

# METER NEWS

Issue Number 181 Nov 2015



Editor: Alastair Nixon, 7 Bramblegate, Edgcumbe Park, Crowthorne, Berks, RG45 6JA. Tel: +44 (0) 1344 775378  
Email: [nixon48@gmail.com](mailto:nixon48@gmail.com) Web site: <http://www.meterfranking.co.uk>

## Meter of the Month

My meter of the month, kindly sent by Jan Lannoye, shows a previously unrecorded Mailmark format that has 'SU Letter 20g' on a letter from the UK to Belgium with £0.85 of postage.

Your editor believes that 'SU' must stand for '**S**urface', i.e. for mail to be sent by sea. It is unlikely to stand for '**S**urcharge' because such items are inscribed 'Surcharge Payment' - see Meter News page 163-1. Having said that, there are a few things that are rather puzzling about this item . . . .

1) The user put an Airmail sticker on the envelope (no room to show here), even though your editor thinks that these stickers are no longer mandatory for European destinations. Anyway, such action appears to conflict with the user applying an 'SU' frank!

*[Patrick Awcock comments that when the all-up service for letters was introduced many years ago, air mail labels were not used for Europe. However, several years ago now, this was changed and air mail labels were then required to be used (printed papers and small packets could go by surface mail). He believes that this is still the case today - although things may have changed when these were abolished in April 2013.]*

2) All mail from the UK to Europe goes by air these days, so this must be an error that has been made by the user. Items only go 'Surface' mail (known as 'Economy Mail') to 'overseas' destinations, i.e. outside Europe. Note that the economy rate for letters up to 20g is set by Royal Mail as £0.85. This aligns with the postage applied by the user in this case - note that meter franking users only get discounts on mail that is addressed to the UK.

3) When the matrix block is decoded, it reveals the 'Mail Type' to be '7001', and numbers in this range have not been reported previously. The 'Mail Code' has a value of '7' which we have also recently seen being used for 'Signed For' items - see page 180-6, and it is rather strange that mail codes of '7' should be assigned the same code for both (completely different) mail categories (i.e. for both 'surface mail' and 'signed for' mail).

## Acknowledgements

My thanks this month go to Jon Aitchison, Jim Ashby, Patrick Awcock, Michael Dobbs, Ray Downing, Alan Godfrey, Peter Huss, Duncan James, Jan Lannoye, Peter Mantell and Mike Mood for their reports, communications or contributions.

## Latest Numbers

Below is the list of 'latest numbers' as at the end of November 2015 – with updates shown in red. Please could I have the next reports by the 28th December - thanks.

In the list below, the part of the serial number that directly relates to the model is underlined. Note that those entries that have a date format with hyphen separators are ones in 'Design J' (matrix) format.

### Frama (UK)

Matrix F2, F4, F6	<u>F1004010</u>	27.05.15	See MN 175
Matrix F12 etc.	<u>FR2001888</u>	22-10-15	Reported by PM

### Francotyp-Postalia

Optimail 25/35	<u>F04115620</u>	04.06.14	See MN 164
Centormail 240/300	<u>FC5110729</u>	18-11-15	Reported by PM
MyMail / PostagePro	<u>FM2657955</u>	29.10.15	Reported by AN
PostBase Qi3/4/6/9	<u>FP6110850</u>	04.08.15	See MN 178
PostBase Qi3/4/6/9	<u>FP6115041</u>	20-11-15	Reported by AN
PostBase Qi3000?	<u>FP7111677</u>	22-08-15	See MN 180

### Neopost

IS-330	<u>N1053186</u>	23.04.15	See MN 175
IS-350	<u>N1182582</u>	18.09.15	See MN 179
Various upgraded	<u>N1240746</u>	31.07.15	See MN 177
IS-480	<u>N3030571</u>	22.07.15	See MN 177
IS-240 / IS-280	<u>N3319858</u>	18.05.15	See MN 175
IS-5000/6000	<u>N5001705</u>	20.10.14	See MN 168
IS-240/280	<u>NE6007428</u>	05-11-15	Reported by DJ
IS-480	<u>NE8008725</u>	17-11-15	Reported by AG
IS-5000/6000	<u>NE9000458</u>	19-11-15	Reported by PM

### Pitney Bowes

DM160i/220i	<u>PB174086</u>	12-11-15	Reported by PM
DM60	<u>PB2008448</u>	09-11-15	Reported by PM
DM50, 55	<u>PB367690</u>	21.10.15	See MN 180
Connect+ 10FC etc.	<u>PB557938</u>	11-11-15	Reported by PM
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB620623</u>	28.08.15	See MN 178
DM 400, 450, 475	<u>PB6627562</u>	24-11-15	Reported by PM
DM 110i	<u>PB884008</u>	06.11.15	Reported by PM

### Advanced Mail Codes

AAGK-HY	NE9000321	16-04-15	See MN 174
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### Meter-related Web Page

The Pitney Bowes web page <http://blogs.pitneybowes.co.uk/pbtalksbiz/2014/07/16/picture-can-worth-thousand-words-envelope/> includes five illustrations that have been taken from past issues of Meter News, together with a link to my web site!

### Latest Number Images

Contributor's initials and other details are shown in the bottom left of each image.



Latest Number Images continued

 Delivered by  17-11-15  
£0.36 NE8008725  **2**  
Letter

AG - NE8008725 [Item 000242]

Delivered by  19-11-15  
£0.51 NE9000458  **1**  
Letter

PM - NE9000458 [Item 0002992]

Delivered by  12-11-15  
£0.51 PB174086  **1**  
Letter

PM - PB174086 [Item 0000119]

 Delivered by  09-11-15  
£0.36 PB2008448  **2**  
Letter

PM - PB2008448 [Item 0000152]


Littlehampton Books  
130 Park Drive  
Milton Park  
Abingdon  
OX14 4SE

Delivered by  11-11-15  
£0.36 PB557938  **2**  
Letter

PM - PB557938 [Item 0003378]

## Latest Number Images continued

Return Address  
Punter Southall Group  
1st Floor  
7 Castle Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 3AH

Delivered by  
  
24-11-15  
£0.51 PB6627562

**1**  
Letter

PM - PB6627562 [Item 0003020]



07  
01  
00  
0E  
29  
70  
29

BRACKNELL  
06.11.15  
BERKS

GREAT BRITAIN  
0039  
POSTAGE PAID  
PB884008

PM

## Coloured Slogans

Just three black slogans this month – all reported by Peter Mantell. Note that the first one, PB557036, is from Rochdale Council but is different from the slogan shown on p178-9. Note also that in the return address for the last item, “Solihul” should be spelt “Solihull”!

Return Address  
PO Box 100  
Rochdale  
OL16 9NP

Delivered by  
  
28-10-15  
£0.63 PB557036

**2**  
L Letter  
100g



STATEMENT  
ENCLOSED


**Bushnell**

Delivered by  
  
01-07-15  
£0.36 PB555348


**2**  
Letter



Return Address  
Solihul College  
Blossomfield Road  
Solihul  
B91 1SB

Delivered by  
  
09-09-15  
£0.36 PB557839

**2**  
Letter



## Mailmark™ News

Peter Mantell reports this new Mailmark format with “2 Advanced Letter”. Previously, similar items have read simply “2 Advanced”. The Mail Type for this item decodes as a new code ‘1504’ and Tariff Version ‘7’ – other Advanced Mail items seen since that date have stayed at Tariff Version ‘6’. Note that the Advanced Mail block itself has not been included.



In the report on page 170-8 there was some confusion with regard to the mapping of the Mail Type code to the 1st and 2nd class Medium Parcel rates. Peter Mantell now reports a ‘2 Medium Parcel’ frank where the matrix block contains the Mail Type ‘0303’. Previously, this Mail Type was reported on a ‘1 Medium Parcel’, and therefore the confusion continues! One thing that is clear, however, is that the frank bears an attractive thematic - depicting a Viking-style boat.



The above reports, together with that on page 1 allows the Mail Type table (last shown in full on page 178-8) to be extended as follows:

Mail Type Code	Type Description	First Reported
0303	1 and 2 Medium Parcel	Page 181-6
1504	2 Advanced Letter	Page 181-6
7001	SU Letter 20g	Page 181-1

Further to page 180-5, Peter Mantell reports another ‘Zero Test’ item with a Mail Type code of ‘9995’. It is starting to look like this code is the norm for such items. Note that the Return Address appears vertically – unusual and against Royal Mail regulations.



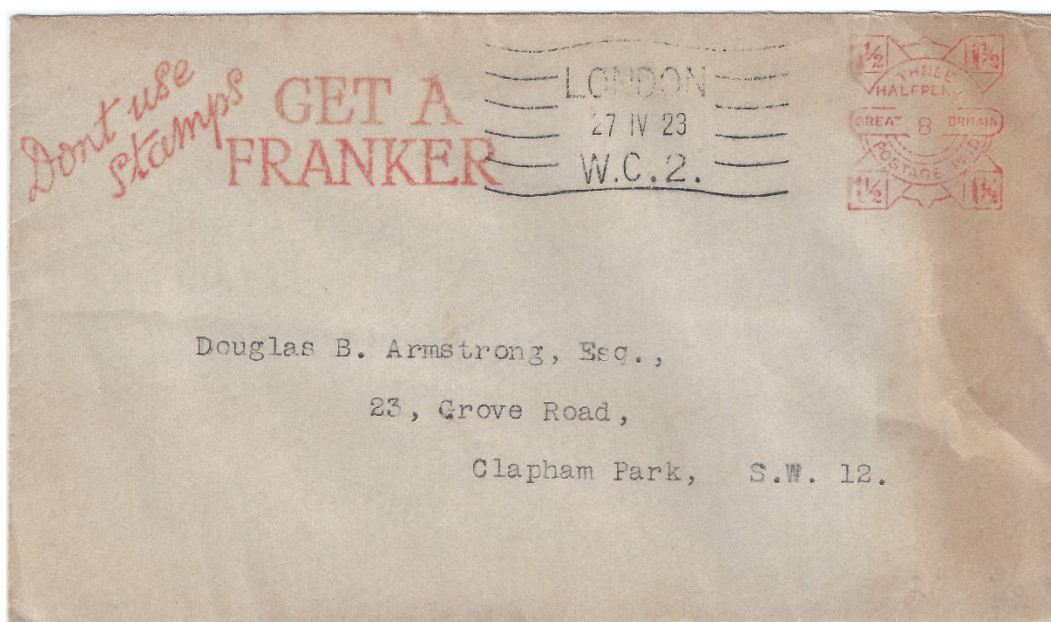
## Recent Interesting Items

Duncan James reports this Surcharge Payment – franked with just £0.03 of postage!



## Historic Items

Further to page 108-1 and 111-9, Jim Ashby has recently acquired two nice very early NZ covers depicting the first ever slogan - "Don't use Stamps / GET A FRANKER". The first item (shown below) is machine 8, dated 27 IV 23 and the other is similar but dated 8 VI 23.



During some research at the BPMA (Post Office Archives) Michael Dobbs reports that he recently came across this entry in a Post Office Circular dated 23 December 1964:

“Roneo Neopost will shortly introduce the Neopost 305. As this is mechanically identical with the Frankmaster the same setting instructions will apply; the only variation is in the modernisation of the outside casing. The prefix letter of the machine number identifying the Neopost 305 will be H.”

Your editor notes that Issue 70 (June 1965) of the Meter Stamp Bulletin makes reference to the fact that the Frankmaster was now known as 'Model 305', but no exact date when that change occurred was stated, so this is helpful to tie the date down. However, the 'H' prefix was, in fact, never used. The 'N@' series associated with the Frankmaster was continued with the Model 305, and at December 1964 the highest number in that series had reached 'NM 124'. The 'H' prefix, of course, had been previously allocated to the Pitney Bowes 'Model H' back in 1929 and in the mid-1960's there were probably still a few of these machines still in use (some are known to exist in Design E), so it is rather strange that they could have been planning to give the Model 305 an 'H' prefix.

## Historic Items Continued

Further to page 180-7, Peter Huss has kindly sent a higher resolution scan of the 'British Celanese' frank.

Although the impression of the left-hand die is not 100% clear, I am now fairly sure that is, in fact, a poorly printed 'B3' (and not 'B4'). Thanks to Jim Ashby for questioning my previous report.



Further to page 180-1, and with much help from Patrick Awcock and Stafford May, I have now been able to locate the reference to the other 'narrow print' report.

It transpires that I somehow got confused between the PB7 (Post Perfect) series and the PB2 (Personal Post) series and it was actually the PB2 series that had different formats in the first batch of machines – my apologies.

The first batch of Personal Post machines were believed to have only been issued to firms based in Peterborough / the East Anglia region. The attached illustration shows the noticeably different versions of the early PB21s.



As for my (slightly) squashed 'PB7' example, I am putting it down to a one-off, probably caused by a mis-feed as the envelope went through the machine. I am now, of course, looking-out for low-numbered PB2 series franks (below PB210399) in order to track down when the change in format occurred, so if you have any low-numbered examples of these, I would be pleased to hear from you.

John Fowler has kindly sent this rather nice frank from 1993 on a label from the British Antarctic Survey (serial P.B.T 051X), depicting a penguin.




Finally, your editor couldn't resist these Swiss mushrooms found by Peter Mantell.





## Meter Ephemera

Mike Mood sends this rather nice double-sided 'hang-up' card from the Post Office (undated, but probably around 1968) entitled "How to post Franked Mail in the London Postal area except WC and EC Districts".




**How to post Franked Mail**

IN THE LONDON POSTAL AREA  
EXCEPT WC AND EC DISTRICTS

- PLEASE... **CHANGE DATE DAILY**
- USE ONLY CLEAR AND CORRECT IMPRESSIONS
- **SEPARATE MAIL INTO CLEARLY LABELLED FIRST CLASS & SECOND CLASS BUNDLES – ALL LETTERS FACING THE SAME WAY**
- **IF POSTING IN E1, N1, SE1, SW1, W1, W2 (OR ELSEWHERE IN LONDON AT THE POSTMASTER'S REQUEST),**
- **SUBDIVIDE BUNDLES INTO;**
  - A) LONDON (NUMBERED DISTRICTS ONLY)
  - B) REMAINDER OF UK AND THE IRISH REPUBLIC.
  - C) AIRMAIL.
  - D) ABROAD.

PLEASE SEE OVERLEAF



**Care helps the Post go round**

London PL1194

## Meter Ephemera continued

This is the reverse side of the card:

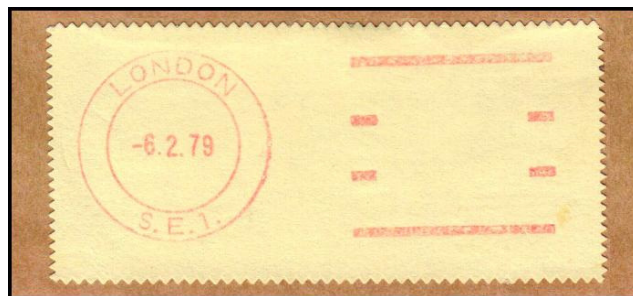
These instructions have been designed to assist the Post Office to deal with your franked mail in the most prompt manner possible. We ask for your co-operation as any failure to comply may cause correspondence to be unnecessarily delayed.

- 1** Franked impressions should be clear and complete.
- 2** They should show the actual date of posting. The licence explains how to claim a refund from the Post Office for incorrect impressions.
- 3** Franked LETTERS should be:
  - a** Arranged with the address facing the same way.
  - b** Secured in medium-sized bundles.
  - c** Separated from mail bearing postage stamps only.
- 4** Separate clearly labelled bundles are required for:
  - a** First-class letters.
  - b** Second-class letters.
  - c** Items bearing postage stamps as well as franked impressions on the same envelope.  
NOTE: The terms "first-class" and "second-class" apply to inland mail (including mail to the Irish Republic). *All* overseas mail should be included in first-class bundles or bags; exceptionally large postings of overseas surface printed papers should be handed in separately.
- 5** LETTER PACKETS should also be separated into "first-class" and "second-class"; and the bags or containers should be clearly labelled. Labels are available on request at the office of posting.
- 6** PARCELS must be kept separate from letter mail.
- 7**
  - i** In London E.C. and W.C. Postal Districts items should be further subdivided into separate bundles for:
    - a** London (numbered districts only).
    - b** Remainder of the United Kingdom, and the Irish Republic.
    - c** Airmail.
    - d** Abroad.
  - ii** In London E.1, N.1, S.E.1, S.W.1, W.1 and W.2 Postal Districts and elsewhere in London at the request of the District Postmaster, items should be subdivided into separate bundles for:
    - a** London (numbered districts only).
    - b** Remainder of the United Kingdom, and the Irish Republic.
    - c** Airmail.
    - d** Abroad.
- 8** Franked mail should always be handed over the counter of the Post Office specified in the licence, unless arrangements have been made for the Post Office to collect, or for posting in special envelopes in a nominated posting box. These special envelopes are available from the franking machine suppliers. Items must not be posted loose. *Second-class mail will generally take about a day longer in transmission than first-class.*
- 9** Please make a daily entry on the CONTROL CARD, whether the franking machine has been used or not. The card must be sent to the Post Office named in the schedule on the last working day (Friday or Saturday) of each week.
- 10** Please show a return address on your envelopes—it will enable the Post Office to return unopened any sealed mail which cannot be delivered. The return address may be incorporated in the slogan block on your machine.

For further advice telephone:—

## OHMS Meters

Peter Mantell has found this meter frank label on an OHMS envelope and has asked for further information. At first glance your editor thought that it might be BFPO-related as it bears a similarity to the item shown on p117-1, but thankfully, Michael Dobbs has come up with the answer!



“These are nothing to do with BFPO, but a Government experimental use of meter marks as part of the ending of the Official Paid mail scheme. In the late 1970s/early 1980s I collected Government mail of the time with meter marks, PPIs, etc and I picked up three of these experimental meter marks.

I also managed to obtain an article in the magazine "Stamps" of July 1982 - Franked 'Postage Paid' Part 4 (Postal History from the Waste Paper Basket) by Jack Peach, together with "letters to the Editor" but I did not record the dates or the particular magazine at that time. Also an extract from the British Postmark Society journal (at the present time I don't have the issue or volume details). I have three further examples in my collection.”

There is, unfortunately, not enough space to include all of the above in this newsletter, but your editor is happy to forward the additional information that Michael has supplied. One of his three other examples of this trial is from the Home Office (shown alongside) is similar but has wavy lines instead of the horizontal bars.



## Printing Errors

Peter Mantell has found this strange printing malfunction on a MyMail frank. The problem has affected all parts of the frank – both the upper and the lower print heads.



Duncan James has found this printing error, where the print produced by the upper print head has separated from that of the lower (which also bends upwards at the edge).



## Meter Thematics

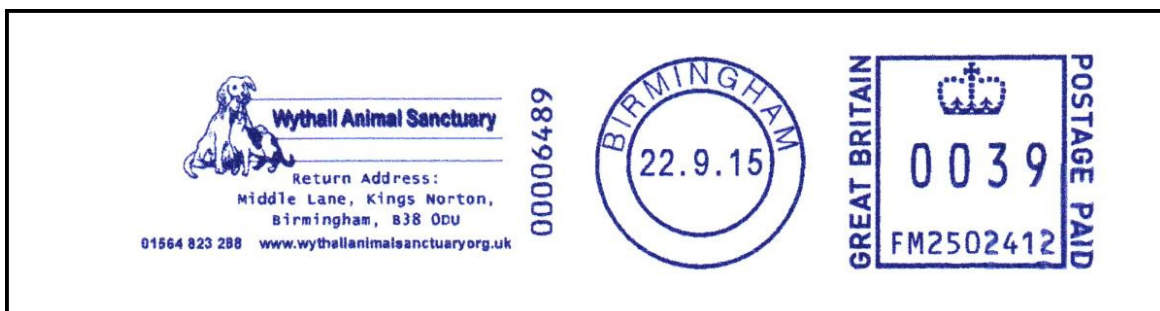
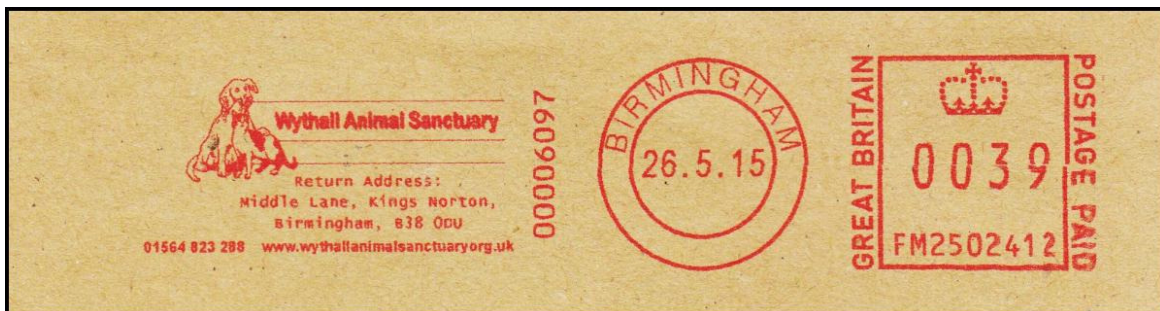
Peter Mantell has found this attractive (mythical?) bird thematic – note the inclusion of the three young fledglings.



Peter reports this frank from the famous Ealing television and film production studios, based in LondonW5. Note that the town die reads 'London / London'.

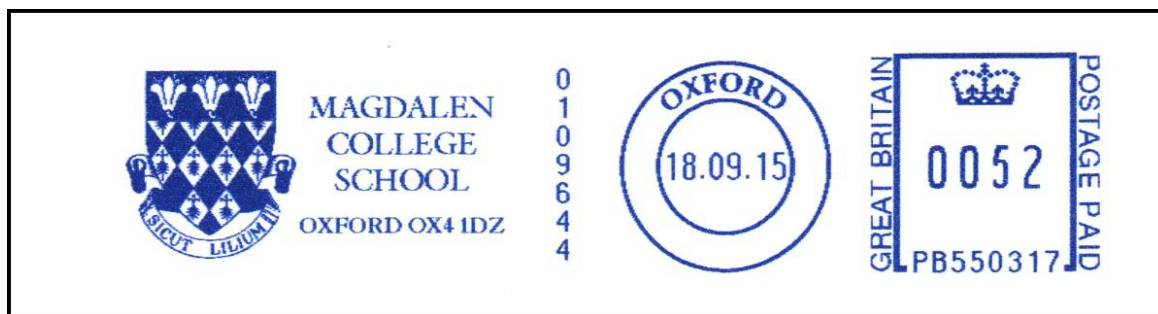


Peter has also found this logo depicting a dog and cat from the Wythall Animal Sanctuary - in both red and blue ink versions.



**Meter Thematics continued**

Here is an attractive heraldic logo from Magdalen College, Oxford found by Peter Mantell.



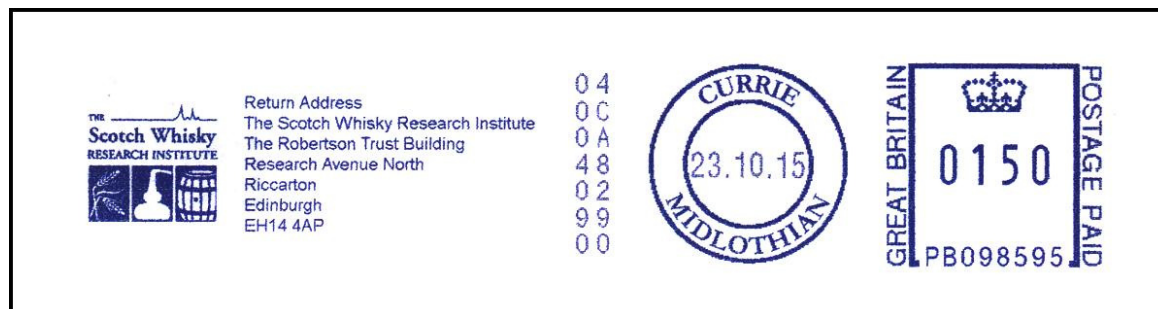
Peter has found this attractive (but rather angry-looking) rhino head from a company called D R Workwear Ltd., based in Birmingham. They are designers and manufacturers of innovative workwear, specialising in the production of fully customised technical clothing including boiler suits, trousers and jackets.



The rest of the thematics this month have been sent by Duncan James, starting with this nice image of the famous Glenfiddich Distillery that has been manufacturing single malt whisky since 1886.



Staying with the whisky theme, here is a frank from The Scotch Whisky Research Institute based in Currie, near Edinburgh.



### Meter Thematics continued

Duncan has also found this frank from the chain of Chinese restaurants called Chop Chop, based in Edinburgh and Glasgow.



Further to page 6, here is another Viking boat – this time depicted on a frank from Rearo Laminates Ltd, based in Glasgow.



Duncan also sends this frank from the Pentlands Science Park, depicting a leaping deer. The laboratory is a world leading location for animal bioscience and life science in Edinburgh and the Lothians.



Finally, my Meter Thematic of the Month award this time goes to Duncan James for this beautiful illustration of a hawk's head being used by a company called HPL Hawker Ltd. based in Battersea, London.

