

## CORY BROS & Co PERFIN ON ½d BANTAM PLATE 9

James Norris

One of the fun aspects of our hobby is the ability to obtain stamps that often display rarity with a story. High value stamps with Perfins are often available at a fraction of catalogue price and that is the icing on the cake for me. Perfins are such a rich source of historical information, and when coupled with a scarce postmark or rare stamp, a story can often be told.

My love of the line engraved Perfin issues often reveals an early historical insight into how and why these stamps were used, and the diverse industry and commerce that used the Perfin to great effect, this is the case for this article.



The SG48 ½d Red Plate 9 in isolation is a rare stamp. But with the addition of a Perfin is an infinitely scarcer item. The Halfpenny Rose-red or Queen Victoria ‘Bantam’ (so called because of its reduced size), was first introduced on 1st October 1870. Before this date the lowest stamp denomination was the 1d Red. The introduction of the ½d Red had become necessary to cater for the new reduced postage rate for newspapers and postcards that grew rapidly in popularity.

The stamps are tiny, measuring a mere 17.5 x 14mm. This is half the size of the 1d red and when compared with its big brother, the Queen’s head is printed sideways with ½d denomination either side of the central design. In keeping with the tradition of fraudulent misuse, the stamp incorporated four corner check letters. The plate numbers,

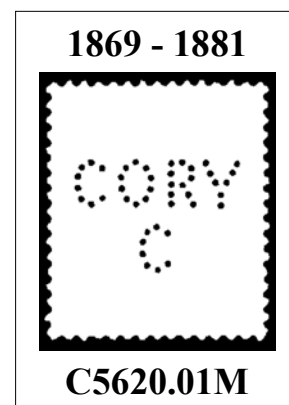
located either side of the Queen's head, are often obscured by heavy cancellations. In this instance the plate numbers are bold and clear.

There was not much space on the stamp for much else, and subsequently, Perfins on these stamps often bear partial strikes of the die.

The sheets were printed in rows of 20 stamps wide by 24 deep and labelled with check letters A-T to A-X and perforation gauge 14. A typical feature with many early GB perforated issues these stamps are often poorly centred. A total of twenty-two plates were produced for printing the ½d Bantam but only 15 were issued. Plates 2 and 7 were defective and destroyed before use, plates 16, 17, 18 were never completed and plates 21 and 22 were never used.

Plate 9 was kept as a reserve plate and the reduced print run is reflected in the current relative value of this plate. There were 3,333,909 sheets of Bantam's issued in total which equates to a total print run of 1600,276,320 stamps!! In comparison 50,000 sheets of Plate 9 were printed, so although there are a number in existence they are relatively scarce compared with the total number of Bantam's produced.

Casting my interest back to the Perfin user, **Cory & Co.**, they initially used this configuration of pins from 1869 to 1881.



The Cory Company was an immensely successful business, and was a prolific user of Perfins. Their use spans the entire line engraved period and can be found on numerous halfpenny Reds, 1d Red and 2d Blue plates. They continued to be used throughout the surface printed era and appeared on telegraph stamps up until the 1950's. The name changes through the generations as sons are progressively bought in to the business.

**Cory Brothers & Co** (late R. Cory & Sons), were Colliery Proprietors, as well as Steamship Owners, Ship Brokers, and General

Commission Agents, located in Bute Street, Cardiff. They also had a London Office at 3 Fenchurch Ave, Lime St, London EC.

Postmarks are predominantly duplex 'D57' for Bute Docks, and barred numeral '162' of Cardiff. Examples are also London EC, London Chief Office, and the barred numeral '545' (Newcastle-on-Tyne), and '761' (Sunderland).



London EC



D57 Bute Docks



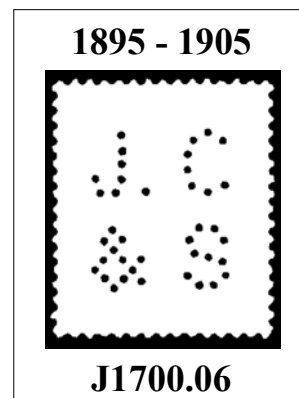
162 Cardiff



Newcastle

The first CORY Company was established in 1844 as Richard Cory & Sons, becoming Cory Brothers & Co in 1859, and then 'Ltd' in 1888. At that time they were Colliery Proprietors & Coal Merchants, based in Cardiff and London EC.

**John Cory & Sons Ltd**, Steamship Owners, were established at 9 Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff, in 1872, used "J.C/&S" (J1700.06) between the period 1895-1905 and appears mostly on 1d Lilacs and some Jubilee issues.



**William Cory & Son (Ltd)** - Coal Contractors & Exporters. Established in London SE as 'William Cory & Son', taking on 'Ltd' status in 1896 by a takeover of the businesses of the following firms:-

Lambert Bros; D Radford & Co; Beadle Bros; J. & C. Harrison; Green, Holland & Son; Mann, George & Co.; G. J. Cockerell & Co.; and William Cory & Son. They were Coal Factors & Contractors, Steamship Owners, with their Head Office at 52 Mark Lane, London EC. They also had divisions in Cardiff, Erith, Gravesend, Hull, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Rochester, and Tilbury.

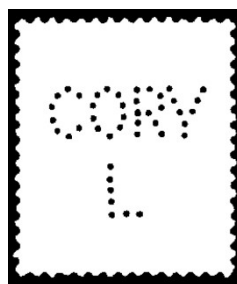
The Company used various dies, including “CORY”, “CORY/C”, and “CORY/L”.

1887 – 1897



C5600.04

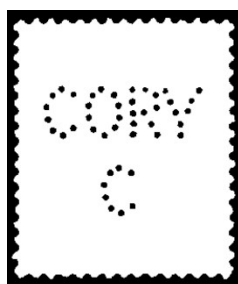
1883 - 1892



C5630.02

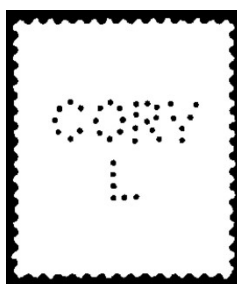


1881 - 1895



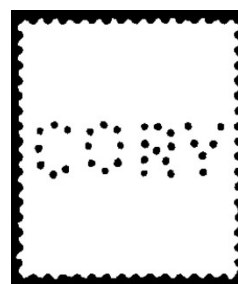
C5620.02

1892 - 1941



C5630.01M

1945 – 1952

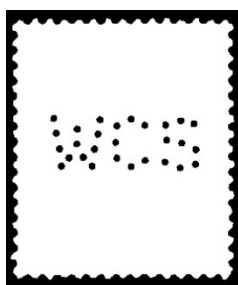


C5600.03b



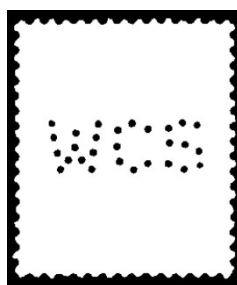
The Company also used “WCS” and “WCS/L” dies

1950 - 1967



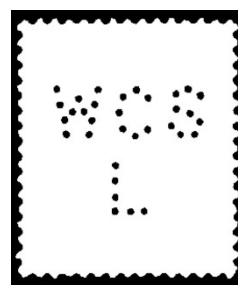
W1510.02aM

1941 - 1957



W1510.02

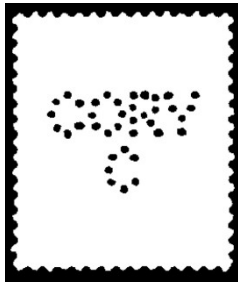
1912 - 1940



W1560.01M



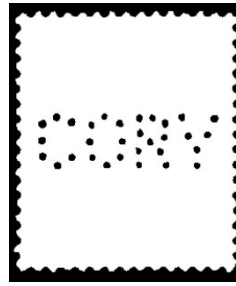
c1895



C5620.03

Illustration  
not available

1945 - 1952



C5600.03a



## Chronology of the Cory Companies;

Richard Cory (1799-1882) of Devon was the owner of a small vessel which traded between Cardiff, Bristol and Ireland.

**1838** Cory opened a ship's chandlers in Cardiff.

**1844** Cory was joined by his sons, John (1828-1910) and Richard (1830-1914), and traded as Richard Cory and Sons, as ship brokers, ship owners, coal merchants and exporters.

**1859** Richard Cory senior retired. His sons John and Richard re-named the business Cory Brothers and Co.



**John Cory  
1828 - 1910**

**1868** The Cory's became autonomous coal owners with the acquisition of Pentre colliery in the Rhondda Valley.

**1888** The company was registered on 9 April, as a limited liability company, to take over the business of colliery proprietors of the firm of the same name. They later acquired the Gelli, Tynybedw and Tydraw collieries, as well as several collieries in adjoining valleys. Became the largest private wagon-owners in UK, opening coaling stations around the world.

By **1908** they owned 118 agencies and depots on all the major shipping routes and supplied coal on a worldwide basis, most of it coming from their collieries in the Rhondda. Subsidiary companies included Aden Coal Co. Ltd and Gueret, Llewellyn and Merrett Ltd. John Cory died 27 January 1910

**1921** Glyncastle Colliery Resolven, Vale of Neath was closed and Cory acquired Penrikyber Navigation Steam Coal Company. They

acquired the Kynochtown factory site and railway to build an oil storage depot, which was renamed 'Coryton'.

**1942** Powell Duffryn Associated Collieries amalgamated with Cory Brothers and Co but maintained its separate identity.

**1944** The name of the company was changed to Powell Duffryn Ltd but they continued to trade under the Cory brand.

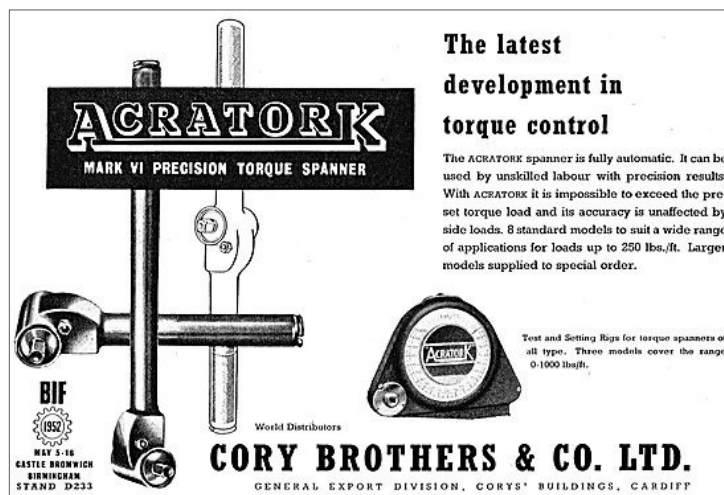
**1950** Vacuum Oil Co acquired the oil storage, blending packing business at Coryton of Cory Brothers and Co in exchange for shares in Vacuum Oil Co which would be held by Cory's parent Powell Duffryn. Together with further investments, this would give Powell Duffryn and Socony-Vacuum Oil Co Inc of USA equal ownership of the Vacuum Co. An oil refinery would be built at Coryton, primarily to produce lubricating oils.

**1952** Entered the UK petrol market and formed a General Export Division to develop and market the 'Acratork' brand of torque spanners for the aviation industry.

**1954** The Coryton refinery had been delayed in completion due to unexpected inflationary costs. Powell Duffryn sold its half share in Vacuum Oil Co to Socony-Vacuum.



Advertisement from Aeroplane Magazine March 28th 1952



By the 1950's Cory Brothers became world renowned distributors for The 'Acratork' Precision Torque Spanner. In 1957 they set up a 'Survival Equipment Division' which still had the Head Office in Cardiff and had expanded to premises in Great Tower Street, London EC3 marketing The Elliot Aircraft Escape Shute, and life jackets, exporting the products worldwide



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TELEGRAMS: CORY EASTPHONE LONDON  
TELEX: 25987

Cory still trades today and is a leading logistics and a maritime service provider. The company seems to have ceased to use Perfins in the 1950's.



**Acknowledgements;**

1. Postage Stamp Chat Board & Stamp Forum
2. Grace's Guide to British Industrial History
3. Wikipedia
4. Dictionary of Welsh Biography
5. The Aviation Ancestry database of British Aviation Advertisements
6. Aeroplane Magazine November 15th 1957 & October 24th 1952
7. Flight Magazine
8. Gault Catalogue