

COPESTAKE. CRAMPTON ET AL

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[Ed:- this came in, in response to Dave Hill's article in Bulletin 325. As Roy Gault has added more about the perfin dies elsewhere in this Bulletin, perhaps all three pieces put together will make a whole.]

I read the article by Dave Hill with interest and although I cannot fully answer any of the queries raised I can add a little more general information which may be of interest to some members.

From the biography of George Moore, [**George Moore Merchant and Philanthropist by Samuel Smiles. Published in 1878 by George Routledge and Sons**] which, although it concentrates on Moore's philanthropic endeavours, it does tie them in with updates on events in his personal and professional life at appropriate points. Here is a potted history of the firm from 1825 to 1876.

The firm **Groucock and Copestake** was founded in **1825** and had offices/warehouse space at **7 Cheapside**. Copestake was the chief clerk and warehouseman and was the main man in the office all his working life. Groucock was the man out and about travelling for orders.

They moved to **62 Friday Street** in **1829**. George Moore joined as a junior partner in the following year when the firm became known as **Groucock, Copestake and Moore**. Moore became a travelling salesman concentrating on the North while Groucock covered the Midlands. After 3 years Moore became a full partner.

In **1834** they moved their head office to **Bow Churchyard**. In **1841** Moore joined Groucock on the warehouse side of the business. At around the same time they bought up houses in **Bread Street** (just round the corner from Bow Churchyard) to increase their warehouse space. Business was obviously booming as they went into manufacturing and built their own **Lace Factory** in **Nottingham** in **1845**.

By **1852** they had offices in many of the larger towns in the United Kingdom and even one notable one in Paris.

Groucock died in **1852** and his name was dropped from the firm shortly afterwards.

Crampton must have joined the firm before 1865 as there is this entry in a commercial directory for that year:- **Copestake, Moore, Crampton & Co. Wholesale warehousemen for lace and sewed muslins, scotch and Manchester goods, cambrics & lawns, crapes, gossamers, velvets, stays, artificial flowers, millinery, baby linen, mantles, outfitting, shawl & haberdashery, umbrellas & parasols; Bow Churchyard EC; 50 Cheapside EC and Bread Street EC.**

Copestake senior died in **1874** after 44 years of partnership with Moore. His son **Samson Copestake** succeeded him as full partner in the firm. **Mr.Osbourne** (who appeared as a partner somewhere along the way, yet to be established) died in **1876**.

George Moore himself died towards the end of 1876.

As to the assertion that Dave made then queried, that **the Moore underprint was used after he was no longer a partner** - I think we can safely say this was the case. Any underprint on a 1d plate 196 or later would post date the death of George Moore. I have several in this range the latest being from plate 224 which was not put to press until 23rd June 1879 a full 2/4 years after his death. One reason for continuing to use the underprint for some time could be due to the fact that this was an official underprint produced by stamp printers. Perhaps the cost or time involved to produce a new die was not considered worth it at the time? It should be noted that the unofficial underprint stopped at plate 204 (put to press 23rd June 1877). This is still 7 months after the death of Moore but much less than the 2½ years of the official underprint.

Also, if they were happy to continue using the Moore underprint after the partner's death then why not the Hughes perfin after he died/left?