London Postal History Group No.44 November, 1979

NOTEBOOK

POSTAL HISTORY IS THE STUDY OF THE OPERATION OF POSTAL SERVICES BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AND THE PUBLICATION OF THE FRUITS OF SUCH STUDY

SOME OF THE FRUITS INCLUDE.....

District Post Cancellations 1840 - 1857 Part II, The Duplex
70 pence, post paid

Rules For Receivers at Provincial Towns in England (HMSO 1869)
70 pence, post paid

London's Date Stamp Codes, by the late W.G. Stitt-Dibden and supplemented by the work of Leon Dubus £1, post paid

District and Branch Cancellations From December 1856, Part II covering Northern, North Western, North Eastern, Southern, South Eastern, South Western. £2.60 post paid

Large Capacity 4 ring Binders for " Notebook " and " London's Postal History" at £2 each PLUS 76 pence for 1, 99 pence for 2.

Please note change of address for Hon. Secretary:

Rev A.J. Potter,
All Saints Pastoral Centre,
London Colney,
Herts. AL2 1AF

The following members with material for sale will be pleased to hear from others wishing to buy (seems logical!) Please write or phone rather than call without warning.

F.E. Bennett,	7 Franklin Close, Lower Wick, WORCESTER, WR2 4DX
T. Davis,	P.O. Box 727, LONDON, SW 20.
P. Dubell,	5 Drayton Green Road, EALING W13.
M. C. Goodman,	111 Green Lane, EDGWARE, Middx.
R. Hake,	21 Broomhill, TIVERTON, Devon, EX16 5AR.
L.M. Hodgson,	Cuckoo Cottage, Main Street, Gt.Longstone, Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE4 1TF.
M. Jackson,	Strand Stamp Centre, Strand, LONDON WC2.
K.S. Sargeant,	5 Ashburnham Gardens, EASTBOURNE, Sussex.BN21 2NA.
M. Townsend,	8 Netley Dell, LETCHWORTH, Herts. SG6 2TF.
E. Wilcock,	39 Fairhope Ave., Bare, MORECAMBE, Lancs.

Any other members with material for disposal in fair quantity on a permanent basis should contact the Editor who will be glad to include their name in this listing.

PLEASE REMEMBER. MOST STOCKS ARE KEPT AT BANKS. A CALL BY APPOINTMENT IS BOTH COURTEOUS AND MORE LIKELY TO PRODUCE THE NECESSARY ' GOODIES '

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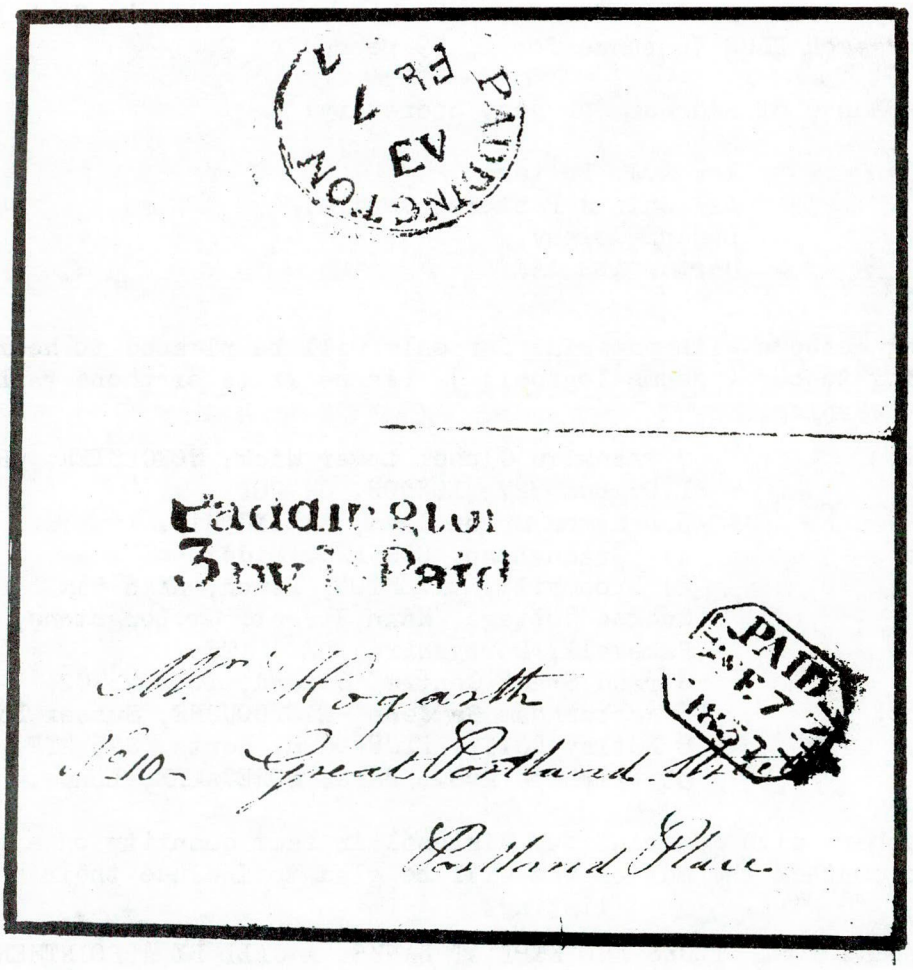
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TWOPENNY POST COUNTRY SORTING OFFICE

Dr. Wyttenbach sends a copy of an error in the Paddington Country Sorting Office for 7th. February, 1837 showing the EV inverted. Although this type of error is recorded for other offices, the care and attention by post clerks makes them rather uncommon.



THE POST OFFICE, by J.C. Platt (continued from p.19,Notebook No.43)

A contemporary picture published in 1851, taken from Volume III of ' London ', Edited by Charles Knight.

(Period is 1767)

Letters were despatched from London to all parts of England and Scotland three times a-week, and to Wales twice a-week; but " the post goes every day to those places where the court resides, as also to the several stations and rendezvous of his Majesty's fleet, as the Downs and Spithead; and to Tunbridge during the season for drinking the waters." The mails were not all despatched at the same hour, but were sent off at various intervals between one and three in the morning, and letters were delivered in London at different times of the day as each post arrived. This careless and lazy state of things existed until Mr. Palmer's plan for extending the efficiency of the Post Office began to be adopted in 1784.

Mr.Palmer's attention was drawn to the singular discrepancy which existed between the speed of the post and of the coaches. Letters which left Bath on Monday night were not delivered in London until two or three o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, and were sometimes even later; but the coach which left Bath on Monday afternoon arrived in London sufficiently early for the delivery of parcels by ten o'clock the next morning; and though the postage from Bath to London was at that time only threepence, yet despatch was in many cases of such importance that the tradesmen of Bath willingly paid two shillings to send their letters to London in the form of a coach parcel, besides requesting their correspondents to give a gratuity to the porter for the early delivery of the packet, this promise of additional payment forming part of the direction. The slow rate of travelling of the Bath post was not an exception. The post which left London on Monday night, or rather on Tuesday, from one to three in the morning, did not reach Norwich, Worcester, or Birmingham, until Wednesday morning; and the Exeter post not until Thursday morning, while letters were five days in passing from London to Glasgow.

Mr. Palmer submitted his plans to Mr. Pitt. He proposed that the mails should no longer be transported on horseback or in light carts, but that coaches should be employed, and, as the robbery of the mail was so frequent an occurence, a man with fire-arms was to travel with each coach. The coaches with the mails were all to start from London at the same hour, and their departure from the country was to be regulated as to ensure, as far as possible, their simultaneous arrival in town at an early hour in the morning. The first mail-coach upon Mr.Palmer's plan left London for Bristol on the evening of the 24th. August, 1784. The improvements suggested by Mr.Palmer met with a good deal of opposition from some of the Post Office authorities. One of them, Mr. Hodgson, " did not see why the post should be the swiftest conveyance in England "; and he conceived that to bring the Bristol mail to London in sixteen or eighteen hours was a scheme altogether visionary. Another gentleman, Mr.Draper, declared " that the post cannot travel with the same expedition as chaises and diligences do, on account of the business necessary to be done in each town "; and the quarter-of-an-hour which Mr. Palmer proposed to allow at the different post-towns was insufficient, as half-an-hour would, in Mr.Draper's opinion, be required in many places. The idea of a guard to each coach, so far from affording safety, would occasion the crime of murder to be added to that of robbery; for, " when desparate fellows had once determined upon a mail robbery, the consequence would be murder in case of resistance ". Timing the arrival and departure of the coaches bearing the mails would " fling the whole commercial corres - pondence of the country into the utmost confusion ". Even the Postmasters General addressed the Lords of the Treasury after Mr. Palmer's plans had been partially in operation for eighteen months, stating that they felt " perfectly satisfied that the revenue had been very considerably decreased by the plan of mail-coaches ". Happily the minister saw more clearly the advantages of increased safety, and of more frequent, rapid, and certain facilities of communication; and he resolved that the scheme should be carried out in all its most essential features. The results were that by 1797 the greater part of the mails were conveyed in one-half the previous time; in many cases in one-third; and in some of the cross posts in one-fourth of the previous time. Daily posts were established to above five hundred places, which before had only received

The Post Office, continued.....

them thrice a-week. The great commercial towns were thought to be as much entitled to this advantage as the water-drinkers at Tunbridge Wells thirty years before. The revenue of the Post Office increased beyond anticipation; but Mr.Palmer, who had stipulated for a per-centage on the surplus net revenue beyond 240,000£., received instead an annuity of 3000£.

The era of mail-coaches embraces about half a century. Their origin, maturity, and perfection, and gradual displacement by the railways, all took place within that short period. In 1836 there were 54 four-horse mails in England, 30 in Ireland, and 10 in Scotland. The number of pair-horse mails in England was 49. Their average speed in England was nine miles, all but a furlong, per hour, including stoppages. Starting from London at eight o'clock in the evening, the mail reached Exeter, 170 miles, in 16 hours 34 minutes; Holyhead, 261 miles, in 27 hours; Glasgow, 396 miles, in 42 hours; Edinburgh, 399 miles, in 42½ hours. The number of miles travelled by the mails in England and Scotland, in 1838, was above seven millions, equal to a circuit round the globe, every day in the year. The English mail-coach was strongly characteristic of the national energy and spirit, and also of the national taste. The daily departure of the mail-coaches from the Post Office was always a favourite sight. In 1837 the number which left London every night was 27, travelling in the aggregate above 5500 miles before they reached their respective destinations. A short time before the hour of starting, they arrived in the yard round the Post Office from their respective inns, with the passengers already in their places. Through the iron railing, by the light of innumerable gas-lamps, the public could see the process of packing the mail-bags. It was really a fine sight to see twenty of these vehicles drawn up, each occupying the same station night after night, the horses fine and spirited animals, the harness unexceptionably neat, and the coachmen and guards wearing the King's livery. The travellers for such various and distant parts of the kingdom seemed as if they felt the difference between travelling by the mail and the stage-coach. As the clock struck eight the Post Office porters dragged out huge bags, of which the guards of the different mails took charge. In a few minutes, each coach, one by one, passed out of the yard, and the sound of the guard's horn became lost in the noise of the streets. About six of the mail-coaches on the south-western, western, and north-western roads, did not take up their bags at the Post Office, but started from the western end of Piccadilly - the bags for those mails being conveyed in light carts in the care of mail-guards. The starting of these mails was a sight for the West-End. About twenty minutes past eight the mail-carts drove up at great speed, the guards' horns warning passengers of the necessity of getting out of the way. The bags were transferred to the mail-coaches, and each successively took its departure.

The annual procession of the mail-coaches on the King's birthday was also an exhilarating and pleasing sight, which will never again be witnessed. " The gala turn-out of our mail-coaches on the King's birthday ", says a popular writer (Sir F. Head), " I always think must strike foreigners more than anything else in our country with the sterling, solid integrity of the English character". And here we have some of the impressions of a foreigner after witnessing this sight ;- " Such a splendid display of carriages-and-four as these mail-coaches could not be found or got together in all Berlin. It was a real pleasure to see them in all the pride and strength which, in an hour or two later, was to send them in every direction, with incredible rapidity, to every corner of England." (Von Raumer, 'England in 1835'). The procession proceeded from the City to the West-End, and through Hyde Park; and usually passed before the residence of the Postmaster-General for the time being.

We now come to a new era, which has had a most important influence on the arrangements of the Post Office. In 1836 the stamp-duty on newspapers was reduced from fourpence to one penny. The circulation of the London and provincial papers together has nearly doubled since this change; and a very large proportion of the total number is sent through the Post Office. Here is so much additional work to be got through. The Penny Postage came into operation on the 10th.January,1840; and the number of letters passing through the Post Offices of the United Kingdom has risen from 1,500,000 per week to 4,000,000, being at the rate of above 200,000,000 letters per year, instead

The Post Office, continued.....

of about 78,000,000. In the same period the letters passing through the General Post Office, London, have increased from 400,000 to 1,364,000 per week; and in the London District Post (late Twopenny Post) the increase has been from 255,300 per week to 476,000.

The great lines of railway have been gradually rendered available for the transmission of correspondence as they were successively opened. In 1838 the sum paid by the Post Office to Railway Companies amounted to 12,380£.,and in 1841 to 94,818£. Most of the great towns in England, with Dublin and Edinburgh, have now a mail twice a-day from London, or fourteen times a-week, and a mail to London as often, making twenty-eight communications per week to and from the metropolis. Before the morning mails were established, a letter from Brighton for a town in Yorkshire was stopped fourteen hours in London, as it could not be transmitted until eight o'clock at night; but it now reaches its destination (200 miles, perhaps, from London) two or three hours before it would formerly have left the Post Office. The Liverpool merchant receives his foreign letters on the same day that they reach London, instead of thirty hours afterwards. The effect of expediting the class of letters formerly de - tained a whole day in London is a good illustration of the philosophy of the Post Office system: they have increased from 6,000 to 30,000 a-day, or five-fold.

The gross revenue of the Post Office in 1838, the last year of the old system, was 2,346,298£.; of the first year under the Penny Postage, 1,342,604£.; of the second year (1841), 1,495,540£. If the increase should be progressive at the same rate, the gross revenue will be restored to its former amount in about two years from the present time. The cost of management, which in 1838 was 686,768£., in 1841 amounted to 938,168£. for the whole country. Of this increased cost -- namely, 251,400£. in 1841, as compared with 1838 -- the sum to be attributed to the Penny Postage plan does not much exceed 50,000£. The morning mails, additional Post Offices, and other additions to the public accommodation, account for the remainder.

From what has been already stated, it will be seen that the London Post Office has grown up with the development of commercial and intellectual activity. If it were merely an establishment for the collection and distribution of the letters which pass through it, the building required for such a purpose would still rank amongst those of the largest class. Nearly as many letters go through the London Office now as circulated a few years ago through all the Post Offices of the United Kingdom, including London in the number. But the General Post Office is a grand central department for the management of the Post Office business of the United Kingdom, for maintaining the means of intercourse with foreign countries and distant colonies, and therefore apartments are required for a large number of officers who are employed in the general administration of the establishment at home and abroad.

The Post Office appears to have been successively removed, immediately after the commencement of the last century, from Cloak Lane, near Dowgate, to Bishopsgate Street, when the next transfer was made to a mansion in Lombard Street, occupied by Sir Robert Viner, who was Lord Mayor in 1675. It was a large and substantial brick building, with an entrance from Lombard Street, through a gateway into a court-yard, around which were the various offices. There was a second entrance by an inferior gateway into Sherbourne Lane. In 1765 four houses in Abchurch Lane were taken, and additional offices erected; and from time to time other additions were made, until the whole became a cumbrous and inconvenient mass of buildings, ill adapted to the great increase which had taken place in the business of the Post Office. It was at length determined to erect a building expressly for affording the conveniences and facilities required; and in 1815 an Act was passed authorising certain Commissioners to select a site, and to make the necessary arrangements for this purpose. The situation chosen was at the junction of St.Martin's-le-Grand with Newgate Street, where once stood a monastery which possessed the privileges of sanctuary. Since the dissolution it had been covered with streets, courts, and alleys.

to be continued.....

BLIND BAG, a response from Michael Champness

The illustrated envelope adds further to the one shown in the previous issue of Notebook. Of particular interest is the endorsement on the right side which reads " Returned Letters ", note the plural. The upside down adhesive, posted the same day and written in the same hand. It seems reasonable the two formed part of a





bundle sent by some off-beat character in Jedburgh. The Blind Office duly bundled up those it could not deliver and returned them to sender. My letter was propably the top of the bundle, the other perhaps a little further down. It is surprising no other BB marks have been seen and recorded before this. Perhaps these two articles will stir the pot a little and report another date.

BLIND DIVISION MARK, from Robert Johnson

I have only one Blind Division mark on record, illustrated here. Perhaps a reader can offer examples on cover to provide some idea of the period of use. According to the information I have this was issued in 1868.



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ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH, A Social and Economic History, by J.L.Kieve

' Notebook ' introduces each issue with a definition of Postal History which would seem to exclude the Telegraphic services. It is not the intention to do so and indeed there are many dealers who offer a wide selection of interesting material connected with telegraphic services as postal history and quite properly so. As a small contribution to furthering this interesting subject, a book with the above title, published by David & Charles as long ago as 1973 is warmly recommended to be included on everyones bookshelf.

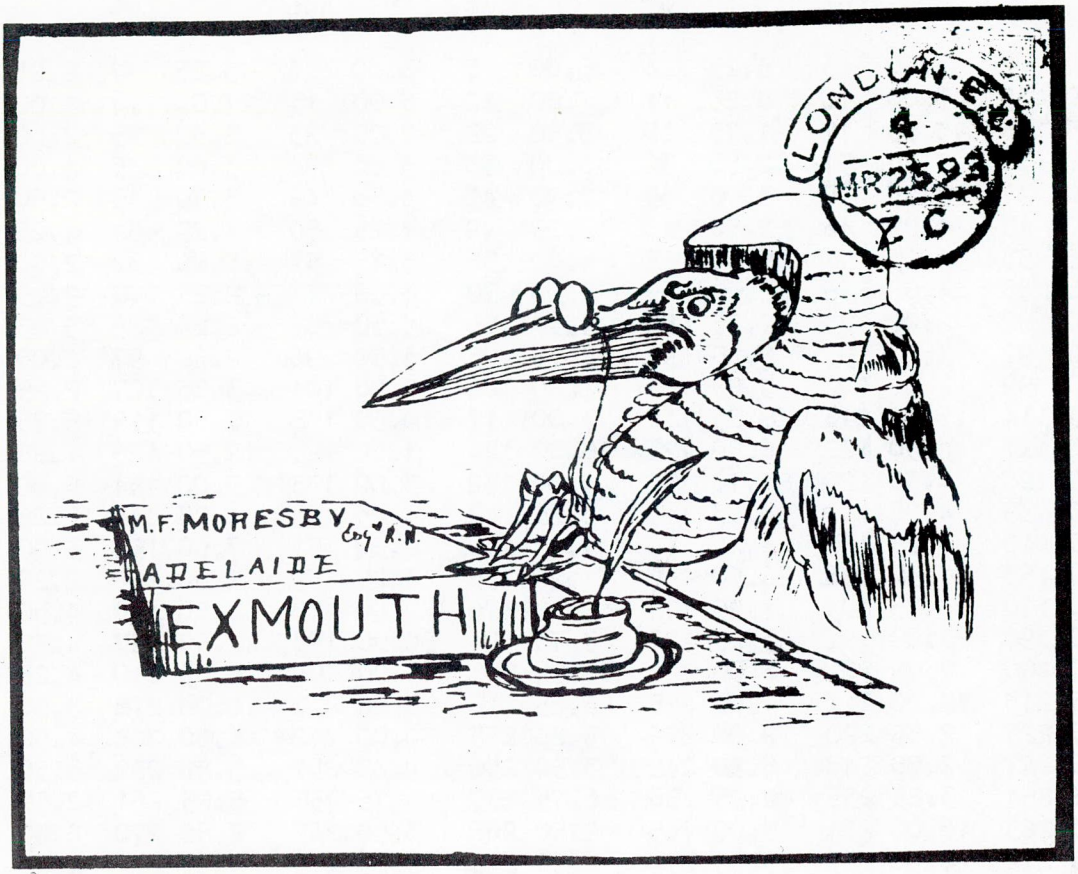
The early experimental work, when the boffin of the day knew they were onto something but were not quite sure what it was or what could be done! The book is packed with information and is most easy to read. There is a good bibliography for those interested in doing some original research.

Originally published at £6, it can be found in Templar bookshops at £2.95.

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PICTORIAL ENVELOPES

At a time when there seemed to be the time to indulge in penning some personal touch to something as personal as a letter. The item we illustrate, kindly supplied by Michael Champness, is a fine example of what are now most collectable items.



BETHNAL GREEN IS.01.E. from Jim Lovegrove

The cancellation illustrated on the right is on a GV ½d stamp on a P.C. The cancellation is a single ring of 22½ mm diameter containing round its arc BETHNAL·GREEN IS.01.E(there is no dot after GREEN and no dot after the final E.)



The centre symbols begin with a time code like a sideways 5 and the letters PM. The sideways 5, if it is that, has curves and no flat top. The rest is quite conventional MR 22 / 13 / 4.

Can a reader identify any particular office/ function for this stamp ?

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THE BUNTINGFORD AUCTION: 29TH. SEPTEMBER,1979 REALISATIONS

Lots not shown were either unsold or withdrawn

Lot		Lot		Lot		Lot		Lot		Lot		Lot	
1	1.50	2	3.00	3	3.25	4	5.00	5	3.00	6	3.25	7	3.25
8	2.00	9	3.00	10	8.25	11	1.00	12	5.00	13	27.00	14	1.00
15	7.25	16	13.50	17	4.75	20	8.50	22	2.00	23	2.50	25	2.00
27	3.25	30	3.75	31	2.50	32	3.00	33	3.00	34	3.00	35	4.00
36	1.50	37	3.25	38	3.00	39	2.00	41	3.50	42	3.50	43	2.50
44	2.00	45	4.25	46	2.50	48	2.25	49	7.25	50	4.25	51	4.25
52	3.25	53	4.25	54	5.50	55	4.00	56	3.75	57	5.00	62	2.00
64	4.50	65	4.00	68	2.00	69	3.00	70	4.00	71	2.25	78	7.25
79	2.00	82	2.00	83	2.75	85	5.50	86	23.50	87	2.25	89	3.25
90	2.00	92	3.00	93	5.25	94	2.75	95	4.50	96	2.50	97	2.00
98	2.00	99	2.00	100	3.25	101	2.00	102	2.00	104	3.75	107	2.25
112	3.75	114	15.00	115	8.25	116	3.00	117	10.50	118	12.50	119	5.75
120	2.00	121	.50	122	6.50	123	10.00	124	4.00	125	19.50	126	1.25
127	1.40	128	4.50	129	1.10	130	4.00	132	3.00	133	3.00	134	5.00
136	3.00	139	4.25	140	4.25	141	3.25	142	4.25	143	4.25	144	2.25
145	4.25	146	3.25	147	6.25	149	4.25	150	2.50	151	7.50	152	3.00
153	2.00	155	20.50	156	26.50	157	4.25	158	3.25	159	2.50	160	2.25
161	3.50	170	3.75	173	1.25	175	2.50	176	2.50	178	3.50	180	4.50
186	6.00	190	26.00	191	3.25	192	3.75	194	50.00	195	27.50	197	4.25
198	7.50	200	2.00	201	6.00	204	30.50	205	6.00	206	6.00	210	4.25
211	4.25	213	12.00	214	4.00	215	6.25	216	5.00	217	10.00	218	5.00
226	3.75	227	2.75	228	2.00	229	5.25	235	30.00	242	5.50	243	4.50
244	1.50	247	2.00	248	8.50	249	3.50	250	2.00	251	3.50	252	3.50
253	10.25	254	3.25	255	2.25	256	6.75	257	6.75	258	5.25	261	12.50
262	16.00	263	16.00	264	5.00	265	2.50	266	3.50	267	4.50	270	2.00
271	2.00	272	4.50	273	3.00	274	2.50	275	5.25	276	3.75	277	2.75
278	4.50	280	.50	281	.60	282	.50	285	1.00	286	1.00	287	1.00
289	2.50	290	2.50	291	1.00	292	1.80	293	1.10	294	.50	295	1.00
296	2.00	300	2.00	301	25.50	302	3.25	303	5.25	304	13.00	305	2.00
306	5.25	307	13.50	308	16.50	309	21.00	310	10.00	311	10.00	312	9.50
313	11.00	314	20.00	315	20.00	316	10.50	317	5.00	318	3.00	320	8.25
321	3.00	322	3.00	323B	5.25	325	2.25	327	1.00	328	1.50	329	2.25
330	.50	332	3.00	333	2.50	334	1.50						

Total Realisation £1,266.25

Lots 168 and 232 were withdrawn

Lots 278 to 300 were for room bidders only.

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LONDON MACHINE CANCELS by Abbot Lutz

From the Pearson Hill to the Hoster.

This article appeared in Numbers 4 and 5 of The Collectors Club ' Philatelist ' and if reprinted by their kind permission.

Although a man could cancel 120 to 200 letters a minute by hand it was not enough to handle the ever-increasing flow of mail in England of the 1850s. Cancelling by machine became a necessity.

More than 8 billion postage stamps were printed and sold in Great Britain from 1840 to 1857. Sixty eight million of those were Penny, six million were 1840 Tuppence Blues. Fourteen billion more stamps were printed in the eleven year period from 1858 to 1869, nearly doubling the amount produced in those first eight years.

England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland had over six thousand post offices, London and its districts had an additional two thousand offices and pillar boxes. More than ten thousand people were employed by the London District Post alone. It was big business. In fact, the Victorian era saw the printing and sale of over eighty one billion stamps and that does not include postal stationery. They did not recall issues and burn remainders in those days.

Although hand cancelling of letters ran from 120 to 200 letters per minute, it did not meet the demand. The use of the mails was continually increasing. It was, however, the legal entity of the House of Lords who pushed for a better method of cancellation than that by hand since legibility of a postmark figured in many a court case. Also pushing from within the post office was Henniker Heaton, a forward looking official who called for machines to do the cancelling of letters; European, Canadian and American post offices were using mechanical cancelling, he said, but the British Post Office was still depending on hand labor to cancel posted letters.

In 1853 Pearson Hill, son of Sir Rowland Hill, Secretary to the Post Office, began work on the problem of mechanized cancelling of mail. Four years later, April 3, 1857, he wrote the Post Office, " I beg to acquaint you that I have designed a machine....which, as well as stamping letters, retains them in neat stacks ready for sorting."

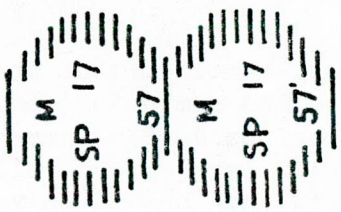


Fig. 1

Hill brought his machine to the Circulation Office of the London Inland Branch and on September 17th., 1857, a few letters were put through it. Only two examples of this test have been found (fig 1). The die did not include the name of the office. On the September 21st. another test took place using a commercially constructed machine made for Hill by Messrs Simpson (fig.2, see overleaf). The machine had a trial run of 32 days. In early February, 1858, a third machine was delivered, the "Opera Glass" canceller (fig 3). It was in use for only eight days; February 13, March 21, 26, 30, 31, April 1, 7 and 9 of 1858. The apparatus was costly, requiring steam and it damaged the letters. It was quickly discarded.

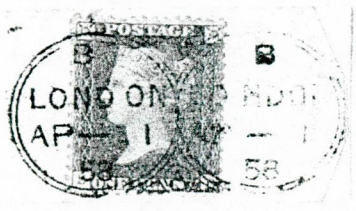


Fig. 3

Charles Rideout, a Senior Surveyor, who had retired from the P.O. in 1857, after 45 years of service, presented his cancelling machine in January, 1858. It was put on trial February 4th. in the Circulation Office, London.

Mr. Bokenham, a post office officer wrote an enthusiastic report to Mr. John Tilley, Assistant Secretary of the Post Office, concerning the Rideout machine.

London Machine Cancels.....



Fig. 2



Fig. 4

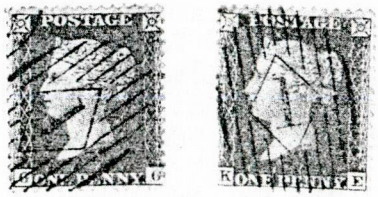


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

Figure 4 is an example of the Charles Rideout machine, numbered one. The number one machine has H.S. as its code and was composed of 8 bars at the top, 7 bars at the bottom and 2 bars at each side. It was subsequently repaired and then showed only 7 bars at the top with all other bars as the first impression (fig.5). The second machine, with number 2 in a diamond, had 5 bars top and bottom with 2 bars at each side - all bars had been thickened. The coding now reads C.R. According to the records one copy of the number 2 macine with the coding letters transposed reading R.C., dated February 21, 1859, is known. This is This is recorded by Westley and Dubus, Figure 6 shows an unrecorded usage with R.C. for 4 July, 1859. Charles Rideout patented his machine in 1860.

Back to the drawing board went Pearson Hill and in 1858 he submitted his " Parallel Motion " machine. This seemed to be a " knock-off " of the Rideout machine. Hill claimed seven features for his machine but none of them were present in the original model. They were:

1. The stamper never loses sight of the adhesive stamp.
2. The machine has an arrangement for inking the date-stamp so that a good impression is made and yet the die is kept reasonably dry.
3. Fresh ink can be driven into the pad when necessary.
4. The hand movement is slight - about 1½ inches - therefore greater speed and little fatigue.
5. The machine is portable and can be carried to any part of the office.
6. It is easily stored under the stamping tables.
7. The two dies could be placed in the machine separately, the " killer " being slid into a slot and the date-stamp screwed into place. This was an unusual

London Machine Cancels.....

4
11 11
4



or 11 3 11
3

Fig. 7

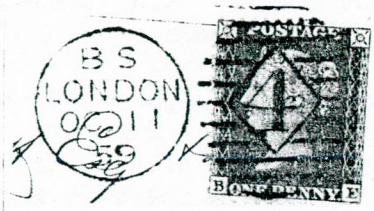


Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

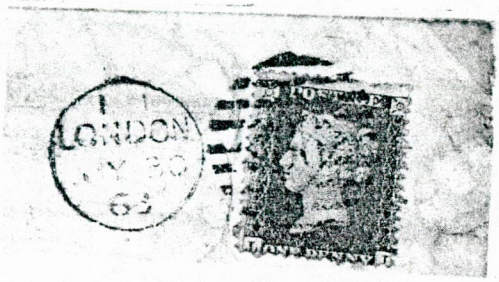


Fig. 11



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

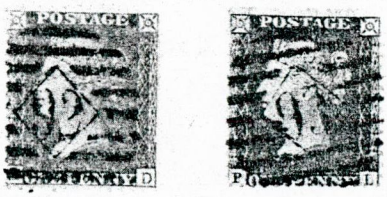


Fig. 14



Fig. 15



Fig. 16

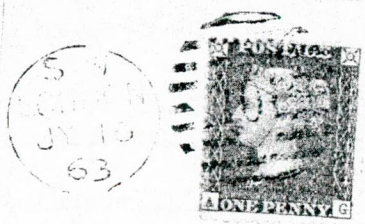


Fig. 17

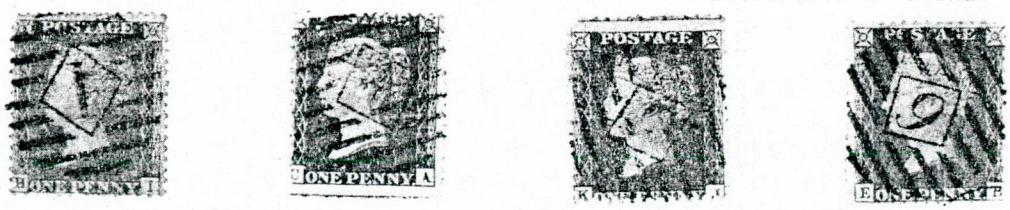


Fig. 18

London Machine Cancels.....

feature since up to this time the double (duplex) stamps in use in London had always been of one piece.

On February 22, 1860, the Post Office placed an order for 20 Pearson Hill Parallel Motion machines. The Treasury approved the purchase on March 31, at a cost of £6.10.0 per machine plus a further charge of 15 shillings for the dies. The cancelling dies were numbered 3 and 4 and 87 through 90 for June, 1860. Numbers 92, 93, 94, 95 and 97 were also used. We have since found numbers 100 and 101 and 1, 2, 5 and 6 none of which are recorded in the proof books (figs 7 to 18 - see page 11). For those with a deeper interest in this machine the following breakdown shows the letter codes used in the dating circles:

Original Code - No.3 "BA"

The first letter denotes the machine - the second letter denotes the day of the month. The second code ran from A to Z six days a week continuing until the end of the month.

1st. Code Used Until Nov.7, 1860

No.	3	4	87	88	89	90	92	93
	A-	B-	C-	D-	E-	F-	G-	H-

2nd. Code Used From Nov.8, 1860

No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	87	88	89	90	92	93	94	95	97
	A-	B-	C-	D-	E-	F-	G-	H-	I-	J-	K-	L-	M-	N-	O-

3rd. Code Used From Feb.7, 1862

No.	87	88	89	90	92	93	94	95	97	100	101
	H-	I-	J-	K-	L-	M-	N-	O-	P-	R-	S-

Interestingly, a Parallel Motion macine was purchased in 1861 by the United States Post Office for £12.12.0 (fig.19).

The J.G. Azemar machine, treadle driven, invented by William Ree of Hamburg, Germany, was submitted to the Post Office in 1868. It went through three trial periods, the first of which lasted four and a half months, from February to June 1869 (figs. 20 and 21).

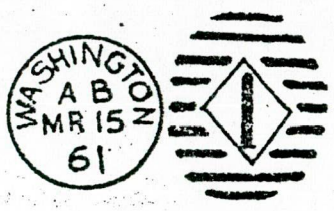


Fig. 19

The second trial (not illustrated) a year later also lasted a few months. The third trial (figs. 22 and 23) did not take place until 1871. The machine was finally rejected in January 1873 even though it was capable of cancelling 500 to 600 letters a minute, a speed nearly as fast as electrically driven machines introduced thirty years later. Its major shortcoming was that over 10% of the letters put through it were miscancelled. The cancels may be identified as follows:

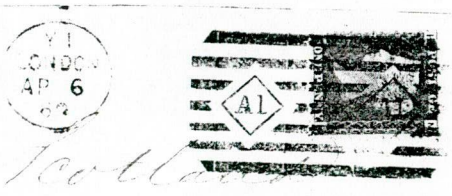


Fig. 20

The first period - 1869 - shows " A " with a flat top.

The second trial shows the " A " with both a flat and pointed top. The sides measured 3mm.

The third trial shows the " A " with a pointed top

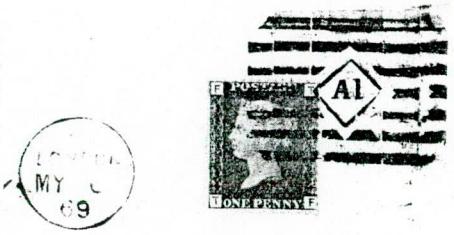


Fig. 21

London Machine Cancels.....



Fig. 22



Fig. 23

and the side measures 4mm.

Date Code Letters: 1869 " YI ": 1871 to end - " AA ", " AB ", " BP ", " CB ", " CR ", etc.

1869 saw the birth of the Postal Card, produced by the Austrian Post Office in October of that year. People found this type of correspondence alarming. They were shocked at the idea that anyone could read their message. Wisely, the Austrian postal authorities printed a disclaimer on the message side " The administration does not accept responsibility for anyone concerned with the contents of this communication ". The Austrian Postal Card was an immediate hit.

So popular was the new message form that nine days after France issued its first postal card on January 15th., 1873, 7,412,700 cards were sold. Interestingly, three weeks later on February 6th., 1873 to be exact, a postmistress in a small Normady village read the message on a card sent by the Cure of Macey, the Abbe Cluche, to his girl friend. She liked the rather spicy message so much that she read it aloud to other postmen and the local citizens. She even made a copy of it so that the entire village would know. The good Father sued and the nosy postmistress was convicted and fined for " Violation of Official Secrets ". The law is still on the books in France.

Postal cards were issued in Great Britain on October 1st., 1870, exactly one year after they were successfully introduced in Austria. Public pressure by the business community forced their appearance. Within six months after the initial issue, sales had risen to one and one half million cards per week.

At the beginning two cards were released; one measured $3\frac{1}{2}$ x $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches and the second card, a smaller one, measured $2\frac{1}{8}$ x $4\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Experimental cancellations were tried on the smaller card. Seven different machine tests were made:

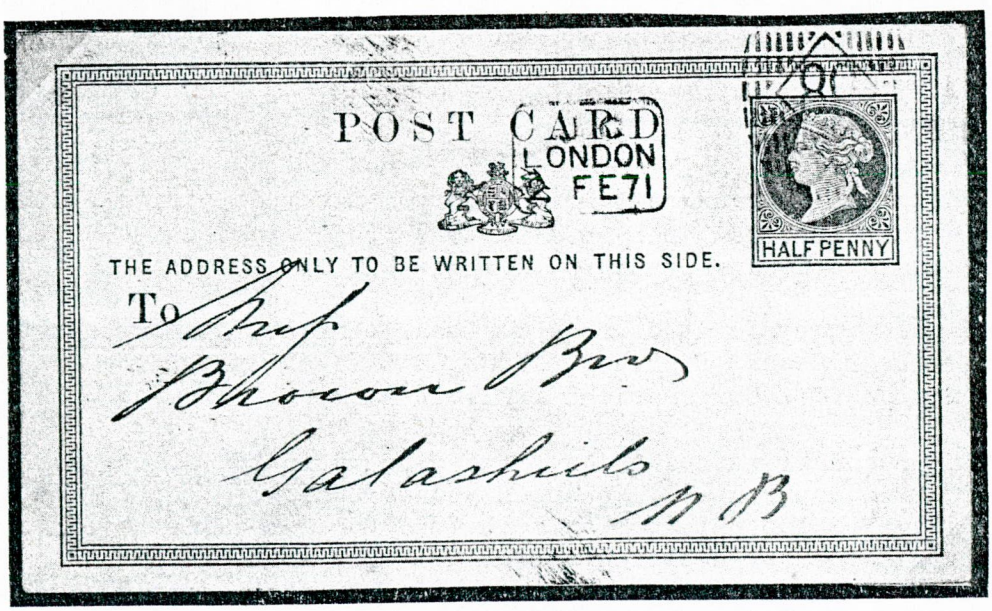


Fig. 24

London Postal Cancels.....

The first was the J.G. Machine (fig.24 on previous page). According to the records it was tried during the month of January, 1871. The example illustrated is dated 2nd. February, 1871. J.G. were supposed to be the initials of J.G. Azemar, although this has never been proven. The machine, a cumbersome foot treadle affair, constantly broke down as was not as fast as a man cancelling manually.

In Manchester what appeared to be a train conductor's ticket punch was tested. Four varieties were tried that punched the right hand side of the card. A spear cut (fig 25), a half round (fig.26), a bracket cut (fig.27) and what appeared to resemble the nose of a pair of pliers. This method was discontinued because the postal clerks

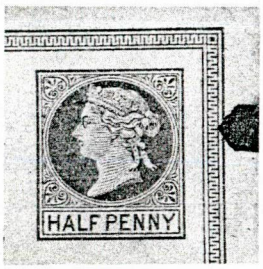


Fig. 25

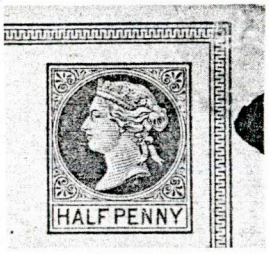


Fig. 26

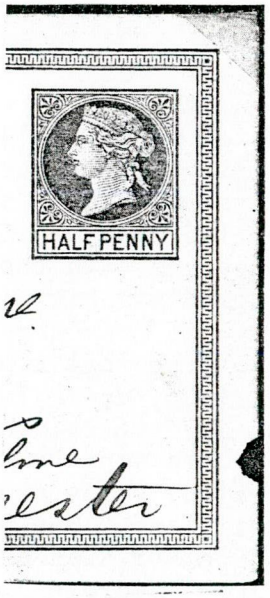


Fig. 27

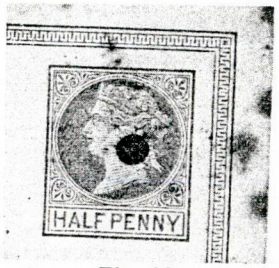


Fig. 28

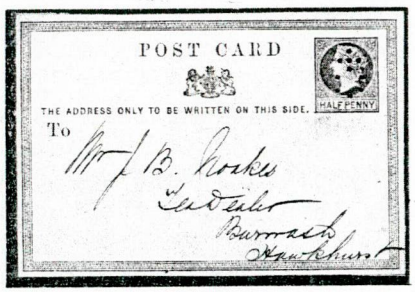


Fig. 29

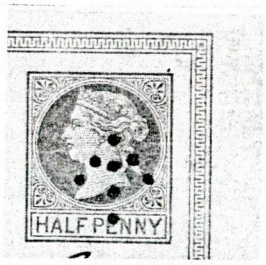


Fig. 30



Fig. 31

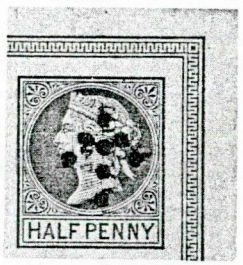


Fig. 32

developed swollen palms. Birmingham, Edinburgh and Liverpool tried a hole punch (fig.28)about a quarter of an inch in diameter. This, too, had a short life because of public outcry that words were being cut from their cards.

London now tried using a perforated Orb and Cross. Little is known about this marking as so few have been seen. Figure 29 shows an illegal use of the Orb and cross on a cut down postal card (Ed. American for reduced size ?). The mark is inverted.

The " perfin ", a precancel method using pierced holes in the stamp, was invented by Joseph Sloper of J.D. Sloper & Co., Walbrook House, London. Sloper, the sole owner of this method, acquired the patent rights in 1858 for a machine to perforate stamps with company initials thereby avoiding pilferage. The post office at that period would refund money on unused postage stamps, but would not accept unused perforated stamps for refund.

London Postal Cancels.....

Sloper sold three machines at £7.7.0 each to the Circulation Department, London, and one machine, at the same price, to the Liverpool Post Office. These machines punched an upward pointing arrow into the postal card. Four vertical holes made the shaft and two holes at either side of the top formed the arrow head. These are known as the " Sloper Arrow " cancellations. The London machines were piercers, going through the paper. The holes had a diameter of one millmeter. The single Liverpool machine punched the holes out with a hollow punch of two millimetres per hole.

The machines regularly broke their pins and needed constant sharpening, paper is a hard surface to cut. All experiments ended in January, 1874.

Figures 30 through 32 (on page 14) show various examples of London and Liverpool usages.

In regard to the Sloper Arrows I must digress and warn you.

Beware of research until you have cross checked the material. Research using previous articles and books could sometimes be very wrong. There are many instances where something written in error has been repeated and repeated until it has become Gospel truth - BEWARE.

Smith wrote an article about the Sloper Arrows in the English Specialists Journal of January 1897 wherein he tells about seeing sixteen cards with large holes all from Liverpool and London. That last statement is an impossibility as only London had the machines with the small holes. Modern research has brought out that the Post Office preprinted the the backs of postal cards for societies and business firms. Such pre-printing was done in London and shipped to the owners with carriage additional. In London preprinted cards were delivered carriage free. Many societies, bible organ - isations and business firms maintained secondary offices in London. Although the back of a card may have carried a Liverpool address it was actually addressed and posted in London. Hence, the London " Sloper Arrow " used in Liverpool. Rather confusing, but good business sense.

Sloper's patent rights for perforating stamps ran out in 1872. He still remained in business as the first firm to prepare machines for perfins on license from the British Government. In 1875 he moved to 6 & 7 King William Street and on June 24th., 1878 moved to 20, King William Street where he opened an office for the G.P.O. Sloper died in 1890 but his sons continued the buiness. They moved many times, were bombed out in World War I and II, but they survived. They are now located at Tower Royal Works, Blackburn Road, London, N.W.6 where they still provide the same service perforating stamps and documents and selling perforating machines. In a letter to the firm I received the following reply:

"....we regret to advise you that we are not familiar with the Sloper Arrow machine.." (figure 33, page 16).

Oddly their advertsing shows a model two machine, which has a maximum die area of $2\frac{3}{8}$" across x $2\frac{3}{4}$" deep, has a base $7\frac{1}{2}$" x 3" and a nett weight of 10lb. (Figure 34, also page 17). It is in current manufacture. This is the same machine that produced the Sloper Arrow only the corners have been rounded and it looks a bit more refined than the original model. It is believed this machine also produced the Orb and Cross can - cellation.

Although the machine bears his name, Albert Hoster was not its inventor. While he did make an improvement or two, his function was that of salesman and promoter of the device. Actually invented by William Loffelhardt of Hamburg, the machine's patent

London Postal Cancels.....

TELEPHONE: 01-624 8633-4 TELEGRAMS: "SLOPERENCY" LONDON, N.W.6

J. SLOPER & CO., LTD.

ESTABLISHED 1858

PERFORATING MACHINES

REGISTERED IN ENGLAND No. 601195

REGISTERED OFFICE:
TOWER ROYAL WORKS
BLACKBURN ROAD
WEST HAMPSTEAD
LONDON, NW6 1RZ

DIRECTORS
M. M. FIRMINGER (GOVERNING)
S. J. DURDEN
E. F. LAVER
A. W. SLATER
E. W. MARSHALL

YOUR REF.

OUR REF. AS/S

TRADE MARK

8th January, 1974

Abbot Lutz, Inc.
Rockefeller Center,
1270 Avenue of the Americas,
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10020

Dear Sirs,

We are in receipt of your letter dated 3rd inst. but regret to advise you that we are not familiar with the "Sloper Arrow Machine".

If you care to send us a copy of the article you have prepared, this may assist us to identify the machine in question.

Yours faithfully,
J. SLOPER & COMPANY, LTD.

MEMBER

All orders and contracts are accepted on the understanding that we are not responsible for any delay or loss arising from contingencies beyond our control, such as War, Strikes, Lockouts, Fires, etc. which prevent or delay the manufacture or delivery of goods.

Fig. 33

history is long and involved.

Loffelhardt's first patent (10511), a German one, was issued June 8th.,1879. He acquired an English patent (3902) on September 27th., 1880 and, after making improvements, a second German patent (11581) on November 30th. of that year. Again Loffelhardt improved the machine, receiving patent 14188 on July 13th.,1881.

Another German inventor, Johannes Georg August Haller, also from Hamburg, took out an

London Postal Cancels.....

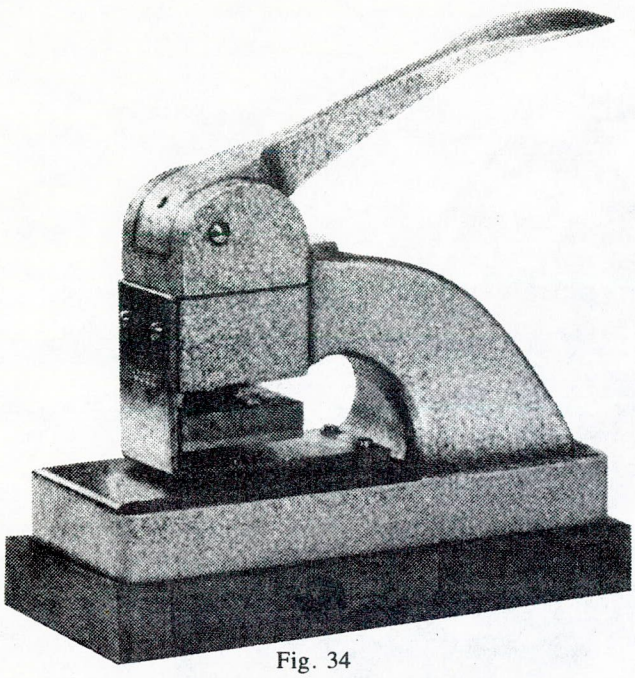


Fig. 34

English patent (640) on February 10th., 1882 for " Improvements in Machines for Stamping Letters, Postal Cards, and like articles with Cancelling Marks, Dates or Devices, Partly Applicable also for Printing and other Purposes. " It was at this time that Albert Hoster entered the picture with an improvement of his own. He received an English patent (270) issued on January 17th.,1883 for adding a counting device to the machine. Haller now applied for a German patent (21170) on his original improvements and was granted one on February 21st.,1883. Hoster countered by applying for a German patent on his counting device. He received patent 24872 on November 16th.,1883.

Still another German patent (28380) was issued to a Robert Hinrichsen of Hamburg on August 26th.,1884 for a further improvement to the machine.

Loffelhardt and Haller must have got together for the following year, on January 27th., 1885 U.S. patent 311,340 was issued to Loffelhardt and assigned to Haller. The title reads, " Machine for feeding letters to stamping-dies ". A final patent was obtained in Germany by Hoster (34116) on January 2nd., 1886 for adding two screws and a heavier spring to the already much-improved machine.

Unfortunately, the full papers concerning the Hoster machine in the post office records are no longer available. They were probably shredded sometime during World War I or II. A number of minutes, however, are still on file and from them we can piece the story together.

We find the first mention of the Hoster machine on August 7th.,1883. Post Office officials point out that two of the machines, manufactured by Newton, Wilson & Co. had been on trial in the London Inland Branch for nearly twelve months beginning in 1882 and they "...offer no advantages over the machine stampers (Pearson Hill Parallel Motion Machines) already in use as would warrant the department in adopting of them. I submit Messrs. Newton, Wilson & Co. be advised accordingly...."

By October, 1883 Hoster having bypassed Newton, Wilson & Co., who had withdrawn, was now in direct negotiation with the post office. Minute 13244 of October 19th.,1883 reads:

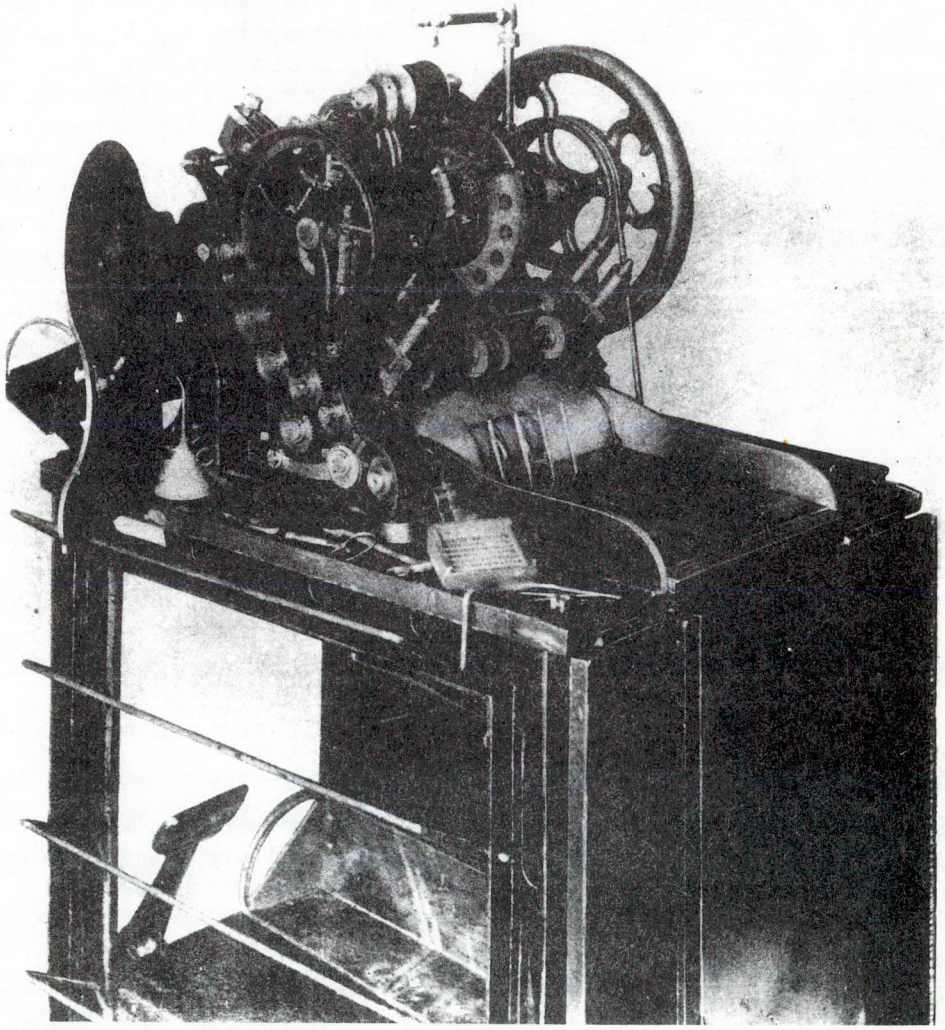
" In compliance with the request of the inventor, Mr. Hoster, further trials have been made with the improved stamping machines, he has submitted, and the enclosed reports give the result.

The machine carries an unusually large die, and certainly gives a clearer impression than is obtained from hand stamps; but this is the only point of superiority, the number of letters stamped by it in a given time, being less than half the number stamped by an equal force using hand-stamps, and the percentage of letters missed and badly stamped being larger.

The Inventor claims that, as regards the speed, his machine would be much better if worked by steam or electricity, but the trials seem to show that, with increased speed, the perecntage of letters missed and badly stamped increases disproportionately.

Mr. Hoster is confident that he can so improve the arrangement for delivering the letters, after passing under the stamp, as to save one of the men now required to work

London Postal Cancels.....



Hoster Machine used in Berlin *Photo courtesy Reg Morris*

the machine. Even if he succeeds, it will still be slower than handstamping.

The machine has now had a very thorough trial, with this unfortunate result, and with every desire to utilize machinery, I submit the Department would not be justified in proposing to adopt this machine."

Hoster would not be put down and in 1884 offered the post office two machines at a cost of £105 each. The Secretary's opinion is recorded in minute number 9470 of July 30th., 1884.

" Mr. Hoster has considerably improved his Stamping Machine, and it is now so far successful that the practical Officers, while by no means conceding all the advantages claimed for it, have so far modified their previous opinions as to recommend that three such machines should be purchased, for more extensive trial at the General Post Office.

From personal inspection I was disposed to support this recommendation, and I therefore caused enquiry to be made of Mr. Hoster, as to the price of the machines. In reply he names 100 guineas as the price of each machine, but he goes on to intimate that large expenses have been incurred, in perfecting the machine, to which he will ask the Department to contribute.

London Postal Cancels.....

I submit he be told, before going further, that you would not be prepared to entertain any such application, and that the price of the machine be an inclusive one."

A subsequent minute number 11582 was submitted in September,1884:

" With reference to Minute No.9470, I submit the following draft letter to the Treasury for approval.

For the last two years, there has been on trial in the Sorting Office of the General Post Office, a new apparatus, invented by Mr.Albert Hoster, for stamping letters by machinery. The Inventor claims that the machine, when worked by treadle or hand power, will stamp from 300 to 400 letters per minute (assuming that they are moderately uniform in shape and size), and that this number can be considerably increased by the use of steam power.

When first tried, the apparatus was not altogether suited to the work of the Department, but the Inventor, who has spared neither pains nor expense, in elaborating the con - struction, has succeeded in an improved machine, which I am assured, when worked by two men, may fairly be relied on to stamp between 300 and 400 letters per minute, 150 to 200 per man, while the number stamped by the hand stamping machines, now in use, ranges from about 90 to 100 per minute. At the same time, the percentage of letters missed or badly stamped with the Hoster machine not larger than with the other process.

So great an increase in the rapidity of work, if maintained on further trial, must obviously tend to economy of force in dealing with large masses of letters, and be an important aid to the despatch of business, especially in times of exceptional pressure.

In the opinion of the Practical Officers of the Department, it is very desirable that the machine should have this more extended trial; and it is recommended that three should be purchased for use in the General Post Office. The machines are strongly made, and the price is 100 guineas each, for which the Inventor undertakes to keep them in order for a reasonable time.

I concur in the view taken as to the character of the invention, and the expediency of a wider trial, and believing moreover, from the experience already obtained, that in any case, the possession of three of the machines would be valuable in expediting the work (especially if steam power is employed) which perhaps can be arranged.

I would ask your lordships to be pleased to authorise the purchase of that number, at the price named."

On October 23rd., 1884, the purchase was approved. At least five machines were supplied between the start of trials in 1882 to 1888. A report in 1884 states that the Hoster seems to be a development of the Azemar machine tried in 1869.

Hoster was the salesman of all salesmen - a persistant type. He kept up a constant bombardment of letters and visits to the post office. Minute 4765 is dated April 21st., 1886:

" With reference to Mr. Baring Young's letter to your Lordship, I annex the more recent papers relative to the Hoster Stamping Machine which has, for some time, been very persistently upon the Department. The earlier papers have been placed on your table in case you may wish to refer to them.

The Controller of the London Postal Service and other practical Officers in their exhaustive reports on the working of the machine show conclusively that while it is valuable under certain conditions as an auxiliary to hand stamping, it never can supersede handstamping altogether.

The rate of speed claimed for the machine is far in excess of its actual performance for efficient stamping, experience showing that when the speeds exceeds 350 or 400 letters a minute the percentage of " misses " becomes very large. The machine

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requires the services of 3½ men, i.e. two machines can be worked by five men. For a single machine three men are needed. With the same amount of labor, from 240 to 320 letters a minute would be stamped by hand.

As at present arranged, the machines are worked by treadle action, and the labor is so great that it is doubtful whether the men would work them without extra pay. Probably this could be remedied by the use of " Power " in some shape, but there are difficuluties in the way of this. Objection is raised to the size of the stamp obliteration mark, as being contrary to recent tendency to reduce the size. In many respects the machine stamp is distinctly better looking than the present handstamp, in which reduction of size has been carried out, perhaps, at the cost of artistic merit. And it must be borne in mind that one strong reason for reducing the hand - stamps is to diminish the weight a consideration which has no force in the case of the machine.

As a general rule processes that can be carried out by machinery are cheaper than when done by hand. The Hoster machine has shown much more clearly than any of its predecessors that letters under certain conditions can be stamped by machinery, and there is no reason why still better results should not be obtained.

I agree with Mr. Jeffrey that the Department would be justified in purchasing three more machines (there is Treasury authority for buying one more), but before doing so I think some improvement should be made as regards the motive power.

The indicating arrangement is practically useless, notwithstanding all that the promoters say in its favor, and might be dispensed with, this would probably some - what reduce the price of the machines.

I submit that a copy of the reply made to Mr. Freeman's letter should be sent to Mr. Baring Young, with an intimation that your Lordship, having looked into the matter, is not prepared to go further than is proposed in that reply, at any rate, for the present. "

Minute 11121/86
" In the enclosed letter, Mr. Baring Young renews an application which has already been fully considered and more than once replied to, and the object of which is to force upon the Department a more favourable opinion of the Hoster Stamping Machine, with a view to its more extended use, than the experience and judgement of the practical officers of the Department enable them to give.

I submit some of the later papers on the subject, including Minute 4765 to your predecessor, with copies or drafts of letters thereafter addressed to Mr. Freeman, a Director of the Company and to Mr. Baring Young.

Notwithstanding the intimation then given that the Department must reserve to itself exclusive rights of judging what are the best and most suitable means for carrying on its own work. Mr. Freeman in a letter to the Secretary of the 20th.July, persists in challenging the accuracy of the results reported by the Controller of the London Postal Service and his officers, and in calling for further investigation, in which the representatives of the Company should take part.

Mr. Baring Young now makes a similar request, and he gives some statistics as evidence of the great saving of time, labor and expense, which he contends the machine can effect.

.....to be continued

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