

British Philatelic Bulletin

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Editorial

This month we are featuring the 1985 Christmas stamp issue, a sign that once again the year is drawing to a close. The theme for this year's Christmas stamps is Pantomime, and they have been designed by Adrian George, who also designed the award-winning British Theatre stamps in 1982. The Christmas stamp issue for the last two years, and British stamps for the last three, have won five major awards including the coveted *Best stamp design in the world* award. The Post Office has a record to be proud of.

New philatelic products are also being launched by The Post Office this month to add to the range already available. These are the Stamp Starter Kit and the Royal Mail Stamp Album. As the names suggest, the former is intended to introduce young people in particular to the hobby of stamp-collecting, and the latter is a quality product aimed at the more sophisticated collector. Full details are included in this issue of the Philatelic Bulletin.

Three special articles are also included in this issue, which should prove of interest to readers. The first is by Len Newbery and looks at some newly-discovered stamp book material. The second chronicles the service provided by Stanley Gibbons who celebrate 120 years of producing stamp catalogues. This continues the occasional series which began with the article on Harrison & Sons Limited celebrating the 50th anniversary of holding the contract for printing British postage stamps. The third, by Norman Williams, throws light on a previously unpublished part of the story of the introduction of adhesive postage stamps in 1840.

In recent weeks a great deal of information has been sent in to the Bulletin by societies holding philatelic events. While every effort is made to include details of stamp fairs or exhibitions of interest to readers, we cannot always guarantee this because of the space available. We would also like to remind contributors of the deadline for receipt of information. This is six weeks prior to publication on the first day of the month, although it is useful if it can be provided earlier. We would also like to thank all those readers who kindly sent in suggestions for future articles in the Bulletin.

CHARLES GOWEN

Shortly before the Penny Black

A discovery has recently been made with reference to a hitherto unpublished facet of the introduction of adhesive postage stamps in 1840. The find was made in a lot consigned for auction to Phillips of New Bond Street, London, through whose courtesy I am able to illustrate it.

The discovery consists of a piece of paper measuring overall 106 mm horizontally and 90 mm vertically. It bears two lots of printing: a background of *moiré* in grey or bluish-grey, possibly lithographed; and 20 repetitions of an ornamented crown in black, certainly letterpress printed. The 20 designs are divided off by faint marks in the printing — not rouletting — so that each item measures 20 mm horizontally and 23 mm vertically. The piece of paper may have been severed from a larger piece.

The paper has been impressed from the back with a series of minute, slightly oval indentations with axes at right-angles and in straight lines. Each oval measures about 0.5 mm and the space between each two ovals, whether horizontally or vertically, is also 0.5 mm. The paper is not pierced at any point but protuberances are palpable and faintly visible on its printed surface. When looked through from the front or the back the paper appears to be thinner, as though watermarked, at each indentation.

The piece is hinged firmly to a home-made album page, which is headed 'Great Britain'. To the left, in 18 lines, is a manuscript legend which reads:

"Piece of the
Original Design
submitted to
The Government
for the back
of the first
Issue of
Penny Postage
Stamps
with the view
of preventing
Fraud.
Presented to
me by an old
friend Mr Kirby
of The Public
Record Office
in 1879".



The philatelically famous Treasury Minute of 23 August 1839 concerning the carrying into effect of the Act for establishing a reduced and uniform rate of postage, in effect, invited 'artists, men of science and the public in general' to offer suggestions or proposals as to the manner in which the stamp might best be brought into use. One point among four which the Board of Treasury considered to be of greatest importance was: '(2) The security against forgery'.

By December 1839 the Lords of the Treasury directed that the paper to be used was to be 'peculiar in its watermark, or some other feature, to be supplied to Government by competition'.

By 20 February 1840 — as appears from *The Line Engraved Postage Stamps of Great Britain* by E D Bacon (1920) vol. 2 Appendix A page 8 — a copy Treasury Minute stated the requisite for the adhesive stamps of 240 impressions to the sheet to be for 'the sheets of paper to have watermarks consisting of the word 'Postage' in the margin and a small crown so placed as to occupy the lower part of each stamp'.

There can be no doubt that, among the 2,600 and more communications which were received as a result of the Treasury invitation in August 1839, some were particularly concerned with the paper to be used for the printed stamps. Regrettably by no means even the majority of the suggestions have survived to come down to us in the nearly century and a half which has elapsed.

As stated in *The Story of the Penny Black* by A G Rigo de Righi (1980) page 11, most of the entries were quite unsuitable but Rowland Hill was able to

make use in a considerably modified form of a few of the ideas put forward. They 'certainly included the use of watermarked paper ...'

History to date has not, so far as I know, recorded the suggestion for a form of security that would be afforded by printing the stamps on paper provided with a twice pre-printed security endorsement, such as is instanced by the recent discovery.

Mr John Chandler, researcher and joint author of *The Newspaper & Almanac Stamps of Great Britain & Ireland* (1981) informs me that the elements of such a procedure were not unusual and may have been standard practice in productions of the Stationery Office over a considerable period. He has referred me to a stock certificate of 1841, a similar certificate of 1844 and a proof impression in 1861 of a Game Licence stamp listed in *Catalogue of the Revenue Stamps of the U.K.* . . . by R G Booth (2nd edition, 1982) vol. 2(I) page A105, type 167.

Obviously, fewer printing operations are involved in applying designs once to watermarked paper than are involved in the three press procedures necessary to print, first, a *moiré* pattern, then the crowns and thirdly the stamps. Whether the one form of proceeding is more cost-effective than the other overall would seem to be a moot point. However, tracing the submission of the idea of such twice pre-printed paper for the stamps and its rejection or modification into watermarked paper has yet to be effected.

L N WILLIAMS

Book Reviews

Royal Mail: The Post Office since 1840

This new economic history by Dr Martin Daunton, the first of its kind to be written on The Post Office, in particular provides considerable insight into the organisation's financial attitudes and the internal and external factors that governed them.

The history of The Post Office is, of course, enormous in its scope and so, not surprisingly, as regards telecommunications, the author could only touch upon its activities in this area. This does result in a certain imbalance when dealing with the performance of management over the years; but, provided this is borne in mind the reader can still gain valuable insight into the workings of the organisation.

The book is particularly strong on the 19th century and then extends the story in outline up to the second world war, with a brief look at the more

recent past. It portrays The Post Office as an innovator in such diverse fields as administration and transport. It also presents a new image of the world famous postal reformer, Rowland Hill — one that might surprise postal historians but which, nonetheless, does make fascinating reading and will surely stimulate discussion.

Other subjects, all of which are presented in a refreshingly different thematic arrangement rather than in the more familiar form of a chronological narrative, include the negotiation of mail contracts for both inland and overseas services, the employment conditions of Post Office staff, and the nature of The Post Office's administrative policy and the impact of external influences such as HM Treasury. It shows the 1970's as a period of decline, with financial losses, falling productivity and sharply rising costs. But Dr Daunton concludes that over the past few years there are ample grounds for optimism. In this he has been proved right by marked improvements in productivity and profit, a boom in the volume of letters, a reduction in real unit costs and the successful negotiation of major reforms with the main postal union.

Dr Daunton is to be congratulated for raising postal history to a new academic level, and this serious, in-depth study is a must for all those who want to add to their knowledge of The Post Office as an organisation.

Costing £18.50 the book is currently available at all philatelic counters, the National Postal Museum, and by post from the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh.

Stanley Gibbons Simplified Catalogue of Stamps of the World 1986 Edition, Volume 1 Countries A-J, and Volume 2 Countries K-Z

The 1986 edition of the Stamps of the World, published in two editions, is currently available. Over 3,700 new stamps and 950 illustrations have been added to Volume 1 and 3,100 new stamps and 830 illustrations to Volume 2 since the 1985 edition. Catalogue numbers are again in line with the 22 part Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue, and a number of price rises are recorded in different sections. The price of the Stamps of the World catalogue is £13.50 per volume and offers excellent value for money. It can be obtained from Stanley Gibbons Ltd, and most reputable stamp dealers and bookshops. The catalogues can also be obtained by post from:— Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd, 5 Parkside, Christchurch Road, RINGWOOD, Hants, BH24 1DU. If ordering either volume by post please add £1.30 (Inland) and £2.25 (Overseas Surface Mail).

The Air mail Service between UK and Australia, 1931-1938: Part 2

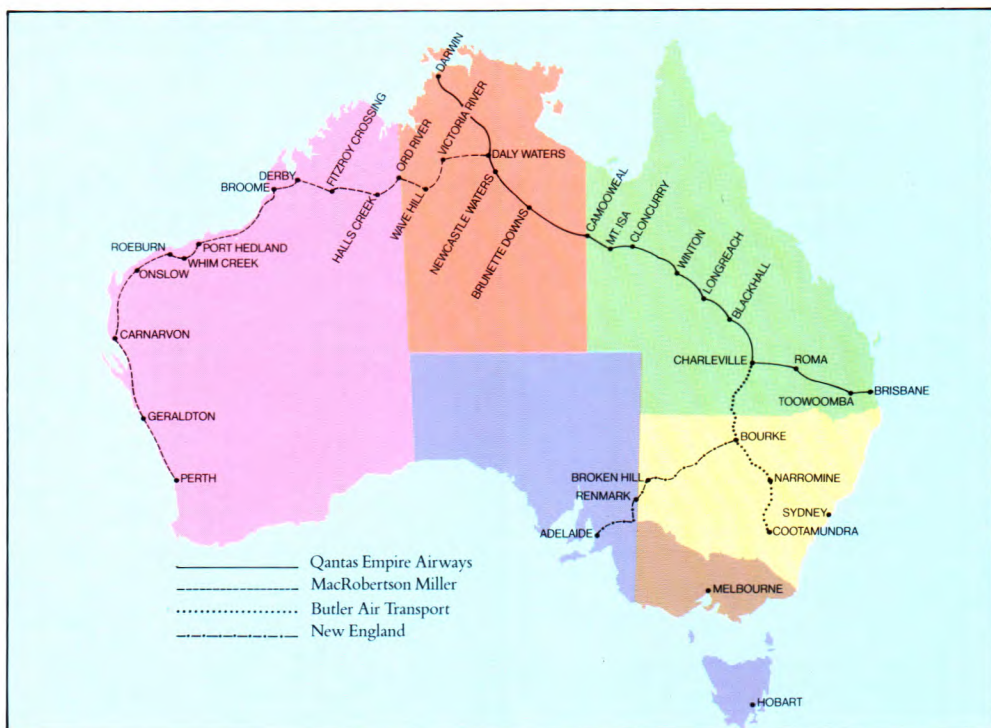
The regular service, 1934

A Special Notice dated November 1934 was exhibited in all British post offices stating that "commencing with the service leaving London on Saturday 8 December the England-India-Malaya service would be extended to Australia. The service would also be available for New England and the Dutch East Indies. Correspondence for Australia sent by the service leaving London on 8 December should be delivered in time for Christmas". The Notice gave the approximate times of transmission from London, and the acceleration afforded. Letters from London, would now reach Brisbane and Hobart in 12 and 14 days respectively. This showed a saving in time of about 20 days in each case.

The latest time for posting a letter to be carried on the first flight was 10.45am on Saturday 8 December, but correspondence could be handed over the counter at Imperial Airways Ltd. Hudson's

Place, Wilton Road, SW1, or posted in the blue Air Mail letter box at the Charles Street post office in Haymarket up to 11.15am on the Saturday. On the introduction of the through service the then air mail service to Australia by sea to Fremantle and thence by air would be discontinued. The Post Office Daily List for Saturday 8 December 1934 stated that the first service in the homeward direction would leave Brisbane on Monday 10 December, and would be due to reach London on Monday 24 December. Thereafter the planes would leave Brisbane every Wednesday and be due to reach London on Monday 12 days later.

An illustration of the special blue Air Mail box referred to above, together with an Air Mail van, can be seen on page 10 of the June 1974 issue of the Philatelic Bulletin. It is stated therein that the box was first used on 23 January 1930.

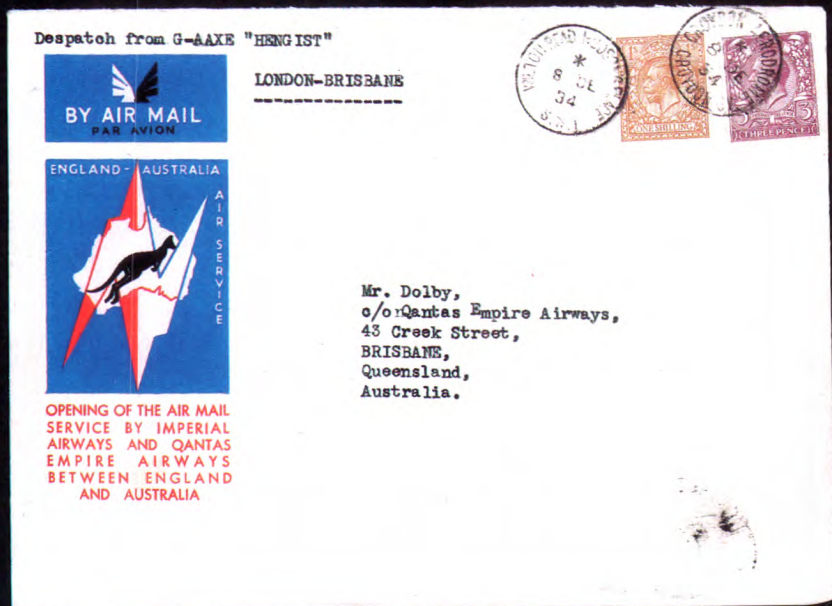


Mail was flown from London to Singapore by Imperial Airways where Qantas Empire Airways (formed on 18 January 1934) took over, carrying the mail via Darwin to Brisbane. (See map). Connections within Australia were made to and from the QEA flight at Daly Waters and Charleville. From the former place the MacRobertson Miller feeder service flew via the coastal route to Perth, serving all places shown on the map. At Charleville the QEA flight was met by Butler Air Transport who ferried the mail to Cootamundra. The service from Adelaide to Bourke by New England Airlines did not materialise at that date. Mail from Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania went by train to Cootamundra, whilst that from New South Wales was put on the train from Sydney to Narromine.

There is an interesting sideline to some of the covers carried on the first flight from London provided in a private letter from one of the postal officials who travelled with the mails. He wrote "...one of my air mail staff and a Post Office official travelled with the mails on HENGIST as far as Paris, and by permission of the General Post Office were allowed to accept at the last moment

before the aircraft took off, a small number of special items, not more than twenty in all, including cinema film of the ceremony which was bagged and dispatched as letter air mail from the aircraft. The cancellation stamps carried on board were the gold and ivory one used by the Postmaster General in postmarking the Royal Mails to Australia, and the Hudson's Place, Wilton Road stamp used at our own sub-office. This had been anticipated and a small number of prepared covers (twelve in all: six are held privately) were dispatched to Australia. This is the first authentic record of a British Travelling Post Office in the air... careful measurement will reveal that the diameter of the cancellation is one millimetre less than the standard Croydon cancellation..." The special gold and ivory cancellor described above is illustrated on page 124 of the March 1985 Philatelic Bulletin, and a photograph of the cover referred to accompanies this article. (Fig. 5).

Special covers commemorating the opening of this service were issued by both Imperial Airways and Qantas Empire Airways. The British and Australian postal authorities did not use any cachets.





Mail, however, to and from Greece did receive a cachet, of which two types are known, (Fig. 6), and which were applied either in blue or black. A very heavy mail was carried, including acceptances from numerous places en route and also from the South Africa-Cairo service. Many of the Imperial Airways envelopes remained unused, and these had the commemorative markings obliterated and were then used for Imperial Airways internal mail as an economy measure.

The rate of postage was 1s 3d per half ounce to Australia and 1s 6d per half ounce in the opposite direction.

The 'All-Up' — Stage III service, 1938

During 1934 a scheme was born for the transmission of all mail throughout the British Empire by air at the ordinary surface rates of postage. The mail was to be carried by flying boat and the scheme known as the 'All-Up' service. It was designed to operate in three stages. On 29 June 1937 Stage I to South Africa was inaugurated. This was followed on 23 February 1938 by Stage II to Egypt, India, Ceylon and Malaya. Finally, on 28 July 1938 Stage III was completed when the flying boat CAPELLA left Southampton and reached Sydney late in the evening of Saturday 6 August. Mail was delivered on Monday 8 August. In the opposite direction the plane left Sydney on 2 August and arrived in London ten days later. The

rates of postage were 1½d per half ounce from England and 5d per half ounce from Australia. This figure was made up of the normal letter postage rate of 2d per ounce plus the air mail fee of 3d per half ounce. On the outbreak of World War II the 'All-Up' scheme was suspended and has never been re-introduced. It might be mentioned that the internal air mail fee of 3d per half ounce was introduced in Australia on 20 May 1929 when a special airmail stamp of this value was issued. The fee was not abolished until 31 October 1959 when enveloped mail of either 3½" x 5¾" or 4" x 9" was carried by air within Australia at ordinary postage rates. There were other restrictions governing the number of sheets of paper and the overall thickness of the envelope.

In the early days of long-distance flying it was customary for passengers to spend the nights at an hotel. In a booklet of air mail labels issued by Imperial Airways about 1936/7 an advertisement stated that the fare of £160 single from London to Brisbane included 'accommodation on land each night, meals, tips and transport between termini and air ports'. In lighter vein it was reported in the Australian Press in March 1929 that the authorities had definitely declined to take passengers beyond Basra on the India flight. The section of the air line between Basra and Karachi was not fully organised as far as rest houses and feeding arrangements were concerned. When the first passengers were accepted only male travellers were allowed to make the journey and they were warned that the arrangements for their comfort after Basra were necessarily crude!

DAVID R. TAYLOR

Replacement Stamp Rolls (12p)

The basic second class postage rate will go down to 12p on 4 November 1985.

New 12p stamp rolls will be available from 12 November at philatelic sales counters, by post from the British Philatelic Bureau, and from offices where there is a known demand.

The new ML roll (contents 500 x 12p stamps, price £60) is reeled for endways delivery and is printed by Harrison and Sons Limited with a single centrally positioned phosphor band. The gum is PVA Dextrin.

Pictorial Stamp Booklet Cover Designs

1968-1973 (3)

The first Queen Elizabeth II stamp booklet with a pictorial cover design, 10/- May 1968 (Livingstone), went on sale 25 March 1968. The design was the first of a series depicting Explorers by David Gentleman. In due course other series went on sale all containing Sterling Machin stamps, 6/- with illustrations of British Birds by Harry Titcombe, 5/- English Homes by Peter Gauld and finally 4/6 featuring famous Ships.

As is customary with new issues a Press notice was released giving details. Included with the notice were illustrations of the various designs, 4/6 on blue card, 6/- on orange card and 10/- on bright purple card. The card used was white with both sides printed in the appropriate colour. The card was cut to issued size. The 5/- on self coloured buff cartridge as issued was distributed later. There was also a distribution of the designs on white art paper some of which were cut to size with the remainder cut 4" x 4".

In a recent departmental move a balance of this distribution together with stereos, proofs etc some of which have hitherto not been recorded, came to light.

There were modifications to the publicity designs in certain issues. The contents line had the Post Office Emblem — St. Edward's Crown surmounting a squared oval containing the letters GPO in black — followed by content.

10/- Publicity distribution.

Bright purple card with text STAMPS: 6 at 1d: 6 at 3d: 24 at 4d.

Livingstone, Scott, Mary Kingsley, Shackleton, Frobisher, Capt. Cook and Drake.

A distribution on art paper was also printed.

Livingstone, the issued booklet had the 10/- larger, Livingstone moved towards the top of spine and the emblem larger with the squared oval in solid colour leaving the letters GPO unprinted. The contents line was in smaller type.

Scott, there was an increase in postage rates and the issued book had an apple green cover. The contents line now read 4 at 1d: 14 at 4d: 12 at 5d the remainder of the design being unaltered.

No corrected publicity designs were printed on the green card but a distribution was made on a white matt card with the corrected contents line.

Mary Kingsley, a proof of an unaccepted layout



10/- Mary Kingsley, issued book cover



10/- Mary Kingsley, publicity pull on purple cover



10/- Drake, large proof without price or text, Whale in solid colour



10/- Livingstone, issued design showing caption, moved and blocked out emblem



10/- Mary Kingsley, proof without price or text showing volcano on left



combined proof without text or value showing Palm Tree and Drake's ship (revised design)

was without value or text and with the design occupying the full space of an issued cover. To the right of the subject was a palm tree and to the left a volcano in eruption. Another proof in the same size had on the right a palm tree (which appears on the subject's left in the publicity pulls and issued booklet) and on the left Drake's ship.

Drake, a proof without value or text size as above depicted Drake flanked by a whale on right and a man'o'war on left. In the initial publicity card and art paper pulls the text read 6 at 1d: 6 at 3d: 24 at 4d and the ship as in the proof. In the matt pull with new content the design had the smaller version of the ship in the combined proof of ship and palm.

There was a combined pull on art paper of four designs 10/- Capt. Cook and Drake, 6/- Curlew and Golden Eagle. The text of the 10/- read 4 at 1d: 14 at 4d: 12 at 5d and for 6/- 18 at 4d whilst the GPO emblem was replaced by one of St. Edward's Crown only.

No booklet with the Drake design was issued and the Curlew design was used for the first 30p Decimal Booklet.

Shackleton, in addition to the original pulls there was a matt pull with the new contents.

Frobisher, there was the larger proof without text or value and pulls with original and later setting. However the issued booklet had the new Crown only emblem.

Capt. Cook, again there was the larger size proof

without text and the publicity pulls with original and corrected content also the combined pull of four designs with the new crown emblem already mentioned.

4/6 Publicity Distribution.

Blue card, The Cutty Sark, The Golden Hind, The Discovery, Queen Elizabeth II, Sirius, The Dreadnought, Mauretania and Victory.

Art paper, The Cutty Sark, The Golden Hind, The Discovery and Q.E.II. There was also a pull of an unissued design The Swallow.

6/- Publicity Distribution.

Orange card, Kingfisher, Peregrine Falcon, Pied Woodpecker, Great Crested Grebe, Barn Owl, Jay, Puffin.

Art paper as above except Puffin and with Kingfisher, Peregrine and Barn Owl on 4"x4" pulls.

5/- Publicity Distribution.

Only the first two designs were taken Ightham Mote Kent and Little Moreton Hall in both buff issued card and art paper.

There was a block for an unissued design — The Red House, Bexleyheath, Kent, 19th Cent. This had the crown only emblem.

The last design in this series was for Mereworth Castle, Kent. The emblem, the St. Edward's Crown only, because of the shorter contents line was larger than that for the later 10/- issues. This design without alteration was used for the colour trials for the



10/- Drake, publicity design, original content, Whale shaded



10/- Drake, publicity design, new content, Whale in solid colour



4/6 Swallow unissued design



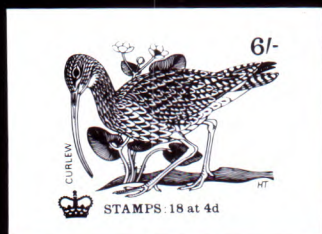
10/- Drake combined pull from design, revised ship, Whale solid colour, crown only emblem



10/- Frobisher, issued book cover with crown only emblem



5/- Red House, Bexleyheath, Kent, 19th century, pull from block of unissued design



6/- Curlew design not issued for 6/- book, design used for first 30p book.

Decimal Stamp Book covers, Mauve for 25p, Bright Purple for 30p and Apple Green for 50p.

As in the sterling series of booklets blocks were prepared for the Decimal designs and pulls taken on art paper often in various combinations of designs. It was found the size of the design was too large and further sets of blocks made some of which were still not suitable so further blocks were made to enable printing to proceed. Designs in all three series of 25p, 30p and 50p booklets were affected and pulls were found.

As the description of the cover subject was included on the inside front cover it was decided to omit the caption on the design.

25p Decimal Booklets. Veteran Transport.

There was a pull on art paper of the first design, Knifeboard omnibus, in a smaller unadopted size with the caption Veteran Transport.

30p Decimal Booklets. British Birds.

There was a pull on art paper of the first design, Curlew, with the price now reading 30p and contents STAMPS: 10 at 3p and still with the caption.

L F NEWBERY

Decimal Booklet Pane Printings – Technical Details (2)

The following changes should be made to the above which was published in the October Philatelic Bulletin.

DP60 booklet:— under the ink cylinder column after the B9 printing of 18.11.1983, add cylinders B24, B9, and B37 with a printing date of 22.11.1983.

DP70 booklet:— the quantities for the DB9 1st Orchids booklet and 2nd Orchids booklet should be shown as 6,824,500 and 2,797,225 respectively.

New Country Definitive Stamps

Following the reduction in the second-class postage rate on 4 November 1985, new 12p country definitive stamps will be issued for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland on 7 January 1986.

The stamps will be available from post offices in the appropriate country. All three stamps can also be obtained from philatelic counters, or by post from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH, EH3 5TT.

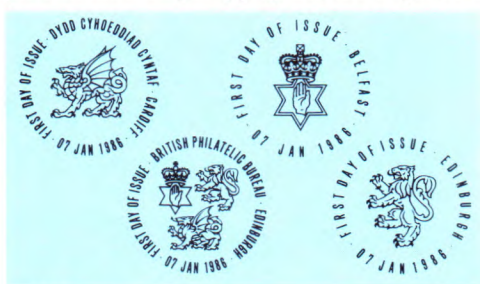
First day covers, price 15p each, and pictorial handstamps will be provided by The Post Office for each of the countries. The three covers will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, and from philatelic sales counters. Each country's covers will be available from Head Post Offices in the respective country.

For bulk orders, obtainable from the Bureau only, the costs for covers are as follows:—
250 for £27.50 or 1000 for £90.00

The British Philatelic Bureau will provide the following service for first day covers:—

SERVICE 'A'

The official Post Office cover will be addressed to the correct postal address of the destination required, a 12p stamp affixed and cancelled with a Philatelic Bureau Edinburgh, or Cardiff, Edinburgh or Belfast pictorial handstamp as appropriate, and despatched.



SERVICE 'B'

Customers' own pre-addressed covers will be given a 12p stamp, cancelled as requested and despatched.

The following charges will apply:—

	INLAND OVERSEAS	
Service 'A'	£0.43	£0.38
Deposit Account		
Customers	£0.37	£0.33
Service 'B'	£0.28	£0.25

Application forms for these services are available from the British Philatelic Bureau and all Head Post Offices, and should be returned by 23 December 1985.

For customers who wish to post their own covers on the day of issue, first day of issue cancellations will be in use at all offices which normally provide them in each of the three countries, and at fifty-three philatelic counters in England.

Technical Details

The stamps will be emerald-green in colour, printed by the offset litho process on unwatermarked paper, and will have a single side phosphor bar. Two printers are involved in the production of these latest issues — The House of Questa has printed the stamps for Wales and Northern Ireland, and Waddingtons Security Print Ltd those for Scotland.

Facets of Postal History

11. The Movable Box

The Anglo-French Postal Conventions of 1843 and 1856 provided for the carriage of mail between numerous British and French ports by private steamers of either country, augmenting the regular cross-Channel mail services by the packet-boats. The private vessels were furnished with a *boîte mobile*

(movable box) on board for collecting letters in transit, and on arrival at the destination port the boxes were taken ashore and emptied, the letters (from 1856) being specially postmarked.

Letters with British stamps would be taken ashore at the French port of arrival — Calais, Cherbourg, Dieppe, Granville, Le Havre and St. Malo were the principal ports — and cancelled with the normal town mark: an additional dated octagonal mark inscribed 'B.M.' (*Boîte Mobile*) and with the name of the port was applied. In early days the French town cancellations were the attractive — and now eagerly sought — 'lozenge' types. Similarly letters from France with French stamps would be cancelled on arrival with the postmarks of a British port — Dover, Folkestone, Southampton, Jersey (St. Helier) and London — plus a 'milestone'-type 'M.B.' mark inscribed 'Southampton/France' etc. The Jersey 'M.B.' marks are quite scarce, while it seems that the Guernsey-St. Malo mail service did not employ movable boxes.

From about 1893 both Southampton and London used circular datestamps bodily inscribed 'M.B.', and these were commonly found on the picture postcards dispatched by holiday-makers either prior to sailing or afterwards by passengers on board. My example shows a London 'M.B.' cancel of 1914. The *Boîte Mobile* service ceased on the outbreak of war in 1939.

MALCOLM JAMES



ROYAL MAIL
MINT STAMPS



106 15 145

port
idea
gove
men
had
pos
eye



tant step towards the show we would recognise today, was known to have been in existence before the Middle-Ages around the south of Italy. It was performed by enthusiastic players who re-enacted classical stories from a basic outline, so that a high degree of spontaneity and dialogue with the crowd ensued. Not that there was anything unusual about audiences getting involved in the action in those days – even in the comparatively starchy Globe Theatre during Shakespeare's day, audiences walked around and interrupted the action of the play when they felt like it.

The Commedia dell'Arte came north to France during the late 16th century, but on its arrival across the Channel it was not enthusiastically welcomed. Britons were suspicious of foreign imports, particularly those which gave women the right to perform on stage, so those which did not happen.



pantomime around the turn of the century, names from music hall, such as Marie Lloyd, Vesta Tilley, Harry Lauder and Dan Leno appearing regularly. The growth in popularity of radio from 1930 onwards brought the BBC's leading variety stars into pantomime roles, and when TV took over during the '50s, a new generation of entertainers, like Norman Wisdom, reinforced their TV popularity with starring roles in Pantomime. The London Palladium, home of TV variety from the late '50s staged a big-name pantomime every year with stars drawn from every section of the theatre, including pop music.

The ageless, uncomplicated charm of Pantomime is as therapeutic for adults in the pressured modern world as it is magical for young children who can not only let their imaginations run riot but their voices, too, as warnings are yelled at the heroine when she encounters dangers unseen to her, and 'hoos' fill the auditorium when the villain stalks some unfortunate victim or reveals, rather boldly in the circumstances, his next devilish plan. But it's all good fun, and that's what keeps the Pantomime alive and well, especially at



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Christmas Stamps Issue 19 November 1985

The theme for this year's Christmas stamps is 'Pantomime'. The origins of Pantomime as we know it today date back to Roman times. However, it was not until the nineteenth century that it achieved the popularity it now enjoys as part of the traditional Christmas scene.

The stamps have been designed by Adrian George who was also responsible for the award-winning 'British Theatre' issue in 1982. They depict familiar characters from the magical world of Pantomime. The stamp subjects and values are as follows:—

- 12p Principal Boy.
- 17p Genie.
- 22p Pantomime Dame.
- 31p Good Fairy.
- 34p Pantomime Cat.

Technical Details

The stamps are printed in sheets of 100 by Harrison and Sons Limited. They are horizontal in format, measuring 41 mm x 30 mm with 15 x 14 perforations. The paper is unwatermarked phosphor coated for all values except the 12p which is printed on FCP with a single phosphor bar. The gum is PVA dextrin.

Values and Colours:

- 12p New blue, greenish yellow, bright rose, gold, grey-black, silver.
- 17p Emerald, greenish yellow, bright rose, new blue, black, gold, silver.
- 22p Bright carmine, greenish yellow, pale new blue, grey, gold, silver.
- 31p Bright orange, lemon, rose, slate-purple, silver, gold.
- 34p Bright reddish violet, bright blue, bright rose, black, grey-brown, gold, silver.

Cylinders used:

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|
| 12p | 1A | 1B | 1C | 1D | 1E | 1F |
| 17p | 1A | 1B | 1C | 1D | 1E | 1F 1G |
| 22p | 2A | 1B | 1C | 1D | 1E | 1F |
| 31p | 1A | 1B | 2C | 2D | 1E | 1F |
| 34p | 1A | 1B | 1C | 1D | 1E | 1F 1G |

First Day Cover

The first day cover, price 15p, has been designed by Carroll & Dempsey Limited. It will be available at most post offices from 5 November 1985.

Presentation Pack

A presentation pack, number 166, containing all five Christmas stamps will be on sale from 19 November 1985, price £1.37. The pack has been designed by Carroll & Dempsey Limited.

Postcards

Postcard size reproductions of each of the five stamps will be available at most post offices from 5 November 1985, price 14p each.

Souvenir Cover

A Christmas souvenir cover, price 15p, and also designed by Carroll & Dempsey Limited, will be available from all philatelic counters from 20 November 1985. It will remain on sale for a period of 12 months, or less, if stocks become exhausted.

£6.00 Pack of 12p Stamps

A special pack containing 50 loose 12p Christmas stamps (ordinary 12p value only, depicting Principal Boy) and costing £6.00 is also being produced. The pack carries a special offer for free National Gallery postcard prints. It will only be available from post offices in the Southampton area which has been chosen as a test market, all philatelic counters, and by post from the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh. The pack only (with no stamps enclosed) will also be on sale from the British Philatelic Bureau price 50p. As with the Christmas stamp book, the pack will remain on sale until 24 December 1985 unless stocks are exhausted sooner.

Christmas Stamp Book

A new stamp book containing 20 x 12p Christmas special Stamps will go on sale on 1 November 1985, price £2.40. It will remain on sale until 24 December 1985 unless stocks are exhausted sooner. The cover, designed by Adrian George, who also designed the Christmas stamps, continues the theme of pantomime and depicts a glass slipper. The stamps will bear a single side phosphor bar, and will have a random series of small non-toxic stars printed on the reverse. The cylinder numbers for the 12p stamps in

the book are as follows:—

B2A B1B B1C B1D B1E B1F

Harrison & Sons Limited printed the stamps by the photogravure process, and the covers on the Libra book mailing machine.



Christmas Pictorial Aerogramme

The 1985 aerogramme illustrating a Pantomime Fairy has been designed by Adrian George who also designed the Christmas stamps. It will be available on 19 November 1985 from post offices and the British Philatelic Bureau. It has been printed by Waddingtons Security Print Limited with two phosphor bars and will cost 30p of which 26p is postage.



Stanley Gibbons Publications — 120 Years of Tradition

Compared with the 350 years service currently being celebrated by The Post Office, Stanley Gibbons 120 years in philatelic publishing almost pales into insignificance. Nevertheless Stanley Gibbons have a long and proud tradition and it is certainly true to say that their catalogues and albums have been a major influence in the development of the world's great collections over the past twelve decades.

A Penny Black for One Penny

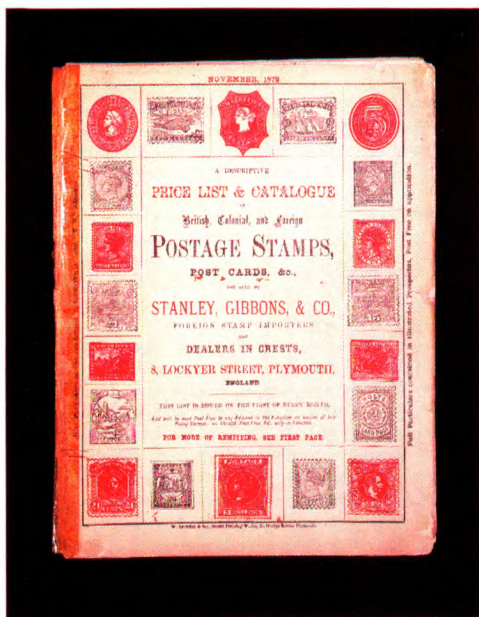
Coincidentally Stanley Gibbons himself was born in the same year as the postage stamp — 1840 — but it was not until November 1865 that he produced his first publication, entitled the 'Description Price List and Catalogue of British, Colonial and Foreign Postage Stamps'. In it he priced a used Penny Black at 1d with a dozen being available for 6d. A Two Pence Blue without lines (the 1840 issue) could be had for 2d and a set of three 'embossed' for 7d. Today the Penny Black is priced at £140, the Two Pence Blue at £275 and the minimum price for an embossed set is £1125 — obviously stamp values have gone up a little over the years! Interestingly the unused Penny Black was not priced in his original list but five years later he was offering them at 1s.6d. (now £2750).

The Catalogue continued to appear on a monthly basis until 1879 when Gibbons produced his first annual volume, complete with illustrations. He did however produce regular supplements to it giving new issue information and these still appear each month in Gibbons Stamp Monthly.

By this time Stanley Gibbons was also publishing his own stamp albums, initially the 'improved' and the 'V.R.', the latter having a printed space for every stamp then issued. The first Great Britain only album — 'The Windsor' did not appear until 1925 when it was advertised as being 'The right album for your British stamps' — many collectors still find it so today!

The Great Britain Specialised Catalogue

Even before the end of the nineteenth century the Catalogue had expanded into two volumes; 'British Empire' and 'Foreign Countries'. In 1934 however an alternative became available in the form of the first edition of 'Stanley Gibbons Simplified Catalogue'. This gave a straightforward listing of the whole world's stamps and proved immediately popular.



Early Gibbons Catalogue published in November 1872, an attractive Victorian publication printed in two colours with stamps on the cover

Renamed 'Stamps of the World' in 1971, it was split into two volumes in 1982, and still remains the perfect catalogue for the general 'all world' and thematic collector.

The exceptional increase in interest in British stamps during the 1960's and 1970's was mirrored by a number of new Catalogues and albums designed to meet the needs of this new generation of collectors. First and foremost there was the Great Britain Specialised Catalogue with the first edition of volume 1 appearing in 1963. There are now four volumes in all, each of them subject to constant revision and amendment as new research extends our knowledge of these fascinating issues. Much of this new information is gained through studies at both the National Postal Museum and the Post Office Archives.

More Great Britain Catalogues and Albums

The ever-popular 'Collect British Stamps' made its first appearance in 1967, the first edition selling out the day after publication. With well over three million copies now sold and with the 37th edition on sale later this month, 'Collect British Stamps' can claim to be the most successful mini stamp catalogue ever. It is of course on sale at all philatelic counters as well as direct from Stanley Gibbons.

The Great Britain One-Country album, a loose-leaf illustrated album for the straightforward GB collection, made its debut in 1967 while, for the junior collector, the all-colour GB album came out in 1977. Subsequently Stanley Gibbons are proud to have collaborated with the Post Office in the production of a special Stamp Bug Album.

'British Stamps'

In 1981 'The Stanley Gibbons Book of Stamps and Stamp Collecting' was published. A lavishly illustrated volume with many fine reproductions of British stamps, it includes several items from the Phillips collection and others in the National Postal Museum. In the same year Gibbons Stamp Monthly, Stanley Gibbons', widely respected magazine, introduced a special 'British Stamps' supplement which now appears in every issue. In addition to current news, it carries numerous interesting articles on all aspects of GB philately including regular features on varieties, the 'Machin' definitives, books and a supplement to the Great Britain Specialised Catalogue. The new-style Stanley Gibbons Stamp Collectors Diary which first appeared in 1983 also includes much information of interest to the GB collector, notably details of all Post Office services and philatelic counters where it is also on sale.



A Selection from the current range of Stanley Gibbons catalogues including the 4-volume Great Britain Specialised and the popular 'Collect British Stamps'.

And the Future

Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd, are justly proud of their 120 years service to stamp collectors and of the tradition of mutual assistance between themselves and The Post Office. A tradition which should serve them both well as they meet the challenges of the coming years.

HUGH JEFFERIES

The First Issue of Line Engraved Stamps

The date for the use of adhesive postage stamps for the prepayment of postage was fixed for 6 May 1840, by a Treasury minute of 22 April. The stamps to be issued from 1 May.

On the first day of issue stamps to the total value of £2,500 were sold, and within days the printers, Perkins Bacon & Co, were hard pressed to keep the production up to the level of demand.

The stamps were printed on handmade paper, supplied by Stacey Wise of Rush Mills, Handington, and each stamp was watermarked with a small crown. An inscription and plate number were printed on the margins of the sheets, the inscriptions read:

'Price 1d per label. 1/- per row of 12. £1 per sheet. Place the labels above the address and towards the right hand side of the letter. In wetting the back, be careful not to remove the cement.'

The printing ink consisted of linseed oil, zinc white and the colouring agent, lamp black, and the gum, which was the subject of much public suspicion, was made from potato starch.

Eleven plates were used in the printing of the Penny Black, during its brief lifetime; these are known as the 'Black Plates'. Plate 1 was registered on 15 April 1840, and registered for a second time on 27 April, after being hardened. It was destroyed on 11 December 1841.

The plate used for the first issue is known as Type 1 and was prepared from the original Die 1.

The upper corner squares in the design contained a white Croix Pate, the white background being represented by unprinted paper and the shape of the cross being indicated by lines of shading and ornamentation printed in colour and forming a star.

Each of the lower corner squares contained a roman capital check letter. These check letters were arranged on the sheet in sequence in such a way that they indicated the exact position of the stamp in question on a sheet containing 240 multiples. The corners had been left blank on the die and the letters were inserted by hand in the printing plate with the aid of punches.

Running across the top of the design, between the upper corner squares, the word POSTAGE



appeared in white roman capitals with serifs on both the One Penny and Twopence. The values were engraved in a similar style between the lower corner squares.

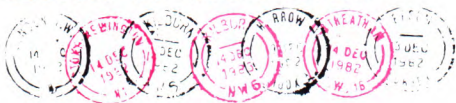
The rest of the design consisted of Frederick Heath's engraving of the Queen's head, superimposed on a background which had been engine-turned by the Perkins process, flanked by two ornamental borders engraved in the same way.

In the R M Phillips Collections at the National Postal Museum is an unused marginal block of seven stamps (Vol III, panel 7) of plate 1 before it was hardened. This unique block shows no sign of plate wear, so is unquestionably a very early impression from the unhardened plate.

JOHN MEMMOTT

Assist. Curator

Letter to the Editor



Dear Mr Gowen

I wonder if you might allow me to reply to Mrs Elizabeth Matthews' letter concerning a disappointment at seeing cheap First Day Covers at a show in Middlesbrough. (September Bulletin)

It has been of great concern to me for some time that so many collectors still produce First Day Covers which are handwritten, scruffy and with postmarks that bear no relation to the actual issue of stamps. One only has to look at the beautiful Legends Issue and note the various postmarks available — two special ones at Tintagel, Winchester and Glastonbury and a whole host of other relevant and attractive pictorial postmarks throughout Great Britain.

It is no small wonder that there is not so much interest in a cover posted in Middlesbrough with perhaps an untidy hand address written on it.

Collectors today like their covers to be very attractive and in superb condition just with relevant postmarks and with a First Day Cover design which pleases them — covers available for all tastes from the traditional Post Office Issues to the more luxurious privately produced covers.

Like all collectables, value is determined afterwards by supply and demand. For the recent Railway issue, for example, the covers are very sought after, and all attractively produced Railway Covers have increased considerably in value.

No such increase will affect the price of a dirty hand-written cover — it will always remain a cheap item. In fact, the differential between postmarks can be quite extraordinary. If you were to have a BBC Cover issued in 1972 with the scarce Pebble Mill Birmingham postmark, bearing the full set of four stamps, we would pay you up to £100 for it. As well as the postmark making a great difference in the price, the cover can also affect the value. The official cover for the Lullingstone Silk Farm who produced the silk for the Royal Wedding Dress in 1981 is being bought for £40 which is ten times the original issue price of £4. Obviously, supply and demand works both ways and some covers lose value because they are over-produced, particularly in boom times such as 1979/1982. There is no doubt today that beautifully produced First Day Covers with attractive relevant postmarks are very interesting items to collect and give hours of pleasure to the collectors and should, in the long run, hold their value and even increase in value.

Yours sincerely

Tony Buckingham

Managing Director

Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd

FOLKESTONE

Advanced Coated Paper (ACP) Machin Definitives

The Phosphor Coated Paper (PCP) currently used for most Machin definitive stamps is gradually being replaced by Advanced Coated Paper (ACP) over a period of time. The latest national definitive to be printed on ACP is the 31p value which follows the 10p, and is initially available from philatelic counters and the British Philatelic Bureau. The reason for the change to ACP is because the level of phosphor signal is more easily controlled during manufacture of the stamp paper.

The following national and country definitives are currently available on ACP:

National Machin Definitive Stamps: 10p, 16p, 17p, 18p, 22p, 24p, 31p

Country Definitive Stamps: Scotland 16p, 22p

N Ireland 22p

Wales 22p

These stamps are not regarded as new issues, and no Post Office official first day of issue facilities are available when they are released.

Forthcoming Events

Midland Philatelic Federation

The third Autumn Assembly to be held by the Midland Philatelic Federation will take place on Saturday 9 November 1985. The host society is the Wombourne Philatelic Society, and the event will be held at the Civic Hall, Wombourne, near Wolverhampton, from 10.30 am to 5.00 pm. The Federation is promoting 18 sheet competitions open to all individual members of affiliated societies. Dealers will be in attendance and there will also be a Post Office counter. Admission is 25p for adults and 10p for children. Free car parking is available. Further information can be obtained from E R Clark, 122 Coniston Road, WOLVERHAMPTON, WV6 9DU.

Dorchester and Weymouth Stamp Club

The Dorchester and Weymouth Stamp Club are holding their Eighteenth Annual Exhibition on Saturday, 9 November 1985. This will take place at the United Church Hall, Charles Street, DORCHESTER, from 10.00 am to 5.00 pm. As well as displays, several dealers will be in attendance and there will also be a Post Office philatelic counter. Refreshments will be available and car parking facilities are available opposite the hall. Further details can be obtained from the Stamp Club Secretary, Joan Burgess, 16 Mistover Close, Manor Park, DORCHESTER, Dorset, DT1 2EQ.

Worthing Philatelic Society

The Worthing Philatelic Society will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary in December this year. To commemorate the occasion, a special stamp book containing 10 x 12p stamps is being produced. The cost of the book is £1.35. It can be obtained from the Society President, Mr J E O Hobbs FRPSL, to whom all remittances should be made payable, at 'Sea Lodge', 183 Brighton Road, WORTHING, Sussex, BN11 2EX.

A special postcard featuring different Worthing postmarks is also being produced. This will be available, posted from Worthing on 4 November 1985, the first day of the 12p post, at 25p each. The card can also be supplied, together with the stamp book, and orders should be accompanied by a 6½" x 4½" stamped addressed envelope as well as the appropriate remittance.

Middlesex Philatelic Federation

The Middlesex Philatelic Federation will be holding its Autumn Stamp Day on 16 November 1985. This will take place at The Great Western Royal Hotel, Paddington, LONDON, W2, from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm. There will be philatelic displays, and dealers will be in attendance. The Stamp Day will also be the occasion for the Federation's Juniors Competitions and 16 Sheet Competitions. The former are open to any Junior Philatelists under 21 and living in the Middlesex area; the latter are open to any member of Philatelic Societies affiliated to the Middlesex Philatelic Federation. Further details of the Competitions can be obtained from The Federation Secretary, Mr M J Taylor, 2 Pines Close, Woodfield Park, AMERSHAM, Bucks, HP6 5QW.

Welsh Philatelic Society

The last philatelic event for this year will be held by the Welsh Philatelic Society on Saturday 16 November 10.45 am to 4.30 pm. This will take place at the Gliffaes Country House Hotel, CRICKHOWELL, Powys. The event will consist of two principal displays, the 600th Anniversary of Newport's Charter, and 'The Robson Lowe Historic Letters'. There will also be other displays and activities, and full details can be obtained from the Honorary Secretary of the Welsh Philatelic Society, D Daunton, 21 Torkington Road, WILMSLOW, Cheshire, SK9 2AE.

Camberley & District Stamp Club

A Stamp Exhibition and Fair will be held by the Camberley and District Stamp Club on Saturday 16 November 1985. This will be held at the Civic Hall, Camberley, Surrey, from 10.30 am to 4.30 pm. The Fourth Three Counties (Surrey, Berkshire and Hampshire) Club Competition entries will be featured. There will be several stamp and postcard dealers in attendance as well as a Post Office philatelic counter. Admission is 20p for adults and 10p for children under 16. Ample car parking facilities are available. Further information can be obtained from the Club Publicity Officer, E Harris, 38 Wiltshire Avenue, CROWTHORNE, Berks, RG11 6NQ.

Withdrawn Items

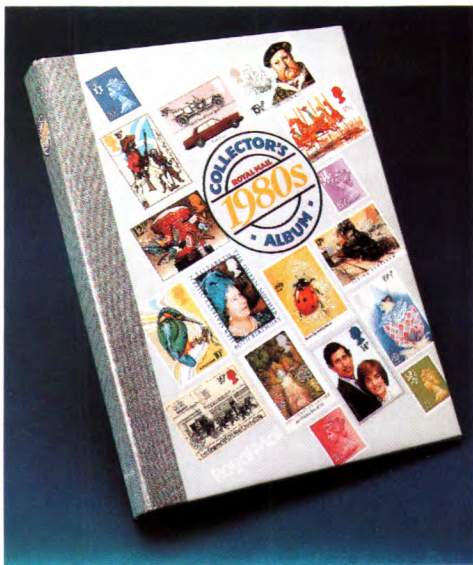
The following items will be withdrawn from sale on 19 November 1985.

Christmas 1984 stamps issue, presentation pack, postcards and Christmas aerogramme.
1984 Collectors' Pack.

Royal Mail Stamp Starter Kit

This is an ideal gift for young people and others who are interested in starting collecting and should prove very popular as a Christmas present. It consists of a colourful loose-leaf album with a series of stock/stamp display pages and illustrated check lists showing all British stamps issued between 1980 and 1985. It also contains a comprehensive beginner's guide to stamp collecting, a 1986 new issue guide, a magnifying frame, tweezers, a pack of 30 used stamps, and a handy plastic wallet.

This Kit which is a useful introduction to stamp collecting, will be available at all philatelic counters, some larger post offices and by post from the British Philatelic Bureau, from 19 November 1985 priced at £9.95.



Royal Mail Stamp Album

This is an attractive high-quality album specifically designed for the display of all British decimal stamps from 1970-85 inclusive on loose-leaf illustrated pages with transparent mounts. It is finished in high-quality leatherette with the Post Office Seal,

drawn by Jeffrey Mathews FSIAD, illustrated on the cover, and is enclosed in its own protective slipcase. This album complements the existing range of Post Office philatelic products and should appeal to all serious collectors of modern British stamps. It will be available from all philatelic counters and by post from the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh from 19 November 1985. Priced at £34.95, the album is a quality product which enhances any collection and offers excellent value for money.

123. Horses, 1978

Four stamps with perhaps the shortest ever title for a special issue were released on 5 July 1978, primarily to commemorate the centenary of the Shire Horse Society of England. The stamps each feature one of the country's favourite horses, and the designs were by the animal painter, Patrick Oxenham of Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire, who also produced the successful British Wildlife issue of 1977.

Pride of place goes to the Shire horse itself (9p) — this is 'Starlight', an old friend of the artist: it is attached to the Rare Breed Stud and lives on the Cotswold Farm Park at Guiting Power, near his home in Stow. It was drawn from life. The Shire is a large, strong draught-horse, used for drawing heavy loads and once bred chiefly in the Midland shires. The Shire Horse Society was founded in July 1878 as the English Cart Horse Society, its name being changed to the present title in 1884. It is governed by a President and 36 members of Council, elected by the members, and is administered by the staff of the East of England Agricultural Society of Peterborough, where the National Shire Horse Show is held in March.

The Shetland pony (10½p) is one of the world's tiniest horses, noted for its courage, agility, relative strength and intelligence. The maximum height of an adult pony is 42 inches and its even temperament makes it a suitable mount for children. Again a local animal, drawn from life. The Welsh pony (11p) has similar qualities of courage and hardiness, a versatile animal equally at home in the show ring or out hunting. Drawn from photographs, the stamp is additionally inscribed in Welsh. The elegant English thoroughbred (13p) is the most famous of equestrian breeds — it has speed, stamina and quality, and is descended from the three great stallions, the Godolphin Arabian, foaled in 1724; the Darley Arabian, foaled in 1700; and the Byerley Turk, captured from the Turks in 1686-87.

The stamps were printed in sheets of 100 (two panes of 50, 10 x 5) on unwatermarked paper with 'All-over' phosphor. Quantities issued were: 9p 48,470,000; 10½p 12,490,000; 11p 11,910,000; and 13p 10,940,000.

JAMES WATSON

Forces Covers

45th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain

A special philatelic cover (RAF (DM) 10) has been produced in the Royal Air Force Awards and Medal Series, to commemorate the 45th anniversary of the Battle of Britain and the award of the 1939-45 Star



with the Battle of Britain Clasp. As with other covers in this series, the medal in question is portrayed in silk, and the aircraft of the 7 named holders of the award shown. (Each cover contains brief records of the 7 pilots and their composite photograph.) The covers have a 17p country definitive stamp affixed, and have been cancelled with a special handstamp BFPS 1891 on 15 August 1985. The covers were subsequently flown in either a Hurricane or Spitfire aircraft and signed by the appropriate pilot. The price of the covers is £2.45 including postage and packing, but 50p should be added for overseas orders. All proceeds will be devoted to the Bomber Command Museum Appeal Fund. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to the Director of Appeals, RAF Museum, Aerodrome Road, Hendon, LONDON, NW9 5LL.

The Dambusters

A special philatelic cover has been produced, no. RFDC 39, featuring 'The Dambusters' film, to coincide with the British Films stamp issue on 8 October 1985. The cover depicts a Lancaster of No. 617 Squadron running in to attack the Möhne Dam. It has the five British Films stamps affixed, cancelled with BFPS 2101 '30th Anniversary of the Dambusters' last operational sorties' handstamp on 8 October, and has been flown in a Tornado of No. 617 Squadron. The covers have been signed by Richard Todd, who played the part of Wing Commander Guy Gibson in the film of The Dambusters, and Wing Commander Peter Day the present Commanding Officer of No 617 Squadron. The price of the cover is £3.95 including postage and packing (50p extra for postage should be added for overseas orders). All proceeds will go to the Bomber Command Museum Appeal. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to: The Director of Appeals, RAF Museum, Aerodrome Road, Hendon, LONDON, NW9 5LL.

70th Anniversary of Departure of RNAS Armoured Car Squadron for Russia

A special philatelic cover is being produced to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the departure of the RNAS Armoured Car Squadron for Russia on 1 December 1915. The cover depicts the flags of Russia and the USSR, RNAS Armoured Car Squadron badge, RNAS badge, and a picture of a Rolls Royce armoured car. The covers will have a 17p Christmas stamp affixed, cancelled with a special handstamp featuring the Squadron badge, on 1 December 1985. The price of the cover is 95p. Covers are also available bearing the 22p Christmas stamp,

signed by Mr J H Locker Lampson, son of Commander O L Locker Lampson CMG, DSO, RNVR MP, the Squadron Commanding Officer, at £1.45 each. In addition, double signed covers will be available, price £2.20 each, bearing a 31p Christmas stamp, signed by Mr J H Locker Lampson and Captain R D Franklin CBE, MBIM, MNI, RN, Admiralty Regional Officer Liverpool. (Whence the Squadron sailed for Russia in 1915.) Orders with the appropriate remittance made payable to the Fleet Air Arm Museum should be sent to the Royal Naval Philatelic Officer, Fleet Air Arm Museum, Royal Naval Air Station, YEOVILTON, Somerset, BA22 8HT, accompanied by a 7"x5" stamped addressed envelope.

Posting Boxes



No. 77. The photograph this month was sent in by John Roberts of Pwllheli, Gwynedd. The posting box is situated at Bwlchderwin near the village of Pantglas, Caernarfon, Gwynedd. It is a very rural area, and this Victorian posting box is incorporated in a typically Welsh stone gate-post. What is doubly interesting is that a slab of Welsh slate has been placed over the box to give added protection. Thank you Mr Roberts.

Stamp World 90

It's 'all systems go' as far as the next international stamp exhibition to be held in London is concerned. The year is fixed — 1990. That may still seem far away, but there are very careful preparations to be made and these need time.

A Management Committee has already been formed which, as one of its first tasks, arranged a competition to find a name for the next London 'international'.

Hundreds of entries were received, leaving the Committee spoilt for choice. After much thought, it was decided that the winning name would be STAMP WORLD 90.

Three of those who entered submitted this title, namely Robert Lester of Godalming in Surrey (a reader of Gibbons Stamp Monthly), Stephen Cante of Bagshot in Surrey (a reader of Stamps and Foreign Stamps) and Gary O'Grady of Hayes in Middlesex (a reader of Stamp Magazine).

Many of the entries were very ingenious and it was obvious that a great deal of careful thought had been put in by the entrants. In reaching their decision, the Committee felt that the chosen name would convey to the general public in a straightforward way the nature of the event.

Commemorative Covers

Royal Mail: 350 Years of Service

A special philatelic cover was produced to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the first Hovercraft Mail Service and the 350th Anniversary of the opening of the Royal Mails. The covers were carried by Datapost from Ryde to Southsea by hovercraft, and then on to Edinburgh. With a 17p Royal Mail: 350 Years of Service stamp affixed, the covers were cancelled with the British Philatelic Bureau first day of issue handstamp on 30 July 1985. The covers also bear a cachet indicating that they have been carried aboard the hovercraft. The price of the covers is £2.50 each plus postage. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to Chris Barton, Flat 1, Wilmington, Appley Rise, RYDE, Isle of Wight, PO33 1LE.

The Lighthouse Club

The Lighthouse Club was founded in 1956 following a ten day Ministry of Public Building & Works Exhibition at Gosforth Park, near Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. This was the direct result of

the strong co-operative and team spirit at the exhibition which from humble beginnings led to the Lighthouse Club today with over 6,000 members in several countries, from the Civil Engineering, Construction and Building industries. Apart from the social and sporting activities the most important aspect is the Benevolent Fund which assists dependants of fatal accidents, casualties and sickness within the trade. The cover was issued on 18 June 1985 to coincide with the Safety at Sea stamps. It has a 22p stamp affixed, depicting a lighthouse, cancelled with a special handstamp at Whitley Bay. The price of the cover is £1.50 with all proceeds going to the Club. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to G B Borwell, Greenham House, 671 London Road, ISLEWORTH, Middlesex TW7 4EX.

Dream of Christmas

A Dream of Christmas cover is again being produced this year by D G Taylor Cover Productions. The cover will have the same design as last year, depicting a Christmas theme, but printed against a mottled background. A different colour will also be used for each handstamp variation. Bearing a 17p Christmas stamp only, the cover will cost £2.00 (inland) or £3.00 (overseas). With a full set of Christmas stamps attached the cover will cost £4.00 (inland) or £5.00 (overseas). Prices are inclusive of postage and packing. The covers will be cancelled with the Bethlehem first day of issue handstamp on 19 November 1985. Details of other possible handstamps are available on request. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to D G Taylor, 202 Somervell Road, SOUTH HARROW, Middlesex HA2 8TS.

150th Anniversary of First Darlington-Built Steam Locomotive.

A special philatelic cover has been produced to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first steam locomotive to be built at Darlington. This was the Hackworth — type 0-6-0, known as the Stockton and Darlington Railway No 25 'Enterprise'. The cover depicts a drawing representing the engine. (There is no historic sketch of the 'Enterprise'.) With a 17p Famous Trains stamp affixed (Sir Nigel Gresley), the covers have been cancelled with the Darlington philatelic counter handstamp on 27 September 1985. The price of the covers is £1.00 to which postage should be added. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to the Chairman of the Darlington Railway Preservation Society, Cllr Barrie Lamb, Lambs Stores, 24/26 West Auckland Road, DARLINGTON, Co Durham, OL3 9EP.

Arthurian Legend

The Scottish Papermakers Wm Sommerville & Sons plc and their export sales and marketing partners, Paper Makers Export Limited, have joined forces and produced a special philatelic cover to coincide with the issue of the Arthurian Legend stamps on 3 September 1985. The cover has been specially printed with facsimiles of the watermarks 'Excalibur Script' and 'Excalibur Sword' — Excalibur Script and Excalibur Sword Laid are two high quality watermarked papers made at the Dalmore Paper Mills specially for Paper Makers Export. The covers have a block of three 22p Arthurian Legend stamps, depicting The Lady of the Lake with the Sword Excalibur, cancelled with either a Warminster or Tintagel special handstamp on 3 September 1985. The price of the cover is £4.95 each inclusive of postage and packing, and overseas customers are requested to add 50p and remit in Pounds Sterling. Customers should specify which handstamp they require. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to Paper Makers Export Limited, 4 Park View, Moulton, NORTHAMPTON, NN3 1TW.

Burns Federation Centenary Conference

A special philatelic cover was produced to commemorate the Centenary Conference of the Burns Federation which was held at the Imperial College of Science, Kensington, LONDON SW7, from 13-15 September 1985. The Federation Conference, which is under the patronage of HM Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, was also held in London in 1885. The cover depicts Robert Burns at the plough together with the Seal of the Poet. Bearing a 17p Scottish country definitive, the covers were cancelled with a special handstamp on 14 September 1985. The handstamp incorporates the signature and Seal of the Poet together with two lines of music from 'A Man's a man for a' that', which is also the motto of the Federation. The price of the cover is £1.50 including postage and packing. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to the Federation's Philatelic Officer, Peter J Westwood, 28 Stranka Avenue, PAISLEY, PA2 9DW.

New Definitive Stamps/Reduced Postal Rate

A special pictorial cover has been produced for the issue of the new 7p and 12p definitive stamps on 29 October 1985. The cover has an observation panel to show the blue stars printed on the reverse of the 12p stamps. Bearing the 7p, 12p, and 12p with blue star definitives, the covers have been cancelled with the Windsor first day of issue handstamp on 29 October 1985. The price of the covers

including inland postage and packing is £1.60 each, 3 for £4.50, or 10 for £14.00.

A special pictorial cover is also being produced to commemorate the reduction in the second class postage rate on 4 November 1985. Bearing the 13p (old rate) and 12p (new rate) definitive stamps, the covers will be cancelled with a pictorial handstamp on 4 November 1985 and will also bear a cachet. The price of the covers including inland postage and packing is £1.50 each, 3 for £4.20, or 10 for £13.00. Orders for both covers with the appropriate remittance should be sent to G Eldridge, 177 Mousehole Lane, Bitterne, SOUTHAMPTON, SO2 4TD, from whom further information is available.

Christmas Parcels

A special Christmas Parcels philatelic cover is being produced to coincide with the issue of the Christmas Stamps on 19 November 1985. The cover depicts a Christmas tree, presents, Father Christmas and a Snowman. The illustration will be printed on a mottled effect background with a different colour for each type of handstamp available. The cover will be available bearing the 17p Christmas stamp only at £2.00 (inland) or £3.00 (overseas) each. Bearing the full set of Christmas stamps, the cover will cost £4.00 (inland) or £5.00 (overseas) each. Prices are inclusive of postage and packing. Two different handstamps will be available, Royal Mail Parcels or Bethlehem first day of issue handstamp. Customers should specify which one is required. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to D G Taylor, 202 Somervell Road, SOUTH HARROW, Middlesex, HA2 8TS.

Thomas the Tank Engine

For the second year running, the West Somerset Railway will be operating special excursion trains, 'Santa Specials', to visit Santa at Blue Anchor or Crowcombe stations. A special Thomas the Tank Engine philatelic cover is being produced to celebrate the excursions, for younger collectors. The covers will feature Thomas the Tank Engine, and will have a 17p Christmas stamp affixed cancelled with the Taunton pictorial handstamp. A West Somerset Railway 20p stamp will also be affixed to the cover with a special 'Santa Special' cancellation. The price of the cover is £1.00, inclusive of postage and packing. Orders with the appropriate remittance made payable to John Nash should be sent to him at Flat 2, 5 South Road, WATCHET, Somerset, TA23 0DA, from whom further information is available.

Theatre Royal Nottingham

To coincide with the Christmas stamp issue on 19 November 1985 whose theme is pantomime, a special philatelic cover is being produced for the Theatre Royal Nottingham. This is in full colour, and features the pantomime 'Aladdin' which will run at the Theatre Royal. The cover will be available bearing the full set of Christmas stamps cancelled with a specially produced handstamp at Nottingham, price £4.00 each. The cover will also be available bearing a 17p Christmas stamp only, depicting a Genie, price £2.25 each. In addition, a limited number of covers will also be available bearing the full set of stamps cancelled with the special handstamp, and signed by Barbara Windsor who plays Aladdin in the pantomime. The price of the signed covers is £7.50 each. All prices are inclusive of postage and packing, but 50p should be added for overseas orders which should be remitted in pounds sterling. Orders with the appropriate remittance made payable to A G Bradbury, should be sent to him at 2 Fairholme Road, LEICESTER, LE2 6GL.

150th Anniversary of the Birth of Andrew Carnegie

The British Carnegie Trusts in association with the Dunfermline Philatelic Society and with assistance from the Scottish Postal Board, are issuing a special philatelic cover on 25 November 1985 to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the birth of Andrew Carnegie. The specially designed cover is printed in two colours, and depicts Carnegie and the weaver's cottage in Moodie Street, Dunfermline where he was born. Carnegie made a vast fortune in the manufacture of steel for railway lines, and the filler card gives brief details of his life and of the Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum. The cover will be available bearing a 17p Famous Trains stamp (Flying Scotsman) at £1.00 each, and bearing both the 17p and 31p (Royal Scot) Famous Trains stamp at £1.50 each. A limited number of covers bearing both stamps and signed by Mr William Thomson, great grandson of Andrew Carnegie, will also be available at £4.00 each. Details of a limited number of covers carried on the inaugural journey of the British Rail Locomotive 'Andrew Carnegie' are available on request. Orders with the appropriate remittance made payable to the Carnegie Dunfermline Trust should be sent to: The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, Abbey Park House, DUNFERMLINE, Fife, KY12 7PB. Orders should be accompanied by a 9"x 6" stamped addressed envelope for return under cover, or by a small self-adhesive addressed label for return by ordinary mail.

Alfred Hitchcock Exhibition

A special philatelic cover has been produced to commemorate the Alfred Hitchcock Exhibition at the 'Sir Alfred Hitchcock' Hotel, Leytonstone. The hotel is situated quite near to Sir Alfred Hitchcock's birth-place. The cover is illustrated with a portrait of Hitchcock. Bearing the British Films stamps, the covers have been cancelled with a special handstamp at Leytonstone, LONDON E11, on 8 October 1985, the first day of issue of the stamps. Each cover has been individually numbered. The price of the covers is £3.75 for those bearing the full set of British Films stamps, and £1.75 for those bearing the 34p value only depicting Hitchcock. 25p should be added to cover postage and packing, and appropriate postage should be added for overseas. Orders with the appropriate remittance made payable to Hawkwood Covers, should be sent to: Hawkwood Covers, 60 Hawkwood Crescent, Chingford, LONDON, E4 7PJ.

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