

GENERAL POST STAMPS (PART 2): STAMPS OF THE BRANCH OFFICES 1829 - 1857

compiled by John Sharp

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Stamps of the General Post Branch OfficesIntroduction

The Branch Offices were established after the opening of the ' new ' General Post Office at St. Martin's-le-Grand on 23rd. September, 1829. The ' old ' General Post Office had been located in Lombard Street since 1678.

The stamps used at the Branch Offices were, with one exception, all based upon the shape of a Maltese Cross. There were both Paid and Unpaid varieties. In all cases initials were used to indicate the name of the office and the date was always included. As a result of the date-stamping being done at the Branch Offices time was saved when the letters they processed were received at the Chief Office.

With the introduction of Uniform Penny Postage no alterations were made in the stamps of the Branch Offices. Unpaid types were not only used on unpaid letters but as date stamps on letters prepaid by adhesive postage stamps. No obliterating appears to have been done at the Branch Offices.

The ' Maltese Cross ' date stamps of the Branch Offices continued in use until the division of London into ten districts, which was carried out during 1857 and '58. However, only a few examples are known with dates of 1858.

Notes on the Tabulated Results which Follow the Illustrations

The tables following the illustrations from each Branch Office are generally self-explanatory. The " date when sent " and " official remarks " are as recorded in the various volumes of " Post Office Date Stamp Impressions (Steel) ". The recorded varieties of color and periods of use are the result of a questionnaire sent out with Notebook No.29 and subsequent investigation.

Sometimes the date of the impression in the proof book does not correspond to the ' date when sent '. In these instances, for reference purposes, the impressed date is entered within brackets below the ' date when sent '. However, if the dates are the same, then the date is entered once only. If there is no handwritten date of issue but merely an impression of the stamp, then the date of the impression has been entered, it is signified as such by being contained within brackets.

A dash (-) in the ' rarity code ' column indicates the omission of a code due to the stamp not being included in the initial survey. It is possible collectors may have listed examples under one of a similar type.

Because of limited space, certain information for the ' Notes ' column has been abbreviated. In cases when further comment is necessary, an asterisk (*) in the column denotes this can be found under the main table.

The abbreviation ' S-T ' in the ' Notes ' column has been used to indicate the possibility of a number of sub-types recorded within the ' periods of use '.

Sometimes a recorded date falls well outside the general period. This could be due to either (a) an error by the collector when comparing and recording types or (b) the use of an old stamp by the postal clerk.

To avoid confusion over the basic ' periods of use ' the rogue date has been omitted.

On the theme of points raised in the two preceding paragraphs there is sometimes a concentrated period of recordings. The letter ' M ' prefixes such periods in the ' Notes ' column, e.g. M.1847 = majority recorded during 1847.

The Illustrations

A new numbering system has been adopted. The number is prefixed by the initial letter(s) of the office for instant identification. The numbers below 100 are used for the unpaid stamps; numbers 100 upwards for the paid stamps. As a cross reference, the numbering used in the ' Notebook ' enquiry which is based on the Alcock and Holland system, has been placed within brackets following the new number given under the illustration.

Rarity and Price

To assess the value of an item by merely attributing a rarity code based on numbers recorded would be unwise. That few copies of a particular stamp have been recorded does not necessarily make it a valuable item.

It is possible a number of sub-types have been included within the range of a particular stamp. If every minor variety were recorded it would have a two-fold effect.

- (a) to deter collectors from recording by making the operation difficult and time consuming,
- (b) to produce types with a very high ' rarity code ' but of little collectable value.

New types have come from the survey making it difficult to establish a rarity code for these stamps. In such cases a code has not been included (ref. para 3 of Notes)

Rarity Codes Used

(For full details see Appendix A 'to ' London's Postal History ')

A.....Common
 B.....Average
 C.....Not easy to find
 D.....Difficult
 E.....Scarce
 F.....Rare
 G.....Very Rare
 H.....Very few exist
 GP0.....Proof Book entry only

The Branch Offices: Lombard Street (initials L.S.)

From Post Office Records the first date stamp was issued on 23rd. September, 1829, the day the G.P.O. was opened at the St. Martin's-le-Grand premises.

The early stamps were applied in blue but this soon gave way to red. However, at Lombard Street black ink replaced red for the unpaid stamps during 1834 and became the normal color for the single outline stamps until the 1850's, when red ink came back into favor. The large double outline stamps always appear in red.

It is believed a second Foreign Branch Office was established in London at Lombard Street between 1850 - 60. From the survey results it does appear the Lombard Street stamp type LS 11 was used by the department handling foreign mail during what may have been a trial period. A number of covers to the continent have been recorded during the early 1850's bearing LS 11 in black. The use of red ink for this stamp seems to have been reserved for internal mail. A special stamp for foreign mail had the initials F.U. above L.S. which are believed to have signified Foreign (Postage) Unpaid. This stamp, type LS 18, has not been recorded in use before 1855.

There are a few stamps belonging to Lombard Street with unexplained codes, e.g. Code B3 (type LS 12); Code B7 (type LS 17) and Code O (type LS 20). Due to the scarcity of covers bearing codes 'B7' and 'O' it has not been possible to put forward any theories. Examples of code B3, although more plentiful, do not give any clue for its application. It was possibly a code for special sorting.

When London was divided into ten districts, Lombard Street became a Branch of the East Central District Office.

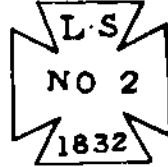
Branch Office Ref.	Date When Sent	Official Remarks	Color	Recorded Period of Use	Rarity Code	Notes
LS1	23. 9.29 (12. 8.29)		Blue Red	26. 9.29 - 30. 5.31 8. 2.32 - 14.11.32	B D	
LS2			Blue Red	12. 1.30 - 13. 7.30 14. 1.32	F F	
LS3	28.11.32 (2.11.32)		Black	4. 7.42	-	*
LS3A			Red	22. 1.33 - 20.11.33	E	
LS4			Black	18. 1.34 - 12. 8.53	A	S-T M.1834-45
LS5			Black	29. 5.39 - 9.11.52	A	S-T M.1948-52
LS6			Red Black	16. 9.41 - 10. 3.42 26. 5.42	- -	Similar to CX9
LS7	21. 9.42 21. 2.50	Additional Recut(sans serif date)	Red	25. 5.44 - 12. 2.56	A	M.1844-50
LS8			Black	23. 9.44 - 11.11.52	A	M.1846-47
LS9			Black	5. 7.47 - 26. 2.57	A	S-T M.1853-57
LS9A			Red	14. 1.56 - 13.12.56	E	
LS10			Black	15.12.48	-	
LS11	5. 2.49 7. 9.55 (8. 9.55)	Recut	Black Red	5.10.49 - 6.10.53 21. 5.49 - 27. 5.49	B B	*
LS12	21. 1.50 7. 9.55 (8. 9.55)	New Recut	Red	6. 1.52 - 5. 9.57	D	

LOMBARD STREET STAMPS

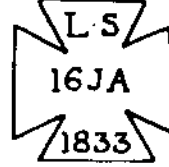
LS 1 (58)



LS 2 (68)



LS 3 (65/V1)



LS3A (65)



LS 4 (66)



LS 5 (66/V1)



LS 6 (72/V4)



LS 7 (74)



LS 8 (72)



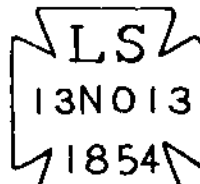
LS 9 (73)



LS9A (73/V1)



LS10 (66/V2)



LS11 (79)



LS12 (83)



LS13 (80/V1)



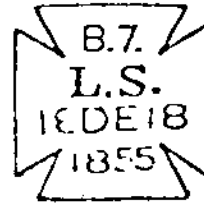
LS13 (80)



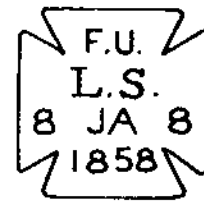
LS15 (73/V3)



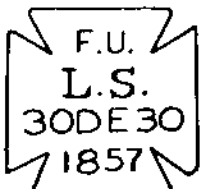
LS16 (73/V2)



LS17 (84)



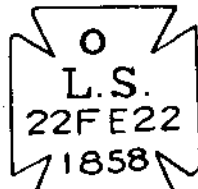
LS18 (82)



LS18A (82/V1)



LS19 (78)



LS20 (82/V2)



LS100 (713)



LS101



LS101A (715/V1)



LS102 (714)



LS103 (&19/V3)



LS104 (719/V2)



LS105 (710/V2)



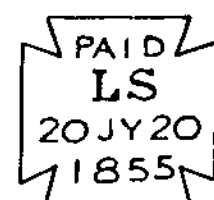
LS106 (719/V1)



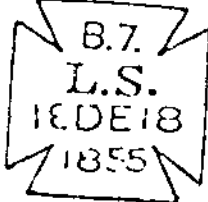
LS107 (720/V1)



LS108 (719)



LS108A

Branch Office Ref.	Date When Sent	Official Remarks	Color	Recorded Period of Use	Rarity Code	Notes
LS13	23. 1.50 7. 9.55 (8. 9.55)	New Recut	Red	12. 8.50 - 2. 8.53	B	Inner Points Distinctly Rounded
LS14	(20. 7.55)		Red	30. 4.51 - 9. 3.57	C	
LS15			Black	27. 8.53 - 13. 2.55	-	
LS16			Black	2. 3.53 - 27.10.55	A	
LS17	15.12.55 (18.12.55)	Lombard St. used in the ..?..Office	Red	30. 1.58 - 25. 3.58	H	*
To what place			Date when sent		Stamps	
<i>At St. Louis in the L.S. office</i>						
LS18			Black	19.11.55 - 17. 7.57)	C	*
LS18A			Black	5. 9.57 - 1. 2.58)		
LS19			Black	20. 4.57 - 6. 7.57	B	
			Red	8. 6.57		
LS20			Red	22. 2.58	H	*

THE PAID STAMPS:

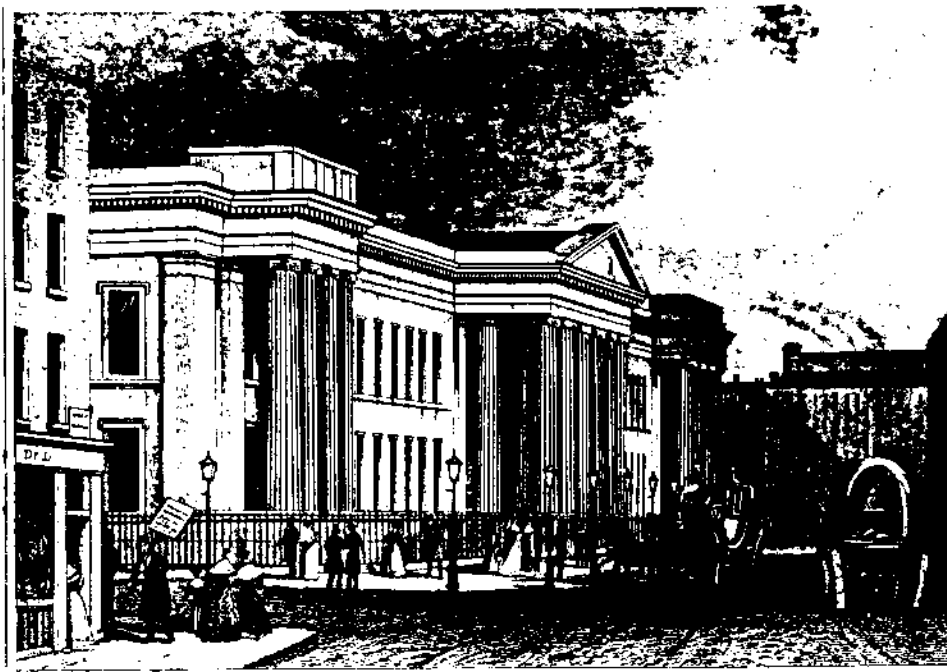
LS100	23. 9.29 (12. 8.29)		Red	26. 6.30 - 25. 8.52	E	*
LS101	28.11.32 (10.11.32)				-	Impression with day after month
LS101A			Red	10. 5.33 - 5.12.33	B	
LS102			Red	30. 1.34 - 16. 5.41	F	S-T *
LS103			Red	10. 6.35	-	
LS104			Red	5. 2.36 - 20. 1.40	D	
LS105	(23. 6.38)		Red	2. 3.40 - 28.11.40	-	*
LS106	4. 7.42 21. 2.50 7. 9.55 (8. 9.55)	New Stamps Recut(sans serif date) Recut(")	Red	8. 7.42 - 12. 8.47	C	
LS107	10.10.42 (12.10.42) 7. 9.55 (8. 9.55)	New & Additional Recut			-	*
LS108	23. 1.50 7. 9.55 (8. 9.55)	New Recut	Red	9. 7.50 - 5.11.57	C	M.1850-52
LS108A	(20. 7.55)		Red	12.12.57		

Notes * are given on the following page, each Branch Office ref. being quoted.

Notes on Lombard Street Stamps

- LS3 Impression copied from P.O. Records. No doubt the same stamp as LS3A but with date plugs transposed.
The 1842 recording in black requires verification.
Month abbreviated MA signifies MARCH.
- LS11 Refer to write up on Branch Office, page B2/4.
- LS17 One example recorded was on a small cutout giving no clue to use.
Refer to copy extract from impression book, volume 12.
Comment as to the illegible 'mystery' office would be appreciated.
- LS18 Refer to write up on Branch Office, page B2/4.
- LS18A No doubt the same stamp as LS18 but with the outer points on the S.E. corner flattened, presumably damaged at some time.
- LS20 Points on S.E. corner flattened as type LS18A.
The only example so far reported was used on internal mail of no apparent significance.
- LS100 On the original list reference was made to a double frame variety (713/V1).
To date no examples have been reported; it has, therefore, not been included in the table.
- LS102 On the original list two sub-types were included - viz: 714/V1 - stops after L & S: the only recorded example has been reclassified as type LS106.
714/V2 - double frame: only known double frame type is LS107.
- LS105 Similar stamps for Charing Cross (CX 102) and Vere Street (VS 103); all three dated 23rd. June, 1838.
- LS107 This double frame stamp, with CX 103, was not included in the original list on the questionnaire. Both appear to be rather scarce.

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



NEW POST OFFICE.
Mariners is Grand
LONDON

The Branch Offices: Charing Cross (initials CHX, CX or C+)

A date stamp in the maltese cross design was first issued for use at Charing Cross on 25th. January, 1830.

On the 3rd. May, 1833 a circular stamp was issued with the year at the top, day month day, across the centre and CX below. From the small numbers recorded its use does not appear to extend beyond 1833. From August a similar stamp is noted but with C+ instead of CX. It is believed this circular stamp was an experimental type not considered sufficiently distinctive and was, therefore, not brought into use at other Branch Offices.

Another type peculiar to Charing Cross was of the maltese cross design but the two vertical sides were curved (type CX14). This stamp can be found both in red and black; the use of black ink at Charing Cross was restricted to this type. Examples on cover often suggest some specialised duty but the lack of material restricts one in drawing any definite conclusions.

When London was divided into ten Districts, Charing Cross became a Branch of the West Central District Office.



CX1(60)



CX2(62)



CX2A(62/V1)



CX3(64)



CX4(64/V3)



CX5(69)



CX6(69/V1)

CX7(69/V2)
(69/V3)

CX8(60/V1)



CX9(72/V3)



CX10(72/V1)



CX11(64/V2)



CX12(64/V2)



CX13(64/V1)



CX14(70)



CX15(71)



CX16(77)



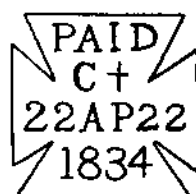
CX17(71/V2)



CX18(71/V1)



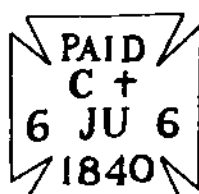
CX100(711)



CX101(712)



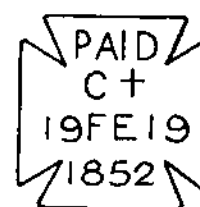
CX102(710/V1)



710(V1)



CX103(720/V2)



CX104(718)

Branch Office Ref.	Date When Sent	Official Remarks.	Color	Recorded Period of Use	Rarity Code	Notes
CX1	25. 1.30 (22. 1.30)	Second Stamp to be used on & from 12.3.36	Blue	20. 2.30 - 30.10.30	E	M.1831-33 *
CX2	3. 5.33		Red	23. 3.30 - 2.11.33	C	
CX2A			Red	1. 6.33 - 13. 7.33	H	
CX3			Red	12. 8.33 - 11.12.33	G	
CX4			Red	4. 1.34 - 28.11.36	C	
CX5	12. 3.36	Old Stamp Addl. New Figures	Red	13.10.37	-	*
CX6			Red	14. 7.36 - 25. 7.38	E	
CX7			Red	14.11.37 - 17. 6.39	E	M.1839
CX8	12. 3.42		Red	6. 8.3(9)- 2. 5.42	-	*
CX9			Red	1. 8.45 - 22. 4.46	E	*
CX10		New	Red	23. 6.42 - 27.10.42	-	Similar to LS6
CX11			Red	10.10.43 - 5. 4.48	C	
CX12			Red	19. 3.45 - 28. 1.54	B	S-T M.1849-51
CX13			Red	5. 4.46 - 20.10.48	B	
CX14	21. 2.50		Red	5. 1.50 - 2. 8.50	B	
CX15			Red	23. 2.50 - 1. 5.58	E	*
CX16			Black	22. 7.51 - 2. 5.57	E	
CX17			Red	16.11.52 - 31.10.56	B	S-T
CX18			Red	7.12.54 - 27. 6.57	B	M.1857
			Red	21. 7.55 - 21. 1.57	-	
			Red	26. 9.56	-	

Branch Office Ref.	Date When Sent	Official Remarks.	Color	Recorded Period of Use	Rarity Code	Notes
PAID STAMPS						
CX100	25. 1.30 (22. 1.30)		Red Blue	2. 3.30 - 28.11.33 5.11.30	E -	*
CX101			Red	14. 3.34 - 27. 5.37	E	S-T *
CX102	(23. 6.38) 22.12.43 (18.12.44)* 14. 2.45 (4. 2.45)	Repaired New Figures	Red	1. 8.38 - 11. 6.47	C	*
CX103	(29.10.40) - 10. 1.45 (4. 1.45)	Repaired New Figures 1 JAN 1843 New Figures	Red	31. 5.41	-	*
CX104	1.11.49	New	Red	3. 4.51- 24. 8.53	D	*

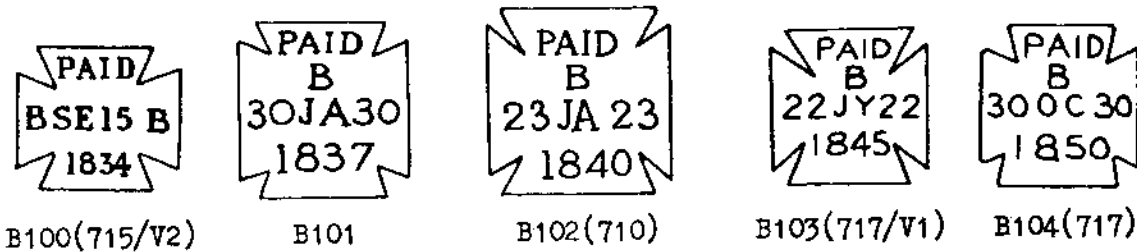
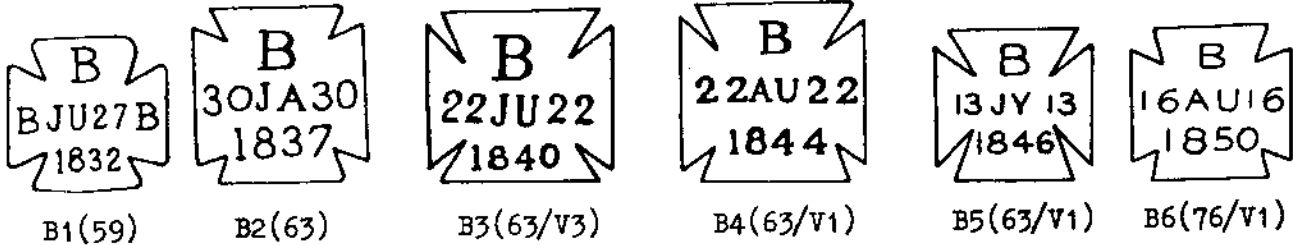
Notes * Additional Information

- CX1 Not to be confused with CX8 which was used at a later period, generally with the day after the month.
- CX2 Refer to write up on Branch Office, B2/8.
- CX4 Sides appear slightly curved.
- CX7 Originally illustrated in Notebook as types 69/V2 and 69/V3.
With 69/V2 the year was indistinct on the example copied and put in as 1830; now identified as 1839.
Type 69/V3 was illustrated with a bulge on the right hand side; this is thought to be due to either wear or application on an uneven surface thus causing distortion.
- CX8 See notes against CX1.
- CX14 Refer to write up on Branch Office, B2/8.
- CX100 No doubt the example recorded in blue was a case of the wrong ink pad being used.
March abbreviated MA.
- CX101 A single example reported with a double frame (712/V1) requires verification.
Possible type CX103.
- CX102 See note under LS105.
The date within the impression of the repaired stamp was 81 SE 18
Reversed figure 8 and wrong year : 1844
- CX103 See note against LS 107, B2/7.
- CX104 On the original list reference was made to a double frame stamp (718/V1).
To date no example has been recorded; it has, therefore, been omitted from the table.

The Branch Offices: Borough (in Southwark) (initial B)

The Borough Office was issued with a date stamp on 4th. February, 1830. The first type can be found in blue with subsequent types in red, although black is occasionally found and strangely the color green has been noted under a particular type. The few examples recorded in black give no indication of specialised duty. As with the use of green ink, their use is no doubt irregular.

During March, 1857 the office at 170, High Street, Southwark became the South Eastern District Office.



Branch Office Ref.	Date When Sent	Official Remarks	Color	Recorded Period of Use	Rarity Code	Notes
B1	4. 2.30 (1. 1.30)		Blue	2. 4.30 - 25.10.30	F	Basic Stamp D
B2			Green Black Red	31.12.36 - 26. 9.37	F E E	
B3	(23. 6.38)	Repaired on 6 Jan 1842 Repaired on 25 Feb 1843	Red Green	30.11.39 - 22. 6.40 11. 4.39 - (9. 5.39)	E	
B4	24.12.41		Red	22. 8.44	F	
B5	22. 2.45 23. 2.45	Two New Stamps (other being type B103)	Red	27. 9.45 - 1. 1.48	D	
B6	23. 1.50	New	Red Black	5. 6.50 - 11. 1.51 4. 4.51 - 29. 7.54	E E	Basic Stamp D
<u>PAID STAMPS</u>						
B100	4. 2.30 (1. 1.30)		Red	15. 9.34	-	
B101			Red		-	
B102	(23. 6.38)		Red	23. 1.40 - 19. 8.40	F	
B103	22. 2.45 (23. 2.45)	Two new stamps (other being type B5)	Red	12. 4.45 - 1. 1.48	E	
B104	23. 1.50	New	Red	25. 9.50 - 30.10.50	F	

The Branch Offices: (initials V.S.) and Old Cavendish Street (initials O.C.S.)

Vere Street was issued with a stamp on the same day as that issued to Charing Cross, 25th. January, 1830. To follow the pattern of the other offices, the early stamps were struck in the usual blue.

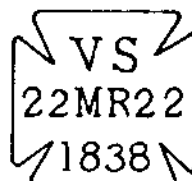
During 1842 the Vere Street Branch Office was superseded by an office in Old Cavendish Street with the latest recorded date for a Vere Street stamp being 30th. November, 1842. The first stamp for Old Cavendish Street is recorded as being issued on 21st. September 1842 in the proof impression books. Although the function of Vere Street as a Branch Office ceased with the introduction of Old Cavendish Street, the Vere Street office continued to be used for postal purposes. A circular date stamp for " Vere Street W.D.O. " is known on a registered cover dated 1863. It is interesting to note the insertion of the letters ' W.D.O. ' (Western District Office) as these initials were also included in a circular date stamp of Old Cavendish Street, issued in 1857. (1) In 1857 19, Old Cavendish Street became the Western District Office; presumably the premises in Vere Street were used as a branch of that office.



VS1(61)



VS2(63/V2)



VS3(67)



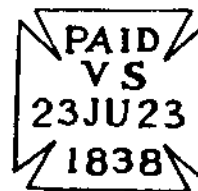
VS100(715)



VS101



VS102(716)



VS103(710/V3)

Branch Office Ref.	Date When Sent	Official Remarks	Color	Recorded Period of Use	Rarity Code	Notes
VS1	25. 1.30 (22. 1.30)		Blue	16. 2.30 - 21. 3.32	E	
VS2			Red	21.11.32 - 18. 1.34	D	
VS3	(23. 6.38)		Red	18. 4.35 - 12.10.36	E	
			Red	30. 6.38 - 20.11.42	E	
PAID STAMPS						
VS100	25. 1.30 (22. 1.30)		Red	8. 2.30 - 30. 1.34	F	
VS101			Red		-	*
VS102			Red	19.11.35 - 31. 3.40	E	*
VS103	(23. 6.38)		Red	19. 2.39 - 26. 8.41		*

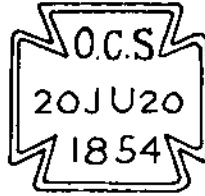
Notes:

- VS101 Paid Stamp associated with type VS2
 VS102 Later recordings may be attributed to VS103
 VS103 See note under VS105

(1) 'Postal Cancellations of London' Westley, p.88: single arc date stamp



OCS(75)



OCS2(81)



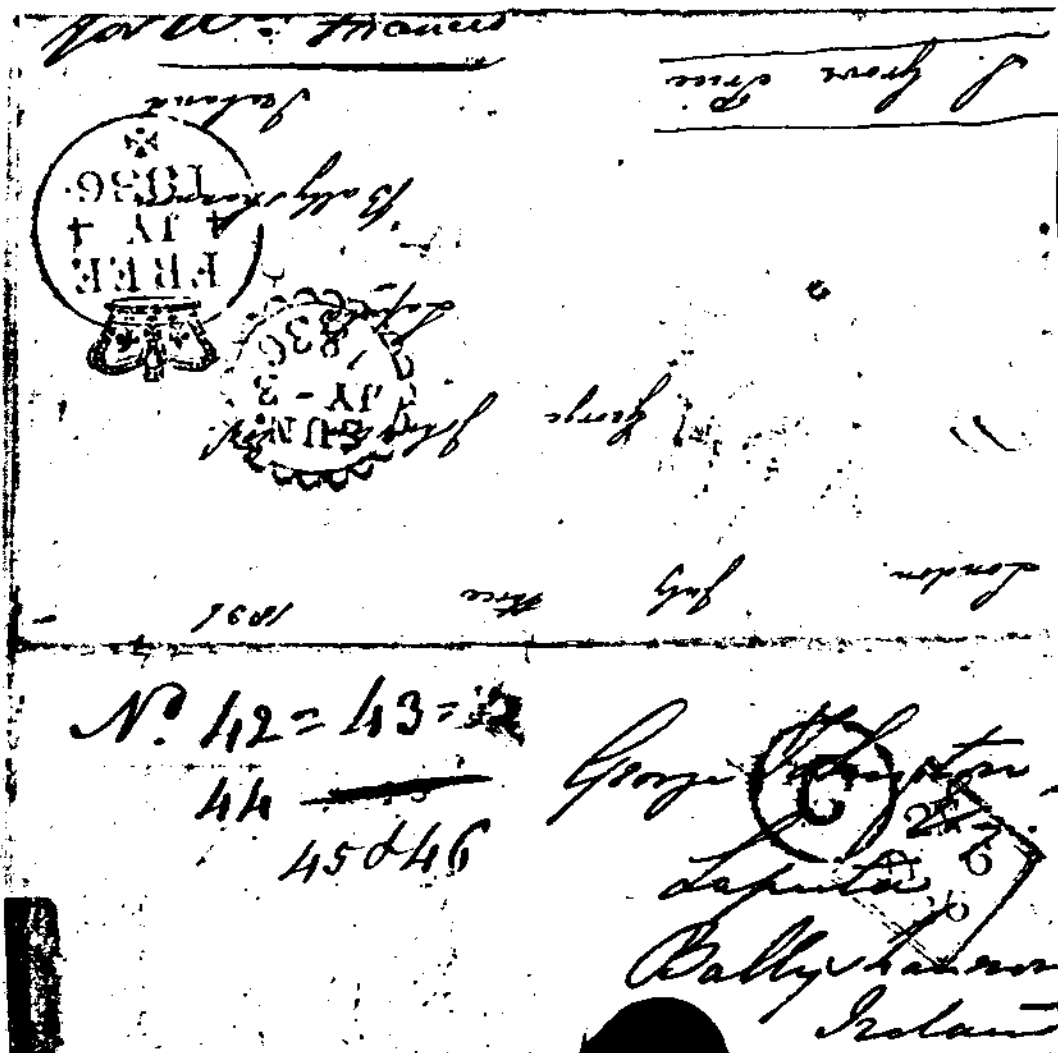
OCS3(81/V1)



OCS100(720)

Branch Office Ref.	Date When	Official Remarks	Color	Recorded Period of Use	Rarity Code	Notes
OCS1	21. 9.42	Additional	Red	26. 1.43 - 21. 9.53	C	M.1843 - 51
OCS2	15. 6.52		Red	12. 2.54 - 17.10.56	D	
OCS3	(14. 2.54)		Black	25.11.52 - 26. 4.55	E	
			Red	5. 8.54 - 5. 3.57		
PAID STAMPS						
OCS100	30.11.42	New - Additional	Red	25. 4.44 - 2. 9.47	F	*
Notes:						
OCS100	Day and Month Plug omitted from impression					

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



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B2/14

ASSOCIATED MARKS(i) Stamps Connected with the Franking System *

From 1835 to the late 1840s franked letters posted on Sunday at Branch Offices of Charing Cross, Vere Street and Lombard Street were stamped with a C, V or L within a circular frame. The mail was then sent to the Chief Office where the Sunday stamps were applied.

Until further research has taken place involving a complete survey it is premature to speak of 'known periods of use', other than in the general terms mentioned above. A rarity coding carries the same limitation.

An extract from P.O. Records is shown below **


Vol.2 p 130	1835	
<i>Sunday Frank from Lombard St. Charing Cross & Vere Street Branch Offices</i>		
<i>Sunday Frank from Lombard St. Charing Cross & Vere Street, Branch Offices</i>		

* see ' Herewith My Frank ' by Lovegrove, p.96

** Notebook No.29, p.8

(ii) Examiners' and Inspectors' Marks

(a) The Capital Letter ' A ' is recorded in P.O. Records, thus:

To what Place	Date when sent	Stamps
<i>Charing Cross new Stamp for Letters dispatched before 8. A.M.</i>	<i>1846</i>	

Examples on cover are generally applied on the address side with a Charing Cross date stamp, of the maltese cross design, on the back. Both are struck in the same red ink. Needless to add at least one is known on the reverse, (1851).

In common with other early impressions of inspectors' marks, examples are not easily found and a definitive period of use is, therefore, difficult to establish.

(ii)(b) The A.B.C. Marks

As with the ' capital A ', the few examples so far recorded have been in the same color as the Branch Office date stamps. Due to their scarcity information is too scant to draw any firm conclusion as to their use. However, for reference the range of marks, recorded in the proof impression books, is shown below.

POST OFFICE DATE STAMP IMPRESSIONS (STEEL)

Issued To	Date When Sent	Stamps	Vol.No.
Charing Cross Stamp altered	21 Dec 1844	B	7
No name, date or comment	but page date of June 1853	d B d B d B	11
Old Cavendish Street	8 Nov 1857 (as written but all date stamps on the page are for 1856)	L B	13
Borough	19 Dec 1856	C	13
Old Cavendish Street	19 Dec 1856	C	13
Charing Cross	14 Jan 1857	C	13

It appears a mixture of the ABC marks were used at Various offices as recent recordings prove:

'a' - Vere Street VS3	- 29. 1.1842
'a' - Old Cavendish Street O.C.S. 1	- 10. 3.1846
'b' - Old Cavendish Street OCS2	- 15. 8.1854
'c' - Lombard Street LS12	- 12.10.1855
'c' - Lombard Street LS108A	- 12.12.1857

(iii) Double-arc Date Stamps

The double-arc date stamps, normally associated with provincial Head Offices of Great Britain and Ireland, are known from the Branch Offices of London. Examples found in the steel impression books record their use for Money Order business, therefore use on normal mail is irregular. For this reason it is considered incorrect to draw up tables for 'periods of use' and to place a rarity code against any type. The very few so far reported have been for Charing Cross and Old Cavendish Street, both using red ink.

Information from the Post Office date stamp impressions (steel) Volumes 7 and 18 is given below.



DA1



DA2



DA3



DA4

Branch Ref.	Date When Sent	Official Remarks
DA1	29. 1.45	New. For Money Order business
DA2	27.10.45	New. For Money Orders
DA3	20. 4.46	New. Money Orders
DA4	22. 5.45	New stamp for Money Order Office
	<u>Date of Impression</u>	
DA3	30. 4.51	M.O.O. (written at side of date stamp)
DA4	10. 2.58	For Money Orders (see Westley, p.82)

(iv) The Creswell Date Stamps

Lombard Street and Charing Cross used single-arc date stamps of the type known as 'Creswells' during the period 1857 - 1858.

Charing Cross - Examples recorded during the period August 1857 to September 1858. All are in red and have a single letter code.

Lombard Street- Examples recorded during the period July 1857 to September 1857. Majority recorded in black one in blue (London date stamps of a similar type, also linked with the Creswell apparatus, used blue for evening duty). Codes recorded consist of two letters, the first letter being either A or B.

It is not unlikely a fuller survey will provide date extensions, other colors and codes.



(v) Office Initial Stamps of the London District Post

A number of stamps with just initial letters or abbreviations were issued to certain offices. These seem to have been employed as a result of a letter being mis-directed and were applied to confirm routing through that particular office.

Although these marks are mainly at offices other than Branch Offices, therefore outside the scope of this section, they are known for Charing Cross and Old Cavendish Street.

The following details have been abstracted from ' Notebook ', No.16, page 10 et seq.

Mark	Recorded Period of Use	Color
CX	12.11.1850 - 26. 5.1855	Black
C X	15.12.1845 - 25. 1.1848	Black
O.C.S.	17. 1.1855 (one reported)	Black
	2. 6.1856 (sans serif)	Black

Evaluation of Recorded Branch Office Date-Stamps

The percentages of the total can be very misleading when assessing value since there are some date stamps within a high percentage group which are extremely scarce. It is, therefore, unwise to generalise and one must look to the rarity code as a guide to the status of a particular type. However, the percentage does indicate that the busiest of the Branch Offices was undoubtedly Lombard Street, with Charing Cross next.

Lombard Street	61%
Charing Cross	23%
Borough	5%
Vere Street	5%
Old Cavendish Street	6%

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to all those who filled in the original questionnaire and to those who submitted copies of varieties. The interest shown has been encouraging, for without the help of collectors this exercise would not have been possible. No doubt the publication of this section will bring to light new stamps, extensions to periods of use and color range. Please do not hesitate to forward any information to the writer, since it is part of the Group publishing policy to issue a supplement, about one year after the original publication, containing all such material.

Particular thanks to the Post Office for permission to reproduce extracts from the Proof Impression Books and for the facilities for research they freely provide.

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