

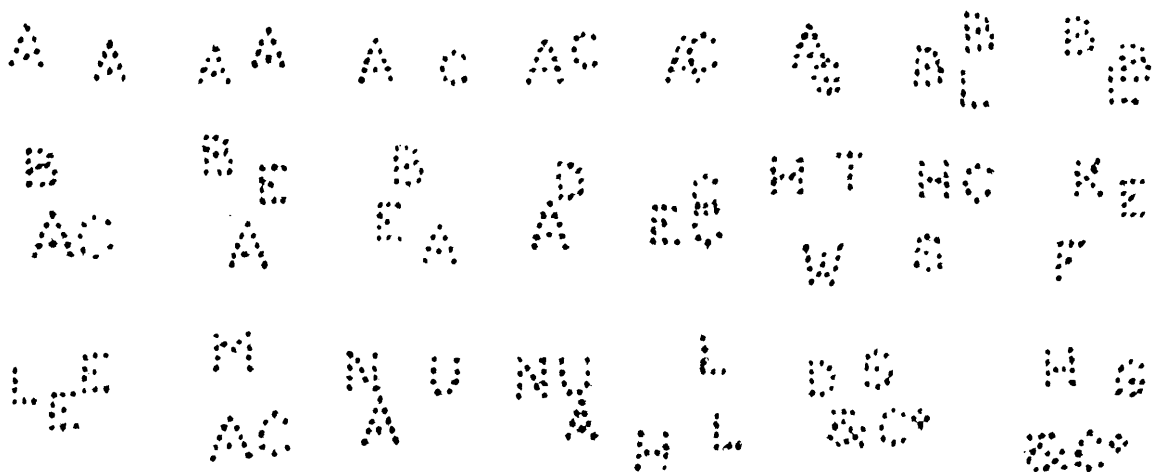
By K. Rymer Young.

Some time ago I bought a big mixed lot of perfins which turned out to consist largely of a dismantled collection. The stamps had hinges on the front, on the back, and type numbers in pencil on the back distinguishing different die varieties using the same actual letters. The differentiation included not only the number of holes but also variations of spacing where letters had the same number of holes. Where there was a lot of space variations the stamps were nearly all the G.VI., pale colours, with a few of the dark colours, and the position of the holes was often not regular. It looked as though many types were not from different dias but were caused by the perforating being done with single letter dies in two, three, or even four operations. Sometimes the letters overlapped giving the appearance of a monogram.

The pale colour stamps were issued in 1941, the 1/2d in September, 1d in August, 2d in October, and 2 1/2d in July, followed by the 1 1/2d in September 1942.

Sloper's works were destroyed by an air-raid in May 1941. If their working dies were destroyed, it seems reasonable to suppose that they provisionally used single letter dies in order to keep their perforating service going until normal dies could be made, so I wrote to their Head Office to enquire whether they had in fact done this but received no reply. Sometime later I wrote again, this time to their works, and got a reply dated 15 July 1963 in which they said, "In reply to your letter dated July 13th we confirm that for a short period following the 'Blitz' in 1941, stamps were perforated with single letter dies.

The provisionals come in a considerable variety of letters but cannot have been used for very long. It is interesting to note that in some cases letters from the 5 hole high alphabet have been



EXAMPLES OF THE PROVISIONALS

used which suggests that at least some of the single letter dies may have been something in the nature of 'master dies' that

survived the blitz.

Further examination of these provisionals has not so far produced one requiring four operations, but it does reveal that there appears to have been a single die for "& Co", probably, from the start, and also that dies for -a few pairs of letters in frequent use, such as DC, existed.

A number of these provisionals may be found illustrated in Van Lint's photographic publication.

It is not always easy to tell in what order the letters should be read, but I have made the following list of the 'A' and 'B' perfins from my own collection and the Van Lint illustrations, and will supply further lists if required.

AA	A/M	B/ <u>A</u>	BF	BS
A/A	<u>A</u> /M	B/ <u>AC</u>	B/G	B/W
AB	<u>A</u> /N	BB	BH	
<u>AC</u>	<u>A</u> /N	B/B	B/H	
<u>A</u> /C	<u>AP</u>	BB/L	BL	
<u>AC</u> /N	<u>AS</u>	B/C	BL/B	
AC/N	AS/P	BX/C	BL/G	
A/D	AY	BD	BP	
<u>AG</u>		BE/A	B/P	
		BE/ <u>A</u>	BP/M	
			BR	

NOTE - A = 10 holes where underlined.