

NOTEBOOK

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EDITORIAL.....

Due to the triple issue of numbers 83 to 85 as the Postal Directory, we have not been able to include the appreciation of the late Artur J. Brown before now. Those of us who knew him will readily endorse the sentiments in the last paragraph.

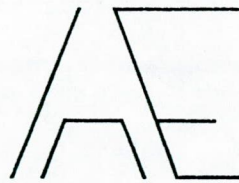
Stampex is over : what were your impressions ? Many members we spoke to expressed the view " there wasn't much about ". This was not exactly true but there was a lack of " something different " and the Editor acquired more non London items than usual.

Never-the-less we expect members to have something of interest to report as a find and this being so, put a few words together, add a decent photocopy, and send it to the Editor at

24 Dovercourt Road, Dulwich, London SE 22 8 ST

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

Argyll Etkin Limited



ARTHUR J. BROWN

It was with the greatest sadness that Angus Parker, Eric Etkin and all his colleagues at Argyll Etkin heard of the unexpected and sudden death of Arthur J. Brown on Saturday, 15th August 1987.

We understand that he suffered a heart attack - exactly 10 years after he had a coronary following the International Exhibition in Amsterdam. He was a most respected and loved personality, renowned for his humanity and kindness.

He was a collector for nearly 50 years, specialising latterly in Sweden and Tunisia which he had exhibited nationally and internationally, and he was a member of many philatelic societies.

In addition, Arthur had been deeply interested in philatelic literature and librarianship for very many years. He was the Honorary Librarian of the National Philatelic Society from the early 1960's to 1976, and had also been a leading Literature Judge at Stampex and B.P.E. for many years. In the 1960's when visiting the Argyll Stamp Company's offices, he saw the great need for the re-organisation of Angus Parker's extensive library, and it was a natural development for him to join Angus full-time in 1968. Subsequently he became the chief sales director of Argyll Etkin Limited from its inception in January 1976, and added to that responsibility when he was appointed to the position of Company Secretary in 1979.

Arthur was a warm and friendly man, regarded with great esteem by all who came into contact with him. Everyone will be immeasurably poorer by his loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Pat, and their two sons.

The most exiting recent discovery it has been my good fortune to make is also certainly of the most important kind as it relates to the pre-1794 Local Post of London. The find is all the more extraordinary because it is not just a new variety of the famous triangular " PENNY POST PAID " marks, or a new type of Receiver's name stamp, but an entirely new design of mark: the wording, style and meaning of which is like nothing else (as far as I am aware) yet been recorded.

I do not normally take up my pen unless I own the item of which I write but the owner of this new discovery has very kindly asked me to be the first to record it and was sufficiently persistent to persuade me to break my normal rule in this case.

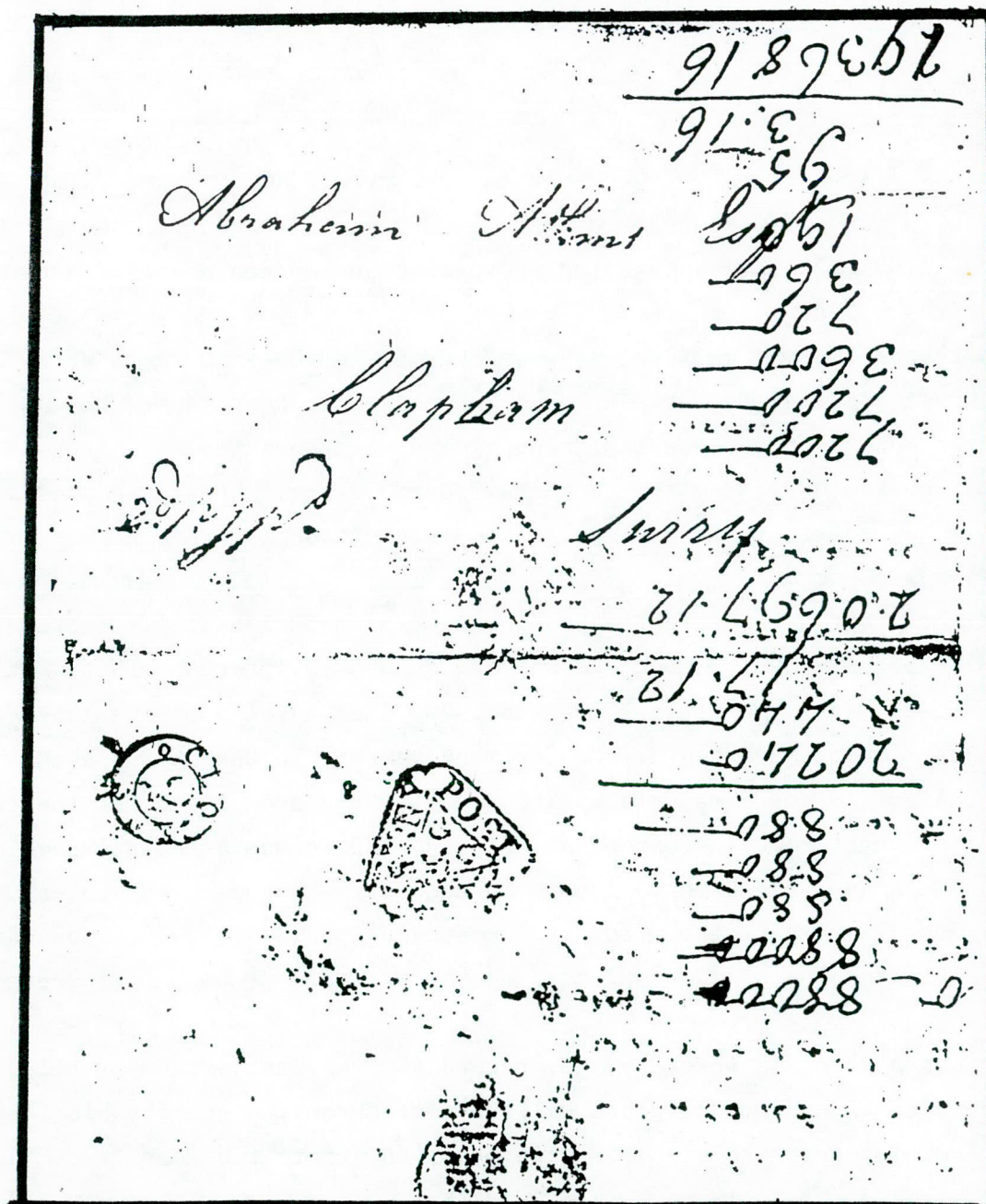


Fig. 1; 1785 letter sent from London's "General Office" of the
Local Post to Clapham in Surrey.

A Major Prestamp Discovery.....

We have an undated letter addressed to one " Abraham Atkins Esqr., Clapham, Surry " and, whereas the original contents have gone, both sides of the letter have been used for some notes on the value of an estate. At first glance (see Fig. 1) there may not be much of particular note on this letter but it certainly deserves closer examination.

Luckily the notes on the back of the letter give a strong indication of the dating: " This Estate was bought in the Beginning of the year 1775....cost £23,520. Selling the same in 1785 when Consols are at £72 will cost the purchaser £26,880. Gain to the seller (therefore) £3,340...."

I think it is a fair assumption these notes related to the contents of the letter, or were, at least, written very close to the date of this letter, which would indicate the letter being posted in 1785. This accords with the postmarks on the back of the letter. The triangular " PENNY / POST / PAID / G / MO " mark of the London General Office (L.336, recorded 1759-94) and the circular " 2 / O CLOCK / S " despatch time mark of the Southwark Office, which is as Jay L366a, which although he gives no dating is, I think, is probably 1760s to 1794. *. Thus, the 1785 date is, at worse, not denied by the other marks. I would remark on one other letter to this same address, though with handwriting and contents not the same, was dated 1790.

The really important feature of this, let us say, 1785 letter is actually on the address panel. At first glance it looks as though someone has written " 2d py pd " in the lower left hand corner. However, on close inspection it is clear - though surprising - to discover this is NOT a manuscript endorsement but the impression of a handstruck mark. The mark betrays all the features of being handstruck. It indents the paper at the top of the second " d " and it is exactly the same color as the ink of the " Dockwra " on the reverse.

When I first found this cover my deductions reached the point of concluding this was a London General Office handstruck mark but the meaning, origin and purpose defeated me: all my instincts told me this was neither forgery nor fabrication. I could not understand why a mark why a mark reading " twopence penny paid " should have been used in the pre-1794 Penny Post General Office of London. It seems foolish now but I failed to solve this riddle for three or four years, despite some considerable efforts. It was in the course of general research into British 18th. Century postal history I came across a clue.

I was reading Herbert Joyce's excellent 1893 book " THE HISTORY OF THE POST OFFICE FROM ITS ESTABLISHMENT DOWN TO 1836 " when I came upon a section dealing with the improvements made to London's local post at the time of the reorganisation of 1794. Joyce was actually describing the anomaly (pre - 1794) whereby letters from central London to the " country area " around London cost 2d. but letters from the " country area " around London cost 1d. What suddenly struck me was the terminology he used at one point: "...for delivery at a private house was to be paid a second penny, commonly called the delivery-penny." There it was, the answer to the riddle!

It all became clear. The mark on the 1785 letter was not " twopence penny paid " but...of course..." **second penny paid** ". It fell into place. This was the impression of a General Office handstamp brought into use to distinguish the VERY FEW letters sent from the central London area to the " country areas " (viz. Clapham in Surrey) of the London Local Post, for which BOTH pennies had been prepaid.

That very few would have chosen to prepay Local Letters all the way to these " country areas " is understandable: we all know of the 18th. Century paranoia about prepaid letters never being delivered. What still is very hard to understand why no - one else, as yet, has reported - or even found - any other examples of this distinctive postmark. It is an elaborate stamp and might have broken

* the catalogue has a footnote " more details of L366a are required

A Major Prestamp Discovery.....

after a short period of use but I do not recall having seen any other markings on a London letter addressed to the " country areas " to indicate it was prepaid all the way. Was there some other secret mark on such letters - albeit very infrequent - for which the second penny had been paid ? I expect there was or, alternatively, these occasional fully prepaid letters were separated out in a separate bundle / wrapper in transit. I would welcome other suggestions.

My conclusions are clear. This mark-" 2d py pd " (= Second Penny Paid) - was used at London's Local Post's General Office. It was very little used, given the dislike of prepayment and the consequent non-delivery fears. I understand this, or a very similar mark, was shown at a LPHG meeting (who was that please) but otherwise no further examples have been reported. I believe the importance of this 1785 cover is beyond dispute: it shows a totally new kind of prepaid charge mark from the early days of London's Local Post and is a most attractive design of handstamp to add to the record. I regard it as probably the most significant addition to the record of British pre-1840 markings I have ever had the luck to have made.

I have been looking for a second example for several years now.....can YOU produce another, or even a report of one ?

PENNY-POST OFFICE,

unnoted by the General Post Office

IT being apprehended that all Miscarriages of Penny-Post Letters are imputed to Negligence in the Office, whereas Directions frequently cannot be made out, especially to Persons in Lodgings for want of their Landlord's Name, or Sign, as also many Letters are refused on account of paying the Second Penny due on Delivery according to Act of Parliament. Now as a Proof of the Attention paid to the Correspondence of the Public, all Letters returned by the Letter Carriers after Three Days Inquiry will be sent to the Writer, as the inability to the Writer, by the means of his or her Place of Residence can be discovered, and the Letter will be sent to the Receiver of the Letter, as the Receiver of the Cover does not appear to be satisfied. The Writer may in some cases be obliged to send the Letter to the Office of discovering where the Fault

The Penny-Post Office notice reproduced here is dated June 2d 1764 and makes specific reference to

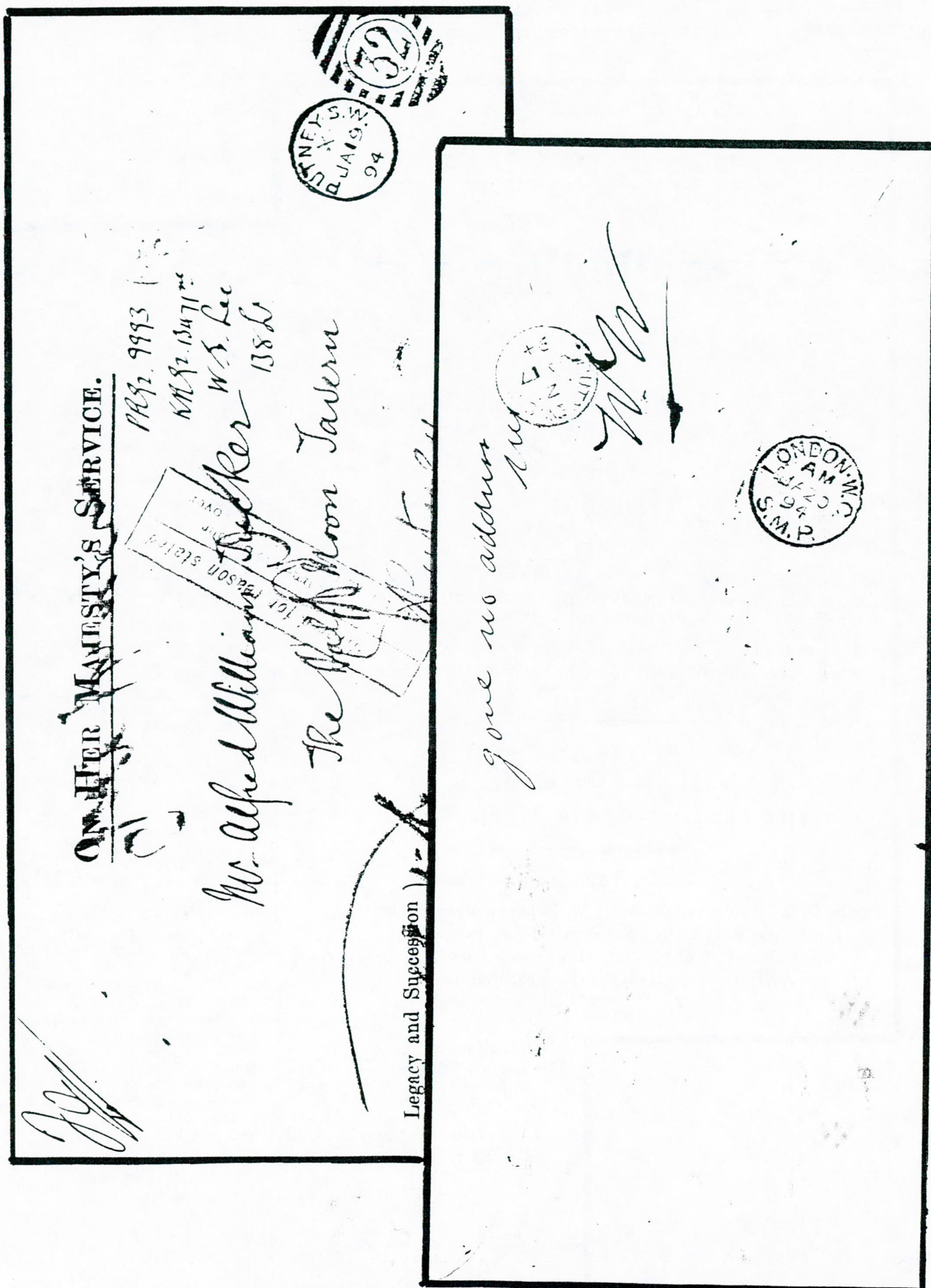
"..many Letters are refused on account of paying the Second Penny due on Delivery according to Act of Parliament..."

-o-o-o-o-o-

By Order of the General Post Office

ST. MARTINS PLACE DATESTAMP, from P Andrews

In Notebook 63/19 we illustrated an " AM " datestamp for 1883. Another example is provided here, again on a returned letter, where the addressee was not at home to the tax office.



LOCKIE'S TOPOGRAPHY OF LONDON

In the course of book browsing, Leslie Bond has secured a superb 1810 publication which provides a description and accurate direction to every Square, Street, Lane, Court etc etc. The first page is reproduced below to give an idea of the detail provided. He had kindly written with an offer to forward details to any reader interested in a particular place. Please write to him c/o the Editor.

LOCKIE'S
TOPOGRAPHY
 OF
London,
 GIVING
 A CONCISE LOCAL DESCRIPTION OF
 AND ACCURATE DIRECTION TO EVERY
SQUARE, STREET, LANE, COURT,
DOCK, WHARF, INN, PUBLIC-OFFICE, &c.

IN THE
Metropolis
 AND ITS
ENVIRONS,

INCLUDING THE NEW BUILDINGS TO THE PRESENT TIME, UPON
 A PLAN NEVER HITHERTO ATTEMPTED.

The Whole ALPHABETICALLY arranged, and comprising the Description
 of more than Three Thousand Places, the Names of which are not
 to be found upon any of the Maps of the present Year.

TAKEN FROM ACTUAL SURVEY BY

JOHN LOCKIE,

INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS to the PHOENIX FIRE-OFFICE.

London:

Sold by G. and W. NICOL, Pall-Mall; W. MILLER, Albemarle-Street;
 J. HATCHARD, Piccadilly; J. WHITE and Co. Fleet-Street;
 J. MAWMAN, Poultry; J. M. RICHARDSON, Cornhill;
 and DARTON and HARVEY, Gracechurch-Street.

1810.

[8s. Boards.

Abingdon - Buildings, Abingdon-
 Street, Westminster,—at 17, near
 Millbank-street, leading to the
 Thames.
 Abingdon-Place, Abingdon-Street,
 Westminster,—3 doors on the L.
 from Old Palace-yard, leading to
 the stone wharf

LOCKIE'S
OF LONDON.

A

Abingdon-Street, Westminster,—
 the first W. parallel to the Thames,
 extending from Old Palace-yard
 to Millbank-street.

Abingdon-Street (Little)— at 10,
 Abingdon-street, is that number of
 doors on the L. from Old Palace-
 yard, leading to the Thames.

Academy-Court, Chancery-Lane,—
 at 93, near Cary-st. and opposite
 Symonds inn.

Acorn-Alley, Bishopsgate-without,—
 at 125, about a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile on the
 L. north from the church, leading
 to Skinner-street.

Acorn-Court, Rolls-Buildings,—
 the first on the R. from 117, Fetter-
 lane, is continued by White's-
 alley and Bream's buildings, to 30,
 the middle of Chancery-lane.

Acton-Place, Lock's-Fields, Wal-
 worth,—extends from the end of
 York-st. and is the continuation
 of it to Camden-street leading to
 East-lane.

Acton-Street, Gray's-Inn-Lane,—is
 about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile N. from Guilford-
 st. Foundling-hospital, on the R.
 and the same distance S. from
 Battle-bridge on the L.

Adam and Eve-Court, Oxford-Street,
 at 67, the N. side, nearly op. the
 Pantheon, leading to 61, Castle-st.

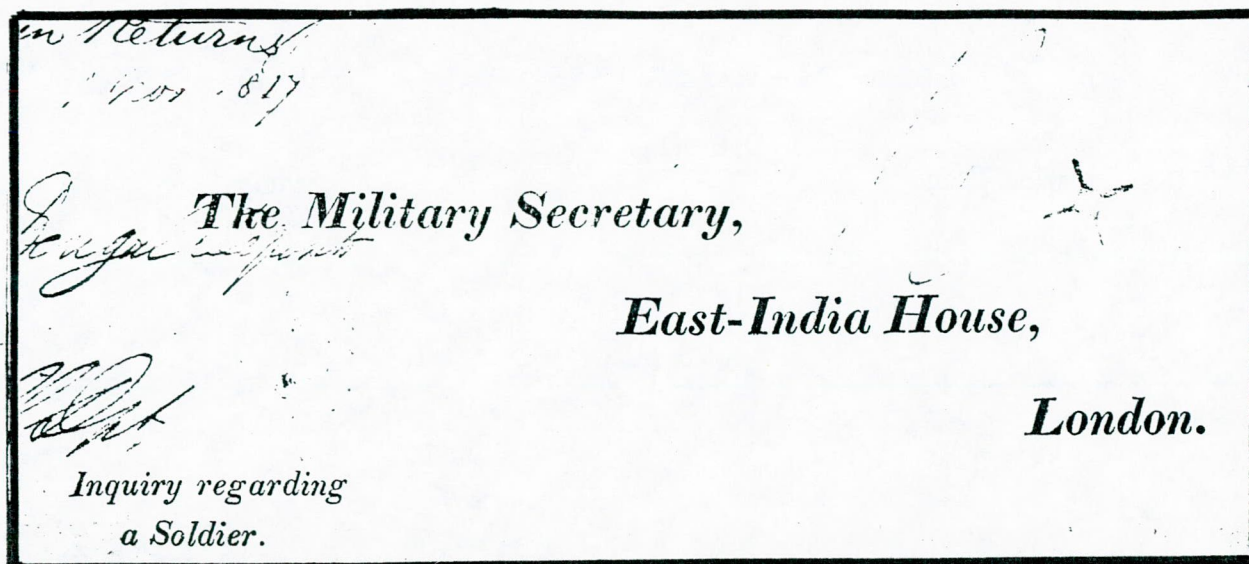
Adam and Eve-Court, White-Cross-
 Street, St. Luke's,—at 106, about
 the middle of the E. side, nearly
 op. Playhouse-yard.

B

Adam

STAMPS USED IN THE FOREIGN DEPARTMENT from Grace Dove

Appearing on page 157 of the London catalogue is a composite of stamps used in the Foreign Department G.P.O. Foreign Post Office. 17 July 1838. Two marks are the curious star like mark which appears on the obverse of the cover shown here.



It carries, as a back stamp in the same ink as the mark, L14d, cross/ 2 FE 2 / 1837. Although ink color is not always a sure guide on use of two stamps by the same office it can be supporting evidence. What is needed are details of at least one or two more examples. Barrie Jay has suggested it may have been misdirected to the Foreign Office.

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

EDITOR'S NOTE.....

In a browse through some old material, the Proof Impression Bool, Volume 2, page 23 copy shown on the next page shows such a stamp being issued 9 June 1835, though the office receiving it is not stated: it may have been Charing Cross but this is not likely.

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

A NEW GENERAL POST DISCOVERY

On a recently acquired piece of mail the Editor was delighted to find a hitherto unrecorded item to add to the series of "Found Open" stamps relating to the General Post.

*Found open in the General
Post and Resealed at Woolley
Hole.*



The stamp was struck in a medium blue ink and the accompanying seal, struck across the flap, is similar to a Bishop, the lower half being solid and the top containing, it would seem, the initials of the Officer. It is clear a great many of these stamps must have been applied, since Joseph Henry Norman Newport (identified from salary records) has his initials incorporated in the design. Sans serif tall capitals conform with the later period when these marks are usually found.

Dating this item has proved difficult as the date stamp is faint and seems to read "1988" which is patently wrong. It might be 1858, January 25 but more examples need to be located to clear this point.

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

Stamps Used In The Foreign Department....

23

To what Place	Date when sent	Stamps
	1832 March 19 th	FRANKFURT MA 15 1832
	June 26 - 1832	HUDLEIGH MA 15 1832
	April 4 1833	HELMSTEDT MA 30 1833
	April 4 1833	HATTERS MA 30 1833
Choring & Brand 3 May Apri	1833	1833 3 MY 3 CX
	Sept. 7 th	★
	1835 June 9 -	✕

DETAINED FOR POSTAGE by Martin Townsend

These three pages show different printings of the letter sent to addressees when an underpaid letter had been detained. Quite why the Post Office went to the expense of writing to the addressee when there was a well established office in London, just round the corner as it were. Would readers with other examples of this letter please send copies to the Editor for inclusion in the Handbook section dealing with Maritime Mail.

GENERAL POST-OFFICE, LONDON,

24 Jan

131 5-

Sn

Ship

THERE is a Letter at this Office addressed to you² which cannot be forwarded until the Postage of *2/3* is paid; if therefore you will desire any of your Correspondents in London, to call at the Foreign Post-Office, Lombard-Street, and pay the above Postage, it will be immediately sent to you.

By Command of the Postmaster General,

F. FREELING,
Secretary.

No. ~~1353~~
1369

Your Correspondent must be instructed to inquire for
the Letter by the above Number.

London
24 Jan^r 1815
P. Freeling to
R. Scott
recd. 10 April
1815

On His Majesty's Service.

R. Scott Esq^r
care of Mess^{rs} Newton Gordon
Murdoch & Scott

Francis Freeling.

Madaira

GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON.

June 21st 18 49
THERE is a *W. L.* Letter **N^o. 16041**
at this Office, directed to you, which cannot be
forwarded until the Postage of *2/8*
is paid; if therefore you will desire one of
your Correspondents in *London*, to call at
the *Inland Post-Office, St. Martin's-le-grand*,
between the hours of Ten and Four o'Clock,
and pay the above Postage, it will be
immediately sent according to the address.

By Command of the Postmaster General,

W. L. MABERLY,

Secretary.

*Please forward the above
and charge Mr. Rothschild
with the postage*

Your Correspondent must be particularly in-
structed to inquire for the Letter by its Number.

On Her Majesty's Service

John S. Maberly, Esq.
PT
Cable det. London 1849
PAID
1849

W. L. Maberly.

R. L. B.—No. 21.

GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON,

185-8

12 ap

THERE is a Letter N^o. *3000*
 at this Office, directed to ~~you~~, which cannot be
 forwarded until the postage of *8*
 be paid; if, therefore, you will desire one of your
 Correspondents to call at the Returned Letter
 Branch of the Circulation Department, between
 the hours of ten and four o'clock (on Saturdays
 between the hours of ten and one) and pay the
 amount above-mentioned, the Letter will be sent
 according to the address; ~~or, if you will return~~
 this Notice to me, *distinctly* stating to whom
 you wish the Letter to be delivered, your request
 will be complied with.

*Your Correspondent must be particularly instructed
 to inquire for the Letter by its number.*

ROWLAND HILL,

Secretary.

H & G 6 Rms 2 | 58



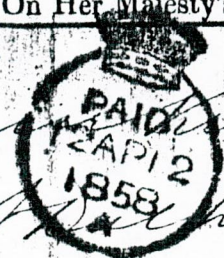
Dalhousie
Rowland Hill
1858

PAID
 APR 13
 1858

H. Bokenham

On Her Majesty's Service.

The Marquis of Dalhousie
Edinburgh



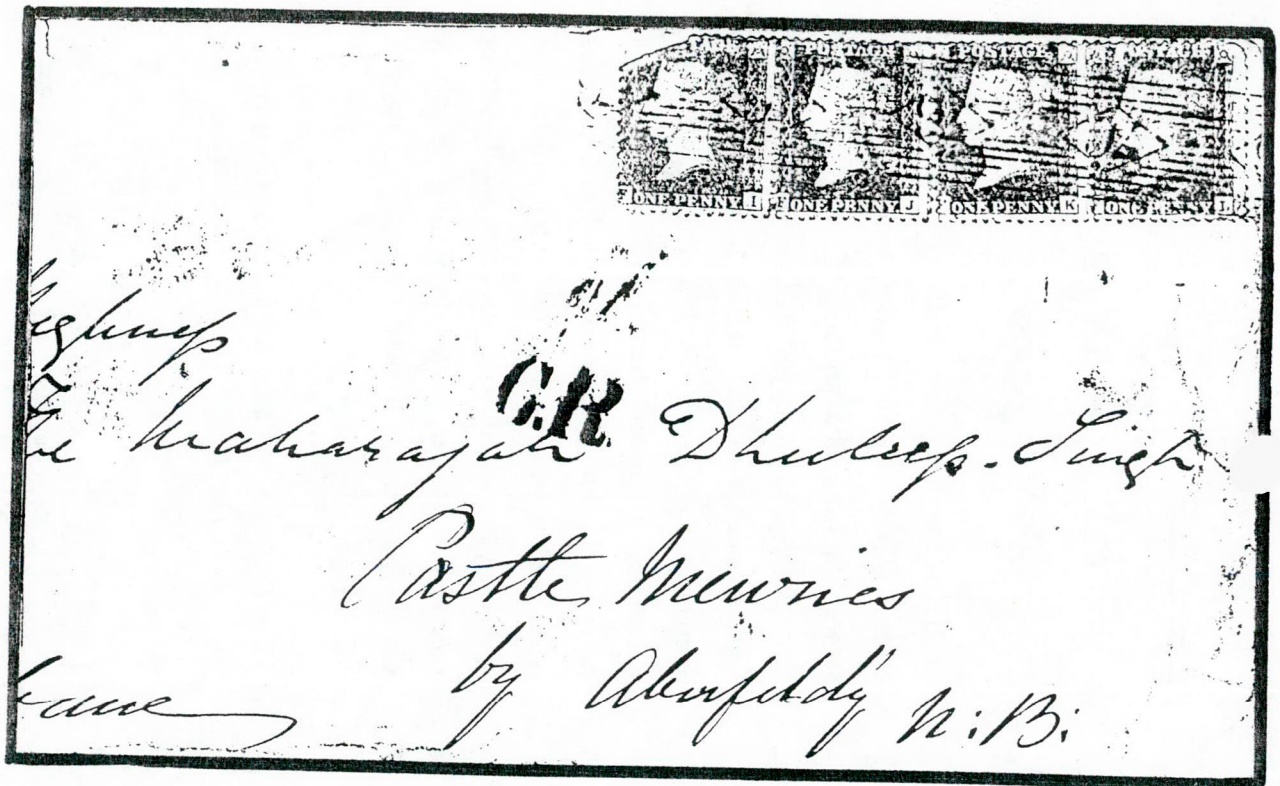
General Post Office.

Edinburgh

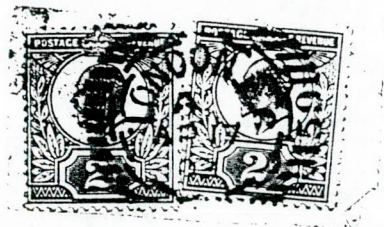
THREE FROM THE POT

The three items illustrated here have become separated from the sender's covering letter, so the Editor's apologies.

The first is of the Inland 76 roller which, according to James MacKay, was made by Kirkwood's of Edinburgh. It is extremely rare. This particular example is dated 10th. June, 1857

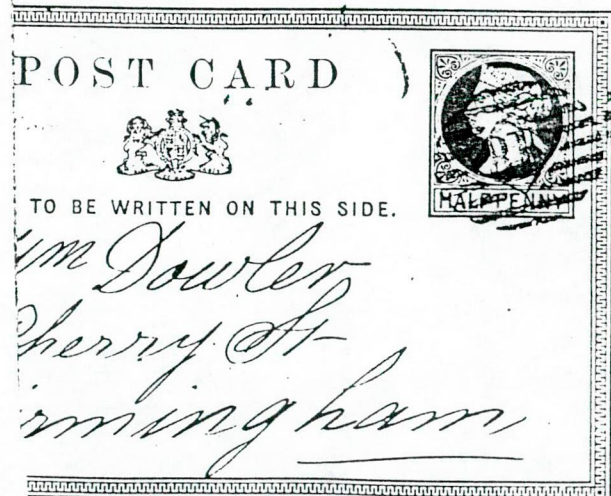


The next is on a pair of KE 7 2d adhesives which some misguided soul reduced from the original cover to a tight piece. The date is 17th. April, 1903, London EC office. This stamp must be one of the rarest of the twentieth century. Could there still be examples, on complete cover, lurking in some general collection?



The third, dated 30th. August 1872 is that very scarce duplex 81 of the Inland Branch. Seen here on a part card, with most of the right hand element off the card, a very useful item to have in ones collection. Can any reader provide a good example of the complete strike?

If the originator of these three would drop a note to the Editor, due acknowledgement will be made.



DEPTFORD CROSS POST, from Peter Bathe

In a ' Notebook ' (80/16) Martin Willcocks talked of a ' suspension ' of the Deptford cross post of 1844-59 during the autumn of 1854 and the downgrading, at that time, of the status of the Deptford office, from that of Post Town to simple receiving House.

I cannot, however, find any documentary evidence for this. Martin's comments were based on some examples of letters from that part of SE London served by the cross post (Deptford itself, Woolwich, Plumstead, Shooters Hill, etc) which went via the Inland Office to places in Kent and not, as expected, via the cross post.

I, too, have a number of examples, all but one from Plumstead to Rochester, which did not use the cross post and their dates are 10 Sept 1853, 29 April and 13 Nov (ex Shooters Hill) 1854, 22 Nov 1856 and 14 May 1859.

Examples which did use the cross post are known for 28 June 1853, 26 Oct 1854, 6 June 1857, 19 Aug 1858 and others.

Because of the overlap of dates, particularly in 1853 and 1854, it would appear there was more than one route for mail from SE London to Kent, rather than there having been an hiatus in the cross post service as Martin suggests.

The Deptford cross post was established to maintain a service which had begun in 1835 with the Shooters Hill cross post linked to the Dover Mail Coach. The Shooters Hill cross post would have been impossible to continue with, once the railways took over the carriage of mail to Kent in 1844 as Shooters Hill was too far from the railway line.

The original Shooters Hill cross post offered the public two advantages: a saving in cost and a saving in time over the route via central London. The cost advantage was negated with the introduction of Uniform Penny Post in 1840 but the time advantage remained.

The last post from Woolwich for letters to connect with the Night Mails via London was 4 pm., but the Shooters Hill cross post allowed letters for Kent to be posted at Woolwich as late as 7 pm (slightly earlier at Greenwich). It also allowed letters from Kent to be delivered with the first morning delivery, rather than with the noon delivery, as with other General Post letters. It was this time advantage, slightly modified, which was retained with the Deptford cross post.

The main Night Mails dispatch from Woolwich was still 4 pm., with the Deptford cross post used for letters posted up to 6.45 pm. at Woolwich (later, now, at Greenwich). Again, there was an earlier delivery of Kent letters. In addition, the cross post was extended to serve places in Surrey and Sussex, as well as Kent.

However, there was always more than one dispatch of mails from Woolwich to London during the day and more than one mail to Kent from London.

While pre-1840 all (or virtually all) letters from Woolwich to Kent were held for the cross post because of the cheaper postage, it was no longer necessary to do this after UPP. As yet I know of no letters for the period 1840 to May 1844 between SE London and Kent which did not go through Shooters Hill but there is no reason why a letter posted, for example, at Greenwich early in the day should not have gone via London to catch the Dover Day Mail.

After the railways took over in 1844, certainly by the 1850s as the volume of correspondence grew and collections and deliveries became more frequent, there were positive advantages to both customers and the Post Office to send letters posted early in the day via London and not hold them for the cross post.

The advantage to the public was often an earlier delivery of the correspondence.

THE OLD KENT ROAD

For no better reason than it evokes memories for anyone who lives in south Lond the Editor has a small sideline comprising material from the Old Kent Road. If readers have any spare material it could well find a welcome home.

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

Deptford Cross Post.....

at its destination. For the Post Office, the advantage was a reduction in the volume of letters which needed to be handled at Deptford in the short space of time between the cross post mail cart arriving and the train down from London.

Indeed, towards the end of the Deptford cross post, it could well have been all letters posted before 4 pm at Greenwich or Woolwich went via London and the cross post was only used for late letters, even though the 4 pm dispatch connected with the same night train as the cross post.

The end of the Deptford cross post was signalled in a minute of 26th. September 1859 in which it was proposed to down grade Deptford.

However, there is some evidence to suggest the service continued into 1860 and after it was eventually ended, pressure from local people in Woolwich brought about the introduction of a late fee service for up to $\frac{3}{4}$ hour after the 4 pm post - far all night mails, not just those to Kent and Sussex. This late fee service - of which I have not heard of any examples surviving - apparently lasted until about 1868.

I can add a little on the different types of Deptford cds used on cross post letters but I must first correct Martin's statement that the Shooters Hill cross post ended on 10th. May, 1844. I have seen an example of 21st. May, 1844 from Greenwich to Rochester still using the Shooters Hill service. Further, the original minute discussing the establishment of the Deptford cross post talks of waiting until after other aspects of the transfer from coach to rail for the Dover mail had settled down before starting the Deptford scheme.



The original large double arc cds was issued to Deptford on the 1st. June, 1844: the earliest recorded use of which I am aware is 25th. July. Another example is known for 6th. August, 1844 on a letter to Guildford from Greenwich. This shows just how far to the west the Deptford cross post linked.

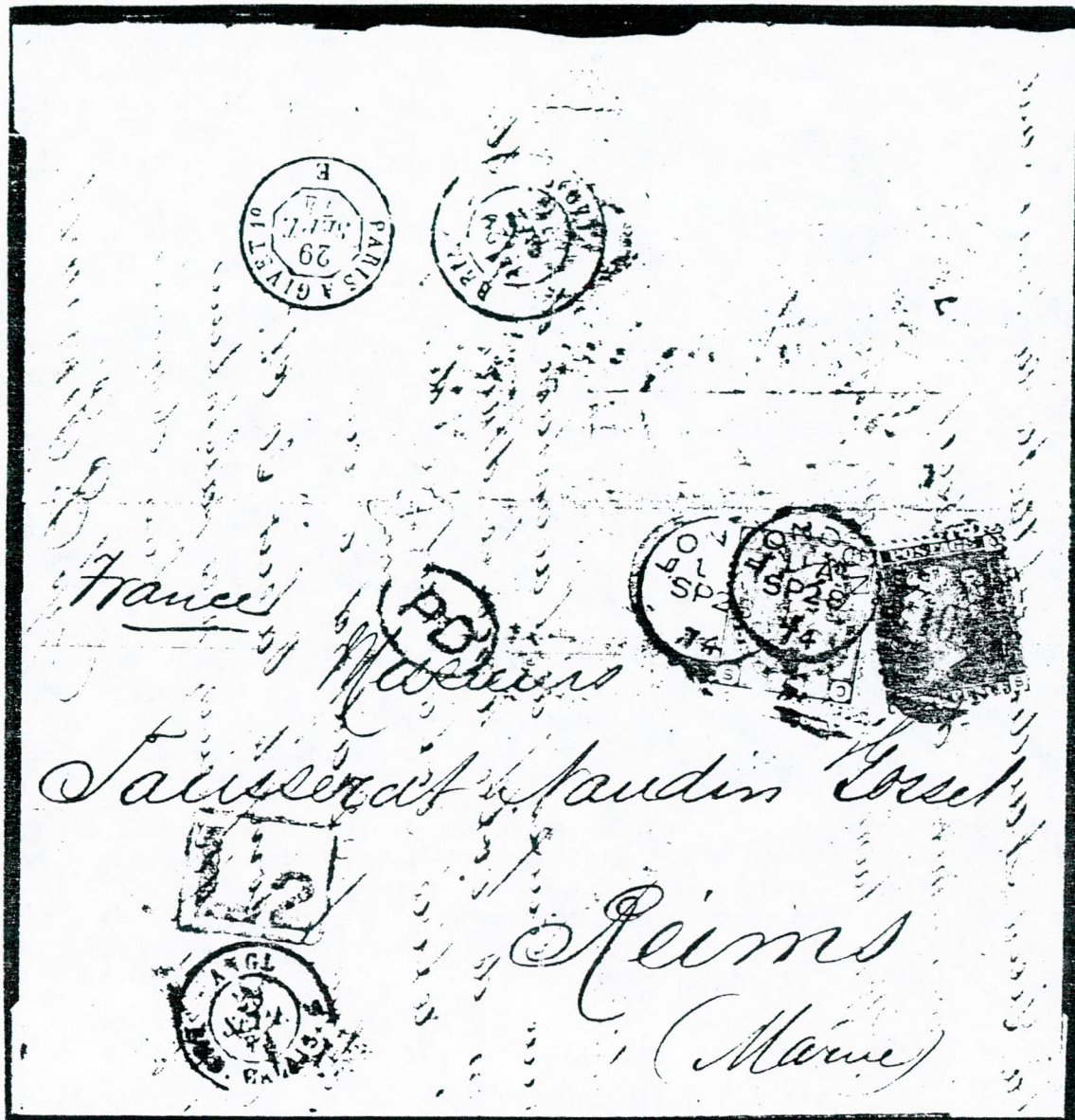
A similar large double arc cds but with wider spaced lettering, possibly a re-cut - appears on a letter from Tunbridge to Peckham for 28th July, 1853. A smaller single circle date stamp for 19th. August, 1858 from Chatham to Greenwich has been seen. This could tie-up with a period in the history of the Deptford office following the death of the postmaster, William Warcup, in September 1856 and the subsequent operation of the office, on a temporary basis by a Post Office 'trouble-shooter' a Mr. Crabb. John Atkins was given the permanent appointment in January 1857 and the small single ring stamp could have been issued at that time.

Further examples from readers could assist in clarifying the dating.

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

THE L OF LONDON, by Horton Roger

The item shown here went from London to Reims, being posted in London on the 28th. September, 1874 and receiving a Paris transit stamp for the following day. The 5d. value of adhesives are cancelled with the 100 London duplex, code UA(?).



The rate to France was 4d for the first half ounce, so presumably the sender paid the extra penny to cover the late fee. Why should, therefore, the boxed L2 have been applied, unless the sender apid a second additional penny in cash? The letter carried the ' PD ' - paid to destination - stamp.

There have been a number of contributions in Notebook over the years. Perhaps a reader would care to summarise the information to date and provide a less fragmented record ?

(Editor - yes PLEASE!!)

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

AP 16 1880 : A DOUBLE MYSTERY IN THE LONDON PROOF BOOK, by Maurice BARETTE.



Fig. 1
Original
Proofs



Fig. 2
Retouched
Proofs



Fig. 3
Squared circle
Proofs

On page 71 of Vol. 39 of the Date Stamp Proof Impression Books can be seen three very similar impressions of a small octagonal stamp reading LONDON, all three with code letter H (Fig. 1 and 2), and two very similar impressions of a Type I squared circle reading LONDON.E.C., with the same code H (a 3rd identical impression is on page 72) (Fig. 3).

1 - Fancy Geometric, Type I A.

In 1984, Stanley F. Cohen, in association with Daniel G. Rosenblat and myself, published a monograph on "London Fancy Geometric Postmarks". The first Type in this series is the small octagon referred to above, called FG Type I A. It was not mentioned by Stitt Dibden, though it shows in the Proof Book, where these are the earliest proofs of FG's of which usage has been recorded.

The three proofs are so similar that they were obviously struck by the same hammer, and we had inferred that only one hammer had been manufactured and proofed three times, which anyhow was rather unusual. But the recorded strikes were similar enough to cause this theory to be credited and we did not indulge in a deep research on this point.

I recently happened to have a look at a page in my collection where the stamps cancelled with this FG I A are displayed and was suddenly surprised to discover that some strikes showed the D of LONDON rounder than others. I at once had a photocopy of the page made on tracing paper and checking with this showed that the strikes could be separated into three series and appeared to have been impressed by three different hammers :

- 1st FG I A (which fits the three proofs), with elongated D and more or less oval O's (Fig. 4) ; recorded usage MY 1 80 - JY 22 80.
- 2nd FG I A, with the O's slightly smaller and more oval ; octagon and letters are not set at the same angle as in the 1st I A : when letters coincide, octagons do not and vice versa (Fig. 5) ; recorded usage MY 24 80 - JY 14 80.
- 3rd FG I A, octagon and letters superimpose to 2nd I A, but D and O's are rounder and L also slightly differs (Fig. 6) ; recorded usage MY 11 80 - JY 29 80.



Fig. 2
One of the proofs



Fig. 4
1st FG I A



Fig. 5
2nd FG I A



Fig. 6
3rd FG I A

There may be another clue to identify these hammers, but more examples are needed to confirm it, as my 16 strikes are too small a number to be reliable.

- 1st I A seems to have code letters M, N, O and P.
- 2nd I A seems to have only code letter F.
- 3rd I A seems to have only code letter E.

Some officials in the GPO were not in favour of so small "combined stamps" and the hammers were retired after about three months of use, before they were worn. They were replaced by FG I B hammers (23 mm octagons instead of 18.5 mm), and by other Fancy Geometric designs.

I should be grateful if readers can confirm the above theory and send me their data on this FG I A Type.

2- Type I Squared Circles.

The three proofs of Fig. 3 have been identified as being the origin of the three recorded Type I A hammers with identification letters A, B and C prefixed to a time code (these letters are Hammer Identification, abbreviated as HI). Again there were no obvious differences between them to enable identification with the corresponding proofs, which also appear to be very similar.

The above case of the FG I A hammers, proofed on the same page, prompted me to have a closer look at them ; the same process of transparent photocopying showed at once that these three proofs also were struck from the same hammer, the one which was to be fitted with HI A.

These three Type I A hammers are recorded from mid-May to mid-June 1880 (Fig. 7, 8 and 9). Contrary to the FG I A hammers, they wore quickly and the three of them had to be recut four times until they were retired in October 1882.



Fig. 3
One of the proofs



Fig. 7
I A-A



Fig. 8
I A-B



Fig. 9
I A-C

What happened in the GPO proofing room on AP 16 1880 ? Twice they applied the unorthodox procedure of striking the same hammer three times, instead of proofing each one of the three different hammers as they should have done. This was the cause of our error, for we could not imagine that such a breach of the rules was possible. As to the squared circles, differences between I A-A, I A-B and I A-C were not so important and could be explained by their rapid wear.

The proofs are illustrated by kind permission of the Post Office Archives ; the FG I A ones were faintly impressed and needed a good deal of retouching ; I also darkened some pale lines in the squared circle proofs ; other illustrations are retouched photocopies of strikes in my collection. Such manual interventions may account for small inaccuracies that can appear in the drawings.

M. Barette, 32 rue Jean de La Fontaine, 76800 Saint Etienne du Rouvray, France.

Addendum : first data from four friends appear to confirm the above code letter scheme and extend period of use of 2nd I A hammer (already noted in the article).

COLLECTING BRITISH SQUARED CIRCLE POSTMARKS

Members interested in these marks will, no doubt, already have on their bookshelves well thumbed copies of the two existing publications on London issues. This latest publication by Stanley F. Cohen weighs in at close to 1½kg and, effectively, covers the whole subject, including the earlier works. Despite this duplication, or rather because of it, the opportunity of undating and revising has been taken, with the result that members will have to buy the single tome, even if their interests are limited. If that sounds like an adverse comment I have to admit that is so. Not many will wish to collect the whole country and many London collectors may feel they would have been better served had the single volume been presented with the three sections made available as separate publications. On balance, I wonder if they would be as well served since, no doubt, much material outside their immediate field will come their way and by having the complete work, they may find their " spare " material has unrealised interest, both postally and financially.

Collecting Squared Circle Postmarks.....

What of this 1½kg of information? In my copy there are some binding errors, which slightly disconcert but which do not detract too much. The introduction deserves to be read most carefully before attempting to check examples.

Section I " The Squared Circle Story " gives a lucid explanation of the mark, not the least dealing with the " Hammer Identification ", which forms the keystone of all the work by Stanley Cohen and his co-workers. I say lucid but you would be well advised to re-read until all is understood before going onto the other sections.

The Provincial Offices starts with a County by County listing of the offices, thus allowing a County collector to identify the places of particular interest which are dealt with in an alphabetical order nationally. Thus Sandy in Bedfordshire is followed by Saxmundham of Suffolk. There are no page numbers to this index, the value of which would, I think, have been marginal but some may find it a drawback.

Section III deals with the London offices, with Maurice Barette as the principal author. The contents do cover ground already dealt with, as already noted, but with the page numbers running from 265 to 428 there is a great deal of new ground covered. Dealt with are the head offices, the branch offices and the suburban district offices. Each section is covered in great detail and the tracing of the recuts, several of these being made to some individual marks shows an attention to research worth remarking. There is the same helpful listing under Districts of the local offices which featured earlier with the County material with a straight alpha listing, this showing the district letters, which aids cross referencing.

Users are invited to report corrections, additions and new discoveries. I gather some quite startling discoveries have been made, this despite the authors having examined many thousands, if not tens of thousands of individual items.

For those of us used to identification by measurement, the Hammer Identification requires a lateral jump not easily made but from my enquiries of collectors of this mark it would appear to be not only acceptable but to work. Given a theory has been proposed and tested practically, with acceptable results, this may fairly be described as a scientific study.

The book is dedicated to the memory of Ken Willington, who dies in 1977 without whom " it is unlikely that anything would have been undertaken, much less accomplished". A fitting tribute and worth appearing on every London collectors book shelf.

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

LONDON GAZETTE CANCELLATION from W.V. Evans

The photocopy of the 1880 5/- crimson is tied to a small piece by a cancellation quite unknown to me. It reads :

LONDON GAZETTE
4 JAN 1901
CANCELLED
3 APR 1901

all within a rectangular single frame.



Can a reader throw any light on the purpose of this mark; it appears to have a duty or accounting function ?

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

POSTAL HISTORY TODAY

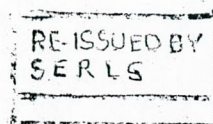
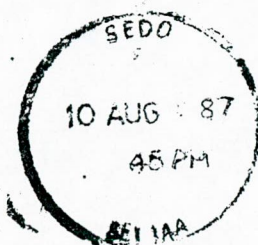
Many of those considering postal history look at the prices some of the most desirable items and carry on collecting tea bag cards. The advice we can all give is to collect that which is current and, as the pocket permits, make brief forays into times past.

An example of something probably rather scarcer than a black on cover turned up during the wet summer months of 1987.

One of our members had sent in copies of his Pearson Hill material. Hearing nothing from the Editor, he wrote enquiring as to the latter's well known slow response rate. To cut a long tale sideways, the envelope eventually reached the Editor, who noted some curious postal markings and reached certain conclusions.



NA
739
3/6/87



Now as can be seen, by courtesy of a copier and an unsteady hand " assisting " the envelope started off on 28 May 1987 in Southampton. It was very clearly addressed but measuring about 11" x 13", with a stout card insert, would not go through the lesser proportioned letter box. Endorsed in manuscript N A / 739 / 3/6/87 it went back to East Dulwich Postmens Post Office. Either there, which seems most probable, or in SEDO two poor impressions of the boxed " Undelivered etc " were struck in black.

No further attempt was made to deliver at that stage. It must have been sent to SEDO, though why it was not opened to discover a return address is not clear. (n.b.- always put a return address on mail.)

On 10 Aug 1987 at ? 45PM to SEDO decided to have another go. Apart from the datestamp, officials applied what must be a howling modern rarity, the small boxed RE-ISSUED BY / SE R.L.S. (there may be dots between all letters, very faint).

Not prepared to take too much notice of stout card inserts the postman this time smartly folded the large envelope and wacked it through the letter box, thus providing the Editor with some copy not intended by the original contributor.

The envelope cannot be mounted in its entirety as it is. To trim it to size would destroy why it was not delivered in the first place so it will have to be folded and written up with an insert as well as the album page carrying the story.

A good example of postal history in any era, postal markings which show the treatment of an item, that treatment recorded in a fairly permanent fashion on a page in Notebook and a practical demonstration of inexpensive W.P.B. material.