

G. B. PERFIN STUDY GROUP NEWS-LETTER

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PERFIN IDENTITIES

In our Nov-Dec issue we gave a list of Insurance Companies which were originally merged into the commercial Union Group. Mr F.H.B. Smith tells us that the present day composition of this Group is slightly different from the one quoted by us. It would seem, therefore, that some of the Original companies have new completely lost their identities in the present set-up.

The companies quoted by Mr Smith are; Commercial Union Assurance Company Limited., The Ocean Accident & Guarantee Corporation Ltd., Union Assurance Society Limited., British General Insurance Company Limited., Edinburgh Assurance Company Limited

Most of these companies have at one or another issued their own perfins.

PERFIN ILLUSTRATIONS

The Illustrations ordered from Mr Van Lint, should, by the time that this issue goes out, have reached those members who ordered through the Secretary. We have already heard that the first shipment has been sent off.

The greatest of care is taken to ensure that each page gives a perfect reproduction but occasionally a poor quality sheet gets through Mr Van Lint's "Inspection Department". He has promised to replace any pages which are not up to standard, and requests that the return of any such pages be done through the Secretary.

Mr Van Lint also says that if sufficient members are interested in obtaining further copies to enable another bulk order to be placed, he will consider another favourable rate. It must be borne in mind, however, that the lower price is given on the basis of no binders being provided, and the pages supplied unpunched, as well as bulk ordering. His standard price for individual copies is for the pages supplied mounted in a folder.

Perhaps any member who missed the last order and now requires a copy, or anyone needing an extra copy, would write to the Secretary.

INFORMATION WANTED

Although as a Group we are basically interested in perfins of Great Britain only, we are always prepared to provide space for members individual notes on perfins of other lands, since we know that not all members confine their interests to G.B, alone. It is, therefore, with this in view that we publish Mr Carr's contribution below.

Mauritius Perfins

Five perfins have been recorded so far on the stamps of the British colony of Mauritius. The details are as follows,

B	14	7	
BB/&Co	14,14/14,8,4	5/5,5,2	BLYTH BROTHERS & Co.
B.B/&Co.	13,13/12,8,6	6/6	
MCB/M	15,8,14/15	5/5	THE MAURITIUS COMMERCIAL BANK
M.B.I/Ltd.	17,13,5/7,5,7	5½/5½	THE MERCANTILE BANK OF INDIA LIMITED

The configuration of the perfins (i.e. 2H or 2S etc.) is not taken into consideration as the perfins are found in all positions.

In order to study these perfins more closely I would be most grateful if members would let me know which stamps they possess with the above, or any other types which may exist, using Stanley Gibbons Part 1 or Simplified, or Scotts catalogue numbers, and also any dates shown on the postmarks.

All information direct to Chris. J. T. Carr.  
please.

WHO KNOWS THE ANSWER?

The following identities are submitted by Mr F.H.B. Smith as 'probables'. Although he has no documentary proof of these he has sound reasons for believing them to be correct. Can anyone give confirmation of them?

AP/CM	2H	9,9/8,17	4½/4½	ASSOCIATED PORTLAND CEMENT MANUFACTURERS
ND/FS	2H	11,9/7,9	4½/4½	NATIONAL DEPOSIT FRIENDLY SOCIETY

PERFIN IDENTIFICATION

We have not received a great deal of correspondence as a result of Mr Van Lint's article and would like to hear from more members before publishing any final considerations.

NEWS SHEET CONTENTS

This issue contains a further fine article by Mr Van Lint and a plea for information from our President. We hope to include more material from these two gentleman in our next and succeeding issues. This issue also concludes Mr Jennings listing of the Line Engraved perfins.

By V.J. Van Lint.

Many years ago pre-cancelled stamps were looked upon by stamp collectors with the same disdain with which they regard damaged and torn stamps today. If I remember correctly, it was the late Stephen Rich who first sensed the possibilities of these specialities and began putting these outcasts aside, for future use, at a time when every other collector was giving them away or throwing them in the waste paper basket.

When we now glance through the Mitchell-Hoover catalogue of U.S. Bureau Precancels and see that a 1927 1½ cent used, which Minkus prices at 5c., is listed at a price of \$10.00 as a precancel then it can indeed be said that precancels have come a long way.

I am not predicting that the same will happen to perfins but oddly enough, today they are somewhat in the same position that pre-cancels were many years ago.

About 30 years ago very few people were interested in perfins. Gradually, here and there throughout the world isolated collectors began putting them aside. These isolated collectors found out about each other and in due time a club was formed, The American Perfin club which now has over 200 members, many in foreign lands. These men are working hard at their hobby and much information is being exchanged. The need for a catalogue was felt and so they got to work with vigour on that programme particularly. Today not only a complete catalogue of U.S. perfins is available to club members but catalogues of foreign perfins as well. Netherlands and Danish perfin lists have been published. An illustrated catalogue of Belgian perfins has been placed on the market. An illustrated compilation of U.S. perfins is also available. All this goes to show that perfins today have also come a long way. What the future holds we do not know.

The difference between the above mentioned perfin catalogue and the ordinary stamp catalogue such as the world wide catalogue of Minkus, is that the latter not only lists all stamps but gives information on their prices also. The perfin lists published up to now do not contain any prices. So we come to the topic of this article. What about prices of perfins? Why do the published perfin catalogues not give also an indication of their value?

This last question is easily answered. Perfin catalogues do not give prices because for a complete price list, for example, on Danish perfins alone, we would have a book comparable in size to Volume 1 of the Minkus catalogue which contains all stamps of Great Britain and Colonies. A simple calculation will make this clear.

There are 750 known different perfin designs of Denmark. Minkus worldwide stamp catalogue lists nearly 400 different stamps of Denmark, exclusive of lithographic and colour varieties. Theoretically, therefore, the possibilities are that there are 300,000 different Danish perfins. Granted that this is very much a theoretical calculation but nobody will accuse us when we take 10% of this theoretical total as a good practical figure of being guilty of exaggeration.

Now, a list of 30,000 stamps, each individually priced, would still give us a voluminous book. And this would only cover one single country, whereas there are 129 different countries in the world that at one time or another have used perfins.

For Holland the comparable figures would be approximately 600 perfin types and approximately 700 different stamps, or a theoretical total of 420,000. And for the U.S.A., with over 4,000 types of perfins and more than 1,000 different stamps we come to the staggering figure of 4 million. Even 10% is still an enormous total of 400,000. For the U.S.A., alone we would have to list twice as many stamps as are listed in all Minkus catalogues together. Those observations show clearly that we can never expect to see a complete perfin price list issued, now or at any time in the future.

Let us now return to the question so often asked, what are perfins worth?

Any discussion on this subject must commence with the well known fact that to an orthodox collector a perfin is a damaged stamp and consequently is worthless. To the perfin collector the value of a perfin depends on many things. One is the country of origin.

Generally speaking, Danish perfins are quite common. As stated before a total of about 750 types are known. On the other hand Brazilian perfins are relatively rare. Only 11 types are known of which 3 have never actually been seen and of others only 1 copy is known to exist. So we can, again generally speaking, say that Danish perfins are cheap and Brazilian perfins are expensive.

Another matter influencing the amount a perfin collector will pay for material useful to his collecting activities is the manner in which it is offered to him, that is, in bulk mixtures of unknown and often doubtful contents, or in single readily identifiable items of which he knows immediately whether they can be fitted into his collection.

When regular stamp collectors and dealers, in their search for material, scout through large quantities of stamps and put the perfins they encounter aside, this takes very little effort and time on their part. The resulting perfin mixtures at present are evaluated at about 75 cents per 1,000 postpaid. Probably a little more for stamps mostly from the period before 1930, and somewhat less for mixtures having stamps predominantly from the period after 1930. I am speaking now of U.S. stamps. Mixtures of this nature of foreign stamps will rate \$1.25 to \$1.50 per 1,000.

When considering the fairness of this price, one must realize that quite often when purchasing these mixtures, the perfin collector acquires 98% useless material in multiple duplication of few types and issues. It takes thousands and thousands of perfins before one finds a really good one. But, if someone has the Dutch 2½ guilder, Minkus No.105 which catalogues used at \$0.50 to \$1.50, and this stamp has the perfin V.D.S. on it, I venture to say that it is worth at least \$1.50, or several times catalogue value. This stamp was first issued in 1899 and was demonitized in 1935. The total quantity issued is not known, but should be considerable

to judge by present day prices. A fair guess would be around 250,000. However, the corner of the perfin V.D.S., the firm of J.B. Van der Schoot in Hilligom Holland, famous Dutch tulip bulb raisers, probably very seldom used such a high value stamp for their shipments. Consequently, this stamp with their perfin on it- the only known 2½ guilder perfin of Holland, incidently- is well worth a premium over ordinary catalogue value.

Finland is another example of relatively high priced perfins. There are only 10 different perfin types of this country known and some of these are really rare and very hard to come by. Consequently, although the prototype say of Finland, Minkus No.79, is catalogued at only 2 to 3 cents, as a perfin with the type F & Co or J G W on it, the stamps would be worth many times their ordinary catalogue value.

I venture to say also, that a Brazilian stamp with the Perforation D & C would be worth several dollars, whereas it may Catalogue only 3 cents.

The relative rarity of perfins can best be established by keeping track statistically of the exact number of each one contained in a large mixture, say of 100,000. For Denmark and Holland this has been done and it can be stated that in general, any perfin of Denmark on Minkus Nos. 457 & 470 are rare and worth several times their catalogue value. On the other hand, Denmark Minkus No. 462 is very common. Most semi-postals with perfins of Denmark on them are rare and should trade at or above catalogue value. The same is true of Dutch semi-postals.

Although the normal-issues with the faces of King Christian X or King Frederick IX of Denmark are plentiful, some issues are rare as perfins, for example, the 1912 Post office issue, and the 1924 Postal Service Commemorative issue.

More specifically, certain perfin types are rare in whatever issue they exist. Examples of this, for Denmark, include;

A G	9mm.	A G A	7½mm.	A N CO	6½mm.	A P/C F	5mm.
A/s D	4½mm.	A U	11mm.	B	19mm.	Bog. D	7mm.
B.P	7mm.	B T T	?	F D	7½mm.		

Quite often these exist on only one type of stamp. The explanation for this is probably that the particular company bought a perforating machine and instead of seeing to it that someone was properly instructed in its use, the gadget was turned over to some office boy who forthwith proceeded to experiment on cardboard, or put too many sheets of stamps in it at one time, with the result that several pins broke off and the whole idea of perforating stamps was given up.

Often, also, a perfin collector will find a perfin on a very early issue, maybe of 1900 to 1905 and then a large gap exists until it appears once again, say on a late 1947 or 1943 issue. Here we obviously have a case of neglect by the management to enforce the rule that stamps shall be perforated immediately upon arrival in the office, with the result that the machine gradually

drifts into disuse, Then a sudden change to more punctual management puts the machine back into operation and changes in the philatelic world what was a rare perfin into a common one again.

In between bulk purchases of large mixtures and the acquisition of single specific perfins is the market for selected mixtures of all different perfins, whether they be types or issues.

As there is a considerable amount of work connected with the preparation of such mixtures, an approximate price of ½ cent per stamp contained in those mixtures is not out of reason. The same rule applies here which governs such mixtures of ordinary stamps, and that is, that the larger the mixtures the higher the average price per stamp. Thus, a mixture of 400 different perfins may be priced at \$1.50 whereas 1200 different of the same country should probably bring \$10.00.

For Dutch perfins, another part of the international perfin field which has been subjected to closer study than most, it can be said, that in general, any type of perfin on Minkus Nos. 233, 234, 235, 203, 204, 205, 206, 278, 575, 590, 637, and 573 are all relatively rare and worth at least 50% of catalogue value, in most cases more. At least a dozen specific types of perfins are known on only one type of stamp and thus these are in demand at a premium over catalogue value.

Summarizing what has been discussed above, it can be stated that;

- 1- Bulk perfin stamps are worth very little due to the uncertainty of the contents of the mixture. For U.S.A., Prior to 1930 a price of \$1.00 per thousand, for post 1930 about \$0.50 per thousand, and for foreign up to about \$1.50 per thousand.
- 2- Ordinary perfins are worth 20% to 25% of their catalogue value.
- 3- Specific perfins are worth several to many times their stated catalogue value.
- 4- Prepared mixtures of all different perfins at a price of ½ to 1 cent per perfin are considered moderate.

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#### PERFIN SOURCES

Mr J Levi  
has a number of earlier G.B. perfins which he wishes to dispose of. Amongst these are a few nice examples of the Board of Trade type. Anyone interested should write to him direct.

#### PERFIN IDENTITIES

Anyone who has additions or corrections to make to the identity lists published so far are requested to write and inform the Secretary. Remember we have a long way to go to completion.

LIST OF G.B. STAMPS NOT YET RECORDED AS PERFINs

The following list, compiled by Mr Jennings, is of those issues of G.B., which so far have not been recorded perforated for use as perfins.

Any member possessing copies is asked to communicate with Mr Jennings, who would also be interested in acquiring duplicate copies for his own collection.

- 1858-54 1d rose-red. Plate Nos., 71, 73, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 88, 91, 95, 96,
- 1858 2d blue. Plate Nos., 7, 8, 9, 12.
- 1870 ½d rose-red. Plate Nos., 1 & 3.
- 1865-7 Surface Printed. Large white letters. Watermark Emblems.  
3d rose, Plate 4; 6d deep lilac, Plates 5 & 6;  
9d straw, Plates 4 & 5; 10d red-brown, Plate 1  
1/- green, Plate 4.
- 1865-73 Large white letters. Watermark Garter. 4d vermillion.  
Plate Nos., 7, 8, 9, 10.
- 1867-80 Large white letters. Watermark Spray.  
3d rose, Plate 4; 6d lilac, Plate 6 (with  
hyphen), Plate 8 (no hyphen), Plate 10; 10d  
deep red-brown, Plate 1; 10d red-brown, Plate  
2, 1/- green, Plate 4; 2/- cobalt; 2/- milky-  
blue, Plate 3.
- 1867-83 Watermark Maltese Cross 10/- grey; £1 brown-lilac.  
Wmk. Anchor. Blued paper. 5/- rose; £1 brown-lilac; £5  
orange.  
" " White paper. £5 orange.
- 1873-80 Large coloured letters. Watermark Anchor.  
2½d rosy-mauve. Blued paper, Plates 2 & 3;  
Error of lettering, LH-FL for LH-HL Plate 2;  
2½d rosy-mauve (Wmk. Orb), Plate 17; 1/- pale  
green (Wmk. Spray) Plate 9; 4d vermillion  
(Wmk. Large Garter), Plate 16; 4d sage-green  
(Wmk. Large Garter), Plate 17; 8d purple  
brown (Wmk. Large Garter), Plate 1.
- 1880-3 Imperial Crown. 6d on 6d lilac - varieties.
- 1881 Watermark Imperial Crown. 16 dot variety.  
1d bluish lilac "Blued paper"; 1d deep purple  
varieties.
- 1883 Watermark Anchor.  
Blued paper 2/6 lilac, 5/- rose, 10/- cobalt.  
White paper 10/- cobalt.
- 1884 Watermark 3 Imperial Crowns. £1 brown-lilac "Frame broken".
- 1888 Watermark 3 Orbs. £1 brown-lilac "Frame-broken".
- 1911 Harrison printing. Perf. 15 x 14. 3d grey on lemon.

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- 1911-12 Somerset House printing. 10d purple & aniline pink.
- 1911-12 George V. Watermark Imperial Crown. "No Cross on Crown".  
1d red (Die A), 1d red (Die B).
- 1912 Watermark Imperial Crown (Re-drawn). ½d green, 1d scarlet  
"No Cross on Crown" varieties.
- 1912 Watermark Royal Cypher (Simple) Re-drawn. ½d green "No  
Cross on Crown" variety.
- 1912 Watermark Royal Cypher (Multiple) ½d green, 1d scarlet, "No  
Cross on Crown" variety.
- 1912-22 Watermark Royal Cypher. ½d Cyprus green; 1½d brown  
Error "Pencf"; 2½d Prussian blue.
- 1913 Watermark Royal Cypher (Multiple) ½d green, 1d scarlet.
- 1913 Watermark Cypher. Waterlow Brothers & Layton printing.  
£1 green.
- 1924-6 Block watermark. "Watermark sideways" variety.  
½d green, 1d scarlet, 1½d chestnut, 2d orange.
- 1929 U.P.U. "Watermark Sideways" variety. ½d green, 1d scarlet,  
1½d brown, £1 black.
- 1934-6 Photogravure. "Watermark sideways" variety.  
1d scarlet, 1½d red-brown, 2d orange.
- 1937 Coronation. 1½d maroone "Colon" variety.
- 1937-52 George VI. "Watermark sideways" variety  
1½d green, 2d orange, 2d pale orange,  
2d red-brown.
- 1946 Victory Commemorative. 2½d blue "Extra porthole" variety,  
3d violet "Seven Berry" variety.
- 1948 Silver Wedding £1 Blue
- 1948 Channel Islands Liberation. 1d scarlet, 2½d blue.
- 1948 Olymic Games. 3d violet "Broken Crown" & "Repaired Crown".
- 1952-4 Elizabeth II "Watermark side-ways" variety.  
1½d green, 2d brown, 2½d carmine.
- 1955-6 Watermark St. Edwards Crown. ½d orange, 3d violet.
- 1957 Jamboree 1/3 green.
- 1957 Graphite Lines ½d orange, 1½d green.
- 1958 Empire Games. 6d purple, 1/3 green.
- 1958 Regionals. Scotland: 3d, 1/3.  
N. Ireland: 3d, 6d, 1/3.  
Wales: 3d, 6d, 1/3.  
Guernsey: 3d,  
Jersey : 3d,  
Isle of Man:3d