

FINNISH PERFINS

Eric Keefe

I do not know when the first perfins appeared in Finland, I have been told that it was sometime in the 1890's. The earliest example that I have seen is dated 1896 (F & Co). Their use seems not to have been very popular and only a handful of companies are known to have used them. To date only ten different perfins have been identified and recorded as being used in Finland. Again, I do not know when their use ceased; my latest specimens date from the end of the 1930's (FORD and ASEA). From the limited number of stamps I have been able to collect the greatest use appears to have been from around the turn of the century to the early 1930s. The most common designs seem to be 'FORD' and 'ASEA'.

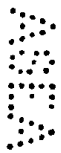


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

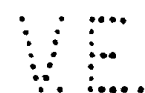


Fig. 10

I am aware of the following perfins on Finnish or Russian stamps used in Finland.

Figure 1 - ASEA Allmänna Svenska Elektriska AB - Helsinki

I have seen examples dating from 1911 on the 1911-15 Russian Arms issue; 1917-30 Saarinen Lion issues and the 1930 Lion issues. Of all the Finnish perfins this appears the second most common. On all the examples I have seen the perfin is vertical and can be found horizontal, inverted and reversed. This company also used perfins on the stamps of Sweden and a number of other European countries. The

Swedish perfins are much larger than the Finnish version and are frequently applied diagonally across the stamp.

Figure 2 - F&Co Finlayson & Company - Tampere

This is said to be the first Finnish company to use perfins. I have seen an example dating from 1896 on a stamp of the 1885 Finnish Arms issue and from 1901 on the 1891 Russian Arms with rings issue. All examples seen by me have the design applied horizontally reading from left to right when viewed from the front of the stamp.

Figure 3 - FORD Ford Motor Company (Oy Ford Ab)-Helsinki

This is by far the most common perfin in my collection. However, I have only seen it on stamps of the 1930-52 Hammarsten-Jansson definitive issue. On the smaller stamps it has been applied vertically in all four settings. The same size perfin was also used on the larger Mark values where it was applied both vertically and horizontally, again in all four settings.

Figure 4 - J.G.W John Gustave Wilkeström - Turku

An elusive item that I only know with the perfin applied horizontally across the face of the stamp. Used around the turn of the century.

Figure 5 - K.B. Karl Boström - Hanko

Again a difficult item, my sole specimen has the initials applied horizontally but inverted across the face of the stamp. It is on a 20p value of the Finnish Arms issue used in 1900.

Figure 6 - N AB Notraco Oy - Helsinki

I have never seen an example of this perfin but I am assured that it exists.

Figure 7 - S. Sampo - Turkit

My earliest example is on a 20 penni stamp of the 1911-1915 Russian Arms type, the latest is a 5 penni green Saarinen without a watermark. Unfortunately, all my copies have undecipherable dates in their postmarks.

**Figure 8 - TKT Teollisuuderlharjoittajinen Keskiniffien
Tapanirmankuurusyhtijd - Helsinki**

This is a formidable title that can be translated as “Industrialist's Mutual Accident Insurance Company”. I have been unable to acquire a copy yet but I know of an example used on a Saarinen 20 penni blue used in Helsinki in 1929.

Figure 9 - V. Verdandi - Turku

My sole copy is on an un-watermarked 50 penni blue Saarinen again without a readable date.

Figure 10 - V.E. Viktor Ek Oy - Helsinki

I have not seen an example but again I am assured it exists and was used in the period 1900 - 1917.

This is a little known field of Finnish philately that needs further development and research.

Ref: - Scandinavian Contact, March 1995, 16, (2), 74 - 77

Ed: Please note that the illustrations in this article are probably not to scale.