

METER NEWS

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Meter of the Month

Peter Mantell has acquired this 'Invalid Value' frank from a Pitney Bowes Connect+. It is believed that this is the first report of such a die from this model. The frank has been applied on a label – note the purple coloured 'tear-back' symbols that have been pre-printed at the top of the label.

The user of this machine is 'The Innovation Centre' and is close to where Peter lives. There are 60+ companies based at this location and many of them are believed to share this machine. The exact number of companies that share this machine is not known, as some may prefer to use postage stamps. However, it is likely that the vast majority are sharing this machine. We could, therefore, in time, discover a record number of companies using a single machine! The full image is shown below:



Apparently, many of the companies based at the Innovation Centre apply their own logos to their mail. One such company is 'Logomotif' whose (rather small) logo is shown below.



Acknowledgements

My thanks this month go to Jon Aitchison, Jim Ashby, Alan Godfrey, Gwynne Harries, Peter Huss, Peter Mantell, Tom Norgate, Richard Peck, Robert Rowe and Peter Wood for their reports, communications or contributions.

Latest Numbers

Below is the list of 'latest numbers' as at the end of June 2013 – with updates shown in red. Please could I have the next reports by 28th July - 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>F1002969</u>	20.06.13	Reported by PM
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Francotyp-Postalia

Optimail 25/35	<u>F04115087</u>	25.06.13	Reported by PM
Centormail 240/300	<u>FC5110668</u>	05.06.13	Reported by PM
MyMail / PostagePro	<u>FM2654917</u>	05.06.13	Reported by PM
PostBase	<u>FP6110216</u>	07.06.13	Reported by PM
Ultimail	<u>FU3117177</u>	10.06.13	Reported by PM

Neopost

IS-330	<u>N1052218</u>	07.05.13	See MN 151
IS-350	<u>N1181546</u>	20.05.13	See MN 151
Various upgraded	<u>N1240644</u>	09.11.12	See MN 147
IJ-80/90/110	<u>N1254486</u>	02.03.13	See MN 149
IS-460 (Ex IJ-50)	<u>N1373678</u>	23.04.13	See MN 150
IS-420 (Ex IJ-30)	<u>N1385456</u>	06.02.13	See MN 148
IS-440 (Ex IJ-40)	<u>N1390617</u>	31.07.12	See MN 146
IS-480	<u>N3026884</u>	05.06.13	Reported by PM
IS-240 / IS-280	<u>N3315280</u>	13.06.13	Reported by PM
IS-5000/6000	<u>N5001537</u>	17.06.13	Reported by GH

Pitney Bowes

DM50, 55	<u>PB099074</u>	15.03.13	See MN 149
DM160i/220i	<u>PB161526</u>	30.04.13	Reported by AN
DM50, 55	<u>PB337895</u>	03.06.13	Reported by PM
DM 810, 900 etc.	<u>PB527641</u>	18.03.13	See MN 151
Connect+ 1000 etc.	<u>PB551669</u>	22.03.13	See MN 149
Connect+ 10FC etc.	<u>PB556517</u>	08.05.13	See MN 151
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB618706</u>	02.05.13	See MN 151
DM100i, 150i etc.	<u>PB874654</u>	11.06.13	Reported by PM

Advanced Mail Codes

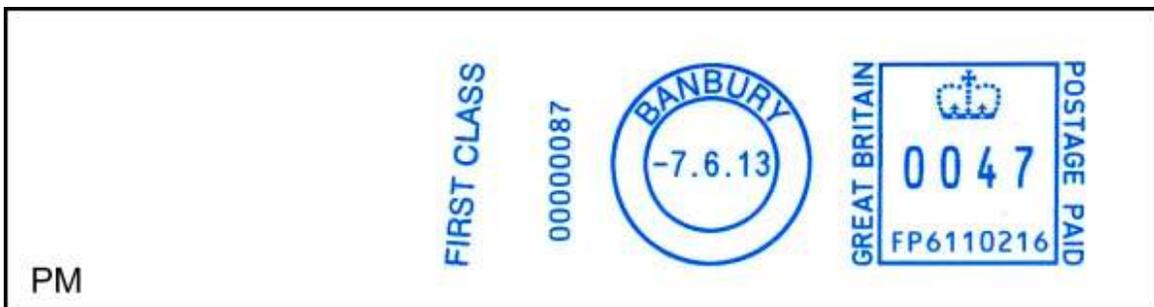
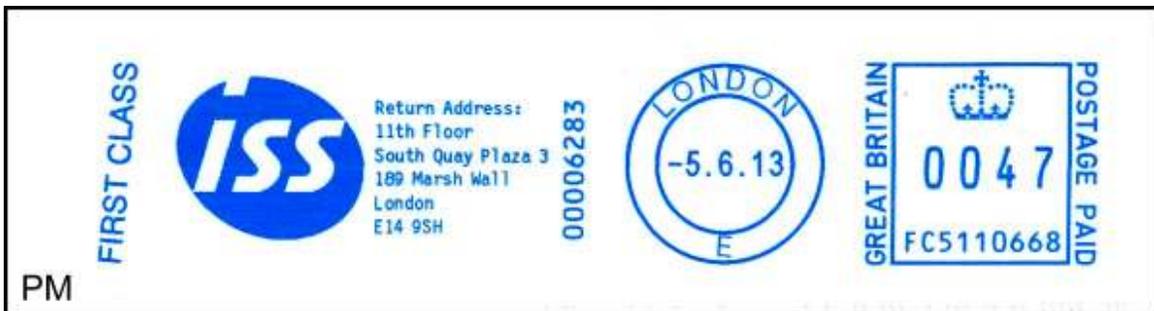
AAEY-TJ **PB617771** **03.04.13** **Reported by PM**

My thanks also go to Robert Rowe for his report of N5001497 dated 21.03.13 and to Alan Godfrey for sending this 'first day' example of N3314847.

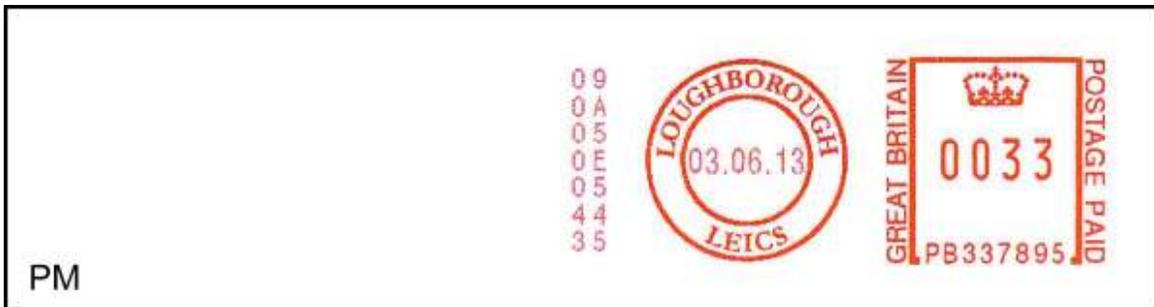


Latest Number Images

Here are images of the latest numbers reported this month.



Latest Number Images Continued



... and, finally for this section, this latest number is also a nice railway thematic:



Recent Interesting Items

Peter Mantell reports a new format for the value indicia appearing on Frama Matrix machines. Traditionally, the format has always been 'FF.FF' for the value (see below left), but recent examples have dropped the decimal point and are using a taller font (see below right). These examples are from the same machine, F1002622.



Type 1



Type 2

Presumably the software for the new font is being uploaded to machines on-line. It is not known at what point Type 2 came into existence, but probably sometime in April 2013. The table below summaries the reports that have been received to date. Further reports of Type 1 and 2 fonts for machines with serial numbers in the range F10026xx to F10028xx would, therefore, be welcome in order to narrow down the changeover point.

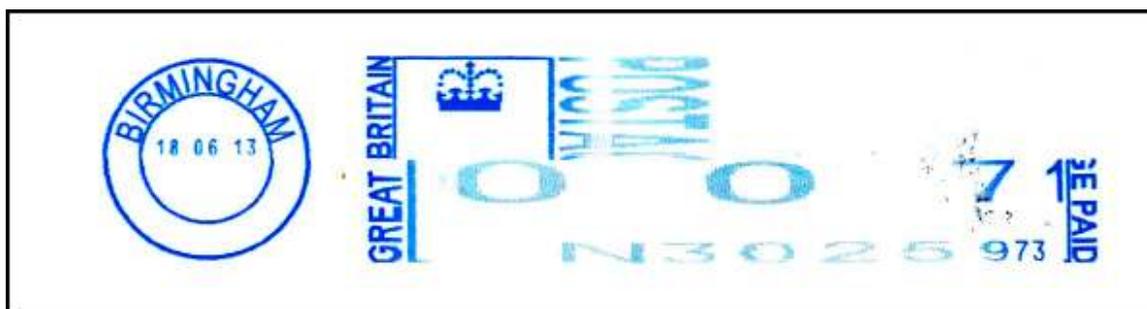
Serial	Comments
F1002622	Types 1 and 2 (see above)
F1002730	Type 1 (L28.03.13, see p. 150-2)
F1002786	Type 2 (E01.05.15, see below)

Serial	Comments
F1002852	Type 2 (08.05.13)
F1002969	Type 2 (see page 152-3)

Your editor reports the earliest example of Type 2 seen so far with F1002786, dated 01.05.13:

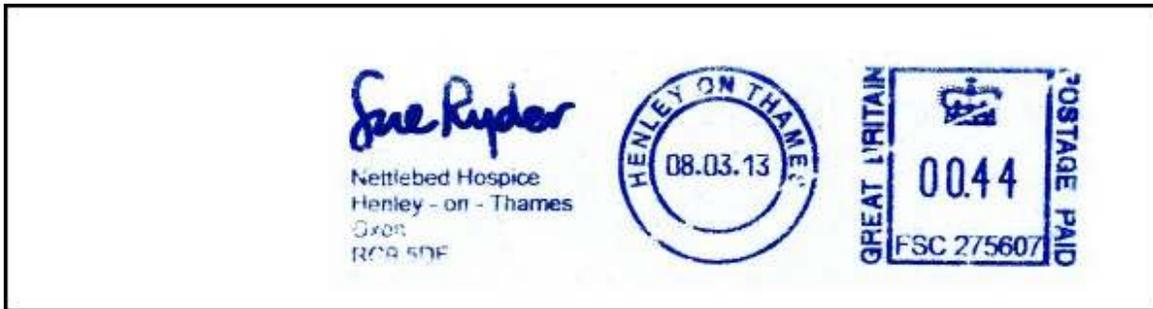
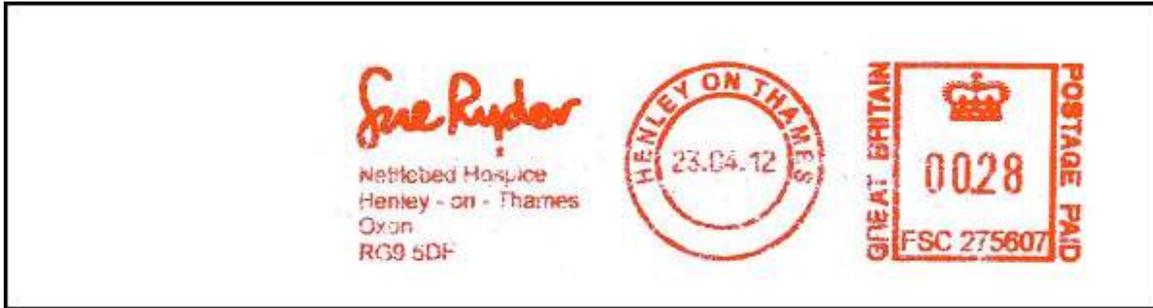


Peter Mantell reports this spectacular printing error on this Neopost IS-480, N3025973.



Recent Interesting Items continued

Your editor reports the first blue ink use on a Frama Sensonic 2000 machine, serial number FSC275607 (both red and blue versions are illustrated):



Meanwhile, Peter Mantell reports the first blue ink use on a Frama Ecomail machine, serial number FSC350331:



Editor: Now is probably a good time to summarise where we are with regard to use of red and blue ink. The following table lists the series currently in use, and the ink colours seen.

Series	Ink colours	Series	Ink colours	Series	Ink colours	Series	Ink colours
F1	Red & Blue	FU3	Red & Blue	N135	Red only	PB2	Red & Blue*
FSC2	Red only	FU8	Red & Blue	N137	Red only	PB4	Red & Blue*
FSC25-9	Red & Blue	FU9	Red & Blue	N138	Red only	PB33	Red & Blue
FSC3	Red & Blue	T	Red only	N139	Red only	PB51/2	Red & Blue
FSC9	Red & Blue	N10	Red only	N30	Red & Blue	PB550/1	Red & Blue
F04	Red & Blue	N11	Red & Blue	N33	Red & Blue	PB555/6	Blue only
FC	Red & Blue	N12	Red & Blue	N5	Blue only	PB6	Red & Blue
FM2	Red & Blue	N124	Red & Blue	PB0	Red & Blue	PB8	Red & Blue
FP6	Blue only	N125	Red & Blue	PB16	Red & Blue	PB9	Red only

* Blue ink on the PB2 and PB4 series has only been seen during the 2003/4 trials period.

Recent Interesting Items continued

Peter Mantell has found this unusual one from a company called [Scweeji](#) based in Cardiff that uses two inverted 'e's in its name!



Enterprise Intelligent Barcodes (EIB)

Further to the report on page 149-1 regarding the likely introduction of 2D barcodes in 2013, Tom Norgate reports that Royal Mail are, indeed, planning major changes to the form that meter markings will appear on mail. Apparently, the meter world has been circulated with some early information.

It is all connected with a new concept called the 'Enterprise Intelligent Barcode' known as the EIB. The design of the indicia will change and incorporate an EIB. The barcode will not resemble the (failed) Watford IMP trial of 1996-97 (i.e. what we refer to as 'Design I'). The position of the barcode in relation to the indicia has yet to be finalised.

Beyond the brief information supplied here, it is all currently commercially confidential. The consultation period with the meter franking manufacturers is currently on going, so 2014 would appear to be the time when more positive information will become available.

Further to that report, your editor has been searching the internet for more information about the EIB and below are a few extracts of some on-line chat that have been found:

- Royal Mail's plans to introduce the Enterprise Intelligent Barcodes will add value to essential communications delivered by post, because regulatory bodies want to see more management information.
- EIB is about adding value to the postal service by creating accessible, accurate Management Information.
- The general idea is to provide information which will raise the value of a mail piece over that of its electronic equivalent, either to the benefit of the issuer, or the recipient.
- The EIB can be used to identify returns without the need for opening, and thereby supporting data protection initiatives.
- Customer input on standards is being sought to ensure that the barcodes and specifications can be used across the broadest customer base.
- Half of the barcode content will be provided as free space for customers and their co-suppliers to support print production, response services, returns management etc.
- Mailing Agents will have a clear part to play in securing any new innovation for their customers and so the EIB programme will be working with the Strategic Mailing Partnership to ensure maximum coverage with this key community.

Enterprise Intelligent Barcodes Continued

Your editor has also found this extract from a Royal Mail Wholesale Customer Discussion document dated 8 October 2012:

"Barcodes for the future - Enterprise Intelligent Barcode

Royal Mail is investigating the inclusion of Enterprise Intelligent Barcode (EIB) on business mail products. We envisage that the use of an EIB will uniquely identify the customer's mail and provide full visibility of mail consignments handed over to Royal Mail, from mail acceptance to delivery preparation, for all machineable letters and large letter formats.

Royal Mail anticipates that a basic level of web based consignment reporting will be provided to customers at no additional charge. This reporting should enable the following customer benefits:

Supply Chain Management. Customers will receive consignment reporting, detailing Royal Mail's performance against the service purchased. Specifically, customers will know:

- daily, which consignments were processed, where and when; and
- which specific items, if any, were not seen

Customers will have greater visibility of their mail supply chain and this may open up new opportunities to trigger activity with their customers.

Direct Mail and transactional mail performance measures. Customers will have access to timely insights into the progress of their direct mail or 'Transpromo' marketing campaigns.

Response Management: Enhanced customer response metrics through identifying returning items and enabling more focused activity within customer contact centres.

We plan to launch EIB for customers who post machineable letters and large letters and who have chosen to be early adopters of this new technology from Autumn 2013."

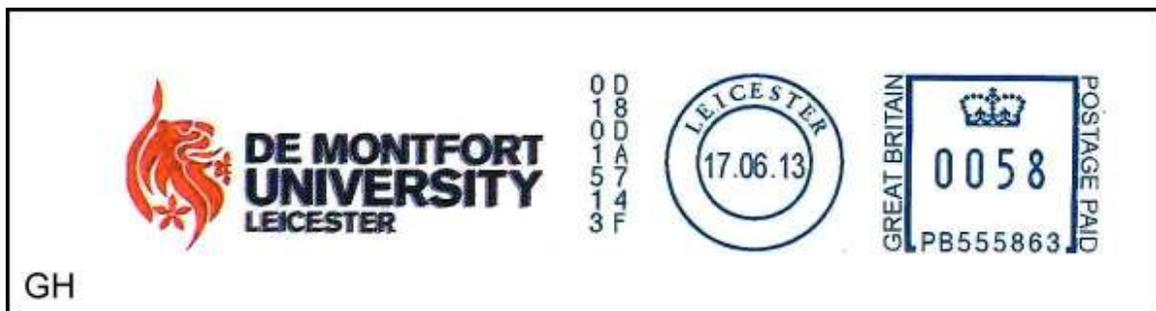
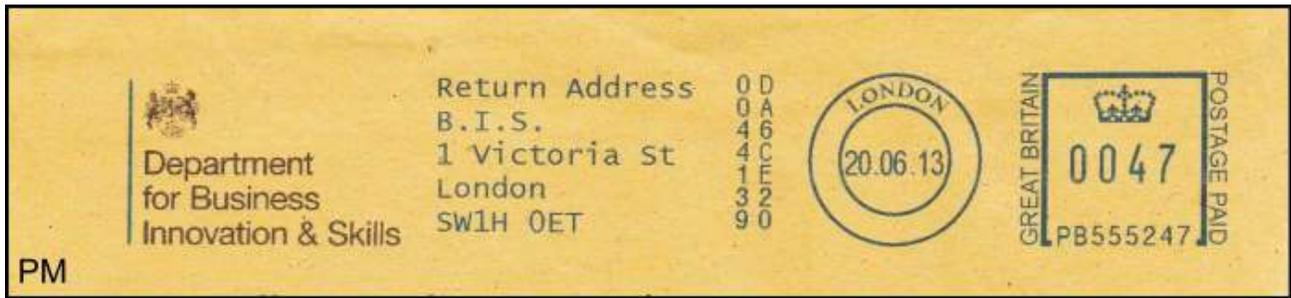
Historic Meter Items

Peter Mantell has acquired this attractive 1927 'Design B' essay, with a railway theme.



Pitney Bowes Connect+ Colour Images

This month, the following coloured slogans have been reported.



Pitney Bowes Connect+ Colour Images continued



Franking Machine Re-branding

Jim Ashby has noticed that there are a number of private companies in the UK that appear to be re-branding franking machines.

One such company is [Mailcoms](#), which is a Royal Mail approved supplier and maintainer of franking machines. The following re-branded machines are currently listed on their web site:

- Mailbase Lite
- Mailbase
- Mailbase Pro
- Mailhub II
- Mailbase +
- Mailbase Speed
- Mailhub II Speed
- Mailcentre
- Mailpoint – Connect+
- Frama - Matrix F2 Lite
- Frama - Matrix F4 Lite
- F-P – Qi3

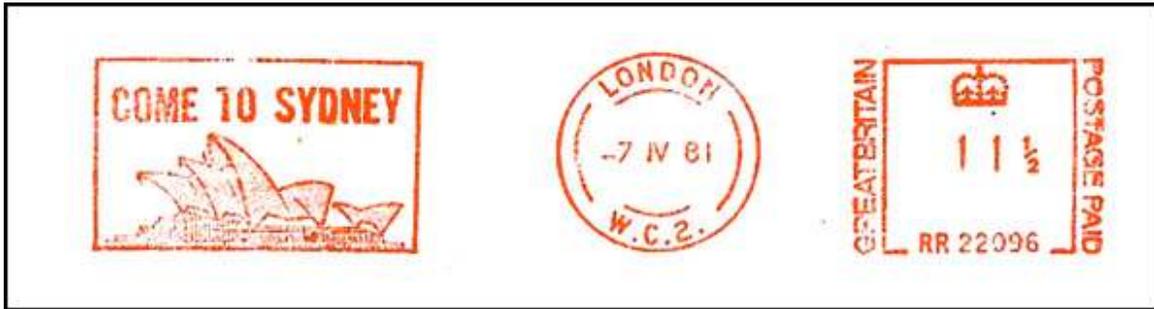


It is not known whether the machines being sold are brand new machines or re-furbished ones. The image shown above is used on their web site for advertising the 'Mailbase', but this looks very much like the Pitney Bowes DM100 franking machine. The Mailcoms company also advertises some franking machines with the original manufacturer model identifiers, e.g. the Neopost IS 240/280 and the Pitney Bowes DM160i.

It is not known what arrangements have been made with Royal Mail with regard to the assignment of serial numbers for these machines and any further information in this regard would be most welcome.

Historic Meter Thematics

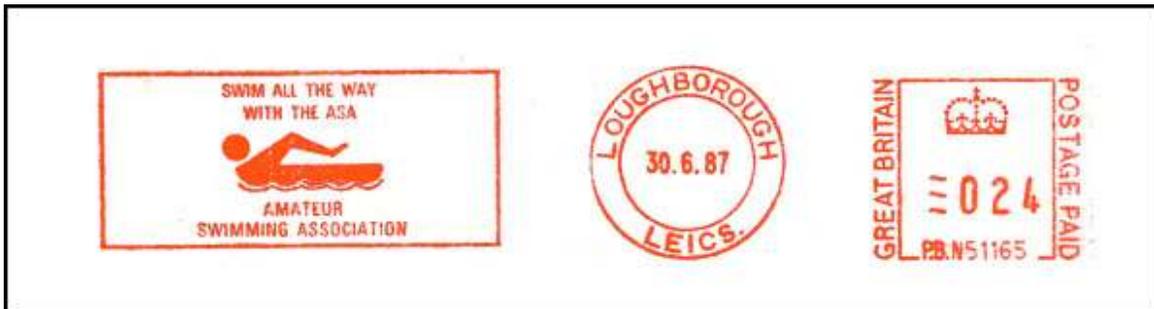
Richard Peck has found this nice "Come to Sydney" slogan on a Neopost 405/505 machine, RR22096, from 1981.



On page 87-8, we illustrated N1203950 from the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) showing the head of an avocet. Now your editor has found an example of their previous machine - an Envopak A9100 model, serial EGS23104. This is a seldom seen series as only a few model A9100 machines were ever sold in the UK.



Your editor has found this nice 1987 design from the ASA (Amateur Swimming Association).

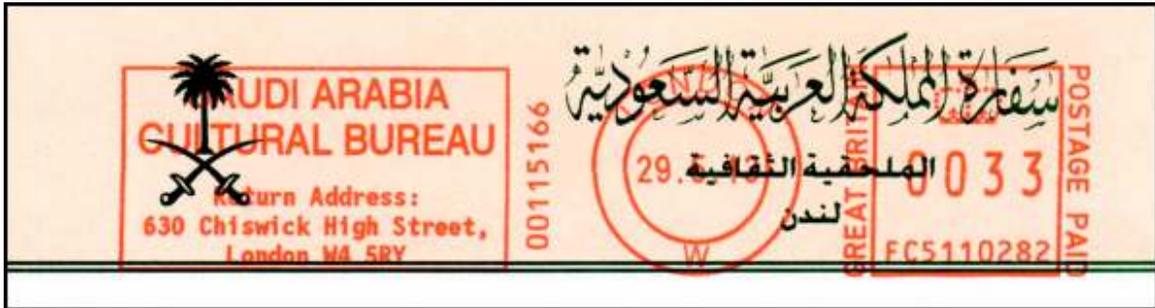


A Meter News reader, who wishes to remain anonymous, has kindly sent a scan of this 1953 French souvenir card with a meter frank depicting the Eiffel tower.

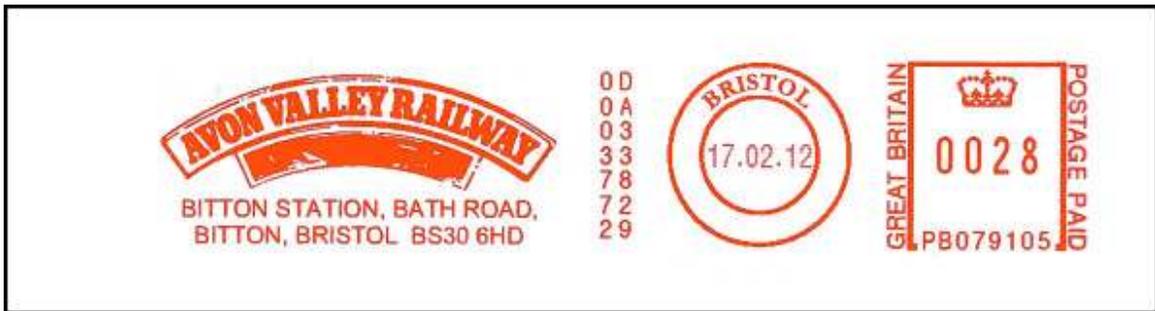


Meter Thematics

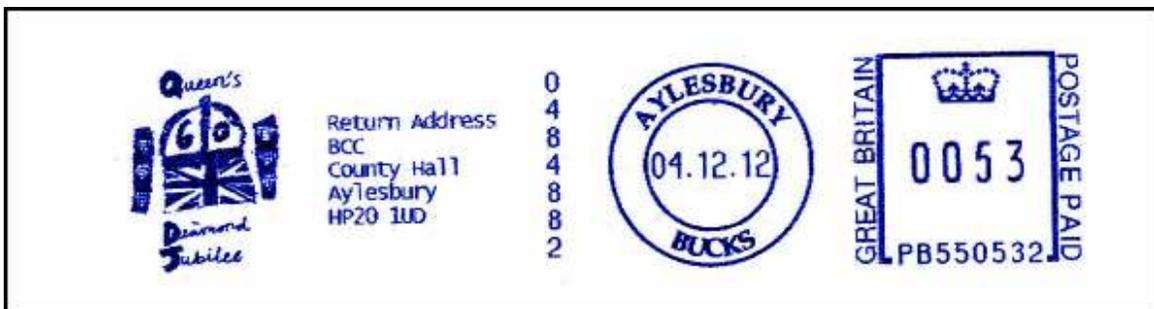
Gwynne Harris kindly sends this frank from the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia – Cultural Bureau, with some Arabic writing pre-printed on the envelope.



Your editor has found this nice railway thematic from the Avon Valley Railway in Bristol. This is only a small concern and it is slightly surprising that they feel it is cost-effective to use a franking machine.



Your editor has found this Royalty thematic from Buckinghamshire County Council - celebrating the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, depicting a child's drawing.



Finally, your editor is proud to receive the Meter Thematic of the Month award for this superb design from 'Equestrian World' based in Henley-On-Thames, Oxfordshire.

