

SLOPER CIRCULAR ACQUIRED BY N.P.M. By M.Harp.

During 1993 the National Postal Museum (NPM) acquired a perfin circular issued by Joseph Sloper. The item was originally featured in the National Postal Museum Review of 1993. The NPM has given our society permission to reproduce this item and it is shown opposite slightly reduced (actual size 128.5 mm x 209.5 mm).

The printed circular is clearly an early one and probably dates from around 1870. The mint penny red stuck at the top has a GR/W perfin (G4350.02) and is from plate 96 so it could put the date of the circular as early as 1869. The address of "Walbrook House" also confirms the early nature of this circular.

The circular also has at either side two further examples of Sloper non philatelic work. The NPM believes that the two annotations at the top and bottom of the circular were made by Joseph Sloper himself and it would be interesting to compare these with known copies of his handwriting.

The top inscription reads, "To J. Clutson Esquire with J. Slopers compliments" and the lower one, "The Post Office has adopted the system for money orders etc. etc." The bulk of the text reports a case of theft of stamps in Manchester and then explains how stamps perforated by Sloper's system could avoid this. As far as I know this circular has not been reported before. It is pleasing to see that the NPM is recognising the important part played by Sloper's invention by acquiring this piece for the museum.

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*J. J. Clutton Esqr with Sloper's Complicity*

## Postage Stamps—Important Case.

The following extract was made from the "MANCHESTER EXAMINER" of 21st February, and appeared in other Provincial and London Papers:—



"CHARGE OF 'RECEIVING' 7,000 STAMPS.—At the Manchester Police-court on Wednesday *John Howarth*, provision-dealer, Cross-street, was charged with receiving, from errand-boys and junior clerks in various Manchester offices, a large number of stamps in payment for bread and cheese, he well knowing the said stamps to have been stolen. Inspector Shandley said he searched the prisoner's premises, and in a drawer he found 4,800 penny stamps, 810 twopenny stamps, and 2,210 receipt stamps; the total number being 7,820, and the value 35*l.* 19*s.* 2*d.* The majority of them were new stamps—that is to say, they had not been stuck upon letters, but a certain portion of them—and these the officer found done up in a packet by themselves—had the appearance of having been fixed upon letters and taken off again, the edges being slightly jagged and the 'sticking stuff' looking not fresh. In fact, the charge against the prisoner originated in a letter being so tampered with. Mr. Slater, St. Ann's-square, suspecting something amiss in the posting of a letter containing two halves of 5*l.* notes—the letter not having been heard of—had asked Inspector Shandley to make inquiries. The result was that the errand boy confessed he had kept back the letter for the sake of the penny stamp (with which he bought a bun at the prisoner's shop), and when he found, on tearing the letter in two, that it was a money letter, he became frightened at what he had done, and he tucked the letter and the enclosed half notes between the bars of a 'grid' in Red Lion-street, where the officer found them. The stipendiary magistrate (Mr. Fowler) thought it a most important case, and he remanded the prisoner for a week to enable Inspector Shandley to make the most searching inquiry possible."

A plan has been devised in connection with "SLOPER'S PATENT PERFORATING SYSTEM" for *effectually* preventing the recurrence of such cases in future, and has been submitted to and allowed by the Post Office Authorities.

This plan, which has just been adopted by many of the most influential Firms and Public Companies in London, will be in full operation as soon as the Patentee has prepared his Machinery to meet the demands which he anticipates,

All applications addressed to—"THE MANAGER,

" Office for Sloper's Patent,

" WALBROOK HOUSE, WALBROOK, LONDON."

*The Post Office have adopted my system for money orders &c &c*