

PERFINS COME TO WALES

By Ralph. E. Wornum

During the past year I have been doing some research under this heading and have shown a Nine Sheet Display to both the Port Talbot and the Swansea Philatelic Societies. That was the foundation of these notes.

Early security measures to "defeat petty pilfering" of stamps, included underprinting on the back of stamps - under the gum- and users included:

1. Copestake, Moore Crampton & Co., Ltd (1867)
2. The Oxford Union Society (1869) who issued free stamps to its members.

It was not long before the same purpose gave rise to experiments by a Mr Sloper, who developed a system of perforating designs and letters-on stamps, now generally known as 'Perfins', which even today are used all over the world.

Examples are to be found from all over Wales, one of the earliest being :- 435.2 GWR (with two different offset settings)  
Great Western Railway. Llanelly 1869

Nationalisation brought the Railway Executive, Western Region 166 RE/WR and the Docks & Inland Waterways Executive 251.1 D&I/WE to Wales.

Many Welsh local authorities also use Perfins,

554.2 AU/DC	=	Aberdare Urban District Council
111.1 CC	=	Cardiff City
111.3 BC	=	Barry
111.3 BC	=	Bangor Council

CC (111.1) is used by at least 6 bodies, and here a Cardiff postmark or a Welsh Regional stamp makes identification well nigh 100% certain.

Swansea Corporation used two elaborate settings on K.G.V, and K.G.VI. i.e. S'SEA/Cpn (Cat. No.s 660.1 & 660.2) but now they are one of 7 bodies who use SC (121.1)

At least one Educational Body - University College, Cardiff uses perfins, UC/C (40)

NC (51.2) with a Gwent postmark suggests Newport Corporation.

With the re-organisation of local government in Wales in 1973, some Perfin using authorities disappeared and others were created.

Aberdare UDC became Cynon Valley District Council = CV/DC

Barry DC became Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council = VG/BC

(I have an example of this with a Porthcawl postmark)

I am fortunate in having numerous different stamps from Bridgend Paper Mill (all with the same BP/M (582.1) setting) including some still on cover with the sender's name. This is an excellent example of establishing the identity of the Perfin.

Nationwide organisations have branches in Wales, and I have Welsh postmarks as evidence of the following bodies:

560.1 LU/&R	=	Law Union & Rock Insurance Co. Ltd
196.2 JD	=	John Dickinson & Co. Ltd

792 CU/GA = Commercial Union Assurance Group  
 206.1 DG = Drake & Gorham Ltd. (later Drake & Scull Ltd)  
 680.2 C&S = George Cohen Machinery Ltd. (and other  
 members of the 600 Group)  
 6 OA/BG = Ocean Accident Guarantee Corporation and  
 British General Insurance Company Ltd.  
 12.1 PAC = Prudential Assurance Company Limited.  
 308.2 NS/PCC = National Society for the Prevention of  
 Cruelty to Children. (Cardiff postmark)  
 851.2 CWS = Cooperative Wholesale Society Limited.  
 410 HJ/R = Ryman Group (Cardiff postmark)  
 3.1 AA = Automobile Association  
 125.5 H&C = Hessler & Company, Hull. (Newport, Mon. p/mk)  
 NV = National & Vulcan Engineering Insurance  
 Group (Bridgend postmark).

The Solicitors Law Stationery Society use the intriguing OYEZ (216.1) and Cardiff and Pontypool postmarks show their link with Wales.

From our catalogue I have identified the following in my collection:-

269 P.J/N.T = Pryce, Jones Ltd. Newtown, Montgomery (QV 1d)  
 261 PJ = Ditto (K.E.VII & K.G.V.)  
 485 S/&McD = Stewart & MacDonalds Ltd. (Swansea and  
 Merthyr postmarks)  
 343 W.H. = William Harris, Merthyr Tydfil.  
 516.2 WM = Western Mail Ltd. Cardiff.  
 11 129 = Uskside Engineering Company Ltd. Newport, Mon.

Once upon a time, there was a firm, Stubbs Limited, Waterloo Street, Swansea who appear to have had representatives all over the Country, for I have examples dated 1906 (Perfin S.S) from Aberystwyth, Haverfordwest, Llanelly (as it was then), Swansea, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath, Tonypandy, Pontypridd, Porthcawl and Cardiff.

I am rather mystified as to the nature of their business, for I have many of their stamps with English postmarks. Additionally, my perfins also establish that Stubbs received correspondence from,

K = Kodak Limited ? Worcester  
 46.3 SB = Somervill Brothers Limited. Kendal.  
 FISON = Fison Limited. Ipswich.

When perfins are used in the Post Town of origin, you can rely on the postmark to support identity, but if someone works in Cardiff and lives in, say Pontypridd, they could provide confusion by posting en route.

Why does the Railway Executive, Western Region stamp have a Renfrew postmark for example?

Other perfins I have with Welsh postmarks which have yet to be identified with their senders are:

FH/&Co	postmarked	D57 Bute Docks
RD/Co/Ld	"	Cardiff.
PD/AC	"	Aberdare
R&Co/C	"	D57 Bute Docks
FR&Co/C	"	" "
JC/&S	"	" "
MB/&Co	"	" "
LL/Ltd	"	" "
C.A/C or C.A/G	"	.... lly (Central Agency, Glasgow?)
RNB/WD	"	Llandrindod Wells (April 1975)

So much for the perfins that I have in my collection, now let us look at the other 'Welsh' perfins I am still watching out for,

217	BD/∆R	= Barry Docks & Railway Company ,
497	BM/R	= Brecon & Merthyr Railway
548	BOVEY	= John Bovey & Company, Ltd., Cardiff.
611.1	B.R	= Barry Railway
715.1	BT/D	= British Transport Dock Board
25.1/.2	CAM/RYS	= Cambrian Railways
58	C/BC	= Conwy Borough Council
510	C.M.S/Ltd..	= Crossville Motor Services, Chester
97	D∆C/RB	= Dee & Clwyd River Board
97A	D∆C/RA	= Dee & Clwyd River Authority
289	D.L.O	= David Owen, Cardiff.
376.1	ER	= Evans & Reid Coal Company Ltd., Cardiff.
29	F/BC	= Flint Borough Council
62	F+C	= Frazer & Company (Cardiff) Ltd.
	H∆S	= ? (seen with Porthcawl postmark)
498	JL/Ld	= John Lysaght Limited, Newport, Mon.
863	JW∆S/C	= John Williams & Sons, Cardiff
51.2	NC	= Newport (Mon) Corporation. (Gwent postmark recently acquired)
212	N./M.G./Co.	= Newport Monmouthshire Gas Company
458	RS/BR	= Rhondda & Swansea Bay Railway Company
1.28	S	= John Summers & Sons Ltd, Shotton, Flintshire
66	T.B/∆Co.	= T. Beynon & Company, Cardiff.
482	TV/R	= Taff Vale Railway Company, Glamorgan.
	PT/DR	= Port Talbot Docks & Railway
	CORY	= Cory Companies of Cardiff & London 5 dies ,
9	A Shield design	used some years ago by Cardiff City. (Corporation not Football Club'')

Sorry if this looks rather like a Catalogue of Welsh Perfins (which it is really), but if you are looking for a new theme within the field of Welsh Philately, I am sure that you will find plenty of interest in this tiny corner of the Perfin World.

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