



# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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Official Monthly Journal of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately, Inc.

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A. P. S. Unit 18

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## EDITORIAL

Our Society plans to hold an auction at CHICAGOPEX this November. Although some material has already been submitted, we want this auction to be a big success inasmuch as the proceeds will benefit the Society's treasury and thereby hopefully enable us to hold the line on future membership dues.

If you have any suitable philatelic material on Czechoslovakia or even on such related material as pre-stamp Czechoslovak territories please send it AS SOON AS POSSIBLE to our President, Charles Chesloe at 8300 South Wolf Road, Willow Springs, Illinois 60480.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| <i>Articles</i>   | <i>Author</i>     | <i>Page</i> |
|---|-------------------|-------------|
| 1. Board Election Results   |                   | 3           |
| 2. The Latest Hradčany Forgeries.....   | Tomáš Morovics    | 4           |
| 3. In Search of the Church at Yasinia.....  | Ingert Kuzych     | 6           |
| 4. CHICAGOPEX Program Announced   |                   | 3           |
| 5. First Flight: New York-Prague-New York .....   | Vladimír Bubák    | 9           |
| 6. A New Philatelic Society in Czechoslovakia .....   | Henry Hahn        | 12          |
| 7. Comments on Current Czechoslovak Security Engr. ....   | Gene Hessler      | 13          |
| 8. Airmail Overprint Flaws .....  | Tomáš Morovics    | 15          |
| <i>Columns</i>  |                   |             |
| 9. President's Corner (a) Fifty Years of Devotion<br>(b) Help the Successor<br>(c) A Slovakia Increment<br>(d) An Overprint Bonus ..... | Charles Chesloe   | 16          |
| 10. Editorial Hinges (a) A Tale of Two SPECIALISTS<br>(b) The Index<br>(c) Wanted: More Back Issues .....                               | Mirko L. Vondra   | 18          |
| 11. Letters to the Editor   |                   | 20          |
| 12. Library Notes: Latest Additions .....   | Richard Palaschak | 21          |
| 13. For the Beginner: The First Issues .....  | Phillips Freer    | 22          |

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Here is a list of all benefits to which S.C.P. members in good standing are fully entitled:

1. A sales and exchange circuit is operated by Jack Benchik. The circuit itself has been fully written up in the Aug/ Sept. 1989 SPECIALIST, page 8. For complete details, contact Jack Benchik, P.O. Box 555, Notre Dame, Ind. 46556.
2. A book sales division is run by Edwin Lehecka. Ads listing philatelic books for sale appear regularly in the SPECIALIST. For further information, contact Ed Lehecka, 217 Hazel Ave., Westfield, NJ 07090.
3. A Society library is housed with Richard Palaschak, librarian. A complete write-up including contents of the library last appeared in the June 1989 SPECIALIST, page 10. For inquiries on borrowing books or making book donations, contact Dick Palaschak, 113 Joyes Lane, Dover, NJ 07801.
4. An expertization committee operates under the direction of Edwin Lehecka. Depending on the nature or substance of the item to be expertized, he will direct you to the appropriate source for expertization. Please contact Ed Lehecka at 217 Hazel Ave., Westfield, NJ 07090.
5. Stamp auctions are currently conducted through Tribuna Stamp Co., in Chicago and ads announcing forthcoming auctions appear regularly in the SPECIALIST. For catalogs and bid forms or for information on submission of philatelic material for future auctions, contact Charles Chesloe, 8300 South Wolf Road, Willow Springs, Ill. 60480.
6. THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST is the official bi-monthly publication of the Society. For inquiries on obtaining back issues, contributing original articles of related significance, translating articles from Czech to English, advertising rates and bound copies, contact Mirko Vondra, editor, 1511 Clearview Ave., Lancaster, PA 17601.

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**HEDY LOWEY, S.C.P. MEMBER NO. 1**

Hedy Lowey, wife of the founder of our Society, Joseph Lowey, passed away on May 15 at the age of 88. She is survived by her daughter, Judith Lowey Bar-Nadav, by her four grand-children, Joseph, Meiron, Talie and Hadora, and by her great grandson, Michael David. Our thoughts of their deep sorrow go out to all of them.

Born in Rohozec, Czechoslovakia, she lived the major part of her life in the U.S. In her last twenty years, she wrote for the *Co-op City Times*. She also maintained a wide correspondence with prominent individuals in her native country, as well as in the U.S. and in the U.K. Her life was filled with a passion for philately and her collection includes letters signed by Eisenhower, Roosevelt, Churchill, Masaryk, Beneš and French ambassador Couget, along with many others. Her family will remember her as a great humanitarian, a loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

Those who had attended the general meeting of the S.C.P. at SEPAD on October 7, 1989 may recall being privileged to see and hear her speak in touching words after receiving a special plaque honoring her husband's work on behalf of the Society he founded in 1939. (see Dec. 1989 SPECIALIST, page 3).

Joseph Lowey died on January 18, 1949. In tribute to him, a feature article appeared on page 1 of the January 1979 SPECIALIST. His widow now joins him in his peaceful rest.

Those wishing to send late condolences may do so by writing to Judith Lowey Bar-Nadav, 38-20 Berdan Ave., Fairlawn, N.J. 07410.



Hedy Lowey  
with Granddaughter, Talie

**BOARD ELECTION RESULTS**

The election of members to the newly-expanded Board of Directors ended on May 31. The votes have been tabulated and certified by members George Kobyłka and Ed Linhart.

The following have been elected to the Board with the vote count shown next to each name.

For a six-year term:

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| Charles Chesloe    | 31 |
| Jane Sterba        | 29 |
| Edwin Lehecka      | 28 |
| Richard Palatschak | 26 |
| Jerry Verner       | 26 |

For a four-year term:

|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| Phillips Freer     | 25 |
| Jack Benchik       | 24 |
| Robert Kolschalk   | 24 |
| Richard Major      | 23 |
| Frederick Lawrence | 21 |

So everyone clearly understands how this system works, the Board has been expanded from ten to fifteen directors, according to the newly-revised By-laws which will be published later this year. Of the existing ten-person Board, five are retiring; the remaining five listed below have two years left before their terms expire:

|                |                |              |
|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Vladimír Bubák | Frank Julsen   | Mirko Vondra |
| Henry Hahn     | Ludvik Svoboda |              |

The outgoing five directors have been replaced by the five newly-elected members with the highest number of votes. Those directors will serve a total of six years. The five newly-created seats will be filled by the five members receiving the next highest number of votes. They will serve a total of four years.

Congratulations to the ten victorious candidates ! Remember—the next Board meeting takes place at CHICAGOPEX on Sunday, November 3 at 10 AM. President Chesloe will let the members know exactly where the meeting will take place when they arrive in Chicago.

## THE LATEST HRADČANY FORGERIES

by *Tomáš Morovics*

Translated by *Mírko L. Vondra*

We recently had an opportunity to study an extensive collection of Hradčany stamps which, among other things, contained a whole series of trial prints, blackprints and color varieties.

Our first review of this collection revealed that certain specimens of the 25h, 40h, 120h, 60h and 200h stamps exhibited color varieties that have heretofore been unknown to us. As we probed further with a view of analyzing the structural content of the paper used for printing along with its plate faults and the sharpness of the engraving, it became evident to us that we were dealing with a more recent group of forgeries to the detriment of First Republic collectors.

The following items were particularly suspect: the 25h dark violet (Pofis no. 11a, Scott no. 29), the 40h olive yellow (Pofis no. 170na, Scott no. 7), the 60h pale green (Pofis no. 171na, Scott no. 32), the 120h silver grey (Pofis no. 25a, Scott no. 36) and the 200h violet blue (Pofis no. 22a, Scott no. 9). Being fortunate to see several samples of each denomination, we concluded that there is an ample supply of these forgeries. It is impossible to guess at their numbers; only the forgerer knows.

Attesting to the fact that these forgeries emanate from the same source are certain conforming

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

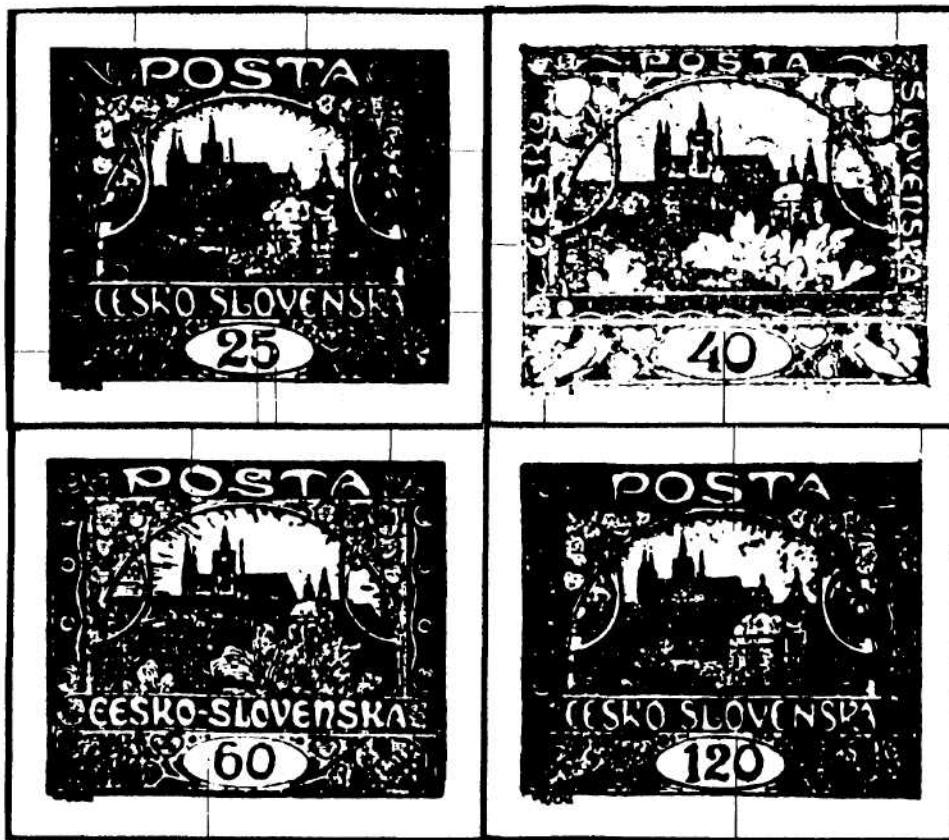


Fig. 3

Fig. 4



signs such as the common structure of the paper used. The individual forgeries can further be distinguished by other signs, the most prominent of which we detail below:

1. 25h forgeries exist in several shades of dark violet. Compared to genuine stamps, the following differences exist: a color projection in the left part of the top outer frame; a white dot to the right of the "T's" stem in "Pošta"; a colored dot to the left of the right-hand steeple; a deformed "O" in "Slovenská"; two white spots in the number "5" and the somewhat indistinct bordering of the picture (see fig. 1).

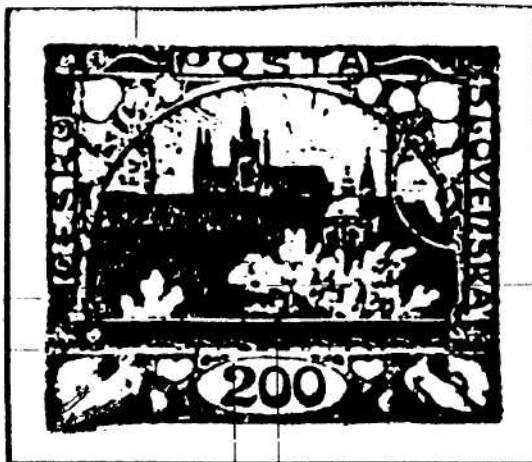


Fig. 5

2. 40h. This forgery can be identified

at first glance because the color used in the printing is a lemon-yellow as opposed to the olive-yellow of the genuine stamp. Other distinguishing marks are a color projection on the right side of the top outer frame, a break in the upper center of the oval frame surrounding the numeral, a very light outline of Mucha's signature and a damaged left outer frame just above the "C" in "Česko-" (see fig. 2).

3. 60h. The color of this forgery is much brighter than in the genuine stamp. The following imperfections are also in evidence: a color dot in the lower part of the "O" in "Pošta"; a color dot to the left of the numeral "6" and the engraving of the leaves is irregular and indistinct. Finally some of the samples showed heavy gumming on the reverse side (see fig. 3).

4. 200h. While the genuine stamp has a violet blue color (which means blue with an admixture of violet), the forgeries are blue violet, ie. violet with an admixture of blue. The forgeries clearly look artificial in the sense that the added color appears to contrast too severely with the original color. As for its distinguishing marks, we call particular attention to the left side of the upper horizontal border with its pronounced irregularities, a large dot on the left side of the bush of foliage, break in the white line directly beneath the bush and several breaks in the upper part of the oval surrounding the numerals. (see fig. 4).

Whether they be forgeries or, in fact, counterfeits, the particular danger they pose when compared to their genuine equivalents is not really the issue here. As part of the collection we examined, they were presented as trial prints mostly without gum (valued at under 100 kčs. or approximately three dollars). The danger lies in the fact that the kind of philatelic material they are purported to be is the kind often sought by research collectors. They make good exhibit material and are generally inexpensive.

Lately forgerers have turned their attention to the creation of various trial prints for the "enhancement" of specialized collections. It is axiomatic that collectors give greater scrutiny to material that is valued at around 5,000 kčs. or more (at least 170 dollars) than stamps worth only a fraction of that price. Even though the degree of loss may be relatively small in terms of monetary fraud, we nevertheless believe it is important to alert the unsuspecting collector of the existence of these new Hradčany forgeries. Especially those who expertize philatelic material should be aware that a new breed of counterfeits has recently surfaced.

**We welcome contributions of good philatelic articles for publication.**

## IN SEARCH OF THE CHURCH AT YASINIA (JASINA)

*by Inger Kuzych*

In a previous edition of the *SPECIALIST* (see April 1990 issue on page 9), I described the postal issues featuring the wooden church at Yasinia (referred to in Czech and in Slovak as Jasina). According to my sources, this is the Church of the Resurrection built in 1824. Not long after that article appeared, I became aware of other publications that cast some doubt on the name of the church and its date of construction. A number of these sources are described below.

A Ukrainian account of the origin of Yasinia and its church was translated into Slovak by Florian Krajník. This version was further translated into German by Father Viktor Schmack who included in it an article appearing in the *GABRIEL* journal of June 1964. An English translation of that article was made by Andrij Solczanyk and included in the *MARIAN PHILATELIST* of May 1969. It is this latter version that is quoted below:

“Archeological investigations and historic documents demonstrate that the village [site] has been in existence for over 4,000 years. A story told by inhabitants states that in 1535, Ivan Struk traveled from Galicia (Halychyna) to Hungary to purchase 400 sheep. On the way back, crossing the Carpathian Mountains, he came to the gorge of Yasinia and was caught there, under the Bukovinka Mountains, by severe winter weather. Since he and his shepherds had only light clothing, they were forced to flee, leave the sheep and return to Galicia. Ivan Struk, presuming his sheep had perished, returned to skin them the following spring. When he and his companions entered the gorge, they found, much to their surprise, that the sheep were alive and the herd had actually increased [in size] with the arrival of lambs. The shepherds perceived this as a magnificent gift of God. In thanksgiving, Ivan Struk built a wooden bell tower from nearby ash trees. In Ukrainian, the ash is called ‘Yasen’. From the word ‘Yasen’ came the name of the village, Yasinia.”

“In 1557, the companions of Ivan Struk settled on the slopes of the Bukovinka Mountains and at the same time constructed a church. The wooden structure—erected without any wedges—was strengthened by bolts in the 19th century. The church pictured on the stamp is still preserved today. Inside are four icons: one represents the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ, the second and third show the Apostles and the fourth depicts the Mother of God. Traditionally, only the faithful who lived on the right bank of the Chorna Tisa River (ie. on the bank on which the church is located) were buried in the cemetery near the church. Since 1962, no divine services have been held in the House of God, but it is protected as an architectural treasure.”

Although this chronicle is very interesting, it fails to furnish the name of the church. Not long after the *GABRIEL* article appeared, a “Catalogue of Marian Stamps” by W. J. Hoffman was released; it designated the structure as the Assumption Church. So the matter seemed to lie in the philatelic press until the appearance of my article.

To complicate matters even more, a 1988 issue of *UKRAINIAN ENGINEERING NEWS* (nos. 170–173) contained an article on Ukrainian wooden churches by Ivan Zayats; it included a photograph of the church at Yasinia, which it named the Ascension Church of 1824 !

Over the past couple of years, I have made a number of inquiries (all fruitless) regarding the true name of the church and its actual construction date. It was not until recently that I was able to contact Dr. Titus Hewryk at the University of Pennsylvania. He has made himself something of an expert on Ukrainian wooden churches and wrote an excellent book, “Masterpieces in Wood-Houses of Worship in the Ukraine”.

After consulting several sources, Dr. Hewryk confirmed my original findings that the structure is indeed called the Church of the Resurrection and that it was built in 1824. However, he stressed that these facts do not disprove the traditional account of the 16th century founding of the church and village. Many wooden structures have been rebuilt after decades or even centuries of exposure and use, often in the shape of the original structure, though sometimes in a new style. The church at Yasinia, which is still referred to as "The Struk Church", was most likely reconstructed in 1824, perhaps reusing many original timbers. A hint of this rebuilding survives in the traditional account which states that "the wooden structure . . . was strengthened by bolts in the 19th century."

The mystery of why the structure was also referred to as the Ascension Church may lie in the similarity of the Ukrainian words for the "Ascension" (vozesennya) and the "Resurrection" (voskresannya). An additional mixup may have occurred between the "Assumption" of the Virgin Mary and the "Ascension" of Jesus Christ. Religious nomenclature and terminology have been known to sometimes obscure the facts of history.

Illustrated here is a limited edition 1989 commemorative cover released by the Ukrainian Philatelic Society of Austria to honor the 50th anniversary of Carpatho-Ukraine's independence. Shown on the cachet is an enlargement of the famous 3 kcs. 1939 Carpatho-Ukraine stamp featuring the Resurrection Church at Yasinia. The Dec. 3, 1989 cancellation, designed by Auguste Böcskör, is modeled after the vignette of that same stamp. The reverse of the cover contains commemorative information in three languages: German, Ukrainian and English.

Persons interested in obtaining this cover may do so by writing to:

Ukrainischer Briefmarken - Sammlerverein in Österreich  
 A - 1010 Wien, Schönlaterngasse 7/8  
 Austria

Though I am not certain of the price, I believe a 5 dollar payment should cover the costs.

I acknowledge with gratitude and appreciation the kind assistance of Andrij Solczanyk in the preparation of this article.



**References:**

- Hewryk, Titus. *Masterpieces in Wood - Houses of Worship in Ukraine*. New York: The Ukrainian Museum, 1987.
- Hoffman, W. J. *Catalogue of Mariam Stamps*. Orange, CA: Mariam Philatelic Study Group, 1966. (This publication states that Czechoslovakia No. 145 depicts the Church of the Assumption in Jasina but Carpatho-Ukraine No. 1 shows St. Mary's Church in Jasina!)
- Krajnik, Florian. "Die Ukrainische Holzkirche in Jasina" (The Ukrainian Wooden Church in Jasina). *Gabriel* No. 6 (June 1964) 180-181.
- Magocsi, Paul and Zapletal, Florian. *Wooden Churches in the Carpathians*. Vienna: W. Braumüller, 1982. ISBN 3 7003 0311 4.
- Solczanyk, Andrij D. "The Church of the Dormition [Assumption] of Our Lady, Jasina." *Mariam Philatelist* Vol. 7, No. 3 (42) 1 May 1969: 45.
- Zayats, Ivan. "Vplyv Khrystyianstva Na Ukraïnsku Sakralnu Arkhitekturu" (Influence of Christianity on Ukrainian Sacral Architecture). *Ukrainian Engineering News*. No. 170-173 (1988): 43-56.

## CHICAGOPEX PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

I urge all our members to attend CHICAGOPEX 91 where the S.C.P. will hold its annual exhibition and convention. Chicago is a great city and the show will feature Pan-Slavic philately. There will be a few independent exhibits from Czechoslovakia as well as several from our own Society members. Besides hosting our Society, CHICAGOPEX will also host the Rossica Society of Russian Philately and the Mobile Post Office Society Inc.

The two previous issues of the SPECIALIST have already featured some basic information about the forthcoming show. The following is an extract from the latest CHICAGOPEX press release:

Advance reservations are required for the CHICAGOPEX '91 Annual Awards Banquet, which will be held on Saturday evening, November 2, 1991. Reservations must be received no later than October 25, 1991. The banquet will be held at the Radisson Suite Hotel O'Hare Airport, 5550 North River Road, Rosemont, IL. This is the headquarters hotel for CHICAGOPEX '91.

Tickets for the banquet are \$30 per person. Tickets will not be mailed out—please pick them up at the CHICAGOPEX hospitality table at the show. Please make checks payable to Chicago Philatelic Society and send to CHICAGOPEX '91, Banquet Chairman, P.O. Box A-3953, Chicago, IL 60690-3953.

The evening will begin with a cocktail reception at 6:00 p.m. followed by dinner at 7:00 p.m. Highlighting the evening will be the presentation of awards for both the philatelic and literature competition.

Our own Society's schedule of events consists of the following:

Friday, November 1 at 5 PM: Dinner at the Old Prague Restaurant, 5928 West Cermack (22nd Street), Cicero, IL. Directions will be furnished at the S.C.P.'s lounge table. The Old Prague is one of the fine Czech restaurants in the Chicago area. One of the dining rooms will be reserved just for our members.

Saturday, November 2 at 11 AM: General meeting. Guest speaker—Jiřá Štupka will discuss the Dove and Allegory issues of 1920. His exhibit of this material gained him a Large Silver in Prague. This will be followed by a brief talk by Charles Chesloe on covers, cards, parcel clippings, etc. If an auction is held, it will take place immediately after Pres. Chesloe's talk.

Sunday, November 3 at 9AM: Meeting of the Society Board of Directors. Place of meeting will be announced the day before.

The show itself will be open on Friday and Saturday, November 1 and 2 from 10 AM to 6 PM and on Sunday, November 3, from 10 AM to 4 PM. The S.C.P. will have its lounge table open during the entire period stocked with numerous books, periodicals and even some philatelic material. Information concerning time and place of our various events will be available.

Let us all strive to be present and maintain the Society's reputation of participating at these shows in full force.

— C. Chesloe

**Support our Sales and Exchange Circuit—  
Submit your surplus philatelic material  
to our Circuit Manager!**

**FIRST FLIGHT: NEW YORK - PRAGUE - NEW YORK**

*By Vladimír Bubák*

The fourth airmail issue of Czechoslovakia in 1946–1947 is perhaps the most beautiful of its kind. Furthermore, the postal usage of these stamps, shortly after World War II, can be very interesting and, in some combinations, very rare.

On June 15, 1946, an aircraft belonging to PAA (later renamed Pan Am) took off from New York on the first official flight of a new air route: New York - Gander - Shannon - London - Brussels - Prague - Vienna. (see fig. 1). This aircraft delivered mail bearing special rubber cachets (see fig. 2). Aside from deliveries, mail was subsequently picked up at each stop as well. Prague alone received approximately 8,000 pieces of mail from New York and about 2,000 pieces each from Gander, Shannon, London and Brussels. From Vienna, this PAA aircraft then commenced its return flight on June 17, 1946.

For this occasion, the Czechoslovak postal authorities introduced a special 24 kčs. airmail stamp for registered letters and a 16 kčs. stamp for ordinary airmail letters valid only for this flight. The Postoffice PRAHA 7 - LETECKÁ POŠTA (Prague 7-Airmail) used special postmarks with the letters "a", "b" or "c". It was possible to send mail on this flight from any postoffice in Czechoslovakia. The sender paid the fee and the 24 kčs. stamp was affixed by the postal clerk in Prague.

It is rare to find this stamp on a "first flight" cover together with a top or bottom coupon (see fig. 3) because the postal clerk usually tore these coupons off and affixed only the stamp.

14, 258 regular pieces and 43,006 registered pieces of mail were sent by air to New York, but only a very few with the coupons on them. How many pieces actually had the coupons attached ?



Fig. 1





Fig. 2

Gander - 2,112 pieces (see fig. 4). Not illustrated here is the reverse side of the cover showing a Newfoundland cancellation dated June 18, 1946.

SPECIALIZOVANÁ PŘÍRUČKA (Specialized Handbook), published in 1988, places much higher values on these flight covers—as much as 300-400 points—than on covers addressed to New York—to which it credits only ten points.

This question may never be answered. We only know there were but a few and they are in constant demand among collectors.

Besides that, a relatively small amount of mail was directed to other places on the same route. For instance, from Prague, the following were sent to Brussels - 2,044 pieces; to London - 2,231 pieces; to Shannon - 2,014 pieces; and to



Fig. 3



PAN AMERICAN WORLD AIRWAYS  
 FIRST CLIPPER AIR MAIL FLIGHT  
 PRAGUE TO GANDER.



VIA AIR MAIL

c/o Pan American Airways, Inc.  
 Gander Airport  
 Gander, Newfoundland

Fig. 4

Stamps of this airmail issue were valid until the currency reform of 1953 and postally used covers from this late period are also very interesting. However, that is another chapter in Czechoslovak philately.

*(Ed. Note - An interesting aside to the accompanying fig. 1 is that it was sent from New York by Arthur I. Kessler to Ervin Hirsch in Prague. Kessler was born in Poland and came to Prague in 1920 to study engineering at Charles University. While there, he met Ervin Hirsch, who was then editor of TRIBUNA, a philatelic magazine. They became very close friends. Through Hirsch, he met a group of Czechoslovak philatelists including Franek, Basika and Kvasnička. This led to his interest in the commercial aspect of philately and he soon opened his own dealership which brought him extensive contacts in Vienna, Rome, Berlin, Amsterdam, etc. and established him as a respected stamp dealer on the continent. His philatelic business was so successful that despite earning his engineering degree, he never practiced it and continued his stamp enterprise. He was in Paris when the Nazis occupied Czechoslovakia. There he met another famous stamp dealer, Mr. Varga, who tried to help him extricate his wife and daughter from Czechoslovakia. The attempt failed and the two perished in a concentration camp.*

*From Paris, Kessler obtained a visa to Canada where he set up shop in Montreal. Within a year, he moved to New York City and, as soon as the War ended, opened an office on 43rd Street and Fifth Ave. There with the help of William Klemm, another collector from Prague, he published a catalog of Czechoslovak Stamps 1918-1938. Much of the information contained in that catalog was later incorporated into the Scott and Minkus catalogs.*

*Kessler became a friend of Josef Lowey, the founder of our Society, and was persuaded by him to become a member. His number was 47 and he remained a member until his death. Soon after joining the Society, he took a partner name Felix Berg and together they set up the Cross Stamp Co. with offices at 551 Fifth Ave., New York.*

*In the 1950's, Kessler remarried and bought a residence in Vienna where his second wife had relatives. However, he continued his business pursuits in New York until about 1970, when he dissolved the partnership and continued to operate as a single dealer from his home.*

*Arthur Kessler died in New York in the summer of 1977 and his wife died a week later.)*

## A NEW PHILATELIC SOCIETY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

*by Henry Hahn*

On Saturday, November 10, 1990 a new Society was founded in free Czechoslovakia, open to serious collectors, including those living outside the Republic. The founding meeting took place at the Hotel Slovan in Brno. The organization will not receive any state subsidies and hence will operate entirely from dues collected from its members. Membership is limited to members of the Svaz Českých Filatelistu (Union of Czech Philatelists), Svaz Slovenských Filatelistu (Union of Slovak Philatelists) and members of other philatelic organizations which are members of FIP (International Federation of Philatelists). That includes members of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately which is a chapter of APS (the American Philatelic Society), which in turn is a member of FIP.

The prime objectives of the new organization include foremost the development and propagation of Czechoslovak philately. The organization will be active in publishing, expertization, commerce, advisory services, exhibiting and judging. It will also deal with subjects virtually absent from the Czech philatelic scene prior to the "velvet revolution", including the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the Slovak (puppet) State.

Members will receive a quarterly journal entitled "ZPRAVODAJ", the December issue of which contained 28 pages. The editor is Ing. Zdenek Molis, and the editorial board includes Messrs. Bachratý, Pittermann, Chvalovský, Sablatura, Mysliveček and Stadník.

The President of the organization is Ing. František Hutýra, our BALPEX 90 guest. Founding members and members of the executive committee include internationally well-known luminaries of Czechoslovak philately, including Karásek, Pittermann, Sablatura, Aksamit, Molis, the Zampach brothers, Bláha and many others.

While in Prague early in March, I was present at a dinner meeting attended by President Hutýra, Editor Molis, and Messrs Pitterman, Hefer, Čermák, and Ivo Kvasnička. To my great pleasure, I was invited to join, along with Fred Hefer.

Dues for U.S. members are \$15 per year, except for senior citizens who are retired, who will be charged only \$10. Members will be entitled to purchase the recently published "Sborník Článku 4" for \$8. This paperbound publication of 64 pages includes a "black print" of Švabinsky's Masaryk. The introduction is by Ing. Hutýra, as Chairman of the Commission for the Czechoslovak Stamp, SCSF. The publication includes articles on the new Masaryk and Havel stamps, the Hussite issue, the Liberated Republic issue, the Dove, the 1925 Masaryk, the Linden Branch, first flight Prague-New York, a summary of PRAGA 88 items and an addendum to the Specialized Handbook for 1989.

There is now freedom and democracy in Czechoslovakia. But times are tough; food has about doubled in price, and wages have risen only slightly. Publishing costs along with the prices of many goods have more than doubled, and unemployment is on the rise. Our fellow collectors in Czechoslovakia need our participation. I urge our members not to let them down, if they can swing their dues on top of ours.

I have brought back a few applications and copies of the ZPRAVODAJ. Those members of our Society wishing to join the new Society in Czechoslovakia may simultaneously order the "Sborník" for \$8.75, post paid. Please contact me for applications or other information at 2936 Rosemoor Lane, Fairfax, VA 22031.

**COMMENTS ON CURRENT CZECHOSLOVAK SECURITY  
ENGRAVING**

*By Gene Hessler*

*(Reprinted from the essay-proof journal, Fourth Quarter, 1990, Vol. 47, No. 4 by permission of its editor, Barbara R. Mueller, and the Author.)*

Designers as well as engravers of Czechoslovak stamps are commissioned by the Czech Postal Authority. The four engravers at the Státní Tiskárna Cenin (STC), the State Printing Works, often submit stamp essays, one of



Fig. 1

which is frequently selected as the winning design. The names of Miloš Ondráček, who is employed at the STC, and Josef Herčík appear on Czech stamps most frequently. A few months ago the portrait of Czechoslovakia's new president, Václav Havel, by Mr. Ondráček, was selected to appear on a 50h stamp.

During a recent trip to Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, I had productive meetings with seven security engravers; among those in Czechoslovakia was Václav Fajt. At the meeting, Mr. Fajt signed and gave me a proof of his submission for the Havel stamp. Václav Fajt is not only an excellent engraver, he is fast at what he does; these two qualities do not always go together. In addition to the proof, Mr. Fajt gave me a copy of a philatelic article about the stamp, and a copy of a letter from President Havel's personal secretary. (see fig. 1) The letter thanks the engraver for a

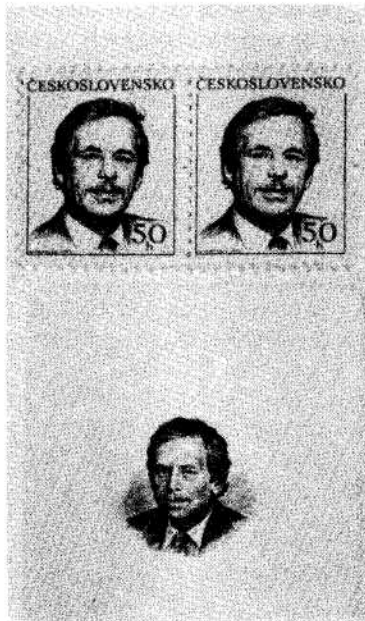


Fig. 2

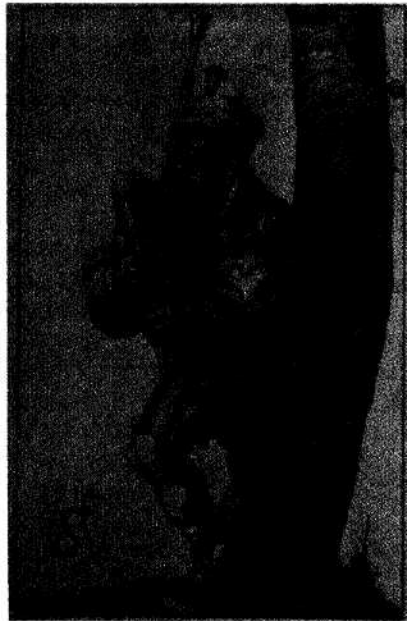


Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

copy of his engraving of the President and makes the comment that "I believe it is better than the one by Ondráček on the postage stamp." Both Havel portraits by Ondráček and Fajt are illustrated here; you can decide which you prefer. (see fig. 2)

The meeting with Mr. Fajt took place in his small flat in Prague where a large portrait of Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) dominates one wall. Out of respect for this artist and engraver, Václav Fajt has engraved many of Dürer's woodcut and

engraving subjects. (see fig 3 & 4) In between sips of a very acceptable wine, we discussed Mr. Fajt's work; the translator was my host and friend, František Sedláček.

Václav Fajt is a very intense man (see fig. 5) who was born on 8 August 1952 in Plzeň, the capital of the Western Bohemian section of Czechoslovakia. One could safely say Mr. Fajt is obsessed with engraving. He is also an avid tennis player. During his early years Mr. Fajt studied art and



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

the first examples of Mr. Fajt's bank note engraving. New notes, including new denominations, are in the planning stage; Václav Fajt will undoubtedly engrave some of them.

painting and attended the High School of Art and Industry in Turnov from 1967 to 1971 and the Special Art School in Prague from 1971 to 1973.

The number of stamps and first day covers he has engraved will soon number 100. Many of these have received awards. As part of a set of six stamps that received the first award at ASIAG in Italy as the best nature stamps are two by Fajt, - a frog and a heron. If you have a copy of *Umění na Známkách, PRAGA 88*, published for the World Postage Stamp Exposition in Prague in 1988, you will notice that the stamp on the cover was engraved by Václav Fajt.

The portraits of Slovak poets Pavol Orszagh Hviezdoslov (1841–1921) on the most recent 10 korun bank note (see fig. 6 & 7) and Ludovit Štúr (1815–1858) on the new 50 korun bank note and the colorful back design for the 20 korun bank note are

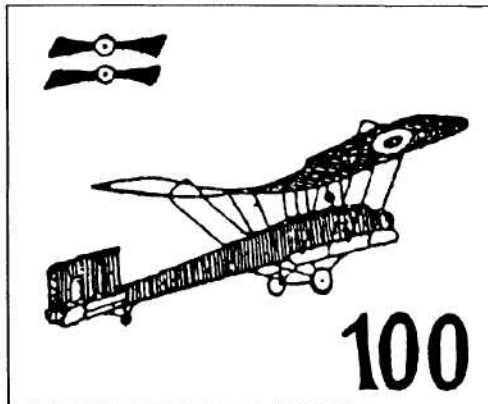
## 1922 AIRMAIL OVERPRINT FLAWS

by Tomáš Morovics

Plate faults and printing varieties are welcome adjuncts to any specialized collection. Even though Czechoslovak stamps manufactured by typography have been carefully scrutinized and closely examined, this has not always applied to overprints. Only those overprints containing obvious flaws are generally known.

As an example, there is the set of three airmail stamps of 1922—often referred to as the Hradčany airmail overprints. Some of the plate flaws of this overprint are already listed on page 31 of Monographie IV. In my view, however, this popular overprint deserves a bit more attention. A whole series of added faults can be found on close analysis. One of those appears on the accompanying illustrations. Note the slanted numeral in the 100/400 denomination.

Plate flaws are not by any means the last problem to be solved regarding the 1922 airmails. Perhaps this brief mention of one previously undisclosed overprint variety might serve to stimulate others to undertake additional detective work. Those who possess that set of airmails may wish to contribute their own share of research in this tapped area and possibly come up with more new findings.





### **I. FIFTY YEARS OF DEVOTION**

Recently I received the final report from Wolfgang Fritzsche regarding the remainder of circuit books which were still under his direction. He was informing me that all the books have now been retired and that he was sending off his final check with an accounting to our treasurer, Lou Svoboda.



For a moment I thought about that letter and then wondered how can I or our Society ever express enough gratitude to a man who has dedicated almost his entire adult life serving the S.C.P. as its circuit sales manager.

Wolfgang manned the post for almost fifty years ! Our Society, its members and I will forever be indebted to him for the outstanding work he did for us all. He even went so far as to keep an account for many members including myself who would charge our purchases and use that against sales from circuit books we submitted. This is practically unheard of and could only have been done by a person as devoted as Fritzsche who truly loved us all. Though he has been elected an honorary member, that in itself cannot atone for all his good deeds and sacrifices in the name of the S.C.P.

### **II. HELP THE SUCCESSOR !**

Jack Benchik, who succeeds Wolfgang Fritzsche to the post of circuit sales manager, has taken on a difficult and time-consuming job. He is resolved to keep our Society's circuit going as his predecessor had done. However, the most conscientious effort one could possibly exert will not make our circuit a successful operation unless the membership starts to submit its duplicate and unwanted material to him so he can fill new books and put them into circulation.

Everyone knows that the key to good electrical circuitry is that in order to have satisfactory output, you must have adequate input. The same applies to philatelic circuitry. Our manager cannot place an adequate supply of books into circulation unless members send him their surplus material so he can fill those books. That is what a circuit is all about !

Please help Jack Benchik make the circuit work as it should. Send him whatever you can from your Czechoslovakia collection. Your input can make for a satisfactory output. And that way everyone stands to benefit !

### **III. A SLOVAKIA INCREMENT**

During the past two to three years, the American Bank Note Company of New York has been selling off its die proofs and die essays that were stored in its archives for perhaps over 100 years. This has given many collectors an opportunity to acquire material that they would not have been able to get otherwise.

The American Bank Note Co. has engraved stamps and banknotes for the United States Postal Administration before the establishment of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in 1898. It has continued engraving stamps and banknotes to this day for numerous governments throughout the world.

In 1907, the American Bank Note Co. engraved a die for the Slovak League of America with a





Fig. 1

value of one cent. The sale of these “stamps” or, more accurately, “labels” was to aid the Slovak resistance against Hungarian rule. The “stamp” is dark blue in color and is line perforated 12.



Fig. 2

Through the years leading up to 1918, the sale of these labels amounted to over one million dollars. When Thomas G. Masaryk, Czechoslovakia’s first President, promised equality among the Czechs, Moravians, Slovaks and Carpatho-Ukrainians, the Slovak League decided to turn over the receipts from the sales to President Masaryk to use for creation of the Republic after the conclusion of World War I hostilities.

The design carries the title “Portrait of a Slovak Girl” and the die was finished on August 1, 1907. Like the stamp, the die is dark blue in color and was engraved by Messrs. Savage and Gunn. It carried Order no. 20655 and the die is coded “C-775”. This information was typed on a large page bearing the die from the archives.

Fig. 1 shows the die proof and fig. 2 shows the “stamp” as issued by the American Bank Note Co. Although it is not an official stamp, it was used as a label on letters and has significance as a collateral item in a Slovakia collection. If you have any in your possession or can acquire one or several of them, it can make for an interesting increment to such a collection.

**IV. AN OVERPRINT BONUS**

Several months ago I was able to purchase two lots at an auction in Europe. The material came from a renowned collector in Czechoslovakia during the thirties—a Dr. Winczer—who won a large silver medal at the PRAGA 38 International Exhibition.

One lot contained two blocks of ten (2 x 5) of the 5h. and 15h. imperforate Hradčany

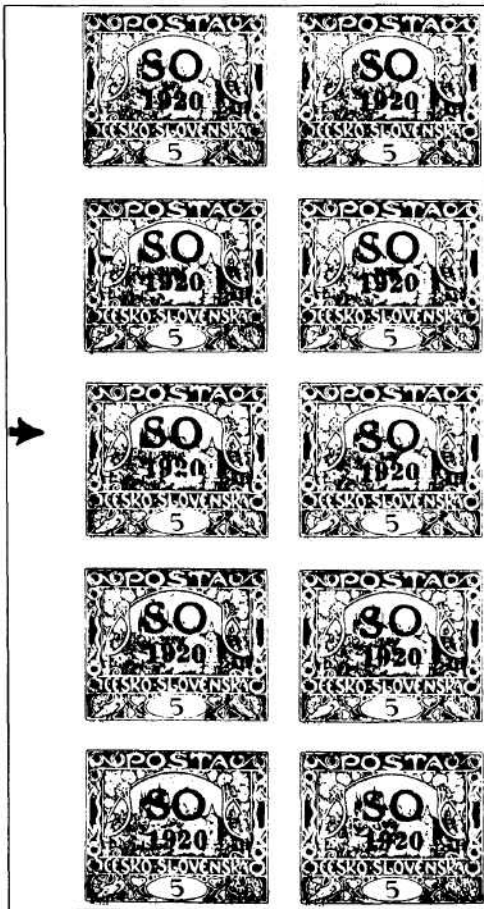


Fig. 3

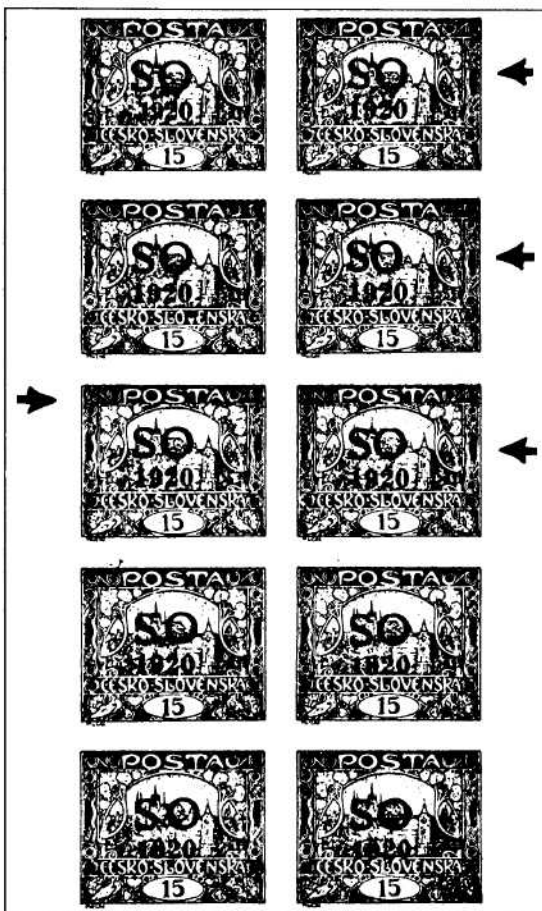


Fig. 4

stamps with the overprint "SO 1920". Although not described in the catalog, I was hoping that the blocks contained at least the narrow "O's" in "SO". My hopes came to fruition. The 5h. blue green has the narrow "O" on the third left stamp from the top. It comes from plate I of the overprint and shows the narrow "O" of position 27 (see fig. 3). But what I did not expect came as a bonus on the 15h. The first three stamps from the top on the right side show the other varieties of plate I of the overprint. The top position 4 shows the deformed "O" of "SO". The next stamp below it shows the narrow "O" at position 14 while the bottom stamp of the top strip of three shows the cutoff top of the "O" in "SO", position 24. The bonus is the third stamp down along the left side showing the open scroll, type I position 23, from plate I of the original Hradčany printing. (see fig. 4).

And so it is that this large block not only possesses major varieties of the overprint, but also encompasses a joined type of the basic Hradčany 15h. value.

**EDITORIAL HINGES  
I. A TALE OF TWO  
"SPECIALISTS"**

When the Society's Board approved the editor's request to switch from a monthly to a bi-monthly publication, there was a certain degree of apprehension. From a standpoint of economics, the move was a good one. Even with the doubling of pages per issue, it was inevitable that both printing costs and mailing expenses would be lessened somewhat. That fact seems to be bearing out as anticipated. What remains unanswered is how will the membership-at-large accept this big change. So far the feedback is satisfactory.

Ever since the Society was founded in 1939, there has always been a monthly journal to report on its activities and on Czechoslovak philately in general. Winner of numerous literary publication awards, the *SPECIALIST* rarely missed going to press ten months out of every year. As the Society matured, so did its publication. With members contributing articles from all corners of the earth, the *SPECIALIST* acquired a world-wide circulation and with it an international flavor. Its 50th anniversary (in May 1989) was celebrated with a special edition and since then, literary contributions have been coming in at a steady pace. We all hope it will continue that way.

Letters to the editor have also been generally favorable. The transition from a monthly to a bi-monthly publication has been a smooth one and appears to have met the members' approval. Because of its unique and sometimes highly specialized contents, our journal is on frequent

demand as a valuable reference item. Many of our members, including more recent ones, have a continuing library of all back issues they can possibly acquire. Our Board anticipated this years ago and began to bind the SPECIALISTS into annual volumes. As costs increased, SPECIALISTS were bound bi-annually. Patron members pay for the privilege of receiving these bound volumes as they are issued.

Today, in its 52nd year, the SPECIALIST is one of the longest-running uninterrupted philatelic publications on record. We all hope to keep that record intact.

## II. THE INDEX

Fifty-one years of a monthly publication cannot survive the test of time unless there is an accompanying Index. One of our original members, Wolfgang Fritzsche (see page 16 of this issue) recognized that fact and, in 1949, published the first Cumulative Index of the SPECIALIST. It covered the first ten years of publication and appeared in the December 1948 issue on page 129. Then in the March 1954 issue on page 43, he published an Index for the next five years. And again, in the February 1959 issue on page 20, he published another five-year Index. These three Indexes were then merged into one which he published in the February 1964 issue on page 27. It covered volumes 1 through 25, which brought the Index up to the end of 1963.

In 1972, Mrs. Henry Stollnitz in cooperation with her husband undertook the project of compiling an Index covering the years 1964 to 1973. The Index was published under separate cover as the May 1974 issue of the SPECIALIST and consisted of 40 pages. It was combined with a "Price Catalogue of Postal Stationary of Czechoslovakia" as gathered by W. Fritzsche and edited by Edward G. Fladung, editor of the Higgins & Gage World Postal Stationary Catalogue.

Finally in 1980, Anne Vondra, wife of your editor, was requested by the Board to bring the Index up to 1980. That Index, covering the years 1964 through 1980, was published as the June 1982 issue of the SPECIALIST.

Therefore at the present time, we have two Cumulative Indexes: the Fritzsche Index of February 1964 spanning the period from 1939 to 1963 and the Stollnitz-Vondra Index embodying all published material from 1964 to 1980.

A few copies of the 1964-1980 Index are still available. Those interested in buying one are requested to contact our book sales manager, Ed Lehecka, for price and delivery.

At the present time, Anne Vondra and member Phillips Freer are working jointly on a complete 51-year Index covering the entire period of SPECIALIST publications from 1939 through 1990. This period we can refer to as the SPECIALIST I era.

Constructing a 51-year Index in an accessible and professional manner is a monumental undertaking. Once completed, it will end all further indexing of the monthly journals. However, the job is so complex and time-consuming, it probably will not be ready before next year and possibly well into 1992.

The transition from a monthly to a bi-monthly publication introduces us to a new line of journals which may be referred to as SPECIALIST II. For those who will compile future indexes, the task should become much simpler due to the existence of a Table of Contents in every issue.

## III. WANTED: MORE BACK ISSUES

Your editor has been fortunate in receiving more individual copies of back issues, especially those whose stock has been totally depleted. This has enabled us to have more back volumes bound and offered for sale to those who collect them either for reference purposes or as historical documents on philately. Most of them have already been sold.

In the last issue, we published on page 23 the latest listing of bound SPECIALISTS available to our members at special prices. There are more back volumes ready to be bound if we can acquire donations of certain back issues. The following is our latest Want List:

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

|                                     |                              |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1963: May, November                 | 1973: May, October, November |
| 1970: January, February, March, May | 1974: January, June          |
| 1971: September                     |                              |

Your editor is deeply indebted to those who responded to his last call for specific back copies of the SPECIALIST. He hopes this time the response will be just as gratifying. If you have any of the above listed issues and are willing to donate them back to the Society, your generosity will be greatly appreciated and acknowledged.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Dear Sir:

Now that all the sales circuits which I had sent out have completed their assigned rounds, the individual books have been returned to their owners and the sales have been paid off, it is time to thank all sales circuit recipients for their splendid cooperation over all these years. It has been a pleasure working and being in contact with all of you.

Many good friendships were formed, with visits during holidays or vacation times. Some members would add a personal note when sending in their report sheets; occasionally a family photo would come with a Christmas greeting. Because of all this good rapport, I feel we had good sailing and no difficulties.

In all my 50 years as circuit manager, it was never reported that someone had switched any stamps in our sales books. When any changes on the circulating report sheets had to be made, the members involved always cooperated, thus insuring smooth sailing and avoiding any delays. What pleased me most were notes telling me they had been sorry not to have asked to get our circuits sooner once they found out they could buy through our circuits rather than by going to a dealer.

When we started the circuits over 50 years ago, I had told the then assembled group we should give our members a chance to get rid of their duplicates by offering them at reasonable prices to other members, thereby helping them enlarge their collections. It has paid off. At times when a book came in with "overpriced" stamps, I would contact the owner and tell him about it. In many cases I was then instructed to reduce the prices to the "proper" level. It always paid off and the sales were good. After all, members wanted to get rid of their duplicates, not simply show off what duplicates they had on hand.

Once word got out that I was "retiring" from the sales circuit management, I received many more "thank you" notes, again telling me how the circuits had helped them with their collections. For this I am grateful. It made me happy to know all my efforts were appreciated. May it continue that way in the future !

Sincerely Yours,  
Wolfgang Fritzche

Dear Editor:

I was deeply moved when I received a phone call from New Jersey informing me of the death of Hedy Lowey, widow of our Society's founder, Josef Lowey.

I never knew Josef Lowey personally, but I did have occasion to meet his wife two years ago at SEPAD when I presided at our general meeting and was fortunate in awarding her a special plaque honoring her husband. On that occasion (the 50th anniversary of the S.C.P.), she spoke in touching words acknowledging and thanking the Society for its thoughtfulness. (see Dec. 1989 SPECIALIST, page 3).

Hedy was a charming personality who, even in her last days, was proud of her husband and of the Society he founded. Several times since then, she called me wondering when I would visit her and mentioning that "she was slipping away".

I will miss her; she was very witty and fun to be with. The entire Society will miss her. So long, Mrs. Lowey ! May God bless you!

Yours truly,  
Charles Chesloe, Pres.

**LIBRARY NOTES****LATEST ADDITIONS**

The June 1989 *SPECIALIST*, pages 10 through 15, contained a complete catalog of the S.C.P. Library. Since then, thanks to acquisitions by our book sales manager and by gracious donations on the part of a few members, the library has been expanded further. The following are additions to that catalog which continues its numbering sequence:

168. Černý, Jaroslav; Tvrđý, Ivan: "Rekomandačné Nálepky A Slovenské Pošty, 1940–1985" (1986, 191 pgs., in Slovak.) This is a catalog of Slovak Registration labels. There are about a dozen pages of instructions only in Czech on the use of the catalog which must be translated to allow proper use of the book by an English speaking user.
169. Hahn, Henry: "A Historical Perspective of Postal History in Telč" (1980, 49 pgs., English). This details Telč's postal history with excellent illustrative and photographic examples. An easy afternoon's reading which is both interesting and entertaining, as well as philatelically informative.
170. Hahn, Henry: "Historie Poštovníctví Telč a Okolí". (1983, 60 pgs. in Czech). It is the Czech equivalent of #169.
171. Karásek, Jan: "Zoubkování Československých Poštovních Známek, 1918–1939", (1984, 48 pgs. in Czech). Explains and details stamp perforations and perforating procedures.
172. Žampach, František; Karásek, Jan; Pitterman, Pavel: "Hospodářství a Věda, 1923", (1990, 104 pgs. in Czech.) This pamphlet describes in precise detail the types, subtypes and numerous positional varieties in the 1923 Agriculture and Science issue. Despite being written in Czech, the English speaking collector can make great use of this pamphlet because it is lavishly illustrated. An excellent publication !
173. Theimer, Ernst: "Exhibit of 19th Century Austrian Postal Stationary", (1988, 160 pgs., in English).
174. SOCFILEX 76 PRAHA: "Mezinárodní Výstava Poštovních Známek (1976, 109 pgs., in Czech and Russian).
175. Page, S.A.: "Monograph no. 1" (Supplement), Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain, Czechoslovak Army & Air Force in Exile 1939–1945, (1982, 73 pgs, in English). This pamphlet includes both a corrigendum (corrections) to Monograph I (library catalog no. 151) and incorporates additional philatelic information offered by collectors who read Monograph I. The Supplement is cross-referenced by both page number and chapter to Monograph I and, thereby, is easy to link to the original work. It is well illustrated, informative and, together with the original Monograph, makes an outstanding compendium of philatelic activities of the Czech military forces during World War II.
176. Richet, Roger: "Les Emissions, Surcharges, Obliterations et Vignettes des Sudetes, 1880–1970" (183 pgs., in French). Although written in French, this pamphlet contains over 300 illustrations and is very useful to the non-French speaking collector. Used in conjunction with lib. cat. no. 177 (which is an English translation without the illustrations), it is an excellent guide and reference. A shortcoming of the translation is the absence of page numbers from the original French book. This causes the reader to spend considerable time finding the same text in the corresponding text in the other book. Otherwise, this is a superb pair of pamphlets.
177. Richet, Roger: "The Issues, Cancellations and Vignettes of the Sudetenland 1880–1970" (88 pgs., in English, translated from French by Anne Vondra). See comments above.
178. Šrámek, František: "Filatelisté a Filatelie" (1988, 259 pgs., in Czech).
179. Votoček, Emil: Special Bulletin no. 9, Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain, "A Treatise on the Subject on Czechoslovak Postage Stamps, Part XIII, Czech Postmarks from



#### THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

the Beginnings to 1918" (37 pgs., in English, translated from Czech by R. Howard). This translation of pages 5–92 of MONOGRAFIE VIII (lib. cat. no. 107) is invaluable to the non-Czech speaking collectors as they make use of the MONOGRAFIE. Through illustration numbers and page numbers, it is easy to move back and forth between the books.

Over the years that the Library has been in existence, several books which were once listed in the Library Catalog have gone astray. I am hoping that these may still be out there in the possession of some of the Society's members. In the hopes of having them returned to the Library, I am asking you to please check in the nooks and crannies of your "stamp room/area" and see if any of those listed below are in your possession. If so, please mail them to me—I assure you that there shall be no late fees and no record or discussion of the source of the returns, just a "thank you".

1. Novotný; Katalogy Poštových Známk: Slovensko, Nové Československo (1946, 112 pp, Slovak).
2. Novotný; Speciální Katalog (3 sections) (1949, 432 pp, Czech).
3. Novotný, Ladislav; Speciální Přručka pro sběratele Československých Známeč (1970, 707 pp, Czech).
4. Richet, Roger; Les Diverses Émissions et Oblitérations de la Russie Subcarpathique et de la Slovaquie du Sud (1860–1965) (62 pp, French).
5. Kassay, Stefan and Pasztor, Belo; Košické Známk (1972, 358 p, Czech).
6. Dub & Horr; Die Postwertzeichen des Sudetenlandes (1963, 480 pp, German).
7. Ferchenbauer; Oesterreich 1850–1918 (1978, 624 pp, German).
8. Exhibition Catalog, Praga 1978, Katalog (397 pp, multilingual).
9. Rauch, Dr. W; Ammerkungen zur Postgeschichte der Karpathen-Ukraine; two volumes (1975, 96 pp, German).
10. Ryan; The Cancellations of Hungarian Post Offices on the First Five Issues of Austrian Stamps 1850–67 during the Austrian Administration (1980, 662 pp, English). [Please insure this for \$150.]

—R. Palaschak

#### FOR THE BEGINNER

##### THE FIRST ISSUES

This is the first in a series of articles which will appear under this column in successive issues of the SPECIALIST. It is directed toward those who are beginners in the philately of Czechoslovakia.

By way of introduction, I should comment that I have been collecting and studying postal items of Czechoslovakia for only the past six or seven years. But one must distinguish between a beginner of one country and a novice of philately in general. A novice I am not, as I have been collecting, exhibiting and even judging for several decades, notably the postal issues of Mexico and El Salvador. However, I must admit that I have never felt—yes, the excitement—that I have now come to feel about the philately of Czechoslovakia.

Why is this? For several reasons, some of them personal. But I think one of the main reasons is the unusual friendliness and enthusiasm which I have found among so many members of the S.C.P., the ever-readiness to be of help, to share information and make friendly suggestions.

As a social hobby, philately relies on the interchange of postal data and ideas between stamp collectors. If you ever tried to join a club whose members looked upon you more as an intruder than as someone interested in sharing and exchanging those ideas, you invariably dropped out of that group. And if such an experience repeated itself two or three more times, you would doubtless lose interest in the hobby itself.

But with the S.C.P., my experience has been just the contrary. And so it is that when you find



yourself surrounded by persons willing and anxious to have you participate in their philatelic endeavors, their enthusiasm rubs off. You acquire an incentive to help them help you in understanding and enjoying your newly-discovered interests. In subsequent articles, I hope to continue this friendly sharing of postal information which seems to be a tradition in a Society like ours.

As a beginner, how do you "begin" your collection? Do you start out with Scott no. 1 and continue until you have everything up to the last stamp currently issued? Well, that is one way of doing it. You will not only run into difficulties, but you will have passed up some very exciting and interesting aspects of Czechoslovak philately. In other words, don't be satisfied to become just an accumulator.

Many beginners have a few recent stamps, mostly on covers, which they received while exchanging correspondence with people in Czechoslovakia. They find the stamps attractive and want to start a collection of just that country. They attend a few regional or even national shows where stamps of that country are being exhibited. From those exhibits, they gain knowledge of what periods in the nation's history are being shown, how the material is arranged and what emphasis is given to which categories. But that is for future reference only. For the immediate present, they visit dealer booths that seem to specialize in Czechoslovakia. Usually these dealers will have one or two basic collections on sale—nothing elaborate, nothing expensive! Acquiring a few basic collections like that may be a good starting point, provided you have a friend or S.C.P. member on hand to advise you if the price is right.

As a nation, Czechoslovakia has had a turbulent century. Starting with its independence in 1918, you have the so-called First Republic era which came to a screeching halt with Hitler's occupation of the lands in 1939. Then came the second phase known as the Bohemia-Moravia Protectorate era during which Slovakia enjoyed a so-called period of "independence" under the sponsorship of the Third Reich. The end of World War II gave the country a brief return to freedom until 1948, when it fell under Communist domination and was then known as ČSSR. Finally, starting with January 1990, its post-World War II democracy was restored under the name of the Czechoslovak Federated Republics. Only time will tell what direction it will take from here.

Therefore in collecting Czechoslovakia, a beginner can start with Scott no. 1 and collect all the stamps up to the present time or he can take one of its phases and concentrate on that, before going on to the next phase. I prefer and advocate the latter approach. Not only does it give you greater organization and flexibility, but you can choose any one or two phases to the exclusion of the others.

The beginner starting his collection logically with the First Republic is advised to get hold of as many copies of the first and second sets of the Hradčany Issue as possible (Scott no. 1 to 53). Most of them are not expensive. In gathering these stamps, do not mount them; instead, place them on stock pages or in a stock book where they can be examined and rearranged.

I am making this suggestion for several reasons. First, you will notice that all these stamps have the exact same theme and picture, namely the Hradčany castle in Prague. Behind the castle one can see the rising sun. Actually, the sun can neither rise nor set in that scene behind the castle. It is merely symbolic of the birth of the Czechoslovak Republic on October 28, 1918. Second, all the stamps seem to have the same design, but that is deceptive. Actually, each of those 53 stamps can be listed under one of five different types. There are two sets in the issue. The first set consists of 20 stamps, some of which are imperforated and some perforated. The second set comprises 33 stamps, some of which are perforated and some imperforated. All the imperfs were officially issued, but only some of the perforates are official. Those that are not were privately perforated.

In my next installment, I will tell you something about the designing of these two issues as well as their plating, the paper used and a word or two about trial prints, with illustrations.

—P. Freer and M. Vondra

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