

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

Copyright 1950 The Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of North America

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

Vol. XII

December 1950

No. 10

EDITORIAL

Among the many bulletins and periodicals received in the past month is one from Germany, Das Nachrichtenblatt des Briefmarkenshandels (address: Allgemeiner Postwertzeichen Handler Verband, Rothenbaumchaussee 33, Hamburg 13, Germany) and its 1950 membership roster. We do not know the cost of membership nor the subscription price of the publication but advise readers interested to write for further information to the above mentioned organization.

We have frequently extracted gems from the Mercury Stamp Journal and do so again today. In the October 1950 issue on page 51 we read: "There is also the question of the stamps of Russia and its satellites, which has to be considered. Quite some people are still of the opinion that we should not govern collecting by political principles. This may be correct in times of peace and friendly relations with all nations. But in times such as we are now going through, when our good money given to the communist dictatorships helps them to buy tools with which they want to destroy our free world and when American youngsters are dying on the battlefields of Korea to save our way of life, such a policy will have to be reconsidered. The collector who buys new stamps of the communist countries which are offered to him by his dealer should not be condemned too much. But the policies of those wholesalers who have contracts with Russia and other communist countries by which they lend their organization to the merchandising of these postal products, in return for special conditions and favors, including imperforate stamps and other varieties, are detrimental to the interests of this country as well as of philately. If their "business as usual" with the Soviets were stopped, it would also have other beneficial results. Russia and its eight satellites in Europe had a large production of stamps, especially of commemoratives and semi-postals, during recent years. In the last five years, these countries have issued about 2500 different stamps, even if we neglect the hundreds of local issues which came out during the same period. This is considerably more than all of the other twenty-six stamp issuing countries in Europe have produced during the same period, although some of them were not bashful either in the production of new stamps. Of the communist issues, 95% were unnecessary from the strictly postal point of view; they were mostly propaganda pictures issued to extract money from the pockets of the collectors in the free countries. When importation of these communist products into the free world ceases, any reason to issue them will also disappear and we can foresee a very reduced stamp issuing program by these countries. If we prevent the wholesalers from doing business with the Soviets, it will be beneficial to philately and at the same time will deprive the Soviets of some of the hard currency which buys material for guns and bombs."

In several issues of the Collectors Club Philatelist appeared an article by Edwin Mueller entitled "The Pre-Stamp Postmarks of Austria." This article, including additions and corrections has now appeared in book form and is a

must for every collector interested in the cancellations used in the territories which later became the Czechoslovak Republic. We recommend this work very highly to our members. It is available from the author, Mr. Edwin Mueller, 522 Fifth Avenue, New York 18, New York. The price for this profusely illustrated handbook is \$2.00 postpaid. It will help us if our readers when ordering the book mention they read about it in the Czechoslovak Specialist.

Mr. George Skopeck writes: Information about Dobrushka as shown in the Specialist is not quite right. Should be northeastern Bohemia, not northeastern CSR and Opochno district (county) not province. We stand corrected.

Our Toronto member, Mr. C. Atkins, exhibited pages from his collection of Great Britain and its Handstruck Stamps during the APS Convention and won second award. We hope to meet member Atkins next year when the APS meets in Toronto.

During the big show in Australia our good friend, Bill Russell was awarded a silver medal for his exhibition of Czechoslovak stamps. We congratulate both Russell and Atkins.

Only recently we announced the death of Felix Brunner and today we sorrowfully announce the death of his widow. Mrs. Eugenia Brunner was a true Czech of the old school who delighted in speaking in the mother tongue. She was always interested in the progress of our modest little paper; her moral support of the editor will be missed. To her parentless children we extend our heart-felt sympathies.

Another member, who frequently writes to the editor, observes that on the 3. Kes stamp of the 5th anniversary of the Peoples' Republic issue, the rifle of the worker has the shoulder strap on the barrel; from the position of the "shoot-in' arn" it certainly appears so. May we suggest these are only simple Nimrods who seldom handle deadly weapons and hence carry the rifle any old way.

This is the last month of the year. You know what that means. Your editor was anxious to beat last year's record of 132 pages but had to be satisfied to tie it. We are really anxious to give you as much reading matter as the treasury permits. We need more members, many more. We shall continue to keep our membership rates low enough to permit even the poorest to remain with us, but ask those who can afford to help us to do so. So, even before you get the notice to pay your dues, mail in that check for 1, 2, 5 dollars (really, any amount will be gratefully accepted) to your treasurer: Edward J. Sabol, Box 221, State College, Pa. (This will be Ed's address for the next few months.)

One of our very newest members writes: "It is generally known that the London issue of 1945 contained only eight stamps and only plates for these stamps were sent to Praha. It would be interesting to check on the paper and gum of these eight stamps to see if additional printings were made in Praha; it would be interesting to compare the companion stamps of additional values for possible deviations in actual design." A fine tip to our Specialists.

By the way, did you pay your dues for 1951? Did you ask non-members interested in Czech stamps to join us? Yes, its only one paragraph back we reminded you, but by now you should have mailed in that check. Thank you.

As we were ready to mail our material to the printer we received for review a book published by the American Philatelic Society entitled "The Danube Steam Navigation Company" by E. F. Hurt and Denwood N. Kelly. We were tempted to place both the book and request aside and conveniently review it next month. Knowing that the Danube is the lifeline of Central Europe, that Central Europe means several Slavic countries, we reread the highlights of the book (we read it when it was published serially in the American Philatelist). We realized it would be an injustice to the authors, the publishers and to our members if we failed to report on it now. The APS Philatelic Research and Literature Committee did very well in presenting this monograph in book form. It is an excellent treatise of the stamps of the D. D. S. G., its cancellations and history. It is well illustrated and information gleaned by many over a long period, is presented in a masterful manner in compact form. We advise our members who are interested to purchase this volume (\$2.50), from the Central Office of the American Philatelic Society, Inc., P. O. Box 800, State College, Pa.

Glad you mailed in that check for your 1951 dues.

To one and all a
 Very Merry and Holy Christmas,
 Your officers and editor.

OUR PRAHA LETTER



Fully 90% of the philatelic activities in the Republic centers around the National Philatelic Exhibition to be held in Praha, October 28th, 1950, was the opening day selected for this great event. Originally scheduled as an international show, the leading powers of F I P granted precedence to the London show in the spring. Without rancor the collectors here changed the plans from an international show in the spring, to a national exhibition of internal solidarity in the fall. Yet, long before the actual plans were laid, it was evident this would not be a national event; every country of Eastern Europe sent its representatives. The Praha show will be a symbol of the aspirations of all democratic people. For the first time in its history the U. S. S. R. is officially represented at a philatelic exhibition.

Much publicity was given the theme of the show. J. A. Svengsbir, the young and talented artist whose masterpieces are so well known to all collectors of C. S. R., is a student of Praha history. He has prepared many designs showing historical Praha and the beautiful block of four prepared for the show proves his research was not fruitless and his genius beautifully transmits his knowledge to the rest of the world. But, this is not all. A special exhibition sheet is prepared showing Praha of today, Praha with a future, Praha of builders. The immortal city which constantly changes yet eternally remains the same. The artist here depicted the architectural beauties of the Hradcany, the Svatopluk Cech Bridge over the Vltava and a part of the Letna Plain with the Hanov Pavilion, the cupola under the Straka Academy, present seat of the presidency of the government and in the foreground the construction of a new bridge over the river just below Letna. This design will appear in one value, 1.50 KCS. steel blue in a special miniature sheet form with four stamps, imperforate and gummed. All the stamps issued for the exhibition are valid for postage until demonetized. A special printing press will be installed in the exhibition hall and all philatelic sheets will be printed there. These stamps shall also be issued in sheet form and will contain an additional value but with the same design, the 3. Kcs. in red. From this description the collector may know that the miniature sheets printed at the exhibition will be from flat plates and the sheet stamps from the rotary press. Besides this a commemorative postcard will be issued.

We hope to present to our friends beyond our borders a full report on this show in the next issue of the Specialist. The entire program is different from those ever held and its novel method may revolutionize exhibitions of the future. It will be proof that individuals are nothing; it is the whole that counts.

NEW MEMBERS

431. Gilbert J. Strache, 2863 S. 7th St. East, Salt Lake City, Utah.
 432. E. Stork, Mount Hood Loop highway, Government Camp, Oreg.

PARADE OF NEW ISSUES

Souvenir Block of Four for the Philatelic Exhibition



On the occasion of the Philatelic Exhibition held in Praha from October 28 to November 5, the Czechoslovak Post issued on October 21 a commemorative set, printed in a block of four with the architectonic pictures of old Praha from the designs and engravings by the stamp-engraver J. A. Svengsbir, with the following denominations:

Kcs 1.50, grey-green	Kcs 2.00, sepia-brown
Kcs 3.00, brown-red	Kcs 5.00, grey-blue

The value of Kcs 1.50 depicts the oldest drawing of the Praha Castle after the book-painting from the Cosmas Chronicles of the XIVth Century.

The picture of the value of Kcs 2.00 has been designed from the wood-engraving by Michael Wohlgemuth, bearing the oldest view of Praha of 1493, as reproduced in the book by H. Schedel "Liber Chronicarum."

The value of Kcs 3.00 depicts Praha of 1606 from the reproduction of the copper-etching by Johann Wechter after the design by Filip van den Bosshe.

For the painting of the picture of the value of Kcs 5.00, the designer of the etching Josef Gregory has used a view of the Small Town and Praha Castle from the design by Ludwig Kohl.

All the above stamps are vertical rectangles, sized 37x23.5 mm, printed by rotary press from plates arranged in blocks of four, each containing four different values that represent the complete set.

The block of four will be on sale for Kcs 20.00 including the admission to the Philatelic Exhibition and will be available only to the subscribers of the inland New Issue Service and to the members of the Czechoslovak Philatelic

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

Clubs who made their applications by Sept. 10, each of them receiving only one block of four.

A cacheted First Day Cover as well as a Collection Sheet, both bearing a special first day postmark of the Philatelic Exhibition will also be issued.

Stamps in commemoration of Zdenek Fibich



On October 15th, 1950, the Czechoslovak Post will honor the 100th anniversary of the birth and the 50th anniversary of the death of the famous Czech musician Zdenek Fibich by issuing two commemorative stamps, viz.

Kcs 3.— red and Kcs 8.— olive-green, both depicting the musician.

The stamps have been designed by prof. Karel Svolinsky and engraved by Jan Mracek. Printing was done by rotary press in sheets of 50 and 25 respectively, arranged in rectangular size of 23.5x37 mm.

A cacheted First Day Cover as well as a Collection Sheet, both bearing a special first day postmark will be also issued.

Stamps in commemoration of the "Day of the Czechoslovak Army"



On October 6th, 1950, the Czechoslovak Post will honor "The Day of the Czechoslovak Army" by issuing two commemorative stamps, viz.:

Kcs 1.50, blue, depicting a Czechoslovak soldier with a miner on his right and a farmer on his left, thus symbolizing the unity of the Czechoslovak Army with the working class in the fight for peace. The stamp was designed by the painter Vaclav Sivka and engraved by J. A. Svengsbir.

Kcs 3.—, red, depicting a Czechoslovak and a Soviet soldier armed with automatic guns, standing under their national flags, firm and resolved to defend their countries. The stamp was designed by the painter Frant. Hudecek and engraved by Ladislav Jirka.

Both the stamps are printed by rotary press in sheets of 50 and 25 arranged horizontally, size 23.5 x 37 mm.

At the same time a First Day Cover, designed by V. Sivka and engraved by Bedrich Housa, as well as a Collection Sheet will also be issued.

The 1920 Masaryk Issue of Czechoslovakia

By Z. K.

Translated by G. Skopecek and R. L. Spofford

(Reprinted with permission of the publishers of STAMPS Magazine)

The first Czechoslovak stamps bearing the portrait of T. G. Masaryk were issued in 1920. Before that time several artists had made an effort to produce a postage stamp with his portrait, but with mediocre success. These unsuccessful attempts served to emphasize the worth of M. Svabinsky's wash drawing, made for the 500h and 1000h values, issued March 7, 1920. This drawing has a design that allegorically expresses the rich abundance of Masaryk's birthplace, Hodonin, where he was born in a small cottage a hundred years ago, and on which site a school stands today.

Stamps with the portrait of T. G. Masaryk were produced at a time when the graphic arts industry was trying to find methods to improve the production of stamps. These efforts open a rich hunting ground for specialists.

The 500h and 1000h values of these stamps were issued in an edition of 500,000 sets. Besides this, 5000 more copies of each value which were earmarked for the overprint "S. O. 1920." For this stamp, Svabinsky adopted the President's portrait of 1919, made for his famous wood engraving. The line engraving on steel by the master engraver, E. Karel, was perfect; although the later impressions lost their original clearness due to wear on the plate.

These plates, of 100 subjects each, were composed of cliches of dies made from the original engraving. The Unie printing establishment tried with utmost care to produce a really good stamp, and to that end, made numerous trial prints on a variety of papers, using different inks, in an effort to reproduce the



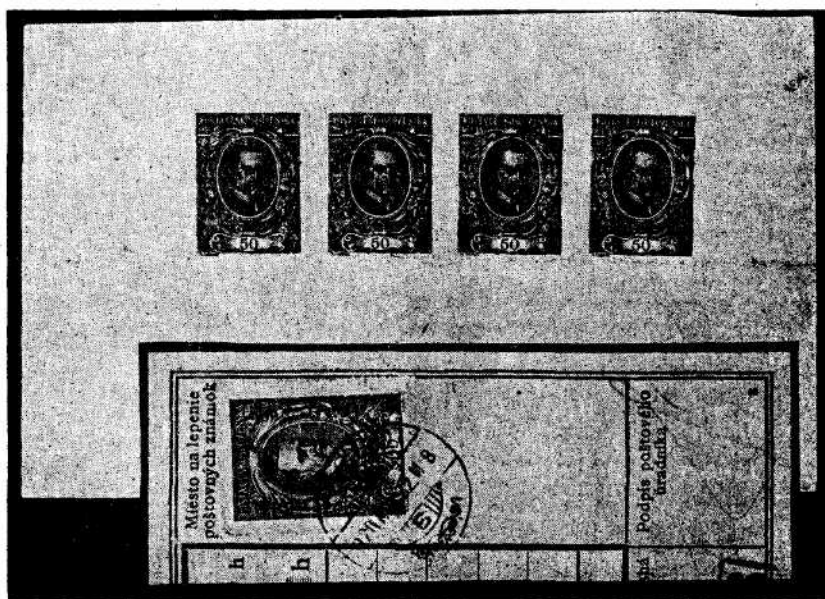
A strip of three 50h essay in photogravure, a trial print of the 125h and a black print of the 2000h essay.



A very interesting bisect of the 500h stamp cancelled in Duřenec.

fine lines of the engraving. Photogravure was also tried, but this process proved entirely unsuitable because the prints produced by it were blurred. However, it appears that the two colors, gray-blue and brown, were selected from the photogravure color proofs, as the proofs made by typography were not in as many colors.

It was decided to produce the stamps by typography on chalky paper, surfaced in a light shade of color, on which the stamps were printed. On the sheets of stamps with wide margins we find unprinted white strips. The gum is yellow-brown, perforations 13%. Proofs which have found their way into collections are either photogravures in yellow, brown, red, blue, or green, or typographed prints of some individual dies on thick carton, chalky, common white or yellowish paper; or on thin colored paper in shades of green, rose, brown-yellow, orange-brown, and light blue. Most of these proofs were made



Trial printing of the small format 50h essay with large numeral. A Hungarian cancellation showing the crown on a 500h stamp.

from cliches, and a few from whole plates. Gum similar to the finished stamps is found on some prints. Imperforates are considered unfinished stamps.

There are a few imperfections in this issue. Wearing of the plates caused the background to blur, and on the eighty-first stamp of the 1000h value, a blot appears in Masaryk's hair, which philatelists call "rose in the hair." The stamps are very often badly centered. A well-centered stamp commands a premium.

Many of these stamps in used condition are on the market, but covers with both values are very scarce. Most of them are found on parcel post tags, thanks to the collectors of post-revolutionary cancels. Among them we find Austrian, Hungarian, nationalized, and even first Czechoslovak cancels. A very unusual example is a halved 1000h stamp on a parcel post tag, canceled May 6, 1920 at Dubenec. Both of these values were overprinted "S. O. 1920" for the plebiscite territory of Teschen; "S. O." meaning "Silesia Orientalis." For this purpose only 5000 sets were issued. Orava, which was a distributing point for all post offices in Teschen territory, never saw these stamps, as all were sold to collectors in Praha. For this reason there is none extant postally used.

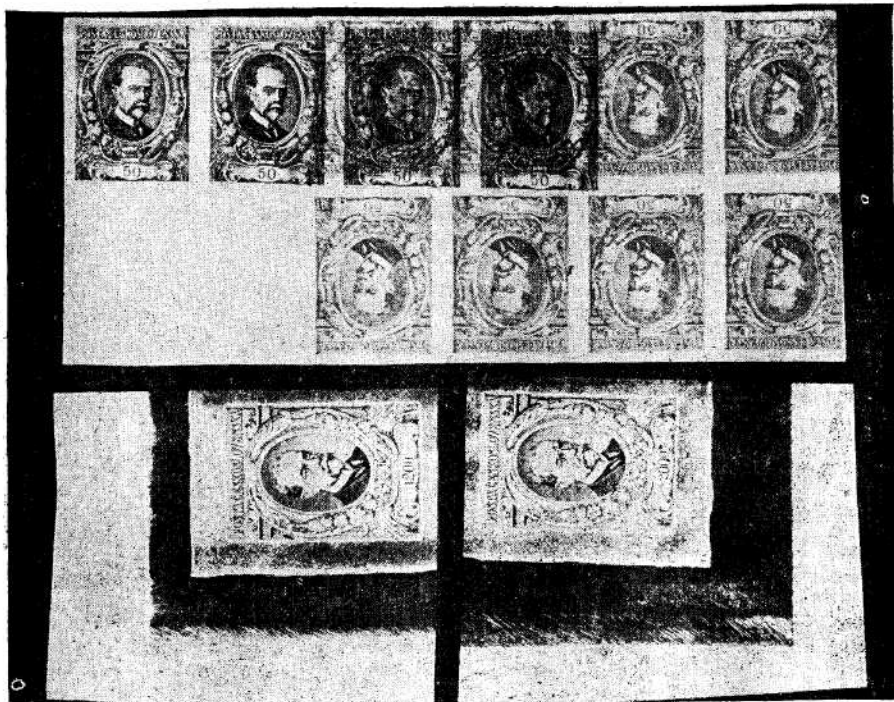
On July 8, 1920 the Ministry of Posts announced the issue of a 50h stamp with the portrait of T. G. Masaryk; color blue, perforate, but of a smaller size (19.5 x 27 mm). Although all preparations for the printing were completed, even to making proofs of plates, the issue was called off. The decision was made because the size was considered unsuitable, as on such a small stamp in a large issue the fine lines of the engraving would be lost.

Trial prints were also made in photogravure in the original size of the 500h and 1000h values, and some in smaller size in several colors. Typography trials did not come out much better, even though the drawing was changed somewhat to suit the process. With the very best care in pulling proofs, the background shading was blurred. This last proof was perforated 11½, and printed in a light blue color. A number of other proofs embellish collectors' albums, among which are those with large and small value numerals on common and hard paper and some on bank forms (similar to the 1919 stamps of Latvia). It is not known whether there were any proofs of cliches of ten, but if there are they were made strictly for the collectors.

The circular of the Ministry Posts dated August 7, 1920, informed of a new issue with the portrait of T. G. Masaryk, due to a change in postal rates. This



A very interesting block of 10 with mirrored inscription "RUBES".



The upper picture shows a very interesting block of printer's waste. The lower two show trial printing of the 1200h essay produced by the photogravure process.

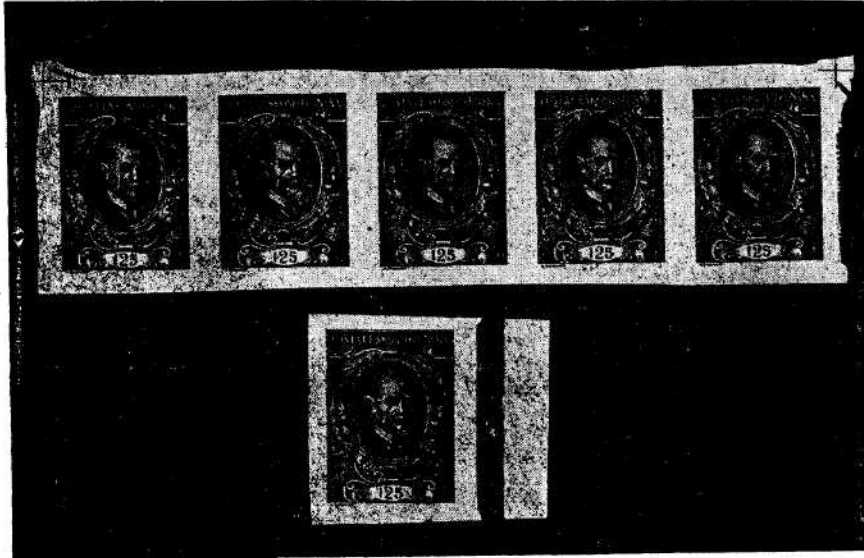
was to be a 1000h value in a new color. At the last moment this issue was abandoned, and a 125h value, light blue, was substituted on September 23, 1920, for the sole purpose of pre-payment of the registered letter fee.

At this time the Unie printing house discharged the engraver, E. Karel, and so used dies made by a photo-chemical process to make plates for the printing. The first prints are fairly clear, but later ones show many defects, and the perforating of the large issue of 18,200,000 was not given sufficient attention. Very many stamps were badly centered and some were even perforated through the center.

Inspection of trial prints of this issue proves that very many proofs were pulled, but it is a mystery how so many of them got into the hands of collectors. Here are some facts which should be of great help in the study of printing development. In the first place, a cliché of twenty dies with blank value shield was made. Then the number 125 was pasted onto it, and enough clichés obtained to form a plate 4 x 25 for printing a sheet of 100 stamps. There are some interesting proofs of this auxiliary material, such as clichés of ten subjects, signed by Rubes, and also a proof of a cliché of twenty-five subjects. Proofs of clichés without value numerals were made in black on common as well as on chalky paper, and in blue on white and colored paper. With value numerals inserted we find black proofs in reverse and proofs in violet, red and greenish blue. There is also waste on red-violet and green papers. On this a line perforation $13\frac{3}{4}$ was tried out, and was adopted for the whole issue.

Typical of plate defects are thin numerals on the twenty-fifth stamp, and on the eightieth stamp the numeral "2" has a short tail. Partial and complete offsets and smeared prints are numerous. The color is blue, shading from gray-blue to dark blue. A part of the issue printed in ultramarine was sold to collectors. Imperforates should be considered as not officially issued.

By order of the Ministry of Posts dated December 10, 1920, there were 650,000



It is evident that many blocks of 10 were made from which was prepared the printing plate.

stamps of this issue surcharged for the Red Cross, and on December 15 two other stamps were authorized to be surcharged for the benefit of the Red Cross—the 40 and 60h Hradcany. These stamps were valid only for internal postage, and were demonetized January 4, 1921. Little interest was shown by the public in these issues so most of them were sold to collectors at the Praha agency. Also known are proofs of the original overprint design, a stylized twig, in red and black.

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
blue overprint	1.50
green overprint	1.50
red overprint	1.50
gold overprint	1.50
BRATISLAVA SHEET, black overprint75

B. J. MILLER

264 E. 180th St.

New York 57, N. Y.

Stamps of the Czechoslovak Field Post in Russia

(Continued from last issue)

The shades of surcharges and overprints: Several shades, sometimes quite pronounced, are found in both the surcharge and the overprint. This is one of the reasons why we believe that these have been applied after the troops had returned from Siberia and therefore cannot be original printings but subsequent printings to enrich those in possession of the original dies.

Quantities issued

The distinguishing appearance of the stamps now found on the market are proof that several printings exist. We have, however, no proof under what circumstances and when these printings took place. Those who are supplying the stamps will not give information and what information they do give must be accepted with consideration. These dies should have been returned to the Museum of National Independence as well as all other material connected with the conduct of the Czech Post in Siberia.

It is possible to recognize the first issue, from the stamps and on covers from Siberia. All other printings must be considered as private emissions, not issued authoritatively.

The originals are recognized by the very distinct relief of the lion and every individual picture of the design. The frame is in a bright, almost steely, blue and the oval in a bright brick to brown red; the paper is white, the gum unevenly coated, slightly yellow with small bubbles. The overprint "1920" is dull and the surcharged values dark or light green, without a trace of shine.

Shortly after the first printing a second larger printing followed. These stamps are recognized by a graying blue frame. The gum is applied more evenly, the printing of "1920" is dull or shiny, the surcharged values are dull, bright or olive green.

Aside from these two printings we cannot accept any other printing as authorized. As has been stated, together with the stamps sent to Russia, the dies went also, but it is highly improbable that further printings were made there. Stamps of this issue purported to be "Siberian printings" must be taken with sufficient reservation.

To the honor of the printers of the original printings be it said that no intentional errors occurred. Most errors are mere printing errors; inverted centers in the original or first printings are not known, but are found in the later printings. Inverted centers of the first printing occur, but the brick red color is absent. Inverted overprints or surcharges are (as far as we know) later printings and therefore must be classed as "unissued in that condition."

Counterfeits

The firm of Sekula* in Lucerne has been marketing very good counterfeits of these stamps. The characteristics of them are:

Type I. After the "e" of Sibirske at bottom a horizontal line and irregularities of letters in words as CesKoslov and SiBirske.

Type II. The supersign above "C" in "Ceskoslov" is plain whereas in the original it consists of two dots.

Other characteristics are noted in both types:

Paper—thin, soft, pliable.

Gum—even, colorless.

Lion—rough print, eye and name indistinct, curve and doubling of tail different.

Oval—bright brick, a distinct shade.

Counterfeits of overprints appeared on both originals and counterfeits. The figures of value are decidedly different. Many of these counterfeits have appeared on covers but all postmarks are counterfeits.

Cancellations

Many original covers without stamps had stamps added later and these were then finished off by an added part of postmark. Only a little care is needed to detect these.

* Our information does not state which of the Sekula firms was the culprit. We are only translating and are not responsible for the statement of the author.



We Buy and Sell

**All
European
Stamps**



CZECHOSLOVAKIA IS OUR SPECIALTY

Of this country we have every stamp in stock

Alfons Stach

MEMBER C. P. S. N. A.

99 NASSAU ST.

NEW YORK, N. Y.

Telephone BEckman 3-0663