

THE SOUTH PACIFIC PERFIN BULLETIN

NO 29 OCTOBER 1994

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EDITORIAL

While we have had a good flow of articles for the Bulletin over recent editions, those pieces have come from relatively few members. Any articles would be much appreciated, not only to help fill these pages, but also to add more variety to the Bulletin.

We have been lucky to have had a Bulletin of high quality but if we are to maintain a high standard and appeal to a wide cross-section of readers, we need articles from a wider range of members. Any contributors?

NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome the following new members:

- #145 Barry Mulholland, Florey, ACT, Australia
- #146 Joseph Coulbourne, Virginia Beach, VA, USA

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

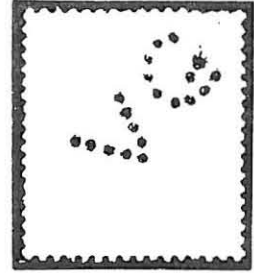
The prompt renewal of subscriptions by most members is much appreciated. If the address label on your envelope has a green patch marked on it, it means that the despatcher has not yet been notified that your renewal has been paid. If this is in fact because the renewal has not yet been paid, please forward your payment as soon as possible (New Zealand renewals may be sent to the NZ Circuit Manager).

The mailing list will be reviewed prior to despatching the January 1995 Bulletin.

THE 'VG' PERFORATING MACHINE

(John Mathews)

The illustration is solely to attract the attention of the reader - it is not meant to start any frantic searches for stamps with such a skew puncture! For the technically-minded, the stamp was a Spanish 2 peseta mauve definitive (SG1221) which was destroyed by shredding immediately after the photocopy was made for the illustration.



Neale Scott had informed me of the whereabouts of the machine some time ago, after it had apparently been sold by the Victorian Government Printing Office among a lot of printing equipment no longer required.

The machine is described, with accompanying photographs, in "Victorian Government Punctures", (5th edition, December 1993) by Neale Scott and Bryan Toop and also in previous editions by Bryan Toop, Jim Dean and John Elford. The only other information which I can add is:

- The punch heads are spaced at 24.5mm intervals;
- The plate alongside the number "3" on the top bracket (visible in the photographs) bears the inscription

"MANUFACTURED
FOR THE
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
OF VICTORIA"

- The electric motor bears a manufacturer's specification plate which gives the maker's identity as "McCOLL ELECTRIC WORKS LTD., MELBOURNE, VICTORIA". This firm is listed in Melbourne Telephone Directories over the period 1933 to 1976.

In preliminary discussions with the management of Conway Printers' Engineers Pty. Ltd., it was revealed that they bought and sold second-hand printing equipment. Even equipment such as a badly-rusted line perforator I saw there could be refurbished - in such a case, perhaps, by replacing the jammed and unrestorable perforating head with a new perforating head, cutting head or stamping head. Much of the equipment was destined for overseas buyers. The possibility of the "VG" perforator going overseas was unthinkable, so I arranged to have a towbar fitted to my car and to rent a trailer for a couple of days! The machine can remain safely in Australia, with its locality recorded from here on by the Perfin Club.

But, please, do not send me any of your stamps. The machine has "retired" and is locked away and I will not allow it to puncture any more stamps. Visitors will be most welcome to inspect it, but because of its weight it is not suited to carting around for displays.

AUCTION WATCH

(David Andersen and John Mathews)

Perfin lots seen in auction catalogues since the last Bulletin include (Australian unless otherwise indicated):

1. **Chalon Stamps (WA) postal Bid Auction No. 20 (June 1994)**
 - a. SA 1/- brown (1904) FU with "DWMLTD" Est \$5.00
 - b. SA 8d bright ultramarine (1904) with "DWMLTD" Est \$3.00
 - c. WA 1d red Swans etc. with "OS" or "GWF" (10) Est \$12.00
 - d. GB 5/- and 10/- Seahorses GU perf. "GEC" Res \$10.00

plus various State and Commonwealth Govt. perfin lots.

2. **PHILAS Stamp Auction (NSW) No. 58 (July 1994)**
 - a. NSW Duty Stamps, QV, KEVII and later, good range of values incl. perfins plus few other States (100s) Est \$40.00
 - b. Accum. of perfins on mainly Aust. States Revenues (121) Est \$40.00
 - c. OS/NSW postcard used by Sydney Harbour Trust. Est \$40.00

plus several lots of State and Commonwealth Govt. perfins on paper.

3. **Philatelics (Australia) Pty Ltd (SA) Sale No. 115 (July 1994)**
 - a. Accum. of 190 private perfins with some duplication. Est \$50.00
 - b. Accum. of many hundreds of used mainly private perfins, mostly on 2 1/2d red KGVI issues. Est \$50.00
 - c. Selection of 400 used State Govt and private perfins on pre-dec. and dec. issues with some duplication. (Mainly "VG"). Est \$75.00

4. **West Brisbane Stamp Sales Pty Ltd (Qld) Auction No. 92 (Aug 1994)**
 - a. Colln. of private perfins A to Y inc. States, Roos, Geo V heads, etc (few 100) Est \$50.00

5. **Jimbo's (Vic) Postal Bid Sale No. 5 (Aug 1994)**
 - a. Private perfins, early Aust. Comm. stamps, either diff. perfin, diff type, or diff stamp (170+). Est \$150.00
 - b. 2 1/2d Roo, with AMPS.4 Est \$30.00
 - c. Pair 6d blue Roo, 3rd wmk, with "DWMLTD". Est \$30.00

6. **Doug Slade (Qld) Postal Bid Sale No. 5 (Sep 1994)**
 - a. 170 G/NSW and VG perfins Res \$25.00

7. **Status Auctions Sale No. 155 (Sep 1994)**
 - a. Revenue stamps various values all perf'd "AGI" (100s) Est \$20.00
 - b. Postal Stationery envelope with perfin "HJD" through both stamp & envelope. Used 1893, with identity of "Harrison, Jones and Devlin". Spiked, but clean. Only a handful of companies punctured postal stationery. Rare. Est \$80.00

plus several lots which included Govt. perfins.

8. **Philangles (Cheshire, UK) Postal Auction No. 43 (Sep 1994)**
a. Australian States, superb range of booklets on perfins of Tasmania, West Aust., S. Australia, NSW, Queensland, etc. £50
Much detailed and identities (5 brochures).
9. **South Yarra Stamps Postal Bids Sale no.8 (29th July 1994)**
a. POL-Luchungen o Selection of 36 POL perforations on a range from Mi357 to Mi632 (noted Mi 393, 603) good starter collection. Cat 353DM... Est \$85
[small collection of German POL (police) perfins]
10. **Richard Juzwin Direct Order Price List Autumn/Winter 1994**
Selected items for the Connoisseur
a. Australia KGV, 4D Olive, Sm Multi, p 13½ x 12½, perforated MLH \$150;
"OS", scarce 12 hole variety. Extremely scarce MUH \$250
[NSW 1993 'OS' -Ed]
11. **Philatelics (Australia) Pty Ltd Postal Bid Sale no.115 28th July 1994**
a. Victoria, 1902 L2 Deep blue KEVII with V Crown Wmk perf Est \$150
12 x 12.½ perf OS, CTO and centered to base SG377,
Catalogue value \$515
b. Rhodesia, 1901 L10 lilac Arms perfin with oval fiscal Est \$60
cancellation in violet, G93, catalogue value as postally used
\$4,625-00

Feedback from a member who had the chance to inspect the lots in West Brisbane's Sale No. 91.5 (see July 1994 Bulletin) indicated that the lots looked quite good and sold for significantly above the estimate in most cases.

EDITOR WANTED

Although I'm starting to lose some of my early optimism that we would find a permanent editor quickly, I suppose that there is always hope that someone will be encouraged to volunteer for the task. If any member is interested, please contact me. I can give an assurance that the workload is not heavy.

COMMERCIAL PERFINS OF AUSTRALIA

Enclosed with this issue of the Bulletin is Update No 4 to *Commercial Perfins of Australia*. The flow of information continues and includes new material on user identities, usage and on patterns previously unrecorded.

In an earlier edition of the Bulletin, I mentioned that *Commercial Perfins of Australia* had been completely sold out. It is flattering to hear that copies of the book have fetched \$40 - 45 in recent auctions. Regrettably, the authors have no spare copies and can only watch this astonishing appreciation with amazement.

WHAT IS IT?

(John Mathews)

John Amiet has submitted the item shown for comment. The stamp is a 10 cent Pioneer Life with a slogan postmark. The "1172051/BIRCHIP" on the reverse appears to have been made by a rubber stamp. The indentations (none completely punched through the paper) form an almost complete pattern consisting of "O\C", or "O\O" or "O/O" in a slightly elliptical ring.



There is a town named Birchip on the North Western Highway in Victoria. Could the number be a registration number of some sort? And could the pattern be something like those used for branding livestock?



Any ideas would be most welcome.

A FURTHER MYSTERY

Dave Elsmore of Brisbane has forwarded the following illustration of a puncture and asks if anyone can help identify it. I do not know on what issues it appears but as Dave is well known for railway parcel stamps, revenues and cinderellas, it is safe to assume that the puncture appeared in that field. Can anyone help?

**GIO OVERPRINTS : AN UPDATE**

(David Andersen)

Since the request for more information about the New South Wales stamp duty issues with the Government Insurance Office of NSW "GIO" overprint some additional items have surfaced. Peter Simpfendorfer was able to add to the list and a number of these items are offered for sale in the Budget Stamp Sales Postal Bid Sale no.31 (28/10/94).

The issues recorded so far including the additional items reported are:

Pre-decimal series 1929 - 1965

3d, 9d, 2/-, 2/6, 3/-, 4/-, 5/-, 6/-, 8/-, 10/-, 12/-, 14/-, 18/-, £1

Decimal series

1c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c, 8c, 10c, 15c, 50c, 60c, 80c, \$1, \$1-20, \$1-80, \$2, \$3

Most of these issues are probably quite common as large numbers would have been used on household documents. No doubt, many of these will surface over the next few decades so that used copies are unlikely to command a premium in the longer term. The assistance of other members to further expand the listing would be appreciated.

THE GEORGE ADAMS "A" PERFINS

(John Mathews)

George Adams, of Tattersalls fame, must have had a very large volume of mail, both inwards and outwards, despite the efforts of the authorities to put an end to his business. It is therefore not surprising that his business perforated its stamps, and that several perforators were used over a period of approximately 10 years at the turn of the century.

Indeed, it is quite believable that there may have been more Tasmanian stamps perforated with an "A" than the combined total of those with the Commonwealth Departments' "OS" and the State Government's "T" during that period.

Their prolific numbers, predominantly on one set of stamps (the "Pictorials") may, at first sight, give the impression that there is only minimal interest to be gained from studying them. However, their very numbers provide an excellent opportunity to study their usage in greater detail than nearly all other companies' perfins. This is facilitated by the size of the stamps of the Pictorial issue and by the apparent policy of the Tasmanian Post Office to cancel stamps as close to the centre as possible, resulting in nearly-complete postmarks.

The following observations are based on information obtained from my own modest collection of Adams' perfins, and from those I have sighted in passing. I would welcome any other date information which could add to these. My curiosity was aroused when determining periods of usage for "Commercial Perfins of Australia", where the detail is limited to years and is therefore inconclusive as far as concurrent or sequential usage is concerned. From months and, in many cases, actual days, a clearer picture starts to emerge.

It appears that the first Adams' "A" perfins were produced in 1899, the earliest I have seen being dated September 1899. These are of the patterns A.3 and A.4. The perfin A.1 has also been recorded with an 1899 usage, but in what months I do not know. These three perfins all seem to have stopped being used by July 1900. Can anyone provide dates of usage of these from May 1900 onwards?

Their replacement was A.2, the earliest date of this one known to me being 3 June 1900. It continued in use until near the end of 1906. With the exception of 1902, the only months for which I have not sighted copies of A.2 during this overall period are April 1903, June 1905 and January 1906. Does anyone have these months on copies of A.2 - or on any of the other Adams' perfins?

The A.2 die may have started to "feel the strain" towards the end of 1901, as perfin A.6 starts to appear at that time; my earliest copy being dated 23 October of that year, and continues through to January 1903, with November 1901, June 1902 and September 1902 being the only months during that period for which I do not have copies of A.6. Is it coincidence that June and September are two of only five months of 1902 (together with early January, mid-March and early April) for which I have seen copies of A.2? Could it be that A.2 and A.6 took regular turns at being in the repair shop during 1902? Any confirmed dates for either of these for any of 1902 would be most helpful in

furthering this assessment. (A.6 has also been reported with a 1906 usage, month unknown).

From February 1903, A.2 seems to have been in service on its own for almost four years. I do have one copy of A.6 dated 5 September 1904, with no copies of A.2 between 29 August and 7 September, so perhaps some running repairs were necessary at that time. The latest date I know for regular use of A.2 is 6 November 1906, then two examples in September and October 1907 and two copies from the first week of November 1908. These isolated examples may have resulted from A.2 being recalled for temporary use when the then current perforator was out of action.

The die A.7 apparently replaced A.2 in November 1906, its earliest date sighted being 17 November. From its appearance and the early loss of the pin at the bottom of one leg of the "A", it may have been produced at short notice. Whatever the reason, it only had a short lifetime with a latest date of May 1907.

Perfin A.8 appeared in early June 1907 and, apart from the brief appearances of A.2 mentioned above, saw out the period of perforating by George Adams to June 1909. I have not made any sighting of dates for A.8 for June 1907, November 1907, April 1908, June 1908, September 1908, or January to April 1909.

George Adams' Tattersalls played a colourful part in Australia's history at the turn of the century. Behind the scenes, a succession of perforators were working hard in the mail room!

VG FORGERIES

(David Andersen)

Many Australian members will have noticed the review of the fifth edition of "Victorian Government Punctures" by Neale Scott and Bryan Toop and the associated discussion by Glen Stephens in the September issue of Stamp News.

Unfortunately most areas of philately have their share of forgeries or fakes. Quite a number of forgeries of perfins are known, so this is not a new problem. Most forgeries are of official type perfins as collectors have been willing to pay substantial premiums for these issues.

Neale Scott and Bryan Toop have done an excellent job in identifying these items. Do we need to take any further steps to protect ourselves from these forgeries? Should copies identified as forgeries be so marked to alert future collectors to their provenance?

In the past when suggestions of this sort have been made many collectors have rejected such proposals.

What effect will the existence of these forgeries have on the number of people collecting VG perfins and for that matter other perfins? Will people give up collecting in these areas because of the forgeries? Will prices and demand for VG perfins or all perfins drop? Time will tell. What do others think ?

A MANUFACTURER OF PERFORATORS USED IN AUSTRALIA

(John Mathews)

In January 1897, Samuel Allen and Sons Ltd. of Townsville requested permission from the Deputy Postmaster General in Brisbane to perforate their postage stamps and, at the same time, asked for information about manufacturers of perforators.

The Deputy Postmaster General must have made enquiries with Brisbane firms known to have been using perforators at that time, for on the reverse of the Samuel Allen and Sons Ltd. letter of 30 January 1897, there is a manuscript annotation that the perforator belonging to Hoffnung and Co. had a marking "Sloper's Patent" and that the perforator used by the New Zealand Insurance Company was supplied by that firm's head office in New Zealand and made by Mordanne (sic) and Co. of London.

Sloper's workshop ledgers confirm that the perforator with die SH&CO.1 was made by them early in 1891.

Sampson Mordan and Co. of 41 and 43 City Road, Finsbury Square, London EC, are listed in the Trades Directory section of Kelly's Post Office London Directory under the classification of "Perforating Machine Manufacturers" from 1879 to at least 1899. In the 1896 edition, they also took out a full page advertisement for their products which included "perforating presses".

At least one of their machines for an Australian customer has survived, that being a seal press which belonged to the Adelaide Steam Tug Co. and which currently is located in archives in Canberra.

It is not known from whom Samuel Allen and Sons Ltd. ordered their perforators. Their original perforator had the word "ALLEN" in a diamond-shaped frame, with very fine pins, and probably quickly fell into disrepair. In 1903, Samuel Allen and Sons Ltd. re-applied to the Deputy PMG for permission to use a second perforator with the more common diagonally-oriented "ALLEN" with sturdier pins.

LITERATURE WATCH

Among the articles in the Bulletins of other Perfin Societies are:

Perfins Bulletin (US) v.47 no.4 April 1994

- Responses to Chuck Spaulding (in response to his article in the February 1994 issue)
- World Perfins Catalogue: Middle East, Turkey, French and German Offices
- Auction #48

Perfins Bulletin (US) v.47 no.5 May 1994

- Additional Responses to Chuck Spaulding's Editorial
- World Perfins Catalogue: South and South East Asia, French India, Indo China, Siam

Perfins Bulletin (US) v.47 no.6 June 1994

- Perfins Bulletin Cumulative Index [now published]
- World Perfins Catalogue: South and South East Asia, China, Formosa, Sinkiang, Peoples Republic of China
- Auction #49

Perfins Bulletin (US) v 47 no 7 July/August 1994

- Ireland: Catalog of Perfins 2nd ed 1994 [review]
- Auction #50
- World Perfins Catalogue-South and South East Asia, British Offices in China
French Offices in China (Canton, Hoi Hao, Kwangchow, Mongtseu)
- The Worlds Oldest Perfin?
- Check Punches by J Lyding

Perfin Society (GB) Bulletin

- Perfins in Current Use by G Dyke
- QEII Commemoratives Reported Perfinned by A Walter
- More on Perforating Machine Manufacturers & Perforators by J Mathews
- Perfins used by Sheffield Firms by R Smith
- Italian Exhibition Perfin [MF/IM]

TELEGRAPH AND OTHER PUNCTURES

(John Grant)

I recently came across a Bulk Postage Docket (shown below) and purchased the item; partly because of its connection with perfins and partly out of general curiosity. I was interested to know why the higher value stamps had been punctured to remove a rather large portion of the stamp paper - evidently *after* the stamps had served their purpose.

After searching unsuccessfully for an answer, I found that my question was more or less answered by an article which I had written (and forgotten about) for a different journal in relation to Telegraph Punctures. The following paragraphs originally appeared in *Capital Philately* (Vol 9, No 2, February 1990) and are reproduced with the permission of the Editor of that journal.

In October 1903, a stamp dealer who operated the Victorian Stamp Market in Flinders Lane, Melbourne, notified the Postmaster-General's Department of a possible irregularity in relation to traffic in used postage stamps. Two stamps of £1 and £2 value had been offered to the dealer by a young customer. the dealer, on noticing that the stamps bore the impress of the GPO obliterating stamp, detained the customer and contacted the Department.

The subsequent investigation carried out by the Department established that the stamps had been removed from bulk postage dockets. As far as the head office of the Department was concerned, the proper procedures required that all dockets with obliterated stamps (these included bulk postage dockets, telegrams and vouchers used for collect-on-delivery telegrams) were to be forwarded to the Accounts Branch to be checked before being put into safekeeping. The accumulated dockets were then to be

destroyed at certain intervals. Obviously, these procedures had not been observed in relation to the two stamps offered to the dealer.

POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT. N^o 17293

Bulk Postage Docket. Form No. 620.—1.

Postage stamps to be affixed within this space by the person posting the mail matter, who must write his name or initials across each stamp.

Stamps to full amount of postage purchased this day.

Date.				Postage.			
Year	Month	Day	Hour	£	s.	d.	
				1	0	0	

Receiving Officer.
checked and found
[Signature]
Verifying Officer.

NOTE.—This form must be forwarded at the close of each week to the Accountant, G.P.O., by registered mail.

Date Stamp
Stamp Sales Office.

Date Stamp
Bulk Postage Office.

Following completion of the investigation, in August 1905, a memorandum referring to illicit traffic in defaced postage stamps on telegrams and other telegraphic documents was sent from the Department's head office to all State Deputy Postmasters-General (oddly, this memorandum made no mention of bulk postage docket - Ed). The memorandum noted that although such stamps had served their original purpose in connection with the collection of revenue, the matter was serious in that:

- the stamps are the property of the PMG and the taking of them is larceny, more particularly as they have a sale value and are therefore valuable property;
- as postage stamps, whether intact or defaced, are not sold by the Department below their face value (this seems to ignore specimen and some CTO issues - Ed), officers cannot under such circumstances be allowed to steal the property of the PMG for the purpose of under-selling him; and
- to sell any stamp for less than its value is a fraud upon the revenue.

The State Deputy Postmasters-General were therefore instructed that:

- only authorised officers are allowed access to the documents having stamps attached;
- immediate action be taken to have all such stamps perforated, before they are put away, in such a manner as to absolutely destroy their saleable character; and
- all stamped documents be ultimately destroyed in the presence of at least two officers.

The Victorian office of the Department responded later that month, noting that, with regard to the stamps on telegrams, the higher values (5/-, £1 and £2) have been punctured in addition to the messages themselves, the latter being dealt with by a machine to prevent the possibility of their being resubmitted. The inference in this response was that such stamps were already being punctured prior to the August instruction. Obsequiously, the Victorian response continued:

"In order to comply with the instruction that all stamps must be punctured, a messenger was specially was specially told off under the immediate supervision of the Search Officer for the purpose, and with punch and mallet was kept fully occupied for two days in puncturing one day's messages."

The Victorian Office wondered if perhaps it was strictly necessary to puncture stamps of the smaller denominations.

A similar suggestion was received from the NSW office which explained that over 8,000 messages were received daily and that it had been found that the one available officer, with the present machines could not perforate more than 2,500 messages per day, as care had to be exercised not to destroy the text of telegrams. That office also noted that all stamps fixed to telegrams, and having a value of 2/6, had been punctured since the introduction of the system of prepaying, in stamps, the costs of transmitting telegrams to destinations beyond the Commonwealth.

The NSW office also noted that most stamps on telegrams were of 6d, 9d and 1/- values, for which present philatelic values were 9d per hundred, 1/- per dozen and 3d per dozen respectively. That office suggested that these values offered little inducement for illicit traffic.

Bowing to the wisdom of these representations, but insistent on having its own way at least in part, the Department's head office advised the State Deputy Postmasters-General in October 1905 that the earlier August instruction was henceforth to apply only to stamps of the value of 2/- or over.

Apart from its humour the correspondence is interesting. First, it fleshes out the history of telegraph punctures and shows that they were very much a consequence of demands made by philately. More importantly, the records highlight that different States used different practices, well beyond federation and illustrate the difficulty of introducing uniform rules which were to apply to the previously separate and autonomous postal administrations.

THE USERS OF PERFINS

(John Grant)

Many of the firms which used perfins are large businesses whose names most of us would recognise immediately. In other cases, the perfin users were fairly obscure businesses whose names have probably been forgotten by all except perfin collectors.

The firms which used perfins are important to philately. They were the major users of the postal system in that they were the businesses whose stocks of stamps were so large as to warrant protection through perforation of their stamps with the company initials.

I would therefore like to see a series of articles in the Bulletin, to flesh out some of the detail behind the more obscure perfin users. Any contributions from members towards these articles would be most welcome. To get the ball rolling

McCracken's City Brewery - The business was started in 1851 by Robert McCracken who had emigrated from Scotland in the previous year. The brewery was situated in Collins Street in the city and had a frontage on that street of some 200 ft. Towards the end of the century, the company employed about 110 staff. The *Cyclopedia of Victoria* (c 1900) reports that *"the brewery is arranged, and all its processes conducted, on the general gravitation principle, so that the liquor, from its initial boiling in the tower, until its delivery into the drays, requires no pumping or artificial aid in its progress from one stage of manufacture to another. The brewing plant is elaborate and complete and includes two huge copper boiling vessels, each capable of containing about 10,000 gallons of liquid; also a splendid ice machine of the Hercules type capable of reducing say 70,000 gallons of water from 20 to 25 degrees per day. The bottling department is also extensive and interesting, and is likewise equipped with all the most recent appliances."*

The fate of the company is not recorded but it seems to have gone out of business by early this century - most probably by a takeover.

CLUB AUCTION NO 2/1994

Enclosed with this issue of the Bulletin is the catalogue for Club Auction No 2/1994. As usual, the catalogue contains much useful material and some very scarce items. Of particular note are new patterns, not recorded in Commercial Perfins of Australia, and various interesting covers. Bids should be lodged with John Mathews by no later than 5 January 1995.

The current auction has considerably fewer lots than the previous ones. While it is intended to continue to run these auctions every six months, much will depend on material being forthcoming. Competition among buyers is keen, so it is a good opportunity to dispose of your duplicates, etc. Don't be hesitant if you only have a few lots to offer!