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SOUTH PACIFIC PERFIN BULLETIN

no.24 July 1993

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Editorial

I was very glad to hear from our Treasurer that so many members have already paid their 1993/94 subscriptions. This is very encouraging to the Club's office holders. If you have not yet paid your 1993/94 subscription please do so soon. Many members will receive their receipts for 1993/94 with this issue.

Also with this issue you should find Commercial Perfins of Australia Update no.2 July 1993 kindly supplied by John Grant and John Mathews.

As a general note, if you receive a Bulletin with missing pages, missing an insert or miss out on an issue (that you have paid for) completely please let me know so I can rectify the problem.

David Andersen

The South Pacific Perfin Bulletin is published by the Perfin Club of New Zealand and Australia four times a year. Club subscriptions (including the bulletin) are A\$10-00 p.a. for New Zealand and Australian residents and A\$15-00 p.a. elsewhere (includes airmail postage of the bulletin).

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- 131 T Washington, 1244 Skyridge St SE, Olympia WA 98503-1857 USA
- 132 N.W. Boatwright, PO Box 1939 Smyrna GA 30081 USA
- 133 Imad El Hert, PO Box 690 Bankstown NSW 2200 Australia

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NORTHPEX EXHIBITION MEETING (NZ)

Barry Clarke writes that things are not finalised for the allocation of space. At this stage the meeting will still be held 10am-12am Saturday July 31 but it is possible that changes may need to be made at the last moment if unforeseen events make this necessary.

PERFIN CLUB OF NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 30TH JUNE 1993

Bank Balance 30.6.92	1672.64	Preparation and despatch 4 Bulletins	947.45
Subscriptions (incl \$575 paid in advance)	1238.98	Bank charges/taxes	3.40
Bank Interest	62.21	Postage & Stationery	64.55
Sale of Bulletins	26.50		
Balance of original NZ Account	<u>259.62</u> <u>3259.95</u>	Bank Balance 30.6.93	<u>2244.55</u> <u>3259.95</u>

P.A. Wood
Hon. Treasurer.

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PERFIN CLUB OF NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIA
NEW ZEALAND ACCOUNT
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR
ENDED 30TH JUNE 1993
(includes NZ circuit operations)

Bank Balance 30.6.92	242.89	To Vendors of circuit	114.55
Circuit Sales	140.25		
Bank interest	9.14	Cheque Book	1.50
P.O.D. Sales*	28.50		
Members Dues	<u>119.00</u> <u>539.78</u>	Bank Balance 30.6.93	<u>423.73</u> <u>539.78</u>

B Clarke
NZ Circuit Manager

*Proof of Delivery stickers

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SARGOOD BROS PERFIN SB.5

John Mathews is trying to find a copy of this perfin with more than 5mm of "white space" to the right of the "B". If anyone has one could they please forward a photocopy of it (reversed is acceptable) against a black background to John at 21 McConnel Cres, Kambah ACT 2902. If you do not have access to a photocopier and are happy to forward the stamp itself, John will photocopy it and send it back by return mail.

AUCTION 2/1993

The timetable for this second auction in the new series will be :

- July 1993 issue - call for material, and guide for vendors.
- October 1993 issue - auction catalogue, and guide for buyers.
- January 1994 issue - list of prices realised.

Vendors are invited to submit lots to the coordinator:

John Mathews, 21 McConnel Cres., KAMBAH A.C.T. 2902, AUSTRALIA

Guidelines for submission of lots are:

1. Lots are to be received at the above address by 30 September 1993
2. Material submitted is to be adequately packaged, both as individual lots, and as a total package for posting.
3. Certified mail, etc., for submitted material to be at vendor's discretion (the Club and auction coordinator cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage in transit to the coordinator).
4. Each lot must :
 - a. be clearly identified,
 - b. have a concise, representative description (for the catalogue), and
 - c. have a nominated reserve price.
 (if the vendor provides a separate summary list of lots so identified and described, a signed copy of the list will be returned as a receipt for the material).
5. It is considered that it would be to everyone's advantage to set a minimum reserve for any lot at \$2 (this should still allow for better items to be sold as singles, but encourage "bulk" lots of more common material which are not easy to put in a circuit book).
6. A vendor's commission of 10% will be deducted from the selling price of each lot (this will go towards postage for receipts for material submitted and for forwarding of payments).
7. Do not forget to include the desired return postal address.

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VAPEX 93

The Perfins Club (based in the United States) is holding a convention at VAPEX 93 to celebrate the Perfins' Club 50th anniversary. This is a most significant event for the Perfins Club so it has been suggested that some of our members may wish to support this event by entering perfin exhibits in VAPEX 93.

VAPEX 93 will be held from 12th to 14th November 1993 at the Virginia Beach Pavilion Convention Center, 1000 19th St Virginia Beach, Virginia. Frame costs are US\$7-00 per frame (16 sheets). Entry forms are available from Leroy Collins, PO Box 2183, Norfolk VA 23501 USA and need to be submitted prior to Sept. 25th 1993.

POLISH FORGERIES

Unfortunately it appears that a forger has been busy in Poland producing fake perfins. Magnus Werner reports in an article in the Perfin Society Bulletin no.264 June 1993 p.13-17 entitled "A Polish Forger" that he has discovered numerous fakes, mainly on German or Danzig issues.

He describes the method most probably used and illustrates the fakes. Attempts to follow up the source of the fakes were not successful as the collector from Poland selling them apparently refused to identify his source.

A number of issues from other countries had fake perfins added including Australia. The Australian "patterns" produced were as follows:

NSW		perfin Z
Tasmania	SG230	perfin T
"	SG248	perfin Y.
West Aust	SG113	perfin P.

Magnus picked the fakes up when he noticed a substantial number of previously unknown patterns in a mixed lot. It is worth bearing in mind that most fakes have been identified in such a manner. While it is quite possible to find a cache of a rare or unknown pattern it is most unusual to find numerous different rare or unknown issues together.

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LITERATURE

Perfin Society Bulletin no.264 June 1993 Articles include:
Slopers Publicity Letters; Perforated Postal Stationary-D Scott; More from the Sloper Record Books-D Scott; a Polish Forger-M Werner; Evidence for Multiple Impression Dies-R Gault; The Butterfly Alphabet-R Gault.

Perfin Society Bulletin no.263 May 1993 Articles include:
Perfin pinnacles (of Australia)-J Mathews; Insurance Stamp Perforators-D Hill; Additional Historical Background to Joseph Sloper; BP Design perfin on Scout Stamps-D Hill; Oxford City Council Perfin-S Steere; Stewarts and Lloyds Ltd-J Mathews; A Joseph Sloper Publicity Perforator-J Norris; More Tobacco Company Perfins-R Gault.

Perfins Bulletin v.46 no.3 March 1993 Articles include:
POC Peoples Outfitting Company-I Pfalser; World Perfins Catalogue.British South Africa A and C pages no.2; Vermont Perfins-J Fowler; Vapex 90-Des50-J Lyding; Fuller, Rodney & Redmund Mystery-J Kisner.

Security Markings P Orsetti & P Pugh. Published by the Hong Kong Study Circle as a supplement to Journal no.283 October 1992 13 pages. This booklet lists the various security markings found on Hong Kong stamps both perfins and overprints. For each overprint the size, height, no. of holes, users name and dates of usage are included. Perfins are recorded by Tilles

Literature cont.

catalogue no., user name, height of letters, no. of holes and dates of usage. Some 66 perfin patterns are listed, 18 more than in the earlier Tilles catalogue. Unfortunately the listing is not illustrated.

£1-50 plus postage from the Librarian Hong Kong Study Circle, Mr C.R. Riding, Park Cottage, Portmellon Mevagissey Cornwall PL26 6PL UK

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AUCTION 1/1993 - PRICES REALISED

<u>Lot</u>		<u>Lot</u>		<u>Lot</u>		<u>Lot</u>	
1	2.00	16	8.50	30	2.00	52	1.25
3	4.25	17	8.50	31	2.00	56	1.50
4	9.50	18	13.00	32	13.00	57	1.25
5	3.00	19	9.50	33	5.50	61	11.00
6	42.00	20	11.00	34	4.75	62	3.00
7	3.25	21	9.50	35	2.00	63	3.25
8	1.75	22	8.50	36	2.00	64	3.25
9	3.75	23	8.50	38	0.75	65	12.00
10	4.50	24	12.00	41	1.50	68	11.00
11	3.25	25	9.50	42	0.75	69	11.00
12	3.00	26	7.50	43	1.00	70	29.00
13	5.50	27	11.00	45	0.75	71	7.50
14	26.00	28	2.00	46	0.75		
15	8.50	29	2.00	51	17.00		

Unsold lots are available to the first "applicant" at the reserve price. Expressions of interest should be directed to the auction coordinator, John Mathews, who will invoice the successful applicant.

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DAVID JONES OVERPRINT FROM WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Another overprint on revenue stamps for David Jones has surfaced, this time from Western Australia.

The overprint is in black.



J. SLOPER & CO. LTD. - THE SURVIVING RECORDS

John Mathews

Introduction

The name of Joseph Sloper is well known to collectors of perfins as the holder of the original patent for perforating stamps as a security measure. The company he formed over a hundred and twenty years ago traded under his name until very recently when it was bought out by another security firm. From British Post Office archive records, it is known that J. Sloper and Co. Ltd. had by far the majority of stamp perforating business in Great Britain.

Several attempts by members of the GB Perfin Society to gain access to the information in the company records had drawn a polite refusal by this security-conscious company.

However, just prior to the takeover, one further approach by a GBPS member (who coincidentally had the same surname as a senior company manager) proved successful, and the Society was able to negotiate to acquire all but the ledgers currently in use by the firm. Moreover, when GBPS members went to collect the records, literally hundreds of dis-used perforator dies were being loaded into a mini-skip to be taken away for scrap metal!

During April 1993, I was in U.K. and through the assistance of GBPS members I was able to go through nearly all the surviving Sloper records.

The overall nature of the records

The surviving records date back to the 1860s, and the latest ones acquired by the GBPS appear to cover up to approximately 1960. The London offices of Joseph Sloper and Co. Ltd. were bombed in the blitz of London in World War II, and those records in the office at that time were destroyed, along with perforating dies held there. (Following this was the brief period when the "Sloper provisional" patterns were produced, one letter at a time.)

Surviving pre-World War II records are from their factory at West Hampstead (a north-western London suburb), and consist of details of the perforating machines produced with serial numbers. After World War II, the ledgers show strikes of dies used by Slopers to perforate stamps for customers - it would seem that few actual stamp perforating machines were made after the war for GB customers.

Overall, the records show that stamp perforators accounted for only a minor percentage of perforating devices they produced. In addition, there is evidence that they only manufactured the perforating dies, and fitted them to a range of devices cast by other firms.

The pre-World War II records

The earliest workshop record books, dating from the 1860s, generally contained only a sample of the strike of each die produced together with its serial number. In the earliest years, even the date of manufacture was only occasionally noted. It would seem that the customer details by serial number for these machines were maintained in the City office and have not survived, which of course is most disappointing.

As time went on, however, the workshop record books included more and more details of the perforators. By the early 1870s, the model of the body of the perforator was usually included, and these had some interesting names - examples such as "small Bridge Screwfly machine"

(usually associated with a large die), various "horizontal lever" machines, and a range of "initial" machines, the model number of which seemed to be larger for larger punch heads and/or larger number of sheets required to be punched in one operation. At about the same time, there was also a symbol to denote which machinist had actually made the die - perhaps this "secret mark" may also have been engraved somewhere on the die's block. Dates of manufacture were noted regularly enough to be able to interpolate quite accurately for any particular die. Occasionally, there would be a diagram showing specific details for a particular device.

Within a few years after the turn of the century, the workshop records became consistently more detailed. They included serial number, order number and date, work ticket number, despatch note number and date, machine type and the pasted-in sample of the strike. About this time, multiple-head dies started to be produced and a complete strike was included in the books. These were referred to in the descriptions as "___-over" dies irrespective of the configuration of the heads; for example, a "6-over" die could be a 6x1, 3x2 or 2x3 arrangement.

Occasionally, an order would include some special requirement. Some which were noted were delivery details to a local agent of the end customer, size and weight details of shipping cases for machines going to overseas customers, and such helpful annotations as "for Australian stamps" (the Roos and King George V heads being of a totally different size to any GB stamps of that period). Most delivery notes were dated within 2 - 3 weeks of the order date.

The post-World War II records

After the war, it would seem that the stamp perforating part of Slopers' business consisted mainly of them providing customers with perforated stamps rather than with perforators, at least for GB customers. Loose leaf ledgers, with specially-printed leaves, were arranged alphabetically by customer name. As well as including sample strikes of postage stamp perforating dies, these ledgers also had many examples of perforating dies for insurance stamps (usually in the form of a numeral or symbolic code figure), and overprints. Those familiar overprints, mostly along the long sides of the GB Wilding issues, or 4 letters in the corners, for customers such as "South Eastern Gas Board", "..... Council", and "Australian Mutual Provident Society", were done by J. Sloper & Co. Ltd.! (Such overprinted stamps were destined for use as precancelled Duty Stamps).

The customised ledger sheets allowed for the recording of details such as the method of customer payment (for example, cheque with order, cheque on delivery, or account - Bankcard and Visa were still some years away), and the cost basis for the work. Stamps in sheets were usually charged per 100 pounds of face value for perforating or overprinting, or "per roll" for stamp rolls. A few customers with obviously exceptionally large orders were charged on a "per annum" basis!

Apart from providing many hundreds of identities for GB perfins, these ledgers revealed some other interesting aspects. First, there were several sheets covered with strikes of different dies opposite a page which simply said "Waterlows". Obviously, many customers had put in orders to Waterlows for bulk stamps and where the requirement was for them to be perforated, this was sub-contracted out by Waterlows to Slopers. The frustrating consequence of this, however, was that Slopers were not able to record the name of the end customer (or they could have negotiated to cut out the "middle man").

Second, it confirmed why in so many cases the same GB perfin has been identified with more than one customer in a given period. Not only did this style of business provide Slopers with on-going work on a regular basis, but it could also be done without having to produce several identical dies for different customers with the same initials!

Predictably, there were no Australian perfins in these ledgers, although the London offices of a couple of companies with Australian connections had GB stamps overprinted and/or perforated (for example, Royal Insurance Co. Ltd. - but a slightly different die to the Australian one). The record book of individual machines produced after World War II was still in use by the new company and could not be sighted. It would have included the 1949 David Jones Ltd. machine, but probably no other Australian ones.

Slopers' Australian customers

The only Australian perforator still existing which had been previously attributed to J. Sloper & Co. Ltd. is the 1949 David Jones Ltd. device (DJLTD.1). Based on similarity of perfin style, it had been conjectured (in "Commercial Perfins of Australia") that several other known Australian patterns were produced by Slopers. Most of these were confirmed and there were several surprises as well.

The "Bell" perfin (SYMBOL.1) was made by Slopers, along with a similar one for the GB branch of the company, almost certainly the "Bell Organ and Piano Co. Ltd.". (As an aside, I spent a delightful 24 hours in Guelph, Ontario, Canada - about 80 kilometres southwest of Toronto - on the way back to Australia. In Guelph had been the head office and factory of the Bell Organ and Piano Co. Ltd., and some of their imposing stone buildings still exist, with different occupants. The Civic Museum, Public Library and University Library Archives contain many artifacts and much information about the company, including its branches in London and Sydney).

The original perforator (1905) for Frederick Ash of Newcastle (FAN.1) had a 4-head single-row die. In June 1924, a second device was made for them - with 5 heads in a single row, but each pattern being identical to the original. The spacing of these 5 heads was changed to suit the size of the KGV stamps.

Similarly, the pattern of the original 6-over die (2x3) of Anthony Hordern and Sons (AH&S.1) was used again for two new dies in 1925, one "for postage stamps" (the new size KGV stamps) which had 30 heads in 10 rows of 3, the other "for duty stamps" having 50 heads in 5 rows of 10! The bases of these machines each measured 26 inches by 7 inches.

The original die produced for Geo. S. Hutton (probable identity) in 1898 read "GH/S" but the error was discovered and another die (GSH.1) was made. The sample "GH/S" strike in the workbook is probably unique!

A list of the Sloper Australian perfins is incorporated into the accompanying Update number 2 to "Commercial Perfins of Australia".

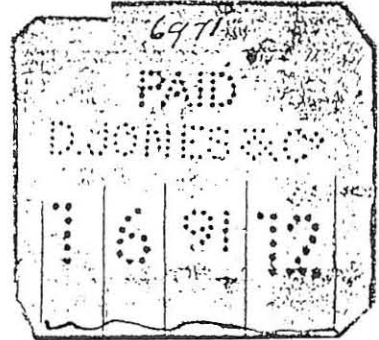
The "scrap-metal" dies

The dies which had been dumped in the mini-skip were those used by Slopers to perforate-to-order for GB customers. The head block had channels down a pair of opposite sides which allowed the head to be slid onto a bracket on a treadle-operated machine which is still in use, and of which I saw a photograph. Of the dies I saw, most had either a single head or twelve heads in a single row.

Other Sloper perforators

Stamp perforators were only a minor part of the Sloper business of producing perforators. The pre-World War II records included sample strikes from devices for other purposes which included :

- (a) cancelling cheques and other business papers (often included the word "PAID" and a date),
- (b) perforating silk,
- (c) perforating skins,
- (d) perforating pages of library books,
- (e) perforating lampshades (for the lacing),
- (f) perforating the rubber skin attached to hair brushes, and
- (g) perforating dates into railway tickets.



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SCHOOL OF ARTS

BANK OF AUSTRALIA
PAID
ADELAIDE

Another interesting item was a piece of paper, pasted into the work book, on which Joseph Sloper had written a note, with diagram, to his brother Horace, who was factory manager, giving specifications for a perforator for postal stationery. The diagram showed the outline of the impressed stamp area and measurements for the position of the perforation within that area.

Conclusion

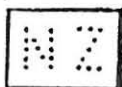
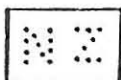
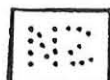
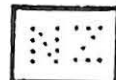
It was fortunate that the Australian Sloper patterns already had proven identities. I can appreciate how frustrating it must have been for the GBPS members to have these historic records going back over 120 years but only having recorded identities for patterns used since World War II.

I really enjoyed the chance to see these records and go through them first-hand. My task was made very much easier due to assistance I received, both in determining the location of the books among the members and in the preliminary work done by the custodians in extracting lists of patterns not able to be matched up with ones in the GB catalogue, thus allowing my limited time to be used to the fullest. I am most grateful to (in chronological order) Michael, Chris, Stephen, Roy, David, John, Maurice, John and Dave in this regard and, to those among them and their understanding wives (and one mother-in-law) whom I visited, for the time they so kindly made available for me and for their generous hospitality.

R.D. Samuel

The Office of the High Commissioner for New Zealand, London, used stamps perforated "NZ" between at least 1922 and 1969. Stamps were perforated by the old established firm of J. Sloper & Co. Ltd.

There are four main patterns:

Type AType BType CType D

Type A This perfin has the letters five holes in height. I have a report of a copy used in 1922; the earliest copies in my own collection have been used in 1924. This pattern seems to have been used until the latter part of 1940. Towards the end of its life various pins worked loose and fell out. Repairs were effected, only for the same pin(s) and/or other pins to fall out or otherwise fail to perforate. There are a number of different late state "missing hole" varieties associated with this perfin.

Type B This perfin has the letters four holes in height, with a space of 3mm between the letters. Although not particularly scarce (which is not to say that it is common), the perfin had but a short life. I have recorded copies used from February 1941. Just three months later, in May 1941, J. Sloper & Co. Ltd's premises were destroyed by enemy action and all its perforating dies were lost. This perfin would have gone out of use at that time. The High Commissioner's Office seems to have obtained a large stock of stamps in the early part of 1941 and some values perforated with this perfin were still being used some years later. I have examples used as late as 1943.

Type C This appears to be a hastily made perfin, constructed by removing pins from an existing die (the "Z" is probably a "B" with some of the pins removed). The letters are again four holes in height but the letter "Z" is malformed, somewhat resembling a reversed "S". In its original state the crossbar of the "Z" comprised only two holes. Later, possibly in an attempt to improve the appearance of this troublesome letter, a third hole was added to the crossbar. "A New Zealand Perfin Collection," by David Dell, illustrates a 6d King George VI with only one hole in the crossbar of the "Z" (described as "NZ.2, Later State B"). Whether this is an even earlier state than the two hole variation, or whether it has resulted from a hole simply failing to punch must be a matter of conjecture.

I have recorded the Type C perfin used from 1941 and, again, because substantial stocks of stamps were obtained, it can be found used in later years. My collection contains a copy used in 1945.

Type D This perfin has the letters four holes in height, with a gap of 2mm between the letters. It appears to have been introduced in 1942 and remained in use until perforated stamps ceased to be used. The latest copy in my collection is postmarked May 1969. By the end of its life the pins were very worn and the holes very small.

PROVISIONAL PERFINS

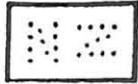
The May 1941 bombing raid caused chaos to Sloper's business. I have recorded three "provisional" perfins which seem to have been used in the month or so following the raid.



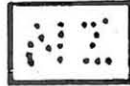
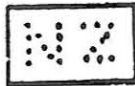
This perfin has the letters four holes in height, but with a gap of 8mm between the letters. At one time I thought that this was an example of Type B with the letters inverted, reversed, and misplaced. It is however a completely different perfin; what

I had not noticed was that the crossbar of the letter "Z" consists of one hole only. I would suggest that this is not a Sloper perfin. It is possible that, in an effort to meet its orders, Slopers sub-contracted some of its work to another firm and that this perfin was manufactured by that firm, probably by converting an existing pattern by removing certain of the pins; the letter "Z" appears to be an "E" with the pins forming the vertical stroke removed and the

large space between the N and the Z would be explained by a complete letter being removed. The basic perfin, then, would have read, NXE (X being a letter unknown). This perfin is extremely scarce. My collection contains only the one example, a 2½d King George VI. Some years ago I was shown a 6d King George VI with the same perfin.



Because Slopers had lost all its customers' dies, the firm started back in business by manufacturing single dies for the most commonly used letters only. Orders for perforated stamps for firms with more than one initial were met by perforating the stamps - in two or more operations - with these single dies. The placement of the letters could vary considerably from stamp to stamp. Supplies of British 2/6 and 5s stamps (at least) were perforated "NZ" using single letter dies. The stamps were perforated with the letter "N", then perforated a second time with the same letter, but positioned sideways so as to resemble a "Z".



The third of the provisional perfins is most interesting. I have three 1d King George VI stamps, two of these perforated "NZ" and the third - obtained from the same source as the other two - simply perforated "N". The placement of the pins on the three stamps is quite different and, on two of the stamps, some of the holes actually overlap. I can only conclude that the stamps were perforated one hole at a time, probably with a hand held single hole punch! The three stamps have all come from booklets. Two of the stamps have the watermark inverted and all three show the characteristic guillotining of the perforations on one or two sides of the stamp.

If the perforation of stamps in this manner seems unbelievable, we should appreciate that the New Zealand High Commissioner's Office was probably one of Sloper's best customers, if not the best customer. From the inception of air mail postage in the late 1930s, the High Commissioner's Office began using large quantities of high value stamps. By 1941 stamps of the 2/6, 5s and 10s denominations were being perforated and the commissions received from perforating these stamps alone must have represented a large percentage of Sloper's income. It is likely that the first order received after the May 1941 bombing raid was met by sub-contracting out the lower values, perforating the high values with single dies (Slopers would have wanted to keep this lucrative part of the order for itself), and perforating the "nuisance" 1d value (possibly only a small quantity - hence the use of booklet stamps) by hand. It is quite likely that in the case of the hand perforated stamps "slave labour" was involved. I can imagine the owner of the business giving the job to his 10 year old daughter (assuming he had one) in exchange for a few pence of pocket money.

Inverted perfins

J. Sloper & Co Ltd was very careful with its perforating and the letters are usually positioned to read normally and upright when viewed from the front of the stamp. I have recorded very few stamps with the perfin inverted. My collection contains just the following:

Type A King George V 6d (pair), 1s (on cover) and 2/6 (single on cover, and a used pair).

Type C 2/6 King George VI, Brown. Three copies (used single, a copy on piece, and a copy on cover). A copy of the same variety is illustrated also in David Dell's "A New Zealand Perfin Collection."

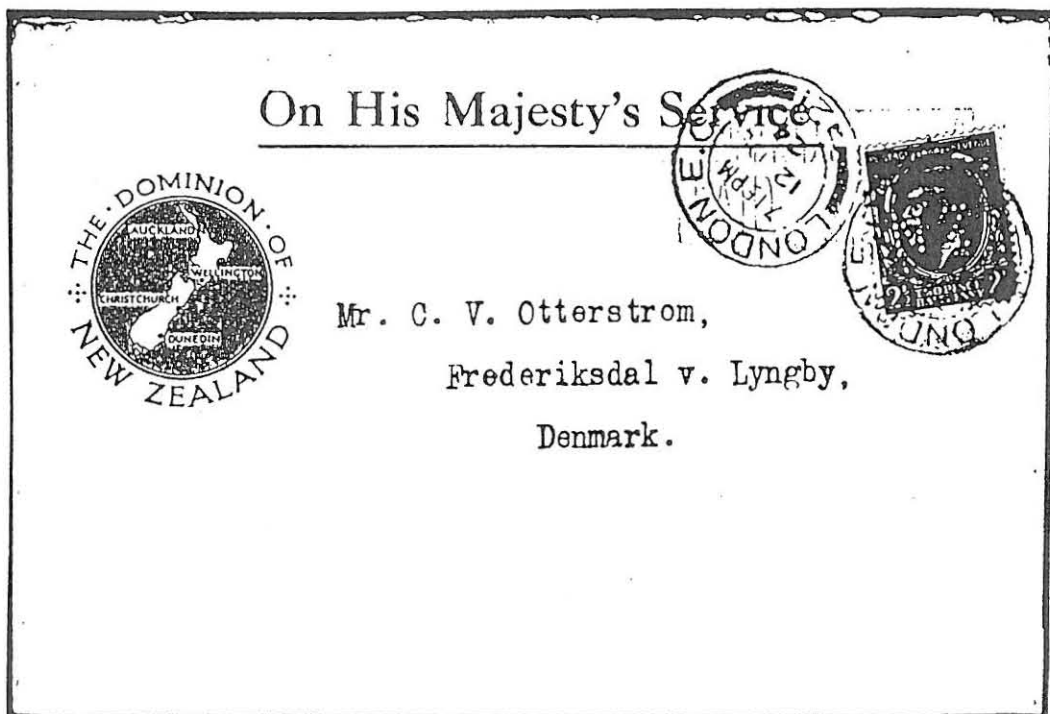
THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY

I began collecting New Zealand perfins in 1957. It was some years before I

obtained my first examples of a British "NZ" perfin. Amongst my first acquisitions were a piece and two covers purchased from the great dealer/philatelist, the late R.J.G. Collins. These items still form part of my exhibition display. Ray Collins, like most collectors of his generation, took the view that the only place for perfins - apart from the British "NZ" perfins, which had a certain "official" standing - was the fireplace. I will say, though, that once he had seen what I had accumulated he appreciated the inherent interest of the subject and hastily changed his mind. Like me, he found the subject fascinating and deserving of more attention than it had been given by past collectors.

I wrote to the High Commissioner's Office about 1968, seeking information about its perfins. I was of the view that the perfins had gone out of use well before this date and was rather surprised that the reply received was written in the present tense: "We obtain our stamps from J. Sloper & Co. Ltd" Unfortunately, the envelope in which the High Commissioners Office's reply was mailed was franked with a rubber marking, not a perforated stamp. I did not follow up the clue contained in the letter and it was not until quite recent times that I obtained examples of the perfin used as late as 1969. If I had followed up the enquiry in 1968 my collection may, today, be graced with mint blocks of NZ perfins.

Another mint block which got away was at one time in the possession of the Wellington dealer, Ray Rowell. A New Zealand Cabinet Minister or Member of Parliament had visited the United Kingdom and, as was the normal practice of the time, was supplied with a full sheet of 2½d stamps for use on his mail. When he returned to New Zealand he offered the left over stamps - more than half a sheet I believe - to Ray Rowell. Ray had no market for perforated stamps but bought (or was given) the stamps all the same. They sat around in his shop for some years. Finally he gave the part sheet to one of his friends who was about to visit the United Kingdom, suggesting that his friend may care to use the stamps for his own postage. A short time later I visited Wellington, dropped in to the Wellington Stamp Centre, and told Ray Rowell of my interest in perfins. "If you had only been here a few weeks earlier", he said. Ray Rowell thought I was quite mad but, for many years, put any perfins he acquired in an envelope marked "Samuel." I would visit Wellington once every three years or so. He would produce his envelope, I would make him an offer which he always accepted, and a few more perfins would be added to my collection. Nowadays there is a bit more competition in the field and perfins do not sit around for three years awaiting my possible arrival. Again - but for different reasons - it is a case of, "If you had only been here a few weeks earlier"



1924 cover to Denmark with London "Official Paid"