

The Postmarks  
of  
Great Britain and Ireland

Part II. Section E(1)

FIRST SUPPLEMENT

The Maltese Cross Cancellations

By

R. C. Alcock & F. C. Holland

Price 5/-

Published by

R. C. Alcock Limited  
1960

# MALTESE CROSS CANCELLATIONS

## Section E(1)

### First Supplement

We must first of all express our grateful thanks to all the reviewers and collectors who have given “Maltese Cross Cancellations” such a warm welcome.

In this supplement we give the new information that has reached us since the publication of “Maltese Cross Cancellations”, and have supplied the additional line drawings of the crosses that so many collectors have requested.

We still hope that our experiments to produce in the correct colour the main types of coloured crosses will eventually prove successful, and that we may be able to supply such a guide later.

R.C.A. and F.C.H.

In this PDF version, some changes in the layout have been made. These include the arrangement of the text being altered, mainly due to the fact that more information could be fitted onto the pages and the insertion of the original black and white pictures in with the text from where they are referenced.

In addition to this, additional colour pictures have been added which it is hoped will add to the usefulness of this work and aid collectors in the identification of the variations detailed in the following pages. In some of these cases, the original illustration may be reduced in size and the colour example shown enlarged for comparison.

## THE MALTESE CROSS POSTMARKS

The decision to adopt adhesive postage stamps in 1840 led to the introduction of a new type of postal marking, since it was essential for the Post Office to ensure by some form of obliteration that the 1d. and 2d. adhesive stamps could not be used a second time. The cancellations made by the first obliterators have become known among philatelists as “Maltese Cross” postmarks. Strictly speaking, the name is not a correct designation, for the true Maltese Cross is as shown in Fig. 942 and in some modern machine-cancellations of Malta. Certain people have suggested that the title “Croix Patée” would be more fitting, but Fig. 943 reveals that that title also is incorrect. A double-framed variety of the Croix Patée can, however, be found on United States of America postage stamps of the 1880’s (Fig. 2654).

Mr. Chaplin ingeniously suggested in the March 1936, “Philatelic Adviser” that the official cancellation to obliterate the first adhesive postage stamps was a composite form of the Maltese Cross, Croix Patée and the Tudor Rose (with four instead of the usual five petals).

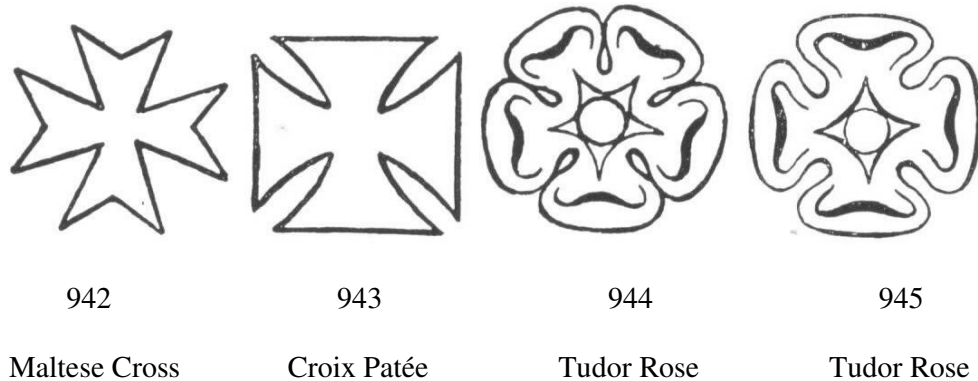


Fig. 2654

The double-framed variety of the Croix Patée found on US stamps of the 1880’s

The term “Maltese Cross” has, however, become so well established that we shall use it for all the first kind of obliterations referred to in this Section.

From a Treasury Minute of 20th February 1840, it appears that the idea was at first considered of all offices using for cancelling purposes their “Journal Stamp.” The late Mr. I. B. Seymour in his “The Postage Stamps of Great Britain, Part I” refers to a letter of 21st March, 1840, from Mr. Bokenham, Superintendent of the Inland Office, to Col. Maberly, Secretary of the Post Office, referring to a form of Maltese Cross cancellation. Mr. Todd’s “History of British Postage Stamps” mentions a letter, once in the collection of the late Mr. 1-1. C. V. Adams. It is stated that this letter, dated 31st March, 1840, was from a firm offering to supply 1,000 hand-stamps a week at a cost of 1/- each, and that the letter bore three specimen impressions of a Maltese Cross cancellation in the margin. Our efforts to trace the present whereabouts of this letter or learn the name of the firm have so far been unsuccessful.

A Post Office Circular of 25th April, I 84U, signed by Col. Maberly, was sent to all Postmasters and Sub-Postmasters stating: —

“It has been decided that Postage Stamps are to be brought into use forthwith, and as it will be necessary that every such Stamp should be cancelled at the Post Office, or Sub-Post Office, where the Letter bearing the same may be posted, I herewith forward for your use an Obliterating Stamp, with which you will efface the Postage Stamp upon every Letter despatched from your Office. RED COMPOSITION must be used for this purpose, and I annex directions for making it, with an impression of the Stamp.

“As the Stamps will come into operation by the 6th MAY, I must desire you will not fail to provide yourself with the necessary supply of Red Composition by that time.”

The specimen impression appeared at the bottom left of the circular, and between the notice quoted above and Col. Maberly’s signature was the recipe for making the “Red Stamping Ink.” This recipe showed that the ingredients were to be:

1 lb. Printer’s red ink  
1 pint Linseed oil:  
Half-pint of the droppings of Sweet Oil

and directions were given that these ingredients were to be well mixed.

A similar circular of 29th April sent to the same addressees enclosed two specimens of the” Mulready covers and envelopes“ and two adhesive 1d. stamps. It gave directions: —

- (1) How letters with suspect stamps were to be dealt with.
- (2) That the variations in the check-letters on adhesive stamps and in the numbers on “ Mulready” covers and envelopes were intentional.
- (3) That the obliteration on “ Mulready” covers and envelope’s was to be struck on the figure of Britannia.
- (4) That “in cases of more than one stamp, each stamp must be separately obliterated.”
- (5) That date-stamps were still to be employed as before.
- (6) That under-paid mail was to be” surcharged in pen in the ordinary way.”

The 2d adhesive stamps, not ready for inclusion with the circular of 29th April, were despatched on 8th May, together with two specimens of the proposed “ V.R.” official stamp.

Adhesive stamps were sent out at the beginning of May, so that they could come into use on 6th of that month. Prematurely used specimens are, however, known, such as the Bath example of 2nd May. According to Rowland Hill’s diary adhesive stamps were on sale to the public in London on 1st May, but did not reach, through error, London Receivers until 7th May.

The arrangements and instructions just described give the clue to many matters in regard to the Maltese Cross postmarks. For example, the obliterations sent out on 25th April 1840, were hand-made and absolute uniformity of design was naturally lacking. Additional obliterations were later needed, generally, no doubt, because of wear and breakages and recourse had to be made in some cases to a local firm for a replacement. This gave rise to other variations, but these local productions are quite limited in number. As in our original volume, we shall describe the Maltese Cross postmarks in regional groups and retain the original numbers for illustrations reproduced from that volume. The numbers given to new illustrations follow in sequence from those in the revised edition of Part I of” The Postmarks of Great Britain and Ireland.”

## 1. LONDON MALTESE CROSSES

- (a) London Maltese Cross of 1840—41. In this mark the outer cross is normal, and the inner cross has its curved sides strongly tapered from the centre of each curve to where it ends in the bar that closes each arm. The arms are not much splayed, and the bar at the end of each arm is usually thin. The central diamond is large and also has its sides curved and tapered, so that the points are long and sharp, often with a slight break at or near the extreme point. An example from a local London letter is shown in Fig. 2655.

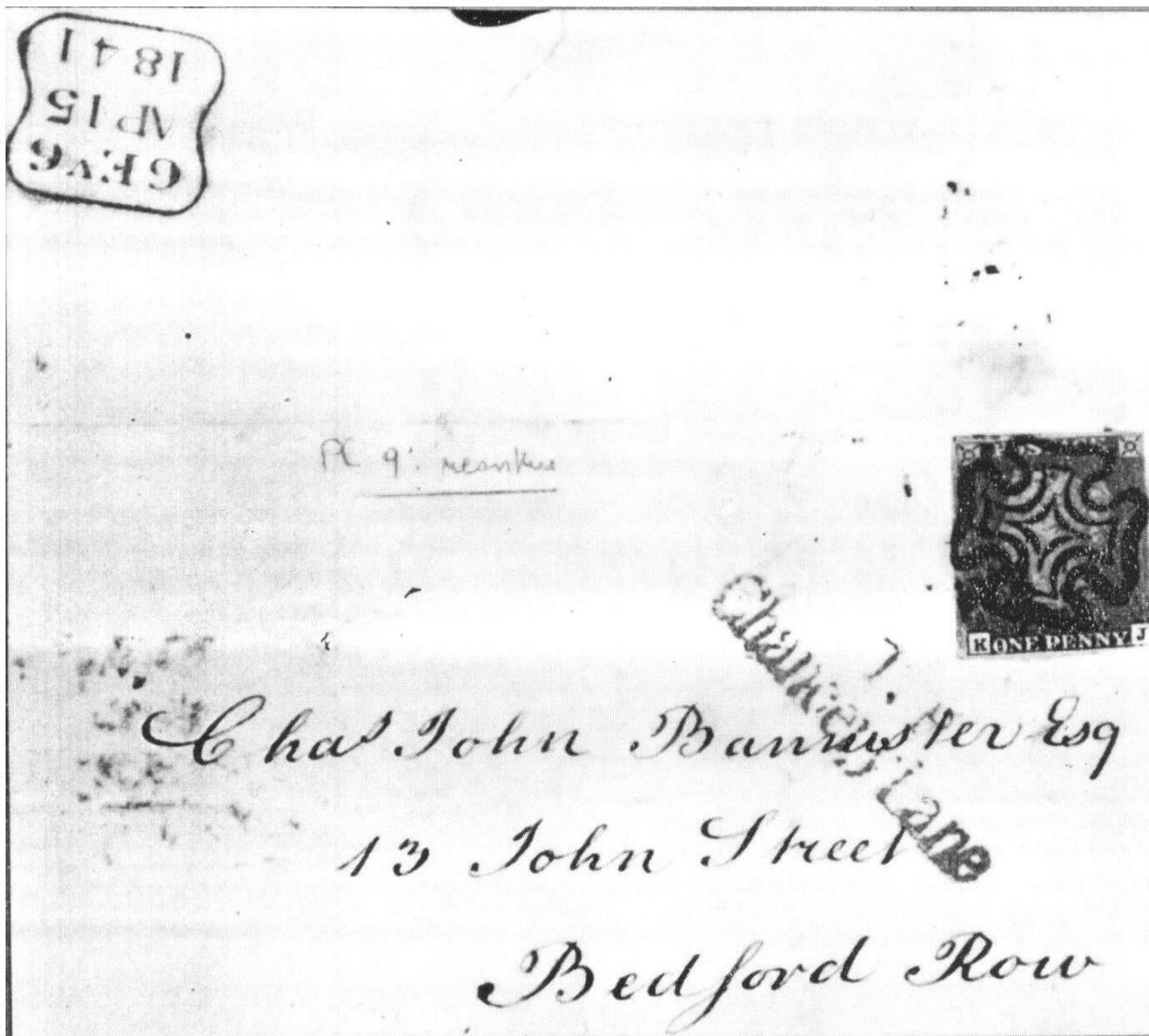


Fig. 2655

- (b) London Variety of 1841.

The central diamond in this variety is extended to end in four fine points (Fig. 2656). These are separated by small gaps from the rest of the diamond, this itself being in four parts with a gap at each point. In ~‘The Postage Stamps of Great Britain, Part 1,’ the variety is shown among the un-located varieties, but in view of the breaks that often occur near the points of the central diamond in the London Cross of 1840 - 41, we wonder whether this other variety is a development, due to wear, from that type.



Fig. 2656

(c) London Maltese Crosses numbered 1 to 12.

In 1843 obliterators with the numbers 1 to 12 in centre came into use at the London Chief Office (Figs. 2657 and 2658). Mr. H. C. Westley in his book, "The Postal Cancellations of London (1840-1890)," states that those numbered 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 were issued on 23rd March and the others on 1st April. We have, however, seen examples of "2" on letters of 21st and 22nd March (Fig. 2659), and of "4" on a letter of the 21st March, 1843. In addition, "1" has been recorded with the date of 22nd March.

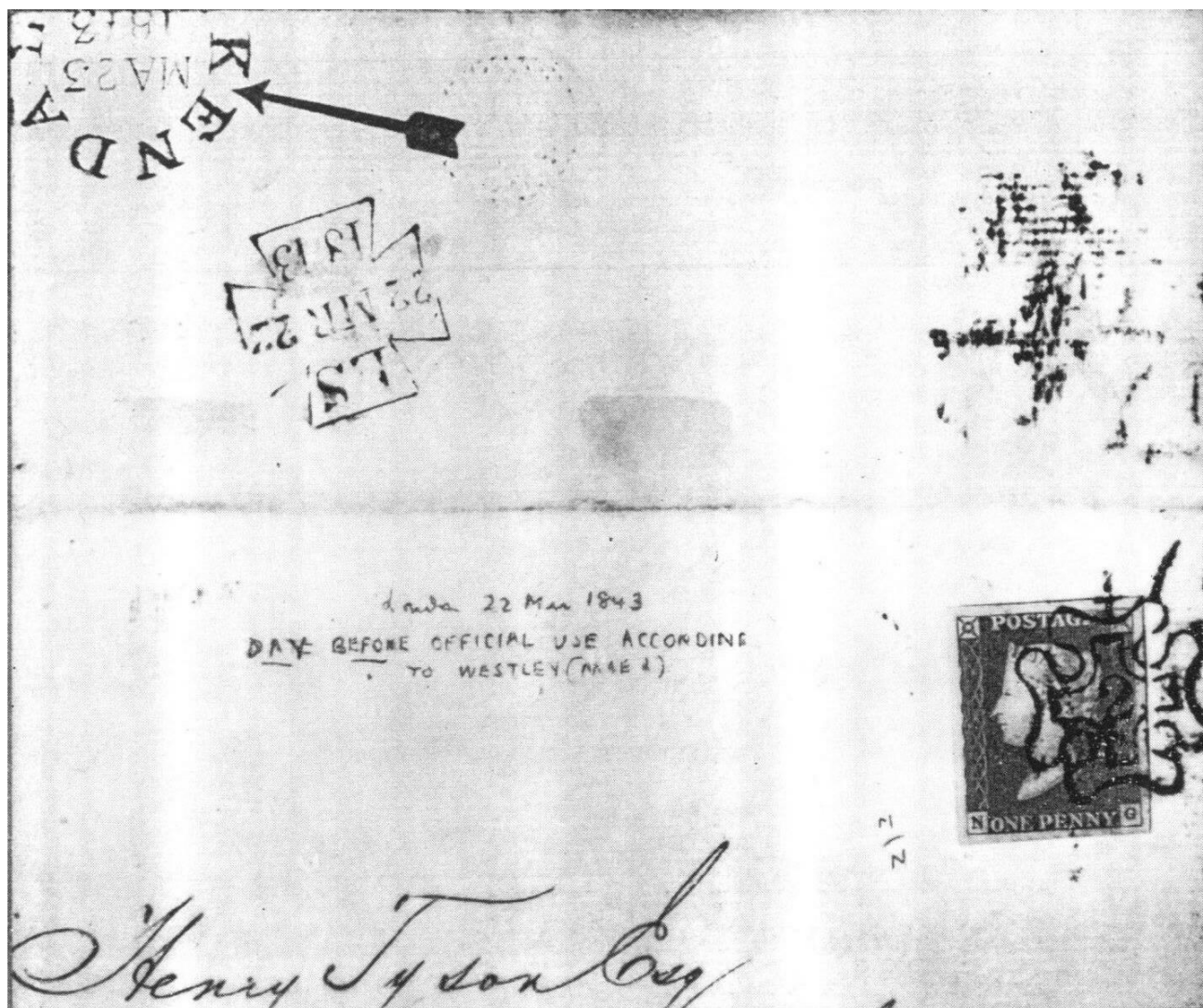
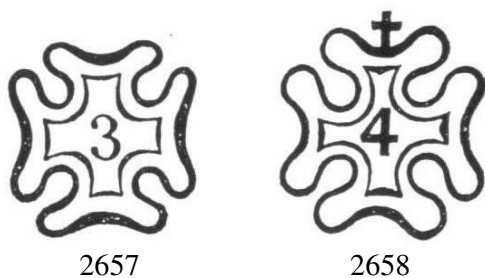


Fig. 2659

The obliterator with 3 “ is omitted from the G.P.O. proof books and differs from the rest of the series in having no outside cross at the top of the stamp. It has been variously suggested that the obliterator with this number had to be re-made for some reason or that it was the prototype for the whole series. A letter of 17<sup>th</sup> March 1843 (see March, 1950, “ Philatelic Adviser “) is known with an impression of the “ 3.” We have a record also of the same number on a letter of 16th March 1843.

Certainly some trial usage of the numbers 1 to 3 obliterations seems evident from the copies dated prior to the date of issue given in the G.P.O. proof books. We have seen “4,” “ 5 “ and” 6” with late March dates and most of the second batch from” 7 “to” 12 “ with early April dates. These numbered London Chief Office cancellations continued in use until the introduction of the numbered “ Diamond” markings in May 1844. We have, for example, noted “ 1 “ on all 11th May letter to Tewkesbury; “ 2 “ on a piece with a date-stamp of 7th May; “ 7 “ on a letter of the same date to Stourbridge and “ 8 “ on a letter of 14th May to Warriston. (Edinburgh).

There are slight variations in the inner crosses of these numbered cancellations as might be expected from hand-made obliterations, and it has been also suggested that of some numbers there was more than one obliterator. No. “ 7 “ it is said exists with a clearly defined serif and also without serif on a figure where the “ upright stroke “ is of equal thickness from top to bottom. We are somewhat doubtful of this suggestion, as we have seen examples where the inking gives the appearance of equal thickness and yet there are plainly visible serifs. Other examples have had just tiny traces of serifs. We have also had a cover of 1st January 1844, with a very plain and normally inked 7 and no signs of any serifs, but the “ upright stroke” increasing as usual in thickness from top to bottom.

We have been shown a cover posted on 2nd February 1844, and bearing a Bishop Street Within name-stamp. This has two clear impressions of a numbered London Maltese Cross with no outside cross. Since this cross is missing there is no proof that the apparent 6 in the centre may not be a 9. The marks may, of course, be under-inked, but it is curious that neither of the impressions shows any sign of the outside cross.

The purpose of the introduction of the numbers into the centre of these London Maltese Cross obliterations appears to have been to obtain a check on the work of the various stampers in the Inland Office.

The London numbered cancellations generally occur on the 1d and 2d postage stamps of 1841, “ 4 “ being the scarcest on the 1d value and “ 10 “ on the 2d value. They are much scarcer on the same values of 1840, since only specimens of that issue used late could bear such obliterations. We have seen 1 on a number of letters with an extra 1d. postage stamp for the late-fee charge, and strips of ‘12’ on covers of above the usual size.

(d) London Maltese Cross with Small Numbers.

London Maltese Cross cancellations exist also with an inner diamond omitted in the series just described—and a small number in the centre. Fig. 2660 shows a cover, once in the collection of the late Mr. H. C. V. Adams, sent on 14th April 1841, to Henley-in-Arden. This has a clear small 1 in the centre of the cancellation, and also bears Mr. Adams’ notes on the postmarks on the back of the envelope.

It has been suggested that experiments may have been made with such small numbers before the large numbers were introduced in the London Chief Office “ 1 to 12 “ series. Other writers, in contrast, have stated their opinion that the small numbers and the dots in the centre of Maltese Cross obliterations are the accidental marks caused by foreign matter adhering to the head of the small nail by which the obliterator was attached to the handle of the hand-stamp. The latter explanation may well be true of numerous dots, crudely formed 5’s and 9’s and some so-called 1’s and 2’s.

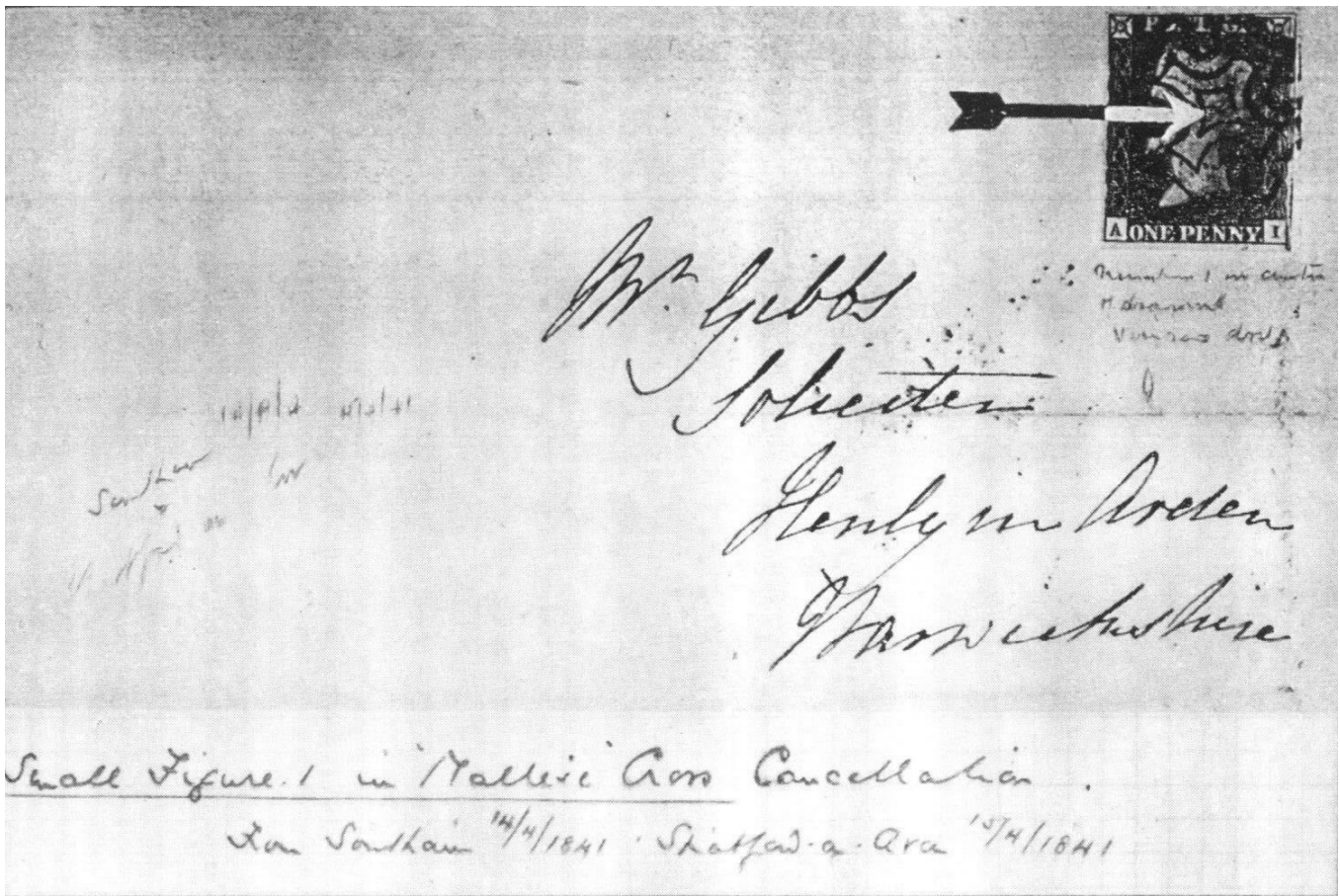


Fig 2660

A constant variety with 1 does; however, seem to have been in use for a period at least at the Chief Office of the London Local Post during 1843. "The Postage Stamps of Great Britain, Part 1" gives the place of use as "the West Central District Office," and records the experimental use of black cancelling ink in the "London District Post" in August, 1840. The former London Two penny Post was not, however, renamed the London District Post until May 1844, and the division into ten districts did not come into operation until 1856—57. We have seen covers of this kind with dates of 25th and 26th July (Figs. 2661 and 2662). The small number "1" will be mentioned again when the English Provincial varieties of the Maltese Cross are described.

We have seen what appear to be clear small "2's" and have kept records of other reported copies, but we have found no examples on piece or cover to give definite proof of London origin.



8 NTR  
JY 25  
1843



Mr. Barrard  
Solr  
Suffolk Place  
Ball Mall

Fig. 2661

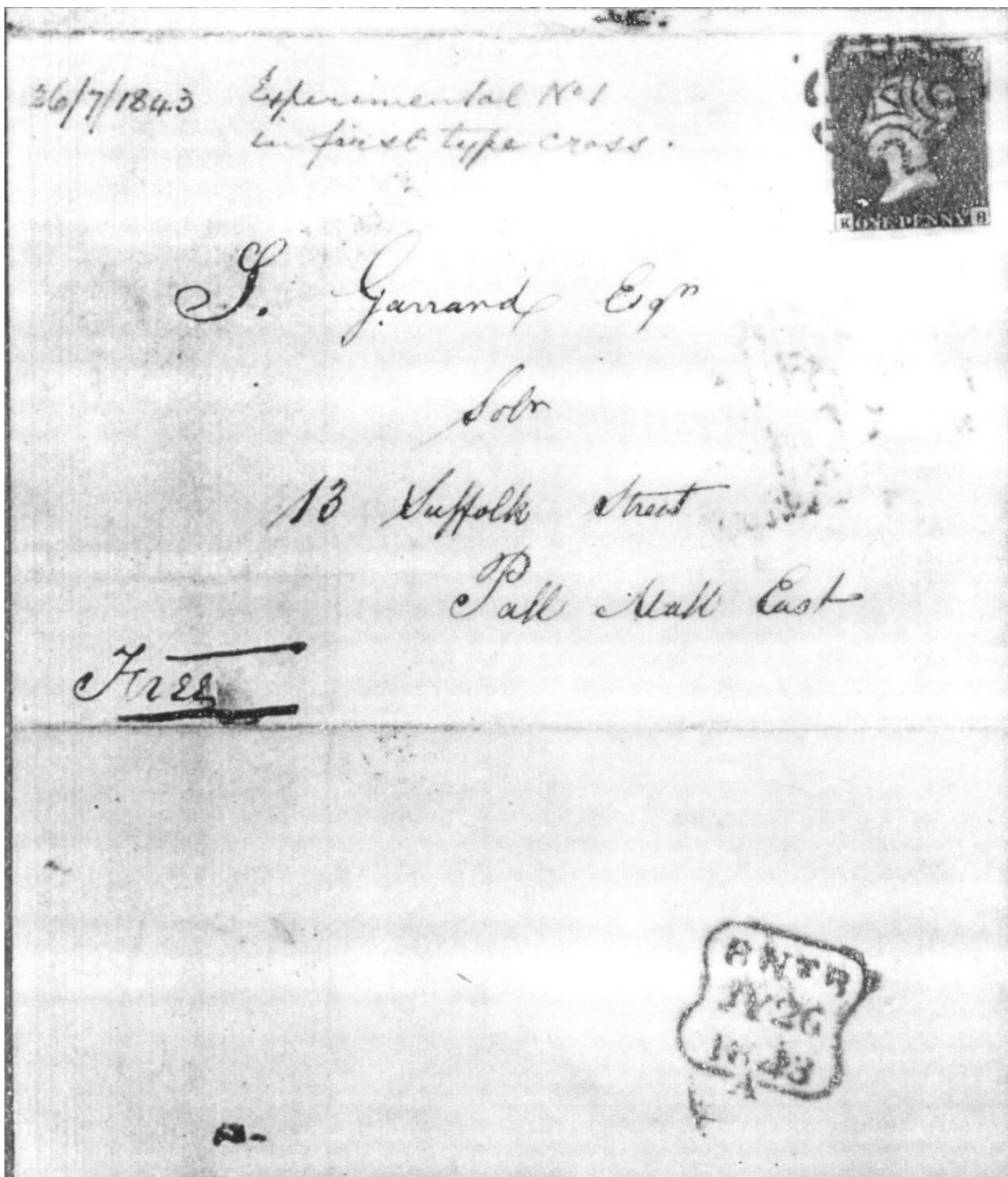


Fig. 2662

(e) London Maltese Cross Cancellations in Black Ink.

The “Red Composition” ink was found not to be completely certain of ensuring no re-use of the postage stamps. At the end of August 1840, an experiment was made in the London Local Post with black ink made by diluting printer’s ink. Black ink was found to give greater security and was later introduced elsewhere, as will be explained in the subsection “Coloured Maltese Crosses.”

## 2. PROVINCIAL MALTESE CROSSES OF ENGLAND, WALES AND THE CHANNEL ISLANDS

### Alderney Cross.

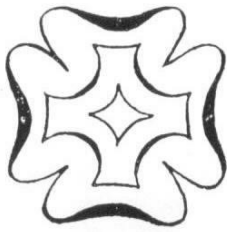


Fig. 957

This Cross is larger than any of the other varieties and unique in design (Fig. 957). The outer cross cuts inwards to four sharp points, and the concave curves are thickened; the inner cross is large with rather straight ends; and, in comparison, the inner diamond is small. Although there appear to be two sizes of this Cross, in the opinion, of the Channel Islands Specialists' Society, these are caused by differences of application of the hand-stamp or by wear.

The Cross was in use from 1843 - 45. At first it was attributed to Guernsey, but modern research has transferred the use of this particular Cross to Alderney. During 1843 incoming and outward mails to and from Guernsey were obliterated there and also received a circular date-stamp. The official route for Alderney letters was via Guernsey, and Alderney letters sent through Guernsey received the Guernsey date stamp. Alderney did not have a name-stamp of its own until 1848. During 1843 considerable activity, however, existed in the formation of steamship lines, and, as routes were experimental, steamers occasionally sailed from Guernsey to England via Alderney.

In June, 1840, the railway reached Southampton and it was, therefore, quicker to send letters from Guernsey by private steamer to Southampton for onward transmission by rail to London than to send them by Post Office Packet to Weymouth and then transport them by road to London. Letters via the Southampton route could be delivered in London within twenty-four hours, whereas those sent by Post Office Packet to Weymouth sometimes took three days to arrive at their destination. From 1840 letters from the Channel Islands are known routed to England via Southampton and covers franked by 1d. Black postage stamps are known sent by this route.

A Guernsey Post Office notice of 1842 stated: -"Letters intended to be forwarded by the Southampton steamers must be sent to this office at least an hour before the time appointed for starting, and the words Via Southampton per private steamer' must be written over the address."

We have seen a number of examples of a normal Maltese Cross cancellation used in Guernsey and Jersey, and it seems likely that normal Crosses were used on both these islands. Alderney was at that time the only other Channel Island to have a post office, as the Sark office was not opened until 1857. It seems likely that the Alderney postmaster considered he should cancel the postage stamps on letters sent direct to England, and this may have been the reason for the use of Fig. 957, (illustrated above), there.

Most of the few known covers with Fig. 957 are undated with no marks of origin, their only indication of having come from the Channel Islands being the endorsement previously quoted from the Guernsey Post Office Notice and a Southampton "Ship Letter" hand stamp. Some, however, do bear a Guernsey date-stamp, probably because for some reason they had to be sent by another route, instead of direct from Alderney to England. A cover is illustrated in Fig. 2663.

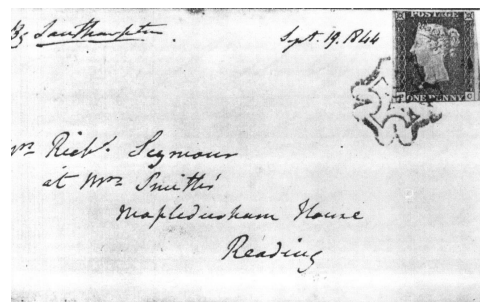
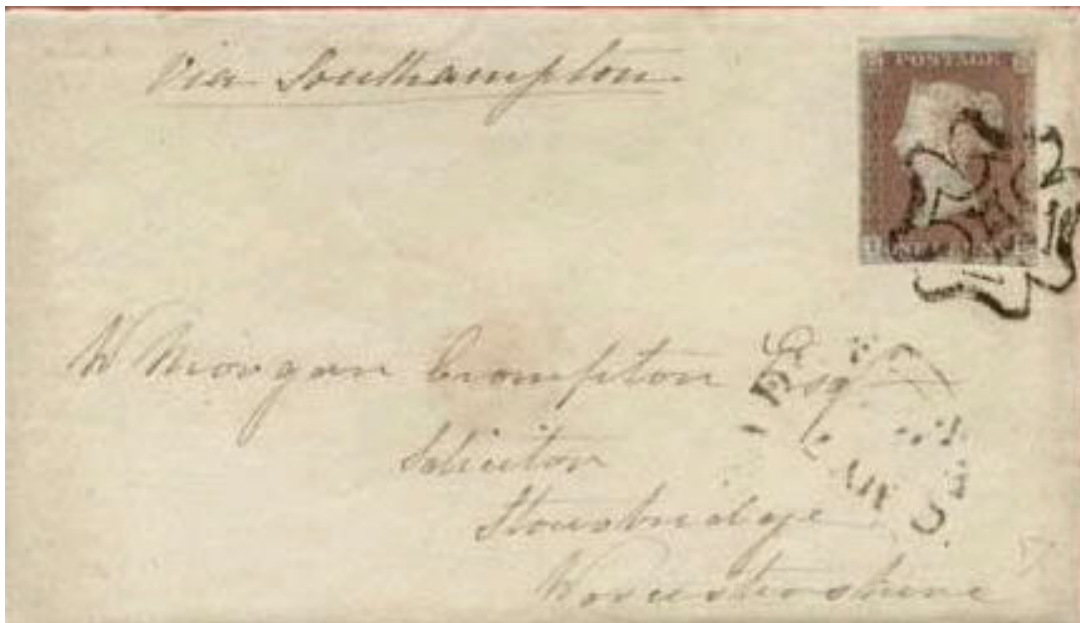


Fig. 2663



The Alderney Cross

#### Birmingham Maltese Cross.

This office started with quite a normal type of Maltese Cross, but by the Summer of 1841 the cancellation showed a sad deterioration. Impressions are thick and rather squat, with a largish inner cross. This seems to have continued until the numbered cancellation with "75" came into use in 1844. In many respects the thick Cross can be described as a type between the Leamington and Norwich Maltese Crosses, but we have never seen a good impression. We have seen somewhat similar Crosses from Brighton and Sheffield. The "Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage Stamps, Vol. I.," published by Robson Lowe, Ltd., illustrates another heavy cross from Richmond (Surrey). This has, like the Brighton type, an inner diamond thicker than in the Birmingham type and a larger inner cross. The ends of the inner cross from Richmond are in the illustration more curved than in the Brighton variety. We have, as yet, seen no cover with this Cross from Richmond.

#### Blackburn Maltese Cross.

In contrast to the heavy varieties just described. Blackburn was using in 1841 a neat Cross akin to the thin Scottish type.

Brighton Maltese Cross.

Like Birmingham, Brighton appears to have started in 1840 with quite a normal Cross. This apparently wore badly, and the G.P.O. records show that a replacement was sent in September 1841. Before the latter was issued a local Cross seems to have come into use. By September 1843, this local Cross had again to come into service, and we have seen examples with dates extending into March, 1844 (Fig. 2664). Specimens of April 1844 have also been recorded.

Many of the local Cross cancellations are heavily inked and give the Cross an extra thickness. The central diamond is smaller than in the Norwich Maltese Cross, and the indentations in the outer Cross are deeper, though not to the extent found in a normal Cross. The sides of the outer cross are only very slightly curved, but confusion is unlikely with the straight-sided Dublin Cross, as the central diamond is so much smaller and also not as pointed.



Fig. 2664

Catterick Maltese Cross.

Of this variety with its small centre and small inner cross we have seen about half-a-dozen specimens, one being very clear on a cover of 6th August, 1842, addressed to Somerset House (Fig. 2665) This example, though very clear, may be slightly over-inked.

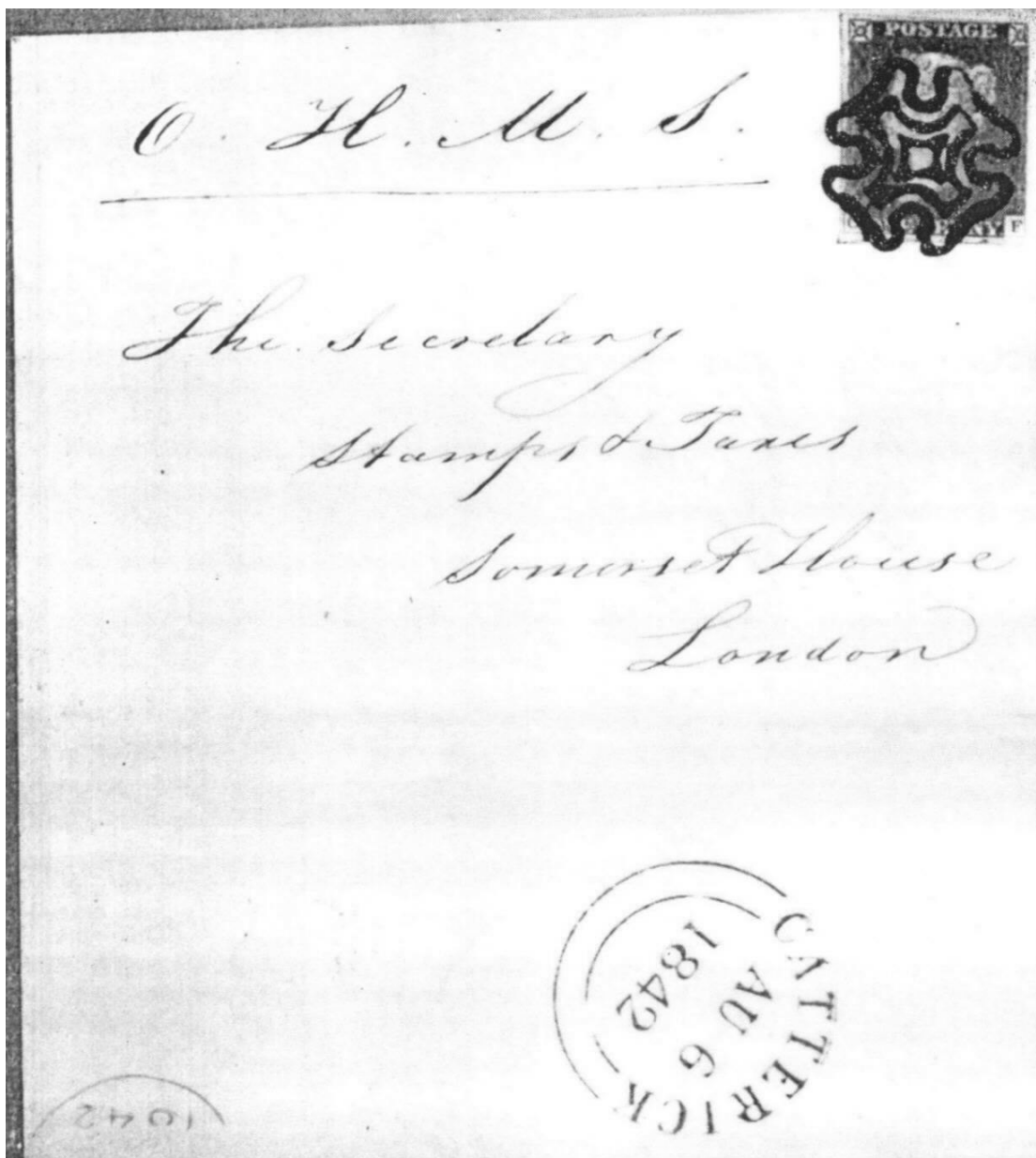


Fig. 2665

Chipping Norton Maltese Cross.

A Cross from this office with an 'X' cut through the centre diamond and inner cross was illustrated in the March 1960 issue of "The Philatelist".

Coventry Maltese Cross.

Coventry also had a late special type of Cross (Fig. 2666.) The inner and outer crosses are thick, so that this variety is somewhat similar to that of Norwich, but is very slightly larger in width. Dated examples known to us range from 7th February 1843 to the 4th February 1844. Normally, of course, it was impressed in black ink, but we have seen a specimen in blue ink. It is very interesting to note how difficult the Coventry Cross with the accidental dot in the centre (Fig. 2667) would be to distinguish from the Kilmarnock cancellation of Fig. 2668, if both the postage stamps were off cover.

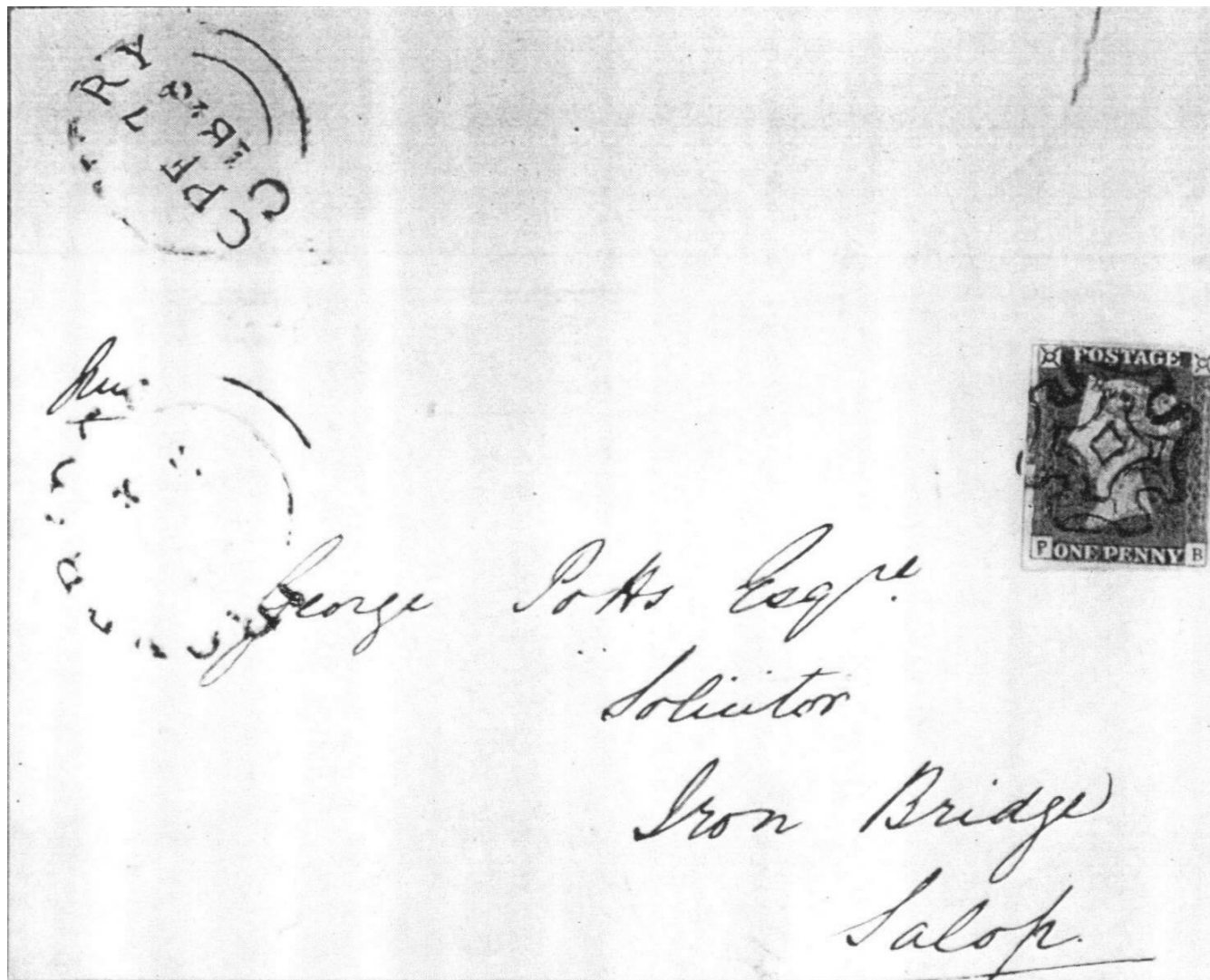


Fig. 2666

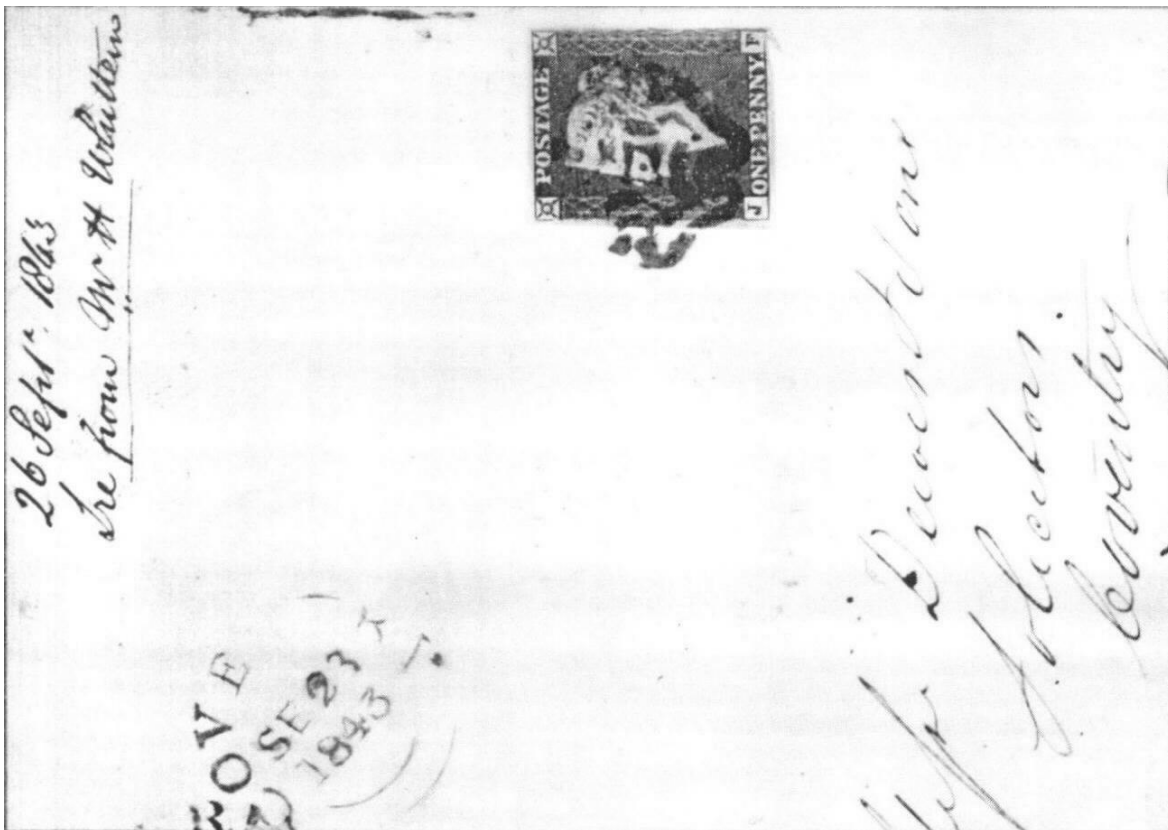


Fig. 2667  
Coventry Cross with dot

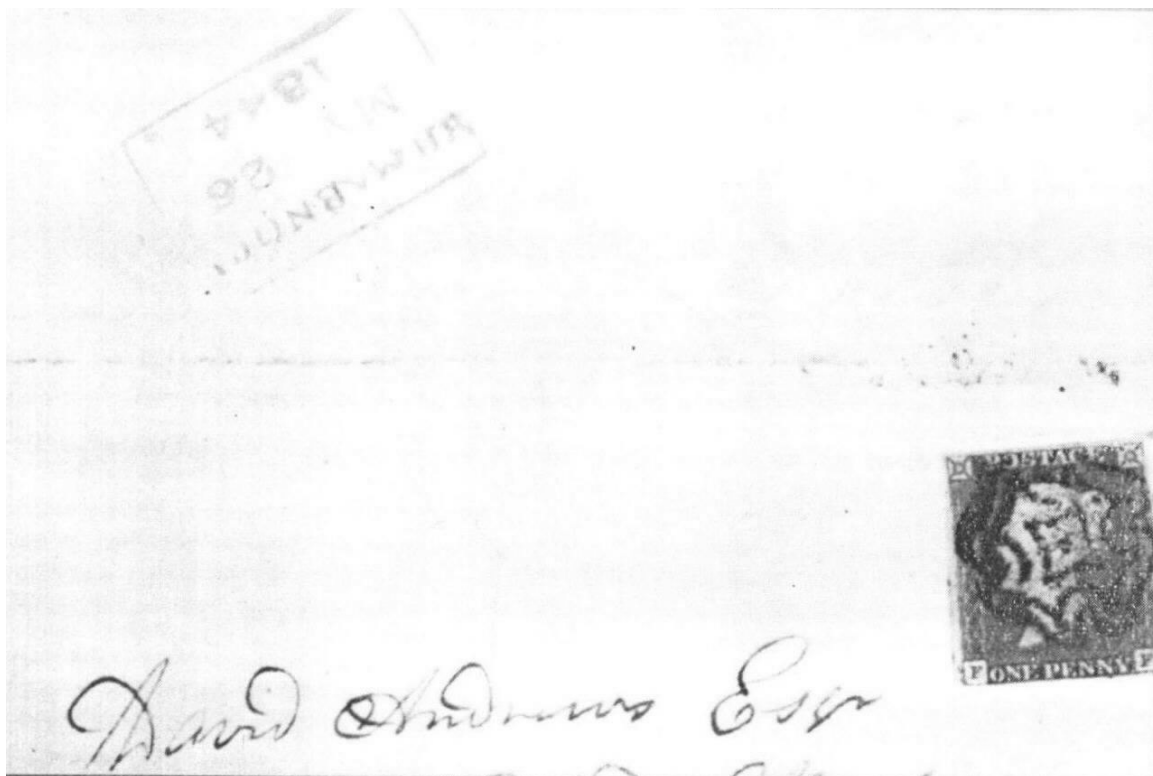


Fig. 2668  
Kilmarnock Cross



Dursley Maltese Cross.

This Cross is somewhat lop-sided as it measures 19mm by 17mm. Fig. 2669 shows a specimen of 6<sup>th</sup> June, 1843, but as yet we know little of its period of use.



Fig. 2669

Helston Maltese Cross.

The "Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage Stamps, Vol. 1" illustrates a normal-looking cross with small projections running inwards at each corner of the inner cross and thick points to the central diamond, and allocates this variety to Helston. So far we have seen no example on piece or cover showing this variety clearly. Fig. 2670 shows a cross with thickening at the points of the inner diamond, but these are very slight indeed on a Helston example of 26th February 1842.

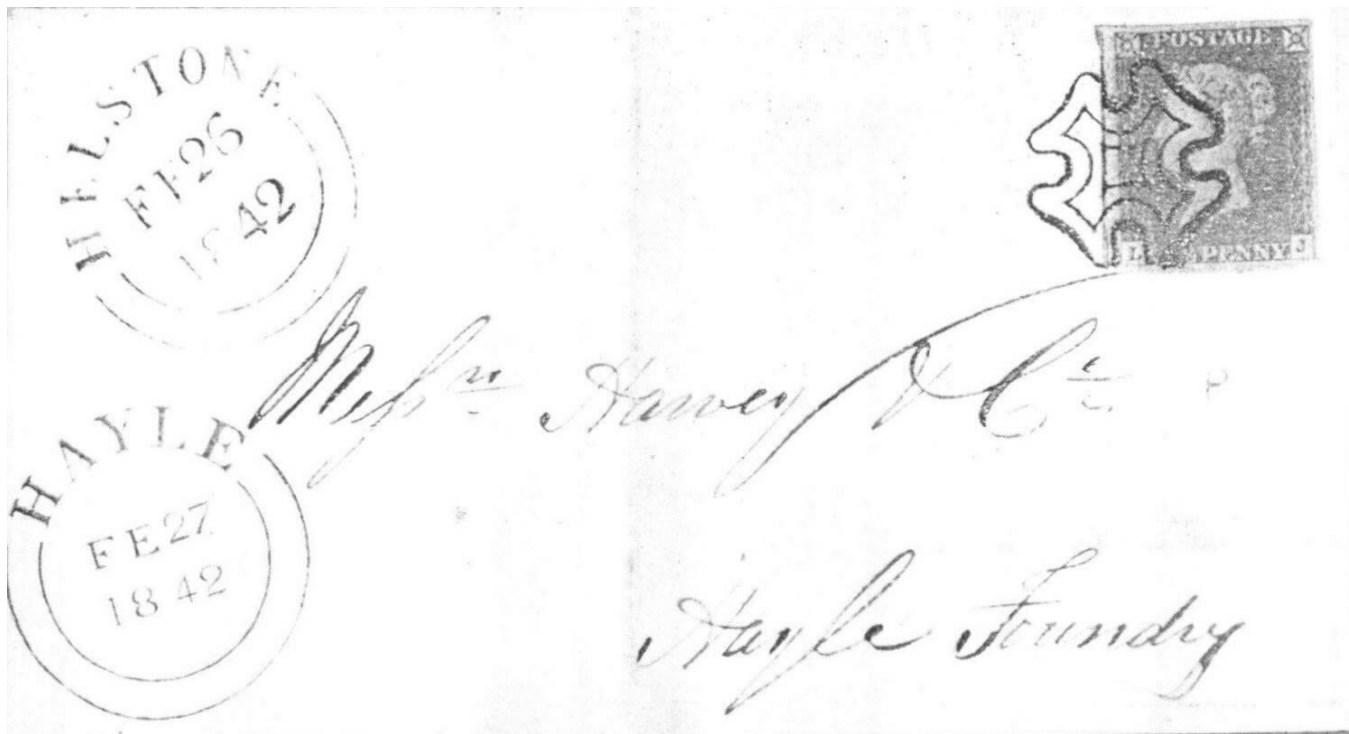


Fig. 2670

Ironbridge Maltese Cross.

A Maltese Cross was used in March and April, 1844, with a solid squat centre. We have seen examples on a number of covers of that period (Fig. 2671). Earlier covers we have had from the same office lack the solid centre (Fig. 2672). Over-inked Maltese Cross postmarks from other offices occur with the centre accidentally solid, but we have also seen normally inked cancellations with solid centres on the Id. Black postage stamps from Bradford (Yorkshire) and Stroud and on the Id. Red postage stamps from Tenby, in addition to the specimens from Welshpool described later in this section.

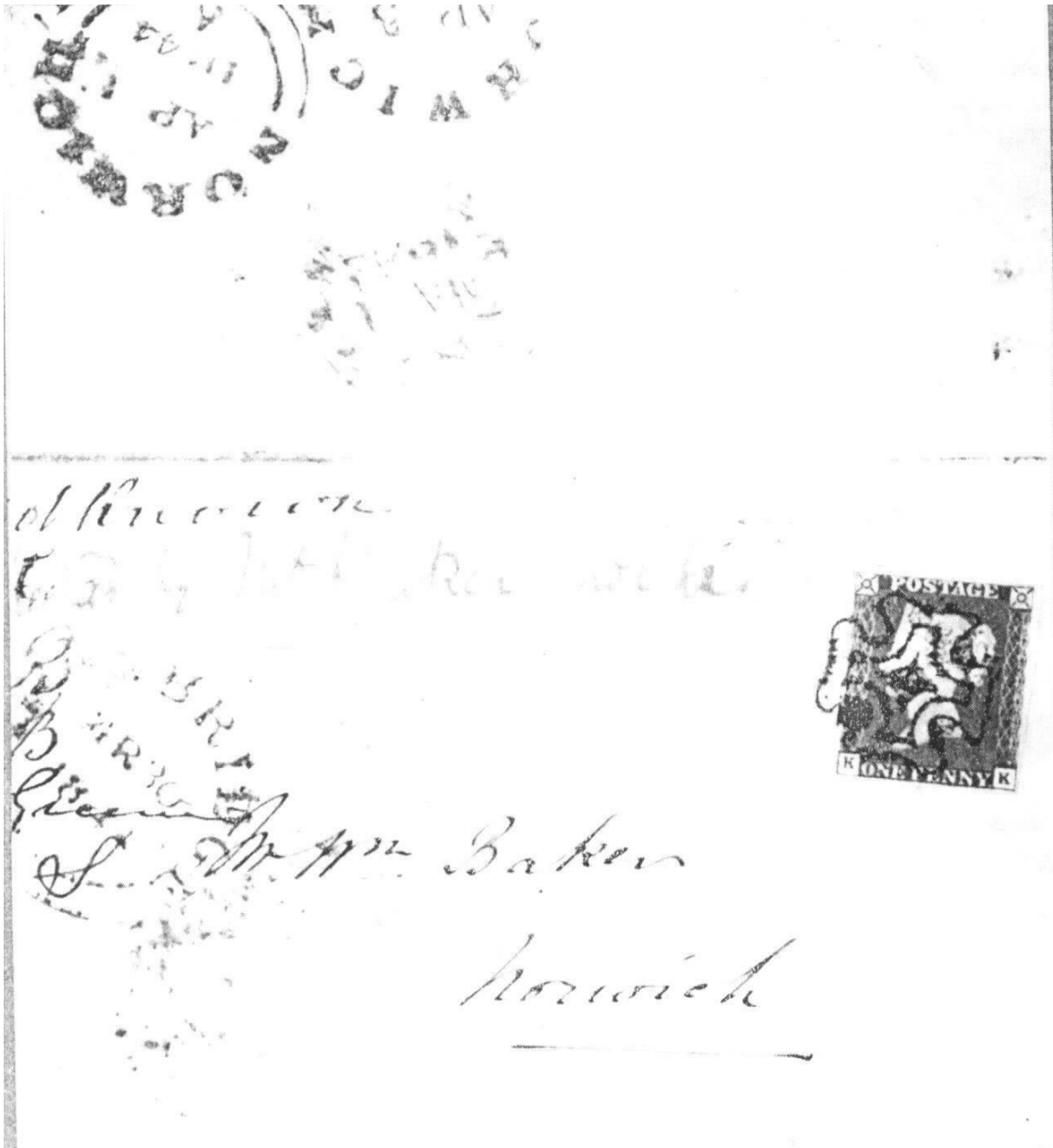


Fig. 2671

Solid centre

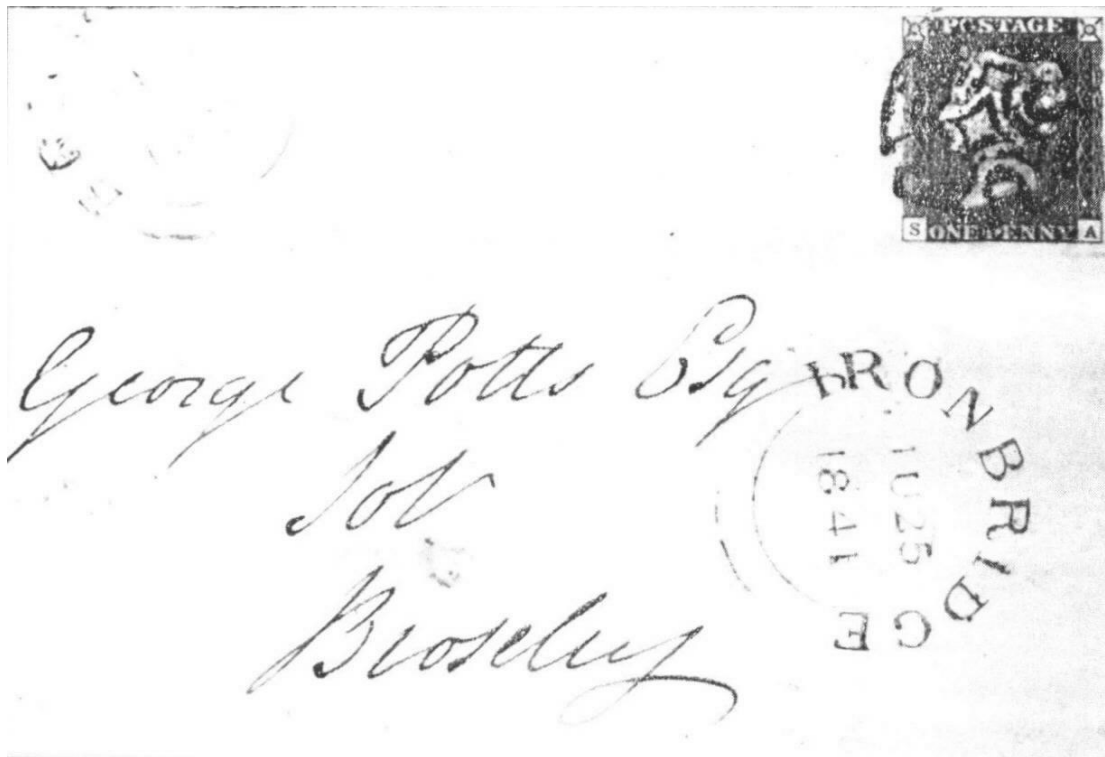


Fig. 2672

Open centre

Leamington Maltese Cross.



Fig. 958

This variety (Fig. 958) was in use from early 1841 until at least as late as April 1844. It is a small Cross with thick outlines and a large central diamond, and resembles the first Maltese Cross of Cork, though the inner cross is nearer to the outer cross than in the latter. The Leamington Maltese Cross is somewhat squat and gives the appearance of being rather stunted, as will be seen from the cover of February 1843, illustrated in Fig. 2673.

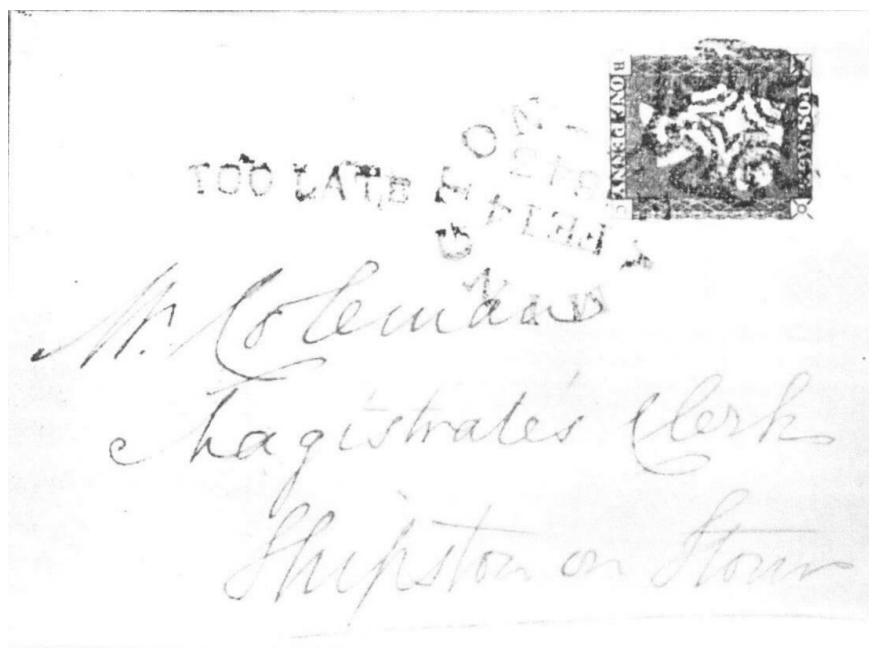


Fig. 2673



Fig. 959

For at least the period January 1841 to November 1842, Leeds had a distinctive Maltese Cross with the loops of the outer cross very rounded. The central diamond tapers to four long points (Fig. 959). The slight differences in size of certain specimens are probably due to the amount of inking and the way the impressions were struck, rather than to the presence of more than one hand-stamp. This special Cross has been recorded used as late as 11th November, 1842, but from the 1st of that month, or possibly earlier, the office also reverted to a Cross of the normal shape, squat and heavily outlined (Fig. 2674).

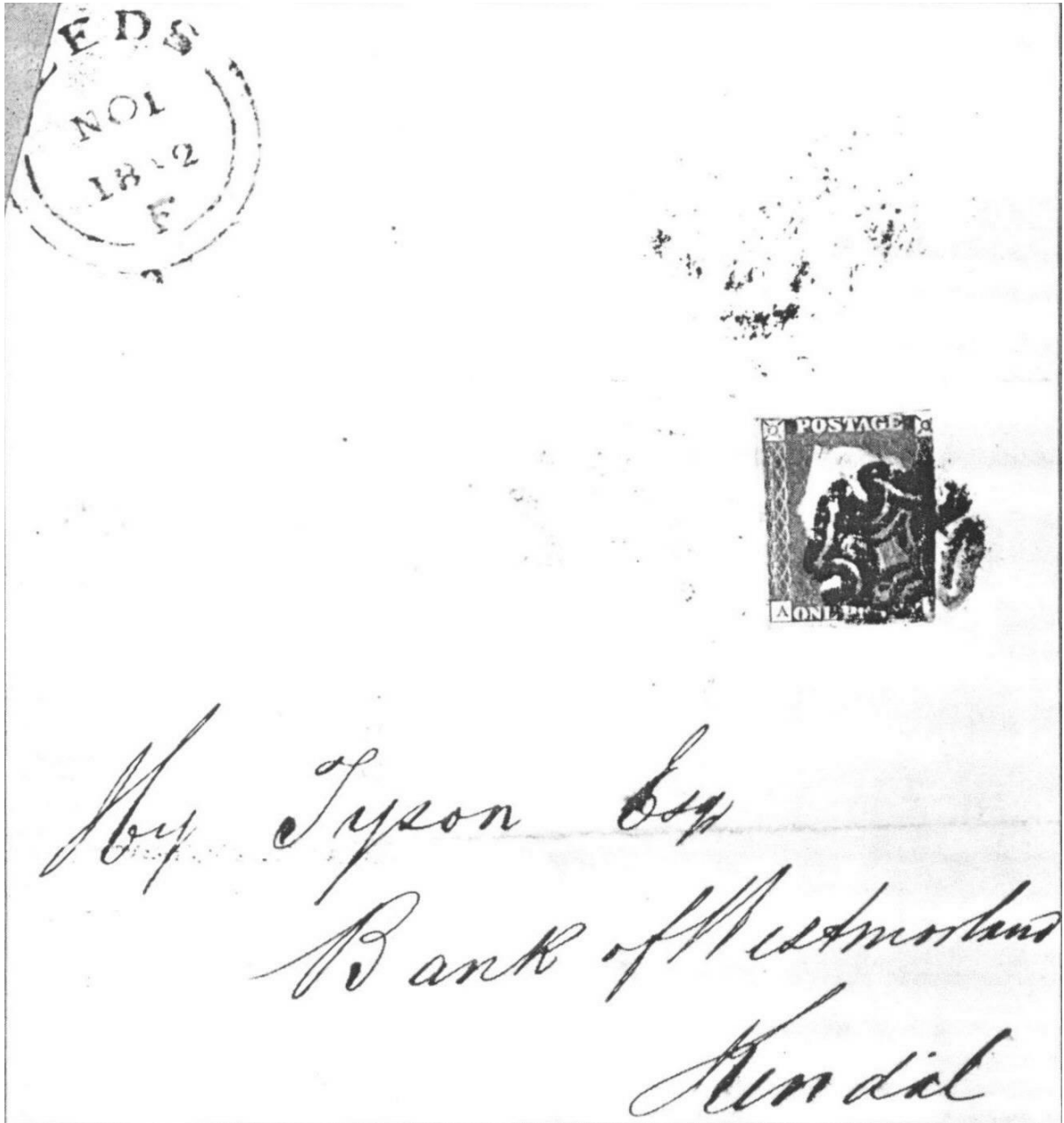


Fig. 2674

Leeds Crosses of 1843 and January to April 1844 have a tendency to be well inked and show thick inner and outer crosses. When over inked as in Fig. 2675 a part or the whole of the inner cross is extremely thick. The central diamond is, as in the special type of 1841 - 42, very pointed, and we have seen a specimen of 21<sup>st</sup> July 1843, with unusually long points.

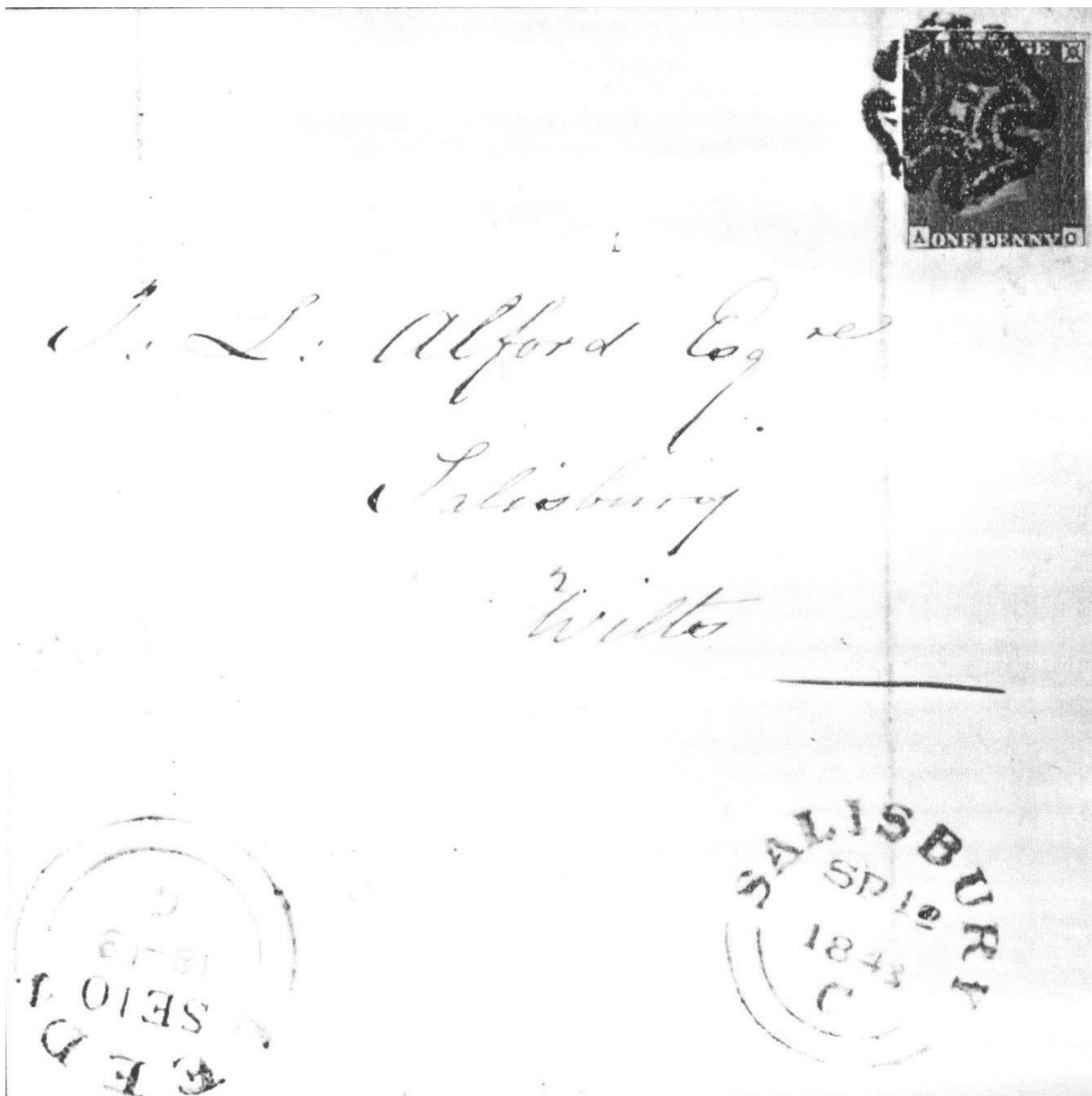


Fig. 2675



Manchester Maltese Crosses.

A very distinctive Cross was used at Manchester in 1841. We have seen specimens on covers from 3rd March into June of that year. The outer cross has V-shaped indentations, and two adjacent points of the central diamond are "fish-tailed" (Figs. 960 and 2676).

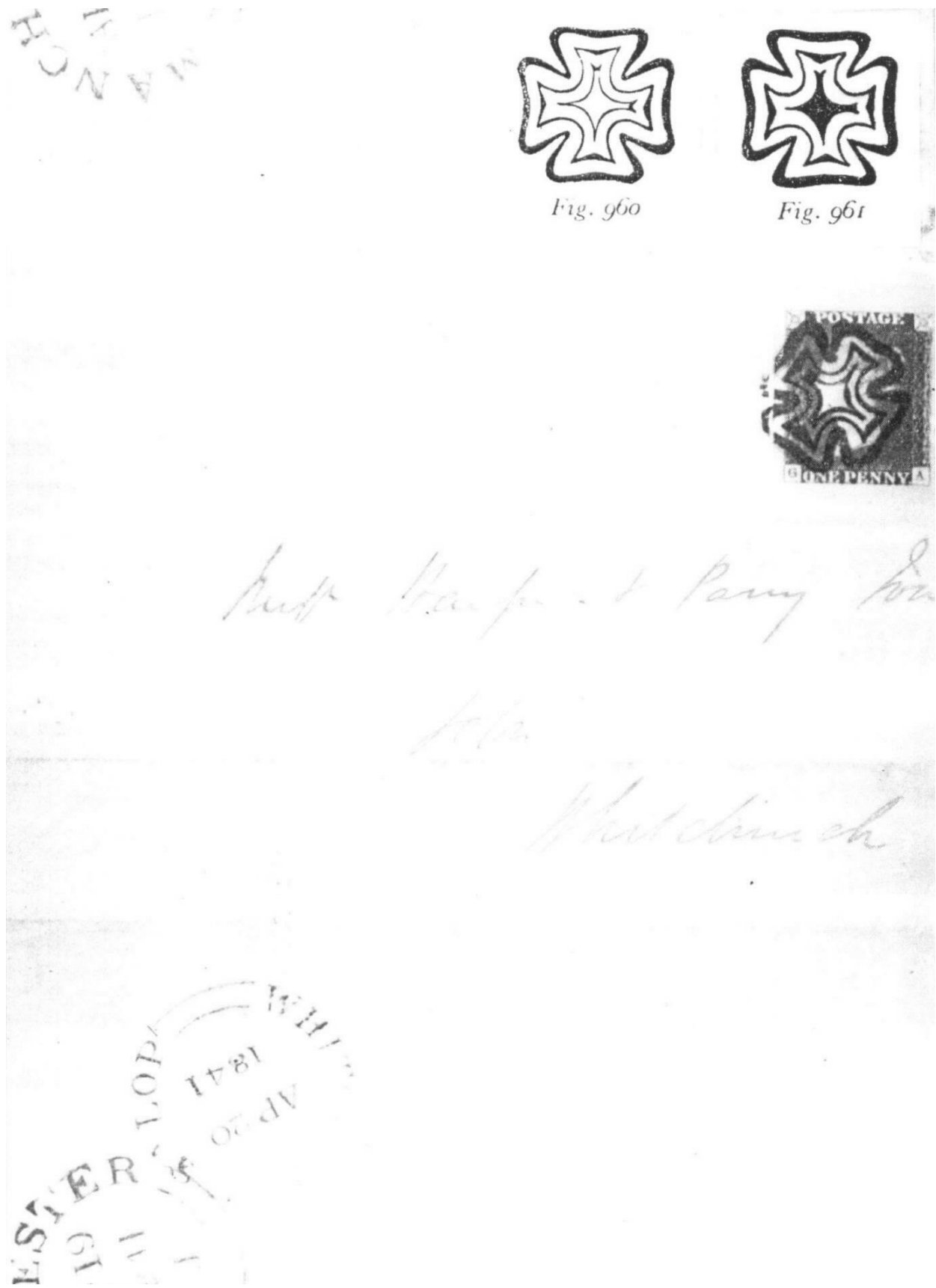


Fig. 2676

By that time a normal Cross was also in use as we have a cover of the 27th May, 1841, with it. A solid-centre impression occurs on a letter of 8th March 1841. This we should have considered at once just a freak variety, but for the fact that it also seems to be slightly larger in size (Fig. 961). We have sought in vain since 1940 for other examples and must now conclude that the differences are probably accidental.

The Manchester Cross of May, 1841 - 44 is illustrated in Fig. 2677. The "Encyclopaedia of British Postage Stamps, Vol. 1" illustrates another Manchester Cross with thick inner and outer crosses and very long points to the central diamond. We have seen several part-impressions of such a variety on single postage stamps, but have not been able to find a cover from Manchester with it.



Fig. 2677



Milnthorpe Maltese Cross.

Another somewhat unusual and heavily outlined Cross was used at Milnthorpe during 1843 (Fig. 2678). Covers of 1841 and 1844 also show a heavily outlined Cross, but of a more normal type.

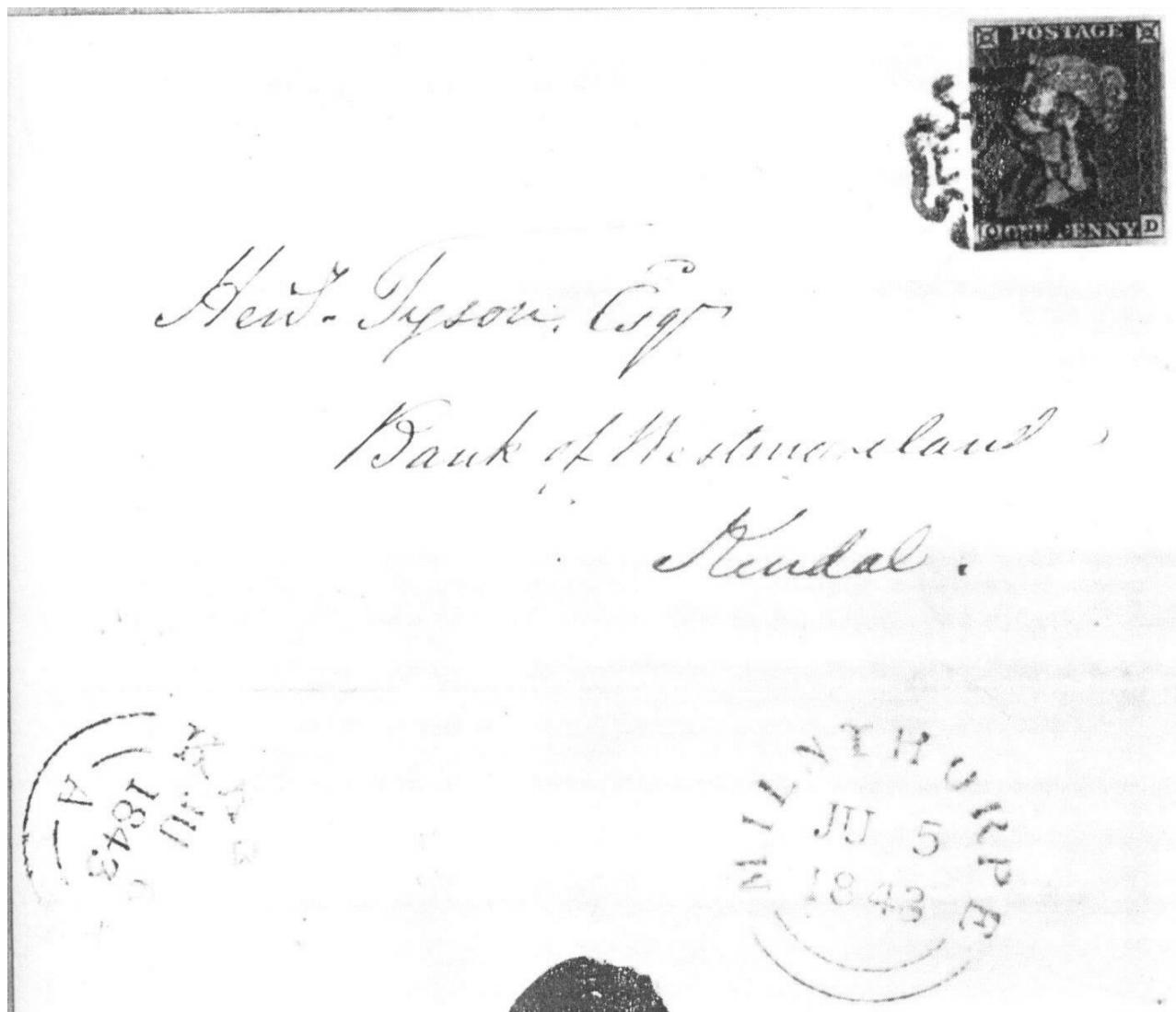


Fig. 2678

Northallerton Maltese Cross.

This Cross has the curves at two opposite corners of the outer cross larger than the curves at the other six corners. A lop-sided effect is also apparent in the inner cross. The variety has been recorded from April 1841, but we have seen only apparent specimens on piece cancelling ld. Red imperforate postage stamps.

Norwich Maltese Crosses.

Before the heavy Maltese Cross usually associated with Norwich came into use late in 1842, that office used a Cross with two points of the central diamond longer than the other two. This produces a lop-sided effect. The examples we have seen on cover have dates of October and November 1841 (Fig. 2679). This feature seems lacking, however, on some of the 1842 specimens we have seen.

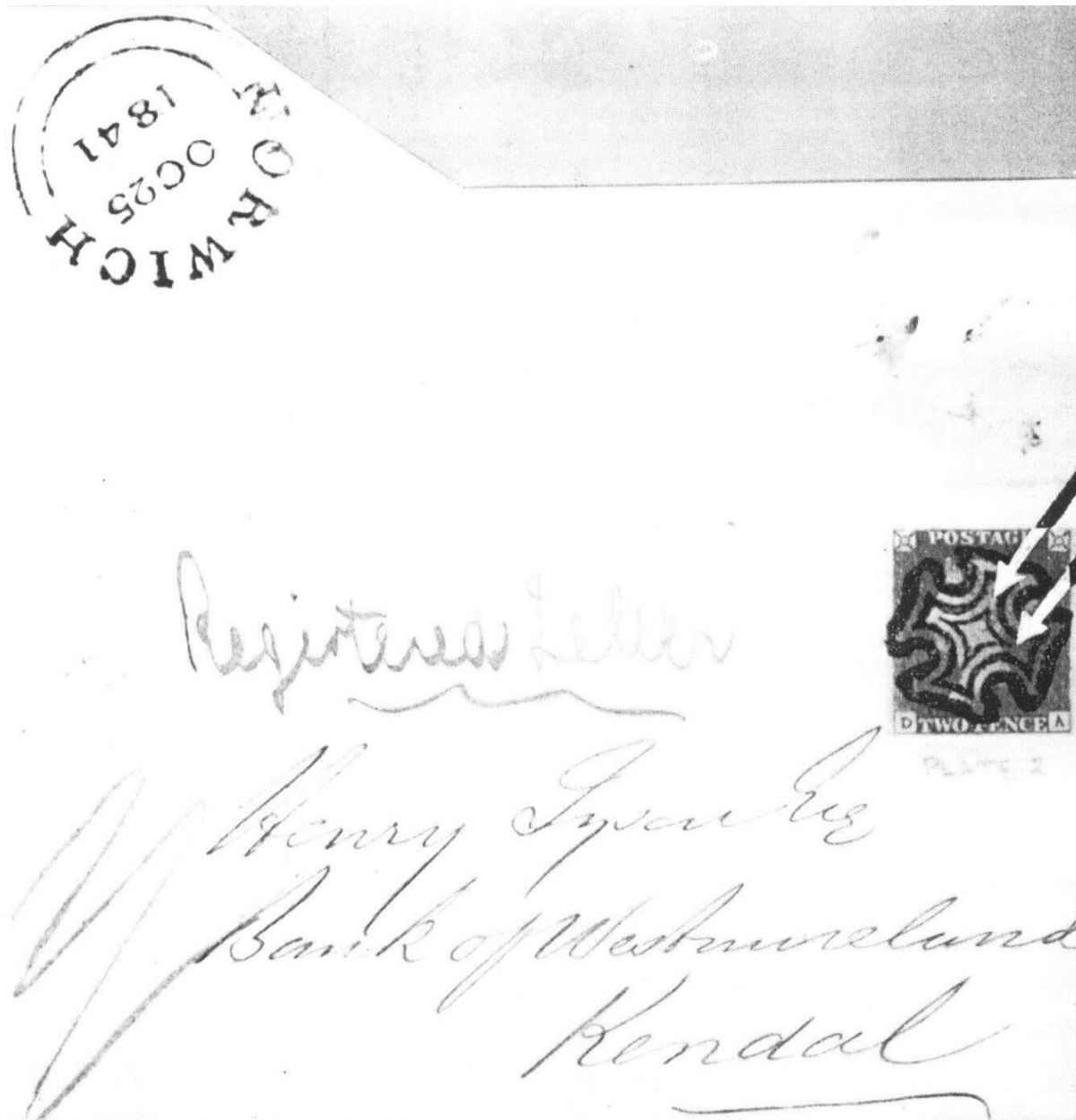


Fig. 2679



The heavy Cross of late 1842 to 1844 has a thick outer cross and thick curves to the inner cross (Fig. 962). It is almost identical with the earlier Plymouth Maltese Cross, and is 16-17mm. wide.



Fig. 2680



Fig. 2681

Fig. 2680 shows a Norwich variety with a sloping small figure 1 and is illustrated from an example ex-the "J. B. Seymour" Collection. We have found two more identical examples, but these unfortunately are not on dated piece or cover (Fig. 2681). It may also be mentioned here that we have been shown two covers of 1841 from Wakefield with what seems to be a clear small "1", but this does not slant as in the Norwich variety.

Plymouth Maltese Cross.

The heavy Plymouth Maltese Cross is earlier in date than the very similar one used at Norwich. It appears to have come into use at the beginning of 1841 and is now known on a cover of as late as May 1842. Fig. 963 shows an example of February 1841. Impressions are known on the 1d and 2d postage stamps of 1840 and on 1d. Red postage stamps from the "Black Plates".



Fig. 963

Settle Maltese Cross.

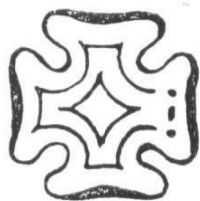


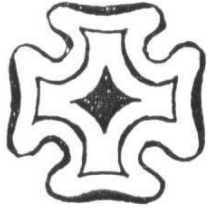
Fig. 964

Examples of May and June 1841, from this office have a Cross in which the end-bar of the right arm of the inner cross is broken and divided into three pieces (Fig. 964). An example of the Cross on dated piece is illustrated in Fig. 2682.



Fig. 2682

Welshpool Maltese Cross.



Like Ironbridge, though for a longer period, a solid-centre Maltese Cross was used at Welshpool, of which we have had numerous examples, ranging in date from July 1841 to May 1842, on the 1d and 2d postage stamps of 1841 (Fig. 2683). Covers of later 1842 show a Cross with a normal centre.

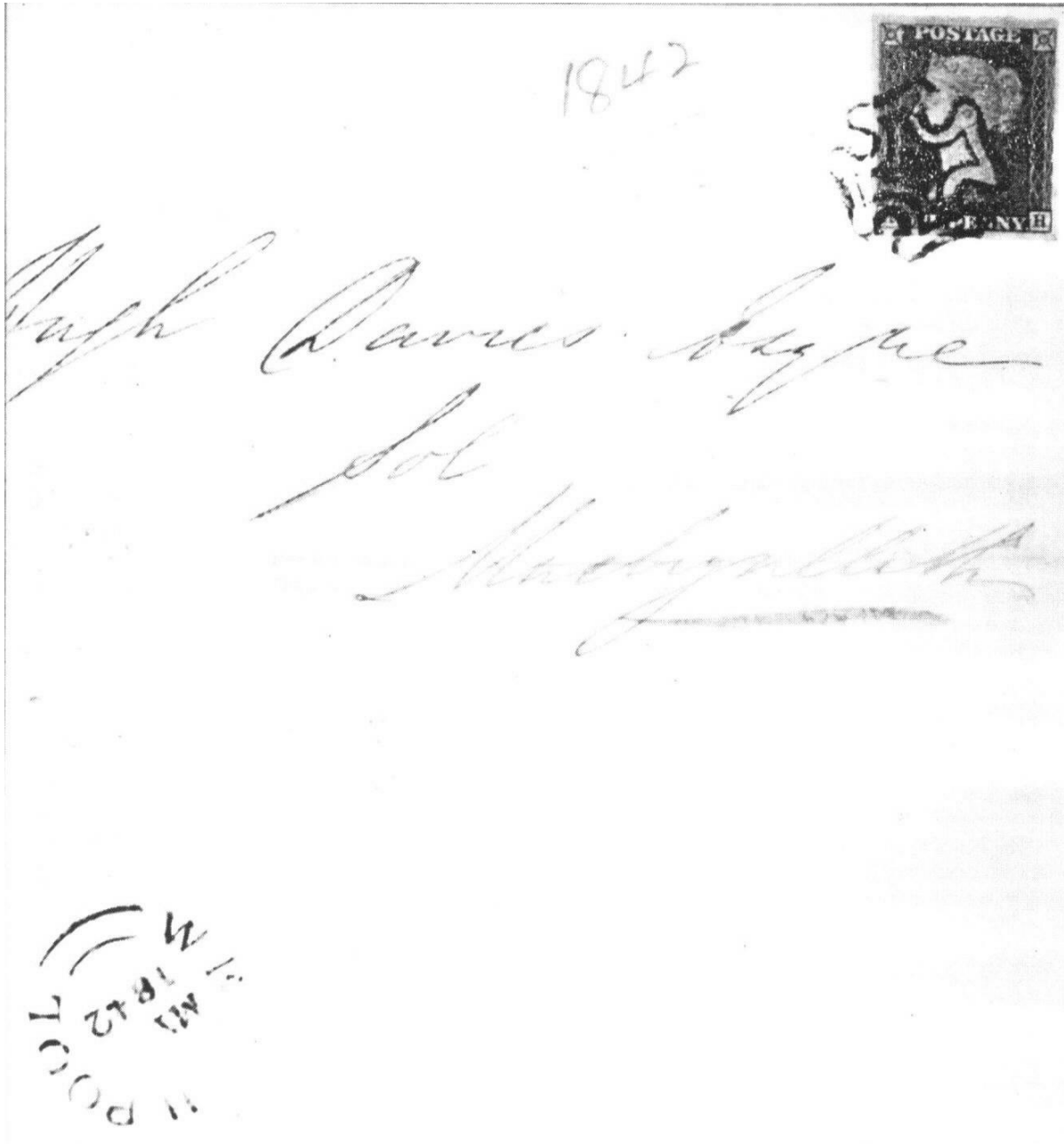


Fig. 2683

Whitehaven Maltese Cross.

We have now seen a distinctive Cross on a cover of June 1841 from Whitehaven to London (Fig. 2731). The inner cross is very wide and square, while the central diamond is much larger than usual. The Cross appears to have had a long life, as it occurs also on a 1d. Plate 95 of the 1864 series.

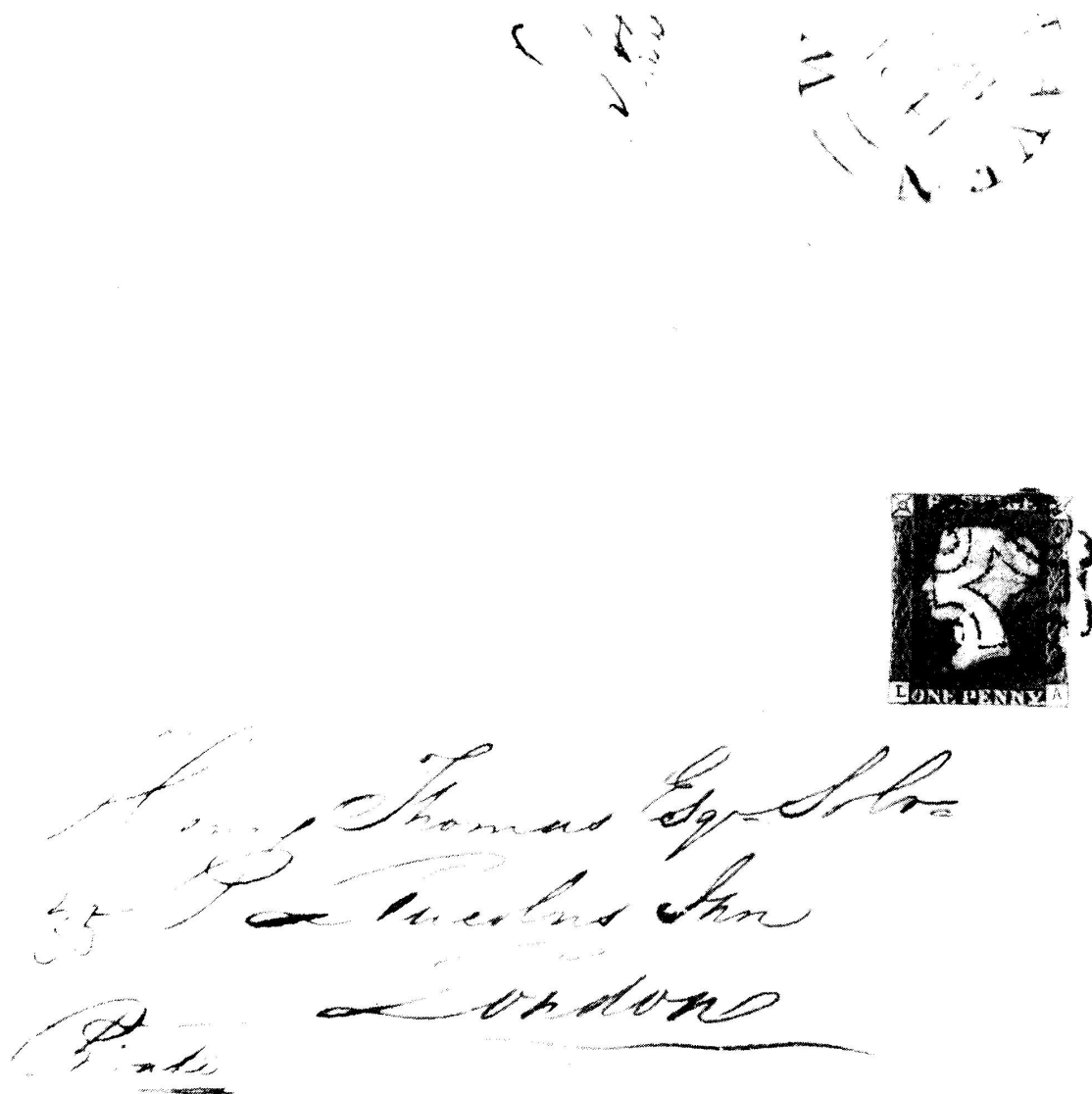


Fig 2731

Wincanton Maltese Cross.

This Cross is marked by the constant dot in one of the indentations of the outer cross. We have seen it on each of the cancellations on a strip of six Id. Reds, and also on the similar strip of four on the cover of 17th January 1849 illustrated in Fig. 2684. A similar Cross with two other constant dots inside the cross has been recorded from Melksham, but we have seen no specimen on dated piece or cover as yet.

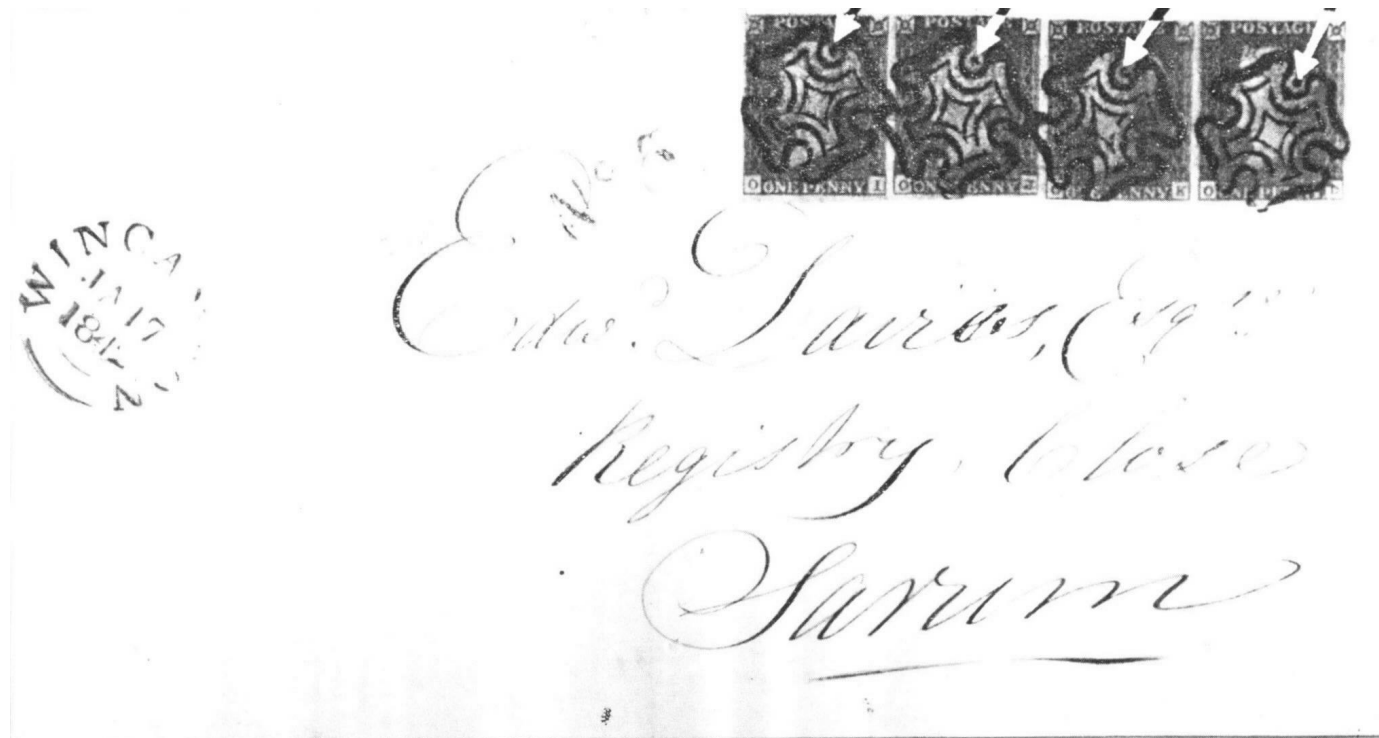


Fig. 2684



This rare Cross, (Fig. 966), occurs in red on the 1d. Black postage stamp of 1840, and in black on the 1d and 2d postage stamps of the 1840 and 1841 issues, as well as on “Mulready” covers and wrappers. It has been suggested that its appearance was caused by a normal Cross being scored by a file. It is known to have been used from September 1840 into 1842. A specimen of February 1841 is shown in Fig. 2685.

Fig. 966

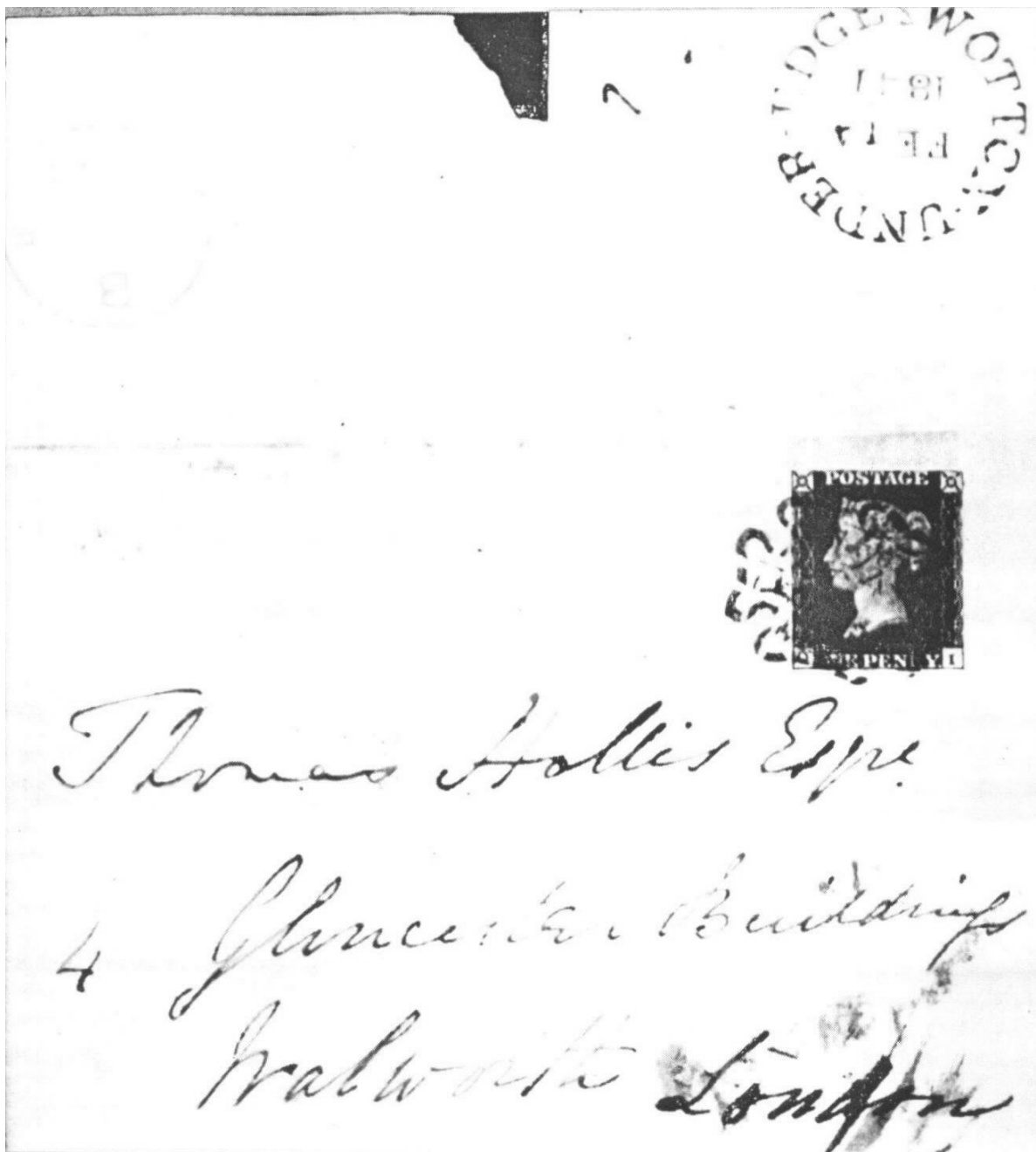


Fig. 2685

York Maltese Cross.

The York office appears to have used at first a normal Cross, of which we have seen examples on cover dated as late as the spring of 1842. A York cover of 19th April, 1843, is also known to us with a normal Cross, but whether this was due to its being cancelled for some reason with the early obliterator or whether the postage stamp missed cancellation at the sending office we do not know.

From July 1842, till at least the end of 1843 the special type of Fig. 2686 was employed. It is a squat Cross with a thick outer cross that is only slightly curved. The inner cross and central diamond are thinly lined, and the former is widely separated from the outer cross. The Cross is known on the following postage stamps: -2d of 1840 and the 1d and 2d of 1841.



Fig. 2686





### 3. SCOTTISH MALTESE CROSSES.

Collectors have grown to think of Scottish Crosses as thinly outlined, neat in appearance and clearly defined, with either a small or a large central diamond (Figs. 2687 and 2688), some diamonds being more pointed than others. Such Maltese Crosses were certainly used at a number of Scottish offices for various periods, but thick Crosses also occur. Arbroath, for example, had one of that type for at least the period March to December, 1843, and others will be Found among the Crosses described later in this sub-section. In Fact, it will be seen that Scottish Crosses present more variety than is generally supposed.



Fig. 2687



Fig. 2688

We have been told that the obliterations of the Figs. 2687 and 2688 types were made in Scotland, but we have been unable to trace any official letters or documents to prove this statement. We shall be grateful for any information readers can give us on the subject.

#### Dumfries Maltese Cross.

From the middle of 1843 to April 1844, this office used a Cross of the small, compressed Scottish type with small central diamond (Fig. 2689).



Fig. 2689

Edinburgh Maltese Cross.

A thin Scottish type with large centre was in use from 1841 to 1843 (Fig. 2690). Very similar Crosses we have found on 1843 letters from Dunkeld and on 1844 letters from Newburgh. We have also noted an Edinburgh Cross of very large size on a cover of 9th September 1843. Fig. 2691 shows an Edinburgh Cross of 27<sup>th</sup> January 1844.

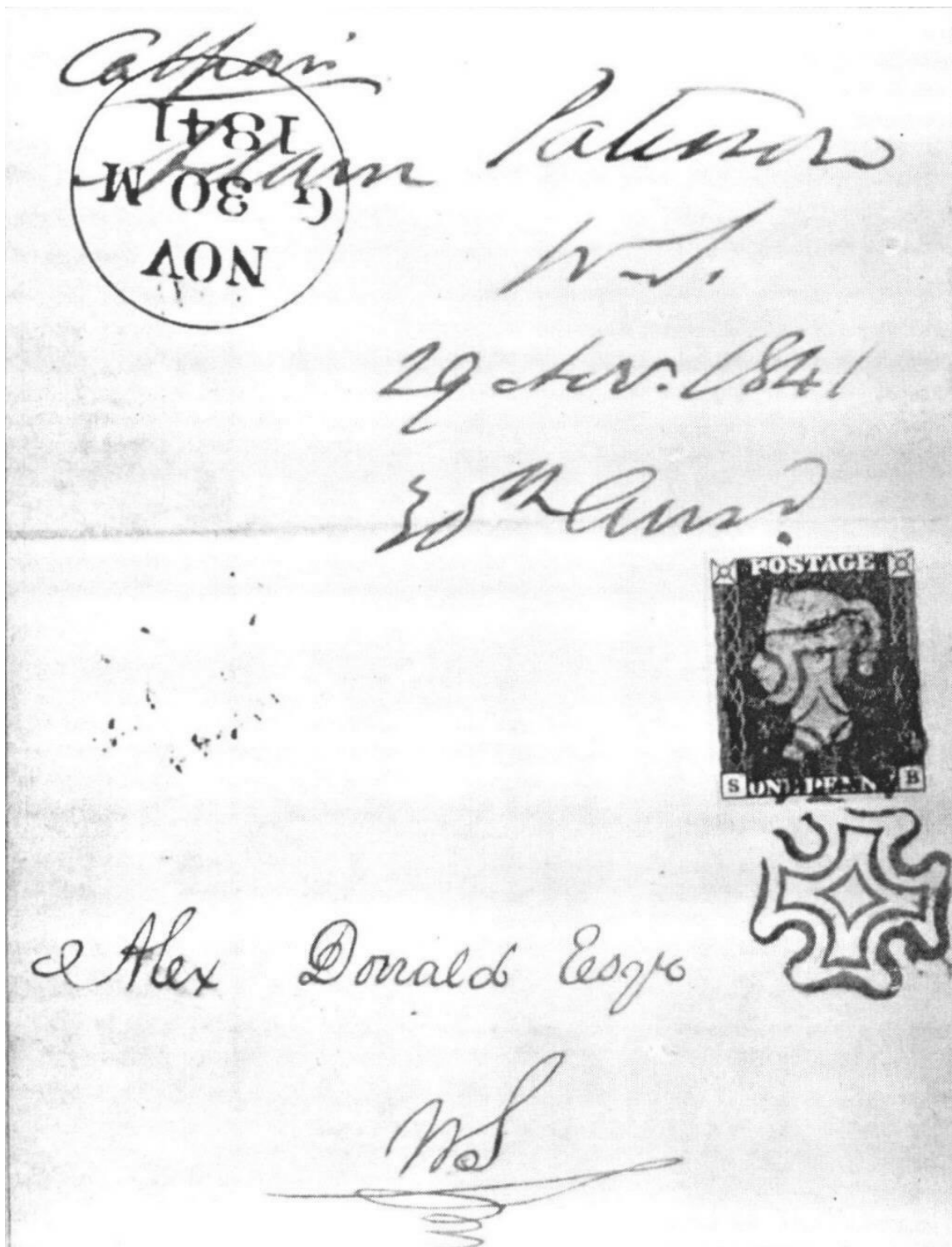


Fig. 2690



Fig. 2691

Gatehouse Maltese Cross.

This Cross is, in a way, reminiscent of the Hollymount Cross, since both have an open centre with the diamond missing.

Many of the 1843 examples we have seen of this Cross have shown no signs of a central diamond, though both the inner and outer Crosses are present. A Few specimens, however, show tiny traces of the diamond. Having seen other Maltese Cross cancellations with only traces of a central diamond we consider it is possible that even the Hollymount Cross, which is said to lack both the central diamond and inner cross, may likewise be due to the weakness of the lines, wear and method of using the obliterator. The Gatehouse Cross, like that of Galashiels, is of the rather heavy type.

During 1843 and 1844 similar cancellations with small or medium sized centres were also in use. One of the latter size is shown in Fig. 2691 above.



The outer cross of the Greenock Maltese Cross is very similar to that of Kelso, but the inner cross has wider arms, which are more splayed at the ends. The central diamond is much bigger, and its sides are more curved and run to finer and longer points (Fig. 2692). The curves of the central diamond are deeper than those of the Belfast Cross (Fig. 973).

We know of specimens ranging from one of 15<sup>th</sup> May 1841 on a 1d. Black postage stamp of Plate 8 to others on the 2d of 1840 and 1d and 2d of 1841, on covers and dated pieces of 1841 - 44. The latest example we have seen is on an embossed penny envelope of 3rd April 1844.

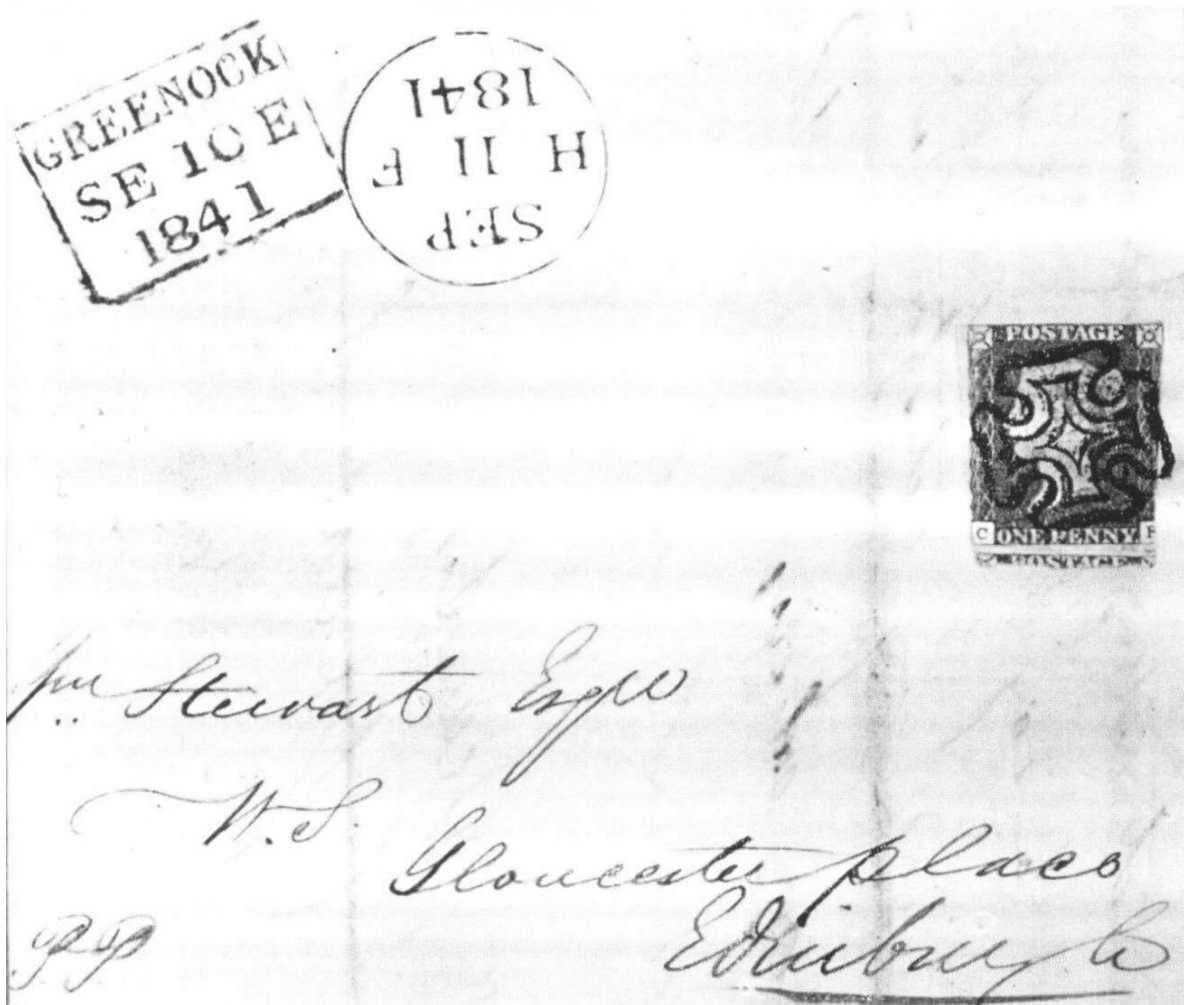


Fig 2692

Kelso Maltese Cross:

This Cross is neat and small. The outer cross is, as already mentioned, very similar to that of Greenock and has only slightly rounded curves. The central diamond is small. It was in use from 1842 to 1844 (Fig. 2693).

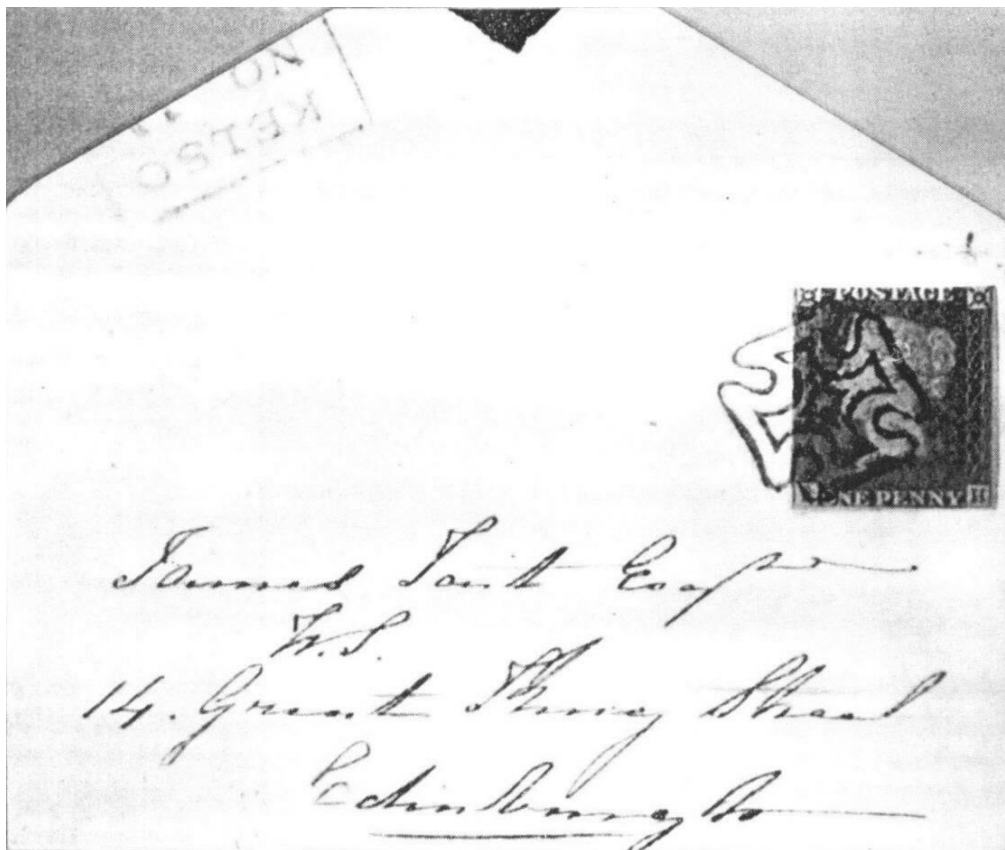


Fig. 2693

Kirkcaldy Maltese Cross.

We have seen a large Cross of the Scottish type with small centre on a letter of 22nd May, 1842, but later covers of 1843 - 44 bear a normal Cross.



This Cross has a curved outline of heavy design. The inner cross is quite unusual with its extended loops. The sides of the central diamond are straighter than in other Crosses, and the ends, instead of being pointed, are cut square. In the centre of the diamond is a diamond-shaped dot (Fig. 975).

Fig. 975

The Cross appears to have come into use late in 1843. Fig. 2694 illustrates a specimen of 26th May 1844, and examples of June 1844 have been recorded. Postage stamps known with this cancellation are the 2d of 1840 and the 1d. Red and 2d Blue of 1841. The Cross is quite scarce.

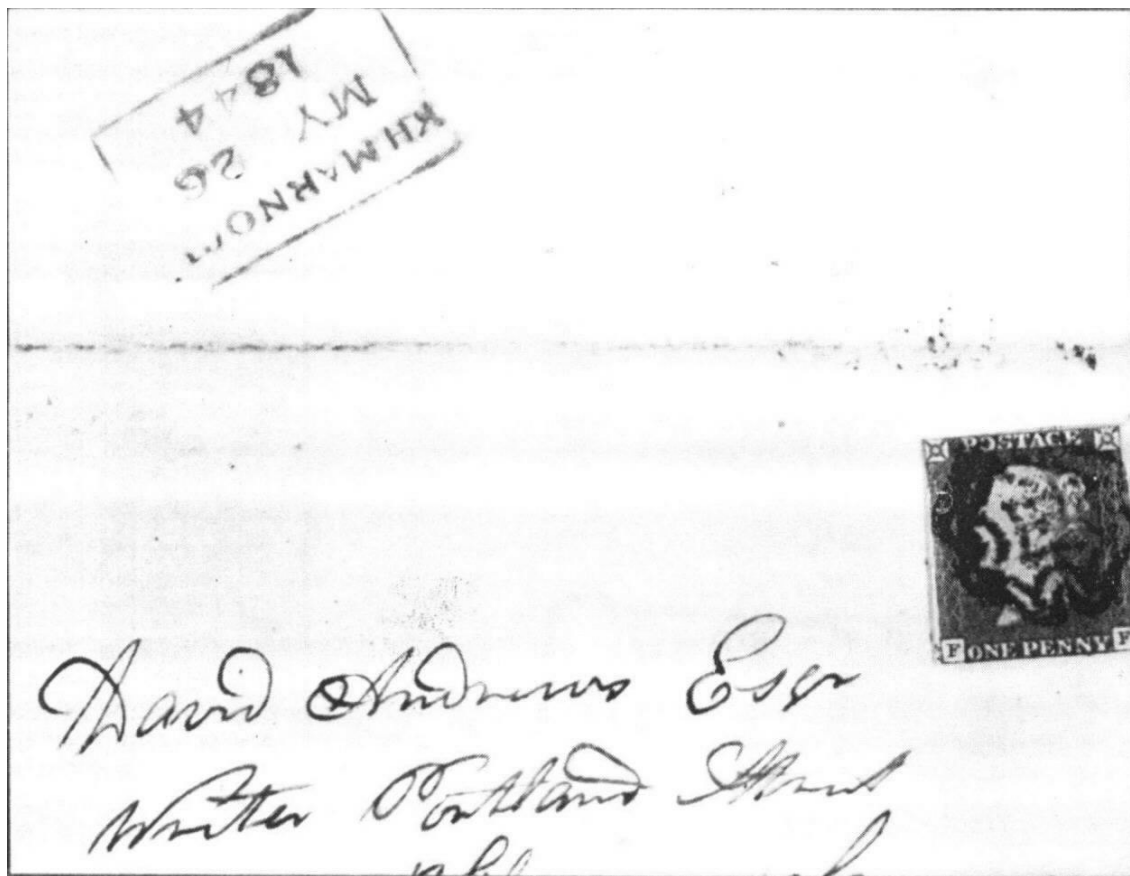


Fig. 2694

See also fig. 2668 under Coventry.

Kinross Maltese Cross.

On a cover sent on 12th April, 1844, from Kinross to Leslie we have seen a Maltese Cross with the top portion of the inner cross much narrower than its lower counterpart. On single postage stamps we have seen several parts of cancellations, which suggest similar Maltese Crosses to that on the cover of 12<sup>th</sup> April 1844, but we have seen no other specimens on piece or cover to confirm this Kinross variety.

Kirriemuir and Kirkcudbright Maltese Crosses.

Both these offices had heavily-outlined Crosses. That of Kirriemuir's slightly larger, while the central diamond in the Kirkcudbright Cross is more squat. Figs. 2695 and 2696 show the two varieties. At present we know little of the period of use at either office, except that by late July 1843, Kirriemuir was using a normal thin Scottish type with large central diamond. We have seen a cover of October 1841, with a Selkirk Maltese Cross, which bears a considerable resemblance to that of Kirriemuir.

Kirkcudbright, Gatehouse and several other offices often made a habit in 1842 - 43 of placing their receiving date-stamps near to the postage stamp. This custom is apt to be misleading when only a piece of the envelope has been preserved.

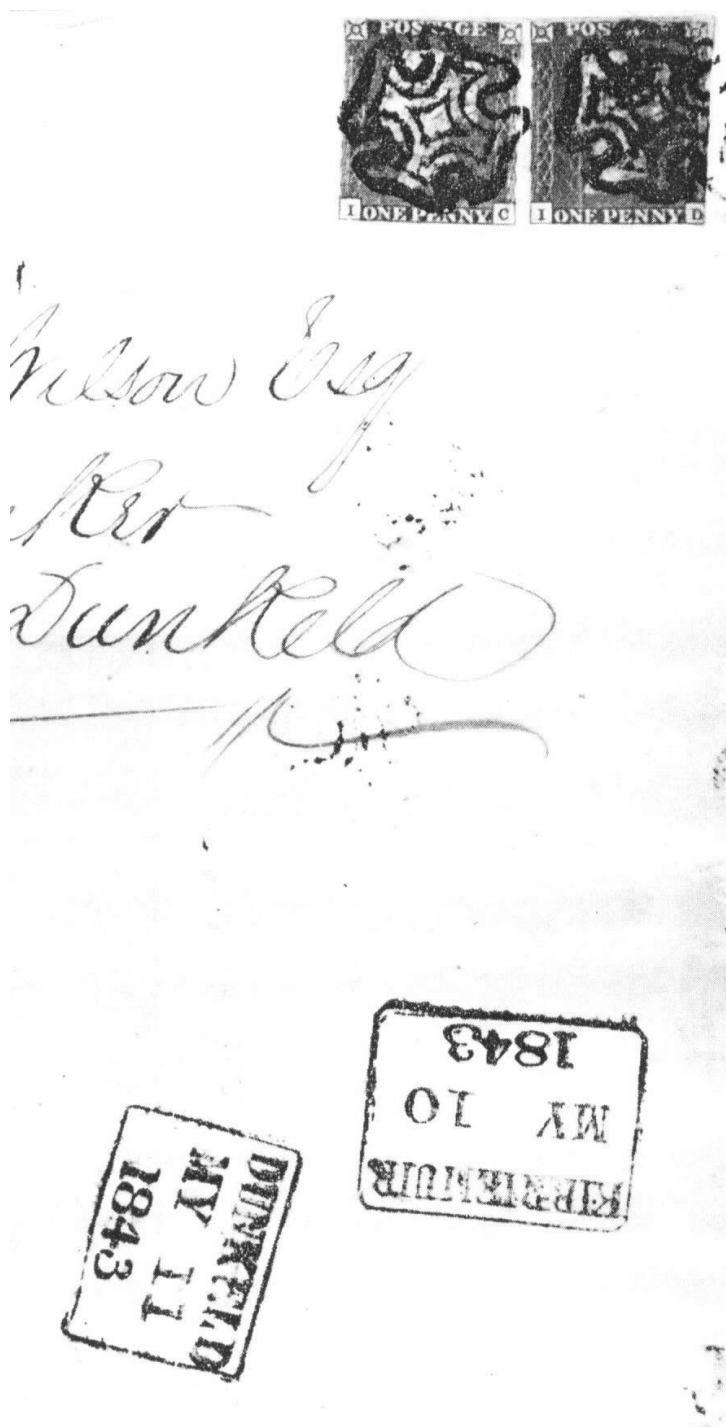


Fig. 2695 – Kirriemuir Cross

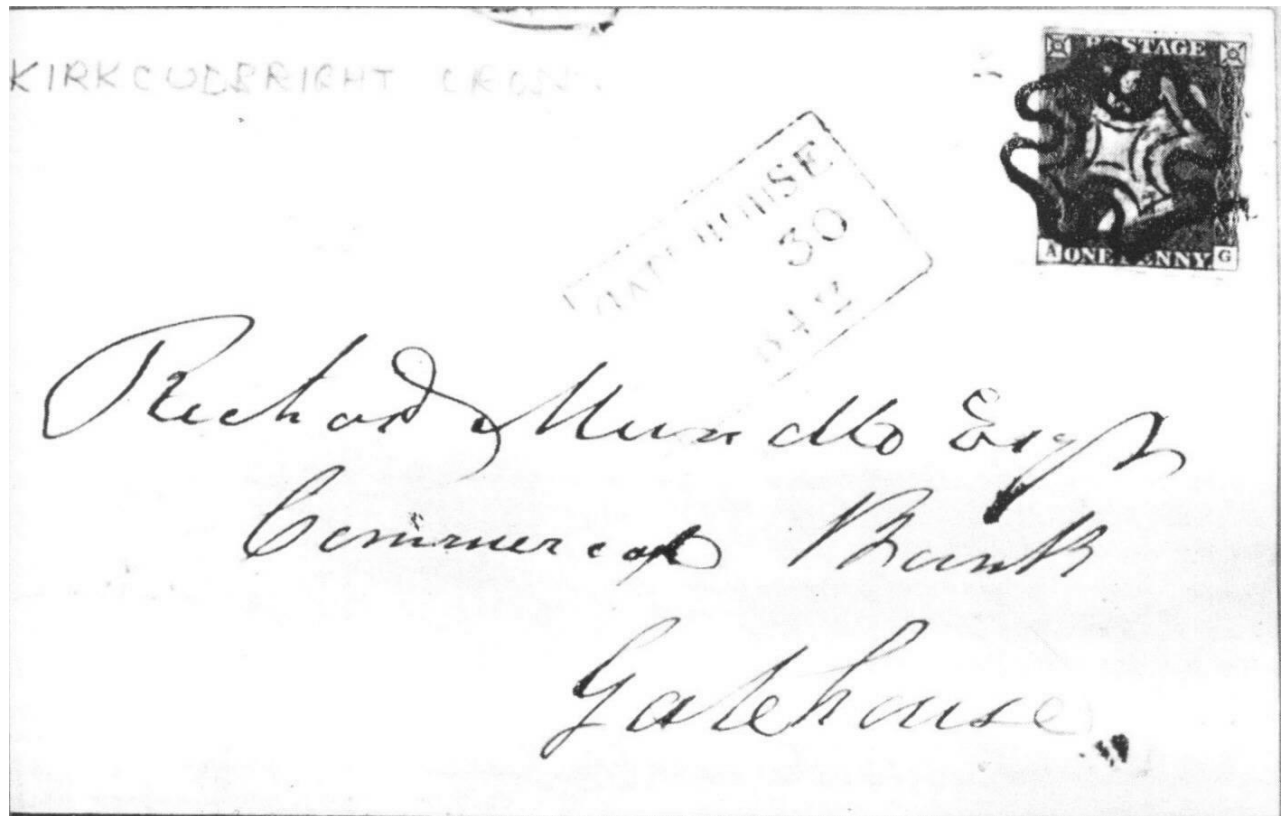


Fig. 2696 – Kirkcudbright Cross

Laurencekirk Maltese Cross:

In June and July 1844, a large Cross with “butterfly” loops, much larger than usual, to the outer cross was used at Laurencekirk (Fig. 2697). When the variety came into use we do not yet know.



Fig. 2697



Lockerby Maltese Cross:

In contrast to the large Cross of Laurencekirk, Lockerby had a small Cross with a blunt central diamond resembling the normal English variety or some Crosses of Edinburgh. This type we have seen cancelling a 1d. Red P1. 2 postage stamp on a cover of September 1841, and it occurs on other covers even as late as June, 1844.

Montrose Maltese Cross:

We have seen specimens of 5th June 1842, to 18th June 1844, from this office with a large heavy outline, and thinner inner cross (Fig. 2698).

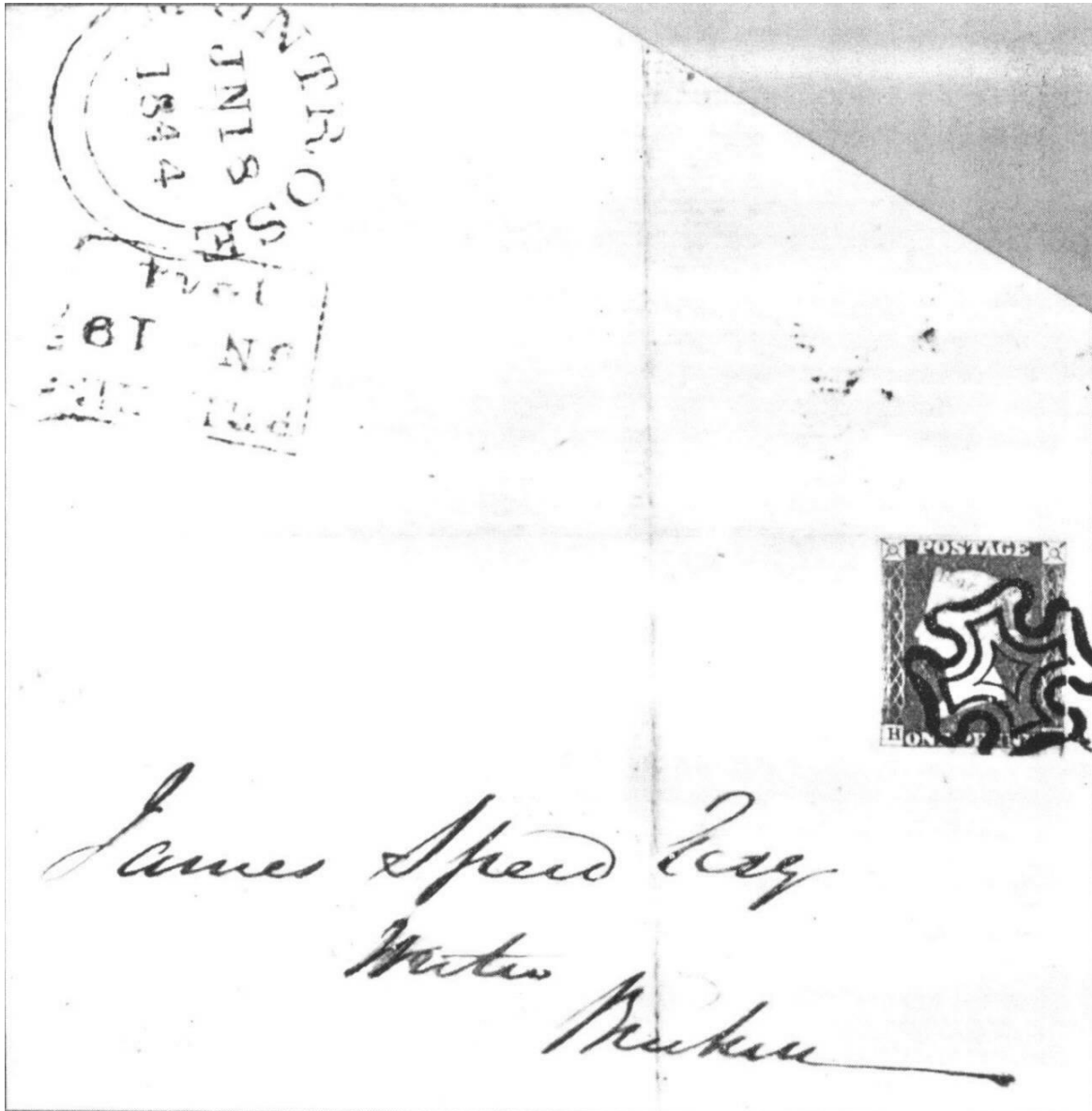


Fig. 2698

Perth Maltese Cross:

This Cross is almost as heavy as that of Montrose just described, and the central diamond, although contracted, goes to points. We have seen numerous examples on covers ranging in date from the 4<sup>th</sup> November 1841 to 12th December 1843 (Fig. 2699). By April 1844, Perth was using a Cross of the ordinary Scottish type with wider central diamond.

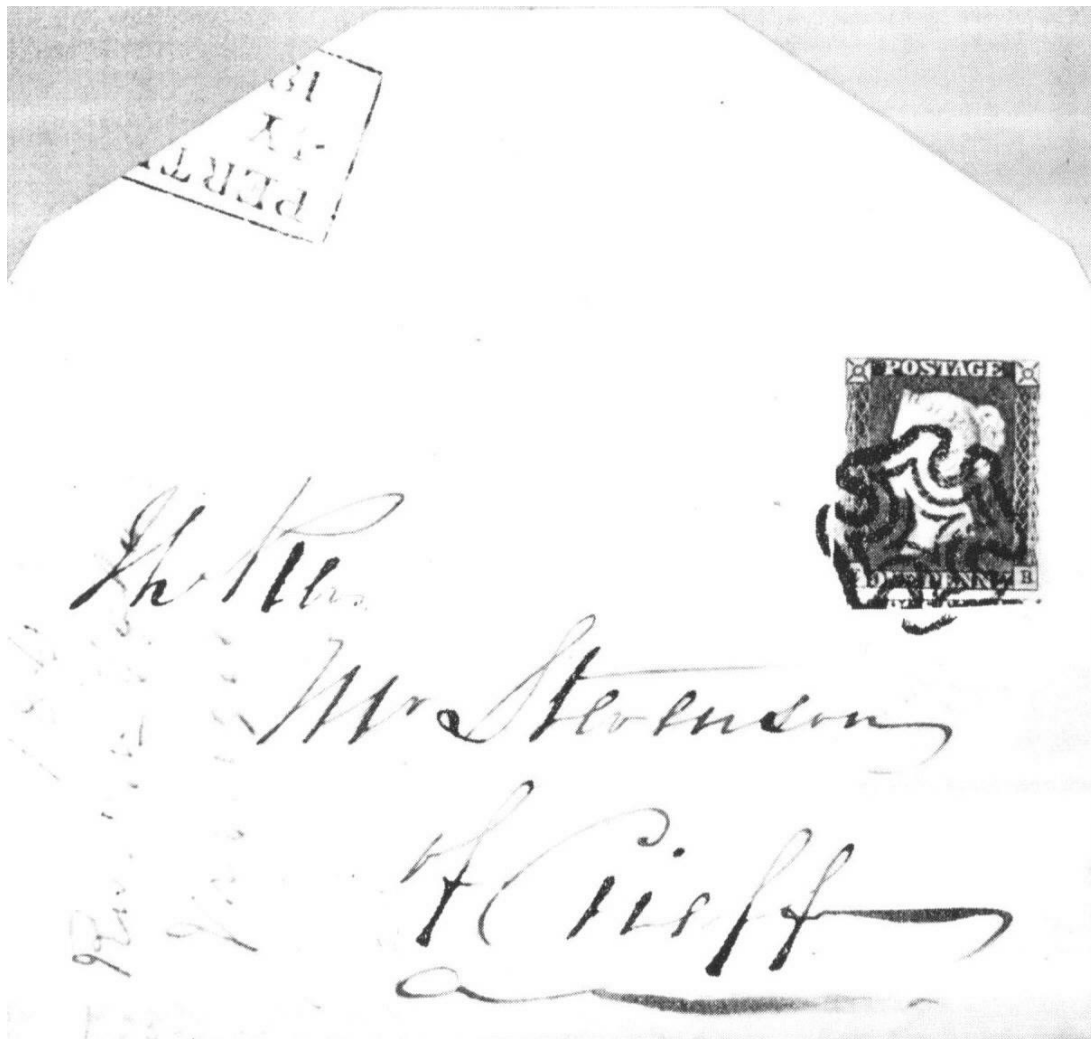


Fig. 2699

Selkirk Maltese Cross.

In October 1841 this office was using a Cross in outline rather like that of Limerick, but thicker. The ends of the inner cross tend to be somewhat wide and blunt. The central diamond is of normal size (Fig. 2732).

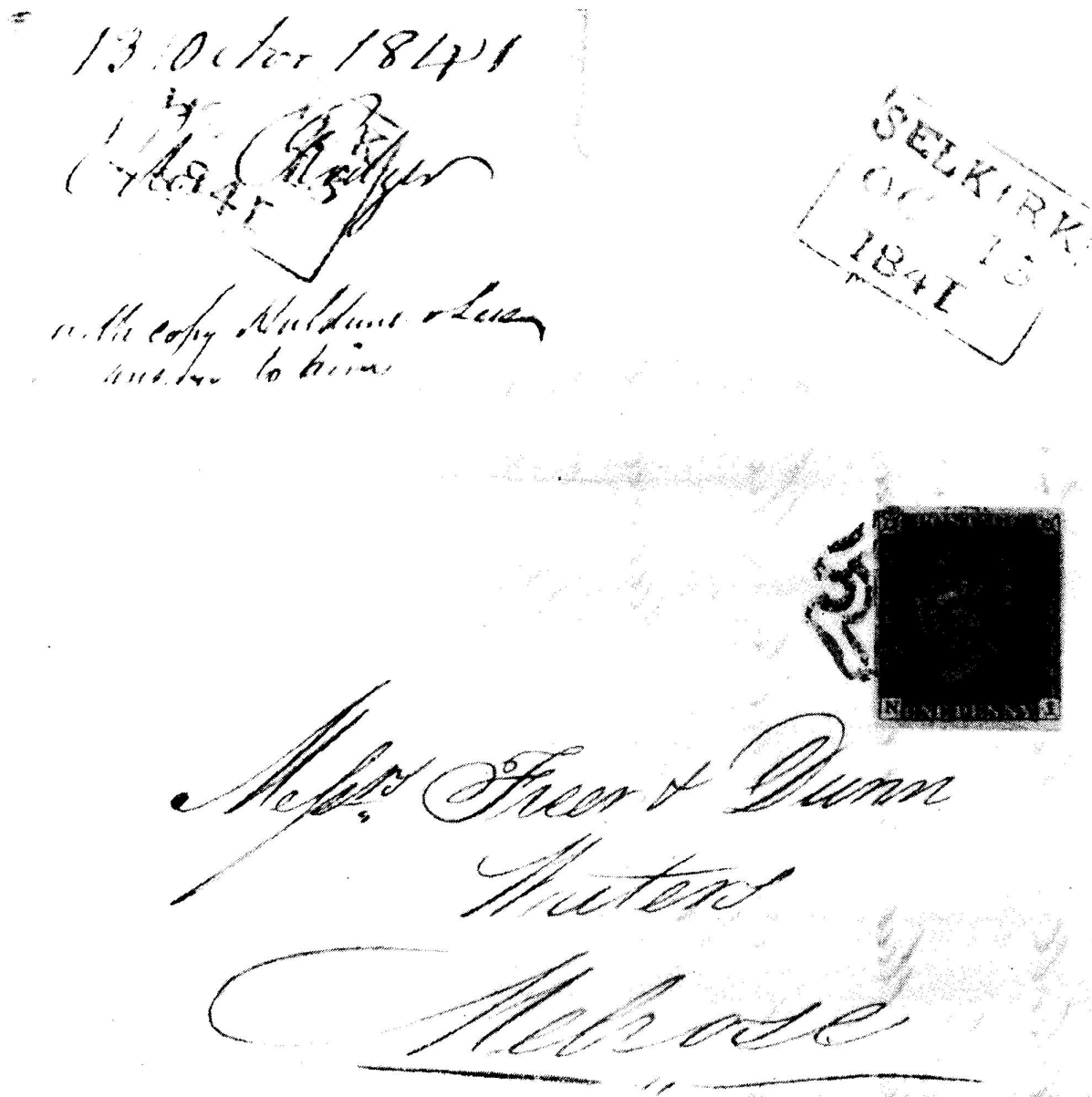


Fig. 2732

Stirling Maltese Cross:



This Cross appears to have had a long life from at least as early as 2nd November, 1841, until at least as late as 18th April, 1844. It is larger than the Kelso variety, but is not uniform in design, as one of the arms of the outer and inner crosses tends to be elongated. The corresponding sides of the central diamond also meet in a long point (Figs. 2700 and 2701). Complete and clearly defined impressions are somewhat scarce.

Fig. 2700

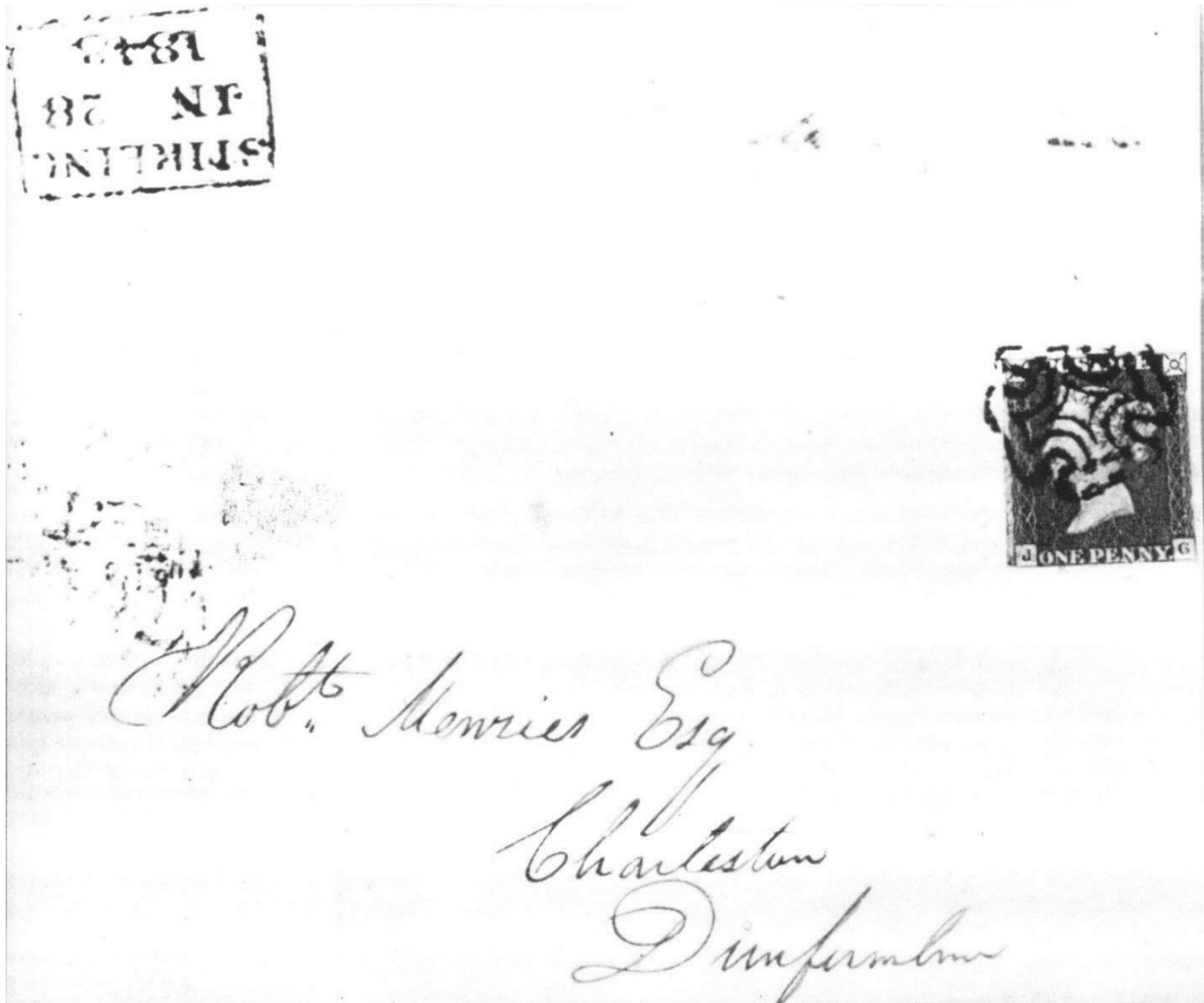


Fig. 2701

Stonehaven Maltese Cross:

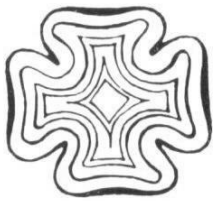


Fig. 2702

Many Maltese Cross cancellations which give the impression of being double-lined are undoubtedly due to over or under-inking. Well-defined examples without thick outlines to the inner or outer lines of the cross do, however, occur in red on the Id. Black and 2d. Blue postage stamps of 1840 on covers from Stonehaven. We know of examples of August 1840 to February 1841 (Figs. 2702 and 2703). These Stonehaven Crosses are by far the clearest examples we have seen with the double lines.

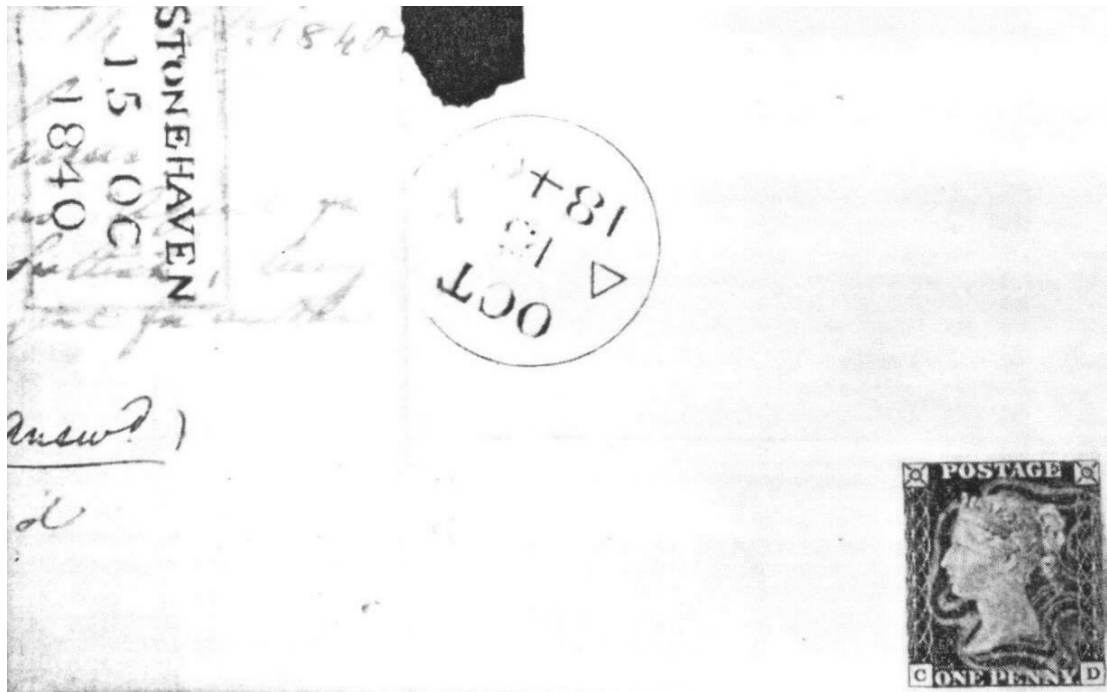


Fig. 2703

By the end of 1842, a rather heavy ordinary type of Cross was in use at Stonehaven (Fig. 2704), but we have as yet seen 110 covers of late 1841 or early 1842 from that office.

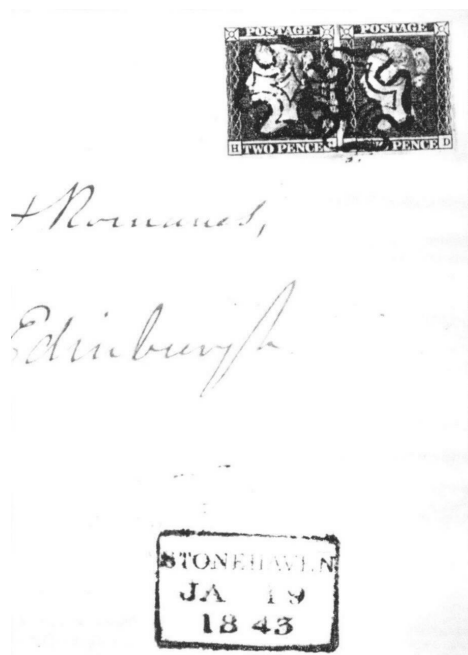


Fig. 2704

A number of heavy outline Crosses from Scottish offices have been described in this sub-section, but we feel that collectors with covers of the period will find other examples, and we shall be glad to hear of such discoveries.

**(4). IRISH MALTESE CROSSES.**

Just as when Scottish Maltese Crosses are mentioned, many collectors think at once of thinly outlined varieties, so when Irish Maltese Crosses are mentioned, it is the type with straight sides to the inner and outer crosses that come to mind, it is true that some of the large offices in Ireland had varieties of the " straight line " kind, but their use was not widespread, and their period of use limited. Until various dates in 1842, or even later in some cases, Irish offices employed varieties of the normal English kind, or at some offices ones of the thin or thick Scottish type, as will be seen from the details that follow: —

**Belfast Maltese Crosses:**

Belfast seems at first to have had a rather small ordinary Cross, which we have seen on covers from early 1842 to January, 1843. In appearance it has features of both the Greenock and Limerick Crosses (Fig. 2705). A very similar Cross was used in 1843 at Dungannon.

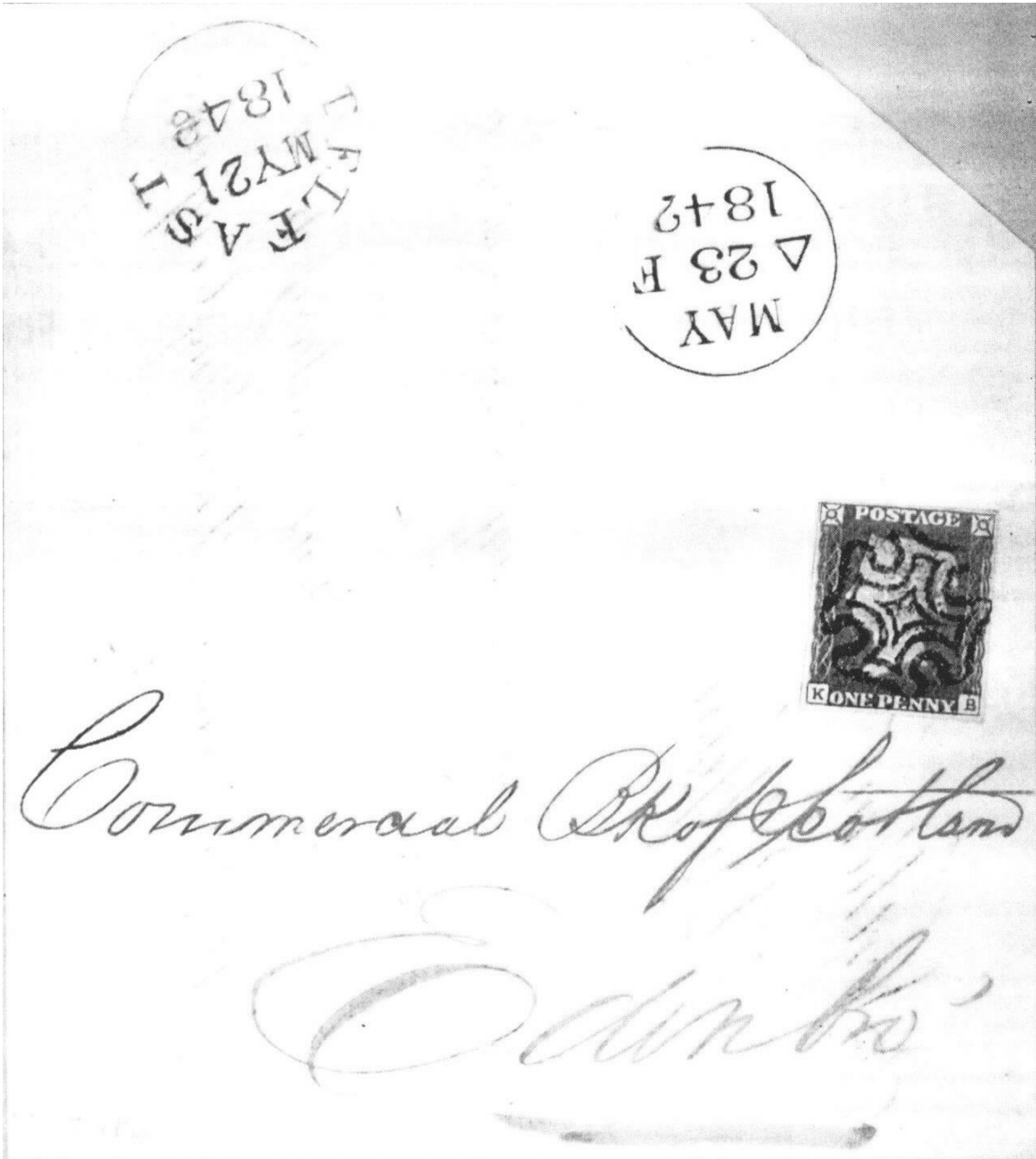


Fig. 2705

Early in 1843 a variety with straight sides came into use. The inner Cross is relatively wide and the inner diamond runs to deeper points than in the first straight-sided type of Dublin (Fig. 977). This Belfast Cross is akin to the similar Cork variety, but in Fig. 976 the space from C to D, i.e. the width of the outer indentation at the point of crossing of the oblique line touching the edges of the inner cross is 2~mm., in the case of the Belfast Cross, hut 3mm in. the case of the Cork Cross. Fig. 2706 shows a Belfast Cross of May 1844.

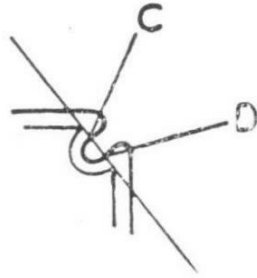


Fig. 976

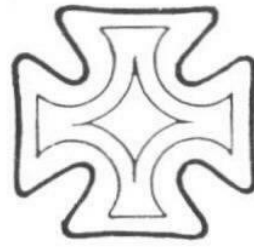


Fig. 977



Fig. 2706

The latest example we have seen of this second Belfast type is on a cover of 7th June 1844. The cancellation in that example seems narrower than usual, but we have not been able to discover from other late specimens whether this narrower Cross is other than accidental.

Castledermot Maltese Cross:

A Maltese Cross with a thick outer cross of the ordinary shape, a small inner cross with straight ends and a small central diamond is recorded as having been used in 1840 at this office. We do not know its period of use.

Clones Maltese Cross.

On letters of 1843 - 44 we have seen a rather small variety of an ordinary Cross from this office (Fig. 2707).

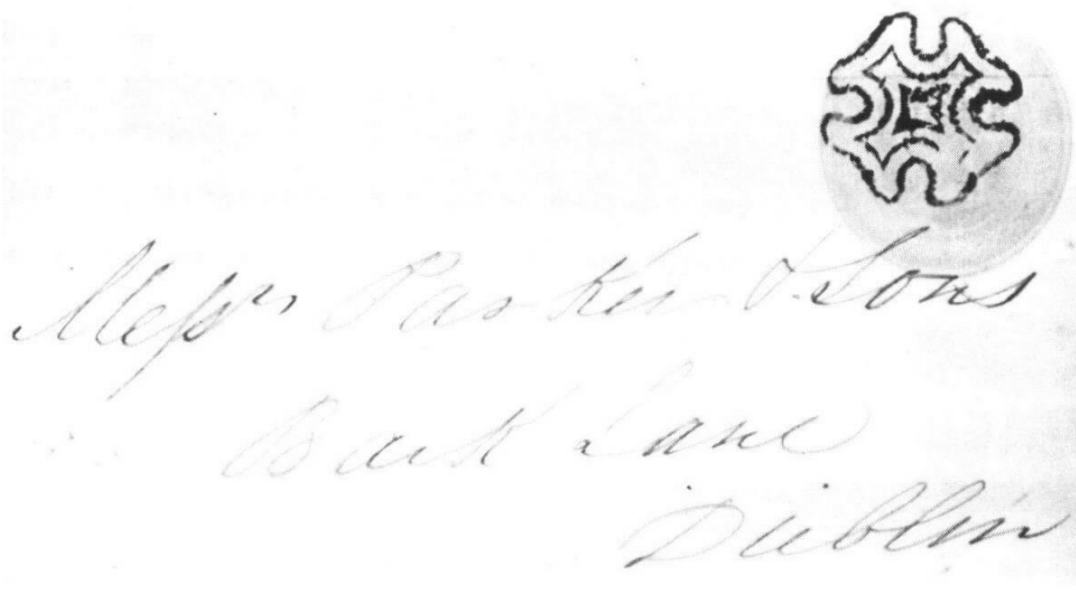


Fig. 2707

Cork Maltese Crosses.

The first type used at Cork (Fig. 2708) was not of the straight-sided kind, but differed from the ordinary English Maltese Cross in that the outlines were thicker and the indentations more curly. Several specimens seen have had an accidental dot inside the inner cross, near one of the points of the diamond. The first type appears to have continued in use until early 1843, when a straight-sided variety appeared (Fig. 978). Clear impressions are scarce.

The straight-sided Cork variety is akin to that of Belfast, but the central diamond is a trifle wider, and the indentations of the outer cross are wider and deeper. The latest example known to us is on a letter of 9<sup>th</sup> May 1844. An example of the previous February is shown in Fig. 2709.



Mr. P. Sullivan  
Cork  
Nov. 1842



Messrs. Smith, Parker & Son  
Leather Merchants  
Back Lane  
Dublin

Fig. 2708 - Cork - First use

R  
L  
O  
F  
1844

3M  
FE26



Fig. 978

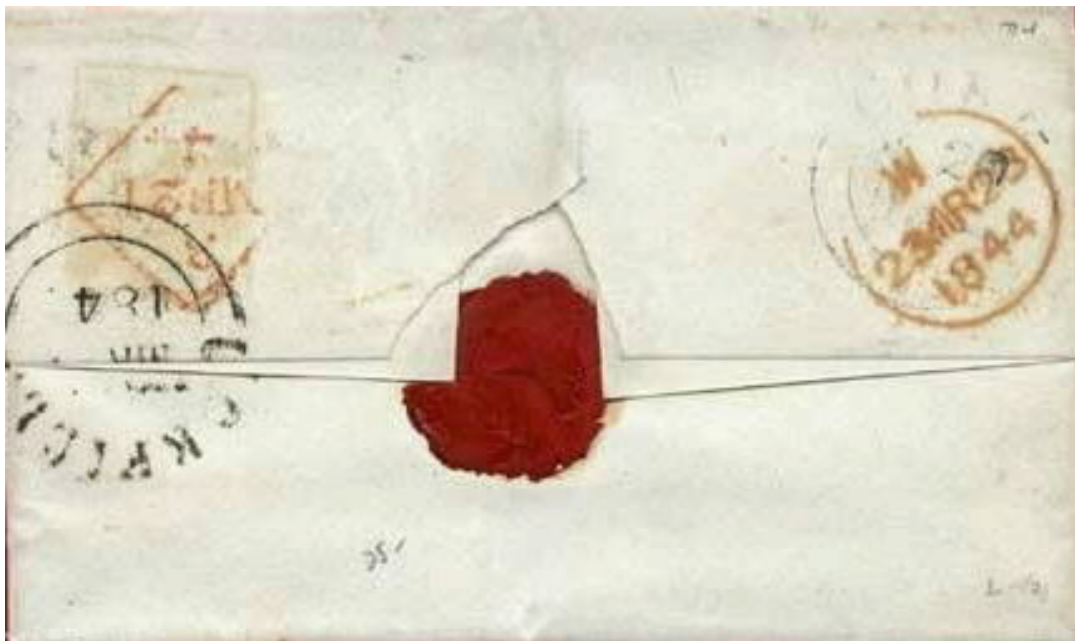


Mess<sup>rs</sup> Richard Williams & Sons,  
Dublin

Fig. 2709



Cork Maltese Cross with an enlargement of the stamp



Rear of the cover showing the various date stamps

Dublin Maltese Crosses.

The Dublin Cross shows considerable variation. The first Dublin Maltese Cross was of the English type (Fig. 2710). It seems to have remained in use until the second half of 1842 or possibly a little later as we have seen no specimens of January 1843, on covers from Dublin.

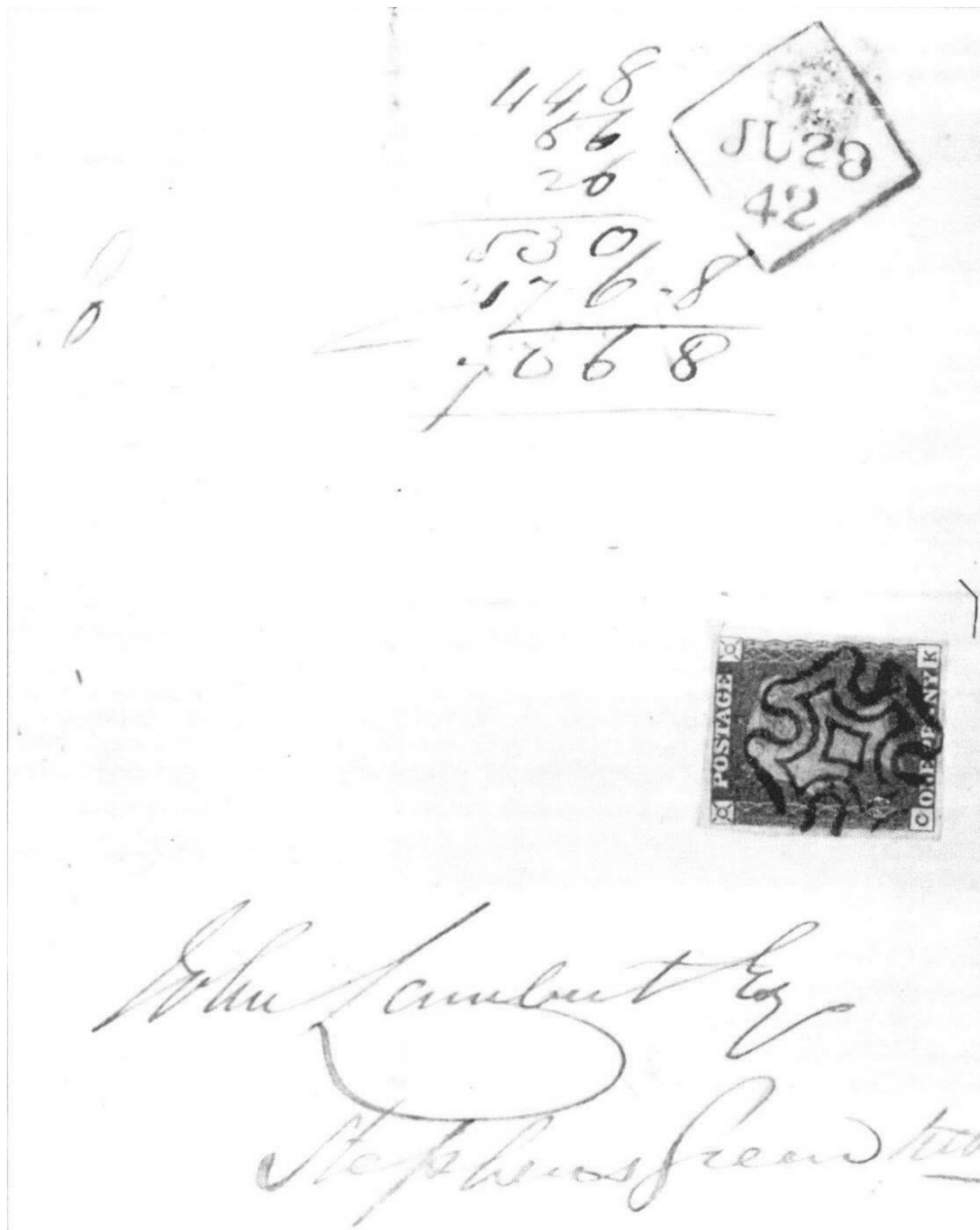


Fig. 2710 – Dublin first use

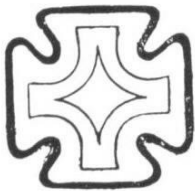
The straight-sided type is shown in Fig. 2711. The space between the straight sides of the inner and outer crosses is wide, and the ends of the inner cross are also wide. Specimens known to us range in date from February 1843 to June 1844.



Fig. 2711



We have also seen another slightly larger late 1843 variety with straight sides and a thick inner diamond with a roughly circular open centre (Fig. 980).



On covers of the same period Fig. 981 also occurs. it has a rather clipped and severe appearance. The outer cross is heavy and often blurred. The inner and outer crosses have straight sides, and the central diamond is large.

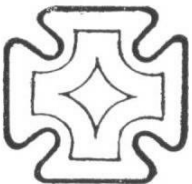


Fig. 982 shows a fourth Dublin straight-line type of 1843. This is slightly smaller in size. The inner cross resembles in shape that of the first straight-sided type, but the central diamond is smaller.

Durrow Maltese Cross.

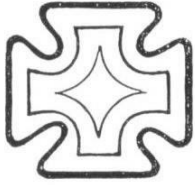


Fig. 983

In 1843, a cross of the Dublin type was used at Durrow (Fig. 983). its distinctive feature is that one of the indentations of the outer cross runs more deeply in towards the inner cross than the others do. Fig. 2712 illustrates the Cross on a cover of 1st February, 1843.



Fig. 2712

Eyrecourt Maltese Cross:

Covers of July 1842 to October 1843 show a Cross of the normal Scottish type in use at this office (Fig. 2713).

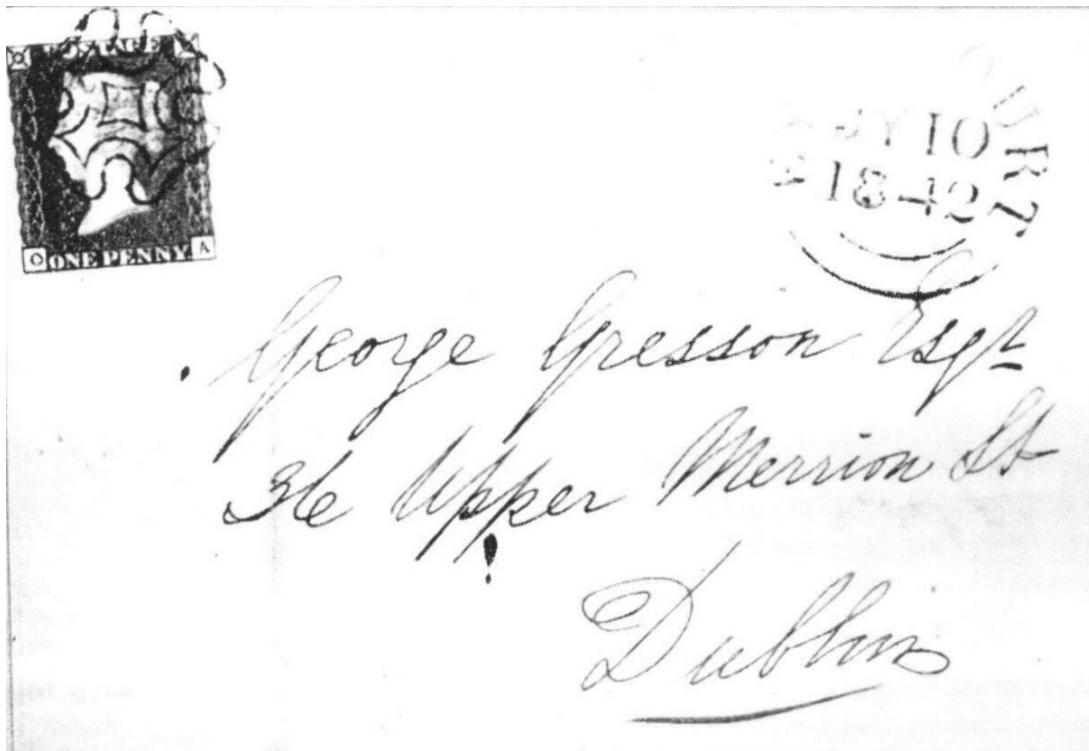


Fig. 2713

Hollymount Maltese Cross.

This Irish Cross is said to lack an inner cross and a central diamond, and we have seen several examples of March to October, 1843, where this seems to be so (Fig. 2715). On the other hand we have seen an example of 14th December 1842, with complete inner cross and central diamond (Fig. 2714), and others with small portions of those parts. Whether, therefore, these parts gradually wore away, or whether the specimens without inner cross and central diamond are due to the inking or method of striking we do not know.



Fig. 2714

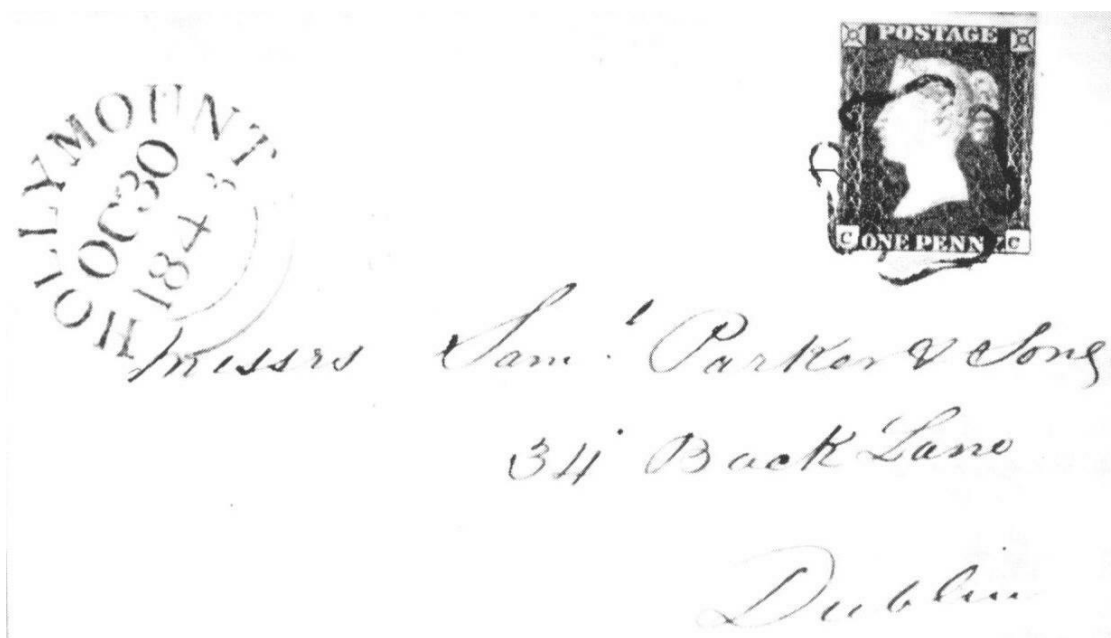


Fig. 2715



Johnstown Maltese Cross:

A variety with a heavy outer cross and thick central diamond was in use at Johnstown in October 1842 (Fig. 2716). It is reminiscent of the Brighton and Ironbridge Maltese Crosses.

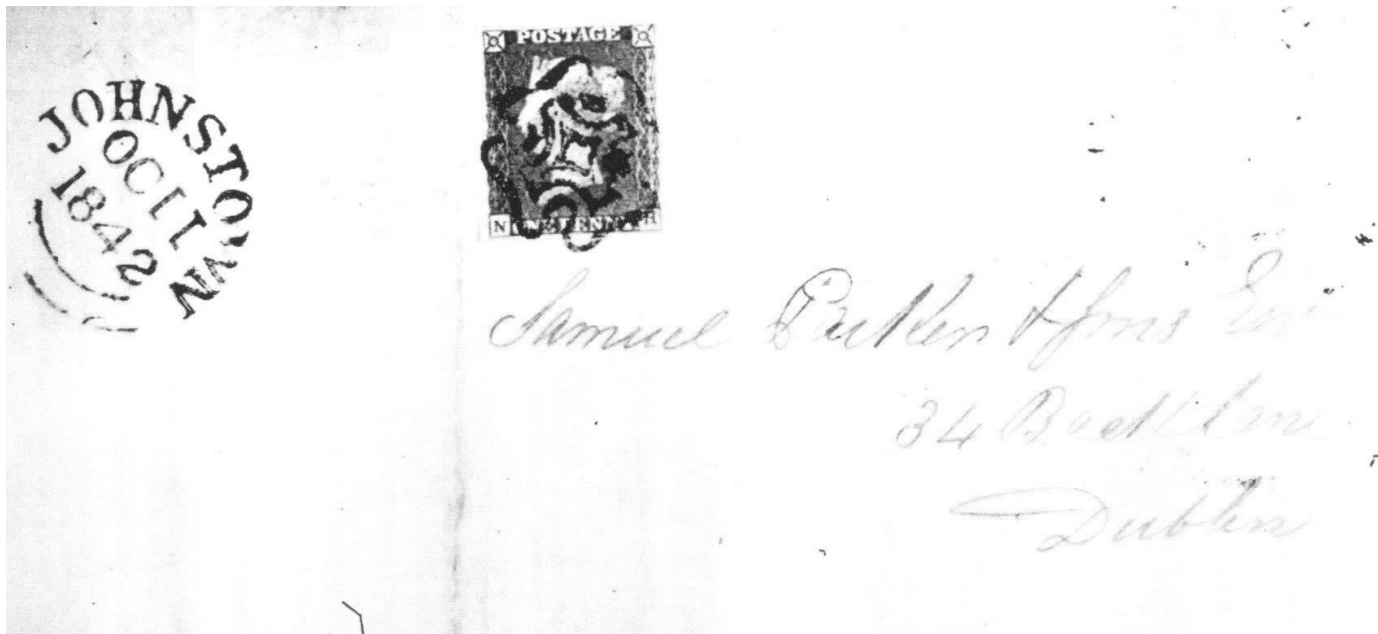


Fig. 2716

Kinsale Maltese Cross:

Early in 1842 this office was using a Cross of the thin type, usually associated with Scottish offices (Fig. 2717). A very similar Cross was also in use in 1842 at Ballytore.

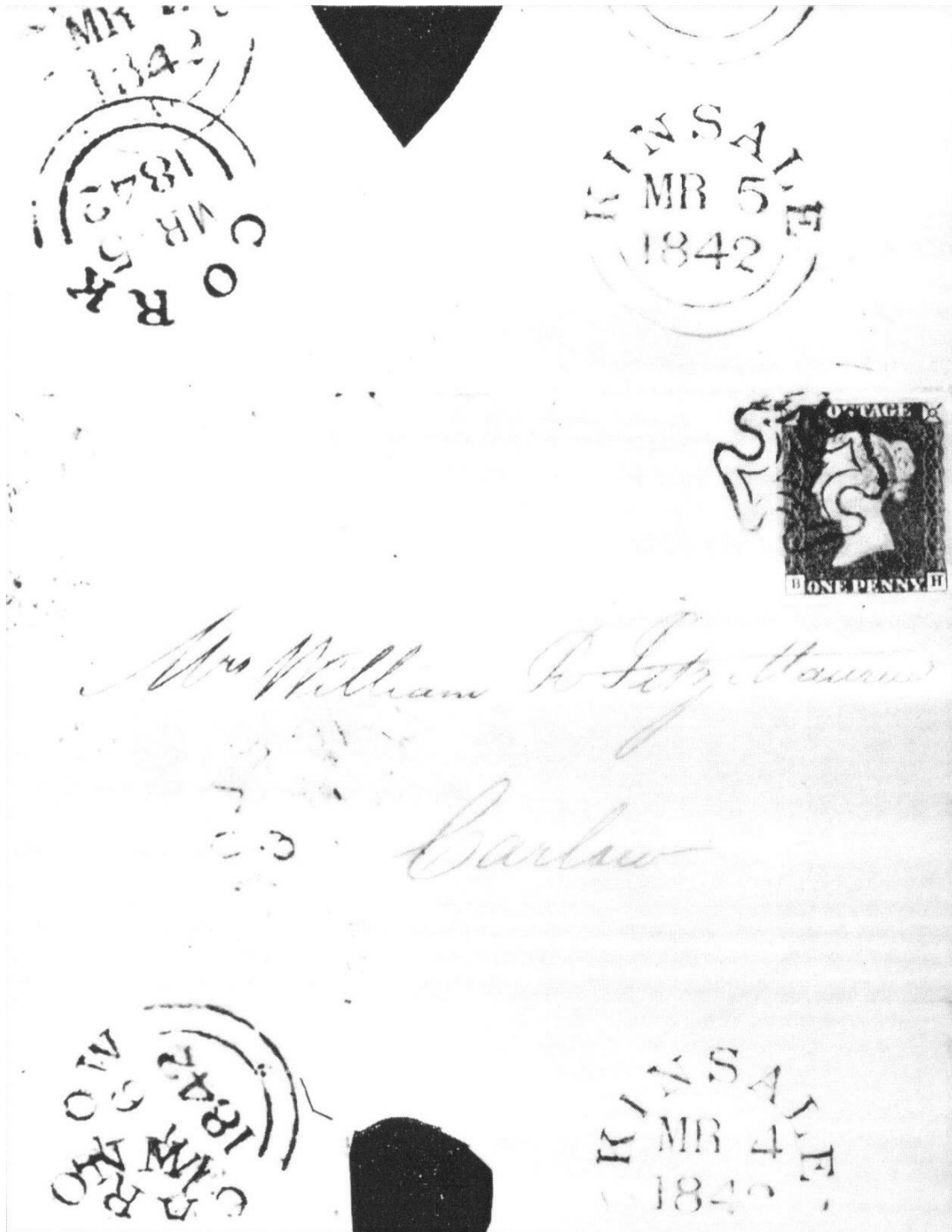


Fig. 2717

Limerick Maltese Cross.

This small Cross recalls the Leamington Cross and the first Cork type in shape (Fig. 2718). We have seen examples ranging in date from June 1842, to May 1844.



Fig. 2718

Midleton Maltese Cross.

This office also had a straight-line type (Fig. 2719), but as yet we do not know its period of use.

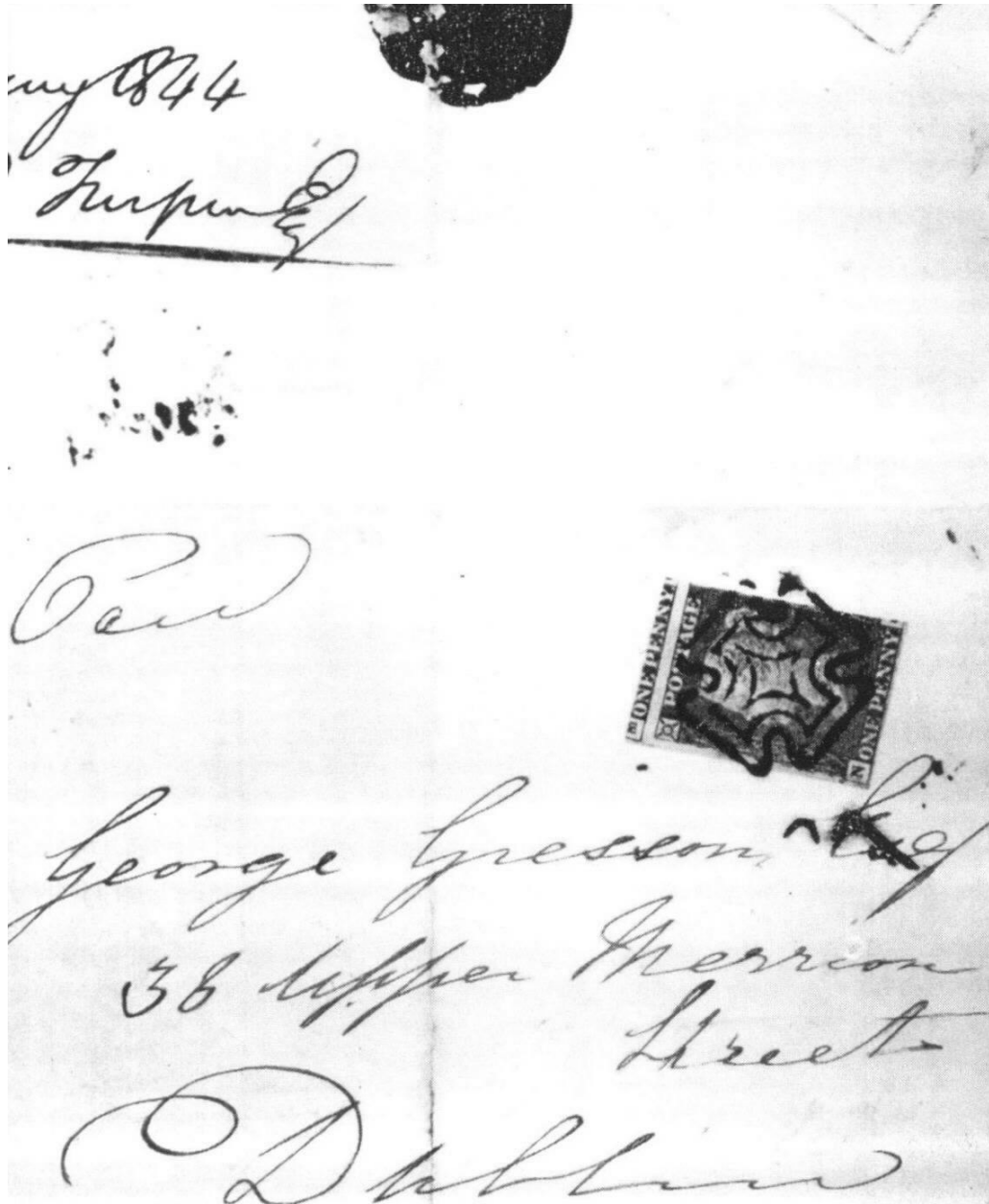


Fig. 2719

Moate Maltese Cross.

This office seems to have had at first a normal Cross of the English type (Fig. 2720), but specimens of August, 1843 to March, 1844, appear to be quite different, although every one we have seen has been over-inked (Fig. 2721).



Fig. 2720



George Weston. Esq  
36 Upper Merrion Street  
Dublin



Fig. 2721



Moate Cross on cover with an enlargement of the stamp

Mullingar Maltese Cross.



This Cross (Fig. 984) with notches in the outer cross is known to us on cover from December 1841, to the end of March 1843. The notches, or some of them, are sometimes filled in, probably due to over-inking. Varieties with additional cuts have also been recorded.

Fig. 984

Piltown Maltese Cross:

Fig. 2722 illustrates a cross very similar to the heavy Scottish type, but we do not yet know its period of use at this office. A striking resemblance to the Johnstown (Kilk.) Cross will be observed.



Fig. 272



Ross (Wexford) Maltese Cross.

This office was using in 1844 a straight-lined Maltese Cross, very much like that of Cork (Fig. 2723). When it was introduced we do not yet know.

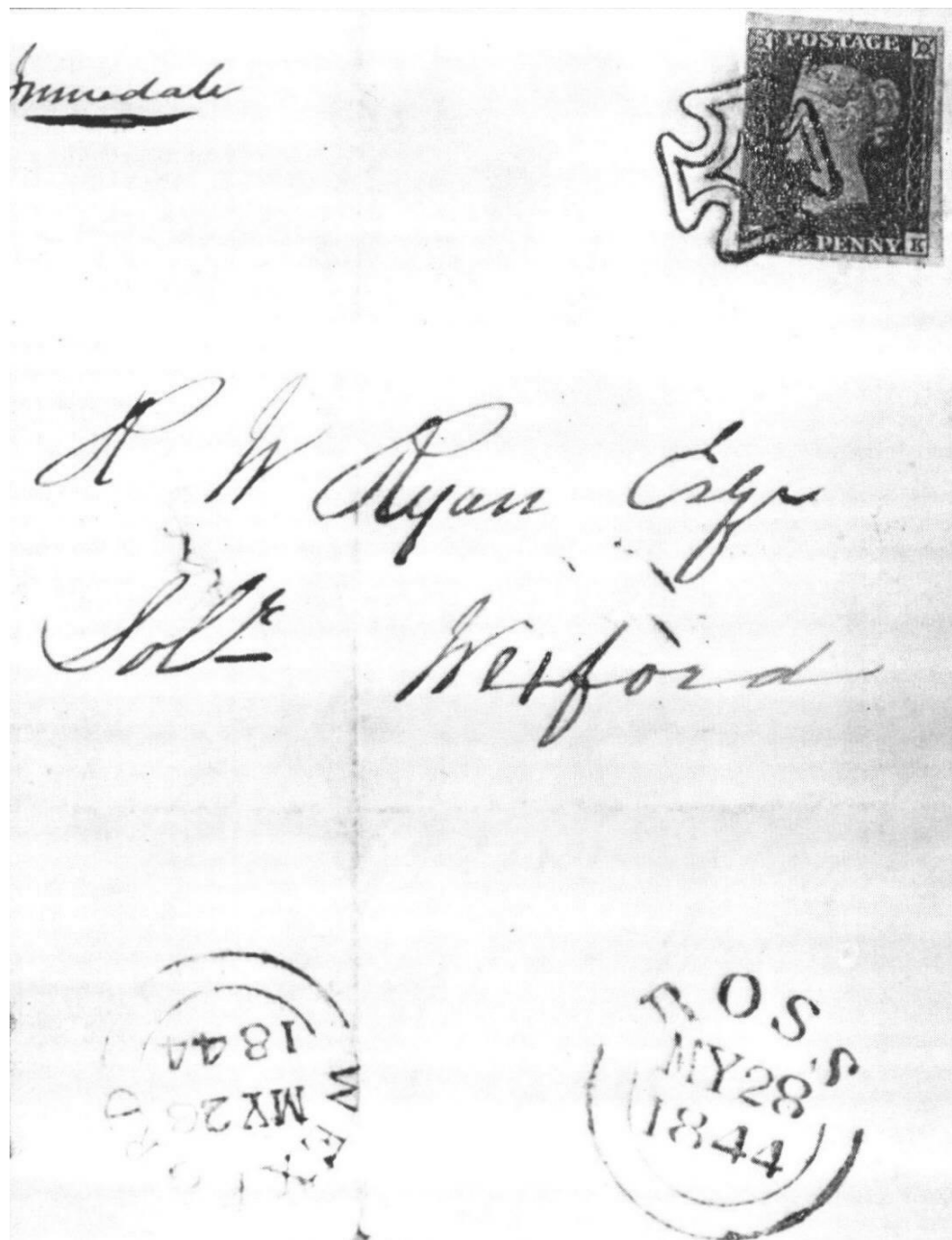


Fig. 2723

Tallow and Tuam Maltese Crosses:

A rather heavy Cross with a small centre was used at Tallow in 1843 and 1844. On the other hand, in the same period Tuam had a Cross of the thin outline type associated with Scotland.

Waterford Maltese Crosses:

Waterford seems at first to have used a large type of Cross (Fig. 2724). Some specimens of 1841 have a small mark resembling a figure "1" in the central diamond, but this mark was without doubt accidental.

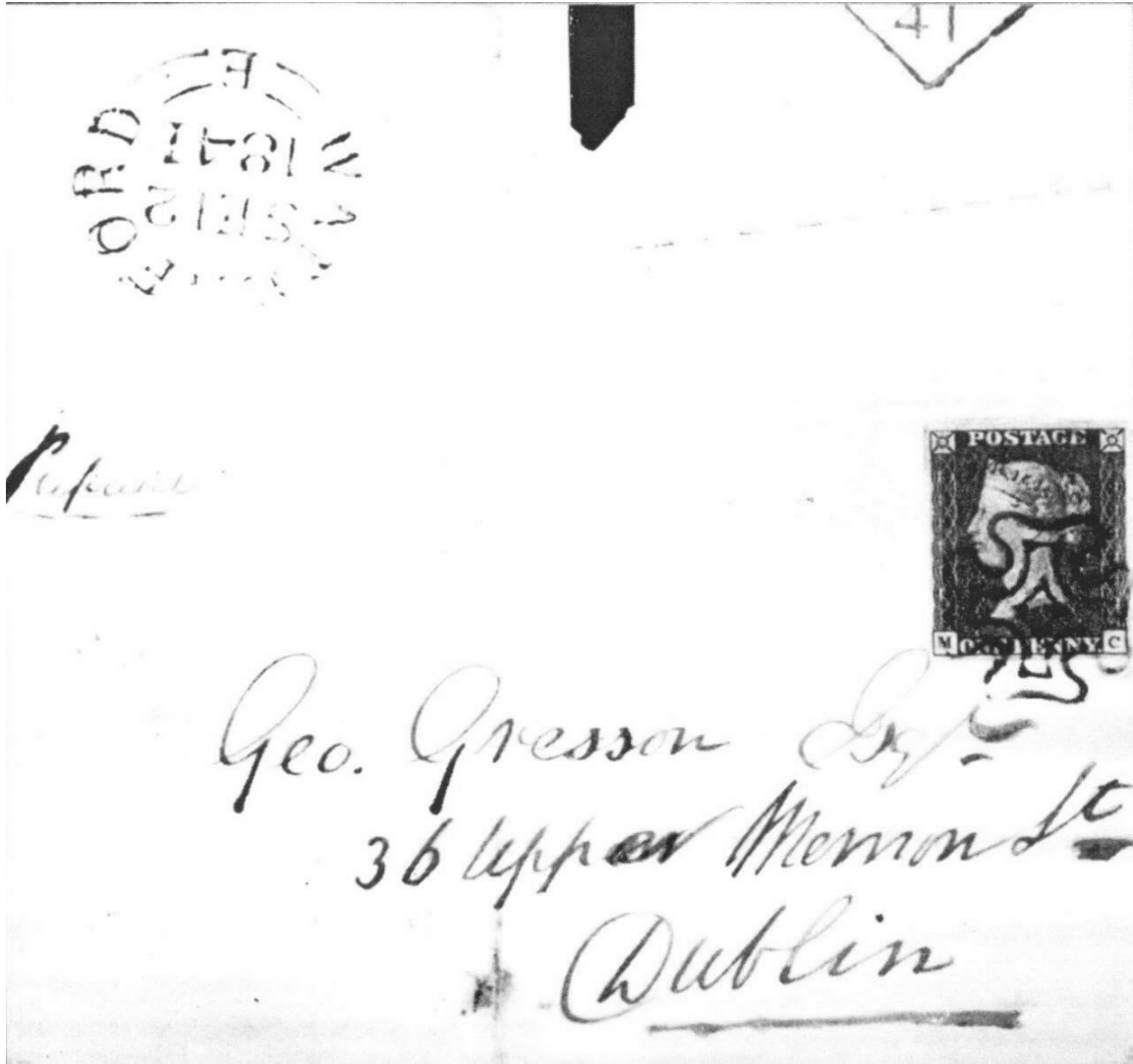


Fig. 2724

By 1843 a smaller, compact, and heavily lined variety (Fig. 2725) made its appearance, and probably continued in use into 1844, as we have seen examples on covers of December, 1843.

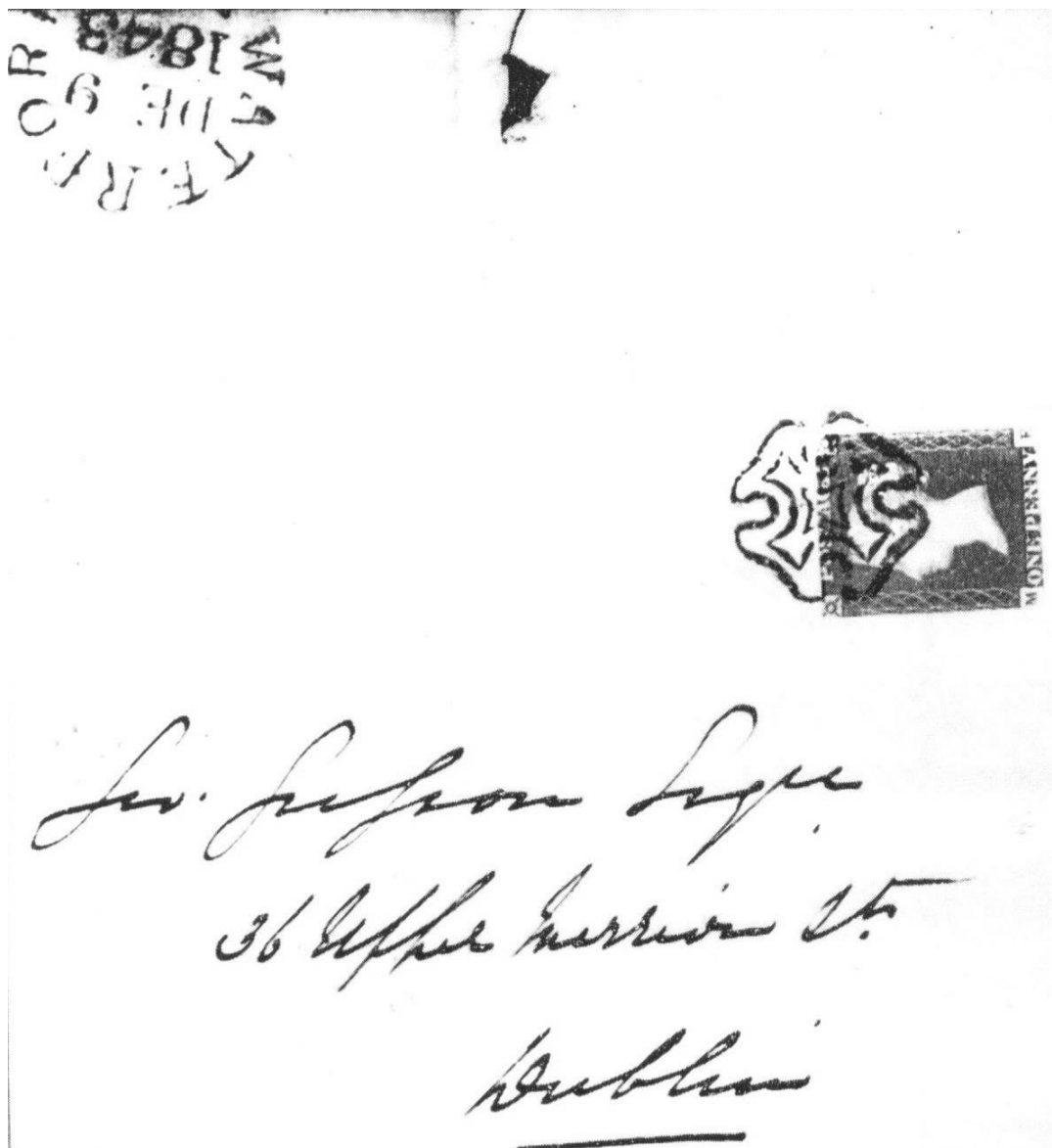


Fig. 2725

Westport Maltese Crosses:

Fig. 2726 shows a Westport Cross of 1841, and we have seen similar thin crosses of 1842, but on covers of January to June 1844, a Cross of much heavier type was used there (Fig. 2727).

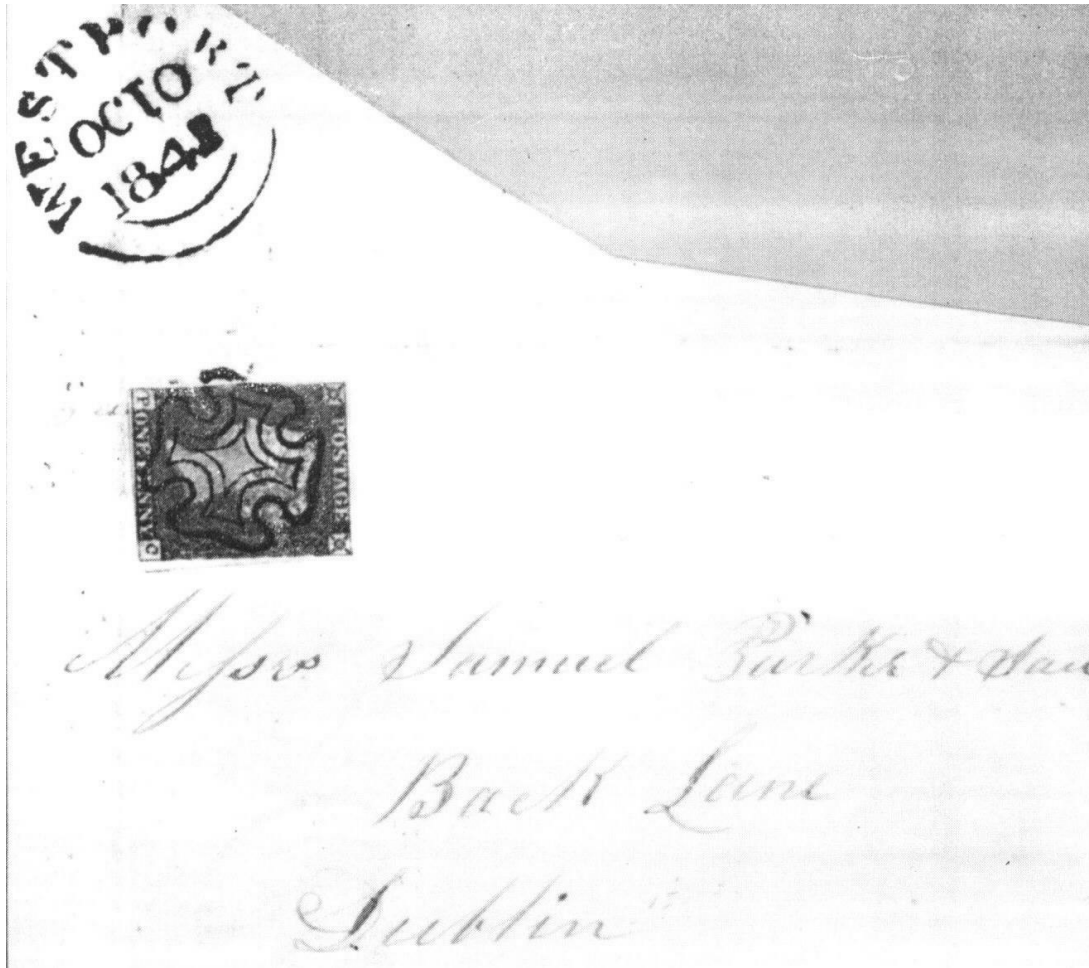


Fig. 2726



Fig. 2727

## Wexford Maltese Cross:

In 1842 and early 1843 Wexford was using a very thin neat Cross which, if seen on a postage stamp off cover or piece, would be attributed to a Scottish office.

It seems likely that other Irish offices, besides those mentioned in this sub-section, used Crosses with a thin or heavy outline instead of ones of a more normal kind. We shall be glad to see any such varieties on cover.

### **5. ADDITIONAL NOTES ON MALTESE CROSS VARIETIES.**

We have already described:

- (1) Crosses with various constant marks or figures in the central diamond;
- (2) Solid-centre Crosses where these occur over a period of time from the same office; and
- (3) The double-outlined Cross of Stonehaven.

It may, however, be advisable to show that clear but isolated examples can be found from other offices, though these were probably in nearly every case due to accidental causes, as we have explained later. In addition, a few notes on the practice of double-strikers and the late use of the Maltese Cross seem to be required.

#### (a) Dot in Centre Crosses:

Smudgy Crosses occur with small marks in the central diamond, and there are better-inked specimens where the presence of foreign matter has caused small dots, lines, or other marks to appear in various positions in the central diamond. There are also however, clear Crosses with a dot of varied size placed centrally in the diamond. We have seen, for example, several good specimens in red on Id. Blacks and Mulready Envelopes from London and Edinburgh, and later good examples of 1842 and 1843 from Glasgow, Liverpool and Moffat on Id. Red Imperf. postage stamps.

Crosses occur that are wholly or mostly filled in by ink, and even lesser over-inking sometimes causes very curious freak examples.

(b) Solid\_Centre Crosses:

Fig. 2728 shows a very badly inked impression of the Maltese Cross, and it is at once apparent how easily freak types of Crosses could occur. It is, therefore, not surprising that smudgy Crosses can be found with the central diamond filled in. It is, however, possible to find occasional examples of reasonably inked Crosses with a solid centre. The best examples of this kind we have seen have been from Bradford (Yorkshire), Stroud and Tenby, the first two on 1d. Blacks and the last on a 1d Red Imperforate postage stamp.

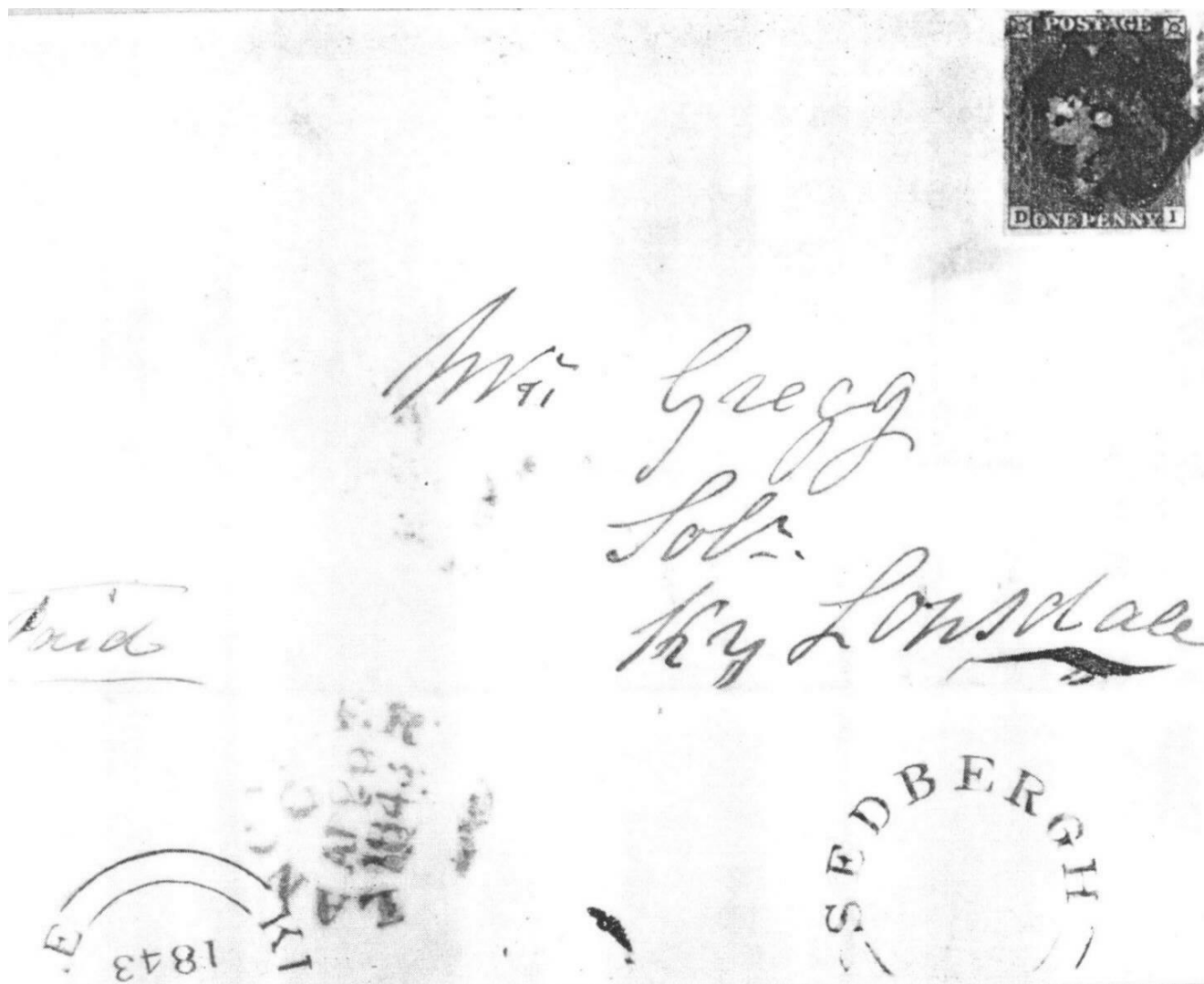


Fig. 2728

(c) Double-Lined Crosses:

It has already been explained that Stonehaven had for a period at least a variety of this kind and that both over-and under-inking could cause such varieties. A study of the impressions often makes it obvious to which of these causes an apparently double-lined Cross can be attributed. On the other hand, odd specimens do occur which to all appearances seem good specimens of a double-lined Cross. The best examples we have seen have been on 1d. Blacks used in 1840 from Blandford and Dunning and in 1841 from Congleton; on a Mulready cover of June 1840, from Campden; and on a 1d. Red imperforate postage stamp from Arbroath.

(d) Double Strikes of the Maltese Cross:

In the original edition of *The Postmarks of Great Britain and Ireland* we drew attention to the practice of the Spilsby (Lincolnshire) office during 1841 and 1842 of striking a second impression of the Maltese Cross on covers cancelled there. We suggested that, as the cancellations only just tied the postage stamp to the cover, the official responsible might have thought that should the postage stamp come off in the post -- there were, as we know, complaints about the lack of adhesiveness of the gum he would have an additional proof of having cancelled the postage stamp. We illustrate in Fig. 971 an example of this practice.

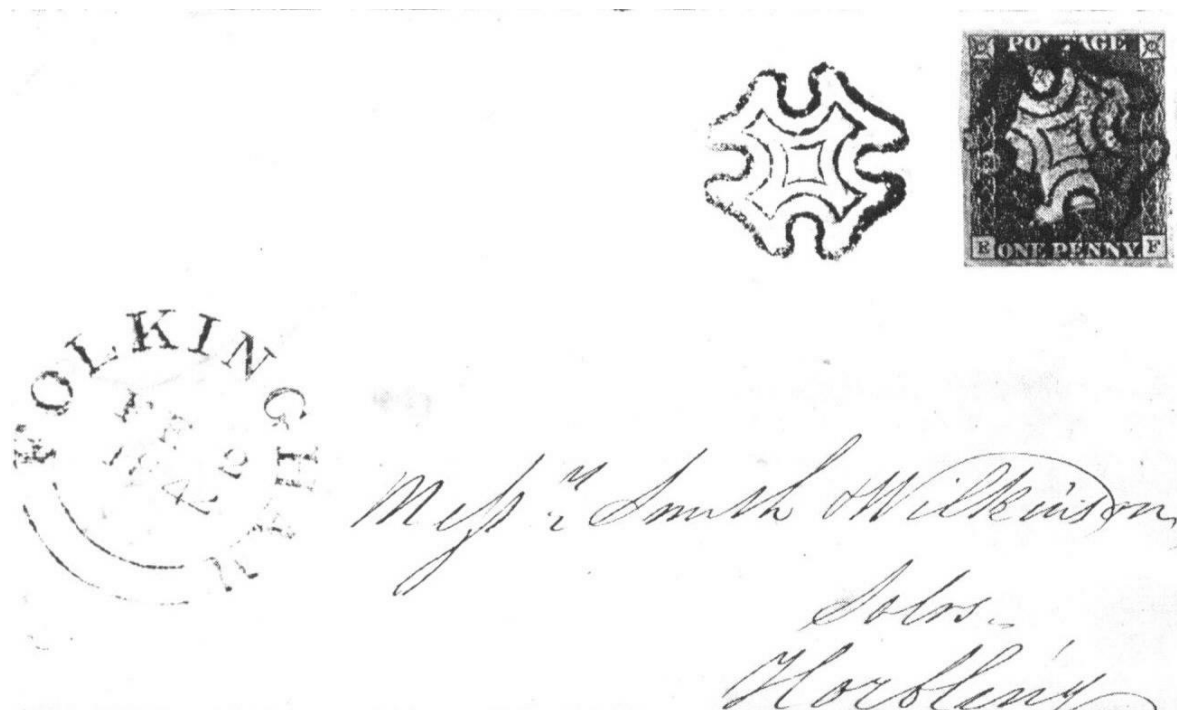


Fig. 971

Examples of double strikes can be found, of course, from many other offices, and we can list below only a few of the specimens we have seen

- (1) Colchester (May 1842).
- (2) Cork (1st Typ2 —April, 1843).
- (3) Cork (straight-lined type May, 1844).
- (4) Dunfermline (July, 1844).
- (5) Elphinstone (February, 1844).
- (6) Edinburgh (On a letter to London, October, 1841).
- (7) Edinburgh (On local letters of December, 1841 to February, 1843).
- (8) London (August, 1840).

It may be of interest to mention that we have seen one cover from Stockton to New Shildon with three additional strikes!

Of quite a different kind are the second impressions that occur when re-cancellation was done at the receiving office, or when the letter had to be re-directed to a new address. Such covers are particularly interesting when the crosses are of different types or when the original cancellation was stamped in one colour and the second impression in another colour. Of the latter kind we have seen several letters of January, 1842, on which the postage stamps were originally cancelled in red at Colne (Lancs.) and re-cancelled in black at Skipton.

(e) Late Use of the Maltese Cross:

Although numbered office cancellations were introduced in May, 1844, some offices do not seem to have at once discarded the use of their Maltese Cross obliterator, as we have seen evidence of this on covers of September, 1844, from Hartlepool and Middlesbrough. The "Postage Stamps of Great Britain, Vol. 1" notes the late use of the Maltese Cross cancellation in Scotland, and a number of examples are known in blue and in black ink of the same colour as the accompanying Aberdeen date— stamps of 1845 to 1849. The Maltese Cross seems also to have been used late in the North of England, for we have seen or have notes of specimens used at Padiham and Sheffield (1845); Aspatria and Longtown (1845 - 46); and Milnthorpe (1847). In a list kindly sent to us by Mr. C. W. Meredith, he records later examples still, accompanied by the date-stamps of Bangor (1848), Southborough (Kent) (1852); Bridgwater (1854 - 56); Kendal (1855) and Aberdeen (1856). In the "G. B. Journal, No. 3", Mr. Meredith points out that covers with these very late Maltese Cross cancellations usually bear also the undated straight-line or circular double-arc name-stamps of a small sub-office, and suggests that the larger offices may have, in some cases, passed down their Maltese Cross obl iterators to such small offices. Full details can be seen in the magazine mentioned above.

On postage stamps not on cover or dated piece, we have seen Maltese Cross cancellations on the 1d. Red imperforate from late Alphabet 1 and from Alphabet 2 plates; on the 1d. Red (various shades) Die I and Die 2 Small Crown Perf. 16; on the 1d. Die 2. Large Crown Perf. 14 on blued paper of various shades, including orange brown; on the 1d. Rose - Red of 1857 to 1863 on white paper; and even on later plate number stamps with check-letters in all four corners, the latest of these being on the 1d. Plate 200. This plate, according to The History of the Adhesive Stamps of the British Isles "by Wright & Creeke, was not put to press until 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 1877. It seems advisable to mention here that we have also seen 1d. Plate Number stamps with forged Maltese Cross postmarks.

Mr. R. G. Punt kindly informs us:

The late use of the Maltese Cross was prolonged in the Furness District of Lancashire. I have a piece bearing Lindal Penny Post with the postage stamp cancelled with a Cross and then over stamped 530 by Milnthorpe, and a similar piece with Penny Bridge Penny Post. Unfortunately neither is dated. In addition, I have a letter from Lindal in Cartmel, dated 25th August 1846, also cancelled with a Cross and over stamped 530 by Milnthorpe, which makes me wonder whether the record of late use of the Maltese Cross by Milnthorpe is correct. These three examples show that Milnthorpe was assertive in the use of its office number, even to the extent of over-stamping the postage stamps on a letter from Altrincham, (21<sup>st</sup> May 1847), which had been wrongly addressed to Milnthorpe instead of to Burton (Westmorland). I am inclined to think that the record relates to one of the Furness villages.'



## 6. COLOURED MALTESE CROSSES.

Colour is invariably a problem in philately. The stamp collector soon discovers that it is possible for stamps, from different countries, that seem to him to be alike in shade to be called by different colour names in various catalogues and philatelic articles. He finds also stamps in shades that appear to him to be quite different from those mentioned for these stamps in the chief catalogues and then discovers that the names given there are intended to cover a group - sometimes a large one - of shades. In addition, stamps appear which he feels must have undergone a change of colour by reason of dampness, over-exposure to strong sunlight, tropical conditions, or the application of some cleaning agent, etc. In most cases, however, there are stamps still in existence in practically pristine condition with which a comparison can be made.

The colour problem arises in the same way in postmarks, but there comparisons with pristine examples are not so easy. Damp, oxidization, excessive exposure to strong sunlight, etc., can alter the colour of postmarks as they do that of postage stamps. We have seen Maltese Cross postmarks whose present colour is undoubtedly due to such influences. On the other hand, we have seen clean covers with coloured Maltese Crosses, sometimes accompanied by date-stamps in the same shade, the colour of which the owners have been told is due to damp, over-oxidization, yet similar date-stamps from the same office in the same shade are known from earlier times, or even on letters prepaid in cash of the same period, these covers also bearing evidence of careful preservation. We have also been told at times that a certain Maltese Cross must have begun its existence in such and such a colour, and later, when we have consulted more scientifically minded people, have been assured that a change of that kind would, to the best of their belief, be chemically impossible!

The use of date-stamps and name-stamps by receiving and sending offices continued after 6th May 1840, and we stress that the colour of these over a period on well preserved covers from varied sources (and thus having been subject to different physical conditions) deserves study before a Maltese Cross postmark in the same colour from the same office is taken to be a " changeling ". As we have said earlier, we readily admit that some coloured Maltese Cross postmarks are not in the same colour as they were originally impressed, and we are also convinced that the ink used at certain offices must have been more liable to change than that used at the majority of offices.

The ingredients to be used for the ink to impress the first cancellations were detailed in the Post Office circular of 25<sup>th</sup> April 1840, but the red of the Maltese Crosses was not uniform throughout the British Isles. This was natural, since the human element was at once introduced in the mixing and the making of the ink. The ingredients purchased for use at the various offices were, doubtless, of varied quality and age; and the ink when made was stored under various conditions and lasted for different periods of time before another supply was needed. The first Maltese Cross postmarks, therefore, can be found in a number of shades of red.

At the end of August 1840, an experimental use was made of black ink. This was found to render the removal of a cancellation much more difficult, though naturally it had the objection of being in the same general colour as the Id. postage stamps. Late in the year an improved black ink was successfully tried. Black ink, however, did not come into general use outside London until February 1841.

The black cancellations of the Maltese Cross do not, of course, show the same range of shade as those in red, but during the period of use of both cancellations Crosses appeared in a variety of colours for a reason we have not previously mentioned. 1840 black cancellations are known from a certain number of offices outside London. These were probably so stamped in error, the official carrying on with the same colour as he had been using for the date-stamp or name-stamp, or carelessly using the wrong inking-pad.

Many date-stamps and name-stamps had prior to 6th May 1840, been struck in blue, green or red ink, and some in other colours, such as brown, orange, or yellow. Old mixtures of ink for date stamping and name stamping continued to be used after the introduction of adhesive postage stamps and probably in some cases new ones were made in the old way. In consequence, Maltese Cross cancellations occur in the colours normally used for date-stamps and name-stamps. "The Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage Stamps, Vol. 1 " states that inking-pads in other colours purple, maroon, violet, etc.—were bought by some Scottish postmasters from a travelling salesman. A mixture of inks also brought some shades into existence when, an obliterator that had recently been impressing in a certain colour was used with a pad of another colour.

As already stated, black ink came into use outside London in February, 1841, so that the red Maltese Cross is scarce on Plate 10, and scarcer still on Plate 11 of the 1d. Black postage stamp. All offices did not at once in February 1841 cease to cancel in red, but Maltese Cross cancellations in red are scarce on the 1d. Red imperforate and rare on the 2d. P1. 4 of 1841. Among the examples known to us on the former stamp are ones from the following offices:

- Billericay (February-June, 1841).
- Bury St. Edmund's (August, 1841).
- Come (May and October, 1841).
- Hayle (May, 1841).
- Kingstown (March, 1841).
- Rathagan (December, 1842).
- Redruth (July, 1841 and February, 1842).
- Southport (May, 1841).
- Uttoxeter (May, 1841).

The earliest examples above are probably due to the continued use of the red ink, while the later examples were probably impressed in error in the way already explained.

It is also interesting to record that we have seen red cancellations on 1d. Red imperforate postage stamps on covers cancelled at the London Chief Office on 15th February 1841, and 11th May 1844.

In the November, 1941, 'Philatelic Adviser' can be found a letter by Dr. F. L. Vanderplank entitled "Coloured Maltese Cross Postmarks", which gives some very useful chemical details concerning some of the pigments used for Maltese Cross cancellations, which he had analysed by spectrographically methods. He points out particularly the way in which "changeling" Brown Crosses can be formed.

We cannot claim such a scientific basis for the list of Coloured Crosses that follows, as it is merely a list of those we have seen or have been able to record from lists sent to us. We Live tried to check the authenticity of the colours by all other means possible, but not in every case has such material been available.

Billericay was still using red ink on Christmas Day, 1841, and Dalry in June 1841. Mr. Robson Lowe has kindly informed us that he has records of a similar use at Adrossan, Belfast and Southport.

### **(A) BLUE MALTESE CROSSES.**

These vary from the greyish-blue of Haddington through the beautiful blue of the late Aberdeen Crosses (March and April, 1849) to the indigo Cross of Tullamore (March, 1843). The best-known examples in blue are from Preston and Truro, where the colour seems to have been very popular. We have seen examples from the former office on covers ranging from October 1841 to September 1842. Cancellations in various shades of blue are known to us from: -

(1) Aberdeen	(11) Moate
(2) Blackrock	(12) Portglenone
(3) Cheltenham	(13) Preston
(4) Clitheroe	(14) Stokesley
(5) Donegal	(15) Truro
(6) Grantham	(16) Tuam
(7) Glasgow	(17) Tullamore
(8) Haddington	(18) Tullock
(9) Leith	(19) Tyrrels Pass
(10) Milnthorpe	

Mr. Robson Lowe has also records of similar Crosses from Accrington. Guisborough and Marlborough.

The 1d Black and 2d Blue of 1840 occur with blue Maltese Cross cancellations, and the list given above includes specimens ranging from mid 1841 to mid 1844, in addition to the late use at Aberdeen, on the 1d and 2d values of the next issue.

### **(B) BROWN MALTESE CROSSES**

We have not included a number of crosses, which to us seem almost certainly or very likely not to be in the original colour in which they were stamped. Of what may be termed normal shades of brown we know of examples from Hinckley, Invergordon, and Newport (Isle of Wight), the last-named being of a sepia-brown.

Another small group of these Crosses can be classified as in red-brown. Manchester, for example, on 7<sup>th</sup> May, 1840, was using an ordinary red cancellation but a red-brown date-stamp, and Maltese Cross cancellations in red-brown occur from that office on covers of late 1840 and early 1841. In a not so bright red-brown we have seen specimens from Bristol, Cheltenham, Dunfermline, Haddington and Wells.

The brown also sometimes tends towards yellow. In addition, we have seen an orange-brown Cross from Liverpool (December, 1840) and a bistre-brown Cross from Ayton (August, 1840). Newtonstewart has been recorded, as having used a purple-maroon Cross. An example of 16<sup>th</sup> August 1840, that we have seen on cover makes us wonder whether purple-brown might not be a better name.

We have seen a cover sent from Driffield to Burlington on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1840. The Driffield date-stamp is on the front of the cover in the same ink, a rusty shade of brown, as the Maltese Cross cancellation on the 1d. Black postage stamp.

Two other copies of the Newtonstewart coloured Cross have now come into our possession. These are on covers bearing date stamps of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December 1840.

### **(C) GREEN MALTESE CROSSES.**

We know of Crosses in varying degrees of green on the Id. Red, while others on the Id. Black and 2d. Blue of 1840 and 1841 have been reported. Cancellations from dirty obliterations or dirty inking-pads are sometimes of an almost indescribable hue, but some bear traces of a dirty, dull green element. We have seen specimens of these from Derby, Wolverhampton and Glasgow.

Cancellations in the normal shades of green vary from pale to deep green, and we have records of examples from

- (1) Athlone.
- (2) Birmingham (September 1843).
- (3) Crawley (January 1844).
- (4) Derby (August 1843).
- (5) Preston.
- (6) St. Columb (June 1842).
- (7) Stockton (January 1842).

Some of the green cancellations can be described as of the blue-green variety, and examples are known to us from

- (1) Derby (July and November, 1843).
- (2) Newcastle-on-Tyne
- (3) Patrick, Glasgow (February, 1841).
- (4) Truro (January, 1843).

We have also seen a grey-green cancellation on a cover of November 1844, from Rugby. A touch on to the wrong pad sometimes gives a confused tinge of red to a black cancellation, and a similar touch on a green pad it seems must have been responsible for the greenish-black hue of a Portarlington Cross on a Cover of August 1843.

### **(D) RED MALTESE CROSSES.**

When describing the general change from red to black ink for Maltese Cross cancellations, we mentioned earlier in this sub-section the causes of the shade-variations in the early red Maltese Crosses. To these must be added later shades, due either to error or to ink-pads of a special hue, and the following list gives the outstanding shades of red we have recorded

- (1) Blood-red - Burton-on-Trent (June, 1840).
- (2) Crimson (brilliant) - Sleaford (May, 1840).
- (3) Maroon - Epsom (December, 1840), Tring (1844).
- (4) Mahogany-red - Bradford-on-Avon (September and October, 1840).
- (5) Pink - Burton-on-Trent (May, 1840).  
Cheltenham (November, 1840 - January, 1841).  
Cirencester.  
Deal.  
Merthyr-Tydfil (September, 1840).  
Ormskirk.
- (6) Rose - A lilac-rose shade is recorded from Colchester.
- (7) Ruby - Aberdeen (August to December, 1840, in the same shade as " PAID IN ABERDEEN " marks of earlier months of that year).
- (8) Scarlet (brilliant) - Manchester (May, 1840).
- (9) Vermilion - Besides the ordinary vermilion shade, there are varieties in orange-vermilion ( Dursley July, 1840) and vermilion-red (Bristol, Dumbarton - May and September, 1840).

### **(E) ORANGE AND "YELLOW" MALTESE CROSSES.**

The shades in the list, given below vary from the very bright orange of Liverpool to the dark, duller orange of Kirkcaldy.

- (1) Bristol (July, September, October 1840).
- (2) Burntisland.
- (3) Cheltenham (June 1841).
- (4) Kirkcaldy (October and November 1840, and January 1841).
- (5) Leith (May 1840).
- (6) Liverpool (May 1840).

In addition, there are specimens in a brownish-orange from Chepstow and Kirkcaldy.

We have seen date-stamps and name-stamps in which we consider to be a true yellow shade, but we have never up to the present time seen a Maltese Cross cancellation comparable with the real yellow of the date-stamps of the 1830s and 1840s, as often found from offices in the North and South-east of Scotland.

We have, however, records of varieties in brown-yellow and yellow-buff from Ayton (October, 1840) and Wotton-under-Edge (May, 1840 before the obliterator was scored with a file) respectively.

### **(F) PURPLE AND MAGENTA MALTESE CROSSES.**

This group includes the cancellation the colour of which has become known to Great Britain specialists as "Magenta." "Magenta" is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as an aniline dye of a brilliant crimson, discovered soon after the Battle of Magenta was fought in the Italian struggle for independence in 1859, but the Crosses to which the name of Magenta has been applied are of a bright reddish-purple shade. Of the ordinary purple shade, we know of specimens from:

- (1) Glasgow (October, 1840).
- (2) Newtownmountkennedy (August, 1843)

And we have seen covers of July 1840, from Glasgow in a paler shade than that of October 1840.

Of the bright reddish-purple (Magenta) Crosses our records show that specimens are known from:

- (1) Aberdeen.
- (2) Bogroy (Inverness-shire).
- (3) Burton-on-Trent (June 1 840).
- (4) Fintry (September 1840).
- (5) Glasgow (April 1841).
- (6) Manchester.
- (7) Milton of Campsie (March and April, 1841).
- (8) Newry (October 1 840).
- (9) Renfrew (June 1840).
- (10) Wexford (December 1840).

A duller shade of reddish purple occurs also in cancellations from Glasgow (December, 1840) and Wadebridge.

### **(G) VIOLET AND MAUVE MALTESE CROSSES.**

We have no record of a Maltese Cross postmark in a true mauve colour, but Mr. S. Raine in the February, 1951, "Philatelic Adviser," tells the sad story of a Cross, pale mauve on the black design of a penny postage stamp, but red on the margin of the stamp and on the cover. The whole Cross became red when the cover was pressed with a hot iron.

Crosses in violet have been recorded from: ---

- (1) Clitheroe (1840).
- (2) Fushiebridge.
- (3) Glasgow.
- (4) Market Street, Herts.
- (5) Newtownmountkennedy (August, 1843).

The Glasgow specimens vary in shade, some being rather duller than others. The violet of a May 1840, Cross we have seen from Renfrew has an element of brown in it.

### **(H) WHITE MALTESE CROSSES.**

Many of the so-called White Crosses we have seen are undoubtedly due to the effects of damp and the lack of careful preservation of the postage stamps, pieces or covers. Mr. R. Brice-Smith, for example, has shown us a series of late 1840 and early 1841 covers which show that the pink Maltese Cross of Cheltenham tends to become white under such conditions. On the other hand, the May, 1949, "Philatelic Adviser" contains an article by Mr. C. W. Meredith describing covers of the same period from Cirencester on which he considered the White Cross of that office might be authentic.

The lists we have given in this sub-section are, we feel sure, far from complete, and we shall be pleased to hear of other examples. Considerations of space have prevented us from giving the dates of every specimen we have seen. We regret also that in the lists we ourselves have made and in those sent to us the date of use has sometimes been omitted.

To appreciate properly all the coloured Maltese Crosses described in this sub-section, we cannot over-emphasize how helpful a study of the colours of date-stamps can be, e.g., any collector who wants to know the true "Magenta" colour can find wonderful examples among Lancaster date-stamps of early 1840 or Dalry date-stamps of May, 1843. Date-stamps and name-stamps are often subject to less exposure to sunlight when struck on the back of a cover than cancellations are. Unlike cancellations they are also not subject to any change caused by the pigments of the dye of a postage stamp.

**7. OTHER CANCELLATIONS USED DURING THE NORMAL PERIOD OF USE OF THE MALTESE CROSS.**

Many other cancellations can be found used during the period May 1840, to May 1844. These include, besides markings really intended to be employed as date-stamps and name-stamps, such obliterations as rings, mailbag seals (Exeter) and pen-cancellations. The Exeter Mail-bag seal marks we have seen on letters of 1841 – 1845. Of these one of the most interesting is the circular cancellation in red of Market Bosworth. The circle is divided into four sectors spaced well apart. Unlike the 1914 - 18 Naval cancellations, this one is not solid, and only the outlines of the four sectors appear. It is recorded cancelling 1d. Black postage stamps. On these Inspectors' Marks are also found. We have had a Penny Black postage stamp on piece cancelled with the Examiner's mark of Fig. 1815.

(a) Date-stamps. (i) "Wessex" Cancellations.

From, in some cases, as early as January, 1842, certain offices in the South-west of England made a practice of using date-stamps of the double-arc type, first introduced in the late 1820s, to cancel postage stamps, and examples from some of the offices are known with dates extending into early 1843. The following places used their date-stamps in this way: - Amesbury, Bideford, Bridport, Chard, Devizes, Dorchester, Frome, Honiton, Kingsbridge, Lyme, Okehampton, Shaftesbury, Torquay, Totnes, Truro, Wimborne, and Wincanton.

Examples are illustrated in Figs. 985 to 987. It will be seen that the Dorchester office used cancellations of two sizes, the smaller being the earlier variety. Of the small-sized date-stamps we have seen specimens with dates up to 25th August, 1842, and of the large-sized variety the earliest example known to us is one of 25th September, 1842.

In incomplete cancellations on postage stamps the smaller type can usually be distinguished by the raised "4" in 1842." An example on cover of a "Wessex" cancellation obliterating pairs of postage stamps is illustrated in Fig. 2729.



Fig. 2729

A few offices elsewhere seem to have followed the same practice, e.g. Atherstone and Petersfield. Occasional examples can be found, some even earlier than the “Wessex” use, from quite a number of offices, e.g. Aylesbury, Bournemouth, Brighton, Horsham, Liverpool, Liskeard, Ludlow, Otley, Redruth, Warwick, Wem, Winchester, etc. Postage stamps can be frequently found with a Maltese Cross cancellation and part of a date-stamp, as some offices, such as Falmouth, made a practice at various periods of impressing their date-stamps on the front of the covers near the postage stamps instead of in the usual places on the back or on the front well away from the postage stamps. Other offices occasionally did the same. Such varieties are of no importance.

(ii) Other date-stamps used as Cancellations.

We know of no offices in Scotland or Ireland, which used their date-stamps as obliterators for any length of time, though there were cases where this was done on odd occasions. In addition to the double-arc type, the Scottish rectangular dated type is also known so used, e.g. Dunse (1844), Kelso (1843). We have also been shown the double-outlined diamond date—stamp of Dublin used as a cancellation on a 1d. Black postage stamp. Examples can be found, as in the case of English and Welsh offices, of part of a date-stamp overlapping a postage stamp cancelled with a Maltese Cross. Such varieties again are of no special significance.

(b) Name-stamps. (i) Double-arc.

As explained in Part 1 of “The Postmarks of Great Britain and Ireland,” markings of the double-arc type were used, without a date in centre, as name-stamps by small offices. Specimens of these double-arc name-stamps used as cancellations are known to us from Camelford, Greenodd, Pontypool, Temple-Combe, Wem and Wool. We have also seen on piece cancelling 1d. Red imperforate postage stamps similar markings from Madeley, but are unable to state whether these were later than the normal period of use of the Maltese Cross cancellation (Fig. 2730).



Fig. 2730



(ii) London Local Post.

Straight-line London Receiving House marks with or without the old "T.P." ("Two penny Post") above continued after 6th May, 1840, to be used as name—stamps, usually on the front of letters. We have a long list of covers seen with such marks on letters where the Maltese Cross is used to cancel the postage stamp or stamps. Generally the Receiving House mark is at some distance from the cancellation, but Charing Cross specimens sometimes overlap the postage stamp, as do also just occasionally those of Long Acre and Leadenhall Street. It is quite likely that similar examples may exist from other Receiving Offices.

(iii) Provincial Penny Posts.

The name-stamps of the Provincial Penny Posts continued to be used at small offices in the provinces as name-stamps after the introduction of adhesive postage stamps. These include not only the markings of the usual general types, but also the dated type and some special types, such as, for example, the framed rectangular Manchester type with "Mottram" in one line and "P.P." below.

As a rule, all these Penny Post markings appear on the front or back of letters in positions other than across the postage stamps, as it was the custom for these to be cancelled at the Head Office. Some small offices, however, seem to have made a habit of impressing their Penny Post stamps across the postage stamps, the latter being later stamped as usual at the Head Office with a Maltese Cross cancellation. Examples can be found from a small number of offices, the most persistent offenders in this respect being Amlwych (see Fig. 989 in "The Postmarks of Great Britain and Ireland" at bottom of Page 240), and Poulton.



Handsworth had been an office of the Birmingham Penny Post with the numbered marking shown in Fig. 990. From 1840 into 1843 this earlier marking was impressed in black, blue or green on postage stamps, these being re-cancelled with a red, or later a black, Maltese Cross at the Birmingham Head Office. A straight line Handsworth name-stamp was also impressed elsewhere on the letters.

A few other numbered marks of the provincial Penny Posts were used, but we believe all were later than the normal period of use of the Maltese Cross cancellations.

(iv) Other markings.

Parts of General Post name - stamps of the straight-line or circular types from Head Offices or Receiving Offices sometimes fell by accident across or partly on to adhesive postage stamps cancelled by Maltese Crosses, but no importance can be attached to such examples. We have also seen collections where the owners have tried to gather covers and pieces with other varieties of postal markings falling on postage stamps cancelled correctly with the Maltese Cross. Such postal markings have included Charge marks, London "Tombstone" Paid marks, inspectors' Crowns," and other such miscellaneous markings.

The review of Maltese Cross Cancellations "in the 5<sup>th</sup> February, 1960 issue of "Stamp Collecting" points out that the 1d. Black postage stamp is known cancelled by a Deal Ship Letter mark on a letter of 1840.

Capt. F. W. Staff has kindly shown us also a cover of 29<sup>th</sup> October, 1841 from Honiton to Chard on which the postage stamp is cancelled by a "Too Late" mark.