

# "PERFINS"

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## HOW I STARTED

Charles Bein

As one of your latest and as your first overseas member I extend my greetings to you and assure you that I am glad to join your ranks. I started collecting Perfins (my own name for them is SPIFS, short for Stamps Perforated with the Initials of FirmS) only about four years ago, just for the fun of it, during the time when we had the black-out, when it was inconvenient to go out after dark and whilst we were waiting for the Air Raid sirens to sound. Having picked about three dozen of these "damaged" stamps out of a biggish parcel of our commonest stamps which were being passed on to the Red Cross in large quantities I decided to pay a little attention to these orphans of Philately, wondering what this "crazy idea" would lead me to. It seemed attractive to collect something that you could not buy at every stamp shop and that you had to hunt for yourself. I set the works going, spoke and wrote to everybody, up and down the country, who was likely to receive perfins on their letters or to find them in stamp collections, accumulations, etc., and the result is that the collection totals more than 28,000 stamps by now and covers more than 6,000 album pages. To old timers like the majority of you, readers these figures speak for themselves: I am going the whole hog i.e. I am collecting all stamps of all issues of this country. The actual number of different dies which I have found so far is naturally much smaller viz approximately 6,700. Nevertheless, I consider the result pretty good going after only four years' collecting and I hope that you will agree with me.

Our first stamps to be perforated were our "One penny reds" with letters in the four corners and Plate Numbers engraved in the scroll at the sides, Scott No. 33, of these I have more than 725 different dies; I collect all plate numbers of each

## "P E R F I N S"

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die and my holding of "Penny Reds" alone amounts to approximately 5,500, including several of the scarce Plate 225.

Collecting Perfins according to issues and denominations is much easier in this country than in yours because, thank goodness, the output of different stamps is much smaller than yours.

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