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COVID-19

Only three months ago when writing Page 1 for the Winter *Specialist* virtually no one had even heard of this virus. Today it is wreaking havoc throughout the world. Stamp shows have, of course, suffered from cancellations/postponements. PHILITALIA MÜNCHEN was the first I had heard of, shut down after one day. Others have followed nearly every day since. The latest casualty is the APS Great American Stamp Show, which should have taken place in Hartford, CT from August 20-23. There are mentions of COVID-19 throughout this issue. Some stamps/postal cards mentioned in this issue have not been issued as planned. Spring is always thought of as a time of renewal and joy, but this year an insidious virus has extended Winter, at least psychologically. We all love collecting, it is important to us, but nowhere near as important as our family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors. I trust you are all in good health and remain so. If we follow the new rules of social-distancing, then each day will bring us closer to the return of a more normal life. At present, however, it looks as if this current disruption to our lives will continue at some level for an uncertain period. In which case-

*Bud'te dobře a pečujte,
Bud'te dobre a opatrný,
Be well and take care.*

Keith Hart

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An Exhibit Plan for the Bohemia & Moravia Protectorate

by Alan Hanzl

After just 20 years of existence, the Czechoslovak nation was confronted with the Munich Pact, initiated by Germany and signed by Italy, Great Britain and France on September 30, 1938. Its provisions effectively partitioned Czechoslovakia within five and a half months, resulting in the creation of the German Protectorate of Bohemia & Moravia on March 15, 1939.

To tell the philatelic story of Bohemia & Moravia, I chose to present the 94 regular issues and 28 semi-postal stamps created for and used throughout the six year and two month existence of the Protectorate.

Printing formats and errors, color variations, plate numbers/symbols, and most important of all, examples of use of those issues on covers and cards were displayed according to the following outline plan.

1. **Partitioning of Czechoslovakia, October 1938- March 1939**
 - 1.1 Munich Pact Effect
 - 1.2 Slovakia Separation
2. **Czech Regular Issues & Provisional Overprints, March 1939- December 1939**
 - 2.1 Existing Czech Regular Issues
 - 2.2 Provisional Overprints
3. **Czechoslovak Designs, July 1939- March 1943**
 - 3.1 Castles, Churches & Cities I
 - 3.2 Linden Leaves I
 - 3.3 Castles, Churches & Cities II
 - 3.4 Linden Leaves II
 - 3.5 Castles, Churches & Cities III
 - 3.6 Dvořák Issue
 - 3.7 Prague Fair Issue
 - 3.8 Protectorate 3rd Anniversary
4. **Early Semi-Postal Designs, June 1940- December 1942**
 - 4.1 1940 Red Cross Issue
 - 4.2 1941 Red Cross Issue
 - 4.3 Mozart Issue
 - 4.4 Hitler 53rd Birthday
 - 4.5 1942 Red Cross Issue
5. **Hitler & 1943 Regular Issues, July 1942- March 1945**
 - 5.1 Hitler Regular Issue
 - 5.2 Stamp Day Issue
 - 5.3 Wagner Issue
6. **Late Semi-Postal Designs, January 1943- May 1945**
 - 6.1 Winter Relief
 - 6.2 Hitler 54th Birthday
 - 6.3 Heydrich Issue
 - 6.4 1943 Red Cross Issue
 - 6.5 Protectorate 5th Anniversary
 - 6.6 Hitler 55th Birthday
 - 6.7 Smetana Issue
7. **Final Regular Issues & Liberation Overprints, November 1944- May 1945**
 - 7.1 Saint Vitus Cathedral Issue
 - 7.2 Hitler Regular Issue
 - 7.3 Liberation Overprints
 - 7.4 Czechoslovakia Reunited

The speed at which the partitioning occurred created a challenge to maintain an effective postal system. **Sections 1.2 and 2.1** cover an important transition period in which existing Czechoslovak stamps were permitted for a time, including



Figure 1

three adjustments (Figure 1), and subsequently overprinted while supplies lasted. Those 19 provisional overprints (section 2.2), are displayed with the typical errors, demonstrating the difficulties with a rushed overprinting process. The bilingual overprint design (Figure 2) with the German name on top and the Czech name on the bottom, along with the horizontal lines obliterating ČESKOSLOVENSKO, give clear evidence of the region's new name and the level of control. Displayed covers and postal cards show censor labels and tapes, inspection stamps and numbers, demonstrating how the new level of control effected any communication within the Protectorate and outside of it, including destinations as close as Germany proper and the new puppet state of Slovakia (Figure 3).

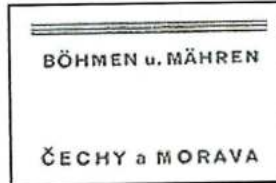


Figure 2

To help maintain local population assimilation into the Protectorate concept, Czechoslovak scenery designs (castles, churches and cities) from several 1930s issues and a new linden leaves design were used to dominate the regular issues for the first four years of the Protectorate (sections 3.1-3.5). A total of 27 scenery and 11 linden leaves stamps, all valid for use until March 31, 1943, were designed by Czechoslovak designers and engravers. Two of the 1941 scenery stamps, 1.20K and 2.50K, were overprinted with an eagle over a swastika celebrating the Protectorate's



Figure 3



Figure 4

3rd anniversary, **section 3.8** (Figure 4). Only two additional regular issue stamp sets of Czech designs, Antonín Dvořák and Prague Fair, were introduced and valid only during the latter part of 1941 (**sections 3.6 – 3.7**).

Two printing sheet formats and two plate symbols are of particular interest to the scenery design sets. For the larger issues, measuring 23.5x29.5mm, two 16 x 7 rectangular arrangements, each with 100 stamps and 12 coupon areas (Figure 5), were utilized to print the stamps. Some of the coupon areas received newly introduced plate symbols with up to three of the two different star symbols on each of the coupon areas (Figure 6). Both symbols were 8-point stars with either a 4-point cross or similar 8-point star blank interior. The color of these stars matched the single color of the stamp issue. The smaller scenery stamps above 1K denomination also received the star symbols, while smaller denominations received numbers, from 1 and 1A up to 6 and 6A, just as the similar Czechoslovak issues of the 1930s had received.

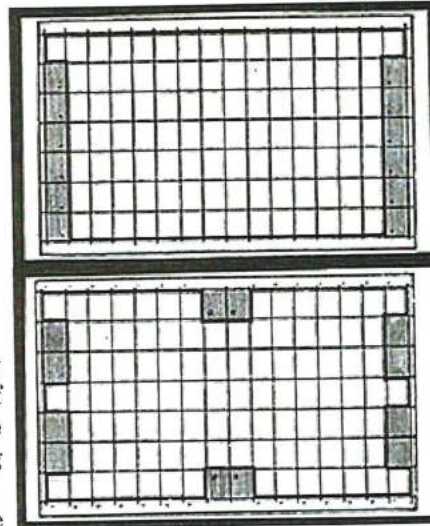


Figure 5

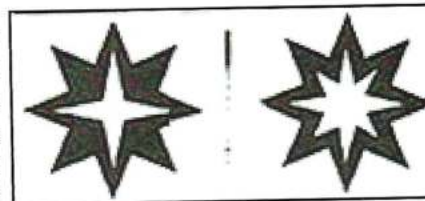


Figure 6

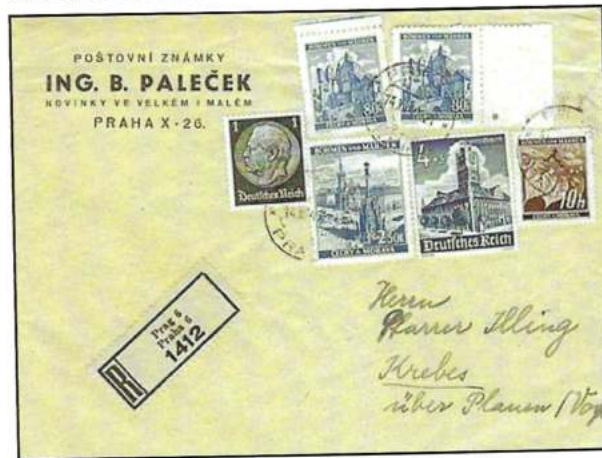


Figure 7

After Germany successfully invaded and occupied Poland during September 1939, and France in June 1940, the occupied territories often reveal examples of mixed franking that were successfully delivered within those territories. The commercial cover in Figure 7 was franked with Protectorate scenery design, German and General Government (occupied Poland) stamps. The Czech scenery and linden leaves designs were both plentiful and popular through the



Figure 8

end of 1942. I chose to include over 50 covers, postcards and parcel cards using various stamp combinations in sections 3.1-3.5 to reflect that popularity.

Only a few semi-postal designs, primarily Red Cross and cultural subjects, appeared during this assimilation period (sections 4.1-4.5). The surcharge was generally less than the postal value of each stamp during this period. The checkerboard design of 50 stamps and 50 coupons from a 10 x 10 printing arrangement was used for the first three semi-postal sets (Figure 8). The only plate number, 1942, for this group was placed at the bottom left and right margin corners of the two 1942 Red Cross issues. The semi-postal issues were typically available and valid for only a few

months. They were not popular with the Czech populace because of the additional cost and Nazi dominated themes.

After the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, the Gestapo chief of the Protectorate, in May 1942, and the collapse of the Stalingrad campaign in January 1943, control over and treatment of the Protectorate populace and the stamp issue designs dramatically changed. The regular issue designs of section 3 were replaced primarily by a 22 stamp set featuring Adolf Hitler's profile image (Figure 9) from a photo taken by Heinrich Hoffman (section 5.1).



Figure 9

Issued July 1, 1942, the stamp set remained valid until the end of the Protectorate. I displayed 20 covers and cards because of the dominance of this set for the last 30 months of the Protectorate. Only two additional regular issue sets, one Stamp Day and three Wilhelm Wagner stamps were issued until late November 1944. Those issues were valid for only a few months during 1943 (sections 5.2 - 5.3).

The late semi-postal designs introduced after 1942 were dominated by punitive Nazi control themes and exorbitant surcharges (sections 6.1 - 6.7). The Heydrich issue



Figure 10

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had a 60h postal value with a 4.40K surcharge, while the 1943 Red Cross issue had a 1.20K postal value with an 8.80K surcharge! The 5th Protectorate anniversary set had surcharges of 3.80K, 10.80K and 20K on postal values of 1.20K, 4.20K and 10K stamps respectively. Most were purchased and used by German government officials and the occupying military personnel. The Czech populace generally had insufficient funds or no motivation to utilize these semi-postal issues to mail anything! In **section 6.5**, I displayed an interesting cover (Figure 10) correctly franked with five 10K + 20K semi-postal stamps and a **V label** (currency delivery) indicating the inclusion of 250,000K in cash mailed from one Prague address to another.

During the final months of the Protectorate, only three regular issue stamps were introduced. A 4.20K denomination of the Hitler profile set was added to meet the registered cover rate within the German occupied territories (**section 7.2**). A more popular pair of stamps depicting St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague was issued in 1.50K and 2.50K denominations to meet the domestic and international rates for letters weighing up to 20 grams (**section 7.1**).

Parts of the Protectorate remained under German control until the formal military surrender of May 1945. The use of Liberation overprints to express freedom and still maintain some level of functional postal service communication was critical to transition back



Figure 11

to the full autonomy of a Czechoslovak led government. I displayed five sets of over 90 known Liberation overprint styles (**section 7.3**). The stamps selected for the overprinting were typically from the Hitler profile set because of their availability and the desire to obliterate any image of the despised oppressor. The number of overprinted stamps was generally very limited and were only used for a few days prior to the May 16 dissolution of the Protectorate (Figure 11).

One week after the reunification of a liberated Czechoslovakia, a nine stamp set was issued by the reestablished recognized government. The chosen design for this set was the linden leaves image, created by Czech designers, first introduced for use in the Protectorate in late August 1939 (**section 7.4**). The ČESKOSLOVENSKO heading at the top replaced the bilingual references to the Protectorate name (Figure 12). I displayed three covers without any evidence of inspection or censoring, symbolic of a liberated free nation.



Figure 12

The presentation of the Protectorate regular and semi-postal issues, primarily in chronological order, together with nearly 200 covers, postal cards, parcel cards and commemorative cards, help to tell the story of an occupied region that was Bohemia and Moravia. The tables below provide detailed information for those issues.

Sec. #	Issue (Regular)	# Stamps	Postal Value	Validity Period
2.2	Provisional Overprints	19	5h, 10, 20, 25, 30, 40, 50, 60, 1Kc(2), 1.20, 1.50, 1.60, 2, 2.50, 3, 4, 5, 10	15 July 1939 – 15 Dec 1939
3.1	Castles, Churches and Cities I	13	40h, 50, 60, 1K, 1.20, 1.50, 2, 2.50, 3, 4, 5, 10	29 July 1939 – 31 Mar 1943
3.2	Linden Leaves I	8	5h, 10, 20, 25, 30(2), 40, 50	30 Aug 1939 – 31 Mar 1943
3.3	Castles, Churches and Cities II	9	50h, 80, 1.20K, 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 20	31 Mar 1940 – 31 Mar 1943
3.4	Linden Leaves II	3	60h, 80, 1K	28 July 1940 – 31 Mar 1943
3.5	Castles, Churches and Cities III	5	1.20K, 1.50, 2, 2.50, 3	28 July 1940 – 31 Mar 1943
3.6	Antonin Dvořák	2	60h, 1.20K	25 Aug 1941 – 31 Dec 1941
3.7	Prague Fair	4	30h, 60, 1.20K, 2.50	7 Sept 1941 – 31 Dec 1941
3.8	Protectorate 3 rd Anniversary	2	1.20K, 2.50	15 Mar 1942 – 31 Dec 1942
5.1	Hitler Regular	22	10h, 30, 40, 50, 60, 80, 1K, 1.20, 1.50, 1.60, 2, 2.40, 2.50, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 20, 30, 50	1 July 1942 – 16 May 1945
5.2	Stamp Day	1	60h	10 Jan 1943 – 30 June 1943
5.3	Wilhelm Richard Wagner	3	60h, 1.20K, 2.50	22 May 1943 – 30 Sept 1943
7.1	Saint Vitus Cathedral	2	1.50K, 2.50	21 Nov 1944 – 16 May 1945
7.2	Hitler Regular	1	4.20K	1 Feb 1945 – 16 May 1945

Sec. #	Issue (Semi-Postal)	# Stamps	Postal Value + Surcharge	Validity Date
4.1	1940 Red Cross	2	60h + 40h, 1.20K + 80h	29 June 1940 – 31 Dec 1940
4.2	1941 Red Cross	2	60h + 40h, 1.20K + 80h	20 April 1941 – 31 Dec 1941
4.3	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	4	30h + 30h, 60h + 60h, 1.20K + 1.20K, 2.50K + 2.50K	25 Oct 1941 – 31 Jan 1942
4.4	Hitler 53 rd Birthday	4	30h + 20h, 60h + 40h, 1.20K + 80h, 2.50K + 1.50K	20 April 1942 – 31 Dec 1942
4.5	1942 Red Cross	2	60h + 40h, 1.20K + 80h	1 Sept 1942 – 31 Dec 1942
6.1	Winter Relief	3	60h + 40h, 1.20K + 80h, 2.50K + 1.50K	29 Jan 1943 – 30 June 1943
6.2	Hitler 54 th Birthday	2	60h + 1.40K, 1.20K + 8.80K	20 April 1943 – 30 Sept 1943
6.3	Reinhard Heydrich	1	60h + 4.40K	28 May 1943 – 30 June 1943
6.4	1943 Red Cross	1	1.20K + 8.80K	16 Sept 1943 – 31 Dec 1943
6.5	Protectorate 5 th Anniversary	3	1.20K + 3.80K, 4.20K + 10.80K, 10K + 20K	15 Mar 1944 – 31 Dec 1944
6.6	Hitler 55 th Birthday	2	60h + 1.40K, 1.20K + 3.80K	20 April 1944 – 31 Dec 1944
6.7	Bedřich Smetana	2	60h + 1.40K, 1.20K + 3.80K	12 May 1944 – 16 May 1945

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