"F" CATALOGUE QUERIES
Roy Gault

Now that Part I of the Line Engraved Catalogue and the low-volume letters "Q", "Y", "Z", "Designs" & "Numbers" are complete, a return has been made to the letter "F". I'm currently tidying up the loose ends prior to preparing the Print Masters, but find there are a couple of mysteries to solve (if possible) and an unusually large number of "F" dies for which no stamp details have been recorded.

The first question is how to catalogue the following die. In the past it's been included as "FB./&C°" (F0315.01) and "FQ/&C°" (F3400.01), although some suggest it could also be read as "FG/&C°", *but what do you think?* The only clues to the identity of the user is London EC postmarks and a die in use date range of 1895-1915.
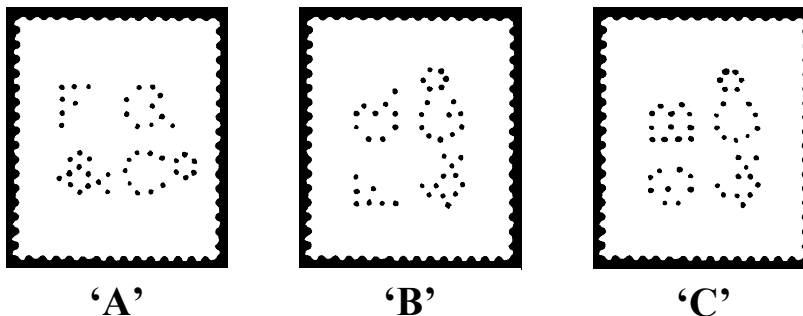
| '**A**' | '**B**' | '**C**' |

Illustration '**A**' (perfin also known sideways) shows how the die is usually found, whereas illustration '**B**' shows an extra hole in the "C". The third illustration showing "GB/&C°" (G0470.03) has been included as the "&C°" portion matches that found on '**A**' and '**B**'.

Stamp details:
'**A**' - B 1d (16-dots), E ½d (gn), 2½d - Earliest date 7th Sep 1897
'**A**' - F 1d, 2½d; I(RC) 1d - Latest date 11th May 1904
'**B**' - F ½d (bl-gn)
'**C**' - No details known!

Could this be a 'Service Die' with removeable pins arranged in a regular grid, used to produce initialled stamps 'over the counter'? This would certainly explain the 'uncomfortable' nature of some of the letters, and the extra pin placed 'in error'. *Please report any other stamp values/issues, earlier dates etc.*

The second mystery was solved (partially at least) part way through writing this article, but rather than leave it out I thought it better to share with you the problem along with the solution.

Again various attempts have been made over the years to catalogue this obvious partial, for example as "F.F./C" (F1285.01), and "FR/C" (F3505.01). It could also be read as "FT/C". Typical examples '**D**', '**E**', and '**F**' are shown below, the only consistant feature being the large, 11-pin "C" tying in nicely with known **Cardiff** postmarks.

c1900	1901-1902	c1904	1904-1915
F0285.01	'**D**'	'**E**'	'**F**'
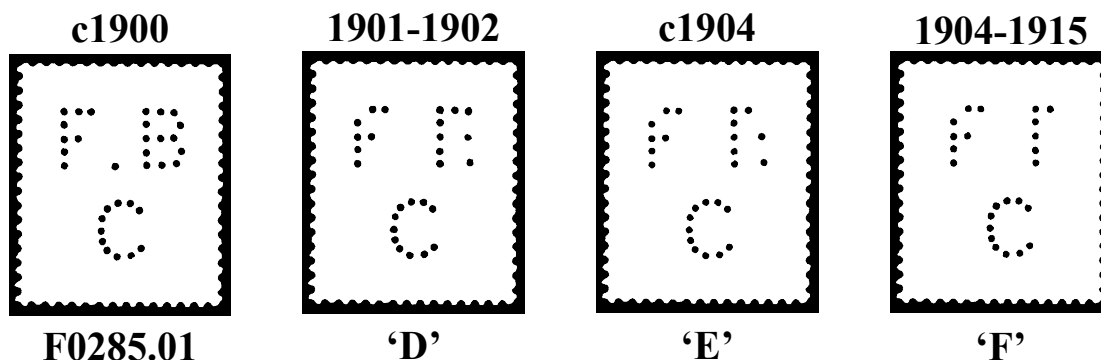
But then, right at the last moment amongst some potentially New Dies sent in by Joe Dooley, I came across an example of "F.B/C"!! This full strike is on a ½d (gn) issue 'E', postmarked (Ca)rdiff, 11 Sep 1900. The mystery as to what the letters had originally been is now solved, but we're still left with the age-old question of who the user was.

Stamp details:

'**D**' - E ½d (gn) dated 20th Dec 1901, F 1d dated March 1902
'**E**' - F ½d (ye-gn)
'**F**' - F ½d (ye-gn) dated 30th March 1905, 1d dated 25 Feb 1904
'**F**' - H ½d; I(RC) ½d dated 30 Apr 1913, and 1d

I've listed what scant details I have to give some sort of chronology for the die regarding pin loss, but of course it may not have been as convenient and neat as this! *Can anyone add anything more?*
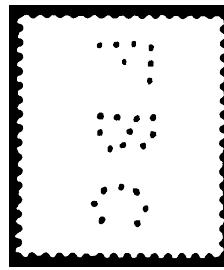
And my final request is for you to look through your collections for these twenty rare "F" dies and report any stamp and postmark details should you be lucky enough to find any. The accuracy and completeness of the catalogue depends on your contributions.
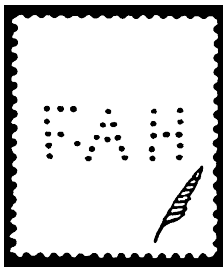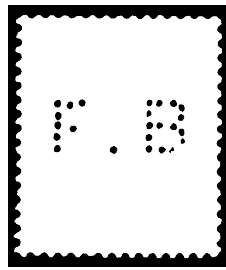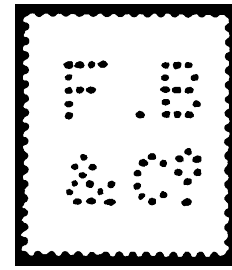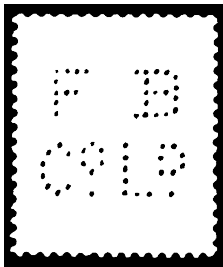
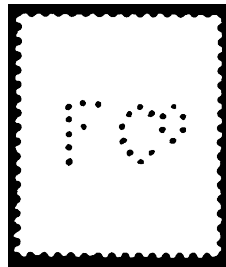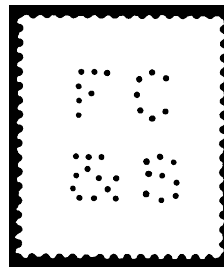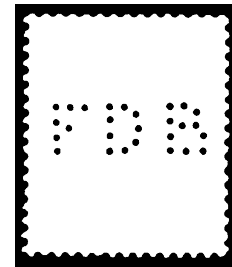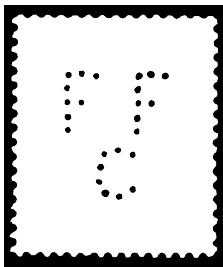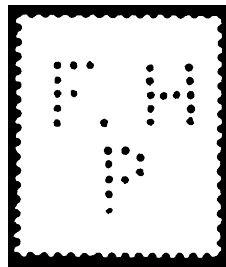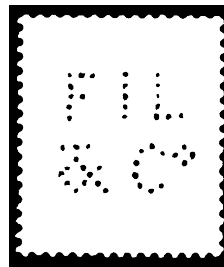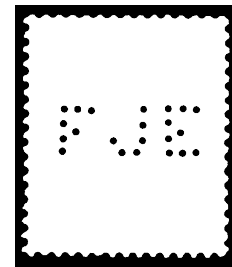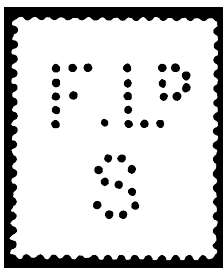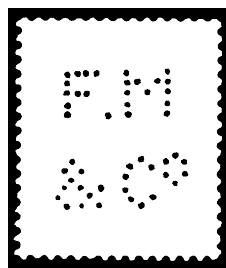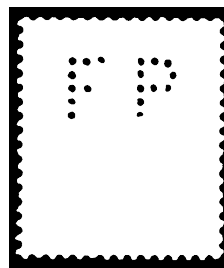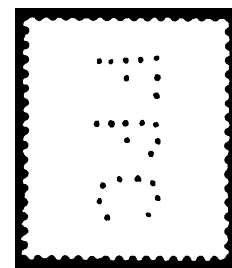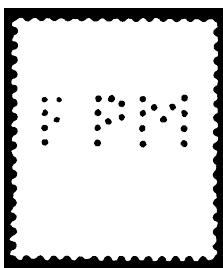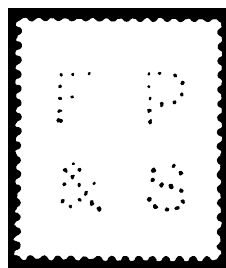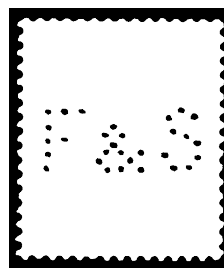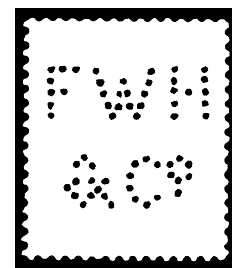|			
F0127.01	**F0220.01**	**F0270.05v**	**F0320.01c**
F0360.02	**F0745.01**	**F0880.03**	**F1030.07**
F1425.01	**F1865.01**	**F2040.02**	**F2160.01**
F2475.01	**F2760.01a**	**F3160.02**	**F3230.01v**
F3310.01	**F3350.03**	**F3700.11**	**F4463.01**

Twenty "F" dies for which no stamp details are recorded.