

London

In This Issue.....

Twopenny Post

Postal History Group

NOTEBOOK

Number 10

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EDITORIAL.....

How strange are the workings of those who would reduce Editors to a sad state! Having made what was intended to be jocular reference to the late arrival of the October issue, due to a slight disturbance on the railways the very date No. 9 was despatched first class, most members did not get the issue, together with the notice of the meeting, until at least the Monday after. Subject to any other similar acts quite beyond the Editor's immediate control this December issue might actually arrive in December.

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

THE NEXT MEETING.....

Will be on January 20th, with " Inland Branch Upright Diamonds " the main subject for discussion and study. Westley pp 36 - 42 refer.

This will be followed, time permitting, by an introduction to the subject of " Ship Letters ", which will have a full study session later in the year.

Members are reminded meetings are now at Caxton Hall (nearest tube station St. James), 2 for 2.30 p.m. Also, the first part of the session is available for the sale and exchange of material, as well as an opportunity for a natter.

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PENNY POST LETTER RECEIVERS WHO HAVE ABSCONDED OR DIED OWING MONEY,
abstracted from the Calendar of Treasury Books for 1687 by Jeremy Greenwood.

Dec 1682 - Mar 1683

Monke, haberdasher Old Bailey
Davis, chandler Crutched Friars
Walker, coffee woman Scotland Yard Gate
Hannah, coffee woman Blackfriars
Strange, smith Hackney
Rutland, coffeeman Castle Alley Cornhill
Knowles, bookseller corner of Tower St
Brothers, victualler New Crane
Bartholomew, chandler St. Thomas's Southwark
Richenson, public notary Redriffe Wall
Pritcherd, barber at the Dogs Head

1683 - 4

Popero, victualler Mile End
Hodges, coffee woman Goodman Field
Hobson, cook Recliffe Wall

1684

Hillman, toyseller Wallbrook
Blunt, bookseller Charing Cross
Darker, grocer St Martins Lane
Pilkington, coffeeman Broad St
Brown, victualler Eltham
Hater, tinner Cheapside

1685

Bush, grocer Rude Lane
Huddeston, coffeeman without Aldgate
Bell, translator Poplar
Osborne, coffeeman Chestwell St
Porter, button seller Paternoster Row
Stone, coffeeman Carter Lane
Wolfe, coffeeman Dowgate Hill
Morris, cabinet maker Cheapside
Holloway, chandler Ould Change
How, grocer Wheeler St Spitalfields
Sherife, fringemaker against Durham Yard
Martin, coffeeman Long Acre
Jeff, oilman Charing Cross
Haws, tinman Cheapside
Voyce, victualler in Minories
Holebrook, victualler Holloway
Wayneman, victualler Fleet Ditch
Hain, grocer Brook St Holborn
Pritchard, victualler King St Bloomsbury
James, victualler Battersea
Gray, victualler Wandsworth
Chesham, coffeeman Richmond
Polbrook, translator Sheene
Dunnett, victualler Mortlake
Jones, victualler Barnes
Branton, victualler Putney
Gray, coffeeman against New Exchange
South, chandler Ryder St
Brookes, sempstress Drury Lane
Noakes, grocer New St

Blunt, bookseller Charing Cross
Sandys, milliner German St
Granwall, inn holder Knightsbridge
Warden, shoemaker Brentford
Tayler, victualler Chiswick
Tatlour, victualler Thistleworth
Brimley, chandler Church St Soho
Stroude, coffeeman St James Gate
Osmond, victualler Rickmansworth
Bird, victualler Harrow on the Hill
Pond, victualler Rinner
Browne, inn holder Uxbridge
Flower, coffeeman Pall Mall
Procter, coffeeman Savoy
Martine, coffeeman Long Acre
Deane, stationer Cranbourne St
Gravener, chandler Bowling Alley
Horseley, coffeeman against the Bell in the Strand
Harrowdine, milliner against St Clements Inn Gate
Hallett, Whit St
Eaglesfield, stationer Fleet St
Birch, milliner Fleet St
Brant, victualler Colney Hatch
Hartley, coffeeman Salisbury Court
Prince, chandler Hatton Garden
Head, coffeeman Whitefriars
Lawkin, grocer Little Queen St
Nicholls, victualler King St Bloomsbury
Cartwright, victualler Queenhithe
Leonard, coffeeman Cateaton St
Parker, cutler Newgate St
Wolfe, coffeeman Dowgate Hill
Baker, chandler Ould Change
Baker, coffeeman E Watling St
Powde, Bagnio Coffee House Newgate St
Benitt, coffeeman Holborn Conduit
Frowde, coffeeman Spitalfields
Pepys, upholsterer Fenchurch St
Shepherd, coffeeman London Bridge
Seamour, baker Lime St corner
Bringhurst, printer Gracechurch St
Jones, salesman Little Tower Hill
Cumber, smith Croydon
Cooper, victualler Streatham
Bradley, victualler Carshalton
Roberts, victualler Mitcham
Elliot, victualler Tooting
Stanton, inn holder Upper Tooting
Play, victualler Waddon
Harrwood, victualler Newington Butts
Handcock, victualler Deptford
Colegate, vintner Woolwich
Barker, victualler Charlton
Archer, ciderman Deptford
Daniell, coffeeman Bridgefoot in Southwark
Medley, victualler Battersea
Small, peece victualler Clapham or Peckham
Tiles, vintner Rotherhithe
Broughton, victualler Putney
Dawkins, victualler Battersea
Handcock, victualler Peckham
Moore, turnkey Kings Bench prison

S FOR SUNDAY -???

For years many collectors have been under the impression that it was " S for Sunday " in backstamps, at least during the pre-adhesive period. To quote from Alcock and Holland..." It must be remembered that in London there was no dispatch of General Post mails on Sunday...during the war with France and during the Irish Rebellion of 1798 callers could obtain their letters on Sunday by personal application at the Chief Office before 3 p.m. Such letters, not prepaid, were impressed with a stamp of the type shown in fig 37..... letters from places outside Great Britain and not addressed to Government offices are known from 1803 to 1839 stamped with the type illustrated in fig 38.....It should be noted that in London Chief Office stamps after 1842 the letter S no longer denotes Sunday ".....and in a section on the Franking system..." Since franked letters, if posted on a Sunday, were not stamped with a " Free " stamp until the next day, a Sunday stamp was also impressed on them to explain the difference between the written date and that which appeared in the " Free " stamp. Until 1832 the type shown in fig 38 was used on franked letters...."



Fig. 32



Fig. 37



Fig. 38

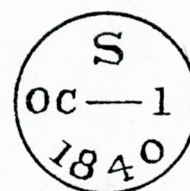


Fig 16.

However, this fairly tidy picture is muddled by Stitt Dibden's " London Date Stamp Codes " in which the fig 16 is of slightly different arrangement and shows the year in a curve. Might this be an incorrect illustration?

In Robson Lowe's Encyclopaedia Part 1, fig 9, which is as A&H fig 38 (with a different date); it is noted used 1800 - 1803, and with day before and after month, from 1812 to 1842 this being advised in a footnote.

Again referring to A & H, one of the modifications made to the unpaid evening duty stamps was to yield a single rim type, fig 32, and this with the " S " obviously not a Sunday stamp. Indeed, S.D. makes this clear in giving a list of codes for 1823, when the system of using successive letters each day was adopted, for "S" is shown on 36 days only, and not 52!

Clearly, an "S" cannot always be a Sunday.

Should you wish to check any you may have, try the following formula:

1. Take the last two figures of the year
2. Add a quarter of these (ignore the remainder)
3. Add the day of the month
4. Now add a figure from the following table

January	1*(0)	February	4*(3)
March	4	April	0
May	2	June	5
July	0	August	3
September	6	October	1
November	4	December	6

1 In a Leap Year, use the figures in brackets

5. Add for the 18th. century	4
19th.	2
20th.	0
21st.	6

6. Divide the sum by 7 and the remainder will give the order of the day in the week, thus:

Sunday 1; Monday 2 thru' to Friday; Saturday is 0.

Interpreting fig 38....

1.....3
 2.....0
 3.....13
 4.....4
 5.....2

22 divide this by 7, which is 3, with remainder of 1

(The question was raised by J.R. Sharp)

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Acknowledgement is made to the Alcock and Holland " British Postmarks " 1940 edition; Robson Lowe's Encyclopaedia Part 1, 1948 edition and " London Stamp Codes " by W.G. Stitt Dibden for the information and illustrations used.

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LONDON TWOPENNY POST.....

Report on the Group Meeting Held at the B.P.A. Boardroom, October 14th.
by C.J. Adams.

After a pleasant half hours preamble, the meeting got down to the Group's first serious dig into the Twopenny Postal system.

Quite a number of copies of the recently reprinted book by G. Brumell, " The Local Posts of London 1680 - 1840 ", published by R.C. Alcock Ltd, were in evidence. This was first published in 1938 and the reprint contains no amendments, alterations or additions. As is to be expected, several anomalies have come to light and these are mentioned below.

Mr. Barrie Jay opened the proceedings with a description of the system, its mechanics, and showed some excellent maps of the period. He explained that the introduction of the 2d. rate was nothing more than an inflationary trend of the times and the structure of the system remained as for the preceding re-organised Penny Post.

The Twopenny Post spanned nearly 40 years and certain major changes took place from time to time; it might be useful if, at this point, these ' Milestones ' were listed in some detail.

April 5th. 1801.....Introduction of the Twopenny Post system which was, as already noted, no more than an increase in the cost of sending (or more often by far - receiving) a local letter from 1d. to 2d.

1805.....A 3d. rate was brought in for letters going from Town areas to Country Areas & vice-versa; also for letters between places in the Country Area. Brumell gives April 1805 as the date of introduction of the 3d. rate, but an example shown at the meeting from Richmond to Piccadilly dated 18th. March, 1805 carried a handstruck 3 (Brumell fig. 116).

1809.....Introduction of the Bye-Posts & Country Sorting Offices; these offices were located at points along, and at the termination of, rides radiating from the Principal Offices to the limits of the Country Areas. This service was gradually extended over the ensuing years.

Autumn 1829.....The Chief Office was moved from Abchurch Lane, Lombard St. to St. Martins-le-Grand.

Islington was transferred to the Town Area in 1829 with the Chief Office moving to St. Martins.

1831.....Brought boundary changes with the Town Area increased to a 3 mile radius from the G.P.O. The narrow area to the east covering Poplar and Blackwall was retained, thus giving the new Town Area a " sideways keyhole " shape. This resulted in certain Country Receiving Houses & Country Sorting Offices transferring to the Town Area.

Also the 2d. charge for letters posted in the Town Areas for transfer to the General Post was abolished. The 2d. fee for such letters from the Country Area continued.

The General Post Town Area was also extended but General Post letters addressed to destinations within this added area were transferred to the Twopenny Post for delivery without extra charge. Such letters were usually stamped with initial type handstamp G.P. in red.

The 1831 boundary changes are illustrated in Notebook No. 6, page 10 and were.....

Camberwell	Camden Town
Hackney	Kent Road
Sommerstown	Vauxhall
Walworth	

July 1834.....The Principal Office for Westminster in Gerrard St. was closed, thus leaving the whole of the London 2d. Post Area under the Chief Office.

January 1st., 1839.....Consolidation of 2d. Post & General Post Receiving Houses - what these days might be termed " rationalisation ". It could also be described as the beginning of the end of the London Twopenny Post.

December 5th., 1839.....The rate for local London prepaid letters up to $\frac{1}{2}$ oz was reduced from 2d. to 1d. Local unpaid charges remained unchanged until:

January 10th., 1840.....when the Universal rate of 1d. was introduced for letters up to $\frac{1}{2}$ oz and this virtually was the end of the Twopenny Post system although it was still referred to and its handstamps used for some years after.

Mr. Barrie Jay then followed up with a display of interesting examples of the period. One of the little regarded points until made clear was that in the early stages, the Principal Office date/time handstamps are occasionally found struck in black and these are well worth looking for.

Datestamps of the two Principal Offices are differentiated by the order of the day and month i.e.
 Month before date.....Chief Office
 Date before month.....Westminster Office

The flat topped 3 (Brumell fig 117) applied at the Country Sorting Offices to indicate a Bye Letter was illustrated by examples in black, red and blue. In 1823, new unpaid date/time stamps (Brumell figs 61 and 62) were brought into use and the well known engraver's errors in reversing the hour for 2, 4, 7 and 12 were displayed.

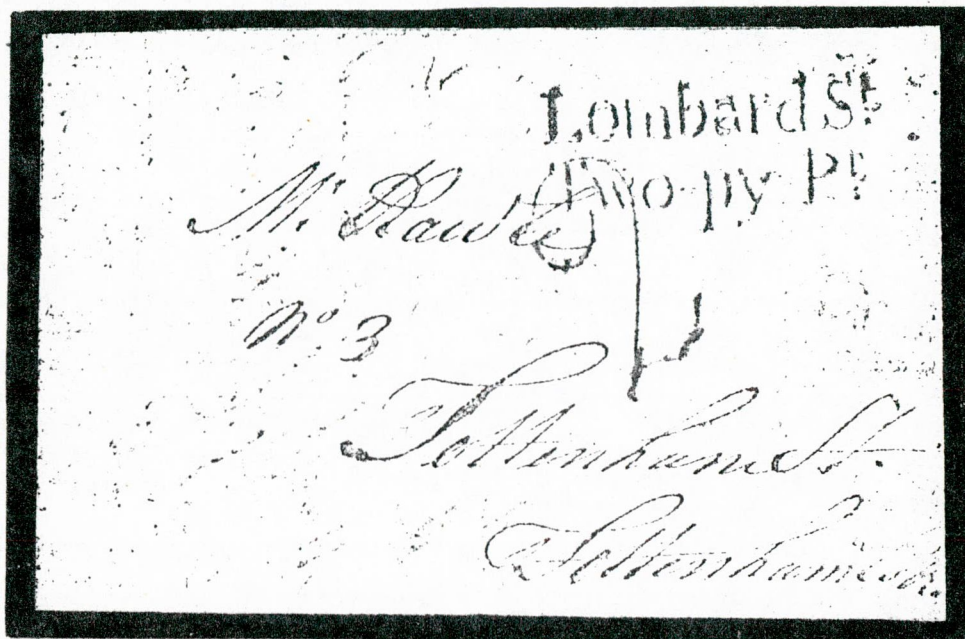
Covers carrying some of the initialed types RL, HP, WR, MS etc followed, but Barrie Jay was far from satisfied with Brumell's explanation for some of these markings. For example, it is now thought more likely that HP stood for " Houses of Parliament " and not " Peers ".

The Free types (Brumell figs 142 - 4) applied to Soldiers letters and some variations of " TO BE DELIVERED BY 10 o'CLOCK SUN MORN " (figs 137 - 140) and " TOO LATE FOR MORNING POST " (figs 131 - 133) - all difficult markings - were then displayed.

Further contributions by other members illustrating further facets of the system ensued. Examples of rate changes for reason of being re-directed, charged wrongly in error, double rate etc demonstrating the various types of obliterations (figs 121 - 123) applied to the original unpaid charge mark and the corrected (or amended) charge achieved by application of the 4, 5 or 6 (figs 118 - 120). It was thought that "5" was the scarcer. One example shown posted in the Country Area and addressed to the Town Area had been correctly rated with an unpaid 3 at the Principal Office. However, on delivery the letter had been re-addressed to another TOWN destination and

handed back to the Letter Carrier who had taken it back to the Principal Office. There the 3 was obliterated and the handstamps "5" and "In All" (figs 119 and 124) applied.

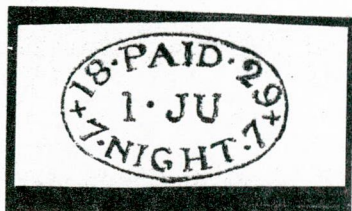
One very important discovery was brought to light. This is an unrecorded unpaid namestamp for Lombard St. It bears a datestamp for 10th. April 1801 - just a few days after the introduction of the 2d. Post and could have been an experimental type.



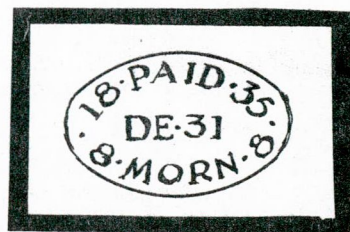
(reproduced by courtesy of Mr. G.F. Oxley)

As can be seen it reads " Lombard St. / Two - py Pt. ". Can any reader produce another example of this mark, for Lombard Street or any other Office?

Two covers were shown with a time/date paid handstamp type not recorded by Brumell. Both were dated between the closure of the Westminster Principal Office at Gerrard Street in the Autumn of 1834 and the introduction of the Chief Office Paid handstamp (fig 82) in 1836. The fairly obvious conclusion is that on the closure of Gerrard Street its current Paid datestamp (fig 81) was modified by reversing the order of date and month and replacing the side crosses with dots. It was then used at the Chief Office as a standby or relief stamp at times of pressure.



Brumell fig 81 as used at Westminster Office until 1834



Modified and used at the Chief Office 1834 to 1836

Letters that for some reason violated P.O. regulations were opened and returned to sender in a "Returned Letter" wrapper with the sender being charged the applicable rate (2d. or 3d.). On the reverse of the wrapper were the Twopenny Post regulations.

TWO-PENNY POST-OFFICE.

THE enclosed has been opened by the proper Officer, and is returned to you for the Reason assigned thereon.

E. JOHNSON, Comptroller.

REGULATIONS.

There are *Two Principal Offices*, One in the *General Post-Office Yard, Lombard-street*, and the other in *Gerrard-street, Soho*. There are, besides, numerous *Receiving Houses* for Letters, both in Town and Country.

There are *SIX Collections and Deliveries* of Letters in Town daily, (Sundays excepted) and there are *Two Dispatches* from and *Three Deliveries* at most Places in the Country, within the Limits of this Office.

The Hours by which Letters should be put into the *Receiving Houses* in Town, for each Delivery, are as follow:

For Delivery in TOWN.			For Delivery in the COUNTRY.		
		Delivery			Delivery
Over Night by.....	8 o'Clock for the	First	The preceding Evening by 5 o'Clock for the	First	
Morning	8	Second	Morning	8	Second
.....	10	Third	Afternoon	2	Third
.....	12	Fourth			
Afternoon.....	2	Fifth			
.....	5	Sixth			

But Letters, whether in Town or Country, may be put in at either of the *Two Principal Offices* an Hour later for each Dispatch.

Letters put in on Saturday Evening are delivered in the Country on Sunday Morning.

The date Stamp, or, if there are Two, that having the latest Hour, shews also the Time of Day by which the Letters were dispatched for Delivery from the Principal Offices.

The Postage of a Letter from one part of the Town to another, both being within the Delivery of the General Post-Office, is Two pence; and to and from parts beyond that Delivery Three-pence; and the Postage of this Office on each Letter passing to or from the General or Foreign Post-Offices, is Two-pence.

The Two-penny Postage of all Letters, such as are for Parts out of His Majesty's Dominions excepted, may or may not be paid at putting in, at the Option of the Senders.

No Two-penny Post Letter must weigh more than Four Ounces.

The Delivery of this Office extends to the following and intermediate Places.

In KENT—Woolwich; Plumstead; Shooter's Hill; Eltham; Mottingham; South End; Lewisham; Beckenham; and Sydenham.

In SURREY—Croydon; Beddington; Carshalton; Mitcham; Morden; Merton; Wimbledon; Ham; Petersham; and Richmond.

In MIDDLESEX and HERTS—Twickenham; Teddington; Hampton; Hampton Court; Hampton Wick; Sunbury; Whitton; Isleworth; Brentford; Ealing; Hanwell; Wembley; Willsdon; Kingsbury; The Hyde; Mill Hill; Highwood Hill; Tottenham; Whetstone; Friern Barnet; East Barnet; Southgate; Winchmore Hill; and Enfield.

In ESSEX—Chingford; Sewardstone; High Beach; Loughton; Chigwell and Row; Wanstead; Hford; and Barking.

Cash, in Gold or Silver, or other Articles of Value enclosed in Letters (Notes or Drafts for Money excepted) to be mentioned to the Office-keeper at putting in; but it is recommended that Bank Notes, or others payable to Bearer, be cut in half and sent at twice, the Second Part not to be sent till the Receipt of the First is acknowledged. This Office however is not liable to make good the Loss of any Property sent by Post.

It is earnestly requested that Persons receiving Letters will not detain the Letter-Carriers at their doors longer than can be avoided.

Letters for this Delivery are frequently by mistake put into the General Post, by which they are unavoidably delayed; It is therefore recommended that they be put into the Two-penny Post Offices or Receiving Houses, in order that they may be regularly forwarded by their proper conveyance.

BYE POST. A Bye Post is established on each Road within the Country-Delivery of this Office, by which Letters are transmitted from one part to another of the same district, direct, and without coming to London.

Any irregularity in the Delivery of Letters communicated to the Comptroller will be duly attended to, and if the Covers bearing the date Stamp are produced they will assist materially in discovering where the fault lies.

Illegal conveyance of Letters: By the 9th Queen Anne, cap. 10. "Any Person illegally conveying Letters, incurs a penalty of £5. for every offence, and £100. for every week the practice is continued." And by 42d. Geo. III. cap. 81. "The Sender also incurs a penalty of £5. for every offence with full Costs of Suit."

1823.

Examples of prepaid letters put into the 2d. Post Country Area Receiving House for transfer to the General Post, there being no General Post Receiving Houses as such in the Country Area, were then shown, including several with handstruck oval with PAID and a space for the Receiver to fill in the rate in manuscript (fig 125).

An interesting example carrying a fig 96 from Camberwell Grove to Margate was dated 20th. January, 1802, thus predating Brumell's date of 1803.

The scarcity of some of the paid Receiving House namestamps was remarked upon - especially fig 97 in the early stages - this having a short life of possibly less than one year. Fig 102, which Brumell states to have been in use by 1836 appeared to be particularly scarce.

Figs 100 and 103 - issued according to Brumell in 1803 and 1836 respectively would seem suspect as to dating, there being no record of examples dated prior to December 5th., 1839!

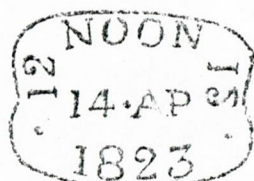
Two ' posers ' were not completely resolved:

1. L in 20 mm diameter circle struck in red. Two examples were shown & both had been transferred from the General Post to the local 2d. Post for delivery. It was suggested there may have been more than one use for this handstamp; " Lombard Street " and "Late" explanations were advanced.
2. A cover dated 16th. February, 1821 with fig 96 from Mount St, Grosvenor Square to Greenwich and also carrying handstruck 3 (fig 116) and the datestamp normally struck in black on letters transferred to the General Post (fig 86), but in this case was in RED. As the normal Principal Office datestamp had not been applied, it can only be assumed the transfer stamp was used in red as a substitute for some reason (or none ?).

R.C. Alcock have stated they will be greatly interested in amendments that the Group can put forward on the Brumell book (please route through the Co-ordinator) and have kindly given permission for the illustrations to be reproduced in Notebook.



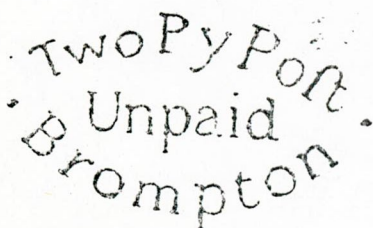
61.



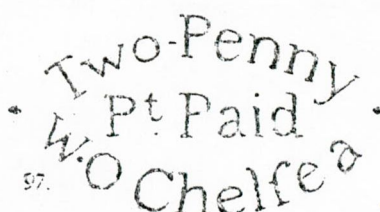
62.



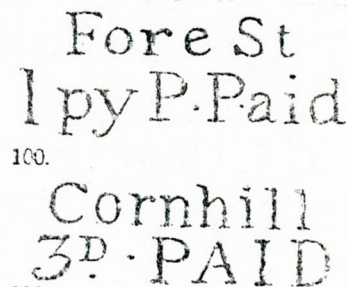
85.



96.



97.



100.

102.

2 3 3 4

115.

116.

117.

118.

5 6 *

119.

120.

121.

122.

W

123.

In All

124.

Paid

125.

G.P.
P

126.

G.P.
PAID

127.

Too Late for
Morn^g. Post

131.

Too Late for
Morn^g. Post

132.

Too Late for
MORN^G POST

133.

To be Delivered
by 10.0 Clock
on Sund Morn.

137.

To be Delivered before
10. Sund Morn
12+OC
1806
Two P^ost Unpa

138.

To be Delivered
Sund
MORN^G
by 10

139.

To be Delivered
by 10 Sund Morn

140.

To be
delivered
Free

142.

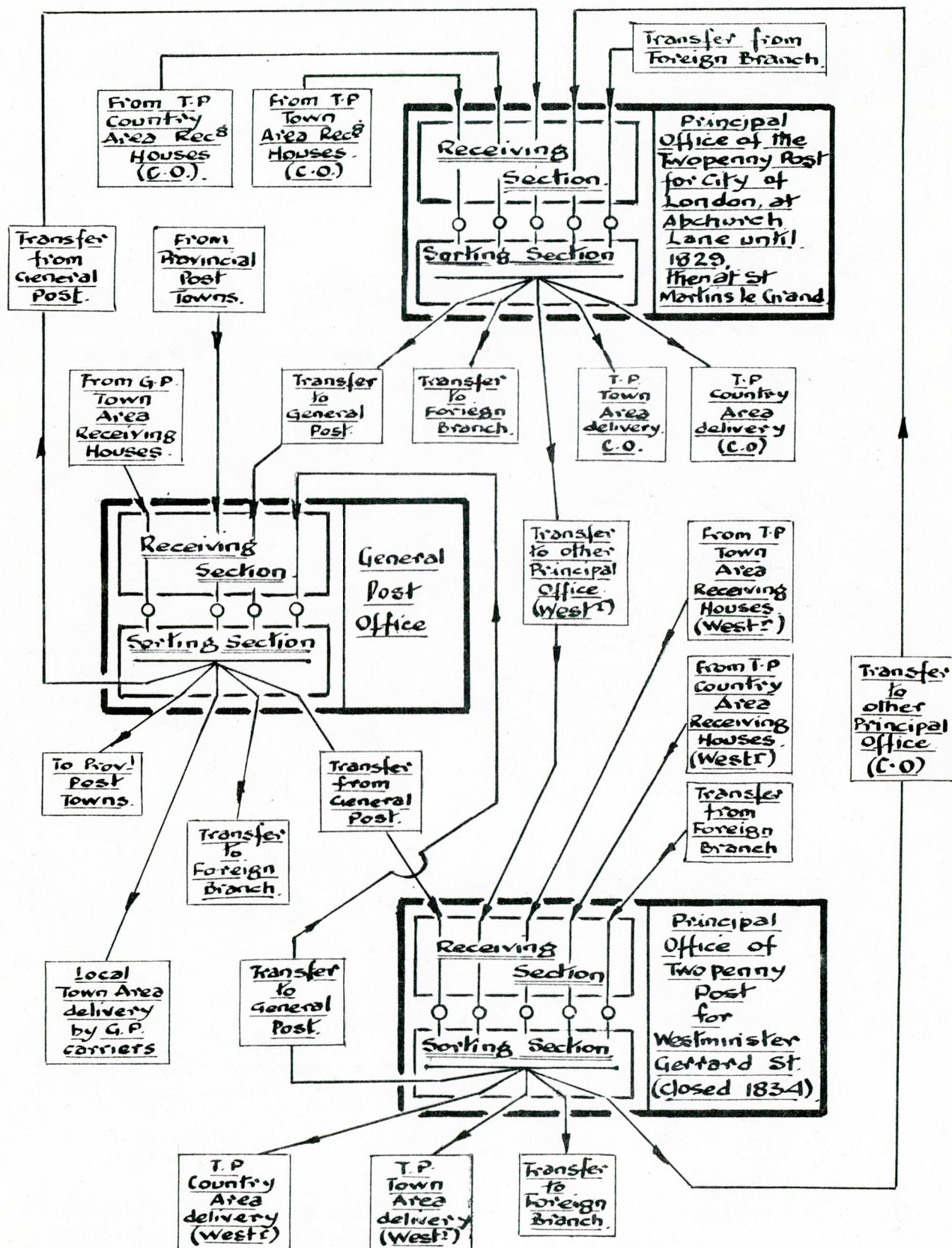
To be
delivered
Free

143.

To be
delivered
FREE

144.

DIAGRAM SHOWING TWOPENNY POST
SYSTEM 1801-34.



UNDATED " TOO LATE " STAMPS, by Michael English.

During the 19th. Century, a variety of " TOO LATE " stamps without the date were used by London offices. These are discussed by Alcock and Holland and by the late W.G. Stitt Dibden in his " Late Fee and Too Late Stamps ". I do not believe any detailed description of the use of these stamps has been published and I would invite members to let me have details of any in their possession so some thoughtful research into these stamps can be undertaken and published in " Notebook ".

Some of the more common marks are illustrated below:



1



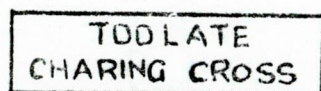
2



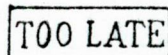
3



4



5



6

Too Late

7



8

*Posted After
7.P.M*

9

Fig No.	Dates Known	Colour	Notes
1	1844 - 1857	Black	Various sizes - I have 25mm. 28mm.
2	1843 - 1850	Black	
3	1859 - 1900?	Black	Photograph of use in 1861 in Westley
4	1888 - 1900?	Black	Foreign Branch - a similar mark has I B - Inland Branch
5	Aug. 1888 - ?	Black	I have a copy dated 23.10.68 - Charing Cross
6	1842 - 1855	Black	
7	1840 - 1847	Red	Script type - my copy is dated 6 Nov 1843
8	1838 - ?	Red	Inland Office
9	1860 - ?	Red	known in black, used on Newspapers without district initials in Newspaper Branch; Other districts recorded.

PUT IN AFTER
7⁰CLOCK AT NIGHT

10

POSTED AFTER
7⁰CLOCK AT NIGHT

11

Fig No,	Known Dates	Colour	Notes
10)	1790 - 1846	Red	Inland Office - also " 6 o'clock "
11)			

Using this list as a starting point, I should be very pleased to receive details of those in your possession. Please send a sketch, photocopy, or even the actual item (on very short loan, of course !!); also details of sizes, colours and any other markings which supply dates and other useful information.

As an extension of the basic marks study is their use on covers which appear to show that a late fee has, in fact, been paid.

One would expect such " Too Late " and " Late Fee " markings to be mutually exclusive, but this does not appear to be the case. I have two such covers the details being:

1. A postcard to Rotterdam with the hexagonal L-1 duplex of Leadenhall St. dated 6 Feb 94 and the circular TOO LATE F.B.G.P.O. The postcard is only stamped 1d. and the Rotterdam receipt date is 8 Feb 94. Although it has previously been accepted that the L-1 denotes a Late Fee of 1d., Dubud points out that Leadenhall St. only had a hexagonal obliterator and this may have been used for cancelling other mail.....but why would they cancel a postcard?
2. A small envelope to Clitheroe with 2 x 1d. stamps and the Charing Cross duplex WC 34 with a rectangular TOO LATE CHARING CROSS. The envelope is so small it seems unlikely it could be overweight.

I know several members have other examples of the possible use of the " TOO LATE " stamp after a late fee had been paid - again please let me have the details and a pattern may emerge. In any event, a record of these will make for interesting reading.

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

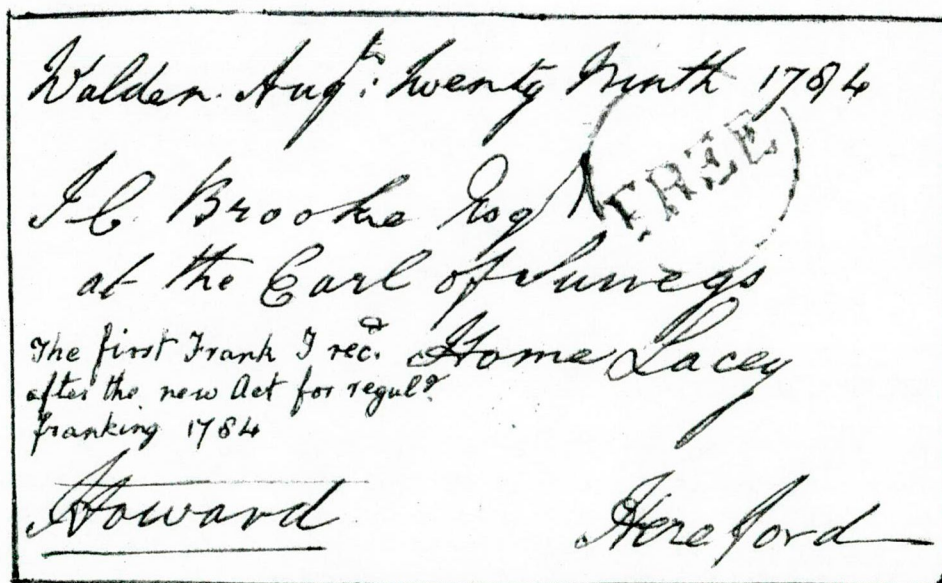
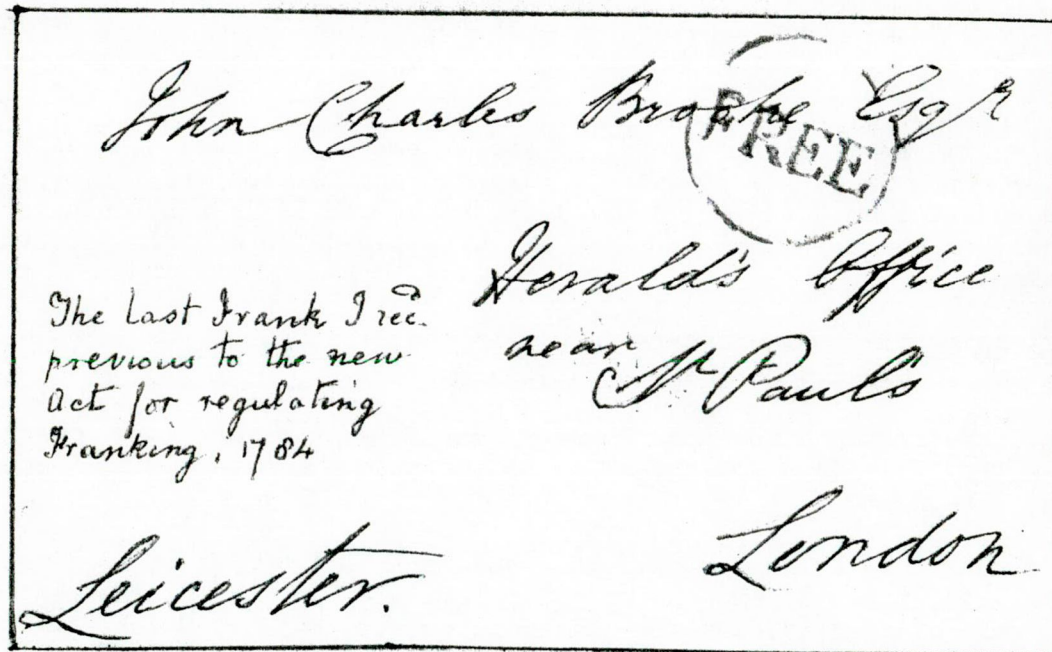
UNDATED CIRCLED OFFICE INITIALS.....

Michael Champness points out that in Notebook No.9, page 6, it should be made quite clear that the double circle initial stamps are associated with misdirected mails but the single letters L., C., & V. within a circle were used on Sunday mails only at Lombard Street, Charing Cross and Vere Street and in no way indicated misdirection or misaddressing.

Incidentally, PT is PORTLAND not POSTLAND STREET !

AN EARLY POSTAL HISTORIAN ?, by George Crabb

The Act of 1784 required that a Member must write on his free letters not only his name and address but also the name of the Post Town from which they were to be sent, the day and month in words, and the year when they were to be posted. This brought about a considerable decrease in the number of letters, but at least one person recorded the event, as illustrated below:



ROYAL POSTMARKS.....

A visit to the Post Office Records in search of information in connection with experimental handstamps yielded, from the Proof Impression Books, a record of the issue (volume 39, page 196) on 11th. July, 1882 one type of VR scroll handstamp and in the same volume on page 210, another, issued 6th. November, 1882.

" British Postmarks, A Short History and Guide " by Alcock and Holland (2nd. Edition) when dealing with Postmarks connected with the Royal Family has this to say.....

" The two types of London scroll " V.R. " marks (figs 1148 and 1149), the second of which can be distinguished from the ordinary London marks of that type by the full stop between the " V " and the " R ".



Fig. 1148



Fig. 1149

The P.I.B. examples are as fig 1148 no dot, but is code A and the second is as fig 1149, again code A, also with the full stop. Apart from a note they were both issued to the Circulation Department and that 2 of the second were issued, they is no indication as to their Royal connection, although the "V.R" must have some significance.

I have but three examples, unfortunately on adhesive only, of which but one, with code A, clearly shows the " Royal " dot. From their own collections and records, would other members please let me know what authority there is for the assertion these marks are Royals, and just what was the function of the amrk, apart from possibly ensuring that little extra care ?

(Acknowledgement is made to the A & H publication mentioned above and from which the two postamrks are reproduced : Peter A Forrestier Smith)

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WHAT THE AUCTIONS TELL.....

Robson Lowe.....9.2.72

Lot	Description	Estimate	Realisation
1433	1797-1850 E. and E.L., a selection showing a variety of "SHIP LETTER" marks including 1846 consignee letter from Calais with "EXEMPT SHIP LR"(Ex2) and framed "MB" and three different "INDIA LETTER"s with a *** strike of the first type cds (IN.1) dated 1816; many ** to ***; also thirteen different prints and photographs	£30	£130
1441	1869 E. from London to Naples bearing a fine 6d. plate 8 (wing margin) cancelled only by oval framed "PD" in red. Unusual & attractive	£12	£ 44

Robson Lowe.....27.6.72

598	1789 E.L. to the Strand showing across the join a faint "PENNY/POST/PAID" of General Office and a superb strike of "J*BROOKS" Receivers h.s.(57 x 8mm).	£12	£ 26
601	1794-97 E.L. showing Receiving House h.s. for "RICHMD./-1-" and "2", "CATEA/TON-ST.2"."FLEET/ST.S-1" and "W-HALL/ET 3" mainly **, one also shows triangular "Penny/Post/Not Paid" (5)	£20	£100

Robson Lowe.....19.9.72

164	1796 E.L. showing circular framed "W"(in red) and alongside an unusual large "2", ** to ***	£12	£ 17.50
174	1811-48 E.,E.L. and complete envelopes showing a wide variety of framed cds of the London Country Sorting Offices including Barnet, Bow (2, one in red), Bromley, Carshalton, Finchley, Highgate, Kent Road, Mortlake, Paddington, Putney, Romford, Sydenham, Wheatstone and Woolwich, some also show Penny Post and other marks ** to ***	£35	£135
291	1858(12th March) E. bearing 1d. red cancelled with G.H.Cresswell's experimental " Rotary Stamping Apparatus " duplex *** to very ***, a rare cancellation used only in London for a few days in March, also a few notes and pictures of Mr. Cresswell's experiment. (Illustrated Notebook No.9, page 3)	£75	£140

J*BROOKS
598

FOURTH REPORT OF THE POSTMASTER GENERAL ON THE POST OFFICE FOR 1857

Abstracts relating to London.....

.....**Chief Office in London**

During the last few years important improvements have been in progress in the Chief Office in London, and, although not yet complete, they have, at a moderate expense, already added largely to the amount of accommodation, and have had a beneficial effect on the health of the officers.

Like too many other public buildings, the Chief Office in St. Martin's -le - Grand seems to have been erected with much more regard to external appearance than to careful adaption for its purpose; and the consequence has been a great waste of space, a bad arrangement of rooms, and half darkness where there is most need of light.

So long as the number of letters was comparatively small, these defects were probably little felt; but the vast increase in the work of the office during the last twenty years caused such a pressure for room and such obstacles to the rapid discharge of the duties, that, as your Lordships are aware, it was at one time in contemplation to build an entirely new office in another situation; a measure which would necessarily have entailed a very great expense. By a careful examination, however, of the present building, it has been found practicable so materially to improve it and to devise arrangements for further improvements when these shall become necessary, that I have no fear of the building proving insufficient for its requirements especially considering the relief which will be afforded by the district offices.

.....**Delivery in London**

The first morning delivery in London, a striking improvement in which was notified in my last Report, has been further accelerated.

So far as this delivery is concerned, the object of dividing London into postal districts, and of making a preliminary sorting of the letters, either in the country offices or on the railways, has to a great extent been attained; since, except on Monday, the delivery is almost always nearly completed before nine o'clock.

I should observe, however, that this result is not wholly attributable to the foregoing measures, but is in part owing to the better state of preparation for delivery in which the Colonial and Foreign Mails now arrive (as will be explained hereafter), and to increased diligence and efficiency on the part of the letter carriers.

Arrangements have also been made for expediting the delivery of a large portion of the letters arriving by the Day Mails (those, namely, which are brought by the North-western Railways), provided they bear the initials of their respective postal districts; and when, from any cause, a part, though not the whole, of the contents of any other of the numerous mails arriving in the afternoon can be sent out by the next delivery, a selection for that delivery is made of such letters as bear the initials; this priority not being the result of arbitrary preference, but a natural advantage arising from the facility in sorting afforded by the senders of the letters.

The delivery of General Post letters has also been expedited in many of the suburban towns and villages; and in several, not only have earlier deliveries of these and other letters been effected, but it has been found poss-

ible to allow the posting of letters up to a later time, and to increase the number of despatches; while in some cases an additional and later delivery has been made in the evening, and a collection in the morning sufficiently early for many of the Day Mails.

Measures are in progress, though they must necessarily proceed gradually, for still further improving the postal service in the suburban district; and when completed they will, I trust, place the whole of this service on a very satisfactory footing. These measures include an acceleration (where this has not already been accomplished) of the General Post letters arriving in London by the Night Mails; the extension to all places within six or seven miles of London (isolated houses and scattered neighbourhoods excepted) of a late evening delivery, so that letters leaving the London Office about 7.30 p.m. may reach the hands of the public the same night, instead of remaining undelivered till the next morning; a greater approach to equality in the periods between the despatches from London; and, where requisite, more numerous despatches and collections, longer periods for posting, and an earlier morning collection.

So far as its object was to expedite the interchange of correspondence between district and district, the system of postal divisions in London is still, owing to the want of offices, only in very partial operation. In some districts no suitable building or even site, has been found; and in others unforeseen obstacles have arisen to retard the completion of the arrangements, even when considerable progress has been made.

Nevertheless offices have been opened in the Western, Western Central, North-Western, and South-Eastern districts; and not only is there already some interchange of bags between these districts, but in all of them that part of the plan which provides for the speedy delivery of letters posted in the same district in which they are to be delivered has been brought into full operation.

It may be well to point out that as the opening of a District Office is likely to cause a change in the starting point for the letter carriers, the effect on the deliveries, though beneficial on the whole, may not be so in special cases; I hope, however, that even such exceptional instances will be but temporary.

.....Street Nomenclature and Numbering of Houses

Since my last report some little has been done towards improving the nomenclature of the streets in London, and the numbering of the houses; and, so far, the delivery of letters has been facilitated; but the work proceeds very slowly, and much remains to be accomplished.

.....Letters in London

Of the whole number of letters last year nearly a quarter were delivered in London and the suburban districts; and counting those also which were despatched, nearly one half passed through London.

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EXPERIMENTAL CANCELLATIONS.....

Further information has been received and readers would no doubt wish to bring their records up to date.

From John Chandler comes the following.....

Re Notebook No.8

Page 4 Pearson Hill's Second Machine: Code M is recorded for FE 3/58 and FE 10/58 in the " Maximus " sale of Stanley Gibbons Auctions 1 and 2 Oct 1970 (Plate 7, lots 324 & 323)

Rideout, 8 bars at top: A later date, 14 Oct 1858, is recorded in the Postal History Society's Bulletin 55 p. 18 Westley.

Page 5 Rideout, 7 bars at top: I have a copy dated OC 22/58; and a copy dated 19th.November 1859 is recorded in PHS Bulletin 55 p.18, Westley.

Rideout, second machine, second trial: a copy dated 14th. February 1867 is recorded in the PHS Bulletin 52 p51,Westley.

Page 9 Hoster. Fig 14 Bedford St: a copy dated NO 10/85 is illustrated on Plate 7 (lot 333) of the " Maximus " sale noted above.

From Alf Kirk, some observations on the Hosters:

Page 8 Type VIIA, but star between month and day and the year is higher dated 10th. October, 1887.
Another copy dated 4.4.1888, but the outside stars are in a different position.

Type IX, again with a star between the month and the day. A copy dated 7.11.1991 and another 9.2.1992 but the latter has the year above the E.C.

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THE LONDON EXCHANGE.....

WANTED.....INFORMATION please re any postal markings from the HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT. I am trying to complete a study of Parliamentary Postal History and shall value any information esp. dates of use etc. All postages will be refunded.

David Trapnell, Brendon, Lyndale, London. NW2 2NY

WANTED.....to buy, beg, borrow or exchange!!! Any Local Penny/Two penny/Threepenny Post Receiving House marks of:

Beckenham: Bexley: Bromley: Chislehurst: Crayford: Foots Cray: Hayes: St. Mary Cray: South End: Sydenham: West Wickham.Please contact.....

Micael English, 50 Somerden Road, ORPINGTON, Kent. BR5 4HT.

WANTED.....strictly***examples of Anglo-French Convention markings...offers to Peter A. Forrestier Smith, 6 Church Manor, Bps Stortford, Herts.

WANTED.....HOSTERS - Types 1b, II and X (as recorded in Notebook No.8)
Abbot Lutz, Rockefeller Center, 1270 Avenue of the Americas, New York, N.Y. 10020, U.S.A.

FOR SALE OR EXCHANGE OR ???.....Accumulation (17) of clean entires with
 " Jubilee " 2½d blue stamps (S.G.201) and London EC " Hooded Scroll " cancellations. Letters are from London to Barcelona 1890-93.
 Any offers??.....Michael English.

WANTED.....PRECANCELLED STAMPS AND POSTAL STATIONERY, especially A & H types 1583 to 1590 inclusive.
 Offers to...R.D.Lee, 23 St. Andrews Road, Cranbrook, ILFORD, Essex.

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