

## 1.0 Usage of the Handstamps of the Uniform Four Penny Post and “4” as a charge mark.

### Background

1.1 This display will present examples of the usage of the handstruck “4’s” from the regions within the UK during the period of the Uniform Fourpenny Post and 4’s used as a charge mark. The experiment commenced on 5th of December 1839 at the 4d rate for letters of not more than ½oz to anywhere in the UK and Ireland and lasted until 9th of January 1840, a period of only 36 days. The Uniform Fourpenny Post was the first component of the comprehensive reform to the Royal Mail postal service that took place in the 19th century. Usually, the rate is presented in manuscript, but some towns had a specific 4d handstamps created.

### Aim

1.2 Within Ireland an italic 4 was used while other areas throughout Great Britain used a more block defined four. The Aim of this display is to compare the Irish italic charge mark against its counter parts, to show the usage of the different types of 4’s to pay postage and their later usage as a charge mark.

### Structure

1.3 Examples from the Great Britain and Ireland regions are included within the display. The layout is presented in Table 1 below with pages 1.2-1.6 showing use during the U4P period. Some of these hand stamps continued in use after the Uniform 4d period as postage due marks and the second half of the display records their use after 9<sup>th</sup> January 1840. Pages 1.7 and 1.8 show examples from England and Wales as charge marks and to demonstrate the different type of mark in use in GB, while pages 1.9 to 1.16 show usage of the Irish marks. The important items are illustrated with 4 and rising to 444 for the most important items, representing one of the few as yet recorded known usage.

|           |                                   |         |                                         |           |                        |           |                          |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Page<br>1 | Handstruck Four's<br>Introduction | 5<br>4  | Ireland<br>Dundalk 4                    | 9<br>444  | Ireland<br>Ballymena 4 | 13<br>444 | Ireland<br>Enniskillen 4 |
| 2<br>4    | Ireland<br>Dublin dotted 4        | 6<br>44 | England<br>Ashburton 4                  | 10<br>444 | Ireland<br>Newry 4     | 14<br>4   | Ireland<br>Drogheda 4    |
| 3         | Scotland<br>Glasgow 4             | 7       | London Treasury use<br>as a charge mark | 11<br>4   | Ireland<br>Belfast 4   | 15<br>4   | Ireland<br>Drogheda 4    |
| 4<br>4    | Scotland<br>Edinburgh 4           | 8<br>44 | Wales<br>Bangor 4                       | 12<br>444 | Ireland<br>Roscrea 4   | 16<br>4   | Ireland<br>Down 4        |

Table 1 – Layout of Display

### Irish Charge Mark Usage

1.4 Within Ireland 9 towns are initially recorded as using a special italic type handstamp, namely; Armagh, Ballymena, Belfast, Dublin, Dundalk, Enniskillen, Galway, Newry, and Roscrea. Later Derry, Down and Drogheda have been added to the known locations. The handstruck “4” for the initial towns was originally issued by Dublin Castle, the remaining two at Ballymena, and Roscrea had a locally produced handstamp. Table 2 outlines the 16 as yet known Irish usage as charge marks since 8<sup>th</sup> January 1840. Those included within this display are shown in red.

|           |                                        |                            |                   |             |                                 |
|-----------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| Armagh    | 5.1.40, 31.5.44, 3.8.44                | Derry, Dundalk<br>& Galway | Not<br>Known      | Enniskillen | 1.12.44                         |
| Ballymena | 4.7.40, 17.7.40 (Not<br>Dublin Castle) | Dublin<br>(Later at Down)  | 21.2.40<br>3.7.68 | Newry       | 5.9.42                          |
| Belfast   | 10.12.40, 3.2.44, 7.4.49,<br>28.10.50  | Drogheda                   | 4.2.47,<br>4.3.47 | Roscrea     | 11.11.44 (Not<br>Dublin Castle) |

Table 2 – Recorded Irish Examples as Charge marks.

### Bibliography:

Alcock and Holland, Chadwick, Erhard Zietlow, FAI, Fletcher Collection (British Library), James MacKay, Kane, Robson Lowe, Treasury Minutes, Wilcocks.

## 2.0 The Act &amp; Dublin Dotted 4 – Ireland Use.

2.1 The 17<sup>th</sup> August 1839 ACT, 2&3 Victoria, c52 set out a new postal regime "without reference to the Distance or Number of Miles the same shall be conveyed" with charging by weight. Prior to going to Uniform 1d postage this trial was decided upon setting the rate at 4d for anywhere within the British Isles.

1839

SINGLE SHEET.

Mr. JOHN ~~McK...~~ *MacKenzie*

Scottish (Widows' Fund) Life Assurance Office,

5. St. Andrew's Square,

EDINBURGH.

Above: 1839, December 13<sup>th</sup>, letter from Dublin to Edinburgh with the dotted Dublin 4 handstamp. Backstamped Scottish Circular Receiver DEC/C 18 E/1839.

Left: 1839, December 27<sup>th</sup>, Consignee letter from Dublin referring to 49 sacks of Super Fine Flour, on arrival at Glasgow struck with a 4 handstamp, unpaid to Leith. Only the inland Postage was charged as Consignee letters were Free.

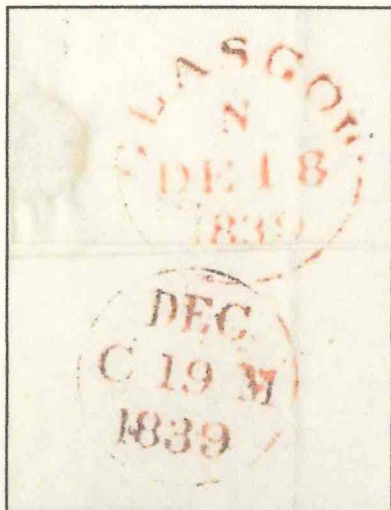
Shipped in good Order and Condition by FRANCIS HURRY & Co. Dublin, in and upon the good Ship or Vessel called the *Griffin* is Master for this present Voyage, and now lying in the Port of Dublin, and bound for *Glasgow*



CHARLES HOPKINS

### 3.0 Glasgow 4 – Scotland Usage

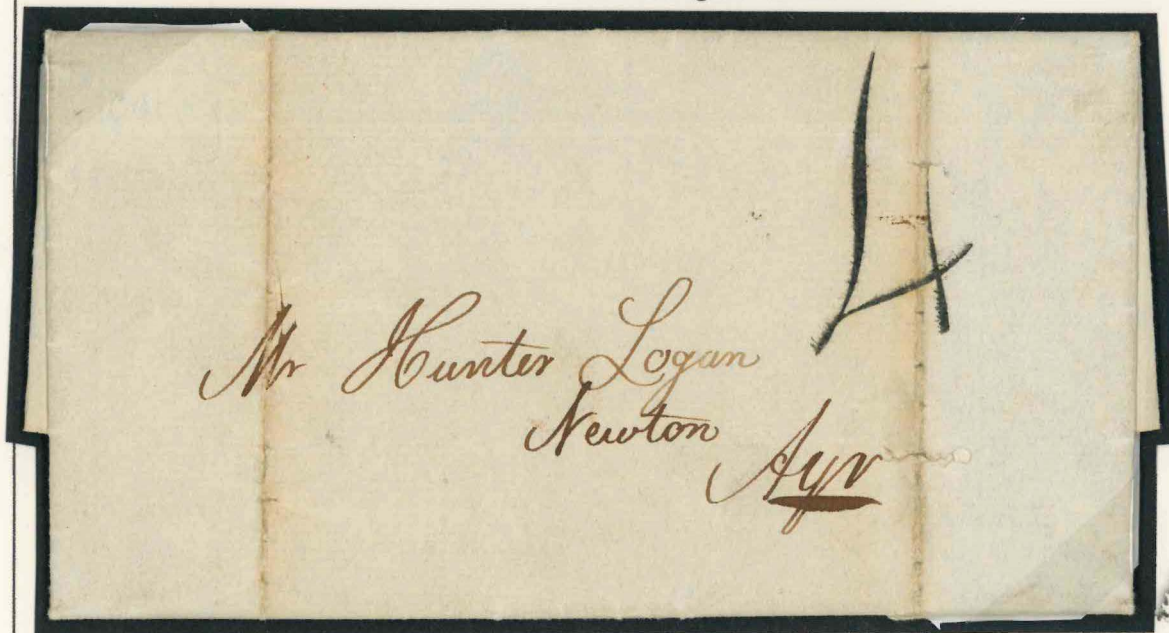
3.1 An 1839, December 18<sup>th</sup>, (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of use) wrapper from **GLASGOW** to Pennycuik showing the usage of the Glasgow handstruck '4' and on the reverse an Edinburgh date stamp for the following day.



The postmarks from the reverse.



The Glasgow handstruck 4



3.2 An 1839, December 11<sup>th</sup>, example from Glasgow to Ayr carrying the Glasgow 4 handstamp, back stamped with a boxed **AYR / DEC 12 / 1839**.

Both entires rated at 4d

Transit time 2 days each .

Backstamped:

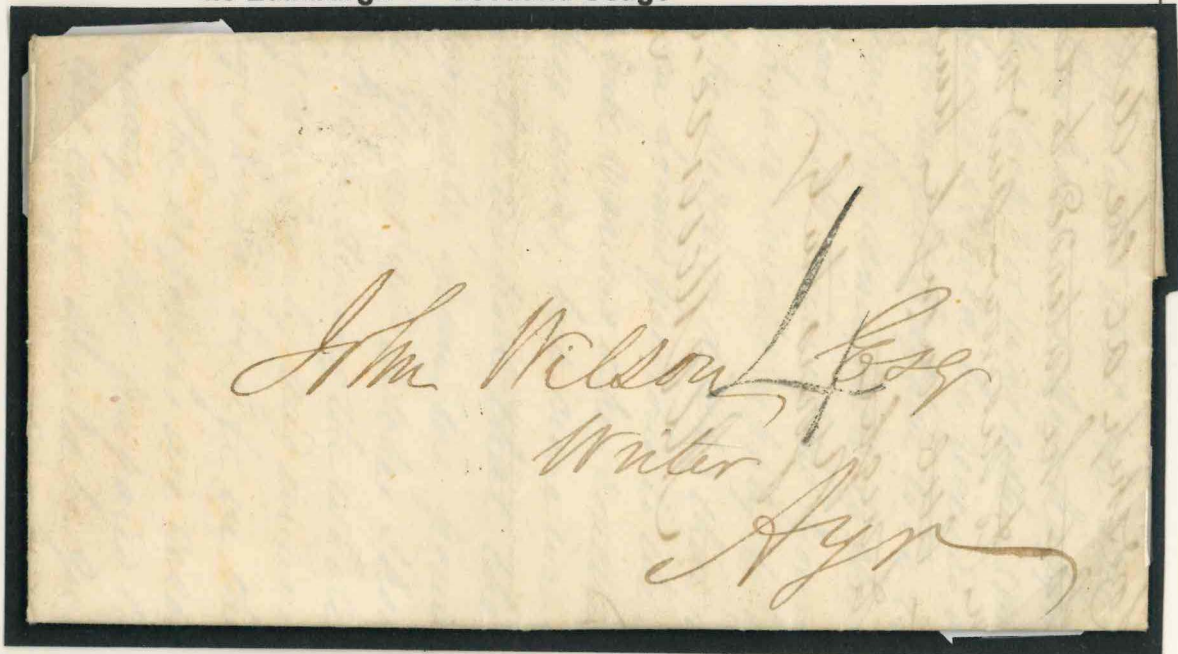
Top - Glasgow Circular Receiver **N/DEC/18 & DEC C19M 1839**

Bottom – Glasgow **N /DEC11/1839** & Boxed **AYR/DEC12/1839**



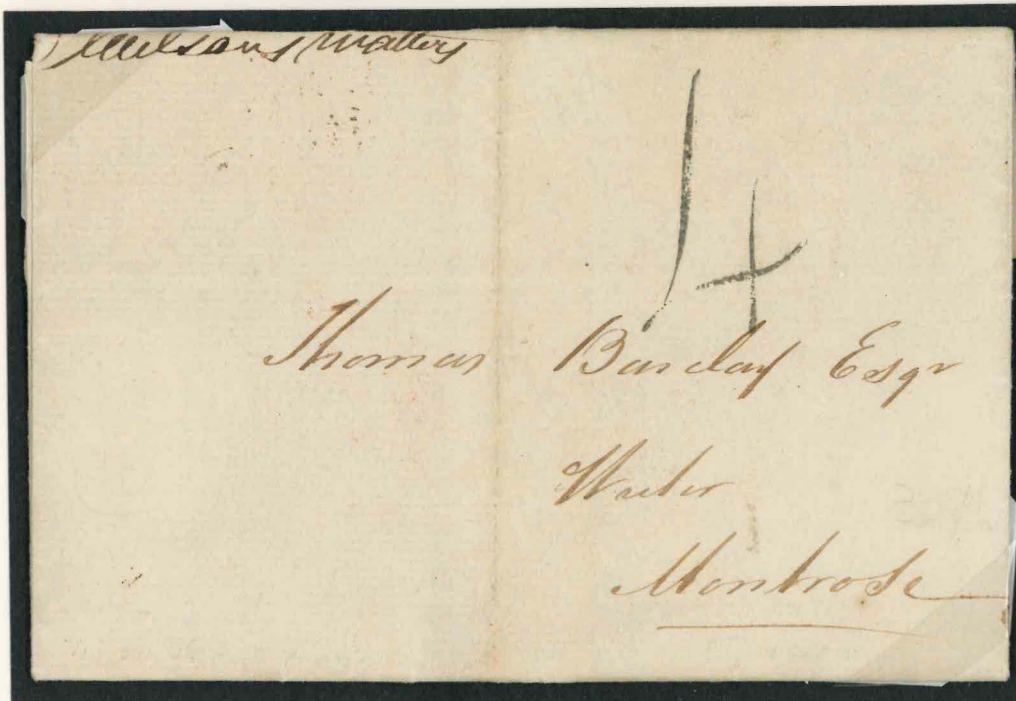
## 4.0 Edinburgh 4 – Scotland Usage

4.1 1839,  
December 21<sup>st</sup>,  
entire from Alex  
Kennedy in  
**EDINBURGH** to  
AYR showing a  
usage of the  
Edinburgh 4 back  
stamped with a  
boxed rectangular  
**AYR DEC21 1839**  
and a circular  
receiver for **DEC H**  
**17 N 1839** also in  
black.



4.2 1840, January  
7<sup>th</sup>, entire from  
**EDINBURGH** to  
Montrose showing the  
usage of the  
Edinburgh 4 on the last  
Monday of operation  
backstamped with an  
Edinburgh date stamp  
for January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1840,  
just two days before  
the introduction of the  
Uniform Penny Post.

4

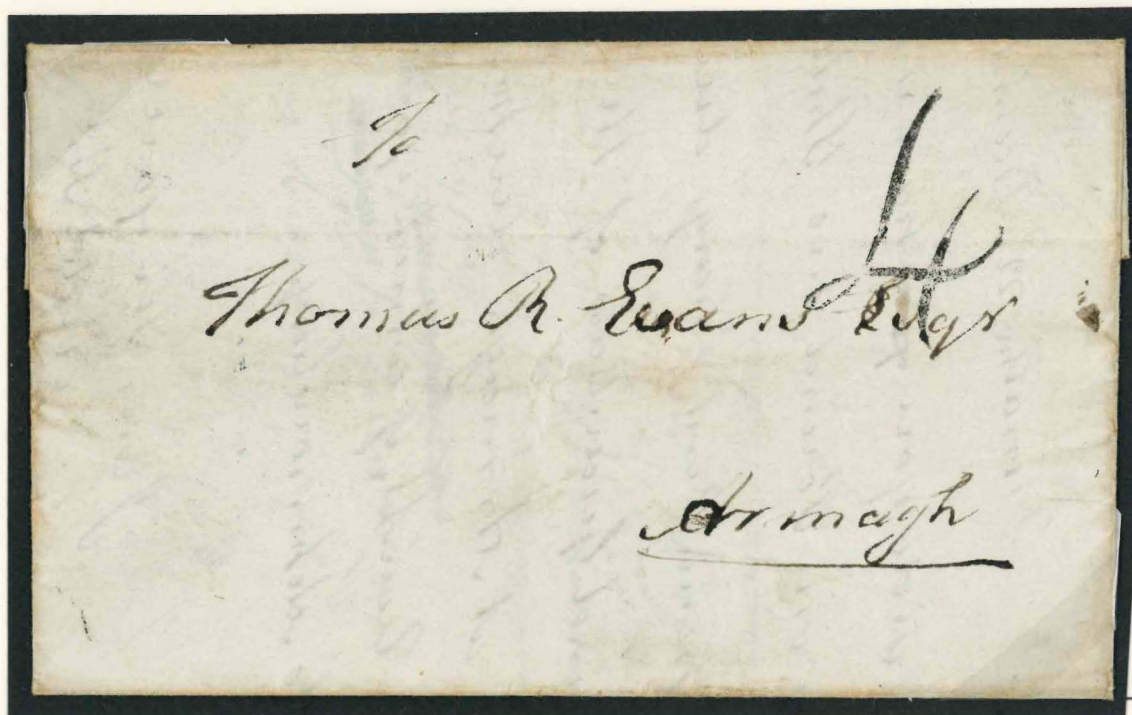


4.3 1839, December  
17<sup>th</sup>, entire from  
**EDINBURGH** to  
Linlithgow showing a  
usage of the Edinburgh  
4 back stamped with red  
circular receiver **DEC**  
**A17A 1839**.



## 5.0 Dundalk 4, Irish Entire on Third Sunday of Usage

5.1 1838, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, entire from Dundalk to Armagh showing the usage of the handstruck 4 of Dundalk. One of 6 as yet known examples of the Dundalk 4 during the U4P period. The entire is dated internally "Dundalk 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1839" and backstamped with DUNDALK 22 DE 1839 in black and ARMAGH 23 DE 1839 in blue. This is the only as yet recorded Sunday use of the Dundalk 4d handstamp.



## 5.2 Derry 4

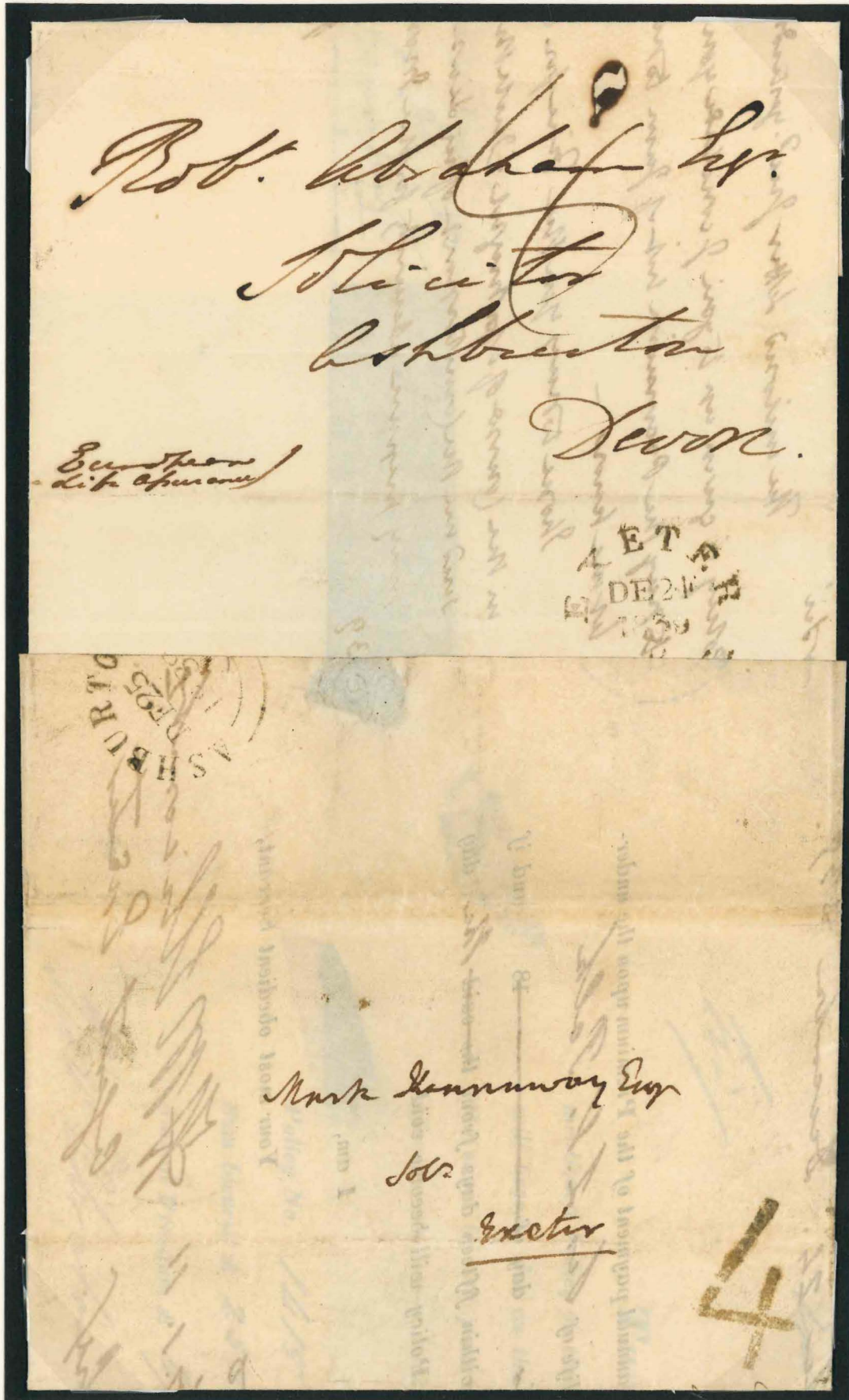


5.3 1839, December 19<sup>th</sup>, entire from Mr Davenport, Derry to Kirkcaldy showing a strike of the Derry 4 handstamp a DERRY DE19 1839 receiver with the 9 date slug inverted, together with a Scottish receiver in red DEC F 21 1839.

This is the earliest of the 7 known Derry handstamps.

## 6.0 ASHBURTON 4, Christmas Eve &amp; Christmas Day, England Usage.

6.1 The English fours were less script than the Irish 4. This ASHBURTON Handstruck "4" is used in combination with a manuscript "4" on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Originally posted on 24<sup>th</sup> December 1839 from Exeter to Ashburton on Christmas Eve.



6.2 The initial postage was covered by the manuscript 4d charge. It was then turned and re-used with the reply written on the same sheet and posted back from Ashburton to Exeter on Christmas Day, 25<sup>th</sup> December 1839. Postage for the return is noted with the fine strike of the ASHBURTON HANDSTRUCK 4.

The only, as yet recorded, English Handstruck "4" cover that has been turned and re-used in this way.

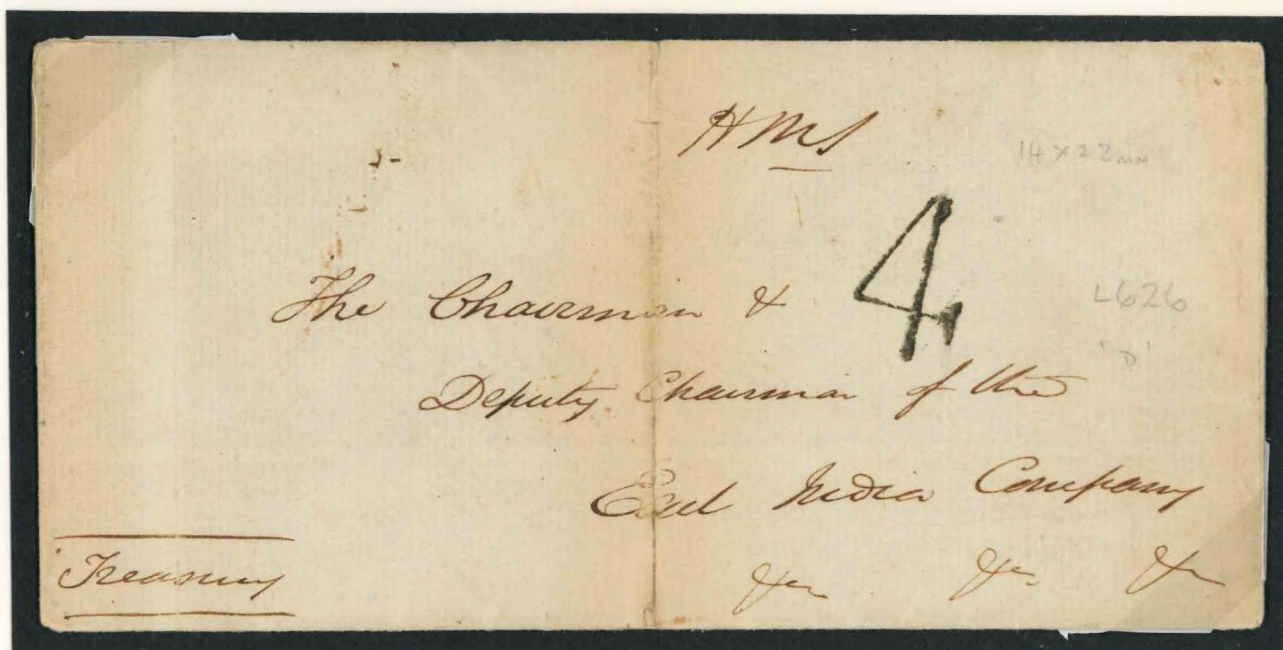
The Ashburton 4 is as yet one of 3 known examples in private hands.

ASHBURTON EXETER

## 7.0 London – Treasury Usage as a Charge Mark

7.1 Even before the introduction of the Uniform Four Penny Post in January 1840 the Treasury used a 4d handstamp, but after the U4P the use of the handstamps was changed. Some offices retained them for use as a charge mark. This example of an outer wrapper from Sir Edward Walpole was inscribed as "HMS" and endorsed in the lower corner as "Treasury". Sir Edward was based at Isleworth near Richmond and Hounslow and addressed the wrapper to the *Chairman and Deputy Chairman of East India Company* based in London.

7.2 The 1840, September 7<sup>th</sup>, wrapper was posted unpaid and endorsed as having the correspondence relating to costs for recruitment from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1837 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 1838. The outer wrapper shows usage of a "4" handstamp used as a charge mark. It is backstamped 7<sup>th</sup> September 1840 with a red penny post receiver in an irregular oval shape for **8 NT 8 / SP 7 / 1840**. The 4d handstamp mark has been used as a postage due tax mark, measures 14x22mm in height and is struck on the front in Black.

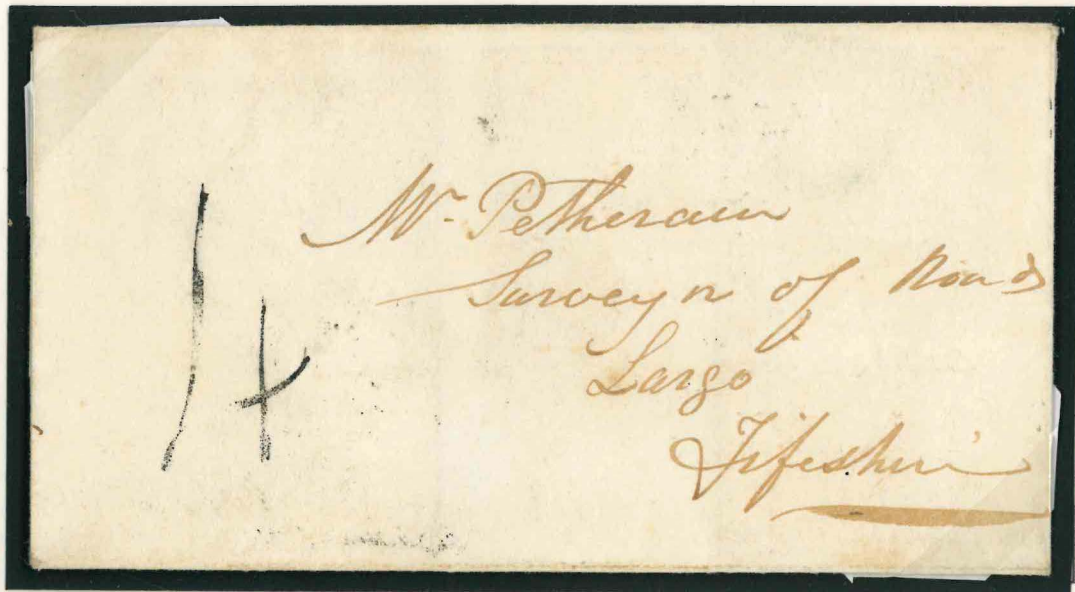


1839, March 20<sup>th</sup>, wrapper from London with a **FLEET ST TWO** penny post mark to the Treasury is charged at **2d** and backstamped with a **T.P. Chief Office** handstamp in black together with a red receiver for **8NT8 / MR21 / 1839**. It is redirected to 10 Whitehall and recharged a further **2d** with a **2** handstamp and backstamped with a **2AN2 / MR 21 / 1839**. The 2 x 2d strikes are then cancelled and replaced with a single **4** handstamp to pay mark, proving that the **Treasury 4** Handstamp was in use before the Uniform 4d Penny Post but the above cover shows it remained in use after the U4P period as a charge mark.



## 8.0 Perth , In period Use

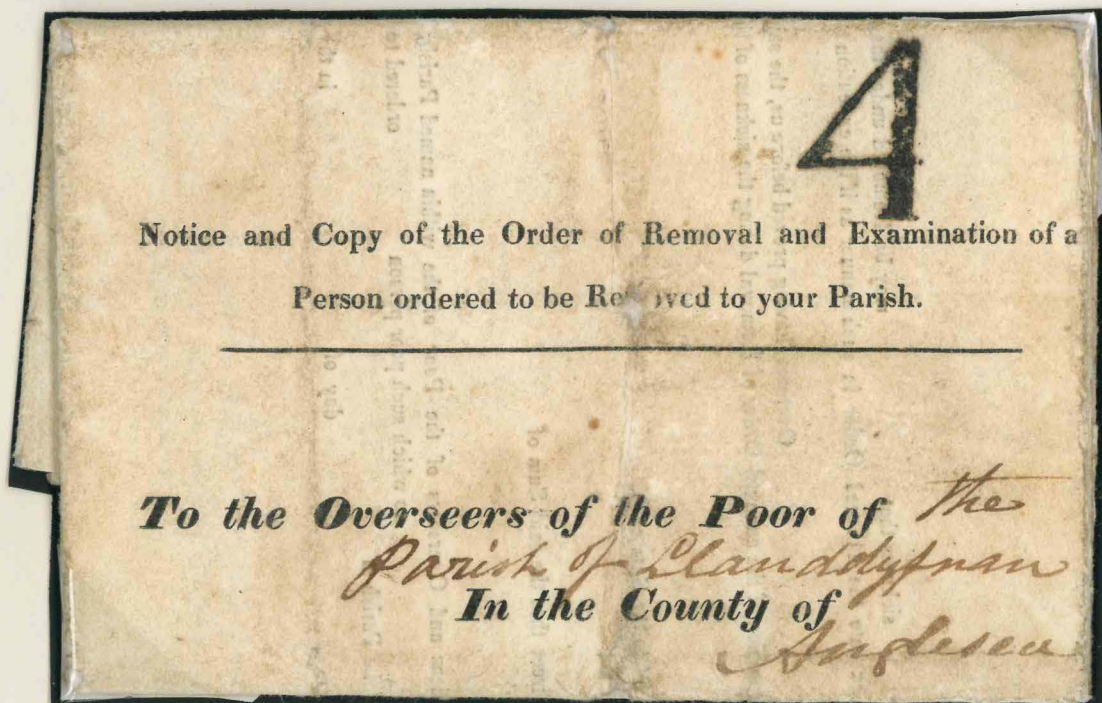
8.1 An 1840, January 6<sup>th</sup>, entire from Perth to Largo showing a strike of the Perth Handstruck 4 to pay the Uniform 4d Postage. The wrapper is backstamped with a double arc for **PERTH / 6 JA / 1840**.



**Wales, Bangor 4**  
**Usage as a Charge Mark**

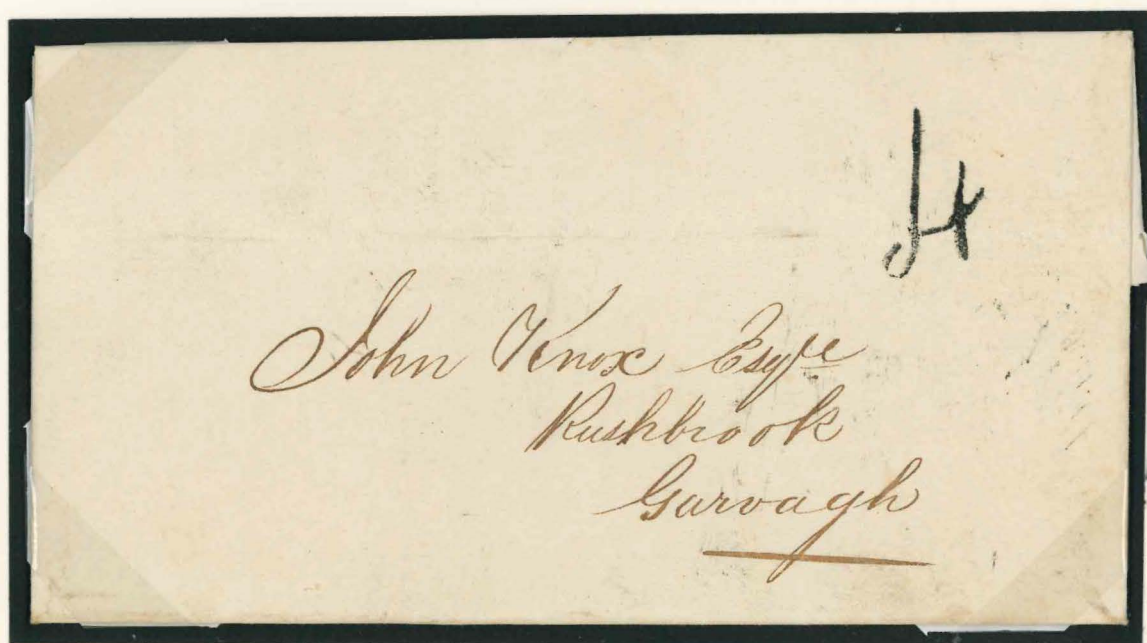
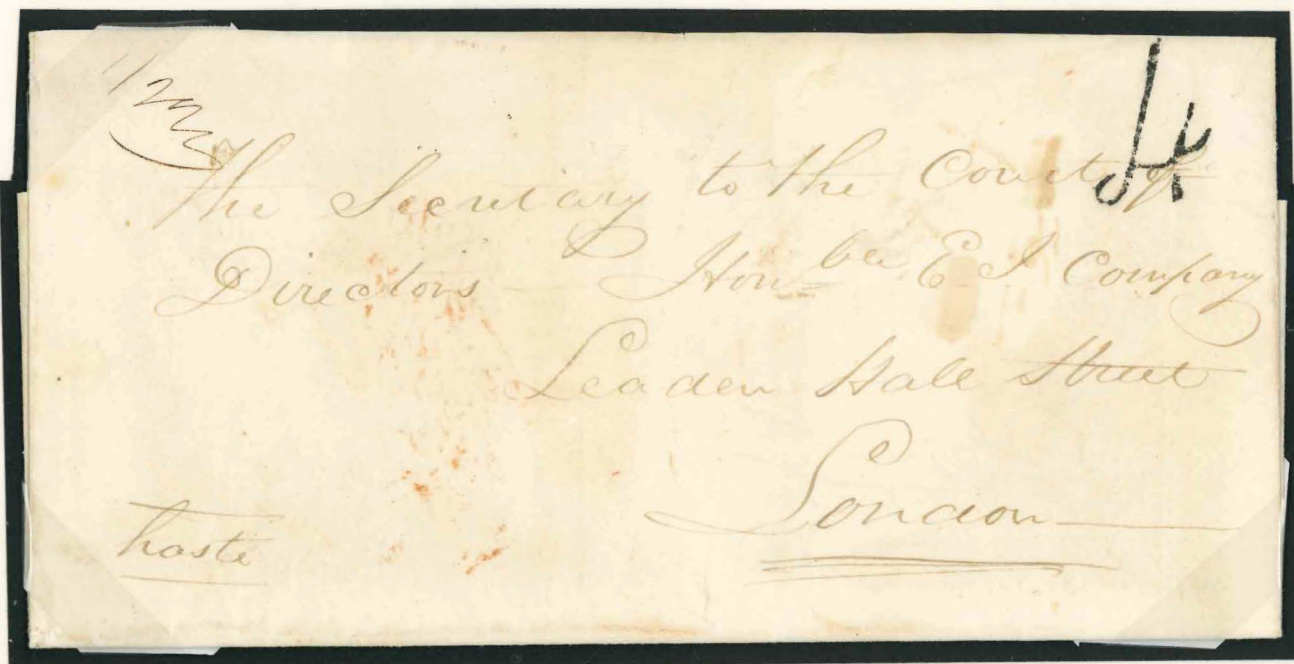
444

8.2 1841, February 19<sup>th</sup>, entire showing the usage of the Bangor Handstruck 4 as a charge mark. The wrapper was posted unpaid from Bangor to Llanddyfnan in Anglesey, and is backstamped with a double arc for **BANGOR / FE19 / 1841 / D**. This is the only usage yet recorded of the Bangor 4 as a charge mark.



9.0 Ballymena 4, 4<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> July 1840, Ireland Usage

9.1 1840, July 4<sup>th</sup>, part entire from Ballymena to the Secretary of the Court of Directors of the East India Company in London, inscribed in the bottom left "*haste*". The reverse is backstamped with a **BALLYMENA JY 4 1840** double arc and a further **BELFAST JY 5 1840** receiver. On arrival in London a red receiver is dated **7 JY 1840**.



9.2 A second usage of the Ballymena on an entire from Ballymena to Garvagh, backstamped with a **BALLYMENA JY 17 1840** double arc and a further **COLERAINE JY 18 1840** receiver. The only two as yet recorded, usage of the Ballymena "4" as a charge mark.

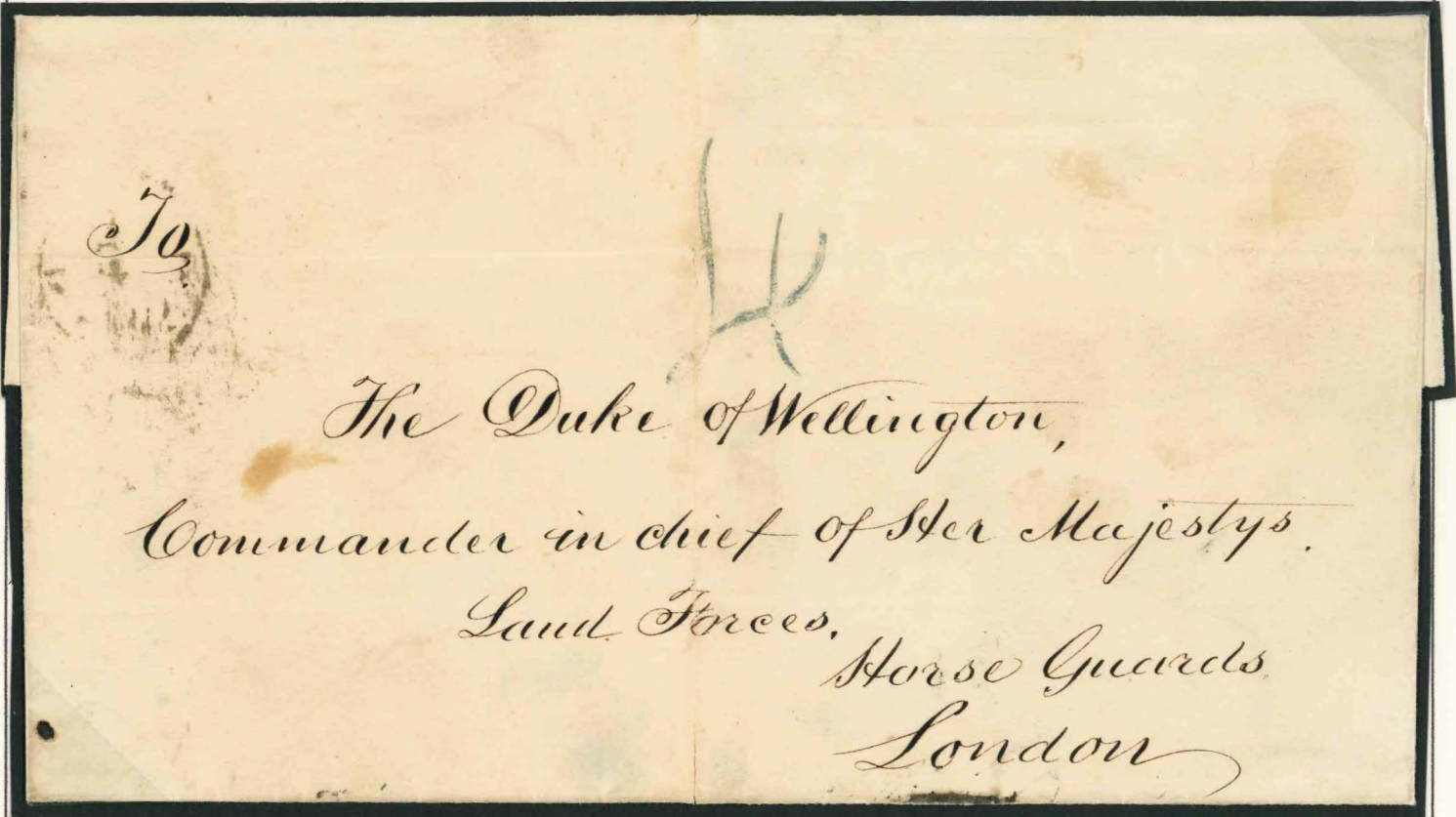
The normal rate for the double letter would have been 2d if it had been prepaid and the upper letters journey would have taken it across the Menai Bridge.

Transit time is 4 days & 1 day, respectively.



10.0 Newry, County Armagh 4  
5<sup>th</sup> September 1842

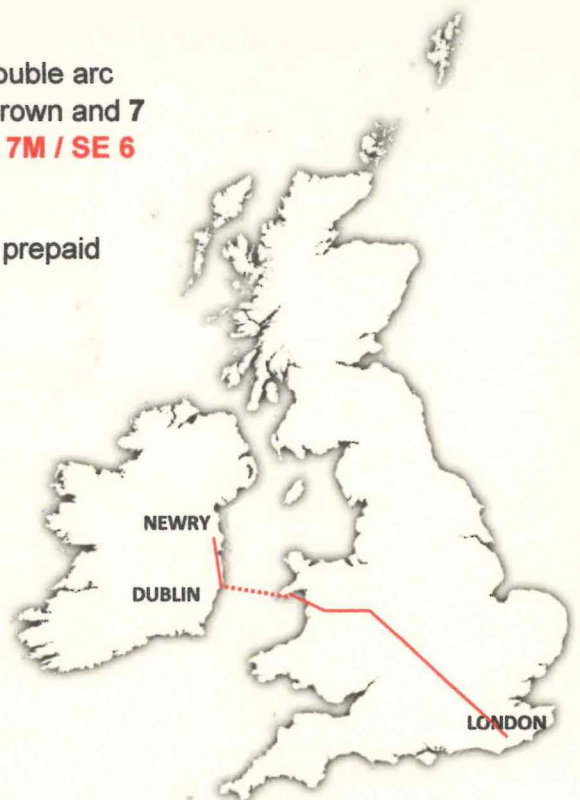
10.1 1842, September 5<sup>th</sup>, part letter sheet from Newry to The Duke of Wellington, Horse Guards, London posted unpaid and struck with a **green "4"** charge mark handstamp of Newry. The **only, as yet recorded, usage** of the Newry handstamp as a chargemark of the Uniform Penny Post, with only 5 examples recorded in use within period.



10.2 The reverse is backstamped with a **NEWRY SE 5 1842** double arc receiver in blue, a London 22mm circular receiver containing a crown and **7 SP 7 / 1842** in black and a Dublin diamond receiver in red dated **7M / SE 6 / 42**.

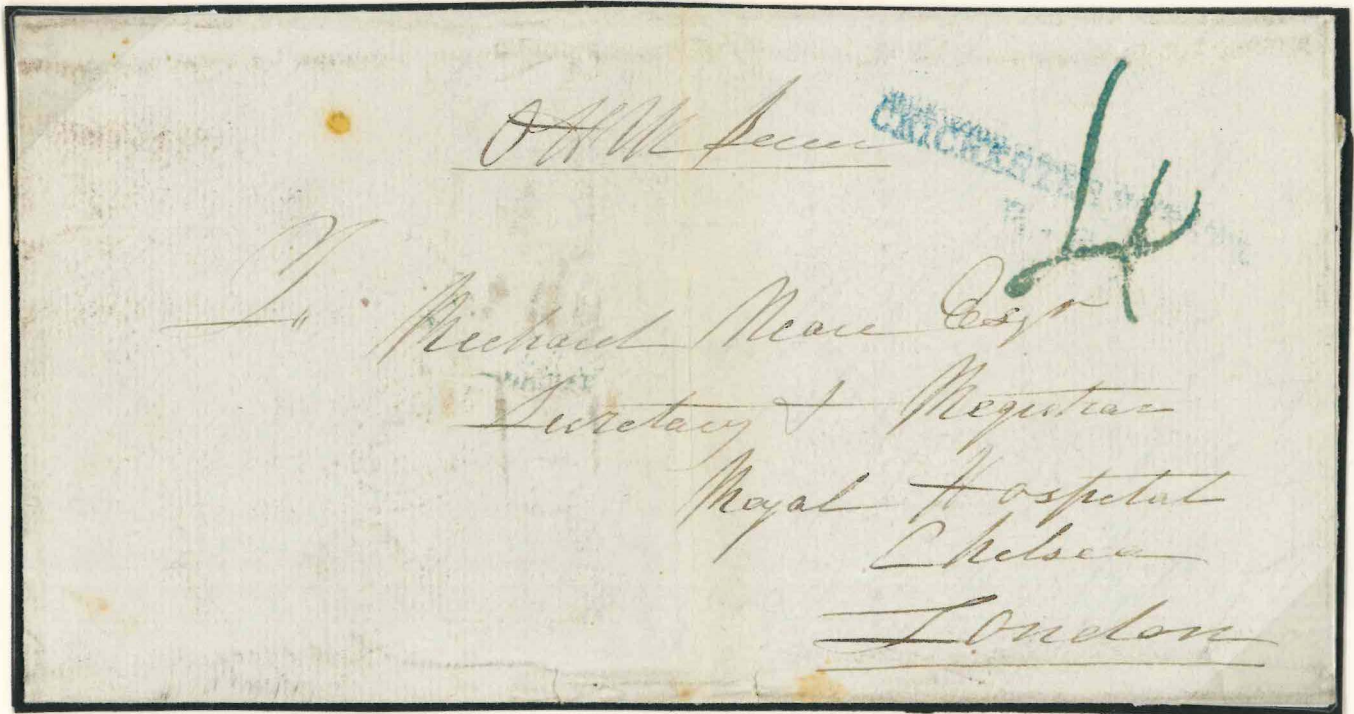
The normal rate for the entire would have been 2d if it had been prepaid and the contents had made it a double weight.

Transit time is 3 days.



# 11.0 Belfast 4 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1844

11.1 1844, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, double weight letter from Belfast to The Royal Hospital, Chelsea, London inscribed at the top *OHM Service*, put in at Chichester Street RH in Belfast with a usage of the Belfast "4" in blue. **One of four, as yet recorded, examples of the Belfast handstamp as a chargemark of the Uniform Penny Post.**



11.2 The front carries a strike of the **CHICHESTER STREET RH** in blue while the reverse of the wrapper is backstamped with a **BELFAST FE 3 1844 E** receiver in blue and a London 22mm circular receiver containing a crown and **5 FE 5 / 1844** in black.

The normal rate for the entire would have been 2d if it had been prepaid .

Transit time is 3 days.



12.0 Roscrea 4  
11<sup>th</sup> November 1844

12.1 1844, November 11<sup>th</sup>, double weight letter from Birr to The Royal Hospital, Chelsea, London inscribed at the top *On Her Majesties Service*, put in at Roscrea on the 11<sup>th</sup> and arrived in London on 13<sup>th</sup> November, showing the usage of the Roscrea "4" in blue. One of **only two**, as yet recorded, examples of the Roscrea "4" and the **only example recorded as a charge mark use**.



12.2 The front carries a strike of the **ROSCREA/ NO11 / 1844** receiver in blue while the reverse of the wrapper is backstamped with a Dublin Diamond receiver for **5A/NO12/44** in red and a London 24mm circular receiver containing a crown and **13NO13 / 1844** in red.

The normal rate for the entire would have been 2d if it had been prepaid.

Transit time is 3 days.



### 13.0 Enniskillen 4 1<sup>st</sup> December 1844

13.1 1844, December 1<sup>st</sup>, double weight entire written on 30<sup>th</sup> November from Enniskillen to The Horse Guards, London inscribed at the top *On Her Majesties Service*, put in at Enniskillen on the 30<sup>th</sup> November showing the usage of the Enniskillen "4". The **only, as yet recorded**, example of the Enniskillen "4" used as a charge mark of the Uniform Penny Post, and the **only example recorded in blue** including the three as yet recorded examples known in use during the U4P period.



13.2 The entire carries the blue Enniskillen "TOO LATE" handstamp and the reverse a strike of the **ENNISKILLEN NO30/1844**, a second **ENNISKILLEN/ DE1 / 1844** receiver both in blue, accompanied with a Dublin Diamond receiver for **2A/DE 2/44** in red and a London 24mm circular receiver containing a crown and **3 DE 3 / 1844** in red.

The normal rate for the entire would have been 2d if it had been prepaid.

Transit time is 4 days due to the late postage on 30<sup>th</sup>.



**14.0 Drogheda 4**  
**4<sup>th</sup> February 1847**

14.1 1847, February 4th, double weight entire showing usage of the Drogheda "4" in green, **one of two as yet recorded** examples in private hands. Following the Act of the Union (Ireland) Act of 1800 there was no separation between North and South until 1921, so it had no political separation in 1840's and both the postal and customs system was as one. This double weight entire from the Custom House in Drogheda, was posted unpaid to the Custom House, Dublin.



14.2 The reverse carries a strike of the **DROGHEDA / FE 4/1847** also in green and a Dublin 26mm circular receiver code **2 / FE 5 / 1847 / A** in red.

The normal rate for the double entire would have been 2d if it had been prepaid.

Transit time is 2 days.

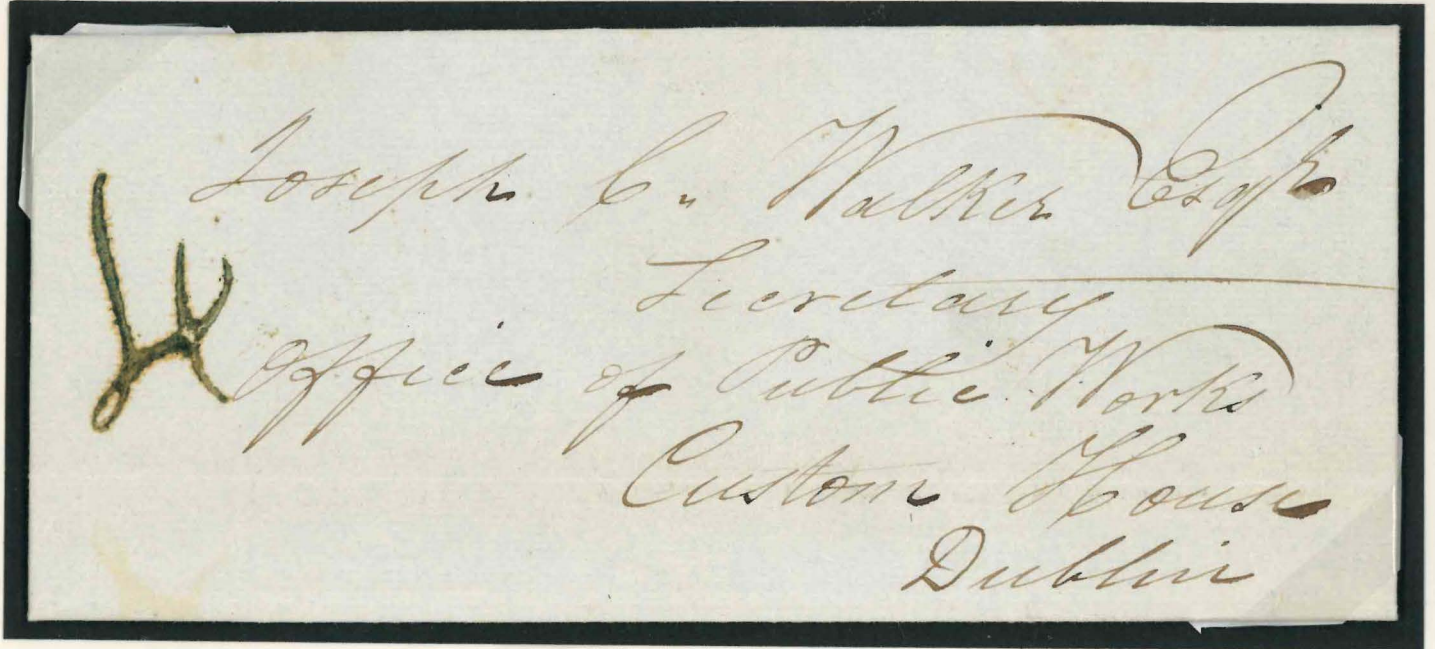
The "4" was manufactured at Dublin Castle during the Uniform Four Penny Post Period.



## 15.0 Drogheda 4

4<sup>th</sup> March 1847

15.1 1847, March 4<sup>th</sup>, double weight entire from The Custom House at Drogheda to the Office of Public Works, showing usage of the greeny-black Drogheda "4" as a charge mark. The **second of two, as yet recorded**, examples of the Drogheda "4" used as a charge mark of the Uniform Penny Post.



15.2 The reverse carries a strike of the **DROGHEDA MR 4 /1847** receiver in dark greeny-black and a 28mm Dublin circular receiver for **5 / MR 4 / 1847 / H** in red.

The normal rate for the entire would have been 2d if it had been prepaid.

Transit time is 1 day due to the local route.

The four is the same as that used and produced at Dublin Castle.



## 16.0 Down 4 – The End of an Era

### 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1868

16.1 1868, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, envelope posted from Portaferry, County Down to Canada, cancelled with a Portaferry Duplex, showing usage of the Down "4". **One of three, as yet recorded**, examples of this handstamp as a late "Allan Line" usage.

16.2 Few of the "4" handstamps remained in use as charge marks after 1850. There are two exceptions, the first is the Edinburgh "4" which lay in the back of a drawer for more than 50 years and then reemerged for a few weeks in 1895. The second is the Down "4" resurrected as an accounting mark on the Allan Line Mail. This is the **earliest of the three known covers for the Down 4** during the Uniform Penny Post Period as it did not carry such a mark during the operational period.



16.3 From the 1867 Canada Post Office Act, which set up the new post office legislation, the rate for the full journey was 12½c or 6d with an additional charge of the same amount for mail sent unpaid. The handstruck "25" struck on the front in Quebec shows the amount to pay on delivery. Of this the British share was 4d made up of 1d postage and 3d half share of the fine.

16.4 The reverse carries a strike of the 22mm double arc receiver for **PORTAFERRY / JU 3 / 1858 / C** and a double arc receiver for **GODERICH JU 19** while the front received a strike of the **178 duplex** for **DOWN / D / JU 3 / 68**.

16.5 Transit time is 16 days due to the sea crossing and long distance to travel in Canada.

16.6 The handstamp was originally made for use in Dublin. It migrated to "DOWN" when it became the last stop for the Allan Line before crossing the Atlantic. An unusual use of the 4d hand stamp.

