

# CZECHOSLOVAK PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN

## BULLETIN

SATURDAY, 10th JULY, 1976 at 2.30 p.m.

(NOT 17th July, as previously advised).

No. 6

JUNE, 1976



Edited & Published by

C. Wackett

to whom all communications

should be addressed

The last meeting held at the home of Mrs. K. Goodwin in Christchurch was a great success, and we again look forward to seeing a large number of members at the July meeting.

## N E X T M E E T I N G

Please note that the next meeting of the Society will be held on:-

SATURDAY, 10th JULY, 1976 at 2.30 p.m.

(NOT 17th July, as previously advised).

### Travelling Instructions

BY ROAD. From Central London drive via Elephant & Castle on the A 2 along New Kent Road, Old Kent Road, New Cross, Lewisham, Catford, following signposts "Bromley". (From Lewisham A 21). About 2 miles after Catford watch out for Bromley Court Hotel which is on the right-hand side of the main road. Directly OPPOSITE the hotel turn left into Avondale Road. Continue right along Avondale Road which ultimately leads into Lake Avenue. Fenn Close is a new Close off Lake Avenue. No.6 is the 6th house on the left.

BY RAIL. From Charing Cross (main line) Station to Grove Park. A convenient train would be the 13.44 calling at London Bridge at 13.50, and arriving at Grove Park at 14.12 where any members travelling by train will be met by car.

The philatelic subjects for discussion at this meeting will be:-

1. SO 1920 Overprints
2. Any unusual items of interest.

The last meeting held at the home of Mrs. K. Goodman in Christchurch was a great success, and we again look forward to seeing a large number of members at the July meeting.



## Monografie

We are pleased to advise Members that Volume 13 of the Monografie has been translated for us, and will be circulated to Members free of charge, at a future date.

## Exchange Packets

We regret that some Members have had to wait a long time to receive the packet which is currently circulating. This is because a number of Members have kept the packet in their possession for an unreasonable length of time. We regret, therefore, that any Member keeping the packet for more than 3/4 days will have to be deleted from future packets in the interest of the membership as a whole. Will all Members who will be away from home on holiday, please notify the Packet Secretary Mrs. P. Oliver, 116, Birchfield Road, Northampton, giving dates of their absence from home so that the packet can be diverted during their absence and thus avoid unnecessary delays.

## Famous People on Stamps

Bozena Nemcova - Issued 21.6.1950 - Pofis Nos. 548/9.

Bozena N. (1820-1862) was one of the most famous novelists of her Country and one of the most intellectual figures of either Czech or Slovak Nations. Her first book "National Legends and Tales" (1845) was followed by "Slovak Legends" (1847) and gained her wide respect locally. Her fiction, which began with short stories bringing in the village life of her people, ran to several volumes, the most famous of which was a long novel "The Grandmother", (1855). She kept up the output between 1855 and 1860, but "The Grandmother" remains her most famous work, and familiar to all Czechs. It has been translated into several foreign languages and is regarded as one of the classics in Czechoslovakia. Her correspondence was published after her death and includes much of tremendous literary interest.



## RETOUCHES OF THE 'EGG' VARIETY OF THE 50 VALUE

The red 50h stamp was in use from the 17th September, 1920 until the 31st January, 1923 and the green one from the 23rd January, 1923, until the 31st December, 1925. The retouches were discovered by Dr. J. Munk and first described in an article in the 'Narodni Sberatel' 1940/2. A note appeared in the Tribuna on the 4th May, 1940. To these four retouches discovered in 1940 a further number has been added through discoveries during the following 18 years and the total number is in the region of twenty.

The retouches discovered by Munk were made in order to correct the white spots known as the 'egg' variety, which had been popular with collectors for several years without it being known that this variety was found on different plates and that it had been subsequently retouched. The variety exists on the red stamp throughout its circulation. The green stamp was first printed from the same plates. The fault was removed from the plates sometime during the first half of 1922. (This can be ascertained from the postmarks on used copies). According to V. Nebesky 38 plates were used for the printing of the red stamp, out of which four were retouched and these were then replaced by new plates on which the 39th stamp was normal. On stamps used in 1924 and 1925 the retouch is no longer found.

In addition to the retouch other small flaws are found on the green stamp; two of these occur in conjunction with the retouch; a small coloured dot over the letter "B" in the group "VHB" at the bottom of the stamp. This is the retouch "A". The second retouch "B" comes from a different plate. It shows a small dot in the curved part of the left hand "5". Retouch "C" shows two dots in the right palm instead of three. Retouch "D" has the lower right hand frame line broken by a small nick.

To discover a retouch it is necessary to compare the stamp with a normal one. The margins of the design from the chest downward the first two wavy lines and the upper line across. The characteristics of types A, B, C, and D must all be present.



Stamps Commemorating the Jubilee  
of the Death of Jan Žižka

By: C. Wackett

On 17th April, 1923 the firm of A. Haase of Prague, an artistic graphic institution for the printing of Postage stamps and bank notes passed a proposal to the Ministry of Post and Telegraph for permission to print postage stamps commemorating the coming Jubilee of the death of Jan Žižka of Trocnov (1424-1924). The stamps were to be produced by steel engraving process, and to be extremely difficult to counterfeit.

It is interesting to note that in this lengthy memorandum their comparison of the Czech Postage Stamps as "Visiting cards for neighbouring foreign countries". Messrs. Haase were mainly interested in the Hussite movement and its representatives - Jan Hus, Jan Žižka, Prokop, Jiří of Poděbrady and Jan Amos Komensky. It was pointed out that this was a suitable time being the 500th Anniversary of the Hussite period. The Jubilee period commenced with the burning of Jan Hus in 1415, but Austrian censorship during the world war made it impossible to celebrate this Jubilee.

The content of the drawings would be significant persons and their places of work in the best presentations from famous Czech artists: M. Aleš, V. Brožík, Marold, Hlava, Šaloun and Myslbek.

Newspaper stamps would show modern motifs and in the first place they suggested K. Havlíček, the great Czech Publicist. For the airmail stamps they proposed Štefánik.

Among the numerous reasons they used to substantiate their arguments was the fact the up to that time Czech stamps were severely criticised, especially by their friends the English and French. The latter called them "terrible" whilst the English expert Mellville in the "London News", commented that they were "Historical crossword puzzle drawings as would be drawn by an Oriental for the use of small Indian States.

## Jubilee of Jan Žižka (Contd.)

Four lists of stamps were proposed with suggested values and subjects as follows:-

### a) 12 Postage Stamps

Proposed Picture	VALUE	Proposed Picture
Šaloun: Jan Hus	40	Myslbek: J. Žižka † 1424
J. Manes: Narození J. Žižky	50	M. Aleš: J. Žižka † 1424
A. Chittusi: Žižka u Rabi druhé oko ztrácí	60	Hlava: J. Žižka † 1424
J. Manes: Smrt J. Žižky 1424	100	M. Aleš: Jiří z Poděbrad
„ Žižka a Korybutovič	200	V. Brožík: J. A. Komenský
„ Žižka na Slovensku 1423	300	T. G. Masaryk

It is not clear why President T. G. Masaryk was included in this series especially commanding a position on the highest value. If it was for the purpose of assisting them in persuading the Ministry to allow them to proceed with the printing of these stamps it was evidently to no avail.



value	Proposed Picture	value	Proposed Picture
5	Tábor (fortified by Zizka)	250	Lipany (according to Marold)
10	Čáslav (the seat & grave of Zizka)	400	Pernštýn (refuge of the Brotherhood)
15	Budějovice (where Zizka worked)	500	Orava ditto
20	Praha " " " "	1000	Báňská Bystřice ditto
25	Kutná Hora " " " "	2000	Zvoleň ditto
30	Pízeň " " " "		
40	Hradec Král. " " " "		
50	Domažlice " " " "		
100	Husité na Baltu (according to Ales)		

c) 6 Newspaper Stamps

value	Proposed Picture	value	Proposed Picture
5	K. Havlíček (Coach)	30	Lod Legie (sea transport)
10	Brno (Railway)	50	Ml. Boleslav (car transport)
20	Mělník (river transport)	100	Lázně Poděbrady (radio)

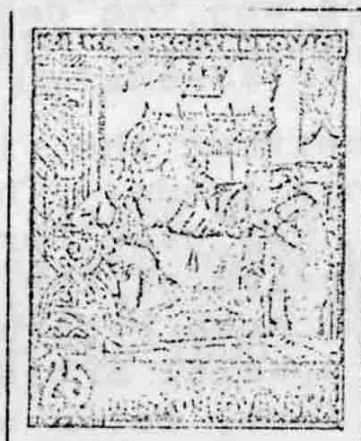
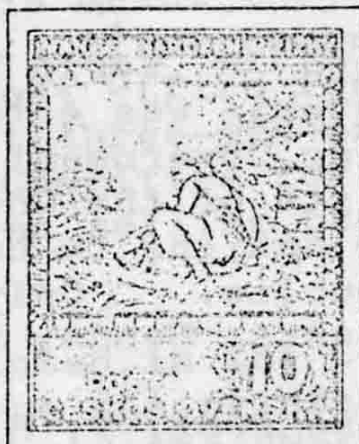
d) 3 Airmail Stamps

value	Proposed Picture	value	Proposed Picture
50	Štefánik (Bratislava)	100	Košice (airport)
100	Praha (airport)		



Jubilee of Jan Zizka (Contd.)

The final page of the Haase Memorandum depicted proposed specimens of the 12 stamps in the first series as follows:-





## The Legionnaire Issue of 1919

By: F.J.Kovarik

(With acknowledgement to Czechoslovak Specialist March 1949)

Soon after the end of World War 1, when the new Republic of Czechoslovakia was entering the philatelic field as a stamp issuing Government, the postal authorities invited the artists of the Country to participate in a contest of stamp designs to commemorate the first anniversary of the Republic. Only three artists took part in the contest: Messrs. Benda, Brunner and Obrovsky.

The Committee chose Prof. V. H. Brunner's design as the best; second choice was the design of Prof. Jaroslav Benda and the third went to Prof. Jakum Obrovsky.

Curiously enough neither the first or second prize winners was used for this issue. The design of Obrovsky which won third award, was used for three values (75h. 100h and 120h). The design of the other three values, also by Obrovsky had not been recognised by the Committee as Possessing any special artistic value. The first choice, in a modified form, later became a part of the second definitive "Allegory" issue, and is known as the "Liberated Republic" design. The second choice, which represents a Legionnaire in a burst of shrapnel, was found unsuitable for a stamp design. The third choice, "Mother Republic holding Child of Fallen Legionnaire", is very appropriate and pleasing. The other design by Obrovsky which was utilised for this issue, represents "The Czech Lion Breaking the Chains of Bondage".

The values used for this issue were: 15h. green, 25h. brown, and 50h. blue of the "Lion" type; and 75h. grey, 100h. red-brown, and 120h. violet of the "Mother" type. Five million stamps of each value were printed, and consequently many shades exist on all values, especially on the 15h., 25h. and 100h.



## The Legionnaire Issue of 1919 (Contd.)

The stamps were officially placed on sale on 27th October, 1919 and had validity for inland mails only to 3rd November, 1919. This meant they had a franking value lasting only eight days. After demonetization they could not be returned to the Post Office for exchange. All the remainders, estimated at three-and-one-half million sets, were turned over to the "Committee for the Legionnaire Help Fund", which committee was selling them to collectors for many years.

The stamps were printed in the Czech Graphic Union in Prague. The "Lion" type was printed from Zinc plates by the letter-press process and the "Mother" type was printed from steel-engraved plates by the photogravure process. Each value was printed in sheets of 100 subjects arranged ten by ten.

Plate numbers were placed under the ninety-first stamp of the 75h and 100h values and under the one-hundredth stamp of the 120h value. Plates 1, 2, 3 and 4 were used for the 75h; plates 5 and 6 for the 100h; and plates 7 and 8 for the 120h value.

Plates for the 15h and 50h were not marked by a number but by symbol; the control number of the 15h first plate is marked: 3. - -. with break in dash in middle: in the second plate the break in the dash occurs farther to the right: 3 - =. On the 50h we find three plates were used one plate has no distinguishing mark; in the second plate the control number under the ninety-first stamp has a shorter dash ( $2\frac{1}{4}$  mm. instead of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  mm. as on the first plate) in the third plate we find two symbols; and the ninety-eighth stamp the dash has one break and under the one hundredth stamp two breaks. No plate markings were found on the 25h. value.

While the paper was usually white, tinted paper is also known. In the lower values, pinkish to rose-violet; and on the 120h. it is yellow. No thick paper is known, but very thin paper has been shown on the 15h. and 50h. values. The gum was of very good quality thinly but evenly applied.



The Legionnaire Issues of 1919 (Contd.)

The perforations are a real headache and many variations may yet be found. The Hirsch-Franek Handbook on the stamps of Czechoslovakia lists the following:-

<u>Line perf:</u>	$11\frac{1}{2}$ x $13\frac{3}{4}$	-	15, 25 and 50h (scarce).
	$13\frac{3}{4}$ x $11\frac{1}{2}$	-	75, 100 and 120h.
	$11\frac{1}{2}$ x $10\frac{1}{2}$	-	15, 25 and 50h (scarce).
	$10\frac{1}{2}$ x $11\frac{1}{2}$	-	75, 100 and 120 (scarce).
	$10\frac{1}{2}$ x $13\frac{3}{4}$	-	15, 25 and 50h (scarce).
	$13\frac{3}{4}$ x $10\frac{1}{2}$	-	100 and 120h.
<u>Comb perf:</u>	$13\frac{1}{2}$ x $13\frac{3}{4}$	-	15, 25 and 50h.
	$13\frac{3}{4}$ x $13\frac{1}{2}$	-	75, 100 and 120h.

The following perfs. are very scarce:-

$10\frac{1}{2}$	-	15, 25, 50 and 75h.
$11\frac{1}{2}$	-	15 and 25h.
$13\frac{3}{4}$	-	120h.

Perforation varieties (double perfs. omitted perfs. etc.) are not very common, and when found can be classified as material illegitimately smuggled out of the printers.

Due to the large quantities of these stamps on the market their monetary value to-day is no higher than it was the day they were issued except for the imperforate stamps and the above-mentioned perforation varieties. Needless to say these stamps have not been counterfeited. Really postally used copies of this issue are extremely scarce but purchasers should buy these on original cover only.

For the benefit of the "Fund Committee", commemorative cancellations were applied (at 10h each) to blocks of four or to stamps on cover (or piece) as is the custom in Europe. Some of these cancellations were counterfeited; but here the counterfeiter was stung because the dies used for cancelling were in the hands of the Fund Committee, and the committee applied these at the same price as when originally issued. Two major types of cancelling die were used a linden leaf and a circle design. Ink used for these commemorative cancellations was green, blue or red.