

"Joseph Sloper, Inventor, London".

Roy Gault.

Spurred on by the 'Sloper' family history research undertaken by John Mathews over the years and recently presented at length in Bulletin No.328, I idly tapped in "Joseph Sloper" for a web search. Imagine my surprise and initial disbelief when the following picture popped up!



It is a 'sepia toned' studio photograph of the man (presumably signed by him), with additional details added by another hand. According to the caption, the photograph was taken in 1873 (not long after his monopoly period ended) when he was aged 60. The other details confirm his known birth and death years (1813-1890).

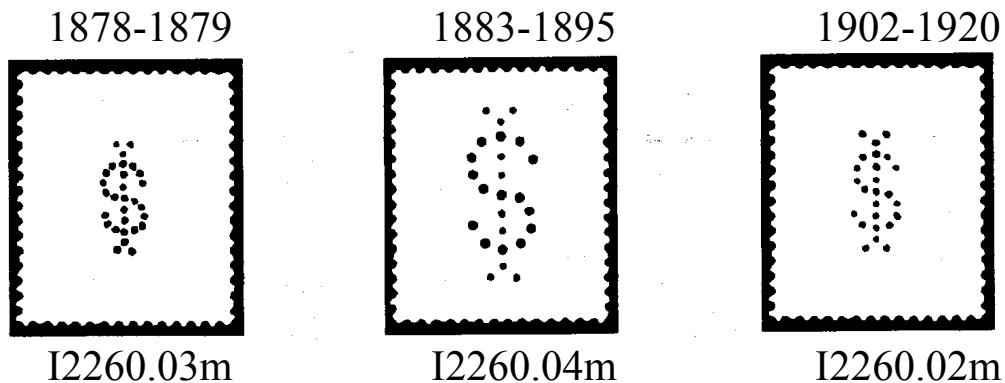
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Apart from the obvious curiosity in what the man actually looked like, of interest are the pen strokes through both of the S's in his name. To me they are reminiscent of the monogram "IS" dies we either know (or suspect) he and his company used.

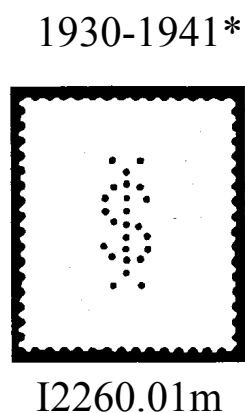
The dies in question are shown here in chronological order of their known use dates. Although one seems to have been made a good 15 years before it's earliest recorded use, the first two were certainly used during Joseph's lifetime.



Note: I2260.04m is Sloper m/c No. 6324 (made c1883), and *positively identified* as having been used by J Sloper & Co.

I2260.02m is Sloper m/c No. 6466 (made c1885), but only known used from c1902. This is a *suspected identity* based on a 101 Cannon St, EU postmark.

A fourth "IS" monogram is known which is very similar to I2260.02m above, and was probably used by Joseph Sloper & Co.



* This die was probably destroyed in the "Blitz" on Sloper's premises in May 1941.

These dies are not common, so I would be more than pleased to hear of details (denominations, issues, watermarks, postmarks and dates) from surviving examples to help further refine the die in use date ranges.