitlerism, he arrived in the United States in 1938 and continued his stamp business and activities here. Mr. Brunner wrote many articles on his specialty and had exhibited at many national stamp shows, winning several first or grand awards. He won a gold medal at the Centenary Exhibit here and last exhibited at the National Philatelic Museum in Philadelphia in March.

He was a member of the American Philatelic Society, Czechoslovakia Philatelic Society, Collectors Club, Philatelic Foundation and Austrian Stamp Society, the B'nai B'rith and the Masaryk Club.

Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Eugenie Brunner; a son, Walter; two daughters, Mrs. Paula Abelow and Miss Alice Brunner, and a grandson.

The foregoing obituary appeared in the New York Times, July 7, 1950. Those of us who knew Felix Brunner personally, shall miss him. Your editor is especially indebted to him because over a long period of years he helped him in the building of his Posta Ceskoslovenska 1919 and the collection of Czech, Moravian, Silesian, Ruthenian and Slovak postmarks on the stamps of Austria and Hungary.

To his widow and to his children, the officers of our Society extend their heartfelt sympathy. There are very many dealers and collectors, but very few Brunners!

OUR PRAHA LETTER

The forthcoming exhibition in Praha will be a novel venture. There will be no individual exhibitors; all accepted pages for the show will be submitted by clubs and societies.

The Postal Museum in Praha is intensively at work installing its collections to be ready for the National Exhibition in October. Stamps of Czechoslovakia, stamps of the Peoples Democratic governments and other European countries will be mounted on Stiburek album pages. The preparation of a comprehensive showing of library material is advancing, thanks to the cooperation of societies, members of the National Federation of Stamp Clubs.

Stamps of all kinds are again freely sold at the Post Offices in Czechoslovakia. (Editor's note: Not all correspondents agree with this statement. Some maintain that specific items can be had in very limited quantities, if at all. Some hint that certain items are sold only to a favored few who will capitalize on their drag.) It is especially fortunate that stamps commemorating the Fifth Anniversary of the liberation of the Republic by the heroic soldiers of the Red Army, can be freely placed on sale.

The May 21, 1950, issue, philatelic section, of the publication "Prace" (Work), states: On May 4, 1950, the Ministry of Posts nullified all previous restrictions governing the sale of postage stamps for philatelic purposes. From May 5, 1950, the sale of postage stamps is liberalized as follows:

Individuals and organizations may obtain new issues after paying, once and for all, the sum of 5.Kcs for a new issue registration and an annual subscription of 10.Kcs, valid from January 1 to December 31, irrespective of the date application is made. Those on the subscription list at the present time are con-

sidered as paid to the end of the calendar year 1950. The subscriber has an option either to have the stamps delivered to his home or turned over to him at a designated post office.

Any person or group not yet on the subscription list who desires to be placed thereon, is advised to purchase a 1.Kcs card printed for this purpose and legibly write in his name and address. At the same time he will forward the sums of 5.Kcs for registration and 10.Kcs for annual subscription. He will receive a receipt (the second portion of the card) validated by the Post Office Department. When the stamps are being delivered the Post Office is within its rights to ask for an examination of this receipt. If a subscriber fails to purchase the stamps set aside for him within 30 days, he may lose his rights of subscription and the stamps thus remaining at the post office, may be sold freely over the counter. If the subscriber refuses the second group of stamps, he automatically loses his rights to purchase further new issues. Every participant in the new issue service is at liberty to cease purchasing new issue stamps but the registration and subscription fees collected by the Post Office Department cannot be returned but revert to the postal authorities.

As of May 5, 1950, all post offices are authorized to accept registrations and subscriptions to this new issue service.

(Editor's note: This, most likely, ends the manipulations by Orbis, which have been highly unprofitable to the Post Office Department.)

QUESTION BOX

1. Where is Dobruska in Czechoslovakia?
2. I have a cancellation on a CSR stamp bearing the initials "T F N PRAHA." Is this a telephone or a telegraph cancellation?
3. Herewith I submit a counterfeit of the 20h, Scott type A6, rose, 1920 issue. It appears to have been used through the mails with a red commemorative cancellation. Part of the word "ZDRA" is on this cancellation. Has any member a similar item?

Another answer to the question submitted in the January, 1950, issue reached us. Member A. Cifka of Denver, Colo., writes:

"Some years ago, the firm Belik sold lottery tickets and used these labels in lieu of postage stamps to frank their mail. Obviously, they needed and obtained permission from the Ministry of Posts and Telegraphs. This label is comparable to the imprint on circulars with the legend "Postage 1½c paid. Permit No."

We thank Mr. Cifka and others who sent in a solution to this enigma.

WATERMARKS

In previous issues of the Specialist we had occasion to call the attention of our readers to valuable bits of information culled from the "Mercury Stamp Journal." The July, 1950, issue of this invaluable publication contains an article on watermarks. It shows that Czechoslovakia is not the only country with watermarks in eight positions. We again recommend this journal to serious students of philately, especially to those interested in postmarks on pre-1918 Austria and Hungary, used in Czech or Slovak states of the former dual monarchy.

OFFICERS

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 Librarian: Leo F. Goerth, 1850 Brewster Ave., Cincinnati 7, Ohio
 Sales Mgr.: W. Fritzsche, Box 402, Geneva, N. Y.

PARADE OF NEW ISSUES



Issue of the Commemorative Stamps S. K. Neumann

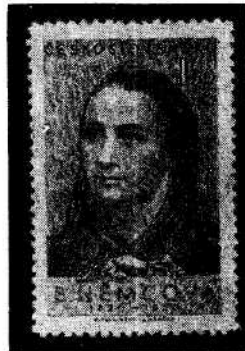
Commemorating the 75th birthday anniversary of the Czech writer and poet S. K. Neumann, the Czechoslovak Post Administration will issue on June 5, 1950, two commemorative stamps showing the poet's portrait after a design by J. A. Svengsbir,

1.50 Kcs, brown, 3. Kcs, red.

The stamps, vertical rectangles 23x37 mm in dimension, in sheets of 50 and 25 copies, will be printed by steel line engraving process.

The engraving of the stamp and the design for the First Day Cover are by the author of the stamp.

The stamps will be put on sale on June 5, 1950, and be valid in the inland and international relations from June 5, until recalled.



The 130th Birthday Anniversary of the Authoress Božena Němcová

Commemorating the 130th birthday anniversary of the authoress Božena Němcová the Czechoslovak Post Administration will issue on June 21, 1950, one set of two commemorative stamps showing the authoress' portrait by professor Karel Svollinsky,

1.50 Kcs, blue 7. Kcs, red brown.

The stamps are 23 x 37 mm in dimensions, arranged vertically, printed by rotary steel engraving process, and will issue in sheets of 50 and 25 stamps. The engraving is by Jan Mracek.

A First Day Cover after the design by the author of the stamp will be issued on this occasion; the engraving is by J. Svengsbir.

NEW MEMBERS

419. Edward Lisy, 87 Carmita Ave., Rutherford, N. Jer.
 420. Louis Ruzicka, 5 Pomona Ave., Newark 8, N. Jer.
 421. Jerome Mehringer, 4669A N. 125th St., Butler, Wis.
 422. Judge Leslie L. Anderson, Court House, Minneapolis, Minn.
 423. Charles E. Tucker, 4816 E. Seminary Ave., Richmond 27, Va.
 424. Tom H. Phillips, 1905 Randolph St., South Bend 14, Ind.

CORRECTIONS TO MEMBERSHIP LIST

(Note: Any member who has been inadvertently dropped from the list is kindly requested to contact the secretary or the treasurer.)

16. N. A. Bogdan, 464 Genesee St., Trenton, N. J.
 58. Clayton E. Brown, 25 Hampden St., West Springfield, Mass.
 114. Thos. Buresch, Box 333, Vauxhall, N. J.
 247. A. J. Cifka, 1641 Stout St., Denver 2, Colo.
 26. Wolfgang Fritzsche, Box 402, Geneva, N. Y.
 256. Jas. B. Glaze, 10910 Avenue O, Chicago 17, Ill.
 387. Leo Jelinek, 2243 S. Sawyer Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.
 126. Frank J. Kaps, Box 701, Chappaqua, N. Y.
 364. Frank Kostell, 9906 McCracken Blvd., Garfield Heights, Ohio
 167. Edw. C. Linhart, 1820 S. Ridgeland Ave., Berwyn, Ill.
 371. John J. Nepras, 4329 W. 21st St., Chicago 23, Ill.
 23. Alfons Stach, 99 Nassau St., New York 7, N. Y.
 156. Frank L. Stack, 4210 S. Prairie Ave., Brookfield, Ill.
 146. Ant. Stavjanik, Woodland Ave. 82, Burlington, Ont., Canada
 384. Louis J. Struhall, 2702 S. Congress Ave., Austin, Texas.
 48. Walter Veselsky, 2424 S. Springfield Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.
 118. Aug. A. Wasserschied, 59 Euston Rd., Garden City, N. Y.



Mr. W. L. Russell sent us a Bohemia-Moravia 1.50K stamp with a peculiar cancellation. We illustrate it here and ask our members to explain it to us. Bob Dodd of Perth, Australia, found it in his duplicates and is as anxious to know more about it as is Bill Russell and your editor.

WE ARE YOUR HEADQUARTERS

for unusual Czechoslovakian material: covers, stationery, varieties and so on. If it enhances the beauty and value of your collection, WE HAVE IT.

In order to sell Czechoslovakian Postal History, we have to buy, so dig out your duplicates of better-grade specialties, errors, varieties, covers, etc. Not only Czechoslovakia, though, but the rest of Europe, too.

POSTMAN'S KNOCK
 Specialists in European Postal History

Box 6

Zone 7

Cincinnati, Ohio

Stamps of the Czechoslovak Field Post in Russia

Introduction

(Reprinted from the Czechoslovak Specialist of 1940)

Many years ago I received from a friend a large number of Siberian essays of the Praha issue. Not finding them catalogued, I used them as seals on the backs of letters and one of them happened to be noticed by the recipient (a stamp collector) who desired information on the seal. I wrote to Praha but could not receive sufficient information, and after a time dropped the subject.

Some ten years ago a friend of mine offered me the set overprinted in diverse values in green and told me he bought them from Sekula. Shortly after that the Sekula Company appeared in the philatelic press as a firm selling many spurious items. Again I forgot about the stamps until quite by accident I acquired a cover mailed in Siberia by a Czech legionnaire. I then wrote to every collector in Czechoslovakia I came in contact with and was surprised at the divergence of information I received. I tried to piece all this material together, but had indifferent success, when upon going through my philatelic library I found a booklet by Novotny, chief of the Czechoslovak Field Post and published shortly upon his arrival in Czechoslovakia from Siberia. After several collectors had asked for information on the Siberian Posts, I decided to translate Mr. Novotny's booklet. His philatelic knowledge was very poor and I tried again to complete the article with some authentic remarks of my own finding. At long last the article was translated and sent to Mr. Francis W. Beedon for corrections.

While this was in Mr. Beedon's hands I happened to obtain a book on the stamp issues of Czechoslovakia written by Messrs. Hirsch and Franek. The last chapters were devoted to the stamps of the Czechoslovak armies in Siberia and I heaved a sigh of relief! Men in Praha, close to the fountainhead of knowledge of these issues, were almost as much in the dark as I concerning them.

I then decided to translate this article and publish it simultaneously with Mr. Novotny's article and so give our English-speaking collectors who are interested in the stamps of Siberia as clear a picture as possible of these issues. I do not profess to be a specialist in these issues, perhaps the material I have is all bogus; but what history there is, is interesting, and in my humble estimation, worthy of record.

I thank many of my friends for the help accorded me in this work, and though incomplete, I trust my readers will accept it "as is," (in the words of our auctioneers), and perhaps later, a more complete picture can be presented.

Frank J. Kovarik

STAMPS OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK ARMY FIELD POST IN RUSSIA

The Czechoslovak volunteers who formed their own legions in Russia to battle against Austria, were originally (after deserting the Austrian army), members of the Imperial Russian Army and consequently enjoyed free franking privileges. After the Bolshevik success in 1917 the Russian Army collapsed and the Czechoslovak Legions reorganized as an independent army. When it was definitely decided that the Czech Army would not be transferred to France, a decision was reached during a meeting in Celjabinsk in the summer of 1918 to organize a Czechoslovak Army Field Post. On July 10, 1918, Lieut. Ant. Novotny was asked to draw plans for a field post, and on August 11, 1918, he was named as head of the service. On Sept. 18, 1918, the first railway mail train left Celjabinsk over Samara and Ufa to Syrzan. The Czechoslovak Post also became a field post of all the allied armies in Siberia (United States, England, France, Poland, Yugoslavia, Roumania, Italy, China, and Lithuania).

Among the hardships of this new service it is necessary to remember the scarcity of material and of an effective personnel, the wide area and the distances. At first the distance measured 4000 Km., and after a union was effected with the eastern army, Oct. 28, 1918, a distance of 7000 Km., a two-weeks trip on the Celjabinsk-Vladivostok line. All of these inconveniences were met

and conquered, so that even the civil population took advantage of the postal service because the Russian Postal Service functioned very poorly.

In spite of the fact that the postal service was free and no postage stamps were necessary, three issues of stamps are known and we shall discuss them in this paper. If the first postage stamp (the overprinted Russian 10-kopek stamp issued in 1918), was the result of a need, not so much can be said for the other two issues, one of which was issued in Russia, the other in Praha. The reason for the Irkutsk issue may have been psychological if not practical; the issue from Praha, showing the Czech lion, was purely philatelic. At best these issues have but a semi-official status.

Although the time between the issue of these stamps is rather short, many of the details are not known and will possibly remain a mystery. Those responsible for the Irkutsk issue (not philatelists) and the Praha issue (philatelist J. Rossler-Orovsky) either paid little attention to supplying details about these stamps or purposely kept them to themselves. It is strange that the many treatments of these subjects by Novotny and Rossler, the men directly responsible for both issues, must be taken with considerable optimistic credulity.

The articles published by Novotny upon his return (and before he became a stamp collector) can be accepted with confidence even if they show certain mistakes, imperfections, or omissions. This authentic honesty is not found in his later articles, which were published with a view of selling some of the material brought back from Siberia. Perhaps the most weighty fact is that Mr. Novotny still retains possession of the material necessary to print the Praha issues, and this accounts for the large numbers of reprints of this stamp. These reprints can be recognized and show marked contrasts to the originals, in spite of Novotny's manifold explanations.

The fact that many legionnaires heard of the stamps only after their return home can be explained both territorially (vast distances between stations and troops) and the fact that the field post was disbanded and returned before all of the troops were evacuated from Siberia. The remainders came to Czechoslovakia with the field post.

Cesskja Posta (Cheshskja Pochta)

In our introduction we mentioned the postal conditions in Russia in the fall of 1918. While the Russian civil and military posts were very incompatible, the Czechoslovak Field Post functioned under all conditions exceptionally well. This was one reason why many of the civil inhabitants used this service. Since at that time no definite arrangement was made with the Russian Postoffice it was necessary to prepay all letters at the rate of ten kopeks. To keep a correct record of mail used by the Czechs, the chief of the Field Postal Service in Celjabinsk after an agreement with the Czechoslovak Field Post, suggested the issuance of a 10-kopek stamp with the overprint "Czech Post." This was also to eliminate confusion resulting from poorly addressed material intended for Czechs. The idea was accepted by the Russian Postal authorities in Omsk and so in October, 1918, the Russian stamp of 1909, value 10-kopeks, blue, was overprinted "Cesskja Pochta" in Russian characters.

The overprint was applied diagonally (from lower left to upper right) in two lines. The text was misspelled ("Cesskja" instead of "Cesskaja"). No record was kept but it is the opinion of most that only about 1000 of these stamps were overprinted. They were used for perhaps one week and were taken out of circulation, when a corrected overprint was to be employed. In the meantime however, the authorities at Omsk gave permission for free mail to the troops of the Czech armies in Russia.

It is not known how receipts for these stamps were to be divided between the Russian and Czechoslovak posts. The small number of these stamps issued and the smaller number saved (mostly in unused condition) is the reason why so little is known about the stamp. Although this stamp really belongs in a collection of Russia, it is much sought by specialists of Czechoslovakia and is highly prized as a memento of the trek across Siberia.

There are rumors that other Russian stamps were similarly overprinted, but until a cover is found franked with them, they must be considered unauthentic.

(to be continued)

SPECIAL

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR ISSUE — at 1941 prices

1939 ISSUE

PRAGUE SHEET, black overprint75
blue overprint	1.50
green overprint	1.50
gold overprint	1.50
BRATISLAVA NEWSPAPER, silver overprint	2.85

CANADIAN ISSUE

PRAGUE SHEET, black overprint75
blue overprint	1.50
green overprint	1.50
gold overprint	1.50

1940 ISSUE

PRAGUE SHEET, black overprint75
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