

Scribblings



---from the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library

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2038 So. Pontiac Way, Denver, CO, 80224
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MEMORIES

by Don Beuthel

Frequently, as a new donation is processed at the RMPL, some of the "older Volunteers" can be heard saying, "Look at this! I had an album just like that!" "My first album was one of those." "Do you remember the Captain Tim, Ivory Soap stamp offers?" "As a kid I used to send for offers like this." "Some of my first stamps were just like these."

We are looking at getting started in Stamp Collecting in the early 1930's. The depression was going strong. Jobs were scarce. What we now call discretionary spending was non-existent because there was very little income. These were the times when some of us were getting our start in the hobby.

There was no TV. Entertainment centered around the home. Printed material was available at cheap prices. Large stamp dealers were doing everything they could to attract the youngsters of the time into the stamp hobby. They would advertise widely. They published pamphlets that told the glamorous stories behind the stamps - naturally stamps that they had for sale. They worked very hard to get the youth interested. These stories about the stamps may have been true - or they could have been embellished slightly to make the story more spectacular to stimulate our interest. We had to have those stamps!!

Several of us remembered the following story from a small booklet printed by H. E. Harris in 1932. The booklet was titled "THE FIERY THRONE" and Other Stories from Stamps and "How to Start a Collection'." The forward contains a statement, "The purpose of this booklet is to briefly show you - with pictures even more than words - a few of the many fascinations of philately." Let's read this slightly gory and gruesome story and think about it as a collector of about 10 years of age in 1932. We had to have those stamps!!

THE FIERY THRONE and Other Stories from Stamps and "How to Start a Collection"



GYORGY DOZSA
... sat on the fiery throne.

H. E. HARRIS & CO.

"Everything for the Stamp Collector"

108 Massachusetts Avenue
BOSTON, MASS.

The Fiery Throne

I. Bela Kun's Postal Propaganda

After the Great War, while confusion reigned among the defeated nations of Europe, a cruel, fat, spider-like monster of a man named Bela Kun was sent from Russia to Hungary. At Budapest he overturned the war-weakened government, and established the terrible "Magyar Tanacskoztarsasag" - the Hungarian Soviet Republic. He ruled all Hungary, for 143 days in 1919, by spreading terror throughout the land.

H.E. Harris & CO Booklet - Printed in 1932

To this day Hungarians still whisper of the unspeakable methods by which Dictator Kun sought to destroy religion, patriotism, and morality in the nation, to establish that curious way of living called "Communism."

But Bela Kun did not succeed. Within five months he fled for his life from the aroused and outraged Hungarians. And behind him there remained only one lasting symbol of his Communistic regime - the postage stamps which his government issued!

It was Bela Kun's scheme, by means of these stamps, not only to advertise his Soviet Republic, but also to introduce five heroes of Communism to an unappreciative world. Every letter that left Hungary would bear, according to the amount of postage, a portrait of Karl Marx the great Socialist, of the poet Petofi, of Martinovics, Dozsa, or Engles.

And this is exactly what happened. Bela Kun's postal propaganda was carried through the mails to all parts of the world.

Most of these interesting stamps are today at rest in the albums of collectors. Some call them Hungary's "Hall of Fame"; others call them, derisively, "The Bolshevick Rogues' Gallery." But whatever you call them, there they stand - five postage stamps - lasting symbols of one of the strangest governments that has ever appeared and vanished in the ever-changing pageant of history.

"The Bolshevick Rogues' Gallery"



Karl Marx

Sandor Petofi

Ignac Martinovics

Gyorgy Dozsa

Friedrich Engles

II. The Rise of Gyorgy Dozsa

In all this grotesque set of postage stamps, there is neither portrait more striking, nor story more strange, than that of the revolutionist Gyorgy Dozsa. How this soldier aspired to be a king, and how he ended his life upon a fiery throne, makes one of the most fantastic stories which postage stamps have ever recalled from the archives of history.

In the 16th Century, when Dozsa was born, there were only two classes of people in Hungary - the rich and the poor - the nobility or aristocracy, and the common people or peasantry. The noblemen owned all the land. They made the peasants work frightfully hard, and forced them to pay unfairly large taxes. And if the peasants disobeyed, they were punished by torture, imprisonment, or death. There was no one to protect them from the wanton cruelty of their aristocratic masters.

Gyorgy Dozsa escaped the usual fate of the poor by enlisting in the army. His strength and courage soon brought him promotion. He became a high officer, and he was famed and respected far and wide as the best fighter in Hungary.

But Dozsa never forgot the common people. For many years it was his secret ambition to set them free. He dreamed of the time when, with the desperate courage that is born of misery, they might dare to rebel and under his leadership sweep the land clean of the hated aristocracy.

In the year 1914 came his great opportunity. Dozsa was appointed to raise a huge army to make war on the Turks. Everyday life was then so miserable that men by the tens of thousands flocked to his standards. Poor farmers and ploughboys came, to escape hard labor; wandering students and parish priests came, to escape hunger; criminals and vagabonds came to escape imprisonment. And before the noblemen realized what was happening, a vast army - a great and dangerous rabble - had assembled, with Gyorgy Dozsa in command.

Dozsa, forgetting all about the Turks, seized this great opportunity, and cried "Rebel! Rebel! Down with aristocrats - and every man shall be rich and free!" The spirit of his words flamed through the entire army, and from the army the spirit of revolution spread through the land like a prairie fire. Then Dozsa swarmed over the countryside, burning and plundering, putting noblemen to death, and striking terror to the hearts of the aristocracy.

His victories intoxicated him like wine. Dozsa began to boast that he himself would soon be the new king of Hungary. He promised to establish a new government, and to make every man rich and free.

This idea grew rapidly in Dozsa's mind. Success made him overconfident. He allowed himself to entertain magnificent dreams. He grew careless of realities. Swarms of recruits daily joined the rebellion.

Most of them were poorly equipped, untrained and ill-clad peasants who knew nothing of warfare; but Dozsa did not bother to train them. The cold winter was approaching; but Dozsa neglected to lay away provisions and clothing.

When his officers urged him to mend these matters, Dozsa paid little heed to them. He was lost in dreams, reveling in the thoughts of his golden throne, his jeweled scepter, and his golden crown.

He saw himself the ruler of all Hungary, a soldier made into a sovereign. He wrote an impertinent, boastful, threatening letter to the king. And his muscular hand, which fitted so naturally about his sword hilt, awkwardly held a pen and planned an empire.

So the army ran wild. Discipline was poor. The men were chiefly interested in plunder, and often they fell to quarreling greedily over the spoils. Large bands of them split off from the main army, and went as far as they dared into new regions, to loot the castles of their former masters.

III. The Fiery Throne

Meanwhile the noblemen were slowly but surely increasing and organizing their forces. Thousands of soldiers were hired or borrowed from friendly rulers of surrounding kingdoms, who hated to see the common people getting into power in any land. And at last the price for Dozsa's dreaming was paid in full. The king's mail-clad knights rode rough-shod over the half-clothed, poorly armed rabble of the revolutionists. Those who escaped with their lives fled to the hills, or crept home whimpering to their masters.

Dozsa was captured alive. Terrible was the anger of the aristocrats against him. They resolved to make an example of him - a frightful example that would strike fear to the hearts of revolutionists forever afterwards.

He had wanted to be a king. So they made an iron throne for him to sit on; and they fashioned a crown and a scepter of iron, to be placed on his head and in his hand. They decreed that these materials should be heated red hot; and that Dozsa should ascend his throne and reign as a king.... until the life was scorched out of his body.

The sentence was actually carried out. With a mock ceremony of such relentless cruelty that the blood of the spectators ran cold, Dozsa was escorted to the red-hot throne and flung upon it; the glowing crown was placed on his head; and the flaming bar of iron - Dozsa's jeweled scepter! - was laid across his knees.

The revolutionist endured these tortures with invincible heroism. No cry of anguish nor plea for mercy escaped his grim, set lips. Defiantly he grasped the flaming scepter. Proudly, for a fraction of a minute, he sat upright on the fiery throne. Then crumpling from the terrific heat, he fell silently forward, face down upon the cool earth.

While life still faintly lingered, a pen full of famished men - Dozsa's former friends and followers who had been starved for many days by way of preparation - were turned loose upon his half-roasted body

Thus ended Hungary's first revolutionist, Gyorgy Dozsa, who tried to overturn the social system of his time. More than four centuries elapsed before a revolutionist of a different calibre, Bela Kun, caused to be issued the set of postage stamps that brought Dozsa's face and deeds to light again.

NEWS FROM THE RMPL...

SECOND SATURDAY PROGRAMS SCHEDULED

The RMPL provides an opportunity for interested philatelists to broaden their philatelic awareness through programs presented by area collectors who are considered experts in their collecting interest. These programs are scheduled for the second Saturday of each month and start at 9:00 A. M. and are completed by 10:00 AM leaving the rest of the day for your other activities. The coffee pot is always on and frequently snacks are available. We urge that you take advantage of these opportunities and bring a philatelic friend.

Because the Second Saturday of September is the same day as APEX '99, the annual stamp show of the Aurora Stamp Club, we will have our Second Saturday Program on the third Saturday,

September 18th. The program for that day will be presented by Jack Willard on the subject of "Just Another Colorado Show".

Back on the normal schedule, the Second Saturday program for October 9th will be given by George Snyder on the subject of "Confederate States of America Covers and Cancels".

OCTOBER - STAMP COLLECTING MONTH ACTIVITIES

Please take time to read the orange colored insert. This outlines the RMPL activities commemorating Stamp Collecting Month. We think that there will be at least one activity that will interest all members and we urge you to participate and bring a friend.

ADULT BEGINNING STAMP COLLECTING CLASS

As announced in the previous Scribblings the second RMPL Adult Beginning Stamp Collecting Class will be held on Saturday afternoons at the library from 1-4 on September 16th, September 25th, October 2nd, and October 9th. There are still a few openings in the class. If you know of an adult who would be interested in a very basic, beginning stamp collecting course please have them call the library at 303-759-9921 to register. The class will be limited to 20 participants. There is no charge for the class.

DONATIONS - DONATIONS - DONATIONS

We are pleased to report that donations of philatelic literature, philatelic material, and money are continuing to arrive at a most amazing pace and we are most appreciative of those of you who are willing to support the library.

During the past 2 months we have received 2 large donations of philatelic literature. The first was shipped to us by Geri Daulton from Richland Hills, TX. This was the library of her brother, a deceased dealer, and contained many useful items that we did not have previously. The second was from Bill Rapp of Crete, NE. Bill Dunn and Jack Willard drove back to Crete in Bill's pickup and hauled back a load of philatelic literature for the library. We greatly appreciate the generosity of both of these donors.

All too frequently the small donations such as an envelope full of stamps for the Kid's Corner, paper for the copier, paper towels, pop, TP, weekly and monthly publications on a regular basis, coffee, binders, office supplies and other such items go un-noticed and un-thanked. We need these small item donations as much and as often as we need the truckload of material. We thank each and every one of our donors for their help.

During the past 2 months we have received donations from the following persons: Steve Wineteer, Shirley Pope, Joe Crosby, Bill Mc Carren, Frank Bocovich, J. L. Havill, Edna Pampy, Mark Vainer, Robly Rhine, Mort Turner, Art Weaver, Bob Brown, Mike Reid, Stephen B. Pacetti, Gerry Morris, Robert Wolf, Matt Zieringer, James Davenport, Douglas Crowe, Webster Stickney, Joan Grady, Libby Sanders, T. Hines, Don Beuthel, David Opperman, Scott Mauusak, and the Denver Germany Stamp Club. Thanks to all of you.

The RMPL accepts donations of all types of philatelic literature, philatelic supplies, and collections. If we can't use it in the library, we will try to sell it and use the receipts from the sale of items to support the library.

The RMPL has a "Public Charity", 501 (c)(3) status with the IRS which means that the fair

market value of your donation may be deductible on your tax return. We try to acknowledge a donation with a letter. If you have made a donation and have not received such a letter, please contact Bill Dunn, Secretary of the RMPL, and he will see that you receive the letter.

RMPL WILL BE AT APEX '99

The RMPL will have a table at APEX '99, the annual stamp show sponsored by the Aurora Stamp Club, which will be held on September 10th and 11th at Buckingham Square Shopping Mall in Aurora. Available will be some of our surplus philatelic literature, the unsold lots from our Silent Auction at ROMPEX, as well as new material that has been donated to the library for sale. We urge you to stop by to say hello - and spend freely.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Some of you will be receiving a first, second, or third renewal notice with this issue of the Scribblings. After the third notice members are moved to the inactive list and will no longer receive the Scribblings and other membership benefits. We hope that each of you will respond quickly and generously. Members who have renewed in the past two months should receive a membership card with this mailing.

New members during the past two months include the following:

Cari K. Edwards Lee H. Trachtenberg, MD
Richard D. Zallen Matthew A. Roth
Thomas Morehead Ann Wood

Naturally the RMPL would like to increase its membership base. Those of you who are already members can help by bringing your philatelic friends with you for a visit to the library. Almost every time a non-member sees what is available he will be happy to join and help to support the costs of keeping the library operating. It would be really great if we could increase our membership by 10% by the end of the year. Costs of operation are increasing every day and an increase in membership can help to offset some of the increases. We are looking for help! Let's all work on getting some new members!!

PERIODICAL PICKINS'

By Sergio Lugo, RMPL Volunteer

The recent donation of a bound, complete set of periodicals (we'll let you figure out which one below) prompts this month's commentary - specifically, periodical holdings centering on the U. S. Possessions. Several such periodicals are currently at hand in the RMPL's growing collection. I'm going to present them, providing a small description that should whet your appetite for locating them on the periodical shelves.

BOLETIN FILATELICO: The philatelic bulletin of the SOCIEDAD FILATELICA DE PUERTO RICO. Library holdings of this primarily Spanish language periodical date back to 1984, and is virtually complete through 1998. Unfortunately, since the Society has not yet established a numbering system, it's unclear as to when the BOLETIN

actually got its start. The BOLETIN provides in-depth analysis of specific Spanish and American issues for the island. In late 1998 it published a list of all known literature on the philately of Puerto Rico.

CANAL ZONE PHILATELIST: The periodical of the Canal Zone Study Group, RMPL holdings are complete (in almost every instance we have two sets for every year) from 1998 back to 1968. All that we are missing is Volumes 1, 2, and 3. This periodical's focus should be self explanatory, but it is interesting that it also includes articles and studies of early Panamanian issues. A cumulative index of articles for the years 1953 to 1990 is available, and should facilitate any specific research interest you may have in the Canal Zone.

FELLOWSHIP OF SAMOA SPECIALISTS: I'm never quite sure what to make of Samoa - i.e. a German Possession, or a British/Australian possession, or an American possession. Whatever - we have one issue of the Fellowship of Samoa Specialists, and it appears to deal with the philately of all three nations as it relates to the postal history of that Western Pacific island. The periodical dates to 1984 - with the RMPL's sole issue found in the short run periodicals under SAMOA SPECIALIST.

FROM THE DRAGONS DEN: Complete, bound versions, from 1969 through 1989, of the official publication of the RYUKYU PHILATELIC SPECIALIST SOCIETY. It is not known whether the periodical continued after 1989, but for those

twenty years its pages are chuck full of details regarding the very special issues of this far western Pacific possession acquired by the U. S. after WWII and relinquished to the Japanese thirty years later.

PO'OLENKA O HAWAII: The quarterly journal of the Hawaiian Philatelic Society, the RMPL's holdings are virtually complete from its inception in 1975 through 1995. It is unknown whether the periodical has continued since 1995. During its early years, the periodical was in the form of a pamphlet, but following its discontinuance in 1987, and its resurrection in 1994, the periodical took on an altogether different look - i.e. a glossy full page publication with lots of bold fonts, higher grade printing and illustrations. The journal devotes itself to the postal history of the Hawaiian Islands as a kingdom, republic, U. S. territorial possession, and as a state.

POSSESSIONS: The quarterly journal of the U. S. Possessions Philatelic Society, the RMPL's holdings are complete (with two sets) from the initial publication in 1978 through 1993. A recent donations may have brought the library's holdings complete to the present time. This periodical contains within its pages articles of interest for every philatelic issuing entity ever under the administration of the U. S. - including overseas offices, A. M. G., and current possessions. It's a grand little document, whose usefulness would be considerably enhanced if an index could be compiled by country, and/or philatelic issuing entity. Any volunteers out there among the Scribblings readership who'd like to take on that task would probably spend about 10 hours in completing the task - if you don't spend years reading all the articles!

CELEBRATE THE CENTURY EXPRESS TRAIN

Comes to Denver

Public Viewing

Thursday, September 9 - 11:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Friday, September 10 - 11:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Saturday, September 11 - 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Union Station

1701 Wynkoop Street

Artwork for Century Stamps - Historical Displays - Entertainment, Games, Music
Amtrack Box Car - Restored RPO Car
Special Souvenir Cancel

WHAT'S HAPPENING at the RMPL
"come and enjoy the activities"

SEPTEMBER - 1999

Mondays: September 13, 20, 27 Open 10-4
Tuesdays: September 7, 14, 21, 28 Open 10-4
Wednesdays: September 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
Open 10-4
Thursdays: September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Open 2-8
Fridays: September 3, 10, 17, 24 Open 10-4
Saturdays: September 11, 18, 25 Open 10-4
September 1 - Aurora Stamp Club
6:30 Trading 7:30 Meeting and Program
September 4 - RMPL CLOSED
Labor Day Weekend
September 6 - RMPL CLOSED
Labor Day Weekend
September 8 - Meeting - 7:30 PM
Denver Germany Stamp Club
September 9 - Meeting - 7:30 PM
TOPical Philatelists In Colorado
September 11 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
Universal Ship Cancellation Society
USS Colorado Chapter
September 18 - Second Saturday at the RMPL
9:00 AM - Program by Jack Willard
"Just Another Colorado Show"
September 18 - Adult Beginners Class
1:00-4:00 PM
September 25 - Adult Beginners Class
1:00-4:00 PM
September 25 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
China Stamp Society
September 28 - Meeting - 7:30 PM
ROMPEX Committee

OCTOBER - 1999

Mondays: October 4, 11, 18, 25 Open 10-4
Tuesdays: October 5, 12, 19, 25 Open 10-4
Wednesdays: October 6, 13, 20, 27 Open 10-4
Thursdays: October 7, 14, 21, 28 Open 2-8
Fridays: October 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Open 10-4
Saturdays: October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 Open 10-4
October 2 - Stamp Collector's Day
9:00 AM -12:00
October 2 - Meeting - Scandinavian Collector's
Club - 10:00 AM
October 2 - Adult Beginners Class
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
October 6 - Aurora Stamp Club
6:30 Trading 7:30 Meeting and Program
October 9 - Adult Education Day - Second Saturday
at the RMPL - 9:00 AM - Program by George
Snyder "CSA Cancellations & Covers"
October 9 - Meeting - 11:00 AM
Rocky Mountain Aerophilatelists
October 9 - Adult Beginners Class
1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
October 9 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
Universal Ship Cancellation Society
USS Colorado Chapter
October 14 - Meeting - 7:30 PM
TOPical Philatelists In Colorado
October 16 - Community Day
RMPL Yard Sale 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
October 23 - Kids Day at the RMPL
10:00 AM -12:00
October 23 - Meeting - 2:00 PM
China Stamp Society
October 26 - Meeting - 7:30 PM
ROMPEX Committee
October 30 - Expert's Day 10:00 AM - 12:00

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Donald G. Beuthel
Editor

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