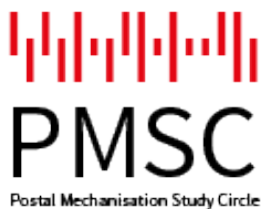


# POSTAL MECHANISATION STUDY CIRCLE NEWSLETTER



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## Editorial

As many of you may know, The Postal Museum have kindly allowed the PMSC to add some exhibits alongside the Sorting Britain exhibit. This is in the separate 'Discovery Room' on the first floor. Our exhibit came about through the Editor suggesting to the committee whether we could ask if the Circle could help with the exhibit. Tom Norgate and Jeremy Meal liaised with The Postal Museum as to the possibility. Jeremy put together a display that brings the development of the postcode and coding up to date with respect to markings on the envelope. My thanks go to Tom, Jeremy and The Postal Museum for converting a "crazy" idea into a well-rounded and excellent display. They have done us proud and illustrate to the public as well as collectors that there is more on an envelope than just the stamp and postmark.

Many postal mechanisation collectors can testify that searching dealers' stock, charity shops and postcard fairs that cover the plain/clear to turquoise dot period can still obtain bargains. In addition, there are the various items that drop through the letterbox. It doesn't take a fortune to get started even if it is a sideline to your main GB collection.

I must apologise if the Newsletter is slightly late. I had my fourth covid shot along with a flu jab and once I got back to the house, I dozed off. Next thing I knew was 'it was night!', so I went to bed. Every time I woke it was dark and I was not sure which day it was. I reckon that I lost a day.

## PMSC

The meeting on the 17 September was highly enjoyable. There was a tour of the Sorting Britain exhibition where great interest was shown to wards the ELSIE sorting machine and to the smaller exhibits on show. Some members watched the video on various themes that included a glimpse into the future on some of the parcel processing research at Swindon. Afterwards, members showed some of their material including Transormas from the Americas and TIMs – Ticket Issuing Machines Parcel Post labels. This meeting was one that should not have been missed.

## Royal Mail

**Strikes** As things stand, the unions have indicated that more strikes are to be expected especially during the Christmas period.

**Coding/Sorting** An update on coding/sorting equipment quantities at each location has been received:-

Office	iLSMs	IMPs	CFC	FSM	PSM
Aberdeen	1		1		
Birmingham	1	4	0	1	1
Bristol	1	5		1	2
Cardiff		3		1	1
Carlisle		2			
Chelmsford	1	3		1	1
Chester		3		1	1
Croydon	3		2	1	1
Dorset	2		1		
Edinburgh	3		3	1	1
Exeter	1		1		1
Gatwick	1	3		1	1
Glasgow	3		2	1	1
Greenford	2	2		1	1
Home Counties North	3		2	1	2
HWDC		4			2
Inverness	1				
Jubilee	4		3	1	2
Leeds		6		1	1
London Central	3		1	1	1
Manchester	1	3		1	2
Medway	4		2	1	1
North West Midlands	1	3			2
Northern Ireland		3		1	1
Norwich	2		2		
Nottingham	1	3		1	1
Peterborough	2		2	1	1
Plymouth		1			
Preston		3		1	1
Romford		2			1
Sheffield	2	4		1	1
South Midlands	5		3	1	2
Southampton	1	2			1
Swansea		2			
Swindon	3		3	1	1
Truro		1			
Tyneside		5		1	1
Warrington	3		2	1	1
Totals	55	67	30	25	37

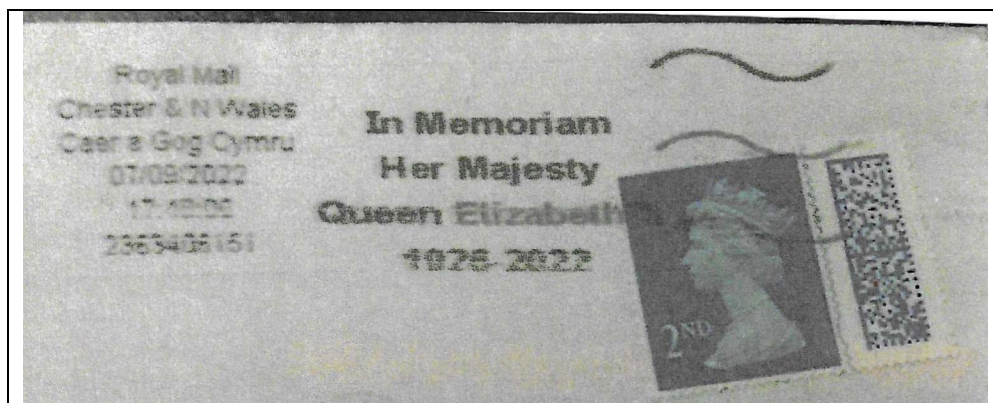
Some personal observations: With each update the number of iLSMs and IMPs keep decreasing while the number of Flat Sorting Machines (FSMs) and Parcel Sorting Machines (PSMs) increase. This shows the gradual change in emphasis at Royal Mail from letters to parcels. Covid 19 certainly did not help the letter side of the business as so many were working from home and e-mail was a cheaper option. Many POs were closed and those that were open had long queues outside and restricted entry to 2-3 customers at a time. Parcels were seen a very valuable commodity especially for sending back covid tests for analysis. I, personally, have witnessed the small vans full of bags containing the tests fill one of these up within 3 post boxes. In addition, the massive increase in letter rates has not helped bring back customers for those services. Surely the parcel delivery market is becoming saturated with companies set up to deliver this mail – eg, DHL, DPD, Evri (formerly Hermes), etc.

## Slogan Cancels

An **In Memoriam** Slogan was introduced on Friday 9 September following the Queen's death on the eighth and was in use until the 20 September. Examples of both IMP and iLSM versions of the **In Memoriam** slogan are illustrated below.



More on the **In Memoriam** slogan - as some members may be aware there have been some questions about a specific aspect of its introduction. The slogan was deployed nationally to all machines after 7:00pm on the 8th of September. The files were received on the IMPs at Chester on the 8th September during the evening, but this example 'appears' to have been dated 7 September.



A summary of how the above Chester cancellation was achieved - the item had the first portion of the cancellation applied during the first pass on the 7th of September (date/mail centre name/letter ID and wavy lines). It was a second class letter so it wasn't processed back through the IMP until the 9th of September, due to the 8th being a day of strike action by the CWU members, whereupon the **In Memoriam** slogan was added to complete the cancellation. The item was initially processed on IMP1 first pass and on IMP4 second pass. Data relating to both passes has confirmed this.

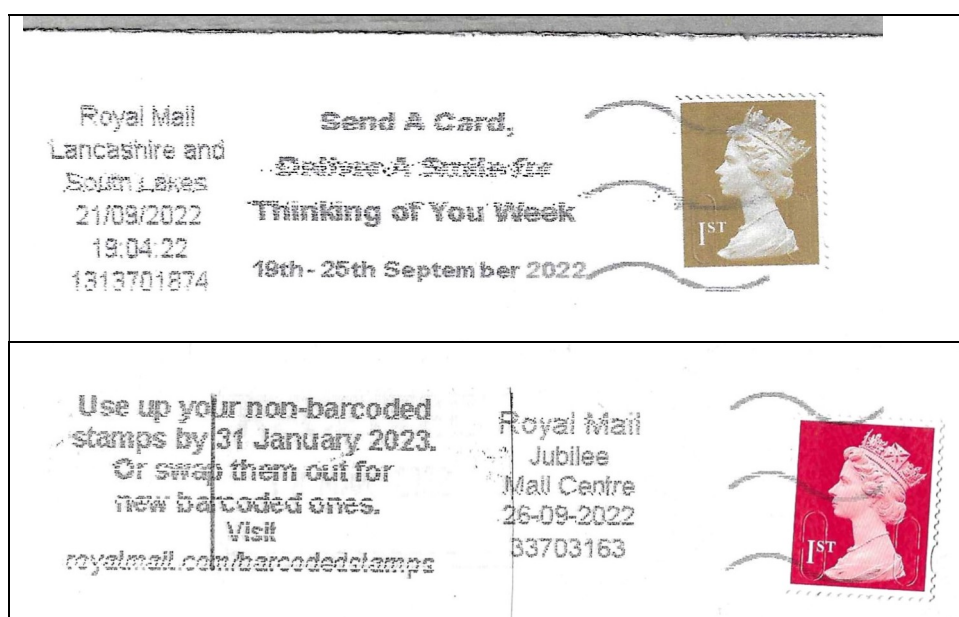
The explanation of what happened is that the IMP applies different slogans, dependent on which of the four UK nations the item is addressed to. If an address-read result is achieved in the first pass through the machine, a cancellation for the specific nation is applied. If the result is not known during the first pass, then a partial cancellation is applied. This means that the first pass through the IMP

may only have enough to cancel the stamp and apply the timestamp and office details as per the example from a typical IMP below with no slogan (eg Carlisle [Cumbria Dumfries & Galloway cancellation]).



Dependent upon the address returned on the second pass, a specific cancellation is applied to match the cancellation message for the individual nation at the time of reprocessing. If no address result is found on re-feed then a default slogan is applied (matches that for England). This is what happened in the case of the Chester item.

The **Send a Card/Deliver a Smile for/Thinking of You Week 19-25 September** replaced the In Memoriam cancel on 21 September. The slogan continued until 24 September.



The “default” slogan **Use up your non-Barcoded stamps by 31 January 2023** replaced it on 26 September.

### **Auction 92 – closing date/time for postal bids Friday 21 October 2022 at Noon (12pm)**

The Auction, planned to be held at the AGM on Saturday 22 October 2022, is included with the bid form and auction rules in this distribution - a little late than we would have hoped due to lack of new material and the need to find a few additional items. This includes some of the unsolds from Auction 91 that are worthy of re-offer.

IF there is a Rail Strike affecting the AGM attendance this will change to a Postal Auction so you may wish to submit a ‘placeholder’ postal/email bid anyway, in advance of the AGM, with the Auctioneer ‘just in case’ we have to postpone the AGM in the event of the strike! If the AGM is postponed the Committee currently plan to hold it alongside our usual Spring meeting in 2023.