

HOSPITAL PERFINS

By; K Rymer Young.

The present system of hospital administration was created by the National Health Service Act of 1946 and came into effect on 5th July 1948. The Act provides for 13 "regions" in England and 1 in Wales, each controlled by a Regional Hospital Board.

Each "region" is divided into between 12 and 50 "groups" of hospitals which are administered by Hospital Management Committees. The number of hospitals covered by a group may vary from one large hospital to about 20 smaller ones.

In addition to the regional groups there are 10 groups of provincial, and 13 groups of London "Teaching Hospitals" administered by their own Boards of Governors.

In Scotland there are 5 regions divided into groups controlled by Boards of Management.

In Northern Ireland there are a Hospital Authority and a Tuberculosis Authority controlling groups administered by Hospital Management Committees.

Finally there are the hospitals operated by the Ministry of Pensions and a large number of Voluntary Hospitals or Homes, many of which are operated by religious bodies.

Since 1959, the largest English region has been split into two regions, and there have been a number of changes in the groups, usually by way of amalgamation, and sometimes with a new name for the new grouping.

All this information and a lot more can be found in the Hospital Year Book which should be available at your nearest reference library.

The use of perfins by hospitals probably dates back to the 1940s but the number of users up to 1948 was very small. Since 1948 there has been a fair amount of use by the Management Committees but not by the Hospital Boards, and even the Management Committees using them do not seem to amount to more than 10% of the total.

A list of hospital perfins is given below. Some are positively identified while others are listed as 'probable' or 'possible', or even 'doubtful, on the information available. Dimensions of HMC perfins are not given as they are always in the Sloper (or Waterlow?) four pin high standard alphabet. Other dimensions are given and "listed" means included in our Identities Catalogue.

Further information as to postmarks when available would be of great help in proving identities. Meanwhile my neck is stuck right out and any criticism will be welcome.

(HP.1)

- A in a Horizontal Crescent Moon (35 holes) below an Asterisk (13)
Listed as "County Asylum, Portsmouth". My copy is postmarked Portsmouth and is on K.G.VI ½d 'light hair'. This seems to be what is now St. James Mental Hospital, originally group 49 in the South West Metropolitan Region but now grouped in the Wessex Region.
- BD/RH The initials and stamp postmarked "--HAM" seem reasonably conclusive that this is BIRMINCHAM DUDLEY ROAD HMC, group 24 of the Birmingham Region. On 2½d pale blue K.G.VI and Q.E values. This is a new identity.
- BH Listed as Brompton Hospital, Chelsea, S.W.3. My earliest is K.G.VI 2½d dark blue, and there are some 'provisionals' on the light colours. It also comes on Q.E. There is another die, 14,12 6mm. dating from K.E.VII with Chelsea postmarks which is probably this hospital since it is one of the big teaching hospitals.
- BH/C Listed as Burnley Hospital Committee. My only copy is Q.E. 2d with illegible postmark. There is a Burnley & District Hospital Management Committee which is group 6 in the Manchester Region.
- B/HMC This is listed as Bow and also as Bexley Hospital Management Committees which is quite likely under the present Sloper practice. The Bow Group was amalgamated in April 1963 with the West Ham Group to form the Thames Group.
- BL/HMC Brighton & Lewes Hospital Management Committee.
- BRB/26 A problem child. My only copy is Q.E. 2½d with Moseley, Birmingham postmark. There is a Moseley Hill Hospital for Children but it is in the Selly Oak Group 25. Birmingham Group 26 is for Sanatoria and none of them are in Moseley. May not be a hospital at all.
- BR/HB Another query. No helpful postmarks and too many possible users under these letters. Again it may not be a hospital one.
- BS/HMC Bermondsey & Southwark Hospital Management Committee. This group was dissolved in November 1965 and is now administered by the Board of Governors of Greys Hospital which is a teaching hospital.
- CA/HMC Cromer Area Hospital Management Committee.
- CF/HMC COSSHAM & FRENCHAY HMC. Both these hospitals are in the Bristol district. Confirmed by postmark on Q.E. 3d. A new identity.

- CH/33 On 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d pale blue GV1 and QE. No postmark but Group 33 of the South West Metropolitan Region is CANE HILL, a very large mental hospital. I think this must be right as a new identity.
- CH/MC Camberwell Hospitals Management Committee. Van Lint's
** illustrations show an obvious provisional for this hospital.
- CRO/HMC Croydon Group Hospital Management Committee. In April 1964 amalgamated with Warlingham Park as Croydon and Warlingham Park Group Hospitals Management Committee.
- D1/HMC Derby No.1 Hospitals Management Committee which is Group 4 of the Sheffield Region.
- DO/HM On pale 3d GV1 with illegible postmark. Could be Dorset, Doncaster or Dovenby Hall (Cockermouth) or may not be a hospital at all.
- DS/G Darenth & Stone Hospital Management Committee. Group 23 of South East Metropolitan Region with hospitals at Dartford and Tonbridge.
- DS/HG No legible postmarks for this one. Could be Darenth as above. Letters might also be used for Dudley Stourbridge and District Group.
- EC/HMC East Cumberland is the only group that seems to fit the lettering. My only copy is 1/- QE without legible postmark.
- EG/HMC Listed as Edmonton Group HMC. Amalgamated in April 1966 Enfield Group HMC.
- EH/MC Listed as Enfield Group HMC. Group 2 of the North East Metropolitan Region.
- FH/MC Listed as Farnham Group HMC, Group 8 of the South West Metropolitan Region.
- F&K Listed as Fulham and Kensington HMC. This Group was amalgamated in October 1960 with the Chelsea Group as Chelsea and Kensington HMC.
- GD/HM No information. If a hospital it could be Gateshead and District or Greenwich and Deptford.
- G/HMC Listed as Guildford and Godalming District HMC. This is an amalgamation of the Guildford (No.9) and Godalming, Milford and Liphook (No.14) Groups in 1961.
- G/N/C Diagonally. Listed as General Nursing Council for England and Wales. Not exactly a hospital but closely connected with hospital work. My earliest copy is GV1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d block watermark.
- ** Administered by the Board of Governors of Kings College Hospital since November 1965. (HP.3)

HB/HMC The only one that fits this lettering seems to be the Hortham-Brentry Group of Somerset No.8 of the South Western Region.

HH/MC Listed as Herefordshire HMC which is Group 10 of the Birmingham Region.

Now come a group with numbers. Some of these should strictly come in the numerical classification and some under H, but it is more convenient to deal with them all together.

3H/MC Listed as Sheffield. Sheffield has four Hospital Management Committees and No.3 is Group 28 in the Sheffield Region. It might be this but usually the perfins use the Group name or number and not the town division. Some help on postmarks needed here.

4H/MC Listed as Chelsea HMC and I have it with a London postmark not further identifiable. This is Group 4 in the South West Metropolitan Region. In October 1960 it was amalgamated with the Fulham and Kensington Group as Chelsea and Kensington HMC.

6/HMC Listed as Norfolk, Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth HMC which is Group 6 in the East Anglian Region.

HMC/6 Probably a different Group. No postmarks but I do have it on a Welsh regional stamp. Group No.6 in the Welsh Region is Merthyr and Aberdare HMC.

7/HM On a recent QE 3d. No information.

HMC/11 No information here.

HMC/14 Listed as South Warwickshire Group HMC and confirmed by two Leamington Spa postmarks. This is Group No.14 in the Birmingham Region.

HMC/25 No information here but only seven of the regions have a Group 25.

IB/HMC Listed as Ilford and Barking HMC and confirmed by postmarks. This is Group 12 in the North East Metropolitan Region.

KC/H Listed as King's College Hospital. This is a teaching hospital and is now the principal hospital of Group No. 11 in the London area. I have it from K.E.VIII.

LG/MC On 3d QE. No information. May not be a hospital at all.

L/HMC Listed as Lambeth but I have not seen one. In July 1964 the Lambeth and Wandsworth Groups were amalgamated as the South West London Group.

- L.C.A/H Listed as London County Asylum, Horton 7,8,10/12 6mm.
Comes as early as 24th July 1906 and the latest is K.G.V.
This is now Horton Hospital, Epsom and the Horton Hospital
Management Committee is Group 34 of the South West
Metropolitan Region.
- LQ/H¹ 8,8/12,5 4½mm. This comes only on 1d reds and is fairly
scarce. Mr Jennings records Plate 170 as the earliest, my
earliest is 186. London, E postmarks are the only evidence
that this might be London Hospital which is a teaching
hospital and now Group 2 in the London area. Information
wanted.
- MA/B 15,10/13 5½mm. Listed as Metropolitan Asylums Board. I
have it on K.G.V stamps of 1912 and 1914.
- MA/B 15,10/14 5½mm. This is not listed as identified but may
be this Board. Found on later K.G.V and 1½d P.U.C.
- MAB 15,10,14 4½mm. Comes on Q.V. 1d lilac to K.G.V 1d white
lion. Just a possibility. This Board no longer exists.
- M/H Listed for Middlesex Hospital. Provisional perforations
exist. This is a teaching hospital and is No. 2 of the
London area.
- OH/BR Oswestry Hospital, Birmingham Region, also known as the
Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital. It is
Group 27 in the Birmingham Region.
- O/HMC Could be Oakmere, Oakwood, Oldham and District, Ormskirk
& District, Orpington and Sevenoaks, or Oxford and
OH/MC District. Postmark information should help.
- PC/HMC Preston and Chorley Hospital Management Committee is
Group 4 of the Manchester Region.
- PG/21 Listed as Paddington General HMC but the correct title is
Paddington Group HMC. This is Group 21 of the North West
Metropolitan Region.
- QHC 12,12,8 4½mm. K.G.V photogravure to K.G.VI dark colours.
QHC 12,12,8 5mm. K.G.VI dark colours.
Q/HC K.G.VI pale and dark colours including provisionals.
All are listed as Queens Hospital for Children.
Additional dies (not confirmed) are probably, QHC 12,11,8
6½mm. on early K.G.V and 1½d P.U.C., QH/C on K.G.VI pale
colours and QHC 10,10,7 4½mm. on K.G.VI dark 1d.
This appears to be Queen Marys Hospital for Children which
was Group 15, Carshalton HMC in the South West Metropolitan
Region. It was amalgamated with Fountain Group HMC in October
1959 as Fountain and Carshalton HMC.
- R&D/HMC Listed as Rochdale and District HMC which is Group 10 in
the Manchester Region. But note that there is a Reading
and District HMC.

- RE/HMC This is the Royal Farlswood Group HMC which is No. 43 in the South West Metropolitan Region.
- R/HB Listed as the North West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board, Watford. Watford is in this Region but the Board's offices are at Portland Place, London, W.1. The Watford hospitals are in Group 9 which is the West Herts HMC.
- RH/B8 Information wanted.
- RH/MC Used by the Redhill Group HMC which is No. 11 in the South West Metropolitan Region. I have a Q.E. 6d postmarked Redhill with the RH definitely closer together than copies on K.G.VI pale colours with illegible posrmarks.
- RM/H Listed as Royal Masonic Hospital. This is a volountary hospital in London, W.6. It comes in the South West Metropolitan Region but is not under any Group HMC.
- S/27 Listed as Middlewood Hospital, Sheffield. This is a mental hospital and is the principal hospital under Sheffield No. 2 HMC which is Group 27 of the Sheffield Region.
- SC/HMC Listed as South Cheshire HMC which is Group 20 of the Manchester Region.
- S&D/HMC Listed as Swindon and District HMC which is Group 9 of the Oxford Region. Note also that these initials could be used by the SOUTHPORT & DISTRICT GROUP.
- SE/&B Listed as Saint Ebba's and Belmont Group HMC which was Group 36 in the South West Metropolitan Region. The Group was dissolved in July 1962 and the hospitals transferred to the Fountain and Carshalton Group.
- SFH/MC The only Group that appears to fit this lettering is the Saint Francis and The Lady Chichester HMC which is No.28 in the South East Metropolitan Region. Has anyone seen it with a Haywards Heath or Hove postmark? Or any postmark at all? The Group consists of mental hospitals.
- SG/H Includes provisionals. Might be Saint Georges Hospital, a large mental hospital at Morpeth which is Gropp 29 of the Newcastle Region, or Saint Georges Hospital which is NO.7 Group of the teaching hospitals in the London area. Or again, it may not be a hospital at all. I have it on K.G.VI pale colours with illegible postmarks.
- S.G.H.S The Seamens Greenwich Hospital Society comes occasionally on 1d reds, the earliest recorded by Mr Jennings being Plate 109. I also have it on the Q.V. ½d vermilion. The "Society" may not be strictly the Hospital but I think it is a logical inclusion. The Hospital is now in Group 6 of the South East Metropolitan Region under the name of the Seamens HMC.

- SH/GH No information. My only stamp is Q.E. 3d with illegible postmark. If it is a hospital it seems to fit for St. H Helier Group HMC which is No. 12 in the South West Metropolitan Region.
- SH/MC I have this with Mile End postmark indicating that the user is Stepney Group HMC. This was Group 7 in the North East Metropolitan Region, but in April 1966 it was amalgamated with the Central Group to form the East London Group.
- SM/HMC South Manchester HMC. This is Group 15 of the Manchester Region.
- SS/HMC South Shields HMC - Group 3 of the Newcastle Region.
- ST/BH The Royal Hospital of St. Bartholomew, usually known as "BARTS". A teaching hospital - No.1 of the London area.
- STG/H Listed as St. George's Hospital. No.7 teaching hospital in the London area. There is an earlier die 10,5,10/12 5mm. (T=3½mm.) on G.V & G.VI dark colours which may be this hospital. See also SG/H above.
- STH Listed as St. Thomas's Hospital which is No.12 teaching hospital in the London area. There are also dies 11,7,12 4½mm. on G.V photogravure & E.VIII, and 10,6,10 (4mm) on G.VI dark green that could have been used by this hospital.
- STJ/H Probably a hospital but there are a lot of St. Johns, St. Josephs and St. James to choose from. My only copy is Q.E. 2½d.
- TW/MC Pembury postmarks make it probable that this is TUNBRIDGE WELLS GROUP HMC which is Group 15 in the South East Metropolitan Region. Pembury Hospital is the largest in the Group.
- UC/H Three dies, 8,7/10 (4½mm), 10,8/11 (5mm), & 10,8/12 (5mm) are listed as United Cambridge Hospitals which make up No. 4 teaching hospital in the Provincial area. The letters could also stand for University College Hospital which is No.4 teaching hospital in the London area. Can anyone produce helpful postmarks? The position of the 'H' on the 10,8/12 die varies considerably and it appears to be a provisional perforation. I have it only on three copies of the 1½d G.VI dark colours. There is another die U.C/H 10,9/12 (5mm) which I have on G.V. 1d. This might belong here.
- U/HMC Listed as Uxbridge HMC. This is Group 15 of the North West Metropolitan Region.
- VH/C On 1d dark colour G.VI. with Chelsea postmark. Any information? V for Veterans?

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WB/HMC West Bromwich and District HMC. No.18 of the Birmingham Region.

WH/MC Walsall HMC. Group 19 of the Birmingham Region. There could be others as well with these initials.

WS/HMC West Suffolk HMC. Group 3 of the East Anglia Region.

That concludes a listing which is certainly not exhaustive, and which is probably more stimulating than accurate. I shall be quite content if it provides a basis for building something better.

(HP.8)

FURTHER NOTES ON HOSPITAL PERFINs

By K Rymer Young

There seems to be enough new material available now to justify a postscript to my article on hospital perfins.

Very soon after the first page of listings came out in the News Sheet I got very helpful replies from Mr Tomkins, Mr Summers and Mr Eades, for which many thanks. I had hoped that other members might be saving their replies until the article was completed but only Mr Coates has come in, and even 4d letters should have arrived by now.

I would like to record much valuable help from a non-member, Mr R.F.P. Glegg who was secretary of the Eastbourne Group HMC, but who has now unfortunately arrived at his retiring age.

Mr Tomkins and Mr Summers both drew my attention to the fact that official letters from the hospital groups use official envelopes currently marked CODE 26 or CODE 27 followed by a size number.

Turning to the actual identities we find,

- BR/HB Adding up information from both Mr Tomkins and Mr Summers this is definitely used by a hospital and may, I think, be safely noted as BIRMINGHAM REGION HOSPITAL BOARD.
- CH/33 Mr Eades reports this with Coulsdon, Surrey postmark which provides the necessary confirmation for CANE HILL.
- EB/HMC EAST BIRMINGHAM HMC (26), constituted November 1962. A reconstruction of the Birmingham (Sanatoria) Group. Recently found on current issue with Birmingham postmarks.
- HMC Mr Coates reports GUILDFORD as now using HMC without any G.
- HMC/6 Mr Summers reports a Yarmouth postmark and I have it with a Norfolk postmark.
- LG/MC Comes with Blackheath and Catford postmarks on code envelopes. Almost certainly LEWISHAM GROUP HMC, Group 4 of the South East Metropolitan Region.
- MW/HMC Not identified. Could be Mid-Wales, Mid-Wiltshire or Mid-Worcestershire. Not seen on Welsh Regionals as far as I know.
- NT/HMC A new identity from Mr Tomkins. NORTH TEES-SIDE HMC. Tees-Side (Newcastle 13), Cleveland (Newcastle 12) and Sedgfield Groups replaced by North Tees-Side HMC and South Tees-Side HMC in March 1958.

(HP.10)

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3H/MC Another from Mr Tomkins. Shrewsbury HMC is Birmingham 15 Group.

DH/MC Mr Summers reports this on code envelope with Wisbech postmark and noted in writing 'Clarkson Hospital'. Peterborough and Stamford HMC is East Anglia 12 but the Clarkson Hospital at Wisbech is North Cambridgeshire HMC (East Anglia 14)

SM/H On code envelope with postmark London E.C. 7 Jun. 1968. St. Mary's Hospital (London Teaching No. 9) is postally W2. This is a hospital but more information is needed for identification.

TB/H From Mr Summers. Tooting postmark on code envelope, with Tooting Bec Hospital written on envelope. I think we can accept this as correct. Tooting Bec Hospital was the only hospital in South West Metropolitan Group 30 but in July 1964 it was amalgamated with the Battersea and Putney Group to form the Battersea, Putney and Tooting Group.

TH/MC No legible postmarks. Possibles are Taunton, Torquay and Tottenham.

UC/H Mr Summers has this with London W.C. postmark on code envelope with handwritten identity, 'University College Hospital, Gower Street, W.C.1.

WG/HMC From Mr Coates. Windsor Group HMC, Group 4 in the North West Metropolitan Region.

That seems to be all for the present. I will produce further notes if and when sufficient new material is available.

K. Rymer Young.

(HP.11)

ADDITIONAL NOTES ON HOSPITAL PERFINs

By K. Rymer Young

- BH Mr Nelson confirms the earlier die for Brompton.
- BH/C Burnley. Miss Thornton produces this one on the 2½d Scout Jubilee, the first recording of a large commemorative.
- CH/GH Reported by Mr Nelson on cover with Guys Hospital on back. No clue at present as to what the CH portion stands for.
- ERH/MC Both Mr Nelson & Miss Thornton remind me that this is listed as East Riding HMC in the catalogue. My omission!
- FC/H Mr Nelson has this with Haywards Heath postmark and I have it with Wivelsfield. This seems to be St. Francis and the Lady Chichester Hospitals but leaves SFH/MC (see original article) uncertain.
- HB/MC Query by Miss Thornton and Mr Whitehead. Lettering suggests a hospital but I have three dies, 12,13/15,8 (4½); 12,14/15,8 (5) and 10,11/11,7 (4½) all only on K.G.V low value dark colours which are too early for hospital management committees. All postmarks are illegible.
- LG/H Reported by Mr Nelson on cover from South Western Hospital, Stockwell, S.W.9. This hospital was in the Lambeth Group which in July 1964 became the South West London Group (see L/HMC)
- RH/B8 Mr Nelson has further confirmation of this as South West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board. (Area 8)
- RH/MC) Mr Whitehead draws my attention to the fact that recent
RN/MC) perfins from Reigate show the second letter as a sort of monogram of H & N. This Group became the Reigate & Netherne in July 1964 which probably accounts for the odd phenomena.
- SH/MC Confirmed as also used by Shrewsbury by Mr Nelson.
- SO/HMC This is Birmingham (Selley Oak) HMC, No. 25 in the Birmingham Region, and should have been included in the original list. My omission again!
- TH/MC Produced by Miss Thornton with London, E.1. postmark that does not fit any present group. The nearest possibility seems to be Tottenham.
- UC/H Mr Nelson and Miss Thornton have London postmarks. No one seems to fancy Cambridge.

Any additions and corrections to Mr Young please
at 18, Milnethorpe Road, Eastbourne.

(HP.12)

FURTHER INFORMATION ON HOSPITAL PERFINS

By K. Rymer Young

- C&K Chelsae & Kensington HMC. Created in October 1960 by amalgamation of Chelsea with Fulham & Kensington.
- DS/HG Dudley, Stourbridge & District HMC
- PH/MC Used by Plymouth & District HMC as well as Peterborough.
- SAH Used by St. Andrews Hospital Management Committee, Therpe Norwich. The Group was amalgamated to form St Andrews & Hellesdon HMC on 1st April 1964 but still appears to be using the same perfin. I have S/A/H with what might be a Norwich postmark.

All the above information has been received from Mr Clarkson of Leeds who also produces a cover from Edmonton (now in Enfield) Group with 05/18, and two covers from Rochford (in Southend Group) with 106 numeral perfins. The latter pair are not "code" envelopes.

I have 106 off cover with Southend postmark. Definitely more information is required on these odd "number perfins".

(Editor's Note: The 106 perfin is recorded as belonging)
(to the Southend Borough Council - see Council Listing)

- UC/H Mr Skelton finally settles this problem with the perfin on cover from Addenbrooks Hospital, Cambridge. Evidently this is a "double user" like PH/MC. Good current practice for Slopers nowadays, but it would never have done in the old red days.