

METER STAMP SOCIETY

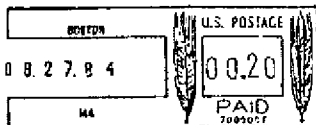
BULLETIN

NO. 185 and 186

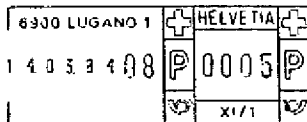
1984

ANOTHER NEW FRIDEN-ALCATEL METER

In Bulletin No. 182 it was announced that a new type meter stamp made by Friden-Alcatel was in use. This company has now produced another also totally new type of meter that is being tested by the USPS in five cities across the country. Unlike the earlier type this one is intended for use in post offices only. It is designed to be used by postal clerks in the mailing and handling of parcels. The machine can weigh, calculate the postage and print out the meter stamp in one step. In use it resembles the Flushing NCR meters which were tested for several years in the 1970's. It will probably be listed in S-W Catalogue in the same PP series as the NCR.



US FRIDEN-ALCATEL



SWISS FRAMA

The five cities participating in the test are San Jose, CA, St. Louis, MO, Philadelphia, PA, Boston, MA, and Charlotte, NC. The test began in mid-August and is scheduled to last six months. Meter numbers seen so far are 7000007 (Boston), 7000011 (St. Louis), 7000022 (Charlotte), 7000027 and 7000029 (Philadelphia) and 7000033 (San Jose). It is known that there are a total of five machines being tested in Philadelphia alone (all at the Continental Branch Post Office, Market Street), and there are no doubt several machines in each of the other test cities as well.

This meter is very similar in appearance to FRAMA post office meters (see Bulletin no. 178). The resemblance is so close in fact it is likely many of the components including the printing head of this machine are manufactured by FRAMA and assembled and marketed by Friden-Alcatel. Compare the imprints pictured above. They are identical in size (24 x 64 mm). The date lines are in the same location and are also identical regarding the shapes of the numerals and the position of the stops between day, month and year.

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| <p>(2) From catalogue illustration
Desire photo of original.</p> | <p>(A) Sender: William E. and
Lewis F. Mason, Attorneys-
at-Law, 108 S. LaSalle St.,
Chicago.</p> |
| <p>(3) Based on W. G. Steiger
article of June 21, 1930.
Need to determine present
holder and obtain photo.</p> | <p>(B) With instructions to
Postmaster in upper left
corner.</p> <p>(C) Sender: The Addressographer.</p> <p>(D) Upper left corner: "Return
in 6 days to 901 W. Vanburen
St. Chicago".</p> |

NOTES :

Of the Shields listed above, two are on exhibit in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. Six are from the Crane Catalogue but whereabouts of the actual prints are unknown. We also include the Shield referred to in the Steiger article of 1930 although the present owner is unknown to us. Under the category "(1) By reference only." above, we have entered eight items where death or other circumstances have prevented us from obtaining confirmation of Shields heretofore known to be owned by four well regarded collectors.

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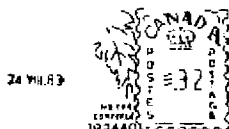
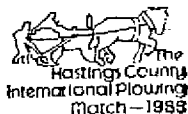
FRIDEN OFFICIAL VARIETY

Another Friden Official meter type O(KE)2b without key letter has turned up. The meter number is 503345 and joins meter number 503302 which was reported with this configuration in Bulletin No. 178.

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FOREIGN METER NEWS

Two new Canadian meters have appeared with date lines but no townmark circles. Members Postel and Megyesi showed us a Postalia and a Hasler respectively with this configuration.



Cuba has released two commemorative PRAMA automats at nearly the same time and both in a foreign country -- West Germany. The first (Fig. 1) was issued to honor the Fifth International Stamp Fair held in Essen on 26-31 May, 1984. The second (Fig. 2), released three weeks later in Hamburg, commemorates the Universal Postal Union's Congress and International Philatelic Exposition, held 19-26 June. Both designs have an unusual pictorial underprinting which depicts a seashore with sun and palm trees. The Essen design was available simultaneously in Havana. It is not known whether the Hamburg design was available outside the show (i.e. in Cuba itself) or whether there are plans to issue "definitive" PRAMA automats for general use.

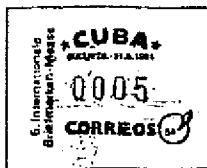
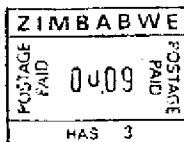


Figure 1.



Figure 2.

Hasler has begun producing their popular Mailmaster line for Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia).



FRAMA has introduced a new four bank meter in Brazil with figure of value: 0.000,00. The last two zeros are fixed and represent centavos (1/100th of a cruzeiro). Member Ernst Muhr has reported that because of the high inflation rate and increasingly low value of the cruzeiro (2279 to the dollar as of this writing) the Brazilian government abolished the centavo on August 21st. This makes the new FRAMA obsolete almost from its inception. No doubt existing meters with figure of value containing centavos will continue to be used, but we can expect a large number of new meter designs sans centavo introduced in Brazil during the upcoming months.

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