

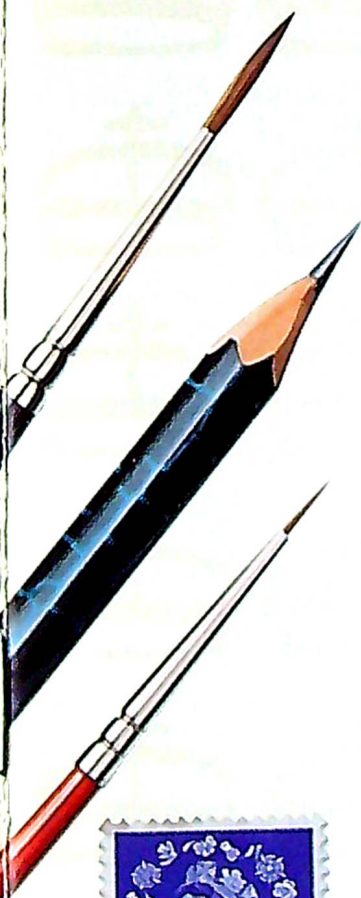
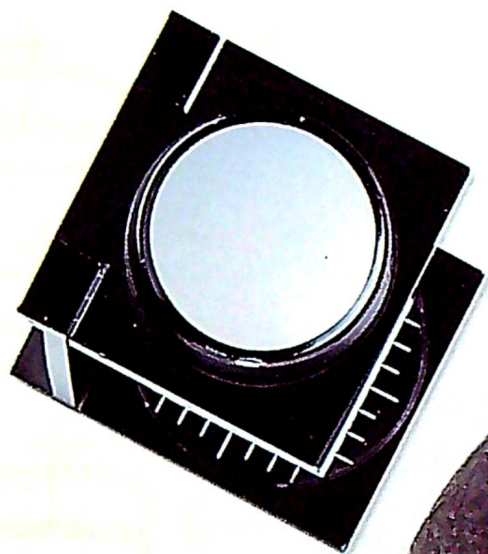
BRITISH PHILATELIC BULLETIN

The Wildings

The First Elizabeth II

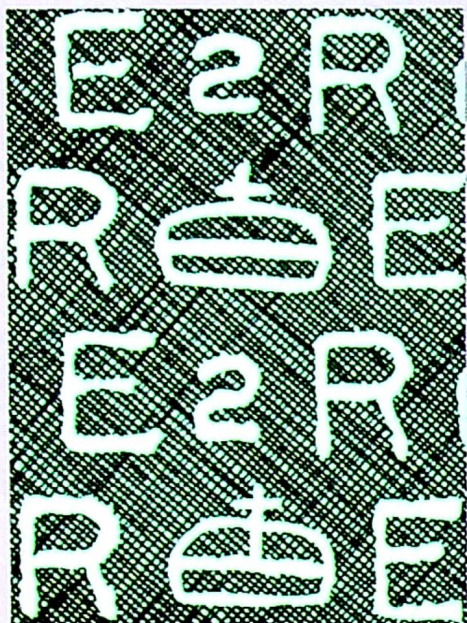
Definitives

PUBLICATION N°9



The Wildings – The First Elizabeth II Definitives

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The 'Tudor Crown' watermark used for the first issue of the Wilding definitives

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Cover Photograph of drawing
by Edmund Dulac, based on
first Dorothy Wilding portrait
of the Queen wearing a tiara

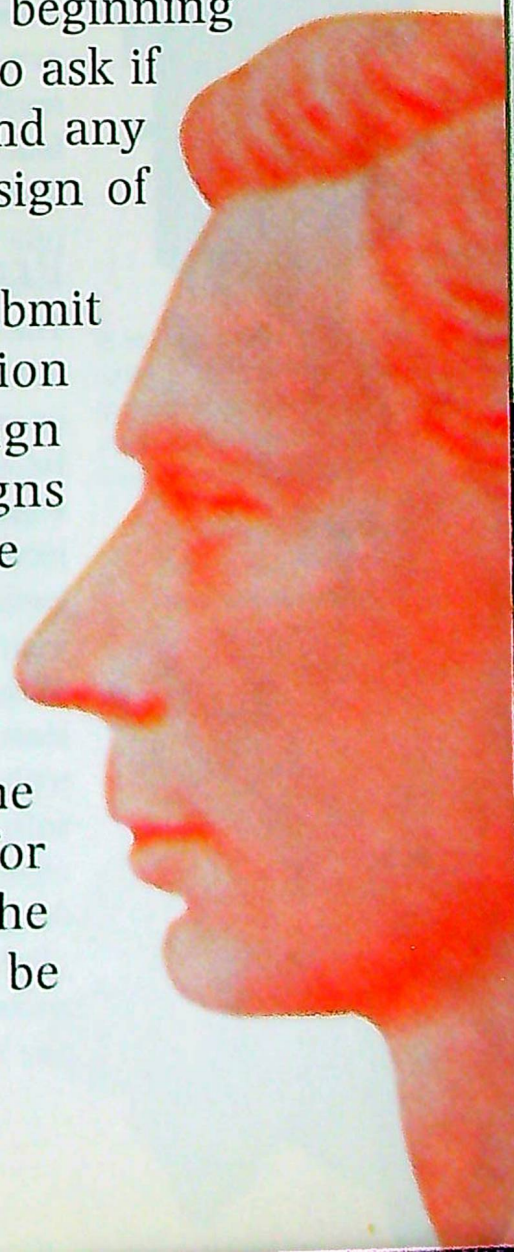


PREPARATIONS FOR DEATH OF KING
By September 1951 the Post Office was contemplating new definitives needed when George VI died and was succeeded by Princess Elizabeth. The succession was already anticipated, and the press

asked what action would be taken by the PO. The Director of Postal Services [DPS] asked for a report of previous practice, and by 9 November a plan entitled *Initial Steps to be Taken in Connexion with New Issues of Postage Stamps* had been drawn up. The main stages were:

(1) The Postmaster General [PMG] would recommend to the Palace the issue of new definitives, ideally beginning with four values in most common use, also ask if special Coronation stamps were desired and any special views of the sovereign on the design of these or the definitives.

(2) The artists who would be asked to submit designs would be chosen in consultation with the Council for Industrial Design [CoID] which would inspect the designs and arrange them in order of merit. The Royal Mint would be consulted to see if any photographs of the new sovereign to be used on coins or medals would be suitable for stamps. Colour essays of the selected designs should be submitted for approval first to the PMG and then to the Palace. The Dominions Office should be informed about the new stamps.



(3) Supplies Department should be advised on requisites for postage stamps (including rolls and books) and stamped stationery, and also for postal orders and dies for use by the Inland Revenue and HMSO.

The *Initial Steps* plan was then locked away until The King died on 6 February 1952. On 13 February, The Queen's Private Secretary, Sir Alan Lascelles, asked what steps were intended; the PMG, Earl de la Warr, confirmed plans to begin the issue of new definitives as soon as practicable and asked about the availability of suitable photographs either for direct reproduction on stamps or as the basis of a new effigy. Meanwhile, at the suggestion of Sir Alan's assistant, the DPS and the Deputy Master of the Royal Mint had already visited the photographer Dorothy Wilding to discuss their requirements from a forthcoming portrait session with The Queen. It was explained 'that for printing by the photogravure process, it was undesirable to have heavy shadows on one side of the face and that top lighting, which threw shadows on the eyes, should be avoided'. Pictures from the session on 26 February reached the PO on 7 March. They showed The Queen wearing a tiara and included four full profiles, and two three-quarters face or 'proper' profiles looking right on light and dark backgrounds respectively.

Proposals to PO Board

The DPS proposed to the Post Office Board the issue of 'two or three of the more commonly used denominations ... by next September or as soon as possible thereafter', the remaining low values to follow 'at suitable and convenient intervals'. He went on to address suggestions made, or likely to be made, in the press and elsewhere: pictorial designs with historical or landscape motifs, a greater variety of designs, a change of colours, and a return to the style of Victorian stamps. Various suggestions, from Sir George Bellew of the College of Arms and others, had included the printing of at least one denomination in black, and the depiction of The Queen with a coronet in the manner of Victoria, rather than a crown as with her successors. The DPS considered that 'with the present size of our low value postage stamp, there is no room for a pictorial design so long as the head ... is retained as the principal feature'.

Enlarging the stamps, to 'at least double the present size' to make enough room for an adequate design was not considered an option due to production difficulties, greater cost of production, the



Society photographer Dorothy Wilding – her studios took the first official portrait of The Queen

modification or replacement of some 18,000 stamp vending machines, and opposition of the business community. The 2s6d and 5s pictorial definitives of 1951 had been somewhat criticised in the philatelic press.

The practice of including the words 'postage' and 'revenue' was to continue; the PO felt bound by a Universal Postal Union [UPA] resolution of 1934. Greater variety in colour and design was considered, as the public complained about distinguishing between several of the lower values since the last change of colours on 3 May 1951. The current two basic designs were to be replaced by three separate designs, for the ranges 1½d, 2d, 2½d-6d and 7d-1s, ideally in the intenser and better-contrasted colours of pre-war days. Simply changing the confusing colours was prevented by the UPU requirement of similar colours for stamps for various classes of mail – inland letters, overseas letters, postcards, etc. Not until June 1953 did this ruling cease.

Of the proposed black stamp, it was noted that the Penny Black was changed to red because of the difficulty of cancelling it. It was thought 'eminently desirable' to retain the national floral emblems (rose, shamrock, thistle and daffodil). The use of a drawing of the monarch's head (such as Dulac's portrait of George VI), could circumvent the imperfections of any photograph, but the photogravure process meant that a photograph could be directly reproduced; both approaches should be considered.

Advisory panel set up

The photographs of The Queen were examined by the PMG and CoID representatives, and stamp-size reductions of seven photographs were examined by the full PO Board on 20 March. The Board felt the crown on stamps should be replaced by a coronet or tiara as in the photographs. The artists Edmund Dulac and Percy Metcalfe, and representatives of the CoID, and College of Arms were to advise the PMG on portraits of The Queen. The PMG, his officials and advisers, and representatives of Harrison & Sons Ltd met on 1 April when the PMG expressed a preference for a three-quarter face portrait of The Queen. A portrait numbered S.6 was considered the best but the profile should face left instead of right and the tiara should be replaced by a coronet. One member found S.6 'very lifelike and more interesting and attractive than a profile'; it was decided to request a new photograph of



Enid Marx's drawing of the daffodil – one of the four national floral emblems used on the four lowest value stamps





Photograph of drawing by Edmund Dulac, based on the first Dorothy Wilding portrait

The Queen on the lines suggested. If this was not practicable it would be possible simply to reverse S.6 (given Her Majesty's permission). While a new photograph was sought, Dulac proceeded with a drawing for use in preparing a design.

Harrisons set about producing bromides in four times stamp size of the S.6 photograph, both as originally supplied and in reverse, for use by Dulac in preparing his drawing. The PMG saw The Queen on 8 April to explain the need for new photographs; subsequently Dorothy Wilding was briefed for a further photographic session on 15 April. This produced left-facing profiles in both full and three-quarter face, as well as at least one portrait in full face. The coronet featured in the photographs was, strictly speaking, a diadem, produced for George IV in the 1820s; it features

emblems of the rose, thistle and shamrock. It was worn by Queen Victoria, Queen Alexandra, and Queen Mary, and by The Queen at the State Opening of Parliament in November 1952.

On 5 May the Palace supplied two full profiles and one three-quarter face, with the proviso that The Queen felt the set showed the coronet too far back on her head and hoped this could be rectified. The three-quarter face photograph (Dorothy Wilding ref. no. O15957-E) became the basis of the standard head that gave the Wilding name to the whole set. Dulac's first three-quarter face drawing was completed by 21 April and on 8 May the

PMG met Dulac to request minor alterations to his drawing in light of the new photograph;

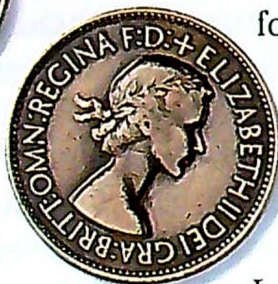
the revised drawing was to be the effigy for all the low value definitives.

Although Dulac's revision was 'considerably improved', it was decided on 9 June to concentrate on the photograph and Harrisons were to proceed with retouching.

In the meantime discussions had been continuing on the choice of artists for the frames and the drafting of their instructions.



Design, using tiara photograph, by Hugo Fleury



The instructions to individual artists and the four main stamp printers, sent out in early May, stated that three designs in vertical format were required, one against a light background, of which The Queen's head was to form the basis. Photographs of Dulac's first unrevised drawing were supplied but it was made clear that this was not a final choice. The denominations would cover the range 1½d–1s and could be shown in words, figures, or both. The designs had to include 'postage', 'revenue', and the national floral emblems. Some 75 designs were received by the deadline of 30 June. These were from:

John Farleigh (7 designs), Edmund Dulac (3), John Stobie (5), Joan Hassall (2), Mary Adshead (6), Abram Games (3), Victor Reinganum (4), Enid Marx (4), E G Fuller (3), Harrisons (5 designs by George Knipe), Harrisons (4 designs by MC Farrar Bell), De La Rue (12, by unidentified staff artists), Waterlows (3 by L D Fryer, Hugo Fleury, and Stanley D Scott), Bradbury Wilkinson (4 by W S Matthews and E J Jackman), Harold W Bird (3), and Lancelot Thornton (6).

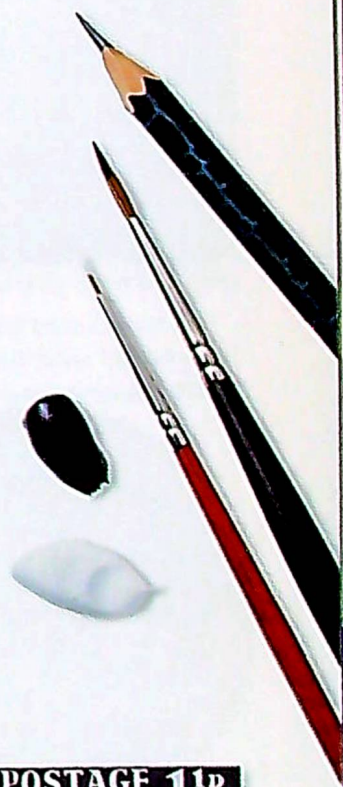
Artists' designs viewed

On 11 July the designs were previewed by the PO and printers to assess suitability for photogravure reproduction. Harrisons considered that, allowing for amendments by artists and their annual summer holiday closure, colour essays might be ready by the end of August – about a month behind the original schedule.

At a meeting of a now expanded advisory panel on 18 July, Lord Crawford, Chairman of the Royal Fine Arts Commission, felt that many of the designs were striving to be fashionable; he cautioned 'Avoid the advice of fashionable people ... Really good stamps should not "date".' The meeting set out to select at least six light-on-dark designs and at least three dark-on-light; by using both normal and 'reversed' backgrounds as well as different designs within the range of denominations. It was hoped that the same colour could be used more than once if necessary. The number of designs was reduced to 19; and then to a shortlist of 9 consisting of Farleigh (2 designs), Dulac (2), Marx, Knipe (2), Farrar Bell, and Thornton. Dulac's drawing and Wilding's photograph of The Queen's head were compared and the former was again criticised. Comments on particular designs included the insertion of a 'd' after the value, a PO requirement omitted in the instructions.



Design by John Farleigh



Early Enid Marx design
(POSTAGE at the top of
stamp)



Unadopted design by
Lancelot Thorton

Advisory panel set up

A full meeting of the advisory panel, with the PMG, on 23 July, addressed itself to the selection of designs, aiming for a modestly radical break from the style of the George VI definitives. One of Farrar Bell's designs, with a very small Roman numeral 'II' to be added to the right-hand side of the 'E', and one by Enid Marx were agreed as first and second choices, recommended for the 2½d and 1½d values. Harrisons confirmed that both stamps could be produced before the year end if early Royal approval was given. Sir Kenneth Clark proposed one of Knipe's designs as the third choice but after more debate the panel chose ones by Dulac and Adshead for later use (denominations to be decided), and rejected the remaining five designs. A decision, with one voice of dissent, was reached in favour of using the Wilding photograph rather than Dulac's latest drawing.

Later the PMG, after speaking to the College of Arms and the Scottish Office, confirmed that it was unnecessary to add a 'II' to Farrar Bell's design as the letters 'E' and 'R' were not combined in the Royal Cypher; the Home Office was opposed to including either letters or numerals, as it could offend the Scots.



Tin advertising the 1951
Festival of Britain

The PMG showed The Queen the panel's recommendations, plus the other five previously shortlisted. Her Majesty preferred the coronet to be a little further forward on the head, and one of Knipe's designs to one of Dulac's. It was decided to proceed with Knipe's in addition to the other four selections; arrangements were also put in hand for Marx and Farrar Bell to change values and amend their designs as necessary to incorporate the new head.

PO officials told Dulac on 25 July that his drawing was not to be used and he agreed to collaborate with Harrisons on retouching the Wilding head to see what could be done with the coronet. The PMG agreed to proceed straight to the production of essays, of the 1½d in green and the 2½d in several shades of red. Essays were prepared in the reds used for the 1940 Stamp Centenary, 1948 Channel Isles Liberation, and 1951 Festival of Britain issues; the magenta shade of the last was particularly favoured.

The allocation of designs to denominations needed deciding. The PMG suggested that the first five values be in each of the chosen designs, which might then be repeated in blocks of two or three throughout the remainder of the low value ranges.

The alternative, according to the more conventional system designed to prevent the danger of stamps of the same design and colour appearing in different values, was 1/2d-2d and 2 1/2d-4d as first intended, followed by 5d-8d and 9d-1s. If a 1s3d stamp were to be issued, this could be in one of two designs, printed in the steel blue (1948 Silver Wedding stamps) or 'airmail label' blue.

Proposed colour change

In August essays in the following colours were requested from Harrisons:

- Marx designs: 1/2d pale orange, 1d black, 1 1/2d pale green, 2d pale red-brown
- Farrar Bell design: 2 1/2d light ultramarine, 3d pale violet, 4d light blue
- Adshead design: 5d rich brown, 6d purple, 7d yellow-green
- Dulac or Knipe designs: 8d violet-red, 9d olive green, 10d azure blue, 11d brownish purple, 1s umber, 1s3d Air Force or steel blue, 1s6d see below.



The steel blue colour of the 1948 Silver Wedding stamp was considered for the 1s3d definitive

Plans for the 1s3d and 1s6d denominations had been afoot since May 1952 following an increase in overseas postage rates, although the introduction of the 1s3d had been discussed since 1940. Estimated annual usage was 45-50 million and 18 million of the two values. In January 1953 the PMG ruled out further new values between 1s6d and 2s6d until further notice. (Essays of a 1s9d in the Dulac design are of much later date; a 1s9d stamp, in a Machin design, was not issued until 1967.)

On 13 August, Harrisons showed the PO essays of the 2 1/2d and 1 1/2d designs. One of the 2 1/2d essays showed Dulac's amendment to the Wilding photograph he successfully tilted forward the cross at the front to give the impression of the whole being further forward on the head. Another essay, without Dulac's modifications, incorporated retouching by Farrar Bell to accentuate details of the coronet, earrings, necklace, hair, and back of the neck. It was agreed to combine both sets of amendments into a third head; The Queen could make her own choice from the three.



Colour trial of the 2 1/2d in blue, early 1953

Essays approved by Queen



The London office of stamp printers Harrisons in the 1950s

Fresh essays were shown to the PMG on 22 August with some recommendations, plus bromides (four times stamp size) of the five selected designs, each with a partly retouched Wilding head in place of the original effigy. Later he forwarded three card-mounted essays to the Palace: two with 'Penny Red' 2½d (A1 with Wilding portrait as retouched by Harrisons, and A2 also retouched, but including Dulac's modification to the coronet), and one with green 1½d with an unretouched Wilding head, to be replaced in due course by whichever of the 2½d portraits The Queen preferred. Her Majesty

approved the A2 effigy for general use and thought it 'a very considerable improvement' – she also accepted the 1½d and 2½d designs, and welcomed the return of the pre-war shade of 'Penny Red'. The remaining designs received general approval pending later developments. The order for colour essays of the remaining denominations was confirmed, as follows:



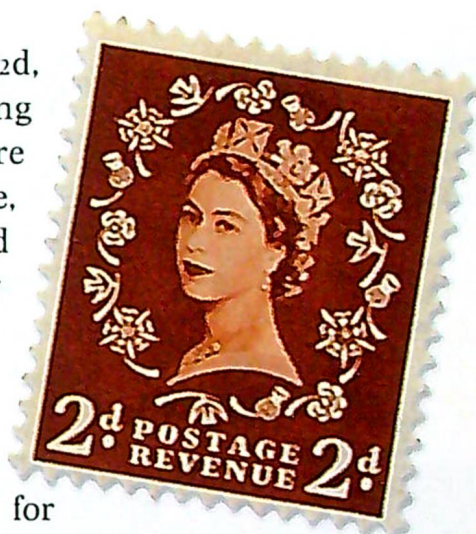
The Queen visits Harrisons factory during printing of the definitives

Values	Designer
½d, 1d, 2d	Marx
3d, 4d	Farrar Bell
5d, 6d, 7d	Knipe
8d, 9d, 10d, 11d	Adshead
1s, 1s3d, 1s6d	Dulac

Enid Marx was asked to remove the two value figures and 'Postage' from the top of her design, and replace 'Revenue' at the bottom with 'Postage Revenue' as on the 2½d. She also made minor changes to the wreath framing the head necessitated by the insertion of the approved effigy.

Essays of all 17 values were to hand on 6 September, in colours as recommended on 7 August except that the 1s6d was in purple. Marx supplied Harrisons with an altered drawing on 15 September, and revised colour essays of the 1½d green were finally sent to the PO on 1 October. The PMG was not completely happy with it and recalled the advisory panel to suggest further alterations that would have made the stamp closely resemble the 2½d design. CoID representatives persuaded him that the design was 'most pleasing'

as it stood and required no change, but criticised the 2½d, which The Queen had approved and for which printing preparations were now well advanced. Criticisms were levelled at the lettering and the circle around the value, but the main problem was one of definition. To avoid suspending printing for modifications – delaying issue by a month – it was agreed that definition would be improved considerably if the colour was changed from 'Penny Red' back to the magenta proposed earlier. The PMG was particularly keen that the stamps should be issued on the same date before Christmas. Harrisons agreed to aim for 15 December with a full quantity of 2½d and as many 1½d as could be produced. The Palace was contacted immediately to approve both the 1½d and the colour change to magenta for the 2½d.



Final design by Enid Marx for the 2d stamp

The PO felt that with a 15 December issue date, senders of Christmas cards might wait until the stamps were available, adding to the Christmas pressure; 8 or 12 December were favoured. By 13 October, Harrisons had completed one cylinder for the 2½d and prepared a second improved one, and begun the 1½d. Proof sheets of both stamps were available for examination on 23 October when a second 1½d cylinder was in preparation. Harrisons were confident of supplying both stamps in adequate quantities; by 17 November they had delivered 500,000 of each, and could keep up 100,000 a week of each until 22 December. It would be possible to issue the stamps as early as 5 December. The date and denominations were announced by the PMG in the House of Lords on 18 November and further details were given to the press at the end of the month; this unusual degree of advance notice was due to the intense public interest. The stamps were duly issued on 5 December.

Later values

When essays in the chosen colours of all values were examined by the PO on 6 September, it was recorded that 'Mr Knipe's design [5d–7d] seems all right in colour and the proposed colours are good and are readily distinguishable from each other'.

The issued 1d stamp



1½d and 2½d values used
on first day of issue,
postmarked Rosemarkie,
Fortrose, Ross-shire,
5 December 1952



However, at least three pairings of the same designs were noted in which the colours were not easy to distinguish in a poor light: 3d and 4d (violet and blue); 9d and 10d (olive-green and azure), and 1s3d and 1s6d (steel-blue and purple). The oval frame surrounding The Queen's head was larger on the 9d–11d design, showing more of her dress and thus not uniform with other designs. Dulac had further altered the effigy on his 1s–1s6d designs without any authority, introducing a slimming effect which 'made The Queen look pigeon chested and her neck too thin'. Dulac was told to use the approved effigy of The Queen, and he and Adshead worked with Harrisons to produce versions that conformed with each other and removed patches of white visible on the dress. On 13 October the issue of 1s3d and 1s6d denominations was decided.

Remaining designs issued

After the 1½d and 2½d had been issued a period of relative calm followed over Christmas and New Year, until fresh consideration was given to designs by Knipe, Adshead and Dulac. At a meeting on 26 January 1953 Harrisons produced colour essays: 5d brown, 8d violet-red and 1s3d in steel blue. Only minor modifications had been made to these since The Queen had provisionally approved the bromides in August. On Adshead's design the lettering of 'postage' had been



Detail from 8d, 9d, 10d and 11d
design, showing more of
The Queen's dress than on
the lower values

slightly lowered to better balance 'revenue', and the value figures reduced in size so as to be more distant from The Queen's face. The artist had declined to remove them altogether to the corners of the design as this would ruin the balance of the whole. The top of Dulac's design was altered to maintain the balance after the base had been amended to show the value in figures rather than words.

As the PMG had decided that the 1s3d and 1s6d Coronation stamps should be green and blue, the definitives had to conform. The olive-green of the Coronation stamp and the shade used on the current 9d were very similar so essays were required of both designs in shades of green, so that a distinctive shade could be chosen for the 1s3d. These were produced in the green of the current 9d stamp, and another in sea-green generally agreed to contrast acceptably with the other greens in the low-value ranges.

The next set of values to be issued was now discussed. It was agreed that one denomination in each of the three remaining designs could be issued by the end of June. The values should be 5d, 8d or 9d, and 1s. The PMG submitted a set of the three essays to the Palace and The Queen's general approval of the finished designs was received on 5 February. The PSD suggested an issue date of 6 July for the 5d, 8d and 1s; the ½d, 1d and 2d could be issued about the end of August, the 4d, 1s3d and 1s6d once the Coronation stamps were withdrawn on 31 October, and the remaining values – 3d, 6d, 7d, 9d, 10d and 11d – late in 1953 or early 1954. This schedule was approved and closely followed. Final essays of the 5d brown, 8d magenta-red, and 1s bistre-brown were approved on 8 May and issued on 6 July after a print run reportedly devoid of mishaps.



Colour trials of the 8d and 5d in violet-red and brown

The ½d, 2d, and the '1d black'

The ½d, 1d and 2d were scheduled for issue on 31 August. The essay of the 2d in red-brown was criticised on the grounds that the figures were poorly designed, the right-hand '2' in particular having a tail that seemed to run uphill; also there was too much red in the colour, which might lead to confusion with the orange-red ½d or even the magenta-red 2½d. A deeper 'chocolate' brown was requested and further essays were received on 14 May.



Essay to test feasibility
of a One Penny Black

Harrisons explained that they could not improve the values on the 2d stamp without a fresh drawing from the artist; this would be a time-consuming process. For this reason essays of the 1/2d and 2d were approved, although the colour of the 1/2d was subsequently improved so The Queen's face seemed less pale.

Attempts over a long period to produce Enid Marx's design in black bedevilled production of the 1d. The problem was to produce a black stamp which could bear legible overprints and cancellations. Finally on 31 December Harrisons submitted a 1 1/2d essay in black overprinted 'Bahrain, 1 1/2 annas' with a double overprinting first in white and then in bronze-blue. The PO was not enthusiastic as the

overprint was still so indistinct as to invite public criticism. Harrisons produced further essays of the 1d design in black, both with and without overprints, and the PO conducted unsatisfactory test cancellations on these. This, and anticipated criticism of the colour as somewhat funereal, led, after lengthy discussions, to favour blue.

The choice was between a blue 1d and a reversed 4d of the same colour, or a reversed blue 1d and normal 4d. It was felt that a royal blue penny and the blue 'reversed' 4d would be creditable. The PMG wished to proceed and final essays were requested. These, with the 1d described as ultramarine rather than 'royal blue' were approved on 8 June. The 1/2d, 1d and 2d stamps were issued on 31 August.

4d, 1s3d and 1s6d approved and issued

Meanwhile the remainder of the batch received on 3 June still required approval. For the 4d and 1s6d this waited on confirmation that the colours were the same as those of the new 1d blue and Coronation 1s6d respectively, after which they might be issued with the new 1s3d. An issue date of 2 November was confirmed on 17 July. The 1s6d appeared to be slightly lighter in shade than the Coronation stamp; although the same ink was used, the variation was caused by the different tonal values of the two designs. It was also felt that the 4d needed to be a shade darker to match the 1d. Further essays followed and colours were eventually approved on 31 July.

A decision on the 1s3d was delayed. In June the PO requested essays in further shades contrasting as much as possible with the greens of the 7d and 9d. PO Supplies pointed out that it was essential for Harrisons to have an approved essay of the 1s3d by mid-August if the stamps were to be ready for 2 November. Some essays were too close in colour to the 9d, 1s6d, and the sea-green shade criticised by the PMG. Yet more essays were required, one in a shade, between those of the 7d and 9d, identified in the Stanley Gibbons colour guide as apple green, to which they drew the printers' attention. Harrisons noted that this was a difficult colour to print but if necessary special inks would be made up. The colour was still not satisfactory and Harrisons produced further essays in Winstone bottle Vert, Nickel, Blue, Jade, and Spectrum greens as well as plain green. After lengthy debate and re-essaying, the simple green was finally selected for the 1s3d which with the 9d was finally approved on 21 August; the stamps were duly issued on 2 November 1953.

Last values issued

At a meeting on 11 June it was intended that the 3d, 6d, 7d, 9d, 10d and 11d stamps would be in identical colours to the George VI issue. Debate on these was less protracted than for other values, but there was the usual 'nit-picking' over shades and the PMG complained, after the stamps had gone into production, that the colours of the 6d and 7d were not as deep as he expected. The PO envisaged issuing the 3d, 6d and 7d at the end of January 1954, and the 9d-11d at the end of March. Both dates were improved on and the stamps went on sale on 18 January and 8 February respectively. Two years and two days after her accession, the Elizabeth II low-value definitive series was finally completed.

Reception

Immediate press and public reactions to the stamps were generally favourable, although *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* of August 1953 had some reservations: George Knipe had 'a good conception of the simple kind of design which suits photogravure best [but] in the new 5d he has adopted flat tints which lack the vigour of solid colour', while Mary Adshead had 'not been very successful with the placing of the value, which seems to have been relegated to the only clear space left, and rather unbalances the design'.



Colour trials in numerous shades of green were produced for the 1s3d value

The verdict on Dulac's 1s however was that 'the whole design is smooth with all its components happily located'; as for Farrar Bell's design, 'we still get a thrill of pleasure whenever we look at the 2½d'. *The Philatelist* of February 1954 rhapsodised over 'the beauty of these charming designs' and the 'high standard of ... technical excellence achieved by the Postal Authorities', and in 1958 a senior PO official asked rhetorically: 'Could one wish for a finer central feature ... than the very lovely head which appears on our stamps today?'

Later their appeal waned. Wilding's portrait of The Queen, as retouched by Dulac and Farrar Bell, being described in *Stamp Collecting* in May 1970 as 'the tenderly glamourised drawing-room portrait of a débutante of the 1930s'. The Wilding definitives were replaced by a new series with the Arnold Machin head of The Queen from June 1967 to July 1968. They remained valid for postage, with other pre-decimal stamps, until demonetised from 1 March 1972.

But that was not their final demise. Knipe's design (5d–7d) was brought out of retirement for 20p, 26p, and 37p stamps in

Some of the issued stamps



'The Definitive Portrait' prestige book of 1998, and Marx's and Farrar Bell's 1½d and 2½d were reissued as 1st and 2nd class stamps in the 'A Gracious Accession' book of February 2002 to mark The Queen's Golden Jubilee.



1½d and 2½d reissued as
1st and 2nd class in 2002
Golden Jubilee prestige
stamp book

FIRST DAY OF ISSUE - WINDSOR
'FAMOUS
HAVE BEEN
THE REIGNS OF
OUR QUEENS'
CHURCHILL
1952
06.02.2002

Biographical notes

Enid Marx (1902–98), educated at Roedean, the Central School of Arts and Crafts, and the Royal College of Art Painting School, worked mainly in textile design and printing and book illustration. She designed posters for London Transport and served during the war as textiles expert to the Board of Trade furniture design panel. Although she submitted many designs, her only other issued stamps were the Christmas set of 1976.

Michael C Farrar Bell (1911–93) was the son of Mrs G K M Bell, a Vice President of the Royal Miniature Society, whose work inspired his design 'in the manner of a framed miniature portrait'. Educated at Harrow, he was best known as a designer of stained glass and for restoring the Great West Window in Bath Abbey. He painted inn signs, and designed Commonwealth reply coupons and vouchers for the Lord Mayor of London's Thanksgiving Fund. His Coronation and definitive stamps were followed by the 3d Salvation Army stamp of 1965 and stamps for a number of other countries.



Early designs



George T Knipe (born 1918) attended High Wycombe School of Art. He was trained in the photogravure process by Harrisons before the war and served in the Royal Artillery from 1939 to 1946. He rejoined the firm and in 1952 was employed as commercial layout artist and designer in their London office. He designed the much-praised Royal Silver Wedding 2½d stamp of 1948.



Mary Adshead (1904–95) learned watercolour painting from her father, and her mother imbued her with a love of flowers which she later expressed in much of her work. At the age of 17 she entered the Slade School of Fine Art. From the late 1920s the bulk of her career was devoted to murals, her last major work in this field being done in 1982. During her last decade her occasional exhibitions of watercolours met with warm acclaim. She designed the 2½d values of the 1949 UPU and 1957 Scout Jamboree sets and the 1951 2s6d and 5s high values.



Edmund Dulac (1882–1953) was born in France and started his career as an artist in 1904. He worked in Britain from 1907 and was naturalised in 1912. He was best known as a book illustrator but involved himself in a multitude of other areas of design. He first designed adhesive stamp labels for the Red Cross in 1914, and both definitive and special stamps for the PO from 1937 onwards. At his death he was perhaps the most respected of contemporary stamp designers.

Dorothy Wilding (1893–1976) had early ambitions to be an actress, dancer or painter, all thwarted by her family before she bought her first camera in 1909. In 1912 she was apprenticed as a retoucher in a Knightsbridge portrait studio, and in 1915 opened a studio of her own. A leading photographer of her day, she took the portraits of George VI and Queen Elizabeth used on British and numerous Commonwealth stamps. She retired in 1957 and her work remained almost forgotten until a major posthumous exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in 1991.

Sources

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