

# **My Stamp's Got a Hole in It**

## **— A Brief Overview of Perfins**

**Presentation to Waltham Stamp Club**  
**by**  
**Stephen J. Tauber**

**March 6, 2018**

# **Precursors**

## **Temptation:**

1850: Office Clerk £20 p.a. — 7 s. 3½ d. per week  
(ca. \$1.92 at period's exchange rate)

1960: London Underground Conductor – 35 s. per week  
(ca. \$4.20 at period's exchange rate)

In 1860s to '90s unused British stamps could be redeemed at the post office.

A few pence worth of stamps had significant value.

Police case in 1868 involved fencing of £35/19/2 worth of stamps by “junior clerks”.

# Precursors

## Underprints

To protect against pilferage some companies had name printed on backs of stamps.



Underprint remains on washed stamp because under gum (hence "underprint").  
Printed (for fee) by stamp printers.\*

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\* Ron Young, "Collecting the Holes", *Perforated Points*, no. 71 (June 1955) [Salisbury Philatelic Society, South Australia]

# Early Perfins (1868 ff.)

Could be done by firm



Perforating machine based on Joseph Sloper's check canceller



# Adopted in Many Countries



Alexandria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Austria (Offices in Turkish Empire), Bavaria, Belgium



Belgium (German Occupation), Bohemia and Moravia, Bulgaria, Canada, Cape of Good Hope, China, Cuba



Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, France (Offices in Turkish Empire), Germany, Greece, Hong Kong



Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Yugoslavia, Luxembourg



## Adopted in Many Countries (ctd.)



Monaco, Morocco, Natal, Netherlands, Newfoundland, Poland (Offices in Danzig)



Portugal, Romania, Spain, Straits Settlements, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand



Tunisia, Turkey, Western Australia, Trieste

First United States perfin 1908.

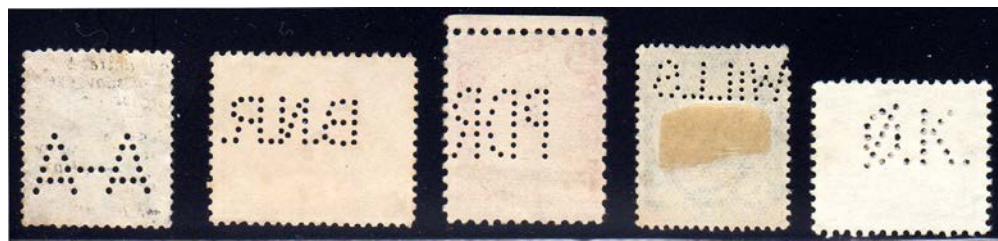
# Types of Patterns



Single letter



Letter(s) in frame



Line of letters



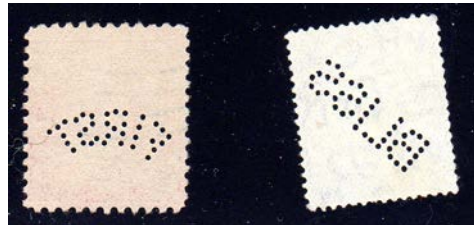
Multiple lines of letters



## Types of Patterns (ctd.)



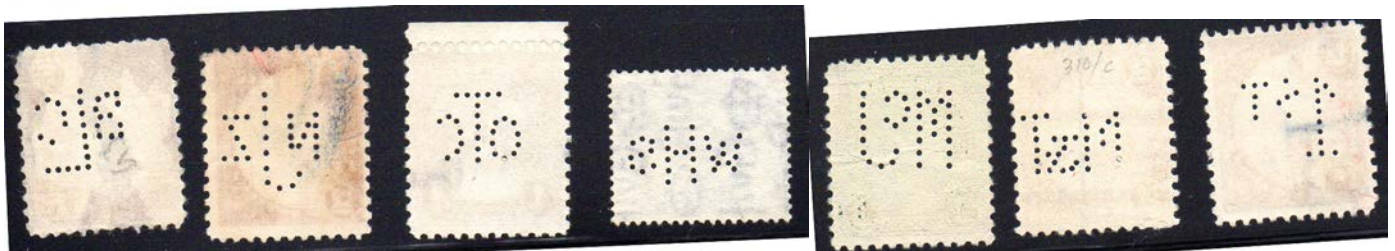
Downward sloping



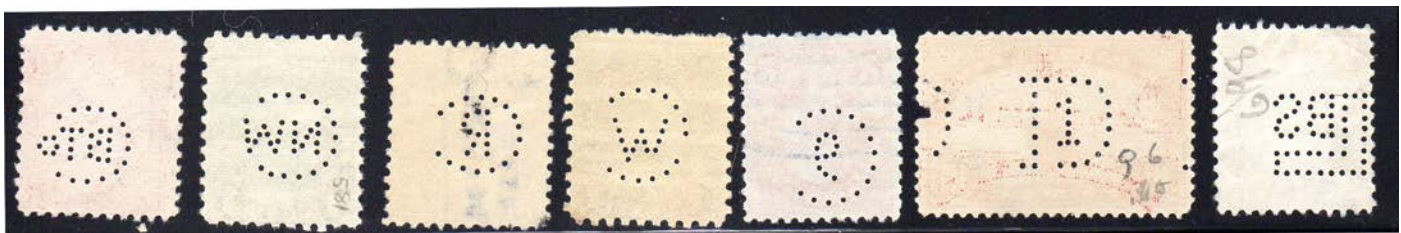
Curved, angled up



Reading downward



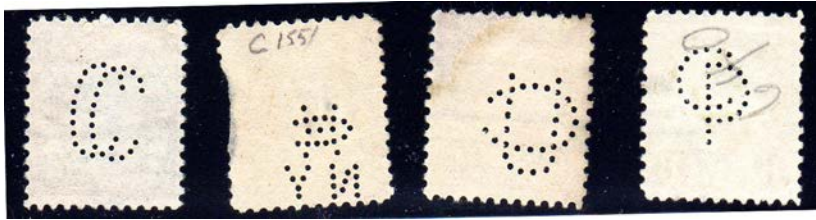
Different Height characters



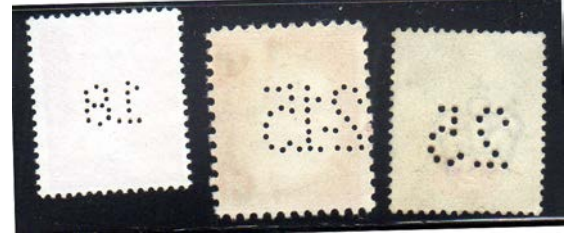
Letter enclosing other characters



## Types of Patterns (ctd.)



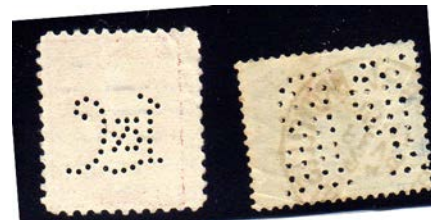
Overlapping characters, sharing holes



Overarching, geometrically arranged, numbers



Stuttering arrangement



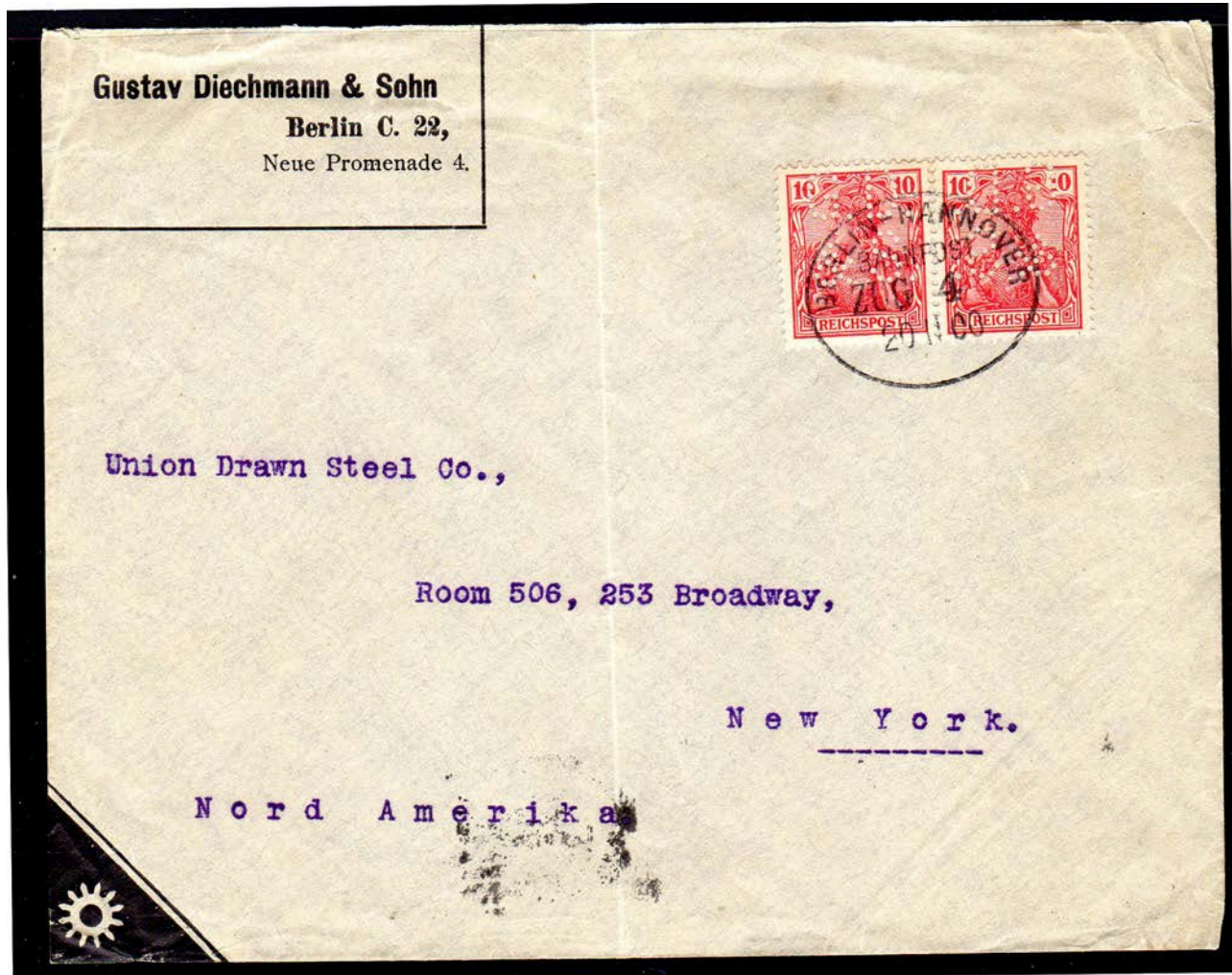
Monogram, fancy letters



Designs



# Pattern Variations



Mirror images (se-tenant)

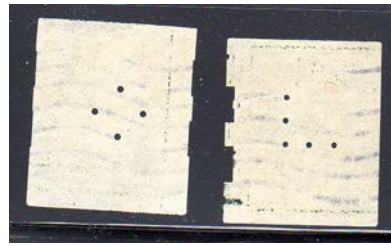


Extra holes in distinct positions to distinguish among offices of a company



# Special Patterns

## Shermack Affixing Machine

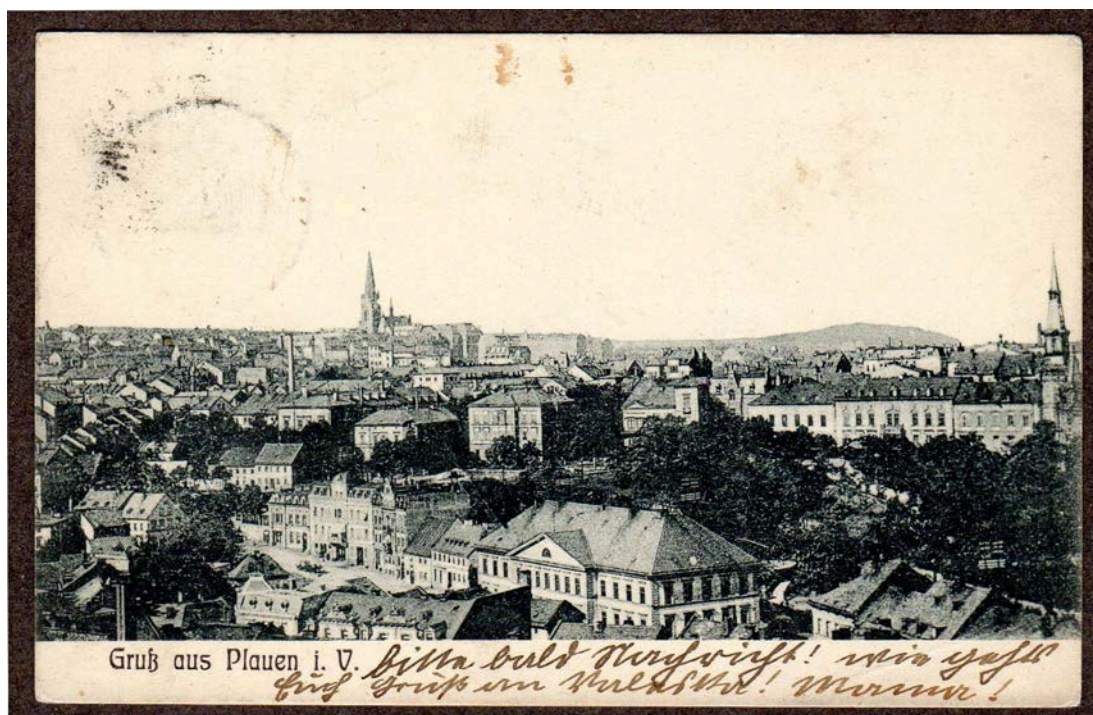


# Preperfs

## Precancelled and Punched



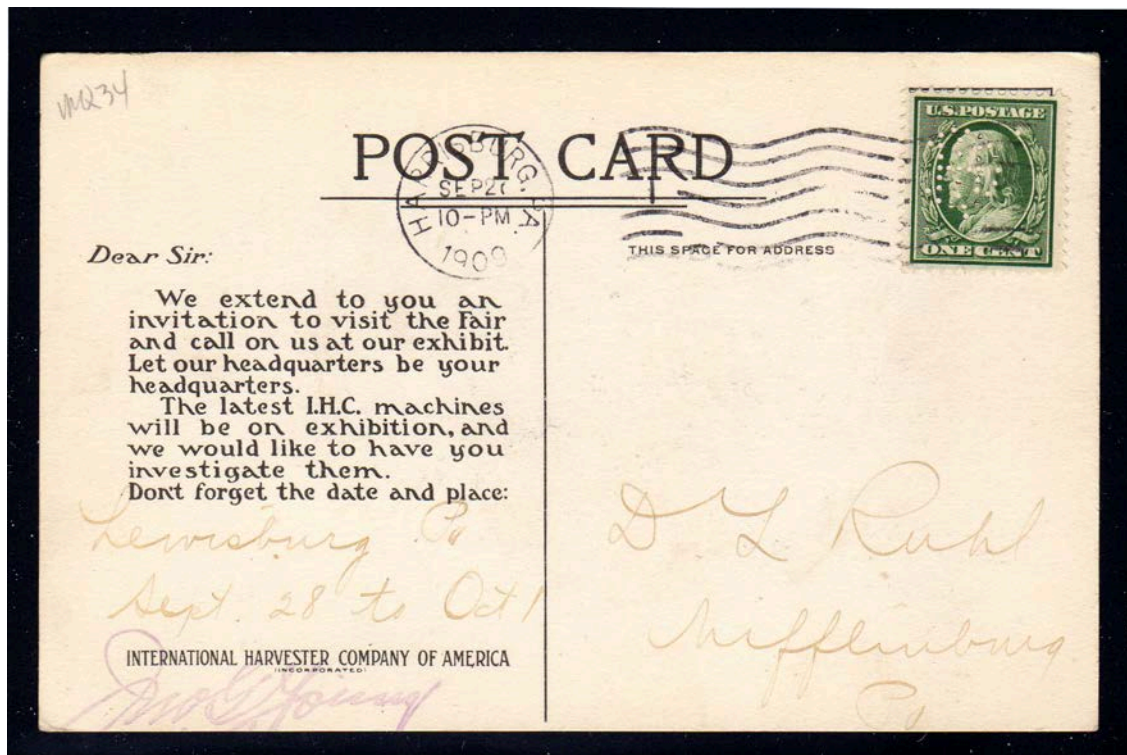
# Use on Postcards



Greetings from new hotel general employe to family. [Illegitimate use]



## Use on Postcards (ctd.)



Legitimate use on an advertising card.

Other legitimate uses:

Notification

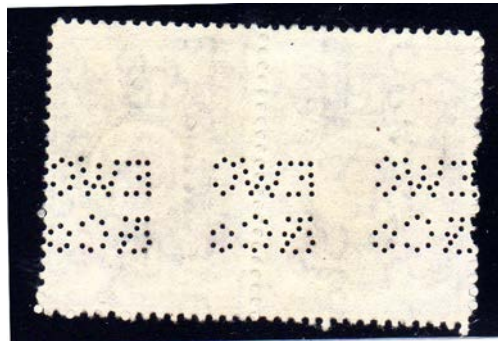
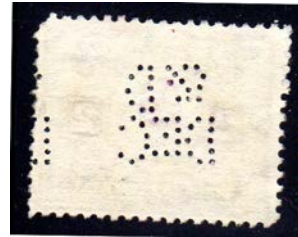
Receipt

Reminder

Inquiry

# Perfin revenues

Same notion as perfins in postage



Example: New York State Stock Transfer revenues



# Perfin Cancels

## Common for Revenues



Date cancel



Pattern cancel



"Annulado" (Cancelled)

# Cataloguing

## Volunteer efforts by clubs or collectors

A-2									
A1	A	H	6; 10	1926-34	x	Milwaukee, WI			
A1.5	A.	H	5%; 10	1926-32	x	Atlanta, GA			
A2	A	H	10; 16	1926-54	*	Swift & Company Dallas, TX			
A3	A	H	11; 20	1908	* x	Atlantic Refining Company Chicago, IL			
A5	Circle(A)	E(H)	11/4(6); 18(10)	1926-33					
A6	Ellipse(A)	E(H)	12(4); 28(8)	1926-38	* x	Auburn Trust Company Auburn, NY			
A7	Maltese Cross(A)	E(H)	9/4(4); 34(8)	1914		American National Bank Nashville, TN			
A8	Maltese Cross(A)	E(H)	12/4(4); 32(8)	1912 R					
A9	Square(A)	E(H)	10(6); 24(11)	1914-17		Armstrong Paint & Varnish Company Chicago, IL			
A10	Triangle(A)	E(H)	9/4(4); 21(11)	1902-14		W. D. Allen Manufacturing Company Chicago, IL			
A11	[AAA]	[H]	[8-10-8]; [40]	1902-12	*	E. C. Atkins & Company Indianapolis, IN			
A12	AAA	D	6; 10-10-10	1926-42	PC *	American Automobile Association Washington, DC			
A13	AAC	H	5-5-5%; 10-10-11	1902-17					
A14	AAC	H	7; 12-12-9	1926		New York, NY			
A16	AAC	D	6-6-5%; 10-10-8	1917-18	*	American Agricultural Chemical Company Baltimore, MD			
A17	AAACC	2H	4/4-4; 8-8-7-7	1908-14	*	American Agricultural Chemical Company Baltimore, MD			
A18	AA/Co	2H	5/4(4)-2%; 10-10-7-6	1908-38 R	PC *	The American Appraisal Company Milwaukee, WI			
A19	AAE	H	5%; 10-10-10	1923-32	*	Arthur E. Everts Company Dallas, TX			
A21	AAH/CO	2H	6/4%; 10-10-11/7-8	1918-26	PC *	A. A. Housman & Company New York, NY			
A21.5	A(A)J	(H)	5/4(5); 11%; 10/10/14	1917					
A22	AAM	D	4; 8-8-12	1912-26	* x	Acetylene Chemical Company Chicago, IL			
A24	AAP	D	4/4-4; 8-8-8	1912-33	PC *	American Asbestos Products Company New York, NY			
A25	AAP	D	5%; 10-10-10	1908-17					
A26	AAR	D	5%; 10-10-11	1908-12	*	American Asphaltum & Rubber Company Chicago, IL			

Facing pages from "Catalog of United States Perfin Patterns"

0A112 5c Violet "Admiral"..... Feb. 2/22									
RF.	1	RF.	3.0	RF.	1.1	RF.	4.0		
A.	35.00	B.	50.00	C.	35.00	D.	60.00		
0A112a 5c Violet Thin Paper "Admiral"..... Oct. 19/24									
RF.	1	RF.	3.0	RF.	1.2	RF.	3.0		
A.	40.00	B.	55.00	C.	45.00	D.	55.00		
0A113 7c Blue "Admiral"..... Jan. 12/12									
RF.	1	RF.	1.2	RF.	3.0	RF.	5.0		
A.	60.00	C.	65.00	D.	80.00	E.	100.00	G.	100.00
0A114 7c Red Brown "Admiral"..... Dec. 12/24									
RF.	1	RF.	1.2	RF.	3.0	RF.	5.0		
A.	50.00	C.	60.00	D.	75.00	E.	100.00	G.	100.00
0A115 8c Blue "Admiral"..... Sept. 1/25									
RF.	1	RF.	1.2						
A.	60.00	C.	70.00						
0A116 10c Plum "Admiral"..... Jan. 12/12									
RF.	1	RF.	1.2	RF.	5.0	RF.	5.0		
A.	60.00	C.	70.00	E.	110.00	F.	110.00		
0A117 10c Blue "Admiral"..... Feb. 20/22									
RF.	1	RF.	3.0	RF.	1.2	RF.	3.0	Thin Paper	
A.	50.00	B.	60.00	C.	45.00	D.	60.00		
0A118 20c Olive Green "Admiral"..... Aug. 1/25									
RF.	1	RF.	1.0	RF.	2.5	RF.	1.5	5.0	
A.	25.00	B.	200.00	C.	40.00	D.	30.00	E.	60.00
0A119 20c Olive Green "Admiral"..... Jan. 23/12									
RF.	1	RF.	3.0	RF.	1.1	RF.	3.0	Thin Paper	
A.	40.00	B.	65.00	C.	45.00	D.	65.00	E.	80.00
0A120 50c Black Brown "Admiral"..... Jan. 26/12									
RF.	1	RF.	3.0	RF.	1.2	RF.	3.0		
A.	50.00	B.	90.00	C.	75.00	D.	90.00		
0A120a 50c Black "Admiral"..... Jan. 26/12									
RF.	1								
A.	95.00								
0A122 5c Orange "Admiral"..... July 22/23									
RF.	1	RF.	3.0	RF.	1.1	RF.	3.3		
A.	100.00	B.	150.00	C.	110.00	D.	165.00		

Pages from "Canada Official Stamps"

Other examples:

John Nussbickel, "Austria Perfins"

"Australian States Official Perfins" (G&R Albums)

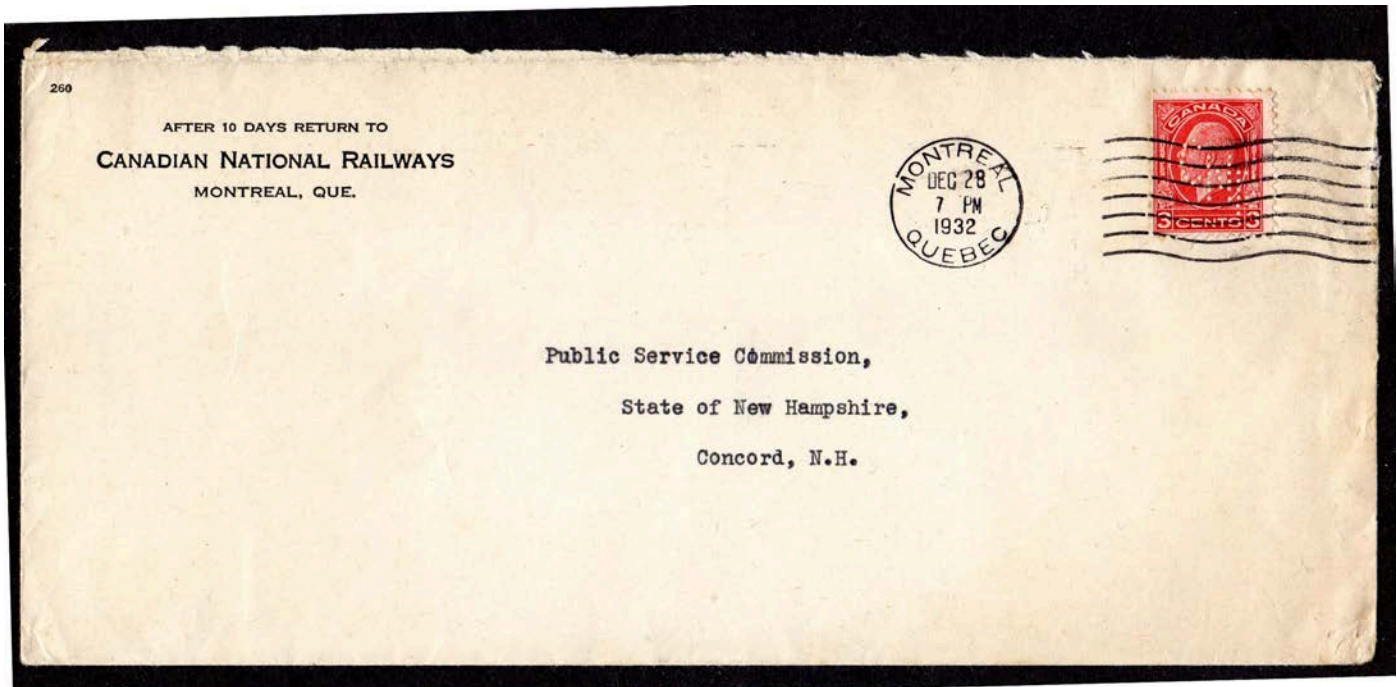
Martin Baer, "CH Perfins"

Neale Scott & Bryan Toop, "Victorian Government Punctures"

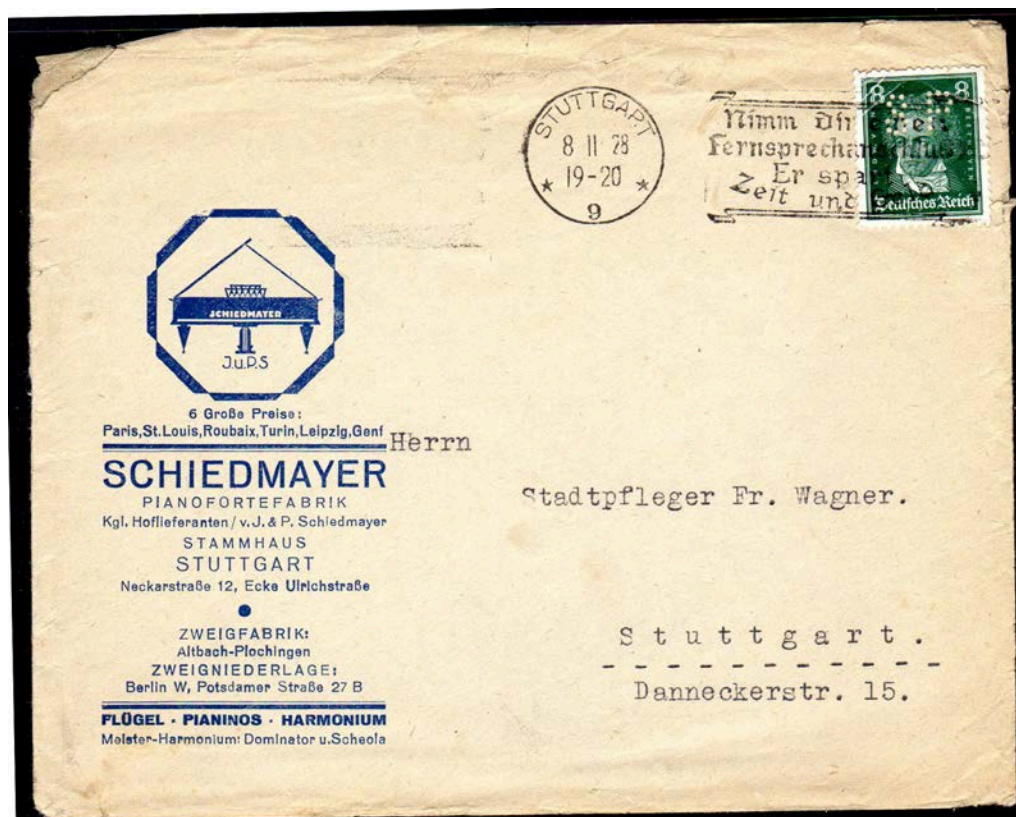


# Cataloguing (ctd.)

## Covers to identify user



CNR: Canadian National Railways



SP: Schiedmayer Pianoforte

## Cataloguing (ctd.)

### Postmarks to identify towns of use



All Federal Housing Administration — from Juneau, AK; Honolulu, HI; San Juan, PR

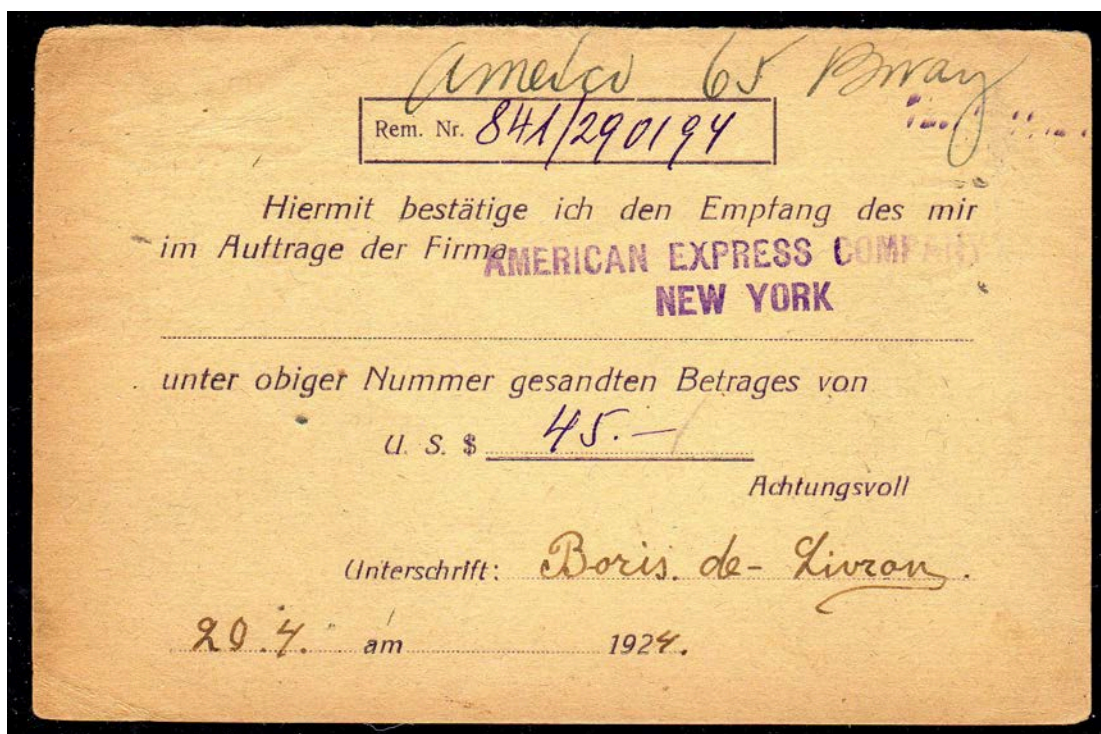


# A Bit of Postal History

## International Reply Cards – Carte postale (Réponse)



Returned from Lindau, Germany to Austria



Receipt for money transfer from the United States



## A Bit of Postal History (ctd.)



Returned from Oswiecim, Poland.



Reply postage not recognized in Chorkówka. User forced to pay Polish postage.



# Specializations

## Banks



B174 Bank of California, B179 Bank of America, C211 Chemical National Bank, C214 Chase National Bank, C219 Chase National Bank



F17 Fifth Avenue Bank of New York, F198 Fourth Street National Bank, G172 Guaranty Trust Company of New York, N41 National City Bank of New York, N145 National Shawmut Bank, P151 Philadelphia National Bank, P152 Philadelphia National Bank



T77 Tradesmens National Bank and Trust Company, U44 Union National Bank, W138 First Wisconsin National Bank, Number 6 First National Bank, Number 3 Second National Bank

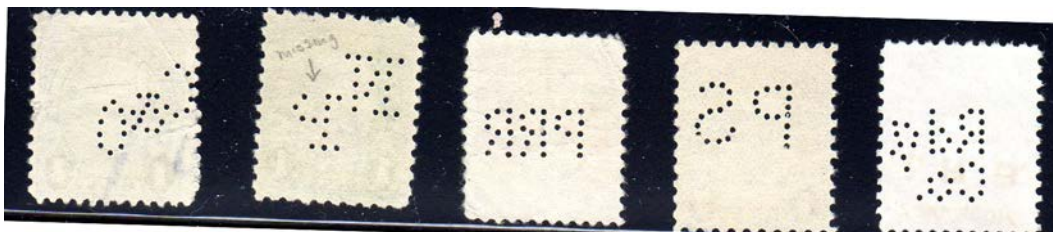
Pattern numbers from John Randall, ed., "Catalog of United States Perfins" (The Perfins Club, El Cerrito, CA, 1998).

# Specializations

## Railways



B252A Boston & Albany Railroad, B275 Boston & Maine Railroad, B 280 Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company, B279.5 Baltimore & Ohio Railroad Company, C235 Chicago & North Western Railway Company



C403 Chesapeake & Ohio Railway Company, N129A Northern Pacific Railway Company, P197 Pennsylvania Railroad Company, P202A Puget Sound Division (Chicago, Saint Paul & Pacific Railroad), R47 Reading Company



S121 Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway Company, S204 Southern Railway System, S232 Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway Company, S287 Chicago, Milwaukee & Saint Paul Railway Company, U60 Union Pacific Railroad Company



Canadian Pacific Railway



# My Specialty: Officially Prepared Perfins For Any Government Mail

New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia



Tasmania, Victoria, Western Australia



Commonwealth of Australia



Large OS, Small OS

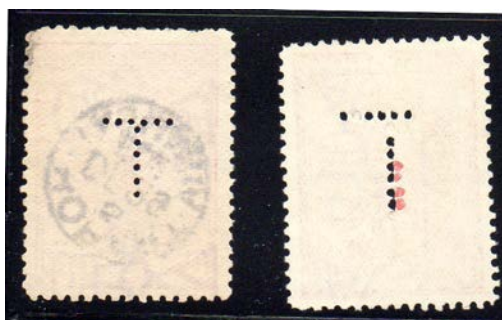
# Officially Prepared Perfins (ctd.)

## Tasmania

Prepared by two passes of a line perforator with some pins removed<sup>†</sup>



6 x 5 holes



6 x 6 holes



6 x 7 holes



6 x 8 holes

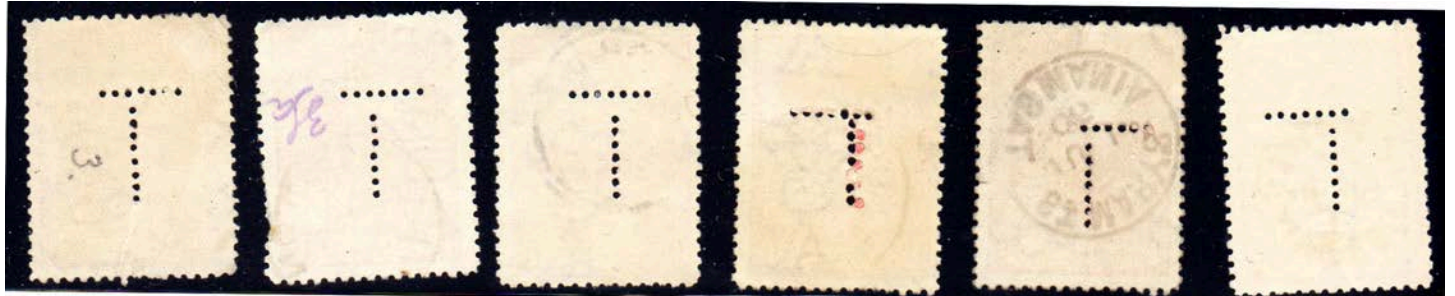


7 x 6 holes

<sup>†</sup> David McNamee, "Perfins on Tasmanian Stamps", <http://www.ozrevenues.com/exhibits/t1/35.jpg>



## Tasmania (ctd.)



7 x 7 holes



7 x 8 holes



8 x 8 holes

## For Any Government Mail (ctd.)

Canal Zone



China (Sinkiang)



Costa Rica



Crete



Guatemala



Luxembourg



Papua



Rhodesia





## For Any Government Mail (ctd.)

### Northwest Pacific Islands



### Sudan



### Switzerland



### Venezuela



# For Any Government Mail (ctd.)

## Uruguay

In Regular, Newspaper, and Air Mail Stamps



In Official Stamps





# For Any Government Mail (ctd.)

## Canada



5-hole OA242A

4-hole 0253A



Position 1

2

3

4

Wrigley suffix: 0253A

0236E

0270C

0234F



Position 5

6

7

8

Wrigley suffix: OA209B

D

G

H

## Canada (ctd.)

### Varieties

#### Missing Hole in 'S' of 5-hole pattern

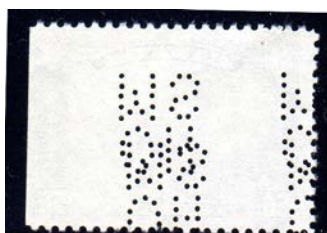


0A197BS



0A232AS

#### Double Punch



0A176CX



0257E&F



# Officially Punched For Government Departments & Agencies

## Great Britain



Board of Trade



Royal Engineers



Bank of England



His/Her Majesty's Stationers Office



Department of Scientific and Industrial Research

# For Government Departments & Agencies (ctd.)

## New South Wales



Government Railway

## Western Australia



Commissariat and Convict Department  
(of the Imperial government, not colonial)

## Canada



Canadian National Railway

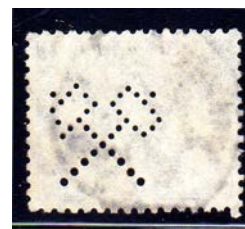
Canadian Broadcasting Corporation

## France



Senat (Senate)

## Bavaria



Eisenbahnbehörden (Railway Authorities),  
Bergwerksverwaltung (Mine Administration)

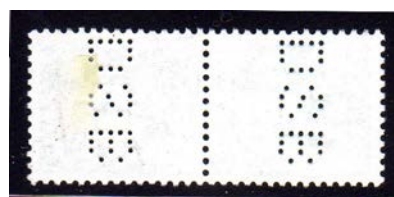


# For Government Departments & Agencies (ctd.)

Ceylon



Denmark



British Broadcasting Corporation

Danske Statsbaner (Danish State Railways),  
Statspolitiet (National Police)

Germany



Police (Hannover, Berlin I, Berlin II)

Reichskohlenkommission  
(Imperial Coal Commission)

## For Government Departments & Agencies (ctd.)

Japan



Natal



Orange River Colony



Navy



Natal Government Railway



Norway



Sudan



Fyrvesenet, Skattevesenet, Statens Arbeidsformiddling  
(Lighthouse Service, National Treasury, National Employment Service)

Army Service



## For Government Departments & Agencies (ctd.) United States



F79 Federal Housing Administration



U69 Census Bureau (Department of Commerce)



U99 Veterans Administration

# United States (ctd.)

## Federal Reserve Bank



C417 Philadelphia

F27 Atlanta

F156 Omaha

F158 El Paso

F159 Houston



F161 Boston

F162 Dallas

F164 Kansas City

F165 Los Angeles

F166 New York



F168 Portland

F169 Seattle

F172 Spokane

F183 Minneapolis

Number-12 New York



# Officially Punched For Other Reasons

## Specimen



Dominica

## Demonetized



Bosnia and Herzegovina



Spain



Uruguay



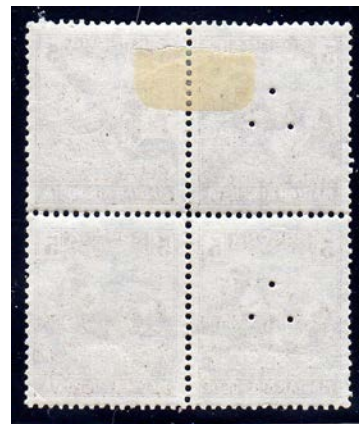
## Other Reasons (Ctd.)

### Postage Due



From the first set of postage due stamps of the Régence de Tunis

### Minor Extortion



Stamp sheets sold at Hungarian post offices had triangles of holes punched into one row or column. To buy stamps without holes, collectors had to pay 10% more.



## Other Reasons (Ctd.)

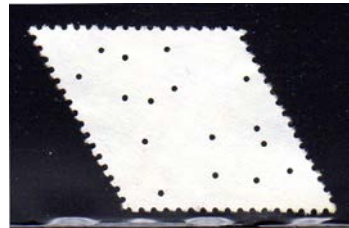
### Not really Perfins



Guatemala more than once bisected stamps diagonally; each half was valid for postage.

# No Stamp Without Issued Only With Holes

## Netherlands



Holes in a holiday issue to suggest candle flame on white or red stationery.



Mooi Nederland (Beautiful Netherlands) in the selvage of the souvenir sheet.



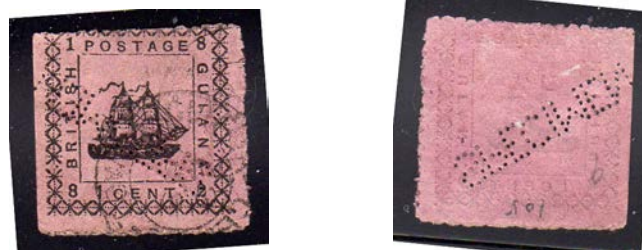
## Issued Only With Holes (ctd.)

### Hong Kong



Each numeral of the high denominations highlighted with an outline of holes

### British Guiana



Typeset and therefor deemed vulnerable to counterfeiting; punched 'SPECIMEN' for security

# Transnational Patterns

## For Companies in Multiple Countries

New York Life Insurance Company



United States, Canada

First National Bank



United States, Argentina

United Shoe Machinery Company



United States, Argentina Brazil



# Transnational Patterns (ctd.)

## Assicurazione Generali de Trieste e Venezia

founded 1831



Austria, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia



Emanuel Ehrentheil, Deputy Director



Emanuel Ehrentheil with granddaughters Eva and Erika Graf (later Eva Glaser and Erika Tauber)

# Perfin Oddments in Cinderellas

Private Mail Service



With Advertising on Stamp



Railway Newspaper Stamp





# Perfin Oddments (ctd.)

## Political Event



Black bar under perfin design.

Germany's town of Selfkant under Netherlands post-World War II.

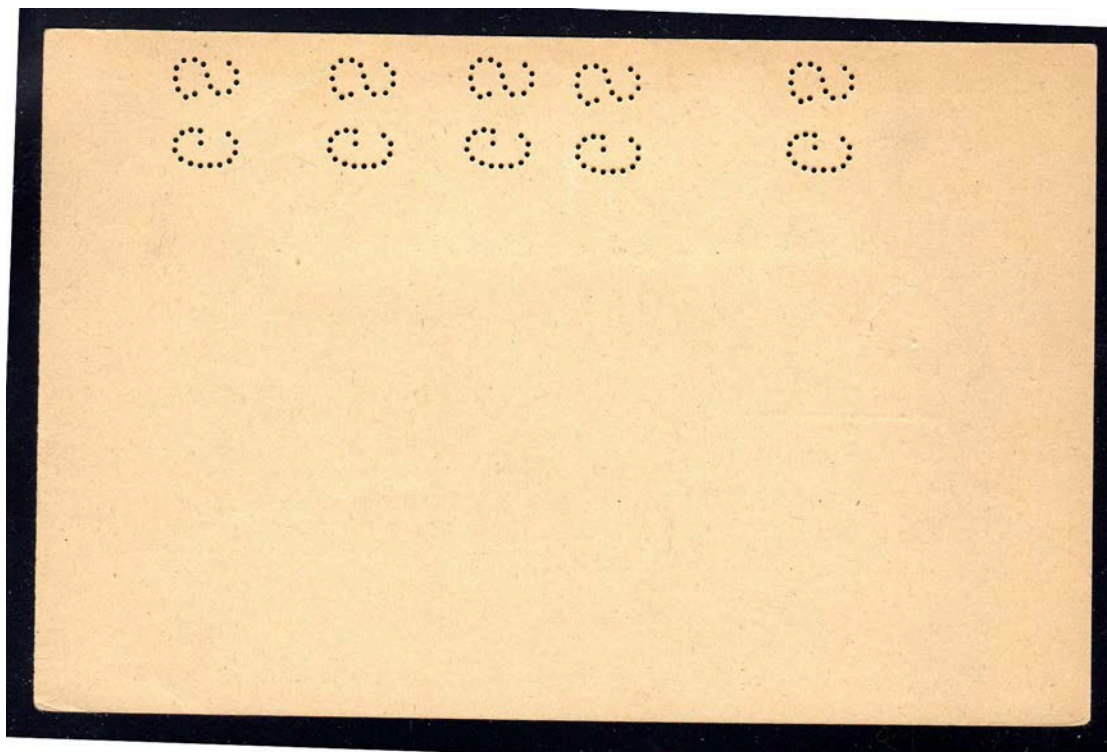
Returned to Germany August 1, 1963.

Cover, prepared for event, postmarked in a Selfkant community on that day.



## Perfin Oddments (ctd.)

**Postal Stationery** Occasionally punched



Prepared as a reply card early during inflation. Not used.



## Perfin Oddments (ctd.)

### Revenues with Government Patterns

Sudan Passport Revenue



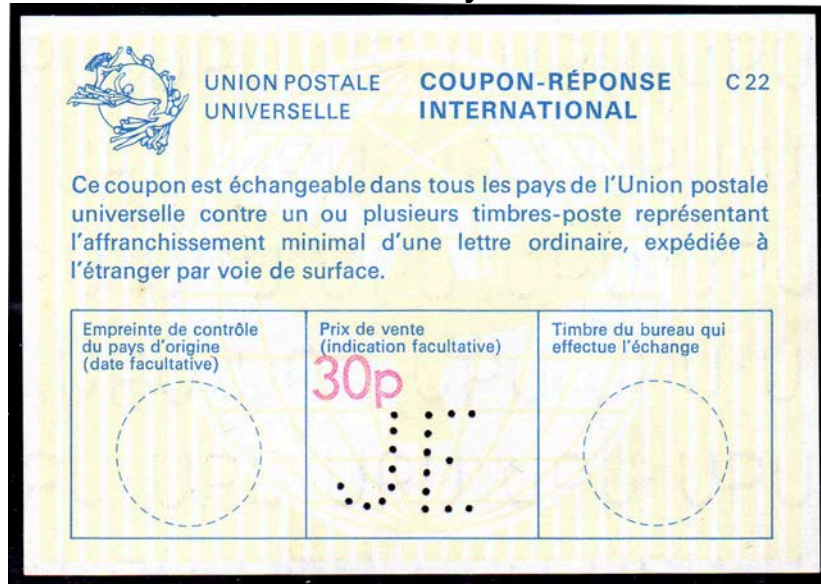
New South Wales General Revenue



# Perfin Oddments (ctd.)

## International Reply Coupon

Jersey



The country of issue is not printed on this international reply coupon. The 'JE' perfin pattern identifies the country as Jersey.



## Perfin Oddments (ctd.)

### Perfin as Surcharge



*From the collection of Thomas  
Kannegiesser A. (Santiago de Chile)*

1900: Chile running out of 5-centavo stamps.  
**Essay** with '5' punched into 30-centavo stamp.  
Impractical for enough stamps quickly.

Stamp issued with overprinted surcharge.

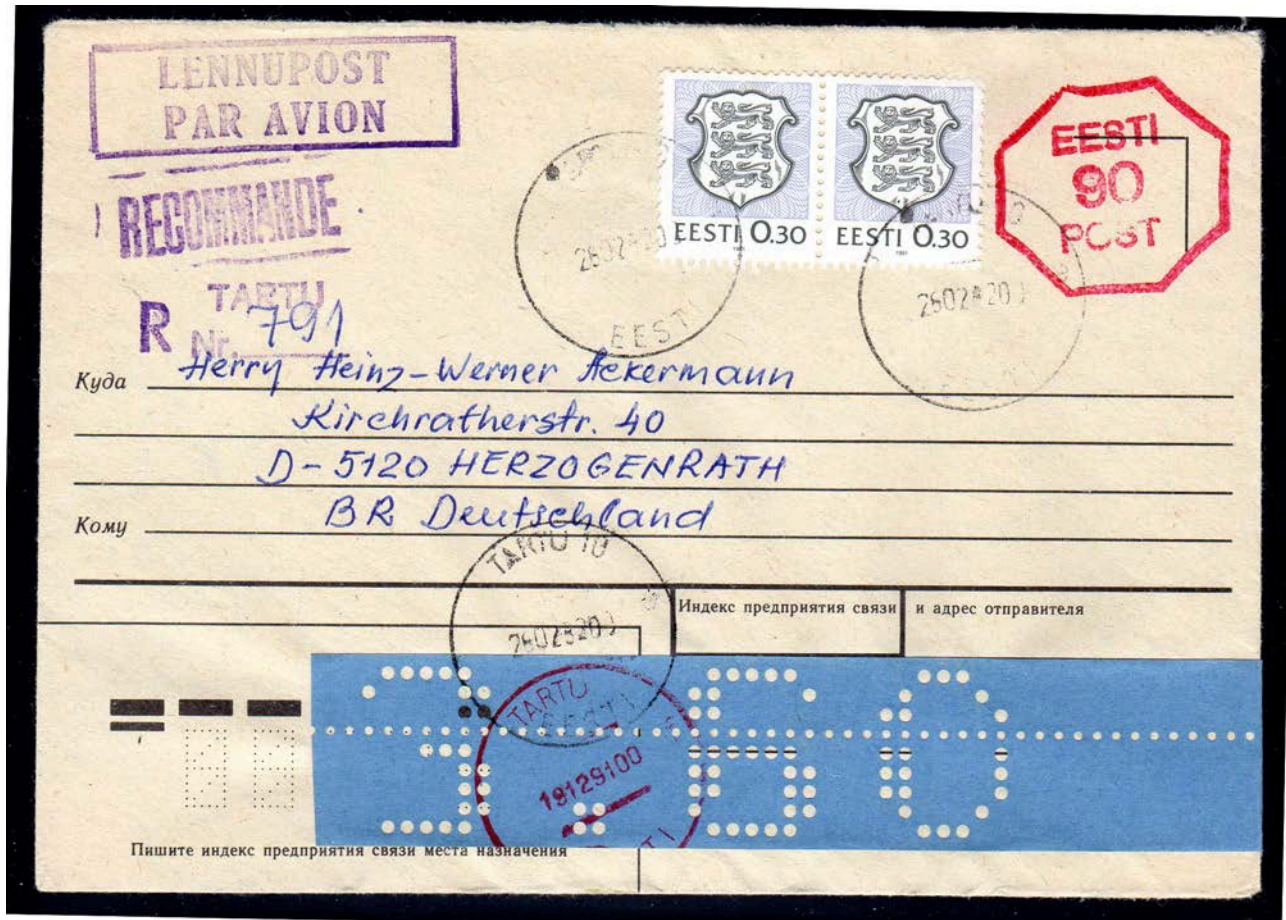


Scott 50

# Wholly Holey

## The Holes make the Stamp

Estonia



Stamp created during post-Soviet turmoil by punching holes into Teletype tape.  
Validated by red Tartu postmark.





