

WRENCH POSTCARDS OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD

Dave Hill

John Evelyn Wrench did not produce postcards for very long, from 1900 until 1906. Upon leaving Eton he made a Continental tour and admired the quality of German cards. When he returned to London he selected photographs and placed orders with a German printer for postcards. He was just 18 years old.

I collect his postcards of London as they show views of streets that are a little different, as most other cards just show the usual tourist landmarks.

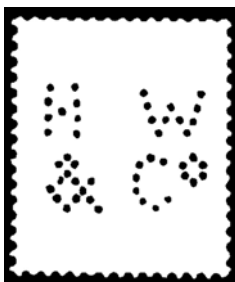
James Spence & Co.

Hitchcock Williams & Co



Judge this from these two cards, the first one is captioned St. Paul's Churchyard, at the Ludgate end. The tall building just in picture on the right hand side is the cathedral itself, out of picture is the main

1897 - 1915

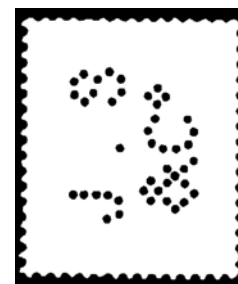


H7710.01M

entrance and steps. In the centre of the image are the shop premises of Hitchcock, Williams & Co who were users of a great number of perfin including probably HW/&Co - H7710.01M. This was only one of their many addresses in London. In Bulletin 394 **Richard Husband** wrote an excellent article on Dickens & Jones which also covered the perfin used by Hitchcock, Williams so I won't cover them here.

On the left side of the postcard you can see the premises of James Spence & Co. silk mercers who also used perfin with just one die identified to date J.S/ & Co - J6980.02.

1875 - 1915

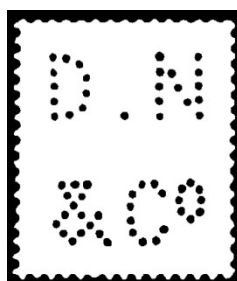


J6980.02

The second card is captioned St Paul's Churchyard, Cheapside end. St Paul's Churchyard continues up the side of the cathedral, turns at a right angle and joins Cheapside, as shown on this card. Where it joins was the shop of Nicholsons. The Gault catalogue recognises three perfin dies as probably used by Nicholsons – but all three are only provisionals.

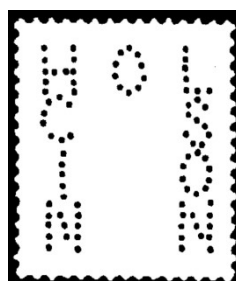


1869 - 1875



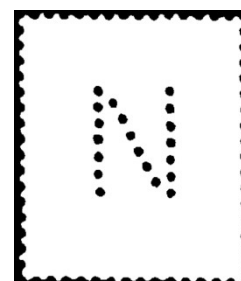
D3435.01*

1870 - 1895



N1785.01*

1930 - 1939



N0020.01*

Although St. Pauls Churchyard is only a short road it was in fact a hotspot of perfin use. The table below shows users of perfin based in St Paul's Churchyard during the period of these postcards.

PERFIN USERS IN ST PAUL'S CHURCHYARD c1900

1-3	John Howell & Co Ltd	Warehousemen
5-14	Pawson & Leaf Ltd	Warehousemen
17	Thomson, McKay & Co	Railway Carriers
19	Howse, Mead & Sons	Warehousemen
21-26	Cook, Son & Co	Warehousemen
27-30	Stafford, Northcote & Co Ltd	Lace manufacturers
36	Thwaite, Taylor & Edwards	Lace warehousemen
37-38	Buchholtz & Co	Lace manufacturers
50-54	Nicholsons	Silk Mercers
65	Religious Tract Society	
69-74	Hitchcock, Williams & Co	Warehousemen
76-79	James Spence & Co	Silk Mercers

James Spence & Co.

Hitchcock, Williams

Nicholsons



A great exhibit could be constructed around the perfin users of St. Paul's Churchyard. And the list above can be extended by companies that moved into the Churchyard in later years.

Paternoster Row ran behind the shops and contained offices and works of these perfin users as well as many publishers. That was until WWII when they were all destroyed in the Blitz, in the 1950's the area was rebuilt in brutalist style which in turn was demolished and rebuilt in the 1990's. Now called Paternoster Square it contains the new Stock Exchange, moved from Threadneedle Street and the old Temple Bar. This ceremonial arch had constricted traffic where Fleet Street met the Strand for 100's of years until it was removed in 1878. It was rebuilt out of London in Theobalds Park, Hertfordshire where it was vandalised and covered in graffiti until it was re-erected in Paternoster Square.

Wrench seems to have overstepped himself, perhaps his cards were too good! He employed a big staff and had a large stock, eventually he went bankrupt. Wrench then went on to work for the Daily Mirror.