

A. Postal Cancellations

2. Bar Cancellations— Early Use on Imperforated Pence Issues

With the issuance of postage stamps in 1857, bar cancellations were used, and continued as the standard through the 1870s on the first Ceylon pence issues. These stamps were first imperforate, followed by perforated issues of varying types. Bar cancels, too, varied in type with differing thickness, used by themselves or sometimes with pen cancels. Cancels were generally in black, although some cancels were found in red.

Early use of thin bar cancel.



Note Colombo Post Paid red cancel on reverse, this has a similar design to the cancels on the handstruck mail cancels of the 1840s shown on the prior page.

October 15, 1860 Colombo departure and a December 2, 1860 arrival in London, 48 days from sending to delivery.



Heavier cancels, wide bar width



Thin cancels, narrow bar width

Bar Cancels vary in width between bars, heaviness of application, and number of bars on the cancel, and completeness of strike.



Typical cancel, not full strike



Unusual cross hatch type bar cancel



→ Unusual Red Cancellation, uncommon in the 1850s-1870s. These may be from partial circular cancels like the Colombo cancel



Cancel rarely applied with Red Ink  
Red used for Receiving and Transit Marks



Following British convention, circular paid stamps were used on mail replacing the earlier hand stamps used.



Examples of stamps, lighter to heavier inked cancels

These stamps were cancelled with Diagonal Bar Obliterator cancels, made in Ceylon and India.



Three Oval Bar Cancels on Piece  
Rate: 3/4d rate, for a triple rate via Marseilles.



Heavily inked strip, note ink fill between bars



Appropriate Marking:  
Two tied bar obliterators  
Rate: 1/6d on piece.  
From an 1868-1872, 1 oz cover,  
routing via Southampton.