

Combined Copestake Underprint & Perfin “Proof”

As early as October 1867, **Copestake, Moore, Crampton & Co.** wrote to the Postmaster General seeking permission to mark their postage stamps in such a way as to deter theft. The suggestion was that an underprint would be used for their own postage stamps and that stamps received at their offices, as small remittances, would be perforated with the initials “SC” - the initials of their senior partner **Sampson Copestake**. Several stamps were so marked and sent to the Postmaster General for approval on **2 January 1868**. The response was a refusal, on the grounds that the perfin might be used to remove/obscure a cancel rendering the stamp usable again. The first example of one of these “proofs” was identified in **1969** and it was not until **2008** that a second example surfaced.



1969 Example (EG)



2008 Example (DG)



Mint Pair (EH-EI)
Pen Cancel



Unlisted Underprint
& Unique Perfin



Type 15
Underprint

This (sadly damaged) pair has just been discovered; lettered **EH-EI** it evidently fitted to the once vertical pair lettered **DG-EG**.

DG	??	??
EG	EH	EI

Note. Neither the underprint nor the “SC” perfin (S1210.08) appear to have been used on any other stamps and are unique to these “proofs”.

Combined Copestake Underprint & Perfin

The firm of **Copestake, Moore, Crampton & Co.** are known to have used a number of different underprints before progressing, as many other firms did, to using perfins as the security device to deter theft of their postage stamps. A number of Copestake underprint/perfin combinations on the same stamps have been recorded:

COPESTAKE,
MOORE,
CRAMPTON, & CO.,
LONDON.

Type 12

COPESTAKE,
MOORE,
CRAMPTON,
& CO.,
LONDON.

Type 14



C3400.01

Copestake Underprint Types & Perfin Known in Combination

The **Type 12** underprint is found on the line-engraved and the **Type 14** on the surface printed issues.

The currently recorded examples are line-engraved 1d red plate 188, 1½d red plate 3, 2d blue plate 14 & 15 and surface printed 3d plate 2, 6d plate 14 & 1d Venetian red.

Of these, the 1d Venetian red is the most common (but still quite scarce) while the others are only known from a handful of examples at most.

To this list can now be added:



1/- green, plate 12, with inverted
underprint & perfin

Currently there are only two recorded examples of this inverted underprint (both in the author's collection), one without and this one combined with the perfin.

W.H. Smith and Son Underprint Multiple

Although multiples of some other protective underprints are recorded, the stamps below are the only (albeit re-joined) multiple so far recorded for w. h. Smith and Son.



**W.H. Smith and Son
Official underprint Type 55
Reading upwards**



**1d red plate 97
Re-joined block of 4
Indistinct cancel**

James Harvey B. Stortford Underprint

Finding a complete & fine example of this underprint is exceedingly difficult. The example below is the best the author has ever seen.



1d plate 197

James
Harvey
B. Stortford.

**Type 28
Unofficial
Underprint**

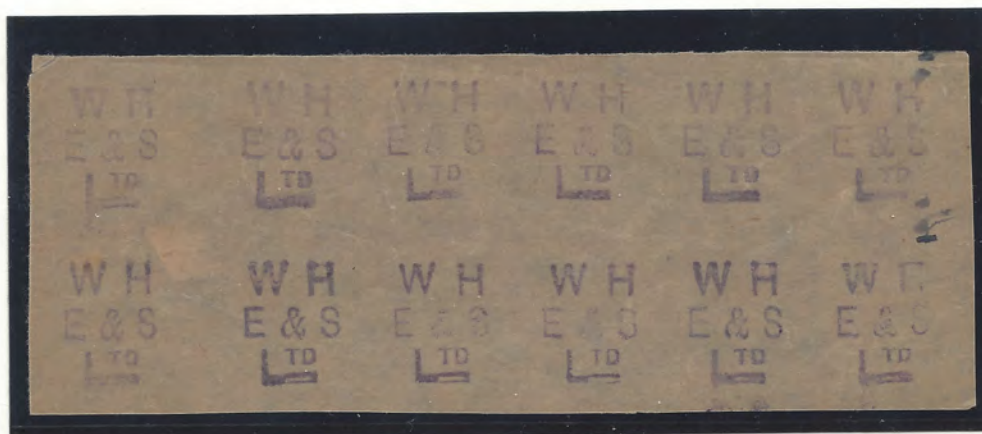
W. H. Everett & Son Ltd.

W. H. Everett & Son Ltd. can trace its roots back to 1790 when Henry Everett & Henry Walton Smith started in business together. However, Everett wanted to concentrate on an overseas service while Smith wanted to concentrate on the domestic market. Consequently they soon went their separate ways. Henry Smith to found what was eventually to become W. H. Smith and Son (now WHSmith) and Henry Everett to found what would become W. H. Everett & Son Ltd.

In 1903 W. H. Everett & Son (incorporated under that name in 1902) were given permission to print their names on the back of postage stamps, as reported in "The Times" newspaper.

INITIALS ON THE BACK OF POSTAGE STAMPS.—
Messrs. W. H. Everett and Son (Limited), of Bell's-buildings, Salisbury-square, Fleet-street, send us a letter from the General Post Office granting them permission to stamp their stamps on the back and thus prevent them from being stolen. "For 15 years past," they write, "we have been trying to obtain this and have at length succeeded, thanks to the fact that you have from time to time inserted letters from ourselves and the replies to same." The passage in the letter from the General Post Office giving the necessary permission runs as follows:—
"If . . . you still consider it necessary, in order to prevent pilfering, to adopt the practice of printing your initials on the back of your postage stamps, the Postmaster-General will not withhold his assent to your taking this course; and in the event of your doing so instructions shall be given to the effect that stamps printed on the back are not to be repurchased at post offices."

The Times – 27 May 1903



12 "Proof" impressions on brown paper

W. H. Everett & Son Ltd.

These impressions were made using a continuous self-inking roller 6 impressions wide and (judging by the illustration) either 4 or 5 rows around the roller.

"EVERETT" THIEF-STAMP DETECTOR

"THE TIMES" says—

"THE PILFERING OF POSTAGE STAMPS."

"Many big firms have suffered from the petty pilfering of postage stamps, and numerous devices have been formed with a view to checking the evil. By far the most salutary step in this direction has just been sanctioned by the Postmaster-General, who has given Messrs. W. H. Everett & Son, Ltd., permission to stamp their stamps on the back, and thus prevent them from being stolen. 'For fifteen years past,' they write to a contemporary, 'we have been trying to obtain this, and have at length succeeded.' The passage in the letter from the General Post Office giving the necessary permission runs as follows:—'If . . . you still consider it necessary, in order to prevent pilfering, to adopt the practice of printing your initials on the back of your postage stamps, the Postmaster-General will not withhold his assent to your taking this course; and in the event of your doing so, instructions shall be given to the effect that stamps printed on the back are not to be re-purchased at Post-offices.'"—*Times*.

To all who know the danger of allowing stamps to be in the hands of employees in such a state as to be negotiable and only to be identified if the thief is caught red-handed, this cheap and effective method will prove invaluable.

Price (complete) One Pound.

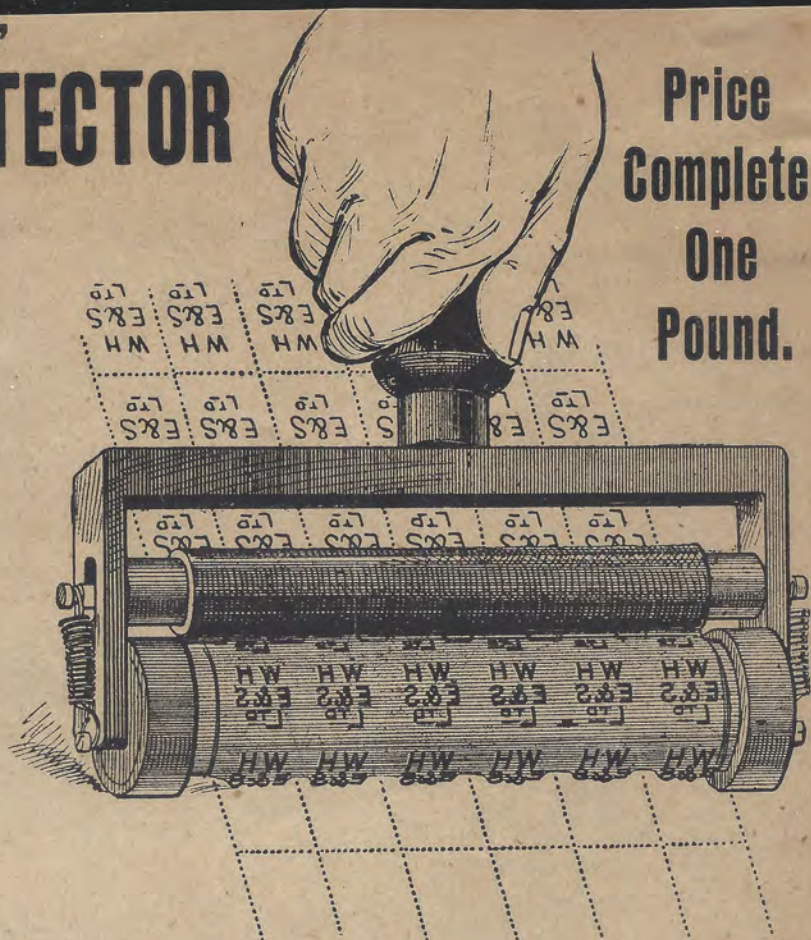
* * This is not one-tenth of the price of a safe, but is a hundred times more effective.

W. H. EVERETT & SON, LTD.,
Bell's Buildings, Salisbury Square, London, E.C.

"THE NEWSAGENT AND BOOKSELLERS' REVIEW" says—

TO CHECK THE POSTAGE-STAMP THIEF.

"Not satisfied with having done so much" (secured the consent of the Post-master General to print on the backs of postage stamps), "Messrs. Everett have gone a step further, and made it possible for everyone to print his initials on the postage stamps himself. They have contrived a handy and clever little apparatus, which they call the 'Everett' Thief-stamp Detector, by means of which half a sheet of stamps can be printed in a few seconds. This they are prepared to supply at the extremely reasonable price of £1. Messrs. Everett will be pleased to furnish the 'trade' with particulars as to prices, &c."—*The Newsagent and Booksellers' Review*.



Price
Complete
One
Pound.

An original advert for the "EVERETT" THIEF-STAMP DETECTOR

Despite offering these rollers for sale for the sum of just £1 there is no evidence that they sold a single one! Hardly surprising given that the use of perfins was firmly established by this time.

W. H. Everett & Son Ltd.

Very few stamps of King George V were underprinted with the W. H. Everett & Son Ltd. roller.



1d Red (Simple Cypher Wmk.) Block of 6 plus lower selvedge

Currently the largest block of Everett underprints recorded "on stamps".



2d Orange (Simple Cypher Wmk.) Faint inverted underprint in pink!

Currently the only example known to the author.

S. & J. Watts

The firm of **S. & J. Watts & Co.** (owned by **Samuel Watts** and **James Watts**) was the largest textile wholesalers in Manchester during the boom years of the cotton trade.

So successful was their business that they had a huge warehouse purpose built on Portland Street. Designed by architects **Travis and Magnall** it cost £100,000 and took several years to complete (from 1851 – 1856). Each of the five storeys was decorated in a different style (Italian Renaissance, Elizabethan, French Renaissance, Flemish and roof pavilions featuring large Gothic wheel windows).

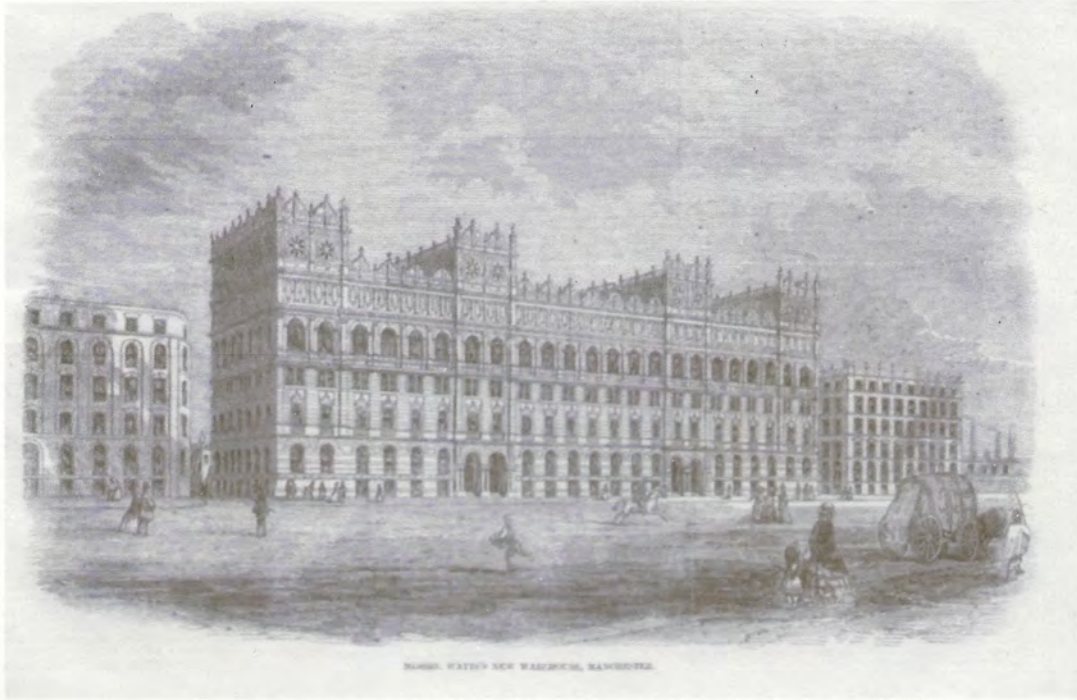
James Watts was Mayor of Manchester from 1855 – 1857 and was knighted by Queen Victoria when she visited Manchester on 29th June 1857.

James Watts junior, the principal partner in the firm at the time the underprint was in use, was a keen stamp collector and this may account for the wide variety of underprints (many have been reported that are not currently listed by Stanley Gibbons).

S. & J. Watts & Co. remained in existence until 1960 when they merged with another local firm to become **Cook & Watts**. They in turn were bought out by the **Courtaulds** group in 1969 and ceased trading in 1972.

The old warehouse building became derelict and was almost demolished in the 1970s. It was however saved and restored, becoming **The Britannia Hotel** in 1982. It is now a Grade II Listed Building.

S. & J. Watts



A contemporary engraving of the new warehouse c1856



BRITANNIA HOTEL - MANCHESTER
www.britanniahotels.com

Modern Postcard of the Britannia Hotel

S. & J. Watts

A number of examples of **King George V** issues with **Simple Cypher** watermark are known.



1½d Red Brown, underprint reading downwards



3d Violet block of 12, underprint reading downwards

The above is currently the largest recorded block of ANY underprint.

S. & J. Watts

In recent years, a number of examples of **King George V** issues with **Block Cypher** watermark have come to light with the underprint.



1/2d Green



1d Red, Mint



1 1/2d Red-Brown, Mint



1 1/2d Red-Brown



2d Orange, Mint

S. & J. Watts



17 June 1929 Piece, 1/2d & 1d PUC with underprint



3 August 1929 Piece, 1 1/2d PUC with underprint



2 1/2d PUC, vertical pair