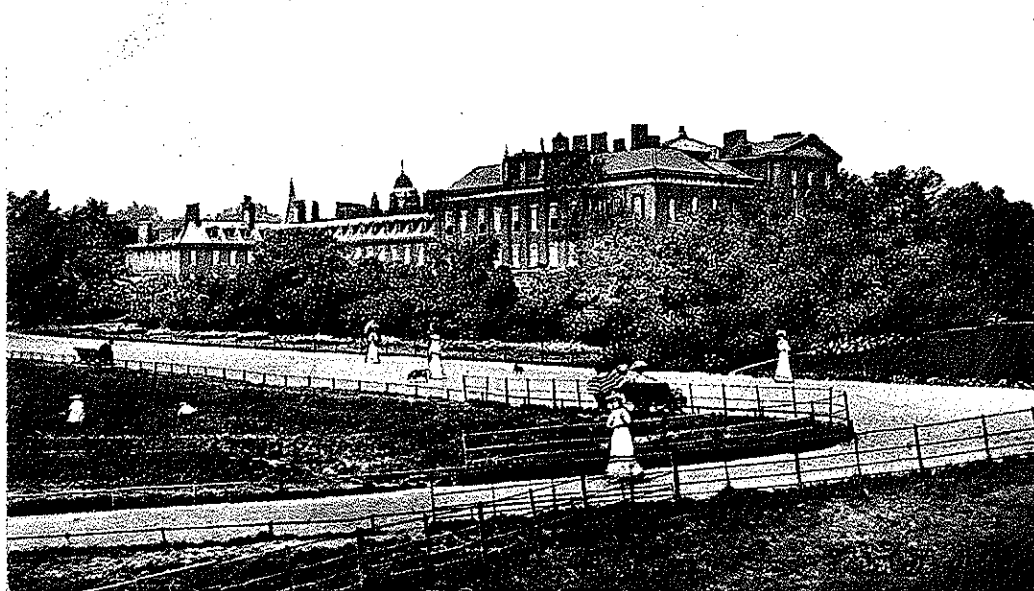

SECTION 3 -

GENERAL POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS AND MARKINGS



London. Kensington Palace from Gardens.

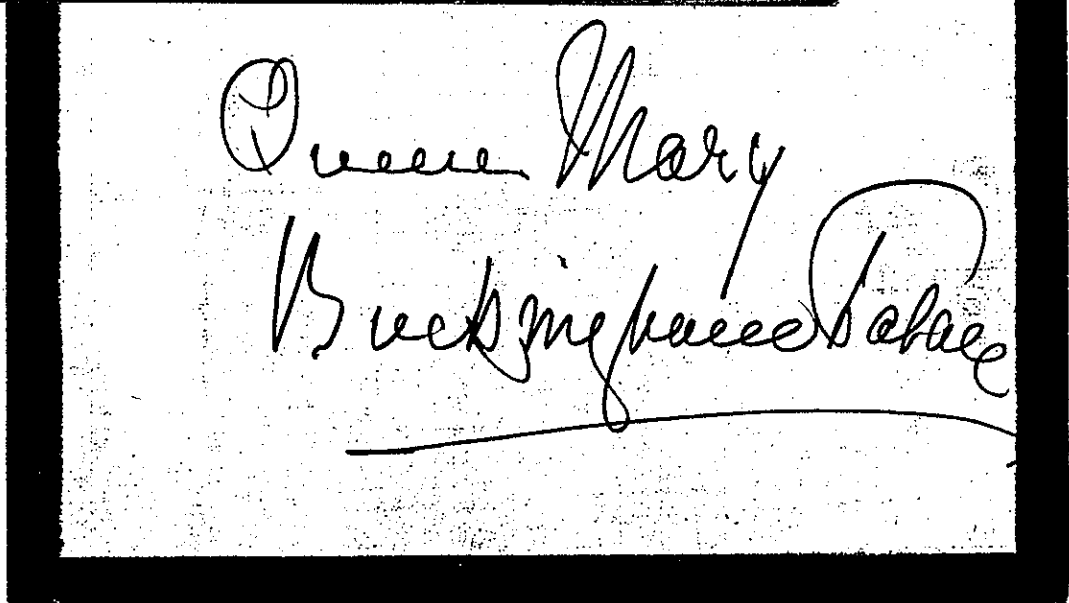
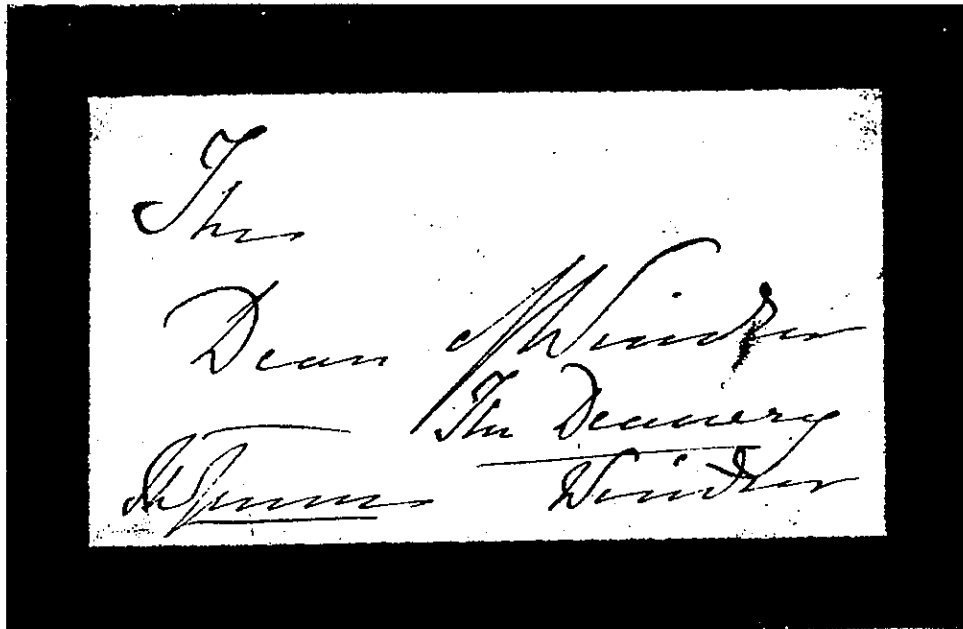


KENSINGTON PALACE

PRIVATELY CARRIED CORRESPONDENCE

Not all mail has always been carried by the Post Office for various reasons including speed and security.

The two examples shown below are firstly a mourning envelope written in the hand of Queen Victoria, signed "The Queen" and bearing, on the reverse, a black wax seal with the royal arms; whilst the second is in the hand of Queen Alexandra again a mourning envelope bearing a Marlborough House imprint on the reverse. Neither cover can be accurately dated as the contents were no longer with the envelopes. They would however, both have been carried by members of the Royal Household or a Royal Postman.



THE FRANKING PRIVILEGE

The franking privilege began during the Commonwealth Period in 1652 for Members of Parliament and Officers of State and Council entitling them to free postage. This included the Sovereign, of course. Over the next 180-odd years there were many abuses as the following Chronology shows:

- 1653 - "For the Service of the Commonwealth" endorsed on letters.
- 1660 - Restoration of Monarchy. Postal revenues reverted to Crown.
- 1660's - Abuses became serious.
- 1693 - Royal Warrant issued in attempt to cut abuses.
- 1703 - Another Act issued as abuses continued.
- 1705 - Act 9 Anne Cap. 10 detailed the regulations.
- 1717 - The Postmasters General complained to Parliament about losses.
- 1734 - Each letter to be totally in hand of writer.
- 1735 - Increased losses reported.
- 1764 - Act 4 Geo. III Cap. 24 issued to prevent fraud and abuses
- 1784 - Members of Parliament told to indicate post town and date of posting. Letters to be posted within 20 miles of town quoted.
- 1795 - Maximum weight for letters reduced from two to one ounce with a maximum of fifteen letters per day.
- 1800's - Government departments escalated causing even more abuses.
- 1837 - General Franking Act 1 Vic. Cap. 32-6 became legislation.
- 1839 - Act 2 and 3 Vic. Cap. 52 enabled privilege to be suspended by Order of Treasury and on 29 December an entry in "The Times" read: "We are happy to be able today to insert the important minute directing the commencement of the Penny Post on January 10th. It will be seen that Her Majesty has given up her Franking Privilege and will use stamps like her Subjects."
- 1840 (10 January) - The privilege of free postage ended. Queen Victoria surrendered her franking rights voluntarily and on 10 August Act 3 and 4 Vic. Cap. 96 endorsed ending of the franking privilege.

The sweeping changes brought about in 1840 by Rowland Hill and his Reforms resulted in a far greater accountability by everybody involved with posting official correspondence and, therefore, less revenue losses.

AUTHORISED SIGNATORIES

INITIALS AND SIGNATURES

The private letters of members of the Royal Family have often (but not always) had an initial or pair of initials or signature in the bottom left hand corner of the envelope to indicate their origin, together with (sometimes) a royal monogram certifying stamp or departmental certifying stamp.

Similar facilities have existed for certain members of the Royal Household.

| | <u>Family Member</u> | <u>Initials/Signature Used</u> |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| A | Queen Victoria | The Queen |
| B | Prince Albert | A |
| C | Prince Albert | Albert |
| D | Edward VII (as Prince of Wales) | AE |
| E | George V | G |
| F | Queen Mary | H.M. Queen Mary |
| G | Queen Mary | The Queen |
| H | Queen Mary (during widowhood) | M R |
| I | Edward VIII (when Prince of Wales) | E |
| J | King George VI | G R |
| K | Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother | E R |
| L | Princess Elizabeth | E |
| M | Queen Elizabeth | E R |
| N | Princess Margaret | M |

Fig. A

Fig. B

Fig. C

Fig. D

Fig. E

Fig. F

Fig. G

Fig. H

Fig. I

Not
Seen

Fig. J

Fig. K

Fig. L



Fig. M



Fig. N

FACSIMILE SIGNATURES

When the Postal Reforms of 1840 came into effect it was necessary for official mail to be endorsed in the bottom left hand corner of the postal item with the signature of a responsible officer of the department concerned, as had been done previously with the franking privilege.

This worked satisfactorily for some considerable time but when the volume of mail posted increased alarmingly the practice of signing each and every letter became a most onerous task. Gradually the use of facsimile signatures came about and the Keeper of His Majesty's Privy Purse was one who took advantage of this facility. A few copies are known of a facsimile "WL Maberly" handstamp used on franked mail posted in the late 1830's and, although not connected with our story, does prove that this labour-saving idea was not exclusive to the Royal Household.

In 1921 a PMG Minute revealed that the Treasurer of H M Household also certified his letters by means of a facsimile signature.

This method slowly proved to be outdated itself and eventually mail from the Royal Household bore impersonal certifying stamps or royal monogram certifying stamps (depending on the letters origin) or overprinted postage stamps, as the following pages will detail.

*General,
Comptroller to H.M. Queen Alexandra.*

*General,
Keeper of His Majesty's Privy Purse.*

Facsimile signatures of D W Probyn from two of his Royal Household positions

HOODED CIRCLE "SCROLL" HANDSTAMPS

The so-called "scroll" handstamps incorporating the initials of the reigning Monarch appear to have been introduced for use on mail emanating from the Royal Family and Household. It is, however, fair to say that covers exist bearing these marks that have no "royal" association whatsoever. The Proof Impression Books from King Edward VII's reign onwards do positively link them to the theme of this book and it is just possible that the Victorian cancellers were used on ordinary mail if no other convenient handstamp was to hand, but this has not been proved.

As a result of King Edward VII reviving the franking privilege it was necessary for the Post Office to instigate special regulations for the non-paying account. The Eastern Central District Office and the Official Correspondence Division of the Inland Section received letters from Buckingham Palace every weekday by van service. Two pouches were included - one for the King when at a location other than Buckingham Palace (sent to the OCD) and a second containing pre-paid mail (sent to ECDO) and cancelled by the E.R. scroll handstamp. Non pre-paid mail received the official paid cancellation.



Fig. 3.1



Fig. 3.2



Fig. 3.3



Fig. 3.4



Fig. 3.5

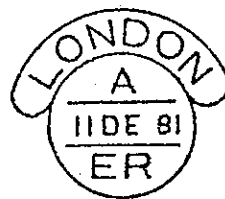


Fig. 3.6

- 3.1 LONDON/V.R. at centre within bars, single circle with hood. Issued to the Circulation Department on 11 July 1882 and to Mount Pleasant Inland Branch on 27 July 1882. Code letters A,B, and C known.

The Mount Pleasant Proof Impression Book reads: "July 26, 1882./ This stamp to be used on Private corres/pondence received in "Official" bags. The/ index letter to be changed hourly. For trial/ only. For this reason the '89' double stamp/ (ie duplex) will be placed out of use for the present,/ withdrawn". The meaning of "withdrawn" is unclear as it could relate either to the '89' or

'VR' stamp. It would not appear to be for exclusive use on Royal Household mail. Seen dated between 26 July and 1 September 1882. Also known on a loose stamp dated 27 February 1893.

- 3.2 LONDON/V.R.** at base, single circle with hood. Two dies were issued to the Circulation Department on 6 November 1882. There is a slight difference of 1mm between the spacing of the "V" and "R" on each die.

There is some doubt in the minds of collectors as to whether this cancellation is always a bona-fide "royal" cancel or merely an official stamp. Without the dots between the V.R. it could possibly have been just a combination of code letters (V equals stamp V used on an evening when R was the serial letter), although this has been disproved as all London "EC" scrolls with two code letters always began with either an A, B, X or Z but never V. Aside from many positive royal examples several copies are known struck on House of Commons envelopes, also Metropolitan Police, War Office and Gladstone envelopes, amongst others. Code letters A,B,C and D known. Also known with an inverted "A" and sideways "B" and "C". Covers known from 1882 to 1901. The Mount Pleasant Proof Impression Book states: "Novbr. 10th 1882. On trial only. No.101 Massey patent withdrawn".

Essays of the coloured paper scheme of 1884 exist in the National Postal Museum Phillips collection (Vol XXXVIII pages 13 and 15) cancelled "4 NO 84". The reason why this particular canceller was provided to De la Rue by the Post Office has not been able to be ascertained.

- 3.3 LONDON/E.R.** at base, single circle with hood. Issued July 1901 to the Eastern Central District Office having been supplied by the Circulation Department on about 3 May 1901. One example seen is dated 18 December 1901 used from York House, St. James's Palace; whilst a second is dated 29 January 1908. Three copies in all known. The Eastern Central Proof Impression Book states: "Used on H.M. the King's Correspondence/ special box". Only code letter "A" known.
- 3.4 LONDON/E.R.** at base and **I.S.** above date, single circle with hood. Issued to the Inland Section on 29 December 1902. No examples recorded. Its intended use is in some doubt until Court mail has been seen but the 1907 Staff Proof Duty Stamping Book states: "Purpose for which used - Correspondence from H. M. The King's Household".
- 3.5 LONDON/G.R.** at base, single circle with hood. Issued on 6 August 1910. No examples recorded. The Eastern Central Proof Impression Book states: "9th August 1910./ A new stamp "The King's" as per specimen impression/ rec'd. from Stores Dept/ & brought into use".
- 3.6 LONDON/E.R.** at base, single circle with hood. Issued to the Eastern Central District Office. Struck in red. One copy known dated during 1981 and recorded by James Mackay in his "Official Mail of the British Isles".

COURT POST "OFFICIAL PAID" CANCELLERS

Early in September 1901 correspondence preserved in the Post Office Archives indicated that: "It has been decided to supply an official paid stamp for use by the Court Telegraphist on certified correspondence from the King and Royal Household and the Secretary will be glad if a special stamp be cut and forwarded with the usual date box to "The Secretary, Establishment Branch" as soon as possible. The stamp should bear the words Official Paid" and a crown." It was: "For use at Windsor, Sandringham, Kings Lynn and in Scotland when the Court is in residence. A record is kept at these offices of the value of the services performed and this record is included in the Chief Office official postage account."



Fig. 3.7

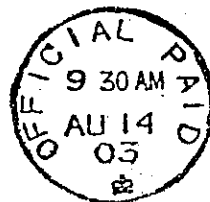


Fig. 3.8



Fig. 3.9



Fig. 3.10

- 3.7 OFFICIAL-PAID/(CROWN)** single circle (hyphen between OFFICIAL and PAID). Issued 26 September 1901 for use at the royal residences. First used at Balmoral. A letter dated 25 October 1901 to the Post Office Secretary by Hiley stated: "The Official Paid stamp I carry with me to the different Royal Palaces". Post Office Proof book states: "Supplied to Mr Landray for Court Telegraphist". Seen 1902-1906. Struck in red ink. A London official paid canceller was issued in the interim.
- 3.8 OFFICIAL PAID/(CROWN)** supplied 13 August 1903 to Aberdeen for use on Balmoral mail. In use between 14 August and 15 September 1903. Skeleton type produced by Alexander Kirkwood and Son of Edinburgh. Returned to Stores at Edinburgh on 16 September 1903. Struck in red ink.
- 3.9 OFFICIAL PAID/(CROWN)** single circle. Seen 1910-1935. Struck in pale red ink. Issued 5 September 1903. The Post Office Proof Book states: "Official Paid stamp for use at Balmoral while the Court is

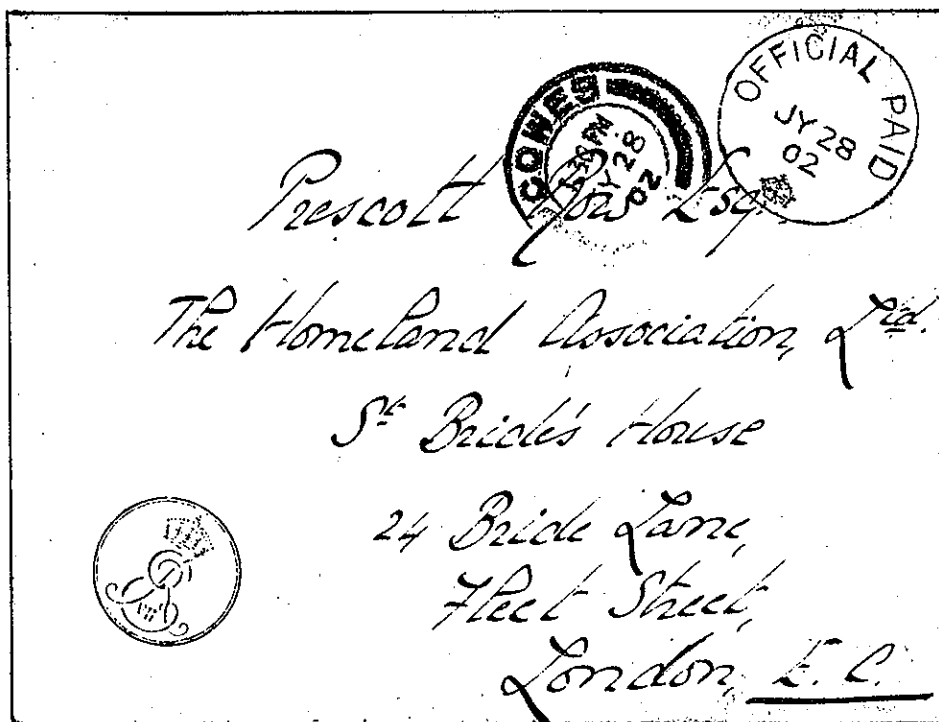
residing there. To Aberdeen. New type box 31424/03".

3.10 OFFICIAL PAID/(CROWN) single circle. Seen 1910. Crown change.

ARTWORK DESIGN FOR OFFICIAL PAID STAMP



Original rough sketch by Mr Hiley



Early usage of first type of official paid cancellation

CERTIFYING STAMPS

The first personal royal monogram certifying stamp was issued for use on King Edward's mail in May 1901 and on 28 August the first certifying stamps were issued for use by certain departments of the Royal Household. All Postmasters were instructed to use official paid cancellations on mail from the King bearing his signature or certifying stamp. Every letter had to be sent free and a record kept. When an official paid canceller was unavailable postage stamps had to be affixed instead. The bill for these stamps could be recovered by using Form "C". For details see the Appendices entry "Instructions Concerning Treatment of "Royal" Mail" on page 168.

ROYAL MONOGRAM CERTIFYING STAMPS

Requested by His Majesty King Edward VII upon his Accession in January 1901 and, as decreed by the Treasury in August, they were intended for use on the Sovereign's private correspondence and letters sent by his staff at Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, Sandringham House, the Royal Yacht when at Cowes and Balmoral Castle. They were impressed in accordance with the Special Regulation Number 237 relating to the franking privilege.

The Post Office Circular dated Tuesday, 5 February 1901 (Number 1424) was headed "Official Correspondence" and listed all Public Offices that had Official Postage Accounts. The final sentence read: "It is to be understood that letters for His Majesty the King and the Duke of York and Cornwall are to be dealt with in the same manner as Official Correspondence for Government Departments". Later that same year (24 September) an additional section partly read: "...and it has also been arranged that correspondence for the Privy Purse and other Departments of His Majesty's Household should be similarly dealt with".



Fig. 3.11



Fig. 3.12



Fig. 3.13



Fig. 3.14



Fig. 3.15



Fig. 3.16



Fig. 3.17



Fig. 3.18



Fig. 3.19



Fig. 3.20



Fig. 3.21



Fig. 3.22



Fig. 3.23

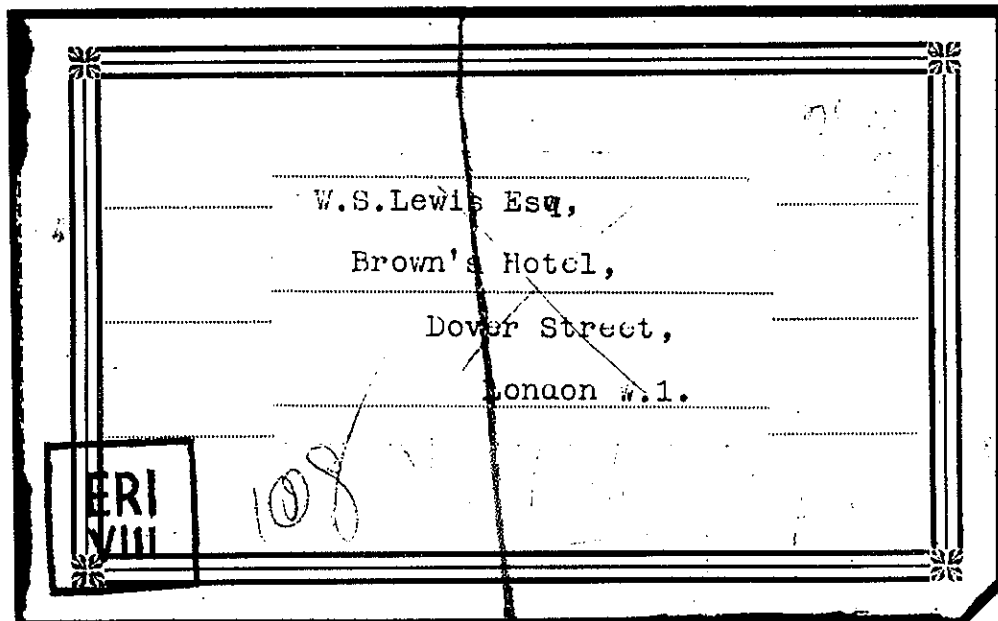
- 3.11** **EVIIR** with Crown in double circle. Design approved by the King on 2 May 1901 and introduced on or about 16 May 1901 and made by His Majesty's Jewellers. Seen 1903. Steel. Six stamps existed by the end of 1901 - two for use by the King, three for the Court Telegraphist and one for Sandringham. A seventh stamp was produced in 1903 for use on the Queen's mail when she was not with the King. The Stamp was kept by the Court Telegraphist when His Majesty was absent and the "Privy Purse" Stamp was used on the Queen's mail when at Windsor Castle. There was not a problem when at Buckingham Palace.
- 3.12** **EVIIR** with Crown in double circle. Type II.
- 3.13** **GVR** with Crown in double circle. Introduced September 1910. Seen 1926. Four stamps were supplied.
- 3.14** **ERI/VIII** without Crown in rectangular box. Introduced 1936. Based on a design sketched by KEVIII early on in his reign, the I of ERI indicates Edward Rex Imperator - Emperor of India. Seen 1936. Eight stamps were supplied for use at Sandringham, Windsor, Balmoral, Fort Belvedere, the Court Post Office at Buckingham Palace (two copies), one for use when travelling plus one in reserve for occasional loan to Lord Wigram. (He was Private Secretary to King George V and Equerry to King Edward VIII.)
- 3.15** **GRI/VI** with Crown in double circle. Introduced 1937. Incorrect cipher. Small size circle. King George VI made known his concern regarding the inaccurate design and arranged for the I to be removed. 12 copies were supplied to Sandringham, Balmoral, Buckingham Palace, Privy Purse, Lord Wigram, St James's Palace, Marlborough House, Windsor Castle, Travelling and Reserve (3). 19mm circle.
- 3.16** **GRI/VI** with Crown in double circle. Introduced 1938. Incorrect cipher. Larger sized circle. Used on mail from Her Majesty Queen Mary in her widowhood. Different typeface used. 20mm circle.
- 3.17** **GRI/VI** with Crown in double circle. Incorrect cipher. Very thick

lettering. 22mm circle.

- 3.18** GVIR with Crown in double circle. Introduced 1938 (28 June). Replaced above GRI/VI markings. Seen 1939-1950.
- 3.19** E with Coronet in double circle. In 1947 a PMG Minute referred to Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh and raised the question of free postage for the royal couple and, more interestingly, item 2 states: "Separate certifying stamp (Coronet with "E" underneath)". The marking is detailed in the Proof Impression Book and the text quoted reads: "Clarence House, SW1 /H.R.H. THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH. ENTERED 27/4/1949." Then below that is a copy of the correct cipher GVIR marking with text reading: "The Certifying Stamp "E" surmounted by a Coronet, previously notified as the authorised certification stamp to be used by HRH Princess Elizabeth at her residence at Clarence House, SW1, has been withdrawn from use, and replaced by the stamp "GRVI". Entered 25/7/49". It is clear therefore that the marking had only a three month life-span.

When Princess Elizabeth was a child she had a favourite bag that she would carry around with her and this, too, depicted a Coronet and "E" motif.

- 3.20** EIIR with Crown in double circle. Introduced about 25 June 1952. Seen 4 July 1952 up to 1981. 20mm circle.
- 3.21** EIIR with Crown in double circle. Seen 1970 to 1977. 22mm circle.
- 3.22** EIIR with Crown in single circle. Seen 1981 in violet and 1988 in violet. 23mm circle.
- 3.23** EIIR with Crown in single circle. Seen 1988 in violet. 20mm circle.



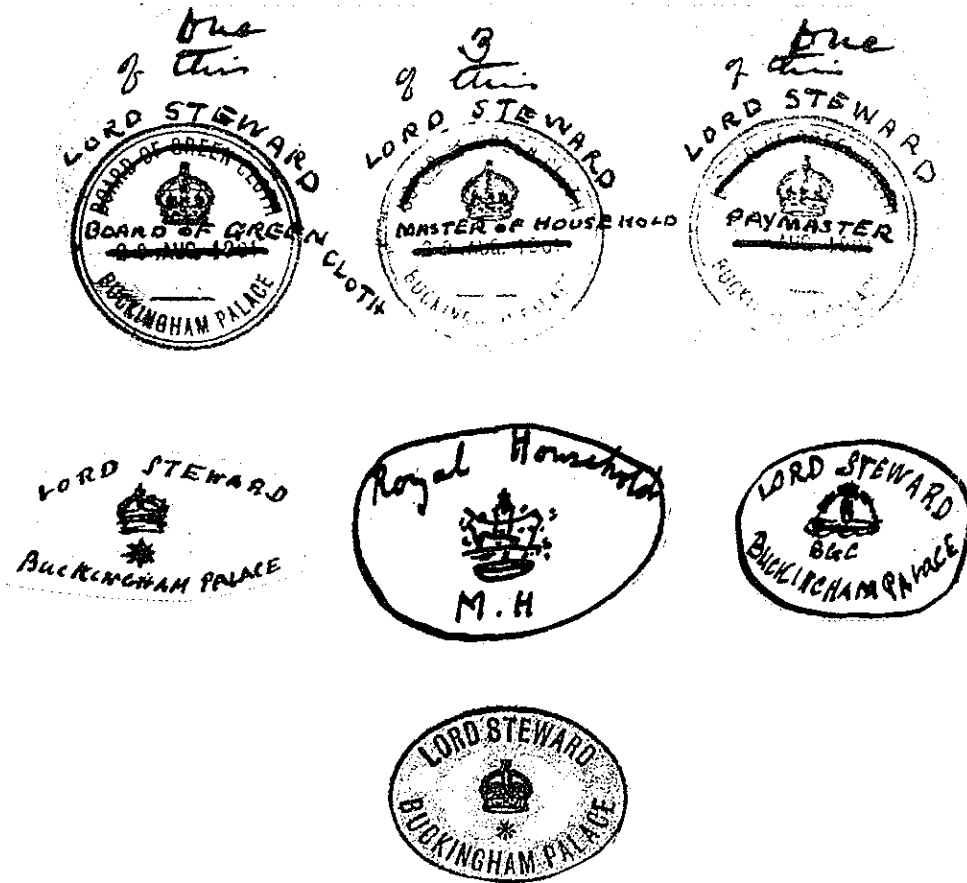
Parcel Post label from KEVIII's short reign

Various slight differences exist between the above royal monogram certifying stamps, such as minute changes in size or the type crown used, but they are of little significance.

DEPARTMENTAL CERTIFYING STAMPS

It was intended that the use of certifying stamps should also extend to the business correspondence of the Privy Purse Office and the Household departments of the Lord Chamberlain, Lord Steward and Master of the Horse. To this end three rubber stamps worded "Royal Household" and numbered 1, 2 and 3 were manufactured for the Post Office but following strong complaints about the impersonal nature of the markings they were not issued. Similar experiments using stars in place of numerals were also produced but not proceeded with. At the suggestion of the Secretary to the Board of Green Cloth new designs incorporating the letters BGC, MH, PH, RC and RL were prepared. His letter partly read: "(The inclusion of) "Lord Steward, Buckingham Palace" on all of these would shew that they are all under the one department - but anything could be traced by means of these letters."

These may be found listed under the relevant residence where used, together with all subsequent departmental certifying stamps.



Original designs for departmental certifying stamps

OVERPRINTED POSTAGE STAMPS

Prior to 1882 (when the first overprinted stamps were issued to Inland Revenue Offices) many government offices and departments were purchasing from their local Post Office supplies of postage stamps for use on their outgoing mail. It is clear that some of this stock was being "liberated" by employees for use on their own post and so, gradually, stocks of the then current definitives were overprinted and requisitioned by authorised officials as and when required.

Great care must be exercised by collectors who contemplate purchasing overprinted British postage stamps as forgeries abound. Purchasers should ensure that a recognised Certificate of Expertisation accompanies the item.

ROYAL HOUSEHOLD

In 1902 stamps of King Edward VII were overprinted in black by Thomas de la Rue "R.H./OFFICIAL" for use by more distant offices of the Royal Household. These included the Examiner of Plays, the Inspector of the Palace of Holyroodhouse, Buckingham Palace, the Housekeepers at Windsor Castle and Frogmore, Gentlemen of the Royal Cellars, Paymaster of the Royal Households and the Royal Laundry at Richmond. They were issued on 19 February (one penny in scarlet) and 29 April (one half-penny in blue-green).



Half Penny
Stamp

R.H.

OFFICIAL

Overprint
Used



One Penny
Stamp

GOVERNMENT PARCELS

It is known that Mr Hiley maintained stocks of Government Parcel stamps for issue to whosoever needed them at Buckingham Palace. Examples of the 2d and 9d values have been seen on a parcel post label used at Buckingham Palace (see section four, page 71). It was necessary for all departments to use these overprinted stamps so it is obvious that some other copies used on piece might exist hidden away in a collection unidentified. The 1d, 2d, 6d, 9d and 1s KEVII stamps were thus overprinted, although whether Mr Hiley maintained all values is unclear.

They were issued to departments for use on parcels in excess of three pounds in weight. Those parcels under that weight were treated as if they were ordinary letters thereby avoiding the railway company payment that would otherwise have been due. (Parliament had decreed that fifty-five per cent of the postage due on the parcel should be paid to the railway).

ROYAL STATIONERY

Going back over the years members of the Royal Family would have written their letters on parchment or plain sheets of paper which would have been folded in such a way as to conceal the contents and be sealed with wax. An impression of the royal coat of arms or some similar device would then be impressed into the wax whilst still maleable and the addressee details would be written on the front. This was prior to the use of the envelopes that we all take for granted today.

When Queen Victoria celebrated her Diamond Jubilee she was staggered to receive 100,000 letters and cards of good wishes from her loyal subjects. Her Private Secretary was faced with the gigantic task of replying to them all and it is amazing that with so much mail emanating from the Household that more items of "royal" mail have not survived.

Gradually the use of printed stationery came about and it is intended that this section of the book should detail a few of the various types seen by the author. It does not claim completeness but does give an indication of changing styles over the years. The letter headings by their very nature are large and have therefore been reduced by varying percentages.

There is a Page of the Presence who has, amongst other duties, to ensure that there are always stocks of the stationery on the desks of the Household Officers and the Queen.

The famous red crested stationery used to be supplied by Waterlow's but these days it is printed in New Bond Street, London by the firm of Frank Smythson Limited.

Used envelopes received at the royal residences are no longer destroyed but are kept for internal mail purposes.

ENVELOPE FLAPS



York Cottage.
Sandringham.



Marlborough House,
Pall Mall. S.W.

LETTER HEADINGS



Memorandum

FROM

The Queen,

Sandringham,

Norfolk.



BUCKINGHAM PALACE



BUCKINGHAM PALACE



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Telephone 01-930 4832

Court Postmaster's Office.

Earl Marshal's Office,
3, Cleveland Row,
S.W.

EARL MARSHAL'S OFFICE,
3, CLEVELAND ROW,
S.W.

Sandringham,
Norfolk.


Buckingham Palace.


WINDSOR CASTLE



GLAMIS CASTLE

22, FRIARY COURT,
ST. JAMES'S PALACE,
LONDON, SW1A 1BJ

CROWN ESTATE OFFICE
THE GREAT PARK,
WINDSOR, BERKS SL4 2HT.



ASCOT OFFICE, ST JAMES'S PALACE. SW1A 1BP

ROYAL MOURNING

When a member of the Royal Family dies there is a period of mourning, as one would expect. As far as effects on the postal service go there are not normally any noticeable changes. However, the stationery used by the Royal Household and Family has, by tradition, had a black border around the edge as a mark of respect, which continues to this day.

If the Sovereign dies the official period of mourning is six months into the new reign; whilst for lesser members it is a personal matter and the period varies.

The use of mourning stationery can be traced back to the reign of King George III and was extensively used from the following reign onwards. Until 1840 letter postage was based on the number of sheets plus the distance that the mail had to travel and so envelopes did not find favour until about 1854 when postal revisions came into effect. It took a couple of years or so for the old habit of using a folded letter sheet to die out. The early envelopes were generally ungummed and so the traditional waxed seal continued in use for some considerable time.

Black-edged stationery, be it envelopes or letter headings, is used only by government departments when the Sovereign dies and has also been known to be used in the Colonies and Dominions in the earlier part of this century.

As a guide for readers there is detailed below the dates of death of our King's and Queen's since George III (for convenience there is also included Prince Albert) and the approximate time that mourning ceased when known.

| <u>Ruling Monarch</u> | <u>Date of Death</u> | <u>End of Mourning</u> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| George III | 29 Jan 1820 | |
| George IV | 26 Jne 1830 | |
| William IV | 20 Jne 1837 | |
| Prince Albert | 14 Dec 1861 | See below |
| Victoria | 22 Jan 1901 | July 1901 |
| Edward VII | 06 May 1910 | November 1910 |
| George V | 20 Jan 1936 | July 1936 |
| George VI | 06 Feb 1952 | August 1952 |

In 1861 very deep black bands appeared around all envelopes following the death of Prince Albert which were to gradually get narrower over the years. Queen Victoria was never to get over the death of her "beloved Albert".

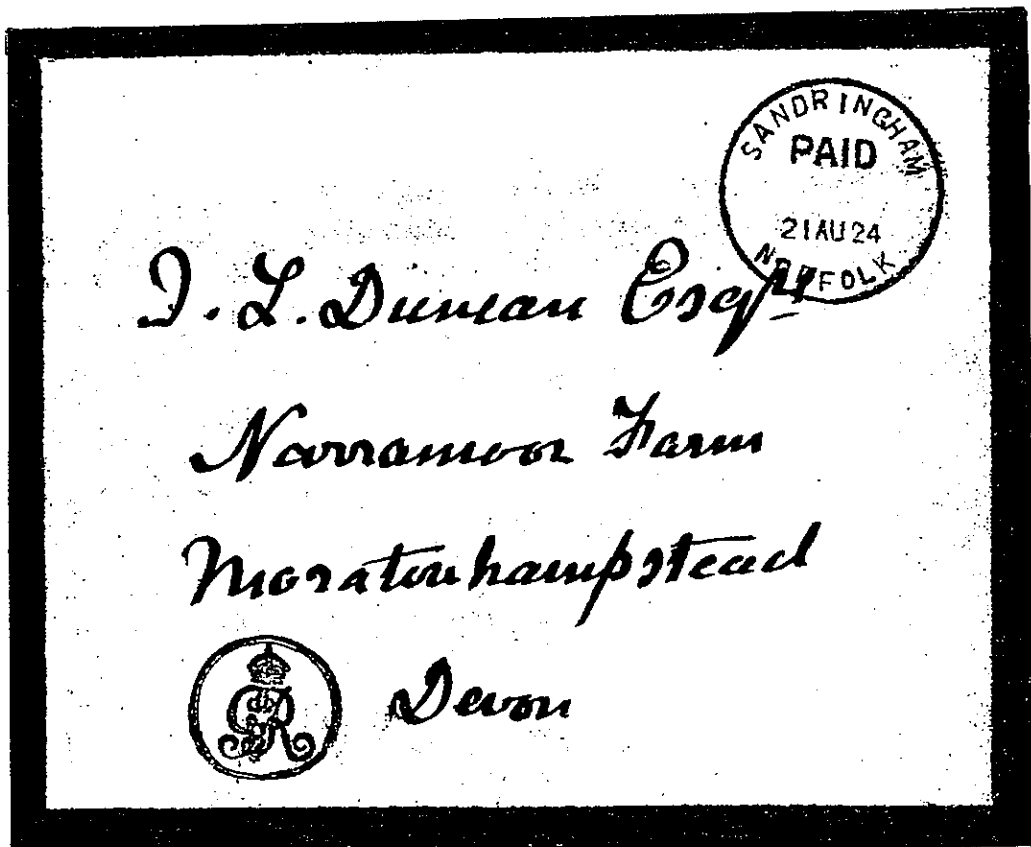
In 1901 the Earl Marshal had the franking privilege granted to him for letters and telegrams relating to the funeral of Queen Victoria. During 1936 free postal and telephone facilities were given to Queen Mary during her widowhood.

It is not uncommon for the royal monogram certifying stamp of the deceased Monarch to be used into the new reign. This is not out of respect, but merely because new rubber stamps are not held in readiness. They have to

be designed and produced following the death. Certifying stamps of the Household departments, with one or two exceptions, do not need to be altered although when replacements are needed the crown is generally changed to that of the current Sovereign.

As the Royal Family tended to be quite large in earlier reigns it has been suggested that they must have been in almost constant mourning.

The width of the black borders have varied over the years and apparently there is no significance in this aspect of mourning.

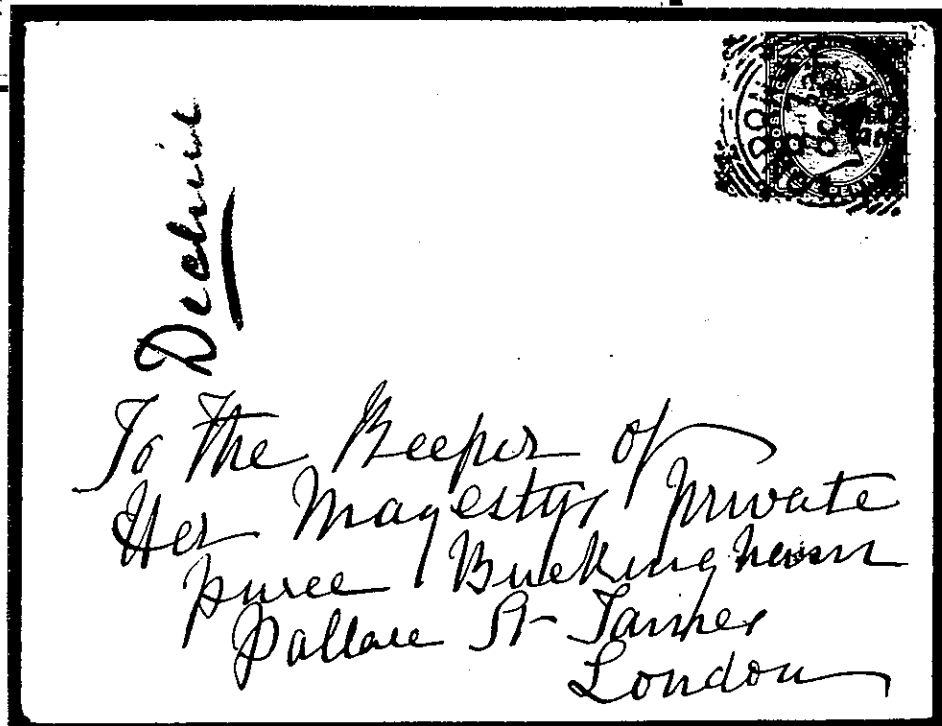
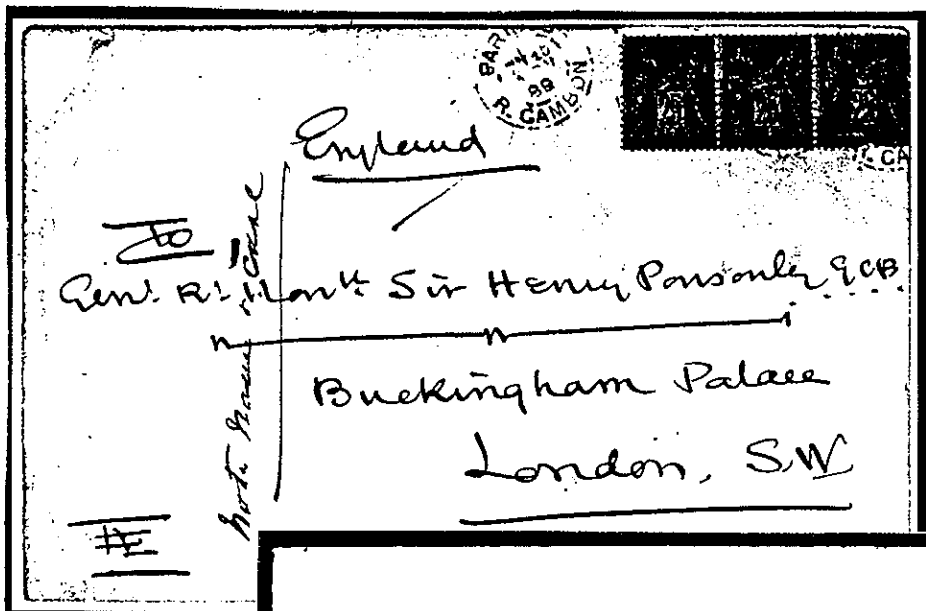


A typical mourning cover from the 1920's

INWARD BOUND MAIL

Mail destined for the Royal Palaces is far scarcer to come by than mail emanating from them as security arrangements in force would normally ensure their destruction at the residence.

There are however, two such items illustrated below. The first (bottom cover) is addressed to the Keeper of the Private (sic) Purse and is dated 1889. It bears the word "decline" in the hand of Sir Henry Ponsonby, Queen Victoria's Private Secretary, and probably contained a begging letter. The second item (top cover) is to Sir Henry in the hand of Albert Edward, then Prince of Wales and subsequently King Edward VII.



TELEGRAMS AND TELEMESSAGES

When the telegram service was introduced in 1870, the Royal Family were quick to take advantage of this new facility. Any messages in the hand of the Sovereign would never pass beyond the Court Telegraph operator.

Eventually, with the spread of the telephone their usefulness came to an end and in 1981 the service was finally scrapped in favour of telemessages.

TELEGRAMS

In 1890 a special account was opened for use by the Duke of Edinburgh for the despatch of telegrams whilst at Devonport. Telegrams despatched by Her Majesty The Queen and members of the Royal Family were given "priority" treatment from 1898 and abbreviated telegraph addresses were allocated in 1901, namely "MARL" London for His Majesty The King, and "KROY" London for The Prince of Wales.

The number of telegrams passing through the Central Telegraph Office on the 1st February 1901 regarding the funeral of Queen Victoria amounted to 199,155 exceeding by 4,000 the record held for her Diamond Jubilee.

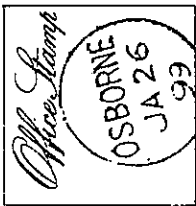
The birth of HRH Prince Andrew in 1960 brought forth 5,000 telegrams all of which were dealt with by the Court Postmaster and his staff.

ROYAL TELEMESSAGES

As in the days of the telegram a telemessage is delivered to all those people attaining the age of one hundred and for those couples celebrating their diamond wedding anniversary. They are delivered in a window envelope worded "[B.T. logo] Telemessage/British Telecom transmitted this Telemessage electronically/to a Royal Mail Sorting Centre near you for delivery today". At the top right is a boxed postage paid impression reading "1/Postage Paid/Great Britain/PHQ413", whilst at the bottom of the envelope is a large sticker bearing a crown within an oval and the words "FROM THE QUEEN".

Accompanying the Royal Telemessage is a slip reading:

"This is a Royal Telemessage for delivery
..... Special instructions
exist about reporting this item. Please
hand to the officer in charge of the
Delivery Office. It should be recorded on
Form P413 and its arrival reported to the
Court Postmaster on 01-930 4832 between
0930 and 1100 (Monday-Friday) and 0800 -
0900 (Saturday)."



AG
D



POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

Counter No. 695

Foreign No.

Handed over
to Public Comptroller
at

Government Telegram

To be forwarded by the
best route available

I Certify that this Telegram is sent on the
business of the Post Office
Signature

For use of Post Office

| | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-------------|
| Prefix Code Sent at To By me | OSBORNE JA 26 99 | No. of Chargeable Words (If in Cyphers) No. of Plain Words Cyphers | Counterman to sign here | Service Instructions AS TO ROUTE | Charges | L S d |
| OSBORNE A.M. P.M. | OSBORNE JA 26 99 | 24 50 | OSBORNE | OSBORNE OSBORNE | Telegram Repetition Acknowledgment Reply Extra Copies Re-direction Special Charges Total | |

The Name and Address of the Sender, if to be telegraphed, must be written at the end of the Telegram.

TO

Lord Chamberlain
London

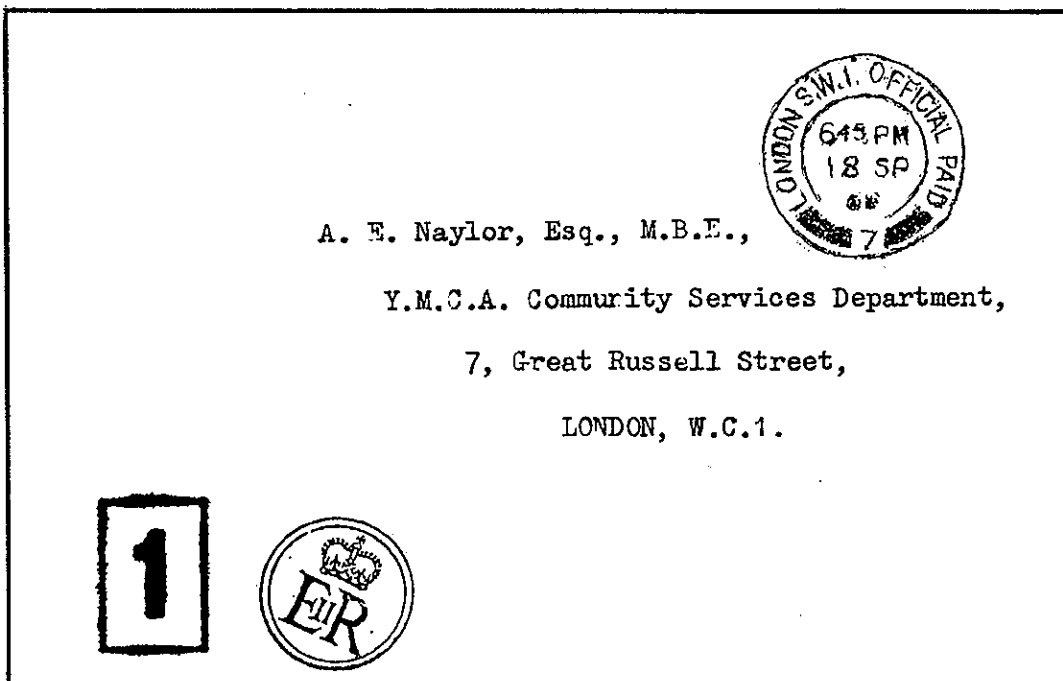
TWO-TIER POSTAL SERVICE

On 16 September 1968 a two-tier postal system was established by the British Post Office that was also to affect all "royal" postings. It brought about a first and second class mail service where letters had to be identified by some means prior to posting. First class was intended for urgent items supposedly guaranteeing next day delivery; whilst second class was for less important mail and delivery therefore took longer.

Consequently, a system utilising a boxed "1" handstruck cachet was introduced for first class letters. Lack of the numeric "1" signified second class. The Royal Household obviously considers all of its mail to be urgent as the writer has only seen a couple of covers without the first class indicator.



Various examples of different sizes and type faces are shown above but the illustrations do not claim, or intend, to be complete, as every officer and department uses varying types and, being rubber, they do not last long. New stamps are requisitioned from H.M.S.O. Stores at Norwich as and when required.



Cover posted just after two-tier introduction