

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST



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A.P.S. Unit 18

S.P.A. Branch 284

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No. 4, Whole No. 478

CZECHOSLOVAK POSTMARKS IN THE U.S.

By Dr. Miroslav Vostatek — Translated and edited by Mirko L. Vondra

My Dear Parents: You are constantly in my thoughts. Day by day I get closer to Ferdinand. Once I arrive safely, I should feel more at ease. We spent two nights in Hamburg. There are many of us. I bid farewell to Prague with a heavy heart and submit to my fate. On Feb. 9 we depart. Yours, Betty.

(Written in Hamburg on Feb. 8, 1913, on board the postal steamer, President Grant, — Hamburg-American Line.)

This is an example of how our brothers and sisters parted with their homeland. As documented further, they sent greetings to their father in April 1934 from Omaha, Nebraska. Even the ship, cited as the President Grant on the picture side of the postcard, may have been the one that later carried Czechoslovak troops across the ocean. A special cancel bearing its name adorns many collections.

As we know, Czechs and Slovaks reside in all fifty states. According to statistics published by the last census in the U.S., there are over 758,000 of them in this country. Ethnic organizations such as our Society seem to report a higher count. According to individual state counts, the largest number of Czechoslovaks are in Pennsylvania — 118,855. Next is Ohio with 93,187; then New York with 90,641; next New Jersey with 51,599; next California with 44,964; and finally Texas with 29,536. However, there are Czechoslovaks even in Alaska (536), in Vermont (393), and in Hawaii (385).

The first known Czech to settle in the country was Augustin Herrman in 1633. The son of a pastor in Mšeno, he became a surveyor and one of the first founders of the Virginia tobacco trade.

Many more from the old country followed and left their marks on American history. Generally it may be said that Czechs settled mainly in the east and central regions like New York, Illinois, and Nebraska, Moravians in the agricultural areas of Texas, and Slovaks in industrial Pittsburgh. It is small wonder, then, that in the realm of postal history, evidence of various stamp forms attests to their influence. Without regard to stamps themselves and without mentioning special cancellations, let me simply delve into the ordinary local postmarks.

Doubtlessly when they arrived in the new world, these immigrants brought a piece of their homeland with them. Consequently they gave their towns and villages the names of the places they had come from which they knew and to which they were sentimentally attached. As a result, many American cancels bear the names of familiar

Czechoslovak localities. Some have been anglicized as, for example, New Prague and New Hradec; others have adopted English spelling, e.g. Lipan, Pilsen Station. There are even instances of names rooted in German equivalents of Czech locations, as in Carlsbad meaning Karlový Vary or Austerlitz meaning Slavkov. Below are some illustrations of those and other familiar communities throughout the country. Note that some have zip codes; others do not.

Tabor, a famous Czech city, is also a biblical term and areas bearing that name probably refer to that biblical connotation rather than to its counterpart in the province of Bohemia. There are several Tabors in the U.S. The above illustration shows the one in South Dakota. There is also one in Iowa bearing zip code 51653. Others are mere hamlets and lack a post office. In addition to several Tabors, some of these hamlets carry names like Frýdek, Hostýn, Kutná Hora, Moravan, Novohrad, Praha, Ratiboř, Smetana, Nechanitz, etc. Additional places acquired slavonic names such as Bohemia, Moravian Station, Libuše, Slovan, and Moravia.

Finally, there are localities bearing the names of Czechoslovak citizens. Korbel in California was named after František Korbel (1830–1929), a native of Bechyne (see SPECIALIST for Nov. 1987, page 13). Kellnersville in Wisconsin is named after a Czech-speaking German resident of Budejovice (Budweis).

An unusual and interesting chapter in these ethnic developments is the names of places founded and settled by our Moravian brethren, such as Bethlehem, PA.

Returning to the cancels, the newer ones carry the state abbreviation immediately after the city, town, or village name. The older cancels have the state at the bottom (see Libuše). The state designation was brought to the top following the locality designation to make room for the zip code. The dating allows for month, day, year, and ante-meridiam or post-meridiam, depending on whether it is postmarked before or after 12 noon.

A brief excursion into the realm of Bohemoslovenika as it concerns American postmarks can uncover a few surprises. Some people can point out more cancels of ethnic origin. This article is not an attempt to be more exhaustive, but rather to remind the reader that collecting these cancels can be a lot of fun in the context of philatelic and historical research.

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Examples of Czechoslovak Postmarks in the U.S.

Member of the Month

MEET LUDVIK SVOBODA

If you were to meet someone who grew up in the U.S. of Czech parents and spoke Czech before he learned English, where would you expect him to have been raised? Either in Chicago or in New York, of course, or possibly Cleveland. But not Ludvik Svoboda.

Raised in a Czech community outside Baltimore, MD, he joined the Sokol at an early age and continued with its athletic activities until he moved away to attend college. He got his Bachelor's degree in mathematics and then went on to achieve a Master of Science Degree in Management Information Systems. That has been his field of endeavor for the past fourteen years during his term of military service.

Philatelically, he started collecting stamps at age seven because his father would bring home stamped envelopes received at his business from all over the world. One day his father bought him the "New Worldwide Postage Stamp Album" published by Minkus and covering the entire world in 350 pages. Today the same 350 pages would barely cover a country like Pakistan or Kuwait or even little Monaco.

Years later, his wife gave him a Scott's Specialized Album of Czechoslovak Stamps for Christmas. It was a complete surprise and helped plunge Ludvik into the philatelic world. Within six months he joined our Society and has been an active member ever since.

Once he mastered the art of collecting, he began browsing through various stamp shops. This led him to a remarkable discovery. There seemed to be an almost ludicrous disparity in the prices of Czechoslovak stamps from one store to another. In many cases, he found dealers so lacking in their evaluation of these stamps, they defensively placed high prices on them. He resolved not to become a victim of such schemes. Having joined the American Philatelic Society, he wrote to several auction houses that advertised in its journal. From their literature, he broadened his scope of knowledge about the availability of Czech philatelic material and its market value based realistically on winning bids.

His career brought Ludvik to the Washington, D.C., area in July 1978. This opened a new phase of Czechoslovak philately to him in that he became active in the Washington Branch of our Society. His understanding of the more refined aspects of philately peaked through his contacts with the branch's frequent host, Henry Hahn, and the graciousness of the hostess, Marilyn Hahn.

In 1982, he accepted the post of Treasurer of the Society and has held that post ever since. As one of the Society directors, he is a bulwark of loyalty to and reliability for all that the Society stands. Flanked on one side by a professionally successful wife and on the other side by a scholastically advanced son, he has as much reason to be proud of them as the Society has to be proud of him.

Note to Other Members:

Send us a resume of your social and business background and your philatelic experience along with your picture and we will feature you in one of our future issues as "Member of the Month." We at the Society believe there can be greater communication between members if each one knows more about the others. This column is intended to serve that purpose.



LUDVIK SVOBODA, Society Treasurer

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CHARLEY'S CORNER

The first imperforate Air Mail issue was released on August 14, 1920. Although the original first flight of the 1920 Air Mail issue was to be October 5, 1920, it is now believed that it was actually October 14, 1920.

I have in my possession a cover which could be a pioneer flight several months before the actual flights started from Prague. This cover was sent from Terezin on August 13, 1920 to Prague where a 14 Kčs imperforate air mail stamp was applied and cancelled "PRAHA 1" on August 15, 1920. It is backstamped "Paris étranger" (foreign mail). There is an additional backstamp at its destination in France "Troyes/Aube, August 16, 1920."

The Franco-Romaine Air Navigation Company was flying during 1920 but the Prague stopover did not officially start until October 14, 1920. It could be possible that an airplane stopped in Prague on the 15th of August and this letter was then taken aboard. The cancels appear to be genuine — all of them — so this makes the cover especially interesting. I have sent photocopies to Ing. Jan Karásek for his opinion and will advise you of the outcome.

In the meantime, good hunting! If you should come across anything philatelically unusual, please send us a photocopy with your comments and we will be glad to publish it if it really merits attention.

C. Chesloe

THE EDITORIAL HINGE

On Bound SPECIALISTS

The saga of the missing 1985 SPECIALISTS has come to an end. They have been found and now the balance of the SPECIALISTS owed to our patron members is being bound. Meanwhile your editor expresses his profound thanks to those who sent in their own SPECIALISTS — some even from Europe — to help out. Now that the quota has been met, certain issues of the 1985 series have been completely depleted.

On Postage Rates

As you are aware, U.S. postage rates are again to be increased while we on the Board of Directors are bending backwards to keep the membership dues at the present levels. But there will be an added strain on our mailing costs which must be absorbed somehow if we are not to increase your dues. Perhaps you can help in preventing that from happening.

Regular membership in our Society costs \$15. If that is your present status, can you afford to become a patron member for \$25? If so, then consider that for the additional \$10 a year, you will receive a bound copy of the SPECIALIST issued for the next two-year period. It is an effective and inexpensive way of preserving the most vital and varied information you can possibly compile on Czechoslovak philately in the English language.

On Dues

Speaking of membership dues, you can also help your Society and thereby help yourselves by sending in your 1988 dues NOW if you have not yet done so. Remember, all 1988 dues mailed in after February carry a 25 cents late charge for every month of lateness. It is now April. All dues sent in this month must have an additional 50 cents enclosed. If you do not pay your 1988 dues by the end of June, you will be automatically dropped from our membership roster and you will receive no further issues of the SPECIALIST.

On Published Articles

Remember the old saying "A picture is worth a thousand words"? Well, many of you have graciously responded to calls for articles by sending us your writings and these are certainly appreciated. But where the subject matter focuses on a particular stamp or cover or even on a particular person or landmark, an accompanying picture goes a long way to enhance that article. Please enclose a clear, crisp picture with any such article you submit for publication.

Our printer has had problems recently in reproducing some of the illustrations, as evidenced in the Dec., Jan., and especially the Feb. issues. I have been assured that these problems have now been overcome. So do not hesitate in sending pictures to illustrate the subject matter of your writing.

M. L. Vondra

POSTSCRIPT TO THE PRISONER FROM MUNKACS

By J. L. Klein

In the December 1987 SPECIALIST, I described a recently acquired letter, sent in 1851 from the prison of Munkacs, Carpatho-Ukraine to Trenchin.

I asked my fellow-collectors if they could provide me with more information about the writer of this letter, whose name I gave as Szeperedy Lajos. No reactions — but my friend, Jaap Beimers, drew my attention to the fact that the writer's name must be spelled as Lajos Bezerédy. All of a sudden, then, he realized what an interesting letter of "Postal History of Carpatho-Ukraine" had been reproduced in the December issue.

Lajos, born in 1818 in Győr, was the son of a nobleman who was a large landowner and Councilor of State. Starting with military school, Lajos became a cadet at the age of 18 and reached the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel when he was 30 years old. He participated in the Hungarian revolution and was taken captive at Világos. There exists a list of persons "court-martialed because of high treason and participation in the Hungarian uprising." Number 61 on that list is our Lajos, referred to as Ludwig von Bezerédy. He was sentenced by the court at Arad on November 29, 1849, to 16 years' detention but was pardoned in 1852, the year the above-mentioned letter was written.

Bezerédy died in Vienna in April 1868 at the age of fifty years. The letter from the Muncacs prison was addressed to Baron Edward Medjansky whose son, Laszlo, became a well-known Hungarian painter and whose sister, Gizella, married our Lajos, the writer of the letter, after his Muncacs imprisonment.

For collectors of postal history of that era, it is always rewarding to be able to identify the principal players. If one succeeds, the cover achieves certain historic value and significance.

PRAGA 88 ANNOUNCES U.S. ACCEPTANCES

According to the Organizing Committee of PRAGA 88, over 50 Commissioners around the world responded with over 1,100 applications of which about 1,000 were for competitive exhibits. PRAGA 88 will take place in Prague, Czechoslovakia, August 26th through September 4th, 1988.

The number of applications submitted on behalf of the U.S. is the second highest in the world; 81 including philatelic literature, of which 76 have been accepted (66 stamp exhibits, 10 literature exhibits). Only the German Federal Republic submitted a higher number of applications. The number of U.S. applications accepted is most gratifying, since only 4,500 frames are available to exhibitors in competition.

Travel arrangements for PRAGA 88 are handled by TATRA TRAVEL BUREAU, INC., 1489 Second Ave., New York, NY 10021. Information on other aspects of PRAGA 88 are available from the U.S. Commissioner, Mr. Henry Hahn, c/o Artech Corp., 2901 Telestar St., Falls Church, VA 22042.

THE DOVE

Sixth Installment

This series on the Allegory Chapter of Monografie II has been translated by Vladimír Králíček.

(Page 206):

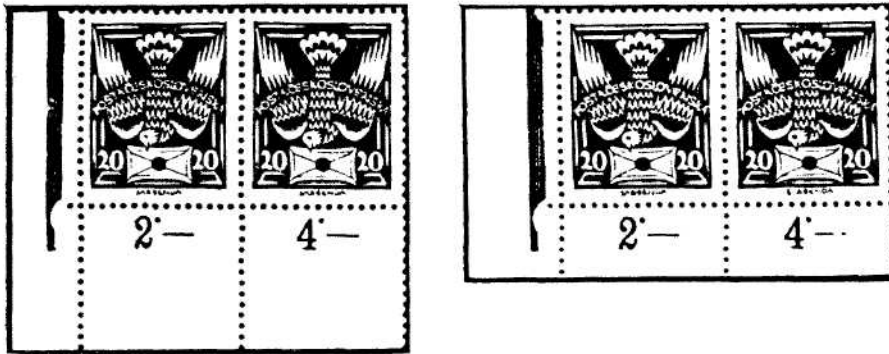


Illustration 323

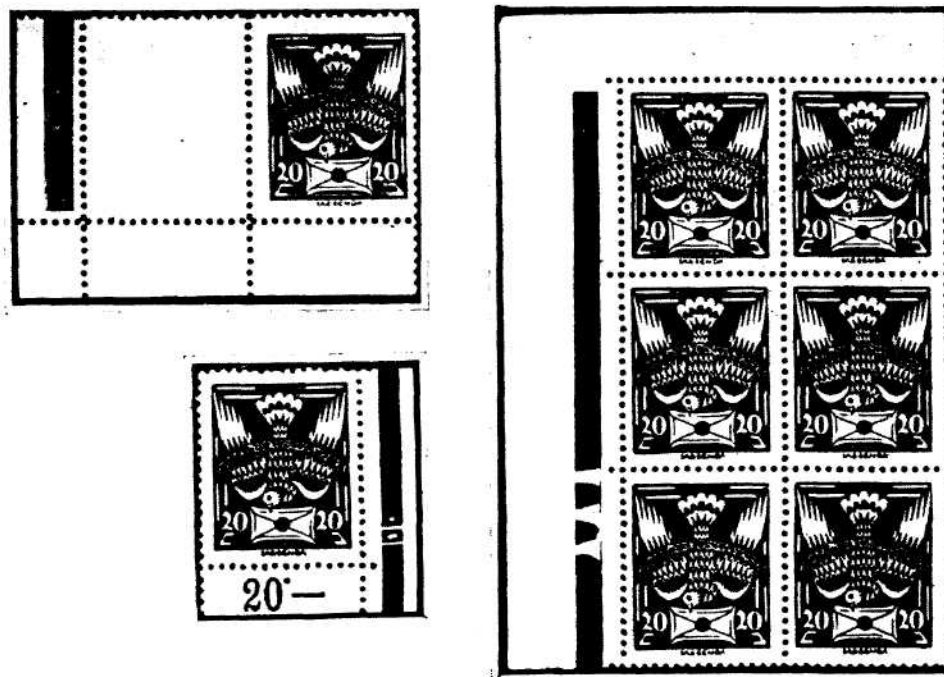


Illustration 324

Table 44. 20h Printing Plates

Type	Plate Markings	Remarks
I	No markings; no sheet margin frame	The 20h Type I stamp was printed with two plates joined with either two plates of 5h (violet) Dove or two plates of the 50h Liberated Republic.
II	No markings; with sheet margin frame	Printing of the 20h Type II was started with two plates (printing form). Both plates can only be distinguished from one another by the format of the sheet margin frame.
	4,-- decimal dash once interrupted; with sheet margin frame	One of the plates with which the printing Type II commenced.
	No markings; no row control numbers; with sheet margin frame Two notches in the sheet margin frame at position 100 Three notches in the sheet margin frame at position 100 Four notches...at position 100 Three strong wedge-shaped notches in the sheet margin frame at position 21	Two plates for the stamp booklets. Further printing forms were composed of four printing plates.
	5 in horizontal position in the sheet margin frame at position 100 6 in horizontal position in the sheet margin frame at position 100 7 in the frame at position 100 8 in the frame at position 100	Interrupted or uninterrupted sheet margin frame. Sheet margin frame is continuous. Sheet margin frame continuous. Sheet margin frame continuous.
	1-24 2-24 3-24 4-24	All prints of plates marked with serial numbers and year date have sheet margin frames of different types on both sides.
	1-26 2-26 3-26 4-26 5-26 6-26 7-26 9-26 10-26 11-26 12-26	Sheet margin frames are continuous or interrupted and are composed of thick or thin lines or of small oblong shapes.
	1-27 2-27 5-27 6-27 7-27 8-27 9-27 10-27 11-27 12-27 13-27 14-27	Plate 8-26 is not known. Plates 3-27 and 4-27 are not known. Further markings not known.
	1-28 2-28 3-28 4-28 6-28 7-28 9-28 10-28 11-28 12-28 13-28 14-28 15-28 16-28 19-28 20-28	Plate 5-28 not known. Plate 8-28 not known. Plates 17-28 and 18-28 are not known.

(Page 207):

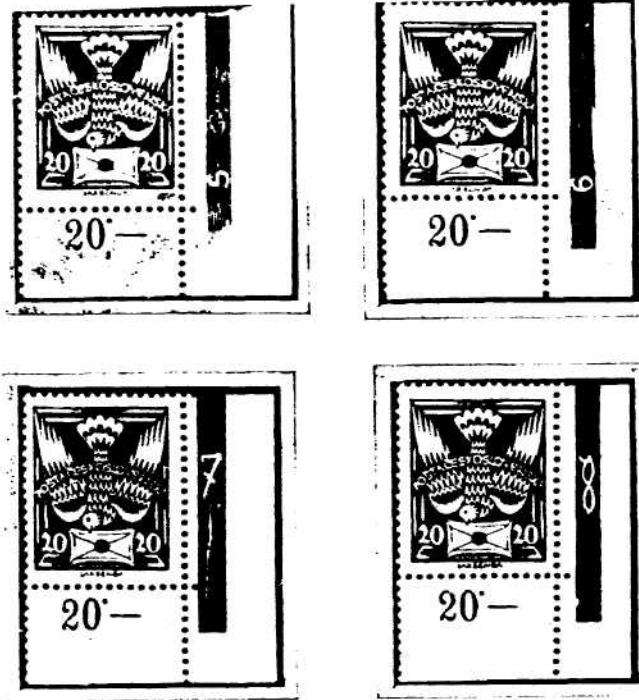


Illustration 325

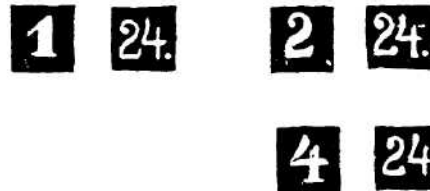


Illustration 326



Illustration 322

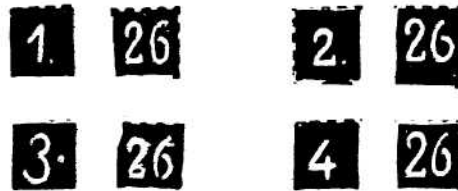


Illustration 327

(Page 208):

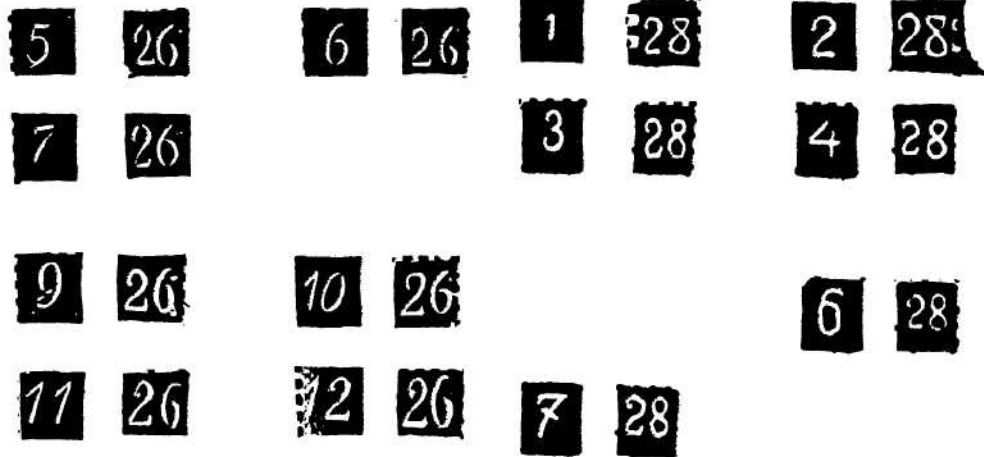


Illustration 327a

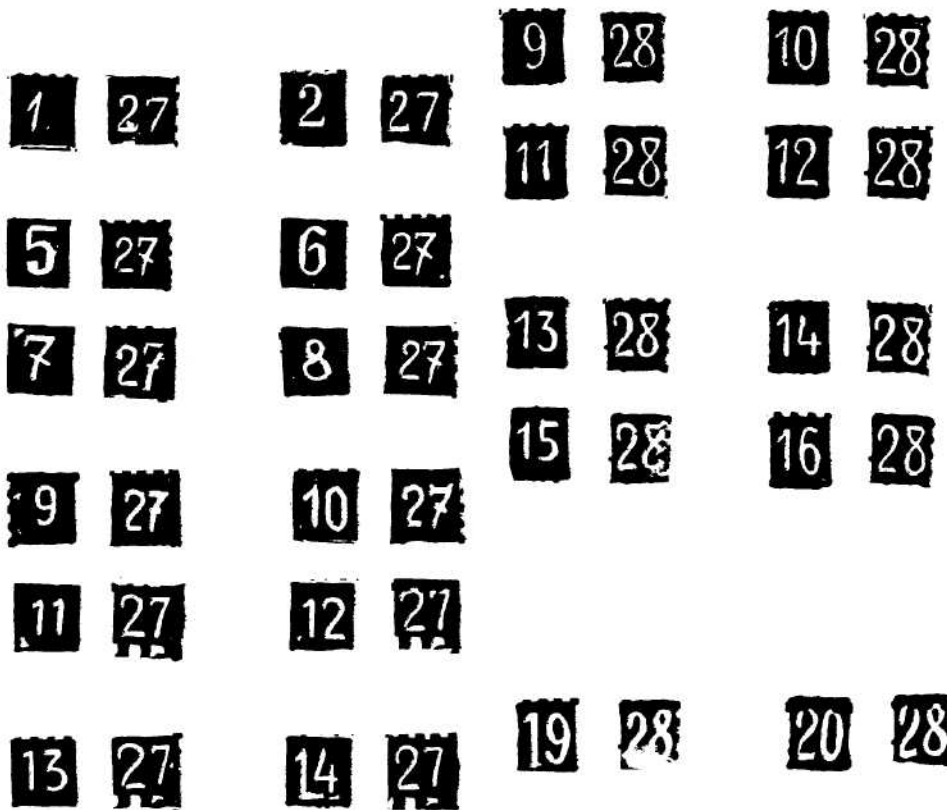


Illustration 328

(Page 209):

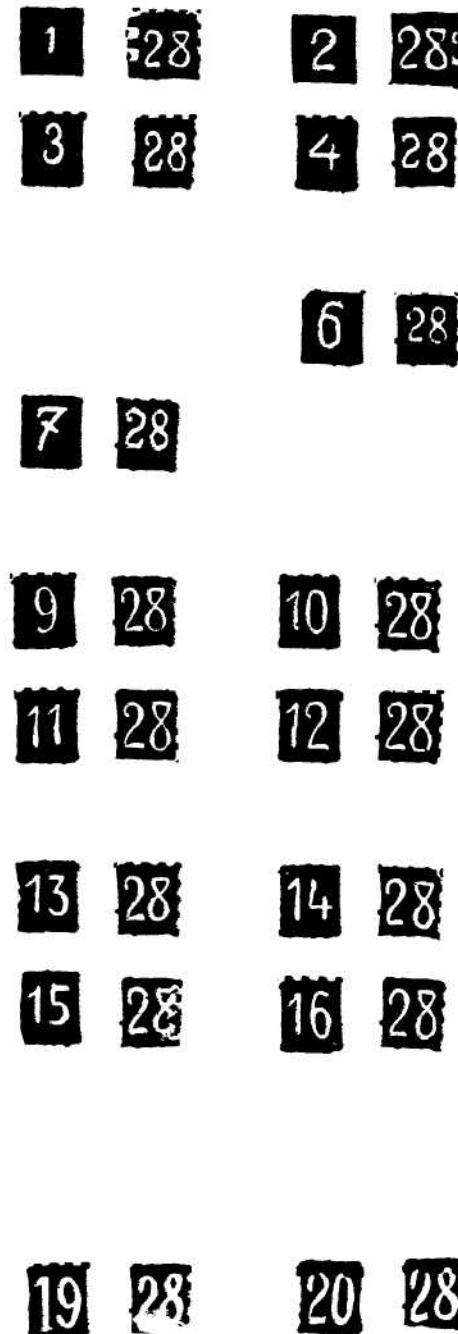


Illustration 329

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ISRAELI STAMP COMMEMORATES SYNAGOGUE IN PRAGUE

Israel issued three Festival stamps and two singles honoring Kupa Holim (the Health Insurance Institution) and Rabbi Amiel, respectively, Sept. 10.

Famous synagogues through the ages are shown on the Festival stamps designed by D. Ben-Dov. His designs are based on meticulous models of these buildings by Beth Hatefutsoth.

The 30-aga value features the 13th-century Altneuschul Synagogue from the Jewish quarter of Prague. It is the oldest synagogue in Europe still in use.

The name Altneuschul means Old-New Synagogue. Originally, it was called the New Synagogue, but its name was changed when a newer one was built.

The synagogue inspired the title of Theodor Herzl's Utopian novel of a Jewish state in Israel, *Altneuland*.

This gloomy and mysterious Gothic-style building also has been the source of many legends, the most famous of which is the story of the Golem, a man-made monster created by Rabbi Judah Loew to save the Jews of Prague who were under attack.

The synagogue was built below street level, and worshipers had to descend a few steps upon entering.

This was a common feature in synagogues of the time. Rabbis explained that they were constructed that way to observe the words of *Psalms* 130:1, "Out of the depths have I called Thee, O Lord."

However, severe laws restricted synagogues in many Christian countries of the time, and the buildings had to be low and inconspicuous.

Under Moslem rule, Jewish houses of worship also were subject to severe limitations. The building of new houses was often forbidden, and when it was allowed, the height had to be below that of the lowest mosque in the town.

Most synagogues in these countries were small because of the restrictions. However, there were some exceptions, such as the Main Synagogue in Aleppo, Syria, which is depicted on the 50a stamp.

This house of worship was constructed in the 9th century and architecturally influenced by the great mosques in Cairo.

The 60a value pictures the Templo Israelitico, one the landmarks in Florence, Italy.

In the late 18th century, Jews emerged from the ghettos into which they had been confined and were recognized as equal citizens. They began building magnificent and prominent synagogues, such as the Tiempo Israelitico.

Many of these synagogues adopted Oriental styles of architecture. Such Oriental motifs can be clearly seen in the dome, turrets and horseshoe arches of the Florence synagogue.

The Oriental theme is continued in the interior, which features multicolor mosaics and tiles.

E. Lewin-Epstein Ltd. printed the issue in sheets of 15 stamps with five tabs by multicolor photolithography. The Kupat Holim and Rabbi Ameil stamps also were produced in the same manner.

A 1.50-shekel denomination commemorates the 75th anniversary of Kupat Holim. This Health Insurance Institution started at a general workers' conference in 1912, when it was decided to establish a sick fund for working-class people.

The Kupat Holim serves approximately three million members throughout Israel.

Raffi Dayagi created the stamp's symbolic design.

A 1.40s value depicts one of the outstanding rabbis of our time, Rabbi Moshe (Moses) Abigdor Amiel. He was born in 1883 in White Russia.

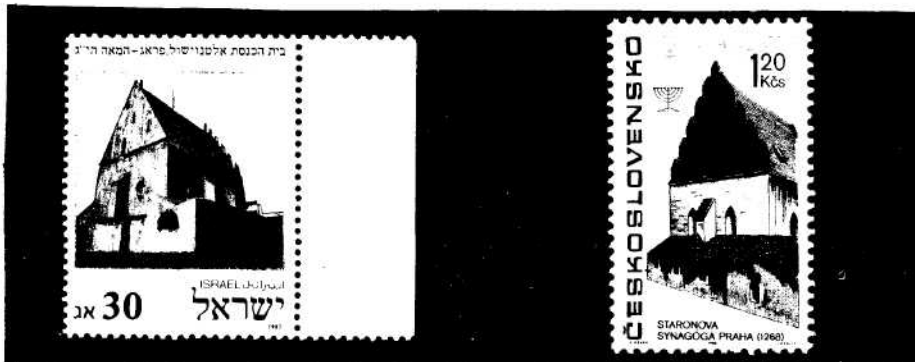
Rabbi Amiel was a renowned philosopher and wrote many books, including *The Ways of Moses*, *Social Justice*, and *Sermons for My People*. His best-known work, though, is *Understanding Jewish Law*.

He also founded several educational institutions and yeshivas. The most famous of these is the Yeshiva Ha-Yishuv He-Hadash in Tel Aviv, which is known as the Rabbi Amiel Yeshiva after its founder.

R. Beckman designed the stamp.

For ordering details, write to the Ministry of Communications, Philatelic Services, 12 Jerusalem Blvd., 61 080 Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel; or the Israel Stamp Agency in North America, 1 Unicover Center, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82008-0006.

(Reprinted from *Linn's Stamp News* Sept. 21, 1987, by permission of the publishers.)



POSTAL MUSEUMS AND EXCHANGE OF CULTURAL VALUES

By Pavel Čtvrtník, Director of Czechoslovak Postal Museum

The Post Office, as an institution charged with transportation and delivery of messages, has been playing a significant role in the modern history of mankind for many centuries. Any political, economic, technological, or cultural progress can hardly take place without its services.

Just before the beginning of our era, in the reign of the first Roman Emperor, Gaius Julius Caesar, the very first historical organization charged with this important public service was set up. In 1985, a large international exhibition was held in Halbturn Castle in Burgenland, Austria, to mark the second millennium of this ancient institution. Czechoslovakia was represented at the exhibition by a painting, a water color on parchment dating from the 18th century and representing Count Karel Josef Paar, hereditary General Postmaster of the Bohemian Crown Lands. The exhibit symbolized the five centuries of postal service in the territory of today's Czechoslovakia.

Postal museums all over the world collect and preserve documents pertaining to the history of postal service from its very beginning to the present day. One of them is the Czechoslovak Postal Museum which is celebrating its 70th anniversary. Some postal museums in Europe are, however, much older than ours. The first museum of this type was founded in Berlin in 1872, being followed in 1877 by the Postal Museum of Petersburg (today's A. S. Popov Museum of Communications in Leningrad) and, in 1888, by the Vienna Museum.

Similar museums were established in countries with a high level of postal services which were industrially advanced and in these much attention was paid to the development of telecommunications. The beginning of postal museums coincides with the beginning of international cooperation in the field of postal services. As a result, the World Postal Union was founded in 1874. An outstanding contribution to this process was made by Heinrich von Stephan, one of the founders of the Union and author of the idea, who also founded the Postal Museum of Berlin.

Several postal museums appeared in northern Europe and in Scandinavia in the early 20th century. However, most such institutions were established after the First World War, and it was also at that time, on December 18, 1918, that the Czechoslovak Postal Museum was founded, just a few weeks after the creation of Czechoslovakia and shortly after the first Czechoslovak postage stamp had been issued.

Today there are postal museums in 36 countries of which 24 are in Europe. After World War II and after the establishment of UNO and UNESCO, the leading museums and galleries all over the world supported the idea of international cooperation and exchange of cultural values in order to pool their resources. The objective was to preserve and conserve for future generations material relics and objects of cultural value including those of developing countries where museology was budding at that time. These efforts resulted in setting up the International Council of Museums (ICOM) within UNESCO. Specialized transport and postal museums founded an International Association of Transport Museums (IATM), associated with the ICOM and thus also with UNESCO.

The Czechoslovak Postal Museum joined the IATM in 1970. Today, this international non-governmental association unites 180 member museums of which almost forty are postal museums. These created a separate international working group as a section of the Association.

International collaboration of museums covers such fields as regular exchange of information and scientific literature, common organization of exhibitions, reciprocal exchange of exhibitions, joint participation in large international exhibits of transportation and telecommunications and, of course, direct exchange of experience which mostly takes place at the annual meetings of the Association. The Association publishes a very interesting journal, the Yearbook of IATM, whose scientific level is very high.

Science research workers of each member institute can contribute to the Yearbook.

Large commemorative events are an excellent opportunity for museologists to meet at international forums. An example is the 150th anniversary of the railway, celebrated in York, England, in 1975. Representatives of specialized museums meet also at international and world exhibitions of postage stamps, such as those in Prague in 1978, in Paris in 1982, and in Stockholm in 1986. The last meeting in Stockholm was attended by forty postal museologists from twenty countries who discussed a number of important professional and scientific problems, such as:

- a) How to make the postal museums more attractive to their visitors;
- b) What kind of documents relating to postal services should be preserved;
- c) How to properly conserve the objects exhibited in their museums;
- d) To what extent might postage stamps be exhibited in museums;
- e) Conservation problems of postage stamps preserved in these museums.

The discussion was of utmost importance and valuable information and experience was exchanged by specialists from Europe, Asia, and America. The meeting helped contribute to better scientific selection, conservation, and exhibition of material documents relating to the history of postal service.

The Postal Museum of Wroclaw in Poland is particularly active. In October last year it marked the 30th anniversary of its activity in Wroclaw and the 65th anniversary of its foundation in Warsaw. Representatives of postal museums in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, France, and Sweden used this excellent opportunity and came to Wroclaw to discuss with their Polish colleagues the further development of collaboration between these specialized institutions.

In Czechoslovakia, the fourth World Postage Stamp Exhibition is approaching. PRAGA 1988 will continue the tradition of previous exhibitions held here in 1962, 1968, and 1978. Czechoslovakia used this opportunity to apply for the privilege of organizing an annual session of the International Association of Transport Museums. Postal museums from many countries will be displaying items of high value in the Czechoslovak capital. A new Postage Stamp Museum will be opened on that occasion in the historical building of Vávra House in Prague which is now being reconstructed for that purpose.

The dominating room will be the Exhibition Hall with a permanent exhibition of postage stamps. Representative sets of postage stamps and other documents collected by the three generations of Postal Museum workers during the last 70 years will be displayed in rooms containing 700 exhibition panels. The exhibits will be thematically arranged as follows:

- a) History of mail transport and delivery in the territory of Czechoslovakia;
- b) Old postage stamps of European countries from 1840 to 1900;
- c) History of Czechoslovak postage stamps;
- d) Present-day postage stamps of Czechoslovakia;
- e) Valuable objects donated to the Postal Museum.

The exhibition of postage stamps will be complemented by a display of prizes and medals received from the respective institutions in recognition of the ideological and artistic level of Czechoslovak postage stamps and of the high quality of our exhibitions. The visitor will have the opportunity to get acquainted with the publications of our Museum and with its scientific work. Domestic and foreign catalogues of postage stamps as well as the Postal Museum Exhibition Catalogue will be available.

Postage stamp designs will be displayed as well. The visitor will be informed about the artistic competitions for postage stamps and about the problems of specific polygraphy: flat plate die stamping, which is a well reputed method applied in Czechoslovakia. Emphasis will be placed on the artistic transposition of famous works of Czech and Slovak art on its postage stamps.

A scientific library and a reading room will be at the disposal of museum visitors. Documents relating to the history of Czechoslovak posts and telecommunications and, in particular, to the history of postage stamps will be available here.

The World Exhibition will be an excellent opportunity for the Czechoslovak Postal Museum to internationally confront its achievements in the 70th year of its existence, and thus contribute to the exchange of cultural values throughout the world.

UMĚNÍ A ZNÁMKA — ART AND STAMPS

By G. M. van Zanten

FRANTIŠEK KUPKA

1871–1957

František Kupka was born at Opočno, about 25 km northeast of Hradec Králové. The small town is famous for its castle, which was built in 1567 and is well worth a visit.

František left his native Czechoslovakia early in life and settled in Paris. He started out in life as a saddler and later became a varnisher for a craftsman, who taught him coloring. From there he became a sign painter. Between 1887 and 1891 he studied at the Academy in Prague and later at the Viennese Academy from 1891 to 1895. Shortly after that he left for Paris.

In Paris he contributed to various satirical magazines, such as *Le Canard Sauvage* and *L'Assiette au Beurre* and also several books bear his contributions. He also practiced as a spiritualist medium. His painting was initially inspired by the Fauves.

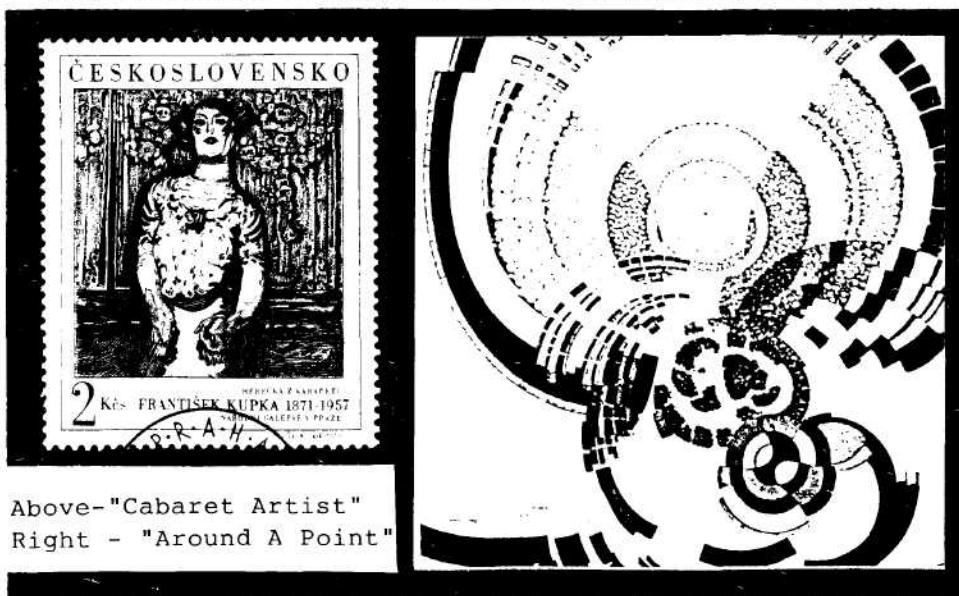
His work "CABARET ARTIST" was the subject of a Czechoslovak 2 Kčs stamp listed in the Pofis catalogue as number 1686. It was issued for the Praga 1968 World stamp exhibition in sheets of four stamps with the exhibition logo in the gutter part of the sheet, date of issue was May 27, 1968. A total of 228200 sheets was printed by flat recess print in five colors. The original work hangs in the National Gallery in Prague.

Investigating the color theories of Newton and Chevreul and other Neo-Impressionists led his art towards abstraction. In the year 1911 he produced his "PLANES OF COLOUR," a series of experimental abstract color compositions.

Illustrated is a detail of his work "AROUND A POINT," which hangs in the Paris Musée National d'Art Moderne, this clearly shows the two different aspects of this Czech-borne artist.

Kupka's paintings are probably the most powerful of the Eastern European painters of the Art Nouveau era.

He died in 1957 at Puteaux.



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