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S.P.A. Branch 284

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No. 6, Whole No. 381

The Urban Import Foodstuffs Tax of Czechoslovakia

By Viktor Indra, Olomouc, Czechoslovakia

Translated by Jane Sterba

In this article I am furnishing additional philatelic information pertaining to the original article, "The Urban Import Foodstuffs Tax of Czechoslovakia," written by SCP member William Ittel. This article appeared in two consecutive issues of the Specialist—June and September, 1976 (issues No. 361 and 362).

These stamps were issued by the Czechoslovak Postal Administration for the purpose of collecting an over-all foodstuff tax. I shall endeavor, in this somewhat lengthy format, to provide this information in order that philatelists can improve their knowledge of these stamps.

First of all, it is necessary to clearly present how—when and for what purpose these tax stamps were issued.

The Ministry of Finance delegated the Postal System to assess a special over-all foodstuff tax on parcels containing foods, as indicated by the sender, on the declaration form affixed to all parcels. The tax was collected by the post office, in the city of delivery, either Prague, Brno or Bratislava. The tax was assessed according to the weight of the parcel.

A better understanding can be obtained by reviewing the following paragraph appearing in the Postal Journal No. 8, dated Feb. 2, 1925.

Postal Ordinance

#11. The Collection of Taxes by Postal Authorities assessed upon foodstuffs.

- (1) Under an agreement entered into with the Minister of Finance, the delivery offices of the postal authorities located in Praha, Brno, and Bratislava will begin collecting an over-all tax, effective March 1, 1925, and all parcels containing foods, as so declared on the declaration forms affixed the shipped parcel. This foodstuff tax will be assessed according to weight, and is as follows: A package weighing up to 5 kilo—1 Kcs. Over 5 kilo to and including 15 kilo—2 Kc. Over 15 kilo and including 25 kilo 3 Kcs, regardless of the type of foodstuffs contained in the parcel.
- (2) The over-all tax will be assessed by providing a special stamp, issued by the Postal Administration, as covered in the above paragraph #1. The postal clerk accepting the parcel, shall affix the tax stamp on the reverse side of the bill of lading (or parcel card) in such a manner that half of the stamp will be affixed to each half of the bill of lading so

that when the bill of lading is torn in half, the tax stamp will be effectively cancelled.

- (3) Until the final over-all tax stamps are printed, the Postal Authorities will use an overprinted postage due stamp. The over-all tax stamp will be a horizontally printed stamp. In the middle of the stamp will be printed the following text: "Pausalovana Potravni Dan." In the upper left and lower right corners the printed values of the stamp will appear, while in the upper right and lower left corners, the KC will be printed.
- (4) The stamp for the over-all tax is assessed on foodstuff parcel under the regulations listed under the heading of "Payments and Additional Balance (or postage) due."
- (5) If the Post Office accepting the parcels so wish, they can also list the contents on the parcel itself, as well as on the bill of lading.

The Postal Journal also informs us the purpose, cause and aspect of the new additional tax stamps, issued for collecting the foodstuff tax, but I think that it is unnecessary to explain this further. I would like to advise that these stamps were perforated.

During this period of time, old issued stamps were successively overprinted, specifically the 25, 250 and 500 hal values.

Ordinance

Ordinance #20/1930. New Issues—Foodstuff tax stamps.

- (1) The 1 Kc and 2 Kc foodstuff tax stamps which were overprinted with the original additional tax, were removed from circulation. New stamps have been issued and printed in a new definitive design.
- (2) The new stamps are printed from a heavily engraved steel plate, printed on white paper with red ink. The printing plate creates a horizontal stamp, 20x30 mm in size. On the upper edge across the top of the stamp printed in white letters is "Ceskoslovensko," while on the lower left and right edge (or area) of the stamp is a 3-line white printing of

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"Pausalovana potravni dan." Printed on this unusual stamp are two white, round shields, in which a figure is printed (in color) which designates the value of the stamp. Between the two shields "KC" is printed onto the white horizontal area. The background area of the stamp has an etched design of linden leaves. The perforation of the stamp is 34%.

(3) Supplies of the former foodstuff tax stamps have been depleted.

At this point I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the flat printing of the size of the stamp as listed in the Postal Journal is not exactly correct, as I measured $19\frac{3}{4} \times 29\frac{1}{2}$ mm, therefore the stamp size varies. The plate number appears beneath the 99th stamp on a sheet of the stamps. I have a 1 Kc. value stamp, with plate #1. It may also be possible to find a color variation, from light red to a brownish red hue. The characteristic design on the first steel plate used in printing these stamps are somewhat narrow about the edge, Fig. #1. My own stamps are perforated exactly 13%. I have never encountered stamps with perforations of $13\frac{1}{2}$, which are referred to in the article which appeared in the Specialist. At present, I only have the 1 Kc stamp in my collection. In later years (the exact date is unknown to me) it was necessary to print additional stamps for both values. The Postal Journal does not refer to these later printings. Since these stamps were used for internal domestic service only, they were considered "odd stamps," and were not regarded as important issues. The stamps of later printings can be readily distinguished. They have a wider margin and are of a different dimension being perforated $12\frac{1}{2}$ mm instead of 13%.



Protectorat

As you know, Czechoslovak postage rates during the period of the German occupation (protectorat) remained the same, Dec. 15, 1939, thru May 20, 1940. The over-all foodstuff tax stamps remained valid until a later date. The Postal Journal does not mention this fact, although I have a bill of lading with the 2 Kc stamp, cancelled in Prague (Praha 22) dated 10.XII.1940.

According to William Ittel's article (Page 110—figure 3—Specialist No. 362) 2 stamps were issued for the foodstuff tax, during the Protectorate period, one stamp having a 1 Kc value, while the other a 2 Kc value. A 2 Kc value stamp was not issued during the Protectorate period. Referring to Postal Journal #43, dated 9.8.1940, the following paragraph appears.

Postal Rates

The change and issuance of a new class of postal rates.

III—Stamps issued for various purposes.

Stamps with a 1 Kc value, which are to be used to settle special taxes applied to parcels containing foodstuffs was issued and corrected to adapt and accomodate the valid language. The design of this stamp is a large horizontal format. It was printed with the use of a rotary steel engraving in a deep red color. The grafic design and arrangement of the stamp is the same as the former, original Urban foodstuff tax stamp. Due to an insufficient demand—the 2 Kc value stamp will not be issued.

It would be very interesting if a bill of lading could be located, with both of the smaller postage rates (1 Kc), one issued by the Czechoslovak Postal

Authorities, as well as the one issued under the German Protectorte. To date, I have not seen such a combination, but theoretically it is possible.

Due to the fact that on June 6, 1942, the collection of a tax on parcels containing foodstuffs was abolished, a new stamp was circulated for a period of 18 months. We again will refer to the Postal Journal #27, dated June 20, 1942, which issues the following.

Abolishment Foodstuff Tax Stamps

A government order issued 28 May, 1942, No. 186- Sb. From the 1st of June, 1942, the validity of collecting a foodstuff tax has been abolished. By this order, the 1 Kc foodstuff tax stamp (as referred to in the Postal Journal #43b/1940 III,1) is being withdrawn from sale. The affected post offices will surrender their remaining stock of foodstuff stamps by the end of July of this year, to the Postal Economic Agricultural Center in Prague and in Brno.

Slovensko



At this time, it is necessary to mention the foodstuff tax of Slovakia. At present, I do not have any copies of the official Postal Journal from which to substantiate and evaluate the Slovak foodstuff tax stamps.

I presume, after a lapse of some period of time following the secession of Slovakia from the Czechoslovak Republic, March 14, 1939, that the balance of the Czechoslovak foodstuff tax stamps which remained in the postal stock of the post offices in Slovakia, and they continued to be valid.

I also presume that following the printing and issuance of Slovak postage stamps, an additional tax stamp was issued 1939-1940. The value of these were 1 Kc and 2 Kc. There was a 2 line overprint in a metallic blue color. The overprinted 'Pausalovana/Potravni Dan' was printed over and obscured the printed word "Doplatne." I do not have the 1 Kc stamp and have never seen one. I have the 2 Kc stamp in a mint block of 4 stamps—which is from the left hand corner of a full sheet having plate #1, Fig. 2. I do not have

and have not had the opportunity to view the stamps referred to as Fig. 4. (Page 110—Specialist No. 362).

It is my opinion that Fig. 5 (the illustration appearing on page 110—Specialist) is an illustration of a foodstuff tax stamp printed in red/blue hue with a black printed text on a white paper which was issued before 1925 for parcel post use. I have the stamp in my collection—cancelled—PODOL . . / C.S. . . which I think is Podoli u Prahy/C.S.P., but because my stamp is so very poorly cancelled, it is impossible to clearly decipher.

All of these stamps were issued by the Postal Authorities and they should have been listed, in my opinion, in the stamp catalogues as stamps. I base this on the following facts. The Ministry of Posts issued these stamps. The Postal Journal published facts about the issuance of these stamps and the Post Offices used these stamps for many years. The Postal Service collected the over-all foodstuff tax by accepting and transporting parcels as well as having them registered. Postal employees affixed these stamps upon the bill of lading of parcels containing foodstuffs which were being sent to the indicated cities described in the Postal Journal governing the Postal System. The stamps were cancelled with an official post office cancellation and the proper tax collected from the addressee. It is therefore obvious, in my opinion, and should be clearly understood and accepted that these foodstuff tax stamps are and were postage stamps. We are not only dealing with the individual tax—we must consider the delivery of the parcel and the postal handling of the parcel.

We know that the Postal Systems of many governments offer the public various types of postal service and at times these services require various and additional payments, which do not seem to be actually connected with the postal administration revenue. You can study at random various stamp catalogues and can readily verify these or similar issues that provide for additional fees for transporting consignments that do not have a joint or common purpose. Herewith are some examples. Bulgaria has additional stamps benefiting postal employees, Zu. 1-22. Germany (under French domination) had a 2 fenik additional stamp NOTOPPER BERLIN, or WOHNUNGSBAU. Germany also had a special army stamp covering packages and airmail letter and field posts. Tunisia had a palm and Insel Post. Germany had accounting stamps (#11-4), all war stamps tax in Roumania, and so on. Under the German Protectorate you have Terezin stamps. Greece assessed a tax stamp benefiting Red Cross. Italy has had numerous delivery stamps. Yugoslavia had various delivery stamps and additional tax stamps. I am sure you are all familiar with Austria's newspaper and accounting stamps. Accounting stamps were issued in Holland. Roumania issued a TIMBRU DE AJUTOR as well as surtaxes upon stamps. Turkey issued stamps benefiting the airforce and other groups.

Therefore, it is very unusual that the postage stamps which were used and issued between 1925-1942 by the Czechoslovak Post Office do not appear in stamp catalogues. Another interesting matter is that in the event that the addressee did not pay the tax to the post office, the parcel would not be delivered, and would have been returned to the sender. He in turn would have to pay the tax stamp in order to obtain return of the parcel.

Even today, the Czechoslovak Postal authorities collect various fees from those that make use of the postal system, and these fees have no connection with the post office.

(1) When mailing a letter or package to a foreign country, it must pass through customs. The sender pays the post office employee for the cost

of the mailing which is determined by the weight of the package. Then the sender must also pay an additional 5 Kc fee as a customs fee—but collection should be the duty of a fiscal officer.

The post office employee affixes the stamp to the shipment form covering the postal rates as well as the special 5Kcs fee for customs control. All stamps are then cancelled.

(2) An addressee receiving a consignment from a foreign country, which has passed through the customs office, must also pay a fee for the customs inspection. This is also paid to a postal employee, when it is actually a customs office service. After payment of the fee for the stamp, the post office accounts for the tax stamps and all those collected fees are then accounted for and turned over to a fiscal customs office.

This is my own view and own opinion of the overall matter. If the postal authorities would per chance decide to establish another more convenient method of accounting for this type of non-postal service (possibly by issuing a new additional tax stamp) the results would be that the old tax stamps issued by the postal authorities would still be part of the post office stock inventory of stamps, regardless that they were originally issued for the collection of a non-postal fee.

Several so-called "philatelic experts" informed me that the over-all food-stuff tax stamps are not "stamps," let alone postage stamps, although they could not offer an explanatory rebuttle to my personal view points. They referred to them as fiscal labels.

I would be very happy to read and receive more information from philatelists about this theme and subject.

Today we are dealing with rare and scarce stamps which should not be missing (even in the cancelled form) in any specialized Czechoslovak collection.

Editor's Gazette

By Jane Sterba, 6624 Windsor Ave., Berwyn, Ill. 60402

PRAGA-78—PRAGUE TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS.

In our April, 1978, Specialist I reported and announced that final travel plans would appear in this June Specialist. Letters, together with a copy of the article which appeared in the June Specialist were sent to Czechoslovak, Pan American and Lufthansa Airlines as well as Weber Travel Agency, Berwyn, Illinois and SCP member F. B. Ales of Ales Travel Agency, New York, N. Y. Here are their responses—select your own travel plans.

Remember hotel rooms will be at a premium during Praga-78. Make your plans and reservations early.

LUFTHANSA AIRLINES—Chicago to Prague Apex Fare round trip \$488.00; New York to Prague Apex Fare round trip \$425.00. Above price includes U. S. departure tax. Apex Fare 14-45 days, must be booked and paid 45 days in advance, prior to departure.

CZECHOSLOVAK AIRLINES—Leave September 4th (Labor Day) on an Apex 14/45 Day ticket. Chicago to Prague, round trip, \$442.00; New York to Prague, round trip, \$379.00. U. S. departure tax included. Contact Dr. J. J. Matejka, Jr., 176 West Adams Street, Chicago, Ill. 60603, or Metropolitan Travel, 7034 West Cermak Rd., Berwyn, Ill. 60402.

PAN AMERICAN AIRLINES—Pan Am offers the lowest fare ever to Prague—their new Super Apex fare is only \$439 round trip from Chicago (\$375 from New York) in September, plus \$3.00 U. S. departure tax). To obtain

this special low fare you must reserve and purchase your ticket at least 30 days before departure. There are convenient connecting flights from Chicago to Pan Am's direct service from New York to Prague. Pan Am's through flight leaves New York on Sunday and returns from Prague on Tuesdays: Flight #66 Lv. New York 8:45 p.m., Ar. Prague 11:25 a.m.; Flight #67 Lv. Prague 8:50 a.m. Ar. New York 2:25 p.m. Can be booked either through a travel agent or directly with Pan Am.

ALESH TRAVEL AGENCY—SCP member F. B. Ales, Pres., 1371 First Avenue, near 74th Street, New York, N. Y. Can arrange your flight to Prague on all International Airlines. Lehigh 5, 4944.

WEBER TRAVEL AGENCY—Mr. Jerry Rabas has arranged and blocked-off plane reservations on Lufthansa and Czechoslovak Airlines, as well as hotel rooms in the Olympic Hotel in Prague. From Chicago to Prague via Lufthansa, departing Sept. 6th, returning Sept. 21st—Apex Fare round trip, \$488 (including U. S. departure tax). Hotel accommodations: \$278.50 per person (dbl. occupancy) 14 nights, breakfast and dinner; \$341.50 per person (single) 14 nights, breakfast and dinner. Via Czechoslovak Airlines, depart Sept. 7th, return Sept. 21st. Apex fare, round trip \$442.00 (including U.S. departure tax). Hotel, \$258.50 per person (dbl.) 13 nights, breakfast and dinner. \$317 per person (single) 13 nights, breakfast and dinner. New York to Prague via Lufthansa, depart Sept. 6th, return Sept. 21st. \$425 (including tax). Hotel: \$278.50 per person (double) 14 nights, breakfast and dinner; \$341.50 per person (single) 14 nights, breakfast and dinner. New York to Prague via Czechoslovak Airlines, Depart Sept. 7th, return Sept. 21st. \$379 (including tax). Hotel: \$258.50 per person (double) 13 nights, breakfast and dinner; \$317 per person (single) 13 nights, breakfast and dinner. Transfers available in Prague from Airport to Hotel \$3 per person one way. Hotel: Olympic, Praha 8, Invalidovna, Sokolovska 138. Modern 20 story hotel, 8 years old, all rooms with showers. Apex fares, 14/45 days, must be booked and paid 45 days in advance, prior to departure. This ticket valid only on flights and dates shown. Reservations cannot be changed, restrictions for refund are \$50 or 10% of fare, whichever is higher. We recommend you purchase Cancellation and Interruption Insurance. Tours of Prague and other parts of Czechoslovakia can be arranged. Write, 6805 W. Cermak Rd., Berwyn, Ill. 60402, phone 312-749-1333 (suburban), 242-1512 or 1513 (Chicago).

ANNOUNCEMENTS REGARDING PRAGA-78.

SCP member Bernard A. Hennig has been appointed as a member of the Praga International Jury. This news was sent to Dr. James J. Matejka, Jr., U. S. Commissioner to Praga-78, via telegram. Mr. Hennig is well-known in the philatelic world, having been on many international juries, the latest of which was in Stockholm. He is now President of the Germany Philatelic Society as well as a member of some fifty-six other philatelic organizations throughout the world. The announcement also stated that fifty-five gold medal winners from the U.S.A. will participate in the 7,500 frames exhibition.

Gosta Hedbom, our SCP member residing in Stockholm, is the Praga-78 Commissioner from Sweden.

The outstanding qualifications that these two gentlemen possess will assist them in fulfilling their duties in their respectively appointed positions.

PRAGA-78 LUNCHEON-RECEPTION.

Plans are being formulated to hold a joint Luncheon-Reception of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately and Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Gt.

Britain during the Praga-78 Philatelic Exhibition in Prague. A cordial invitation is extended to all members of both Societies to plan to attend this function.

"Where and When" will be announced in our next Specialist. Arrangements have been made with Mr. Miller's approval, that the September Specialist will be ready for mailing shortly after August 1st. To be on the safe side, those planning on attending Praga-78 could (if they so wish) send me an airmail postal card or an airmail letter-gram (which is sold by all our Postal Systems) informing me where you will be staying in Prague. This would enable me to advise you "Where and When" the reception will be held, if perhaps the finalized plans do not arrive prior to our Press deadline.

I will notify Kay Goodman and Yvonne King in Great Britain, both of whom are members of both Societies, as well as SCP member Gosta Hedbom in Sweden of final plans, by airmail letter as soon as I myself will be advised from Prague, of arrangements made.

Please feel free to write to me if I can be of any help to you prior to the Praga-78 Philatelic Exhibition. I personally am looking forward to meeting many of you in Prague and am also excited to greet my philatelic friends of many years standing.

TWO PHILATELIC REQUESTS.

Our Society has received two requests from Czechoslovak philatelists interested in establishing a philatelic exchange of U. S. stamps for Czechoslovak stamps. Those members interested please contact either or both of the following fellow stamp collectors.

They are: Richard Reznicek, P. O. Box 515, Praha 1, Czechoslovakia—corresponds in English, German or French; and, Karel Kunc, Kostelec nad Ceske Lesy #842, Okr. Kolin 28163 Czechoslovakia.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

Last month's SPECIALIST, under "Editor's Gazette" included a short report under the heading "A COINCIDENCE." I'm afraid we have a bit of confusion brewing which I'd like to correct. The reported fact that the Skalice issue complete, original gum, rare, with the high values signed by Mr. Bloch sold at auction for \$90.00 is most credible. Unfortunately, the report marvels at the coincidence that "our March, 1978 SPECIALIST presented you with the background story of these stamps sold . . ." Lest any of our members rush off to the nearest dealer and purchase the 1945 Skalice "stamps" for anything like the \$90 mentioned, let me point out that the stamps auctioned off for \$90 by Harmer Rooke & Co., were almost certainly NOT the items written about in the March SPECIALIST, but rather the 14-stamp SKALICE (or SKALICA) set of 1918, which is listed in Pofis as well as Michel. Though the pedigree of both "local" issues is somewhat beclouded, the 1918 set has gained considerably more recognition, and hence also more cash value than the 1945 item. Some say that old frauds are better than new frauds—, but that's another story. But for the moment, all I want our readers to realize is that the "coincidence" is merely that there are two "SKALICE" issues, which are not to be confused.

—Henry Hahn

Editor's Note: Richard Gray telephoned me regarding the above matter, prior to a personal letter on the same subject from Paul Sturman, which was followed by the above "Letter to the Editor."

Thank you, gentlemen, very much for this correction and I appreciate the time and interest you took to notify me of this error.

WOLFGANG FRITZSCHE ANNOUNCES.

The following announcement was received from SCP member W. Fritzsche. "A new book was recently received by me from Germany, "C.S.R. Revenues and Railway Stamps." Martin Erler is the editor of the 210 page book. It is based upon a manuscript by the late Rev. Severin Gottsmich of Austria and compares with the Ittel-Burianek catalogue of Czech documentary (only) stamps. Besides the documentary revenue stamps as listed by Ittel-Burianek, this book issued in 1976, also lists about 30 other types of tax and revenue stamps as well as several different RR fee stamps for different railway services. The price is \$12.00 and can be obtained through American Revenue Association, c/o Gerald M. Abrams, 3840 Lealma Ave., Claremont, Calif. 91711.

VISIT MITCH'S STAMP BOOTH NO. 103 AT CAPEX-78.

Arrangements have been made with Mitch's Coin and Stamp Shop, who will be attending Capex-78 in dealer's booth No. 103, to display our Society's cachet covers. During the exhibition Terry and Mitch will endeavor to promote the sale of our Society's cachet covers.

Mitch's Coin and Stamp Shop handles the largest variety of coins, stamps and books on stamp collecting in the entire West suburban—Chicago area. They are located at 6333 Cermak Road, Berwyn, Illinois 60402.

On behalf of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately, our sincere and heartfelt appreciation for your kindness in agreeing to assist in promoting our Society's cachet covers at Capex-78 without accepting any reimbursement for your services. Members please plan to stop at Mitch and Terry's Booth No. 103 during Capex-78.

CAPEX-78—JUNE 17th—CONVENTION-MEETING, AND LUNCHEON.

A reminder that Saturday, June 17th, we will meet at the Benes Tavern Inn in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The address to remember is 392 Eglinton Ave., West (Eglinton and Avenue Road).

An interesting film, provided under the cooperation of Mr. Rabas, of Weber Travel Agency, Berwyn, Illinois, will be shown at part of our program and our forthcoming visit to Prague and PRAGA-78.

Remember I shall be staying at the Carlton Inn, phone 461-363-6961, if I may be of any assistance. Please refer back to your May Specialist for further notice regarding meeting at CAPEX-78. Looking forward to meeting and seeing you all.

PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENT.

Dominick J. Riccio has accepted the President's appointment to serve as Editor of our philatelic journal. I am sure Dominick will do a very fine job.

At this time I would like to express my appreciation for being given the opportunity to serve as our Society's Editor these past two years. I have felt honored to serve in this position, and hope that you all have been satisfied with all my efforts. I have tried to perform my services to the best of my ability.

I have assured Dominick that I will continue to write an article for the SPECIALIST, and the column "Editor's Gazette" will appear as the "President's Gazette."

The words "THANK YOU" seem inadequate in conveying my appreciation for all the help and assistance I have received.

In closing may I, as well as Joe, wish you and yours a very healthy, happy summer holiday. May we meet at Capex-78 and in Prague for Praga-78.

Sincerely, Jane Sterba

Photo-Offset Lithography

This article originally appeared in the Philatelic Bulletin Australia Post, December 1977. The title was "Australian Paintings Series \$10 stamp depicting "Coming South"—printed by Photo-Offset Lithography. Author S. J. Cope, F.A.I.A., (Dip.) Adv. Certificate (R.M.I.T.), A.C.T.T., Teacher in Advertising Press and Print Production, R.M.I.T.

During the past 10-15 years, most of the world's stamps have been printed by the offset printing process. Realizing that this process is a minor mystery to the average stamp collector, we are here reprinting the article which was drawn to my attention by SCP member George Kobylka who considers this to be one of the best articles written on this theme in many a year. It explains the intricacy of this printing process in words that the average stamp collector can understand.

J. S.

In the past, most Australian stamps have been printed by either the photogravure or engraved plate reproduction methods.

These two methods belong, in reality, to one specific printing process—the "intaglio," or "below-the-surface" method of reproduction—the essential difference between the two methods being the manner in which the image is placed on the image-carrier (or printing plate). Photogravure uses photographic transfer and chemical etching, whilst engraved plates are hand engraved.

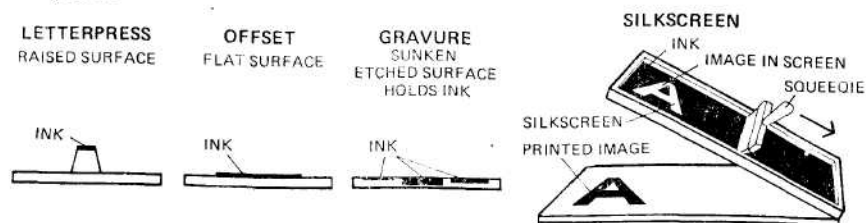
The intaglio process is only one of four major printing processes widely used today—each with a distinctively different preparation principle, but all four having a common end-purpose. The basic principle of all printing is to reproduce multiple copies of an "original" onto paper or other materials such as tinplate, fabric, plastics, etc., using two broad stages:

1. PREPARATION—the original image transferred to an image-carrier;
2. REPRODUCTION—the transfer of the image from the image-carrier to the printed surface, as many times as required, using ink and pressure.

The essential differences between the four major printing processes lie in the type of image-carriers used, and the means by which the image transfer is made.

Each process is defined by the nature of the image-carrier, or type of printing plate produced from the "original copy." These image-carriers have the following characteristics:

1. INTAGLIO, or GRAVURE—"below-the-surface" plates. Both photogravure and engraved plates have the image incised INTO the plate surface.
2. RELIEF, or LETTERPRESS—"above-the-surface" plates. The image areas are high, with the non-image areas at a lower level (a rubber stamp is a relief process). This is the only process which prints directly from type, and has been the conventional method of printing used for over 500 years.



3. STENCIL, or SCREEN PROCESS—"through-the-surface" screens. Image areas are holes in either hand-applied lacquer or film emulsion affixed to a fine-gauge fabric or metal screen. Ink forced through these openings reproduces the shapes onto the printed surface.
4. PLANOGRAPHIC, or LITHOGRAPHY—"on-the-surface" plates. Both the image and the non-image areas are on the same plane. The transfer of an image from flat plates to printed surface is achieved by a basic principle of chemistry—"grease and water do not readily mix" (this will be further explained a little later).

Because of the wide diversity of printing requirements—such as sizes, quantities, colors, surfaces and materials—and the economies which can be affected using particular processes for specific types of work, each process holds an advantage over the others in certain categories of printing.

This does not mean that there is a clearly defined category of printing for each process. On the contrary, many print jobs can be handled economically, and with similar end results, by more than one process. Letterpress and lithography compete for much of the commercial printed matter; and gravure and lithography can both reproduce, with a high degree of fidelity, long-run, high-speed color printing.

Lithography was chosen to print Tom Roberts' "Coming South" as in this instance it was able to more precisely reproduce the very fine detail in the painting.

The Birth of "Lithography"

A Bohemian, Alois Senefelder (1771-1834), invented what was to become lithography, in 1798. As a youth in Munich, Senefelder had ambitions to become an actor, but found that he was more successful at play-writing than acting.

Lacking funds to pay for the printing of his plays by the conventional method, he experimented to find a printing method that he could personally employ.

Senefelder's first attempts were with copper plates. Firstly coating a plate with an acid-resisting compound, he wrote his characters in reverse into the coated surface, down to the bare metal. When treated with acid, the exposed plate was etched below the surface—the result being an engraved, reverse-reading, below-the-surface image.

Reverse writing meant many mistakes and so Senefelder searched for a quick-drying varnish which he could use to paint over these errors; he eventually developed a home-made mixture of wax, soap, lampblack and water which proved satisfactory.

The expense of the copper plates, however, made this printing method impractical to the impoverished Senefelder. Further experimentation with inexpensive Bavarian limestone as a substitute for copper plates, eventually had success—but, like many momentous inventions—it was discovered completely by accident.

Needing to write a laundry list, and having no pen or paper available at the time, Senefelder wrote the list with the "correction fluid" onto a freshly-ground stone. A little later, being curious, he poured a dilute solution of nitric acid over the stone. Within a few minutes the acid etched the uninked surface of the stone, leaving the inked letters in slight relief. Carefully inking the raised letters he obtained an excellent transfer of the image onto paper—but in reverse (or mirror image).

For a time he successfully used this method to reproduce his plays—drawing the letters on a flat, ground stone in reverse. After he was finished with

the stone, it could be ground flat and used over and over again—a decided saving in money! Further experiments in trying to find a better method of placing an image on stone than laborously writing in reverse, led to the principle of lithography as we know it today (Senefelder preferred to call it “chemical printing”).

The breakthrough came because of an order to reprint a book, the original of which had a number of illustrations reproduced on insert sheets from copper engravings—and these engravings were available to him.

In an effort to overcome the long, tedious job of copying these illustrations by hand in reverse, Senefelder inked one of the copper engravings with his “correction fluid” and pulled a proof of this engraving onto paper. Carefully placing this proof on a clean lithographic stone, he transferred the inked image, using considerable pressure. The design on the stone was clean, sharp and a mirror image of the original. He allowed this to dry to a hard finish.

Now, placing the stone on the bed of his press, Senefelder wet the entire surface with a solution of water and gum. Being naturally porous, the stone retained a thin film of water on those surfaces not covered with the inked design—the design image, being composed of a fatty compound (wax and water), repelled the water. Then over the whole surface of the stone he passed a leather roller covered with his “correction fluid” which was now being used as a greasy ink.

The design completely accepted the ink, but the moisture covered, non-image areas remained clean—rejecting the ink. Placing a sheet of paper over the stone, Senefelder found that the normal impression through the press resulted in a reproduction as good as the original copper plate could have achieved—and the image on the paper was not in reverse.

Senefelder had discovered how to write or draw illustrations directly onto a transfer paper, and to transfer this “artwork” onto a limestone surface. He had also discovered that by using a water roller over the surface of the stone, and then an ink roller, he would only place ink on the image area—which could then be transferred to paper by pressure. This speeded up his work, reduced the incidence of error caused by reverse-writing and eliminated the etching process.

Lithography had been discovered—the word originating from two Greek derivations . . . “lithos” meaning STONE; and “graphein” meaning TO WRITE—literally meaning “stone writing” or “writing from stone.”

The principle of lithography remains the same today as it was on the day of its discovery—“the ability to transfer a selected image from a completely flat surface is achieved by the chemical fact that grease and water do not readily mix.”

Admittedly, techniques have changed. Thin metal plates have replaced the Bavarian limestones. Aluminum is the most commonly used, but other materials such as paper, plastic coatings, acetate, zinc, copper, chromium and stainless steel are also used in the making of plates.

The commercial method of transferring an original image onto the plate is now fully photographic instead of by the use of a transfer paper (although this is still used by artists for their limited editions known as “lithographs”). Modern ink, plate, printing press and photographic technology has pushed lithography to the forefront of the graphic reproduction processes.

The Artists' Years

It did not take the art world long to discover lithography's value as an art medium. Here was a reproduction method ideally suited to the reproduction of any number of copies of an artist's work—inexpensively, and without any deviation from the original.

The artist could draw the original in the fatty inks used by Senefelder and transfer this work directly to a lithographic stone. From this stone many exact copies could be reproduced using the "grease and water" principle. Lithography became a medium of direct creative expression.

Thousands of beautiful lithographs were produced by the great nineteenth century contemporary artists. Probably the most famous artist in the field of lithographs was Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec whose famous posters of the Moulin Rouge and Paris "night life" were mainly lithographs and were the forerunner of modern graphic arts.

Towards the end of the nineteenth-century, lithography as an art medium seemed to lose favor—probably because commercial lithography, at that time, became a viable and economical process for graphic reproduction. Today, however, the art of lithographs has been rediscovered, and many modern artists are again using lithography as a creative art medium.

The Commercial Development

Four factors were instrumental in the development of lithography into a major commercial printing process. These were:

1. the invention of photography;
2. the use of thin, flexible metal plates instead of the heavy, rigid limestones;
3. the advent of the rotary press; and
4. the introduction of the third or "offset" cylinder.

The flexibility of photography for transferring the "original" image onto a plate meant quicker, sharper, more accurate and better controlled plate images. Also, photography led to the development of the half-tone screen which meant that the printer could reproduce illustrations with a tonal range—such as a photograph.

The use of thin, flexible plates attached to the cylinders of rotary presses increased the speed and output enormously.

But, probably the most important single factor in making lithography what it is today, was the introduction of the third or "blanket" cylinder—something which is unique to lithography. Up to this time, lithography was a "direct" method of printing—that is, the paper came into direct contact with the image-carrier for the transfer of ink. Continuing friction between image-carrier and paper, due to the pressure being applied in order to transfer the image, meant that the image-carrier had a limited life before the surface image became worn and unusable. The third cylinder overcame this problem and introduced the term "offset" to the process.

The conventional lithographic press now has three cylinders as part of its basic printing unit:

1. the **PLATE CYLINDER**—the one to which the thin, metal image-carrier is affixed. The plate is "right-reading," not in reverse;
2. the **BLANKET CYLINDER**—a soft, rubber-covered fabric is wrapped around a cylinder which comes into direct contact with the plate. The inked image from the plate is transferred onto the blanket by this contact—this is known as "offsetting." One of the purposes of the blanket is to absorb much of the water which is also transferred from the non-image surfaces of the plate. The soft surface of the blanket applies the minimum of friction to the plate surface, thus reducing the wear factor and increasing plate life;
3. the **IMPRESSION CYLINDER**—the paper moves between the blanket and impression cylinders, transferring the inked image from the blanket to the paper by the pressure exerted by the impression cylinder.

The fact that the final printed surface does not come into direct contact

with the plate has given lithography a fringe benefit that has become one of its greatest strengths—the capability of the printing on hard surfaces such as tinfoil, plastics, etc. Before this, paper labels were used.

If tinfoil were to be printed direct by contact with a metal printing plate, the problem of extreme friction between metal surfaces would arise—and the life of a printing plate would be almost zero. The fact that a sheet of tinfoil can be passed between the soft blanket cylinder and the impression cylinder—picking up its printed image from the blanket—means no direct contact with the printing plate, no friction and, therefore, no wear. All tinfoil printing, such as drink and food cans, are printed by lithography as a flat sheet, and formed into cans after printing.

Two other printing-unit factors of lithography must also be mentioned. These are the ink and water systems. Both the ink and water are transferred to the plate by a separate series of rollers. Those transferring the ink are usually either natural or synthetic rubber; the water rollers are encased in a felt-like material, or with a cellulose-based paper cover.

Each of the printing processes uses inks especially made to suit that particular process. Offset inks are compounded to suit the offset printing process, keeping the “grease and water” principle well in view. The inks used for lithographic printing must be able to withstand the reaction of the press’s water system, known as the “fountain solution,” which they encounter on the dampened printing plate. Ideally, the ink should not emulsify (that is, absorb any of the fountain solution). Also, offset inks should not break down and combine with the fountain solution on the non-print areas of the plate. Either of these two situations would tend to impair image sharpness, and the density, color or drying qualities of the ink.

The function of the water system or fountain solution is to furnish a mildly acidic wetting agent to the plate surface during the press run, keeping the non-print areas of the printing plate free from ink. The fountain solution is made up of distilled water plus a number of additives, such as gum arabic and several mild acids. A small amount of detergent may be added to assist in keeping the non-print plate surfaces free of ink.

Offset Press Development

From the single unit, sheet fed, printed-one-side type of offset press (still

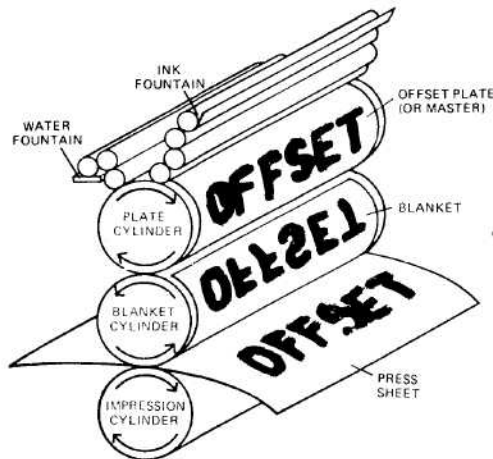


Fig. 1.

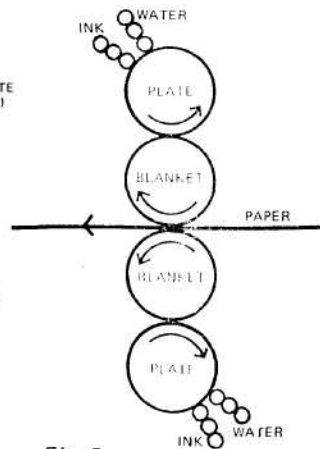


Fig. 2.

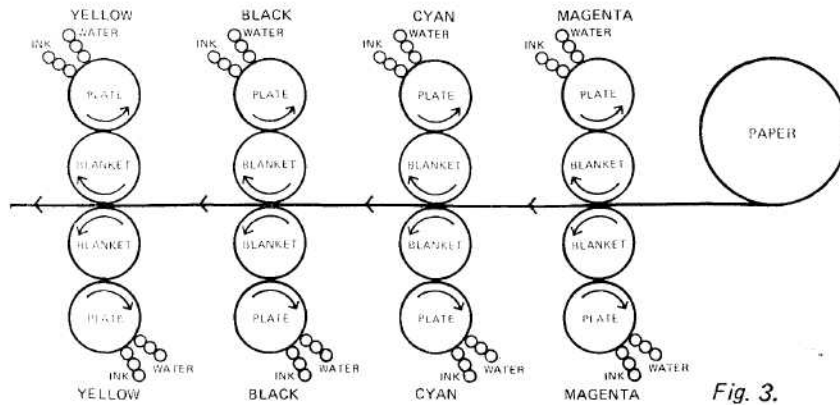


Fig. 3.

used today for much of the short-run commercial work), the modern, high-speed, web fed, printed-both-sides press has emerged.

Diagrammatically, the heart of a single-unit offset printing press is as shown at fig. 1

If two single units (fig. 2) are banked together, with both impression cylinders eliminated, the result is a press which can print on both sides of the paper at the one pass through the machine. The blanket cylinders, because they are absolutely flat on the surfaces, each act as an impression cylinder from the opposite unit. Also, because they are still separate units, different color inks may be used for printing each side of the sheet.

Two or more double-units (fig. 3) placed in line as modules, and the paper fed from a continuous roll (known as a "web"), means multicolor printing on both sides of a continuous web, at a very high speed. This is the method used to print high-circulation color magazines, completely folded and stapled at speeds of 20 to 50 thousand copies an hour. Web offset vigorously competes with the gravure printing process for this type of long-run color work.

A high-speed press, peculiar to offset, is the "satellite" unit (fig. 4). This press has a common impression cylinder surrounded by a number of single printing units. The advantage lies in the paper being always supported by the central cylinder. This ensures accurate registration (the placing of a number of colors on top of each other in exactly the right position), and makes it easier to control the paper's position on the press than by a web floating free between units. The central impression cylinder is also heated to aid in the quick drying of the inks between impressions. The paper web is turned over and passed through an identical satellite unit for printing the

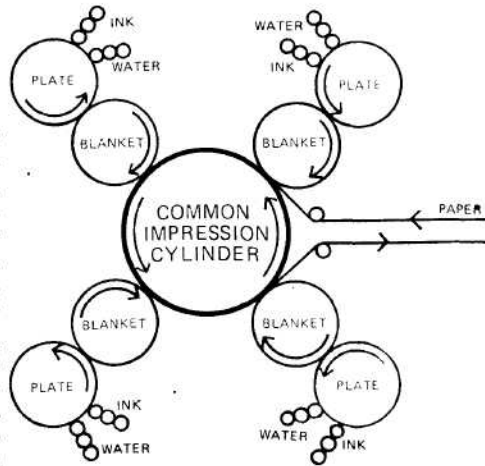


Fig. 4.

reverse side of the web . . . Reader's Digest is printed on this type of offset press.

Graphic Reproduction by Photo-Offset Lithography

The modern method of graphic reproduction, using Senefelder's basic principle that "grease and water do not readily mix," can now be defined as "Photo-Offset Lithography." The basic principle still remains, but two very important factors have been added to suit our modern day needs . . . photography, and "offsetting" the image onto a blanket and THEN to the printed surface. Because of our habit of contracting titles, the process is now universally known as "offset" printing.

Taking the \$10 stamp, "Coming South," of the Australian Paintings series as an example, the production procedure would be, broadly, as follows:

1. The selected paintings are separately photographed as positive color transparencies. The ideal transparency size is half-plate (127 mm x 101 mm).
2. An overlay containing the additional graphics, such as the word "Australia," the denomination and the caption, is prepared as a common element for the whole series. Together, the transparencies and the common overlay, become the total pictorial and graphic representation of the stamp series—and is known at this stage as the "finished art." This is the original from which multiple copies will be reproduced by the process of printing.
3. As all color printing uses the subtractive color theory to reproduce natural color, the finished art must first be broken down into the three color printing primaries—magenta, cyan and yellow. This is known as "color separation" and is achieved by exposing the transparency to three separate negatives, using a different color-filter for each exposure. A red filter will produce a negative image that, when converted to a positive, becomes the cyan printing plate; a green filter will produce the magenta plate; and a blue-violet filter will produce the yellow plate.

In various combinations and strengths, when printed onto paper, these three primary printing colors will, theoretically, produce all colors, hues, shades and tones. Again, theoretically, the three primaries printed in equal strengths over each other will produce black—and the white of the paper becomes the white in the illustration.

Therefore, in theory, the three primaries—magenta, cyan and yellow—should be able to reproduce the total color spectrum. In practice this does not quite happen. Because the color theory involved is one of natural physics—the theory of light—the use of relatively impure man-made materials (film, ink pigments and paper) means that the application of the natural theory of light and color breaks down a little, particularly at the darker end of the color range.

To overcome this unavoidable problem, the plate-maker produces a "black" plate from a single negative exposed to the transparency for a short time through EACH of the filters. This negative represents only the darker ends of the three subtractive primary colors that make up the total color content of the original subject—the negative is not exposed long enough to gain the middle tones or highlights.

4. The graphics on the overlay will be combined with the black negative (or "stripped-in") at this stage. If the graphics are to be white, the overlay is used to "drop-out" all other colors on all four negatives, leaving only the white of the paper when printed. This overlay can be used with any of the negatives to obtain any particular color required.

5. Two other important techniques are being applied almost simultaneously with color separation. The first is "color correction," which is another way in which an allowance is made for color inadequacies in the materials being used. As the impurities in the materials being used, particularly the inks, are precisely known, the separation films are corrected with these factors in mind. This means that the separation negatives are made slightly lighter or darker, relative to each other, so that when made into the printing plate, and one of the primary ink colors used, the impurity of the color in each of the inks will be allowed for.
6. The second technique is the use of the "half-tone screen." An offset printing press cannot vary its ink density on paper—it can only put one color ink onto paper in an even layer, at any one pass through the machine. But many illustrations have tonal variations to represent the visual image (photographs always have a tonal range). To copy a continuous tone original onto a negative—the first step in making a printing plate—a half-tone screen is always placed between the finished art being copied and the negative.

When the negative is exposed, this screen will have broken the original image down into a series of variable-sized dots relative to the strength or weakness of each tone within that original—very small and widely separated at the light end of the tonal range, large and overlapping at the dark end—with a number of dot sizes between the two extremes. In reality, an optical illusion has been created—the variation in the dot sizes conveys a sense of tonal variation to the eyes, even though a uniform layer of ink has been placed on the paper.

The half-tone screen is used in the exposure of all four separation negatives, giving a tonal range at each of the colors to be placed on the paper. This allows for the variations of primary color densities intrinsic in the original being reproduced, and, when the four plates are printed on paper in register, these color densities are reconstructed. This results in a reproduction of the subject's total color range.

7. The four color corrected, half-tone separation negatives can now be "printed-down" onto four separate metal plates.

A photo-sensitive film emulsion coating is first placed on the surface of a thin, flexible metal plate. Usually a separation negative is placed in contact, emulsion to emulsion, and exposed under intense lighting. When developed and washed in a similar manner to any photographic process, a positive image the reverse of the negative will be bonded to the plate surface—the unexposed emulsion coating, which was protected by the opaque areas of the negative, will have been washed away leaving bare metal. This modern offset plate is now comparable, in theory, to Senefelder's Bavarian limestone blocks on which he transferred an image from paper to stone using his "correction fluid."

What has been produced is a "surface" plate. Surface plates are still subject to some friction wear, and do have a limited life, even though this is considerably longer than before offsetting was introduced. The litho plates used for printing the Australian painting "Coming South" used a Collies Kalle P. 7 pre-sensitized plate unbaked positive working. The plate was pre-lacquered with photo-polymer. Both deep-etched and multi-metal plates have the image area chemically etched to a depth slightly below the surface, giving these types of plates greater ink-carrying capacity, resulting in a stronger and more brilliant ink coverage; although the terms "etched" and "deep-etched" are used, the actual depth is barely

measurable. They have a much longer life because the image area, being below the surface, is not subject to wear. These plates use a positive, not a negative, at the print-down stage.

A plate is made from each of the four separation negatives (or positives converted from these negatives), each plate containing the total color content of its particular subtractive primary.

8. Wrapped around the plate cylinders of an offset press, and subtracted firstly to a water coating and then a coverage of a specific ink color, each plate will reproduce its emulsion-surface image onto the blanket and then onto the paper passing through the machine.
9. A four unit press will have the plates printing in sequence—firstly the magenta, then cyan, then black, with the yellow last. Although this is common practice today, it is not a hard and fast rule, the yellow is quite often printed first. The sheet, or web, passing through the machine will pick up each of the color images in sequence and, if in perfect register, will reconstruct the primary color content of the original subject—or a printed reproduction.
10. Once the sheet is completely printed, sorting, checking, perforating and guillotining are carried out.

The Advantages of Offset

Because offset is basically “lithography” and, therefore, an art medium, it offers the artist and designer great creative freedom.

Soft and subtle tones, in both black and white and color, are easily reproduced—but, by using deep-etch plates with their greater ink coverage, modern offset rivals letterpress in strong and brilliant colors. This allows offset to successfully compete with letterpress in the commercial world.

Although the quality is extremely high when smooth or coated papers are used, offset can reproduce better quality work than other printing processes on the less-expensive, rough-surfaced papers. This is due to the fact that the rubber blanket (roller) compresses the rough paper surface, momentarily smoothing it at the point of contact—and ink can be deposited into the paper depressions. This is one of the vital economic factors of offset—a good reproduction on lower quality paper reduces printing costs—and is one of the reasons for offset's popularity.

Rotary offset presses are fast, equalling the speeds of rotogravure and newspaper letterpress machines.

But, There are Some Disadvantages

Color retention on long runs is difficult to maintain—the water to ink ratio tends to drift and must be closely watched at all times. Any slight emulsification of the ink tends to dilute the colors, resulting in some slight changes in color definition throughout the complete print run.

Corrections to plates are almost impossible—minor deletions can be made by removal of the emulsion image surface from small sections of the plate; additions are extremely difficult. Therefore, any alterations to a print job, after the plates are made, are usually made to the finished art and the whole plate making process repeated—which can be costly.

The very nature of the offset process makes it difficult to get proofs on correct paper prior to running the job on the press. Press proofs are expensive because of the preparation required to set up the machine, and the non-productive time which has to be paid for. Several photographic proofing systems are available, but they are inferior to proofs taken on the production press.

The Major Characteristic of Offset

Offset shows the individual dots created by the half-tone screen, and each of the four colors can easily be distinguished. Also, the wording has solid areas of color (or "line"), because the half-tone screen is not used in the image transfer of non-tonal areas—which are, amongst other things, type.

This characteristic makes it extremely easy for philatelists to pick the process used to print a particular stamp.

Photogravure, on the other hand, under a magnifying glass, shows a microscopic, but uniform, square pattern over the whole of the printed surface, including the wording.

And Finally

Photo-offset lithography, or "offset," is probably the major printing process in the world today. Now almost 200 years old it is a strange thing that so few people understand the difference between offset and what is generally known as "printing." Everyone seems to know that printing is done from type—a raised surface—yet they seem to know nothing about the "planographic" process of offset. It has always been difficult to explain this difference to the layman without a demonstration—and, even then, he seems puzzled by the fact that the work is not in relief.

Yet there are so many everyday articles in the home, office, factory and elsewhere that are printed by offset—magazines, newspapers, labels, stationery, brochures, books, advertising and commercial printed literature, and much more.

The simple statement that "grease and water do not readily mix," which is the very basis of the offset printing process, still confuses, especially when we add to this confusion when we state that the print and non-print areas are on the same plane.

But, today, the greater majority of printed material we use in our everyday lives will have been produced by this process. There seems to be no valid reason why the postage stamp should not, also, be printed by photo-offset lithography.

Senefelder would, no doubt, approve!

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A Philatelic Tour of Prague

By Mrs. Jos. F. Sterba, Jr.

(Continued)

After leaving Our Lady Victorious Church, continue walking along on Carmelite Street toward Hradcany Castle. Turn left at the first street corner which is Market Street (Trziste). A very outstanding building on this street is the Schonborn Palace. It is an imposing Baroque building which was erected between 1643-56, and will be very easy to find. The house number is 265/15 and above the archway flies the American flag. During the history of the Schonborn Palace, Richard Teller Crane the founder of Crane Company, the well known U. S. plumbing manufacturing company was owner of the palace. He sold the palace to the United States who in turn converted the palace into the United States Embassy Building. High above the American Embassy Building is Hradcany Castle, overlooking the embassy gardens, which can be entered through the courtyard archway. Richard T. Crane was not only an industrialist, he was also sent to Prague to serve as the first American Minister to the then newly formed Czechoslovak Republic. It may be strange to you that the author of this article is so very interested in Crane Company, its founder and his activities. Husband Joe spent 43 years as an employee of Crane Company, so we have a somewhat sentimental feeling for R. T. Crane and his company.

The immediate locality around the United States Embassy is without a doubt one of the most picturesque quarters of the City of Prague, full of winding streets and impressive palaces, many of which now house various foreign consulates and embassies. In this immediate vicinity is the Maltese Square. In order to locate the Maltese Square it will be necessary for you to back-track somewhat. When leaving the United States Embassy, walk back down to Carmelite Street and inquire about the exact location of the Square, which is about 1½ blocks back toward Our Lady Victorious Church—on Carmelite Street. There angle off toward the Vltava River, walking on Prokopska Street. In the Maltese Square the most important and striking building is the Church of Our Lady Under the Chain (Kostel Panny Marie pod Retezem). The church has mighty Gothic towers, a reminder that a powerful fortress stood here in the Middle Ages, dominating the entrance to the Charles Bridge from Mala Strana. The church was founded as early as 1158 and several times was rebuilt. At one time the church belonged to the Order of the Knights of Malta. Old palaces and houses with arcades form the balance of the square. Many of them have kept their old names and signs which appear on their facades. Watch for the Golden Goose (Zlata Husa) or the Golden Bear (Zlaty Medved).

Another important building in the Square is the former Nostic Palace, No. 471/1 which today is the Ministry of Education and Culture. This Baroque residence is from 1660 and the facade was restyled in Baroque about the first half of the 18th century. The busts of the Roman emperors are copies of originals by M. J. Brokoff. The imposing main portal is Rococo from 1760. The garden, which is open to the public, belongs to the palace and stretches along either bank of the Certovka, which is Prague's Venice and is an arm of the Vltava River.

Consult your tourist guide map locating Bridge Street (Mostecka Ulice). Walk toward the Vltava River through the arch-way of the Bridge towers of Mala Strana onto Charles Bridge. The towers are from the 12th



Fig. 28

and 15th century, fig. #28. Check if the Tower entrance door is open. For a very small fee, you can gain access to the tower and by climbing up the many steps to the top, you can view Charles Bridge from above and the ridge-tiled roofs of Mala Strana. While standing on Charles Bridge you see the statue of the legendary Knight Brunevik, fig. #29, standing guard above the peaceful waters of the Vltava. Watch for the entrance to steps leading down from Charles Bridge to the Kampa. This island is referred to as an island for young lovers. You can see the former Grand Prior Mill, with its wooden wheel, from this point on Charles Bridge. Located on the island is a small Baroque building from the end of the 18th century. You cannot miss house No. 501/7 because in front of the residence is a statue of Joseph Dobrovsky. Dobrovsky was the father and one of the great scholars of the Czech National Revival. If you visit the Kampa at dusk or twilight, you might be able to check out an old legend. A vigil light is supposed to be burning before a picture of a madonna, which hangs on a balcony overlooking Charles Bridge. The picture was allegedly brought down the river by flood waters, many years ago. It was hung on the house to secure the Virgin's aid in keeping the house secure and not being swept away by the high river waters.



Fig. 29

Prior to entering the immediate vicinity of Prague Castle and its historical and philatelic background, I would like to convey this prophecy which was told to me by SCP member Karel Lipa during our Balpex Dinner. At that time I asked Mr. Lipa if he could be so kind to write the prophecy into "A Philatelic Tour of Prague." He very kindly and graciously complied with my request.

An Old Prophecy Came True — by Karel Lipa

Reinhard Heydrich, who served as a Representative of the Reichsprotector in Bohemia and Moravia, died shortly following an assassination attempt by Czech parachutists based in England.

During the following year, 1943, the Occupation Government in Bohemia and Moravia issued a commemorative stamp to his memory, the picture represented the deathmask of Heydrich. Often conquerors are pictured on stamps, but seldom does a nation feel obliged to honor its murderer in this manner.

Heydrich became well known from the first years of Nazism, as the devoted executer of Hitler's mortal orders. He was such a fanatic, that he declared: "When Hitler wants, he will manage that two and two are five!"

In relation to the Czech people, the following quotation appears in the book written by General Frantisek Moravec, "Master of Spies," and is characteristic of Heydrich's viewpoint and attitude. Moravec was chief of the Intelligence Service in Prague, Czechoslovakia before the war and during the war in London. He wrote: "Heydrich's success in the killing of Czechoslovak patriots fulfilled only part of his mission, which was quite simply, the eradication of the Czechoslovak nation. In Heydrich's own words: "To the question, 'Where do you live' A Czech traveling abroad several years from now should answer: 'In Bohemia.' To the question 'Who are you?' he should say, 'I am a Reich German'."

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This glorious future was not planned by Heydrich for all the Czech people. Only the correct-thinking and racially pure. This would be gradually determined by German X-Ray experts and by medical examinations of children attending school. Only these were to be amalgamated into the Reich. The rest, estimated by Heydrich as two-thirds of the nation's population, were incorrigibly patriotic or physically unsuitable by Nazi standards, and they were to be liquidated or deported East into the newly anticipated conquered Soviet Territory.

When Heydrich arrived in Prague, September 1941 he soon became very interested in the Czech crown jewels. Fig. #30 illustrates the Czech crown jewels on a souvenir sheet issued May 9, 1966, in Prague. Probably he did not know about an old curse, "That everyone who will dishonor the crown jewels will be punished with a horrible, personal fate." It is interesting to note that the crown jewels have endured during the centuries many occupations of the country; wars, changes of rulers; and were kept intact in their original condition.

One day Heydrich appeared, with his two small sons, in St. Vitus Cathedral and categorically demanded to be taken into the crypt where the jewels were located. In the crypt he immediately ordered the guard to leave, and then closed the door. What Heydrich did while in the crypt, nobody seems to know. The guard stationed in the corridor only heard the voices and the clash of metal, coming from inside the crypt.

It is speculated that possibly Heydrich took the crown and probably put it on the head of one of his sons, because the guard overheard him say, "It suits you. It is as light as a toy!" The sound of metal clashing as if someone was fencing could be heard. Shouts of such words as "Defend yourself, or I shall stab your throat," echoed in the corridor. After a period of about 45 minutes, Heydrich and his sons walked out of the crypt and without a word withdrew.

Heydrich, as is well known, died some months later from wounds received during an attempted assassination. One of his sons was killed while riding his bicycle. The other son was not alive at the end of the war. From the entire family, only Heydrich's wife survived—she had not visited the crypt.

Thus, the old curse had been fulfilled!

(To be continued)



Fig. 30



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