

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 35 Number 3

NOVEMBER 1997 • 85p

Bulletin

The Royal Golden Wedding
souvenir edition

1997

**Her Majesty The Queen
and HRH The Duke of
Edinburgh celebrate
their Golden Wedding
anniversary this month.**



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals

Late News Printers Harrison & Sons Ltd were acquired by De La Rue in February 1997. From 8 September the name Harrison & Sons Ltd has been superseded by De La Rue Security Print, a division of De La Rue International Limited. The new name will appear as a sheet margin imprint on future printings of definitive and special stamps.

Correction The illustration of the Windsor Castle stamp (October *Bulletin*, page 59) was wrongly captioned Caernarfon Castle. We regret any confusion caused; we hope to show the Caernarfon, Edinburgh and Carrickfergus Castle drawings by Mrs Madle in a future *Bulletin*.

Front cover photograph
Geoff Dann.

Issues Note some items are available only from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath, Belfast, Birmingham Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester Colchester, Coventry, Croydon Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter Gatwick Airport, Glasgow Gloucester, Grimsby, Guildford Harrogate, Leeds, Leicester Liverpool, London (Lombard Street, Trafalgar Square and Victoria Street), Manchester Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth Portsmouth, Southampton Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage Stratford-on-Avon, Truro, Windsor and York.

13 November

Issue Royal Golden Wedding Anniversary stamps and presentation pack and souvenir book; also 1997 Yearbook and Yearpack.



Please Note: the change of date of issue of these stamps and products, originally intended for issue on 7 October. We regret any inconvenience caused by the change

18 November

Issue 26p rust and 1st class NVI flame in sheets printed in gravure using EME cylinders. Printed by Harrison and Walsall respectively

18 November

Issue 10 x 1st NVI stamps flame colour printed in gravure using EME cylinders by Harrison and Walsall

20 November

Issue Royal Golden Wedding philatelic numismatic cover (postponed from 7 October)

24 November

Withdrawal 1996 Greetings Book reprint (issued 25 Nov 96).

1 December

Withdrawal Withdrawal Definitives - 1p, 2p, 4p, 5p, 6p, 10p, 30p, 31p, 37p, 39p, 43p, 50p, 63p, £1.00 printed by Enschedé with blue fluor and 20p & 26p printed by Harrisons using acid-etched cylinders. Also £1.50, £2, £3 & £5 Castle high values printed by Harrison

1 December

Withdrawal Country stamps N Ireland/Scotland/Wales 20p, 26p, 37p & 63p printed by Questa

31 December

Withdrawal Withdrawal 1st & 2nd class stamped envelopes (blue paper, first issued 1983) Note: Date of withdrawal from Bureau and philatelic outlets; will remain on sale at post offices until stocks exhausted.

Contents



David Gentleman has designed more stamps than any other British designer. William Aubrey Witham surveys a body of work which began 35 years ago this month **72**

The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, Royal London House, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Editor** JR Holman • **Price** 85p single copies from Collections, philatelic counters, and National Postal Museum • **Annual subscriptions** UK and Europe £9.50, rest of the world £13.50. Subscriptions should be sent to British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7. Available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, rest of world £21.75 • **Copyright** Unless copyright attributed to specific authors, all articles and features may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Requests to reproduce copyright articles should be sent to the Editor, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Design** by Robert Maude and Goodspeed Colourlink • **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119

Issues and withdrawals for November and December **66**

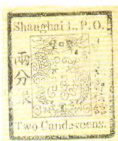
Royal Mail news Last definitives printed using computer technology; New stamp annual and album slipcases **68**

Stamp scene Postage Due and Slania study groups; Stampex report and Thematic preview **70**



Royal Golden Wedding
Daniel Cooke recalls November 1947 and the first stamps of The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh **79**

Autumn in Monaco
A philatelic principedom by James Mackay **82**



Deeside Connections
Wedding celebrations in the Highlands **84**

Robson Lowe James Negus remembers a philatelic star **86**

Royal Celebration
Golden Wedding stamps launched at British Library **88**



Shetland air mail 60th anniversary **90**

Graphite experiment
40th anniversary **92**

Competition Sponsored
by Omniphil: Win 1840 2d blue **94**

Royal Mail news Definitive update • NPM exhibitions • New stamp annual

Definitive News Readers are reminded that the **26p** rust (brown) and 1st class NVI flame (orange) printed in gravure using electro-mechanically engraved cylinders (EME) will go on philatelic sale from 18 November. Both are printed in sheets of 200 by Harrison (26p) or Walsall (1st NVI). In addition the 1st class stamp will also be available in books of 10, printed by both Harrison and Walsall. Stocks will go on sale at post offices and other outlets as supplies of earlier sheets and books are used up. These are not regarded as new issues by Royal Mail and no first day facilities will be offered. ●

Unadapted designs for 1972 Silver Wedding issue.

Permanent Displays include the Poste Haste! exhibition of postal vehicles and artefacts, the famous Reginald M Phillips collection of British Victorian stamps, the All-World Stamps and thematic collections. The Museum, in King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP, is near St Paul's Cathedral and underground station. Open Monday-Friday, 09.30-16.30. Enquiries: 0171 776 3636.



National Postal Museum Visitors to the Museum can see three special exhibitions: 'Golden & Glorious' - 1953 Coronation and 1972 Silver Wedding issues (see October *Bulletin*), 'Etchings into Stamps' - the work of Terence Millington, designer of the Post Offices stamps issued in August, and 'The Mediterranean' - stamps from the collection of HM The Queen. The Terence Millington display comprises some 40 pieces of his work, ranging from still lifes to buildings, including the four post offices shown on the stamps. Prints of many of the etchings on display can be ordered through the Museum shop. The Mediterranean exhibition includes material from Gibraltar, Malta, Crete, Ionian Islands, Cyprus and Long Island and Mount Athos; it will remain on show until 17 December. ●

Friends of the National Postal Museum The Association of Friends of the NPM will hold its annual general meeting at the Staff Hall, Mount Pleasant, London EC1 on 29 November. Souvenir covers are being produced. The Friends arrange a varied programmes of events, including visits to museums, stamp printers and other places of interest to philatelists and postal historians, as well as producing many interesting souvenir items.

The Association has recently produced four postcards reproducing photographs of the new Royal Mail sorting centre in north London (see August *Bulletin*) taken by its Vice-Chairman, Cyril Macey. They are supplied with a fifth, card, published by an Association member, showing one of the special electric trains used at the sorting centre. The Association offers its usual Christmas Gift Package of a special rate two-year subscription - an ideal gift for any philatelist or postal historian. The annual subscription

Colchester Postshop The Postshop has recently moved and is now located at 67-70 North Hill, Colchester CO1 1PX. The Wales & West Special Handstamp Centre in Cardiff now has a new phone number - 01222 392486. ●

for UK members normally costs £15, overseas £20. For the festive season only the two year subscription is just £25 UK, £35 overseas - a saving of £5. On joining the new Friend will receive material produced since 1 April 1997 - a bumper package of NPM postcards, Spring and Autumn issues of *Cross Post* magazine, and the Museum's *Review* for 1996. New material issued up to 31 March 1999 will be despatched as it becomes available. To ensure delivery of the bumper package by Christmas, please order by 30 November. Don't forget to clearly state name and address of the person you are nominating. •

Blue Peter Stamp Annual A new stamp album - with a difference -

is now available, aimed at young collectors. The

annual, designed to house all the 1998 special stamps, is packed with fascinating facts on all the stamp subjects. It also contains a year diary, sections for useful names, addresses and notes, and on general stamp collecting. The annual will make an ideal birthday or Christmas gift.

Oliver Macfarlane, Editor of the *Blue Peter* TV programme comments: 'Just like generations of viewers before, children today are very interested in the special stamps issued throughout the year by Royal Mail. *Blue Peter* viewers have even designed postage stamps. Nowadays children are looking for new and exciting ways to collect stamps. I think the *Blue Peter Stamp Annual* offers the ideal solution!' •



All enquiries about membership, postcards, souvenir covers and Christmas Gift Packages to: Ray Pottle, Friends of the NPM, PO Box 40, Uckfield TN22 2SP, Telephone 01825 766546 (enclose stamped addressed envelope or international reply coupon with written enquiries).

Above The annual, published by The Yellow Submarine Publishing, is available from the British Philatelic Bureau, post shops, bookshops, high street stationers and stamp dealers, price £9.99.

Royal Mail Album Slipcases Luxury padded PVC slipcases are

available for the range of Royal Mail albums - First

Day Covers (maroon colour), Presentation

Packs (brown), Postcards (tan),

Stamp Album (red), Universal

binder (dark brown). Each slipcase

is covered and lined in matching PVC with thumbcut on open edge.

They provide protection for your

albums. Slipcases are available at £9

each postpaid direct from: Complete

Collections Ltd, 8 Teasel Way, West

Moors, Ferndown BH22 0PQ, tele-

phone 01202 872315. Payment may be

made by cheque/postal order to

'Complete Collections Ltd', or by Visa

or Mastercard quoting the relevant

card number and expiry date. •



Stamp scene New study group • Thematic exhibition • Stampex report

Postage Due Mail Study Group Postage Due mail is one of the most complex fields of postal history. Now for the first time there is a study group devoted to it, bringing together collectors and researchers from all over the world to share relevant information. The Group's scope is worldwide postage due mail - meaning anything posted without full prepayment, from the time prepayment became usual to the present. The areas of study include: postage rates; postal regulations affecting eligibility for certain rates, and breaches of them; tax and postage due calculation methods; postal markings of all kinds relating to postage due; procedures for handling insufficiently prepaid mail; and use and cancellation of adhesives in the collection of postage due. At this stage, it is not proposed to include the purely philatelic study of postage due stamps. A quarterly journal contains articles of lasting value, at all levels of specialisation; questions and answers, details of useful books and articles published elsewhere, etc. The Editor is Michael Furfie, author of *British Postage Due Mail 1914-1971*, reviewed here in March 1994. Annual subscription is £8 UK, £9 Europe, £11 rest of world. Enquiries: Peter Williams, 41 Manvers Road, Childwall, Liverpool L16 3N. •

Full details from: Brian Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches SM5 4PQ. Enquiries about the exhibition: Brian Sole, 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, Esher KT10 0QG, Tel. 01372 467652.

Thematica II 97 The second of this year's Thematica exhibitions will be held at Carisbrooke Hall, 63 Seymour Street, London W2 on 21-22 November. The venue is near Marble Arch tube station (Central line). Opening hours are 10.30-20.00 on the 21st, 10.00-17.30 on 22nd. The exhibition will include the Friends' Christmas Stamp Fayre, thematic societies will provide information tables and displays, and a Children's Corner. In the Dealers Hall visitors will find dealers in thematic stamps and covers and postal history from all over Britain and Europe, with material to suit collectors at all levels. Admission is free and prizes will be awarded to 25 lucky visitors. Meals, refreshments and bar available. The exhibition is supported by the Friends of Thematica - membership costs from £20. •

Slania Study Group Rupert Nelson, a devotee of stamps engraved by Czeslaw Slania has sent details of the Slania Study Group which may be of interest to fellow *Bulletin* readers. The Group's interesting journal, *Close-Up*, reports new stamps by Slania and includes articles on past work, exhibitions, etc. The January/March 1994 journal reports on an exhibition of Slania stamps in Lisbon, Portugal (25 January-13 March 1994) for which an exhibition catalogue was published. This was stated to be available, price 5000 Portuguese escudos, from: Margarida Canto Moniz, Fundacao Calouste Gulbenkian, Centro de Arte Moderna, Av. Berna, No. 45-A, 1093 Lisboa Cedex, Portugal. The address for the Czeslaw Slania Study Group is given in the journal as: PO Box 1382, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53201, USA.

Mr Nelson also submitted a copy of an article on Slania published in *Linn's Stamp News*, 30 June 1997. This states that he still works 10-18 hours a day and that many collectors enjoyed meeting the great man at the Pacific 97 exhibition in San Francisco earlier this year. Slania was guest of the Swedish PO and spent time engraving his 97th stamp on their stand. He was warmly greeted by members of his Study Group which held a meeting during the exhibition.

Slania engraved the 1982 Maritime Heritage, 1984 Mail Coaches, 1987 Victorian Britain and 1995 Communications stamps for Royal Mail. Features on his work were published in this *Bulletin* in August and September 1995. ●



Autumn Stampex The excellent displays of British material ranged from rare 17th century mail, exhibited by Gavin Littaur and Prof Barrie Jay, to George V stamps. Prof Jay's exhibit won him the Silver Mailcoach award. The only disappointment was the lack of George VI and Elizabeth II material – just as worthy of study and display. Alan Sabey's exhibit on the Empire Exhibition included the imperf 1925 1½d stamp, shown here in February (page 180). Exhibits of Edward VII stamps, proofs and essays, by G B Horton and Lady Mairi Bury, were most impressive; Mr Horton received the GB Philatelic Society Hassan Shaïda Trophy. Our congratulations to *Bulletin* contributor Douglas Myall on the award of the National Postal Museum Medal for the 2nd edition of his *Complete Deegam Machin Handbook*, and to Mr A Eskenzi who received the Royal Mail Trophy. It is pleasing to record awards for books on postmarks and postal history, by R Broomfield, H Wilson, and the Bristol Philatelic Society, reviewed here in recent months. Dr Alan Huggins, the Chairman of the Jury, noted the increased number of exhibits this year, particularly of GB which 'in many cases contained some really outstanding material'. He concluded, 'All in all an encouraging demonstration that interest in competitive philately is being maintained in the UK which has the greatest number of exhibits qualified for entry at international level after the USA and Germany.'

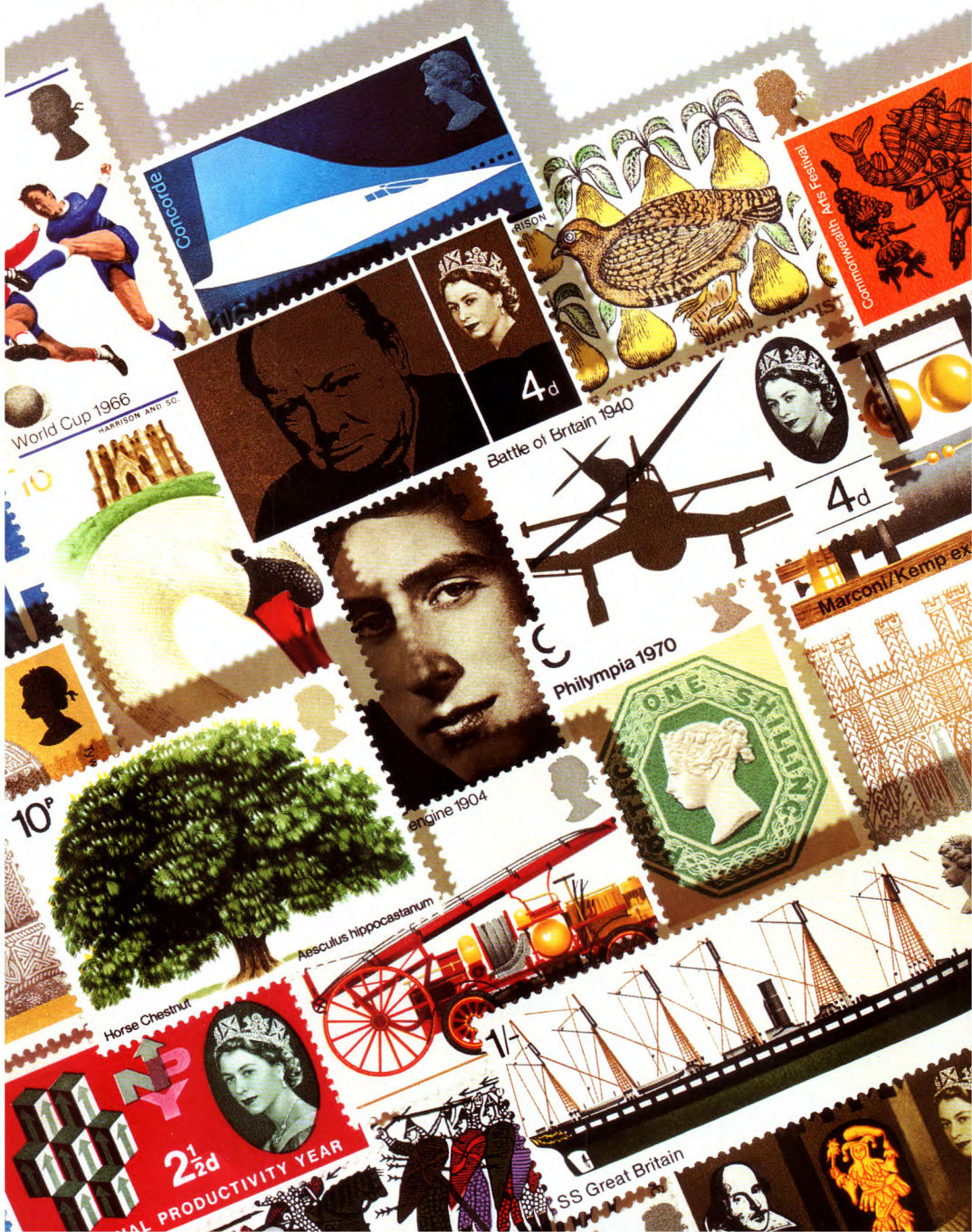
The dates for Spring and Autumn Stampex next year are 25 February-1 March and 6-10 October. ●

Railway Letter Stamps The North Yorkshire Moors Railway issued a 25p stamp on 12 August to mark the 60th anniversary of Stanier 'Black 5' locomotive No 45428 Eric Treacy. This comprises the 25p stamp showing the locomotive, issued September 1995, with commemorative overprint. The original stamp was illustrated here in September 1995, page 13. The locomotive is named after a former Bishop of Wakefield, a noted railway enthusiast. The stamp, printed in sheets of nine, is available at face value, postage 30p UK, 80p overseas. Orders and enquiries: NYMR Letter Service, 5 Tiber View, Brinsworth, Rotherham S60 5EA. ●



Shown here is the new 25p stamp issued by the Mid-Hants Railway in September. It was printed in sheets of nine and is available at face value plus postage from Postal Co-ordinator, Mid-Hants Railway, Aylesford SO24 9JG. See Commemorative Covers Review for details of first day covers.

David Gentleman Britain's most prolific stamp designer, by William Aubrey Witham



DAVID GENTLEMAN has designed more stamps than any other designer of British stamps. His output of 88 British stamps (99 when designs in conjunction with Rosalind Dease are included) started 35 years ago this month. In addition he has designed no fewer than 29 stamps for the Republic of Nauru in Central Pacific. He is not a philatelist and yet he is arguably Britain's most important philatelic designer. He has pioneered much in stamp design, laying foundations for future designers, richly deserving the accolade of Royal Designer for Industry (RDI) awarded by the Royal Society of Arts. His influence is felt to this day.



Education, training and achievements Born in 1930, David Gentleman was educated at Hertford Grammar School, moving up to St Albans Art School before going on to the Royal College of Art where he gained his ARCA and taught for some time. Since then he has worked in illustration, design, print-making, watercolour painting as well as writing and illustrating, *David Gentleman's Britain* (with over 450 illustrations) and other titles in the same series. He has produced a series of lithographs of architectural landscape subjects including castles and great houses of England. He has held many exhibitions of his watercolours and travelled extensively in the Central Pacific, India and East Africa. The scale of his work ranges from the miniature art of postage stamp design to massive projects such as the 360 foot mural in Charing Cross Underground.

A designer of exceptional talent, Gentleman was the first recipient of the Reginald M Phillips Award for postage stamp design, receiving the gold medal in 1969 and once again in 1979 for his British Stamp Designs from 1974 to 1978. Photograph courtesy of Gibbons Stamp Monthly.

Stamp issues – early policy Although 'special' stamps were issued from time to time, these were, until 1963, confined to one or two issues each year. There were in fact only three special issues between 1952 and 1959 compared with the eight or nine issues per year now!

Tony Benn's contribution to philately It was not until Anthony Wedgwood Benn MP (Tony Benn) served as Postmaster General from 1964 to 1966 that a new policy was enacted. Mr Benn had invited designers and artists to submit ideas and suggestions for future stamp issues with a view to broadening the range of subjects while at the same time maintaining or improving high standards. Gentleman, who had already designed three stamps (National Productivity Year, 1962) was one of the artists who replied.

In the resulting album of ideas commissioned by Tony Benn, Gentleman included alternatives to the Monarch's head on stamps, such as 'Royal Arms' or the inscription 'Great Britain' or even 'UK'; also a larger size (41 x 30mm) for a more sympathetic proportion to improve pictorial illustration and a silhouette monarch's head for a less intrusive presentation. Most of these ideas were adopted and are still in use today.

Of the designer's work for the Post Office, Tony Benn said: 'David Gentleman's contribution to the development of our stamp policy was absolutely central to its success. He responded at once to my request for designers to bring their ideas forward and I commissioned him personally to produce an album showing what could be done.'

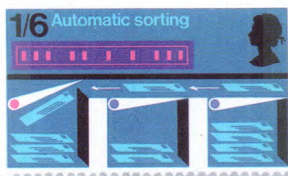
The result was brilliant and I gave one copy of this album to Harold Wilson who was captivated by the designs, and with his blessing I took the other copy to Buckingham Palace for my audience with the Queen.

No other stamp designer can have commanded the attention of the Monarch personally for so long and this led directly to the acceptance of the much more imaginative postage stamps towards which David Gentleman has made such a contribution.

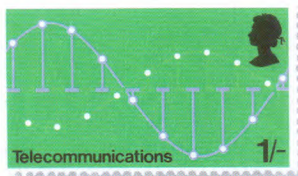
But quite apart from his work, David was a delightful person with whom to work, and my admiration for him has grown over the years.¹

What do we mean by design? Design is really a problem-solving discipline. This is true of engineering as well as of graphic design. But a design problem, unlike a mathematical one, has many possible answers and the designer has to find the optimum solution. In stamp design the suitability of the subject for graphic interpretation and the ability of the designer to produce work of clarity and precision that will withstand reduction to a mere square inch or so is vital. Although, as David Gentleman puts it, 'It is not simply a question of scale; things can be beautiful and well designed or ill considered muddles at any scale.'²

Some subjects are of mind-numbing vagueness and need painstaking research to reach either a satisfactory solution or a 'best compromise'.



The illustrations for a stamp are required to communicate the subject to the viewer with little room for any explanation other than a title. Gentleman succeeds by simplification in his Post Office Technology set.



Difficult subjects for stamp design

Gentleman has tackled difficult subjects and yet produced graphic solutions of great merit. The Post Office Technology issue is a good example. The National Giro, Automatic Letter Sorting and Telecommunications

stamps of 1969 were subjects for which solutions do not readily spring to mind. Ask yourself how you would illustrate these, if you had not seen Gentleman's designs? His Automatic Sorting stamp (1s6d value) clearly conveys the basic principle of an extremely complex electronic machine, showing the gates automatically triggered by the phosphor banding of the stamps. Here, the part represents the whole. Likewise, Gentleman reduced the Telecommunications stamp (1s value) to a pair of sine waves to symbolise the many hundreds of messages transmitted electronically in a telecommunications system. Symbolic 'telegraph poles' join the base line. The design was cleverly arranged to appear as a pair of continuous sinusoidal wave forms in a se-tenant strip of two or more stamps.

Art versus design There are many examples of both art and design in postage stamps the world over. The Automatic Sorting Machine stamp shown above is clearly a design because it translates a vague concept into an understandable piece of engineering. Art, on the other hand, is the spontaneous expression of an artist's feeling for a subject. There are numerous examples of famous works of art reproduced at stamp size – the design element in these being reduced to the selection of typefaces and the placing of The Queen's head and value digits. To sum up, 'The Designer,' Gentleman says, 'has to translate a complicated, hazily-defined and verbal subject into visual terms which must be concentrated, interesting and self-explanatory.'³

Changing the Monarch's image! The three sets by David Gentleman which followed his 1962 National Productivity Year were the Lifeboat Conference, 1963, four of the five Shakespeare Festival set of 1964 and the Churchill Issue of 1965. Gentleman had argued that The Queen's head,

based on the three-quarters portrait by Dorothy Wilding, was far too large and uncompromising to sit comfortably in the frame alongside the stamp illustration. Accordingly, he progressively reduced the size over his next three commissions. But he was to go further, and reverting to the idea of a silhouetted profile head originally presented in his album of 100 designs, he adapted the coinage head which was to make its first appearance in the 'Landscape' issue 1966 in designs by Leonard Rosoman. Later that year, Gentleman reduced the size of the silhouette still further in the 900th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings set. This gave rise to Prince Philip's reference at the time to 'David Gentleman, the Head Shrinker'.



The Queen's (Wilding) portrait in Gentleman's Lifeboat issue compared with the 'shoulders eliminated' Queen's head in his Shakespeare set and the head reduced to the base of the neck on the Churchill pair. In 1966, he reduced the size of the silhouette still further in the 900th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings set, right.

'Commoners' on stamps In Gentleman's Shakespeare Festival set, the portrait of a 'commoner' was to appear for the first time on the same stamp as The Queen's portrait causing consternation in some quarters. There were, however, no serious consequences. Indeed since then persons below the rank of a Peer of the Realm have appeared on British stamps including Churchill 1965, Robert Burns 1966 and Emmeline Pankhurst 1968 to name only three. Shakespeare's image was based on the Droeshout portrait from the centre-piece of the title page of the first folio (published in 1623, seven years after his death) but shown in reverse so that the poet appears to face towards the centre – a nice touch – to balance with the Wilding portrait of The Queen. The stage-sets Gentleman used to illustrate the stamps were typical of those of the 16th century used in Shakespeare's best-known plays, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with Puck and Bottom (3d); *Twelfth Night* with Feste the clown (6d); *Romeo and Juliet* – the Balcony Scene (1s3d) and *Henry V* – the Eve of Agincourt (1s6d).

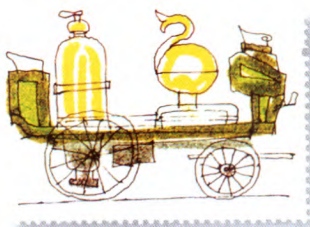


Art and design combined Art and design were combined in Gentleman's beautiful 'Good King Wenceslas' 1973 Christmas set in which the problem of communicating the theme was cleverly resolved. Gentleman said of this set 'In some ways the designs with their cut-away walls and unreal medieval perspectives did make certain demands on the imagination.'⁴ Clearly, the design element, the placing of the cut-away buildings and the position of the figures had to be decided before the artistic rendering of the landscape could be started. The cold blue colouring which predominates in

The 'modern medieval' style of Christmas 1973 borrowed heavily from the simplistic style which typified 13th century art, including a peculiar perspective which contrived to look both inside and outside a building simultaneously! Two stamps in the set show this particularly well.



the five 3p values carrying the theme convey the idea of snow which is deep and crisp and even, as in the carol. There is a kind of ‘cardboard castle’ effect which is particularly apt in Gentleman’s interpretation but the same effect in his earlier Prince of Wales Investiture set (1969) was perhaps less appropriate. The Wenceslas set with its landscapes, castles and figures, tells the story clearly and with great charm – an impressive solution to the problem of communicating a given theme.



Fire Service issue Early sketches featured fire engine components like the nozzle of the power hose. Fire engines from different periods over the 200 year span were developed as artwork for approval.

Who decides the theme? Speaking on the choice of theme Gentleman said, ‘...stamps never begin with a designer seeing something pretty and thinking: that would make a good stamp... A new issue usually starts with an idea for a theme, perhaps (from) within the Post Office, or by a member of the public or by a public institution which would like its own stamp.’⁵

The development of a theme from briefing to finished solution is known from the publication of the unadopted designs for Gentleman’s 1974 Fire Service Issue. The PO brief required a set of four stamps to mark the 200th anniversary of the 1774 Fire Prevention Act. Gentleman describes how with little to go on, he set about obtaining books, photographs, brochures and library references until there were so many possible solutions that he had to prepare a series of preliminary sketches to decide which ideas would make the most meaningful set of stamps. These sketches featured fire engine components like the fire-bell or the nozzle of the power-hose or the familiar fireman’s helmet. Then he drew up sketches showing fire engines from different periods over the 200 year span. These appeared to be the optimum solution and he went ahead with artwork for approval.

Designs without perspective The final adopted designs showed the fire-engines in side-elevation in the manner of engineering projections, without perspective, reasoning that to show the historic spoked wheels of these



Liverpool and Manchester Railway The first stamp shows the *Rocket* approaching the Moorish Arch, Liverpool; the second has the carriages passing through the Olive Mount Cutting; the third shows a carriage and cattle truck crossing Chat Moss; the fourth has the horsebox and coach-carrying truck near Bridgewater Canal and the final stamp has the goods truck and mailcoach at Manchester.

fire-engines in perspective would have produced an overlapping confusion of wheels and spokes. The designs show only the two nearside wheels. Until this is pointed out, one is hardly aware that the farside wheels are missing. The simplification is well justified adding force to the belief that perspective is seldom necessary in miniature work.

Other designs by Gentleman in which perspective is omitted include *British Ships* 1969, *Concorde* 1969 (9d and 186d values), 50th Anniversary of the BBC 1972, *Social Reformers* 1976, *Christmas* 1977 and 1989.

Liverpool and Manchester Railway Early railway details are cleverly shown in this se-tenant strip of five stamps by Gentleman in 1980. The stamps join together to form a train pulled by Stevenson's *Rocket*. The dress and stance of the driver and fireman suggest a uniform based on the dress of a 'gentleman' of that era. The standards provided for different classes of passenger are shown respectively with plush coaches for first class, followed by austere carriages for second class with the third class in open trucks behind!

One stamp depicts the early use of the railway to carry a road vehicle. It shows a horse and carriage complete with passengers, driver and footman. The horse is in an open-sided truck, the sheep are in a bar-sided truck. Carrying road vehicles by rail is therefore at least 160 years old!

Luggage was carried outside on the roof on these early trains, following the custom of the road coach. The first-class carriage has a guard sitting on the roof, while third class passengers do not even warrant a roof, unlike the cattle which at least are spared this indignity! The last stamp in the strip shows a goods wagon (complete with stowaway) followed by the mail coach which has a guard seated on an outside dicky-seat at the rear. How did he keep his top hat on?

Unusually, Gentleman uses perspective, though minimal, on the carriages and some of the background details in this set. However, unlike the *Fire Engine* set discussed earlier, he does indicate the carriage wheels at the far side in perspective and he does show the width of each carriage. Likewise the background farmhouse on the fourth stamp and the double arch in the distance on the final stamp in the strip are each rendered with some perspective. In this particular instance perspective is well justified since it suggests an appropriate 'landscape' background to the train, carefully worked out so that every stamp has an appropriate background. Few British stamps communicate such a wealth of information.

Rosalind Dease 1928-97

As this issue was being passed for press, we learned the sad news of the death of Rosalind Dease. With her husband, David Gentleman, she designed 11 of the special stamps of 1965 and, on her own, a further 20 stamps issued between 1968 and 1974. Describing her work on the Inigo Jones set, she wrote in the *Bulletin* of August 1973: 'Designing stamps is really only one quarter pure creative work. The rest of the time is taken up in preliminary research, committee meetings and production supervision. Besides being a designer one has to be a public relations expert, a technician and a scholar...'



Social Reformers 1976 Gentleman's Social Reformers set of 1976 might be said to suffer from its own excellence. Its theme is the squalor and misery which existed before the work of the great social reformers. The feeling is conveyed in colour. What could be more appropriate than black to commemorate Thomas Hepburn's efforts to improve the conditions of miners hewing coal. The grimy colour of the other three stamps in the set is again fitting comment on the conditions which the reformers Robert Owen (10p), Lord Shaftesbury (11p) and Elizabeth Fry (13p) struggled to improve.

Gentleman's mastery of symbolism is well illustrated in each of these designs. Hands are featured in all the stamps. Hands hold a pick in the hewing of coal. A child's hands thread a needle and are seen through the unguarded machinery in the 10p value. A small boy's hand holds a brush in the 11p chimney cleaning stamp symbolising the awful practice of sending children clambering through the flues to brush away soot. Shackled hands grasp the grimy prison bars in the 13p stamp. These disembodied hands were a unique contribution to stamp design. A further innovation can be seen in a block of nine of the unguarded machinery (10p) stamps which produce complete assemblies of drive belt and pulleys, not obvious in the single stamp. Such configurations interest some collectors.

One can imagine a certain trepidation among the selection committee knowing that here was a set that might be seen less sympathetically by a public who in the main simply buy stamps to post letters.

The Author William Aubrey Witham, recently retired, was born in 1929. An artist and former professional engineering designer and inventor in his earlier career, he later became responsible for graphic design, marketing and public relations with the international ITT Controls and ultimately Johnson Controls International. He is a natural artist, whose great grandfather Joseph Witham was a maritime artist with work in many maritime museum collections in the UK and USA, and grandfather Walter Witham was a landscape painter. He was formerly a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and member of the Institution of Engineering Designers. In the late 1950s, he founded the National Committee on Engineering Design Education, submitting recommendations to the then Prime Minister, Harold MacMillan. He exhibited and sold many of his paintings in aid of church charities throughout Scotland as a member of the Layman's Building Fund under the chairmanship of the Earl of Elgin.

Pioneer artist and designer It might be argued that designers who succeeded David Gentleman have produced equally good work, but it has to be remembered that Gentleman led the way and did not have the advantage of hindsight which they now have, nor have they had to worry about the stamp sizes and proportions or the monarch's image and the many details that have since been

established because of Gentleman's earlier work.

As a professional designer, he would agree that any 'final' design at best represents only one of many possible solutions in a methodology of divergence which is the essence of design. But let us finish in Gentleman's own words: (The search for a solution) '...creates a welter of abandoned sketches, but unfortunately I don't know of any effective short cut. One would have thought that with some hard and careful thought at the outset, it would be easy to decide clearly and logically what was going to work, and then simply sit down and do it... Instead I need to go through a gradual process of refinement to find out which ideas will best serve the purpose, and abandon everything that doesn't' ⁶ ●

References

1 Letter to author from Tony Benn, MP

2-5 *The Design and Production of Postage Stamps*, David Gentleman, Royal Society of Arts, 1974

6 David Gentleman, notes on the 1989 Christmas issue (*Ely Cathedral, Royal Mail Special Stamps Yearbook* 1989)

The Royal Golden Wedding Daniel E Cooke looks back to November 1947



1947 Royal Visit stamps:

South Africa, Basutoland (now Lesotho) and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

Below Royal Tour New Zealand (photo Hutton Getty Picture Collection Ltd).



THE WORLD WAS A VERY DIFFERENT PLACE back in 1947 but for HRH The Princess Elizabeth, Heiress Presumptive, it was a very special year indeed. On 1 February together with her parents, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth and her younger sister,

The Princess Margaret, she sailed from Portsmouth aboard HMS *Vanguard* and 16 days later The King was the first reigning British sovereign to set foot on the soil of the Union of South Africa. Special stamps were issued on 17 February, Princess Elizabeth appearing on the 3d (sg 113) with her sister. The only other time she would appear on a South African stamp would be as Queen on the Coronation issue of 1953 (143). The 1947 Royal Tour was long and arduous but deemed a great success in all the cities and towns it included. Basutoland (Lesotho) issued a set of four stamps with the Princesses appearing on two (34 & 35). On 1 April Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) issued only two stamps, one with The Princesses (62) but following the Royal Tour, on 8 May, issued a belated four stamp set for 'Victory' with one portraying The Princess Elizabeth (66). The Tour started and ended in Cape Town and just before it ended The Princess celebrated her 21st birthday with rumours abounding that the 26 year old Lieutenant Mountbatten (formerly Prince Philippos

of Greece) would suddenly turn up at her side. He did not. At the end of a busy day General Smuts presented her with the 'Coming of Age Diamonds'. Earlier her historic and emotional broadcast had been heard throughout the Empire including the words: 'I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great Imperial Family to which we all belong. But I shall not have strength to carry out this resolution alone unless you join in it with me, as I now invite you to do; I know that your support will be unfailingly given. God help me to make good my vow, and God bless all of you who are willing to share it.' Across the world, Newfoundland issued a 4c stamp for the occasion (sg 293) having already issued stamps honouring the young Princess as early as 1932 and 1938 (214 & 270).

The Princess in her own heart knew that the young man she loved intended to be at her side to support her in all her future tasks.

Prince Philippos was born in the modest Royal Greek residence of 'Mon Repos' (confiscated from his cousin King Konstantine II by the Greek government in 1997), on the island of Corfu on 10 June 1921. His father was Prince Andrew, youngest brother of King Konstantine I and fourth in line to the throne. His mother was before her marriage HSH Princess Alice of Battenberg whose father was created the first Marquess of Milford Haven



Above Royal Visit stamps - Canada (1951 & 1957), Australia & New Zealand (1953-4). Canada and Australia wedding stamps.

Below British wedding slogan postmark (courtesy Lionel Jones).

in 1917. Both Princess Elizabeth and her fiancé were great great grandchildren of Queen Victoria. The Greek Royal Family went into exile from 1922 until 1936 and Prince Philippos lived near Paris taking holidays with his relatives in England, Germany and Romania and later back in Corfu. He was sent to Germany to be educated by Dr Kurt Hahn at Salem until the nazi régime expelled Hahn who set up at Gordonstoun in Scotland. His uncle, Lord Louis Mountbatten, took a great interest in his upbringing and suggested he join the Royal Navy. Although they would have met at many earlier family gatherings, the Princess's first recollection of meeting the man she was to marry was when she was just 13 years old. The 18 year old lieutenant acted as an escort to her and her sister when they visited the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth. Some eight years later on 9 July 1949 The King and Queen announced the engagement and the whole population looked forward to the greatest communal celebration since those of VE and VJ Days which had been tinged with sadness for loved ones lost. The Royal Wedding promised to be an outpouring of sheer joy and a beginning of an end to the days of austerity and sacrifice. The Royal Family were sensitive to the sacrifices suffered by the population and most of the costs were to be met from savings made from the Civil List when there had been very little State entertaining. The Privy Council Meeting which had to formally approve the Marriage included a Canadian Minister, the High Commissioners for Australia and New Zealand and a former Chief Justice of The Union of South Africa.

The young couple's first official engagement in the company of The King & Queen was not until 9 November when they escorted them to the Remembrance Day Service at The Cenotaph, both wearing their military uniforms.

The Wedding Day had been set for 20 November. The bridesmaids had been named: HRH The Princess Margaret, HRH Princess Alexandra of Kent, Lady Caroline Montague-Douglas-Scott, Lady Mary Cambridge, Lady Elizabeth Lambart, The Hon Pamela Mountbatten, The Hon Margaret Elphinstone, The Hon Diana Bowes-Lyon. The pages were to be TRH Prince William of Gloucester and Prince Michael of Kent, with the Marquess of Milford Haven as groomsman (best man). The bridal gown was designed by Norman Hartnell and made at his salon in Bruton Street near the Princess's birthplace.

Although not obliged to do so, Lieutenant Mountbatten had given up his position in line to the Greek throne along with his title and nationality in order to become officially British for his career within the Royal Navy. On the eve of the wedding,



George VI created his future son-in-law; HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, Earl of Merioneth, Baron Greenwich and a Knight Commander of The Most Noble Order of the Garter. The morning of 20 November 1947 was grey but dry and was to be greatly brightened by military uniforms and the sight of 2000 guests on their way to Westminster Abbey. These included representatives of the Royal families of Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Spain and Yugoslavia.

The first procession to leave the Palace was that of Queen Elizabeth with the principal bridesmaid Princess Margaret, greeted by heartfelt cheering. Anticipation mounted until the appearance of the Irish State Coach carrying King George proudly escorting his eldest daughter to her wedding. The beautiful young Princess wore her Hartnell gown of rich ivory Duchesse satin with the white roses of York embroidered on the satin, silk and tulle, encrusted with crystals and pearls along a 15 yard train. The Princess chose at the last moment to wear the 'Crown Pearls' which had belonged to Queen Anne and Queen Caroline, Consort to George II. Her veil was crowned with the Hanoverian Diamond Tiara Fringe set in 1830 from brilliants inherited from George III.

Unfortunately no British special stamps were issued to mark this historic day although a special slogan postmark was used 20-30 November (a few offices jumped the gun and introduced the slogan on 19 November). Australia however issued a special stamp (SG 222) portraying The Princess and this year reproduced it for The Queen's 71st Birthday (SG 1691). It has taken 50 years for their wedding portrait, by Court photographer Baron, to appear on British stamps. The Royal Couple first appeared on British stamps in 1972 (SG 916/7) to commemorate their silver wedding. (In 1948 138 stamps were issued for the silver wedding of The King and Queen by GB and Empire countries). The first Royal wedding stamps issued in Britain were not until 1973 (SG 941/2) for the marriage of Princess Anne to Captain Mark Phillips, followed in 1981 (1160/1) for The Prince of Wales and Lady Diana Spencer and 1986 (1333/4) for Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson. In retrospect, perhaps not a good idea!

In 1951 the Royal Couple undertook a tour of the Empire on behalf of The King and Queen but while in Kenya news of the King's unexpected death reached them. The Princess returned home as HM Queen Elizabeth II. Many stamps were issued for the Coronation in 1953 but none showing the Duke of Edinburgh. Later that year the Commonwealth Tour was resumed and New Zealand and Australia issued stamps showing the Royal Couple (SG 722;274). During the past 50 years The Queen and her Consort have undertaken innumerable tours; The Queen has appeared on the stamps of countries as diverse as Brazil (SG 1253), Brunei (192/5), Ethiopia (601/3) and Iran (1223/4), and the Duke on issues from Ascension (SG 222), St Helena (334) and Tristan da Cunha (109/12). They have appeared on stamps commemorating their tour of the Caribbean, 1966 and for their silver wedding in 1972 and silver jubilee in 1977. As well as the four British stamps for their Golden Wedding there are many other attractive issues from around the world.



Wedding balcony scene
on 1997 St Helena Golden
Wedding stamp (one of a
pair).

**Below British 1972 Silver
Wedding stamp**



Autumn in Monaco By James Mackay

From 28 to 30 November Monaco will be hosting a prestigious international philatelic exhibition celebrating the 80th anniversary of the princely philatelic collection and the 60th anniversary of the world's oldest philatelic bureau. What better way can there be of dispelling those blues at the onset of winter than a trip to the Riviera and a few days browsing through stamps and postal history on show, as well as the opportunity to visit the stands of the dealers and philatelic bureaux taking part in this great gathering.

The exhibition is being staged in the Stamp and Coin Museum which was only opened a year ago, in custom-built premises at Fontvieilles-Terrasses, on land reclaimed from the sea. This handsome museum, representing the most advanced technology for the care and conservation of philatelic and numismatic material, is close to the western end of the principality. Accommodation in Monaco itself tends to be rather expensive and most visitors will probably prefer to stay at a hotel in Nice (whether regular daily flights from Paris and England make travel very convenient). From Nice you can take the train the Monte Carlo some 15 miles away, although the bus which takes the vertiginously scenic coast road is much more interesting, and you can alight at Fontvieille, close by the Museum and Exhibition venue. There is no frontier formalities between France and Monaco; the only



Prince Rainier
(Rex Features, London)

sure way that you will be aware of having crossed into another country is the colour of the mail-boxes - yellow in France and bright orange in Monaco!

Monaco's postal history dates back to the Middle Ages, but with the construction of the Grand Corniche (1806-13) communications with France were considerably improved. Manuscript postal markings are known from 1732 and the first handstamp from 1762. French stamps were in use from 1849 till

1851 when those of Sardinia were substituted. Following the creation of the kingdom of Italy, Monaco once more came under the French sphere of influence and French stamps were again used, until 1885 when distinctive Monegasque stamps were introduced.

From the outset stamps formed an important part of the principality's revenue (the world-famous Casino, of course, being the main source), and it is significant that Monaco was the first country in the world to establish a full-scale philatelic bureau, in November 1937. Despite wartime restrictions, a full mail-order service to overseas clients was instituted in 1942, and some of the original customers are still getting their stamps and covers from the bureau.

The nucleus of the Museum was the incomparable collection of the Hereditary Princes of Monaco. Interestingly, this had its beginnings at the turn of the century due to the interest of an



Monaco stamps promoting the international stamp exhibition.



Monaco stamps showing Prince Rainier and the new museum and the villa Miraflores (1987).

English clergyman, the Revd G G Barber, who had amassed a fine collection of the classic stamps and forerunners of Monaco. On his death in 1917 Prince Albert purchased the collection and thus the present state collection dates from that period. Prince Louis II encouraged further research into Monaco's rich postal history and made substantial purchases which enabled the government to acquire the collection of Albin Harnisch which was extremely comprehensive for the period from 1885 to 1891.

Prince Rainier himself has taken a keen interest in the growth of the collection and established the first postal museum, inaugurated in 1950, with H M Gamerding as curator. The collection has been considerably enriched by artwork and proofs as well as complete sheets of the issued stamps. The postal history material now spans the period from 1725 to 1885 and deals exhaustively with both pre-stamp covers and covers franked by French or Sardinian stamps with appropriate postal markings.

The museum was formerly housed in the prince's palace but was transferred to its present site in October 1996 where it is much more accessible to the general public. Similarly the philatelic bureau, which was formerly in the splendid Villa Miraflores at 2 Avenue St Michel in Monte Carlo, moved to a suite of offices in the government building at Fontvieille about three years ago. The bureau has more than 30,000 subscribers. At one time the revenue from philatelic sales was reckoned to be about four per cent of the national income, but although sales

have increased steadily over the past few years the actual percentage has declined, owing to the fact that Monaco now derives a considerable part of its income from investment, insurance, banking and other aspects of the financial sector.

In November 1987 Monaco staged an international philatelic exhibition celebrating the bureau's golden jubilee, and on that occasion issued a handsome 8 franc black stamp, engraved by Czeslaw Slania, showing the Villa Miraflores. A die proof, in deep purple, was printed on souvenir cards to mark the exhibition itself. A triptych featuring the museum and reproducing a stamp facade of the new museum also appears on the 4.60 franc stamp issued by Monaco on 5 April to mark the meeting of ASCAT, the international association of philatelic publishers and catalogue editors. The stamp also portrayed Prince Rainier and depicted the Grand Prix de Philatélie awarded to him in 1996 for his major contribution to world philately.

Editor's Note: Amongst the many rare items on show at the Monaco exhibition will be a pre-July 1865 essay for a Shanghai stamp from the collection of Charles W Goodwyn, the Keeper of The Royal Philatelic Collection. Mr Goodwyn cited this as the favourite item in his collection in a *Bulletin* interview last April.



Essay for Shanghai
stamp (Courtesy Charles
W Goodwyn)

Deeside connections A look at how the Royal Wedding was celebrated in the Aberdeen area, by Jean Matheson

FROM THE DAY that Queen Victoria called them her 'neighbours', Aberdonians felt that they had closer links with the Royal family than other cities could claim. This view was re-enforced close on a century later when Princess Elizabeth, thanking the Lord Provost for the City's wedding gift, mentioned her 'particular pleasure' at receiving it from 'a city I have known all my life, and with which I have had such close associations'.

When the Princess's betrothal to Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten was announced in July 1947, the Head Stalker at Balmoral called on estate workers to join him in a toast 'to one of the finest Royal stalkers we have ever had – and a very pleasant lass to work for' – while an Aberdeen journal named her 'ane o'oor ain folk'. It was predicted that the couple's public appearances together would be highlights of the summer, but for a time the only news of the Princess on Deeside in that fine, dry August was that she watched test landings of the helicopters which were soon to carry the King's Mail from Aberdeen airport to Balmoral, on the last stage of its journey north.

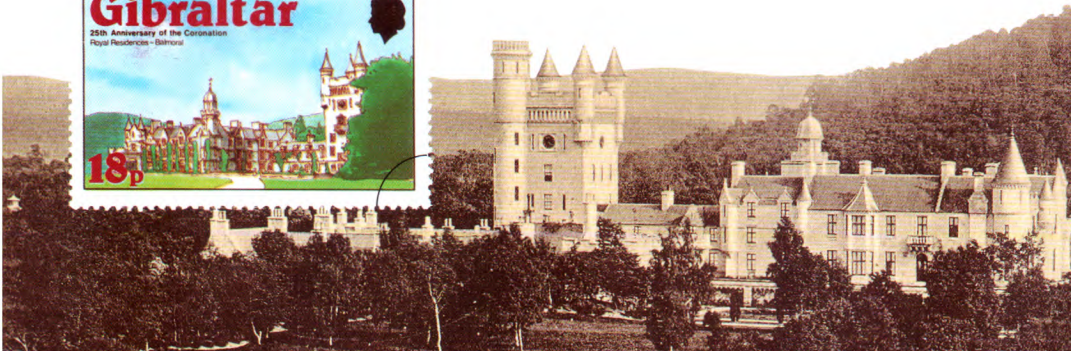
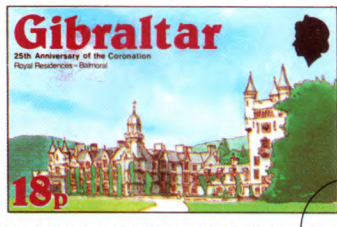
It was not long before Lieutenant Mountbatten, too, arrived at the airport, bringing the Princess's corgi with him and delighted the crowds outside Crathie Church on Deeside by driving there with the Princess in an open car, following her parents' limousine. His naval duties soon called him away and, although he came and went throughout the summer, it was with the King and Queen or Princess Margaret that Prin-

cess Elizabeth attended the Braemar Gathering and – for the first time – the County Ball.

Wedding presents Well into October, the Princess left Deeside to finalise preparations for the wedding. A public appeal in Aberdeen had raised a substantial sum for her chosen gift – a suite of drawing room furniture 'made in choice woods and covered in tapestry...from a London firm which has furnished much of the Royal Household', the city's *Press and Journal* reported. The County of Aberdeenshire gave a tea service and spoons crafted by Aberdeen silversmiths in the eighteenth century, and landowners' gifts included a rare book, an oil painting of upper Deeside and lengths of tweed. Queen Victoria had started the family tradition of attending the annual Braemar Gathering, and the Braemar Royal Highland Society marked this long association with a present of antique silver tea caddies and a silver quaich – Scotland's traditional shallow drinking bowl, used in pledging friendship.

As the wedding day drew near, an old lady who had long wished to offer gifts to the Princesses, walked into Aberdeen's Town House and entrusted the Lord Provost with two half sovereigns to hand over.

Unique gift The Postmistress of Crathie's sparsely-populated parish collected for an unique gift. A Deeside pharmacist had recently set up a perfume factory capturing scents of local moor and



mountain flowers and sold them in utilitarian bottles – all that was available in these immediate post-war days. Somehow an antique-style crystal flask was found, its silver cap was engraved with a coronet-surmounted 'E', and *Deeside Lavender*, packed and posted at the little post office, went to the Palace.

Princess Elizabeth was a frequent visitor to the one-room school on the Birkhall estate, near Balmoral, which housed many mementoes given by the Royal family. She unknowingly caused a dilemma for Aberdeenshire's Education Committee by sending a wedding invitation to the sole teacher, whose absence would mean three days without schooling for the nine pupils. The wedding day was to be a holiday for schools throughout the nation, and at the last moment the Committee allowed these Birkhall children to have additional time off – on the understanding that they might have to forego a day's holiday in the future.

On the wedding day, flags flew on public and main buildings in Aberdeen, but there could be no public festivities at this time of stringent rationing and warnings of more crises to come. Viewing the wedding film was most people's only celebration, and cinemas had to arrange extra showings. The highlight of a successful charity fair in Aberdeen was a 'dolls' wedding', the groom dressed as a sailor.

In the countryside, dances and film shows were held in village halls, and at Braemar children had saved food parcels sent from a school in Australia to have a party marking the Princess's wedding.

The housekeeper at Birkhall House, another wedding guest, had hurried back to move dust sheets from the furniture, and see that fireplaces were laid with huge logs, while a German prisoner-of-war from a nearby hostel tidied the kitchen garden. The Princess and her husband – now TRH The Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh – were soon back on Deeside, staying in the old, snow-bound house. After their Wedding Breakfast – white heather from Balmoral among the table decorations – they had left for a Hampshire mansion, where intruders hid in trees and climbed on tombstones at Romsey Abbey to



Opposite Balmoral Castle, the Royal Family home on Deeside

Above The Queen at Balmoral – BIOT Golden Wedding stamp (top), and the Braemar Gathering, attended by the Royal Family

catch a glimpse of them. Before their return to Deeside, the County's Lieutenant, the Marquess of Aberdeen and Temair, made known their plea for no formalities and no crowds of sightseers. Their wish was respected and they could relax in the 'freedom and peace' that so enchanted Queen Victoria on her first visit to Balmoral.

Editor's note Records in Post Office Archives show that an official Letter Receiving House was established at Crathie in 1842. The first Receiver was Charles Thomson. He carried out PO business until his death in 1887. By then Queen Victoria had become a frequent visitor and expressed the wish that Charles's son Albert, then following a successful career in London, should take over. When she realised that he would have to accept a substantial drop in income, she undertook personally to make up the deficiency. So Albert Thomson became Postmaster of Crathie by Royal request. The office was enlarged during his tenure and he was succeeded by his widow and son in 1933 and 1947 respectively ●

Robson Lowe An Appreciation by James Negus



ROBSON LOWE, known to his friends as 'Robbie', died peacefully on 19 August 1997. He was born on 7 January 1905, son of John Lowe and Gertrude Lee. He was educated in Fulham. He became a stamp collector as a boy and recalled

being taken to the International Stamp Exhibition at London's Horticultural Hall in 1912. He was also dealing in stamps while still at school and made an unusual entry into the trade at age 15. He was courteously fired within half an hour by the old-time dealer Humphrey Golding after acknowledging he meant to learn the business so he could set up on his own. Happily, another dealer, Alex Abrahams, rescued Lowe by buying his school-boy collection for £20; with this as capital the youngster looked around for something saleable with which to start his own independent career. At an auction in the Old Brompton Road, Lowe secured a commode for the equivalent of 55p plus 10p for a porter to wheel it home. Its side panels were full of old letters from India, many bearing the 1854 issue. Lovingly ironed and refolded, the hoard found a ready buyer three days later at £75 and Robson Lowe was launched in business.

By 1926 he had set up Robson Lowe Ltd in London's prestigious Regent Street, already known and respected in the trade in spite of his youth. The Irish provisional overprints of 1922-23, the new-issue fad of the times, were proving a drug on the market when Lowe shrewdly made bulk purchases at half face and turned in a handsome profit. This speciality foreshadowed accurately the life ahead of him, for he helped popularise the stamps by minute study of their many varieties and - most importantly - publishing the results. At 19 he was the author of *Irish Varieties*, which ran to three editions between 1924 and 1926.

Recognised expert His seniors took to this remarkable young man at the London International Stamp Exhibition of May 1923 (employed to empty the ash trays he always alleged), enduring friendships and contacts resulting. Deep study of a huge accumulation of Spiro forgeries around this time led to his becoming Curator of the London Stamp Club's forgery collection. Recognised at once as an expert in this field, his fascination for this by-way never left him; he was Chairman for 25 years of the British Philatelic Association's Expert Committee in later life and called upon for investigations by postal authorities. His foresight in the 1950s in helping to defeat the French master forger Jean de Sperati was a culminating achievement. Typically, he has left as legacy a classic of philatelic literature, *The Work of Jean de Sperati*, a detailed account of the forgeries.

Auction career In 1930 Lowe opened a shop as the Regent Stamp Co and also took to auctioneering, the activity which helped to make him a household name among philatelists. He pioneered specialised auctions for single countries or areas and in 1936 launched the first postal history sales. Lowe moved to Bournemouth in 1937 and soon inaugurated Bournemouth Stamp Auctions. In 1936 he had begun Trafalgar Stamp Auctions for non-postal history properties in partnership with Maurice Levene and HR Harmer, but bought these fellow dealers out in 1939 on returning to work in London. Large and important archives of old correspondence were soon flowing to the postal history sales, some consigned by Christie's as outside their usual range. During the war Lowe organised stamp auctions at Christie's in aid of the Red Cross and that early collaboration eventually led to a takeover as Christie's Robson Lowe in 1980. Perhaps the most celebrated of his auctions was dispersal in the 1960s of the greatest all-world collection of quality ever formed, that of Maurice Burrus.

For the Penny Black Centenary in 1940 Lowe complemented London's curtailed wartime cele-

bration with a Congress and Exhibition in Bournemouth. He was General Manager at the Internationals in London in 1950 and 1960 and, in 1965, started a new British Philatelic Exhibition, now part of Autumn Stampex.

Author and Editor His enduring fame for many, however, rests upon his prodigious literary output, where he was a master at precise authoritative detail and compilation of works of reference. He spoke of being 'bitten with the writer's bug' in the early 1930s and for the next six decades this remained a major part of his life. He begun his own magazine *The Raconteur* (later *The Philatelist*) in 1934, edited it for 40 years, retired, but resumed the task in 1986. In 1933 he began *The Regent Catalogue of Empire Adhesive Postage Stamps*, an alternative to Stanley Gibbons, maintaining regular editions to 1949. This was complemented by an innovative section with postal history and other matter in 1935, the combined work becoming *The Regent Encyclopaedia*. Another priced catalogue, *Handstruck Postage Stamps of the Empire 1680-1900*, was published in 1937. All were in effect preliminaries to his grand design, being absorbed into his *Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage Stamps*, a multi-volume work that was to give the most comprehensive catalogue of stamps, postal history and historical data. His *The British Postage Stamp of the Nineteenth Century*, published by the National Postal Museum in 1968, (2nd edition 1979), is a most detailed guide to the riches of the R M Phillips Collection.

Historical studies Lowe never ceased forming collections of his own. His abiding interest in forgeries has been mentioned, but he had advanced collections of Revenue stamps, Cape of Good Hope, Australian States and us postal history and historical letters, especially those of Royalty, the Civil War, French Revolution and Napoleonic era.

He received numerous honours, including the Lichtenstein Award (Collectors Club, New York), Crawford Medal (Royal Philatelic Society, London) and the Lindenburg Medal from the

Berlin Philatelic Club. He was also the first professional philatelist to be accorded Honorary Membership of the Royal, when that rare distinction for the trade was revived in 1991.

A great personality Few in the world of philately and postal history have been as universally loved and respected. As a student and writer he was in the very top rank, responsible for some of the most influential books and catalogues. He was astonishingly erudite, seemingly interested in everything that came before him, from the unknown Cinderella label to the higher reaches of plating, from medieval documents to modern essays. He had a fascination with forgeries, enjoyed Valentines, loved engraved classics and was the father of postal history in this country.

Yet, with all this learning and achievement, there was a total lack of 'side' to the man. He was the most engaging of companions in private conversation, business dealings or at public events. I was privileged to know Robbie for 40 years and do not recall a single harsh word being uttered about him from any who knew him. His kindness was legendary; his relaxed and humorous, on occasion Rabelaisian, approach to life astonishing. The resources of his company were freely available to anyone furthering philatelic research: in my case this extended once to lending me his office at Bournemouth to work in when he was away! He and his editorial colleague, the late Peter Collins, put freelance work my way when Gibbons made me redundant: such practical help, spontaneously offered, was typical.

Robbie was a great man and, in our stamp world, the biggest true 'star' since Fred Melville. It will be impossible to forget him and the friendly twinkle in his eye every time one reads the magic words 'by Robson Lowe'.



© Courtesy Spink & Son Ltd

A Royal Celebration – Glenn Morgan reports on a prestigious stamp launch



Above Some of the Crown Agents Golden Wedding Stamps

IT WAS A GLORIOUS SUMMER EVENING on 9 July 1997, when the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau and the British Library Philatelic Collections held a joint reception in the King's Library Gallery, part of the British Museum complex in London.

The evening celebrated two events, namely the forthcoming move of the Library to new premises, and the issuance of a commemorative 'omnibus' edition of stamps and souvenir sheets from 17 countries. The series was produced to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the wedding of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh.

A set of speeches started with John Ashford, Chairman of the Board of the British Library, who discussed the move of premises and thanked the Crown Agents for sponsoring the evening, describing them as 'long an loyal supporters'. David Beech, Head of Philatelic Collections, then gave details about some of the 36 main collections acquired since 1891, including the

Crown Agents Philatelic and Security Print Archive. David explained an interesting family connection between the Crown Agents and the British Library in the shape of Peter Berry, a member of the Tapling family and current Managing Director of the Crown Agents. Many readers will be aware that Tapling was responsible for establishing the Philatelic Collections when he donated his stamps to the nation. They have been on display since 1903 in the gallery where the reception was held.

The changing role of Crown Agents was then explained by Keith White, Secretary to the recently established Crown Agents Foundation. The final speaker was Nigel Fordham, Head of the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau. Nigel talked about how the Crown Agents was founded in 1833 and how they are responsible for providing a whole range of services, including provision of drivers and vehicles for the United Nations peace keeping forces in Bosnia.

It was 1847 when the first indent was received by the Crown Agents to produce stamps. Exactly 150 years later they are marking continuous service to the postal community, including production, marketing, sales and exhibition services to over 60 countries, as well as provision of training for postal officers. A charity cheque was then presented to the British Legion by Nigel followed by a loyal toast to The Queen, concluding the formal part of the evening. Guests were now able to return to the excellent food, drink and conversation.

It was good to be able to mingle with so many guests, including those from the Crown Agents, Royal Household and British Library, together with prominent philatelists, journalists, designers and printers. It was a particular pleasure for me to finally meet Jennifer Toombs, a stamp designer whose work I have long admired. I was also able to renew my friendship with Tony

Theobald, another Crown Agents' designer with many fine works, especially in the field of aviation, behind him.

The stamps were designed by Derek Miller, who has been responsible for previous royal omnibus issues. They depict photographic montages of Royal family members, carriages and horses in se-tenant pairs, generally three pairs per country. Exceptions were St Helena, who elected to depict views taken at the time of Royal Visits to the island; whilst Norfolk Island and the Solomon Islands each decided to issue two pairs only. Each stamp has a blue band at the top inscribed 'Golden Wedding' and at the bottom the name of the country appears.

The miniature sheets were the work of Nick Shewring. The sheet margins share a common design, resembling wallpaper and are 'topped and tailed' by a blue band with gold edging to unite the miniature sheets and panes of stamps. A simple, yet stylish, means of bringing two different designer's work together. To the left of the single, centrally placed, rectangular stamp is an oval wedding day portrait of HM The Queen (then Princess Elizabeth) and to the right a similarly shaped portrait of HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. The designs for these stamps depict The Queen with The Duke in various open-top horse-drawn coaches across 16 sheets, Pitcairn deciding that a miniature sheet could not be justified.

Unfortunately, I never got to meet the two designers of this new omnibus issue, for the evening went by all too quickly, and now compliment them on the skill of their designs and the fresh approach that they were able to inject into this series. It must be difficult to produce something different when there have been so many issues of a royal nature over the past few years, although in fairness the designs and themes adopted by the Crown Agents have always been interesting and relatively conservative in number. It has tended to be other philatelic agencies that have brought the whole idea of the omnibus into disrepute. They have produced hundreds of basic stamps, miniature sheets, sheetlets and overprints for so many territories that I, for one, had become somewhat fed-up with the whole concept. This



Left to Right Nick Shewring designer of Golden Wedding souvenir sheet; Hazel Turner, of the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau; Derek Miller, designer, The Golden Wedding stamps.

series has generated within me a renewed interest in such issues.

Most of the Golden Wedding stamps and sheets were issued the day after the reception, 50 years to the day that the wedding was announced to the world by Buckingham Palace. Some countries will wait until later in the year before issuing their stamps for logistical reasons – Pitcairn and Tristan still being remote locations. These two sets will be issued on the date of the anniversary, ie 20 November. Norfolk Island issued its stamps on 12 August, Papua New Guinea's set came out on 25 June, and that for the Bahamas the day before.

As each guest left the reception they were presented with a commemorative folder bearing the Crown Agents logo on the front. Inside was an example of the Golden Wedding miniature sheet with a suitability inscribed perforated label. These sheets were reserved exclusively for guests – an unexpected bonus to what had been a most enjoyable evening.



The souvenir sheet presented to guests, and the issued sheet from Samoa.



The 60th anniversary of the regular Shetland air mail



Special slogan cancellation for the 50th anniversary of the regular air mail, above, and special handstamp to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the opening of Sumburgh Airport.

Opposite, *Shetland Times* souvenir envelope carried on the first regular flight to Aberdeen.



BACK IN MAY and October 1994, the *Bulletin* reported on the celebrations surrounding the 60th anniversary of the first Orkney air mail. Three years have passed and it's now time to record 60 years of regular air mail service to and from the Shetland Islands.

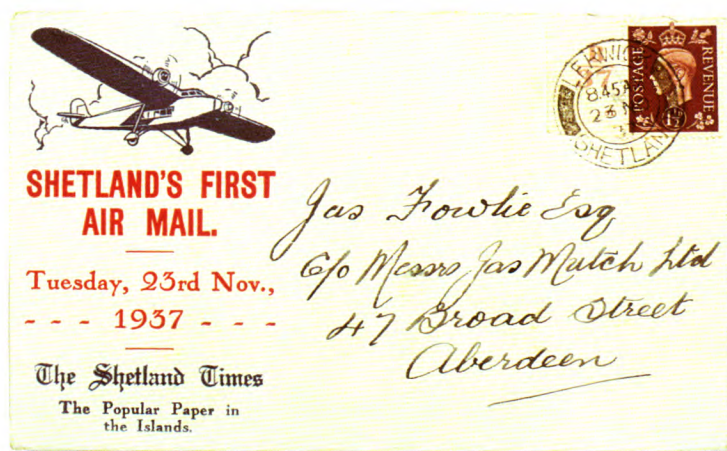
Although the Orkney Isles had had a regular air service from Inverness since 1933 and a regular air mail since 1934, it was not until the summer of 1936 that the aerodrome at Sumburgh, located at the southern tip of the Shetland Isles, became a public airport with the necessary radio beacon to aid navigation.

A small airline, Aberdeen Airways, then opened a regular service from Aberdeen to Sumburgh via Thurso and the Orkneys. Initially the mails still went by sea, but the potential for mail carriage by air was demonstrated in no uncertain fashion in January 1937. Such was the ferocity of the winter gales that two weeks of storm-bound Shetland mails had accumulated in Aberdeen. Aberdeen Airways were then chartered to fly 448kg of these mails to Sumburgh, Shetland, via Thurso on 29 January. The DH84 Dragon G-ADFI carried the mail to Thurso, another Dragon, G-ACAN, finished the flight. The viability of a Shetland air mail had been demonstrated in terrible weather conditions; a

regular service was now inevitable.

In February 1937, Aberdeen Airways changed its name to Allied Airways (Gandar Dower) Limited, Eric Leslie Gandar Dower being the somewhat eccentric driving force behind this Aberdeen-based company. As a young man he had been an actor, in the 1945 general election he entered Parliament as the Unionist (Conservative) member for Caithness and Sutherland with a majority of seven votes! It was this newly named company which received a Post Office contract to carry first class mails three times a week between Aberdeen and Sumburgh Airport. The contract commenced on 23 November 1937 when the DH Dragon G-ACNJ, appropriately named Sir Rowland after the postal reformer Rowland Hill, took off from Aberdeen with Captain Eric Starling at the controls. 221kg of mail was carried northwards and 283kg southwards, there was no air mail surcharge. Captain Starling had a long and successful career in commercial aviation and took part in the Inverness-Orkney celebrations in 1994. The mail was eventually carried every weekday, Allied Airways maintaining a precarious separate existence throughout the war years until nationalised and incorporated in British European Airways (BEA) in April 1947.

by Richard Beith



Further Reading

Richard Beith *Scottish Air Mails 1919-1979*, Dunblane, the author 1981. (Still available from philatelic literature specialists)

Peter V Clegg *Flying against the elements, reminiscences of Aberdeen Airways*, Godalming, the author 1987

Ian Hutchison *The Flight of the Starling, story of Scottish pioneer aviator Captain Eric Starling*, Erskine, Kea Publishing 1992

Acknowledgement Thanks to Eric Tawn, BAeF, for help with the illustrations

Philatelic Souvenirs Covers carried on the emergency flight in January 1937 are known, they can be identified by the date on the postmark coupled with a suitable address. These covers have often been decorated with an Aberdeen Airways publicity sticker, but, of course, these must have been added by collectors after the event – when posting these letters to the Shetlands, the senders would have been totally unaware that the covers were eventually to be carried by air.

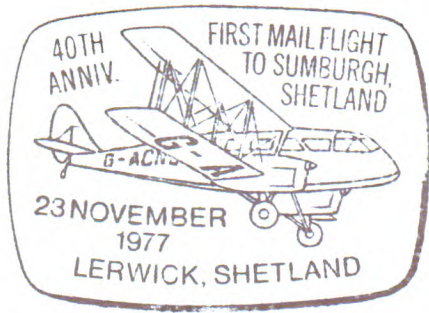
A range of printed souvenir covers were produced by a variety of organisations for the official first flight in November 1937. Sponsors included the local paper, *The Shetland Times* (above); Robert Ollason, a Shetland stationer; Charles Stout, a Lerwick pharmacist and the Shetland Hosiery Co. Other varieties can be found.

The 40th anniversary of the first regular flight was commemorated in November 1977. A well-designed commemorative handstamp depicting the DH Dragon G-ACXJ (right) was used at both Aberdeen and Lerwick, Shetland. Souvenir covers were sponsored by British Airways and Royal Mail, and a small commemorative booklet produced to fit inside these covers. These covers were flown in the British Airways HS 748s G-BCOF, northbound and G-BCOE, southbound.

The 50th anniversary of the opening of Sum-
burgh Airport in 1936 was marked on 2 June 1986
by the use of an attractive souvenir handstamp
(opposite, left).

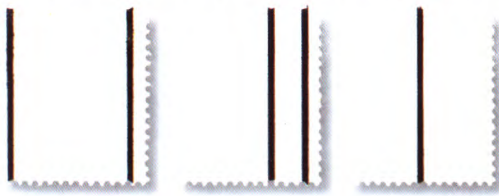
The 50th anniversary of the first regular mail
was again commemorated with a special post-
mark used at both Aberdeen and Lerwick, but the
decision to make this a slogan cancellation for use
in an ordinary cancelling machine rather than a
handstamp was not a wise one (opposite, right).

Celebrations in November 1997? No celebrations
have been announced at the time of preparing
this article, but it is possible that a commemora-
tive postmark may be produced. If so, it will be
announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*, the
companion publication to this magazine •



The graphite experiment James Mackay reports on the introduction of electro-mechanical scanning

THE SORTING AND CANCELLING of mail is one of the most labour-intensive aspects of postal operations and for almost a century and a half the best brains in the Post Office have been exercised by ways and means of streamlining and mechanising the various processes involved. The invention of cancelling machines was a great step forward but the preliminary stage of facing and stacking the pieces of mail had to be carried out manually and tended to slow down the operation. When letters and postcards were tipped out of the sack in which they had been collected from posting-boxes they were jumbled up, therefore the first task was to sort them out so that they were in neat bundles with their long sides parallel, the address side facing to the front and the stamp in the upper right-hand corner in order that the mail could be fed into the cancelling machine.



In the 1950s Post Office engineers devised equipment which would perform this task automatically. Eventually an Automatic Letter Facing machine (known as ALF) was perfected and given a trial at the Southampton sorting office commencing on 19 December 1957. Mail was fed into this machine with the long edges of letters, packets and cards parallel, but the stamps could be in any one of four positions – facing to the back or front in either upper right-hand or lower left-hand positions. The pieces of mail were rearranged so that the stamps were in one of two possible positions on one long edge. These two positions could then be separated into stacks and, at the same time, it was possible to segregate printed matter from items prepaid at the full postal rate. Later on, of course, this principle

would govern the separation of first and second class mail into two streams. The stacks of mail were now ready for machine cancellation, and unstamped or oversize items which could not be processed were automatically rejected.

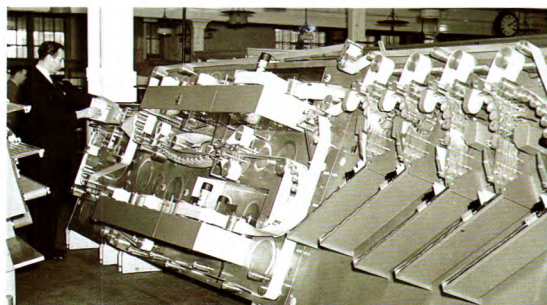
The original facing machine had scanned the piece of mail for a tell-tale area of dense printing ink that betrayed the presence of the stamp, but early experiments were only partly successful because of the great variation in the density of ink used for printing stamps, especially commemoratives, and sometimes the machine was thrown off the scent by heavy printing on the face of the envelope. Nevertheless this method of detection was retained as a back-up system to cope with OHMS and business reply correspondence.

Electro-mechanical scanning The solution to the problem, however, was the development of electro-mechanical scanning equipment which would look for something more specific in the design of the postage stamp, and this led to the adoption of vertical bars printed on the backs of stamps under the gum. This electrically conducting black substance was originally known as ‘naphthadag’, the last three letters being an acronym for Acheson’s Deflocculated Graphite. This mouthful was rapidly replaced by the term ‘graphite lines’, used by philatelists ever since. The 2d stamp, then pre-paying the printed matter rate, had a single graphite line, while all other denominations from the halfpenny to 3d had two lines printed on both sheet and coil stamps used in the Southampton area. Stamps of the Wilding definitive series printed on paper with the St Edward’s Crown and E2R watermark were released on 19 November 1957, a few weeks ahead of the actual operational introduction of the facing equipment. A year later graphite lines were applied to stamps with the modified Crowns watermark and extended to the 4d and 4½d denominations. In this issue booklet panes as well as sheets and coils were treated.

Fears expressed The reaction of the general public in the Southampton area to the new-fangled stamps was predictably anxious. Fears were expressed in the local press about licking off the black lines, despite the fact that they were printed under the gum. Stamp dealers who made a point of using the graphite-lined stamps on their mail subsequently reported numerous enquiries from mystified customers who had spotted the tell-tale signs of the black bars (often visible through the margins of the stamps) but who had hitherto been unaware of their existence.

As a rule, the graphite line on the back of the 2d appears on the right but examples of the first printing are known with the line on the left due to misplacement during printing. Such stamps exist in horizontal pairs with stamps from which the line is omitted. Similarly, examples of the 1½d of the same watermark have been recorded with both lines at the left. In the second issue, however, misplaced lines were discovered on some 1d, 3d and 4d stamps released in 1961, the first in coils and the other two in sheets and resulting from the use of residual stocks of graphite-lined paper. As the operational use of graphite lines had ceased by that time the alignment of the graphite in relation to the stamps was irrelevant from the postal viewpoint. This misplacement may occur as two lines close together or a line omitted.

Qualified success The use of electrically conducting bars was not an unqualified success because of interference from staples, paper clips and metallic fasteners. Moreover, the process also tended to behave erratically in bad weather when mail was prone to dampness. This problem led



to the abandonment of the original electro-mechanical system and the adoption of electronic scanners working on the principle that phosphorescent ink, when exposed to ultra-violet light, releases energy in the form of visible light. In this connection, therefore, existing stocks of stamps with graphite-lines on the back were overprinted with phosphor bands – a single band for the printed matter and two bands for all other denominations. Interestingly, the stock of the three lowest denominations (½d, 1d and 1½d) thus treated were on the obsolete St Edward's Crown E2R watermark, whereas the values from 2d to 4½d were on the more up-to-date Crowns watermark. A few sheets of 2d stamps with the earlier watermark were phosphor-banded and released by error, while examples of the 2½d with the obsolete watermark are believed to have come from a small quantity retained for internal purposes and not released to the public in the usual manner •

Opposite Normal 1d (two bands, one each side) and examples of misplaced two and one band stamps.

This page The letter-facing machine at Southampton, above, and stamps cancelled on day of issue.



Competition Win mint 1840 2d blue catalogued at £3000

1st prize GB QV 1840 2d blue, two margins example cancelled by rare blue Maltese Cross, SG 5e cat £3000. GB Select-Direct selling price £250.

2nd prize GB Edward VII 1902 10s ultramarine, SG 265, pale colour good mint example GB Concise cat £350 as hinged. Good perfs, just slightly off-centre. GB Select-Direct price £120.

3rd prize GB 1840 Mulready 2d blue lettersheet, unused, some faults but good clean example, SG cat £175. GB Select-Direct price £50.



SPONSORED by Omniphil Home Approvals and GB Select Direct. There's still time for you to reply to Omniphil's Home Approvals offer and keep an 1841 2d blue, cat £40, plus a spacefiller quality QV stamp(s) cat £80 – a total of £120.

£200 Loyalty Bonus Program + Free £120 Cat QV GB

Sounds too good to be true, but this is precisely the package offered by Omniphil Home Service Approvals – all without obligation to purchase so that discriminating collectors can peruse then in the peace and comfort of their own home.

Unlike most other dealers Omniphil are big enough to offer each and every stamp individually available for you to select from their library of over 4632 different approval books. Yes, they break every set – very helpful for collectors with broken sets. If your collection is missing stamps from 1840 to the 1980s all you have to do is tell them all the countries/areas that you collect and they will send a suitable selection as available without obligation.

At present Omniphil Approvals are offering all *Bulletin* subscribers, who have not applied before, the opportunity to pick a further 25% worth of stamps free of charge via their £200 loyalty bonus program provided subscribers can select stamps to a sales value of £12 from each selection requested. The first 250 *Bulletin* subscribers to receive their approvals will also be sent absolutely free of charge an 1841 2d blue catalogued £40 plus a further £80 cat QV spacefiller – a total of £120. Write telling them all countries you collect and whether you collect mint and used to: **Omniphil Home Service, Bulletin QV 120 Offer, PO Box 29, Stroud GL6 6RW.**

To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: November Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL to arrive by 23 December. Entries must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

The winners of the August competition were

Ann Welsh (1st prize), Pieren Freddy & Alex Cooper (2nd), David Lamming, T Conrad & P S Hardman (3rd) S J Glen, J S Vera-Cruz, Dave Johnston & J H Crook (4th) and E Gibbs, R White, P Sanford, C J Watson & Georg Spori (5th)

The answers 1) East Dulwich; 2) August 1870; 3) De La Rue; 4) 0171 600 8914. Our thanks to all who entered.

- 1 Which famous philatelist died in August, aged 92?
- 2 Which Commonwealth (Empire) countries issued stamps for Princess Elizabeth's marriage in 1947/48?
- 3 The work of which stamp designer is currently on display at the National Postal Museum?
- 4 What does Naphthadag stand for?
- 5 In what year was the first regular airmail service to Shetland introduced?

The answers will be found in this *Bulletin*. The competition is not open to employees, families or agents of Royal Mail or Omniphil/GB Direct-Select.

Events

Now showing 'Golden and Glorious' exhibition (Royal stamp issues), 'Etchings into Stamps' (the work of Terence Millington, designer of Post Offices stamps), and 'The Mediterranean' (stamps from the Royal Collection) at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP. Open Mon-Fri 09.30-16.30. Admission free. **Enquiries** 0171 776 3636.

Now showing Postal Memorabilia displays at City Square Post Office, Leeds and Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln. **Enquiries** D Harrop, 15 Hawthorn Road, Stockport SK4 3DQ

30 October-1 November London International Stamp & Cover Show at Royal Horticultural Hall 2, Greycoat Street, London SW1

1-2 November Scotex '97 at Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre, Glasgow. Open 11.00-18.00 1st, 11.00-16.30 2nd. Organised by Scottish Philatelic Trade Association. Admission free. **Enquiries** F Tonelli, 01382-224946.

7-9 November Stampa '97 (Irish national stamp exhibition) at Royal Dublin Society International Exhibition Centre, Dublin 2. Open 11.00-18.00. **Enquiries** Stampa '97, PO Box 2723, Dublin 1.

8 November Kent Federation Autumn Rally, hosted by Maidstone & Mid Kent Phil Soc, at Vinters Boys School, Huntsman Lane, Maidstone, 10.00-16.00. **Enquiries** B Stonestreet, 01622 675784

9 November Northern Cinderpex (cinderella, revenue & poster stamps) at Pudsey Civic Hall, opens 10.00. Parking, near New Pudsey rail station. **Enquiries** T Williams, 01709 548187.

11 November Display by prominent GB collector James Grimwood-Taylor to Camberley & District Stamp Club, St Michael's Church Hall, London Road, Camberley, 19.30. **Enquiries** H Capsey, 40 Quintilis, Roman Hill, Bracknell, RG12 7QQ

15 November Camberley & District Stamp Club Stamp Fair at Collingwood College, Mitcham Road, Camberley, 10.00-16.30. Displays, 30 dealers etc. **Enquiries** H Capsey, 01344 424984

15 November GB Philatelic Society displays - Queen Victoria (C Reid) & Cancellations of the 1850s (M Samwell) at British Philatelic Centre, Charterhouse Street, London EC1. Opens 11.00. **Enquiries** A Lajer, 01189 344151

21-22 November Thematica at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2. Open 10.30-20.00 21st, 10.00-17.30 22nd. Admission free. Displays, dealers, meeting of British Thematic Association 22 Nov, 10.30. **Enquiries** B Sole, 01372 467652.

21-22 November Leeds Phil Soc annual exhibition and fair at Pudsey Civic Centre. 21 Nov 11.00-18.00; 22nd 10.00-17.00. **Enquiries** R Shiers 0113 268 2370

22 November London Cinderpex (cinderella, revenue & poster stamps) at International Students House, Great Portland Street, London W1, opens 10.00. **Enquiries** T Williams, 01709 548187.

22 November Sussex Autumn Convention at Hove Town Hall, 10.00-16.30. Celebrates 50th anniv of Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies. Dealers, society meetings, juniors workshop, etc. **Enquiries** L Jones, 0171 600 8918 (business hours).

28-30 November International exhibition of rare stamps and philatelic documents in Stamp & Coin Museum, Monaco. **Enquiries** Office des Emissions de Timbres-Poste, 23 Avenue Prince Hereditaire Albert, MC 98050, Monaco Cedex.

29 November AGM of Friends of the National Postal Museum at Staff Hall, Mount Pleasant, London EC1. Speakers Alan Sabey & Stanley Hunter of the Exhibitions Study Group. **Enquiries** R Pottle, 01825 766546.

A YEAR IN STAMPS



The lavishly-illustrated **Royal Mail Year Books**, first published in 1984, are collectors' items in their own right. They provide authoritative background stories on each issue of special stamps, based on interviews with the stamp designers. Stamps are supplied on stock cards ready for mounting in the book. Each book supplied in a matching slip-case.

The **1997 Year Book** including the 39 special stamps from the Great Tudor (Henry VIII) to Golden Wedding costs £23.50 (£75 leather-bound).

The popular **Royal Mail Collectors Packs** contain special stamps on stock cards with a colourful and informative brochure giving details of the stamp subjects. The **1997 Year Pack** costs £15.95.

Ideal Christmas presents – for yourself or your philatelic friends! On sale at the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets and main post offices from 13 November (leather-bound Year Book available only from Bureau).

British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT



5 014721 103112

