

CONSTANTINE & PICKERING STEAMSHIP COMPANY of MIDDLESBROUGH

By Mike Oxley.

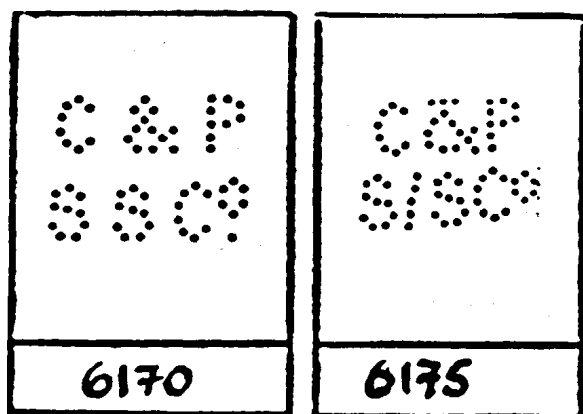
I have been trying to compile a list of North East perfin users, and I recently obtained a second copy of a perfin which enabled me to make out the postmark, which was Middlesbrough! A visit to the Public Library gave me a positive identity for C6170 (CSP/SSCS), the Constantine and Pickering Steamship Company of Middlesbrough. My copies are C6170 but I suspect the identity will also be correct for C6175 (C&P/SISC°) though I have no copies to check the postmark. If copies exist with legible postmarks, please report. The following is a brief history of the company.

In 1885 Joseph Constantine and Warley Pickering Junior, trading as "Messrs Constantine and Pickering", bought their first ship. By 1896 their fleet had expanded to two barques and six steamships, all of which were registered in Norway.

In 1897 the decision was made to build up a fleet under the British flag, and the name of the firm was changed to "Constantine and Pickering Steamship Company" while the ship-chandlery business continued to trade as "Constantine, Pickering and Company". A second company, the "Meteor Steamship Company limited" was formed in 1907 to own coasting and short-sea ships.

The company was also reorganised in 1918 because Mr. Warley Pickering retired and in 1920 the "Joseph Constantine Steamship Line Limited" was registered. The fleet declined to two ships by 1922, the emphasis over this period having been on brokerage and agency work with the formation of "Joseph Constantine and Sons (London) Limited" in 1921, but steps were taken to rebuild the fleet to its former strength.

However, after the retirement of Mr. R.A. Constantine in 1963, it was decided to wind up the company, and in 1966 it was replaced by a new parent company "Constantine Holdings Limited". The ships were sold by 1968 and the freight forwarding, packing and shipping services were expanded.



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