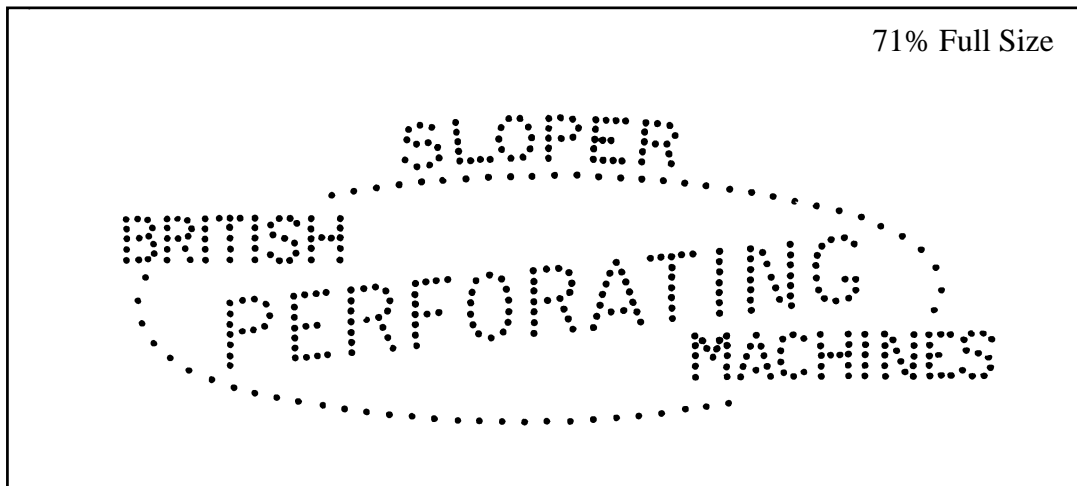


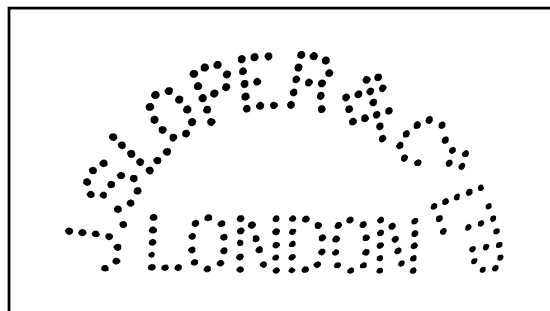
SLOPER TEMPLATES

Terry Comper

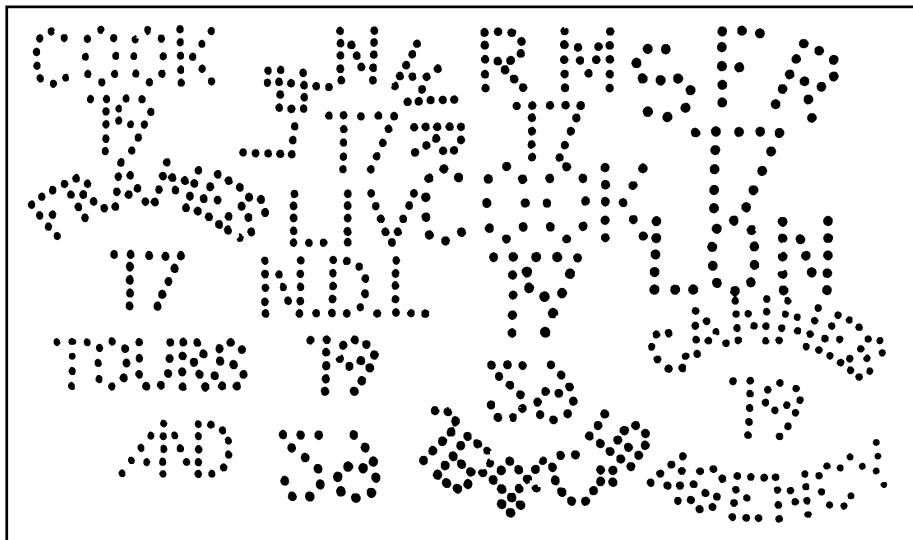
The chance to own a number of brass and steel plates drilled full of holes and reputed to have come from Sloper's premises was too good an opportunity to miss. The provenance is that they came from the estate of an ex director of J Sloper & Co Ltd, Mr John R Hawkins. Displayed here are illustrations of seven of the plates, scanned from black & white contacts prints taken from the plates themselves. It should be noted that some of the plates have rounded corners, and some are not quite rectangular in shape, so for convenience all are shown in a rectangular frame representing their maximum dimensions. Due to size limitations, some are shown at 71% Full Size.



This is the most recent looking of the plates as the brass is still shiny and untarnished. Up to now I've referred to them simply as plates, but in all probability they are templates prepared for use in the manufacturing process of the actual dies used in various perforating presses. Some of the pieces show straight lines scribed on the metal to act as guidelines.

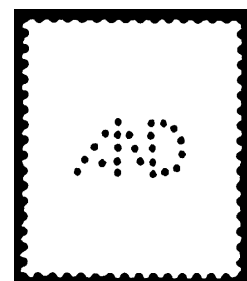


Here we have a steel template for use by Joseph Sloper & Co Ltd.

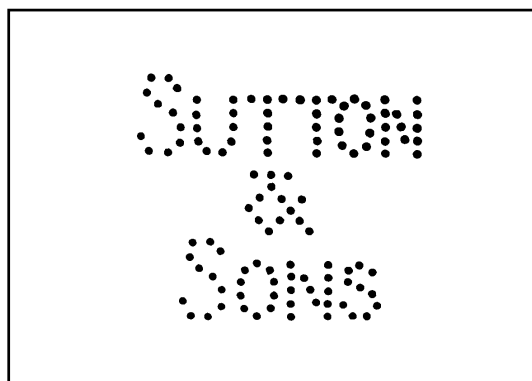


Most of the patterns are not known used on postage stamps, and were probably never intended to be. Here is a jumble of at least eleven patterns, on occasions seen from behind. The figures probably represent years, so we have 1917, 1919, and 1929. The large COOK in the centre of the piece has a combination of both 17 and 19! Interestingly, one of the patterns is now known on a postage stamp, the monogram “AND”, although it was reported just after the recent issue of the Monograms Catalogue. It was ever thus!

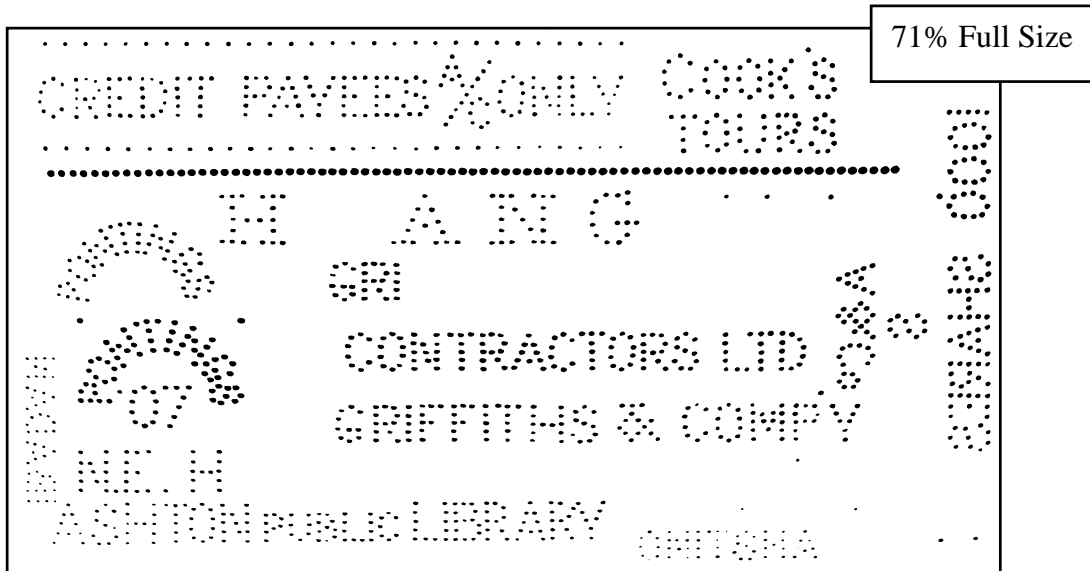
The “AND” perfin has been allocated **A4215.01m** and was reported on a ½d I(RC), postmarked London, 1916. This date ties in well with the earlier dates suggested above.



The minor differences that can be seen between the perfin and the template could have been produced by slightly inaccurate drilling after marking out using the template, or quite simply a multiheaded die.

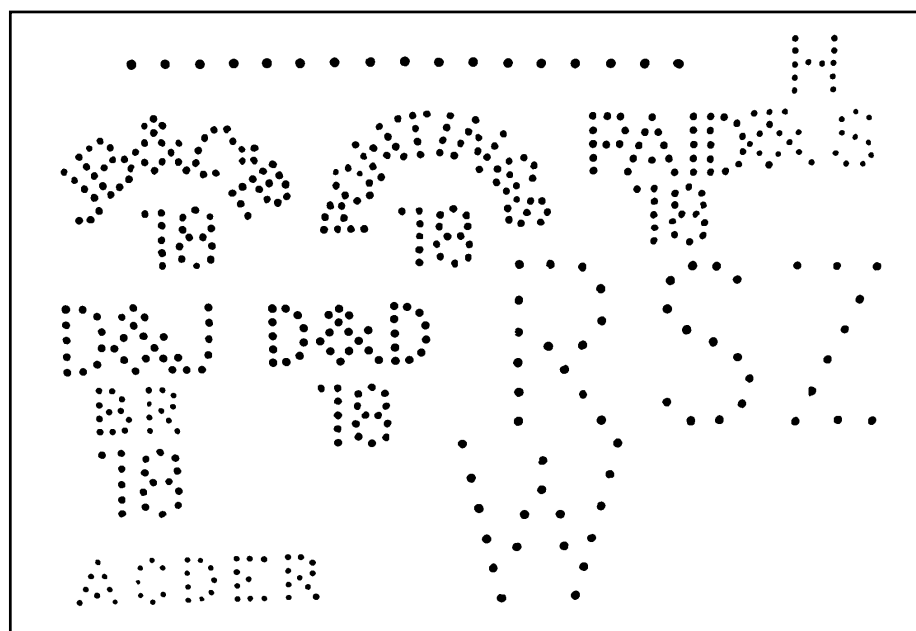
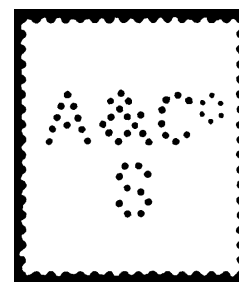


Another template in the ‘cache’ known used on postage stamps is the large “SUTTON/&SONS” we have down as **S7890.02**. This is known used on King Edward VII 2/6d and 5/- stamps, one of which has a date of 11th November 1912.



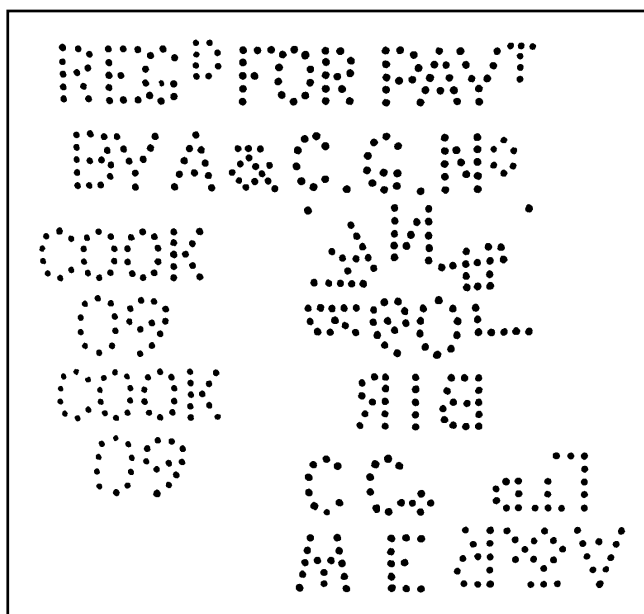
This large plate shows a wide variety of patterns, and even a couple of false starts! The implied date of 1907 from the PONTINGS pattern is in stark contrast to the very early date suggested by the pattern below.

Although seen from the back in the main illustration, the “A&C^o/S” pattern is recognisable as **A1390.01**. It is known used 1871-1912 by (probably) Thomas Ashby & Co, Bankers, Staines, Middlesex.

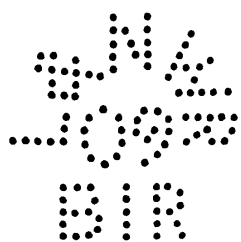
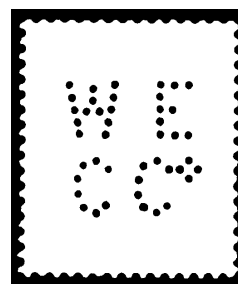


The above illustration of the 6th template shows a consistent ‘18’, suggesting a date of 1918 for many of the patterns. One in particular stands out as being ‘stamp shape’, that of “H&S”, but close examination shows that it does not match our H6390.03.

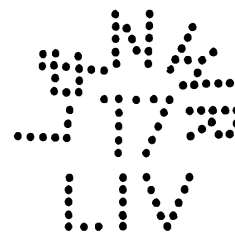
The 7th plate in this batch shows a consistent '09', suggesting an intended use in 1909, so (like all the others with dates) was probably made the year before.



This time two look to be of a size suitable for use on postage stamps. “WE/CC⁰” matches **W2240.01M**, and is known to have been a 2x2 multiheaded die fitted to Sloper m/c No.60988. The machine was dispatched to the West End Clothing Company on 9th October 1908. Unfortunately, no match can be found on G.B. perfins for “A&R/L^{td}”.



Two railway related patterns can be seen on the plates, both for the London & North Western Railway, presumably for use at Birmingham and Liverpool.



Can anyone from the Railway fraternity suggest a possible use?

Another twenty or so similar templates are known to exist. These will be featured in a future edition of the Bulletin once the all important black & white contact prints have been made.

Watch this space!