



# THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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## THE MUCHA EXPRESS STAMPS Spěšné Známky (Scott E1-3; POFIS S1-3) by Mark Wilson

In 1919 the renowned Czech artist Alfons Mucha submitted his design for these wonderful contemporaries of his Hradčany masterpiece. They flourished at first, faltered when tariffs rose shortly after their introduction, and eventually faded away when the post office no longer needed them. They are, in their own right, as elegant as the Hradčany and deserve our philatelic notice and respect.

I am aware of only two studies of the Mucha express stamps: that section of *Monografie IV*<sup>1</sup> devoted to the issue and a series of short articles in *The Czechoslovak Specialist*<sup>2</sup> published during the mid-to-late 1970's. Both sources rendered quite valuable insights into the express service and its stamps, but they also contained a few small errors, some of which are addressed here.

Since express stamps supported a postal service not familiar to most Americans, we frequently and incorrectly associate them with a more familiar facility -- special delivery. Despite the fact that the Scott catalog lists them as such, at the time of the express stamps' release, what Americans know as the special delivery service cost Czechoslovaks 60h. By denominating the express stamps far below that amount, the postal service clearly had in mind a completely different purpose.

*(Continued on Page 3)*

### Table of Contents

#### ARTICLES

	<i>Author</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. The Mucha Express Stamps	Mark Wilson	1
2. The First Printing Error on Stamps of the Czech Republic	Ctibor Sobotka	12
3. FOR BEGINNERS: The Philately of Czechoslovakia (Part 3)	Phillips B. Freer	16

#### COLUMNS

4. Elections to the Board	Ludvik Svoboda	15
5. Charley's Corner	Charley Chesloe	21
6. Letters to the Editor	(various)	23
7. Philatelic News and Views	(various)	27
8. SELL - SWAP - WANT	(various)	28
9. New Issues	G.M. van Zanten	28

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## THE MUCHA EXPRESS STAMPS

(Continued from Page 1)

If one understands the need of businesses to post printed commercial materials quickly and cheaply, one understands the motivation behind the express service and its stamps. Under the former Austrian government, printed commercial matter normally shipped as parcel post, but when postal customers affixed a special surcharge in the form of an express stamp to printed matter the post office upgraded the item to a faster delivery service. The new Czechoslovak government followed suit with its own express service and stamps.

The new post office treated printed commercial matter bearing the required 3h Hradčany definitive and an added 2h express stamp as a first class letter. An advertiser saved a considerable amount in postage because the first class letter rate at the time was much higher. During the same period the sender could also frank printed commercial matter with a single 5h express stamp. Subsequent rate changes forced the post office to withdraw the 2h and introduce the 10h.

Canceled examples of the Mucha express issue, while not uncommon, do not appear in the abundance characteristic of the majority of early Czechoslovak stamps. One sees with relative frequency the Hradčany and other typographic issues offered in lots measured by the thousands and the tens of thousands. I have often purchased and sold early Czechoslovak stamps by the pound, yet a few dozen large blocks and panes of express stamps represent almost my entire research stock. In my whole philatelic career I have encountered fewer than 100 loose copies, usually in mint condition. According to some, most were discarded and destroyed with the mail they franked during their brief period of use.

The authorities often permitted or tolerated other uses for these stamps. During the first months of the Republic, for instance, since no definitive issue bore the denomination 2h, a single 2h express stamp provided the correct 10h up-franking for the still-valid Austrian postal cards originally imprinted with an 8h Hapsburg stamp. Actually, the postal service overlooked many unsanctioned uses of express stamps. Although only valid for domestic use, one may find covers sent to foreign addresses franked with express stamps.<sup>3</sup> I leave to collectors more expert in validating covers than I to determine the nature of the item shown in

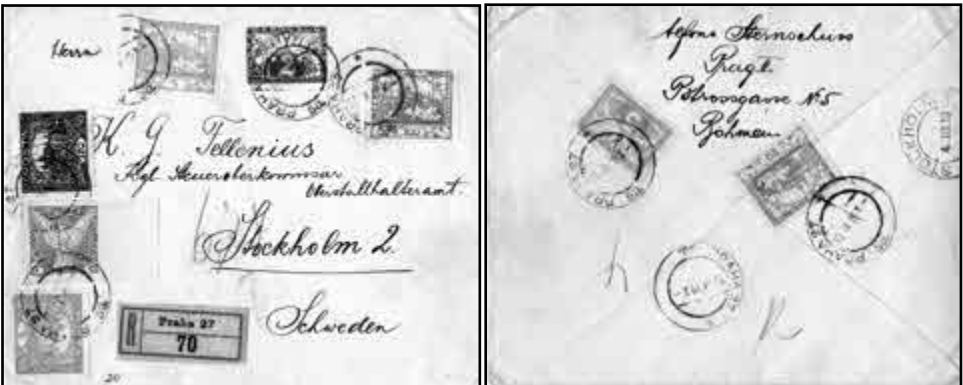


Figure 1: International mail with 2h on face, 5h on verso.

**THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST**

Figure 1. Is it a complete forgery that never passed through the mail, a philatelic cover that saw postal service, or a genuine piece of mail somewhat exuberantly franked?

As kissing cousins of the Hradčany, one may with some certainty assume the printers employed the same production technique for the express stamps as they used for that more famous issue. From a copy of an original template the printer created 100 double-size prints then arranged the prints in a ten-by-ten array with



Figure 2: Flaws in a template appear on a specific denomination's every stamp.

the control numbers pasted under the bottom row. A camera with a special lens reduced the image of the array to an appropriate size so the printer could chemically transfer its negative to metal plates for etching.



Figure 3: Black trial on white chalk paper.

Apparently the printers did not use the more common technique of pasting new numerals over the old to produce new denominations from an already used template. They instead created three completely new templates. The fact that

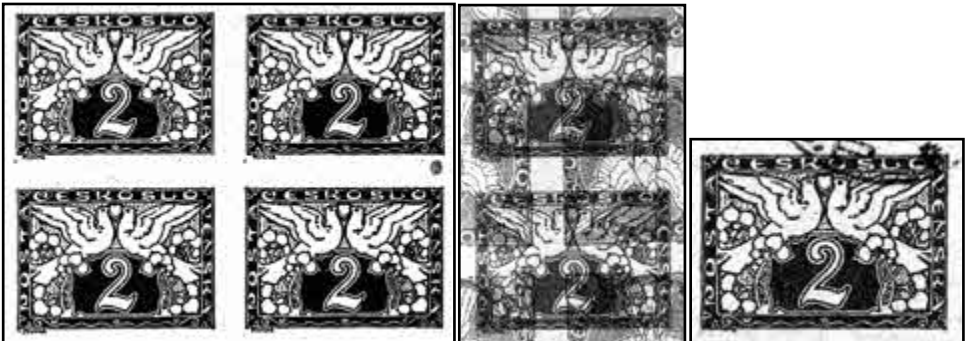


Figure 4: Printers' waste on brown craft paper.

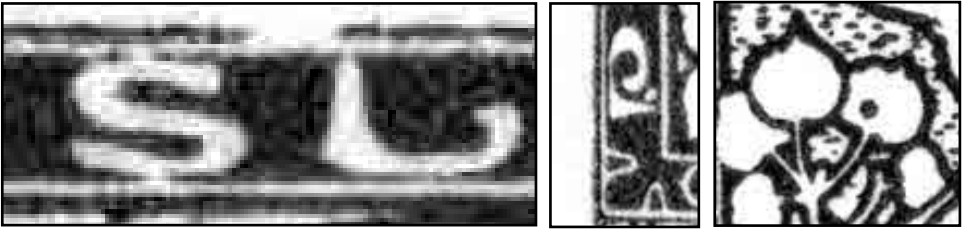


Figure 5: Flaws in a negative appear on a specific denomination's every plate.

each denomination sports its own individual difference dramatically demonstrates the use of a new template for each ten-by-ten array. The 5h's peculiarity is a gap between two leaves in the center left cluster (Fig. 2, center), for the 10h it is a gap between two leaves in the center right cluster (Fig. 2, right), while the 2h bears neither flaw (Fig. 2, left).

One can easily find printers' waste and trial pieces for this issue on the market. The exemplars above appear on brown craft paper imprinted in the released color (Fig. 4, left), sometimes together with other issues (Fig. 4, center). One may even find printers' waste with favor cancels (Fig. 4, right). Trials in black ink on chalk paper are somewhat more difficult to acquire (Fig. 3).

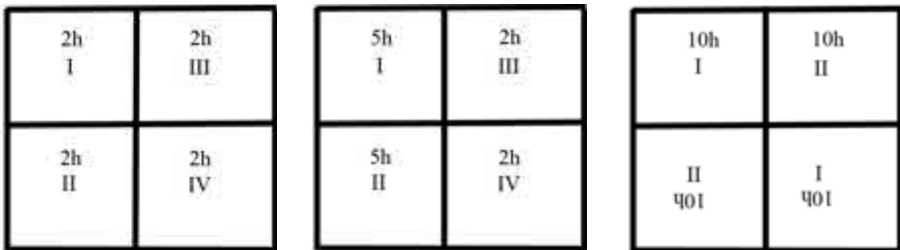


Figure 6: Four-plate printing form arrangements.

Instances of the presence of the same flaw at the same position on every plate implies the use of a single negative -- three negatives in all -- to produce each denomination's plates. We find for the 2h, at position 61, a large gap in the frame above the **SL** in **ČESKOSLO** (Fig. 5, left); for the 5h, at position 40, a white spot at the foot of the **P** in **POŠTA** (Fig. 5, center); and for the 10h, at position 23, a large colored spot in the fourth leaf in the upper left cluster (Fig. 5, right). Many other examples of this phenomenon exist.

In all, the Czech Graphics Union produced four plates for the 2h denomination and two plates each for the 5h and 10h values. Unlike the Hradčany, one cannot identify plates by nips and cuts in the control numbers -- one must look to plate flaws within specific stamp positions to determine the source plate for any one pane.

In his *Czechoslovak Specialist* articles, Pearce spoke only of plates I and II of the 2h -- he seems not to have known about plates III and IV. In addition, Pearce's plate numbering reverses that of the *Monografie*. Thus, the flaws reported by Pearce for plate I and plate II appear respectively on the *Monografie*'s plate II and plate I. In this article I have used the *Monografie*'s nomenclature.

**THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST**

Sheets archived in the Prague Postal Museum illuminate some of the printing arrangements. In one, all four 2h plates appeared (Fig. 6, left) while in another two 5h plates replaced plates I and II of the 2h (Fig. 6, center). The plates for the 2h and 5h stamps on the printing press always faced in the same direction -- there were no tête-bêche arrangements. Gutters cut from double panes of the 2h and 5h illustrate this fact (Fig. 7).

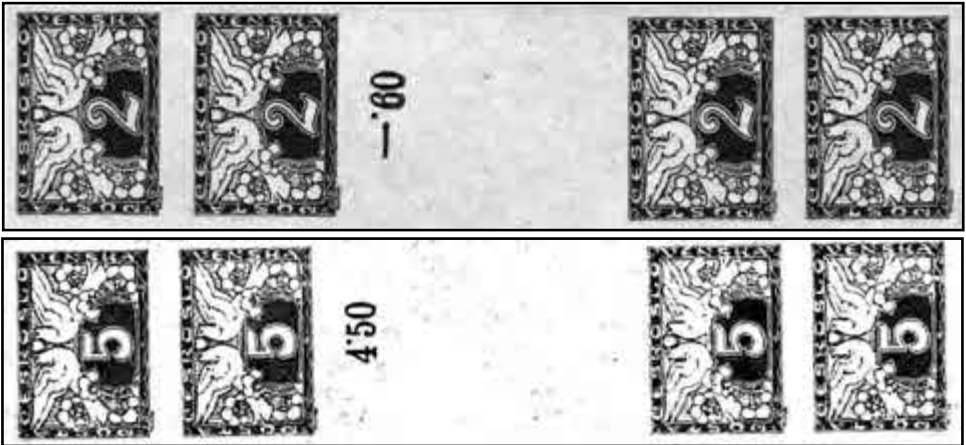


Figure 7: 2h and 5h gutter pairs.

The 10h appeared only in a tête-bêche arrangement but no gutter pairs have been reported. Even stranger, the sheets archived in the Postal Museum show plates I and II of the 10h being used twice at the same time on the same printing press (Fig. 6, right). Since a plate cannot be in two places at once, one must conclude that the printed sheets were taken from the press, rotated, reinserted, and a second impression taken. The printers used this same technique to produce sheets bearing two impressions each of the single-plate 300h Hradčany and the 500h Mucha postage due denominations.

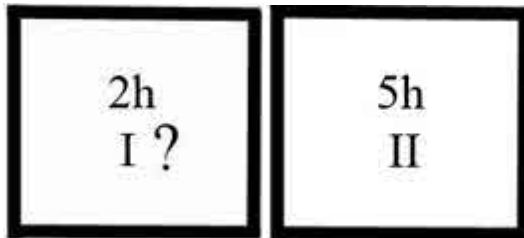


Figure 8: Single-plate (white paper) printing form arrangements.

Authorities mandated a yellow-colored paper for the express stamps. However, a few stamps printed on white paper represent their rarest variation. The printers made 12,500 stamps each of the 2h and 5h denominations, but produced an unknown and very likely quite smaller number of 10h impressions on white paper (Scott E1a-E3a; POFIS S1N-S3N). The Postal Museum archived white paper sheets of the 2h and 5h stamps printed with the single plates shown



Figure 9: White paper exemplars (perhaps).

in Figure 8. The *Monografie* implies the use of only one plate on the press at a time. How they printed the 10h white paper version -- the rarest of the three -- is not discussed in the *Monografie* or by Pearce. In addition, POFIS lists **SO 1920** overprints for the 2h and 5h on white paper, but regards all white paper stamps -- with and without overprints -- as not officially issued. Scott makes a similar assertion.

While the text of the *Monografie* and the archived sheets in the Postal Museum imply the printers employed plate I of the 2h to print the white paper stamps, the information provided by the *Monografie* in tabular form indicates the use of plate II for this purpose. The 2h on white paper I own comes from position 57 on plate I (Fig. 9, left), so I suspect the *Monografie's* text is correct and the *Monografie's* table wrong. Table I reflects this assumption.

Society for Czechoslovak Philately member Tony Dewey reports a long-wave ultraviolet lamp caused his white paper stamps to glow bright lavender (the normal reaction of bleached white paper to ultraviolet light).<sup>4</sup> My personal experience has been that this lavender glow can be quite subdued, but that the more common yellow paper glows not at all. One may easily believe some soft yellow papers are white, but placing a genuine white paper stamp next to the impostors quickly puts that idea to rest: the visual contrast is startling.

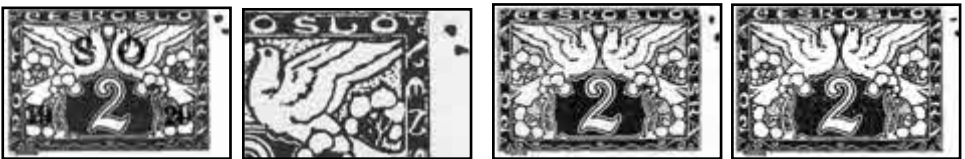


Figure 10: The 2h printing B markings: Plates I, II, III, IV respectively (Plate II is from the *Monografie* IV).



Figure 11: the 5h printing B markings: Plate I and II (Plate II is from the *Monografie* IV).

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Table I: Printing Identifiers for the 2h

Plate	Printing	Description	Notes
I	A	No additional markings.	Also overprinted <b>NOVINY</b> See note **
	B	Marks at either end of the 5 <sup>th</sup> row and after position 100.	
	C	Nail mark to the lower left of position 91.	Also white paper (according to my findings but confusing in the <i>Monografie</i> )
II	A	No additional markings.	See note **
	B	Marks between either end of the 6 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> rows and after position 100.	Also overprinted <b>SO 1920, NOVINY</b>
III	A	No additional markings.	
	B	Marks between either end of the 6 <sup>th</sup> and 7 <sup>th</sup> rows and after position 100.	
IV	A	No additional markings.	
	B	Marks at either end of the 5 <sup>th</sup> row and after position 100.	

\*\*NOTE: See the discussion of additional overprints for these printings in this article's main text.

Table II: Printing Identifiers for the 5h

Plate	Printing	Description	Notes
I	A	No additional markings.	
	B	Marks after position 100.	
II	A	No additional markings.	
	B	Marks between either end of the 5 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> rows and after position 100.	
	C	Nail mark right of the space between the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> row.	

The late Czech expert Jan Karásek wrote that the white paper of the 10h has a distinctive minute-sized lozenge pattern and adds that this is also true for a very small number of the 2h and 5h stamps;<sup>5</sup> my copies of the two lower white paper denominations do not have this feature. Since my one copy of a favor-canceled white paper 10h value also lacks the lozenge pattern, I strongly suspect it is a forgery (Fig. 9, right).

Readers may be able to compile more evidence as to the source of the white paper 2h stamp. Try locating the flaws on your white paper stamps in my 2h plating guide found on the Internet at <http://www.knihtisk.org/express/2h/info.htm>. Determining which plates were used to print the white paper stamps would add another validity test (that plate's flaws) for this issue. I would be very interested in hearing about the results. My postal and e-mail addresses appear at the end of this article.

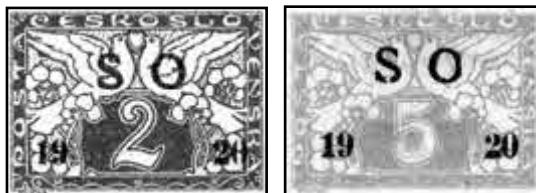


Figure 12: SO 1920



Figure 13: NOVINY overprints and surcharge.



Figure 14: Perforated exemplars.

One may identify three separate printings of the two lower denominations from additional markings made alongside their printing plates, typically on either side halfway down the plate or at either end of the bottom row of stamps. These are summarized in Tables I and II. Some marks -- especially those located to the right of position 100 -- differ between plates from the same printing, but one must always remember that in some printings the plates have no markings at all.

Figures 10 and 11 show the distinctive colored spots placed to the right of position 100 characterizing printing B. As the illustrations indicate, I do not own stamps with these markings for plate II of either value. Unlike the two lower denominations, the 10h had no markings to distinguish its printings; indeed, it may have only gone through a single printing.

The First Republic frequently overprinted the remainders of withdrawn issues for other services or to reflect new tariffs. As shown in Figures 12 and 13, the express stamps were no exception. Even before the stamp's withdrawal, authorities overprinted express stamps with **SO 1920** to support the express service under the short-lived Eastern Silesian plebiscite. This overprint is in either blue or black for the lower values -- the 10h did not receive the overprint. Postal authorities also overprinted and surcharged express stamps for the newspaper service. In this instance, they used an art deco font to overprint the stamps with the word **NOVINY** [*newspaper*] in dark blue.

With respect to overprints on the 2h, although the *Monografie* reports only **NOVINY** overprints for plate I and absolutely no overprints for printing A of plate II, I have in my possession two unmentioned overprints -- plate I printing B and plate II printing A -- both overprinted **SO 1920** in light blue. I assume these two panes of the 2h are genuine and the *Monografie's* typesetters omitted this information in error. I have not yet explored the overprints on specific plates and printings of the 5h and 10h denominations.

The stamps may be found perforated in several gauges, but they were never released in that form. Some were privately perforated, others as favor issues for

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Table III: Express stamp regulations

Date	Notes
February 10, 1919	2h and 5h released. For initial 2h tariff, see the first page of this article.
May 3, 1919	Printed matter, not express, per each 50g ----- 5h. For express delivery without regard to weight ---2h additional.
February 17, 1920	Printed matter, not express, per each 50g ----- 5h. For express delivery without regard to weight --- 5h additional.
July 26, 1920	Printed matter, not express, per each 50g ----- 10h. For express delivery without regard to weight --- 10h additional.
April 30, 1921	2h express stamp withdrawn.
January 1, 1922	Express service for printed matter revoked by postal authorities. Any franking after this date does not represent the stamps' intended usage.
July 31, 1924	The 5h and 10h express stamps withdrawn

Table IV: General Information from the *Monografie*.

Value	Color	Number Printed (by paper color)		Number Overprinted		Number Released	Release Date	Withdrawn
		Yellow	White	SO 1920	NOVINY			
2h	Blackish Purple	26,680,000	12,500	380,000	17,726,000	8,564,000	Feb 10 1919	Apr 30 1921
5h	Light or Darker Green	12,030,000	12,500	300,600	4,150,000	7,579,400		July 31 1924
10h	Blackish Brown	5,430,000	?	n. a.	2,360,000	2,630,000	Dec 20 1920	

high ranking postal and other government officials. POFIS lists the perforated types, but Scott does not.

For readers interested in exact and official franking possibilities, the *Monografie* reports rates announced and usage fixed by the calendar in Table III. As indicated, express stamps remained available but without purpose for a considerable period after the demise of the express service. Collectors of covers are advised to take this information into consideration when making purchases.

Even after almost 100 years, the early Czechoslovak stamps pose questions we may still be able to answer. Earlier, I challenged readers to examine their white paper issues to determine the plates used to print them. Below are more questions to consider.

Did postal authorities choose yellow paper to foil counterfeiters or because the stamps appear far more attractive on that paper? Or, did colored paper -- as might the pink paper of the Legionárské -- simply signify domestic use only? Why do some white paper 2h stamps display the lozenge pattern of the white paper 10h when such a long period separated their printings? Why does every copy of the plate I pane of the 5h in my possession have a diagonal slice taken from the lower selvaige (Fig. 15)?

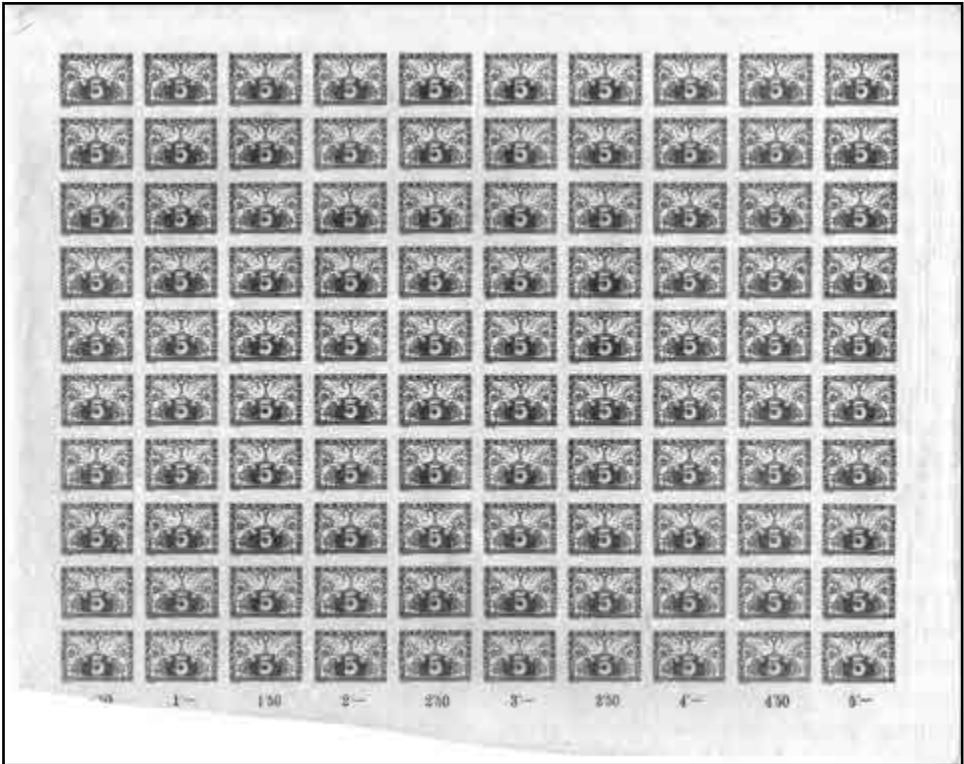


Figure 15: The mysterious diagonal slice from the lower edge on many copies of the 5h plate I.

These vibrant stamps promise rewards for those brave enough to become philatelic explorers. They invite you to raise still more interesting questions, put forward exciting and insightful theories of your own, or simply to try to respond to the questions presented here.

### Research Request

*At some time in the future I would like to provide readers with more detailed information treating separately each of these beautiful stamps' three denominations. I have worked extensively with the 2h, but at the moment unfortunately lack sufficient research material to proceed much further on my own.*

*For instance, no indisputably genuine white paper 10h stamps have come my way and I am unsure of my white 2h and 5h examples. The only panes of the 10h plate II in my possession are overprinted **NOVINY**, and I only have partial panes of the 5h plate II. I have never seen identifiable panes for printing C of the 2h and 5h stamps.*

*Readers interested in furthering this project are invited to contact me at my address [Mark Wilson, 8825 Lund Hill Lane, Cotati, CA 94931] or via e-mail [mark@knihtisk.org]. I would be happy to work with you, to purchase certain of your full panes, large blocks, and white paper items, or arrange to borrow your material to study for no longer than a day or so. Let me hear from you.*

<sup>1</sup> Karásek *et al.* *Monografie československých známek*, Díl IV. Prague, 1986, p. 427-452.

<sup>2</sup> Pearce, C.J. "The 2h and 5h 'Special Delivery' of 1919." *Czechoslovak Specialist*, April, 1975, p.49; "The 10h 'Special Delivery' of 1919." *Czechoslovak Specialist*, December, 1975, p.153; "Special delivery and registered mail of 1919-1920." *Czechoslovak Specialist*, January, 1978, p.1.

<sup>3</sup> Hahn, Henry. "Illegal usage of the 5h rapid delivery of 1919." *Czechoslovak Specialist*, April, 1987, p.2.

<sup>4</sup> Dewey, Anthony. "Letter to the editor", *Czechoslovak Specialist*, Jan/Feb 2003, p.39.

<sup>5</sup> Karásek, Jan. "A Czech expert speaks", *Czechoslovak Specialist*, Mar/Apr 2000, p.31.



## THE FIRST PRINTING ERROR ON STAMPS OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

POFIS No. 459

by Ctibor Sobotka

trans. by Ludvik Svoboda

The existence of this printing error was first made known in the Czech philatelic press (*Filatelie* 3/2010) by František Beneš, chairman of the commission of experts for the Svaz of Czech philatelists. There he also stated the reasons why it was a printing error.

Which stamp is it that has a printing error? We are talking about number 459 [*Scott 3295*] of the POFIS catalog, Congratulatory Bouquet, 10 Kč from 2006. On the printing error stamp appears the mistaken year of 2007 (Fig. 1).

How did the printing error come about? Since 2003 the Czech post has been putting out stamps with coupons for additional personal printing to order. They come out in small printing sheets. On one printing sheet there are 9 definitive stamps and 12 blank coupons. These stamps [*with personalized coupons*] on small printing sheets are reprinted as they are ordered.

The stamp, Congratulatory Bouquet, 10 Kč, came out in 2006. A year later there was issued another stamp with completely the same image [*but showing the year 2007*], but with a value of 11 Kč. Apparently then when the printing forms for the reprinting of 10 Kč ordered stamps were being produced they used the stamp image with the 2007 year on it. Thus were produced the first Czech stamps with a printing error.

In catalog listings this stamp will be shown as:

459	10 Kč	multicolored	(2006)	10 Kč	5 Kč
459X	10 Kč	printing error	(2007)	..-	..-

It is possible, however, that the prevailing major markets will determine the actual values. The future POFIS catalog comes out in the beginning of 2011.

The fact that the existence of this printing error was totally unknown last year contributes to the reality that the printing error appears only on printing sheets having coupons for private additional printing. Based upon confirmed data there exist 2,400 printing sheets with this printing error. Information on the quantity and types of private additional printings is not provided by the Czech post.

In order to provide the complete picture, we point out that collectors have so far identified nine different additional printings: Mohelnik stagecoach, snowman, Mozart, church, Prague Orloj, playing cards, Prague Semmering (railway), flooded Postal Museum, and Scouts. Thus, something for everyone.

What arises from this for the general collector of Czech Republic stamps? Into his collection he can place one stamp -- the printing error, or perhaps also stamps with coupons, or an entire printing sheet. A specialized collector will however also want various coupon combinations, or perhaps all the known additional printings. A thematic collector will procure a stamp with a coupon, or a printing sheet with a motif which interests him.

The total quantity of existing printing sheets in world distribution -- in order to satisfy these various interests -- is quite small. In addition, Czech philately is reaching more and more into the awareness of the international collecting public. Last but not least, is the deserved merit for the excellence of the graphical standards of Czech stamps, as well as their catalogs, which belong among the best in the world.

The editors of the Michel catalog (German) were also informed of the existence of this printing error. And their reaction? They erroneously labeled this printing error as only another type. In the next catalog it will therefore carry the designation of 457 II. However, based upon the definition for a printing error that Michel uses, this item meets the criteria of a printing error. How the other world catalogs will treat this item, it is not possible to guess.

It would be possible to provide additional information, e.g., the use of various printing techniques, old and new logo's of the Czech post, color variations, etc. This, however, would not be within the scope of this article.

Finally about price: in the fall Majer auction (Prague, September 2010) there was a printing sheet with the most common additional printing "Prague Orloj" that sold for 5,000 Kč + commissions. This corresponds to a price per piece of about 550 Kč. The price on the existing free markets is ranging in the same relative area. In view of the reasons that we have stated, we can certainly expect that as the less informed collectors become aware of this first printing error of Czech Republic stamps its price will develop favorably.

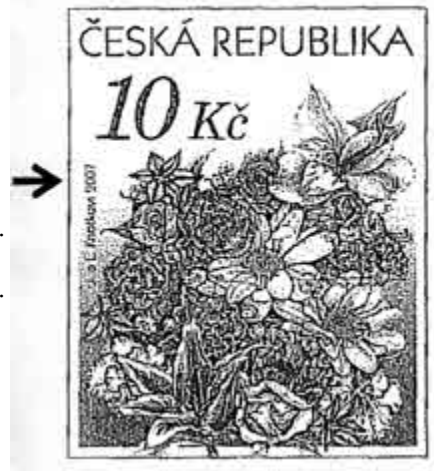


Fig. 1

**SOCIETY OF CZ PHILATELY IN THE NETHERLANDS**

**20<sup>th</sup> MAIL AUCTION**

**30<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2011**

**CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND RELATED AREAS  
SUDETENLAND  
BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA  
SLOVAKIA**

**CARPATHO UKRAINE  
REVOLUTIONARY OVERPRINTS 1944 – 45 (a lot of them !)**

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## ***ELECTIONS TO THE BOARD***

I asked each candidate to respond to the following questions in order to provide information for the voters:

-- what position do you currently hold in the SCP, and what positions have you held in the past?

-- what skills do you bring to help govern the SCP?

-- what goals do you have for the SCP, if you are elected?

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

1 -- Tom Cossaboom (member #936) of Prescott, AZ; currently Board Member, former secretary, former president, US Commissioner for BRNO 2005; management skills gained as a USAF command historian, writing skills as historian, extensive knowledge of Czechoslovak philately; maintain financial health and vibrancy of the SCP, keep the *Specialist* relevant to the membership, reopen the SCP Library ASAP.

2 -- Savoy Horvath (member #1686) of Readstown, WI; currently Board Member, Foreign Editor, Publication Manager; an expert in two Czech philatelic topic areas, speaks/reads/writes Czech; need to gain new members.

3 -- Chris Jackson (member #2050) of St. George, Ontario, Canada; I am a 38 year old dedicated philatelist with 33 years of collecting experience (including serving my father's philatelic clients in his shop at an early age); my Czechoslovak collecting interests come from my mother's Czech/Slovak heritage (including a great-grandfather being in the Czechoslovak Legion in Siberia); to attract new members, my goals include more translated reference material, a formal mentoring program, and the formation of specialized study groups.

4 -- John Pojeta (member #847) of Rockville, MD; currently Board Member; a deep and abiding interest in Czechoslovak philately, presented the G.D. Harris Award of the Paleontological Research Institute for 'Excellence in Systematic Paleontology'; major problem is younger membership to sustain the SCP, is a volunteer for a committee to attract new and younger members.

5 -- Ludvik Svoboda (member #1203) of Aurora, CO; currently President, Editor, Board Member, formerly Treasurer; 26 years of increasing management positions in the USAF, extensive knowledge of Czechoslovak philately, read/write/speak Czech; find new editor, get Board Members/members more involved, revitalize membership.

Of the above, Tom Cossaboom, Savoy Horvath, John Pojeta, and Ludvik Svoboda 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 April 15<sup>th</sup>.

**FOR BEGINNERS**  
**The Philately of Czechoslovakia**  
**(Part 3)**  
**by Phillips B. Freer**

**Overprints**

Up to this point I have discussed the early stamps of the First Republic. Considering that Czechoslovakia became a free nation in October 1918, the only stamps that were being used during the first two years of its existence were intended for surface mail. Europe did not start issuing airmail stamps until 1920 and then only on an experimental basis. Furthermore, Czechoslovakia was confronted with a unique problem: postal services in the new Republic had to continue uninterrupted from the end of the Austro-Hungarian empire, and, therefore, some sort of stamps had to be provided.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

By decree of the new government in Prague, Austrian and Hungarian stamps were valid as postage until the end of February 1919. In the meantime, the newly formed Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications rushed to print its own stamps, the first of which were not issued until December 1918. That left almost two months when Austrian and Hungarian stamps enjoyed usage in the new Republic. During that time, certain private parties designed their own overprints which were used on Austrian stamps. Those included Mareš (“*Česko-slovenský Stát*”, see Figure 1), Horner (“*Česko-slovenský Stát*”, see Figure 2), Šrobár and Rossler-Orovský (“*Provisorní Československá Vláda*”, see Figure 3). These were used on Austrian stamps. Other overprints include Skalica, Žilina, and Chust. These were used on Hungarian stamps. Stamps with these overprints were postally used and canceled on covers. Counterfeits abound.

In the meantime, the Ministry of Posts prepared a series of overprints, “*POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919*”, which are found on many Austrian and Hungarian stamps but which experienced virtually no postal usage. Despite their non-use, many counterfeits exist, and collectors, especially beginners, are warned to seek expertization of any overprinted stamps they wish to acquire.

As mentioned earlier, much of Europe was experimenting with airmail during 1920, but there were few, if any, regularly scheduled flights or routes. Czechoslovakia finally took part in the signing of agreements for airmail flights abroad. But, again, the country had no airmail stamps of its own, so, as a temporary measure, early Hradčany issues, both imperf and perf, were overprinted and surcharged with new values to serve as Czechoslovakia’s first airmail stamps.



Fig. 4

The first overprints were as follows: 14k on 200h ultramarine (reddish overprint), 24k on 500h red-brown (blue overprint), and 28k on 1000h red-violet (green overprint). (See Figure 4). 300,000 copies of those denominations were overprinted with a high-wing monoplane, a surcharge value in the center near the bottom of the stamp, and an airplane propeller on each side of the value. These first airmail stamps are listed as Scott Nos. C1 to C6. Counterfeits of the overprints

exist, and expertizing is advised.

The first flights were scheduled for transport of mail from Prague to Paris, Prague to London, and Prague to Warsaw. In some instances, emergency landings had to be made before final destination was reached, and the postal authorities did not guarantee direct air delivery in such cases.

The original airmail rate for a letter was quite high, and, hence, the public made little use of airmail. As a result, genuinely flown covers during this early period are quite scarce. From October 5, 1920, to March 31, 1921, there were perhaps only four or five hundred genuinely flown covers, which means that existing ones are of considerable value.

On March 27, 1921, the Ministry of Posts announced a reduction in the airmail rate which took effect on April 1, 1921. The new rates were Prague to Paris, 3k; Prague to Strasbourg, 1.50k; and Prague to Warsaw, 1.50k. The use of airmail stamps immediately increased.



Fig. 5

Official airmail labels were printed for the Paris, Strasbourg, and Warsaw flights. The labels were perforated, and the text was in Czech as well as in French.

In 1922 three values of the Agriculture and Science issue of 1920 were overprinted for use as airmails. They are the 50h on 100h, the 100h on 200h, and the 250h on 400h (see Figure 5). They carry Scott numbers C7 to C9. The overprint and surcharge markings of these three stamps are somewhat different from the Hradčany overprints. There is the same monoplane, but above and a bit to the left are two propellers, and the surcharge is also below the airplane but on the right-hand side of the stamp.

Returning to overprints for regular surface mail use, even though Czechoslovakia issued its own stamps the latter part of 1918, stamps of Austria and Hungary remained valid for postal use until the end of February 1919. They were then withdrawn and sent to Prague where they were supposedly overprinted instead of being destroyed. The reason for this was to avoid waste in destroying so many millions of stamps. However, no doubt there was some philatelic motivation behind the expense of overprinting so many stamps, especially in view of the fact that by then Czechoslovakia had already printed its own first issues.

One of the earliest overprints is known as the HLUBOKÁ overprint named after the originator and apparently put to use by a man by the name of Mareš who had a die made and overprinted a total of 42 different Austrian stamps with it. Apparently, almost all, if not all, of these overprints were placed on covers which went to philatelists.

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Another overprint, of which examples of stamps bearing the overprint are still sometimes available, is the so-called Horner overprint. Josef Horner was a stamp dealer who became dissatisfied with the service provided by Mareš and hired the same engraver used by Mareš to produce another overprint. The same Austrian stamps as were used by Mares were overprinted with the Horner overprint plus a few more. There were other overprints on both Austrian and Hungarian stamps but the one of most interest to collectors is found on both Austrian and Hungarian stamps which are designated in the Scott catalogue as semi-postals. These are numbers B1-B123. The overprint, usually in diagonal form, is “*POŠTA ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ 1919*” (see Figure 6). These overprints are found on 1916-1919 Austrian postage stamps, newspaper stamps, special handling, air post, and postage dues, as well as on Hungarian 1913-1919 newspaper stamps, special delivery, semi-postal, and postage due stamps. There are a total of 63 Austrian issues and 58 Hungarian issues with the overprint. Some of both the Austrian and the Hungarian overprints are extremely rare. These overprinted stamps were sold at the Prague Philatelic Window at 50% over face value for the benefit of a charity, but they were valid for ordinary postal use within the country.



Fig. 6

As might be expected, there are some very clever forgeries of these overprints. Collectors who have these overprinted stamps are urged to get a copy of the book *Forgeries of Czechoslovak Postage Stamps* by J. Karásek, Z. Kvasnička, and B. Pauliček which has a section on the overprint forgeries. The book has been translated into English by Jaroslav Verner and Henry Hahn and can be obtained from the Czech Society for a nominal price.



Fig. 7

In addition to the above described overprints, there are the “VZOREK” [*sic* VZOREC] overprints with their very interesting background. (See Figure 7).

The Universal Postal Union (UPU), with headquarters in Switzerland, receives examples of all stamps issued by member countries. One copy is kept on file at the UPU and other copies distributed to other countries. By this means many countries have developed extensive postal museums. Czechoslovakia joined the UPU on May 18, 1920.

Stamps sent to the UPU are overprinted indicating that they are “specimen” stamps and, of course, are not valid for postal use. In the case of Czech stamps, the overprint is VZOREC, which is the Czech word for “specimen”.

In August of 1920, the Czech Ministry of Posts sent the required number of regular postal issues, special delivery, and postage due stamps to the UPU, most of them without the VZOREC overprint. Just how this happened is not known. Subsequently, a rather small supply of the overprints was sold to the Czech Philatelic Club in Prague and divided among the members. Hence, the existence of Hradčány regular issues, newspaper, special delivery, and postage due stamps overprinted VZOREC.

There is another group of overprinted stamps which are very definitely a part of Czechoslovak Philately, but which will not be found in the Czech section of

the Scott Catalogue. Scott lists them under the heading “Eastern Silesia”. They are Hradčany issues, both imperf and perforated: the 500h and 1000h of the first Masaryk stamps, special delivery stamps, postage due stamps, and newspaper stamps, all of which are overprinted “SO 1920”. Included in the Eastern Silesia listing are ten stamps of Poland with the same overprint. The explanation for these overprints is a story of considerable historic significance. There is a part of the former Austrian Silesia which is known as Teshin [*sic* Těšín] and, because of its economic importance, was of great interest to both Poland and Czechoslovakia. Following the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Poland occupied this territory. However, the Czechoslovak army pushed the Poles back and occupied the region. At a conference in 1920 the Teshin area was contained within the boundaries of Czechoslovakia, and a Commission, which took over the government of the area, suggested that both Czech and Polish stamps be overprinted “SO”, which probably stood for the Latin “*Silesia Orientalis*”, Eastern Silesia, plus the year date 1920. For some reason (perhaps philatelic?) these stamps were overprinted in rather large quantities considering the comparatively small area intended for their use. Many varieties of the overprint as well as counterfeits are found. However, very few are known to exist postally used on cover. (See Figure 8).



Fig. 8

### The First Regular Airmail Issues

The first airmail stamps of the Republic of Czechoslovakia have already been mentioned. They comprise the early Hradčany issues and three values of the Agriculture and Science set which were overprinted for use as airmail stamps until actual airmail stamps could be printed. They are listed as Scott Nos. C1 through C6 and C7 through C9.

The first stamps specifically printed for airmail use (Scott Nos. C10 through C18) were issued during the period of 1930-1939. They show an airplane in flight over various Czech and Slovak landscapes taken from photographs. They are 50h green, 1k red, 2k green, 3k violet, 4k dark blue, 5k brown, 10k violet-blue, and 20k grey-violet. C10 and C11 are in a narrow format (see Figure 1); C12 through C17 are in a wide format with slightly different designs in both plane and background (see Figures 2 and 3). Later a 30h violet was printed with the nation's label hyphenated to read “*Česko-Slovensko*”. (See Figure 4).

There is a difference in dimensions found in the 50h green, the 1k red, 2k green, and the 4k blue even though they were all printed from one single plate. These dimensions are as follows:



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

**THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST**

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Original Dimensions</u>	<u>New Dimensions</u>
50h Green	17.7 x 21 mm	17.2 x 21.7 mm
1k Red	17.7 x 21 mm	17.2 x 21.7 mm
2k Green	31.5 x 21.5 mm	30.5 x 21.8 mm
4k Dark Blue	31.5 x 21.5 mm	30.5 x 21.8 mm

The explanation for these differences has to do with the way the paper roll was cut which, in one case, was slit in the longitudinal direction of the roll, and in the second instance was slit transversely. The cut sheets, which were wetted prior



Fig. 5



Fig. 6

to printing, shrank the design to the different dimensions when they were dried. The paper expands in longitudinal direction and shrinks in transverse direction, so that the stamps are either longer and narrower or shorter and wider.

The stamps were printed from steel plates and since

there were frequent printings, there are many varieties. They were line perforated 13 3/4. However, a few stamps were found to be perforated 12 1/4, so the Ministry of Posts issued some additional values with line perf 12 1/4. Despite that, they are all more valuable than those with 13 3/4 perfs. Other perforations also exist, as well as imperforates, but those are mainly proofs and were not valid for postage.

The above mentioned group of stamps with their perforation varieties and their slightly different dimensions highlight the necessity of obtaining very accurate perforation gauges and a very accurate millimeter rule, both of which should be used under magnification. There are many perforation gauges available, some more accurate than others. Be sure to check with reliable authorities before choosing which ones to buy.

At this point it might be well to consider the difference between "line" and "comb" perforations, since stamps of Czechoslovakia, particularly the First Republic, were perforated by both methods. The terms "line" and "comb" refer to the positions of pins in perforators and how they work. The "line" perforator perforates the stamps in a straight line across the entire sheet, both horizontally and vertically. The "comb" perforator has pins that literally look like a comb and move from one side of the sheet to the other, cutting the comb sequentially. The comb just cuts down the page (actually, it is the paper that moves, not the comb). Thus, the holes at the corner are "clean", that is, they do not overlap. The line seldom has clean corners because the pins are not mounted in a horizontal-vertical relationship. Note the "clean" corners of the comb perfs in Figure 10 and the ragged or overlapping corners on the line perfs in Figure 11.



Fig. 7



Fig. 8

The next set of airmail stamps was issued during 1946-47, a total of nine stamps. They are Scott Nos. C19 to C27. Four of them show the portrait of a flyer (see Figure 5); the others show planes in flight (see Figure 6). Each stamp has a different color and denomination. Those showing a plane in flight exist with coupon tabs (see Figure 7). In September 1949 when new airmail rates took effect, C19 to C22, C24, C26, and C27 were surcharged with new values and bars obliterating the old denominations. The surcharged stamps are listed as Scott Nos. C28 through C35 (see Figure 8).



Fig. 9

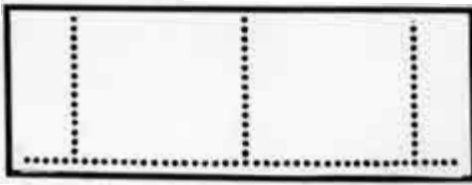


Fig. 10

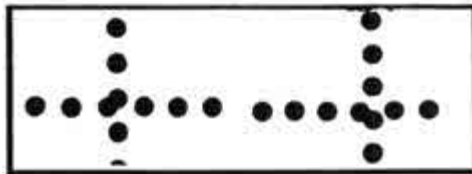


Fig. 11

The last set to be mentioned here is the airmail issue of 1951. They picture an airplane flying over various cities. There were four stamps in this set. The stamps show a plane flying over Karlovy Vary (6k, sage green), over Piešťany (10k, deep plum), over Mariánské Lázně (15k, ultramarine, see Figure 9), and over Silač (20k, sepia). They came perforated 13 1/2 only.

This last set comprises the first airmails to be issued by the country's new Communist regime. These as well as most of the sets that followed were as attractive as the early issues and their propagandistic themes were kept to a

minimum with a few exceptions. Many collectors who specialize in airmails will find these of Czechoslovakia particularly appealing.

(To be continued)



## Charley's Corner

Years ago I used to write articles about interesting material from Czechoslovakia. Today I will discuss a special rare cancel from the Eastern Silesia territory.

The cancel is in a rectangular shape showing a horizontal separation making up 2 horizontal rectangles.

The 25 heller cover (Fig. 1) must have been mailed between May 15, 1919 to March 14, 1920 when the postage for a letter was 25 hellers.

The top of the rectangle cancel reads "Frydek -- Ostrava", and the bottom rectangle reads "dne.....19..." [*meaning "of the day"*], so the cancel was designed to be used in 19XX for a railroad route.

Figure 2 shows another railroad cancel on a 10h Hradčany stamp with a cancel reading "...dek -- Ostrava". The first town name could have been "(Fry)dek".



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

These are the only railroad cancels that I have ever come across with this cancel type. The cancels were in a dark violet color.

Charley Chesloe

[Ed. Note: Tom Cossaboom and I examined our libraries to look for references to this route. We found them in *Monografie vol. 17 (cancels of the First Republic), part 2, pages 383/384 & 481-482, and Monografie vol. 5 (Eastern Silesia), pages 113 & 143. They give this route in the Eastern Silesia area the*

*designation of #659, do not show an image of the cancel, but indicate that it was rectangular with an area to write in the date, that it was a pre-cursor cancel only in use for a very short period of time, and that there is no known written record on its development or use (evidence of its existence and use comes from a few genuinely postally used covers). It is interesting to note that Tom found a very similar cancel but from a non-Eastern Silesia area, so it was a design that found use elsewhere. Also, it is of interest that routes #656, 657, and 658 (all associated with Přívovz) show a date of 1919-19??. The main Ostrava railroad station was located in Přívovz; today the settlement is part of Ostrava. ČSP cancels were introduced sometime in about August-Sept 1919 for #656-658, and in 1 January 1922 these routes were renumbered #756-758. These new numbers place these routes in the number series allocated to the routes in the former Austrian Silesia and very northern Moravia. Tom's best guess is that Charlie's cancel is a temporary device used between the time the Czechs occupied the area during December 1918, and the introduction of the ČSP cancels #656-658 in the August-Sept 1919 period.]*

## Letters to the Editor

1. Hi Lou,

I have long respected and admired the work of prolific *Specialist* contributor Gerald van Zanten and with great reluctance put forward a suggested correction to his New Issues article in the Fall 2010 *Specialist*. His third item discusses the “Development of Philately” stamp denominated with the letter “A” (domestic rate). In the text he refers to the stamp as a “definitive literal postage stamp”. I am sure this was a simple oversight and that he knows that the word “literal” means “strict adherence to” and does not refer [to] a letter of the alphabet. Also, in the Summer issue, my good friend Lubor Kunc in this article used the term “Letter Stamps” (parsed, this term would mean “postage in general”) which does not quite do the job. I completely understand -- I was unable to come up with a better term myself. I did think about “Letter-denominated Stamps” but rejected that term.

Since I needed to deal with the subject of stamps denominated by letters instead of numbers when I undated the *Specialist’s* Interactive Index, I did an Internet search on philatelic and postal service terminology dealing with the subject. Among the terms I found were “Non-Value Indicator Stamps” (abbreviated as NVI in the trade), “Undenominated Stamps”, and “Non Denominated Postage”. I selected the latter for the index, clumsy as it is, but am quite willing to use a more facile term if someone can come up with one. Can someone? Or have the current philatelic catalogs already solved this problem?

Also, please inform the membership that I have updated the Interactive Index on my website, so members can now get to all articles between 1939 and 2009 from the link to the indices on the Society website. 2010 will go up next year in keeping with Board policy.

With my special regards to Mr. van Zanten and my thanks for all his marvelous articles.

Mark Wilson

2. Lou:

Here is an exchange of correspondence on my article (Joined Pairs of the 1945 Official Stamp) from the Fall 2010 issue of the *Specialist* that may be of interest to our readers. [*Figure 1 from that issue for reference.*]

Dear Mark:

I read with high interest your article on official stamps of 1945 in the last *Specialist*. I am “only” the postal historian, but I don’t believe definition of the joined-types in the issue is correct. Please find enclosed a page from specialized catalog of Czechoslovakia (POFIS 1998) registering the issue. As you see, the “interrupted tail” is known as plate variation/desková odchýlka (SL1 DO) later being retouched (SL1 RE). The variety is known on plate positions 11, 16, 31, 36, 51, 56, 71, 76, 91 & 76 [96?]. The catalogue doesn’t register the joined-types, but the existing registration confirms existence of DO/RE stamps together with standard plate position stamps. What is your opinion?

Lubor [Kunc]



Figure 1

Hello Lubor,

I am so pleased you enjoyed the article.

The word “Types” is ill-defined in philately. I disagree with the catalog in this instance. A plate flaw is an irregular event, while a type is regular. While some stamps may share the same flaw, the regular appearance of this “flaw” in every block of ten stamps qualifies it in my mind as a “type” produced by the repetitive use of a template.

On the other hand, consider the 400h Hradčany stamp. Its Type II stamps often differ from one another and are clearly repairs made by hand to the negative (the Monografie says to the plate, but I believe differently). Or the famous spiral, bar, and frame “types” of the later Hradčany -- all show evidence of being hand drawn repairs because they differ from one another in a number of cases.

The best examples of a type are those of the 1923 Agriculture and Science issue and the 1937 Postage Due stamps -- here the types differ because their source templates and dies were different, not because someone tampered with the negative of the plate.

I was unaware of the repairs to the 1945 issue. It would be great to get a block of 10 to show the difference.

Mark [Wilson]

3. Hi Lou,

I have some questions about Mark Wilson’s article “A Correction and New Discovery: The Very *First* Hradčany Stamp” on pp. 10-12 of the Fall 2010 *Specialist*. Mark’s email address is not given in the article, and I don’t have a current email address for him in my Address Book, so I’m forwarding my questions to you, either for response, or for you to forward to Mark for response. Thanks!

In Figure 3 [Fig. 3 shown for reference]:

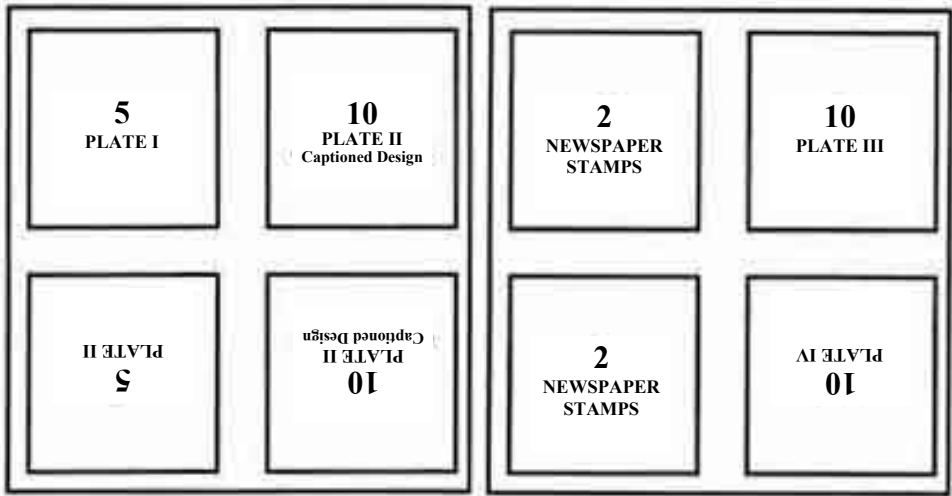


Figure 3

- On the left, there are two PLATE IIs for the 10h. Shouldn't there be a PLATE I?

- On the right, the 10h stamps are shown tete-beche, but the 2h newspaper stamps are not tete-beche. Shouldn't the 2h newspaper stamps be tete-beche?

Frederick [Lawrence]

[This e-mail was forwarded to Mark for response.]

Hi Frederick,

Thanks for your interest in my small article about the Captioned design in the Fall 2010 *Specialist*. I'll answer your questions about Fig. 3 in the order you asked them.

**1. On the left, there are two PLATE IIs for the 10h. Shouldn't there be a PLATE I?**

You are correct. I have to take the blame for this. As you can see above, Figure 3 from my original draft is somewhat blurry. Since the printer experienced difficulty reading the text within this illustration, Lou called me for clarification just before the issue went to press. I answered him hurriedly without referring to the drawing and must have misspoke, giving him the wrong information. If you compare the illustration from my draft copy to the one in the Fall *Specialist*, you will see immediately that they differ. I am not sure, but I think that my phone conversation error crept in when they were redone to create a more readable illustration for the *Specialist*. As you can see in the original (albeit poorly) all four 10h plates have different numbers (I and II in the form shared with the 5h; III and IV in the form shared with the 2h).

**2. On the right, the 10h stamps are shown tete-beche, but the 2h newspaper stamps are not tete-beche.**

According to the *Monografie*, the newspaper stamps were not printed tete-beche in these particular printing forms (printings C1 and C2, volume 1, page 100).

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

But they were printed tete-beche when coupled with the 3h Hradčany (printings A1 and A2 shown on the same page). However, while I have not yet studied the first newspaper issue carefully, I have found a number of other errors in this section of the *Monografie* dealing with Hradčany printing forms, so the printing form in question may yet prove to be incorrect. Good research project for someone.

If I can help clarify this, or if you have further questions or comments, I would be most happy to continue talking about this or any other article. It is delightful to know that a reader has been so attentive to detail.

Mark Wilson

### 4. Hi Lou:

I read your President's Corner in the Fall 2010 issue with great interest. You reported that finding people to serve on the Board is difficult. Along with the Fall issue came a small piece of paper asking for nominations. I looked at it and believe part of the Society's problem is the nomination process itself.

For one thing, the form asks that a member nominate someone who is willing to serve. Then the form asks that another member second the nomination. Now, that process would work well at a general meeting because all of the interested parties would likely be present, but by mail, the nominating form presents difficulties.

Let us suppose that there are members out there who would be willing and excited to serve. Since I only know a few members, and no one I know has expressed a desire to serve, I cannot nominate anyone. Suppose further that I actually was aware of someone eager to serve. I am still faced with the problem of finding another member to second the nomination.

Back in the days when members' names and addresses were published in the *Specialist* -- or when there were lots of local groups like the one I belonged to in the DC area -- that requirement presented no problem. I could either review the published list for a likely second for the nomination or ask one of the members of the local group to countersign with me.

But today those methods are not really available to me. I live in California and have no local group; the list of members' names and addresses was dropped from the *Specialist* for security reasons. How am I to locate anyone or know of their interest in serving on the board?

May I suggest a method that might bring new candidates for the board to the fore? First, everyone knows if they themselves want to serve, so invite members to self nominate. That would bring any potential but isolated candidates to the table. I cannot imagine the Society being overwhelmed with such nominations but would it not be wonderful if the Society were swamped with candidates? Clearly, some test of willingness to attend the annual meeting would have to be made and it might also be nice to know why the person wants to serve, or what plans they have.

Secondly, drop the requirement for a second nominating signature. Finding a willing nominee and a second is likely so difficult a process that most members simply ignore the nominating form, or like me, are unable to complete the form for lack of contact with other members.

Will this work? I don't know, but since the current process seems to be failing, perhaps it is worth a chance. I want to see our Society strong and doing new and

exciting things. Changing the board nominating process might be one way to achieve that goal.

Regards,  
Mark Wilson

✂ ✂ ✂ ✂ ✂

## *Philatelic News and Views*

### 1. From Ludvik Svoboda:

-- Don't forget! Our annual convention this year is being held in conjunction with Minnesota Stamp Expo 2011, July 15-17, at the Crystal Community Center, Crystal, MN (a suburb of Minneapolis). The show hotel is the same one as before, the Radisson Hotel & Conference Center (10 minutes from the Crystal Community Center), BUT it has changed names to the Crown Plaza Minnesota West. Their phone number is 763-559-6600, ask for the special rate for the show of \$89. We always welcome the opportunity to see and talk with our members and visitors who are interested in Czechoslovak philately, that is why we are constantly changing the general area of the country where we meet.

### 2. From Karel Holoubek (trans. by Savoy Horvath):

-- I would just like to pass on an interesting fact about our new self-adhesive stamps. In contrast with the stamps put out by other postal authorities, our [*self-adhesive*] stamps come off with normal water like the other stamps on paper. I believe that this would be interesting to the other readers of the *Specialist*.

### 3. From Savoy Horvath:

-- Available this spring/summer 2011 POFIS Catalog Czech Republic.

### 4. From *Linn's Stamp News*, February 21, 2011, *NEWS* column:

-- Postal monopolies end for 11 European nations: The changes are in line with a European Union postal directive; additional countries will follow.

Eleven member states of the European Union ended their postal monopolies Jan.1, as part of the European Union's third postal directive of 2008.

The purpose of the directive is to abolish legal monopolies on postal service in all member states.

The European Union said that the directive is aimed at "ensuring the best possible service through a progressive opening of the market by gradually reducing the scope of the reserved area (initially mail under 350 grams, amended in 2002 to 100 grams and reduced on Jan. 1, 2006, to 50 grams) . . ."

Ending their monopolies on Jan. 1 were Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain, according to a report from the Consumer Postal Council.

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

The report added that six member states -- Estonia, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom -- had previously ended postal monopoly rights for their national carriers.

Ten member states -- Cyprus, Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia -- have until 2013 to comply with the terms of the directive.



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## *New Issues*

### NEW ISSUES by G.M. van Zanten

#### 2011 ISSUE PLAN FOR CZECH REPUBLIC STAMPS

Date of Issue	Name of Issue	Number in set	Value Kč
Jan 5	Kaspar Maria von Sternberg (1761-1838)	1	43
Jan 5	Census	1	10
Jan 20	Tradition of Czech Stamp Design -- Josef Herčík	1	10
Jan 20	Personalities -- Famous Czechs -- St. Agnes of Bohemia (1211-1282)	1	12
Feb 9	Personalities -- Famous Czechs -- Jiří Melantrich of Aventinum (1511-1580)	1	30
Feb 9	Beauties of Our Country -- Cheb 950 Years -- Cubist Architecture (Black Madonna House Prague)	2	12 14
Feb 11	20 Years of the Visegrad Group	1	20
Mar 9	Year of the Rožmberks (Vilém and Petr Vok of Rožmberk)	1	49
Apr 6	Personalities -- Famous Czechs: Vlasta Burian (1891-1962)	1	10
Apr 6	200 Years of Teaching at the Prague Conservatory	1	10
May 4	EUROPA -- Forests: Alluvial Forests	1	20

May 27	Johann Gerstner (1851-1939), Joint Issue with Slovenia	1	34
Jun 1	For Children -- Zdeněk Smetana: The Little Witch	1	10
Jun 1	Execution of 27 Protestant Leaders (21.6.1621) on the Old Town Square	1	26
Jun 15	Young Animals	1	10
Jun 15	100 Years Since Jan Kašpar's First Public Flight	1	21
Jun 15	European Florists Championship Europa Cup	1	25
Aug 31	Men's European Volleyball Championships	1	20
Aug 31	Nature Protection -- Šumava	4 s/s	10/12
	-- UNESCO Biosphere Reservation		14/18
Sep 14	Travellers: František Alexander Elstner (1902-1974)	1	12
Sep 14	Crafts: Historical Organs, Plasy	1	10
Oct 5	World Post Day	1	21
Oct 5	Czech Film Posters	2	
	-- <i>Une femme douce</i>		10
	-- Markéta Lazarová		10
Nov 9	Works of Art on Stamps		
	-- Jaroslav Vožniak (1933-2005)	1	24
	-- Joža Uprka (1881-1940)	1	26
	-- August Bedřich Piepenhagen (1791-1869)	1	30

1. On November 10, 2010, the Ministry of Industry and Trade issued a set of three commemorative stamps in the Art on Stamps series. The stamps were produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by recess print from flat plates combined with multicolored offset in printing sheets of 4 pieces.

-- 24 Kč: Karel Škréta (1610-1674), "Paris and Helena, (around 1672)" (Fig. 1), National Gallery in Prague, engraved by Miloš Ondráček; in multicolored offset and black (recess print). Karel Škréta, one of the major 17<sup>th</sup> century Czech



Fig. 1

baroque painters, was born to a well-to-do Protestant family, with the noble predicate 'ze' (his full name being Škréta Šotonovský ze Závovic). Members of the family, originally from Olejnice in South Bohemia, lived in Prague and Kutná Hora. Karel's father Konrád died when Karel was only three years old. The little boy was placed into the care of his uncle, Pavel Škréta, who, following his brother's will, enabled his young nephew to obtain a broad humanistic education in the Prague's Týn school. Young Karel spoke Latin, German, Italian and French, and this knowledge proved very useful in the young man's adult life. Škréta's likely teachers of painting were artists at the royal court. After his return to Prague in 1638, he became one of the most popular local painters and gradually one of the major Czech early baroque painters. Škréta's painting shop, one of the largest in Prague, employed a number of apprentices and journeyman painters. His famous works include outstanding portraits, altar paintings, drawings and illustrations. Mythological themes rarely appeared in his works. His later works

**THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST**

were based on the chiaroscuro technique. Škrèta was the author of the Saint Wenceslas series of paintings for the Augustinian Monastery at Zderaz in Prague's New Town (1641), numerous altar paintings for major Prague churches (St. Thomas and St. Nicholas at the Lesser Town, St. Stephen, Virgin Mary before Týn) and the Assumption of the Virgin Mary church of the Cistercian Monastery in Plasy. In countless court proceedings, Škrèta eventually won back almost all of his family's property that had been confiscated after they fled the country. He died in 1674 in Prague as a very rich man. A FDC in dark brown shows the work by Karel Škrèta "Bohemia Glorified by History and Poetry" (Fig. 2).



Fig. 2

-- 26 Kč: Miloš Jiránek (1875-1911), "Piskaři (Sand Bargemen), 1910" (Fig. 3), Moravian Gallery in Brno, engraved by Václav Fajt; in yellow, red, green, blue, blackbrown. Miloš Jiránek, also known as Václav Zedník, was a Czech painter, art reviewer, writer and translator. His paintings were mostly influenced by impressionism. He studied at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague. His teachers at Prague's Academy of Arts were M. Pirner and V. Hynais. Jiránek was one of the leaders of the generation of founders of Czech modern art emerging in the course of the 1890's. The main features of the new generation were their critical approach to the servitude of art with respect to ideology; calling for the creative freedom of individuals and for autonomous art thinking. The struggle for emancipation of Czech art life found its



Fig. 3

expression in the establishment of the Mánes Union of Fine Arts (1887) and the art magazine *Volné Směry* (1896). Miloš Jiránek's work as a painter remained for a long time in the shadow of his activities as an art reviewer and organizer. The quality of his graphic art, tragically ended by his premature death at the age of 36 years, has not yet been fully appreciated. A FDC in dark brown is the picture by Miloš Jiránek "Self-portrait" (Fig. 4).

for autonomous art thinking. The struggle for emancipation of Czech art life found its



Fig. 4

-- 30 Kč: Karel Špillar (1871-1939), "Jaro (Spring), 1912" (Fig. 5), National Gallery in Prague, engraved by Martin Srb; in yellow, light brown, red, blue, black. The Czech painter and graphic designer Karel Špillar studied with František Ženíšek at the Prague's Academy of Arts (1885-1893). He was one of the members of the Mánes Union of Fine Arts and a teacher (after 1913) at the Academy of Arts. His early works were influenced by his stay at Paris and expressionism (1902-1908), other styles that found a way into his works included neo-romanticism and the symbolism of Art Nouveau. His decorative works followed the paintings by Puvis de Chavannes (Portrait of a Lady in Black, 1899;



Fig. 5

Shepherds, 1914). Špillar’s best known masterpiece is his decoration of the Municipal House in Prague, including the mosaic Homage to Prague (1909) above the entrance and the paintings in Smetana’s Hall representing an allegory of Music, Dance, Poetry and Drama (1910) in the Art Nouveau symbolic style.



Fig. 6

He was the author of a number of other decorations, such as those in the lounge of the Central Hotel in Prague. Špillar was also the author of lithographic works, posters, small graphic designs. A FDC in black is the picture by Karel Špillar “Lady Wearing a Green Hat” (Fig. 6).

2. On November 10, 2010, the Ministry issued a 10 Kč commemorative stamp in the Christmas stamp series -- Žlutice Hymn Book for Christian prayers (Fig. 7). The 1558 Žlutice Hymn Book is a rare renaissance parchment folio (sized 63x40x16 cm, weighing 28 kg), containing 471 sheets of Czech ultraquist liturgical texts for the divine services and hymns, decorated with remarkable paintings. The book was ordered by the Žlutice town councillors for the local literary brotherhood, for the considerable expense of 283 threescore of Meissen groschen, of which the sum of 23 threescore was contributed by the lord of the estate. Jan Táborský of Klokotská Hora, owner of a painting shop in Prague, used the following words to appreciate their generosity:



Fig. 7

“Eager to sing, the people of Žlutice ordered costly scripts to be made and written in a reasonable (i.e. Czech) language”. The author of the letters (Czech bastarda) and notation was Vavřinec Bílý. The book was illuminated by the famous painter



Fig. 8

Fabián Pulér of Ústí nad Labem. The 16 miniature paintings in the initial letters and arabesques are particularly well appreciated. They contain the coats of arms of Žlutice and each of the donators and guilds, scenes from the Old and the New Testaments as well as from the life of the townspeople (feasts, bull slaughtering, Sunday rest), paintings of famous Czech historic persons (Saint Wenceslas, John Hus, Jerome of Prague; the two latter ones being erased in the 17<sup>th</sup> century) as well as certain of the donators, both townspeople and lower noblemen from the neighborhood. The Hymn Book, until 1977 deposited in the Prague’s City Museum, is now a part of the collections of the Museum of Czech Literature in Prague. The City Museum keeps

a replica of the book. The stamp was designed by Zdeněk Ziegler, engraved by Bedřich Housa, and produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by multicolored offset using recess print from flat plates in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in black shows a picture from the hymn book showing a kneeling man and a praying woman (Fig. 8).

3. On January 5, 2011, the Ministry issued a commemorative souvenir sheet containing a 43 Kč stamp showing Kaspar Maria of Sternberg (1761-1838)(Fig. 9).



Fig. 9

Kaspar Maria of Sternberg was born on January 6, 1761, in Březina. He was one of the most outstanding natural scientists of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He was specialized particularly in botany, geology and paleontology. He is considered as one of the founders of paleobotany. He assembled an extensive and invaluable collection of minerals, fossils and herbarium specimens. These became the basis of collections of the National Museum in Prague, founded by Kaspar Maria. He was born in the ancient, but not very wealthy Czech noble family of Sternbergs as the eighth and last child and the third son of John of Sternberg and the countess Anna Josefa, born Krakovská of Kolovraty. He studied philosophy at the Prague University and theology in Rome, where he also received the lower religious consecration. In 1790 he began to be interested in natural sciences, the inspiration for which was the foundation of

the Botanic Company in Regensburg. He contributed to the *Botanisches Taschenbuch* being issued by this company and he became its regular member in 1800. He began the private study of botany. His first teacher was Charles Jeunet Duval. There was a hopeful church career before him but after the failure of the diplomatic mission in Paris in 1804-1805, he resigned from ecclesiastical functions. He accepted the post of the Director of Research Institutes in Regensburg. He founded here a botanical garden which was, however, destroyed in 1809 during the military campaign. During his stay in France he met Alexander von Humboldt and the elite of French paleoethologists and botanists. The material from his scientific expeditions, especially to the Bavarian Alps he used for his Latin work "The Overview of Saxifrages in Pictures". Shortly afterwards he inherited from his older brother and passionate naturalist Jáchym the manor Radnice in Western Bohemia. He established again a botanical garden at his residence and searched for fossils of prehistoric plants in the newly opened coal mines. He issued "A Treatise on the Botany in Bohemia" in German and thereafter also in Czech and in the years 1820-1838 the common work of Kaspar of Sternberg, Karel Bořivoj Presl and



## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

contains a pictogram symbolizing a computer rendering of the census (Fig. 12).

5. On January 20, 2011, the Ministry issued a 10 Kč commemorative stamp in the Tradition of Czech Postage Stamp Production series in honor of the graphic artist and engraver Josef Herčík. It contains a single-color stamp, printed by rotary recess print method, which first appeared on the “Mail Coach on Charles Bridge”



Fig. 13

envelope commemorating The Exhibition of Specialized Branches of the Union of Czechoslovak Philatelists Prague 1966 (Fig. 13). Josef Herčík (22 March 1922, Uherský Brod -- 9 July 1999, Prague) was one of the leading Czech engravers in the post-World War II era, mainly due to the large number of national and international awards he received for his contribution to the art of engraving in stamp design. As the author of more than 400 stamp engravings, Josef Herčík managed to overcome even Jindra

Schmidt and became the most prolific Czechoslovak engraver. He started his art career in the almost forgotten craft of gunstock engraving in the arm producing firm Zbrojovka Uherský Brod. He moved to Prague in 1940 where he also married. After the end of the war he was admitted to the College of Arts in Prague. Although mainly recognized as a stamp engraver, he also authored a large spectrum of other graphic works, such as drawings, book covers, illustrations, and bibliophilic works. His engravings for the 1958 edition of Arthur Rimbaud's "*Le bateau ivre*", designed by painter František Tichý, was the first work that made him publicly visible. His cooperation with graphic designer Václav Sivko, which started at the same time, introduced him to stamp engraving; Herčík's first stamp engravings followed Sivka's designs used for the PRAGA 1962 exhibition, although his first "real" stamp engravings featuring two insect motifs appeared later. Herčík worked mainly for the Czechoslovak stamp design, but several of his works became also internationally renowned. He engraved an extensive series of facsimiles of famous stamps, e.g., the Blue Mauritius, for the German philatelic firm Hermann Sieger, as well as a few stamps for other postal administrations, such as Monaco or the United Nations. Herčík covered also other areas of graphic design, such as free or heraldic graphics. As a heraldic designer he was even commissioned to design and engrave almost all Czechoslovak issues including heraldry of Czech or Slovak towns. The stamp was originally designed and engraved by Josef Herčík, while Bedřich Housa is the author of the current engraved version. The stamp was printed by the Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in black combined with photogravure in brown, blue, and yellow in printing sheets of 30 pieces. Besides the stamps in sheet arrangement, philatelic booklets of 8 stamps and 4 labels are issued. The labels in the size of a half of the stamp bear a picture of a historic post horn and are printed by rotary recess print in black. A FDC in dark brown shows two homing pigeons from

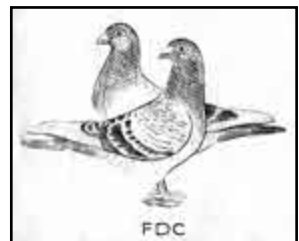


Fig. 14

the 6 Kč stamp, an issue of the 18<sup>th</sup> Olympiad of Homing Pigeons Prague 1983 issued on 20 January 1983 (Fig. 14).

6. On January 20, 2011, the Ministry issued a 12 Kč commemorative stamp the theme of which is St. Agnes of Bohemia (Fig. 15). St. Agnes of Bohemia (c. 1211 -- 6 March 1282), Czech princess and abbess of the Convent of St. Francis in Prague, was the youngest daughter of Czech king Přemysl Ottokar I and Constance of Hungary. When she was three years old, she and her sister Anna were entrusted to the Cistercian order in Trzebnica and Doksany to be educated. At that time she was probably engaged to Konrad (son of duke Henry I the Bearded of Silesia and his wife Hedwig). Konrad later died and both sisters returned back to Prague. At the age of eight, Agnes was engaged by her father Přemysl Ottokar I, who wished to establish a relationship with the Hohenstaufen family, to Henry, son of Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor



Fig. 15



Fig. 16

(later Henry VII of Germany). For the next six years Agnes was sent to the court of Leopold VI of Babenberg to continue her education. But Leopold managed to secure Henry for his own daughter Margaret, and the fourteen-year-old Agnes returned back to Prague again. Her father then planned for her to marry Henry III of England. Henry's delegation was welcomed at Prague Castle a year after her return from Babenberg and Agnes was engaged to Henry, but Henry broke the engagement in 1229. Henry VII of Germany, at the time already married to Margaret of Babenberg, then showed interest in Agnes again. The last suitor was Henry's father Frederick II, but Agnes, who was then free to decide as her father already died and her brother Wenceslaus I loved her, rejected him. With the help of her brother Wenceslaus I, Agnes founded the Hospital of St. Francis in Prague (1232) and two convents where the Franciscan friars and Clare nuns who worked at the hospital resided. She joined the Prague Clares in 1234 as their abbess. She also contributed to the promotion of the Franciscan brotherhood working at the hospital as an individual order, the Knights of the Cross with the Red Star, based on a strict compliance with the Franciscan rules, although her first attempt in 1237 failed. In 1238 she gave up the office of abbess of the Prague Clares, the office remaining vacant until her death. Agnes played an active role in the social life of her time. Her contributions to the conciliation between Wenceslaus and his son Přemysl was vital. During a controversy between her nephew Přemysl Ottokar II and the papal protégé Rudolf I of Habsburg, Agnes clearly took the side of her family when she accepted Přemysl's daughter Kunhuta under the roof of the convent in 1277 and denounced the pope's anathema placed on Přemysl by asking the nuns to pray for Přemysl during his war campaign against Rudolf before the battle on the Moravia Field. Agnes remained highly active even prior to her death, which occurred at the then venerable age of 71 years. Her famous charitable works and involvement in the country's affairs gave rise to numerous legends emerging immediately after her death. Although the early

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

attempts at canonization of this pioneer of care for the poor and hospital care in the Czech lands made by Elizabeth of Bohemia and her son Charles IV failed, Agnes was beatified in 1874 and later, on November 12, 1989, formally canonized. The stamp was designed by Renáta Fučíková, engraved by Jaroslav Tvrdoň, and produced by Post Printing House in Prague by rotary recess print in black combined with photogravure in ocher, red, blue, and golden in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC in blue shows a drawing of a crown from which a lily is growing (Fig. 16).

### Stationery

7. On January 20, 2011, the Ministry issued a postal card with imprinted literal postage stamp "A" destined for additional printings for commercial and promotional purposes (Fig. 17). On the imprinted stamp is depicted a historic post horn, a motif taken from the label on the printing sheet of the Tradition of the Czech Stamp Production 2011 (Josef Herčík) issue. The stamp was designed by

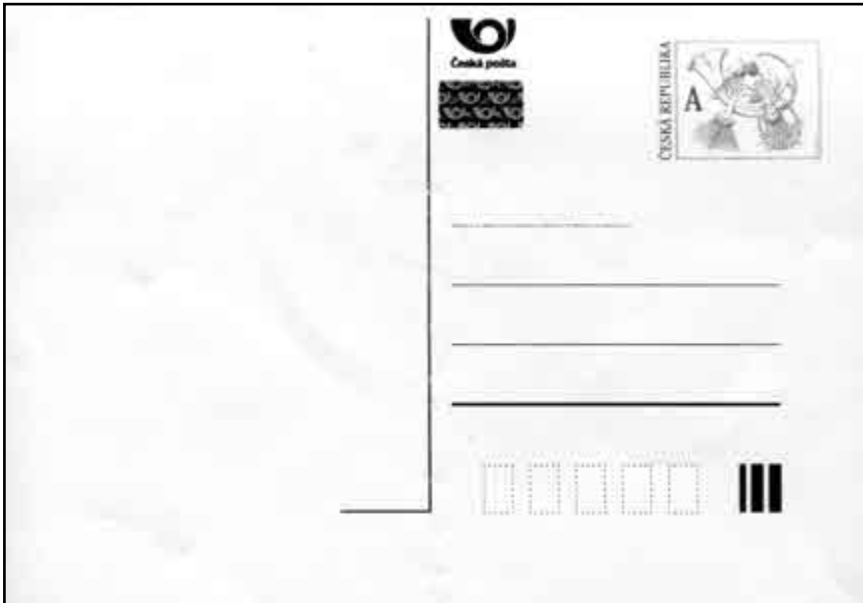


Fig. 17

Bedřich Housa and the post card was produced by the Post Printing House in Prague by colored offset. Under the stamp is a microline with the Czech microtext Czech Post, PTC, 2011.

## SLOVAKIA

by Gerald M. van Zanten

### 2011 ISSUE PLAN FOR SLOVAK REPUBLIC STAMPS

Date of Issue	Name of Issue	Number in set	Value €
Jan 17	International Year of Chemistry	1	0.80
Jan 28	Cultural Heritage of Slovakia: Church, St. George in Jur	1	0.70
Feb 11	20 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of the Visegrad Group	1	0.90
Mar 4	Easter 2011: Folk Style	1	0.40
Mar 25	Sport: Ice Hockey World Championship	1	0.50
Apr 15	Sights of our Homeland -- Dobšinská Ice Cave	1	1.10
May 6	EUROPA 2011: Forests -- National Park Poloniny	1	0.90
Jun 3	Stamp with personalized coupon	1	0.40
Jun 6	Historical Anniversaries: 150 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Memorandum of the Slovak Nation	1	1.20
Jul 1	Technical Sights: Historic Cars	2	
	-- Aero 30/50		0.40
	-- Aerodynamic Tatra 87		0.80
Jul 29	Personalities: Ján Cikker (1911-1989)	1	0.50
Sep 2	Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava 2011	1	0.40
Sep 20	Personalities: Michal Miloslav Hodža (1811-1870)	1	0.40
Oct 14	Nature Conservation: Great Bustard	1	1.10
Nov 11	Christmas 2011: Folk Style	1	0.40
Nov 25	Art	2	
	-- Ján Sambucus (1531-1584)		1.20
	-- Panel Painting of Metercia Rožňava		1.20
Dec 2	Postage Stamp Day: Historical Mailbox	1	0.50

8. On November 12, 2010, the Ministry of Transport, Posts, and Telecommunications issued a 0.40 € commemorative stamp for Christmas 2010 entitled Initial with the Birth of Christ from the Bratislava Mass-book (Fig. 18). The liturgical manuscript of the Bratislava Missal I from the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century is preserved in several fragments. It can be found in the Bratislava Archive of the Bratislava Town Museum and in the St. Adalbert Association in Trnava. Originally having 366 sheets, nowadays there are altogether 303. There are painted figural illuminations mainly as initials with biblical motifs on some of these parchment sheets of the Codex. One of these paintings on the parchment sheets in the Town Museum is the Nativity initial. The scene is placed in the shape of the letter P. This is the initial of the text "Peur natus est . . ." (baby boy was born). Simple notation above the text reveals that it is a Christmas song which was integrated into the liturgical codex. Baby Jesus -- lying still, wrapped in a blanket with a distinctive gloriole on his head dominates the scene. Jesus is accompanied with a donkey, calf, and two angels which are pointing to the star on the golden background of the picture. Such a composition of the Nativity is unusual since it lacks Mary -- the Mother of God. The figures are painted in bright colors. Their compressed style resembles archaic Byzantine patterns. Other circumstances of the missal's origin confirm its connection with Italy. During the Middle Ages Italy



Fig. 18

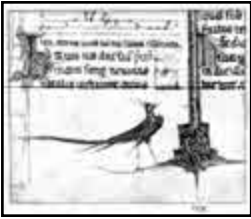


Fig. 19

was an intermediary for Middle Eastern cultural stimuli to Hungary. According to some experts the writing comes from Esztergom. At the turn of the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century the archbishopric center was a meeting point for many scholars. Also, when the missal came into existence -- at the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century -- Bratislava was the place where papal legates Nicolaus Boccasino von Trviso and cardinal Gentilis were residing. We can also assume that the Codex was written and decorated for the Bratislava canonry by one of the writers and illuminators of their delegation. The stamp was designed by Kamila Štanclová and produced by the Poštovní Tiskarna Cenin Praha, a.s., using offset in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC shows another illumination page (Fig. 19).



Fig. 20

contemporary appearance is the result of several reconstructions. The wall painting of Karl Robert's coronation represents the remains of the decoration dating back to the period before the Gothic reconstruction in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.



Fig. 22

9. On November 26, 2010, the Ministry issued a set of two commemorative stamps in the Art on Stamps series. They were produced by the Poštovní Tiskarna Cenin Praha, a.s., using recess printing from flat plates in printing sheets of four stamps.

-- 1.20 €: Author unknown, Portion of Gothic Mural Painting (Fig. 20). The history of the Cathedral church of St. Martin, bishop in Spišská Kapitula (Spiš Canonry) dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Its



Fig. 21

The motif of the painting under the northern portal is a ceremonial scene which is dominated by the Mother of God on her knees with Jesus. The last reconstruction of the complex (Ladislav Szekély, 2005) honored the historical signs and datings. Considering the iconography, the painting could have been created shortly after Karl Robert from Anjou was coronated the Hungarian king by the Esztergom archbishop for the last time in 1310. The stamp was designed and engraved by Rudolf Cigánik. A FDC shows another view from the mural containing Mother and Child (Fig. 21).

-- 1.20 €: Master Paul of Levoča, "Madonna from Lubica" (16<sup>th</sup> century)(Fig. 22). The Parish Church of

the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Lubica is the largest church from the group of so-called double-nave Spiš churches; it has undergone several reconstructions. The church interior underwent fundamental alterations in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. After 1764, the walls and the vault were decorated with rococo ornaments. The Baldachin altar in the sanctuary (1680) is older and was created by the baroque sculptor Olaf Engelholm from Levoča. A niche older still gothic altar with the statue of the Virgin Mary from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century is also integrated into this monumental work. The Madonna, wearing a bright gold cloak, accompanied with little statues of four saints on the sides represents the so-called Apocalyptic Mary type standing on a half moon with two angels by her feet. The moon represents the devil that was humiliated by the Mother of God. Both angels raising her cloak serve the purpose of sending the message face to face



Fig. 23

to the spectators. The method of shaping the cloak, but mainly the facial features of the Virgin Mary and the angels, reveal the origin of the statue as well as the whole original gothic altar to be the workshop of Master Paul of Levoča. The preservation of the statue and its cabinet in the baroque altar in Lubica is not that unusual. A similar example is the baroque altar of the Minorite church in Levoča from the 17<sup>th</sup> century that is also the work of Olaf Engelholm. In addition, a gothic Madonna can be found in the baroque altar of the Parish church in Podolíneč. And finally, in 1696 the whole gothic cabinet with eight original statues was integrated into the altar in the Parish church in Prešov. Such a history surely relates

to the former re-catholicization atmosphere of the period after the reformation and its effort to emphasize religious and cultural tradition continuity. Artistic monuments were a significant source of arguments in the religious disputes of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The stamp was designed and engraved by František Horniak. A FDC shows the statue of the Madonna from Lubica (Fig. 23).

10. On December 1, 2010, the Ministry issued a 0.40 € commemorative stamp entitled Fight Against HIV (Fig. 24). HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that causes the AIDS disease. It completely disrupts and destroys the human immunity. It is not a commonly contagious virus. We do not get infected by touch or by common social contact. Infection may occur by transfer of bodily fluids, blood or during sexual intercourse; moreover, by using the same needle among drug addicts. The period during which a person is a virus carrier and by the time the symptoms appear could last for years. During this period

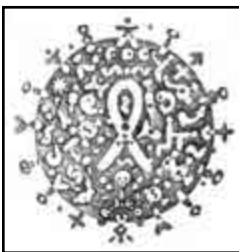


Fig. 25



Fig. 24

the afflicted person can unconsciously spread the virus. It is not possible to cure it. Therefore, it is very important to talk about it in families, to inform about it in media, and to speak about it mainly with young people. The stamp was designed by Robert Jancovič and produced by Poštovní Tiskarna Cenin

## THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

Praha, a.s., using offset in printing sheets of 50 pieces. A FDC shows a circular design representing the virus (Fig. 25).

11. On December 3, 2010, the Ministry issued a 0.70 € commemorative stamp with a label for the Postage Stamp Day series honoring Karol Ondreička (1944-2003)(Fig. 26). Karol Ondreička was a painter, graphic artist, an illustrator,



Fig. 26

postage stamp creator, significant artist and teacher, and a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design and at the Faculty of Education of Comenius University in Bratislava. He was a student of and continues with the activity of Professor Albin Brunovský. In 1989-1990 he was the Chancellor of the Academy of Fine Arts and Design. His works are

specific for rich imagination, marked drawing skills, redrawing of the details and using classical graphic techniques. These are known from his free graphics, numerous book illustrations, artistically strong exlibris, paintings and especially in his stamp creation which is the integral part of his life-long work. Stamps of the author together with his graphic creation -- such as on his depiction of the historic legend during the times when Roman legions penetrated our territory -- show his ability to demonstrate magnificence of the poetic imagination on a rather small surface. The stamp was designed and engraved by Martin Činovský and produced by the Poštovní Tiskarna Cenin Praha, a.s., using rotary recess printing combined with gravure in printing sheets of 30 pieces. A FDC shows one of Ondriečka's works (Fig. 27).



Fig. 27

12. On January 17, 2011, the Ministry issued a 0.80 € commemorative stamp honoring the International Year of Chemistry (Fig. 28). Man can be proud of the centuries of work within chemistry that has significantly affected almost all areas of his



Fig. 28

life. In December 2008, the 63<sup>rd</sup> UN General Assembly approved the year 2011 to be the International Year of Chemistry -- IYC on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Association of Chemical Societies -- IACS. The main

theme of IYC 2011 is "Chemistry -- Our Life, Our Future" and is focused on the achievements of chemistry and its contribution to the well-functioning of human society. The chemical industry in Slovakia is particularly focused on petrochemistry, manufacture of pharmaceuticals and products from macromolecular compounds. The stamp "International Year of Chemistry 2011" is motivated on the idea of environmental issues. We are alive because of the ingenious natural chemical reaction -- photosynthesis, which ensures the existence

of life on earth. Its exceptional performance and waste-free process makes photosynthesis an example to provide guidance for chemically motivated human activity. The basis of the stamp design is made up of two important chemical compounds, water and carbon dioxide, which interact in photosynthesis. Sunlight and chlorophyll are the catalysts of photosynthesis, which results in oxygen and glucose, two molecules of life, having an essential role in our lives. A green leaf appears on the FDC, representing chlorophyll, along with formulas of the entering and generated chemical compounds and completes the picture of this unique photochemical reaction. The stamp was designed by Igor Benca and produced by the Postal Stationery Printing House in Prague using offset in printing sheets of 30 pieces. A FDC shows a green leaf with chemical formulas relating to the photosynthesis process (Fig. 29).

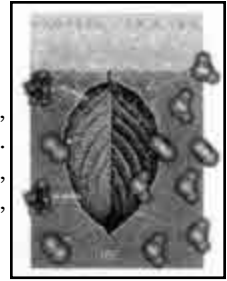


Fig. 29

13. On January 28, 2011, the Ministry issued a 0.70 € commemorative stamp in the Cultural Heritage of Slovakia series for the Saint George in Svätý Jur Church (Fig. 30). The stone Altar of St. George in Svätý Jur near Bratislava takes a prominent place among the works of art between the Gothic and Renaissance periods. Taking into account its technique -- skilled craftsmanship in fine



Fig. 30

limestone -- this altar is a unique work in Slovakia. Its artistic quality is exceptional since it is an example of Central European art. The figure of St. George -- who is a knight on horseback, with spear, killing a dragon under the horse's hooves -- is the focus of the later architecture. The sculpture -- almost in the style of a free equestrian statue -- has in the background a relief of landscape scenery, while garlands over it create a natural canopy. This décor is accentuated by smaller scenes on the sides -- in the wings of the altar -- with four scenes from the life of the saint (Christ's birth and escape to Egypt, Adoration of the Magi, St. George in conversation with the Emperor, the Passion of St.

Sebastian -- its motif is the drawing on the FDC). Apart from the rich Renaissance decoration, the parts of the altar are made of several loose sculptures on both sides, usually more in the Gothic style. Such stylistic ambiguity is typical of the period around 1500, and on the altar in Svätý Jur it may be explained also by the participation of at least three relatively autonomous sculptors. With regard to the aforementioned uniqueness, it is obvious that the altar was imported in blocks from outside Slovakia, or medieval Hungary. The closest stylistic affinities lead to nearby Vienna, where one can find an analogy with the so-called Altar of St. Anna (1512), however, according to recent research, its masters drew inspiration from a much wider area of the Danube (Salzburg, Passau). It must be mentioned that since the Middle Ages the art in Bratislava and its surroundings was determined by the importance of the Danube trade route, and particularly by



Fig. 31

the vicinity of Vienna, in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century -- the imperial metropolis. The stamp was designed by Robert Jancovič, engraved by Martin Činovský, and produced by the Postal Stationery Printing House, Prague, using rotary recess printing combined with gravure in sheets of 100 pieces. A FDC shows a semi-circular medallion containing the passion of St. Sebastian (Fig. 31).

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