

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

OFFICIAL MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE
CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA

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Editor Frank J. Kovarik, 8748 Rockefeller Ave., Brookfield, Illinois

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EDITORIAL

This is the last issue of the Specialist for the season and your next issue will reach you soon after September 1. We hope you enjoy your vacation so that when you return to your stamps in the fall you will be "rarin' to go."

We know there are many writers among us who can do a great service to the Society and indirectly to themselves by writing short stories about Czecho stamps, what they represent, the historical and biographical backgrounds, etc. Send the fruits of your labor to the editor who will edit the work and then farm the articles to various philatelic publications for future use. These non-specialized articles can rouse interest in the average collector to learn more about the stamps of Czechoslovakia and become a member of the Society. There may be members who prefer writing in Czech or German; do not hesitate, we'll get the stuff translated.

In a very short time we hope to begin a lengthy article on the stamps of Austria and Hungary which were overprinted POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919, some of which are extremely rare. When more about them is known and the fear of counterfeits is gone these stamps will come into their own and only those collectors who get in early will reap the benefit. Of course, we must have money in the treasury because the illustrations will be costly. We had hoped to have a seminar in Chicago to explain these issues, but that would do little good to the many members outside the Chicago area.

We helped edit the COMPEX Directory which will sell for \$1.25 postpaid. It was decided to print 2000 copies tho the prices for the ads were geared to the original figure of 1000; we had no previous yardstick and so may under-guess or over-guess on the number of copies needed. We advise our members to write to our exhibition chairman Mr. J. J. Jiranek, 5032 West 25th St., Cicero 50, Ill., and if any directories are left over you will want one. From present indications there will be three articles on Czechoslovak stamps: HRADČANY SPIRALS by F. J. Kosik, FIRST CZECHOSLOVAK AIRMAILS by J. Velek and OFFICIAL PROOFS and ESSAYS by J. Jiranek. Besides these there will be about 16 to 18 other original articles of lasting interest. The book promises to be an outstanding library item.

Some time ago we mentioned that member R. Reinowski, 9031 W. 24th St., North Riverside on looking thru his Bratislava Exhibition Sheets found one in imperforate condition. A short time ago an illustration of this scarce and interesting item appeared in Linn's Weekly Stamp News and we asked permission to reproduce it in the Specialist. Our librarian Kosik sent a letter to Reinowski explaining how this error came into being and we reproduce both the illustration and Kosik's comments below:



"Regarding your imperforate Bratislava 1952 souvenir sheet as illustrated in Linn's, allow me to make some comments on the item.

"The paper was perforated before it went into the printing press. The paper measured 100x150mm producing two sheets when cut apart. The sheets were tete-beche before the cutting to 100x75mm. They went into the press four times to complete this set-up. So four times the printer passed up the mistake. There is no record that the sheet was printed in imperforate condition. My theory is that there always was an imperforate sheet in the stack of paper denoting a certain count. The printer should have laid this aside but somehow, by accident or otherwise fed it in the press. Printing of stamps is closely controlled in CSR; I imagine the printer was in a mess when his blank sheets failed to tally. If this is the only sheet so printed there must be a second copy besides the one you have. Of course the other possibility is that the sheet before printing was short two perforations."

In order to get this issue of the Specialist to you with a Complex cancellation, it is prepared well in advance of the usual dead-line. Our printer promised us an early delivery if we give him the copy much sooner. We hope the cancellation turns out nice.

THE CHICAGO GROUP MEETING

was held in the home of Dr. Matejka. An atmosphere of happiness seemed to pervade the place and a good reason for that existed. The handbook will be shipped to Chicago May 1. (We hope we'll have enough money ready then; we asked our pledgees (is this a new word?) to send the money after May 10 but before May 30.) The other reason for joy was the shaping of COMPEX. Despite the fear of some at the outset that the combined show will be a financial fiasco the first year, an even break the next year and not until the third year to begin to show a profit, we see now it must be even a financial success. Maybe not as much as we should like, but not a loss. To this end all Chicagoland members are expected to do their share of work during the three days of the show and before.

The following members including the host Dr. J. Matejka were present:

R. Palmer, P. Marusic, Sr., P. Marusic, Jr., R. Mitchell, F. Zaviska, J. Janecka, J. Jiranek, E. Berka, J. Velek, G. Kobyłka and F. Kovarik.

Dr. W. Reiner-Deutsch's letter concerning ISPEX (Israel Philatelic Exhibition) read. As this is not an Israel exhibit per se, it may be of help to the Society to take one frame there to advertise our aims. Kovarik is asked to contact Dr. Reiner-Deutsch to exhibit our publications, our dictionary and, if possible, our handbook. Past issues of Special Czecho editions of STAMPE should be included in this publicity. The sum of \$5 was allotted to this venture.

COMPEX 58 Czecho Section Exhibition chairman Jiranek announced that 13 frames are available for the late comers. In order to satisfy some of the demands, several members relinquished frames to others so we'd have the broadest coverage of Czech and related material. It is interesting to record that this is the first time more than half out-of-Chicago-area members are participating; we hope the fear of superior material from the Chicago members is past. Frankly we want your cooperation more than anything else.

Our treasurer sent out notices to delinquent members and because of this we learned of the death of two members: Alfred F. Chaloupka of Sinton, Texas, and John Timko of our area. May they rest in peace. To the bereaved families we extend the heartfelt sympathy of our membership.

Dr. Matejka reported on CompeX. Everything appears rosy except that the three days of the Show will present many problems to the area members. There will be so much to do. We must man our lounge, help at the registration booth, have a committee of women to care for the philatelic widows, sell our dictionary and handbook, plus a few other tasks. Some members may think this is fun, but, try it!

A collection of stamps depicting Benedictine endeavors, work, churches, saints, etc. on stamps, put together by Sister M. Lucy, O.S.B. of Indianapolis, was shown to the attending members. All were amazed at the amount of historical research which went into this collection and the editor was asked to congratulate Sister Lucy on her extraordinary accomplishment.

The treasurer took the floor to rebuke the members for reducing the cost of the handbook from \$5 to \$4.50. What guarantee have we we'll sell even 400 of the 600 copies ordered? He was reminded this is not a money raising stunt but an honest endeavor to just break even. The treasurer is a realist and the others are idealists; we hope the sales vindicate the majority's decision. If you haven't ordered your copy of the handbook do so now by sending \$4.50 to the treasurer G. C. Kobyłka, 1433 Cuyler Ave., Berwyn, Ill.

The June meeting of the Chicago Group will be held Sunday June 15 2:30 p.m. in the home of Chas. Chesloe, 83rd and Wolf Rd., Hinsdale, Ill. The Chesloe's have an immense pool and you are invited to come enjoy a dip. Bring your family and enjoy it. As member Chesloe only recently joined the Benedicts let us come in large numbers and congratulate the newly married couple.

Sept. 21 afternoon is tentatively scheduled in the home of the editor. Watch September Specialist for particulars.

THE NEW YORK GROUP MEETING

was held in the quarters of the Collectors Club Friday April 18 and the following were present: Dr. and Mrs. Wm. Reiner-Deutsch, A. I. Kessler, N. Feiwelsohn, G. P. Kaplowitz, P. H. Flynn, W. V. Schoenig, J. Verner, O. Berger and J. Stein.

Dr. Reiner-Deutsch showed two volumes of his Czecho Postal History covering a span between the years 1780 and 1925. The collection was re-

plete with interesting covers, stampless as well as with stamps, mixed franks, etc. This was followed by a report of the doctor's visit with the Chicago group and the Compex committee. The report was very impressive, especially the knowledge that the handbook is to be a reality in a very short time.

The group decided to postpone the annual exhibition from June to October primarily because of Compex and secondly to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the birth of Czechoslovakia. If at all possible it will take place Saturday, October 18. Further details will be reported in the September Specialist.

Members were urged to vote promptly. Unfortunately many members have not yet received their April copy. The postal service is very poor.

The May 16 meeting will feature items from the collection of member G. Pobuda and June 20 member W. Schoenig will show his collection of Czecho First Day Covers. All members are urged to be present.

The group succeeded in getting a new member, Mr. Jaroslav Verner, who has expressed a wish to purchase the Bohemia Moravia Handbook. We trust our veterans will do likewise.

After the organization matters were settled member Michaelson talked on the subject "Printing of Postage Stamps" with special emphasis on the printing methods employed in the production of Czechoslovak stamps.

CZECHOSLOVAK REGIONAL MEETING IN CLEVELAND March 23, 1958



Seated at the table left to right: Dr. J. J. Matejka, G. A. Blizil, C. Kozak, H. Prohupeh, W. Fritzsche, C. Cerny, C. Zahradnicek, F. J. Kovarik. Standing l. to r. A. Klein, unknown, L. Pesch, M. F. Klozar, A. Kopcah, C. Matiasha, unknown, J. Dolak.

R. I. P.

We have received word of the death of Mrs. J. Leo Chapman, wife of our Florida member. We extend friend Chapman the sympathy of the entire membership.

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CZECHOSLOVAK AIR MAIL STAMPS OF 1946-1949

Ten years have passed since Czechoslovakia began to print and sell its postwar airmail stamps. Their high price and other incidents did not endear them to the collectors and very little attention was paid to them by philatelists. In this article we present a summary of this first issue with some interesting philatelic items, which appeared during the time they were valid.

The validity of this issue was from June 1946 to June 17, 1953, being in circulation for full seven years. This time can be divided into four periods. In the first period, which lasted only one day, a 24Kčs stamp was issued, blue on yellowish paper, especially for the first flight from Praha to New York. Several peculiarities (more or less artificial) are linked with this issue, brought it into disrepute and did not make it the rarity as was expected. The 24Kčs value was used because that was the air postage for a foreign registered letter of 5 grs. Only 43,096 of these letters were dispatched to New York. Subsequently unused stamps were sold only to collectors belonging to the New Issue Clubs, so that out of a printing of 1,000,000 a great number was left. During 1949-50 the postal department tried to sell this surplus to collectors below the face value, which totally destroyed any interest in them. A 16Kčs air stamp was issued at the same time as the 24Kčs, intended for domestic letters of 5 grs. There were only 14,285 first day covers sent out, but the stamp was valid until June 17, 1953.

The second period begins July 4, 1946, when six additional values were issued, namely 1.50, 5.50, 10, 20, 24 and 50Kčs to which was added a 9Kčs value on April 5, 1947.

The third period began in 1949, when the air postage was reduced and all the values were overprinted with new values and at the same time the postal authorities permitted the use of airmail stamps on all letters and packages. Use of the ordinary stamps for air postage was permitted some time before.

The fourth period of validity of 1946 stamps lasted only from the first to the seventeenth of June 1953, when their value was reduced following the monetary reform, at a ratio of 1:50, that is the new crown was exchanged for 50 old ones. At this time there were 16 values of air stamps, 8 without overprint and 8 with it. This period can be followed only on covers, some of which are very interesting. From June 1, 1953 air postage was lowered in the ratio of 1:5, that is, 60 hal. bought an air stamp with an overprint 30/50Kčs. The 50Kčs stamp was sold at the postoffices for 1Kčs of the new money. That is why many covers franked with the high values, fall into this period. In collecting these covers it is necessary to obtain all possible information, because they are not listed in the catalogues.

Before describing the individual stamps, here are some pertinent facts about them. All nine values were printed on the Stickney rotary press by the Czechoslovak Graphic Union in Praha. They are in two sizes. The lower values, 1.50, 5.50, 9, and 16 Kčs are of the medium size, 30x24mm. The stamps were supplied to the postoffices in sheets of 50 and 100. Stamps of the large size were in sheets of 100 only. The arrangement of stamps in the sheet was, as customary at that time, that is, the first and the last vertical row contained only one stamp and six blanks. On these so called coupons was printed a globe with an airplane. The other 14 rows had 7 stamps each. Three designs were used for the vignettes, which were repeated on all values. Antonín Erhardt is the author of all the designs, including the coupons. In designing he used photographs and added an airplane. On stamps of the medium size is the likeness of Capt. F. Novák, of the air force, with an English fighter plane in the background. Final layout and engraving is the work of Jindra Schmidt. For stamps of the large size two designs were used. On the 24Kčs and 50Kčs stamps is the view of the Charles Bridge, looking toward the Old

Town, taken by Prof. Carl Plicka. The airplane was added by the designer. On the 10Kčs and 20Kčs stamps is the well known view of Bratislava with the Old Fort, taken from the Petrželka Heights. The airplane was inserted over the Fort. The engraving was done by Jar. Goldschmied.

The color of the stamps varies considerably, from which we deduce that there were several printings, and it is not possible to pinpoint the actual dates, nor how many plates were used. The paper used for all the stamps was white, of medium weight, except the 24Kčs blue, which was printed on yellowish paper, (chamois). The gum is white with vertical grooves on the medium size stamps and horizontal on large ones.

After lowering of the airpost rates, the stamps were overprinted to show the new values. This overprinting was done by rotogravure on the 50 and 100 subject sheets of the medium size stamps. Of the large size stamps only 70 of the 100 were overprinted, the other 30 (15 in the upper and 15 in the lower part of the sheet) were cut off. The cutting was done in the third and the fourteenth row, leaving a piece of the stamp attached to the adjoining stamp. The width of this selvage is 4 to 8mm. The stamps with this selvage are numbered 029 to 032 in the Pofis catalogue.

The overprinted stamps were issued Sept. 1, 1947 and according to the decree of the Ministry of Posts (printed in Filatelie No. 9, 1949) only the stamps on hand in the Postal Economic Center were overprinted. Because the color of the overprinted stamps differed to some extent, it is believed that stamps of various printings were used. Plates for the overprints were carefully prepared and the only real variation was discovered on the 6/9Kčs and the 30/50Kčs values. Occasionally there were some small defects, but they were not typical. Shifted overprints are rare, the greatest so far discovered is on the 12.50/20Kčs value, where the overprint is canted about 2 degrees.

The overprint consists of two horizontal lines with the ends cut on slant, which cancel the numerals on the stamp, and the new numerals. On the medium size stamps these are placed above the lines and on the large size below. The color of the overprint does not vary. The only discernible difference is on the 15/24Kčs value, which is officially noted and shown in the index.

The more or less known shades of the overprints are shown in the index according to the POFIS catalogue numbers. The total of the overprinted stamps is not included in the total of those without the overprint. According to the Postal Economic Center, all listed stamps were distributed to postoffices and used up, especially during the monetary reform.

INDEX

Stamps without overprint.

- #16—24Kčs (Praha) Dark blue on yellowish paper, only one printing. of 1,000,000, no variations.
- #17—1.50Kčs (Novák) The first printing is rose to light red; later printing is heavier, almost orange. Some shades oxidize to brown. Light shades are quite common. Printing of 4,000,000.
- #18—5.50Kčs (Novák) This stamp is of three shades. Mostly ultramarine gray, sometimes light gray blue, seldom dark gray blue. Printing of 5,500,000.
- #19—9Kčs (Novák) Sepia brown color—no shades. Printing of 4,000,000.
- #20—10Kčs (Bratislava) This stamp has some very pronounced shades. The first printing is dark blue green, the last one is dark green and in between are shades with grayish cast. The last printing was overprinted so these stamps without an overprint are very seldom seen. Printing of 4,000,000.
- #21—16Kčs (Novák) Color is gray violet, sometime shading to gray or violet. Printing of 3,500,000.

- #22—20Kčs (Bratislava) Color is light cobalt, with almost no shades. Printing of 2,500,000.
- #23—24Kčs (Praha) Color is brown red or carmine red. Printing 2,500,000.
- #24—50Kčs (Praha) Color is mostly blue violet, sometimes shading to gray and very rarely to dark gray ultramarine.

Overprinted stamps.

- #25—1/1.50Kčs No. 17. Color is of medium shades, occasionally running to very light or orange. Overprint is dark, without variations, more or less glossy. Lines crossing the values are 7.4 mm. long. Numerals are 3.3 mm high. The whole overprint is 5.9 mm high. Printing of 800,000.
- #26—3/5.50Kčs No. 18. Color is mostly ultramarine gray. Overprint is dark carmine, without gloss. Lines are 8.3 mm long, numerals are 3.3. The whole is 5.9 mm high. Printing of 970,000.
- #27—6/9Kčs No. 19. Color is sepia gray, overprint is sepia without gloss. Lines are 3.3 mm long, figures 3.2 mm high, the whole 5.8 mm high. In the sixth and seventh rows are some small variations in arrangement of the type. Shift of 0.2-0.5 mm is noted. Printing of 1,000,000.
- #28—7.50/16Kčs No. 21. Violet shades are quite prevalent, otherwise there are no variations. Overprint is dark carmine without gloss. Lines are 5.4 mm long, larger numerals are 3.2 mm.; smaller, 2.7 mm high; the whole is 5.8 mm high. Printing of 960,000.
- #29—8/10Kčs No. 20. Most of the overprinted stamps are dark green with a gray cast. They are from the last printing. Transitory shades are rare. The blue green of the first printing is also rare. The overprint is heavy dark green with very little gloss. Lines are 6.6 mm. long, numerals are 4.1 mm. high, total is 9.0 mm. Printing of 420,000.
- #30—12.50/20Kčs No. 22. Color is light cobalt, overprint is dark blue with gloss. There are no variations. Lines are 7.0 mm. long, larger numerals are 4.1 mm., smaller 3.1 mm. high, total is 9.0 mm. In the overprint the 10th stamp in the eighth row has two small colored dots to the right of the numeral 2 and the left bottom corner stamp has a white dot in the numeral 2. These variations are typical. Printing 672,000.
- #31—15/24Kčs No. 23. Color is without variation. Overprint is dark blue glossy, similar to the No. 31, sometime light blue. The lines are 7.0 mm. long, numerals are 4.1 mm. high, total 9.0 mm. Printing of the stamps with dark blue overprint is given as 301,000 and with light overprint as 367,000. This information cannot be correct, because the total is not divisible by 70, it being the number of stamps in the sheet.
- #32—30/50Kčs No. 24. Color is blue violet, with medium shades. Overprint on the very dark or very light stamps is unknown. Lines are 7.0 mm. long, numerals are 4.1 mm. high, total 9.1 mm. high. The overprint on the first stamp of the second row is canted about 1 degree to the right in comparison with the rest of overprints. Printing of 672,000.

In conclusion I must say that in this so little explored field, especially in overprints, other variations may be found. If any reader has such information, the author and the editor would be glad to have it.

—Ing. Klement Ptačovský

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STATE EXHIBIT OF YOUNG PHILATELISTS

A state philatelic exhibit for young collectors was held in Pardubice in June 1957. This was the first of its kind held in Czechoslovakia. Previously exhibits of young collectors were always made a part of adult exhibitions. The main reason for this arrangement was an effort to gain more members among the younger generation and also to have those already collecting aid in the membership drive. Each exhibitor received a diploma and a gift of stamps. Aside from that, some 120 valuable prizes were contributed by various business firms, schools, individuals and the members of the Ministries of Schools and Communications.

The exhibits were divided into classes and these into groups. In the first class were collections of Czechoslovakia, in the second general European and in the third the topical and other interesting items. Each class was divided in three groups; those up to 10 years, another of 10 to 14 years and another of 14 to 18 years.

The jury for judging the exhibits was composed of the foremost collectors of Czechoslovak stamps, with J. Mrňák, an expert on Czechoslovak stamps, as the presiding officer. Other members were K. Basika, Dr. Jan Wagner, Ing. M. Hrdlička, Ing. Jan Karásek, Ing. Frant. Šternwald and Karol Němec.

Judging some 300 exhibits was no easy job, because, to evaluate honestly what the youngster himself collected and arranged, or what he borrowed from his father, gave the jury some headaches. However, it can be said that the decisions were universally well accepted and the real goal of the exhibit was attained, that is, collecting was well advertised among the young people. The fact, that some 25,000 visitors attended is a proof that the popularity of stamp collecting is on the increase in Czechoslovakia and in the whole world. This contention is supported by the fact that some large exhibits from the West and East Germany were shown.

The exhibit was attended by the Minister of Communications, who also opened the exhibit and praised the efforts of the young adepts. East Germany's Minister of Posts also attended and gave high praise for the arrangement and variety of individual collections. In honor of the exhibit the Czech Government issued two special stamps, one of which was printed in small, four-stamp sheets. Two first day covers were also issued and an appropriate cancel was used. All of this served to increase the interest in the exhibit.

At the end of the second week, which was also the end of the exhibit, results of the judging and presentation of the prizes were given with a great flourish! Many young collectors were present to receive their awards and counseled to continue the good work and progress in collecting. At the same time an announcement was made that the next Great State Philatelic Exhibit was to be in Brno in Oct. 1958, where Czechoslovak and foreign philatelists will have an opportunity to demonstrate that a stamp is a visiting card, recognized and accepted by the people of good will the world over in a beautiful friendship.

—Karel Basika

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REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD OF 1945

A very interesting segment of Czech philately covers the period from the end of April to the fifteenth of May 1945. The Allied Armies were moving in from both east and west and the Protectorate was shrinking, speeding the day of retribution.

Eruption of the May 15 revolution signalled a definite end to foreign domination. This period is very interesting to Czech and foreign collectors of Czech stamps, as there was no central authority as yet to issue instructions about or regulate the postage for the country as a whole.

As the various parts of the country were liberated, there being no government, they submitted themselves to the commanders of the Allied armies. On the face of things, the stamps of the Protectorate were used until May 15, 1945. However, this period, although ordinarily unrecognized and ignored, was marked by frenzied actions of collectors and patriots. It will be forever argued whether a letter should have been franked with a stamp of the former Führer as some were, or with some stamp overprinted by various groups, most of whom were philatelists.

It is necessary to differentiate between the few issues prepared before the fall of the Protectorate and the flood of issues produced in many localities and after the May 15 deadline. This date is the real dividing line between the various issues. On this date, the Praha government issued a decree, forbidding the use of all such stamps. However, it must be pointed out that because of the very disturbed conditions, it was impossible to deliver this order everywhere in the Republic, so many localities continued to use these stamps. Covers from this period are interesting and rare.

After things quieted down politically, up popped a question in philatelic circles—"Should the stamps and covers of this short period be collected or not." Government officials, philatelic sources and particularly the Center of the Philatelic Clubs, emphatically said "NO". However, this adverse opinion had no effect on specialists. These people are always looking for something out of the ordinary, something different.

If a collector places in his album a cover postmarked with a date between the 5th and 15th of May and franked with a stamp of the Protectorate it may be said that it should have been franked with some of the overprinted stamps, showing the change in the status of the government and joy over the newly obtained independence. In case we go along with the opposition, we are then faced with a peculiar fact, that the period between the 5th and 15th of May philatelically did not exist.

There are hundreds of collectors in Czechoslovakia who view these historical times with a critical eye, weighing the various facts, circumstances of franking and different official orders, which in themselves caused chaos.

Let us look at some of the issues, some of which were prepared in the time of the Protectorate, others, overprinted in the first days of the liberation. We have the issues of Pardubice, Sušice, in Moravia the Partisan issue (Jan Žižka z Trocnova) and others. These are all noted for the small number of values, showing that they were produced only for the immediate need of franking mail. Other issues, made and put in circulation on the first days of liberation are more extensive, running up to 50Kčs. Praha was not going to be left behind and put out several issues of its own. Of those, the most valued is the one with overprint "Svobodné Čechy ve Svobodné Evropě". The National Committee in Říčany put out a full set of overprinted stamps, actually used for franking mail.

In the Western Zone, under the American Army, all stamps in the region of Budějovice were overprinted "Československý republika 1945" and used for franking until the issue of a decree invalidating them. For the issue of these

stamps an official decree, dated in Praha, was actually put out, but later nullified.

In Moravia, the Olomouc issue, the so called ORLICE, was very popular. This is the only independent issue as to design. It had one bad fault, as a surcharge was put on it in favor of the Red Cross. Although this sum was actually handed over to the Red Cross, it was unnecessary and burdened the issue from the start. When speculators got hold of it, the public lost all interest in it.

Prisoners returning from the concentration camps were initiators of two stamps—4 pf and 6pf, simply overprinted and used by the Cheb postoffice.

Later, when conditions were more settled, a number of speculators appeared on the scene and began to overprint whole sets of stamps, of course, strictly for profit! This action was one of the main reasons why this period, recognised elsewhere as semi-official, was refused recognition in Czechoslovakia, because no one could tell the good from the bad in this flood of overprints. Nevertheless, letters postmarked with the dates between the end of April and 15th of May 1945, and franked with some of these overprints have a definite value in specialized collections, if they were really handled by a postoffice in those difficult days of transportation and delivery.

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NOTES ON THE HRADČANY STAMPS

The stamps depicting the Hradčany were the first to displace those with the heads of the Austrian and Hungarian governments. In the eyes of the Czechoslovak people they were the symbol of renaissance of the Czechs and Slovaks. Printing began in December 1918, and altogether there were 27 values, some of which appear in two issues and colors. The original design of A. Mucha was changed five times. The issues differ considerably. The poorest one, with respect to the printing, is the first issue, containing the 3 hal., 5 hal., yellow green, 10 hal. red, 20 hal. blue green, 30 hal. yellow olive and 40 hal. orange. The one with the most defects and corrections is the 25 hal. blue, of which more later.

We observe the stamp as a unit composed of several different parts. There are the bands on all four sides with the picture of Hradčany in the center. In the top and side bands is the lettering and the bottom one contains the value shields. A thin line encloses the whole. All these parts have some importance for the student of these stamps. Although many differences have been discovered since their issue, there still remains much to learn about their printing.

Defects and Corrections of 3 hal. Stamp

1—Frame

This is a fine colored line framing the stamp. Being very fine, it is easily damaged and some of the breaks are as much as 4 mm. long. On the 25th stamp, Plate II, the break is 10 mm. long over the word POŠTA. There are more defects on the outside stamps of the sheet, caused by the nails or screws securing the electros to the block. If I stress the defects in the frame too much, it is because they are very important as controls in locating corrections and also are an aid in plating.

More important than the defects are the corrections of the frame. I discovered three in Plate I on the 4th, 14th and 97th stamp. These corrections were made on the metal plate before its first use, because no stamps without these corrections have been found. The probable cause is poor etching. They appear as a heavier white line at the word SLOVENSKÁ and are found on all black prints and the printers waste.

2—Inscription

So far, very little has been written about the corrections of the inscriptions of the 3 hal. stamp. The subject is so immense that it is not possible to describe it in all its detail. The word POŠTA has been corrected partially or wholly on the glass negative of the following stamps:

Stamps 2, 3, 7, 8, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 35, 36, and 46. As in all corrections they differ from the original and from each other. For instance, the vertical line in the letters "P" and "S" are not wedge shaped but are the same width from top to bottom. Letters "O", "Š", and "A" are uneven (fig. 1). On some of the stamps even the neighboring design was corrected—as the rays and wavy lines—or these were left traces of the old design. In locating each of these stamps we use some regular defects as controls. These corrections make the 3 hal. stamp outstanding among the first Hradčany issue.

3—Rays

The silhouette of the Hradčany is completed by the sun and rays, which are drawn on the inside of the curve. They have a fixed location and are shortened from left to right. They are very finely drawn and it is not surprising that they were soon damaged and had to be corrected. Plate II has more corrections than plate I. The corrections of the rays on plate I were made at the same time as the corrections of the inscription. The corrections

made two groups of rays into one, lengthened some rays, made five in place of four (under the letter "T") or gave a different direction from the normal. I found these differences on the following six stamps of plate I—7th (lettering also corrected), 9th, 10th, 20th, 52nd, and 86th.

On plate II, I consider the rays on the 93rd stamp as corrected. Also they are evened up in the left side of the longest group.

4—Other Corrections

Under this heading it is essential to mention the two lines on stamps 36 and 54 of Plate II. On the 36th a line, beginning at the letter "š", slants to the left to the small bush. On the 54th stamp, a discernible line runs from the letter "L" in "SLOV" toward the church of St. Mikuláš, where it can better be seen below the tower. These defects were probably caused by careless handling of the plates and were only partially corrected.

Defects and Corrections of 5 hal. Light Green

This stamp was among the very first issued. For the printing two plates were used. The first plate was used in 1918 and the second was used for the reprints. There are not many corrections on the 5 hal. stamp in comparison with the 3 hal. and 100 hal.

Following is the description of the corrections:

1—Frame

This is broken in many places, the greatest damage being on plate I, where the upper right corner of the 30th stamp is broken, the letter "A" is deformed in the right leg and the cross line. The 67th stamp on both plates has the bottom line of the frame under the dove bent or broken. On plate I the long ray is normal, but on plate II it is longer, almost to the sun.

2—Inscription

Beside some more or less important defects, we find only one correction which we can pinpoint and which is important in that it is the greatest one on the Hradčany issue. This is found on the first stamp of plate I.

1 In the word "POŠTA" the letters "T" and "A" were corrected and from the looks of it, the correction is similar to the correction on the 3 hal. stamp, being shorter than other letters.

2 The left wedge shaped filler under the letters "PO" between the top band and curve is shorter, the curve being thickened.

3 The rays are redrawn under the letter "O" and the left limb. Under the letter "O" are 3 rays in place of four and under the letter "Š" three and a little farther one in place of three and four. Under the letter "T" are two long ones in place of four of uneven length. Under the letter "A" are two long ones and two short ones. Under the leaves the rays are peculiarly grouped. The long ray seems to be normal, although it was redrawn.

4 The main steeple is shorter and the point is without a dot. Beside the corrected inscription we find even greater defects:

a) Between the letters "S" and "T" is an oblique line, the letter "T" is terminated with a white dot and the long ray has a colored dot in the middle.

b) The 30th stamp of plate I has the cross line in "A" (POŠTA) thickened, the right upper corner is broken and the numeral 5 is closed.

c) On the 8th stamp of plate I is a white dot under the letter "N".

d) On the 100th stamp of plate II the letter "A" is connected at the bottom to the white line and the first steeple is crossed by a white line, about which we will have more to say later.

e) The letters "V" and "E" are connected at the top and the main ray is shorter.

3—Rays and the sun

These were not damaged and are normal on most of the stamps, with the exception of a few, where the long ray is either shorter or longer than normal or has a different slant or distance from the fourth steeple of St. Vitus church. The most obvious correction is described in the corrections of the first stamp of plate I. The 71st stamp of plate I has a most striking correction of the long ray. The upper end points past the letter "S" and is almost vertical. More differences are found on the stamps of plate II.

1 On the 1st stamp the ray is considerably more slanted. As a control we can use the colored line behind the numeral at the bottom of the oval and the missing point of the 5th steeple.

2 On the 3rd stamp the rays are missing between the left limb and the first steeple. Control—right upper corner damaged.

3 The long ray on the 7th stamp is too near the steeple.

4 On the 47th stamp the long ray is slanted too much—a white dot behind the second curl, and sometimes bigger and sometimes entirely missing colored dots in the tail of the left dove in the lower band. The white dot also appears on the 47th stamp of plate I, the long ray of which was not corrected and also on a stamp where the long ray is absent.

A stamp from an unknown plate has a correction of ray, which reminds me of the 71st stamp of plate I.

4—Other defects

In this category belong dots and spots on various sheets, for instance—on the 100th stamp of plate I of the large sheet, the broken edge connects the two sheets and contains many white spots. The largest one is on the 27th stamp of plate I and one quite long is on the 46th stamp of plate II, both of which are over the small bush. It seems to me that these were not corrected as stated in the catalogue. Noteworthy is a stamp of unknown position, where a left branch of a limb was broken in the crotch and so corrected that it appears as a colored spot. There are several cases of damages to the roof, as for instance—on the 11th stamp of plate II there are two spots in the roof, stamp 90 of plate I has a damaged roof and a leaf, the so-called "coffee mill". White lines appear on the 9th stamp of plate I, beginning in the center of the main steeple and running to the dome of St. Mikuláš church. On the 100th stamp of plate II is a white line running from the first steeple to the fourth steeple. Apparently the plates were damaged and the effort to correct them was only partially successful. The first steeple of the 30th stamp of plate II is badly damaged.

5—Bottom Band

This has sometimes a damaged value shield or numerals. They are sometimes broken, closed, thickened or with dots or spots around them.

—Jos. Hanák

ALOIS JIRÁSEK (1851-1930)

Not far north of Náchod is the village of Hronov, the birthplace of the "Walter Scott" of Bohemia. A prolific author of renown, his Czech historical novels sustained the national spirit of the people when the oppression of the Austrian bureaucracy was at its height. Furthermore, his novels awakened the people to the glory of their history. One novel, the "Psohlavci" glorifies the Chods and Jan Kozina, the guardians of the Šumava border. He was a natural narrator and is classed as the best of Czech prose writers. During the height of the political persecution in 1918 he made a famous speech in Praha, April 1918 to an audience of 6000. This speech gave a fresh impulse to the struggle for freedom.

An 8K stamp was issued in 1949 and two in 1951, his 100th birthday.

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