

**CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY
OF GREAT BRITAIN**

BULLETIN

№ 5



MARCH, 1976

**Edited & Published by
C. Wackett
to whom all communications
should be addressed**

The 50th. on 50th. Post. NEXT MEETING (Contd.)

As we informed you in our February News - Letter, the next meeting of the Society will be held on:-

SATURDAY, 15th MAY, 1976

at the home of Mrs.K.Goodman, "Ingledene", 5,Oakwood Road Highcliffe, Christchurch, Dorset.

This is in pursuance of our recently introduced policy of holding meetings in Members' homes and, where practicable, in various parts of the country.

Mrs. Goodman has very kindly offered to provide buffet lunch to members attending and it is suggested that we assemble at Mrs. Goodman's house between 12.30 & 1 p.m.

Travelling Directions:

BY ROAD: From London drive on the M.3, then carry on following "Southampton" sign until you come to the new bypass, M.27, go on this and come off the Lyndhurst sign and proceed to Lyndhurst. From Lyndhurst take the Christchurch Bournemouth Road about 9 miles on the right-hand side past a Public House named "Cat and Fiddle", immediately afterwards turn left to Hinton Admiral Station, over the Railway Bridge second turning on the left is Holmhurst Avenue, immediately sharp left into Oakwood Road, and No.5 is the third house

BY RAIL: Trains depart from Waterloo Station at 4 minutes past each hour. Book to New Milton Station. The journey takes approximately 2 hours, therefore, it is suggested that any Members travelling by train take the 10.46 arriving at New Milton at 12.40. Cars will be waiting at the Station to meet Members.

For the return journey, trains leave New Milton at 11 minutes past each hour.

As previously advised, there will be two philatelic subjects at this meeting; (a) Postage Dues, (b) The Prague Philatelic Exhibitions. Please bring along to this meeting any material on these subjects. Will any Member intending to attend this meeting and who has not yet returned the tear-off slip attached to the February News-Letter PLEASE advise the Secretary by return so that Mrs. Goodman can be advised of precise numbers for which to cater.

Would you please also make a note in your diaries that the meeting following the one above will be held on Saturday, 17th July, 1976. It had been intended to hold this meeting in the Midlands however, there was insufficient response from Members to warrant this; it has therefore been decided to retain the meeting in the London area and it will be held at the home of one of our Secretaries, Mr. R. Kingsley, 6, Fenn Close, Bromley, Kent. You will be further advised of the Philatelic subject to be discussed at this meeting.

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The Editor regrets that owing to a bout of flu and pressure of work both at home and at the Office it was not possible to issue this edition of the Bulletin during March. However, unforeseen circumstances excepted the next issue No.6 will be circulated sometime in June.

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National Anthem Sheets and Their Forgeries

On 21st December 1934 the first issue of Czechoslovak miniature sheets appeared. The music and words of the Czech National Anthem were incorporated into the frame design surrounding fifteen stamps to a drawing bearing the same title as the anthem "Kde Domov Muj".

Printed from flat plates on ungummed thick white carton paper and perforated $13\frac{3}{4}$ in two values 1K Claret and 2K Blue, each complete in an individual folder and available only in Prague.

Always extremely popular the catalogue value advanced in accord with demand some ten times pre-war and almost 80 times to the present time, of the original 1934 valuation.

This type of demand and value must always attract the unscrupulous, but forgeries were not apparent until immediately after the close of the second world war. A number of factors in connection with the forgeries appearing at this time and various aspects of the design lead students to believe that the frame dies of the original issue being of no postal value were not destroyed along with those of the actual stamp but retained to fall into unauthorised hands during the unsettled times at the close of hostilities.

This view is taken by virtue of the fact that no apparent differences have been located in the frame design other than slight variations in colour and the application of ink in their printing.

The fifteen stamps themselves however have a multitude of differences and even if one is unable to compare original and forged sheets side by side the following information should enable the locating of the various facets which identify the forgeries.

National Anthem Sheets (Contd.)

Perforations: Whilst the perforations of the originals show distinct variations in alignment the forgeries are very accentuated, and rather too much out of line at times. Also the perforations themselves are smaller in size.

Colour Printing: In the genuine the colour of the 1K in both the music and stamps are the same, whereas the music in the forgeries is printed in a darker shade than the stamps.

With the 2K however, almost the reverse is the case. The genuine music appears in a deeper blue than the stamps, whilst in the forgeries the overall colour is well matched.

Measurement: Being printed on carton paper considerable wetting of the paper was necessary causing gross shrinkages in both the originals and the forgeries rendering measurement as a means of detection very inaccurate.

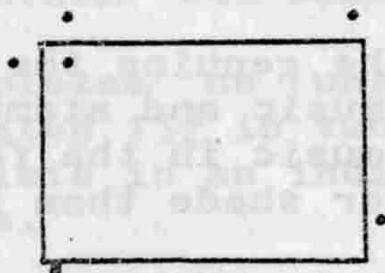
Paper: As stated the originals were printed on white carton paper perforated approximately $13\frac{1}{4}$, whereas forgeries appear on thick slightly tinted wove paper with a certain parchment appearance.

Printing: The indentations (recesses) of the engraved music shows on the reverse of the originals but not on the forgeries.

Guide Marks: It is felt however, that the surest check one can have without any reference to other sheets for comparison are the guide markings or lack of them. The originals have these guide markings which whilst not appearing on every stamp occur frequently and clearly throughout the sheets in five positions.

National Anthem Sheets (Contd.)

- i) Left top of stamp upper margin.
- ii) Three-quarters upper left (a) Margin
(b) on stamp.
- iii) Left bottom of stamp lower margin.
- iv) Right top of stamp upper margin.
- v) Right bottom of stamp right hand margin.



Differences occur which also aid in the detection of forgeries amongst individual stamps taken from the sheet and whilst described below cannot be adequately explained without the use of sketches, but nevertheless may be of some guide.

Original

Forgery

- | | |
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| a) The engravers initial appearing in the lower left corner is an "M". | The engravers initial whilst intended to be the same, appears as an "H" with curved sides. |
| b) The skirt of the figure of a woman holding a baby below the waist belt at the left is a fold in the material. | In the same position the fold is broken giving the appearance of a hook. |
| c) The continuation of the skirt line at the seat of the woman is slightly broken. | In the same position a pronounced break appears. |
| d) The head-dress of the plowman behind his neck is shaded all over. | The head-dress is shaded at the right only with a plain gap the depth of the left side |
| e) Four hairs on baby's forehead irregular in length. | The hairs are of equal length and thin 2K value only. 1K no hairs on head. |

THE STORY OF A ONE-DAY STAMP

By: W. L. Russell

With acknowledgement to the Czech Specialist of Sept. 1944

"Marshall Zhukov's army driving into the heart of the Carpathians has reached the borders of Czechoslovakia". So read the cables as this article was being written and since it looked as if Ruthenia would be the first portion of Czechoslovakia to be liberated, let us take a look at the country and its one-day stamp.

Ruthenia, which prior to 1918 was part of Hungary, forms the rump of the Czechoslovak Republic and, in quite another sense, is the most backward part of that go-ahead nation. It was inhabited mainly by peasants, shepherds, timber cutters, mountaineers and the like and its few towns were not by any means the modernised communities that the rest of Czechoslovakia boasted.

The Ruthenians spoke a dialect of the Ukrainian tongue, and used the Cyrillic Alphabet. They had their own religion which was an offshoot of the Russian Orthodox Church, and life in the village centres round the wooden church which invariably showed a form of architecture found nowhere else.

Who were the Ruthenians? And how did they come to issue a stamp? The answer to both questions may be found in the fact that there had always been a pan-Ukrainian movement in Ruthenia. In fact, the people interested in that movement had always referred themselves as Carpatho-Ukrainians.

Following the Munich Conference and its aftermath, when the Slovak Separatist movement was raising its head, the Pan-Ukrainians thought they saw their opportunity. Prague had troubles of its own; Bratislava was like a schoolboy with his first pair of long pants, and was interested in its own affairs only. So in Ruthenia the wheel of political fortune turned, and the Pan-Ukrainians assumed control. One of their first acts was to order a National Stamp, and it is typical of the tolerant view taken by Prague of these resurgent phenomena that the stamp

as actually printed by the National Stamp Printing Bureau in Prague. This was probably due to the fact that in the early stages of planning their own stamps, proceedings were on the basis of the continuance of the Czechoslovakian Republic, even if continued on a Federal basis.

For the design of their first stamp, the Ruthenians chose the same illustrations as was used by the Czechs in their issue celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Republic. Do you remember the 60h stamp showing the wooden church at Masina? That design is so typical of the country that it was adopted and with suitable alterations in the lettering and value, was printed in blue on yellow paper, the Ukrainian National colours. These stamps, although on sale at the Philatelic Bureau at the G.P.O., in Prague, were only valid for use in Ruthenia and were intended to be used for the first time at the opening of the Carpatho-Ukrainian Parliament in Chust, the capital.

In order to meet the wishes of Collectors, the Post Office in Chust took orders for first-day covers from all over the Republic, for from no other place could the commemorative cancellation be obtained. The Stamps were sent to Chust in good time for the big event which was originally planned for 21st March, 1938. However, political events took an unexpected turn, and the date was advanced to 6th March. This date, however, was not kept by Parliament. It is mere conjecture to say what went wrong. The cancelling stamp bears this date, for it was a fixed one, and could not be altered although Parliament did not actually meet until 15th March. On that date the postal authorities began the issue of stamps in Chust and cancelled them with a red postmark. On that date, too, the Carpatho-Ukrainian Parliament announced, as did Slovakia, complete severance from the Union of Czechoslovakia since on the same day Nazi troops were marching into Prague and Brno. The Carpatho-Ukrainian independence, however, did not survive 24 hours, because on the same day Hungarian troops occupied the country; bringing to a sudden end both Chust and the wider activities of Parliament, including the issue of stamps. There were, indeed some registered letters despatched. The rest, packed in chests, were taken by the Hungarian troops, and the Hungarian Authorities forbade the use of any but Hungarian stamps, so there remains but one stamp to commemorate the one-day state.

By: Jan Karas

With acknowledgement to the Czech. Specialist - Nov. 196

This issue, in six values, was not received with much joy by collectors. The issue was 5 million copies, valid for only eight days - 27th October to 3rd November, 1919, so not very many were sold, the majority being left on the Post Office shelves. Even the commemorative overprint did not increase sales.

One very interesting facet of this issue is the perforations. Because of such a large issue, perforating was done on more than one machine. A large portion of the "Mother and Child" stamp was comb perforated $13\frac{3}{4} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$. The "Lion" stamp was perforated $13\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{3}{4}$. Another portion of both stamps was line perforated $13\frac{3}{4} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ and $11\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{3}{4}$. These two perforations are most common, except on the 50h blue, with perforation $11\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{3}{4}$. When some of the perforating machines broke down, many partially perforated sheets were shifted to another machine, thus creating compound and mixed perforations.

So far, five types of perforations have been found. One type of comb perforation, three types of compound perforations and one type of line perforation. Four types are rather rare and in comparison with some of the Hradcany rare perforations, are rather underpriced. It seems that the stamps with mixed perforations were overprinted with the commemorative overprint. There are a number of collections complete except for four of the rare perforations.

Centering is poor showing that the job was done in a hurry and without much supervision, many sheets being only partially perforated or double perforated and passed by the inspectors. Sometimes the last line of perforations, vertical or horizontal was missed and when discovered, put through another perforator, producing compound perforation such as :- $11\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{3}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{3}{4}$ on the 15h. stamp or $11\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{3}{4} \times 11\frac{1}{2} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ on the 25h. stamp. There is no doubt that some of this stuff was smuggled out for sale under the counter.

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM SHEETS

The National Anthem "Kde Domov Muj?", (Where is my Fatherland?), originated in Fildovacka, a comedy with songs, which was first performed at the Estates Theatre in Prague on 21st December, 1934. The music was by Frantisek Skroup (1801-1862), and the words by Josef K. Tyl, (1808-1856). The song became so popular that it was adopted by all Czech Nationalists as a song of revolt. It was banned by the Austro-Hungarian Authorities, but in 1918 it was chosen as the first part of the Country's National Anthem. The second part was a Slovakian Song, "Nad Tatra sa Blyska".

Kde domov můj?

1854 *Andante con moto.* 1934

The image shows a musical score for the Czech National Anthem, "Kde domov můj?". The score is enclosed in a decorative, ornate border. At the top, the title "Kde domov můj?" is written in a stylized font. Below the title, the year "1854" is on the left and "1934" is on the right, with the tempo marking "Andante con moto." in the center. The score consists of two staves of music with lyrics in Czech. The first staff has the lyrics "Kde domov můj, kde domov můj?" and "há - ti po - tu - si - náš - ho - ry to - ti". The second staff has the lyrics "po - tu - si - náš - ho - ry to - ti", "kde - ži - vě - ní - tu - si - náš - ho - ry to - ti", and "de - ži - vě - ní - tu - si - náš - ho - ry to - ti". In the center of the score, there is a grid of 12 small, square images, each depicting a different scene or figure, likely related to the themes of the anthem.

The design is taken from one of Josef Manes' rejected works. He is better known for his pictorial work on the clock face of the Prague Town Hall. It is a drawing of a Ploughman, a Mother and Children and a Fiddler.

One of the most outstanding rarities of Czechoslovakia is not recorded in a number of stamp catalogues, including Gibbons, although its authenticity is beyond question.

With the introduction of new printing techniques, the earlier issues, which had been mainly printed in large quantities by the letter-press process were gradually superseded by rotary-press productions. Large stocks of the former issues were held by the Postal Administration and to these were added those remaining in the Post Offices, the remainders being recalled and replaced by new issues. Instead of destroying the stock it was decided to utilise the stamps for Postage Due purposes by applying a suitable overprint the word "DOPLATIT" (Postage Due) being employed and in the main appeared in conjunction with a revised value. The first examples appeared on the Hradcany issues on 18th January, 1922, and continued through varying denominations of this series until 2nd February, 1926.

Other types were also employed as provisionals, the "Liberated Republic" types appearing in 1927. There were three values originally issued in identical colours namely red, as follows:- 20h., 50h. and 150h. Owing to the very limited stock of the 50h. denomination, it was decided not to utilise these, and the stamps were therefore withdrawn. The supply of the other values on hand, namely: 20h. - 27,7000,000 and 150h. - 3,930,000 were issued on 24th September 1927, with the word "Doplatit" placed diagonally across the stamp to right and the value "50" on either side to obliterate the original figures. Every care was taken by the printers to ensure that no mistake occurred during the overprinting process hence the lack of varieties appearing in these issues.

During October, 1928 a copy was discovered showing the overprint applied on an example of the 50h. red stamp, the postmark showing that it was used at the Post Office at Holesovice, a district of Prague, from the cancellation "PRAHA 14". The item was obviously received with doubt for it was appreciated that as the original value was that of 50h., the necessity for overprinted numerals did not arise. However, the overprint appeared to be genuine and

The 50h. on 50h. Postage Due Error (Contd.)

the announcement of its discovery created considerable activity on the part of philatelists and others. All available stocks on hand, packets, kiloware, and correspondence received by commercial firms were carefully examined, with the result that other copies came to light. By 1935 eleven examples of the error had been discovered and at the present time (1963), the number known is seventeen, all bearing the "PRAHA 14" postmark. No unused examples are known.

An examination of the used known copies would appear to indicate that they all emanated from one sheet and it, therefore appears reasonable to say that not more than 100 could have originally existed. A sheet of the 50h., value had apparently been inadvertently overlooked by the Supervisors during the process of overprinting, and the fact that the new values invariably obliterated most of the original figures would have made the error readily indiscernible to the Postal Authorities.

It was obvious that in view of its scarcity, the item would soon attract the interest of forgers, and it was not long before unused examples appeared. However, as no mint copies had been seen before, experts readily discovered that these were not genuine. Another device employed was that of painting out the figure "1" of both "150's", but the fact that the numbers "5" and "0" are more narrowly spaced on the original than those of the 50h. stamp and also do not have inner lines in the figures readily disclosed their status.

There is a possibility that other copies may come to light but whatever the final outcome it can still be classified as one of the rarest errors of the philatelic world.
