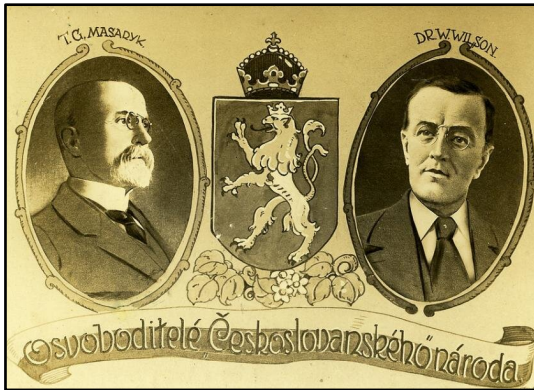


CZECHOSLOVAKIA FOUNDING FATHERS: **TOMAS GARRIGUE MASARYK**

BY SUSAN J. MARTIN
reluctantphilatelist@gmail.com

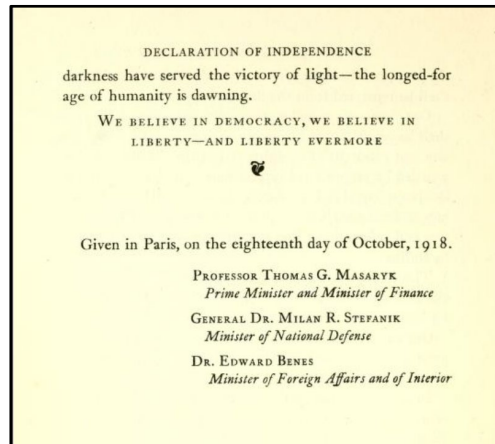
Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk (March 7, 1850 - September 14, 1937) was a Czechoslovak philosopher, sociologist, and statesman. One of three founding fathers of Czechoslovakia, he signed the Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence from the Austro-Hungary Empire in October 1918 and served as the first president until 1935.

Figure 1



Trained as an academic and involved in politics since 1891, **Masaryk** established the Czech Realist Party in 1900. World War I afforded the opportunity to advocate for independence, gaining the support of United States President Woodrow Wilson.

Figure 2



On October 18, 1918, he, along with **Milan Rastislav Štefánek** and **Edvard Beneš**, signed the Czechoslovak Declaration of Independence, also known as the “Washington Declaration” formally uniting the Bohemian, Moravian, and Slovakian people and lands.

Figure 3



Masaryk was elected as the first President and served from November 1918 until December 1935. He was succeeded by **Edvard Beneš**.

Figure 4



Masaryk died on September 14, 1937

Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7

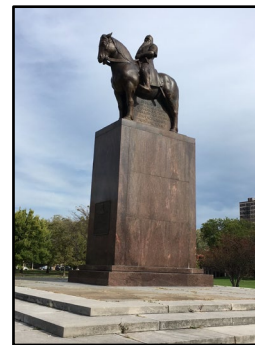


Figure 8



Masaryk's death made headlines and his impact and importance has been remembered throughout the United States as well as within his own country.

Figure 1 Presidents Masaryk and Wilson - Liberators of Czechoslovak Nation, 1919, promotional postcards. Image courtesy of Archives of Czechs and Slovaks Abroad - University of Chicago.

Figure 2 Declaration of Independence of the Czechoslovak Nation by Its Provisional Government. *The Czechoslovak Review*, vol. 2, no. 10 (2) (1918).

Figure 3 President Masaryk. Issued 2 Jan. 1931. 1-Koruna. Carmine. SG CZ 304.

Figure 4 Mourning for Pres. Masaryk. Issued 20 Sept. 1937. 2-Koruna. Black. SG CZ 374. Stamp and cancel on postcard.

Figure 5 Masaryk is Dead. *New York Times*. 14 Sept. 1937 p.1.

Figure 6 Champion of Liberty: Thomas G. Masaryk. Issued 7 March 1960. 4-cent. Dull Blue and 8-cent. Carmine, ultramarine, and ocher. Scott 1147 and 1148.

Figure 7 Thomas Garrigue Masaryk Monument. Midway Plaisance Park. Artist Albin Polásek. Installed 1955. Photograph by author.

Figure 8 Statue of Masaryk in Washington DC. Given by the Czech Government in 2002. Photograph by Nicolas Veron. Used under a CC BY-SA 3 license.