

L.& Y. Newspaper Stamp with WHS/&S Perfin

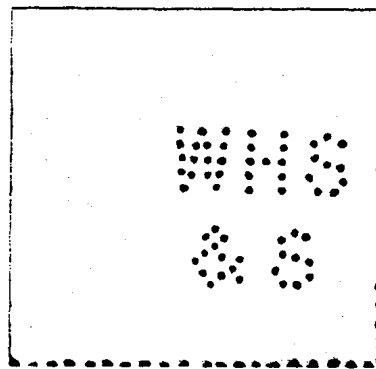
Paul Molyneux-Berry

This is taken from *RAILWAY PHILATELY*, Vol.33 No.4 September 1999.

In the March 1998 issue of *Railway Philately* (Vol.32 No.2) Tony Goodbody illustrated a Mersey Railway Newspaper stamp with the security perforations 'WHS/&S' which he suggested was probably produced by the newsagent W.H. Smith. [*See Bulletin 294 Page 16 for this article*]

The Mersey Railway was an extremely short line and it seems improbable that it could justify the issue of newspaper stamps. However examination of the route of this very short line reveals why it issued newspaper stamps. The railway crossed from one side of the Mersey to the other via a tunnel. The railway thus offered a quick and reliable method of transporting newspapers across the Mersey, hence the issue of the newspaper stamps.

I have in my collection a red 2d Railway Newspaper stamp inscribed 'LANCASHIRE & YORKSHIRE RLY.' which has been security perforated with the same initials 'WHS/&S' as seen on Tony's Newspaper stamp. Comparison with the perfin on the Mersey Railway stamp reveals that it is clearly from the same source.



stamp rotated 90° with the design removed to show perfin

[Ed:-In Bulletin 294 I added that this die had no identity. In the new W section of the Gault Illustrated Catalogue with details, this die, W3890.01, is known from 1885-1939, no identity but Liverpool Pmks. The values known are:- B 1d; D 1d; E 3d; F ½d, 3d; H ½d; I 1½d, 1d, 2½d, 3d, 6d; M ½d, 3d; N ½d, 2½d; O ½d; Q 1½d, 2d]

The stamp illustrated above, is numbered '239936' and is listed by Ewen* as type 26 of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway. According to Ewen, the design was introduced in 1892 with two variations of inscription in the circle, either 'PREPAID SINGLE NEWSPAPER' or 'PREPAID NEWSPAPER PARCEL AT OWNERS RISK', surprisingly the 2d is recorded with both types of inscription. Subsequently issues had different inscriptions in the circle.

Perforators used for security perforations can be single or multiple headed to deal with either one stamp at a time or several in one strike. Multiple strikes could be a row of stamps, or part of or even a full sheet of stamps. Unfortunately it is not known if the 'WHS/&S' was from a single or multiple head perforator. The dimensions of the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway newspaper stamp differ considerably from those of the Mersey Railway newspaper stamp and the sideways perfin on this 'L&Y' may indicate a multiple head was used.

Like the Mersey Railway the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway also had a terminus in the centre of Liverpool so these perfins may both have originated at W.H.Smith & Sons in Liverpool. It would be interesting to hear of other examples of this perfin.

** Priced Catalogue of the Newspaper and Parcel Stamps Issued by the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom. 1855-1906 -H.L 'Estrange Ewen.*