

METER NEWS

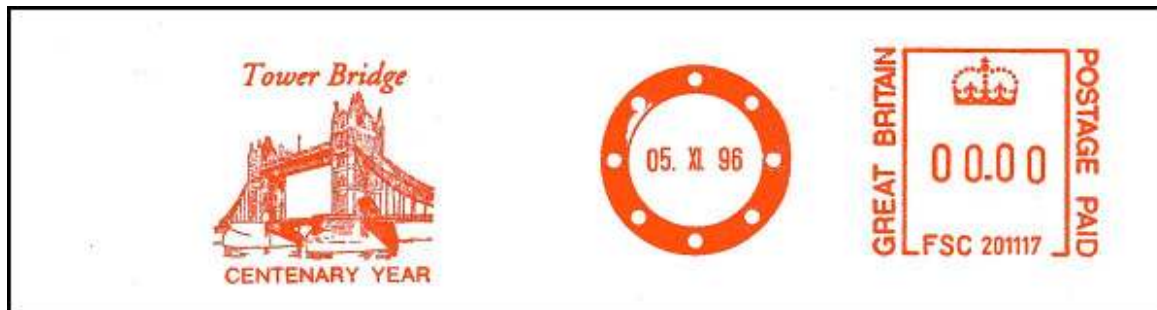
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Meter of the Month

Your editor has come found this as Frama demonstration frank from 1996 with the townmark showing a solid ring with what appears to be eight rivet holes. The slogan on this frank, shown below, advertises the centenary year of Tower Bridge, which nicely supplements the illustration of Tower Bridge, depicted last month on page 146-14.



Editorial

In each January edition of the Newsletter, your editor uses the advances that have been recorded in the monthly 'Latest Numbers' section in order to carry out an analysis of the machines sold over the year just gone. It must again be emphasised that this is not an exact science and hence this analysis should only be used as a rough indication.

It appears that the total volume of new machines sold in the UK during 2012 fell by about 11% compared with 2011 figures. My estimate suggests that nearly 47,000 were sold, compared with 53,000 in 2011. Having said that, it is difficult to put any real meaning to this. On one hand, the recession has undoubtedly suppressed the market, but on the other hand, the large discounts now being offered by Royal Mail to meter users should have boosted franking machine sales. Another factor is, perhaps, that users are now sending more invoices by email in order to avoid the large increase in postal rates that were introduced last April. As you might expect, sales of 'low-volume' machines remain strong and these still account for nearly 75% of all new franking machines sold in the UK.

Finally, by my calculation, this issue brings up 1000 pages of Meter News!

Acknowledgements

My thanks this month go to Jon Aitchison, Jim Ashby, Patrick Awcock, David Crotty, Michael Dobbs, Peter Mantell, John Scotford, Rick Stambaugh and Peter Wood for their reports, communications or contributions.

Latest Numbers

Below is the list of 'latest numbers' as at the end of January 2013 – with updates shown in red. Please could I have the next reports by 26th February - 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	<u>F1002463</u>	03.12.12	See MN 146
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Francotyp-Postalia

Optimail 25/35	<u>F04114813</u>	24.01.13	Reported by AN
Centormail 240/300	<u>FC5110606</u>	30.11.12	See MN 146
MyMail / PostagePro	<u>FM2654301</u>	10.12.12	See MN 146
Ultimail	<u>FU3117033</u>	26.09.12	See MN 144

Neopost

IS-330	<u>N1052182</u>	01.06.12	See MN 140
IS-350	<u>N1180808</u>	08.08.12	See MN 146
IJ-65	<u>N1208331*</u>	27.03.12	See MN 138
Various upgraded	<u>N1240644</u>	09.11.12	Reported by AN
IJ-80/90/110	<u>N1254484</u>	16.01.13	Reported by AN
IS-460 (Ex IJ-50)	<u>N1373650</u>	18.09.12	Reported by PM
IS-420 (Ex IJ-30)	<u>N1385379</u>	03.01.13	Reported by AN
IS-440 (Ex IJ-40)	<u>N1390617</u>	31.07.12	See MN 146
IS-480	<u>N3025073</u>	18.01.13	Reported by PM
IS-240 / IS-280	<u>N3311775</u>	07.01.13	Reported by PM
IS-5000/6000	<u>N5001438</u>	21.01.13	Reported by PM

Pitney Bowes

DM50, 55	<u>PB099054</u>	14.12.12	See MN 146
DM160i/220i	<u>PB160687</u>	17.01.13	Reported by AN
DM50, 55	<u>PB330516</u>	17.12.12	See MN 146
DM 810, 900 etc.	<u>PB527633</u>	02.07.12	See MN 146
Connect+ 1000 etc.	<u>PB551659</u>	01.11.12	See MN 145
Connect+ 10FC etc.	<u>PB556374</u>	28.01.13	Reported by PM
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB618046</u>	02.01.13	Reported by AN
DM100i, 150i etc.	<u>PB871036</u>	05.12.12	See MN 146

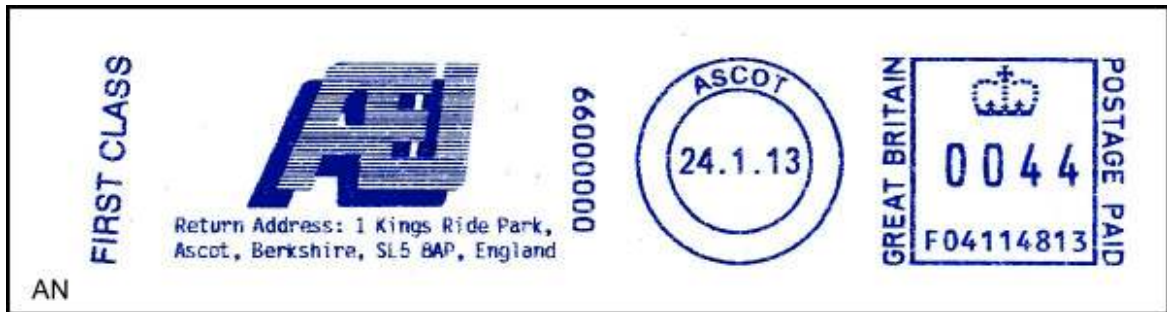
Advanced Mail Codes

AAEU-LR	F1002463	03.12.12	See MN 146
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* The long-running N1208 series is scheduled for retirement from this list next month as no further increases have been reported for almost a year.

Latest Number Images

Below are images of the latest numbers reported this month – with contributor's initials shown in the bottom left of the image.



Latest Number Images continued



BFPO Meters

Further to page 146-11, both John Scotford and Michael Dobbs explain that the BFPO meter frank received a town die of RUISLIP because RAF Northolt (with a postal address of Ruislip) is the home of the British Forces Post Office. Michael Dobbs has kindly provided further details, which your editor has summarised as follows.

The new, purpose built £30 million, facility at Northolt for the British Forces Post Office was officially opened by Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal on 13 March 2008. The new facility began operations in the autumn of 2007. The BFPO at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, London was the previous traditional home for the main UK sorting office for the Forces Postal and Courier Service. The Inglis Barracks closed in January 2008 and the organisation now simply called the British Forces Post Office.

Michael believes that the feint postmark that was also shown on the item in question to be a self-inking date-stamp of the BFPO series, which were numbered in the four digit 3xxx series (3000 to 3209 highest so far recorded). That would make it BFPO 3125 which, like so many, have not been recorded previously.

The actual inscription of the unit date-stamp reads "SERVICES LIAISON OFFICE".

2012 Sales Statistics

Part 1 - Low Volume Machines

The table below is my best guess at the number of new Low Volume machines sold during 2012. Low Volume machines are defined as ones that have a throughput of less than 50 items per minute.

This year the Francotyp-Postalia T1000 series has been dropped and the Pitney Bowes PB16 and PB33 series have been added.

Low Volume 2012	Prefix	Dec-12	Dec-11	Difference	Estimate	Notes
Frama - Matrix F2	F1	1002463	1001516	947	805	Note 1
FP - Optimail 25/35	F041	4114640	4113732	908	908	
FP - MyMail	FM265	2654301	2651775	2526	2526	
Neopost - IS330	N10	1052182	1051791	391	391	
Neopost – IS350	N11	1180808	1179930	878	658	Note 2
Neopost – IS240/280	N33	3310903	3303862	7041	7041	
PB - DM 50, 55	PB0	099054	082102	16952	16952	
PB - DM 160i/220i	PB16	160504	-	504	504	
PB - DM 50, 55	PB33	330516	-	516	516	
PB - DM100i / 150i	PB8	871036	862300	8736	8746	Note 3
Total Low Volume					39037	

Note 1: The F1 series is being used for the Frama Matrix F2 (Low Vol.), and the F4/F6 (Mid Vol.) machines. Estimates of 85%, and 15% respectively have been taken as a rough proportion of the F2 and F4/F6 machines sold.

Note 2: From records taken, it appears that there are some significant gaps in the allocation of the N11 series (probably for overseas allocation). The figure of 75% allocation has therefore been taken as a rough estimate for this series.

Note 3: An estimate of 10 machines has been added for the PB898 series.

2012 Summary & Trends

2012 Summary (Low)	No. sold	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Frama Low Volume	805	2.1%	1.3%	2.2%	2.1%	1.9%
FP Low Volume	3434	8.8%	7.1%	3.7%	2.2%	5.5%
Neopost Low Volume	8090	20.7%	15.1%	18.1%	9.9%	16.0%
PB Low Volume	26708	68.4%	76.5%	76.0%	85.8%	76.7%

2012 Sales Statistics continued

Part 2 - Mid Volume Machines

The table below is my best guess at the number of new Mid Volume machines sold in 2012. Mid Volume machines are defined as ones that have a throughput of between 50 and 150 items per minute.

Note that in 2012 there were no advances in the N131 series and, therefore, this series has been dropped from the table.

Mid Volume	Prefix	Dec-12	Dec-11	Difference	Estimate	Notes
Frama - Matrix F4, F6	F1	1002463	1001516	947	142	Note 1
FP – Centormail 240	FC5	5110606	5110531	75	75	
FP - Ultimail	FU311	3117033	3116538	495	495	
Neopost - IS460	N137	1373650	1373543	107	107	
Neopost - IS420	N138	1385377	1385340	37	37	
Neopost - IS440	N139	1390617	1390501	116	116	
Neopost - IS480	N3	3024823	3019982	4841	4841	
Neopost – IS5000	N5	5001419	5001055	364	364	
PB – DM810/900	PB52	527633	527560	73	45	Note 4
PB – DM400/450/475	PB6	617982	616900	1082	1082	
Total Mid Volume					7304	

Note 4: Some machines with the PB52 prefix are 'high-volume' machines and, therefore, a proportion has been taken to reflect this.

2012 Summary & Trends

2012 Summary (Mid)	No. sold	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Frama Mid Volume	142	1.9%	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%
FP Mid Volume	570	7.8%	9.0%	8.9%	9.0%	8.7%
Neopost Mid Volume	5437	74.4%	68.1%	63.8%	69.7%	69.0%
PB Mid Volume	1155	15.8%	21.9%	26.1%	20.1%	21.0%

2012 Sales Statistics continued

Part 3 - High Volume Machines

The table below is my best guess at the number of new High Volume machines sold in 2012. High Volume machines are defined as ones that have a throughput of more than 150 items per minute.

Note that in 2012 there were no advances in the N131 series and, therefore, this series has been dropped from the table.

High Volume	Prefix	Dec-12	Dec-11	Difference	Estimate	Notes
Neopost – IJ65	N120	1208331	1208320	11	11	
Neopost - Upgraded	N124	1240644	1240607	37	37	
Neopost - IJ80 etc.	N125	1254480	1254437	43	43	
PB – DM810 etc.	PB52	527633	527560	73	28	Note 5
PB - Connect+ 1000	PB550	551659	551419	240	240	
PB - Connect+ 10FC	PB555	556320	555782	538	538	
Total High Volume					897	

2012 Summary & Trends

2012 Summary (High)	No. sold	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Frama High Volume	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
FP High Volume	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Neopost High Volume	91	10.1%	11.7%	16.6%	59.6%	24.5%
PB High Volume	806	89.9%	88.3%	83.4%	40.4%	75.5%

Part 4 - Overall Volume in 2012

Manufacturer	Low	Mid	High	2012	Share	2011	Share
Frama	805	142	0	847	1.8%	652	1.2%
Francotyp-Postalia	3434	570	0	3804	8.1%	3832	7.2%
Neopost	8090	5437	91	13618	29.0%	13277	25.1%
Pitney Bowes	26708	1155	806	28669	61.1%	35163	66.5%
Total 2012	39037	7304	897	46938		52924	

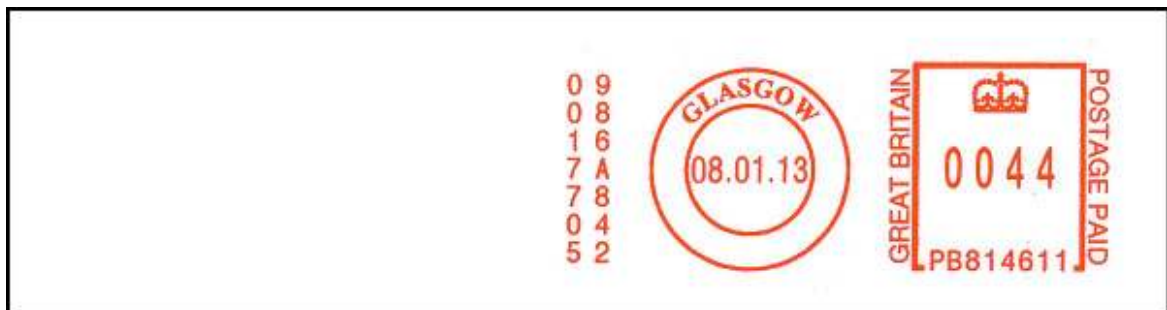
In conclusion, the figures appear to show that, overall, total number of machines sold in 2012 was down about 11% from the number sold in 2011.

Recent Interesting Items

Further to pages 120-6 and 144-5, where we illustrated Frama Matrix franks appearing with the town die reading "LONDON / LONDON", Peter Mantell now reports a similar occurrence but this time reading "BRISTOL / BRISTOL".



On page 118-3 we reported that 89% of all DM100I (PB8) machines had been converted to the large font size in the value die. By the end of 2010 it was assumed that all machines had been converted. However, two years on, Peter Mantell now reports that one machine still remains with the old (smaller) font size as shown below. Well spotted!



Peter Mantell reports this unusual town die of Sanquhar, which is a town in Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland. The town has a population of about 2100 and claims to have the oldest working post office in the world – dating back to 1712.



Peter Mantell reports a second example in red ink from the new PB33 series – this time a lower number than the one reported last month. It appears, therefore, that not all new Pitney Bowes machines are being supplied with blue ink.



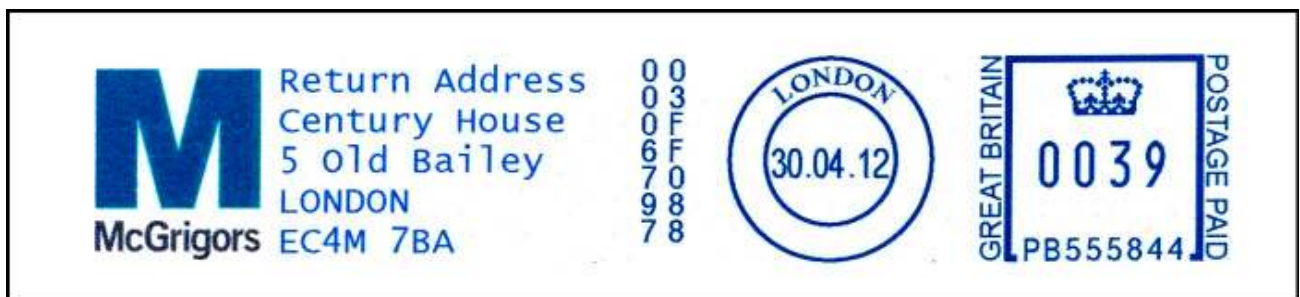
PB Connect+ Coloured Slogans

Further to page 145-1, Dave Baker reports another, but different, coloured slogan from Pitney Bowes depicting an image of a Connect+ machine. The differences being:

- 1) The frank has been applied by their original machine, serial PB555206, rather than machine serial PB555890
- 2) The town die reads 'HERTFORD' (not HARLOW) as it has been processed at Pitney Bowes' new offices at Hatfield.
- 3) The image of the Connect+ machine is larger
- 4) The slogan is in a separate block (but the wording remains the same, i.e. "Why not sell this advertising space and make some money!")



Three other coloured slogans are reported this month – the first two coming from Peter Mantell and the third from Dave Baker.



Historic Meter Items

Peter Huss kindly sends an example of a rarely seen series from the 1970s, namely P.B.C. This series was assigned to the few remaining 'Model CV' (Constant Value) machines remaining in use at the end of the 1960's. It first appeared in 1968 as Design H in the run-up to decimalisation, which took place in February 1971.



However, 'Model CV' first appeared back in 1935 with the 'P' series (with serials P1 -P99) and these were actually 'Limited Value' machines. In 1953 the series then continued with the 'PA' prefix and serials PA1-PA99 were assigned. In 1959, the series then continued with the PC prefix. [The prefix 'PB' was not used because that was already in use for the Fixed Value machines, Models A, B and F.]

The PC series ran from PC1 to PC178. The total number of CV machines sold therefore totalled 376. It is believed that only 37 of these machines survived beyond decimalisation and these were assigned serials P.B.C 001A to P.B.C 037A. No other suffixes were used. Note that the series must not be confused with the later PBC series (without stops and suffix letter) from Model A921 introduced in 1991.

Two Neopost specimen franks have recently been posted on eBay, neither of which has been previously recorded, I believe. The first item is an early Design B frank from 1927 and reads "MEET AT THE MECCA FOR TEA".



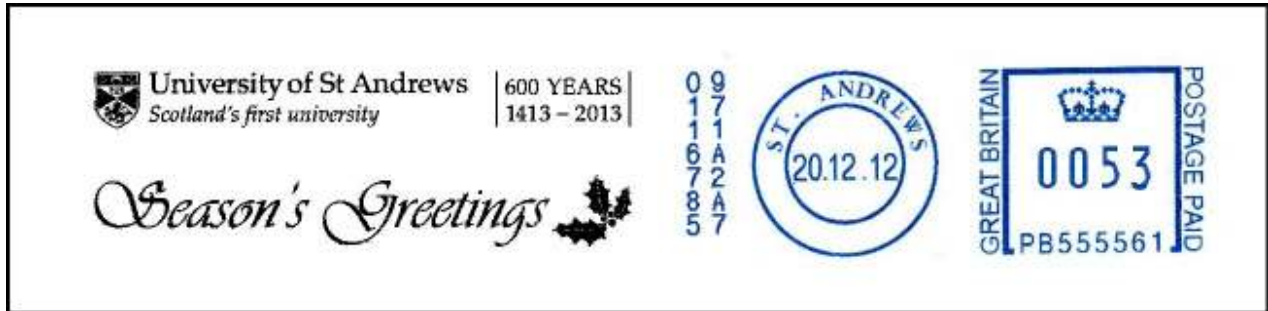
The second is from 1932 and bears the slogan "TELL ENGLAND NEOPOST TELLS THE WORLD".



2012 Christmas Slogans

It is unfortunate that many Christmas slogans come into our possession in the New Year when they have really passed their 'sell-by date' as far as the newsletter is concerned. Anyway, not wishing to overlook the recording of these, here are the best ones from 2012.

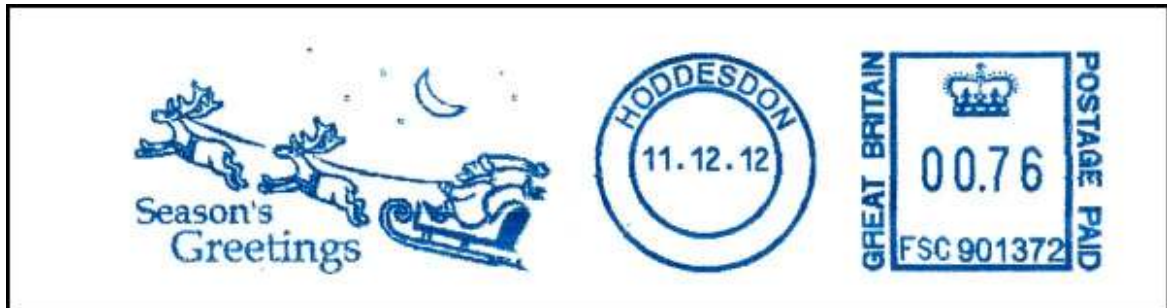
The first comes from Peter Mantell and shows a Season's Greetings slogan from the University of St Andrews. The university was, of course, where Prince William and Kate Middleton first met, back in 2001.



Peter Mantell also reports this Merry Christmas slogan from the company Crane Care Ltd.



Meanwhile, your editor reports this attractive Seasons Greeting slogan from Frama (UK) Ltd.



The above frank was applied to an envelope containing a leaflet called "Creating the right impression" that advertised equipment for opening, folding and inserting, as well as an advert for the Frama Matrix franking machine that features the ComTouch™ touchscreen display (see alongside).

Frama Matrix franking machines feature the patented ComTouch™ touchscreen display with OneTouch keys for quick and easy access to everyday franking tasks. And franking machine users benefit from Royal Mail volume related discounts.

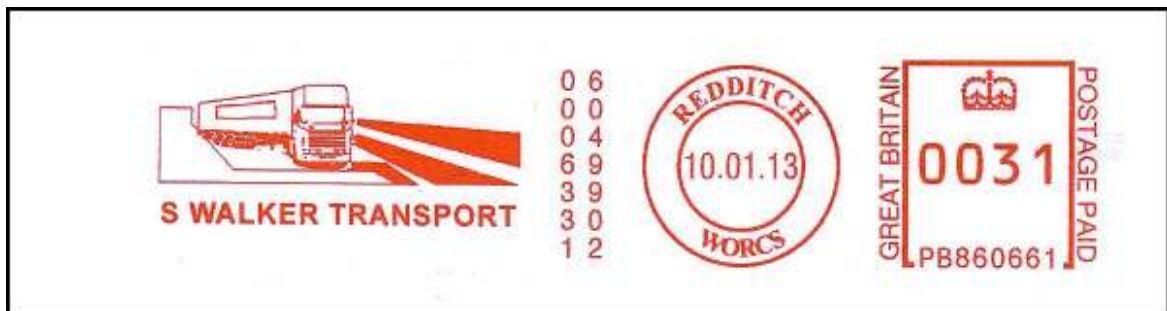


Meter Thematics

Further to page 87-8, Peter Mantell reports the same slogan from Eagle House School being used on their new machine F04111040 – their previous machine being FM2116972. It is, perhaps, worth noting that the townmark 'Sandhurst' is rarely seen in meter franks.



Peter Mantell has found this nice transport thematic showing an articulated lorry.



Peter Mantell reports this unusual design showing a fingerprint. This must surely be a first!



Peter Mantell reports this attractive design that illustrates several themes, in particular Football and Heraldry.



Finally, the award for my Meter Thematic of the Month goes to the Frama Season's Greetings frank, shown on page 147-11.