January/February 2021

The Perfins Bulletin

Volume 75, Number 1 Whole Number 686

- Users of H067,K066 and R018 identified
- Computer analysis of perfin patterns
- Index to Vol74
- A pricey US cover
- A Japanese Occupation (of China) cover
- A fantastic auction of German perfins

Changes to the Club's Leadership Team

Bob Hodges, elected President at the Club's Virtual Convention last August took office on January 1, 2021. Bob was informally introduced to the Club in the January/February 2018 Bulletin as a recent retiree who had enthusiastically offered to help the Club. It was also noted that he exhibits his perfins at a variety of shows, having won awards for several of them. In moving to the Vice Presidency, Bob left two years of his three-year term as Vice President vacant.

Dave Smith has been named by President Steve Endicott to fill that remaining year as Vice President. Dave is known to most of us as a dealer of precancels and , to a lesser degree, perfins. He has recently published his exhaustive *Catalog of United States Perfined Precancels*. His acceptance of the Vice-President position leaves the remainder of his term as Director-at-Large vacant. That position will be filled by Bob Hodges, with the approval of the Executive Board shortly.

Cliff Irving, elected to his first full term as Director-at-Large at the Virtual Convention last August, will continue in that role which he assumed in January 2019. Bob's autobiographical note will be found on p. 1 of last year's *Bulletin*.

Susan Kolze was named by President Endicott to fill the vacancy created by Cliff's move to VP. See her autobio on p. 103 of the Nov/Dec 2019 *Bulletin*.

And if this shuffle has left you confused - see page 2 where it is all detailed.

Thanks Steve!

After five years as Club President Steve will transition the office to Bob Hodges, as noted above. Much has been accomplished under Steve's watch.

He mentioned several of these accomplishments in his farewell note in the last *Bulletin*, giving lots of credit to others and barely mentioning his contribution to the list. He managed to understate the importance of one of them - one which has reinvigorated many members interest. The publication of the 2018 version of the *U. S. Perfins Catalog* was that major accomplishment. It has caused so much new research that Steve is having to revise and reissue the *Catalog* to accommodate the huge amount of new information which has been discovered since its release.

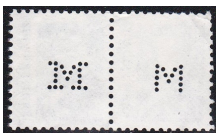
And his success with the *Catalog* was exceeded by his willingness to help all members and his organizational skills. He leaves the Club in extremely good shape! It has caused Steve some worry trying to keep the focus of the Club on the fun of collecting holey items. He worried => we had the fun.

And, lest you fear he will disappear, he remains U. S. Catalog Editor.

Farewell Mooo.5

Edited from an email from Steve Endicott (LM #2284)

Bill Sinesky (#4176) recently submitted the se-tenant pair of perfins shown to the right to our US Catalog Editor. Steve's comment "…a really neat se-tenant copy of M000.5 and M001A, resulting in the deletion of M000.5…" So, say a fond farewell to pattern M000.5.



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Computational Analysis of Perfin Design

Lin Yangchen (Contributed Paper)

I find perfins appealing, not only because they represent organizations with interesting back stories but also because they add a dimension of beauty to the stamps, especially when one shines a light from the back like an Egyptian perforated lamp shade.

Another fascinating thing about perfins is the mathematical and typographical arrangement of the holes, but this area has seen very little research. Mustacich (2015a,b) developed computer programs for characterizing stamp perforations, but these pertained to holes in straight lines while perfins are two-dimensional.

I present a computational workflow that automatically detects and measures perfin holes from scans or photographs. I also detail mathematical formulae to measure various aspects of perfin typography, and an algorithm to automatically align and compare the holes of two samples of a perfin. All code was written in the R Language for Statistical Computing. I have made it open source and available at https://github.com/linyangchen/perfin

As a case study I used a selection of Malayan KGV (1936) and KGVI (1937–1941) definitive stamps bearing eight different perfins. As far as possible I chose stamps with a complete set of cleanly punched holes to minimize measurement errors.

Perfin imaging

Stamps were placed face-down on a black background to maximize perfin contrast and flattened with an optical-grade quartz plate. They were photographed using a Canon EOS-1D X camera with an MP-E 65 mm close-up lens leveled using a two-way spirit level. The optical system has practically zero distortion throughout the frame as confirmed by a photograph of a square grid.

The DPI was calibrated by photographing a finely graduated ruler. The system yields a true, high-quality 3718 DPI which was used in subsequent length and area calculations. If using preset DPI on a scanner, it is still advisable to calibrate it to ensure accuracy.

Where necessary, edges of stamps were cropped out from the images and they were flipped and/or rotated to make the perfins read the proper way. After initial processing, the images were saved in lossless Portable Network Graphics (.png) format for computational analysis. Everything from this point on can be executed automatically with a single command.

Hole detection

Pixels darker than a specified threshold are recognized as holes. For maximal accuracy, my algorithm considers not only the brightness of each pixel but also the color. The background is black in this study and most philatelic situations, so the computer looks for pixels that are very dark in all three RGB channels.

One should sample some pixels from the image to determine the best threshold values to apply. This can be done during the initial processing above. I used a threshold of 50 out of 255 for each channel.

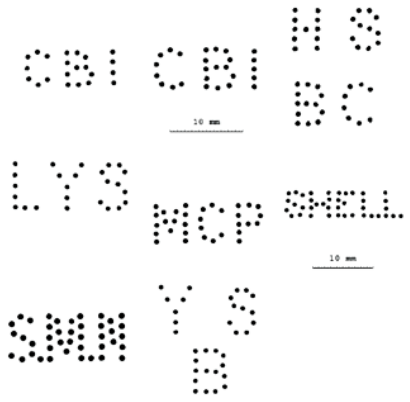

Figure 1. Holes of Malayan perfins as automatically detected by the computer. All perfins are to the same scale except SHELL which is shown slightly smaller.

If there are stray fibers crisscrossing the holes, a hole may be detected as multiple objects or a weird-shaped object. This problem can be mitigated by opening the original image in raster editing software and using the lasso or brush tool to paint over the fibers with black. This procedure is not recommended if many of the holes in a perfin are affected and/or the holes are badly clogged, as too much "cleaning" may make the measurements inaccurate.

Hole position and diameter

The positions and sizes of the holes are measured using the computeFeatures.moment and computeFeatures.shape functions in the EBImage library in R. For each hole, the algorithm measures the radius at different angles and calculates an average for that hole. There may be stray specks in the image that the computer mistakenly thought were holes. These are now automatically identified and deleted as they are much smaller than the actual holes.

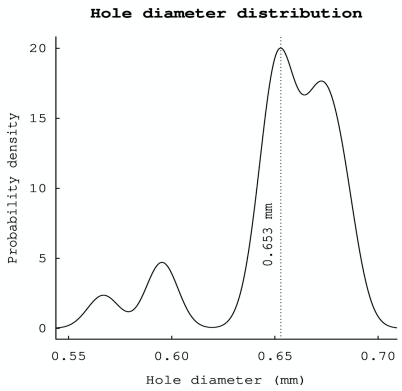

Figure 2. Distribution of the diameter of holes of the CBI (Kuala Lumpur) perfin.

The characteristic hole diameter of a given perfin is estimated as the most frequently occurring diameter in the distribution. This is analogous to the statistical mode; it does not matter whether the distribution is skewed or not. Smaller peaks are usually from imperfect holes. This example is from the CBI (Kuala Lumpur) perfin.

Perfin typography

How does one distill the design of perfin characters into a simple number that can be calculated from just the hole positions and sizes? I wanted to avoid a "phenological" formula that explicitly encodes the characters (e.g. "C", "B", "I"). This would make it too complicated and less comparable across perfins.

I propose three easily calculated metrics of perfin typography: stroke clarity, hole congestion, and perfin readability. They are described below.

Stroke clarity

The perceived sharpness or clarity of the strokes in a dotted character depends on three variables:

- Characteristic hole diameter as described earlier. The larger the holes, the fatter and less distinct the stroke.
- Distance between a hole and the hole nearest to it. This is calculated for every hole and the average is taken. The closer the holes are to each other, the clearer the stroke generally.
- Cap height (height of the uppercase letters). For the same interhole distance and hole size, a greater cap height gives clearer strokes since the holes are less clustered (e.g. the two CBI perfins in the first illustration). Most perfins are composed mostly or entirely of uppercase letters so cap height is a good indicator of font size. The algorithm measures cap height as the height difference between the centers of the lowest and highest holes. It may slightly overestimate but will never underestimate (pun not intended) cap height.

These variables are combined in an overall measure of stroke clarity given by:
cap height ÷ (characteristic hole diameter × average distance to nearest hole)

The number of characters in the perfin and the presence of lowercase letters and punctuation do not affect this definition of stroke clarity, so different perfins can be compared. It however ignores the spacing between characters. Closely spaced characters can make the perfin hard to read, such as in the SHELL perfin.

Because of how cap height is measured, the stroke clarity calculation works only for perfins with a single, uncurved line of text oriented horizontally in the image. Slanted perfins can of course be rotated to horizontal during initial processing. Automatic measurement of cap height in multi-line perfins would require optical character recognition algorithms. This would be challenging for perfins because the strokes are dotted rather than continuous.

Hole congestion

There is a phenomenon not accounted for in the stroke clarity equation. When the holes are large but the distance between them is small, the perfin can look congested and hard to make out (see SMN and SHELL in the first illustration).

Congestion is therefore measured as:

characteristic hole diameter ÷ average distance to nearest hole

Perfin readability

The readability of a perfin can be conceptualized as the presence of "structure" in the arrangement of its holes, which helps the eye to recognize the characters. Structure is measured using the average nearest neighbor (ANN) method widely used in spatial analysis. For each hole, the algorithm measures the distance to the nearest neighboring hole (first-order neighbor), second nearest (second-order neighbor) and so on, using the nndist function in R. Then it calculates the average distance for each neighbor order. If there is little structure in the arrangement of holes, the average distance will increase smoothly with neighbor order. If the hole arrangement is highly structured, the increase will be uneven.

To compare this across perfins, the experiment must control for the different number of holes and different total area of each perfin. This is done by first comparing each perfin with a set of as many randomly distributed holes occupying the same area. The area is defined as the bounding box whose edges intersect the centers of the top, bottom, leftmost and rightmost holes of the perfin.

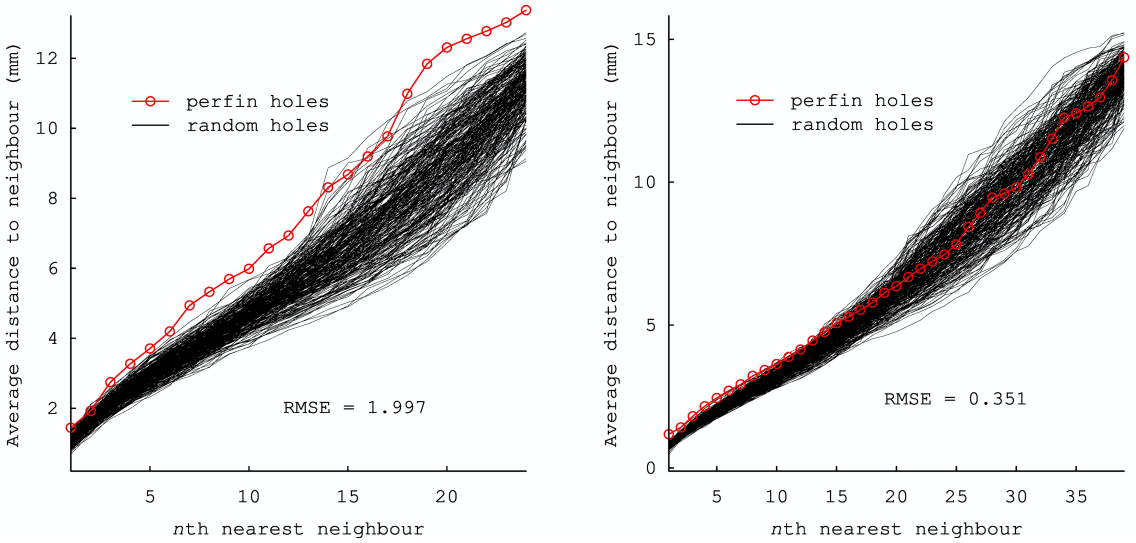

Figure 3. Computed average nearest neighbor for patterns LYS (left) and SHELL (right).

For each perfin, 250 sets of uniformly distributed random points are simulated using R's pseudorandom number generator. This yields 250 ANN distributions from which an "average" distribution is obtained. The algorithm then calculates the root mean square error (RMSE) between this and the perfin's ANN. The larger the RMSE, the more structured and readable the perfin.

Perfin	Cap height	Holes	Diameter	Area	Interhole	Congestion	Stroke	Readability
CBI_KL	4.541	22	0.653	7.838	1.386	0.471	5.018	0.924
CBI_Penang	5.351	26	0.697	9.928	1.302	0.535	5.901	1.099
HSBC	NA	43	0.685	15.853	1.365	0.501	NA	1.821
LYS	6.187	25	0.646	8.279	1.443	0.448	6.635	1.997
MCP	5.075	33	0.676	12.116	1.235	0.548	6.073	0.953
SHELL	3.929	40	0.692	15.23	1.179	0.587	4.811	0.351
SMN	5.993	41	0.822	21.944	1.397	0.588	5.218	0.751
YSB	NA	33	0.591	9.163	1.318	0.449	NA	0.792

Table 1. Vital statistics of some Malayan perfins. "Area" refers to the total area of all the holes in the perfin. Lengths and areas are in mm and mm^2.

The proposed metrics of stroke clarity, hole congestion and perfin readability work reasonably well. For example, SMN and SHELL are particularly hard to read because of oversized holes and congestion. The larger version of CBI is more congested than the smaller one, yet it is more readable because of clearer strokes. Meanwhile, LYS gets top marks in all three metrics. The perfins can be compared by eye in the first illustration.

Automatic hole alignment

One may wish to compare two samples of a perfin for small differences in hole positions or sizes that may indicate forgeries or multiple punch dies in a perfin machine. Matching by eye may be possible if you have good eyesight, a good loupe and steady hands. But computerised analysis has advantages. It can objectively and accurately record the results, which facilitates further analysis or dissemination. And if you have numerous samples of a perfin, the computer can rapidly match all of them pairwise and reveal otherwise invisible statistical patterns.

The matching algorithm can analyze perfins of any size or shape. As a case study I ran the algorithm on two samples of the HSBC perfin and 25 samples of the YSB perfin. The YSB samples encompass almost all denominations of both reigns including the top values.

First the algorithm finds the centroid or "center of mass" of each sample by taking the average of the coordinates of its hole centers. Then it translates the sample images such that their centroids both lie on (0,0).

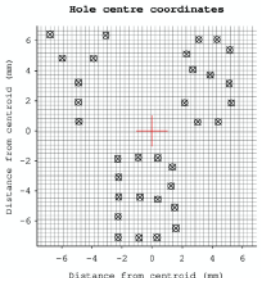

Figure 4. Hole center coordinates for pattern YSB.

The centered samples are then rotated to get a least-squares match of their hole centers. The rotation angle is determined by principal component analysis and singular value decomposition (Arun *et al.* 1987), which are standard techniques for this purpose.

A "misalignment map" (Fig. 5) is generated by subtracting one matched image from the other. The misaligned areas are in black and white while

A “misalignment map” (Fig. 5) is generated by subtracting one matched image from the other. The misaligned areas are in black and white while grey is where the holes overlap. The map shows not only the amount of misalignment and any difference in hole size, but also whether the holes are misaligned in similar or different directions.

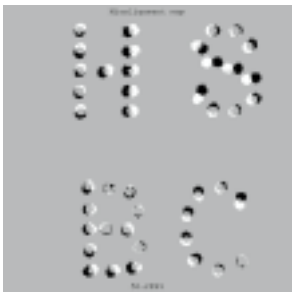

Figure 5. Misalignment map of holes in two HS/BC patterns.

The percentage misalignment of each pair of samples was calculated by summing the black and white pixels and dividing the result by the sum of the total hole pixels of both samples. This “double counting” reduces bias by averaging out the difference in total hole area between the samples.

The HS/BC samples shown above are misaligned by 50%, suggesting strongly that they came from two different punch dies. In this case one can tell from examining the actual stamps that they are different, but the computer records precisely what the differences are and gives a measurement.

As for the YSB perfin, the much larger sample size permits more statistical analysis. For each sample, the computer takes the misalignment values of all pairings with that sample and plots the distribution. The bandwidth of the distribution must be standardized across samples but can be tuned across the board to resolve or smooth out details as shown in Fig. 6. Any aberrant sample will have an odd-shaped distribution that stands out from the res. This anomaly detection method can find the “needle in the haystack” more quickly, consistently and reliably than manual examination by eye or even by regular image editing software.

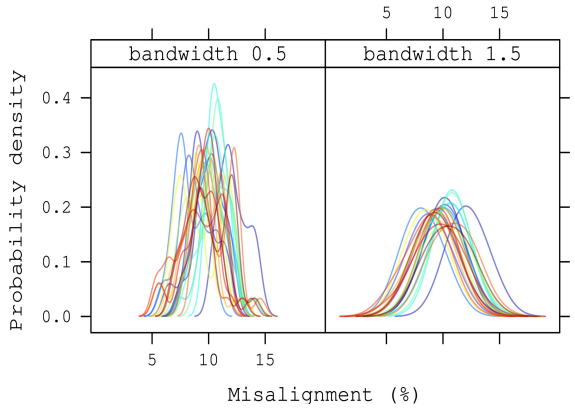

Figure 6. Misalignment graphs comparing 25 different YSB perfin patterns.

For the 25 YSB samples, although the peaks are somewhat spread out, none is far off enough to raise suspicion. Noise from stray fibres and imperfectly punched holes in some samples can cause misalignment values to diverge. Some judgement is needed, but one can always go back and inspect the sample in question.

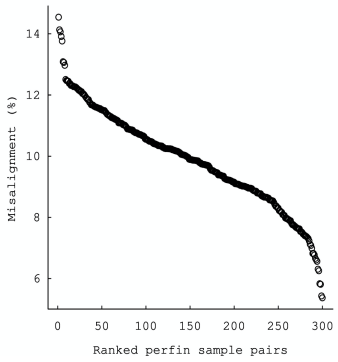

Figure 7. Distribution of misalignment (%) in sampled YSB patterns

One could also try to deduce from the data whether multiple punch dies were used and how many. For the YSB perfin, the ranked misalignment values appear Gaussian-distributed across a fairly narrow range from about 5% to 15%, so there is no reason to suspect multiple dies. If there were multiple dies, one may see two or more distinct groups of misalignment values, since samples from the same die tend to match more closely with one another than with samples from another die. This of course assumes that the differences between multiple dies are greater than

the background noise. There may be cases of multiple dies that show no statistical difference.

If the statistics do indicate multiple dies, the dies can be separated using DBSCAN (Density-Based Spatial Clustering of Applications with Noise), a robust and widely used algorithm by Ester *et al.* (1996). Unlike some common algorithms, DBSCAN does not require *a priori* knowledge of the number of clusters (dies). One only needs to tell the computer the misalignment percentage above which two samples should be considered to be from different dies. This value can be deduced from the aforementioned ranked misalignment values. If successful, the samples will get grouped into the different dies for further characterization.

So perfins don't just look pretty sitting in the album, they can also be the subject of some serious and fascinating number crunching.

References

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Ester, M., Kriegel, H.-P., Sander, J. & Xu, X. 1996. A density-based algorithm for discovering clusters in large spatial databases with noise. *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Knowledge Discovery and Data Mining* 226–231.

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Mustacich, R. 2015b. Measurements of stamp separation features by digital image analysis. In *Proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Analytical Methods in Philately* eds. Barwis, J. H. & Lera, T. pp. 73–85. The Institute for Analytical Philately, Ohio, USA.

More About Cigar Revenues

From Emails-to-the Editor Plus

Lou Caprario (#863) wrote:

Cigar stamps and other taxpaids are among my favorites in the sphere of stamp collecting. I would like to offer some additional information.

Beginning in 1932 a series number was used to designate the year of issue for tax stamps on tobacco products; they began with "Series 102". Each subsequent year added one to the series number, thus "Series 103" for 1933 and so on until 1955 with "Series 125". Thereafter the series designation remained unchanged from "125" until 1959 when the use of tax stamps on tobacco products was ended. "Series 123" therefore refers to 1953 as the issue date, not 1954 as indicated in the article. Stamps were valid for use for two years after their issue, so the 1954 use date indicated by the perfin cancellation falls within this timeframe.

The class designations A-G were related to the [manufacturer's sale] prices of the cigars and were set by law in 1919 by the Tax Act of October 3, 1918. (I guess it took Congress a couple of months into the next year to stop dragging their feet and actually pass a law. Some things never change.)

- Class A cigars sold for not more than 5 cents each
- Class B cigars sold for more than 5 up to 8 cents
- Class C cigars sold for more than 8 up to 15 cents
- Class D cigars sold for more than 15 up to 20 cents
- Class E cigars sold for more than 20 cents each

The tax rates governing these classes were changed in 1926:

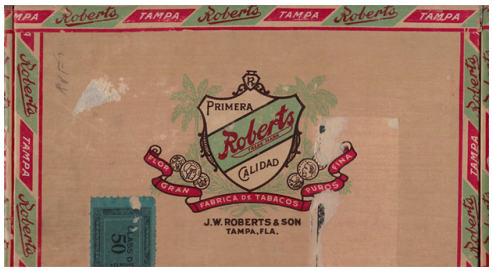
- Class A - $2.00 per 1,000 cigars
- Class B - $3.00 per 1,000 cigars

- Class C - $5.00 per 1,000 cigars
- Class D - $10.50 per 1,000 cigars
- Class E - $13.50 per 1,000 cigars

As a consequence, the tax imposed on a box of 50 cigars selling between 8 to 15 cents per cigar, $4.00 to $7.50 per box, was 25 cents.

The data tables above were taken from the upcoming revision to the Springer catalog by H. Dennis Higdon & Eric Jackson.

Dan Fellows (#3364) wrote with similar information and included scans of another cigar box. J.W. Roberts & Son of Tampa, Florida properly affixed the taxpaid stamp beginning on the boxtop and continuing to the side in a manner that in order to open the box the taxpaid stamp would have to be broken. From the bottom of the box and the revenue stamp we know that the box contained fifty Class "D" cigars. Using the above tabular information we deduce that the "Series 124" on the taxpaid stamp indicates use in 1954 or in 1955. This is confirmed by the rev-perf which reads "FLA / +6·54" specifying payment in Florida of the Federal tax of $0.525 for the contents of the box (50 x $1.05), with the payment being made sometime during June of 1954. And, from the bottom we can confirm Tampa, Florida.



Both men agree that these stamps should indeed be collected on cover, keeping them on the box much as stamps are collected on the full piece onto which they were affixed.

All of the above got me interested in "…the rest of the story." And that led me to an interesting website: "Dating Cigar Boxes; How to date most cigar boxes" by Tony Hyman (http://cigarhistory.info/Site/Dating_boxes.html). He starts the discussion with the simple statement "There are two kinds of information on every cigar box: information that is [1] optional and [2] required by law."

Tax laws required all cigar boxes made in the U.S. to have:

- [1] tax stamps (1863-1959),
- [2] cigar maker I.D.'s (1866-1960's),
- [3] caution notices (1868-1959)
- [4] tax paid notices (1917-1959)

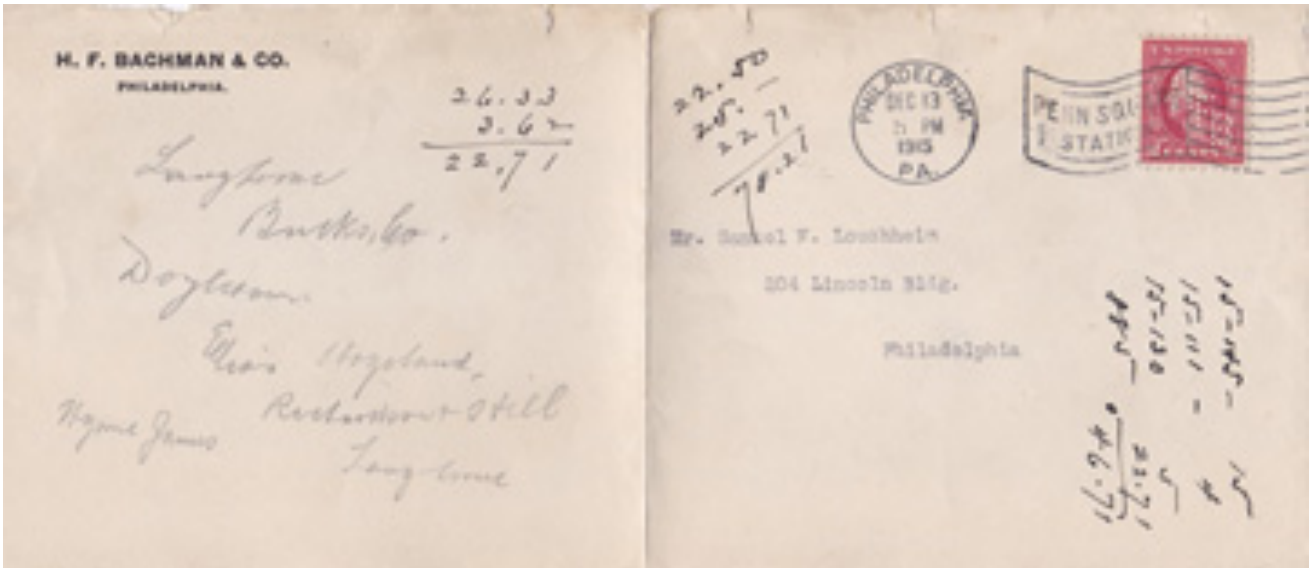
He also states that: "Optional information includes advertising, guarantees, slogans, ingredient lists, copyright and registration dates, type of labor, type of tobacco, source of tobacco, retail price and the like. Everything optional was exactly that. Pictures were optional, Text was optional. Truth was optional. The latter was abused unmercifully by this creative and opportunistic industry."

He also presents a useful guide to dating any cigar box which is titled "Tony Hyman's Dating Guide for people who like things very simple." (My kind of website.) It presents 12 identifying features of the box and attached tax stamps which allow you to quickly approximate the date of use of a cigar box. Worth mentioning, but these Q&As don't really apply to rev-perfs which tell their own story.

Revenue Catalog Volunteer Editor Needed

User of Pattern H067 Identified

Edited by Paul Mistretta (LM #111) from a cover discovered by Bill Sinesky (#4176)



Proving that even the most abused cover can provide new information consider the one pictured above. Clearly used as scrap paper, apparently more than once, yet it establishes a new user identity, city/state of use and its EKU.

H. F. Bachman & Co had a building on Chestnut Street renovated. Architectural drawings dated April 5, 1911, seen on eBay record: "Details of alterations of a banking building on Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA. Rankin, Kellog & Crane, Architects".

Facade of the H. F. Bachman & Co. building at 1512 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA.

A partial sentence note in a book on the Philadelphia Stock Exchange states "H. F. Bachman & Co. held seats on both the Board of Brokers and the New York Stock Exchange. Bachman also traded on the New York Cotton and Coffee Exchanges." (Vitiello & Thomas 2010)

The only other information we have discovered is a brief note from the *Evening Public Ledger* in which it is announced "ESTABLISHED 1866 / H. F. BACHMAN & CO. / Members of New York and Philadelphia Stock Exchanges / announce their removal to / 1425 Walnut Street". No explanation is given for this move.

In addition to the ID of H. F. Bachman & Co., Philadelphia, PA we also have (from the cover) an EKU of December 13, 1915. Hope it wasn't a Friday…

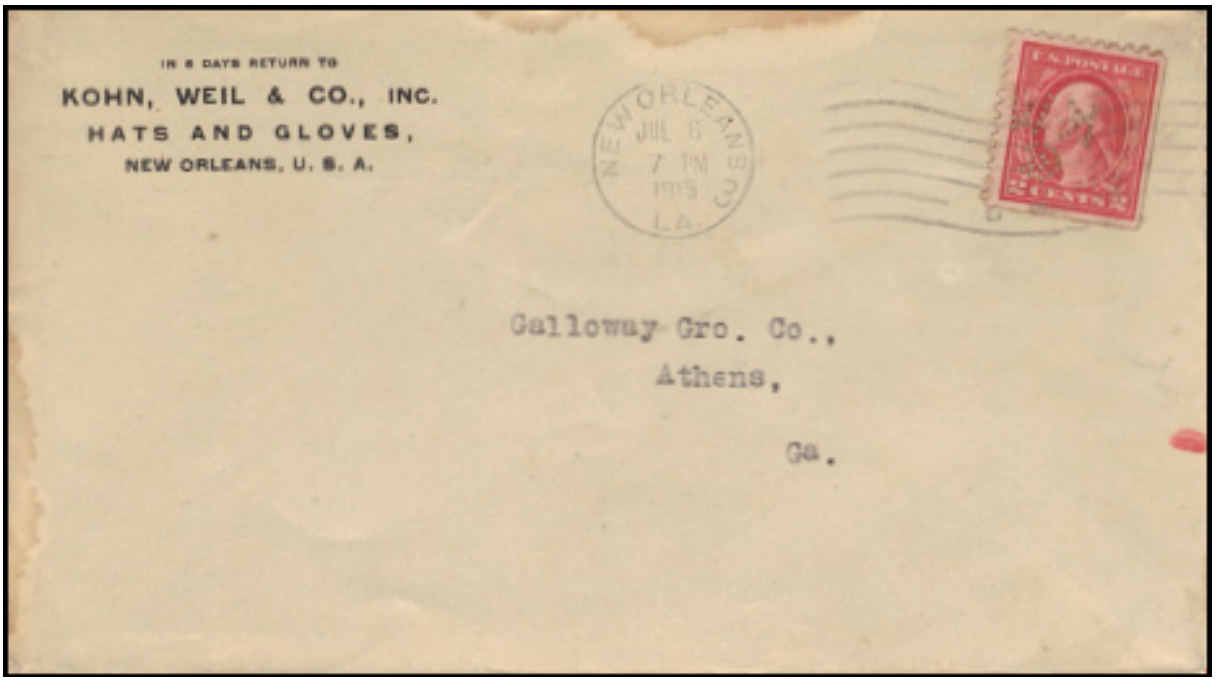
References:

Anon. 1920. Classified ad. Philadelphia, PA: *Evening Public Ledger* (Jan. 2, 1920):

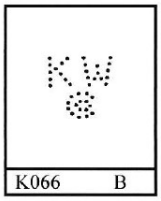
Vitiello, Domenic; Thomas, George E. 2010. The Philadelphia Stock Exchange and the City It Made. The Philadelphia Stock Exchange and the City It Made. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press: 106

K066 User Identified

Joe Coulbourne (#2574)



I was leafing through my covers yesterday and came across this one. I didn't remember the user and found it was unidentified after a short email with *Catalog* Editor, Steve Endicott. The pattern is K066 and we now know it was used by Kohn, Weil & Co., Inc. They made hats, gloves, trunks, umbrellas and artificial flowers. The company was located at the southwest corner of Canal and Magazine Streets in New Orleans, LA. They were famous at the time for their Falcon Brand Hats but also sold the Cleopatra and Fawn Brands as well.



Their logo on the reverse of this cover captures their motto that "Every Hat is made to Perfection".

A bit of history: The company was founded by Charles Simon and Joseph Kohn in 1867 (the picture is of Joseph Kohn). At that time it was called Simon & Kohn. In 1893 Charles Simon retired and Herman Weil joined the company. It was renamed Kohn, Weil & Co., our perfin user. In 1899, Leon C. Simon joined the company and they formed a corporation. Shortly thereafter, Albert N. Simon, Louis A Weil and Harold S. Weil joined. In 1920, the company was renamed Kohn, Weil & Simon. It was incorporated shortly thereafter. These men were noted leaders in their community and all were of Jewish ancestry. Most were related, for example, Mrs. Herman Weil was the niece of Joseph Kohn. Joseph Kohn died in 1921 at the age of 75.

The company continued making hats, gloves and trunks until it was dissolved in 1936. If we assume the perforator stayed in use by Kohn, Weil & Co., Inc., the perforator should have gone out of use in 1920 upon the formation of Kohn, Weil & Simon.

User of Pattern Ro18.5 Identified

Bill Sinesky (#4176)

In 1848, Jacob Loeb Rosenbaum fled his native Bavaria and settled in Dubuque, Iowa. By 1850, he was established enough to send for the rest of his family, including sons Morritz (Morris) and Joseph and daughter Rosalie.

In 1858, Joseph and Morris established a general store in Cedar Falls, Iowa. In 1862, Joseph enlisted in Company B, Thirty-first Iowa Volunteer Infantry and served with distinction until hostilities ceased.

Upon his return, he and Morris began to handle livestock and grain at Waverly, Iowa. Two years later, they entered into partnership in the banking business, founding the Bremer County Bank and the Bank of Nasua, Iowa.

In 1874, they sold their Iowa interests, relocated to Chicago and established the livestock commission firm of Rosenbaum & Co. Joseph also founded the firm of Rosenbaum Brothers, Grain Commission Merchants, located at 77 Board of Trade Bldg., Chicago.

Morris died in 1902 and Joseph in May of 1919, having previously retired to Pasadena, CA. At the time of his death, his many business interests were being ably handled by his three sons.

Only one further relevant note has been found. In the Chicago Tribune of May 12, 1939, it was reported that: "A dust explosion was blamed last night for the $4,000,000 fire that destroyed five huge grain elevator buildings at 102nd street and the Calumet River yesterday. Eight persons, missing, were believed dead and twenty-three others were injured by the blast and fire. Eighteen of the injured are firemen." The buildings which were destroyed, with an estimated value of $4,000,000, included a complex of 3 buildings operated by Rosenbaum Brothers.

I have not been able to locate any further information on this company. It is unclear what was done with the insurance money received from this disaster, but no further record seems to exist for Rosenbaum Brothers.

PS: Doug Cutler provided documentation to Steve Endicott in January 2020, which identified the user of this pattern as Rosenbaum Brothers of Chicago. He also provided a postmark (7/28/1922). At that time, that was the only postmark we knew of. Now, on the above cover an earlier postmark, so we have in addition to a user ID for the pattern, an EKU and LKU; specifically: it was used between 11/21/1917 and 7/28/1922.

A Fantastic Deal

Edited by Paul Mistretta (LM# 111) based on an e-mail from Maciej Pilecki (#3762)

In auction #390 of the Jürgen Götz e. K. Internationales Auktionshaus (Jürgen Götz, Registered Merchant, International Auction House, Oberkirch, Germany) which closed on September 9, 2020, Item 9383-A390 was sold for a very interesting price. The lot was described as follows:

> Extensive estate in approximately 200 volumes, beginning at Alsace. The main value is in the approximately 100 albums with perfins of France, Great Britain, Germany and various European areas, with surely over 100,000 stamps, ordered by the different companies, and mixed punched letters, knowledgeably compiled. With also 36 albums with among others over 4,000 covers with German Reich punches, as well numerous additional albums with "normal" stamps from, among other areas, France mint never hinged to novelties, colonial issues from old to new, Israel in several illustrated albums, Europe and overseas, and so on. In this kind and quantity - as a single unit - practically never offered! We recommend a detailed inspection!

There is a further note that impacts sales price: "The auctioneer receives a commission of 22% of the hammer price and 2.00 euros per lot from the buyer. In the case of written bidders, postage and flat-rate insurance will be charged separately. The statutory sales tax of currently 16% is calculated on the commission and the ancillary costs (lot fee, insurance, packaging, postage, etc.). There is no sales tax for the brokerage of goods from non-EU countries or to non-EU countries if the corresponding import / export certificates are presented."

So how much would you pay for the Lot described. Someone was willing to pay a mere €19.000,00 [€19,000 equals approximately - US$22,450 -- and with the + 22% = US$26,900 without the addition of taxes and shipping costs to its new home.]

Illustrations from the auction house's website (shown below) indicate the sheer size of the collection.

My guess is that even at the price, if the listing is accurate, this price was a real deal for the purchaser! Second mortgage anyone??

Subsequent to the story above, Maciej has sent three follow-up emails which appear to be the purchaser reselling parts of this collection.

- The first sale (on eBay) was a lot of 4.,000+ covers. The verbal description was followed by illustrations. The first picture shown was of 4 Bankers Box-sized boxes containing a total of 39 cover binders. This was followed by 100 pages of pictures of random covers from the lot - 2 or more covers/page - clearly to whet the appetite of bidders. Suggested price was €22,500 (approx. US$26,500.) Unfortunately, no price information is available as this lot was withdrawn.
- The second was a set of less pricey lots. Again, I have no further information on these lots as I apparently waited too long to visit the auction site.
- However, the third lot was very interesting - a single stamp lot. Described "DR Mi 34 gestempelt mit frühem perfin" loosely "Michel #34 stamp with perfin." This pattern (shown to the right) is apparently a newly discovered pattern, it is not listed in the current ARGE Catalog of Commercial Perfins. The pattern could be CMP, CWb, GMP with broken pin, or something else. It sold for €25,49 (approx. US$30.50).

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General Subject Index

General Subject Index (cont.)

Subject	*Bulletin* pgs.	Subject	*Bulletin* pgs.
Pittsburg ? ….gh, PA	74:83-84, 92	Romania: General	74:48
Portugal: General	74:71	Street Car use of perfins	74:94
Precancels	74:83, 91	U.S.: Perfins in imperforate stamps	74:49-50
PSS/Perfins Club Convention 2020, Charleston, SC	74:20, 40, 51-53, 60, 61-62, 80	U.S.: Perfins in Schermack perforated stamps	74:49-50
		U.S.: Prepers	74:91
QSL - QSO cards with perfins	74:53	U.S.: Revenue perfins	74:85-87
Railroad/Railway: general	74:3; 11-13; 19, 23 & 23, 74-76, 91-92	Upcoming events	74:20, 40, 60, 80, 100, 120
		Whatizzits	74:47, 71-72

Catalogs & Checklists

Subject	***Bulletin* pgs.**	Subject	***Bulletin* pgs.**
US: A&C pages to catalog	74:91, 118	U.S.: Encyclopedia of Perfins by Topic	74:31-35, 36, 56-58, 77-78
U.S.: Catalog of prepers (perfinned precancels)	74:91	World Perfins Catalog: Americas section)	74:41 & 43

Index of U. S. Pattern

Catalog # (Endicott 2018)	***Bulletin* pgs.**	Catalog # (Endicott 2018)	***Bulletin* pgs.**
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A221-1A -- AR	74:5	R104 -- RM/Co	74:83 (pc)
A221-1B -- AR	'74:5	S002-55 -- S	74:6, 118
B003 -- B	74:6	S002-56 -- S	74:118
B003A -- B	74:6	S002-62 -- S	74:6
B053 -- BBH	74:94	S002-62A -- S	74:6, 118
C192 -- [C(M)]	74:83 (pc)	S6 -- S	74:94
GP185.3I -- Guam	74:81	S018 -- [S Arrow]	74:83-84 (pc)
G185.5IP -- Guam	74:81	S120 -- SFE	74:118
H171I -- HS/BC	74:89	S121 -- SFE	74:118
J75 -- JJC	74:94	S195-22 -- SO	74:88-89
K012 - KB	74:30	S195-28 -- SO	74:88-89
L042 -- LBC	74:90	S195-30 -- SO	74:88-89
M213 -- MPZ/Co	74:101	S195-33 -- SO	74:88-89
M239 - MSC	74:19	S215 -- SP	74:3
N167 -- NU	74:83 (pc)	S216 -- SP	74:3
N182 -- NYC	74:11-13	T6 -- star (T)	74:118
O032 -- OHIO	74:94	T006A -- star (T)	74:118
P129 -- PL/&T	74:83 (pc)	V22.5 -- V(P)	74:6
P196 -- PRR	74:11-13	W060 -- W(CO)	74:94

Index of Foreign Patterns				
Country/catalog #	***Bulletin* pgs.**		**Country/catalog #**	***Bulletin* pgs**
Belgium: Catalog -- Hammink, Ruud J.; + 1997.			**Indochina** (cont.)**:**	
C128 -- CPR	74:90		A7 - LJC	74:30
Gibraltar: Catalog - Schwerdt, Bob, ed. 1994.			**Netherlands**: Catalog -- Verhoeven, Jan L. 2007	
unl - CANCELLED [small]	74:27-29		358 [K3] -- K	74:53-54
unl - CANCELLED [larger]	74:27-29		361 [K6] -- K	74:53-54
Great Britain: Catalog -- Gault			**Romania**: Catalog -- Llewellyn-Edwards,	
N-01 -- Crown / B.T	74:108-109		Tam. 2008.	
N-11 -- Crown / B.T	74:108-109		B32 - BC.I.	74:48
Indochina: Catalog -- Schwerdt, Bob, ed. 1996.			P10 - PhS	74:48
A3- D.F.	74:30		S45?45.5 - S.J.T	74:48

Photos of Clubmember				
Matthews. John	74:113		Mistretta, Paul	74:113

Australian Items Spotted at Auction

Edited from an email from Rudy Roy (#1124)

Rudy has again spotted an auction item worthy of note for those of you who wonder what constitutes a winning bid.

This time the lot he reports was composed of two Australian stationery items described as: "AUSTRALIA 2 Scarce Printed Envelopes-each w/ 'OS' simulated perfs".

As is common with eBay material offered for sale, the scans of these items are low resolution and the simulated "OS" perfin simulation barely shows. However as seen in the illustration accompanying this note, the covers are very different.

- The upper cover is obviously a legal sized envelope while the lower is a regular sized window envelope. Both have preprinted corner cards but they are very different.
- On the legal sized envelope there is a seven-line, printed statement: "This envelope can only be / legally used by Government / Office…" and has a rubber stamped "Education Department / Melbourne" notation at the bottom left.
- The window envelope has a three-line disclaimer which is virtually illegible in the scan. What I can read is: "If not deliv[ered within 7 days, please return] to / Metropolitan Board] of Water Supply / [Melbourne, ???]".
- And finally, the legal cover bears the printed legend "On His Majesty's Service" while the window envelope is marked simply "O. H. M. S."

So how much would you pay for the lot? Less than the $70 single bid and you would not have succeeded in purchasing it.

What Caused Thi$ Price?

Edited by Paul Mistretta (LM#111) based on an email from Doug Cutler (LM#126)

Described as: "50C #310 ON 1909 PERFIN PITTSBURGH PA SPECIAL DELIVERY PARCEL PIECE", the item pictured below recently sold on eBay (after 69 placed bids) for $350.00.

Implied in the description is that the 50¢ stamp is perfinned - it is not. The other three stamps are, although the pattern is not one cataloged among those used in U.S. postage stamps. Further the 50 stamp is severely creased.

The perfin, reconstructed from a relatively poor image of the cover, *appears to be* "T2O" with the 2 being a slightly smaller character than the other two, with all three characters aligned at the top. The punch on the 10 ¢ appears to be the same pattern punched from the vignette side of the stamp - with the stamp inverted. Having said all of that, it is also possible that the pattern is "O&L" with the characters aligned at their bases. Sadly, the picture is too poor to allow a definitive determination.

After all this speculation it is obvious that the perfin is not the driver of the price. Checking my 2015 Scotts US Specialized catalog I discovered that the cancelled $37.50 catalog value for Sc# 310 jumps to $700 when on cover. So that explains the crazy price for a perfin piece.

Several problems and questions arose when I expanded the image, poor as it is, to 500% to try determination of the perfin pattern. The right-hand 5¢ blue Washington is ripped from the upper right to the lower left, a tear which continues into the wrapper paper. It appears that this tear has been poorly repaired as reflected by the poor match of the cancelling ink of the outer oval, the poor alignment of the "A" of "PA" with the period which follows it, the poor match of the 2 halves of the second "T" of "Pittsburg", and the minor gap in the inking of the lowest line of the outer oval at the bottom (on the wrapper). Also, somewhat confusing is the fact that both the 10¢ and 50¢ stamps are cancelled by a canceller with "11" in the inner oval while that notation is absent from the left-hand cancel on the 5¢ stamps, and on that stamp there is an unexplainable horizontal bar and blob in the oval. Additionally, in the right-hand cancel, after the "A" of "PA." there is an ink smudge not seen in the other three cancels.

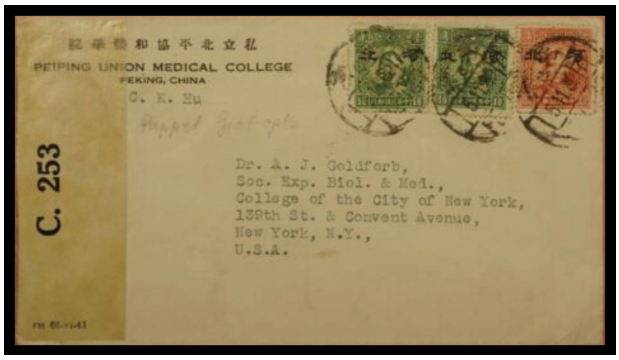
Of greater concern to me is the fact that the cancel on the 50¢ stamp does not extend beyond the stamp. And, finally, the creases in the wrapper are not completely mirrored by those in the 50¢ stamp.

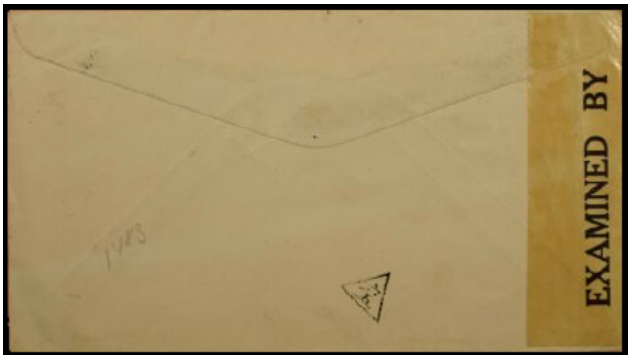
While I may be reading too much into a poor illustration, I am glad I didn't spend $350.00 to get the one sound perfin, even if it is on cover!

An Intere$$$ting Chinese Cover

Paul Mistretta (LM#111)

Almost a year ago, Rudy Roy (#1124) emailed me a note in which he pointed to an eBay lot described as: “CHINA JAPAN OCCUPATION PERFINS PEKING TO USA WWII CENSORED”. Stating that he was “…no China expert…” he continued “…the description about it being from the 'puppet' government makes it somewhat questionable to me.”





I put this aside since I knew it would take a little research to explain this cover to my satisfaction; not only what it is but why it is what it is. I finally dusted it off with the following being the result.

What it is turned out to be a simple bit of catalog work.

- The three stamps are overprinted with two characters used to reflect “Hopei Province”; stamps of this type are found in the Scott Catalogue in the “4N…” series of issues. (The letter “N” for those unfamiliar with Scott indicates occupation stamps.
- The stamps appear to be perf. 14 (as opposed to perf. 12.5), but cannot be determined beyond the type which is Scott Type 57. There are two issues of these stamps with perf. 14 further distinguished by “secret marks” and the presence/absence of a watermark, neither of which can be determined from the cover as shown on the web.
- The perfin, based on only 5 holes visible in the leftmost stamp and, the bigger hint, the return address of the “Peiping Union Medical College” is PU/MC (Schwerdt’s pattern A27).

Why it is what it is requires a little history lesson. Hopei, also known as Hebei or Hopeh, is a Province in northeastern China. It borders the Bohai Sea (also the Gulf of Chihli) and surrounds the cities of Beijing and Shijiazhuang. A map of the area currently covered by this province is shown in red immediately below.

Hopei was part of a three District group whose stamps were overprinted in 1941 during the Japanese occupation in the early years of World War II.

Ma’s catalog explains: “… the postal authorities planned to curtail speculation on smuggling stamps from other parts of China to the then Japanese occupied Northern provinces, where the puppet Federal Reserve Dollars were in use, they ordered the Postal Supply Department in Shanghai to get ready some overprinted stamps to be used particularly in the districts with a different puppet currency in circulation.”

Continued page 20

Secretary's Report

New Members:

#4261 Roger King
348 Simcox St.
Wadsworth, OH. 44281-1270
EMAIL: rking1865@gmail.com
Interests: USA, GB, (TOPICS: Ohio Co., Ulysses Grant)

#4262 Steven Strawn
10640 SE 26th St.
Midwest City, OK. 73130-3056
EMAIL: sstrawn11@cox.net
Interests: Germany, Railroads

#4263 Martin McDonald
140 West 71st. St., #5EF
New York, NY. 10023-4018
EMAIL: martymcd@me.com
Interests: US, especially NY Life (former employee)

Closed album

LM #3443 Art Mongan

Retiring:

#4118 Donald Faulkenburry - other collecting interests
#4189 Thomas Bieniosek - tried free offer but decided not to collect perfins

Corrected Info:

Paul Eagle
6 Congress St., Apt. 101
Belfast, ME 04915

Dropped for non-payment:

#4162 Anna Marie Ayers
#1737 Richard W. Boosey, Jr.
#3670 Kenneth Lee Chotiner
34045 James W. Felton
#4068 Melvin Getlan
#2299 Ruth M. Glidden-Pantry

Dropped (Cont.)

#4202 George Hoff
#4192 Michael Kohut
#4241 Joseph Laplante
#4182 Johnny Lochey
#3828 Robert E. Lynch
#3180 John E. Mitchell
#1255 David E. Murray
#4186 Harold Ornoff
#4222 Clifford Peeeno
#4090 Ronald Schram
#4196 Wayne Schuetz
#3990 John E. Schupp, Jr.
#3819 Alfred N. Weiner
#4163 Joseph (Bill) Latchic
#4224 Todd Willman
#2188 Neil F. Dowsley
#4161 David Fortune
#4210 Jorma Häkkinen
#4192F Mary-Margaret Kohut

Current membership: : 432

Louis DeJoy, the Postal Board of Governors and the US Postal Service (not their fault) Did Us Wrong

Hopefully everyone has received their copy of the September/October *Bulletin* by now; possibly even after receipt of the November-December issue. We experienced ***severe*** delays with mail service when the *Bulletins* were apparently prioritized below the flood of political and advertising junk mail. This combined with a general top-down disruption of service (ordered no overtime, removal of sorting machines, etc.) caused the *Bulletins* which were mailed periodical rate to be caught in a perfect storm.

The Postal Services' "Standard Rate" was used to mail the domestic copies of the November/ December *Bulletin* and delivery went much smoother.

As a result, all future domestic mailing of the *Bulletin* will be made using "Standard Rate" (except for those members who have paid for and will continue to receive their issues "First-Class").

Volunteer needed: Revenue Catalog Editor

The Perfins Bulletin
6500 Upper Applegate Road
Jacksonville, OR 97530-9314

(Chinese Cover - from pg. 18)

Two overprints were prepared and applied to Chinese postage stamps, one for use in Hopei Province, the second for use in Shantung Province. These 5-character, single line overprinted stamps were never released for use since the North China Political Council banned their use. These unissued stamps have reached the open market; they were assembled in a 270-stamp souvenir album given free to all postal workers "…of higher ranks…". This distribution was done shortly before the puppet Peking Post Office was taken over by Chungking authorities after the August 1945 Japanese surrender.

Ma's continues: "Since the postal authorities under the puppet North China Political Council refused to use the Shanghai overprinted stamps, they ordered the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Peking to overprint the so-called Six Districts Small Character Stamps which were put on sale on July 1, 1941. The six districts are Hopei, Honan, Shantung, Shansi, Supeh, and Mengkiang. For each district only the name of the district was overprinted on the stamp." The small character overprint is "北 冀".

It was almost immediately followed (about 1 month later) by a large character overprint "北 冀" having the same basic characters but differing in size; the second 2-character overprint, as the nickname suggests, being both taller and wider than the first.

Both these overprints were accepted by the North China Political Council and saw appropriate postal use.

The overprints seen on the three stamps on the cover are of the large character style. Possibly of interest to the fly-speck philatelist is the fact that the upper line on the left side of the right-hand character appears to be mostly absent, suggesting a chronologically later overprint application using a damaged overprinting device.

To allay Rudy's concern, the overprints were used to counter smuggling under a puppet government established by Japan in occupied China.

Oh, by the way, with 34 bids placed, this cover sold for a mere $181.50.

References:

Anon. 2020. Hebei. Accessed at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebei. Accessed on Nov 19, 2020.

Ma, Zung-Sung, ed. Ma, Ren-Chuen, Compiler & Translator. 1947 Ma's illustrated catalogue of the stamps of China. 1st Ed. Shanghai, Chi.: Shun Chang & Co:394-396 & 414

Upcoming Events of Interest

~~**January 18-21, 2021 - Florida Winter Meet** is tentatively scheduled. The Florida Precancel Club Precancel Bourse and Perfins Exchange~~… **CANCELLED DUE TO THE COVID PANDEMIC**

August 23-28, 2021 - PSS/ Perfin Club Convention – Marlborough, MA: Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel. More later.

The Perfins Bulletin is published bi-monthly.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to The Perfins Club, Inc., 6500 Upper Applegate Rd., Jacksonville, OR 97530-9314