12,13,14

London Postal History Group NOTEBOOK

In This Issue.....

Explanatory Marks Relative to Foreign Mails in London....

February 1973

Number 11

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EDITORIAL.....

The meeting on the 20th. January had members involved in a discussion on the future of postal history societies and their organisation. This arose from correspondence between Francis Granville and the Chairman. It appears that for some time the Postal History Society have been considering the matter and indeed have instituted a sub-committee to examine the positiom. Quite clearly from the existence of at least eight regional postal history groups such as ours, the P.H.S. was not attracting all the members it might otherwise interest. Fragmentation may well be a more expensive proposition for many than one single body, particularly for those with wide interests. There has been an attempt through the Federation of Postal History Societies to achieve a link, without loss of autonomy, but this has not received the support necessary to make it flourish. The point has been reached when discussions between the several societies might, with profit, be arranged. What form of organisation is thought desirable; a single unit or a confederation ? For that matter if any useful purpose can be served from a unification of the separate groups. From what was said at the meeting, members were generally interested to learn more, though this was by no means unanimous.

This is very much a matter for all members to consider. Many pay subscriptions to more than one society, others are interested only in London. Chairman are, now and again, required to take the initiative and this one is prepared to talk and listen. Will you join him?

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PAR BALLON MONTE.....

In Notebook No.7, mention was made of the well known Paris Balloon Posts, by way of introduction to an article on their London counterparts, the latter being much less known.

Illustrated below, from the collection of Dr. Ed. Wyttenbach of Zurich, is a



very fine example of the Paris " issue ".

It was originally addressed to Madame Henry de Navenne
Buckland's Hotel
43 Lower Brook Street, Grosvenor Square,
London Angleterre

Apparently the lady had moved on for it was redirected to Worthing. During the journey through the post it collected a number of marks. The only one not quite clear is the London Paid mark struck across both the adhesive and the Paris datestamp. What is odd is the framed L1, which according to Stitt Dibden in his book " Late Fee and Too Late Stamps " was employed on Late Fee letters destined for the Paris mails after the 1864 acceleration which introduced early morning despatch for such mails.

It is clear this was not the purpose in this case being quite obviously, an item of incoming mail. The suggestion that such marks were used in connection with redirection from London is not much in favor these days, but apart from the possibility of a " Fred " in action, it might be thought useful to reconsider the Late Fee theory.

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WANTS AND FOR SALE.....

Readers are reminded that they may advertise their postal history needs in the London Exchange at the end of Notebook.

MMETING REPORTS, by A.J. Kirk.

20th January, 1973: THE UPRIGHT OVALS.....

This meeting, as usual brought forth a plethora of material, covering all the marks called by Westley the ' Upright Ovals '.

The first thing established was that No. 74 (Westley fig, 79) does not, at the moment, appear to exist; can any reader produce one ?

Complete sets of fig. 91 were seen, some on cover. Westley states these were meant for use on Money Orders and Postal Orders, but there does not appear to be any proof of this. It is possible they were used on oversized mail which could not be dealt with by the Pearson Hill machine then in use; there was some evidence at the meeting to suggest this.

The odd shaped figs. 80 and 81 were seen, mostly on cards, and the set with the double ring date stamp was shown, together with recuts, on cover. Once again there was an odd man, No. 43. Any reader with a copy of this number?

One very interesting display was devoted to showing how the letter code in the date stamp, used 1859 - 1885, was associated with the days of the week.

The Rideout mark was shown and again a query raised. The letter code, in the date portion, is normally CR but RC is recorded. Mr. K. Martin Jones would appreciate details of any known to members.

Practically all marks in this section were covered, including the experimentals used for the Pearson Hill device in 1858/59, and these were shown on cover. Not seen very often.

A most interesting afternoon, with some queries answered and others raised.

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25th. November, 1972: EXPLANATORY, CHARGE AND OTHER MARKS.

Under this title, a profusion of material, with examples of practically every type issued must have been on view.

The main displays were given by Mr. R.I. Johnson, ably seconded by Mr. M. Goodman. Mr. Johnson concentrated on Charge Marks with coverage of such items as Underpaid Marks, More To Pay, Redirected Marks, Postage Unpaid, Accountancy and a varied number of Late Fee Marks, included a most unusual one for $3\frac{1}{2}$!

Mr. Goodman's effort was over a wider range and again, amongst the better known types were the unusual. Such items as " Closed Against Inspection ", " More To Pay " in a crescent under a crown (RL 192) are not at all common. " Posted In Wrong Box ", " Rhodesian Stamps Not Valid ", " Captured Mail ", and several items showing Deficient Postage charges and Deficient Charge and Fine as well. These and many others were viewed with pleasure.

These two displays were supported by other members who produced a wide range of material.

It is not possible in this brief outline to give more than an impression of the material; there can be no doubt that the members present thoroughly en - joyed themselves at this first Caxton Hall meeting.

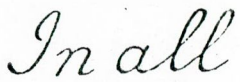
-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

EXPLANATORY, CHARGE AND OTHER MARKS.....

As indicated elsewhere, the wide range of material at our December meeting made any detailed reporting well nigh impossible. Robert Johnson has sent out circulating working papers covering the foreign mails aspect, the following details, drawn mainly from the 1940 edition of Alcock and Holland's book " British Postmarks ", section K, in as far as it relates to marks on Foreign mails, will serve to set the scene.

K(1) Charge and Surcharge Marks

Used to denote the total of two different charges calculated en route, added together and collected from the addressee. Dates from the late 1770's. In black.

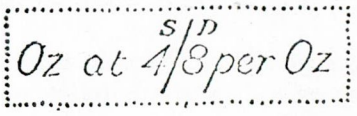


On foreign letters of October 1839 and November 1839 one can find oval double arc London stamps with " Rebate " at the top, a crown and date in the centre and " F.B.O. " and " Foreign Office " respectively at the bottom. The stamps indicated that the Post Office accepted the original charge to be in excess of the correct amount and that a rebate had been credited or paid to the addressee (not illustrated).

There were stamps belonging to the Foreign Office of the London GPO for use where the whole of the charge on letters from abroad could not be claimed by the British Post Office. These were impressed in black and there are both framed and unframed varieties. The separate amounts of the " divided " postage were written by the side of each word. Unframed examples continued to be used in the same way in London after 1840 .



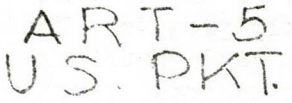
London Foreign Office stamps also occur on letters from abroad of one ounce and upwards in weight showing in detail the rate at which they were conveyed, this being determined by the country of origin.
The stamps were in use from the middle of the second decade of the nineteenth century until the early 1830's. Early specimens are unframed but from the late 1820's a rectangular frame of dots was used. Black ink.



On 15th. December, 1848 London was one of the " Exchange Offices " set up under the Postal Treaty between the United Kingdom and the United States, following some three years of dispute between the two countries on matters postal.

Letters were marked at the dispatching office with the amount to be credited or debited to the other country for its services in the conveyance of the letters. Thus an unpaid letter from Liverpool to New York by a British Packet would be impressed with a stamp in cents showing the debit against the U.S. for British sea postage and the British Inland postage, while a paid letter would show the credit to the U.S. for Inland postage in that country. Credit ' charge ' marks were impressed in red and debits in black or green. London stamps in Groschen on unpaid letters to Bremen to show the amount of postage due to Great Britain on letters from the United States and carried in the open mails.

Article V of the British American Postal Treaty of 1848 also permitted the passing of prepaid closed mails through the United States to London for delivery in parts of the world served by British lines of shipping. In addition to charge marks showing the amount credited to the British Post Office, stamps occur with " ART-5 " in a straight line and " BR.PKT " or " US.PKT " beneath these being used to show that the mails had passed over either the USA or British North America in closed mails at Inland rate and had been carried on the appropriate packet.



International agreements were entered into by Great Britain for the covey - ance of letters from British colonies and British P.O.'s abroad and certain European countries, particularly France.

The stamps used consequent on the 1843 Anglo-French Treaty are as follows:

Colonies/&c Art 12: 1.6.1843 to 31.12.1845
covering Colonies, British Possessions and other overseas countries to France on which a rate of 3s.4d. per ounce was charged.



Colonies/&c Art.13: 1.1.1846 to 31.12.1855
covering the same as above. It follows these two were in use during different periods of time for the same purpose.

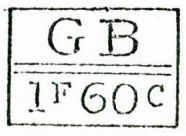
Canada/&c Art 12: 1.1.1846 to 31.12.1855
covering mail from Canada and the Maritime Provinces for France via England. This occupied that part of the waybill previously occupied by the ART 12 stamp noted above.

Colonies/Art-18: effective 1.1.1856
covering mail from all British Colonies for France, carried to England by British Packet.

Foreign Countries/Art-20: effective 1.1.1856
covering mail from foreign countries for France and carried by British Packet to Great Britain.

It should be understood that the wording "ART" is not an abbreviation for one of the 68 main articles of the 1843 Anglo-French Postal Convention but refers to a heading on the WAY BILL which accompanied each bag of mail. According to an article by Alan Robertson in " Stamp Collecting " in 1859, no copy of the Way Bills had then been traced in P.O. archives.

A further Postal Convention between England and France came into being on 24th. September, 1856, and effective from 1st. January, 1857, hence compar - ative scarcity of the last two "ART" hand stamps listed above, wherein it was laid down in connection with the exchange of each other's mails from else - where, that where one of the countries levied sea or transit charges on unpaid letters for the other country, special stamps in black should be impressed to indicate... " the rate at which the dispatching office shall have delivered those letters to the other office ". A number of stamps came into use incorporating the initials " GB " and the amount in francs and centimes due to Great Britain for her services in the conveyance of the mails to France. There were also "FR" marks for France for a similar purpose. Many of the "GB" stamps were in use in British Colonies, UK ports as well as the Foreign Branch of the G.P.O. in London.



A number of stamps were employed in London on mail to and from abroad which was in - correctly prepaid. These include such advices as " Insufficiently Stamped "; " Insufficiently Prepaid "; " Part Paid/ More To Pay ".

INSUFFICIENTLY STAMPED

PART PAID
MORE TO PAY

On insufficiently prepaid colonial letters appeared various types of " Deficient Postage/Fine " or " British Share of Fine " below (recorded in red and black).

DEFICIENT-POSTAGE
FINE

There is a splendid four line mark for Malta and Gibralar found on incoming mail but these are thought to originate other than in the U.K.

Charge marks with "FS" or "FB" with varying rates can be found, although these are more often found in connection with 20th.century material, gradually taking over from the earlier ship letter charge marks.

Posted unpaid and opened in due course, but having originated out of Malta forwarded charged with fine.

The "T" = "Taxe" in various shapes and frames was employed from about 1875 after the UPU Convention began to take effect.

The"Posted on Board Ship Abroad/I.S." is dealt with very fully in Notebook No.4,pp 11/12.

K(2) Stamps Used on Undelivered and Delayed Letters.

Unpaid letters of the 1830's and 1840's addressed to places abroad for which pre-payment was compulsory were stopped and impressed in red with such stamps as those shown on the right.

Returned for Postage

Letters returned from abroad in the 1840's and 1850's because the addressee could not be found or in some cases being sent back with out a reason being assigned, received the stamp illustrated below on the left.

Returned for Postage

Framed and unframed varieties, see lower right, struck on letters returned from abroad, also "RETURNED FOR POSTAGE/THE AMOUNT DEFICIENT"

RETURNED FROM

SENT-BACK-TO-ENGLAND
WITHOUT-A-REASON
FOR-NON-DELIVERY

Another type of mark associated with mail to and from abroad were those relating to registered items.(Section J)

Registered letters from the Continent were imprssed in London in the 1820's and 1830's with stamps having " Registered " in a convex curve above a crown. Known in red and black, with at least two varieties of crown. From about the middle of the 1830's, other stamps with " Registered " in a concave curve below the crown appeared. (Except for the shape of the crown, this pre 1840 type was similar to the later stamp illustrated top right.) These continued in use until 1867.





Special stamps occur from 1859 - 1867 on registered letters from Prussia. In the late 1860's this was replaced in a dated single curve type with " Prussia " above and " Registered " below. Varieties of oval date stamps are known on letters from other foreign countries in addition to the type shown on the right.



This very brief introduction to the subject of the first circulating study paper on the Foreign section of the Charge and Explanatory Marks may serve to whet your appetite. Should you want to be included on the list of those to receive, study and add to if possible, these papers please contact.....

Mr. R.I. Johnson,
9 Branscombe Road, Stoke Bishop, Bristol 9.

For the benefit of tyros, like the Editor, among us, do not forget to make a note of any markings you may see when browsing through stocks in dealers hands, exhibitions or others collections. All this, giving the location of the material, adds much to the pool of information. On advantage of being a postal historian is the opportunity to obtain information even when the material is not available.

from Robert I. Johnson.....

I have had the opportunity of reading this introduction by the Editor. I am dealing with unpaid and underpaid letters in forthcoming issues of the PJGB (a Robson Lowe publication strongly recommended - Ed.) and I would suggest we could start with recording all details to do with registered and undelivered letters which have a foreign element, and explanatory marks on letters going abroad. A selection will be illustrated in the next Notebook.

As a bit of fun, here are two examples.....

BEING IN THE SPANISH LANGUAGE
THIS PAPER IS PROHIBITED FROM
CIRCULATION IN SPAIN

fig 1.

Not allowed to circulate through the Post in Russia

fig 2

Fig 1: the reason being that everyone speaks Greek in Spain (1859)

Fig 2: from the Post Office Guide circa 1864 we read:-

" it is forbidden to introduce into Russia through the post political newspapers in cover open at the ends and sides ". Newspapers only by sub - scription via the Russian Post Office with exception for the Royal Family, Imperial Ministers and Diplomatic Corps. Newspapers not of a political character only via established bookseller, higher schools, the Imperial Public Library or Acadamy of Sciences.

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OTHER MATTERS.....

were under consideration at the January meeting. Members will be pleased to learn we now have a Packet Secretary in the person of:

Mr. B. T. Smith,
41 Cranleigh Drive,
Swanley, Kent.
BR8 8NZ

Apart from the rules, an outline suggestion of which is given below, would those interested note there are but two requirements, namely....

Those who wish to receive the packet, send their names and addresses to the Packet Secretary and

Those with material for disposal send it to the Packet Secretary.

The full rules will be issued shortly, but as a guide.....

Members may submit any material for sale, not confined to London items, clearly identified by means of a reference number and listed with this no. a brief description, price required and space for signature, on an envelope which is to contain the item(s) being offered. The size, as the material will have to be made up into a postal parcel, should be no more than, say, 10" x 7". There will be a 10% commission to cover running costs, plus the return postage on any unsold material. Insurance will be arranged if it can be obtained at reasonable rates, but until advised material is at the contributors own risk with no liability to the Group or Group Officers.

Purchasers should check the packet to ensure all previous purchases have been signed for, any missing items to be advised to the Packet Secretary. The member immediately before on the list will be held responsible, so please check carefully. When buying, sign your name in full, or use a suitable rubber stamp. Complete the remittance advice and when sending to the next ' customer ' by hand get a signature from the member concerned; by post, use registered parcel post for the full value of the packet, less purchases to date. Forward the remittance advice and registration slip to the Packet Secretary within 24 hours of parting with the packet. The packet should not be kept for more than three days, less if possible.

Much of this will be familiar to those already in receipt of other society's packets, and if there are any suggestions for the proper regulation of the matter, again contact B.T.S.

Should you know of any dealers who would like to send material around, let them know the packet exists(future tense) and a copy of the rules if their's for the asking.

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THE FIRST ESSAYS, by M.V.D. Champness.

The 9th. Report of the Commissioners of Post Office Enquiry, dated 7th. July 1837, included in the Appendices, specimens of two wrappers and an envelope which they proposed should be used for letters in the London District Post.

Whilst it is fairly certain these were produced by Charles Whiting of Beaufort House, no positive evidence to this effect has been forthcoming in spite of diligent searches through Post Office Records.

In the National Postal Museum (Phillips Collection Frame 4) examples of the 1d. Brown and 2d. Green wrappers are exhibited. Both were subsequently resubmitted for the 1839 Treasury Competition by John Dickinson, the security printer, are annotated with the Treasury Number 23659 as submitted 15th. October 1839. Reginald Phillips' writing up attributes them as " probably the work of Charles Whiting ".

Whilst much attention has always been given to the Treasury Competition essays, they were produced well over two years after Lord Duncannon's commission had recommended special postal stationery for use in London, and these District Post essays can rightly claim pride of place over those produced in 1839. Indeed, they rank with those produced by Chalmers in Dundee, which appeared in March 1837. Chalmers essays were very simple in concept and once the germ of the idea had been sown could have produced within a week. On the other hand the District Post Essays are complete works of art dominated by the security theme associated with bank note production, and must have taken much longer to produce.

It is of interest to quote the source document in full on the London District Post Essays:

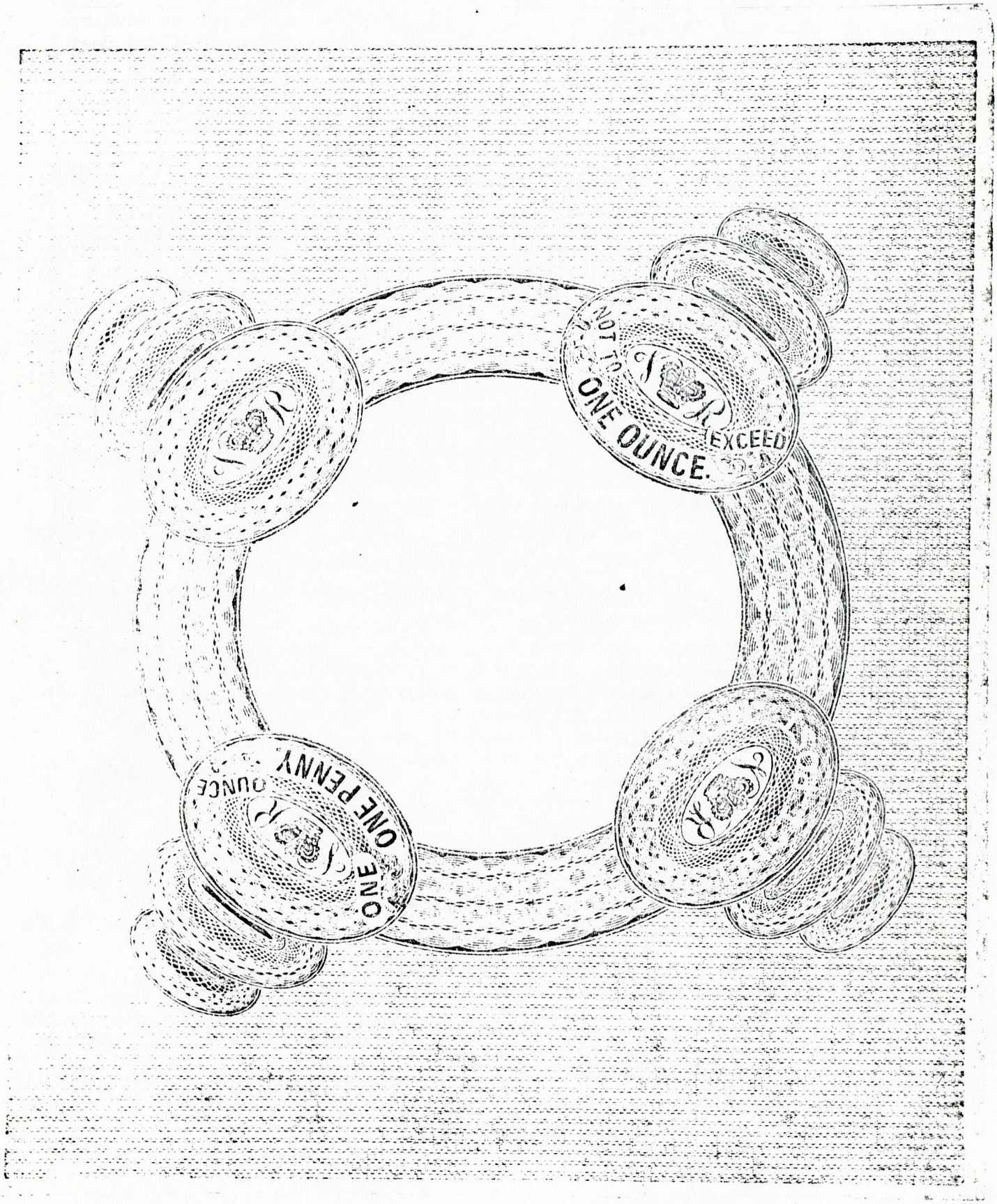
9th. Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the management of the Post Office Department - 7.7.1838 under Lord Duncannon, H. Labouchere Esq. and Lord Seymour.

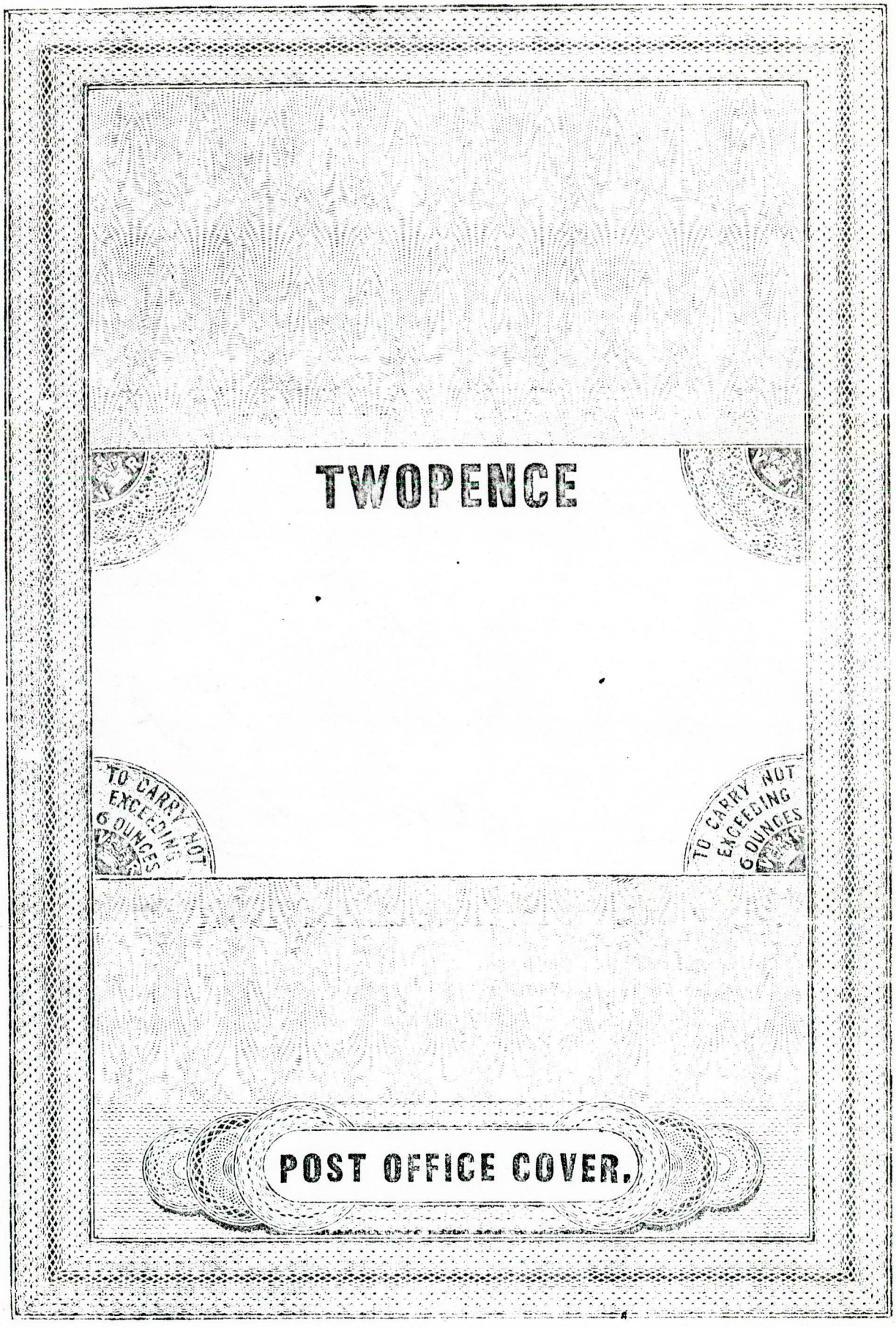
page 8: " We have appended to the report specimens of the paper and envelopes which we propose should be introduced for the conveyance of letters by what may be termed ' The London District Post ' which, at present, comprises all places within 12 miles of the General Post Office; although we are inclined to believe that it may be found advantageous to extend the delivery beyond this boundary to several of the towns within 15 miles of London.

In order to afford the public every facility for obtaining the covers, they should be kept at all the receiving houses; and it will be necessary for the Stamp-Office to make such an allowance to the distributors as will induce stationers and others in and around London to vend them. We recommend that the envelopes shall be sold to the Public without any additional charge beyond the respective duties of 1d. and 2d. whilst labels may also be prepared of such a form that they can be attached to other envelopes or covers of any size and description.

In proposing that letters shall be conveyed by means of stamped covers, and for a charge of not more than half the present rates, we do not anticipate that the increase of correspondence will be so great as to compensate for the reduction in postage.

We are of the opinion that any very large increase in the number of letters could only arise from combining with the introduction of stamped covers an additional number of deliveries and establishing district offices, by means of which an interchange might be affected in a very short space of time, which cannot be done whilst the whole correspondence is collected simultaneously and conveyed to the Chief Office to be sorted and despatched from there ".


NOT TO EXCEED
ONE OUNCE.
ONE PENNY


TWOPENCE
TO CARRY NOT EXCEEDING 6 OUNCES
TO CARRY NOT EXCEEDING 6 OUNCES
POST OFFICE COVER.

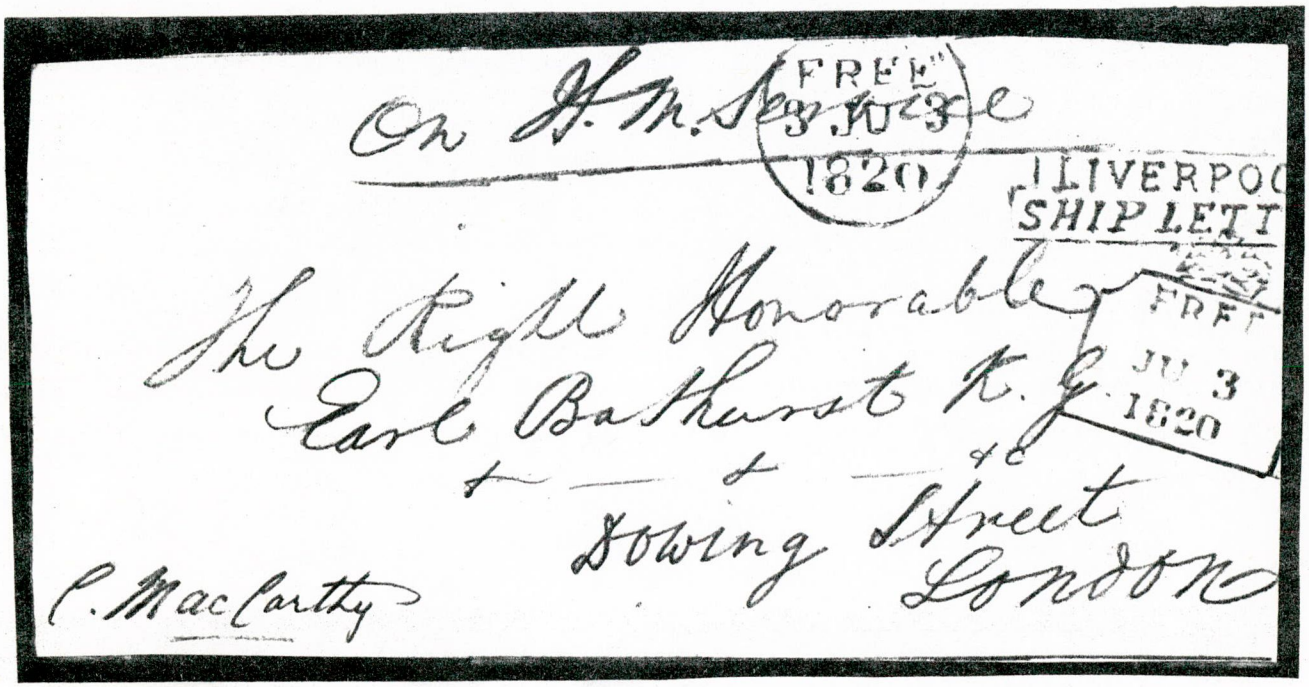
Page 12: Specimens of envelopes to be used for Franking letters by the ' London District Post ' (missing from the P.O. Records copy of the Report)

The paper of which the envelopes are made is prepared by a peculiar process, with a view to prevent forgery. Mr. Dickinson, the inventor, has the exclusive right of manufacturing this paper and proposes that it should be employed solely for Government purpose (See evidence of Mr. Pressley and Mr. Dickinson. Appendix 18, 22, 24.)

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THE CHAMFERED CORNERED FREE (Notebook No.7, page 13)

George Crabb submits the item illustrated below as further evidence as to the use of this somewhat obscure marking. Although only (sic!) a front, it



clearly indicates a possible Military and/or Official usage, bearing as it does " On H.M. Service " boldly across the top, although the address of " Dowing Street " probably should be " Downing Street ". Can any reader identify " C. MacCarthy ", the signatory?

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LONDON INLAND OFFICE.....

Would members please check to see if they have any dated copies of Dubus series 17 of the HORIZONTAL diamonds, 1.2. nos 52 to 75. Please send accurate tracings or if possible photocopies together with the dates. If at all possible I would appreciate sight of the actual covers. Any Inland Office material for sale or exchange also please contact me.....

B.T. Smith, 41 Cranleigh Drive, Swanley, Kent. BR8 8NZ.

INLAND BRANCH UPRIGHT DIAMONDS, by Keith Martin-Jones.

From the large number of covers and pieces on view at the meeting on the 20th. January, and from the many answers to my questionaire, the following results may be of interest to members.

A. WITH DATE STAMPS.

Westley, in his notes under his fig. 75 did not mention that 24, 25 and 26 were also issued with LONDON round the date stamp (Dubus 79b and 81). Under fig. 82 he did write that 99 to 104 had small date stamps but not that these also had LONDON round the date stamp. There is also 86 with the same from Dubus series 23, which has smaller ovals and in the later examples the code letters were replaced by collection times. By 1892 this had been replaced by a stamp with LONDON in a straight line.

Of Westley fig.79 two examples of 72 were shown with codes L1 and L3, 73 with code L1 and a photo from a German catalogue with code L3. I have had no reports of 74 at all. 80 has been reported with code L3, and 81 with a time code.

One of the most interesting discoveries was that there are definitely two distinct types of 32, 35, 45, 46 and 52 of Westley's figs. 85 to 87. In the earlier ones (1877) LONDON in the date stamp is small, but by 1884 it is slightly larger and more spread out, while there are distinct differences in the length of the bars of the ovals. Perhaps there were two complete series?

All the four ' Money Order ' obliterations were there, B on stamp, A and D on small pieces and C on part cover dated Nov 30 1875.

B. WITHOUT DATE STAMPS.

Westley mentioned two groups on page 37 and wrote that in his opinion they were merely examples of a duplex obliterator used in single form.

Dubus gave four examples similar to Westley's fig. 75.

Series	1	10	and	11	(mentioned by Westley)
	4	1	to	10	
	5	13	to	44	
	9	26	to	39	

In Series 1 and 4 the ovals are smaller than the ones used with date stamps as are the diamonds. Series 4 was used on Too Late and Late Fee letters from 1864 to 1867. Several copies on cover were seen and have been reported the most interesting being a 6 with part of a ring round it. Perhaps this belongs to Series 24.

Series 5 was used on registered letters, on covers for the Continent sent in bulk and also on ordinary letters. Dubus gave the numbers he had seen as 13, 15 to 17, 19, 20, 23 to 27, 30, 40, 42 to 44. Between us we have added 28, 33, 34, 35, 41 and 46. Has anyone seen 29, 31, 32, 36, 37, 38, 39 or 45?

Series 9 has much smaller figures and diamonds, and Dubus gave the numbers as 26 to 39, but had not seen 27. So far only 33, 34, 35 and 36 have been reported.

There are also two very rough Series, Dubus 16 (Westley's figs. 80 and 81 and Dubus 24).

Series 16 was mainly used on postcards about 1871, when no date stamp was used on the front. It was also used on large letters and printed matter, when there was usually a separate date stamp. Dubus gave the numbers as 34 to 51, but had only seen 34, 35, 37, 38, 40 to 46, 48, 50 and 51. 47 and 49 have been reported so far. 36 and 39 are then the missing numbers.



Fig. 75
(1-33, 87-98, 100-107)



79 b



Fig. 82
(85-104)



134
1875



244



Fig. 79
(71-79) 80, 81)



Fig. 85
(27-36, 39-45)

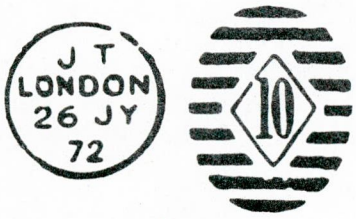


Fig. 88
(13, 14, 16, 17, 26)



40
1864

Series 4



65 a
0 étroit
1870-73



Series 5



97

Series 9.



Fig. 80
(34-51, Figs. 80 and 81)



Fig. 81



260 a
1882

Series 24.

Series 24 was in use from 1870 to 1882. Dubus had seen 1 to 5, 9, 11 and 14, to which we have added 7, 10 and 12 so far. Has anyone seen 6, 8 or 13?

Members will no doubt be pleased to learn the Group are to purchase the two volumes of the Dubus book, thus allowing the better illustration of articles, permission for this being very kindly granted by M. Dubus.

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UNRECORDED LONDON RECEIVER ? by M.V.D. Champness.

At a meeting of Postal Historians in Edinburgh on September 2nd., 1972, the Countess of Mexborough showed some veteran items from her family archives. Rumour has it that there could be one of the major finds of post war years, with crates of hitherto untouched original correspondence with a plethera of Dockwras and Bishops. No doubt more will be heard of this material anon, if it is ever released to provide us with delectable album fodder. Let us hope it is fully recorded, both postally and by archivists, before it does go public and the material scattered worldwide.

Amongst the numerous gems was one dated 1683 (possibly 1689) which had a mark - presumably postal, which was entirely new to the distinguished audience present. The letter was headed " London November 1683 " and there was apparently no other clue beyond the mark in question.



Approximately the size of a 2½p. piece, it could represent a receivers mark, alternatively it may be a mark introduced at a Coffee House. The letter theory appears to be more likely in view of the absence of other markings, and whilst we have not been able to ascertain the actual address to which the letter was sent, it could well have been carried by a private ship or by a carrier.

There is, of course, a similar mark recorded by Alcock & Holland in their 1940 opus, which is of a different format being in an oval with a serif S over I. Might there be some connection?



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DATES FOR THE DIARY.....

The programme fixtures were considered at the January meeting, and these, together with suggestions from readers before the end of the current programme will be incorporated. Any particular subject of interest you would like to have included should be advised to the Secretary.

The dates booked at Caxton Hall are as follows:

1973: 11th. August; 22nd. September; 17th. November;

1974: 19th. January; 16th. March; 18th. May; 3rd. August; 21st. September; and 16th. November.

It is hoped to arrange at least two Thursday evening meetings during the period and as soon as arranged, members will be advised of the dates.

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ROYAL POSTMARKS, Notebook No.10, page 15

Several members have written on the subject of the VR postmarks, in particular a report on these contained in the ' Philatelic Adviser ', published by R.C. Alcock Ltd. has been quoted and extracts, together with a date summary of a detailed listing, are given below. From the check list it is clear that a royal connection exists. To quote from the P.A., whole number 131:

" Evidence strongly supporting the belief that the V.R. marks were introduced for special use on Royal Household correspondence has been supplied by Mr. R.A. Addyes-Scott. This consists of a cover bearing a Penny Lilac stamp cancelled with the Type 2 postmark. The cover is addressed in the hand - writing of King Edward VII, when Prince of Wales, and is post-dated 6th. February, 1892; the envelope flap bears the personal seal of the Prince and contains the letters A.E. (Albert Edward) enclosed in the Garter and surmounted by the Crown....which confirms beyond doubt that the V.R. mark was applied as a cancellation for Royal correspondence. "

The article later remarks.." There still remains some mystery about both of the postmarks, a search conducted by the G.P.O. Records Department (covering the years 1879 to 1892) failing to produce any information other than dates of issue ".

Type 1





Type 2

In the 'P.A.' whole number 133 the check list is preceded by comments on the findings and that a direct descendent of the VR in the form of an ER had been traced. However this can be extended, since recorded in the day duty books of the E.C. Office, held at the National Postal Museum, appear to be like marks up to George VI. This is most interesting and perhaps a reader visiting the Museum could secure the page references and dates of issue for recording in " Notebook ".

According to the P.A. check list, the type 1 is a very rare bird, with but three recorded examples; one in July and two in September 1882, the date span being July 26 to September 2.

Of type 2, code letters A, B, C and D are recorded, as follows:

Code A	Earliest	8. 9.1891	Latest	7. 3.1900
B		10.11.1882		3. 1.1884
C		6. 3.1883		28. 4.1884
D	Only one recorded			12. 5.1884

A number of those recorded appear on House of Commons envelopes, including the code D. Mr. J.C. Chandler has suggested examination of the use of the code letters could lead one to suppose that codes C and D were NOT royals, but confined to House of Commons mail.

With this further speculation to spur readers, perhaps some date extentions and proof positive of Royal codes C and D might be forthcoming. The curious lack of any official instruction as to the use of the marks adds, rather than otherwise, to the need for further careful research.

Full acknowledgement is made to the " Philatelic Adviser " and the writer of the original article, C.V. Eltringham for much of the above informatiom.

The following is, without doubt, social history. It does, however, give a very clear picture of the conditions domestic of postal workers and on that peg hangs the raison d'etre.

FOURTH REPORT OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL 1857
Appendix M. Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Dwellings of the Letter Carriers.

Medical Department
General Post Office, June 1857

Sir,

His Grace the Postmaster-General having signified his wish that I should make him acquainted with the domestic circumstances of the officers in the minor establishment, in as far as relates to their dwelling houses, I have the honour of submitting the following statements:

During the month of May I drew up a form, containing fourteen queries. This was circulated among the letter-carriers, sorters, sub-sorters, stampers, messengers, porters, and labourers attached to the Chief, the Money Order, and the nine Branch Offices in London.

Of the 1,648 men to whom these were addressed, 1,530 have returned them properly answered. The statistics that I now submit are drawn from the replies so given.

Of the 1,648 officers, 1,155 are attached to the Chief and Money Order Offices; 493 to the Branches.

Nearly three fourths of the men return themselves as married or widowers with families.

AGE.....

The letter-carriers are, as a body, the youngest of the officers. The youngest letter-carrier is 18 years old, while the eldest is 62. Their average age is 33.

There are very few young men among the sorters or messengers; their average age is 36, 3 years more than that of the letter carriers.

The average age of the whole body of officers is 34.

NUMBER IN FAMILY.....

This of course varies very much, viz, from 2 to 11. The average appears to be about 4, including the parents themselves.

SIZE OF THEIR HOUSES.....

Some few of the officers who have families inhabit houses which they have purchased through being numbers of a building society. Three such societies in connection with the Post Office are in existence.

One of these admits as members only such persons as are attached to this Department, while the two others admit other persons as well. A very few of the men hire small houses of six rooms each for their own occupation alone, whilst others do so for the purpose of letting off the part they do not require for themselves, calculating that the profit derived from this sub - letting will relieve then from a portion of their rent-charge.

Several of the letter-carriers contrive to live occasionally rent-free, taking charge of empty houses.

The houses inhabited by the letter-carriers consist more frequently 8 rooms

than of any number.

NUMBER OF ROOMS OCCUPIED.....

The greatest number of unmarried men occupied single rooms, while some reside with their parents in a portion or the whole of a house.

About one fourth of the single men occupy 2 rooms. On the average, each married man's lodging consists of 3 rooms, although many occupy 4, 5 or 6 rooms.

A considerable amount of over-crowding exists among the officers who are married and have children. Thus, among those whose lodging consists of a single room only -

there are 17 who have 4 in family
8 5
4 6

while among those whose lodging consist of only two rooms.

there are 30 with 5 in family
18 6
8 7
5 8
3 9
1 10
1 11

while many instances of five, six, seven, and eight in family are found inhabiting three small rooms.

If returns had been made by all the officers, these numbers would probably have received some addition.

AMOUNT OF RENT.....

The rent paid by the various classes of officers varies slightly. Thus the average weekly rent paid by -

	s.	d.
the married letter carriers is	5	2
the single ditto	3	7
the married messengers is	6	0
the single ditto	4	0
the married sorters is	6	6
the single ditto	4	6

From this table it appears that the single men pay about 33 per cent. less for their lodgings than the married; that the letter carriers pay the smallest amount of rent; and the messengers about 15 per cent. more, and the sorters about 10 per cent more than the messengers.

The unmarried men occupying single rooms pay rents varying from 2s. to 5s.6d; averaging 3s.4d. per week. Those occupying two rooms pay from 2s.6d. to 6s; in one instance 8s. per week. The average is 4s.

Many messengers and sorters with families pay 10s. and some even 12s.6d. per week for 3 or 4 rooms. One messenger with his wife (no children) and one servant pays 17s. weekly for his own occupation. A few, having the entire house or the greater part of it, the lower portion of which is used as a stationer's or grocer's shop, or for carrying on some trade or business therein, pay 20s. or 21s. a week. One messenger lately kept a coffee-house in the neighbourhood of the Chief Office, the rent of which was about 22 L. a year.

DISTANCE OF RESIDENCE FROM WORK.....

It will be seen that a large proportion of the men reside at a considerable distance from the office to which they are attached or from their walk. Their object in doing so appears to be to enable them to have more healthy or cheaper dwellings than they would find it possible to procure in the immediate neighbourhood of their work.

It will readily be seen how much additonal exertion is undergone by those who have to walk some miles to their office before the commencement of their morning deliveries, and the same distance home again after the duties of the day are finished.

From the 1,530 returns which have been sent in (120 short of the entire number) it appears that 513 men live from one mile to two miles from their office or walk, 358 from 2 to 3 miles, 104 from 3 to 4 miles, and 47 live upwards of 4 miles; a few of them reside even 6 miles off.

LENGTH OF TIME IN THE SERVICE.....

On account of recent changes in the Treasury arrangements respecting superannuation, a considerable number of men who have long been more or less inefficient are now quitting the service; and on this account, as well as from the increase of business demanding a correcponding increase of the force, and the annual official leave of absence necessitating extra men to supply the place of the absentees, a considerable addition to the number of men who have been a short time only in the service has been made during the last two years.

The number of men who have been a very long time in the service has correspondingly decreased.

Among the twelve officers who have been the longest in the service, and whose period varies from 35 years to 46, eleven belong to the London District branch, and only one to the General Post. Eleven out of the twelve are letter carriers, the twelth being a sorter.

The four who have been the longest in the service are attached respectively to and reside in the districts of Peckham, Stratford, Blackheath, and Hackney. These, it will be observed, are outskirts of the metropolis, affording the men there comparatively pure air.

The Peckham District letter carrier, who has been the longest in service (46 years) informs me, that, with the exception of a few slight colds from getting wet in the discharge of his duties, he never had a day's illness, nor been absent from duty from sickness, nor has he ever had occasion to take medicine of any kind. He informs me that he lives in a good healthy cottage well drained into the common sewer.

The facts point clearly to the necessity of assimilating the conditions of the dwellings of the officers in the Department in the interior of the metropolis, as far as pure air is concerned, to that of those who inhabit the outskirts.

They also show that there is not necessarily anything in the employment of a letter carrier detrimental to health.

RATIO THE RENT BEARS TO THE AMOUNT OF SALARY.....

The average amount of salary earned by the letter carriers and sorters is 27s.6d. per week, while that of the messengers is 29s.4d.

It follows, therefore, that

the married letter carrier pay	20 per cent
single	12
the married messengers	24
single	14
the married sorters	25
single	16

of their salaries for their dwellings alone. In these calculations I have not taken into account the Christmas boxes received by letter carriers, which may average about 8 L each annually. This would diminish slightly the per-centage of their wages paid for lodging.

It appears to me that this is a very large proportion of their salaries to be paid for rent alone; and that of good accommodation could be found for them at a lower rate their condition would be much improved thereby.

CONDITION OF THE DWELLINGS.....

The last question addressed to the men was as to the condition of their lodgings.

The greater number made no observation on the subject. Some 50 or 60 of the officers, the majority of whom live in the suburbs, as Islington, Kingsland, Peckham, Brixton, Pentonville, &c, say that their lodgings are " healthy "; " first rate "; " neighbourhood healthy " and " sanitary condition satisfactory "; " very healthy "; " quite comfortable ", &c.

These descriptions must be taken with a certain allowance, as in some cases they are made by the owners or the occupiers of the entire house who let off apartments to other lodgers.

In some cases the men, from what I believe to be ignorance of what constitutes a healthy habitation, state their lodgings to be in a satisfactory condition as to sanitary requirements under circumstances that make it difficult to agree with that opinion. Thus one man living in a small narrow street in Lambeth in the neighbourhood of many notorious nuisances, as gas-works, potteries, bone boiling, &c, calls the situation " open and healthy ".

A second, living in Millbank, calls it " very good "; while a third, who lodges in Bunhill-row, in the vicinity of a badly contrived, over-crowded graveyard, says that the condition of his lodgings " far exceeds all expectations ".

Others are not so satisfied. Thus they remark, " close quarters, the top room "; " the house itself is healthy, but the neighbourhood quite the contrary;" " not so comfortable as I should wish, but equal to the rent I pay".

This shows the expense and discomfort of those officers who for convenience sake live in the neighbourhood of their work.

The latter officer is a single man; his lodging is in Jewin-street in the city, and pays 4s. a week for <u>half a room</u>! Other replies are as follows " Bad smell from the drains occasionally;" " I would have a better lodging if my wages could afford it;" " The situation is healthy, and yet, not withstanding, I suffer very much from chronic affection of the head, which I attribute either to the gas or daughts entering the doors or windows while employed sorting. "

I am sorry to say that the lodging of the Irishmen in the force are, generally speaking, in a most unsatisfactory condition. They are much more over-crowded, close, and dirty than those of the English. I have constantly to make the same remark relative to their personal condition.

I have thus drawn out in as brief a manner as was compatible with generalizing so large a mass of information the principal points to which it was necessary to draw the attention of the Postmaster-General in regard to the domiciliary condition of the officers of the minor establishment of this Department.

While leaving to his Grace and to yourself the practical points to be deduced from them, I cannot but remark that in my opinion, as conservator of the health of the employés, the facts disclose a very considerable amount of mischief to be present in the homes and dwellings of the men. The two evils that are the most prominent are, the large amount of over-crowding, and the great extra amount of exertion necessitated by so many of the letter carriers having to walk a considerable distance to the seat of their work, and to return again.

It is agreed by all philanthropists and sanitary inquirers who have the most deeply and minutely examined these subjects, that the greatest of all sanitary evils, the greatest spreader of contagion, and the greatest favourer of epidemic and endemic disease, is over-crowding. The effect of this evil is seen, not so much in the mortality of the adults as in that of the children, whose lungs act as the most delicate test of an impure atmosphere. It causes the adult working population to be more freqently disabled from sickness,and to be more easily fatigued with a moderate amount of labour than is normal.

In conclusion, I would say that I see no natural relief from this state of things, which, from the great annual increment of the population of this metropolis, and the improvements in and about to be brought into operation (improvements which mainly consist in destroying the habitations of the lower orders), has a tendency to augment in intensity, - I see no relief but causing the erection of special dwellings for the officers of this Department.

I have strong reason to believe that, under good management, healthy home, within moderate distances of the various offices, can be provided at a cost not exceeding the average of what is now paid for very inferior dwellings.

I have, &c.

(signed) Waller Lewis

Rowland Hill Esq.,
&c &c

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STUDY GROUPS.....

Several members will have received what might be called ' postal working papers ' dealing with the Upright Diamonds and more recently the Charge and Explanatory Markings relating to the operation of mails to and from foreign parts. (The organiser has a much neater title!) For the benefit of those not aware of this method of securing information the system is:

One member, with assistance usually, puts together a set of notes on a facet of postal history. From his own, and other's, records details of dates and usage are compiled, with suitable illustrations. The ' set ' is then sent to members who expressed interest in the subject matter at a meeting or in correspondence with the Secretary. On receipt, they add such information as they have from their own collections and notes, adding any aspects on which they

would like information. The notes then go to the next on the list for similar treatment, finally returning to the organiser.

However, there must be many members whose interests are not known in enough detail to the organiser. The two at present circulating are mentioned above and the organisers controlling the operation are:

Upright Diamonds: Mr. K. Martin-Jones,
Eton House, Docking, King's Lynn, Norfolk.

Charge Marks: Mr. R.I. Johnson,
9 Branscombe Road, Stoke Bishop, Bristol 9.

There will be more ' postal working papers ' from other organisers issued in the future and these will be advised as soon as possible.

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THE LONDON EXCHANGE.....

WANTED.....INFORMATION please re any postal markings from the HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT. I am trying to complete a study of Parliamentary Postal History and shall value any information esp. dates of use etc. All postages will be refunded.

David Trapnell, Brendon, Lyndale, London. NW2 2NY

WANTED.....to buy, beg, borrow or exchange!!! Any Local Penny/Twopenny/Threepenny Post Receiving House marks of:

Beckenham; Bexley; Bromley; Chislehurst; Crayford; Foots Cray; Hayes; St. Mary Cray; South End; Sydenham; West Wickham. Please contact....

Michael English, 50 Somerden Road, ORPINGTON, Kent. BR5 4HT

WANTED.....Strictly *** examples of Anglo-French Convention markings... offers to Peter A Forrestier Smith, 6 Church Manor, Bps Stortford, CM23 5AE, Herts.

WANTED.....HOSTERS - Types 1b, II and X (as recorded in Notebook No.8) Abbot Lutz, Rockefeller Center, 1270 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y.10020, U.S.A.

FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE OR ???.....Accumulation of clean entires with " Jubilee " 2½d. blue stamps (S.G. 201) and London EC " Hooded Scroll " cancell - ations. Letters are from London to Barcelona 1890 - 93. Any offers??

Michael English...

WANTED.....PRECANCELLED STAMPS AND POSTAL STATIONERY, especially A & H types 1583 to 1590 inclusive. Offers to.....

R.D. Lee, 23 St. Andrews Road, Cranbrook, ILFORD, Essex.

WANTED.....Material, articles, photographs etc. connected with the 1890 Jubillee of Penny Postage. Also Postmarks or other items connected with **Exhibitions** or Special Events (Victorian period only)

P.G. Day, 56 St. Michaels Road, Long Stratton, Norwich NOR 72W

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" COLUMBIA " MACHINE CANCELLATIONS - HELP WANTED.....

The Group had been asked to assist Mr. R.A. Keneally of 1/2 Middlegate, Penrith, Cumberland who is preparing a book on " Columbia " Machine Cancellations of London 1903 - 1909.

Mr. Keneally would like records of any items of W.,W.C., M.P.,M.P. with No.2, M.P. with No.3, N., N.W.,S.E.,S.W. or Paddington Offices. He is interested in the types, size of date circle, date and existence of District letters in the bars. He is also interested in any information of examples with the date circle at an angle to the bars.

Please send any information direct to Mr. Keneally.

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Back numbers of " Notebook ", when available, may be obtained from the Chairman.

One copy 35p: one year's issues £2.00, postage paid.
Out of print issues may involve a special quotation.

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