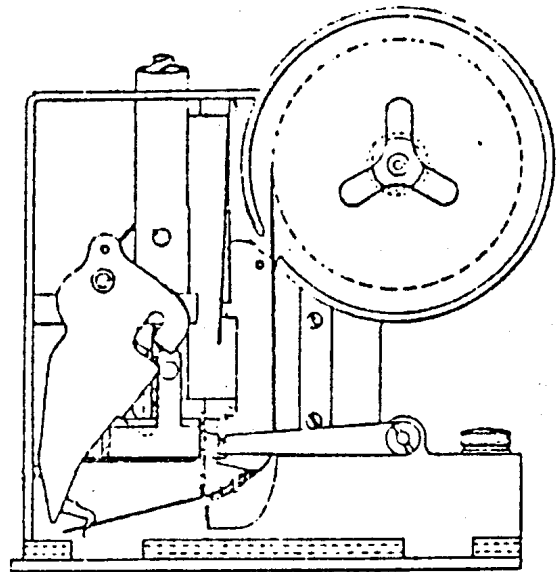


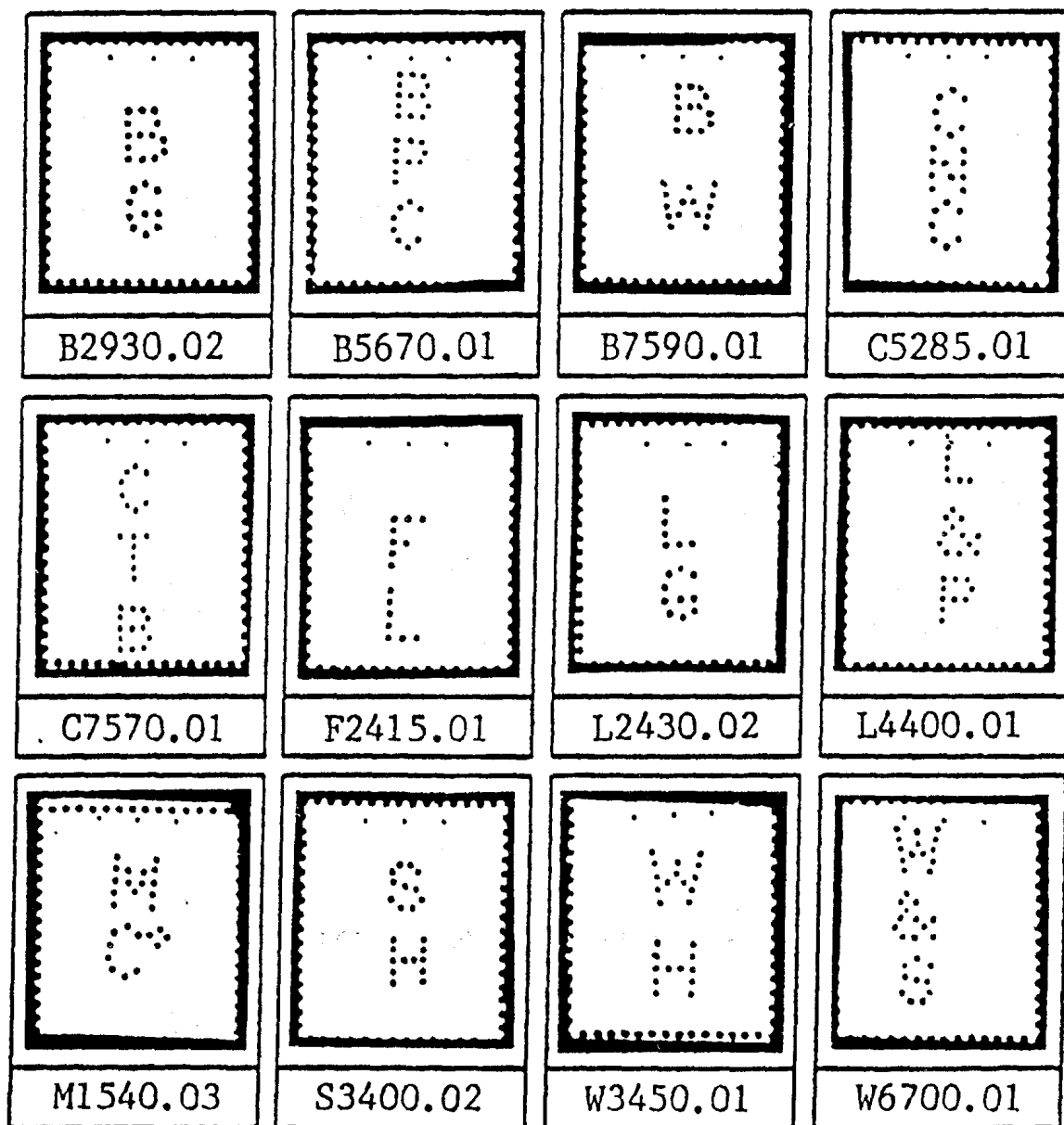
A study of perfins on G.B. stamps from coils was started last year with a survey of two distinctive groups: POKOs and stamps with Sideways Watermarks. Some two dozen members have since responded with valuable information. One such contributor was Harry Dobson, whose death was reported with sadness in the June Bulletin. His collection was not to be a closed album though, for just before he died he paid me the highest possible compliment by making me a gift of his perfinned coil stamps.

Amongst his carefully sorted material was a fascinating group of stamps bearing the 'tell-tale' marks of the FIXO affixer. Unlike the massive POKO machine, the FIXO was a small, hand operated device suitable for use on an office desk. A simple plunger action drew the stamp 'head-first' from a coil, severed, moistened and affixed it to the postal item. Each affixer carried a single roll of 500 stamps.



This British built machine had its hey-day during the early years of GV's reign, having been introduced late in 1911. Stamps will normally show cut top and bottom edges produced by the severing blade inside the affixer, with the sides generally cut straight during the manufacture of the coils. The method of drawing the stamp forward was by 3 pins sticking into the face of the stamp. It is the marks left by these impaling pins, which give the vital clue. Often these marks are very faint, and on occasions non-existent! The GPO first produced coils in August 1912 by joining together panes of stamps. Improved production techniques would remove the need to join sheets of stamps to form coils, but for reasons of economy, some values continued to be made this way.

The following dies are all found on stamps which show impaling pin marks typical of the FIXO affixer. What is unknown though is whether the perfin was applied directly by the affixing machine, or whether it was the subject of a separate perforation of the complete coil before loading into the affixer. A good source for these perfins would be the early issues of GV. I have no early date on record, but the latest date seen so far is 28 April 1922.



It should be stressed that the three impaling pin marks are NOT holes, but simply depressions in the paper. They have been shown as dots only to indicate approximately where they may be found.

Of interest is the die W/H (W3450.01) which has been identified with William Hollins & Co. Ltd., Yarn & Fabric manufacturers, Nottingham & London. Three different values and two postmarks, London and Pleasley Vale (near Mansfield), were represented in Harry's collection. This could mean as many as six individual affixers and hence six different perfin dies, but try as I might I can see no difference in the perfins produced. This of course lends weight to the possibility that the coils were perfined before being dispatched for use in the various offices.

Please help in this investigation by checking your holdings of these FIXO dies, and report the issues, postmarks and dates involved. You may well have spotted other perfin dies that should be included in this group. Again please forward any snippets of information that you may have.

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