

An Early British Security Endorsement Cover

By Dick Mewhinney (LM60)

The cover shown below is my most prized philatelic item. Also, the most expensive I ever purchased. I acquired it in London during the summer of 1977 from Stanley Gibbons for £40 (then \$1.91/1£.)

I am not a cover collector and have only two others of note. The other two, also British, are a penny black (Great Britain, Scott #1) cover and a Multiready design imprinted cover.

As perfinners know, or should know, the British O.U.S. overprint was a forerunner of perfins. This overprint was applied by the post office with their approval. After a short period of time overprinting was discontinued since the process tended to obscure the head of the queen. Then, for a while, the British post printed the designs on the back of the stamp prior to the gumming of the sheets. There are 13 known backprint designs.

When the post office discontinued this process many companies printed their designs on top of the gum. Unfortunately, when these stamps were licked, stuck to, and subsequently soaked from an envelope the design went away with the gum. Designs on the gum of mint stamps are extremely scarce and bring big prices. Fortunately, I have 8 of the designs on cancelled stamps (that is 8 of 51 known designs.) I also have a copy of the only design which was printed on the back and also perfinned.

