

# NOTEBOOK

Number 127 : July 1997

*IN THIS ISSUE.....*

## THE SILVER JUBILEE MEETING

We managed to hold this meeting before the end of the twenty-fifth year: a day to be remembered with no small affection by the forty one members and guests who attended. To mark this event, we have obtained a few items from many of the displays given by members. The offerings of Barrie Jay and Martin Willcocks included material covered in articles in the Postal History Society journal and permission to reprint these has been obtained. Martin Willcocks also provides a supplement to his article and comment on other items shown by him.

We start with an abstract from issues 1 and 2 of "Notebook", strictly steam typewritten, no spell checker, whereas this comes by courtesy of the latest technology and a very poorly understood word processing program full of "Now how did that happen ?" reactions.

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### EDITOR

Peter A Forrestier Smith, 64 Gordon Road,  
CARSHALTON, Surrey. SM5 3RE

Page 2 "Notebook" Abstracts :-  
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These abstracts from the individual displays ,presented here in the order displayed, may convey something of the enjoyment afforded those at the Silver Jubilee meeting.

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## *EDITORIAL..... (Issue No.1)*

The prospect of launching a London Postal History Group rather resembles that which must face a hungry schoolboy locked overnight in the tuck-shop, the only problem being just where to start. From the response to the original proposal it is quite apparent that interests range across the whole spectrum, with an interesting strength in the post-adhesive period, stimulated no doubt by the monumental effort of Leon Dubus. Despite this very welcome addition, there is still much ground to be explored, not the least being the HISTORY aspect, as distinct from the POSTMARK.

The Editor's own "collection" consists of odds and ends garnered over the years, has little shape or substance and will only be offered as the 'clay' at which those with the knowledge can loose off well chosen shot. However, by spending the odd hour or three in Post Office Records, it is hoped to contribute the occasional nugget of original material. As for the bulk of "Notebook" contents, this will depend on the time and care Group members can afford. The all too often vain hope of a page from every one interested, is one this Editor does not entertain but the prospect of dashing off a page or two every three months, the interval at which it is hoped to publish, should not prove too daunting.

For the balance of material, slight and / or serious plagiarism will be indulged in, without too many qualms since very willing acknowledgment will be made whenever possible. The only excuse for this type of activity is the wide scatter of information which can be gleaned from the general philatelic press, coupled with the difficulty in securing your page or two !

Having beaten that favourite editorial drum, it is not proposed to repeat the exercise - and that is a promise !

Some of this first edition will be taken up with random thoughts on the scope of the group, by way of providing a ball to be kicked around at the inaugural meeting; the first in a series of abstracts from the P.M.G.'s Reports relating to London; odd London postmarks in the Editor's so-called collection and a look at some auction results.

One last Editorial note. Despite modern English usage, the non-U spelling of words such as favor, color etc. may be noted. This is not an American influence, for as anyone who has cause to inspect old documents can confirm; non-U was thought good enough for the various titled P.M.G.s, to say nothing of Ormond Hill !

## *REPORT ON INAUGURAL MEETING..... (issue No. 2)*

The London Postal History Group was launched on Saturday 27th. February 1971 at the Great Northern Hotel, Kings Cross. Despite the postal strike and the consequent difficulty in giving as wide a spread of publicity as had been hoped, twelve enthusiasts, from as far afield as Bridgnorth and Kings Lynn, took part.

Draft rules were considered and it was agreed to defer their full adoption although they would be used to guide the operation of the Group.

The following rules, as numbered in the draft list, were adopted.

1. Name....The organisation shall be called the London Postal History Group.
2. Objects.....The purpose for which the Group is formed is the promotion of the study of London Postal History..



3. Subscription.....Ordinary members shall pay £2.00 per annum  
Associate members shall pay £1.25 per annum.

Management....The meeting agreed to the following appointments ;-

Mr P.A. Forrestier Smith.....as Chairman

Mr. M.M. English.....as Hon.Secretary/Treasurer

with the members present at the full Group meetings acting as the  
Committee.

Limits of London.....this was defined as the limits in current use by the  
Post Office during the period being studied. A useful guide is the limit of the  
Country area of the London Twopenny Post.

Readers might be interested to see a list of those attending that first meeting.  
Names starred \* are still members and \*\* were at the Silver Jubilee meeting.

C.J. Adams  
M.M. English \*\*  
P.A. Forrestier Smith \*\*  
W.B. Gledhill \*  
M.C. Goodman \*\*  
R.J. Luxton  
K. Martin Jones  
D.J. Muggleton  
J. Parmenter\*\*  
B.T. Smith \*\*  
S.B. Szymanski \*

Plus those early members not at the first meeting.....

W.S.H. Ashmore  
Dr Frank Bottomley  
M.J. Burrows  
M.V.D. Champness \*  
J.H. Chandler  
A.R. Clark \*  
James S. Donaldson  
J.R. Henderson  
Barrie Jay\*\*  
A.J. Kirk\*\*  
R.C.A. Payne  
H.J. Waterton  
R.M. Willcocks \*\*

The Jubilee meeting was for members to display up to twenty-five  
favourites from their collections . Fortunately, not all of those who offered so to do  
brought material. Despite this, it was a slight scramble at the end of the day to fit  
everyone in but what a feast and range.



## FREE HANDSTAMPS OF THE LONDON SHIP LETTER OFFICE

Barrie Jay

This article first appeared in "Postal History" No. 279 of September, 1996

For several years I have been collecting details of covers that received the hand stamps known as the Foreign Branch Free stamps (Jay L840-848; Lovegrove C/1-C/4) and of covers between the British Isles and overseas countries carried under the franking system which received only Inland Office Free stamps. It have become evident certain of the generally accepted views on these hand stamps will have to be amended.

In 1991 I published details of my study of a series of, what were called, the Foreign Branch Free Stamps ("Notebook" No.96, page 4) and indicated what I had previously published in the London Volume of the British County Catalogue of Postal History needed amending. These hand stamps could be divided into three basic types:



Type 1



Type 2a



Type 2b



Type 3

Type 1, L840, has month/day below FREE and is known used between 1817 and 1822.

Type 2, L842-L846, has day/month/day below FREE and has upper corners rounded. The various hand stamps used between 1824 and 1834 may be subdivided into two main groups:

Type 2a has concave upper corners with sharp points and is known between 1824 and 1829. The distance between the top frame and the bottom of FREE is about 6mm, while the distance between the top frame and the bottom of the day/month/day line being 11mm.

Type 2b has rounded upper corners and is known between 1830 and 1834. The distance between the top frame and the bottom of FREE is about 4mm, while the distance between the top frame and the bottom of the day/month/day line is 9mm..

Type 3, L848, has square upper corners and is known used between 1835 and 1839.



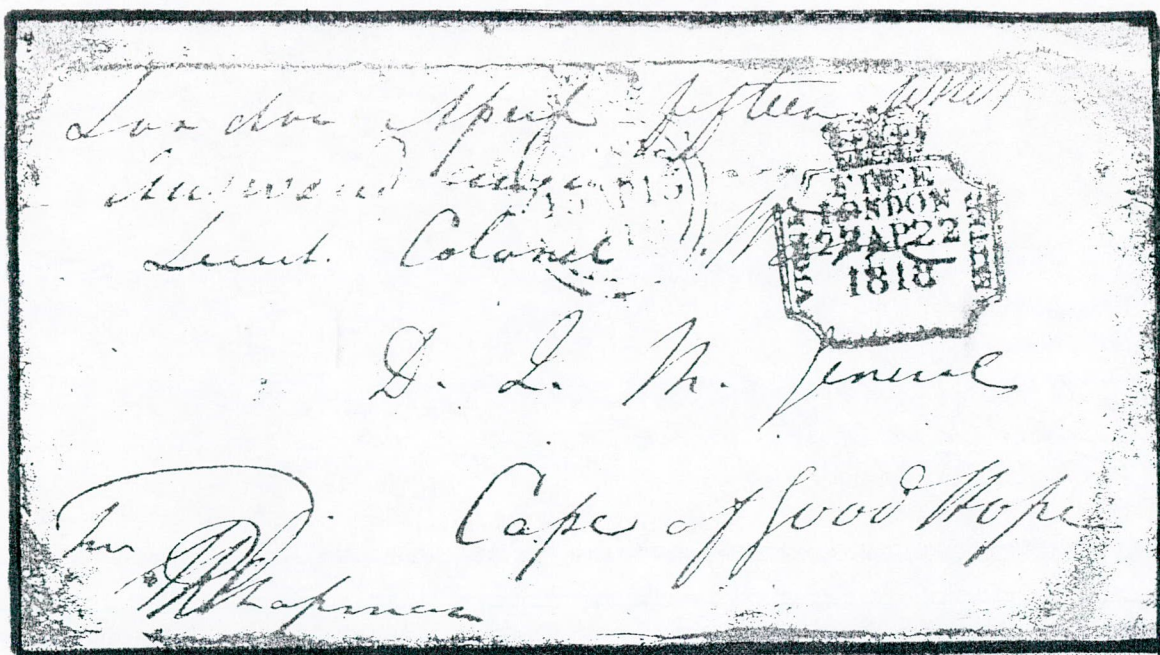


Figure 1. 15 April 1818, London to Cape of Good Hope with FREE INDIA LETTER handstamp. Oval ship letter date stamp on reverse.

At about this time I acquired an unrecorded FREE INDIA LETTER hand stamp on a cover from London to the Cape of Good Hope, the cover also having received the small oval date stamp (L1424) of the Ship Letter Office, indicating the letter had been delayed awaiting a ship (Figure 1). The cover had also received an Inland Office Free stamp and had been franked by Lt. Col. S.R. Chapman, Secretary to Earl Mulgrave, the Master General of the Ordnance. Lt. Col. Chapman was one of a number of officials who could send and receive Foreign and Ship Letters free.

The shape of this FREE INDIA LETTER hand stamp was somewhat similar to the series L840-L848, described above, and resulted in my studying further the letters which had received these so-called Foreign Branch Free hand stamps. Of those where adequate details are available, 17 passed between London and India (Figure 2), 6 between London and the Cape of Good Hope (Figure 3), 3 between London and Australia, 2 between London and North America and 2 between London and the West Indies. Nine of these letters had received Ship Letter hand stamps in addition to the Free stamp (Figure 4); none of these covers carried a Foreign Office stamp.



Figure 2. 19 September 1831, Vallwell to Delhi. This private letter from a Mr Fraser to his son, was franked by Charles Grant, President of the India Board, who had unlimited franking privileges. The letter received an Inland Office Free and a type 2b Ship Letter Free handstamp.

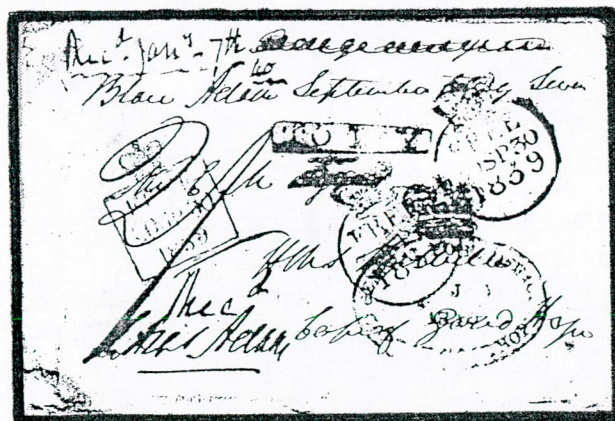


Figure 3. 26 September 1839, Blair Adam to HMS Melville, Cape of Good Hope. The letter received Inland Office Free handstamps and a type 3 Ship Letter Office Free stamp. The letter was charged 2/-, possibly because it was franked by someone who did not have unlimited franking privileges.



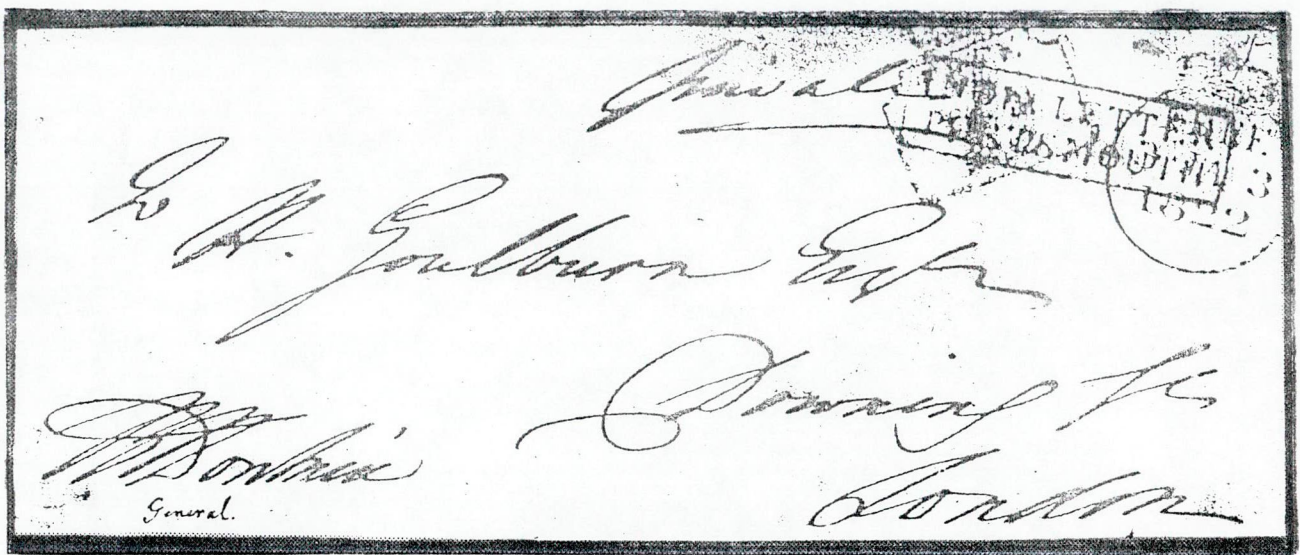


Figure 4. 1822, India to London. This letter received the INDIA LETTER PORTSMOUTH handstamp on being landed and on arrival at the Ship Letter Office received the Type 1 Free handstamp before passing to the Inland Office where it received their Free handstamp. This letter passed free as it was addressed to Henry Goulburn, Under Secretary for the War Department, who had unlimited franking privileges.

I then examined the few covers I had in my collection between this country and overseas which had passed through the **Foreign Office**. There were 4 such letters from London to the continent (Figures 5 & 6) and one to India via Falmouth which carried Inland Office FREE hand stamps and Foreign Office date stamps (Figure 7). (A letter to the British Army in Portugal and one to India received no charge; the two letters to Germany had continental charge marks.) There were also two covers, one to Jamaica and one to Canada (Figure 8), with only an Inland Office FREE hand stamp and had not been charged any postage.

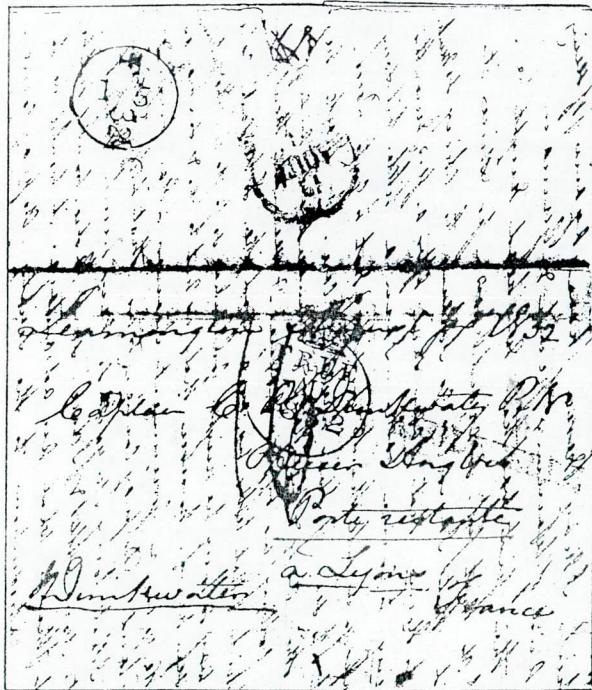


Figure 5. 6 August 1832, Leamington to Lyons, France. This letter received the Inland Office Free stamp before being passed to the Foreign Office where the F32 15 stamp was applied. The letter passed free in the British post but was charged 16 decimes in France. The letter was franked by J Drinkwater, Comptroller of Army Accounts with franking privileges. The letter was, however, signed Good night dearest Charles ... Your most affectionate Gina!

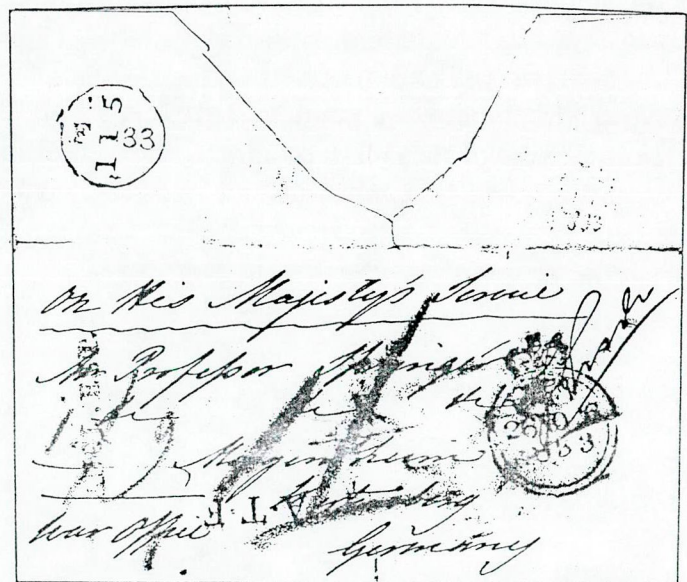


Figure 6. 26 November 1833, War Office to Wurtemberg. This free letter received the Inland Office Free stamp before being passed to the Foreign Office. The letter passed free in Britain but was charged 1Guilder 9 Kreuzer on delivery [1 Guilder due to France for carriage from French port to Stuttgart, 8Kr for delivery to Wurtemberg and 1Kr local delivery].



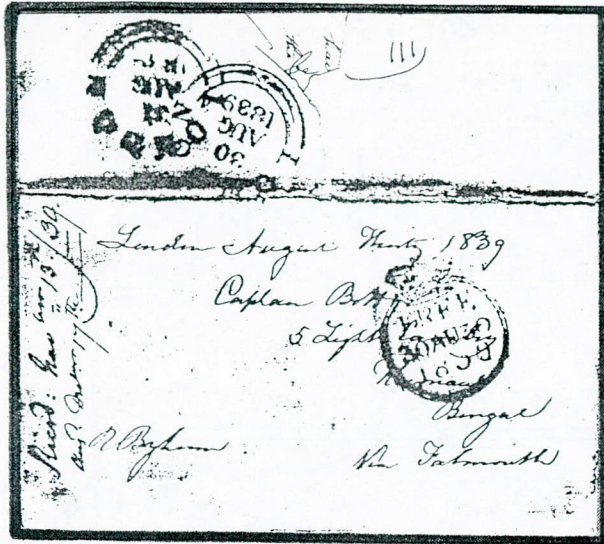


Figure 7. August 1839, Ordnance Office to India. This free letter was signed by Robert Byham, Secretary to the Board of Ordnance, and was transferred to the Foreign Office for passage to India by Falmouth packet.

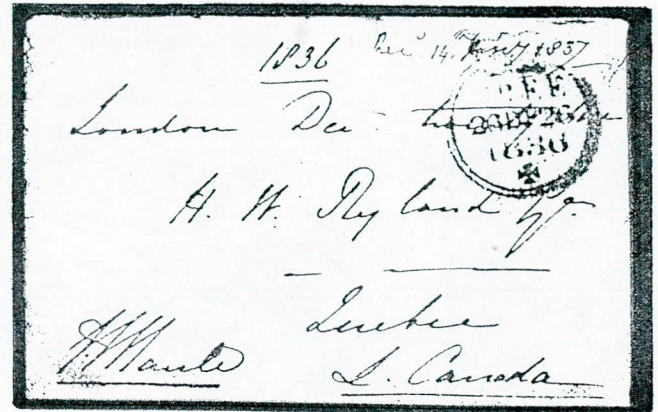


Figure 8. 26 December 1836, London to Quebec. The Hon Fox Maule, who signed this free letter, was Under Secretary of State for the Home Office with authority to send letters free of postage. This letter received only an Inland Office Free stamp and would have travelled by packet to Canada and was not charged any postage.

It would , therefore, appear free letters passing through the **FOREIGN OFFICE** received the Inland Office **FREE** stamp, as well as a Foreign Office date stamp, while those going through the **SHIP LETTER OFFICE** received one of the 'square' **FREE** hand stamps previously attributed to the Foreign Office but which will now have to be reclassified as Ship Letter Office hand stamps.

### **EXAMINERS' and INSPECTORS' MARKS**

Mike Bolt

Although of no great scarcity these will, it is hoped, be of interest. The first item (fig.1) is a letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> April 1833, it arrived in London from Paris on the 15<sup>th</sup> and received the dotted circle postmark of the Foreign Post Office. The Inspector's mark, a circle with cross inside, was applied but there is no obvious cause for his attention, other than the letter may have been delayed or missorted, this being the explanation offered by Hendy. The charge of 1s.2d. was correct for a single letter from France.

The second example (fig 2) is of the four pointed star type, usually used to denote the letter had been found out of course. However, in this case it would seem it was applied in connection with the doubling of the postage. The letter is clearly dated, 13<sup>th</sup> March 1798, on the obverse by the writer. The initial charge was the single rate for distances over 150 miles, that is, 8d. However, it was detected to be a double sheet item and the rate changed to 1 / 4 , with the Inspector's four point star struck to confirm the matter.



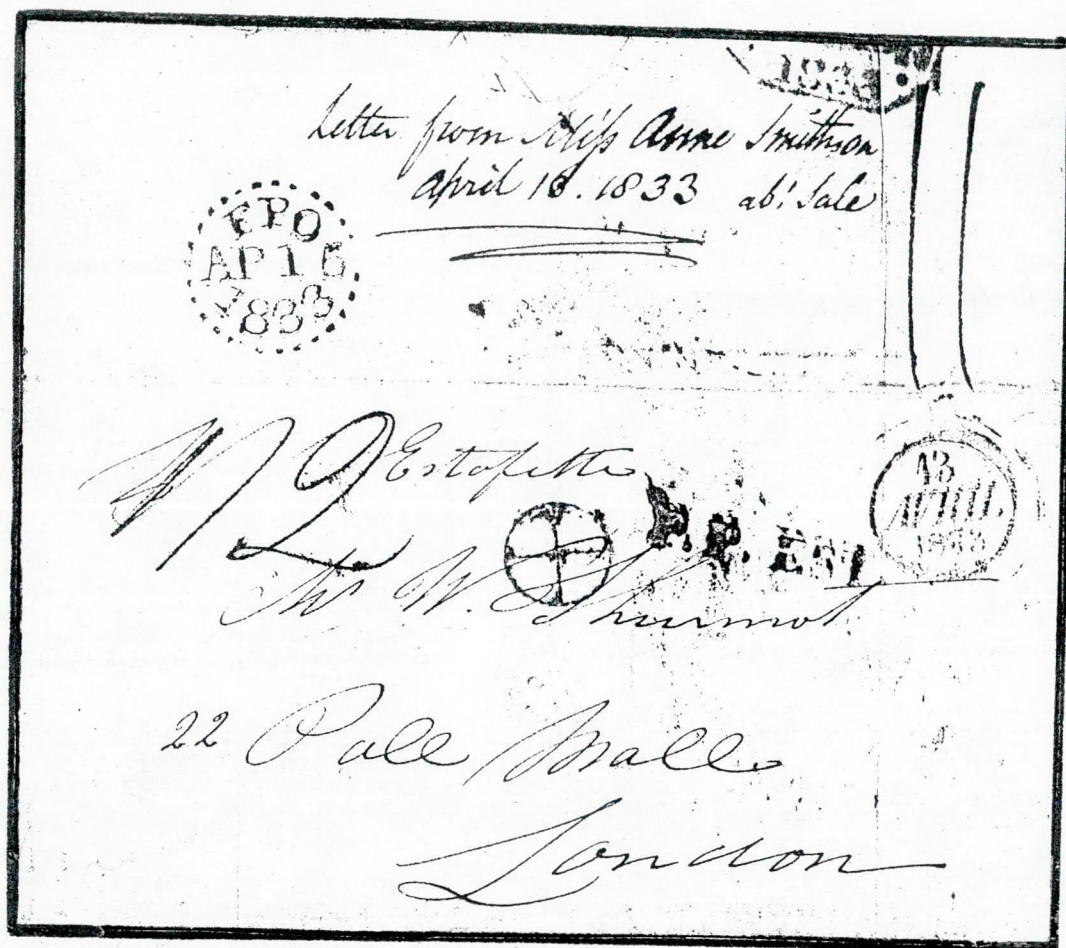


fig. 1



fig. 2

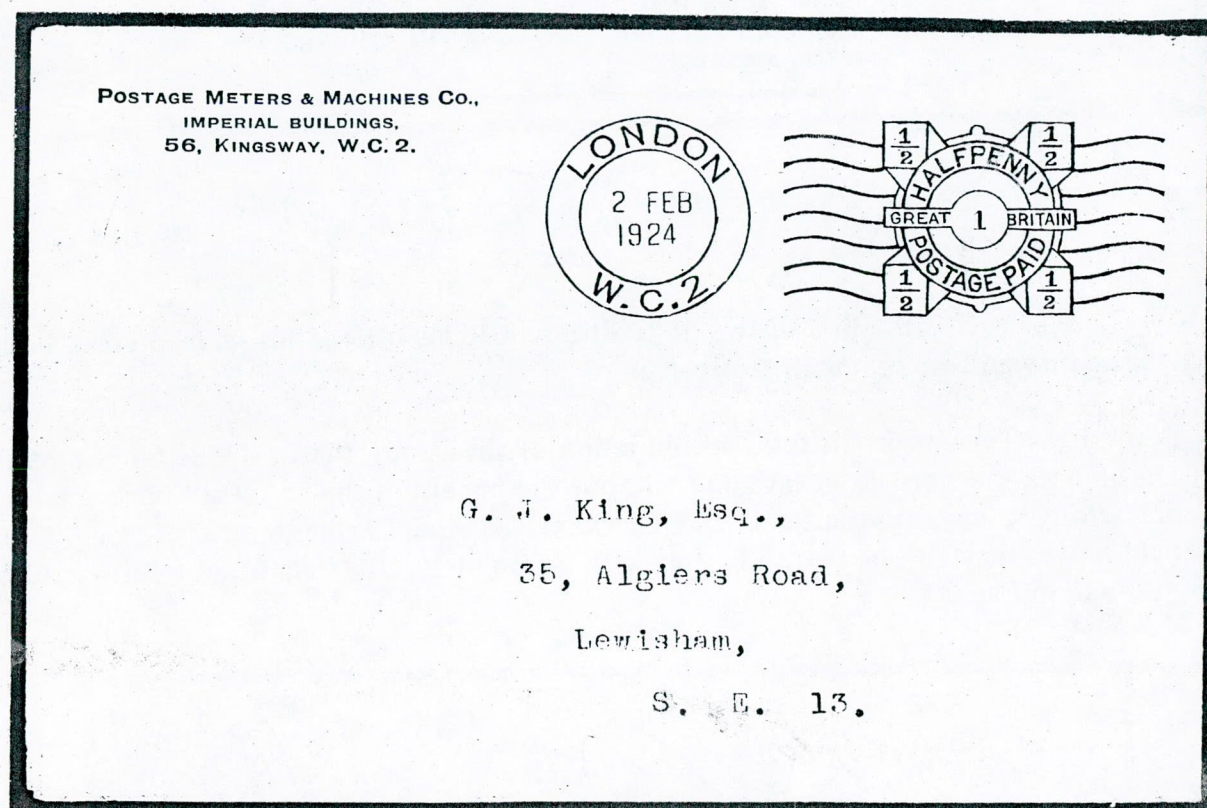


## THE INTRODUCTION OF METER FRANKING INTO GREAT BRITAIN

Jack Peach

The display concerned the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the introduction of meter franking into Great Britain, traced the initial approach to the Post Office in 1880 and the subsequent developments of the New Zealand Moss and the American Pitney Bowes machines, these being the first two to gain approval.

Although the developed Moss machine had been demonstrated to the Post Office as early as 1909, it was the Pitney Bowes to be approved first, on the 13<sup>th</sup> May 1922. The first illustration shows a cover from Machine Number 1 (between "GREAT" and "BRITAIN") used by the Postage Meters & Machines Co., which was the British subsidiary of Pitney Bowes. The name of the addressee may be familiar to many readers.



The Post office required a number of modifications to be carried out on the Moss machine and approval was not notified in the Post Office Circular until 18<sup>th</sup> October 1922. On that day the machine with Licence Number 1 (again between "GREAT" and "BRITAIN") was lent to Harris Publications and was used to frank wrappers for the Philatelic Magazine. One of these First Day Covers is shown on the next page.



# The Philatelic Magazine

Fortnightly, Post Free, anywhere, 7/6 per annum.

LONDON (ON ART PAPER, posted flat, 12/6 per annum.)

13 OCT. 1922

W.C.2.

If undelivered, please return to

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Philatelic Literature Specialists,

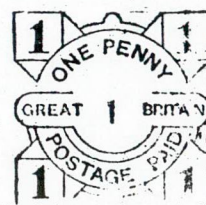
87, Emmanuel Road, London, S.W.12.

MESSRS. REGAN & GAUSBY,

17, QUEEN'S ROAD,

AT

BOY-WALKER & CO.



## MAILED BY UNIVERSAL POSTAL FRANKERS LTD.

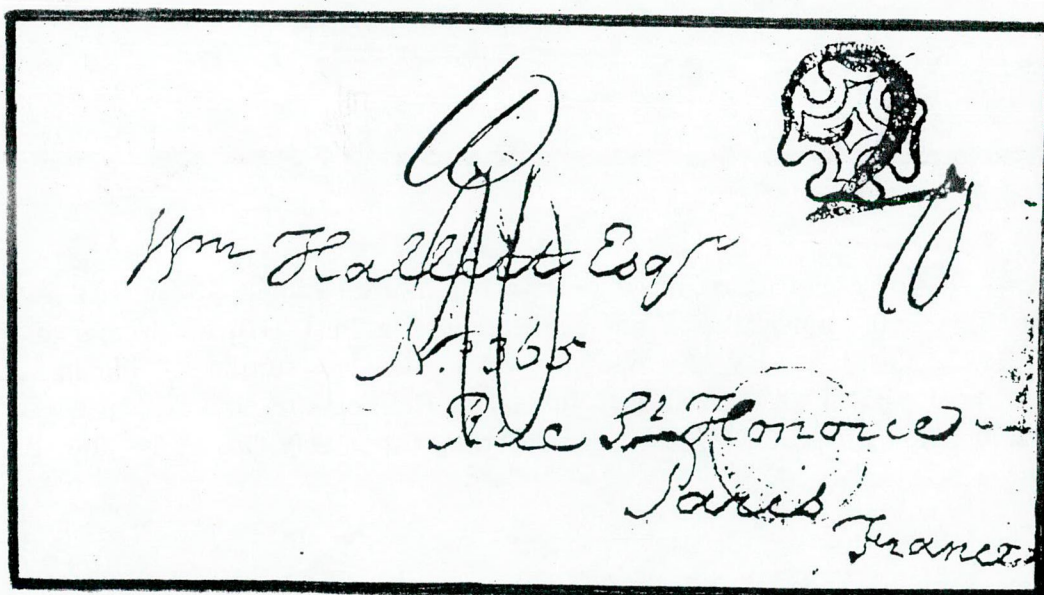
by whose courtesy (pending the installation of our own machine), this is one of the first copies of an English periodical to be sent out under the new system of Postal Franks described in THE PHILATELIC MAGAZINE.

## THE EARLIEST BLACK MALTESE CROSS

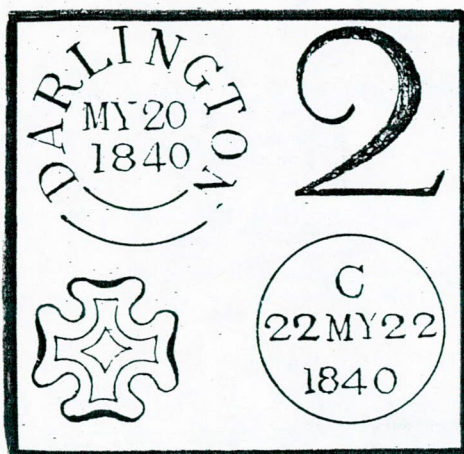
Maurice Barette

This is the first of two quite different items offered for your interest, both having some significance, the first rather more.

Two weeks after the introduction of the Penny Black, this letter is posted at Darlington, not prepaid in cash and without the benefit of the "cement" backed label. Quite wrongly, an enthusiastic Postal Clerk strikes the Darlington "2"; wrongly, as unpaid letters may still be sent to France with a rate of 10d. to Calais and a further 10d. to destination Paris.



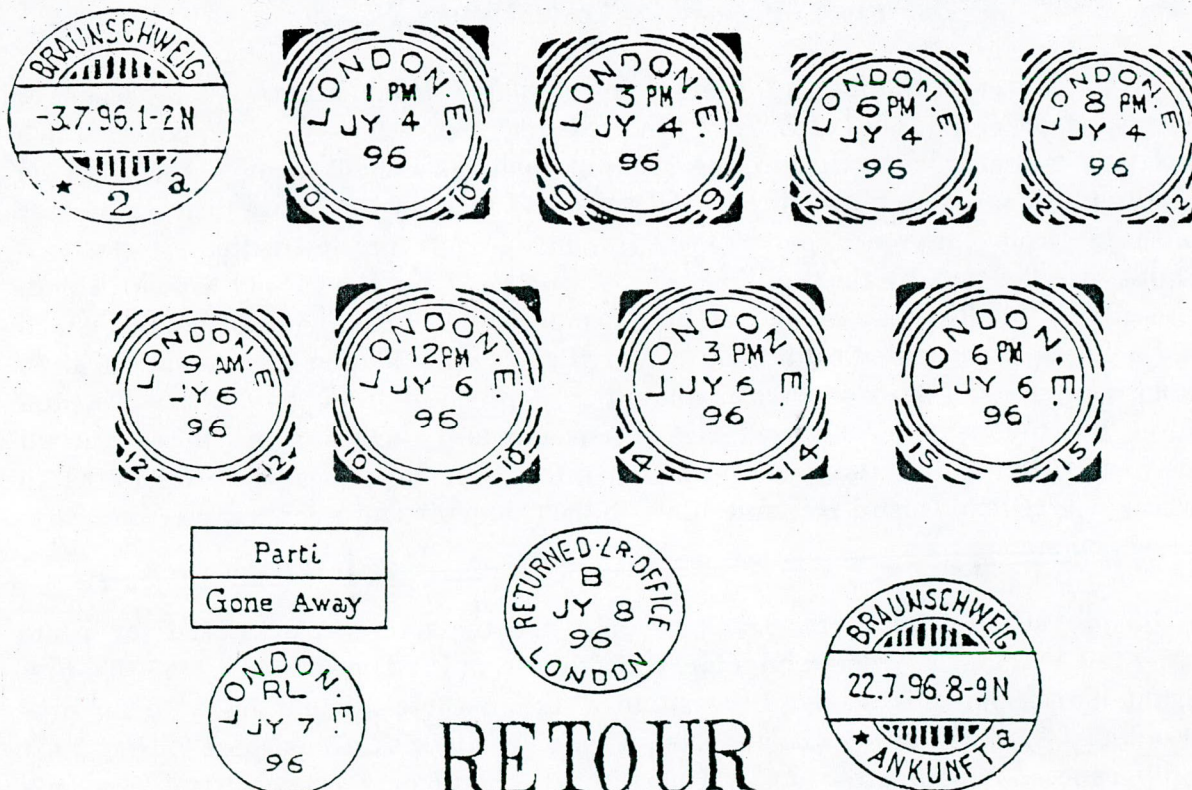




This error is noticed and a London, presumably, Postal Clerk cancels the "2" with the Maltese Cross, thus committing another error: the MX is intended only for the cancellation of adhesive labels. he compounds this felony with the third appearing on the letter - he uses BLACK ink, whereas RED was, at that time, the correct colour for MX cancellations. The first *trials* of the black ink took place later in the year, August, with the general introduction of black, to obliterate with new red-brown adhesives, in February 1841.

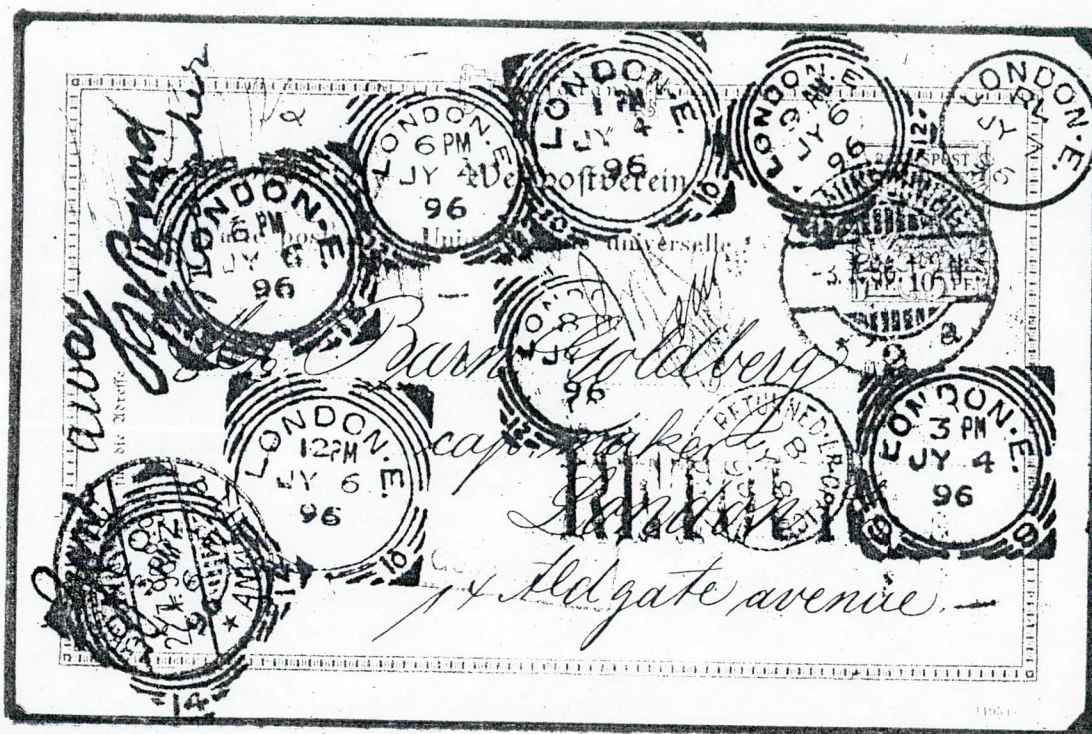
**The second item**, which always seems to arouse startled amusement, began life as a simple German Stationery Post card in Brunswick on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1896 and, indeed, finished there later the same month, on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

In the process, apart from the "opening" and "closing" stamps there were eight squared circles struck, plus three stamps dealing with the non-delivery. It requires no more comment; the two illustrations (one on the next page) suffice.



RETOUR





### ARE THESE LATE LETTERS?

Martin Willcocks

This article appeared in "Postal History, No.280"

Over a number of years I accumulated many examples of Alcock & Holland figs, 50 & 51 (Jay L.18). A & H stated they had seen only one on cover, which shows only a small proportion of the relevant mail bore these stamps; they had no opportunity to see the piles of material rescued, many years after their opus was published, from the waste paper firm responsible for the destruction of the vast quantities weeded out by the Public Records Office. At the time I had a good friend, quite senior in the PRO, and I did my best in pointing out the millions of pounds which would help the Exchequer if sold. She was horrified - "something in a letter could lead to trouble if disclosed". To my sorrow, quantities were saved from the Chelsea Hospital archives but the person concerned was discovered and sacked before these reached Greenwich Hospital - nothing survived. Therefore, the bulk of my material was to Chelsea, War Office, Inland Revenue, East India Company and a few to the Admiralty: an unfair sample.

In his later years, Frank Holland said these stamps were used for a late delivery to Government offices and a late collection from Parliament. I accepted this but, thinking it over for this study, I began to question these attributions and am now open-minded. If not as Frank Holland said, what on earth was their purpose? They must identify a special type of letter to Government offices and from Parliament and were only a small proportion of that mail. Some system started before April 1841 to Government offices only and continued until December 1858. A surprising fact is the use of red and black inks together; I have both colours on the same day but never seen a mixed ink.



Possibly the colours were used by different stampers. I have few for the period 1846-1853 compared with 1854-1858.

Before February 1846 another system began for mail from Parliament, just catching the last year of fig. 2 but, to distinguish them, they have the day on one side only. Early in 1847 this outward system changed to fig. 3 but inward continued to use fig. 2. It is notable the Bag Room of the Foreign Office used the former for diplomatic mail sent privately in the Bag (paying Inland postage only) and showing no arrival stamp. Fig. 3 was changed to fig. 4 in October 1855 and figs. 5 to 8 show the normal stamps of the period.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

I shall be interested to have views whether this was a later letter system without surcharge, actually little is known about payment for Government mail. All these are unpaid, charged 2 or 4, but was the postage ever paid? A few from Inland Revenue Edinburgh to London are marked prepaid. My doubts arose because the last of ten deliveries of normal private letters went out from the London head office at 8 p.m., so it is surprising if a much later delivery were needed for Government offices. The late collection from Parliament would be understandable, with late sittings, but this came five years after this time.

#### All to Government Offices, Inwards

Figure 1 (A & H 50) in red.

Seen from 8 April 1841 to 8 January 1844, addressed to Chelsea Hospital, East India Company, War Office, Inland Revenue and the GPO. All are unpaid with either 2 or 4 in black.



Figure 1 in black.

Seen from 27 October 1842 to 8 January 1844, addressed to Chelsea Hospital, War Office and East India Company. All unpaid except one from Edinburgh to London 8 January 1844, where a 1<sup>d</sup> adhesive has been removed.

Figure 2 in black.

Seen from 19 January 1844 to 9 April 1845 to the War Office and Chelsea respectively, 13 May 1846 to the East India Company, 18 January 1847 to Chelsea and 9 August 1854 to Inland Revenue. All these are unpaid but the 18 January 1847 is used inside with a Chelsea seal and a 2<sup>d</sup> blue to Newcastle. From 19 September 1854 to 22 May 1855 are a series from Inland Revenue Edinburgh to the London Office and 11 August 1854 and 16 March 1855 from Inland Revenue Dublin to London, all O.M.H.S. *but* with the PAID AT stamps.

Figure 2 in red.

This is, by far, the most common. Seen from 26 January 1844 to 10 December 1858 (only a cutout) to Chelsea, War Office, Admiralty and East India Company. All are unpaid with a black 2 or 4, the majority marked O.H.M.S. ; seeing these in quantity makes one doubt if the charges were paid or ignored. Little is known about the payment for Government mail and that the sending office put on a charge does not mean it was paid. Some are from individuals (pensions), others from provincial Government offices.

Two exceptions : one from Edinburgh 23 August 1854 with fig. 2 of the 24<sup>th</sup>, Bedford of the 25<sup>th</sup> and a normal London fig. 5 of the 26<sup>th</sup>. An adhesive has been removed, yet it has a circular red More to Pay / D. Evidently it was missorted in the Chief Office after applying fig. 2 but regarding the charge, *well* ??? There is a black 2. The other is a tax form from Inland Revenue Edinburgh to London with a PAID AT.

Two surprises are from overseas - one to the Admiralty with fig.2 of 14 November 1844 endorsed "Mr Walter Strickland, claim to China Batta". The other is from Calcutta August 7 1845 with fig. 2 of 24 September to the East India Company. The first has a SHIP LETTER stamp. To complicate charges still further, a few have the original form inside - there and back. Invariably the original form from the Inland Revenue outwards has O.H.M.S., a London PAID and a stamped signature *J Sargent*.

#### Parliamentary Mail, Outwards

Figure 2 in red.

Very few of these are known. Seen from 26 February 1846 to 29 January 1847 ; they are most interesting in that they have the day on one side only - normally on the left. Presumably this was to distinguish them from the Government mail inwards. Probably unsatisfactory , for after eleven months a new handstamp was introduced.



Figure 3.

The mail has Parliamentary seals or are addressed to Richard Cobden in Wales or Manchester. All are stamped normally. A Commons envelope has a complete date 21 February 1854 but the postmark is defective at the top left and I think there was a code letter there. A few London normal date stamps have a code on one side only (see fig.7) and I think was one.

Figure 3 in red.

Seen from 20 July 1847 to 28 May 1849 and 29 May 1854. All, except the last (which must have been a mistake) are outward late collection. They bear seals of Royal Arms or Ducal (one carefully removed by a seal collector) or addressed to Mrs Cobden or the Baron de Worms. All have adhesives or have an unpaid 2. One is a leap year - 29 February 1848 and the last, 1854, was in the Diplomatic Bag as it is signed on the front by Hamilton, who was the British Consul in Boulogne ( see below ).

Figure 3 in black.

Seen from 12 November 1849 to 7 September 1855. A number were sent in the Diplomatic Bag, some signed by Hamilton (one headed *British Consulate Boulogne*), another endorsed *Via Liverpool* addressed to Nottingham, England; one to Guernsey with the letter enclosed from Foo Chow Foo and one with the seal of the Foreign Legion. The others are endorsed or have seals of the Admiralty, Treasury, General Board of Health, Horse Guards or just the Royal Arms. One is endorsed from George Moffat (Rowland Hill's right hand man) and some are addressed to Lady Anderson of 3 Blythswood Square, Glasgow, a neighbour of Madeleine Smith at the time of her trial for murder.

Figure 4 in black, with the cross below replaced by l.

Seen from 15 November to 18 October 1858, all stamped outwards from the India Commission, Windsor Castle (cancelled in London), Parliament and the Lord Advocate of Scotland. More to Lady Anderson at Blythswood Square, from Parliament, Richard Cobden at Midhurst and one addressed to Princes Gate, Hyde Park from Newenden, cancelled at Staplehurst. It was forwarded to Marlow, all on 16 May 1856. Yet it has an Exeter CDs of the 17<sup>th</sup> and E/GW of the T.P.O. confirmed by a normal London date stamp of fig.5. This I cannot explain.

### *FURTHER THOUGHTS.....*

Following the publication in Postal History 280, a letter made me check the dates and destinations of the figs. 1 and 2 letters. there was no need to check the Parliamentary mail outwards, figs. 3 and 4, for I cannot add to these. All from 1841 to August 1854 are to Service departments and I am sure they would have staff on duty through the night to deal with anything urgent, so delivery at 2 or 3 in the morning would have been possible. One problem is a letter with fig. 1, in red, to Charles Presly, Tax Office, London on September 17, 1842 from Wrexham, arriving on the 19<sup>th</sup> but I have more than a hundred to War Office, East India, Admiralty and Chelsea and the address



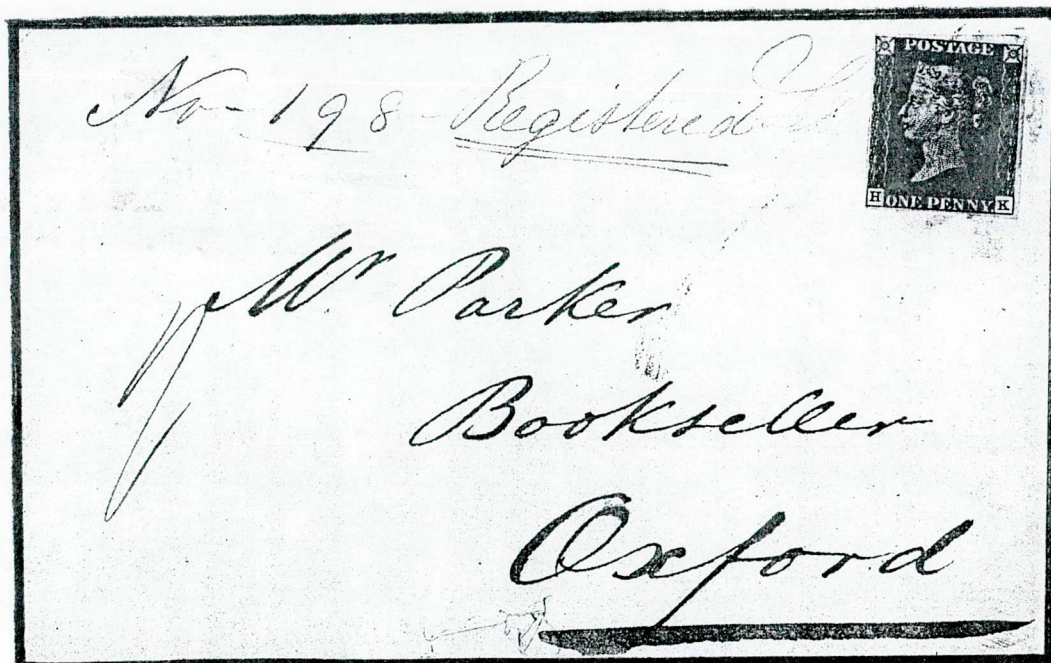
is so different, I feel sure it is a case of the wrong stamp being struck. Inland Revenue letters of this period have the normal stamps, figs 5 to 8.

This from 8 April 1841 to 26 October 1842 all are fig. 1 in red and from 27 October 1842 to 8 January 1844 both black and red were used. Between 8 and 19 January 1844 the sans-serif stamp fig. 2 was introduced and continues on letters the Service Departments to 26 April 1858 (the latest date of an entire). Inland Revenue run from 9 August 1854 to 23 May 1855, then there is a gap of two years to a few from 22 to 26 May 1857. What happened in this period, whether it is a break or whether our friend was discovered and sacked before these were dealt with one cannot say. The same comment applies to other civilian departments - presumably the Public Records Office had not dealt with them.

I think this shows Frank Holland was right ( as usual) and figs. 1 and 2 were used on mail specially delivered to Government Offices (if they could deal with them) in the middle of the night. A change must have been made in mid 1854 but whether civilian departments started a night staff I cannot say, for nobody at the inland Revenue could, or would, help me.

### REGISTRATION, CROSS POSTS AND LORD BYRON

There are four other items which might be of interest, starting with the inland registration of mail which began on the 6<sup>th</sup> January 1841. It was laid down the Registration fee of 1/- "*must always be paid in money*" but "*letters presented for the purpose of Registration, bearing a sufficient number of Stamps, will be considered paid Letters*". The two shown here follow that ruling.



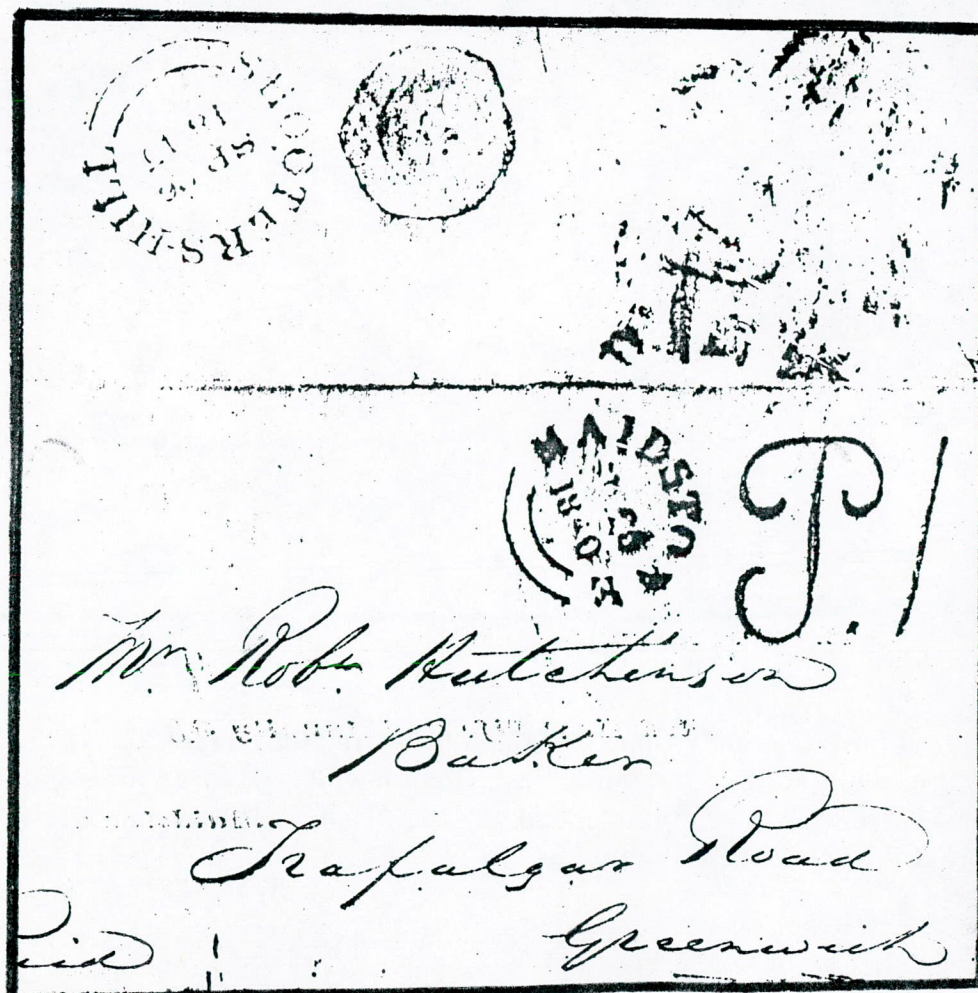
Liverpool to Oxford, January 1841, the first month,  
prepaid with a Penny Black.





Sheffield to Bakewell  
February 1841  
Prepaid with a pair of 2<sup>d</sup> Blues of 1840

It is rewarding to find a turned letter, in this case the more so as it involved

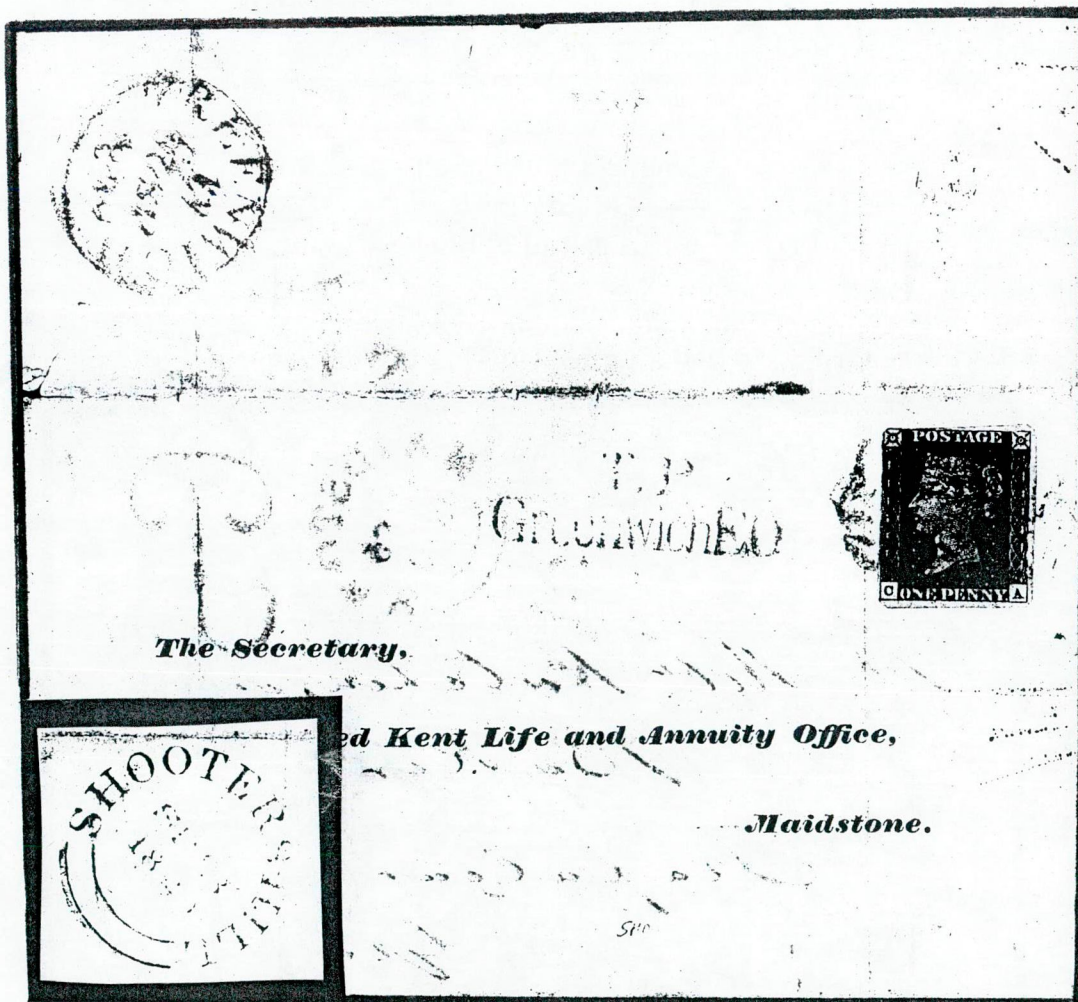




the Shooters Hill Cross Post - there and back as it were. One can see the Maidstone stamps through the thin paper.

Sent from Maidstone to Greenwich on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1840, the letter was dropped from the Dover Coach at Shooters Hill, to go by the Walk to Blackheath and Greenwich. On the 28<sup>th</sup> the form was turned and sent back to Maidstone, using an adhesive, whereas the first journey had been prepaid by 1<sup>d</sup> in cash. The Greenwich S.O. stamp and the Maltese Cross were both struck at the Blackheath office.

Shooters Hill c.d.s. was issued 15<sup>th</sup> July 1840 and is recorded by Peter Bathe from the 23<sup>rd</sup> October: this is about one month earlier.



I have seen only Blackheath and Shooters Hill London Cross Post Offices with serifs. Piccadilly seriffed but not X Post. Hounslow, Kingston etc. were General Post Offices as well. Deptford, for example, had sans-serif stamps. Has anyone seen other serif stamps, Cross Post or Central London ?



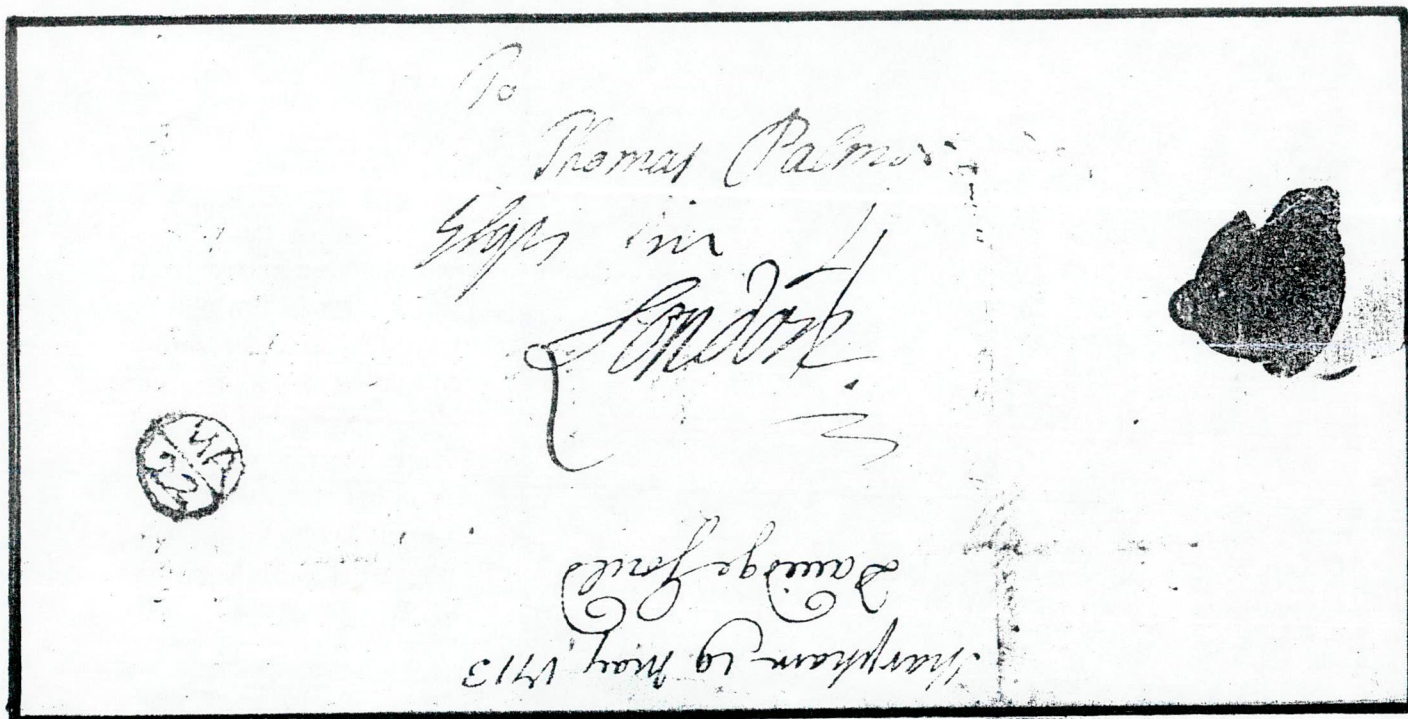




## MARKS OF THE GENERAL POST

### Ray Standing

Two quite different stamps from the selection shown. The first is an example of the Bishop, sans serif lettering, with the diameter increased in size to 14mm, although it should be noted the 13mm size remained in concurrent use.



The letter is dated 19<sup>th</sup> May 1713, addressed from Sharpham Park Somerset. The sender was Davidge Gould, brother of Sarah, Henry Fielding's mother. Fielding was born at Sharpthorn Park and was just six years old when the letter was written. It was addressed to Thomas Palmer the M.P. and Recorder for Bridgwater.

The routing of the letter : taken to nearby Glastonbury where, as a bye-letter, it was taken by the Wells bye post to Sherborne, there to await the London bound Western Road Post Boy, due about 7 am on Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> May. The letter would have arrived in London about 4 am on the Friday where the Bishop was struck.

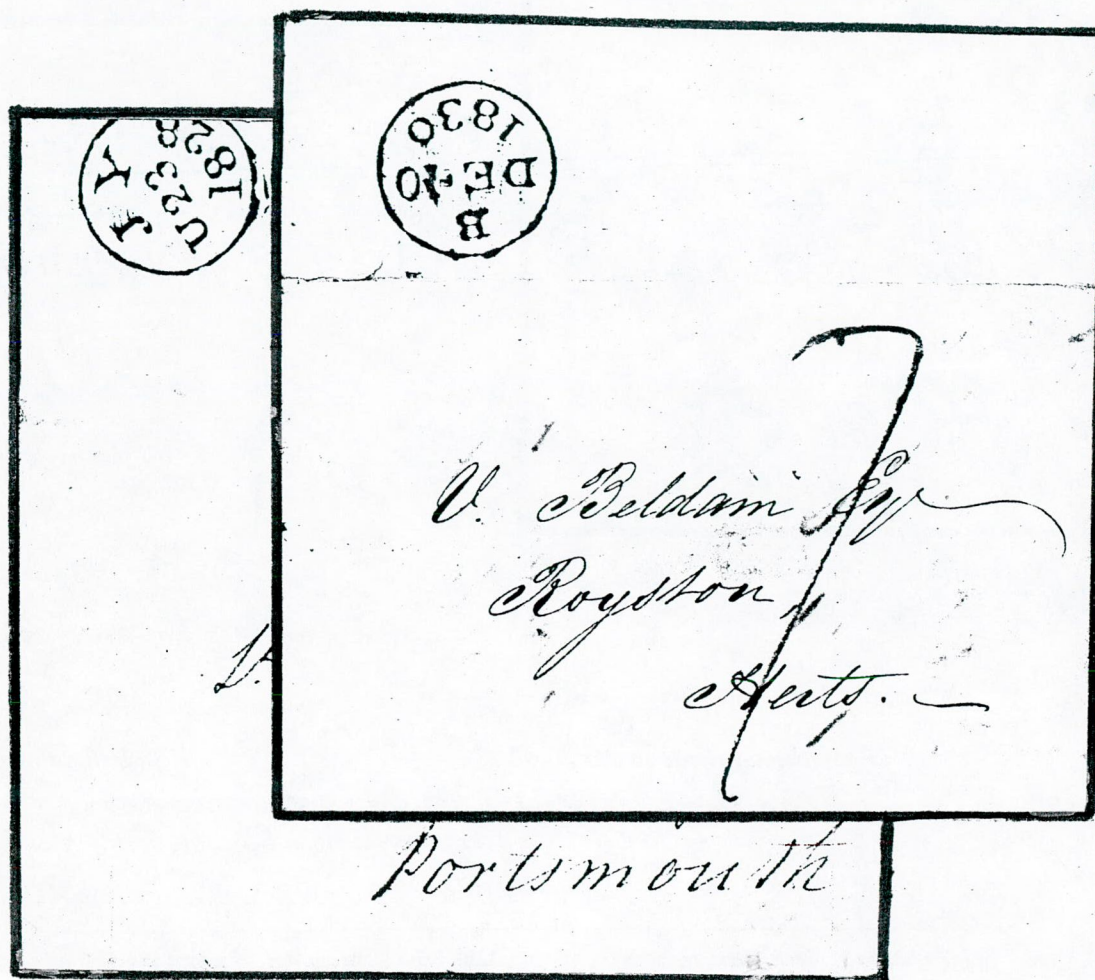
The letter was charged four pence, the "above 80 miles" rate.

The second mark is the comparatively prosaic single rim date stamp. In 1828 the double rim version of the evening duty stamp was replaced by a single rim type, the year on a curve remaining a distinct feature for evening duty; it remained in use for only two years. In 1830 the month and the code were transposed, possibly to avoid confusion in reading the date caused by the imbalanced design.

The examples shown below are from the last and first years of use of the two and illustrated together clearly show the imbalanced nature of the earlier mark.



The 1828 item would have gone by mail coach through Guildford, due at Portsmouth at 6.15 am the following morning. It was charged eight pence for the 72 miles. The 1830 letter to Royston would have been carried on a "North Road" mail coach (i.e. Edinburgh, Newcastle, York etc.), leaving London 8 p.m. on the 10<sup>th</sup> December, passing through Shoreditch, Tottenham, then Waltham & Ware, arriving at Royston about 12.30 am the next day. At 37 miles from London, Royston rated a charge of seven pence.



### **THE COST OF EARLY NEWSPAPERS SENT BY POST**

Janes Grimwood-Taylor

The P.O. Clerks of the Roads had the right to send newspapers free by post to Postmasters from the 17th century onwards, until newspapers with 1d tax stamps could be sent free of postage (except for local rates) from 1836. Their distribution system was very lucrative prior to 1836. From 1790 to 1825, however, due to loop-holes in the law, the P.O. allowed all newspapers to pass free of postage (except for local rates) if the name of any M.P. or Peer was simply written or printed above their wrappers' addresses. To quote Chandler & Dagnall; "...the Post Office allowed all stamped newspapers to pass free under the spurious endorsements of Members' names."





General Post Office,  
London, the 5 April 1790  
Dr. to Samuel Ardron.

L. s. d.

April 5, 1790 - 10/11

Please to pay the Contents to Mr. *Baker* Postmaster of  
*Llandovery*, or his Order, and you will much oblige,  
Your very humble Servant,

SAMUEL ARDRON.

All Country News Papers, Magazines, Lloyd's List, Price Current, &c. procured and regularly sent;  
and to accommodate his Customers, Advertisements, &c. are inserted in either London or Country  
Papers. They may also be supplied with any Papers during their Residence in Town.

This 1790 ½-yearly account (for "£1-11s-0d") for the thrice-weekly "London Chronicle" was sent by S. Ardron (one of the P.O. Clerks of the Roads) to a customer in Llandovery via the local "Postmaster".

The 1813 wrapper was posted from Wales to Walthamstow, but because the name "Lord Cawdor" was written above the address, it was only charged with local London postage. The charge for a newspaper within the London local post (to Walthamstow) was reduced to only 1d in 1805, hence the handstruck "1" charge-mark of the London Chief Office of which just a handful have been recorded.

Illustrations have been reduced 10%



# 4<sup>d</sup> POST PERIOD

## PREPAID LOCAL LONDON MAIL ENCOURAGED

As part of the general move to encourage people to prepay letters during the 4d Postage Period (universal prepayment was to be essential for Penny Postage to succeed), local letters in London and Dublin were all charged only 1d if prepaid as of 5th December 1839, whereas the old rates (2d or 3d in London and 1d or 2d in Dublin) remained in force for unpaid letters. At the same time, letters passing through the local posts as well as by General Post were charged a maximum of 4d per ½ ounce.



This pair of local "country area" London letters (4th Jan. 1840 from Clapham to Peckham, and 21st. Dec. 1839 from Kensington to Covent Garden) show the contrast of the new rates for prepaid ("1py P.Paid") and unpaid ("3d to pay") letters.

The 28th December 1839 letter from Hammersmith to Berwick passed through both Local and General Posts, and so was only charged the maximum 4d (per ½oz.) rate. This letter shows London's circular "G(eneral).P(ost) PAID" mark and the red "4" mark appears to have been handstruck in the same ink, although no London 4d-Post handstruck "4" has been recorded, and only one red handstruck "4" mark has been seen from the whole of Britain for the 4d-Post Period.

Illustrations have been reduced 10%

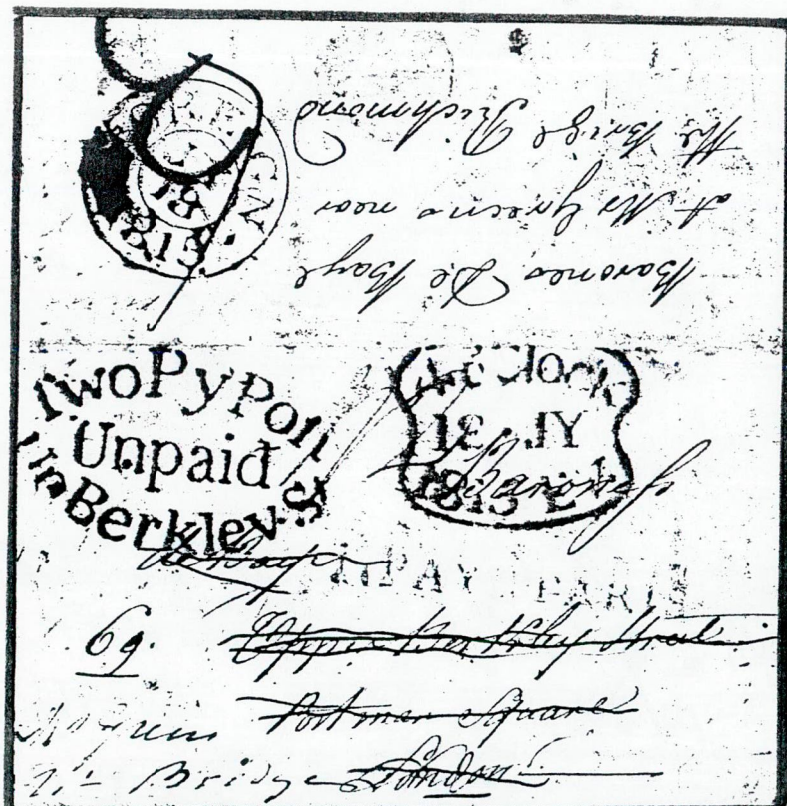


## MAILS FROM FRANCE

Geoff Oxley

Paris to London

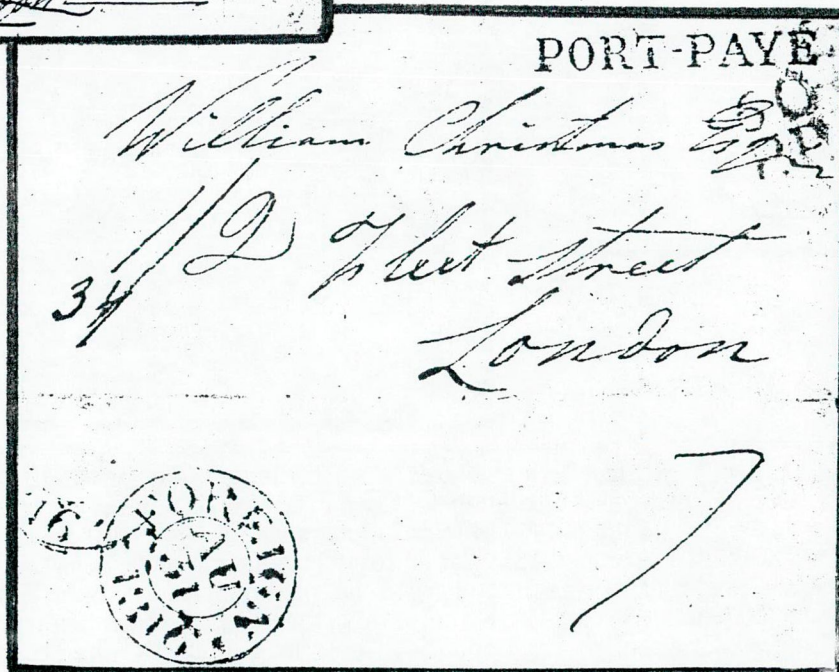
This letter dated 11th June, 1815 was prepaid 7 decimes comprising 5 for postage from Paris to Calais and 2 for sea postage acknowledged by the 'P. Paye Paris' (Port Paid Paris) handstamp. The letter had been treated normally although the '100 days' war was in progress after Napoleon had escaped from Elba and returned to France. However, the letter did not reach the Foreign post office in London until 18th July showing that there was a substantial delay in the handling of the mails from France.



By 4 o'clock on 18th July the letter was in the Chief Office of the Twopenny Post having been delivered at Upper Berkeley Street, the packet postage of 1/2d. paid and it being re-directed to 'Baroness de Bayl, at Mr. Greens near the Bridge, Richmond'. The letter was charged '3' (three-pence) for delivery in the country area of the London twopenny post which included Richmond.

Letters posted in the Bureaux of the Paris Petite Poste were stamped distinctively but prepaid the same amount of postage as those posted at the Bureau Centrale.

The second letter shows a British Foreign (Post) office datestamp in its last recorded month of use and as it is dated 31st August it is also the last day of use.

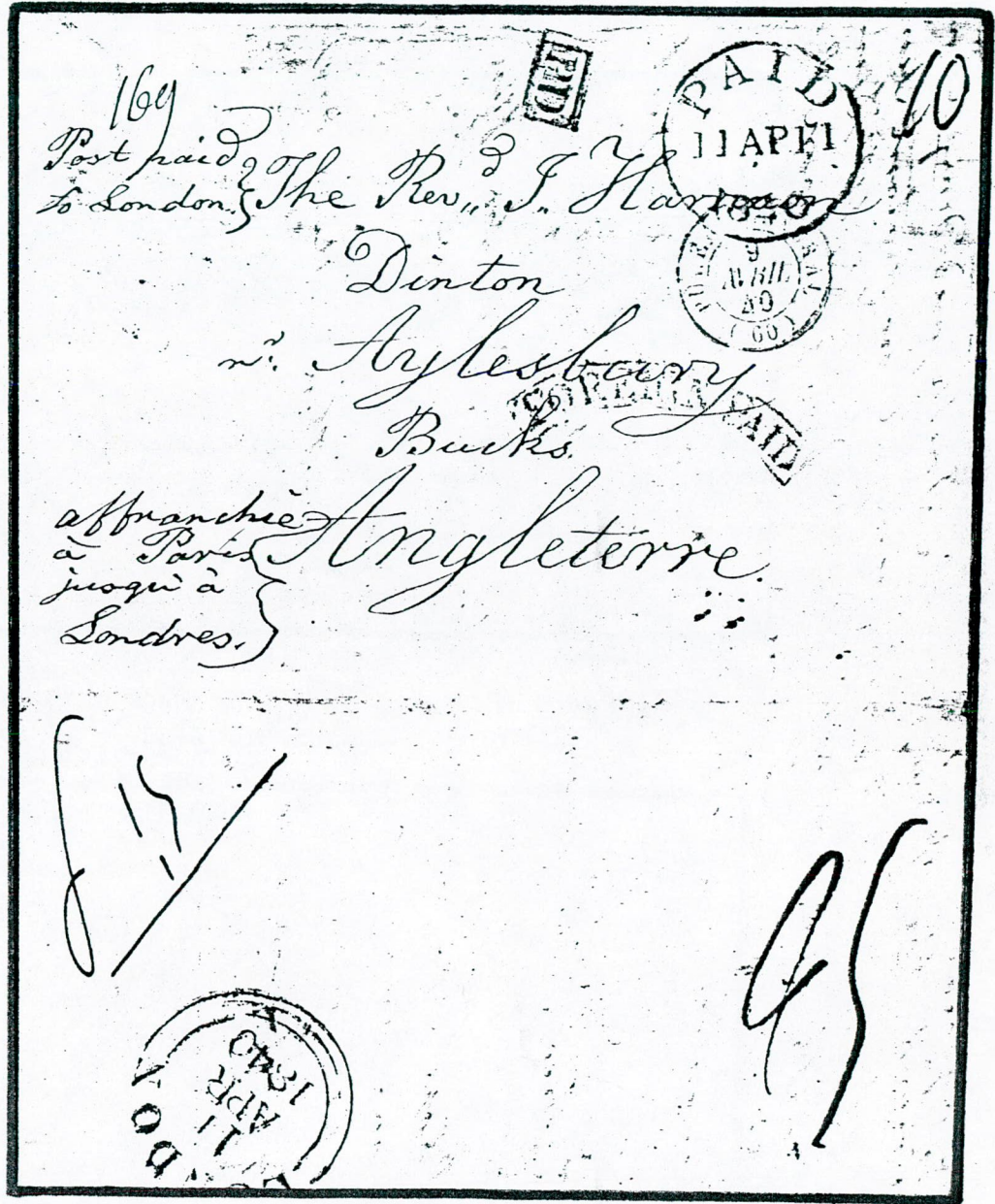




## Paris to Aylesbury

From 15th July, 1836 letters from Paris to Calais were prepaid 10 decimes for a weight up to 7½ and up to 15 grammes and 15 for a weight from 7½ to 10 grammes. A further 10 grammes was paid for conveyance from Calais.

The instruction 'affranchie a Paris jusqu'a Londres' (paid in Paris as far as London) was not correct because the amount prepaid for postage within the United Kingdom was uniform from 10th January, 1840



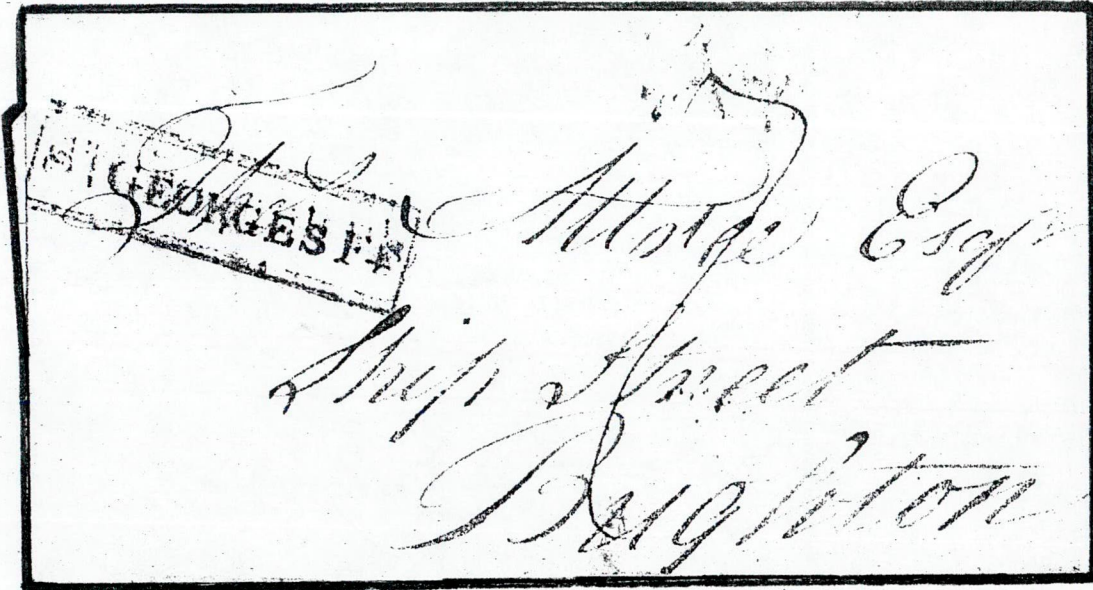
The postal rate prepayment and accountancy charge on the back of the letter show that 25 decimes was paid of which 1F. 5 dec. was retained for French postage. 10 decimes was credited to the United Kingdom and this is shown top right on the front.



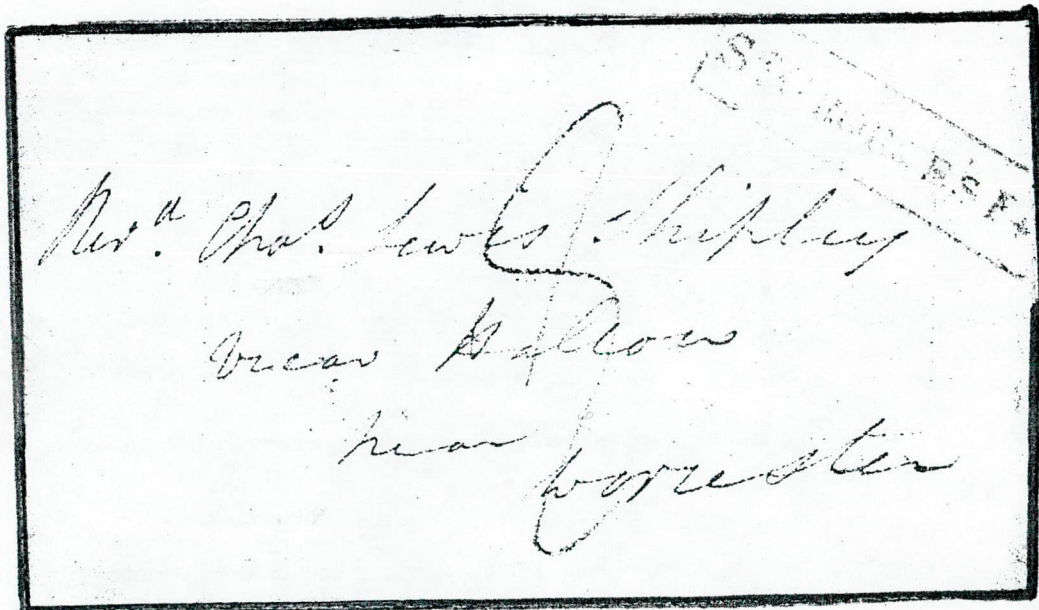
## **SOUTHWARK**

Roy Lambert

Southwark had the distinction of housing both Charles Dickens and the King's Bench Prison. One of the stamps used for the prison reads ST GEORGE'S F+<sup>S</sup> and can be found used in red and black: as is so often the case with the inks, there is no apparent purpose to their use, which in the case of this receiving house is concurrent 1816-17.



Recorded in use 1812 to 1817, this black ink example is dated  
January 14<sup>th</sup> 1812

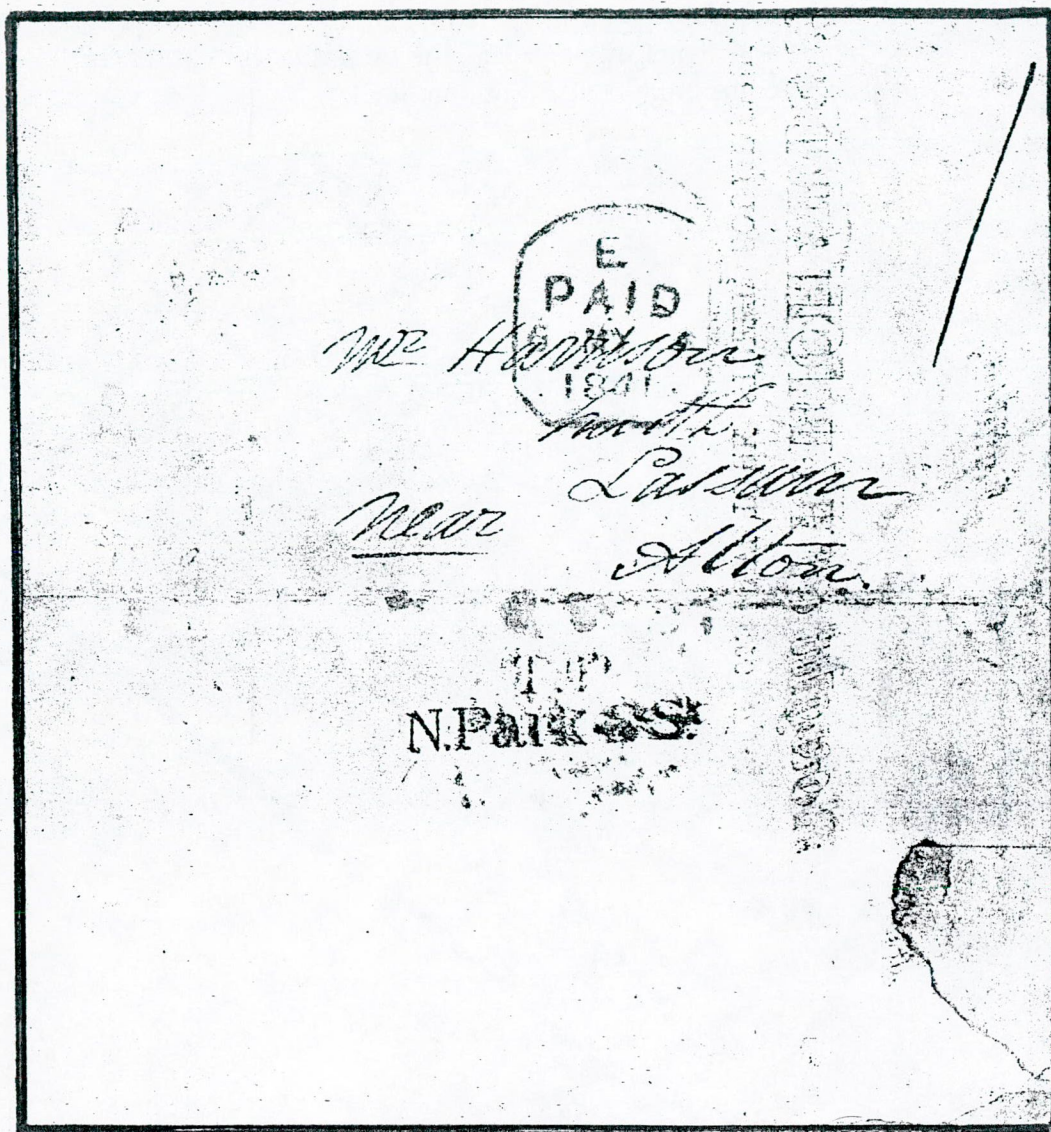


On August 4<sup>th</sup> 1817 an example in red.  
Recorded in that colour for 1816 and 1817 only.

New Park Street, Southwark, ran parallel to the River, south of Bankside and Southwark Bridge. It had but a small receiving house and only a few stamps have



been described. In his original working papers, Hugh Feldman did not illustrate the Twopenny Post stamp shown here.



Although this example of the unframed TP stamp is on a letter date stamp 6<sup>th</sup> May 1841, it must have been issued some time before then. The strike, though a little smudged, looks unworn.

The letter is, in fact, an invoice for goods, rasps, files etc., bought of R. Richard & Son, 95 New Park Street and is dated the 30<sup>th</sup> April, and is addressed to Mr Harrison, Smith, Lassam, near Alton. Not a double barrelled surname, rather the local blacksmith.

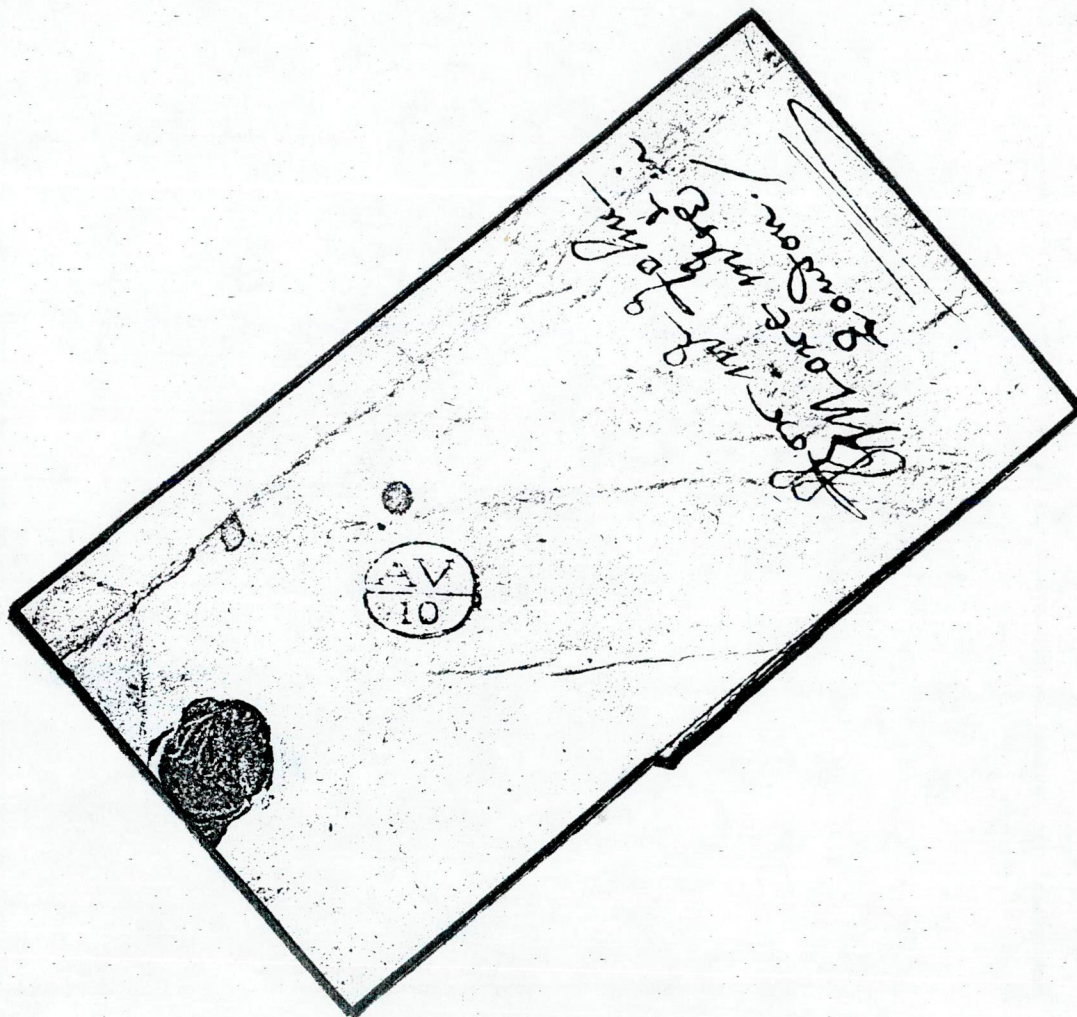
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## THE VERTICALLY OVAL BISHOP

Bob Champion

Of the several items displayed at the meeting, this rather appealed to the Editor, who professes to collect only Local London mail.



From the letter it is dated 1668, which makes it some six years prior to the single year record of 1674 shown in Jay. As one might expect from a stamp for which a separate one exists for every day, the measurements differ from the 13 x 16 mm in the catalogue, this example being 12 x 14 mm. It is rated as "G" which suggests there should be a number of these ovals recorded, albeit in 1674 only. Please can we have the size checked please and a note of any dates other than 1668 and 1674.

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## HOODED ROYAL POSTMARKS

Simon Kelly

These "Royal" stamps continue to command attention and the following are taken from three pages of the collection.

PO Steel Impression Book  
Vol. 39, p. 126  
11 July 1882

A single die was issued to the  
Circulation Department



HOODED ROYAL POSTMARKS  
VR at Centre  
Proof Impression Books  
1882

Mount Pleasant Impression Book  
26 July 1882

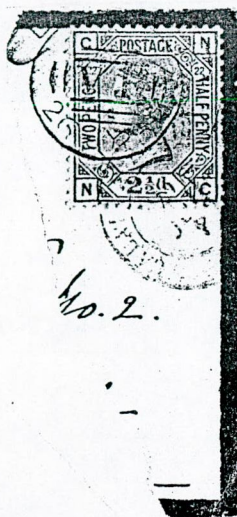


*July 26 '1882*  
*This stamp to be used on Private correspondence received in Official bags the index letter to be changed hourly. For trial only. For this reason the 89 Double stamp will be placed out of use for the present Withdrawn*

This stamp to be used on Private correspondence received in Official Bags. The index letter to be changed hourly. For trial only. For this reason the 89 Double stamp will be placed out of use for the present [then undated in different hand] Withdrawn.

First day of Trial use  
26 July 1882

Code C, used on 2½d blue,  
plate 21, on portion of envelope





HOODED ROYAL POSTMARKS  
VR at Centre  
Upper Code Letters A, B, C  
July - September 1882



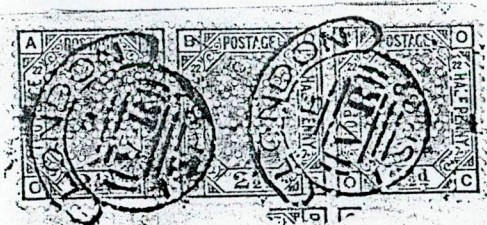
Code A  
31 July 1882



Code B  
21 August 1882

Code C  
8 August 1882

Board of Trade



Code B  
1 September 1882

Cancelling strip of three 2½d blue, plate 22  
perforated Crown over BT



HOODED ROYAL POSTMARKS  
ER at Base  
Code Letter A

Clarence House  
29 January 1908



Last known use of the ER die, code A, used on 29 JA 08, on 2½d rate stamped envelope addressed to Miss Adam, Alta Chiara, Porto Fino, Genoa. One of only three known examples.

King Edward VII revived free franking for his personal mail within the realm, but it was necessary for foreign mail to have the appropriate rate in stamps



### A PERSONAL NOTE

The London Postal History Group was born of ignorance, that of your Editor. Being a simple soul he could find no information of these stamps and marks found on mail starting, passing through or finishing in London appearing on the material being collected for his, then, primary interest, Bishop's Stortford.

Over the past years he has enjoyed seeing the wealth of information published, not only in the pages of "Notebook" but other journals and not the least the invaluable London catalogue produced by Barrie Jay in the excellent series of County Catalogues by Willcocks and Jay.

That the Editor's enjoyment should have been marked by members at the Silver Anniversary with the presentation of a number of gifts (the nuts and "hard stuff" went in record time) came as a delightful surprise, much appreciated and received with sincere thanks to all concerned. The two volumes of "Walks through London" by David Higson, published in 1817 have already afforded hours of pleasure and will do so for many more yet.