
T H E
M E T E R S T A M P
B U L L E T I N

Journal of the
Meter Stamp Study Group

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE enclosed envelope bearing an impression of the U.S. Model DM meter with Detroit 250th Birthday Festival slogan is sent to you with the compliments of Mr Leo F. Goerth, Cincinnati (please see under "Wants and Offers!")

Although up to the present, nearly half of last year's members have not yet sent me their subscriptions for 1951, I trust that this is due simply to inadvertence and that I shall hear from them soon. They will, I am sure, appreciate that the subscription is only sufficient to cover out-of-pocket expenses, and it would be unfair to make the prompt payers bear the whole cost of the "Bulletin", postages, etc. If therefore I do not hear from them before the next number of the "Bulletin" is due, I shall feel obliged to remove their names from my list.

I am glad to report on the other hand that six new members have enrolled for the current year.

WANTS & OFFERS

Miss V. Lidbury (Puriton, Bridgwater, Somerset) wants G.B. "Universals", GvR, EviiiR, GviR; offers all types of G.B.

Mr Leo F. Goerth (P.O. Box 6, Cincinnati 7, Ohio) wants collections or large lots of China, New Zealand, and Palestine.

EXCHANGE REGULATIONS

In view of offers from overseas members to exchange meter stamps with collectors in this country, it seems advisable to set out the official regulations now in force. These refer to "postage stamps and similar articles of philatelic interest" which must include meter stamps - even if one calls them "meter marks"!

As regards the "Scheduled Territories", i.e. all British Countries except Canada, together with the Irish Republic, Burma, Iceland, Iraq and Jordan, there are now no restrictions on the import of stamps, etc. into or export of stamps etc. from the United Kingdom.

As regards all other countries, stamps, etc. may be imported therefrom as a gift (provided that no payment or other "consideration" is given for them) or as part of a barter (exchange) transaction, but export is permitted only against payment or as part of a barter transaction. When the material is being imported or exported as part of a barter transaction, it must be addressed to the recipient "c/o The British Philatelic Association, 3 Berners Street, London, W.1." and must be accompanied by an invoice setting out their value in detail.

Conditions relating to import or export for payment are not likely to concern members of this Group and are therefore omitted.

PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION

Because of the difficulty of publishing detailed check-lists in this Bulletin, due to shortage - or, rather, cost - of space, a member has suggested that it would be helpful to publish instead information as to what check-lists have been compiled and what other detailed information recorded. It would obviate needless duplication of work if members thinking of undertaking a particular investigation knew whether or not the work had already been carried out by someone else; also, collaboration would be facilitated.

Perhaps members will therefore be kind enough to let me know what lists etc. they have themselves compiled, indicating the degree of completeness, also whether they are in a form which could be lent to other members.

A bibliography of meter articles published in the philatelic press of this country is in course of preparation and I hope to be able to circulate it with the next Bulletin. Many of the articles will be available for lending. (The earliest mention of meter-stamps of which I have record is in the "London Philatelist" of July 1909, referring to a proposal to introduce the machines in Australia.)

For the benefit of new members, I will repeat that I have still available for lending Harris's "Meter Postage Stamp Catalogue", for 1940 (the last) edition, and the booklet "The Mails: History, Organization and Methods of Payment" by H.N. Soper, which contains a few pages dealing with franking machines and their history. For the former, please send 8d. or for the latter 6d. in stamps to cover postage and packing; they cannot be sent outside the British Isles.

GREAT BRITAIN: IMPROVISED DIES (1940)

(by D. R. Burchell)

When the postal tariff was revised in May 1940 many fixed-value machines did not possess the requisite new denominations of 1d. and $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. The makers were snowed under with requests for new dies, and were quite unable to cope with the demand. It was suggested that it would be much quicker - and cheaper - to adapt existing dies for temporary use than to make new ones. This was done in several ways, according to the type of meter.

Pitney-Bowes first type (square with wavy lines at sides):

- 1) By deleting the value in letters "THREE HALF PENCE" on $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. dies, together with the " $\frac{1}{2}$ " in figures in each corner, thus making a 1d. die from an original $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. one. Both "die 1" (large loop at top and bottom centre) and "die 2" (small loops) are to be found.
- 2) By deleting the value in letters and in figures, and re-engraving the figures "1" or " $2\frac{1}{2}$ " in the four corners. The $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. occurs in both "dies", the 1d. in "die 2" only.

Pitney-Bowes second type (Royal Cypher GvR):

- 3) By deleting the " $\frac{1}{2}$ " of " $1\frac{1}{2}$ d", leaving the value "1 d" (i.e. with space between.) This occurs both with "PB" at left and with "PB" at right.
- 4) By deleting the ident.no. only. The 1d. and $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. occur, also the "1 d" value as (3), all with "PB" at left only.
- 5) By deleting the "1" of " $1\frac{1}{2}$ d" and inserting "2", converting $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. to $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. "PB" at left only.

6) As (4), $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. but unique single-circle date-stamp (townmark) "READING". "PB" at left

Neopost second type (Royal Cipher GvR):

- 7) By deleting the " $\frac{1}{2}$ " of " $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.", leaving "1 d" (with space between.) (Harris's type A3 - single line at base.)

8) By deleting the figures of value and substituting "1d." or " $2\frac{1}{2}$ d." in place of the original value, $\frac{1}{2}$ d. or $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. (Harris's types A1 - double line at base - and A2 - single line at base.)

These are of course fixed-value dies. It is difficult to explain in words how they differ from normal 1d. and $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. dies but it can easily be seen that the value has been replaced.

These "improvised" dies are, in point of fact, provisionals which have continued in use for, in some cases, ten years or more, and are so called to distinguish them from the truer "provisional" of a few days or weeks duration: a prolonged, against a purely temporary use.

Note: The increase in the minimum rate for printed matter from 1d. to $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. as from 1st June last may possibly give rise to improvised dies of the latter value. Will members keep a look out for them, and be kind enough to advise me, giving full details of any found? - A.A.D.

GREAT BRITAIN: PITNEY BOWES MODEL "H"

With reference to the notes on page 57 of the last Bulletin, Mr D.R. Burchell reports that the earliest date known to him is 29 XI 29 which he believes to be the first date of issue.

Mr Werner Simon reports H 1 used on 31 III 30 and H 2, 38, 42, 47 and 54 also used in 1930.

No explanation has appeared as to why Harris published a date, with month, more than a year later than the true one.

GREAT BRITAIN: UNIVERSAL M.V.

Check-list, continued

Cipher G v R

Three of the nos. listed as not known have been reported by Mr D.R. Burchell, 275 (Junior) and 381 (ordinary), both with "SPECIMEN" town-mark (and a slogan) only, and 285 (ordinary). There is however some doubt about this last, as

it has the same tmk and user as 286 and it may be simply an indistinct or distorted impression of 286.

Cipher G vi R

(List due to Mr S.D. Barfoot.)

Nos. known (U prefix): 1 to 999 except the following:-

4, 5, 17, 19, 23, 38, 46, 47, 57, 69, 71, 76, 83, 94, 99, 100, 101, 103, 106, 116, 117, 122, 123, 125, 131, 133, 134, 138, 142, 143, 144, 146, 148, 149, 151, 153, 154, 159, 160, 164, 165, 169, 171, 174-7, 181, 183, 185, 189, 190, 192-9, 201, 202, 205-10, 215, 216, 218, 219, 221, 223, 225, 230, 233-6, 240-3, 245, 248, 249, 250, 253, 254, 259, 260, 261, 265, 266, 270, 272, 280, 281, 283, 284, 285, 287, 292, 295, 297, 299, 300-2, 304-7, 309, 311, 312, 314, 316-20, 324, 326, 328, 329, 330, 332, 336, 337, 338, 341, 342, 344, 345, 347, 352, 353, 356, 358, 359, 361, 364-8, 371, 372, 374, 379, 383-6, 388, 389, 390, 394, 396, 397, 398, 400, 402, 403, 405, 406, 409-12, 414-8, 423, 424, 428, 430, 432-5, 437, 438, 439, 441, 442, 445, 446, 447, 452, 456, 457, 459, 460, 470, 471, 476, 478, 479, 481-5, 488, 489, 491-4, 497, 500, 510, 511, 517, 519, 522, 769, 804, 810, 821, 823, 826, 828, 829, 841, 843, 844, 846, 847, 851, 867, 874, 893, 931, 955.

Many of the nos. below 500 are still using the G v R or E viii R ciphers. The following eight nos. below 412 (the highest GvR) are however not known with any cipher:-

69, 207, 259, 285, 332, 352, 379, 397.

Of the nos. known, the following are "Junior" models:-

247, 257, 267, 269, 273, 275, 276, 277, 308, 315, 317, 323, 325, 327, 339, 340, 343, 346, 349, 355, 363, 370, 378, 419, 425, 431, 440, 480-490, 528-536, 555-564, 580-589, 600-619, 640-648, 659-678, 691-707, 718-739, 741-757, 760-791, 793-806, 815-827, 840, 845-879, 890-909, 915-926, 937-946, 957-996.

The following are "Intermediate" models:-
453-469, 547-550, 575-579, 689, 690, 740, 792,
932-936, 947-951, 956, 997-999.

This gives the following totals:-
Known: Ordinary, 390; Junior, 329; Intermedi-
ate, 39; Not known, 241; Total, 999.

Any amendments or additions to the above
list will be greatly appreciated. The prefix
"UA" series will be dealt with in the next
issue.

RETURN ADDRESSES

When a meter slogan reads "If undelivered,
please return to....", one tends to assume
that the name and address given are those of
the user of the machine. But a slogan
recently noted on a G.B. "Universal" (UA 820,
London E.C.2.) provides a striking exception,
for it reads "If undelivered, please return to
Ewing McDonald & Co., Ltd., P.O.Box 188, Cape
Town, South Africa"!

The envelope had been addressed to Cape Town,
and presumably the sender preferred to have it
returned, in case of non-delivery, to his
local branch or agent rather than back to
England.

G.B. TOWNMARK NAMES

(by A.A. Dewey)

Considering the many thousands of townmark
dies that have been produced, it is not really
surprising that errors in lettering have occa-
sionally been made; but it is somewhat sur-
prising that they have escaped inspection by
the engraver, manufacturer, post office, and
user, and have actually come into use.

Two such errors are recorded in Harris's
Catalogue - "INCHANNIN RENFREW" for Inchinnan
and "LONDON W.C.3" for W.C.2., there being no
"W.C.3" district. Both occur on Midget
machines, the former with GvR die M 35 in

March 1931 and the latter with GviR die M 86 in July 1938.

Yet another "Midget" is "BOREHAM WOODS HERTS" for Boreham Wood, with GviR die M 8, in use in Nov. 1943 but subsequently corrected by deletion of the "S".

The only "Neopost" I have found is "NORTH SHIELDS NORHTUMBERLAND" (with H and T transposed), die N 2, in use in March 1942 but later corrected by a complete new townmark.

Has anyone noticed any others ?

A very minor error is a superfluous stop in "HIGH. WYCOMBE. BUCKS." (N 16, GviR). An anomaly but not actually an error is the spelling of "BERKHAMSTED HERTS" on one townmark and "BERKHAMPSTEAD HERTS" on another, later one with the same die (U 128); both spellings are in use locally, but the ordinary postmark now uses the former.

While on the subject of townmark names, it may be amusing to refer to the longest and the shortest names found in G.B. The "Philatelic Magazine" recently asked this question in regard to ordinary postmarks; the longest was a small village not likely to possess a meter. The longest I have found with a meter is "COALBROOKDALE IRONBRIDGE SHROPSHIRE" (33 letters) but it is possible that this can be beaten. "WHITTINGTON MOOR, CHESTERFIELD DYS" (30 letters) would have been longer had it employed the normal abbreviation for Derbyshire. This is on Neopost die N 2; N 4 omits the county altogether, and I have not seen N 1 or N 3 from this place. For the shortest, "AYR" can hardly be beaten, as any other 3-letter name must have the county added.

U. S. A. METERED-MAIL POSTAGE

"Stamps" (New York) of March 31 stated that the 31st annual report of Pitney Bowes Inc., just out, showed that the U.S. Post Office De-

partment estimate of the postage paid on metered mail for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1950, was about \$580,000,000, an increase of 16 per cent. The sum represented 39 per cent of the postage paid on all mail.

The corresponding figure for 1938, according to A.H. Harris, was about \$106,000,000, representing 16 per cent. of the total revenue from postage in that year. The G.P.O. states that corresponding figures are not available for the United Kingdom; apparently, separate records are not kept.

MANUFACTURERS OF U. S. POSTAGE METERS

There have been far more different makers of postal franking machines in the United States than in any other country, and their inter-connexion is somewhat involved. The following list, derived from the American "Meter Stamp Society's Monthly Bulletin" of May 1949, may be helpful in understanding them.

- (1) Pitney-Bowes Postage Meter Co. (founded 1920, still in business.)
- (2) Mail-O-Meter Co. (founded 1922, taken over by (1) in 1924.)
- (3) International Postal Supply Co. (founded 1922*, 1926, still in business.)
- (4) Mack Postograph Co. (Little is known about this Co. Its machine was approved by the P.O. Dept. in 1923 (?) but very few postally used prints exist. The patent rights were acquired by (5) some time during the late 1920s.)
- (5) Continental Postage Meters Corp. (founded 1928*, 1930; name changed to (8) in 1931.)
- (6) Whitlock Metered Mail Co. (founded 1930, purchased by (10) in 1933.)
- (7) National Cash Register Co. (founded 1930, still in business.)
- (8) U.S. Postal Meter Corp. (founded 1931, acquired by (12) in 1944.)

- (9) Multipost Co. (founded 1933, acquired by (10) in 1942.)
- (10) National Postal Meter Co. (founded 1933, name changed to (12) in 1944.)
- (11) International Business Machines Corp. (founded 1935; the postage-meter operations of this concern were taken over by (12) before 1946.)
- (12) Commercial Controls Corp. (founded 1944, still in business.)

*Although the designs of these firms received P.O. approval in the first year indicated, they were not available to the public until the later year shown.

CATALOGUE SUPPLEMENTCANADA (contd.)

The following amendments to the previous supplement are reported by Mr Werner Simon:

Type 6: tmk with 2-line date, "METRE NO." delete /29d/, 1c.

Type 7: /46/, 7c., should not be deleted.

Type 8: add /A50b/, inscribed "METRE", star preceding value, with "P O" at sides of date. Harris's /A51/, with "RETURN POSTAGE PREPAID" in place of tmk, should be replaced by the two types, /A50c/ and /51c/.

Type 9: earliest date is May 1936.

Type 11: additional variety /71c/ with three wavy lines instead of star before value.

Type 13: occurs with single-circle tmk and with double-circle tmk.

Type 15: Pitney-Bowes model DM with new design; "CANADA" smaller and directly above crown, and "POSTES" vertically at left of value. /76/.

ADHESIVE LABELS (N.C.R. Machines)

(There are many distinct variations of these which are difficult to list concisely. The machines were allocated both to firms and to post offices without distinction.)

(i) Long vertical strip type, printed in violet or blue on (a) plain white paper; (b) safety paper with grey underprinted design; (c) ditto but pinkish design; (d) ditto but green design. Wording from top to bottom as follows:-

/L.1/ CANADA POSTAGE PAID (Denom) No. .. (town)
(year) (serial no. & date)

/L.2/ CANADA Postage Paid Port Paye (denom.)
No. .. (town) (year) (serial no. & date)

(Some machines with "POSTAGE PAID" and/or
"PORT PAYE" all in capitals.)

- /L.3/ (date & serial no.) CANADA POSTAGE PAID
(denom.) No. .. (town) (year)
- /L.4/ (date & serial no.) No. .. (town) (denom.)
CANADA POSTAGE PAID ((No.104 only.))
- /L.5/ (date & serial no.) CANADA POSTAGE PAID
(denom.) No. .. ((No.112 only.))
- /L.6/ (date & serial no.) No. .. (town) (year)
(denom.) No. .. (town) (year) ((No.862 only.))
- /L.7/ (date & serial no.) CANADA Postage Paid
Port Paye (denom.) No. .. (town) (year)
- /L.8/ CANADA POSTAGE PAID (date & serial no.)
(denom. as .05) No. .. (town) (year)
(denom. as \$00.05)
- /L.9/ No. .. (town) (year) (denom.) CANADA
POSTAGE PAID (serial no. & date) ((No.1 only))
- /L.9A/ As /L.9/ but "POST OFFICE" instead of
"POSTAGE PAID". ((No. 734 only.))
- (ii) Square type, date at top and serial no. to
right of value; "PAID" below value. Printed in
violet on (a) surface-coloured yellow paper;
(b) orange paper coloured through; (c) paper
with pinkish safety underprint.
- /L.10/ "PAID" in seriffed letters;
2 figs. of value, 3-fig. serial no.
- | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| /L.11/ | 2 | " | " | " | 4 | " | " | " |
| /L.12/ | 3 | " | " | " | 3 | " | " | " |
| /L.13/ | 3 | " | " | " | 4 | " | " | " |
- (Some of L.12 and L.13 have "A" or "B" after
value; figures of value are smaller than in
L.10 and L.11.)
- /L.14/ "PAID" in sans-serif letters.
- /L.15/ Inscribed in French, "POSTES CANADA" and
"PORT PAYE".
-