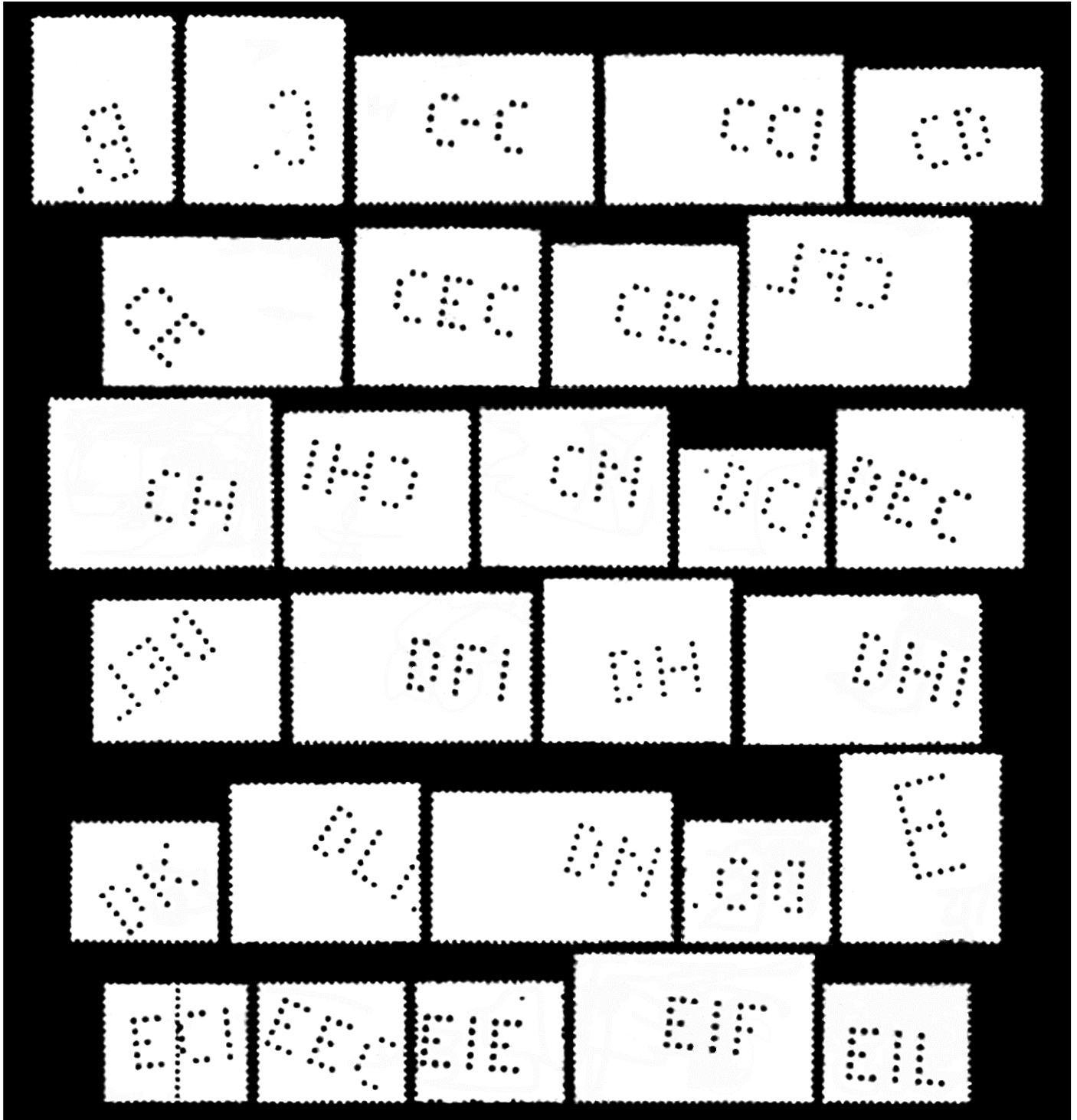

A Study of the Bogus Perfins of Romania

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A significant quantity of previously unrecorded perfins from Romania, have surfaced over the past two years. These sixty four new perfin types (Fig 1)

appear to have been punched with the same type of perforator, probably the same device.



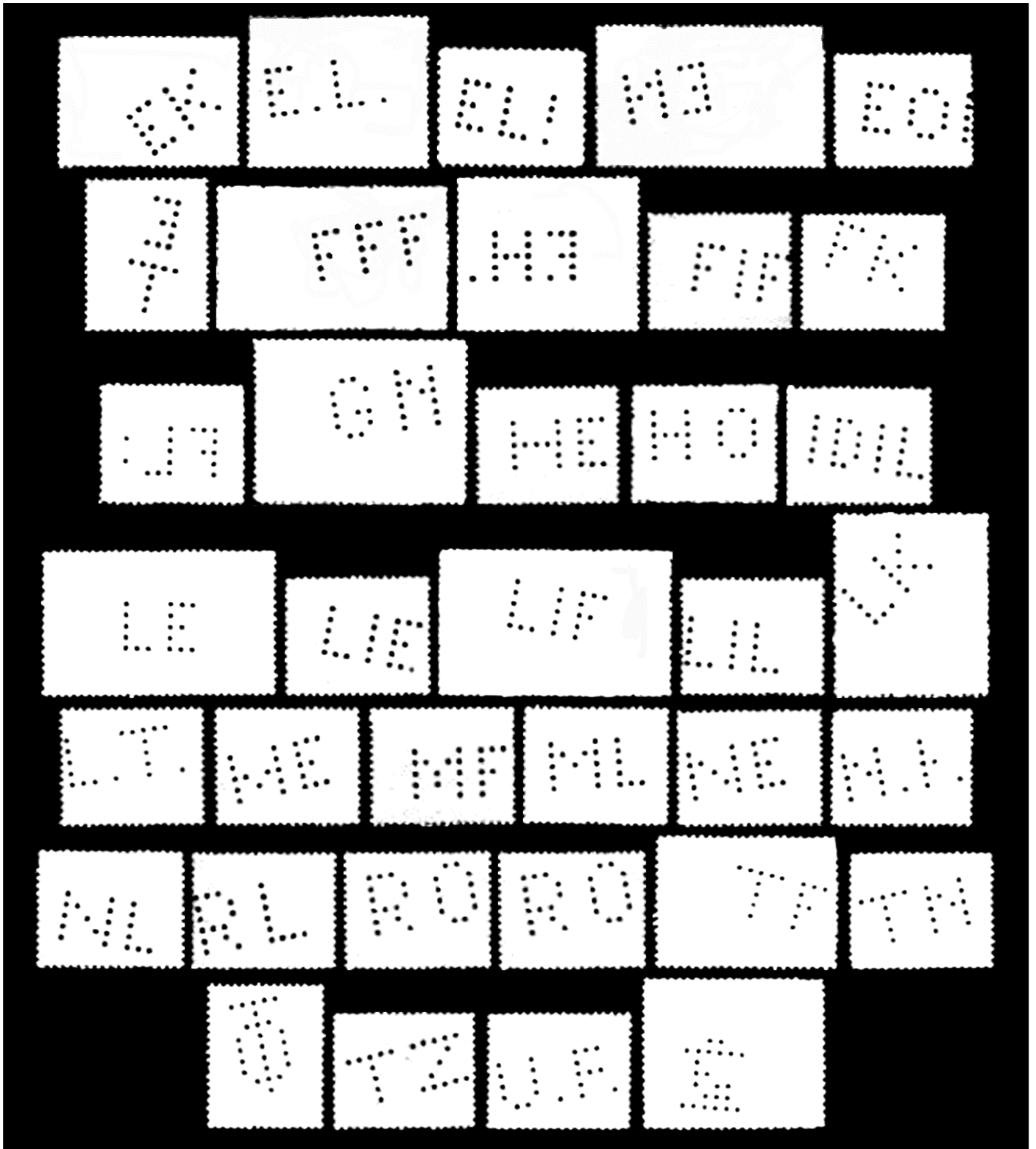


Figure 1- Sixty-four perfin patterns of debatable validity found recently in Romanian stamps

The author has acquired several thousand of these *apparently bogus* perfins from 4 different sources in

Romania and Germany in the past 24 months. Each of the four sellers had acquired their material from,

what appears to be, the same dealer in Romania at local stamp shows. At this point no other information is known relative to the genesis of these perfin types.

The good news is that they are readily recognizable, and are completely unlike any known perfins, commercial or fiscal, previously found on Romanian stamps. These perfin types have never appeared in any known perfin lot, mixture, or collection prior to 2005; a number of collectors were questioned and it is clear that these were not available to anyone prior to 2005. Additionally, the author has looked at every e-Bay lot since then which contained Romanian perfins and has yet to discover any of these as part of a general perfin lot. So it appears that all of these perfins placed for sale to date, have been successfully purchased, and removed from the marketplace.

These perfins appear in many different Romanian stamps, many seldom or never seen with perfins. The largest number appear on the King Carol II issues of 1930, 1934 and 1935, the Commemorative issue of 1939, the King Michael series of 1928, 1940, 1945, the 1947 commemoratives, as well as the RPR overprints of 1948. None of these perfins appear on any stamp issued after this last set in 1948. Only a very few perfins appear on stamps prior to 1928 (5 of the 2000+ seen).

A number of these patterns appear in the Official Stamps of 1929 & 1930, as well as the Postal Tax stamps of 1947 & 1948. This in itself is unique to these patterns. Full sheets and large mint multiples have been discovered with the MF pattern.

The cancellations appear to be completely random within any pattern. While a few are consistently from the same city, that is far from the rule. A good example is Scott #443 which exists with 7 different perfin patterns, all cancelled in the same purple ink from the same city. Patterns E, EL, and ET each show cancels from at least 6 different cities.

It appears that these perfins were also made in blocks of 4 or full sheets, since mirror pairs in blocks are quite common.

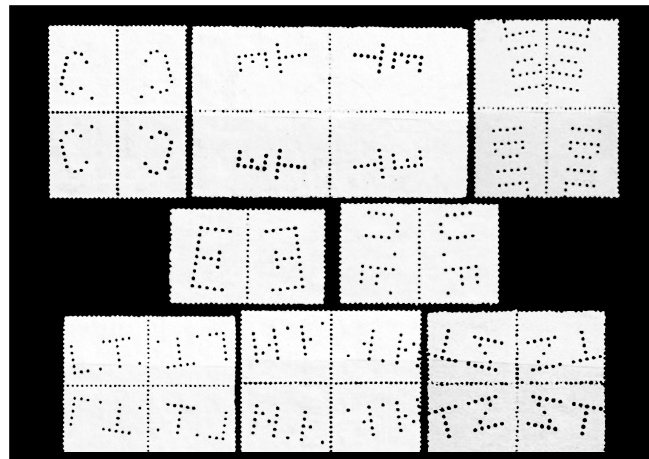


Figure 2. Mirror pairs and blocks of apparently bogus Romanian perfins

An in-depth analysis was completed on these perfins with the following observations noted.

The shape of the perforated initials C, D, O and R are very similar to some Persian perfins (fig 3). This pattern shows initials in the same angular form as in these Romanian patterns. Instead of showing the perforated initials in round forms, these initials are formed from holes from straight horizontal and vertical lines, leaving out the corner holes, where the letter should have a round (circular) form.

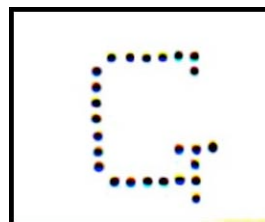


Figure 3- Persian pattern showing basic character similarities to the 'new' Romanian patterns

This Persian perfin was made by using a perforator which made the pattern as shown (fig 4). This device is made up of a square pattern of 100 holes in 10 horizontal lines of 10 holes each. The perfin G was made from this die by using only the pins necessary to perforate it.

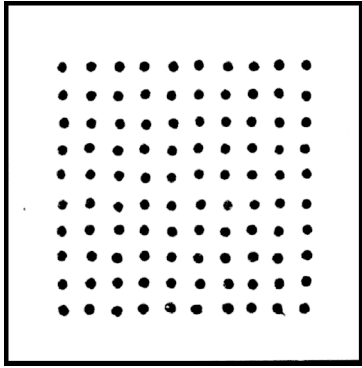


Figure 4- Single stamp pattern (10 x 10 holes) punched from a 100 x 100 pin grid (with pins removed to leave letters) used to perforate initials into a sheet of stamps 10 stamps wide and 10 stamps high (Persian patterns [Schwerdt #] B7 and C2)

It is our belief that the previously described Romanian patterns were produced using a device with similar characteristics. Clearly the C, D, O, and R have no corner holes (fig 5) and are typical of a perforator with straight horizontal/vertical lines of pins equally spaced. Close examination reveals that the perfin holes are dimensionally exact, horizontally and vertically, regardless of pattern.

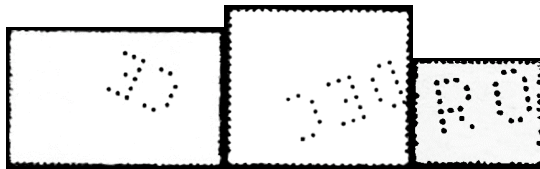


Figure 5- Patterns C, D, O, and R showing the similarities diagnostic of characters punched on a grid similar to that shown in fig. 4

In other words, the holes of the H align with those of the C, the E, etc. (fig 6) The CE-pattern is exactly the same in CEL and CEC. The vertical holes in the 'L' of CEL' are in the exact location as the three vertical holes in the second C of CEC.



Figure 6- Comparison of characters in patterns CEC and CEL

When comparing the perfins in fig 7, we note that the holes in the vertical lines of the initials N and E

are in exactly the same spot as in the pattern HE. The same is true for the holes in EIL and LIE, HL, HO, EIF and EIE.

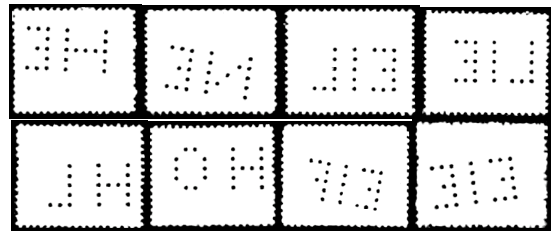


Figure 7- Comparative position of holes in several patterns..

Another defining characteristic of this device is the relatively large size of the holes. This also is extremely uncommon in Romanian perfins. And, all of the perfins accumulated to date have clean punched holes indicating that the device had little wear when the perfins were created.

Using such a perforating machine (a square pattern of holes in a number of horizontal/vertical lines) would result in other unique characteristics. For instance, when utilizing this perforator to produce holes in diagonal lines (such as the letter N), the distance between these holes would be larger than the distance between holes in horizontal or vertical parts of the initials. That is indeed the case in these Romanian patterns (fig 8). The perfin holes in the diagonal lines of the M, N and Z show this characteristic, necessary to make holes that fit the usual form of the pattern.



Figure 8- Diagonal spacing is also consistent with the grid pattern shown in fig. 4

After examining the evidence carefully, we can only conclude that these perfins were not produced for any legitimate usage. Thus, they should be considered **BOGUS**. These stamps may have been produced in the 1940's or 2000's, we have no way of making this determination. The authors are baffled why anyone would go to the trouble of making all of these perfins, and then distribute them

in the fashion they did. It is more likely that the creator of the item, and the distributor were not one and the same. Nor is it likely they were produced contemporary to their sale. We probably will never have the answer to this puzzle.

Anyone having any additional information regarding these bogus perfins is requested to contact David Begin at dbthecollector@aol.com.
