

Scots Local Postmarks on Penny Reds - 1854-1860

Purpose: To show each type of the so-called Scots Local postmarks, describing differences in formats of the postmarks used by different sub-post offices. The exhibit also explains how and why these name-stamps were used and the routing of the mail processed through the sub-post offices. Only examples canceling **Penny Red** adhesives are shown, as this was the postage amount for inland letters, the only expected to be processed at sub-post offices.

Local sub-post offices were directed to cancel stamps on mail brought to their offices under a specific Edinburgh, Scotland GPO requirement, not tied to any protocol driven by the GPO in London, England. The Official Period of Scots Locals use to obliterate adhesives began 26 October, 1854. It stipulated that postal sub-offices use their undated name stamps to obliterate adhesives on mail it received. This same directive forbade the Chief Offices to further cancel adhesives when the mail was addressed to outside the local delivery area. Previously, the undated name-stamps were used by sub-offices as back stamp receivers only, and all canceling of adhesives was done at parent offices.

On 18 February, 1860, a new Edinburgh circular ended the Official Period, it stipulated, "The practice of obliteration postage stamps at sub-offices shall be discontinued in every case. You must cease to obliterate postage labels, letters are dispatched to the Head Office as the duty will be performed there instead." The exhibit provides examples of Scots Locals canceling the **Penny Red** throughout the short period of use.



Pitt Street
Small Framed
Scots Local
First Month of Use
as an obliterator
November, 1854

What distinguishes a Scottish Local Postmark is that it is an **undated** name-stamp. In Scotland, datestamps were issued to larger volume post offices. This exhibit is organized by kind of postmark, and shown by city (or parent) post office, detailing differences by city *previously not described*.

Urban post office receiving houses and rural sub offices were equipped with only the less expensive undated name-stamps, some dating back to pre-adhesive times. Realizing that cross-town and local mail could be delivered without processing through a parent post office, the practice of having these office canceling the postage was initiated.

All rates shown are one penny, all adhesives are the Penny Red.
Significant items are framed in red plaid.

Exhibit Plan

Organized by the Six kinds of Scots Local postmarks:

- I. Small Framed
 - II. Large Framed
 - III. Double Lined
 - IV. Large Lined
 - V. Unframed
 - VI. Circle Double Arcs
- End of Use

I. Small Framed

Used in Edinburgh

The Scots Local postmark with Small Frame from Edinburgh had sans serif capitals in a thin oblong frame, locally produced.



Posted since 7 pm
Last Night
Edinburgh GPO
marking

Antigua St.
Small Framed
Postmark Used
1856-1857

Edinburgh local use 28 June, 1856—next day

Routing: Antigua Street sub office →Edinburgh GPO→Local Delivery



Clerk St.
Small Framed
Used 1856-1858
Mourning Cover

To Leith, 19 February, 1857—same day delivery

Routing: Clerk Street sub office →Leith Post Office→Delivery

Per official protocol, each letter received at the sub post office had its postage obliterated at receipt. Mail for delivery out of the immediate area was sent to the parent post office for city local delivery or other onward delivery points.

I. Small Framed

Used in Glasgow

The Scots Local Postmark with Small Frame used in Glasgow sub post offices had a similar format to those from Edinburgh, but type variations are noticeable. Glasgow type styles are smaller and more rounded.

Old Kilpatrick
Small Framed
Used 1857-1858
Blue-Green

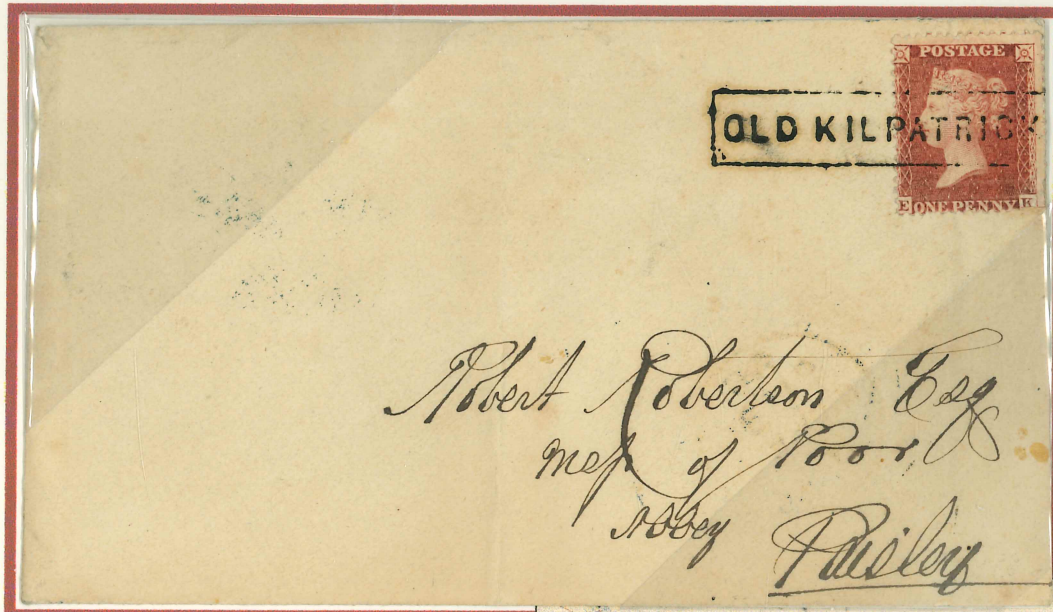


Glasgow local use 19 May, 1857—same day

Routing: Old Kilpatrick sub office →Glasgow PO→Local Delivery

One of three covers recorded with Old Kilpatrick struck in blue-green.

Old Kilpatrick
Small Framed
Used 1854-1859



To Paisley 13 September, 1858—next day

Routing: Old Kilpatrick sub office →Glasgow
PO→Paisley PO →Delivery

Reverse partial: transit
markings at 100%



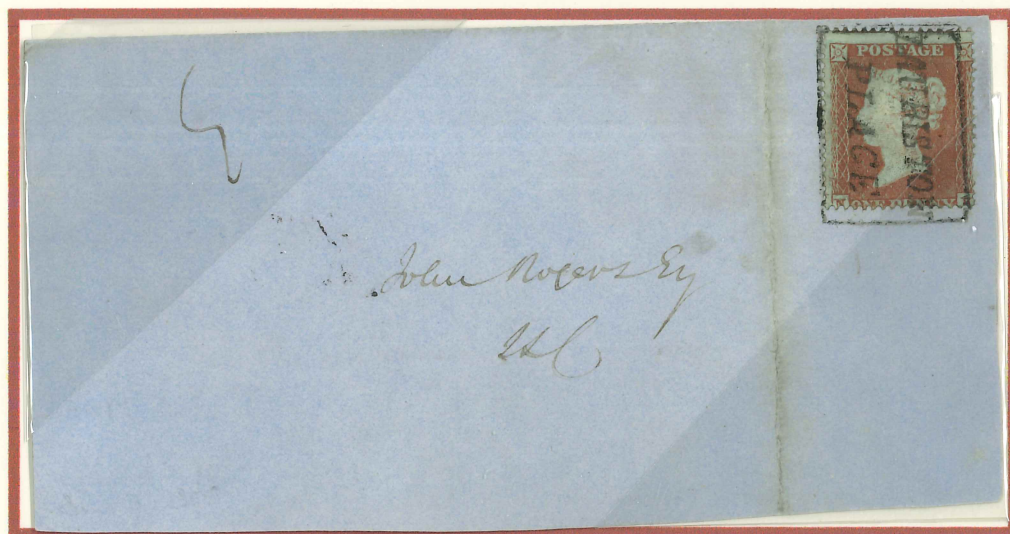
Ink Colors: The majority of Scots Local Postmarks were struck using black ink. Blue-green and shades of blue or green are the only other colors observed.

II. Large Framed

Used in Edinburgh

Large Framed Scots Local markings are found in single and two line formats, both types were used in Edinburgh.

Lauriston Place
Large Framed
Used 1854-1858



Edinburgh local use, 3 June, 1855—same day

Front, partial back

Routing: Lauriston Place sub office →Edinburgh GPO→Delivery



Canongate
Large Framed
Used 1854-1858

Edinburgh local use, 21 June, 1856—next day

Routing: Canongate sub office →Edinburgh GPO→Delivery

Edinburgh GPO datestamp Posted Since 7 Last Night

Font Variations: Lauriston Place is only marking using Roman Capitals in Italic font. Canongate has Sans Serif Capital in a large rectangular frame.

Horizontal and Vertical Strikes: Post office regulation did not dictate how the strikes were to be placed, different offices had different patterns of placement. Lauriston strikes are more often placed strikes vertically, neatly obliterating the stamp.

II. Large Framed

Used in Edinburgh & Glasgow

Scots Local undated name were use as backstamp receivers, both earlier and in the period of use as obliterators.

Sandport Street
Large Framed
Used 1854-1858



To Kirkcaldy, 15 January, 1857—next day
Routing: Sandport sub office →Edinburgh
GPO→Kirkcaldy PO → Delivery
←Earlier use as receiver, June, 1853

Contrary to Regulation: ↓ Use as Backstamp



On Reverse: Glasgow obliteration→



To Beith, 15 December, 1858
Routing: Osborne Building sub
office →Glasgow PO →Beith PO
same day delivery
Osborne Buildings
Large Framed
Used 1855-1858

To Edinburgh, 11 September, 1857—next day

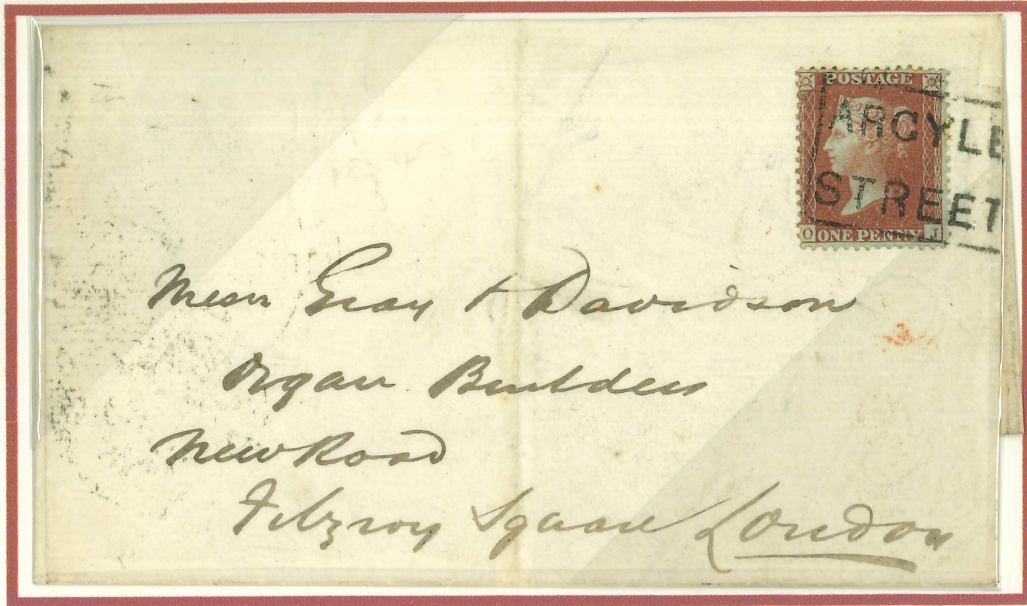
Routing: Osborne Building sub office →Glasgow PO →Edinburgh GPO → Delivery

II. Large Framed

Used in Glasgow

The Large Framed two lined boxed markings with sans serif capitals provided especially clear strikes and adequately obliterated the stamps. The larger block type is typical of use in Glasgow sub offices.

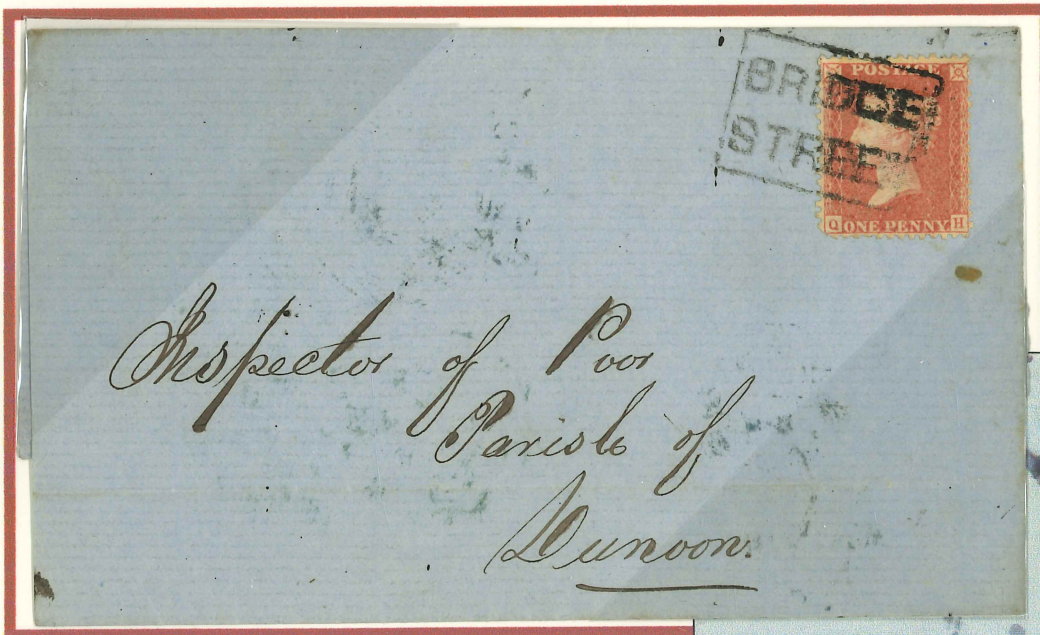
Argyle Street
Large Framed
Used 1854-1858



To London 19 February, 1857—2 days

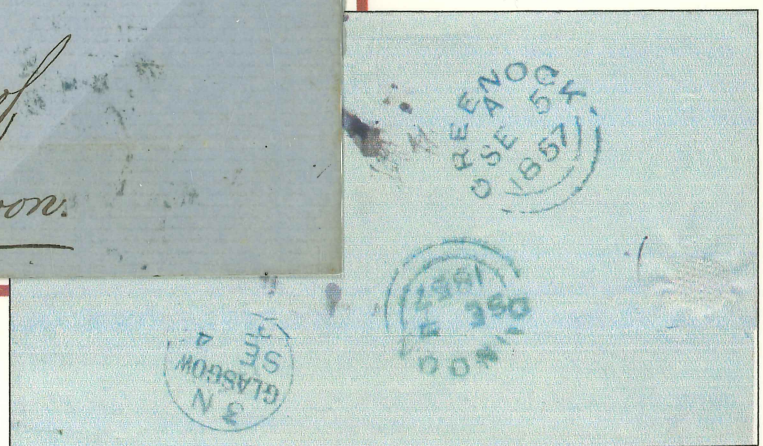
Routing: Argyle Street sub office →Glasgow PO→London GPO→ Delivery

Bridge Street
Large Framed
Used 1854-1858



To Dunoon 4 September, 1857—next day

Routing: Bridge Street sub office →Glasgow PO→Greenock
PO→ Dunoon PO→Delivery



Reverse (at 75%) shows three postal markings, four post offices in all.

Postal Accountability: While name-stamps were initially used for internal postal purposes, much of the increase in date stamping along each step of the way where a letter passed between post offices had to do with showing increased accountability to the public, with growing expectations and reliance on timely delivery.

III. Double Lined

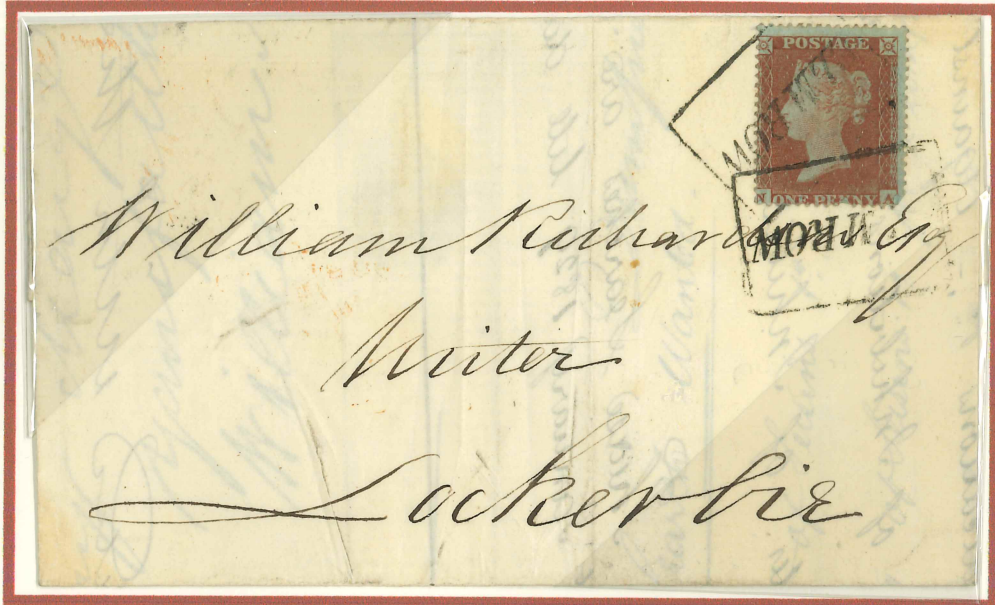
Used in Edinburgh

The Double Lined marking is found with sans serif capitals and also Roman capitals. The marking is smaller in overall size than the boxed marking, and was used intermittently throughout the period.

Matched Pair—The earlier Scot Local postmark and its replacement Scots Local

Some sub offices change name-stamp devices during the six year period of use as obliterations. The reasons for this are varied: Need for additional devices, worn device replacement, and adhering to new local styles.

Elm Row
Large Framed
Used 1854-1857

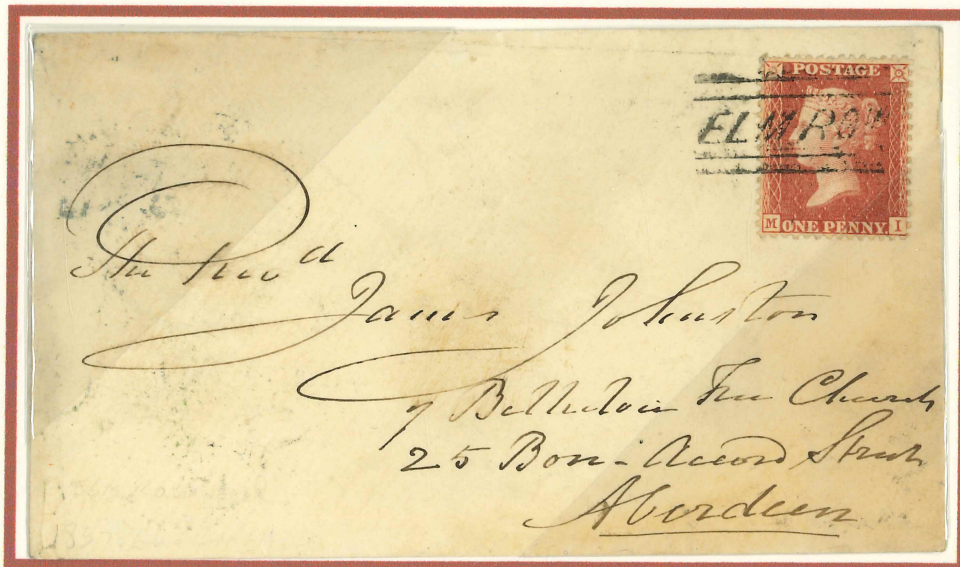


To Lockerby 20 December, 1854—next day

Routing: Elm Row sub office →Edinburgh GPO →Lockerby PO→ Delivery

Used in first year, Double Strike—first strike (left, upward) lightly inked, and second (lower, horizontal) more heavily inked for certain obliteration.

Elm Row
Replacement
Double Lined
Used 1857-1858



To Aberdeen 14 December, 1857—next day

Routing: Elm Row sub office →Edinburgh GPO →Aberdeen PO→ Delivery

Elm Row Large Framed: Roman Capitals, Italic in large rectangular frame. Its use ended as the doubled lined format came to use.

Elm Row Double Lined: Sans Serif Capitals, Italic, two lines above and below, use beginning in 1857.

III. Double Lined

Used in Edinburgh

The Edinburgh Double Lined postmark are distinguished from other towns only by their font style of Roman Capitals in Italic.

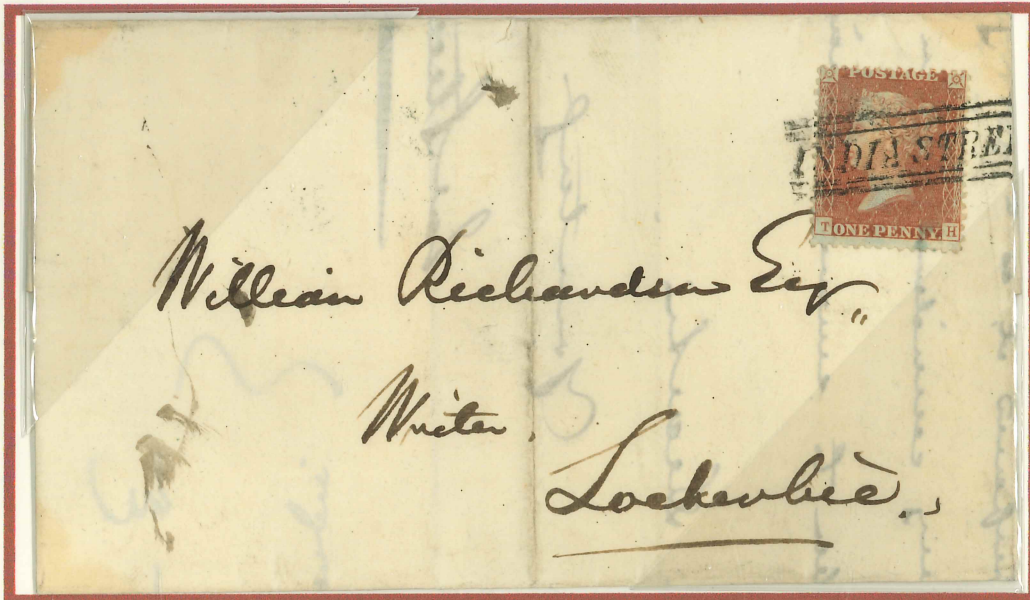
Port Hopeton
Double Lined
Used 1855-1858



Edinburgh Local 11 July, 1856—same day
Routing: Port Hopeton sub office →Edinburgh GPO →Delivery

India Street
Double Lined
Used 1854-1858

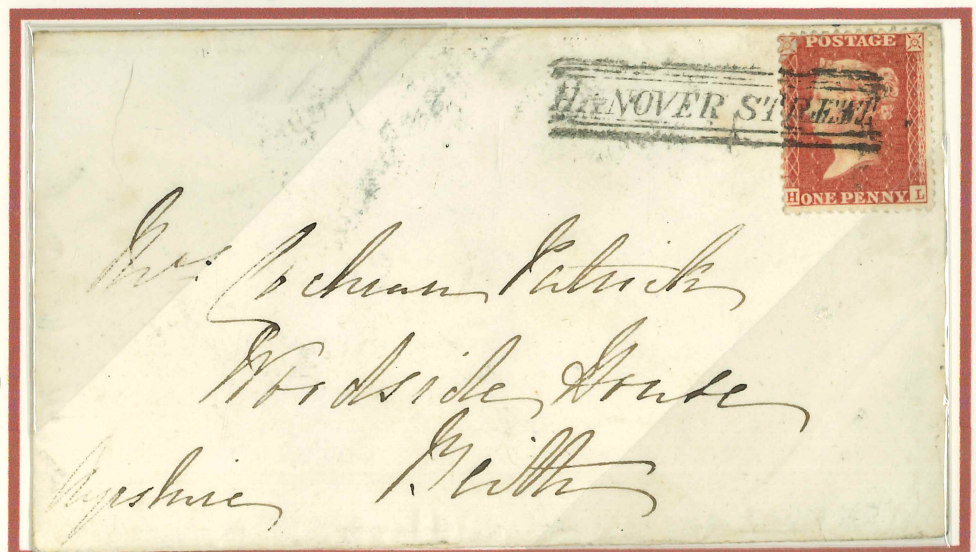
December, 1857
To Dumfrieshire



To Lockerby 11 February, 1857—same day
Routing: India Street sub office →Edinburgh GPO →Lockerby PO →Delivery

Hanover Street
Double Lined
Used 1854-1858

To Beith 1 October, 1856—next day
Routing: Hanover Street sub office →Edinburgh
GPO →Beith PO →Delivery



III. Double Lined

Used in Glasgow

The Glasgow Double Lined postmark vary in font style from those of Edinburgh, making them easy to distinguish. Duke Street has San Serif Capitals in Italics, while Gordon Street has a Roman Capitals G in Italic and other letters San Serif.



Gordon Street
Large Framed
Used 1855-1858
Note Serif G

To Edinburgh 15 May, 1856—same day

Routing: Gordon Street sub office →Glasgow PO→Edinburgh GPO →St Andrews Square Delivery

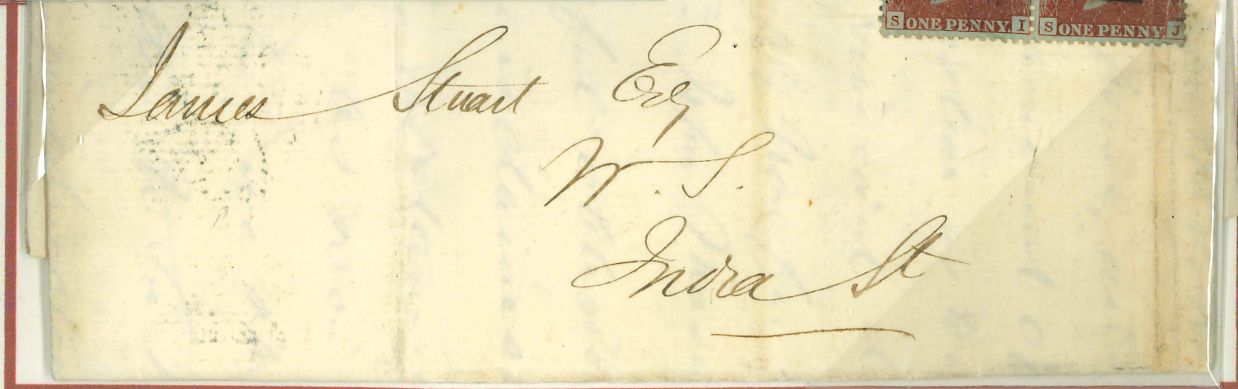


Duke Street
Double Lined
Used 1854-1855

To Macduff 8 December, 1856—next day

Routing: Duke Street sub office →Edinburgh GPO
→Banff PO →Marduff Delivery

Double Rate Letter



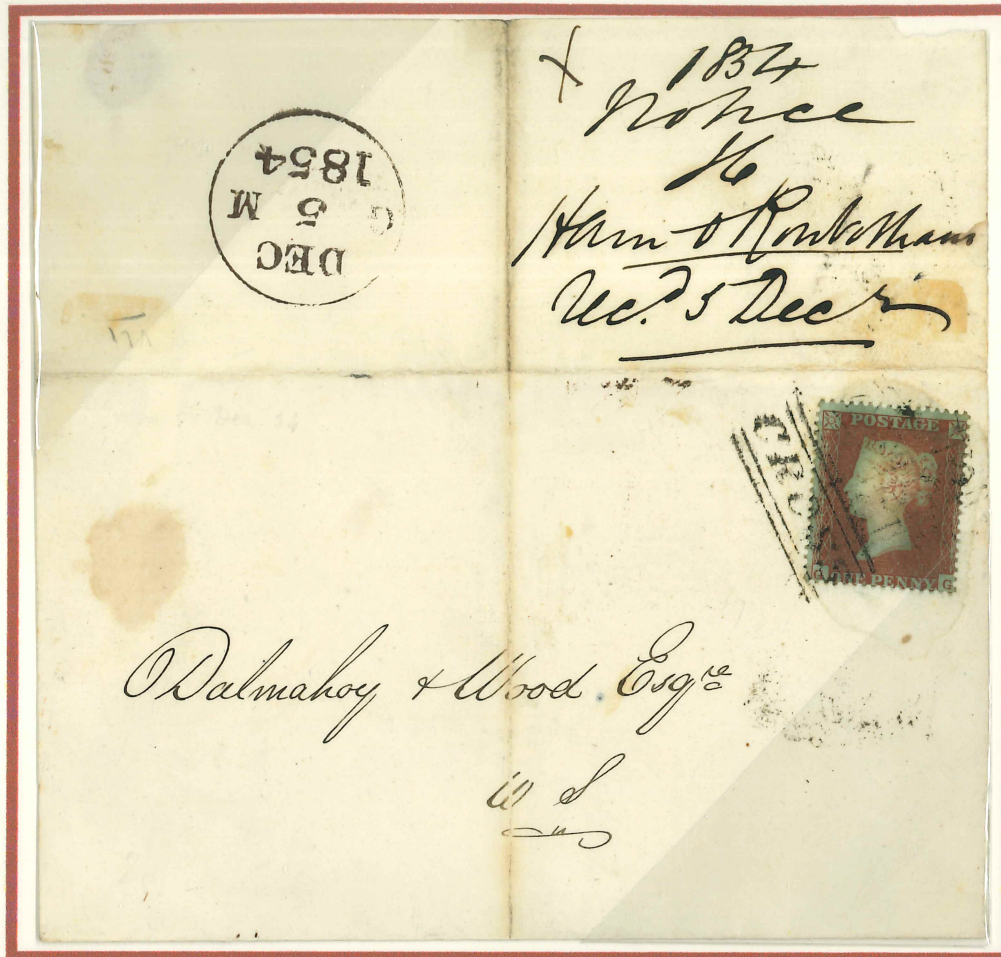
Centered Strike
for Two Stamps

To Edinburgh 20 June, 1857—next day

Routing: Duke Street sub office →Edinburgh GPO →India Street Delivery

III. Double Lined

Used in Edinburgh and Aberdeen



Cross

Large Framed

Used 1854-1858

Edinburgh Local 5 December, 1854—same day

Routing: Cross Street sub office →Edinburgh GPO →Delivery

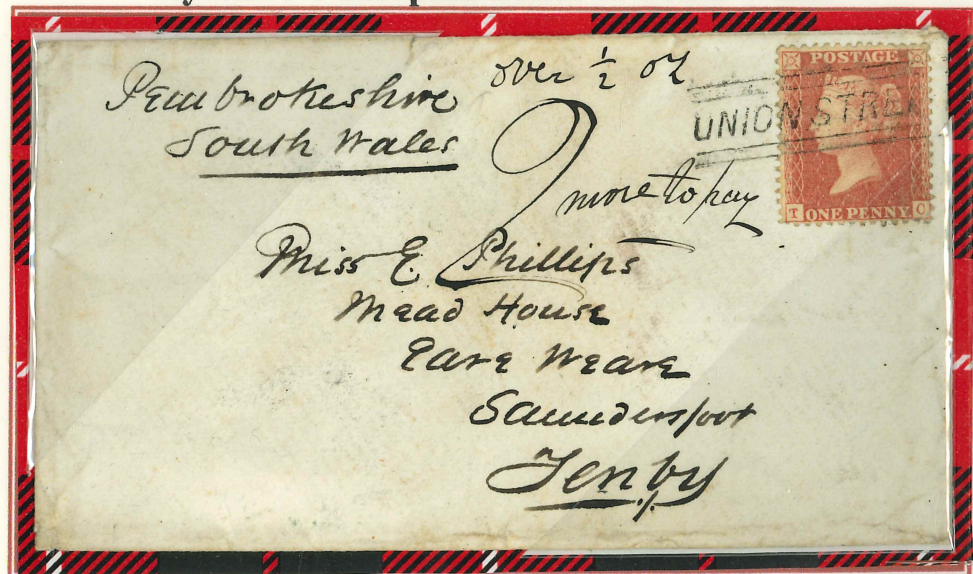
Used in first year, earliest recorded use of marking 7 November, 1854.

Double Strike—first strike (upward, to the right) lightly inked, and second (left, nearly vertical) more heavily inked for certain obliteration.

Ayrshire Underpaid Letter to South Wales

More to Pay Over ½ oz →
Manuscript 2—2d Due

Union Street
Double Lined
Used 1857-1859



To South Wales 15 September, 1854—next day

Routing: Union Street sub office →Aberdeen PO →Pembrokeshire, South Wales PO →Tenby Delivery

Limited Handstamps: Not only did Scotland's sub offices not have date stamps, this cover provides an example of manuscript notations regarding rate, as they also did not have customary handstamps for underpayment.

IV. Large Lined

Used in Glasgow and Dumbarton

Large Sans Serif Capitals with single line above and below are uncommon and are found used from towns with longer names, with sizes starting at 55 mm. A doubled Large Lined was also used.

They are not found from sub post offices of Edinburgh GPO.

Scots Local to Scots Local: From and To Sub Post Offices

Strathblane
Large Lined
Used 1857-1859

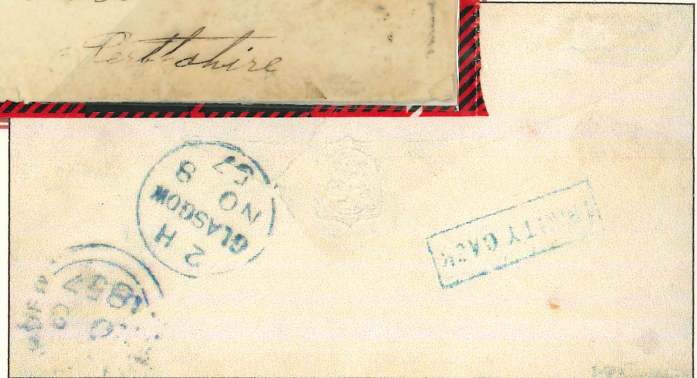
Fast Processing:
Four Postal Facilities
and over 50 miles

Strathblane
Glasgow
Trinity Cask
Auchterarder



To Auchterarder 8 November, 1857—next day

Strathblane Stirling/Glasgow Sub-office →
Glasgow PO → Perthshire Trinity Cask sub
office → Auchterarder Destination



Reverse transits at 75%

Cardross
Large Lined
Used 1857-1860

Dumbarton sub-office
to Renfrewshire—
Paisley office



To Paisley 1 March, 1859—next day

Routing: Cardross sub office → Dumbarton PO → Paisley PO → Delivery

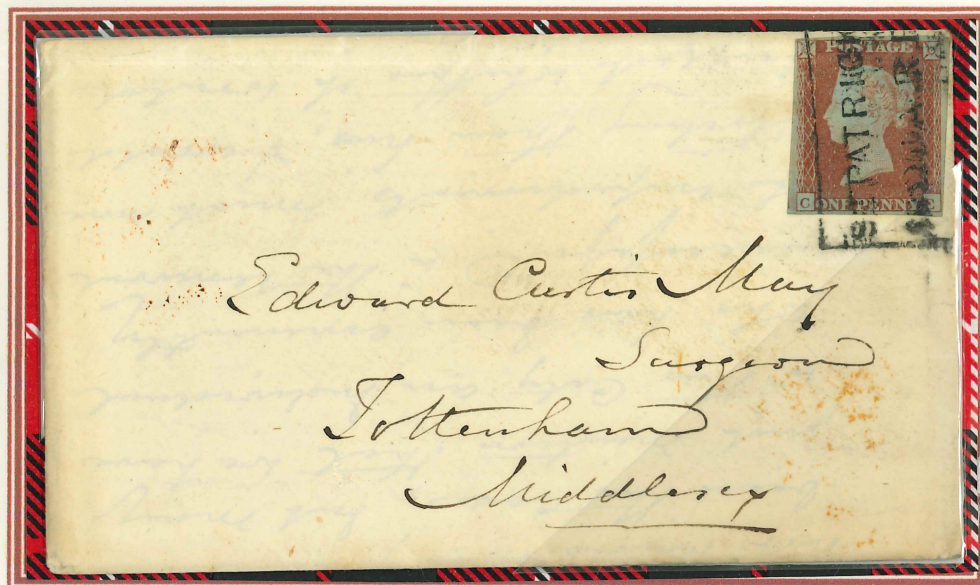
II. Large Framed

Used in Edinburgh

The Large Framed Scots Local Postmarks were not a replacement for the small framed, but instead were typically made for post offices with names that more neatly fit with a two lined or oversized format. Format sizes were 16 mm vs. 10 mm frame size typically. Large Framed postmarks were used concurrently with all other versions. Most Large Framed postmarks are from Edinburgh sub-offices.

St. Patrick Square
Large Framed
October, 1854
Used 1854-1858

Vertical Strike on
imperf Penny Red



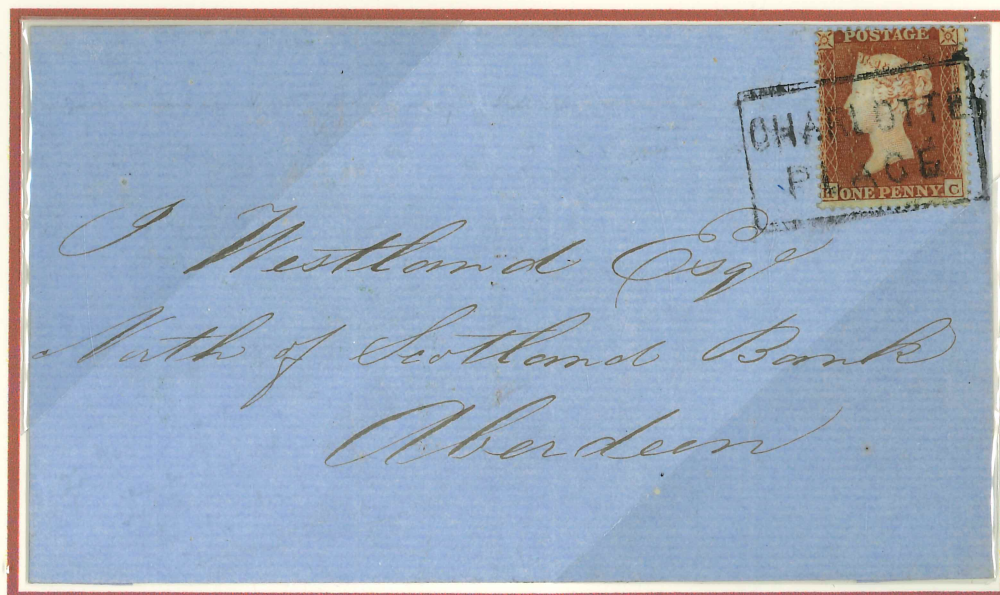
To Middlesex, England, 30 October, 1854—next day

Routing: St. Patrick Square Street sub office →Edinburgh GPO→London
GPO→Middlesex Delivery

Used in first four days, earliest recorded use of marking

Charlotte Place
Large Framed
Second Month of Use
December, 1858
Used 1854-1858

Horizontal Strike

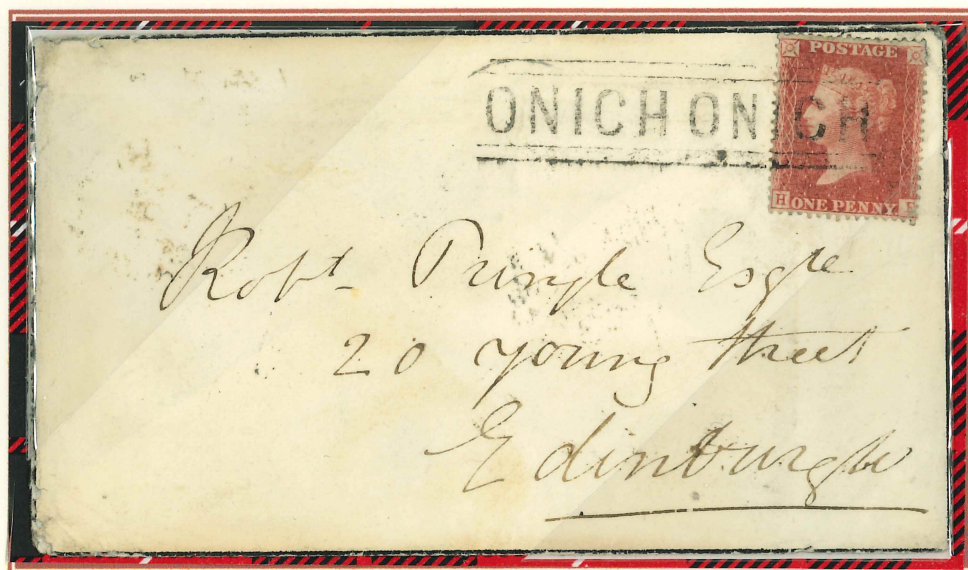


To Aberdeen, 22 December, 1854—next day

Routing: Charlotte Place sub office →Edinburgh GPO→Aberdeen PO → Delivery

Early use: early use of the Scots Local Postmarks is especially regarded and collected. While the Official Period of use began 16 October, 1854, it has been up to collectors to find the first examples of use by sub-office, and dates vary considerably. Collectors categorize dating by "First Months of Use" the early use period in 1854.

Onich Onich
Large Lined Date Stamp—Name Repeated



Onich Onich

Large Double Lined

Double Named

Used 1857-1858

Mourning Cover

To Edinburgh 8 June, 1858—next day delivery

Routing: Onich sub office →Bonaw PO→Edinburgh GPO →Delivery

One of five covers known

Why repeat the office name? - No one knows, many have conjectured:

- ◆ One office name to obliterate the stamp, one to be readable alongside .
- ◆ Additional name for ensuring obliterating the postage stamps only where the office name was short.
- ◆ Designed to confirm in look, length and utility with other Large Lined postmarks.

Name of Office Repeated: Of all Scots Local Postmarks, those with the office name repeated are the most prized in collecting. Precisely because it is not specifically known why the name was duplicated that has led to the speculation and interest.

V. Unframed

Used in Edinburgh and Glasgow

Unframed markings were used in very few instances, with one and two line examples. Markings are in Roman Capitals.

Cowcaddens
Unframed
Used 1854-1855



COWCADDENS

To Glasgow 22 June, 1855—same day

Routing: Cowcaddens sub office →Glasgow PO →Delivery

Cowcaddens marking always struck Vertically. Cover front, partial back.

Scots Local to Scots Local: Same Day

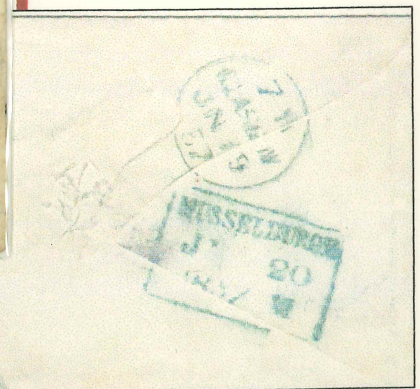


Portland Street
Unframed
Used 1854-1858

To Musselburgh 19 June, 1857—same day

Routing: Portland Street sub office →Edinburgh GPO

→Glasgow PO →Musselburgh Sub Office→Delivery



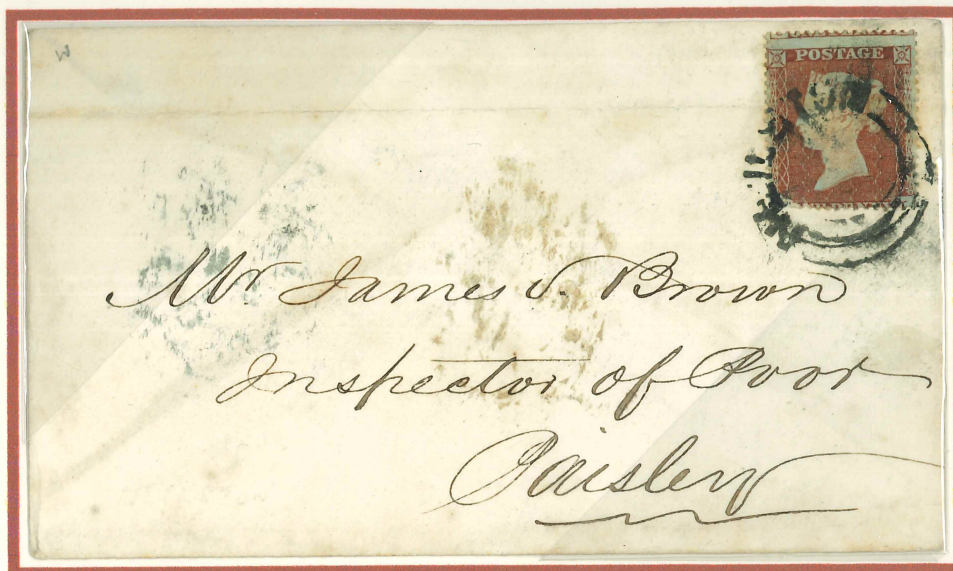
Remarkable Service: Above letter sent from Portland Street, a sub-office of Glasgow, across the "neck" of Scotland, to Musselburgh, a small sub-office of Edinburgh. Posted in the afternoon of one day, it was delivered in the morning of the next. This letter passed through two sub-offices and two city offices. Reverse transits with N—afternoon and M—morning).

VI. Circle Double Arcs

Used in Renfrewshire

Neilston
Circle Double Arcs
Used 1854-1858
March, 1855
Used 1854—1857

Dumbarton sub-office



To Paisley 29 March, 1855—next day

Routing: Neilston sub office →Glasgow PO→Paisley PO →Delivery

Matched Pair—The earlier Scot Local and its replacement Scot Local



Lockwinnock
Circle Double Arcs
Used 1854-1857

To Paisley 28 January, 1856—same day

Routing: Lockwinnock →Paisley PO →Delivery

Lochwinnoch→
Large Lined
Used 1857-1859



To Paisley 28 December, 1858—same day

Routing: Lochwinnoch sub office →Paisley PO →Delivery

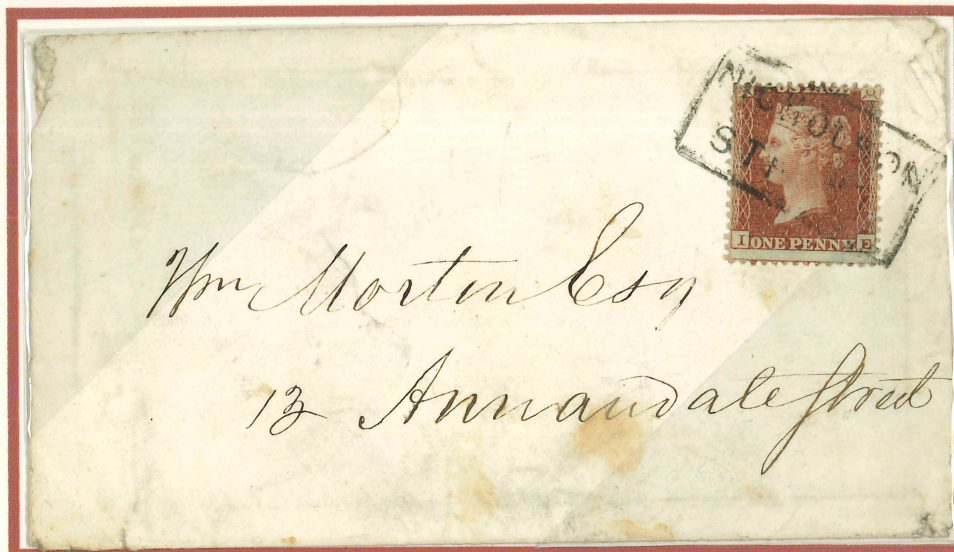
Note spelling change. from **Lockwinnock** with a **K** on the Circular Arcs to **Lochwinnoch** with an **H** on the Large Lined postmark. Wear on the earlier circular marking making it difficult to read. This circular marking used extensively prior to postage stamps, with many of the devices well over 20 years old by 1856.

VII. Use Change

Conclusion

Following the issuance of postage stamps in 1840, concurrent needs for obliterating the stamps, providing tracking and maintaining efficiency entailed the experimental use of Scots Local namestamps as postmarks from 26 October, 1854 until 18 February, 1860. By 1860, further postal accountability to delivery date drove a change to date stamping, like we are accustomed to today.

**Nicholson Street
Framed Namestamp
Used 1854-1858**

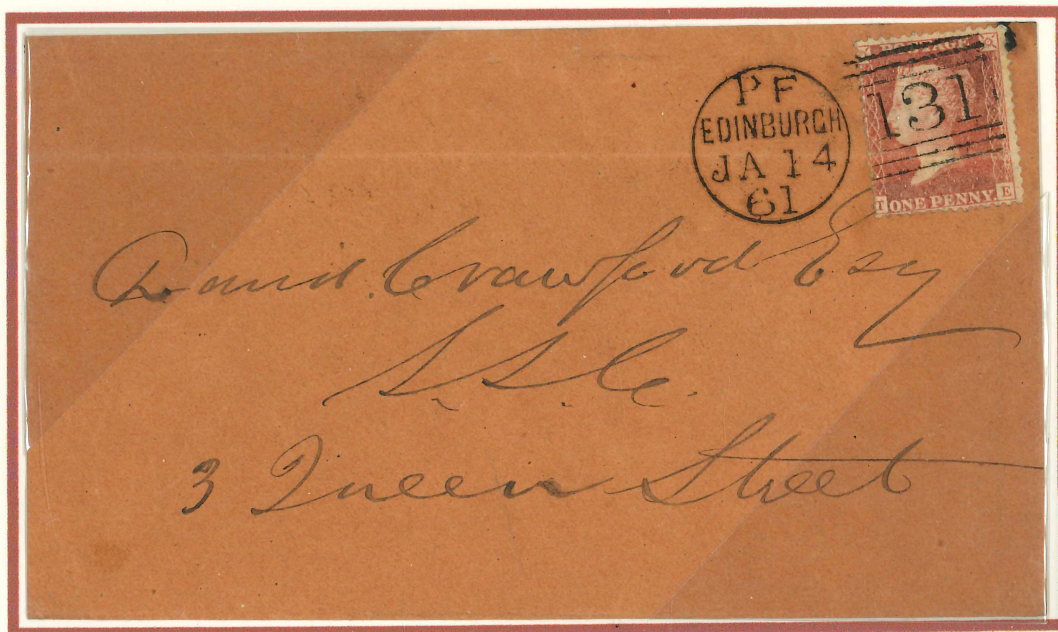


To Edinburgh 6 December, 1855—same day

Routing: Nicholson Street sub office →Edinburgh GPO →Delivery

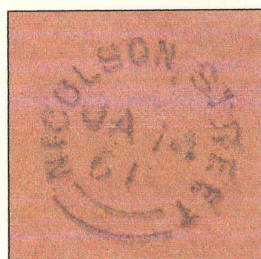
Conclusion: Scot Local Use Ends—New Datestamps Replace Earlier Name stamps

**Nicholson Street
Circle Double Arcs
Datestamp
January, 1861**



To Edinburgh 14 January, 1861—same day

Routing: Nicholson Street sub office →Edinburgh GPO →Queen Street Delivery



Reverse datestamp

The Official Period ended: On 18 February, 1860, a new Edinburgh circular stipulated, "The practice of obliteration postage stamps at sub-offices shall be discontinued in every case. You must cease to obliterate postage labels, letters are dispatched to the Head Office as the duty will be performed there instead." All markings were ordered to be removed from all use.

The New Accountability process: Sub offices back stamp, Parent Post Offices Cancel, Datestamps replace all name-stamps.

Epilogue: Scots Local Postmarks, regarded for their variety and use, remain among the most collectable and sought after of all Scottish postmarks.