



Land of Wood and Water

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Dry Harbour – a Mystery Resolved

In his list of Type P11 date-stamps¹, Foster mentions a small circular date-stamp for Dry Harbour (Type P11a) in use circa 1873, but states: “recorded by the late Mr. Collett but never seen by the compiler and cannot be confirmed”.

Two recent discoveries, confirm the existence of this instrument. The

first is as a despatch mark, dated December 16th 1872, on the reverse of a cover from Dry Harbour to Brown’s Town.



The second is as a transit mark, dated June 8th 1873, on a cover from Brown’s Town to Falmouth.

The diameter of the instrument measures approximately 22mm,

which tallies with the measurement recorded by Foster. However, the type is not Type P11a, as previously surmised and as allocated by Foster, but rather Type 12 i.e. the town and colony name are placed in an arc at the top. Unlike the other Type 12 date-stamps (Malvern and Newport, in use from 1862), there is no sign of an index letter. Why a Type 12 should have been ordered, some 10 years after the other marks of this type, remains, for now, a mystery.

1. Foster, T. Jamaica – The Postal History 1662-1860, Robson Lowe 1968, pages 95-99

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The Foster Type P7 “Utility” Date-stamp

One of the most intriguing date-stamps described by Foster¹ is his Type P7 which he describes as follows:

On 22nd October 1850, a utility date-stamp was sent to the colony together with a “double set of types and 62 additional letters”. This marking had a diameter of 33mm and with its multiplicity of ‘slugs’ and positions was obviously intended for provisional use in case of damage to or loss of any current date-stamp.

Only one example was recorded by Foster, used at Clarendon in April 1855² (fig. 1). The Clarendon Type P2a was lost during March 1855, never to be recovered. The permanent replace-

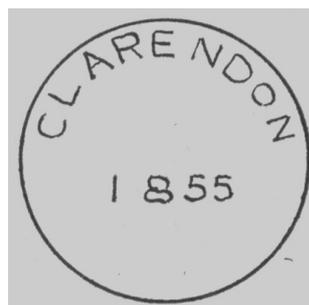


Fig. 1

ment (Type 8), despatched to Jamaica on 16th May 1855, has a earliest known date of use of 25th April 1856

Foster also records: *A further utility date-stamp was sent to Jamaica on 27th February 1858 but no evidence of its use has ever been recorded. It has a diameter of 27 ½ mm.*

Since Foster’s study, three additional examples of the Type P7 have come to light.

Inside this issue:

Dry Harbour - A Mystery Resolved	1
The Foster Type P7 “Utility” Date-stamp	1
Double Ring Date-Stamps - Use of coloured inks, 1894 to 1932	3
Walker’s Wood - P13 Anomalies	4
Ebay Watch	4

Manchioneal, 15th July 1859 (fig. 2). On cover from Manchioneal to Kingston. Illustrated in “Exploring Jamaica Through Obliterators” by I. R. Woodward (BCPSG, 1982). The reproduction is not particularly clear, but the date-stamp appears to be c. 33mm in diameter. Both Day/Month and Year slugs appear to be present, possibly inverted.

The reason for the deployment of the P7 at Manchioneal is not clear.

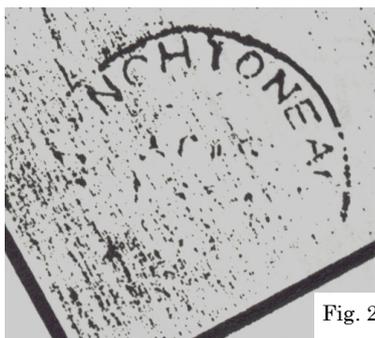


Fig. 2

A Type P2a instrument is recorded used at this office between 1840 and August 1849 and a Type P11 is known from September 1859. It is likely, therefore, that the P7 was used prior to the arrival of the P11 and following the loss of the original P2a.

Dry Harbour, 9th November 1860 (fig. 3). Described as follows in the Robson Lowe auction catalogue of 4/7/1980 (Lot 1926) - 1860 *EL* addressed from “Dry Harbour P.O.” to London, showing on the flap an unusual c.d.s. “DRY HAR-

BOUR” (uneven lettering, apparently a “travelling” or “skeleton” type, not listed by Foster). It is known that the Dry Harbour office mislaid its A36 obliterator



Fig. 3

shortly before the introduction of the Pineapple watermark stamps (23rd November 1860). It is apparent that the Type P8 date-stamp, in use since 1853, was also mislaid at the same time³.

Newport, 12th December 1862 (fig. 4 and 5). A despatch mark on a registered piece from Newport to Barclay & McDowell (Kingston). The piece is franked with adhesives to a value of 10d (4d postage



Fig. 4

plus 6d registration fee), cancelled with the A59 obliterator transferred from Morant Bay to the newly opened Newport office in October 1862. The permanent P12 date-stamp for Newport was despatched 29th October 1862, but evidently it did not arrive in time for the opening of the office⁴.

The diameter of the Dry Harbour date-stamp is not clear from the Robson Lowe description, however the Newport example measures approximately 28mm in diameter. Given the date of use at Dry Harbour, it is highly likely that both items are examples of the second, previously unrecorded instrument mentioned by Foster (i.e. Type P7b, the Clarendon and Manchioneal examples now re-classifiable as Type P7a).

These new findings help to clarify and broaden the purpose of the two Type P7 “utility” date-stamps, i.e.

- as temporary replacements due to the loss of or damage to an existing date-stamp, pending replacement or repair
- as temporary date-stamps at a newly opened office, pending arrival of the permanent instrument

1. Foster, T. Jamaica – The Postal History 1662-1860, Robson Lowe 1968, page 92

2. Potter, I.A. The Postal Markings of Jamaica, I. A. Potter 1996, page 87. Potter gives the only known date of use of the Type 7 at Clarendon as 18th April, 1855 – this date presumably being apparent from the entire to which it was applied.

3. Land of Wood and Water, Volume 1, Issue 1 – Use of Manuscript “36” at Dry Harbour, 1860-62

4. Potter records the earliest date of use of the P12 at Newport as 3rd March 1863.



Fig. 5

Double Ring Date-Stamps - Use of coloured inks, 1894 to 1932

From 1857, all Jamaican post offices were supplied with a special black ink (procured exclusively from Shackell, Edwards & Co. in London until well into the 1930s) for use with their permanent date-stamp and obliterator instruments. From time to time, due to temporary shortage of stock of the special black ink, other colours were used.

Double Ring Date-Stamps were first introduced in 1892 and were still in use well into the 1970s at many offices. The table below lists

all the known examples of Double Ring instruments struck in colours other than the regulation black between 1894 and 1932. Kingston dates are per Lewarn¹, all others per Potter². Italicised entries are authors additions and corrections.

It is worth noting that many of the instances of the use of violet ink follow directly the use of a Temporary Rubber Date-stamp, applied in violet, at the office in question. This suggests that many Post Masters took the

pragmatic, and cost conscious, approach i.e. to utilise existing ink supplies before procuring stocks of the new black ink.

1. Lewarn, A.W. The Double-Ringed Circular Date Stamps of Kingston, Jamaica, BWISC Journal 101 – 103 (and numerous supplements), between 1979 and 1986
2. Potter, I.A. The Postal Markings of Jamaica, I. A. Potter 1996
3. A forged strike of a Kingston Double Ring is known in purple ink dated FE17/14, code 6E. The forgery is not particularly well executed; the lettering in particular is very uneven.

Office	Ink Colour	EKD	LKD
Annotto Bay	Blue	26/09/1902	29/09/1902
	Blue	4/9/1906	
Askenish	Purple	6/06/1921	c. 13/06/1921
Banana Ground	Blue, Violet	7/10/1924	c. 31/12/1924
Bonny Gate	Violet	23/10/1912	9/12/1912
Buff Bay	Blue	5/09/1924	
Chalky Hill	Violet	6/04/1923	c. 31/12/1923
Glengoffe	Violet	19/12/1928	
Harewood	Violet	22/02/1929	
Harry Watch	Violet	7/04/1917	
Keith	Violet	11/3/1921	
Kingston	Blue	14/11/1893	16/11/1893
	Blue	26/11/1903	10/06/1904
	Purple ³	FE17/14	Forgery
Street Letter Box, Kingston	Blue	14/11/1893	
	Blue, Green (?)	27/11/1903	15/12/1903
Latium	Violet	23/12/1910	
Lucea	Blue	23/10/1924	13/11/1924
Lucky Hill	Violet	31/01/1922	
Milk River Bath	Violet	29/05/1922	c. 31/12/1922
Mocho	Blue	23/06/1907	
Montego Bay	Blue, Green	4/01/1904	24/03/1904
Old England	Blue	14/02/1932	
Old Harbour Bay	Violet	1/05/1922	
Port Antonio	Blue	--/02/--	
Port Maria	Blue	20/01/1904	5/02/1904
Retreat	Blue	26/09/1906	7/11/1907
Savanna-La-Mar	Blue	8/02/1894	
	Blue	20/01/1904	15/02/1904
Sherwood Content	Violet	3/05/1921	6/05/1921
Spaldings	Blue	3/10/1903	
St. Anns Bay	Blue	12/01/1904	10/03/1904
Sturge Town	Violet	6/06/1922	
Wait-a-Bit	Violet	7/03/1923	9/04/1923
Walderston	Blue	12/04/1904	22/05/1905
Water Mount	Purple	18/01/1922	
Watt Town	Blue	25/05/1905	19/11/1910
Woodford	Violet	5/08/1922	7/04/1923



Retreat, 1907



Savanna La Mar, 1904



Spaldings, 1903



SLB Kingston, 1893

Walker's Wood—P13 Anomalies

Close examination of two examples of the rare Walker's Wood P13 date-stamp highlight some interesting differences (see figure). In the example dated 1890, the "W" of "Walker's" is clearly aligned below the day and month plugs, the "R" is blind, the "S" is upright and the "D" appears reversed. In the example dated 1891 the "W" is directly in line with the day/month, the "R" appears clear and the "S" is possibly inverted.



Perhaps the instrument was disassembled, cleaned and reassembled in a slightly different orientation?

Ebay Watch

Buying and selling "on-line" (over the Internet) may not be to everyone's fancy, but it certainly has its rewards for those brave enough to try.

All of the items below have been recently auctioned on Ebay, one of the Web's largest and most popu-

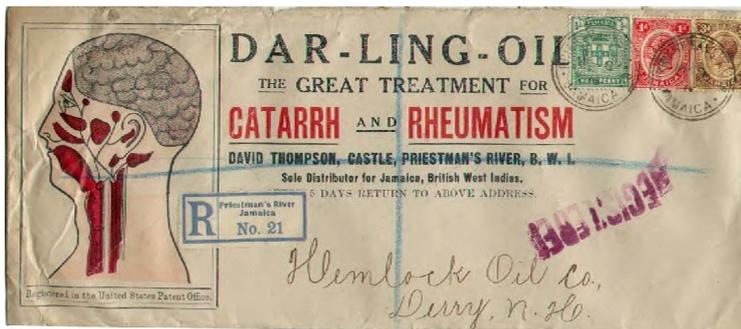
lar auction sites. While much of what appears on Ebay (which runs tens of thousands of auctions each day) is of questionable quality or value, nice items (often at very nice prices) frequently appear.

Anyone wanting to take the

plunge should find their way to www.ebay.com and sign themselves up as a registered user. It is worth noting that Ebay simply facilitates the sale; it does not involve itself in the transfer of money or goods. In this respect, Ebay should be treated with a modicum of common sense and caution.



September 1902 patriotic (?) cover from Morant Bay to London. Imprint "Marchalleck & Co / Morant Bay / Jamaica / W.I." on flap. Ebay, 19/2/00, realised \$13.51



Two advertising covers (1915, 1916, one registered) for "Dar-ling-oil / The great treatment for / catarrh and rheumatism". Sent from "David Thompson, Castle, Priestman's River, B.W.I." to Derry, New Hampshire. Ebay, 19/2/00, realised \$17.50



October 1861 cover from London to Barclay & McDowell in Kingston. "1d" in red denoting proportion of postage payable to colony? Ebay, 27/2/00, did not reach reserve of £75



1859 large piece from Porus (to Kingston?) franked two pairs of GB 1d cancelled A68 (not apparently tied?). Piece also bears Porus Type P5 despatch mark of June 7th. Ebay, 6/3/00, did not reach reserve of \$125