

# METER NEWS

*Issue Number 179 Sep 2015*



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## Meter of the Month

For some time now, your editor has been wondering what happens when, before posting a 'Mailmark' mail item, a user notices that it has been franked '1 Letter' when it should have been franked '1 L Letter 100g', and a 'make-up' value therefore needs to be applied so that the correct total amount is paid. Thanks to Duncan James, I believe we now have the answer!

My meter of the month, sent by Duncan, shows a previously unrecorded Mailmark format with 'PF Frank Pay' and which has the small amount of £0.27 postage. It just so happens that the rate for a first class meter frank is currently £0.51, and that for a Large Letter at the 100g rate is £0.78 – yes, a difference of £0.27.

Your editor guesses that 'PF' is an abbreviation for 'Payment Frank' but is unable to confirm that at this stage. Presumably, the more logical abbreviation of 'FP' (standing for 'Frank Pay' to align with the visible text) was rejected because it could be confused with 'Francotyp-Postalia' and that other manufacturers would object to such an abbreviation. The full image is shown below, noting the inclusion of 'UK' above the date, applied in error:



The 'Mail Type' code encrypted in the matrix block for this item decodes as '9998'. We have previously seen examples of 'Surcharge Payment' with the 'Mail Type' code '9999'. It makes sense, therefore, that a 'make-up' payment is put in the category of 'underpayment' (with codes starting with '9'). Reports of other examples of 'PF' franks would be very much appreciated.

## Acknowledgements

My thanks this month go to Jon Aitchison, Ray Downing, Alan Godfrey, Gwynne Harries, Peter Huss, Duncan James, Jan Lannoye, Peter Mantell, Mike Mood, Robert Petts and Peter Wood for their reports, communications or contributions.

## Latest Numbers

Below is the list of 'latest numbers' as at the end of September 2015 – with updates shown in red. Please could I have the next reports by 28th October - 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>F1004010</u>	27.05.15	See MN 175
Matrix F12 etc.	<u>FR2001670</u>	17-08-15	See MN 178

### Francotyp-Postalia

Optimail 25/35	<u>F04115620</u>	04.06.14	See MN 164
Centormail 240/300	<u>FC5110690</u>	25-08-15	Reported by DJ, see note p3
MyMail / PostagePro	<u>FM2657744</u>	07-01-15	See MN 171
PostBase Qi3/4/6/9	<u>FP6110850</u>	04.08.15	See MN 178
PostBase Qi3/4/6/9	<u>FP6114980</u>	28-08-15	Reported by DJ
PostBase Qi3000?	<u>FP7110916</u>	30-09-15	Reported by AN

### Neopost

IS-330	<u>N1053186</u>	23.04.15	See MN 175
IS-350	<u>N1182582</u>	18.09.15	Reported by AN
Various upgraded	<u>N1240746</u>	31.07.15	See MN 177
IS-480	<u>N3030571</u>	22.07.15	See MN 177
IS-240 / IS-280	<u>N3319858</u>	18.05.15	See MN 175
IS-5000/6000	<u>N5001705</u>	20.10.14	See MN 168
IS-240/280	<u>NE6006789</u>	21-09-15	Reported by AG
IS-480	<u>NE8007772</u>	29-09-15	Reported by AN
IS-5000/6000	<u>NE9000393</u>	25-08-15	Reported by DJ

### Pitney Bowes

DM160i/220i	<u>PB172883</u>	17-09-15	Reported by AN
DM60	<u>PB2007105</u>	25-09-15	Reported by DJ
DM50, 55	<u>PB367041</u>	12.08.15	See MN 178
Connect+ 10FC etc.	<u>PB557886</u>	14-08-15	See MN 178
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB620623</u>	28.08.15	See MN 178
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB6627188</u>	31-07-15	See MN 178
DM 110i	<u>PB883605</u>	15.09.15	Reported by PM

### Advanced Mail Codes

AAGK-HY	NE9000321	16-04-15	See MN 174
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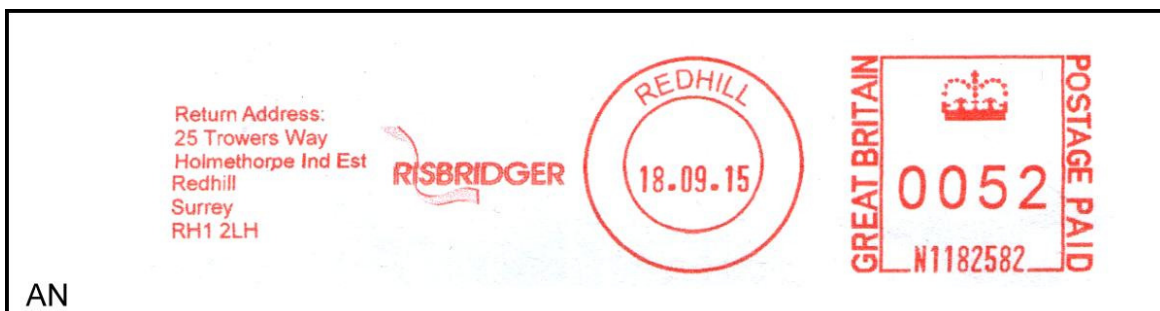
This month the FU311 and PB551 series have been removed from this list as no updates have been reported on these for over a year.

Peter Mantell reports an update to the N137 dead series with the serial N1373754.



## 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. Note that the first image is the first time we have had a latest number for the FC series with a Mailmark format.



**Latest Number Images Continued**

Delivered by

Royal Mail

29-09-15  
£0.63 NE8007772

2  
L Letter  
100g

AN - NE8007772 [Item 0001041]

Advanced Mail  
Second Class  
AAGL-KJYG-RRCJ

Delivered by

Royal Mail

25-08-15  
£0.45 NE9000393

2  
Advanced

DJ - NE9000393 [Item 0026922]

Delivered by

Royal Mail

17-09-15  
£0.36 PB172883

2  
Letter

AN - PB172883 [Item 0000384]

Amazing Entertainment Inside. Please  
**DO NOT BEND**  
It's For A Very Special Customer !!!!!

Delivered by

Royal Mail

25-09-15  
£1.09 PB2007105

1  
L Letter  
250g

DJ - PB2007105 [Item 0000453]

0 E  
0 7  
0 E  
0 7  
0 1  
0 4  
7 2

YORK  
15.09.15

GREAT BRITAIN

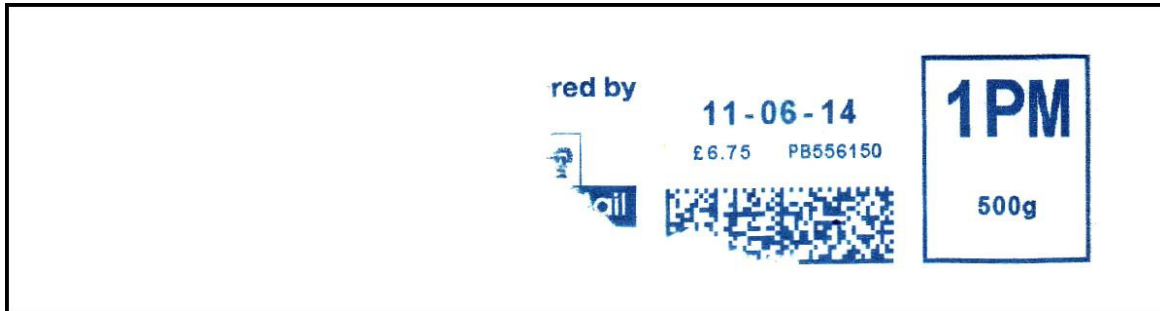
0052  
PB883605

POSTAGE PAID

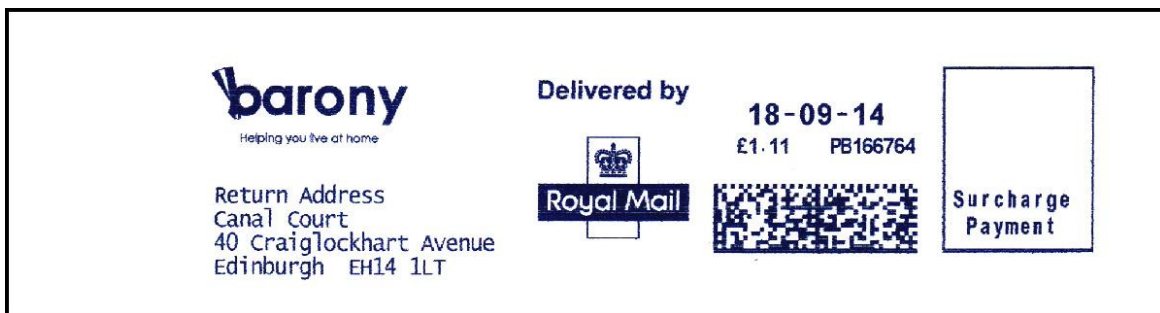
PM

## Recent Interesting Items

Duncan James reports our first sighting of a '1PM 500g' Mailmark frank. Unfortunately, it has only been partially printed and the matrix block cannot be decoded. Therefore, the 'Mail Type' code for this service cannot yet be added to the Mail Type list (see next page).



Duncan also sends these 'Surcharge Payment' and 'Zero Test' franks. Such franks are seldom seen on live mail.



Finally for this section, Duncan sends this printing error seen on a Francotyp-Postalia PostBase machine, where a ghost '2' is shown in the upper part of the indicia block. It seems that the item was misfed as it entered the machine because the frank starts on the extreme right hand side of the envelope and this may, in turn, have caused the printing 'hiccup'. Note that the lower printer has failed as well because the words 'Address' and 'Blackpool' also contain double-printed letters.

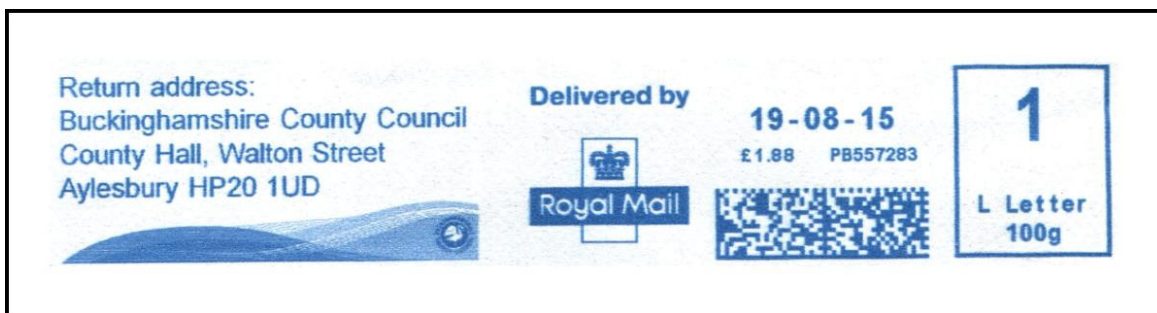


**Mailmark™ News**

Your editor has found this ‘Signed For’ item that has a (previously unrecorded) Mail Type code of ‘1100’ in the matrix block.



Your editor has also found a similar item but at the Large Letter 100g rate (see below). This frank contains the Mail Type code ‘2100’ in the matrix block. Items showing the equivalent second class rates using the ‘Signed For’ service have not yet been reported.



The above reports, together with the ‘PF’ report on page 1, allow the Mail Type table (that was last shown in full on page 178-8) to be extended as follows:

Mail Type Code	Type Description	First Reports
1100	(Signed For) 1 Letter	Page 179-6
2100	(Signed For) 1 L Letter	Page 179-6
9998	PF Frank Pay	Page 179-6

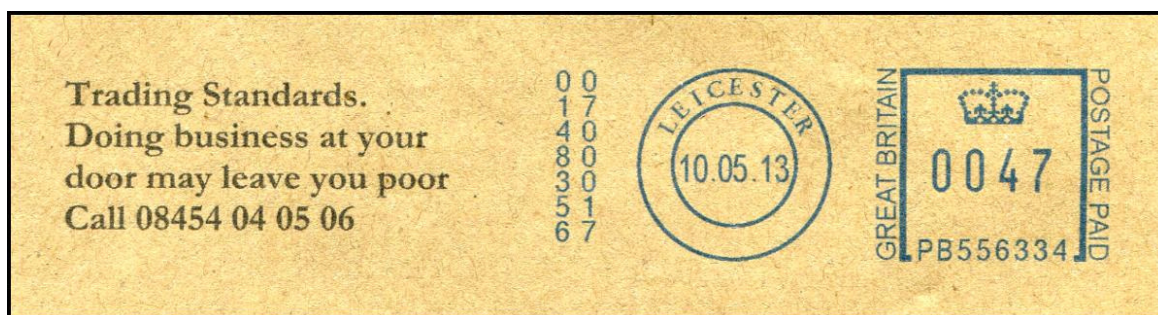
## Francotyp-Postalia MyMail machines - Conversion to 'Design J' format

In the September 2014 issue of the newsletter (pages 167-2/3) our first 'Design J' MyMail frank was reported as a highest number (with serial FM2656873). However, in October 2014 the highest number for this series was in the old Design H format, with serial FM2656946. All highest number reports since then have been in Design J format. Also, it appears that some older machines that would originally have appeared in 'Design H' are now being seen converted to 'Design J' format.

It appears therefore that, as far as serial numbers are concerned, there was not a 'clean' changeover to the new Design J format and that an overlap exists. One possible explanation is that not all new MyMail machines are being sold with the new technology and that the old-format franks are being offered to users as an option. In order to clarify what is happening, your editor would appreciate reports of all MyMail franks with a serial number higher than FM2655540, whatever the date or type of frank – thanks.

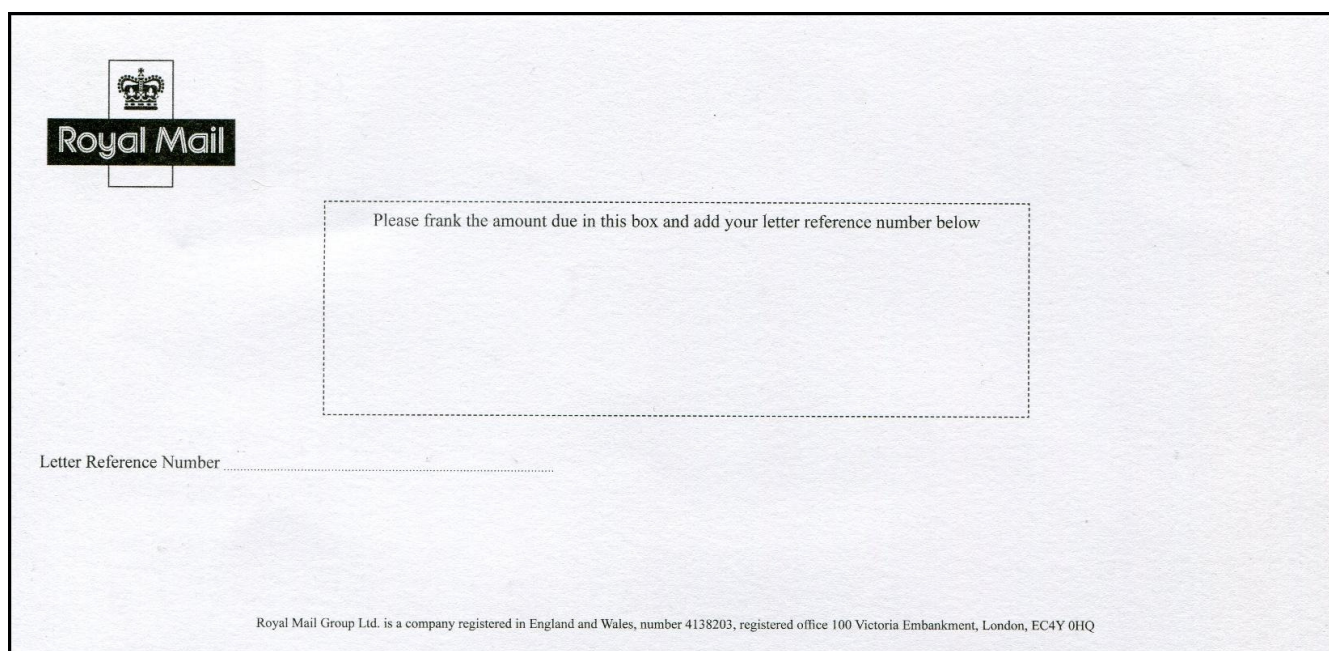
## Coloured Slogans

This month we have just one new item with a 'black' return address block and a nice slogan – thanks to Gwynne Harries for this report.



## Meter Franking Ephemera

Your editor has recently acquired this 'Franking Underpayments' card. On the reverse, the return address for the card is "Royal Mail, PO Box 740, Wombwell, Barnsley, S73 0ZJ"



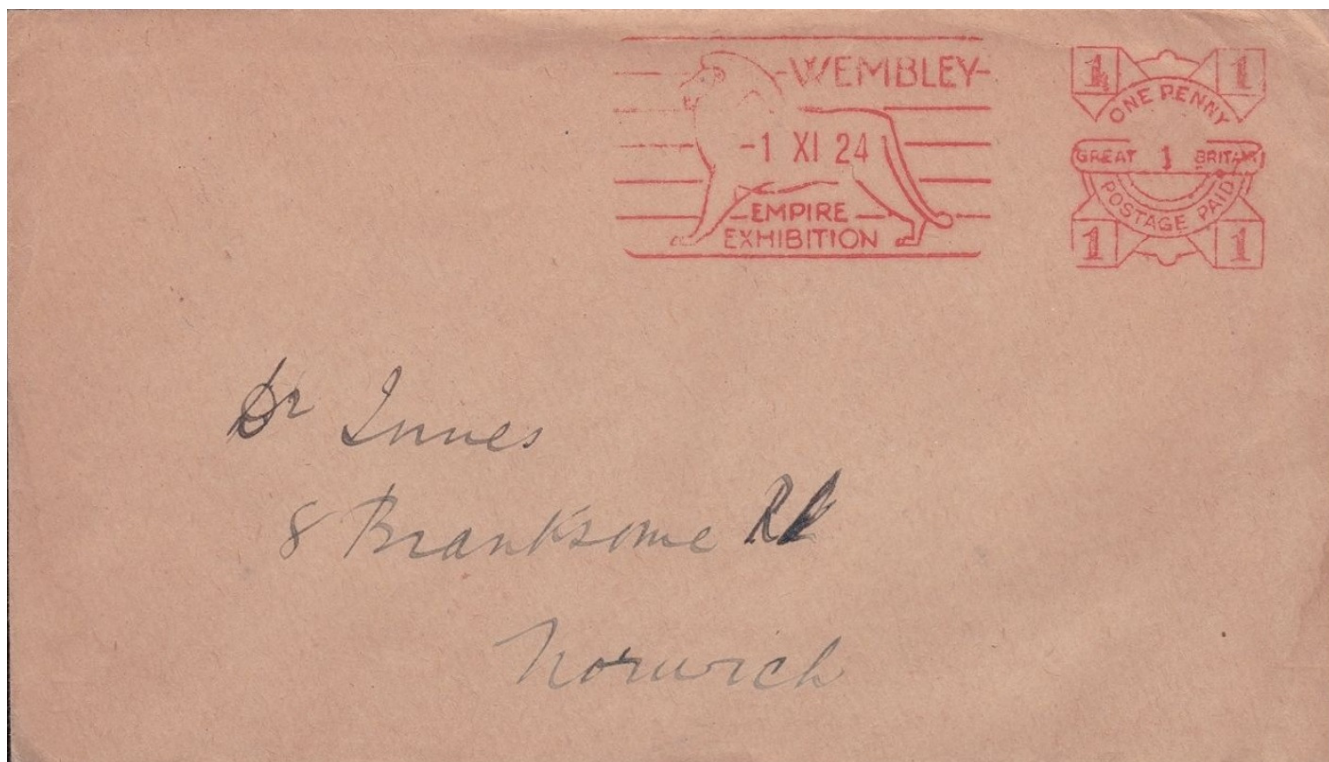
## Historic Items

Peter Mantell has recently acquired this most unusual Neopost LV Design D frank where the month appears as a '10' in Arabic figures rather than an 'X' in Roman figures, normally seen for such machines. This appears so out of place because the digits of the '10' are thicker and brighter than the day and year numerals either side. Furthermore, the 'zero' is fatter than zero's used in the day and year of other similar machines. It is likely, therefore, that a repair to the 'month' wheel has taken place at some stage.



Peter asks whether anything can be read into the fact that this happened during war-time. Your editor believes that this could be a factor. We know that some of the value dies on Pitney Bowes machines around that time were not replaced with new ones for cost / resource reasons. For example, the '1½d' value was 'engraved out' to make '1d' on some machines. In the meter franking world, examples of this are known as 'Wartime Provisionals'. In this case, if the 'X' for October had worn out on the dial and they didn't have a spare wheel lying around, then it is just possible that they could, with some ingenuity, have used a number "1" and a letter "O" that just happened to be lying around from a discarded slogan plate and then soldered those onto the wheel.

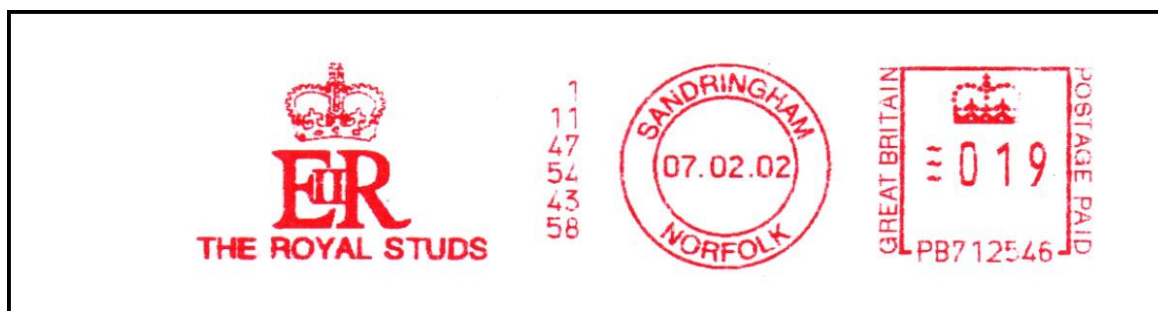
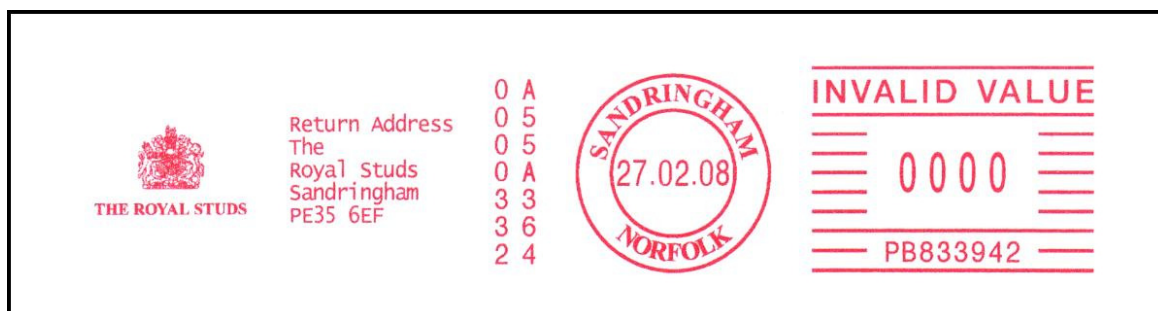
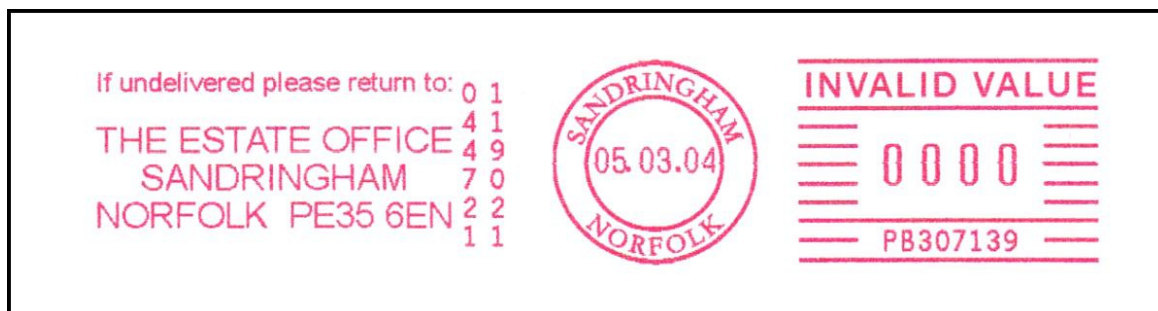
Peter has noticed that this Wembley cover recently sold for £102 on Ebay.



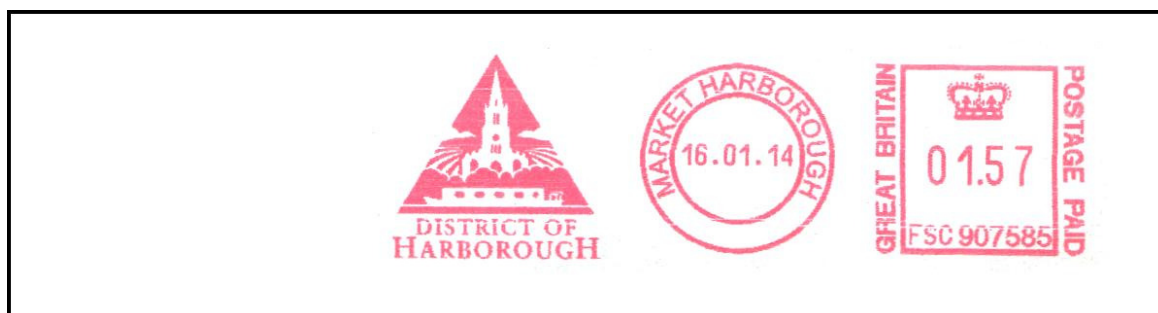


## Meter Thematics

Peter Mantell has recently acquired these three nice 'Royal' thematics from Sandringham. The first two are specimens on blank cards and the third is from a live mail item.



Your editor has found this attractive frank from Harborough District Council based in Market Harborough. The town is in Leicestershire, has a population of around 23,000 and is situated on the border with Northamptonshire. The frank depicts a canal boat as the Leicester branch of the Grand Union Canal passes through the nearby village of Foxton that is famous for its ten lock 'staircase'. The frank also shows the steeple of St. Dionysius' Parish Church which was built in 1300 and situated in Market Harborough town centre.



### Meter Thematics continued

Duncan James has sent this interesting fire-related thematic. It reads as though the user should take care when opening the item because there is a risk of fire when doing so! However, surely this cannot be the case as no such appliance could have been enclosed in an ordinary second class letter, I would have thought!



Duncan has also found this attractive 'frank from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.



Duncan sends this unusual design from a company called 'BabyBoom 2000' - a retail outfit based in Ruislip that supplies everything that parents might need for their baby.



Finally, Duncan has found this attractive frank depicting the famous Forth Rail Bridge, which receives my 'Meter Thematic of the Month' award. The Forth Bridge is a cantilever railway bridge over the Firth of Forth, 9 miles west of Edinburgh City Centre. It is considered an iconic structure and a symbol of Scotland, and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

