

T H E

M E T E R S T A M P

B U L L E T I N

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Meter Stamp Study Group

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EDITORIAL NOTES

Although the majority of members, both at home and abroad, have renewed their subscriptions for the current year, quite a lot have not so far responded to the special reminder inserted in the last Bulletin, and it therefore remains doubtful how many of these really wish to continue. In order to give these a further opportunity to pay up, a further reminder is being sent to them, and the issue of the membership list is being deferred until the position is more definite.

From time to time, requests have been made for the allocation of "membership numbers" as is done in the Junior Philatelic Society and some other societies. We cannot see much point in such numbers with us, but it may be of interest to record that the numbers, allocated in the order of payment of the first subscription, would now reach to 102, Member No. 100 having joined in February. Our American confreres the American Metered Postage Society, started in 1952, enrolled their member No. 400 in January this year, which is a very considerable achievement; in their case as in ours, the actual present membership is of course a good deal lower, a little over 200 for them against 79 for us.

Our Slogan. Members will have noticed that the last two issues of the Bulletin have been franked by a Neopost meter, which is by kind arrangement with Messrs. Roneo-Neopost Ltd., London office (the Group's correspondence is - fortunately! - not sufficient to justify obtaining a machine for our exclusive use.) The December 1954 Bulletin showed one of the Neopost slogans, but for the March 1955 issue we were able to introduce a slogan of our own. Members are asked please to note that for practical reasons, this slogan can be used only on "bulk" mailings of our Bulletins or other communications, and copies cannot be made available otherwise. All requests for further copies must therefore be refused.

THE NEOPOST "FRANK-MASTER"

The issue of this new multi-value machine ("omni-denominational" to our American readers), which was fully described in our December issue, was delayed beyond the date then mentioned owing to inevitable troubles attendant on the introduction of an entirely new machine, but the first machine was put into use on 4th April by British Industries Fair Ltd., London W.C.2., the new firm set up to run the annual trade fair in London.

Contrary to the earlier report, the key-letters adopted are "NA" and not "RN" or "R". It was not possible to arrange for die No. 1 to be the first used, and the B.I.F. Machine is NA 98. After the first 999 (or 1000 ?) with letters NA, the letters NB will be used, and so on. It will be recalled that the Nos. of the ordinary Neopost dies run into four figures where necessary (the only district at present is London W.1.), so that the letters NA are not used for these as they are in South Africa.

The bringing into use of further machines has been rather slow and we understand that only a few are yet in operation (NA 19 has been reported by Mr. J.C.Mann, NA 219 by Mr. E.Buckley, and proofs of NA 171 seen), but it will soon be

speeded up. However, owing to the great demand in Great Britain, it is likely to be some time before any are used in other countries.

G. B. NOTES

Obsolete types in use in 1954. A few additional reports have been received, but more are still desired.

Pitney-Bowes. It looks as if the long-lived single-value meters PB 10 used by G.E.C., London W.C.2, have at last gone out of use, for Mr J.T.W. Mann has shown us an envelope from that firm with a new L.V. meter "PA 28". (dated 29 APR 1955).

Simplex. It had been assumed that, like the Universal M.V., the "S" series ran to 999 before starting with "SA", but Mr K.F. Jennings reports the finding of "S" 1000" (Sheffield, EiiR die) with date 16 II 54. No doubt it is more convenient for accounting to have 1,000 in each series rather than 999. The highest Nos. so far noted are SB 54 (London S.W.18, -6 IV 55) and SX 559 (London W.C.2, 19 IV 55), both of course EiiR.

"T.I.M." Parcel Post. No further items have been reported; cannot we do better than the 50% completeness so far achieved ?

Universal M.V. The highest No. reported to date is UF 690 (Perth, 16 III 55) by Mr. W.G.Amedro.

A RARE ERROR ?!

Apart perhaps from a few slogans, there is not much humour in meter stamps, but members may share the secretary's amusement at the following enquiry received from a man in Wales:

"Perhaps you would be interested in the meter stamp I have ? It is a "6/=" meter stamp, on a parcel label, but the "6/=" is upside down like this: =/9. If this were an ordinary stamp, it would be valuable. As it is, I am in doubt as to the value."

Although the letter was written in April, the date was not the First and the enquirer appeared to be quite serious !

ERROR OF NUMBERING

Mr. W.G.Amedro reported in Sept. last year that Neopost dies showing No. N 36 were in use apparently simultaneously by three quite unrelated firms in Dundee. Messrs Watson & Philip Ltd., Wholesale Provision Merchants, used a GviR die while the Scottish Gas Board and Messrs T. Justice Ltd., House Furnishers, were using EiiR dies. There was no doubt as to there being three distinct machines. In April this year, Mr Amedro informed us, the Gas Board had changed to N 59 and Messrs Watson & Philip to an EiiR die N 66; Messrs T. Justice retained their N 36.

UNIVERSAL M.V. MACHINES

(Further Notes derived from the records of Universal Postal Frankers Ltd., by S.D.Barfoot)

14. Zero Impressions. All early British M.V. machines could produce zero impressions, as O/--- or O/O. These may be found on covers bearing two separate impressions, the first showing indistinct townmark or date. The present P.O. regulations do not allow zero impressions to be used, and all newer machines are fitted with a special device which prevents their production. Some older machines have also been fitted with the device. Any machines without the device and found by the P.O. to be producing such impressions are ordered to fit one, failing which their licence may be withdrawn.

INDIA: IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

by A. A. Dewey

In addition to several other features of particular interest, the meter stamps of India possess a unique system of identification of the users of the machines (this system has however been continued by Burma and Pakistan since their separation from India.)

The Universal N.Z. Model, multi-value, and Simplex stamps - though not the Neopost (the commonest and for years the only type in use) - show the customary machine number in the frank, these numbers being apparently allotted consecutively throughout India. But all makes, including the Neopost, have also a double identification in the townmark, consisting of the initials - sometimes a shortened form of the name - of the firm or organization using the machine, followed by a letter and number representing the licence or permit No.

These letters preceding the No. were described by A.H.Harris simply as "Series Letters"; the Barfoot & Simon Catalogue does not give them any specific designation. From the fact that the cities most commonly met with in meter town-marks are Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, with letters "B", "C" and "M" respectively, it is sometimes supposed that they are the initial letters of the city of use; but other examples prove this to be incorrect. I believe that they are in fact the code-letters of the Postal Circles or regions into which India is divided for postal organization.

The following is a list of the towns from which I have meter-stamps, with their letters:-

- A - Cawnpore;
- B - Bombay;
- C - Calcutta, Barabazar*, Darjeeling;
- D - New Delhi; Dacca (Pakistan);
- DA- Dacca (Pakistan);
- EP- Delhi;
- H - Hyderabad;
- K - Karachi (up to about 1937);
- L - Lahore, Rawalpindi; earlier also Delhi;
- M - Madras, Cochin, Mannady, Mathurai, Tuticorin;
- R - Rangoon (India to 1937, thereafter Burma);
- S - Karachi (India from about 1938 to 1947, thereafter Pakistan).

* This may be a suburb of Calcutta

"DA" presumably stands for Dacca and the "D" is perhaps a mistake. "EP" doubtless stands for East Punjab, and "S" for Sind. "A" is probably Agra.

Can any member add to this list ?

(The above originally appeared in the India Study Circle's News Sheet for Sept. 1953, and is reproduced with a few amendments by kind permission of the Secretary of the I.S.C.)

Apropos the above, I have recently noticed an error in which the letter has been omitted. This is on Universal M.V. machine U 91, the townmark having "MADRAS" at the top and "HINDU : -189" at the bottom, with a small lozenge after "HINDU" instead of the letter "M". The user is the journal "The Hindu" and the date Jan. 1955.

GERMANY (BERLIN): COIN-OPERATED METER

A mail box with a coin-operated meter was installed at a branch post office in the Western Zone of Berlin on 15 Aug. 1954, according to reports in the Bulletins of the American Metered Postage Society. From the illustrations and an example kindly sent us by Mr. H.O. Meisel, it appears to be a Francotyp machine, three-bank with Gothic figures of value, the frank being of the usual current German type with the important exception that the name at the top reads "DEUTSCHE POST / BERLIN", being the first to include Berlin. The townmark is of the type designated "DC-A" and two different names are known, firstly "(1) BERLIN W 15" and subsequently, after removal of the machine to another office, "(1) BERLIN-NEUKOLLN 1". It is understood to be still in use experimentally.

A note by Werner Simon in "Stamps" (New York) adds that the machine accepts coins of 1, 2, 5 and 10 pfennig and prints postage up to 9.99 Marks.

ANOTHER NEW COUNTRY

Commandant de Wailly informs us that a meter of Havas Model M (type 9 of France), No. M 1023, is in use in Fort de France, Martinique. As however Martinique ceased to have its own issues of adhesive stamps several years ago and now uses ordinary French stamps (being an "Overseas Department" of France and no longer a "Colony"), perhaps this should not be regarded as a new title for the Catalogue.

A U.S.A. METER-STAMP PRICE LIST

Our member Walter M. Swan has published the first edition of his Meter Stamp Price List, based on the U.S.A. list in the Barfoot-Simon Catalogue, which gives the prices at which he can supply most of the items listed therein. As there have been a number of criticisms of the absence of prices in the Catalogue, this list should prove a valuable contribution to the subject.

The list contains 14 pages of about the same size as this Bulletin, fully illustrated, and is divided into four main sections, viz: Firm Meters, Coin Meters ("Mailomats"), Post Office Meters, and Postage Due Meters. The prices quoted are for "collectable copies", cut 2 x 4 inches from envelopes or tapes free from paper, and they range from 2c. for the current P.B. and C.C. types up to as much as \$3.50 for the experimental Mailomat PB Meter 52000 (Cat.No. M 8). The first (1920) "box" design is \$2.50 or with Station Name, \$3.00.

The introduction mentions that there are now over 130,000 firm meters in service, and an estimated 6,000 in post office service for parcel post and registered mail, of which 500 are equipped with "snap-in" dies for part-time Postage Due service; over 55 meters are full-time P.D. meters.

We understand that the first printing of the list is almost sold out, but Mr. Swan (whose full

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address is Palmer, N.Y., U.S.A.) will be glad to send a copy if available to any member for 12c. in mint U.S. stamps or two International Reply Coupons.

U. S. A. "SECTION" NUMBERS

Mention was made in our last Bulletin of the recent changes in the designations such as "SEC. 435½ P.L. & R." often found in U.S. meter impressions on matter mailed under various reduced rates of postage. We now learn from the Bulletin of the A.M.P.S. that only one meter is known to have used the short-lived "39 CFR 34.66", namely P.B. Meter 01688 (Evanston, Ill.); where it appeared in the townmark circle and the old "SEC. 34.66 P.L. & R." also was shown below the frank. So far, no meters have been reported with the new "BULK RATE" indication though it has been noted in a "Permit" indicia.

DEVELOPMENT OF METERED MAIL

Some Notes by Walter M. Swan.

In the period 1901-02, there were two lines of thought as to methods of payment of postage other than the ordinary use of the adhesive stamps as sold at post offices. One was that the privately perforated coils of such stamps to be used in a stamp-affixing machine was the progressive method; while others believed that a form of indicia printed by machine which would "meter" the postage involved and provide advance payment was the coming method.

Shortly after the close of the first testing of the Pitney meter machine at Washington, D.C., an Act of Congress was passed on April 28, 1904, providing authority for use of "permit" markings on third-class mailings. "Without stamps affixed" is the common term found in some U.S. patents and in some early Post Office Department rulings, which can apply both to "permit" indicia and to meter indicia. A Postal Bulletin of Feb. 25, 1929, quoted "Conditions upon which metered mail will be accepted without stamps affixed as

provided by Sections 435 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 452. Postal Laws and Regulations", showing that the term was used even as late as 1929.

As a result of his belief in perforated coiled stamps to be applied by stamp-affixing machines, Mr Schermack left Chicago and went to Detroit; a complete book has been compiled by George P. Howard on this subject, which appeared serially in "The Collectors Club Philatelist" from Jan. 1949 to 1950. The close connexion between the privately-perforated coiled stamps, Permit indicia and the postage meter devices cannot be denied by anyone who has read this book by Mr Howard or the small booklet I compiled in 1952 on "The Development of the Postage Meter Machines of the U.S., 1898-1920".

Almost all advanced collectors and students of metered mail in the United States desire to show a copy of the early Permit markings, 1904-1920 period, and then copies of the Permit markings on first-class mail after May 1920.

NEW ISSUES AND DISCOVERIES

This month's Supplement concentrates on the American countries other than the U.S.A. We have to thank Mr Barfoot for the list of Argentina, Mr Werner Simon for Mexico, and Mr H.O.Meisel for a copy of the NCR label of Mexico; the rest are from the Editor's collection.

In the previous Supplement, the items were all from the Editor's collection, but we must apologize for inadvertently failing to credit the details of dates of issue for Jamaica to the American Metered Postage Society's Bulletins.

ARGENTINA. Type 6E. "FRANQUEO PAGADO PERMISO (No.)" on one line. Francotyp Cc. /A24/ VN. O. F.of V. \$z000 (Ov.) (z=lozenge). SC or DC

Type 6H. "PER.(No.) FRAN.PAG." in one line. Roman month-figure. Francotyp Cc. /A31/ VN. O. F.of V. \$x0.00 (A). TM: SC.

Type 11A. Hasler. /73a/ As /73/ but decimal comma misplaced as in /71a/. TM. C raised.

78.)

/74a/ As /74/ but Per.No. (401) without frame.

TM. C raised.

Type 11B. Hasler, small frank.

/A81/ N. O. F.of V. 0,00 TM. C centred.

/B81/ N. O. F.of V. 00,00 TM.C raised; D centred

Type 12. Universal M.V.

/A91/ N. O. F.of V. 0000 (Ov.) TM. DC.

Type 16. (Cat. Addenda.) Hasler. Head of
Sra. Peron. P.No. not in frame.

/A95/ N.BT. F.of V. 0,00 $\frac{1}{2}$ TM. C raised.

/96/ N. O. F.of V. 00,00 TM. C raised; E.

Type 17. Pitney-Bowes Model R. Usual
style. Issued 1953. Roman month-figure.

/100/ F.of V. 000 (?).

A number of additional townmark varieties have
been noted in the Hasler types 10 and 11.

BRAZIL. Type 1B: /15/, add Cr\$ 0,60.

/15a/ Error: As /15/ but second digit of year
inverted (M.No. 93; 1952 to 1954 at least.)

Values Cr\$ 0,10; 0,30; 0,40; 1,00; 2,00.

Type 3B, I. Universal M.V.

/A50/ Frame not broken. N O DC (date figs. L),
f.of v. \approx 000 (A) + Fo (A). (No. 1278)

/A54/ Frame broken. N O DC (date figs. L),
f.of v. 0000 (Ov) + Fo (S,A). (No.1007)

/B54/ Frame not broken. N O DC (date figs. L),
f.of v. 0000 (Ov) + Fo (Ov). (No.1402)

Adhesives. Type 6 on pink safety paper with
white background of words "CORREIOS DO BRASIL -
FRANQUIA MECANICA PB -" repeated in straight
horizontal lines.

Type 11. New type, perf. rectangle with
BRASIL CORREIO above value in centre, globe in
bottom left corner, M.No. M 10022 (etc.) at bottom
right. Slogan central. ? Postalia.

/100/ Value as CR\$ 00,60. TM. DC-A.

COSTA RICA. Type 4. New type. Pitney-
Bowes model R; usual style, showing National
Monument in centre.

/9/ F.of v. 3 wavy lines + 00:

Type 5. Hasler. Rect. frame including

SC.TM at left, figs. of value at right with
"REPUBLICA DE COSTA RICA" above and mountain scene
below.

/10/ F.of v. as 000.

CUBA. /3/ Add .05, .20 cvos.

/4/ Add .04 cvos. /4a/ Add .08 cvos.

/8c/ As /8/ but TM has "PERM." (and No.) only.

/9b/ As /9/ but TM has "PERM." (and No.) only.

/10/ and /11/ Values presumably 01 to 21 cvos.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. Type 1. Pitney-Bowes
model R; usual style, inscribed "REP.DOMINICANA
CORREOS" with Arms in centre and "M.F.No." below.

/1/ F.of v. 3 wavy lines + $00\frac{1}{2}$

EL SALVADOR. Type 1. Pitney-Bowes model R;
usual style inscribed "REPUBLICA DE EL SALVADOR
AMERICA CENTRAL" with Cap of Liberty over five
mountains in centre.

/1/ F.of v. 3 wavy lines + 00:

Type 2. Universal MV. Large rect. frame
including DC. TM. at left, Arms in wreath in centre,
and figs. of value at right; inscribed "REPUBLICA
DE EL SALVADOR, C.A." at top. No. (U 2) below Arms.

/2/ F.of v. as 0000.

GAUTEMALA. /6/ Values presumably 01 to 21 c.

MEXICO. Type 2B: /4d/ with MAQ.F.M. 577.

Type 4A: /12a/ Single-line frame missing
(Hasler No.6764, Permiso No.6C)

Type 4B: /13a/ PERMISO NO. above HASLER NO.

/16b/ As /13a/above and with month in letters.

New designs:-

Type 10. Cactus and Warrior. Universal MV.

A) 28 x 32 mm., with "MAQ.No."

/33/ N O F.of v. as 000 (0v).

/34/ N O F.of v. as 0000 (0v).

B) 28 x 32 mm., with "MAQ.F M No."

/35/ N O F.of v. as 000 (0v).

C) Smaller, $25\frac{1}{2}$ x 32 mm., frame at right cutting
through shield. "MAQ. F M No."

/36/ N O F.of v. as 000 (0v).

Type 11. Universal Simplex. Similar design.

/37/ MAQ.No. / PERM.No. Values 5 to 125 cts.

/38/ MAQ.SX.No. / PERM.No.S.- Values ditto.

Type 12. Frank similar to type 8. Permisio No. white on red block. TM. SC. Francotyp Co. /39/ W O F. of v. as 000 (Ov.)

Type 13. National Cash Register adhesive label. Printed in violet with central line of figures in red, on orange label. Only one machine known, with No. 4542173 at bottom of impression.

/40/ F. of v. as -0.00

Type 14. Pitney-Bowes Model R. Similar to type 5 but wings in centre and three cacti at right. No frame round value. Roman month fig.

/41/ F. of V. 3 wavy lines + 000

Type 15. Pitney-Bowes Model DM. Similar to type 14 but smaller. MAQ.M.No. at left of TM.

/42/ Values 0,05 upwards (to ?)

PANAMA CANAL ZONE) A number of items have
PERU) had to be held over

URUGUAY. Official Machine. As type 5 but P.No. uncut (solid bar); TM "EXPEDICION EXTERIOR MONTEVIDEO" and Sl. "SERVICIO / OFICIAL" at left. /0.1/ F. of V. as 00,00

WANTS AND OFFERS

Dr. J.F. Fick (P.O.Box 11, Goeddegun, Swaziland, South Africa) wants entire covers from many smaller and unusual countries, and offers in exchange South Africa, Australia, Canada, Germany, U.S.A. and G.B.

Herr R. Glasewald, Hellbrookstrasse 14, Hamburg 33, Germany, offers - "For 50 different meters on entire covers, I send you 50 others of the World."

Several members overseas are anxious to obtain G.B. parcel meterstamps, the T.I.M. and other types; can any member help? Please let the Hon. Sec. know if you have any to spare.

Thurston's, 39 Longley Road, Harrow, Middlesex.
Telephone: HARrow 5324