

# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Official Monthly Journal of the



Society for Czechoslovak Philately, Inc.

(USPS 808300)

Silver Award Interphil '76 - Silver Award Capex '78 - Silver-Bronze Praga '78 - Praga '88

A. P. S. Unit 18

ISSN: 0526-5843

Vol. 52

MARCH, 1990

No. 3, Whole No. 497

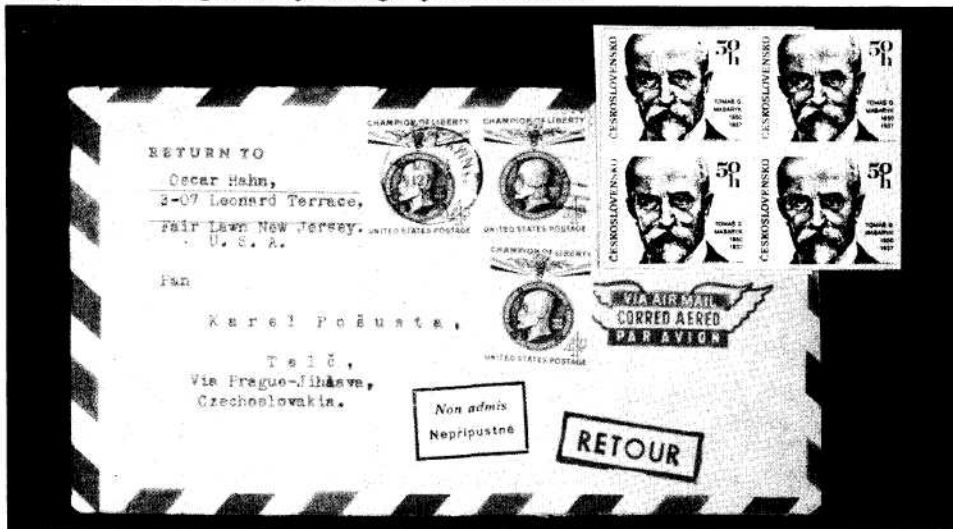
## THE DAY HAS COME !

by Henry Hahn

The last Masaryk stamp to be issued in Czechoslovakia was in Sept. 1947. (Scott no. 334 and 335). After more that 42 years, a new stamp has appeared with the likeness of the First President of the Republic. Issued in January 1990, it is a reminder that a free country once again openly honors its founder.

On the philatelic scene, nothing is as pleasing as being able to place one of Czechoslovakia's latest new issues depicting T. G. Masaryk over a cover bearing his portrait on a stamp issued in the United States as part of the Champions of Liberty set. The U.S. Masaryk stamp was issued on March 7, 1960 - the date would have been his 110th birthday. The cover bears the Czech "Non Admis/Nepřipustné" label and is rubber-stamped "Retour". The picture of Czechoslovakia's beloved leader so offended the Communist authorities that letters bearing this stamp were returned to the addressee - in direct violation of U.P.U. rules.

It is the fervent hope of all Czechoslovaks, both at home and abroad, that this is the beginning of a new era. The First Republic was born in 1918 and died in 1939. The Second Republic, restored in 1945, was mutilated within three years. Now with the rebirth of freedom, a Third Republic is being formed. Politically, it is a blessing. Philatelically, it should provide a "shot in the arm" for a hobby that was being stifled by state rigidity and intolerance.



## MORE ON FORGERIES AND COUNTERFEITS

By Charles Chesloe, Pres. of S. C. P.

*(The January issue contained a series of articles by our President, Charles Chesloe, and by member Adolf Hujer, about forgeries and counterfeits. Meanwhile more and more philatelic material of questionable origin is surfacing world-wide to the point where it is becoming a major concern to those seeking to preserve the quality and integrity of Czechoslovak philately. The SPECIALIST therefore continues its series on this subject and invites members to write in about any material of dubious origin they may recently have obtained).*

During the current awareness and emphasis on forgeries and counterfeits, I have three different topics to address and I am certain that at least two of them will make some philatelists unhappy. But I feel obligated to express my views based on 35 years of serious collecting.

### 1. The Scout Overprints

During the SEPAD exhibition last October, I had the pleasure to meet Frederick Lawrence who is an avid classical Scout collector and to view his exhibit which of course included the Czech Scout Issue of 1918. He had two of three covers of the overprint "Přijezd Presidenta Masaryka" which showed two different types of cancels. Naturally one would almost immediately conclude that one of those cancels had to be forgery. This is where the discussion became interesting. In all my years of collecting Czechoslovakia, I have come upon only one type of cancel in the double ring "Pošta Skautů" that I believe to be genuine. Even when looking at Jan Dvořák's and Ivo Kvasnička's collections in Prague (and theirs are the world's largest) and seeing their many covers, I was aware that this type of cancel seemed constant.

---

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

(USPS 808300)

Official Journal of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately, Inc.

A.P.S. Unit 18

Vol. 52

MARCH, 1990

No. 3, Whole No. 497

Published monthly except July and August - \$18.00 per year

Second Class Postage Paid at Lancaster, PA 17604

and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST, 1511 Clearview Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601

Editorial Staff

Managing Editor: Mirko L. Vondra, 1511 Clearview Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601

Assistant Editor: Gerald van Zanten, P.O. Box 159, Napier, New Zealand

Technical Editor: Adolf Hujer, Polska3, Prague, Czechoslovakia

Manager-Slovakia Study Group: Jack Benchik, P.O. Box 555, Notre Dame, IN 46556

Elected Officers

President: Charles Chesloe, 8300 South Wolf Rd., Willow Springs, IL 60480

Vice President: Jack Benchik, P.O. Box 555, Notre Dame, IN 46556

Secretary: Jane Sterba, 6624 Windsor Ave., Berwyn, IL 60402

Treasurer: Ludvik Z. Svoboda, 4766 South Helena Way, Aurora, CO 80015

Appointed Officers

Circuit Manager: Wolfgang Fritzsche, Box 8, Canandaigua, NY 14424

Expertizing Chairman: Edwin W. Lehecka, 217 Hazel Ave., Westfield, NJ 07090

Librarian: Richard Palaschak, 4050 Carbury Court, Chantilly, VA 22021

APS Representative: Henry Hahn, 2936 Rosemoor Lane, Fairfax, VA 22031

While discussing the subject with Mr. Lawrence at SEPAD, he indicated that he had spoken with various collectors (outside Czechoslovakia) who informed him that there were at least three or perhaps as many as five different genuine Scout cancels. They also contended that the cancelling took place in more than one office, which would seem to lend credence to their argument. However, it is on this allegation that I have to take exception. Nowhere in philatelic literature during the First Republic is there any mention that cancelling took place at more than one office. There may have been up to five different collecting stations, but I submit that genuine cancelling was done at only one office. As collectors, you must be aware that a vast majority of these covers were prepared privately for collectors after the fact. It is therefore my opinion that any assertion that there existed at least two cancelling offices has no basis in fact and is probably a concocted story to peddle bogus cancelled covers, some of which I have seen during the past few years at auctions in West Germany. I also caution buyers about auctions in Switzerland where such "phony" covers have been known to be prepared. Buy only those cancel types which are illustrated on page 110 of the Hirsch-Franek Handbook of 1935. If you buy anything else, you are taking a big chance.

### 2. The B-36 "Pošta 1919" Overprint

About a year ago, I purchased a variety of the Scott's B-36, the so-called greenish black overprint, at a German auction. It was a Type III copy of that overprint which I needed since I already possess Types I and II. I was happy to receive the registered envelope from West Germany because now I would fill the missing gap. When I opened the envelope, I saw a copy that looked exactly like a black overprint. Of course I was disturbed since the item was already paid for. I then immediately wrote the vendor firm and told them I was sending the stamp to Jan Karásek for his expert opinion. After a few "eternal" weeks, I finally received his response. He wrote that the overprint does appear to be "quite dark" but that it is indeed the greenish black overprint variety. Though not entirely satisfied, I accepted the decision. Nevertheless I would not mount it as Type III next to my other two copies which are unquestionably greenish black overprints.

I recall a conversation I had with Zdenek Kvasnička in Prague many years ago about this very topic. Mr. Kvasnička was very specific in pointing out one important fact: If the color does not appear to be that color to the naked eye, then it is not that true color. Searching for that color under an ultra-violet lamp does not alter this fact. What he was saying is if there is any doubt in one's mind that the naked eye is seeing brownish red or silver-grey or greenish black, the best decision is to leave it alone and not buy it.

### 3. Miscellaneous Published Material

PRAGA 88 published two hard-bound books along with their Specialized Handbook (Specializovaná Příručka). One of them is a dark green covered book entitled Czechoslovak Philately (Československá Filatelie). It has several photos in it in which the material illustrated is highly suspect and is the property of a famous and serious Czech collector. On page 117, it shows a red imperforate 20 h. Hradčany on a commercial cover cancelled at Opava. The cancels on the cover and on the stamp itself just do not correspond. There is no trace of the word "Troppau" anywhere on the cancel of the stamp itself. The outside circle looks somewhat oblong or bowed. Whatever markings are on the stamp cancel are indistinct whereas the text on the cover cancel is legible. All intersecting points of both circles are unbroken which is very unusual.

There are also two covers from Eastern Silesia with "SO 1920" overprints on pages 158 and 159. They show the imperforate 10 h. and 20 h. with the cancel of "Trstená - 27.III.20-12-a".

First of all, these values were not found in the postoffice at Trstená, so the best one could hope for is that they are philatelic covers. However, I have several "SO 1920" covers and parcel clippings from Trstená and the cancellations look entirely different. The two covers show a rather shabby crudely-formed cancel with poor lettering and date markings. My cancels have well-formed lettering and date markings. I am therefore reasonably certain the illustrated cancels in the above-mentioned book are forgeries. It would be interesting to ascertain if the "Mrnák" expert's

mark is genuine. As best as I can make out, the "Karásek" mark appears genuine, but I would not hesitate to ask Mr. Karásek to carefully re-examine those covers and compare them with my many Trstená cancels.

The other book published by PRAGA 88 is the blue-covered "Katalog for PRAGA 88". Page 123 again shows the red imperforate 20 h. Hradčany on the same cover.

In the January Specialist Adolf Hujer showed some airmail covers of the first airmail issue that were identified as forgeries by the expert, Jan Karasek. I submit that this type of forged cancel is shown in the green book on page 131. This particular cancel is "PRAHA 1" instead of "BRNO 1" as was shown on the covers illustrated in the Specialist. The cancel appears exactly the same as on the known forged covers. Compare that cancel with the genuine one on pages 130 and 132 of the green book and on pages 136 and 137 in the blue book (Katalog PRAGA 88).

The problem here is that many of the stalwart pillars of Czechoslovak philately have either passed away or are too elderly to be active. There is a new breed taking over and unfortunately many of them are mercenary and greedy. Hopefully now with the turn of the political scene in Czechoslovakia, these dealers and/or collectors will be held accountable for their deeds and not be allowed to shirk their responsibilities because they were in political favor. This applies to parties both inside and outside the country.

### THE 6 h. NEWSPAPER BLACKPRINT

*by Tomáš Morovics*

Not long ago, I had the occasion to examine some blackprints of the 6 h. newspaper stamp showing the "Sokol in Flight". There were 14 pieces, including three blocks of 4, which roused my curiosity because they appeared on thick white chalky paper. After I made some initial observations, it became evident they evolved from the same five plate positions.

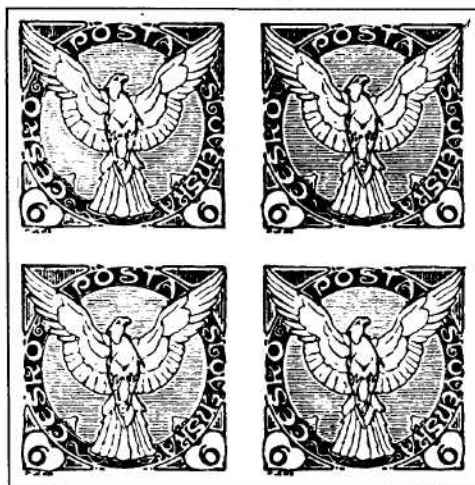


Fig. 1

Considering the number of pieces involved, the likelihood of that being a coincidence seemed remote. The trial prints lacked typical sharpness and, after comparing them with genuine blackprints of the same denomination, I concluded they were counterfeits (see fig. 1).

These 14 pieces seem to carry a whole line of markings identifying them with genuine blackprints. Therefore I find it necessary to go into some detail as to just how these counterfeits originated. As a guide, the forger used a block of original stamps printed on the first plate. He photographed a block of them, specifically positions 14, 15, 24, 25 and 34. With the help of the negative, he succeeded in engraving a printer's block in the actual dimensions of the original. It is likely that there were six stamps in this block since five positions have been pinpointed.

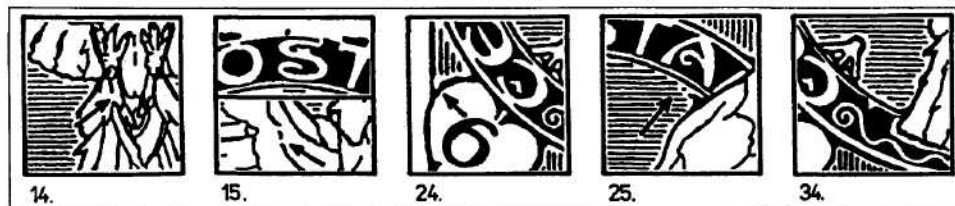


Fig. 2

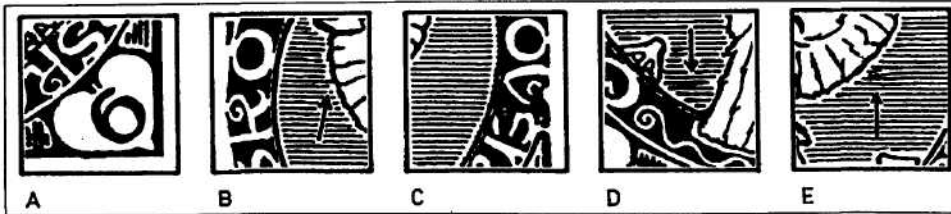


Fig. 3

The real stamps are not of high quality, especially those printed on the first plate. In one row, the colors run together. These faults would naturally have to carry over on to the printer's block prepared by the forger. Inasmuch as the red dye on the real stamps did not sufficiently contrast with the tone of the paper they were printed on, the counterfeits could not be made to look foolproof. Furthermore, the lines in the background surrounding the Sokol bird and the upper triangular corners were unclear in the counterfeit. To correct this, the forger re-etched the lines around the bird on all five positions, but not in the upper corners. As a result, the counterfeits in their finished form show background lines which break up around the bird and tend to blend together in the upper corners. The breakup of background lines gives the appearance of milling, especially on the left side below the wing and left of the tail. Besides that, note the crude outline of the top of the bird's right wing and of the lower part of the circular frame containing the word "Slovenská".

As already mentioned, the forger used as a model a photo of the real stamps so that whatever faults already existed on them were transposed to the counterfeits. The following original faults are shown in fig. 2:

- (14) Damaged outline of the Sokol bird's right leg.
- (15) A fine spot above the letter "S". A broken line at the center of the bird's wing.
- (24) Lengthening of the triangular panel directly above the left numeral plate.
- (25) An interrupted horizontal line creating a dot beneath the letter "A" in "Pošta".

Attention is drawn to the fact that these plate faults appear in these positions on the original blackprints. However, the counterfeits contain these as well as other faults which arose during the engraving and re-etching of the background lines. Here are some new separate faults which can be detected when viewing fig. 3:

Counterfeit A - The vertical edge of the right numeral plate has been thickened and straightened.

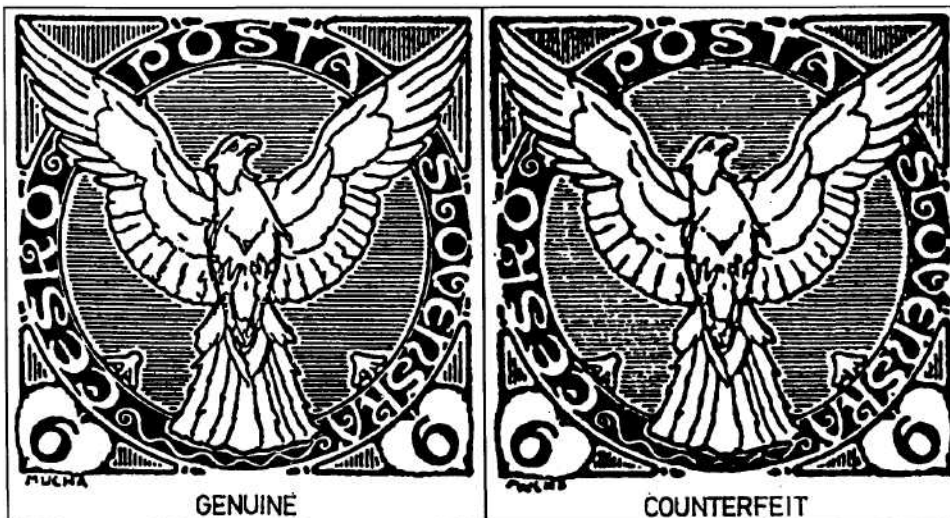


Fig. 4

Fig. 5

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Counterfeit B - One of the background lines between "K" and "O" in "Česko" touches the wing.

Counterfeit C - There is a large colored spot at "VE" in "Slovensko".

Counterfeit D - Slanted joining of two background lines to the left of the tail (due to faulty re-etching).

Counterfeit E - Division of a background line at end below right wing (seen in fig. 1).

It is my opinion that the forger produced his stamps in blocks of six. If that is true, then there exists a Counterfeit F, which came into existence following the photographing of plate position 35 and which has yet to be identified.

Of course there are many minor flaws to be found on these counterfeits. I have merely touched upon the more obvious ones that are sufficient to distinguish between what is genuine and what is not. For example, note the "Mucha" signature below the left numeral on fig. 4 (Genuine) and compare with the signature of fig. 5 (Counterfeit). However, because of redrawing on the original, that is not a definitive sign. This has been the subject of a previous article. (see Specialist, Nov. 1989, pages 2 and 3).

In conclusion, I wish to express my gratitude to František Žampach and Ing. Jan Karásek for their valuable assistance on this project.

## WHAT'S NEW IN NEW ISSUES

by Adolf Hujer and M.L. Vondra



Fig. 1

Events in Eastern Europe are moving so fast these days, one dare not glance at another part of the globe lest he miss a key development at home.

"Home" is Czechoslovakia to many people living abroad. Many of them have either emigrated or defected elsewhere rather than accept the deplorable conditions of the past forty years. Those who remained had a choice: tow the Communist hardline or resist and suffer the consequences. While writers like Milan Kundera and Arnošt Lustig sought haven in other lands, playwrights like Vaclav Havel remained behind and spent years in prison. But change came swiftly, thanks to the efforts of the Civic Forum which Havel led to victory. That "victory" is still hanging by a thread if one considers that of the ministers in the present government, the reformers outnumber the Communist by only one.

But all that is a far cry from conditions as they existed prior to December 1989. Havel is now President, albeit holding office temporarily pending final elections. In the meantime, a shambles will possibly result from the Schedule of New Issues for 1990 that ARTIA announced last October and which we printed in the January issue, pages 13 and 14. On January 9, a new 50 h. stamp bearing the likeness of Havel has emerged from Prague's Printing Office (see fig. 1). Note its similarity in format, and size to the President Ludvik Svoboda stamp that was issued during the Prague Spring of 1968 (see Scott no. 1540-1541).

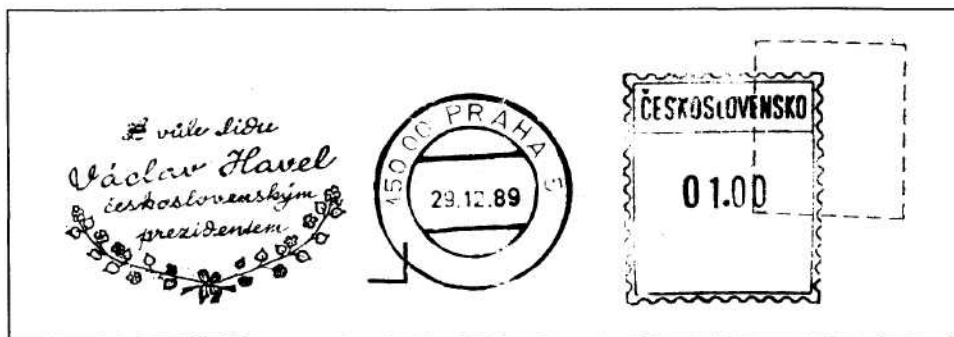


Fig. 2

In addition, a special red cancellation honoring the election of Vaclav Havel was introduced on December 29, 1989. The text is set within a half-wreath and reads "Z vůle lidu - Vaclav Havel - Československým Presidentem" (By the will of the people - Vaclav Havel - President of Czechoslovakia). (see fig. 2).

As for the Velvet Revolution itself, we all have been witness to those historic events in the last two months of 1989. We have seen it daily on our television screens; we have read about it in newspapers and magazines; we have lived and re-lived those memorable events as if we had been right there.

But why a "Velvet" Revolution? The phrase was coined by French journalists. It is "velvet" because it was non-violent; yet it was instigated by one of the most brutal acts of police violence against Czech students ever seen in that country.

In last month's editorial on page 13, we were informed about the "Civic Forum" that was so much in the forefront of televised news reports. And we also learned about the less-publicized "Citizens' Forum" that was organized within the philatelic community. Now we are told that not only has Ladislav Dvořáček resigned as President of the Federal Union of Czechoslovak Philatelists, but the Union has served notice that he has no authority to represent its members in his capacity as President of F.I.P. In addition, J. Švarc has resigned as President of the Czechoslovak Union of Philatelists. Furthermore, the two Unions with assistance from the Citizens' Forum are expected to undertake a thorough investigation of the rash of recent forgeries and counterfeits that has plagued the philatelic community in that country.

Keep looking and you will doubtless see some considerable changes in the schedule of new issues for this year. Some of these changes might even be officially unannounced and may take place "on the spur of the moment" as, for example, the Masaryk stamp. It is a time for change - change is everywhere! We are all witnessing the changing tides of history!

### Book Review

## A PHILATELIC HANDBOOK

*Reviewed by G. M. van Zanten*

A new philatelic handbook titled "Filatelistická Příručka" has been published in three volumes by the Czechoslovak Philatelic Union in Prague. Written and compiled by Tomáš Šilhan, it deals exclusively with Airmail Postal Stationery during the period from 1959 to 1987.

The volumes are divided into the following headings and Table of Contents;

Vol. I	Introduction	5
	Aerogrammes — description	7
	Type of format	10
	Recognition of format on printing plate	12
	Stamp	21
	Color of printing	24
	Paper and glue used	25
	Aerogrammes — Individual issues	27
	Aerogrammes without stamps	39
	Aerogrammes with Private overprints	46
	Pigeongrammes	51
	Officially issued Pigeongrammes	52
	Private conversion of Aerogrammes to Pigeongrammes	57
	Conclusions	61
	Survey of Aerogrammes and Pigeongrammes	62
	Literature	64
Vol. II	Introduction	5
	Airmail envelopes	
	Postal usage	7

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

	Classification of printing	8
	Envelopes production, TUS sign	9
	Paper	13
	Technical standards	19
	Special airmail envelopes	21
	Airmail envelopes with Official overprints	84
	Conclusions and remarks	100
	Survey of Airmail envelopes	102
	Literature and sources	106
Vol. III	Introduction	5
	Airmail cards	
	Postal usage	7
	Printing	8
	Paper	10
	Technical standards	12
	Special airmail cards	13
	Airmail cards with Official overprints	75
	Conclusions and remarks	78
	Survey of Airmail cards	80
	Literature and sources	83
	ČSN 88 4674 card	87

Aerogrammes cover the period of 1959-1973 except for one additional aerogramme with private overprint issued in 1979 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Malacký gymnasium of which there were only 50 printed.

Good technical description is given of all the different formats used and the individual formats types.

Additional details given are of the stamp engraver and designer, colors, paper, quantities issued.

Airmail envelopes cover the period 1974-1987. Excellent technical description is given on all the aspects of production and printing, including paper, glue, optical qualities. Individual envelopes are described with additional details about the designer and engraver of the stamps, the special occasion they were designed for and the number issued for each type.

Airmail cards cover the period 1975-1987. Excellent technical description is given on all the aspects of production and printing including paper and optical qualities. Individual cards are described with additional details about the stamp designer and engraver and the special occasion for which they were designed. This includes the number issued for each type and the period of usage.

The booklets are a must for anyone interested in modern aerophilately. The author has obviously gone to great lengths compiling the available information and credit must go to him for producing these three booklets. A word of thanks and appreciation also goes out to the Union of Czechoslovak Philatelists for publishing them — an invaluable aid for the serious collector.

### SOCIETY ANNOUNCES AUCTION

The following pages comprise the mail auction catalog sponsored jointly by our Society and Tribuna Stamp Co. This is the same auction that the Society had planned to hold last September at INDYPEX and last October at SEPAD. The officers of both of these national exhibits had requested that no private or Society auctions be held during the shows and we naturally complied. This mail auction is the result of the above developments.

Please support your Society ! Participate in the bidding and be a winner ! Winning bids will be announced in a subsequent issue of the Specialist.



# THE ART OF THE ESSAYIST

by Henry Hahn

The days when the designing of Czechoslovak stamps was a highly competitive business, when firms such as Haase and Unie submitted essays to the postal administration and when great artists like Benda and Obrovsky responded to calls for contests are gone. But some of us still enjoy leafing through our album pages displaying essays as well as "essays" (the quotation marks are added as the rendering moves across an ill-defined border between an official request and a commercial venture or even further toward exploitation of the collector). Nevertheless such names as Josef Zvěfna, Hlava, A. Madrunka, F. Kysela, Rijáček, Jáchym, Matouš and Kupla are not forgotten.



I am therefore delighted to report that the tradition of the private essay still lives in the artistic hand of Marisa Morgan, SCP member number 1436, who lives in Miami, Fla. Many of us have met Marisa at BALPEX, NAPEX and elsewhere, mostly in the company of Earl Galitz, our assistant commissioner at PRAGA 88 and a prominent collector and postal historian of the Bulgarian and Balkan area. Though Marisa was in Sofia at the last FIP International Exhibition, she was not so lucky as to be present at PRAGA 88. Instead, she and her mother spent the time at our home in Fairfax, Va. which gave her the opportunity to brush up on some of her creative endeavors. Upon my return from Prague that year, she presented me with three original essays which I wish to share with our readers. (see Illustrations).

Clearly inspired by her native Floridian habitat, her essays will hopefully light a few fires under our new and reformed Czech postal authorities and awaken them to the realization that a Rusalka (Water Nymph) set is long overdue. The delightful frog might almost be lifted in toto as he happily listens to the Marvelous "Měsíčku na Nebi" aria from Dvořák's Rusalka. As for the other essays, Brunšvík, the legendary Bohemian sailor, would feel right at home considering all the stamps of ships that Czechoslovakia has issued these last few years (see April 1983 Specialist, pgs. 1, 2, 3; Oct. 1989 Specialist, pgs. 12,13, 14).

Clearly inspired by her native Floridian habitat, her essays will hopefully light a few fires under our new and reformed Czech postal authorities and awaken them to the realization that a Rusalka (Water Nymph) set is long overdue. The delightful frog might almost be lifted in toto as he happily listens to the Marvelous "Měsíčku na Nebi" aria from Dvořák's Rusalka. As for the other essays, Brunšvík, the legendary Bohemian sailor, would feel right at home considering all the stamps of ships that Czechoslovakia has issued these last few years (see April 1983 Specialist, pgs. 1, 2, 3; Oct. 1989 Specialist, pgs. 12,13, 14).

## The President's Corner

### 1. HRAĎCANY POSTAGE DUES



Fig. 1



Fig. 1A

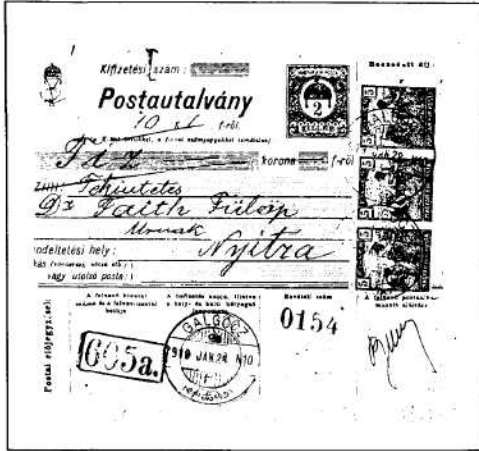


Fig. 2



Fig. 2A

Two unusual parcel clippings (close to being parcel entire) show how the Hradčany stamps were used as postage dues. The parcel forms are Hungarian and were used in Slovakia.

The 80 filler green Parliament was mailed on Jan. 7, 1919 from Galgocz (Hungarian for "Hlokovec") to Szakolcza (Uherská Skalica)(see fig. 1) where a 5 h. Hradčany was applied as additional postage upon payment of that amount by the recipient (see fig 1A).

The strip of three 5 filler green Reaper stamps was sent on Jan. 28, 1919, also from Galgocz, to Nyitra (Nitra)(see fig. 2) and a 10 h. Hradčany applied as postage due. (see fig. 2A). Note the "Nyitra" cancel in the upper left corner with the date "Dec. 30" which of course was a mistake and was corrected by the other two cancels.

## 2. CZECHOSLOVAK FIELDPOST

Communications between members of the Czechoslovak military in Great Britain and our people in the U.S.A. makes for some interesting covers. Fig. 3 shows an A.P.O. cover sent from an Army hospital in Miami, Florida, to a Corporal Joseph Sikora in Great Britain. Note in the lower



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

left-hand corner the approval of a U.S. Army censor, 1st Lt. Margie A. Tyll and also the censor tape "EXAMINER 3500". Note the clear bold receiving cancel of the "Czechoslovak Fieldpost, 28 May 1943" which is in purple. This was a commemorative cancel issued by the Fieldpost honoring the birthday of the President-in Exile, Dr. Edward Beneš.

Fig. 4 shows a civilian cover franked with the Trans-Atlantic rate of 30 cents to a Sergeant Pavel Borek with the Czechoslovak forces. Note the receiving cancel dated 13 June 1944. It was censored by "EXAMINER 770", but not signed.

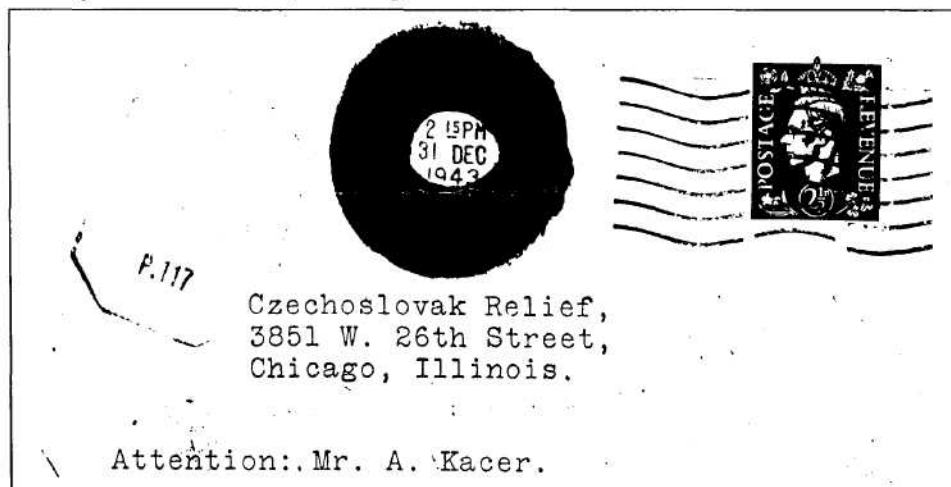


Fig. 5

A cover mailed by someone in the military to a relief organization in Chicago, Illinois is the subject of Fig. 5. The cancel showing the town where the letter was mailed from has been blacked out due to military security. Barely visible is an octagonal-shaped British censor marking with a crown and "P. 117".

Fig. 6 reveals a cover without franking, but with labels, addressed to our Society's founder, Mr. J. W. Lowey. Franking was not required since the party who mailed it was "on active military



Fig. 6

duty". The return address has been eradicated and a censor tape "P.C.90" applied for security reasons and also "passed by censor no. 4431".

Most of the covers illustrated in these two parts were found in dealers' boxes at various philatelic shows and bourses. If you have the patience and perserverence to search, you too might find a few hidden gems suitable for your collection.

C. C.

**Editorial Hinges**

**HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE**

In our May 1989 issue, page 19, and our June 1989 issue, page 4, Henry Hahn discussed the new point system of judging which was adopted by the F.I.P. and used internationally for the first time at PRAGA 88.

In the October 1989 issue of the Philatelic Exhibitor, Henry Hahn continued his discourse on the new point system and how he applied it as chairman of the judging panel at NAPEX 89. In it, he states that "the format of the judging sheet was similar to that used in judging PRAGA 88, except that the attribute 'CONDITION and rarity', representing 30 of the 100 points in traditional FIP exhibits was rated 25 points at NAPEX 89, and the point count for 'PRESENTATION', representing only 5 points at FIP shows was increased to 10 points. This was done to reflect the general custom in the U.S. to emphasize presentation and assign somewhat lesser weight to rarity. The remaining two attributes were rated as 30 points for 'IMPORTANCE AND TREATMENT' and 35 points for 'KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH', for a total of 100 points. Due to the absence of two sizes of medals resulting in a difference in the number of award levels, the form was revised to show '90 and over' required for gold, '80 and over' for vermeil, '70 and over' for silver, '60 and over' for bronze-silver, '50 and over' for bronze and 'below 50' for diploma or certificate of participation."

He continues that "the results were mixed, though encouraging in many ways. The experiment was seriously flawed because the judges received no prior notice and in many instances

were unfamiliar with the FIP rules and procedures. The exhibitors were also unaware, though this was of little consequence since in no instance did the point count prevail when in conflict with the majority of the judges exercising the 'gut feeling' approach."

He observed that "the judges themselves, including two competent and knowledgeable apprentices, were about evenly divided in their attitude toward use of the system. As expressed by the judges at the critique, the division appeared to be mainly of age. It appeared that some of the more senior judges on the panel were not familiar with the four basic attributes as defined by FIP and some had difficulty in conceptualizing or relating subjective impressions to numbers. One judge believed that a zero rating of an attribute constituted abstention from voting which of course it does not..."

Hahn concluded his article by calling on judges accredited as "general" to have an in-depth knowledge of all exhibiting classes - "aside from venerability and long experience."

This, in the eyes of your editor, appears to be the crux of the judging problem at least in this country. Participation by our Society at INDYPEX 89 was a glaring example. There were some outstanding exhibits of Czechoslovakia material which the "accredited" judges simply did not understand. For fear that they might "overrate" some of these exhibits, they downgraded them by simply passing over them when awarding the "Grand" and the "Gold" medals. In this manner, they "played it safe" while at the same time penalizing the exhibitors because of their own shortcomings. This is inequity in its most blatant form.

Henry Hahn is to be applauded for bringing this vital statistic out in the open so it can be fairly aired in the philatelic community. While judging may be on the minds of many who exhibit competitively and with frequency especially at international shows, there is a large group of collectors who are more concerned with what they can amass at the least cost to themselves rather than exhibiting. A major portion of our members treat philately as a hobby with which they can play in their spare time. They enjoy trading and exchanging. As bargain hunters, they will buy when the price is down and sell when a reasonable profit can be realized.

On that point, John Ross, writing in the January 29 issue of Linn's Stamp News, made an interesting observation about the early Airmail issues of Czechoslovakia. He noted that "the 1990 Scott catalog prices list the hinged, imperf set Scott C1-3 at \$49.75, down nearly 40 dollars from the 1989 catalog value. The set in lightly hinged condition sells in Europe for approximately 60 dollars." In other words, Ross recommends this set as a bargain at that price.

While it is true that Scott Publishing Co. has dropped many of its prices on most countries to reflect true market value, it seems somewhat puzzling why they also dropped prices on items whose values are currently on the rise and are actually selling at prices Scott quoted in its catalog a year ago.

By those members who are missing the above airmail issue or wish additional copies for their collection, Ross' advice should be heeded. But beware! Many of these overprints have been illegally produced. Unless the collector knows exactly what to look for, he should resist buying those stamps without proper expertization.

As for the drop in their catalog value, that is a contrivance only the compilers of Scott's Catalog can explain. One thing seems certain: Czechoslovakia as a philatelic subject is not held in high esteem by the powers at Scott Publishing. Great Britain, including its present and former colonies, tops the priority list. Also high on that list are Germany and Israel. Even tiny Guernsey seems more popular philatelically than Czechoslovakia. This of course is a situation that our Society is seeking to correct.

Recently one of our members (Phillips Freer) submitted an interesting picture postcard to your editor for analysis (see fig. 1). The picture is of no consequence. What is puzzling is the imprint of a stamp in the upper right corner with no denomination, showing the profile of a blind man surrounded by this text: "Union of Blind Czechoslovak — " (the last word appears partly obliterated). Clearly this is not a postally-recognized imprint of an official stamp. Might it be a seal or a label? And what about the date stamped to the left of it? (March 28, 1939). Is

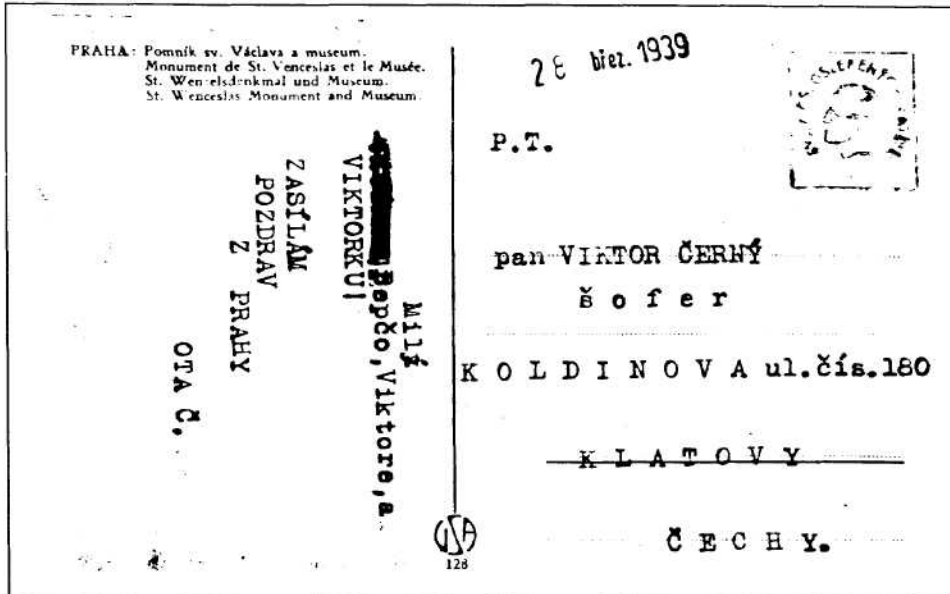


Fig. 1

that a postal date cancel or a private stamping record?

Nazi Germany occupied the so-called Sudetenland in October 1938. The rest of Czechoslovakia was invaded on March 15, 1939. This card seems to have gone from a man in Prague to a relative in Klatovy, Čechy (Bohemia) during the period of political crisis and international upheaval. Was this card delivered through official postal channels where the lack of proper franking was overlooked (either accidentally or deliberately) or was it delivered by private courier? If any one can provide a reliable and valid explanation, please contact your editor or write to Phillips Freer, Apartado Postal 646, Oaxaca, Oax. 68000, Mexico.

Recently Gerald van Zanten sent us an interesting cover he received in the mail about a year ago. Thinking it was a miniature sheet, he could not find a listing for it. On careful examination, he noticed that the piece had been sewn along the left side. From this he concluded the piece was a page from a postal booklet (see fig. 3).

M.L.V.

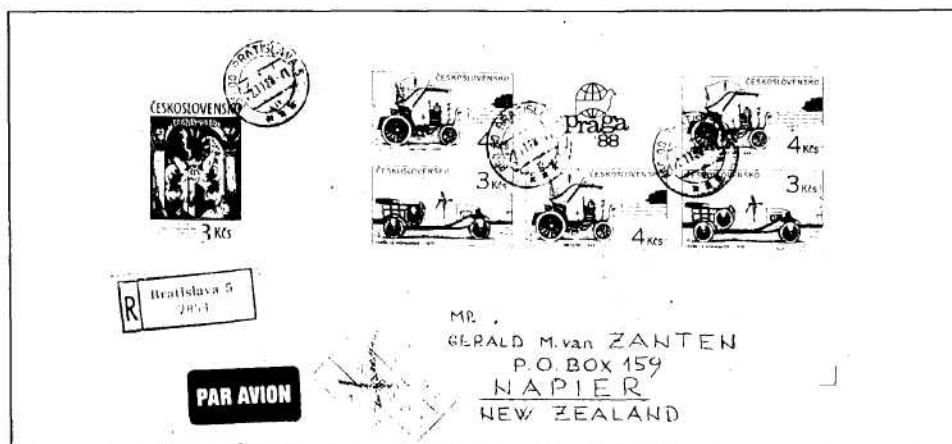


Fig. 2

### **WANTED — OLD SPECIALISTS**

Your Society continues to compile and bind old Specialists since there is an increasing demand for them from our members. At the moment, we are concentrating on the fifties and sixties. We are missing the following issues:

May 1959  
October 1960  
January 1964

If anyone has an extra copy of any or all of these three issues, a donation of them to our Society will be greatly appreciated. Please send your extra copy of Specialists to the editor:

Mirko Vondra  
1511 Clearview Ave.  
Lancaster, PA 17601

### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain is planning a joint meeting with American and Czechoslovak members of our Society followed by dinner at the Czechoslovak Club on May 12, 1990 at 6:00 PM. This is during the International Stamp Show being held in London on May 3 through May 13 called "Stamp World 1990".

Reservations are limited and are on a first-come, first-served basis. Cost of dinner is ten British pounds. Please make your reservations as soon as possible with the British Society's secretary:

Mrs. D. Y. Gren  
146 Old Shoreham Road  
Shoreham-by-the Sea  
Great Britain BN43 5TE.

### **CHANGES IN SALES CIRCUIT FEES**

In last year's issue of the Specialist on pages 9, 10 and 11, we discussed the Society's Sales and Exchange Department which is now called the Sales Circuit Division. Its history was traced from the beginning in 1940 to the present. This was followed by a listing of the Division's Rules and Regulations.

These Rules are now being modified because of an increase in insurance rates. Effective immediately, every member receiving a Sales Circuit from our Society's Circuit manager is required to pay \$1.50 into the insurance fund instead of the \$1.00 previously assessed.

Those members who presently have circuits in their possession are requested to change the instructions on their route sheets calling for a \$1.00 payment. Please change that amount to read \$1.50. Eventually all route sheets and all report sheets will be printed to show that a \$1.50 insurance payment is required.

Your sales manager thanks the participating members for their cooperation.

W.F.

**HE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST**

**(USPS 808300)**

**1511 CLEARVIEW AVE.  
LANCASTER, PA 17601**

**- Forwarding and Return Postage Guaranteed -**

**Second Class**  
Postage Paid  
Lancaster, PA 17604  
and additional  
mailing offices.