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Theresienstadt Parcel Mail

"Receipt and Thank You" Cards

By Henry Hahn, SCP

The initial portion of the procedure required of Theresienstadt inmates for the receipt of parcels was described in an earlier paper¹, together with a description of the forms used for mailing the required admission labels. Since many of these forms bear postal markings and are franked, they constitute an extremely interesting phase of "Theresienstadt" collecting. Additional details concerning the parcel mail procedure may be found in papers Möbs², Simon³ and others.

While parcel mail became somewhat systematized—and more severely restricted—after issuance of the permit label on July 10, 1943, parcels were



Fig. 1. Card Posted Theresienstadt March 8, 1942 Unfranked; Arrived Prague March 14th, Postage Due Collected March 15th.

received by inmates prior to that time, and recipients were permitted to thank their benefactors for parcels as well as for other mail. However, mail from Theresienstadt could only be written in German and had to be on open cards, though there were exceptions. Before 1943 these cards were not pre-printed.

An early card, shown in Fig. 1 would indicate that inmates may have been short of postal stationery (cards) as well as postage stamps. The home-made card, dated in Theresienstadt on March 8, 1942 was rubber stamped with "8,III,1942" and "Antwort Nur Durch Jüd. Kultusgemeinde Prag" (Response only through Jewish Congregation in Prague). The card was post-marked in Prague on arrival on March 14, 1942, stamped "T" for Postage Due, which was collected the following day. The March 15, 1942 Prague post mark over the 40h B & M Protectorate Postage Due stamp is quite clear in the original. The purpose of the "339" or the marking (in red) at the lower left is not known.

Another means of forwarding mail from Theresienstadt to the Protectorate (Prague) is illustrated in Fig. 2. This card, dated by the inmate on Nov. 27, 1943, was postmarked in Berlin on Jan. 20, 1944 and sent on to Prague. The fact that the card bears a Theresienstadt return address and usual rubber stamp "Rückantwort Nur Auf Postkarten in Deutscher Sprache" (response only on post cards in German) indicates that this was a legitimate routing; i.e. the card was NOT smuggled out by a German and simply posted in Berlin.

Pre-printed "receipt and thank you" cards were probably introduced with the labels and label forms in July 1943. Several issues of these appeared between 1943 and 1945, which differ both in detail and in routing.

The first is illustrated in Fig. 3 and Fig. 4. The authorities utilized the regular postal card, available in Protectorate Post Offices for 5h (upper left, Fig. 3) which was issued in 1940 (bottom center). The preprinted message

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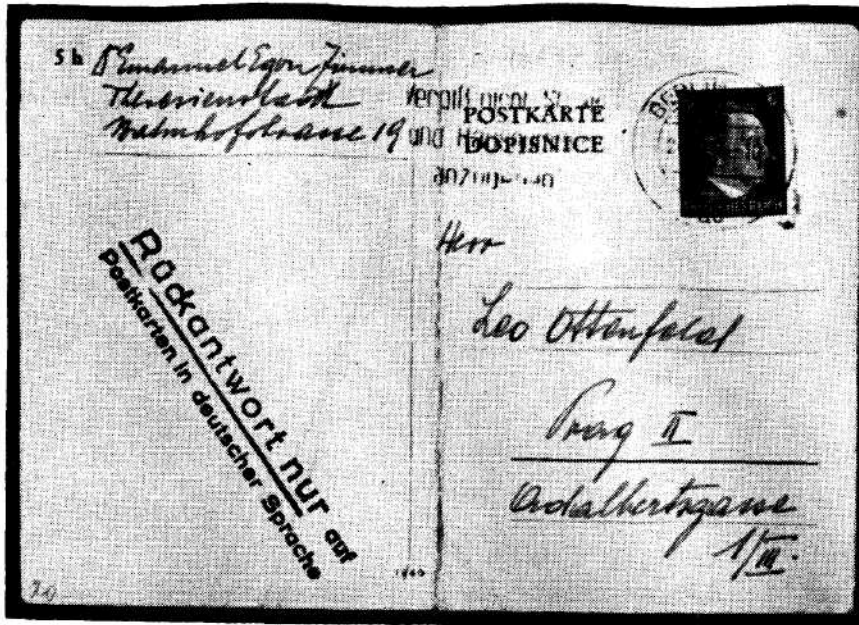


Fig. 2. Theresienstadt to Prague via Berlin. Posted November 27, 1943.



Fig. 3. First Issue of Pre-Printed Cards—Face.

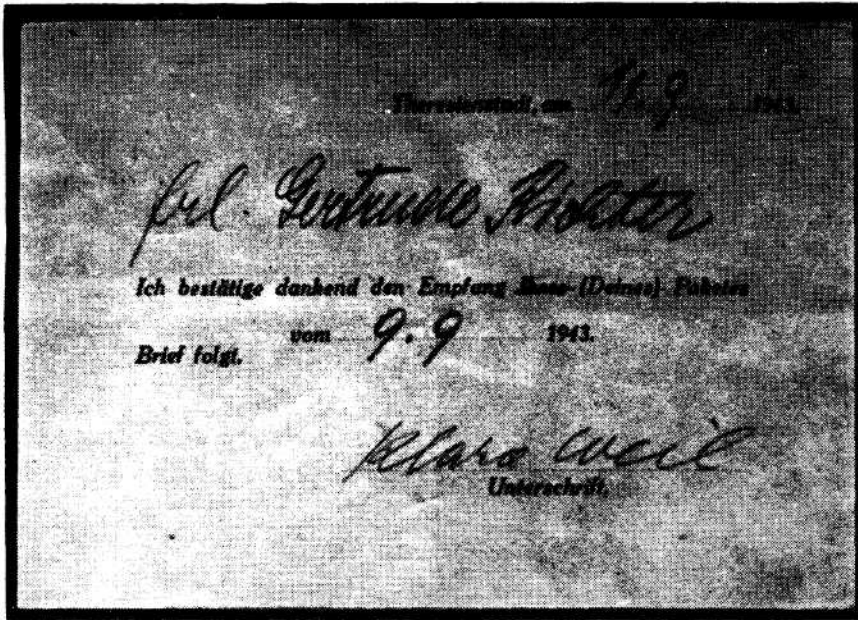


Fig. 4. First Issue of Pre-Printed Cards—Back.

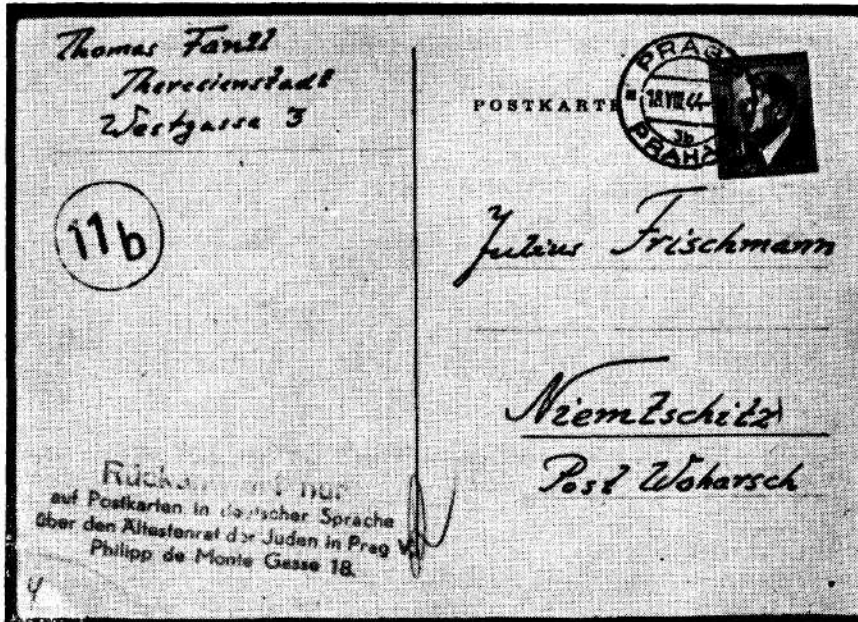


Fig. 5. Issue of 1944—Postmarked in Prague.

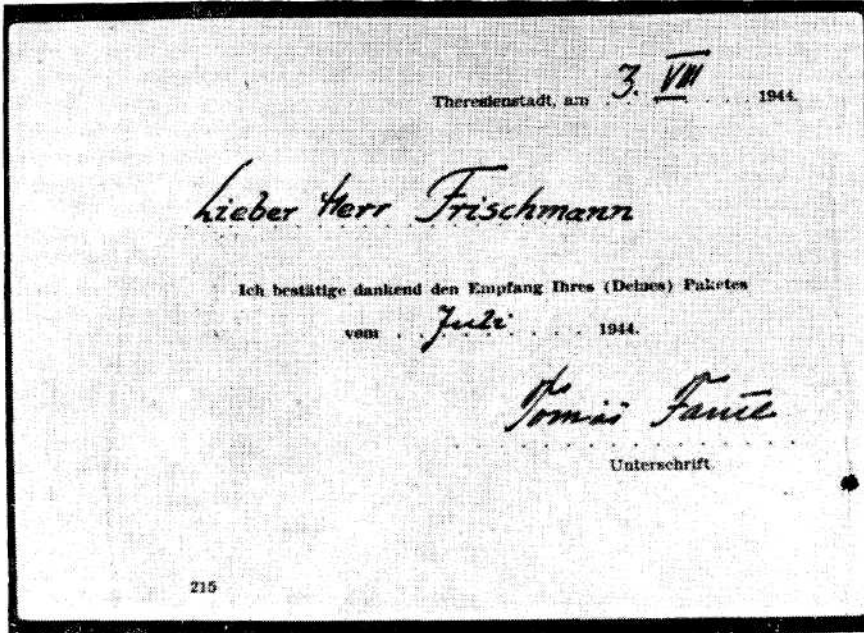


Fig. 6. Issue of 1944—"Brief folgt" Missing.

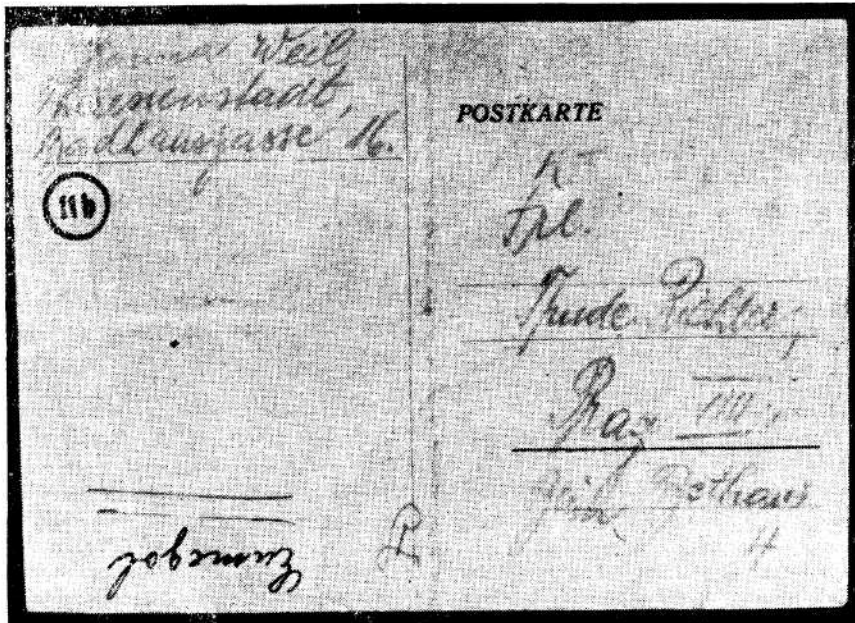


Fig. 7. Another Issue of 1944—Olive Stock.

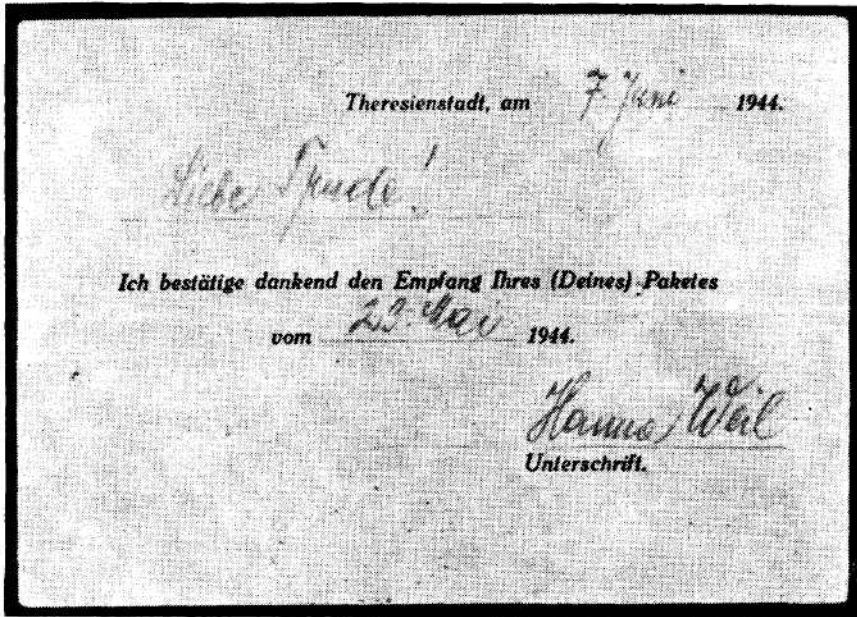


Fig. 8. Reverse of Fig. 7—"215" Missing.

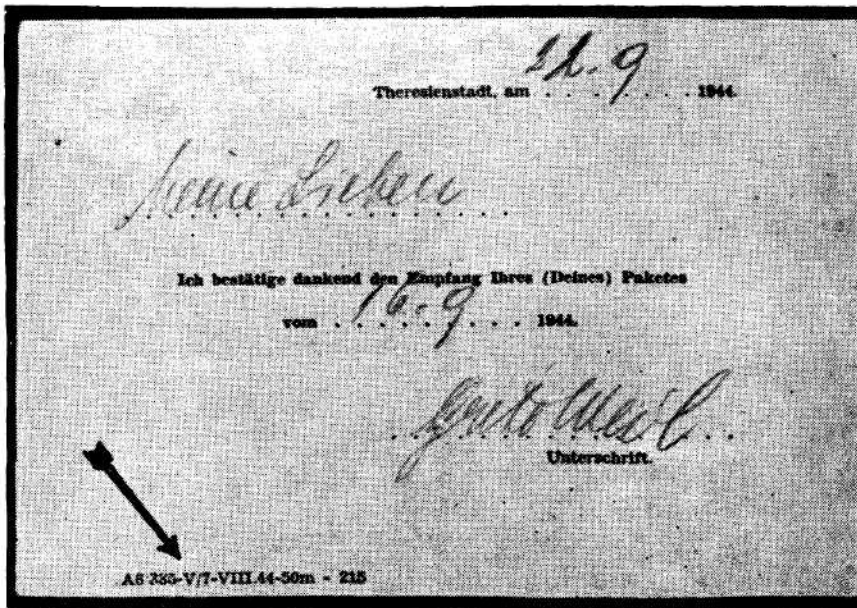


Fig. 9. Issue of August 7, 1944 (?) Printing of 50 m (thousand).

bears the date 1943 in two places (Fig. 4) and reads: "Theresienstadt on ----- 1943. ----- I acknowledge thankfully receipt of your (thy) package of ----- 1943. Letter follows. Signature"

The card is of good quality tan stock, franked with the regular 30h B & M Protectorate Hitler issue, and post marked in Bohušovice Nad Ohří, a railroad junction just south of Theresienstadt. The circular marking 11b is a "zip code."

A new card of lower paper quality, tan or olive appeared in 1944, accompanied by several basic changes in routing and regulations. The face of the card, Fig. 5 shows that while franking remained at 30h, the post mark of origin was Prague rather than Bohušovice Nad Ohří. The card was dated by the inmate on August 8, 1944, but post marked in Prague 2 only on August 18, 1944. The rubber stamp was altered to read "Rückantwort Nur Auf Postkarten in Deutscher Sprache Über Den Ältestenrat Der Juden in Prag V. Philip De Monte Basse 18." (Response only on post cards in German via the Jewish Council of Elders in Prague V, Phillip de Monte Street 18.) Fig. 6 is the same with one significant difference. The sentence "Brief folgt" (Letter follows) is missing—letters were apparently no longer allowed. Note the number "215" at lower left, which may relate to the form number. The years—upper right—has been changed to 1944.

A card of equally poor paper quality but only in olive appeared a little earlier or concurrently. Its front shown in Fig. 7 differs somewhat, as does the reverse, Fig. 8 which reads identically to the other early 1944 card except that the number "215" (lower left) is lacking.

A later printing that year apparently on August 7, 1944, using the same stock as cards bearing the form number 215 is shown in Fig. 9. The other numbers appearing at the lower left indicate a probable printing of 50m (thousand).

In 1945 there appeared additional printings of the card, using the same stock (identical front and paper quality), except that "1944" has been changed to "194" at the center, whereas the date at top right now merely reads "19". The postage rate was increased to 50h.

The better quality cards of the 1940 Protectorate issue were apparently still available at Theresienstadt in 1944, though not preprinted with the "receipt and thank you" message. This card was sent via KOLIN 2 rather than Prague, where there was a secondary (field) office of the Council of the Elders of Jews. The card lacks franking as do other cards sent via KOLIN.

There is little doubt that other forms of "receipt and thank you" cards—written or preprinted—exist. Their place in postal history collections of concentration camp mail is firmly established, though relatively little has been written about them to aid the specialist.

-
- 1—Hahn, H. Concentration Camp Parcels: Theresienstadt Label Forms, *POSTAL HISTORY JOURNAL*, vol. 19, No. 41, Oct. 1975.
 - 2—Möbs, T. "Theresienstadt, Eine Philatelistische Studie," Frankfurt Am Main, 1965.
 - 3—Simon, S. "The Postal History of Theresienstadt," *GERMANY POSTAL SPECIALIST*, Oct. 1975, p. 365.

President's Gazette

By Jane Sterba, 6624 Windsor Ave., Berwyn, Ill. 60402

Prof. Karl Seizinger

SCP member J. L. Klein, residing in Wassenaar, Netherlands, has forwarded the sad report of the death of Karl Seizinger on May 4, 1978. Prof. Seizinger was known throughout the philatelic world for his outstanding work, engraving numerous postage stamps which were issued in Czechoslovakia during the First Republic. He was 89 years of age at the time of his death in Haarlem, Netherlands.

Jiri Svengsbir Honored

During my visit to Prague in May 1979, I received a special invitation from Jiri Svengsbir, to attend ceremonies held in the new city hall building where he, as well as numerous citizens of Czechoslovakia were honored for their contributions in the fields of art, medicine, law and public service. Dr. Zdenek Zuska, Lord-Mayor of Prague presented the eminent Czechoslovak engraver, Jiri Svengsbir, a medal of recognition for his beautiful engravings and art work which appeared on the outstanding series of Czechoslovak stamps illustrating Prague and her beauty. On behalf of our Society I extended Mr. Svengsbir our sincere congratulations.

Editor's Review

As I write this editorial, I am reminded of the cockeyed view of seasons that countless years of schooling have given me. Somehow, September remains for me the beginning of the new semester. Indeed, I took over the editorship of the Specialist last September and sad to say, I must relinquish this position as of this issue. This Fall, I have taken on additional professional responsibilities which include the co-founding of a psychoanalytic school and significant writing demands. Consequently, I will have precious little time for my philatelic pursuits and must regretfully resign as Editor of the CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the many members who have contributed material and ideas over the last year, especially Mr. Harlan Miller who has been unduly patient with my inability to make deadlines, and Henry Hahn for his constant encouragement and advice. I will continue to contribute material on the Postal History of Carpatho-Ukraine as time permits and will also serve on the board of directors for the next four years. My tenure as editor has been a gratifying one and I especially enjoyed receiving letters from our readership. I hope that the younger and newer members of our Society will take a more active part since it is becoming clear to me that our older generation of members is no longer able to carry the same responsibility as it has in the past. A hopeful sign that the Society is moving in this direction is the fact that three of the five new directors elected to the board are newer members who have never served previously. However, it was quite disappointing to observe that only five members were nominated and therefore were automatically elected.

In closing, I would like to thank our President, Jane Sterba, and the board of directors for giving me this fine opportunity to give back in some small way, a few of the many benefits I have derived from the hobby of philately.

Board Nominees Are All Elected

Since only five nominations were received as of July 31, 1979, all five are automatically elected because a vote was obviated by the lack of alternate choice. The new members elected to the board of directors include:

Henry Hahn, Edward Lehecka, Dominick Riccio, Ludvik Svoboda, and Mirko Vondra.

The terms of the new board members begins January 1, 1980 for a period of four years.

The other five members who began their term on January 1, 1978 will remain on the board and together with the new members will comprise the new board of directors. Their names are:

Charles Collins, Richard Major, Edward Sabol, Joseph Stein, and Jane Sterba.

The members who are completing their terms as of December 31, 1979 and therefore were not eligible for reelection according to the bylaws of the Society, are as follows:

Dr. L. V. Fischmeister, Richard Gray, George Koplowitz, Henry Samek, and Jaroslav Verner.

Thank you, gentlemen for the fine job you have done over the past four years.

Finally, congratulations to our five new members which include two past presidents of the Society and three young, energetic newer members. It appears that the board has a nice balance of solid experience and enthusiastic freshness.

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New Issues



The idea of preserving a suitable environment for the further healthy development of mankind is a very humane one and one that is very close to the heart of the sensitive artist who designed the stamps. The "Man and Biosphere" set of commemorative stamps is a small contribution on the part of the Czechoslovak postal administration towards the world-wide conservation program launched by UNESCO.

The stamps are printed by multicolor flat recess print, an exacting method that is always chosen for stamps considered to be of great social and cultural significance.

Our environment is irreplaceable. Clean, life-giving air, good, clear water, sweet smelling forests and plants, and the variegated world of animals—all goes to make up our environment and it is our obligation to alter it only to the mutual benefit of both. Every disruptive element—smog in cities, wastes and sewage in water, dead forests—is a grave memento both for the present and future, for the life of all generations everywhere on the earth. UNESCO's long-term "Man and the Biosphere" program is one of the possible ways of assuring the physical and mental health of mankind in the years to come.

On 22 June, 1979, the Federal Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of Czechoslovakia issued a set of commemoratives entitled "Man and the Biosphere—UNESCO" and comprising the following four stamps:

- 60 h—MAB—UNESCO. Engraved by Josef Herčík. Colors: black, yellow, blue and violet.
- 1.80 Kčs—MAB—UNESCO. Engraved by Jan Mráček. Colors: black, orange, blue, green.
- 3.60 Kčs—MAB—UNESCO. Engraved by Miloš Ondráček. Colors: black, red, blue, yellow
- 4 Kčs—MAB—UNESCO. Engraved by Jindra Schmidt. Colors: black, yellow, red, green

The stamps were designed by Josef Liesler, Meritorious Artist.

They were printed by four color flat recess print at the Post Printing Office in Prague in sheets of 10. The dimensions of the stamp pictures are 30x23 mm.

Issued with the stamp were two First Day Covers, likewise designed by J. Liesler. Depicted on the cachets are: a) water, b) forests and plants.

Commemorative Postage Stamp "35th Anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising"

On 29 August 1979, three and a half decades will have passed since the outbreak of the Slovak National Uprising, an organized armed revolt against Hitler's forces which occupied Czechoslovakia and tyrannized the Czechoslovak people from 15 March 1939 until the end of the Second World War. Throughout this whole period the people's opposition grew and gained in strength in the form of an underground resistance movement, led by the nation's most progressive and bravest sons and daughters, which culminated on the 29 August 1944 in the Slovak National Uprising and on the 5 May 1945 in the uprising of the Czechs. The "heart" of the Slovak

National Uprising was in central Slovakia, in Banská Bystrica, and after fierce combat with the Nazis, who far outnumbered its valiant fighters, it lived on in the mountains of Slovakia and joined forces with the Soviet army in the Carpathian-Dukla operation in which Czechoslovak units fought side by side with the Russians to liberate their country. The crowning moment came on 6 October 1944, which marked the crossing of the Czechoslovak frontier at Dukla and fierce battles as the army of liberation forged ahead. Those who took part in the Slovak National Uprising included members of many Slavic as well as non-Slavic nations; many brave fighters—partisans have their graves in Slovakia's mountains and valley. Their memory will live for always.



The commemorative postage stamps bearing the inscription "Slovenské Národné Povstanie—1944-1979 / Slovak National Uprising — 1944-1979—has a face value of 30 h and is being issued together with a First Day Cover. Both are designed by the Slovak painter and graphic artist Albín Brunovský, who already has many Czechoslovak stamps to his credit. The stamp picture shows part of an industrial plant with mountains in the background. This symbolized the onset of a new era following the lengthy and fierce struggle for renewed independence, the era of the building of a socialist society with an economy based on a developed industry. The cachet on the First Day Cover shows the partial figures of three fighters of the Slovak National Uprising, thereby paying homage to all the brave men and women who during the Second World War took up arms and fought against Hitler for the liberation of their country.

On the 29 August 1979, the Federal Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of Czechoslovakia is issuing the following commemorative stamp entitled "35th Anniversary of the Slovak National Uprising":
30 h—Engraved by Miloš Ondráček. Colors: cold blue, warm blue, black, red.

It was printed by rotary recess print combined with three-color photogravure in sheets of 50 at the Post Printing Office in Prague. The dimensions of the stamp picture are 23x41 mm.

"The International Year of the Child—UNICEF—Biennial of Book
Illustration—Bratislava UNESCO"



This year, proclaimed the International Year of the Child by the United Nations Organization, offers many opportunities, both on an international as well as national scale, for showing how we stand and what we are doing to ensure optimum conditions for the all-round development of our youngest generation—our children. In the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic children, their care, upbringing and education are a priority and permanent item of the nation's plan for economic and social development. Apart from this permanent effort it is only natural, however, that Czechoslovakia is also taking active part in the events of the International Year of the Child besides organizing numerous separate events of its own, mostly cultural, for its children—one and all. And this is where the new set of commemoratives dedicated to the International Year of the Child comes in, though April already saw the issue of a single commemorative postage stamp with the well-known emblem plus the small figure of a child held safely in the warm and safe embrace of an adult as a symbol of the International Year of the Child.

The present set, consisting of five stamps and three First Day Covers, was inspired by that important cultural event—the Biennial of Children's Book Illustrations—held every two years in Bratislava, capital of Slovakia, under the auspices of UNESCO and organized by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Socialist Republic together with the Slovak National Gallery. Gathered here under one roof are loveliest children's book illustrations from the whole world, among them, naturally, also illustrations by Czechoslovakia's painters and graphic artists. And it was the last such biennial, held in the late summer of 1977, that provided the subject matter for the stamp pictures and tabs of the present set as well as the cachets on the First Day Covers.

It is very difficult to describe in a few words all that goes to make up the beauty of the set. Let us first note that each of the five stamps is paired with a tab of the same dimensions as the stamp—there are 35 stamps and 15 tabs to a sheet—and that each such pair depicts the work of a single artist. These include illustrations by János Kass of Hungary, Rumen Skurčev of Bulgaria, Karel Svolinský of Czechoslovakia, Otto S. Svend of Denmark, and Tatiana Mavrina of the Soviet Union. The three First Day Covers show us illustrations by Noorendin Zabrin Kelk of Iran, Eliardo Franca of Brazil and Jiří Trnka of Czechoslovakia. This pleiad of prominent illustrators of delightful books that make children's faces light up with joy, have filled the stamp pictures and FDC cachets with fairy-tale figures, animals, flowers and birds. Each stamp bears the "BIB" (Biennial of Illustrations Bratislava) emblem and naturally also the emblem of the International Year of the Child. Besides these two emblems there is also a third symbol with the heads of two children in honor of the 17th Congress of IBBY—International Board on Books for Young. The tabs likewise bear the BIB emblem, the IBBY emblem—a child's figure superimposed on the letter "Y," the emblem of the 17th IBBY Congress, the International Year of the Child emblem and the well-known UNESCO emblem. The inscription on the stamps is in Slovak; on the First Day Covers it is in Slovak, French, German, English and Russian. The symbols on the stamps and tabs thus embrace all who are doing something for children on a small as well as world-wide scale. One more thing—the title of the stamp set also includes the initials UNICEF—United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund—which dedicates its funds, obtained from the contributions of the UN member nations, to the children in these countries that as yet do not have other means to counter hunger, disease and illiteracy.

Let us wish every child—as a symbol of the joy and happiness of childhood—the opportunity of always having a lovely book with artistic illustrations, such as are presented by the new Czechoslovak set dedicated to the International Year of the Child.

- 20 h—János Kass (Hungary). Engraved by Jindra Schmidt. Colors: black, yellow, red, green.
- 40 h—Rumen Skurčev (Bulgaria). Engraved by Miloš Ondráček. Colors: black, yellow, red, blue.
- 60 h—Karel Svolinský (Czechoslovakia). Engraved by Ladislav Jirka. Colors black, red, orange, ochre.
- 1 Kčs—Otto S. Svend (Denmark). Engraved by Josef Herčík. Colors: black, red, blue, yellow.
- 3 Kčs—Tatiana Mavrine (USSR). Engraved by Jan Mráček. Colors: black, yellow, blue, red.

The graphic design of the entire set is by the painter and graphic artist Vladimír Kovařík.

The stamps were printed by rotary recess print combined with three-color photogravure at the Post Printing Office in Prague. Each stamp sheet contains 35 stamps and 15 tabs. The dimensions of the stamps and tabs is 40x34 mm.

Issued with the stamps are three First Day Covers with cachets depicting illustrations by the following artists: a) Noorendin Zabrin Kelk (Iran), b) Eliardo Franca (Brazil), c) Jiří Trnka (Czechoslovakia).

* * *

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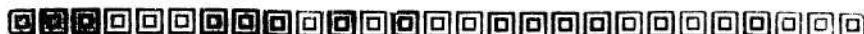
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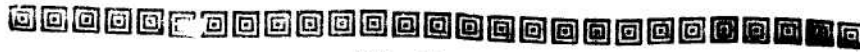
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