

February 1971

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The prospect of launching a London Postal History Group rather resembles that which must face a hungry schoolboy locked overnight in the tuck-shop, the only problem being just where to start. From the response to the original proposal it is quite apparent that interests range across the whole spectrum, with an interesting strength in the post-adhesive period, stimulated no doubt by the monumental effort of Leon Dubus. Despite this very welcome addition, there is still much ground to be explored, not the least being the HISTORY aspect, as distinct from the POSTMARK.

The Editor's own "collection" consists of odds and ends garnered over the years, has little shape or substance and will only be offered as the 'clay' at which those with the knowledge can loose off well chosen shot. However, by spending the odd hour or three in Post Office Records, it is hoped to contribute the occasional nugget of original material. As for the bulk of " Notebook " contents, this will depend on the time and care Group members can afford. The all too often vain hope of a page from every one interested, is one this Editor does not entertain but the prospect of dashing off a page or two every three months, the interval at which it is hoped to publish, should not prove too daunting.

For the balance of material, slight and/or serious plagiarism will be indulged in, without too many qualms since very willing acknowledgement will be made whenever possible. The only excuse for this type of activity is the wide scatter of information which can be gleaned from the general philatelic press, coupled with the difficulty in securing your page or two!

Having beaten that favorite editorial drum, it is not proposed to repeat the exercise - and that is a promise!

Some of this first edition will be taken up with random thoughts on the scope of the Group, by way of providing a ball to be kicked around at the inaugural meeting; the first of a series of abstracts from the P.M.G.'s Reports relating to London; odd London postmarks in the Editor's so-called collection and a look at some auction results.

One last Editorial note. Despite modern English usage, the non-U spelling of words such as favor, color etc. may be noted. This is not an American influence, for as anyone who has cause to inspect old documents can confirm; non-U was thought good enough for the various titled P.M.G.s, to say nothing of Ormond Hill!

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WHAT IS IT ALL ABOUT?

The number of times I have come across a postmark or reference and wanted to learn more, only to find yet another case of little or no information in such reference books I have. With such a vast postal area as London, there can be few collectors of either stamps or postmarks who do not have a London mark of some sort and who have the same difficulty.

It was with no little surprise I found a London P.H. Group not amongst those present and with tongue in cheek, proposed the formation of such an organisation. The need has become very apparent from the enquiries received - not so much in the number, but with several examples of much time and care lavished on a research project, only to find another publishing just a month before the results can be finalised.

This brings me to what I regard as a prime reason for forming the Group. The urgent need to let London Postal Historians know who is researching what, to solicit aid and information, and to revise previously published information - be it merely to challenge one assertion with another!

Almost as a bye product comes the second objective, to give quick access to information on London PH to those who want to know and by way of fusing these two, to give anyone interested a fuller enjoyment and appreciation of the subject.

One important question already put is the defining of the geographical limits of the subject. My initial inclination is to regard the area of the London Postal Region plus associated areas served by the Region. As to the time span, this is surely from pre-Bishop to the latest phosphor codings and, as already indicated, interest has been expressed spanning these several hundred years.

Quite how to cover this huge range with any degree of thoroughness is, to put it mildly, quite a problem. Apart from the publication of member's solo efforts, the method by the East Anglia Study Circle of all members

For example, we might consider over the coming year.....

1. The London Twopenny Post.
2. The Inland Branch/Office.
3. Machine Cancellations.
4. The Years to 1800.

Each would be fully reported in "Notebook", not only to record the meeting for those who attended but, more important, for the members who will no doubt be drawn from all over the U.K. and overseas.

Organisation of the Group must be considered and suggested rules are given on the following pages. As can be seen, Officers and Committee have been kept to a reasonable size and it may well be most practicable to have the first period of each full meeting as a committee meeting, with all present taking part. Membership of the BPA has considerable advantages, not the least being the opportunity of publicity.

The first meeting of the Group, which will be at the Great Northern Hotel Kings Cross on Saturday February 27th from 2 p.m., will allow a full discussion of these and other points.

By way of an initial study session, material relating to the London District Post will be considered and everyone is invited to bring along whatever they have on this.

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The Great Northern Hotel is just outside Kings Cross and is linked by tube and bus to all other main line stations.

C103 C105 C107 C109 C111 C113 C115 C117 C119 C121 C123 C125 C127 C129 C131 C133 C135 C137 C139 C141 C143 C145 C147 C149 C151 C153 C155 C157 C159 C161 C163 C165 C167 C169 C171 C173 C175 C177 C179 C181 C183 C185 C187 C189 C191 C193 C195 C197 C199 C201 C203 C205 C207 C209 C211 C213 C215 C217 C219 C221 C223 C225 C227 C229 C231 C233 C235 C237 C239 C241 C243 C245 C247 C249 C251 C253 C255 C257 C259 C261 C263 C265 C267 C269 C271 C273 C275 C277 C279 C281 C283 C285 C287 C289 C291 C293 C295 C297 C299 C301 C303 C305 C307 C309 C311 C313 C315 C317 C319 C321 C323 C325 C327 C329 C331 C333 C335 C337 C339 C341 C343 C345 C347 C349 C351 C353 C355 C357 C359 C361 C363 C365 C367 C369 C371 C373 C375 C377 C379 C381 C383 C385 C387 C389 C391 C393 C395 C397 C399 C401 C403 C405 C407 C409 C411 C413 C415 C417 C419 C421 C423 C425 C427 C429 C431 C433 C435 C437 C439 C441 C443 C445 C447 C449 C451 C453 C455 C457 C459 C461 C463 C465 C467 C469 C471 C473 C475 C477 C479 C481 C483 C485 C487 C489 C491 C493 C495 C497 C499 C501 C503 C505 C507 C509 C511 C513 C515 C517 C519 C521 C523 C525 C527 C529 C531 C533 C535 C537 C539 C541 C543 C545 C547 C549 C551 C553 C555 C557 C559 C561 C563 C565 C567 C569 C571 C573 C575 C577 C579 C581 C583 C585 C587 C589 C591 C593 C595 C597 C599 C601 C603 C605 C607 C609 C611 C613 C615 C617 C619 C621 C623 C625 C627 C629 C631 C633 C635 C637 C639 C641 C643 C645 C647 C649 C651 C653 C655 C657 C659 C661 C663 C665 C667 C669 C671 C673 C675 C677 C679 C681 C683 C685 C687 C689 C691 C693 C695 C697 C699 C701 C703 C705 C707 C709 C711 C713 C715 C717 C719 C721 C723 C725 C727 C729 C731 C733 C735 C737 C739 C741 C743 C745 C747 C749 C751 C753 C755 C757 C759 C761 C763 C765 C767 C769 C771 C773 C775 C777 C779 C781 C783 C785 C787 C789 C791 C793 C795 C797 C799 C801 C803 C805 C807 C809 C811 C813 C815 C817 C819 C821 C823 C825 C827 C829 C831 C833 C835 C837 C839 C841 C843 C845 C847 C849 C851 C853 C855 C857 C859 C861 C863 C865 C867 C869 C871 C873 C875 C877 C879 C881 C883 C885 C887 C889 C891 C893 C895 C897 C899 C901 C903 C905 C907 C909 C911 C913 C915 C917 C919 C921 C923 C925 C927 C929 C931 C933 C935 C937 C939 C941 C943 C945 C947 C949 C951 C953 C955 C957 C959 C961 C963 C965 C967 C969 C971 C973 C975 C977 C979 C981 C983 C985 C987 C989 C991 C993 C995 C997 C999

MATERIAL FOR SALE.....

London District Offices.... NE and S on 1d. Stars and Plates at 6d each
enquiries to....Mr. R. Levy, 23 Selborne Way,
Angmering on Sea,
Sussex.

[illegible]

DRAFT RULES.....

Name

1. The organisation shall be called the London Postal History Group.

Objects

2. The purpose for which the Group is formed is the promotion of the study of London Postal History.

Membership

3. Members may be of the following classes:

- (a) Ordinary Members, who shall be those interested in London Postal History and over 18 years of age.
- (b) Associate Members, who shall be those interested in London Postal History but under 18 years of age.

Elections

4. Applications for membership must be to the Secretary and on receipt of such application, the Secretary may refer the same to the Committee, who shall then decide whether or not to admit the applicant to membership.

Resignation

5. Any member may resign from the Group by giving one months notice in writing to the Secretary and shall upon the date of such notice cease to be entitled to the benefits of such membership but shall, however, remain liable for any unpaid subscriptions or other dues owing to the Group.

Termination

6. The Committee shall, in their absolute discretion, have the power to terminate the membership of and member and such decision shall take effect from the date of despatch, by ordinary post, to the member at his last known address, of their decision.

Subscriptions

7. The subscription to be paid shall be fixed by the members at the Annual General Meeting but until they otherwise determine, Ordinary Members shall pay £1.25 per annum and Associate Members £0.75 per annum. Such subscriptions shall fall due upon first joining and in subsequent years upon the first day after the Annual General Meeting.

8. Subscriptions shall be paid to the Hon. Treasurer, who shall report to the Committee the name of any member who is three months in arrears. Management.
9. The management of the Group shall be vested in a Committee, which shall consist of the Honorary Officers, who are the Chairman, Vice Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer and three Ordinary Members. The services of all these shall be honorary.
All the Officers and all the members of the Committee shall retire each year and those to fill up their places shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting each year. All members of the Committee shall be eligible for re-election.
10. The Secretary shall convene all meetings of the Group and shall keep regular Minutes of the proceedings both of General Meetings and of Committees and Sub-Committee Meetings. He shall also keep an up-to-date roll of members, together with their addresses.
11. The Treasurer shall apply for the Annual subscriptions and other dues which may be owing to the Group and on receiving the same shall be responsible for acknowledging the receipt and proper disposal of the money. He shall under the authority of the Committee, discharge all the accounts and the Annual General Meeting each year submit a statement of receipts and payments for the last financial year.
12. The Committee shall be responsible for the proper custody of the property of the Group.
13. The Committee shall have the power to fix their own quorum but until otherwise decided, the quorum shall be four.
14. The Committee may, at their discretion, arrange for such services to be given to members of the Group as they may consider desirable, including the establishment and provision of a lending library, exchange club packets, or any other facility and they shall further have power to make rules and regulations for the operations of these services.
15. An Annual General Meeting shall be held once in every year and included in the business of any such meeting, a financial statement should be presented by the Treasurer, followed by the election of Officers and of the Committee of Management.

16. An Extra-Ordinary Meeting may be called by the Committee and/or any seven members acting together who shall submit items for discussion to the Secretary.
17. The Secretary shall give fourteen day's notice in writing to each member of the Group of the intention to hold any Annual General Meeting or Extra-Ordinary Meeting.
18. Unless otherwise decided by the members in Annual General Meeting, the quorum necessary for the transaction of business at an Annual General Meeting shall be seven, or 25% of the paid up membership, whichever is the lesser.

Alteration of Rules.

19. No alteration of these Rules shall be made, except at an Annual General Meeting or at an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting specifically called for that purpose. The proposed alterations shall be clearly set out in the notice convening the meeting.

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LATE FEE OR NOT?

In common with most modern authorities, Westley in his 'Postal Cancellations of London' attributes the upright oval 13 as undoubtedly used for cancelling late fee letters - adding with commendable caution.. 'and possibly other odd jobs'.



Recently I purchased an entire dated 30th. May, 1862 bearing two 1d. Stars, each cancelled with 13 and without more thought I made the note 'late fee'. However, the London backstamp in BLUE of the same date as given by the writer of the letter plus the St. Columb arrival mark of 31st. May gives ground for speculation.

According to Stitt Dibden *, Blue Cresswells were used for MORNING duty, but just to confuse me further, this example, this example was not the typical 8" Cresswell, but 11/16ths. - a size not mentioned by any author read on the subject of the Cresswell postmark.

However, on the basis of Blue being used for A.M., why was the entire franked with 2d. - there being no indication inside of extra weight - and stamped with the 13 'late fee' hand stamp which must relate to an evening posting?



I have not yet had the opportunity of researching the matter in P.O. Records and would appreciate any information readers might have on the subject of colored time signals and the 11/16" against the 10/16" circle.

* Stamp Collecting, May 31st., 1963

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SUB OFFICE STAMPING.....

In 1859, Mr. Boucher, Head of the Inland Office staff, suggested the discontinuance of stamping letters at the London District Receiving Houses. On September 6th. of the same year, Rowland Hill reported that he agreed with the proposal and added.....

"As far as the Public are concerned, I believe they will scarcely miss that stamp, and no complaints are, therefore, likely to be made; and as regards the Department, the dated stamps used at the District Offices, will be a sufficient clue in tracing the course of a letter."

The Minute (4431/59) to which the report refers quotes the experience of various postmasters in discontinuing backstamping, and concluded with a reference to 'the stamping pad invented by Mr. Cresswell'.**

Grays-Inn
(1849)

Grays-Inn
(1855)

** Stamp Collecting, May 31st., 1963, W.G. Stitt Dibden.

On March 3rd., 1860 Hill reported the success of the experiment and the practice of stamping letters at all sub-offices at which date stamps were not used was discontinued with effect from March 6th.

Grays-Inn
(1856)

The London Receiving House stamps provide a delightful study and include a wide range of lettering and colors, the three examples from Grays Inn shown above being just one small sample of the range.

The item dated 10th. April 1849 is cancelled with the Inland Office diamond the other two being cancelled by London District Post 72 and 76 respectively.

This is a most fruitful field for study and perhaps could be the subject for a study session at a future meeting of the Group.

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WHAT THE AUCTIONS TELL.....

As one with a singular lack of success at auctions, the chief advantage in sporting a few pounds a year for auction catalogues and price lists lies in the information which may be had, both as to hitherto 'unrecorded' items and prices realised.

Robson Lowe's catalogues command great respect as works of reference if nothing else. This is not to decry the value of the duplicated list received from others, but these operate in a lower key which often offer single items (just as well!).

In the hope that others will be able to contribute, this first offering is made and will, it is hoped, have something of interest for nearly everyone.

12th. November, 1969.

Lot.	Description	Valuation Realisation	
1184	1794 E.L. to Bolzano showing "NORWICH" and the London experimental octagonal framed "POST/PAID" d.s.***	£20	£20
1186	1799 E.L. both to the same address in Bolzano one with "MANCHESTER" and the other with circular "LEEDS", both showing the scarce London c.d.s. surmounted by "PAID" and, on the reverse, c.d.s. "FOREIGN-OFFICE" for Nos. "41" and "73" **to***	£15	£21
1194	1772 E.L. to Highgate showing Dockwra type "PENNY/POST/PAID"*** to *** and 1794 E. to Westminster with "POST/PAYD/PANY"*, the first also shows circular time mark.	£ 7	£ 9

Lot.	Description	Valuation	Realisation
14th. January, 1970			
1394	1710-69 E.L. each showing, on the reverse, Bishop Mark and circular framed receivers "FR"(2), "BE" and "IB", ** to *** (4)	£10	£13
1409	1773 E.L. showing "PAID/PENY/POST" ** to *** of Temple Office, also circular time mark & unframed "DAVIES" receivers h.s.	£ 8	£14
1428	1883 envelope (opened out) to Bristol bearing 1d. lilac cancelled with "LONDON/VR" ds *** and with seal of the Private Library	£10	£14
25th. February, 1970			
1409	1794 E.L. to Bolzano showing the circular unframed "MANCHESTER" and experimental "PAID" d.s. ** to ***	£20	£12
14th. April, 1970			
410	1799 repaired E.L. to London showing horseshoe "PENRYN" and c.ds. with "PAID" outside ***	£ 7	£ 3.50
413	1703-86 E.L., piece and a copy of "The World" mostly showing circular framed Receivers Marks including "AB", "AC", "AE", "BE" (2), "BL", "F", "GC", "GxL", "IG", "JB", "MT", "PJ", "RM", "RS", "RJ", "JL", "SD", "SR", "WF", "WM", and one with unframed "Partington", many ** to ***	£40	£85
415	1791 E.L. to Llandovery showing the double ring "TOTTENHAM-Ct./ROAD/G.P./O", almost superb	£12	£12
416	1796-1837 E.L. a selection showing many different types of framed and unframed Receiving House h.s. mostly ** (44)	£11	£ 8.50
18th. November, 1970			
1580	1885 wrapper, complete with enclosed circular, from London to Kinross, bearing $\frac{1}{2}$ d perforated "N", cancelled with a very *** strike of the scarce Hoster "N.P.B." cancellation.	£20	£27
1581	1893 E.L. to Barcelona bearing $2\frac{1}{2}$ with a superb "Hey-Dolphin" machine cancellation.	£25	£32

(Since drafting this abstract, the run of items not secured has ended and the new addition will be the subject of a future article)

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FIRST REPORT OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL FOR 1854.....

An abstract relating to London...

Improved Organisation.

Many changes were made in the organisation of the London Office, and in various branches of the Inland Service, in the course of the last year.

The appointment of a single Chief Secretary, in place of the double Secretariat which has existed of late years, has been attended with the advantages which the Commissioners anticipated in their report.

The classes and duties of the whole body of Officers and Clerks in the London Office have been revised for the purpose of determining the numbers of each class (reference being had to the nature and amount of the work to be performed in it), and of placing every individual, as nearly as is possible, in his right position, according to qualifications and efficiency. The new scale of salaries and other arrangements, for which I have received the sanction of your Lordships, have enabled me to do this without inflicting loss upon any one.

I trust that the unusually favorable opportunity which this re-organisation has afforded me, of giving advancement to the most meritorious officers of the Department, and of marking the sense which is entertained of intelligent and zealous service, will not be without its good effect. The habit of trusting to external influences, and of engaging the solicitation of private friends, or members of parliament, for their promotion, has been very prevalent amongst the officers of this Department; but, although much may be said in favour of listening to the recommendations and using the judgement of trustworthy persons unconnected with the office, in the selection of new candidates for trial and for appointment, if qualified, no one will contend that the disposition of promotion and reward to those already enlisted in the service can properly be influenced by any such considerations. I believe that the course which has been taken in the recent important changes in the various branches of the Department will tend to impress this upon the minds of its members; and that they will be convinced that in carrying out still further the recommendation of the Commissioners, according to which every superior appointment is to be filled as far as possible by promotion from below, (and in which, as I have already informed your Lordships I cordially concur,) regard will be had to no other claims than those of meritorious conduct and proved good service.....

....Every person connected with the London Office will henceforward be allowed an annual holiday, varying in length from a fortnight to a month, without any deduction on that account from his salary....

....Arrangements are in progress for effecting a complete amalgamation of the two classes of London Letter Carriers - those attached to the General Post and those belonging to the London District - the former popularly known by their red and the latter by their blue uniform. The object of this, so far as regards the public, is to avoid the waste of time and trouble caused by two men going over the same ground to distribute different classes of letters which might be delivered together. The benefit to the Department will consist in the greater simplicity of its organisation, and in the

removal of an inequality in the pay and prospects of the two bodies of servants, whose duties and position are nearly the same.

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APPENDIX P. **NOMENCLATURE OF STREETS** &c.....

Copy of Report from Mr. T.B. Cook, Inspector of Letter Carriers, to
Mr. Rowland Hill.

General Post Office
27th. December, 1854.

Sir,

Having been informed by Mr. Watson, that you desired I should make a statement of whatever I might know detrimental to the proper delivery of letters, I respectfully beg to submit the following remarks.

Not only the delivery, but the sorting is retarded by the irregularities connected with the building of houses, &c. in various parts of London.

First, the numbers of alleys and courts having houses without numbers, or badly numbered, occupy the time of the Letter Carriers so long, that the delivery of important letters in the neighbourhood is frequently delayed.

Secondly, the distinguishing of streets of the same name by Great, Little, Upper, Lower, Old, New, East, West, &c., is very objectionable, omissions and mistakes being sometimes made by having such words prefixed.

Thirdly, a great number of streets of the same name and sometimes in the same parish or locality, such as King Street, Queen Street, John Street, William Street, New Street, &c. If reference be made to a book of Streets, there will be found about 50 King Streets, nearly as many Queen Streets, 60 William Streets, and upwards of 40 New Streets, with various other places in similar proportions. The latter name is likely to mislead strangers, who may suppose such streets to be of recent construction. In course of time, like all other things, these streets become old, but still retain the name of new, when their appearance indicates them to be quite the reverse, and should therefore never be given to any places.

Fourthly, the irregularity in the numbering of houses is one of the greatest hindrances to the delivery of letters, and should be remedied as soon as possible, not only for official purposes, but also for the benefit of the public, who frequently suffer great inconvenience by the delay or non-delivery of letters, which would have otherwise reached the persons for whom they were intended.

The irregular numbers may generally be traced to the following causes. In the construction of new streets, the building of houses may commence at both ends, and on each side at the same time. The four corner houses are sometimes called number one. The other parts of the street may afterwards be built by different persons, who now can give to their houses whatever names they may think proper. One may prefer Albert Terrace, another Well-

ington Place, and a third wishing to preserve the family name, will call his houses Smith's, Taylor's, or Bacon's Cottages, as the case may be. Each set of houses having number one, will cause seven houses in the same street to be of the same number. Irregular numbers are also sometimes occasioned by the carelessness or ignorance of the persons who inhabit the houses, an instance of which came under my notice while going round with a letter carrier to survey one of the districts in the eastern part of London. On arriving at a house in the middle of a street, I observed a brass number 95 on the door, the houses on each side being numbered respectively 14 and 16. A woman came to the door, when I requested to be informed why 95 should appear between 14 and 16; she said it was the number of a house she formerly lived at in another street, and it (meaning the brass plate) being a very good one she thought it would do for her present residence as well as any other.

If the removal of such anomalies could be effected, there can be no doubt that the service, and the public generally, would be materially benefitted.

I am, &c.
(Signed)
T.B. Cook.

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MEMBERSHIP LISTS.....

Subject to the results of the inaugural meeting, the next " Notebook " will list the names and addresses of members with a note of their particular field of study.

WANTS LISTS.....

The " Notebook " will print, without charge and subject to available space, members 'wants'. All that is required is a note of these and the missing and thus far unobtainable item could appear.

As a further service, any material for disposal may be featured (as on another page in this issue). Again there will be no charge.

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Next meeting

Sat 22 May

Inland Office.

B T Smith
42 Canterbury Ave
Sidcup &
Kent
302 - 1743.

London we.

District Post

Wesley 112 - 134a

London Diamonds

Bowse