

## Force Food Company

FORCE           7,8,10,7,9  
FOOD            7,8,8,9  
Cat.No. 309    3½mm.

From the wonderful co-operation of Brian R. Fincken, one of the directors of A. C. Fincken & Company Limited, and member E. D. Chambers, the clouds of mystery which surround this catalogue entry have begun to clear away.

The roots of 'FORCE' were established in the United States of America at the turn of the century, for it was in that country that the Force Food Company was formed in June 1901. A London office was opened in the early part of the following year and an advertising campaign, begun in the March, caused quite a stir. The product advertised was the first breakfast cereal flake offered to the British public.

For the first year or so the major advertising character was a rather strange little caricature called Miss Prim. The packet containing the new breakfast alternative depicted two men forging a chain. The merchandise being marketed for the grand sum of 7½d.

For some reason Miss Prim did not last very long. Two young American girls, a Miss Ficken and a Miss Minnie Maud Hanff, sent a rough sketch and a jingle to the Company.

By the autumn of 1903 their sketch had been adopted and the famous "Sunny Jim" appeared. One of the jingles was, 'VIGOR, VIM, Perfect Trimo FORCE made him'. This rhyme and "Sunny Jim" replaced the anvil design in 1908. In 1910 the sales of FORCE were taken over by A. C. Fincken & Co. This Company, still in existence today, is responsible for the manufacture of FORCE.

As the Company were responsible for marketing other products, it is thought unlikely that the perfin FORCE/FOOD was used by A.C. Fincken & Co. This is borne out by the dates of the postmarks reported. The only address for the Force Food Company that has been unearthed is 25 & 26, Rosier Lane, London, E.C. The telegraphic address was "FORCELLUTO".

Only a few members reported examples of this perfin usage. None were able to confirm the user.

### Stamps Reported

King Edward VII       ½d blue-green  
                              ld

### Postmarks

12.11.02  
20.1.03

\* Although mostly known diagonally, the ld dated 16.10.02 is an upright perfin.

19.11.04 London  
16.10.02 London\*

### Unknown

FORCE            7,8,9,7,9 Diagonal  
Cat. No. ?        4mm.

Only one member reported this. The example is on a K.E.VII 2d. and has a London postmark for 3.7.09.

For further information see article on A.C. Fincken published in the September/October 1979 issue of SEPS Bulletin.

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