

SLOPER'S "5 REIGNS BOOKLET"

Dave Hill

In this, our Jubilee year, have you ever wondered about Sloper's list of perfin users in the above booklet? What do you mean, you haven't got a copy? At just £3.50 (UK) from **Jeff Turnbull** this booklet is a mine of information, produced by Sloper's themselves in 1939, when they showed their products at an engineering exhibition (which one I wonder, Sloper Checkpoint still had a photo of it in the 1990's). Sloper's in 1939, seem to have inherited the style of their founder with lots of paragraph headings in red.

To the list of users at the back, the Alliance Assurances and Barclay Bank type of clients are well known but what about Du Barry Perfumery Co for instance? I find this Hove company didn't use a perfin, but it's shorter lived side shoot did. The Standard Tablet Co, and Du Barry Perfumery or Du Barry et Cie as they termed themselves on their commercial overprints (also produced by Slopers) which sounds a lot better than the Standard Tablet Co! S7520.01 ST/PCo is only known used from 1912-18 (what was the "P" for?) although there is a possible pre-war die S7230.01 S/T/C but postmarks haven't confirmed Standard Tablet as the user. And there is a possible wartime provisional ST (Hove postmarks would be nice) but Standard seems to have vanished during the war whereas Du Barry survived at least until the 60's as part of an American group. But apparently never using perfins, so Sloper seems to have a tenuous claim to them being a user in 1939. Perhaps they did other work for them as Sloper did produce some machines for perforating sachets for the pharmaceutical industry.



Another user in the booklet was the Boys Scout Association; inclusion was likely to impress any grown up Boy Scout. The first perfin B6500.01 BS/A is rare and a scout collector once told me why. Used by Baden Powell and other high ups in the organization's early days, any letter or card from BP was jealously guarded by the recipient. Witness correspondence that was occasionally displayed at Baden Powell house, when we had our meetings there. A later perfin B6500.02 BS/A, used 1926-36 is hardly better known. The BP perfins that appeared in the last 10 years, belatedly, on the 1957 Scout Jubilee stamps are spurious I think. Produced in Australia from an old cheque canceller I think and sold by Rushstamps in this country, some appeared in our own auction recently. I resisted the temptation to bid. I wonder what is planned for the Boy Scout Centennial this year, perfin wise?

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St Giles Christian Mission is also listed; the basis for the claimed possible identity of S3150.01 S.G/C.M used 1930-45. Founded to spread the Gospel to the slums of Soho in the 1860's it moved to Islington in the 1930's and still operates today.

Grosvenor Hotel is a bit of a misnomer in Tomkins where it's listed as Grand Hotel (Gordon Hotels) London WC. G2060.04 GH was used from 1925-30. The list in the 5 reigns booklet also has Gordon Hotels. In Sloper's first ledger Gordon Hotels Ltd. is listed as using an unidentified perfin GHL, perhaps a mistake for GH. As far as I can make out a Grand Hotel existed on the south side of

Trafalgar Square until about 1930 when the site became Grand Buildings, which still exist. Later I find that Gordon Hotels owned the Mayfair, Grosvenor and Hotel Victoria. They also managed the Dorchester for a while; the Grosvenor being the first hotel to have lifts or "ascending rooms" as they were called.