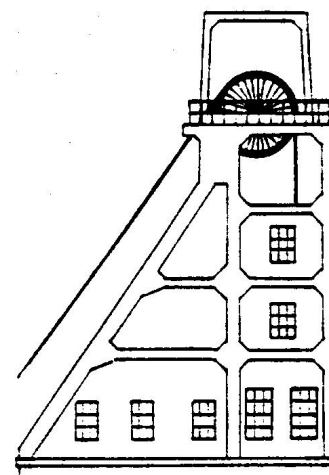


British Colliery Perfins.

Roy Gault

The existence of coal in Great Britain has been known since early times from exposed outcrops along the coast of Northumberland, hence the term 'Sea Coal'. However, it was not until the 1600's that the commercial exploitation began on any appreciable scale. Coal was central to the development of the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century which heralded the coming of the steam age in the 19th century.



The sinking of new pits increased dramatically during the Victorian era so much so that by 1880 there were some 4,230 collieries in operation. Coal production in Britain peaked in 1913 at 287 million tons, which is still a world record. Sadly, these heights were never to be reached again as by 1926 the number of pits had dwindled to 1,400, down to 250 in 1975, and soon we will be talking in terms of a dozen or so.

Surprisingly, out of this large number of collieries only ten have so far been identified as having used perfins. The illustrations for these and the location of the collieries concerned can be found on the accompanying map. Included here is all known information concerning each die together with the limited historical information so far gleaned by researching.

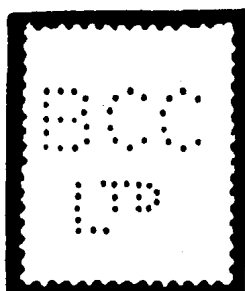
1. AC/Co (A1100.01) Aldridge Colliery Co. Walsall.
History: Unknown.
Issues: B 1d F ½d(ye-gn), 1d E7 Postal Stationery ½d.
Postmarks: Walsall and Aldridge, Staffs.
Date range: 26 Mar 1896 - 9 May 1905.
2. A.K/&S (A3437.01) Pendlebury Colliery. Manchester.
History: Run by Andrew Knowles & Sons Ltd.
Issues: B 1d E ½d(gn) F ½d, 1d H ½d, 1d I(RC) ½d, 1d.
Postmarks: Pendlebury.
Date range: 25 July 1890 - 11 June 1915.

3. BC (B1110.03AH) Brereton Collieries. Nr Rugeley.
 History: Originally owned by the Earl of Shrewsbury & Talbot, it became the Earl of Shrewsbury's Brereton Collieries Ltd in September 1906, and simply Brereton Collieries Ltd in 1920. With the nationalisation of the coal industry 1/1/1947, it formed part of the West Midlands Division (No.2 area) of the National Coal Board.
 Note: Perfin produced by Slopers using a 12x1 multi-headed die and known on issues from GV light colours through to QEII. As it was used by many different users, the postmarks become important on loose stamps.
4. CC/A (C1190.03) Careton, Collieries Association.
 History: Unknown.
 Issues: Unknown. Help needed here!
5. DCC/N (D0680.01) Digby Colliery Co. Nottingham.
 History: Colliery situated at Kimberley just outside Nottingham and known as the Digby Coal Co until 28/8/1899. The colliery closed 3/8/1928.
 Issues: B 1d E ½d(verm) F ½d, 1d.
 Date range: 28 June 1900 - 11 Feb 1903.
 Postmarks: Nottingham, Northampton & Bletchley.
 Any explanation for the Northants postmarks?
6. L.A.C. (L0060.01) Lancashire Associated Collieries. Manchester.
 History: Unknown.
 Issues: M 1½d, 2d O ½d, 1d Q ½d-1½d R 1d, 2½d
 Date range: The only date I have on record is 18 Feb 1937.
 Postmarks: Manchester.
7. MC (M1010.01M) Moira Colliery Co.
 History: Moira Colliery (near Ashby-de-la-Zouch) owned originally by Lord Donington and became part of the East Midlands division of the NCB 1/1/1947.
 Note: Perfin produced by Slopers from a 12x1 multi-headed die and used by many different users. Leicestershire postmarks are important on loose stamps.

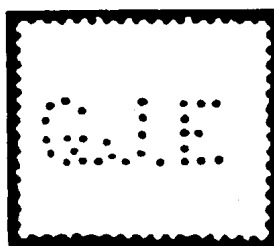
8. M.C (M1030.02) Manchester Collieries Ltd. Walkden.
 History: Unknown.
 Issues: I(BC) ½d, 1d M ½d, 1½d, 3d K 1½d O ½d
 Q W-1W R 2½d GVI 1840/1940 2½d, Victory 2½d
 Postmarks: Manchester.
 Date range: 5 Dec 1932 - 10 Feb 1943.
9. RE in Diamond (R1590.01) Havdock Collieries. Nr St Helens.
 History: Run by Richard Evans & Co Ltd.
 Issues: Unknown. More help needed here !
 The RE in Diamond mark was probably the Trade Mark of Richard Evans and may well have appeared on the side of his coal wagons.
10. RV/CL (R5620.01) Rother Vale Collieries Ltd,
 History: Unknown.
 Issues: E ½d(both) F -W, 1d H ½d I(RC) 1d, 2d
 Postmarks: '655' Rotherham.
 Date range: 14 Mar 1899 - 4 Apr 1914.

In each case the dates quoted are the earliest and latest of those so far reported to me'. The Issue code letters (B, E, F etc.) are from the standard set as used in Tomkins. I would be pleased to hear from anyone who can add any more detail regarding issues, values, dates etc or perhaps fill in some of the gaps in any of the colliery histories.

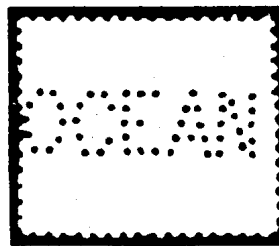
An interesting extension to this group of perfin is the numerous trades associated with coal such as Coal & Iron Companies, Coal & Coke merchants etc. A small selection of such companies known to have used perfin is illustrated below .



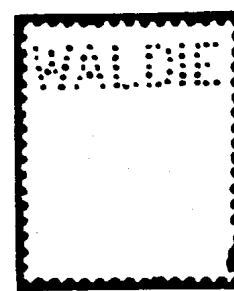
B1285.01



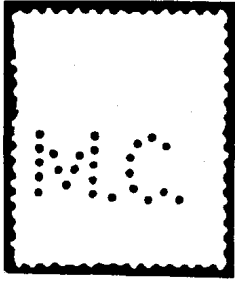
G2780.01



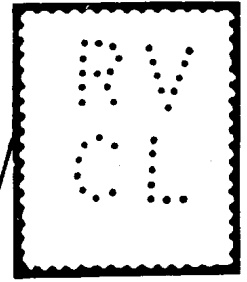
O0440.01



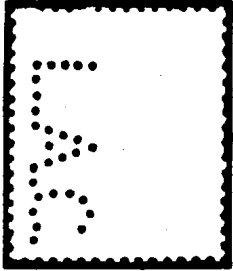
W0215.01



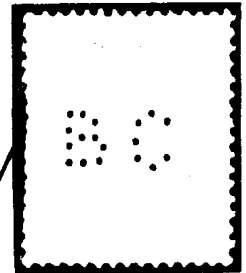
M1030.02



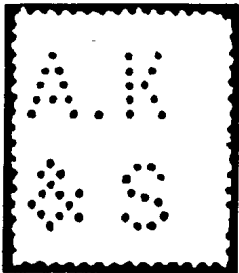
R5620.01



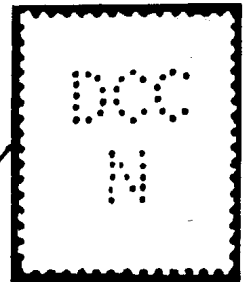
L0060.01



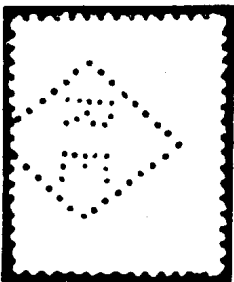
B1110.03AM



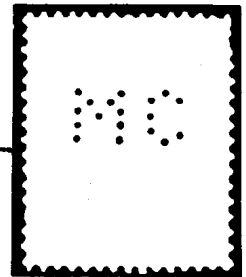
A3437.01



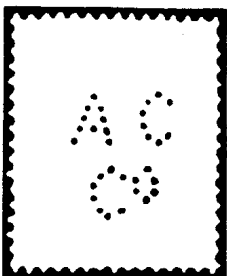
D0680.01



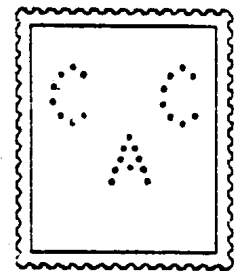
R1590.01



M1010.01M



A1100.01



C1190.03

