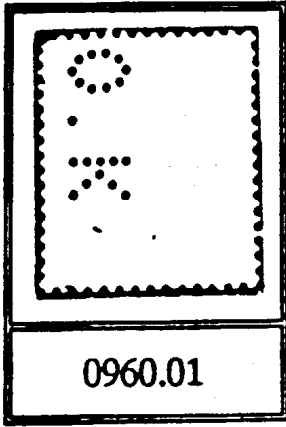


USED ON THE OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE WORLD? By John Mathews



Machine number 644 7 in the workshop ledgers of Joseph Sloper and Co. has a strike of the letters "O.K" and, from dated entries either side of it, must have been made late in 1884.

I had identified it with an Australian perfin known to have been used over the period 1890 to 1974, and had been curious why no dated example could be found earlier than 1890.

Now, in the New Illustrated Catalogue of GB Perfins, I notice the identical pattern with a catalogue number of O0960.01 and a period of usage on GB stamps of 1885 to 1890!

The Australian user is known to be Harrold Bros, and its successor companies Harrold, Colton and Co., and later Colton, Palmer and Preston Ltd., ironmongers and hardware merchants, of Currie St., Adelaide, South Australia. The GB user is not identified but these GB perfins are known with "London EC" postmarks. In Kelly's Post Office London Directory of 1889, the firm of Harrold Bros., merchants, is listed as occupants of 29 Great St. Helen's, E.C. (Great St.Helen's is a short thoroughfare opposite the eastern end of Threadneedle Street.)

"O.K" was one of the company's main trade marks.