
An Italian Merzario Cover

D. A. Cooper (#1773)

This cover was mailed on 5.5.77.00 to Border Brokers Limited, in Halifax, NS .I joined this firm in 1959 in Fort Erie, Ontario, after three and one-half years with Canada Customs, and I am still employed with their predecessor company Livingston International Inc.



Border Brokers Ltd/Livingston International Inc. is Canada's largest Customs House Broker. They are involved in Customs brokerage, freight forwarding expediting, etc. In fact, Livingston International, Inc. is now the fifth largest Customs broker in the USA.

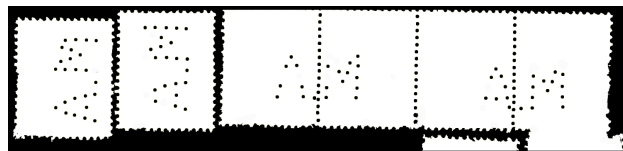
The cover is from Merzario of Genoa a major Italian Customs brokerage/international freight forwarding firm with locations in most major Italian ports. I know that the name stood for their first name, such as Andreas, Andrea, etc but do not have the exact information handy.

It is interesting that this firm pre-dates postage stamps as they began with mail coach services between Milan (Italy) and Paris (France) in 1835.

Of interest to those of you who want to know 'the rest of the story' Merzario still exists and has an active website (www.merzario.co.uk). This website lists 5 offices in Great Britain for this multinational company and gives the following corporate mission statement: To be recognized as a Global leader of integrated logistics services by providing first class customer service, communication and operational choice

This registered cover is franked with stamps totaling Italian Lire 1270: one each of Scott 998F (20L brown) and Scott 998J (50L olive) neither of which is perfined plus six copies of Scott 998U (200L blue). The six copies of Scott 998U are interesting

because of the placement of the "A.M" perfin plus their missing pins.



Starting from the left (face):

- 1) M.A. vertical with the M on top; M missing pins at left top & lower right
- 2) MA similar; two pins missing at upper right

The next four stamps are in a joined horizontal strip of four:

- 3) only A shows; four holes missing
- 4) only M. shows; three holes missing at left
- 5) only A shows; two pins missing
- 6) only M. shows; three holes missing.

It appears that all of the letters have different missing holes. I have had this cover since it was received in my office on 8 VII 1977.

Editor's Note: Or – why I like Photoshop...

Below is reproduced the same strip with a minor addition – the square 'holes' shown in this illustration are holes that were marked by the perforator but did not punch through the stamp. When "zoom in" is used on the images, these points appear as depressions that are virtually invisible in the stamps on cover. All patterns are somewhat more complete than would appear from a naked eye review.



An additional question comes to my mind looking at these illustrations. How many dies were on the perforator head and how were they oriented? The four punches illustrated here differ from each other in ways that indicate at least four different dies exist. But, the orientation of these dies if on a multi-die head can not be inferred from the perfins shown.