

# METER NEWS

Issue Number 173 Mar 2015



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## Meter of the Month

My Meter of the Month comes from Peter Mantell who reports this unusual post town 'LONDON E3 3ND' on a Neopost frank. Although we have previously seen town names bearing the full postcode before, they have all been on Frama machines. The full image is shown below.



Peter also reports two further examples of unusual town marks, as shown below. The first is 'TY CROES' which is a village in Carmarthenshire, Wales with a population of just 2,156. The second is 'EAST COWES / ISLE OF WIGHT'. Normally, we find 'COWES / ISLE OF WIGHT' but this is our first sighting of 'EAST COWES'.



## Acknowledgements

My thanks this month go to Jon Aitchison, Guy Amedro, Michael Dobbs, Ray Downing, Alan Godfrey, Peter Huss, Jan Lannoye, Peter Mantell, Robert Petts, Robert Rowe, John Scotford and Peter Wood for their reports, communications or contributions.

## Latest Numbers

Below is the list of 'latest numbers' as at the end of March 2015 – with updates shown in red. Please could I have the next reports by 28th April - thanks. In the list below, the part of the serial number that directly relates to the model is underlined.

In the table below, note that those entries that have a date format with hyphen separators are the ones in 'Design J' (matrix) format.

### Frama (UK)

Matrix F2, F4, F6	<u>F1003875</u>	10.10.14	See MN 168
Matrix F12 etc.	<u>FR2000889</u>	12-02-15	See MN 172

### Francotyp-Postalia

Optimail 25/35	<u>F04115620</u>	04.06.14	See MN 164
Centormail 240/300	<u>FC5110688</u>	28.04.14	See MN 163
MyMail / PostagePro	<u>FM2657744</u>	07-01-15	See MN 171
PostBase Qi3/4/6/9	<u>FP6110841</u>	25.04.14	Reported by JL
PostBase Qi3/4/6/9	<u>FP6113899</u>	13-03-15	Reported by PM
Ultimail	<u>FU3117315</u>	23.05.14	See MN 164

### Neopost

IS-330	<u>N1052975</u>	09.06.14	See MN 168
IS-350	<u>N1182423</u>	13.02.15	See MN 172
Various upgraded	<u>N1240736</u>	19.03.15	Reported by PM
IS-480	<u>N3030278</u>	05.11.14	See MN 170
IS-240 / IS-280	<u>N3319102</u>	15.04.14	See MN 162
IS-5000/6000	<u>N5001705</u>	20.10.14	See MN 168
IS-240/280	<u>NE6003636</u>	05-12-14	See MN 170
IS-480	<u>NE8004809</u>	20-03-15	Reported by AN
IS-5000/6000	<u>NE9000295</u>	22-01-15	See MN 171

### Pitney Bowes

DM160i/220i	<u>PB170261</u>	11-03-15	Reported by PM
DM110i?	<u>PB2001034</u>	11-12-14	See MN 171
DM50, 55	<u>PB365427</u>	11.03.14	Reported by PM
Connect+ 1000 etc.	<u>PB551797</u>	23.04.14	See MN 162
Connect+ 10FC etc.	<u>PB557615</u>	27-03-15	Reported by AG
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB620566</u>	01.12.14	See MN 170
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB6626350</u>	19-02-15	Reported by PM
DM 110i	<u>PB882336</u>	16.03.15	Reported by PM

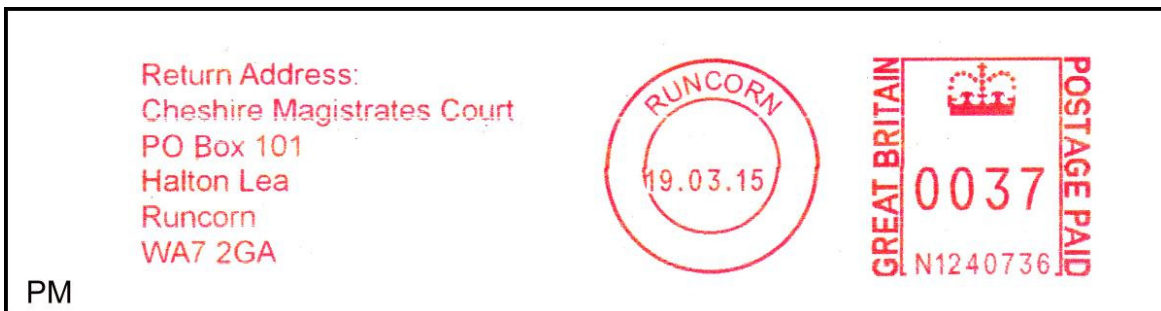
### Advanced Mail Codes

AAGH-LG	NE8002505	16-10-14	See MN 168
AAGJ-HH	HQ25668	PPI no date	See MN 160

Back in 2009 the FU9 series was relegated to the dead series. Now Robert Petts reports an advance on this series with FU9001151. Peter Mantell also reports an advance on the N125 dead series with N1254515.

**Latest Number Images**

Here are images of the latest numbers reported this month – with contributor’s initials etc. shown in the bottom left of each image. Unless otherwise indicated, the Tariff Version encoded in each matrix block of the Design J items is ‘3’. Also, I think this is the first time that we have reported two different latest numbers from the same user in the same month!



**Latest Number Images Continued**

Delivered by

20-03-15  
£0.35 NE8004809

Royal Mail

2  
Letter

AN - NE8004809 [Item 0009814]

Delivered by

11-03-15  
£0.49 PB170261

Royal Mail

1  
Letter

PM - PB170261 [Item 0000005, Tariff V5]

01  
02  
0D  
01  
05  
50  
80

GLASGOW  
11.03.15

GREAT BRITAIN  
0037  
POSTAGE PAID  
PB365427

PM

 Orkney Islands Council  
School Place  
Kirkwall Orkney  
KW15 1NY

Delivered by

27-03-15  
£0.35 PB557615

Royal Mail

2  
Letter

AG - PB557615 [Item 0017685]

Return Address  
Aldermore  
Western House BlockB  
Lynch Wood  
Peterborough PE26FZ

Delivered by

19-02-15  
£0.49 PB6626350

Royal Mail

1  
Letter

PM - PB6626350 [Item 0004972, Tariff V5]

  
Return Address: Byron House, Willow Drive,  
Annesley, Notts. NG15 0DP

04  
0D  
0A  
0E  
18  
41  
17

NOTTINGHAM  
16.03.15

GREAT BRITAIN  
0037  
POSTAGE PAID  
PB882336

PM

**Recent Interesting Items**

With the postal rates changing on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2015, your editor reports this “rate update” slogan from Francotyp-Postalia Southern.



Peter Mantell reports this unusual item that includes a spurious ‘m’ to the left of the Royal Mail cruciform logo. The user is unknown but your editor does not believe that there would be any operational significance to this.



Further to page 171-5 and earlier, Peter Mantell reports another example of a ‘Surcharge Payment’ frank.



Peter Mantell has found this frank from The Highland Council with the Gaelic name Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd also included in the slogan. This is, I believe, the first time that we have seen Gaelic wording appearing in a meter frank.

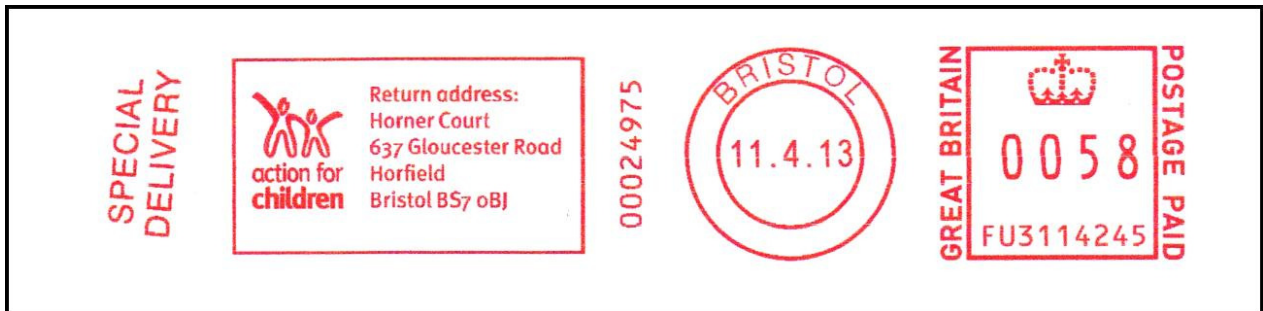


## Recent Interesting Items

Peter Mantell sends this item where just the postcode 'B4 6NH' has been included in the Return Address block, breaking Royal Mail regulations. The user is believed to be the Birmingham Children's Hospital.



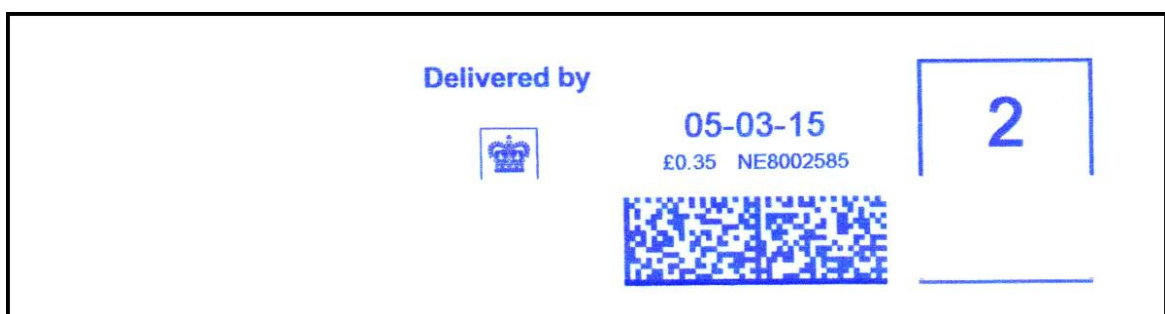
The following frank from the 'Action for Children' organisation, sent by Peter Mantell, shows the rarely seen 'SPECIAL DELIVERY' mini logo on a Francotyp-Postalia Ultimail machine.



Robert Petts reports this unusual stretched frank. This effect is, presumably, caused by the item slipping as it went through the machine.

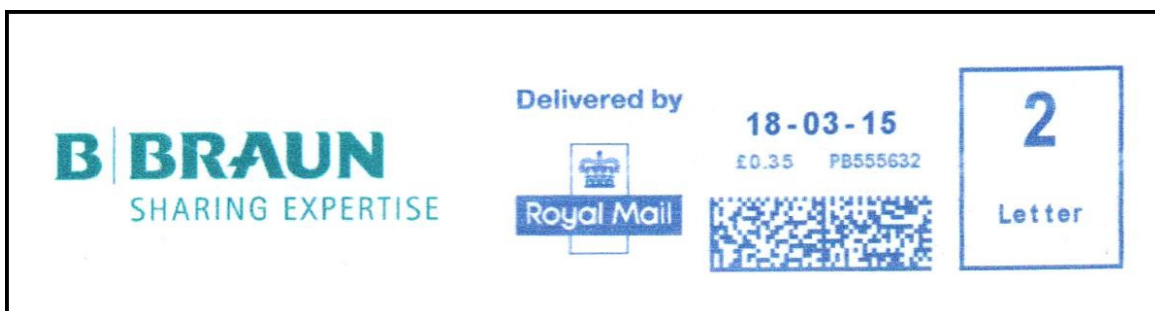


However, the cause of the following error, supplied by Peter Mantell, cannot be so easily explained. It was possibly caused by a software glitch of some kind.

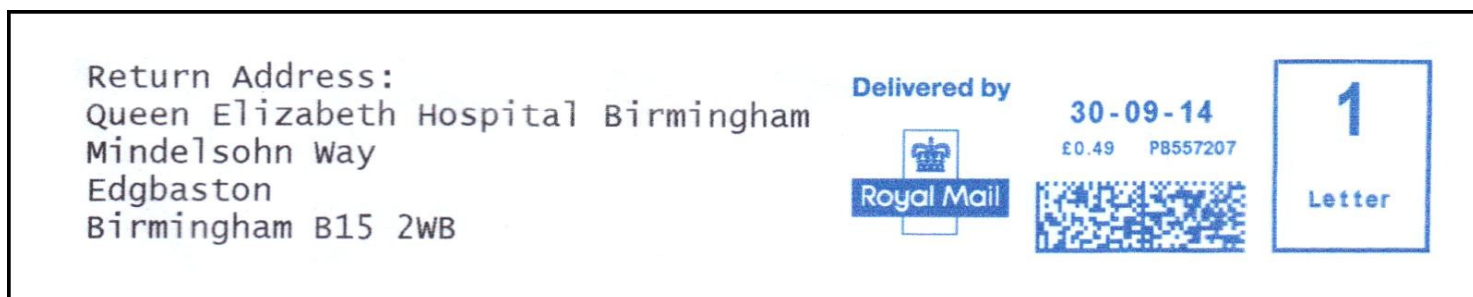


## Coloured Slogans

On page 143-6 we illustrated this slogan on a 'Design H' frank. Now Peter Mantell reports the same slogan but with a 'Design J' frank.

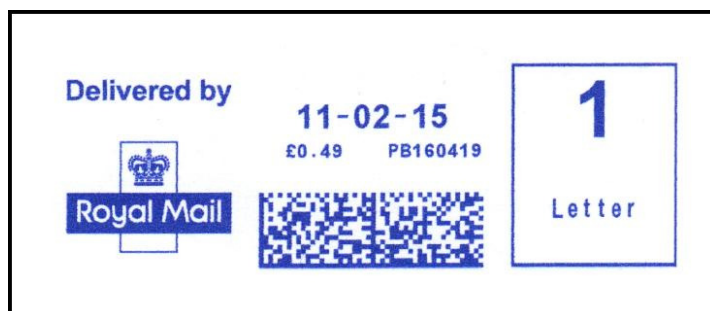


Peter also reports this frank from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham with the return address in black.



## Mailmark™ News – Pitney Bowes

Both Peter Mantell and Robert Petts have reported PB1 Mailmark franks with the value and the serials appearing in a smaller font size as shown below. It appears that the software change happened on Monday 2nd February and most (approximately 80%) of the items from this series now appear in this new format. Presumably this change is being done to make the PB1 series align with the font size already appearing in other PB Mailmark franks.



Last month we reported a Pitney Bowes PB1 series with a 'Tariff Version' of '5'. This has now been observed on other Pitney Bowes models. Whether this software update was as a result of a deliberate change or an error is not known at this stage. We shall have wait and see what happens after the change of postal rates due to take place on 31st March. To date, no Tariff Versions of '4' have been recorded on any Pitney Bowes machines.

## Analysis of Mail Items (January - March 2015)

Your editor has performed an analysis of 683 mail items collected from the same source over the same 7-week period (January to March) as the analysis made in recent years. This represents a 12% drop in volume compared with the figure of 776 last year. Also, the overall proportion of meter franked items compared with other mail types has fallen slightly compared with last year.

The following table shows the breakdown of the 683 mail items into the main categories of Meter Franked Mail, Stamped Mail and PPIs + Others. It also shows the percentage breakdown compared with the previous four years (in black text). Note that these figures include mail from overseas.

Category	Total 2015	2015%	2014%	2013%	2012%	2011%
Meter Franked Mail	378	55.3%	59.0%	59.4%	55.9%	55.3%
Stamped Mail	161	23.6%	21.8%	23.5%	22.3%	23.0%
PPI & Others	144	21.1%	19.2%	17.1%	21.8%	21.7%

The next table gives the breakdown by size of envelope.

Size	Total 2015	2015%	2014%	2013%	2012%	2011%
C4 or larger	30	4.4%	4.4%	2.3%	3.7%	4.1%
C5	144	21.1%	18.9%	18.5%	23.3%	19.6%
DL	509	74.5%	76.1%	78.9%	73.0%	75.9%
C6 or smaller	0	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%	0.0%	0.4%

The next table shows the proportion of 1<sup>st</sup> class to 2<sup>nd</sup> class mail (UK mail only)

Type - Class	Total 2015	2015%	2014%	2013%	2012%	2011%
Stamped mail – 1st	60	39.5%	40.1%	37.3%	43.6%	40.1%
Stamped mail – 2nd	92	60.5%	59.9%	62.7%	56.4%	59.9%
Metered mail – 1st	174	47.5%	46.0%	45.4%	48.8%	50.8%
Metered mail – 2nd	192	52.5%	54.0%	54.6%	51.2%	49.2%

The next table shows the volume of meter-franked mail broken down by manufacturer. Note that these figures exclude overseas mail.

Manufacturer	Total 2015	2015%	2014%	2013%	2012%	2011%
Frama	12	3.3%	4.2%	3.4%	3.7%	4.2%
Francotyp-Postalia	26	7.1%	8.0%	6.4%	7.3%	8.8%
Neopost	132	36.1%	36.9%	42.3%	40.9%	42.6%
Pitney Bowes	196	53.5%	50.9%	47.9%	48.2%	44.5%



## Analysis of Mail Items Continued

The following table shows the actual number of items for each main 'Design H' meter series.

Design H	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
<b>Frama</b>					
F1	6	14	3	6	7
FSC3	0	1	1	3	7
FSC9	1	3	14	9	10
<b>Neopost</b>					
N105	1	1	3	2	0
N11	8	6	34	38	61
N120	5	4	6	8	9
N124	2	3	5	3	4
N125	2	7	14	16	19
N130-131	3	5	7	11	31
N135	0	10	22	26	42
N138	3	4	19	20	23
N3	62	101	134	114	111
N33	10	15	5	8	0
N5	0	8	1	0	

Design H	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
<b>F-P</b>					
F04	8	6	12	15	16
FC5	0	1	0	1	2
FM	0	3	5	6	6
FP	2	5			
FU3	2	3	2	3	13
FU8	4	4	6	5	14
FU9	2	5	6	11	8
T	6	5	7	5	15
<b>PB</b>					
PB0	22	29	45	49	53
PB2	3	4	4	3	3
PB33	10	13	4	-	-
PB4	1	1	2	7	11
PB50-52	17	22	31	40	59
PB550/1	4	4	7	8	5
PB6	24	32	45	52	52
PB8	68	102	134	133	150

The following table shows the actual number of items for each main 'Design J' meter series which started in March 2014 (after last year's analysis was carried out).

Design J	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
<b>F-P</b>					
FC5	1	-	-	-	-
FP6	1	-	-	-	-
<b>Neopost</b>					
NE6	1	-	-	-	-
NE8	31	-	-	-	-
NE9	4	-	-	-	-

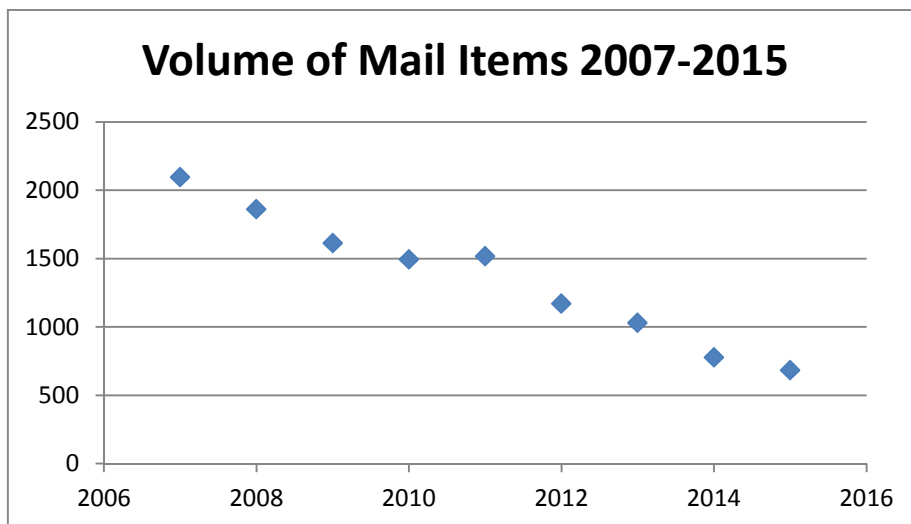
Design J	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
<b>Frama</b>					
FR2	5	-	-	-	-
<b>PB</b>					
PB16	27	-	-	-	-
PB20	1	-	-	-	-
PB555/7	13	-	-	-	-
PB66	6	-	-	-	-

## Analysis of Mail Items Continued

The final table shows the percentage of franks that were applied in blue ink.

Manufacturer	Total 2015	Total Blue	% Blue 2015	% Blue 2014
Frama	12	12	100.0%	84.2%
F-P	26	18	69.2%	65.6%
Neopost	132	108	81.8%	49.4%
Pitney Bowes	196	166	84.7%	52.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>83.1%</b>	<b>53.6%</b>

Your editor has been carrying out this yearly analysis for the last 9 years. In that time we have seen the volume of mail fall dramatically – to approximately one-third of the volume seen in 2007. This has undoubtedly been because more and more invoices are being sent electronically each year. The decline of mail since 2007 from this particular source is shown graphically below.



## Meter Correction Handstamps

Peter Huss sends this 'Treat as Airmail' Revenue Protection Handstamp from Peterborough Mail Centre.



## Meter Ephemera

Your editor has acquired this Royal Mail leaflet associated with the 2015 postal rates changes that explains the steps that need to be taken by franking machine users.



### Franking prices are changing on 30th March 2015. Here's what you need to do.

Before 30th March 2015 – make sure you contact your manufacturer/independent to get the latest prices:

- via data download
- via tariff chip

(depending on your franking technology)

If your franking machine has not been updated by 30th March 2015 and you post mail with the incorrect price, you will receive a letter from us requesting payment of the underpaid amounts plus an administration fee\*.

To keep up to date with franking visit:  
**[www.royalmail.com/franking](http://www.royalmail.com/franking)**

\*For information on surcharges visit [www.royalmail.com/franking](http://www.royalmail.com/franking)

Thank you for your business over the past year.

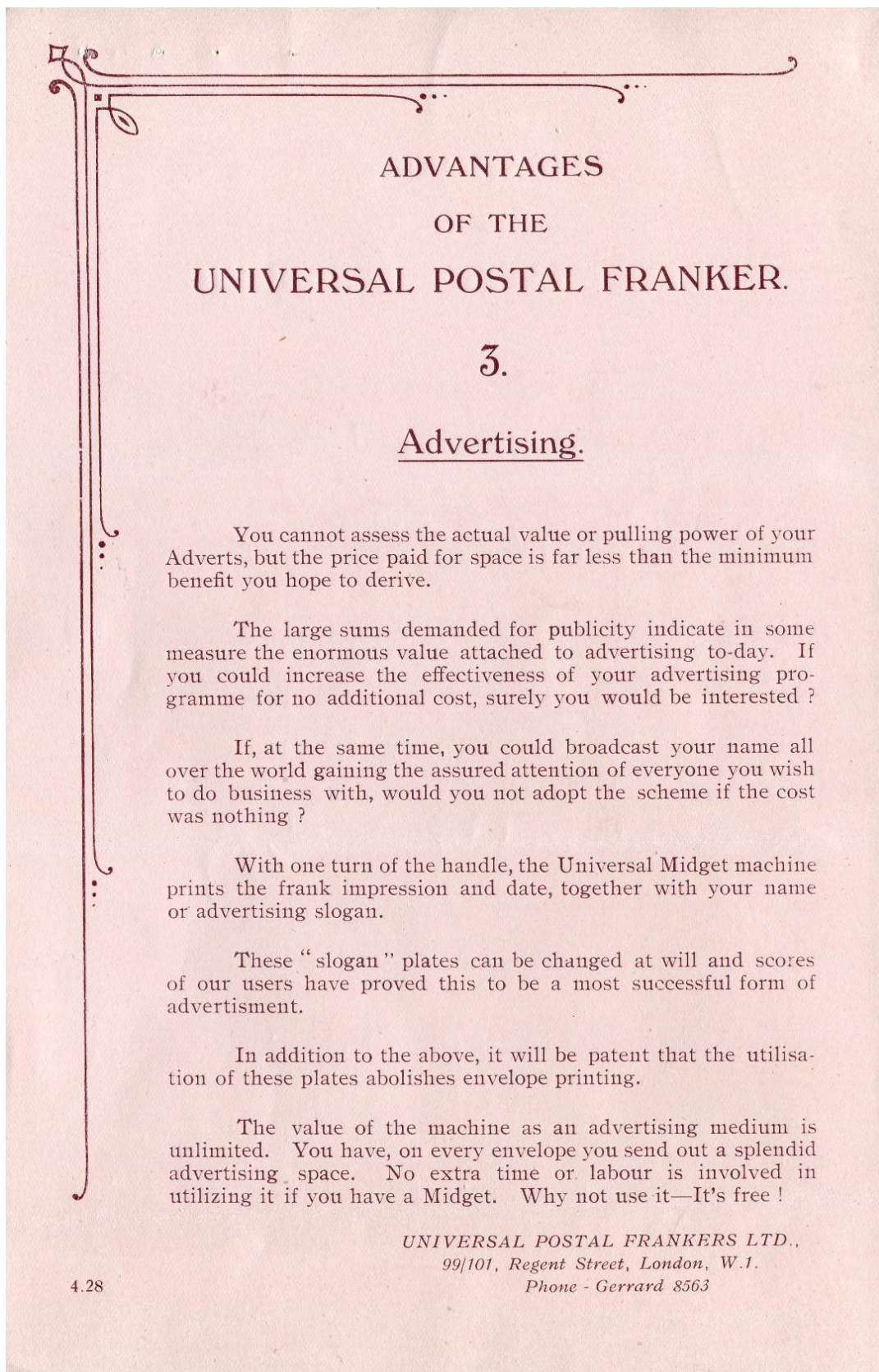
**If you are not responsible for updating your franking machine, please forward this to the person who is.**



Royal Mail and the cruciform are trade marks of Royal Mail Group Ltd. © Royal Mail Group Ltd 2015. All rights reserved. Royal Mail Group Ltd. registered in England and Wales, number 4138203, registered office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London, EC4Y 0HQ.

## Historic Items

Further to the UPF material supplied by Michael Dobbs (see p 171-9 and 172-9), below is the third of four promotional cards included in the information pack sent to a customer in 1928. It advertises the advantages of the Universal Postal Franker with the title "Advertising".



ADVANTAGES  
OF THE  
UNIVERSAL POSTAL FRANKER.

3.

Advertising.

You cannot assess the actual value or pulling power of your Adverts, but the price paid for space is far less than the minimum benefit you hope to derive.

The large sums demanded for publicity indicate in some measure the enormous value attached to advertising to-day. If you could increase the effectiveness of your advertising programme for no additional cost, surely you would be interested ?

If, at the same time, you could broadcast your name all over the world gaining the assured attention of everyone you wish to do business with, would you not adopt the scheme if the cost was nothing ?

With one turn of the handle, the Universal Midget machine prints the frank impression and date, together with your name or advertising slogan.

These "slogan" plates can be changed at will and scores of our users have proved this to be a most successful form of advertisement.

In addition to the above, it will be patent that the utilisation of these plates abolishes envelope printing.

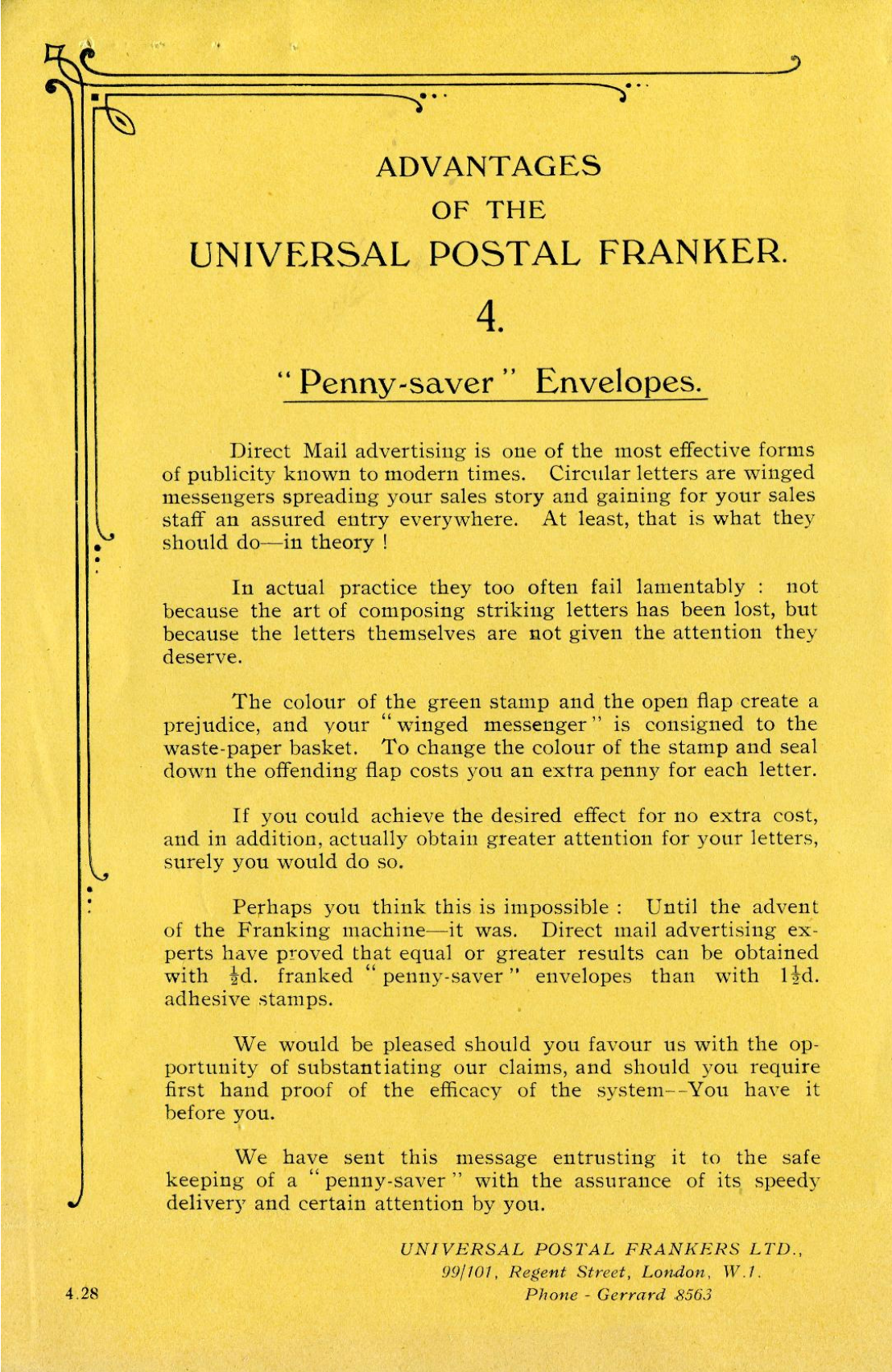
The value of the machine as an advertising medium is unlimited. You have, on every envelope you send out a splendid advertising space. No extra time or labour is involved in utilizing it if you have a Midget. Why not use it—It's free !

UNIVERSAL POSTAL FRANKERS LTD.,  
99/101, Regent Street, London, W.1.  
Phone - Gerrard 8563

4.28

## Historic Items continued

Here is the fourth advertising card. It lists the advantages of the Universal Postal Franker under the title "Penny-saver Envelopes".



ADVANTAGES  
OF THE  
UNIVERSAL POSTAL FRANKER.  
4.  
"Penny-saver" Envelopes.

Direct Mail advertising is one of the most effective forms of publicity known to modern times. Circular letters are winged messengers spreading your sales story and gaining for your sales staff an assured entry everywhere. At least, that is what they should do—in theory!

In actual practice they too often fail lamentably: not because the art of composing striking letters has been lost, but because the letters themselves are not given the attention they deserve.

The colour of the green stamp and the open flap create a prejudice, and your "winged messenger" is consigned to the waste-paper basket. To change the colour of the stamp and seal down the offending flap costs you an extra penny for each letter.

If you could achieve the desired effect for no extra cost, and in addition, actually obtain greater attention for your letters, surely you would do so.

Perhaps you think this is impossible: Until the advent of the Franking machine—it was. Direct mail advertising experts have proved that equal or greater results can be obtained with  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. franked "penny-saver" envelopes than with  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. adhesive stamps.

We would be pleased should you favour us with the opportunity of substantiating our claims, and should you require first hand proof of the efficacy of the system—You have it before you.

We have sent this message entrusting it to the safe keeping of a "penny-saver" with the assurance of its speedy delivery and certain attention by you.

UNIVERSAL POSTAL FRANKERS LTD.,  
99/101, Regent Street, London, W.1.  
Phone - Gerrard 8563

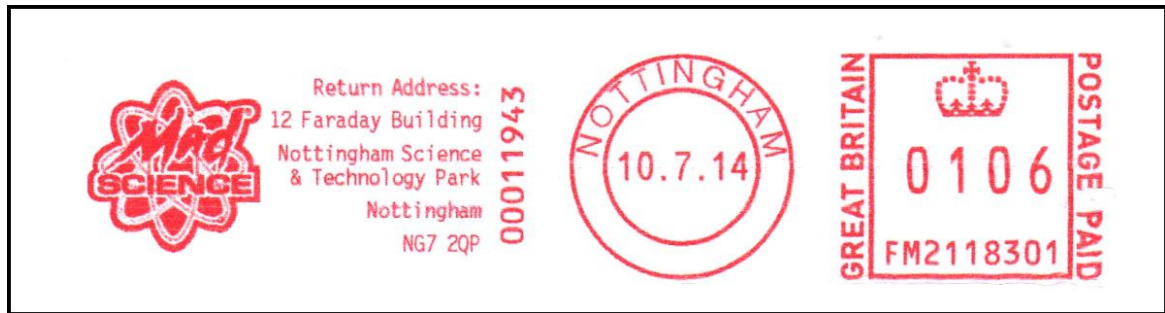
4.28

## Meter Thematics

Peter Mantell kindly supplies all of the thematics on this page, starting with this “Love Milk” slogan from Tomlinsons Dairies in Wrexham.



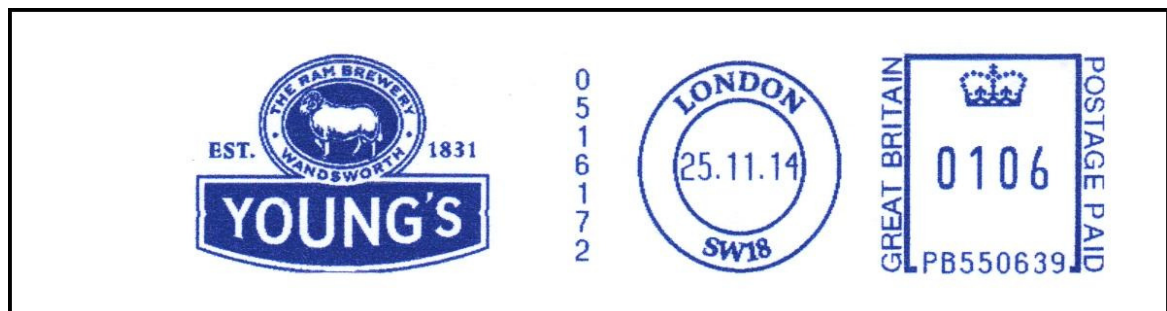
This unusual logo is from a business called ‘Mad Science’ that is based in Nottingham and it specialises in children’s parties.



This attractive heraldic design is from the Hampton School and bears the Latin insignia “Praestat Opes Sapientia” - which translates into “Wisdom Surpasses Wealth”.



Here is a nice animal and drink thematic from Young’s brewery.

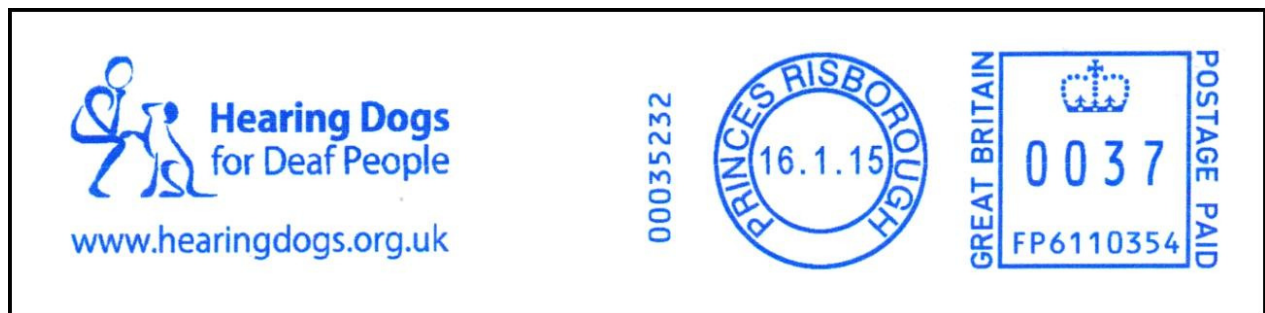


### Meter Thematics continued

Peter Mantell reports this railway thematic from Virgin Trains East Coast based in York.



Peter Mantell has found this disability and animal thematic from Hearing Dogs.



Peter Mantell reports this nice education and bird thematic from the Wanstead High School. It is also worth noting that this is the lowest number seen from this PB66 series.

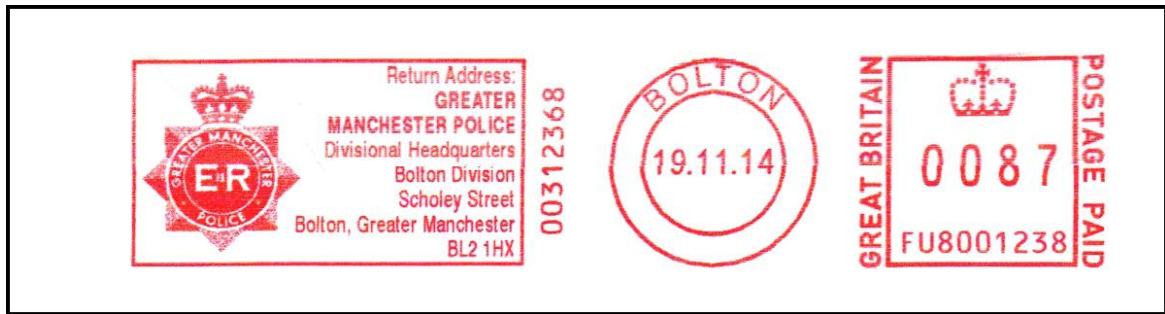


Guy Amedro kindly sends this attractive fish design from the Scottish Fishermen's Organisation (SFO) based in Edinburgh.



### Meter Thematics continued

Peter Mantell reports this slogan from the Bolton Division of the Greater Manchester Police.



Peter Mantell sends this unusual slogan from the Paralympics GB headquarters in London.



On page 167-8 we illustrated this logo from the Royal Aeronautical Society in red ink. Now Peter Mantell reports the same logo but in blue ink.



My Meter Thematic of the Month is awarded to Peter Mantell and is one of my all-time favourites. It comes from St. Christopher's School in Wrexham and their logo is clearly based on Pink Floyd's "Another Brick In The Wall". When an item like this comes along it, perhaps, explains why I find this hobby of ours so fascinating!

