

THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPECIALIST

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A.P.S. Unit 18

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POŠTA 1919 OVERPRINTS ON 4K AND 10K, GRANITE PAPER

Two "Doctored" Covers

By J. L. Klein & Fred Hefer

Increasingly, as methods of detection become more sophisticated, certifications of stamp authenticity by some of the old-time experts are proving to be highly suspect. A recent Rapp auction in Switzerland (early 1985) provides us another demonstration of the fallibility of experts like J. Lešetický.

Rapp's lot 4606 consisted of two absolutely beautiful covers bearing, respectively, examples of the 4K and 10K "Pošta 1919" overprints on granite paper, along with shade examples on ordinary paper. The Rapp description goes on to warn collectors that these covers "had been exhibited in Geneva in 1943. At that time they were still considered as genuine, each bearing a Lešetický certification (and on the reverse of the cover, in Lešetický's handwriting, a statement to the effect that the stamps are genuine also appears). In later years expert Mikulski found the overprints on the granite stamps to be faked." The other stamps were genuine, as was the postmark.

Both of us were interested in the covers because, even as partial forgeries, they are interesting items for a specialized "POŠTA" collection. Subsequently, J. L. Klein acquired the 10K cover, whose two genuine 10K stamps were of the violet and deep violet shades, plus the bonus of a 5f "Reaper" invert.

Fred Hefer eventually acquired the 4K cover, with its two genuine examples in the yellow-green and deep green shades.

Now to back-track a bit to complete the story. Of course many Pošta 1919 collectors had noticed this interesting item and comments began to reach us. Dr. Fischmeister wrote that seven years ago a dealer wanted him to expertize some thirty covers, all the "POŠTA" overprints, amongst these also 4K and 10K granite, all forgeries, some with forged signums of Lešetický and Gilbert, and Dr. Fischmeister wondered whether our two covers came from the same source. As will be demonstrated later, they did not.

The two covers were then sent to Jan Karásek, who said that the two granite indeed had forged overprints and that the other stamps were genuine. There is one puzzling detail: the two covers were dated 28.XII.19, and at that time people did not yet know how scarce the two granites were, so it is unlikely that some weeks after these overprints had been issued, forgeries were already made. That leads rather quickly to the possibility that the forgeries were added to the covers at a later date, if in fact the complete units were not fabricated at the same time. We also note that Zdeněk

Kvasnička, another well-known expert in these matters, said that the canceller "Praha 4e" used on the covers was genuine, even the one on the forged granites. He further points out that "4e" was used at the Philatelic Department of the Prague Main Postoffice. Some high officials almost certainly had access to this canceller and it would not have been difficult to back-date the postmark.

Both covers were now examined by Fred Hefer, who is an official expert, "Bundesprüfer," for Czechoslovakia postal items. He mostly agreed with the findings of Karásek and Mikulski and discussed the problem with the latter. He found out that these covers cannot be the same as those examined by Dr. Fischmeister some years ago, as the covers from the Swiss auction had been in a vault for some decades and — with other material — were sold only recently. The collection had belonged to a well-known Swiss manufacturer of elevators, who bought the covers in Prague.

Fred comments that this is obviously a well-prepared falsification that was tripped up by two major flaws: the inclination of the overprints is 48°, whereas the genuine overprints are 55°. The length of the "ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ" is 27.7 mm, and the genuine is 27 mm. There are some small differences in letter-types and the overprint color, according to Z. S. Mikulski. Fred fully agrees with Mr. Mikulski's findings and adds that there is a very slight 0.1 to 0.15 mm shift in the axis between "ČESKOSLOVENSKÁ" and "1919."

But how the making of these pieces took place can be only a matter of speculation. The covers were attested by Lešetický on 9.9.1924 in handwriting on the back of the covers. When comparing the handwriting with other examples from Lešetický, there is no doubt that the writing is the same. In addition there appears in the righthand area of each postmark an impression (best seen in the granite paper variety just below the cipher "1") of one of Lešetický's expertizing marks (he had several) along with an octagonal "star." It is also very curious that on all of the genuine stamps the star is below the expertizing mark, but on the 4K and 10K granite the positions are reversed. Is this accidental? Is there some other reason for this combination?

This particular instance casts doubt, often expressed over the years, that the expert Lešetický was as careful and conscientious as he might have been in assigning his mark to exceptional stamps. The fact that he wrote his attestation on the reverse of these covers raises serious doubts as to his competency as an expertizer, because other items he has approved have been found to be fraudulent also. It is also disturbing that he was known to be rather careless in the custody of his expertizing marks, with the unfortunate result that forgeries bearing his mark may in fact never have been examined by him. The validity of a Lešetický mark therefore has suffered in recent years.

All this points out that present-day expertizing facilities are much better than forty or more years ago and one cannot be too careful when buying "rare" stamps, especially "Poštas."

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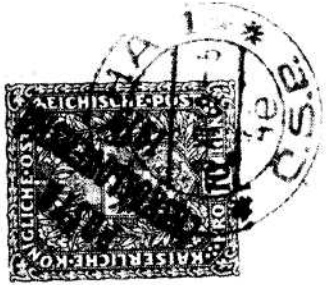
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N^o 65.



N^o 44



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9/19 24

HAPPY EIGHTIETH, ZDENĚK KVASNIČKA!

One of the pleasures of our hobby is the opportunity to meet fellow collectors in all parts of the world. These occasions usually blossom into enduring friendships and pleasant relationships. So it was that during a recent junket to Prague by members Fred Hefer, Hans Klein and Frank Julsen it was their pleasure to spend several days with the Zdeněk Kvasnička family, enjoying their hospitality and viewing with awe the wonderful items in Zdeněk's collection of Czechoslovak postal history.

We also learned, to our considerable surprise, that this alert and vigorous man soon would celebrate his eightieth birthday on the 26th of December. As a memento of the visit, Fred kindly snapped the photograph below, with Zdeněk and Hans Klein in the foreground and son Ivo Kvasnička and Frank Julsen behind. Ivo, by the way, also is an ardent philatelist, and he is particularly known for his fine collection of Scout stamps, about which he has written extensively.

While sincerely wishing Zdeněk continued good health and progress with his collections, we also borrow from a recent issue of *Filatelie* magazine a recounting of some of the honors his collections have been awarded over the years in national and international philatelic exhibitions. As far back as 1937 he was awarded "Gold" at Bratislava, followed by the Grand Award at Praha in 1940, another Gold at COMPLEX in Chicago (1958) and at BALPEX in Gdańsk and PRAGA 1962. His collection was in the Court of Honor at PRAG '68 (National Award) and PRAG '78 (Class of Honor). And in between he exhibited in many other national and international shows, his various collections always gaining high honors.

During these years, not content merely to exhibit his treasures, he devoted his time and energies to all phases of Czechoslovak philately, serving on many national juries, writing numerous articles dealing with specialized subjects, as well as contributing to the *Padelky* handbook and *Monografie I*. And of course he is also a recognized expert on all phases of Czechoslovakia postal history. Last but not least, over the years he has been a valuable contributor of articles to our *Czechoslovak Specialist* and is an Honorary Member of our society as well as the Club of Czechoslovak Philatelists. Zdeněk Kvasnička has had a long and distinguished career in Czechoslovak philately and we wish him many more active years in the hobby he has so well served. Happy birthday and many happy returns!



“REDISCOVERED” ARTS & SCIENCE TYPE

In the December 1965 issue of *The Czechoslovak Specialist* long-time member C. J. “Bud” Pearce co-authored with former member Frank J. Kosik a fine description of the recognized types of the Redrawn 1923 series:



Type I



Type II



Type III

The authors also chronicled the existence of what they termed Type IIIa, a constant variation found in all three denominations, wherein it had all the distinguishing marks of Type III with one very obvious exception: The rib of the leaf below the “O” of POŠTA resembles almost exactly that of Type II:



Type IIIa

This type can be found in vertical and horizontal pairs and strips in all three denominations, as well as in both perforations. However, because this distinguishing feature is so faint on *some* specimens—although very firm and distinct examples also can be found—the philatelic chroniclers generally ignored this variety in even the specialized catalogues. It might be added that the 100h of this type IIIa was reported in the CSR philatelic press in 1938, but then the matter dropped out of sight.

The purpose of this brief résumé of the Pearce-Kosik article of 20 years ago is to announce that recent research and attention by our Czech cousins to the subject will result in the recognition of this type in a future issue of “Filatelie,” to be followed later with a detailed brochure! Our congratulations to the Pearce-Kosik team for its early recognition of this definite type — and for its patience in awaiting vindication.

NEW ISSUES

By G. M. van Zanten, Courtesy ARTIA of Prague

Member Gerald M. van Zanten kindly has offered to chronicle new issues for the *SPECIALIST* on a regular basis. He has an arrangement set up with Artia, under which he is sent examples of all new issues. This will ensure prompt reporting as soon as the "system" falls into place. Meanwhile, we will report on 1985 issues as information reaches us. Our sincere thanks to Gerald for the "helping hand."

On the 3rd June two commemorative stamps were issued for the *Czechoslovak Spartakiade*.



A 50h stamp in black, blue, light blue, red and yellow, it bears a picture portraying older pupils exercising with rackets and balls.

A 1Kčs stamp in black, red, blue, yellow and green, it bears a picture from the gymnastic performance of young girls with scarves. In the background is a fine silhouette of Prague Castle.

Both stamps were engraved by Václav Fajt and designed by Zdeněk Filip. And printed by the Tiskárna Spojů printing works of Prague.

On the 4th June three stamps were issued to commemorate "*Artists-Fighters against*



Fascism."

A 50h stamp Josef Čapek 1887–1945 in black, blue, brown and pink. Josef Čapek was the elder brother of the outstanding writer Karel Čapek. He died at the very end of the war in April 1945 in Belsen camp. A 2Kčs stamp František Bidlo 1895–1945 in black, blue, ochre and red. Bidlo was a drawer and caricaturist; the stamp shows Bidlo's caricatures "The Conference on Disarmament in Geneva" (1927) and "The Prophecy of Three Parrots" (1933).

A 4Kčs stamp Antonín Pelc 1895–1967 in black, blue, green and ochre. Pelc was professor at the Academy of Creative Arts, painter, graphic artist and caricaturist.

The stamp shows two caricatures, on the left is "The Unknown Warrior to Order" (1936) and the "Almost Peaceful Dove" (1937).

The engraver in each case was Ladislav Jirka.

Artistic designs are the work of Zbyněk Kočvar.

Rotary die stamping combined with multicoloured gravure printing in sheets of fifty stamps.

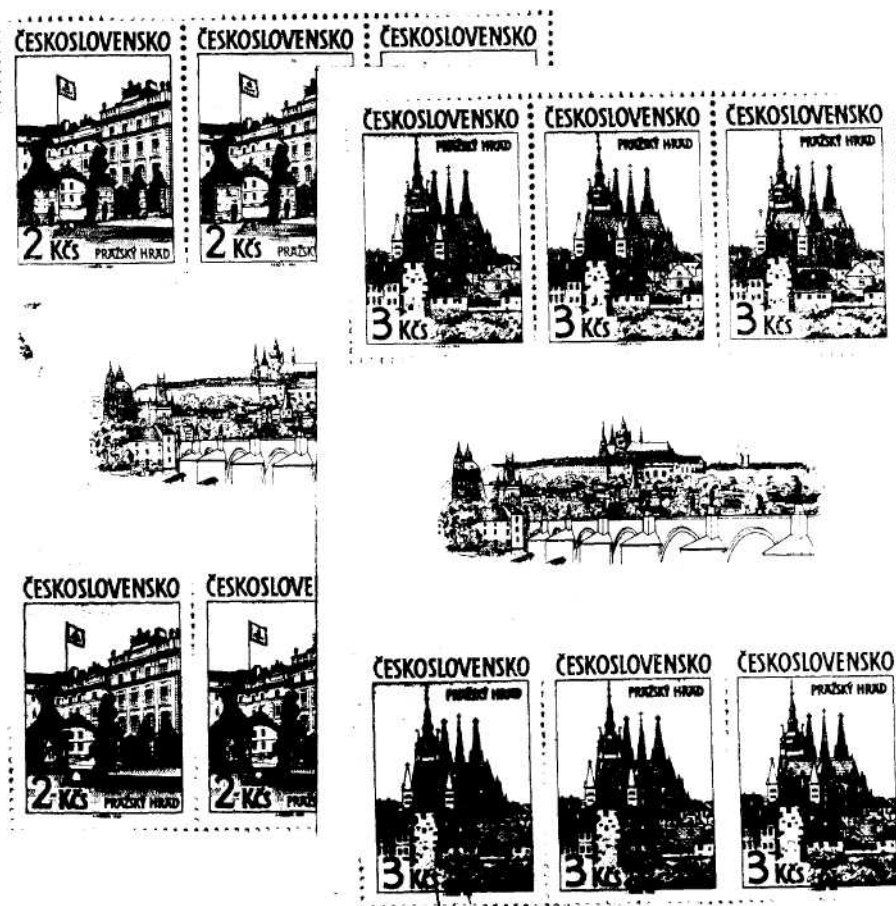
Printed by the Tiskárna Spojů printing works in Prague.

On the 28th October, two stamps were issued in the Prague Castle series in values of 2Kčs and 3Kčs.

The 2Kčs stamp is in: red, black, blue and ochre; it bears a picture showing the entrance gate to the first courtyard of the castle, surrounded on three sides by majestic palaces. The richly decorated entrance gate is the work of sculptor Ignac Platzer the elder from 1768. The Presidential flag shows above the palace and by the gate the Castle guards can be seen.

The 3Kčs stamp is in: black, red, blue and ochre as well as green; this stamp shows Prague Castle as viewed from the East. This view is also very interesting and indicates the architecture of the palaces, gates and towers, forming in all an unforgettable picture.

The emission is printed in sheets of six stamps. The strip between the stamps shows a panoramic view of Prague Castle as seen across the river Vltava, behind the Charles Bridge and the Little Quarter with all its historical churches, palaces and ancient houses. Graphic design and engravings are the work of Artist Josef Herčík. Rotary recess print technique combined with multi-colour photo-gravure and printed in sheets of 6 stamps and graphic decoration. Size of the pictorial part of the stamps is 26 × 40 mm. Printed by Tiskárna spojů in Prague.



HRADCANY 25h (SCOTT #29) COMPOUND PERFORATED

Ed Note: This is a condensation of an original article submitted by Ludvik Pytlíček, one of the leading Czech philatelists.

The issues of Hradčany are very interesting and are constantly studied, leading to new knowledge and discovery. One recent discovery is the 25 violet Hradčany type V, compound perforated $11\frac{1}{2} + 11\frac{1}{2} + 11\frac{1}{2} + 13\frac{3}{4}$. Specialized collectors of Czechoslovak stamps know this stamp with the following perforations: line perforated $11\frac{1}{2}$, $11\frac{1}{2}:10\frac{3}{4}$ and because of a fault in the perforating machine, emergency line perforated $13\frac{3}{4}:11\frac{1}{2}$, and line perforated $13\frac{3}{4}:10\frac{3}{4}$. Such perforations are known on plates I-IV. Prior to the recent discovery compound perforations were only known on Hradčany 15h and 30h values which are listed in the Pofis catalog, as well as in the Specialized Czechoslovak Catalog issues in 1978.

Recently I obtained a horizontal strip of four of the Hradčany violet 25h from Plate I with joined types, plate positions 11-14. The strip of four contains two joined types, i.e., between positions 11 and 12, and between positions 13 and 14. All four stamps are perforated $11\frac{1}{2}$ except for the skew row of $13\frac{3}{4}$ (See Illustration No. 1). On this illustration we can also observe differing distances between the vertical perforations.



Illustration No. 1

The first stamp measures 33mm between vertical perforations, stamp 2 only 30mm, stamp 3 33mm, and stamp 4 30mm. Such irregular vertical spacing was created by machine malfunction.

My amazement was even greater when shortly after I received a horizontal strip of four stamps of the same issue and denomination with the upper horizontal row doubly perforated $13\frac{3}{4}$, and above that $11\frac{1}{2}$. Examination by enlargement and comparison with the original perforation of $13\frac{3}{4}$ showed that the perforation $13\frac{3}{4}$ is in all respects genuine.

With this discovery there became known an entirely new compound perforation type of the 25 Hradčany, i.e., line $11\frac{1}{2} + 11\frac{1}{2} + 11\frac{1}{2} + 13\frac{3}{4}$. The rarity of the item (Illustration 2) is enhanced by the fact that it is from Plate I, where the third stamp position is of spiral type I, hence providing joined types with plate positions 2 and 4 having type II spirals.



Illustration No. 2

The strip was earlier back stamped by Prof. Gilbert.

It is quite probable that similar discoveries will be made in the future as studies of perforations continue.

Ludvík Pytlíček

VALIDITY OF POSTAGE DUES FOR REGULAR FRANKING ENDS

We have been informed by correspondents in Czechoslovakia that the validity of Postage Due issues for ordinary franking was to have ended on December 1, 1985. Ironically, the letter providing this piece of news was franked with Postage Due stamps and postmarked in Prague AFTER that date.

Additional information on the abandonment of these Postage Due stamps is being sought; available information will be published as soon as received.

Henry Hahn

(Ed. comment: to back up Mr. Hahn's experience, the Editor has just received a Registered letter bearing copies of the 6Kč 1946 Postage Due stamps, clearly postmarked Prague December 18, as well as another regular letter bearing mixed frankings of 1946 and 1972 Postage Dues, the latter also from Prague dated the 13th of December. Let's see whether their use continues into 1986. Actually, one would suspect continued use of these stamps until present supplies are exhausted.)

FURTHER ON SEIZINGER

In further reference to the J. L. Klein article — "An Update on Professor Karl Seizinger" — in the November issue, we are grateful to Captain Jimmy Bootsma of Amsterdam for the very helpful background information he supplied about Professor Seizinger's work. Mention of his help was omitted inadvertently at the end of the article.

BUY - SELL - AUCTION

CZECHOSLOVAKIA PHILATELIC HEADQUARTERS

SEE Charley Chesloe at: Cicero-Berwyn Stamp Bourse
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Berwyn, Illinois

On first Sundays at Society Meetings only 9:00 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. or write to:
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8300 S. Wolf Road
Willow Springs, Illinois 60480

WANTED

Provisional newspaper stamps (Nouzové novinové nálepky) 1918–1919. Everything of interest: mint, used, blocks, used on entire wrappers, varieties, etc. Single items or collection. Kindly reply by AIR MAIL to Stig Asklund, P.O. Box 14604, Nairobi, Kenya.

PERFORATION OF CZECHOSLOVAK POSTAL STAMPS (1918-1939)

Table of occurrence — Dove TTT
Value Hal.

Perforation	5 (m)	5 (f)	10 (z)	10 (0)	15	20	25	30
CP-HZ 14	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CP-RZ 13¼	xxx	x	xxx	x		x		
CP-HZ 14 (LH)		xx	x					

Table of occurrences — Liberated Republic TT
20, 25
Value in hellers

Perforation	30, 50c	40 I	40 II	50 (z)	60	100	150	185
CP-HZ 14	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
RP-ŘZ 13¼		xx	x	xx	x	xx	xx	
CP-HZ 14 LH		x	xxx		x			

Table of occurrences — Husbandry and science T
Value in hellers

Perforation	100, 200	300	400	500	800
CP-HZ 13¾:13½		x		xx	xxx
LP-ŘZ 13¾	x	x	x	x	x

Table of occurrences — Postage due Provisional TT
Provisional 1922 Provisional 1926 Provisional 1927

Perforation	303/15 hal.	40/15 hal.	40/300 hal.	all other values	100 hal.	all other values
CP-HZ 11½	x	x				
CP-HZ 13¾:13½	x	x	xx	x		
LP-ŘZ 13¾	x	x	x	x	xx	xx (5/150)
LP-ŘZ 13¾:11½	xxx	xx				
LP-ŘZ 11½	xxx	xxx				
LP-ŘZ 11½:10¾	xxx	xxx				
CP-HZ 14					x	x

Table of occurrence — Airmail stamps of 1930 TTT

Perforation	Value in korunas					
	50 hal.	1 K	2 K	3 K	5 K	20 K
ŘZ 13¾	x	x	x	x	x	x
ŘZ 12¼	xx	xx	xx		xxx	x
ŘZ						
12½:13¾		x				
ŘZ						
13¾:12¼			xx			xxx

Legend

xxx = sole occurrence
 xx = sole current occurrence
 x = normal occurrence

LP-ŘZ = Line perforation
 HP-RZ = Harrow perforation
 CP-HZ = Comb perforation

4.3. Examples of the rarer type of perforations
 (Sole occurrence of perforation)



Illustration 65. Block of four 600 hellers, violet
 HZ 13¾:13½



Illustration 66.
 30-heller reddish violet, ŘZ 13¾.



Illustration 67.
 50-heller blue and 120-heller violet, ŘZ 10½.



Illustration 69. Block of six 15-heller orange red,
 RZ $13\frac{3}{4}:13\frac{3}{4}$ ($\pm 3 \times ST$ — combined type).



Illustration 70. Block of four 30-heller reddish violet,
 HZ $11\frac{3}{4}$ + RZ $13\frac{3}{4}$.

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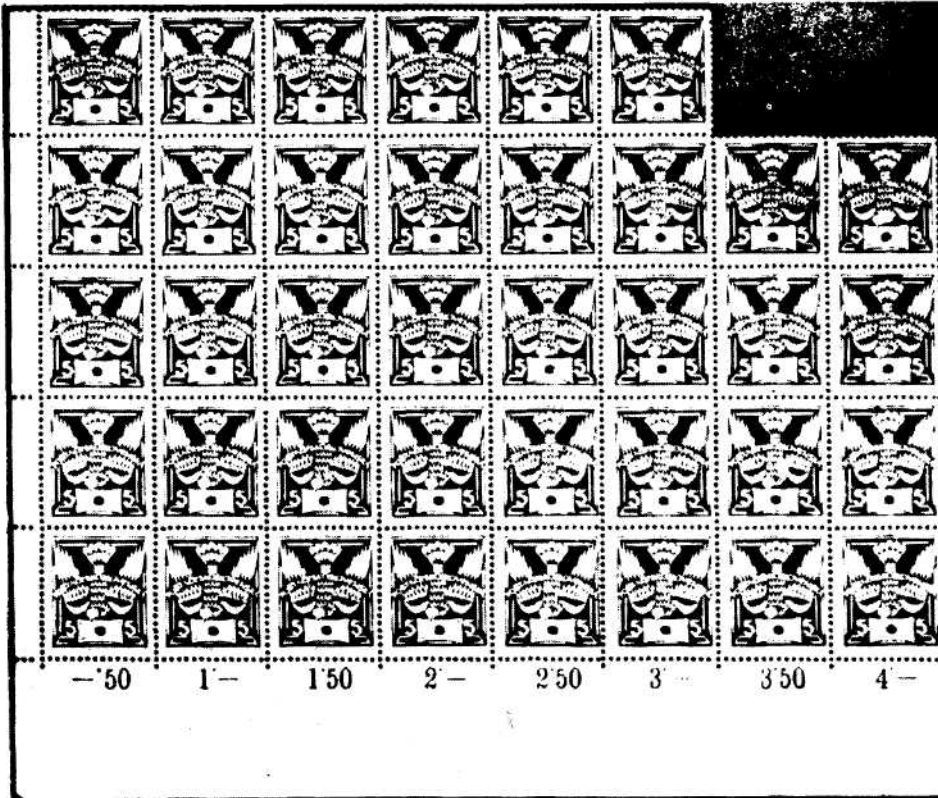
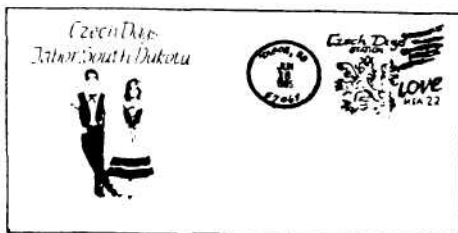


Illustration 71. Sheet of 5-heller violet (38 Hvl) HZ 14
(Horizontal comb).

Our readers have undoubtedly noticed that, in the presentation of this translation of the Karásek article, the numbering sequence of the illustrations frequently interrupted. This does not mean that we have omitted any illustrations; the omissions are in the original text.

* * *



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FROM THE EDITOR

We owe an explanation — and apology — to our European members for the lack of delivery of their copies of the *SPECIALIST* since the May-June issue. In an attempt to accelerate the delivery of their copies, an arrangement had been made with a source in Germany whereby the issues were shipped in bulk by air mail to this source, which in turn was to have immediately posted the copies to European addresses. When this system first was inaugurated it resulted in copies being delivered to our European members within ten days. If they had been posted here in the States, as usual 2nd Class postal material, the deliveries would have involved a 5 to 6 week period. It has just come to the Editor's attention that this source failed to post these issues; in fact they have finally made their way back to the States and have been readdressed and posted. By the time this January issue will have reached our European members they should have received the delinquent copies. If by any chance a member has not received the May-June, September, October, November and December issues, please advise the Publication office at 2936 Rosemoor Lane, Fairfax, VA 22031 and copies will be sent to you.

As I mentioned in the May-June issue, we are making every effort to put the publication of the *SPECIALIST* on a timely and regular basis. With this January issue we will have accomplished that objective. A new effort will be made to establish another European distribution point; if that cannot be arranged, we shall post the issues as has been done in the past via surface mail except for those who specify air mail delivery when they renew their membership.

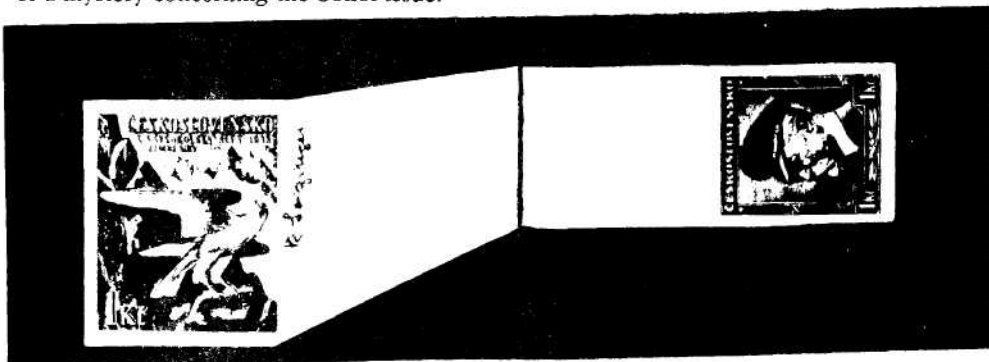
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1445 KOLPEK, Jeff, 2251B Winterry Dr., Lexington, KY 40504
1446 EMRICK, Michael, 1229 Sixth Ave., No., Nashville, TN 37208

SEIZINGER AND HEINZ

By J. L. Klein

This curious and very rare pairing of a signed Seizinger die proof of the 1 K \check{c} 1938 Sokol Games stamp and a Heinz proof of the 1935 1 K \check{c} Masaryk portrait is a reminder of a mystery concerning the Sokol issue.



There seems to be little doubt that the basic design and original engraving were Seizinger's work. There exists an original drawing in the 50h version, signed by Seizinger:



original design by X. Seizinger; final engraving by B. Heinz.

However, the issued stamps bear credit lines for C. BOUDA as designer and B. HEINZ as engraver:



How and why Bouda and Heinz entered the picture is not known. Although the Heinz engraving follows Seizinger's design very faithfully, his shading technique results in a "lighter" overall effect. In truth, the Heinz engraving could probably be considered an improvement. However, the Bouda contribution to the final product is difficult to determine unless in fact he did prepare a new sketch which Heinz used as a guide in doing his engraving; but that seems somewhat unnecessary since the original Seizinger sketch and die already were available. It is a mystery that seems to have no solution unless one of our members can provide information not known to me.

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