

Goldsbrough Mort Co. Ltd in Adelaide

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Introduction

In the past I have researched various pattern groups with similar letter combinations such as HSLD, VOCO, LLG, NZL and NZIC. In these studies I have sought to define all the patterns and their devices and place these into their geographical locations and chronological usage. With this study I am focussing on a series of different devices with different patterns which were all used by the one user, in a single location. I will call this collection of patterns the Goldsbrough Mort – GM (Adelaide) family of patterns.

I have chosen the GM family as I am currently drafting the South Australian chapter of “The Private Revenue Perfins of Australia” with Dave Elsmore and the GM family are all almost all found used on revenue stamps.

A note of warning when researching this company and its principals is the spelling of the company name. Some references, including both CPA and HAPP, as well as others spell it Goldsborough Mort but I have confirmed from company publications, and published statements that the correct spelling is Goldsbrough Mort.

Goldsbrough Mort were a very large company that had their roots in Melbourne and Sydney but in time grew to have State capital offices, wool stores and regional offices across Australia. Interestingly they only chose to use perfins in their South Australian operation. We may never know for sure but the small book, “Wool and the Nation – A sketch of the Wool Industry in Australia” which was published by Goldsbrough Mort and Co. Ltd in 1947 (with later editions in 1955 and 1960) provides a clue. The book includes a chapter on “Pioneers of the Wool Industry” which, not surprisingly, details the history of Goldsbrough Mort. It states that in 1924 the company took over the stock and station agents Bagot, Shakes and Lewis.

Bagot, Shakes and Lewis were perfin users (BS&LLTD.1) and the company had existed since 1888. HAPP lists BS&LLTD.1 as being used from 1899 until 1925. The 1925 end date is after the take over by Goldsbrough Mort but it is likely to be correct as the stock of perfined stamps would have been used by Goldsbrough Mort. The 1899 start date

is not supported by the postmark evidence I have seen. 1912 would be a more likely date as use of the pattern on South Australian stamps is scarce. I would welcome any evidence to support an earlier date than 1912 so if you have earlier postmarks then please share them with me. As an aside there were actually two BS&LLTD patterns as follows:

BS&LLTD. New used 1912 - 1917

BS&LLTD.1 (as per HAPP image) used 1918 – 1924(5)

The differences in the patterns are small and mainly limited to the ampersand so it is possible that it was an alteration or repair to a single device that lead to the creation of a different pattern. I will detail this in a separate article. Interesting these BS&LLTD patterns are often found with postmarks from remote towns around South Australia just as the Goldsbrough Mort patterns are – see below.

Overview of Patterns

The Goldsbrough Mort family includes at least 7 different patterns and I have listed them here with there HAPP numbers and the HAPP usage ranges. I have also listed the usage ranges that I have found. For clarity I have placed them in chronological order as per my usage findings.

	HAPP Range	My findings	Device
GM&COLTD.1	1925 - 1935	1924 – 1928	Single head
GMCOLTD.1	1929 – 1935	1929 – 1931	Two head
GMCOLTD.2	1930 – 1935	1932 – 1935	Two head
GM.1	1919 – 1938	1936 – 1937	Possible 2
GM.2	1932 – 1938	1936 – 1937	head GM.1/2
G.2	1938 – 1940	1937 - 1940	Possible 2
G.8	Not stated	1937 – 1940	head with G.1/8

Also possibly related:

GM.6	Not listed	1937-1938	Unknown
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With the exception of GM.6 all of these patterns are confirmed to be from Goldsbrough Mort and used at its Adelaide office at 172 North Terrace. But the company also had a large wool store at Port Adelaide and the pattern is found on stamps with a range of remote postmarks from Cowell, Port Lincoln, Hawker, Mount Pleasant, Loxton, Murray Bridge, Jamestown, Riverton, Kongolia, as well as many others. These remote usages are consistent with the network of small buying offices and agents that the company was known to have around South Australia.

GM&COLTD.1 1924 – 1928

This is a single head device and I have examples of multiple strikes on joined pairs etc. and none show any consistent relationship between strikes.

The CPA and HAPP images are the same and although they capture the scale and layout of the pattern they slightly off in some of the pin locations. For instance they both show the cross bar of the T of LTD to be curving upwards but it is actually straight across the entire life of the device.

See corrected image on the Pattern Reference sheet below.

GMCOLTD.1 1929 – 1931

This is the first 2 head device used by the Company and it was rather short lived having a usage of only 3 years. It is quite a large pattern considering the size of the contemporary postage stamp issues (KGV sideface definitives) and it appears that it would have been difficult to get a central strike on these issues. The separation of the heads suggests that the device was designed to make an upright strike, position 1 (and depending on folding positions 3,5 and 7) on a KGV sideface but most of the examples I have seen show sideways strikes in positions 2,4,6 and 8. What is more the heads each have 64 rather thick pins and these would have removed a fair amount of paper which would have weakened the stamp and made separation of stamps from multiples more of a challenge.

The 2 heads of the device are in a horizontal array and are rather similar. CPA reports a single type but this is corrected in HAPP to 2 types to reflect the 2 heads of the device and the multi head layout is noted in HAPP Appendix 4 (page 37).

CPA and HAPP show a very good representation of the right hand head. The 2 heads can be easily distinguished by the shape of the cross bar of the T in LTD. In the left hand head (type 1, if you like) the cross bar bends upwards and in the right hand head (type 2) the cross bar bends downwards.

An example of the strike with late usage (Nov 1931) shows many blind pins in the G, C and LT of the left hand head and this could have indicated wear or breakages, but such strikes are rare and in the main the strikes from the device are clear and there seems to be little reason for the device to be discontinued.

See the two heads with the correct separation on the Pattern Reference sheet.

GMCOLTD.2 1932 – 1935

This is another 2 headed device and it appears to have replaced the short lived GMCOLTD.1 device. It has just 55 pins and these are laid out into a tighter pattern which would have made it easier for the operator to get good central strikes onto contemporary postage stamps.

Interesting the 2 heads are in a vertical array in lieu of the horizontal array of the earlier GMCOLTD.1 pattern.

Again CPA listed a single type but HAPP corrected this and recognised the multi head format and listed 2 types. The HAPP image is a bit grainy but it is a good representation of the bottom die (type 2). Again it is easy to tell the dies apart. The upper die (type 1) has a G with a straight cross bar. The lower dies (type 2) has a cross bar which is angled downwards.

1935 usage does show some blind pins but otherwise the device seemed to be sound at the end of its usage.

GM.1 1936 – 1937

GM.2 1936 – 1937

CPA only lists GM.1 but HAPP lists both GM.1 and GM.2 and notes in Appendix 4 and page G-18 that the patterns (as well as G.2 and G.8) were part of a multi head device, although it provides no other detail.

You may wonder why the 2 heads of both GMCOLTD.1 and .2 are both treated as types of a single pattern and yet the heads of the GM's (and the related G.1 and G.8 patterns) are considered separate patterns. This inconsistent treatment occurs in other listings in CPA and HAPP. For instance the patterns DJLTD.3, .4 and .5 are listed in CPA and in HAPP there is the added pattern, DJLTD.6. Collectively these are the 4 heads of a 2x2 device and HAPP details them in Appendix 4 as a multi head device. The multi head devices that give us NASC.2/3 and NASC.4/5 are treated similarly. I would favour treating the heads of a multi head device as types of a single pattern as they share location, usage and user details. The illustration of the pattern should show the various types and where possible the correct separation between heads.

I would suggest that, as reported in HAPP, GM.1 and GM.2 are most likely 2 heads of a 2 head device, but I cannot find any conclusive evidence of this. In fact the best evidence I can find comes from the G.2 and G.8 patterns as these patterns are produced from the same device that made GM.1 and .2 but with the M's removed.

The HAPP image of GM.1 is very good but the image of GM.2 is slightly narrower than the true pattern. The patterns are easily distinguished as the G of Gm.1 has a flat base and the G of GM.2 has a very weak "chin" in its bottom right hand corner of the G under the cross bar. See the corrected images in the Pattern Reference sheet but note that the separation between the 2 patterns is not confirmed.

G.2	1937 - 1940
G.8	1937 – 1940

The GM device had been created to make central strikes in the KGV issues of the early to mid 1930's but in May 1937 Australia issued a series of smaller format stamps in the first of the KGVI definitive issues. The company responded by altering their GM device by removing the M's to create (most likely) a two head device with 2 G's which are listed in HAPP as G.2 and G.8.

G.2 is listed in CPA but HAPP contains both the G.2 and G.8 as well as a note (page G-18) that they are a modification of the device that created GM.1 and GM.2 respectively.

I have examples of stamps with strikes of both G.2 and G.8 on the same stamp. The problem is that they do not show a regular spacing so I cannot confirm the structure of the device. The fact that the stamps carry both

strikes is a strong evidence for a multi head device as these multiple strikes could easily occur when an operator is using a multi head device to make strikes in a block of stamps. The alternative is to accept that a strike was made first with one single head device and then another strike was made with another single head device. This seems unlikely.

If anyone has a multiple of a G.2 or G.8 then I would be keen to see it.

The device was not used passed 1940 and at this point the company ceased perforating their stamps.

The HAPP image of G.2 is very good but the image of G.8 is slightly distorted. Again the patterns are easily distinguished as the G of GM.2 retains the flat base. The G of G.8 also has the same weak “chin” in its bottom right hand corner of the G under the cross bar as in GM.2 but this is not as obvious because of the consistent missing pins in the bottom left hand corner of the G. See the corrected images in the Pattern Reference sheet but note that the separation between the 2 patterns is not confirmed.

GM.6	1937-1938	Possibly related
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GM.6 is a pattern very similar in scale to GM.1 and .2. It is a rare pattern and I have only a single example and it is on a 2 d NSW sesqui centenary issue, which places it around 1937 or 1938. The stamp did not have a readable postmark so I can not confirm its most likely location.

It may be an amendment to a either GM.1 or GM.2 but this device was known to have been converted into G.2 and G.8 and the form of the G's was retained. More examples and postmark evidence about this pattern needs to be found before it can be confirmed to be part of the Goldsbrough Mort family of patterns.

True Usage Ranges

When you look at the patterns and the associated devices as a group the first issue that surfaces is the usage ranges. If we accept the HAPP usage ranges, then between 1932 and 1935 the Adelaide office had 4 or possibly 5 devices, in various formats. It could be argued that multiple devices were required to service the various remote offices, but this is not supported by the fact that most patterns within the family are found with the same range of remote postmarks. Rather than supporting the argument for various remote devices this large range of remote postmark evidence

points to a central device(s), most likely in Adelaide, with stamps issued to remote offices.

Given the oddly overlapping usage ranges reported in both CPA and HAPP, I undertook a fresh collection of usage data from the 100+ examples that I had from this family of patterns and I found that evidence indicates a series of devices with defined usage that does not overlap. See table above.

I would argue that this sequence of usages is a more likely to be correct than the overlapping usages listed in HAPP and it is certainly more logical. For instance HAPP claims the earliest usage from the family to be GM.1 (1919) but this predates the companies arrival in South Australia which seems to have been linked to the take over of Bagot, Shakes and Lewis in 1924. Also GM.1 is part of a 2 head device which includes GM.2 but HAPP lists GM.2 usage as a more reasonable 1932 – 1937.

Conclusion

The Goldsbrough Mort – GM (Adelaide) family of patterns were created when the company took over the Stock and Station Agents (and perfin users) Bagot, Shakes and Lewis in 1924. They replaced Bagot, Shakes and Lewis's perforator with one of their own (GM&COLTD.1) and then proceed to use a range of 2 headed devices in the format of GMCOLTD and later GM and finally G without significant overlap before ceasing to perforate their stamps in about 1940.

The I would be happy to see what postmark evidence other collectors have and if they are able to confirm any missing information or disprove some of my dates then I will amend this document and show the corrections in red and name the person providing the information.

References:

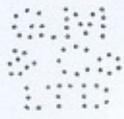
Commercial Perfins of Australia-Grant/Mathews (1992)

Handbook of Australian Private Perfins– Mathews (2003)

HAPP Update #1 October 2005- Mathews

HAPP Update #2 February 2012 – Mathews

“Wool and the Nation – A sketch of the Wool Industry in Australia” published by Goldsbrough Mort and Co. Ltd in 1947 (with later editions in 1955 and 1960)

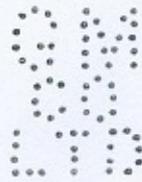


GM2COLTD.1



GMCOLTD.1

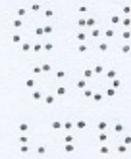
type 1



type 2



type 1



type 2

GMCOLTD.2



GM.1



GM.2



GM.6



GM.2



GM.8