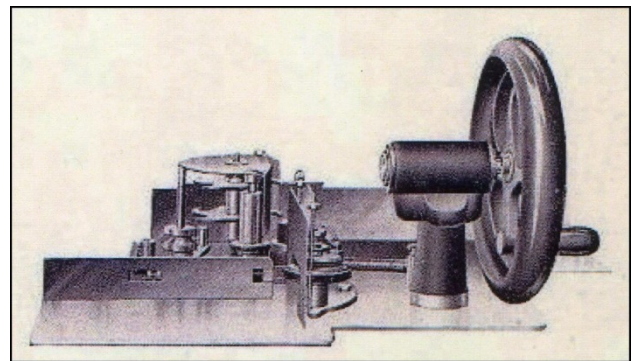
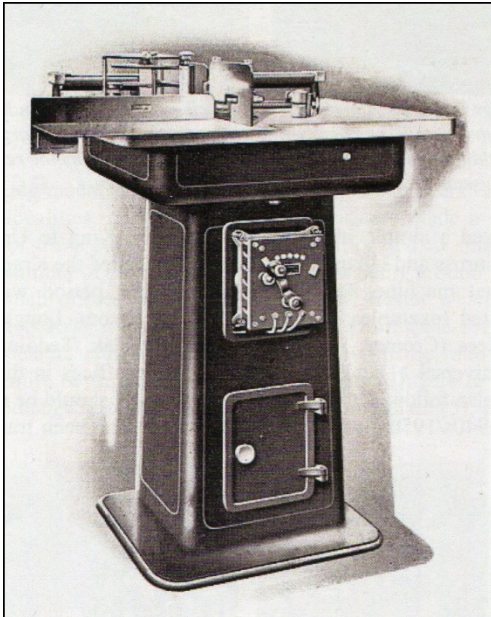


1905 – The Krag Machine

Following various trials in London offices between 1905 and 1907, these continuous-impression postmarking machines entered regular service in May 1907. The machines were made by a Norwegian company called Krag-Maskinfabrik A/S and could postmark up to 1200 items per minute.



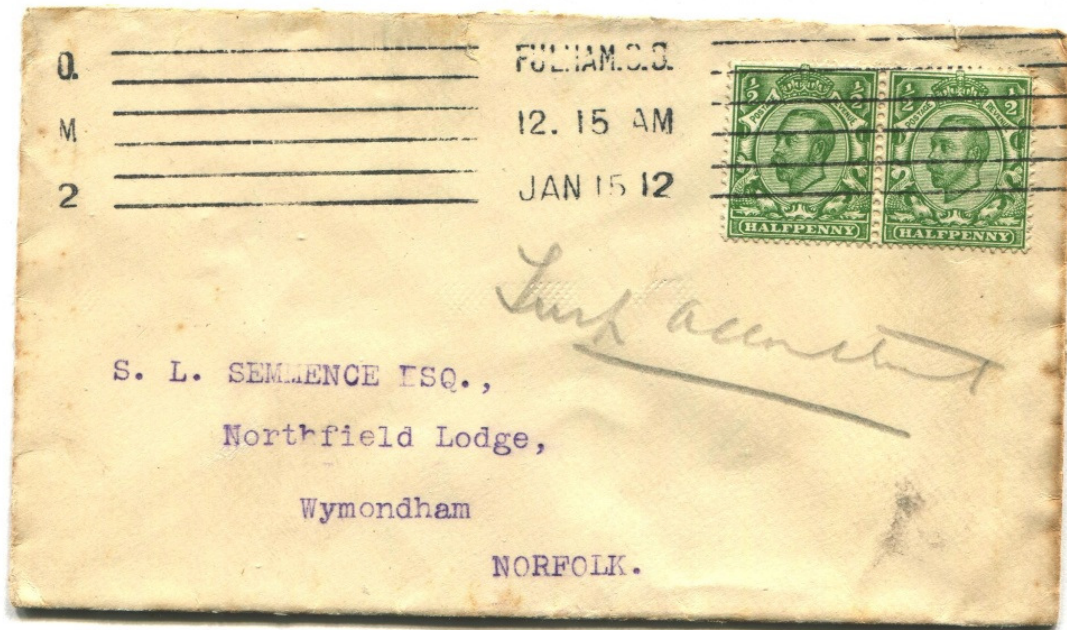
The machines produced were generally electronically-powered (above left). However, the machine in use at the Chelsea office was initially treadle-operated and later converted to hand operation (above right).

Machine-use peaked in the 1920s but these machines remained in use in England until 1993. Today, there is just one machine still in use in John O' Groats, Scotland.

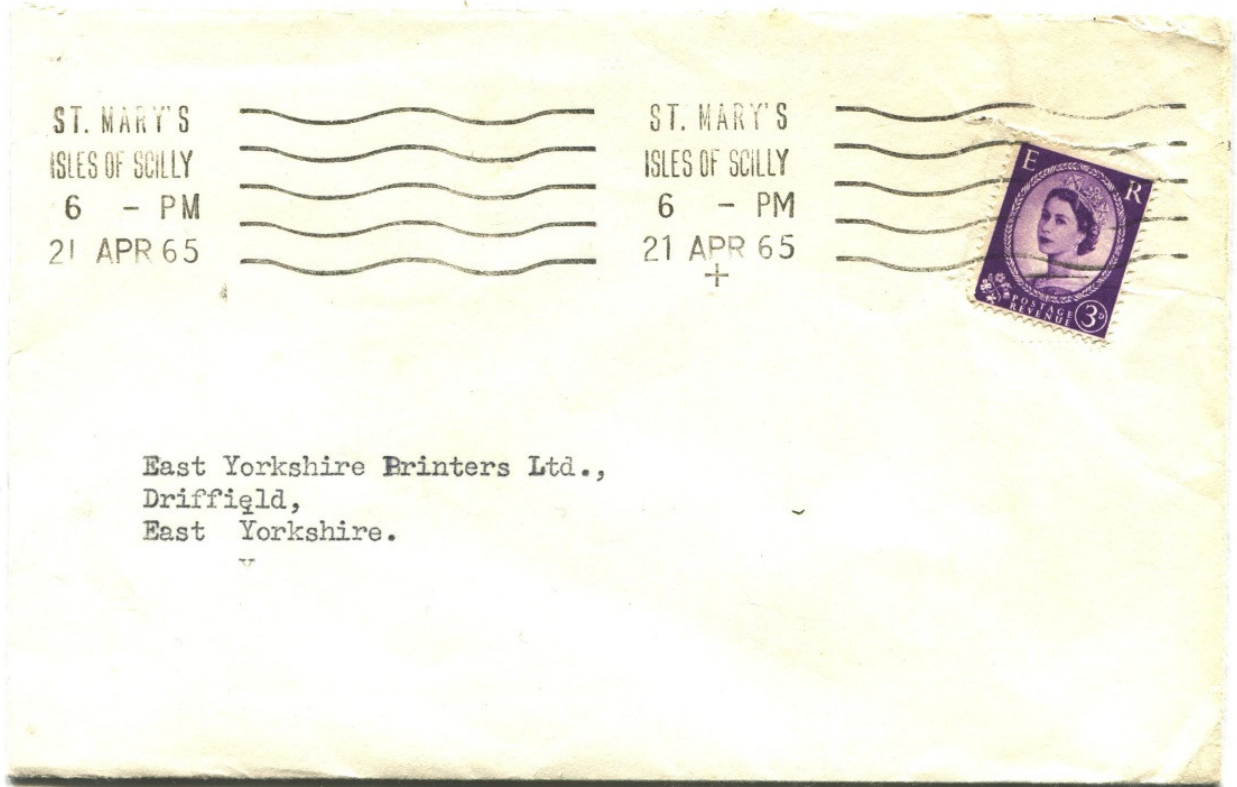


Postmark from the first day of the trial at London WC on 18 May 1905.

Krag Machine Cancels



Fulham D.O. - 15 Jan 1912



St. Mary's / Isles of Scilly - 21 April 1965

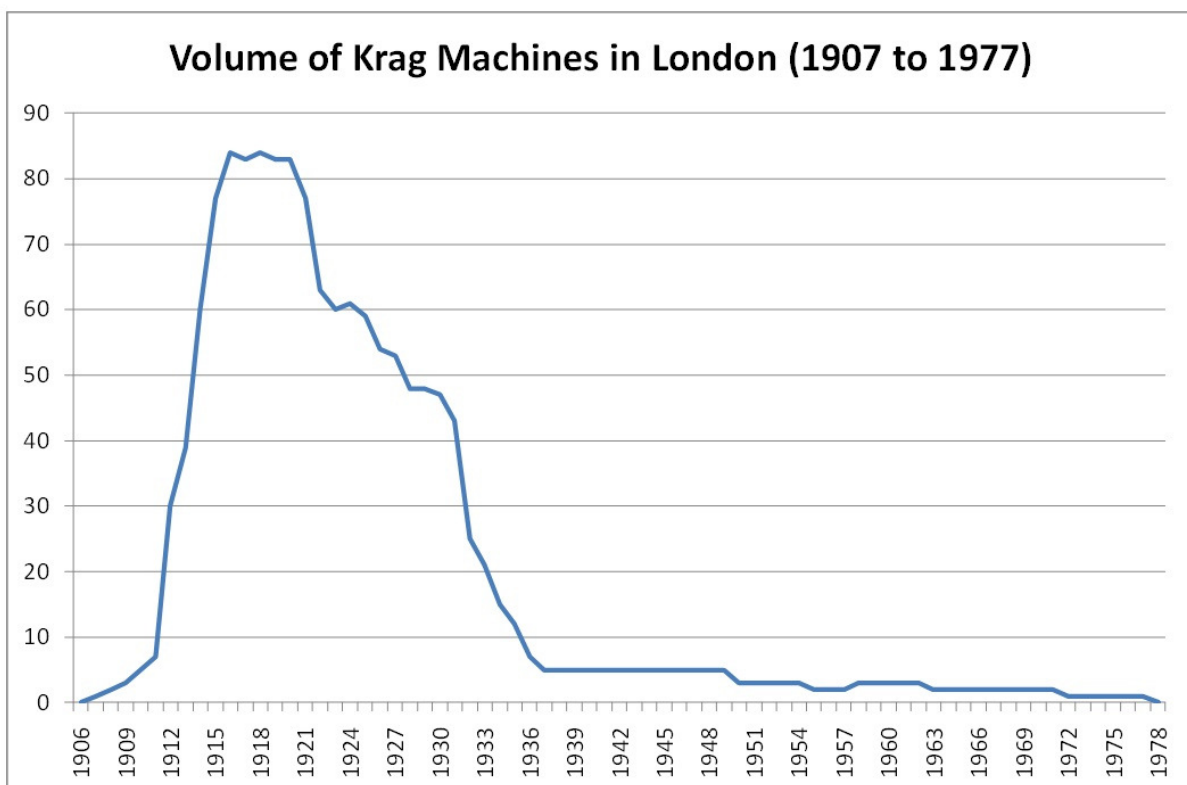
1907 Krag Stamping Machines in London

Trials of the Krag “continuous impression” machine were first carried out at the London W.C. office in 1905 and were used to postmark live mail in 1907. Krag machines were then installed at busy London offices to speed up the postmarking of mail at peak periods.

During the 1920s, the Krag machines in the main London offices were gradually superseded by faster machines and the almost indestructible Krag machines were transferred to smaller, less busy offices. In total, 106 offices in the London area were, at some stage, fitted with Krag machines.

Between 1914 and 1921 three Alma machines were also installed at the Suburban Offices. The impressions from the Almas have a similar appearance to the Krag machines. However, by comparing certain characteristics, it is possible to differentiate between the two types of machine.

By 1977, all Krag machines in London had been withdrawn.



1911 – The Universal Stamp Cancelling Machine

In August 1911, the GPO took delivery of a stamp cancelling machine that was manufactured by the American company 'Universal Machine Company' - later to be amalgamated with Pitney Bowes Ltd.

This machine was extremely robust and reliable and its use soon became widespread across the UK. Machines based on this design are still sometimes used in Mail Centres today.

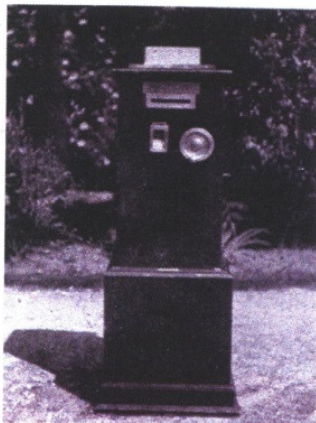


First recorded use of the Universal SCM – London S.W., 3 Aug 1911

1912 – The Wilkinson Machine Trial

On 25 Jan 1912, a coin-operated automatic letter stamping machine, was installed at the Chief Post Office in King Edward St., London EC.

It was known as the Wilkinson machine - invented by Mr F. Wilkinson of Braintree, Essex. Having inserted a 1d coin, the user placed their letter into the machine and turned a handle and the machine automatically applied the mark shown alongside.



The box was emptied once an hour by a Postal Inspector who then took them to be handstamped. These handstamps were initially applied in black ink but, in early February, they changed to red. The trial was not successful due to dwindling use and was discontinued on 31 August 1912.



*Wilkinson machine mark and handstamp 19 August 1912
Sent by 'The Great Eastern Railway Company'*

Wilkinson Machine Usage

The following table lists the number of mail items that were processed by the Wilkinson machine during the first three months of use between the 25 January and 24 April 1912.



Day	Date	Usage
Thu	25-Jan-12	1060
Fri	26-Jan-12	431
Sat	27-Jan-12	322
Sun	28-Jan-12	
Mon	29-Jan-12	375
Tue	30-Jan-12	345
Wed	31-Jan-12	310
Thu	1-Feb-12	217
Fri	2-Feb-12	286
Sat	3-Feb-12	49
Sun	4-Feb-12	
Mon	5-Feb-12	229
Tue	6-Feb-12	158
Wed	7-Feb-12	146
Thu	8-Feb-12	179
Fri	9-Feb-12	164
Sat	10-Feb-12	65
Sun	11-Feb-12	
Mon	12-Feb-12	97
Tue	13-Feb-12	125
Wed	14-Feb-12	133
Thu	15-Feb-12	115
Fri	16-Feb-12	125
Sat	17-Feb-12	89
Sun	18-Feb-12	
Mon	19-Feb-12	128
Tue	20-Feb-12	106
Wed	21-Feb-12	105
Thu	22-Feb-12	94
Fri	23-Feb-12	117
Sat	24-Feb-12	56

Day	Date	Usage
Sun	25-Feb-12	
Mon	26-Feb-12	121
Tue	27-Feb-12	141
Wed	28-Feb-12	85
Thu	29-Feb-12	126
Fri	1-Mar-12	94
Sat	2-Mar-12	46
Sun	3-Mar-12	
Mon	4-Mar-12	91
Tue	5-Mar-12	71
Wed	6-Mar-12	72
Thu	7-Mar-12	80
Fri	8-Mar-12	77
Sat	9-Mar-12	57
Sun	10-Mar-12	
Mon	11-Mar-12	78
Tue	12-Mar-12	85
Wed	13-Mar-12	57
Thu	14-Mar-12	59
Fri	15-Mar-12	50
Sat	16-Mar-12	54
Sun	17-Mar-12	
Mon	18-Mar-12	77
Tue	19-Mar-12	60
Wed	20-Mar-12	52
Thu	21-Mar-12	45
Fri	22-Mar-12	61
Sat	23-Mar-12	47
Sun	24-Mar-12	
Mon	25-Mar-12	85

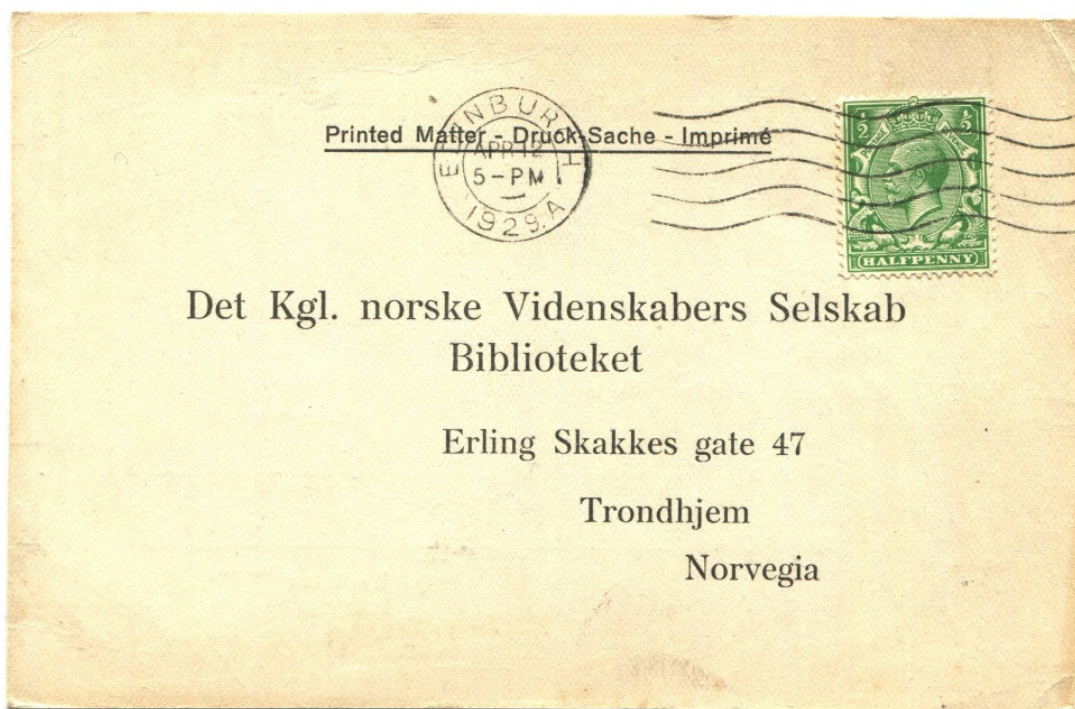
Day	Date	Usage
Tue	26-Mar-12	36
Wed	27-Mar-12	54
Thu	28-Mar-12	65
Fri	29-Mar-12	61
Sat	30-Mar-12	52
Sun	31-Mar-12	
Mon	1-Apr-12	68
Tue	2-Apr-12	60
Wed	3-Apr-12	48
Thu	4-Apr-12	34
Fri	5-Apr-12	21
Sat	6-Apr-12	25
Sun	7-Apr-12	
Mon	8-Apr-12	
Tue	9-Apr-12	25
Wed	10-Apr-12	51
Thu	11-Apr-12	43
Fri	12-Apr-12	52
Sat	13-Apr-12	29
Sun	14-Apr-12	
Mon	15-Apr-12	33
Tue	16-Apr-12	47
Wed	17-Apr-12	38
Thu	18-Apr-12	50
Fri	19-Apr-12	37
Sat	20-Apr-12	28
Sun	21-Apr-12	
Mon	22-Apr-12	40
Tue	23-Apr-12	27
Wed	24-Apr-12	35

1914 – The Hey-Dolphin ‘Flier’

Following three separate short trials in 1893, 2002 and 2011, a machine called the ‘Flier’, manufactured by Hey-Dolphin, entered service. Machines were installed at six locations, namely Belfast, Lincoln, Rochdale, Canterbury, Wallasey and Birmingham.

The impressions had five cancelling bars and, initially, the town dies were single-ringed circles but, in 1924, these were changed to double-ringed circles. At this stage, the G.P.O. were buying these machines in large quantities. The year of the postmark was always shown in the outer rim of the town die circle.

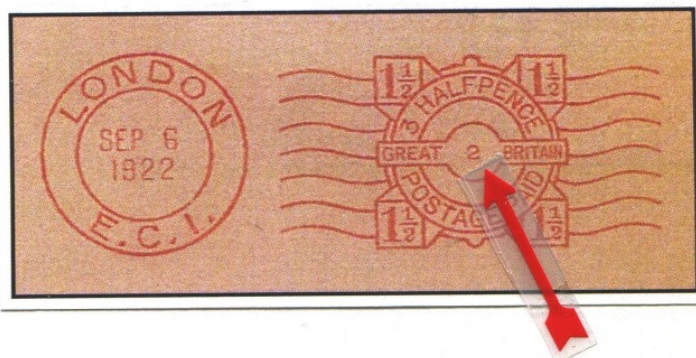
From 1933 onwards, the format was changed to align with that of the Universal machine which became the standard across the country.



Hey-Dolphin ‘Flier’ from Edinburgh dated 12 April 1929

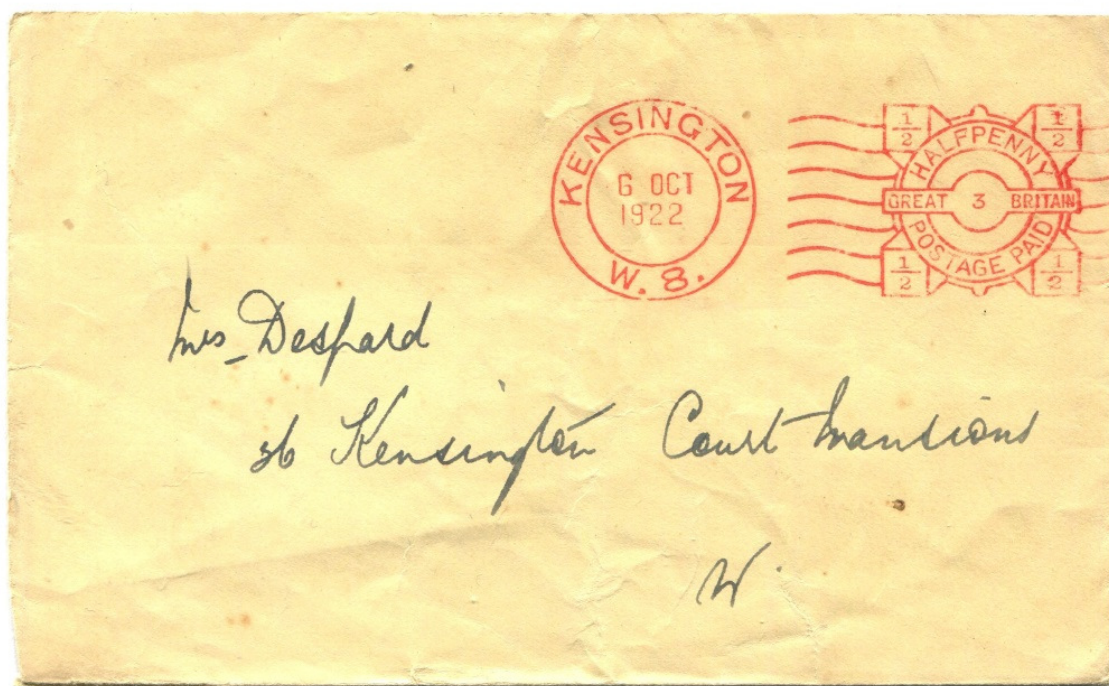
1922 – Introduction of Meter Franking Machines

Following trials in August 1922, Post Office licences were granted to five businesses in London to use Pitney Bowes franking machines. First use on live mail was 5 Sep 1922.



The licence number appeared in the centre of the indicia block.

- Licence 1 Postage Meters & Machine Co. London W.C.2
- Licence 2 Prudential Assurance Co. Ltd., London E.C.1
- Licence 3 John Barker & Co. Ltd., Kensington W.8
- Licence 4 Derry & Toms Ltd., Kensington W.8
- Licence 5 J. Lee Ltd., London W.1

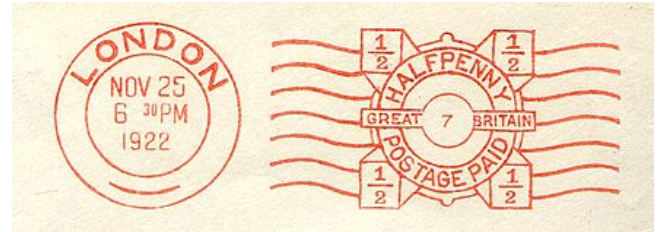


Licence 3: John Barker & Co. Ltd. 6 Oct 1922

Meter Franking – Design Formats (1)

The following are examples of the ten different meter frank designs used in the UK and the years when they first appeared:

1922 – Design A (GvR square)



1927 – Design B (GvR emblem)



1936 – Design C (EviiiR emblem)



1937 – Design D (GviR emblem)



1953 – Design E (EiiR emblem)



Meter Franking – Design Formats (2)

1959 – Design F (EiiR floral)



1967 – Design G (EiiR large crown)



1967 – Design H (EiiR decimal)



1996 – Design I (EiiR barcode)



2014 – Design J (EiiR data matrix)

