

THE PERFIN SOCIETY LIBRARY TRANSLATIONS PROJECT

by Brian Birch

In June, 1971 when I took over the position of Librarian for the Security Endorsement and Perfin Society of Great Britain (SEPS) as it was then, the library contained about half a dozen foreign language articles. Only one of these articles was accompanied by an English translation. In the intervening decade, the extent of the library has increased dramatically. It now contained complete files of five foreign-language periodicals devoted to perfins (two from Germany and one each from France, Czechoslovakia and Japan) also about 100 foreign language books and articles. As I do not read any foreign languages, the information in these publications is largely denied to me and, I presume, to most other members of the Perfin Society.

Since 1975 the contents of the library have been organized and publicised by means of "Perfin Abstracts". Each book, pamphlet and article in the library is included in Perfin Abstracts with its full bibliographic data and an abstract of its contents. Indexes are published periodically. Foreign language publications obviously formed a stumbling block to this systematic approach as I was unable to abstract and index them.

A legacy from my University days was a librarian who carried out technical translations for students, to alleviate the boredom of evening duty on the enquiry desk. We became friendly and even though I had departed the University some years earlier, she very kindly agreed to translate philatelic articles for me. Once the articles have been translated, I edit them and arrange for them to be typed. A copy of each translation is sent to the Perfins Club in the U.S.A. to be deposited in their library.

Inevitably, one translator could not cope with all the foreign languages in which articles I held were written. However, her linguistic ability did cope with French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Russian. Articles in the remaining languages; Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Polish, Hungarian, Czechoslovakian, Japanese, Dutch and Greek are translated through the good offices of the American Philatelic Society's translation committee under its Chairman, Dmytro Bykovetz, Jr.

Translating Periodicals Devoted to Perfins

In general, periodicals will contain signed articles, unsigned articles (generally written by the Editor) and Society news. Of course, a proportion of these (generally the Society news) will be of no permanent interest and therefore do not need to be translated from what should not require a knowledge of the language concerned and so we come the full circle.

The policy with respect to specialist periodicals devoted to perfins is to produce cover-to-cover translations (i.e. everything from the front cover to the back cover is translated). Critical selection can then be carried out prior to inclusion in Perfins Abstracts. The following periodicals are currently being translated cover-to-cover:-

1. BULLETIN DE LIAISON

Bulletin of the Association Nationale des Collectionneurs de Timbres Perfores (ANCOPER), Paris. Status: In progress, 40 plus issues -translated to date.

2. PERFINY

Bulletin of Kluben Filatelista 00-65 Kovoprojekta, Prague. Status: In progress, 80 plus issues - only about 20 issues have been translated. Further translations are in progress.

3. SENKO

Privately produced by Tadiski Adachi, Japan. Status: Ceased publication after 12 issues. Seven issues translated. Further translations are in progress.

4. ARBEITSCHEMEINSCHAFT PAL-LOCHUNGEN-RUNDBRIEF

Circular of the Pol-perfin Collectors' Society. Produced by Herbert Mocha, Helmstradt, West Germany. Status: Ceased publication after 24 issues - very few have been translated. Further translations are in progress.

5. LOCHUNGEN

Magazine of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Lochungen, West Germany.

This periodical has had various name changes prior to the adoption of its present title in April, 1982. Even the Society's name has been simplified from "Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft Firmen-und Behordliche Durchlochungen". Status: In progress, 40 plus issues.

About 15 have been translated. Further translations are in progress. (The first two issues were un-numbered).

TRANSLATING BOOKS, PAMPHLETS AND ARTICLES DEVOTED TO PERFINS

This category mainly consists of articles dealing with perfins published in general and specialist society periodicals. The books and pamphlets are generally either catalogues of the perfins of a particular country or merely include perfins as one part of a wider specialised study.

There are about 100 of these ad hoc items in the library and additions are being made at the rate of about 35 items per year.

LIST OF TRANSLATIONS

All translations, whether cover-to-cover or ad hoc are numbered serially. No separate indexes are available to the translations as they will eventually be incorporated in Perfins Abstracts and will then be indexed by both author and subject