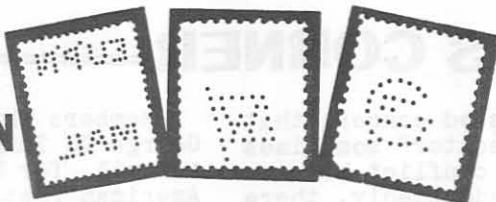


MOUNTING FOR FUN



by David C. Stump

One of the most rewarding pastimes, when passing time in a philatelic manner, is to build up a small set of album pages which may be sent to an Exhibition, a Stamp Show, or an informal display of your own Club. This is formally referred to as "Mounting for Exhibition", but such formality sometimes deters the timid, and we like to think of it as "Mounting for Fun."

That Perfins can be exhibited at any general type of Stamp Exhibition and stand a very good chance of winning recognition in the form of an award has been proved many times by the many members of the Perfins Club who have shown their wares in more than half of the States of the Union, and in several foreign countries.

For one thing, you do not have stiff competition with many others, and you certainly do not - and really cannot - spend much money in assembling an interesting entry. Most Stamp Clubs which feature annual exhibitions admit outsiders to their show, and publicity beforehand is given in the philatelic press. You have only to write to the representative of the club and he will gladly send you a write-up (called a prospectus) giving all details of the show. This will list for you the various classes, such as United States, Foreign, Topical, Postal History, Miscellaneous. These classes are usually subdivided into smaller classes; for example "United States" might be split up in 19th Century, 20th Century, Confederate, Air Mail, etc. Same applies to the other general divisions, but the Miscellaneous remains as a "catch-all" for anything that will not fit exactly into the other groups. If you enter your Perfins in "Miscellaneous" you immediately side-step all competition of the rarities, the complicated plating jobs, the "wonder-how-they-got-them" essays and proofs, and all other material which you could never afford. You also side-step all possibility of winning a Grand Award, but then you'll probably never win one anyway, so let's try for something reasonable.

Perfins are interesting, and they are not too hard to come by, but still are unusual enough to provide an eye-catching entry. Perfins come with pretty designs, and on every imaginable type of stamp from almost any country. They started in England during 1869, and a couple of Penny-Reds from that country will start off your exhibit. When they are mounted on a small black square, which is in turn mounted on your white album page, the little holes stand out quite plainly, and you create interest by just putting one or two examples on your first page, followed by a few lines of explanation.

To attract attention and to keep up interest, your Perfin exhibit must arouse a little curiosity, and the best way to do this is

to try to tell a story - the story of Perfins. Remember your exhibit will be viewed by many who have never seen a Perfin or understood what one was, so its job is to tell them, and to tell them quickly, concisely, and in an easy-to-understand brief story. You have started by showing how Perfins began, now show how they are used. The chief use of a Perfin stamp is to discourage theft or misuse, so show examples of the Perfins used by some large corporations. Railroads are prolific users and have turned out some eye-catching designs. Some use letters similar to script, others interlace the initials to form a monogram, and the Wabash Railroad even uses a little flag design with their "W" in it. All are relatively common, but a page of them is attention-getting, because everybody is interested in Railroads, although unfortunately nobody ever rides on them any more.

If you don't like railroads for a page, you can turn to some other group. Banks, Colleges, Insurance Companies, State or Municipal Governments, all use Perfins or have used them, so they are not hard to obtain. If you choose a company like General Electric, Gulf Oil, or New York Life Insurance Company (and there are many others), you can really have yourself a good time, for these companies have many offices scattered throughout the nation and each office uses Perfins. But the thrill comes when you show your viewers that you can tell by the Perfin just what branch office used it. This is easy, because these companies have thoughtfully placed extra "holes" in certain parts of their designs which indicate as sort of a code, which offices used the stamp. One page of this branch office designation will do wonder to dress up your entry and most viewers will never have supposed that such a thing existed.

Then you can show the universality of Perfins by displaying examples of Perfins found on the lowest value stamp ($\frac{1}{2}$ ¢), the highest value (\$5.00), on Parcel Post stamps, on Commemorative Stamps of every size, and even on Booklet Panes and Coils.

To make another page, you can refer to Scott's Catalog and quote from the footnote under Hungarian stamp #126, which describes how this stamp was punched with three holes forming a triangle, so that collectors and others who wanted unpunched stamps would have to buy them through the philatelic agency at an advance of 10% in price. Scott will help you show any other uses or "odd jobs" performed by Perfins. For example, the Catalog tells us under stamp #37 of Paraguay that this stamp was punched with a circular hole in order to prevent it from being fraudulently overprinted as #31. The French government
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used the Perfin method to advertise the 1930 International Air Post Exhibition by perforating the C6bair mail stamp with the letters "EIPA 30", and Tunisia perforated a huge "T" in certain stamps to indicate they were used as postage due stamps. For those people who collect only "Scott", remember that many other Perfin stamps are listed in the Catalog. A page which displays a few of these items, together with an explanation of why the stamps were Perfinned, is certain to arouse comment and catch the eye of the judges. Here you score points for philatelic knowledge. Everybody can score for neatness and attractiveness, but you need a few extra points like this to get yourself into the winning class.

So far we have shown you how to make six or eight pages with not too much trouble, but still you have created something which is unusual and which many people have never seen. With a little thought you can go on and make other pages, but you don't need too many to tell your story. Many awards have been won by an interesting one-frame entry, and one frame requires only about eight or nine pages, sometimes less.

Now when you have completed your exhibit, you have just begun the fun. The work is all over and you relax and start to draw your dividends. You search the philatelic press and find out where the shows are being held. Then after writing and receiving the necessary information, you mail your entry in to compete - first one show, then another in some other part of the country. With exhibits being held some place almost every week, you will have no difficulty in sending your entry to many different shows, and the beauty of it is that the identical entry can visit as many different shows as you want. This can be overdone, of course, but by the time you have exhibited at a few shows, starting with smaller ones, and then taking a chance now and then with a bigger show, you will have a new quota of ideas of how to make a better exhibit and then you start all over again. It's fun, it's interesting and rewarding, and it doesn't take much money.