The Story. From the very first postage stamp it was known that a better way was needed to frank business mail. Experiments in New York 1897, Norway 1900, New Zealand 1904, and Chicago 1912 preceded the introduction of production postage meters in the US in 1920, Great Britain in 1922 and Canada in 1923 as a part of existing mail handling machines to facilitate preparation of business mail. Development of the postage meter proceeded from purely mechanical devices to the use of electronics and now to fully digital machines.


The Exhibit. This display exhibit presents a postal history of the postage meters used in Canada as it developed through the three phases. Magazine advertisements, equipment brochures and newspaper clippings are used to illustrate this story, but the real story tellers are the meter indicia themselves. Mechanical meters provide the golden age of meters with a great profusion of indicia designs as the equipment behind the indicia evolved. Thus the indicia of the mechanical era are grouped largely by the indicia design. The indicia used for the electronic era are grouped by manufacturer because the vendors used the design, to some extent, to distinguish themselves during this time. The digital meter indicia designs are now very similar. Special purpose, mostly governmental, meters are shown separately. Each indicia is shown with data for period of use, figure of value, values printed and other pertinent information to help distinguish stamps that might otherwise seem identical.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanical Era</th>
<th>Electronic Era</th>
<th>Digital Era</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Shield</td>
<td>1.9 Excise Tax</td>
<td>3.1 Pitney Bowes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 National Cash Register</td>
<td>2.1 Pitney Bowes</td>
<td>3.2 Hasler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Stamp</td>
<td>2.2 Hasler</td>
<td>3.3 Francotyp Postalia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Crown</td>
<td>2.3 Postalia</td>
<td>3.4 Neopost Friden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Maple Leaf</td>
<td>2.4 Friden</td>
<td>3.5 Nixdorf Post Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Square</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.6 Pitney Bowes Kiosk Trial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Newfoundland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New York Times 10 Aug 1921
Internationally Endorsed

THE United States of America, the Kingdom of Great Britain and the Dominion of Canada endorse and authorize the use of "Metered Mail" as an adjunct to their respective Postal Services for the economy and convenience of their mailers.

"Metered Mail" speeds delivery by the elimination of the time-consuming operations of facing and canceling in the Post Office. It saves time and labor in the sealing and stamping of mail and for the first time renders perfect postage control not only possible but automatic.

The official "Metered Mail" indicia insures respect and attention for mail on receipt. It is a mark of progressiveness associated with national and international organizations. The privilege of using "Metered Mail" is granted only by Post Office Department License to reputable, well established institutions.

A request on your letterhead will bring you copies of letters from business houses in your own or related lines. They show the advantages and savings which you can obtain by using "Metered Mail."

The Postage Meter Company
SOLE DISTRIBUTORS OF
PITNEY-BOWES PRODUCTS
765 Pacific Street, Stamford, Conn., U. S. A.

Office in principal American cities and foreign countries

THE WORLD'S LARGEST MANUFACTURERS OF MAILING EQUIPMENT

Pitney Bowes Large Shield

First Commercial usages for Pitney Bowes Meters

United States: 5 August, 1920
Great Britain: 23 August, 1922
Canada: 29 September, 1923

The Weiss & Klaau Co.
462 Broadway New York

T. Eaton Co.
Toronto, Canada

Miss I. G. Burkholder,
Box 166,
Vineland, Ont.
**Pitney Bowes Large Shield**

**Description**

Postage Meters are devices approved by the Post Office Department for the printing and recording of postage. Such devices cannot be sold outright, but are leased by the manufacturer to the mailer. The manufacturer or distributor of such devices must assume full responsibility for the location, maintenance, inspection and proper operation of all such devices placed in service. A license must be secured from the Post Office Department for the use of such devices by the mailer. The indicia must show the mailer’s license number and the register number of the meter used. Postage Meters can be secured for any denominations of postage. The Postage Meter is a detachable unit operating on either Pitney-Bowes Model “A”, “B” or “F” mailing machines.

**Indicia and Townmark of Model M postage meter.**

**First Pitney Bowes Large Shield Design**

First Use: 7 August, 1923 at Pitney Bowes Offices.

First Commercial Use: 29 September 1923 at T. Eaton Company, Winnipeg.

Single Value Meter: Value: 3¢ Only

Meter Number: **4001 Only**

The first meter indicia were hand cut. The lines under the word “Canada” and over the word “Postage” have definite hooks. Five meters were built but only Meter 4001 was used for postage. Other units with this design were used for samples.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shield Design</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Value Box</th>
<th>Townmark</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Meter Number</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1.1 Pitney Bowes</td>
<td>29 Sept 1923</td>
<td>22x25 mm</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>12 mm</td>
<td>4001-4305</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large Shield</td>
<td>Through 1951</td>
<td>Value: SV</td>
<td>TLD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.2 Universal Square</td>
<td>4 Jul 1926</td>
<td>22x25 mm</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>25 mm</td>
<td>501, 503, 505, 509, 511, 512, 513</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To</td>
<td>Value: MV(3)</td>
<td>SLD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18 Jul 1927</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sold to PB</td>
<td>1, 2, 3¢</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feb 1927</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.3 Universal</td>
<td>19 May 1927</td>
<td>22x25 mm</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>25 mm</td>
<td>195-2076</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Shield</td>
<td>To Sept 1938</td>
<td>Value: MV(3)</td>
<td>SLD</td>
<td></td>
<td>0000 or M0000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-6¢, 10¢, 12¢, 15¢</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marketed by Pitney Bowes May 1927</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.4 Pitney Bowes</td>
<td>16 Sep 1929</td>
<td>22x22 mm</td>
<td>DC</td>
<td>27 mm</td>
<td>40000+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Shield</td>
<td>To</td>
<td>Value: MV(1,3, 5)</td>
<td>TLD</td>
<td></td>
<td>46000+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 Jan 1955</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>48000+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pitney Bowes Brochure, ca1927

First Postage Meter Model M

This unit could be installed into the model A, B or F mailing machines.
Les empreintes ci-dessous sont des spécimens de celles des machines à timbrer en usage pour l'affranchissement des objets de correspondance déposés au Canada adressés aux pays compris dans l'Union postale universelle.

1. The Mechanical Era

The Post Office provides bulletins to inform personnel of designs approved by Canada and the UPU. This bulletin, ca1924, was one of the first to show designs of the early postage meter stamps.

Upper Image:
First Pitney Bowes Large Shield

Middle Rows:
Six Permit Designs

Lower Image:
First NCR Meter Design

An Early Post Office Notice
(Approximate Translation)

"PRINTS OF FRANKING MACHINES ADOPTED BY THE POSTAL ADMINISTRATION OF THE DOMINION OF CANADA"

"The prints below are specimens of franking machines used for stamping of correspondence from Canada addresses and accepted by the Universal Postal Union"
Model M Postage Meter
The Model M was designed to operate with three existing mailing machines: Models A, B and F.
This example: License number text upside down.

MAILING

Model “A”
Pitney-Bowes Mailing Machine

Description
The Model “A” adaptable to Postage Meters for “Metered Mail” as well as special counting and printing attachments. Electrically driven—semi-automatic feed—imprints and seals letters at the rate of 250-300 per minute.
Occupies floor space 38” x 42”. A steel cabinet is furnished for the storage of Postage Meters and supplies. Prints envelopes as large as 12” x 14” and 3/4” thick. Will seal envelopes as high as 3½”.

Pitney-Bowes Model “A” machines are built of the same workmanship and material as the “Universal” Postmarking and Cancelling machines, which have stood the heavy duty work of the Post Offices of Canada and many foreign countries and manufactured by this company for the past twenty years. The Model “A” is a high speed machine, quiet running, smooth and easy to operate.

MACHINES

Model “B”
Pitney-Bowes Mailing Machine

Description
The Model “B” adaptable to Postage Meters of any denominations of postage and printing attachments. Automatically feeds, separates, seals, prints and stacks in one operation.
Speed—150 pieces of mail per minute.
Floor space—with shelf raised 16” x 40” (With shelf lowered 16” x 25”).
Adaptable to commercial envelopes of a maximum of 12” long and 1/4” thick, and flaps not over 2¼” deep.
Letter tray—16¾” long.

This model represents the highest skill in mechanical design, workmanship and material. It is simple in operation, requires no intricate adjustments, no skilled operator and is always ready for work by simply turning on the electric switch.

EQUIPMENT

Model “F”
Pitney-Bowes Mailing Machine

Description
The Model “F” adaptable to Postage Meters for “Metered Mail” and special counting and printing attachments. Electrically driven—automatic feed—imprints and seals letters simultaneously at the rate of 125 per minute. Occupies counter or desk space 34” x 16”, or may be conveniently used on a Pitney-Bowes Ideal Mail Table or special steel cabinet.
Handles all standard sizes of commercial envelopes.

The Model “F” Pitney-Bowes Mailing Machine represents the greatest achievement of its kind in the mailing machine field. It offers an automatic machine at a low price which imprints and seals in one operation, without sacrificing quality, workmanship or material.
1.1.1 Pitney Bowes Large Shield

Second Large Shield Design
Indicia machine cut without the “hooks”. Single Value Meter.
Values Known: 1-5¢, 12¢ and 13¢
Meter Numbers: 4002-4305
Used from 29 September 1923 until 1951. Worked with mailing machine models A, B and F.

This impression dated on 15th day of Canadian commercial postage meter use.

After 1927 the license number and time in the townmark became optional.

Double Circle Townmark
Setting
License Number
Three Line Date
Value-Single Denomination

13 cent meter was used infrequently.
1.1.1 Pitney Bowes Large Shield

Proofs Second Large Shield Design
Indicia machine cut without the “hooks”.
Single Value Meter.
Values Known: 1-5¢, 12¢ and 13¢
Meter Numbers: 4002-4305
Used from 29 September 1923 until 1951.
These Proofs appear printed at different locations on different dates. Most probably prepared at one PB office at the same time. Note that the 3 cent Proof is dated almost 3 months before meters were officially used in Canada.

Proof dated 3 months before first official postage meter use in Canada.
Variations

Permit Number Inverted
The indicia were assembled by Pitney Bowes technicians so errors like this were not common.

Date Inverted
The date slugs were inserted by the user. Inverted dates are found occasionally.

Sputtering
The equipment was sophisticated for its time but envelope handling occasionally slipped, as in this instance.
1.1.2 The Universal Midget Square

Midget
Postage Meter Machine

Universal Midget Square Indicia

Universal Postal Frankers, GB. Universal Midget No. 3.

Square Design
TM: DC
Introduced: 4 July 1926
Values: 1, 2, and 3¢
Meter Numbers: 501-513.
The Universal Midget printed a square design that was too similar to some permit designs. Post Office objected. Pitney Bowes bought rights in February 1927 and began replacement of Square design on 19 May 1927 to Small Shield design.

All units converted by 18 July 1927. Machines were used with new indicia until 1938.

Pitney Bowes Brochure ca1927. Shows Universal Midget model and Small Shield design used to replace the Square Design.

Description
Midget Postage Meter, for concerns having moderate mail; meter and machine complete in one unit; three denominations of dies, any combinations or repetitions of which may be used on one piece of mail; sealing and stamping in one operation; provides for the printing of advertisements on envelopes simultaneously with the postmarking when desired.
February 1927 Pitney Bowes purchased the Universal Postal Frankers meters.
Small Shield design first known use: 19 May, 1927.
All Square indicia replaced by 19 July, 1928. Meters used until 1938.
Varieties: English "Meter" or French "Metre"
    Meter Numbers: "0000" or "M0000".
    Townmark: DC or BIC
Value: MV(3) or MV(5)
Known Values: 1-6¢, 10¢, 12¢ and 15¢.

English "Meter".
Meter number M0000.

"Double Rate Indicia"
The Indicia showing the rate twice were printed by a die that could
print that value only. The "MV" meter could print three or five val-
ues if it had three or five separate dies installed, selectable by the
operator.

Broken Inner Circle Townmark.
English “Meter”.
Meter number 0000.

THE POSTAGE METER COMPANY
336 JACKSON BUILDING
OTTAWA, CAN.

THE MIDGET POSTAGE METER
PRINTS YOUR OWN
ADVERTISEMENT IN
THIS SPACE IF DESIRED

Ottawa
ONTARIO
15 V 28

Canada
METER
2 CENTS 2

Aikenhead
Aikenhead Hardware Limited
17-19-21 TEMPERANCE STREET
TORONTO 2

27 VII 32

Canada
METER
3 CENTS 3

Double Circle Townmark.

Broken Inner Circle Townmark.
1.1.3 Universal Small Shield

French “Metre”.
Meter number M0000.

Double Circle Townmark

Broken Inner Circle Townmark