

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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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

**KINDLY NOTE YOUR EDITOR'S NEW ADDRESS:
8748 ROCKEFELLER AVE., BROOKFIELD, ILLINOIS**

Soon before our retirement we started a search for a new home, preferably in a suburb not too distant from Chicago and a place with good transportation facilities. Ever since the loss of vision in the left eye we refused to drive; why jeopardize lives other than our own because of our handicap? We have difficulties with our good eye; it is not easy for us to judge distance or exact location of any object at some distance. The eye is good enough for ordinary reading and with a good glass we are not afraid to judge stamps, but that is not hazardous. So having no car of our own, transportation was a real problem. The second problem was financial; we do not want to saddle ourselves with a debt. Our primary object was to sell either the summer home or the city home, purchase the new home with a down payment from the sale of one of them and getting a loan until such time as we can sell the other. It seemed we'd never succeed, then things began to happen so fast that between the time we learned we can sell our city home and buy the new and move into it, only nine days elapsed. Both our buyer and seller gave us the impression that at least two months of grace will be accorded us; then this! The rush was terrific! We sit in what we hope will one day be our den preparing this copy for the printer. We can't find our pen. We did remember to bring our Specialist material last (that would be on top), but not much else. If this issue of your publication is poor, we trust you'll pardon us. The June issue may not be much better. With two months without a deadline staring us in the face we hope to improve with the September issue. May we add: We don't wish moving even to our enemies, especially if, like we, they've lived in one place more than a half century and are proud owners of a library of more than 2000 volumes.

Feeling quite secure that the threat of moving is far enough away we decided to visit our youngest nephew and godson in St. Louis on the occasion of his birthday. The Chicago A. S. D. A. Show took place the week-end before our departure and we noted several St. Louis philatelists in attendance. Among them was our president James W. Adler and we confided to him our plan of visiting his city. With Messrs. "Sandy" Arnold and Ellsworth Post we were invited to be guest at a meeting of the Mound City Stamp Club where we met friends and members of our Society, namely: J. Dunajcik, G. Weber and F. Stupka. We visited member J. Strnad in his drug store and enjoyed a pleasant chat with Joe and his wife. Strnad was the first member

of our Society we visited after we became editor of the Specialist and so our friendship is of long standing. We thank our St. Louis friends and especially Jimmy Adler, his Mother and Dad, for their kind hospitality.

Two other collectors who seek an active exchange of mint stamps and/or first day covers with collectors on this side of the metallic draperies are: B. Charfreitag, Zamberk 658 and Josef Košťák, Černošice u Prahy, čís. 138.

Correct your March 1957 Specialist to read March instead of February on the first page. Thank you.

Minkus Publications, Inc., are now working on Volume III of their New World Wide Postage Stamp Catalog which will include the countries of Europe and their Colonies. Your Society has been asked to cooperate to make this catalog as complete and accurate as possible by proof-reading the manuscript of Czechoslovakia. Needless to say your Society thru its officers accepted this task with the proviso that the pricing shall remain with the publishers. In the past we have worked with the publishers of the Scott catalog and are ready to assist any organization which honestly tries to promote philately and especially that section so close to our hearts.

NEW YORK GROUP MEETING

The last meeting of the New York group was held Friday, March 15 in The Collectors Club. Among those present were members Dr. Wm. Reiner-Deutsch, L. M. Horechny, P. L. Flynn, E. J. Michaelson, Wm. Schoenig, N. Feiwelsohn, W. Beck and Jos. Stein.

Member Stein showed his Bohemia-Moravia and Slovakia collections in lieu of member G Kaplowitz whose wife was removed to a hospital. (We hope the nature of Mrs. Kaplowitz's illness was not too serious and wish her early and complete recovery.)

Of course, the subject nearest the hearts of all New York members is the forthcoming exhibition to be held at The Collectors Club, Friday, May 17 from 7 PM to 10 PM. All 19 frames have been subscribed and the twentieth has been reserved to publicize the Society, its aims and publications. Material for this frame has been sent to New York thru the kindness of member John Velek.

Members who have failed to attend any of the New York Group meetings hereby receive a personal invitation to participate in the group activities. It is the hope and wish of the active members of the group to have a strong organization worthy of our metropolis.

The members are anxious to have the editor of the Specialist as guest at the next meeting and at the exhibition. (The possibility of this visit is very good. FJK.)

After the meeting W. Beck showed a very interesting topical collection entitled "Stamps that are not stamps." With this the meeting has been adjourned.

It is the fervent hope of the group officers that all New York area members help make the New York Show a big success.

CHICAGO GROUP MEETING

The meeting was held in the home of member Frank Zaviska, Sunday, March 17, and was attended by the following members: J. Velek, G. Kobyłka, J. Jiranek, J. Janecka, M. Skrivanek, F. Kovarik and one or two others. (We have misplaced our notes of this meeting and therefor it is not as complete as we should like to have it.)

The meeting concerned itself primarily with the proposal advanced by several stamp clubs and societies in the Chicago area to limit the number of

stamp exhibitions during the season. It is well known that many of these end up as financial and moral failures. If the groups could get together to work out a good plan the number of shows could be limited to three or four good ones instead of the present many more or less poor. A meeting of all the groups is being called to the Hotel La Salle to study this idea.

Nothing new can be reported on the handbook at this time. The committee is hard at work to study possible ways and means to produce a handbook worthy of the name. A price list can be published quite economically, but that cannot be graced with the title Handbook.

The next meeting of the Chicago Group will be held in the home of Jos. Jiranek, 5032 25th St., Cicero, Sunday, May 19, at 2:30 PM and the June 16 meeting will be held in the office building of Jos. Janecka, 7306 Ogden Ave., Riverside.

The Chicago Group wishes the New York Group huge success with their Show.

SCOUT STAMPS

Reprinted with permission from Weekly Philatelic Gossip

When you travel you meet a lot of people for the first time and make new contacts which may prove useful years later. I mention this because two years after I visited Stockholm, Sweden, a dealer over there has just sent me three lovely Czechoslovak Boy Scout covers. How these covers dating back to the foundation of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 found their way to Sweden would be most interesting to trace back. However these covers are now here in the States and it would also be interesting to know in which collection they will finally end up. On October 1918 the Czechoslovak Republic was born while the old Austrian stamps were still in circulation.

Thus the Scout stamps were strictly of a provisional nature and used exclusively as "Officials" for delivery by messenger, in this case Scouts. I have the three covers in front of me, one with a 10 haleru blue and two with the 20 haleru in red. Two of the covers, one with a 10 and the other with a 20 haleru are addressed to a "County Economical Board" in Prague and from the difference in the denomination you can gather that there were no specific postal rates at this time of emergency. The agencies of the new government just used the Scout stamps they had on hand. Both covers have a cancellation which translated means "Scout Post," the name of the town "Praha" and the year 1918. The exact date of the mailing is filled in by hand. In the left corner there is a rubber stamp whose translation reads as follows: "Letter received from Scout." Apparently the receiver had to sign personally when the letter was handed over to him. So much for the two local Prague letters.

The third is the most interesting cover, again addressed to "County Economical Board," but this time to Zizkow, which is outside of Prague. It bears a 20 haleru stamp which is tied to the cover with a "N. V." cancellation, the abbreviation of "Narodny Vlady" which means "National Government." For some reason no rubber stamp marking the delivery by a Boy Scout is applied to this cover. These Boy Scout stamps are not listed by Scott and are not hard to find in MINT condition. They do exist in reversed and in different trial colors in lilac, brown, black, blue, etc. The original dies seem to have been destroyed.

On original covers these Czechoslovakian Boy Scout stamps are historical documents pertaining to the birth of a new state and are most interesting from every angle. Such items are not only collected by the legion of Scout collectors but also by the Czechoslovakia specialists, a fact which makes them very desirable.

Why Bohemia and Moravia Issued Stamps

By Major H. L. Halle

Reprinted with permission from Weekly Philatelic Gossip

For a clearer understanding as to why Bohemia and Moravia became a stamp issuing country, it is necessary to review the historical events leading to the creation of the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia.

A close survey of rule and government of administrations reveals its autonomous character. These are the factors that led to the issuance of postal paper for a territory that although incorporated into Greater Germany was ruled by its own president and cabinet under the watchful eyes of a Reich's Protector.

Since August, 1943 Bohemia and Moravia was governed by Reich's Protector Dr. Wilhelm Frick, the former minister of the interior. The Reich's Protector was subordinate only to Hitler.

It was on Sept. 15, 1938, the day of Chamberlain's arrival at Berchtesgaden, that the Sudetenleader Henlein for the first time openly announced the demand for union with the Reich. The Czech Government counteracted this demand by suspension of the party and all its organizations within a day. Henlein and his deputy and other leaders fled to Germany.

After the breakdown of the Godesberg negotiations on September 23rd, the Western Powers advised the Czech Government to mobilize. Within 24 hours the mobilization was accomplished.

However by September 30, 1938 the accord of Munich sealed the fate of Czechoslovakia.

With the danger of armed conflict rapidly growing the British and French Governments started negotiations with Germany. As a result of these negotiations they forced Czechoslovakia to accept the German demand for a dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. All this without consultation of the Czech Government or the people concerned. The Munich terms provided for plebiscites in a few areas besides the five zones to be annexed by Germany immediately. Under this Four Power Plan the Plebiscite Areas which included the districts of: JIHLAVA; BRNO; OLOMOUC; MORAVSKÁ OSTRAVA were to be occupied by an international force before the plebiscites were to be held. Hitler preferred not to avail himself of this opportunity, but to leave them undisputed to the Czecho-Slovak rump State. They were to fall to him in due course, when he invaded Czechoslovakia on March 15, 1939.

The results of the two partitions of Czechoslovakia are shown in the following figures: Prior to the Munich agreement of September 30, 1938 and the Vienna Award of November, 1938 Czechoslovakia consisted of 141,000 sq. km. with a total population of 15,100,000. Under the agreements, losses to Germany amounted to 20,000 sq. km. with 3,400,000 population, to Hungary 12,000 sq. km. with 1,000,000 population, to Poland 1,000 sq. km. with 200,000 population. This meant a total loss in area of 42,000 sq. km and 4,600,000 population, leaving Czechoslovakia with an area of 99,000 sq. km. and 10,500,000 population during 1938-39.

However after the invasion on March 15, 1939, a complete partition took place with 49,000 sq. km. and 7,300,000 population forming the Protectorate and 38,000 sq. km. with 2,800,000 population forming the State of Slovakia. The remainder Carpatho-Russia 12,000 sq. km. and 679,000 population went to Hungary.

On March 16, 1939, the Protectorate Bohemia and Moravia was created and considered part of the incorporated area (territories) of Greater Germany. Under Fuehrer decree an autonomous government was formed under a Czech "Administrative Administration." A Reichsprotector maintained

German interests.

The "autonomous" Czech Government was headed by a president (Hacha) and prime minister dependent on the Reich's Protectors instructions. All members of the cabinet and government had to be approved by the Reich's Protector. There was a Minister of Justice, Minister of the Interior, Economics, Education, Agriculture and Forestry, Communications and Technical Services and Finance. The Ministers of Economics and Labor were Reichs German. All others Czech. However no Czech minister was permitted to sign anything without the approval of the German Director General (Presidialchef) attached to each ministry. All foreign affairs were handled by the Reich. The Protectorate had its own little Government Army of 7,000 and also maintained a representative with the title Ambassador in Berlin.

In September, 1940, Bohemia and Moravia was included into the German customs area. As for the Provinces, Bohemia and Moravia, the presidents were Czech, the vice-president German. The real power was invested in the hands of the vice-president.

These are the underlying facts that made Bohemia and Moravia a stamp issuing country.

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Hradcany Stamp Perforations

By Z. Kvasnicka

Translated by G. Skopecek

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I have been asked many times by collectors of Hradcany stamps if it is possible to collect all the perforations and how to recognize the genuine ones from counterfeits. Because of increased interest in these perforations, profiteers (collectors as well as dealers) who wanted to reap a harvest persuaded some owners of perforating machines, and even those of UNIE, to make rare perforations for them. Of course, like all greedy people, they overreached themselves and perforated issues which were not authorized and so were not postally used. Collectors consequently are offered many mint stamps with perforations of no philatelic value. The claim that some were made officially or made especially as gifts for influential persons, even if true, will not help us to discern the fakes from the genuine. However, stamps with perforations which were not issued to post offices and not normally used for franking may be considered as trial perforations.

For example, let us consider the 20 hal. carmine, issued imperforate and rather rare. Shortly after its issue, the Cesky Filatelista came out with a notice, saying that it also was issued perforated, but this statement was not supported with properly used specimens.

A collector may find that he has Hradcany stamps on parcel post tags with perforations not listed in any catalog. In such cases it is likely that they are private perforations, which many business houses and banks had made on imperforate sheets to speed up the separation of stamps. In many instances even post offices did this because in the beginning the majority of issues were imperforate.

How to Recognize Official Perforations

In the first place we must know that the following values were issued only imperforate: 30 hal., 30 hal. olive, 40, 50 hal. violet and blue, 75, 80, 100, 300, 400, 500 and 1000 hal.

All others were perforated 10%, 11½, 13½ and 13¾. An easy way to check perforations is to paste a cheap stamp with these perforations on black paper and then match the perforations of stamps that are in doubt. Also, to classify perforations, it is necessary to know the difference between line and comb perforations.

In line perforations only one row of needles is used, first for the horizontal stroke, the sheet then being turned 90° for the vertical stroke. The row of needles was usually longer than was necessary so that perforations extended into the margins. The perforations done by this method crossed without any definite pattern (Fig. 1). Sometimes, to speed up the work, two machines were used, one for horizontal and another for vertical perforations.

The comb method was much faster, because it was not necessary to put the sheet through the machine twice. One stroke perforated the top strip of stamps horizontally and width of the stamp vertically. Thus, only eleven strokes were necessary to perforate a sheet of stamps 10x10. With the eleventh stroke the vertical perforations extended into the bottom margin. If the sheet was put in upside down, the perforations extended into the upper margin. By this method the pattern of holes at the corners of stamps is always the same (Fig. 2).

The comb perforations are always 13¾ horizontally and 13½ vertically, or 11¾ on all sides. Line perforations are 10%, 11½ and 13¾. These perforations may appear individually or in combination.



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The list of the official perforations of Hradcany stamps can be found in the catalog POFIS. This table shows the prices of most perforations as rather low, except the 30 hal. violet, which in face of the high price of the imperforate stamp would not be worth counterfeiting. More attention should be given to the 5, 15, 25 and 60 hal. which should be tested as we have suggested.



Block 4, at upper left, Fig. 1; Block 4, upper right, Fig. 2; four stamps below these blocks, Fig. 3; below them, Fig. 4; at bottom, Fig. 5.

Defective Perforations

Too much haste in the printing and perforating of the first Czechoslovakian stamps resulted in some very badly perforated sheets. Some were greatly off center, partially perforated, or with badly lined-up needles (Fig. 4). Such sheets were supposed to have been thrown out on inspection, but were sent to the post offices anyway and so reached the hands of collectors. Badly centered stamps (Fig. 3) do not have much value.

Private Perforations

As mentioned before, banks, business houses with heavy correspondence, and even some post offices resorted to perforating the sheets in various ways to facilitate the separation of stamps; some used pinking wheels, or a serrated knife, which produced rouletted perforations (Fig. 5). Other availed themselves of perforating machines in private printing shops. These private perforations should not be rejected, when they show proper official use. They belong by all means in a specialized collection. Unused stamps of this kind are not collectible, because they are too easily counterfeited.

Following is a basic list of towns from which we have privately rouletted or perforated stamps. This list may be augmented by later finds. Also listed are some postage dues of the first issue for interior use, which proves that some post offices produced private perforations.

Line Perforation 10

Ceska Lipa, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 violet, 80, 100 hal.

Line perforation 11½

Chomutov, 30 hal.

Frachatice, 20, 30, 100 hal.

Praha 1 (Union bank), 40, 60 hal.

Praha 14—100, 400, 500 hal.

Podborany, 10, 40, 50 violet, 80, 100, 200, 300 hal.

Josefodol nad Jizerou, 10, 50 violet, 60, 80, 100, 200, 300, 500, 1000 hal.

Kalna Voda, 80, 120 hal.

Karlovy Vary 4—30, 40, 100 hal.

Kromeriz 1—10, 40, 100, 300, 500 hal.

Krnov 2—500 hal.

Lochovice, 40, 50 violet, 75, 80, 100, 200, 300, 400, 500, 1000 hal.

Lovosice 50 violet, 75 hal.

Liberac 1—20, 50 violet, 50 blue, 100, 120 hal.

Liberec 2, 80 hal.

Litomeric 2—100, 200 hal.

Ruzomberok (horizontal only), 50 violet, 50 blue, 100, 200, 300 hal. 400, 500.

Usti nad Labem 1—5, 50 violet, 2 hal. special delivery.

Usti nad Labem 3—3 (horizontal only) 100, 300 hal.

Teplice-Sanov 2—300 hal.

Warnsdorf 3—10, 100 hal.

Zatec, 20, 80, 100, 500 hal.

Line Perforation 15

Decin nad Labem 15, 30, 40, 50 violet, 50 blue, 60, 80, 100, 200, 400, 500 hal.

Rouletted

Arnstov (Arnsdorf b. Haida), 3, 5, 10, 20 hal.

Banska Stiavnica, 5 hal.

Brezno (Brezobanya), 25 blue.

Bozi Dar (Gottesgab), 30, 40 hal.

Borova u Policky, 10, 20 postage due.

Brno 2—25 hal. blue.

Bystre u Policky, 10, 20, 30, 50 violet, 80, 100, 120, 200, 300 hal.
Cetoraz, 20, 100 hal.
Cadca, 5, 50 hal. violet.
Centov tovarna, 60, 100 hal.
Ceske Budejovice 1—5, 20, 40 hal.
Doksany, 10, 80 hal.
Dobruska, 40 hal.
Damborice, 20, 40, 80, 300 hal.
Driten, 1, 50 violet, 60, 80 hal.
Dubnany, 10, 25 blue, 80, 200, 400 hal.
Ekec (Ekecs), 5, 20 hal.
Graefenberg u Fryvaldova, 25 blue, 100 hal.
Habry, 20 hal.
Hejcin-Repcin, 120 hal.
Hradecna, 20, 50 violet, 50 blue, 80, 300 hal.
Hradek nad Nisou, 10, 40, 80, 100, 200, 300, 500 hal.
Horni Einsidl, 400 hal.
Horovice, 20, 25 violet, 40, 50 blue, 100, 200, 400, 500 hal.
Horice, 25 blue, 30, 50 violet.
Hovezi, 25 blue.
Humena, 30 hal.
Chanovice, 10, 20 hal. postage due.
Cheb 2—80, 100, 200, 300, 400 hal.
Chvalno, 10, 20 hal. postage due.
Chyse, 5, 40, 100, 400, 500 hal.
Javorina, 15 hal.
Jince, 10, 20, 40, 80, 100 hal.
Komarov okr, Horovice, 25 hal. blue.
Koprivnice, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 blue, 50 violet, 50 blue.
Kostelec nad Orlici, 10, 100, 200 hal.
Kostomlaty 30, 60 hal.
Kral. Vinohrady, 5, 80 hal.
Kvetna, 100 hal.
Malacky, 20 hal.
Mala Chyska, 100 hal.
Mala Vozice, 400 hal.
Miserd (Miserd), 40 hal.
Merovice na Hane, 10, 20 hal postage due.
Mnichov u Mar. Lazni, 400 hal.
Nachod, 25 hal. blue.
Neudek, 10 hal. postage due.
Nizkov, 5 hal. --
Ledec nad Sazavou, 40, 80 hal.
Liberec 2—5, 10, 20, 30, 50 blue, 100, 200, 300, 400, 500 hal.
Libesice u Ousteku, 25 hal postage due.
Lubenz, 25 blue, 40, 120 hal.
Olomouc 1—5 hal.
Osecna, 30, 40, 100, 120 hal.
Povazska Bystrica, 5, 20, 40, 300, 400 hal.
Pisek, 25 hal. violet.
Praha 1—5, 30, 300, 400 hal.
Praha 4—40, 50 blue, 100 hal.
Praha 11—10, 40 hal.
Praha 15—5, 10, 30, 50 hal. violet.
Praha 17—10, 20, 25 violet, 25 blue, 30, 40, 50 violet, 50 blue, 80, 100, 120,
200, 300, 400, 500, 1000 hal.; 2, 5h. special delivery.

Prostřední Lanov (Unter Langenau), 5, 20, 25 violet, 40, 50, 60, 80, 200, 300 hal
 Prerov 2—400 hal.
 Přisecnice, 10, 50 violet, 80, 300 hal.
 Racinevec, 60, 80, 120, 300 hal.
 Radenin, 20 hal.
 Roudnice, 10, 20, 100 hal.
 Schonbuehel in B., 10, 30, 40, 50 violet, 50 blue, 60, 80, 100, 200, 300, 400 hal.
 Skutec, 15 hal.
 Sv. Ondřej (Landzasotfalu), 5 hal.
 Strasice, 15 hal.
 Varnsdorf 2—40, 50 hal.
 Velis okr. Jicin, 20, 60, 200, 400 hal.
 Vilanec, 30 hal.
 Velka Mana (Nagymanya), 40, 300, 400 hal.
 Velky Meder (Nagymegyer), 3, 5, 10, 20, 25 blue, 100 hal.
 Velke Mezirici 30, 100 hal.
 Velke Oleksovice, 40 hal.
 Velke Sarluhy (Nagysallo), 5, 10, 20, 40 hal.
 Vimperk, 40, 80, 300, 100, 500 hal.
 Vsetin, 20, 25 blue, 30 hal.
 Ustek, 100 hal.
 Usti nad Labem 2—5, 15, 30 hal.
 Usti nad Labem 3— 20, 100 hal.
 Uzhorod 1—15 hal. postage due.
 Zdice (Zieditz), 40, 300 hal.
 Zelezny Brod, 30, 40, 100, 200 hal.

SV. VOJTECH

St. Adalbert was the second bishop of Praha, in whose diocese was included Slovakia. Elected by Prince Boleslav and the Czech nobles in 981, he was immediately beset by the animosity of the very same nobles. After several years of this, discouraged, he left for Rome. Later he proceeded to Hungary and in 997 on his mission to the Prussians was murdered. His name is connected with the Church of Poland, of which the first bishop was Vojtěch's brother Radimil. The lofty church of St. Jacob in Prachatice is supposed to have been founded by St. Vojtěch.

A set of stamps, beautifully engraved by Jindra Schmidt was issued at the 950th anniversary of his death.

VELEHRAD

A Church located near Uherské Hradiště, Moravia, to it thousands of people make a pilgrimage every year. There are two reasons, one that Cyril and Methoděj, who brought Christianity to the Czechs, first preached here; and second, that the castle of Buchlov was in the 8th and 9th century the seat of the mighty Moravian kingdom under Rostislav. About 1202 one of the largest Cistercian monasteries with attached Roman basilica was founded, then burned down during the Husite wars and later rebuilt in baroque style. Emperor Josef II abolished the order and the buildings were used for a chateau. The church was rehabilitated in 1928 and everything possible was done to preserve its Romanesque style. On the higher (1700 ft.) hill of the two, shown in the background on the stamp, stands the Buchlov castle.

The stamp issued in 1928 is a copy of a painting by J. Mařák. The original is in the President's Lodge in the National Theater.

AIR MAIL STAMPS OF 1955



Each new issue of Czechoslovak stamps is subject to the scrutiny of collectors. Being human they have their likes, which, when not fulfilled, make for criticism and disappointment. So, the new PRAHA air mail stamp is subject to both favorable and unfavorable comments. This is the first of the five air mails issued in the first quarter of this year. The high value was a surprise, being the highest value issued since the monetary change in 1953. It was made necessary for franking packages to foreign countries. The former practice was to affix many stamps of low denomination on an additional parcel post tag, because there is not sufficient room on the original tag.

Since the authorities decided to issue this high value, they wanted the design and subject of it to correspond in high quality. Naturally, the subject was to be the capital of Czechoslovakia, PRAHA. The design was selected by the Minister of Communications, Dr. Newman. When he visited the Hollar exhibit of C. Bouda's works, among the prints was a copper engraving of Praha which was the theme for a large Gobelin hanging by Prof. Teinitzer. This large engraving (24" x 12") shows the view of Praha from Černín Palace on the left to Vyšehrad and the railroad bridge on the right. The print does not show the view as it would be seen from a single point, but a series of views dominated by long verticals of the prominent buildings and churches,

with the river Vltava, spanned by many bridges, dividing the whole picture in two parts.

The beautiful work of Bouda's engraving in no way detracts from Jindra Schmidt's difficult task of reducing the design. It is a pity that he could not use the whole of the original. In collaboration with Bouda, Schmidt redrew most of the left half, simplifying it, because otherwise it would be too crowded. Even on the largest of the Czech stamps it was not possible to show the architectural wealth in detail, but had to be shown simplified, sometimes only with shadows. It is really surprising that Jindra Schmidt was able to show such a clear view of the city in almost a one-hundredth reduction of the original.

The dark tones of the steep slopes of Petřín are split by the white band of the HUNGARY WALL (Hladová Zed). Farther on rises the church of St. Nicolas, a dominant feature of Malá Strana. The panorama of Hradčany is seen above the Belvedere and Letná, where we can recognize among other edifices the Memorial of Stalin. From the Lighthouse on the Petřín one has a fine panoramic view of Hradčany, the valley of Malá Strana, Charles Bridge with its Gothic towers, Křižovník, Týn and St. Jiljí, churches of the Old Town. Prominence is given to the shrine of Czech culture and art—the National Theater. Thus, even on the small space of a stamp one can see the thousand years of culture and beauty of a magnificent city. Its beauty imposes on all who paint it the proper appreciation of its glorious past.

We visited the workshop of Jindra Schmidt, for first hand information on the designing and engraving of this stamp. The humble master of the burin pointed out to us with a smile the pitfalls he had to guard against on this job. In large architectural layouts the necessity of proper gradation of shades is very important, that the whole does not run into a meaningless mass. When the Ministry of Communications invited him to design and engrave this stamp, he was not at all sure he was equal to it, and approached it with reverence. However, on delivery of the finished engraving, it could easily be noted that Schmidt was satisfied with the work well done. He hoped that the printing would be as successful, because all artists are desirous of having their stamps as perfect as possible—a pride to them all.

Sometimes, of course, as in all efforts, there is disappointment when the stamp is presented to the public, but the printers cannot always be accused of poor work. The cause may be in the poor quality of paper, inks or rollers. It is a pity that there seems to be no chance of improvement.

(Note by the translator. This is the first printed acknowledgement by the Communists, that in spite of all their bombast that they can do everything better than we can, they are not equal to us in the printing trade.)

Discussing further the Praha engraving, Schmidt acknowledged to us that this was one of the most difficult and absorbing assignments. Every part of the engraving had to be constantly viewed in conjunction with the whole, so that it would not become too much of a contrast or too flat. The excessive reduction made it necessary to leave out some buildings for the same reason.

The tables and workbenches of Schmidt's workshop are never empty. We had a peek at the design of the Olomouc stamp, then ready for the burin of J. Goldschmied, because Schmidt had other important commitments, one a Stretti design of J. I. Sládek for a stamp of a cultural series to be issued in the spring.

We are grateful to Jindra Schmidt for his extraordinary work, for which were necessary an artistic touch and infinite patience. May the sun rays over Hradčany persist for ever and shine over the metropolis for peace and prosperity of a happy nation.

The four other air mail stamps of the series are 1.55, 2.35, 2.75 Kčs. We

saw the designs for these stamps and it is patent that the whole issue is deficient in design and production. No less than three designers and four engravers were employed in the creation of the designs and engravings. It is the same old sore spot in the production of our stamps, by employing too many graphic artists which breeds disunity and variations in the finished work. In the designing, the three artists employed are K. Vík, C. Bouda and J. Švengsbír. Even if we consider the relationship of the designs in the stamps of one issue, which is prerequisite in production of stamps, all being steel engravings, there are notable generic differences.

The oldest of the three artists is K. Vík, whose prints glorified our country and who has a particular knack for artistic grouping of architectural treasures. In this instance he set his sights on a design of Bratislava Castle with a portion of the old fortifications. He presents a view of the Danube Valley, which could have been taken from an aeroplane, but he crowds the architecture of the town, permitting a monotonous plain and horizon to occupy more than half of the space.

The original design shows Vík's technique of using a system of soft vertical lines, giving the finished print the character of a woodcut. This aided B. Housa in simplifying his pen drawing for the engraver. He translated the soft lines into straight hard lines of the almost uniform thicknesses demanded by engravers' methods.

The advantage of Vík's technique is that it presents the real proportions of the view, locating the various architectural points in their true location. Otherwise, it is not quite equal to the designs of the other stamps on account of its archaic idea. On the favorable side is that he can show the architectural affluence of the historic city in such a small space. Bouda's design of Praha uses a very similar technique by showing the various public and religious structures in vertical intensified lines, thus breaking up the plane and giving individual structures pronounced strength and beauty. There again Schmidt showed his power of differentiating the important and unimportant.

The nearest to the Praha design is that of Olomouc. This is because the original designs are both by C. Bouda and the simplified drawings are by Jindra Schmidt. The engraving was accomplished by J. Goldschmied, Jindra having other work to do.

The younger generation of designers is represented by J. Švengsbír in the two designs of this issue, namely, Český Krumlov and Báňská Bystrice. The originator of the Český Krumlov design is Boh. Coufal, a native artist of Český Krumlov. Švengsbír also could not use all of Coufal's original, because it would have made the stamp overcrowded, so centered his attention on the Renaissance mansion of Krumlov, the parks around it and part of the town. He succeeded wonderfully well in showing the architectural unity of vast parks and the course of the river Vltava. Unfortunately he could not include the beautiful buildings surrounding the old town square. For that reason the whole design fails in completeness. It is more a plan than an architectural picture of the town. Švengsbír seems to treat his design more from an engraver's than a painter's point of view which detracts from its beauty. For instance, the course of the river Vltava fixes the composition of the layout and whole is controlled by certain graphic rules. It seems that his creations are speculative or abstract. His final effort is not directed by any one idea, but numerous thoughts and variations to accomplish a finished design.

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