

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

No. 18

(Vol. III No. 1)

March 1954

Editor and Hon. Secretary:-
A. A. Dewey, M.A., B.Sc.(Econ.),
46 Chester Drive, North Harrow, Middx.

REPORT FOR 1953

The past year has been noteworthy for two things. Firstly, in October was published the eagerly-awaited catalogue of meter stamps of the World, compiled by our two members S.D. Barfoot and Werner Simon and sponsored by Universal Postal Frankers Ltd. Although at first sight this catalogue may appear somewhat formidable to beginners or elementary collectors, on account of the great amount of detail included and the rather small print, it should do much to establish meter-stamp collecting on a firm basis. The omission of prices has been criticised, but it would in fact have been quite impracticable to indicate any significant quotations, and in any case the absence of any hint of "commercialism" is not wholly a disadvantage. We hope that all members have by now obtained their copy.

Secondly, our Group has obtained an unusual amount of publicity during the year in the philatelic press. "Stamp Collecting" published in July a full account of the Group, which was followed by a letter from me, and later a review of the Catalogue, also followed by a reply from me. The "Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly" in September and "The Stamp Magazine" in November published

(2)

introductory articles on meter stamps by our member F. Lloyd Parton, in which the Group was mentioned. The references in "Stamp Collecting" brought no less than 29 enquiries (two from as far afield as Israel and Northern Rhodesia), and the others 16 between them. Nearly one-third of the total were from non-collectors either wishing to dispose of accumulations which they had or offering to supply meter-stamps from their business mail, but it is rather disappointing that less than one-third (nine in all, including the enquirer in Israel) of those expressing interest in collecting have actually become members.

The membership position has however been quite good, 24 new members having been gained altogether, against whom 6 have had to be dropped from the list since nothing has been heard from them for well over a year in spite of reminders. The total membership at the end of the year was accordingly 67, of whom 38 are in Great Britain, 14 in the U.S.A., 7 in various European countries and 8 in other parts of the World. These figures include 9 new members who joined after 1st October and whose subscriptions have been taken as extending to the end of 1954 and counted as 1954 subs. in the accounts.

In spite of this increase, the accounts for the year are less satisfactory. The income of the year, after adding 1953 subs. received in the previous year and deducting 1954 subs. received during 1953, fell short of expenditure by 18s.11 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. which compares with a surplus of 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in 1952. The adjusted income increased by £2.11.2 $\frac{1}{2}$, but expenditure increased by £3.11.0 $\frac{1}{2}$, accounted for mainly by increased postages due to the large number of enquiries already referred to (very few of the enquirers showed the courtesy of a stamp for reply) and also by increased cost of duplicating the Bulletin and a prospectus of the Group. A detailed financial statement is sent herewith to all members, and I shall be pleased to answer any questions arising therefrom.

As we still have a balance in hand, and it is not likely that so many enquiries will again be received, the subscription will be maintained at 7s.6d. (U.S.A. \$1.00) for 1954, and I shall be glad if all members who have not already done so will remit at their early convenience.

A.A.Dewey.

BULLETIN FORMAT

No more than two or three members have commented on the suggested change of format, and give no decisive view either way. As another duplicator outside the London area has been recommended, who quotes more advantageous terms than the firms hitherto tried, it has been decided to maintain the original format.

P R I C I N G

Too few members have responded to the request to let me know their ideas as to prices for certain specific items for any detailed analysis to be justified. Suggested prices for the G.B. 1912 "Wilkinson" frank on entire range from 10s. to £3.10s. Current mixed material, several members suggest, has no cash value, at any rate beyond the postage involved in supplying it; prices otherwise range from 1s. to 3s. per hundred items. The suggestions for the other four items vary very widely and are too few to provide any significant averages.

GIFTS TO MEMBERS

By courtesy of Jan Dekker (Amsterdam), members will receive with this Bulletin two G.B. covers (fronts) bearing GviR Neoposts, London E.C.2., N 177 and E.C.3., N 33, the former showing old-style townmark and date-figures and the latter apparently single-circle townmark. In the classification set out in the September Bulletin, the franks are respectively types Ib and Ic.

Further gifts have been received from F.Lloyd Parton and W.M.Swan, and will be sent with later Bulletins.

(4)

G.B. E II R VARIETIES ALREADY!

Almost as soon as the E II R design first appeared in May last year, two distinct varieties were found in both the Universal MV and the Neopost dies.

In the Universal MV, what may be designated "type I" has the crown raised about $\frac{3}{4}$ mm. above the letters "E R", while "type II" has the crown practically touching the tops of the letters. No other differences have been noted, but the foregoing is unmistakable. Almost all dies having prefix letters U, UA, UB, UC and UD are type I, while all dies having prefix UE are type II. The only exception so far found is U 621 (London N.18) used for "first day" covers by Universal Postal Frankers Ltd., which is type II.

In Neopost, the die N 62 (London W.C.1) used by Roneo-Neopost Ltd. for their "first day" covers differs from all other dies so far found. It has the leaves cut by the GREAT BRITAIN" scroll at top left much broader than in the normal type, and the leaf reaching to the corner below "G" tapers to a point at the inner end instead of being cut across by the oval line. The words "POST PAID" are inclined more steeply, about 15° to the horizontal instead of about 8° , and the line below "POST" is, at its left, level with the centre of the fourth "perf" tooth from the bottom corner whereas in the normal it is level with the centre of the fourth "hole". The advance die proofs submitted to the G.P.O. were in the special type - probably the identical die - but Roneo-Neopost Ltd. are now using another "N 62" die in the normal type.

E II R DENOMINATIONS

The following is a list of the denominations so far found in the various series; will members reporting additions kindly supply full details of identification No., town, name of user, and date?

Midget: $\frac{1}{2}$ d, $1\frac{1}{2}$ d, $2\frac{1}{2}$ d, 3d.

Neopost: $\frac{1}{2}$ d, 1d, $1\frac{1}{2}$ d, 2d, $2\frac{1}{2}$ d, 3d, 4d, 6d, 9d,
1/-, $1/8$ d.

(Univ.) New Zealand: $\frac{1}{2}$ d, 1d, $1\frac{1}{2}$ d, 2d, $2\frac{1}{2}$ d, 3d,
4d, 6d, 8d, 9d, 1/-, $1/4$ d,
 $1/8$ d.

Pitney-Bowes "H": (None)

Pitney-Bowes "P" (and "PA"): $1\frac{1}{2}$ d, 2d, $2\frac{1}{2}$ d, 3d,
4d, 6d.

Pitney-Bowes "PB" (wide setting): $1\frac{1}{2}$ d, $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.

ditto (narrow setting): (None)

Simplex: Original ("S", "SA") $\frac{1}{2}$ d to $6\frac{1}{2}$ d.

ditto Major ("SX") $\frac{1}{2}$ d to $1/0\frac{1}{2}$.

Universal Multi-value: "Original, Intermediate,
and Junior models.

G.B. DATE ODDITIES

by Jason T.W. Mann

I would like to add a few notes to what has already appeared in the Bulletin on the machines London E.C.2 - N 269 (Messrs C.J.Hewlett & Son Ltd.) I first became interested in their machine in 1940 when I received a cover dated 28 5 40 with the month shown as an Arabic numeral. I looked back through my collection and found I had an impression from the same machine dated 19 I 40 with the month expressed normally. Comparison of the other numerals showed that those indicating the day and year were also different. Thus all the movable type in the date-stamp had been replaced but not the die itself.

Between May 1940 and April 1953 I kept covers currently received from this firm. Up to July 1948, 365 covers had accumulated and all showed the month in Arabic numerals. Eight covers dated 28 VII 48 to 15 XII 48, however, were apparently franked by a different machine, the "269" is in much smaller type and the month is in Roman numerals. The only other impression like this I have received is dated 11 V 49. 57 covers between 21 12 48 and 23 4 53 all show the earlier type of impression.

Unfortunately, since the latter date I have ceased to see correspondence from this firm.

(6)

Editor's Note: It would appear from this valuable contribution to the story that the Arabic figure months were introduced between January and May 1940, doubtless due to some war emergency, and that they have remained in use at least until last year - very much longer than had been supposed. Messrs. C. J. Hewlett & Son Ltd., who are manufacturing chemists, however evidently obtained also a "normal" machine (with the same No.) in mid-1948 which has since been used concurrently.

G.B.: SHORTER NOTES

Neopost GvR Varieties. The hitherto unknown value of 1/4 has just been found by the Editor; frame type II and value type c, New Malden, Surrey, N 2, the copy found being dated 11 VII 49. No examples of the high values 4/-, 10/- and £1 have yet come to light, and the users of machines with these values who have been approached are unable or unwilling to help.

Neopost Numbering Surprise. It had been expected that when the Neopost Nos. reached 999 in any district, they would adopt the system used by Universal and Simplex, and start again with "NA 1" to avoid four-figure Nos. However, R.D. Lee has sent us a copy of London W.1., N 1000, an E II R die, dated 9 XI 53. The figures of the "1000" are almost as small as those used in the GvR dies. K.F. Jennings has since reported N 1003, 1009, 1011 and 1013 in the same district. No other town or district appears yet to be much above 500.

Universal MV. Probably before this Bulletin appears, the "UF" series will be under way. The highest No. so far reported is UE 955 (Birmingham) mentioned by F. Lloyd Parton. With the GvR cipher, the highest No. seen is UE 482, but it is not certain that all lower Nos. were issued with that cipher, as there are several lower "UE" Nos. with E II R cipher.

New Neopost Townmark Style. A curious-looking style of lettering occurs on several recent townmarks, which are otherwise of the standard type having inner circle broken at each side and arcs at each side between name of town (at top) and county or London district (at bottom). The whole of the name is in the narrow lettering normally used only for the county or district, and the letters are widely spaced from one another. In some of them, moreover, the names are badly centred round the circumference, and it looks as though an inexperienced engraver had made a mistake. Those seen, all with E II R dies, are: Basingstoke - Hants N 15; Birmingham N 130; Corby - Northants N 1; Guildford - Surrey N 10; Ipswich N 26; Ipswich - Suffolk N 49; Wembley - Middx N 38. The Ipswich N 26 is in any case an error, having "Suffolk" omitted, an unusually long arc taking its place.

ILLUSTRATING METER STAMPS

Members may sometimes have wished for a simple and inexpensive method of reproducing meter-stamp designs; hand drawing or tracing requires too much skill to give precise results, and ordinary photography needs expensive apparatus. An article by James Andrews in "The Stamp Lover" of Jan.-Feb. 1954 describes the method of Reflex Copying, which enables one to produce precise, exact size photographic copies of postmarks etc. without the use of a camera. Ilford Reflex Contact Document Paper No. 50 is used, firstly to make a negative (which can easily be touched-up to eliminate unwanted portions such as parts of the address) and then from this, direct prints. The article does not indicate the cost; it would unfortunately take too long to produce sufficient prints for the purpose of illustrating this Bulletin.

NEW COUNTRIES

Two further countries have recently introduced postage meters, - Turkey and Panama Canal Zone. Both are using Pitney-Bowes "Model R" machines.

Venezuela has changed its official title from "United States of Venezuela", abbreviated as "EE. UU. de Venezuela" on its stamps, to "Republic of Venezuela"; the alteration will no doubt be made on the meter-stamp designs.

CURRENCY CHANGES WILL AFFECT METERS

It has been reported that Greece is about to introduce a new Drachma equal to 1,000 of the present Drachmai, of which 84,000 equal £1; also that Pakistan will shortly change to a decimal currency with 100 pice to 1 rupee which may be renamed. (The present pice - not to be confused with "pics" - is $\frac{1}{4}$ anna.)

The Greek change can easily be effected by removing the last zero in the meter stamps and counting the remaining figures as "Lepta", as the currency is not named on the stamps and all the meters are multi-value machines.

The Pakistani change will however necessitate new machines for all makes - though it is relevant to remark that when Burma likewise changed from Rupees and Annas to a decimal currency in 1952, the Neopost meter stamps continued to be designated in Annas at least until January of the present year.

KENYA-UGANDA-TANGANYIKA: UNIV. M.V.

An error (due to the Editor and not to Mr Barfoot) occurred in the list of Nos. on page 90 of the last Bulletin. No. U 75 has initial zero, not star, thus: 0000. Jan Dekker reports also U 78 with the same style of figures of value but with Record No. above townmark which has small (Simplex-type) date figures.

LIECHTENSTEIN'S FIRST ISSUE.

Heiner Dürst (Switzerland) informs us that there were two machines with the oval dies No. 386 existing at the same time, each with the values 10 and 30 Rp. Moreover the 30 Rp. die was changed once in each machine, so that there are four different 30 Rp. dies and two different 10 Rp. dies; they are distinguishable by tiny differences in the number "386".

THE METERS OF CHINA (Continued)

by Henry G. Morgan

Since writing the first part of this article, it has been ascertained that one of the machines referred to as "of unknown make" is a Swiss Hasler F88. There have been supplied 38 Universal machines, 8 Pitney-Bowes and one Hasler, but they may not all have been put into use and may not have survived the wars. Almost all dies were altered locally before use.

To list the full range of variations at present known would take up too much space, but it may be worth listing the major types, bearing in mind that each type may have several variations of value designation.

Chinese Republic Inscription :

- Type 1. Universal. $2\frac{1}{2}$ f. of v. Frame vertical, with pillars at each side. 1936. (U 1 only.)
 Type 2. Universal. 4 f. of v. As above but frame wider, almost square. 1947. (U 1 only.)
 Type 3. Universal. 4 f. of v. Goose centred at top with inscription superimposed. Ident. Nos. at bottom. (Proof type, probably not used thus.)
 Type 4. Universal. 4 f. of v. "U" No. at bottom left, reading vertically, and "No. - " at bottom left, reading horizontally. (Proof type but some known used.)
 Type 5. Universal. 4 f. of v. "U" No. at bottom left, reading horizontally. (Not known used.)
 Type 6. Universal Teltax. 4 f. of v. 4-figure R.No. above lowered townmark. Frank design as Type 2 but "T.1" for "U.1".

(10)

Type 7. Universal Teltax. 4 f.of v., angular. No R No. Goose at top right; machine No. in Chinese at bottom left. Townmark lowered.

Type 8. Universal. 4 f.of v. As type 7 but f.of v. oval and townmark normal.

Type 9. Pitney-Bowes. 3 f.of v. Machine No. in Western characters.

Type 10. Pitney-Bowes. 3 f.of v. Machine No. in Chinese characters.

"East China Postal Service":

Type 11. Universal. As type 8 but "East China" inscription.

Type 12. Pitney-Bowes. As type 10 but "East China" inscription.

"Chinese People's Posts":

Type 13. Universal Teltax. As type 7 but Communist inscription and no goose.

Type 14. Universal. As type 8 but Communist inscription and no goose.

Type 15. Pitney-Bowes. As type 10 but Communist inscription.

Type 16. Hasler F88. Apparently 7 f.of v. Goose, Chinese inscription with Ident.No. in Western characters; f.of v. in imitation perf. rectangle below. Townmark to left.

Type 17. Make unknown. Apparently fixed-value, only \$ 800 seen. Star on lined background in imitation perf. rectangle, with f.of v. in centre. Townmark below frank, and machine No. in Chinese characters between townmark and frank.

As mentioned above, about fifty machines were available in all, but many are not yet known used. The list of machines at present known is as follows:-

Shanghai: U.1 (the original Universal machine); 1, 2, 3, 8 (Pitney-Bowes); 4 (Universal); 5 (Universal Teltax - originally T.1); 6 (Hasler F88); 10, 11 (Red Star, unknown make).
Other Cities (All Universal machines) Amoy, 1; Canton 2, 3, 4; Changsha, Changtu, Hankow, 1; Kunming, 2; Kweiyang, 1; Nanking, 6; Swatow, 1.

It will be seen that many more machines have yet to be reported, and information is far from complete on the ones which are known. It is to be hoped that in the end we shall be able to list all the changes of die for each machine, with their approximate dates. Thanks are due to Messrs Barfoot, Delahoy, Dewey and Simon for loans and gifts of specimens, and may I please repeat my request that anyone who has any material of China should let me see it, or send along details of type, denomination, sketch of the value characters, date of use, town, machine No., and whether on cover or adhesive.

Note that the dates in the townmarks may be expressed either in Chinese or in Western style. For example, A.D. '49 = 38th year of the Chinese Republic. Except for machine U.1., any dates with years less than '47 are either "impossible" proof dates or else expressed in the Chinese style.

By courtesy of Mr A.J.Wright and the China Study Circle, in whose journal a more detailed article is appearing, a limited number of sheets of illustrations are available, and can be supplied by the Editor to any member interested on receipt of stamped addressed envelope.

THEMATIC OR TOPICAL COLLECTING

"Thematic" or as it is known in America "Topical" stamp collecting seems to be becoming extremely popular. This means the collecting of stamps solely according to the subject of their designs. Since the great majority of meter stamp designs are composed simply of meaningless lines, it might be thought that they offer no scope for collecting in this manner, but the field is wider than might at first be imagined, and it may be amusing to make a list. The unofficial slogans are of course left out of consideration in this; they would enormously enlarge the field.

(12)

For Animals, we have: Horse (Venezuela), Kangaroo (Australia), Lion (Belgium, Danzig Springbok (South Africa), Tiger (Federated Malay States).

Birds: Dove ? (Netherlands), Eagle (Germany, Jugoslavia, Poland U.S.A.), Goose (China), Quetzal (Guatemala).

(Of course some of the animals and birds are shown heraldically rather than naturally.)

Trees and Plants: Aloe (South-West Africa), Banana (Kenya & Uganda), Cactus (Mexico), Cherry-blossom (Japan), Maple (Canada), Oak (Germany), Olive (Palestine), Palm (Jamaica, Kenya & Uganda, Nigeria).

Buildings: United Nations.

Views: Japan, Mexico, Newfoundland.

Ships and Boats: Aden, Barbados, British Guiana.

Maps: Australia, Brazil.

Flags: Australia, Brazil.

No doubt readers will be able to add to this list both "topics" and countries.

WANTS & OFFERS

R.D.Lee, 20 Yoxley Drive, Ilford, Essex: wants adhesives ("tapes") - exchange against ordinary at appropriate ratio.

G.Pustel, YMCA-Room 532, 315 Pearl Street, Hartford, Conn., U.S.A.: will exchange all U.S and foreign - particular interests, U.N. and U.N. Agencies etc.

Walter M. Swan, Palmer, N.Y., U.S.A. asks: Who will supply me with Nos. 1 and 2 of this Bulletin to complete my file? and offers \$2.50 for them. Also desires exchange - N.C.R. of South Africa, Universal and other tapes wanted, and can offer Japan, El Salvador, U.S.A. 1930 onwards.

Commandant de Wailly, La Therese par St. Agil, Loir et Cher, France.: wants British Colonies and unusual values of G.B., offers France and French Overseas Territories.
