THE

METER STAMP

BULLETIN

Journal of the Meter Stamp Study Group

(Annual Subscription 7s.6d.; U.S.A., \$1.00)

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EDITORIAL NOTES

A S promised when the Group was started, I give on the next page a statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the first year of operation (including small preliminary expenses before 1st Jan. 1950.) It will be seen that we ended the year with the very satisfactory balance in hand of £5.12.7½ (excluding advance subscriptions for 1951); but this was due wholly to generous donations which cannot be expected to be repeated.

There were moreover five issues of the Bulletin during the year, though normally there will probably only be four; also postages are not expected to be quite so heavy another year. On the other hand, the cost of producing the Bulletin must inevitably rise with the increasing cost and scarcity of paper.

It might be noted that no allowance has been made for general stationery, use of typewriter, etc., which have to be regarded as an "invisible" donation.

for the Year ended 31st December, 1950
RECEIPTS
Subscriptions (a): 26 @ 7/6 £9.15
5 @ \$1
total 11.10. 1
Donations <u>5.16.6</u>
TOTAL £. 17. 6. 7
EXPENDITURE
Duplicating Bulletins (5 issues) £7. 2. 1
" Exch. Packet Rules 7. 6
Postages: before 31 Dec. 1949 9. 1
on Bulletins Nos. 2-5 (b) 14. 2
all other £2.12. 8
less stamps rec'd 6. 91
2. 5.10
Stationery (c) 14.3
Cheques and P.O. Commission 11
TOTAL £ 11.13.11
SURPLUS of Receipts over Expenditure 5.12. 7
£ 17. 6. 7

Notes:-

- (a) Excluding two 1951 Subs. received in advance (15/-).
- (b) On copies posted at reduced rate on day of issue only, excluding copies sent subsequently at letter rate. All of No.1 were sent out at letter rate.
- (c) Incomplete figure, representing mainly large envelopes for sending out Bulletins and for lending Catalogue.

As is shown in the accounts, 31 subscriptions were received in 1950; in addition, two were outstanding and two more have been received since 31st December, making a total of 35 members. Of these, 21 are in the United Kingdom, 4 in the U.S.A., 3 in the Irish Republic, 4 in Europe (Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland),

2 in South Africa, and one in East Africa.

If any member wishes to make any comments on the accounts, or would like any further details, I will do my best to satisfy him.

All things considered, continuance for this year of the same rate of subscription seems to be justified. I hope that all existing members will renew, and I shall be greatly obliged if they will remit as soon as they can; I also hope that the number of members will continue to increase, so that better value can be given.

Thanks are due to the Editors of "The Stamp Lover", "Philatelic Magazine", "Stamp Collecting" and the "Philatelic Contact" for notices which have introduced new members, and also to those members who have introduced others.

The general opinion seems to be that a larger number of pages in each issue is preferable to a more frequent issue of the Bulletin. Unfortunately the high cost for a limited circulation still makes it impracticable to include illustrations. Contributions of articles and notes suitable for publication in future issues are warmly invited; perhaps members will also let me know subjects on which they would like to have articles, for which I may be able to arrange.

WANTS AND OFFERS

This section seems to have met with approval; here are two further names:

Mr J. Mann (63 Dulverton Road, New Eltham, S.E.9) will send parcel of current unsorted (mainly G.B) to any member studying such material, against refund of postage and packing (within U.K. only.) Miss M.B. Cokes (6 Baronet Road, London, N.17) offers assorted G.B. entires (current) @ 7/6 per 1,500 (post free).

A check-list of the machines with GvR dies, detailing type, town, user, and slogans, was published in the Bulletin of the old Meter Club for July 1946. This has been revised by Mr. S.D. Barfoot, and similar lists of the EviiiR and GviR dies drawn up. The heavy cost of reproduction unfortunately makes further publication impracticable (the original list covered 36 quarto pages), and I can give only a summary of the identification nos. known and the types of machine. Many nos. are known with two or three different townmarks, and some with four.

If any member possesses any of the nos. indicated as unknown, will he kindly send me full details as above with the dates of his copies?

Cipher G v R

Nos. known: 1 to 401, 406, 407, 408, and 412, except the following:69, 207, 259, 273, 275, 285, 332, 339, 340, 343, 350, 351, 352, 354, 357, 358, 360, 368, 370, 373, 379, 381, 382, 385, 391, 397.

(Nos. underlined are however known with the Eviil cipher. No. 349 is known with "Specimen" townmark only.)

Nos. 1 to 21 (except 5,6,10 and 16) and 42 have single-lined frame at base and wide oval; nos. 5, 6, 10, 16, and 22 upwards except 42 have double-lined frame, narrower oval and other differences. No. 3 occurs in both types.

All known are "Ordinary" models, registering $0/-\frac{1}{2}$ or $0/0\frac{1}{2}$ to $29/11\frac{1}{2}$ except the following - "Junior" models (registering $\frac{1}{2}$ to $11\frac{1}{2}$):

Nos. 247, 254, 257, 265, 266, 267, 272, 274, 276, 277, 290; 302, 304, 307, 308, 311, 314 to 320, 322, 323, 325 to 330, 336 to 346, 349, 356, 363, 372, 378, 388, 389, 392, 394, 396, 412.

There are no "Intermediate" models with G x x

There are no "Intermediate" models with G v R cipher.

Cipher E viii R

Nos. known: 10, 24, 31, 64; 113, 143, 150, 163; 223, 239, 261, 262; 310, 354, 358, 368, 369, 383, 385, 388, 391; 402 to 501 except the following - 406, 408, 412, 425, 430, 436, 440, 443, 444, 448, 453, 461 to 469, 472, 474, 475, 483, 492, 499.

(Nos. underlined, below 402, are not known with G v R cipher. From 402 upwards, the only no. also known with G v R cipher is 407.)

All known are "Ordinary" models $(0/0\frac{1}{2})$ to $29/11\frac{1}{2}$) except the following (so far as known)—"Junior" models ($=\frac{1}{2}$) to $11\frac{1}{2}$): 368, 383, 385, 388, 403, 414 to 419, 435 to 446, 480 to 494.
"Intermediate" models ($=/0\frac{1}{2}$ to $9/11\frac{1}{2}$): 451 to 460.

It is hoped to give similar lists for the G vi R cipher in the next Bulletin.

GREAT BRITAIN: PITNEY-BOWES MODEL "H"

Harris's Catalogue gives the first date of this type (GvR cipher, with key-letter "H") as "1931, March". I have however found a copy of H 28 (London, E.C.2) clearly dated "-9XII 30". It is the l½d. value, and the user Midland Bank Ltd., Overseas Branch, 122 Old Broad St., E.C.2. Is the Catalogue wrong, or is this an error of date? If its date is correct, it would seem likely that the first date of the first machine of the type (presumably H 1) was well before December 1930.

Unlike the other key-letters, the "H" is not the initial of any name but simply the series-letter of the model (cf. the model "R" described in the last Bulletin.) Mr Henry J. Howard has however informed me that the Swiss firm Hasler (whose franking machines are used in a number of European countries) showed a machine at the Postal Union Congress in London in 1929, which produced specimens of the then current G.B. design with ident.no. "H l". Hasler machines were however not sanctioned for use here.

The British "Universal" machine has been introduced here, and already shows a number of distinct variations. The frank resembles that of the 1928 "Francotyp" but is wider and has a bolder "Greek Key" border at sides; the meter no. (at foot) is preceded by "U" and runs from 101 upwards. The townmark is a double circle, usual in most other countries but not previously adopted in the Netherlands.

There are two varieties of spacing, (i) approx. 16 mm. between townmark and frank, with slogan to left of and/or below townmark; and (ii) approx. 52 mm. between, with slogan between townmark and frank and record no. above it. There are either 2, 3 or 4 figures of value, the 3-figure having either initial star or zero. Meter U 101, used by the "Universal" representatives, Veenman's K.I.B. at Rotterdam, had at first the very small date figures as in the "Simplex"; the other machines have datefigures as in G.B. (This machine U 101 has setting (i) with 3 figures of value, initial star.)

(Information kindly supplied by Mr J. Dekker, Nederlandse Vereniging van Poststukken- en Poststempelverzamelaars, Amsterdam.)

OVERPRINTED METER STAMPS

Mr Werner Simon has informed me of overprinted meter stamps earlier than those of Pakistan mentioned on p. 34. After the German occupation of Austria in 1938, the special franks used by the Law Courts (not listed by Harris) were overstamped in violet "RM PFG" to indicate German currency instead of the Austrian "S G" inscribed at the sides of the frame.

(The following is based on articles by Heiner Durst published in the "Berner Briefmarken-Zeitung" and "Schweizer Briefmarken-Rundschau".)

For the oval type of frank (introduced in 1924) there were five makes of machine, and for the larger rectangular frank, two makes (the smaller rectangular are all Hasler), which could readily be distinguished only by the ident.no., thus:

Franco, nos. 100 to 122, except nos. below; Francopost, Nos. 112, 114, 119, 121; Hasler, Nos. 105, 117, 201-800, 1001-2000, 4,000 upwards;

Universal Five, Nos. 801-1000, 2001-3000; Safag, Nos. 3001-3999.

(The information given in Harris's Catalogue was amended by an article in the "Philatelic Mag." of Oct. 9, 1942.)

However, the very differing rates of issue of the various makes led to many nos. in the groups remaining unallocated, and also in course of time the exchange of machines led to the system being broken into. Consequently, the Swiss Postal Administration decided, as from 1st July 1946, to allocate the nos. in a continuous series irrespective of the make; furthermore, nos. which become vacant through the withdrawal of old machines are being re-allocated. As a result, one can no longer determine the make from the no., and it would seem that from 1946, the different makes will have to be ignored in the catalogue.

In the rectangular franks (multi-value), besides the 3, 4 and 5-figure values listed by Harris, there are also to be found " $3\frac{1}{2}$ " and " $4\frac{1}{2}$ " figure values (i.e. with a fractional $\frac{1}{2}$ cent.), which can be distinguished by the centering of the remaining digits when the $\frac{1}{2}$ is not printed.

Referring to the note on page 33, two types have been submitted by Mr Axer (Capetown). One, apparently a "Universal", has a large transverse rectangular frank with "perforated" border, showing a flying goose in the upper right corner and a three-figure value preceded by two stars (possibly therefore a 4-figure machine) in European figures in the centre. All inscriptions are in Chinese characters, including what is probably the ident. no., a "4" in brackets at the bottom left. The townmark, the usual "Universal" double circle, has the date (28 IX 49) in the centre and SHANGHAI at the foot with Chinese characters at the top.

The other is the Pitney-Bowes Model R, in the same style as the U.S. and other franks from this machine. Between town-circle and value-box is a flying goose (performing a nose-dive!); the value, date, and town-name (SHANGHAI) again are in European characters. The value has four figures preceded by a star, but it looks as though the last digit may be a fixed zero. The Chinese inscriptions are exactly the same as in the "Universal" except that the ident.no. (?) is "8".

I understand that the machines were introduced before the Communist occupation of Shanghai.

ETHIOPIA

Although, according to Harris, a solitary machine (a Neopost) was used here before the Italian occupation (Bank of Ethiopia, Addis Abeba) I am officially informed that no machine has yet been re-introduced into the country, but that the Ministry of P.T.T. will consider the matter after this year, if approached for permission.

By way of addenda to the notes on this subject in Bulletin No. 3, Mr H.G. Morgan has suggested the following.

Identification No. This is not intended to supersede the terms such as "Meter No." or "Licence No." when these are explicitly shown on the impression, but only to be used when — as in G.B. — neither of the other terms is appropriate.

Key Letter(s). The letter(s) denoting the make or series of machine, usually preceding the ident.no. as in G.B. The term should not be used of the letters which form an integral part of the ident.no. as in Australia (the earlier machines) and some of G.B. where they denote a second machine under similar licence.

Frame - the portion of the frank excluding the (movable) figures of value, to be distinguished from:

Border - the ornamental framework surrounding the whole frank, townmark, etc., as usual in Italy and in certain of the U.S.A. and Canada.

Adhesive should be applied only to impressions struck on specially-prepared rolls of gummed paper delivered by the machine, and not to be used of impressions on ordinary gummed paper such as address or parcel labels.

As regards the comment under <u>Townmark</u>, Mr Werner Simon has pointed out that the omission of the town-name is compulsory in the U.S.A. on all registered mail, for which Postal Laws and Regulations require the omission of the whole townmark. (In some cases, the bare circle is unavoidable left.)

CATALOGUE SUPPLEMENT

BERMUDA

(A "Midget" machine was sent to the Colony in 1933 but was not brought into use. Proofs exist from a "Universal" machine (MV), submitted in 1949, but its use was not sanctioned.

BRITISH GUIANA

Type 2. Universal MV. Large upright design, Crown in middle of name label at top. /7/ ? figures of value.

Type 3. Neopost LV. Sailing Ship within oval garter (resembling the 1860 adhesives); POST and BRITISH in scroll at left, GUIANA and PAID in scroll at right.

(Only proofs have been seen so far.)

BURMA

Type 1(b). Neopost LV. Royal Cipher GRI in centre (adapted from Indian type.) Add /lb/ $\frac{1}{4}$ a (Subsequent issues will be listed under Foreign Countries.)

CANADA

Type 1. Pitney-Bowes FV. Large transverse, figure of value at each end of central tablet with CENTS between. LICENSE above and METER below. a - with License No.; b - License blank. Add /6b/ 6c.; /7a/ 12c.; /A7a/ 13c. Ditto with RETURN POSTAGE PREPAID instead of townmark. Add /B4b/ 4c.

Similar type but hand-cut die, shorter and taller with CANADA POSTAGE larger. One machine only, Lic. No. 3, Meter No. 4001. /X3/ 3c.

Type 3. Midget. Similar but taller and narrower. a - METER; b - METRE above CENTS; No. with or without prefix M below. (Some machines have the 3c. in var.b and the other values in var.a.) Add /14a/ 4c.; /18b/ 10c.;

 $\frac{\text{CANADA} - \text{contd.}}{19\text{a}/12\text{c.}}$

Error, CENTS for CENT. /Blla/ lc.

Type 4. Postage Meter Co. Similar to type 3 but five-fig. meter no. (40,000 up). Earliest known date is Sep. 1929, not 1928. Add /X17c/9c.

Error, CENTS for CENT. /Blle/lc.

Error corrected, S removed leaving CENT to

left. /Cllc/lc

Type 6. Postage Meter Co. Square design with POSTES above and POSTAGE below figures of value. Townmark with single-line date. a - METRE NO. at foot; b - METRE; c - METER COMPTEUR. Add /39a/50c.; /B36b/12c.; /C36b/13c.; /39b/50c.

Ditto but two-line date. d - METRE NO.;

e - METRE. Add /32e/ 4c.

RETURN POSTAGE PAID instead of townmark: /A27d/ 3c.

(Delete Harris's column f - METER COMPTEUR.)

Type 7. Similar to type 6 but POSTES and POSTAGE vertically at left and right; scroll below value turns downwards at ends.

Add /43/ 4c.; delete /46/ 7c.

Type 8. Pitney-Bowes Model J (MV). Crown over wavy lines between townmark and frank, the whole surrounded by a "perforation" line. Replace no.50 by

/50/ inscribed METRE; small date; stop preceding value. (No.94,000 only.)

/A50/ inscribed METRE; larger date; star preceding value. Nos.94,001 to 94,034.)

Type 9. Pitney-Bowes Model CV (FV). Similar to type 7 but scroll turns upwards. Two-line date in townmark. a - METRE; b - METER COMP-TEUR. (Earliest date for a, July 1936; b, Oct. 1937.) Add /58a, 60a, 62a/4c., 6c., 8c. /58b, 60b, 61b/4c., 6c., 7c.

Type 11. Pitney-Bowes Model R. Maple leaves between townmark and frank; Crown above value. MV to \$1.00 cr. to \$9.99 (not distinguishable.) Earliest date. May 30, 1940.

CANADA - contd.

/71/ (Meter Nos. 140,000 to 140,999; 143,000 upwards; 1000 to 1299.)

/71a/ RETURN POSTAGE PREPAID instead of tmk.

/71b/ P O in tmk (Post Office use.)

Type 12. National Postal Meter Co. Earliest date, Apr.13, 1943. Two machines only -

/72/ Inscribed NPM COMPTEUR No.9922.

/73/ " METER-COMPTEUR NPM No. 9923.

Type 13. Commercial Controls Corp. Inscribed METER-COMPTEUR over CC - No. (40,001 upwards.)

/74/ Values ?

Type 14. Pitney-Bowes Model DM. Similar to type 11 but narrower, CANADA larger and straighter; POSTES at top left and POSTAGE vertically at right. Two figures of value only.

/75/ Meter Nos. 240,000 upwards.

Note. There are a number of minor varieties of many of the foregoing. The lists of meter nos. given by Harris are not all quite correct or complete but space does not permit them to be detailed here.

The adhesive labels (National Cash Register Co.) will be given in the next instalment.