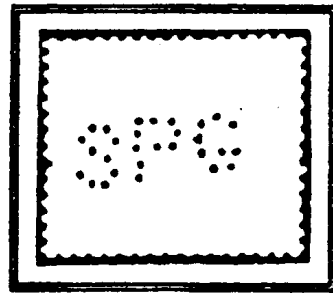
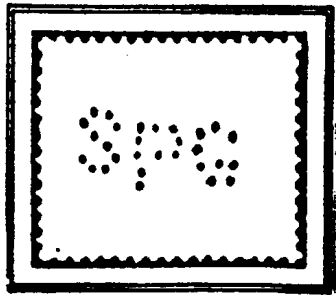


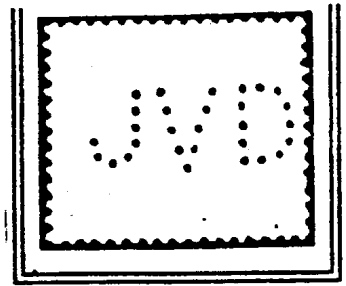
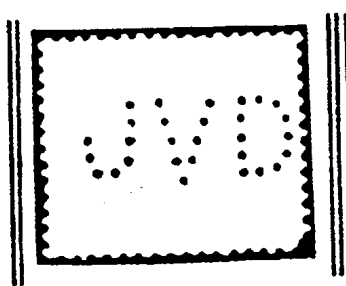
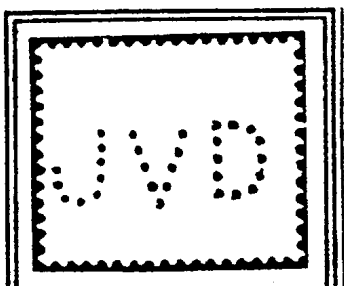
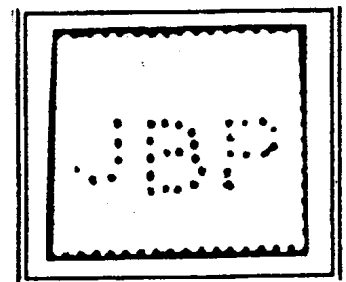
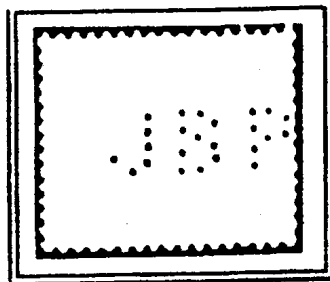
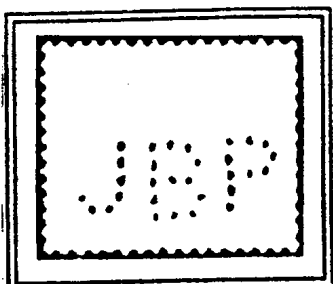
THE MAKER OF THE 'SPG' TYPE DIE

By Dave Hill

I think I have discovered the maker and user of this type of die. First, what is it? Roy Gault named it thus because as he arrived at the 'S' pages of the New Illustrated Catalogue he came to the conclusion that each of these perfins were not different dies but were dies made by single letter dies, clamped together in different combinations. This was most obvious in the many 3 letter dies, up and down the stamp, like 'SPG'. The letters are always very badly formed with larger letters from 1890 to 1905 and smaller thereafter. For instance there are many different 'S's, 'P's and 'G's and they could be assembled in many combinations (if there were only 2 of each letter they could still make 9 possible perfins).



Roy was faced with cataloguing all these combinations. John Nelson had also long recognised that there was something different about these dies. Blocks of stamps proved that they were not different dies of a multi-die and Roy came to the conclusion that they were individual letter dies, somehow clamped together.



I discovered that the dies were made by Waterlow & Son. I made the discovery in quite a devious fashion. In the New Illustrated I noted that one late user of an 'SPG' type die, J B Pash, later used a Sloper wartime provisional. Another, J V Drake, also used a regular Sloper die in the 1950's and I remembered that with our Sloper records we have a few lists of clients which they 'inherited' from Waterlow. Looking at these I saw that both the above firms were ex Waterlow clients. From about 75 Waterlow clients I found that 25 had had 'SPG' type dies.

When looking for proof I found the answer staring me in the face. Before Roy made his discovery I had been in correspondence with the Waterlow Study Circle. They had sent me a copy of a Waterlow advert for perforating for the year 1891.

At the bottom this stated, *"The above charges include the use of stock Dies, such as "E.A.S.", "S.&G.", or any combination of three letters. Any greater number will require the preparation of a special Die, which would have to be charged to the customer."*

Not all Waterlow clients had 'SPG' type dies: some no doubt wanted better looking dies or more than three letters. Some of these dies might have been made for Waterlow by Sloper or other firms over a period of years. The 'SPG' type die was only used by Waterlow, not sold to their clients.

Also I think Sloper perfined other stamps for Waterlow over a period of years as well as supplying dies and machines. So from the lists we have of Waterlow clients we get a mixture of dies.

Some clients like SPG went back for more perfins time after time and got a different combination of letters. Others only made one order and only one die is known. At first the letters were vertical, later horizontal. Two letter perfins are also known but single letter perfins are best ignored. It might be this type of die or it might just be 'home-made'.

Waterlow did quite a lot of business. We have some figures from the Post Office for about 1906. Waterlow perfined about £75,000 worth of stamps per year, more than Allchins but a lot less than Slopers £525,000.

Despite its crude results Waterlow used this machine for nearly 50 years. Why they didn't use neatly shaped letters all the time, I cannot understand.

* * * * *

WATERLOW ADVERTISEMENT FOR 1891

Perforation of Postage Stamps

FOR PREVENTION OF FRAUD AND EMBEZZLEMENT.

Extract from "Post Office Guide."

"In consequence of representations made to the Post Office by various Firms that there is reason to believe that their postage stamps were purloined by persons in their employ, the Department has recommended that the initials of Firms, &c., be perforated through the stamps by means of a machine devised for the purpose, and Postmasters have been instructed not to purchase such stamps."

WATERLOW & SONS LIMITED have prepared Machinery by which they are enabled to perforate the initials of Firms, Companies or private Traders on all kinds of Postage Stamps.

Stamps so perforated are secured from misappropriation, as they cannot be purchased by Postmasters or used for Savings' Bank forms.

CHARGES FOR PERFORATION.

If less than 12 sheets are ordered, a minimum charge of	1	4.
If 12 sheets or upwards, per sheet	0	1
and Sixpence to cover Registered Postage.		
Post Cards and Wrappers, per 1,000	2	0
" " " 500 and under.	1	0
Plus carriage.		

The above charges include the use of sack Dies, such as "E. A. S.," "S. & C.," or any combination of three letters. Any greater number will require the preparation of a special Die, which would have to be charged to the customer.

N.B.—Remittances must in all cases accompany Orders and the Stamps will be forwarded promptly.

Waterlow Stationery Works; 49 & 50 Parliament Street.