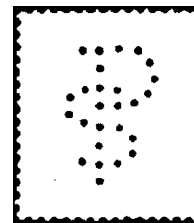


**THE PERFIN SOCIETY
BULLETIN**
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THE SOCIETY'S OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	Chris Carr
SECRETARY/ TREASURER PACKET SUPT. AUCTIONEER	Dave Hill John Donner
BULLETIN EDITOR	Rosemary Smith
CATALOGUE EDITOR	Roy Gault
LIBRARIAN	Alastair Walter
PUBLICATIONS	Jeff Turnbull

BULLETIN No:- 327 Subscription £5 (UK); £7 (abroad/surface); £10 (abroad-air)

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SOCIETY INFORMATION

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES TO NOVEMBER 2003

New Members

TREVOR HARRIS

ROSS EDWARDS

GEOFF DIXON

STAN ASHTON

GEOFF WILCOX

Change of Address

STAN POLCHINSKI

DAVID ELLIOT

ROBERT DEDECKER

Resigned

GEOFF BEANEY, LILIAN THRUSSELL

Gone Away (Anyone know where?) JAN STRANDBERG, SWEDEN

MEMBER' WANTS

New Member Geoff Wilcox, address as above, is interested in Australian Officials.

Secretary/Treasurer's Comments Dave Hill

Displays

I get asked for members willing to give displays to Philatelic Societies. I know of only Rosemary and John Marriner who would give a full 200+ sheet display but obviously only to clubs in their county. A number of members, some probably unknown to me, are prepared to give smaller displays to their own or neighbouring P.S's and make themselves known to their programme secretaries. I have been asked by Plymouth (too far for me and I can only make 50 sheets) and Southampton (they want 2x90 sheets). If anyone can display at either of these venues, please let me know.

Subscriptions

Membership cards for those who have paid since the last Bulletin should be enclosed with this one. If you have still not paid your sub the amount outstanding is written in red on this Bulletin label.

Lastly, from myself and all the officers of the Society, We wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas.

Editor's Comments

Since the last Bulletin when I said that I would be looking for a replacement Editor, I have had quite a number of letters. All very complimentary to my work over the last 14 years but all ending by saying the writer doubted if any offers would be forthcoming. How right!

At the London meeting I agreed to continue but I shall only use material sent in to me. I am not taking up any hours finding interesting items to put in when the vast majority of members cannot be bothered to put pen to paper or finger to computer. Without Roy Gault and Dave Hill plus Stephen Steere, John Nelson and one or two others, there would be no articles of note. When Maurice Harp sent in the piece for this Bulletin he made the point that if every one of the members sent in just half a page on a perfin topic, I would have material for 5 years. This Bulletin is the usual size because of the AGM reports but the next could be 12 pages - or less. It is up to you.

REPORT OF THE AGM, LONDON NOVEMBER 2003

Chris Carr - President

Chris sent his apologies, his sister-in-law was renewing her marriage vows and Chris needed to be there. He sent a written report:-

It had been quieter this year with only two disputes to resolve, regrettably this resulted in the resignation of the aggrieved member. He is sorry this happens because the Society loses a member and the member access to the Society's wealth of knowledge. He thanked officers for their dedication and those members who supply information to the Catalogue Editor and articles and notes to the Bulletin Editor. He particularly thanked Rosemary for her hard work and hopes that a volunteer would come forward to take over her tasks.

Jeff Turnbull - Publications Officer

Jeff finds he cannot travel the long distance to the meetings and sent this written report:-

He has had problems once again with the list of members who receive the New Illustrated Catalogue". **He thinks it better if in future each member individually asks for each section of the catalogue and either encloses the money to pay for it or finds out from Dave whether they have the credit to pay for it.** (Please note Dave can only take \$ cheques) The price to non-members should be formalised. At present it is members price plus £1, New Illustrated £5. We get more enquiries from non-members now, presumably because of our web site.

John Donner - Auctioneer

John has moved and is reasonably settled. The short postal strike may affect deliveries. Pictures of lots may be included in the Auction List/Bulletin as space permits for choice items. Rules are to be included on the Auction List cover, members please note the latest bidding increments. John finds that big 'ADD' lots go to one of 2 members whereas many bid on smaller lots (DH comments in last Bulletin).

Rosemary Smith - Bulletin Editor

Rosemary has had no offers for a new editor: she is willing to carry on for a while but the Bulletin will have fewer editorial articles, even pages. (See 'Editor's Comments' elsewhere.) John Luft is happy to continue collecting the Bulletin from the printer and "stuffing" the envelopes. Thanks John! So the printing can stay in Sheffield, we get good value from these printers.

Roy Gault - Catalogue Editor

Roy made the point that, to a large extent, it is up to the officer involved how he runs his/her particular aspect of the Society.

The "M" pages of the New Illustrated Catalogue is progressing for completion next year. Roy is also working on the Irish Catalogue.

He will also endeavour to finish the Line Engraved Survey, (started in 1988 with Harry!). This will be in the form of the New Illustrated but the info on LE dies will continue if the dies were used beyond the LE period. Maurice Harp is providing biographical details of the firms to go at the back - about 250 pages - 1250 dies. Same size about as one section of the New Illustrated Catalogue.

The colour repro of the 64 page 'Stampworld 2000' display + intro was discussed. It was not viable at the usual price for colour copying of £1 per page. Roy felt he must monitor quality and have control of the originals. It was suggested that Roy investigate the purchase of a colour copier (from our reserves), to try to achieve a more acceptable target of £20 for c50 copies: Most members present thought this was acceptable, what do you think?

Alastair Waiter - Library

New Library List to go out with the February Bulletin. Perfin related material gratefully accepted from Brian Birch and Mike Hemsall for the Library.

Any Other Business

RAILWAY PERFIN CATALOGUE. There have been no offers to produce what would be a prestigious publication. To reiterate: we wanted to do more that update the original Bowmans. The research is almost all done and Terry Comper is willing to travel anywhere in GB in reason to deliver/explain. There are 52 railways, 153 dies. It is hoped to include short histories of each railway, logos and maps besides the perfins. It will

be about 100 pages **and we ask anyone with publishing experience to come forward** - Roy is prepared to suggest layouts but it might have to wait until after his other commitments. Terry has had responses from 85 people to the Railway Worksheets ranging from all the sheets to just the odd one. This is a tremendous response and shows how much interest there would be in a finished catalogue. This would be sort after by many more people than perfin collectors. Terry has spent many hours on collating these worksheets and seeking histories, logos, other illustrations and maps. The material is almost complete: we now need someone who can put it together in readable, catalogue form.

SLOPER ORIGINAL LETTERS FROM THE 5 REIGNS BOOKLET.

These are with Brian Birch being archived. Brian has given the Society 500 postcard reproductions of the picture of Queen Victoria's 1887 Golden Jubilee procession passing Sloper's offices in King William Street. (This picture, behind glass, was given to the Society at the close of Sloper's business. It had been on the wall of the office of the company's directors.) Each member will receive one shortly, hopefully with the February Bulletin. Dave Hill will greet other perfin clubs throughout the world with some of the remainder. Many thanks Brian!

COMPETITION

A smaller entry this time - 5 only. John Marriner won with perfin on Victorian high values. Roy was second with "Beyer Peacock". Entries are only 5 sheets, intended to be the basis of a short article in the Bulletin. The entries are put up without speaking about them and are marked by the members present. Why not send Dave 5 sheets in the Spring if you cannot attend. (Ed:- The article in this Bulletin about Hitchcock Williams and Co by Dave Hill is taken from his entry. The article "Diesel & Gas Engine Manufacturers" by Roy Gault is an entry which Roy did not use. Could the other entrants send me photocopies of their entries and they can go into the next couple of Bulletins.)

ROOM AUCTION

Was held with material mostly donated by members. It went cheaply but still made £74 for the Society plus bits for members. Thanks to all the donors and buyers.

Sorry if this is longer than usual; rather than repeat the usual formula I have tried to make an appraisal of the services the Society offers and their cost. Remember all officers give of their time, telephone and e-mail freely. Postage and consumables are usually charged, but I would not ask anyone to account for every last stamp or photocopy. Almost all expenses are charged to the respective heading; auction, library, bulletin, publications etc.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership continues at about 375, it has been constant at this level most of the 10 years I have been Secretary. During the year many new members join, some very keen, and we lose about the same number to the usual causes. I am not sure that some new members do not get frustrated at not being able to build their collections beyond a certain point. Please keep your surplus perfins in circulation.

TREASURER

Overall figures are much the same as last year.

Auction profit is very similar. For various reasons we seem to get a "short" auction each year. Incidentally the accounts year generally runs from Auction 3 to Auction 2, i.e. I start the year receiving payments for Auction £ (2002) and end it paying out Auction 2 (2003). Auction 3 (2003) is up (and therefore commission is up) and I hope this sets a trend for the coming year. Remember it is your material we are selling.

Historically our accumulated fund (our reserves), were accumulated mostly by Harry's auctions in the 1980's. We do not get such good material now.

Publications would appear to have gone from a £500 profit to a £63 loss. The 'L' pages of the new catalogue were issued late in the financial year, sales of it are down and we still have many in stock. In the previous year 'P' was issued earlier. Also we reprinted John Nelson's Handbook again. (Written in 1968, it is still the best introduction to perfins.)

Again Bulletin expenses exceed Subscription income. It was always reckoned (rightly or not) that the Subscription should cover the Bulletin expenses. Note the Bulletin carries the extra cost of printing and posting the Auction List.

Interest rates are still down but it more than covers bank charges (and still probably would if we didn't have the interest on member's credit, £7000+)

The packet is defunct but see the appeal from Colin Fountain.

The Library would have shown a very small profit if I had not bought something for it.

Meetings are slightly up as I took a table at SWIPEX.

Printing, postage, stationary and officers' expenses are down but could easily have been up. Roy's photocopier is past repair but trials of replacements have been unsuccessful. My cheap printer is not capable of printing labels for the Bulletin and I will have to get another one. The last heading (PPS & officers' expenses) is a bit of a misnomer, it is Roy's and my expenses. Roy's postage, printer and photocopier cartridges came to about £350 last year. My consumables came to £160 and my computer cost £150, thanks to viruses. My postage was about £300 but it is very difficult to put a figure on. I receive many mint stamps in payment and buy stamps for postage at much less than face. I carry forward a large stock of stamps. Taken away from this is a small miscellaneous income from photocopying, donations etc of £150. Printing (apart from mine for the general administration of the Society, which is included in my consumables) is £170 which completed the Railway Worksheets. This we will recoup when we publish a Railway Perfins Catalogue (have we any volunteers?)

There are small anomalies, for instance much of my postage is to do with the auction or other services but it is too difficult to separate.

As usual members' credit is reduced (£1050 this year) on September 1st for members who have credit or have paid early and this is transferred to Subscriptions.

So you can see where the money went. I find treasurers' reports as boring as you do, I imagine, and I hope I will not need to repeat much of this in future years.

The result is that we are dipping into our reserves by about £1000 a year, although I can remember "bad" years when we lost about £3000 and years when we had a similar surplus.

After lengthy discussion at the London meeting, it was felt that subs MUST cover our expenses and therefore it was agreed that the subs be increased by £5 across the board from September 1st 2004; i.e. GB £10, Europe and the rest of the world surface £ 12 and rest of the world airmail £15. It was endorsed by many members that they receive far more for a much lower subscription than other specialist societies.

SEEN IN AUCTION Dave Hill

Dacorum Stamp Auctions had a vertical strip of 10 mint Board of Trade perfins at, what I thought' a very inflated price, £180, but someone else might think they were worth it! The 10 were from the top margin down to the interpane gutter, but with a fold on the 6th stamp. A horizontal strip would have been more use as any multie would most probably have been 12x 1 or 6x 1 across the sheet.

Also the stamp itself poses a problem. It is the ½d Edward VII yellowish green. This was issued on 26th November 1904 whilst the BOT perfins were supposedly "withdrawn" (whatever that meant in practice) on 14th May 1904.

I can only say from the photocopy that there are many different partial pins, either, I assume from inexpert operation or wear and tear. I would not like hazard an opinion as to whether there is more than one die or which it is. I suppose we will never know where it came from. It might just as well have come from some official archive as from some private, illegal use of the die, assuming it is not a forgery.

It serves to add fuel to the controversy and the price might have been worth it for that alone.

THE PERFIN SOCIETY - Statement of Accounts.

INCOME & EXPENSES for year ended 31st August 2003.

BALANCE SHEET at 31st August 2003.

	2003 £	2002 £
<u>INCOME</u>		
AUCTION PUBLICATIONS	10,401 <u>1,193</u> 11,594	10,200 <u>888</u> 11,088
<u>Less COST OF SALES</u>		
AUCTION PUBLICATIONS	9,585 1,256 <u>-10,841</u> 753	9,562 335 <u>-9,897</u> 1,191
<u>Plus OTHER INCOME</u>		
SUBSCRIPTIONS	1,998	1,941
INTEREST	211	255
PACKET	<u>0</u>	<u>7</u>
	2,962	3,394
<u>Less EXPENSES</u>		
BULLETIN MEETINGS	2,376 283	2,587 250
PPS & OFFICERS EXPENSES	982	1,385
LIBRARY	149	142
BANK CHARGES	134	130
CORPORATION TAX	66	55
	<u>-3,990</u>	<u>-4,549</u>
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	<u><u>-1,028</u></u>	<u><u>-1,155</u></u>

CURRENT ASSETS

	2003 £	2002 £
CASH IN HAND	193	110
GIRO	1,131	1,890
RESERVE a/c	14,539	14,328
PREMIUM BONDS	150	150
PUBLICATIONS a/c	391	490
	<u>16,404</u>	<u>16,968</u>

REPRESENTED BY

ACCUMULATED FUND*	9,542	10,697
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	-1,028	-1,155
MEMBERS CREDIT	<u>7,890</u>	<u>7,426</u>
	<u>16,404</u>	<u>16,968</u>

* As at 1st September

Note: PPS = Printing/Postage/Stationery

MEMBERS' COMMENTS ON PREVIOUS ARTICLES

Users and Postmarks Bulletin 326 Page 26

Whilst reading John Nelson's comments about the Q.V. stamp used in 1915 from a Field Post Office, ALASTAIR WALTER was reminded of an article in a GB Journal of July/August 2002 (which the Society get in exchange for our Bulletin). The whole article was headed, **Demonetisation of Obsolete Stamps by Douglas N. Muir FRPSL**. Included in the article was a photocopy of a notice in *The London Gazette*, 21 Ma 1915. The notice stated *"His Majesty's Postmaster-General and the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, in pursuance of Section 22 of the Stamp Duties Management Act, 1891, as amended by Section, 10 of the Revenue Act, 1898, hereby give notice that the use of all dies which were in use previously to the 22nd day of January, 1901, for denoting duties of postage (of which dies some have been available for denoting also duties of Inland Revenue) has been discontinued, and that on and after the first day of July, one thousand nine hundred and fifteen, those dies will not be lawful dies for denoting the payment of duty.*

Dated this 17th day of May, one thousand nine hundred and fifteen.

Alastair comments that as this was published on 21st May 1915, by the time John Nelson's stamp was used on the 15th June 1915, 'those in the know' would be using up any remaining Q.V. stamps. Which still leaves the question of how a soldier in the field came by the stamp, had he seen the notice and where, and didn't he have better (?) things to worry about? If the user was a philatelist they might decide to use up any damaged stamps in their collection for postage, but who would take their stamp collection to the front with them? Still a nice little puzzle.

EGYPTIAN PERFIN CATALOGUE ON CD

Vahe Varjabedian has been asked by the Egyptian Study Circle to make his catalogue of Egyptian Perfins, with all new dies reported since the catalogue was first printed, available on CD. The CD's are available and include full details of each firm using perfins, earliest & latest dates of use, numbers of perfins known, plus colour cover of each firm. Price is £15: 20 Euro: 20 US \$. This includes Registered Post.

HISTORY OF FIRMS USING PEREFINS

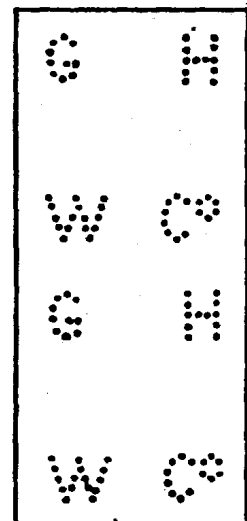
HITCHCOCK WILLIAMS & CO.

Dave Hill

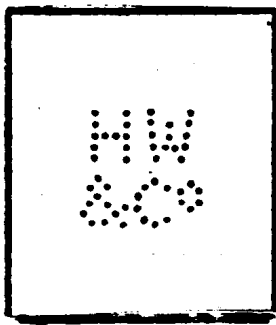
George Hitchcock revitalised an old-established firm of drapers in St. Pauls Churchyard at the west end of Cheapside. Cheapside was the traditional shopping street of the City of London before the development of the big West End department stores. Neighbours were Nicholsons; Cook, Sons & Cook; James Spence and Copestakes. All by the way users of perfin. Sloper's offices were at the other, east end, of cheapside. Fellow west countryman, George Williams had worked for Bridgewater's leading draper and joined Hitchcock's in 1841, both being recent evangelical converts. Williams helped Hitchcock build the business, dealing with the large staff of 150 in a benevolent manner. Williams married Hitchcock's daughter in 1855 and was taken into the partnership, now styled **George Hitchcock, Williams & Co.** Hitchcock was involved with the Early Closing Association, the Ragged School Union and the anti-slavery campaign.

In 1863 Hitchcock died and Williams became the sole proprietor: his sons joined the firm and it became Hitchcock, Williams & Co in 1892. It did not move to the West End but concentrated on wholesaling and manufacturing. By 1900 it had established a world-wide business (they controlled Bright & Co., one of Australia's largest stores) as well as branches in English provincial cities. Williams' family married into fellow evangelical families, Thomas Cook and Hodder & Stoughton. A great friend was Samuel Morley of I & R Morley.

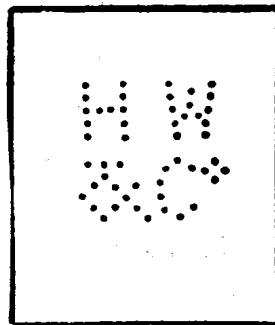
From Sloper's earliest records we find that the first machine made for sale to a client was No.2607, to perforate two stamps at a time. An impression (copied alongside) was taken on the 3rd April 1868, Sloper having been given permission to perfin stamps on 13th March that year. Cat. No. G2410.01M, this has yet to be positively identified with George Hitchcock, Williams & Co., as early covers are scarce.



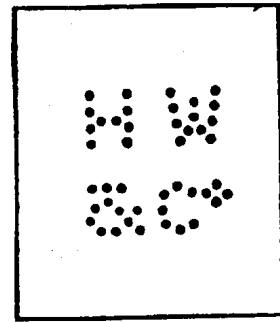
Hugh Vallancey had access to Sloper's records, and in his booklet on perfins in 1933, gave Hitchcock, Williams & Co. as the first firm that 'Sloper's had done continuous business with since the early days'.



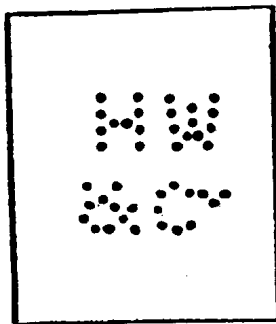
H7710.02
in use 1885-95



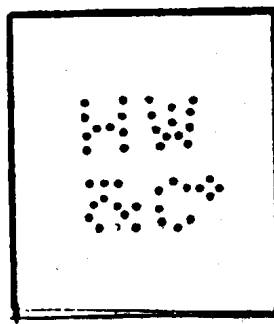
H7710.06
in use 1925-36



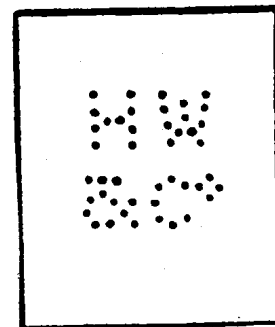
H7710.033M
in use c 1939
12x1 die-indicated in
Sloper's 1st Ledger?



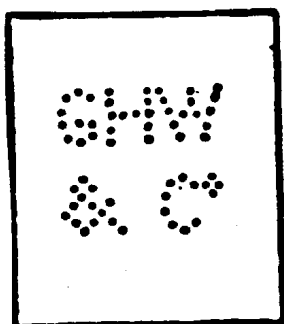
H7710.03dM
in use c 1945
12x1 die



H7710.03aM
in use c 1949
12x 1 die?



H7710.03bM
in use ?
12x1 die
in Sloper's 2nd Ledger



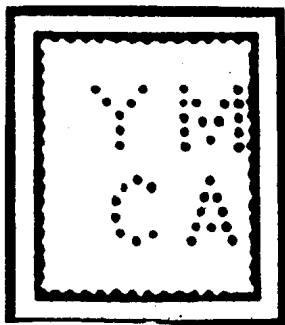
G2420.01? in use ?
unidentified but does it fill the gap 1896-1924?

There is no wartime provisional listed in Ledger 1. A single die is indicated but is not known(?).

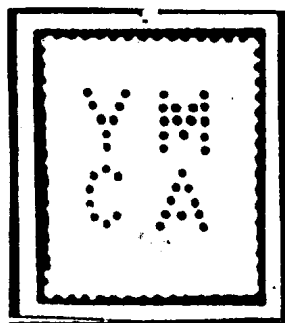
George Williams is regarded as the founder of the Young Men's Christian Association. The first meeting was held at Hitchcock, Williams & Co's offices in 1844. The name was the idea of another employee: the meetings developed into the London Central YMCA. Initially there were aimed at young shop assistants and the like as an alternative to the public house and music hall.

Hitchcock was treasurer until he died when Williams succeeded him. He was also the second president after Lord Shaftesbury died. He was responsible with S Morley, J D Allcraft and others for the purchase of the Exeter Hall for the YMCA, to save it from becoming another music hall. Williams was a delegate to YMCA conferences all over the world almost up to his death in 1905. At that time he was president of 39 charitable societies and had an interest in many more. In 1894 he had been made a Freeman of the City of London and was knighted. He is buried in St Pauls.

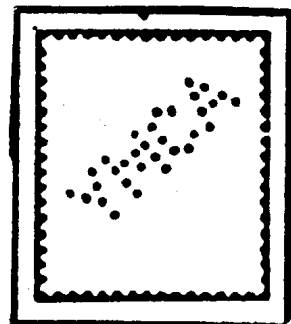
In 1951 the business became a private company and in 1984 it closed, a victim of the economic recession. Gordon Williams was a director at that time, the 5th generation.



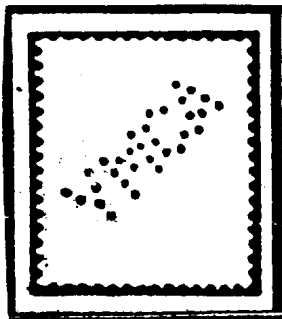
Y0720.02
in use 1896



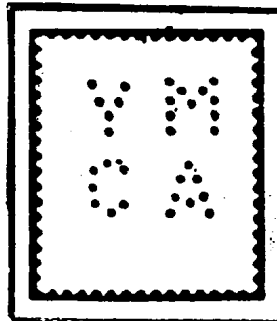
Y0720.03
in use 1915



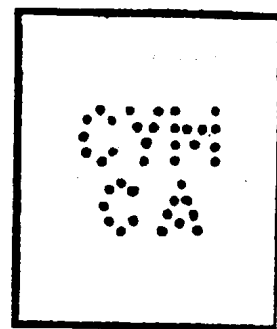
Y0710.01a
in use 1918-36



Y0710.01
in use 1930-39



Y0720.01
in use 1945-60



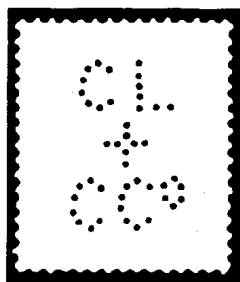
C8780.01
in use c1925
London Central YMCA

Another Copestake Die.

Roy Gault.

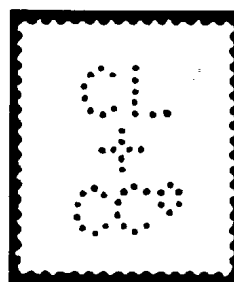
While looking through a batch of twenty-seven "CL/+CC" dies recently I noticed a variation in the spacing of the two C's on the bottom line. Just four showed the variation, and all four had dates in 1888. Analysis of the remainder gave an earliest date of 27th October 1891, and a latest date of 28th March 1899. This modifies slightly the information presented in Bulletin No.326.

C1888



C4370.01a

1890-1899



C4370.01

If anyone can further refine these 'die in use' date ranges, I would be pleased to hear from them.

* * * * *

PERFIN SOCIETY PACKET

Colin Fountain

Following my suggestion in Bulletin 326 to re-start the Perfin Society circulating sales packet, I have so far only been contacted by five members offering material for the packet. Unless there is considerably more support for this proposal. I must unfortunately accept that Dave Hill was right and that there is no longer sufficient support to run the packet on an on-going basis.

I am sure there are many members who would welcome the opportunity to buy from the packet, but we do need more offers of material if this is to get off the ground.

"The YOST Typewriter Co Ltd."

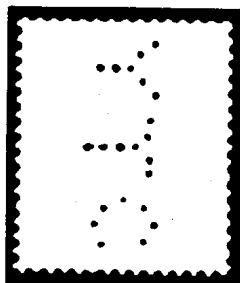
Roy Gault.

Sven Klitgaard has reported a 'cache' of perfins, all of which are either the full-name "YOST" or the "SPG" type "YTC". Coming from a single source led him to suspect they were probably from the same user.

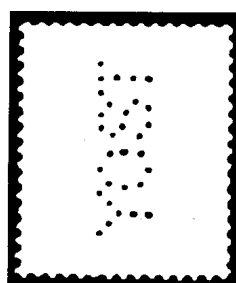
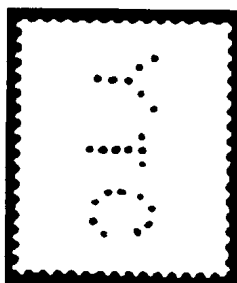
The "Yost" typewriter was the invention of a certain *George Washington Newton Yost*, one of the pioneers of typewriters in the U.S.A. From as early as 1873 he was involved in their design and promotion.



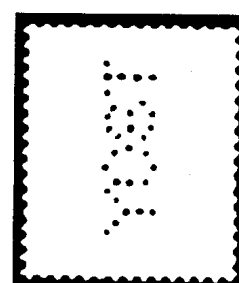
The "Yost Typewriter Co Ltd" was registered in Great Britain in 1891, and had offices in many towns and cities including: Birmingham, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Hull, Liverpool, London, Manchester and Newcastle-on-Tyne. The "YTC" perfins are only suspected identities at present, but the five full name "YOST" dies are all confirmed.



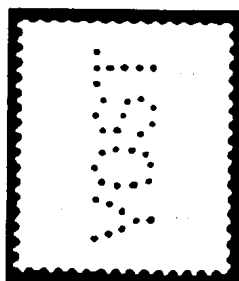
1891-1899 'SPG' type.



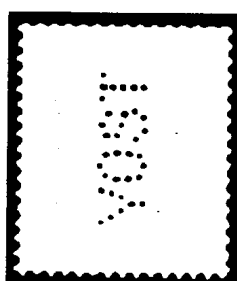
1899-1902



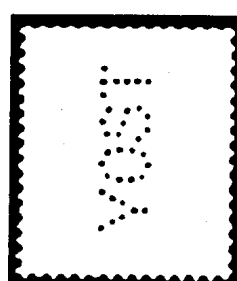
1899-1902



c1902



1902-1904



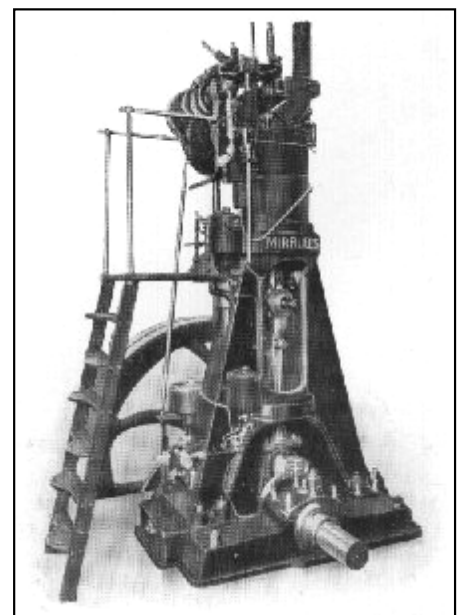
1904-1923

The UK company went into voluntary liquidation on 10 Dec 1923, but was not struck off the register until 20 July 1934.

"Mirrlees" diesel engines are famous worldwide, but what is their history and inter-relationships with other engine manufacturers?

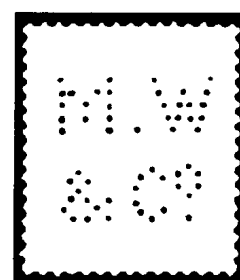
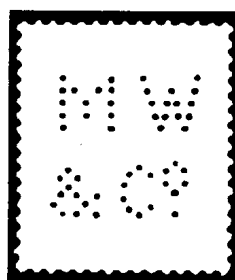
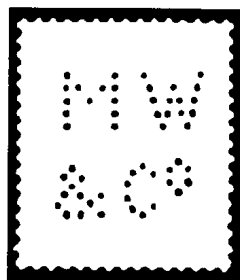
The roots of the company go back to 1840 when three brothers, Peter, William and Andrew McOnie, set themselves up in Glasgow to manufacture sugar cane processing machinery. Through a procession of partners and at least six name changes, the company was registered in 1889 as Mirrlees, Watson & Yaryan Co Ltd.

During the 1890's the company became involved in the development of the diesel engine, invented in 1892 by Dr Rudolf Diesel. In 1897, under license, they built only the third diesel engine in the world.



In 1898 the company was reconstructed yet again becoming "*Mirrlees, Watson & Co Ltd*", with Charles Day as the general manager. It was he who developed engine manufacture at the Glasgow works, but more of him later.

Although unconfirmed, the following perfins are thought to have been used by the company during this period based on the initials used and the Glasgow postmarks. Considerable variation, especially in having stops or not, can be found as the three illustrations show.

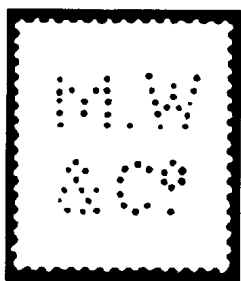


1900 – 1910

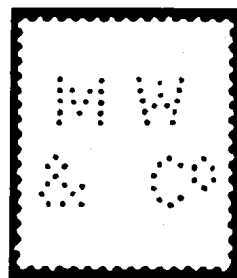
Noteworthy is the first use of a "Mirrlees" diesel engine by the Royal Navy as an auxiliary power supply on the WW1 battleship *HMS Dreadnought*.

The years 1907/8 are significant in the history of the company, for they mark the formation of "Mirrlees, Bickerton & Day Ltd" and the building of a brand new factory at Hazel Grove, Cheshire - see later.

The Glasgow works continued in production, and also continued to use perfin as a protection against theft using three more dies. Although this first one is as yet unconfirmed, it is similar to the preceding dies, and also has Glasgow postmarks.



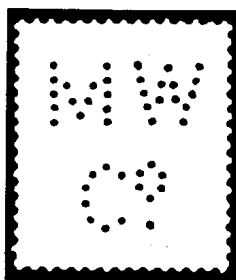
1910-1912



1925-1930

The company went into voluntary liquidation in May 1926, but its undertakings and 'certain assets' were taken over by "Mirrlees, Bickerton & Day Ltd". The Glasgow plant continued to operate under the same name, "*Mirrlees, Watson & Co Ltd*".

The most common of all the "Mirrlees, Watson" dies is this last one, in use for around 35 years. Of interest is its use on Scottish Regionals, but by the 1960's the die was in poor shape and strikes are usually blind. The die is believed to have been multiheaded.



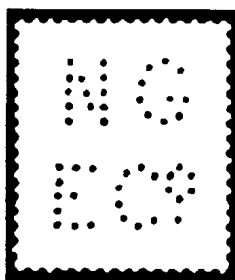
1930-1965

Now we take a look at another type of engine, in particular the gas engine as developed by the "*National Gas Engine Co Ltd*", later to become the "National Gas and Oil Engine Co Ltd". Having said that, the company was always referred to simply as "The National".

The company was founded in 1889 by two engineers, Henry Neild Bickerton (1858-1929) and (later Sir) Dugald Clerk, (1854-1932), both leading lights where internal combustion engines were concerned. They occupied the works in Wellington St, Ashton-under-Lyne, used previously by Isaac Watt Boulton to make his industrial steam locomotives. Production centred on 'gas' engines running on town gas for use in small workshops, and factories.



Although presented here as an unconfirmed identity, the company appears to have used perfins for a brief period at least, as evidenced by the following die known with Ashton-under-Lyne postmarks.



1895-1915

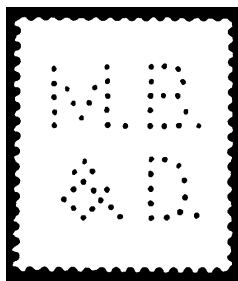
They became part of the "Brush Group" in 1950, but the factory had closed by the early 1970's.

Now we bring together Charles Day and Henry Neild Bickerton!

"Mirrlees, Bickerton & Day Ltd" were registered in 1907, and a factory built at Hazel Grove, near Stockport in Cheshire, specifically to make diesel engines.

The company was formed by Charles Day, then Chairman of Mirrlees, Watson & Co Ltd, Glasgow, and Henry Neild Bickerton of the National Gas Engine Co Ltd, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancashire. The new factory opened in October 1908.

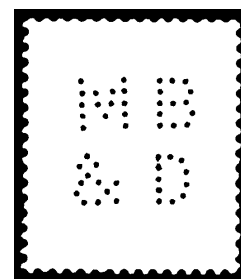
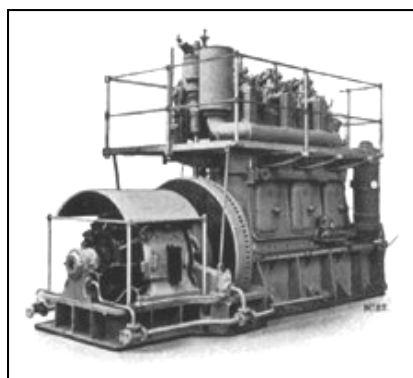
The tradition for using perfins seems to have been established from the outset. Although as yet unconfirmed, this first die was probably used by the company based on Hazel Grove & Stockport postmarks.



1908-1920



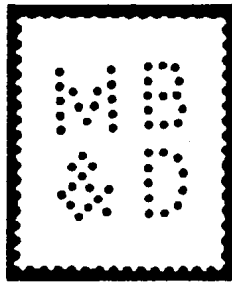
The Hazel Grove factory built a standard range of diesel engines, but during the Great War, they developed a special type of oil engine for use in the 'Tank', first used in 1916.



1920-1936

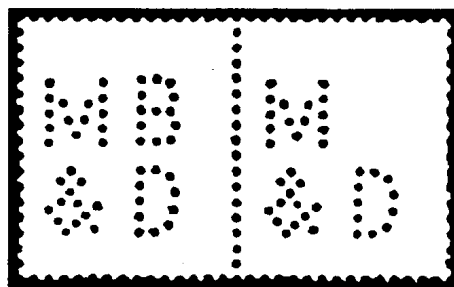
A second die was used by the company, taking them through the 'depression' and into the years leading up to the WWII. Typical of their production at this time was the engine shown alongside, a far cry from the first Mirrlees diesel of 1897.

The company's third and final perfin (as far as we know) was a multiheaded die, in use until just after the Second World War.



1936-1948

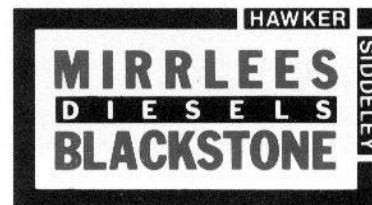
Evidence for the die being multiheaded can be seen in this joined pair showing the "B" completely missing. The pair probably dates to around 1939.



Although the story ends here with regard to the use of perfins, there is one final twist!

After cessation of hostilities in 1945, "Mirrlees, Bickerton & Day", became a member of the "Associated British Oil Engines Group of Companies", which was itself part of the "Brush Group". In 1957 the "Brush Group" (which the "National Gas and Oil Engine Co Ltd had joined in 1950') was acquired by "Hawker Siddeley". Then in 1961, "Hawker Siddeley" amalgamated "*Mirrlees, Bickerton & Day*" with the "*National Gas, and Oil Engine Company*" to form "*Mirrlees National Ltd*". And so the wheel had turned full circle with Henry Bickerton's two companies becoming one.

In 1969, "Mirrlees National Ltd" and "Blackstone & Co Ltd", were merged to become "*Mirrlees Blackstone Ltd*".

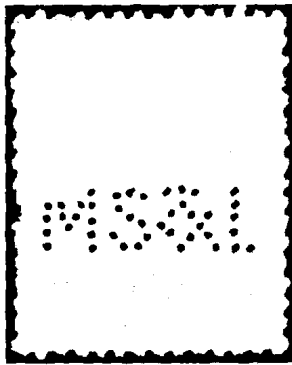


The company still trades under this name today

ANOTHER LINE ENGRAVED DIE CONFIGURATION
DETERMINED -"MS&L'

Maurice Harp

In Bulletin 325 Roy Gault showed that the study of the minor die differences on line engraved dies could help yield information on the overall configuration. Inspired by this piece and the current work on the Railway Catalogue I decided to look closer at my holding of M5250.01, MS&L, used by the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway. I very soon found that a number of copies had a distinctive broken pin variety. As can be seen in the illustration below the top pin of the letter M and the last pin, of the leg of the L are broken and missing.

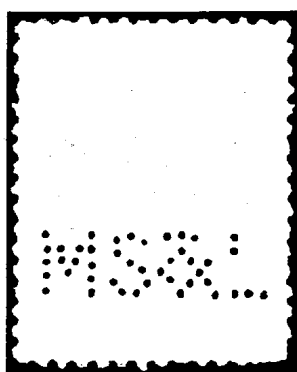


Recorded only on B & H
columns of plates

124, 158, 159, 164, 172
173, 178, 179, 180, 181,
183, 184, 185, 187, 191,
192, 200, 205, 212

I found seven copies of this variety from the B (2nd) column and a further twelve copies from the H (8th) column stamps. Thus clearly this is another 6x1 die. This is starting to appear to be a popular arrangement with Sloper for producing perfins for the large users at this early period. The earliest plate that I have is plate 124. Roy has been able to add some additional information in that his copy of this die on plate 159 is complete whereas mine has the variety. However he has a copy on plate 150 where the M pin is missing but the L is complete which must mark the beginning of trouble with this part of the die. Plate 159 that shows both states was first put to press in August 1872 but without dated copies of this variety it is impossible to set a likely date for when the broken pins occurred.

However there is a twist in the tail to this story. There is another broken pin variety that is much scarcer and it appears in the same columns - B & H. This time two pins are missing from the L upright and the two pins in the first variety are intact. Note how the top of the ampersand is curved in both varieties - so we are indeed looking at the same die position. Neither Roy nor I have any real explanation for this second variety. The only suggestion I have is that this break was spotted and the two pins were moved from the top of the M and the leg of the L to do a quick fix - and then like many quick fixes it became permanent. It is strange though that Sloper seems to have made no attempt to repair the broken pins.



Recorded only on B & H
columns of plates

157, 182

If any members can report other copies of these varieties I would be very pleased to hear from them.

O00oo00O

MODERN PERFINS

Derek Ransom

New values reported by John Strange and Sven Klitgaard.

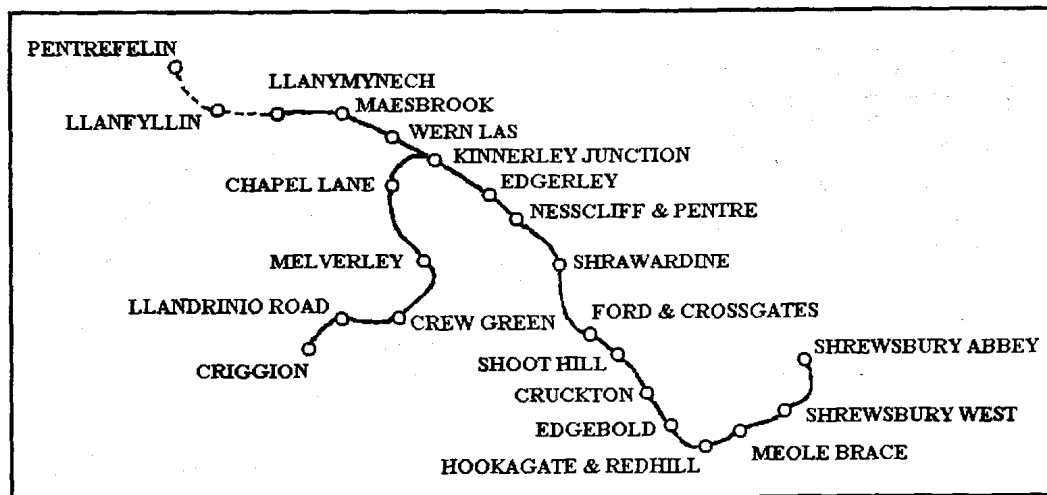
B1110.03M	BC	41p	
C1260.01M	C/CC	43p	
D0560.02M	DC	2nd	
D4710.06	DT	19p	
E2020.01b	EH/MC	33p	
H1160.02M	HC	26p	
L0630.01M	LB/R	2p	
M1010.01M	MC	2nd	NEW DIE
N0510.02M	NC	2nd	
R0410.01	RBC	39p	

"The Potts".

Roy Gault.

The "Potteries, Shrewsbury and North Wales Railway Co."

Conceived originally in 1860 as the 'Yest Midland, Shrewsbury & Coast of Wales Railway', its objective was to reach Portmadoc (for Ireland), via Kinnerley, Porthywaen and the Tanat Valley. The route also involved an ambitious tunnel through the Berwyn Mountains. Although this particular scheme failed, it was soon followed by the "West Shropshire Mineral Railway Company" which obtained an Act in 1863 to connect Llanymynech with Shrewsbury. The company was later renamed the "Shrewsbury and North Wales Railway Company".



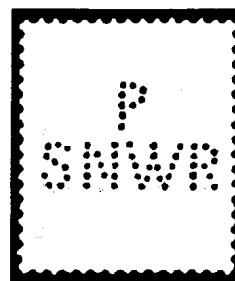
The line from Nantmawr to Shrewsbury (21 miles) was built by the constructor R S France between 1864 and 1866. A branch line from Kinnerley to Criggion (6 miles) was also constructed to transport the green basalt quarried at Criggion.

The "Shrewsbury and North Wales Railway Company" amalgamated with the "Potteries and Shrewsbury Junction Railway", a railway company set up specifically to connect Stoke-on-Trent with Shrewsbury via Market Drayton. The resulting company was called the "**Potteries, Shrewsbury and North Wales Railway Co**". The line opened to passenger traffic from Llanymynech to Shrewsbury (and for freight throughout) on 13th August 1866.

Unfortunately, the railway did not prosper and the connection from Shrewsbury to Stoke-on-Trent never materialised. The line closed to all traffic on 22nd June 1880 and then abandoned. Even though the railway never reached Stoke-on-Trent, it was always known 'affectionately' as "The Pods".

1870-1872

One perforated die is thought to have been used by the company during the early 1870s. Just two examples are known, both on QV 1d Reds (plates 122 & 145), one with a '708' duplex postmark for Shrewsbury. The die was almost certainly made by J Sloper & Co during the 'monopoly' period.



P4405.01

Subsequent History of the Railway.

In 1888 the derelict "Potteries, Shrewsbury & North Wales Railway Co" was sold to the "Shropshire Railways Co" who on 19th September 1890, started re-building the line between Shrewsbury and Llanymynech. However, due to financial difficulties, the work ceased on 15th July 1891 and the line abandoned for the second time.

Next on the scene was the "Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway Co". Formed in 1909, with Colonel Holman Stephens as the engineer, to reconstruct as a light railway the long abandoned lines of the "Shropshire Railways Co". Work commenced in September 1910, and the line from Shrewsbury to Llanymynech opened to both passenger and freight traffic on 14th April 1911. The entire system closed to passengers on 6th November 1933.

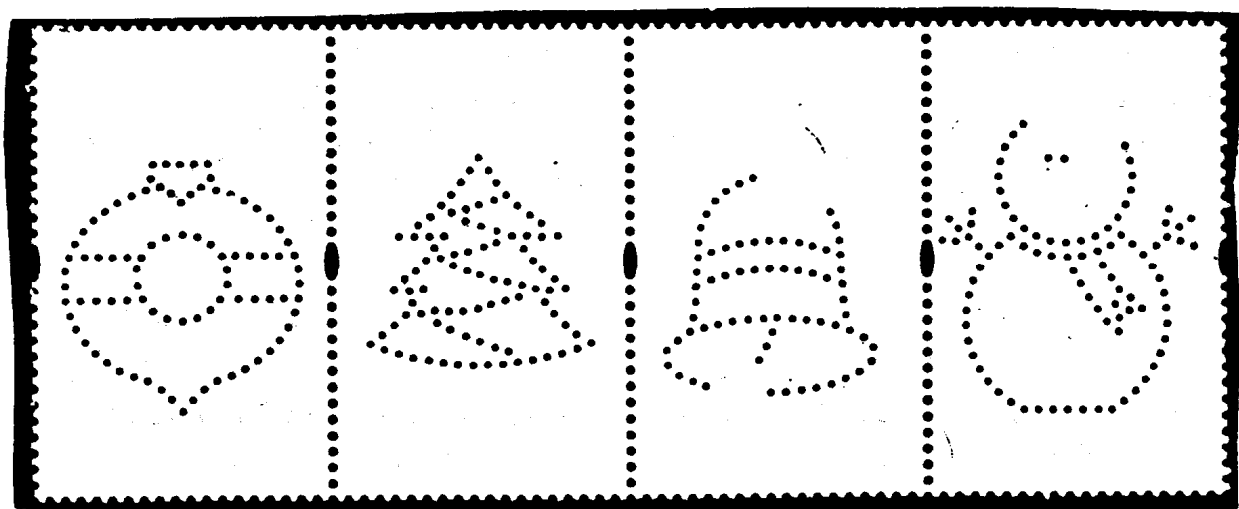
In July 1941 the War Department took over the "Shropshire & Montgomeryshire Light Railway" and operated both military and civilian freight traffic.

The line finally closed to all traffic on 29th February 1960, and the track removed except for a short spur into Shrewsbury Abbey Station, which was used as a goods depot by British Railways. I believe Abbey station is due for demolition (2003).

Non-Perfins

Rosemary Smith

Since the beginning of the year a number of members have brought to my notice stamps which are perforated through with perforations which have no security intention. Both Norman Hewerdine and Dave Hill sent a set of 4 Hong Kong 2002 Christmas stamps. The values being \$1.40, \$2.40, \$3 and \$5. The perforations formed 4 Christmasy items; a Christmas tree, a bauble to hang on the tree, a snow man and a bell.



Dave sent the following observations. *The stamps are in pastel shades of blue, yellow, red and green. The hat, star and bow etc are what I think is called foil blocking. the effect is sparkly holographic. The holes in the "perfins" are slightly smaller than those separating the stamps.*

Note the elliptical perforation, they have been adopted almost universally after a very slow start. Does anyone know the history of the elliptical perforations?

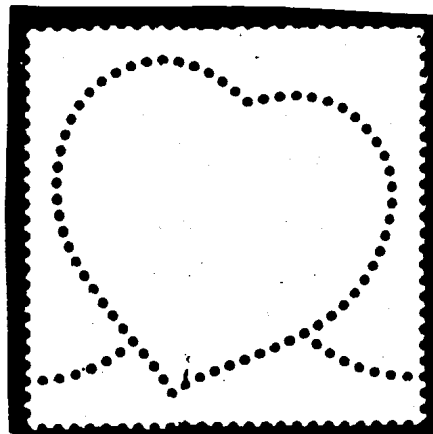
He would be interested to know details of the stamp printing. He wonders if the "perfins" were done in the way we know. He thinks they may have been printed by Enschede or De La Rue as there are few stamp printers about nowadays.

In the January 2003 USA Perfins Bulletin Paul Mistretta asks if the 4 Hong Kong stamps are "perfins" and are similar, not for security perforations which are issued by acceptable postal authorities, also "perfins"? He was

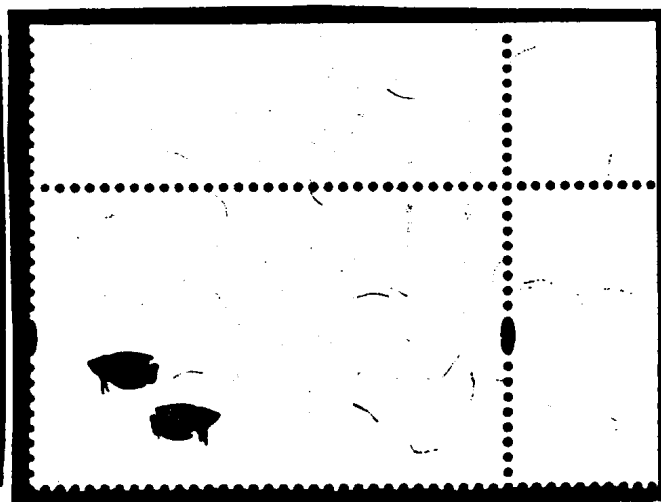
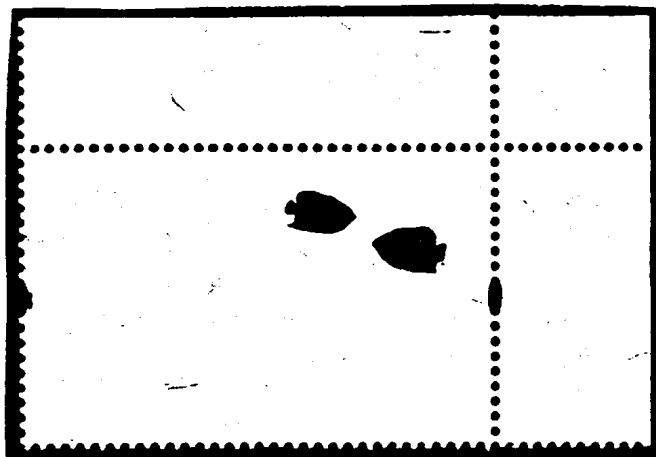
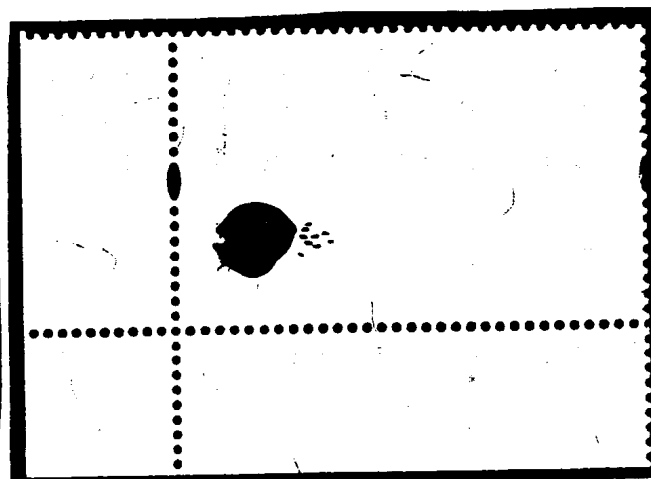
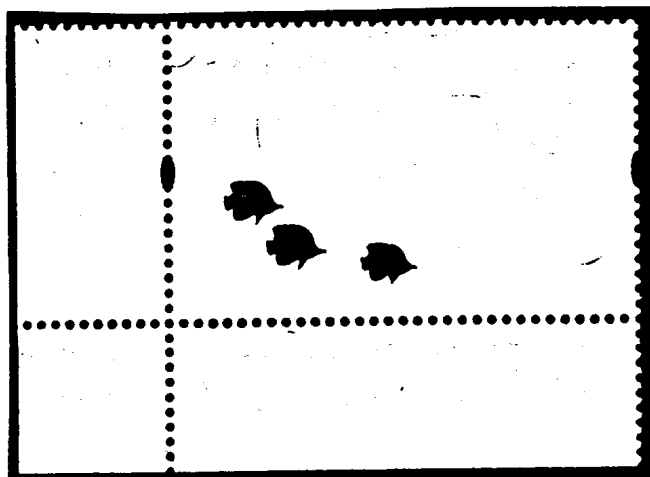
referring to the Hitchcock head outline from USA and the Netherlands 1993 Christmas issue with random 'snowflake' perforations as examples.

This question of perfin or no perfin has been debated before in these pages and I am not putting forward an opinion on the subject, just letting members know of the more recent 'non-perfin' designs.

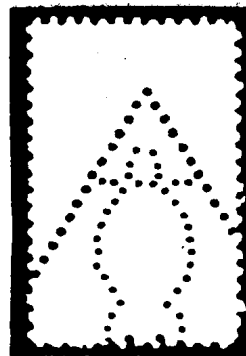
A friend gave me a French 3.00 F or 0.46E Christian Lacroix stamp in which the design was enclosed by a perforated heart shape.



Dave Hill also sent 4 Hong Kong Pet Fish issues, same values as the Christmas stamps, perforated with fish symbols.



Also in a recent issue of the Perfins Club Bulletin, Bob Schwerdt showed a copy of a Guatemala Revenue stamp with a 'bug in a triangle'. Bob thinks this could be part of a larger design and asks if anyone has a block showing the whole design.



Finally, although this is a genuine perfin, I think it fits into this article very well. Gary Shayler sent a strip of 4 German stamps, 23-8-23 Issue, 100 Mark with Berlin postmark. The perfin is an elephant. Gary says he has seen a Wolf s head on another German stamp but no other animals. Write in if you know of any other animal perfins and I will pass the information on to Gary and mention in a future Bulletin.

Again by one of those quirks of coincidence, the following cartoon was in a recent Perfins Club Bulletin. It clearly shows this perfin and for those of you who are not members of the Perfins Club, I am sure you will appreciate the humour of "Tong In Cheek".

