

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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## EDITORIAL

In the last issue of the Specialist we stressed the necessity of raising the membership dues. We announced the new rates to members and are happy to report that the dues are already rolling in. An announcement appeared that the treasurer resigned and that the president appointed Mr. George Kobyłka to succeed Mr. Edward Sabol until the next election. Those of you who have the interest of your Society at heart, please gladden your newly appointed treasurer by mailing your 1952 dues to him now. To refresh your memory: The regular membership dues is \$2.00; Associate, \$5.00; Patron, \$10.00 a year and the new Life Membership is \$75.00. The new treasurer's address is: Geo. Kobyłka, 3453 W. 23rd St., Chicago 23, Ill.

The September Specialist consisted of 16 pages; this issue only 8 pages. We hope our treasury is healthy enough to warrant more than the average of 12 pages each issue. This, of course, is up to each member.

The last PRAHA LETTER received contained more political ranting than philatelic information. We publish only an excerpt which may interest our members, especially those who conduct an active exchange with collectors over there. "An entire catalogue of stamps refused for transmission through the mails, has been published by the P. O. D. This contains the following items listed according to 1951 Zumstein: Albania: 296-340; Danzig: 268-269, 275-282; Germany: all issues from 1933 to 1945 (488-921, Service 117-141, 1-22, etc.); all German locals issued between 1938 and 1945; Bohemia-Moravia, Slovakia, General Government, Croatia, Montenegro (1941-1944) and Serbia (1941-1943); Finland: 238-240; Karelia, 1-28; France, 564-565; Italy, all issues from 1923 to 1945; all Italian occupation issues from 1923 to 1944; all Italian Colonies from 1923 to 1945; Norway, 233-266, 274, 275, 280, 283-284, 292; Netherlands, 413, 414; Rumania, 445-451, 784-788, 800-847, 859-867, 874-881, 887, 903-909; Austria, 633-647, 672-694, all locals of 1945, overprints on German stamps; Greece, 509-554; San Marino, 223-229; Spain, all issues of the fascist regime issued since 1936, all semi-official and local stamps issued under fascist rule; all Spanish Colonies issued since 1936; Hungary, 593-599, 625-630, 640-644, 653-661, 667-671, 686-692, 697-700, 730-743, 751-754; all stamps with fascist designs no matter when or where issued."

After the action of USSR, this can hardly surprise us. The Soviets "excommunicated" two of their own sets by not including them in their national album.

## PARADE OF NEW ISSUES

## New Issue Honoring Josef Hybeš



To honor the 20th anniversary of the death of Josef Hybeš, a socialist politician and one of the founders of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, the Czechoslovak Post issued on July 21st, a series of two commemorative stamps with his portrait. The stamps are of the following denominations and colors:

Kčs 1.50 brown, and Kčs 2.— red, and were designed by Jan Hlína and engraved by Ladislav Jindra, recess printed in sheets of 50 and 25 in format 23.5 x 37 mm.

At the same time a cacheted First Day Cover, as well as a Collection Sheet, both bearing a special first day postmark, were also issued.

## New Commemoratives Honoring Alois Jirásek



To commemorate the centenary of the birth of Alois Jirásek, the famous Czech author, falling on August 23rd, 1951, the Czechoslovak Ministry of Posts issued a new set of the following commemoratives:

1. The portrait of Alois Jirásek, 1.50 Kčs black grey,
2. The drawing "Fables and Fates" by Mikuláš Aleš, 3.— Kčs red,
3. The drawing of "The Region of Tabor" by Mikuláš Aleš, 4.— Kčs brown grey,
4. The portrait of Alois Jirásek, 5.— Kčs blue.

The portraits on the stamps 1. and 4. are the work by professor Karel Svolinský, the engraving by Jindra Schmidt.

The drawings by Mikuláš Aleš drawn on cartoon in 1880 and 1881, depicted on the stamps 3. and 4., were applied to adorn the National Theatre in Prague. Their graphical arrangement for the stamps is also by K. Svolinský. To preserve the originality of the drawings they must have been printed by photogravure.

The stamp No. 1. is recess-printed in sheets of 50 and 25 copies; the stamp No. 4. is recess-printed on flat plate in sheets of 10 copies. Both the stamps are in the form of a rectangle, vertically arranged, 23x37 mm in dimension.

The stamps 2. and 3. are in the form of a horizontal rectangle 22x36.5 mm. in dimension.

Validity for postage from August 19th, 1951.

A cacheted First Day cover designed by the author of the stamps, who drew also the First Day postmark, as well as the Collection Sheet, were issued at the same time. The engraving of the cover is by Jindra Schmidt.

#### NEW MEMBERS

460. Robert T. Lourence, 1900 Strand, Manhattan Beach, Calif.  
461. David C. Guhl, 402 E. Cedar Ave., Connellsville, Pa.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

379. Milos Polivka, 101 Montrose Rd., Berkeley 7, Calif.

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## NEW AND RECENT ISSUES

	Mint	Used				
406-09	Democratization	--- .35 .15	430-31	P. T. T.	----- .15	---
410-13	Nationalization	--- .35 .15	432-33	Tajovsky	----- .20	---
414-15	Neumann	----- .15	---	434-35	New Prague	----- .15
416-17	Nemcova	----- .25	---	434a	Philatelic Sheet	--- .25
418-21	Student Congress	--- .35	---	436-37	II CSR-USSR Friend	.20
422-23	Fibich	----- .33	---	---	Peace Fighters (2 v.)	.15
424-25	Army Day	----- .15	---	---	Fucik (2 vals.)	--- .20
426-29a	Old Prague Sheet	--- .85 .75	---	---	Heavy Industries (3)	.26

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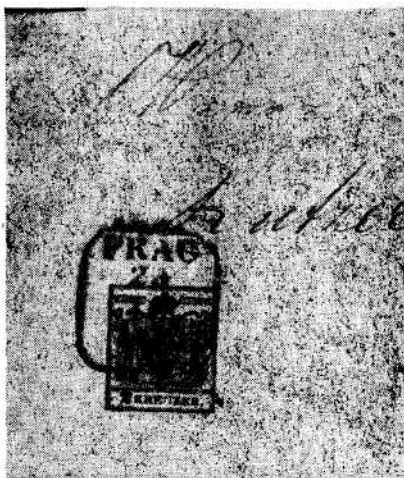
New York 57, N. Y.

## PRAHA POSTMARKS

By F. J. Kovarik

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Photographs of philatelic material in this article are by Adrien Boutrelle, N. Y.



The above octagonal vertical frame containing the town name "PRAG," capitalized, with day and month, is found most frequently on the first issue of Austria.

Postmark collecting was always in vogue in Czechoslovakia. This type of philately had its origin long before the creation of the Republic following World War I, and was in reality a political expression of a suppressed people. Many fine postmark collections can be found in Poland, northern Italy, western Germany, in Czechoslovakia. These people felt that collecting postage stamps of the country which kept them under subjection is criminal, and because they could not rid themselves of the urge to follow philately, chose postmark collecting as a logical pursuit. Central and eastern European countries provide a wide field in this particular phase of our hobby. There are localities which pass from country to country, and a collection of postmarks on cover or on piece (and for the lucky collector "socked-on-the-nose" on the stamp) is a historical document of the turbulent times, often of the passing of wars, or at least of usurping tyrants.

It would be foolish to state that all postmark collections have a political or historical background. There are many collections based on the types of cancellers used. Still other collections of postmarks strive to show the postal reason, the real and primary reason, for stamp usage. But when looked upon as a whole, every postmark collection presents history, not only of the country whose stamp appears under the cancellation, but of the town or city in which it was applied.

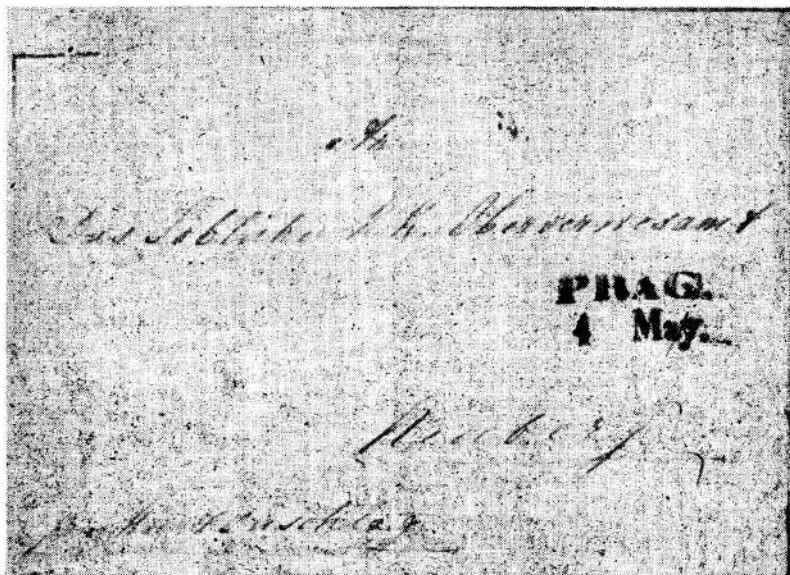
The old Austro-Hungarian Monarchy contained many peoples before its collapse in 1918. Most of them were Slavs who were not too pleased with the government. To the northwest of the country were the Kingdom of Bohemia and the Margravates of Moravia and Silesia. In the northern part of Hungary was the ancient Principality of Slovakia, whose language is almost identical with that of the Czechs of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. Most of

the town names were Germanized (those in Slovakia were Magyarized) and it was not easy to recognize a Czech town from the name appearing in the postmark. But the postmark collectors of the future Czechoslovakia knew not only the name of the town as used by its inhabitants but also the official name employed in the postmark.

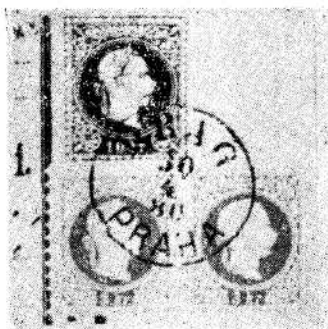
That postmark specialization was popular in many European countries is evidenced by the many well known handbooks devoted to the subject: Müller's Handbooks on Austrian cancellations (The Pre-Stamp Postmarks of Austria, Grosses Handbuch der Abstempelungen von Altoesterreich und Lombardei-Venetien, etc.), Vacek's handbook on the postmarks of Czechoslovakia used immediately after 1918, published in Praha in 1940, with the now queer title "Postmarks of Former Czechoslovakia" (Razítka Bývalého Československa), Leitenberger's Handbook of Czechoslovakian cancellations showing all types used in the first ten years of the Republic (Handbuch der Tschechoslovakischen Poststempel), etc.

To give even a general idea of the postmarks used in the territory which at any time belonged to Czechoslovakia, from the era when posts were first established during the pre-stamp period, during the Austrian stampic history from 1850 to 1918 when the Czechoslovakian postal system was established, through the Protectorate crisis and to the present day, would tax the pages of many issues of this magazine. We shall therefore confine our article to a general outline of postmarks used in the capitol of the ancient Kingdom of Bohemia and later the capitol of the Republic of Czechoslovakia, Praha (Prag, Prague).

The first postmarks used in former Austria were employed first in Wien (Vienna) in 1751 and all large cities of the Empire were supplied with town postmarks during 1751 and 1752. At that time postage rates were based on weight (number of sheets in letter) and distance. This postmark device was very simple, it contained only the name of the Post Office and was applied either to the face or the back of the cover. In the year 1789 a new postal law became effective. This law discontinued the distance clause (within the limits of the Empire) in the rate on mailings, leaving only the weight (or the



A pre-stamp, or stampless, cover.



A cancellation which came into use in the late 1870's. This one is dated April 30, 1880. (LEFT)

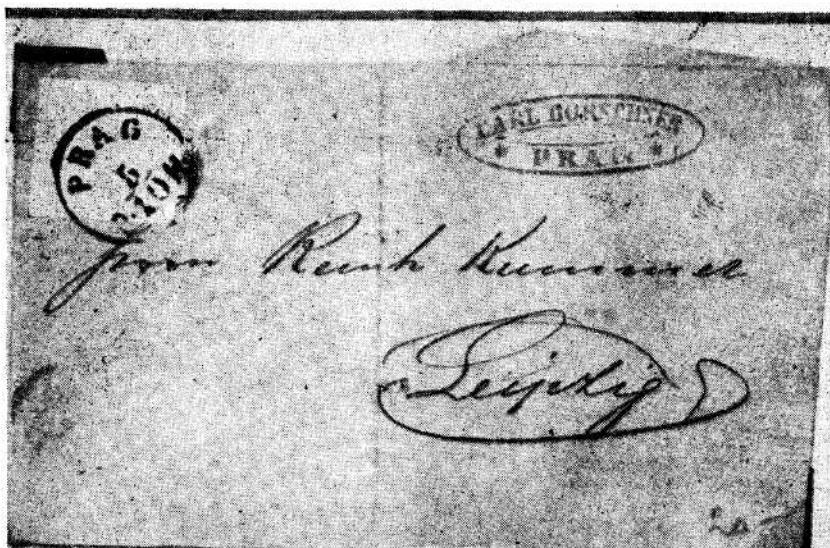


The earlier of the common double-circle device.

number of sheets in the letter) to be considered. Many Post Office clerks believed the postmark was applied merely as a check on distance rates, and after 1789 were lax and negligent in the application of the postmark. This is the reason why covers of the Eighteenth Century are so scarce. It is believed that Napoleonic wars took so much of the country's time and energy that only periodic orders of the Post Office Department mentioned postmarks. At last, in 1817, specific orders were issued compelling the postal personnel to apply the town postmark.

It is from this year that postmark collectors meet with postmarks from Praha, used always in the German spelling, Prag. One encounters a script town postmark in a horizontal oval, as also a postmark preceded by "a" and then in a horizontal rectangle having the appearance of a serrated perforation. This was followed by a large capitalized "PRAG" without a frame; another with a double lined horizontal rectangular frame, and still another horizontal rectangle frame composed of dots, enclosing also the month, day and year. These latter postmarks have been used on mail matter without and with postage stamps; in other words, in the transition period when the first adhesives were introduced in Austria, in 1850.

(to be continued)



The early single-circle cancellation. (Thimble size).



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