

METER NEWS

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Meter of the Month

Peter Mantell reports another item No. 1, this time on a Pitney Bowes meter, serial PB867148. Over the years this makes a total of 14 (7 Francotyp-Postalia and 7 Pitney Bowes) that have been reported, summarised in the table below.

F-P Serial	MN Page
FM2117669	MN 99-8
FU8000255	MN 49-1
FU8000436	MN 57-7
FU8000460	MN 98-5
FU8000487	MN 64-4
FU9000205	MN 61-6
FU9000212	MN 66-6

PB Serial	Security Code	MN Page
PB051345	57D3924	MN 110-1
PB061344	F24B016	MN 123-7
PB064781	CEC1591	MN 121-5
PB089226	F885852	MN 142-4
PB504001	-	MN 44-1
PB843128	D63A618	MN 115-1
PB867148	6F1C705	MN 143-1

Your editor had half-hoped that examples of item No. 1's on the PB0 and PB8 series might provide a clue on how the Security Code is formed, but regrettably they don't. However, the above table does show that the first four characters of the code on the PB0 and PB8 models are hexadecimal, whereas the last three characters are always digits (0-9). Your editor has observed this for some time, but it has never formally been stated in the newsletter.

One that almost made it to 'Meter of the Month' is this Frama frank, reported by your editor. Here the frame of the value die has dropped, relative to the value itself. The only other similar item was reported on page 43-4.



Acknowledgements

My thanks this month go to Alan Godfrey, Peter Mantell, Richard Peck, Robert Petts, Robert Rowe and Ray Woodward-Clarke for their reports, communications or contributions.

Latest Numbers

Below is the list of 'latest numbers' as at the end of September 2012 – with updates shown in red. Please could I have the next reports by 28th October - thanks.

In the list below, the part of the serial number that directly relates to the model is underlined.

Frama (UK)

Matrix F2, F4, F6	<u>F1002179</u>	05.09.12	Reported by AN
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Francotyp-Postalia

Optimail	<u>T402913*</u>	02.06.11	See MN 129
Optimail 25/35	<u>F04114603</u>	10.09.12	Reported by AG
Centormail 240/300	<u>FC5110572</u>	27.07.12	Reported by PM
MyMail / PostagePro	<u>FM2653869</u>	27.09.12	Reported by AN
Ultimail	<u>FU3116825</u>	29.05.12	See MN 140

Neopost

IS-330	<u>N1052182</u>	01.06.12	See MN 140
IS-350	<u>N1180773</u>	26.06.12	See MN 140
IJ-65	<u>N1208331</u>	27.03.12	See MN 138
Various upgraded	<u>N1240619</u>	16.02.12	See MN 141
IJ-80/90/110	<u>N1254459</u>	29.06.12	Reported by PM
IS-460 (Ex IJ-50)	<u>N1373581</u>	30.11.11	See MN 138
IS-420 (Ex IJ-30)	<u>N1385377</u>	24.05.12	See MN 142
IS-440 (Ex IJ-40)	<u>N1390543</u>	10.02.12	See MN 137
IS-480	<u>N3023734</u>	14.09.12	Reported by PM
IS-240 / IS-280	<u>N3309975</u>	19.09.12	Reported by PM
IS-5000/6000	<u>N5001379</u>	23.07.12	Reported by RR

Pitney Bowes

DM50, 55	<u>PB093849</u>	17.08.12	See MN 142
DM 810, 900 etc.	<u>PB527622</u>	20.04.12	See MN 139
Connect+ 1000 etc.	<u>PB551419*</u>	14.09.11	See MN 131
Connect+ 10FC etc.	<u>PB556133</u>	14.09.12	Reported by PM
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB617823</u>	26.09.12	Reported by PM
DM100i, 150i etc.	<u>PB869114</u>	10.09.12	Reported by PM
Unknown	<u>PB898932*</u>	09.08.11	See MN 134

Advanced Mail

AAEK-CA	<u>FU3116534</u>	03.05.12	See MN 139
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* Unless any new updates are received, the following series are due for retirement next month as there have not been any updates on these for over a year.

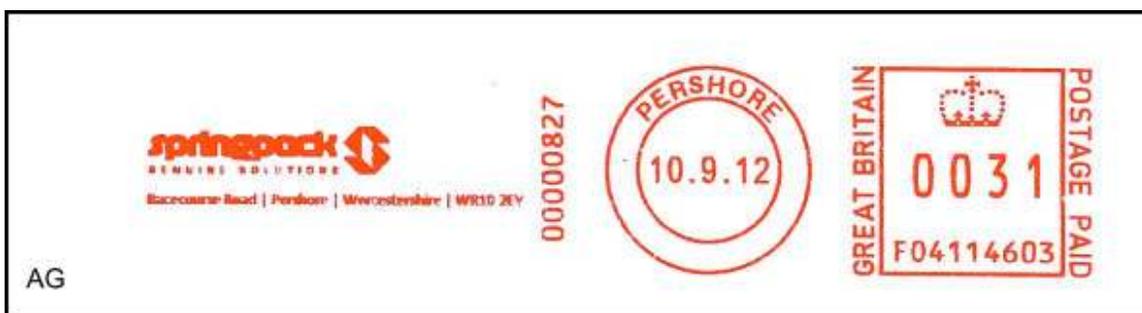
T series. This appears to be the end of the line for the long-running series that first appeared in early 1994.

PB551 series. All Connect+ machines now seem to be allocated to the PB556 series.

PB898 series. It is probably time to cease listing this as no other examples around this number have been reported. It is not known whether this number was allocated in error.

Latest Number Images

Below are images of the latest numbers reported this month – with contributor’s initials shown in the bottom left of the image. Your editor has decided to revert to full-size images for these reports, although some are shown half-length when there is no slogan in order to save space. Note that an image of N5001379 is not available.



Latest Number Images Continued



Recent Interesting Items

On pages 58-5 and 106-4 we illustrated franks printed on a roll of tape that were nearing the end of the roll - with red/pink warning lines on the tape. Peter Mantell has now found what appears to be the start of a roll with a large black arrow. This is the first example that I have seen, as normally this leader at the start of the roll would be discarded before use.



Advanced Mail

Further to page 141-3 and earlier, your editor reports another Advanced Mail item in red ink and hence in breach of Royal Mail regulations.



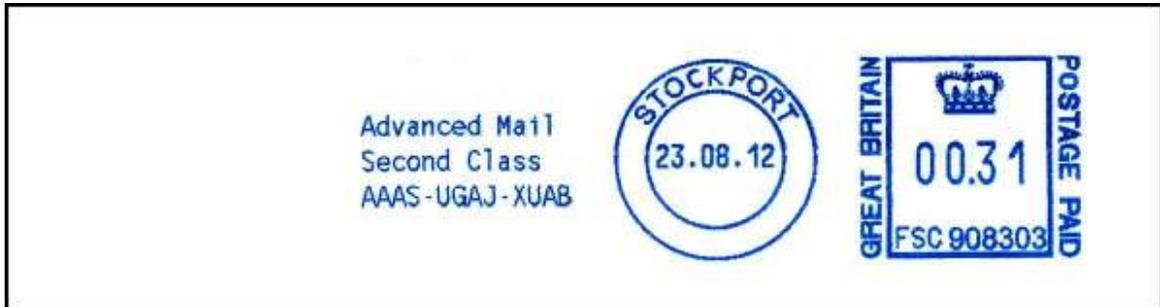
Your editor has found that the First Class Advanced Mail code 'AAAE-ZY' is being used on three different machines (PB506988, PB510041 and PB555466) in three different locations (BIRMINGHAM, LEEDS and SHEFFIELD).

Unfortunately, the user is not known but all three have a return address of 'PO Box 3729, SHEFFIELD, S1 9AD'. This is a good example showing that the Advanced Mail code gets assigned to a user rather than to a particular business address. All three machines are believed to be still in use.



Advanced Mail Continued

Further to page 139-7, Peter Mantell provides further confirmation that the Mailmax (FSC9 series) model is a 'SMART' machine (or is capable of being converted to one) with a report of FSC908303 using the Advanced Mail logo. Note that the font used on this item is much smaller than that of the previous report – repeated underneath for comparison purposes.



PB Connect+ Coloured Slogans

Two more reports of Connect+ FC franks using coloured ink. The first, using green ink, is supplied by Peter Mantell is from B.Braun - a company that helps to improve treatments and working practices in hospitals.

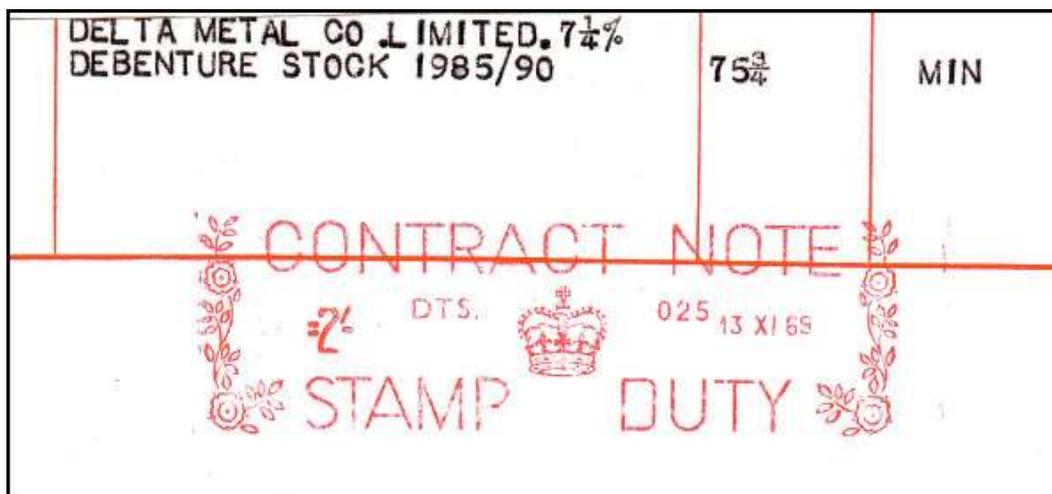


Meanwhile, your editor has found this one using black ink from Slaters in Glasgow – a retail company specialising in menswear, womenswear and formal hire clothing.



Contract Note Meters

Ray Woodward-Clarke kindly sends two examples of meter franks that have been used to pay stamp duty on stocks and shares purchases. The first example is dated 13 Nov 1969 and has the serial number 'DTS 025'.



The second example is dated 29 Sep 1972 (i.e. post-decimalisation) and has the serial number 'CN 139'. Note that both examples incorporate a floral emblem design that is similar to the 'Design F' used on meter franks in the 1960s, but with the emblems of Scotland, Wales and Ireland omitted.



Ray says that these franks replaced the traditional contract note stamps, like the one shown here.

Your editor is keen to know more about these franks and the machines that produced them. For example, how many machines were in use?, which models were involved?, when were they first introduced?, when were they last used?, do they exist with a 'decimal design'? what does the serial prefix 'DTS' stand for?



Pitney Bowes Mail Management System Cards

Peter Mantell has recently acquired a bundle of Pitney Bowes 'Mail Management System' cards, but what are they? There are three types of card, namely '1ST CLASS', '2ND CLASS' and 'OTHER'. There are 24 of each type, numbered 001 to 024 in the lot purchased. The cards are plastic with the number and type embossed, and are the exact size of credit cards, i.e. 8.5mm x 5.4mm. Each card has a metallic strip on the back - see illustrations below.



Also with this purchase were several specimen franks from machines with the serials 'PBO 00124' and 'PBO 00156', with two examples shown below.



A possible connection between these specimen franks and the Mail Management System cards is put forward as a theory on the next page....

Pitney Bowes Mail Management System Cards continued

As a background to the theory, let us be reminded of the following 'model' numbering system that was used by Pitney Bowes in the 1980s:

- 6900 – The generic series identifier used when referring to Models 6920 and 6921. These models were introduced in 1986 and were in production until the late 1990s. The machines had the capability of producing coloured slogans in green, blue or black.
- 6920 – The manual-resetting version with the serial prefix 'PBF'. About 1,100 were sold.
- 6921 – The remote-resetting version with the serial 'PBG'. About 48,000 were sold.
- 6922 – The sales demonstration version of the 6920, that had the serial prefix 'PBO'.

My theory is that these Mail Management System cards were used in conjunction with models 6920 and 6922 and possibly these particular cards were used in conjunction with 24 demonstration (6922) models that were available for sales purposes.

I guess that when either the 1ST CLASS and 2ND CLASS cards were inserted, the appropriate amounts for these rates would be automatically printed and the relevant amount deducted from the card. Insertion of the OTHER card would, presumably, allow any value to be entered from the keypad.

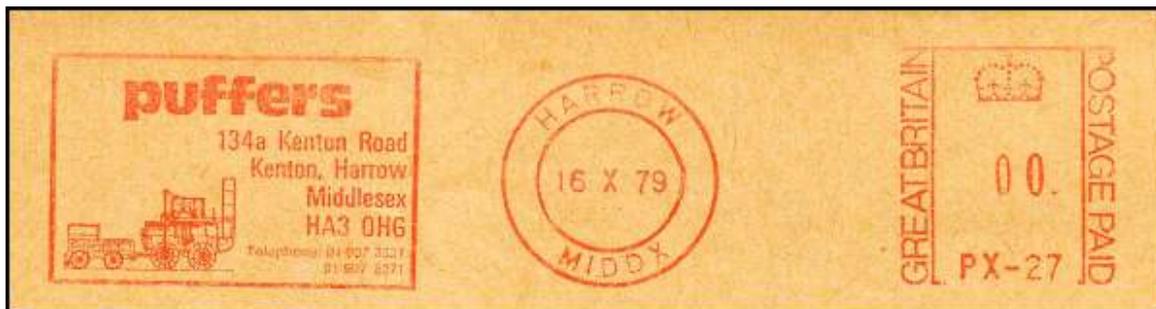
The above is, of course, just guesswork and if anyone has any further information on the purpose of these cards and how they worked, I would very much like to hear about it.

Meter Thematics from the Past

Peter Mantell sends two attractive designs from the past. The first is this tram design from the National Tramway Museum in Matlock, Derbyshire.

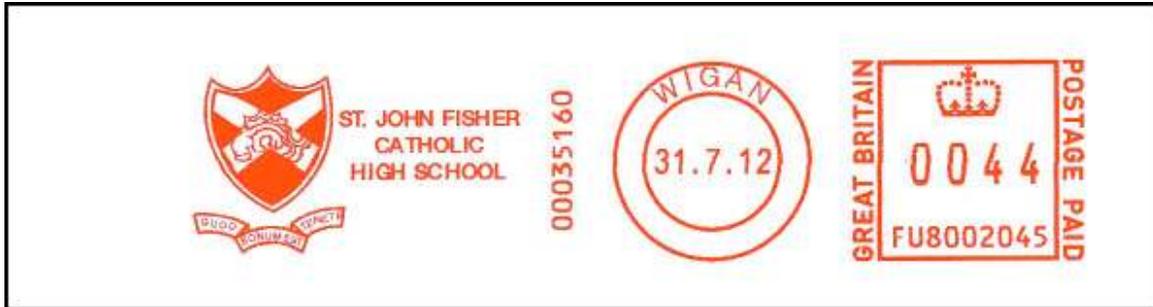


Peter also sends this old locomotive but he is not 100% certain what it depicts. His initial thoughts were that it could be Stephenson's Rocket but it is definitely not that. Peter believes it is more likely to be 'LOCOMOTION No.1', which was built in 1825 by George Stephenson and Timothy Hackworth for the Stockton and Darlington Railway.

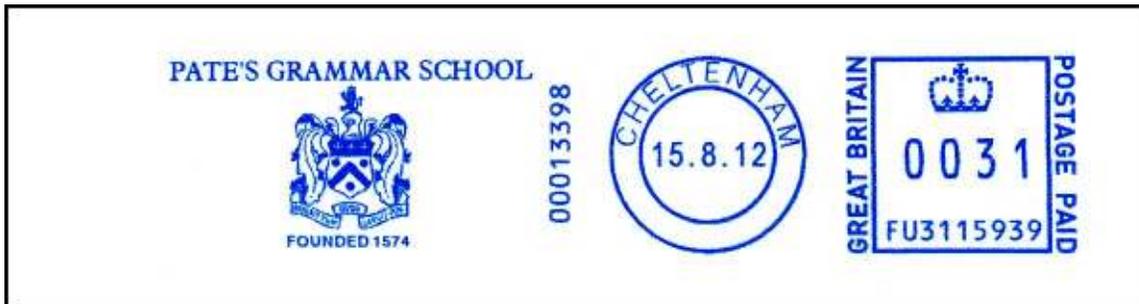


Meter Thematics

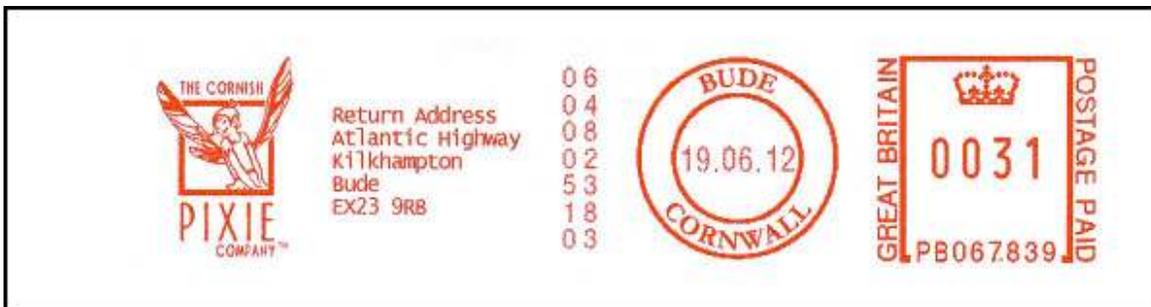
Peter Mantell sends two school thematics with Latin mottos. The first is from the St. John Fisher Catholic High School in Wigan. It is not clear what the creature in the school badge is, but the motto “Quod Bonum Est Tenete” under the badge means “Hold fast to what is good”. Their logo from on the Internet is shown alongside - as with all of the items on this page.



The second is from Pate's Grammar School in Cheltenham, which incorporates an attractive coat of arms. Underneath is the Latin motto “Patebit tum quod Latuit” which means “That which is hidden shall be revealed”.



Peter Mantell has found this rather fine pixie from a company called The Cornish Pixie that makes handmade signs and fridge magnets.



Finally, your editor's wife collects my 'Meter Thematic of the Month' award for supplying this 'face' of a cauliflower from a company called Cauliflower Cards – another thematic first!

