

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Rosemary Smith

There is quite a lengthy set of articles in this issue which came from the journal, *Cross Post*. The text has much to recommend it to all members who are fairly new to the 'perfin game'. Even an 'old timer' like myself found some new information, particularly in the part about perfin die machines.

One of the reasons I have put in all the data is because I am now short of material for the Bulletin. Please send any information for the 2001 Bulletins.

As Dave sent me the *Society Information* before the London meeting on November 4th, a few words about the meeting are in order. Although the room is smaller than at Baden Powell House, the furniture is easily moved around and we soon made ourselves comfortable. Refreshments were 'help yourselves' so we made tea or coffee as soon as we got in and then at anytime during the afternoon. Biscuits were aplenty.

15 members turned up despite the petrol shortage scare, the floods and the train disruptions. Roy was advised of long train delays so stayed away. To save their blushes, no names mentioned, two who never miss the meeting rang me at the beginning of the next week. One had spent a fruitless 20 minutes searching for the entrance to the Oddfellows Hall and another rang to say they were going for their bus ticket the next day, thinking the meeting was on the 11th. Better luck next time: we are using the room again.

Lastly, a very peaceful and healthy Christmas and New Year. Eat and drink in moderation but spread goodwill in abundance.

SOCIETY INFORMATION

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES to November 2000 Total Members 365

New Members

GEOFF BEANEY

J B ELMS

DOUGLAS MYALL

TONY STANFORD

BRUCE TOWNSHEND

JAN MEIJER

Rejoined

ANNE TAYLOR

BOB BROWN

Resigned

RICHARD SYMONDS;

BILL DOWNES;

P J MILLS;

NICK VOOREN

INCOME & EXPENSES for YEAR ENDED 31st AUGUST 2000

<u>INCOME</u>			<u>EXPENSES</u>			
		<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>		<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>
Subs		1918	1839	Bulletin	2380	2282
Auction	£13,865 -£13,170	2941	695	Meetings	426	228
Interest		501	382	Ass. of British Philatelic Societies	150	165
Publications	£1,444 -£1,532	-714	-88	Officer's expenses/ post/printing	652	2124
Packet		16	42	Corporation Tax	111	102
				Deficit	943	-2031
Total		<u>4662</u>	<u>2870</u>	Total	<u>4662</u>	<u>2870</u>

BALANCE SHEET AT 31ST AUGUST 2000

<u>ASSETS</u>			<u>REPRESENTED BY</u>		
	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>		<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>
Cash in hand	0	65	Accumulated fund at	11387	12330
Bank	4808	1375	1st September 2000		
GIRO	395	349	Deficit	943	-2031
60 Day A/C	13746	14128	Members' Credit	7071	6286
Premium Bonds	150	150			
Publications a/c	248	518			
Total	<u>19347</u>	<u>16585</u>	Total	<u>19347</u>	<u>16585</u>

Treasurer's Report 31st August 2000

Dave Hill

The changes in the auction over the last years have caught up with us, involving some expense. I have paid out auction 2 but I am owed about £1000 in total, not an unusually large sum at this time of the year. (It was, in fact, paid early in September) I hope we can look forward to a more settled period and an increase in turnover.

Publications only show a small deficit on the year. Interest rates are down, hence the drop in interest. Meetings are down but usually we would have prepaid for Baden Powell House. Duchess of Kent Lodge is 1/3rd the cost and I have not prepaid.

Officers' expenses are high. I have had to replace my copier at £646. Stampshow 2000 costs were £428, including a £100 donation to the National Youth Stamp Group, to produce an album for the children. They have printed a large stock and we get a mention in it. There were also expenses in moving the library and auction accumulation.

Bank charges are high and we get a 50% reduction this year, so it will be even higher next year. This eats into the interest we get on our reserves. I am investigating Girobank Direct, but they cannot handle dollar bills. I am looking into other ways of changing these. Banking would be all postal but it would enable me to transfer any surplus in the ordinary account into Girobank Business Reserve along with our accumulated fund. This pays treasury rates of interest. Constructive suggestions would be welcome from our (financial wise) members.

The bank balance appears low, having paid out auction 2. There was no auction at this time last year. Because it has only just been paid out there is over £2000 of uncleared cheques so the actual balance was higher.

This means that overall we are back to a deficit this year but I am sure we will be back to a surplus next year. This deficit has been incurred in furthering our hobby. (The deficit is in fact less than the deficit in 1998)

I continue to urge members to prepay their sub and over half have done so, reducing members' credit shown by over £1100.

I am sorry if I have seemed a bit cavalier with small auction payments. A problem for me with the auction programme is that John can pick and choose your lots to enter, so giving a balanced auction. The result is that you can have £2 sales in this auction and another £2 in the next. Harry used to include put your lots in "lumps". I will not write out cheques for small amounts when the cheque 'costs' us 59p. I credit sales to your account until they warrant writing a cheque. Also, as subs become due, I deduct them from the money outstanding to you. It costs me no more to write your cheque but saves me cashing one at 27p.

Membership cards for those members who have paid since the October Bulletin should be enclosed with this Bulletin. If you have still not paid the amount you owe is written in red on the label of this Bulletin. Cost prevents us from reminding you individually. If you do not pay this may be the last Bulletin you receive. I do not write to individual members before lapsing their membership.

* * * * *

Secretary's Comments Dave Hill

As noted at the beginning of the last auction list, No 4 (2000), John Donner is not putting out a December auction due to work commitments. This is just a word of thanks to John's wife, Sandra, who closed the last auction (No 3) and posted out the appropriate lots to successful bidders.

This will be the last Bulletin of the year and I would like to send Christmas wishes to all members, particularly those who are kind enough to send Christmas Cards. I receive too many to send cards in return so I hope you will accept this as a 'thank you' for your cards.

Copyright

You will note that we have added "Copyright The Perfin Society" to the Bulletin. Copyright protection in the UK is automatic and there is no registration system. Articles should not be copied or reproduced in a published work without the permission of the Society (which will not be unreasonably withheld). The copy should state "by permission of The Perfin Society" and give the author's name. That is unless you, the author, want us (the Society) to refer the matter to you each time we are approached about using your article in another magazine. In effect we are looking after your copyright interests, unless you tell us otherwise, when you submit your article for publication.

We have not pointed this out before but Catalogue numbers and Illustrations in the Perfin Society Catalogues and publications are unique to the Society and are Also copyright: as are SG numbers to Stanley Gibbons etc.

Permission to copy is usually given to publicise the Perfin Society or further perfin research but **NOT** for monetary gain.

Members' Wants

Member **Jon Johnson**

is finding difficulty in compiling enough GB material to complete an exhibit on Canadian Pacific Railway (world wide perfins).

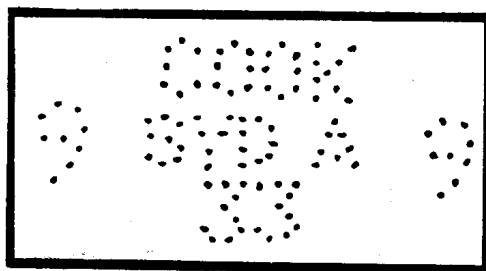
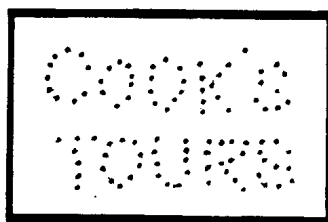
He is looking for stamps (by issue) and covers of CPR. CP/R, CPE, CP/E, CP/EX, CP/OS and CP/S plus overprint. Send stamps with price (US preferred) or description with price. Can be contacted on jon@okrihhons.com if preferred.

Members' Comments on Previous Articles.

Thomas Cook Perfins

Although this information from **COLIN CLARK HUTCHISON** is not about perfins on stamps, it does continue the theme from the query posed by the authors in Bulletin 307 Pg.24 and continued by Leif Bergman in Bulletin 308 Pg. 18-19.

Colin has a *Baggage Insurance Certificate* from New South Wales which is perforated with a two line "**COOK'S TOURS**" and a three line "**DATE PERFORATOR**" typical of the many produced by Joseph Sloper & Co. The date is Cook/9 SYD A 9/33 – i.e.:– 9th September 1933 Sydney, Australia. The date cancels the 8d NSW Stamp Duty stamp. It is interesting to note that the Insurance Policy is arranged through The Prudential Assurance Company Ltd of Holborn, London. The premium is £1-13-6d (Australian) for 60 days and covers up to a loss of £130.



Series 8885.

No. 599

PREMIUM

Australian 1/12/15

BAGGAGE INSURANCE CERTIFICATE.

DURATION OF RISK, *sixty* DAYS.

The holder hereof is entitled, for the space of *sixty* Days from the date perforated hereon, and to the extent of *One hundred thirty pounds*

on *Five* Packages, etc., as detailed on the Proposal Form, to the benefit of a Policy or Policies arranged by THOS. COOK & SON, LTD., or THOS. COOK & SON, under an agreement with The Prudential Assurance Company, Ltd., of Holloway, London, E.C.1, to cover Personal Baggage.

This Certificate represents the original Policy or Policies for the purpose of collecting a claim thereunder, and, if required, in the event of any claim arising, a separate stamped Policy will be delivered to the holder hereof in exchange for this Certificate.

This Certificate must be signed by the Holder in the space provided on the reverse side.

This Insurance covers the Personal Baggage and Articles specified, in all places and situations, against the risks of fire, theft, and against all risks of accidental loss or damage, subject to the following conditions:

CONDITIONS

1.—ORDINARY BAGGAGE.

The whole of the Travellers' Personal Baggage must be insured for its full value.

N.B.—Insurances cannot be granted in respect of a portion only of the Travellers' Personal Baggage, either as regards quantity or value.

2.—SPECIAL ARTICLES (which may be insured if desired).

Jewellery, Watches, Gold and Silver articles, Field Glasses, Cameras, Furs, and all articles of special value, must be separately detailed and valued.

3.—PROPERTY NOT COVERED BY THE INSURANCE.

Documents, Papers, Travel Tickets, Cash, Money, Bank Notes, or Currency of any description.

4.—RISKS NOT COVERED BY THE INSURANCE.

(a) Damage to fragile or brittle articles, or to Furniture, Pictures, or Musical Instruments, unless caused by fire, or accident to the steamship or other conveyance.

(b) Confiscation, or loss or damage arising from delay, or by moth, vermin, wear and tear, or natural deterioration.

(c) Capture, Seizure, Arrest, Restraint or Detainment, or the consequences thereof or of any attempt thereat (Piracy excepted), or any consequences of hostilities or warlike operations, whether before or after declaration of War, loss or damage caused by Strikers, Locked-out Workmen, or persons taking part in Labour Disturbances, or Riots or Civil Commotions.

N.B.—In the event of claim, notice must be given immediately on discovery of the loss or damage to THOS. COOK & SON, LTD., Berkeley Street, London, W.1, or to the nearest Cook's Office.

Signature of Holder

Permanent Address, in full



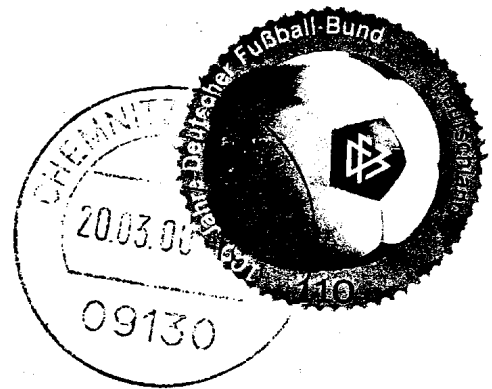
Since this article appeared in the bulletin I have had several comments about the subject. No more seem to be forthcoming so I will print them all together.

John Mathews makes the point that:- "the circle of holes is not a perfin -it is a circular stamp. Other countries who have produced stamps in this format in recent years include Singapore and New Zealand. The irony is that each such stamp still has to have a rectangular surrounding area to facilitate separation from the sheet!"

Mick Penfold also notes that the German stamp can only be franked on the round stamp - so it is a perforation not a perfin.

[Ed:- the original comment in Bulletin 305 did make it obvious that it was 'tongue in cheek' reference to 'perfin'.]

Burkhart Beer wrote to Ken Dee (who did not send me the original item and photocopy, and although I apologised in the next issue, no one has claimed responsibility for bringing it to my notice) and sent an envelope which he had received with the 'central centre part' taken from the surrounding rectangle and used on its own for postage. He too makes the point that it was not a perfin.

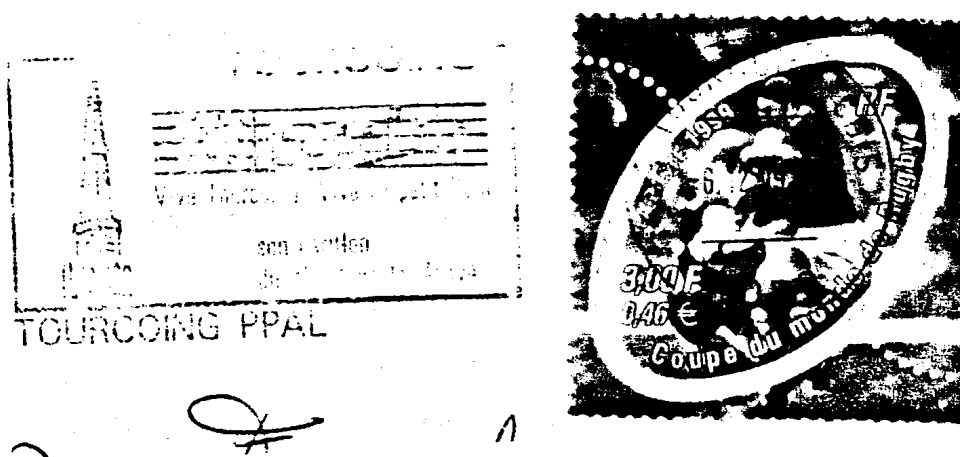


Jenny
B. Beer,
Lahr, 12.

Lewis Wassell sent me a photocopy of a similar item from France. This stamp too has a perforated shape inside the rectangle - a heart shape this time. He is torn between keeping it for the 'perfin' or the skiing slogan as he has a Thematic collection about skiing.



Peter French sent a photocopy of a second French stamp with a shape perforated inside the rectangle. This time it is in the shape of a rugby ball. He presumes they are commemorating their 'coupe du monde'.



I am not sure how well these three stamps will reproduce but you may get the idea.

This type of 'perforation' within the stamp seems to be coming popular. A few years ago **Jack Brandt** sent me details of a Canadian set of stamps with cut-out jigsaw pieces in the stamps. This was a "Helping people learn to learn" initiative. The USA also issued the Alfred Hitchcock stamp with a slit on it.

Seen In Auction

Dave Hill sent this item from **Scotia Philately Ltd - Autumn 2000 - Offers from stock.**

◆ Lot 749 1870 Machine Cancel November 11th ½d p/s card to Devon cancelled by the rare SLOPER Experimental Machine cancel series of holes in the shape of an orb. Superb. **£400**

Not
To
Scale



KEN DEE noticed that **Rush Express** has the 1957 Scout Jamboree set for sale with the three different BP design perfins. These stamps keep appearing in philatelic journals but where they originated, no one has come up with anything other than a guess. The price this time is £9-50 for the three. £35 for marginal blocks of four.

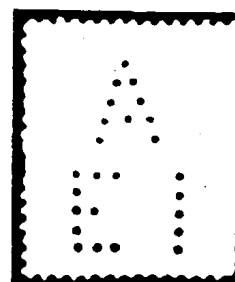
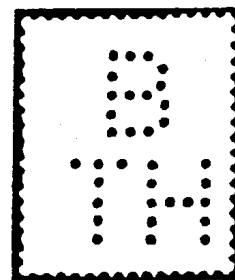
RUSH STAMPS were also advertising "'Perfin' Starter Collections".

◆ From Queen Victoria to George VI, a selection of 30 different, excellent value at £3-75. I suggest you buy through our auction and get much better value.

BRITAIN'S LARGEST MULTI-HEADED DIE

Roy Gault

Slopers produced a machine (delivered 17 February 1926) for British Thompson-Houston, the base for which measured a massive 26 inches by 7 inches. It was fitted with a 12x5 multiheaded die and produced the perfin 'B/TH'. British Thompson-Houston became a wholly owned subsidiary of Associated Electrical Industries in about 1945, so when AEI was reconstructed into product divisions (1 January 1960) the B/TH perfin was replaced by one reading 'A/EI'. Hence there are two perfins, which hold the title of having come from Britain's largest multi-headed die. Unfortunately, although the A/EI perfin remained in use until c1969, the fate of the machine is unknown.



oOOOOo

Another - SEEN IN AUCTION

John Mathews saw this on the Internet. Opening bid was £150.

GB SG 143 Block of 8 Plate 18 Perfin 'ADAM'.



LIBRARY

Alastair Walter

The following are selected items, which are missing from the Perfin Society Library at 3/11/00. If any member has the copy, please return it to Alastair.

<u>Number</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Title</u>
	Australia	Victorian Government Punctures - 4th Ed. <i>Jan 1988-B Toop - pp45</i>
	Bosnia	Perfins of Bosnia & Herzegovina <i>Sep 1975-J Prim</i>
1673	Brazil	Brazilian Perfins <i>1964 Perfins Club</i>
	Columbia	Perfins of Columbia <i>Jan/Feb 1977 - E Harris</i>
0206	Cuba	Perfins of Cuba <i>Feb 1977-R Roy</i>
	Faroe Islands	Faroe Island Perfins <i>May 1977 - L Bergman</i>
	Germany	Privatpostmarken mis Lochungen <i>7957 - Horst Muller-pp16</i>
	Luxembourg	The Perfins of Luxembourg <i>Sep 1977 - JPrins</i>
	New Zealand	Tasman Catalogue of New Zealand Perfins <i>1975 - Laurie Franks Ltd, Christchurch, N.Z.</i>
	U.S.A.	Topical Perfin Lists:- <i>All 1968 - C M Swenson - US Perfins Club</i>

[a] Automobile & Allied Companies

[b] Miscellaneous Groups

[c] Newspapers, Magazines, Journals etc

[d] Paint, Varnish & Allied Products,

[e] Railroad, Loco & Car Manufacturers,

[f] Steamship Lines and Shipbuilders.

MORE ON JOSEPH SLOPER

Rosemary Smith

Over the last few years we have attracted quite a number of new members to the Society. Therefore I make no apology to the older members who may know everything which is in this next article. Earlier this year, MAURICE HARP sent me a photocopy of an article by MICHAEL BAMENT which had been published in *Cross Post Vol. 7 No. 4 Spring 1999*. I asked Maurice if he could obtain permission for me to use part of this article in our Bulletin. Maurice received Bament's permission and also the comments from *Cross Post* readers in their next two journals. The following is the main part of Michael Bament's perception of Sloper and perfins.

"Sloper's Patent and the Case for the Perfin."

"There can't be many of us who haven't, at one time or another, slipped the odd personal letter through the company's postal system without asking permission. In most cases nowadays the bosses would turn a blind eye and cheerfully absorb the cost of the occasional postage stamp or meter frank as an acceptable part of the firm's annual overheads.

Such a tolerant attitude was not always the case and many instances have been recorded, particularly in Victorian times, where members of staff were prosecuted, and even imprisoned, for stealing postage stamps from their employers. Temptations then were very much greater than today - social conditions were of course very different - larger families, poor job prospects, low wages and very little if any by way of National Assistance except perhaps the dubious benefits of the Workhouse!

Prior to the introduction of the postal order on 1st January 1881, the postage stamp was a very useful and convenient form of negotiable currency and would commonly be used for making small remittances by post. At that time, mint stamps received in payment for goods could be converted into cash at any post office, subject to a discount of 2½% commission. In Victorian times there were probably very few employees stealing stamps to stick on their letters, but where firms received postage stamps in lieu of cash, a weak or dishonest employee might be tempted to steal stamps for trading in at the post office. Clearly something was needed to prevent both the regular pilfering of occasional stamps and the actions of those determined to steal them on a larger scale.

From 1867, a number of firms such as W.H. Smith & Sons, Copestake Moore Crampton & Co and Great Eastern Railway had official permission from the GPO to print their companies' initials on the backs of their stamps. This undoubtedly provided some deterrent to pilfering, but as soon as a stolen stamp was affixed to a letter, evidence of its theft was not readily apparent.

The answer to the problem was the PERFIN - **PER**forated with the firm's **IN**itials - the method most commonly used - and approved by the GPO in March 1868. One man more than any other was responsible for developing and negotiating Post Office approval for this idea - Joseph Sloper.

Sloper, born about 1812, was a man of great energy and with a wide range of skills. He started in business in 1839 on the very threshold of the birth of the postage stamp. His first commercial venture was as a painter and decorator with premises in London's Oxford Street, but he later showed his genius for inventions of a mechanical nature. On 1st September 1958 Joseph Sloper was granted Letters Patent No. 1958 giving

him exclusive rights for a period of 14 years on an invention which almost ten years later came to be applied to the perforation of postage stamps with firm's initials. Approval to the perfin was given in writing by the GPO in a letter to Sloper dated 13 March 1868, albeit it was nearly a year later on 1st March 1869 before a notice appeared on page 22 of the Post Office Circular (Postmaster's edition) as:-

POSTAGE STAMPS

*In consequence of representations made to the Post Office by various Firms that there is reason to believe that their postage stamps are purloined by persons in their employ, the Department has recommended that the name or initials of Firms, etc, be either printed on the **back** of the stamps, or perforated through the stamps by means of a machine devised for the purpose, so that, inasmuch as the sale of such stamps would be thereby rendered difficult, the temptation to steal them might be lessened or altogether removed.*

Postmasters will take care not to purchase any postage stamps thus marked which may be offered to them for sale.

The final paragraph of this notice was of paramount importance. By removing the opportunity to sell the stolen stamps, the act of theft would also be removed.

One well-publicised case in which a shopkeeper received 7,820 stolen stamps took place in February 1868. John Howarth, of Cross Street, Manchester, was charged with receiving £35.19s.2d worth of unused stamps in payment for bread and cheese, he well knowing that the stamps had been stolen by errand-boys and junior clerks working in various Manchester offices. Howarth was later found guilty and imprisoned for a period of five years. Joseph Sloper was quick to take advantage of this unfortunate situation which was prominently reported in the *Manchester*

Examiner and other leading newspapers of the day. In an advertising circular from the National Postal Museum collection [also illustrated in Bulletin 272 (Oct'94) Page 13] which was sent by Sloper to a prospective customer, he added in manuscript, "*The Post Office has adopted my system for Money Orders etc.*". Original documents at Post Office Archives indicate that the manuscript additions are in Sloper's own hand.

One company that sought from the start to prevent fraud of this kind was the Great Western Railway. A letter dated 14 October 1869, written on their headed notepaper from the Accountants' Office at Paddington station is also in the Museum collection. The letter includes the statement..."*I beg to inform you that all Postage and Receipt stamps used in this Company's service are perforated "GWR" by Mr Sloper of Walbrook House E.C.* The letter goes on to say..."/ *may mention that Mr Sloper obtained the sanction of the Post Office authorities to use his invention before we entered into arrangements with him.* "

Full-name perforations

It was not until 1873 that the Post Office became aware that a small number of firms were using 'full-name' dies to perforate their stamps. This was quite legal, as the original GPO notices of 1 March 1869 had recommended that "...*the name or initials of Firms etc be either printed on the back of the stamps or perforated through the stamps...* " In relation to the perfins, this was not however what the PO had really intended, and in 1873 they tried to restrict the perforation of stamps to a firm's initials only. Whilst the early perfins generally comply, with initials only, the Post Office failed in their attempts to suppress full-name perforations and in ensuing years a varied and interesting assortment of dies were brought into use. From the simple 'initials only' dies, the variety extends to

J. J. Clutton Esq. with Mr. P. Complicity

Postage Stamps—Important Case.

The following extract was made from the "MANCHESTER EXAMINER" of 21st February, and appeared in other Provincial and London Papers:—



"CHARGE OF 'RECEIVING' 7,000 STAMPS.—At the Manchester Police-court on Wednesday *John Howarth*, provision-dealer, Cross-street, was charged with receiving, from errand-boys and junior clerks in various Manchester offices, a large number of stamps in payment for bread and cheese, he well knowing the said stamps to have been stolen. Inspector Shandley said he searched the prisoner's premises, and in a drawer he found 4,800 penny stamps, 810 twopenny stamps, and 2,210 receipt stamps; the total number being 7,820, and the value 35*l.* 19*s.* 2*d.* The majority of them were new stamps—that is to say, they had not been stuck upon letters, but a certain portion of them—and these the officer found done up in a packet by themselves—had the appearance of having been fixed upon letters and taken off again, the edges being slightly jagged and the 'sticking stuff' looking not fresh. In fact, the charge against the prisoner originated in a letter being so tampered with. Mr. Slater, St. Ann's-square, suspecting something amiss in the posting of a letter containing two halves of 5*l.* notes—the letter not having been heard of—had asked Inspector Shandley to make inquiries. The result was that the errand boy confessed he had kept back the letter for the sake of the penny stamp (with which he bought a bun at the prisoner's shop), and when he found, on tearing the letter in two, that it was a money letter, he became frightened at what he had done, and he tucked the letter and the enclosed half notes between the bars of a 'grid' in Red Lion-street, where the officer found them. The stipendiary magistrate (Mr. Fowler) thought it a most important case, and he remanded the prisoner for a week to enable Inspector Shandley to make the most searching inquiry possible."

A plan has been devised in connection with "SLOPER'S PATENT PERFORATING SYSTEM" for *effectually* preventing the recurrence of such cases in future, and has been submitted to and allowed by the Post Office Authorities.

This plan, which has just been adopted by many of the most influential Firms and Public Companies in London, will be in full operation as soon as the Patentee has prepared his Machinery to meet the demands which he anticipates,

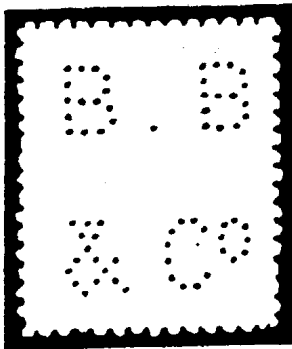
All applications addressed to—"THE MANAGER,

"Office for Sloper's Patent,

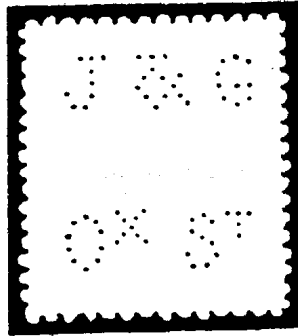
"WALBROOK HOUSE, WALBROOK, LONDON."

The Post Office has adopted my system for money orders &c &c

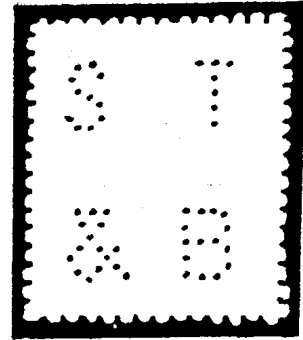
full-name dies, coats of arms, trademarks, monograms, numbers and geometric patterns - all of which retain the collective name of 'perfins'.



Baker Baker & Co., Bristol

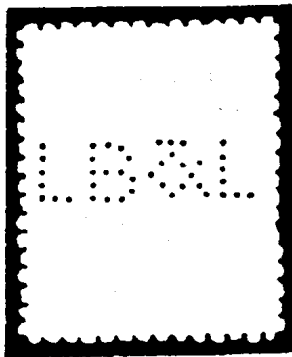


Jackson & Graham,
Oxford Street, London

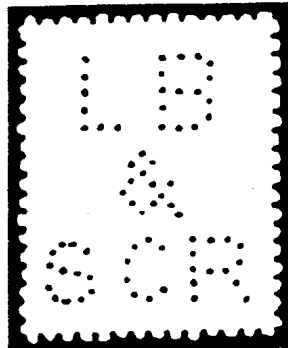


Spencer Turner &
Boldero, London

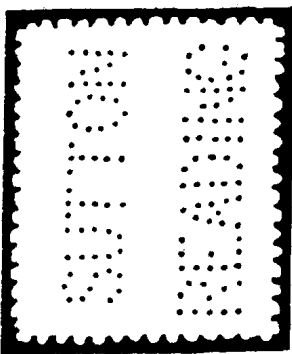
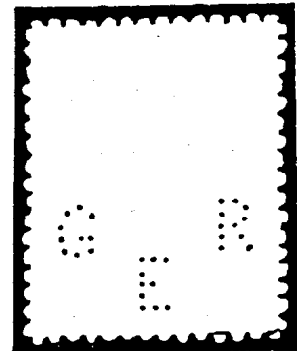
Lake Beaumont
& Lake, London



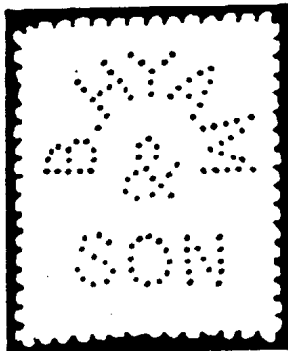
London Brighton &
South Coast Railway



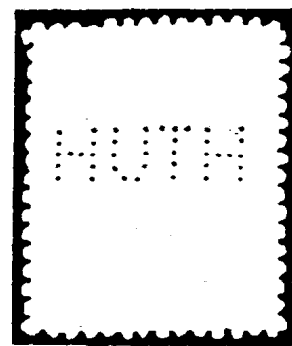
Great Eastern Railway



Sutton & Sons, Reading

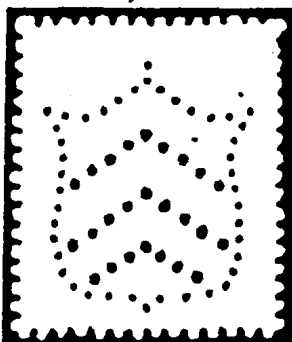


Benjamin Hyam
& Son, London

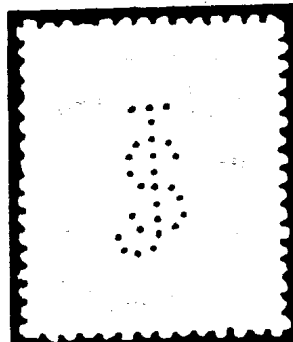


Frederick Huth
& Co., London

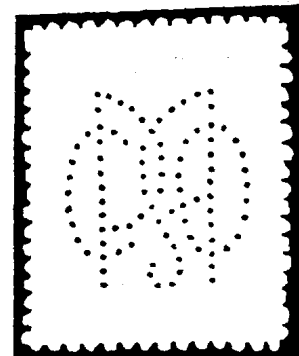
Coat of Arms –
The City of Cardiff



Joseph Sloper



Patriotic Assurance Co.,
Dublin



Joseph Sloper died in June 1890, but his invention is still applied to postage stamps, albeit the need nowadays hardly exists in relation to fraud and is largely addressed to the business of advertising. Since Sloper's first perfins of 130 years ago, there have been thousands of different types, the dies for which have been produced by many manufacturers since his original patent ran out in 1872. Merely a small sample of these fascinating stamps is shown on the following page.

Many businesses applied their own perfins to the sheets of stamps, having purchased the perforating machines from manufacturers such as Joseph Sloper. Sometimes, a member of staff might fold the sheet to speed up the perforating process and this would also account for a stamp perforated through the back. A variety of different combinations of adjoined perfins can occur if a sheet of stamps is folded more than once and such configurations are known to exist.

[There was a Fig. 8 which showed a strip 3 one penny lilacs on a cover to Winnipeg from London on March 2nd 1901. The caption stated that the perfin on the left-hand stamp is upside down and a mirror image of the other two, indicating that the stamp was taken from a sheet that had been 'perfinned' through the back.]

The acknowledgements at the end of this article read:- *"The study of perfins is the province of the Perfin Society of Great Britain, formed in 1957 and currently with a world-wide membership of over 350. In preparing this brief article, I gratefully acknowledge the help given by Terry Comper of that society and to THE HANDBOOK OF BRITISH PERFINS by JOHN S. NELSON. My thanks also to the staff of the Post Office Archives and Records Centre."*

In the next issue of *Cross Post - Vol. 8 No 1*, Mr Gerald Davies wrote in with the following comment:-

"...I enjoyed the excellent article by Michael Bament on Joseph Sloper and the 'Perfins'. But the caption to figure 8 mentioned: 'The perfin on the left-hand stamp...indicating that the stamp was taken from a sheet that had been 'perfinned' through the back.' I doubt if stamps were 'perfinned' in sheets, bearing in mind the machines used.

I have an envelope from the East Asiatic Company from Burma with four 'perfinned' stamps and as the holes in the picture are not very clear I add my description to make my point.

The 2 rupees has the EAC perforated normally, the 5 rupees is inverted, the 8 annas is reversed (a mirror image) on its side while the 6 pies has only the E and the A and such a small part of the C that anyone seeing it on its own, off cover, might not be able to interpret it.

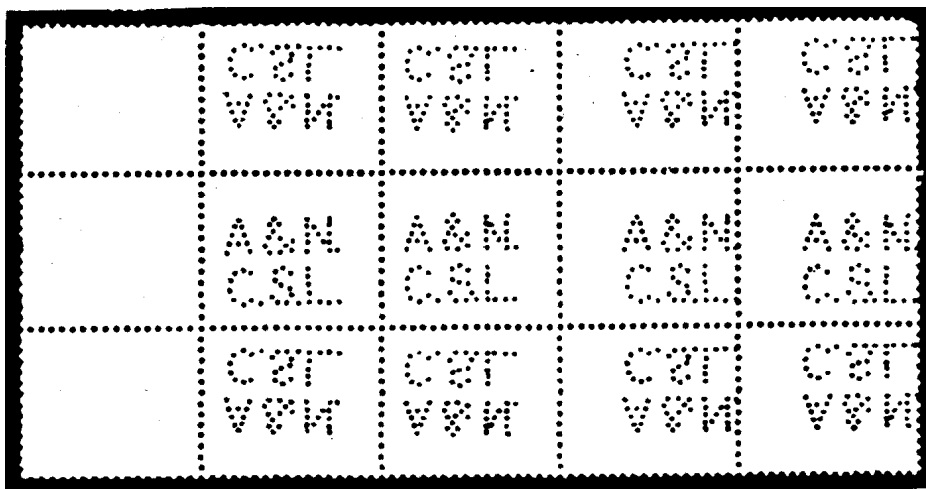
The perforating die was clearly made for the high values. It was too big for the 6 pies, but were they punched in blocks of four stamps folded, which would account for the 'abnormals'? Anyway more than four stamps at one time would need quite a lot of power to punch.

I 'wrote-up' this cover years ago, but now believe that all stamps were 'perfinned' one at a time and the operator (perfinner) never bothered whether the stamp was right way up, inverted, back to front or any way. After all, what mattered was the holes that protected each stamp."

In the next issue of *Cross Post, Vol.8 No.2*, Michael Bament states that since publication of his article and the postscript by Gerald Davies, more information came along. Bament then writes:

"On re-reading my article I can see how I gave the impression that stamps were 'perfinned' in complete sheets as a matter of course. This was not intended and I think a few words on the subject may be helpful.

I recently read an informative article by Rosemary Smith, Editor of the *Bulletin of the Perfin Society*, which perfectly illustrated the point I was trying to make about how and why some perfins appear as mirror images when perfinned from the back of the stamps. With the kind permission of the above society I reproduce an illustration of a block of 12 stamps [Ed:-See *Bulletin* 302 (Oct'99) Pg.16] perforated with the initials 'A&N/C.S.L.' (Army & Navy/Co-operative Society Ltd). In this instance, the block of stamps had been folded twice to produce a strip of three stamps thick prior to the 'perfin' process.



The middle row is a mirror image of the other two.

The piece is post-marked 18/9/1890 and the die appears to have been in use 1885-1895.

Roy Gault of The Perfin Society has been more than helpful in explaining single and multi-headed dies and describing the parameters of the machines that punched out these security perforations. I can do no better than quote directly from his letter to me on the subject, as follows.

*"The reality of the situation is that single-headed dies produce **one pattern** at a time whereas multiheaded dies create **more than one pattern** per operation of the perforating machine. Clearly, if in one go three strips of stamps are fed through a perforating machine fitted with a*

single-headed die, then three stamps will be perforated at a time. Of course the stamps do not have to be in separate strips; they can be in blocks folded into strips (as with the block you want to illustrate) to produce strips three stamps thick.

The design of hand-operated presses is such that the back of the press usually prevents a sheet of stamps from being inserted too far, hence sheets are either broken up into strips or folded in such a way that the stamps can be 'initialled' with the minimum effort. Usually, small presses were fitted with single-headed dies and larger presses with multi-headed dies.

Another point to bear in mind is that Slopers either sold machines fitted with perforating dies to customers to initial their own postage stamps, or made dies to perforate stamps on behalf of customers. When Slopers perforated stamps for customers they took great care not to perforate the stamps 'upside down' or 'back to front'. On the other hand, 'customer' presses would have been operated by office juniors and the like who wouldn't have been too interested in keeping the stamps 'the right way up'.

For hand-operated presses, the stamps would usually have been torn into strips and fed through the perforating machine in two, three or four thicknesses of stamps all at one go. Of course, there was a finite limit to the 'gap' through which the stamps could be fed but the greater the thickness attempted, the greater the effort required to perforate the stamps. Hence some perfins show partial penetration giving rise to incomplete patterns. On occasions, due to the excessive pressure being applied, some pins became damaged and had to be removed, producing 'missing pin' variations. Sometimes a broken pin would be replaced.

To complicate matters, when Slopers produced multi-headed dies to perforate stamps on behalf of customers, the machinery used was such that the sheet could be passed completely under the perforating head. This did away with the time-consuming task of tearing the sheets into

strips prior to initialling and also made it easy to send the initialled sheets of stamps to the customer. Hence complete sheets of stamps could be initialled, albeit one row at a time, leaving the sheet intact. As you say, Slopers usually (but not always) made multi-headed dies with 12 patterns (i.e. 12x1) to initial stamps on behalf of customers, later reduced to 10x1 to deal with decimal sheets. They also made single-headed dies for initialling small volume orders or large format stamps.

I note that Gerald Davies believes that all stamps were 'perfinned' one at a time, but I fear he couldn't be further from the truth. As we've seen above, even with single-headed dies, multiple thicknesses of stamps would be initialled at the same time. However there is just one circumstance where only one stamp would be initialled at any one time and they would come from 'Initialling and Affixing' machines such as the POKO and Michelius affixers. In these cases, coils of stamps would be loaded into the machines and the stamps only initialled when the machine was cranked over and a stamp was affixed to a postal item. These two machines happened to use vertical delivery coils, but sideways delivery coil machines were also used. These, however, took pre-initialled coils - a job undertaken by Sloper using (usually) 6x1 multi-headed dies.

To finish off this business of single/multi-headed dies, I'm afraid we don't know yet what proportion of each existed. We're still in the early stages of analysing the information we have to hand. What I do know is that 1x1, 2x1, 2x2, 3x2 and 6x1 are known configurations as well as the 10x1 and 12x1 mentioned above. The 12x5 is a bit of an exception! Incidentally, Slopers didn't always remove the last two patterns from their 12x1 multi-headed dies. I have examples showing the last two patterns perforating the selvage of decimal Machins. The Society also has proofs' taken from a number of Sloper 12x1 multi-headed dies in the mid 1990's showing all 12 patterns. New dies though, made after decimalization, would only have had 10x1 patterns. "

SLOPER AND GWR

From National Postal Museum Material

One of the illustrations in the article from *Cross Post* by **Michael Bament** was a letter from The Great Western Railway, Accountants Office, Paddington, London W to The Midland Railway, Derby. It is dated 14th October 1869 and reads:-

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 11th inst. received this morning, I beg to inform you that all the Postage and Receipt Stamps used in this Company's service are perforated "GWR" by Mr Sloper of Walbrook House, E.C., who I am quite sure will be most happy to give you any information you may require.

I may mention that Mr Sloper obtained the sanction of the Post Office authorities to use his invention before we entered into arrangements with him.

We have the Stamps we receive for Transfer Fees perforated as well as those we purchase.

Yours truly

From the plate numbers on the 1d reds, we know that The Great Western Railway was one of the very early users of Sloper's security device, namely perforated initials, for postage stamps.

MODERN PERFIN Derek Ransom

Once again Derek is asking you to report **ANY** perfins on elliptical cut stamps with dates of 1999 and 2000. Even if they are in the original list, we need to know which perfins are continuing to be used.

Perforating or Embossing Machine?

Mick Penfold sent me a leaflet about Tamworth Castle in Staffordshire. In the leaflet is a photograph of a little girl using, what looks like, a hand operated embossing machine. It is very similar to some of the perfin single die machines which the Society were given from Joseph Sloper's Works, prior to their closure. It looks to be made from iron, painted black, with gold leaf pattern on the side. I say it may be an embossing machine because the head is round. If my memory serves me right, the perfin dies which were given to the Society were square or oblong in shape. If anyone goes to Tamworth Castle, keep your eyes open for this hand operated press. It would be interesting to know if it is for perfins or embossing.

THE PERFINNED REVENUE STAMPS OF G.B.

From Jeff Turnbull

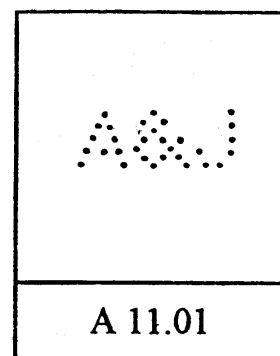
FOREIGN BILLS

In use: 1890-1905
Dates: —1-1912
Issues: EDV11,1/-,

Ident: Appollinaris & Johannis Ltd
London.

New illustrated
Cat No A 3140.02

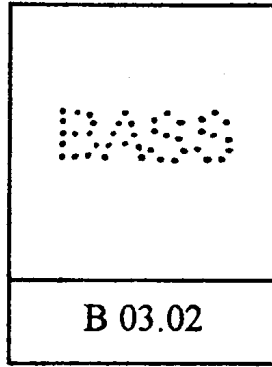
NEW ADDITIONS



In use: 1885-1905
Dates: 19-9-1889
Issues: Qvic,3d,

Ident: Bass Ratcliffe & Gretton Ltd.
Burton-on-Trent.

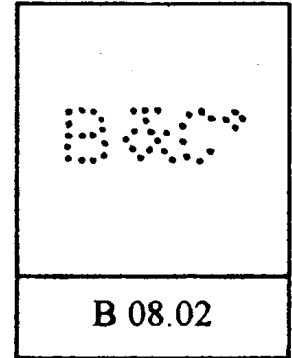
New Illustrated
Cat No B 0230.01



In use:
Dates:
Issues: Qvic,2/-,

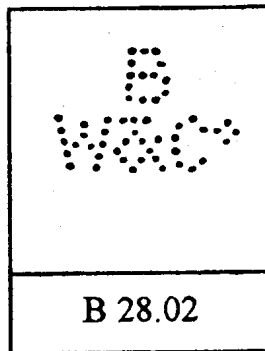
Ident:

New Illustrated
Cat No



In use: 1920-1925
Dates:
Issues: EDV11,3/-,
Ident: Bessler Waechter & Co Ltd.
Glasgow Newcastle & Cardiff.

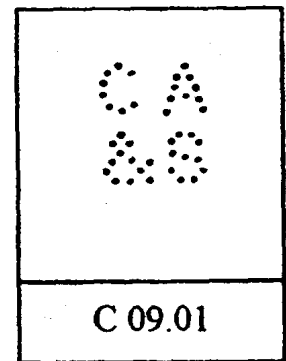
New Illustrated
Cat No B 7720.05



In use: 1890
Dates:
Issues: Qvic,3/-,

New illustrated
Cat No C0310.01

Ident: & Sons Ltd.



In use:
Dates:
Issues: EDVII,6d,
Ident:

New Illustrated
Cat No

