

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

A publication of the Czechoslovak  Philatelic Society of N. America

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## EDITORIAL

We find it is quite pleasant to start an Editorial with some enjoyable news item. This time it is our pleasure to wish our past president, Mr. George A. Blizil, good luck and loads of fun (if possible) in his new elective office of Director of International Affairs of the American Philatelic Society. By the time this issue reaches our members, George will have had his first meeting with the new officers of APS in Mexico. We may get some interesting information from him in due course.

Czechoslovak Philately has not been doing well lately. Apparently the Postal Department had been issuing unnecessary items just to follow the example of many other countries. The APS presented a number of Black Blots to certain issues and maybe it will be of some help to awaken the authorities to the fact that the sale of other stamps may suffer because of such unnecessary, questionable emissions.

Some time ago we promised a very interesting article on Fieldposts in France and England in WW II which we were going to translate from German and which appeared in the Sammler Lupe. We had written to the Editor for permission and as we were waiting for a reply which did not seem to come we began the actual translation. After two months of waiting we wrote again and at the same time we informed one of our correspondents in Europe of our intention to publish that particular article by a certain author. We were indeed surprised to learn from our correspondent that the philatelic writings of the particular author are not very accurate, so after having translated over one-half of a long article we threw it all into the waste basket. Here we wish to add that the Sammler Lupe Editor's permission arrived just about at the same time. His delay was caused by a serious automobile accident which sent him to a hospital for nearly two months. It is indeed quite likely that had we received his permission within a reasonable time we would not have even mentioned our intention to our European correspondent.

The Austin Stamp Club in Chicago is sponsoring a course in philately for the fall at which the introductory remarks will be made by Dr. Matejka. Frank Kovarik will give some lectures as well as member Hrivnak.

We mentioned before how we wish to keep Czechoslovak philately before the eyes of philatelists. This is the main reason that we so often send some of our material to exhibitions not for competition also. At the Rochester, New York, Show there were three exhibits containing material of our specialty and at Nojex in Newark quite recently, there was only one exhibit of it. At

Rochester in addition to members Koplowitz and Vondra, we placed a few frames and received the Certificate of Merit of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society, which certificate, by the way, was originated by us as to wording some years ago and printed by member Horechny. The Lowey Award was for many years in the past also donated by member Horechny. At Nojex there were 290 frames of 16 pages to a frame, we had five frames of postal history and we received the Postal History Society's Gold Medal. The Postal History Society participated with 115 frames. We also received the bronze medal of Nojex for the exhibit. Nojex showing was really most outstanding with marvelous confederate material, Austrian superb collection and the finest Baden, just to mention a few. Due to the hectic times in Newark we returned with a bad cold which we are still nursing, one week after our return.

We have just finished reading the proposed article on the history of the Czechoslovak Specialist by Frank Kovarik which is to appear in our January issue. We have an article in preparation on the history of the Society, which will be published in December on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of our Society. The combination of the two articles will give our members a good idea as to what has transpired during our first 25 years and we can be proud of our society. The different selfless workers, though only a few are still with us, deserve much acknowledgement by the members.

Quite recently we received a letter from our good friend Major Knox in which he emphatically agrees with the suggestions of member Verner made which were published in May. Yes, the question and answer section in our Specialist would be very valuable to all of us. Who is going to make a start? We recall in our experience at scientific meetings when we conducted a session and after the end of a particular delivery we asked "Are there any questions" and no one got up to ask a question. Finally we decided to ask the first question ourselves and that is all that was needed to start the questions going. We wonder whether this should be done here also? We are sure there are many of you interested to get an answer to your problems. Now we make a suggestion! If a member does not wish to have his name published that would be satisfactory, too. Just send us your questions and give us your wishes, we will publish only the question. How does this appeal to you? We are willing to go to any length to get the ball rolling!!

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#### MEMBERS, PLEASE NOTICE!!

Enclosed you will find your dues envelope. Please place your dues into it and mail it to the Treasurer at your earliest convenience. We are sure that you have found it worth while to belong to our Society. Please pay your dues promptly.

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#### FRANK STERN

We were shocked to learn of the passing of member #54 Frank Stern. He was a faithful member of our society and though in later years he did not attend our meetings in New York, he was always ready to support our exhibitions at the Collectors Club. He had a most marvelous collection of Czechoslovak Air Mails and an extensive collection of the various provisionals and locals of the post WW II period.

We had the opportunity to see him at our meetings soon after the organization of the society and we used to see him after our return from overseas at our meetings at a hotel and later at the offices of late member Vinson.

The officers and members of the Society extend their heartfelt sympathy to the widow and son.

**MILO BARRY**

To the Editor:

Mrs. Philomena Barry, widow of our good friend, a prominent philatelist, and member of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society has requested me to send you the enclosed death notice of the passing of her husband on August 29, 1963.

Milo has been ailing for a long time, and spent his last months at St. Anthony's hospital in St. Petersburg, under the most efficient care of the staff. It is unfortunate that he had to leave prematurely, as he had huge plans for the future in his beloved hobby of philately.

He and his wife moved to St. Petersburg from Van Nuys, California, only a year ago; and were looking forward to enjoying their declining years in the sunshine and favorable climate of the West Coast of Florida. But the change in residence did not have the expected results, as his failing condition did not improve with the passing months.

Milo Barry, a former general contractor, was an expert in many fields of human endeavor, and did much of his own work in building, developing and beautifying his home and surroundings. It is a pity that he had to leave before many of his ambitions and plans were fulfilled. We shall all miss him, as a dear friend, an expert philatelist, and a wonderful husband.

Mrs. Barry has requested me to assist her in straightening out his philatelic belongings, and in the disposition of part of his philatelic estate. I am gradually working on an inventory and will be in a position to offer some material to interested parties—mainly and firstly to members of the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society, as time goes on.

Very sincerely yours, Frank J. Rosner

We have here published in full the letter of Mr. Rosner and wish to add the expression of our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Barry in the name of the officers and all the members of the Society.

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## Commemorative Stamps With Folk Art Motifs

Stamps with Czechoslovak folk art motifs were to have been issued on the occasion of the Praga 1962 World Stamp Exhibition. The Committee of Stamp Design recommended that they be issued as a pendant to the exhibition stamps depicting industrial cities. They were supposed to show the life and folk art of the Czechoslovak people. This decision was altered in order that the themes of the exhibition stamps should be in accord with the motto of the Praga 1962 exhibition.

The issue of stamps presenting the folk art of Czechoslovakia is rather unusual as regards theme, artistic concept, and print. Professor Karel Svolinsky who designed these stamps finds folk art a constant source of inspiration. The very background of this artist who journeyed to all parts of Czechoslovakia in search of folk art determined him as the person to design these stamps. All the designs are naturally his own ideas and these stamps may be considered as eminently suitable for collectors of motifs.

They generally depict fragments from larger pictures of folk scenes which are enlivened by a bright and at the same time disciplined coloring. The four color composition printed from four plates faithfully presents the colors of the painter's and engraver's originals.

Folk art is fascinating for its naturalness of content and feeling. On the whole the folk artist is never one who practices art. He expresses himself unconsciously, truly spontaneously, one might say instinctively. He is able to express his concepts in their full breadth and extent very simply by means of symbols. The characteristic feature of folk art is its clarity of concept and

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ability to express itself. Folk art can be divided into several groups. Superstitions and customs have their origin in the traditions of the pre-Christian era, e.g., the death effigies, straw symbols of harvest festivities, and various creations from masquerades. Man expressed fear of death in nature, satirical joy at the return of spring, the eternal forces of life and the life-giving strength of the sun.

Plastic pictures and those drawn with a painter's approach belong to another group. Pictures of saints, serving to fulfill a protective function. Various depictions from religious festivities, Bethlehems, Calvaries, etc. Emotions and feelings were expressed by wedding bouquets, wedding costumes, lovers gifts, etc. Desire for adornment manifested itself in the national costume, embroidery, lacework and jewellery making.

The national costume served as a means of social differentiation. It differentiated people according to employment, ownership of property, those who were married, those who were single, children from adults. The guild system provided many opportunities for folk art—guild emblems, seals, chests, national costumes, flags, trade signs, etc.

The basic feature of the folk art form is linearism. Folk art covers a vast sphere and is a highly spiritual activity. It includes folk songs, poetry, stories and tales, every expression of folk and artistic receptivity and cultural creativeness. Folk art made its appearance in Czechoslovakia in the 17th century.

Professor Svolinský's design for the 60 h stamp depicts painted toys. The simplicity of form is accentuated by the bright red and blue coloring.

For the 80 h stamp Professor Svolinský painted a magnificent rooster, also in red and blue. The space around the bird is filled in with an ornamental plant design. What a bold artistic expression this was, painted probably by some folk artist on the fireplace wall.

The Czech villages abound in furniture from the past century painted in the style shown in the 1 Kčs stamp.

The 1.20 Kčs stamp clearly was inspired by a Slovak folk artist. This picture is a fragment of the larger Slovak glass painting "Jánošík and His Men" and the coloring bears witness to the fact that this is the product of Slovak folk art.

The 1.60 Kčs stamp also possesses all the features of Slovak folk art both as regards the drawing and the coloring.

And last of all the jovial knight on the 2 Kčs stamp, taken from a fragment of a Czech glass painting, is proof of the rare skill and ingenuity of the author.

How masterly is the composition and color harmony of these stamps! What a number of novel ideas are realized by the author in the over-all concept of the various designs! It cannot be denied that Professor Svolinský creates truly attractive designs which will doubtless be appreciated by collectors.

We visited Ladislav Jirka, the man who engraved the stamps, in his studio to ask him about his work on the stamps designed by Professor Svolinský. These are his words:

"I enjoyed doing the stamps designed by Professor Svolinský. They are all very attractive and I am sure will prove popular both at home and abroad. I admire the graphic and color composition of the stamps which are executed with true artistic feeling.

"The engraving of these stamps was not an easy task. The painter's design forces the engraver to use quite unusual positions in the linear system when transferring the picture to the metal in order that they express the artistic qualities and dynamic conception of the original. The author's design

naturally influences the outcome of the engraver's work. It may be said that the better the work of the artist the more difficult is the task of the engraver who is responsible for its reproduction. I must say that I like working with four-color steel engraving for this method of printing preserves the character of an engraving best. The work requires absolute precision in the separate colors which, when combined, give the picture its color brightness.

"Professor Svolinský's designs are dynamic, they have no 'empty' spaces and they compel the engraver to adapt his lines to the original drawing.

"For myself, I should like to add that working with Professor Svolinský always was and always will be the best training of all, for when breaking up the picture into its separate parts as well as during the actual engraving I am given the benefit of his vast knowledge. I am very glad that Professor Svolinský's designs are being continuously printed and are thus bringing us ever new artistic and thematic concepts."

We thanked Ladislav Jirka and left his studio convinced that he would be able to transpose even the most exacting stamp designs. We wish him success in his future artistic tasks—and a happy journey around the world to the "Czechoslovak Folk Art" stamps.

(F. S. K.)



### Parade Of New Issues

Edited by Frank Kosik

#### A New Unesco Set

The Czechoslovak Board of Management of Telecommunications issued on September 2, 1963, a set of six stamps with folk art motives designed by Professor K. Svolinský, National Artist, for the UNESCO competition.

- 1) 60h, turned and painted wooden toys. Red, blue, pink and grey.
- 2) 80h, fragment of wall painting. Blue, red, pink and brown.
- 3) 1 Kčs, painting and wood. Yellow, pink, red and green.
- 4) 1.20 Kčs, painting on glass; depicts Jánošík, the Slovak national hero. Blue, red, yellow and brown.
- 5) 1.60 Kčs, stag, painting on a jug (Slovakia). Yellow, green, dk. violet, grey, blue



- 6) 2 Kčs, painting on glass. Red, blue, yellow and black.

All stamps bear the inscription "UNESCO".

Two First Day Covers were released with this emission. The cachets depict a carved wooden dish and an embroidered bird.

Designer: Professor K. Svolinský, National Artist. Engraver: L. Jirka.

The stamps were printed in the Post Printing Office in Prague, by multi-color flat bed recess process in sheets of 10. Dimensions of the stamp picture are 23x30 mm.

#### Consumer Goods Fair at Liberec



Release date: 13 July, 1963:

- 30 h Emblem characterizing the Liberec Consumer Goods Fair as a show of modern fashion

Colors: black and violet. Designer and engraver: Jiří Švengsbír.

On August 15, 1963, the Czechoslovak Board of Management of Telecommunications issued the following stamps:



- 1) **30th International Congress of Iron Founders in Prague**  
60h blast-furnace, two iron foundry in foreground. Colors: black and blue.  
Designer: T. Rotreky, academic artist. Engraver: J. Herčík.  
Dimensions: 30x23 mm.
- 2) **2nd International Pharmacological Congress in Prague**  
1 Kčs white mouse against red background, inscription "Congressus Pharmacologicus II Praha 1963". Colors: black and brick-red.  
Designer: M. Hegar, academic artist. Engraver: B. Housa.  
Dimensions: 40x23 mm.
- 3) **Freedom from Hunger**  
1.60 Kčs symbolic drawing modern farm machinery. Colors: dark br., black  
Designer: Professor K. Svolinský, National Artist. Engraver: L. Jirka.  
Dimensions: 30x23 mm.

All stamps were printed by the Post Printing Office in Prague. Stamps No. 1) and 2) were printed by rotary recess combined with photogravure, and 3) by rotary recess, in sheets of 50.

A First Day Cover has been released with each of the above stamps.

## The First Issue In the Postal Museum

By John Velek

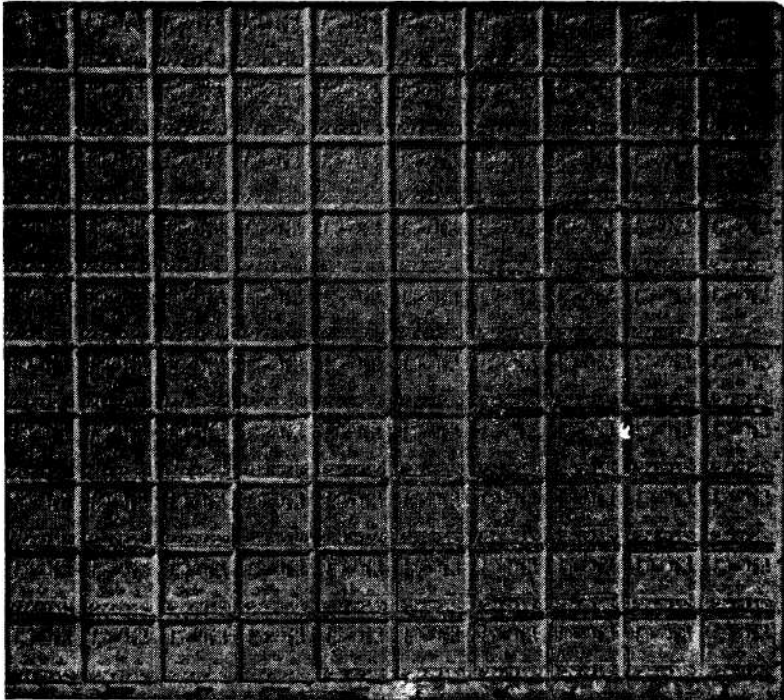
Reprinted from Compex Directory 1963

The Czechoslovak Postal Museum is located in an old cloister in Prague. One large room where stamps are on exhibition is open to the public. They also have a philatelic library and the archives where material not on exhibit is stored. In one end of the exhibition hall are installed elaborate pull-out frames where the museum's main collection of stamps is mounted. Along the other walls are glass cabinets in which are found various displays of philatelic material.

Being a specialist in the first issue of Czechoslovakia, (the Hradčany) I was mainly interested in the museum's collection of these stamps and material related to them. Considering the fact that the serious collectors of the early Republic were mainly interested in early Austria and other classic stamps, and the Hradčany were generally ignored, a surprising amount of fine material has survived.

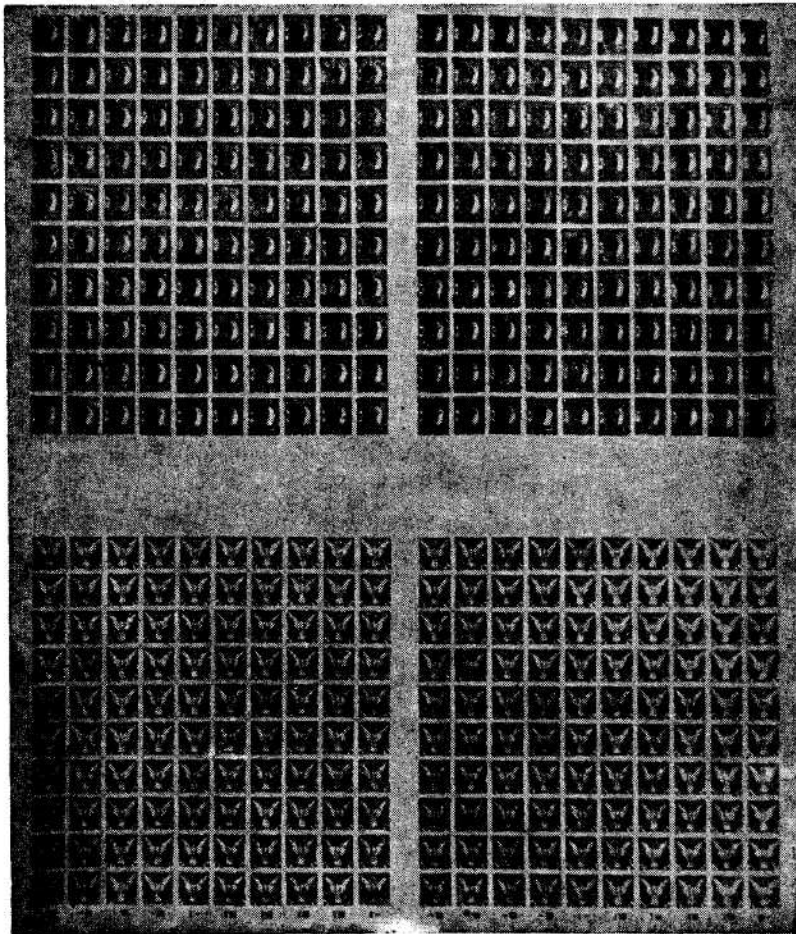
One of the first cabinets contained two original drawings by Alfons Mucha, designer of the first issue. These were sketches of the entire Hradčany design with additional details drawn along the sides. On one of these the value tablet was heart shaped but this part of the design was later used as a side ornament. Another cabinet held an interesting display used at a 1922 Philatelic exhibition to demonstrate the method in which stamps were produced. It was an especially made display of the 1 heller Hradčany stamp in a block of 25 and consisted of the following six items:

1. Glass negative.



2. Transfer to a copper plate.
3. First etching—edges opaqued out
4. Final etching with routing showing on edges and between stamps.
5. Finished printing plate.
6. Black proof from plate.

Another exhibit was a set up of 100  $2\frac{1}{8} \times 1\frac{3}{4}$  inch black prints of the 25 heller Type V design. All positions except #1 and #30 had the 20h value pasted over the value tablet. Position #1 had been left the 25h value and on #30 the 20h value had peeled off. Control numbers for the 20h value were pasted on the bottom of the setup. This of course had been used in the making of the 20h plates. Also noted were forgeries of the 200, 500 and 1000h values intended for the airmail overprints which were printed in blocks of eight. The display included the 1919 10h photogravure experimental proofs in full sheets of brown, blue, green and red. The first, ninth and tenth vertical rows had been damaged and the sheets consisted of only 70 positions. The museum also has full sheets of the Vzorec (Specimen) overprints both perforated and imperforate. Also on hand are full sheets of the overprinted airmails both





perforated and imperforate. The 14K and the 24K values are incidentally the specially printed sheets with no control numbers at the bottom.

Knowing my interest in the first issue, Mr. Husek, the curator, brought from the archives the only three original plates of the Hradčany that exist. The 5h is in copper, the 25h in brass (Figure 1\*) and the 120h in zinc. Having done intensive research on the 5h stamp, I took this plate to a good light and examined it with a magnifying glass. It is the original Plate I and is in a battered condition with about ten nail holes along each edge where it had been fastened to wooden backing during the various printings. The margins between the stamps showed considerable hand tooling. This was probably done when the plate was used to print the 30th anniversary reprints of 1948.

The Hradčany stamps were printed in sheets of 400 (Figure 2\*) with two plates of two different values set up vertically in pairs. This method enabled the post office to issue more denominations as early as possible. Uncut sheets of 400 exist only in the Philatelic Museum and Mr. Husek was kind enough to bring out their entire holding for me to examine. Following is a list of the combinations that I noted:

- 5h Type V with 120h
- 75h with 2h newspaper stamp
- 75h with 20h newspaper stamp
- 40h olive with 60h green (with Red Cross overprint)
- 40h olive with 60h green (without Red Cross overprint)
- 50h Type III with 6h newspaper
- 25h Type I with 15h
- 15h with 10h Type V
- 5h Type I with 10h newspaper
- 5h Type I with 400h
- 500h with 30h Type I
- 15h with 10h Type I
- 20h Type V with 10h Type V
- 200h with 100h
- 60h with 3h (set up se tenant)
- 25h Type I with 20h Type I (both with period after 20 retouched)
- 5h Type I (all four plates)
- 30h Type V with 2h newspaper
- 30h Type V with 15h Dove issue
- 25h Type V with 15h Type V

Seeing these uncut sheets was quite a thrill and I couldn't help thinking what a nice album page crossed gutter blocks from these sheets would make.

I am very much indebted to my good friend Mr. Zdenek Kvasnicka of Prague for making arrangements with Mr. Husek for my tour and to Mr. Husek for his courtesy in showing me the results of his hard work.

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\*Illustrations are from "Studie o Filatelistických Shirkach Postovního Musea" by the late Ervin Hirsch with the permission of the author.

## POSTAL MUSEUM MOVES TO CASTLE

### History of Communications

Only a few of the world's capitals possess a postal museum, and Prague is one. Its origins go back to 1918 and the birth of the Czechoslovak Republic; it was one of a number of institutions then founded, but its formal opening took place later, after a period devoted to assembling material.

It that time it was not very large or particularly well supported, and it

not unnaturally focussed attention on the history of postal services in the Czech lands, previously under Austrian rule. On the stamp side it showed home issues and, as international connections were established, foreign issues too. There were some examples of post office equipment, prints of mail-carrying vehicles, maps of routes, and so on.

With the growth of philately the museum gradually became better known. It was moved from its first small home near Charles University to larger premises in the Smíchov district of Prague, where it remained until recently.

There, five rooms contained displays which had been expanded to touch on all aspects of the history of postal communications: old letters as well as early stamps and cancellation marks; a mail coach and sledge; delivery time tables; and, besides the ever-increasing number of stamps themselves, an interesting collection of original drawings, engravings, plates and proofs for Czechoslovak issues.

The momentum of expansion and interest has increased since the war, and the museum has been able to build up its collection still further. The need for another move became pressing, and this was arranged last year. While the specialized stamp displays and reference books will remain where they are, other exhibits are being transferred to Hrádek Castle, where they will be set out in better lit and less crowded surroundings.

The castle is 60 miles from Prague, but it already attracts many visitors and it is likely that next year, when the collection is installed, the stream will increase.

Not only will the exhibits be better arranged, but the opportunity is being taken to present national postal history in the context of the world history of communications. Thus the beginnings and development of writing will be shown; ways in which messages were recorded and carried in ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome; the "postal system" of the Inca empire and of African peoples, and many other aspects of the story. In all, there will be several thousand items, including stamps.

Does the museum house any rarities? Yes; for instance, an 18th century map—among the oldest of its kind—showing coach routes and staging points in Central Europe. Also an Austrian stamp with "Czechoslovak Post" overprinted upside down. Only six of these are known to exist, and this one is valued at 60,000 crowns. (W. R.-D.)

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Dr. Henry J. Safarik, 600 Novelda, Alhambra, California.

#### FOLLOWING MEMBERS TO BE INCLUDED IN LIST

462 Mrs. K. F. Goodman, 110 Brunswick Rd., Ealing, London W 5, England  
 649 L. Gonuille, 35 Bressey Grove, South Woodford, London E 18, England  
 647 Keith C. Riddle, 10 Burwood Close, Hersham, Surrey, England

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**RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AND PHILOSOPHY AS DEPICTED ON THE  
STAMPS OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA**

by **C. Hedley Osbourn**

(Reprinted with permission from the *Coros Chronicle*)

(continued)

**George of Poděbrad**

(1420-1471), king of Bohemia, was the son of Victoria of Kunštrát and Poděbrad, a Bohemian nobleman, who was one of the leaders of the "Orphans" or moderate Taborites during the Hussite wars. George became prominent as leader of the National, or Calixtine party in Bohemia. In 1448, he raised a force of 9,000 men, marched on Prague and took it; afterwards defeated the Romanist party led by Ulrich von Rosenberg. In 1451, he became administrator of Bohemia. On February 27, 1458, the Bohemian Estates unanimously chose Poděbrad as king.

King George based his whole policy of religious life and administration on the well-known "FOUR ARTICLES OF PRAGUE," which defined the aims of the Hussites.

1. The unrestricted preaching of the Word of God.
2. The administration of communion of both kinds to all believers.
3. The abolition of the possession by monks and clergy of large estates and possessions.
4. The strict punishment of immorality and simony, which was then widespread in the Church.

The hostility of the Pope, and the Romanists, proved an almost insoluble obstacle. Eventually they formed a confederacy, and on December 23, 1466, the Pope excommunicated Poděbrad, forbidding the Romanists to continue in their allegiance. War was the result. Matthias of Hungary conquered a large part of Moravia, and was crowned King at Brno on May 3, 1469. On March 22, 1471, Poděbrad's death ended the war. He was the only native King of Bohemia, and the only one not a Roman Catholic.

(Type A70, A343)

**TWILIGHT AND OBLIVION**

I hope I shall be forgiven for including this in the study of Religion on Czechoslovakian stamps, but here is a nation's agony graphically portrayed. To a Czechoslovak it must be painful to even recall, yet only in retrospect can its lessons be learned.

The heading "Twilight and Oblivion" was tragically true, for from the year 1620 till 1918 the sun withheld its rays, and not until the First World War did the clouds part and allow the sun to shine through, and while even now, the clouds have obscured the sun again—still the words of St. Václav mean something—"Truth prevails."

And now to our story.

The Utraquist creed, frequently varying in details, continued to be that of the established Church in Bohemia till all non-Roman religious services were prohibited shortly after the Battle of White Mountain in 1620.

The Taborite party never recovered from its defeat at Lipan, and after the town of Tabor had been captured by George of Poděbrad in 1452, the Utraquist worship was established there. The Bohemian Brethren to a certain extent continued the Taborite traditions, and in the 15th and 16th centuries included most of the strongest opponents of Rome in Bohemia.

All this time conflict between people and crown existed, dictated by religious differences. The Lutheran movement in Germany made great inroads,

until in the middle of the 16th century about two-thirds of the population were Lutherans, about one-tenth Brethren, and the rest Roman Catholics. Then came the counter reformation, the entry of the Jesuits, then the revolt of 1618, and the defeat of White Mountain (November 8, 1620).

The reaction:

1. The execution of 27 real or alleged leaders of the revolt.
  2. Confiscation of the rebel's properties.
  3. The liquidation of the Czech nobility.
  4. All Protestant pastors expelled.
  5. All schools closed.
  6. The censorship of all life given to the Jesuits.
- OBLIVION—30,000 families emigrated (one quarter of the urban populations)—the moral and intellectual flower of the nation.

#### Check List and Explanatory Notes

##### The Old Town Square, Praha

The scene of the execution of the Czech nobles, June 21, 1621. Here Bohemia drank the dregs of humiliation.

(Type A28, A36, A158 (408))

##### Charles Bridge, Praha

Sadly remembered, for on this bridge were strung the heads of the decapitated Czech nobles in 1621, and left there for ten years.

(Type A252, AP9, C25, A315, AP11)

##### Týn Church, Praha

In this church were kept the skulls of the executed Czech nobles.

(Type A28, A36, A158(408), AP11(C44))

##### Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius)

The fate of Czech Protestantism was sealed at the Battle of Bílá Hora (White Mountain) near Praha. The blame for this defeat may be ascribed very largely to the deterioration of the morale of the Czech peasants as a result of their enslavement in 1500.

"The Hussite battles were won by free peasants, the Battle of the White Mountain was lost by mercenaries." So writes Palacký, the great Czech historian, and the punishment fell on the Czech nobility.

Ferdinand II now established his claim to rule Bohemian Lands. "Better no population at all than a population of heretics," said he, and all Protestants were exiled or persecuted or forcibly converted to Roman Catholicism, and all their property was confiscated. Some 20,000 Protestant families went into exile.

Notable among these was JAN AMOS KOMENSKÝ, Latinized "Comenius," pastor of a church at Fulnek in Moravia, and Bishop of the Bohemian Brethren (Unitas Fratrum) who took refuge in Lesna, Poland. Here he continued to teach and write, his books being very widely translated. He was a devout Christian, and a loyal Czech, as well as an ardent pansophist and a forerunner of the Encyclopaedists.

Just before his death in 1670, he bequeathed all his possessions to the Czech and Moravian nations, with these words: "I also believe before God that after the passing of the storms of wrath brought down upon our heads by our sins, the rule over thine own possessions shall be restored to thee, O Czech peoples."

(Type A61a, A199, A316, A317)

#### THE DAWN OF FREEDOM

1620 to 1918. For nearly three hundred years the Czech peoples lay under the heel of the despots. With their intellectuals executed or in exile, they



became a race of peasants—untaught and illiterate. They were denied their language and all national aspirations were thought to have been extinguished.

But through all those 300 years, the spark flickered; in secret each generation learned the language of their forebears and absorbed the past glories of their race. And they patiently waited.

The "Awakening" came through literature, for in 1803 the first use of the Slav languages was officially permitted. The people awoke to the realization of their heritage, and their opportunity came in 1918, when the Germanic nations challenged the democratic world—and lost.

#### Consecration of the Legion Colors



The story of the Czech Legions is an epic of history. The thousands of Czechoslovaks who deserted to the Allied Forces, and who thereafter fought for the ideals of a "Free Country," is a tale worth repeating.

However, the particular stamp we have under study is that having to do with the Legion in Russia. On September 28, 1914, in Kiev, the solemn administration of the oath to the troops to their flags, and the consecration of the colors, took place before high ecclesiastical dignitaries.

The scene is St. Sophia Square (commonly called Cathedral Square). The banner is held by the standard bearer Hejduk. At the right of the banner is Lt. Colonel Sezontavic, Legion Commander; at the left is Legionaire J. J. Švec, who later rose to the rank of colonel. The ecclesiastical dignitaries are not known. However they are garbed in the robes of the Greek Orthodox Church, one a Bishop, the others lesser clergy and acolytes. Kissing the banner is 2nd Lieutenant Vladimír Klecanda, who was later staff commander of the Legion. At his right is 2nd Lieutenant Cecek, who eventually became Commander—Far East.

In the right background of this very interesting stamp is the Cathedral of St. Sophia, the oldest in Russia, built in the 11th century, and which has been rebuilt so many times that its original form is lost, and only a few of its nineteen domes date back to medieval times. The golden cupola of its four-storied campanile is visible for many miles across the steppe. The interior of the cathedral has beautiful 11th century frescoes and mosaics, covered with white-wash during the Uniat occupation of the cathedral in the 17th century and rediscovered in 1842. They are the oldest monuments of Russo-Byzantine art and represent hunting scenes, gladiatorial combats, games and dances.

It is interesting to recount that the regiments of the Czech Legion received the names of the national heroes, such as Hus and Žižka, and used the Hussite symbols.

The story of the Czech Legions has been perpetuated in their Museum in the Troja Castle, just outside Praha. Here has been gathered trophies of all kinds, uniforms, rifles, guns, and even one of the armored train cars of the Siberian epic.

(Type A49)

## PERSONALITIES

In our study of religion on the stamps of Czechoslovakia, and applying the same to personalities represented as such on the postal paper is a very difficult problem. For one thing, religion is part of the very woof and fibre of the history of the country, and throughout the centuries, and especially in the past one hundred years, the great motivating forces have been actuated, either by religious schools of thought, or by the thinking of individuals who have come into contact with the same. As for the cultural and religious life of the nation, despite its relative numerical inferiority, the Protestant element has played a role far beyond its strength in numbers. The President-Liberator, Thomas G. Masaryk, had become, early in life, a convert of Protestantism, and remained a member of the Czech Brethren Church all his life. General Milan Stefanik, the leader of the Slovaks during the struggle for independence, was born in the home of an Evangelical parson, and belonged to the Lutheran Church. Dr. Edward Beneš was a member of the Czech Brethren.

Masaryk, Thomas G. (Types A4, A9-10, A15, A27, A37, A38, A55-56, A60, A91, A108, A133, SP3, SP8, SP8a)

Štefanik, General Milan (Types A58, A63, A106, Slovakia A3)

Beneš, Dr. Edward (Types A62, A73, A107, A116, A125, A133)



The great impetus to the Czechoslovak "Awakening" came, as stated before, through literature. In 1803 the Lutheran Lycee at Bratislava, with its Institute of Slav Languages was organized. It was here that Palkovic and Ludevít Štúr made their mark, and the Lycee remained the center of Lutheran nationalism in Slovakia until its dissolution by the Magyar government some years after its foundation. From this school emanated Ludevít Štúr, who created a linguistic instrument common to the Slovaks of every creed to resist the increasingly violent assaults of Magyarism. We should also consider Hurban and Hodža, who worked with Štúr in establishing Slovak as a literary language uniting all Slovaks, Catholic and Protestant. Both Michael M. Hodža and Miloslav Josef Hurban were Lutheran clergymen, and actively served in that capacity in Slovakia. It is interesting to note that Milan Hodža, who served as Prime Minister during the critical period of 1938, was a son of Michael.

Štúr, Ludevít (Type A132(358), A396, Slovakia A31, SP11)

Hurban, Miloslav Josef (Type A132)

Hodža, Michael M. (Type A132(359))

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