

NOTEBOOK

IN THIS ISSUE.....

- page 2 Exempt Ship Letter, by Michael Jackson
An Interesting Stampex 1983 Find, by A.J. Kirk
- 3 Time Handstamps
- 4 General Post Paid Stamp of 1798, by Grace Dove
- 5 Finchley : The Development of Postal Services From About 1800
by Jean Farrugia
- 9 Twopenny Post - Line of Deliveries, by A.J. Kirk
Consolidation of the General and Twopenny Post Receiving Houses
- 10 London Ship Letter Paid Stamp on a Mulready de Luxe
- 11 Branch Office Handstamps, by Keith Romig
- 12 Old Cavendish Street
- 13 London Mis-Sort Stamp
- 14 Inland Branch Duplex Rarity, by Fred Steenbruggen
West District : Late Usage, by G.R. Stevens
- 15 The Ethridge Machine
If At First You Don't Succeed, by P. Andrews
- 16 Unpaid Letter From Abroad, by Robert Johnson
- 17 British Army in Egypt, by A.J. Kirk
- 18 Halfpenny Book Post
- 19 Columbia Machine : Received From HM Ships, by Roger Keneally
- 20 Posted Out of Course, by A.J. Kirk
- (c) 1983 Contributor, where named, and L.P.H.G.
Editor : Peter Forrestier Smith
24 Dovercourt Road, Dulwich, SE22 8ST

THE EXCHANGE PACKET.....

Presumably in the far past, the members surplus material was indeed ' exchanged '. In 1983 it still is, for cash. Brian Smith, who is the Packet Secretary, is very keen to ensure the tradition is kept and members are invited, if not positively urged, to send him their surplus material, priced to sell sensibly (very shrewd lot the L.P.H.G. buyers). Of course he would also like to hear from anyone not at present getting the box of delights and who would like to have the opportunity of buying.

Please write to Brian Smith,
41 Cranleigh Drive,
Swanley, Kent. BR8 8NZ

EXEMPT SHIP LETTER, from Michael Jackson.

Regarding the item in Notebook 59 contributed by Charless Hahn, although I have no proof of origin, I believe it must be a London mark.

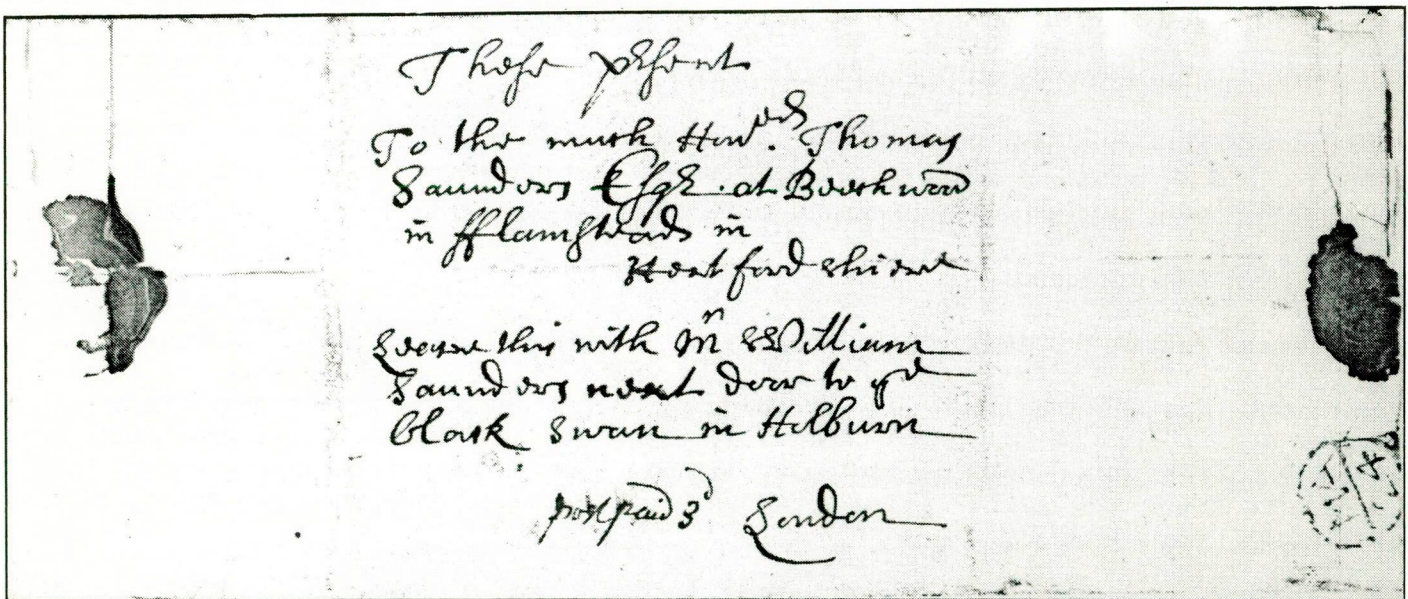
However, I would point towards an even earlier mention of exempt ship letters, in the Commonwealth Post Office Act of 1656, which is reproduced below, the section of immediate interest being marked.

" Be it enacted by His Highness the Lord Protector and the Parliament, And it is Enacted and Ordained by Authority thereof, That from henceforth there be one General Office, to be called, and known by the name of the Post-Office of England: And one Officer from time to time to be nominated and appointed by His Highness the Lord Protector, and His Successours, and to be constituted by Letters Patents under the Great Seal of England, under the Name and Stile of Post-master General of England, and Comp-troller of the Post-Office; which said Officer, and his Deputies by him thereunto sufficiently Authorized, and no other, shall have the Receiving, Taking up, Ordering, Sending forward, and Delivering of all Letters and Pacquets, which shall from time to time come and go to and from all Parts and Places of England, Scotland and Ireland, where he shall settle Posts, and from all the said Parts and Places of England, Scotland and Ireland, unto any the Parts and Places beyond the Seas, (excepting such Letters as shall be sent by common known Carriers, and by them Conveyed along with their Carts, Waggon, and Pack-horses, and Letters of Advice of Merchants, which shall be sent by Masters of any Ship, Barque, or other Vessel of Merchandize, or any of their Company or Passengers therein, immediately from any Post-town of England, Scotland and Ireland, by them to be Conveyed along with such Ship, Barque, or other Vessel to any other Post-town within any of the same, or into the Parts beyond the Seas, or from the Parts beyond the Seas to any Post-town of England, Scotland and Ireland, or members thereof, and no further. "

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

AN INTERESTING STAMPEX 1983 FIND, by A.J. Kirk

More than one postmark on an early letter is not unusual but two addresses in the same handwriting on a single letter is. The illustration shows a letter posted in Lincoln -



shire and is first addressed to Thomas Saunders at ' Beechwood ' fflamstead, Hertfordshire, and in the same hand it states, " leave this with Mr. William Saunders next door to ye black swan in Holborn '. No doubt these two Saunders were related and by sending the letter to London where, no doubt, it could be picked up by the addressee,

An Interesting Stampex 1983 Find...

the cost of the postage would be halved. To give this letter added interest, it is a paid letter, as is shown in manuscript "post paid 3^d". Such letters are not often found at the date, 24th. May, 1675. For those interested, the Bishop Mark is the second type, diameter 13mm.

With the letter came a photostat of an old engraving of 'Beechwood', the family home of the Saunders. Altogether what one might call a 'good buy'.

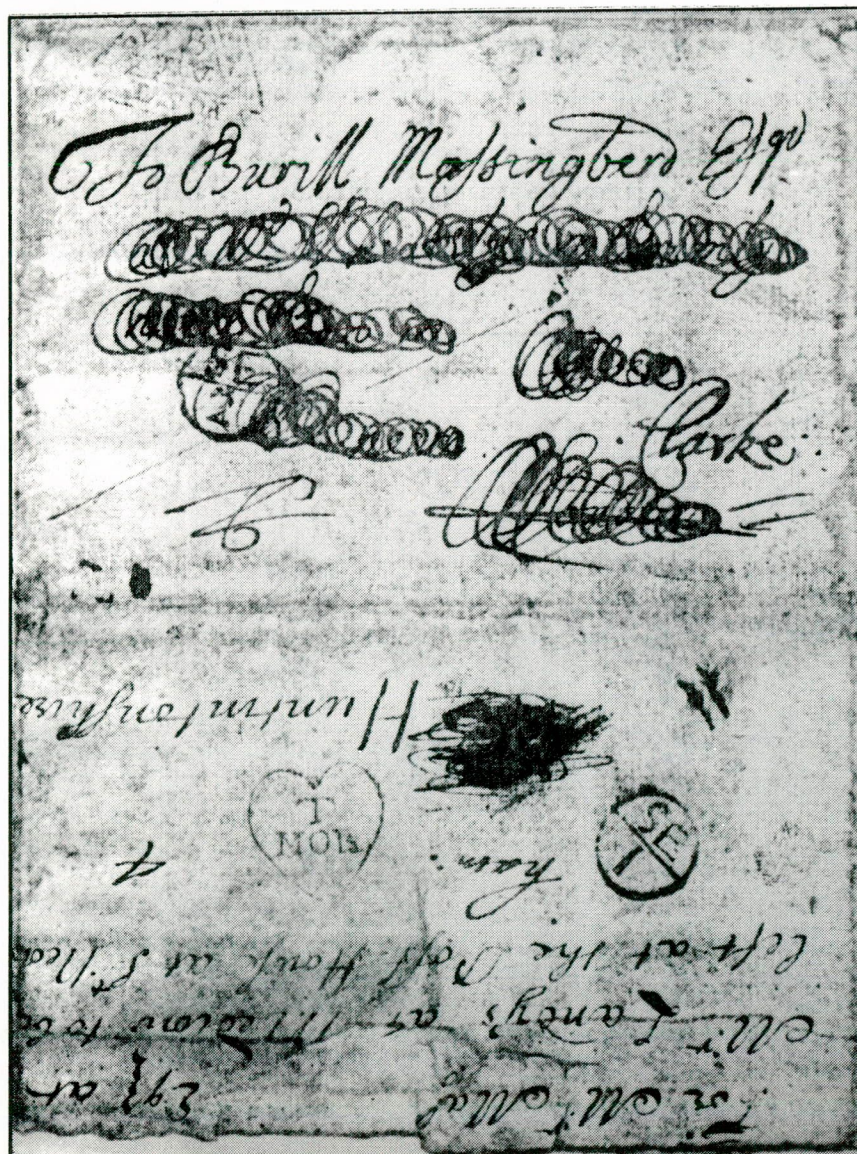
-o-o-o-o-o-

TIME HANDSTAMPS

It is a great pleasure to indulge oneself with the purchase of an item rather more than just beyond the limits of financial wisdom. One such is shown below, which further research has more than compensated for the price paid.

To go straight to the mark of primary interest, the solid heart for Tuesday Morning, listed by Barrie Jay in Black for 1702, with this predating the record slightly with a manuscript 1701 in the letter and two Bishops for the 1st. and 2nd. September.

To get the story together, have a good look at the rather unsightly scrawling out which appears between the heart and the SE/1 Bishop. It is just possible this is another Heart timestamp for an outline of such a shape can be picked out, though it is rather smaller than others recorded. With the aid of Tipp-Ex and a tracing of the alleged small heart is shown alongside.



Time Handstamps.....

Barrie Jay, with some reservations on the validity of the small heart suggestion, has proposed the following routing, starting with a question.

Is the obliterated stamp (?) another solid heart, of M/AFT ? The letter was written in Harrington on the 29th. August, 1701 and addressed to Brumley neere Bow, Essex, neere London, being received in the GPO and according marked with a Bishop, SE/1. It was then tranferred to the Penny Post for delivery in Bow. The Bow address was deleted, by Clarke (?), and re-addressed to " be left at the Post-House at St. Neots ". On that tranfer to the PP the alleged solid heart would have been applied.

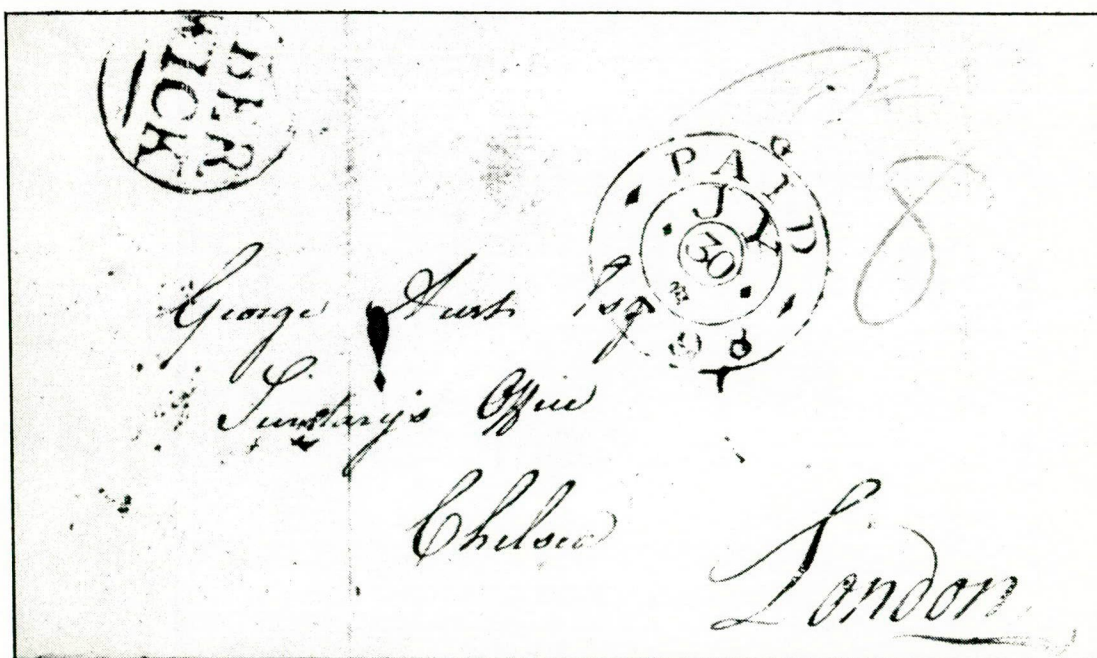
On being re-addressed the letter was posted in the PP, possibly in Bow, this being served by Bishopsgate, whose Dockwra for Tuesday can be seen top left. The time stamp for Tuesday morning was applied, but most unusually on mail going out to the General Post. The letter then went to St. Neots by the General Post, getting the Bishop for SE/2 before leaving London.

As to the charges, they show it must have been a double letter. Harrington to London was 6d. for a double, the ' 6 ' can be seen left centre. The London to St. Neots was 4d, again double rate: this to the left of the heart. These two, plus the 1d. for the local London charge, made up the 11d., which can be seen just above the SE/1 Bishop. What is doubtful is that the 6d. should have been paid on delivery, not added and carried forward. Could it be that ' Clarke ' was the Penny Post official who knew the addressee - possibly from earlier letters - was now in Medlow and re-addressed it himself. After all, it would not seem unreasonable to have such knowledge, particularly if the addressee had provided a shilling or two before departing London's eastern outposts.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

GENERAL POST PAID STAMP OF 1798, from Grace Dove

In 1798 an old soldier wrote to Chelsea seeking re-admission, having heard that two of the old comrades had died. Nearly two hundred years later his letter provides something of a puzzle for postal historians by displaying a stamp which has gone unrecorded all those years.



The Paid stamp for 30th. July 1798 appears to have a small ' G ' outside, whereas the reference books, including the latest catalogue, record A to F only. When I mentioned my discovery to one or two others, the immediate and not unreasonable reaction was to

FINCHLEY : THE DEVELOPMENT OF POSTAL SERVICES FROM ABOUT 1800

By Jean Farrugia

Note : these extracts have been taken from the minute series " Reports to the Post - msters General " (volumes and papers) unless stated otherwise.

1790 Finchley Common began near the 6m stone on main road from Highgate and finished near the " Old Swan with Two Necks ", shortly before the 9m stone and the Whetstone Turnpike Gate.
(Cary's " High Roads from London, 1790 ")

1806 June 15. Letter from Edward Johnson, Controller of the Twopenny Post Office :

Having received notice of the decease of Mrs Boulding, Letter Receiver at East Finchley, I went there on Thursday to see whether the letters were taken care of and the Duty of the Office was properly attended to and likely to be so, or whether it would be necessary to remove it and I was informed by Mrs Boulding's daughter, who officiated as Letter Receiver, that the next day she should leave the house and was to be succeeded in it by a Mr James Jasper from London, whose address she gave me and that he was a person of good character and as the house is the most conveniently situated of any for the purpose I went there again yesterday to Instruct him in the Duty, which was the more necessary as there was nobody in the house who understood it and the Office Keeper has to make up a Bag twice a day for Town....

On these days I visited the Offices at Kentish Town, Highgate, Church End Finchley and Whetstone.....

At the Sorting Office at Church End where 5 Letter Carriers receive and make up bags I found them there on both days, duly in attendance and...I could find nothing amiss...

(Report 89A/1806)

1811 September (Notice to the Public regarding new Bye mails arrangement in Finchley and other Rides)

1811 November. Report from Johnson :

....I have carried this (Bye Post) Regulation into effect on the Sydenham, Edmonton, Finchley and Paddington Rides...On the Finchley (Ride) including Paddington which is connected with it, six offices are employed and none of the Receivers objected to undertake this new Duty....

Salaries proposed, from commencement of Bye Letter duties :-

Finchley Ride :-

	Salary
	£
Islington	6
Sommers Town	5
Camden Town	5
Highgate	5
Finchley	6
Paddington	5

In every quarter the number of Bye Letters has increased since this speedy delivery has been adopted.....

1814 October 18th. Appeal from Thomas Cope Marsham of Totteridge :-

.. the delivery of the letters in this Parish is so late that there is scarcely Time in Matters of Business to return an Answer. I do not allege any Complaint against the Postman, but the Enclosure of Finchley Common makes so great a diff-

Finchley.....

erence as to the Time of Delivery from Finchley to this place that an Horse Post is really necessary considering the Distance which our present Postman has to go in his Delivery at Whetstone and I am well assured that there are many in this Village who attach Blame, when the alteration of the Road by the Enclosure is a great impediment to his speed....

Note : letter witnessed by his neighbour, John Jennings.

Letter from Edward Garrow :-

....The Man (Hattersley) who has been some years the Carrier is by far the best I have seen (in 18 years residence) but beginning at Finchley, Whetstone and to the extreme end of this long village where are two single Houses, has always been a hard duty....and what adds to the severity of the Duty is the Enclosure of Finchley Common and stopping up Foot Paths across the Fields and increase the distance by going the Road way.....

Report from Johnson :

Besides the enclosed....I have heard complaints to the same effect from East Barnet, which place like Totteridge is attached to the Finchley delivery.

Finchley is served three times a day by one Letter Carrier - a part of the Common, Whetstone and Totteridge, by another, and Colney Hatch, Fryern Barnett and East Barnet by a third. The two latter perform each two deliveries and two collections daily and attend twice a day at the Sorting Office at Finchley Church -

The distance each travels daily is upwards of Twenty miles.

The enclosing Finchley Common, which has recently taken place, has increased the distance of their journeys, especially that of the Totteridge Letter Carrier, and on the Common there are some houses lately built which lie wide and have added to his duties....I have been two day round with the Letter Carrier whilst delivering his Letters to ascertain the time it took at a quick rate of walking to perform each delivery....I found that the delivery in the middle of the day could not be completed till about two o'clock, nor that of the Evening till about $\frac{1}{4}$ past Eight. At Totteridge the departure is at $\frac{1}{4}$ before Three and at East Barnet by $\frac{1}{2}$ past Two. These early departures are necessary in consequence of the great distance from the offices to that at Finchley where the Ride ends. At Totteridge the Office, which is in the most convenient situation, is still more than a mile from some parts of the Village, and both at Totteridge and East Barnet the interval is too short for answering Letters by return of Post.

The Reverend Mr. Marsham of the former place recommends in his letter a Horse Post to that Village, But I am of opinion that the advantage of a delivery on horseback from Finchley would not be adequate to the expense which must be allowed for a horse.

There are numerous families of respectability at these places, but, in regard to accommodation by the Post, they are not on a footing with others in general at the same distance from London. Instead of a Horse Post to Totteridge one additional Letter Carrier, whose walk should be formed out of part of each of the present three Walks would answer a better purpose....

I beg to recommend that an additional Letter Carrier at the usual wages of 20/- a week be allowed at Finchley....

The present number of Letter Carriers for these parts is the same that it was in the year 1794 and there has been no addition to it for these 20 years. The duty and the Revenue have gradually increased since that period and within the

Finchley.....

last five years the increase of Revenue from these letters delivered on these Walks is about £200 per annum.

Proposal approved by PMG (Report No.233/1814)

- 1816 September : G.W. Taylor, Finchley Letter Carrier, committed for further Examination.....
 G.W. Taylor, Colney Hatch Letter Carrier Committed for Trial....
 G.W. Taylor, Finchley Letter Carrier found Not Guilty.....
 (PMG Minutes 1816)

- 1821 July 23rd. Letter from H. Fulwood, Letter Receiver at Finchley :-

** I am informed that several Receivers as had there Salary advanced will thank you to think on me as the Salary is very low for what we have to do. (Salary £6pa)

To which Johnson remarks

....his present Salary....is adequate....

(Report 309/1821)

- 1822 December 4th. Another letter from Fulwood, addressed to the Postmaster General:-

** I have taken the Liberty of Righting to you. I keep the Post Office at Finchley and there is a Great Many Houses Built in the Road to Muswell Hill which is out of the Finchley Delivery Likewise Hornsey and there is a great Many Letters come to that Place and it Depends on me Eather to send them or carry them my Self and it takes a Great deal of time I should be glad if your Lordship would take it in concidination A raise my Sallery as it is very Low.....

December 10th. Johnson remarks :-

An addition.....of Two pounds a year might make it more adequate to these services which are as follows : -

The ordinary duty of a Receiver:- attending to receive from the Mail Coach at Nights, the Finchley Bag from London - taking care of the Bag till the Letter Carrier attends for it the next morning - providing house room for the Letter Carrier while sorting the Letters for delivery - making up a Bag of Letters outwards twice a day and taking charge of Letters inwards, being for parts in Finchley Common, to which the Letter Carrier cannot extend his Walk, some of which he delivers at the houses to which they are addressed and others to persons who ask for them.

Salary of £8 a year agreed by PMG (Report 478/1822)

- 1824 October 20th. Report from the Twopenny Post Office :-

Mr Fulwood the Letter Receiver at Finchley Common having given Notice that he is about to quit his house and that he has let it to Mr Richard Gracer, a very respectable man, who is desirous of being appointed his successor, I have to observe that Mr. Fulwood's is the only House in that quarter conveniently situated for the Post Office. At this house the Mail Coaches stop on their way from Town, which enables the Guard to deliver there, with ease and safety, the Finchley and Hendon Letter Bags....

(Report 539/1824)

- 1826 January 2nd. Letter sent by hand to Sir Francis Freeling, Secretary to the Post

** n.b. not the Editor's usual typing, rendered as it appears in the original

Finchley.....

Office, from the Magistrate of West Ham :-

...This will be handed to you by the Constable of West Ham who apprehended the Man he has with him (and who states his name is Mark Burgess) at a Public House in the Parish where he was in a state of Intoxication and had called for a Pint of Beer and for which he had no money to pay. He gave a very incoherent account of himself and on Examining his Bundle two Letters were found in it with Post marks on them not delivered. He states that he is a Postman and has omitted to deliver them but can give no account satisfactory to me why he came to this place. He has committed no hurt except that of Drunkeness....

Report of T.M. Musgrave, Controller of the Twopenny Post Office :-

...The conduct of Mark Burgess, one of the Finchley Letter Carriers who was recently brought in custody to the Post Office and examined by the Solicitor having made it necessary to institute personally an Enquiry....I beg to acquaint you that this has been done at Finchley, and the result of this Enquiry is such as to induce me strongly to recommend that he should be continued in the service.

It appears that the state of Mind in which he was found is to be attributed, partly to anxiety arising from the supposed loss of a Letter containing a Sovereign, and partly to the effect of accidental intemperance, into which he has been misled by the false kindness of the people to whom he delivers Letters and who unwisely marked their satisfaction at his general conduct, by prevailing upon him to drink too much at the return of this Season of the Year - It may be proper to state that a few years since he had a violent fever, which left his mind in such a State as to be easily affected by liquer but he bears a remarkably good character, both at Finchley and at Whetstone, for great regularity in the discharge of his duty, and great sobriety in his general habits. Indeed, he is so much respected that the Inhabitants would, if necessary, readily come forward with a Memorial on his behalf. He has been about Ten years in the Service and this is the first time that he has been charged with any misconduct....

The retention of Burgess in the Service agreed to by the PMG.

(Report 27/1826)

Editor's Comment : This extract from the Post Office Records relating to one place in London shows several aspects of the Postal Service, routes, wages, conditions of work, methods of work and, as what many consider the element which raises postal history above the study of adhesives, the insights into social conditions in which the service operated. It is only hoped the details of the service of the 1980's is at least as well documented.

We are always anxious to have local postal history articles in ' Notebook ' and other members are cordially invited to make their own contributions.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-

General Post Paid Stamp of 1798....(from 64/4)

ask if it was not perhaps a smudged ' C ' ? Look at it under a glass and the upright from the base of the letter is very sharply angled with the curve, and the cross bar is very distinct. I believe there can be little doubt that it is a ' G '. Can no-one else produce a small letter ' G ' to support this ?

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

TWOPENNY POST - LINE OF DELIVERIES, by A.J. Kirk

Following the Editor's comments in Notebook 61, page 17, my research seems to indicate that the Peckham New Town Receiving House was at 6 Park Terrace, near to Frensham Street, still shown on modern maps. This puts the Receiving House at the north end of what is now Peckham Park Road, near to the Old Kent Road and close to the Shards Square mentioned in the earlier article. This puts the RH well within the three mile radius of 1831. It is interesting to note this address places the RH much nearer the Peckham Sorting Office than the Kent Road Sorting Office. Its position justifies the charge of 2d but is it possible it may have been sent via Peckham and not Kent Rd? One would have thought that in sorting any letter at the Chief Office the operative word would have been 'Peckham'.

This item raises an interesting point in respect of Receiving Houses on the borders of the 2d. and 3d. postal areas, also which Sorting Office would handle the letters for these border line areas. It will come as no surprise when I say my own particular area is Camberwell Green and is such a borderline case. In 1831 all the Receiving Houses in the area, with the exception of Denmark Hill, were transferred to the Town area. The Denmark Hill RH was only some two hundred yards beyond Camberwell Green and one would, therefore, assume the letters for the Denmark Hill district, charged at 3d., would be sent to the Camberwell Sorting Office.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

CONSOLIDATION OF THE GENERAL AND TWOPENNY POST RECEIVING HOUSES

In his book on London's Local Posts Brumell makes the statement "After December 31st 1838, when the Receiving Houses of the Twopenny and General Posts were amalgamated..." It must be admitted the Editor has extended what was written to imply that the two sets of Receiving Houses were amalgamated on that date, giving a neat, clean start on the 1st. January, 1839. It seems not only is this slight interpretation incorrect but, on a very rare occasion, it seems so was Brumell, for there exists a Post Office notice which makes the date on and after 11th. December, 1838. It contains a further item of no little interest in giving the addresses of the three offices at which General Post Paid letters cannot be received. That one rarely found a Cornhill posted letter going outside the local area is fairly widely known. Are the other two also strictly local delivery offices only? Perhaps a reader can tidy up this matter.

The Notice reads as follows:

GENERAL POST OFFICE,
December, 1838.

ON and after the 11th. instant, the General and Twopenny Post Receiving Houses, within the Three Mile circle, will be consolidated; consequently, from that day every Receiving House within those limits will be open for the receipt of General, Foreign, Ship, and Twopenny Post Letters, both Paid and Unpaid, with the exception of the Receiving Houses at No. 24, Cornhill; No. 22, Charing Cross, and No. 152, Oxford Street, (corner of Vere Street), at which places General Post Paid Letters cannot be received, as they would interfere with their duties, while little inconvenience will be sustained by the Public, as they are in the immediate vicinity of the Branch Offices of the General Post at Lombard Street, Charing Cross, and Vere Street.

Signed W.L. Maberly,
Secretary

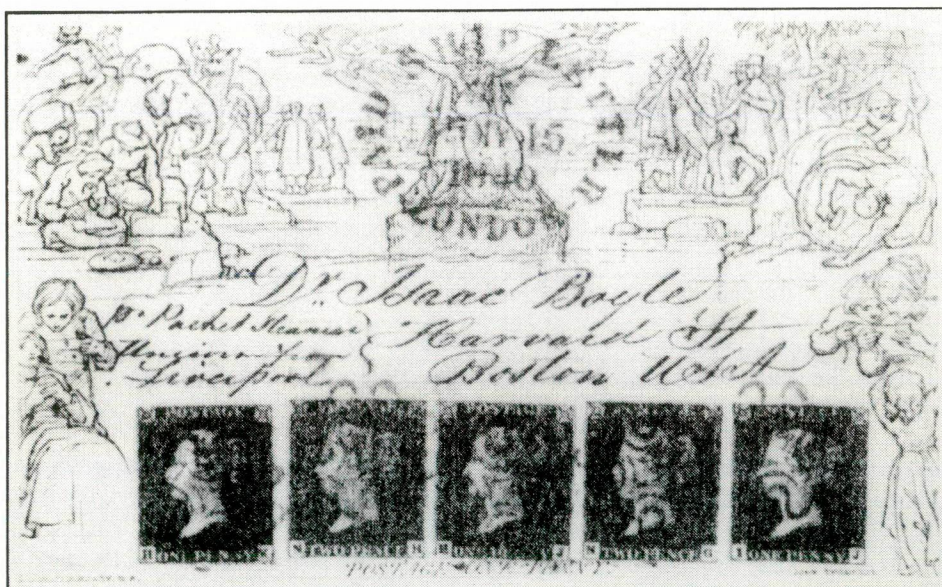
N.B. On and from the day of the Consolidation, General Post Letters for the Day Mails can be put into the Receiving Houses till Eight o'clock in the Morning of the day on which the Mails are despatched. Newspapers, however, cannot be received, except at the Branch Offices or the General Post Office as at present.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

LONDON SHIP LETTER : PAID STAMP ON A MULREADY DE LUXE

If the writer of the letter contained in the Mulready addressed to Dr. Isaac Boyle of Boston was not a stamp collector, he at least had all the necessary instincts. Franking the letter with alternate penny blacks and two pence blues, adding the five superb impressions of the Maltese Cross and oval Paid Ship Letter London datestamp centrally over Britannia, makes one feel the writer worked in the London Ship Letter Office.

The endorsement " pr Packet Steamer Unicorn from Liverpool " shows the writer knew what he was about in making this first " crossing " cover. Frank Staff's excellent work " Transatlantic Mail " tells the story of the first contract with the Cunard Line which started on the 1st. June 1840, the service commencing on the 4th. July 1840 when the wooden paddle steamer, "Britannia", sailed from Liverpool with Samuel Cunard on board. The voyage to Boston, including a stop at Halifax (Nova Scotia) took fourteen days, eight hours.



The 'Britannia' was not the first Cunarder to carry mail across the Atlantic, for on the 16th. May the 650 ton 'Unicorn' sailed from Liverpool and arrived on the 2nd. June after a crossing of sixteen days. She had been purchased by Cunard's British and North American Royal Mail Steam Packet Company from the Glasgow and Liverpool Line to ply between Quebec and Pictou, Nova Scotia. Her arrival in Boston was greeted with salutes from the U.S. navy and cheers from the crowds gathered on the wharves.

Was Dr. Boyle in the welcoming crowd? Did he realise his English correspondent had sent him a crown jewel of British philately and postal history which was to realise about 200,000 times its original cost over 137 years later. In any event, Dr. Boyle and his heirs kept it and looked after it well, for the pleasure of all those who see it.

The 'Unicorn' remained on the Quebec-Pictou run for six years, during which period it made two transatlantic round trips. For two years it then served on the coastal service between Halifax and Boston and from 1849 to 1853 was on the Panama and Pacific service carrying the " forty-niners " en route to their fate in California.

This article originally appeared in The Philatelic Journal of Great Britain in March, 1978 and is reproduced with appreciation.

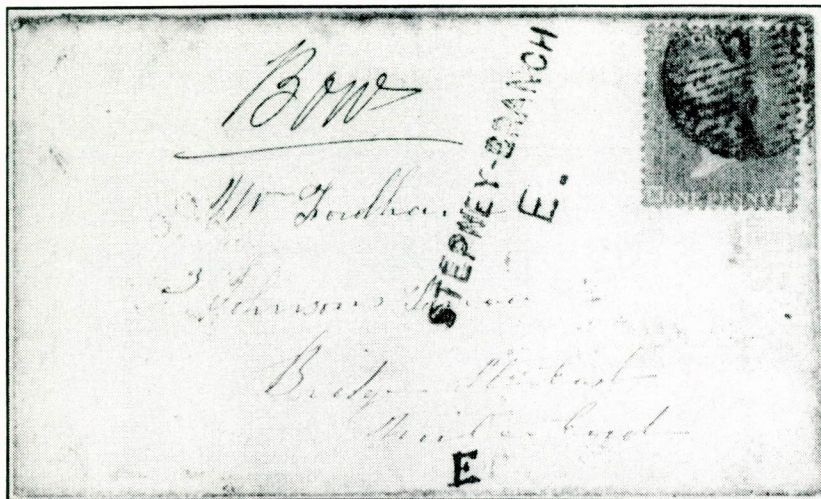
-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

SHIP LETTER RESEARCH for the ' Handbook ' is nearing a draft stage for the Decitors to read through and it high time you sent in a record of every piece of Maritime Mail of London in your collection. The first section to be published will be concerned with Ship Letters, Packet Letters, including India marks.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

BRANCH OFFICE HANDSTAMPS, by Keith Romig

Letters which cannot be delivered for some reason or other are invariably of extra interest to the postal historian because of the various handstamps and endorsements applied to the cover in the course of its travels throughout the postal system. Some of these handstamps are rather elusive and I have been searching for a number for quite a long time, with recent success.



The first cover, to the left, is addressed to Bridge St. East, Mile End, instead of Bow. When handled at the Stepney Branch Office, it was endorsed ' Bow ' at the top and presumably delivered correctly thereafter.

The letter was sent on the 5th. August, 1857, during a period of change and great interest.

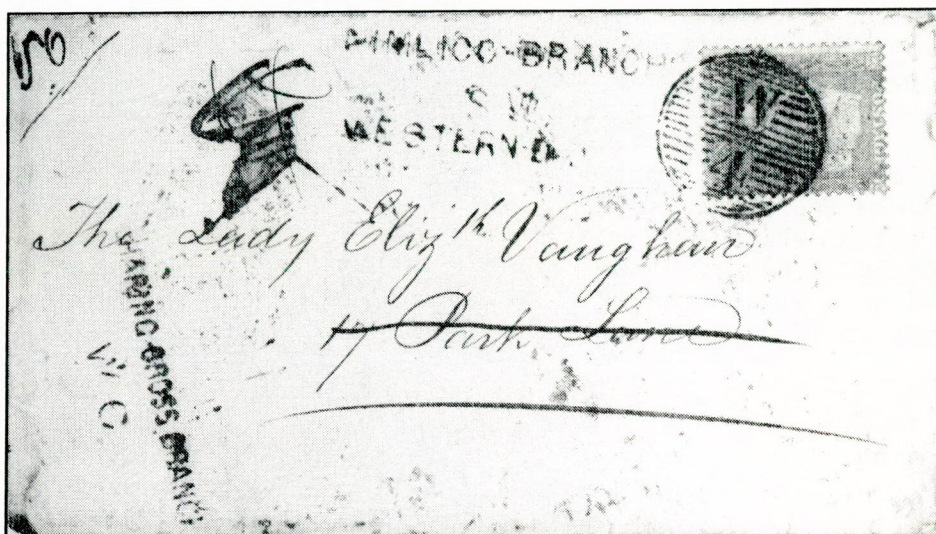
The other cover caused more trouble as it has no fewer than three Branch Office handstamps.

It is addressed to The Lady Eliz Vaughan, 17 Park Lane. The problem seemed to have been, to which Park Lane? The three stamps on the obverse testify to its travels.

CHARING CROSS BRANCH / WC is in green;

PIMLICO BRANCH / SW, is in black.

WESTERN D.O., this in black.



On the reverse, among the various datestamps, are the manuscript endorsements..... " Not known as directed G Wood " " Not known in Park Lane R^S P.^K " " Not known at the Pimlico Branch " " Not known at the C.X.B. " The smudge on the obverse top left of centre, would appear to be " CX", which was scribbled out, then smudged for good measure.

Sent originally on the 10th. July, 1857.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

FURTHER STUDY.....

Does a reader have a full listing of these ' BRANCH ' handstamps and some dates for publication in ' Notebook ' and eventually in the ' Handbook ' ?

Even if you have but one or two examples, do please drop a line to the Editor, with a photocopy and full details of all the markings. The consecutive dating of these stamps the Office Initials is something on which we can speculate when a decent list of examples and datings comes to hand.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

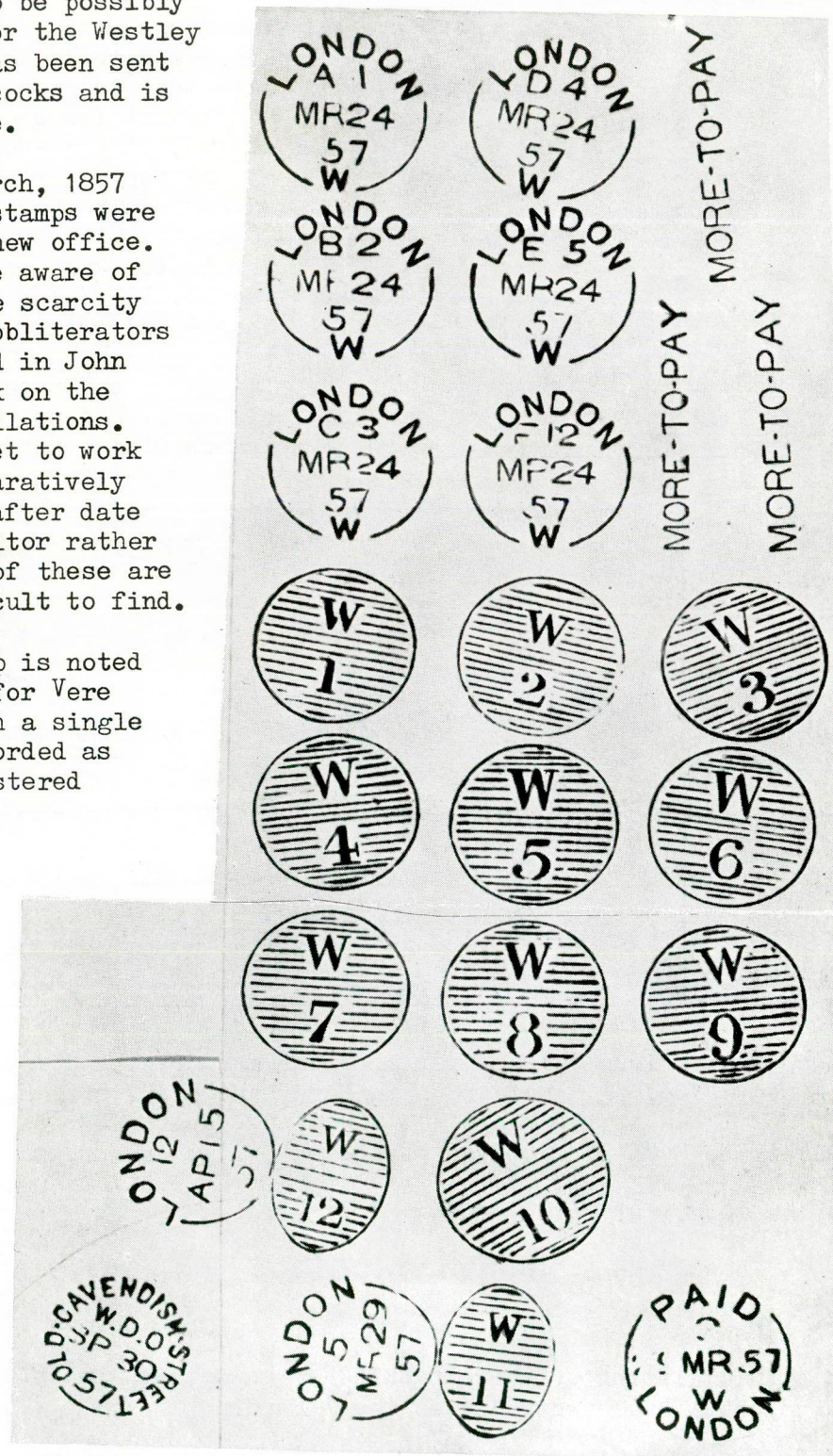
OLD CAVENDISH STREET

In his work on the Branch Offices, John Sharp makes reference to the circular date date illustrated by Westley on page 88 of his "Postal Cancellations of London", although in 1857 the premises at 19 Old Cavendish Street became the Western District Office and hence the stamp would fall outside the immediate scope of the book.

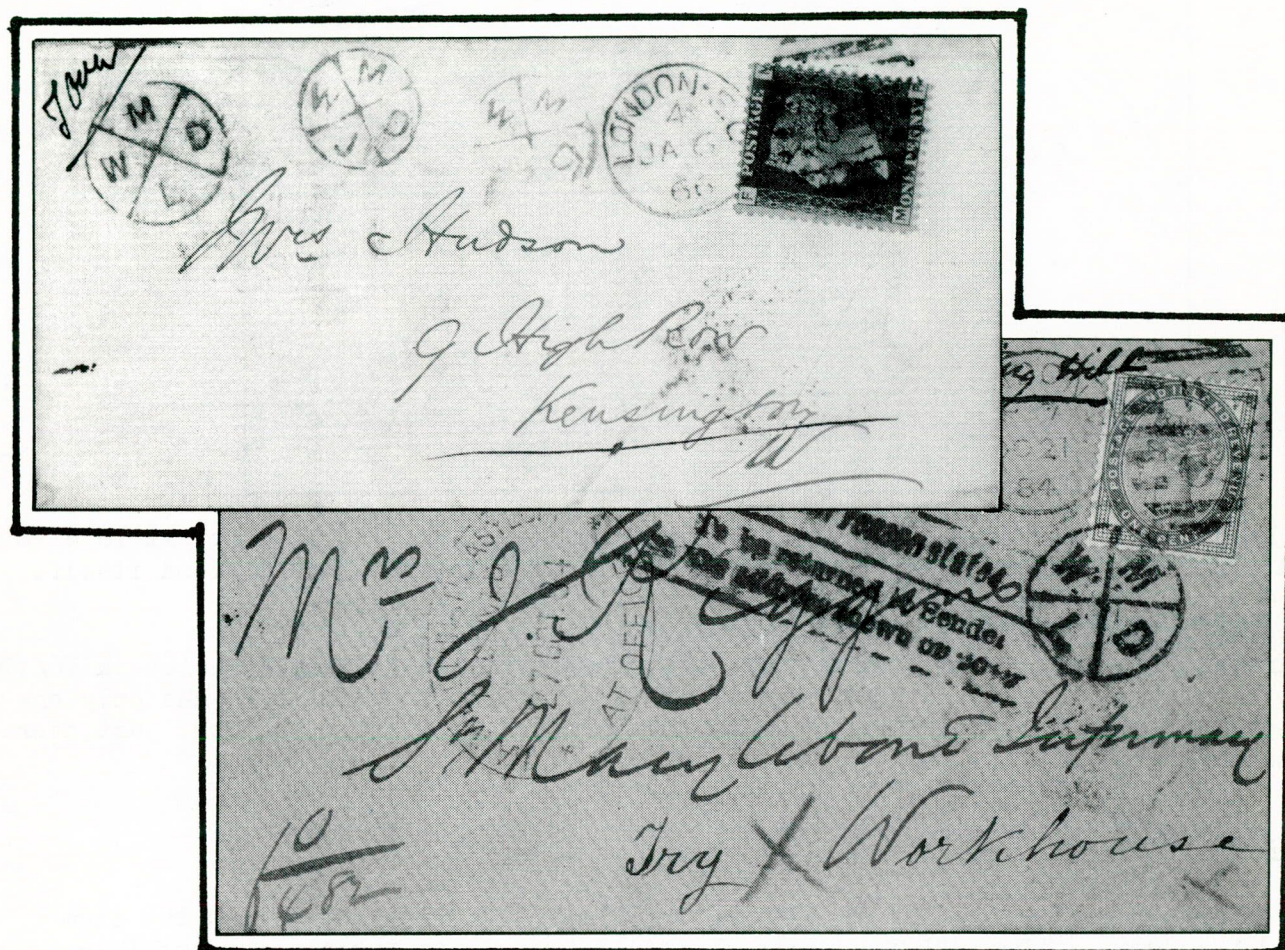
What appears to be possibly the original for the Westley illustration has been sent by Martin Willcocks and is reproduced here.

On the 24th. March, 1857 these various stamps were issued to the new office. Readers will be aware of the comparative scarcity of the single obliterations as demonstrated in John Parmenters work on the District cancellations. What we have yet to work on is the comparatively little sought after date stamps. The Editor rather suspects some of these are quite as difficult to find.

A similar stamp is noted by John Sharp for Vere Street of which a single example is recorded as used on a registered cover in 1863.

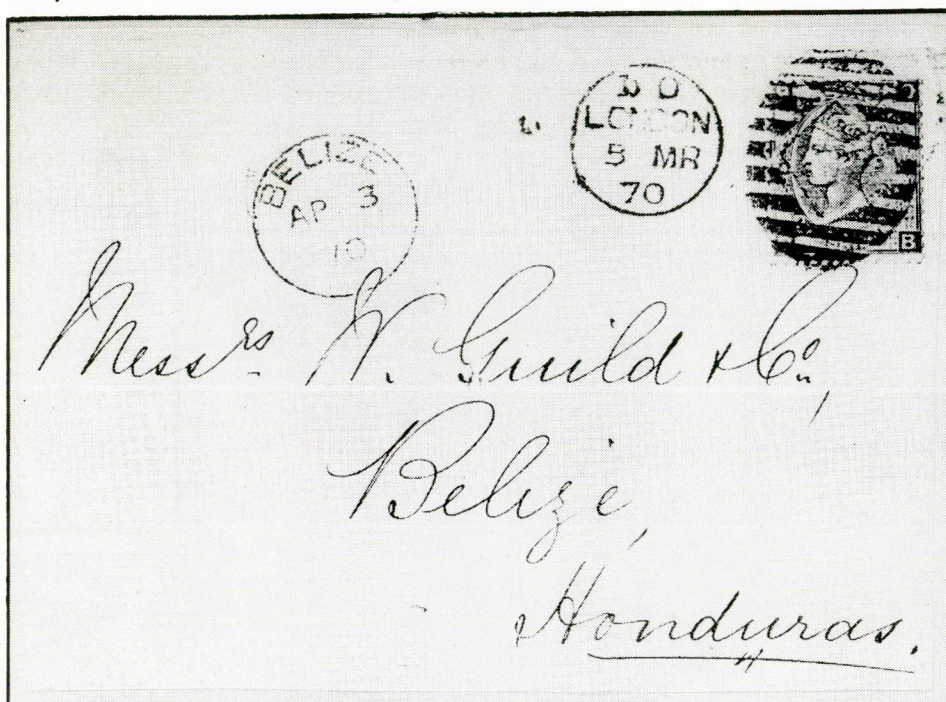


When the listing was printed in October 1974 readers were cautioned on the re-allocation of stamps to different offices, unrecorded in the Impression Books. The stamp could not be presumed to have been used at the office of initial or subsequent issue. Mentioned also was the change in size, going from 18mm initially to 20 or 22mm.



This range of handstamps, replaced in 1890 by a redesigned stamp, cover a period of some thirty two years and generally appear on covers which have considerable postal history interest, including the very collectable comments and signatures of postal employees. As some time has elapsed since the original listing, perhaps readers would be interested in correcting and republishing as part of the Handbook.

Members may recall the Meunier sale in 1982 which had one lot showing a void duplex cancellation on piece. Now Fred Steenbruggen sends a photocopy of a fine example from 1870 on a front, addressed to Belize, Honduras.



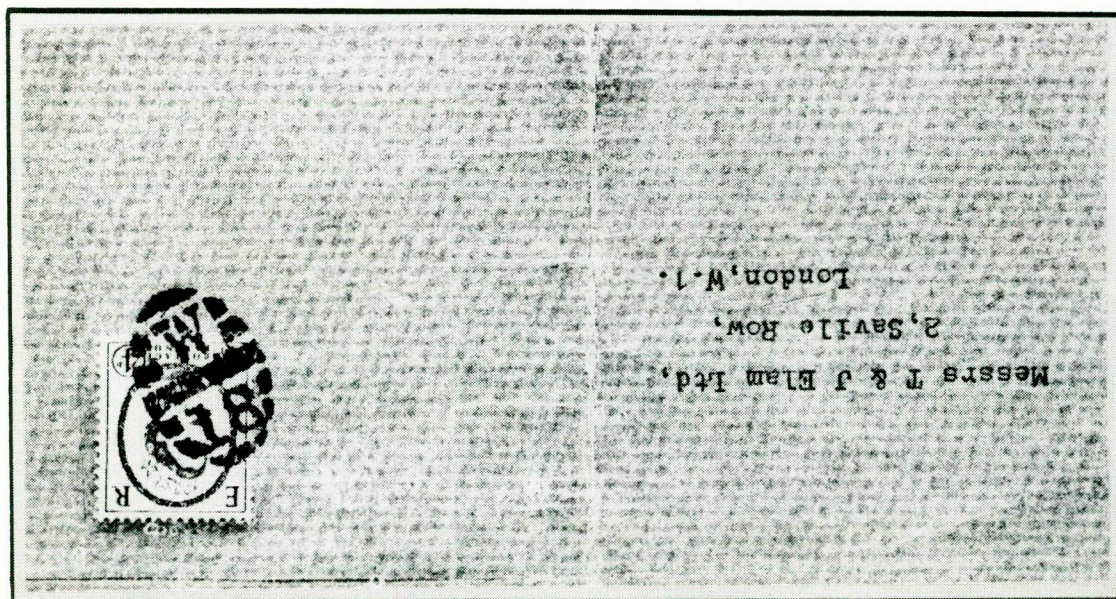
As can be seen the clarity of the strike is such there can be little doubt it is a void diamond for unlike others alleged to be void, this clearly shows the diamond itself. The screw mark is a bonus. Note the clear profile on the adhesive.

There are now two such in the pages of ' Notebook '. The 1866 example, Notebook 56/19, did not fit into any of the duplex series. This new report, code ' b ', has only one contemporary item, 25D6, which is shown in the Handbook April to June 1869, just over eight months earlier.

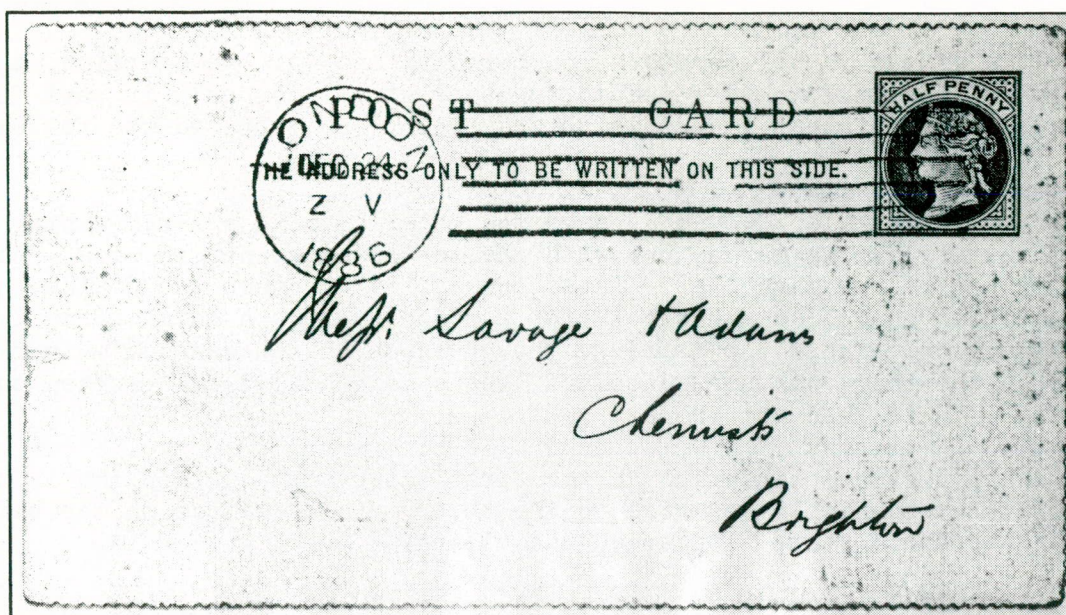
-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

WEST DISTRICT : LATE USAGE, from G.R. Stevens

I can provide an even later use of the 18D11 reported in Notebook 61 with the item shown below, dated 1966. Unfortunately, there is no date on the obverse but this can be demonstrated from other marks not seen in the illustration.



-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

THE ETHRIDGE MACHINE

Norman Mounsdon very kindly sent in a photocopy of the Ethridge Machine used on Christmas Eve 1886. Curiously enough, none of the general reference books tell us very much about the periods of use of this machine. It was on trial from September 1886 to April 1887, though it is not clear if this was continuous or merely covered several 'bursts' of work.

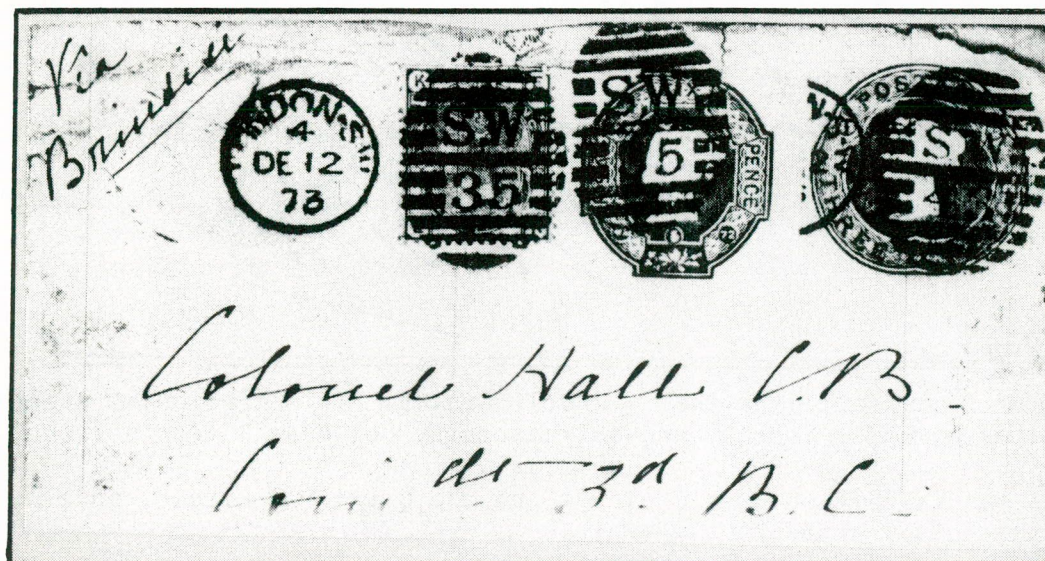
In December 1886, in a report issued by the Controller of the London Postal Service, there is a statement which suggests the trial was not continuous, since at that date there is reference to the "Ethridge Stamping Machine has now been on actual trial for two months". This would take the trial back to October, rather than September. This may be merely a misread phrase but in the absence of a detailed listing of the period(s) of use, it may serve as a starting point.

Perhaps those readers who have examples in their collection would advise the Editor of the dates and codes of their example(s).

-0-0-0-0-0-0-

IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED.....a cover with a moral from P. Andrews

I picked up this item whilst on holiday, one tends to keep looking even when, in theory at least, getting 'away from it all'. It struck me as unusual, carrying as



If At First You Don't Succeed...

it does the portions of two SW oblitters, numbered 35 and 43. In addition, the date stamp portion of the duplex had failed to register at all, or only in part for two of the strikes. For interest I sent it to the Editor who proposed the following theory :

When cancelling, the postal clerk would arrange the material in a stack, fanning them - rather like a hand of playing cards, but with the top right corner in view - to facilitate the faster use of the canceller. Subsequently, it was seen two of the three ' stamps ' had not been cancelled and the letter was included in a batch of mail which needed further attention. Again the fanning, though exposing the **second** ' stamp '. This time, although the third was not cancelled, the same postal clerk spotted the omission and dealt with it then and there.

One can see the sharp vertical line through the first datestamp and then the left edge of the second obliterator which gives rise to the theory of the letter on top being placed to the left of the ' stamp ' to speed cancelling.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-

p.s. The Moral ? If you at first.....

-O-O-O-O-O-O-

UNPAID LETTER FROM ABROAD, from Robert Johnson

The rates for letters from Chile in 1880 were as follows:

via Southampton.....	1s. 6d.	} These are all half ounce rates.
via Liverpool.....	1s. 0d.	
by French Packet.....	1s. 6d.	

This letter was sent by the Liverpool route. The letter was probably bagged for London as the 11d. and 1s. od. marks were applied in the Foreign Branch in London.



The 11d. charge mark is cancelled by the FB/2 obliterator. This particular stamp is not seemingly recorded by Dubus or Westley and is reasonably noted as " very scarce ".

On the reverse are the Valparaiso Unpaid c.d.s. and the quartered circle, code N, the former in black, the latter in red.

January 1880

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

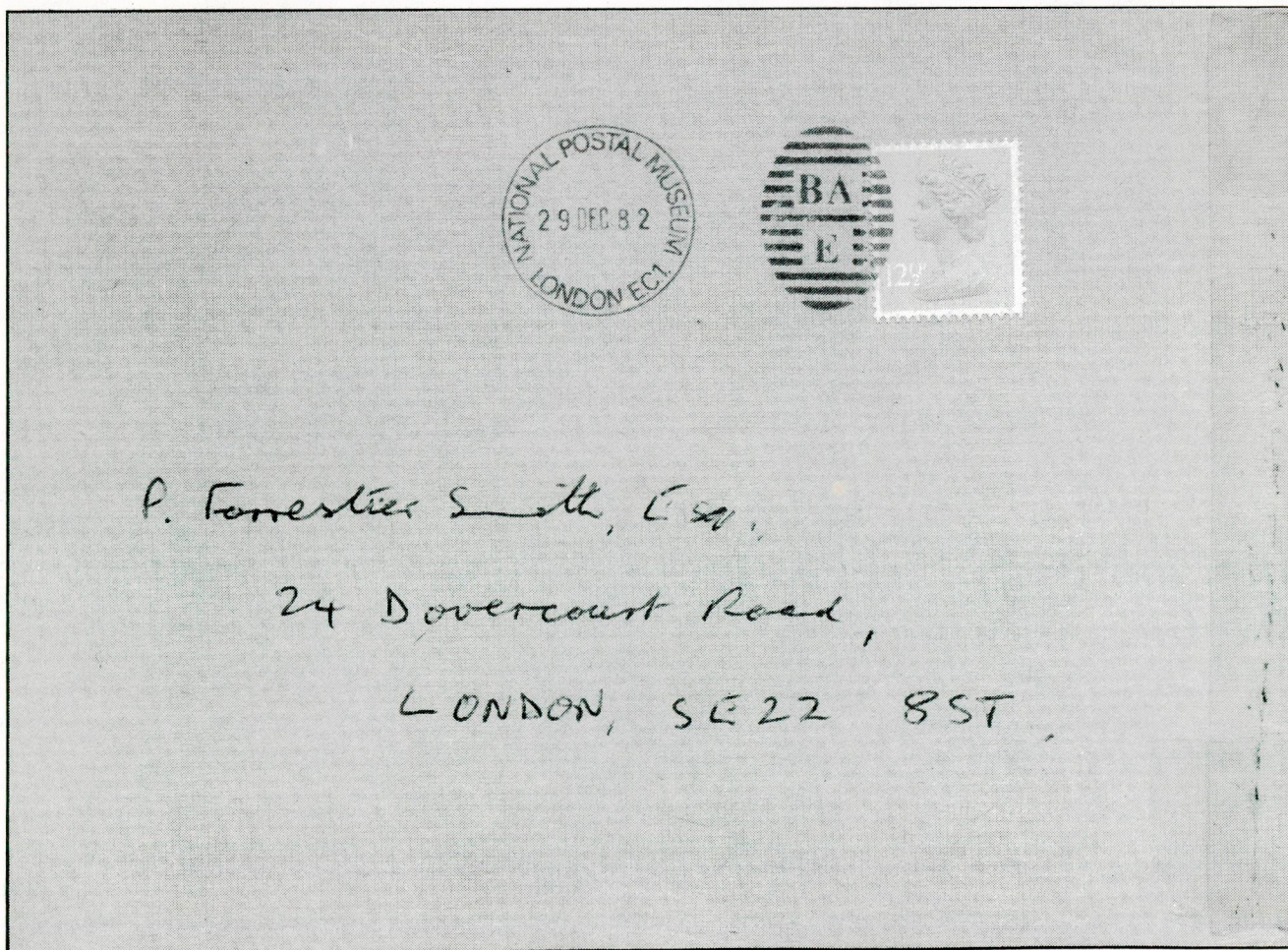
BRITISH ARMY IN EGYPT, from Alf Kirk

In the " ~~Special~~ Event Postmarks of the United Kingdom ", George Pearson records the use



The BA/E handstamp. Apparently applied by favor at South Kensington celebrations and believed to have been first used in 1885. This particular example was joined by the un-numbered handstamp for the 16th May, 1890 of the Penny Postage Jubilee, although in view of the ' favor ' nature one may be allowed some doubt on the total accuracy of the dating.

Nearly one hundred years later, the Postal Museum in London produced a duplex with the BA/E motif again displayed. I do not recall seeing any references to its use in the nineteenth century as a postal marking, though it does seem curious the Postal Authorities should have had such a special stamp for use by the army which never was, in fact, used by that force.



British Army In Egypt...

The answer to this was given by Alistair Kennedy in "The Philatelist and PJGB". It seems there were two similar handstamps. The first was issued on the 5th. August, 1882 some six handstamps being provided. Alistair records these "however, were not discovered when the stores were unpacked, so that the stamps were obliterated by the date-stamp, a fact which drew comment from the Foreign Branch in London, when the first mails were opened. They were evidently found later, although not given much use, as a few loose stamps are known with the obliterator, one small piece with the "B" datestamp alongside dated SP 25."

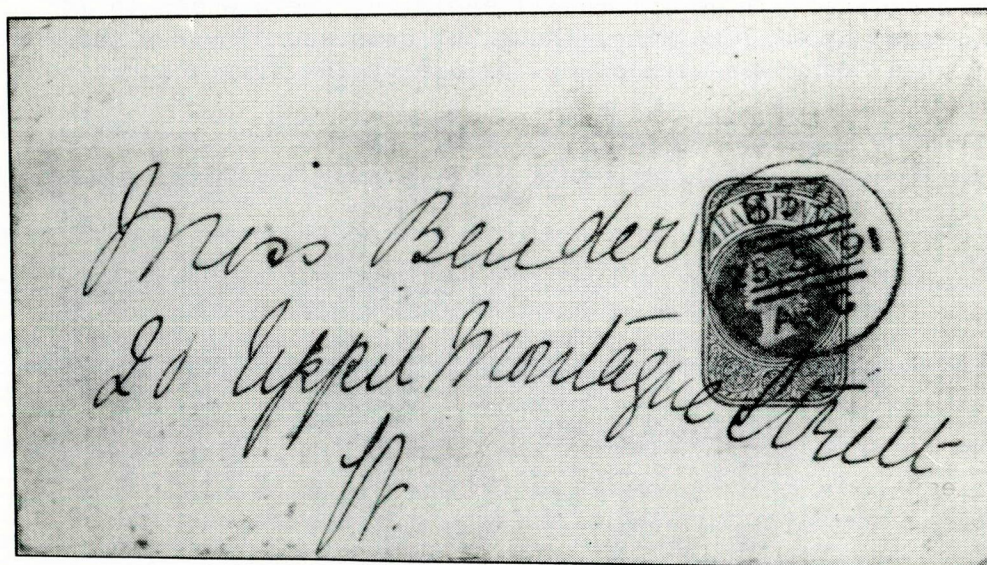
The second handstamp was issued on the 25th. February, 1885, this time six obliterations again BA/E but with fewer bars. It seems these too suffered the fate of not being used other than in 1890 as souvenir 'cancellations'. A further six obliterations are shown in the Proof Impression Books on the 2nd. April, but seemingly did not get so far as being packed as the reinforcement party for whom they were intended was not required.

The modern duplex, sent to the Editor by Alistair, shows a smaller version of the first obliterator of 1882.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

HALFPENNY BOOK POST

Going along in fits and starts is the Editor's study of the Halfpenny Book Post. There is quite a fund of accumulated information from members but the solid slog through the Post Office Records has been barely started. Nevertheless, it was something of a surprise to come across an item which, at first glance, appeared to be 'wrong'.



The office coding is '833', whereas we are used to see either a low number or the District Initials. What, then, was this? Turning to a well thumbed "British Post Office Numbers" in the 'Index to Offices in the London District' appeared an entry for Chingford showing 833 (1887), mystery solved. But why should there be so scarce? Although originally intended for book post, this series can be found on a great many items, including cards and letters, the survival rate of which is generally testified by the quantity of such material bearing other cancellations. Again, why should these Book-post items be so difficult to find? Looking through the Index mentioned, there are a number issued with the England series. For the record, these are:

Barking	F 08	Beckenham	D 13
Bexley	389	Brentford	E 95
Carshalton	D 97	Chadwell	F 10
Charlton	379	Chingford	833(1887)
		"	84(1899)

Halfpenny Book Post...

Chiselhurst	201	Chiswick	42(1874)
"	D 05(1874)	"	57(1892)
Edgware	328	Edmonton	119
Elstree	C 97	Eltham	G 22
Enfield	C 85	Erith	403
Hampton	C 95	Harrow	D 75
Ilford	F 07	Isleworth	E 97
Lessness Heath	412	Leyton	102
Loughton	D 77	Lower Edmonton	G 80
Merton	809	Mitcham	D 24
Ponders End	F 58	Richmond	D 21
Shooter's Hill	771		
	385(1887)	Southall	395
South Tottenham	H 07(1887)	Stanmore	770
Sudbury	J 64(1892)	Sutton	D 23
Teddington	C 94	Tottenham	117
Twickenham	C 93	Upper Edmonton	G 80
Walthamstow	109	Welling	386
Wimbledon	801	Woodford Green	F 20
Woolwich	264	Sunbury	C 96

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

COLUMBIA MACHINES :RECEIVED FROM HM SHIPS/NO CHARGE TO BE RAISED from Roger Keneally

On page 28 of the special issue of Notebook, number 62, were some illustrations which encourage me into print. This type of cancellation was used on five Comubia Machines code letters A, B, C,D and E. The earliest cancellation I have seen is dated the 18th January, 1915 and was in the rectangular box, as figure 1. Figure 2 is the type with no frame.

LONDON

I A P I 6 I 5 E

RECEIVED FROM H.M.SHIP.
NO CHARGE TO BE RAISED

LONDON

MAR 13 179

RECEIVED FROM H.M.SHIP.
NO CHARGE TO BE RAISED

fig 1.

fig 2.

Code	Earliest	Latest	Earliest	Latest
A	JAN 18 15	FEB 4 16	MAY 30 17	MAR 13 20
B	MAY 9 15	DEC 19 15	NOV 6 16	MAY 22 20
C	JUN 1 15	JAN 14 16	DEC 13 16	APR 16 19
D	MAR 7 15	MAY 18 16	JUL 12 16	JAN 18 21
E	JAN 20 15	SEP 11 15	NOV 22 15	DEC 22 18

These dates have been drawn from over 160 covers examined.

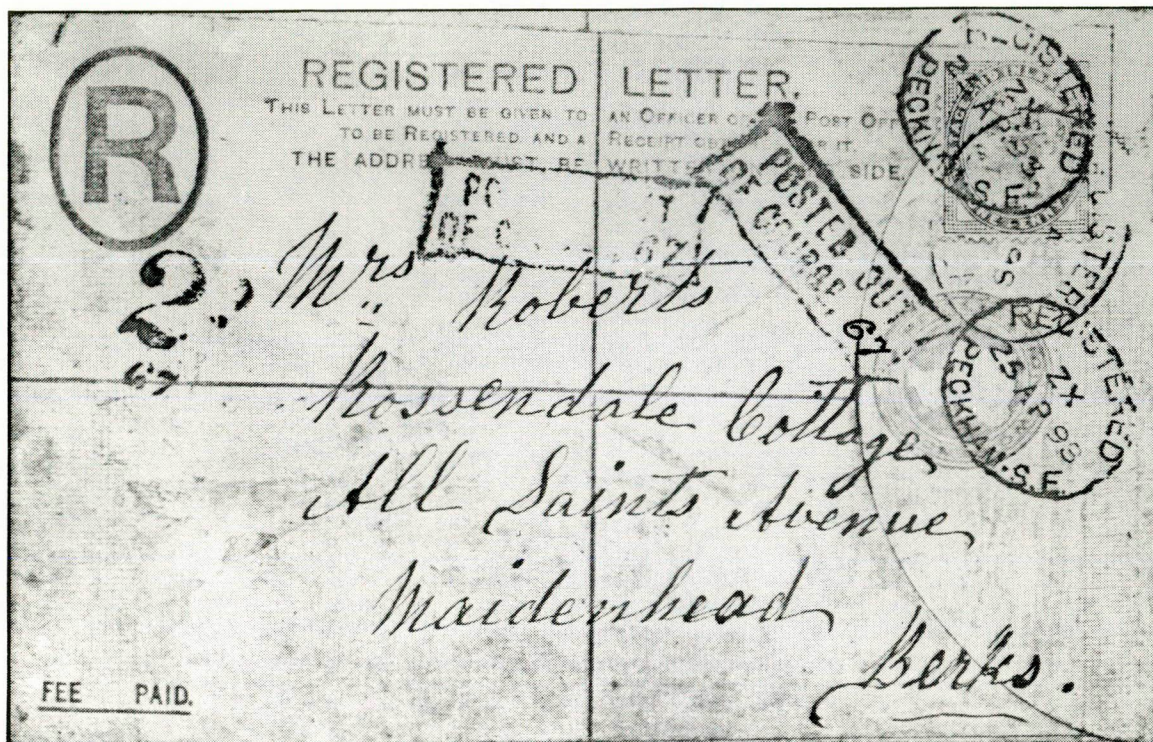
There do not appear to be any overlapping dates and one may presume the unboxed fig.2 was a new issue. It is clear though the boxed type were not taken out of use at once for all machines as the ' E ' machine boxed is shown in use while ' A ', ' B ', ' C ' and ' D ' were still being employed.

Would readers check any copies they have, even just a single example, and let me know of any date extensions or overlapping. My address is " Rose Cottage ", Ireby, Cumbria.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

POSTED OUT OF COURSE. by A.J. Kirk

The article by John Forbes-Nixon (Notebook 61, page 9) reminded me I had one of these Registered Envelopes with the cachet ' Posted Out of Course '. As will be seen, from



the illustration, this item is dated 1893, the mark is much larger than shown previously, and includes the number ' 67 ', which was the number issued to Peckham as recorded in the lists of 1874. The charge mark is ' 2d'', again with a ' 67 '.

I am puzzled by the expression '..when the charge stopped ' which occurs in the earlier article. Were these charges some sort of fine for not carrying out the correct postal procedure ? Could they not, perhaps, be ordinary Postage Due marks for overweight letters ? These Registered Envelopes were specifically designed and issued to carry coins through the post. Remember there were no £1 and 10/- notes in those days and anyone paying a small bill, or even their rent, would have to pay it in coin.

Further, one must remember that coins of the Victorian era were much more substantial than the ' mickey-mouse ' money of today. The postal rate in 1893 was 1d. for 1 oz., then a further $\frac{1}{2}$ d. for the next oz., and then $\frac{1}{2}$ d. for each succeeding 2 ozs., or part thereof. It follows the use of only a few half or full crowns and coppers would soon put the weight of the envelope over the oz. limit. Is it possible these two items were deliberately posted in a pillar box to avoid paying excess postage, thus passing the cost to the recipient ?

- * However, looking at this particular item, the " ZX " coding can be seen in the Registered datestamp which suggests the Office might have been closed for normal counter service and the sender was anxious to secure delivery the following morning (it used to happen like that !) so popped the registered item into a box with a collection after the close of the counter.

Would a diligent reader please read through Post Office Guides and Regulations and let ' Notebook ' readers know when fines were dropped.

* Editor's note.