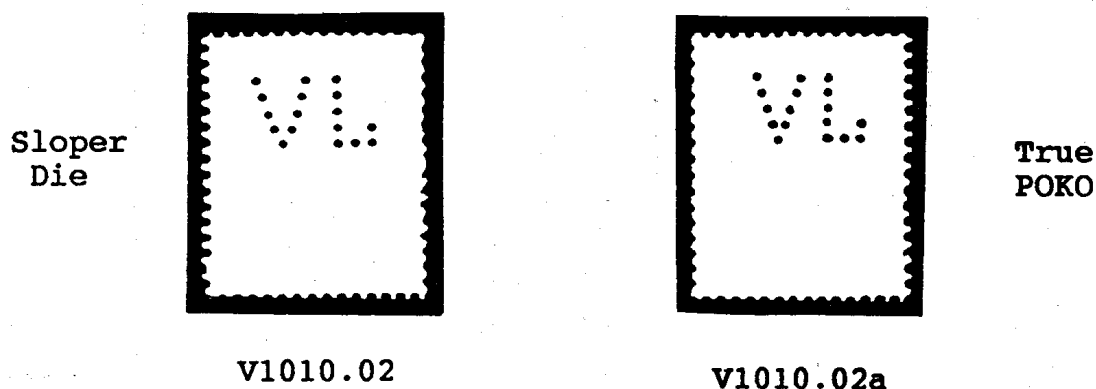


Close inspection of perfins often reveals the existence of more than one die. In the February Bulletin I illustrated the varieties that can be found in the POKO 'J', and this time it is the turn of another common POKO - the 'VL' of Venesta Ltd.

Comparisons of the catalogue illustrations used by Van Lint (1959) and Harvey Tilles (1975) show slight differences which I had interpreted as distortion errors in the production of the printed sheets. I even tried to 'correct' the situation by issuing a new illustration for the die in the V update, but how wrong I was! Now that the Society has access to the Sloper ledgers, a little more of the story can be pieced together



It would appear that Venesta Ltd. used a POKO affixing machine from the early 1930's. The die fitted to the machine was 'VL' (V1010.02a) and can be regarded as a true POKO. It is known on George V Typographs (Block Cypher) right through to the George VI changed colour issue, a span of about 20 years.

But where do Slopers come into all this? Well, the 'VL' die (V1010.02) is illustrated in their post-war ledger. It is slightly wider than the original POKO, and the right leg of the 'V' is a little curved. Unfortunately, I have only seen one example of the Sloper die. Interestingly, it shows a cut top and Bottom (presumably produced by the affixing machine) but the sides are ragged. This would imply that Slopers perforated

sheets of stamps for Venesta which were then torn into strips and made into coils ready for loading into the POKO affixing machine. Now, both dies are known on the GVI changed colour issue introduced in May 1951, but neither has been recorded on EII issues which first appeared in December 1952. This would indicate a very short life for the Sloper product of perhaps less than two years.

Please help to substantiate the above by checking your holdings of the Venesta VL's, and report the various values, issues, postmarks and dates involved for both dies. For those of you who have copies of the elusive Sloper die, please report on the cut/torn state of the edges.