

HISTORY OF FIRMS USING PERFINS
NORTON ROSE By John Nelson.

1. The Firm

In a recently published history of solicitors Norton Rose, the roots of the firm are traced back to 1794, although no partner by the name of Rose was associated with the firm until 1838 or of Norton until 1844,

During the course of the 19th century the firm came to prominence as one of the most important solicitors' practices in London, representing many eminent clients including prime minister, Benjamin Disraeli and the financier Sir Ernest Cassel. They also acted in The Tichbourne Case, the longest and most sensational civil trial in Victorian England.

In commercial legal work they were prominent in the field of international investment and in the formation of many of Britain's major railway companies. As solicitors to the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway the firm occupied offices at the London Bridge Terminus between 1867 and the mid-1880's.

The firm continued to prosper in the 20th century with a clientele principally of affluent private individuals, merchant banks and other commercial companies. It was not however until the amalgamation with Botterell & Roche in 1960 that the partnership moved up into the position it holds today among the largest and most influential solicitors' practices in the City of London, undertaking most branches of legal work but with special emphasis on international and shipping finance.

As will be seen from the table below, the name of the firm, as is common with solicitors, has changed from time to time, usually as principal members of the partnership have come and gone, but more recently by the use of a shorter name to project a sharper and more modern image.

The addresses given in the table are those of the firm's City offices (London EC and later EC2 or EC3) but during the early part of the perfin era they also maintained an office at 6 Victoria St, London SW (1857-1889) and at 10 Victoria Street, London SW (1889-1906) as well as the one at London Bridge Station, London SE.

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| <u>Name of the Firm</u> | <u>City of London Address</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1865 Baxter, Rose, Norton & Co. | |
| 1873 Baxter, Rose, Norton & Brewer | |
| 1874 | 24 Coleman Street |
| 1881 Norton, Rose, Norton & Co. | |
| 1888 | 57½ Old Broad Street |
| 1904 Norton, Rose, Norton Farish & Co | |
| 1906 Norton, Rose, Barrington & Co. | |
| 1919 Norton, Rose & Co. | |
| 1924 | 111 Old Broad Street |
| 1929 | 128 Bishopsgate |
| 1934 | 116 Old Broad Street |
| 1935 Norton, Rose, Greenwell & Co. | |
| 1940 | St Helen's Place |
| 1942 | 116 Old Broad Street |
| 1955 Norton Rose & Co. | |
| 1960 Norton, Rose, Botterell & Roche | Kempson Hse. Camomile St. |
| 1988 Norton Rose (from 1st May) | |

2. The Perfins

The following dies, in date order, are positively identified as having been used by the firm:

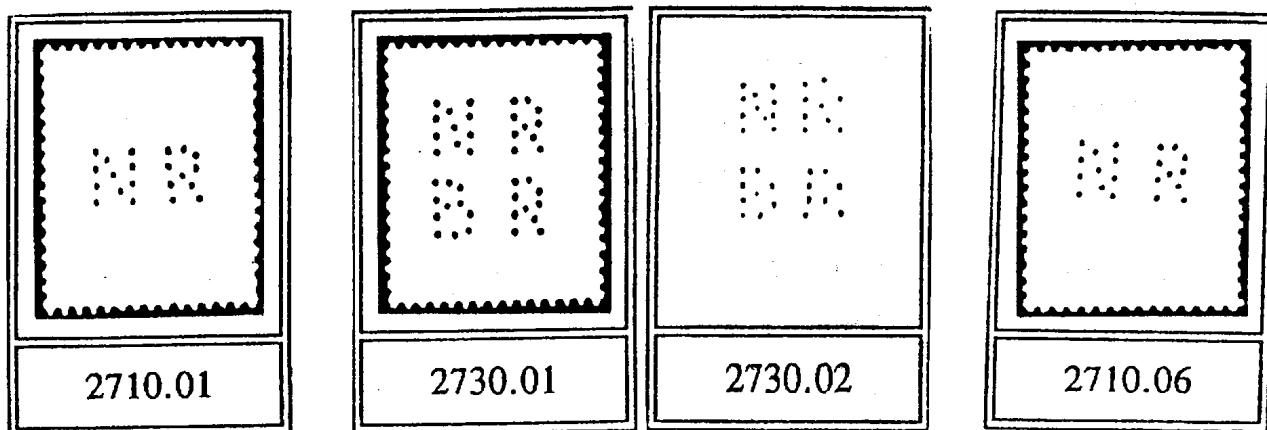
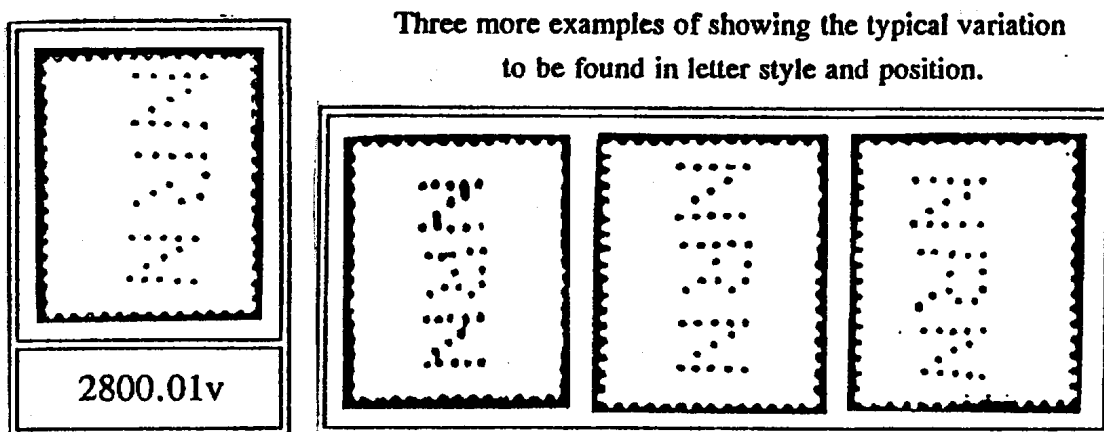
- N2800.01v NRN Sideways reading down. 'SPG' type with letters of varying shapes and sizes. Known on QV 1d lilacs and Jubilee ½d vermilion and green.
Postmarks: Threadneedle Street, JU 20 96
London SW, AU 4 96
- N2710.01 NR Known on KGVI 2%^d dark blue so in use from early 1940's at least. Also KGVI light colours ½^d, 1^d & 2½^d, changed colours ½, 1^d & 2½^d, and QEII Wilding 1^d, 1½^d, 2½^d, 3^d & 4½^d. The firm made frequent use of stamped addressed envelopes for the return of papers by clients so that no reliance can be placed on town names etc. appearing on postmarks. The perfins, supplied by Slopers, ceased to be used during the early months of 1960.
- N2730.01 NR/BR I have personal knowledge, as a legal executive with the firm at the time, that these stamps, supplied by Slopers, came into use on 17th Nov

1960. At first there were only QEII 3d and 4½d Wildings but later there are known to have been further Wildings 4d, 6d & 9d, sterling Machins 4d & 5d and decimal Machins ½p, 1p, 2p, 3p, 3½p, 4½p, 6½p, 7p, 8½p, 9p, 10p, 11p, 12p, 12½p, 14p, 15½p & 16p.

NORROSE SERVICE CO LTD, which appears as a second identity in the Tomkins Catalogue, was a company formed by the partnership for reasons of administrative convenience. It was, in reality, none other than the same people using the same stamps.

N2730.02 NR/BR This appears to have been a short lived die known on QEII decimal Machins ½p, 1p, 17p & 18p.

N2710.06 NR The most recent die which probably came into use soon after the name changed to Norton Rose on 1st May 1988. Known on QEII decimal Machins 2p, 18p, 19p, 20p, 20p double head, 22p, 24p & 25p.



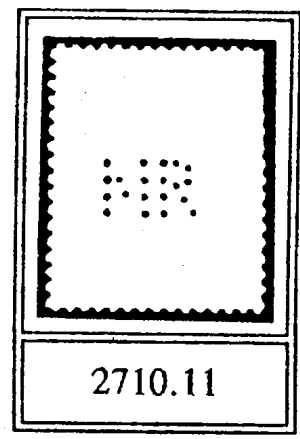
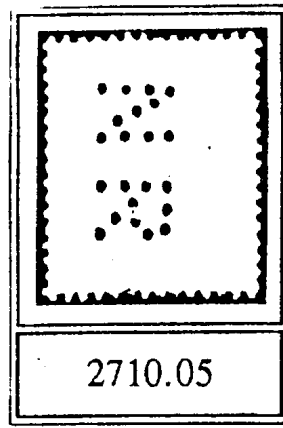
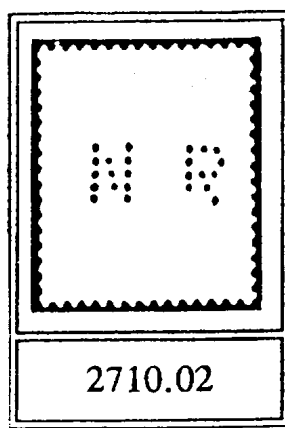
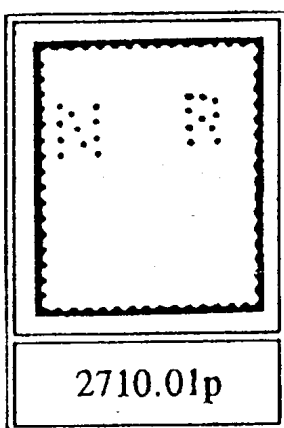
It would seem probable, when one observes the number of other NR dies in the New Illustrated Catalogue, that some of the following were also used by the Norton Rose firm. Those particularly suspect are:-

N2710.01p NB Known on KGVI 2W light blue. A Norton Rose wartime provisional is a possibility.

N2710.02 NE Known on KGV photo. 1½d; KEVIII 1½d; KGVI dark colours ½d, 1½d, & 2½d.

N2710.05 NE Stamps bearing this die, known upright and reading down, could possibly have come from the same supplier as the NRN die. I have it on a QV 1d lilac and also on a KEVII 1d with postmark London E.C. in 1902. (I, Ed, have this on ½d blue Jubilee postmarked London 30 3 01)

N2710.11 NE I have this on KGVI 2½d dark blue.



If anyone has covers or other evidence to confirm the use by Norton Rose of these or any other dies, I would very much appreciate hearing from them.

My sincere thanks to Stephen Steere and Roy Gault for their assistance in providing some aspects of the information I have used in the writing of this article.

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