

# METER NEWS

Issue Number 183 Jan 2016



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## Meter of the Month

My Meter of the Month has been kindly sent by an overseas reader Wang Jingsheng in Beijing. It shows a Pitney Bowes specimen frank from a DM 110i machine with '9999' postage. The interesting point to note is the '899973' serial number which, almost certainly, shows that a number of demonstration machines were produced with serial numbers allocated in reverse order, starting with '899999'. Readers will recall the reverse order allocations given to the PB7, PB9 and PBP series machines in the 1990s for 'on-loan' machines (see page 68-4). He also sends an example of a 'Register Report' for this machine:

Register Report	Used:	£2145.73	10.01.11	
	Unused:	£7382.27	15:13	
	Total Pieces:	345	Batch Count:	99
	Control Sum:	£9528.00	Batch Value:	£1165.05
			PBP Serial No.:	6899973

## Francotyp-Postalia PostBase Mini

Peter Huss sends this link to the PostBase Mini:  
[http://www.ims-franking.co.uk/postbase\\_mini.html](http://www.ims-franking.co.uk/postbase_mini.html)

Your editor is certain that this must be the entry-level machine that produces the FP7 serial prefix. It prints up to 15 items per minute, has 'SMART' (Mailmark) technology and incorporates 10 customised advertising images.



## Editorial

This month your editor has again carried out a yearly analysis of sales of new machines from each manufacturer. The analysis indicates that a small reduction in the overall volume of sales from 2014 with the market share between manufacturers remaining fairly constant.

## Acknowledgements

My thanks this month go to Jon Aitchison, Michael Dobbs, Alan Godfrey, Gwynne Harries, Peter Huss, Duncan James, David Jones, Jan Lannoye, Peter Mantell and Robert Petts for their reports, communications or contributions.

## Latest Numbers

Below is the list of 'latest numbers' as at the end of January 2016 – with updates shown in red. Please could I have the next reports by the 28th February - thanks.

In the list below, the part of the serial number that directly relates to the model is underlined. Note that those entries that have a date format with hyphen separators are ones in 'Design J' (matrix) format.

### Frama (UK)

Matrix F2, F4, F6	<u>F1004014</u>	14.12.15	See MN 182
Matrix F12 etc.	<u>FR2001898</u>	27-01-16	Reported by AN

### Francotyp-Postalia

Centormail 240/300	<u>FC5110729</u>	18-11-15	See MN 181
MyMail / PostagePro	<u>FM2658042</u>	27.02.15	See MN 182
PostBase Qi3/4/6/9	<u>FP6110850</u>	04.08.15	See MN 178
PostBase Qi3/4/6/9	<u>FP6115509</u>	15-01-16	Reported by AN
PostBase Mini	<u>FP7112814</u>	19-01-16	Reported by D James

### Neopost

IS-330	<u>N1053359</u>	15.12.15	See MN 182
IS-350	<u>N1182582</u>	18.09.15	See MN 179
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-240/280	<u>NE6008143</u>	21-01-16	Reported by AN
IS-480	<u>NE8009338</u>	06-01-16	Reported by AG
IS-5000/6000	<u>NE9000466</u>	07-12-15	Reported by AN

### Pitney Bowes

DM160i/220i	<u>PB175807</u>	29-01-16	Reported by PM
DM60	<u>PB2012345</u>	19-01-16	Reported by PM
DM50, 55	<u>PB368265</u>	21.10.15	See MN 182
Connect+ 10FC etc.	<u>PB558027</u>	08-12-15	See MN 182
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB620820</u>	06.01.16	Reported by PM
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB6627568</u>	26-01-16	Reported by AN
DM 110i	<u>PB884225</u>	31.12.15	Reported by AN

### Advanced Mail Codes

AAGK-HY	NE9000321	16-04-15	See MN 174
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### Meter-related web pages

Several web sites report that Royal Mail is planning to increase the gap between Mailmark and older systems. Royal Mail is aiming to migrate 90% of its machine-readable mail to its Mailmark tracking system by March 2017, and is increasing the cost of other systems in comparison to encourage uptake. For example, see:

<http://www.printweek.com/print-week/news/1153326/royal-mail-to-increase-price-gap-between-mailmark-and-older-systems>

## Latest Number Images


Contributor's initials and other details are shown in the bottom left of each image.






**Latest Number Images continued**


Return Address:  
Invicia House  
Maidstone  
Kent  
ME14 1XX



Delivered by



07-12-15  
£1.51 NE9000466



**1**  
Letter

AN - NE9000466 [Item 0005109]

Delivered by



29-01-16  
£0.51 PB175807



**1**  
Letter

PM - PB175807 [Item 0000032]

Return to> NRSLTD  
118 Burnley Road  
Southport PR8 3LR  
United Kingdom

Delivered by



19-01-16  
£0.36 PB2012345



**2**  
Letter

PM - PB2012345 [Item 0000052]

Return Address  
ETES Ltd  
9-11 High Street  
Staines  
TW18 4QY

Delivered by



26-01-16  
£0.51 PB6627568



**1**  
Letter

AN - PB6627568 [Item 0005473]

04  
06  
01  
13  
97  
09  
94



GREAT BRITAIN



POSTAGE PAID  
PB620820

PM

0A  
09  
01  
0F  
06  
64  
47



GREAT BRITAIN



POSTAGE PAID  
PB884225

PM

## 2015 Machine Sales Statistics

This year I have decided to present the yearly sales statistics slightly differently - by splitting the data into 'Traditional' technology (Design H) and 'SMART' technology (Design J) machines, rather than grouping by volume category.

Note that some Pitney Bowes machines get a new licence number whenever a battery replacement is made - approximately every two years (see p160-5) and this clearly impacts these figures. The extent of this practice is unknown and no attempt has been made to estimate the true figure of sales of new Pitney Bowes machines. The trends, however, remain valid and the analysis appears to indicate that the overall volume of sales is only just down on 2014 figures and the split between the manufacturers remains similar to last year.

### Part 1 - 'Traditional' technology machines (Design H)

Manufacturer	Category	Model	Dec-15	Dec-14	Sales
Frama	Low/Mid vol.	Matrix F2 etc.	F1004014	F1003875	139
F-Postalia	Low volume	MyMail	FM2658042	FM2657744	298
F-Postalia	Low volume	PostBase Qi3 etc.	FP6110850	FP6110743	107
Neopost	Low volume	IS-330	N1053359	N1052975	384
Neopost	Low volume	IS-350	N1182582	N1181981	601
Neopost	Low volume	IS-240 / IS-280	N3319858	N3319102	756
Neopost	Mid volume	IS-480	N3030571	N3030278	293
Neopost	High volume	Various upgraded	N1240746	N1240699	47
Pitney Bowes	Low volume	DM50, 55	PB368265	PB362909	5356
Pitney Bowes	Low volume	DM 110i	PB884225	PB882070	2155
Pitney Bowes	Mid volume	DM 400, 450, 475	PB620651	PB620566	85
				<b>Total:</b>	<b>10221</b>

Note that the F04, FU3, N5 and PB551 series have been dropped from the table because no increases were seen for these machines in 2015.

### Part 2 - 'SMART' technology machines (Design J)

Manufacturer	Category	Model	Dec-15	Dec-14	Sales
<b>Frama (UK)</b>	Low/Mid vol.	Matrix F12 etc.	FR2001888	FR2000812	1076
<b>F-Postalia</b>	Low volume	Centormail	FC5110729	FC5110688	41
<b>F-Postalia</b>	Low volume	PostBase Qi3 etc.	FP6115262	FP6113437	1825
<b>F-Postalia</b>	Low volume	PostBase Mini	FP7111849	-	1849
<b>Neopost</b>	Low volume	IS-240/280	NE6008102	NE6003636	4466
<b>Neopost</b>	Mid volume	IS-480	NE8008809	NE8004645	4164
<b>Neopost</b>	Mid volume	IS-5000/6000	NE9000466	NE9000295	171
<b>Pitney Bowes</b>	Low volume	DM160i/220i	PB174901	PB168406	6495
<b>Pitney Bowes</b>	Low volume	DM60	PB2011321	PB2001034	10287
<b>Pitney Bowes</b>	High volume	Connect+	PB558027	PB557482	545
<b>Pitney Bowes</b>	Mid volume	DM 400, 450, 475	PB6627562	PB6626325	1237
				<b>Total:</b>	<b>32156</b>

## 2015 Machine Sales Statistics continued

The following table shows the split in total UK sales volume between manufacturers.

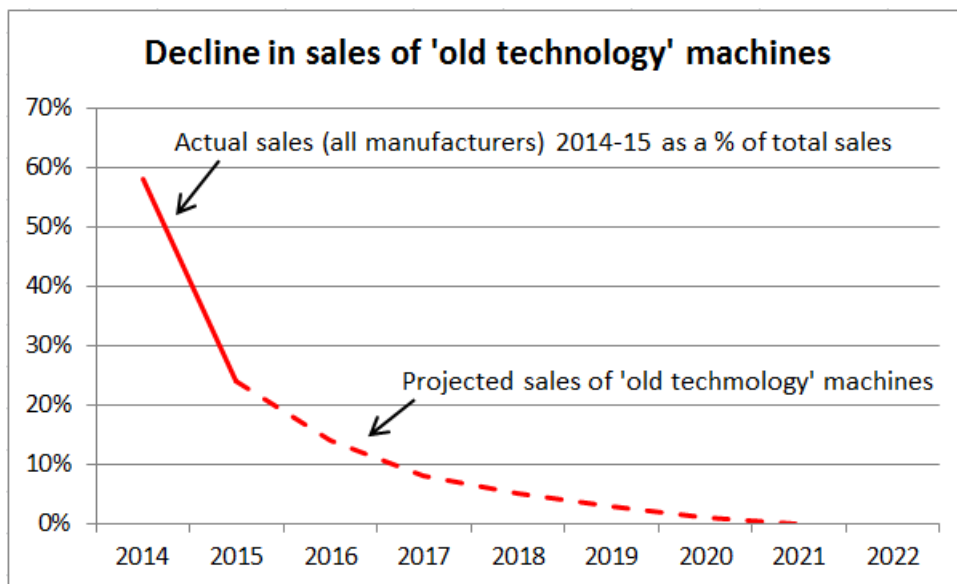
Manufacturer	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Frama	1215	1209	893	847	652	679
Francotyp-Postalia	4120	3686	2414	3804	3832	1718
Neopost	10882	12079	12230	13618	13277	10377
Pitney Bowes	26160	29056	28523	28669	35163	23363
<b>Total</b>	<b>42377</b>	<b>46030</b>	<b>44060</b>	<b>46938</b>	<b>52924</b>	<b>36137</b>

The following table shows the split in total UK sales as a percentage between manufacturers.

Manufacturer	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Frama	2.9%	2.6%	2.0%	1.8%	1.2%	1.9%
Francotyp-Postalia	9.7%	8.0%	5.0%	8.1%	7.2%	4.8%
Neopost	25.7%	26.3%	27.8%	29.0%	25.1%	28.7%
Pitney Bowes	61.7%	63.1%	65.0%	61.1%	66.5%	64.6%

At some stage in the future, all new machines sold will have 'SMART' technology. Mailmark has now been around for nearly two years which allows us to estimate the percentage split between old and new technology machines over that period.

The graph below tries to show the decline in the proportion of old technology machines sold. The 2015 sales analysis above gives us our first 'real' data on this graph and is shown as a solid red line. It reflects the fact that approximately only one-quarter of all new machines sold in 2015 was one with Design H.



The dotted red line is purely your editor's prediction as to the likely tail-off of sales of old technology machines over the next few years. If correct, this shows that, within five years, all new machines will have SMART technology fitted. However, old technology machines are likely to continue to be in use long after that - subject to any new Royal Mail regulations that may come into force at some stage, of course.

## Recent Interesting Items

Duncan James sends this PF (Payment Frank) with £3.00 postage from machine FP6114310, applied on a pre-printed Royal Mail 'payment' card. The matrix block decodes as Mail Type 9998, Item 00002834.



Duncan also sends a similar item on machine FP6114007, but this time the £1.50 postage has been applied using a 'Surcharge Payment' frank and printed on a label before fixing it to the 'payment' card. The matrix block decodes as Mail Type 9999, Item 0000713. Note that 'UK' appears in both examples above the date.



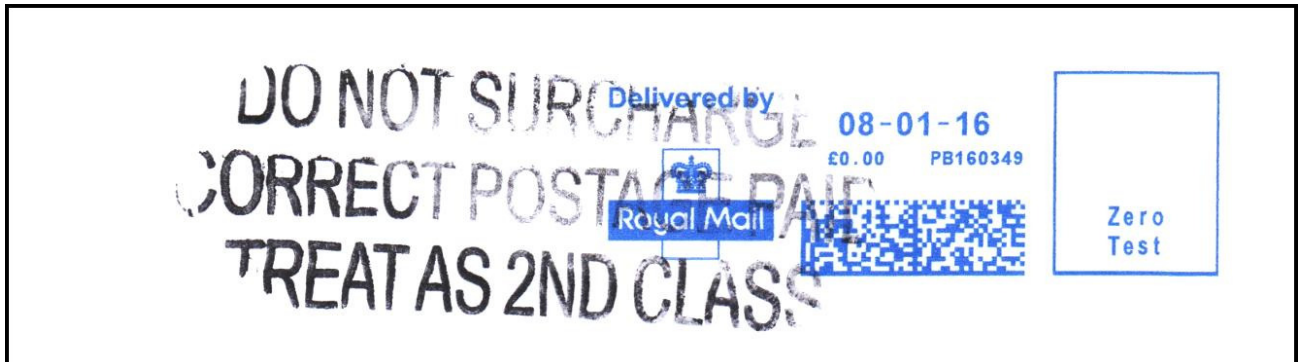
Duncan sends two further examples of 'Surcharge Payment' franks – one from Neopost (serial NE8000766) and the other from Pitney Bowes (serial PB174671). As expected, both of these have a Mail Type of 9999.





## Recent Interesting Items continued

Peter Mantell reports this 'Zero Test' item where a Revenue Protection handstamp (office unknown) has been applied over the frank. The Mail Type of the frank is confirmed as '9995'.



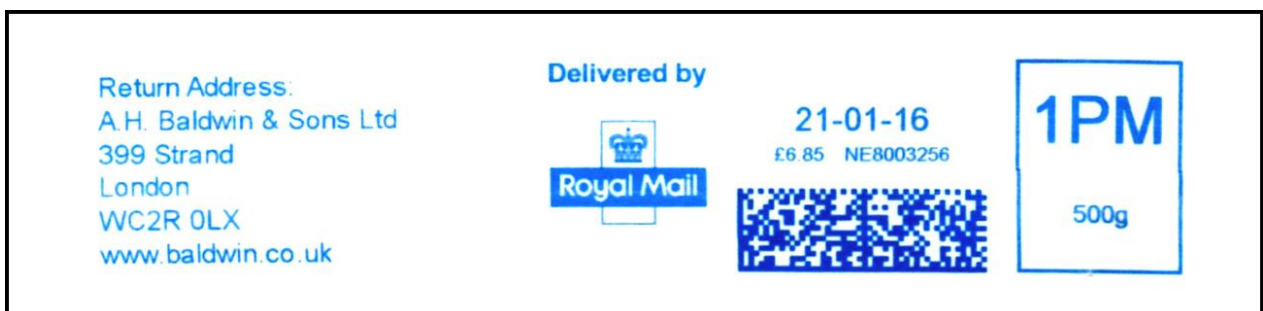
Peter Mantell also sends this "Private & Confidential" slogan. With such a large ampersand, it is probably a 'pre-loaded' message within the machine (because a user is unlikely to go to those lengths!). Reports of this message on a different machine would be welcome in order to confirm this.



## Mailmark™ News

Further to pages 178-7 and 179-5, David Jones has found this (Special Delivery) '1PM 500g' item, which decodes as Format 4, Class 3 and Mail Type 0101. This report has triggered some further thoughts from your editor on the apparent overlap of Mail Types assigned to Special Delivery and Large Letter items.

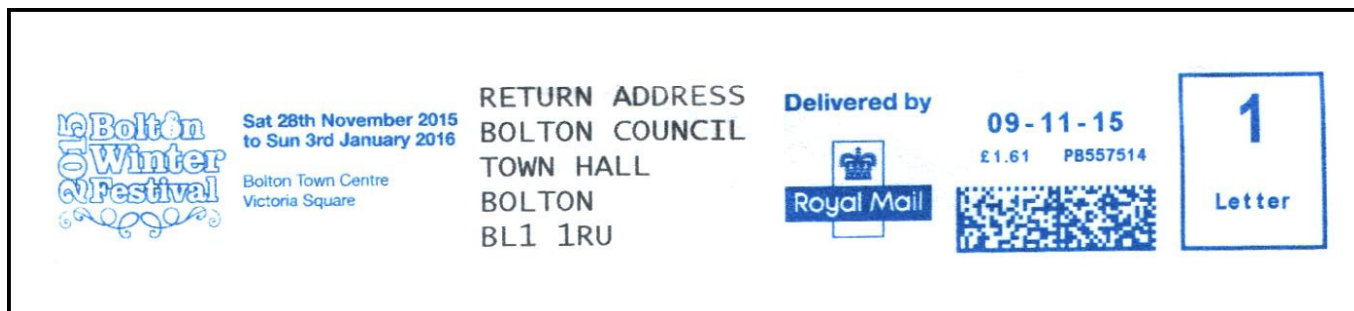
My initial conclusion is that unique Mail Types are not assigned to '1PM' Special Delivery items and that they need to be taken in conjunction with the 'Format' and 'Class' fields - which appear to be always 'Format 4' and 'Class 3' for Special Delivery items. However, as only a handful of examples so far have been seen, some more analysis is required to confirm this and your editor would appreciate further reports of all Mailmark Special Delivery items (both 9AM and 1PM).



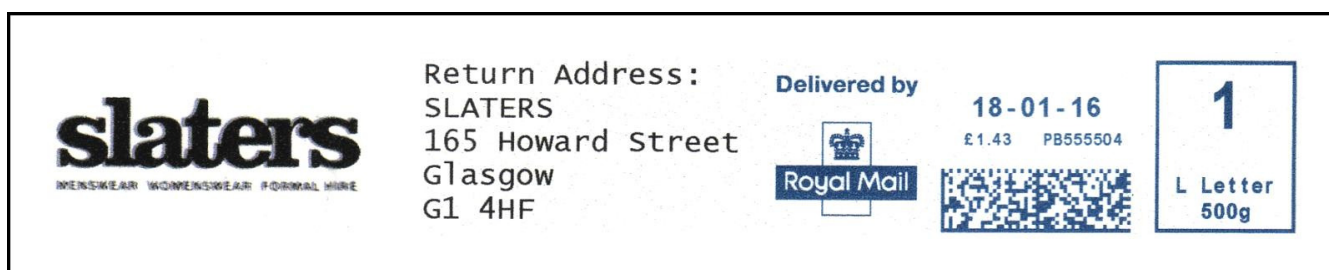


## Colour Franks

Your editor has found this frank from Bolton Council. This machine was previously reported with a slogan advertising the Bolton Market on page 178-9.



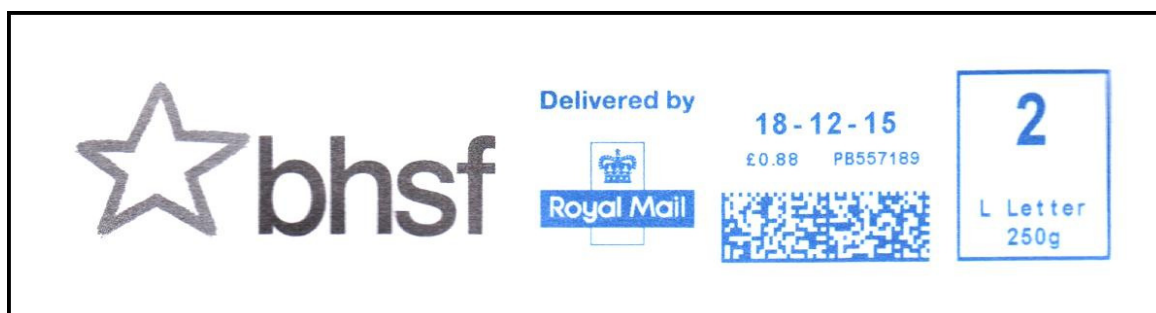
On page 143-6 your editor reported this PB555504 frank in Design H from Slaters in Glasgow. Now, more than three years on, Duncan James reports that this machine is still in use but, as with all Connect+ machines nowadays, is in Design J format.



This black return address from OXFAM comes from Peter Mantell. This machine was shown on page 140-7 in Design H format with a "Be Humankind" slogan.



Peter also sends this black return address from the 'BHSF' (Birmingham Hospital Saturday Fund). The charity was established in 1873 to provide funding for local hospitals.



## Colour Franks continued

Your editor reports a further five coloured franks this month:

**Rushcliffe**  
Borough Council


RETURN ADDRESS  
CIVIC CENTRE  
PAVILION ROAD  
NOTTINGHAM  
NG2 5FE

Delivered by  
**Royal Mail**

27-01-16  
£0.78 PB556071



**1**  
L Letter  
100g

**My Health Tools**  
A guided journey through self-care  
[www.myhealthtools.uk](http://www.myhealthtools.uk)

Kirklees Council  
9 Colne Road  
Folly Hall  
Huddersfield  
HD1 3ER

Delivered by  
**Royal Mail**

10-12-15  
£0.36 PB556211



**2**  
Letter

**HAMBLETON**  
**DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
Civic Centre, Stone Cross, Northallerton DL6 2UU  
Customer Contact Centre  
01609 779977


Delivered by  
**Royal Mail**


04-01-16  
£0.36 PB557308




**2**  
Letter

4 Saturn House  
Calleva Park  
Aldermaston  
RG7 8HA

**ergo-ims**  
mailing systems - office and stationery supplies

Delivered by  
**Royal Mail**

06-01-16  
£0.36 PB557316



**2**  
Letter

**CWU**  
The communications union

Return Address  
150 The Broadway  
London SW19 1RX

Delivered by  
**Royal Mail**

21-01-16  
£0.51 PB557865



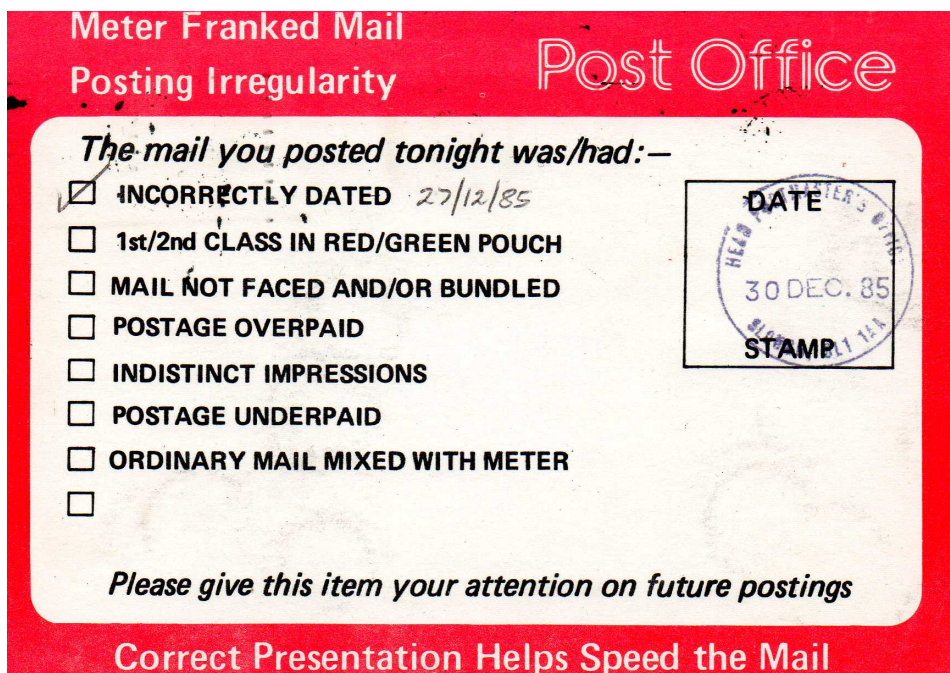
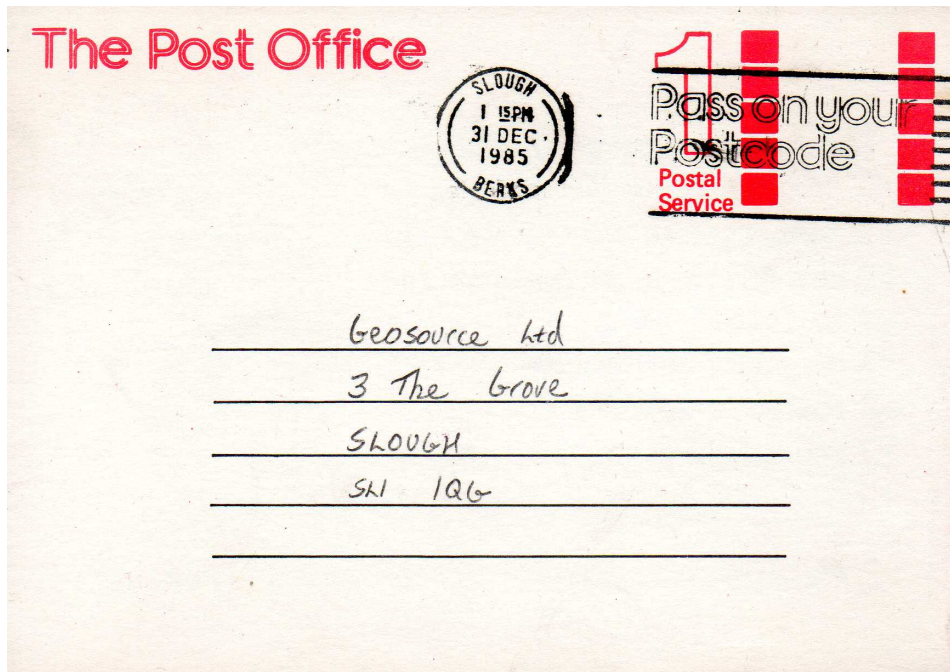
**1**  
Letter



## Historic Items

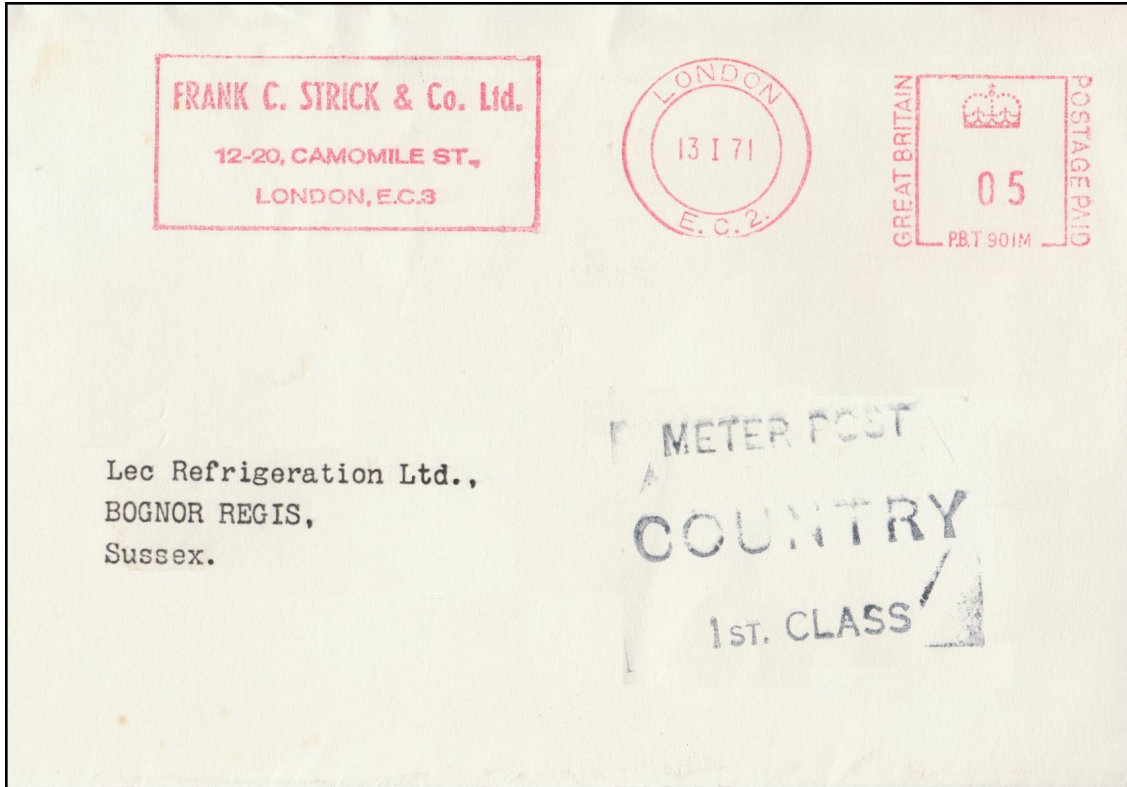
Michael Dobbs sends this 'Meter Franked Mail / Posting Irregularity' PO card that has not been reported previously in the newsletter. Note that, usually, such cards have a (P-series) PO card reference, but not in this case. The front of the card has been machine-cancelled "SLOUGH / BERKS." on 31 Dec 1985 and sent to the local user Geosource Ltd.

The reverse of the card has 8 tick boxes to classify the type of irregularity. In this particular case, the "INCORRECTLY DATED" box has been ticked. Alongside this is a handwritten "27/12/85", that presumably indicates the incorrect date shown on the meter posting. The 'Climax' type rubber date stamp is inscribed "HEAD POSTMASTER'S OFFICE / SLOUGH SL1 1AA". The date of this handstamp is "30 DEC. 85" and presumably reflects the actual date that the meter posting was received in the sorting office.



### Historic Items continued

Peter Mantell reports this handstamp from 1971 inscribed "METER POST / COUNTRY / 1st. CLASS". Note that it is dated '13 I 71', which happens to be exactly one week before the start of the 7-week national postal strike that year.



Robert Petts sends this 'railways' thematic from 1993 that has had a label affixed to correct the date of posting. On the label is a hand-written "DELAY BOMB EXPLOSION"!





## Meter-related web pages (continued from page 2)

Jan Lannoye has recently published his web site "Archives Franking Machines Belgium". The site is still under construction but already includes some useful information and photos. The link for Jan's web site is:

<http://www.frankeermachinearchief.be/index.html>

Your editor has come across a Royal Mail web page that illustrates a very early example of a 2D barcode - dated almost one year before the introduction of Mailmark. The date, postage and serial number decode correctly but the Mail Type attributed does not align with the '1 Large Letter' indicia (see below).

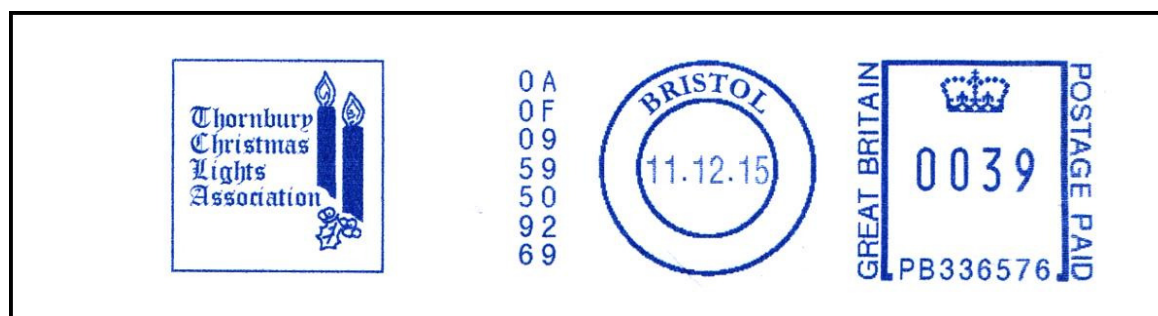


The site can be found at:

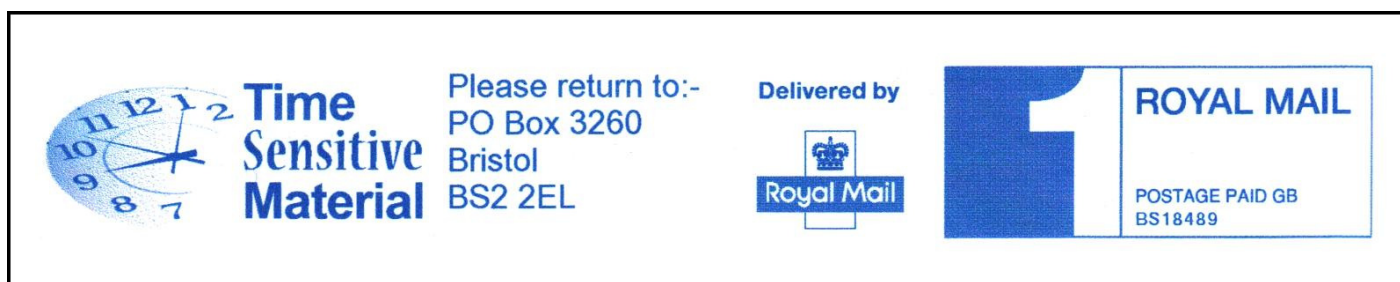
[http://www.themailingroom.com/category-info/mailmark/?gclid=CjwKEAiA8K20BRDetNv3p6DNhXwSJADSw3tzt45aEqJuRKf4gCaXmpny0-lfbbJCsHBzuH5bK9t6xoCeIXw\\_wcB](http://www.themailingroom.com/category-info/mailmark/?gclid=CjwKEAiA8K20BRDetNv3p6DNhXwSJADSw3tzt45aEqJuRKf4gCaXmpny0-lfbbJCsHBzuH5bK9t6xoCeIXw_wcB)

## Meter Thematics

Somewhat past its 'sell by' date, but worth recording, is this nice Christmas thematic - found by your editor.



Peter Mantell has found this attractive 'Time' thematic that has been produced by a franking machine operating in 'PPI' mode.

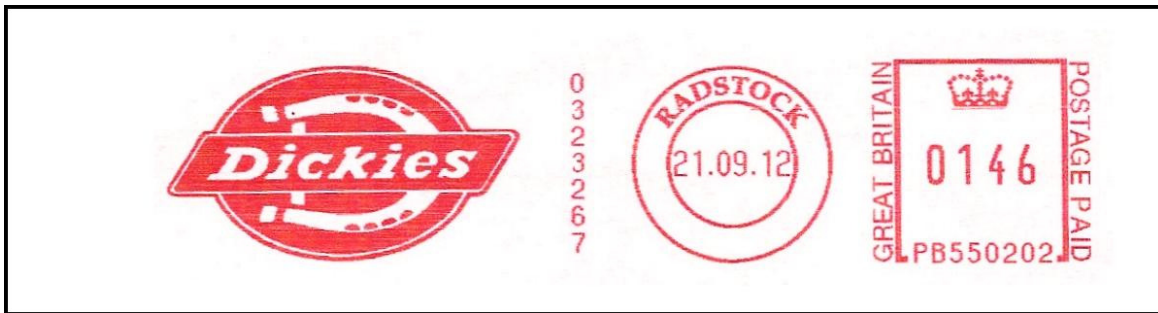


### Meter Thematics continued

This 'household products' thematic from the 'Lytham St. Annes Soap Workshop' was sent by Duncan James. This Lancashire shop sells handmade natural skin care and bath products.



Jan Lannoye sends this image depicting a rather nice horseshoe. 'Dickies' is a USA brand - manufacturing outdoor and workwear clothing.



Peter Mantell sends this education thematic from CLPE (Centre for Literacy in Primary Education).



Finally, my Meter Thematic of the Month is awarded to Duncan James for this amazing artwork of an industrial pipework component.

