

METER NEWS

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Meter of the Month

Peter Mantell reports this unusual Town Die from 1997 produced by a Hasler Model F204 machine and inscribed "PCD RLC". The machine was one of a batch of machines that were bought by British Forces Post Offices in 1982 (see below). Various internet searches reveal that the letters "PCD" stand for "Postal Courier Depot" and the letters "RLC" stand for "Royal Logistic Corps.". It is believed that the machine in question was being used at Mill Hill but the precise dates are not known and further reports would be welcome.

This particular machine has not previously been recorded in Meter News, but another one from this batch was illustrated on page 46-1 and shown again below for convenience:



It is, perhaps, worth re-stating that the year of manufacture of Hasler machines between 1978 and 1985 was encoded into the serial number as the second digit - see table below.. From 1986 onwards, the year of manufacture was indicated by an 'alpha' suffix character.

2 nd digit	Year	Notes
8	1978	HF series only. These were manufactured in 1978, but not in service until 1979.
9	1979	HF series only. Reports of all examples dated 1979 are welcome.
0	1980	HF series only.
1	1981	HF series only.
2	1982	HF series. Towards the end of 1982, some 93 machines had the 'HF' prefix omitted.
3	1983	HB, HF and possibly HM series. Reports of HB and HM dated 1983 are welcome.
4	1984	HB, HF and HM series. Reports of any dated 1984/5 welcome for research purposes.
5	1985	HB, HF and HM series. Reports of any dated 1985/6 welcome for research purposes.

Acknowledgements

My thanks this month go to Jim Ashby, Patrick Awcock, Jon Aitchison, Dave Baker, Ray Downing, Peter Mantell, Peter Huss, Richard Peck and Peter Wood for their reports, communications or contributions.

Latest Numbers

Below is the list of 'latest numbers' as at the end of December 2013 – with updates shown in red. Please could I have the next reports by 28th January - 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>F1003356</u>	25.11.13	See MN 157
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Francotyp-Postalia

Optimail 25/35	<u>F04115154</u>	09.08.13	See MN 154
Centormail 240/300	<u>FC5110668</u>	05.06.13	See MN 152
MyMail / PostagePro	<u>FM2655540</u>	03.09.13	See MN 155
PostBase	<u>FP6110361</u>	22.10.13	Reported by PM
Ultimail	<u>FU3117271</u>	08.07.13	See MN 153

Neopost

IS-330	<u>N1052705</u>	06.08.13	See MN 154
IS-350	<u>N1181649</u>	05.08.13	Reported by PM
Various upgraded	<u>N1240674</u>	18.11.13	Reported by PM
IJ-80/90/110	<u>N1254487</u>	11.07.13	Reported by PM
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>N1390685</u>	22.08.13	See MN 154
IS-480	<u>N3028838</u>	13.12.13	Reported by PM
IS-240 / IS-280	<u>N3317360</u>	25.11.13	See MN 157
IS-5000/6000	<u>N5001589</u>	02.10.13	See MN 156

Pitney Bowes

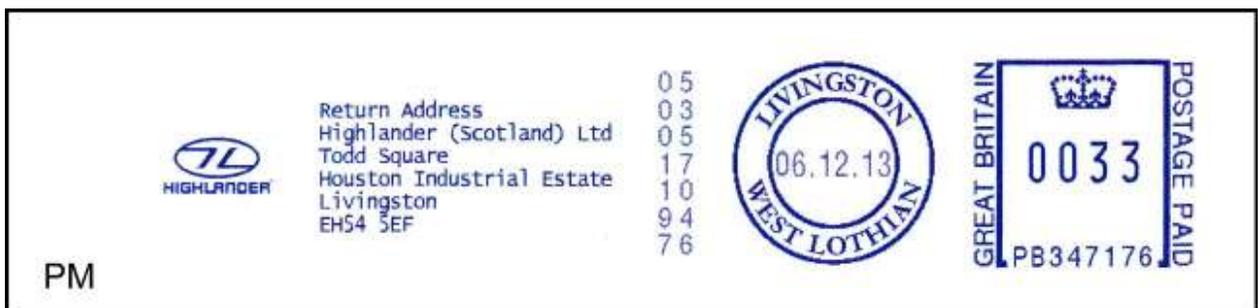
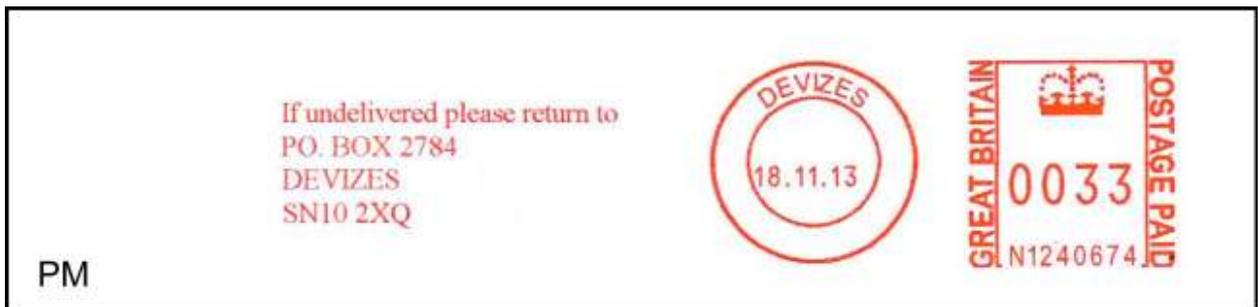
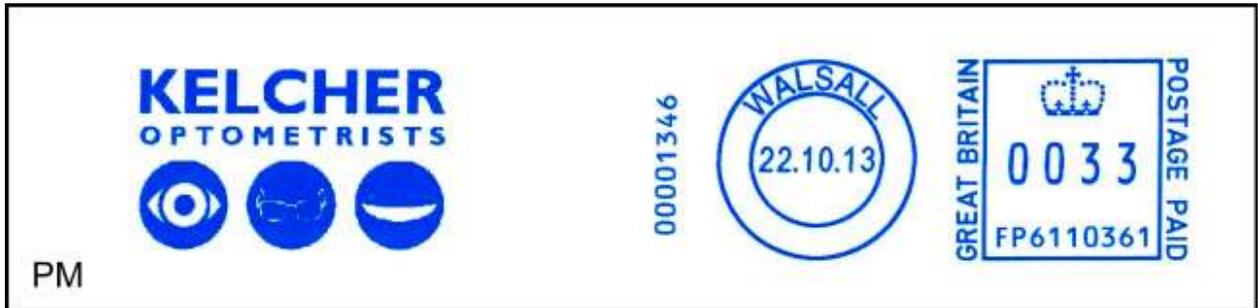
DM50, 55	<u>PB099074</u>	15.03.13	See MN 149
DM160i/220i	<u>PB162510</u>	22.11.13	See MN 157
DM50, 55	<u>PB347176</u>	06.12.13	Reported by PM
DM 810, 900 etc.	<u>PB527641</u>	18.03.13	See MN 151
Connect+ 1000 etc.	<u>PB551781</u>	26.11.13	See MN 157
Connect+ 10FC etc.	<u>PB556670</u>	19.12.13	Reported by AN
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB619376</u>	18.12.13	Reported by PM
DM100i, 150i etc.	<u>PB879002</u>	11.12.13	Reported by PM

Advanced Mail Codes

AAGA-UL	<u>N3027730</u>	10.09.13	See MN 155
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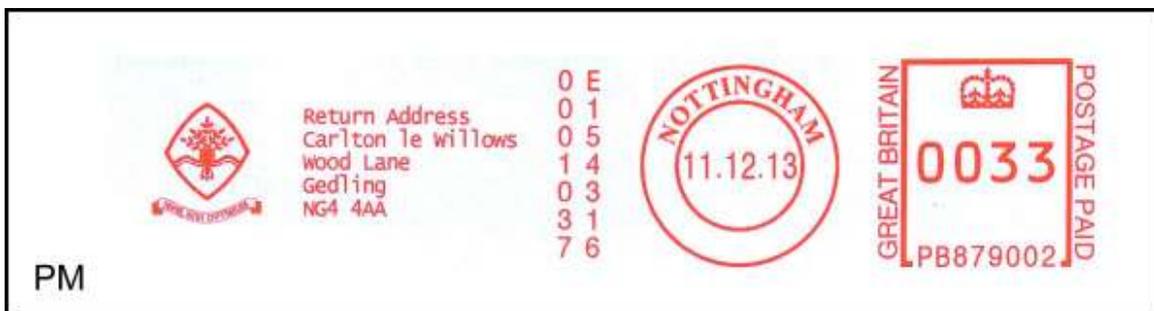
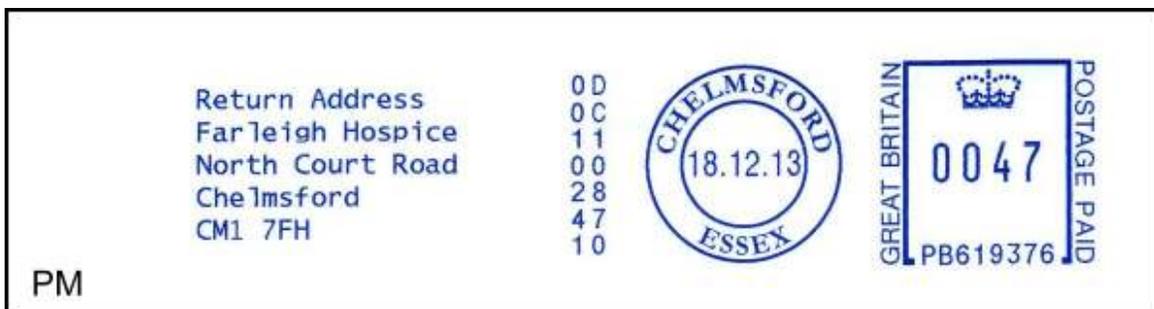
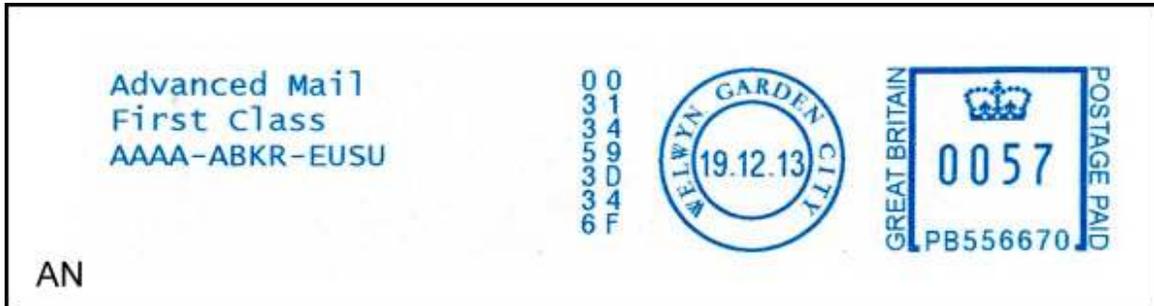
Latest Number Images

Here are images of the latest numbers reported this month – with contributor's initials shown in the bottom left of the image.



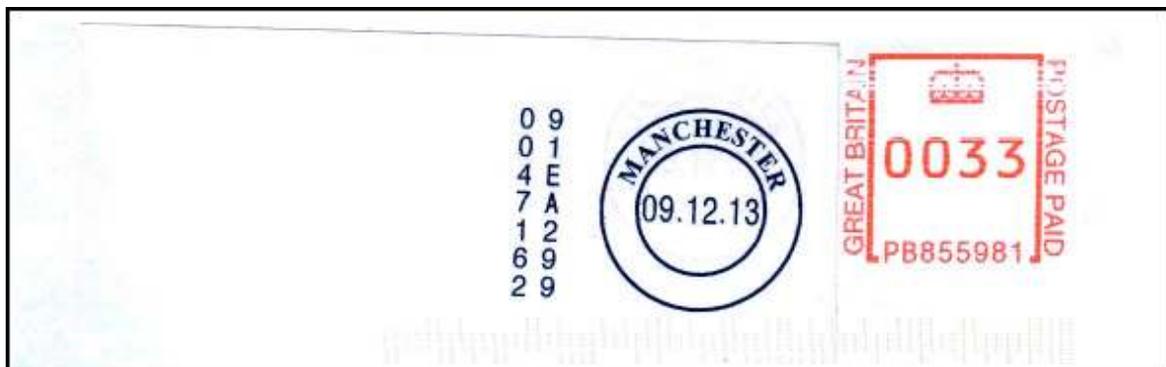
Latest Number Images Continued

Below are the final three images for this month. Note that PB556670 is from Pitney Bowes themselves and is, I believe, the first time we have seen 'Welwyn Garden City' as the town name in a machine being used them. Note that the First Class Advanced Mail Code is the same as that being used at their other offices, as such codes are assigned to the business, not the machine. Also, for a new machine, the item number of '0335336' is remarkably high.



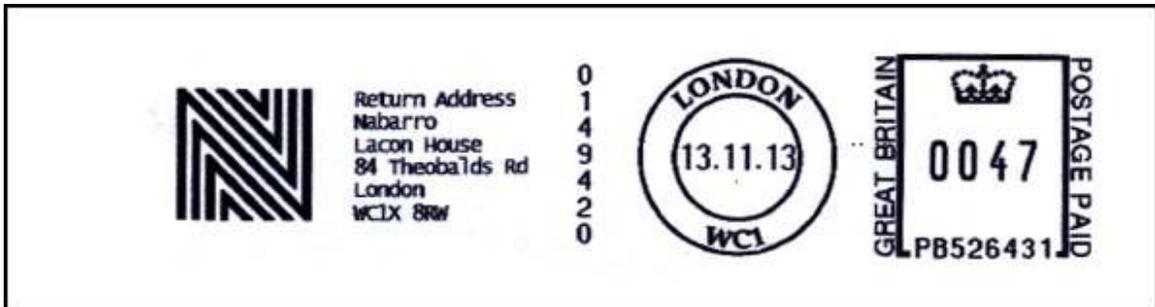
Recent Interesting Items

Peter Mantell has found this unusual item. The original frank in red ink is dated 04.12.13 (Thursday) but, for some reason, was not posted on that day. A label dated 09.12.13 (Monday) was later applied over the original impression but this was applied in blue ink!



Recent Interesting Items Continued

Patrick Awcock reports this DM810/900 frank using black ink. It is not known how this has come about. One possibility is that a blue cartridge has been 'renewed' with some black ink. A more likely scenario is that the machine had previously been printing in PPI mode and a black ink cartridge was used for that but not replaced with a blue cartridge afterwards.



On a possibly related theme, Peter Mantell reports this unusual meter frank from Estée Lauder that bears the Royal Mail Cruciform Logo. It can only be assumed that previously the machine was printing in PPI mode where a Royal Mail Logo is required, but the logo was not removed when the operator changed back to 'Meter' mode.

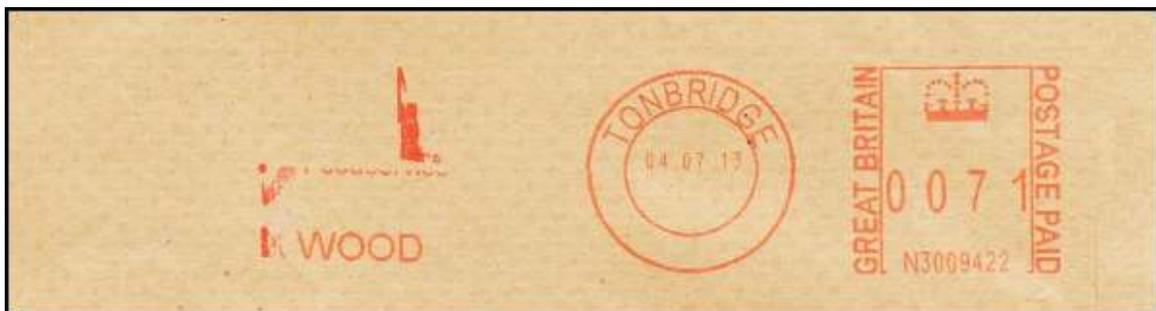
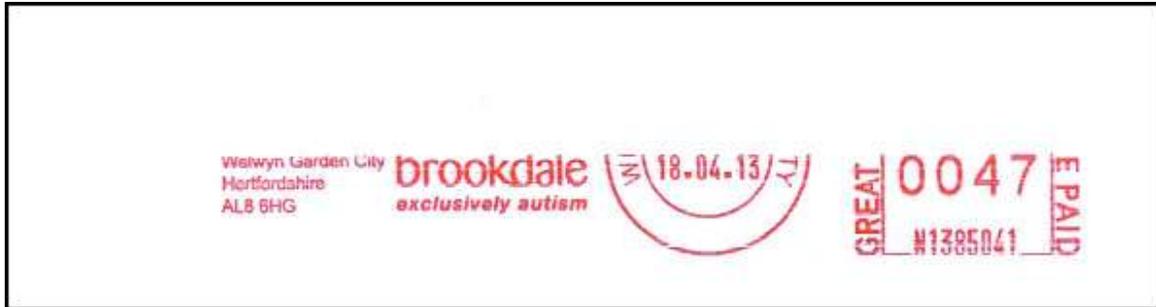


Peter also sends these two interesting items. The first is a 'NEOPOST SPECIMEN' and also a 'food' thematic. The second is an Advanced Mail item applied in red ink.



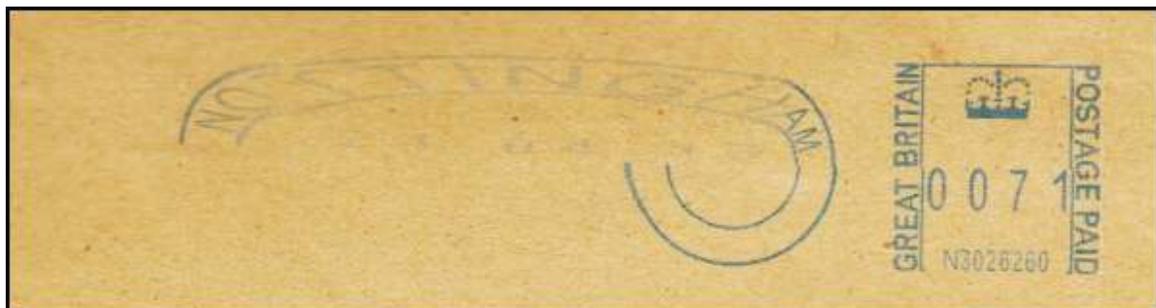
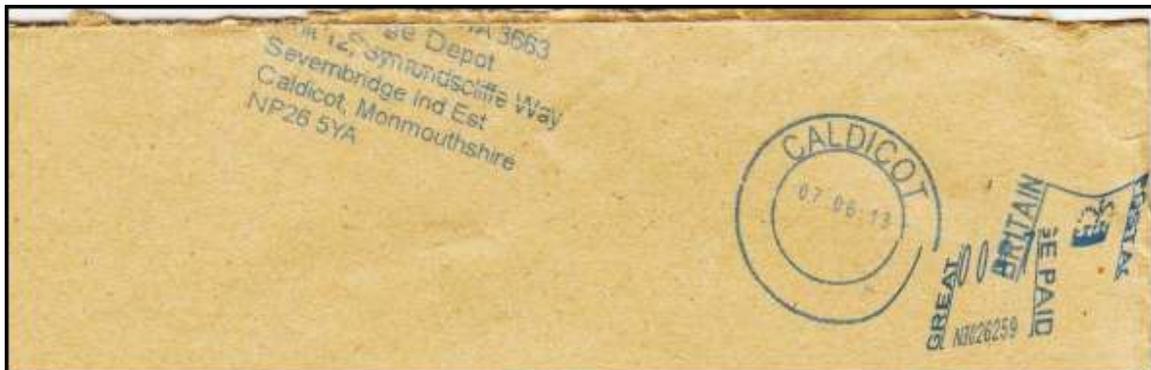
Franking Errors

Peter Mantell reports a number of printing errors – all from Neopost machines during 2013. The first illustration is one of several examples from various models where the upper part of the print has failed to print anything. The remaining examples show various unexplained printing malfunctions.



Franking Errors Continued

Peter Mantell also reports that a number of Model IS-480 machines in the range N3026242 to N3026260 appear to be having problems, resulting in stretched or squashed prints etc. It would seem likely that a whole batch of machines have been playing up.

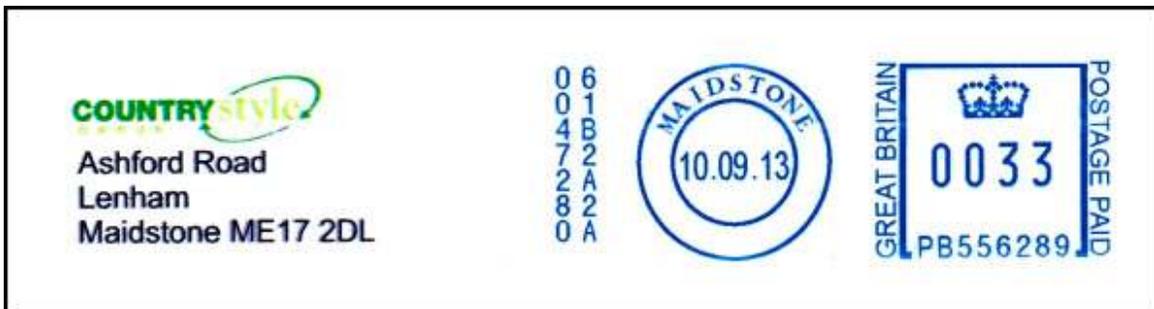


Pitney Bowes Connect+ Coloured Franks

On page 140-7 we illustrated a red and blue coloured slogan from the City of Westminster College, advertising their Higher Education Open Day. Now, Peter Wood sends a more recent example from the same machine but without a slogan and in pure black and white.



Peter Wood also sends these two franks from Connect+ machines.

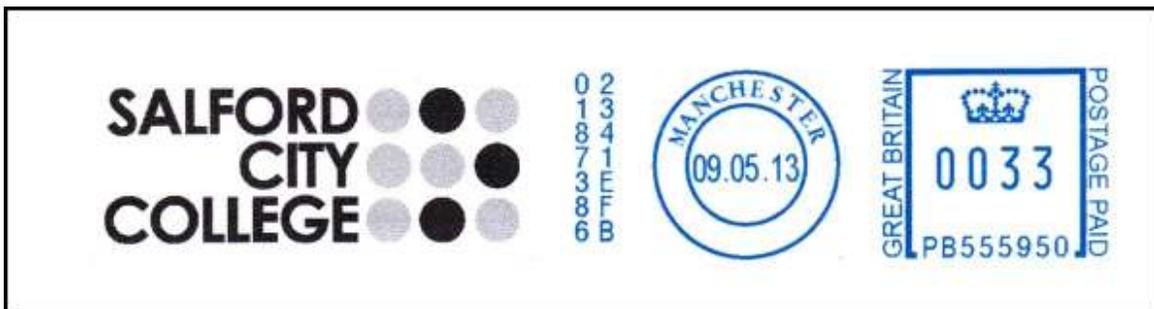
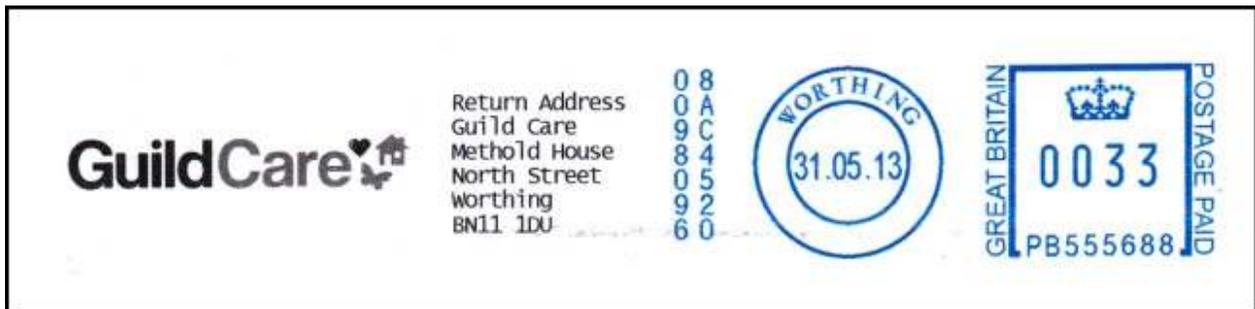


On page 140-7 we illustrated a coloured slogan from Arthritis Research UK. Dave Baker has now found an earlier example from the same machine that has the slogan and return address blocks reversed compared with that previously illustration.



Pitney Bowes Connect+ Coloured Franks Continued

Peter Mantell provides 9 further examples of new coloured franks from PB Connect+ machines.



Pitney Bowes Connect+ Coloured Franks Continued



Finally Peter Mantell reports this PPI that has been printed by a Connect+ machine. The PPI number should surely read "HQ1384" and not "H61384", I would have thought.

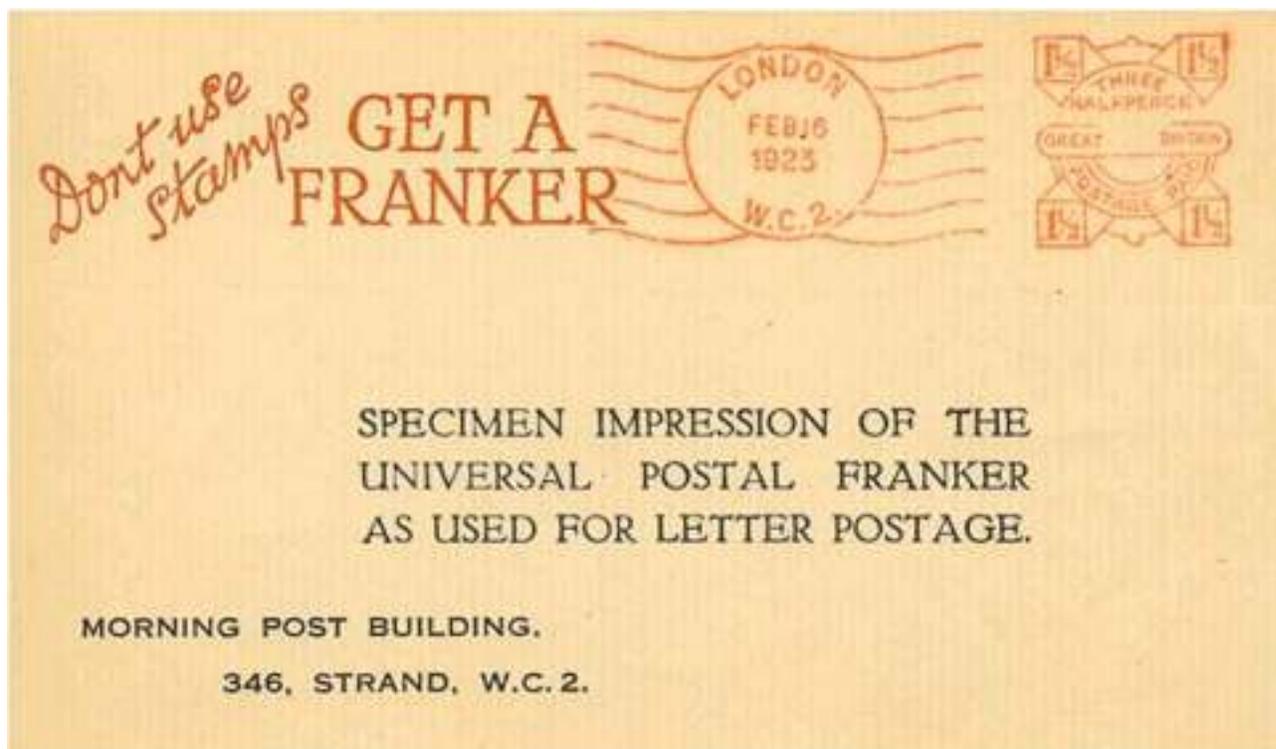


Interesting Historic Items

Jim Ashby has recently acquired this rare specimen item. It is one of the pre-production Universal Postal Frankers Model NZ machines, Machine No. 17, dated 14th March 1923. This was during the period when the company was trying to obtain approval for the use of franking machines on envelopes bearing pre-stamped slogans. Note that the slogan is a different colour to the rest of the frank.



This nicely complements the following example, dated 16th February 1923 from a Model HS machine that Jim already owns:



Interesting Historic Items Continued

Peter Mantell has recently acquired this nice cover from 1967 that marks the installation of a Pitney Bowes Simplex machine in the village of Bowes, Yorkshire. It was sent to Mr F Bowes Jr., VP for International Operations at Pitney Bowes in Stamford, Connecticut. The accompanying letter (letterhead, dated 2nd Jan 1967, omitted) makes interesting reading.



Dear Sir,

Please accept, with our compliments, this first day cover envelope announcing the installation of a Pitney-Bowes Postage Meter Machine in the village of Bowes, Yorkshire, England, on January 2nd, 1967. Bowes is forty nine miles from Bradford, Yorkshire, the birth-place of Walter H. Bowes, one of the founders of Pitney-Bowes, and a pioneer of the postage meter and the metered mail system in the early nineteen twenties. The machine is a Simplex model and has been ordered by the proprietor of the village garage. Although Bowes is in the County of Yorkshire, the cancellation postmark reads Bowes, Barnard Castle, County Durham, to conform to postal regulations.

Since its inception the metered mail system has developed to a point where it is widely used throughout Britain, U.S.A., Canada, Australia and 73 other countries. There are now over 461,000 Pitney-Bowes Postage Meters in use throughout the world. They vary in size from small desk-top hand operated models, to high speed, large volume, electric models.

Regardless of size Pitney-Bowes Postage Meters all contribute to the efficiency of postal communications by reducing the Post Offices' work, and speeding mail on its way. Because metered mail is already faced, postmarked and cancelled it by-passes these operations in the Post Office, and often catches early planes and trains. Metered mail also assists any organisation in handling outgoing mail more efficiently. A postage meter machine safeguards postage - meter stamps are not negotiable and do not exist until printed. The meter automatically accounts for postage used, eliminating the need for a post book, and can print a small advertisement, return address or slogan simultaneously with the postage.

In 1967 Pitney-Bowes, in liaison with the G.P.O., are embarking on a continued policy of expansion, and will increase their efforts to bring the benefits of the metered mail system to every type of organisation whether large or small.

Cordially,

J. K. Tottrup

J.K. Tottrup
Information Officer

JKT/PD

ORIGINATOR OF THE POSTAGE METER MACHINE | MANUFACTURER OF MAILING AND BUSINESS MACHINES

Interesting Historic Items Continued

On p 106-3 we showed a meter frank, applied in error, with £36.00 worth of postage. However, Peter Huss kindly reports this item from 1954 with a value of 85/=. Note that, according to the web site measuringworth.com/, in today's terms, this would be worth the equivalent of £94.90.



Peter Mantell reports this undated 'Rebate' meter. Like the item above, it is from a Design E Universal Model MV machine. Your editor would be pleased to receive further information regarding 'Rebate' meters.



Meter Thematics

Dave Baker reports this attractive coat of arms from the Lieutenant Governor's office in Jersey. Jon Aitchison adds that he has now recorded 2600 Channel Island franking meters but this is the first time he has seen the Lieutenant Governor's slogan on this new digital machine/license number. Jon notes that the same logo/slogan has appeared in the past on license number RJ 267 except that it was oval, rather than round. The earliest usage recorded was 16.12.94 and latest date was 22.04.99. The same machine is recorded without a slogan on 06.03.92.



Peter Mantell kindly supplies the remaining thematic meters this month, starting with this unusual spider's web from a company called 'Cobweb Postcards'.

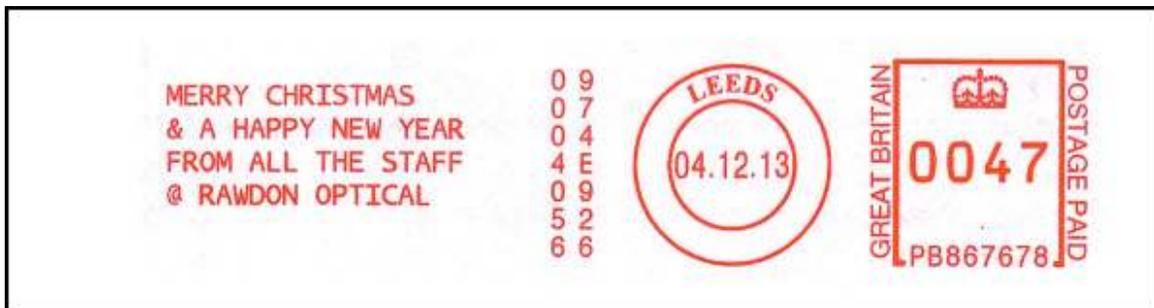


Meter Thematics Continued

Here are two different thematics from Eskdale Comprehensive School in Whitby. The first depicts the white rose of Yorkshire and some ears of wheat, whereas the second bears a Christmas greeting.



The only other 2013 Christmas message reported so far is this one from Rawdon Optical.



Here is a nice bird thematic - note the spelling error in the Return Address block, where 'Brighton' has become 'Brighton'!



Finally, my Meter Thematic of the Month goes to Peter Mantell for the most attractive heraldry design from Fenland District Council on page 9.