

The imaginary perfins at left spell out the title of the third edition of Adachi Sunao's famous catalog of Japanese perfins: Nihon kigō-iri kitte zukan [Illustrated Collection of Japanese Perfins], published 1 August 1980 by Senkō Kitte Kenkyū Kai [Perfin Stamps Research Society] and sold in Japan and abroad by Sun Philatelic Center.

Although only a few new discoveries have been added since the 1974 second edition, English translations of introductory information and the names of perfin users (where known) are included with copies sold abroad. The English is quaint but understandable, though some of

the translations of foreign firms' names will doubtless be improved upon in time. "Traffics" has been used in many firm-name translations for two words that usually are translated as "transport" or "transportation" [unsō, un'yu]. Users of the translation should have no trouble with the explanations of H54 ("muchmost holes type") and H55 ("top many letters pattern").

Section A of the catalog shows the four embossed insignia so far discovered—two early ones and two from after World War II. A1, the earliest, found on Cherry Blossom and Old Koban stamps, is the highest priced item in the catalog at 150,000 yen.

Section B lists the 70 handstamped overprints that were forerunners of perfins. One design has been deleted and six new ones added. Sections C through Y show the true perfins, and add only four new designs to previous listings, plus correcting the illustration for W6 to show a pattern with the correct 37 holes. The total number of different perfin designs (exclusive of embossed and handstamped) illustrated by Adachi is now 664. To these can be added five in my collection and one from a Perfins Club member that have not yet been reported to Adachi. We learned about his new edition only in June 1980, too late for inclusion.

The most startling aspect of the new edition is the pricing. I have been reluctant to accept Adachi's valuations as monetary prices, preferring to regard them solely as indications of relative value—not price. Adachi, however, says that his valuations are yen values. Many of these have risen dramatically above those in the second edition, and all are up, to one degree or another. Probably the most dramatic change is the increase shown for G41—Japan's first perfin—from 10,000 to 100,000 yen. At present rates, this would be about \$475. Only a handful are priced at 500 yen or below. Most prices seem to be in the 1,000 to 2,000 yen range (\$4.75 to \$9.50 each). By comparison, the average realization for 134 lots of Japanese perfins in an October 1978 Perfins Club auction was only 97½ cents per lot—\$0.0017 per Adachi yen. Even if Adachi's catalog prices are double the actual market prices in Japan, it seems that Japanese prices are still high. There is no doubt about increased popularity of Japanese perfins among collectors at home and abroad. Early in 1980 I entered a book of perfins in the ISJP sales circuit, valued at \$0.0010 per Adachi yen or 40% under the Perfins Club auction average. The whole book was bought by the first per-

son on the circuit, and was by far the fastest result I have ever had from the sales circuit. Of course, every item was fully identified as to both Adachi design number and post office of use (where present), but I was still surprised by the result.

The new Adachi edition has 112 pages, and is priced in Japan at 2,000 yen (\$9.50), plus postage. It must be a "must" for all Japan perfin collectors, especially with the new English-language material included. One relief to collectors is that Adachi did not this time renumber any patterns (as he did for most entries in the second edition). The new items were simply added at the end of their section (G76--SRC, H56--R&Co, W89--a 19 mm., 59-hole W14) or added as an "A" number (C20A, a variation of C20).

The six additional patterns mentioned above that are not in this catalog are described below. Really avid perfinners may want to note that the hole counts shown under 6 illustrations in the catalog are incorrect. The right counts are: D10-39, G51-33, G74-29, M3-26, W30-48, and Y1-61 (this last item, by the way, is the well-known Taiwan postal-savings perfin used as a cancellation--see JP 14/248 & 15/155).

The following supplementary illustrations show the perfin pattern first from the back of the stamp, then from the face, and finally as they would appear from the face if the stamp design were entirely filtered out. Note that all except the first of the six were punched to read normally from the face, not from the reverse.



From the collection of Bob Schwerdt, who is Foreign Catalog Editor of the Perfins Club. He reads it as CCI, but I prefer ICC until proof to the contrary turns up. Since it is a mirror image from the face, the third or filtered illustration is omitted.



This perfin is like Adachi's G59 except that the Z had 9 instead of 10 holes. This copy (Old Taishō Watermarked 30s brown) was cancelled at Semba (in Osaka) in August 1925. It is distinctly a separate variety, as the 10-hole Z variety is readily found.



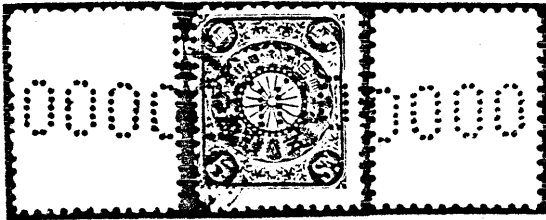
This pattern looks like the katakana syllabic NA, and there is no sign of any "blind" holes. Nevertheless, I now conclude that it is not a "reverse NA" but an incomplete punching of Q7, which is the ideograph 大-DAI. One leg is missing here.



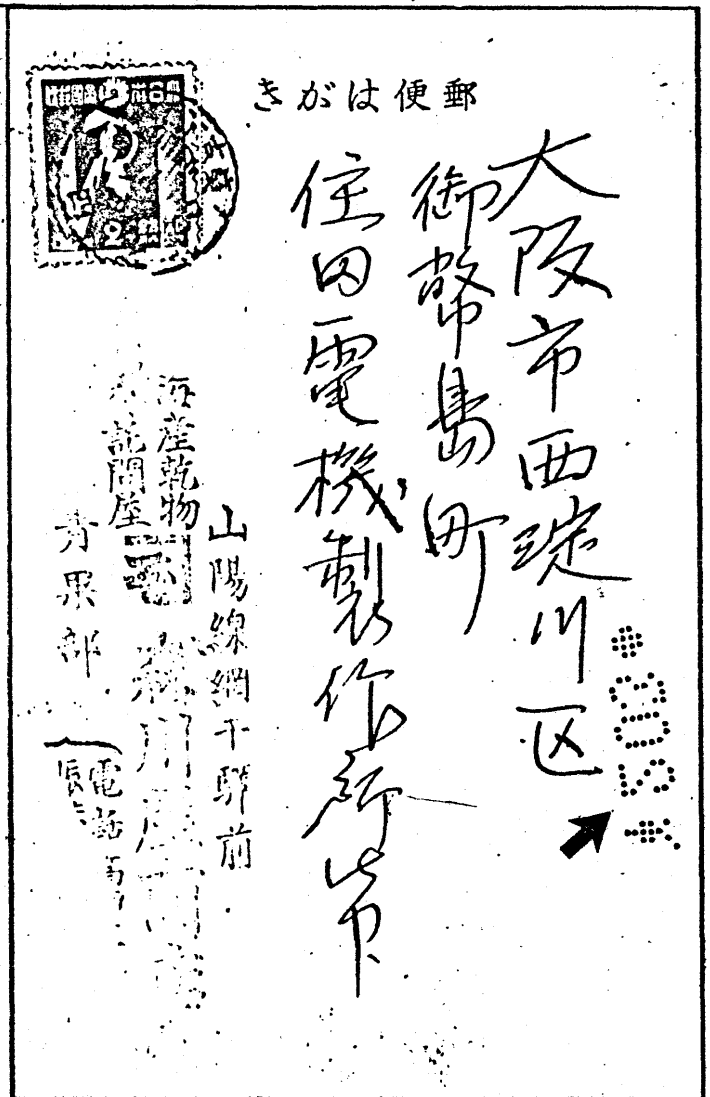
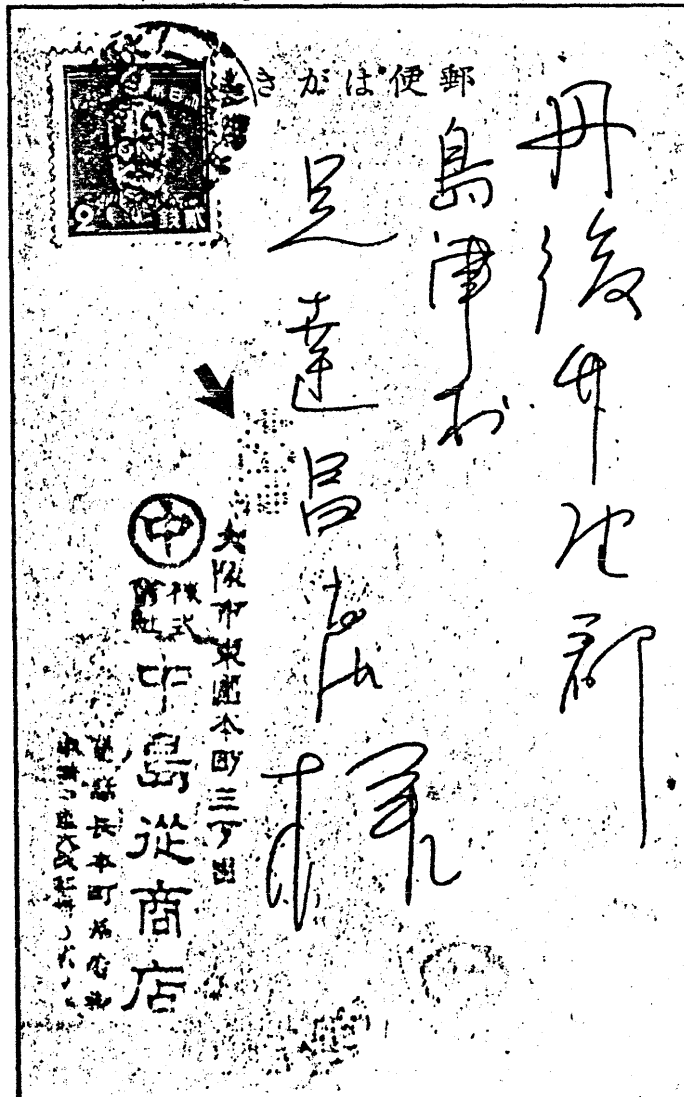
Two katakana syllabics SA and WA comprise this design, making the word 'sawa'. This appears to be the same as pattern L6 except that it is 1 mm. taller and 1/2 mm. wider than L6. This example (OTW 30s) has a telegraph cancellation of Tokyo Central / Nihombashi, 21 July 1925.

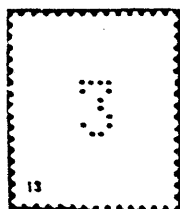


Patterns Q26 to Q31 show six types of the kanji character 正, SHŌ (part of the word for "specie"), with from 19 to 32 holes, used by various offices of the Yokohama Specie Bank in Japan and Dairen. This is an 18-hole variety, on a New Taishō Watermarked 25s, postmarked Moji, 7 August 1935, 4-8 p. m. Moji is not listed by Adachi as an office using any of the other 'shō' patterns.



While having all the attributes of a perfin, this string of zeros is probably not a true perfin. The earlier Adachi catalog illustrated on page 89 six patterns consisting of arabic numerals, ¥0, ¥5, and a simple cross, but these were not given catalog numbers because none had been positively identified and their method of use was unclear. Adachi dropped them entirely from the third edition of the catalog. I recently acquired a few postcards used in the 1930s as notifications of bank transactions. These have perforated yen amounts or the word "paid". Although the perforations did not hit the stamps on my cards, one can see how misplacing the card in the perforating device could cause the perforations to fall





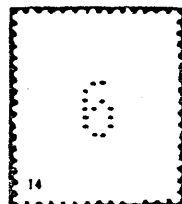
審切手

この6種の穿孔切手は正規のものとしては今のところ疑問があるので番号と評画はさしひかえることにした。エンタイヤか承認票でも発見されれば解決するが、それほどなくてもオンピースとか消印のかぶった単片の存在が数例確認されればよいので、ご所有の方はぜひご報告くださるよう切望する。

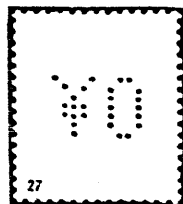


旧大正毛紙

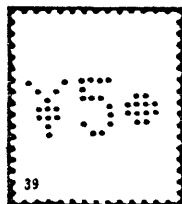
on the stamp. This could be the source of the six "pseudo-perfins" shown in the second Adachi (reproduced at left) but deleted from the third edition.



第1次昭和



第2次昭和



旧大正毛紙



昭和四単位

However, one thing going for my 0000 design is that the stamp has a foreign-mail postmark (roman letters) of Yokohama.

Does anyone else have any of these or anything similar that might shed light on the question?



Readers are invited to contribute information to this column by writing to Mr. Fisher at the address given inside the front cover. If you prefer not to have your name mentioned in print, please so indicate in your letter.

ANOTHER ROMAN-LETTER POSTMARK DISCOVERY: In the October issue, several roman-letter foreign-mail postmark discoveries made since publication of Monograph 7 were recorded. Ewald L. Krauklin has just discovered one more, from Ōtsu-- the single-circle two-digit-year type, dated 31 December of a year whose final digit is missing in this strike. This style was superseded in 1906 by the comb-type postmarks, so the date must be 00, 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, or possibly 06. Mr. Krauklin's example is on an off-cover



Chrysanthemum Series 20 sen orange (first issued 1 October 1899).

There are several municipalities named Ōtsu but this is undoubtedly from the one located just east of Kyoto on the southwest edge of Lake Biwa. That office was included in the "Official List of Post Offices Authorized to Send and Receive International Parcels as of

December 1899", published in JP 32/246. Of the 52 offices in that list, 32 were not mentioned in the Nishino-Tani work on foreign-mail postmarks. Roman-letter postmarks have now been found for 7 of these 32.

New discoveries of this kind may be valuable as well as informative. Lot No. 1099 of the 11-12 July 1980 Sun Philatelic Center auction in San Francisco was a picture postcard addressed to France, with a stamp on the picture side very clearly cancelled with a previously unreported TOKUSHIMA / 14 AUG 06 / JAPAN single-circle postmark. The auction firm's estimated value was \$250, and the lot actually sold for an astonishing \$360.

The Tokushima discovery was misdated in JP 35/254: 1900.8.14 should be 1906.8.14. The Ōtsu discovery should be added to Monograph 7 on page 50 as XI-15a, following Otaru. We plan to report major finds, such as this one, individually in JP, and to cumulate other Monograph 7 update data for publication twice a year in JP. Please continue to report such information either to me or to Mr. Bishop in England.