

THE
METER STAMP
BULLETIN

Journal of the
Meter Stamp Study Group

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SECRETARY'S NOTES

We welcome two new members with this issue:-

- (131) G. Mackay, Esq., 145 Bannerdale Road, Sheffield, 7.
- (132) M. Jacques Lémonnier, 59 Bd de la Victoire, Cholet, M. & L., France.

Having recorded this fact, it reminds me of others. Firstly, have YOU paid your sub. for this year? At the time of writing, over half of the members have done so, but of course we cannot be expected to continue to send bulletins to those who have not. Check now, and if you have not, send today; 10/- in G.B., \$1.50 U.S.A., or your local equivalent.

Secondly, new members. Do you know of a meter collector who is not a member of the Group? There must be many, judging by the number of catalogues etc. that have been sold in the past few years, and the strength of the Group depends on a large membership. See if you can encourage an addition to our numbers!

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NEXT BULLETIN. This will be dated September, though publication may be slightly delayed owing to the Editor's holidays.

Thereafter it is hoped to resume bi-monthly publication. Notes and news should reach the Editor by 23rd August.

BACK NUMBERS OF THE BULLETIN. We have a quantity of spare copies from No.19 onwards; if you want copies to complete your files of these, or to cut out the catalogue supplements, the Hon. Sec. will be pleased to send them, price 1/- each.

"STAMPEX", 1958

On March 15th, the opening day of this, the annual stamp exhibition in London, a dozen of our members gathered for what proved to be a most enjoyable general "natter" and a number of rare and interesting items were shown. It is hoped that future meetings of this nature will be held, but of course, due to the fact that we are spread over a large area, it would be helpful if some of those living in other parts of G.B., and also the U.S.A. if possible, would think about organizing a get-together of this nature. We are afraid that the Group as such cannot pay for the hire of rooms etc., because this would be unfair to those who could not attend any of the meetings, but a small collection nearly always covers the cost of an evening, and we feel sure that everyone would benefit. What do you think?

BOX OF DUPLICATES

As a number of G.B. members will know, we have circulated two boxes of duplicates which have been donated by various people. The system is that each person just takes out what they want and then passes on the balance. Each name on the list is moved up one each time so that each will have "first pick" every now and then. Because of the obvious difficulties, it has had to be restricted to G.B. members so far. The success of such a scheme depends on two things: one, the honesty of members to take out only what they really want for their own collection, and secondly, someone who is able to collect and parcel up the material. There does not seem to

be any shortage of duplicates!

OVERSEAS EXCHANGES

Mr. G. Chamberlain, Dominion Laboratory, Government Box, Wellington N.1., New Zealand, would like to exchange N.Z. for G.B.

M. Jacques Lemonnier, 59 Bd. de la Victoire, Cholet, M.-et-L., France, veut envoyer environ 100 empreintes de machines à affranchir françaises, toutes différentes, en échange de la même quantité d'empreintes anglaises ou de n'importe quel autre pays.

"STICK TO STAMPS" (Contd.)

The March/April issue of the B.P.A. journal "Philately" printed a letter from our member Mr. C. Delahoy in reply to the remarks by Mr. Darracott against the use of meter stamps as quoted in our last Bulletin. Mr. Delahoy made the points that, had it not been for the use of meters, there would have been a flood of stamps and they therefore make ordinary stamps more worth while collecting, and also meter stamps are themselves collectable items with a lot in them to interest collectors, and have a place in all postal history collections.

However, Mr. Darracott was given the last word, saying that he completely disagreed with Mr. Delahoy.

G. B. NOTES

EARLY ADAPTED TOWNMARK. Adapted or improvised townmarks, made by the removal of part of an existing lettering, are usually a product of war conditions, when scarcity of labour and material makes this course preferable to provision of a new die. We have however just found a much earlier example, dated 12 X 29, on a Midget (GvR die, M 27, $\frac{1}{2}$ d.) where "LONDON W.1" has apparently been produced by removal of the "N" or "S" from N.W.1 or S.W.1, though leaving the dot

preceding the "W". The townmark is of the DC type; the user is unfortunately not recorded.

NEOPOST ERRORS. Although a number of odd variations from the correct inscriptions have been recorded, actual errors of spelling are rare. Mr Jennings has shown us one where the TM reads "TONYPANDY (RHONNDA) / GLAM." with double "N" instead of double "D" in "RHONDDA"; it was in use on N 2 (EiiR die) at least during X-XI 57 and has not yet been seen corrected. In the accompanying slogan, the name is spelt correctly, though the user's address is "LLWYNYPIA.RHONDDA. GLAMORGAN". Another, sent by Mr F. Lloyd Parton, shows "WOLVERHAMTON" spelt without the "P" although here again the slogan shows the correct spelling; this was used with GviR die N 32 (var. B 1) in II 51 (and probably earlier) but was corrected in 1952 or 1953 (still using GviR die).

UNIVERSAL N.Z. The last survivors of these old machines, so long used by "The Times" newspaper, appear to have gone out of use at last, Mr. Barfoot reports.

PITNEY-BOWES P/PA. The denominations normally fitted to these machines were given in the January Bulletin (p.7), but Mr Barfoot has ascertained that several machines had a $3\frac{1}{2}$ d and/or a $5\frac{1}{2}$ d., while one machine, PA 44 used by Littlewoods Pools, Liverpool, has a high-value range, 6d, 9d, 1/-, 1/3, 1/6 and 2/6. Does any member possess these values? Mr Barfoot also notes that PA 1 was the last GviR die.

SIMPLEX. Mr J. Wilson, in conjunction with Mr Hammond, has compiled charts recording the different types of frame die, figures of value, townmark and other variations, which are illustrated on sheets attached to the charts. Although a good number of machines are recorded, there are still many gaps, and Mr Wilson will be very pleased if any member will assist to fill them as a result of borrowing the charts. Postage

is 1/- but Mr Wilson will be prepared to accept 60 points worth of Simplex covers instead of stamps. Anyone interested should write direct to Mr. Wilson at 14 Dale Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex.

FREAK USAGE. We have from time to time noted various freak usages of meter stamps, which though contrary to P.O. regulations have nevertheless been passed without comment or surcharge, but one sent us by Dr Detlef Schmidt (Hamburg) easily beats the lot! It is a registered envelope sent from London to Hamburg, the meter stamp being applied on a white gummed label bearing the firm's name and address vertically at right which is "tied" to the envelope both by the blue pencil cross and by the oval "Registered" postmark of the Eastcheap B.O., E.C.3, dated 11 FEB 57. The extraordinary feature is that the whole of the meter impression (from machine UC 881, Gvir die, LONDON E.C.3., with 0/10 value) is in reverse - an offset or mirror image; the townmark is at left and frank at right as in a normal print, though the slogan (G. CZARNIKOW LTD., LONDON in two lines) now falls between townmark and frank. It is difficult enough to understand how such a print came to be made on the face of the label, but still more so to understand how it was accepted by the P.O. clerk who postmarked it on acceptance.

HIGHEST NOS. The most interesting change this time is the appearance and rapid progress of the UK series. Thanks to Messrs Barfoot, Hammond, Lloyd Parton and Pearson for their reports.

NC 461; SB 786; SZ 619; UK 304;
PA 86; PB 172.

No one has yet reported the existence of NA and NB 1000; nor has PB 171 been found.

POSTAGE MACHINES FOR PARCELS

(From "The Financial Times", May 5, 1958)

The Post Office has ordered 600 machines to issue "postage paid" labels for use on parcels in place of stamps. From about October the machines will begin to appear and they will be brought into use at offices where parcel traffic is heavy. Each machine will take up no more space on the counter than a telephone, and will be operated by a clerk.

After a parcel has been weighed to ascertain the postage due, the machine will issue a franked label for any value by ld. steps up to 19s. 11d.

Setright Registers are making the machines for hand operation, with provision for electrical operation if desired. They will cost £37,000.

THE NEOPOST "FRANK MASTER" MACHINES

by H. E. Hammond

My first example of this new venture by Messrs Roneo-Neopost Ltd. is a "Specimen" dated 2 XI 54 with prefix RN but the first machine to come into use was NA 98 with a "B.I.F." slogan and TM LONDON W.C.2. dated 4 IV 55.

When postally-used examples began to appear, it was soon apparent that considerable variation was to be expected, for the setting varied from examples where the TM and frank were touching to examples spaced practically across the length of a foolscap envelope. This was, no doubt, caused by slippage - a fault which has been almost completely cured. There was, also, a considerable number of poor impressions which I deduce were caused by failure of the inking apparatus. After the makers had overcome these and other "teething" troubles, superb impressions began to appear and I venture to suggest that current Frank-Master stamps are amongst the finest in my collection. There was also much variation in the size and form of the prefix letters which, after

experiment, have culminated in the present large and shapely NB and NC series which, in my opinion, could not be improved.

Errors appear to be few, most being surplus hyphenation of the town name. I have noted the following:

NA 40 CRADLEY-HEATH; NA 297 WEST-DRAYTON;
 NA 505 BRIERLEY-HILL; NA 609 OLD-HILL;
 NB 472 WALTHAM-CROSS; NA 108 ELLERSMERE-PORT

this last having had the original Frank-Master date-figures changed to standard small Neopost style while retaining the surplus hyphen.

The only important errors, which have already been recorded in the Bulletin, are NA 127 with LANCASTER / MORECAMBE instead of LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE and likewise NB 51 and NB 460 with BOURNEMOUTH / POOLE. There is also the error of numbering, NA 461 for 641, subsequently corrected.

Considerable damage is occurring to the townmark circles and replacements are due on many machines. The most outstanding I have seen is NA 76 used at Maidstone, where the inner circle of the DC TM has completely disappeared at both sides leaving a symmetrical BIC TM for which it could easily be mistaken. I have a suspicion it may have been tidied up by the user, as for some time portions of the circle were missing. NA 522 of London E.C.2. has the inner circle of the DC-A TM badly deformed at left due to damage and NA 643, Cardiff, also TM DC-A, has the arc displaced and it is now close to the outer circle instead of being central. NA 185, St. Helens / Lancs., had TM BIC-A with FM date figures in early 1957 but is now using DC/s still with FM date figures. NA 321, Dundee / Angus, had TM BIC-A with FM date figures in 1956 but now DC-A with Neopost (large) date figures. NA 547 is another which has had the original DC-A changed to DC. A curious anomaly exists on NB 112, Sheffield, TM DC: my copy, dated 14 VIII 57, has standard small Neopost figures for 14 VIII and large figures for 57.

For my own, and, I hope, others' interest, I have made a small specialized study of the combinations of prefix, M.No., townmark and date figures in my collection. They may not be quite complete, but will probably cause more interest to be taken in this most fascinating issue. I have not quoted first and last numbers, as too few examples are yet available.

The four styles of townmark circle are abbreviated thus:-

BIC-A Broken inner circle, arcs at sides;
 DC-A Double circle, arcs at sides;
 DC/S Double circle, $24\frac{1}{2}/16$ mm. diam., no arcs;
 DC/L " " 26/17 mm. " " "

and the three styles of date figures:-

FM Tall, narrow (similar to value figures);
 NL Ordinary Neopost style, large;
 NS " " " small.

<u>PREFIX</u>	<u>M.No.</u>	<u>TOWNMARK</u>	<u>DATE FIGS.</u>
NA med. (thick N, thin A)	small	DC/S	FM
—small	"	BIC-A	FM
— " "	large	"	FM, NS
—medium	"	"	FM, NL
— " "	"	DC-A	FM, NL, NS
— " "	"	DC/S	FM, NL, NS
— " "	"	DC/L	FM
— large	"	BIC-A	FM, NL, NS
" "	"	DC-A	NL, NS
NB small, thin	"	DC-A	NL
short, thick	"	BIC-A	NL, NS
" "	"	DC/S	FM, NL, NS
tall, fine	"	BIC-A	NS
" "	"	DC/S	FM, NL, NS
" "	"	DC/L	NS
NC " "	"	DC/L	NS
		DC/A	FM, NS

Small
Large
VC/NL

DC/S NL

G.B. "PB 8, 9 and 21" NUMBERING PROBLEM

With reference to the article published in the last Bulletin, Mr Roberts of Messrs. Universal Postal Frankers Ltd. has kindly supplied the following information:

"When U.P.F. provided three Model A machines to Arthur Wheeler & Co. in 1923, it was arranged for all of their meters to have identity "8" and these were used for the dispatch of their vast mailings. At the same time this firm purchased two more machines to be used on their behalf by their printers, Bemrose & Sons of Derby. These had townmark "LEICESTER" and ident. No. "9". There appears to have been some complication in the fact that on occasion the mail from the machines at Derby was actually postmarked with that town and later, as a convenience, dies with this engraving were supplied.

"In 1925 one of the machines was transferred from Derby to Leicester and Bemrose & Sons then installed another machine with meters bearing ident. No. "21" for their own use on mailings of their customers."

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 Mr Roberts has no record of the ident. No. "99" though Mr Barfoot agrees that this also was used by Wheelers.

Unfortunately this by no means completely answers our questions, for it does not account for the use of No. 8 at Derby nor No. 21 at Leicester; it might almost appear that strictly these were errors arising from the meters of the two firms getting mixed up. We take the last sentence of the first para. quoted above to mean that the mail was actually posted at Derby though the meter townmark read "LEICESTER" until the "DERBY" dies were supplied. But according to the dates known, No.9 used the Derby TM before it used Leicester!

The previous article specifically refrained from consideration of the different varieties of die, and it is extremely difficult to determine

just how many there were. Mr C.W.E. Colcs claims to have distinguished five of the frame of the No. 8, two of them having two varieties of the "8" which, he suggests, was inserted on a movable plug in the central circle.

What is particularly significant is that he has an example dated 13 APR 1923 showing the well-known (but rare) variety, "8" inverted, and another dated the following day, with apparently the same frame but the "8" upright. Moreover, Mr Barfoot has two copies with the inverted "8" and I have one, all being of the same date, which seems to imply that it was used only on the one day.

A. A. Dewey

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MORE FRANK-MASTERS. Since the note in the January Bulletin, FMs have been reported in use in Barbados, Ghana, Jamaica, Malaya, New Zealand.

MORE NEW COUNTRIES. Brunei (Neopost LV); Swaziland (Simplex); Taiwan (Formosa) (Universal MV); possibly also Bechuanaland (Simplex).

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NEW ZEALAND: THE "STAMP MASTER"

Mr S.D. Barfoot has lent us an article on this machine, extracted from an unfortunately un-named N.Z. news-letter which is worthy of quoting in full.

"The Stamp Master postage franking machine or meter is a New Zealand product and, though not equipped with a date-head, has the neatest and best laid out meter slogans ever used on N.Z. made machines. Impressions are made with a bright orange-red ink which makes them outstanding.

"The meter was invented by Mr. A.H. Aldridge of Invercargill and the first machine submitted to the Post & Telegraph Department in 1953. After modifications had been made the machine was approved on 13th November 1953. At the request of the Department the letter M was placed in front of the meter number. The meters are numbered from M 1 up and demonstration machines

show "SPECIMEN" in place of the number.

"First used February 1954, the machines are made by Messrs. A.H. Aldridge and Sons, Bowmont Street, Invercargill, and are distributed throughout N.Z. by British Typewriters Ltd.

"The machines are of the fixed value type whereby each value die is an integral part of the frame die, that is, each impression is made from a single die. Though not fitted with a dating apparatus there is provision for a slogan to appear to the left of the values. The machine is fitted with values $\frac{1}{2}$ d, 1d, 2d, 3d, 6d, 1/-, 2/- and 3/-.

"The original frank design had a straight line frame and this was used on meters M 1 to M 20. Meters from M 22 up have the frame serrated, the first such meter being introduced 12th March 1955. Meters from M 82 up have the "No." omitted from the design."

NEW ZEALAND NOTES

The following are taken from a later issue of the news-letter mentioned above.

Rotex meter G.1157 used by Social Security Dept., Wanganui, used a black ink in error during August (1957) and this has now (? October) changed to blackish-red as red ink has been added to the inking roller. Red is the regulation colour in N.Z. but black or purple are occasionally used in error. A few Rotex meters (including G 886) can be found with a 3d value.

Neopost meter N 1, the first Neopost meter in N.Z. which was thought to have been discarded many years ago, is now in use at Wellington as a "relief" machine for Neopost users whose normal machine is being repaired.

Our member Mr Chamberlain, of Wellington, has informed us that the first licence for a Neopost "Frank-Master", NR 1, was issued in March 1958.

He also has found, on an old file in the Post Office, an interesting piece of information about the very early upright oval type (Type 2 in

44 the B.-S. Cat.); this is an account for the postage prepaid by this machine, totalling £275, representing 66,000 impressions. "Where are they all now?" Mr Chamberlain asks!

BELGIUM CURIOSITY

An item which often seems to puzzle collectors is the large Hasler MV type (B.-S. type 6), L.No. B 706, with double-circle "townmark" inscribed round the circumference "x BOECHOUT x /BELGIUM" and across the centre, in place of the usual date, "HEUVELSTR. / 3". At the left, in four lines, are the words "IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE, RETURN TO" in Flemish (Dutch), English, French and German respectively. In spite of its resemblance to a townmark the double circle must, we think, be regarded as part of the slogan; this type of meter is frequently used with only slogan and no townmark.

Incidentally, it is somewhat amusing to note that in the English inscription the comma is misplaced as indicated above, while in the French, the accent on "A" (to) is acute instead of grave! The user of the machine is the firm Sluys, but we do not know the nature of their business.

SUDAN CHECK-LIST

The Oriental Philatelic Association of London Newsletter No.60 (March 1958) published a check-list of the meter stamps of the Sudan, showing town and user. All are Universal multi-value machines and the Nos. run from U 1 to U 25, but 6, 7, 12, 14-18, 21, 22 and 24 have not been located and the users of U 3 and U 4 are not known. Can any member help to supply the gaps?

It is noted that U 3, 8, 11, 23 and 25 have the town-name in English only, the others in both English and Arabic; U 3 is FORT SUDAN, U 8 BARAKAT, and all the others KHARTOUM.

METER PROGRESS IN THE U.S.A.

The 1957 Annual Report of the U.S. Postmaster General, as quoted in a recent Bulletin of the American Metered Postage Society, gives some interesting figures of the money received for postage in the various forms. For the year ended 30th June, 1957, metered postage amounted to \$1,057 million as against \$1,004 mn. during the preceding year, being an increase of 5.3%. Adhesive stamps and stamped stationery amounted to \$1,015 mn. against \$1,011 mn. during the previous year, an increase of under 0.5%. Meters therefore brought in more than adhesive stamps and stamped stationery during 1957 for the first time, and represented 44.2% of all receipts for postage (which include, besides the items just mentioned, "permit" mail, newspapers etc. and collections from government agencies.)

In their annual report for the same year, Pitney-Bowes Inc. add that the total number of their machines in use during 1957 amounted to 214,000. In Canada, there were 20,800 machines in use and they produced \$66,975,000 or about 41½% of the postage paid on all mail.

"PERMITS" REPLACE METERS

It is interesting to note from the detailed figures of the P.M.G. referred to above that permit-imprinted mail, although still amounting to only \$206 million in 1957 (8.6% of total receipts) showed a proportionately greater increase than metered postage, 7.1% over the previous year.

In this connexion, Mr Henry O. Miesel, President of the A.M.P.S., wrote in a Bulletin of his Society about a year ago as follows:-

"While the number of postage meters in daily use is steadily on the increase, the use of printed permits for third-class mail is also increasing at a much faster rate. It is known that some postage meters have been taken out of service and replaced with inserting and mailing machines which imprint a permit indicia

on the envelopes.

"Permit machines for large mailers have some advantages over postage meters because the entire machines are owned outright, and thus the monthly rental for meters is entirely eliminated as well as the purchase of expensive machines for operation of the meters. The high-speed permit machines function in exactly the same way as do the high-speed meter machines. Also postage meters have to be taken to the post office for setting against deposit placed with the postmaster, and any ruined or unused impressions can be redeemed for 90 per cent. of the amount, thus all postage must be paid in advance. However, with permit machines it is not necessary to pay for any postage until the mail is deposited at the post office, and thus there is no money involved for ruined or unused impressions."

Mr. Meisel concludes that "Permit machine indicia should be collected". However, from the great variety in style and in detail of these permit impressions - many of which are illustrated in the A.M.P.S. Bulletins - it would appear that the P.O. Dept. does not closely prescribe the design to be used; consequently, if they became popular as collectable items, it seems to us that users would be liable to bring out an even greater number of varieties for the interested collectors.

UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES

The International Atomic Energy Agency, recently established at Vienna, has brought into use a Postalia machine, as B.-S. type 16 but with four figures of value, with TM BIC-B (WIEN 40) and slogan at left "INTERNATIONALE / ATOMBEHÖRDE" with Atomic emblem between. First day of use was 29.11.57. Many thanks to Dr Detlef Schmidt for a copy.

The European Regional Office of the W.H.O at Copenhagen (Kobenhavn), Denmark, also has introduced a meter but details are at present lacking. (Noted by Sammlergruppe "Vereinte Nationen", Hamburg.)

CATALOGUE SUPPLEMENT

Although several further additions to the lists of British Commonwealth countries have been reported, we are now trying again to catch up with the arrears for European countries. Most of the items listed below are reported by Mr S.D. Barfoot, the rest being in the Editor's collection.

G R E E C E

Id. Nos.: Hasler, add 9800, 11700, 12800, 13500 etc. series. Francotyp CC, F 1001 up. Postalia, 18700 etc.

Note re Charity Tax should read "1 drachma (100 lepta)" and on newer machines 10 drachmai; now discontinued.

The list is best divided into three periods, as follows.

I. Prior to German Occupation (April 1941)

Only Nos. /1/, /1a/, /2/, /2a/ and /8/ were used. Whether any machines were used during the Occupation period is not known to us.

II. From Liberation to Revaluation of Currency

(End 1944 to April 1954)

Nos. /3/ to /7/ and /9/ to /11/ (? and /12/) belong to this period, when postal rates were mostly in hundreds of drachmai. Also the following:

Type 2, Universal MV, should be corrected to Type 3. Add:

/13/ VN. AT. F. of V. ?0010 (? - π or 0) (U 8)

Type 2. Francotyp. Same machine as /8/ but altered figs. of value. TM.DC with name in Greek letters at top and Roman (ATHINAI) at bottom.

/14/ W. TC. F. of V. ^πzOoi (G) (Two stars, one ^π above the other.)

III. New Currency (From May 1954)

(1 new drachma = 1,000 old drachmai)

Type 1. Hasler. Frank 31 x 36 mm. (9 square ornaments at each side, 8 at top and bottom.)

TM as before.

/15/ VN. O. F. of V. ~~xx~~00,oi

/16/ VN. AT. " ~~xxx~~00,oi

/17/ VN. AT. " ~~xxx~~00,01

Type 1B. Hasler. As type 1 but frank 31 x 31 mm.

(8 square ornaments at each side and at top and bottom.) TM DC with name in Greek at top and Roman letters at bottom.

/19/ VN. AT. F. of V. ~~xxx~~00,oi

Type 4. Universal MV. Similar to type 3 but with "DR./LEPT." (in Greek letters) below value.

/21/ VN. AT. F. of V. 00oi (Ov.)

Type 5. Rostalia. Frame of lozenges, large crown above and "ELLAS" (in Greek) below value. TM DC. No. (18000 series) in bottom centre of frame.

/22/ O. F. of V. 00oi (small Ov.)

Type 6. Francotyp Cc. Similar to type 2, L.No. with F prefix below frank. Slogan between TM and frank. TM DC, stops after D and M figs.

/23/ W. TL. F. of V. z0.01 (Ov.)

H U N G A R Y

Type 1. Midget.

/1/ 32f. also M4.

Type 2. Francotyp.

/5/ and /25/ have F. of V. either 5 or 6 mm. high.

Types 2E and 3.

/32/, /36/, /43/, /46/, /48/, /49/ - amend TM "SC-E" to "BIC-E"; segments "lined", not "shaded".

Type 2E. Francotyp A. Add:

/A27/ N. TC. x001 (Ov.) (Fr. 8)

Type 2E. Francotyp C.

/31/ Add TMs DC-A, BIC-E segments lined.

Type 3. Hasler.

/46/ Machine H I/37 from 1950-52 at least shows month "SZEP" in date with the Z reversed.

/49/ Add TM BIC-E, segments blank.

Type 5. Safag. Issued 1949 or earlier. Amend "SI" to "I. S." Slogan at left.