

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



(USPS 808300)

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Silver Award Interphil '76 — Silver Award Capex '78 — Silver-Bronze Praga '78

A.P.S. Unit 18

S.P.A. Branch 284

Vol. L

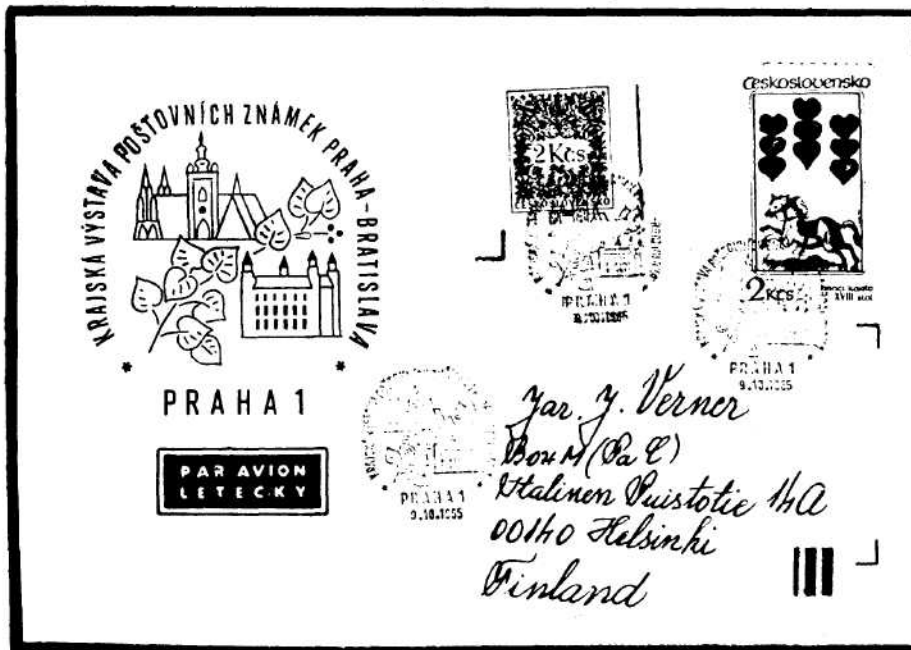
May 1988

No. 5, Whole No. 479

POSTAGE DUE STAMPS USED FOR REGULAR POSTAGE

By Adolf Hujer — Edited by J. J. Verner

In April 1985 postage due stamps began to be used for regular payment of postage in Czechoslovakia. This has led to confusion and controversy, which in turn led the author to research what happened and why. The following information was collected through long and sometimes difficult research in the *Gazette of the Czechoslovak PTT*, in internal postal documents and finally, in order to get an official interpretation of outstanding questions, by asking for an official explanation from the PTT Section of the Ministry of Communication. We trust this information will be useful to collectors and will enrich the postal historical records concerning what is perhaps a unique decision made by the Prague postal authorities on the use of postage due stamps.



For some years, probably since about 1975, Czechoslovak postage due stamps have virtually disappeared from postal traffic. Stocks of postage due stamps existed, but they were not used for some time by the postal authorities. Occasional improvised postage due overprints or hand written revalidations of regular postage stamps appeared in many places in Czechoslovakia. Little information is currently available regarding these "overprints" — where and when they were used and, most importantly, why they were used. The study of these questions is a task still ahead for future generations of philatelists.

On April 25, 1985, the Czechoslovak Federal Ministry of Communications, PTT Section, issued the following instructions to all post offices throughout the country:

"The following change of Para 86, item 2 of the Postal Regulations (postovni řád) is introduced effective immediately: Postage due stamps shall be used as regular stamps until the stocks of all postage due stamps are completely exhausted. The postage due stamps can be sold to customers without any limit and these can be immediately used as regular stamps. . ."

No further information was added, nothing was published in the official Gazette of the Czechoslovak PTT (*Poštovní věstník*), no additional detailed instructions were issued; but from April 25, 1985 on, postage due stamps were valid for postage. However, this internal postal instruction leaked to the philatelic community only after some time because no mention of it had been made either in the daily press or in philatelic magazines.

The imprecision of the postal instructions leads to the most interesting aspect of this postal decision: It was not specified which of the postage due stamps issued after 1945 could be used — or, for that matter, which of them could not!

As a result of the Czechoslovak currency reform of June 1, 1953, all postage stamps available to the public were devalued and could only be used at the rate of 1 to 50 of their face value for a few days during early June. After that they were invalidated. However, the postage due stamps issued in 1946 (Pofis Nos. 67–78) continued to be used at face value for several more years. The rationale used by the postal authorities was that postage due stamps could be used only by the PTT and not the public (they were not sold at any post office) and therefore there was no reason for them to be invalidated. So postage due stamps continued in force and were used for several years after 1953 (Pofis nos. 67–78) without restrictions.

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The first postage dues issued after the monetary reform appeared on November 22, 1954, almost a year and a half after the reform. They were produced on the Stickney presses and were perforated $12\frac{1}{2}$ (Pofis 79-91). The same design, though not all the values, was used on the next series issued in 1963, printed on the WIFAG press and perforated $11\frac{1}{4} \times 11\frac{1}{4}$. A new and final set of postage dues, multicolored with abstract designs, was issued on November 14, 1971 (Pofis 92-103).

The situation that existed prior to April 25, 1985, therefore, was that the issue of 1946 which, as we have seen, was not invalidated by the monetary reform of 1953, was widely used until 1956 when the stocks were depleted, but with usage known till about 1960. It was used concomitantly with the issue of 1954 and, at least in theory, could have been used much later with the subsequent issues.

This fact has given rise to the much discussed and controversial situation which arose after April 25, 1985, when postage due stamps were designated for use as regular postage. Czechoslovak users began to send postal items franked not only with the postage due stamps of the recent issues (Pofis 79-91 and 92-103), but also with the stamps of the 1946 issue. This meant that postage due stamps of the 1946 issue were the only stamps issued prior to the 1953 fiscal reform that were valid for franking of all manner of mail in Czechoslovakia. Since postal workers knew the stamps of the 1946 issue had continued to be valid after the fiscal reform, they accepted them accordingly, having no instructions to the contrary.

This general confusion forced the PTT Section of the Ministry of Communications to issue a clarification regarding which postage due stamps could be used for postage and which could not. It was not until the middle of December 1985, however, that another internal instruction went out to post offices: only the postage due stamps from the 1954 issue and later were valid for postage. The instruction included pictures of the stamps reproduced from the Pofis catalog. Unfortunately, many of the smaller post offices did not receive this second instruction and consequently continued to accept all postage due stamps for franking. The result has been that the 1946 postage due issue can still be seen occasionally used on shipments delivered within the country.

In an attempt to get an official explanation of this unique use of postage due stamps, the author contacted the Ministry of Communication for its views. The Czechoslovak

Postal Administration, in response to specific questions, sent the following reply in its letter No. 11 563/87 dated October 26, 1987:

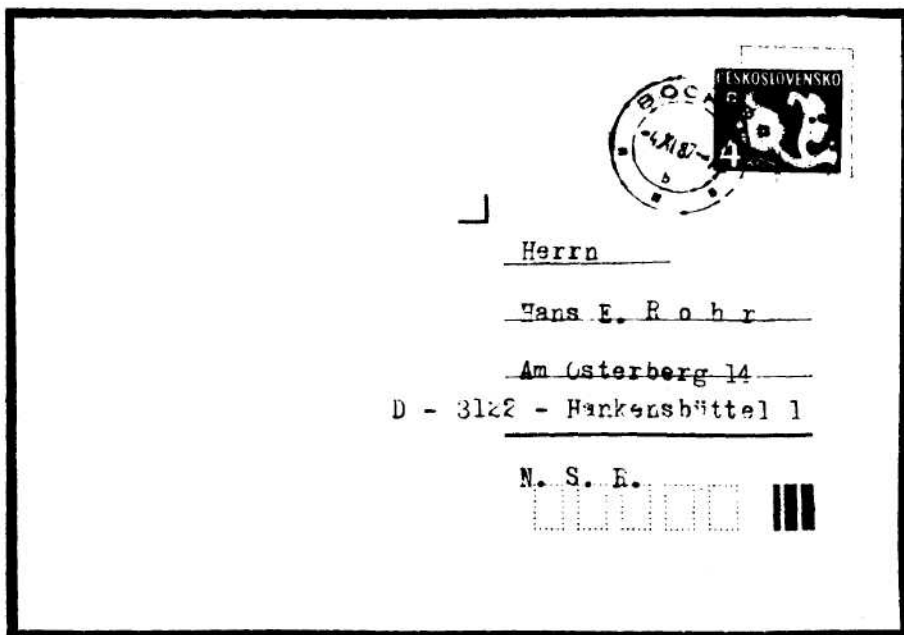
"The use of postage due stamps for clearing postal rates always has been a matter for departmental decisions (rezortní rozhodování). This is also why the decision to use postage due stamps as regular stamps for postal shipments was given as an internal instruction in April 1985. On the basis of this decision, the general depletion of printed stocks of postage due stamps was begun. The basis for this decision was the fact that postal traffic had no particular reason for issuing special kinds of stamps just for postage due.

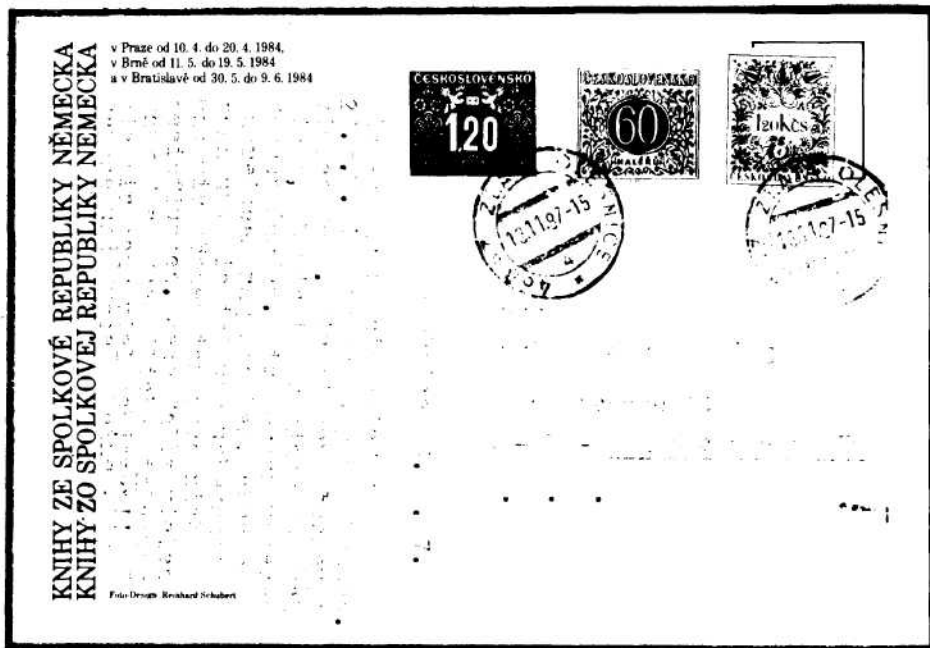
"All stamps and all other postal values issued to that date lost their validity on June 1, 1953, by decision of the Czechoslovak Government taken on May 29, 1953. It is possible to use as regular stamps only those postage due stamps issued in 1954 and later because the present postal traffic accepts as valid only those stamps issued after June 1, 1953.

"The mentioned arrangement is valid only until the depletion of all stocks of postage due stamps, after which the postage due stamps will be cancelled as a postal value. We expect their validity to end this very year (1987).

"The shipments franked with postage due stamps issued before June 1, 1953 are to be considered as not franked because invalid stamps were used. If such shipments were delivered without objections, it was a case of violating regulations as well as negligence and carelessness on the part of the postal services.

signed: Ing. E. Janigova
Director of the Postal Administration"





While it is true that this is the official position of the postal authorities, it is also true that the above statements are not consistent with historical fact. It remains a fact that the postage due stamps issued in 1946 were not invalidated by the governmental decision taken on May 30, 1953, since they continued to be used by the Postal Administration for many years after that date. This can be established by many philatelic documents which show usage as late as 1960.

For this reason the author again wrote to the PTT Section of the Ministry of Communications and received the following reply dated December 7, 1987 (same file number as above):

"-As published in the Gazette of the Czechoslovak PTT, No. 45/1954 under No. 744, new Czechoslovak postage due stamps were issued (Pofis 79-91). It was decided at the time that existing postage due stamps (Pofis 67-78) would retain full validity, i.e. could be used as postage due stamps.

"-This means that the first postage due stamps issued after the War and before the Czechoslovak fiscal reform in 1953 were used until full depletion of stocks. Their official use in the mentioned years (1953-1960) can not be excluded.

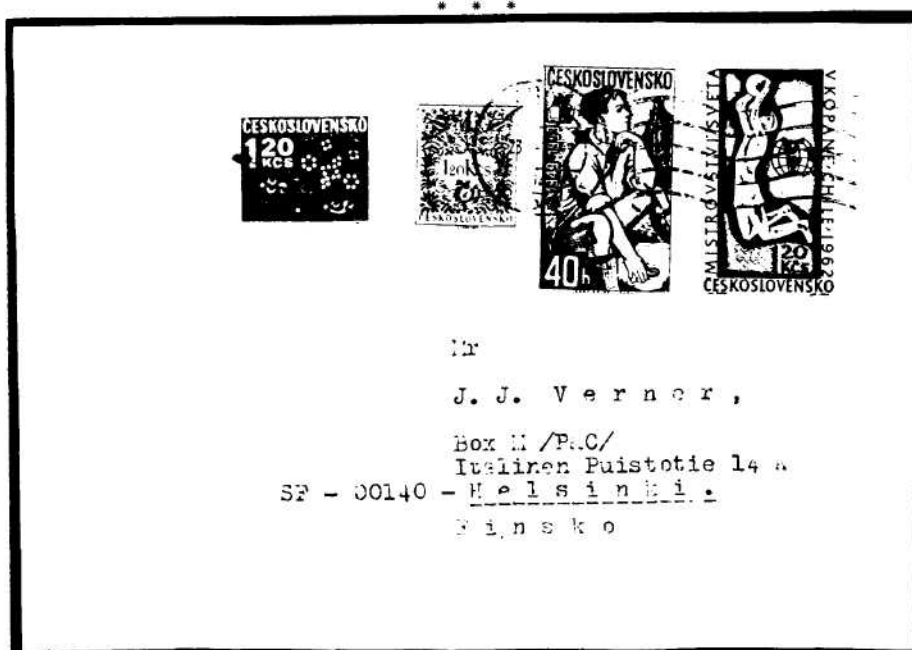
signed: Ing. E. Janigove
Director, Postal Administration"

Some may ask why the postage due stamps ceased being used and, more importantly, what happens in Czechoslovakia when a letter has insufficient postage. During the 1984-85 period, the Czechoslovak Post Office instituted a rather original and an extremely complicated and administratively burdensome system of collecting postage that was due. When there was a shortage of postage on a letter/parcel, it was delivered by the Post Office in the normal way and without collecting the postage due. But along with the letter, the addressee also received a post card which showed on its face what postage-short correspondence had been delivered and how much was due. The addressee was instructed to affix to the card the amount due in the form of regular stamps and drop it in a post box. The card was addressed to that post office which had

delivered the correspondence. At the post office, the payment was entered under the exhibit number in the postage due ledger where it had been entered before the original correspondence had been delivered. This procedure required much time and extra control activity; certainly it was much more complex than the previous, simple and almost universally accepted, proven system of using postage due stamps.

Since the difficult and complicated system of gathering the postal cards used and collecting the amounts due during 1984-85 understandably did not work, a further change was made during 1985-86 that continues to this day. Currently when postage is due, the delivering post offices use regular stamps from existing stocks. They are not overprinted or marked in any way. They can be identified only because the postmark of the delivering post office cancels the stamp rather than that of the sending post office. Only thus can current postage due letters be identified.

This means, of course, that philatelists can find interesting, indeed potentially valuable, materials in the mail. Covers franked with postage due stamps from Czechoslovakia that actually passed through the mails should be of considerable interest to philatelists. Such covers have been seen in the mails since April 25, 1985, and some may even bear stamps of the 1946 issue. Of these, there will not be many and collectors that have copies are lucky indeed. As mentioned in the official letter from the Czechoslovak Postal Administration cited above, use of postage due stamps for regular postage may have been terminated at the end of 1987. Hopefully many of you already have these interesting items in your collections.



A D V E R T I S E M E N T

FOR SALE: 1928-1936 issues with privately printed tabs (see Michel Catalog) of stamp dealer in Prague. Mint, on piece & cover SASE for list. Dr. Oscar Stadler, 24355 Tunbridge Lane, Beachwood, Ohio 44122.

THE DOVE Seventh Installment

This series on the Allegory Chapter of Monografie II has been translated by Vladimír Králíček.

(Page 210):

Table 45. 25h Printing Plates

Type	Plate Markings	Remarks
I	No markings; no sheet margin frame	The entire issue of the 25h (Type I) stamps was printed in one formation composed of two printing plates.
II	No markings; no sheet margin frame	
	No markings; sheet margin frame is continuous	
	No markings; sheet margin frame is continuous	
	Single notch in sheet margin frame at position 100	
	Two notches...at position 100	Sheet margin frame not interrupted.
	Three notches...at position 100	
	Four notches...at position 100	

Illustration 331

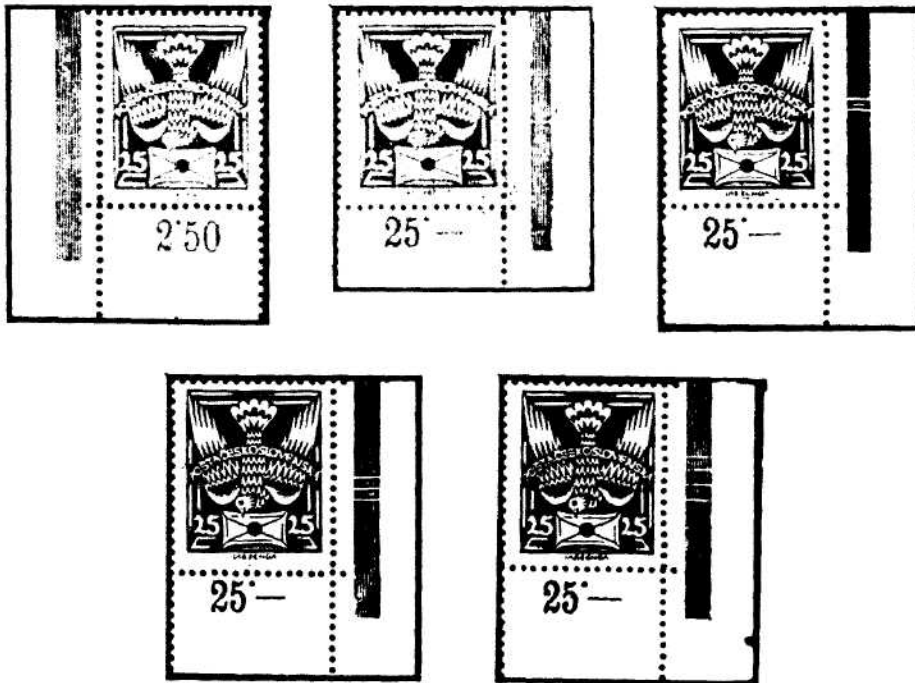




Table 46. 30h Printing Plates

Plate Markings	Remarks
1-25 2-25 3-25 4-25 (Left hand drawing in Illustration 332 is Type I.) 4-25 (Right hand drawing is Type II.)	All printing plates of the 30h have continuous or interrupted sheet margin frames.
1-26 2-26 -26 -26 5-26 6-26 7-26 8-26	The third and fourth plates since 1926 have different markings—inside the right colored field are the numerals "3" and "4"; the left field is a solid block without numerals.

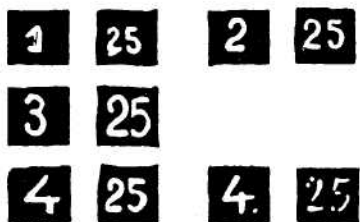


Illustration 332

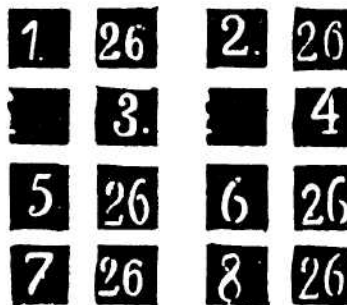


Illustration 333

(Page 212):

STAMPS TYPES

With the 20h and 25h we find two types which were produced during the preparation of value numerals. Printing of the 20h value began with two plates of Type I together with two plates of the 5h violet.

Types I and II stamps are distinguished by the differences in the shape of the "0" in the value numeral "20."

Type I - has the inside part of the "0" cut at top and bottom (rhomboid upwards);

Type II - has the inside of the "0" rounded in the shape of an ellipse.



Illustration 334a. Type I



Illustration 334b. Type II

With the 25h the origin of Type II was somewhat different. The first drawing of the value numeral "2" was not distinct enough, and the design was therefore subsequently corrected. The numeral "2" was altered, thus producing Type II.

Thus there are again Type I and Type II differences in the value number "2."

Type I - The top of numeral "2" is only slightly rounded, so that the number is similar to the letter "L."

Type II - The top of numeral "2" is fully rounded, making it entirely different from the original design.



Illustration 335a. Type I



Illustration 335b. Type II

(Page 213):

PAPER

In the majority of issued stamps, the paper used is white to slightly yellow. In a few minor instances, stamps were printed on brownish yellow (beige) paper. Stamps in all denominations exist on thin paper with the print showing through, as well as on thicker paper and on exceptionally thick paper as in the case of the 5h blue.

The glue used was white, yellowish to yellow.

PERFORATIONS

All values were provided with comb perforation 14 vertically advanced. A substantial number of stamps have shifted perforations, thus producing the so-called extended and shortened comb perforations.

The 5h violet, the 10h olive, and the 20h are known to have some line perforations $13\frac{3}{4}$. They exist in sheets intended for use in booklet form. Also available with this line perforation were the normal sheets of 100 bearing values 5h violet and 10h olive.

Unofficially, stamps of the 5h blue, the 10h green, and the 15h values were line perforated $13\frac{3}{4}$. An unknown quantity fell into the hands of collectors. The above three denominations in those perforations are known to exist mint only.

COLOR OF STAMPS

As with other stamps typographically printed in quantities numbering in the millions, we find that the Dove issue has a number of color shades. The most important are:

- 5h - light blue, dark blue, light and dark ultramarine
- 5h - light and dark violet, dark reddish violet, blackish violet
- 10h - light and dark green, bluish green, deep and olive green
- 10h - light and dark olive, olive brown, yellowish olive
- 15h - light and dark brown, reddish brown, brown
- 20h - light and dark orange, reddish orange, rose red
- 25h - light and dark blue green, olive green (only with Type I)
- 30h - light reddish violet, dark reddish violet

In all of these shades there exist greater or smaller differences in color richness.

OSTRAVA'S UNIQUE DOCUMENT

The oldest document in the history of the city of Ostrava, deposited in the municipal archives, dates from the year 1362. It is a charter under which the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia, Charles IV, granted Ostrava the right to hold sixteen-day open-air markets once a year.

G. M. van Zanten

LONG DISTANCE EXCHANGE

The following persons have written us that they would be interested in exchanging stamps of Czechoslovakia for stamps of the United States with our fellow brethren in this country. If you are interested, please contact these individuals directly:

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Miroslav Klouda | 2. Zdeněk Kubánek |
| kpt. Jaroše 616 | Lidická 530 |
| 26401 Sedlčany | 411 08 Štětí |
| Czechoslovakia | Czechoslovakia |

EDITORIAL HINGES

A Resignation

Just after the last issue of the *SPECIALIST* went to print, the Society's Board of Directors received the following letter from a member:

"Ladies and Gentlemen:

"I am resigning as director and member of the Society effective immediately. The reason is the publication of insidious slanderous statements about me in a Czechoslovak Public Magazine by a fellow member. I regret not to be able to share the pleasure of membership in the same Society with this person. I like to thank all members for casting their vote again for me during the recent election as a director and beg for their understanding of my decision.

"Sincerely yours,
Fred W. Hefer
Munich, March 23, 1988."

A Warning

In the past few months, there has been an unfortunate resurgence in the private and commercial handling of counterfeit philatelic material. Even expertized signatures have recently been found to be forged. The Board of our Society cautions all members who purchase Czechoslovak stamps or covers to be extremely wary of material they are buying, especially if its costs run over \$100 an item. Wherever possible, a commitment should be obtained from the seller that if either the signature of the expert or the item itself is judged not to be genuine by a certified expert, the buyer may cancel the transaction, return the item and obtain a full refund from the seller. We welcome any information from any source where the seller refused to make good on a fraudulent transaction.

The Editor's Comment

The Board of Directors met on March 5 in Chicago and discussed all facets of Society business. High on the Agenda was the growing problem involving the sale and exchange of forged Czechoslovak philatelic material.

This was the first full-fledged meeting of the new Board which comprises the following members: Jack Benchik, Charles Chesloe, Jay Carrigan, Henry Hahn, Fred Hefer, Frank Julsen, Ed Lehecka, Jane Sterba, Lou Svoboda, and Mirko Vondra. Absent from the meeting were Mssrs. Carrigan, Hahn, and Hefer.

The Board naturally regrets Fred Hefer's resignation. The Society will miss him and the members hope he will eventually return.

M. L. Vondra

COCA-COLA'S BEST

Coca-Cola made in Czechoslovakia has been selected by the manufacturer's computer as the best in the European Division. It is made under an American license at Modrice, in Southern Moravia, in one of the plants of the Czechoslovak Fruta Brno enterprise. The reason for the high quality is local dechlorinated water and the accuracy in the dosing of ingredients.

What has this to do with philately? Perhaps nothing. But for those who do not drink beer, Czech or domestic, imagine the delight of browsing through your collection on a hot summer day while sipping an ice cold Modrice Coke!

G. M. van Zanten

THE CZECHOSLOVAK MUSIC SCENE JOSEF BOHUSLAV FOERSTER

30-12-1859 to 29-5-1951

By G. M. van Zanten

Author of more than 190 works with opus numbers, of which many consist of sets and cycles. The majority of his works are made up of vocal music.

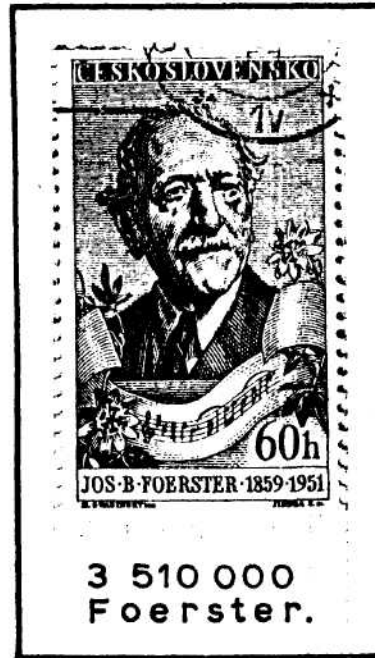
There are 6 operas, namely: Debora 1893, Eva 1899, Jessika 1905 (this is after Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice"), Nepřemoženi (Invincibilities) 1918, Srdce (Heart) 1923, and Bloud (the Fool) 1936. There are over 350 songs, over 300 choral works, as well as 26 melodramas.

As you can see his artistic production was enormous, and that was not all; he contributed to numerous specialist journals and his extensive literary works include essays and memoirs of high quality and value. He was also a gifted pictorial artist from childhood and attained very high skills in this as well. He was well read and showed a wide knowledge of world literature.

He was born on December 30, 1859, in a picturesque corner of the Lesser Town, the Kampa Island in the center of Prague. His father, who lived from 1833 to 1907, was organist and choirmaster in several Prague churches: he was organist at St. Vitus's Cathedral, teacher at the Prague Organ School, and from the 1860's he was professor of theory at the Prague Conservatory. His uncle was a pupil of Smetana, he contributed his talents to music in Yugoslavia.



Josef Bohuslav Foerster



Quite a tradition of music for the young Josef, who studied chemistry after leaving grammar school in 1878, after which he studied at the Prague Organ School from 1879 to 1882, where he was one of the best students. He succeeded Dvořák as organist at the St. Vojtěch from 1882 to 1888. He also conducted singing classes at Prague Secondary Schools, and he was a director of church music at Prague's Church of the Virgin Mary of Snow. At that time he composed several remarkable works, such as his Violin Sonata, the Piano Trio and Three Mixed Choirs.

Among his personal acquaintances we can count Smetana and Dvořák as well as the poet Jan Neruda and Tchaikovsky, to mention just a few.

In the year 1888, he married Berta Lautererová, who was a soprano at the National Theatre. In 1893, she was engaged by the Hamburg Stadtoper when both moved to that town. He became a critic for the *Neue Hamburger Zeitung*, the *Hamburger Freie Presse* and the *Hamburger Nachrichten*.

In 1901, the Hamburg Conservatory appointed him professor of the piano. While in Hamburg he befriended Gustaf Mahler, who supported him. When Mahler moved to Vienna he engaged Lautererová for the Hofoper, so in 1903 the Foersters left for Vienna, where at the New Conservatory Josef became professor of composition.

From 1910 the influential daily *die Zeit* employed him as music critic. In 1918, when the Czechoslovak Republic was formed, the Foersters returned to Prague where he took up several appointments and also taught music. In 1919 he received an honorary doctorate from Prague University. To take care of his output, a J. B. Foerster Society was founded. From 1931 to 1939 he was president of the Czech Academy of Sciences and Art. Together with Novák he received the title of National Artist in 1945.

His wife died in 1936, after which he married again and moved to Staré Strašnice. After his death on May 29, 1951, he was granted a state funeral, which started from the National Theatre in Prague on June 5th. In his memory we now have the Foerster Wind Quintet in Brno, formed in 1956, and the Foerster Trio of Prague 1957. He certainly was an internationally recognized composer, his works proceeding from the rich tradition of the great Czech composers of the 19th century, and providing a link between Czech classical and modern music.

At the parish house of the Church of St. Adelbert (Kostel sv Vojtěcha) is a memorial and an intimate concert hall dedicated to Josef Bohuslav Foerster. For those of our readers interested, I give some details of this church: it is one of the parish churches of the New Town, originally a 13th century village church, enlarged after the foundation of the New Town by the main nave, 15th century, and adapted in Baroque 1693, altered again in 1745. Partial Gothic adaptation in 1875 to 1881. The late Gothic ceiling frescoes date from the early 16th century, the Gothic statue of the Virgin and child is from the late 15th century. It is situated off Šitkova (information from the book "Walks through Prague").

A commemorative postage stamp issued on May 12th, 1957, in the Prague Spring series commemorates this great composer. The design was by Max Švabinský, Pofis 941; a total of 3,510,000 stamps were printed.

REMEMBER!
PRAGA '88 IS ONLY THREE MONTHS AWAY!!



NEW ISSUES

By G. M. van Zanten — Courtesy ARTIA of Prague

“OLYMPIC GAMES AND SPORTS”

On February 1, 1988 a set of three stamps was issued to commemorate the above event.

Engraving of the stamps was by Václav Fajt; designs were by Jan Lidral.

Rotary recess print, combined with multicolor photogravure in sheets of 50 stamps each measuring 48×10 mm.

This year is the year of the 24th Summer Olympics and the 15th Winter Olympics in modern times.

The stamp pictures are divided into three fields, showing various sports in the right and left field, the center field has the inscription CZECHOSLOVAKIA, the stamp value as well as the Olympic rings. The values of the stamps are 50h, 1Kčs, and 6Kčs. Also issued with the sheets of 50 stamps were 3 small sheets containing two stamps of each value with the Olympic rings in the top margin.



PRAGA '88

An unscheduled Imperf. miniature sheet appeared on my desk without any information, it measures 101×100 mm and shows four of the 10Kčs Intercosmos stamps which were the subject of my December New Issues.

In the top margin is the PRAGA '88 logo. In the much larger bottom margin in large print: “SVETOVÁ VÝSTAVA POŠTOVÝCH ZNÁMOK PRAGA 1988,” repeated also in French, English, Russian, and German, as well as the PRAGA '88 logo surrounded by a square, making it look like a stamp.



ADVERTISING RATES FOR THE SPECIALIST

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Eighth page.....	8.00	20.00	35.00	55.00
Sixteenth page (4 lines across page).....	5.00	13.00	25.00	38.00
Thirty-second page (2 lines across page).....	3.00	8.00	15.00	23.00

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