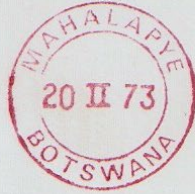


FROM : VAN
STANDARD BANK.
P.O. BOX 82 : POSBUS 82
MAHALAPYE,
BOTSWANA



Mathieson & Ashley Ltd.
P.O. Box 31027,
Braamfontein.
Transvaal.

Meter Marks of Botswana

The Development of a Typology and Cataloguing

Why do I collect this stuff

I currently live in Nova Scotia Canada.

I lived in Botswana from 1994 to 2002, where I ran and eventually owned a landscape architecture, environmental consulting, and land use planning company.

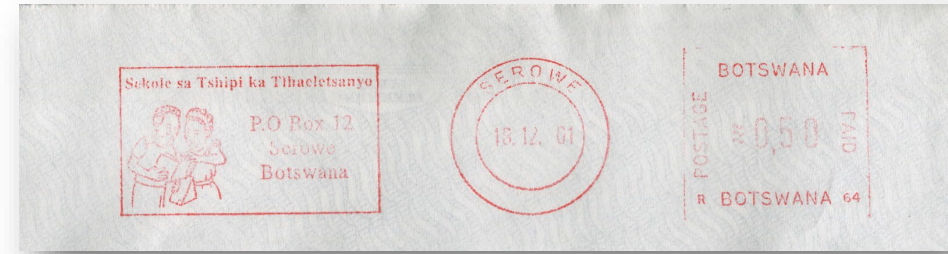
My interest in stamp collecting re-ignited in Botswana by receipt of nicely stamped mail from Canada.

I joined local club and started collecting Botswana stamps.

I quickly developed good collection of stamps and started looking for other topics.



Meter Mark Postal History

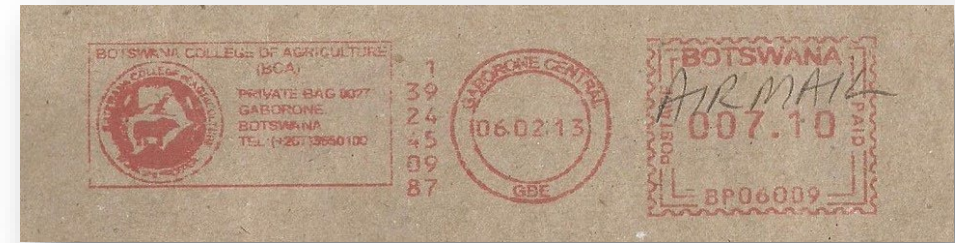


While other countries in the region, such as South Africa and the Rhodesias were issuing meter licences as early as the 1920's, Botswana remained largely undeveloped until the 1970's, thus influencing the lack of demand for meter licences.

The first meter franking in Botswana that I am aware of is dated 13 November 1970, although a drawing of a frank die from Universal Postal Frankers Ltd. in London UK in 1957 indicates that their use was under consideration earlier.

From 1970 until 1999, a total of 232 licence numbers were issued. In 1999, the Botswana Post Office began retiring and re-issuing unused licence numbers. By August 2002, 95 licence numbers had been re-issued, bringing the total number of licences issued to 327.

Meter Mark Postal History



Up to circa 2003, all meter machines in the country were mechanically reloaded (i.e. the machines or portions thereof need to be taken to the post office for resetting). Around 2003, Botswana Post required all meter machine users to switch to digital machines that could be reloaded by means of a modem.

This necessitated the replacement of all meter machines in the country and a new numbering system was introduced.

New licences start with the prefix BP and the licence numbers start with 060 / 061 and 065, 51187 of which the exhibitor is aware.

In the 2010's additional licence numbers starting with 511, 514, and 518 have been seen.

Meter Mark Postal History



Initially, prefixes for the licence numbers included J, R, S, and UA.

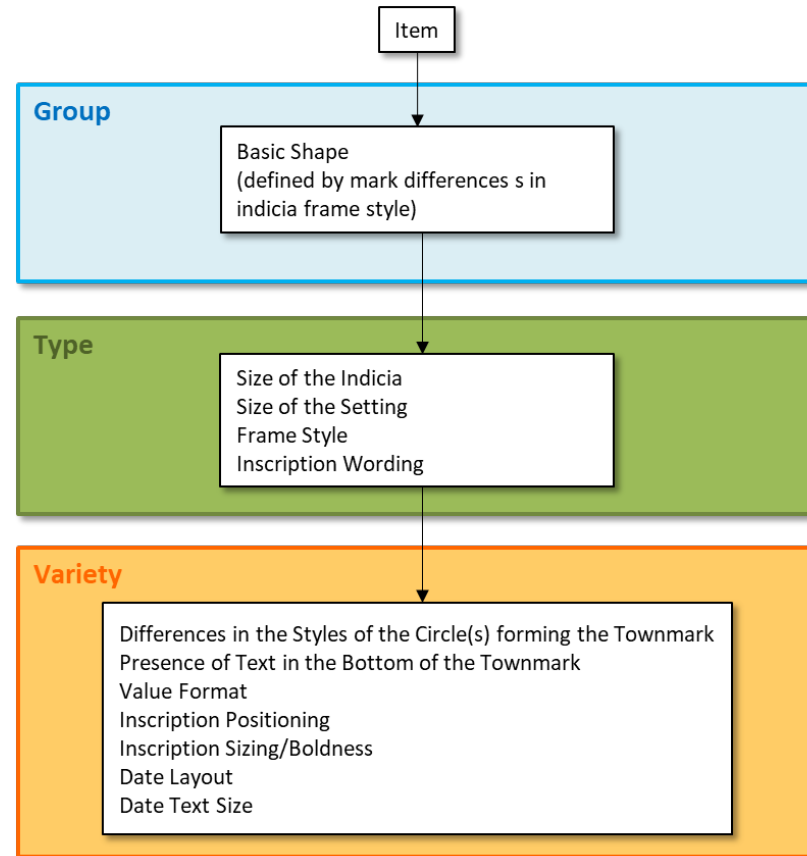
By the early 1980's, the prefix R appears to be the predominant prefix in use, with the following exceptions:

- the prefix TX appears on licence number 148 on 1981,
- the prefix J appears on licence number 706 in 1988, and
- the prefix G appears on licence number 148 from 1993 to 1995.

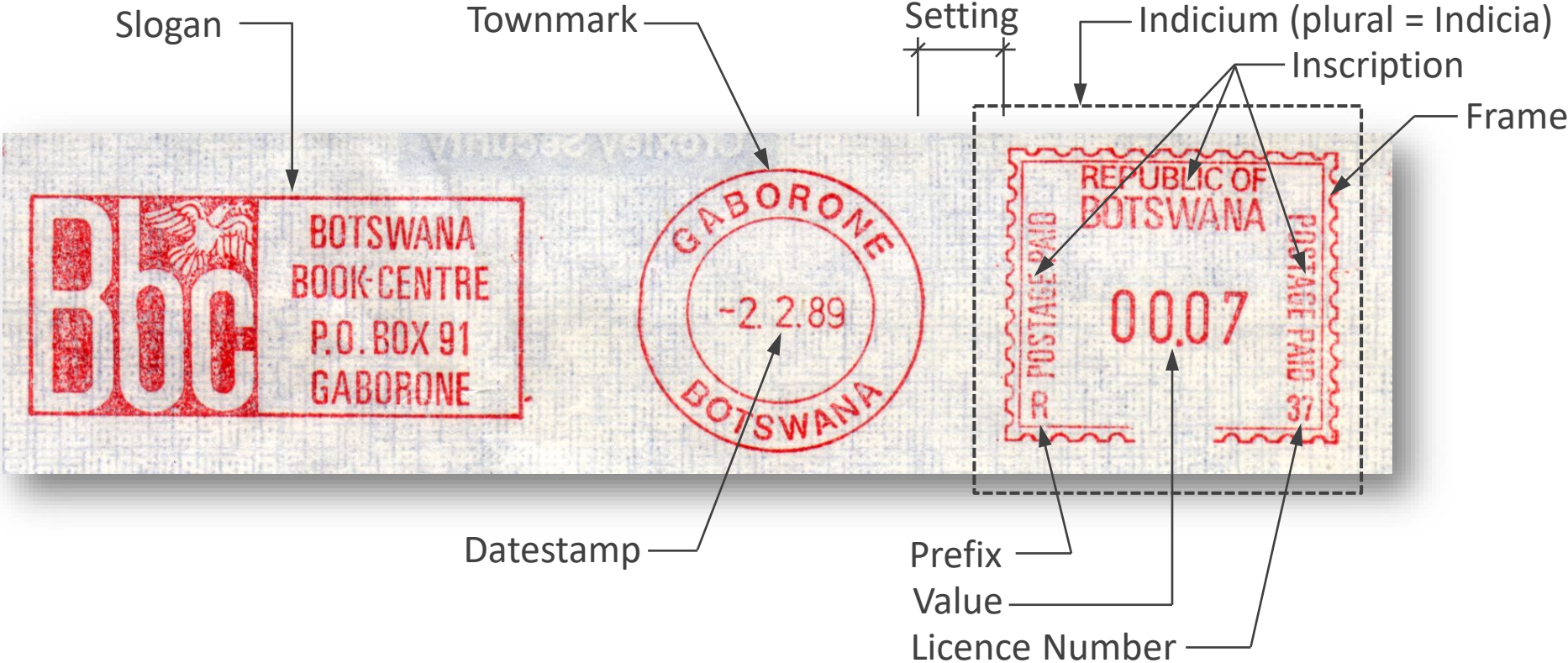
Typology



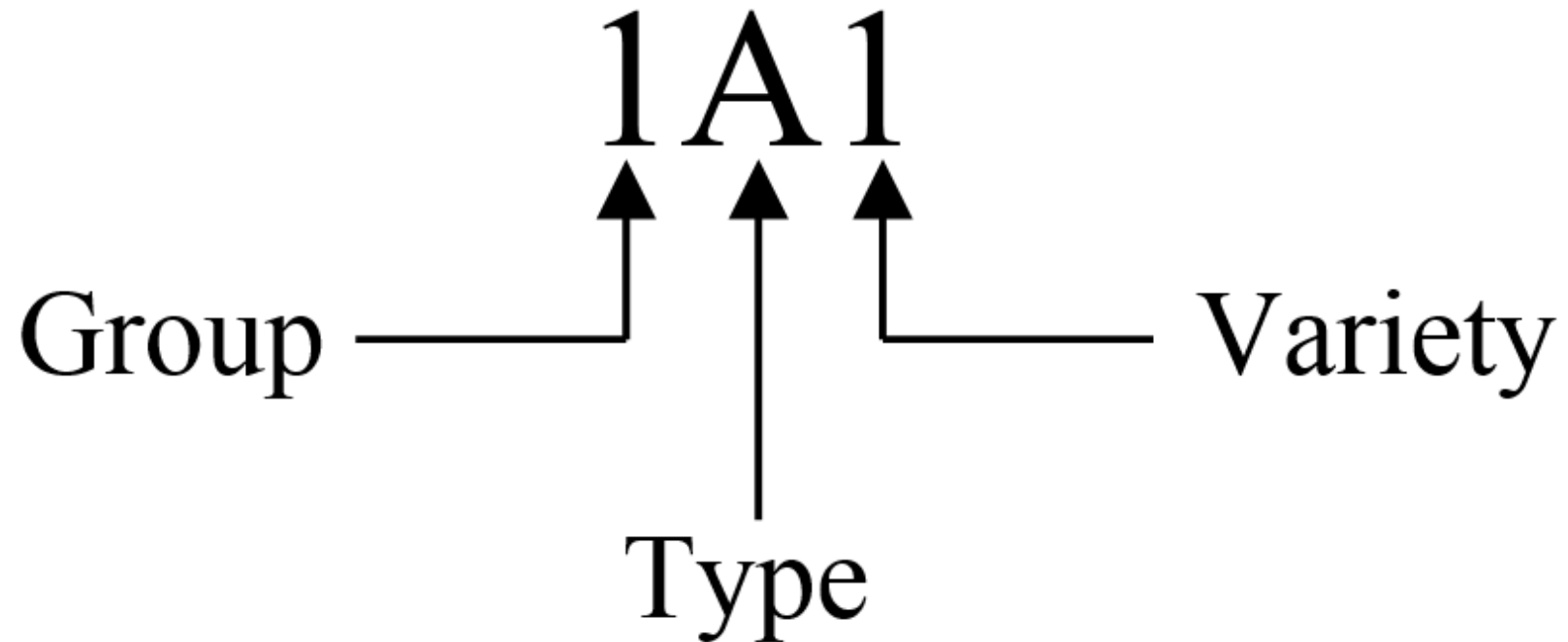
Meters – Basis of Typology



Parts of a Meter Mark



Typology Descriptor Components

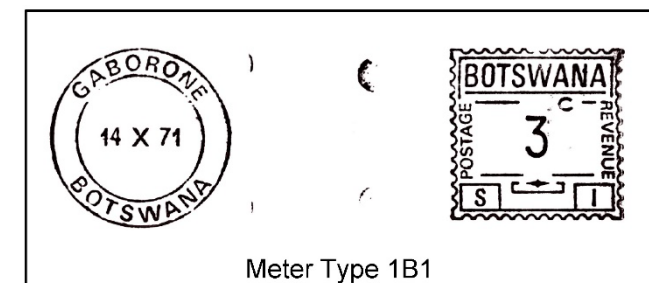
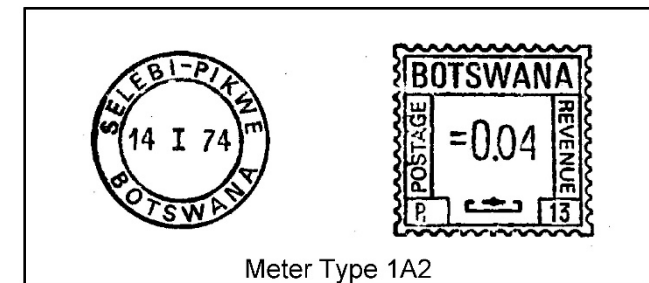
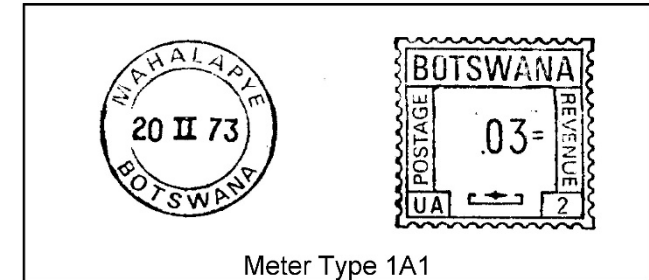


Meters - Typology

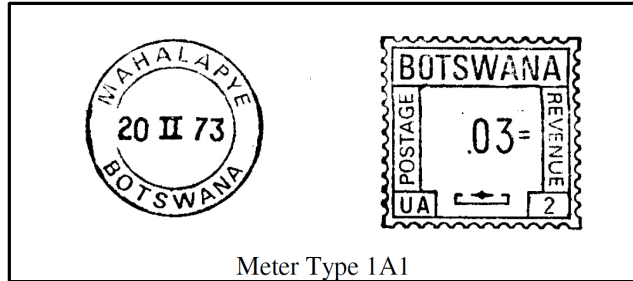
Aspects that determine type

Aspects that determine variety

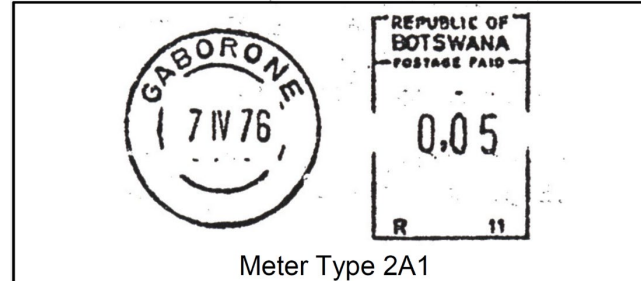
Meter Type Number	Aspects that determine type				Aspects that determine variety							Machine Type
	Size of Indicia	Size of Setting	Frame Style	Inscription Wording	Townmark Circles	Text in Bottom of Townmark	Value Format	Inscription Positioning	Inscription Sizing/Boldness	Date Layout	Date Text Size	
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	



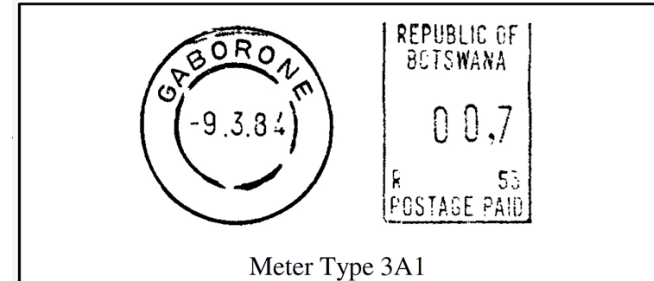
Types



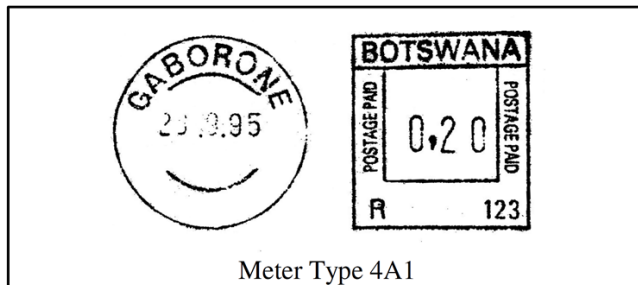
Meter Type 1A1



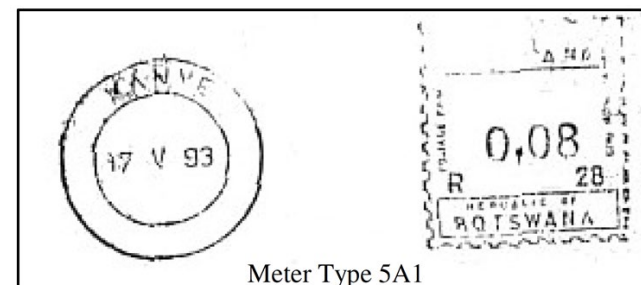
Meter Type 2A1



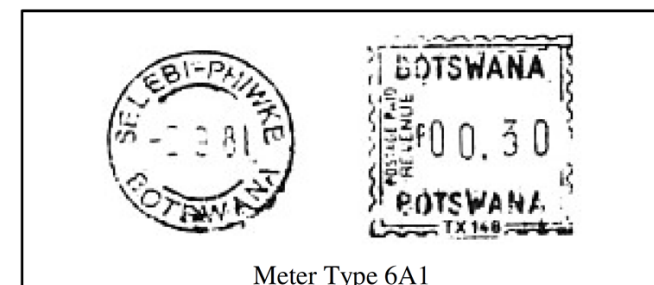
Meter Type 3A1



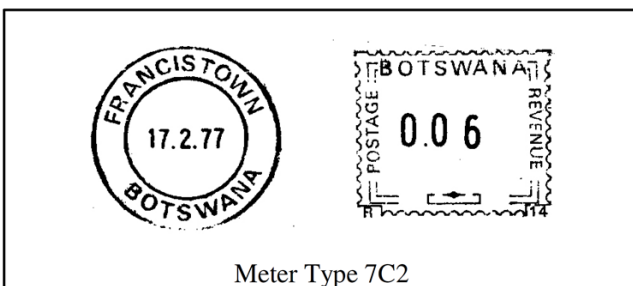
Meter Type 4A1



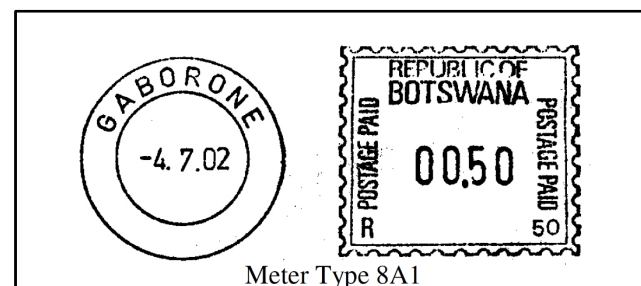
Meter Type 5A1



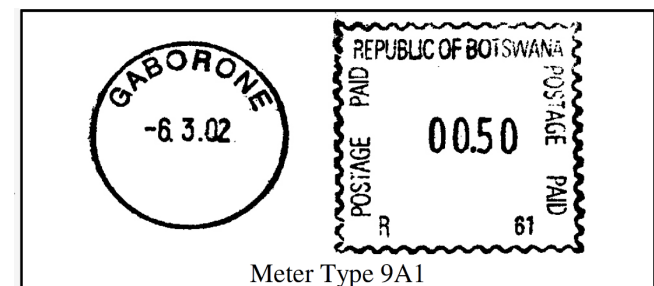
Meter Type 6A1



Meter Type 7C2

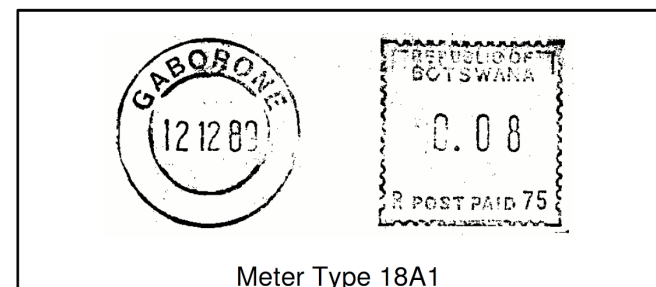
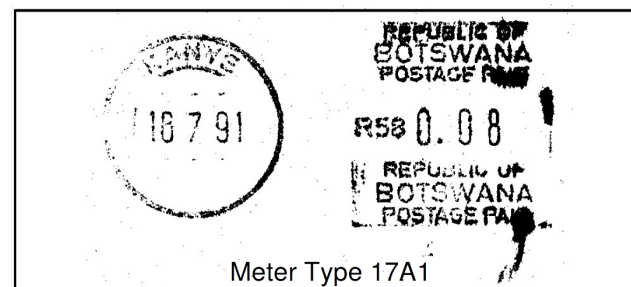
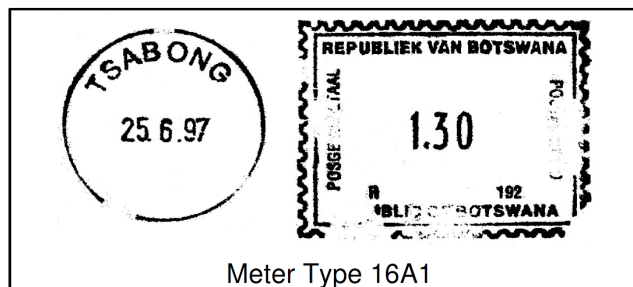
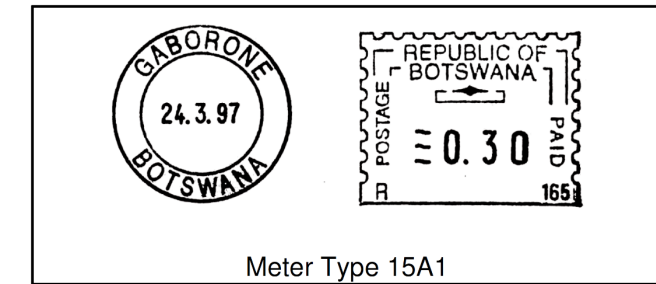
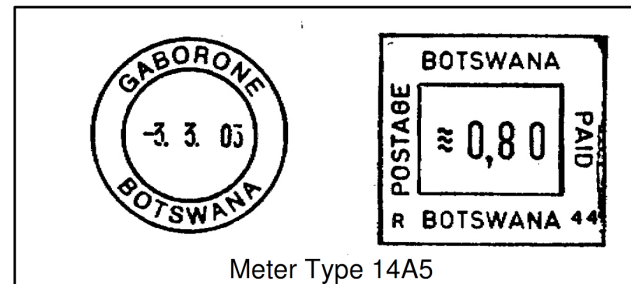
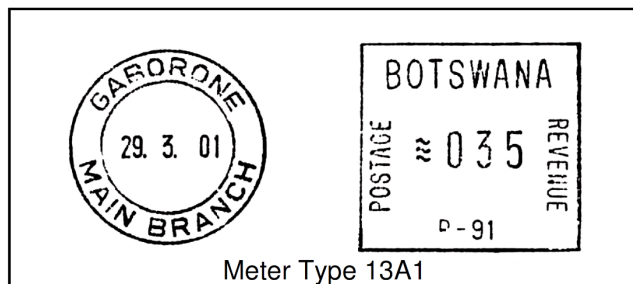
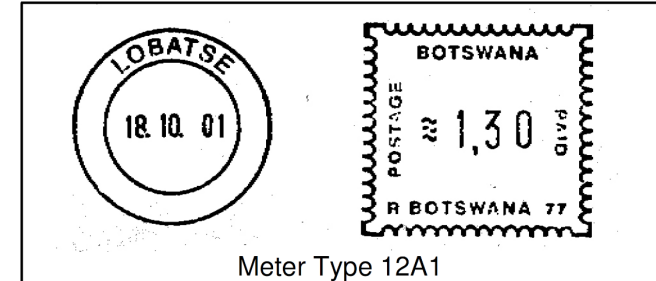
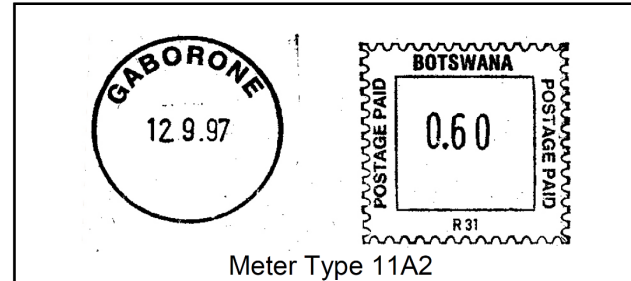
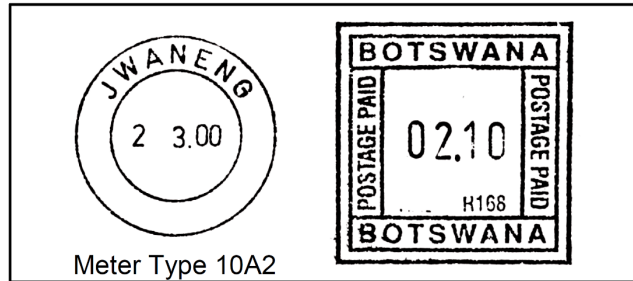


Meter Type 8A1

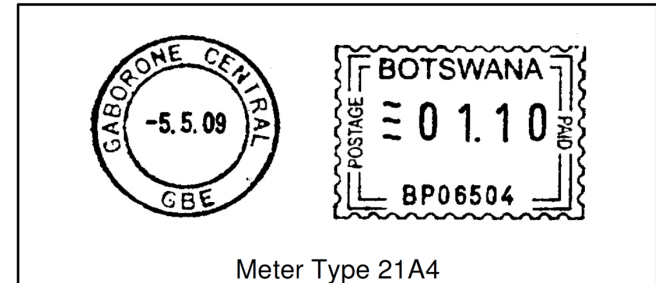
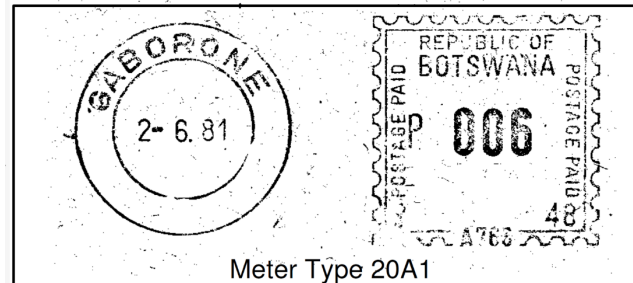
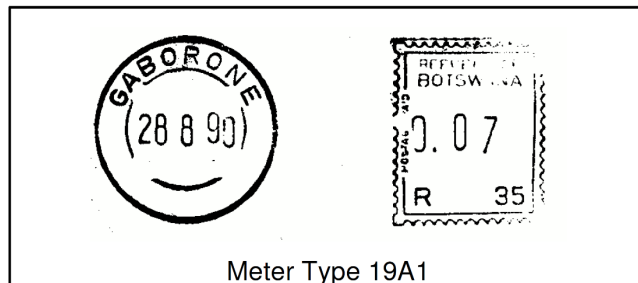
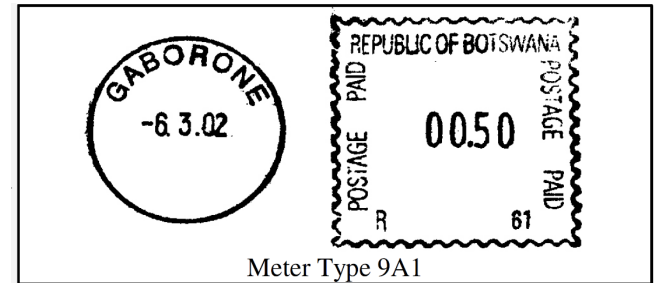
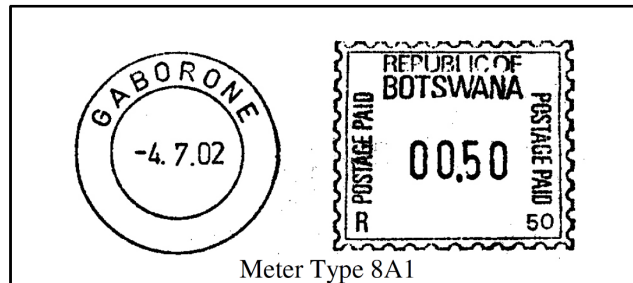
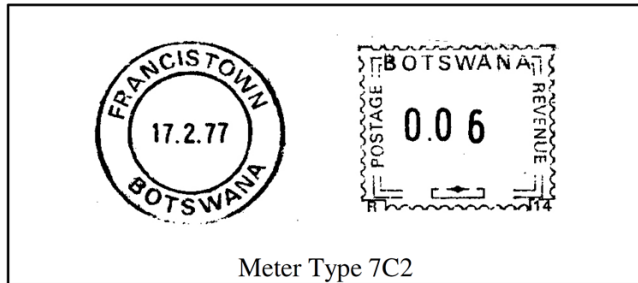


Meter Type 9A1

Types



Types



Typology Example

Meter Type Number	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	Machine Type
8A1	30 x 26 mm	7 mm	1	1	Double	No	00.00	1	1	1	1	Hasler "Mailmaster" (MV) or Ascom "F101" (MV) [Type 8B1] or Ascom Hasler System "120" (MV) [Type 8B1]
8A1	30 x 26 mm	7 mm	1	1	Double	No	00.00	1	1	2 ^s	1	
8A2	30 x 26 mm	7 mm	1	1	Double	No	00.00	1	1	1	1	
8A3	30 x 26 mm	7 mm	1	1	Double	No	00.00	2	1	1	1	
8A4	30 x 26 mm	7 mm	1	1	Double	Yes	00.00	1	1	1	1	
8B1	29 x 26 mm	7 mm	2	1	Double	No	00.00	1	1	1	1	
8B2	29 x 26 mm	7 mm	2 ^t	1	Double	Yes	00.00	1	1	1	1	
8B3	29 x 26 mm	8 mm	2	1	Double	Yes	00.00	1	1	1	1	
8B4	30 x 26 mm	7 mm	2 ^g	1	Double	No	00.00	1	1	1	1	
8C1	29 x 26 mm	7 mm	3	1	Double	No	00.00	1	1	1	1	

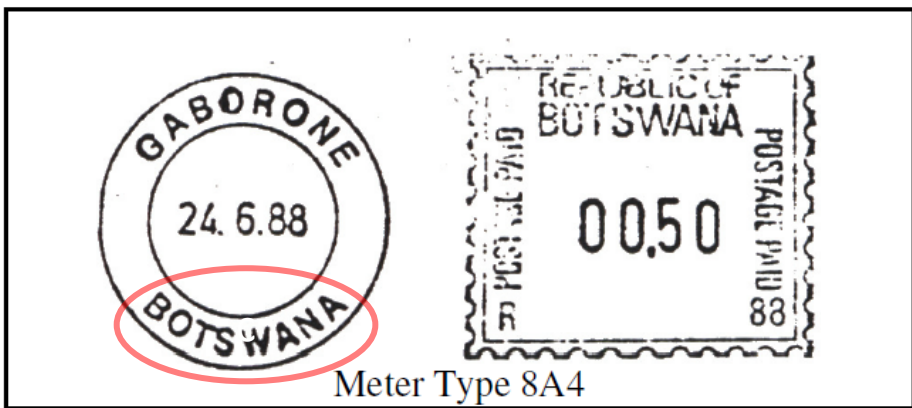
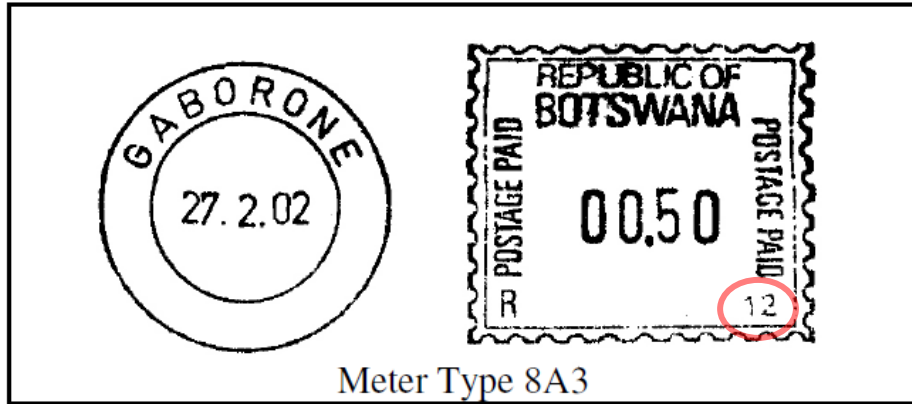
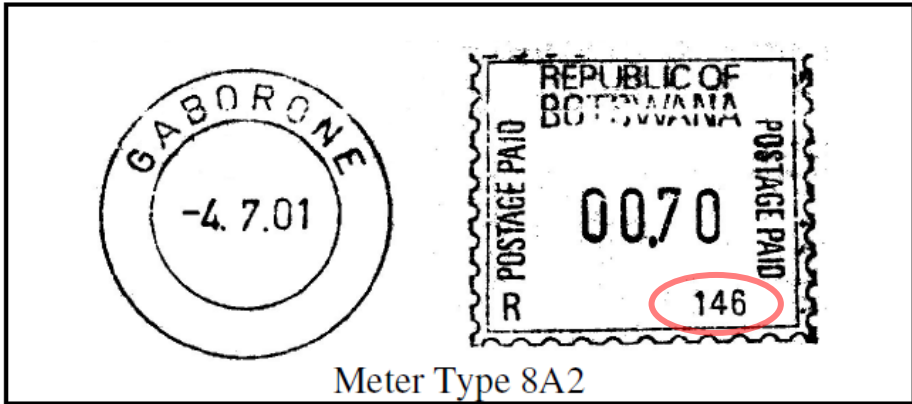
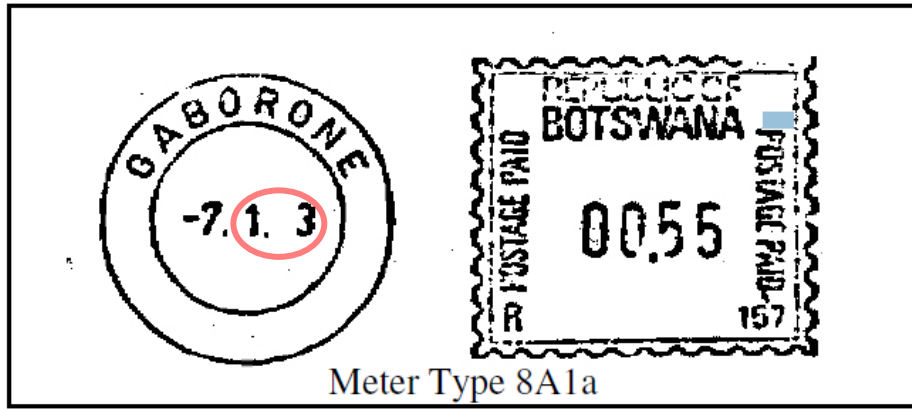
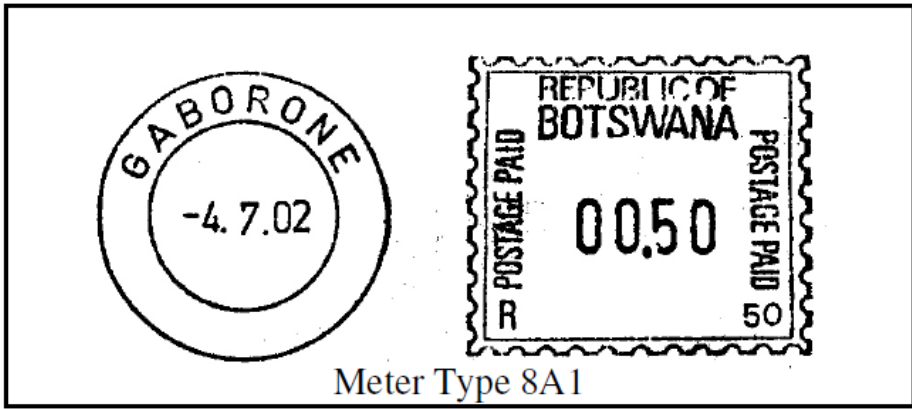
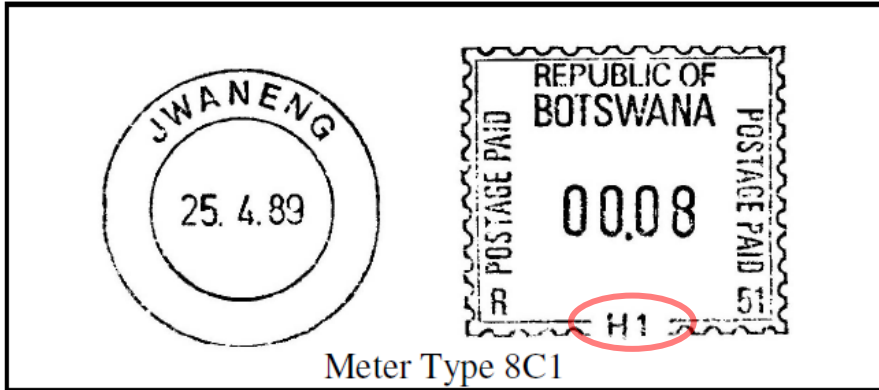
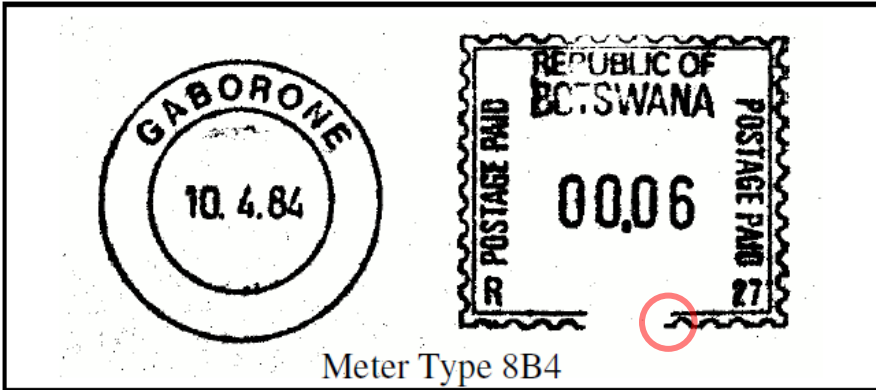
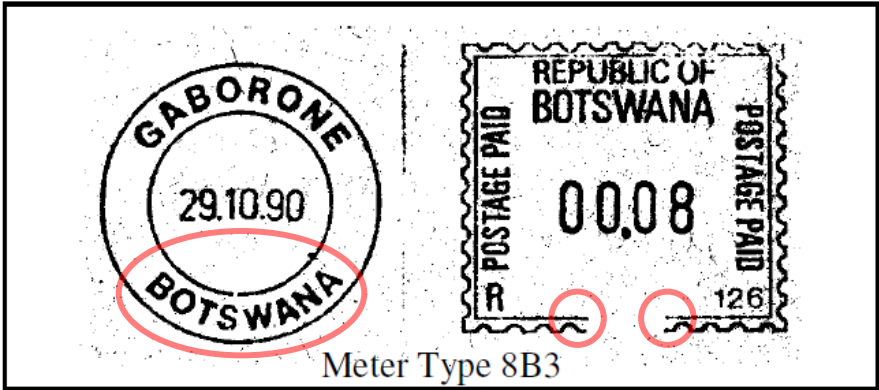
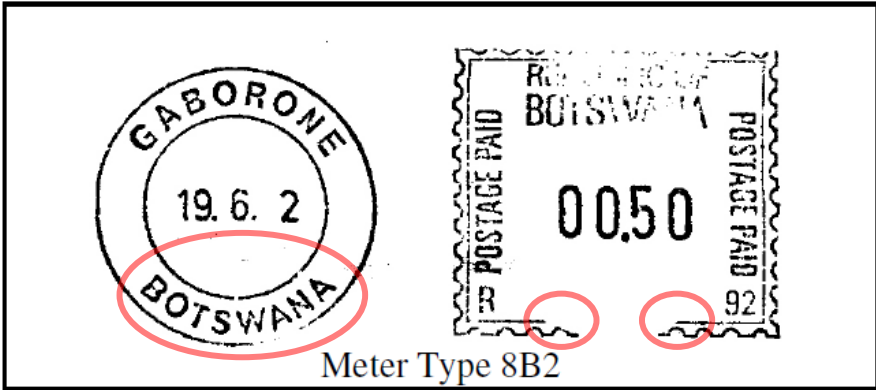
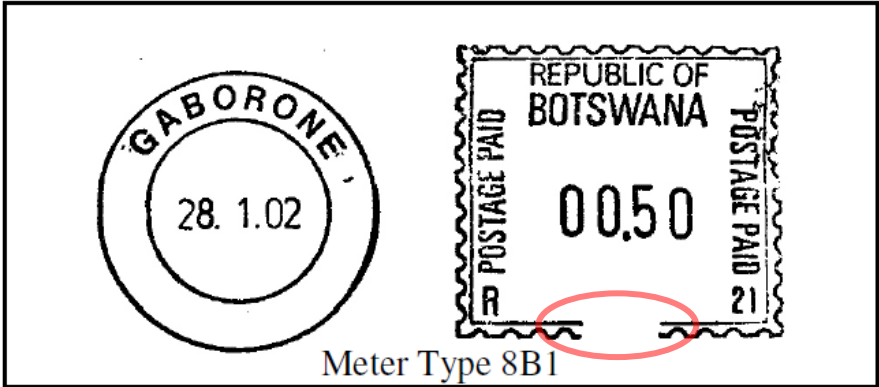
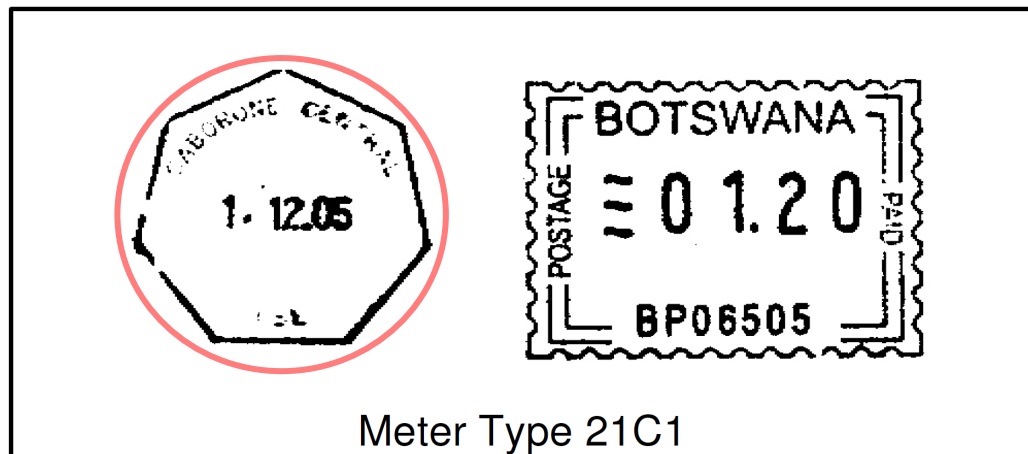
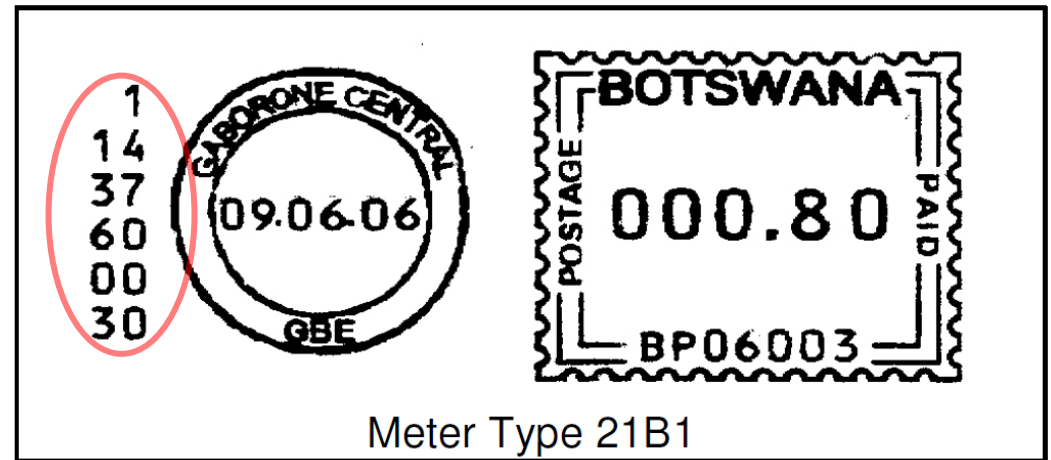
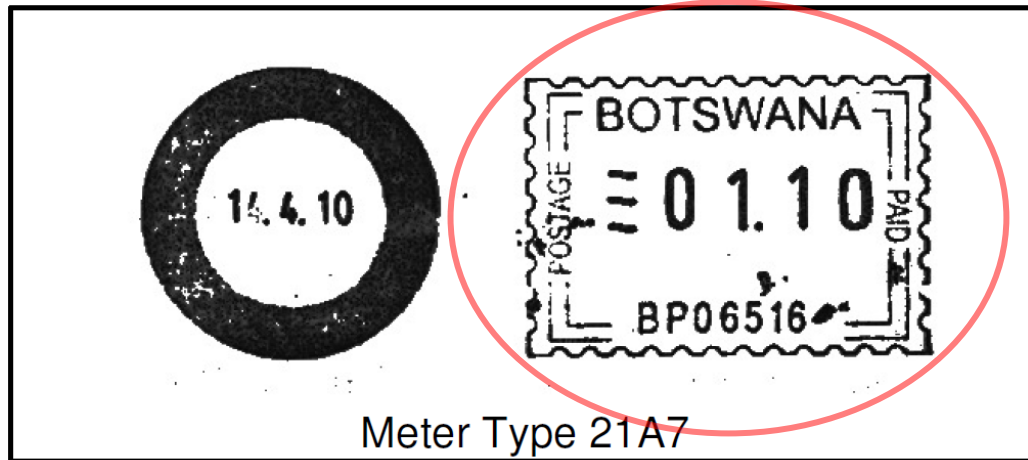


Illustration of Differences

Illustration of Differences



Digital Meter Marks starting in 2003



These new licences start with the prefix BP and the licence numbers start with 060 / 061 and 065. In the 2010's additional licence numbers starting with 511, 514, and 518 have been seen.

Some More Meter Numbers and Types



Starts with prefix BP and the licence number starts with 372.



Starts with prefix BW and the licence number starts with 501. Also has a laser readable block or datamatrix.

Accession Numbering System



Cataloging



I currently have over 3,000 covers of non-stamped postal history from Botswana.

Even in the early days, I was having trouble keeping track of what I owned and was often buying duplicates, so I needed some system to record what I had.

So I started fooling around with Excel, but it wasn't very powerful in allowing me to sort information in different ways depending on questions I had.

I then looked at FileMaker Pro in the early 2000's, an Apple product, but technical support and updates were dwindling.

When I moved back to Canada, I moved from an Apple world to a PC world and MS Access became available to me.

Meters – Database



Microsoft Access

Table Tools: Fields, Table

File Home Create External Data Database Tools Fields Table

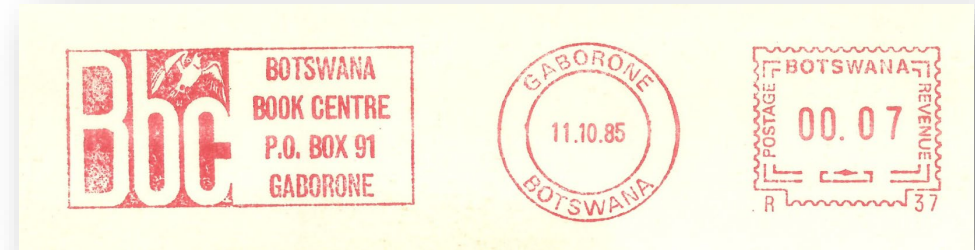
Views Clipboard Sort & Filter Records Find Text Formatting

All Tables: Issue Status, Item Type, Items, Licences, HOLDINGS, Licences ExportErrors, Machine Types, Old database original, Old Item data, Old Licence data, Paste Errors, Quality of Item, Typology, Unrelated Objects

Pref	Lic	Licencee	Community	Date Issued	Issue Status	Address	Contact Nam	Phone Num	General Comments
R	1	Botswana Housing Corporation	Gaborone	07-Jul-99	Expired	P.O. Box 1197	K.Khimbele	352-431	Machine type (Francotyp Postalia "MS5") determined by phone call in Dec. 20
S	1	Botswana Book (?) Centre	Gaborone		Expired				Machine type (Pitney Bowes "Simplex") determined from list in Meter Stamp B
Typolog	Date of Item	Type of Item	Quality of It	Holder of It	Value	Machine Type	Item Comments		
1B1	14 Oct 1971	Cover	Excellent	GS	\$0.03	Pitney Bowes "Simplex"			
1B1	19 Jan 1972	Photocopy	Excellent	see item comm	\$0.03	Pitney Bowes "Simplex"	In article by Inglefield-Watson in the Runner Post issue 24 September 1991.		
1B1	27 Jan 1972	On Piece	Excellent	GS	\$0.10	Pitney Bowes "Simplex"	Denominated in cents. Contains 2 overlapped impressions.		
1B1	22 Apr 1972	Photocopy	Excellent	see item comm	\$0.03	Pitney Bowes "Simplex"	In article by Peetoom in the Runner Post issue 90 August 2015.		
1B1	14 Dec 1973	On Cover	Good	GS	\$0.10	Pitney Bowes "Simplex"	Indicia contains 'c' indicating cents as in rands and cents. No logo.		
*				GS	\$0.00				
UA	1	Standard Bank	Gaborone		Expired	P.O. Box 21			Copy from Case in Meter Stamp Bulletin June 1971, no. 95 (vol XI no 7) show
R	2	Botswana Meat Commission	Lobatse		Expired				Company name supplied by Roy Setterfield via JIW.
R	2	Central District Council	Serowe	07-Jun-99	Expired	Private Bag 001	B. B. Matlapeng	430-857	Re-issue as letter in BP file 34BPS/FM/5 dated ?/99 states that CDC do not l
R	2	?? Machinery	Francistown		Expired	P.O. Box 137			
S	2	Matamela Master	Serowe		Expired				Pitney Bowes "Simplex" described by Roy Setterfield via Inglefield -Watson le
S?	2	Central District Council	Unsure		Expired				Letter in BP file 34BPS/FM/4 dated 26/7/95 from Serowe Post Office states CI
UA	2	Standard Bank	Mahalapye		Expired	P.O. Box 82			Machine type (Pitney Bowes "Automax") determined from list in Meter Stamp E
R	3	Serowe/Palapye Sub District	Palapye	27-Aug-99	Expired	Private Bag 0072	Botho Baruti	421-092/421-14	Machine type (Francotyp Postalia "MS5") determined by phone call in Deceml
R	3	Botswana Business Machines	Francistown		Expired				No response to P.O. enquiry letter in BP file 34BPS/FM/5 dated 14/7/92 or 19.
R	4	Standard Bank	Maun	05-Oct-87	Expired				Letter in BP file 34BPS/FM/4 dated 12/4/96 states branch machine no longer i
R	4	Tati Land Board	Masunga	20-Nov-03	Expired	PrivateBag 009	P.O. Jeremia	248-9267	
R	5	KPMG	Gaborone		Ever Used ?				Licencee determined through typex on original list.

Num Lock

Accession Numbering

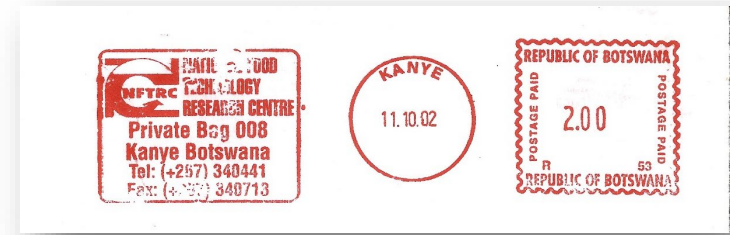


I assign a prefix based on the “primary” cover type.

I am still trying to determine how to deal with covers only seen not acquired– I will probably put scan in digital filing system and print of scan in physical system.

Cover Type	Prefix	Accession System	Example
Meters	BMM	Licence number, prefix and date; same dates, add sequential letters	BMM-096R-091222a BMM-06526BP-050109

Lessons Learned



I built this as I went, not knowing where it was leading. I built the meter database first and have since added Official Frees and Government Printed Envelopes.

I thought about each cover type separately and created a separate database for each.

Therefore, some data like dates are input into each database creating repetition.

If I was starting from scratch, I would create one large database with different tables with a primary table based on accession numbers and some basic information like date of the cover associated with that.

Then, other database tables associated with specific cover types would call that information from the main accession table, reducing duplication of work inputting dates and minimizing data entry errors.

However, I like having the prefixes that tell me the primary interest of the cover and filing by that. Having to put in different accession number types in the same column could reduce input quality assurance.

Some Recent Writings

Post-Independence Industrial Development of Botswana as Illustrated through Meter Marks: Large Companies

by Gordon Smith

Introduction¹

Following independence in 1966, Botswana underwent a transformation from one of the poorest countries in the world with a per capita income equal to US\$95 a year to a middle-income economy with a per capita income of US\$1,565.² By the mid-1990s, it became one of the wealthiest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. This successful transformation was based on the careful management of its diamond resources. All diamond mining in Botswana is controlled by Debswana, a joint venture owned in equal parts by De Beers Diamond Company and the government of Botswana.



Figure 1. Summary map of Botswana with locations mentioned in the text.

The map above (Figure 1) illustrates the locations where the companies described in this article were located. While the map shows the current major road network, it should be noted that there was only 3 km of paved road in the country at independence. The rest of the communities were connected by sand tracks and gravel roads of varying quality. At independence the communities of Lobatse, Francistown, Maun and Ghanzi existed. The other communities, Orapa, Selibi Phikwe, and Lobatse were established to support local mines and have developed into some of the major cities and towns in the country. It is interesting to think that given the way mines in more remote locations are currently established as fly-in camps that these communities would probably not be developed today and would not have become the economic engines and contributors to development and modernization that they have been and are. It is also in-

teresting to note how these communities are all located in the eastern portion of the country. The western side of the country remained quite remote and relatively undeveloped until the mid-1990s, when the first paved road was constructed through the area.

Mines

Kimberlite, the tell-tale diamond-bearing ore, was discovered by De Beers prospectors in northern Botswana in 1966. In 1969, De Beers joined with the government of the Republic of Botswana to establish the De Beers Botswana Mining Company (Figure 2). The Government held 15% of the company at its founding, increasing its shareholding to 50% in 1975. The name of the company became the Debswana Diamond Company (Pty) Ltd in 1992.



Figure 2. De Beers Botswana Mining Company (Pty) Ltd., Gaborone, Licence R224. This mark is associated with the head office of the company, located in the capital city.

De Beers is a subsidiary of Anglo American Corporation that focuses on diamond mining, while the Anglo American Corporation is a larger holding company (Figure 3) with interests in a wide spectrum of mining activities.



Figure 3. Anglo American Corporation Botswana (Services) Limited Gaborone, Licence R71.

In 1967, the second largest Kimberlite pipe in the world, covering 262 acres at the surface, was discovered by De Beers at Orapa. The De Beers Botswana Mining Company began production at the Orapa Mine in northern Botswana in 1971 (Figure 4).



Debswana's Jwaneng Mine.^{3,4} As a private environmental consultant in Botswana from 1994 to 2002, the author did a number of projects related to the operations of this mine.



Figure 4. De Beers Botswana Mining Company (Pty) Ltd., Orapa, Licence R93.

In 1972, De Beers geologists discovered the Jwaneng Kimberlite pipe, and the Jwaneng mine was opened in 1982 (Figure 5). Jwaneng has since become the world's richest diamond mine by value, producing an average of 11 million carats per year.



Figure 5. Debswana Diamond Company (Pty) Ltd., Jwaneng, Licence R51.

In 2000, the company's diamond production totalled 24.6 million carats (4,920 kg), approximately 51% of the world's annual production.⁵ There have been a number of recent finds on very large diamonds in the country including a 1,098.3-carat high-quality gemstone found at Jwaneng Mine in June 2021 (see Figure 6). Other recent finds of large gems include a 1,758-carat stone found at Karowe mine in central Botswana in 2019 and an 1,101-carat diamond found at the same mine in 2015. The high value per weight of diamonds mined by Debswana has made the company the leading producer of diamonds by value in the world.

The Botswana Government has used the large revenues from the diamond mining industry to develop the social and physical aspects of the country. While the biggest economic contributor by far was the diamond industry, other mining activities including copper-nickel and soda ash also contributed significantly.

An agreement between Tshekedi Khama, Regent of the Bangwato Tribe in the Bechuanaland Protectorate and Roun Selection Trust was signed in 1959 to form Ramangwato Concessions Limited and prospecting commenced leading to the discovery of the copper and nickel orebody in the Selibi area in 1963. In 1966, high-grade ore was discovered at Phikwe (Figure



Figure 6. A member of Botswana's Cabinet holds a nearly 1,100-carat diamond that could be the third-largest mined diamond in the world. (Montal Nhyan / AFP/Getty Images)⁶

FRANKING METER MARKS

Botswana Meter marks: An introduction

by Gordon Smith, Philatelic Society of Greater Southern Africa, the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, the Postal History Society of Canada, and the Nova Scotia Stamp Club.



Introduction

The public often pays little attention to the stamps on their mail, especially since they are less colourful and art-like than stamps. However, most mail in the world now moves by non-stamped means, so if we are to describe and preserve current postal history for future collectors, we need to consider the marks that allow an item to move through the postal system without the use of postage stamps. Postmarks are viewed by the philatelic community as a valid aspect of postal history collecting and it can be argued that marks denoting payment (just like a stamp) are at least as equally important to understand and record as postmarks.

Neglected even in developed countries, the collecting of non-stamp marks denoting payment is even less common in smaller developing countries, such as Botswana. Given the lack of interest in this material, covers are often quickly relegated to the trash, even by philatelists, making them rare in collecting circles and challenging to obtain.

- licence number 2 to Central District Council in Serowe,
- licence number 3 to Botswana Business Machines in Francistown,
- licence number 4 to Standard Bank in Maun,
- licence number 6 to Botswana Power Corporation in Francistown, and
- licence number 7 was issued to Botswana Game Industries in Francistown.

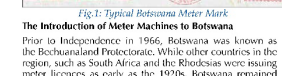


Figure 1. Typical Botswana Meter Mark (Case, 1977)

The Introduction of Meter Machines to Botswana

Prior to independence in 1966, Botswana was known as the Bechuanaland Protectorate. While other countries in the region, such as South Africa and the Rhodesias were issuing meter licences as early as the 1920s, Botswana remained largely undeveloped until the 1970s, thus influencing the lack of demand for franking licences.

There is no evidence that postal franking machines were used in the Protectorate, although a drawing of a frank die from Universal Postal Frankers Ltd. in London UK in 1957 indicates that their use was under consideration (Fig. 2). An article by John Ingfield-Watson (1991) states that "It has been reported that in May 1963 the Postmaster of the Protectorate wrote in reply to a query that there were no machines then in use, but applications for their introduction (makes unknown) were in hand."



Figure 2. Simple Stamp Design from Universal Postal Frankers Ltd. in London UK in 1957. (Ingfield-Watson, 1991).

The first meter franking appears to be meter licence no. UAT issued to Standard Bank of Botswana in Gaborone and dated 13 November 1970 (Fig. 3). This mark was created by a Universal NW 'Automas' machine from Universal Postal Frankers Ltd. The production of this model of machine is dated to have ceased in 1960 (Ingfield-Watson, 1991), which in conjunction with the drawing of the frank die noted in Fig. 2 would make the earlier use of meter machines in Botswana seem more likely. Issue dates for the first 30 or so licences in Botswana are unknown. The only file record from the 1970s and 1980s remaining at Botswana Post is the original licence number issue list, which does not contain this information. It is only possible to estimate dates on the basis of earliest seen dates.

From commencement, meter licences were issued nationwide as evidenced through the issuing of the following licences:

- licence number 2 to Central District Council in Serowe,
- licence number 3 to Botswana Business Machines in Francistown,
- licence number 4 to Standard Bank in Maun,
- licence number 6 to Botswana Power Corporation in Francistown, and
- licence number 7 was issued to Botswana Game Industries in Francistown.



Figure 3. Earliest known Botswana Meter Mark (Case, 1977)

The Number of Meter Licences Issued

By March 1999, a total of 232 licence numbers had been issued.

In 1992, all licence holders were contacted by Botswana Post in order to confirm whether the issued licences were still in use. While a number responded that either they had never purchased a meter machine or that their machine had ceased functioning, no further action was taken by the Post Office.

In 1999, a similar contacting exercise was undertaken. At that time, licences not being used were designated for re-assignment, this resulted in 75 old licence numbers becoming available for re-use. However, research from Post Office files and secondary sources appears to indicate that a few licence numbers changed hands before the Post Office began re-issuing expired numbers in mid-1999.

Including the re-issued number, a total of 327 licences had been granted by August 2002.

Meter Machines Used

The Post Office did not charge for the use of a meter licence nor did it sell meter machines. It only re-set the machine on request by the licence holder. This may have changed since this information was determined in the early 2000s. So, for at least the first 30 years of postal meter use in Botswana, licence holders had to obtain their machines from a private source.

Assistance

Can I have help identifying the different machines that made the marks?

Any ideas of the meaning of the codes?



Contact

Gordon Smith

Email: gs@postalhistory.ca

Website: postalhistory.ca

