

MEMBERS COMMENTS ON PREVIOUS ARTICLES

Frank Braham Advert – Bulletin 340 / 23

John Nelson writes to help out on the dating of the Frank Braham advert.

“It is of course difficult to be precise as to the date of the advert, but I would suggest that it dates from around 1877/79. I say this because, in order to offer a free perforating service, Braham and the others relied for their profit on the 1% poundage allowed to Postmasters on the value of stamps purchased from the Post Office and which they then sold at face value. This came to an end in March 1879 when a limit of £400 per annum was imposed by the Post Office and eventually, in 1883 the poundage was incorporated as part of the Postmasters' salaries.”

“I have done no original research in Post Office Records for some time but seem to remember that Braham opened the Tabernacle Street Post Office and

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started to perforate stamps about 1877, which gives me my earliest suggested date.”

“When the Postmasters' salaries were increased in 1883, Braham (£200.6.0) received the third largest amount after Sloper (£341.6.0) and Francis Hancock (£318.5.0). Although Hancock and Braham were major players, they have never been given the prominence accorded to Sloper so perhaps our 'perfin-genealogists' could take the first steps to rectify this.”

“Nor, so far as I can recall have the individual characteristics of their dies ever been the subject of detailed examination. It is difficult with Hancock because there is very little to go on, but it was Braham's practice to use typical representations of his dies as part of his publicity material as with RH/&/JP and E/&Co on the advert in Bulletin 340. Sometimes the dies were perforated on stamp-size inter-pane gutters, which he stuck on to his leaflets. I have seen dies BF/Co, D&F/G and ED/WJ employed in this way. It is probable that these were dies supplied to customers but they could have been specially made up for publicity purposes.”

[Ed: **Dave Hill** in Bulletin 288/28 & 294/30 made an attempt to link some of the Braham proof stamps with known perfin dies and their users. Certainly though more work needs to be carried out in this area as both Hancock and Braham were major players.]