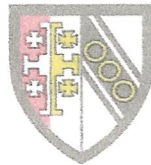


Mike says "College Stamps - Between 1871 and 1885, seven Oxford and three Cambridge colleges issued stamps to pay for the messenger services that they operated within their cities. The Post Office eventually suppressed these paid-for services. The labels have become collectable, and I'd love to find the one issued by my college, St Johns Cambridge, in 1884. Instead this sheet presents the stamp issued by Selwyn College."

OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE COLLEGE STAMPS

Selwyn College, Cambridge

The first Cambridge college to issue messenger stamps was Selwyn in the year of its foundation, 1882. The college was established in memory of George Augustus Selwyn (1809–1878), the first Bishop of New Zealand (1841–1868) and then Bishop of Lichfield (1868–1878).



The design of the stamp was based on the Selwyn College arms, believed to be those borne by George Selwyn as Bishop of Lichfield.



The stamps were lithographed on magenta surface-coloured paper, supplied by a local Cambridge stationer, W P Spalding. They were cut up and delivered as single, imperforate stamps. Many examples – and this is probably one such – are reprints produced in the 1890s from the original plates. They had a face value of a half penny.

Regulation 14 of the October 1883 issue of the college regulations covered the postal service:

Letters are posted in the box under the gateway.

A messenger is employed for the service of members of the college. He will clear the letter box of Cambridge notes at the same time that he takes out the letters for the post. A charge of ½d on each note is made for his payment, to be paid by putting on one of the college stamps, which (as well as postage stamps) can be obtained from the porter. He will wait for answer when the person to whom the note is addressed is at home if two stamps are put on. The messenger will not deliver beyond Grange Road, Barton Road, Lensfield Road, St Andrew's Street, Jesus and Magdalene.

[Note: three covers bearing single stamps are known. None with two stamps on one cover survive]