

Perfins on Argentine coils is toughest of specialties

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Perfins collectors have all types of specialties. Some collect fancy designs. A recent catalog published by the Perfins Club of the Netherlands illustrates more than 900 such patterns ranging from anchors to animals to geometric shapes of all sorts. I counted four types showing stylized humans and five types showing a human hand.

Other collectors like to arrange their specialties synoptically. They seek perfins on each of the functional stamp types: postal, airmail, charity, special delivery, war tax, fiscal, local, and so on. Some collectors even add Christmas seals and other labels to their perfins collections.

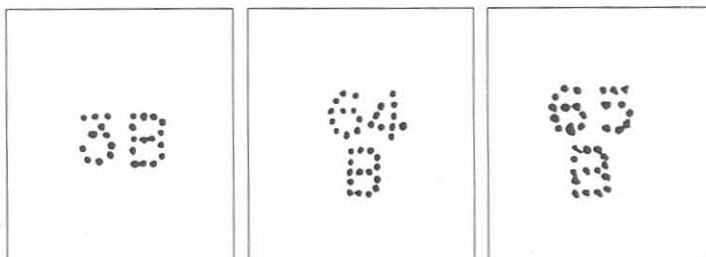
Single stamp issues are another collecting interest. A few of these are the United States 14¢ Indian chief of 1923 (Scott 565), any stamp depicting Albert Einstein, the black Harding issue (Scott 610-613), or registration stamps, like U.S. Scott F1.

Ever since Burton Bauder's 1974 catalog, *POKO Issues of the Netherlands*, was published, collectors have found fun studying perfinned coil stamps. Most of the Dutch items are easy to identify because of the syncopated perforations. Forerunners and

postrunners, however, lack the special perforations but are easily recognized by the shape of the punched letters.

The Perfin Society of Great Britain recently conducted surveys of perfins on British coil stamps. We all have some of these and can easily recognize them by the clipped edges and the punched letter shapes.

Collectors of perfins on U.S. coils have plenty to choose from. Some are very common, such as



the I/WILL pattern of Chicago. Others are harder to come by, such as the Schermack types listed at the end of the Balough Catalog. Perhaps even rarer than the traditional grid perfins on Schermack stamps are lettered company insignia which were not punched on the automated machinery.

The writer's collection includes perfinned coil stamps from Argentina, Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Ireland, Union of South Africa,

and, of course, the United States.

I submit that the hardest to find are the perfinned coils of Argentina.

The *World Perfins Catalog* lists eleven Argentine coil perfins. Ten of them have a numeral and a B. The eleventh has an FN over the same type of B. It has been identified as being used by the First National Bank of Boston in Buenos Aires. Users are known for nine of the remaining ten. Three of these patterns are shown in

the catalog as tracings, which indicates that no stamps were available when the catalog was published in 1992.

I have the patterns FN/B, 4B, 5B, 10/B, 11/B, and 64/B in my collection.

These numerical coil perfins are the only Argentine examples I have managed to acquire in more than 30 years of collecting.

Perhaps some readers can contribute more information about Argentina's coil perfins. We need to know the user of the pattern 64/B and we need actual examples of 3B, 64/B, and 65/B to photograph for the catalog.

I'd also like to determine just how scarce the Argentine coils really are. If you have a perfin on an Argentine coil, please note the Scott # of the stamp, the perfin type, and the postmark if it is legible. Send this information to me. If you have clean copies of any of the patterns, or can identify the user of pattern 64/B, please send that information to the foreign catalog chairman.

I promise an update once I have more data to work with. Let's find out just how scarce the Argentine coil perfins really are.

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