METER NEWS

Issue Number 139 May 2012

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Meter of the Month

Your editor reports a fifth example of a 7-digit number on a T-series (Francotyp-Postalia T1000 machine) – with an extra '0' appearing at the end. The serial number in this case is T7885790 - the user being Beacon Lights of Leiston (Suffolk). The table below lists the numbers that have now been reported:

Serial	Date	Page
T7880800	14.03.05	53-5
T7880980	17.09.97	27-1
T7885790	28.10.11	See above
T7898650	19.05.98	5-1, 27-1
T7908090	15.09.97	27-1

The extraordinary thing about this latest find is that the frank from this meter used to be correct – with the normal 6 digits and without a zero at the end, as this example from 2002 shows:
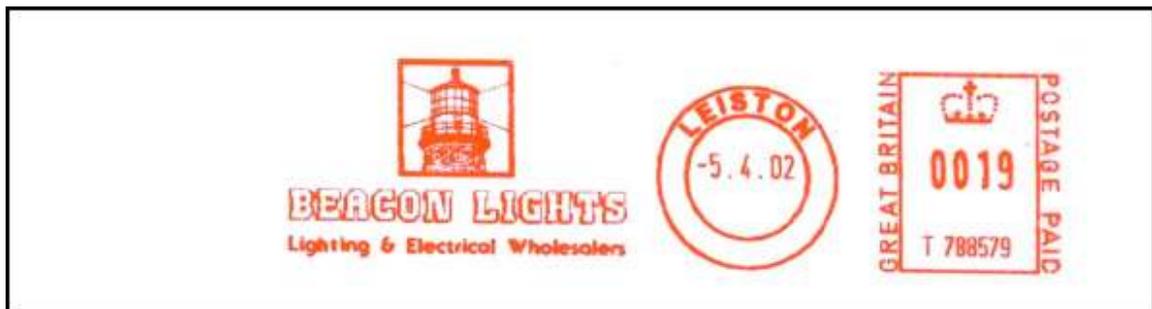
Your editor would be pleased to receive reports of any further examples.

Acknowledgements

Latest Numbers

Below is the list of 'latest numbers' as at the end of May 2012 – with updates shown in red. Please could I have the next reports by 28th June - thanks.

In the list below, the part of the serial number that directly relates to the model is underlined.

Frama (UK)

Matrix F2, F4, F6	F1001873	23.05.12	Reported by PM

Francotyp-Postalia

Optimail	T402913	02.06.11	See MN 129
Optimail 25/35	F04114026	24.04.12	See MN 138
Centormail 240/300	FC5110551	27.02.12	See MN 137
MyMail / PostagePro	FM2653081	14.05.12	Reported by PM
Ultimail	FU3116684	16.04.12	See MN 138

Neopost

IS-330	N1052108	30.04.12	Reported by AN
IS-350	N1180253	30.01.12	See MN 137
IJ-65	N1208331	27.03.12	See MN 138
Various upgraded	N1240607	21.10.11	See MN 132
IJ-80/90/110	N1254447	03.01.12	See MN 137
IS-460 (Ex IJ-50)	N1373581	30.11.11	See MN 138
IS-420 (Ex IJ-30)	N1385374	14.11.11	See MN 137
IS-440 (Ex IJ-40)	N1390543	10.02.12	See MN 137
IS-480	N3022050	27.04.12	See MN 138
IS-240 / IS-280	N3306700	29.03.12	See MN 138
IS-5000/6000	N5001299	27.04.12	Reported by PM

Pitney Bowes

DM50, 55	PB088363	29.05.12	Reported by AN
DM 810, 900 etc.	PB527622	20.04.12	Reported by TM
Connect+ 1000 etc.	PB551419	14.09.11	See MN 131
Connect+ 10FC etc.	PB555979	23.04.12	See MN 138
DM 400, 450, 475	PB617383	25.05.12	Reported by PM
DM100i, 150i etc.	PB866696	31.05.12	Reported by AN
Unknown	PB898932	09.08.11	See MN 134

Advanced Mail

AAEK-CA	FU3116534	03.05.12	Reported by AN
ABCE-GH	PB555386	15.02.11	See MN 128 & 132

The highest Advanced Mail Code (AAEK-CA) reported by your editor is shown below.
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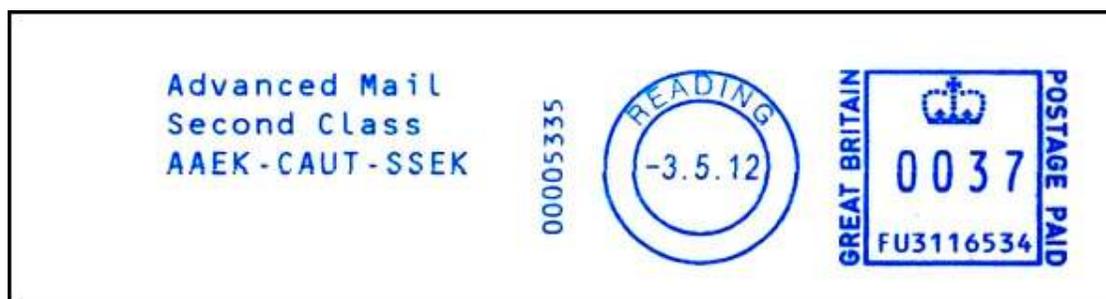
Latest Numbers – Images

This month your editor has decided to try the idea of including images of the latest numbers reported. The images are reduced to 60% of full-size in order to save space. Your thoughts on whether or not the inclusion of these should be a regular feature of Meter News would be appreciated.

The advantages are that it shows the colour of the frank and it provides a definitive record in cases where a typo might have been made in the 'page 2' list. The disadvantages include the time it will take me to include these images, the increased file size of the newsletter and the fact that often new machines often do not begin life with a slogan and therefore might appear to be rather boring to some readers. There may also be complications for 'last minute' reports if the basic layout of the newsletter has already been determined. Previous attempts to include these images as a separate annex or to make them available on my web site failed due to the time it took to me put together.

Recent Interesting Items

Peter Mantell reports our first example of the 'GOOD NEWS' built-in slogan on the N3 series (IS-480 model):

Recent Interesting items continued

Your editor has found this frank from P&O Ferries with the letters 'UK' positioned at the far left of the envelope. It would be interesting to see what they are putting on mail that is destined for non-UK addresses. Your editor would therefore appreciate any reports of this meter seen by our overseas members.


PB Connect+ Coloured Slogans

Here are four more examples of coloured slogans from Pitney Bowes Connect+ machines. The first is from Peter Mantell and the others are from your editor.
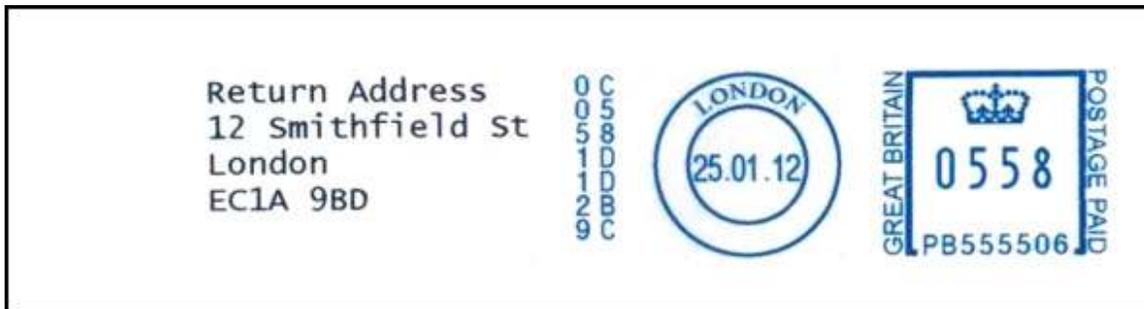
Royal Mail Branding Trial

Further to pages 131-3 to 131-5 and 132-3, your editor is able, at last, to report a genuine 'U' mark on an underpaid meter franked item. It clearly shows that the sorting equipment is now capable of reading and interpreting the postage applied in the value die. Exciting times!
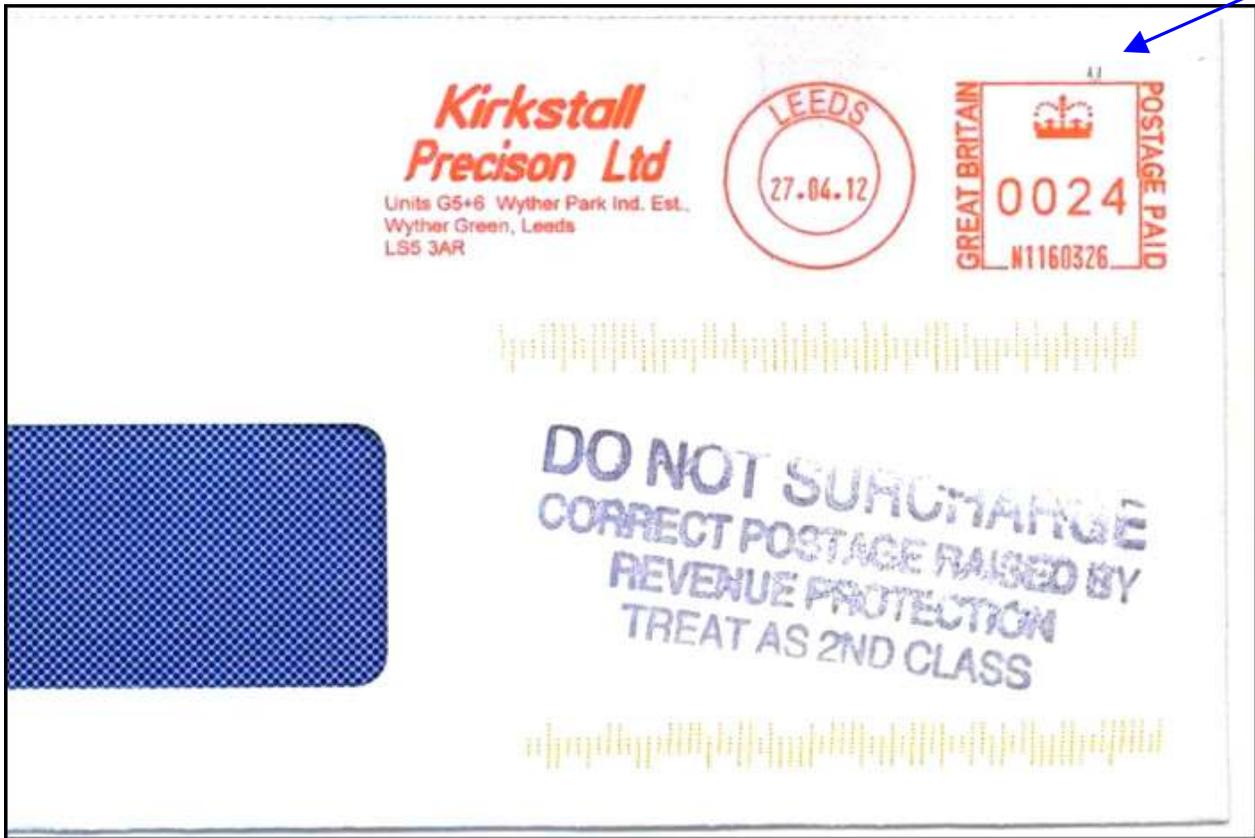
The Royal Mail iLSM (integrated Letter Sorting Machine) has recently been applying small bars to meter and PPI mail. These marks are being applied either at the top left-hand corner or, as shown here, the top-right hand corner. The marks can be either widely or closely separated, the purpose being to exercise the printer to help prevent the ink jets drying up.

Instructional Markings

Peter Mantell reports two new instructional markings that have been applied to under-paid meter mail at the Home Counties North (HCN) Mail Centre at Hemel Hempstead. The first has been applied by a dated handstamp but the second mark is undated and appears to have been applied by what looks like a continuous impression stamp-cancelling machine.

Your editor has found this partially franked item with a 'TO PAY' label rather than a Revenue Protection handstamp. The item only bears the left-hand side of the value die and does not bear any town die. What may have happened is that three overlapping mail items went through the franking machine together, this one being the middle of the three. The top one may have had the town die and the one underneath may have had the remainder of the value die. Royal Mail staff were, presumably, unable to apply the meter revenue protection scheme because the meter serial number was missing. They therefore had no option but to treat the item as an un-stamped item and apply the full £1.00 handling fee for underpaid stamped mail - hence the label rather than a meter 'Do Not Surcharge' handstamp.

Advanced Mail

Contrary to what was reported on page 138-3, it appears that the Mailmax (FSC9 series) model is a 'SMART' machine (or is capable of being converted to one). Peter Mantell reports FSC908364 using the Advanced Mail service after the new VAT on Postage rules came into force on 2nd April 2012, which would appear to confirm this.

Further to page 127-5 and earlier, Peter Mantell reports another example, N1254400, where an Advanced Mail frank has been applied red ink – contrary to Royal Mail regulations.
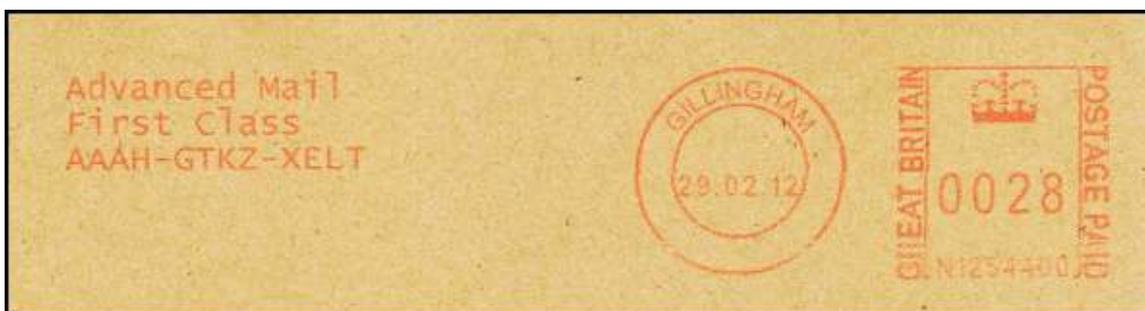
UPF NZ Wembley Meters – A special request from Jim Ashby

Jim Ashby is currently producing an article on the UPF Wembley meters that will explain some of the changes of die, Town Mark colour and dates of use. Jim would very much appreciate scanned images of all items that you may have in your collection. Examples of what Jim needs are shown below. Thanks.
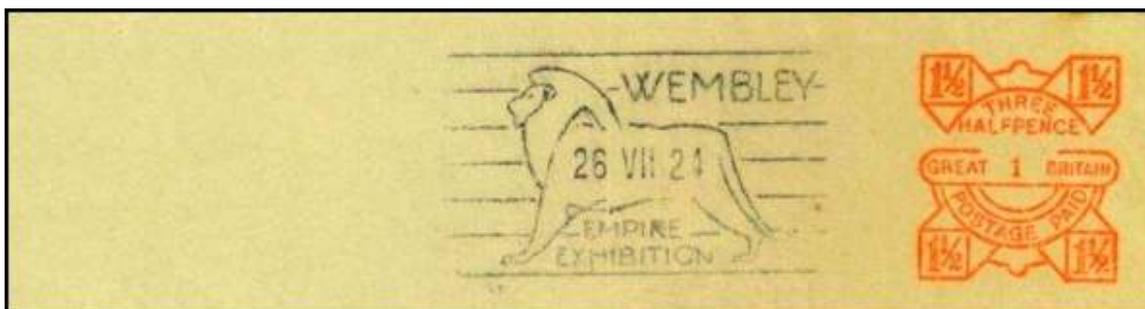
Interesting Items from the Past

Jim Ashby sends this unusual specimen from the 1947 British Industries Fair, with the word "SPECIMEN" at an angle through the value die (machine N44, value 60d).

Your editor has found these three specimens. The first illustration was produced by the very first Universal Multi-Value machine (U 1). The date of -1 1 1932 may be a 'First Day'.

This specimen frank from 1936 has the serial number blanked out and bears the slogan "Universal – THE HALL MARK OF POSTAL EFFICIENCY".


This frank from machine UG 598 has been applied on a label with the word 'SPECIMEN' pre-printed on the roll. Note that the machine identifier on the label is "UF 171 LEICESTER".

Interesting Items from the Past

Dany Staelens kindly sends some scans of Addressing Systems International (SECAP) Alpha and Minipost specimen franks from the early 1990's - obtained from a recent internet auction. The items are all from different machines, namely: ASA 36826, 36829, 50003, 50011, 50262, 50285, 50304 and ASM 08512, 08577, 08579.
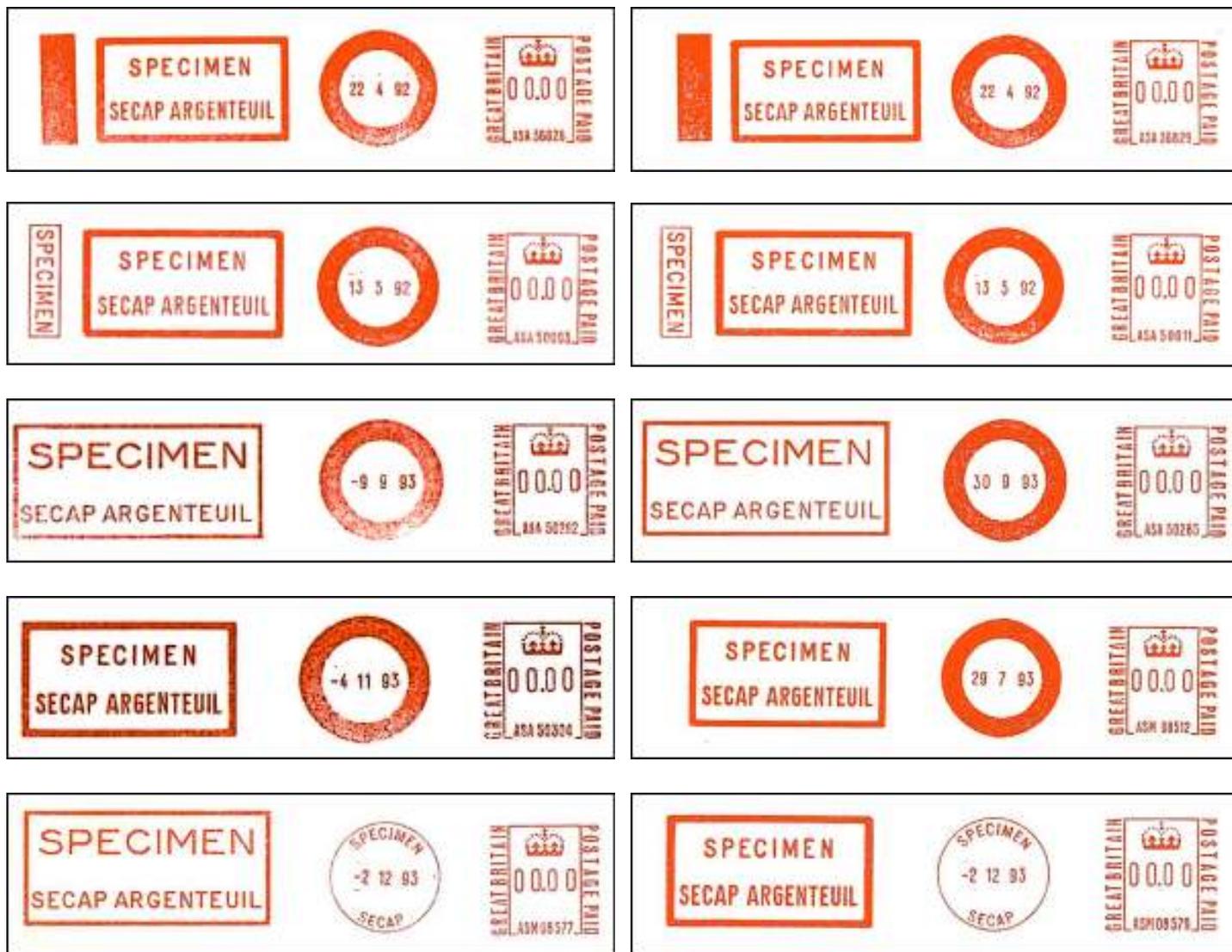

Dany also included this Irish version of a SECAP specimen frank. Whether this was from an Alpha or Minipost model is not known. It is also unknown whether any SECAP machines were ever installed in Ireland, and any reports of use would be most welcome.

Meter Thematics from the Past

Your editor has recently come across these rather attractive Universal Multi-value (Design D) slogans from the early 1950s. The first is from Bendix Home Appliances, machine UA 326 and the other four are from the Midlands Electricity Board, machine UA 327.
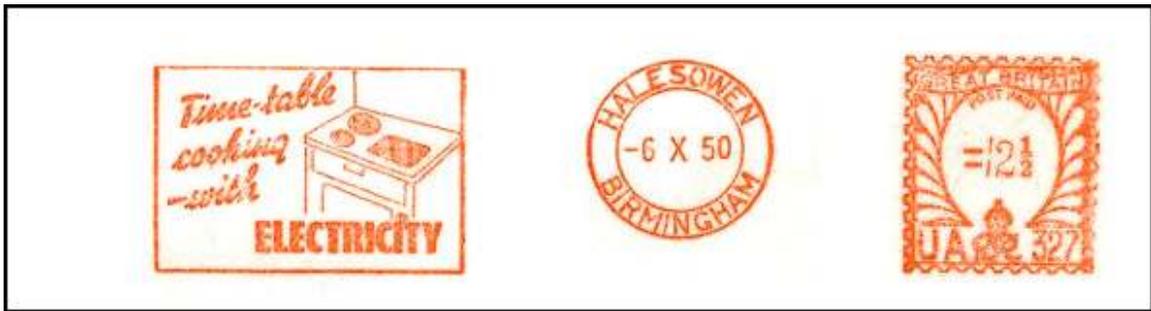
Meter Thematics

Further to page 127-8 and earlier, David Jones reports the latest in the long-running series of exhibitions that promote world cultures at the British Museum. This one advertises "Shakespeare: staging the world" which runs between 19th July – 25 November 2012.

I couldn't resist this rather cute platypus on an Australian frank – reported by Richard Peck.

Talking of cute, how about this one sent by Peter Mantell, from a company called Water Babies that runs swimming classes across the British Isles for under five year olds.
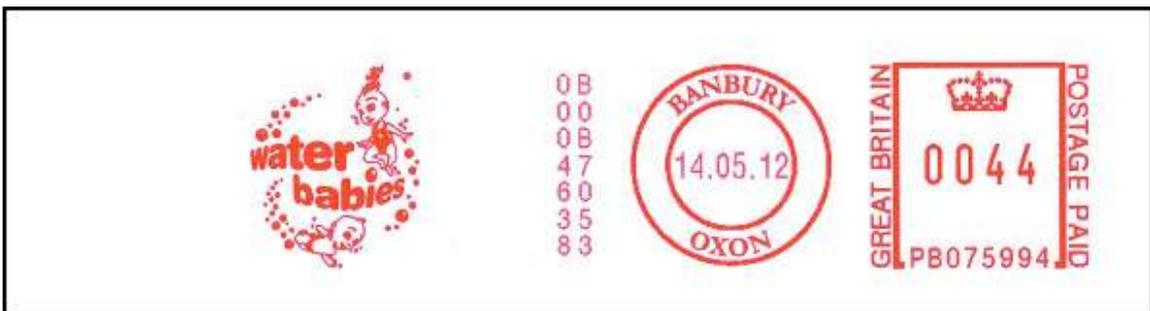
Peter Mantell has found this frank from a company called Wisemove where an owl design forms the letter 'O' of the company name.

Meter Thematics Continued

Further to page 131-10, you editor has found three more PPI designs from Charnwood Stoves – the second and third continue the dog theme of the earlier design.

Peter Mantell sends this rather attractive swan's head design.

My Meter Thematic of the Month this time goes to Robert Rowe for this nice slogan from the Secret World Wildlife Rescue. This design is both attractive and quite clever with the Swan design forming the "**S**" of 'Secret' and the hedgehog spines being represented by the letters "**WWR**" of 'World Wildlife Rescue'. Very nice indeed!