

INTRODUCTION

This typology is based on the design of the meter prints, as the simplest means of classification. Using the type of machine as a basis of differentiation was attempted and abandoned due to difficulties in identifying which machines made which marks and the realization that multiple makes of machines made the same mark. It was not possible to adopt the popular practice of identifying meter mark types by meter licence prefixes, which in other countries often denote the manufacturer of the machine. In Botswana, after limited early attempts to assign prefixes based on machine types, all meter licences are prefixed with an 'R' giving no indication of the manufacturer or the machine type.

This typology of Botswana meter marks is based on the system developed by the Meter Stamp Society¹. The system is relatively simple and classifies the marks into **groups**, which are then divided into **types**. Types are further sub-divided into **varieties**. This typology is based on the examination of 12 different aspects of the meter mark design on over 1,000 Botswana meter marks.

DEFINITIONS

While the differences in types and varieties as defined by terms such as “immediately apparent differences” or “subtle variations” are subjective in nature, the typology is visually based and reference to the images of the marks shown in the typology will assist greatly in the recognition of the various types and varieties.

A **group** is a set of meter prints with a common basic shape, which sets them apart from all *other* prints. Groups are defined by marked differences in the indicia frame style. Groups are designated by the first number in the typology (see Figure 1).

A **type** is a meter print, which differs from others in its group by major differences in design. Types are defined by one or a combination of the following:

- immediately apparent variations in the size of the indicia;
- immediately apparent differences in the size of the setting;
- immediately apparent variations in the frame style; and/or
- variations in the inscription wording.

Subtle variations in the size of the indicia, the size of the setting, or frame style constitute varietal differences. Types are designated by the capital letter in the typology.

A **variety** is a meter print that has minor differences in design from others within its type. The differences are not always obvious at a hasty glance, but easily distinguished from all other varieties upon examination. Varieties are defined by one or a combination of the following:

- differences in the styles of the circle(s) forming the townmark;
- the presence of text in the bottom of the townmark;
- the value format;
- the inscription positioning;

¹ Pyle, Robert L. et al. 1951. *Classification of United States Postage Meter Prints*. The Meter Stamp Society and Meter-Slogan Associates.

- the inscription sizing/boldness;
- the date layout; and/or
- the date text size.

Varieties are designated by the number following the letter.

TPOLOGY DESCRIPTORS

In the typology sheets that follow, the first column lists the meter type number. The meter type number provides information on the group, type and variety of a meter marks as shown in Figure 1.

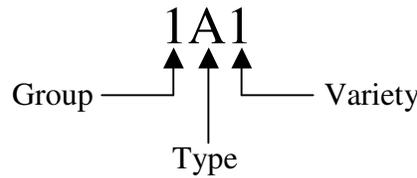


Figure 1: Typology Number Components

The second group of columns illustrates the aspects that create the different types, while the third set of columns illustrates the aspects that create different varieties (see Figure 2). The last column lists machine types, where known.

Meter Type Number	Aspects that determine types				Aspects that determine varieties						Machine Type	
	Size of Indicia	Size of Setting	Frame Style	Inscription Wording	Townmark Circles	Text in Bottom of Townmark	Value Format	Inscription Positioning	Inscription Sizing/Boldness	Date Layout		Date Text Size
1A1	27 x 27 mm	16 mm	1	1	Double	Yes	.00=	1	1	1	1	Universal/Pitney Bowes "Automax" (MV)
1A2	27 x 27 mm	16 mm	1	1	Double	Yes	≠0,00	1	1	1	1	
1B1	22 x 23 mm	29 mm	2	1	Double	Yes	3, 4, 5, 10c (vals. seen)	1	2	1	2	Universal/Pitney Bowes "Simplex" (LV)
2A1	20 x 29 mm	7 mm	1	1	Double	No	0,00	1	1	1	1	Roneo Neopost "205" (MV)
2A2	20 x 27 mm	6 mm	1	1	Double	No	0,00	2 ^a	2	1	1	
2A3	20 x 29mm	7 mm	1	1	Double	No	0 00	1	1	1	1	
2B1	20 x 25 mm	6 mm	1	1	Double	No	0-00-	3 ^b	2	1	1	
2C1	18 x 26 mm	8 mm	1	1	Double	No	0,00	1	3	1	1	
2C2												

<p>Meter Type 1A1</p>	<p>Meter Type 1A2</p>
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Figure 2: Layout of the Typology Table

In the typology table, the numbers in the *Frame Style*, *Inscription Wording*, *Inscription Positioning*, *Inscription Sizing/Boldness*, *Date Layout*, and *Date Text Size* columns are

Botswana Meter Mark Typology

Methodology for Determining Types

Page 3
13 November 2004
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comparative within each aspect (or column). The numbers are used to designate that one mark within a group is different in some manner from the other marks in that group and have no specific meaning. The colours in the columns are a visual method to facilitate quick recognition of where the differences occur and also have no specific meaning. Where the differences are subtle, endnotes designated by a small superscript letter describe the differences. The sizes of the indicia have been grouped together where the differences are subtle.

The size of the indicia is measured from the inside edges of the frame lines or simulated perforations to minimise variations due to “print-drag” or ink smears. The first number in the sizing is the width and the second number is the height. The measurements for this aspect and the size of the setting are rounded to the nearest whole millimetre and may vary by plus or minus 0.5 mm.

Townmarks are simply listed as single or double, with no separate listing for broken double circles, which are often common in postmarks. With Botswana meter marks, there is a lack of consistency in the breaks that may be attributable to faulty manufacture, damage, or maladjustment of individual machines. While some breaks do appear more consistent than others, the use of broken circles as a basis of differentiation is unnecessary, as there are no two marks that are similar except for this aspect.