

Philatelic Bulletin

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Editorial

Elsewhere in this Bulletin there appears a note which may help to clarify the new conditions for which the Post Office Stampex Trophy will be awarded. The change is minimal, but it may help to encourage more entries in the National Class. When we consider the hundreds of thousands (at the very least) who collect GB stamps, the number who exhibit at BPE, Stampex or who

submit entries for the Melville Awards is very low. Perhaps some of our readers may care to write to the Editor outlining why they do not enter their collections in the major National Exhibitions.

We are sometimes accused of issuing too many stamps with the consequent increase in the cost to collectors. We like to think that we adopt a conservative policy but freely accept that we do not necessarily please all of our customers. Be that as it may, we of the Philatelic Bulletin, are gratified to announce what must be the most reasonable price increase in the philatelic field. For the first time in over three years the subscription is to be increased. From 1 January 1979 the annual fee is to be increased by 10p a year! Details of this and other changes are shown in this issue.

Christmas Theme at Gibbons December Exhibition

Christmas is the seasonal theme for the 1-22 December exhibition in Stanley Gibbons Romano House Gallery, 339 Strand, London WC2.

Comprising nine frames, this fascinating display concentrates mainly on Christmas greetings and postmarks of Britain and from abroad during the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Among the many attractive and highly decorative Christmas cards to be shown will be some sent by Royalty. There will also be cards from the Boer War, the two World Wars, and a few aerogrammes.

There will be a fine selection of Great Britain postmarks of the early 1900s. Among which is an example of a special Christmas Day postmark, identifying a letter posted well in advance and delivered on Christmas Day.

Bristol Philatelic Sales Counter

The new address of the Philatelic Sales Counter is Merchant Street, Bristol, BS1 3EJ, and not Small Street, BS1 1AA.

'Post Office Reform-Its Importance and Practicability'

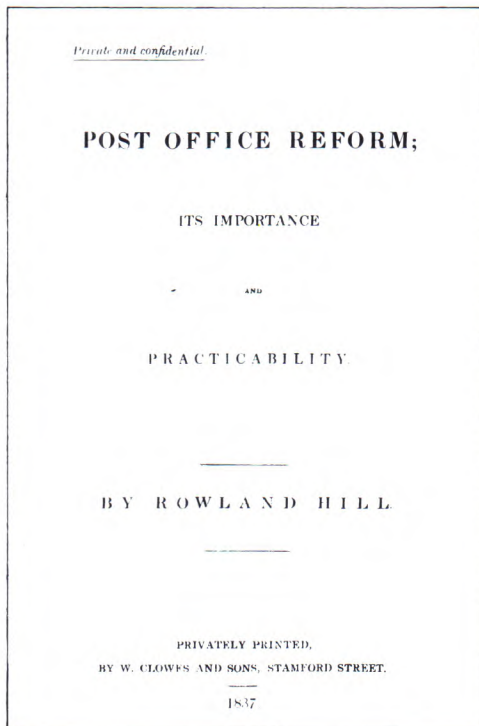
In August next year — as a tribute to the work of Sir Rowland Hill for Postal Reform, and to mark the centenary of his death on 27 August 1879 — the Post Office will be issuing a set of commemorative stamps and a miniature sheet.

This month's gem — one of the most historic documents in the R M Phillips Collection — features the first 'Private and Confidential' version of Rowland Hill's famous pamphlet, which he published privately in January 1837 for the eyes of the Government only.

In his pamphlet, which he entitled 'Post Office Reform; Its Importance and Practicability' (carefully avoiding the use of the words 'Penny Postage' which, at this stage, he feared might alarm his readers!), Hill cautiously set out his detailed plan for a reform of the outdated postal system of the 1830s.

A major weakness in that postal system was the age-old practice of collecting postage upon the delivery of a letter, which wasted Letter Carriers' time in knocking and waiting at front doors just to offer delivery of the letter and to collect the payment due. Another fault recognised by Hill was the assessing of postage according to the number of miles over which a letter had been carried and according to the number of sheets of paper making up the letter. This, Hill argued, made the task of delivering letters 'an exceedingly tedious, inconvenient, and consequently expensive process'. To highlight this, Hill cited evidence that it required one hour and a half to deliver 67 letters — some houses detaining a Letter Carrier for as long as five minutes in giving change — up to 25 times as long as it would have taken just to deliver the same number of letters without waiting to collect the postage.

The existence, too, of so many different postage rates, and the 'penalties' imposed in the form of double or treble postage on letters having an enclosure, created additional and costly administrative problems for the Post Office. The one meant that postmasters had to familiarise themselves with a wide variety of complicated postage rates; the other created a need for postal officials to scrutinise all letters passing through the post for extra, surchargeable enclosures. For



the London Post this meant that all letters taken in by receiving houses within three miles of the General Post Office had to be conveyed to St Martin's-le-Grand for examination, taxing and sorting — and then returned to the branch offices for delivery! For letters arriving in London every morning by the General Post this meant that every one had to be examined by the Clerks, to see that the charge on each had been made out correctly and that every postmaster had debited himself with the correct amount of postage for any that had been prepaid. When this task had been completed, further accounting work was needed to determine the amount of postage to be collected by each Letter Carrier and to charge this against him. All this, Hill stressed, was before a letter could be taken out on delivery!

Hill pointed, too, to the fact that, despite an increasing population, an extension of education

and the increasing trade and prosperity of the country since 1815, the revenue of the Post Office was falling, and this, in spite of the paramount importance attached by Government to the duty of the Post Office to gain as much profit as possible. The high cost of postage, he argued, was clearly inhibiting a greater use of the posts — and the existing system under which the administration laboured was costly to operate and inhibited any increase in efficiency.

Hill's real objective was, of course, the adoption of a uniform basic postage rate of one penny, charged by weight rather than distance, and payable in advance by the sender of the letter. And, by skilfully leading the reader of his pamphlet, step by step, through his well argued and documented case for postal reform, Hill hoped to convince him that penny postage was not, after all, a mad, preposterous idea but the only logical remedy for all that was wrong with the present system.

Hill succeeded in his aim, and from this point on the Government, through the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Thomas Spring Rice, gave Hill and his scheme every support.

Soon afterwards, Hill was summoned to give evidence before the Commission of Post Office Inquiry, which was then gathering information for its ninth report, one dealing with the local Twopenny and Threepenny Posts of London.

And it was on 13 February 1837, when giving evidence before this Commission, that Hill put forward the idea of using, as a means of prepaying postage, 'a bit of paper just large enough to bear the stamp, and covered at the back with a glutinous wash . . . '.

It is interesting to note that, at that time, Hill was thinking more of stamped covers as being the usual method for prepaying postage — not adhesive stamps, which he saw then as a mere expedient for use in exceptional cases. Hill was as surprised as anyone to learn, soon after their introduction in May 1840, that the new adhesive postage stamps were proving to be the most popular method of prepaying postage!

JEAN FARRUGIA

Christmas Stamp Book



The above illustration shows the make-up of the Christmas stamp book issued on 15 November 1978, price £1.60

Postcode Stamp Books for Derby

Two new stamp books will be issued by the Post Office on 5 February 1979 to help promote postcode publicity in conjunction with the opening of Derby Mechanised Letter Office. They will be available only from the Philatelic Bureau, Lothian House, 124 Lothian Road, EDINBURGH, EH3 9BB, Post Office philatelic sales counters and post offices in the Derby Head Post Office area.

The books priced at 70p and 90p and containing either 10 × 7p or 10 × 9p definitive stamps will be in a similar format to the current books at that price.

The 70p book cover will depict Kedleston Hall, the historic Derbyshire home of the Curzon family and the present home of Viscount and Viscountess Scarsdale. The Tramway Museum at Crich near Matlock, Derbyshire, will be illustrated on the 90p cover.

The Christmas Carol-Part 2

After the Restoration, the new foreign styles of fashionable music introduced by the court of Charles II were ill-suited to the production of simple carol tunes with unsophisticated words. However, nothing can extinguish for very long the basic desire of people to sing together in celebration, and during the last years of the 17th century and the first half of the 18th century a new contender entered the field to fill the void left by the now virtually extinct little carol. Largely influenced by Charles and John Wesley, this period saw the birth of the greatest English hymns and it is to this time that we owe such magnificent Christmas favourites as the early *While Shepherds Watched* (1696), *O Come all ye Faithfull* (c 1742), *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* (c 1739), and *Christians Awake* (1749). As different musically from the simple words and lilting repetitive tunes of the medieval carol as it is possible to be, they nevertheless touched a common chord across the centuries and in source and intention were closer to it than anything produced in the intervening years. Nowadays the distinction between carol and hymn is blurred to all but the purist and these 18th century and later 19th century Christmas hymns such as *Once in Royal David's City*, *Angels from the Realms of Glory*, *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, are today to be found mingled with the carols in all walks of life.

But if no new carols of any merit or durability were being produced, where were the old ones? Had they just disappeared without trace into the dusty folios of old manuscripts and if so, what provided the resurgence of interest in their tunes and words in the middle of the 19th century, and more important still, what inspired people to begin writing carols again?

The most obvious repository for the traditional carols was that of human memory in the country districts where the old tunes and words gained something of the status of folk-song. Yet even here the carol was beginning to lose ground and in the early 19th century the sound of carol singing in country areas was regarded as something of a delightful rarity, and the field researches of such folk-song enthusiasts as Cecil Sharp and



Mediaeval Shepherds Dancing a Carol. Reproduced by kind permission of the Bodleian Library, Oxford

Vaughan Williams only arrived just in time in the early years of this century, after the major carol revival, to save the orally transmitted carol from total oblivion.

Instead, the basic source for carol texts and tunes until this more recent concentration on field research and medieval manuscript sources proved to be the humble broadsheet produced since the middle of the 18th century in shoddy type by small printers in the major towns, who could find a ready market for simple carols and ballads amongst the common people who could not follow the prevalent musical fashions of the day.

The first two major collections heralding the return of the carol, Davies Gilbert's *Some Ancient Christmas Carols* (1822), and William Sandy's *Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern* (1833) relied heavily on the broadsheet tradition and also started the fashion for the translation of foreign carols. The motives of these two editors were undoubtedly of an antiquarian nature, indeed they believed that carols would soon die out, but at the same time social conditions were ripe for a regrowth of the carol tradition based on their publications.

Victorian society had found two new enthusiasms in the growth of music for the ordinary man with the spread of cheap pianos and choral societies and the celebration of Christmas in the form in which we know it today with its Christmas trees, snowy scenes, Father Christmas, presents, and emphasis on the sanctity of the domestic circle. If we add to this mixture the impetus from the academic side of a passion for early English music and poetry fostered

by the Oxford Movement it is easy to see how the stage was set for a full revival of carol composition and singing at just that moment when the carol as a folk tradition and as an obsolete lyric form had reached its lowest ebb and almost disappeared.

Several collections of carols appeared in the wake of Gilbert and Sandys, notably the *12 Carols for Christmastide* (1853) and the *12 Carols for Eastertide* (1853) by the Rev J M Neale and the Rev T Helmore, based on translations from the Swedish carol book *Piae Cantiones* of 1582. Edmund Sedding's Collection of *Antient Christmas Carols* (1860 and 1863) published still more old English carols interspersed with foreign borrowings but the really great step forward came in 1871 at the height of the rage for carol singing amongst educated people. This was the collection of 42 carols by the Rev H R Bramley and Dr John Stainer, organist of Magdalen College, Oxford, *Christmas Carols New and Old*, later increased to a grand total of 70 carols in 1878.

Now came the great period of carol singing as a Christmas social activity with choirs singing in the streets with lanterns for mince pies and Christmas cheer and groups gathered around the family piano by the fireside. But by now it was carol singing as a social activity rather than academic carol collection which had taken over in full force and although all of these collections had contained some old traditional carols, culminating in the inclusion of twenty-seven in the 1878 edition of *Christmas Carols New and Old*, they were really in danger of being swamped by a deluge of second rate Victorian carols designed to cater for the insatiable appetite of the public. Some of these, such as Christina Rossetti's and Gustav Holst's *In the Bleak Mid-Winter* and J H Hopkin's *We Three Kings* are worthy additions to the carol repertoire, but many deserved to be consigned to the oblivion which the traditional carols had suffered for so long.

The balance was not really redressed until the efforts of the Folk-Song Society, founded in 1898, led by Miss Lucy Broadwood, Cecil Sharp and Ralph Vaughan Williams, culminated in the 1928 *Oxford Book of Carols* which remains the

standard carol collection in general use today, with 197 carols, old and new.

The Congregational Hymnary of 1916 was the first Church hymn book to print carols along with hymns, and the fashion of Carol Services, which began with the inauguration of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at Truro in 1880, meant that after so very long carols became a permanent feature of the Church's official celebration of Christmas.

The editors of *Oxford Book of Carols* described their collection as 'a book of practical carols intended to be sung' and one can only hope that the old carols and the new ones being composed today will indeed continue to be sung as well as listened to, so that carol singing of 'tidings of comfort and joy' will never again disappear as before.

Post Office Stampex Trophy

In order more fully to cover the various aspects which should be required of an entry worthy to gain the award the conditions have been amended. In future the Post Office Stampex Trophy will be awarded for the best entry of stamps of Great Britain issued from 1924.

Conversion of F1 Stamp Vending Machines to 50p

In early November about 100 F1 (10p) stamp booklet vending machines were converted, on a trial basis, to accept a 50p coin and vend a 50p booklet. These machines are to be known as the F2.

Six converted machines have been on trial since 1977 in London (at Trafalgar Square BO, Queensway BO, Upper Holloway BO, London Chief Office and Islington BO) and at the Brighton Conference Centre. Additional machines are to be converted in Brighton and London and in nine other major centres — Norwich, Hounslow (including Heathrow Airport), Birmingham, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Glasgow, Manchester, Belfast, Bristol and Cardiff.

If the trial proves successful the remaining 2,000 F1s will be converted to vend 50p booklets by the end of 1979.

Forces Covers

Royal Navy Cover

4 December 1978 marked the 'paying-off' of the aircraft carrier, HMS *Ark Royal*, when her Air Group left the ship for the last time.

The occasion is remembered by the issue of a commemorative cover depicting the crests of the squadrons serving aboard the ship. The cost of the cover, bearing a 9p 'Energy' stamp and cancelled with a BFPS handstamp numbered 1629 — illustrating the crest of HMS *Ark Royal* — is 45p. Alternatively, the cover with the 10½p 'Energy' stamp affixed, cancelled, and signed by Captain E R Anson RN, the Captain of the aircraft carrier, costs 92p. And finally, with an 11p 'Energy' stamp, the cover is available signed by Vice Admiral Sir Desmond Cassidy KCB, Flag Officer, Naval Air Command, and Captain Anson, price £1.72.

Orders sent to: The Royal Naval Philatelic Officer, Royal Naval Air Station, Yeovilton, Somerset, BA22 8HL, should be accompanied by cheques etc made payable to the Fleet Air Arm Museum, and a stamped and addressed 7" × 5" envelope.

RAF Cover HA33 will be issued to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the World Seaplane Long Distance Record. The record was achieved in the aircraft 'Mercury' piloted by Air Vice-Marshall Bennett (then Captain Bennett of Imperial Airways) in October 1938, flying from Dundee to South West Africa. The cover illustrates the 'Mercury' parting company with its parent aircraft, the flying boat, 'Maia', which took 'Mercury' into the air over Dundee.

The cover, bearing a 7p postage stamp, and cancelled with a special handstamp BFPS 1620, will be flown over the route taken in 1938, should be available early in January 1979 from The Project Officer, Squadron Leader E Wormald, Lyndarrach, Heughfield, Bridge of Earn, PH2 9BH, price 45p plus 7p postage.

RAF Cover HA34. On 28 November 1978, the Battle of Britain Museum in Hendon was opened by HM The Queen Mother. A cover, depicting the famous painting 'Achtung Spitfire', by Frank Wootten, deals with the war time career of Squadron Leader R Stamford-Tuck DSO DFC, and his encounter with General Galland of the German Luftwaffe during aerial combat, was issued. The cover bearing a 7p postage stamp is cancelled with handstamp BFPS 1623. After a special flight it will be available from Squadron Leader M J Smith, BSW, RAF Alton, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP22 5PG.

Wales and The Marches Pictorial Postcards 9-14

A set of six postcards depicting postbuses in the Wales and The Marches Postal Board area will be issued on 10 January 1979. Price per postcard will be 6p or the full set of six 36p. A special pictorial handstamp to mark the first day of sale will be used at Cardiff, with a special posting box at the Cardiff Branch Office, 18 Westgate Street, CARDIFF, CF1 1AD. Stocks of the first issue — series WMPB 1-8 have now been exhausted.

New Price Increases

The Price Commission has given approval to price increases of the following philatelic items:

	Current Price	New Price
First Day Covers	8p	9p
Picture Postcards	7p	8p
Philatelic Bulletin		
Inland, surface mail		
and airmail to Europe	£1.25	£1.35
Airmail to countries outside Europe	£2.15	£2.35
Single copies from philatelic counters	10p	11p

The increases will take effect from 1 January 1979.

British Dogs Stamp Issue 7 February 1979

Four commemorative postage stamps, values 9p, 10½p, 11p and 13p, depicting examples of favourite British Dogs will be issued on 7 February 1979. The dogs illustrated are: an Old English Sheepdog (9p), a Welsh Springer Spaniel (10½p), a West Highland Terrier (11p) and an Irish Setter (13p).

First Day Cover Services

The following first day cover services will be offered by the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh, including a choice of two handstamps: Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh, and London SW.

Service A

This consists of the official Post Office cover, addressed to the correct postal address of the destination required, and bearing all four stamps. The cover will be cancelled, Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh or London SW, as requested, and despatched for a charge of 62½p. For deposit account customers the charge will be 58p.

Service B

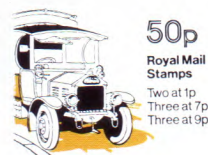
Customers own pre-addressed covers bearing the correct postal address, will be given the full set of stamps, cancelled and despatched for a charge of 51½p per cover.

Service C

For bulk orders of 50 or more covers, all to the same address, under the conditions of Service A, the charge is 60p per cover.

The usual first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes. Application forms, available from the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh, and at all Head Post Offices, should be returned not later than 29 January 1979.

New Illustrated Stamp Books



The fifth series of four new stamp books with cover illustrations will be on sale at the Philatelic Bureau and philatelic sales counters from 10 January 1979, and from other post offices as existing stocks become exhausted.

Details are as follows:

- 10p Farm Buildings — Scotland
- 50p Commercial Vehicles — Albion (Jarrold)
- 70p Country Crafts — wattle fence making
- 90p British Canals — Regent Canal, Little Venice, London.

British Special Stamps

49. European Free Trade Association, 1967



EFTA — the European Free Trade Association — which is based in Geneva, was established by the Stockholm Convention in May 1960 with eight member countries: Austria, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, and with Finland as an associate member. Its principal objective, free trade (ie the removal of tariffs) between member countries, was achieved in 1966, but in 1972 the UK and Denmark formally left EFTA to join the EEC.

It was on 20 February 1967 that the Post Office issued two stamps to commemorate the 'movement of trade' between the EFTA member countries — the transport of freight by sea and by air. They were designed by Clive Abbott for Harrison and Sons. The 9d showed a dockyard scene with a freighter at the quayside, the 1s 6d an 'Argosy' cargo plane of British European Airways on the tarmac.

Both stamps were inscribed 'EFTA' in exceptionally bold lettering (probably the largest ever seen on British stamps!), based, rather ingeniously, on the style of stencilling used on crates for export, and incorporated the flags of EFTA's member countries at the foot. These were Clive Abbott's second accepted designs — he previously designed the Post Office Tower stamps issued

in 1965. With artist Jennifer Toombs, he was involved in the design of the Coronation 25th anniversary omnibus issue for the Commonwealth territories earlier this year.

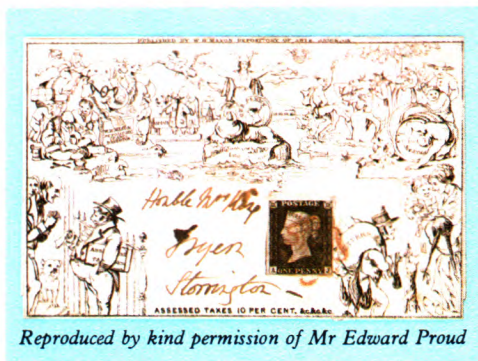
The stamps were photogravure-printed by Harrison and Sons in sheets of 120 (6 × 20) on ordinary and phosphor-banded paper, watermark multiple crowns. Varieties included numerous colours omitted on both values, ordinary and phosphor, and inverted watermarks. The small Queen's head was printed in black and a major variety was the omission of the head and the brown, new blue and yellow colours on the one 9d stamp. The 9d is also known with the 'quay flaw', a black protuberance between two trucks, while on the 1s 6d there is a broken strut below the wing of the aircraft, and a broken ribbon at the back of the Queen's hair.

Quantities sold (phosphor in brackets) were: 9d 6,553,738 (5,557,104); 1s 6d 6,363,483 (4,237,944); presentation packs, 42,906.

JAMES WATSON

The Proud Collection

6. Mulready Caricatures



The Mulready design which was issued concurrently with the Penny Black in May 1840 gave rise to a host of caricatures. One of the more interesting ones with a political slant was published by W H Mason in Brighton. The inference being that taxes would be increased due to uniform penny post.

Stamps for Pleasure

19. Royal Events

There have been nine Royal occasions and anniversaries commemorated by stamps since 1935, all providing a permanent and colourful record of historic events. Over the years the Post Office can be seen to have progressed from the formal and traditional designs of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s to the informal and very personal portraits of the Royal Silver Wedding (1972) and the Royal Wedding (1973). Modern design techniques have enabled the Post Office to mark the Queen's Silver Jubilee (1977) and the 25th Anniversary of her Coronation this year with stamps appropriate to these occasions.

Thus the theme of 'Royal Events' is well-established and the collection of 29 stamps listed below, reflecting the centuries-old ritual, ceremonial and pageantry of successive reigns, is of immense historical interest. Gibbons' catalogue numbers are quoted for easy reference.

Silver Jubilee of King George V, 1935.

Four stamps, $\frac{1}{2}d$, $1d$, $1\frac{1}{2}d$ and $2\frac{1}{2}d$ (452/5) in a uniform design by Barnett Freedman. Numerous artists and printers submitted designs — the final choice was Mr Freedman's version in horizontal format, featuring the 'Mackennal' profile head of George V as used on the contemporary definitive stamps, flanked by the crown and a wreath of laurel, and the dates, 1910-1935.

Coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, 1937. $1\frac{1}{2}d$ (461). Lack of time, the difficulty of finding suitable portraits and tight printers' schedules permitted the issue of only one stamp. Essays by Eric Gill were rejected in favour of a design by the French-born artist, Edmund Dulac, who drew full-face portraits of the King and Queen based on photographs by Dorothy Wilding, embellished by the crown and the monogram combining the Queen's initial with the traditional 'GR', prominently placed in the centre, and with the Orb and the Ampulla in the borders.

Royal Silver Wedding, 1948. Again numerous essays for this happy anniversary were submitted — by Harrison's staff artists and by a nominee of the Council of Industrial Design, Joan Hassall. Twin profile portraits of King George VI and his Consort, Queen Elizabeth, by

Dorothy Wilding were eventually selected, and two eminently suitable designs emerged — a $2\frac{1}{2}d$ in horizontal format by George T Knipe of Harrison and Sons, and a handsome, 'framed' $\text{£}1$ stamp by Miss Hassall. Perhaps two of the most attractive, photogravure-printed stamps we have ever had (493/4).

Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, 1953.

The first commemoratives of the new reign. Three of the four stamps (532/5) featured the familiar Wilding definitive portrait of The Queen — the $2\frac{1}{2}d$ by E G Fuller, $4d$ by Michael Goaman, and $1s\ 6d$ by M C Farrar-Bell with appropriate flanking symbols and emblems of the occasion. Edmund Dulac defied convention with his $1s\ 3d$ stamp which showed The Queen full-face, holding the Sceptre and the Orb, against a tapestry background. Again four attractive stamps.

Investiture of HRH The Prince of Wales, 1969. Five artists were invited to submit designs and for once there was ample time — more than a year — for the selection, development and printing of the five stamps for the forthcoming Investiture (802/6). The accepted designs by David Gentleman showed a marked Welsh element — three $5d$ stamps picturing the King's Gate, Eagle Tower and Queen Eleanor's Gate at Caernarvon Castle, setting for the Investiture, a $9d$ showing the Celtic cross at Margam Abbey and a $1s$ bearing a three-quarter close-up of the Prince of Wales. All values were inscribed in Welsh and English.

Royal Silver Wedding, 1972. This was a notable issue in the technical sense as it was conceived and progressed as a photographic project — Jeffery Matthews' designs for the $3p$ and $20p$ stamps (916/7) were based on profile portraits of The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh from photographs taken especially by Norman Parkinson, the society and *Vogue* photographer, for the purpose. The enlarged heads effectively filled the design area of the stamps.

Royal Wedding, 1973. The Royal romance captured the imagination of the public and the bold, smiling portraits of Princess Anne and Captain Mark Phillips on the special $3\frac{1}{2}p$ and

20p stamps (941/2) were in the 'best-seller' class. The uniform design by Collis Clements and Edward Hughes was selected from photographs taken by Lord Lichfield, cousin to The Queen. The stamps were simply inscribed with the date of the wedding — 14 November 1973.

The Queen's Silver Jubilee, 1977. The 25th Anniversary of The Queen's Accession was the occasion for the issue of four stamps, 8½p, 10p, 11p and 13p, later augmented by the addition of a 9p value (due to increased postal charges for first-class letters), in a uniform design (1033/7) — a special profile portrait of The Queen by Richard Guyatt, Professor of Graphic Art at the

Royal College of Art, flanked by the large, decorative letters, 'ER'. Variety was introduced in the patterns of the letters and in the range of portrait and background colours.

25th Anniversary of The Queen's Coronation, 1978. The most recent Royal commemoration — Jeffery Matthews designed the four attractive stamps (1059/62) which recaptured the majesty and splendour of the 1953 Coronation. The designs showed 9p The Coronation State Coach; 10½p The St Edward's Crown; 11p The Sovereign's Orb; and 13p The Imperial State Crown.

JAMES WATSON

Book Reviews

Collect British Stamps

The 23rd edition of Stanley Gibbons' best selling check list 'Collect British Stamps' was published on 10 November, price 95p.

This booklet — indispensable to serious collectors of British stamps — lists all British issues from the world famous 1840 1d black to the new 1978 Bicycle stamps. This new edition comprises 60 pages, with illustrations in full colour, and prices have been revised.

'Collect British Stamps' was first published in 1967. The present edition reflects the continuing growth of interest and with the publication of this edition total sales will exceed 1,900,000 copies.

The British Library

The British Library announces the publication of the first of a series of portfolios entitled, 'Reproductions from Famous Collections'. The series will contain enlarged reproductions of important and attractive items from its own philatelic collection.

Series One, 'The Art of J A C Harrison', will consist of 6 portfolios, each containing 6 prints devoted to the work of this well known engraver. The prints are on medium weight parchment, and can be framed without the need for any

mounting. Each print measures 203mm and 249mm.

The first in this series is called, 'A Stamp is Born: the King George V 1912 One Penny', and the prints illustrate how Harrison progressively engraved the die for the stamp.

The cost of the portfolio is £2.00 and is available from The British Library, Great Russell Street, LONDON WC1B 3DE.

Islands Postal History: Series 1 & 2

No 1 Harris & St Kilda

30pp A4 text, 3 plates and 94 illustrations. £1.50 plus postage (Inland 15p, Overseas 50p)

No 2 The Uists & Barra

57pp A4 text, 8 plates and 217 illustrations. £3.00 plus postage (Inland 25p, Overseas £1.00)

From the author, James A Mackay, 11, Newall Terrace, DUMFRIES, DG1 1LN.

These two companion volumes illustrate the wise old saying 'Postal history mirrors the social climate of its time'. Nowhere was this more true than in the Western Islands of Scotland where massive problems faced the postal services from the outset.

Go back in time one hundred and fifty years. Then, take an extremely remote location and give it a population which rarely spoke, much

less wrote, in the English language. Let them be few in number and widely scattered across a difficult terrain and you would seem to have an infallible recipe for instant disaster.

It is little short of a miracle that the Post got off the ground, let alone survived until today. These books explain how it did so. They detail the historical background as well as the inner workings in a clear and readable way with maps and illustrations of postmarks and cachets.

Everything is within from St Kilda 'mailboat' to Dr Gerhart Zucker's notorious Rocket Post which contrived to deposit its contents all over the launching pad to the ill-concealed delight of the islanders.

If you are one of those people who believes that postal history is always dull, then reading these books will rapidly help to change your mind.

Chartastamp Guide — New Version

A new version of the Chartastamp Guide which shows GB stamps issued by the Post Office from May 1840 until May 1978 is now available from stamp dealers, or post-free direct from Chartastamp Ltd, Beckford House, St Peter, BUNGAY, Suffolk, NR35 1NQ, price £1.75. It is an up-dated edition of the original Guide and includes the two most recent cards, as well as an attractive two-colour cover.

One great improvement is a new plastic spring clip binding which permits further sheets to be added when published.

The Guide reproduces in A4 size all the GB cards in the Chartastamp system. Each stamp is illustrated in chronological order and its position on the card is determined by its face value.

Up-Dating Kit

For those who already have the previous version of the Guide, an up-dating kit is available, direct from Chartastamp only, at 50p, and includes the new page incorporating Elizabethan decimal cards 10 and 11, new cover and plastic spine.

The Skeleton Postmarks of Scotland

By James A Mackay, 78 pp A4 reprotype, £3.00 plus 25p postage from the author at 11 Newall Terrace, Dumfries DG1 1LN.

To the uninitiated a skeleton datestamp provides movable type in addition to dateslugs thereby enabling office names to be changed as well as dates or times. To the knowledgeable it conveys rather more, but you must read this book and find out for yourself.

Their use generally followed a burglary or some other loss or damage to a regular stamp. They were frequently used at special events and temporary post offices, but in recent years speedy procurement of new stamps coupled with a vogue for pictorial cancellations has tended to reduce their usage.

Generally the quality of impressions struck is exceptional and the marks deserve much more attention than they usually receive. Every skeleton postmark tells a story which can be interestingly written up in a collection and details of the circumstances surrounding their use can often be obtained from local newspaper files for the dates in question.

With 72 pages of text, 216 illustrations and a list of 1,400 impressions from 1846 to 1977, Mr Mackay's book is a most welcome addition to the postmark collector's library. To the serious student of Scottish 'skellies' it is well-nigh indispensable.

The Post Office Railway London

The idea of driverless electric trains scurrying to and fro under the busy streets of London unseen, unheard and almost forgotten appeals to the imagination of many people, and it is therefore not surprising that the highspot of many visits to the great London sorting offices is descending into the depths to actually see them — the trains of the Post Office Railway. The railway celebrated its golden jubilee in 1977 and it is perhaps surprising that no definitive history had been written of it. This has now been rectified by the publication of 'The Post Office Railway London', by Derek A Bayliss, Turntable Publications, 745 Abbeydale Road, Sheffield S7 2BG (ISBN 0 902844 43 1), price £3.50. In this well-written and illustrated book Mr Bayliss takes us from the early, ill-fated pneumatic tubes which linked Euston with St Martins-le-Grand, and

through the tortuous birth of the railway itself, frustrated as it was by early opposition (the Great Eastern Railway feared that it might cause Liverpool Street Station to fall down!), the first World War and the escalation of costs which followed it. In later chapters he shows how the railway has become a unique aid to the movement of mail in London and gives us a fascinating glimpse of what might have been — planned extensions northward to serve the northern railway termini and sorting offices and a similar southern loop which inexplicably would have passed within a quarter of a mile of Victoria Station without actually serving it.

A must for the student of postal history and railways alike.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I read the letter of Mr C H Sexton and your reply in the October issue of the Philatelic Bulletin.

I don't think that Mr Sexton objects so much to the actual subjects as to the frequency of the special issues. I personally do not think that eight special issues a year denigrates the British stamp; provided the issues are well chosen and presented with imagination and originality of concept. Perhaps, six issues and one Christmas would be enough. But I do emphasise the importance of *imaginative treatment*. I also suggest — without wishing to cause Mr Sexton a further shock — that we plan a fine LONDON pictorial/tourist series for 1980. The secret here is not the subjects, but how they are treated. I suggest best method is to have *colour transparencies* and *both* artists impressions and to reproduce these in an imaginative way. It would be a very popular series if the subjects were well chosen.

Best wishes for the future success of the Bulletin.

Yours sincerely

South Croydon
Surrey

G Angeloglou

Posting Boxes



No 5: The pillar box shown here dates from the period 1859-66 and was the first design of a national standard pillar box. The posting aperture is immediately beneath the rim of the roof and has an inward moving flap. These boxes were made by Cochrane & Company of Dudley and a few of this type of box can still be seen in use today. This example is at World's End, Hambledon, near Portsmouth

1978 Collectors Pack



This year's Collectors Pack, illustrated above, was issued on 22 November 1978, price £2.85.

Special Handstamps

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting should bear $\frac{1}{2}p$ in excess of the normal postage and should be sent to the Head Postmaster of the town where the special posting box is located or the relevant District Postmaster in London marking the outer cover 'Special Handstamp'.

24 January-5 February 1979 (P/R)

Fiftieth Amateur Squash Championships Wembley 24 Jan to 5 Feb 1979.

Special posting box adjacent to the Reception Desk at the Squash Centre, Empire Way, Wembley.

Postmark Slogans

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting bearing the appropriate postage rate should be forwarded to the Head Postmaster of the town where the slogan is to be used marking the outer cover 'Postmark Slogan'.

Until 31 October 1979 (P)

Scarborough, Whitby, Filey Yorkshire's Holiday Playground Write Director of Tourism Scarborough. To be used at Scarborough and York. 1st and 2nd class Scarborough. 1st class York.

Until 30 December 1978 (P)

Darlington Civic Theatre Cinderella Spectacular Family Pantomime 18 December Until 20 January. To be used at Darlington and Durham. 1st and 2nd class.

29 January-17 February 1979

Milton Keynes February Festival Feb 15 to Feb 18 1979. To be used at Milton Keynes and Wolverton. 1st and 2nd class.

1 January-15 February 1979

Give A Child A Home 446824 Leeds Social Services. To be used at Leeds. 2nd class.

UFN

Portsmouth Has A Mechanised Letter Office Please Use Postcodes. To be used at Portsmouth. 1st and 2nd class.

Until 10 December 1978 (P)

30th Anniversary 1948-78 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To be used at the following offices:—

Belfast	2nd class
Cardiff	1st class
Edinburgh	1st class
London ECDO	1st class
Birmingham	1st class
Manchester	1st and 2nd class
Liverpool	1st class
Bristol	1st class

Until 20 January 1979 (P)

**Lewisham Concert Hall Catford SE6
4TU 01-690-3431 Puss In Boots Dec 23rd
to Feb 3rd.** To be used at Catford SDO SE6.
1st and 2nd class.

Until 24 February 1979

Mechanised Letter Sorting Is Coming To Bournemouth Please Use Postcodes. To be used at Bournemouth. 1st and 2nd class.

Until 31 December 1978

Tyne Bridge Golden Jubilee Tyneside Junior Chamber of Commerce And The Evening Chronicle 1928-1978. To be used at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. 1st class.

Until 30 November 1979 (P)

Kent's Growth Area For The 1980's Ashford. To be used at Ashford. 1st and 2nd class.

P denotes Pictorial

R denotes Rectangular



The Editor wishes readers of the Bulletin a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Requests to reproduce articles and illustrations appearing in the *Bulletin* should be addressed to the Editor, Philatelic Bulletin, PMK 3, Postal Headquarters, St Martin's-le-Grand, LONDON EC1A 1HQ.

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