

THE  
METER STAMP

BULLETIN

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Meter Stamp Study Group.

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EDITORIAL NOTES

hanks to Messrs J.T.W. Mann and J.W. Dallimore, members will receive herewith a cover bearing a G.B. Pitney-Bowes GvR 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. (still in use), and a strip showing the new Australian "Simplex". The ident. nos. in both vary.

WANTS AND OFFERS.

For Sale on behalf of a correspondent: Approx. 3,000 U.S. meters (Many duplicates) on pieces (3 - 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> x 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in.); all oval designs (some with "ADL 1c PD", central tablet, &c.) or small square - no "Eagles" - and some "Permits". Best offer before 1st. Jan. to Hon. Sec. secures. Sorry, but within British Isles only.

Mr. J.T.W. Mann, 63 Dulverton Road, New Eltham, S.E.9. can still supply one or two new members (in British Isles only) occasional parcels of current G.B. meter stamps against cost of postage.

Some post-office "Paid" marks also available.

by Wexler Simon

(Translated, by permission, from the Esperanto original in "La Interligilo" May/June 1948.)

New ideas habitually appear in different places at the same time. So too the idea of postal franking machines was discussed in various places at the end of the 19th century.

An American newspaper published in Philadelphia reported in 1895 that the German Authorities were considering the use of an apparatus which marked the postage instead of sticking on postage stamps. The description of the apparatus wholly resembles the present-day franking machines, but it seems that it was not used practically.

In 1897, a Bavarian newspaper contained an article which recommended the replacement of postage stamps by marking machines, and in 1899 a franking machine was patented in the U.S.A.

The first actual use of a franking machine took place in Christiania (now Oslo), Norway, on 24 August 1900. The inventor, Christian H. Kahrs, installed his machine in the vestibule of the chief post office and it printed 5 and 10öre marks after insertion of coins of the corresponding value. However, at that time it was not yet perceived that a mark would suffice for franking and the postal officials stuck stamps on the envelopes found in the machine. The mark is a philatelic rarity; it consisted of a post-horn containing the franking value in the central ring. Above, "Chra." signified "Christiania", and below, the inscription "Aut.No.1" indicated the first machine. Probably the machine was withdrawn after a short period of use.

A second Norwegian experiment in 1903 was somewhat more successful but nevertheless the few machines which were used in post offices and business firms one after another broke down and by 1905 none remained in use. The mark showed a complicated design consisting of arms with a crown with the value at each side and a central

figure blowing a horn. The words "NORGE FRIM." (39. (Norwegian postage stamp) appeared in a ribbon. Only the 5 Bre value is known on a postally used cover; its colour is green. This second trial of a franking machine is chiefly of importance because for the first time the mark itself was considered as indicative of franking without the addition of a postage stamp.

In 1904, Ernest Moss introduced franking machines in New Zealand with such success that that country has never since then ceased to use machine franking. In fact the many years of use in New Zealand prepared the ground for the ultimate general introduction of franking machines throughout the world, and several of the present types of machine are based on the early New Zealand models.

A trial installation of a franking machine in London in 1912 was a failure, for the machine invented by Mr. Wilkinson, operated only from January to August owing to insufficient public interest. The mark was simple: in a circle was the inscription "LONDON. E. C." and "POSTAGE PAID" with the value "1d" and a crown.

More important was the experiment in the same year in Washington, U.S.A., where for five days a franking machine was tested by the postal administration. That machine possessed a wholly new control device which stopped its operation when the sum previously paid to the post office was exhausted. It also sealed the envelopes, but lacked date- and town-mark, without which the postal administration considered the machine of only limited advantage. However, similar machines were tested in practice in Chicago in 1914, but the chief barrier was the contemporary postal regulations, which allowed the use of franking marks only for printed matter and for inland correspondence.

The ultimate success of franking machines began in 1920, when the Madrid Congress of the U.P.U. permitted the use of franking marks throughout the world. In the same year, the

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United States Congress adopted a law allowing the use of franking marks for letters. The way was now freed. Soon machines were made and installed in country after country. The United States used the first machine in December 1920, Great Britain in 1922; in 1923, Germany, Switzerland, India and Canada followed, and in 1924, Austria and France, and soon almost all other countries adopted the new method of franking, by which at the present time up to 20% (now about 40% - Ed.) of all postal matter in the United States and Canada is franked.

Without doubt the future will bring a further extension of machine franking. The chief American manufacturer of franking machines has made a combination of franking machine and letter box, which was used experimentally during the war in several public places such as hotels, post offices, railway stations etc. These so-called "Mailomats" operated in a wholly satisfactory manner and made possible the hourly despatch of all mail without stamps. A large-scale installation in the whole country is planned for the near future, and then the meter stamp will even further replace the adhesive stamp.

(Note: One Carle Bushe of Paris is reported to have taken out a British patent for "an apparatus for impressing stamps" as early as August 1884, and a dozen other British patents followed before the end of the century. -Ed.)

Book Review.

**THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE POSTAGE METER  
MACHINES OF THE UNITED STATES, 1898-1920**

by Walter M. Swan; Corinth, N. Y., 1952.

(To be had from D. R. Burchell, Eastfield House,  
Portobello, Scotland; price 7s. 6d.)

I am glad to have the opportunity of reviewing this book, as it is without doubt the most important work on the subject yet published.

The amount of invaluable information crowded into its 21 pages is prodigious. All the early types of machines are fully described, and the indicia illustrated.

These indicia are mostly of the greatest rarity, only two or three copies of some being known; but probably there are more knocking about the world, the owners being unaware of the value of their possessions. It is indeed surprising that so little of this early metered mail has been preserved when huge quantities were used in mailing catalogues etc. No expense has been spared on the production of this book. It is finely got up, and the subject matter is presented in an interesting and eminently readable manner. A bibliography of Reference Material used is also included. The book is absolutely indispensable to every serious collector of U.S.A. metered mail.

- D.R.B.

A few facts from the book may be mentioned. The earliest machine, invented by Elmer E. Wolf of Springfield, Ohio in 1898, was in many ways an advance on many later machines, being capable of printing nine different postal rates and locking when the amount of postage prepaid had been exhausted; but there is no record of any testings being made. Subsequent machines, all produced by the Pitney Postal Machine Company and its successors, were patented in 1901 and later years, and post office trials took place in 1903, 1904, 1912 and 1914, but postal regulations prevented regular adoption until 1920. The first regular metered mailing took place on December 10, 1920.

#### G. B. IDENTIFICATION NO. SYSTEMS.

A mistake occurred in the last para. of the article in the last "Bulletin." In London W.5, the first "wrong" Neopost No. is 119, not 118, and it is nos. 19 to 118 which do not exist.

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#### LONG TOWN-NAMES

Some time ago in this "Bulletin", reference was made to extraordinarily long town-names in meter townmarks of G.B. The longest mentioned was "COALBROOKDALE IRONBRIDGE SHROPSHIRE" with 33 letters, and the runner-up "WHITTINGTON LOOR CHESTERFIELD DYS" (30 letters) which occurred with the Neopost GviR die N.2. It has since been noticed that with the EviiiR die N 2, this place has the county "DERBYSHIRE" given in full, making a total of 37 letters. Can anyone beat this ?

The shortest name (in G.B.) is "AYR", which cannot be beaten as any other three-letter name must have the county added.

#### METERED POSTAL STATIONERY.

In the article on this subject in the last "Bulletin" it was mentioned that no envelopes with 1d. embossed stamps had been seen with an additional  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. meter stamp to cover the increase in the rate in June 1951. Mr. J. T. W. Mann has now submitted two such envelopes, used as late as March and April 1952. One has a Neopost frank and the embossed stamp is cancelled by the post office, but the other has a Universal M.V. frank which covers the embossed stamp and this has received no P.O. cancellation. Another member, Mr. J. C. Mann, has shown one having a Universal M.V. frank with date a day before the P.O. cancellation (19 June 1951)

#### NEOPOST IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

The American Metered Postage Society's section in a recent number of "The Sontinel" records the probably little-known fact that the British "Neopost" machines were authorized for use in the United States as long ago as 2 December 1930. None of these machines have however been used there.

"Neopost" machines, although very popular in Great Britain and most parts of the British Commonwealth, have in fact not been much employed

in foreign countries. This may be because (43. these countries change their postal rates more often or because of the decimal currency, making multi-value machines more convenient.

They were introduced in Denmark and Sweden (1926), Belgium (1930), Iceland, Netherlands (1931), Egypt, Ethiopia (1933), Brazil, Lithuania (1934) and Argentina (1936), but are now obsolete in all except Belgium, Iceland and Netherlands.

In addition, they were introduced into Ireland, Burma and Palestine during the British connexion, and continue to be used in these countries (Palestine having now become Israel.)

#### SIMPLEX MACHINES ABROAD

Further to the notes in the last "Bulletin," Messrs Universal Postal Frankers inform us that these machines have been sanctioned in the following countries besides Great Britain: Australia, India, Jamaica, Kenya-Uganda-Tanganyika, Malaya, New Zealand, Nigeria, Northern Rhodesia, Pakistan, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia; Iceland, Ireland (Eire), Netherlands; Belgian Congo, Brazil, Egypt, Israel, Mexico. Proofs exist also for Trinidad & Tobago.

The range of denominations provided varies. In Australia, New Zealand and Nigeria, they run from  $\frac{1}{2}$ d to 1/-; South Africa and S. and N. Rhodesia may have the same or 1d. to 2/- without odd halfpence; Jamaica has 1d. to 2/1. Of the non-sterling countries, Malaya, Netherlands and Egypt run from 1 to 25 (cents or mills) but Netherlands may also have 2 to 25, and Egypt 5 to 125 by fives. Israel and Mexico likewise run from 5 to 125; Kenya, Iceland and Brazil from 10 to 250; while Belgian Congo runs from 25 to 625. Pakistan has from  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{6}{4}$  annas, and India  $\frac{1}{4}$  to 6 annas with a "zero" for re-dating wrongly-dated impressions as required by the Indian P.O.

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The "zero" also is provided for Australia, so that the  $1/0\frac{1}{2}$  rate now catered for by a special adhesive cannot be included.

#### AUSTRALIAN NEWS

(Reported by Mr. J. T. Dallimore)

The "Midget" franks are known in values  $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d.,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d., 2d.,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., 3d.,  $3\frac{1}{2}$ d., 4d., 5d., 6d., 7d. and 1/-.

The Universal multi-value has adopted an entirely new design of stamp, the town, date and value being all included within one large rectangular frame with denticulated outline, in the same style as now used in several other countries. The town name appears in a straight line at top left, above the date, and "POSTAGE PAID" at top right, above the value. Between them is the Australian flag and along the base is "AUSTRALIA" in large letters followed by the identification (licence) no.; so far known are M52 and M53. These are four-bank ( $0/0\frac{1}{2}$  to  $29/11\frac{1}{2}$ ) models.

The system of identification nos. was described in the Dec. 1951 "Bulletin"; it now appears that a departure has been made from the method of issuing the nos. in order throughout the Commonwealth. Latest machines issued in Victoria are in the M11-M99 series and in Western Australia in the T11-T99 series, the highest nos. seen in other states being in the "H" series.

#### AUSTRALIAN METER MAGAZINE.

Our member, Mr. J. T. Dallimore, of Corio, Vic., has revived after a gap of some years the "Meter Magazine" first issued in Jan. 1935. The first number of the new series, dated August 1952, consists of seven pages in a similar style to our own "Bulletin" but has the advantage of several hand-drawn illustrations. Issues will not be regular but roughly quarterly, and will be sent to anyone interested for postage and a few duplicate meter stamps.



In the March 1952 "Bulletin," there was summarized the new "Classification of U.S. Postage Meter Prints," whereby the various designs of stamp are classified into basic "Groups" each designated by a capital letter, the "Type" (of which there may be one or more under each Group) then being designated by a second letter following the first; "Varieties" within a type, if such exist, (these being minor differences in design not always obvious at a first glance but easily distinguished on examination) are indicated by a number following the Type letter.

Werner Simon, in a recent Bulletin of the (American) Meter Stamp Society, has worked out a corresponding system for Canada which is summarized here.

Group A: Curvilinear octagonal frank with band containing value across the centre. One Type only, AA, - "LICENSE No. .." above and "METER.." below band. (Harris type 1.)

Group B: Plain upright rectangle with large figures of value in centre, "CANADA" above and "CENTS" below. One Type only, BA (rare.) (Harris type 2.)

Group C: Design similar to Group A but much narrower. "METER" or "METERS" above central band and No. below. Types CA - tall, narrow with 3 or 4 figure no. and CB - shorter and wider with 5 figure no. (Harris types 3 and 4.)

Group D: Small rectangular design with frame of "imitation perforation"; "POSTES" vertically at left and "POSTAGE" vertically at right. Scroll below value has both ends curved downwards. Types DA - large figures of value without "CENTS" (Harris type 5), and DB - smaller figures with "CENTS" below (Harris type 7.)

Group E: Similar to Group D but scroll has ends curved upwards. Types EA - "POSTES" above and "POSTAGE" below figures of value (Harris type 6) and EB - "POSTES" and "POSTAGE" vertically at

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left and right of value (Harris type 9.)

Group F: Townmark and frank contained within large rectangular denticulated frame; crown over wavy lines in centre. Types FA - maple leaves above and below "CANADA" (Harris type 8) and FB - maple leaves in upper and lower left corners of frame; and experimental "Mailomat", No. 101 only. (Harris type 10.)

Group G: Large maple leaf, stalk upwards, in centre between town circle and frank. Type GA only.

Group H: Large rectangular frank, maple leaves in upper corners, with denticulated border.

Types HA - meter no. prefixed by "N.P.M." and HB - meter no. prefixed by "CC".

Group I: Similar to Group G but narrower and leaf with stalk downwards. Types IA - "POSTES" in upper left corner and "CANADA" large, extending into town circle, and IB - "POSTES" vertically at left of value and "CANADA" smaller, centrally over value box.

Group K: Small rectangular frank with imitation perforation border; large crown in centre and value below. Types KA - "COMPTEUR / METER No." at bottom left, and KB - "COMPTEUR / METER" (without "No.") at left.

(Groups G, H, I and K appeared after 1939 and are therefore not in Harris's Catalogue.)

The National Cash Register Co. adhesive labels are omitted from this classification. Types BA and CA are British "Midget" machines, KA and KB "Neoposts"; HA was made by the National Postal Meter Co. and HB by its successor Commercial Controls Corporation, and all the others by Pitney-Bowes.

#### SOUTH AFRICAN NOTES.

(Reported by Mr. R. Axer.)

Most of the new-type "Francotyps" have key-letter "F" preceding the No., but a few have "FR". Some have one zero for shillings, and others two. First day was 25.3.52.

The locally-made "Mercury" machine also exists in the 1d. value. Although having no townmark or date-stamp (nor slogan), the franks are not postmarked so that place and date of use are not indicated. Impressions are usually poor. First day was 20.5.52.

Both the new Francotyp and the Simplex machines have now been introduced into South-West Africa; designs as for South Africa with the (bilingual) name altered. (In an earlier "Bulletin," Sept. 1951, it was indicated that the original S.W.A. Francotyps had identification nos. "F 1" and "F 2"; Mr. Barfoot points out that this is incorrect - they had "SWA 1" and "SWA 2". No. 1. had "SOUTH WEST" in two words and No. 2. in one word.) No. 1. was used by the S.W.A. Trust Co. Ltd. before being taken over by Metje & Ziegler. Ltd.

Amplifying the check-list of S.W.A. Neoposts also in the Sept. 1951 "Bulletin," Mr. Barfoot has indicated that both N 1 and N 2 exist in values  $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d.,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d., 2d., 3d., 6d. and 1/-, the 2d. having at some date replaced the  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. on the machine.

#### NETHERLANDS NOTES.

(Reported by "De Postzak" - organ of Nederlandse Vereniging van Poststukken - en Poststempel - verzamelaars)

The Amsterdam head post office has for some time used a special meter franking machine for indicating postage due on matter sent out from there. The impression is blue, with the inscription "Amsterdam Te betalen .. cent Post."

All authorizations for the use of "Korusina" machines were withdrawn by an order of 8 April 1952. These machines, of German make, were introduced in 1930 and are no longer made.

Most new Neopost machines print the values 2,5,6,10,15 and 20 cent. A few have 25c. instead of one or other of the others.

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UNITED NATIONS METERS.

Further to the lists of United States meters (Pitney-Bowes model "R", types HA3 or HA4) used prior to the introduction of the special U.N. design, Mr. Wm. R. Bird (Chicago) has reported several additions (slogans not stated):

<u>Meter No.</u>	<u>Town.</u>	<u>Date.</u>
150815	LAKE SUCCESS, N.Y.	Jun. 26, '48
162110	LONG ISLAND, N.Y.	Sep. 27, '50
186840	NEW YORK, N.Y.	Jul. 28, '51

Also two earlier dates:

108314 (Dec. 4, '43); 186897 (Jul. 16, '51.)

On the other hand, no. 162488 should be deleted, having proved to be a misreading of an indistinct no. 182488.

Another new meter is 304381 (NEW YORK, N.Y., no slogan) undated on printed matter but received at the end of October.

U.S. PITNEY-BOWES NUMBERING

The numbering of the current P-B model "R" ("modern eagle" type) started at 100,019 (apart from the Mailomats which started at 51,000), and has run to just short of 200,000 after which the Nos. have jumped to 300,000, as the 200,000 block has been utilized for the smaller "desk model" (DM) machines.

CHILE: AIR MAIL METER STAMP

As well as Colombia, Chile has issued a special type of meter stamp for airmail postage. Generally similar to the Universal M.V. design used for ordinary postage - a large rectangle with denticulated border - it is inscribed at top "CORREO AEREO CHILE" in two lines instead of "CORREOS DE CHILE" in one line.

(Information due to Mr. Walter M. Swan.)