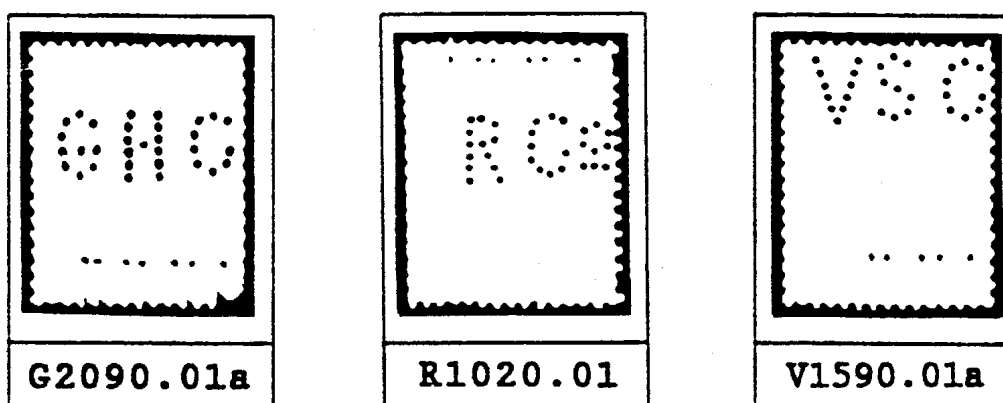


PERFORATED COIL STAMPS - The 'Michelius' Affixer. Roy Gault

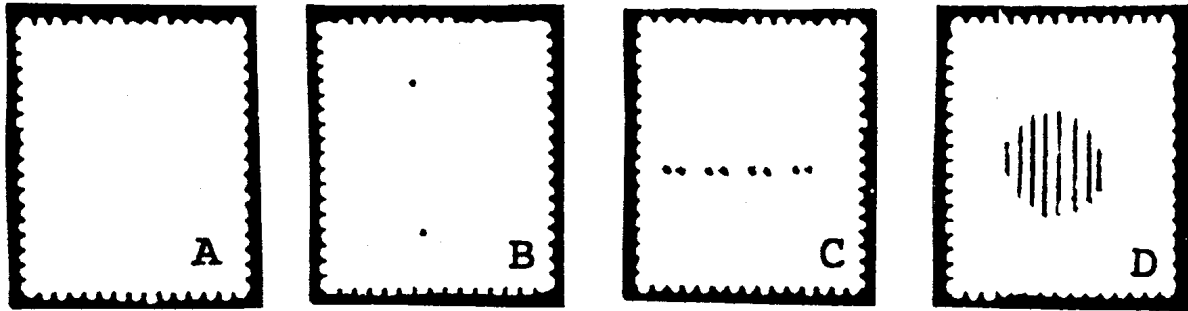
In my FIXO article (August 1991 Bulletin) I acknowledged Harry Dobson's contribution to the study of perfins on GB coil stamps. Amongst his coil material were two examples (GHC and VSC) where up to eight impaling pin marks were visible instead of the customary three associated with FIXOs. To these I added a third example (RC.?) which showed the same markings. Noting that 'characteristic' lettering had been used (note the shape of the 'C'), I put them all to one side to await further study.



And that is the way it remained until quite recently, when completely 'out of the blue', I received a complimentary copy of 'MICHELIUS - Postwertzeichenaufklebmaschine und Barfrankierungsmachine' (in Dutch and German) from its author, Ruud Hammink. In the publication, Ruud covers in detail the various patents which were registered between 1909 and 1912 by individuals associated with 'The Michelius Company' (for want of a better title) in a number of countries, but especially Germany. -

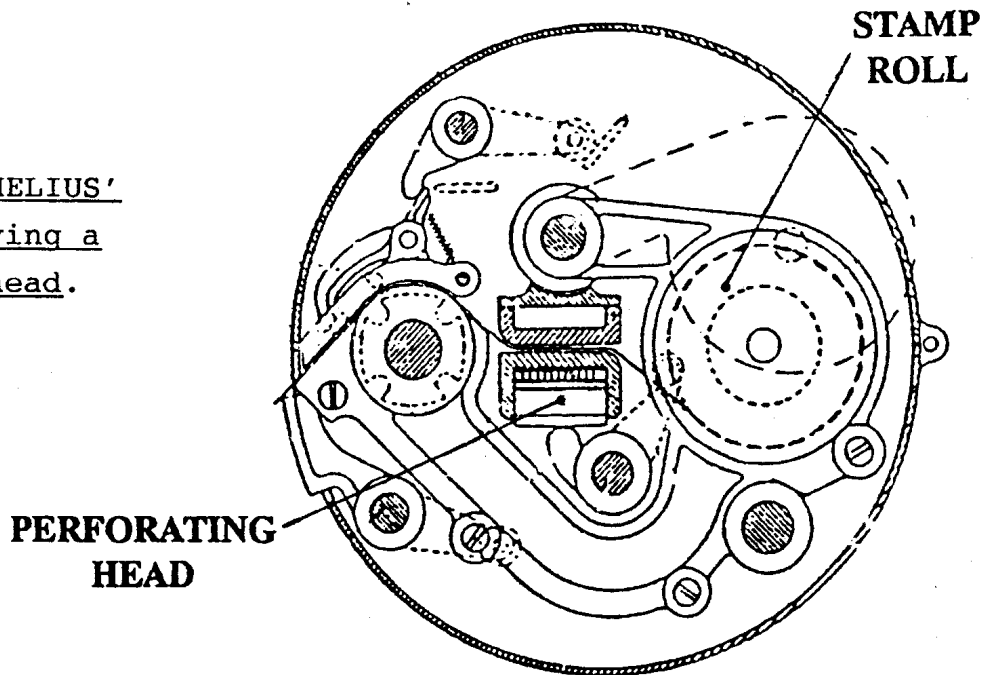
It would seem that the name 'Michelius' was taken from Isaac Michel the engineer/designer/inventor of the machine who, judging by the patents, made a number of different types of affixing machine. Each had its own method of gripping and moving the stamps through the machine, and at least two designs involved a perforating head. One of these even used the principle of 'interchangeable' cassettes containing their own roll of stamps and perforator.

MICHELIUS Feed Marks.



- (A) No marks visible, tops/bottoms usually torn.
- (B) Two fine vertical pin holes, cut tops/bottoms.
- (C) Four pairs of impaling pin marks.
- (D) Vertical 'ridges', stamp best viewed edge on.

Typical 'MICHELIUS'  
design involving a  
perforating head.



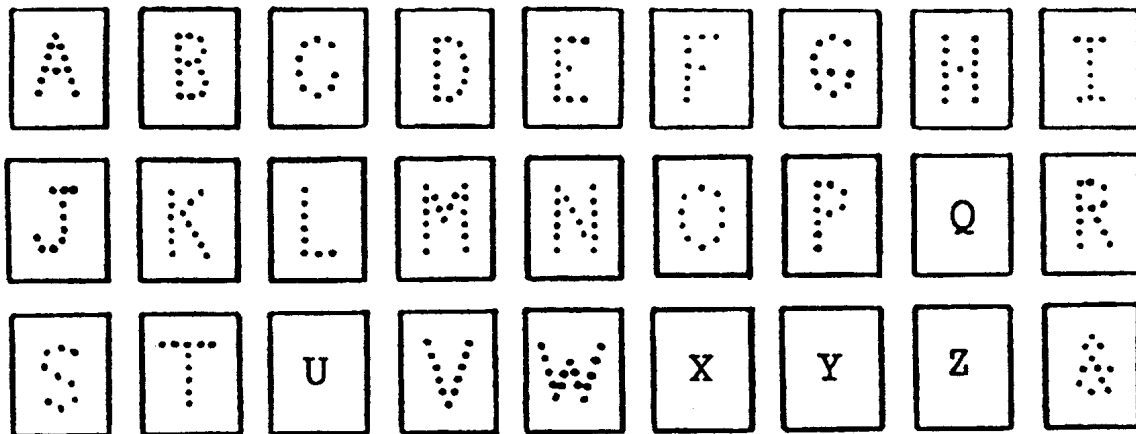
GB Coil Issues involved.

British P.O. records show that trial coils were supplied to Mr. F. Kleeman (the GB distributor) for testing in a 'Michelius' affixing machine. These must have been successful for when coils of stamps were officially introduced in August 1912, two sizes of rolls were made to fit the 'Michelius' - Rolls 'A' and 'B' for the 1d and ½d respectively. Both contained 1000 stamps coil-jointed every 10th stamp, and wound to give Top End Delivery (i.e. the stamps would come from the roll head first).

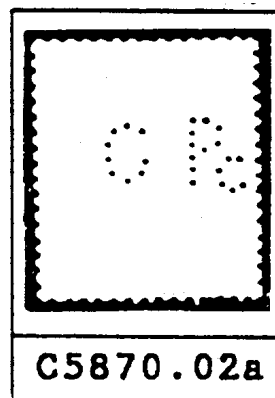
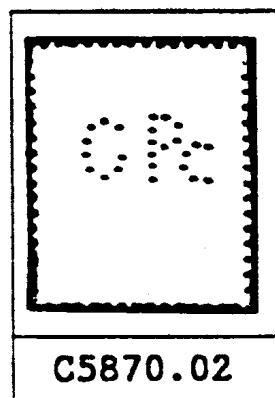
These early coils were made from sheets of King George V Mackennels (in which various dies and watermarks can be found), but GV Royal Cypher Typographs were used from 1913. In August 1918 a third value, the 1½d 'J' roll, was added to the coil range to accommodate the new postal rate introduced earlier that year. However, I suspect that these new 'J' rolls came too late to have seen much use in the 'Michelius' machines.

The Standard MICHELIUS Alphabet.

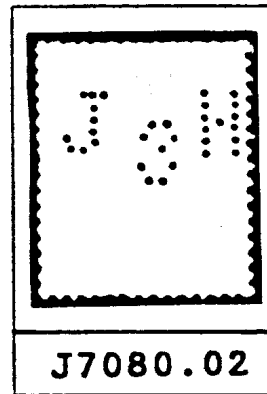
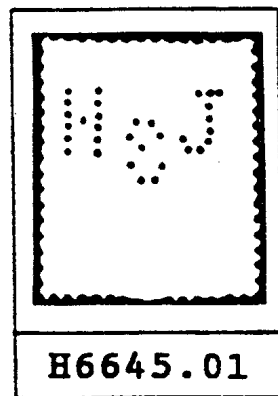
My search through the Illustrated Catalogue found enough examples to re-construct the majority of the 'Michelius' alphabet, leaving only the difficult 'Scrabble' letters QUXYZ!



All of the 'Michelius' dies found so far are illustrated at the end of the article, but worthy of note are the variations of 'CpC' - are these from the machine that took cassettes?



Also well worth a mention are 'HSJ' and 'JSH'. It would appear that the die 'HSJ' was made in error and later corrected to read 'JSH' by reversing the die and redrilling the foot of the 'J'. [Cover up the last 3 pins in the foot of the 'J' of JSH to reveal the mirror image of HSJ!]



Finally, could I call upon the good nature of fellow collectors to contribute to this original research by inspecting their GB perfin collections and report their holdings of these 'Michelius' perfins. As usual, issues, values, postmarks and dates would be welcomed, but this time would you also report on the 'transportation' marks (if any). I should point out that many of these perfins are scarce, and quite possibly unique!

