

POSTAGE RATES AND PERFINS

By Dave Hill

(Follow-on from Bulletin 322 Page 21-28)

Is this the product of a fertile mind or a "sad" person? Postage rates matter little to the user of sheet stamps, if you want 1/- stamps perfined then you order them. Actually that's not quite right, if like Sloper, you charge a percentage of the total cost of the sheet, then to perfin a sheet of 1/- stamps cost a lot more than a sheet of 1d's. But I was thinking more of affixing machine users. They needed rolls of stamps in the current postage rates, so I have researched what the Post Office made available and the changing postage rates.

First the machines. **FIXO**, the earliest, must have had their own rolls of stamps, or had them made privately before the first PO rolls were issued in 1912. They used end-ways delivery and I think it had almost disappeared by 1920. The machine was cheap and perhaps not very robust, it also offered no security.

It seems to have been superseded by the **MULTIPOST**, which could be locked and stamp rolls were still being used for it into the 1960's. It used lower end delivery rolls but the firm who marketed it pressed the PO to produce sideways delivery rolls and it changed its machines to them early in the 1920's. Neither machine perfined its own stamps, but some users had their rolls perfined. The perfins need research but some dies appear very similar to Slopers' common later alphabet.

The **MICHELIUS** machine used end-ways rolls and is uncommon. It perfined its own stamps, using a tall continental looking alphabet (the machine was German) with letters occasionally deformed.

The users of the above machines had two choices. They either loaded a roll of 1½d and stamped all their letters, then a roll of 1d and stamped their postcards (tradecards). Or they only used ½d stamps, putting one on printed papers, two on postcards etc. The utility of the POKO machine was that it had a number of rolls of stamps of different values which you could select. The single perforating head moved across to the value which you selected. The alphabet is distinctive and well known although I have

an idea that some heads were replaced with non-standard dies. Both these machines could probably be used without their perfin dies.

All these machines could have used privately made stamp rolls. POKO's are known to have used 1/- rolls never made by the PO.

POSTAGE RATES

<u>Up To</u>	<u>Basic Inland</u>	<u>Postcard</u>	<u>Printed Paper</u>	<u>Stamps</u>
1918	1d	½d	½d	up to GV RC & MRC
1920	1½d	1d	½d	GV RC & MRC
1922	2d	1½d	½d	ditto
1940	1½d	1d	½d	ditto+photo+G6 dk & lt
1957	2½d	2d	1d	G6 dk & lt & ch. QE2

Printed papers included many of the short hand-written or typewritten commercial trade cards we see with perfins on, order acknowledgements and advices etc.

If anyone is interested enough in this topic to want a list of the **Stamp Rolls Produced by the Post Office for Multipost and POKO Machines**, values and dates, I, or the Editor, can send you a copy.