MODIFIED PERFINS   by J M Rucklidge
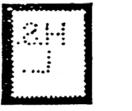
It is quite common for a perforator to lose one or more pins through breakage. If only one or a few pins are missing this is usually obvious and the perfin can still be read. In extreme cases there may be so many pins missing that it is unreadable.

There are a few letters which by the loss of a small number of pins can be misread as a different letter. Thus B can become P, E can become F, T can become I and so on. It is a matter of conjecture how many of these exist.

Recently I came across a perfin C/VC. I would have put this in my un-catalogued envelope had not the batch also contained several score of the perfin AC/C. I now believe that the C/VC is simply an AC/C with a single pin missing from the A. This possibility only arises when all the remaining letters are symmetrical about a horizontal axis (C, D, E, H, I, O and X). If one other letter is present such a misreading is not possible.

Of perhaps greater interest are perfins which have been modified intentionally. This is usually done because of a change of user or because the user changes the name of the concern. One example of this is our own perfin PS monogram (see Bulletin 209). Others of which I am aware are
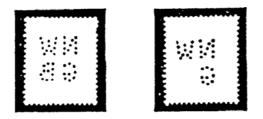

Harrod's Stores Ltd dropped
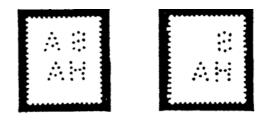the stores and became Harrod's Ltd.

Cadbury's used the C.B/B perfin in several forms. When they amalgamated with Schweppes the first B was modified to a (mis-shapen) S.

North Western Gas Board was renamed NorWest Gas and removed the B.

SA/HA was used by Sandwell Area Health Authority. The first A was apparently removed but I do not know why.

Finally I suspect that when the railways were nationalised in 1947 the L/NE perfin used by the London & North Eastern Railway was modified by the addition of three pins to read E/NE and was used by the Railway Executive Eastern Region. I have no proof of this but it seems possible (the Western Region produced a new die RE/WR so it would have been sore logical to use RE/ER).

I would be very pleased to learn of any other dies which are known or suspected to have been modified in this way.

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