

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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Modern Cultural Personalities of the 20th Century Honored



In comparison with the commemorative set of seven stamps devoted to "cultural personalities of the 20th century" issued in 1968, the 1969 set of six stamps by Prof. Adolf Hoffmeister contains more of the portrait and less of the caricature. In one other respect these stamps differ from those

which appeared in 1968, and which were also by Hoffmeister whose anniversaries were honored by UNESCO included only one from Czechoslovakia, Karel Capek; this year three represent Czech or Slovak science and culture.

The first, a 30-heller stamp, shows Pavol Orszagh Hviezdoslav (1849-1921), revolutionary poet of the Slovak people whose verses dealt with the problems closest to his country. Although he lived at the time of a great oppression of the Slovak nation he was firmly convinced of the people's strength and ability to win for themselves a happy future. He always felt a profound brotherly love for the Czech nation, which he proclaimed in his work.

In Hviezdoslav's time there were several political trends in Slovakia. One saw the small country's salvation in Vienna, the other in Czarist Russia. For Hviezdoslav the answer was in the joint struggle of Czechs and Slovaks against domination of any kind. "We are brothers—we love each other without conditions, without the obligations an enemy requires," he wrote.

The Hoffmeister portrait on the 40-heller stamps is of G. K. Chesterton (1874-1936), the famous British essayist and critic, unfortunately known to Czechoslovak readers primarily as the author of "Father Brown" mystery stories.

The rugged profile on the 60-heller stamp belongs to Vladimir Vladimirovich Mayakovsky (1893-1930), the celebrated Russian poet and playwright, co-founder of Russian futurism. He is considered the greatest Soviet poet, who tried through his work to re-evaluate the world, art, intellectual and moral values and all artistic methods and approaches from the point of view of socialist ideology and its aesthetics.

It is a paradox that Mayakovsky, who was also called the "poet of the revolution" and who nearly physically ruined himself in the service of socialist and communist ideals, ended his life by committing suicide.

The artist wearing glasses and a scarf and holding his palette, portrayed on the one-crown stamp, is the well known French painter Henri Matisse (1869-1954) whose paintings are full of joy and sensual enchantment in spite of his depressing experience as a member of a generation which lived through two world wars.

Unlike his contemporaries—Picasso and Braque and also Derain—Matisse's work is not marked by any revolutionary changes and does not reflect new trends and developments.

There is one aspect which cannot go unmentioned. It is "Matisse the monumental." In addition to a number of chapels and churches, which owe much of their beauty to his decorations, this concerns especially the Chapel of the Rosary at Venice of which he was at the same time the architect, painter, sculptor, and decorator. Matisse himself described this chapel as his masterpiece.

On the 1.80 crown stamp, the man with the long lean face, accompanied by a human skull and bones as symbols of scientific work, is the outstanding Czech-born American anthropologist, Ales Hrdlicka (1896-1943). His contribution to science is described below because his name is well known in the scientific and cultural world. In the calendar of world anniversaries of UNESCO for 1969 the date March 29 features the name of this famous American, Dr. Ales Hrdlicka.

He was born 100 years ago at Humpolec in Bohemia, a town with about 5000 inhabitants and situated 120 kilometers to the southeast of Prague at the foot of the Czech-Moravia Highland which is marked for its rough climate and unfertile soil.

Ales Hrdlicka was an excellent pupil. Perhaps it was for this reason that

he won the favor of the local priest who gave him private lessons in Latin and Greek in order that he might attend the grammar school in the town now known as Havlickuv Brod.

This did not come about, however, as the family of poor cabinet-maker Maximilian Hrdlicka and his wife—the parents and five children—emigrated in September 1882 to the United States of America similarly as many other Czech families at that time.

Ales difficult beginnings and later steep climb to the position of an eminent scientist fulfill the general idea of the endless possibilities of an American citizen.

However, in Hrdlicka's case it is necessary to take into account the fact that the source of his inner strength enabling the attainment of his life success had its roots in the country of his birth.

As a member of a small nation which at the time in question was fighting for its independence he realized the achievement of success in his work was the only and, perhaps, the best way of helping his nation as a resident in a foreign country.

He studied at the Homoeopathic Medical College in New York and successfully passed the entrance examination to the Johns Hopkins Hospital. The private practice which he established on completing his studies did not allow him to devote himself to the scientific work in which he was so interested.

Consequently he preferred to accept the offer of a post at the State Homoeopathic Hospital for the Insane at Middletown, N. Y., where he was promised the possibility of carrying out scientific research.

The need to study new anthropological methods led Ales Hrdlicka to Paris. After his return to New York he applied the knowledge he had acquired in Europe to the development of research of the normal population for the purpose of gaining comparative norms.

For some time—up to his appointment as curate of the newly founded department of physical anthropology at the National Museum in Washington (the Smithsonian Institution)—he was concerned with research of human bone material from different collections, in particular at the Anatomical Institute of Professor Huntington.

He also concentrated on the acquisition of norms, the preparation of publications, and repeated participation in expeditions to the Indian-inhabited southwestern region of America and to Mexico for the Museum of Natural History of New York.

Hrdlicka's talent, his diligence and passion for his work on one hand, and the possibilities afforded him by the Smithsonian Institution on the other hand created prerequisites for the beginning, in the course of 40 years of work in the anthropological department of the museum, of one of the richest anthropological collections in the world and over 300 scientific works in the most varied branches of the science of man.

Hrdlicka devoted himself to the history of his branch including the book "Physical Anthropology, Its Scope and Aims," the methods of physical anthropology.

Other areas of study were the book "Anthropometry," and the question of the Indians and the settlement of North and South America; "Early Man in South America, The Origin of the American Indian, The Peopling of America from Asia."

He wrote his book entitled "The Skeletal Remains of Early Man" after examining all known discoveries and finding places of that time, documenting the development of man in various parts of the world. It would be an interesting map if we were to trace all Ales Hrdlicka's journeys made on be-

half of anthropology.

Hrdlicka became an authority in his branch due to the fact that he never hesitated to fulfill even difficult and unpopular tasks and mainly because he did not recognize obstructions. Moreover, no effort was too great when it was a question of gaining arguments for his hypotheses.

For example, when he realized that the findings of paleontologist Professor F. Ameghin of South America—the so-called *Diprotomo* and *Tetra-
prothomo*—were unable to afford proof of man's development since in America the development of animals in the tertiary geological period differed from the conditions prevailing in the Old World.

He concluded that higher types of primates did not exist there from which alone it is possible to trace the trend of development culminating in man. He made, together with his colleagues, a detailed analysis of his finding places and comparative studies on his findings and proved the unjustifiable conclusion of the finder.

In order to acquire proofs of the arrival of the first inhabitants of America from Asia, he made ten expeditions to Alaska in the course of the years 1926-1938.

Even at the age of 70 he traveled, in 1939, to the USSR in order to study in museums the skulls of the ancient inhabitants of northeast Asia in order to carry out an essential comparison with those which he had dug up in Alaska.

In spite of the fact that he suffered a heart attack in London on his way to Leningrad which confined him to bed for six weeks, he carried out research with Professor A. P. Okladnikov in the basin of the Angara in Siberia. He presented biological dates pertaining to Americans in his work entitled "Old Americans."

Ales Hrdlicka ranked among the pioneers of science in the United States of America. He was strict with himself and others. In the course of his life he was awarded the most varied scientific honors and distinctions:

Membership in the American Academy of Sciences in 1921 and many other institutions; the gold Huxley Medal for his lecture "The Neanderthal Phase of Man" in London in 1927; and an honorable doctorate of Charles University in Prague and of Masaryk University in Brno.

His modesty and personal unpretentiousness enabled him to support from his own savings, the development of anthropology in Czechoslovakia as well as research of the American Indians.

The foundations which he established at the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and the university bear the name of his first wife Marie, a Frenchwoman whose death he found hard to bear. His second wife was of Czech origin, this fact once again strengthening his ties with his own country.

He was responsible for the building of museums devoted to man in Prague and elsewhere, his aim being to provide people with the possibility of learning about themselves, about man's development, about the changes which take place in the human body from youth to old age and about the human races.

Czechoslovak anthropology owes thanks to Hrdlicka for his constant moral, financial and program support. He contributed to the foundation of a magazine edited from 1923 by J. Matieck and later J. Maly and the present Hrdlicka Museum of Man attached to Charles University.

Ales Hrdlicka's understanding of man's development as a smooth process, expressed in his work on development of man, speaks in favor of the uniform origin of mankind and excludes the possibility of the existence of evolutionarily older (lower) and evolutionarily younger (higher) human races as certain racial theories formerly maintained.

During the period of from September 1 to 5, a conference of Czechoslovak

anthropologists with international participation will take place in Ales Hrdlicka's birthplace of Humpolec in honor of the 100th anniversary of the scientist's birth. This jubilee will remind not only his old and new country, but also the professional public of many countries of his merits in the science and better understanding among nations.

Almost everyone will recognize the face on the two-crown stamp as a faithful portrait of a writer whose name had the attention of literary critics all over the world for decades, and whose work since its "rediscovery" has influenced young authors, especially in West European countries, perhaps more than that of any other modern writer. He is, of course, Franz Kafka (1883-1924) one of that famous group of Prague authors of Jewish origin who wrote in German. In his sketches as well as in his unfinished novels (*The Castle*, *The Trial*, and *America*), aphorisms, and diaries he presented mostly imaginary situations full of alienation characterizing both the world in which he lived and which is still worrying the present-day man.

Kafka's heroes seem to be at the mercy of anonymous social forces acting under the false pretext of an imaginary dictatorship of the existing social system and directed against all that which is simple and humane in a way which today we could call sectarian or demagogical, but against which there is no defense in Kafka's stories. If Kafka wanted his works to survive their author and make his message equally understandable to those who came after him, he had to resort to supernatural, mystical fables whose absurdity actually stresses the strongly humanistic undertones of his writing.

The six new commemorative stamps are intended as a modest tribute to the six great men included among those personalities whose anniversaries should be honored this year.

NEW MEMBERS

- 883 Paul M. Hadjdu, 435 S. Palm Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212
- 884 Ferdinand Pozek, 724 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis, Indiana 45222
- 885 Kirby Blakeney, 1702 Inez Drive, N. E., Albuquerque, New Mexico 87110
- 886 David J. Kaup, 20½ Chestnut St., Potsdam, N. Y. 13676
- 887 Břetislav Charfreitag, Gottwaldova 239, Zamberk, Czechoslovakia
- 888 Donald Briggs, Box 128, Carlsbad, Calif. 92008
- 889 William F. Graf, 396 N. Delaplaine, Riverside, Ill. 60546
- 890 William Cotinas, 145-35 Willeto Pt. Blvd., Whitestone, N. Y. 11357
- 891 Alfred C. Jensen, 1255 Orcutt Rd., San Luis Obispo, Cal. 93104
- 892 John Wesley Kimball, Jr., 111 7th Street S. E., Washington, D. C. 20003
- 893 Gerald M. van Zanten, P. O. Box 49, Napier, New Zealand
- 894 Novak Vratislav, P. O. Box 269, Praha 1, Czechoslovakia
- 895 Thomas A. Campanile, 855 East 7 St., Brooklyn, New York
- 896 Dempsey J. Prappas, 634 Hunters Grove, Houston, Texas
- 897 Miss P. A. Fooks, 138 Chastlian Road, Dartford, Kent, England
- 898 Dr. Peter T. Cyr, 42 Stroudwater Rd., Portland, Maine 04102
- 899 Orlando L. Byers, 14582 Philomene, Allen Park, Mich. 48101
- 900 Richard G. Cirka, 3944 Jefferson St., Carlsbad, Ca. 92008
- 901 Milo C. Karchuta, 19 High St., Woodbury, N. J. 08096
- 902 Dr. H. C. McNamara, Hurley, N. Y. 12443
- 903 Preben Larsen, Rugens Kvt. 3A, 2620 Albertalund, Denmark
- 904 V. B. Flindt, Lyngbyvet 70, 2100 Kovenhavn, Denmark
- 905 William Ittel, 136 Dickson Ave., Ben Avon, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15202
- 906 Phillip Melamed, 1986 Algonquin Rd., Mt. Prospect, Ill. 60056
- 907 George Yaremkevych, 3836 Spokane Ave., Cleveland, Ohio 44109
- 908 E. Gorge, 11 Manor Way, London, England

1970 CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION

The Czechoslovak Philatelic Society is scheduling a convention meeting at SEPAD, on Saturday, October 17th, 1970, at the Sheraton Hotel in Philadelphia. The meeting will be held at 3:30 p.m. and after the business meeting one of the most outstanding experts of the balloon mail, Mr. Ernest M. Cohn of Washington, will deliver a talk about the balloon mail of 1871 during the siege of Paris.

Members are urged to exhibit Czechoslovak material which will be judged by our own judges as well as the jury of SEPAD. Our president, in consultation with the officers, decided to have appropriate awards on hand for the use of the judges.

President Janecka has appointed member Joseph Stein Convention Chairman and anyone wishing additional information should contact him at 585 East 21st St., Brooklyn, N. Y. 11226. Enclosed is a pamphlet explaining SEPAD.

See you in Philly in the Fall!

COMING IN SEPTEMBER

Recently your editor came into possession of the auction catalogue and prices realized from the first stamp auction held in Czechoslovakia in over 20 years. The auction consisted of 1047 lots, 139 of these were Czechoslovak material and two pertained to the U.S.A. The heaviest concentration was in European items, but Asia, Africa, British Colonies, North and South America were also represented. The catalogue was 40 pages of which four were color illustrations and eight in black and white. All illustrations were clear and of excellent quality, especially the colored ones. From a cursory review, it appears much material was 19th century and most lots were pre-World War II. The catalogue is in Czech, the stamp numbers are Pofis and Zumstein, and the prices in Czechoslovak crowns. Henry Hahn has graciously consented to translate, convert Pofis to Scotts numbers and crowns into dollars for the next edition of the Specialist. This will be in September as the Specialist is not published during July and August. Even tho this auction took place last November, it will still be worthwhile to print the lot descriptions of Czechoslovakia, estimated prices and prices realized. Why? Because this is the first opportunity in 20 years to acquaint our members with the results of an actual philatelic auction, which took place in Czechoslovakia. Also it gives an indication of the present state of the hobby in the old country. Lastly, who knows how long it will be when they will have the next auction?

PRAGUE POSTAL MUSEUM ROBBED

Translated and adapted by Joe Stein

This story has been printed in the Prague newspaper "Svobodne Slovo" edition of March 24, 26, and April 3. There was a robbery in the Prague Postal Museum by 2 young men on March 12. They overpowered a woman guard and stole among other items a sheet of 80 stamps of the "Blue Mercur" (Austrian newspaper stamp of 1851) which is valued between \$200,000 to \$250,000. So far they have not been apprehended. This is the largest known number of blue Mercury stamps in a single sheet. The sheet was given to the museum after World War II by the National Renovation Fund as former Nazi property confiscated in Teplice.

The Union of Czech Philatelists has posted an award of 10,000 Kcs and the Ministry of Posts and Communications an award of 20,000 Kcs for the apprehension and recovery of the stamps. The newspapers in Prague have appealed to the robbers not to cut the sheet and return it intact to the museum. The World Postal Union has been advised of the robbery and requested to advise all its members accordingly.

**HANDBOOK OF CZECHOSLOVAKIAN POSTMARKS
OF AUSTRIAN AND HUNGARIAN ORIGIN**
By Frederick Leitenberger — Translated by C. H. Osbourn
(continued)

CONCERNING THE POST OFFICE

Concerning the postal situation at the time of the revolution, the "Information on the Statistics of Government Offices of the Czechoslovak Republic," sets forth among the statistics for the year 1920 the following:

"The head office for the post, telegraph and telephone services, is the ministry for the post and telegraph systems, with the minister at the top. Representatives of the minister is the general director for the Post and Telegraph System, who administers all the business of that system, according to the directions of the minister and in his name, and for whose decisions the minister is answerable."

Head offices in the separate countries of the Czechoslovak Republic direct the post and telegraph operation. In the year 1920 they were seven in number, and were situated in Prague and Pardubice for Bohemia; in Brno for Moravia; in Bratislava and Kosice for Slovakia; in Uzhorod for the Carpatho-Ukraine (later on the first of April 1921, taken away and administered from Kosice.)

There are country post offices, classified post offices (Classes I, II and III), and postal deposit stations, the last are not in charge of a postmaster, but some private person.

When the Czechoslovak Republic was first set up, the postal authorities had on hand a big undertaking. It was necessary that the entire operation, which before the revolution had been managed from Vienna and Budapest, be transferred to Prague. From there it was administered, and for that very reason there were extreme difficulties with Slovakia.

The first foundation pillars for the Czechoslovak postal direction of Slovakia was laid, which by the end of December was established at Zilina. By the beginning of the year 1919, postal direction was taken over in Bratislava and Kosice, and at the beginning of February, the head office was moved from Zilina to Bratislava.

In the year 1919, the management of the post office in Czechoslovakia was disturbed in its peaceful development, by a strike of the staff, which had been taken over from the former Hungarian service, and an invasion of Magyar Bolsheviki. No less difficulty was encountered with the up-building of the organization of the post office in the Carpatho-Ukraine, with the attendant labor, from the first to almost the end of the year 1919, before the postal system there could be rightly set going. The management was, because of the great number of staff members, in the year 1921, amalgamated with the office at Kosice, and the postal inspectorate was transferred to Berehovo. The question of Teschen was also a very difficult problem for the postal authorities. It was first raised in the time from August 6th to 9th, 1920.

More easily, it came about on the 4th of February 1920, that the post offices in the Hultschin country was taken over, and later, the post offices in the district of Feldsberg and Weitra in July of the same year.

With regard to the changeover, the very difficult task confronted the postal authorities after the revolution, of maintaining the service uninterrupted. Above all, it was necessary, especially in the case of the railway post office, to make radical changes. Fortunately, all obstacles were overcome, the car barns were newly built, the necessary staff was set up. By the end of 1920, the post office had 687 remodelled and 24 new mail cars in use.

It was no small task to work up public confidence in the new system, and one can say that it was brilliantly carried out, for the number of lost or damaged parcels is already far below the figure of the prewar period. The increase in the postal tariff was only decided after much consideration, on March 15, 1919; March 15th and August 1st, 1920.

As may be seen by the foregoing, the post office carried through considerable changes in the first year of independence. Only in the year 1920, especially in the second half, did the system settle down to order. For this reason also in this year, for the first time, statistics were issued for the post office, telegraph and telephone systems.

For the first year, statistics were published as in the former Austria, and in order of the former ministry, of February 8, 1905, #3467, the method was set forth, and it was carried out, with few changes by the order of August 8, 1920.

According to this decree, the directors of the post office, presented the minister each year statistical information on the organization and the management of the postal service.

A further duty of the post and telegraph officers lies in the collecting of that statistical material which concerns the performance of the postal service (letter, newspaper and parcel post). This material is laid before the state statistical officer.

The above extract out of the beginning of the report, makes plain that the collection of all postmarks is no easy undertaking. Even if things were not much changed by the revolution, still there is a series of yet unanswered questions, especially in respect to future designations and their postmarks. What cannot be set forth officially must be obtained by philatelic research. Right on the subject was the official report, first given in the year 1921, "A Directory of the Post, Telegraph and Telephone Offices with the Postal Deposit, Train and Telegraph Stations and the Railways Station Post Offices of the Czechoslovak Republic." This rendered philatelic research much more difficult, because at various times boundary regulations became confused and their establishment constitutes a new hindrance.

We see further from this backward glance that until the year 1920, no official supervision over the post office was set up. This Handbook, whose material deals with exactly that period, has stood quite on its own merits so that to its completion all similar work is essential.

POSTAGE STAMPS

Many postage stamps like those of the forerunner states were used, and indeed their use was as follows:

Stamps of Austria and Hungary until February 28, 1919.

Envelopes, postcards and wrappers of Austria and Hungary until October 14, 1919.

Among the population of the Hultschin Lands, the use of stamps of the German Reich continued until February 12, 1920.

Concerning the first appearance of postmarks on the First Czechoslovak Issue, the following dates are given:

Hradcany — December 18, 1918 to April 30, 1921

Newspaper — December 18, 1918

Postage Dues — February 1, 1919

Special Delivery — February 10, 1919

Hradcany Post Cards — February 1919

Legionaire Issue — October 28, 1919 to November 3, 1919

Plebiscite "S. O. 1920" — February 13, 1920 to August 20, 1920
 Hradcany Letter Cards — July 1920
 Dove, Free Republic — June 1, 1920
 Free Republic Postcards — April 1920
 Red Cross Issue — Dec. 15, 1920 to Jan. 14, 1921
 First Airmail Issue — August 1920 to April 30, 1921

Where the end of the time of the issue is not listed, it is because it happened that some values of the issue went out of use at different times. Other than the issues listed here, none have any relation with the postmarks with which this Handbook deals.

SYSTEM OF POSTMARK FORMS

As we have already said in the foreword, it must be seen to be impossible that the subject, set out by a single collector working alone, should be handled with all possible completeness. This circumstance made a division of the material into Part I and Part II necessary.

Although one part is of equal importance with the other, still, the second can only be built on the first, and it requires also a dependable Part I. It has already been pointed out that the Handbook in its present form shall be above all not merely an attempt at answering the general questions, and what is equally important, in the hope that with the description here, even postmarks not included in this book, may be put into their proper place. Considering this possibility, to publish a place or postmark catalogue now would be premature, since it with regard to postmark forms could only be imperfect. To give a mere list of places would be superfluous, because there are at hand already enough official and semi-official lists of that sort which would serve our purpose.

Indebtedness is expressed to the following two works by Jaroslav Nosek, Director in the Post Office, "Topographical Survey Information for the Czech Republic"; and Professor Ernest Pfohl, "Little Place Catalogue of the Czech Republic."

Only when the Handbook scares up the hidden dilettante collectors of this material out of their seclusion and causes them to open up their knowledge, is the point of time reached for the issue of Part II. It lies also in the interest of every postmark collector to add to the completeness of Part I, in order to render possible within the year the appearance of the place and postmark lists.

INTRODUCTION

There are collectors who know no more of their stamps than—place of origin, color, value figure, border—and catalogue value. That is not philately. It consists of more than that.

Even greater demands will be laid upon the collectors of postmarks, for although the postmark is in some respects, much more eloquent than the stamp yet on the other hand, it is more silent. A postmark collector must certainly have for a background, a knowledge of the land and people. Where that is lacking, there also is lacking a proper understanding of the subject, especially when a state has endured a revolution in its way of government, after centuries of its history and decades of philatelic time reckoning. But not only this present period deserves attention, it can be seen to be even more necessary to be instructed in the history and geography of the country in question.

If now within the confines of a philatelic work, these factors are included with a perhaps more than customary emphasis, it is intended only to smooth the way to a better understanding of the material.

THE POSTMARKS

- (A) Common
 - (1) Austrian Postmarks
 - (2) Hungarian Postmarks
 - (3) German Reich Postmarks
- (B) Nationalized Postmarks
 - (1) Austrian Postmarks
 - (2) Hungarian Postmarks
- (C) Renationalized Postmarks
- (D) Uses of Postmarks
- (E) Types of Postmarks
 - (1) Austrian Postmarks
 - (2) Hungarian Postmarks
- (F) Between and Transition Postmarks

(A) Common Postmarks

Corresponding to the "das Postwesen in der Tschecho-Slovakei," wording, the inner organization of the postal system remained unchanged, while places and whole countries had changed overnight their national allegiance. It goes therefore without saying that the complete postal system as standing, was taken over and carried on without any serious changes. This arrangement also extended naturally to the retention of the method of post marking formerly used in the vanished states, at least until the bringing in of their own Czechoslovak postmarks.

The compilation of the material must in the foregoing circumstances always go back to the system in use in Austria and Hungary. Among the Austrian postmarks, a division is made according to the language character (German, Czech, Polish and their combinations), and many more will be gathered together under the general title, "Osterreich Stampel". But, in the territory which went to Czechoslovakia from Hungary, this matter does not come into question, because here only a single language, Hungarian, had been in use on the postmarks.

(1) Austrian Postmarks

The compilation of the material, must in the foregoing base, also include the Czechoslovakian postmarks since, to separate them would require a whole book relating to and laying the groundwork for these postmarks. Often it happens that unusual things are pushed aside, because their explanation is not easy. Even aside from freaks the forms of postmarks constitutes a puzzle. The search for origins and beginnings shows only in rare cases, doubt free results, and almost all literature going deeply into the subject omits these postmarks which lie outside the heading of "Old Austria" (Alt-Osterreich). These irregularities, between the period Old Austria till 1918 cannot be filled out in this book, it must rather remain over for those interested in Austrian post marks. Here we cannot deal with the kinds of postmarks issued in Austria, but only with those which were adapted for use in Czechoslovakia. In this study one must gain the impression that up to the time of issuing their own postmarks, all that went before were used by the post offices, wherever they were on hand. Among them appear some descended from a time when the arrangements of the stamp implements were not yet centralized at Vienna, but was controlled by the local post offices, and they accordingly used the name "Postmaster Postmark." That in these circumstances, was given to the wishes and ideas of the local postmasters, can be well understood. This situation came first after the year 1871.

(To be continued)

Prague Castle



Prague is a beautiful city. The beauty of this city lying on the river Vltava can be described in various ways, by various views and from various points of view. But one fact is indubitable—that the complex of the Prague Castle is really unique, whether we look at its silhouette from afar, or walk through the courtyards, palaces and churches of the castle precincts. The St. Vitus Cathedral stands out most royally from the centre of the complex, it is a gem in itself as regards architecture and artistic ornamentation. The early origins of the Prague Castle reach back into the second half of the 9th century, when there was a Slavonic settlement here, where one of the first church buildings to be constructed was the St. Vitus rotunda in the 10th century. In 973, the Prague Bishopric was founded, while the large bishopric church of St. Vitus was finished round about 1060. After 1344, however, it was replaced by the monumental work of Matthias of Arras and Peter Parler, the magnificent Gothic Cathedral of St. Vitus.

The peoples of Czechoslovakia understand their traditions to be the continuous flow of events in their history, the most significant of which they like to see as a permanent reminder. One of the deepest and most permanent traditions is the St. Wenceslas tradition. St. Wenceslas, a Bohemian Prince who ascended the princely throne in 924 and was treacherously murdered several years later, belongs to the most celebrated characters. (The St. Wenceslas millenium was celebrated in 1929, although later historical research proved that the death of St. Wenceslas occurred in 935-936.) Prince Wenceslas, called St. Wenceslas, does not have his only memorial in the equestrian statue on Wenceslas Square in Prague; there are many other monuments to this ruler over the country. Also in the very heart of the Prague Castle, in the St. Vitus Cathedral, there is a special chapel consecrated to his memory. The St. Wenceslas Chapel, a peak work of the Czech Gothic period, was built by Peter Parler in 1362-1367 at the very spot where the south apse of the St. Wenceslas rotunda stood in the early 10th century. The whole architecture and decoration of the chapel stands as a magnificent proof of the world standard of central European art in the 14th century. The lower part of the chapel is faced with Czech semi-precious stones. The mural paintings which decorate the rest of the walls depict scenes from church life and portraits of historical characters. Above the window sill there is a cycle of Renaissance paintings which show scenes from the life of St. Wenceslas. Although the

visitor's attention will be mainly attracted by the stone tomb of St. Wenceslas, his silver bust and other articles and the chapel decoration, all reminders of the life of St. Wenceslas—including the paintings of figures of Czech patron saints above the altar—are all extremely interesting as regards origin and content. Until quite recently this cycle was considered to have been the work of an unknown master. But patient and profound study of the subject has proved it to be the work of the Master of Litoměřice, whose greatest work had previously been considered to be the altar in the church at Litoměřice, a town to the north of Prague. The content of the cycle is all of secular character, very human and life-like. That is perhaps the reason why one of these scenes, showing St. Wenceslas at work, pressing wine, was chosen for the first stamp of the year's emission "The Prague Castle." Here the Prince is prosaic, human, close to the people—this is the patron of Bohemia without a vestige of cold dignity, the image that will remain alive forever.

The second stamp takes us into the first half of the 18th century. This is also a subject reminding us of famous old traditions inciting national pride. It depicts the Coronation Banner of the Estates, dating from 1723. The front of the standard bears the figure of St. Wenceslas, the lower left part of the stamp shows the motif from the back of the banner. This consists of five emblems—the Bohemian lion in the center, surrounded by the remaining emblems of the Lands of the Czech Crown. When the Czech nobility—the higher and lower nobility, the clergy and the bourgeois of the royal towns—the so-called Third Estate, paid homage to their ruler, they did so beneath their precious banner, which was richly embroidered in silver and gold. Such a standard—irregular in shape, usually having one or two elongated corners—was a symbol and honorary emblem for its owners, a practically inviolable object of honor and glory.

In 1969 it is for the fifth time that Czechoslovakia issued stamps marked "The Prague Castle." It is a tradition only several years old, but already an accepted fact that these stamps form sets of views of the Prague Castle and its most precious cultural-historical monuments. And this set will be further extended every year.

It has become traditional in recent years for the Czechoslovak Postal Authorities to issue stamps to commemorate May 9th as the anniversary of the end of the Second World War, and also as "Liberation Day" from the Nazis. The two stamps issued in 1969 depict a celebrated work of art and pay tribute to Czech sovereignty. One of the stamps shows the Czech coronation Standard of 1723. The other depicts a painting which was among the cultural works assembled in the former seat of the Czech kings. Both stamps have a face value of 3 Kčs., and were engraved by Jindra Schmidt and Ladislav Jirka.

Those who are well informed on Czech history usually speak of the Czechs as the nation of St. Wenceslas, and that might well be considered accurate. The old Wenceslas legend is still very much alive in Czechoslovakia. In the rich history of Czech lands St. Wenceslas has always represented patience, belief in God's justice, and therefore in a better future.

Until not so long ago, the legend was still widespread among the people of Czechoslovakia that the God-loving and valourous Prince Wenceslas (910-929) sleeps with his knights beneath Blaník Mountain in Central Bohemia. And, according to this old legend, when things appear blackest for the Czech nation, the side of the hill will open and the knights will ride forth.

A more modern expression of the respect the citizens of Prague have for the Wenceslas tradition is the magnetism which draws them to the Myslbek monument on Wenceslas Square whenever anything of momentous conse-

quence occurs. Around the monument are the words from the Wenceslas hymn, which has resounded in every period of oppression: "Leave us not or those who follow us to perish."

King Wenceslas was exceptionally religious and diligent in his effort to preserve peace for his nation, like their ruler, were known for their industrious habits.

One may still visit today at Prague Castle and the so-called Wenceslas vineyards which the "Good King" planted and cultivated with his own hands, in order to press out the wine himself with his feet, as recalled on one of the stamps and offer it at mass. This is among the murals of St. Wenceslas Chapel in St. Vitus Cathedral, which stands on the site where Wenceslas founded the first Christian church, and where he was buried in 932.

In the set of five stamps issued on 14 May 1929 Czechoslovakia commemorated the millenium of the death of St. Wenceslas. On the 50 and 60 heller stamps of that set, Scott Nos. 159-160, St. Wenceslas is depicted as King after a portrait by the famous Czech painter Mikolas Ales. Another famous painting, by Felix Jenewein, represents the founding of St. Vitus Cathedral; this is the theme of the 2 Kcs. stamp, Scott No. 161. On the 2 and 5 Kcs. stamps, Scott Nos. 162 and 163, is shown a reproduction of the painting, "St. Wenceslas Martyred," by Josef Manes.

For centuries the Chapel has been the goal of visitation for pilgrims and Czech patriots, for there may be seen the Crown of St. Wenceslas, pictured on the Czech commemorative sheet issued in 1966, Scott No. 1390. The decoration of the Chapel was entrusted to the Master of Litoměřice. He was the greatest artist in Bohemia at the turn of the 15th century, when Gothic began to be replaced by the Renaissance.

The portrait of St. Wenceslas shown on the Czech Standard, previously mentioned, represents his blessing on the ruler who has just assumed the throne. Like the Crown Jewels, the coronation banners are kept in St. Wenceslas Chapel at Prague Castle. This stamp pictures in the lower left corner the coats-of-arms of the Czech Lands; in the center, the Czech Lion; upper right and left, the arms of Upper and Lower Lusatia, and lower right, the arms of the Bishop of Olomouc. On both stamps is the inscription "Prazsky Hrad" (Prague Castle).

The Czechoslovak Central Administration of Communications issued a special-occasion series of postage stamps "The Prague Castle" on May 9, 1969: 3 Kcs—The Prague Castle—The St. Wenceslas Chapel—The Master of Litoměřice, 1511—an ornamentation detail. Colors: yellow, red, blue, black-brown, gold. Design and engraving by Jindra Schmidt.

3 Kcs—The Prague Castle—The Coronation Banner of the Estates, 1723. Colors: black, red, green, silver, gold. Design and engraving by Ladislav Jirka.

The stamps were printed by the Communications Publishing House in Prague, in five colors by the die stamping method from flat plates, in sheaves of 4 stamps each. The size of the pictorial part of the stamp is 40 by 50 mm.

Together with this emission, first-day covers were printed: designed and engraved by Jindra Schmidt.

NEWS OF MEMBERS

Double congratulations to Hartley H. Smith for not only winning a first place at FINPEX in the General Foreign category for his showing of "Czechoslovak Army in Britain Cancels," but also he won a first place in the topicals for his "Stamps on Stamps." Incidentally member Smith is one of the earliest members of the society with membership number 15.

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