

NOTEBOOK

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

IN THIS ISSUE.....

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13 London E.C. and Mount Pleasant Columbias,
by D.C. Holliday and B.P. Pask

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EDITORIAL

This long delayed issue contains but two contributions. One deals with a major change in the organisation of the post of London in the 1830 s; the other with a significant attempt at improvement through mechanisation in the early twentieth century.

Neither are light reading but both are commended for the mass of interest awaiting careful examination.

Due to a change in work load now occupying most Friday evenings and then Saturday afternoons and early evening, this issue has been delayed to the extent of a full month - and number 42 is due before the end of April! It is sincerely hoped to get back into the normal pattern ere long.

Apologies also to the many who write seeking advice, offering comment & generally behaving as interested and responsible members. The track record for swiftness of response has never been good but the battery of mail at my right hand requiring action causes previous accumulations to appear all to more modest. However, with this off to the printers on Saturday in the morning even that problem will be dealt with. Please keep writing and you may confidently expect a reply, er, sometime!

A quick word about " HANDBOOK OF LONDON ". Not our publication but a reprint of the 1850 edition of the work by Peter Cunningham. It is stuffed with information about places and persons of the time. The Post Office gets due attention:

The Penny Post was set up on our Lady-Day, (being Friday), AODni 1680; a most ingenious and useful project, invented by Mr. Robert Murray first, and then My. Dockwra joined with him....." (Malone's Inquiry, p.387)

This entertaining and worthwhile reprint is £9.95. Buy it.

THE LONDON CROSS AND BYE POSTS

In both the catalogue and history, Martin Willcocks devotes some space on the establishment, in late 1834, of a service to the post using public, whereby mail for places along a mail coach route from the provinces would be dropped short of the Chief Office and delivered from that point. This avoided the journey to the capital and back again. This major improvement, for such it most certainly was, is well documented in Post Office Records.

The body of this article is copied from the P.M.G. Reports. It provides the detailed background. The identity and occupation of the Shooters Hill Post - master is recorded, his position as running what is curiously referred to as a " Voucher Office ", Shooters Hill not being thought suitable of the dignity of a Post Town.

The full story for all the roads has not been attempted. Only Hounslow and Shooters Hill are dealt with in depth: Barnet gets a passing reference by way of an afterthought.

No. 701

General Post Office

Freeling to P.M.G.

4 Oct 1834

My Lord,

Your Lordship is aware that I have long had a favorite scheme in Contemplation and that at various times I consulted your Predecessor upon it who greatly encouraged it but we were all desirous that as this Scheme was so closely connected with the Country Twopenny Post the circle of which was lately extended to 12 miles round London it would be right to see how that measure succeeded in all its operations before we clogged it by any premature addition to the almost numberless details of which it is composed.

The extension has now had a fair trial, it has greatly added to the convenience of the Circle, and we have reason to believe that the Expense altho' heavy will eventually be repaid by the increase of Letters.

I will state the object of my plan generally and as concisely as I can - It is, that instead of the Letters for places between the 3 and 12 mile Circles round London, thru' which the Mail Coaches pass, being brought up to London in the morning and dispatched from thence by the Twopenny Post, they shall be delivered at those places either from the Post Towns already established nearest London, or by making some of the Places themselves Post Towns - The Letters by this arrangement would be received much earlier, and at less expense to the Inhabitants -

In pursuance of this scheme I addressed certain pointed Queries to the Intelligent President of the Twopenny Post, and I now enclose them with his replies, so that your Lordship may see the whole force and scope of the object.

So far as the main operation of the plan is concerned it is effectual Altho' much remains to be done by communications with Surveyors, for it will at once appear how many Post Offices will have to make up accounts, bags, &c with Brentford in the event of its becoming the Post Town - I have selected the Hounslow and Brentford Road as the principal, and the most difficult, in as much as 7 Mail Coaches center at Hounslow. If it should be practicable on this Road, the same principle must obtain on all the Roads to London, with respect to the villages within 12 miles (not touching upon our General Post 3 Mile Circle) thru' which the Mail Coach passes -

My mind is not yet perfectly satisfied whether Brentford can be made the Post Town - I incline to think it must be Hounslow, to avoid the multiplication of Bags and accounts.

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In the latter Case, it would merely be necessary to order that the Letters for Brentford &c &c shall be put with the Bags already made up for Hounslow, instead of the London Bags.

It will be seen by Mr. Smith's Memorandum that the arrangement for giving the places in question a morning Delivery, (which would be completed by 9 o'clock) can be carried into effect without employing additional Letter Carriers.

There will however be some expense for a Ride from Hounslow to drop the bags to be made up there, and also for the extra duty thrown upon the Hounslow Office - but I shall be disappointed if the whole is not to be accomplished for at most £100 a year.

My object is to obtain your Lordship's sanction of the principle if it should appear to you desirable - I shall then proceed to prepare the details by further communicating with the President of the Twopenny Post, and corresponding with the Surveyors.

There will of course be a sacrifice of the Twopenny Postage, and in some Cases the General Post Rates may also be affected by the Letters being charged only for the distance to Hounslow - instead of London, but the Penny Postage from Hounslow will be in some degree a set off to this reduction.

By an account taken at the beginning of the present year there were 166 Letters in one day, brought thro' Brentford, Hammersmith, Kensington &c, which by the proposed arrangement would be delivered earlier and at less expense to the Public.

All which is humbly / submitted by / F. Freeling

Endorsed:

It appears to me that this arrangement wd be very desirable & give g^t satisfaction to the public.

Cunningham

Brentford, Hammersmith &c to be served from Hounslow

(further scrawled note in 2 lines - illegible)

R. Smith to Freeling

Twopenny post Office
10th Oct^r 1834

Sir,

I beg to return you the inclosed papers relating to the new arrangement for delivering Gen^l post Letters short of the 3 Mile Circle, and making Hounslow the Sorting District instead of Brentford.

I have now to state that I have considered the subject with that attention its importance required, I have also put myself into communication with Mr. Stow, the Surveyor, are we are both of opinion that it is practicable to carry the new measure into effect, by making Hounslow the Post Town, & treating the places on the line of road between Hounslow and the 3 Mile Circle as forming part of the Hounslow penny Post.

With this view I have prepared a list of the places that the Deputies in the Country must be instructed to sort to Hounslow instead of the London Bag, this will require strict attention on their parts. After the arrival of the Mails at Hounslow it will require great exertion on the part of the Post Mistress to dispatch the Bags in sufficient time to arrive at the various Sorting Offices previous to the departure of the Letter Carriers. There are 5 Sorting Stations between Hounslow &

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London Viz: Brentford, Turnham Green, Hammersmith, Kensington & Brompton, Bags must be made up for each place, and it will require much accuracy & attention in Sorting the Letters for these districts, the Ride must be in attendance at Hounslow by 6 o'clock in the Morning & he must be dispatched soon after, to enable him to arrive at Brompton about $\frac{1}{4}$ past 7 o'clock, the distance is quite 9 Miles. The Mails begin to deliver their Bags at Hounslow soon after 5 o'clock & the last Mail arrives at 39 minutes after, consequently there will be but little time allowed for making up the Bags, & I think it will be necessary to give the Dep^y at Hounslow an Assistant. Out Charge Taker is a very intelligent respectable Man, he is well acquainted with the districts & would be a great assistant in Sorting the Letters and I have no doubt for a small remuneration he would be glad to do it.

To prevent an unnecessary accumulation of accounts, M^r. Stow thinks with me that it will be better for the Postmistress of Hounslow to charge our Receivers at the various Sorting Offices with the amount of Letters sent for delivery, & for them to collect the postage from the Letter Carriers & Transmit it in Sealed Bags to the Dep^y: of course care will be taken to provide the necessary Checks for the Security of the Revenue. By this arrangement this office will not have to open any new accounts.

In my former observations I have alluded to Letters posted at Brentford, Kensington &c for the down Mails. It is therefore only necessary for me to observe they will be sent to Hounslow in the Evening by the Ride, & care must be taken that they arrive at Hounslow in sufficient time for the Dep^y to make up the Bags previous to the arrival of the Mails. With this view I think the Brompton Box should close at 30 Minutes past 6 o'clock, the Kensington & Hammersmith at 45 Minutes & the Brentford at 7 o'clock, if found practicable the time can be afterwards extended. I have before stated that I only propose to make the principal office in each district available for the receipt of Letters for the extended time.

I am not aware how long it will take to give the necessary instructions to the Postmasters in the Country, but I apprehend I could make the necessary arrangements to commence within a fortnight, it will however be necessary for me to be furnished with lists of the places that the Bags are made up for at Hounslow, that the Receiver may have proper instructions for keeping back the Letters.

With reference to the expense I fear the Sum named by you to the Postmaster Gen^l will not be sufficient; a small remuneration will be sufficient to our Receivers, some addition will be expected by the Postmistress of Hounslow as well as her assistants. I think it will be better not to fix these allowances until the measure has been in work for about 2 months, by this time I shall be the better able to judge of the extent of the additional duty, and will with the assistance of the Surveyor prepare a scale of allowances for the approval of the Post Master Gen^l.

The Riding Work will be 9 Miles p^r. day.

I am/Sir/your most obedient/humble Servant/ Rsmith *

(* Editor's note: the signature really does look like this!)

The following two sets of notes are undated. One is written by Smith, the other (in a very bad hand) is not signed, merely addressing his remarks to ' Mr. Smith '. It is endorsed " In 701 4 Oct 1834 "

Notes by Smith

I have considered this subject with that attention its importance requires, & am disposed to think the plan of making Brentford the Post Town for the Letters brought by the Mails intend(ed) ((added in pencil by another hand-Ed)) for this

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place, & the other places between it & the Gen^l post towns delivery may be accomplished, without first sending them to London.

The letters for the early morning delivery in the Country districts are conveyed by the Mails the previous night, & the deliveries at most of the Villages commence about $\frac{1}{4}$ past 7 oclock in the morning -

I find there are 7 Mail pass through Brentford in the Morning. Viz: Poole, Exeter, Bath, Bristol, Gloucester, Stroud & Devonport: by the time these Mails arrive at Hounslow I calculate the first would be at Brentford by 25 Minutes past 5 o'clock, & the last by 53 Minutes. The Letter Receiver at Brentford must of course be placed in a similar situation to a Dep^y Post Master, he must receive the Bags & sort the Letters to the various districts, those for Brentford he would keep back & charge to the Letter Carriers those intended for Hammersmith, Kensington, Brompton & Chelsea must be sent off to those places in Sealed Bags, I calculate this duty may be completed by $\frac{1}{4}$ past 6 o'clock, a Rider must be in attendance to convey them to the various Sorting Offices, all of which may be delivered in time blend the delivery with the present early Mornng delivery, & the deliveries would be completed before 9 o'clock. By this arrangement the proposed plan may be carried into effect without employing additional Letter Carriers.

By the proposed plan Brentford will be made the Post Town for the places between it & London; the question will naturally follow how are the letters to be charged, are they to be taxed with the rates of postage to London? or are they to be charged according to the distance they travel? if the latter the postage can only be calculated to Brentford, & is it to be considered a free delivery to the places between Brentford & London, or are they to be charged with a penny post rate: these are points requiring consideration.

If Letters are to be stoped (a further pencil 'p' has been added - Ed.)arriving by these Mails it will equally apply to Letters to be dispatched by them. At present our latest dispatch from Brentford is at 4 o'clock & at Hammersmith, Kensington &c something late: the Letters put into the Various Receiving Houses in these districts intended for the Cross Post, must be kept back to be forwarded from Brentford, but this I can apprehend will not be sufficient, the Mails do not pass through Brentford till about 9 o'clock, I should therefore propose that the principal office in this place be open for the cross post Letters till 8 o'clock, & the principal Offices at Chelsea, Brompton, Kensington, & Hammersmith till 7 o'clock: the same Ride that conveyed the Bags to these places in the Mornng would take them back to Brentford in the Evening -

Should the place answer on this Road, it can then be applied to the others.

Rsmith

Editor's Note: The response to Smith's notes were on the right hand half of the paper. They were written in a very poor hand, resulting in several guesses. Words underlined are what is thought was written; spaces underlined are when inspired guesswork of the Editor and P.O. Records staff combined could not make any sense of the scrawl. Never-the-less, there is sufficient to make a reasonable piece of the total record.

Convinced as I am that such a large Town as Brentford & perhaps Hammersmith cannot ultimately be suffered to _____ as at present, having certain of their Letters sent thro to London & back again with the charge of two penny postage upon them. I wish Mr Smith now to consider & state shortlyany observations(on this paper) as to the practicality of effcting this - He has written sensibly upon it as in - corporating it with the established Delivered (Morning) at those places & the expense.

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I request he will consider it unencumbered with these considerations. Suppose Brentford to be made a Post Town, suppose that its delivery of Letters sent in the last T.P.P. from London overnight & the particular Letters brought up thro' Hounslow in the morning were to be blended & in the first course of delivery could they not be distributed of any arrival from London of the TPP in the morning, could that delivery be made to extend up to the former line of the General post delivery at Knightsbridge &c &c.

These questions are put placing aside expense or any other connection with London TPP beyond that of our being able to graft upon it a Service which shall exonerate us from a charge that we bring Letters thro great places on the Main Road up to London then send them back again & with a rate of add^d postage upon them.

I lay aside an objection which has always had force, that a speculator having a residence on such a main Road might from an earlier delivery than in London come up & forestall the Markets - the Delivery in London is now so much accelerated & as the accommodation now _____ in upon _____ Circle of 3 Miles, I think the objection has less weight than it formerly had.

If the plan be first arranged on the greatest Road of Brentford the same could be made available to other great Roads Blackheath - Greenwich (now a Borough) Deptford Enfield Edmonton Tottenham Finchley Highgate & Ilford &c.

No.860
Freeling to P.M.G.

General Post Office
9th December 1834

My Lord,

I am glad to find by the inclosed Reports from Mr G. Stow and Mr. Smith that the arrangements for stopping at Hounslow and delivering from thence the Letters for Brentford and other Places upto the 3 Mile Circle, which commenced on Saturday last, were completely successful, the Letters reaching all the places from Hounslow in time to fall in with the early Morning Twopenny Post Delivery, and those sent to Hounslow in the Evening, arriving in time for the Mail Coaches from London. The number of Letters thus delivered some Hours earlier was 72, and of those sent away many Hours later than formerly, 130, and I have no doubt this Measure will afford great satisfaction. When it has been a short time in operation, it will be right to turn our attention to similar arrangements on the other Roads, to which we shall be naturally expected to extend the same indulgence as we have afforded to Brentford &c --

All which is humbly / submitted by / F. Freeling

Stow to Freeling

Hounslow
Dec 7th 1834

Sir,

I beg leave to acquaint you that on the 5th I proceeded to this place to see the new arrangement carried into effect of stopping all Letters at Hounslow brought by the Western Mails for places between that Town and the three mile Circle.

I am happy to be able to state that I found no difficulty in carrying it into effect. The Ride was dispatched at the time arranged with Mr Smith - at it arrived here in the Evening at the time agreed upon, giving the Deputy sufficient time to make up her Bags - for the Down Mails.

The Postmistress of Hounslow appears thoroughly to understand the new arrangement and I entertain no doubt that this plan which gives such important advantages to all the places it embraces, will work well -

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As I hope to be able to complete the necessary arrangements here tomorrow, I shall venture to proceed to Stockbridge to start the Penny Post lately sanctioned from that Town to the Villages of Bossington, Broughton Tytherley.

I am / Sir / Your most obedient / Humble Servant / Geo. Stow

Smith to Freeling

Twopenny post office
6th December 1834

Sir,

Being aware of your anxiety to know the success of any new measure in which the Public are interested, I lose no time in acquainting that the arrangement for Stopping Letters at Hounslow for places short of the 3 Mile Circle, has been successful, I have just returned from the various Sorting Offices & find the Letters arrived in ample time for the early morning delivery. I have also seen Mt. Stow at Hounslow & he informs me there will be no difficulty in the Postmistress & her Assistant having the Letters to be dispatched by the time we calculated, Viz 15 Minutes after 6 o'clock in the Morning.-

There were 72 Letters forwarded from Hounslow to our Sorting Offices for delivery this Mornng, but I have no doubt the number will be considerably more than this, for I apprehend that several of the deputies have not clearly understood the day the new arrangement was to commence.-

Mr. Stow will be at Hounslow to night to superintend the making up of the Bags, & he will probably report to you on the number of Letters that will be sent in from the Twopenny post districts.

I am / Sir / your most obedient / humble Servant / Rsmith.

Endorsed " Conyngham "

No.24

General Post Office
16 Jan^y 1835

Freeling to P.M.G.

My Lord,

In submitting to Your Lordship the inclosed Report from the Superintending President of the Twopenny Post accompanied by an account of the Surveys made by him in various parts of the Environs of London during the last Quarter, I beg to explain that it was considered by Your Lordship's Predecessors essential to the preservation of the discipline and regularity of the Service which consists of such numberless details and ramifications, that the principal officer should exercise a vigilant inspection of all the parts of the Machinery from time to time, and I can assure Your Lordship that much advantage has arisen from this regulation.

The several points to which Mr. Smith has afforded his attention within the past 3 Months are detailed in the account, and amongst these the most important are the affording an Evening Delivery to those Places within the 3 Mile Circle which were not previously included: the benefits of which M^r Smith has clearly described; and the Stopping at Hounslow, and delivering from thence, Letters for Brentford, and the other populous Places between Hounslow and the Circle of the London General Post Delivery, which Letters were formerly brought thro' the Places to London, and afterwards delivered by the Twopenny Post.

I send for your Lordship's further information my Original Report recommending this Measure which I had long had it in contemplation to propose, but waited for a favorable opportunity. We were induced to commence with the Hounslow Road in consequence of a greater number of Mail Coaches passing thro' that Place than any

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other Town near London; the Places intermediate being also of more importance than in any other direction; and it was presumed that if the experiment succeeded on the most difficult Line, it could easily be accomplished on the others. The result, as will be seen by Mr Smith's Statement, has been most favorable, and when the bustle of the General Election has subsided it is my intention to propose that a similar arrangement may be tried on the Road next in importance (added in another hand is " probably the Barnet Road " - Ed)

In addition to the great alterations during the Quarter, other Minor but material improvements have been effected, and it is gratifying that in his Surveys Mr Smith found all the Persons employed alive to their Duty, and the Service proceeding in a satisfactory manner. I may repeat to your Lordship's Predecessors that the Money expended on these Surveys is well laid out, when the objects ensured are so material as to the Interests of the Service.

The Allowance 15^s/ pr day, and for the 33 Surveys amounts to £24 15^s/. If your Lordship approve I request you will be pleased to sign the Warrant for that sum attached to the accounts.

All which is humbly / submitted by / F. Freeling

Endorsed:

17 January 1835

The arrangement appears to be a very beneficial one for the Public; and having proceeded so well at Hounslow &c, should be extended to the other Road: and I approve of the next experiment being made on the Barnet Road. The money expended on the Surveys is certainly well laid out for the Public Service, when the Surveys are conducted in the manner Mr Smith seems to have accomplished.
Maryborough

Smith to Freeling

Twopenny post office
15th January 1835

Sir,

The inclosed Warrant is for the payment of the Surveys made by me in the last Quarter. I beg to state that in addition to the regular inspection of the Sorting Offices & Receiving House, two most important arrangements have been carried into effect. The first is the extension of the 7 o'clock delivery to the Circle of 3 Miles from the General post Office, & the second Stopping Letters at Hounslow brought by the Western Mails, intended for the Places between Hounslow & London.

Both these arrangements have been some weeks in work, & I am glad to report they are proceeding in the most satisfactory manner. By the extension of the 7 o'clock delivery upwards of 1000 Letters are delivered each Night instead of being detained until the following Morning: this, to the Inhabitants residing in the Villages around London must be a most important accomodation, it enables them, in many cases to know the previous night the business they may have to attend the following day, besides the advantages of answering their letters many hours earlier - the Stopping letters at Hounslow is also a most just & equitable arrangement, it is not only the gain of 2 or 3 Hours in time, but the letters are only charged with the rate of postage according to the actual distance they travel. By a return that I have got from the Deputy at Hounslow, I find that upwards of 6000 Letters have been forwarded by this arrangement in one Month.

In addition to these improvements arrangements have also been made, within the last Quarter to extend an early morning delivery to Plumstead, Loughton & High Beach so that these places have now two deliveries pr. day much to the satisfaction of the Inhabitants.

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I have also the satisfaction further to state that in my regular Surveys at the Sorting Offices, I have found the Letter Carriers in attendance at the proper time, that I have every reason to believe they are diligent in the discharge of their duties, & are desirous to give the public satisfaction. My Lord the Post Master General may be assured that this (good)* of the Service shall continue to have my best attention.

I am / Sir / your most obedient / humble Servant / Rsmith

*unclear on original

No. 87
Freeling to PMG

General Post Office,
14 February 1835

My Lord,

In order that as little time as possible might be lost in carrying into effect my plan for stopping the Letters from the Dover Road and its Branches, for Black - heath, Greenwich, Woolwich &c at some point, from whence they might be delivered without being brought through those places to London, in the same manner as those for Brentford &c are now delivered from Hounslow, I had arranged that while the assistant Surveyor was locked up at Dunmow instructing the new Postmaster, the superintendant of The TwoPenny Post should make preliminary enquiries, so that as soon as Mr Sebright was discharged, they might together proceed to arrange the details of the Measure.

This has now been done as will be seen from the enclosed Report.

The present plan differs from that adopted at Hounslow as far as relates to the establishment of a new Bye Office on the Dover Road, as a point from whence the places in question can be served. Hounslow being already a Post Town at a convenient distance answered every purpose. Dartford is the first Post Town from London on the Kent Road, and the objection to making this the point, is the heavy additional expense that would be incurred, besides the difficulties pointed out in Mr. Smith's first Report. It therefore occurred to me that Shooters Hill would be preferable and that it would not be necessary to make it a Post Town with London (in which Case the Letters would be liable to heavy increased Postage) but simply that it should make up bye letter Bags with all the Towns on the Dover Road, and such others branching from it, as now send their Letters for Dartford by the Cross Post - The Postmaster would have to collect the Revenue on such Bye Letters, and must therefore have an appointment, and give Bond.

The House of Mr Thomas Shelley, a Grocer, is stated to be the most eligible for the purpose, and he is himself competent and respectable. The Officers therefore recommend him for the appointment. If this be approved he will also act as the Two Penny Post Receiver, and a separate Salary of £7 for this Service will merge in that proposed for the Postmaster. The sum recommended is £40 a year and considering the number of Bags to make up, with the accounts to keep, and the responsibility, it appears to me quite moderate. It is further suggested that a Messenger should be appointed to carry the Letters every morning from Shooters Hill to Blackheath, Greenwich, Deptford and New Cross - to return to Shooters Hill with the Letters for the Dover line in the Evening; 10^s/ a week seems to be only a fair remuneration for this Service. Another Messenger will proceed from Blackheath to serve Limehouse, and 3^s/a week is considered sufficient for him - and for the reasons stated by Mr Smith, a Person must be employed to convey the Letters from Woolwich to Shooters Hill in the Evening for which 6^s/a week is proposed. The total expence of these arranged will be £82-8 per annum. If they had been adopted from Dartford, that expence would probably have been £100 a year more. The Letters delivered from Shooters Hill will be charged with Penny Postage in addition

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to the general Post Rates, as far as that Place. There will naturally be some loss of Revenue by those Letters being no longer subject to the London Twopenny Post Rate, but this I conceive is not material, when the object is to effect a decided public accomodation.

If your Lordship approve the plan now submitted, some little time will be necessary to instruct the new Postmaster, and prepare the other arrangements, but this will be accomplished with the least possible delay, and when the measure is in operation, I shall proceed as the current business of the Department will permit, to consider on what Road it may be right next to carry the same principle into effect.

All which is humbly/ submitted by/ F. Freeling.

Endorsed: appointment sent 18 January 1835

15 February 1835

I highly approve of the whole of this arrangement. Mr Smiths Report of the 13th. Int^t is very clear, and does him much credit. The sooner we can extend this admirable plan to other Roads the better.

Maryborough

authorize Mr Smith & Mr Sebright

Editors Note: In Post 42, which contains a copy of the main letter in any series, appears a red ink annotation, presumably contemporaneous with the original

Mem sent to Mr Smith to discontinue the 7^d to Shooters Hill as Rec^d of TPF April 5 1835.

The following letter is included in P.O. Records in the file No.87, though dated before the main letter of 13th. February mentioned above.

Smith to Freeling

Twopenny post office
29th. Jany, 1835

Sir,

I have now to report that I proceeded to Dartford yesterday for the purpose of ascertaining the best & most efficient measures to be adopted for carrying into effect the plan for Stopping Gen^l post Letters for the places short of London.

It appears to me that there are two ways of doing this. The first by Stopping at Dartford, and despatching a Ride from thence to the various Stations, on the face of it this certainly appears the most simple plan, but the expense would be considerable. The Bags would have to be conveyed from Dartford to Deptford which is just 11 miles, and I am doubtful whether we should not sometimes be liable to break down: it is 11 miles of heavy ground, & the Bags should be dispatched from Dartford by about 20 minutes after 5 o'clock, to enable them to be at the last Station (Deptford) before 7 o'clock. at this early Hour in the Morning I fear there is the possibility of the Rider not being punctual in his attendance, even at Hounslow where the departure is an Hour later there has been some difficulty on this point, the expense for Riding work alone would be £124 - 8 pr annum besides other expenses for foot Messengers & additional allowances to the Dept^y at Dartford, & the Twopenny post Letter Receivers.-

The second plan is to make Shooters Hill a Gen^l post Station. In that case sets of Bags must be received & dispatched from this Office the same as at Dartford, the distances must be calculated and the rates of postage charged accordingly, in fact this Station must be made the same as a Newpost Town & the accounts opened accordingly. Ou present Receiving House on Shooters Hill is just 7 miles on this side of Dartford, but if the Mail was to bring the Bags on to this place, which I believe it passes at about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 5 o'clock in the morning, I should not then require a Rider, as could send foot messengers with the Bags to Blackheath,

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Deptford &c. I calculate by this arrangement about £70 pr. annum would be saved; it will however take more time to carry it into effect because the new Depy will require some time to learn his duty.

The places that I propose to have the benefit of this early delivery are Woolwich, Plumstead, Charlton, Greenwich, Blackheath, Eltham, Lewisham, Lee, Deptford, & Peckham.

Which ever place My Lord the Post-Master General may be pleased to decide on shall be accelerated by every means in my power.

I am Sir / your most obedient / humble Servant Rsmith

Endorsed:

To make Shooters Hill a regular Post Town would be to inflict an additional rate of postage upon it from London. Can we not make it a Voucher Town as far as Dover?

Smith to Freeling

Twopenny post office
13th Feb^y 1835

In obedience to your directions I have been with Mr Seabright to Shooters Hill for the purposes of ascertaining whether the House I had alluded to in a former report could be made available for the Post Office duties under the new arrangement, & now beg to report the result.

The house is conveniently situated and is kept by Mr Thomas Shelley, Grocer, he appears to be a Steady, intelligent and competent person, he has got a private room by the side of his Shop which he can appropriate for the Office, both the Surveyor & myself consider Mr. Shelley to be a very proper person to have the charge of the Office. I however thought it right to have some references to speak to character, & Mr Longden a Magistrate residing on Shooters Hill has been with me this Morn^g and speaks most satisfactorily of him this Gentleman will be one of his Sureties. Under these circumstances Mr. Seabright & myself have not the least hesitation of recommending Mr. Shelley to My Lord the Post Master Gen^l for the appointment.

The present Twopenny Post Receiving House is at the Red Lion at Shooters Hill but should Mr. Shelley be appointed the duties of Letters Receiver & Sub Deputy will both be discharged by him, this will enable me to remove the Letter Box from the Red Lion, which I have been for some time anxious to do.

The Salary paid to the present Receiver is £7 pr annum; looking at the responsibility that will be attached to the new Receiver, the early Hour he must be up in the Morning, with the number of Bags he will have to receive & make up & the various accounts he will be required to open with the Twopenny post Receiver, the Surveyor & myself feel we are justified in proposing his Salary to be fixed at £40 pr. Annum, which of course is to include the allowance for the Twopenny post Box. We trust the Board will only consider this a fair remuneration for the duties of the office.

In addition to the proposed Salary to the Receiver it will be necessary to have a Messenger in attendance at Shooters Hill at 6 o'clock in the Morn^g to proceed with the Bags to Blackheath, Greenwich, Deptford & New Cross, the distance is about 4 miles, this messenger will also have to return to Shooters Hill in the Evening with the Letters posted at these places for the down Mail. I propose that 10/- pr week shall be allowed for this Service; a Messenger must also proceed from Blackheath to Lewisham every Morning with the Letters for that place, the distance is not considerable & I therefore only beg to propose 3/- pr week for this Service - Woolwich being an important place in consequence of the Shipping & Government

The London Cross and Bye Posts.....

Establishment, I propose to keep the principal Office open till 7 o'clock in the Evening for Letters for the down Mail; it now closes at 4 o'clock in the After - noon; is this is done a Messenger will be required to proceed to Shooters Hill every night with the Letters, the distance from the two Offices is about 2 Miles, I think that 6/- pr. Week should be allowed for this Service - these figures will include the whole of the expenses that will be incurred under the new arrangements, with the exception of small additional allowances to the Receivers at Woolwich, Blackheath &c for the increase of duty they will be required to attend to, but in these cases I think it will be desirable to proceed in the same manner as I have done on the Hounslow Road viz: to let the place be in work a Short time that I may be more competent to judge of the extent of the additional duty.

Should My Lord be pleased to approve of these recommendations, the charge on the Revenue will be as follows —

additional Allowance to the Letter Receiver as Sub-Deputy £33 pr ann & for extra Messengers to Blackheath, Woolwich & Lewisham £49-8 pr annum, making together a total charge of £82-8 pr Annum.

Had the other plans for stopping the Letters at Dartford been adopted, the charge for Riding Work alone would have been £121..13..4 pr Ann. for Extra Messengers £40 pr Annum, & I apprehend about £20 pr. Annum must have been paid to the Post Master at Dartford for his additional trouble. These Sums would have made the total expense £181..13..4 pr Annum, so there will be a saving of nearly £100 pr Annum by adopting the present plan, with the greater certainty of its working well.

I beg to add that Mr. Seabright proceeded on to Dartford for the purpose of obtaining some necessary information preparatory to calculating the distance from Post Towns to the New Station, and when he returns we shall proceed with the arrangements.

I am Sir/ your most obedient/ humble Servant

Rsmith

No.433

General Post Office
17 July 1835

Freeling to P.M.G.

My Lord,

In submitting to your Lordship the enclosed Report from the Superintending President of the Twopenny Post, enclosing an Account of Surveys made by him in the Quarter ended the 5th Ins^t I beg to refer your Lordship to the accompanying Papers explaining the objects of these Surveys and the advantages resulting from them. Experience has fully confirmed those advantages, and it has only been by a constant and vigilant Superintendence of the various parts of the System, that the whole has been preserved in order and efficiency.

The chief object which has engaged Mr Smith's attention during the last Quarter, was connected with the important Measure which I had long contemplated for the public accommodation, the delivering from Hounslow of the Letters formerly brought to London for Brentford, Hammersmith, Kensington &c. It has now been extended by branch Posts to Richmond, Twickenham, Hampton &c; and may I here mention that a similar arrangement commenced last Saturday on the Barnet Road, and I hope soon to be able to bring under consideration the adoption of the same regulation on other lines.

Mr. Smith reports favorably of the manner in which the Service is being performed at the various places he has visited during the Quarter. He made altogether 34 Surveys and at the authorized Allowance of 15/- pr day, the Amount due to him is £25.10 for which a Warrant is attached to the Account, and if your Lordship approve I request your Signature to it.

All which is humbly / submitted by / F Freeling

The London Cross and Bye Posts.....Smith to FreelingTwopenny post office
16th July 1835

Sir,

I inclose a Warrant for the payment of the Surveys made by me in the last Quarter and you will be pleased to assure My Lord the Post Master General that in making these Surveys it has been my anxious endeavour to enforce a diligent & proper discharge of the duties in all Country districts I have, from time to time, inspected the various Sorting Offices and Receiving Houses, and it is gratifying to me to add that in almost all cases I have had reason to be satisfied with the manner in which the duties have been attended to, and I feel that I am justified in saying that with the great body of the Country Letter Carriers there is an anxious desire to discharge their duties with fidelity and despatch.

The chief improvement that has been carried into effect in the Country districts during the Quarter, has been stopping letters brought by the Mails passing thro' Hounslow, intended for Rickmond, Twickenham, Hampton &c &c & forwarding them to these places in time for the early delivery: this arrangement is working well and I am assured gives general satisfaction. Other measures have been in progress and have commenced in the present Quarter; the first is the removal of the sorting office from Waddon to Croydon and the second forwarding the Fulham Bag direct to that place instead of leaving it at Hammersmith. I am glad to add the public will derive all the benefit that was calculated from these alterations.

I am, Sir / your faithful / humble Servant / Rsmith

-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-

LONDON E.C. AND MOUNT PLEASANT COLUMBIAS by D.C.Holliday and B.P. Pask

It has been some time since these notes were hoped to be published. Attempts to produce a worthwhile listing have brought to light many problems but these preliminary notes will serve as a fact-finding exercise, to be followed up by comprehensive notes when all information from members' collections has been collated.

The real problem with E.C. (and, to an extent, Mount Pleasant) is that during the period from late 1902 to late 1906 a wide variety of both town dies and cancelling bars were used. It is also obvious that either the town dies or the cancelling bars were moved from machine to machine fairly frequently since numerous different combinations exist. Much detail of this period is already available in Dr. J.T.W. Mann's book " Columbia Stamp Cancelling Machine at ECD0, London, 1901-1907 ", but we feel more is needed before a worthwhile interpretation of these marks can be given. For this period, therefore, we will depart from our usual procedure of producing dated lists. Instead, we will merely record, with suitable illustrations of both town dies and cancelling bars, all combinations known to us exist. Members are asked to check items in their collections against the illustrations and advise us the details and dates of all such marks in their collections. A pro-forma for this purpose is enclosed with this Notebook. It is important we record as many individual items as possible, rather than just earliest and latest dates of use of each combination, since only in this way can we attempt to show the way dies were moved around.

The first Columbia machine use by the British Post Office was a trial machine purchased in 1901 and installed at London, E.C., where it remained in use for some years. During the period up to 1903, it used distinctive 17 mm depth, seven

London E.C. and Mount Pleasant Columbias.....

straight line cancelling bars and only two different town dies. The details can thus be tabulated in the normal way. As will be done throughout these notes, the notation used will be that explained in our classification article in the December 1978 Notebook.

Ref.	Inscription	Town Die Type Fig	Bars Type	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Notes
C1	LONDON.E.C.	Si 1	7S(17)	16.11.01	26. 2.02	Trial Machine
C1A	LONDON.E.C.	S 2	7S(17)	3. 3.02	3.11.02	
C1	LONDON.E.C.	Si 1	7S(17)	27.11.02	18. 3.03	Re-use of original die

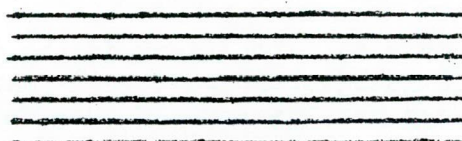


FIG. 1 - C1/7S(17)

FIG. 2
→
C1A



From late 1902 additional machines were purchased. It is believed up to six at any one time were in use at London, E.C. and three at Mount Pleasant. Dealing first with E.C., these additional machines (and the trial machine after early 1903) used a range of different single circle town dies, some with number at the bottom, during the period up to early 1906. Interspersed with these from early 1904 and continuing until late 1906, were a number of "boxed" town dies of the type associated with early Columbia machines elsewhere in the country. The cancellers paired with these dies included six different sets of "multiple" bars (M1-6), two sets of seven line bars incorporating the letters " EC " (7Si(EC)a and 7Si(EC)b), six line bars incorporating the numbers 2 and 21 and plain six and seven line bars of various depths. To further complicate matters it should be noted that in some impressions of seven line bars one bar fails to print, giving the illusion of six line bars. These cases will generally be revealed by the position of the town die, which will be slightly off centre compared with the bars. The E.C. Columbia machines were also used for backstamping during this period and when so used the town die appeared alone, without cancelling bars. The various combinations which are known to exist are listed below roughly in order of appearance of the town dies. It is for these lists that ANY dates members can provide will be helpful.

continued on page 15.....

REGISTRATION LABELS are required by a reader of ' Notebook ' ; would anyone with either material for disposal or knowledge of material source is asked to contact:

Mr. F.A. Evans, Yelton Hotel, Hastings TN34 1JU East Sussex.

Buying - Fine full strikes of Provincial Office squared circles on Victorian Mail Ed. Wilcock, 39 Fairhope Avenue, Morecambe, Lancs.

HEREWITH MY FRANK: Supplement No.1 was published in September 1978 and the Editor has a small stock of these at 75pence post paid for members. It is packed with information and is a must for all with any interest in the franking system. The original publication may also be available from normal suppliers at £4.75.

Jim Lovegrove wrote some time since that he hoped to have further information for publication by Easter this year.

London E.C. and Mount Pleasant Columbias.....



FIG. 3



FIG. 4



FIG. 5



FIG. 6



FIG. 7



FIG. 8



FIG. 9



FIG. 10



FIG. 11



FIG. 12



FIG. 13



FIG. 14



FIG. 15

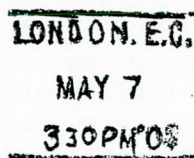


FIG. 16

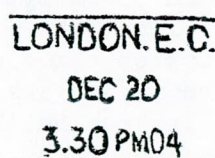


FIG. 17

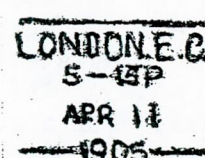


FIG. 18

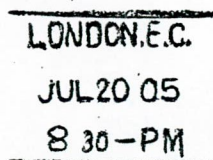


FIG. 19

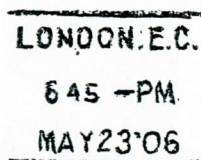


FIG. 20

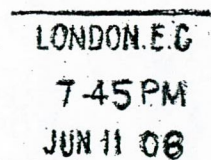


FIG. 21



FIG. 22



FIG. 23

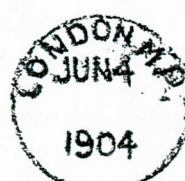


FIG. 24

London E.C. and Mount Pleasant Columbias.....Single Ring Town Dies

Inscription	Town Type	Die Fig	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Bar Types Recorded
LONDON,E.C./15	S	3	1.12.02	6.04	M1; 7Si(EC)b; none
LONDON,E.C./15	S	4	12.12.02	4.12.03	M2; M3; 7Si(EC)a
LONDON,E.C./15	S	5	13. 1.03	18. 5.03	M1
LONDON-E.C.	S	6	6. 5.03	14.12.04	7S(21.5)
LONDON,E.C./15	S	7	29. 8.03	24. 2.04	7Si(EC)b
LONDON,E.C./1	S	9	8. 1.04	21. 5.04	M4: 7Si(EC)a; none
LONDON,E.C./2	S	8	9.11.03	6. 1.04	M4; 7Si(EC)b; none
LONDON,E.C./58	S	10	26. 4.04	8. 7.05	M4; 7Si(EC)a; 7S(21.5)
LONDON,E.C./3	S	11	1. 7.04	10. 2.06	M4; 7Si(EC)a; 7S(22) 6Si(No21); none
LONDON,E.C.	S	12	19. 7.04	22. 1.06	M4; 7Si(EC)b; 7S(21.5)
LONDON,E.C./52	S	13	6. 9.04	9. 2.05	none
LONDON,E.C.	S	14	16. 1.05	23. 1.06	7S(22); 6S(18); 7S(21.5)
LONDON,E.C.	Si	15	11. 3.05	7.10.05	none

"Boxed" Town Dies

LONDON,E.C.	B	16	2. 3.04	10.11.04	6Si(No2); none
LONDON,E.C.	B	17	1. 9.04	2. 1.06	6S(18.8); 6Si(No2); none
LONDON,E.C.	B	18	7. 4.05	17. 4.05	M5
LONDON,E.C.	B	19	12. 7.05	9.12.05	7S(21.5); 6Si(No21)
LONDON,E.C.	B	20	1. 5.06	8. 9.06	M6
LONDON,E.C.	B	21	8. 6.06	20. 8.06	6S(20)

Late in 1905 the first unboxed three line town die is recorded and by the end of 1906 these had replaced all the older types. It is very difficult to identify individual dies of this type except where the punctuation differs. There will presumably have been at least five or six dies (one for each machine) at any one time, thus some of the entries in the list below almost certainly represent more than one die. For the first few months these dies were associated with the No21 in bars canceller but eventually all the machines seem to have used six line cancellers of either 18.8 or 20 mm depth. Again there must have been several sets of virtually identical bars. The marks of this period can be recorded thus :

Inscription	Town Die Type	Bars Type	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Notes
LONDON,E.C.	3	6Si(No21)	23.11.05	25.11.05	
LONDON E.C.	3	6Si(No21)	14.12.05	24. 1.05	
LONDON E.C.	3	6S (18.8)	23. 1.06		
		6S (20)	14. 2.06	29. 7.07	
LONDON E.C.	3	6S (18.8)	7. 4.06		
	4	6S (20)	20. 4.06	28.10.07	Paid only seem
LONDON,E.C.	3	6S (20)	18. 7.06	18.12.06	
		6S (18.8)	24. 7.07		

The situation changed completely at the beginning of 1908 with the introduction of machine letters, which appeared in the impression as part of the year plug. Only five machines out of six allocated can be identified by this time by letters A to E. The sixth was presumably spare, although unlettered examples are recorded in 1912 - it is not clear whether this represents the sixth machine or an error of some sort. Cancellers were six straight lines for the whole of the rest of the

London E.C. and Mount Pleasant Columbias.....

CANCELLING BARS



M1

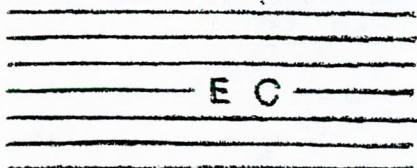


M3

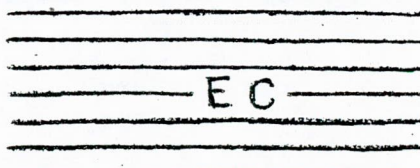


M6

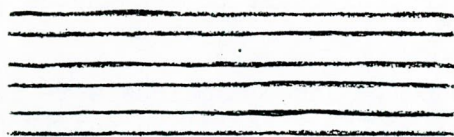
- M1 - illustrated.
 M2 - differs from M3 only in the absence of bars top and bottom.
 M3 - illustrated.
 M4 - as M6, but distinguishable by height of vertical bars, which is 16mm.
 M5 - similar to M1 but without distinctive break in vertical bar.
 M6 - illustrated - height of vertical bars 17-18mm.



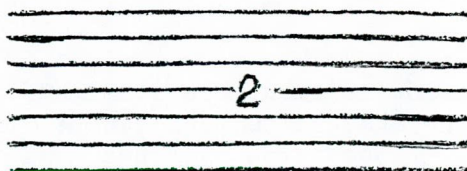
7Si(EC)b - EC 3mm high
 (a has slightly less rounded C)



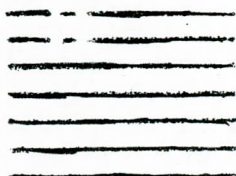
7Si(EC)c - EC 4mm high
 (not mentioned in text)



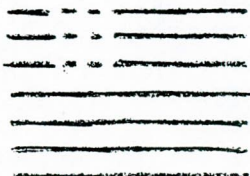
3 P



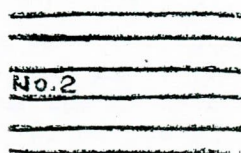
7 Si (2)



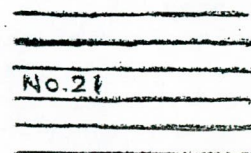
7S (2 cuts)



7S (3 cuts)



6 Si (No.2)



6 Si (No.21)

(Left hand half only in each case)

London E.C. and Mount Pleasant Columbias.....

lives of these machines at E.C., although they continued in use well into the period when five wavy line cancellers were being used elsewhere. Slogans are recorded as being used in two of the machines in 1917/18. Details of this period are tabulated below.

Inscription	Town Die Type	Bars Type	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Notes
LONDON.E.C//A	3L	none	4. 0.09	13. 4.12	Backstamping - these two dates recorded solely
	4L	6S	16. 2.10	12.10.12	Paid only seen
	3L	S1(T.1A)	23. 7.18		
	4L	6S	7. 3.19		Paid only seen
LONDON.E.C//B	3L	6S	10. 8.08	21. 6.15	
		S1(T.1A)	11.12.17	13. 3.18	
LONDON.E.C//C	3L	6S	27. 2.08	5. 1.14	
LONDON.E.C//D	3L	6S	8. 9.08	10. 4.16	Also noted in 1918
LONDON.E.C//E	3L	6S	3. 6.09	24.12.13	
	4L	?	7.10.16		Paid mark on a small piece - may be without bars

London F.S. was equipped with a Krag machine from 1907 and handstamped its mail prior to that. Nevertheless, Columbia markings from this office are known and these arise through F.S. borrowing a machine from E.C. (which is, of course, located in the same building) either prior to the Krag being installed or while the Krag was not available for some reason. These marks are quite rare and we would, therefore, be grateful for details of any examples in members' collections. Those recorded so far are :

Inscription	Town Die Type	Bars Type	Date	Notes
LONDON F.S.	3	6S	29. 9.06	
LONDON F.S.	3	6S	1.11.06	
LONDON F.S.//C	4L	6S	30.12.10	Paid
LONDON F.S.//E	4L	6S	20. 5.11	Paquebot *
LONDON F.S.//E	4L	6S	9. 6.11	Paquebot *
LONDON F.S.//E	3L	6S	14. 6.11	*

* probably part of continuous period
of use

Mount Pleasant is much more straightforward than E.C. Three machines were in use there by the end of 1903 and can be distinguished by the three different types of canceller. These three machines used three very similar single ring town dies which appear to have remained with the same machines throughout, except for one exchange of dies in late 1904 / early 1905, which is noted below. Early in 1906 three line town dies with the inscription " LONDON " rather than " LONDON M.P. " were introduced and two of the machines received seven line bars with two and three cuts in the bars respectively. Later, six line bars appeared but it is not absolutely certain whether they were used in the third machine only, or in all three. Certainly there is no overlap of dates, so it possible for the latter part of 1907 the three machines produced indistinguishable marks. At the beginning of 1908 the three machines were designated A, B and C and this designation appeared as part of the year plug. Shortly afterwards three additional machines, D, E, and F, were brought into use at Mount Pleasant. Cancellers were normally six straight line until about 1913, then five wavy lines, with slogans in the 1917/18 period. However, in 1909/1910 there were also experiments with a canceller consisting of three pairs of bars

London E.C. and Mount Pleasant Columbias.....

(referred to as type 3P in the lists below) and brief use in 1912 of another with eight straight line bars. The first of these was used intermittently in the A machine over quite a long period but also made occasional appearances in four of the other fove machines. The eight line bars are rare and are only known in the A machine. Full details of the six Mount Pleasant machines are tabulated below:

Ref.	Inscription	Town Type	Die Fig	Bars Type	Earliest Date	Latest Date	Notes
(C3	LONDON,E.C./15	S	4	M2	12.12.02	16.12.02	1)
C3A	LONDON,M.P.	S	22	M3	12. 2.03		
(C3	LONDON,E.C./15	S	4	M3	5. 3.03	18. 3.03	1)
C3A	LONDON,M.P.	S	22	M3	25. 4.03	6. 3.06	
C3B	LONDON	3		7S(3 cuts)	16. 3.06	27. 5.07	
C3C	LONDON//C	3L		6S(17.5)	6. 8.08	23. 7.13	
				5W	27. 4.14	15. 6.16	
				S1(T.1A)	1. 5.18		
				5W	21.11.19	22. 6.21	
C4	LONDON,M.P.	S	23	7S(22)	5. 5.03	20. 5.03	2)
C10	LONDON,M.P.	S	24	7S(22)	17. 1.05	16. 2.06	2
C4A	LONDON	3		7S(22)	8. 3.06	14. 3.06	
				7S(23.5)	13. 7.06	16. 7.07	
				6S(19.5)	25. 7.07		
				6S(17.5)	30. 9.07	4.12.07	
C4B	LONDON//A	3L		6S	18. 9.08	4.12.12	3
				3P	4.10.09	15. 4.10	4
				8S(20.5)	22. 8.12	5. 9.12	5
				5W	3. 7.13	23. 3.15	
				S1(T.1A)	23. 3.18		
				5W	15. 3.21		
C10	LONDON,M.P.	S	24	7Si(2)	24.12.03	4. 6.04	2
C4	LONDON,M.P.	S	23	7Si(2)	15. 3.05	16. 1.06	2
C10A	LONDON	3		7S(2 cuts)	13. 3.06	25. 5.07	
C10B	LONDON/B	3L		6S(17.5)	21. 9.08	20.12.12	3
				3P	11.11.09		5
				5W	7. 7.13	6.12.16	
				S1(T.1A)	15.12.17		
				5W	23.12.19		
C40	LONDON//D	3L		6S	23.11.08	15. 2.13	3
				3P	16. 1.09	20.12.09	6
				5W	14. 5.13	23.11.17	
				S1(T.1A)	31.12.17		
				5W	18. 3.20	28. 7.20	
C41	LONDON//E	3L		6S	27. 8.08	24. 9.12	3
				3P	7. 1.09		5
				5W	6.10.13	1. 7.15	
				S1(T.1A)	13.12.17		
				5W	20.11.20		
C42	LONDON//F	3L		6S	7. 9.09	21. 4.13	3
				3P	12. 6.09	27. 7.09	5
				5W	3. 7.13	.15	
				S1			7
				5W			8

- Notes - 1. This machine is believed to have been used briefly at E.C.D.O. at first and details are included here for the sake of completeness.
 2. Exchange of town dies between machines C4 and C10.
 3. Intermittent use of 3P or 8S bars also known during this period.

London E.C. and Mount Pleasant Columbias.....

- Notes - 4. Intermittent use only - recorded on 4/10; 9,18,20,27/11; 22/12; 9,13/2; 7/3;15/4.
 5. Recorded on date(s) shown only.
 6. Intermittent use only - recorded on 16/1; 10/11; 20/12.
 7. Not yet recorded but probably exists.
 8. Machine believed in use to 1920 but not recorded after 1915, so far. Slogan T.3A (in use Oct/Nov 1918) may also have been used in some of these machines.

_____ LONDON _____	_____ LONDON _____
_____ SEP 2 -09 _____	_____ SEP 2 -09 _____

_____ LONDON _____	_____ LONDON _____
_____ JUN 8 10 _____	_____ JUN 8 10 _____

To complete the picture of Mount Pleasant Columbias, mention must be made of various trials with continuous impression machines. There were in fact three machines, the first of which produced a distinctive impression with three widely spaced cancelling bars (upper illustration above). Impressions of this pattern are recorded between 5th. July, 1909 and 12th. February, 1910. An improved version of the machine producing an impression rather more like a single impression Columbia (lower illustration) is recorded from 14th. March. Post Office Records state a further " improved version " was installed on 27th. September but it apparently produced identical impressions, since marks of the same pattern have been noted to 8th. February, 1911. According to the Records, the machine was still in use on 3rd. April but was later removed, probably in May, but definitely by August.

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A REMINDER:

Please do not forget to fill in the pro-forma with details of ANY E.C. Columbia marks of the 1902 - 06 period you have. It can be sent either to the Editor or the Derek Holliday, 17 Dudley Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey.

This article is also being published in the British Postmark Society Quarterly Bulletin and a pro-forma will also go with that publication. Joint members do not have to fill in both!!

Any extensions of date or additional information you can provide should also be entered on the pro-forma.

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London Postal History Group

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The Editor often gets enquiries for material sources and usually suggests the names of one or two dealers whose stocks cover the type of P.H. sought. The names and addresses below have been culled from the membership lists and should help with finding the odd item or three.

Please remember most dealers keep stocks at the bank and if you want to pay them a visit, apart from courtesy, it is better to arrange this beforehand, thus ensuring items you wish to inspect are not locked away in the vaults! A wants list could prove just as effective but please always advise any dealer when you have secured anything on your wants lists. It must be a source of both irritation and embarrassment when a long sought item is forwarded on the strength of an out of date list.

Any other members with material for disposal should advise the Editor who will gladly include additional names in this listing.

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