

NOTEBOOK

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POSTAL HISTORY IS THE STUDY OF THE OPERATION OF POSTAL SERVICES,
BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, AND THE PUBLICATION OF THE FRUITS OF
SUCH STUDY

NEW PUBLICATION.....

District and Branch Cancellations of London, 1857 - 1900, Part 1, covering West Central, Western, Eastern and Branch Offices; by John Parmenter.

Over 160 pages in A5 format, card covers and plastic binding; price to members is £1.65 PLUS 25pence P & P. Retail price is £2.40 for non members.

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PLEASE DO NOT FORGET THE POSTAGE EXTRA WHEN ORDERING.

THE EARLY POSTAL HISTORY OF HOUNSLOW, by Jeremy Greenwood.

The importance of Hounslow as a post stage was not merely as a post town on the Bristol road but as the intermediate stage between London and the Court at Windsor or Hampton Court. The road to Bristol was intermittently settled, existing only in 1579, 1581, 1599 etc. although there was a long gap after 1611.

Consequently the post of Hounslow was a special appointment and appears in the accounts of the Master of the Posts as being paid for extraordinary services. In fact the first appointment pre-dates the Bristol road by several years as the first accounts of the Master of the Posts, for 1566, state " Jeffery French of Hounslow, for letters from London to Windsor ". He was succeeded by his son Thomas a few years later and by 1600 Thomas Whitney was the postmaster there.

Due to the large demand for post horses in certain areas, the Privy Council had decided in 1590 that when in excess of 10 horses were needed in any one day, the extra ones should be supplied by the surrounding districts. Hounslow was one of the places specifically given this relief.

Following the discharge of the posts of the Bristol road in 1611, Thomas Whitney received special appointments to be postmaster at Hounslow so as to serve the Court. The actual documents appointing him have survived and are among the Egerton MSS in the British Museum. These state the reason for his appointment in 1612 as " His Majesty being at Hampton Court " and for September and October 1613 as " whilst the Queen is at Hampton Court ".

Further details of the Hounslow posts are scanty. In 1627 Francis Harpar, the postmaster, declared, respecting a packet that was lost, that he had received a letter addressed to Lady Russell which he had sent away by horse and man. Among the many petitions for places in the Post Office at the Restoration, was one of John Gale, swordmaker and mill man of the Army, for the place of postmaster at Hounslow. He was imprisoned, plundered and his family turned out of doors, for executing his office whilst the king was at Oxford. He was, however, unsuccessful and William Cobell retained the post.

Henry Cleaver, postmaster at the Still, issued a token in the 1660's and in 1666, Robert Gisby is noted as postmaster. During the Plague, in 1665, the Court fled to Oxford and letters coming up to London from the West were intercepted at Hounslow and sent on to Oxford. The postmaster at Hounslow proved somewhat negligent and allowed several bags of letters for the Court to go on to London. It was thought at this time that the Plague could be carried by letters, hence the attempts at disinfection with vinegar and the fear of handling ' contaminated letters '.

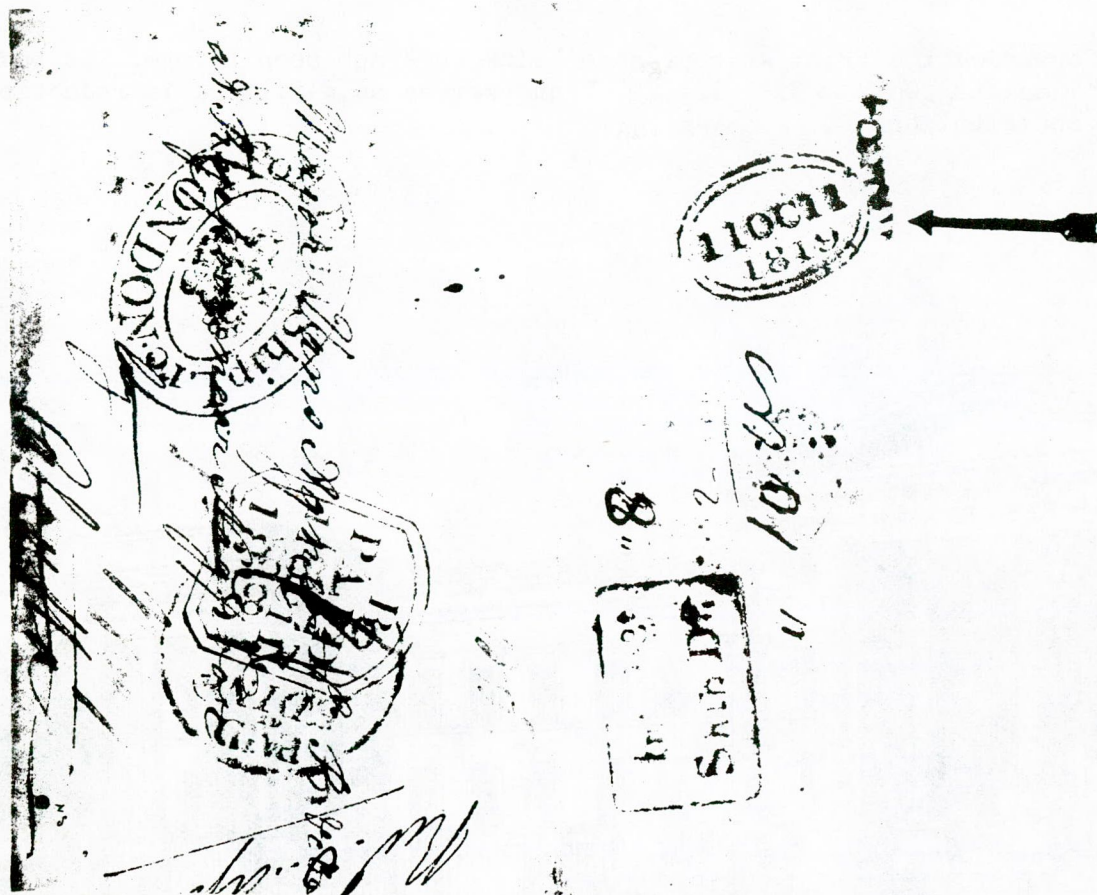
By 1672 Edward Locke was the postmaster and the town had become a normal stage on the Bristol post road again.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

UNPAID STAMP, OF LONDON ??

It is not often that one comes across something apparently unrecorded in the unpaid stamps, that is, those not bearing the word PAID.

A recent Robson Lowe sale resulted in the acquisition of a number of ship letters and had amongst them a mark apparently not calling for any comment by either the previous owner, or anyone else. However, it was quite unknown to me, for what that is worth as a rarity guide, and as such caused a diligent search through the various reference books in my ' library '.

Unpaid Stamp, of London ??, continued

It could not be found. My immediate concern was that it might not be a postal marking but if not who had struck it and for what purpose ?

The cover bears an Edinburgh PAID stamp for 8th. October, 1819, a double rim London PAID stamp for 11th. October, the S.41 Post Raid Ship Lre/London (all struck in red). On the reverse is what I take to be an Indian stamp in a single frame which is (none too) clearly a split charge, part of which relates to Ship. The entry is an eight for the first charge and a two for Ship with ten (annas?) as the total. This in black.

Also in black is the double rim oval 11 OC 11 / 1819.

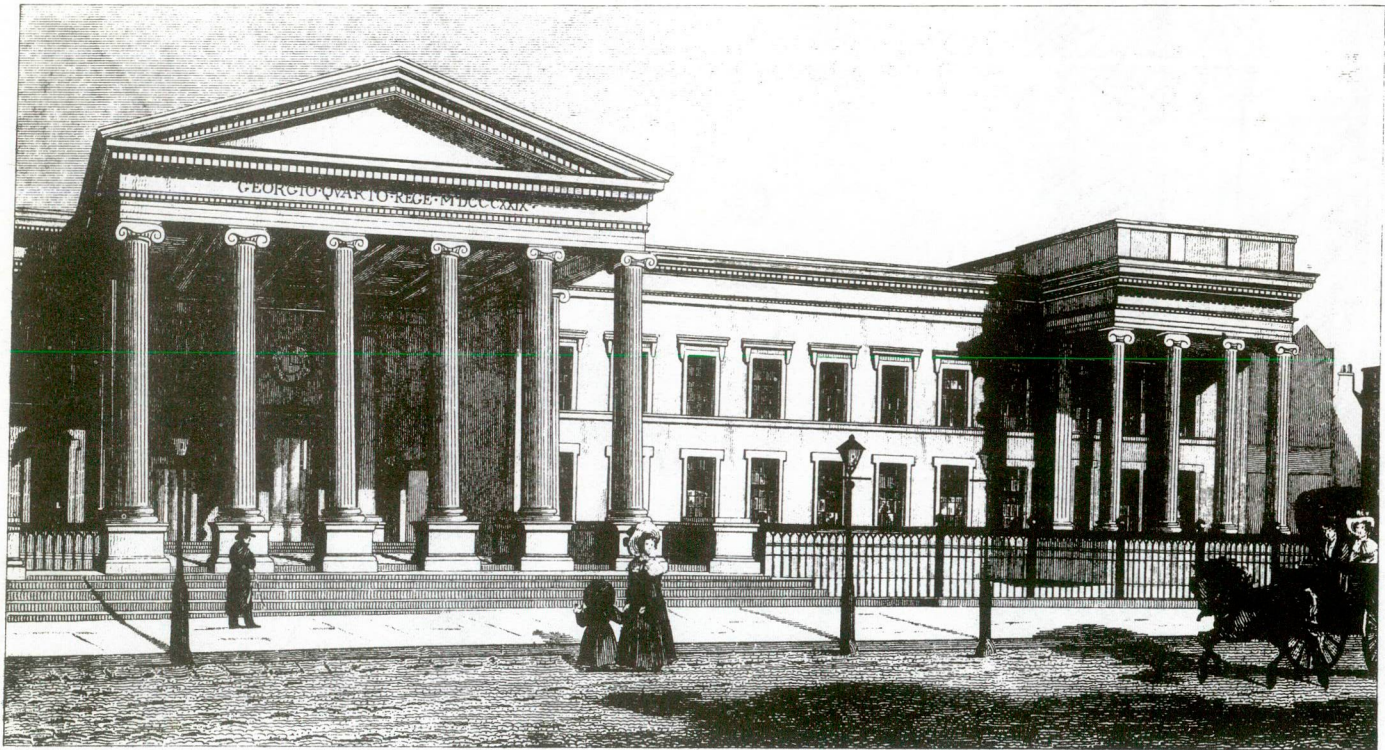
The date agrees with the London PAID stamp, so it must have been applied in London. At last a faint bell suggested a further look through the Willcocks catalogue, this time outside my immediate interests. To my surprise IRISH, fig.859, cat.no.E1518, but without SUNDAY was noted. IF it is Irish, how, why and other questions await comment from readers better versed in such matters.

P.A.F.S.

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THE NEW POST OFFICE

Brian Smith has forwarded the print we reproduce below, one not seen before. It bears the inscription " Gent.Mag.Oct.1829.Pl.I.p.297 " and serves as a fitting introduction to the following contribution.



POST OFFICE, LONDON.

THE POST OFFICE, ST. MARTIN'S LE GRAND, as 1838 survey from S. Stanaway

Extracted from " Illustrations of the Public Buildings of London ", with descriptive accounts of each edifice by Pugin and Britton.

Second edition - greatly enlarged, by W.H. Leeds, Vol.ii

Published by: John Weale, Architectural Library, 59 High Holborn. 1838

The very confined limits of the original buildings of the Post Office having become inadequate to the existing business, and an impediment to the farther extension of it, it was determined in 1815 to erect a new edifice. The arrangements for the purchase of the premises required for its site were not completed until the year 1821, but in the meantime a general invitation had been addressed to architects to offer designs for this great work.

The very natural and plausible scheme, now so often resorted to, by which it is hoped to obtain, at the expense of a few moderate premiums, the collective experience,

THE POST OFFICE, ST MARTIN'S LE GRAND, continued.....

knowledge, and talent of the profession, is not always attended with the benefits anticipated. It would not be difficult to point out more than one architectural production in this city, condemned by the general judgment of mankind, which nevertheless owe their existence to what is termed " a free and fair competition ". It may be retorted, that works of but little merit have also been produced in cases where the selection of the artist has not been the result of competition; such cases, however, only indicate a want of discrimination on the part of the selecting authority - a want just as likely to occur when the judgement is to be exercised in the choice of a design.

On the present occasion, no fewer than eighty-nine persons accepted the invitation, and nearly one hundred designs, each consisting of many large and elaborate drawings, were submitted to the examination of the Treasury. These were, in the first instance, laid before a committee of taste, who were to select a certain number of designs, of which the exteriors were considered the most commendable. The designs so selected, were then submitted to the careful examination of the principal officers of the Post Office, who were charged to report upon their relative convenience in respect to internal arrangement. The result of this report, founded upon a most minute consideration of the designs, was, that not one appeared to be such as to admit of the business of the department being transacted with regularity and convenience, or even be capable of being modified for that purpose.

The fact was, that although the facades displayed the gorgeous trappings of architecture in profusion, the plans were inadequate and unsuitable; General instructions had indeed been given for the information of the candidates, but the wants of this great establishment were most necessarily unknown to the 89 architects who had embarked in the venture.

To relieve themselves from this embarrassment, the Lords of the Treasury commissioned Sir Robert (then Mr.) Smirke*, who had not himself hitherto entered into the field, to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the business of the Post Office, and to make the experience so acquired, the foundation of a plan for the new building.

Hence rose the present edifice, which is represented on the accompanying plates. It was commenced at the latter end of the year 1823, and finished in 1829. The cost was between two hundred and thirty and two hundred and forty thousand pounds including in this sum the cost of the fittings and furniture.

It would be scarcely becoming on the writer of these pages, to indulge in the experience of his own admiration of this building. He may, however, be permitted to say, that if the tone of the general criticism is to be looked upon as a test of merit, no modern public work has been more successful; a success more remarkable as there is at present a very prevalent tendency to revive and to admire the exploded styles of the most corrupt periods of art.

One of the most conspicuous beauties of the great work before us, in an architectural point of view, is the strict propriety of design that pervades the building. It might not be unattended with advantage to the student to inquire how far this uniform propriety could have been preserved, had any other style of architecture been adopted.

Fortunately, perhaps, for the architect's character, although he was zealously and laboriously aided by the principal officers of the establishment, and although the expenditure was scrupulously watched and controlled by the Office of Works, he was

*

see note at end of article

THE POST OFFICE, ST MARTIN'S LE GRAND, continued.....

left unembarrassed by assistance on those points on which his professional education made it probable that he needed none.

Let us now take a general view of the elevation and plan of this building. The west front, which is principal, extends 390 feet. The centre is emphatically marked by a hexastyle of gigantic dimensions, of which the order is after the example of the Ionic Temple of Minerva, at Priene in Asia Minor; the columns are 37 feet in height, and four feet by two at their diameter. The width of the portico is about 75 feet, and its projection 25 feet; but a great additional apparent projection is given to it by recessing the wall behind the portico, to the depth of nearly 15 feet, a contrivance by which effect of the portico is strikingly heightened.

On either side of this centre is a double range of windows, with dressings of suitable character; above them is continued, in unbroken line, the great entablature of the portico.

The great length of the front required the wings to be strongly marked; accordingly at each extremity is a projecting colonnade of four columns, similar in all respects to those in the centre; whilst, to give additional variety to the outline, these wings are surmounted by an attic. Throughout this front, as well, as on the other three fronts, the order rests upon a high uninterrupted stylobate of granite.

The north and south fronts, which are nearly alike, and each of which presents a frontage of about 130 feet, have the same entablature continued, with pilasters, carrying on the order which rules the west front.

The back or east front, which is towards Foster Lane, is uniform and symmetrical, but without many architectural features; a triple range of windows on this front give light to a multitude of offices, and convey forcibly an idea of the vast extent of the building.

All the four fronts are built with Portland Stone, backed with brickwork, and the stylobate or basement is, as above mentioned, of granite, from Aberdeen; its height varies from five feet and a half, to nine feet and a half, according to the slope of the ground, which has a uniform inclination towards the north. The blocks of granite forming this basement are of considerable bulk, many of them being the whole thickness of the wall.

On entering the building through the great portico, in the centre of the west front, we pass into a public hall of imposing dimensions, being about 80 feet long and 64 feet wide, and 66 ft high in the centre part. It is divided longitudinally into three by a double range of stone Ionic columns, and therefore in some degree resembles the nave and aisles of a church; or with more propriety with the ancient Basilicae.

The traffic through this hall is incessant, and the scene it presents shortly before the closing of the letter-boxes is not without interest. Clerks and porters groaning under their load of letters, are seen hastening to deposit their charges through the windows provided to receive them on either side of the great hall; within, a still more interesting spectacle presents itself. In the sorting offices into which these letters are injected during the last few minutes before the closing, there is one uninterrupted and mighty flood of letters and papers seen pouring in, which would seem to a stranger to defy the task of examining, sorting and stamping, within any reasonable limit of time; in an hour, however, the whole of this undigested mass of correspondence is reduced to order, and in not many minutes afterwards each letter has commenced its swift and almost unerring flight to its destination, perhaps to the uttermost corners of the earth.

The busiest evenings in the General Post department are Mondays and Saturdays, a

THE POST OFFICE, ST MARTIN'S LE GRAND, continued.....

greater number of letters being sent on those days than on any other: much additional business, however, is occasioned on Thursdays by the arrival of immense packages of the following Sundays newspapers for transmission into the country. (Hence it would appear, that the simple inhabitants of the more remote provinces are deceived, when, in applying themselves to the study of their newspapers, they imagine themselves 'au courant' with the more advanced politicians of the metropolis.)

An inspection of the accompanying plates will more satisfactorily, than any verbal description, explain the arrangements of the respective offices. To the right or south of the great hall are, next the east front, the range of offices appropriated to the Twopenny Post; in the centre is the Foreign Letter department; and next the west or principal front, are the Receiver and Accountant-General's offices, also the apartments for the residence of the Secretary; but these, which were placed at the south-west angle of the building, are now given up chiefly for the purposes of his official business. To the left or north of the great hall, the whole wing on both stories is appropriated to the Inland General Post department.

Some idea of the extent of the business done in this department may be formed from the fact, that the Letter-Carriers' office is 103 feet long, 32 feet wide, and 33 feet high, and more than 200 hundred persons are employed in it in the early part of every day, receiving and sorting the letters which arrive by the mails. The Inland office is still larger, being 87 feet long by 50 feet wide, and in this upwards of 100 clerks and others are employed every evening, in taxing the charges which are made for each letter, and sorting them for transmission to the different parts of the country to which they are addressed.

There is an upper or third story over nearly the whole building which is chiefly lighted from internal areas, obtained over the roofs of the Inland and Foreign offices. On this upper story are store-rooms for official papers, the house-keeper's apartments, and sleeping rooms for 20 clerks, who have to attend upon the foreign mails, should they arrive during the night.

It is satisfactory to know, that this building is stated to have been made fire-proof, as far as circumstances would allow: the main beams of all the floors are of cast-iron, and between most of the floors and ceilings is a fire-proof surface of metal plates, or of hollow bricks turned in flat arches, and closely cemented together.

In the original arrangement of the plan of the building, it was wisely directed by the Government that the capacity of the new building should not be regulated by the extent of the business at the precise period of its erection, but that ample room should be provided for the future increase of the establishment: had this provision not been made, either the country would be now loudly called upon to furnish the means of erecting another building, or else all the subsequent improvement in the management of the department, and the greatly increased facilities of the circulation of the correspondence of the country now enjoyed by the public, would have been utterly impracticable.

In concluding, it would be a needless effort of self-denial to abstain from some expression of congratulation at the evidence of national greatness afforded by the growing prosperity and rapid improvement of this department of the State. I believe I may safely say, that no other age or country can offer such an imposing spectacle of national activity and spirit, as the London Post Office. Between seven and eight hundred clerks are employed under its roof, and one hundred and seventy millions of letters are annually circulated through its means, with a rapidity and correctness that would exceed the belief of a stranger. Nor is it less surprising, that notwithstanding the enormous expense of such an establishment as this, and notwith -

THE POST OFFICE, ST.MARTIN'S LE GRAND, continued.....

standing the remarkable fact that ten-elevenths in weight of the whole correspondence of the country is entirely gratuitous, (viz. the franks and newspapers) yet the gross revenue nearly doubles that of France, although in superficial extent and population she so greatly exceeds this country, whilst the net profit accruing to the revenue, after all expenses are paid, much exceeds one million and half sterling.

SYDNEY SMIRKE *

*(presumably the son of Sir Robert mentioned in the opening paragraphs. SS.)

Editor's Note:

Despite the laudatory tone in the final paragraph, it is interesting to see a reference to the extent of the ' free ' transmission of franks and newspapers. This no doubt at a time when the public were taking a very keen interest in some less than happy aspects of the Post Office. One might be tempted to suppose the entire article was intended as a vehicle to punch home this one point of the reformers' message.

REFERENCES TO PLAN

A	Hall
b	Inland Letters
c	Foreign Letters

SOUTH WING

ddd	Receiver-General's Office
eee	Accountant-General's Office
ff,&c	Offices for Foreign Letters
g	Entrance to Foreign Office
hh	Secretary's Apartments
ii,&c	Twopenny Post Department

NORTH WING

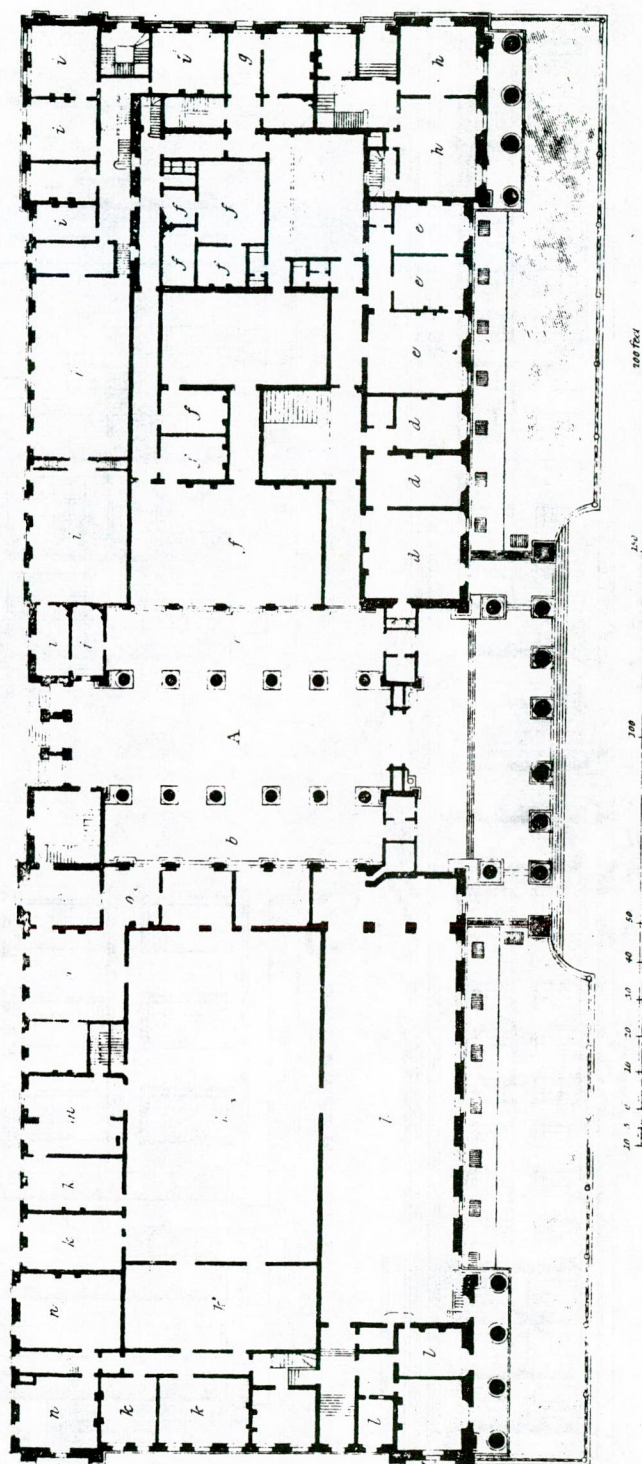
kk,&c	Inland Letter Department
lll	Letter-Carriers' Offices
m	Entrance to Inland Letter Office
nnnn	Mail-Coach Offices
ooo	Ship-Letter Offices

Note: The plan on page 9 is entitled POST OFFICE Ground Plan and has, in very small print W.Butler del.(at left) F. Mansell SC (at right) John Weale,Architectural Library 59, High Holborn(centre)

The elevations on page 10 are: Left " Section Through Portico and Part of Hall " right: " Part of elevation to a larger scale "

The attributions are: C.J.Richardson del.(left) F.Mansell sculp(right) and at the foot John Weale etc etc.

THE POST OFFICE, ST.MARTIN'S LE GRAND, continued.....

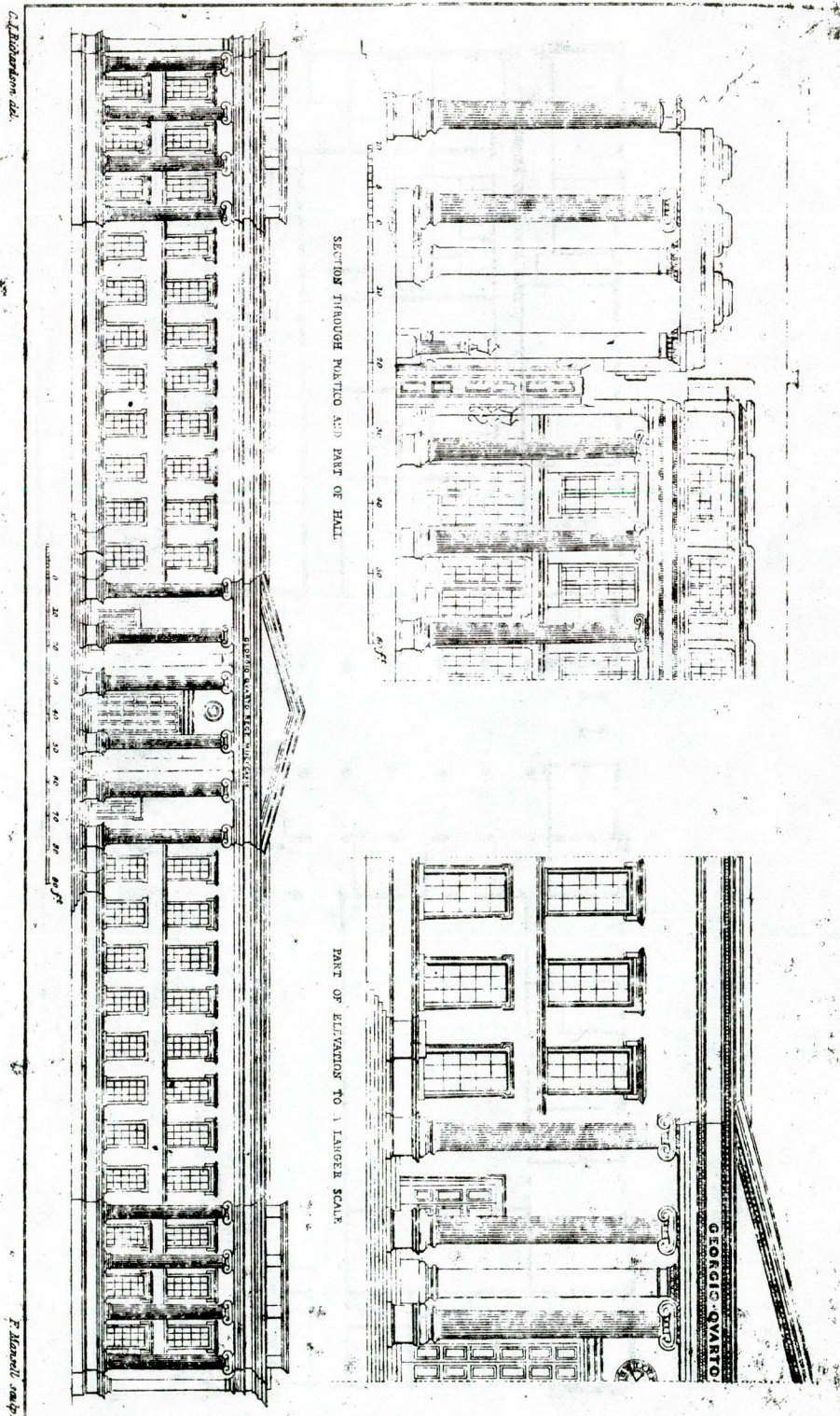


F. Mansel & Co.

John Trade Architectural Library 59 High Holborn.

W. Baker, Ltd.

THE POST OFFICE, ST.MARTIN'S LE GRAND, continued.....



ORMOND STREET RECEIVING HOUSE

The reading of available literature leads one to suppose the various receiving houses were distinguished one from another either by the use of the Receiver's initial or name stamp. A hasty revision threw no light on the use of the name of the actual office until quite late and if such stamps were employed, they have remained unrecorded. There are the numbered office stamps from 1670 to 1679 (RMW 25 - 27), the initials and names running 1670 - 1790 (RMW 28/29). The name of office appear to start in 1789. This is the pattern in London.

In the provinces, apart from the exceptional 'initial' types from 1696, the office stamps use is generally held to run from 1701 to 1709, a break in use for most offices until 1719/20 then, in one form or another through the years.

It was a surprise, therefore, to find in Derek Green's September list this :

224: 1709 EL to Cooper-Sale, Essex, man 'By Epping Bag', with, on reverse Bshp & vnear **** st-line unfrm'd " ORMOND/STREET " (London). Could very well be unique at this date.

The final comment seems most likely !!

Unfortunately it was not possible to get a photocopy for Notebook, but the further details kindly provided by Derek Green are :

ORMOND	height	5mm	length	36mm
STREET		5mm		33mm

Overall height of strike is 13mm.

A modern gazetteer has this to say: eccl.dist (St.Alban) and ham. W.Essex, on border of Epping Forest; pop 756; P.O. The ham is $1\frac{1}{2}$ m. S. of Epping. C. House is a seat. (pop figure relates to 1932)

Should a reader have any knowledge of this stamp or any other of the same period Notebook would be happy to reproduce the details.

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MASSEY TRIALS AND OTHER UNUSUAL HANDSTAMPS, Meeting Report

Our October meeting, thanks in no small measure to the cover given by Derek Holliday, was a very hectic affair in that members were able to contribute a great deal of additional data as to types, codes and periods of use. At the moment Derek is busily putting this data into digestible format with the Editor badgering several members for information not available at the meeting.

The outcome of all this, most enjoyable and noisy, session will be a draft publication for all those with material to check and update. With the high costs of print and postage it is not proposed to make a blanket issue of these notes. Will those who have material and who are able and willing to check please write to Derek (address on back cover) for a copy.

Due to a gremlin page five of Notebook 24 failed to print correctly. Under the heading Hammer design....the line should read

Dies 1 - 6 were issued to LONDON EC and LONDON (IS). These twelve were all very scarce.

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LONDON S.E. DISTRICT: WESTLEY FIGURE 8, by Brian Smith

On page 84 of Westley's Postal Cancellations of London there is mention of a gap in the Post Office records of No. 15 in the Figure 8 series.

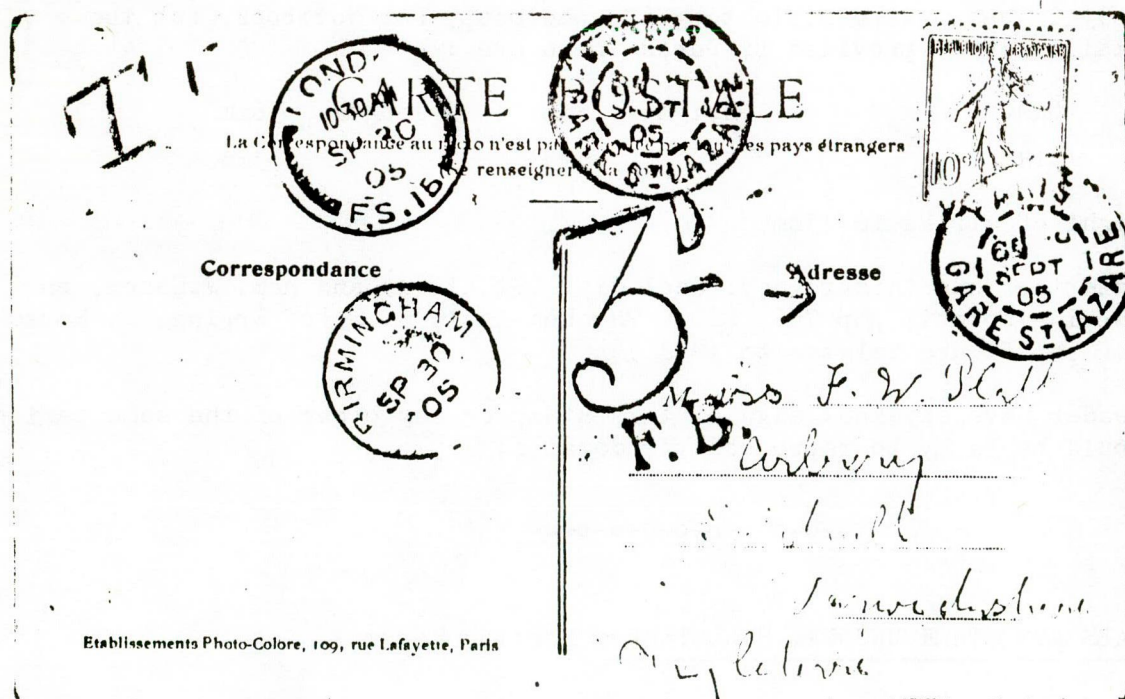
The sequence of dates of issue show as follows:

7 - 10 20th. November, 1862
 13- 14 17th. February, 1863
 15 unknown
 16- 17 6th. March, 1862



I have before me an example of the 15 used on 15th. December, 1861 and readers may well have earlier copies. Please check through your collections and advise the Editor of any finds.

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ARROW MARK LOCATED

Etablissements Photo-Colore, 109, rue Lafayette, Paris

We have illustrated in the past a curious arrow mark appearing on cards coming from abroad. John Sharp sends another, this time coming from FRANCE, bearing a 3d/FB charge and the arrow. It has also a F.S. 15 solid arc stamp for SP 30 05 as an arrival mark.

The arrow has now been traced in the Proof Impression Books to Volume 46, page 220 when six such stamps were issued to " Foreign Branch CD 23.5.90 "; this is not to suggest there may not be later issues, but we have at last determined the postal aspect of the stamp, even though apart from the useful, vague, " Inspectors' Mark " cubbyhole no functional description can be offered.

Please do report any you have or see, in particular those BEFORE 1900.

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INLAND BRANCH LATE FEE STAMPS

The four stamps illustrated above, by courtesy of Post Office Records, are those listed as Series 15 by Dubus in a run 71 to 81 combined with the hexagonal date stamp. According to Westley, 78 and 79 were issued on 6th. May, 1869 and on the 1st. March 80 and 81 were issued in a similar type, but the obliterator was much narrower. Numbers 75 to 77 are also known, but with larger numerals. Westley notes 71 to 74 as being issued on 29th. September, 1885 (sic) and adds these do not appear to be known to collectors. Just for the record it may be noted the Proof Impression Book gives the date when sent as 30.9.85. The rarity of these last four is confirmed by Dubus who records 72 and 73 on adhesive only.

In the June 1973 issue of PJGB, Mark Yarry records a 71 on a 'too late' envelope addressed to Switzerland (2½d. adhesive). PJGB notes only two others known to the journal, one being described in German (?) as being used on 30th. July, 1886.

The Yarry envelope also carries the TOO LATE F.B.G.P.O. as a bonus, the usual P.O. habit of the day of gratuitously advising the addressee the P.O. had charged to treat as a late letter and then managed to miss their own FB post.

(As an idle thought one wonders if there exists any cover to show a refund of the ineffective late fee ?)

Could it be a reader has one, or more, of these rare items unremarked ?

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NEWSPAPER RARITY

From the Postal Guide of May 1856 comes the following quote from the Act governing the passing of newspapers in the post (effective 29 June 1855).

Condition No.10

If the publication be addressed to a person within the free delivery of the place where it is posted it becomes liable to a postage of one penny which must be prepaid by affixing a postage stamp.

The free delivery of London so far as applies to this rule extends to such places only as are within three miles of the General Post Office.

The stamp was issued on the 3rd. March, 1857 and can be readily distinguished from the general issue on 9th. February, 1858 by the absence of a district initial.

R.I. Johnson, in the March 74 issue of PJGB, comments that none are known to him as recorded in use. Any offers ?



-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

RIVER LETTER POSTMAN, SUSPECTED OF A FELONY.....

GENERAL POST-OFFICE,

August 30, 1810.

WM. SIMPSON, A Letter Carrier, employed on the River,
is strongly suspected of Felony.

Whoever shall apprehend him, will be entitled to a Reward of

ONE HUNDRED POUNDS,

Payable on his Conviction.

He is about 20 Years of Age, stout made, rather tall—has dark Brown Hair, straight—Brown Eyes—fair Skin—some Colour in his Face; was dressed in a Red Silk Handkerchief about his Neck—Blue Coat with Yellow Metal Buttons, striped Waistcoat, Yellow—Knee Pantaloons striped, white Colour—Hessian Boots and a round Hat. He went in a Hackney Coach about 10 o'Clock last Night from Brick Fields, Dock Head.

By Command of the Postmaster General,

FRANCIS FREELING,

Secretary.

Tempe, Printer, Tower-hill, London, for His Majesty's Stationary Office.

RIVER LRE

Alan Robertson in " The Maritime Postal History of London " has this to say about the small framed handstamp bearing the RIVER/LRE of the title.

" The only recorded example of this is an impression in black on part of a letter bearing a London datestamp 11 FEB.1803. It is known that small " Post Office " boats collected letters from vessels lying in the Thames, prior to this time. But whether the practice continued is unknown, so the theory that this was a letter written on board a ship in the Thames and brought ashore by " Post Office " boat remains unproven. (More data sought)."



In a footnote A.W.R. refers to Hyde's " The Royal Mail, its curiosities and Romance " p. 324 - a practice prior to 1700.

The ' more data ' was unearthed by A.W.R. and published in the Great Britain Philatelist in February 1962. The source of the information was a series of books held in Post Office Records entitled " President's Order Books ".

The President's Order Book contained instructions from the Postmaster General, his Secretary and other senior administrators sent to the Presidents of the Inland Office. These two senior officials supervised the Inland Office alternating the morning and afternoon ' shifts '. These instructions copied into the P.O.B. had to be read and initialled by the officers and staff to whom they applied. The first order book is dated 1784. The first reference is in 1800.

Number 12: 7th. February, 1800. " Mr. Stow (the Packet Superintendent President at the time) has sent to the Presidents this evening two books for the entry of the River Letters, and he particularly requests that they will see the directions contained therein properly put into effect. Copies of these instructions are as follows:

River Letters Outwards (out FROM ships in the river to the G.P.O.) Commencing February 10th instant..On and from Monday evening 10th a bag will be brought up (to the Inland Office, in preparation for delivery the following morning) every night ticketed ' RIVER BAG '. The letters are to be carefully told up, and the number inserted in this book opposite to the proper date, this is to be most accurately taken by the officer who ticks off the bags of an evening.

River Letters Inwards (letters received at the office for delivery by the River Postmen)..On and from the 10th instant...All letters addressed to persons on board ships in the River lying between London Bridge and Limehouse, are to be sorted by themselves at the Paid Letter Office, and to be incorporated in the window charge of each day. (There were a number of windows around the inner courtyard of the Lombard Street G.P.O., through which letters were either handed in or collected by the public. In charge of each of these windows was a WINDOWMAN, whose responsibility was to attend to the postal business appertaining to that window. He kept a separate account of monies apid in or out during the course of each day's business.) The person appointed by the P.M.G. to the service is to pay for them on the following morning (that is after the River Postman had delivered his letters and collected the postages due from the addressees.) deducting only the one penny which is to be added by the Window Man, over and above all other postage charges whatever. It will therefore be proper for the number delivered to the River Boatman to be very accurately set down in the proper columns of this book.

8th. February, 1800. Two River Letter stamps are sent to the Preseident on duty this evening, from Mr. Stow.

RIVER LRE, continued.....

Number 17: 1st. December, 1801. As letters conveyed aboard ships in the River by the River Postman are not such as can materially affect the mercantile proceedings of the City, and as it is improbable for the man to return in time for his evening collection if he can be detained after half past 10 o'clock, Mr. Stow begs the Presidents will order that he be despatched at that time, and direct that such letters as may come after his departure may be detained for the next days delivery.

Number 22: 27th. April, 1804. The Presidents will be pleased to give the necessary instructions for the River Letters Outwards, not in future to be stamped with the RIVER LETTER stamp. As it is not intended to add the 1d., to the rates outwards. The number however is to be accurately told up, as the River Postman will have to account for the same. The above order is particularly of consequence as it appears that we have for sometime past illegally been charging 2d. for all River Letters outwards; namely 1d. paid to the man who blows his trumpet, and 1d. charge here, over and above all other rates.

19th. June, 1804. Amount of pence collected by the River Postmen. April 27th to June 19th. Number 2,244. Amount £9 7 Od. The presidents will be pleased to add the above sum to the Windowman who will be repaid by the River Postman. In future the Windowman will incorporate the amount of letters collected by the River Postman with those delivered, which the Presidents will see properly checked.

A mss note alongside this entry reads " Terry (one of the River Postmen ?) has been directed to bring the book containing the number of River Letters outwards to the President every Saturday evening for the purpose of them being added to the Paid charge. (this initialed "J.B.").

Alan Robertson could find no further references up to and including volume 44 which is for March 1832. He summarises the evidence from the abstracts above, roughly as follows:

1. The limit of the river served was London Bridge to Limehouse.
2. In addition to other postages, there was an official River Letter rate of one penny to be paid by the addressee on board a ship in the river. Until April 1804 there had been a charge of 2d, the further one penny being charged without any authority.
3. Unpaid letters sent from ships in the river were charged one penny in addition to any other charges.
4. Until 1805 the River Postman had to account to the Revenue for letters both to and from the ships. A.W.R. suggests the cause for the unlawful 2d charge mentioned above can be traced to the 1d. for his services on unpaid letters being added to other postal charges but from 1805 he was required only to account for the letters delivered to ships. No doubt he received the 1d still from senders despite it being charged to the addressee, the monies becoming a ' perk '.
5. RIVER LRE was, or should have been, struck on letters to and from the ships until the end of April 1804; after that time the stamp was applied ONLY to letters COLLECTED by the River Postmen.
6. From various references to the quantity of mail handled in connection with the service there appears to have been something in excess of 1,000 items per month. Allowing the stamp was in use from 1800 (issued in February that year) through to 1810, there possibly, in round terms, some 100,000 River Letter items.

RIVER LRE, continued.....

7. A.W.R. takes only 20% of this figure to allow for unknown factors causing changes in the use of the service over the period; why then are there so very few of these items recorded ?

It is now some fourteen years since the original article appeared and since that time there must have been other examples of this stamp appear on the market and in exhibitions. Readers are invited to cull through catalogues, lists and other articles to establish if this is so.

The source for the data above is an article in " The Great Britain Philatelist " by Alan W. Robertson. The article was published In Febraury, 1962.

The illustration is from " The Maritime Postal History of London 1766 - 1960 " also by Alan W. Robertson, published by Robson Lowe Ltd on the occasion of the London International Stamp Exhibition 1960.

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LONDON'S MARITIME POSTAL HISTORY

As mentioned in the previous article, the very fine work on this subject was published some fourteen years ago. Apart from the modern stamps, both machine and hand which have come into use since that date, there have been many discoveries of new types, datings and use.

Bill Hamblin, who ' cannot claim to be a specialist ' (to quote from a recent letter) does have a good collection of material and has kindly agreed to help in putting together such data as members can provide with a view to the Group publishing, as part of their London Catalogue, a section on Maritime Mail.

Quite a few members have included the subject as one of their interests, but there are no doubt many who have at least one or two items, albeit as part of a general PH collection or another specialised study. As a contribution to that aspect of postal history which Notebook defines as publishing the results of study, please write to Bill Hamblin of your interest; this will give some indication of the range of available material within the Group.

The address is:

Mr. W.F.J. Hamblin,
24 Salcombe Road,
ASHFORD, Middx.
TW 15 3BS

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WORLD CRUISES.....

Although you and your immediate circle of friends do not always take two or three months holiday each year to enjoy a long cruise (a venture with much to commend itself), you may just get to hear of someone who does plan to take a long sea trip. Someone off to the Antipodes, South America or wherever. Suggest you let them have a number of self addressed air letters for posting on board ship just before each port of call and as soon as they leave the UK. The results can be very interesting and you may even get a London stamp to start the run.

ELEVENTH REPORT OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL, 1864**Increase in Correspondence.....**

In the London District the proportion of letters to population rose from 48 per head per annum in 1863, to 51 per head per annum in 1864; and the proportion of letters to inhabited houses rose from 362 per house per annum in 1863, to 373 per house per annum in 1864.

In both years the total number of letters delivered in the London District would have been more than sufficient to give a delivery of one letter on every working day to each house throughout the district.

The increase during 1864 in the number of circulars sent through the post in letters appears to have been considerable. In 1863 an account was taken of 4,000,000 letters which were posted in London, and which obviously contained circulars, and could be assigned to various trades and societies.....In 1864 a similar account was taken of 4,600,000 letters posted in London, and obviously containing circulars.

	In 1863	In 1864
Of these circulars there were transmitted by :		
drapers	1,690,000	1,780,000
railway companies	348,000	404,000
insurance companies	292,000	388,000
wine merchants	101,000	386,000
charitable institutions	307,000	261,000
publishers and booksellers	58,000	189,000
lottery offices	141,000	169,000

In addition....largely increased numbers were in 1864 transmitted by the book post. During that year in was observed that:-

	Book Circulars
There were posted in London by :	
railway companies	316,000
drapers	282,000
charitable institutions	279,000
building and mining companies	210,000
wine merchants	197,000
medical men and dentists	177,000
insurance companies	113,000
tailors	108,000

There was also a considerable increase in 1864 in the number of valentines :-

Estimated Number of Valentines posted in London			
Year	For Delivery in London	For Delivery In the Country	Total
1863	299,200	195,500	494,700
1864	326,300	204,000	530,300
Increase in 1864	27,100	8,500	35,600

In both years the number of valentines posted in the Western Postal district of London was nearly one-fourth of the whole number posted in London.

London Postal History Group

" Notebook " is produced 5/6 times a year and is issued free to members.

Individual copies, where available, can be supplied at 40 pence each post paid (UK and surface rate; air extra)

Publications, other than " Notebook "

1. " Classification of Types of Undated Namestamps of England, Wales and Ireland 1840 - 1860 ", by M.V.D. Champness (1973) 15pence.
2. " Horizontal Oval Cancellations of London ", by John Parmenter (1974)
(out of stock)

Other catalogue publications are in course of preparation.

Chairman/Editor: Peter A. Forrestier Smith,
6 Church Manor, Bps. Stortford, Herts.
CM23 5AE.

Hon. Secretary: Derek Holliday,
4 Darwin Road, London.
W5 4BD.

Hon. Treasurer: John Grimmer,
48 York Road, New Barnet, Herts.
EN5 1LJ.



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* to be confirmed at the A.G.M. 1976