

U. S. perfins used on Paquebot mail in South Africa

I submitted my first newsletter from Africa for the October 2000 *Perfins Bulletin*. The response from Club members and your editor has been very encouraging and I am grateful for the interest shown.

Last time, my subject was Zululand forgeries which is far removed from the main collecting interests of most members. So in this newsletter, I intend to discuss how stamps of the USA—with perfins of U. S. companies—are found postally used in Southern Africa.

A few years ago, I was sorting through some U. S. stamps when I noticed one had a Capetown cancellation. I assumed at first that it was an arrivals cancel but when I found a few more, I realised that I had an interesting philatelic challenge to explain.

The answer, of course, is Paquebot usage which is part of the enormous philatelic field of Maritime Mails.

Basically from 1897 the word "Paquebot" was officially adopted by the

UPU Congress in Washington for international use for all correspondence received at ports from ships at sea. The sender could



H. W. Peabody perfin used on Paquebot mail and canceled in Capetown.

attach stamps of his own country for postal use in another.

For example, on a major vessel, passengers would complete their correspondence and attach stamps from their own country. These would be handed to the ship's purser or captain who handed them in to the Postmaster at the next port of call. He would then cancel them with

his Paquebot cancel (which was often a cds) and post them into the local postal system.

Thus foreign stamps could be postally used, quite legitimately, in another country such as South Africa. Some of them were perfined!!

Since my first example of the SB/SA perfin (type S59), I have identified 35 different perfins on stamps from other

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So far, 21 different U.S. perfins are known on Paquebot mail in South Africa

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countries which were used as Paquebot mail in Southern Africa. Most went into CapeTown and are found with a variety of recognised CapeTown Paquebot markings.

However, I have others from Durban, Port Elizabeth, Walvis Bay (now in Namibia) and Lourenco Marques (now in Mozambique).

These Southern African cancels have been noted on perfined stamps from nine different countries. However, the majority (21) are perfin patterns from the USA, mainly from the period between the two World Wars, and reflecting what must have been a high level of maritime trade between the USA and South Africa. I will list these twenty one for everyone's interest,

1. A&D, Type A289, Arkell & Douglas Inc, from 1917 to 1923. CapeTown and Durban Paquebots.
2. A&D, Type A289.5, Arkell & Douglas Inc, 1925. CapeTown Paquebot.
3. IHC, Type C152C-15, International Harvester Co., 1940. Capetown.
4. CNB, Type C219, Chase National Bank, 1940's. CapeTown.
5. DCA, Type D22, D.C. Andrews & Co. Inc. 1933-38. CapeTown.
6. DSC, Type D104, Draeger Shipping Co. 1931. CapeTown.
7. F, Type F8, E.L.Faber Pencil Co. CapeTown.
8. GBC, Type G43, unknown, 1920. CapeTown.
9. GM, Type G112, General Motors Co. (Export). Walvis Bay Paquebot.
10. GT, Type G172, Guaranty Trust Co., 1939. CapeTown.
11. HWP, Type H207, Henry W. Peabody & Co., 1915-1918. CapeTown.
12. HWP, Type H208, Henry W. Peabody & Co., 1927. CapeTown.
13. IBT, Type I119, Irving Bank & Trust Co., 1940's. CapeTown.
14. KE/G, Type K28, Kerr Ellis & Co., 1938. CapeTown.
15. NCB, Type N43. National City Bank. CapeTown.
16. RWC/Co, Type R143. R.W. Cameron & Co. CapeTown.
17. SB/SA. Type S59, Standard Bank of South Africa, 1931-1940. CapeTown.
18. UCD, Type U11, Universal Car L & D Co., 1931 to 1940. Capetown.
19. UC/&C, Type U23, Union Carbon and Carbide Co., 1931-1940. CapeTown.
20. USE, Type U74. US Steel Export Co., CapeTown.
21. VO, Type V20, unknown, 1917. CapeTown.

It is a fascinating situation that so many U.S. perfined stamps were used in Southern Africa. In fact, I am sure they must be found cancelled from many more ports around the world. However, my interests are in Africa and this subject raises a lot of questions of which the three closest to me are:

A. Can anyone please add to this list or identify the "unknown" patterns?

B. Should these patterns be included in the list of South African perfins? I believe they should be included as they were legally posted into the South African postal system in terms of the UPU regulations. The Douane usage of the Caterpillar Tractor Company's perfined stamps have brought their two patterns into the perfin catalogues of Canada, Australia and South Africa. So why not

Paquebots?

C. I am always interested in why such companies traded in South Africa. Many of the companies are not well known here. If any reader can send me a brief summary of the nature of business of any of these companies, I would be grateful.

I hope this article will interest Perfin Club members and may internationalise the recognised use of U.S. stamps and perfins. Any discussion on this topic would be welcomed either through the *Bulletin* or to me at bdennis@mweb.co.za or 28 Pyracantha St, Heldervue, Somerset West 7130, South Africa.

I will collate any comments for a future newsletter.



New York
International
Harvester perfin
used on
Paquebot mail in
South Africa