

# World of Stamps:

## Landlocked Countries: Czech Area Eastern Silesia, Sudetenland, Carpatho-Ukraine, Bohemia and Moravia, Slovakia

by Geir Sør-Reime

### Eastern Silesia

The area of Eastern Silesia was part of Austria and most of the area was occupied by Czechoslovakia in 1918, but this was contested by Poland. The countries went to war over the area and by 1920 each controlled around half of it. A plebiscite was planned to be held late 1920 or early 1921.



Clockwise, on Czech issues: Eastern Silesia 1920 Imperf, Sc. 2; 1920 perforated, Sc. 25 Newspaper stamp Sc. P3

Czechoslovak stamps overprinted "S.O. 1920" were issued during February 1920 in the western half held by Czechoslovakia and Polish stamps overprinted "S.O. 1920" were issued April-May 1920 in the eastern half held by Poland.

On July 28, 1920, a negotiated settlement was announced, and the plebiscite cancelled. The settlement made the Eastern Silesian areas held by the two countries final, but there



On Poland issues: Eastern Silesia 1920. Sc. 45, 50

were adjustments around two areas, Spis and Orava further eastwards, where Czechoslovakia gave up the northern parts to Poland effective August 10, 1920.

The plebiscite stamps were withdrawn in August 1920.

On October 1938 Poland occupied the Czechoslovak part of the area and on November 11 issued a stamp to celebrate its annexation. This area was returned to Czechoslovakia after the war.

### Sudetenland 1938

The German-populated areas surrounding Czechia were ceded to Germany October 1, 1938, and local authorities overprinted various Czechoslovak stamps awaiting German stamps to arrive. German stamps only were valid for postage from October 19.

The following local issues were sold over the post-office counters but there were several other issues that are merely commemorative labels.

In Asch, Czechoslovak stamps were surcharged with new values only, in Karlsbad the stamps were overprinted with a swastika and the text "Karlsbad I.X.1938", in Konstantinsbad stamps overprinted "Sudetenland" were issued, in Niklasdorf stamps were surcharged with new

values, in Reichenberg-Maffersdorf the stamps were overprinted with a swastika and the text "Wir sind frei!" (We are free!), and in Rumburg a similar overprint was applied, in addition to stamps with the overprint and surcharged.

These Sudetenland issues are only footnoted in Scott; these are Michel #s



1938 Asch: Mi.2, 4, 5



1938 Karlsbad: top Mi.54, bottom 57, right 58



Left to right: Konstantinsbad Mi. 22; Niklasdorf Mi. 89-91; Rumburg Mi.19 Below, Reichenberg Mi.77





The German annexation of the Sudeten territory was commemorated on two German semi-postal stamps in 1938.

A Carpatho-Ukrainian Parliament was opened March 15, 1939, and a single stamp



1939 Carpatho-Ukraine Parliament, Sc. 254B

was issued to commemorate the event. The stamp was withdrawn the following day as Hungarian forces occupied the area.

German forces occupied what remained of Czechia March 15, 1939, and made it a 'protectorate'.

**Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia 1939-45:** The history and stamps of Bohemia and Moravia were featured in *Mekeel's and Stamps Magazine*, February 2, 2024.

**Slovakia**

A Slovak Parliament was inaugurated January 18, 1939, and this was marked with a single overprinted stamp issued in Slovakia only.

March 14, 1939, Slovakia declared its independence under German protection after the government in Prague had deposed Jozef Tiso, the Premier of Slovakia. He then became President of the Republic of Slovakia till Slovakia was re-incorporated in Czechoslovakia May 1945. He was executed April 18, 1947, for war crimes.

The first stamps of Slovakia were Czechoslovak stamps overprinted "Slovenský štát 1939" (some without 1939 or with 1939 above the text). These stamps were issued from March 21. Two of the overprinted stamps were unissued stamps inscribed Czecho-Slovakia and having a portrait of Father Hlinka (1864-1938, prominent advocate for Slovak independence).



1939 opening Slovak parliament, Carpatho-Ukraine Sc. 254A



Slovakia 1939 overprint, left to right, horizontal, Sc. 12; diagonal, Sc. 19; Father Andrew Hlinka, Sc. 25



Father Hlinka, left to right: Slovakia 1939 Sc. 26, 1943, Sc. 69 Czechoslovakia Sc. 2836

Definitive stamps with a portrait of Father Hlinka and inscribed "Slovenska Posta" were then issued from April 1939. He was also portrayed on a single 1943 stamp, and in 1991, a Czechoslovak stamp celebrated his 53rd death anniversary, and a Slovak 2014 stamp for the 150th anniversary of his birth.



Germany B133, Annexation of Sudeten Territory

From September 1939 till 1942 a pictorial series featuring landscapes, castles, traditional trades, and

Father Hlinka, Slovakia 2014, Sc. 696



Above, 1943 Bratislava stamp exhibition, Sc. 73; left to right: 1941 Medical Corps, Sc. B2, 1942 Army and Youth, Sc. B8.



1939 President Tiso, Sc. B1



Left, Slovakia 1944 National Protection Sc. 109; right, 1939 Pres. Tiso, Sc. B1; Below, 1944 Princes Sc.95-102



Slovakia 1944 National Protection Sc.108-09 and B25-26 Slovakia 1944 Princes Sc.95-102

President Tiso and the Presidential residence was issued. There were also 1941 and 1943 semi-postal stamps dedicated to the armed forces of Slovakia, stamps publicizing a 1942 stamp exhibition in Bratislava, and 1944 stamps for the national protection.

In 1944, a set of eight stamps were issued to celebrate the fifth anniversary of independence portraying princes associated with Slovakia.

The last issue of Slovakia was a 1945 series of six stamps featuring a portrait of President Tiso (above, Sc. 112).



To be Continued