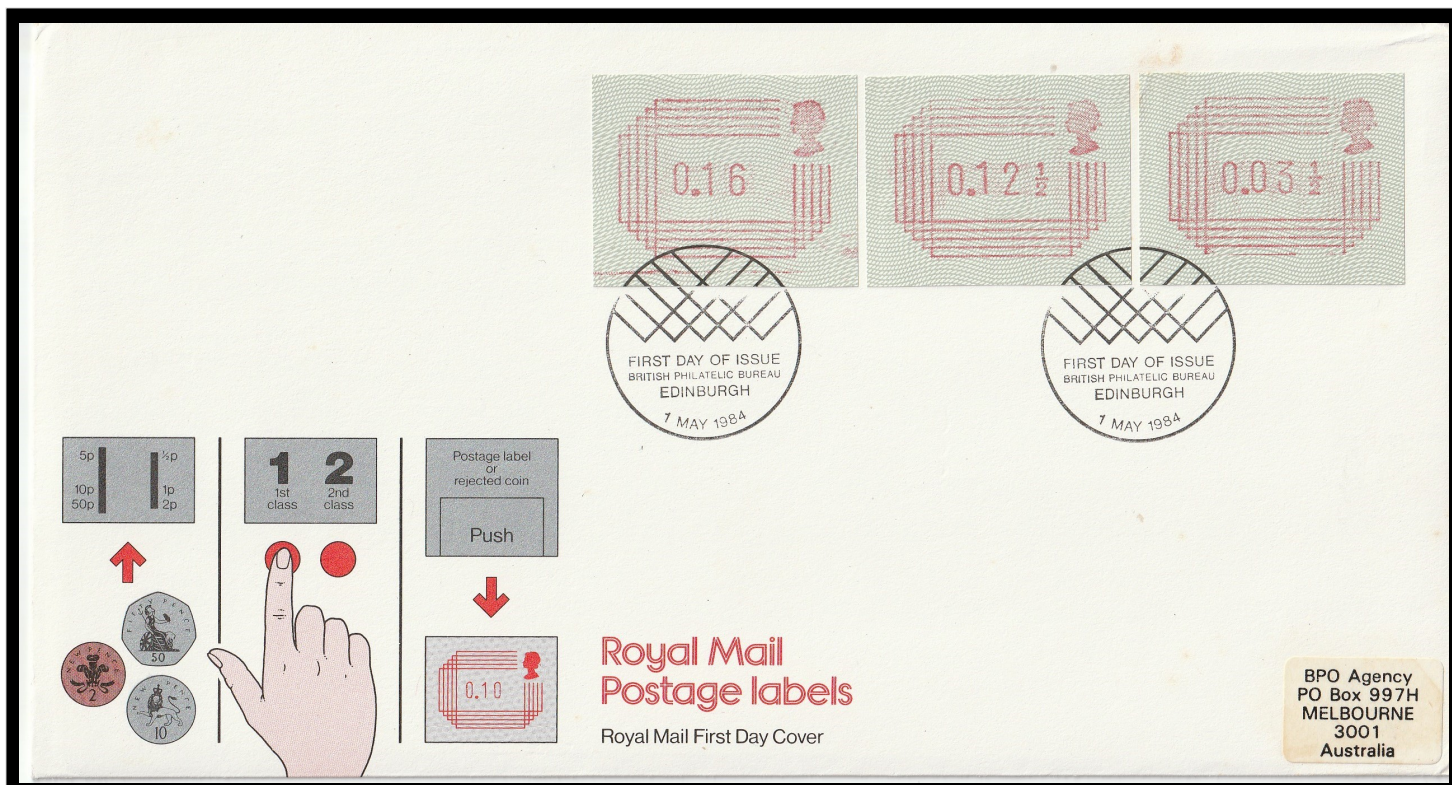


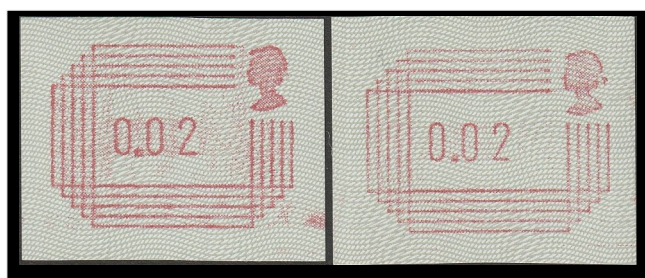
The most boring stamps

By 1984 many countries postal authorities had released machines that imprinted on command any postage denomination within a specified range on labels that were used for postage. Great Britain eventually joined the fray with a design that was roundly criticised as 'boring' by all the media. The labels could be any of 32 denominations between 1/2p to 16p.

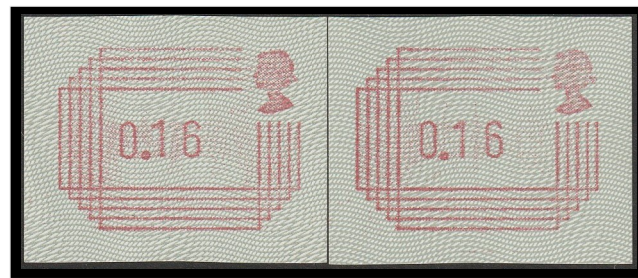


FDC showing values for the first weight step for both first class and second class inland letter; plus a make up value between the classes

The labels were available from the Post Office Philatelic Bureaux, or could be purchased from the machines in 5 locations. Labels issued from the machines can be identified from those issued by the Philatelic Bureaux as the print was slightly elongated.

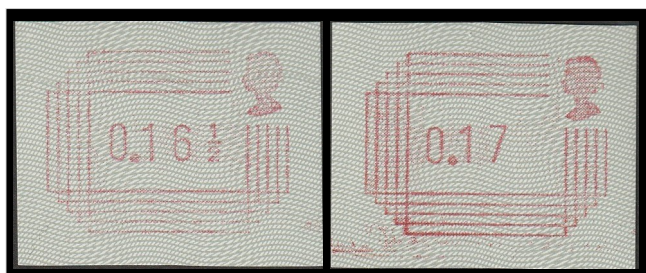


The Bureaux issued label is on the left, whilst the machine printed label is on the right.



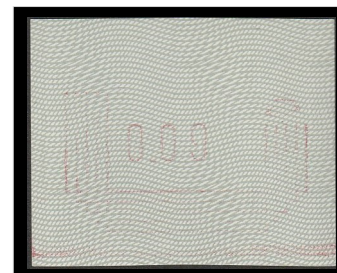
By September 1984 the Royal Mail had increased the postage rate (again) such that higher values were required. So a 16 1/2p and 17p value were released—and the machines altered to print such.

Like all stamps, errors and varieties did occur.



Only the 17p value had any postal use being for first class letters up to 60g from 3 September 1984.

9p machine issued label with weak print and completely omitted top frame



In 1985 Royal Mail finally 'killed off' the experiment and the most boring looking stamps issued