

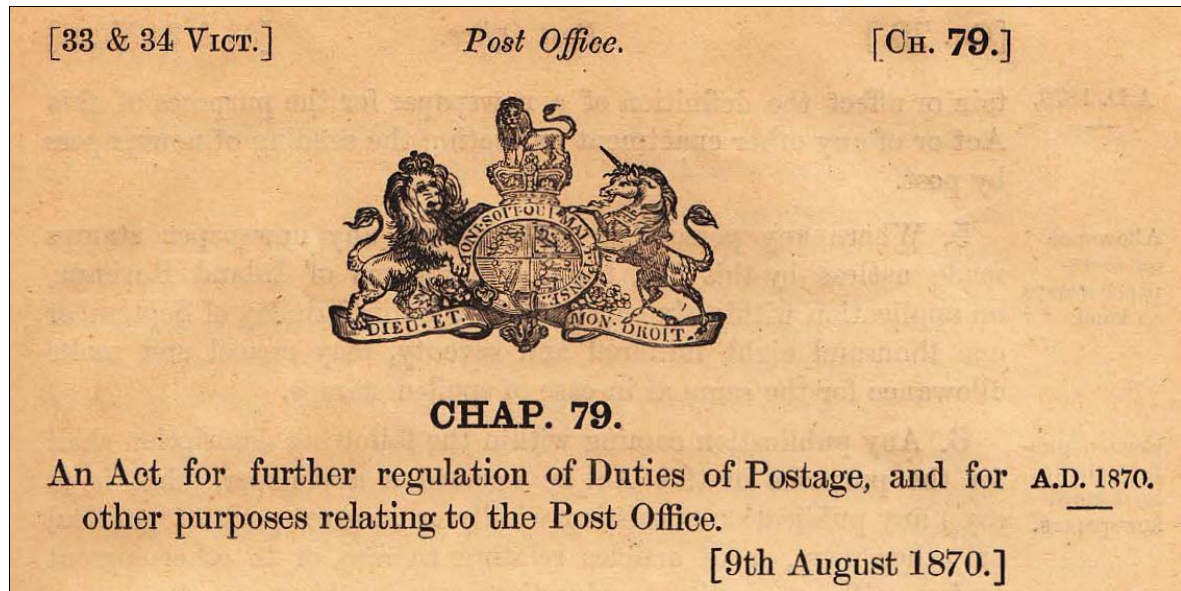
SLOPER EXPERIMENTAL CANCELLATIONS



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and
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SLOPER EXPERIMENTAL CANCELS

Under an Act of Parliament [33 & 34 Vict.] on October 1st 1870, Postal Stationery Cards were introduced to Britain for the first time (they had already been in use in Austria for a year). Two sizes of card were allowed at first, 3½ x 4½ inches and 2½ x 4½ inches; both having a ½d stamp, border and wording in violet on light buff card.



The issue of these cards was announced in a Post Office Circular dated September 19th 1870.

POST OFFICE CIRCULAR - 19th SEPTEMBER 1870.

"On and after the 1st October next. Post Cards, bearing an impressed halfpenny Stamp, will be sold at all Post Offices, at the rate of one halfpenny each."

"They will be available for transmission between places in the United Kingdom only."

"The front (or stamped side) is intended for the address only. There must be no other writing or printing on it, nor must there be any writing or printing across the stamp. On the reverse side, any communication, whether of the nature of a letter or otherwise, may be written or printed. Nothing may be attached to the Card; nor may it be folded, cut, or otherwise altered. If any of these rules be infringed, the Card will be charged with postage on delivery as an insufficient paid letter."

The postal authorities knew that these cards would be popular but they had no idea how popular. One purchase would provide, cheaply, both writing material and stamp, and would enable business houses to send a short missive instead of a longer letter. This could be seen as a first step towards modern efficiency perhaps - some would say a retrograde step when reading the flowery terms in a Victorian business request for custom or payment of long standing debts. In the event, the Post Office almost ground to a halt. On the first day of issue, over 500,000 cards went through the London G.P.O., and 75 million were used in the first year throughout the country, thus disorganising the cancellation and delivery of the

ordinary mail. This scenario was enacted in many of the larger cities which were centres of commerce, such as Liverpool, Manchester and Edinburgh.

THE NEW POST CARD

THE new postal cards, &c., have greatly increased the labour of the Post-office *employés*, especially the letter-carriers who have to deliver them. On Saturday last, the first day of their issue, some hundreds of thousands passed through the office, advertising patent medicines, theatrical performances, &c. Some few, posted before twelve on Friday night before the new stamp came into operation, were taxed *2d.* as unpaid letters. Many are being sent with hoaxing and bantering messages: "I am still alive, you dog!" "Oh you little puss;" "Make me a pancake for supper, with plenty of eggs;" "As you are a loyal subject, I send you the last portrait of the Queen," and so forth. One sent to a chemist in a leading City thoroughfare, was addressed to him as an "astrologer," and asked, "When can I have my fortune told?" The extra work is causing much discontent among the men, but any agitation or remonstrance other than an appeal to the Postmaster General through their immediate superior officer is strictly forbidden, under pain of dismissal.

The Graphic - October 8th 1870

To address these issues a Post Office Circular dated October 12th 1870 gave guidelines to postmasters on how postcards should be handled.

POST OFFICE CIRCULAR - 12th OCTOBER 1870.

"The postage stamps on some of the Post Cards will be obliterated by means of a punch instead of the ordinary obliterating stamp. Postmasters will not tax such cards with postage on this account."

"Postmasters are instructed not to stamp Post Cards received at their Offices for delivery. Even such Cards, the postage stamps on which have not been obliterated, need not be stamped."

Instructions were given to postmasters to concentrate on cancelling letters first, no doubt so that the adhesive stamps could not be used again and many cards in the early days were delivered without a forwarding cancellation and only received the date stamp of the Receiving office on the reverse of the card. Some did not even get a receiving mark.

In Harry Dagnell's book "The Evolution of British Stamped Post-Cards & Letter Cards - Their History & Documentation"^[15] he reports that there had been complaints as early as 3rd October 1870 that part of the message had been obliterated by the local receiving stamp. So it would seem more logical to assume that the P.O. directive of 12th October was an attempt to also alleviate that particular problem which had arisen within days of the advent of the card.

Experiments with cancelling punches must have already taken place before the Cards came on sale for there to have been such an early circular.

London Experimental Cancellations

This state of affairs was not very satisfactory as they needed a faster way of cancelling postcards. So the Post Office turned to Joseph Sloper for a possible solution. They were already using one of the Sloper Machines to perforate Money orders with a date and realised the potential for a cancelling device. Being used to making machines which punched holes through cheques, receipts, letters and railway tickets etc., Sloper suggested using a die in one of his machines which would punch a shape through the printed stamp on the card.

This has always been thought to have been the famous London ARROW machine. However inspection of the dates of use show that the earliest machine recorded is the ORB & CROSS design which is known used on October 27th 1870 - just 26 days after the introduction of postcards. The earliest known use of the London ARROW design is November 11th 1870 - two weeks later. So it appears that the Post Office was experimenting with more than one machine at this early period which went on from late 1870 to early 1871. (Figures 1a/b & 2)

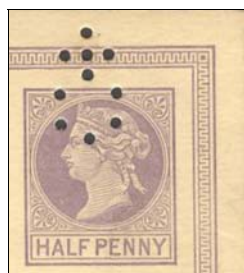


Figure 1a.

London Orb & Cross
Earliest Use - 27-10-70
Latest Use - 03-11-70

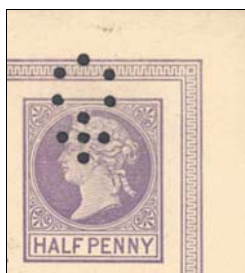


Figure 1b.

London Orb & Cross
Earliest Use - 07-11-70
Latest Use - 16-02-72

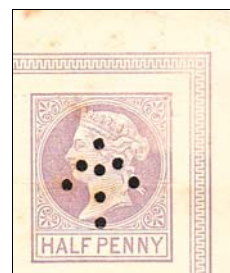


Figure 2.

London Arrow
Earliest Use - 10-11-70
Latest Use - 10-10-73

The ORB & CROSS cancel is found both with the cross at the top (inverted) and the cross at the bottom (normal). The earliest copies of this cancel all have the cross at the top of the card. This arrangement seems to have lasted for less than a week (27-10-70 to 03-11-70) when the die appears to have been inverted in the machine and all subsequent strikes are found with the cross pointing to the bottom of the card (07-11-70 to 22-11-70). It is unclear why this inversion of the die was carried out. This ORB & CROSS experimental cancel would seem to have been the first one to be discontinued, although a single late copy of 23-02-72 which was first recorded by B. F. Hounsell Dammers^[2]. This particular card was sold in 2014 by Argyl Etkin. The ORB & CROSS strike with the cross pointing to the top is probably the rarest of all the experimental cancellations. Why this machine was abandoned is not clear as it appeared to give clear strikes but maybe it was limited on the number of cards it could process. It should also be noted that both small and large postcards are found with this cancellation. All later cancellations in London and Liverpool have only been seen on small postcards.

As far as can be determined there has been no actual documentary proof that this machine was supplied by Sloper but it is almost certain that the presumption of a Sloper machine is correct as the Sloper patent was still in force.



Orb & Cross Cancellation – (a) early examples were struck with the orb & cross upright. This only lasted for a week after which the strike was inverted (b). Example (c) shows a rare strike on a large format post card. Following the introduction of the arrow cancellation only small format post cards were cancelled.

Following the brief use of the ORB & CROSS an ARROW design cancel was trialled between November 1870 and June 1871. This trial was deemed to have been successful and although the scarcity of the number of examples on the market indicates that the machine was not in general use. It should also be noted that the ARROW cancel at this period was only being used in London.

Purchase of London and Liverpool Machines

The following is a record of a Minute in the P.O. Archives, endorsed "Approved 5th June 1871" which records the decision to purchase machines from Sloper:

"The enclosed papers relate to a trial which has been made in the Circulation Department of this office, of a perforating machine devised by Mr. Sloper, for the purpose of obliterating the Postage Stamps on Post Cards.

Mr. Boucher reports that this result is satisfactory, and he recommends the adoption of the machine.

At present only four machines will be required, three for the Circulation Department, and one for the Liverpool Post office, and I request your authority for supplying them at the price asked by Mr. Sloper, viz £7/7/0 each, which Mr. Boucher considers not unreasonable.

There may be other Offices, but if so I believe they will be very few, where the quantity of Post Cards posted may be so great as to render it necessary to supply such Offices with the machines."

Whether this purchase of three machines for London and one for Liverpool included the test machine(s) or not is not clear, but here we have evidence that there were at least four machines used. The design of the London and Liverpool machines was identical. However it has been proposed by Lutz^[6] and others that the pin size was larger in the Liverpool machine than the London machines but as will be seen there seems to have been a variety of pin sizes used in Liverpool.

The 'Broad Arrow' die supplied by Sloper had 8 holes, each of approximately 2mm diameter. The pins were of hardened steel and were probably longer than those used in stamp machines in order to allow a number of cards to be perforated at once. Jennings^[5] reported that the pins were tapered to give "extra strength and clear penetration". However there appears to be little evidence for this statement and it seems to have been based on the observation that some strikes seem to have been made with smaller pins. A tapered pin would be likely to jam in the cards and the base plate. Such a pin would initially punch a clean hole but the tapered pin would then push rather than cut card out of the hole. There is no evidence for this when the cards are inspected.

We also know from the Sloper records that when a repair to one of the machines was made, standard pins were used. The observed variation in pin hole size is probably explained by the use of more than one machine, position of the post card in the pack or indeed fakes and forgeries.

It should be remembered that the material for puncturing was card not paper. Jennings^[5] also stated that the "one inch long pins were designed to puncture 96 cards at one operation - a pack of cards as sold over the Post Office counter numbered 24". Measurement of the card thickness does indeed justify this statement as the throat of the machine would need to be approximately 1 inch to take 96 cards. However, again the basis for this statement is unclear. It is possible that Jennings might have seen a machine as we know that at the time one was still in existence and held by the Post Office. Further research needs to be made in this area and sight of the actual machine would lay a lot of these questions to rest.

**NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC
OFFICIAL POST CARDS**

"After the 31st instant, Official Post Cards will be sold to the Public in packets only, - - the smallest packet containing twelve Cards, and the larger ones twenty-four, thirty-six, forty-eight, and so on."

"The price of a packet of twelve Cards will be sixpence-halfpenny, and the larger packets will be charged in the same proportion."

"Single Post Cards will no longer be sold."

"Arrangements will shortly be made for impressing with a halfpenny stamp, at the Office of Inland Revenue, Post Cards other than Official Post Cards, subject to certain restrictions."

"By Command of the Postmaster-General 27th March 1872."

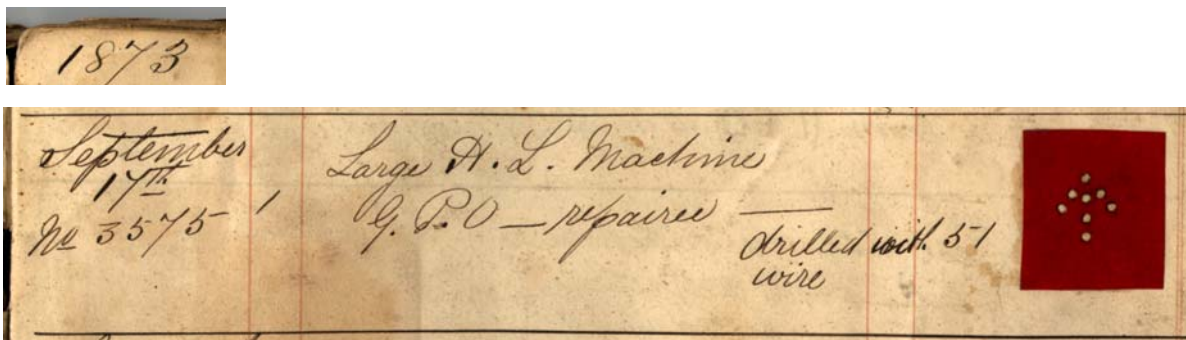


Figure 3 – Sloper Ledger Entry

One nice piece of confirming evidence has come to light in the Sloper Record Books now held by the Perfin Society. The entry shown above in Figure 3 comes from the 1873 Machine Ledger but there is no record of the supply of the original machine. The entry is for a repair to a die on September 17th 1873 - No. 3575 and unless it was for a repair to a Liverpool machine, later dates from London than that shown in the Table "must" exist. The entry refers to the machine being a "Large H(orizontal) L(ever) Machine - G.P.O. repaired - drilled with 51 wire". (51 gauge wire is equivalent to 0.067 inch / 1.7018 mm).

However this repair in September 1873 also raises a number of questions. The latest recorded use of the London ARROW is August 1873. So if this was a repair to a London machine it would appear to have been money wasted by the Post Office, as the repaired machine was

never used. If it was a repair to a Liverpool ARROW machine it still doesn't make much sense as the Liverpool machine showed little sign of serious breakage in its first two years of use. A break appeared at the end of 1872 which was quickly repaired and during 1873 there were no breaks recorded. So why a repair to a Liverpool machine would be carried out in September 1873 is unclear. The Liverpool ARROW machine however did suffer multiple pin breaks starting in March 1874 so any repair can't have been very effective.

One explanation of this dilemma is that a London machine was repaired but following the repair the decision was made to abandon the use of the ARROW machines in London and that then the three London machines were sent to Liverpool.

Liverpool Experimental Cancellations

There is some evidence that Liverpool may have conducted their own experiment with postcard cancellation prior to receiving their own ARROW machine from Slopers in June 1871. The postcard below used January 1st 1871 is from the collection of Jerry Miller^[20] and shows a diagonal cut made through the stamp (Fig. 4). How such a cut was made is unknown – maybe with a device like a pizza cutter. It's doubtful that such a device would have been any quicker than a conventional cancel as it would have been used one card at a time. The result was a cut through the stamp which would have been hard to spot in a dimly lit Post Office.

Miller states that only two examples of this cut have been reported. This particular card was used on January 1st 1871. Certainly such a device would have been short lived as the official Liverpool ARROW was ordered in June 1871.



Figure 4 – Liverpool Cut

Although the above extract from the P.O. Records Department only mentions one ARROW machine for Liverpool, there must have been at least three in use between 1870 and 1875 as three distinct type of holes are found: one with large round, clearly cut holes (Figure 5), a second with smaller holes but still very clearly cut (Figure 6) and a third with small, rough pin-hole type punctures (Figure 7). The latter cards usually show the impression of the jaws holding the pins too. Analysis of the broken pin varieties found on Liverpool Arrows also supports the fact that there must have been at least three machines in use.

Constant penetration of so many cards must have put great strain on the pins and there are many examples of 'out of alignment' holes or 'missing pin' varieties. Note that no broken pin varieties are found from the London machine. All broken pin varieties reported are from Liverpool after 1872 and one can only conjecture that Sloper kept an eye on the London operation, instructing on the correct load for the machine, whilst the Liverpool machine was grossly over-worked. In fact the broken pin varieties from Liverpool in this later period are more common than the complete strike (Figure 10).

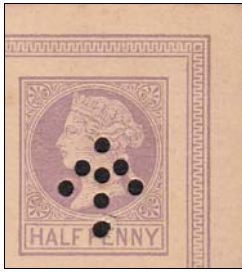


Figure 5.
Liverpool - Arrow
Used 29-10-74

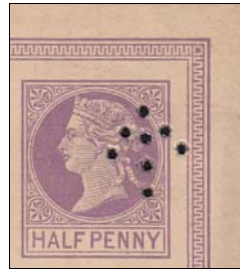


Figure 6.
Liverpool - Arrow
Used 02-05-73

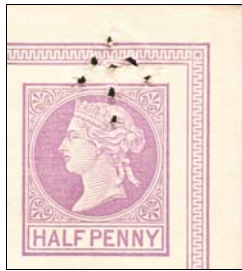


Figure 7.
Liverpool - Arrow
Used n/k

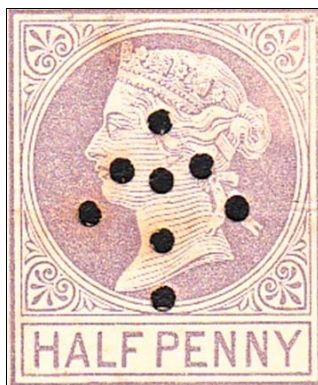


Figure 8.
Liverpool -
Double Arrow
Used 01-09-73

From a study of the dates of known use, (see table at end of article), Liverpool must have used the prototype 'Arrow' die, (Figure 1) or another similar machine made by Sloper, as Liverpool dates from January 1871 are found.

It should be noted that there is little or no difference in the pin layout of the Liverpool and London ARROW cancellations as can be seen in the illustration below (Figure 9). This is hardly surprising when both machines were probably made by Joseph Sloper.

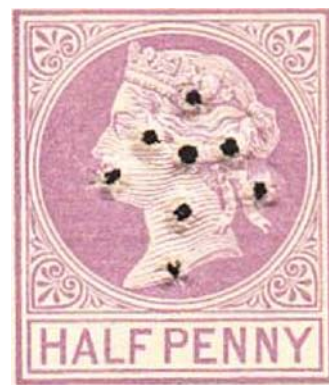
Figure 9.



London Arrow



**Liverpool Arrow
(Large Pins)**



**Liverpool Arrow
(Small Pins)**











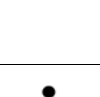
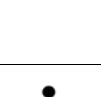
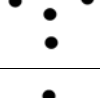
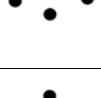
Points to note are that by March 1872 the cards were not available singly; not available for the mere cost of the postage; they were only sold in packs of twelve or multiples thereof and there was now some poundage to pay. It was mentioned earlier that packs of postcards were bought from the Post Office. It's possible that more single cards were punched prior to 27th March 1872 than packs of cards. Remember there was no poundage on the cards until 1872. Looking at the Table of Dates for these cancels, it is noticeable that the missing pins at Liverpool date from July 1872. Was this when they punched thicker packs of cards rather than single items for their clients?

Liverpool Broken Pin Varieties

Liverpool strikes suffered from pin breaks. The earliest record of a pin break is 05-07-72, just 4 months after Liverpool was provided with their machine. However during this early period repairs seem to have been quickly carried out and indeed during 1873 only one broken pin variety has been recorded.^{[2][4]} These early pin breaks appear to be rare as none have been seen in this current study. Major pin breaks seem to have started in 1874 and the majority of cards recorded during this period show pin breaks. Table 2 details pin break varieties during 1874.

Close inspection of the dates that different pin breaks occur (see Table 1 & 2) shows that there must have been more than one machine in operation during this later period of use. For instance in April and May 1874 four different pin breaks have been reported (see Table 2). This may indicate as many as four machines were being used. Again this gives evidence to the three London machines being transferred to Liverpool.

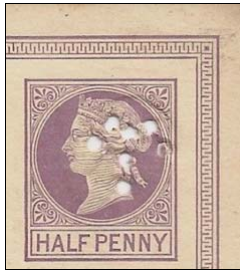
TABLE 1 - LIVERPOOL ARROW BROKEN PIN VARIETIES

| | | | | | |
|---|---|--|----|---|--|
| 1 |  | 05-07-72, 08-07-72, 11-07-72, 13-07-72, 16-07-72, 08-08-72 | 8 |  | 01-05-74 (See note below) |
| 2 |  | 27-08-72, 28-08-72, 25-09-72 | 9 |  | 04-04-74, 08-04-74, 09-04-74, 04-09-74 |
| 3 |  | 08-10-72, 15-11-72, 21-11-72, 29-11-72 | 10 |  | 28-05-74 |
| 4 |  | 23-01-73 | 11 |  | 14-10-74 |
| 5 |  | 20-01-74, 29-04-74, 18-05-74, 20-06-74, 27-06-74, 04-07-74, 06-07-74, 20-07-74, 06-08-74, 08-08-74, 25-08-74, 23-09-74, 24-09-74, 10-10-74 | 12 |  | 28-10-74 |
| 6 |  | 16-01-74, 29-01-74, 21-02-74, 27-02-74, 05-03-74, 07-03-74 | 13 |  | 27-11-74, 05-12-74, 08-12-74, 30-12-74, 05-01-75, 21-01-75 |
| 7 |  | 09-02-74, 07-03-74, 10-04-74, 17-04-74, 30-04-74, 02-05-74, 13-05-74, 14-05-74, 01-06-74, 02-06-74, 10-06-74 | 14 |  | 21-01-74, 24-01-74, 31-01-74, 02-02-74, 07-02-74, 02-04-74, 09-04-74, 06-08-74, 29-10-74, 02-11-74, 04-11-74, 16-11-74, 21-11-74 |

Note:- Type 8 probably doesn't exist. The only known example is struck on the left side of the card and probably resulted from a Type 7 strike on the reverse of the card.

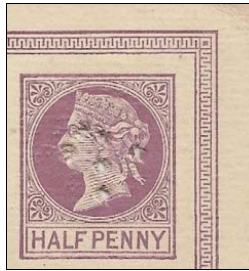
Figure 10. - Liverpool Arrows with Broken Pins

Type 1



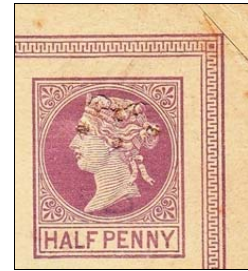
11-07-72

Type 2



28-08-72

Type 3

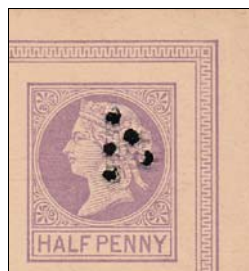


15-11-72

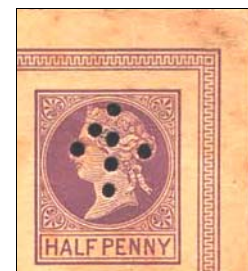
Type 4

Type 5

Type 6



10-10-74

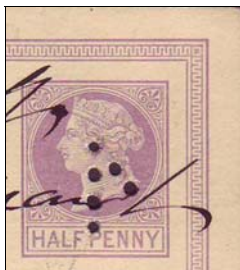


03-74

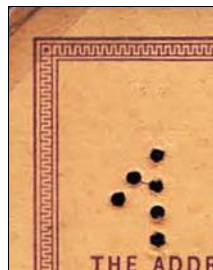
Type 7

Type 8

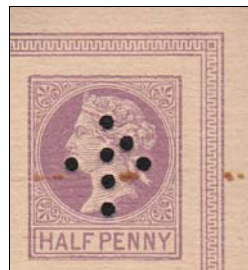
Type 9



30-04-74



05-05-74



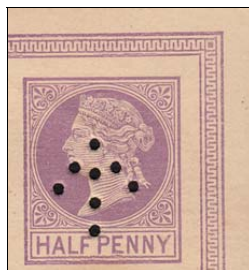
04-09-74

Type 13

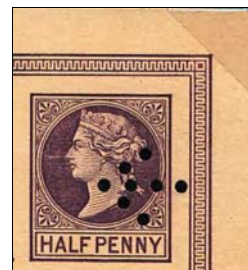
Type 14



Date n/k



11-10-73



Date n/k

TABLE - 2 BROKEN PIN VARIETIES IN 1874 SORTED BY DATE

| January | | February | | March | | April | |
|-----------|------|----------|------|----------|------|----------|------|
| Date | Type | Date | Type | Date | Type | Date | Type |
| 16-01-74 | 6 | 02-02-74 | 14 | 05-03-74 | 6 | 02-04-74 | 14 |
| 20-01-74 | 5 | 07-02-74 | 14 | 07-03-74 | 7 | 04-04-74 | 9 |
| 21-01-74 | 14 | 09-02-74 | 7 | | | 08-04-74 | 9 |
| 24-01-74 | 14 | 21-02-74 | 6 | | | 09-04-74 | 9 |
| 29-01-74 | 6 | 27-02-74 | 6 | | | 09-04-74 | 14 |
| 31-01-74 | 14 | | | | | 10-04-74 | 7 |
| | | | | | | 17-04-74 | 7 |
| | | | | | | 29-04-74 | 5 |
| | | | | | | 30-04-74 | 7 |
| | | | | | | | |
| May | | June | | July | | August | |
| Date | Type | Date | Type | Date | Type | Date | Type |
| 01-05-74 | 8 | 01-06-74 | 7 | 04-07-74 | 5 | 06-08-74 | 14 |
| 02-05-74 | 7 | 02-06-74 | 7 | 06-07-74 | 5 | 06-08-74 | 5 |
| 13-05-74 | 7 | 10-06-74 | 7 | | | 08-08-74 | 5 |
| 14-05-74 | 7 | 20-06-74 | 5 | | | 25-08-74 | 5 |
| 18-05-74 | 5 | 27-06-74 | 7 | | | | |
| 28-05-74 | 10 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| September | | October | | November | | December | |
| Date | Type | Date | Type | Date | Type | Date | Type |
| 04-09-74 | 9 | 10-10-74 | 5 | 16-11-74 | 14 | 05-12-74 | 13 |
| 23-09-74 | 5 | 14-10-74 | 11 | 21-11-74 | 14 | 08-12-74 | 13 |
| 24-09-74 | 5 | 28-10-74 | 12 | 27-11-74 | 13 | 30-12-74 | 13 |
| | | 29-10-74 | 14 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |



Manchester Clips

In the meantime, other large provincial towns were trying their own experiments. Again, there is no documentary evidence that these punches originated from Sloper. Manchester tried taking out a CLIP from the edge of the card, adjacent to the stamp. The clip would appear to have been produced by using something akin to a railway ticket punch. Four main types of shape can be seen on the cards from Manchester; a Bracket Cut (Figure 11), a Spear Cut (Figure 12), a Half Round Cut (Figure 13) and a Pliers Cut (Figure 14), but even these four shapes had variations and many of the cuts are so oddly shaped that it is not possible to say to which type they belong. Dates for Manchester clips have been reported from 11-11-70 to 22-01-75.

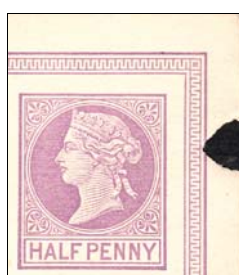


Figure 11.
Manchester
Bracket Cut
Earliest Use 29-10-70

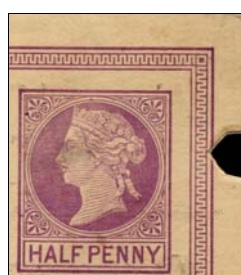


Figure 12.
Manchester
Spear Cut
Earliest Use 03-12-70



Figure 13.
Manchester
Half Round Cut
Earliest Use 11-11-70

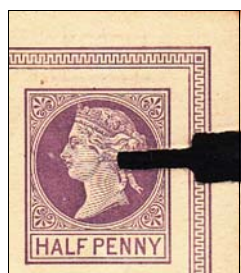


Figure 14.
Manchester
Pliers Cut
Earliest Use 08-12-70

Manchester used the Pliers Cut for a very short period (Figure 14) and is thus a rare item. A theory has been proposed that the end of this Pliers Cut may have broken off after a while this giving rise to the other types of Manchester clips. Comparison of the Pliers Cut with all the other types of Manchester cuts shows that the cut width is similar, if somewhat inexact to the other clips. It may be assumed that there was more than one machine in operation, and so allowing for wear and tear, a slight difference in width could occur.

Bradford, Birmingham, Edinburgh & Liverpool Single Holes

The first study of these experimental cancellations was carried out by Bradshaw Smith in 1897^[1]. Although that study looked at over 300 cancelled postcards only one example of the SINGLE HOLE type was recorded - and that had been used in Manchester! It wasn't till Hounsell Dammers' review^[2] in 1948 that further SINGLE HOLE cancels emerged, being recorded in then Birmingham, Edinburgh & Liverpool. A number of regional cities may have used a SINGLE HOLE punch. Traditionally four cities have been recognised as using single hole punches - Birmingham, Bradford, Edinburgh and Liverpool. However they have also been reported from Salford, Manchester, Nottingham and London. Which of these were officially sanctioned, and which of these were simply filing holes added later is unclear as there is no official record of their use. The most common are those used on cards used in Bradford and Edinburgh. The Liverpool examples have not been seen in this current study,

and the one recorded date for Liverpool of 19/10/70 predates the use of the Liverpool Arrow, which brings it into doubt. Similarly the one London example also predates the trial of both the ORB & CROSS and ARROW trials. The examples from Bradford are in general large, clean cut holes, approximately 3mm in diameter (Figure 15).

Edinburgh copies are smaller and rough cut. All the recorded copies show the impression of the base of the machine and can be seen in the illustration below (Figure 18). The Edinburgh Hole may have had the longest life, one of the cards being dated 10-01-76 and the rest are in 1871. Once again no documentary proof of the maker of these perforators, but all cancels - Arrows, Clips, Orb and Cross and Holes - have become known as the Sloper Experimental Cancels.

However the Edinburgh Bullets may be a little different. In this survey six copies have been recorded of these scarce cards – five of them were used by the National Bank of Scotland and the sixth by the Royal Bank of Scotland. These cards were all sent out to acknowledge receipt of a customers' letter and so many hundreds would have been sent out every week. It is possible that the Banks had an agreement to pre-cancel these cards and thus take the pressure off the Post Office. This is of course just conjecture at this time but may have more weight as further copies are identified.

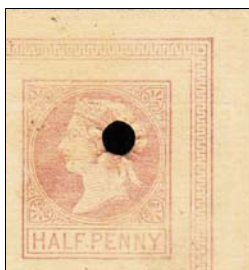


Figure 15.
Bradford -
Single Hole
24-06-72

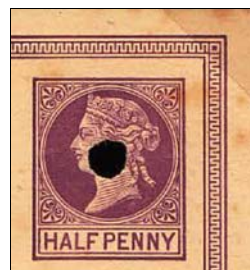


Figure 16.
Birmingham -
Single Hole
27-02-73

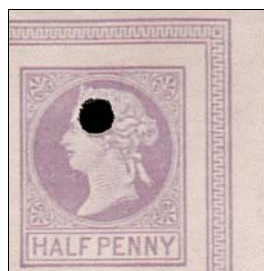
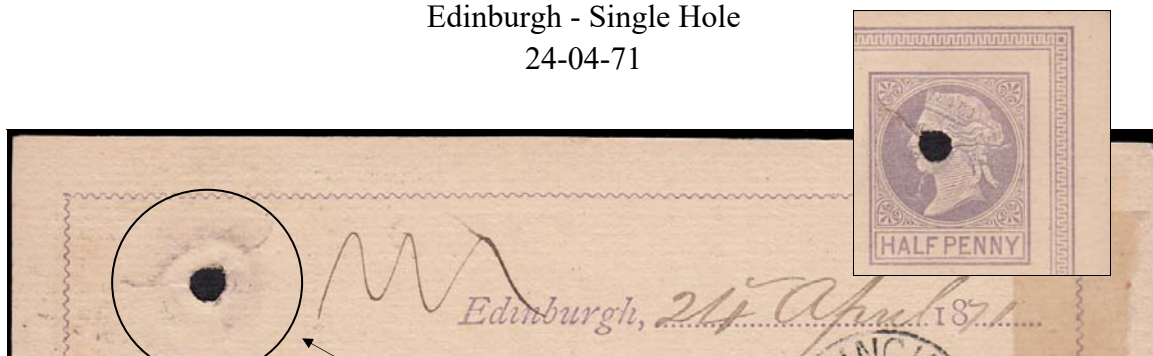


Figure 17.
Nottingham -
Single Hole
15-03-73

Figure 18.
Edinburgh - Single Hole
24-04-71



Impression of base of machine



Postcard used in Birmingham used September 17th 1874

FAKE SINGLE HOLE, MANCHESTER CLIPS AND ARROWS

The SINGLE HOLE cancellation is unfortunately very easy to fake. Below are shown two obvious fakes used in Heywood and Burnley as the cards have been postally cancelled (Figure 19 & 20). Some fakes are a little less obvious such as the use in Caldicot (Figure 21).



Figure 19.
Heywood -
Fake Single Hole
18-10-70



Figure 20.
Burnley -
Fake Single Hole
11-02-74

Fakes also exist of the Manchester clips as these are equally easy to forge. One example was on a card used by W. E. Hall, Leadenhall St, London EC in 1882 - a long way from Manchester and long after the use of Manchester CLIPS had been abandoned. There may well be fakes of the ARROW type cancels as they have been reported in the literature posted in Ormskirk, Hanley, Wigan and Birmingham. Great care should be taken to ensure appropriate usage when buying any of these experimental cancellations.

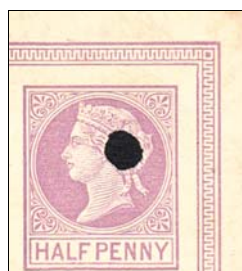
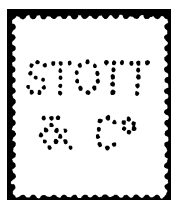
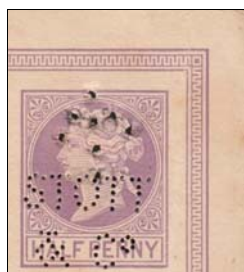


Figure 21.
Caldicot -
Fake Single Hole
03-03-75

COMBINED PERFIN AND SLOPER CANCELLATION

Two examples have been reported where the postcard stamp has been perfinned and the card cancelled with the experimental cancellation. Both are from Liverpool. The first has the full name perfin of STOTT/ & Co - S7490.01a (Figure 22) used by W. H. Stott & Co, Ship & Insurance brokers. The card is dated February 2nd 1874.



S7490.01a
Figure 22.



M1280.01a
Figure 23.

The second example has the perfin McI - M1280.01a (Figure 23), used by David & Charles McIver, of the American Royal Mail Packet Co, 8 Water St, Liverpool. The card was posted March 2nd 1872.



Postcard used in Liverpool used February 2nd 1874

Table 3 shown below has been compiled from material seen by the authors and from a number of articles and references.

TABLE 3

SUMMARY DATES FOR SLOPER EXPERIMENTAL CANCELS

ARROW PERFORATIONS

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------------|----|-----------------------|
| London:- | 10-11-1870 | to | 10-10-1873 (50 cards) |
| Liverpool:- | 01-08-1871 | to | 03-12-1874 (74 cards) |
| Liverpool (missing pins) | 05-07-1872 | to | 05-01-1875 (45 cards) |

MANCHESTER CLIPS

| | | | |
|------------------|------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pliers Cut:- | 08-12-1870 | to | 13-12-1870 (3 cards) |
| Half Round Cut:- | 11-11-1870 | to | 01-05-1874 (16 cards) |
| Spear Cut:- | 03-12-1870 | to | 25-11-1874 (14 cards) |
| Bracket Cut:- | 29-10-1870 | to | 22-01-1875 (25 cards) |

SINGLE HOLE PUNCH

| | | | |
|--------------|------------|----|-----------------------|
| Birmingham:- | 00-08-1872 | to | 28-07-1873 (5 cards) |
| Bradford:- | 30-01-1871 | to | 19-08-1872 (10 cards) |
| Edinburgh:- | 04-04-1871 | to | 10-01-1876 (7 cards) |
| Liverpool:- | 19-10-1870 | | |
| London:- | 13-10-1870 | | |
| Nottingham:- | 15-03-1873 | | |

LIVERPOOL CUT

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| Liverpool Cut | 01-01-1871 |
|---------------|------------|

ORB AND CROSS PERFORATION

| | | | |
|----------------------------|------------|----|-----------------------|
| London - Cross at top:- | 27-10-1870 | to | 03-11-1870 (4 cards) |
| London - Cross at bottom:- | 07-11-1870 | to | 19-03-1872 (17 cards) |

These experimental cancels ceased in January 1875, with one odd reporting of a card dated 14-1-77^[5]. By this time some Offices were selling the cards in packs of 24 already perforated. They were handed back over the P.O. counter from the firm using them for their business, and they received no further cancellations. Could these be classed as the only pre-cancels ever used in Britain?

POSTSCRIPT

Another item of interest is illustrated below (Figure 24). This is a card that has been struck with an ARROW strike. No further information is known about this item other than what is written on the card. Although this confirms that one of the Sloper machines was still in existence in 1950, investigations at the Post Office Archives has not located the machine. Hopefully this Sloper machine is still sitting somewhere in the Post Office archives and will resurface one day.

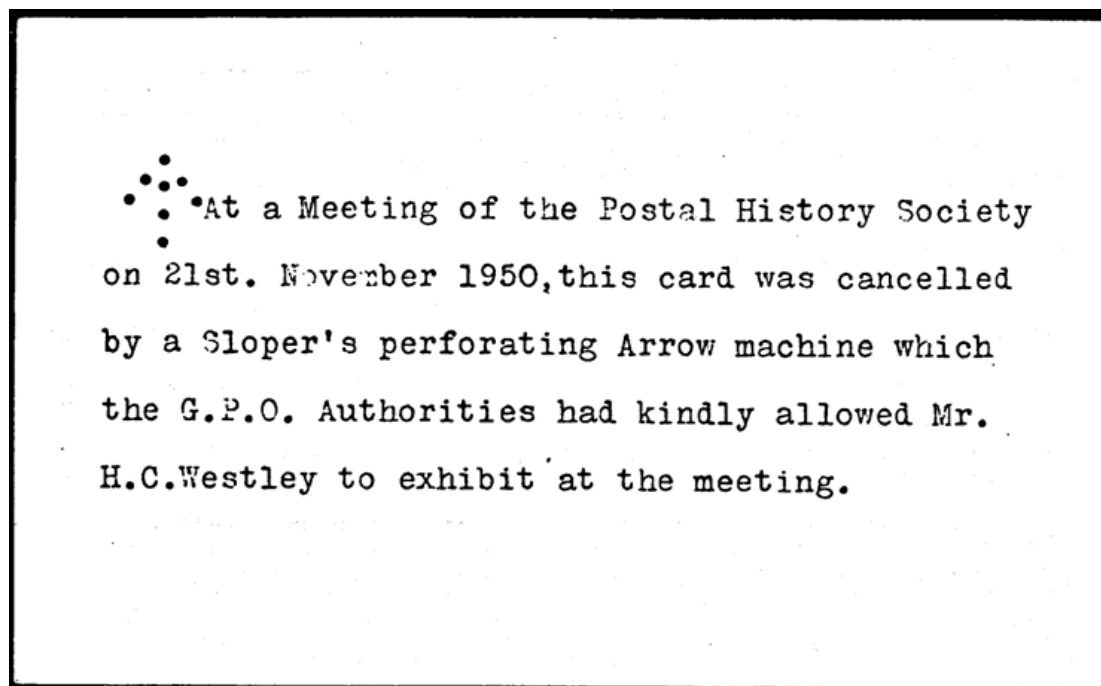


Figure 24.

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Over 200 postcards have been examined in the compilation of the information in this chapter. Apart from information gleaned from collections of these Experimental Cancels and noting dates etc. from all cards seen in dealers stocks, information was obtained from the G.P.O. Postal Headquarters in London and from Philatelic Journal articles over the years, viz:

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