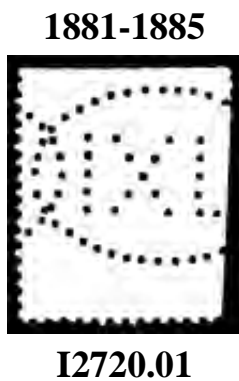


SERENDIPITY

Roy Gault

By chance I saw that “**IXL** in an **Oval**” (I2720.01) still didn't have a user attributed to it, and wondered if it might be a Trade Mark. Ever the optimist, so I Googled ‘IXL Trade Mark’, and sure enough up popped this ‘Pot Lid’ listed on an auction site as selling for A\$200.



There are four different stamps listed in ‘Gault’, along with a single date - 27th May 1881 - and two postmarks, ‘466’ *Liverpool*, and Wolverhampto(n). Poor copies though they are, I can show you two of them ...



Liverpool



Wolverhampton

As you can see from the ‘Pot Lid’, the company involved was ‘*Ayrton & Saunders, Liverpool*’. *Mark Matlach* has already done the research, which he's presented on the COSGB website - précis to follow - along with illustrations of three overprinted stamps, one of which I've shown here.



Ayrton & Saunders were manufacturing chemists and pharmaceutical wholesalers. The company was established in Liverpool in 1868, by *Acts Hill Saunders* (1821-1889), a retired partner in a firm of chemists in London, and *Francis Ayrton MD* (1827-1878), who was a retired doctor in Liverpool. As well as Tooth Paste, the company manufactured cod liver oil emulsion, dyestuffs, and surgical instruments. In fact, by this entry in a 1900 Liverpool directory, they offered a whole range of items ...

**Ayrton and Saunders druggist's sundriesmen,
glass bottle makers, cardboard box
manufacturers, glass blowers, surgi-
cal instrument makers, shopfitters
and show case makers, wholesale
dealers in brushes, combs, perfumery
&c., &c., &c
TELEPHONES 423 & 5804
34 Hanover st. W—factory Campbell st W**

With Dr Ayrton dying in 1878, Act Hill Saunders left the business to his two sons when he died in 1889. The firm continued to grow and was incorporated as a limited liability company, '*Ayrton Saunders Ltd*', in 1902. In 1903 two chemists' businesses, '*Henry Gilbertsons Ltd*' and '*W H Kemp & Son*', were acquired, and the company renamed '*Ayrton, Saunders & Kemp Ltd*'. In 1908 it was restyled as '*Ayrton, Saunders & Co Ltd*'.



The company still exists today, with the company 'Logo' proudly stating that they were established in 1868.

There are no references to 'Ayrton' in either 'Gault' or 'Tomkins', so presumably the use of Perfins proved unnecessary, although the company did use overprinted stamps for receipt purposes in the 1950s, which were inevitably supplied by J. Sloper & Co.