



# THE SQUARED CIRCLE CANCELS OF BRADFORD, YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND



This city was one of the more prolific users of squared circle cancels in England, with a total of 60 formats put in place over the period when this style of cancellation device was popular in that region. These different formats were spread over 13 series of hammers, and, for the most part, were the result of recutting the original, and further revising the recut devices. The various alterations were made primarily to provide for changes in postal regulations which necessitated different approaches to designations provided within the canceller itself, and to deal with worn impressions. Six of the hammers (Series 1 through 6) were proofed on February 26, 1887, Series 12, on August 18, 1887, while the remainder were added at undetermined intervals between 1890 and 1894. As many as six alterations were made to some in the series. The earliest recorded use of any of the hammers is for Series 5, March 5, 1887, while the latest recorded use is for Series 3 on June 29, 1906.

The exhibit relies heavily on the information gathered by Stanley Cohen, Maurice Barrette, Daniel Rosenblat (authors of *Collecting British Squared Circle Postmarks*) and John Hine and A. M. Williams who provided new information for the *Second Edition* of that catalogue. As well, Mike Boddy who provides monthly updates for interested collectors is a constant contributor to the effort.

The purpose of this exhibit is to use various covers, cards and individual stamps to illustrate the fascinating progressions that took place within each of the thirteen series of cancellers. It will show characteristics that were common to the majority of the hammers as well as features which were used for only one or two hammers.

The exhibit is arranged by series, commencing with the 1st proceeding through to the 13th, with detailed information as to which stage the particular hammer format falls under—1st through as many as 6 recuts. Further data is provided which indicates the recorded period of use for that example, the date of the item, and the **code** that indicates its collection/processing time, and in some instances, the series number.

Providing the time of processing/collection was considered to be of great importance, and over the years that these cancellers were used in Bradford, three distinct code styles were used: SC—meaning Special Code where various letters of the alphabet were assigned to hours of the day; CC— designating Clock Code which used the already established Post Office Telegraphs time signals; and CT— Clear Time, being the actual time of day.

The study of the progression of RECUTS provides for interesting comparisons. Most formats go from SC time codes to CC indicators to CT, but changes to the basic styles creep in. Some show series numbers incorporated at the top of the design— sometimes using very small type size; others add the series number near the bottom of the basic design, while still others show very small numbers between the bottom arcs of the cancel. Many of the final RECUTS see the series number incorporated in each of the bottom corners of the hammer.

Another feature to be discovered is the fact that BRADFORD was represented in three different ways. Initially, each series except #10 and #11, commenced with BRADFORD at the top of the hammer, and YORKS at the bottom. For #'s 10 and 11, it read BRADFORD, YORKS across the top. In later years, due to Bradford's in other counties going through name changes, it was decided that the "Yorks" was unnecessary, and so it was removed from the hammers.

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