THE

METER STAMP

BULLETIN

Journal of the Meter Stamp Study Group

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SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 1957

Another year has gone by, it seems very quickly to me, but I feel that you will agree with me that it has not been a bad year for the Group.

Our membership has been maintained, but has not, I regret, increased at all. It was very pleasing to enrol a member from New Zealand; indeed, seeing the early history of meters there, it was surprising that we had not had a member there before.

The accounts for the year are enclosed with this issue of the Bulletin, and again it will be seen that we have managed to overspend ourselves for another year. Now that our subscription has been increased, this tendency should cease; also it will be seen that expenditure on stationery has been heavy, this mainly because of the re-organization of our secretarial and editorial arrangements. Otherwise, expenditure has been about as expected, postage of course increasing. The item marked "Miscellaneous" consists mainly in the cost of the covers sent to members from Butlin's Camps earlier in the year.

We are pleased to welcome a new member:(130) R. Crookes, Esq., 198 Buxton Road, Stockport,
Cheshire. - J.C.M.

I would like to thank Mr. Mann - and I feel sure all members will support me - for his good work during his first year of office, without which the Group could not have continued in active existence.

- A. A. D.

The next Bulletin: This will be dated June, and notes and news for inclusion should reach the Editor by 15th May.

THE GROUP'S METER

Members will no doubt have noticed that the last issue of the Bulletin was franked with our special slogan device again, after bearing various "Neopost" slogans for each issue of 1957. But, although the townmark and frank die are the same as when the slogan was last used (17 XII 56), there is a slight alteration which may have escaped notice: the latest impression has the new-style figures of value with larger "D". We would like again to put on record our thanks to Messrs. Roneo-Neopost Ltd. London office for allowing us the use of their machine for franking our Bulletins.

"STICK TO STAMPS"

We quote from an article under the above title by R.W. Darracott in the Jan./Feb., 1958, issue of "Philately", the journal of the British Philatelic

Association Ltd.:
"This may seem rather an unusual heading to see in 'Philately', but it is prompted by the rapidly increasing use of Post Office machines by private firms (including stamp dealers) for the purpose of franking their mail. There are several reasons why the use of these machines is bad for philately, and if their use continues increasing at the present rate, we shall see a great reduction in the overall use of stamps in all parts of the world.

"It seems to me that for anyone interested in philately to sanction the use of these machines in their office means either they have not realised

the implications of their action, or they do not have the best interests of the hobby at heart."

(It seems difficult for many people to understand that "philately" is not correctly restricted to the collection of the gummed labels sold ready-made in sheets, and that meter stamps are postage stamps in the full sense of the term, in fact they serve genuine postal needs far more on the whole than the labels. The B.P.A. itself uses a meter! Incidentally, Mr. Darracott's designation "Post Office machines" is a new one to us! — Editor.)

The following, from a Khartoum correspondent of "Stamp Collecting" (Jan. 31st) supports the remarks we quoted some time ago from a Dutch trade journal, objecting to the use of meter machines from another angle:-

"I think a firm that thinks of little things like varying the stamps on its letters may build up goodwill for itself in unlikely places. And I got strong support from a fellow-guest (in the Khartoum hotel) from a Middle-Eastern country whose firm lost an old-established contract with a big firm in Iraq because the London office bought a meter machine. The Iraqui's firm had previously sold their stamps from the mail to dealers and they terminated the contract because meter merks had no value."

(Heve current G.B. stamps really such a high value in Iraq? We might suggest that the use of the more efficient metered mailing should enable the London firm to reduce its costs enough to compensate for the lost value of the used stamps.

— Editor.)

EXCHANGE WITH OVERSEAS COLLECTORS

From time to time we receive invitations from collectors in other countries - sometimes members of the Group and sometimes not - to exchange meter stemps with them. There is now no Import-Export control to hinder such exchanges, as there was when the Group was started, but nonetheless there seem still to be difficulties. If meter stemps are regarded - as we always

maintain they are - as 'postage stamps, whether cancelled or not", then it is explicitly prohibited to send them at the reduced rates applicable to "Printed Papers", "Commercial Papers" and "Small For sending by letter post, the postage is exceedingly heavy: a packet of 100 entires (and most collectors seem to prefer these) weighs, with packing, almost 12 oz., and the postage to foreign countries (including the U.S.A. and our nearest neighbours in Europe) now comes to 4s. 2d.; even for Commonwealth countries, it amounts to ls. $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. Further, even if one is willing to pay the postage, it seems to be necessary to provide a Customs declaration form (either the "Green Label" or a separate form according to the destination) with full description of the contents (in French as well as in English for some countries) and the value; which is tiresome, to say the least.

It would be interesting and helpful to know whether, and if so, how, any members in Great Britain have overcome these obstacles.

G. B. NOTES

NEOPOST (LV). A fifth type of die has just been discovered by Mr. H.E. Hammond. It is small with almost circular centre like the fourth type, but is distinguishable by having smaller crown and FiiR (hardly measurably, but noticeably further from the inner frame) and the tablets containing "POST PAID" have straight bottom lines whereas in preceding dies these are concave. The earliest date Mr. Hammond has found is 2 XII 57, and so far only 2d and 3d values, though others inevitably must exist.

NEOPOST FRANK-MASTER. An error of numbering and its correction have been shown us by Mr. K.F.

Jennings. All impressions are on the Neopost "patterned" tape (yellow background) imprinted with "NA.641 LONDON E.13." along the bottom, but in the earliest impression, dated 24 IV 56, the frank shows

the No. NA 461 whereas one dated 27 VII 56, and also one dated 3 I 58, shows the No. NA 641 in agreement with the imprint on the tape. The townmark (DC with arcs) is identical in all of them.

PITNEY-BOWES "PB". This series having been quiescent for so long was thought to have been terminated, but now we have received PB 172 (London W.2.), an advance of 2 on the previous highest known. It is a 2d EiiR die and the date of our copy is 30 JAN 1958. Being used by British Railways Western Region, Paddington, it would appear to be in supersession of PB 50 long used by the old Great Western Railway. Can anyone find PB 171?

To the list of these machines known with EiiR dies Mr. G.R. Pearson adds: 19, 22, 26, 50, 62, 75, and 125, making with 172 a total of 21 machines.

SIMPLEX. Mr. Jim Wilson has brought to our notice that the more recent machines have larger figures of value than the original ones, about $5\frac{1}{2}$ mm. tall against $4\frac{1}{2}$ mm., the "D" being distinctly larger as well. As the figures are of the same shape and style, the difference is less noticeable than might be expected. The new figures have been noted on SZ 159 and higher Nos.

HIGHEST NOS. Few reports have been received this time, and no increase is recorded for PA, but on the other hand, as noted above, PB has made an unexpected advance. The "NC" series was reported by Mr. G.R. Pearson before the publication of the last Bulletin, with higher Nos. reported since. We have to thank also Messrs. H.E. Hammond and J.T.W. Mann for reports (as well as ourselves!)

NC 186; SB 599; SZ 483; UJ 974; PA 81; PB 172.

Can any member tell us whether the NA and NB series run to 999 or to 1000?

For Neoposts in London W.l., Mr. Chamberlain reports N 1285.

P.O.S.B. MACHINES

With the assistance of a few members, a detailed check list has now been drawn up in draft form. It records dies from seven different towns, with varying code-letters and minor differences making a total of 17 different town dies. Ten basically different slogans are recorded, with minor varieties of size of certain of them making a total of 18 apart from use without slogan. However, only 52 of the theoretically possible 17 x 19 combinations have been found.

We aim to record the earliest and latest dates for each type of town die (irrespective of slogan), and likewise for each type of slogan (irrespective of town die). It is hoped that, by the time this Bulletin appears, a few copies will be available for lending to other interested members for possible amendments to the dates before eventual publication in some form.

G.B. "PB 8, 9 and 21" NUMBERING PROBLEM

by A. A. Dewey

The Pitney-Bowes single-value machines, the first to be used commercially in this country, consist of a high-speed mailing machine (which automatically seals the envelopes as they pass through) provided with a detachable postal franking machine (meter); a slogan printer could be used in place of the postal meter. Two or more different meters of the same or different denominations, could be used (alternatively) with one mailing machine, and it is understood that, errors excepted, all the meters used with one mailing machine showed the same identification number in the frank. The franks of the Royal Cipher design with key-letters "PB" (at left or right) were numbered in the same series as the original large square design with the No. in the centre which they superseded after 1926 (though the former dies continued in use so long as they remained serviceable). Thus the number has to be regarded as attaching rather to the mailing machine than to the postal meter itself.

No.1 was used by Postal Meters and Machines Co., the British agents for the machines (which were manufactured in the U.S.A.) in London, Liverpool and Manchester; I have no evidence whether there were actually three different machines or whether the same machine was used in turn in the different cities.

A few other numbers also were used in more than one town, probably due to removal; but our big problem is posed by Nos. 8, 9 and 21, each of which was used at both Leicester and Derby. The user of each at Leicester was the firm of stockbrokers, Arthur Wheeler & Co., who sent out an enormous quantity of circulars in the late 1920's (which were, incidentally, my first introduction to meter stamp collecting!) user at Derby is recorded as being the large firm of colour-printers, Bemrose & Sons, Ltd., though it is not clear why they should have needed these machines; the early check-list published in "The Stamp Lover" of November 1926 attributed No. 21 at Leicester as well as at Derby to Bemroses, but this has to be doubted. As an additional complication, No.99 also was used at Leicester by Wheelers, but as this is rare and I have no examples, no further mention of it can be made.

This investigation started from the idea that the three machines were originally used at one of the towns and subsequently transferred to the other, like so many more recent machines, and I hoped to determine the sequence of the towns and the date of transfer for each No., the information having apparently not been published.

Examples of all three used from Derby are much scarcer than examples used from Leicester, and I have found only three of No.9 and one of No.21 (or rather, two of the same date) from These dates, in comparison with the earliest and latest I have from Leicester, are as follows:-No.9: DERBY

13 Apr., 3 May, 21 June., 1923 LEICESTER (earliest) 31 May, 23 Nov. 1923 (latest) 18 Dec., 1930

No.21: DERBY (two) 24 Aug., 1925

LEICESTER (carliest) 26 Mar., 1926 " (latest) 21 Sep., 1928

Examples of No.8 are slightly less scarce from Derby, and common from Leicester. My dates from Derby are: 4 Dec. 1923, 26 May 1924, 21 Aug. 1925 (two) and 22 Sep. 1925; and this is where the big problem arises — I have also, from Leicester, dates 27 Nov., 5 Dec. 1923; 21 May, 6 Jun. 1924; 11 Aug., 7, 15, 25 Sep. 1925 — thus within ten days before and after each of the Derby dates!

It would appear that the machine had been transferred to Derby for a few days (perhaps only one day?) on at least four occasions. Although Leicester and Derby are only thirty miles apart, it seems unlikely that the heavy machine was moved to and fro in this way, though it is not altogether impossible. That it was not used by Bemroses exclusively on work for Wheelers is suggested by the attribution in an old collection of two examples from Derby, the one to Huntley & Palmers and the other to Rolls Razor Ltd., explained presumably by the use of the machine to despatch advertising matter printed by Bemroses on account of the other firms named.

The only alternative possibility that occurs to me is that No.8 (and perhaps also 9) was somehow duplicated and allocated both to Wheelers and to Bemroses at the same time.

It would be of great help in the problem if all members possessing any examples of these three Nos. used at <u>Derby</u> would report the exact dates of all of them (the die-type and denomination should also be noted.) We might then determine more completely the dates of use at Derby.

It might also be useful to record my earliest and latest dates of No.8 from Leicester; these are - earliest, 13 Apr. 1923; latest, 24 Feb. 1931; both 1d value. The former is the variety with inverted "8" in the centre and the latter still the "square" die although the GVR design had been used for the 1d value as early as 18 Mar. 1927.

Subsequently No.8 was used by an unknown firm from London W.1. My only copies, both GvR $\frac{1}{2}$ d die, are dated 13 Feb. and 13 Mar. 1937.

It should be mentioned that in the foregoing, no attention has been paid to the different types and varieties of die or denomination (the Royal Cipher dies have been taken into account as well); these details seem not to be relevant to the main problem, but are of much interest - the different varieties of die No.8 are innumerable!

Two more fundamental questions also have not been dealt with:-

- (1) Why should both Arthur Wheeler and Bemrose & Sons each have had three different Nos. (even four for Wheelers if No.99 is included), whereas no other firm appears to have had more than one No. at one address?
- (2) How did it come about that these two so fer as is known, unrelated firms used the same three Nos? It can scarcely be put down to mere coincidence, when three Nos. are involved.

Unfortunately no hint of any answer to these questions has emerged, various hypotheses which at first sight seemed plausible having all to be rejected. Has any member any suggestion to offer?

In conclusion, I must express my thanks to Mr. D.R. Burchell for criticisms of my original draft of this article and for loan of a number of examples to record dates etc.; but he is in no way responsible for my arguments and theories.

CEYLON: ERRATIC RECORD NO.

Though a "Record No. " is a common feature of machines made on the Continent of Europe, it is rarely included on British machines and, apart from a few special parcel-post meters, Ceylon is the only Commonwealth country where it is regularly found. Not long ago, I was sent some forty impressions, covering seven months of 1957, from Universal MV machine No.138 (Colombo,

26 used by Darley, Butler & Co. Ltd.), corresponding to B-S No.17. When arranged in order of date, these show that the Record No. mechanism must have been working in a most erratic manner. Normally, of course, with a four-figure No., the chance of obtaining two examples of the same No. is 1 in 10,000 but here I have no less than eleven of one No., eight of another and seven of a third! The sequence of the dates and Nos. is as follows:---4 IV 57 to 25 IV 57 (4 dates) No. 3393 -1 V 57 (only) 3406 -6 V 57 to -4 VI 57 (8 dates) 3466 13 VI 57 to 20 VI 57 (4 dates) 3496 26 VI 57 (only) 3516 -1 VII 57 (only) 3526 10 VII 57 (only) 3566 12 VII 57 to -7 IX 57 (11 dates) 3576 14 IX 57 3606 -9 X 57 (only) 5676 12 X 57 to 30 X 57 (7 dates) 5686 It will be seen that, from 1st May, the last digit apparently remained fixed at "6" while the preceding digits advanced slowly at intervals. Unfortunately there are no copies between 14 Sept. and 9 Oct. to show how the initial "3" came to change to "5", but it does not look likely that the second

to "5", but it does not look likely that the second digit completed two revolutions in the interval.

— A. A. D.

CEYLON: Universal MV Numbers. As is recorded in the B-S Catalogue, these machines are numbered from 51 up, and in the ordinary sequence have apparently reached something over 150 to 1.

from 51 up, and in the ordinary sequence have apparently reached something over 150 to date. We have however an example with No.253 used (by the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd., Colombo) as long ago as 28 VI 55, which is peculiar in that the frame is of the type designated in the Catalogue as "D" while the value is in angular figures with initial star and there is no Record No.

FRANCE: New Townmark. French meters have hither to been peculiar in showing the town and date in a horizontal line below the slogan or wavy lines, except for a few post-office machines (impressions from which are scarce). From an example submitted by Mr. G.R. Pearson, it looks as though this is being changed. The Satas meter SD 0497, used by Messrs. Walker & Charhon. Paris-IXe, has a single-circle townmark, "PARIS 48 / R.BERGERE (9e)", with the large datefigures characteristic of this make in the centre, level with the value figures (as *001F), the initials of the user "W. & C." appearing vertically between town circle and frank. The date of the copy seen is 17 I 58.

INDIA: Unengraved Nos. We have recently come across two Universal MV dies showing a solid block in the bottom right-hand corner square in place of the ident. No. The first, an old "ANNAS" die (3-bank machine), has townmark "*HOWRAH* / H.E.CO. LTD*C-1317" and date -9 X 56. The second is one of the new decimal "RUPEES" dies (again 3-bank) with townmark "*CALCUTTA*/ B.C.C:C-1038 " and came into use early in December 1957. The same townmark had previously been used with the "ANNAS" die U 194. The user is the Bengal Chamber of Commerce.

(Since writing the above, Mr. Jennings has shown us several other examples in the new "RUPEES" dies, Simplex as well as Universal MV. and it would seem that it has been decided that the Nos. can be dispensed with; after all, they never appear on the Neopost dies.)

NEW ZEALAND. The 1916 type (B-S type 13) showing town-name at bottom and No. in a circle in the centre, was superseded in 1928 by the design with large figures of value and without town-name, but we have found one used as lately as April 1956. This is No.151, AUCKLAND, red impressions in values 6d. and 1/-.

member any later example?

A new model of the locally-made "Sentinel" machine has recently been introduced, Mr. G. Chamberlain reports. This prints the three values 2d., 3d. and 4d., without townmark or slogan, and sells at the very low price of £30. From "Specimen" impressions he has sent, the design of the frank is the same as before (B-S type 18).

SOUTH AFRICA: New Simplex Die. A new die has apparently come into use. It is slightly wider, but the most distinctive difference is that the ends of the curved scrolls bearing the country name are now inclined at a much greater angle to the vertical - about 50° instead of 30° - and the upper scroll is spaced further away from the corner triangles. letters of "POSTAGE PAID" and "POSGELD BETAAL" are slightly larger, and "SUID-AFRIKA" now has a hyphen instead of the previous space (the Universal MV in the same general design has the Afrikaans name in one word). S 702 is the only No. we have in the new Die, and S 410 the highest in the original Die; can any member help to fill the gap? Some of these Simplex machines run from $\frac{1}{2}d$ to 1/- in $\frac{1}{2}d$'s, and others from 1d to 2/- in 1d's, but there appears to be no way of distinguishing examples except that values with an odd 1d must be the former model and those over 1/- the latter. Whether the Nos. are arranged in blocks, we do not know.

UNITED NATIONS, Geneva. Two new items have been brought to our notice by Dr. Detlef Schmidt. Both are of the current "Crosses and Posthorns" design of Switzerland with five figures of value and townmark "GENEVE 10 / NATIONS UNIES". The one, used by the European Office of the U.N., has M.No. 3401 and licence No. =1 107= below the frank, and slogan at left showing "NATIONS UNIES" above and "UNITED NATIONS" below the U.N. emblem. The other, used by the World Health Organization, has M.No. 3298 and licence No. =1 478=, with slogan showing the full title in French above and English below the W.H.O. emblem.

CATALOGUE SUPPLEMENT

Before resuming the listing of foreign countries, there are still a few additions and amendments to the Commonwealth countries. Most of those below were submitted by Mr. K.F.Jennings.

BARBADOS (32)

Type 5. Roneo-Neopost Frank-Master. Frame similar to G.B. but "BARBADOS" and "POST PAID" at top horizontal. Key-letters "RN" at bottom left. TM DC.

/8/ Values O.Ol to (?) 9.99

BASUTOLAND

Type 1. Simplex. Rect. design with imitation-perf. border, "BASUTOLAND" at top, "POSTAGE" left, "REVENUE" right, large crown at bottom between "S" and "600" in rectangles. (Numbered in South-African series.) TM DC. Slogan left. (20 VI 56) /1/ Values (?) ½d to 1/-

BRITISH GUIANA (A)

POST OFFICE MACHINE

For Registration. Type R.2. Satas (French).

Similar to type 2 with key-letter "S" at bottom left. TM large DC with tall date-figures, small 6-figure R.No. above slogan between TM and frank.

/R.2/ Values as *O.oi (1954?)

CANADA (32)

Type 6-C. "P.O.W." TM and "AIR MAIL" slogan.

/21a/ 30c. (M.Nos. 48007, 8, 9)

Type 7-A. Error, TM and date inverted.

/22a/ Value .02 (M.No. 82413, MONTREAL / QUEBEC,

MAR 3 '36)

CANADA - contd.

Type 8-B. /42a/ .05 also M.No. 54129 Type 15-A. Also No. "N29" (ST.JOHNS - N'FLD) /70/ Add 2c. (N29 - with 3c.)

CEYLON (33)

Type 2-B. Neopost. /5/ Also 4c.

GIBRALTAR

P. O. MACHINE: PARCEL POST

Type P.1. Universal MV. Long rect. design with coarse imitation-perf. border; "PARCEL (crown) POST" at top; date and "GPO" centre; "GIBRALTAR" at bottom. Value with "S D" above at right. On "Frankopost"

safety tape. /P.1/ Values $0/0\frac{1}{2}$ to $99/11\frac{1}{2}$

GOLD COAST (GHANA) (33)

Type 4. Roneo-Neopost Frank-Master. Similar to G.B. but "GHANA" at top, Royal Cipher omitted, and key-letter "N" only. TM BIC.

/7/ Values =0/=1/2 to (?) 99/11/2

HONG KONG (33

P. O. MACHINE: PARCEL POST

Type P.1. Universal MV. Similar to type PP.1 of Southern Rhodesia but "HONG KONG" to left instead of town name, and "\$\\$ c" above and below value.

M.No. preceded by "No" at top centre. On "Frankopost" safety tape.

/P.l/ Values as 000i

$\underline{I} \underline{N} \underline{D} \underline{I} \underline{\Lambda}$ (33)

Type 5. Neopost. /11/ Also $R_{\Xi}^{1}R$

Decimal Currency

Type 5 with "R/RUPEE" at each side of value.
/18/ Also 0.02, 0.06, 0.13, 0.19 R.

(There are two distinct sizes of the first "O" of the value in most values.)

INDIA - contd.

Type 10. Universal MV. Similar to type 6 but "INDIA POSTAGE" smaller, and "RUPEES" above value.

TMs as before.

/20/ 3-bank. Values as 0.0i /20a/ Variety, M.No. unengraved (solid block.)

/21/ 4-bank. Values as 00.01

/21a/ Variety, M.No. unengraved (solid block.) Simplex. Similar to type 8 but Type 11.

"RUPEES" above value. TM as before.

/22/ Values 0.01 to 0.24 Rs.

/22a/ Variety, M.No. unengraved (solid block.)

KENYA, UGANDA & TANGANYIKA (22)

Type 1. Neopost. /3/ Also 1.30 cents.

MALAYA (GENERAL ISSUES) (34)

Type 2. Universal MV. As /6/ but M.No. small. /A6/ Values as 0001 (U 167)

Type 3. Neopost. /7/ Also 6c., 8c.

P. O. MACHINES: PARCEL POST

Correction to last supplement (page 14) - Type PP2 (Federation) has seven wavy lines at right of frank and type PP3 (Singapore) has two series of short vertical lines, not conversely.

(34). NEW ZEALAND

Amendment to last supplement (page 14) - Type 20 (Simplex) has TM DC or nil.

NIGERIA (33)

Type 1. Neopost. Also 2d., 9d.

NORTHERN RHODESIA (33)

/3/ also U 760 (Lusaka).

PAKISTAN (33)

Type 3. Neopost. The letters "AS" vary considerably in size on different dies. Type 4. Universal MV.

/A4/ 4-bank. Values as 000.3 and 001- upwards.

RHODESIA AND NYASALAND (34)

Type 1. Neopost. Inscribed "POSTAGE" at each side of crown.

/1/ Also ld., $1\frac{1}{2}$ d., 4d., 2/-

Type 3. Neopost. As type 1 but inscribed "PAID" instead of "POSTAGE" at right.

/3/ Values $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., 3d., 1/-

Type 4. Simplex. Similar to type 2 but key-letter "S" at bottom left.

/4/ Values \frac{1}{2}d to 1/-.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA (34)

P. O. MACHINES: PARCEL POST

Type PP.2. National Cash Register. Similar to
type PP.3 of South Africa but without ornements at
top and "PARCEL POST" and "PAID" in English only.

Town as "Salisbury, S.Rhodesia" at bottom. Violet
impression on white.

/P.2/ Values as --1.9 (range?)

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO (34)

Type 3-B. Universal MV. /A8/ Values as Ooi (U 29)

EXCHANGE IN BULK. If any member will send me say 500-1000 current or common G.B., I will send the same quantity in exchange. All makes welcome. Don't waste time and money on postages, just send and I will do the same by return. Some duplication unavoidable. A fair quantity of overseas material also available. Cash transactions not considered or desirable. - H. E. Hammond, 16 Elton Grove, Birmingham 27.

Thurstons, 39 Longley Road, Harrow. Phone: HAR.5324