

VALLANCEY AGAIN

By Dave Hill

I've written on F Hugh Vallancey before, he was a philatelic writer (and dealer) in the 30's & 40's. He was perhaps the first to take notice of perfins in a serious way and produced a little handbook on them in 1933 and was one of the few people to have access to Slopers' records. After the war he revised his handbook with information from Charles Bein, an early collector of perfins. I think his researches in 1933 prompted Sloper to publish their "History Through 5 Reigns" in 1939, which I believe Slopers did for a Trade Exhibition they attended that year. Perhaps he even helped them prepare their history because in his 1933 handbook he quotes much of the correspondence that Joseph Sloper had with the Post Office and this also appears in Sloper's book. Of course they do not say that Copestakes stopped using underprints in July 1880, when Sloper received their first order for perfins from them.

Vallancey was responsible for 2 things which most of us decry now. He suggested cutting the perfin and identity of the user from the envelope and mounting one copy of each perfin face down! But undoubtedly his interest led to the formation of our society in 1957.

Unfortunately his handbooks contain many errors, as most early research often do, but parts are worth recalling. Firstly a section headed, 'Very Early Records'. I add my comments after each part.

"Records are arranged in order of receipt of instructions and later with the names of their clients in alphabetical order. "

"The first is for a supply of stamps for Mr J T Allman the publisher of Oxford St., (TJA) "

He means T J Allman and the die is TJA/463, it was for a machine, not stamps. It was actually m/c no. 2652, completed on 11/3/69 and was the 6th machine made.

"The second is for J C Bailey & Co of Tower Hill (JCB&Co.) whilst the third is for Baker Baker & Co of Bristol (B.B&Co) "

There is no die JCB/&C^o, they used just JCB rather later in 1890, unless Vallancey means the unidentified die JB/&C^o (J0630.02) known from

about 1873. He is right with B.B.&C^O (B0620.03) was used from c1870. Or perhaps it was the recently identified B0620.03a, the 15th machine made.

"... Crosse & Blackwell are 10 on the list (C&B/SOHO)"

Correct again, C0960.01 used from c1870,

"Copestake, Moore, Crampton & Co (S.C.) are number 20".

Now, we know this is the FIRST machine, made in 1867, but apart from examples that were sent for approval to the Postmaster General, it was never used again. Yet it was thought to be worth listing at some later date.

"Number 29 is Hambro, Son & Co. the bankers (C.I.H/&S)".

Correct. C3730.02 was used from c1870.

"No 89 is Frederick Huth---.

Again correct, presumably full name (H7490.01) used from about 1870 but see later.

"The first full name was No 9, CORY---.

Actually CORY/C (C5620.01), again used from 1870.

"The second was No 11, CRAMER, the piano firm".

It may have been 11 in this book but CRAMER & CO (C6450.01) was not used until 1890. What about HUTH above?

These records seem a little strange, they were compiled in 1890 or later and we do not have them. In fact, none of these dies figure in the list of earliest covers known. (See Bulletin 317 page 7)

Nor do the perfins figure in the list of the first machines made for clients, other than where I have noted. (See Roy's article in Bulletin 289)

A further section in Vallancey's handbook is entitled "Interesting Specimens" and one reference is pertinent to a query in Bulletin 325 page 7. This concerns the single large hole found on some early 1d red plates. Vallancey says "they were officially done by the Post Office, much in the same way that telegraph stamps are punched now", but

offers no proof. I think he is also referring to these holes in his addenda to the second edition of his booklet in 1948. He states the holes range from plate 72 (we know from plate 92) to King GV.

There is a section on the "EUP'N MAIL" perfin and the publishers of The European Mail, Morgan Brothers, but a little later he refers to a perfin "NIGHT MAIL", which perfin has never been seen.

Vallancey ends with a section on earliest 1d red plate numbers which he adds to the addenda to the second edition. I have brought the two together. Perhaps members would compare it with their own.

Plate 74	seen with perfin	CD&C ^o
Plate 89	" " "	GRW
Plate 90	" " "	VS&C ^o
Plate 92	" " "	MB&C reported by a Walter Morley in 1902
Plate 100	" " "	GER
Plate 102	" " "	NICHOLSON
Plate 104	" " "	C&BSOHO
Plate 105	" " "	SM&C ^o
Plate 106	" " "	TRAVERS
Plate 107	" " "	LB&L
Plate 108	" " "	SH&S
Plate 109	" " "	WILKS BROS
Plate 110	" " "	EUP'N MAIL and NBR

[Ed..- Dave did not indicate one or two line perfins in his text]

Vallancey finishes by saying that his list of perfins on 1d plate no's in 1933 was only typical and he has received long lists of additional perfins since. Mr Bein has over 30,000 perfins including more than 7,200 different dies, (remember even in 1948 many dies had yet to be made) and 700 are on 1d red plate numbers. He welcomed lists from collectors (I wonder what happened to them?). Vallancey has seen about half a dozen copies of perfins on plate 225 and found a perfin on 1d red stars in corners similar to those Mr Bein has. (Were these from Sloper's "Plaques", perfinned stamps from 5 reigns including a 1d black, made for a few select people in 1939?)

Postscript(s)

After the perfin NICHOLSON, above, Vallancey notes it as "Messrs Nicholson of St Paul's Churchyard". I have an old postcard of this end of Cheapside with a shop clearly called NicholsonS and they are also listed in Sloper's first ledger, (with the large 'S') as using an N10, actually thought to be N10.20. I will check when next in London whether they were ever Nicholson (singular) and if so, when did they become plural.

It seems from Roy's list already referred to that the earliest perfin will not be a 1d red. At present the oldest postmarked stamp is a 6d plate 6; and cover a 4d plate 10.

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