

G. B. PERFIN STUDY GROUP NEWS-LETTER

No. 16 Jan.-Feb. 1960

Subscription 5/- per annum.

PRESIDENT: C.Jennings, Esq.,
SEC/EDITOR: R.Bowman, Esq.,
ASSISTANT EDITOR: C.Carr Esq. & R Bowman Esq.
PACKET.SUP: J.Rucklidge, Esq.,

PERFIN ALBUM PAGES

The samples of perfin album pages have now come to hand and a copy is included with this issue of the bulletin. These pages are a part of the third consignment of 5,000 received by The Peerless Album Company of the U.S.A. from their printers and are offered at \$1 (7/-) for 35.

They appear to be extremely popular in the States and recently an exhibit mounted on only nine of them won a 2nd place medal at the National APS Soscal Show in Los Angeles. Prior to this the same exhibit has won modals at the Illinois, Wisconsin, and Florida Federation Stamp Club shows.

If any members are interested in purchasing some of these pages perhaps they would write to the Secretary who will place a bulk order and distribute same on arrival in this country.

EXCHANGE PACKET

The packet seems to be running fairly smoothly although just recently a snag has cropped up which necessitates adding a further rule.

Too many common varieties are being sent in and obtaining a credit of 1/- per hundred without there being any chance whatever of selling them. In one recent lot, out of a count of 400 there were only 7 different types, and one of these accounted for 150 of the total.

Obviously, since the exchange is intended to be non profit making it can not continue to stand such a loss as this, therefore, the following clause will be added to the rules already published,

'The Packet Superintendent will reserve the right to return any perfiris to selling members which are thought to be unsaleable for any reason, credit being given for only those retained'.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Rev. W. West

PERFIN SOURCES

Mr C.H. Spencer
has foreign and British Colonial perfins for sale or exchange.

Mr Spencer is a retired Bank Manager and obtains his perfins from 1st class bank lots.

PERFIN IDENTIFICATION

This issue carries a six page article by Mr Van Lint on the subject of identifying perfins.

There appears to be a great deal of truth in what he says about the manner in which we and our American colleagues describe perfins in our catalogues. Indeed, upon reading his article and studying many British perfins we are forced to the conclusion that our system, has been over elaborated. A much simpler system could be adopted.

It would be a bit difficult to introduce a new system at This juncture for we are now well on the way with our re-listing. However, the Secretary would like to receive members comments on this subject, and perhaps a discussion could be held in future bulletins before settling on another method.

You will see one suggestion in the Editorial comments on pages 6 and 8.

PERFIN IDENTITIES

Our last issue contained a number of probable identities from the Warrington district and to add to this we have received two further 'probables' from Mr Young. They are,

- | | | | | | |
|----|-------|----|-----------|-------|----------------------|
| 1. | SH/CC | 2H | 10,12/8,8 | 5 | St. HELENS CABLE Co. |
| 2. | RB/W | 2H | 19/15 | 5½/5½ | RYLANDS BROTHERS |

In No.2 the R is reversed and its vertical stem is combined with that of B.

In addition to this we have an apology to make for a mistake in one of Mr Young's identifications given in our last issue. The user of the H./L. perfin should have been HARRODS LIMITED and not HOWARDS LIMITED.

LINE ENGRAVED LISTS

The remaining pages of the Line Engraved lists have been omitted from this issue due to the holiday period leaving insufficient time to type the stencils.

These lists will be concluded in March-April number.

PERFIN ILLUSTRATIONS

The bulk order for copies of Mr Van Lint's G.B. Perfin illustrations was placed on 31st January. The Secretary wishes to thank those who had ordered previously and remitted promptly but would ask them to remain patient whilst awaiting delivery. Having set a closing date it was necessary to allow members the full period of time before ordering.

Anyone who did not order through the Secretary and is now desirous of obtaining a copy should write direct to Mr Van Lint enclosing a Remittance of 54/-.

By : Victor J. Van Lint.

This article first appeared in the S.P.A Journal and the original has, with Mr Van Lint's permission, been altered in some respects to obviate the need for illustrations.

Practically from the very moment that stamps came into use complaints were heard about employees stealing them. Something had to be done to protect the owner and after several other means had been tried with little or no success, the perfin method showed promising aspects. It was adopted and officially sanctioned in G.B. in 1868 but in the U.S.A. not until 1908. Gradually its use spread until today perfins are being used in a total of 129 countries all over the world, by more than 26000 firms.

Anybody interested in this matter may obtain a mimeographed list of the names of those countries by sending a self addressed stamped envelope to the writer at 8163, Sewell Avenue, Fontana, California.

Gradually, perfins began attract the attention of the collector. The earliest known publication on this subject is of 1933, when the English writer Hugh Vallancey published a booklet with the results of several years of his research in this matter.

Here and there collectors started concentrating on perfins and it was of course natural that they should establish contact with each other, and feeling the need for exchange of information, formed a group. Thus, the PERFIN CLUB was formed in the U.S.A., which is now the national representation of perfln collectors, has an active membership of over 200, issues a monthly bulletin, and operates an exchange system.

Exchange of information made it imperative that a proper system of identifying and describing perfins should be available. The first attempt at this is credited to John W. Dow. He based his system on the number of holes letter was 'high' and a total of some 20 groups into which the different arrangements of the letters in a perfin could be fitted.

Through the years improvements upon this system were proposed and perfin collectors in other countries developed identification systems of their own. Basically there are at present three systems to identify perfins in use, American, Dutch and British.

In the American system a perfin is identified by first describing the arrangement of its letters; for instance H means in one horizontal line, 2H in two lines, M means monogram, and D means diagonally. Next the millimetre height of each letter is stated.

As an example, a perfin Bk/CAL appearing on the stamp in two horizontal lines and having letters comprised of the following number of holes B = 13 K = 9 C = 7 A = 8 L = 6, would be listed as

Bk/CAL 2H 6,4/4 BANK OF CALIFORNIA

The Dutch perfin collectors felt it necessary to add to this the total number of holes of the perfin for them to obtain a proper identification. Thus, according to the Dutch system the proper description of the same perfin would be,

Bk/CAL 2H 64/4,43 BANK OF CALIFORNIA

The method used by the British Perfin Study Group is much more elaborate. It lists first the number of holes of each separate letter and follows this up with the millimetre size of each letter or row of letters. Looking at the previous example under the British system it would be listed as,

Bk/CAL 2H 13,9/7,8,6 6,4/4 BANK OF CALIFORNIA

Now, nobody will deny that philately in whichever of its many varied forms and specialities first of all is, always has been, and all ways must be, a hobby. As soon as it should become a drudgery it is bound to lose many of its friends and addicts. And hardly anybody will disagree with the statement that measuring 5 to 7 letters in millimetres, and then counting all the holes in each letter and then making an accurate record of all this is a far cry from the kind of pleasure we are looking for in stamp collecting. Such a procedure is too time consuming. It is a strain on the eyes and is by far too monotonous to produce the relaxation and the feeling of well-being we are looking for when indulging in philately. Quite a good reason, therefore, to be on the lookout for a simpler system.

Many years of experience with perfins have convinced me that these elaborate methods are totally unwarranted, uncalled for and unnecessary.

Measuring to a tolerance of a quarter of a millimetre does not make sense when it is being considered that the dies in perfin machines are individually made and therefore in themselves may, and probably have, differences in size of that order. Also, the measuring tools commonly available to the collector are far too crude, to even to attempt to determine a difference of a quarter of a millimetre with any amount of accuracy.

I have found that at least 97% of all perfins can be properly identified and later relocated in the collection by giving besides the code describing their configuration, only the size of the 'key' letter, that is the first letter met when approaching the perfin from the left and the one under which the perfin should be alphabetically classified.

Thus, in my collection the perfin already used as an example is identified as,

Bk/CAL 2H 6

The remaining 3% are perfins in which the key letter measures the same but differs from others in design and arrangement of holes, and so its height alone does not give proper identification. Or, maybe there are differences in the configuration of the second letter of the perfin. Something, therefore, has to be added to the description of these perfins to properly identify them.

This of course can be done by counting all the holes of the perfin but that is something we want to avoid if possible.

We look, therefore, first at the configuration of the key-letter for a clue to differentiation. Let us use the U.S. perfin WP as an example. We see that in seven different types the W is constructed of two outside stems and an inner arrangement of holes. To describe such a letter by reference to the holes in each of its lines we call the first one a '64 W', because there are 6 holes in each of its vertical lines and a total of 4 holes in its inner structure. Another of the seven is a '63 W'. Two others are '75 W' and here we shall have to go the 'P' for a further clue. One of these we can call a '77 P' since it has 7 holes in the vertical stem and 7 holes in the bend of the P. The second, on a similar basis would be a '66 P'.

This method gives a proper and easy way to differentiate between perfins of the same letters and the same size. Usually it does not involve counting of too many holes. Actually it often can be seen at a glance.

Other letters that can be treated in this way are A,H,M,N. Sometimes all that is necessary is the number of_holes, contained in the vertical stem. Letters for which this method can be used are:- B,D,E,F,K,L,P,R,T & V. For round letters there is no other solution than to count all the holes:- C,G,J,O,S & U.

Sometimes, as said above, we have to go to the second letter of a perfin for the necessary differentiation. The British perfin 'BC' is a good, example of this, although there are many many more throughout the entire perfin field of this fact. There are 13 known different perfins on British stamps with the initials 'BC'. (Actually there are 24 different but this does not in anyway affect Mr Van Lint's argument. Editor.) Table 1 gives a list of them with their different characteristics. In table 2 a comparison is given between the three different identification systems and the simplified system discussed herein. It shows that the latter is indeed simpler and more attractive whilst still giving proper identification.

Next I want to discuss some perfins which even defy the Simplified system, let alone the three other ones. These are CL of Credit Lyonnaise, CN of Credit National, both French banking concerns with numerous branch offices all over France and the Italian perfin CI of Credito Italiano, an Italian banking firm also having a large number of branch offices.

It is very difficult to recognise the minute differences Between the several perfins of these groups used in the numerous branch offices. So difficult indeed that in fact at first one is inclined to believe that there is no system at all in their design but that someone just at random has placed the holes in a queer order. However, carefull and painstaking studies eventually revealed the design pattern and the logic of the apparent madness of these perfins.

Let us look at the Italian perfin CI as an example.

All the perfins of this general description can be divided into four major groups:

- 1 - No full stops.
- 2 - Full stop behind C only.
- 3 - Full stop behind I only.
- 4 - With both full stops.

Next we set up a code to describe the I by a two digit figure, the first digit giving the number of holes in one serif of the I, and the second digit giving the number of holes in the stem in between the two serifs.

We can now set up a table describing all perfins belonging to group 1 as given in table 3. Similar tables are made for the different perfins of the other three groups. By sorting our CI perfins according to these four groups first, and analysing the four assortments with the aid of these tables, one can come to the proper identification of each and every one of them.

It is amazing that the same general system is also applicable to the two French perfins CL and CN.

Tables for the proper identification of the many varieties of these perfins have been composed and have been in use for a relatively long time with complete satisfaction.

From the foregoing we can, therefore, draw the following conclusions;

- 1- Identification of perfins does not have to be a tedious job.
- 2- The simplified system as described herein gives complete and satisfactory identification.
- 3- There are some perfins for which more detailed tables have to be composed to make proper identification possible.
- 4- There is a lot of very interesting research and sleuthing to be found in the perfin field.

-0000000-

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Studying the 24 known types of the British perfin BC shows that there is a great deal in what Mr Van Lint suggests. In fact this particular example will lend itself to an even simpler system. Looking at table 1 it is apparent that no two types of the same height have the same number of holes in T, that is considering similar types with and without stops as two distinct types. This is also true of the unlisted remainder. Thus, to describe these all that would be necessary is, the configuration, the height of B, and the number of holes in B. Such a code might read,

BC,H,5,15

Perfin	Vertical size in mm	Number of holes in		Total Number Of Holes	No. of Holes In Vert. Stem Of B
		B	C		
BC	4	11	8	19	4
BC	4	12	9	21	4
BC	4½	11	7	18	4
B.C	5	14	8	23	5
BC	5½	13	8	21	5
BC	5½	15	8	23	5
B.C.	5½	13	8	23	5
B.C	5½	13	8	22	5
BC.	5½	17	8	26	5
BC	6	15	10	25	5
BC	6	14	9	23	5
BC.	6	13	8	22	5
BC	7	14	10	24	6

Table 2.

Perfin	American	Dutch	British	Simplified
BC	H 4, 4	H 4, 4.19	H 4, 4 11, 8	4, 8 h c
BC	H 4, 4	H 4, 4, 21	H 4, 4 12.9	4, 9 h C
BC	H 4½, 4½	H 4½, 4½, 18	H 4½, 4½ 11, 7	4½
B.C	H 5, 5	H 5, 5, 23	H 5, 5 14, 8	5
BC	H 5½, 5½	H 5½, 5½, 23	H 5½, 5½ 13, 8	5½, 13 h B
BC	H 5½, 5½	H 5½, 5½, 23	H 5½, 5½ 15, 8	5½, 15 h B
B.C.	H 5½, 5½	H 5½, 5½, 23	H 5½, 5½ 13, 8	5½
B.C	H 5½, 5½	H 5½, 5½, 22	H 5½, 5½ 13, 8	5½
BC.	H 5½, 5½	H 5½, 5½, 26	H 5½, 5½ 17, 8	5½ hole in C
BC	H 6, 6	H 6, 6, 25	H 6, 6 15, 10	6, 10 h C
BC	H 6, 6	H 6, 6, 23	H 6, 6 14, 9	6, 9 h C
BC.	H 6, 6	H 6, 6, 21	H 6, 6 13, 8	6, 8 h C
BC	H 7, 7	H 7, 7, 24	H 7, 7 14, 10	7

Table 3.
Italian Perfin C I Without Stops

Type No.	Size	Arranged According To Size		Arranged According ype To Number Of Holes In 'C' =		Type No.
		Holes In C	Code For I	Holes in C	Code For I	
1	6½	8	33	8	33	1
2	6½	9	33	8	24	7
3	6½	10	33	9	33	2
4	7	9	33	9	33	4
5	7½	13	34	10	33	3
6	7½	11	35	10	35	14
7	8	8	24	11	25	6
8	8	11	35	11	35	8
9	8	12	07	11	34	10
10	8½	11	34	11	35	12
11	9½	13	35	12	07	9
12	10	11	35	12	35	13
13	10	12	35	12	35	15
14	10½	10	35	13	34	5
15	11	12	35	13	35	11

EDITORIAL COMMENT

We are open to correction but it seems to us that these perfins can also be described by the 'simpler' simplified system already suggested on page 6.

A glance at columns 2 and 3 above show that, like the British perfin BC, no two types of the same height have the same number of holes in the first letter.

PERFIN ILLUSTRATIONS

The preparation of the negatives for the complete set of G.B. Perfin Illustrations has now been completed by Mr Van Lint, and he is offering them to British members at a reduced price for a limited period only.

The catalogue consists of 123 pages containing a total of 9,550 illustrations of different types.

If ordered through the Secretary before 31/1/60 the price will be \$5 (36/-).

After that date the illustrations must be ordered directly from Mr Van Lint and will cost \$7.50 (54/-).

An Order Form is attached below for your convenience.

The catalogues arrive in this country as a bulk order and will then be distributed individually by the Secretary. It is estimated that postage and packing in the British Isles will cost approximately 1/6d per copy, therefore, the price of a set, including postage on this side of Atlantic, will have to be 37/6d.

We hope that all members will find it possible to take advantage of this offer since it will simplify the task of recording identities immensely. To refer to a particular type it would only be necessary to quote the page number, line, and position in the line. This can easily be done by means of a simple code, e.g. 112/5/7.

Remember also, that cut up the illustrations would give a perfect picture of a type when mounted in the album.

G.B. PERFIN ILLUSTRATIONS

Please order me set(s) of the above illustrations at the rate of 37/6d per copy.

I enclose cheque/postal order No.....for..... to cover cost and postage in this country.

Upon receipt please send the copy/copies to

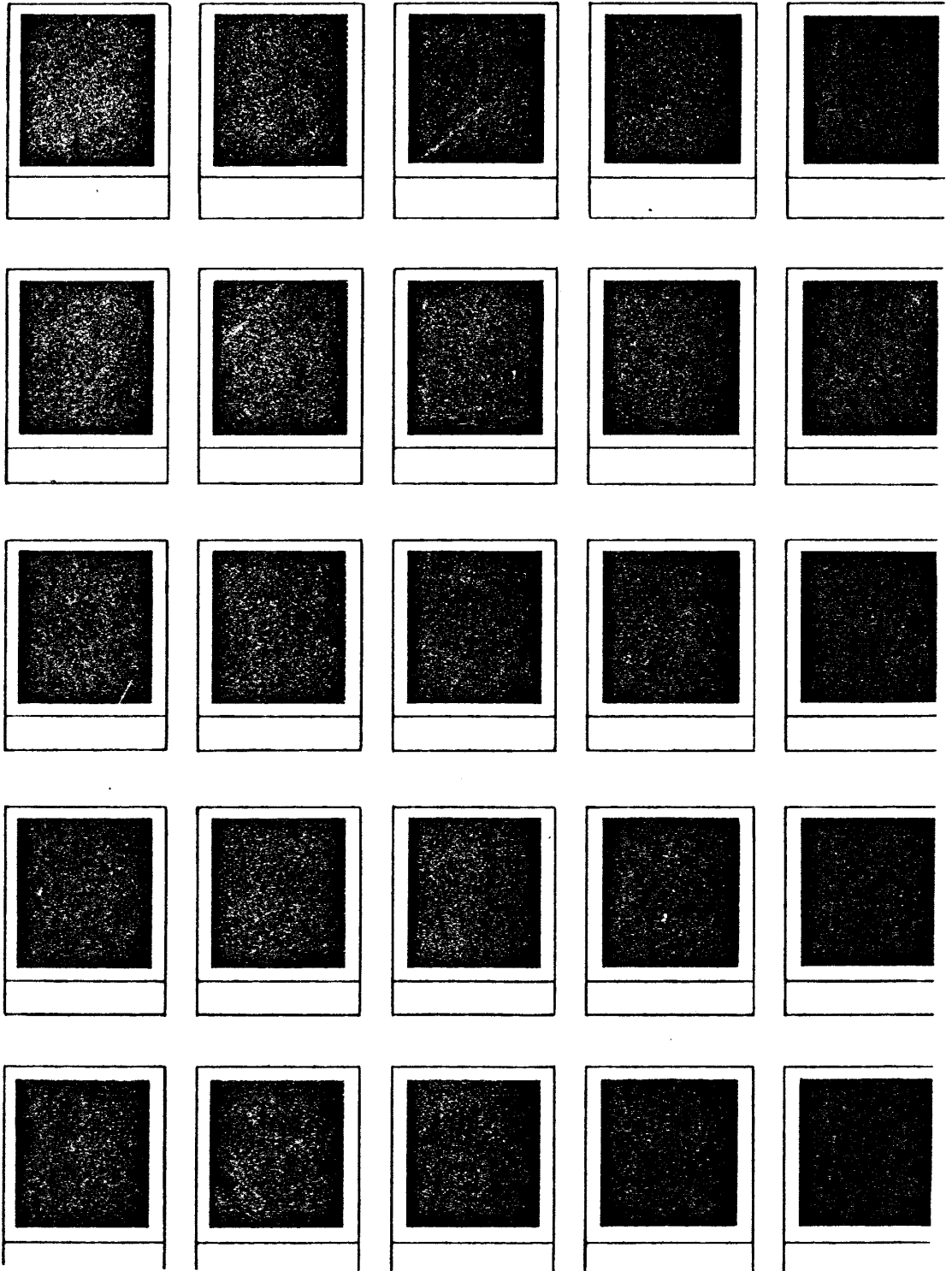
.....

Signed Date

PERFIN



COLLECTION -



© 1957 PERFECTION COMPANY, AURORE, ILL.