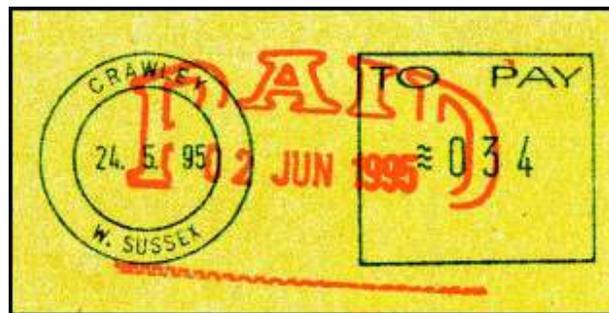


METER NEWS

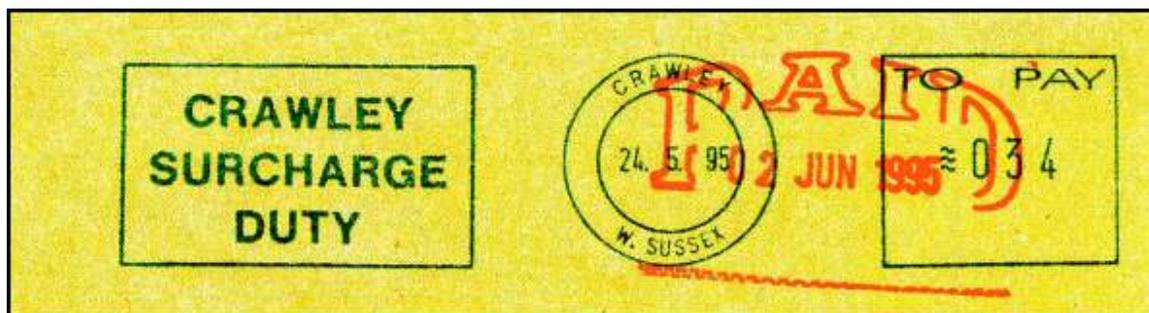
Issue Number 154 Aug 2013



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Meter of the Month

On page 136-6, we illustrated a 'To Pay' meter frank in red ink from Crawley dated 09.06.98. Tom Norgate now reports three similar examples from May 1995 (some three years earlier) but this time in green ink. The above is one of these dated 24.5.95 (with a PAID handstamp applied in red dated 2.6.95) – the full illustration is shown below.



A number of these 'To Pay' franks have been reported over the years in the newsletter and we can summarise the reports as follows:

Brighton. Green ink. Reported to exist - see page 38-1.

Chester. Green ink. Earliest 31.1.91 and latest 1.3.93. Machine serial P.B.E 5020. Townmark inscribed "CHESTER / POSTAGE DUE". Slogan reads "POSTAGE / DUE" in a jagged-edged rectangular box. See page 149-1.

Crawley. Green ink (see above). Machine serial number not included in the frank. Townmark inscribed "CRAWLEY / WEST SUSSEX". Earliest 5.5.95 and latest 24.5.95. Slogan inscribed "CRAWLEY / SURCHARGE / DUTY" in a rectangular box.

Red ink as above but dated 9.6.98 - see page 136-6.

Croydon. Green ink. Machine serial number not included in the frank. Townmark inscribed "CROYDON". Slogan inscribed "CROYDON / SURCHARGE / DUTY" in a rectangular box. The only report is dated 20.12.99 - see page 38-1.

Acknowledgements

My thanks this month go to Jon Aitchison, Patrick Awcock, Dave Baker, Keith Downing, Ray Downing, Gwynne Harries, Peter Huss, Peter Mantell, Tom Norgate, Richard Peck and João Robalo for their reports, communications or contributions.

Latest Numbers

Below is the list of 'latest numbers' as at the end of August 2013 – with updates shown in red. Please could I have the next reports by 28th September - 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 F1003180 08.08.13 Reported by PM

Francotyp-Postalia

Optimail 25/35 F04115154 09.08.13 Reported by AN
Centormail 240/300 FC5110668 05.06.13 See MN 152
MyMail / PostagePro FM2654917 05.06.13 See MN 152
PostBase FP6110331 06.08.13 Reported by PM
Ultimail FU3117271 08.07.13 See MN 153

Neopost

IS-330 N1052705 06.08.13 Reported by PM
IS-350 N1181546 20.05.13 See MN 151
Various upgraded N1240644 09.11.12 See MN 147
IJ-80/90/110 N1254486 02.03.13 See MN 149
IS-460 (Ex IJ-50) N1373678 23.04.13 See MN 150
IS-420 (Ex IJ-30) N1385456 06.02.13 See MN 148
IS-440 (Ex IJ-40) N1390685 22.08.13 Reported by PM
IS-480 N3027318 20.08.13 Reported by PM
IS-240 / IS-280 N3315280 13.06.13 See MN 152
IS-5000/6000 N5001548 22.07.13 See MN 153

Pitney Bowes

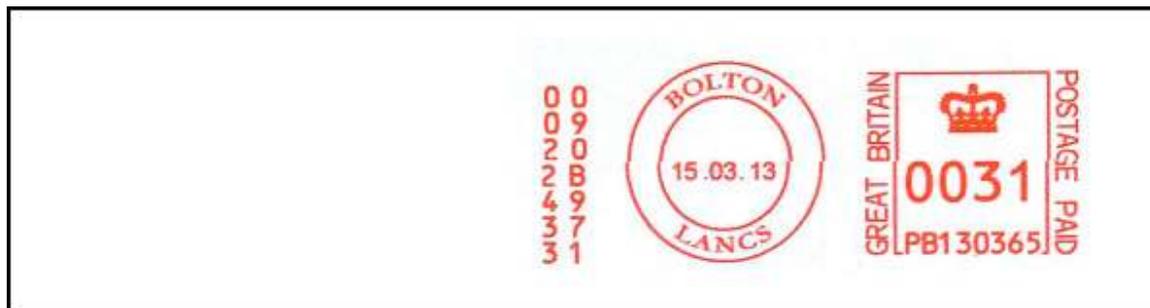
DM50, 55 PB099074 15.03.13 See MN 149
DM160i/220i PB161875 13.08.13 Reported by PM
DM50, 55 PB340037 06.08.13 Reported by PM
DM 810, 900 etc. PB527641 18.03.13 See MN 151
Connect+ 1000 etc. PB551669 22.03.13 See MN 149
Connect+ 10FC etc. PB556591 08.08.13 Reported by PM
DM 400, 450, 475 PB619026 30.07.13 Reported by AN
DM100i, 150i etc. PB875461 25.07.13 See MN 153

Advanced Mail Codes

AAEY-TJ PB617771 03.04.13 See MN 152

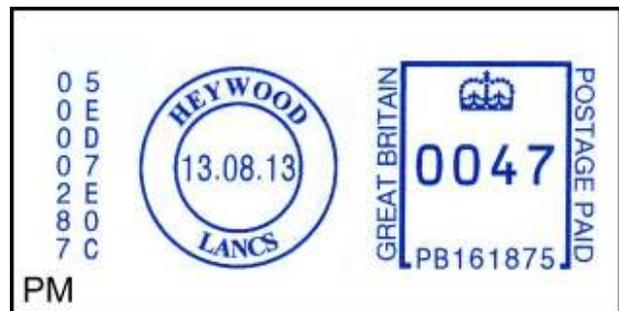
Dead Series Update

Peter Mantell reports a highest number for the PB13 dead series.

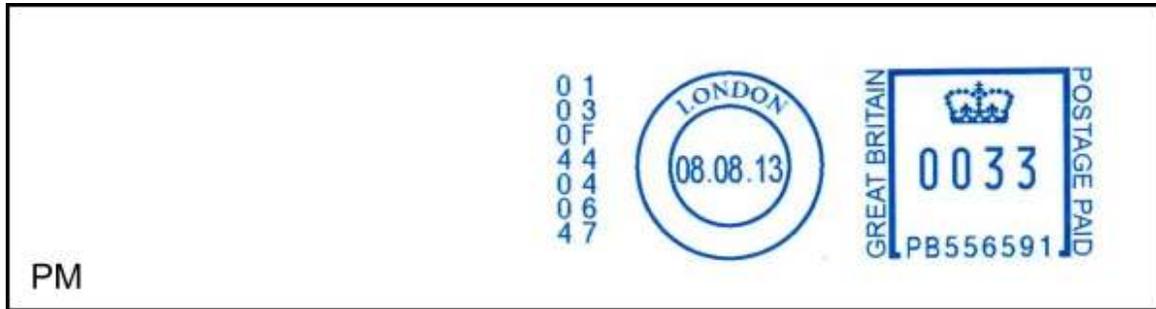


Latest Number Images

Here are images of the latest numbers reported this month.



Latest Number Images Continued



Recent Interesting Items

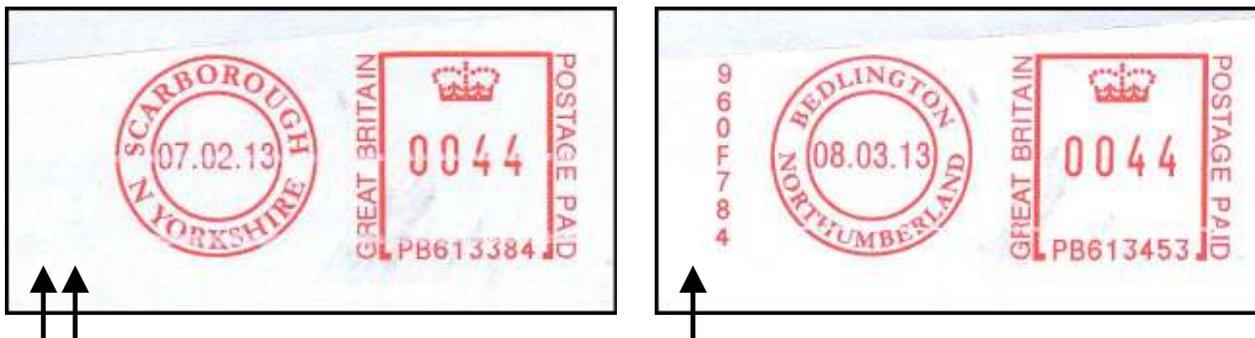
Your editor has found this unusual item where a frank has been printed on a label and where the bottom edge of the frank is missing off the lower edge of the label. Well, not quite missing – the remaining part of the frank has actually been printed upside-down at the left-hand lower edge!



Your editor would be pleased to hear from anyone who seen anything similar on Francotyp-Postalia Optimail franks, or can provide an explanation as to what might have happened to cause this effect.

Recent Interesting Items Continued

Peter Mantell has noticed some strange things happening with respect to the security blocks on franks produced by the Pitney Bowes DM 400 model. In the first example (below left), the security block is completely missing and in the second example the item count only is missing. It is worth noting that both examples were applied at an angle to the envelope edge – could this have triggered the problem, perhaps? Again, your editor would be pleased to hear from anyone who has come across anything similar.



Peter Huss reports our first sighting of a PostBase frank with the 'AIRMAIL / PAR AVION' built-in mini slogan.



Patrick Awcock has found this unusual townmark on a Frama Mailmax frank. The lower half of the town die appears to read "A19". Without the Return Address being included, this would, indeed, be puzzling. However, it is clear from the postcode that this should have read "AL9" – the "I" being a lower case "L".



This frank is also noteworthy because as this is the first time that your editor has seen the town 'WELHAM GREEN' inscribed in a meter frank. Welham Green is actually a village in the parish of North Mymms. This village has a stone plinth that marks the position that the Italian balloonist Vincenzo Lunardi made his landing on the first hydrogen filled balloon flight in England on 15 September 1784.

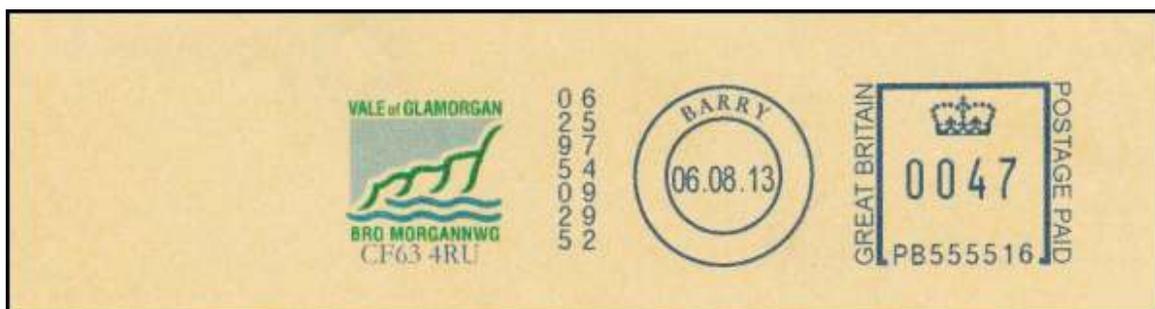
Royal Mail Branding of Meter Mail

Further to page 150-4, Gwynne Harries sends another example of a C5 landscape envelope that has received the Royal Mail branding logo beneath the meter frank. The frank serial number N5001299 is used by Staples (the office supply company). This practice appears to be reasonably common now as Peter Mantell and your editor have both come across similar items recently.



Pitney Bowes Connect+ Coloured Franks

This month we have two new coloured franks from Connect+ FC machines - both being supplied by Peter Mantell.



Historic Meter Franks

An overseas reader, João Robalo kindly sends this unusual meter franked piece from 1954. It shows a normally applied 10^D frank together with two further 10^D values that have been cut out and glued on like stamps.



The machine that produced this frank was a UPF 'Multi Value' model. These machines were first introduced in January 1932, although this particular machine (UB 876) would have been acquired as a new machine in February 1950. These franking machines were capable of producing values greater than one shilling (1/=), so this is the first puzzle - why was the exact amount not applied in a single operation? Is it possible that some of these machines were capped at a maximum of 11½d, to prevent operators setting high postage values by accident?

Almost certainly, this practice of gluing on meter stamps would have been against Post Office Regulations. However, in 1954 there would have still been some 'Limited Value' machines still in existence. These types of machine were capable, by using a special lever, of printing one or more impressions with only the value die and by resetting that lever would produce the final impression that included the town and slogan dies. In that way a high postage value could be applied. However, this is not what has happened here, but it might explain how the user might have got away with it. [I say 'might', as we cannot be certain as the item is not complete.] By the way, I think that a postage amount of 30d would have been too high for a letter at that time and the item may well have been cut out from a parcel wrapper.

However, the thing that is really puzzling are the 13 punched holes (gauge 11¼) that go across the additional 'stamps' - above and below the values of 10d in the meter 'stamps'.

Your editor would welcome reports of similar items and any explanation for these punched holes.

Meter Franking Ephemera

Ray Downing has stumbled upon this old advert from Pitney Bowes. The date is unknown.



Is it always illegal TO KILL A WOMAN?

For six months I beat the rats of the home office to get a postage meter. I win . . . Then the only good, fast, dependable, honest-to-Goddy stenographer I got, this red-head Mortsey . . . backs at a postage meter!

"I have no mechanical aptitude. Machines run me up, kind of," she says. As if we asked her to fly a P-51, I almost blew my top.

This postage meter, I explain, is modern, most efficient, a time saver . . . No more reflective stamps. No stamp box, and who's got the keys? No running out of the stamps you need. No scripsing. No stamp stacking. Just set the lever for any kind of stamp you want, for any kind of mail, and the meter prints the stamp right on the envelope with a dated postmark—and it seals the flap at the same time. Faster than mailing by hand. Prints stamps on tape for parcel post. Will handle anything we have to mail out of this office. Even keeps its own records!

And metered mail doesn't have to be postmarked and cancelled in the postoffice, gets going earlier. It is practically heaven's gift to the working girl . . . and so on. But with the Mortsey, no soap.

I try diplomacy. "Miss Mortsey, I want you personally to try it for two weeks. If you don't like it then—back it goes to the factory! I depend on your judgment implicitly, Olay!" . . . She acts like an early Christian about to be lunch for a lion, but gives in.

So help me—two weeks later she has a big pink box on the handle of the postage meter—like it was an axel of something. I give it the gape.

"Kinda cute, ain't it," says Miss Mortsey. "But a very efficient machine, Mr. Jones. Now the mail is out early enough so I get to the girls' room in time to hear all of the dirt" . . . I wonder if it always illegal to kill a woman!

We are always learning some new advantages of the postage meter. If you'd like to learn what one could do for your office, call the nearest Pitney-Bowes office. Or write for an illustrated booklet.



PITNEY-BOWES *Postage Meter*

PITNEY-BOWES, Inc., 1115 Pacific Street, Stamford, Conn., Distributor
Mail. Largest industry of making machines. Branches in 61 cities in the United States.

baredpanda.com

Instructional Markings

Your editor has found this label affixed over a frank having insufficient postage for an Airmail item. It would have been applied at Swindon Mail Centre.

Note that the Revenue Protection scheme was not applied here. Either this scheme does not apply to Airmail items or the company has not signed up to the scheme.



Peter Mantell reports this handstamp that has been applied at Gatwick Mail Centre to correct the date irregularity made by the user.



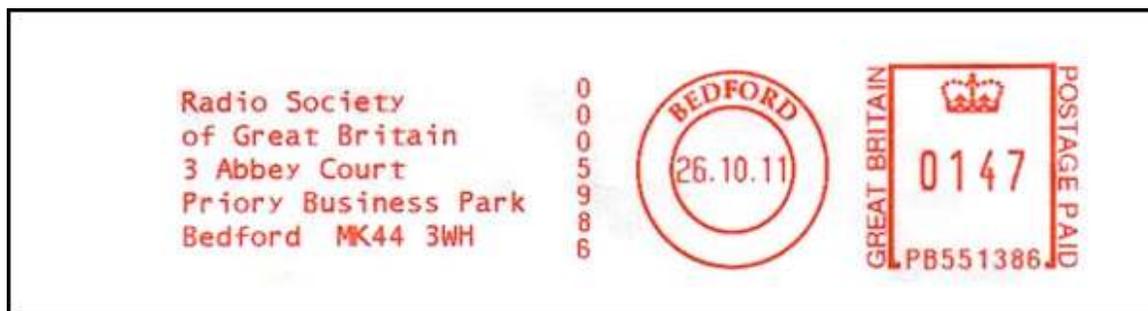
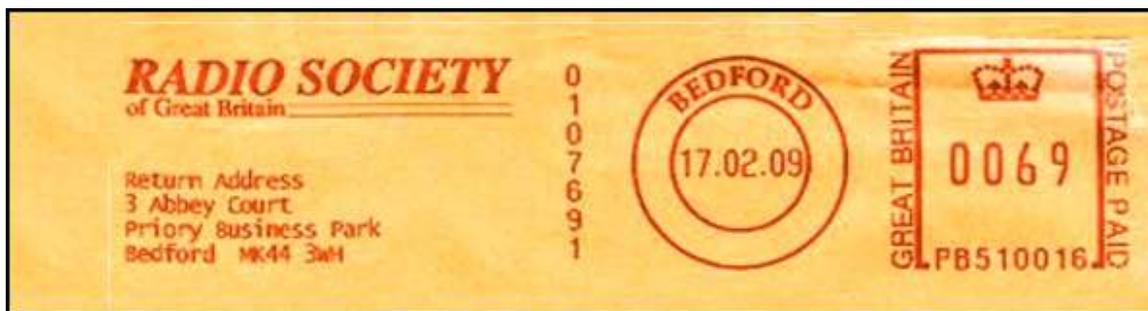
Meter Thematics from the Past

Dave Baker has found these two attractive thematics from the past. The first depicts an illustration of the White Tower of the Tower of London that was built in 1078.

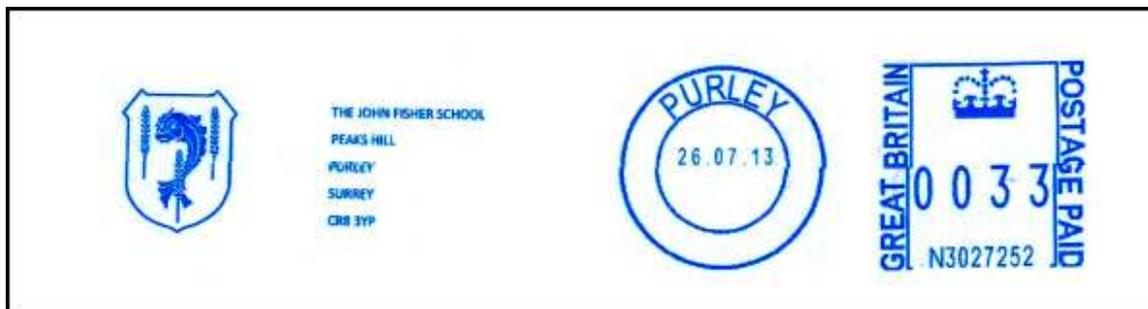


Meter Thematics

Keith Downing kindly sends two ham radio thematics depicted on a Spanish web site. They are from the Radio Society of Great Britain (RSGB) based in Bedford.



Peter Mantell sends this attractive fish design from the John Fisher School in Purley.



My Meter Thematic of the Month is awarded to Peter Mantell for this unusual thematic. Certainly, palm trees are rarely depicted on a UK meter frank!

