



THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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Winner of Numerous Philatelic Literature Awards

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THE FIRST WORK OF ART BY A CZECH ARTIST ON A POSTAGE STAMP

by Gerhard Batz

For some years, I intensely dealt with Czech/Slovak postage stamps and in this connection particularly with the artists who designed and engraved these stamps. During this time, I was able to collect a lot of information. As a result meanwhile, an extensive website has been coming into being. If you once have time enough, I would be glad, if you would visit my [Stamp Gallery of Czech and Slovak Graphic Art](http://www.stamp-gallery.de) at:

www.batz-hausen.de/stampeng.htm

In searching for information I soon inevitably dealt with Czech and Slovak art history in general and with the famous artists of both countries in particular; also because many works of art by these artists are depicted on Czech/Slovak stamps, e.g. on the annual series "umění" (art). And in so doing, I also searched for the first stamp issue which shows a picture of a Czech or Slovak artist. Among Czechoslovak postage stamps Mikoláš Aleš' picture of Saint Václav from the year 1929 should be the first one depicted on a stamp (Fig. 1, S159/160, P243/244). The stamp has been issued on May 14, 1929 as part of a 4-value [*sic 5-value*] set commemorating the 1000th anniversary of the saint's death.



Fig. 1

However, it might be unknown that already more than 30 years before this Czechoslovak issue, another work of art by a great Czech artist has been depicted on a stamp, long

before there was an independent Czechoslovak state. The stamp was issued by the US postal authorities -- already in 1893! It shows a painting (Fig. 2, S234) by one of the most famous Czech painters, Václav Brožík (1851-1901), and is entitled "Columbus soliciting aid of Isabella". As far as I know this actually might be the very first work of art by a Czech artist which was depicted on a stamp.

The stamp, with denomination of 5 cents, is in chocolate-brown color, printed in steel engraving technique, has an official edition of 35,248,250 items and is part of a series with altogether 16 different stamps commemorating the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus. The series was printed by the American Bank Note Company. Among US philatelists, the stamps of this series are to be considered the first US commemorative stamps of all. The first issue date was January 1, 1893 to commemorate the Chicago World's Fair 1893 which attracted millions of people over the year. With this series a long tradition of commemorating World Exhibitions with



Fig. 2

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a special, limited-printing series of stamps by the US post office has been started. Also this first series had a very limited number of copies, first of all because of the high price of the set, which was not within one person's means. For the complete set ranging in value from one cent up to \$5.00, one had to pay then in total \$16.34 which was more than the average week's salary of an American at that time. Today, one pays for a complete mint series in excellent condition up to \$11,000 in the USA!

In 1992, the year of the 500th anniversary of the discovery of America, the WORLD COLUMBIAN STAMP EXPO took place in Chicago, IL. The US post office used this event to issue a new edition of this legendary stamp series on May 22, 1992 -- one hundred years after the original issue. The recent stamps were issued on six commemorative sheets and reproduced as exactly as possible the designs and colors of the original 1893 stamps. Each sheet -- with the exception of the first sheet with the \$5.00 value -- contains three stamps of the original issue. On the stamp design, only the year 1892 on the original was changed to 1992 in the upper right corner of each stamp. For the first time ever, the United States issued these stamps jointly with the three other countries Italy, Spain and Portugal.

Václav Brožík whose painting was the pattern of the 5 cent stamp is considered the greatest Czech painter of historical pictures (Fig. 3). He also belongs



Fig. 3

to the artists of the so-called "Generation of the Czech National Theater" who considerably were involved in the decoration of the National Theater at Prague at the end of the 19th century. He was born on March 5, 1851 at Železný Hamr u Třemošné. He died on April 15, 1901 in Paris. So the stamp was issued still during his lifetime. He studied in Prague and in Germany (Dresden and Munich). Later he moved to France and became their bearer of the Cross of the Honor Legion. His most famous historic paintings are among others "Mistr Jan Hus před koncilem kostnickým" (Master Jan Hus in front of the council at Konstanz) from 1878, and "Zvolení Jiříka z Poděbrad za krále" (the election of Jiří from Poděbrady to be king) from 1897 -- two typical examples from Czech history.

The picture "Columbus soliciting aid of Isabella" depicted on the 1893 stamp represents the tradition of these historic paintings. It shows, how Christopher Columbus -- after his support petition for his plan to sail westward to India was rejected by king John II of Portugal -- turns to king Ferdinand and queen Isabella of Spain for support. On the monumental work from the year 1884, the depicted figures are life-sized. Today the painting is displayed in the lobby of the Manoir Richelieu Hotel in Québec (Canada).

Already three times there have been paintings by Václav Brožík depicted on the stamps of Czechoslovakia, which underlines Brožík's importance for Czech visual arts. In 1936, only a few years after Czechoslovakia's independence, a portrait of the



Fig. 4

teacher Jan Amos Komenský (Comenius), painted by Brožík, was the pattern for a commemorative stamp engraved by Bohumil Heinz (Fig. 4, S215/P300). Another painting by Brožík was issued in 1974 as part of the annual row "umění" (Fig. 5, a portrait of the violinist František Ondříček, S1981/P2115), and one more for the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Czech National Theater in Prague in 1983, an allegoric picture of "Praha", which decorates the King's Lounge in this theater (Fig. 6, S2485/P2619). This year (2001), his 150th birthday and also the 100th anniversary of his death have been celebrated. Therefore the postal authorities of the Czech Republic issued another Brožík painting on stamp entitled "Pasačka husí" (The Goose Keeper) on November 14, 2001 as part of this year's "umění" series (Fig. 7, S3162/P311).



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

So far we have talked about the most important information about the stamp -- the original picture and its artist. In order to comprehensively demonstrate backgrounds and facts of this historic stamp issue, I still miss some information. Therefore I hope that there are some



Fig. 7

people among the readers of this article who are able to give me answers to some of my questions:

- Was Brožík informed about depicting his painting on stamp? Did he perhaps influence the engraving and if yes, in which way?
- Are there statements by Brožík in which someone can see what he thought about this painting on stamp?
- How did the original painting come into being and on which way it came to Canada?

I would be glad about every message, particularly about answers to my questions, but also about any critics or other ideas. So write me an e-mail:

batz.hausen@t-online.de

* * *

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In the USA, there is a group of philatelists, who deal with the history of the Columbus issue of 1893. Some time ago, Mr. William Jones, a member of this group, wrote me some details of the history of this issue giving some indications, how it was possible that a painting by a Czech artist became part of this set of paintings.

Three persons play a central role in this story. The first one is John Wanamaker, Postmaster General during the Harrison administration who gave the impulse to this set of postage stamps. A successful merchant and pioneer of modern advertising techniques, he knew how to estimate the value of good advertising. And so, first of all, he considered the set of stamps with the Columbus pictures as good advertising for the Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

The greatest influence for choosing the picture motifs for this set -- and so for choosing a painting by a Czech artist for one of the stamps -- came from William Elroy Curtis. Primarily known as a journalist, he travelled widely and during these journeys he often photographed paintings which he offered as motifs for the planned set of stamps. He had close connections to the Royal Court of Spain and was invited to the Columbus celebrations in Madrid in 1892. He probably photographed Brožík's work there or somewhere else and in this way it became part of the set of paintings to be considered.

Based on Curtis' photographs, Abraham D. Hazen, Third Assistant Postmaster General had to decide which paintings should be issued on the stamps of the set. Among his duties was the procurement and distribution of stamps. He approved the designs submitted by the American Bank Note Company (ABNC). ABNC transferred the images for engraving to the master die by a photographic process known as ferrotype and this served as a guide for the (unknown) engraver.

William Jones writes, that the story of these stamps is far from being completely investigated. I hope with him that at some time the story can be more fully developed.

In the above section I wrote that the engraver of the stamp (probably) is unknown. Meanwhile I could find out that this isn't correct at all. On the contrary, it is rather well documented who in particular worked on this stamp. My investigation as to the engraver of the Brožík stamp was initiated by a statement in a German publication where the famous Austrian engraver Ferdinand Schirnböck is called the author of the stamps of the American Columbian issue. Although Schirnböck worked for many countries in the world, it seemed to me very incredible. Schirnböck, however, had close connections to Prague, where he later even worked for the State Printing House there. He probably knew Václav Brožík, and so it wouldn't have been unusual, if he would have taken part in the creation of the Brožík stamp. But my research could find out that the American Bank Note Company, where the stamps came into being, employed altogether five different engravers to create the 16 stamps of the series. Although this was the final contract of the American Post Office for this company before the Government transferred that responsibility to its own Bureau of Engraving and Printing, the ABNC exactly documented the work on these stamps. So it is a fact on the basis of the documentation that two engravers worked on the Brožík stamp: Charles Skinner,

who engraved the actual picture, the so-called "vignette", and Douglas S. Ronaldson, who was responsible for the frame.

It seems to be a misunderstanding that Ferdinand Schirnböck was called the engraver of the Columbian stamps by mistake. William Jones told me that there are reproductions of the stamps, printed in pamphlet form carrying descriptive text in German. And the stamps depicted there were engraved by Schirnböck.

Because I know the engravers of the Brož'k painting now, . . . I have another question which I write down here hoping someone may be able to give me an answer:

• Who knows more about the pamphlet with the engravings of the Columbian stamps by Schirnböck?

*

*

*

Meanwhile, Mr. Gene Hessler, author of the book "The Engraver's Line" gave me the following information about the two engravers of the stamp.

Douglas S. Ronaldson, born 1825 in England, died 1902. . . .

Charles Skinner, born 1841, died on March 14, 1932. . . .

* * * * *

**AUSTRIA 1783 -
"LESSER" OR "CLAPPER POST" FROM PRAGUE**
by Milan Černík

Figure 1 shows a unique money letter with 50 florins in the form of banknotes from Prague to the town councilors of Ungarisch Skalitz (today's Skalica, Slovak Republic), paid in full on posting and sent by registered mail on 11.9.1783. The content of the letter was counted on posting and sealed according to the valid regulations with one seal of the sender and two seals of the office of posting, i.e. an office of the so-called lesser or clapper post. The letter was dispatched for transportation by the chief post office in Prague and canceled with the first type of post office stamp, the single-line stamp "Von Prag". The lesser or clapper post was operated in Prague as a private post service in the years 1782-1789. The stamp "Von Prag" began to be used in 1782.

In 1782 the postal administration issued a license to the private businessman and owner of the "lesser post" in Vienna, Francois Garsia, for operation of a similar business also in Prague. The lesser post, also known as clapper post according to the instrument sounded by postmen to signal their arrival, was established in Celetná Street and was operated as a local delivery service by pedestrian postmen in Prague and its close neighborhood. Its owner was licensed to charge -- for a letter up to 6 half-ounces (105 g) of weight -- 2 kreutzers within Prague or 3 kreutzers within the distance of 3 miles from the town gates. A quarter of the netto [*sic* net] profits on the collected charges was due to the postal administration. The lesser post had within the licensed area its own letter collection points, and the lesser postmen passed five times a day through the streets of Prague where they delivered and received letters. The debts of Garsia towards the postal administration because of the unpaid due

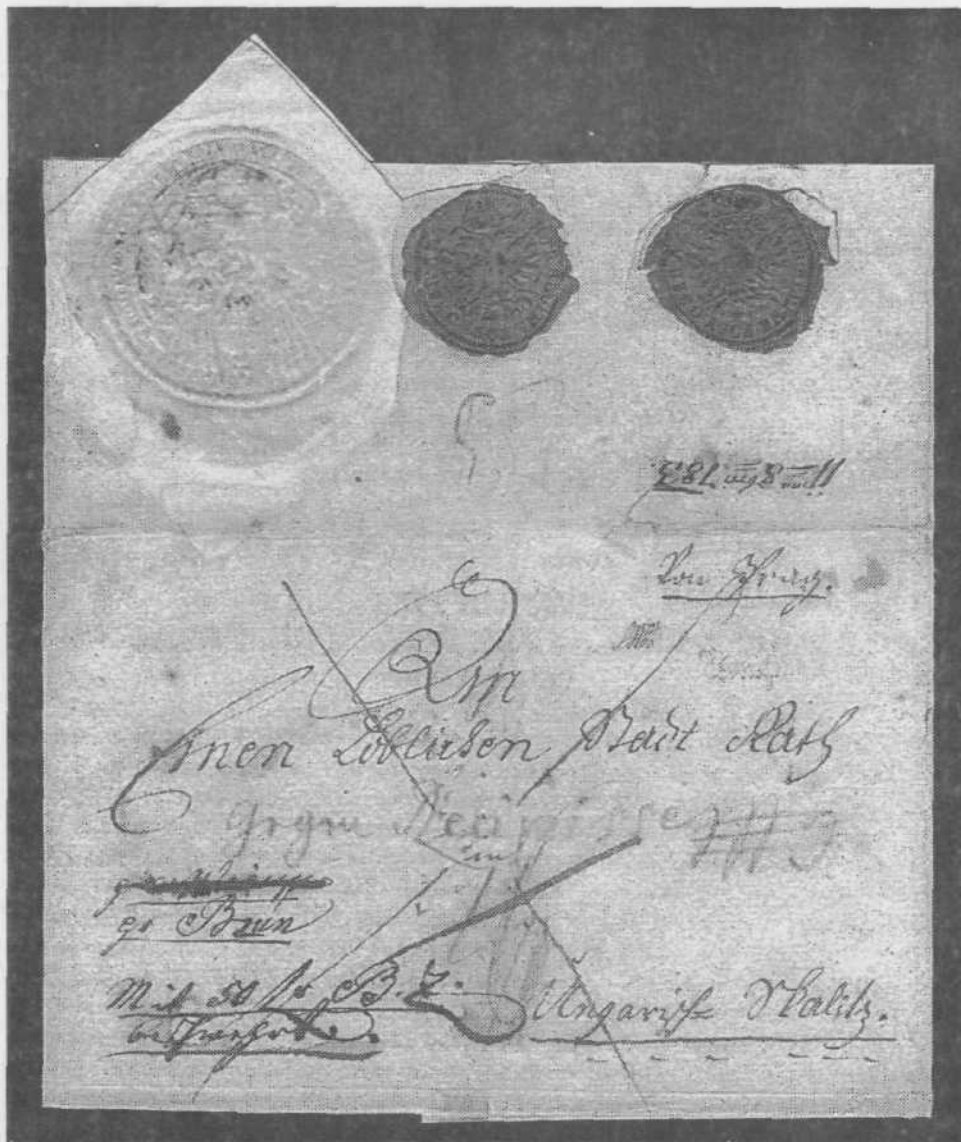


Fig. 1

profits were used in 1789 by the chief post office as a reason for transformation of the lesser post into a part of the chief post office. In the early 19th century its couriers were sent up to a distance of thirty miles from Prague; as such it became a rural courier institution. In 1821 it was finally canceled due to a lack of business.

[Ed. Note: This cover and description are taken from an exhibit of the Czech Postal Museum of Prague found on EXPONET at <http://www.exponet.info/>.]

CZECH LITERARY TREASURES

by Tom Hrcirik,
Helene Cincebeaux

The oldest translation of the Bible into a Slavic language was done by the Byzantine missionary brothers Cyril and Methodius (Fig. 1, 2) who were invited by Prince Rastislav (Fig. 3) to spread God's word in Great Moravia in the 9th century AD. The original texts in Old Church Slavonic have not survived.



Figure 1: S209/P292



Figure 2: S2886/P11

The Codex of Vyšehrad (Fig. 4, 5) was written in 1085 to mark Vratislav II's coronation. It is pictured [on these stamps] . . . with its beautiful decorated pages.



Figure 4: S1715/P1857

Another significant text is an old Czech biblical translation known as the Dresden Bible or Leskovec Bible dating back to 1360 during the reign of Charles IV.



Figure 3: S97/SI100

This year marks the 427th anniversary of the first edition of the Kralicka Bible or Bible of Kralice, a translation made from the original biblical languages by the Czech Brethren in 1579, which set the standard for the Czech language for many centuries. The most recent translation into modern Czech was done 27 years ago and, known as Český ekumenický překlad or Czech Ecumenical Translation.

* * *



Figure 5: S2537/P2675

The British Library in London has the first complete Bible printed in Prague in 1488, as well as the first illustrated Bible printed in the mining town of Kutná Hora in 1489. Around 100 editions of the Bible, or its parts, are held, including early volumes issued by the great Czech Renaissance printer J. Melantrich in the years 1549-1577, the six volume Kralice Bible printed in secret

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by the Unity of the Czech Brethren (1579-1594), and clandestine Protestant editions printed for the Czechs abroad after the defeat of the Reformation in the Czech Lands.

Presses that flourished in Bohemian and Moravia towns in the sixteenth century, the "Golden Age" of Czech printing, are represented by their secular output. From the early presses of Severyn comes the great *Kozmografia Czeska* (1554) and Melantrich's celebrated *Herbarz* (1562) with large woodcut illustrations. The *Ivančice kancional* (1564), the Brethrens' hymn book, is beautifully printed from moveable type, demonstrating the peak of Czech 16th-century printing coming from this secret press.

Book production of the 17th and 18th centuries was determined by the Counter-Reformation and concentrated in a smaller number of establishments under the control of the Jesuits. The awakening of Czech national consciousness at the end of the 18th century, as well as new discoveries in science and scholarly research, heralded the birth of the first learned societies and secular books.

Secrets of the Kralice Bible

"I bequeath to you as your inheritance the Book of God, the Holy Bible, which my sons with great diligence have rendered from the original languages into Czech and to which enterprise the Lord God gave such a blessing that few are the nations on earth that can hear, in their own mother tongue, the prophets and apostles speak so truthfully," wrote Jan Amos Komenský (Fig. 6), the Czech nation's most renowned scholar.

In 1956, in the center of the village of Kralice, there was a low mound on which stood two small houses, one with an odd looking cellar. Archaeologists were called in to examine the site. What they found was a sensation, a treasure of treasures.

From under the clay and centuries of accumulated refuse they uncovered the foundations of the Kralice tower. Toward the end of the sixteenth century, a printing press existed there that produced one of the most important liturgy works in Czech history, the Czech version of the Holy Bible known as the Kralice Bible (Fig. 7).

Historians tell us that the roots of the Old Testament lie in the second millennium before Christ. In the second century AD the Old and New Testaments were joined to make what we now know as the Bible. More than a thousand years later it became clear that new ways would have to be found to pass down the Book of Books to succeeding generations.

"The official church became more and more estranged from the Living Word of God, though interest in the Bible was unabated with the more religiously observant communities. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries interest actually increased, a development welcomed by Church authorities. The Bible was translated into several European languages and many vernaculars," Vladimír Čapek wrote in his book, *The History of the Bible*.



Figure 6: S793/P930

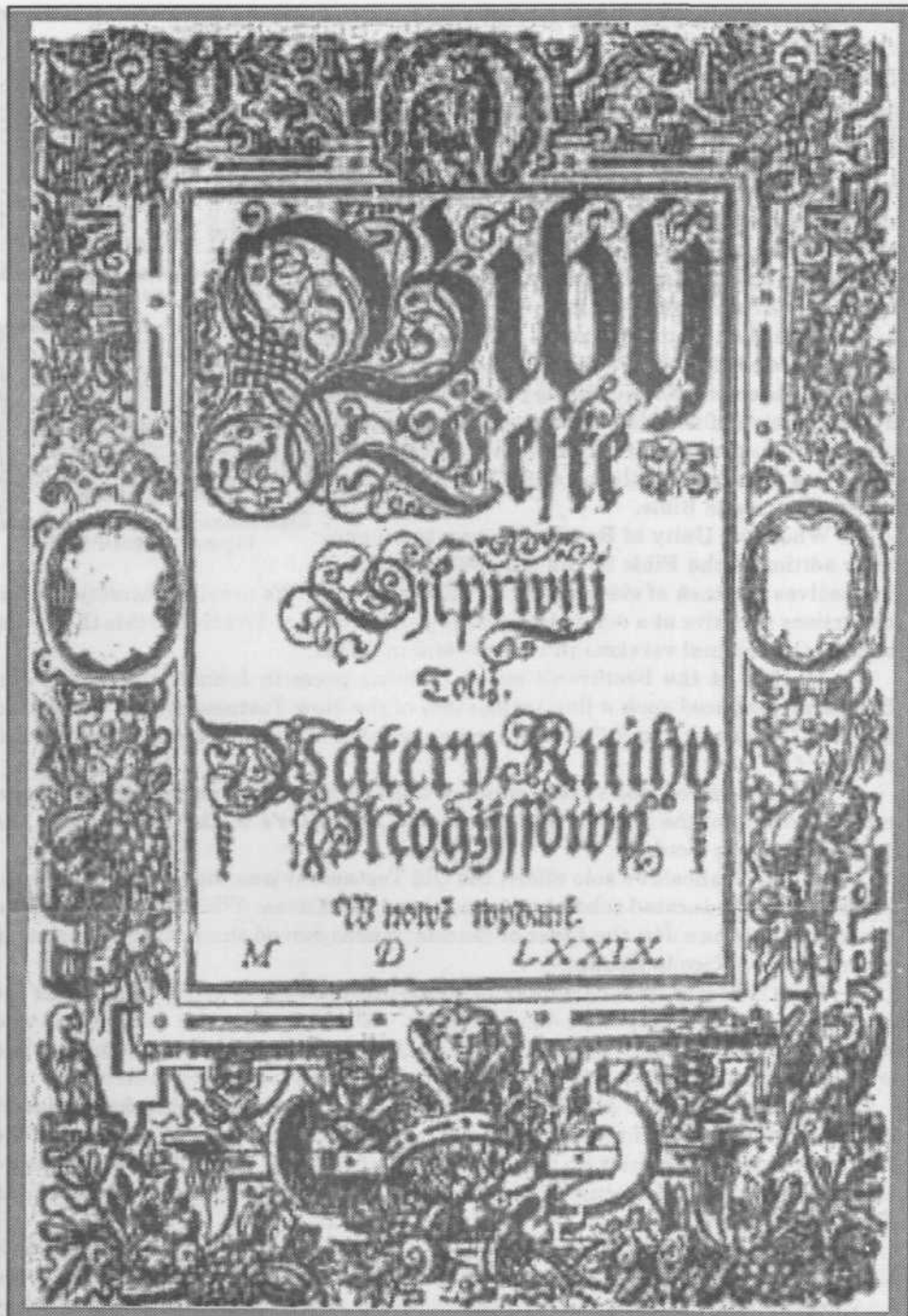


Figure 7: Cover page of the famed and precious Kralice Bible

Historians are forced to rely on guesswork concerning the several attempts made at translating various parts of the Bible into Czech. These fragments were finally collected and edited in the 1380s; the result was later described by Josef Dobrovsky as "the first edition of the Czech Bible".

Its flaws became apparent over time, however, and so a "second edition" of the Czech Bible was produced. According to some historians, the author was Jan Hus (Fig. 8,9 - being burned at the stake) who considered it very important that the faithful be able to read the scriptures, only then could they believe the truth found within.



Figure 8: S534/P667

More than a hundred years went by before the first printed edition of the Czech Bible appeared. The first Bible to come off the printing press was probably a 1475 version of the New Testament; the printer is unknown. Later, the first full version of the Czech Bible was produced; likely in 1488. This edition was called the Prague Bible.



Figure 9: S1461/P1601

When the Unity of Brethren began to prepare their edition of the Bible in the late 1500s, they set themselves the task of cleansing the translation of all its previous accretions and distortions to arrive at a definitive meaning and wording. To achieve this they went back to the original versions in Hebrew and in Greek.

In 1564 at the Brethren's secret printing press in Ivančice, Moravia, Jan Blahoslav produced such a fine translation of the New Testament that he praised himself. "No one," he said, "would have succeeded in expression more 'faithfully and directly'."

Three hundred years later, when writer Jan Karafiat was preparing his new critical edition of the Kralice Bible, he called Blahoslav's work "exemplary in the true sense of the word."

Unlike Blahoslav's solo effort, the Old Testament was the work of a group of extremely well educated scholars, among them Jan Eneas. With the support of the powerful nobleman Ján the Elder of Žerotín, Eneas moved the Brethren's printing press from Ivančice to Kralice.

For a full forty-two years after 1578, the press shop worked in secret under the official designation of a book-binding shop. At that time, the publication and distribution of "heretical" books was punishable by death. When the Kralice Bible was printed, it was shipped out to its readers concealed in wooden barrels.

The Brethren had already published their own school textbooks, a reader, catechism and two hymnals, but the crowning work was the Czech translation of the Bible. It came out gradually between 1579 and 1588 in five volumes with some commentaries. A sixth volume was issued in 1574 [sic 1594?], a new edition of Jan Blahoslav's New Testament.

The printing of the Kralice Bible was directed by Zachariáš Solín Slavkovský. Even as they were being produced, the Brethren realized that six volumes were impractical as a tool for spreading the Book among the people. So in 1597 they

printed a single-volume Bible. It was published twice more before the Battle of White Mountain in 1620. The importance of the text was not simply a matter of religion. For generations to come, the Kralice Bible would represent the epitome of mature and refined Czech literary expression. Komensky exhorted, "Adopt it as your own treasure, my beloved country, and use it to the glory of God and your own good education."

In exile in 1658, Komensky published a shortened version of the Kralice text under the title, *A Little Manual or The Heart of the Holy Bible*. Komensky was familiar with Kralice, having visited his friend Jan Lanecky there, and for the last time in 1626. The library in the tower was still in existence then.

The Kralice Bible is an outstanding linguistic and translation work and is considered as a masterpiece of printing of that time. During the 17th and 18th centuries the Kralice Bible was an ideal of the language of all Czechs regardless of religious affiliation and greatly influenced the religious and literary life. It became famous abroad, not only in Slovakia but also in the Germanic countries.

[Ed. Note: Reprinted with permission from *Morava Krasna*, a publication of the Moravian Heritage Society, Volume 13, No. 4, Winter 2006; Tom Hrnčirik, 28485 Tomball Pkwy #381, Tomball, TX 77375; thrnčirik@sbcglobal.net; www.czechUSA.com. Stamp images have been added.]

THE ROMANTIC PEDIGREE OF THE DOLLAR or How Our Money Got Its Name

by Ludvik Z. Svoboda

Throughout history a major problem facing any ruler was the establishment of a uniform means of valuation of worth and its acceptance by the populace. An obvious and early method was barter of goods and services. But this was subject to very subjective estimates of value by the owner

or the provider. In addition, you had to bring the goods or the provider of the services

with you wherever you were conducting business. So, some more objective and transportable means was required. The answer was to establish a specified amount of a scarce commodity as having a uniform value. Thus were born coins, typically minted from silver or gold.



Fig. 2



Fig. 1

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This of course did not end the problem however. As always, there were those who would take advantage of the situation. They forged the coins, shaved the edges so there wasn't the correct amount of silver or gold, and in general took actions which made a particular coin distrusted by the populace.

Thus it was that when a particular coin gained a reputation as being difficult to forge or "shave", the people put great stake in it, and it was greatly desired as a medium of payment.

Such a coin was the Joachimsthaler (alias thaler or tolar) of 1520 (Fig. 1 - obverse, Fig. 2 - reverse).



Figure 3: Bohemian silver rush in 1516 -- prospectors at work.

In the heart of Europe, 20 years after Columbus discovered America, a Bohemian lord discovered immense silver deposits at Saint Joachim's Dale (or Joachimsthal)(Fig. 3). In 1519, Count Stephen Schlik, owner of the "silver rush" mines, obtained by royal charter the right to mint his own coins. His handsome hefty "Joachimsthaler groschen" (called "thaler" for short) quickly became Europe's most popular monetary unit. (A horse in those days sold for 50 to 60 thalers.) In 1528 the Hapsburg Emperor revoked Schlik's monopoly and made thalers the coin of his realm.

For over 450 years "Sound as a Dollar" has meant a disc of solid silver weighing one ounce spelled THALER - TOLAR - TALLERO - DALER - DAALDER - DOLLAR in the four corners of the world . . . a coin bespeaking confidence whether in Europe, the Americas, Africa, or in the Near and Far East. They all descended from their ancestor minted by Count Stephen Schlik in 1520 at St. Joachimsthal -- today called Jáchymov in Czechoslovakia in the heart of Europe. [Ed. Note: Jáchymov is located in the far western Czech Republic in the Krusné Mountains, 20 km north of Karlovy Vary, and just 6 km south of the German border. At Figure 4 is a Czechoslovak stamp commemorating Jáchymov (S1413/P1549), but not for its "tolar" or silver fame. Rather, it is publicizing it as the "cradle of the atomic age" since pitchblende was first discovered here.]



Fig. 4

1732 -- The Spanish Pillar Dollar

Bohemia's Hapsburg monarchs also ruled Spain and her American colonies. In the New World, silver from the mines of Mexico, and Peru was minted into "thaler"-type coins worth eight "reales". These "pieces of eight" were the favorite booty of Captain Kidd and his fellow pirates who preyed on the Spanish treasure fleet. Yankee traders in the 13 British colonies called these coins "Spanish pillar dollars" because of the two crowned columns on the "tails" side (Fig. 5). These symbolized the Straits of Gibraltar -- the pillars of Hercules. "Spanish pillar" was written "S// " -- soon superimposed as \$, the modern dollar sign.



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

1780 -- The Maria Theresa Thaler

Austria's Most Catholic Hapsburg empress Maria Theresa cultivated relations with the one Christian kingdom of Africa, Ethiopia. Her thalers soon circulated all over East Africa and Arabia. To this day the Vienna mint turns out two million of the classic coins yearly to supply barterers, businessmen, and banks from Addis Ababa to Zanzibar, where it is affectionately called the "Fat Lady Dollar" (Fig. 6).



Fig. 7

1795 -- The Liberty Head Dollar

A slimmer lady's profile adorned the first American "cartwheel", minted by the fledgling United States government in 1795 (Fig. 7). Though the dollar

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was made the new nation's official monetary unit in 1776, "pieces of eight" were also acceptable tender until 1859. Modern American silver dollars have the same one-ounce weight and fine silver content (833 parts per 1000) as their illustrious Bohemian ancestor, the thaler.

1935 -- The Canadian Silver Dollar

The Bank of Canada opened its doors on March 11, 1935, and in that year a Canadian silver dollar was minted. On its "heads" side, it bore the bust of Britain's King George V, the reigning monarch (Fig. 8).



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

Perhaps in an attempt to emulate the success and acceptance of the Joachimsthaler, there was another silver thaler minted in 1620 for the Moravian estates. It is memorialized in a stamp issued as part of a set for the 1966 Brno National Philatelic Exhibition (Fig. 9 - S1418/P1553). On the top side it has the Moravian eagle in the middle surrounded by "MARCHIO MORAVIA MONETA NOVA" (possibly "MARCHIO(?) new Moravian money"). The bottom side shows a square spike with ivy growing on it and "VNIO" (union?) at the base, surrounded by "VIREBO 1620 TE STANTE" (possibly "strong while you stand"). The year 1620 was the culmination of the wars between the Protestant estates (strong in Moravia) and the Catholic Hapsburg dynasty which ended that year with the battle of White

Mountain where the Protestants were defeated. [Ed. Note: Does any reader have any information on this Moravian thaler or the meanings of the inscriptions?]

Reference:

- TUZEX flyer, Prague
- POFIS catalogs

* * * * *

TAX MONEY ORDER

by Lubor Kunc

Parliamentary elections were scheduled for June 2006. The social-democratic government thought how to attract public attention and get public support. The Ministry of Finance (managed by Mr. Sobotka of the party) got an idea to enable the taxpayers to pay their duties free of any charge. Until this reform was done, taxpayers could pay taxes in cash at financial offices, by bank transfers, or by postal money orders (but always for a fee).

On March 15, 2006 the new "Tax Money Order" was introduced (Fig. 1). This is a special kind of money order being suitable only for payment of taxes (e.g. VAT, income tax, motor tax, real estate tax) or customs duties. Every tax has a special ID code to be marked on the money order, e.g. VAT as 705. To identify the tax office you

are paying to, you write in upper right corner its registration number. The left part of the money order serves as confirmation of the tax payment, and it is returned by the post office to the sender.

Fig. 1

The system is very effective and convenient for taxpayers, because they can send their taxes for free from every one of the 3,405 post offices working in the Czech Republic at the moment. This service was first started after the signing of a contract between the Ministry of Finance and the Czech Postal Administration. The postal administration receives about 50 mil. Kč (i.e. about \$2.5 mil.) from the Ministry of Finance for this service -- every "free" Tax Money Order is billed for 20 Kč (\$0.95). This is not only nice income, but also good promotion of the postal administration, because the majority of people used to pay their bills via banks, and thus the quantity of money orders sent via post offices had decreased.

Thanks to our life in the Internet age, the tax money order can be downloaded at the web site of the Ministry of Finance of the Czech Republic; see http://CDs.mfcr.cz/cps/rde/xbcr/SID-53EDF4E6-38F21EEF/CDs/3Danova_slozenka_K.pdf

Do you want to know if the trick helped the Social Democrats? Here is the answer -- partially. However, while it wasn't the main factor for the party receiving more votes than expected, it still wasn't enough and the party lost the election and was replaced by the election winner. On the other hand, the Social Democrats are still able to play an important role in the political scene of the Czech Republic, and they are influencing politics more than the winning ODS party (Conservatives).

Despite the political success, the future of the Tax Money Order is not clear. The program was agreed to by the Czech Postal Administration without a public proposal (in order to start it before the elections), so it is limited for 1 year only. The Ministry of Finance is currently unsatisfied with the fee being paid to the Czech Postal Administration, and so it decided to prepare a public proposal for providing the service in the future. Among the expected participants in the proposal can be found not only the postal administration, but also commercial banks and ticket sellers, who can use their machinery equipment for tax payments. It is thus possible that these Tax Money Orders will move from postal operations to those of the banking world -- and thus this special type of postal stationery will exist for only one year.

PRAGUE'S POSTAL HISTORY

by Slavomir Kaiser

In the Middle Ages, when postal services in the present sense of the word did not exist, despatches were delivered to Prague by royal messengers, later joined by the runners of church dignitaries, monasteries and Prague university. The merchants of Prague soon found it worth maintaining their own messengers, who ran a regular weekly service. This was the state of affairs in the mid-14th century.



Figure 1: Scene from the Middle Ages at a postal way station on the way to Prague (on the building wall "do Prahy" = to Prague).

In the reign of Charles IV (1346-78), Prague became the capital of the Holy Roman Empire then uniting Germany. This led to the establishment of regular postal services to all the provincial centers of the Empire and all the more important cities of Europe; the regular services were maintained until the Hussite wars of the 15th century. (Fig. 1)

A regular state-operated postal service, carried out by mounted messengers, was introduced to our country by Ferdinand I (1526-64)(Fig. 2: S381/P509 - Middle Ages post rider and modern post. 2 bus). Anthony of Thurn Taxis was brought to Prague to act as postmaster-general of all the Habsburg lands, and his uncle, Ambrose of Thurn Taxis, in 1527 became the postmaster of Prague, then the capital city of the Empire (Fig. 3: S1968/P2110 - post horn to announce arrival).

During the reign of Maxmillian II (1564-76), the mounted messengers called "couriers" first began to carry private as well as official correspondence (Fig. 4: S2117/P2254 - postal courier). In the days of Rudolf II (1576-1612),



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

postal services were transferred to stage coaches which carried paying passengers as well as mail (Fig. 5: S2343/P2469 - Postal landau). [Ed. Note: It is of interest that the "Taxis" family still operated the post, and the fact that they began carrying paying passengers is where our term "Taxi" comes from.]



Fig. 5

The first post office in Prague was located in a house called "At the three stars" on Malostranské náměstí N° 37-24 (The Minor-Quarter Town Square). Weekly Royal Mail services used to depart from this house -- the Italian Mail via Venice to Rome, the German Mails via Dresden to Hamburg and via Plzeň (Pilsen) to Augsburg and on to Brussels; independent mail runs were operated to Vienna, Brno and Wrocław.

In the 17th century, this post office moved to Maltézské náměstí (Maltesian Square) N° 480-8, a house to this day called "At the old post office". In 1723, the post office moved to Lázeňská Ulice (Baths Street) N° 428-5 in the Minor Quarter, and in 1742, it was shifted to the Lichtenstein palace.

In 1792, the main post office took over the abandoned Dominican monastery in the Minor Quarter and later transferred to the former Hybernian monastery on Joseph's Square. Finally, in 1869, it moved to the corner of Bredovská and Jindřišská Streets; the building erected on this site in the seventies still houses Prague's Central Post Office.

Many of the houses and streets in Old Prague are linked with the history of the city's postal services; a good example are the streets which used to form the routes of regular postal runs, such as Poštovská (Post Street, the present Karolina Světlá Street), Stará Poštovská (Old Post Street, the present Křenencová Street), where mail coaches from the Minor Quarter passed through on their way to Vienna, or Nová Poštovská (New Post Street, now called Červená Street).

Most of the historic houses once linked with the postal history of Prague have been demolished, and only the old engravings in the city's museums can give us some idea of the environment in which the city of Prague's postal services arose, flourished and withered away.

[Ed. Note: The SPECIALIST is pleased to reprint the above article from BOHEMIA, An Historical Sketch, Count Franz von Lützow, rev'd 1939.]

ADVERTISEMENT

CARPATHO-UKRAINE FOR SALE

I have added an extensive list of offers to my web site. Material is available in all price ranges. So far, the sections on the Chust and Užhorod overprints have been completed, with more to come in the sections on the 1945 definitive issues. There is also a small section on pre-1945 postal history. Please see <http://www.jaypex.com/sales/C-U/>, or write to Jay Carrigan, 39 Foxglove Road, Hendersonville, NC 28739 (USA), e-mail: jay@jaypex.com, and phone: (828) 698-7836.

NATIONAL STAMP SHOW OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

by Savoy Horvath

On April 19-22, 2007 in the city of Hradec Králové the Czech Stamp Union will hold a National Postage Stamp Exposition. It will be held on the banks of the Elbe river in the Hradec Králové museum (Fig. 1) where - 85 years ago - the very first national stamp show was held during October 28 - November 2, 1922. This then was the first ever Czech-only stamp show in the area of the Bohemian Kingdom -- but also the first stamp show of the newly created Czechoslovak Republic.

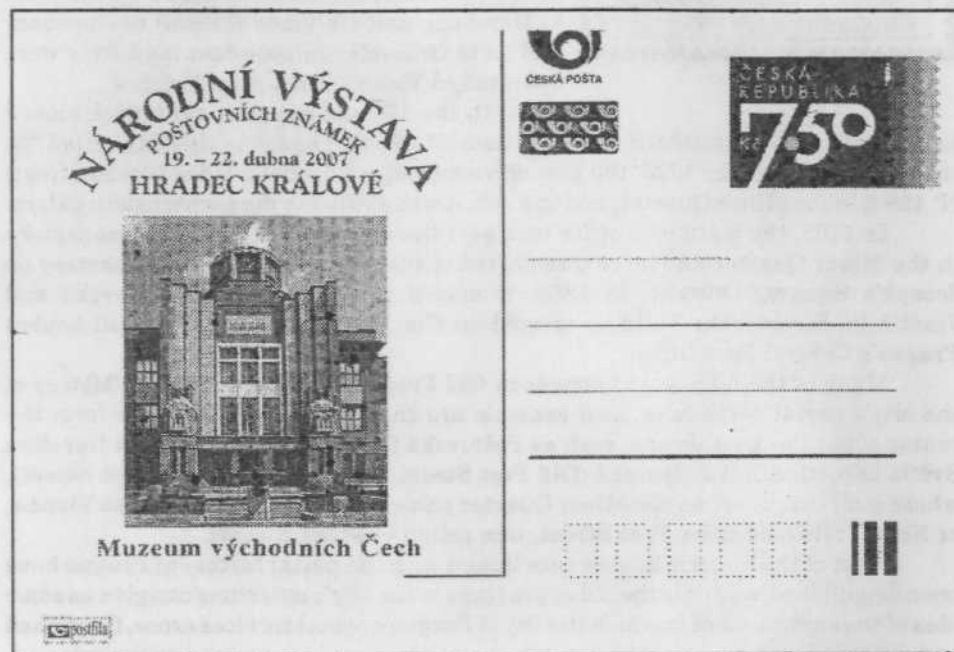


Figure 1: Commemorative postal card showing the museum of eastern Bohemia.

This year's show will also commemorate 125 years of organized Czech philately. During the Austrian monarchy strictly Czech organizations were not welcome.

Another anniversary being celebrated in 2007 is the 700th year since the city was dedicated as a royal city. As a result, the patrons of the show are both the Mayor of Hradec Králové and also the Hradec Králové county president.

Over one hundred exhibitors will participate, showing from Czechoslovak classics to some exotic foreign material such as Indian States revenue stamps. Part of the exhibition will hold thematic collections -- anything from postal history to space travel. The Prague Postal Museum will also participate. Organizers of the show will also exhibit the



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

original antique jewelry illustrated in a 15 Kč Czech postage stamp from last year (Fig. 2). This show is actually a forerunner to PRAGA'08 and will afford many collectors the last chance to gain the qualifications needed to participate in PRAGA'08.

The Czech Post will have a station at the show and will be canceling covers and cards with different special commemorative post cancels (Fig. 3, 4). Also, a special Reco label will also be available at the show site (Fig. 5).



Fig. 4

The Slovak Post Office will also have a station available. The building next to the museum will have a bourse, dealer tables, and meetings/lectures by different Czech philatelic societies.

Hradec Králové is located 100 km east of Prague, can be reached by an expressway, by train, and by bus. Karel Holoubek is the show organizing director, a former Board Member of the Czech Philatelic Union, and is a member of our Society.

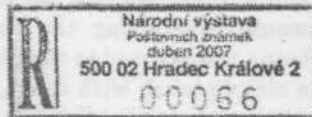


Fig. 5

SOME THOUGHTS ON VISITING ESPANA 2006

by Richard Livingston



Figure 1: The emblem of the exposition

I had the good fortune to be able to attend ESPANA 2006 in Malaga, Spain from October 7 to October 13, 2006. I share below some of my thoughts on the exhibition, both the organization of the show and the exhibits, which I believe, might be of most interest to members of the Society for Czechoslovak Philately.

All in all, I greatly enjoyed the show and found the staff at the exhibition friendly and helpful. The layout seemed most unusual, however, with exhibits distributed unevenly in seven exhibition buildings -- some of which closed earlier in the week than others, much to my dismay. None of the exhibition buildings had real places to sit and rest; none had rest rooms and none had a place to eat or drink. The one major exception was the room for viewing literature exhibits, where the lighting was good and the chairs reasonably comfortable. The

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organizing committee was inaccessible and had its headquarters in the rear of a convention hotel, which housed no exhibits. Assistants at the show were generally helpful. Security guards were present and generally pleasant even if they objected to the taking of pictures of exhibitors that I knew in front of their exhibits. And our Commissioner should have taken more care in supervising the setting up of Society members' exhibits. One traditional exhibit, for instance, had had several stamps fall askew in their mountings during the course of their being transported to the show. With just a simple touch with tongs, the volunteer setting the stamp pages in the frames could have done a little adjusting -- the stamps were just slightly ajar in their mounts -- to make the exhibit more presentable.

I was also quite surprised at the small number of dealers and postal administrations for an international show -- only 44 under tents along a pedestrian street. But those that were there did have a good number of visitors, even after the closing hours of the show.

ESPANA 2006 boasted that they had 3,200 exhibition frames, 48,000 collection sheets, and over 250,000 exhibited pieces. The exhibits that I saw in detail (a minuscule portion of that total) had excellent material, including many rare specimens and covers. (I find it helpful when the exhibitor points out the scarcest or most unusual items.) Let me mention 11 of the exhibits with a Czechoslovak theme that I found most interesting:

Czechoslovakia

-- Robert Alexa, "T.G. Masaryk on Stamp Issues 1923-1927, Rarities and Features", Frame 6507, Grade 78 -- Large Silver

-- Miloš Červinka, "History of Postal Services in the Děčín Region", Frames 2564-2568, Grade 83 -- Vermeil

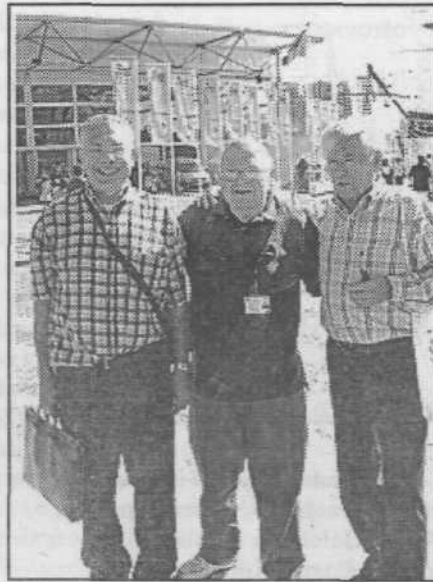


Figure 2: Richard Livingston, Henry Hahn, and Jan Verleg in front of the main pavilion



Figure 3: Henry Hahn with his exhibit of Czechoslovakia - The First Republic (1918-1938)

-- Henry Hahn,
"Czechoslovakia - The
First Republic (1918-
1938)", Frames 1152-
1159, Grade 87 -- Large
Vermeil

-- Julius Pisa,
"Perforated Hradčany
(1918-1921)", Frame 6505,
Grade 75 -- Silver

-- Georg Wilhelms,
"Die Tschecho-
slovakische Luftpost,
1920-1939", Frames 4001-
4008, Grade 85 -- Large
Vermeil

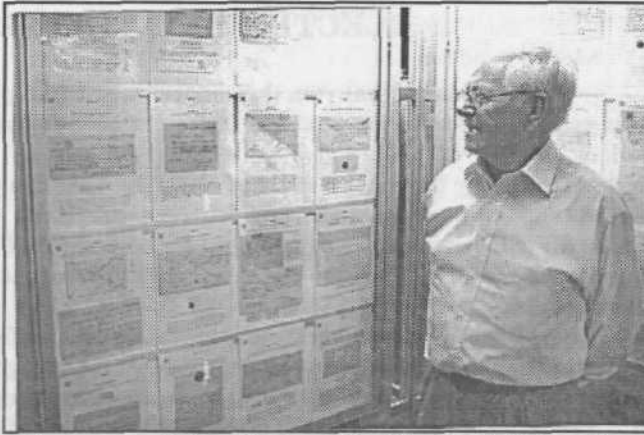


Figure 4: Jan Verleg with his exhibit of The Postal History of the Carpatho-Ukraine, 1786-1945

Slovakia

-- Ondraj Foldes,
"Slovakia 1939-1945", Frames 1183-1187, Grade 75 -- Large Silver
-- Ervin Smažák, "Ervo Catalogue: Slovak Republic 1939-1945, 1993-2005",
Item 7206 in the Philatelic Literature competition, Grade 68 -- Silver Bronze
-- Ervin Smažák, "Sport Stamps of Slovakia", Frame 6506, Grade 63 -- Bronze

Carpatho-Ukraine

-- Otto Hornung, "Carpatho-Ukraine", Frames 2296-2303, Grade 90 -- Gold
-- Juan E. Page de la Vega, "Carpatho-Ukraine", Frames 1147-1141, Grade 75
-- Large Silver
-- Jan Verleg, "The Postal History of the Carpatho-Ukraine, 1786-1945",
Frames 2304-2311, Grade 90 -- Gold

SELL - SWAP - WANT

I am, once again, re-initiating a feature column that used to be a staple of the SPECIALIST many years ago (in the 1970's). I am hoping that it will help members find philatelic items that they need or to sell/swap those that they have in excess -- AND, it is all free!

Every member is entitled to one free 15 word ad each calendar year which will run in the column headed the way this one is. Your name and address does not count towards the 15 words. Send your ad (please type or print it so there are no misunderstandings) to me at the address or e-mail address found on page two of every issue.

EXAMPLES of ads:

WANTED: Buy International Reply Coupons all countries. L. Svoboda, 4766 S. Helena Way, Aurora, CO 80015

SELL: Hard cover bound copies of 1951-53 issues of SPECIALIST, \$15 postpaid. L. Svoboda, 4766 S. Helena Way, Aurora, CO 80015

SWAP: Interested in Hradčany perf/imperf sheets, covers, freaks, anything -- especially 25h blue. L. Svoboda, 4766 S. Helena Way, Aurora, CO 80015

ELECTIONS TO THE BOARD

The candidates that you, the general membership, have nominated to run in this year's election to the Board of Directors include the following (in alphabetical order):

1 -- Alan Hoover (member #1543) of Norcross, GA; has philatelic interests in both Czech and Hungarian materials; current president of Society for Hungarian Philately (SHP); sales circuit manager for both the SCP (since 1994) and the SHP; maintains the SHP website; member - SOSSI (since 2005), APS (since 1973); US Commissioner to SLOVAKIA'02.

2 -- Robert Koschalk (member #1461) of Waukegan, IL; former vice-president; Czech collector (Bohemia & Moravia expert) since 1952; Chicagoland Branch member; runs Cicero/Berwyn bourse (oldest in Chicago); frequent Czech Republic visitor.

3 -- Frederick P. Lawrence, Ph.D. (member #1180) of Gilbert, AZ; specializes in Scouts on stamps issues; Czech interests since early 80's; frequent contributor to philatelic journals including the SPECIALIST; FIP and APS-accredited judge in Czechoslovak materials among many others; member and officer of numerous philatelic organizations.

4 -- Richard Livingston (member #1989) of Vienna, VA; started seriously collecting Czechoslovakia in 2000 with the 1934 anthem sheets; has visited Prague and Telč three times, attended BRNO'05, active in the Washington area Society chapter, worked at the Society table at WASHINGTON'06.

5 -- Philip Rhoades (#1955; member since 2003) Cleveland, MN; Society Secretary, 2005-present; primary interest is WWII era and related, especially occupied Czechoslovakia (Heydrich assassination, Lidice destruction); asst. editor *The Philatelic Exhibitor*; member - APS, APRL, AAPE, GPS, MPHS, ATA, NPM.

Of the above, Alan Hoover, Robert Koschalk, Frederick Lawrence, Richard Livingston, and Philip Rhoades are currently on the Board and are seeking re-election.

Enclosed in the envelope with this issue is the election ballot that every member in good standing is asked to complete. Vote for any 5 of the candidates listed above. The order in which you list them is not important. Mail your ballot to our secretary, Philip Rhoades, at the address given on the ballot. Make sure that your ballot is postmarked no later than May 15th.

APRIL 1

THE IDEAL BIRTHDAY GIFT: AN S.C.P. MEMBERSHIP

We all have the problem of finding a good present for someone who has everything. All of us also have friends and loved ones with whom we exchange gifts who collect stamps or might become interested.

The solution to your gift problem: buy them a membership in the Society for Czechoslovak Philately. The cost is only \$25 (regular) or \$3 (youth -- under 18) per year. Among the many advantages of SCP membership, they will receive our

outstanding journal (a fresh gift from you every two months!) and a great source from which they can purchase their philatelic needs.

Go to the SCP website (www.CSPhilately.org) today, download an application, complete it, and send it in along with your check for \$25 or \$3. Or, you can write to our Secretary, Philip Rhoades for the application (his address is on page 2 of every issue). Your loved one or friend will receive a nice year-long gift as a result of your thoughtfulness.

* * * * *

Philatelic News and Views

From Phil Rhoades:

-- The primary purpose of my recent trip to Prague/Lidice was to formalize plans for showing my Lidice exhibit at Památník Lidice (Lidice Memorial) next summer. The plan is to show the exhibit in expanded format (20-frames) June-August in Lidice. The formal opening will be 6 pm, June 9. There will be a pre-opening seminar at 4 pm at which Czech historian Eduard Štehlík will speak on the "Echoes of Lidice", and I will speak on how I became interested in Lidice. My exhibit will be shown in the Památník Lidice Art Gallery. This is being done in conjunction with the 65th anniversary remembrance of Lidice's destruction and the 60th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone for rebuilding Lidice. The expanded exhibit (compared to the 10-frame limit at US stamp shows) will include additional philatelic material, supplementary collateral material and items too large for showing at a stamp show (newspapers, posters, photos, publications, etc.), and a new section showing movies/documentaries related to Heydrich/Lidice.

From Tom Cossaboom:

-- I just recently learned that our member, Phil Rhoades, was awarded a Gold medal at the recent CHICAGOPEX'06 philatelic exhibition for his exhibit "The Murder of Lidice" [see above also]. He was also awarded the APS 1940-1980 Medal of Excellence.

From Gerald van Zanten:

-- Our recent new member, Johannes Broekes, of Waikanae, New Zealand, entered his 6 frame Hradčany collection in the National exhibition in Christchurch and was awarded a large silver medal. He said it was a good show.

From Linn's Stamp News, 22 January 2007, "The Insider" column of Les Winick:

-- Czech Show Mixes Collectibles. While some stamp show organizers are fighting to boost attendance at shows in the United States, a recent trade fair in the Czech Republic broke attendance records. *The Philatelic Exporter*, a British stamp trade magazine, reported in its November 2006 issue that "13,655 collectors of postage stamps, postcards, coins, banknotes, minerals, and phonecards visited the ninth Annual Collector (Sberatel) International Trade Fair." This was nearly 2,000 more than the old record. The fair was held Sept. 15-17, 2006, at the Prague

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Fairgrounds. The event included 214 booth holders from 32 countries. In addition to the Czech Post, representatives of the postal services of Switzerland, Slovakia, Germany, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the United Nations were in attendance. Five British dealers were interviewed, and all said that they will return next year. A sampling of 277 randomly chosen visitors indicated that 40 percent of the visitors came to the fair more than once. Also, only 37 percent of the visitors came from Prague, and most of those from Prague visited the show on Sunday. About 40 percent of the attendees were from cities other than Prague, and 18 percent were from other countries. The 10th annual trade fair will take place Sept. 14-16, 2007, in Prague.

From Linn's Stamp News, 2 February 2007, "Show Awards" column:

-- At the Thamespex'06 stamp show, held Oct. 15, 2006, in Waterford, CT, Anthony F. Dewey received a Gold medal for his exhibit "A Postal History of Hartford, CT, from Statehood to the Twentieth Century", also the United States Stamp Society president's award and the Connecticut Postal History Society award.

✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠

New Issues

CZECH REPUBLIC

by G.M. van Zanten

1. On 10 January 2007, the Ministry of Communications of the Czech Republic issued a set of two commemorative stamps in the Personalities series (Fig. 1). The stamps were designed by Josef Saska, engraved by Václav Fajt, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print combined with photogravure in printing sheets of 50 pieces.



Fig. 1

-- 7.50 Kč - Fráňa Šrámek (1877-1952), colors: black (recess print), yellow, rose, blue, and red. The poet, prosaist, playwright, and journalist F. Šrámek studied at the grammar school in Písek and the law in Prague; however, instead of finishing the law studies he turned to

literature. He gradually passed through various artistic movements. Characteristic of his initial works is anarchism and antimilitarism together with impressionism and symbolism (e.g. "Života Bído, Přec tě Mám Rád", "Žasnoucí Voják", "Modrý a Rudý"). These works are the most valuable of Šrámek's contribution to the early 20th century Czech literature. He then gradually turned from social rebellion to sensual life (e.g. the novel "Stříbrný Vitr", the poetry collection "Splav", the play "Léto"). Šrámek's poetic expression is strongly emotional, his resources being colloquial language and city folklore. His late works display melancholy and resignation to

life. The postage stamp commemorates the 130th anniversary of the poet's birth. A FDC in gray depicts a cachet showing a pair of lovers.

-- 19 Kč - Karel Slavoj Amerling (1807-1884), colors: black (recess print), yellow, rose, green-blue, and blue. The Czech physician, natural scientist, teacher and philosopher K.S. Amerling was a great supporter of the work by J.A. Komenský whose follower he considered himself to be. He studied medicine in Prague but was interested also in philosophy, theology and natural science. He travelled extensively throughout Europe. After his return to Prague he worked as a private physician but he thought about building a Czech education system which would suit the needs of the Czech people. In 1839 he founded the education establishment Budeč for teachers, women and craftsmen where he practiced education based on natural science in a close connection with industries and agriculture. In 1848-68 he was the headmaster of the 1st k.k. Model General Czech School - an establishment for education of future teachers. He emphasized Komenský's principles of demonstration and adequacy in education and designed an education system according to these principles. After his removal due to political reasons he was instrumental in the 1871 foundation of an establishment for mentally handicapped children at Ernestin in Prague. He became its headmaster and was involved, *inter alia*, in research activities. The postage stamp commemorates the 200th anniversary of Amerling's birth. A FDC in gray-blue shows a still life symbolizing Amerling's scientific work.

2. On 10 January 2007, the Ministry issued a 9 Kč stamp to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the Czech Technical University in Prague (Fig. 2). The establishment of the Czech Technical University in Prague came from Emperor Joseph I and his rescript dated 18.1.1707 establishing the Czech Estate Polytechnic College. The Czech Technical University emerged in 1920 as a union of seven technical colleges. Today's Czech Technical University has seven colleges, or



Fig. 2

faculties (mechanical engineering, civil engineering, electrical engineering, nuclear sciences and physical engineering, architecture, biomedical engineering) and several specialized institutes and research centers. The stamp shows the logo of the CTU in Prague along with its name and the years 1707-2007. The stamp was designed by Pavel Hrach, engraved by Bohumil Šneider, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in blue combined with photogravure in ocher, orange, black and gray in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in gray shows a graphic composition created by symbols of all seven faculties of the CTU in Prague.

3. On 20 January 2007, the Ministry issued a 7.50 Kč stamp in the Tradition of Czech Stamp Production series (Fig. 3) to commemorate the painter and graphic artist Josef Liesler (1912-2005), the designer of more than a hundred Czechoslovak and Czech postage stamps. The first one was issued in 1947, and the last one in 2002. Chosen for this issue of "A Stamp on A Stamp" was Liesler's postage stamp

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featuring the portrait of the violin virtuoso J. Slavík, issued in 1953 in the face value 75h on the occasion of the Prague Spring Festival and engraved by J. Schmidt. J.



Fig. 3

Liesler graduated from the College of Architecture and Civil Engineering, majoring in drawing with C. Bouda, J. Sejpek, and O. Blažíček. His work includes painting, graphic design, illustration, ex libris as well as wall monuments and mosaics. He had his distinctive style of painting embedded in surrealism. He himself described his work as fantastic reality. From his college days he was a member of the Association of Graphic Artists Mánes, the Union of Czech Artists and Graphic Designers Hollar, and numerous other bodies. He was a member of the Royal Belgian Academy and a fellow of the Florentine Academy. In 2003 he was granted the medal For Merits by the Czech President. Numerous of his postage stamps also won honors and prizes, e.g. the 1974 World Most Beautiful Stamp dedicated to the International Hydrological Decade. The great fancy ornateness and decorativeness together with the brilliant drawing make his stamps unique.

The stamp was design and engraved by Bedřich Housa and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in black combined with photogravure in blue, dark red and ocher in printing sheets of 30 pieces. Besides the stamps in sheet arrangement, philatelic booklets of 8 stamps and 4 labels featuring a part of a violin with the initials of J. Slavík. The labels are printed in black (recess print) and ocher. A FDC in black shows the drawing of a lyre by J. Liesler.

SLOVAKIA

by Gerald M. van Zanten

4. On 31 May 2006, the Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications issued a 10 Sk commemorative stamp in the For Children series (Fig. 4). The stamp shows a tulip flower and three flying insects that represent the young artist's idea of Spring. This was the theme for this year's annual competition for physically and mentally handicapped school children. The stamp is the original art work of Jozef Šurkala, was designed by Robert Hromec, and produced by Állami Nyomda Nyrt., Hungary by offset in sheets of 100 stamps. In addition, a maximum card and booklets of 10 stamps were issued.



Fig. 4

5. On 9 June 2006, the Ministry issued a 10 Sk stamp commemorating Castle Devín with a label that can be personalized (Fig. 5). The stamp shows a view of the ruins of the Castle Devín. The stamp was designed by Karol Felix and produced by Állami Nyomda Nyrt., Hungary by offset in sheets of 8 se-tenant stamps and 8 labels with marginal text. Some of the sheets have labels showing the emblem of the Police Force of the Slovak Republic while the other sheets can have their labels



Fig. 5

personalized. The marginal text has the dates "1991-2006" and in Slovak - 15th Anniversary of the Slovak Police Force. There was no official FDC.



Fig. 6

6. On 9 June 2006, the Ministry issued a 25 Sk definitive stamp as the first in a new series on Slovak Folk Handicrafts entitled

Shepherd's Long Pipe (Fig. 6). The stamp shows a man in folk dress playing a shepherd's long pipe called a fujara, was designed by Igor Benca, and produced by Állami Nyomda Nyrt., Hungary by offset in sheets of 100 pieces. There was no official FDC.

7. On 23 June 2006, the Ministry issued a set of two commemorative stamps titled Technical Artifacts from Museum Treasures recognizing Glass and Copper Production (Fig. 7). The stamps were designed by Rudolf Cigánik (28 Sk) and Igor Rumanský (31 Sk), engraved by

Rudolf Cigánik, and produced by the Post Printing House, Prague by recess printing from flat plates with offset in sheets of 8.

-- 28 Sk: a glass vessel from the 16th century from the Slovak glass museum. The Slovak glass making industry was influenced by the Venetians from the 14th century although the first Venetian glassmakers probably did not settle in Slovakia until the 15th century. Distinctive styles of colorless glassware were produced often with painted decoration. The tradition of glass making continues today. A FDC in dark gray represents patterns created with unfinished glass fiber on the stem of a goblet with glassmakers' tools.

-- 31 Sk: a copper measuring cup with the coat of arms of Banská Bystrica in relief and the date 1576 from the central Slovak museum. Copper has been exploited in the area from the earliest times but from the 14th century the metal was exported to many parts of Europe. The town declined in importance during the 17th century as the mines became exhausted. A FDC in black portrays the coat of arms of the free royal mining town as shown on the town seal dated 1576.



Fig. 7

[Ed. Note: Some information was taken from CZECHOUT, 3/2006.]

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