

NOTEBOOK

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IN THIS ISSUE.....

Page 2	General Post Branch Offices	
Page 3	The Treatment, in London, of <i>On Active Service Mail</i> for UK and Overseas (Non Empire Destinations)	Richard Stroud
Page 11	London Maritime Mail: India Soldiers' Letters	
Page 12	The General Post Office at St. Martin's-Le-Grand	
Page 14	Undated Receiving House Stamps	
Page 15	Suburban Charge and Explanatory Marks	Peter Bathe
Page 19	Inland Office Diamond : Date extension	Matthew Toomey
Page 20	Service Suspended	Robert I Johnson
Enclosure	A Fresh Look at Inland Branch Duplexes	John Parmenter

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EDITORIAL.....

As is so often the case, whilst searching Post Office Archives for one thing, a related but not specific nugget or two were discovered which are shared with members in this current issue.

The only reasons for making this point are twofold. One gets the distinct impression collectors are not making full use of the facilities offered and econdly, articles appearing in the pages of a number of journals suggest the few actually doing any research are hugging the information to themselves. If writing a book this could be understood but, even in that case, to drop a few of the discovered pearls on the pages of the philatelic and postal history journals will not come amiss.

A further thought: having recently been engaged in editing someone else's work for publication, it was alarming to see how much unsourced speculation, most of it wrong, was to be found.

Those publishing a paper, pamphlet or book should remember the golden rule: 'It takes two minutes to get an error into print. It takes twenty years to get it out.'

GENERAL POST BRANCH OFFICES

The generally accepted date for the start of business by the General Post Branch Offices is 23rd. September, 1829., the date the General Post Office headquarters started operating in St. Martin's-le-Grand. The details of this move and, possibly, some reference to the Branch Offices are being sought in Post Office Records, without any definitive results thus far.

Two reports relating to the newly established Branch Offices afford a glimpse into the impact of the opening of the Vere Street Branch Office.

Post 42 relates to the précis reports or covering note from Freeling to the Post Master General. The full report is in Post 40 and direct access is very restricted. Somewhat imperfect microfilm is available.

Post 42 / 121 page 414 reference 825 I dated 10th October, 1829

My Lord,

The enclosed is an Application from Mr Bowen who had a Receiving Box for General Post Letters at his house No 315 Oxford Street, which was ordered to be discontinued when the Branch Office was opened in Vere Street.

That application is backed by the signatories of many most respectable persons in the Streets immediately adjoining.

I ordered the distance from 315 Oxford Street to the Branch Office to be ascertained and your Grace will see that it does not exceed 2 Minutes Walk. I know the situation well and I should suppose it cannot exceed 250 yards.

We have not been activated in any of the very few reductions of Receiving Houses by any parsimonious feeling as to expense, but it is a duty while we (are) expending large sums for further accommodation to avail ourselves of every fair and reasonable opportunity where we can, be the amount little or much, and it must be remembered that the Branch Offices afford infinitely more accommodation than the Receiving Houses.

Under these circumstances the proper Officer is of opinion that the Receiving House at No 315 Oxford Street ought not to be reopened.

as some of the Petitioners reside in Regent Street I may add that we have it now under consideration to propose some transpositions in the neighbourhood which will probably afford a Receiving House in that Street.

All which etc., etc. F.F.

By way of comment, Feldman does not list 315 Oxford Street, or one in Regent Street, with the other General Post offices . Freeling uses the term '*Receiving Box*' initially but concludes by calling it '*Receiving House*'. The Post Office Directory for 1829 does show 315 Oxford Street; that for 1830 omits it. Freeling states the Branch Offices '*afford infinitely more accommodation than the Receiving Houses*' but unfortunately misses the opportunity of detailing these.

[illegible]

The next extract comes from the Post Master General Minutes, Post 35.

Post 35 / 16 : Volume 34, page 559 reference 1103 Q dated 15th February 1830

I described to your Grace at the Board on Saturday this very unfortunate Circumstance & that I had written to all the Parties whose Letters were delayed & indeed enclosed them under my own cover.

I trust that what has been done will prevent a recurrence of the evil.

The pressure at the Branch Offices is almost terrific - the Clerks have been selected for their Steadiness and ability.

THE TREATMENT, IN LONDON, OF ON ACTIVE SERVICE MAIL FOR UK AND OVERSEAS (NON-EMPIRE DESTINATIONS)

by Richard Stroud

This article is a follow up to the query item about Boer War soldiers' mail having adhesives put on in London.[Notebook 156, page 18 refers]. More research has evolved and is reprinted here from the pages of THE ANGLO-BOER WAR PHILATELIST, Volume 47, Number 3 September 2004, by kind permission of the Editor, through the good offices of Robert Johnson.

On several occasions, reports have been made in the AWBP concerning the London Foreign Branch (of the General Post Office) applying adhesives to mail to make up the difference in postage on soldiers' letters going to, say, the United States or a European country, where only 1d might have been paid in South Africa, or where "no stamps available" had been endorsed by the writer. How was the additional postage accounted for by the Foreign Branch?

A representative range of such covers have now been identified in the Ken Griffith collection and, in addition, another three formed one lot in the initial Argyll Etkin auction of Ken's material. All are addressed to UPU countries where a rate of 2½d per ½ oz would have applied. One has to remember UPU regulations demanded an adhesive to indicate prepayment so, without the correct rate, the addressee would have been charged postage due. Thus the London Foreign Branch applied a 2½d duty if the item was "no stamps available" or a 1½d duty if the item were posted at the soldiers' 1d concessionary rate. [Note that from 1 December, 1900, the standard civil rate from South Africa to Empire destinations (other than Rhodesia, Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands) was reduced to 1d per ½ oz. Previously the rate had been 2½d per ½ oz.]

Extensive enquiries on the subject were made to members and non-members who might have been able to provide a lead to official files containing the procedures or instructions for the Foreign Branch. Finally, Alistair Kennedy remembered some notes which he had made some 25 years previously from the Post Office Archives! There, although all were not necessarily verbatim, confirmed the postage would otherwise have been recoverable from the senders or addressees in respect of unpaid, or underpaid, mail from troops serving at the front in South Africa should be charged to the War Office. It also confirms the practice of adding postage stamps to unpaid/underpaid mail addressed to foreign destinations.

Alistair noted he had been intending to write an article on the treatment of such mail! With his notes and illustrations of items from Ken's collection, this has not been done for him. I also thank Robert Johnson of Bristol for his help in trying to locate source material for me.

¹ Such reports have included December 2000 (Vol. 43, No.4, page 101 and December 1987 (Vol. 40, No. 4, pages 100/101

² Argyll Etkin Sale of 6 March 2003, Lot 381.

INTRODUCTION

The addition of a 2½d duty to a soldier's unpaid letter with, say, a European destination, stems from the practice in the early months of the war of the General Post Office and the colonial Post Offices collecting postage due on all such unpaid mail, irrespective of destination. This initial taxing took place as soon as soldiers at the front in South Africa began writing home and adhesives were not available at their unit. (Initially, no Army Post Office facilities even existed!) The mail was indicated unpaid at Cape Town - with a "T" tax mark and postage due was calculated and collected at the destination country. Figure 1



Figure 1

Three stampless and taxed covers, all with DCFPO datestamps, each with the "T" tax instructional mark of Cape Town.

TOP Cover to Cape Town postmarked with the code 2 datestamp for FE 2 00. The 1^d postage-due handstamp was applied at Cape Town. There also a CHARGE CLERK datestamp on the reverse.

CENTRE Cover to Durban postmarked with the code 3 datestamp for MR 14 00. The 1^d postage-due handstamp was applied at Durban.

BOTTOM Cover to Dublin postmarked with the code 16 datestamp for DE 15 99. The 1^d F.B. B postage-due handstamp was applied at London.

The Cape and Natal usages are late as instructions from London would not have reached those colonies at that time.

illustrates three such taxed covers, one to Dublin, then part of the United Kingdom, one to Durban and one to Cape Town.

The response of the British public and the newspapers was predictable and correct. Then, as now, the official mind set was to adhere blindly to current procedures. Then, as now, important aspects at the planning stages of a campaign had been overlooked. Then, as now, Government policy can be modified by public protest!.

In the case of the taxed mail, communication on the subject began to flow between the War Office, the

Treasury and the GPO. Much of what Alistair Kennedy located in the Post Office Archives was high level

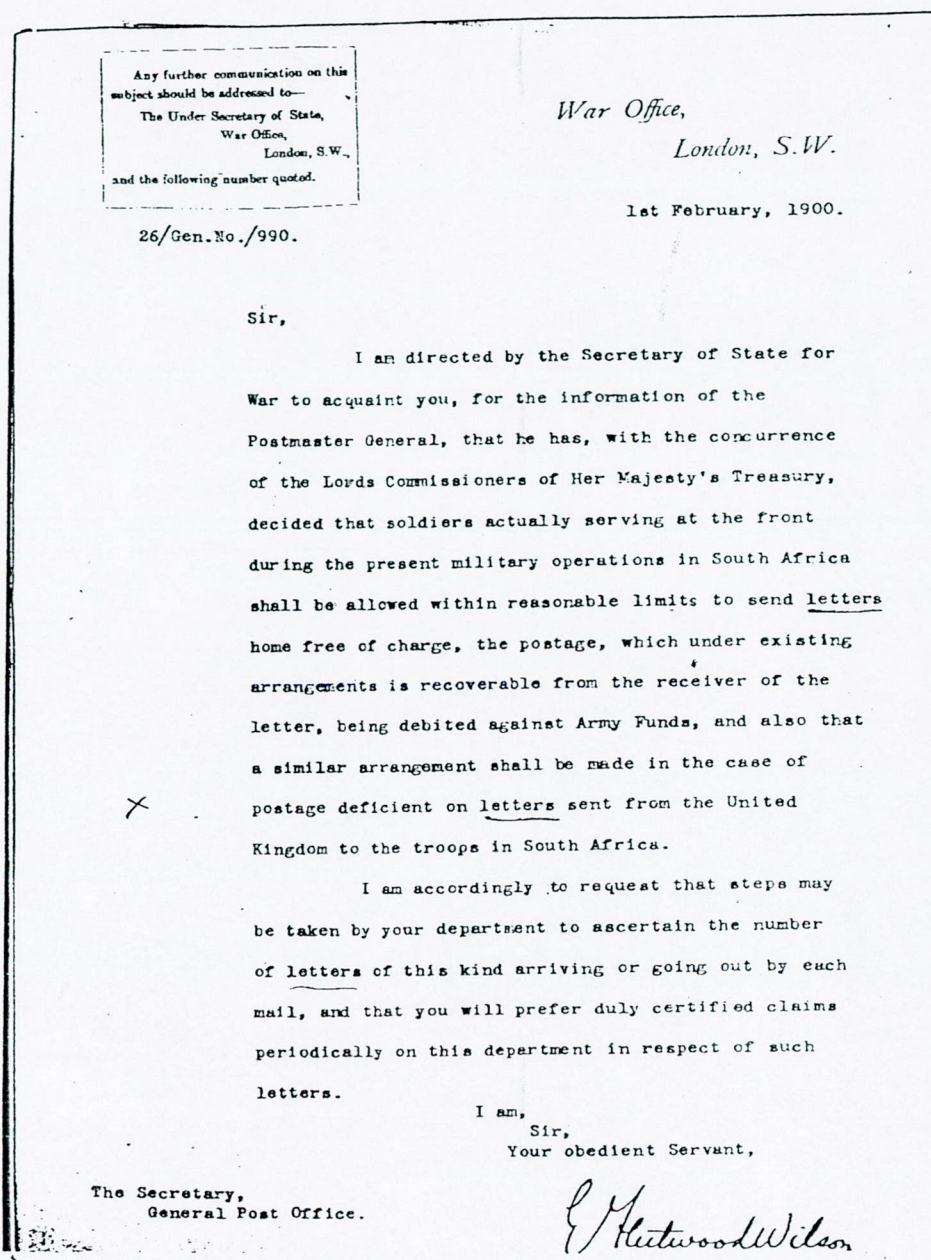


Figure 2

Letter, dated 1st February 1900, from the Under Secretary of State, War Office, London, to the Secretary, General Post Office, whereby the postage on mail sent from the front free of charge should be debited against Army Funds.

communication between these departments in early 1900. The documents were contained in PKT 117A/1900 (APO Arrangements, South Africa War 1899-1902).

MAIL TO UK ADDRESSES

Extracts from Departmental Correspondence.

118/1/00 WAR OFFICE TO THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY,

re letters posted unpaid and endorsed "no stamps available".

The Postmaster General should be informed so that steps may be taken for collecting from the addressees only the postage actually deficient.

There is wide feeling that a soldier at the front should be allowed within reasonable limits to send letters home free of charge

It is proposed to charge against Army Funds the postage recoverable under existing arrangements.

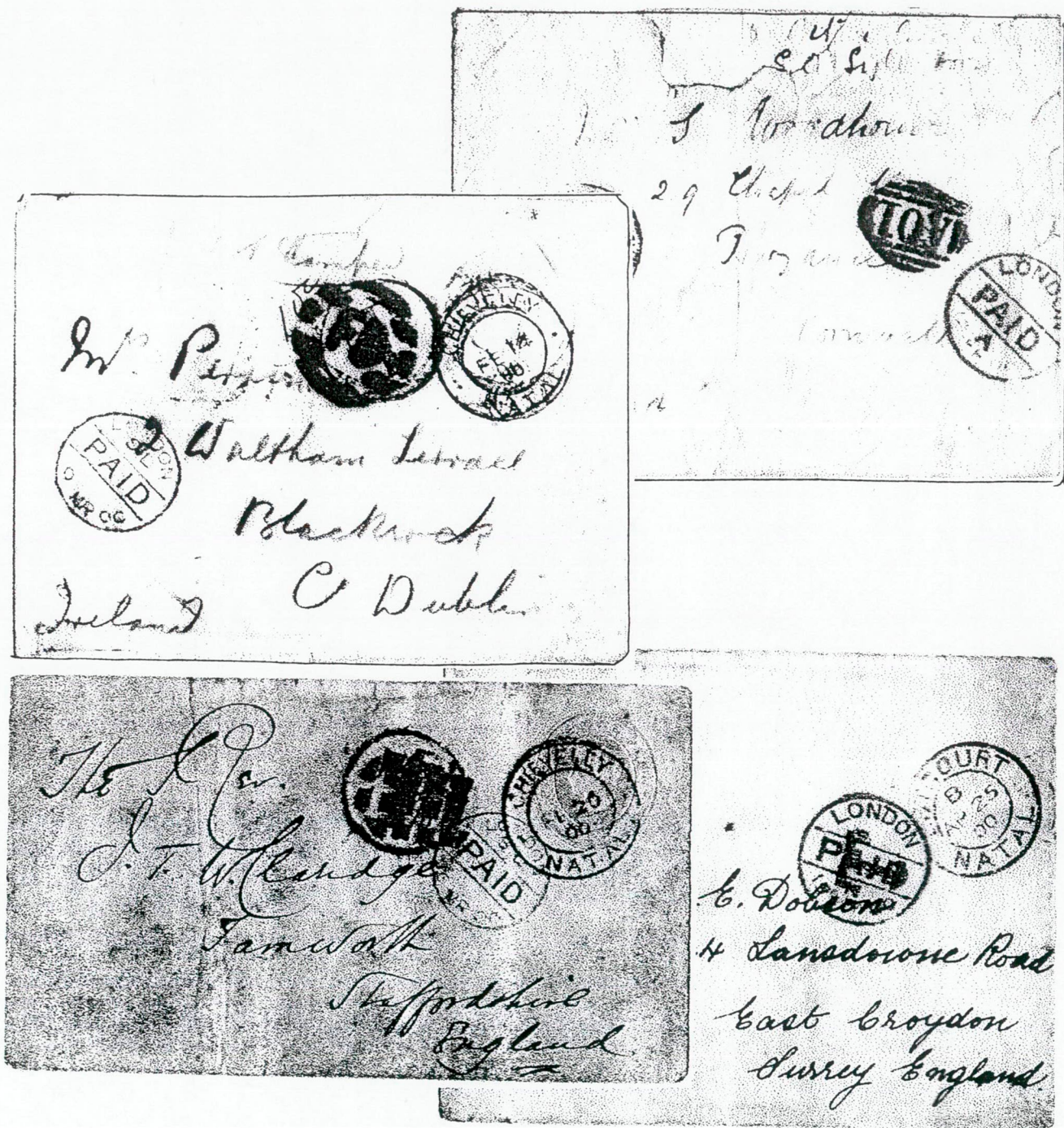


Figure 3

Four stampless and taxed covers, each with the "T" tax instructional mark of Cape Town or Durban obliterated in London, and each by a different method. All with the LONDON PAID datestamp.

TOP to BOTTOM

Cover to Cornwall, postmarked JA 15 00, the tax mark obliterated by the obsolete A01 canceller of Jamaica.

Cover to Ireland, from CHIEVELEY FE 14 00, the tax mark obliterated by a barred-circle FB handstamp.

Cover to Staffordshire, from CHIEVELEY FE 20 00, the tax mark obliterated by a grid handstamp.

Cover to Surrey, from ESTCOURT AP 26 00, the tax mark obliterated by the LONDON PAID datestamp.

1/2/00 WAR OFFICE TO THE SECRETARY, GENERAL POST OFFICE

I am directed by the Secretary of State for War to acquaint you, for the information of the Postmaster General, that he has, with the concurrence of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, decided that soldiers actually serving at the front during the present

military operations in South Africa shall be allowed within reasonable limits to send letters home free of charge, the postage, which under existing arrangements is recoverable from the receiver of the letter, being debited against Army Funds, and also that a similar arrangement shall be made in the case of postage on letters sent from the United Kingdom to the troops in South Africa.

I am accordingly to request that steps may be taken by your department to ascertain the number of letters of this kind arriving or going out by each mail, and that you will prefer duly certified claims periodically on this department in respect of such letters.

Yours etc., E. Fleetwood Wilson

The first paragraph of this letter is - yes - one sentence. You will need to re-read it to obtain the sense of the content. In the second paragraph - also one sentence - the archaic use of "prefer" is typical official usage. How much easier to have used the verb "present", or could it have been mistyped originally? See Figure 2 for the complete letter.

14/2/00 INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE GENERAL POST OFFICE TO POSTMASTERS AT LIVERPOOL AND PLYMOUTH

Any paid or insufficiently prepaid letters or postcards reaching your offices from the troops in South Africa or from transports to or from that country should be impressed with the PAID stamp and be sent out for delivery free of charge. Report to London Postal Services the numbers and rates of postage due. Any cash received with such mails to be deducted from the claim made against the War Office.

Figure 3 illustrates four covers on which the LONDON PAID handstamp has been applied (always in red), with each cover having a different treatment in the way any postage due mark has been deleted. The most common method was to obliterate the tax mark with the barred circle FB handstamp or, occasionally, with a handstamp having a grid of obliterating squares. For a period, the old barred oval A01 cancel of Kingston Jamaica (which had been withdrawn by 1877, not being shown in that year's list of British Post Office Numbers³) was brought back into use, in London, for the purpose of obliterating tax marks on the unpaid mail.

³ British Post Office Numbers 1833 - 1906 by G. Brummel, published by R.C. Alcock

MAIL TO OVERSEAS ADDRESSES

Extracts from Departmental Correspondence

***File 10 (21/2/00) REPLY FROM GENERAL POST OFFICE LONDON TO CANADA
re unpaid letters***

*Cases have arisen in which letters from the Forces have reached this Department with remittances, and instructions were given for them to be marked here **Official Paid** if addressed to the UK or a British Colony, or to have postage stamps affixed if addressed to a foreign country.*

There is no objection to Canada foregoing collection of postage on unpaid letters addressed to Canada.

There are three points to note here.

The first is that some letters had *reached the GPO with remittances*. Presumably such remittances were for unpaid postage. Have any such **Official Paid** items been recorded?

The second is that *postage stamps were affixed if addressed to a foreign country*. It is the pointer to the practice of affixing a 2½d or 1½d adhesive to an unpaid or underpaid letter, so that the correct rate was on the item before it was forwarded to the foreign country of its address.

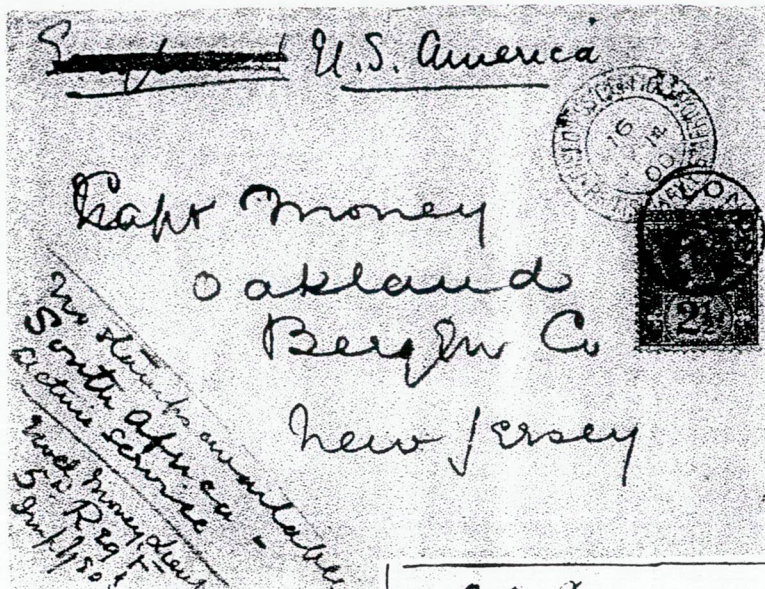


Figure 4

Stampless cover, postmarked with the DCFPO code 16 datestamp for JY 14 00, from an officer in the 5th Regiment Imperial Yeomanry to a relation in the USA. 2½d duty added in London, and debited against War Office funds, and cancelled AU 11 00. Arrival on reverse.



Figure 5

Stampless "OAS" cover, postmarked NEWCASTLE NATAL 5 JU 1900 to Portugal.

Countersigned with a handstamped cachet of the adjutant Natal Cabineers. 2½d duty added in London, and debited against War Office funds, and cancelled JY 3 00. Arrival on reverse.

Figures 4 and 5 illustrate two unpaid covers from South Africa, one to Portugal and one to New Jersey, U.S.A., each with an added 2½d duty applied and cancelled in London.

Figure 6 illustrates two items pre-paid at the 1d rate from South Africa, one to France and one to New York, U.S.A., each with an added 1½d applied and cancelled in London.

The third point of the letter from the GPO to the Canadian Post Office raises no objection to Canada foregoing collection of unpaid letters addressed to that country. This obviously applies to mail from the initial Canadian Contingents.

IRREGULARITIES IN APPLYING THE 2½d DUTY

One can credit the London postal authorities with good common sense in the cover of Figure 7 (page 10). This in contrast to an "OAS" cover from Kimberly 20 JY 01, debited to War Office funds in London as PAID, has a 2½d duty applied in London when it was reposted for forwarding to France. In this case the War Office was debited with a total of 3½d - good business for the Post Office.

However, Figure 8 (page 10) can only be considered an error of handling. This is an unpaid cover (perhaps civilian rather than military) from Pretoria 28 SEP 00 to Nottingham. The cover was Taxed in Pretoria and either should have been treated as a normal postage due item in London or be considered as PAID. However, a 2½d duty (LONDON OC 19 00) cancellation was applied, the tax mark deleted and the cover forwarded to Nottingham.



Figure 6

Two items pre-paid at the 1d rate from South Africa, one to France and one to New York, USA, each with an added 1½d duty applied and cancelled in London.

TOP: Cover with a 1d V.R.I. ZAR cancelled KRUGERSDORP 19 NO 00, transferred to the APO (DCFPO code 17 for NO 20 00), with an added 1½d duty applied and cancelled in London (DE 14 00) and debited against War Office funds.

BOTTOM: 1d pink postal-stationery front with DCFPO code 25 for NO 11 00, with an added 1½d duty applied and cancelled in London (DE 15 00) and debited against War Office funds.

GENERAL FORWARDING TO OVERSEAS ADDRESSES

There are covers from South Africa forwarded from the UK to overseas destinations which do not have any connection with the handling on unpaid / underpaid mail in London. These arise from general forwarding by the public and have additional stamps added to make up the correct 2½d rate. Figure 9 (page 11) illustrates two such covers. Although they are nominally outside the scope of this article, they are included so that readers are aware of the difference.

OTHER DEBITS OF POSTAGE AGAINST WAR OFFICE FUNDS.

An interesting example of debiting War Office funds with the registration fee and postage on returning deceased soldiers' effects is given by Peter Prime⁴ He cites a letter from Lt. Col. J. Greer, the Director of Army Postal Services, Cape Town, to the Secretary of the GPO London. This, dated 16 May 1900, reads:

*The Secretary,
General Post Office,
London.*

On the 11th instant [i.e. 11 May 1900], the General Officer Commanding the Lines of Communication in Natal telegraphed to know if the Queen's Chocolate Boxes belonging to deceased soldiers might be sent home to their relations in free registered letter packets. I replied in the affirmative as, notwithstanding the small loss in revenue, I felt convinced that

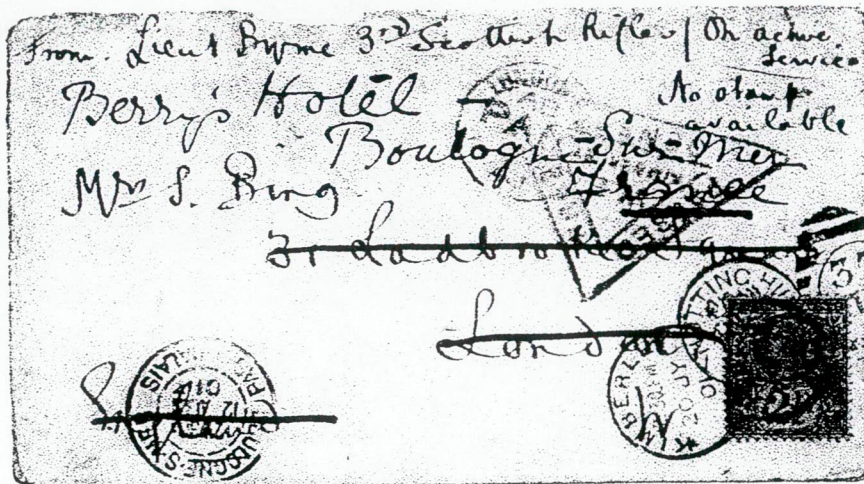


Figure 7

An "OAS" cover from Kimberley
20 JY 01,

debited to War Office funds in
London as PAID, with a 2½d duty
applied in London when it was
reposted for forwarding to France.

In this case the War Office was
debited a total of 3½d on this item.

Figure 8

An error of handling.
A stampless cover from Pretoria
28 SEP 00 to Nottingham.

The cover was taxed in Pretoria and
either should have been treated as a
normal postage-due item in London,
or be considered as PAID. However,
a 2½d duty (LONDON OC 19 00)
was applied, the tax mark deleted and
the cover forwarded to Nottingham!



the Postmaster General would approve of this course. The majority of the packets will I
presume be sent home by the next two mails

Lt Col J Greer,
Director of Army Postal Services

A manuscript minute appended to this letter is to Mr J.C. Badcock, Controller of the London Postal
Services. The minute is initialled AGS 5.6.00 and states:

The postage should be debited to the War Office in the normal manner.

The terminology in the normal manner implies that, by June 1900, the practice of debiting War
Office funds with postage on unpaid mail was commonplace

⁴ British Army Postal Cancellations of the Anglo-Boer war 1899 to 1902, page 94. Peter Prime. Published ABWPS 2003. ISBN 0
90138 09 1.

[figure 9 appears on the following page]



Figure 9

General forwarding by the public. Two covers with additional stamps added to make up the correct 2½d rate for forwarding overseas - one to Switzerland and to Austria.

TOP: Cover with an O.F.S. V.R.I. 1d cancelled with a DCFPO code 38 for SP 12 01 correctly delivered to a Dorchester address, but then forwarded to Switzerland. A 1d and a ½d added locally upon forwarding.

BOTTOM: Cover with a GB QV 1d lilac cancelled with a DCFPO code 31 for JU 12 01 correctly delivered to a London address, but then forwarded to Austria. Three x ½d added locally upon forwarding.

LONDON MARITIME MAIL : INDIA SOLDIERS' LETTERS

The files of catalogues from the major auction houses held by the National Philatelic Society Library have been scrutinised to determine comparative numbers, of the India Soldier 7 and 7a. Over thirty years of auction lots yielded several reputed examples of 7a but, when illustrated, proved to be In. Sol. 7. This may be due to a mix up in the of numbering to the examples provided by Alan Robertson, the same illustration is used for both types, with 7a repeating the illustration for 7, see below. When producing *Robertson Revised*, Colin Tabart gave the same date range for both with a suitable caveat.



In. Sol. 7a



In. Sol. 7a.



In. Sol. 7

The illustrations on the left and in the centre should be titled In. Sol. 7

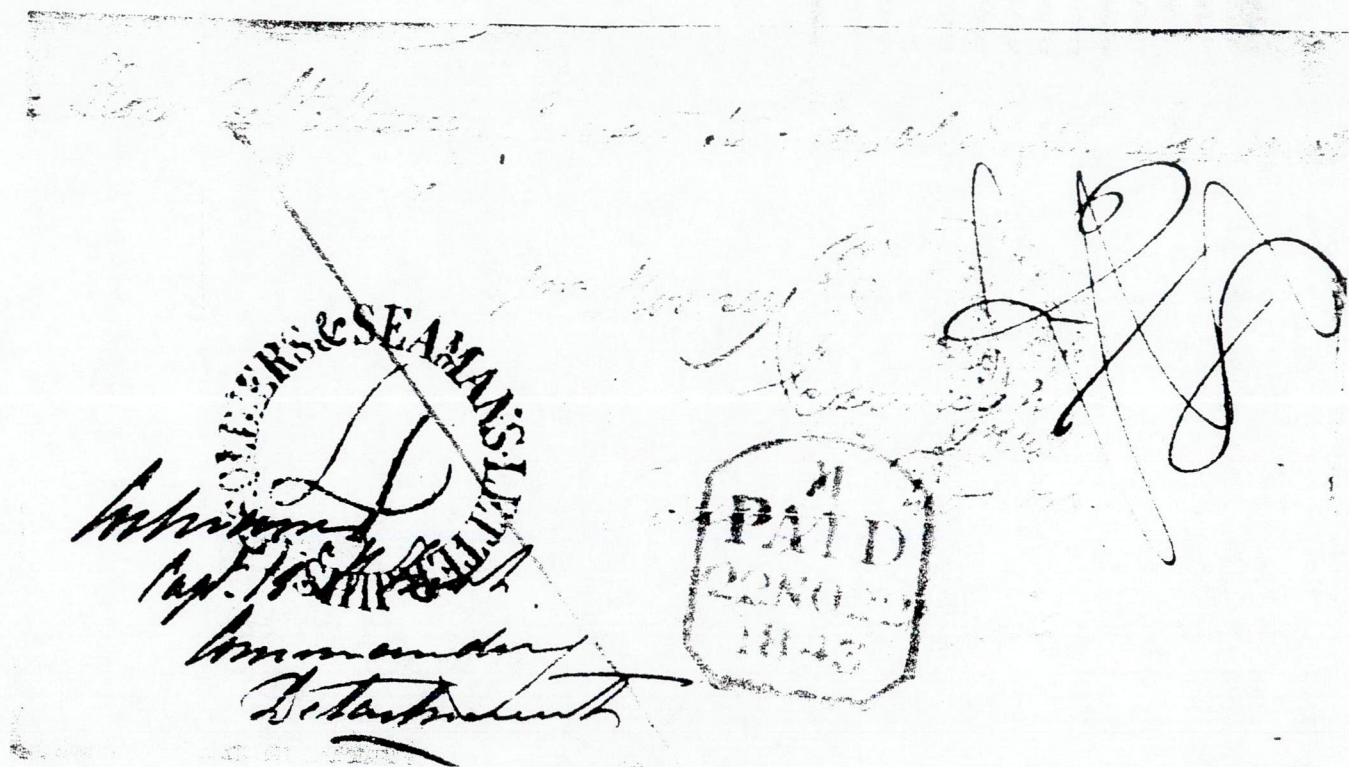
The one on the right should be titled In. Sol. 7a

The conclusion had to be there were NO verifiable examples of the second type.

To digress slightly, the need for such a rate : Martin Willcocks was of the opinion the stamp was connected with the new P. & O. Contract of 1841. However, the 4d rate for Soldiers and sailors was enacted 1/9/40 (3 & 4 Vic. c. 96) and David Robinson links to stamp to that event. It appears, therefore, the only

recorded example of this stamp is on a front from Hong Kong and that actually shown by Robertson. This came up for auction at Cavendish on the 23rd September, 2004, with the following description:

Enlarged photocopy



- 360 HONG KONG P.O. "ARMS" MARK IN COMBINATION WITH THE RARE LONDON "SOLDIERS & SEAMENS LETTER / BY SHIP / 4" MARK. The famous c. Aug. 1843 front addressed to Ireland, headed & countersigned for the Soldier's Concession Rate for a Private Mooney of the "18th Royal Irish Regiment", having a very fine (for this) red oval "HONG KONG POST OFFICE (Arms)" mark in red beside a very fine strike of the equally rare London circular "SOLDIERS & SEAMENS LETTER / 4 / BY SHIP" mark, along with a very fine 22 Nov. 1843 London arrival "PAID" Tombstone d.s. and a cancelled manuscript "2/8" charge. This famous item - the only such combination of the Hong Kong "Arms" mark with a Concession Rate charge of which we are aware - is illustrated in Lobeli & Hopkins (1949; pl.6), Webb (1961; pl.12), Robertson (1960; p.188B) and Scamp (p.181). The fragment of the contents gives a fascinating glimpse of what must have been an important Campaign Letter; "...ong Kong. Dear Mother...on our arrival...{?at N}ankiin we were greatly [?suprised to find a flag] o truce flying on its[?walls]..."

The estimate was £500: the hammer price £2,200

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE AT ST. MARTIN'S-LE-GRAND

The opening for business of the General Post Office in St. Martin's-le-Grand and the great concerns this occasioned for Francis Freeling and the Post Office hierarchy is very clearly shown from two abstracts from Post Office Records, Post 42, volume 121. It is necessary to remember Post 42 is merely a copy of the report written by Francis Freeling, subject to clerical copying errors and, of course, lacking any additional papers which were in the original report.

My Lord,

I have the satisfaction to state for your Grace's information that by the united & extraordinary efforts & exertions of every Officer & person in the Department, we succeeded in effecting a delivery of letters yesterday Morning considerably earlier than usual.

The four accelerator carriages answered our most sanguine expectations, & the Letters at the West End of the Town were delivered about one hour earlier than usual.

The great press & difficulty was in the Evening ; & nothing can describe the anxiety & the eagerness of all, from the superior Officers down to the lowest Sorter, Messenger, & Letter Carrier - I never witnessed anything to compare with it.

The new positions of all the Stamping, Sorting Tables, Boxes, &c, & the necessity of making upwards of 200 corresponding alterations in the sorting, both in the Inland & Newspaper Offices, rendered the whole proceeding of a most anxious & arduous nature -

Happily as the Clock struck Eight, the first Mail Coach was despatched & the whole of them were clear of the Post Offices Premises by 12 Minute past 8 each Coach despatched amidst the acclamations of the Multitude which consisted of at least 10,000 persons.

At the time I congratulate your Grace on this fortunate commencement I cannot disguise my apprehension that many Letters & Newspapers may have been mis-sent & will continue to be mis-sent until all are more conversant with the new Machinery & arrangements; & much as I may regret any individual inconveniences, I am convinced that no human care could guard against it, & that no real blame or censure can attach to any -

It will be my duty in a few days to submit to your Grace the propriety (I may almost term it, Duty) of you expressing to the Officers &c your marked approbation of the cordial co-operation, which they have manifested on the occasion.

All which &c &c F.F

On the 29th September Freeling wrote another report to the Post Master General. It contains references to the workload and difficulties encountered with the expectation he, Freeling, will soon be able to offer answers.

Number 791 29 Sept 1829

My Lord

Yesterday was a day of much anxiety to myself & the Assistant Secretary both in the Morning & Evening.

It is unnecessary to tell your Grace that there are many more Letters received & sent from London on Mondays than on any other days.

Every Officer was summoned & by the greatest exertions the Letters of the Morning were in a course of delivery much sooner than could have been reasonably expected - viz. - half an hour earlier than last Monday from the Old Post Office.

The same efforts were afforded to the more trying Duties of the Evening, in the hope of despatching the Mail Coaches at 8 O'Clock precisely - there were 40,694 Less & not less than 52,104 Newspapers dispatched - I Was apprehensive several times in the course of the

Evening that we should not have accomplished of our object, but by the united & unremitting labors of the Officers & Newspapers Sorters, the Bags were all out of the Inland Office by 8 O'Clock & the Coaches in motion from 1 to 9 Minutes past - 8 - & I consider the whole as highly creditable to all engaged in the Service.

We are promoting as well as extreme pressure will enable us many arrangements necessary to the convenience of His Majesty's Government & to the further advantage of the Metropolis. All these will be detailed as soon as we are enabled to bring them into shape, they must of necessity be attended with Expense.

The great difficulty we have to attend with is the late hour at which the Mags of the Newspapers find their way now into the Office & the very late time at which the Letters from the Public Offices at the West End of the Town are brought up - this must be subject of consideration as soon as possible & I hope to effect something to alleviate it.

All which &c &c. F.F

By way of additional information, from the Establishment Book for 1830 (Post 59/34, page 63), a brief note of the number of General Post Receiving Houses, the salaries and duties.

61	{	4	£ 25 p.a.
		1	24
		7	20
	{	1	18
		3	15
		18	14
	{	9	12
		18	10

Specification of Duties

The Letter Boxes are opened every morning and close at 5 PM. The Receivers take charge of all Letters and Newspapers put into their Boxes, receive the Rates of those which at Post Paid, making up an Account of the same on a Bill, which together with the Money, the Unpaid Letters, Franks & Newspapers are sent to the Post Office every evening in a sealed bag

From the research provided by J.W.A. Lowder (started work in the post office as a Bag Messenger, retired in 1982 as an Assistant Superintendent) when writing of the changes made in 1834, following the closure of the Gerrard Street office, provides this interesting nugget:

All General Post Carriers, before leaving the Lombard Street Chief Office, had a printed card handed to them on which were entered the commencement times of the delivery and they were responsible for going to the nearest Receiver at the end of their delivery to be signed off. The cards were handed in the next day.

UNDATED RECEIVING HOUSE STAMPS

Paul Davey had a query. A very nice example of the BRIXTON / ACRE LANE circular framed Receiving House mark, dark black-blue on a cover dated July 30 1858 had been purchased but no record could be found. It so happens his cover extended the recorded date of use by some four months and came as

a reminder that L.P.H.G. are hoping to produce a detailed record of this interesting group during the winter months.

Please take the opportunity in the next few weeks, to report any of these undated stamps which have come your way in the past year or so and which you have not already reported to the Editor.

Many thanks.

SUBURBAN CHARGE AND EXPLANATORY MARKS

Peter Bathe

In Notebook 155, Andrew Ford says it is difficult to determine if a full set of charge marks were issued to each office. Sometimes, however, at least some of the marks appear in the proof books. Alf Kirk reported proof book entries for "sets" (not necessarily *full* sets) of such stamps issued to Camberwell (April 1884) and Rotherhithe (October 1884) in his excellent series of "village" postal histories published in Notebook over the years. His searches through the proof books also turned up occasional issues or one or two stamps for these places and for others such as Walworth, Peckham and Dulwich.

A trawl through back issues of Notebook revealed, however, apart from Alf Kirk's work, there have been only a few reports of suburban charge and explanatory marks. The following notes are intended to add to the record charge and explanatory marks used at one suburban office, Woolwich.

In 1875, Woolwich was taken out of London Control and became a provincial head office in its own right. It was then allocated the office number 264 and a series of charge and explanatory marks using that number were later issued to Woolwich.

In 1878, a T-boxed "More to pay / above _ oz" stamp was issued and is known used in 1883 (Fig. 1) This is on a cover posted at Welling (one of the dependent offices in the Woolwich District) and although the adhesive was cancelled with the 386 barred oval of Welling, the surcharging stamps were applied at Woolwich.

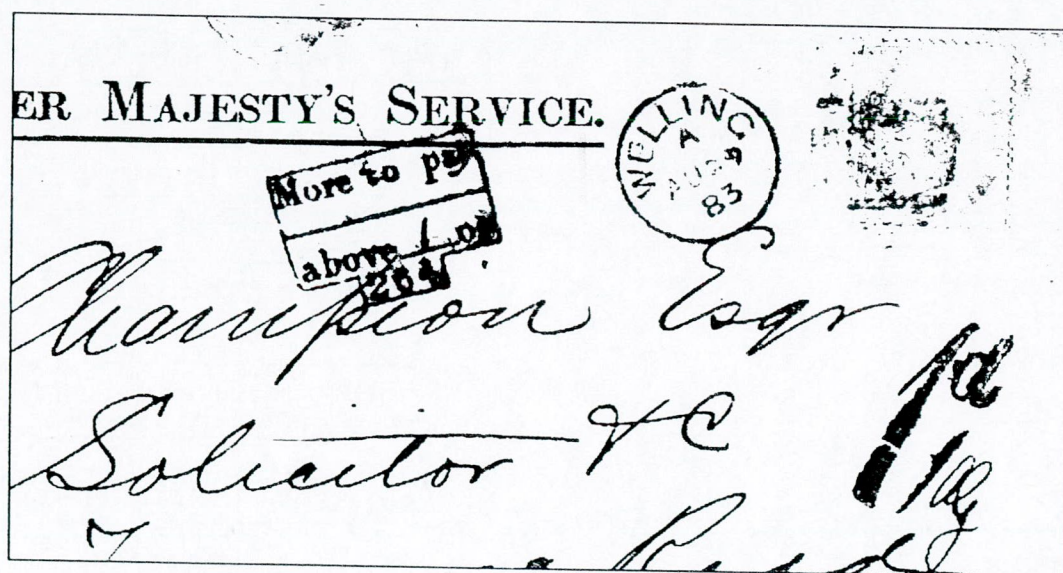


Fig 1

In 1882, Woolwich received a large number of stamps, including 10 T-boxed marks all with the office number 264. The proof book entry is shown in Fig. 2, No examples of any of these stamps have so far been recorded, although there appears to have been a call for them as, in 1918, there was a new issue of the "Address contrary to rule" and the "Closed contrary / to Regulation" stamps. Presumably the originals had either become lost or damaged - it is unlikely demand for these particular stamps was two were needed simultaneously.

To what Place.	Date when Sent.	Stamps.
<i>Woolwich</i>	<i>6.3.82</i>	Contains a communication of the nature of a Letter 264
		Of the nature of a Letter 264
		Closed contrary to regulations 264
		Found open and resealed at Woolwich
		Found at Woolwich without contents
		Found at Woolwich without a cover
		Prohibited enclosure 264
		Firm not known 264
		Not called for 264
		Contrary to regulations 264
		Address contrary to rule 264
		Gone No address 264
Not to be found 264		

Fig 2

At the same time, a replacement for the "More to pay..." stamp was also issued, this time without the horizontal dividing line and a more regular spacing between the words for the first time (Fig. 3).

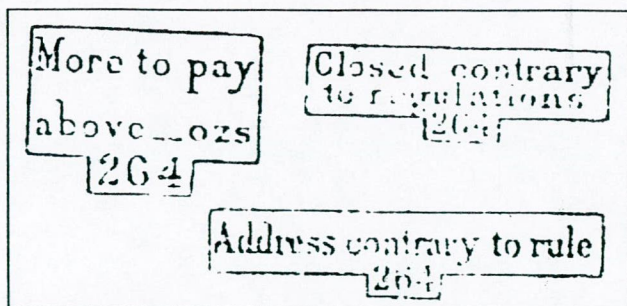


Fig 3

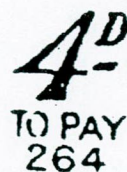


Fig 4

Interestingly, these 1918 replacements continued to include Woolwich's old provincial series number, 264, even though the office had been returned to the control of the SEDO in 1913. A 4^D TO PAY stamp was also issued in 1918, again with the 253 number (Fig. 4).

One stamp not yet found in the proof books is a "Liable to Letter Rate / 264" mark (Fig. 5) although at least four examples of this mark are known in and around 1906. The example illustrated is on a postcard with a newspaper cutting pasted to the picture: a postcard with glitter on the front attracted the same treatment!.

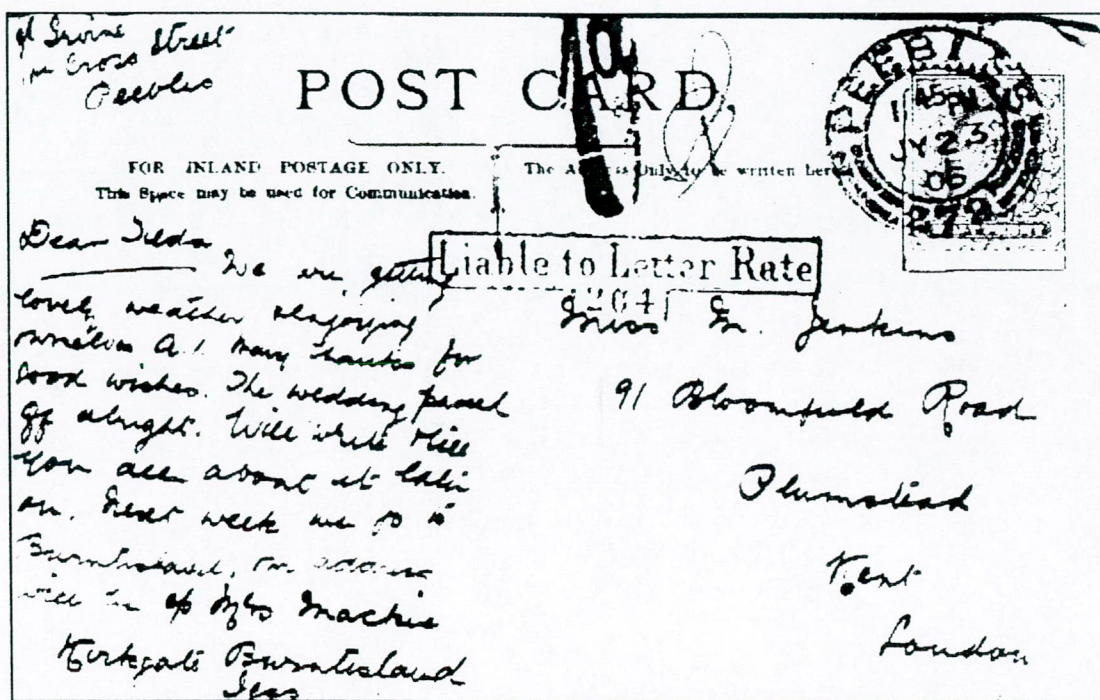


Fig 5

The large 1^D stamp seen in Fig. 1 and Fig. 5 (and with the other known uses of the Liable to Letter Rate stamp) was applied at Woolwich. It is clearly identified by the score across the 1, visible in both the 1883 and 1906 examples. This is probably an old stamp. Prior to then such stamps rarely had the penny symbol and, during the 1870s, such stamps were issued with the office number included.

Woolwich eventually allocated 16 in the London series and at least one new charge stamp had been issued to the office with the number by 1925 (Fig. 6).

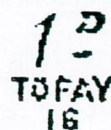


Fig 6 ("improved")

Later examples include (1968) a boxed "To pay posted unpaid" with the Woolwich sub district number SE18 Fig. 7) and an anonymous "More to pay...rate / above...oz" and used 10 years later (Fig. 7). Although there is no indication of the office of use incorporated in this stamp, as it appears on a cover posted in SE18 to an address in SE18, it can safely be assumed to have been used in SE18. The postage dues have been cancelled with a Woolwich steel double circle in red.

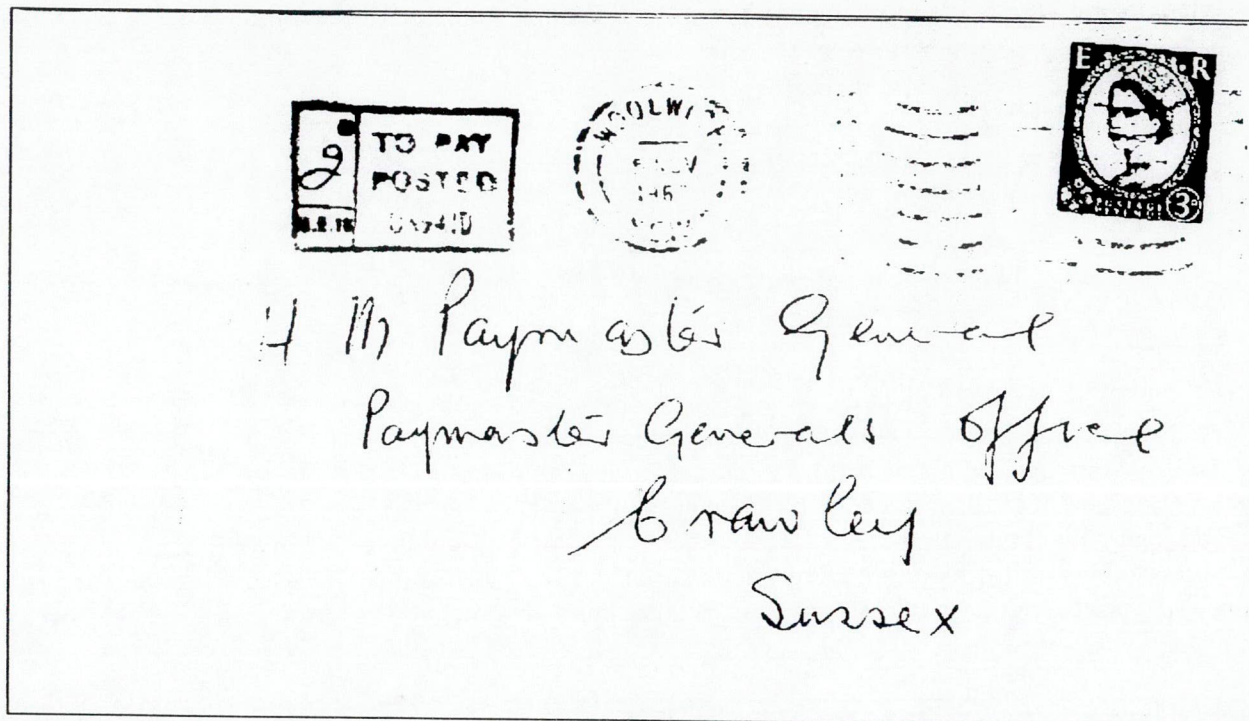


Fig. 7

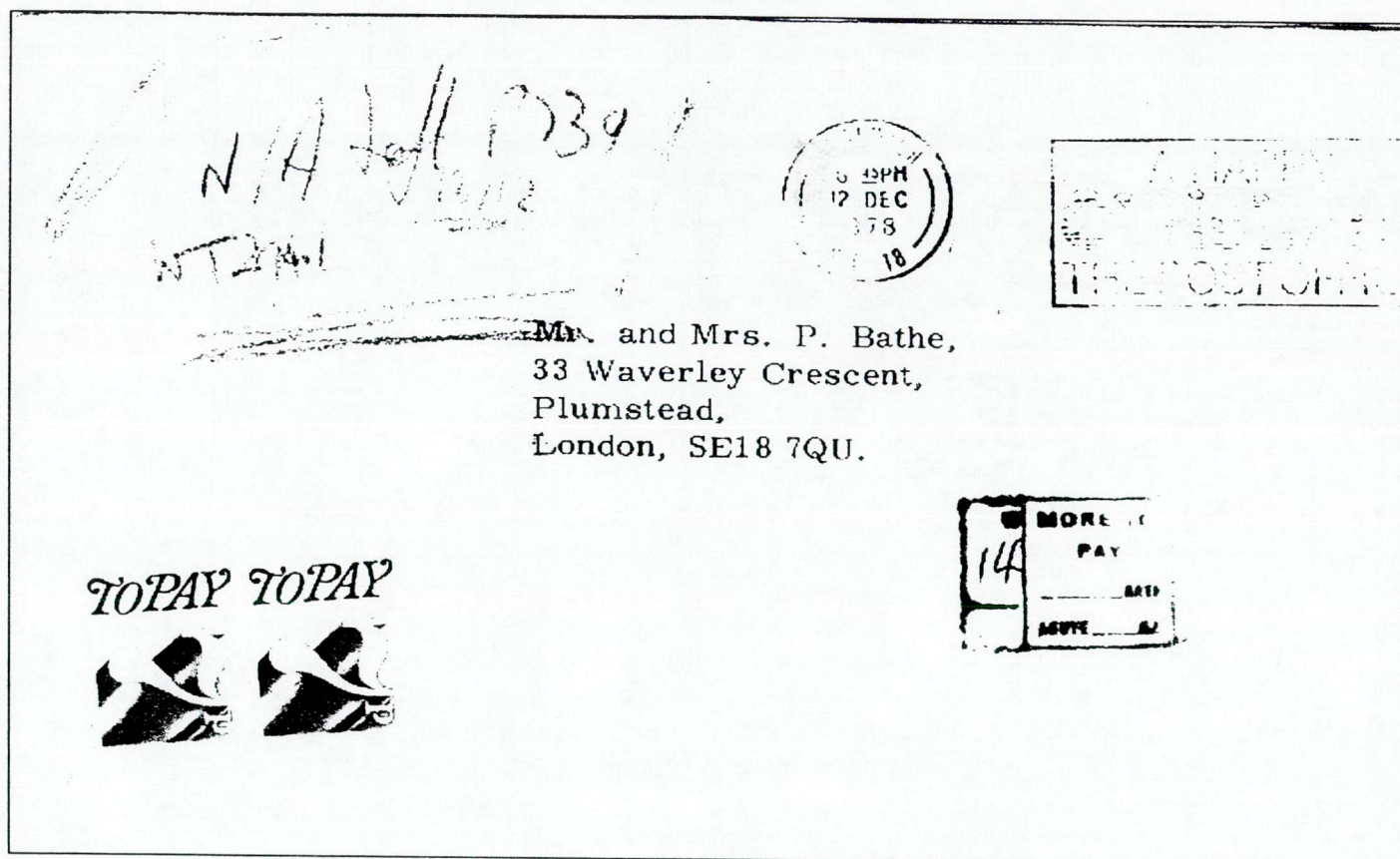


Fig. 8

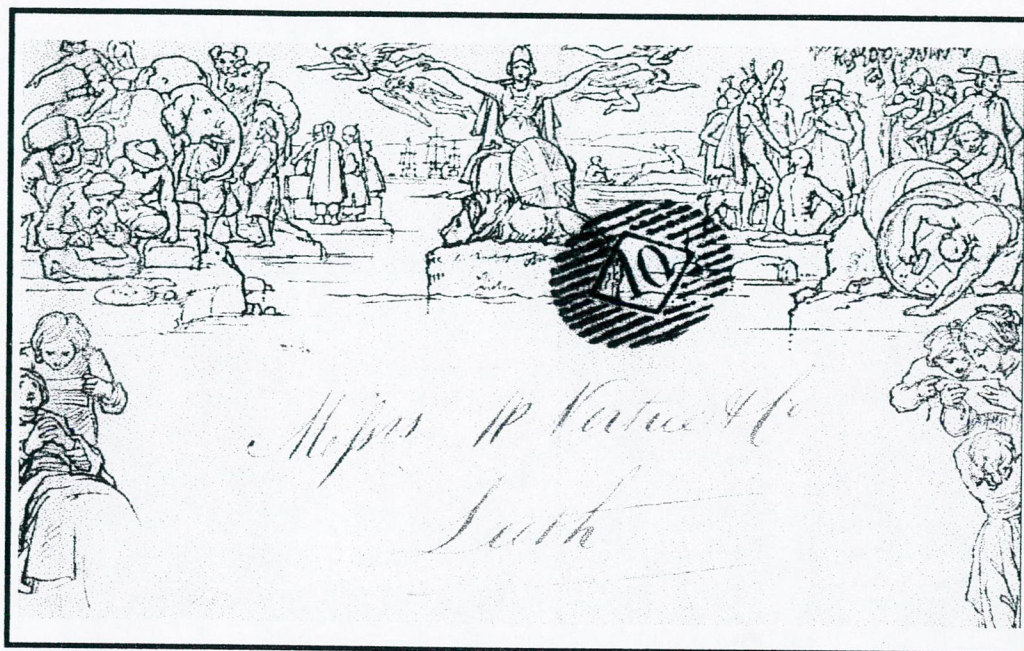
INLAND OFFICE DIAMOND: DATE EXTENSION

A page from the collection of Matthew Toomey

Mulready lettersheet with 1844

Inland Office Horizontal Diamond Cancellation No 10

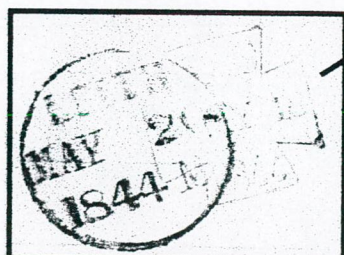
London to Leith 18th May 1844 (extension by 10 days of date of known use as reported in LPHG Handbook no. 12).



Lettersheet is A66 Forme 3 (1st series)

This mulready lettersheet is dated 18th May 1844 and was posted to the publishers J.S. Virtue & Co. in Leith. It was posted at Lombard Street Branch Office of the General Post (Chief office of the inland branch). Lombard Street was the busiest of the branch offices. Branch offices did not obliterate and there is a faint strike of A&H 72 used as a date stamp on the reverse of the lettersheet. The letter would then have travelled to St Martins Le Grand Inland Chief Office, where it was cancelled with the horizontal diamond. The numbers in the diamonds were generally for stamper identification purposes, that is each man drew a stamp, made an impression or otherwise recorded the number with his name.

The letter travelled on to Leith (the port of Edinburgh) where it was received on 20th May 1844 in the morning.



Lombard Street date stamp
18 MY 1844 and Leith date
stamp A&H 517 MAY 20
1844 M (Morning Duty)



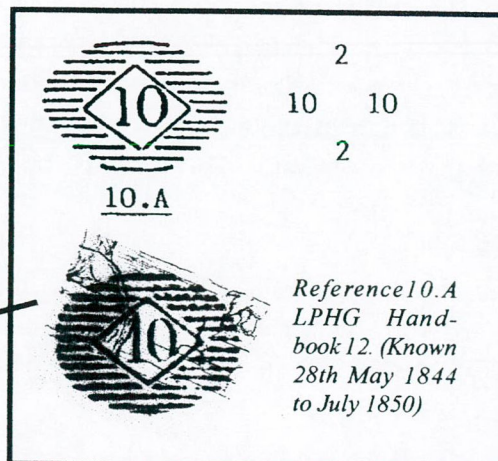
*A&H 72 and
Wilcocks and
Jay type 46
known from
18.01.34 to
25.4.57*

*Inland Office Horizontal
Diamond (10) cancellation*



At Martins Le Grand circa 1837
Opened 23rd September 1829

Branch Offices opened in 1829 in Borough, Charing Cross, Vere Street and Lombard Street.



SERVICE SUSPENDED

Robert I Johnson

Post Office Strikes

Parcel Post in London

January 1962



Main feature

The Times reported on the 11th January 1962 that the parcel post had stopped in London. Postal workers were on a work to rule. Some parcels were diverted to the railways on the 15th January 1962. London had too many parcels to cope with and, as in this case, the Post Office suspended the parcel service into London.

Notes

The dispute was over a pay claim and went on into February and March 1962. An award with back pay was agreed with the Government in May 1962. There was another dispute in November 1962 which had the same effect.