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SPLITS AND OTHER DEF.

Warren Travell

In Perfins, it is the punching—the pattern of the punched holes, which is of primary importance while the other features of the stamp become secondary. So it comes about that, as long as the pattern of the holes is clear and complete, we may overlook many of the common stamp detriments, such as straight-edges, thin spots, heavy cancellations and tiny tears. Of course, the more perfect the stamp is the better and no one wants an item in his collection which is an eye-sore but with perfins we are looking at those funny little holes—and not for slight defects. The corollary of all this reasoning is that a perfin which does not have a good complete pattern of holes is defective and should be in the discard. The most common defect in perfins results from the spreading of the pattern over two stamps and such perfins may be called "splits" for short. These result, of course, from careless work on the part of those who perform the manual job of perforating stamps in companies' offices. The slovliness with which this work is usually done in the United States as compared with the meticulous care exercised in almost every other country in the performance of the same kind of job, furnishes a good opportunity for making comparison of national characteristics.

It is also to be noted that in general the perfins of other countries not only have complete, well-centered patterns but they are almost always "right side up with care," whereas here we find every possible misarrangement, such as inverts, obverts, inverted obverts, sideways up, sideways down, double punching, etc. In the writer's opinion, it a waste of time and energy to attempt distinguishing between these minor variations in placement of pattern and, while such mal-arrangements

are not to be regarded as defects, they may be tolerated.

Another more serious defect results from the breaking of pins in the punch with the result of missing holes in the perfin pattern. The primary cause of this may be traced back to another national attribute—hurry and rush. When that same ubiquitous office-boy tries to punch twice as many sheets at a time as he should, something happens—either pins break or the bottom sheets are not perforated. A few missing holes may be tolerated but when so many are lacking that the pattern is indistinct or indeterminate, the proper place for such a perfin is the wastepaper basket. Again, it is to be noted that few perfins from foreign countries show missing holes. On the other hand, the perforation work in the offices of some American companies is so poorly performed as to reflect upon their business management. One does not have to have collected many perfins before he learns that the output of some users is so poor that it is difficult to find a single one of their perfins in perfect condition.

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