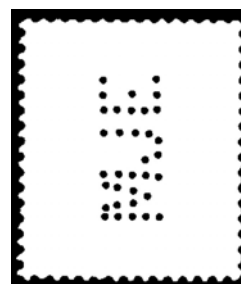


M. J. ELLINGSEN OF LEITH

Maurice Harp

In Bulletin 331 (August 2004) **Rosemary Smith** reported the discovery of two rare and important covers. The first was an identifying cover of perfin die MJE - M5335.01. This was the first confirmed report of this die. The second was a similar cover with the 2½d lilac of the 1883 issue having an M.J.E. overprint in red. Both covers were used by M. J. Ellingsen of Leith, who were coal exporters and ship brokers. At the time both were illustrated in black and white which did not do them justice so I have shown the overprinted cover on the front cover of this Bulletin.

1885



M5335.01

Now a second registered perfin cover has come to the surface which bears two 1d lilacs to pay the registration fee as well as the regular 2½d lilac.



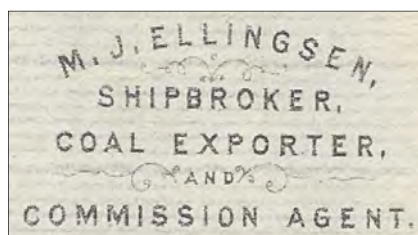
Andy Donaldson has made a record of Ellingsen covers and this is what we know of their use to date:-

Non perfinned covers	Earliest	17-07-85	
Perfinned covers	Earliest	06-10-85	Latest 09-11-85
Overprinted covers	Earliest	17-12-85	Latest 28-05-86

As can be seen, rather surprisingly the known dates of use of perfins precede the use of the overprint and only seem to have been used for a very short time. Indeed the company's flirtation with both perfins and overprints seems to have been a very brief one.



Thanks to research carried out by **Roy Gault** we now know a little about the company. Martin Julius Ellingsen was born in 1842 in Norway. He sailed to Scotland in the late 1860's and set up his company in 1869. The principal business of the company was supplying coal to his native Norway. All the known covers used by the company were addressed to O. & H. Holta, Skien, Norway although the company also had business with Denmark



& Russia. O. & H. Holta were a shipping company and coal importer. Ellingsen has been traced in the trade directories until at least 1921 but the company seems to have disappeared by 1940. The failure of the business may well have been triggered with the outbreak of the Second World War and the occupation of Norway in spring 1940. Marcus Ellingsen died in 1912, aged 70, as shown by his obituary taken from The Scotsman.



THE SCOTSMAN

Obituary - November 4th 1912

DEATH OF LEITH SHIP BROKER - A well-known figure in commercial circles, both in the east and west of Scotland, passed away yesterday after a short illness in the person of Mr Martin Julius Ellingsen, of Messrs M. J. Ellingsen & Company, coal exporters and ship brokers, Leith. Mr Ellingsen was a native of Norway, and in the matter of physique, at any rate, inherited the characteristics of his Norse ancestry, his massive stature making him a commanding personality wherever he went. He came to Leith as a young lad, and altogether he had been in business in the port for well over half a century. He was seventy years of age and is survived by three sons and three daughters, his wife having predeceased him by three years.