WHAT ARE PERFINS FOR - EXCEPT TO COLLECT? A note in the July 1953 Perfins Bulletin helps to explain:

"A few months ago the Oregon State Police picked up in Salem two questionable characters. They found on the men unusued Perfins of both the SP and the SP&S railroads. A visit to the SP&S station agent in town revealed that the only station operated jointly by the two railroads, so that both kinds of stamps could be taken at once, was at Lebanon. A telephone call to the police at Lebanon at 4 a.m. revealed that the station had been burglarized, but the burglary had not been discovered because of the early hour."

It seems that Perfins do have a purpose other than the one we put them to.