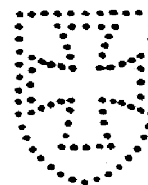


PRIVATE USE OF CARLISLE PERFIN ?

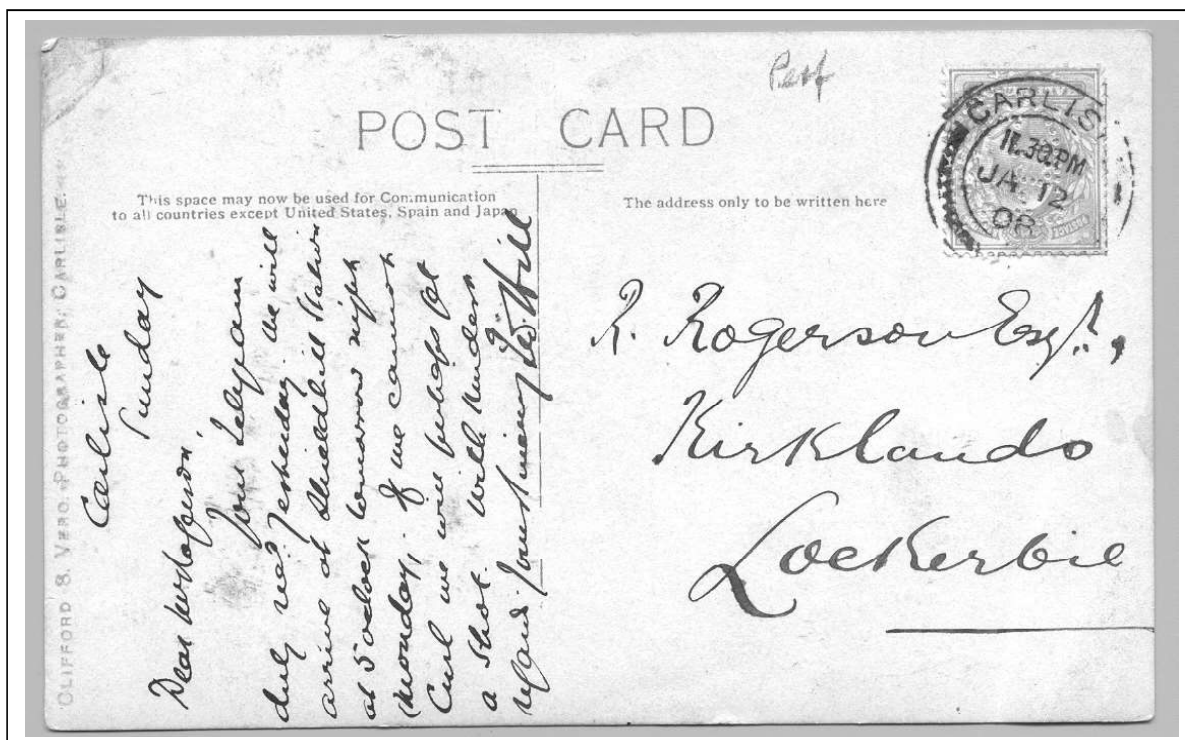
John Mathews

I recently came across a postcard which at first glance, seemed to be an example of “illegal” private use of a perfin. The perfin pattern on the inverted ½d green KEVII stamp is Design 0130.01, known used from 1895 to 1918, and



Des 0130.01

attributed to user “Town Clerk’s Office, Carlisle”. The design of a Maltese Cross within a shield outline is the Coat of Arms of the city of Carlisle.



Message side of the Carlisle postcard

Out of curiosity, I tried to find “G. W. Hill” of Carlisle on the 1901 Census, but there was no such person in Carlisle. I then turned my attention to Post Office Directories, of which the 1906 and 1910 editions are available online. These Directories show that George Hill was Chief Constable for the City of Carlisle in 1906 and 1910. Was this the writer of the message?

The picture side of the card shows a man in a uniform, which does not appear to be a military uniform, but to me it looked as if it could be the formal uniform of a Chief Constable. The hand-stamped "Clifford S. Vero, Photographer, Carlisle" indicates that this is not a mass-produced commercial picture postcard, but rather a personal portrait in a similar style to the older "calling cards" and produced by a local photographer (as were the "train crash" cards). This also seemed to support the idea that the person in the portrait was a local official of some sort. Clifford S. Vero appears in the 1910 Directory but not in the 1906 Directory, so the portrait must have been taken in late 1906 or 1907 (the card is postmarked "JA 12 / 08").



George Hill is not in the County of Cumberland in the 1897 or 1901 Directories, which suggests that he was appointed as Chief Constable from outside the County. This would explain his personal portrait postcard having been made by the Carlisle photographer following his appointment.

George Hill's appointment as Chief Constable was terminated by the Council on 7 January 1913 after the manager of the Carlisle Motor Company alleged victimization because they refused him use of a free car. George Hill pleaded illness and went on a month's sick leave, at the end of which he claimed still to be ill, and asked for either another six months' sick leave or to be retired on pension. ["The Times", Wednesday 8 January 1913, page 4].