

METER POSTAGE ST/ MP CATALOGUE

by *Blue*
S. D. Barfoot, B.Sc., and Werner Simon



IMPRESSION FROM THE FIRST MACHINE TO BE
SANCTIONED, NORWAY, 1903

Norwegian Government Gazette, May 6th, 1903 :
"Tentatively in Kristiania stamping machines will
be used in the place of stamps. The values are
5 øre & 10 øre. All mail having such stamps is
to be considered & handled just like other mail
having regular stamps of the corresponding value."

E. W. Thrall
610 Arlington Avenue
Berkeley 7, California

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of the

METER POSTAGE STAMP

OF THE

WORLD

Preface.

SINCE the publication of the late Albert H. Harris's third edition of his Meter Postage Stamp Catalogue in 1940, the increase in the use of Meter Franking machines by Post Offices and private firms throughout the World, and with it, the number of varieties of meter postage impressions, has been phenomenal.

Unfortunately their collection and study has not kept pace with this increase and is still confined to all too few enthusiasts in Britain, while in the United States almost all "philometrists" (as they are known) confine themselves to the collection of their own country's varieties, neglecting those of the rest of the World.

This apparent lack of interest is no doubt due to the lack of up-to-date information, and it is our hope that this Catalogue will help in some measure to increase the number of those who have turned to "side-lines" like meters, after having become discouraged from the collection of adhesive postage stamps, either by reason of reduced incomes, or by the never ending stream of new issues which have poured out. These are often highly speculative and designed solely to increase the income of the issuing Countries.

There are no unnecessary or speculative issues of meter stamps, and their use, and the types of dies employed, is strictly controlled.

Meter franking has now become of such importance that it is a serious competitor of the adhesive postage stamp. For the fiscal year ended June 30th 1951, \$636 million was paid on metered mail in the U.S.A., representing 41% of the total value of all postage.

Meter mailing is a postal institution which was recognised internationally at the Postal Union Congress in Madrid in 1920, and in most Countries where Meter Franking is employed meter stamps, imprinted on gummed labels or "tapes", may be affixed to letters and parcels exactly like regular postage stamps. They are therefore of equal value and status, and as fully entitled to being collected and studied. This is especially true of those used by Post Offices. The United States Post Office Department has several thousand postage meter machines in operation in all the large Post Offices throughout the Country, and in Great Britain over 100 machines are now used for parcel post and telegram franking.

Many problems associated with the early issues of postage stamps have taken generations to solve. Similar problems await solution with meter stamps, for many of the circumstances connected with their origin and development remain obscure. There is therefore, a very wide field open to all postal history enthusiasts who wish to undertake any research into this long neglected branch of philately.

This catalogue aims to include descriptions and illustrations of all the varieties of meter machines and impressions known to have been used for

postal purposes throughout the World, including railway parcel meter stamps. It should be noted that meter machines are also used to a growing extent for other than postal purposes, such as receipts, motor tax, tobacco tax, insurance, bills of exchange, customs duty etc. in lieu of the corresponding adhesive revenue stamps. In a few cases the same machine may be employed for both postage and revenue purposes, e.g. Ceylon, New Zealand. The purely revenue meters are outside the scope of this Catalogue.

Prices have been omitted from the Catalogue, both for reasons of space and because at present the market for meter impressions is very limited. Instead the letters R, VR, RRR are used to indicate relative rarity.

We are particularly indebted to Mr. Horace N. Soper of Universal Postal Frankers Ltd., and to Mr. E. J. S. Smith, late of Roneo-Neopost, Ltd., for their many courtesies and unfailing help and patience in answering innumerable queries and supplying very interesting proofs and impressions and to Mr. Fred Bowes Jr., of Pitney-Bowes, Inc., for his help in connection with their machines.

Our thanks are also especially due to :—

Herr Heiner Dürst, of Rüschlikon, Switzerland, for permission to include material from his very detailed researches on European meters.

M. M. Michel, of Nice, France, for permission to use the details of French and Colonial meters in his Catalogues.

Heer Jan Dekker, of Amsterdam, Holland, for notes on Scandinavian meters.

Heer W. J. Pieterse Jr., of Bilthoven, Holland, for notes on the meters of Holland and Belgium.

Mr. Walter M. Swan, of Corinth, N.Y., for permission to illustrate several early United States meter impressions.

Mr. A. A. Dewey, of Harrow, England, the editor of the "Meter Stamp Bulletin", and to the many foreign agents of Universal and Neopost, manufacturers of European machines, and postmasters in several countries, who have almost invariably provided us with answers to the questions asked of them and sent innumerable items useful for illustration.

We are aware that the Catalogue will be incomplete in that many varieties, especially from newer machines, are omitted, but it is hoped to publish a supplement at a later date. All additions and corrections should be sent to the Editors.

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Introduction

METER FRANKING MACHINES are machines which print impressions or stamps of various values direct on to envelopes, wrappers, labels, etc., and record the amount expended by means of a meter. Three types are found :

1. Used by private firms or government departments under licence from the postal authorities.
 2. Used by post offices for franking mail handed in by the public.
 3. Coin-freed machines, used by the public for franking their own mail by insertion of the required coins.
- Many varieties of "Postage Paid" impressions are found, produced by Post Office machines or by private firms chiefly in U.S.A.), and generally found on mail posted in bulk. These are *not* metered impressions.

I. TYPES OF FRANKING MACHINES AND VALUE DIES

Franking machines can be placed into three groups, according to the type of value die employed.

1. *Fixed Value (F.V.)*. Each value is printed from an entirely separate die, of which the value (denomination) forms an integral part. Some early machines (many of which are still in use) were fitted with a single value die only (F.V. 1), e.g., Pitney models C & M (used in conjunction with mailing machines) Havas Tiranny, Sazas Sanglier.

Numerous machines of this type have had their value dies changed, sometimes on several occasions. Universal N.Z. machines usually have 6 value dies, Midget either 2, 3 or 5. Early Neopost machines have 2, 3 or 5 values, Franco, Universal '5' and Rorex, 5 values, Hasler D 106, 8 values, Francopost and Safag, 10 values.

Midget machines used in Great Britain are often found with two different varieties of die on the same machine e.g. E VIII R and G VI R where a new die has been substituted for a worn or obsolete one.

2. *Limited Value (L.V.)*. These machines are fitted with a single frame die, with a limited number of separate value segments, which are brought into position for use by the operation of a lever or dial. They were first introduced by Neopost (L.V. 6), where in some cases, e.g. Great Britain and India, the value die impression is at the base of the frame and includes a portion of the frame, which is therefore broken, thus making it possible to distinguish these dies from similar F.V. dies. Pitney-Bowes Model C.V. has 6, Model H has 10, the Belgian Timbrographe 9, and Havas Grandjean 5 value dies respectively. The new Universal "Simplex" and Pitney-Bowes DM (Desk Model) must be considered as Limited Value machines, although they are fitted with as many as 25 and 21 value dies respectively, since all the values obtainable are on distinct and separate segments, and not arranged in banks as on Multi-Value machines.

3. *Multi-Value (M.V. or OMNI)* have a single frame die in which any denomination can be printed by the operation of keys, on the Cash Register principle, the number of possible denominations depending on the number of "banks" of keys. For example, Universal MV machines using British currency are of 3 models : (i) the Junior is a two Bank model with values from 1d. to 111d., the first key giving nil or 1d., the second from 1d. to 11d., the intermediate is a three Bank model with values from 1d. to 911d., the third key giving the shilling denominations (iii) the Original is a four Bank model, with values from 1d. to 2911d. (or occasionally higher) or from 1d. to 29 : 19 : 11d. It should be noted that although the "Junior" can produce only 23 values compared with the 25 values of the "Simplex" it is nevertheless a M.V. machine since, as mentioned above, the fractional values are obtainable only by the use of 2 banks of keys, instead of one, as in Limited Value models.

With decimal currency, for which these machines are particularly suited, machines may print from 001 to 991, 001 to 999 etc. up to 00001 to 99,999 etc., according to the number of banks of keys, which may range from two to seven. Some models are fitted with one or more fixed zeros at the right of the die, e.g. Brazil, China, Greece, to allow for high values, due to currency depreciation.

The first Swedish Frankator machine impressed values from 001 to 099 ore with a fixed zero at the left. It was therefore a two Bank model, instead of a three Bank as would appear from the impressions produced.

The chief Multi-Value machines are Pitney-Bowes, Universal, Hasler, Francotyp, Komusina, Postalia, Krag, Sazas, Frankator, Taxo-post, Safag and Portec.

The classification used above differs from the normal American practice. Their types are :

1. Single denomination, corresponding to our F.V. 1.
2. Multi-denomination, which includes both F.V. and L.V. machines, having two or more different value dies.
3. Omni-denomination, corresponding to European Multi-value machines.

The latter certainly print every possible denomination *between certain limits*, but this does not make them *omni-denominational*.

Not all machines of types 1 and 2 can repeat the frank where multiple franking is required, and envelopes must be run through the machines more than once to obtain the required value, e.g., P.B. Desk Model.

II. HISTORY OF METER FRANKING

Soon after the introduction of adhesive stamps in 1840 suggestions were made and patents taken out in an attempt to replace their use. It was recognised that a system involving purchase, moistening and affixing of small pieces of gummed paper to mail for subsequent cancellation by the Post Office might well be replaced by some mechanical means whereby prepayment of postage might be made by the approved use of a machine to imprint the "stamp" and at the same time to keep a register of the postage used.

Carle Bushe of Paris appears to have been the originator of such a system. He took out a British patent in August 1884, covering an apparatus for impressing and registering stamps. The foreword of this patent is interesting as showing his remarkable foresight :

"It is indisputable that the adoption of postage stamps did away with a great deal of trouble and annoyance, but it is impossible for progress to stop there, for that system still presents numerous inconveniences not only for the Government but for the Public. In fact the application of adhesive stamps, which is so easy and convenient when a few only are to be used at one time, becomes a difficult matter, and entails a serious loss of time when hundreds of letters, circulars, newspapers, and so forth have to be despatched daily."

Business methods and office equipment were not then geared up to the present mechanised age and firms were not ready to finance the production of such apparatus, or capable of manufacturing them in quantity.

NORWAY

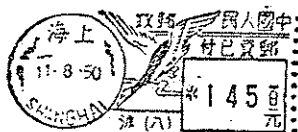
A machine, invented by Chr. A. Kahrs, was installed in the lobby of the G.P.O. Kristiania (Oslo), on August 24th, 1900. This was a coin-freed model, and the franks produced were considered only as receipts for prepaid postage and the Postal authorities affixed adhesive stamps to the letters bearing them, usually over the meter impressions. The machine was withdrawn on September 14th, 1900.

To Karl Uchermann goes the honour of having originated the franking system as we know it today for use by private firms. His machines were constructed by Krag Maskinfabrik, of Kristiania. The frank dies were supplied by the Postal authorities and the design is one of the most attractive ever to have been used (see frontispiece). Only the 5 ore value impressions are known used on covers.

The machines were first used on June 15th, 1903, and the latest date of use known is January 22nd, 1905.

U.S.A.

The forerunner of the meter machines used in the U.S.A. was the invention of Arthur H. Pitney, Co., founder of Pitney-Bowes, Inc. The machine was designed and built by Eugene A. Rummier, the printing unit being contained in a rectangular box-like structure. The first Company for its promotion, Pitney Postal Machine Co. was organised in 1902. The machine was first demonstrated by Mr. Rummier in the Post Office Department in Washington D.C. in March, 1903. From November 24th, 1903 to March, 1904 all official correspondence of the Third Assistant Postmaster General was handled by this machine under the supervision of a committee of the P.O. Department appointed by Postmaster General Payne. The committee reported favourably on the machine but concluded that the Postmaster General did not have the authority to adopt that style of postage. Very few impressions from this machine are known. As only official mail was franked, the impressions produced have no value for collectors.



1950. Type 7. As illustrated, with 4 characters at T, rt. reading "Chinese Peoples' Republic."
12. 4S L + 3/Ov. + 2 signs (100 dollars).



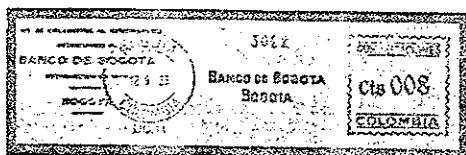
(十) 港



1950. Type 8. Make unknown (MV.) Star design in imitation perf. rectangle. TM. below, with M. No. in Chinese between. Ar. MF. in D.M. Yr. stops between. Possibly a "Postage Paid" franking machine, but further information is required.

13. F. of V. 3; Ov. (Machines 10 & 11, Shanghai).
Impressions from several machines were cut out and sold to the public as adhesive stamps during rapid currency changes.

COLOMBIA



1931. Type 1. Universal MV. Model O (III-bank). LIC.2-15 known. (under TM.) Ar. MF. in D.M. Yr. Date figs. S.N.

1. W 4S TC 3(0 + 2)A. CE (Frankotyp) TM.
BIC. SIC. (rarely L. of TM.). (Lic. 2-11.)
2. N O 3(st. + 2)A. CE. TM. BIC or DC.



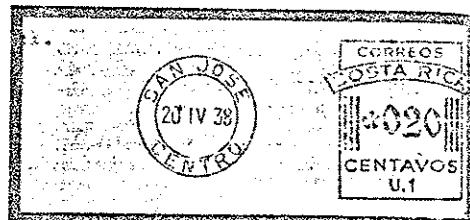
(Proof)

1952. Type 2. Hasler F88 (MV.) Design similar to Type 1, but Hasler type F. of V. and TM. Rm. MF. in D.M. Yr. stops after D. and M.

5. As 3, but with "SOBREPORTE AEREO" at T. No. 4 design incorporates a special charity tax of No. 5 appears to be used only in combination with No. 4 for airmail surcharge, in place of airmail address stamps.
1952. Type 3. Pitney-Bowes Model R. (MV.) PB. . . up. TM. DC. Rm. MF. in D.M. Yr.
6. F. of V. 3(3 wavy lines + 2 + 2 dots) Ov.

COSTA RICA

- M. Nos. Universal MV. : Ur up.
Neopost LV. : Nr up.



1938. Type 1. Universal MV. Ur up. TM. DC. Rm. MF. in D.M. Yr.

- A. Model O (IV-bank). Without "POST PAID" under "COSTA RICA." Value in "CENTAVOS" (error for "CENTIMOS").

1. N O 4(st. + 3)A. (Ur only) (R).

- B. As A, but value corrected to 'CENTIMOS'.

2. N O 4(st. + 3)A. (Ur only, R. die) S.L.L.

- C. As B, but "POST PAID" (in English), under "COSTA RICA."

3. N O 4(st. + 3)A. (U3, used by Government departments).

4. N O 4(st. + 3)Ov. (U8).

- D. Model I (III-bank). As C.

5. N O 3(st. + 2)A. (U1r).

6. N O 3(st. + 2)Ov.

1939. Type 2. Model I (III-bank) Design as Mexico Type 2, but "COSTA RICA" at top, MAQ. No 1000 PERM. No U.2. at bottom.

7. N O 3(st. + 2)A. (U2 only) (R).

1947. Type 3. Neopost LV.(6). Nr up. Design as Type 1 but smaller, 19 x 25. TM. DC with arc Rm. MF. in D.M. Yr. F. of V. Ov. Scrf.

8. Values : 10, 15, 25, 40 centimos, 1 colon.

CROATIA

During the Italian occupation Croatia was proclaimed an independent state and Yugoslav machines were modified as illustrated.

1941. Type 1. Wider frank, shaded squares in shield right. 1 row of cords, L. "HRVATSKA" centred R. No. 48. Rm. MF. in D.M. Yr. (normally).

- A. Francotyp A (MV. IV-bank).

1. N TC 4(st. + 3)A. TM. BIC. Townname T. & B.
a. ditto, but TM. DC, Townname at T. only. Star arcs at B. (as illustrated).

- B. Francotyp C (MV. IV-bank).

2. W TC 4(st. + 3)A. 6t. TM. DC. Townname T, star & arcs at B.

7436



Type 1.

1941. Type 2. As Type 1, but double row of cords, L. Francotyp C (MV.).

5. W TC 4(1oz. + 3)G. TM. DC-A. Townname at T, star & arcs at B.

1941. Type 3. Narrower frank. Solid squares in shield, rt. 3 rows of cords L. "HRVATSKA" further to left.

- A. Francotyp A (MV.).

6. N TC 4(st. + 3)A. TM. BIC. Rm. MF.

- B. Francotyp C (MV.).

7. W TC 4(0 + 3)G. TM. DC-A, as 5. Ar. MF. After the liberation, Yugoslav type dies were again fitted.

CUBA

- Meter Nos : Pitney-Bowes H : No Croir up. (inscribed PERMISO No or METRO No in frank) (P. No., different from M. No. may appear in TM.).

- Model R: No. C. . . up. (P. No. in TM.) (Type 2).

- PB. C. . . up. (P. No. in TM.) (Type 3).

- Desk Model : P.B.-c. . . (P. No. in TM.).

- Adhesives : pink "METERED MAIL" safety paper. Z.Ro.



1938. Type 1. Pitney-Bowes Model H (LV. 10) : No Croir up. TM. DC. M. in letters in M.D. Yr.

- A. Inner oval not touching outer imitation perforations (as illustrated).

1. Permiso No. C. . . in fr. TM. : town/CUBA.

- Fr. 22 x 22.

- Values : .02, .03, .04, .05, .06, .08, .10, 1.00 centavos.

- a. Fr. 25 x 25. (C107).

2. As 1, but TM. : town, CUBA/PERMISO No. . .

- Values : as 1.

3. Metro No C. . . in fr. TM. as 2. Values : .02, .03, .08, .10 centavos.

- B. Inner oval cutting imitation perforations.

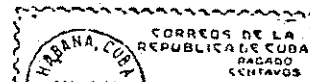
4. Metro No C. . . in fr. TM. : town, CUBA/PERMISO No. . .

- Values : .01, .02, .03, .05, .06, .08, .09, .10, .20c.

- a. TM. : town, CUBA/PERMISO . . .

- b. TM. : town, CUBA/PERMISO No. . .

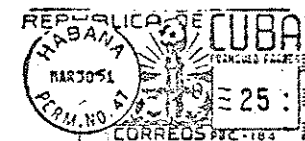
5. As 4, but TM. : Town/CUBA. Values : .02, .03, .05, .06, .10, .20, .50, 1.00 centavos.



19. Type 2. Pitney-Bowes Model R. (MV. III-bank). METRO No C 175 up? TM. SC. M. in letters in M.D. Yr.

6. F. of V. 3(stop + 2 + 3)Ov. (.01 : to 9.99) TM. : Town, CUBA/PERMISO NO.

7. 3 (3 wavy lines + 2) (0.01 to 9.99). TM. : Town, CUBA/PERMISO.



1948. Type 3. Pitney-Bowes Model R (MV. III-bank). PB. C. . . up. S.L.L.

8. F. of V. 3(3 wavy lines + 2 + 3). Rm. MF. in D.M. Yr. TM. SC with PERM. No., dots at rt. of F. of V. spaced or close.

- a. TM. with PERMISO.

- b. TM. with PERMISO NO.

9. F. of V. ditto. M. in letters in M.D. Yr. TM. SC. with PERMISO NO.

- a. TM. with PERM. NO.



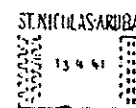
1950. Type 4. Pitney-Bowes DM. (LV.21). Design as Type 3, but smaller.

10. M. in letters in M.D. Yr. TM. with PERM. Values : .02, .03 centavos.

11. Rm. MF. in D.M. Yr. TM. with PERMISO. Values : .02, .03, .05, .08, .09, 20 centavos.

CURACAO

4375



LAGO OIL AND TRANSPORT Co. Ltd



1938. Francotyp CE (MV. IV-bank). M. Nos : 1-3. Design as Netherlands Type 3.

1. W 4S TC 4(st. + 2)A. (*001-999) Ar. MF. in D.M. Yr. S.L.C. & L. of TM. (1, Williamstad : 2, Emmastad : 3, St. Nicholas, Aruba).

- For later issues, see NETHERLANDS ANTILLES.

CURACAO