

THE HMSO PERFORATING MACHINE

by Tony Edwards

As mentioned by Betty Lucas in her article on page 5 the machine used to perforate the HMSO perfins has come to light in a storehouse in London. It was discovered just in time as due to a reorganisation in HMSO that store has been closed and the machine was to be sent away for scrap. I am pleased to be able to report that I have been able to save it and it is now part of my collection (I will stick it in with a very large stamp hinge). I intend to keep the machine on behalf of the Society and will welcome any suggestions regarding what we could do with it. It is in full working order and any member who would like to inspect it is welcome to contact me. If anyone would like a sample from it I would be pleased to provide one on blank paper. I will not perforate stamps with it as this was part of the agreement made when it was obtained.

The machine has a label identifying it as a SLOPER Ho. 68939, but from Slopers records it is known that it was originally manufactured by Hurlin & Son and modified in 1949 by Sloper who provided a new perforating head. It is a treadle operated machine which now perforates a horizontal row of 12 stamps at a time. An interesting point regarding its design is that the length of the pins forming each letter is different so that as the sheets are perforated only the pins forming one letter penetrate the stamps at a time. In this way a number of sheets can be perforated together without the effort of forcing all the pins through the paper at the same time.