INDECIPHERABLE OR INCOMPLETE PERFINS

Burkhart Beer wrote about these just prior to me hearing Peter Maybury's comments. Burkhart thought we could perhaps start a discussion in the Bulletin on the following subject:- Are well centred perfins with one or more missing pins:-

a] Not worth collecting because they are damaged like a perforated stamp with missing perfs
b] or worth collecting because they are a variety caused by bad-handling of dies, wear etc.
If one accepts b] are thin pins (TRAVERS) or thick pins (IBHL) more likely to break? Does the frequency of breaking depend on the diameter of the pins in mm?

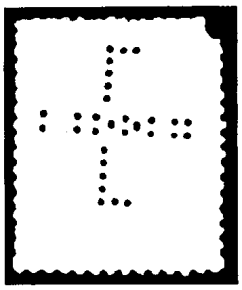
Roy has had an e-mail from Peter Maybury suggesting a possible on-going Bulletin item. He was looking through some of the back numbers of the Bulletin and came across the back page of Bulletin 287 which has a page of queries by Terence Wood. Two of those queries were answered at later dates.

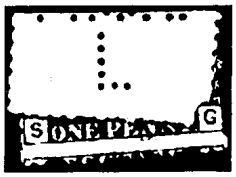
Peter goes on to say,
"*I am aware that the odd unusual pattern is published for comment but I thought it might be an idea for it to be a regular column as I am sure there are literally thousands of partials/missing pin patterns out there that perhaps are duplicated among a number of members which are "not quite recognisable ". The column could start with an appeal by Rosemary for scanned oddities and she could publish those that are the most interesting each edition and invite feedback. I know that 80% of the questions and answers will come from the same group but it will probably get a number of members out of their shells. "*

It could work if members sent me a good scan of the perfin and do not send me a packet of partials to sort out. I have more that enough of my own to decipher. To give an example of the kind of thing Peter is perhaps thinking of, Roy has pulled this one out of his oddments to show how a peculiar partial can be reconstructed - if you have the Society catalogues!!

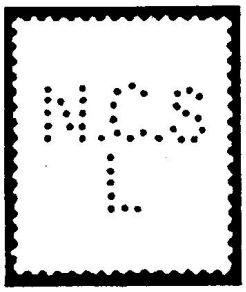
Roy explains,

"This unusual pattern is on a QV Id Red (plate 176) postmarked with a London Chief Office 'diamond'. From the symmetry of the holes, the stamp has been folded, so re-folding it gives the impression of exactly what to look for and match with.





With the "L" in the correct orientation, the first letter probably finishes with the first two holes, i.e. the bottom of an "A", "H", "M", "N", "R", "W" or "X". There is probably a stop between the first two letters because the 4th hole has two neighbouring holes placed slightly higher and just nibbling away at the fold of the stamp. This is probably the bottom part of "C", "G", "J", "O", "Q", "S" or "U". With a stop between the first two letters, there is probably another stop between the last two letters and may well account for the 5th hole in the line of holes. This leaves just two holes close together to account for - possibly a "C", "G", "J", "O", "Q", "S" or "U", but a different letter to the second letter.



Next would follow a trawl through the Illustrated Catalogue, unless experience or a simple hunch kick in. For me, "N.C.S/L" (N0840.01) was screaming out loud and clear and on closer inspection it fitted exactly. The die was probably in use 1874-1907 by the New Civil Service Co-operative Ltd, 122 & 124 Queen Victoria Street, London EC. "

So either let me know if you have an opinion about Burkhart's points; or think the idea from Peter will make a regular feature; if you would find it useful to help solve your partials; and if you have an oddment for a future column. Remember, I do not want actual stamps sent, just a good scan or photocopy. Either send to scale or increased exactly to A5 size so they will reduce back to scale in the Bulletin.