

G. B. PERFIN STUDY GROUP

NEWS-LETTER

No. 38 November 1962

Subscription 10/- per annum.

PRESIDENT: C.Jennings, Esq.,
SEC/EDITOR: R.Bowman, Esq.,
PACKET.SUP: J.Rucklidge, Esq.,
LIBRARIAN: G. Holden, Esq.,
EDITOR: V. Terry, Esq.,

PRESIDENT'S RESIGNATION - a note from the Secretary -

Immediately following this note you will find a letter from our President, Mr. Jennings, tendering his resignation and giving his reasons for doing so. We have attempted to dissuade him from taking this course but he is adamant in the view that to do otherwise would be against his principles.

It is with the deepest regret that we have to accept the inevitable, particularly as the fault is really mine. Mr. Nelson submitted his letter to me with the express wish that it be destroyed if I considered it to be too strong a line to take.

I was of the opinion, and I still believe it to be true, that Mr. Jennings would welcome criticism. His original intention in writing in the manner he did was to stimulate interest and to endeavour to work out a formula whereby we could attract more members.

It was because of this that I passed on, unaltered, Mr. Nelson's letter for publication. It did not occur to me that the disclosure of Mr. Jennings' professional status was breaking a confidence or that it would make his office of President untenable.

For this I am most deeply sorry and tender my sincere apologies to Mr. Jennings for not giving the matter more thought. I truly hope he will continue to give us the guidance and assistance as a private member as he did as President.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

To the Editor

Dear Sir,

Mr. Nelson has been aroused to champion the cause of preserving the name "Perfins". If only the energy and spirit which he shows were shared by other members in other directions we should be a real live-wire body instead of a somnambulant 'underground' movement of the body philatelic. If only the correspondence on this matter had appeared in the philatelic press, I am sure we should have had dozens of new members keen to join no matter what the name of the Group might be.

However, Mr. Nelson has made some remarks which need some reply.

He states that 'under and over-prints do not form a worth while part of the Group's activities. Why not?. Are they not the forerunners of punctures Are they not part and parcel of the same subject ?. Is it possible that Mr. Nelson is only interested in stamps which can be acquired for hardly any outlet. Does he not realise that if the interest and scope

of the hobby is widened and demand stepped up, these stamps he has already acquired would appreciate in value and would he not be prepared at a time of selling to take advantage of such appreciation ?. Surely every stamp collector seeks to have something of value in his collection although it may not have cost him much when he acquired it otherwise all collections would be in the 'schoolboy' category. I believe the real fault lies with too many members wishing to consider 'punctures' as an amusing side-line but who are not prepared to make it their main study. I have long ago discarded all other collections and have used the money obtained from them to carry out my own researches. Punctures are my main and only collection and not just a side-line to other 'collections. I would hesitate to say, however, that I was the only member in the Group to collect them seriously, otherwise I should think I was wasting my time.

I would like to point out that I was the first to take up the work of Hugh Vallency and Charles Bein and to study their collections and to have correspondence with them on this subject. I was the first to clarify and classify the types of ampersands and the first to write for the philatelic press a really comprehensive article of several pages over two issues of a well-known stamp magazine. It must be quite obvious, therefore, that I take this subject seriously. When the Study Group was subsequently formed I believed that we had assembled a number of persons who were similarly interested. I was a little disappointed to find that the members were concerning themselves mainly with modern issues but this was understandable since this material is so easy to acquire and I had better opportunities of obtaining the older stamps. I have consistently concerned myself only with those dies which were made by Slopers. After the expiry of their patent rights so many other machines became available that these issues had little interest for me. It does surprise me, however, that so many members a wealth of modern material to study have concerned themselves more with identifying the users of the dies than with trying to study the types of machines used and to identify their makers. This is where the real research work can be done by anyone who does not even possess any punctures earlier than 1900.

Two or three members of the Group have given me valuable help by furnishing particulars of line-engraved and surface-printed punctures and without that help I could not have been so far advanced as I am with my study but from the majority of the Group there has been no response in this direction. With regard to under and over-prints I have never suggested a study of these because almost all the research has already been done and there is a wealth of information available upon these. But I do think that every collection of 'perfins' should include some of these in the earlier part of his collection to make a complete study of the whole subject. After all, they are not too numerous in a simplified way and seven examples is all that the ordinary collector need include.

Mr. Nelson states that he understands that I am in the stamp trade. This is something which I have always tried to avoid becoming common knowledge and have tried to cash in on this since I did not wish anyone to think that I had an axe to grind in this subject. I have never sold any of any material to non-trade members of the Group and have, instead, given some thousands of stamps to the Group. I am indeed very anxious that Mr. Nelson has seen fit to bring this to light since I feel that a stamp-dealer would not obtain the same co-operation from members that an ordinary collector would receive. It is true that I am a stamp dealer and have been for 35 years. I deal in almost every type of stamp except 'perfins'.

Where they are concerned I am as much a private collector as any other member of the Group. My stamps have been obtained by gift from kind customers by purchase from customers and, mainly, by purchase at auction sales and from other dealers. I have frequently paid more for a collection than I would otherwise have done because it contained some punctures in which I was keenly interested. I have spent almost £100 on my collection to date which over 10 years does not point to any particular advantage_I have on the score of wealth. My opportunities are greater I will admit but had I not been a dealer with those opportunities I doubt whether so much would be known about these stamps today.

Mr. Nelson says we are a minority pursuing a back-alley of philately and always will be. I believe that postal history was once so regarded and thematic collectors were not taken at all seriously. Yet times have changed and I still have hopes that even "stamps with holes" will achieve some standing in the philately world.

In my collection I have some 80 under and over-prints compared with some 14,000 punctures. It does not seem that I am advocating the cause of the 'expensive' stamps too much but I still argue that the two must be treated as a whole.

Mr. Nelson delivers his final blow by adding a P.S. in which he mentions stamps at a well-known auctioneers being described as "with advertisements on the back". More point might have been given to this had he been able to add the price these stamps realised. It was well above the price such stamps without these underprints would have realised yet it was not so much that most members of the Group could not have afforded them.

In conclusion may I add that since Mr. Nelson has revealed my trade connections I feel it possible that my standing with the Group has been affected since many collectors do not like to belong to societies where a dealer has a finger in the pie. I feel, therefore, that I must tender my resignation as President of the Group although I shall still endeavour to further the interests of the Group as a PRIVATE member.

Yours faithfully

C. Jennings

CHANGE OF NAME

The results of the recent 'Poll' have been analysed and are shown below in an extract from a letter from Mr. Jennings.

The British votes do not include those of the President and the Secretary, both of whom are in favour of a change and it can, therefore, be said that the British vote shows a slight majority in favour of a change. Similarly, a few of our members in the U. S. A. qualified their vote against by saying that they were slightly biased because America has never had overprints or underprints, and the word perfins suits them admirably.

It is true that Perfins has become the universally adopted name for punctured stamps, and it is suggested, in view of this and the divided opinion, that we adopt the compromise solution given by Mr. Jennings. It satisfies both schools, fairly adequately describes our interests and raises us out of the Study Group class.

EXTRACT FROM MR. JENNINGS' LETTER ON CHANGE OF NAME

Many thanks for particulars of survey which has proved rather indecisive. Analysis shows the following result:-

<u>41_ Replies</u>	8 for change	= 19.5%
	17 no change	= 41.5%
	16 no opinion	= 39.0%

This would appear to show that the majority is in favour of no change but when it is observed that 8 votes came from the U.S.A. where opinion is probably somewhat biased in favour of the name coined by them, we find that ignoring these votes we have the following result:

33 British	8 for change	= 24.24%
<u>Replies</u>	9 no change	= 27.27%
	16 no opinion	= 48.48%

Again the anti-change members prevail but one cannot help wondering what the 42% of members who did not vote might have said.

There does appear to be a compromise, however, in the suggestion that we are known as the Perfin and Security Overprint Society. Underprints can be loosely classified as "overprinted on the backs of stamps". It would not exclude embossed types although these could hardly be specifically mentioned. I then suggest that we pay the 1 guinea membership to the B.P.A. for affiliation and notify Harris Publications and the P.T.S. that we wish to appear in the Handbook of Societies.

Mr. Jennings.

LONDON MEETING

The London Meeting held recently was rather poorly attended, only five members being present.

It does seem, however, that these five had a very enjoyable afternoon_ discussing all aspects of our hobby, swapping stamps and viewing each other collections.

We do wonder whether other members living within easy reach of the meeting place are discouraged from attending because they believe them to be rather formal gatherings. This is certainly not the case. They are informal and the afternoons are spent swapping ideas and chatting about perfins.

Anyone is welcome so why not attend the next one arranged by Chris Carr.

It has been suggested that perhaps members would like to have a meeting elsewhere in the Country. The editor is quite prepared, if the support is forthcoming, to arrange either a Saturday or Saturday and Sunday Get-together in Coventry in the Spring. There is quite reasonably priced accommodation available and it could be arranged to visit the New Cathedral and/or any other places of local interest. You might almost say that A Perfin Congress could be held. Please let the editor know if you are interested and preparations could begin. The editor's wife will be only too pleased to look after the ladies if they do not wish to talk stamps with their 'better' halves.

N.B. GENERAL NEWS ITEMS HAVE BEEN HELD OVER UNTIL NEXT MONTH IN VIEW OF THE IMPORTANT POINTS ALREADY MENTIONED