

# The Machine Cancel Forum

The Journal of The Machine Cancel Society - APS Unit #24

## 250<sup>TH</sup> ISSUE!

This Journal began as **FLAG CANCELLATIONS** published by the Flag Cancel Society in September 1963, for the study of Flag Cancels. In 1987 the Flag Cancel Society amended its charter to include the study of all Flag Cancels and all machine cancels. The Society changed its name to The Machine Cancel Society, and assumed ownership and editorship of **The Machine Cancel Forum** from its original publishers, John Koontz and John R. McGee. The First Series of Forum was published by Koontz and McGee from May 1974 into 1986. The Second Series of Forum, published by The Machine Cancel Society, began in January 1987. The last issue of **FLAG CANCELLATIONS** was issue #138, under the editorship of Bart Billings. The numbering sequence of the Flag Cancel Society was retained for its journal, and hence the first issue of **The Machine Cancel Forum** under The Machine Cancel Society's editorship became issue #139. Bart Billings was the first editor of the Second Series of Forum. Bart served ten years as editor of **FLAG CANCELLATIONS** and another ten years as editor of **The Machine Cancel Forum** (Second Series). This 250<sup>th</sup> issue of Forum is dedicated to Bart Billings, with thanks for his labor of love.

The Machine Cancel Society  
OCTOBER 2014 \*\*\* ISSUE #250

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The members listed below have volunteered to act as the focus points of information in their area of study of machine cancel markings. If you have questions about usage in a particular city or state, earliest or latest known use, or the markings themselves, you are encouraged to contact them. The courtesy of self-addressed stamped envelopes for response would be appreciated.

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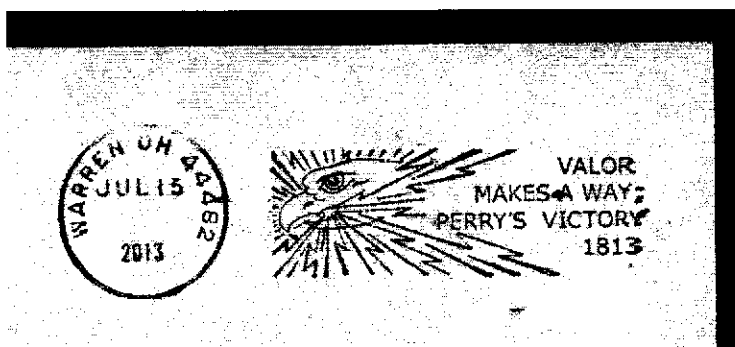
For the 250<sup>th</sup> issue of Machine Cancel Forum, Jerry H. Miller has provided this very special article on the history of Machine Cancells:

**The Evolution of Experimental Machine Postmarks Worldwide,  
1857-1920s  
by Jerry H. Miller**

Beginning on page 5375

\* \* \* \*

### EDITOR'S CORNER



My many thanks to Jerry H. Miller for his hard work in assembling his 62 page article on the evolution of machine cancells for this 250<sup>th</sup> issue. The option was to break it into smaller units, and publish it in several issues. However, breaking it up would break its continuity and usefulness as a single issue. To keep Forum in publishable size, you will find no other articles or society business. News concerning the August Annual General Meeting will be delayed until the January issue.

But I will remind you of the following:

- **Dues statements are being mailed out separately.** Kindly respond promptly. Please remember that our dues remain at \$15, the same for **twenty** years! How do we do it? By your participation in our auctions, buying society books, and donations of covers and money to the Society. Thank you loyal readers for your support.
- **The membership will vote on officers for the upcoming 2015-2016 term.** In the past, these were stuffed into your Forum envelope. It is actually cheaper for the officers to stuff the envelopes and mail them out to you first class! Kindly respond to the ballots mailed to you.
- **We have an auction coming up.** See flier on the back of this page. Thank you for participating!

*Cheers! Alex*

# **MCS AUCTION NUMBER 2014-2**

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**Bids Must be Postmarked or E-mailed by Tuesday, November 18, 2014**

Send Bids to: **Don Pearson, Auction Manager**  
**2368 Wheatland Cir**  
**Delmont, PA 15626**

or e-mail: **donpearson@aol.com**

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The Auction Manager is finally settled into his new home and is again offering the quarterly auctions.

The Auction for this quarter will be available on our website by the first week of October 2014.

The address is: <http://machinecancel.org>.

Members who have requested hard copies in the past, will automatically receive hard copies of this auction in the mail. Other members may request a hard copy of the auction by sending a request to the Auction Manager at his address above.

Results of the previous auction will be sent to all successful bidders in the auction, as is customary, or by request from the auction manager.

Because the number of bidders is still low, the number of competing bids is low, and bidders are getting some good bargains. So send in your bids and get in on the bargains.

Please be sure to read the auction rules on our website.

**The Evolution of Experimental Machine Postmarks Worldwide,  
1857-1920s  
by Jerry H. Miller**

**FOREWARD**

This article encompasses the worldwide evolution of machine postmarks limiting itself to the author's perspective regarding the importance of the postmarking machines presented and their related postmarks, since many other machines of lesser importance, particularly involving the United States, could be included, nor will the article present an in-depth study of postmarks of any one country or illustrate every postmark relating to each machine.

The concluding chapter briefly discusses other related, albeit unusual to most readers, postmarking machines of the period, their postmarks, applications and usages.

**FORERUNNER DEVICES  
(1850s)**

Mechanical devices for postmarking out-going and in-coming mail were tried and tested in a number of countries in the 1850's including Denmark, France and the United States of America, with the primary objective of improving the clarity and application of hand-stamp applied marks.

One unusual example of early experimental use was at Copenhagen, Denmark.

Already in 1856, the Copenhagen (Railway) Post Office sought to apply transit marks to out-going mail using a hand-operated device which applied a circular mark indicating the time and date of transit information (Figure 1).

**FIGURE 1:**

Folded commercial mail dated October 30, 1856, sent from Copenhagen to Bordeaux, France, by train through the Danish Post Office at Hamburg and subsequently arriving at Bordeaux on November 2, 1856! (The Copenhagen train station transit mark is located at the lower left front. Other transit and arrival postmarks on reverse.)



Duplex postmarks applied by a single stroke were not new to Britain or America, since they were already applied on trial mail at Manchester in England between November-December 1857 by a French-manufactured hand stamping device along with duplex markings also appearing in 1850's America.

## **“PIONEER” MECHANICAL POSTMARKING MACHINES**

**(1857-1866)**

### **GREAT BRITAIN**

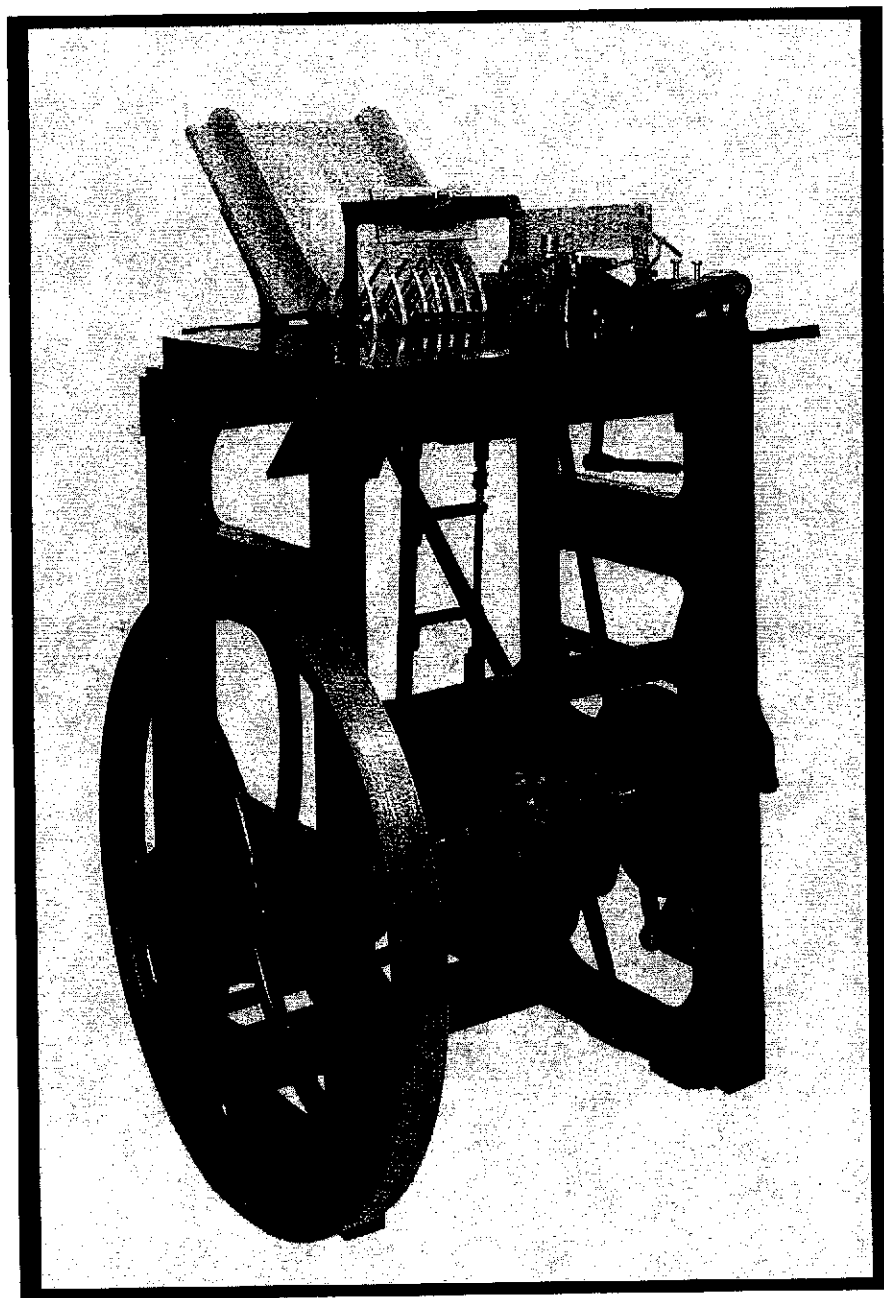
Rowland Hill has been credited with introducing prepaid postage in form of a postage stamp in Great Britain's Postal Service in 1840. Less than twenty years later, his son, Pearson Hill, is credited with introducing the first mechanical postmarking machine.

Appointed junior secretary with the British Post Office in 1850, Pearson Hill became involved with studying the postmarking deficiencies in the post office and subsequently recognized a need for improving the legibility of postmarks through development of a machine or stamping device to replace hand-application of postmarks, heretofore generally requiring a clerk to apply two strikes (separate dater & obliterator hand-stamps).

Alternately, although his work may not have been directly intended for such, Hill's efforts and ultimate patented postmarking machinery enabled the Post Office to expedite the handling of the increasing volume of mail from the expansion of mail use during Britain's so-called "Industrial Revolution" Period, which increased from 70 million units of mail handled in 1839, just prior to the introduction of prepaid postage, to 208 million in 1841 and 350 million by 1850, after the use of prepaid postage! (1)

### **PEARSON HILL MACHINE (1857-1858)**

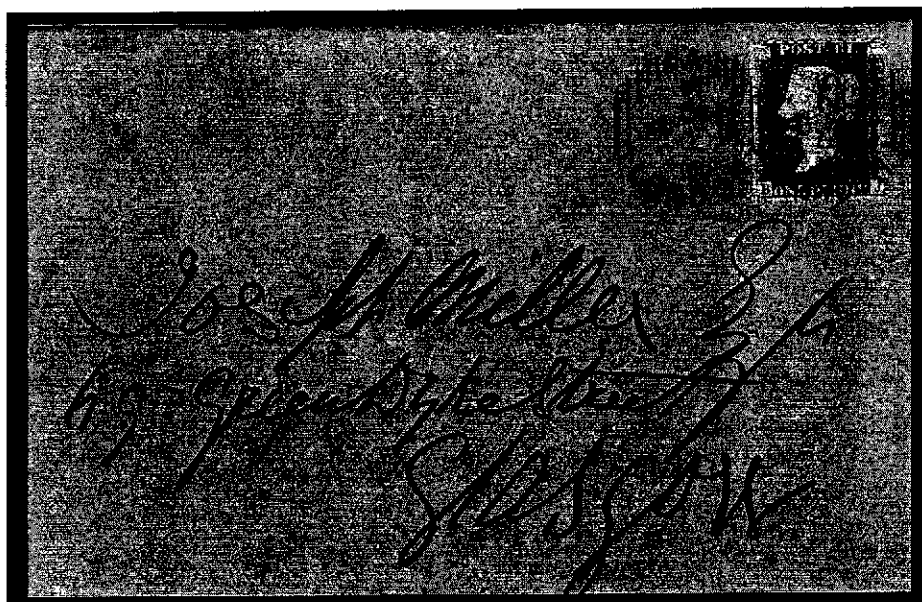
It was Pearson Hill in 1857 who would first patent a machine for "stamping, marking or printing...letters" (2), a single-impression, treadle-operated, single-stroke machine (Figure 2).



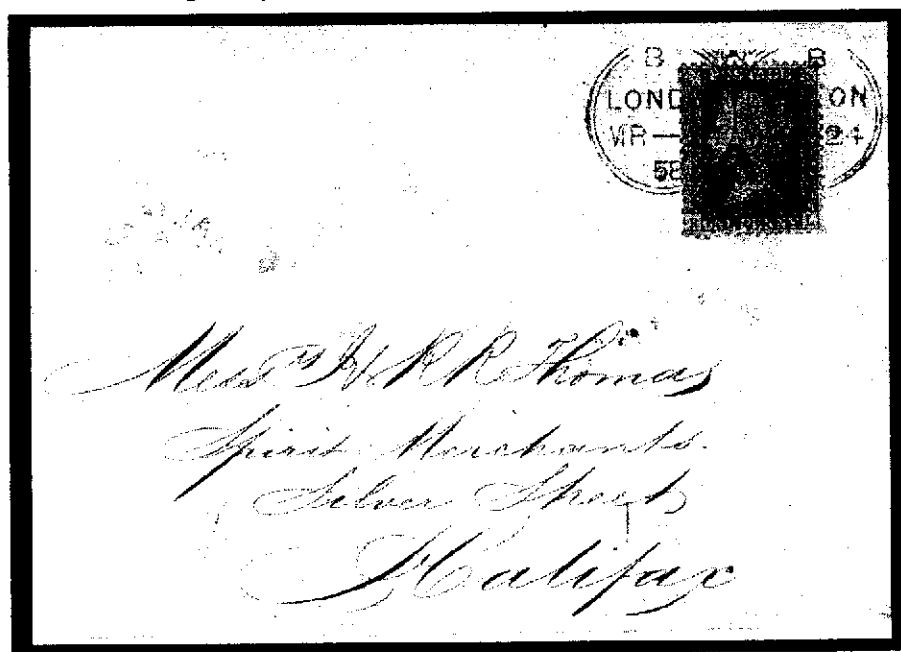
**FIGURE 2:**

Photo of Pearson Hill's treadle-operated "Model A" Machine able to postmark about 100 letters/minute. (3)

Between 1857-1858 subsequent versions of Hill's postmarking machine would be tested by the postal authorities at London. Machine refinements evolved from those trials, resulting in two primary field-use postmark types... (Figures 3 & 4).

**FIGURE 3:**

Postmark example from Hill's first production "Model A" Machine tested between 1857-1858., with first daytime use on September 21, 1857, and first full day of operation of the machine, September 25, 1857 (illustrated), with the latest date known February 17, 1858, having postmark codes "A, M, 1, 2, 3, 4" used at various times during a day.

**FIGURE 4:**

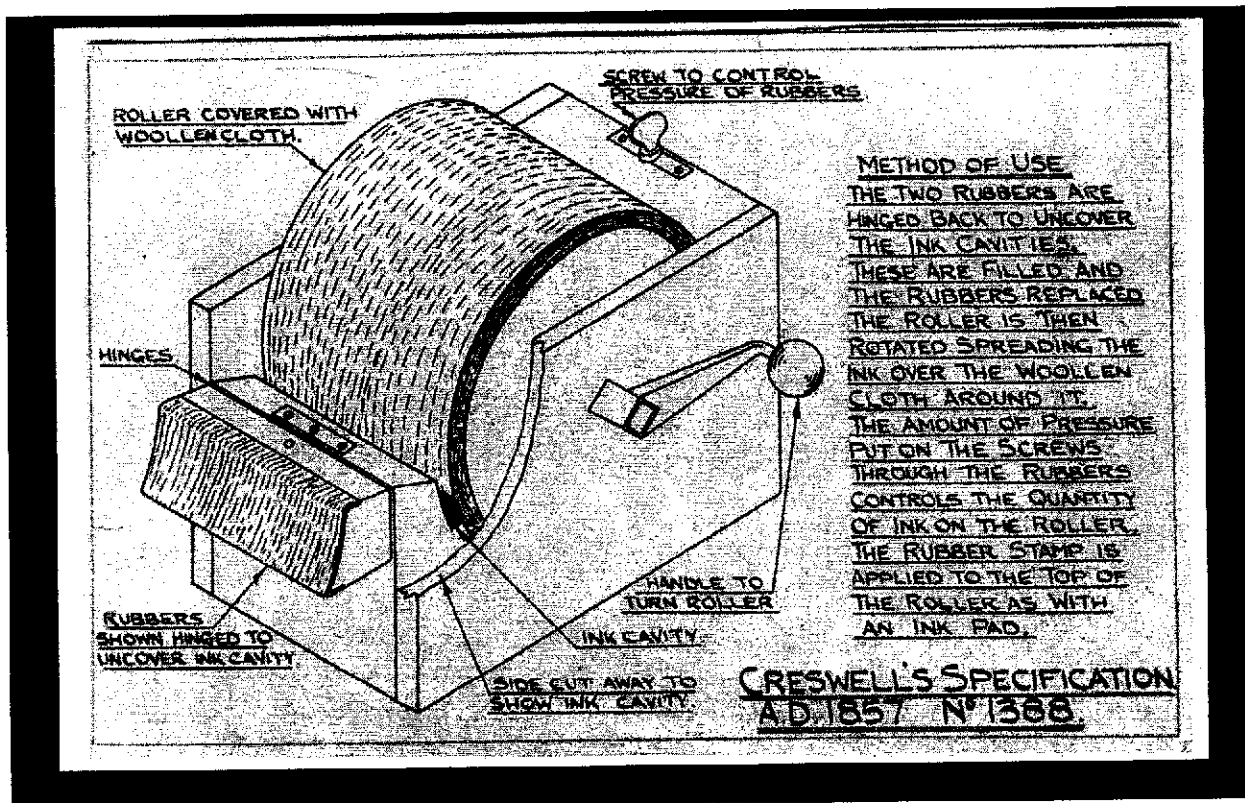
Hill's second machine version "Model B" was tested between March 21 – April 23, 1858, was a modification of his production Model "A" having a metal postmark die, known as the "Opera Glass".

Concurrent with Pearson Hill's efforts, other devices for improving postmarking of mail were patented and introduced in Britain during 1857-1858.



## CRESWELL INKING DEVICE (1857)

In 1857, George Henry Creswell patented his "Apparatus for supplying ink or other mixture for stamps used in stamping letters...", i.e. a revolving stamp pad. (4) It became widely used in Britain with the objective of improving clarity of postmarks as well as reducing the amount of ink used in the postmarking of mail, which were early objectives of the British Post Office. (Figure 5)

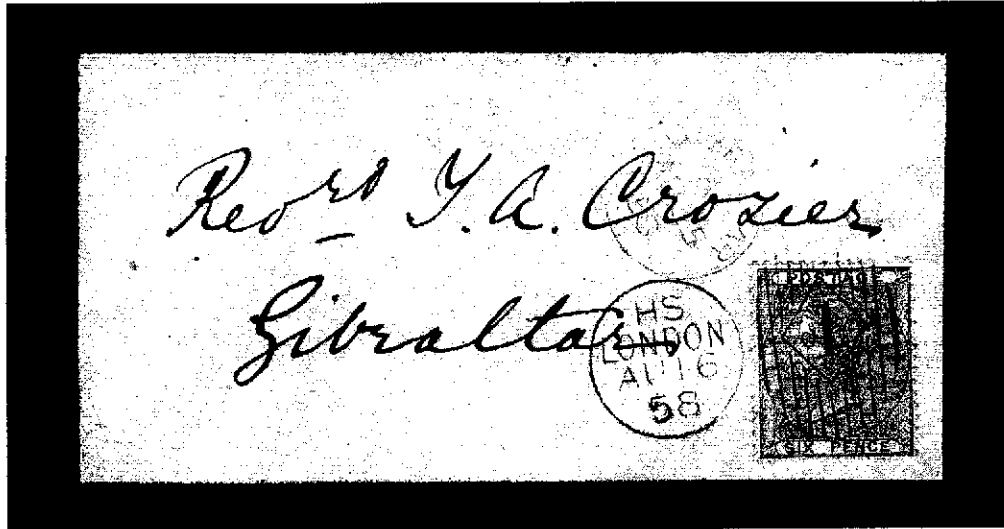


**FIGURE 5:**  
 Illustration of Creswell's revolving ink pad from his patent of 1857.

However, this innovation was quickly technologically out-dated in that the Pearson Hill Parallel Motion Machine, introduced in 1858, was self-inking, which gave it a strong marketing advantage.

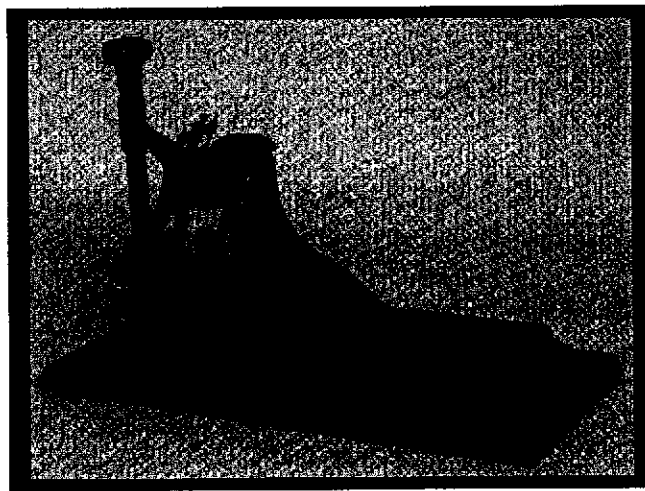
## CHARLES RIDEOUT MACHINE (1858-1866)

In 1858, Charles Rideout, a former surveyor with the British Office, offered the post office a compact table-top single-die, hand-operated, single-stroke, postmarking device which had been patented by his son-in-law, George Beard, in October 1857. (5) Its postmark was a duplex style having a dater dial and obliterator indicating machine number (Figure 6).



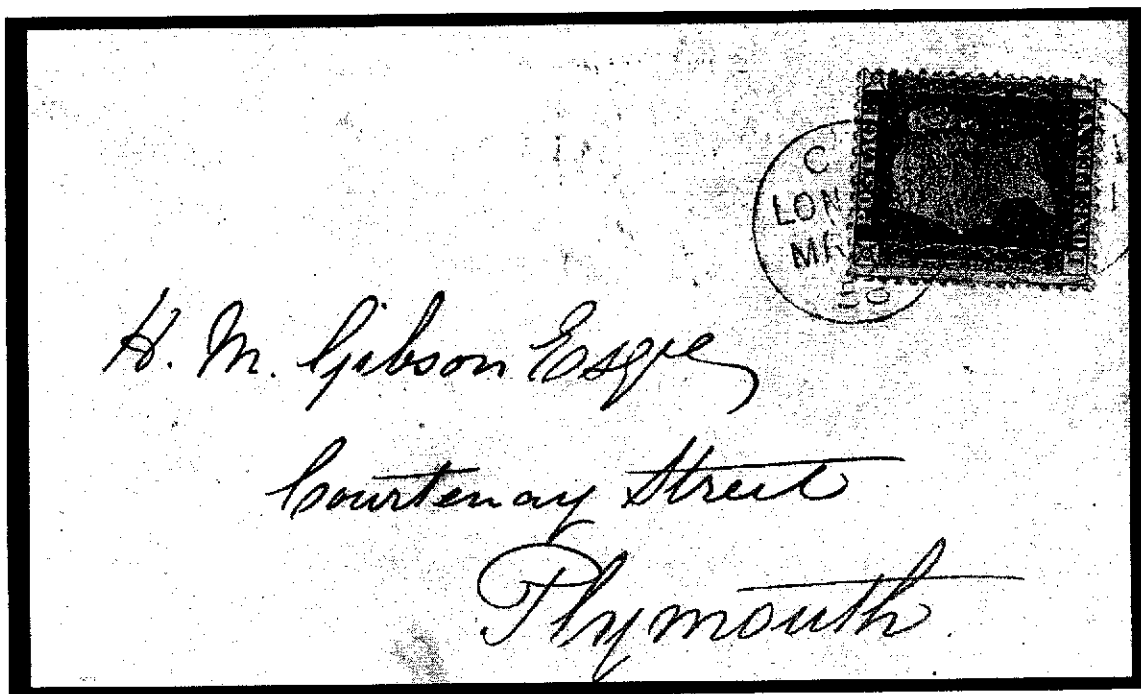
**FIGURE 6:**  
Example of a 'Rideout' Postmark on a mourning cover sent to Gibraltar in 1858.

Rideout's machine offered many advantages compared to the treadle-operated Pearson Models "A" & "B" resulting in Hill, in less than five months, introducing his new "Parallel-Motion" mechanical stamping machine ("Model C") in March, 1858, which was similar in some respects to the Rideout device in design and features (Figure 7).



**FIGURE 7:**  
Illustration of Pearson Hill's Parallel Motion Postmarking Machine. (6)

Initial post office trials on Hill's "Model C" Machine took place between March 8-18, 1858, using a double dater-dial postmark (Figure 8).



**FIGURE 8:**

Example of a Pearson Hill Model "C" double-dater-dial postmark on a domestic cover dated March 11, 1858.

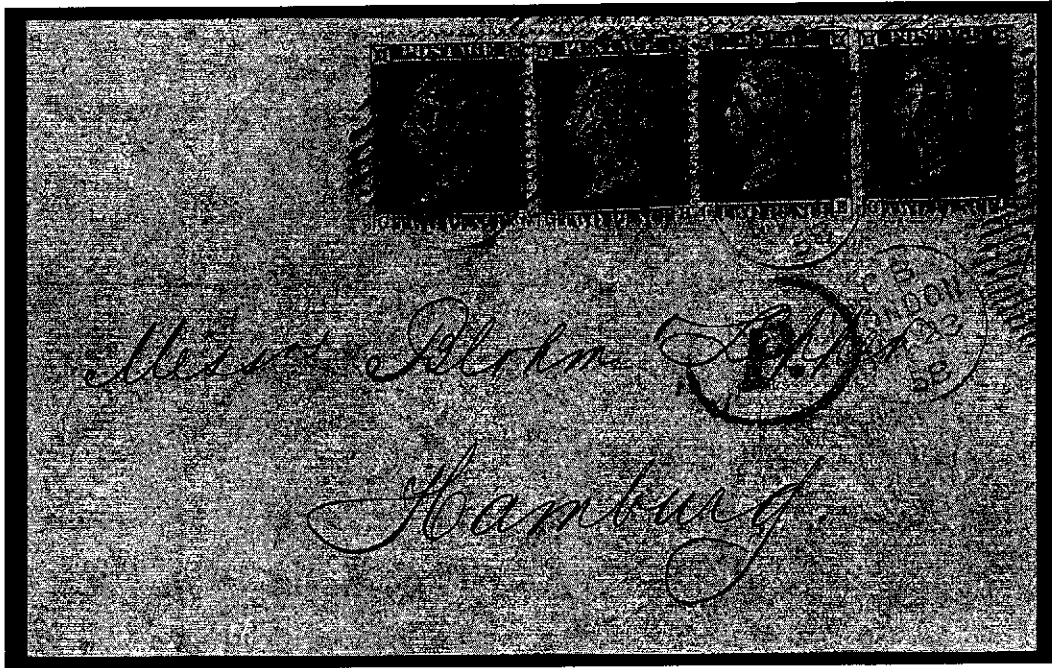
In past years, postmark specialists incorrectly credited the inventor Creswell for the postmark applied by Hill's Model 'C', but such belief has since been refuted.

## **RIDEOUT VERSUS HILL MACHINE**

**(1858-1866)**

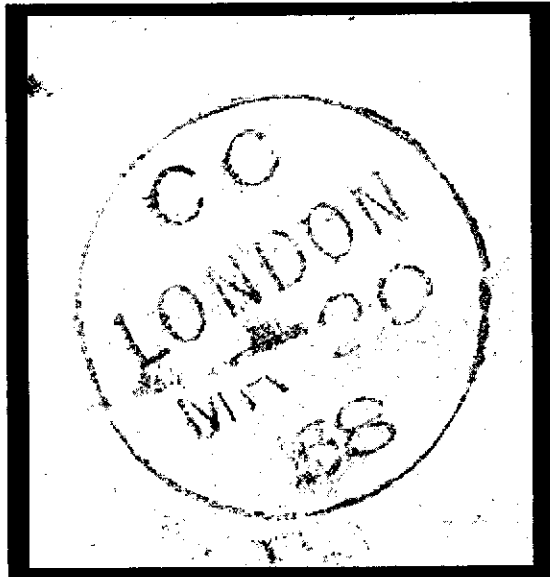
Trials were authorized by the British Post Office to compare the functionality of both the Rideout versus Hill's Parallel Motion Machine with the objective to select one of the machines for purchase by the British Post Office for field use.

To properly prepare for such trials, Hill altered his heretofore double-circle postmark to a single-dater dial with new obliterator having "3" indicated representing his "third trial machine" (Figure 9).

**FIGURE 9:**

Example of Hill's first duplex postmark ("CB, London, Mr 23, 58") on a March 23, 1858, (only known example) on a folded commercial letter sent to Germany, applied by Hill's Parallel Motion Machine.

Such postmark was now a 'duplex' (applied with one machine stroke) similar to that of the Rideout Machine. Hill used the "removed" second circular dater-dial for use as a receipt or service back-stamp on incoming mail (Figure 10).

**FIGURE 10:**

Example of the earliest known Hill (Model 'C') Machine mail-receipt back-stamp, March 20, 1858.

Results of the trial in November, 1859, showed that the speed of Pearson Hill's Parallel Motion Machine out-performed the Rideout Machine by overall 10% and by about 70% versus a clerk hand-stamping! (7) Accordingly, the British Post Office thereupon soon commenced purchase of Hill's Parallel Motion Machine.

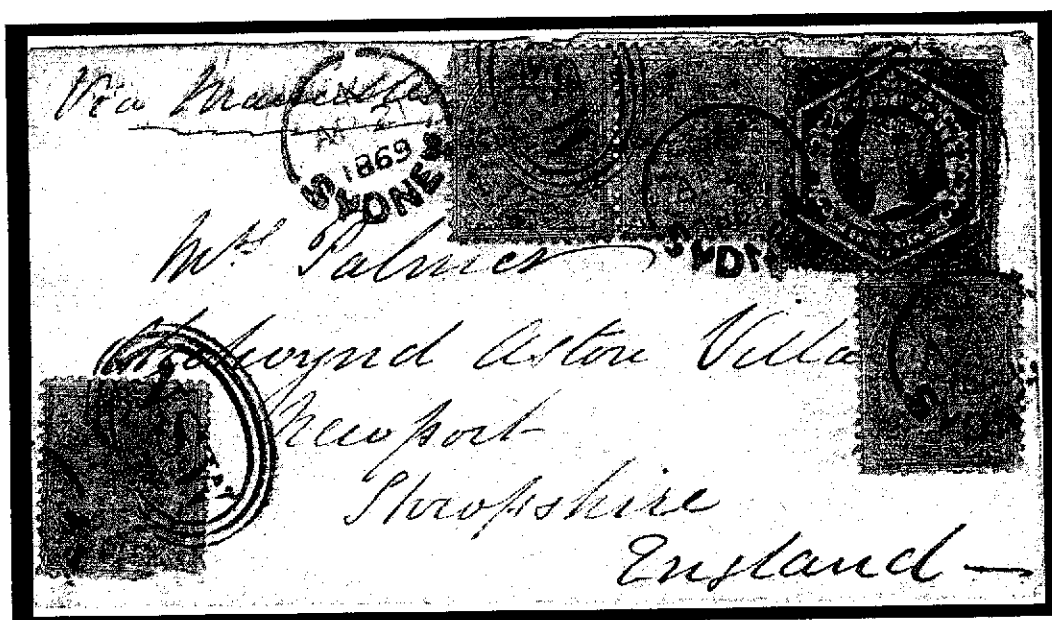
Hill later adapted his Parallel Motion Machine to swivel on a counter top, resulting in such version becoming known as a Hill's "Pivot Machine", which became widely used by the British Post Office.

## EXPANSION OF MECHANICAL MACHINES WORLDWIDE (1860s – 1880s) AUSTRALIA

While comparative testing of both the Hill and Rideout Machines by the British Post Office was taking place, both Rideout (Figure 11) and Hill (Figure 12) commenced attempting to sell their machines to post offices of the British Empire, including Australia.



**FIGURE 11:**  
Example of Rideout Machine use in Sydney, Australia, 1861-1862.



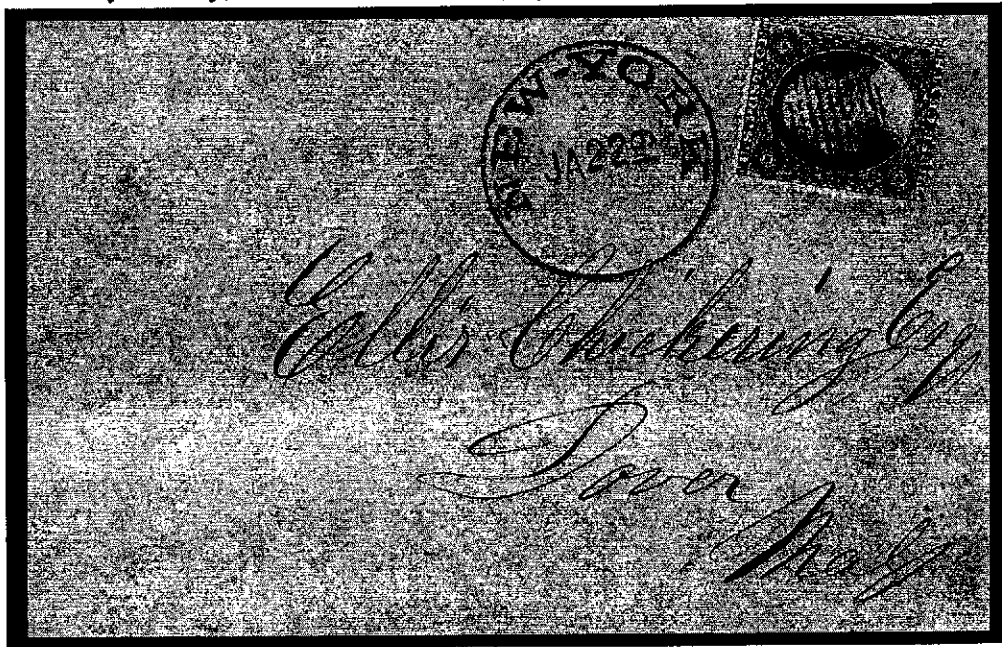
**FIGURE 12:**  
Example of Hill's Parallel Motion Machine use in Sydney, Australia, 1867-1871.

However, concurrent efforts, beyond Great Britain and its Empire, in other countries arose where national needs to improve the expedition of mail postmarking as well as an application of service postmarks to in-bound mail.

Moreover, a Pearson Hill Parallel Motion Machine was sent to the Washington D.C. postmaster for evaluation on May 8, 1861, although examples from a test there have not been to-date found. (8)

### UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (1861-1880s)

Duplex, single-impression, single-stroke postmarking devices, similar to the Hill and Rideout Machines, were also developed and tested in the 1850's in Britain and in the United States with one of the earliest in the United States invented by Marcus P. Norton, a patent attorney at Troy, New York, in 1859 (Figure 13).



**FIGURE 13:**

Example of a "Norton Patent Duplex" Postmarking Stamper tested at New York City between January 22- March 28, 1861.

A Postmaster General's Report, dated December 1, 1862, indicated:

*"Various new instruments and devices for cancelling postage stamps have been examined to trial, and two machines are now in process of construction which are designed to replace cancelling by hand at larger cities." (9)*

The Post Office was seeking devices or machines to improve the postmarking of the increased mail volume from soldiers since Washington was the main office in the east where mail was exchanged with the Union armies. Such volume was an average of 250,000 letters daily! (10)

One of the machines tested at Washington was a foot or treadle-operated machine designed, built and patented by John McAdams of New York .

Figures 14 & 15 illustrate two postmark types believed by machine-postmark specialists to be from one or both of those machines:



**FIGURE 14:**

35mm elongated round dater dial with a 5-ring obliterator known used between December 5-9, 1862. The elongated dater shape is possibly a result of the cover being "wrapped" around a postmark transfer roller as it was being postmarked and carried through the machine (11).

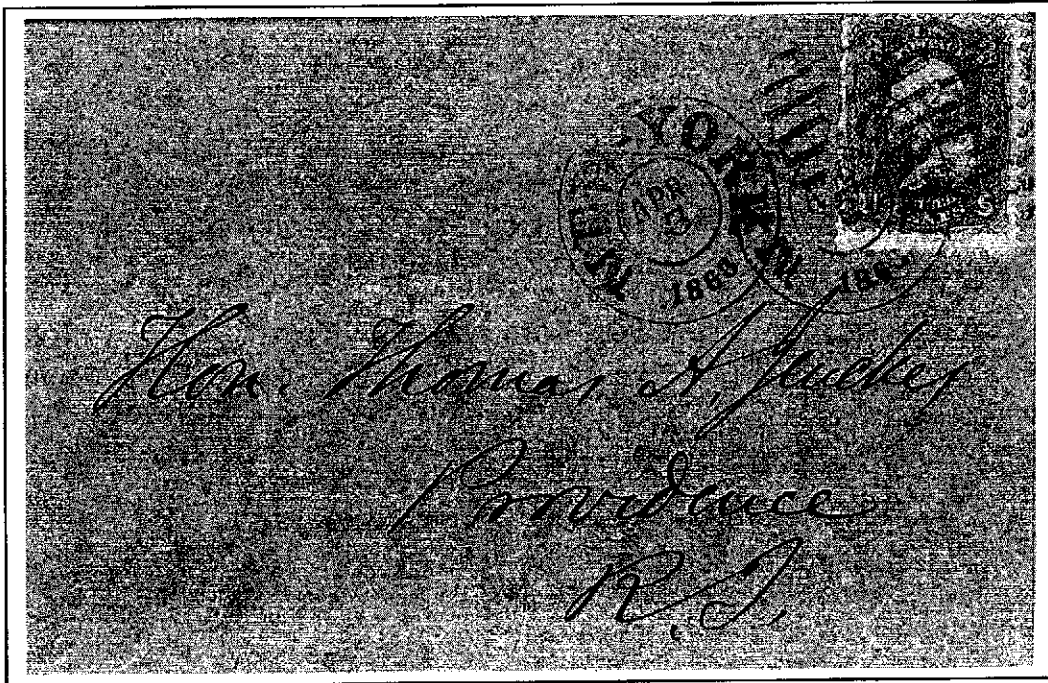


**FIGURE 15:**

32mm round dater dial with a "waffle iron" obliterator known used between December 4-10, 1862 (11).

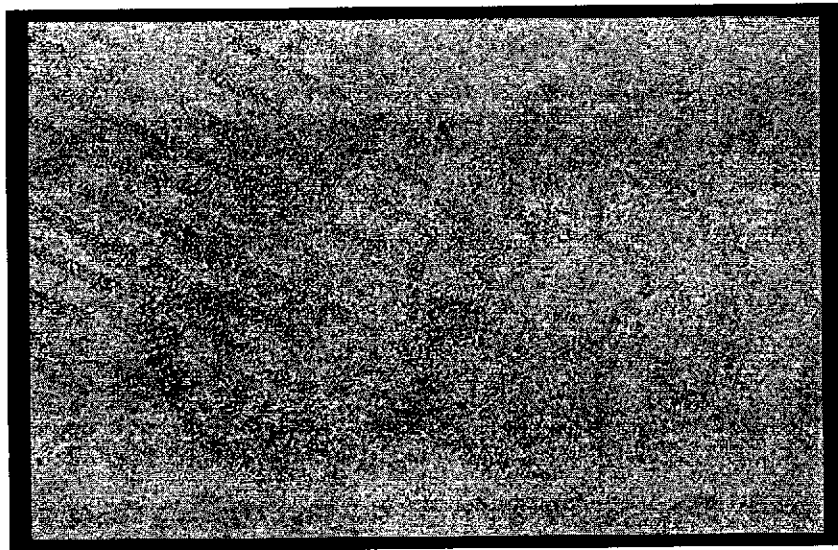


Another trial by machine took place at New York City in early 1863, where a series of trials took place with either a McAdams or possibly a Pearson Hill Machine. Records have not been found to verify which (or both) machines might have been used with the Figure 16 (16A) postmark.



**FIGURE 16:**

26mm round dater dial with an obliterator known in use between March 28 - April 6, 1863.

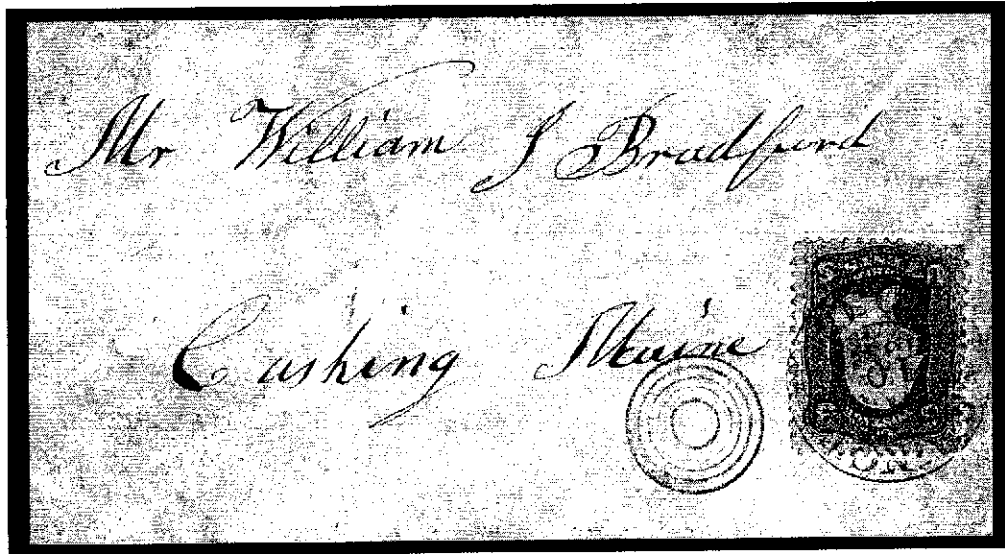


**FIGURE 16A:**

The reverse-side postmark reflex from Figure 16 is one important aspect of verification that the mark was applied by a mechanical device.



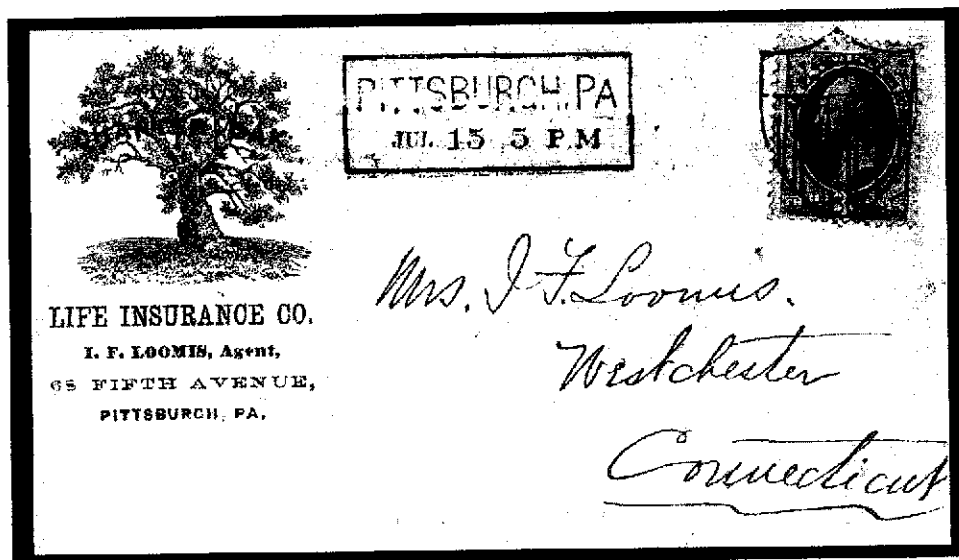
Concurrently in early 1863 at Washington D.C., testing of a mechanical device took place with the following Figure 17 duplex.



**FIGURE 17:**

26mm round dater dial with a 5-ring obliterator known in use between March 7-11, 1863.

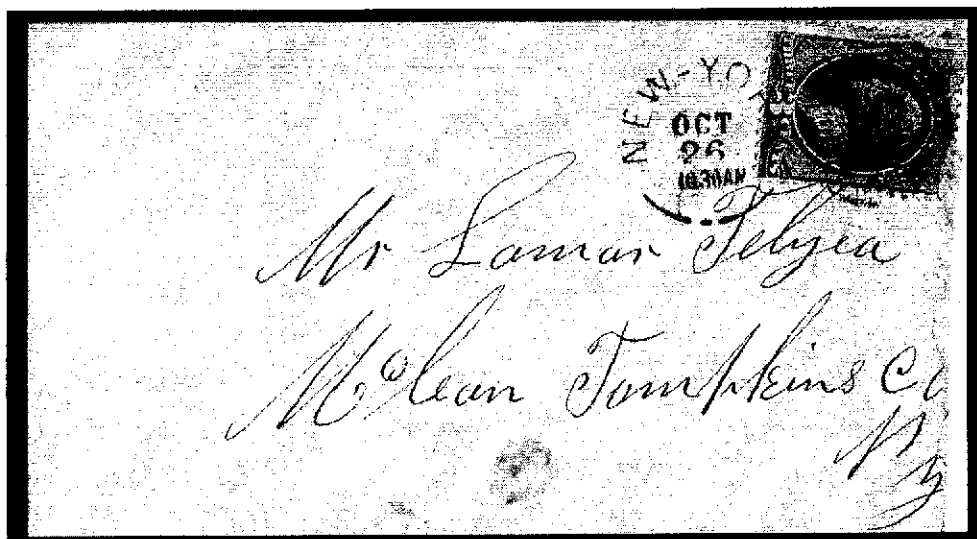
It would not be until 1871-1872 when another single-impression (Figure 18) postmarking machine was tested in America, albeit now at the City of Pittsburgh, not Washington D.C. or New York City. Its inventor is not known, albeit the trials lasted about one year testing several postmark die configurations.



**FIGURE 18:**

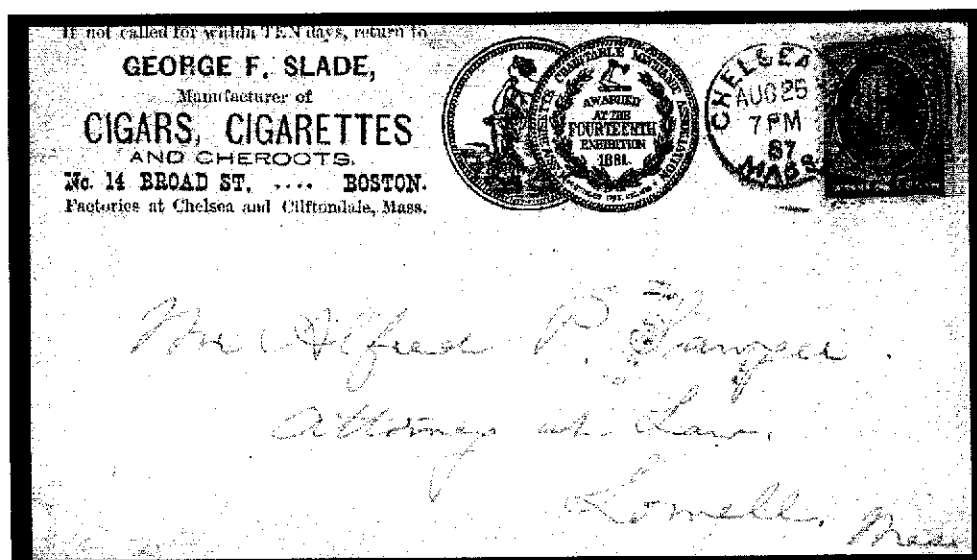
Example of the attractive "Shield" Postmark having a 45x18mm rectangular dater and an attractive "shield" as the obliterator on an advertising cover, dated July 15 (1872).

A modified version of the British-manufactured 'Pearson Hill Parallel Motion Machine' (Figure 9) possibly tried at New York in 1863 (Figure 16), which later in 1866 (mounted with a swivel arm and subsequently referred to as a "Pearson Hill Pivot Machine"), was tried at New York in 1874 (Figure 19), and again tried at Boston in 1887 (Figure 20) with no wider success in America.



**FIGURE 19:**

Example of a Pearson Hill Pivot Machine Postmark on mail postmarked New York on October 26, 1874.



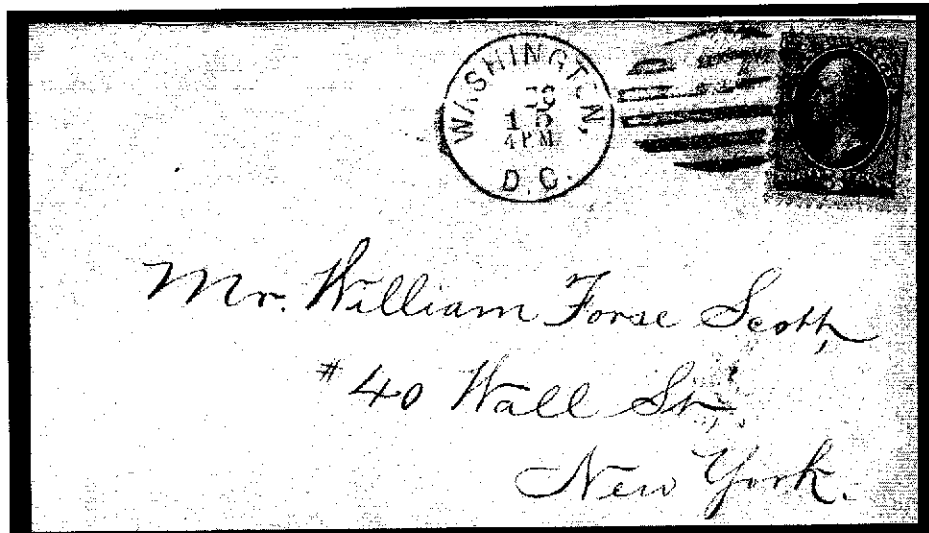
**R**

**FIGURE 20:**

Example of a Pearson Hill Pivot Machine Postmark on local Boston mail, August 25, 1887.

The first two effective American-built hand-operated postmarking machines to be tested over a longer period were patented in 1875 by Timothy G. Palmer and Henry F. Clark and the Leavitt Brothers respectively.

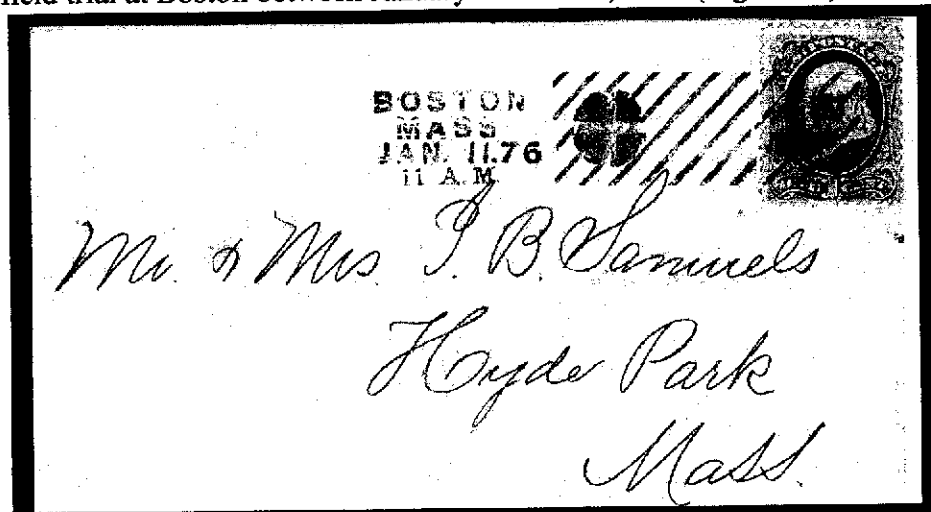
The Palmer & Clark Machines were evaluated at seven different cities between 1876-1877 (Figure 21).



**FIGURE 21:**

Example of a Palmer & Clark Postmark on cover, postmarked December 15 (1876), sent to New York City.

The rotary-operating-postmark Leavitt Machines were first prototype tested in late 1875 with a field trial at Boston between January 6 – June 8, 1876 (Figure 22).

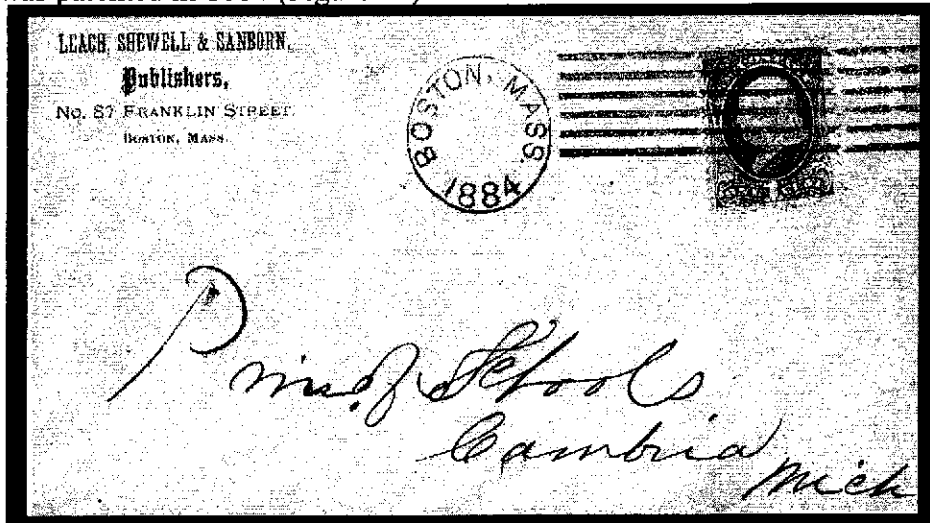


**FIGURE 22:**

Example of an early Leavitt Postmark on one of few known postmarked covers, date January 11, 1876. 1 Cent Drop or Local Letter-Rate (1/2 ounce).

Eventually the 'Leavitts' were in field use at twenty-nine different post offices and primarily postmarked postal cards and not covers.

In 1883, Martin Van Buren Ethridge, financed by Henry Waite, developed a machine which was patented in 1884 (Figure 23).



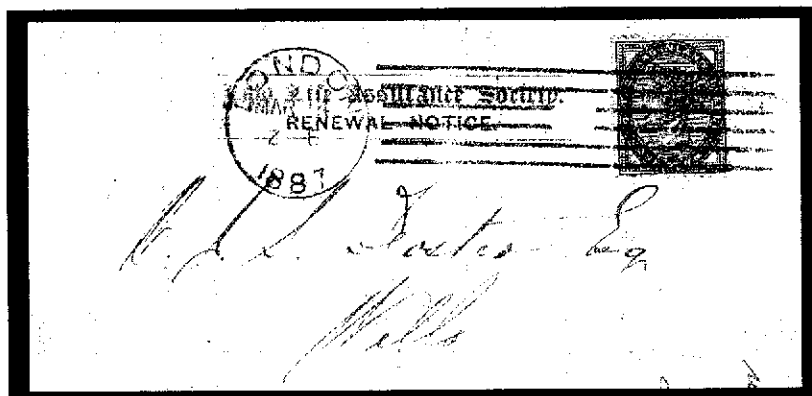
**FIGURE 23:**

Example of an 'American' Postmarking Machine postmark from 1884 on third-class printed-matter mail.

The manufacturer, 'American Postal Machine Company', was successful in having the machine first tested at Boston, Massachusetts, supposedly able to postmark 300 letters/minute or the equivalent of six postal clerks having to hand-stamp an equal amount of mail! (12)

By 1886, seven of Ethridge's machines were operational at Boston, followed in 1890 with machines at Philadelphia and 1891 at Washington D.C.

Martin Ethridge was also successful in attempting to have his postmarking machine tried and tested in England, where his machine (Figure 24) was tested six months between September, 1886, and April, 1887, albeit with no resulting sales.

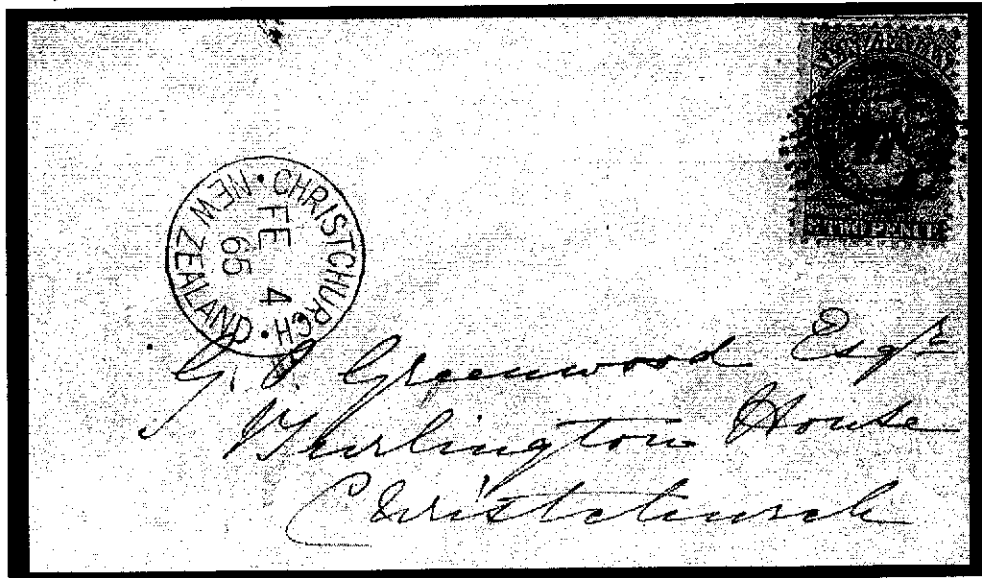


**FIGURE 24:**

Postmark example from an 'American Postmarking Machine' tests in England, where the machine was referred to as the "Ethridge Machine", London, March, March 14, 1887.

## NEW ZEALAND (1865-1868, 1874)

The first trial of a postmarking machine, invented by F.E. Wright, postmaster at Christchurch, New Zealand, occurred in 1865 (Figure 25).



**FIGURE 25:**

Earliest known Wright Machine postmark, dated February 4, 1865, on a domestic cover.

Whereas the British-origin Pearson Hill Parallel-Motion Machine was primarily intended to postmark out-going mail, the Wright Machine was a single-impession, single-stroke device intended to apply service, receipt or arrival postmarks to in-bound or transit mail. Its strongest feature was its ability to apply a postmark to mail of varying thickness and sizes, with best results when mail was fed into the machine sideways, which is its unique characteristic.

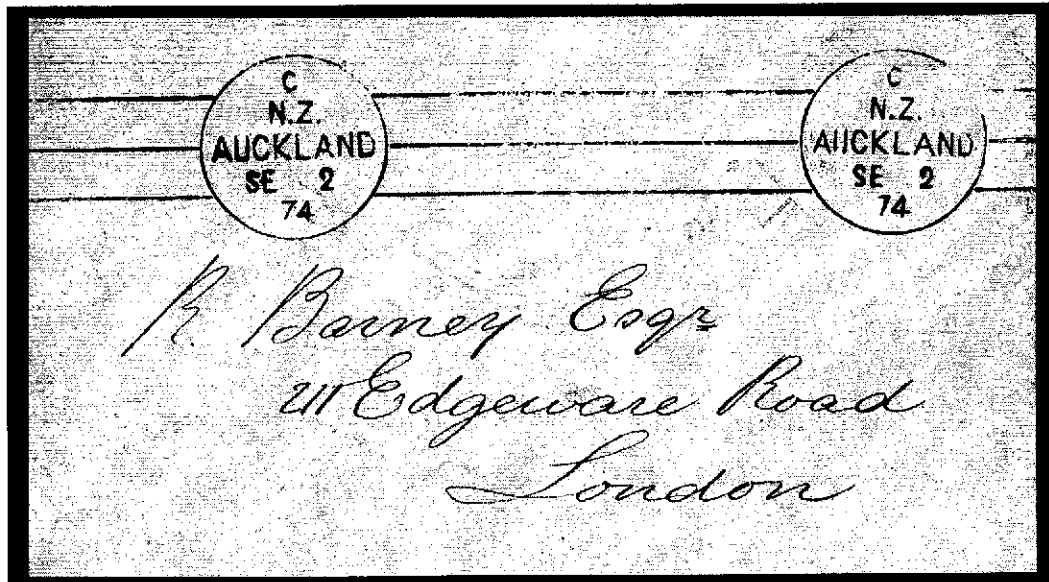
Trials took place between 1865-1868 (Figure 26).



**FIGURE 26:**

Late-date example of a Wright Postmark as a back-stamp, dated April 4, 1868, on a Scotland-bound overseas cover.

In 1874, Robert Vaille of Auckland, New Zealand, introduced a new, unique for the time, hand-operated machine, one that applied the first “repeater” postmark to mail. However, since the New Zealand Post Office was satisfied using its British-manufactured Pearson Hill ‘Pivot’ Machines, Vaille was not successful in selling his machine in New Zealand, but later attempted to sell the machine to the London Post Office in 1878 (Figure 27), using the Auckland dated postmark on his demonstrations at London. There, too, Vaille was unsuccessful.



**FIGURE 27:**

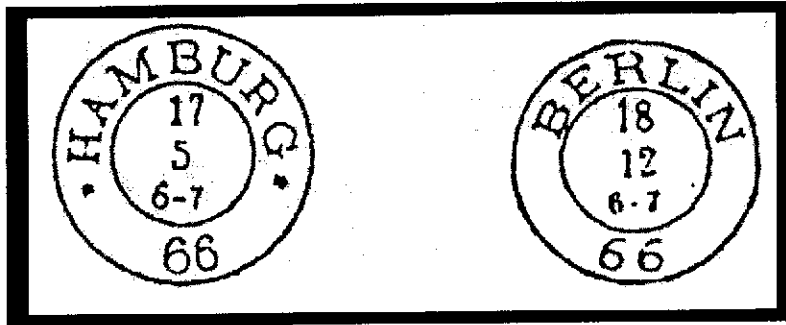
Example of one of seven surviving examples & types, dated “September 2, 1874, Auckland”, from the London demonstration of the Vaille ‘repeater’ postmarking machine, later rejected for additional evaluation by the London Post Office.

It would not again be until 1899, when the next new postmarking device was to be tested and used in New Zealand, and then using an electrically-powered American-manufactured machine.

**CITY-STATE OF HAMBURG, PRUSSIA,  
NORTH GERMAN CONFEDERATION  
& IMPERIAL GERMANY  
(1865-1890)**

Also in 1865 in what was then known as the City-State of Hamburg, two German inventors, Carl Fischer & J.C.W. Mass, developed a hand-operated, triple-die postmarking machine which was later patented in England, Prussia and the United States of America. However, it would be Robert Hinrichsen, an entrepreneur, who would manufacture the machine, and to whose name the machines are today referred.

The earliest evidence of trial demonstrations and usage of the machine took place at both Hamburg and Berlin in 1866-1867 (Figure 28).

**FIGURE 28:**

Illustrations of the first two postmarks from the early trial of the Hinrichsen Machine at Hamburg & Berlin.

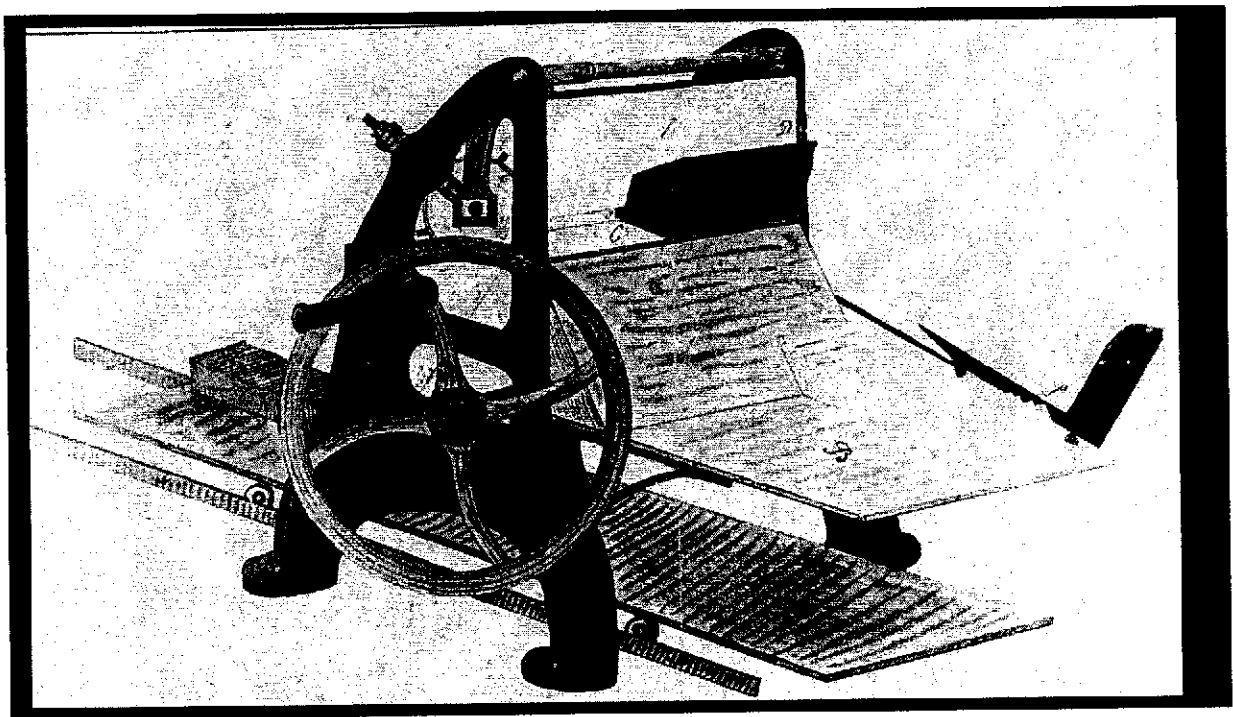
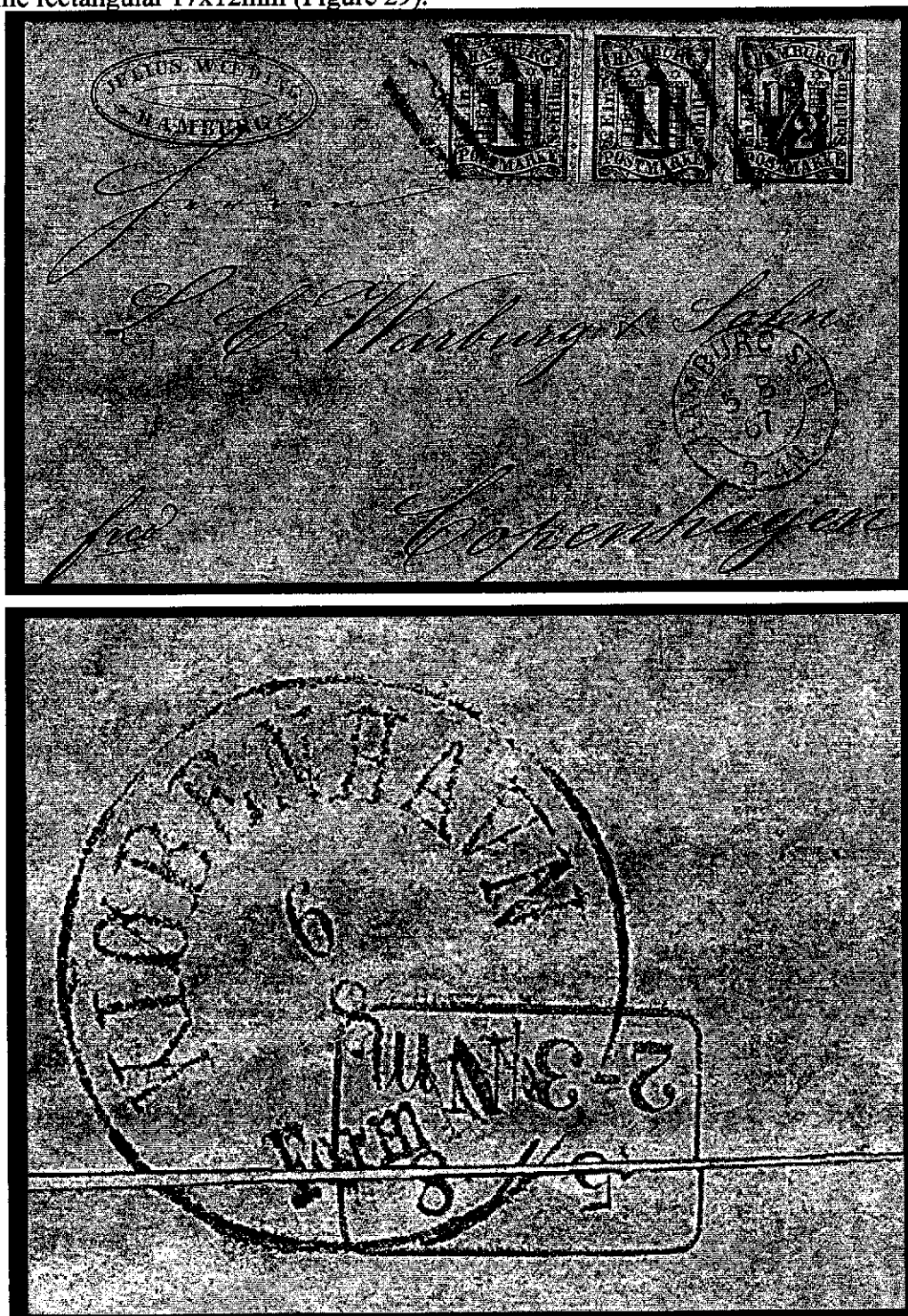
**FIGURE 28A:**

Illustration of a Hinrichsen Machine.

At Hamburg, the machine was used to apply receipt or transit markings to incoming mail from America. At Berlin, it applied origin postmarks to mail.

By August, 1867, the service/receival postmark applied was no longer round but, rather, became rectangular 17x12mm (Figure 29).



**FIGURE 29:**

Earliest known use of the new rectangular 'Hinrichsen' transit postmark on the reverse of commercial mail sent from Hamburg to Denmark, August 5, 1867 (Front & Reverse).



Upon the unification of the North German States to form a confederation, which took effect on January 1, 1868, Heinrich Stephan, one of the later organizers of the Universal Postal Union, who had been postmaster general of Prussia, became postmaster general of the Confederation and continued to support the need to test and find postmarking machinery to postmark incoming and outgoing mail.

Early in 1868, various trials with the Hinrichsen Machine were expedited to apply origin postmarks to out-going mail (Figure 30).



**FIGURE 30:**

Postmark example on commercial mail processed during the earliest trial (January 23-25, 1868).

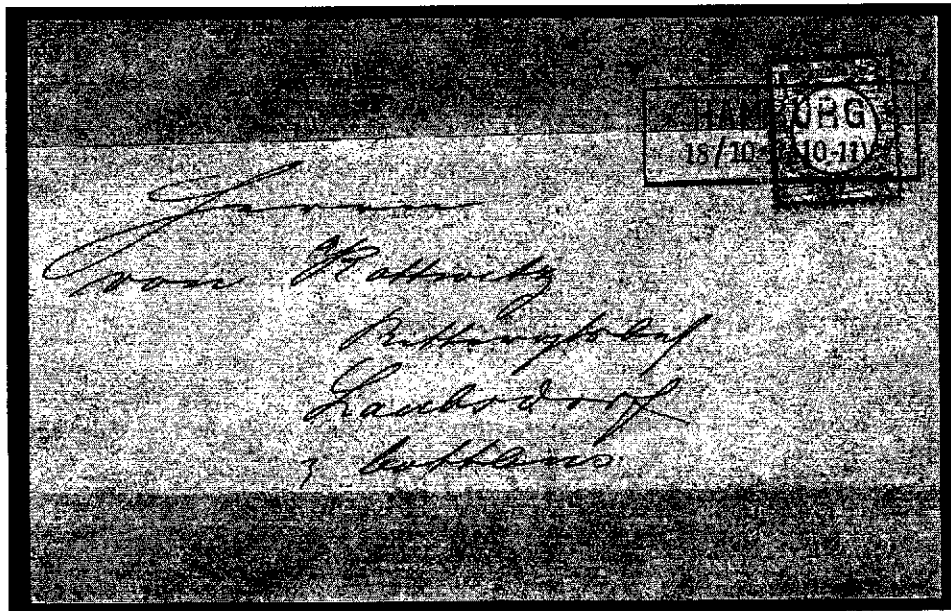
Since service or receipt postmarks remained an important objective for the postal authorities, they also continued their trials at each Hamburg and Berlin for such.

At Hamburg, one trial Hinrichsen Machine was dedicated to apply receipt & transit postmarks to inbound American-origin mail with such continuing from 1868 to 1872 (Figure 31).

**FIGURE 31:**

'Hinrichsen' Transit Postmark example on the earliest known inbound American commercial mail arriving at Hamburg and in transit (dated April 27, 1868) to Bavaria.

Additional trials with the Hinrichsen Machine using various postmark designs continued until 1881 in Imperial Germany, where such postmarks were primarily applied to lottery advertising (printed-matter) bulk mail (Figure 32).

**FIGURE 32:**

Early horizontal 'Hinrichsen' Postmark on lottery-advertising wrapper mail, Hamburg, October 18, 1874. Unique full wrapper example having imperial eagle issue franking.

Robert Hinrichsen attempted to sell his postmarking machine, which had, in the meantime, been patented in England, through a British-domiciled dealer named "Azemar". Four trial series took place in England between 1869-1872 (Figure 33).

**FIGURE 33:**  
Illustration of an  
"Azemar-  
Hinrichsen"  
Postmark from  
the first post  
office trial of  
1869.



Two other important German-origin machines need to be mentioned, both hand-operated, and both evolving from the same inventor.

Wilhelm Löffelhardt, an inventor located in Hamburg, developed and patented with George Haller, a single-impession single-stroke hand-operated machine dedicated to applying service or receipt postmarks to inbound mail, which, as mentioned previously, was an important objective to the German Post Office to expedite the handling of mail. The machine became known as the "Haller Machine", manufactured by "Haller & Company" (Figure 34).



**FIGURE 34:**  
Illustration of an early  
(April 20, 1881)  
Haller Postmark on a  
postal card sent from  
Spandau to Berlin by  
way of the Berlin  
Main Post Office,  
where the Haller-  
Machine postmark  
was applied.

George Haller, working with the German *Reichspost* in early 1882, also demonstrated his machine could apply origin postmarks to out-going mail



**FIGURE 34A:**

Illustration of a George Haller addressed & used postal card (1880) used in demonstration trials with the Haller Machine to apply an origin postmark. Trial postmark: 1. February 1882. Origin mark located in upper-right corner with a Haller receival postmark in lower left corner.

The German Post Office was pleased with the Haller Machine's operation for applying service or receival postmarks and soon thereafter extended a purchase contract to Haller for machines to be supplied for fifteen German city post offices.

George Haller was also able to sell one of his machines to the United States Post Office, where trials were conducted at New York in 1882 (Figure 35).



**FIGURE 35:**

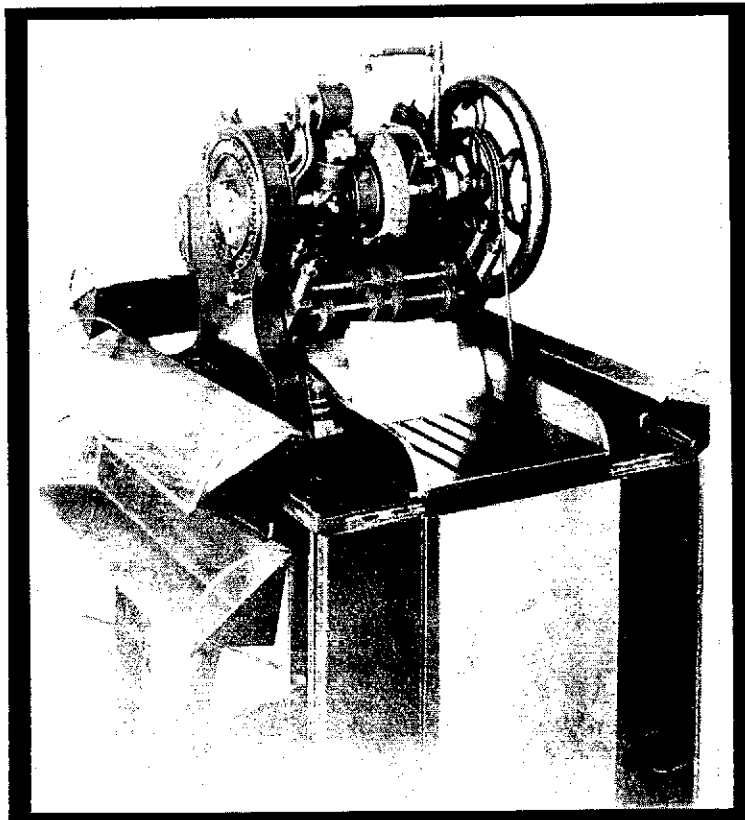
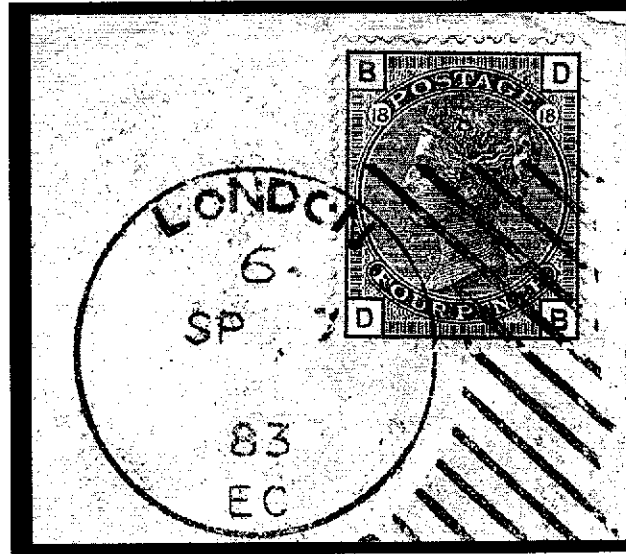
Illustration of a Haller Machine receival backstamp on mail received at New York, December 26, 1882.

In 1883, a German entrepreneur, Albert Hoster, acquired the assets of

“Haller & Company” in Germany, and, recognizing the market potential for the postmarking machines in England, Hoster established the “Postal Stamping & Patent Machinery Company Limited” in London.

Between 1883-1886, the latter company sold the London Post Office eight, “Haller-technology-adapted-machines” to now apply origin postmarks to out-going mail. Those machines, referred to as “Hoster Machines”, remained in trials for about ten years at London to apply both origin postmarks as well as receipt postmarks to out-going and incoming mail respectively (Figure 36).

**FIGURE 36:** Example of an 1883 London Hoster Postmark, dated September 7, 1893, from the first field trial in England.



**FIGURE 36A:**  
Illustration of a (hand or treadle-operated) Hoster Machine capable of postmarking 300-400 units of mail/minute.

In Germany, a Hoster Machine demonstration trial to apply origin postmarks for the German Post Office also took place in 1883, albeit formal field trials using a production-version of the Hoster first started in 1885 (Figure 37) at each Berlin and Hamburg and ended in 1887, when the machine was determined to be “not acceptable” by the German Post Office.



**FIGURE 37:** Example of the earliest ‘Hoster’ field trial in Germany, Berlin, July 15, 1885.

Albert Hoster also licensed the manufacture of one of his machine types to the Czeiga-Nissl Company of Vienna, Austria, and it submitted a trial machine, which is assumed to be the “Hoster” instead of the “Haller” version, to the Austrian Post Office at Vienna for testing between 1891-1894 to apply receipt postmarks to in-coming mail (Figure 38).



**FIGURE 38:** Example of a Hoster Postmark (upper left on card), dated January 14, 1894, on an in-bound postal card from Bavaria, Germany.

## NETHERLANDS (1868-1898)

As in the aforementioned countries, the Dutch also used hand-cancellers with movable type prior to seeking mechanical means to postmark and expedite the handling of mail.

The first Dutch-manufactured mechanical device for postmarking was developed by Auguste Mellet of Hague, Netherlands, in 1868. The first trial of his device, which was hand-operated by moving the device-handle up and down, took place at Hague. Such trial proved that impressions were very clear and enabled about 135 units of mail to be postmarked in a minute, whereas a postal clerk hand-stamping could average only about 70 units of mail a minute. (13)

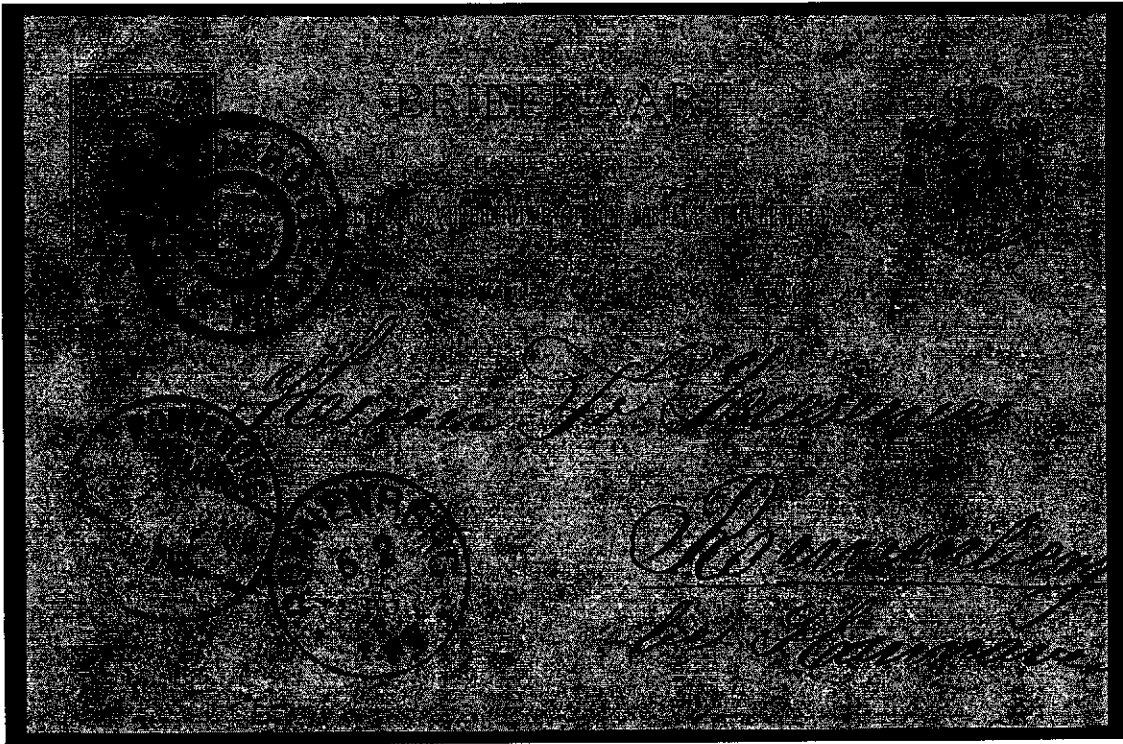
Between 1868-1890, the Dutch Post Office had Mellet Postmarking Devices operating at its post offices at Gravenhage (Hague), Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and Arnhem, where circular double-dial daters were applied to out-going and in-coming mail (Figure 39).



**FIGURE 39:** Example of a 23mm Diameter (large-type) Mellet Postmark used between 1871-1877 postal stationery card, postmarked at Rotterdam, dated October 26, 1875, sent to Brussels, Belgium.



In 1889, J.F.C. Roelants, who was postmaster at Assen, Netherlands, at the time, introduced a machine of his design but manufactured by Th. M.A. van Dijk Company of Schiedam, Netherlands, which were tried during the period of 1893-1898 at Gravenhage, Amsterdam and Rotterdam (Figure 40).



**FIGURE 40:**

Example of the 27mm Diameter 'Roelants' Postmark on a postal stationery card, postmarked at Rotterdam, dated February 3, 1898, incorrectly routed to Ronneburg (February 5) and re-forwarded (February 6) to Ronnenberg, Germany.

The machine was similar in operation to the Mellet Machine, albeit with a counter weight, which made it more difficult to operate, was slower than the Mellet Machine and subsequently not accepted for additional trials or use by the post office.



## FRANCE (1884-1900)

By 1884, the 'Daguin' French-manufactured mechanical postmarking device commenced trials and use in France. It was a double postmark device, where the twin postmarks 25mm in diameter could be adjusted for distance closer or farther apart, depending upon the mail being handled (Figure 41).



**FIGURE 41:**

Example of a twin 'Daguin' Postmark on a French domestic re-directed postal stationery card, postmarked at Amiens, France, on November 5, 1884.

The Daguin Machine was widely used in France prior to the advent of high-speed electrically operated machines being tested and introduced in 1898 (Figure 42).



**FIGURE 42:** Example of late-date usage, commemorative twin Daguin Postmark, postmarked at the Paris Exposition, September 28, 1900, sent to Munich, Bavaria, Germany.

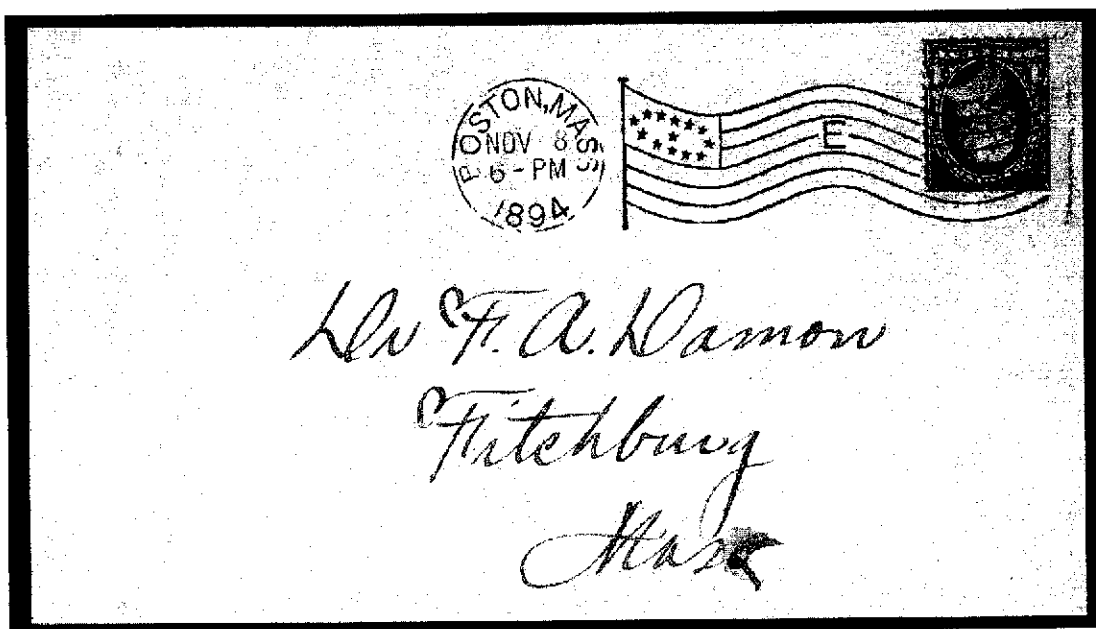
## INNOVATIVE HIGH-SPEED POSTMARKING MACHINES (1880s-1900s)

The first early effective higher-speed postmarking machines were developed in the United States of America and Canada, with those having one common factor, the primary inventor, Martin van Buren Ethridge.

As discussed briefly earlier, Martin van Buren Ethridge was a free-lance inventor who was instrumental in the development of postmarking machines for the American Postal Machine Company ("American Machine"), the Imperial Mail marking Company ("Imperial Machine"), the Canadian Postal Supply Company ("Bickerdike Machine") and the Acme Supply Company ("Empire Machine").

### 'AMERICAN' MACHINE (1894-....)

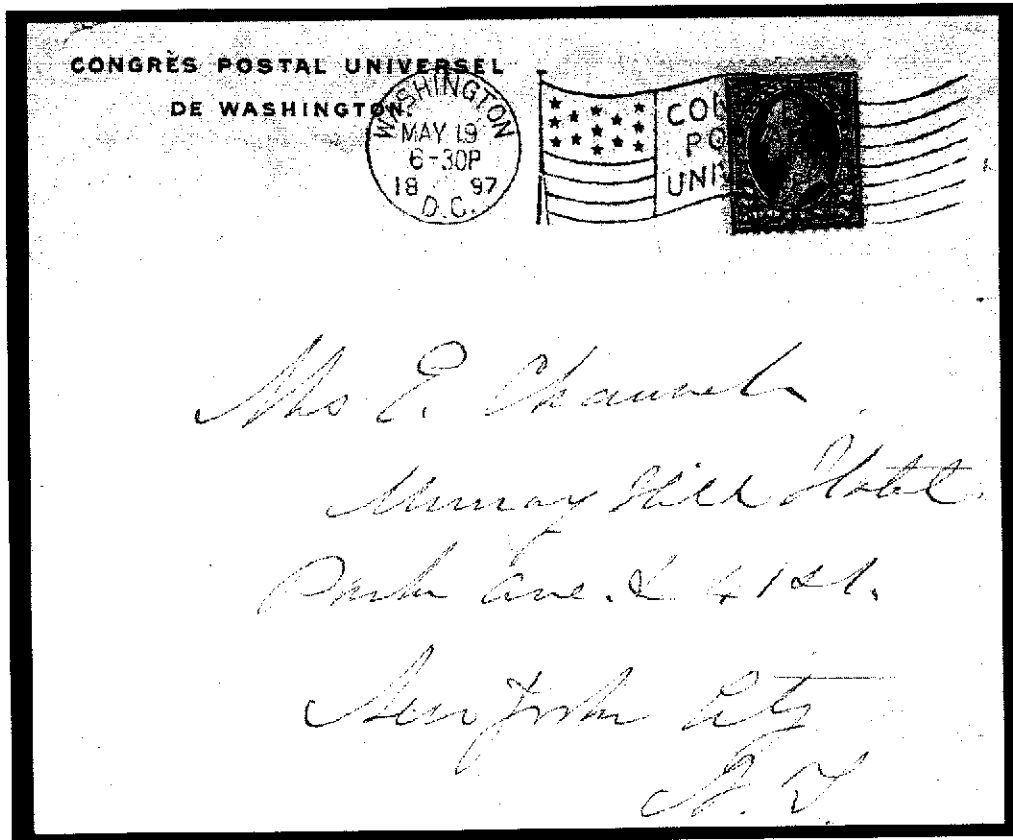
In 1894, The American Postal Machine Company introduced the first American 'flag' cancel, i.e. the postmark consisted of a dater dial with a 13-star flag obliterator (Figure 43).



**FIGURE 43:** Early American Machine flag postmark on cover usage at Boston, November 8, 1894,

Such postmarks became widely used in America and applied by thousands of 'American' machines operational throughout the country until 1940.

For the Fifth Universal Postal Congress, which took place at Washington D.C. between May 5 and June 15, 1897, a special commemorative 'flag-style' postmark was developed and only used at the congress site post office (Figure 44).



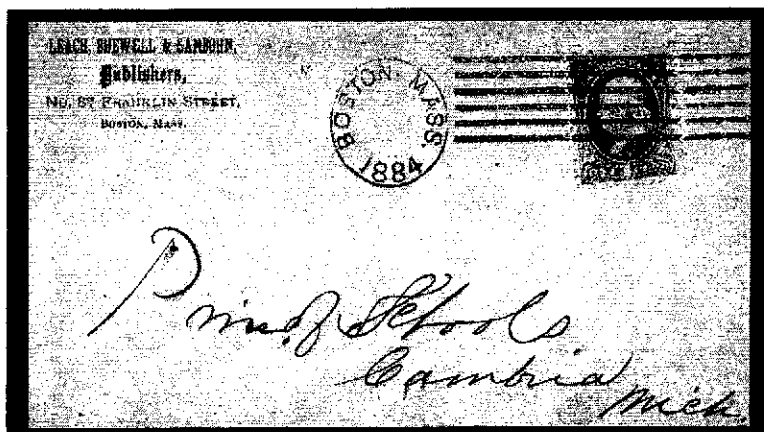
**FIGURE 44:**

Commemorative American Machine postmark example on 'Fifth UPU Congress' at Washington D.C. cover, May 19, 1897.

### **"IMPERIAL" OR "BOSTON" MACHINE (1896-1900)**

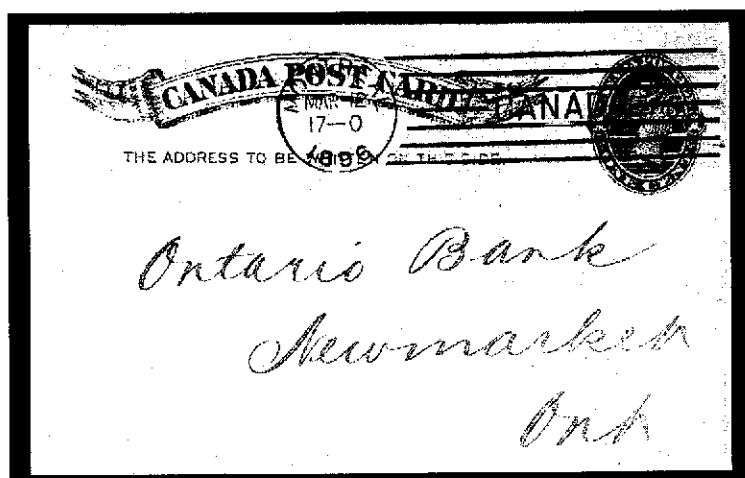
The basic machine developed by Martin Ethridge and manufactured by the Boston-based Imperial Mail Marking Company is referred to as the "Boston" or "Imperial" Machine, depending upon the country of its use with offices both at Montreal, Quebec, Canada, and Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

In the United States, Martin Ethridge along with his associate Henry Waite developed three prototype machines between 1884-1886 receiving a patent on their first machine in 1885 which applied a dater-dial with a six-horizontal-line obliterator. (Figure 45)

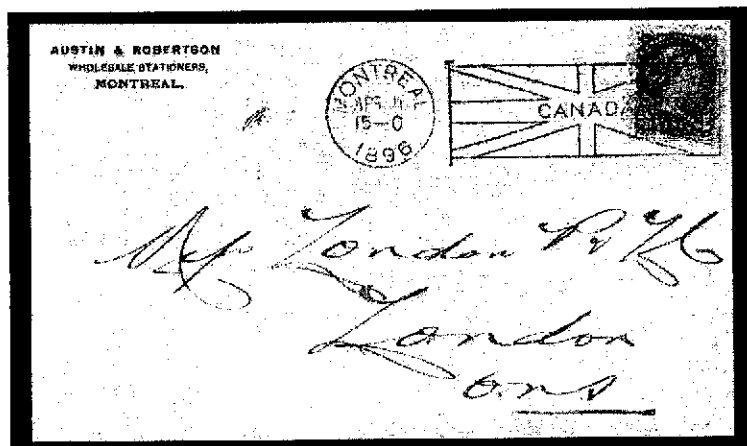
**FIGURE 45:**

Example of an 1884  
'American' Machine  
Postmark on third-class  
commercial mail.

However, the company's early success was in Canada, where the Canadian Post Office initially operated seven 'Imperials', six for Montreal and one for Ottawa, applying initially postmarks having a dater-dial with line obliterators (Figure 46) subsequently followed by ensign flag obliterators to outgoing mail between 1896-1897 (Figure 47), and eventually also applying receival (dater-dial only) postmarks to incoming mail.

**FIGURE 46:**

Early "Imperial" line-oblierator  
postmark on a postal card,  
Montreal, March 12, 1896.

**FIGURE 47:**

Attractive ensign-type "Union  
Jack" Imperial Machine flag  
postmark applied only between  
April 11-22, 1896, at Montreal.

In 1897, in honor of Queen Victoria's sixty-year reign as monarch of the British Empire, one of the most attractive commemorative postmarks of all times was applied by the 'Imperials' operating at Montreal & Ottawa (Figure 48).

**FIGURE 48:**

Early 'Imperial' postmark example commemorating Queen Victoria's 60-year reign, Montreal, June 25, 1897.



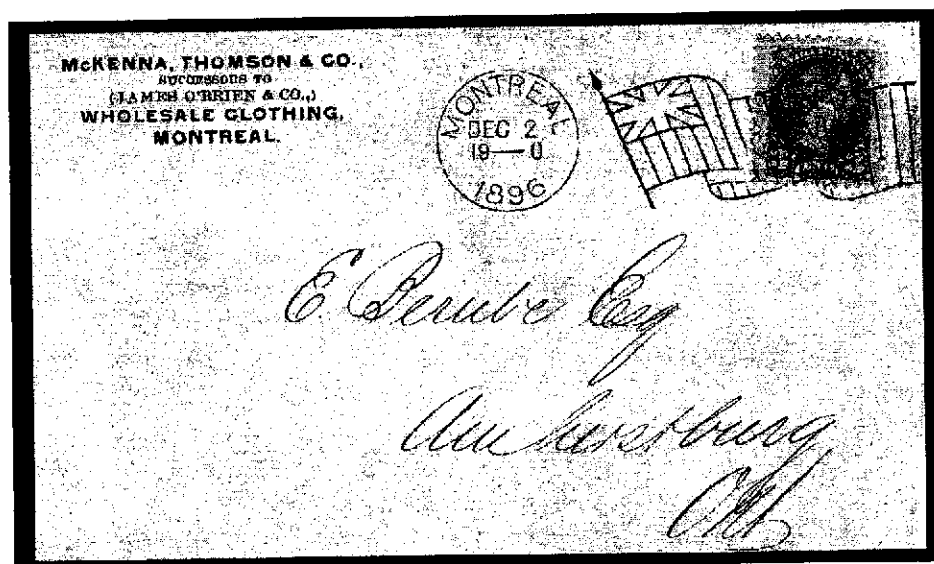
### BICKERDIKE MACHINE (1896-1915)

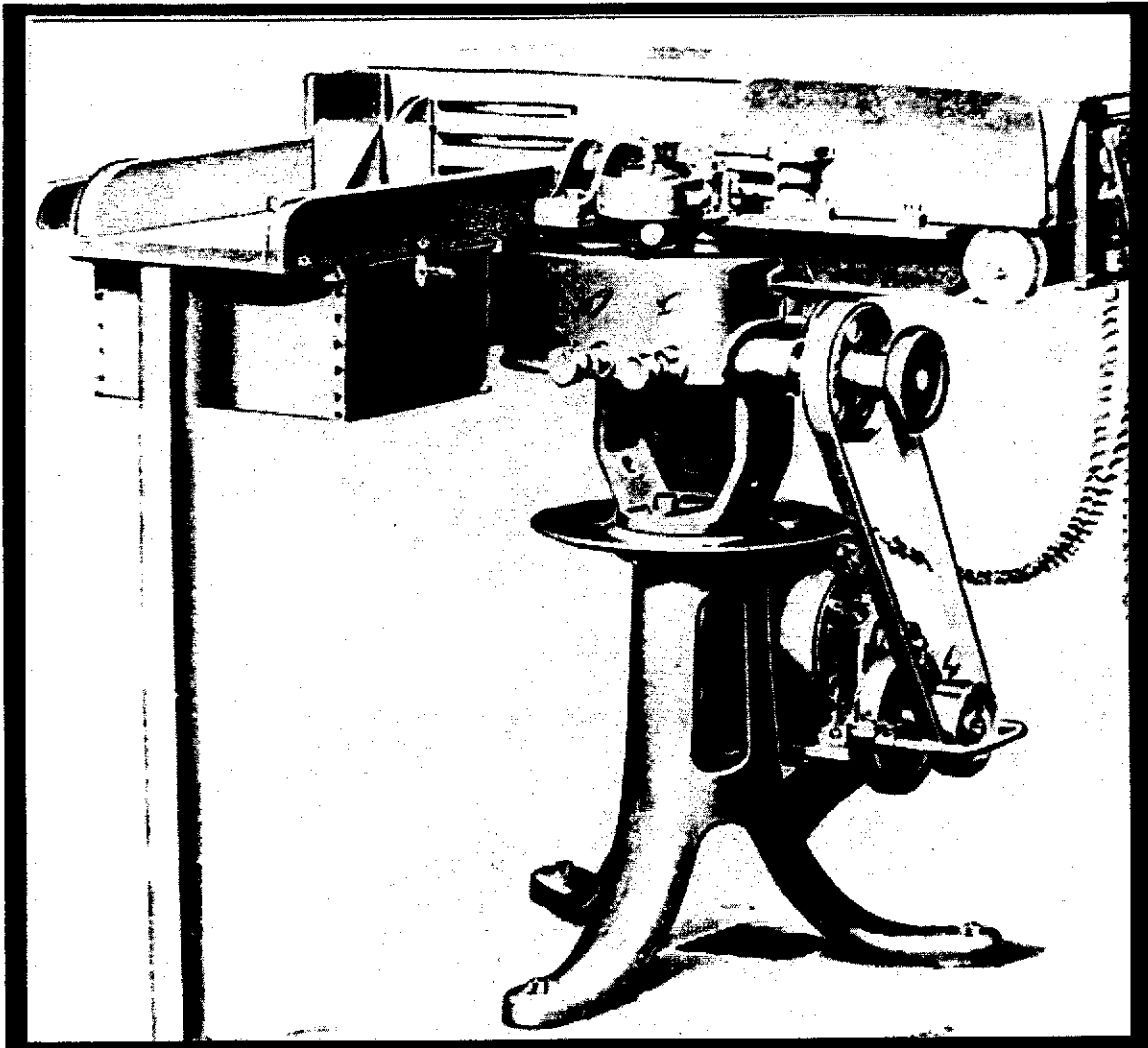
Now working with John Brooks Young, who was earlier associated with the Imperial Mail Marking Company, Martin Van Buren Ethridge filed for a Canadian patent in May, 1896, which became a patent in October of that year. A few months later, these gentlemen also filed and received an American patent on a new postmarking machine in 1897.

On December 2, 1896, the new machine, named '*Bickerdike*' after the Canadian entrepreneur Robert Bickerdike, who financed the Canadian Post Marking Machine Company, was first demonstrated at Montreal using a flag postmark (Figure 49) by the Canadian Post Office with much success, since a leasing agreement subsequently was concluded for forty machines to be installed at eleven different post offices, replacing the seven Imperial Machines in two of those offices.

**FIGURE 49:**

Earliest first-trial date usage on cover, Montreal, December 2, 1896.





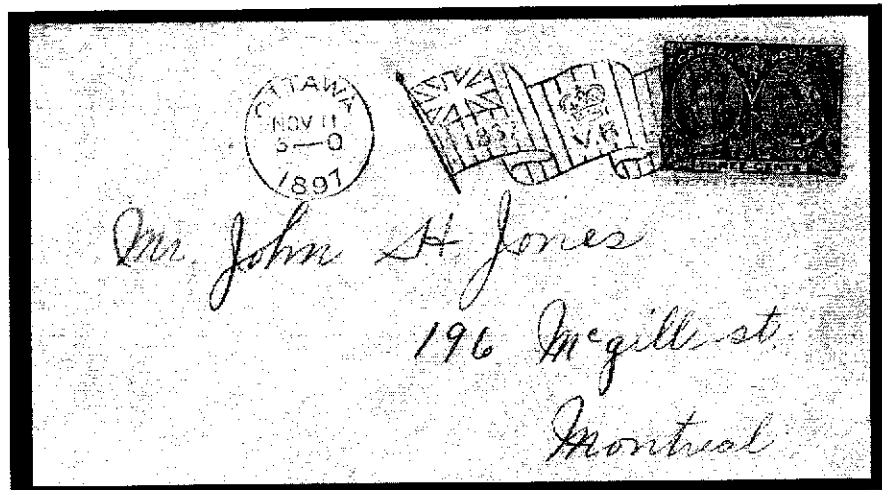
**FIGURE 49A:**

Illustration of an electrically-operated Bickerdike Postmarking Machine having the ability to postmark 5000 units of mail/minute.

The Canadian 'Bickerdikes' were manufactured in Montreal and applied various "flag" postmark types to outgoing mail.

Similar to an 'Imperial' commemorative postmark for Queen Victoria's sixty-year reign celebration, the Canadian Postal Supply Company designed and applied a commemorative postmark for the event in 1897 for machines operating at each Montreal and Ottawa (Figure 50).

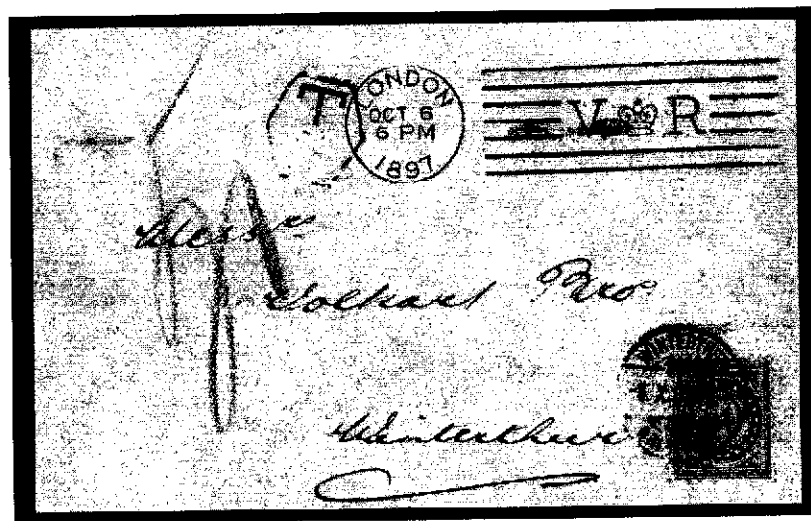
**FIGURE 50:**  
'Bickerdike'  
commemorative  
postmark example on  
cover, Ottawa,  
November 11, 1897.



Although the Canadian Postal Supply Company was not very successful selling their machine design to the United States Post Office, they were indeed successful through primarily the efforts by Brooks Young of that company, to sell machines to the British Post Office at London, the German, French, Italian & South African Post Offices.

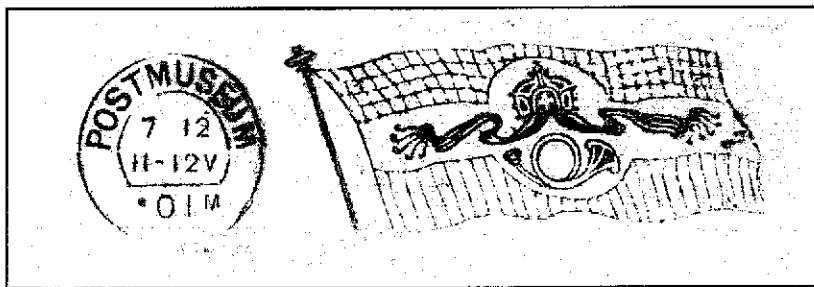
The London Post Office set out to have trials using six machines of the "Boston" (Imperial) Machine with six of the "Bickerdike", whereby the Bickerdike Machine was the successful competitor. All Bickerdike Postmarks at London consisted of a dater-dial with bar-line obliterator with the initials of the reigning monarch in the obliterator portion of the postmark (Figure 51).

**FIGURE 51:**  
Early-date British-trial of  
Bickerdike Machines at  
London on postage-due  
cover to Switzerland,  
October 6, 1897.



In Germany, trials began with six Canadian-manufactured Bickerdike machines in 1898, which were successful, resulting in a manufacturing license being signed. Eventually forty-one Bickerdike Machines were operational in Germany (including the independent postal administrations of Bavaria & Württemberg).

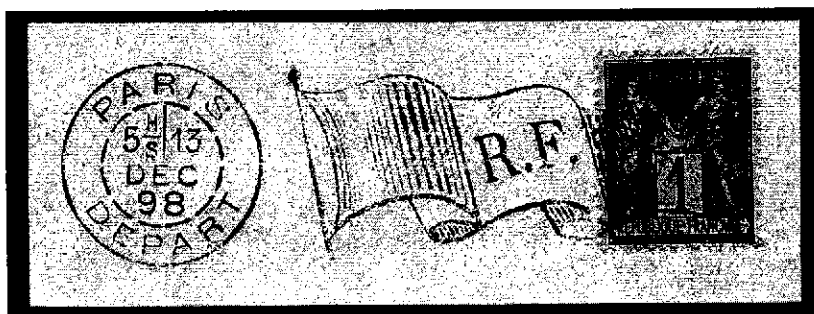
The initial postmarks used in Germany had line obliterators but those were soon converted to the attractive German postal flag postmarks (Figure 52).



**FIGURE 52:**

'Bickerdike' German postal flag postmark applied by trial machine at the German Postal Museum, December 7, 1901.

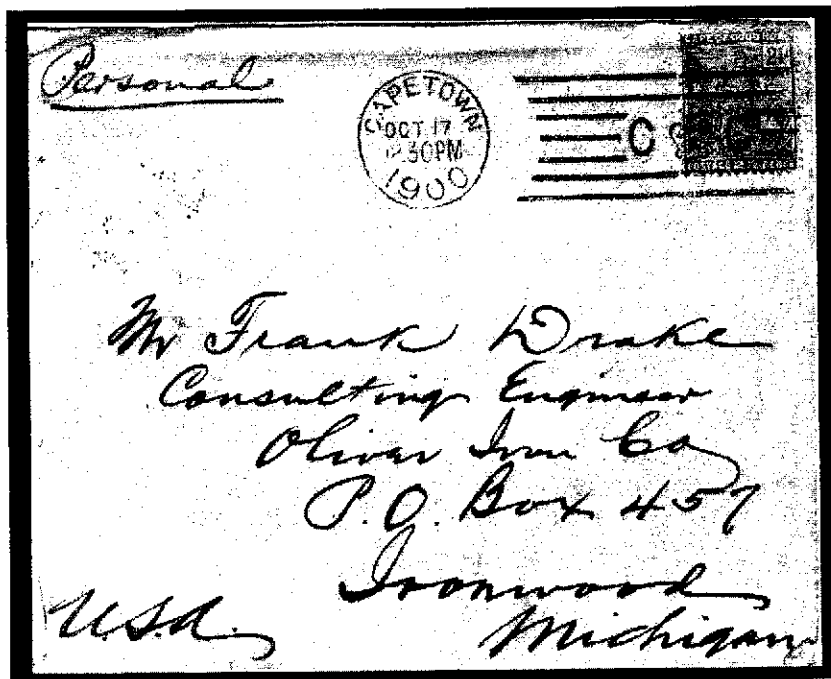
In France, where, subsequent to successful trials, twelve Bickerdike Machines were purchased and in use and operational between the years 1898-1906 (Figure 53).



**FIGURE 53:**

Proof postmark example of the "small" earliest Bickerdike flag postmark applied in France, December 13, 1898.

In South Africa, two Bickerdike Machines were in operation, one at each Pretoria and Capetown (Figure 54).



**FIGURE 54:**

Capetown 'Bickerdike' Postmark on cover, October 17, 1900.



## International Postal Supply Company Machines (1885-1900s)

In early 1885, George W. Hey, an attorney and consultant in patent cases, became interested in the heretofore postmarking methods used by the Post Office after having met inventor George Mott. Both gentlemen together investigated the postmarking needs with authorities at the New York Post Office and submitted ideas to them after inspecting their Leavitt Machine in operation.

In July of 1885, George Hey established the International Postal Supply Company in New York, whereupon he developed and submitted prototype machines to that post office for testing in 1888-1890 and later to post offices in Brooklyn & Buffalo, New York, as well as Washington, D.C. (Figure 55).

**FIGURE 55:**

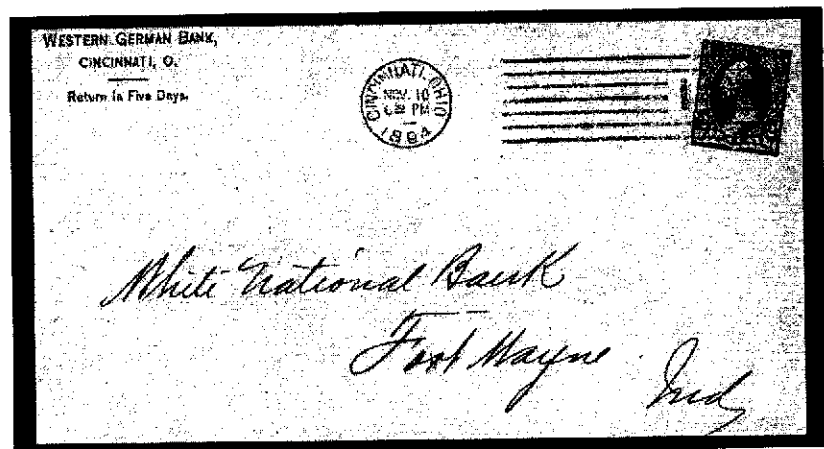
Early-date 'Die 3' Example Postmark on a Penalty Card from the Washington, D.C., March 30, 1890.



In 1891, the American Postmaster General signed an agreement with Messrs. Hey, Dolphin & Whelan of the International Postal Supply Company for one hundred "Hey & Dolphin" Machines, which could count, stack and postmark 24,000 postal cards in an hour, less when covers are postmarked! (14)

**FIGURE 56:**

Cover Example of an 1894 'International' Postmark, Cincinnati, Ohio, November 10, 1894.



The Figure 56 used machine was a forerunner to a later 1895 transformative and compact electrically-operated machine, "Hey & Dolphin High-Speed Flyer (Flier) Machine".

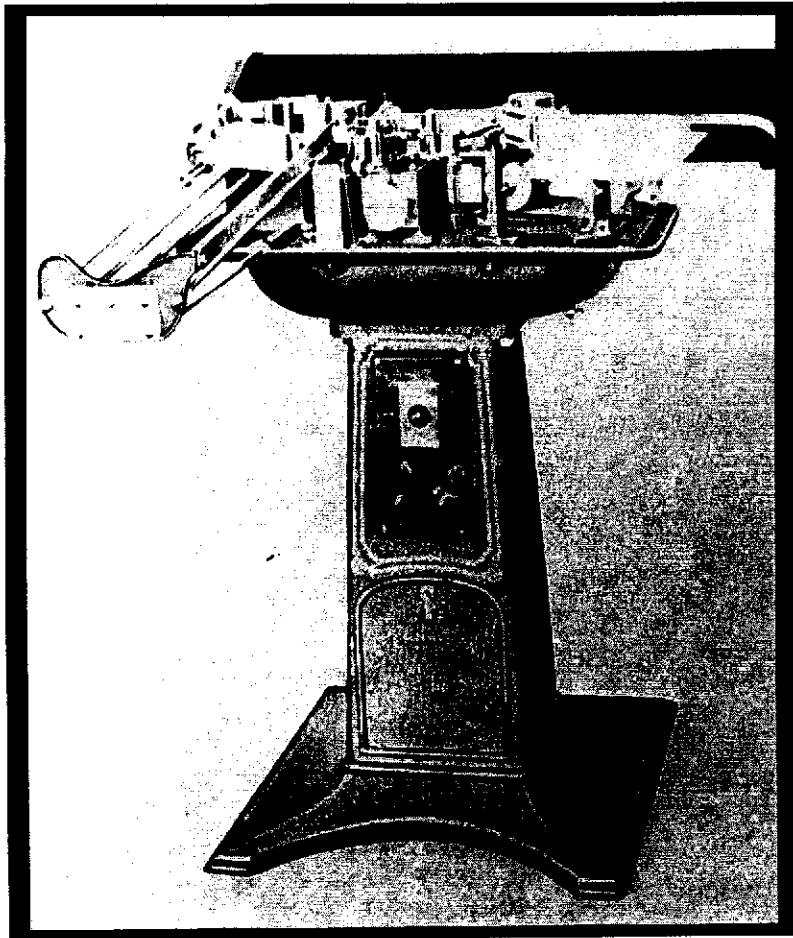
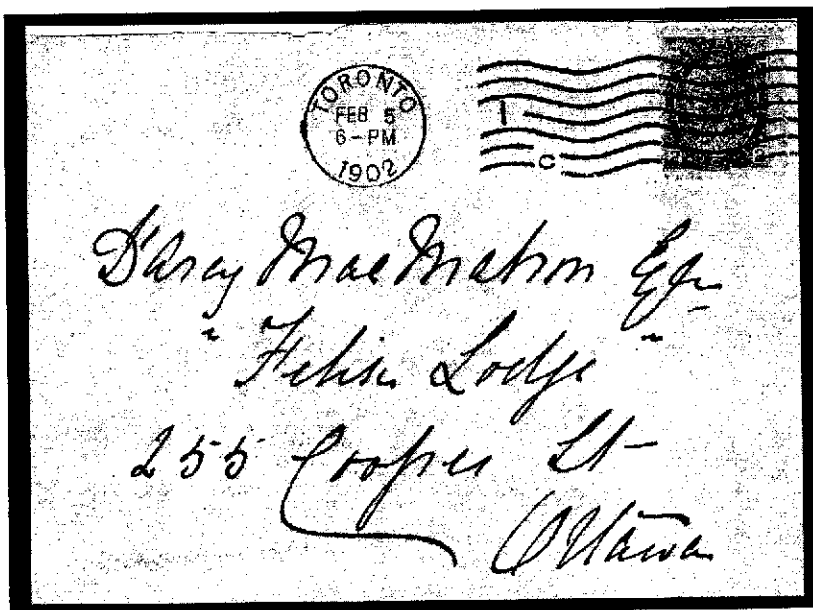
**FIGURE 56A:**

Illustration of the high-speed Hey & Dolphin 'Flyer' (International) Machine able to postmark between 40,000 to 60,000 pieces of mail an hour! (15)

The "Flier" Machine was successfully sold and operated at the Post Offices in the United States and Canada, albeit also demonstrated in England and Germany without subsequent sales or leasing agreements. In Canada, the 'Flier' replaced all their operating Bickerdike Machines (Figure 57).

**FIGURE 57:**

Second-day of demonstration trial (February 4-10, 1902) usage at Toronto, Canada, February 5, 1902.

## Barry Postal Supply Company Machines (1894-1912)

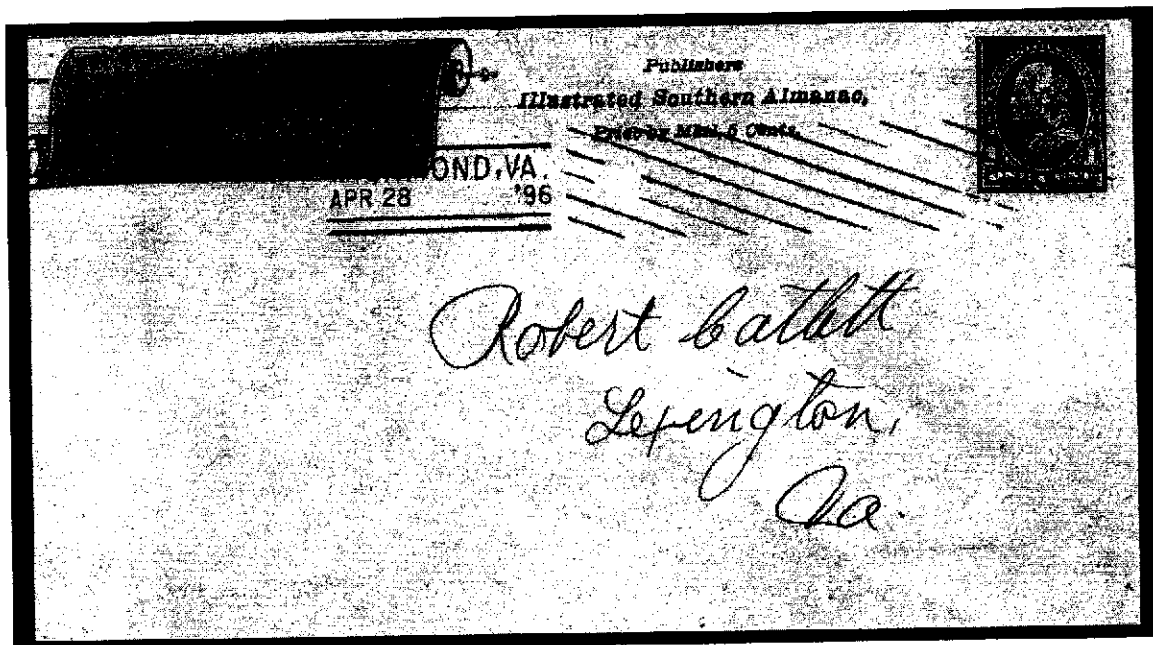
Similar to Martin Van Buren Ethridge in many respects, William Barry of Syracuse, and later of Oswego, New York, was one of America's early prominent inventors of higher-speed hand & treadle-operated machines.

His application of technology and developments can be considered the transition from early single impression slower mechanical machines to the very high speed later-generation of electrically-operated machines. Postmarking evolved with Barry by his use of a revolving postmark applicator or die, which effectively enabled higher-speed postmarking of faced-mail with every machine stroke.

The "Barry Story" is a complex one, and has been well documented by others. (16)

Barry started inventing with a patented harness stitching machine in 1876 and progressed between 1894-1912 with a number of patents specifically involving postmarking machines.

In July 1895, Barry founded his own company, the Barry Postal Supply Company, with financing by others and, thereupon, actively commenced marketing his machines primarily to the United States Post Office. His success appeared imminent in that the Post Office, after reviewing his machine and its price, decided not to renew a pending contract with a competitor company, the International Postal Supply Company, selling them 100-200 machines in his start-up year (Figure 58)! (17)

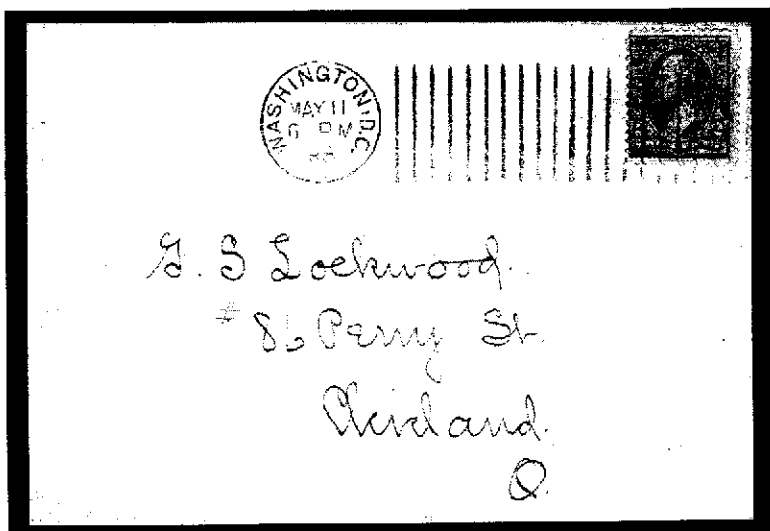


**FIGURE 58:**

Example of an early 'Barry' Machine postmark on third-class advertising mail cover, Richmond, Virginia, April 28, 1896.

## Barr-Fyke Machine Company (1896-1898)

In 1897, John Barr, an inventor, and John Fyke, an attorney, established the Barr-Fyke Machine Company in Kansas City, Missouri, a small company which attempted to gain a market share for its comparatively inexpensive and entirely automatic rapid postmarking machine, whose postmark obliterator was heretofore unique in that it consisted of a long-series of vertical lines (Figure 59).

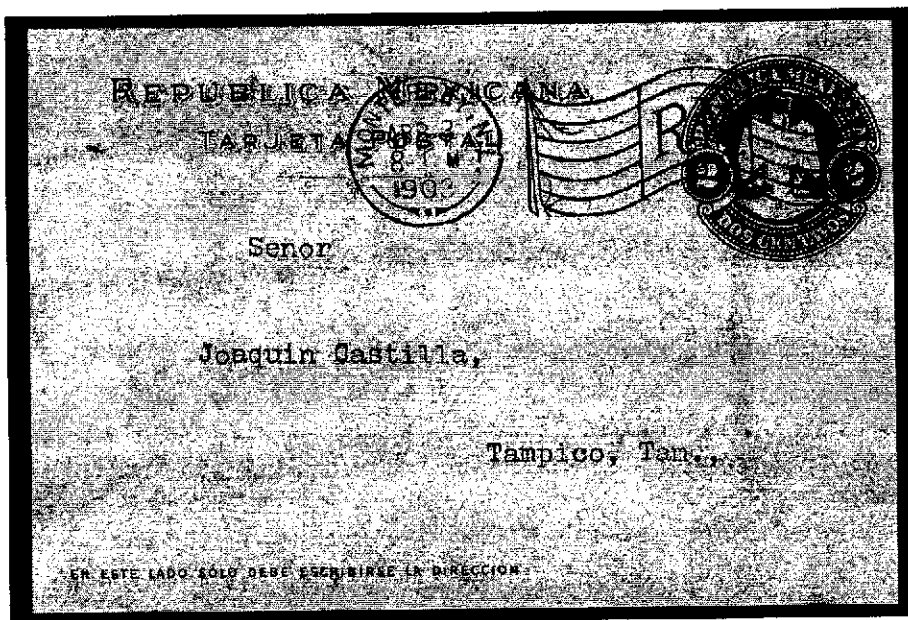


**FIGURE 59:**

Example of a Barr-Fyke Postmark on cover, postmarked at Washington D.C., May 11, 1898.

Although its success was limited in the United States, Barr-Fyke tests and sales in two markets abroad are most interesting for their particularly unusual postmarks.

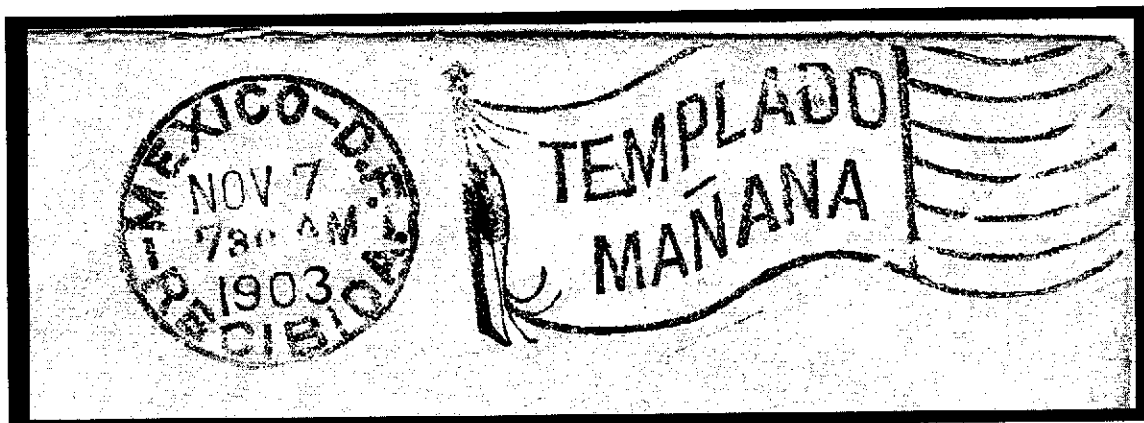
In Mexico, the postmark applied for out-going mail consisted of a dater-dial and “flag” obliterator indicating “RM” (“Republic Mexico”) (Figure 60).



**FIGURE 60:**

Monterrey, Mexico, Barr-Fyke “Flag” Postmark on local postal card, April 3, 1903.

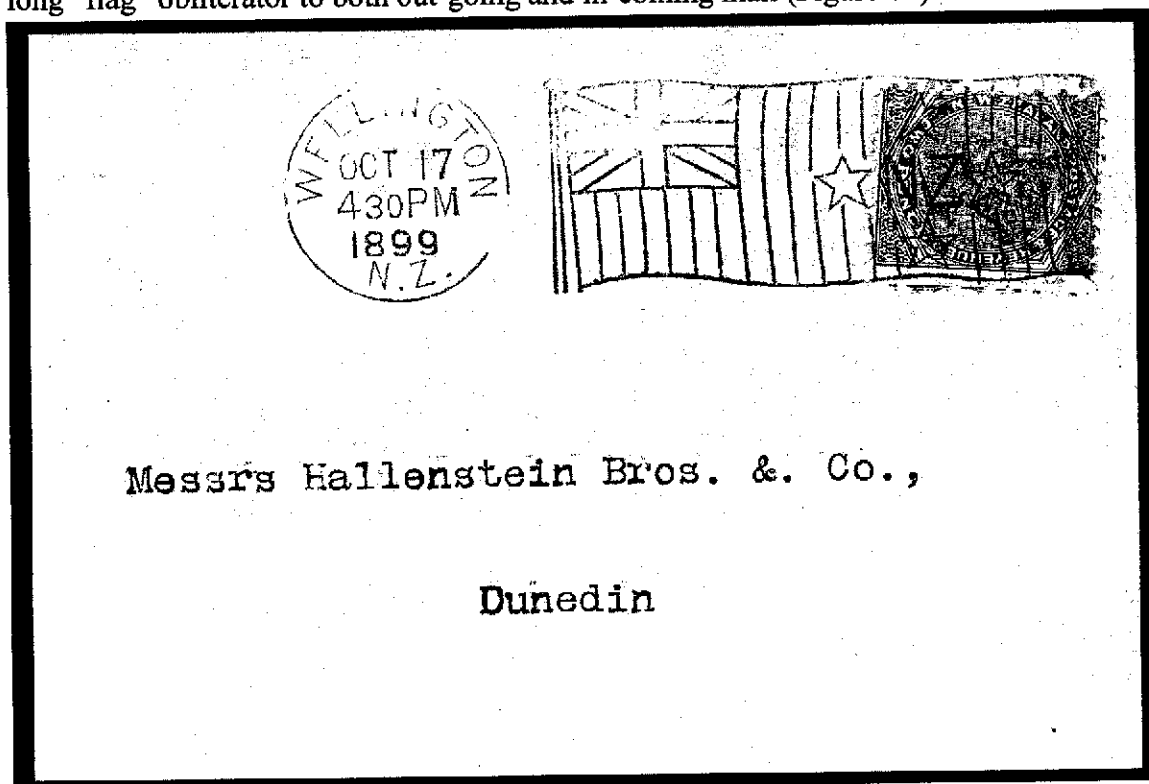
For in-coming mail in Mexico, the Barr-Fyke Machine applied postmarks consisting of a dater-dial with an obliterator indicating a weather forecast! (Figure 61)



**FIGURE 61:**

Reverse of local Mexico cover with Barr-Fyke "weather flag" receipt postmark indicating *Templado Mañana* ("mild tomorrow"), Mexico D.F. Receipt: November 7, 1903.

In New Zealand, the Barr-Fyke Machine applied a postmark having a dater-dial and a long "flag" obliterator to both out-going and in-coming mail (Figure 62).

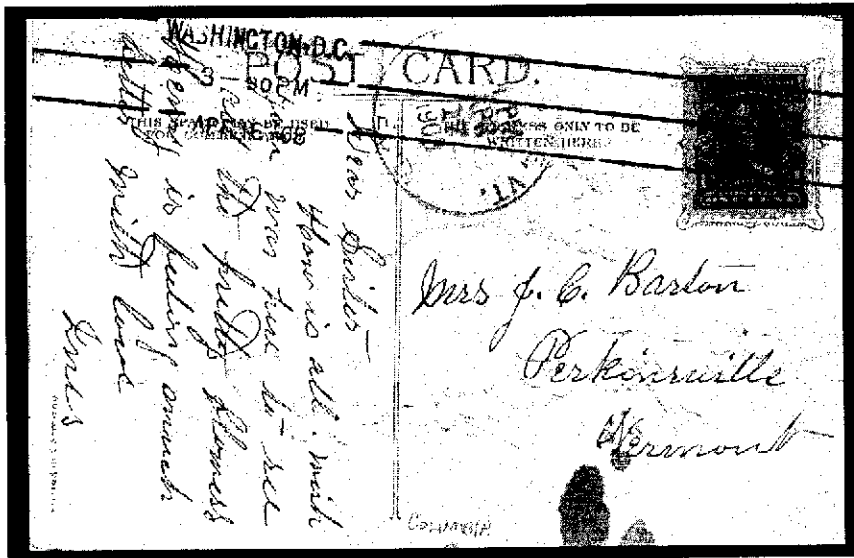


**FIGURE 62:**

Wellington Barr-Fyke "NZ" Flag Postmark on cover, October 17, 1899, sent to Dunedin, New Zealand.

## Columbia Postal Supply Company (1900-1925)

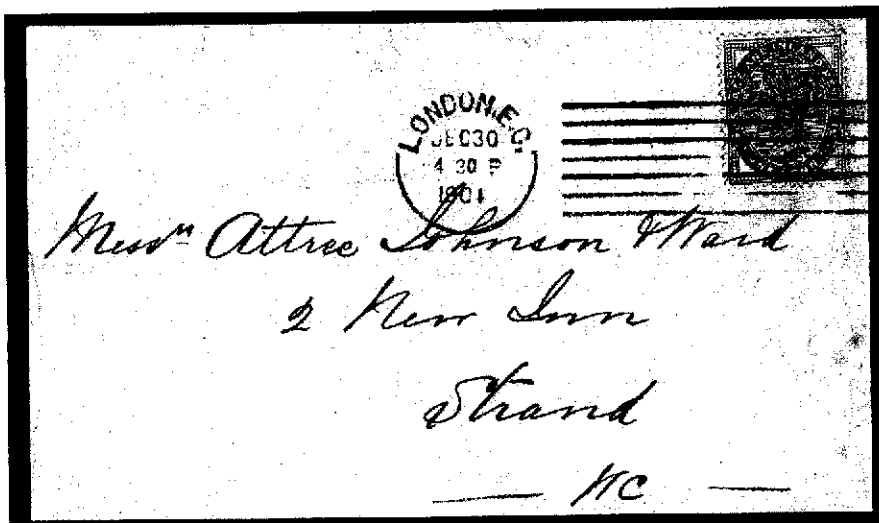
Just prior to the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a German-born American, Fred Ielfield, invented and introduced a high-speed, vacuum-fed, electric postmarking machine, which was initially patented in both Germany and the United States of America in 1901 (Figure 63). Its advance traits of speed and technology were most competitive to the heretofore American, International & Barry-brand machines used by the United States Post Office.



**FIGURE 63:**  
Columbia Machine  
postmark of an early  
trial using a continuous-  
impression postmark,  
Washington D.C.,  
April 16, 1908.

In attempting to exploit an initial, albeit modest, contract for twenty machines with the U.S. Post Office, the Columbia Postal Supply Company of Silver Creek, New York, of which Ielfield was a part owner, offered their machine to overseas postal administrations in the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, and others.

In the United Kingdom, for example, the postmarks consisted of a dater and multi-line obliterator (Figure 64).

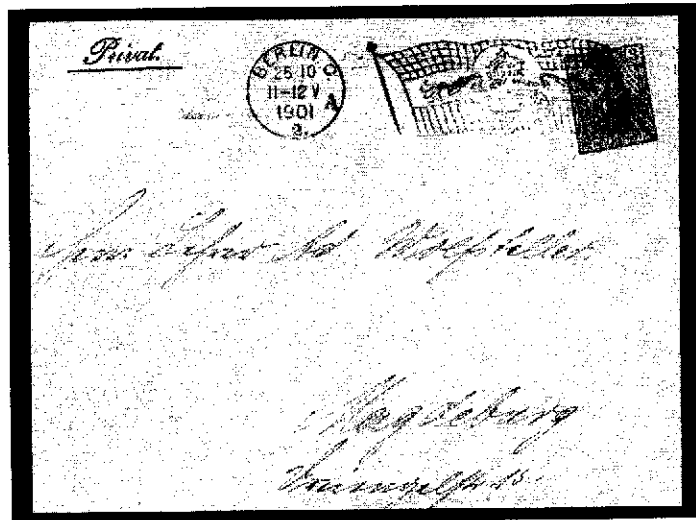


**FIGURE 64:**  
Columbia Machine  
marking on cover  
from the early trials in  
the United Kingdom,  
London, December  
30, 1901.

In Germany, the first trial was an attempt to convince the German Post Office to utilize the Columbia Machine versus the Bickerdike which the German Post Office had already commenced testing in 1898 and was in the process of purchasing machines from the German-domiciled manufacturing licensee. Accordingly, the first postmark trial in Berlin consisted of a postmark having a dater-dial with flag obliterator, similar to a "flag" postmark applied by the early Bickerdike Machines (Figure 65).

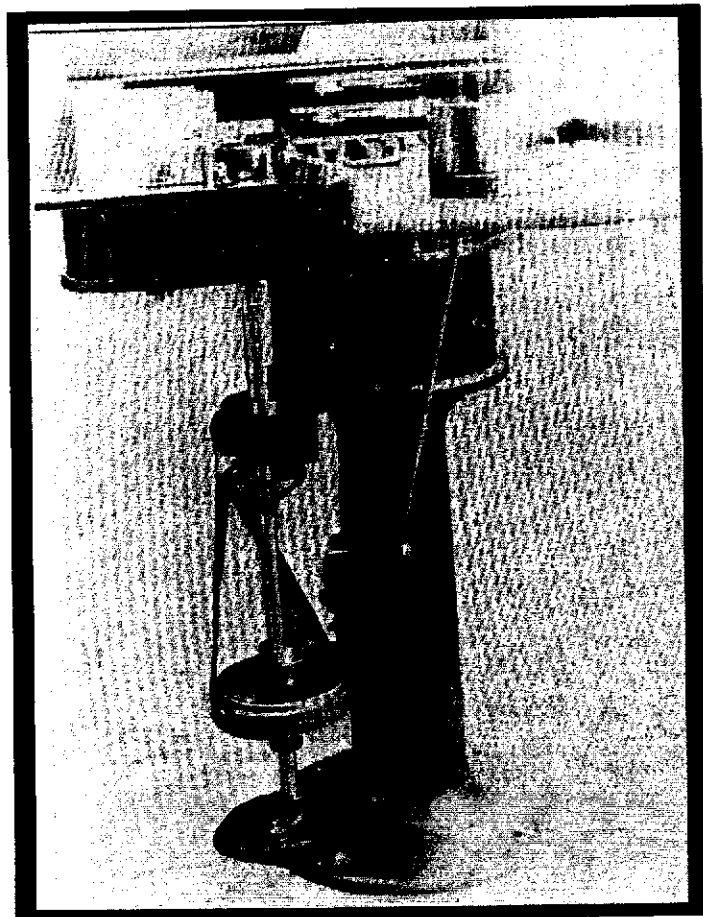
**FIGURE 65:**

Flag Postmark used with the Columbia Machine trial at Berlin, Germany (October 14, 1901 – 5 January 1905).

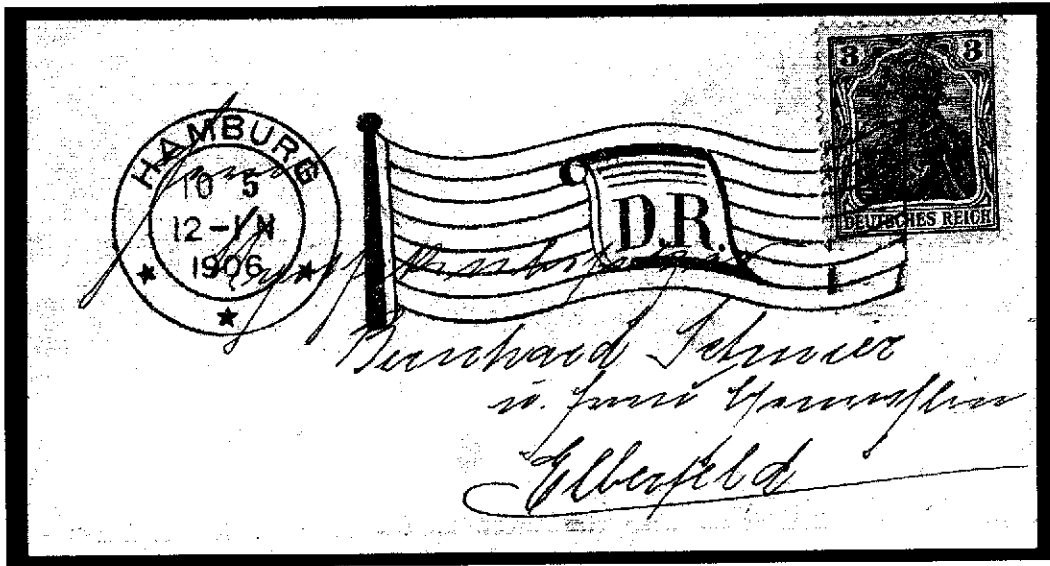


**FIGURE 65A:**

Illustration of the single-impression-postmark Columbia Machine as used in Germany.



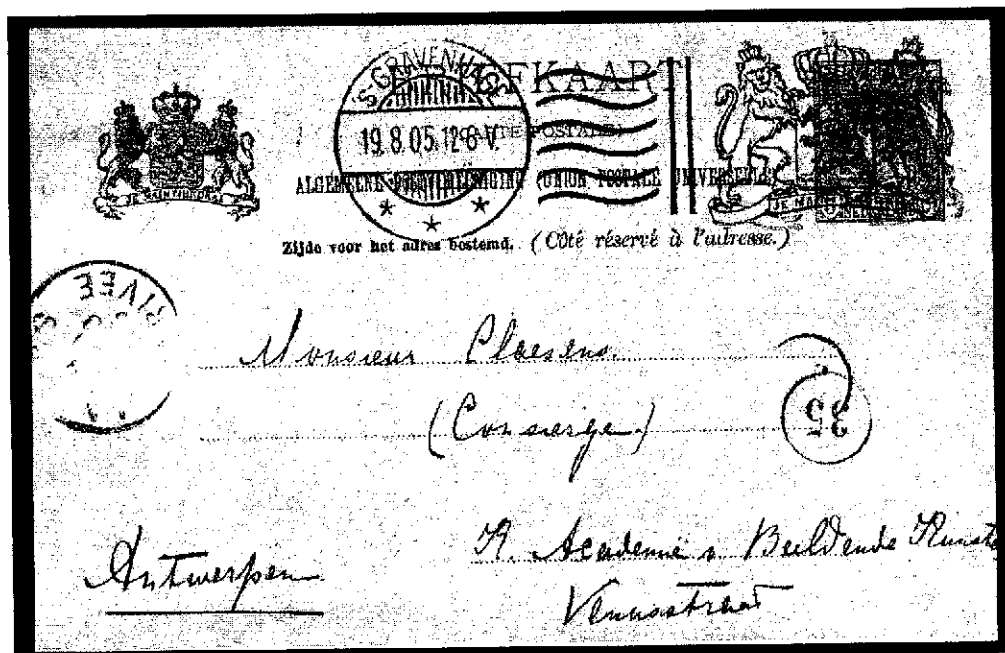
In later trials using a still-faster machine version at Hamburg, the postmark had, again, a postal “flag” postmark design (Figure 66).



**FIGURE 66:**

Columbia Machine trial at Hamburg with a modified, albeit popular with collectors, “flag” postmark (23 April 1906 – 9 January 1907).

In the Netherlands, machines were tested at Gravenhage (Figure 67), Amsterdam & Rotterdam between 1905-1908, all postmarking out-going mail as well as applying receival marks to in-coming mail.



**FIGURE 67:**

Illustration of the Columbia Machine Trial at Gravenhage 1905-1907.



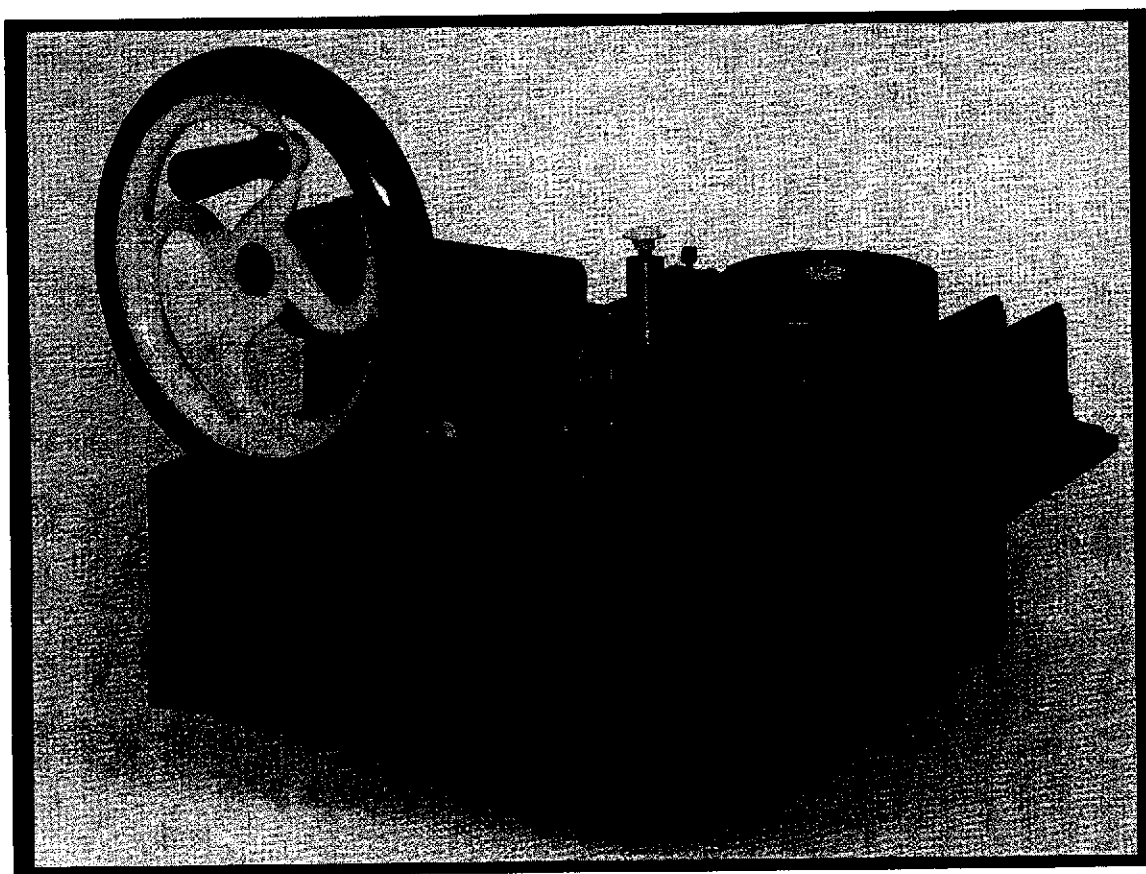
## **HIGH-SPEED FLEXIBLE MACHINES (1904-1940s)**

### **NORWAY & GERMANY (1904-1930's)**

#### **Norway**

#### **Krag Machine (1904-1908)**

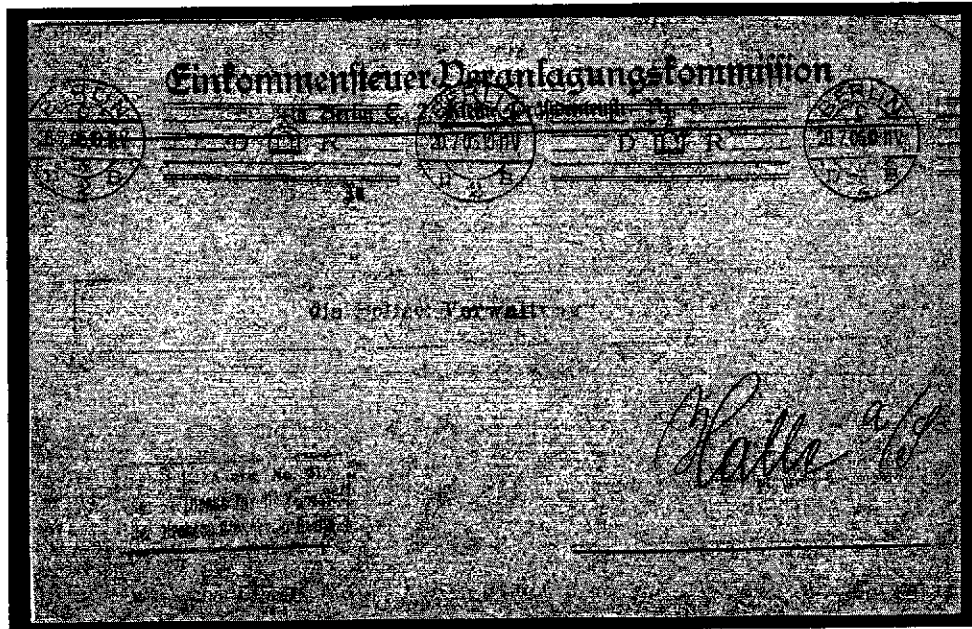
Certainly one of the most successful postmarking machines conceived and marketed shortly after the turn-of-the-century, was one which developed in 1904 in Norway by Gustav Adolf Hansen and manufactured by Nils Krag (Figure 68).



**Figure 68:**

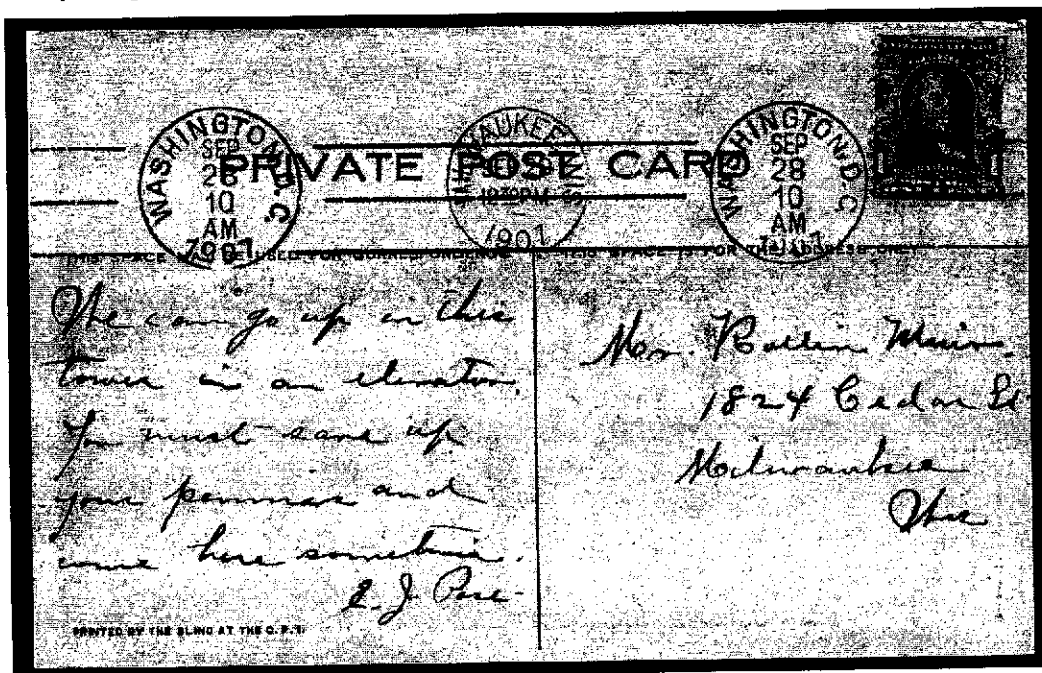
Illustration of a hand-operated Krag Machine, introduced into Britain in 1907(3)

The “Krag” Machine was unique for its time in that it was a high-speed machine, available in hand, treadle or electric-operated versions, and applied a continuous-impression (revolving dual-marking die) postmark (Figure 69).

**FIGURE 69:**

Example of a Krag Machine Postmark during the trial (July 13, 1905 – March 3, 1906) phase at Berlin, Germany, July 20, 1905, illustrating a triple impression postmark applied by a dual-dies on an official-mail cover.

Among the countries where the machine was sold and operated were Scandinavia, Germany, England and the United States of America (Figure 70).

**FIGURE 70:**

Example of a Krag Machine Postmark during the trial (August 29, 1907 – February 6, 1908) phase at Washington, D.C., September 28, 1907, with an 'International' Machine receival mark at Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

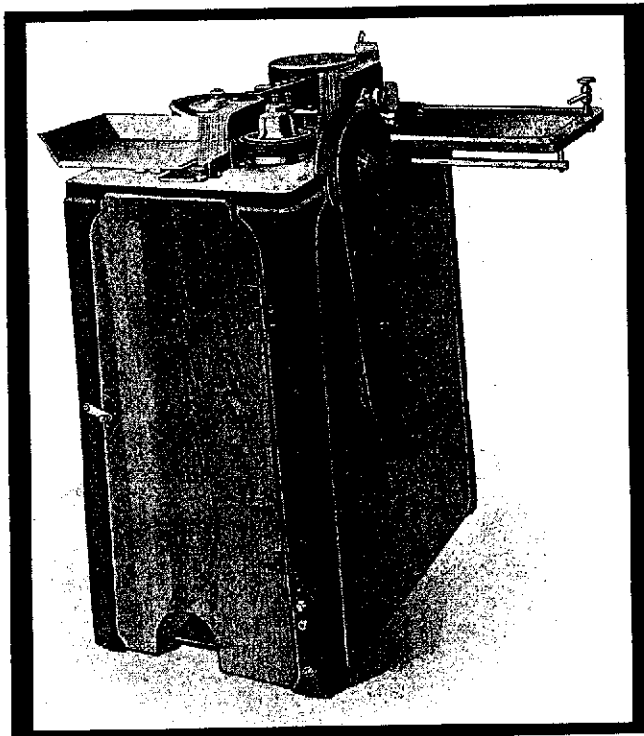
## Germany

### Sylbe & Pondorf (1907-1930s)

Soon after the trial and field use of the Krag Postmarking Machine by the German Post Office in 1905-1906, the Sylbe & Pondorf Company of Schmölln, Germany, introduced their newly developed rapid postmarking machine, which in many respects was similar in technology to that of the Krag Machine but with a number of distinct advantages (Figure 71).

**FIGURE 71:**

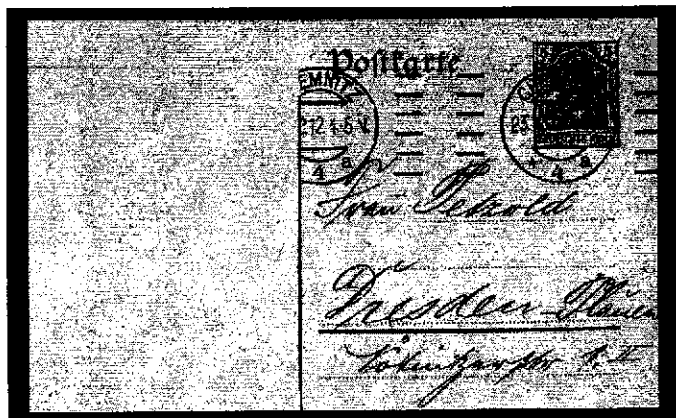
*Continuous impression "Sylbe" Machine "Chemnitz" postmarked postcard sent to Cairo, Egypt, January 1, 1913, with partial obstruction of written text.*



**FIGURE 71A:**

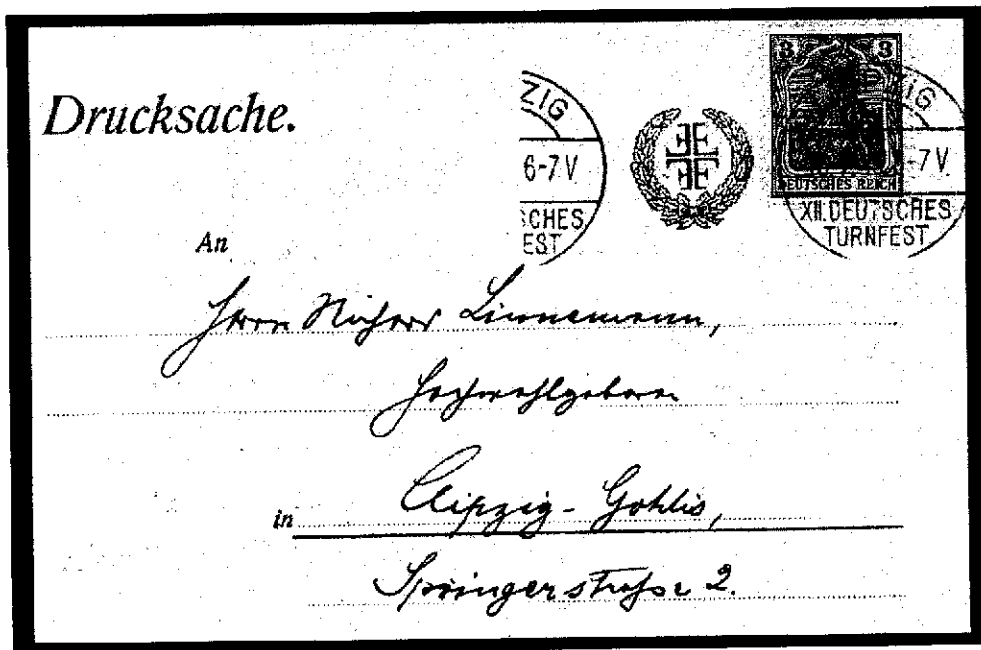
Illustration of a German-built Sylbe & Pondorf Machine.

Although the "Sylbe" Machine was initially a dual die-head continuous-impression machine, similar to the 'Krag', its design, however, enabled it to postmark 25% more mail. Its additional feature was its flexibility to apply continuous-impressions (repeater postmarks) but also adjust to apply only "half" or single-impression postmarks, which was important for the postmarking of postal stationery cards or postcards so that the mark did not over-ride the written message (Figure 72).



**FIGURE 72:**  
Half-impression 'Sylbe' Machine  
"Chemnitz" postmark on domestic  
postal card, December 23, 1912.

That feature of adjustability also permitted the 'Sylbe' Machine to accept a slogan in place of the obliterator portion of a postmark, resulting in the first use of commemorative slogan postmarks in Germany (Figure 73).



**FIGURE 73:**  
Half-impression 'Sylbe' Postmark commemorating the "XII Deutsches Turnfest" (12<sup>th</sup>  
German Gymnastic Meet), July 13, 1913.

In Germany, the 'Sylbe' Machine was the first rapid continuous-impression postmarking machine to apply bulk prepaid mail postmarks, in 1910 (Figure 74), which are forerunners to meter machines widely introduced in Germany commencing in 1922.



**FIGURE 74:**

First-day use of 'Sylbe' Machine prepaid bulk-mail postmark in red on Bavarian advertising reply postal card pair, February 1, 1910.

Those features eventually enabled the 'Sylbe' Machine to become the mainstay of the German Post Office and led to the replacement of the Krag Machines in its most important market. 'Sylbe' Machine sales expanded throughout Europe and other parts of the world, except for the United States of America, which had both the 'International' and 'Universal' Machines eventually dominating its market.

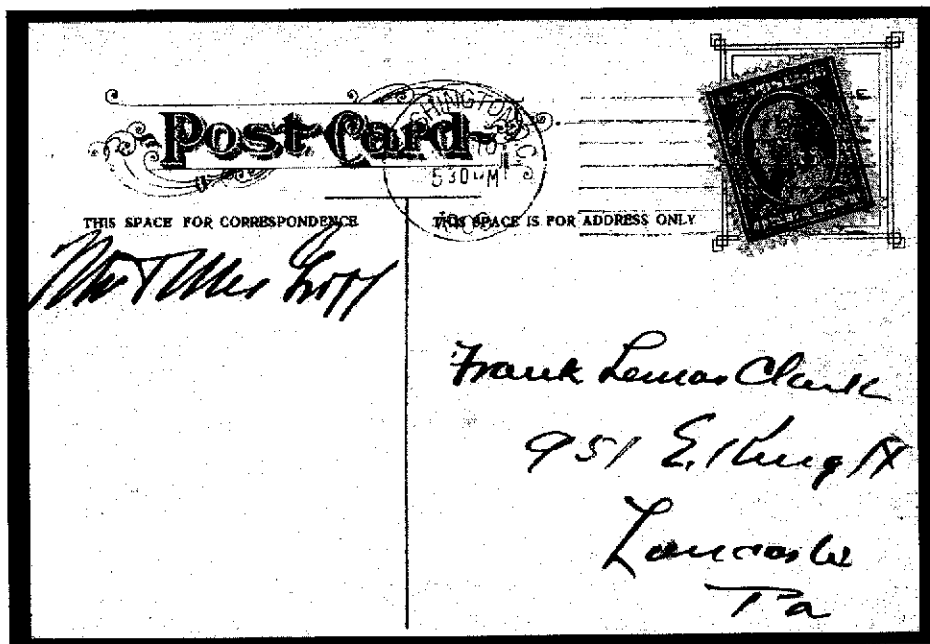
## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (1909-1940's)

### Universal Stamping Machine Company (1909-1942)

Walter H. Bowes purchased the Universal Stamping Machine Company of New Jersey in 1908 with the intent of manufacturing high-speed check endorsing machines invented by George Graham, who for many years had previously been affiliated with the International Postal Supply Company for many years.

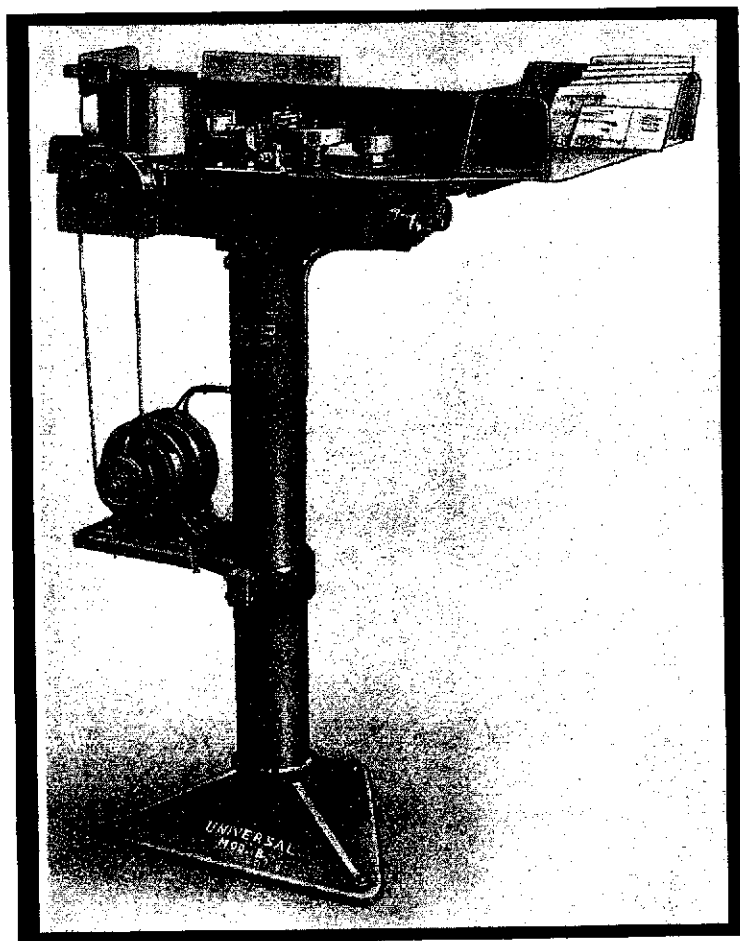
With research and motivation of his own and with the technological experience of George Graham, Bowes & Graham developed a high-speed postmarking machine, which

was introduced to Postmaster General Grandfield at Washington D.C. in July, 1909 (Figure 75).



**FIGURE 75:**  
Example of the Universal Postmark, applied by the first Universal prototype machine, from the first trial at Washington D.C. between August 4-16, 1909, on a postcard, August 10, 1909.

**FIGURE 75A:**  
Illustration of a Universal Postmarking Machine.

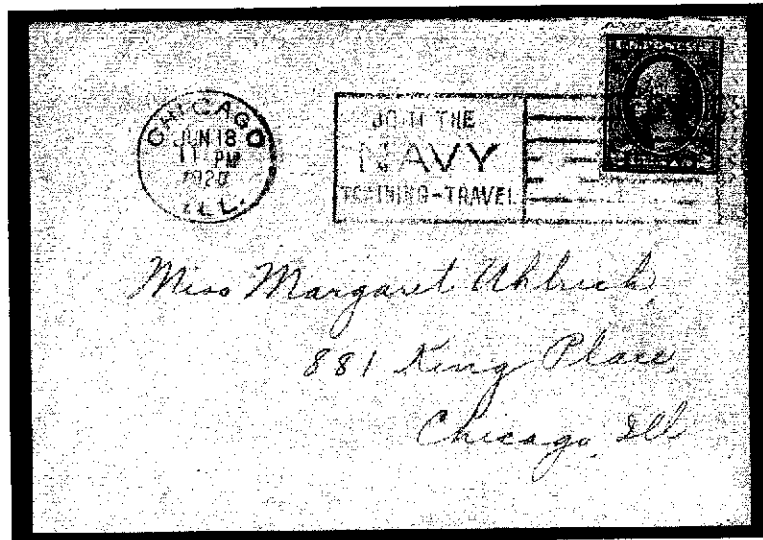


Upon completion of the successful trial, hundreds of the 'Universal' hand-operated machines having a postmarking speed of 450 mail units/minute were procured by the Post Office for small town use. (18)

Subsequently, more advanced and electrically-powered machines were introduced by the Universal Stamping Company, for lease or purchase, having postmark line or slogan obliterators (Figure 76).

**FIGURE 76:**

Universal Postmark with slogan obliterator "*Join the Navy Training-Travel*", Chicago, June 18, 1920.

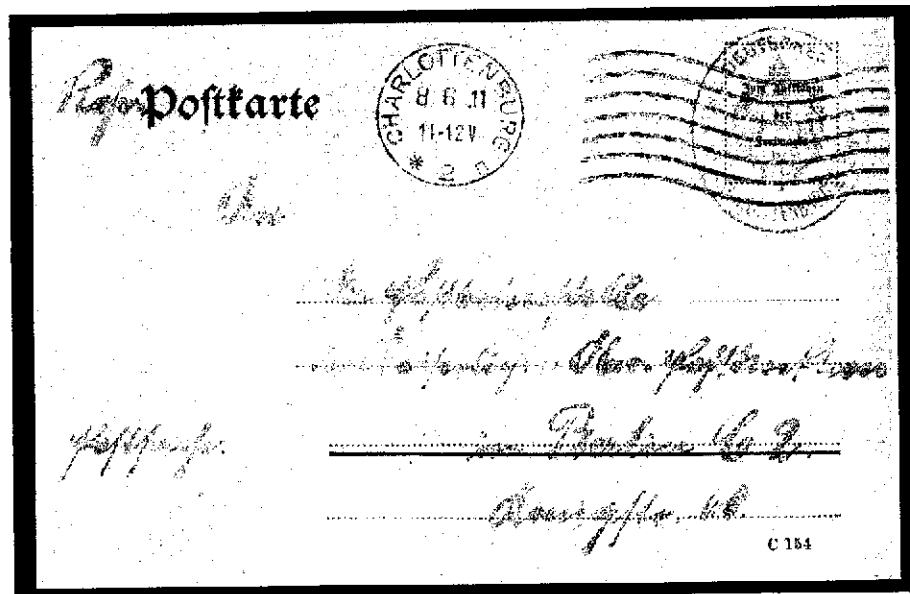


In 1911, William Bowes traveled to Europe and attempted to market his machine types to post offices there.

In Germany, the German Post Office tested his electrically-operated high-speed machine for testing between 1911-1912 at five post offices (Figure 77).

**FIGURE 77:**

Earliest known  
postmark  
example, June 8,  
1911, from a  
Universal (trial)  
Machine  
operating at  
Charlottenburg  
(Berlin),  
Germany, on  
official post office  
mail.



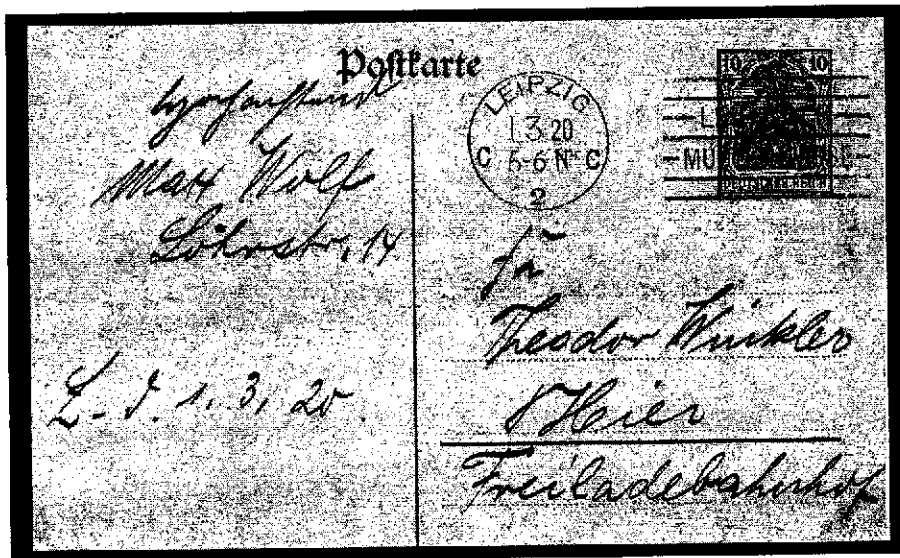
With trials in Germany having been most successful, the Universal Stamping Machine Company licensed the manufacture of its machine to the Deutsche Post- und Eisenbahn-Verkehrswesen Aktiengesellschaft (DAPAG) at Staaken (Berlin), which between 1913 and 1920s manufactured hundreds of 'Universals' for use in Germany (Figure 78).



**FIGURE 78:**

Leipzig Universal Machine Line-Postmark on World War I censored mail to Brazil, April 1, 1916.

The line obliterator was later altered with a slogan for the purpose of advertising events (Figure 79).



**FIGURE 79:**

Leipzig Universal Machine Postmark with obliterator indicating "Leipziger Mustermesse" (Leipzig Trade Fair), on a domestic postal card, March 1, 1920.

After World War I, newer postmarking machines continued to be introduced, or heretofore models refined or improved, in various countries, albeit, in conclusion here for the subject time period, other innovative machines should be mentioned as an epilogue.



**EPILOGUE:  
OTHER INNOVATIVE  
POSTMARKING MACHINES  
(1870-1920's)**

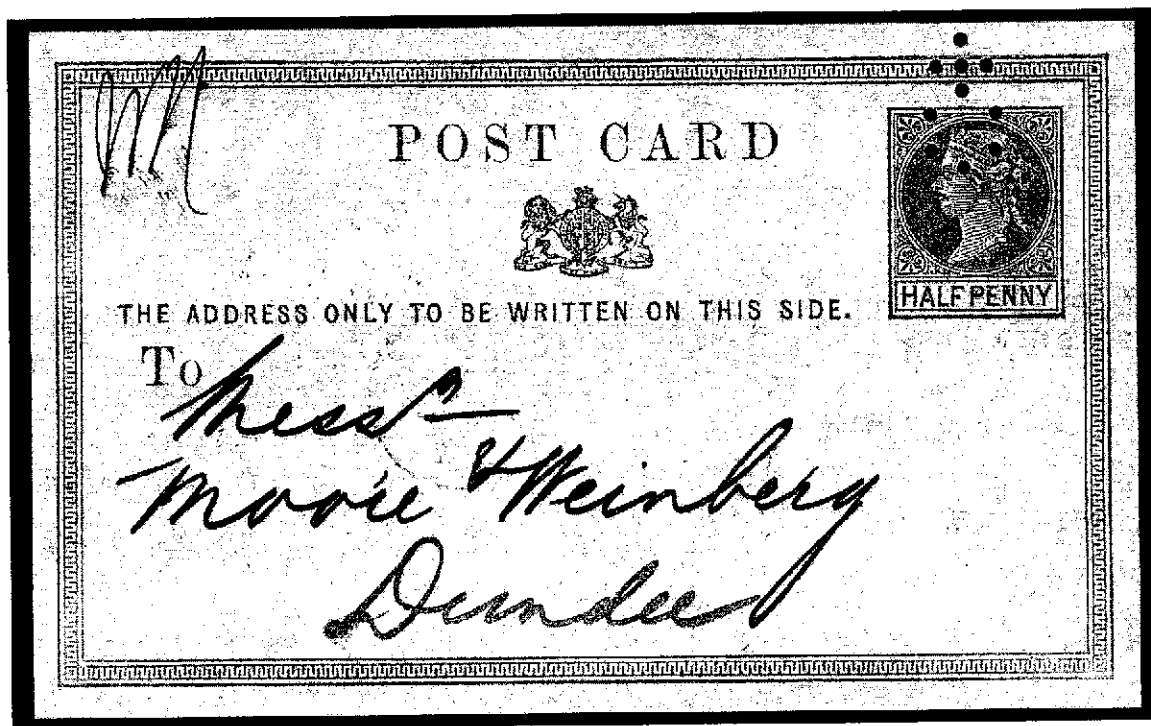
**GREAT BRITAIN**

**Sloper Perfin Postmarking Machines  
(1870-1875)**

With the introduction of the postal stationery card in Britain in 1870, the post office sought a device for effective postmarking of uniform-size cards in quantity. The "Sloper" Perforating Machine, heretofore used for perforating business documents, appeared to be the machine which they sought and subsequently tested.

Several perforation designs were ultimately tried, mainly consisting of arrows with or without broken pins, albeit other hand devices were also concurrently tried where those clipped, punched or knife-sliced the cards to invalidate them for additional use.

The initial perfin design applied by the 'Sloper' and used at the start of the trial at London was a "Cross & Orb" design in use only in November, 1870. (Figure 80).

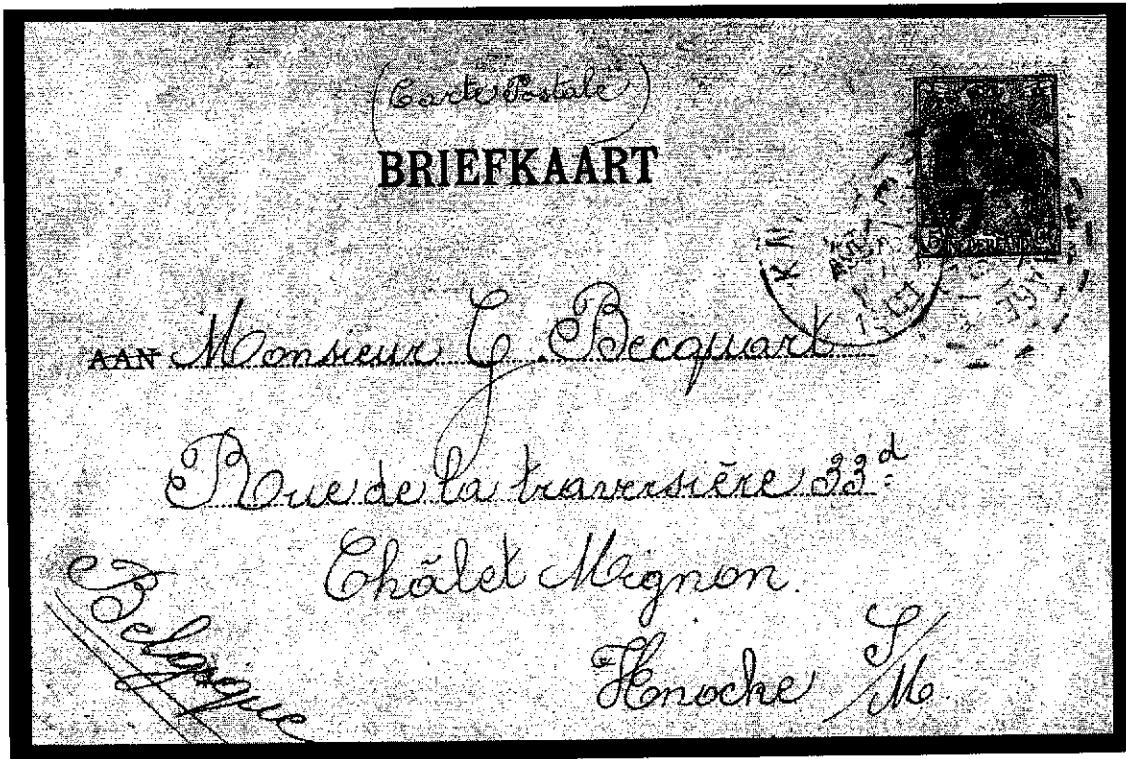


**FIGURE 80:**

Earliest "Cross & Orb" Perfin example on a postal stationery card written on November 2, 1870.

**NETHERLANDS****Vulcanus Branding Machine  
(1901)**

In August, 1901, the Dutch Post Office at 's-Gravenhage tested a treadle-operated machine where the postmarking die was heated and which obliterated the postage by "branding"! (Figure 81)



**FIGURE 81:**

Vulcanus 'branded' Postmark on a postal card, dated August 19, 1901, sent to Belgium.

If the postal clerk applied too much force, the mail became branded to the extent where the contents were burned! Altering the die's time and/or date required time for the die to cool.

Since the machine's effective output was not higher than the Roelant Machines already in wide use, the Vulcanus Machine trial ended soon after it started, and the machine was no longer of consideration for the post office.

## NORWAY, NEW ZEALAND & GREAT BRITAIN

### Self-Service Coin-Operated Franking Machines (1901-1912)

#### NORWAY...

Two inventors in Norway developed meter forerunner machines.

Charles A. Kahrs invented and manufactured a self-service machine, which, after the postal patron inserted his coins suitable for payment of postage for domestic cards or letters, applied the patron's mail with a "postal-horn" mark (Figure 82) and retained such until a postal clerk later affixed a postage stamp covering the mark with a postage stamp and a subsequent postmark.



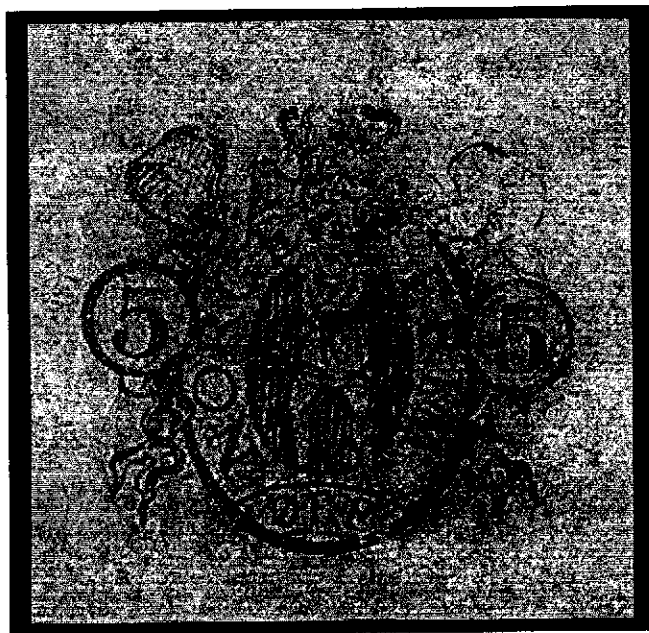
**FIGURE 82:**

Illustration of the "Kahr's" Machine Postmark.

The Kahr's Machine was tested at the main Kristiana (today.. Oslo) Post Office between August 12 – September 14, 1900, with no additional subsequent interest shown by the Norwegian Post Office in purchasing machines.

A few years later the Uchermann-Krag Company of Norway introduced a more effective meter forerunner machine in 1904 with seven machines being used by commercial banks and businesses.

The machine applied a marking of a "shield with crown around a standing figure" with text "5 Ore .. Norge Frim" (Figure 83).



**FIGURE 83:**

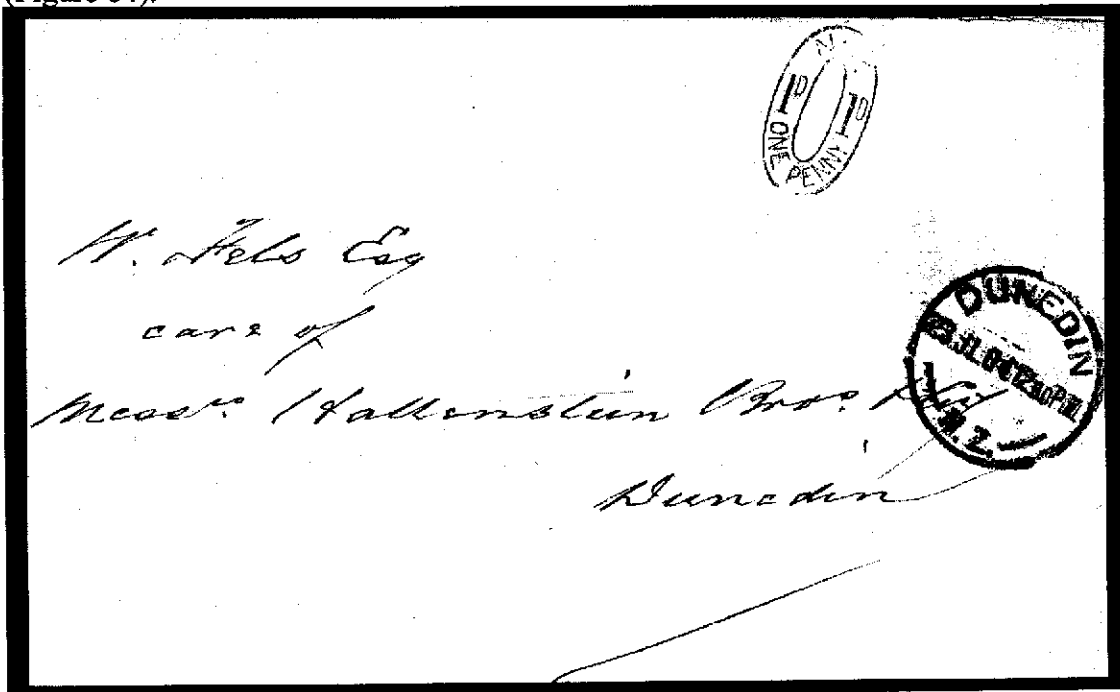
Illustration of the Uchermann-Krag Machine Postmark.

The Uchermann-Krag Machine's mark was a payment mark (green color) on bulk mail with a post office clerk subsequently, upon delivery to mail to the post office, hand cancelling each mail unit indicating the date and time.

### NEW ZEALAND...

In 1904 New Zealand, Ernest Moss (Automatic Franking Machine Company) and Robert Wales (New Zealand Franking Machine Company) separately developed and introduced coin-inserted self-service franking machines for public use at the Wellington and Dunedin Post Offices respectively.

In both instances, a one-penny coin was inserted and a cover was simultaneously applied with a "One Penny" round or oval mark for the Moss or Wales Machines respectively (Figure 84).



**FIGURE 84:**

Wales Machine Mark (upper right) on a domestic 1904 cover.

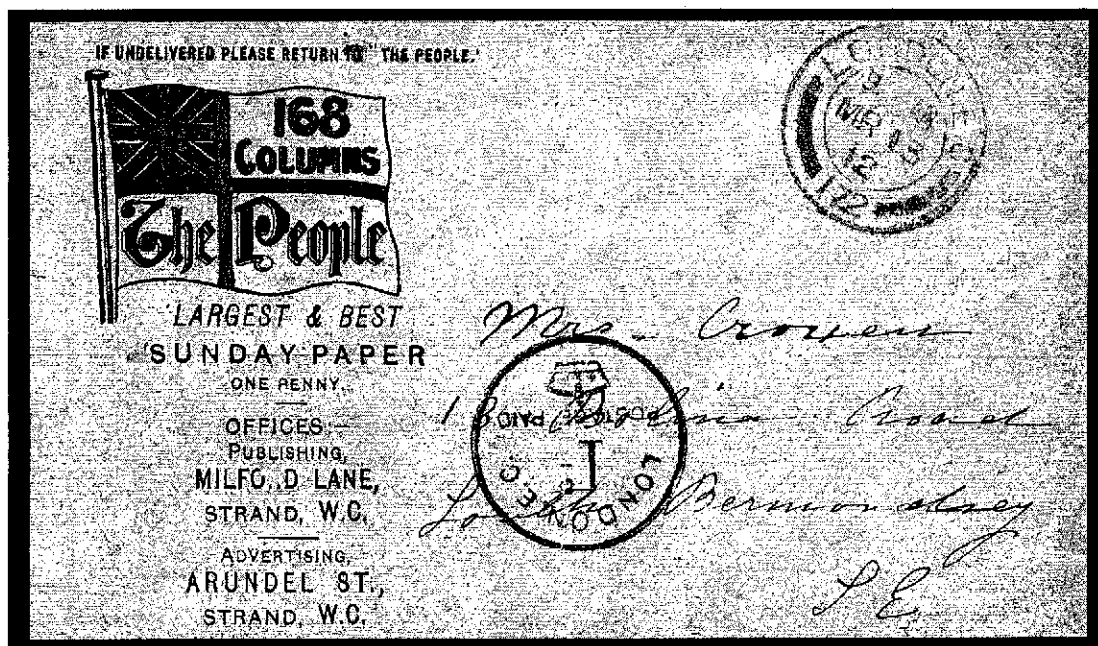
Both machines would retain the mail which would later be retrieved by a postal clerk who would then apply a postmark indicating the time and day.

### GREAT BRITAIN...

In 1912 (January 25 – August 31) the London Post Office tested a "stampless post machine", developed by F. Wilkinson of Braintree, England, which was coin-fed and self-postmarking.

Operation of the Wilkinson Machine was simple:

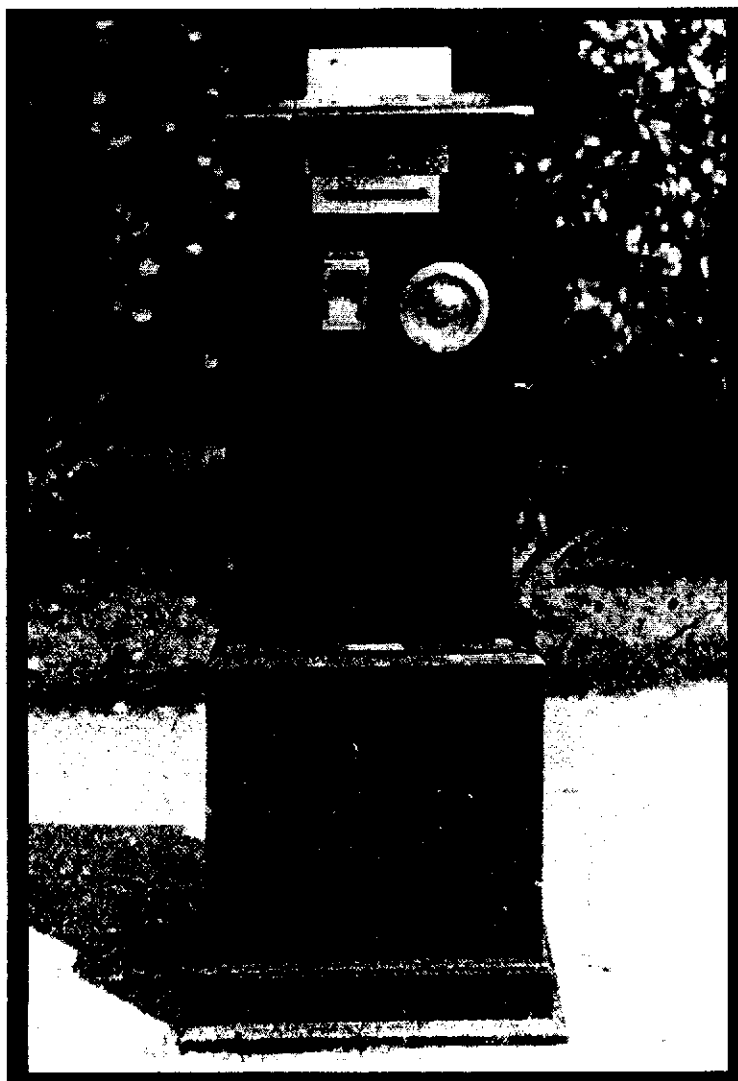
The mailer inserted a One-Pence coin along with his/her mail into the machine. A hand-crank handle was turned twice whereupon a "postage paid" (Figure 85) marking was applied to the cover with the machine retaining the mail until retrieved by a postal clerk at daily intervals, who subsequently applied a second postmark indicating the day and time.

**FIGURE 85:**

Wilkinson Machine  
Postmark on non-  
philatelic commercial  
mail advertising cover,  
London, March 13,  
1912.

**FIGURE 85A:**

Illustration of a  
Wilkinson Machine,  
which postmarked an  
estimated 12,000 units  
of mail during the eight  
month trial period (19).



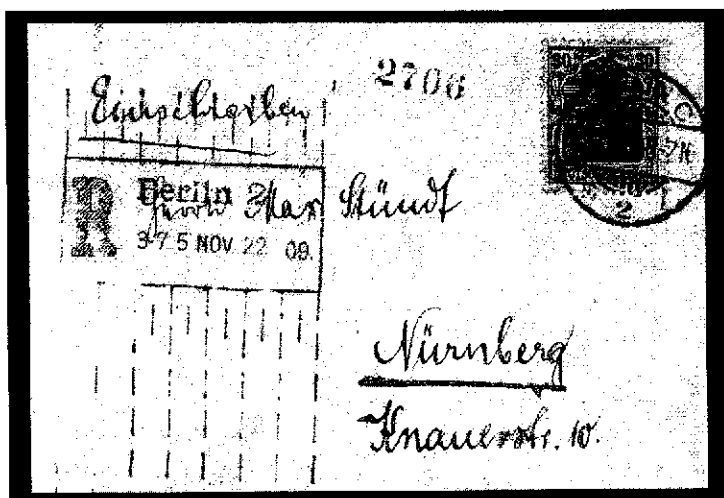
## GERMANY

### DAPAG & Micheliuss Self-Service Registered Mail And Postage Affixing & Postmarking Machines (1909-1920's)

#### DAPAG Self-Service Registered Mail Machine...

In 1909, the "DAPAG" Company (*Deutsche Post-und Eisenbahn Verkehrswesen Aktiengesellschaft*) introduced their self-service mail registration machine.

Between 1909 and the late 1920's twenty-four such machines were operating in the lobbies of various German post offices with several additional machines in operation in Russia. The purpose of the machine was to expedite the processing of primarily domestic registered mail during standard or closed post office hours (Figure 86).



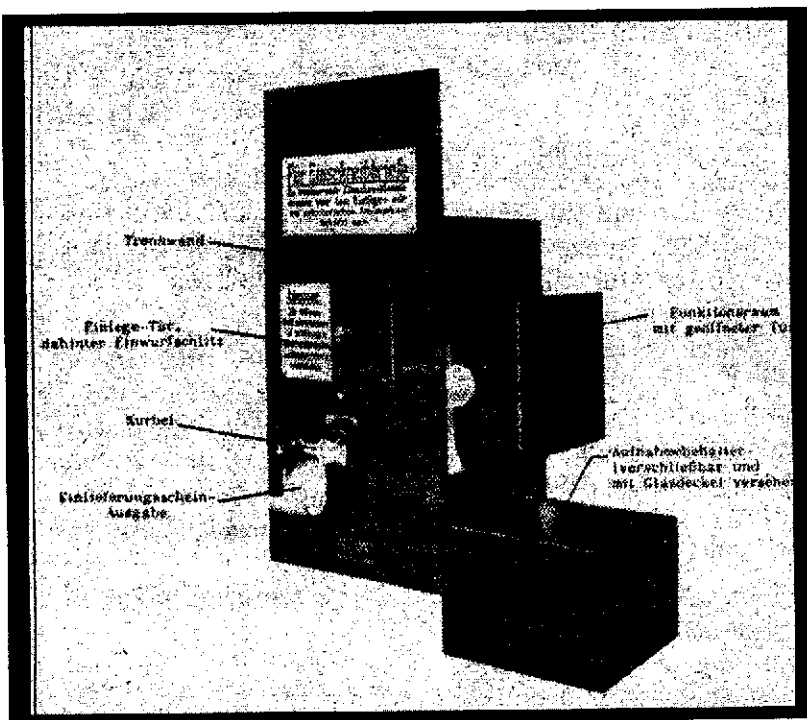
**FIGURE 86:**

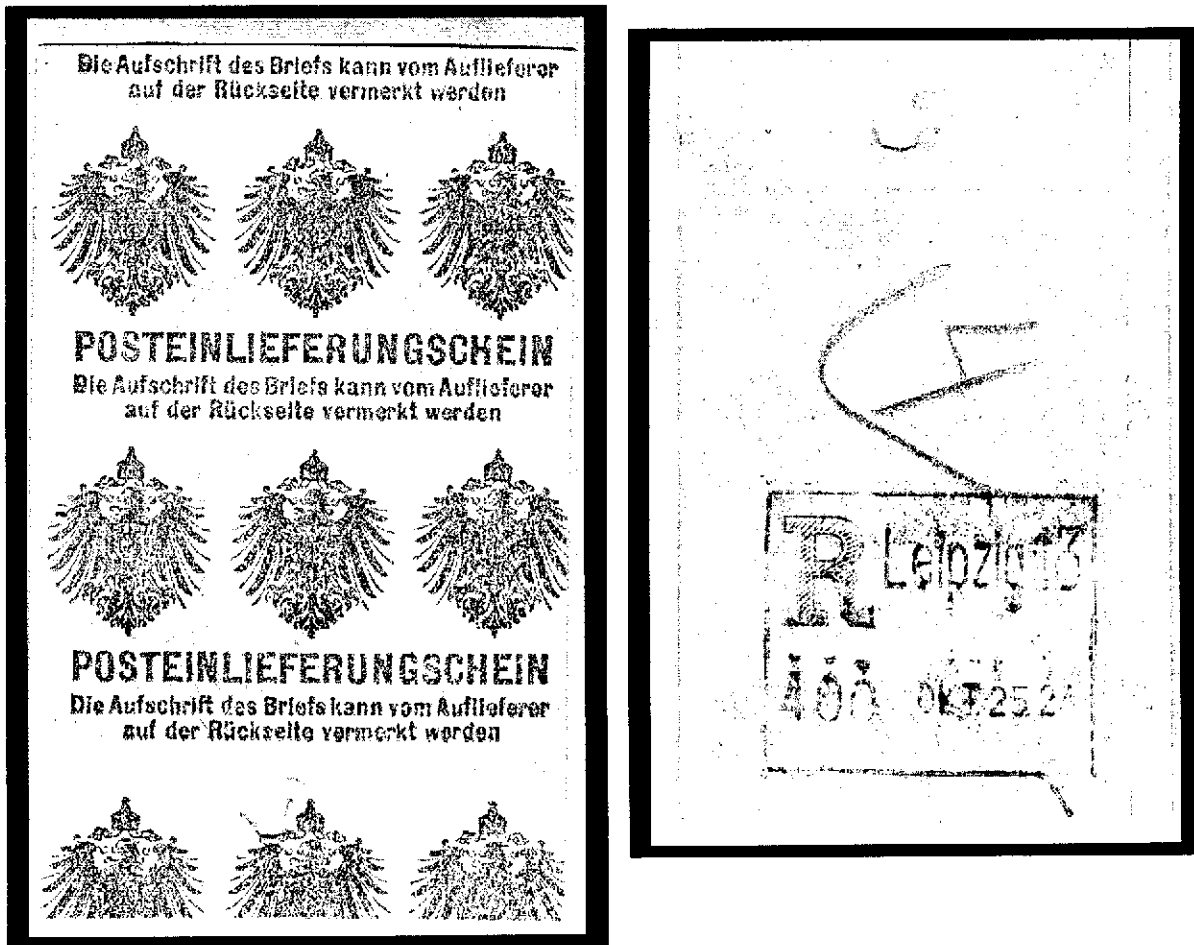
Self-service machine registration mark applied to a domestic mail cover applied during the late 1909 post office trial at Berlin, November 22, 1909.

**Figure 86A:**

Illustration of a DAPAG Self-Service Registered Mail Machine as shown in the company's Technical Bulletin No 8, 1910.

Operation was simple in that the postal patron placed his/her properly-franked mail into the machine where the mail then received a registration postmark and was retained in the machine while the postal patron received a receipt for the mail (Figure 87).



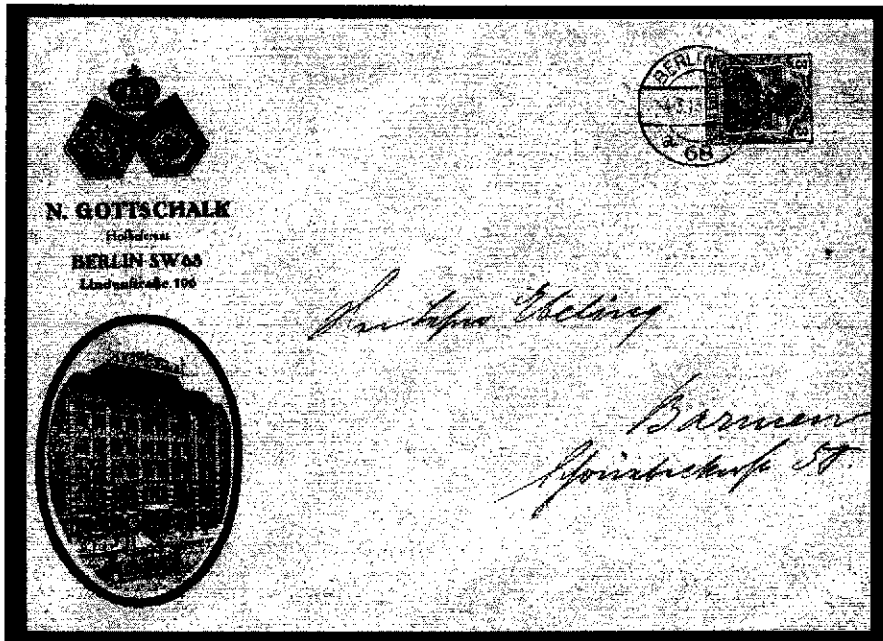
**FIGURES 87 & 87A:**

Receipt example (front & reverse) for a registered mail cover sent from Leipzig, Germany.

Retained mail was collected at regular intervals during the day by a postal clerk, who subsequently postmarked the mail, verifying postage concurrently.

**DAPAG Postage Affixing & Postmarking Machine...**

Between 1913-1921, the DAPAG Company also introduced a machine which affixed postage (cut/torn from coils mounted and stored in the machine/by the machine) to mail and postmarked such concurrently. Several levels of mail, not just printed matter, were processed by the post office, where the postal patron delivered the mail to the post office in bulk form, paid the postage and left the mail for the post office to process accordingly (Figure 88):

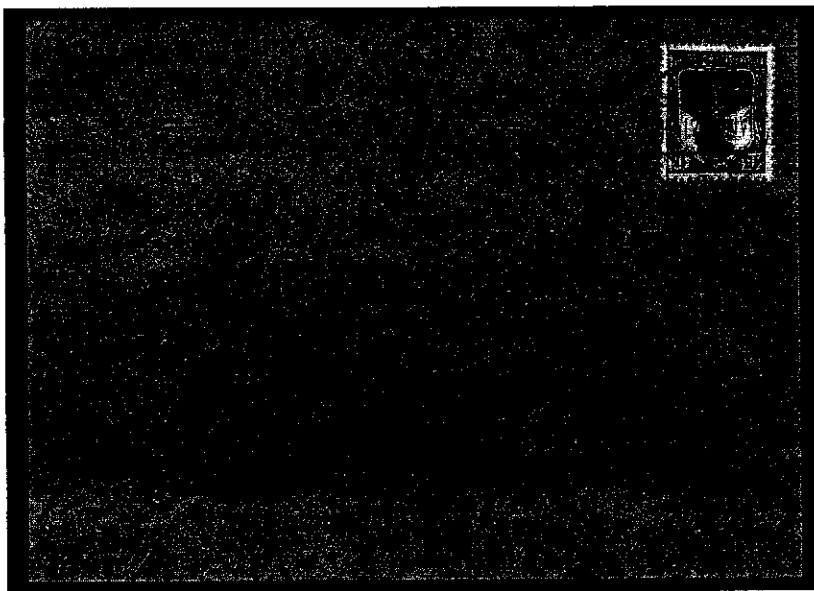


**FIGURE 88:**  
Example of a DAPAG  
horizontally-applied  
postage stamp &  
postmarked cover,  
Berlin, March 4, 1913.

Where the post office postage was not sufficient to cover the postage because of foreign destination, for example, the post office would pass the cover again through the machine for a second affixing of a postage stamp. Should the value of both stamps be in excess of the amount of postage required, the post office would simply write-off the amount as "convenient over-franking".

## Michelius Postage Affixing & Postmarking Machine...

Similar to the DAPAG Machine, the 'Michelius' Machine also affixed postage stamps from coils as well as postmarked the mail concurrently. The major difference for the Michelius Machine was that it affixed the stamp upright, not horizontally as the DAPAG Machine (Figure 89).



**FIGURE 89:**  
Example of a Michelius  
Machine vertically-  
applied postage stamp  
& postmarked cover,  
Berlin, Leipzig,  
November 16, 1921.



**Endnotes:**

- (1) West, Chris, *A History of Britain in Thirty-Six Postage Stamps*, Picador Books, p. 8.
- (2) Pearson Hill, Royal Patent #822, dated March 25, 1857.
- (3) Photo courtesy of (British) National Postal Museum
- (4) George Henry Creswell, Royal Patent #1388, dated May 16, 1857
- (5) George Beard, Royal Patent #2607, October 12, 1857
- (6) Photo courtesy of (British) National Postal Museum
- (7) Postmaster General's Minutes, No. 750, Registration No. 53790/59, dated February 21, 1860
- (8) Payne, Robert, *Machine Cancels of Washington D.C.*, Billing's self-publishing, Vol. 1, April 2006, pp ix & xii
- (9) *Ibid*, p. ix
- (10) Graham, Richard B., The Experimental Washington Postmarks of 1862-63, U.S. Classics Society Chronicle 210, Vol. 58, No. 2, May, 2006, p. 140.
- (11) *Ibid*, pp 137-138
- (12) Payne, Robert, *Machine Cancels of Washington D.C.*, Billing's self-publishing, Vol. 1, April, 2000, p. 90.
- (13) Giphart, J., "Typenraderstempels en Stempelmachines als Voerge Voorbeelden von Mechanisatie, 1868-1912", *Maandblad*, May, 1979, p. 213.
- (14) Payne, Robert, *Machine Cancels of Washington D.C.*, Billing's self-publishing, Vol. 1, April, 2006, p.43.
- (15) *Ibid*, p.71
- (16) Morris, Reg. & Payne, Robert G., *The Barry Story*, self-publishing, Vol. I-III, 1988.
- (17) Payne, Robert, *Machine Cancels of Washington D.C.*, Billing's self-publishing, Vol. 1, April, 2006, p.141.
- (18) Payne, Robert, *Machine Cancels of Washington D.C.*, Billing's self-publishing, Vol. 2, April, 2006, p.468.
- (19) Lutz, Abbot, "Post Office Machines: Metered Mail – Coin Fed for Public Use", *Collectors Club Philatelist*, Vol. 60, No. 4, July, 1961, p. 228.

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Time Marking Machine Co.	Donated Editions Sold Out – Reprinting not authorized		
Universal Machine Cancel Catalog – to 1920 (Revision #2)		\$90	\$50

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