

EARLIEST SLOPER ARROW CANCEL

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Non member Robert Parsons from Ottawa, Canada has contacted me with this very interesting example of the Sloper arrow cancel. The first thing to be noted is that it is struck on a large postcard – large cancelled postcards are rarely found. Second, the arrow has been struck horizontally and lastly, the date of the card is October 29th 1870. This date is the earliest recorded for any London arrow cancel and only two days later than the earliest Orb & Cross cancel.

Conventional wisdom was that the Orb & Cross cancel was trialled first and abandoned after a very short period at which point the Arrow cancel was introduced. However we now see that the dates of the two cancels overlap.

The fact that this arrow has been struck horizontally may indicate that that this was the initial set up of the punch during this early trial period. Certainly this is the only example recorded – unless of course one of our members knows different.