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British & The Bull



Royal Mail

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Main Feature

Collecting Decimal Machins

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Douglas Myall begins a survey of Machin issues since 1970, suggesting suitable areas for collection and study



Printed in photogravure and recess – the 1990 Stamp World London 90 miniature sheet containing 20p Machin and reproduction Penny Black

Royal Mail News

100 Years of Going to the Pictures Stamps

Five stamps commemorating cinema going will be available at post offices, and philatelic outlets from 16 April.

The **19p** (inland 2nd class rate) depicts the Odeon in Harrogate, one of the best preserved period cinemas in the country. The **25p** stamp (basic inland 1st class and EU rate) features a scene from the film *Lady Hamilton* (GB title, or *That Hamilton Woman*, US title) starring Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh made in 1941.



The **30p** (Europe, non-EU rate) shows a typical cinema ticket of pre-decimal days (1/3 = 6p approx).

The **35p** stamp (airmail postcard rate) depicts a still from a Pathé newsreel; 1996 marks the centenary of Pathé News. From 1946 newsreels were entitled "British Pathé News". British Pathé, owner of the Pathé News archive of almost 3000 hours of old newsreel shot between 1896 and 1970, was bought by the Daily Mail & General Trust in December 1995.

The top value, **41p** (basic airmail letter rate) features the Big Screen showing display at the Odeon in Manchester.

The Designers

The stamps were designed by The Chase design group, based in Manchester. These are their first stamps for Royal Mail; they previously designed the 1995 Rugby League Centenary stamps presentation pack.

Centenary of Cinema

During 1895 rival inventors were developing film cameras and projectors. On 28 December, the Lumiere Brothers, Louis and Auguste, gave the first successful public showing of their *Cinematographe* at the Salon Indien, Grand Cafe, 14 Boulevard des Capuchines. Birt Acres and R W Paul made their first films for showing in Edison Kinetoscope Parlours during 1895, notably The Boat Race (March 1895) and The Derby (May 1895). Acres gave a presentation of projected films to a photographic club in Barnet and to the Royal Photographic Society in January 1896. The following month Paul made a similar presentation to the Finsbury Technical College and the *Cinematographe* was shown to the UK press at the Regent Street Polytechnic – the first UK cinema show in the public domain.

To mark the centenary of cinema in the UK numerous events are being organised by Cinema 100 under the patronage of HRH The Prince of Wales. The Chairman of Cinema 100 is Lord Attenborough, the distinguished actor and director. The events include lectures, exhibitions, radio and television programmes, and publications as well as screenings of important films.

7 March is an important date, being the centenary of the first "picture show" at the Empire Theatre of Varieties, Leicester Square, London. A celebratory event will be held on the centenary date with a "Centenary Trail" and "Picturegoer" exhibition opening at the Museum of the Moving Image (South Bank) the following day. The exhibition will be on show until 19 May, the Trail until November.

The diamond jubilee of Loughborough's Curzon Cinema will be celebrated at the end of March and *The Living Picture Show* begins its national tour at Brighton on 25 March. Described as "a stunning montage of cinema with live action", it takes the audience on a personal journey from 1896 to the present. It will be shown in Newcastle, Bradford, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Stoke on Trent, Knutsford, Somerset/Dorset, Manchester, Kingston upon Thames, Glasgow, Liverpool, Preston, Gloucester, Leicester, Basingstoke,

Royal Mail Mint Stamps present

100 years of going to the pictures
a cinema celebration

264 16.4 96



'Going to the Pictures...' the words ring around the memory, evoking that exotic world, that bright shining world which lay awaiting at the mere payment of a bob. On 7 March 1896 Leicester Square held its first picture show; the audience at the Empire was agog. For the following century British picture-goers have been bathed in sunshine, romance, adventure and laughter through the magic portal of the screen – a gateway to a Paradise where heroes triumphed, good beat evil, and bad was sent tumbling by the antics of the meek.

But however brilliant and diverting it may have been, film soon offered more than that. Evolving into a piercing commentary on life as the century unfolded – a century of invention, untold savagery and sublime nobility – our screens reflected it all, leaving with us unforgettable dramas unmatched in any other medium. With vibrancy, truth, poignancy and vision, they presented to ordinary people the world over all that mankind was, is and may, God willing, become.



Royal Mail First Day Cover



Royal Mail presents
100 years of going to the pictures
a cinema celebration

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorhies Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Nottingham, Welwyn, Scarborough, Oxford, Stamford, Norwich, Isle of Wight, Swansea, Chester, Exeter, Belfast, and Newark. For further information contact Cinema 100, 10 Stephen Mews, LONDON W1P 0AX, Tel. 0171 636 7214.

Special events will be held in Edinburgh on 13 April, Cardiff on 5 May, and Belfast on 16 November to mark the centenaries of the first cinema shows in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The key celebratory event – “Cinema 100 Day” – will be on 2 June when audiences will be able to attend any one of nearly 2000 screens at 700 cinemas across the UK for the admission price of just £1. “With special showings of previews and classics, as well as the latest releases”, it will be says Lord Attenborough, “a truly national celebration.”

featuring some of our best known actors: Peter Sellers, David Niven, Charlie Chaplin, Vivien Leigh, and Alfred Hitchcock.

Numerous stamps have been issued recently to commemorate the centenary of cinema, including issues from Australia, Brazil, Finland, Gibraltar, Israel, Italy, San Marino, Spain (showing Lumiere Brothers), and Sweden – all adding up to a colourful omnibus issue.

A feature article on cinema on stamps and postmarks will be published here next month.

Technical details

Printers: Harrison & Sons Ltd

Process: Photogravure

Size: 37 x 35mm

Sheets: 100

Perforation: 14 x 14.5

Phosphor: 19p – one phosphor band

25p-41p two phosphor bands

Blue fluor in phosphor

Paper: OBA free (OBA = Optical Brightening Agent)

Gum: PVA



First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets around a week before 16 April, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial “First Day of Issue” postmark of the Bureau or London WC2, price £2.18 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.86 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 16 April.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers on the day of issue, for these cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, LONDON EC1A 1BB (for London WC2 postmark). The outer envelope should be endorsed “FD9607” (Bureau), or “FD9608” (London WC2).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) “First Day of Issue” handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark*

Cinema Stamps

This will be Royal Mail's second set of stamps celebrating British films and film-going. Five stamps marked British Film Year in 1985,

Bulletin – the Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe; £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

Collectors are reminded that it will be in order to affix just the 19p Cinema stamp to covers to receive all special cancels ("First Day of Issue", sponsored and philatelic counters), in use on 16 April. The minimum 1st class rule is suspended on this day as this set includes a 2nd class rate stamp. It should be noted that this concession applies only to Cinema stamps; otherwise covers must bear at least 1st class postage.

Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards

A presentation pack (price £1.85) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, and main post offices. The text of the pack is by Colin Welland, the Oscar and BAFTA-award winning screenwriter, actor and playwright. It was he who held up the Oscar in 1982 and said: "The British are coming!"

Queen's Birthday Stamp Book

To commemorate the 70th birthday of HM The Queen, a book containing four 1st class NVI stamps and a commemorative label will be issued shortly before Her birthday (21 April) on 16 April. The label, designed by John Stibbe, features a study of The Queen by Karsh of Ottawa, with Windsor Castle in the background. It is a worthy successor to earlier labels marking the tercentenary of the Bank of England (1994) and the centenary of the birth of Spitfire designer R J Mitchell (1995).

The book has been printed by Walsall Security Printers. The stamps bear two phosphor bands

with blue fluor. In the books the pane will be folded between the stamps and the label. Unfolded panes will, as previously, be available from the British Philatelic Bureau.

Philatelic/Numismatic Cover

A joint Royal Mail/Royal Mint Philatelic/Numismatic Cover bearing the stamp pane, cancelled by a special 21 April 1996 postmark, and an encapsulated £5 crown coin, is being produced. This will be available from the Bureau, price £15.95. Early ordering is advised as such covers are very popular and the edition limited.

First Day Arrangements

As the stamps are not new, the pane (stamps and label) will not qualify for "First Day of Issue" postmarks on 16 April. Other special handstamps can be applied – details of which will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*. Of particular relevance to this issue are the permanent philatelic postmarks showing Windsor Castle and Buckingham Palace. Collectors should send covers for these to: South East Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, SLOUGH SL1 1AA (Windsor request handstamp number 2133) or London Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, LONDON EC1A 1BB (Buckingham Palace, handstamp 2599).

Stamp Cards

Three stamp cards will be issued on 16 April, reproducing the designs of the three commemorative labels – Bank of England, R J Mitchell, and Queen's Birthday. They will be available from the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, and main post offices, price 25p each.

HM The Queen

Princess Elizabeth Mary was born at 17 Bruton Street, London W1 on 21 April 1926, eldest daughter of the Duke and Duchess of York and first grandchild of the reigning monarch King George V and his consort, Queen Mary. The young princess became heir apparent when her uncle, King Edward VIII, abdicated in December 1936 and her father became King George VI. The Royal Family stayed in London during the Second World War and Princess Elizabeth, and her younger sister Margaret, joined in the VE Day celebrations in front of the Palace, cheering their parents on the balcony. The Princess



married Prince Philip Mountbatten in November 1947 and a year later their first child, Prince Charles (now Prince of Wales) was born. A daughter, Princess Anne (Princess Royal) followed in August 1950.

In February 1952 George VI died suddenly whilst his daughter and her husband were in Africa. Elizabeth returned to London as Queen; the new "Elizabeth Age" had begun. The Queen and her husband undertook many overseas tours of Commonwealth countries (often commemorated on stamps). In 1958 Prince Charles was created Prince of Wales, the announcement coinciding with the British Empire & Commonwealth Games at Cardiff. Princes Andrew and Edward were born in 1960 and 1964.

In 1972 The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh celebrated their silver wedding, and five years later the 25th anniversary of Her accession. The latter was commemorated around the country by street parties and a Royal Tour. The 40th anniversary, in 1992, was a less happy time, ending with the fire at Windsor Castle and the announcement that the Prince and Princess of Wales were to separate. The Queen herself described the year as her *annus horribilis*. Despite the trials and tribulations of the Royal Family in recent times, The Queen retains huge respect and affection at home and overseas – as the crowds that greet her on Royal visits bear witness.

Some 24 British special stamps have commemorated events and anniversaries of The Queen's reign: 1953 Coronation; 1972 Silver Wedding, 1977 Silver Jubilee, 1978 25th anniversary of the Coronation, 1986 60th birthday, and 1992 40th anniversary of accession. Jeffery Matthews's delightful 60th birthday stamps featured formal and informal studies of The Queen as princess and monarch. The 1977 Silver Jubilee stamps, by Richard Guyatt, were reminiscent of the George V Silver Jubilee set of 1935. Stamps will commemorate The Queen's golden wedding anniversary in October 1997.

Celebration of Scottish Football Aerogramme

The first of two Scottish aerogrammes for 1996 will be available at post offices in Scotland, the Bureau and philatelic outlets on 2 April. Designed by 999 Design Group Ltd of Glasgow, it celebrates Scottish football and features grounds and personalities of importance in Scottish football history. Price 45p including aerogramme postage. This is the 43rd in a series

that started in 1974.

The two 1995 issues are still available from the Bureau, price 45p each. The Glasgow School of Art and Prehistoric Scotland aerogrammes remain on sale until 3 April, and 17 July respectively. Articles on these appeared here in March and July 1995.

Blue Fluor and Stamp Book Update

Three further definitives – 5p, 20p, and 30p – have now been printed with blue fluor in the phosphor bands. These will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau during March. There will be no first day of availability. Collectors should note that an ultra-violet lamp is required to detect the colour of the fluor.

The Bureau will withdraw yellow fluor versions of the 2p, 4p and 35p definitives, 19p and 25p Country stamps, and 1st and 2nd NVI stamps from sheets on 29 March. Collectors still requiring these should order without delay. These values, with blue fluor, will remain on sale.

The three international stamp books (4 x 35p, 4 x 41p, and 4 x 60p stamps) to be issued on 19 March will not only bear Olympic and Paralympic logos but will have the Royal Mail cruciform logo, replacing the Royal Mail International logo used on most earlier international books. The stamps will have blue fluor – the first time for the 41p and 60p values. The 35p stamp with blue fluor was issued in books last October (Bureau order code UB120).

NPM News

Valentines Exhibition

Currently on show at the National Postal Museum is an exhibition entitled "Cupid's Workshop: A Labour of Love" displaying some 50 handmade Valentine cards. The earliest



NPM Valentine postcard (14 February 1996)

Valentines date from the 18th century but most were made in the Victorian era. Some of the cards were labours of love, made at home to be exchanged by sweethearts. Others were made by poorly-paid women in over-crowded workshops. The story of the Valentine tradition and the sending of love tokens is supported by contemporary Victorian images depicting the making and receiving of Valentines.

To coincide with this exhibition, the Museum has issued four postcards reproducing colourful Valentine cards – see January *Bulletin*, page 148, for details. The cards are on sale at the Museum shop (25p each), or as a set from the British Philatelic Bureau (£1).

Cartoons Greetings Stamps Exhibition

An exhibition launching the new Cartoons Greetings stamps opened at the Museum on 26 February and will run until 3 May. Four of the stamps are by Mel Calman (1931-94) who worked for *The Times* newspaper over many years. *The Times* has inaugurated a cartoon competition in his memory and the winning drawings form part of the exhibition, as does original artwork from previous sets of Greetings

stamps, showing the rich diversity of imagery for this relatively new type of stamp.

Historic Painting Sought

The NPM is eager to acquire for its collections a painting entitled “A halted mailcoach” signed by Henry Alken, snr (1785-1851). Painted in oil on canvas, measuring 14 x 19ins framed, it is available by private treaty at £35,000.

Christine Jones, NPM Collections Manager writes:

We already have in the collection two paintings by Henry Alken, jnr – one was reproduced on a NPM postcard (see December 1995 *Bulletin*, page 103). Alken snr is a better artist than his son (although he did have his ‘off days’!), and this painting is a fine example of the mailcoach genre. From the NPM’s point of view, this is a very desirable painting because, in addition to the mailcoach, it also shows a post office (misspelled Post Office!). The Museum collections lack representations of early or rural post offices so this would be an important example to acquire.

Alken, a prolific painter of hunting and coaching scenes, was firmly established as an



artist of note, mainly working to commissions, before the reign of Queen Victoria. He was born in Soho, moving to Ipswich about 1809. Soon after this he began to make a successful living as a graphic journalist, working under the pseudonym Ben-Tallyho! In his later years he found it harder to sell his paintings, and died penniless.

The NPM is slowly building up a collection of artwork showing the many and various aspects of the postal services through the ages. Hence out interest in acquiring this particular painting.

Contributions from *Bulletin* readers towards the cost of purchasing this fine painting would be most welcome and should be sent to Christine Jones, National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP. Cheques should be payable to "The Post Office" which will match, pound for pound, all monies donated. In the event of the NPM not being successful in acquiring this painting, donors should indicate whether they wish a refund or their contribution to be held towards future purchases. All donations will be acknowledged.

Museum Attractions

The NPM is just a few minutes walk from St Paul's Cathedral and underground station. Open Monday-Friday 09.30-16.30, admission free. Enquiries: 0171-239 5420. Still on show (until April) is the "Victorian Posts" exhibition and there are permanent displays of British and overseas stamps, and postal artefacts. The Museum celebrates its 30th anniversary later this year – originally established primarily to display the collection of Victorian stamps formed by Reginald M Phillips (1888-1977).

Wildlife & Wetlands Trust Postcard Book

A book containing 10 postcards will go on sale at the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets on 12 March, price £2.95. Five cards will reproduce the stamp designs but without The Queen's head and value, the other five will show WWT centres at Arundel, Martin Mere, Slimbridge, Llanelli, and Caerlaverock with reproductions of the 19p, 25p, 30p, 35p, and 41p



stamps superimposed. It should be noted that these reproductions are not valid for postage and collectors who wish to use the cards as maximum cards will need to affix the relevant adhesive stamps.

Burns Exhibition

Royal Mail is sponsoring a touring exhibition in Scotland of the Life and Works of Robert Burns, arranged by the National Library of Scotland. During March the exhibition can be seen at: Central Library, East Kilbride (until 13 March), Eastwood District Libraries (13 March-12 April), and Bellshill Cultural Centre. Further venues will be announced next month.

Blue Fluor

The cylinders/plates reported are: Definitives – 10p 1; 29p 2; 35p 2; 38p 3; Country Stamps – Northern Ireland 19p Q3Q3.

Post Offices Photography Competition

A set of stamps featuring sub post offices will be issued in 1997. Royal Mail, in conjunction with *Practical Photography* magazine, is running a "Great British Post Office Competition" inviting readers to submit photographs of the exterior of a post office. Excellent prizes are offered and winners' photographs will form an exhibition at the National Postal Museum in summer 1997. The closing date for entries is 1 April 1996 – an entry form was included in the February issue of *Practical Photography*.

Football Legends Stamps

Royal Mail has announced that the five players chosen for the Football Legends stamps (14 May) are: Danny Blanchflower, Dixie Dean, Duncan Edwards, Bobby Moore, and Billy Wright. The players were chosen by the general public from a list of 10 players selected by sports writers from players nominated by the four country Football Associations. *Bulletin* readers were invited to cast their votes last October.

Steve Griffiths, Royal Mail manager responsible for the Football stamps said "I am very pleased with the response from the public and especially the level of interest from *Bulletin* readers! The players chosen are amongst the finest and best-loved of all time. I anticipate great interest in the stamps which will be issued in the lead-up to the European Football Championships."

The stamps will be previewed in next month's *Bulletin*.

Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust Stamps

The cylinders and colours are as follows:

19p P33 (phosphor) 1A (sepia) 1B (orange-yellow) 3C (brown) 1D (pale buff) 1E (grey) 1F (gold)

25p 1A (bistre-brown) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (magenta) 3D (new blue) 1F (pale buff) 1F (gold) 1G (black)

30p 1A (bistre-brown) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (magenta) 1D (new blue) 1E (pale buff) 1F (gold) 1G (grey-black)

35p 1A (sepia) 1B (pale orange) 2C (lake-brown) 1D (brown-olive) 1E (pale buff) 1F (gold) 2G (grey-black)

41p 1A (sepia) 2B (greenish yellow) 3C (magenta) 2D (new blue) 1E (pale buff) 1F (gold) 1G (grey-black)

25p Coil Stamp

The 25p definitive is now available from horizontal coils of 500, printed by Harrisons with 2 phosphor bands (blue fluor). Please note this stamp does not have elliptical perforations. The cylinder used was B4.

The Stamp Show 2000

Royal Mail and P & O Events Ltd announce that the international stamp exhibition to be held in London in 2000 will be entitled "The Stamp Show 2000". The organisers, P & O Events Ltd, appoint an advisory board for each of its exhibitions, from the London Motor Show to smaller trade exhibitions. Such boards keep the company in touch with the particular trade and ensure the exhibition meets its specific needs. The Philatelic Advisory Board for The Stamp Show 2000 comprises: Patrick Pearson (Chairman), Francis Kiddle, Richard Payne, Richard West, Chris Rainey, Julie Dunwiddie, Franceska Rapkin, and Philip Kenton. Each member will bring to the Board experience in different spheres of philately, design, and exhibition organisation.

The exhibition will be held at Earl's Court, London SW5, 22-28 May 2000. Enquiries about the exhibition should be addressed to: The Stamp Show 2000, PO Box 372, HAYWARDS HEATH, W Sussex, RH17 7FL. Further news next month.

Royal Mail Burns Bicentenary Watch

Royal Mail has produced an attractive wrist-watch showing, on the dial, a red rose with the inscription 'O MY LUVE'S LIKE A RED, RED ROSE/ROBERT BURNS 1759-1796'. The watch, supplied in a presentation box, costs £24.95 and is available: Royal Mail Collection, Room 205, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL. Remittances payable to "Royal Mail".



Shown here is a proof of the forthcoming Scottish football aerogramme (2 April) and the Railways pictorial aerogrammes (30 January). The Railway aerogrammes are sold in packs of six at £2.50. See February Bulletin, page 168, for details.

Stamp Scene

Scottish Philatelic Congress

The 67th Annual Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies will be held at the Town Hall, Falkirk on 23-24 March, hosted by the Caledonian Philatelic Society which is celebrating its 90th anniversary. Many of the country's major stamp and postcard dealers will be present, and the British Philatelic Bureau will have a stand. On Sunday 24 March displays will be mounted by many Scottish and specialist societies. Parties of school children will be most welcome. Enquiries: Terry Woods, 32 Bryan Street, HAMILTON ML3 0JW. For details of souvenir cover see *Commemorative Covers Review*, February 1996.

Caillebotte Exhibition

The Royal Academy of Arts are staging an exhibition of the work of Impressionist painter Gustave Caillebotte (1848-94) at Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0DS from 28 March to 23 June (closed 5 April). Gustave, sometimes erroneously referred to as Georges, Caillebotte is of interest to philatelists as, with his brother Martial, he formed a magnificent general collection not only of adhesives but also of postal and telegraphic stationery. On Martial's marriage in 1887 the adhesives were bought by T K Tapling who used the Caillebotte albums for a rearranged collection supplemented from his existing holdings. The famous Tapling collection is now part of the British Library Philatelic Collections, the Head of which, David Beech, FRPSL, has contributed an essay on the Caillebotte stamp collection to the Royal Academy of Arts exhibition catalogue. The Royal Academy exhibition will be open Monday-Friday 10.00-17.30, admission £4.50, concessions £3.50. Enquiries: 0171 439 7438.

Stuart Rossiter Memorial Lecture

About 100 philatelists and postal historians gathered at the National Army Museum in London on 16 December 1995 for the first memorial lecture in honour of Stuart Rossiter (1923-82), Editor of *The London Philatelist*, 1975-82. The lecture was given by Professor Barrie Jay, the Hon Secretary of the Royal Philatelic

Society, London, who looked at pre-stamp mail from several theatres of war. He explained to his audience that he did not see philately and postal history as rival hobbies; he had begun as a collector of 1d reds and 2d blues before moving on to a study of London postal history. His collection now includes military mail and he displayed, on slides, selected items from the War of Grand Alliance, the War of Austrian Succession, the last invasion of Britain (Pembrokeshire, 1797) and Prisoner of War mail from the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. The letters shown and quoted from vividly told the human story of war – the suffering as well as the glory. Prof Jay explained the routes taken by the mail and the rates charged – skilfully combining postal with the military and social history recorded in the letters.

Donations to the Stuart Rossiter Trust, a registered charity, can be made to: Stuart Rossiter Trust, c/o 30 Queen Charlotte Street, BRISTOL BS99 7QQ. The Trust has published *Naval Officers' Letters: A Study of Letters sent to and from British Royal Navy Officers serving abroad in the Victorian Era* by Geoffrey Osborn. Copies are available from the above address at a minimum donation of £10 plus postage (UK £1.50, overseas £2.50).

Awards for Philatelic Service

Each year the Association of British Philatelic Societies Awards Sub Committee considers nominations made in the approved format by an officer of a federation or society affiliated to ABPS for the Congress Medal and Awards of Merit. The Medal is awarded for outstanding service by a member of a society affiliated to ABPS, to British philately at national level. There is only one recipient each year. The award, consisting of a framed certificate, is given for outstanding service by members of affiliated societies to philately at county, federation and national, specialist and local society level. Up to 15 awards are made each year. "Outstanding service" includes work to advance philately at the level appropriate to each award in connection with Congress, a convention, exhibition, or the activities of a federation or society. It excludes study, research, formation of collections, journalistic work or the reading of papers.

Nominations should be submitted, by 1 May, to the Chairman of the Awards Sub Committee from whom nomination forms are available: David Beech, c/o British Library Philatelic Collections, Great Russell St., LONDON WC1B 3DG.

Collecting Decimal Machins

Part 1

D G A MYALL

The Machin head is the only design in the history of British postage stamps to have unified the complete range of definitives from ½p to £1. This was first achieved with the pre-decimal series on 5 March 1969 when the four large-size values (2/6d, 5/-, 10/- and £1) engraved by Bradbury Wilkinson were issued (delayed from 9 September 1968). This unity lasted well into the decimal era and ended only when the castles design for the high values was re-introduced in a modified form on 18 October 1988. Since then, the £1 has become a 'low value' and was re-issued with the Machin head on 22 August last year, with novel security printing features. So stunning is the three-dimensional look of this stamp that I for one would happily see *all* the castles stamps change to Machins. Yes, even the £10 one, despite the call on my pocket that such a move would mean. Then, once again, Machins would unify the whole definitive range, a position which all Machin maniacs would argue is its rightful one.

Decimal day was 15 February 1971 but the first decimal stamps with the Machin portrait were issued on 17 June 1970. They were recess printed by Bradbury Wilkinson in the denominations 10p, 20p, 50p and £1. Although the latter had been part of the pre-decimal

Machin series, a new layout of the printing plate meant that there were 100 stamps to a printer's sheet instead of 160. A small change to the typeface used for this value was introduced on 6 December 1972. The small format definitives for the then current tariff were all issued on D-day. There were 12 of them, printed by Harrison in photogravure: ½p, 1p, 1½p, 2p, 2½p, 3p, 3½p, 4p, 5p, 6p, 7½p and 9p. Perhaps only the idiosyncratic British could introduce a decimal currency with a fraction in it. This did not disappear until the ½p coin was demonetized on 31 December 1984.

New tariffs, new values

Since then, there have been 18 major tariff changes, with a further one very likely later this year. Each has necessitated the introduction of new values, or the re-introduction of a previous value in a new colour, to meet key rates and to maintain a practical range of make-up values. Changes of colour of the same value have also been caused by operational requirements, chiefly to meet technical demands of mail sorting machines. Other changes were brought about by two reviews undertaken by Jeffery Matthews at the request of Royal Mail. An account of these was given in the *Bulletin*, January/February 1993.

Leaving aside the pre-decimals, it would require a collection of 300 stamps to have just one of every Machin value and of every official colour change. At this level one must include

£4315 pane of 5 x 3p plus label ex 25p Veteran Transport No 2 book (17 September 1971) showing imperforate "blind" label, also perforated label pane – the labels could be detached and used as stamps!





Elliptical perforations – pair of 38p printed by Enschedé

three other groups in addition to the National range of standard unified issues. These are: the Country or Regional stamps, first issued on 7 July 1971; the non-value indicator (NVI) stamps, first issued on 22 August 1989; and the stamps issued in 1990 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the penny black. The total is made up as follows:

Large format (including the redrawn £1)	12
National, small format (including the small £1)	109
Isle of Man	4
Scotland	55
Wales	55
N. Ireland	55
NVI's (including the 1993 horizontal self-adhesive)	5
1840 anniversary	5
Total:	300

Such a collection indicates the diversity of the Machins and its attraction to collectors. Stamps are issued in three basic forms: in sheets, in booklets and in coils. Some of them exist in only one form; the 60p, for example, can be found only in books, (as can the famous ½p side band, but that is rather more specialised).

Of course, there is much more to Machin collecting than one of each. The past 25 years have seen many major developments in both printing and mail sorting technologies, and Britain has led the world in most of them. Every aspect of the makeup of a modern postage stamp has undergone change. Among the most important are the further development of phosphor inks and phosphorised papers, and the introduction of security features to counteract forgery. All these changes have left their mark on the stamps. In this fact lies the secret of their fascination.

Where to start

25 years is a long time and it would be very difficult to accumulate a complete Machin collection now. So where should you start if you want to have more than a basic collection of "one of each"? There are many "break points", limited only by what interests you personally and by your budget. In the rest of this article I will try and indicate some of the possibilities. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list but it will give you some idea of the scope available for a personalized collection.

All restricted forms of Machin collecting fall into one or other of two groups. I call these "closed" and "open". By a closed group I mean one in which there will be no more issues. For example, the series issued to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the penny black is a closed group. An open group is one which is concerned, at least partly, with issues which are still on sale. Examples are stamps with blue fluor in the phosphor ink, or machine vended booklets. Each kind of group has its advantages and disadvantages. The collector of a closed group knows that he is not going to be under the pressure of having to keep up with anything and everything that Royal Mail issues within his area of interest. On the other hand, he will be unable to obtain his wants at face value at his local post office and may find some of his purchases cost a considerable sum. Of course, even items in an open group may also cost a lot if they consist of errors, but there is always the chance of a lucky find, such as imperforate stamps or ones with



*Top: The new £1 – Mr Myall's favourite Machin!
Below: 1p and 12½p values – ideal for specialist study*

the phosphor omitted. The fun of the hunt is available to both groups of collectors, but collectors of an open group will never be complete until after Machins have come to an end; and what a sad day that will be!

Printers

Six firms have been engaged to print the Machins: Bradbury Wilkinson, Harrison, Waddington, Questa, Walsall and Enschedé, using a dozen different papers and four gums. Three printing methods have been used: recess (or intaglio), photogravure, and lithography. Here is source enough of variety and interest, although you will need to be able to distinguish the work of the various printers and to identify the paper/gum combinations. This is perfectly possible and there are many specialist publications to help you.

A traditional interest of all stamp collectors is perforation and the Machin series offers ample opportunity to build a collection around the subject. While only four gauges have been used, one of them an error but knowingly released (on some Walsall booklets in October 1990), a study of the various perforators used, both rotary and comb-operated, interests many people. Then there are the elliptical perforations, introduced to small format definitives in April 1993; these make a collecting group on their own.



Six printers – 20p Bradbury Wilkinson (Recess, 1970) and Waddington (Litho, 1980); 2p Photogravure (Harrison 1988 and Enschedé 1995) and Litho (Questa 1988 and Walsall 1993)

More specialized have been the variations in the pin layouts on the margins of booklet panes brought about by operational requirements (The Great Britain Decimal Stamp Booklet Study



20p Machin (photo) with "Penny Black" (recess) from 1990 miniature sheet

Circle has codified over 50 types). This is an open group and Questa machine-vend books have recently added a new layout to it. Pin layouts have also been altered for other purposes. One of the earliest was stated to have been to help the blind avoid mistaking the labels in early stitched books for stamps. Stamps with deliberate straight edges also fall into this group.

I have mentioned the wide range of colours that have been used for decimal Machins; based on official colour names there have been over 100 of them. This variety is a feature that prevents a display of Machins from being boring, a calumny often advanced by the uninitiated! "All those identical stamps on an album page", they cry. Well, each to his own bent, but a plateful of penny reds does not look all that different to me. One collector I know limits himself to a single colour; well, actually, a colour group. Variations on the green theme have provided him with an amazingly interesting collection. This is an open group because there are eight different greens in the current Jeffery Matthews colour range.

Single Value

An even more restrictive self-imposed limitation is adopted by collectors who concentrate on a single value. I know people who collect nothing but 3p stamps or 12½p ones. The latter is a closed group but although the 3p is not in the current range one never knows whether it might one day be needed again and so there is always the prospect of certain closed groups being re-opened, probably just as you feel that you have exhausted the possibilities and are looking for something else to collect. The formation of a single value collection can present quite a challenge if it is to be anything like complete. In addition to such regular items as cylinder blocks, coil leaders and booklet panes, there are major errors such as imperforates and missing phosphors and, for some colour trials, essays and

proofs. Not all of these are expensive; a missing phosphor 1p from sheets can be had for only £2 or £3.

In fact, the humble 1p is suggested as a candidate for a single value, single colour collection; the modern equivalent of the penny red, perhaps. This value is the only

one which has been continuously available unchanged from D-day to the present, apart from a hardly noticeable colour change from crimson to dark maroon in 1991. Until June 1993, when Enschedé took over the contract for it, all were printed by Harrison; it does not exist in a lithographed version.

Se-tenant pairs

No booklet pane consists solely of 1p stamps; those that exist are se-tenant with other values. This leads me to suggest another sphere of collecting which is very popular, especially on the continent. (There are many, many Machin enthusiasts in foreign countries; testimony to the global appeal of the design.) Se-tenant pairs can be collected horizontally or vertically. If you want all of them you must collect both forms since not all pairs exist in both. The current, and soon to be abolished, 50p machine vend booklet contains a vertical pair of a 25p stamp under a slogan label; no horizontal pairing of these two elements exists. Of course, if you wish, you can exclude pairs which do not consist only of stamps; the choice is entirely yours.

I have mentioned the 1840 anniversary issue and this is a very interesting closed group, having a direct connection with the beginning of stamp collecting. One of the unissued plates of the original Victoria head was combined with the Machin head to make the design (hence the popular reference to these stamps as "double heads"). This was very skilfully done by Jeffery Matthews. This group would make a splendid adjunct to a classic collection of penny blacks and twopenny blues, especially as the colours of the stamps were black and light blue in a conscious decision to link them with their famous predecessors. There were only five values and all were printed in sheets by photogravure. The stamps were not issued in coils, but the two lower values, 15p and 20p,



50p book (*Giant's Causeway - Sep 1995*) showing 25p vertically se-tenant with Postcode Helpline labels

which prepaid the minimum inland letter rates of the time, appeared in booklet form, as did the 29p value.

As usual, booklets provide the major source of variety and interest. The two lower values were issued in 50p and £1 machine-vend books printed by Harrison. The pane in the £1 book was also printed by Walsall as a lithography trial. Walsall, along with Harrison and Questa, also printed both values in red retail (window) books. Stamp World 1990 was held during the period these stamps were on sale and a special prestige book, *London Life*, contained panes with anniversary stamps, including one in which they appeared se-tenant with the standard issues; a case of two group collecting interests overlapping. The 20p was also featured on a miniature sheet se-tenant with a replica of the penny black, although the latter was not perforated.

Curiously, all of the 1840 anniversary sheet stamps exhibited the feature known to collectors as "screened value". The photogravure process as used by Harrison employs a cross-ruled screen to create the tiny cells which hold the ink. (The depth of these varies and it is this which gives the full tonal range which is so distinctive of the process.) The cause of value screening is underexposure to light at a certain stage of the cylinder-making process. This is an example of how an understanding of the printing processes can enhance one's interest and enjoyment. You do not *have* to bother with "flyspeck philately" although even this is of interest to 'platers'; who patiently re-create the original printer's sheet of booklet panes from the flaws they contain. This enables faked material to be detected and it is so very different from plating penny reds?

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To be continued

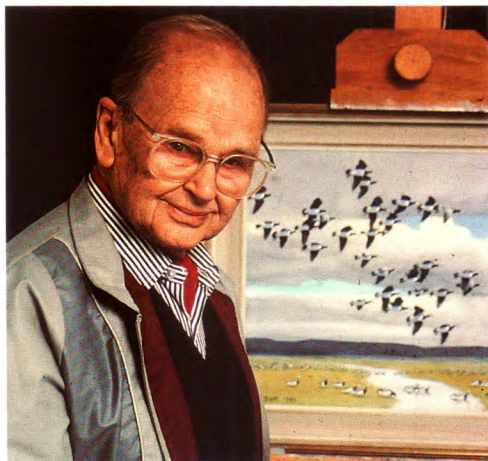
The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust 1946-96

Working to save wetlands for wildlife and people

KIM STYLES

Philatelists may know WWT's founder, the late Sir Peter Scott, not for his association with The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust but for his signature and illustrations which have appeared on many First Day Covers. He would have been delighted that the organisation which he founded 50 years ago on 10 November 1946 should itself now be commemorated with a special set of stamps.

Sir Peter, son of the Antarctic explorer Captain Scott, had a particular passion for wildfowl and after returning from service in the navy, wanted "to establish a centre for the scientific study, public display and conservation of the wildfowl of the world". In 1945, he visited the low-lying fields on the banks of the River Severn at Slimbridge and saw vast numbers of wild geese, including two rarely seen Lesser White-fronted Geese, amongst the more common White-fronted Geese. Sir Peter was so excited by seeing these rarities, together with so many other geese, that he decided that here was the site on which to establish his Centre and, in just under a year, his dream became reality. The choice of the Slimbridge site on the Severn reflected its vital importance as a winter habitat for thousands of migratory wildfowl. In particular, it is the major UK site for White-fronted Geese which are shown on one of the stamps.



Sir Peter Scott, 1909-89 ©Jonathan Leach/WWT



Feeding Hawaiian geese ©Jonathan Leach/WWT

Other sites, similarly attractive to wild birds, have become WWT Centres so that there are now eight: one in Scotland, one in Wales, one in Northern Ireland and the remainder in England. Work has commenced on a new Centre at Barnes in London, due to be opened for the year 2000. Located on what used to be Thames Water reservoirs, this area has also become important to wildfowl and other wetland wildlife such as newts. With skills acquired through 50 years' experience of wetland habitat creation and management, WWT is constructing a diversity of habitats which will become home to a wide range of plants and animals: diving and surface-feeding ducks including the beautiful snow white, fish-eating Smew, dragonflies, newts, frogs, geese, swans and waders.

Visitors welcome

In addition to a wealth of wildlife, all WWT Centres share another important feature: they are designed to welcome human visitors and to enable them to share the thrill of seeing skeins of wild geese and the special excitement of being close to some of the world's most beautiful birds. In the belief that successful conservation required the involvement and interest of people, Centres were, and still are, designed to enable visitors to see and learn about birds without disturbing them – and have a great time, too. Hides allow unrivalled views of wild birds, and tame birds at all but two Centres can be hand fed. Whilst educational and interpretative

methods have changed greatly over 50 years, they remain an important element of the excitement of a visit to a WWT Centre.

WWT has played an important role in researching wildfowl biology. In 1946, little was known about the captive breeding of wildfowl. The use of an "electronic egg" told WWT scientists the proper temperatures at which eggs should be incubated, how often they should be turned and what humidity they required. Such knowledge helped WWT to undertake a rescue mission for the Nene or Hawaiian Goose. By 1950, its numbers had fallen to about 50 and the species was on the verge of extinction. Three individuals were sent to Slimbridge and, from these, many have been bred and returned to their native homeland, buying time for the species. WWT continues to work with agencies in Hawaii to ensure that this lovely goose does not again face extinction. WWT has bred many other wildfowl for the first time in captivity, including Bewick's Swans, Marbled Teal, King Eider, Goosander and White-headed Ducks. It continues to play a key role in international efforts to conserve wildfowl species.

The migratory movements of birds have fascinated people for centuries and strange stories grew up to explain them. Barnacle Geese, with their black and white plumage, were thought to develop from shellfish which grew in clusters on sea-washed timbers! Thanks to WWT's skill in capturing and ringing wildfowl, whether through rocket-netting in winter or rounding up flightless birds on summer expeditions abroad, the routes and "re-fuelling" stops of many wildfowl are now much better understood. This knowledge has led to conservation measures to ensure that birds still have access to these areas which are vital to their survival.

Recording Wildfowl Species

From 1947, WWT was involved in the National Waterfowl Counts Scheme which mobilised large numbers of volunteers to visit wetland sites during the winter to count and record wildfowl species. In 1954, WWT took over the running of the scheme and, over the years, the data collected has formed the basis for the estimation of wildfowl population numbers. It has provided the facts on which designations of important wildlife sites have been based and is used in deciding planning applications for developments on wetland sites. The scheme, now called the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) has, since 1993,



WWT stamps, 12 March 1996

been jointly run with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the British Trust for Ornithology and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. WWT continues to run the waterfowl counts, one of the most comprehensive surveys of wildlife anywhere in the world.

Graceful Bewick's Swans return to Britain each year from their breeding grounds in arctic Russia. Each bird has an individual pattern of yellow and black bill markings so, with practice, they can be recognised. Careful studies have revealed that some birds have returned each year for 25 years to WWT Centres, they have the same mate throughout their lifetime although



Bewick's Swan on 1988 Linnean Society 31p value

occasional "divorces" are known and cygnets make the long journey with their parents when only about four months old and may remain with them into the following year. Several Centres enable people to see both Bewick's and Whooper Swans plus other wildfowl being fed by floodlight during the winter.

Over the last few years, WWT has broadened its work to include wetland habitats. Wetlands are not only vital to the survival of vast numbers and diversity of wildlife, they also perform many functions which are vital to people. Not least amongst these is the storage and release of water. Rivers, lakes, streams and reservoirs are all examples of wetlands and their role in the Water Cycle is perhaps better understood following the drought in 1995. Wetlands have varying appeals to different people: cheap land for the developer of a landfill site, recreation for the windsurfer, birdwatcher, waterskier and wildfowler, a valuable aid for flood protection and pollution purification for engineers. Sometimes, these uses can cause conflict between people and wildlife. WWT works to ensure that wetlands are used



WWT postmarks for 1980 British Birds and 1993 Swans issues

sustainably for the benefit of both wildlife and people and, when necessary, will oppose unsustainable practices.

Worldwide Network

Over the years, WWT has accumulated a vast knowledge of successful educational practices, wildfowl biology and wetland habitat creation and management techniques. A consultancy company, the Wetland Advisory Service Ltd, has been established to deal with the many commercial requests for help and advice. Information is also shared with colleagues in governmental and non-governmental organisations both at home and abroad. In particular, WWT runs Wetland Link International which networks Centres around the world which share our belief in the need to raise awareness of wetlands amongst as wide an audience of people as possible.

As a conservation charity, WWT has to find the funds to carry out its vital wetland



WWT 1991 £3 Waterfowl Conservation stamp (see Bulletin February 1992, page 114, note this stamp is not valid for postal use)

conservation work. Income is derived from admissions to Centres, membership and bird adoptions, donations, legacies and grants. Whooper Swans, which are featured on the stamps, are just one of the species which can be adopted. With wetlands under continued threat both at home and abroad and 45 (20%) of the world's wildfowl species threatened with extinction, WWT will work even harder over the next 50 years to carry out its mission to save wetlands for wildlife and people.

For further details of WWT's work, please contact Kim Stiles, The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, Slimbridge, GLOUCESTER GL2 7BT, Tel. 01453-890333.

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Closure of Glasgow Head Post Office

JAMES MACKAY

One of Glasgow's best-known landmarks, the Head Post Office in George Square, will shortly close its doors for the last time as a post office. This brings to an end an office which, in one form or another, has fronted George Square for almost a century and a half. At the time of the momentous reforms of 1840 Glasgow's PO was located in Glassford Street but by 1850 was inadequate. In that year the Chamber of Commerce petitioned for a new post office, suggesting the Assembly Rooms in Ingram Street recently vacated. The Treasury turned this down, but a quarter of a century later was compelled to buy that site for an extension.

The matter was not allowed to rest, and in 1854 the Office of Works was asked to design a new post office for a site, then known as Manhattan Buildings, which was purchased the following year. By the end of 1856 work had advanced sufficiently for the PO authorities to decide that the imperial arms should adorn the facade – a matter which provoked storms of protest in the newspapers. The new post office was opened early in 1857 and was immediately embroiled in a massive shake-up in the aftermath of the Madeleine Smith murder trial, when the conduct of the office had been heavily censured.

Within a decade the new office was hopelessly inadequate for the needs of a city which had expanded dramatically. By 1870 the Treasury sanctioned the purchase of property at the corner of George Square and South Frederick Street for £27,000, but the demolition of buildings did not take place till 1873. New wings, on either side of the 1857 post office, were then erected, the staff moved into them in 1875 and the building of 1857 was razed to the ground and rebuilt. The Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) laid the foundation stone in October 1876 and the work was completed by September 1879.

Further extensions were added in 1880-83, but no sooner completed than the advent of the parcel post necessitated additional premises to relieve overcrowding which was so bad that postmen had nowhere to go between shifts and had to lounge in the Square in all weathers. It was not until 1896 that the post office, in its present form, was completed. In 1891 Richard Hobson, the then Postmaster-Surveyor of Glasgow, was allowed to resign when it came to light that he had refurbished his office without Treasury sanction, adding a palatial en-suite bathroom and installing electric lighting! Hobson had previously been Surveyor of the North Western District of England and lived at



Glasgow HPO (Photo James Mackay)

Penrith, preferring the delights of the Lake District to the grimy realities of Glasgow, and being frequently reprimanded for running his office at long distance.

The various departments, including parcels, telegraphs, letter sorting and delivery, as well as the public counter and administrative departments, continued there until the 1980s when a Parcel Concentration Office was opened in Kilbirnie Street and a Mechanised Letter Office in Kingston in 1984. In 1993 the MLO closed and was replaced by the Automatic Processing Centre in Springburn, on the northern outskirts of the city.

The fate of the old head post office has recently been decided – it is planned to convert it into the National Gallery of Scottish Art. Some of the treasures from the National Postal Museum in London are likely to be displayed in the new gallery, as announced in the January *Bulletin* (page 153).

Twentieth Century Postal Stationery

COLIN BAKER

Part 4. George VI

King George VI's reign began in a time of peace and hope, but just like his father's period before him, it took only a few short years before war once again ravaged Europe, pushing up postage rates and creating difficulties of supply and distribution. This time British Forces were scattered over the whole world and the Post Office was forced to review both the cost and the means of sending mail overseas.

New Stamps for a New King George

At the beginning of George VI's reign it seemed that only redesigned stationery stamps were needed, incorporating the new King's head for the same values as those used for George V. Embossed stamps in $\frac{1}{2}$ d and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d values were prepared for PO envelopes with 1d and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d letterpress stamps produced for postcards and lettercards. Newspaper wrappers were never issued as the rapidly reducing demand for these did not merit their continued production. When supplies of stamped wrappers from the George V

period ran out, the public were expected to use plain wrappers with adhesive stamps.

The embossed stamps prepared for the range of envelopes produced by the PO were very similar in design to the previous issue, the laurel branches being replaced by doves of peace, reminiscent of the 2d value of the earlier reign, only the 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d stamp varying from this theme and the only embossed stamp in the whole range to have no embellishments at all.

George VI envelopes in $\frac{1}{2}$ d and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d values were released early in 1939. The design of the new impressed stamps used the same head as that prepared for their adhesive counterparts issued in 1937. Once again the designs for the impressed stamps had to be modified to suit the letterpress process. The King's head, which had been drawn by Edmund Dulac (1882-1953), was set in an oval frame designed by Eric Gill (1882-1940). Unlike the previous George V issues, the value of these new stamps was only given in figures, with the single word POSTAGE set at the bottom of the frame.

The outbreak of War in September 1939 forced up postage rates and on 6 May 1940, exactly 100 years after the introduction of adhesive stamps and postal stationery, the letter rate was raised to 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d, printed papers to 1d, and

The 1939 envelope for printed papers. This had a short life, being superseded about a year later following the postage rate increases of May 1940.



postcards to 2d.

As in the George V period of rising postage rates, dies in the new values of 1d and 2½d were already available, having been used for privately stamped stationery. Envelopes in these new values were soon on sale, although due to wartime conditions, those for the printed paper rate had a short life. The letter rate envelope also suffered, with both the quality and weight of the paper becoming progressively worse as the war dragged on.

Yet again the colour of the 2½d letter rate stamp failed to meet the UPU agreed colour scheme, this time being printed in blue, the colour reserved for the overseas letter rate. It was not until 1957 with the issue of revised colours that British stationery fell into line again when envelopes and lettercards carried a 2½d crimson stamp and unsealed envelopes a green 1½d stamp.

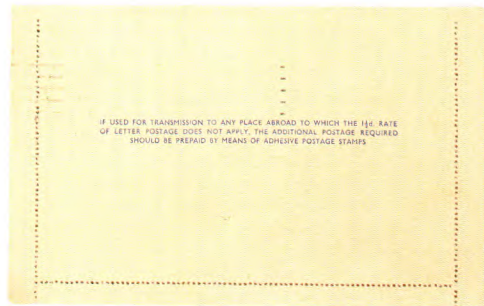
Problems with impressed Stamps

In May 1940 the George VI 2d letterpress stamp was not yet available for printing onto postcards. The PO considered using the 2d George V die, but rejected the idea of employing stamps prepared for a King who had been dead for four years. Although a new 2d die was in the making, there was a shortage of inland postcards and a supply impressed with two 1d stamps was issued. These two stamps had to be printed in separate runs, adding to the difficulties of preparing the cards and also to production costs, a fact that did not please the PO.

Fortunately the new 2d dies were ready shortly after the postage rate increase, enabling postcards with a single 2d stamp, as well as reply cards, to be available from July 1940 onwards.

Early in 1940 the delays in preparing stamp dies for printing on lettercards reflected the same problems which the 2d dies for postcard stamps were experiencing. Finally in March 1940 the lettercard with a 1½d stamp was issued, but in a few short weeks this was made redundant by the rate increases of May 1940. Rather like the 2d postcard stamp, the 2½d letter rate stamp was not ready and a provisional issue of lettercards printed with both the 1½d and 1d stamps was produced.

When at long last the correct value die was ready, lettercards with the new 2½d stamps were issued in such a hurry that the instructions on the reverse still referred to the old postage rate of 1½d. Although similar errors have occurred on other stationery products issued by the PO, this



The 2½d lettercard issued July 1940. Below: the instructions on the first printing which still showed the old rate of 1½d.

is the only occasion when the incorrect postage rate has been printed on the back of a lettercard. Subsequent issues had this error corrected.

In March 1944 and April 1945 special airmail postcards for transmission to Far East Prisoners of War went on sale at 3d and 1½d respectively. By the use of a postcard with its open message, censorship was made easier and it was hoped this would help in their safe delivery. Despite the deliberate use of a postcard, most were not delivered to Prisoners of War although many were safely delivered to refugee and internee camps in the region.

Changes to Registered Envelopes

During the Second World War and in the years that followed the PO faced enormous difficulties in supplying sufficient quantities of registered envelopes. Contracts for the production of these special envelopes were placed with several printers resulting in a large number of different printings and print settings.

During George VI's reign the registered envelope was not only affected by the postage rate increase of 1940, but also by an increase in the basic registration fee from 3d to 4d in 1949

and again to 6d in 1952, each time requiring new combined postage and registration stamps.

In 1940 the PO started to print the envelope selling prices in the box reserved for the registration label. But once again, wartime conditions intervened, and with ever increasing production costs and selling prices, this practice was quickly discontinued.

In May 1949 the PO still held large stocks of the popular G size envelope. The effects of the War continued to be felt and to avoid unnecessary wastage, 1d embossed stamps were added to the flaps of these envelopes to bring them into line with the current postage rates.

A New Stationery Idea

The need for a simple, cheap, yet lightweight air letter was first recognised by Douglas Gumbley (1881-1973), the Inspector General of Posts and Telegraphs in Iraq, and the world's first air letter weighing only grammes was issued there on 15 July 1933. The British Post Office were slow to adopt this method of communication, so that by the start of the Second World War there were no concessionary air mail rates and the cost of sending letters by air was still expensive.

Large numbers of service personnel who were stationed in the Middle and Far East at this time had the choice when writing to their families at home, either to wait months for surface mail to arrive, or to make use of the speedy but expensive airmail service. They naturally clamoured for a much cheaper method of sending letters and the idea of adapting Gumbley's air letter was considered. However, its introduction was slow and spasmodic.



The first stationery air letter for general use. This example has been stamped at the 1s 3d rate since it contained an enclosure.

Initially only limited supplies of unstamped air letters were distributed to forces serving overseas, although generally postage was free. Supplies of air letters gradually increased and their use was extended to other areas, but not to the UK. Plans were made to allow a similar air letter to be sent from this country but at a rate of 6d. Delays occurred in preparing the printing plates and in the meantime an unstamped air letter was released in December 1942. Finally, the postal stationery version was available in the middle of 1943. There was no first day of issue for these air letters, the earliest recorded date of use is 30 June 1943 (see *Bulletin* May 1993, page 221).

The 6d air letter had been preceded in 1941 by an earlier version, but this had only been valid for writing to internees and prisoners of war held in Europe. At 2½d it matched the inland letter rate but was unsealed to allow the contents to be censored on both sides of the channel. The "Prisoner of War Air Mail Lettercard", as it was called by the PO, was ungummed but was provided with a tongue which slipped into a slot in the back of the folded sheet. To prevent any enclosures being included within the air letter it had no sides and could be inspected without being opened out.

By contrast the normal issue 6d air letter issued in 1943 was folded into quarters and sealed by pregummed fold-over flaps, thus ensuring privacy for the writer. These air letters were printed on a blue/grey paper that was so light and thin that an additional overlay was required to prevent the writing showing through to the outside. The 6d rate for air letters was maintained for the remainder of George VI's reign.

In 1948 the Olympic Games were held at Wembley and the opportunity was taken to prepare Britain's first commemorative air letter. This was released on 28 July 1948, and although the only indication of its special significance was the stamp taken from the commemorative set of four adhesive stamps, it is still considered to be the first of a long line of special issues which has continued to this day.

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For further information on early air letters and air mail lettercards see articles by Peter Jennings in the *Bulletin* of June and August 1993, July 1994, and April 1995, also the letter from Tony Edwards in July 1993. Ed.

Exhibition News

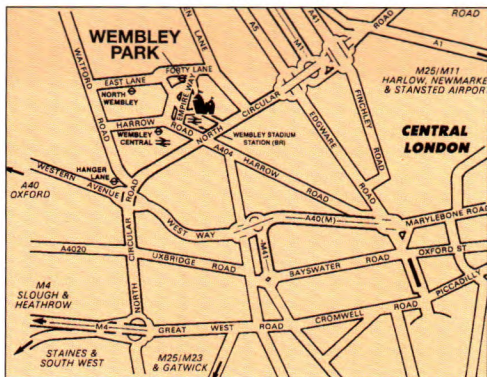
Stamp '96

The British Philatelic Trust (BPT) will be directly sponsoring and organising some important additional features which have been incorporated into Stamp '96, at Wembley Exhibition Centre, London 25-28 April 1996. Specifically the BPT's main role will be to co-ordinate the Collectors' Information Centre and Workshops in conjunction with the Association of British Philatelic Societies (APBS) and the National Philatelic Society (NPS). It will also lend its support and expertise to the expanded programme of specialist seminars running throughout each day of the show.

Francis Kiddle RDP, FRPSL has been appointed by the Trust to Chair a Project Working Group to integrate these activities. The involvement of the Trust is a significant step in the development and future direction of Stamp '96 and emphasises the strategic benefits of building on the existing partnership between Royal Mail and Stanley Gibbons who jointly backed the launch of the new show at Wembley last April.

Information Centre

The Collectors Information Centre and Workshop sessions will feature a philatelic reference library, the latest computer based collecting software and provide demonstrations and guidance on a range of diverse subjects including stamp identification, use of accessories



and the writing and mounting up of a collection. Two information booths staffed by philatelic experts representing all the appropriate organisations will deal with visitors' questions and provide information on all aspects of the hobby from starting a collection to joining clubs and societies.

The specialist seminar programme (expanded from Stamp '95) will feature up to seven 30 minute sessions each day in a specially equipped seated theatre. The individual talks will be enhanced with special displays, slide presentations and the provision of delegate notes. These will cover a wide range of topics including aspects of thematics and covers; postal history; the British Library and Post Office Archives; Aero philately; beginning your collection; forming a stamp club; stamp design and printing; and a preview of forthcoming GB stamp issues. Over the weekend of the show visitors will be able to participate with major names in a series of specialist forums.

Participating in Stamp '96 will be some 87 dealers, 17 postal administrations, and a number of philatelic publishers, accessory suppliers and auctioneers.

Sports stamps

Wembley is a highly appropriate venue relating to the major sporting events of 1996 – European Soccer Championships in England, and Olympic Games in the USA. Many will recall with pleasure England's World Cup victory at Wembley in 1966! Stamp '96 will tie in launches of new issues on sporting themes by several administrations, including Guernsey and Jersey football issues on 25 April. Royal Mail will be previewing their European Football Championship issue (14 May), and exhibiting the recently launched 100 years of Going to the Cinema issue (16 April).

There will also be two valuable private sporting theme collections on view. Football stars past and present will be attending on the opening day and celebrities from the world of sport will be visiting the show to provide signatures for special souvenir covers and other philatelic items from an autograph booth.

A Rugby League star will be available during the morning of Saturday 27 April – the Rugby League Cup Final takes place at Wembley that afternoon.

Commemorative Cover and Charity Auction

Another new feature of the 1996 show will be demonstrations by stamp printers Walsall Security Printers and Harrisons. The latter will also have an engraver at work on their stand monitored by close circuit television.

A Stamp '96 commemorative envelope will be on sale and a special commemorative cancellation will be applied to mail posted at the exhibition. The proceeds from this will be donated to the show's designated charity, The Children's Society, for which Stanley Gibbons Auctions are organising Charity Auction during the evening of Friday 26 April. Lots will be welcome and donors should contact David Crocker at Stanley Gibbons Auctions on 0171 836 8444.

Valuers from Stanley Gibbons will be on hand throughout the show providing visitors with advice and free valuations of stamps and albums. It is recommended that bookings are made on first arrival.

Free Entry, Free Gift, Free Prize Draw

In addition to free entry to Stamp '96 all adults will receive on registration a mystery bag containing a complimentary gift with some special prizes to be found. The free draw prize this year will be a trip to Canada for two people to visit Capex '96 World Stamp Exhibition in Toronto in June, courtesy of Harry Allen, Agents for the Canada Stamp Corporation.

Junior Attractions

Stamp '96 aims to attract more children to the hobby and to encourage junior collectors, their families, friends and schools to develop the beneficial interest.

Main junior features include a "Design-a-Stamp Competition" and a Treasure Hunt involving a free "goodie bag" for starters and a chance to participate in a tour of 15 stands to accumulate extra items. Final stop at the Rush

Stamps stand will be rewarded with a special £5 value pack of stamps – providing the questions have been completed in full! A Children's Stamp Workshop will operate during the show and a creche facility will be available.

Free Advance Tickets, Catalogue and Show Guide

Advance tickets are available from the Stamp '96 Free Ticket Hotline on (01425) 461353 (weekdays). A copy of the Stamp '96 catalogue and comprehensive guide can be obtained shortly prior to the show by sending a A4 size stamped addressed envelope stamped at 47p 1st class or 36p 2nd class to: Stamp '96, 5 Parkside, Christchurch Road, RINGWOOD, Hants, BH24 3SH by 10 April.

30% off UK Coach Travel

A large number of people are expected to travel to Stamp '96 by coach. National Express are offering visitors with Stamp '96 Discount Vouchers 30% off standard coach fares for travel to London Victoria Coach Station from throughout the UK during the four days of the show. Discount Vouchers and National Express timetable can be obtained from the Stamp '96 office – address and phone number above.

"Stamp '96 NEC"

The organisers of Stamp '96 have announced that a new second show, "Stamp '96 NEC", will take place at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham on 22-24 November 1996.

Capex 96

The exhibition's organising committee is pleased to announce that Canada Post will be launching two stamp issues (Historic Canadian Land Vehicles and Yukon Gold Discovery) at the exhibition. This will provide collectors who attend Capex a rare opportunity to attend a stamp launch in person. "Vehicles of Industry and Commerce" will complete a popular series of miniature sheets depicting Historic Land Vehicles, issued in 1993-95 (SG MS1563, 1611, 1636). The final sheet will be issued during the Opening Ceremonies on 8 June. On 13 June, designated "Gold Rush Day", Canada Post will introduce a stamp booklet featuring five different designs to mark the centenary of the discovery of gold in Yukon.

Capex '96 – a world philatelic exhibition – will be held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre from 8-16 June 1996. Some 827 exhibits will be displayed, amounting to 3800 frames of

stamps. No fewer than 39% of all entries have never previously been shown at an international or world philatelic exhibition. Some 35% will cover traditional philately and 25% postal history.

Enquiries: Capex '96, PO Box 204, Station Q, Toronto, Ontario, M4T 2M1, Canada.

Pacific 97

Planning is now at an advanced stage for this exhibition to be staged in San Francisco 29 May-8 June 1997, marking the 150th anniversary of the first United States postage stamps. Each day will have a theme: Postal Administration Day (29 May), United States Postal Service (30), Organized Philately (31), Philatelic Literature (1



June), San Francisco/Golden Gate Bridge (2), Bureau of Engraving & Printing (3), Stamp Dealers (4), National Postal Museum (5), Youth (6), FIP (7) and Universal Postal Union (8). Special cancels are being designed for each day.

There will be a special non-competitive section in the Literature Exhibition featuring all kinds of philatelic software. This is an experimental section proposed by FIP to become part of the philatelic literature section. Pacific 97 will be the time philatelic software has been displayed at a FIP World Philatelic Exhibition. Displays will include stamp inventory programs; exhibit and album page design and layout programs; electronic catalogues on CD-Rom; and programs that allow comparison of scanned images or their use in other applications.

Enquiries: Pacific 97, Quinby Bldg, Top Floor, 650 S Grand Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90017-3809, USA.

Events – March & April

until 3 March: Exhibition of stamps and associated material, by Luton & District Phil Soc, at Wardown Museum, Luton. Enquiries: R Head, 98 Mancroft Road, Caddington, LUTON LU1 4EN.

until-31 March: Display of Ascension 1995 Flowers issue (artwork, essays, proofs, issued stamps) at British Library, Great Russell Street, London WC1. Open Mon-Sat 10.00-17.00, Sun 14.30-18.00. Enquiries: 0171-412 7635/6.

until April: "Victorian Posts" exhibition at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1. Open Mon-Fri 09.30-16.30. Admission free. Enquiries: 0171-239 5420.

2 March: Scout & Guide Stamps Club annual exhibition at Baden Powell House, Queen's Gate, South Kensington, London SW7. Open 11.00-17.00. Admission free. Dealers, displays, etc. Enquiries: P Duck, 0181-891 5746.

23 March: Rayleigh Phil Soc Annual Stamp Day Exhibition & Fair at Mill Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh, 10.00-17.00. Admission free. Dealers, Displays, Refreshments. Enquiries: R E How, 01702-544632.

23-24 March: Scottish Philatelic Congress at Falkirk Town Hall. Dealers, displays, British Philatelic Bureau, specialist society meetings. Parties of school children welcome. Enquiries: T Woods, 32 Bryan Street, HAMILTON ML3 0JW.

30 March: Railway Philatelic Group annual convention at St Sepulchre Church Rooms, Church Lane, Northampton, 10.00-16.00. Enquiries: A Violet, 50 Roberts Road, Prestbury, CHELTENHAM GL52 5DJ.

30 March: Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies Spring Convention at Burgess Hill School for Girls, Keymer Road, Burgess Hill, 10.30-16.30. Dealers, competitive displays, talk on "Less Usual Facets of Collecting from South Australia, Queensland and Tasmania" by A R Butler, RDP.

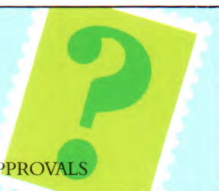
1 April-30 June: Display of Seychelles/Zil Elwanngen Sesel 1983 Wildlife issue (artwork, essays, proofs, issued stamps) at British Library, Great Russell Street, London WC1. Open Mon-Sat 10.00-17.00, Sun 14.30-18.00. Enquiries: 0171-412 7635/6.

13-14 April: Railway Letter Stamp Seminar at North Yorkshire Moors Rly. Enquiries: Mrs M Atkins, 5 Tiber View, Brinsworth, ROTHERHAM, S60 5EA.

20 April: Telford Phil Soc Stamp & Postcard Fair at Civic Offices, Wellington, Telford, 10.00-16.00. Enquiries: P Morris-Jones, 01952-223926.

Competition

SPONSORED BY:
AVON MIXTURES UPON APPROVALS



Win a GB Queen Victoria 1847-54 1s, embossed block of four cat £15,000!

The prizes for this month's competition have been supplied by AVON MIXTURES. Collecting WORLDWIDE and FOREIGN COUNTRIES stamps via Avon Mixtures can be such fun and good value for money. For as little as £5 + 75p p&p gives you the opportunity to pick 250 stamps PLUS up to a further 250 FREE, regardless of catalogue value, from a big bag of over 2000 unsorted off-paper worldwide stamps. PLUS if you order now (refund guarantee), AVON will include a FREE £5 CAT VALUE BRITISH STAMP.

* 1st prize: GB Queen Victoria 1847-54 1s embossed, an unused, albeit heavily restored, block of four in pale green, SG 54 catalogued not less than £15,000! A great rarity even in this condition worth hundreds of pounds.



* 2nd prize: GB Edward VII 1911-13 Somerset House 10s blue SG 319, a well centred fine colour original gum example with small dealer's handstamp on reverse, cat SG £325.

* 3rd prize: GB 1840 1d black, letters EC (European Community?!), plate 6, fine used, margins just clear to good, most attractive deep shade example, cancelled by fine crisp red Maltese Cross, cat SG £175.

The Avon Challenge

Valuable stamps are often found in mixed lots and at any one time AVON MIXTURES has between 20-30 million loose worldwide stamps in stock! Collected from sources developed over 30 years of trading, it is a physical impossibility

for them to sort these stamps...

...which is why they parcel the mix up and offer collectors the chance to pick through. They could never sort it in a hundred years but you could join thousands of other collectors who receive their bags of stamps upon a BUY ONE, YOU TAKE ONE FREE basis.

Ask for a bag of over 2000 unsorted worldwide stamps from which to pick 250 stamps at 2p each PLUS UP TO ANOTHER 250 ABSOLUTELY FREE. Return those you don't want. Stop the service anytime. Stamps catalogued £s upwards are regularly found: best find reported £1300 cat Canada 10d Cartier. Avon has now despatched over 40,000 bags to collectors who enjoy the idea of picking from mixtures without having to watch the pennies and knowing that every stamp selected is either 2p or FREE!

The FREE £5 CAT GB stamp is yours to keep whatever you decide. To accept the Avon Challenge to try their mixtures just send a cheque/PO payable to AVON MIXTURES for £5 + 75p p&p or enclose Access/Visa/Mastercard number plus expiry date. You can always return the bag intact for full refund and keep the free £5 cat stamp. Write now, CWO please to:

AVON MIXTURES WORLD
MIX FREE £5 OFFER,
PO Box 23, RUGBY CV22 6SQ



To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: March Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL to arrive by 26 April. Entries must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

1. Who refurnished his office without Treasury sanction?
2. How many printers have produced Machin stamps?
3. Which organisation took over the running of the Waterfowl Counts Scheme in 1954?
4. What was the standard letter rate from 6 May 1940?

Answers will be found in this *Bulletin*.

Competition not open to employees, families or agents of Royal Mail or Avon Mixtures.

The winners of the December competition were: E Schillinger (1st prize); P Wearden (2nd); M Tarry, D Funnell, Dr J Warmbrunn, and C Reich (3rd). Answers: 1. John Roberts, 2. Falkirk, 3. Peter Westwood, 4. 1968, 5. Alex Murphy.

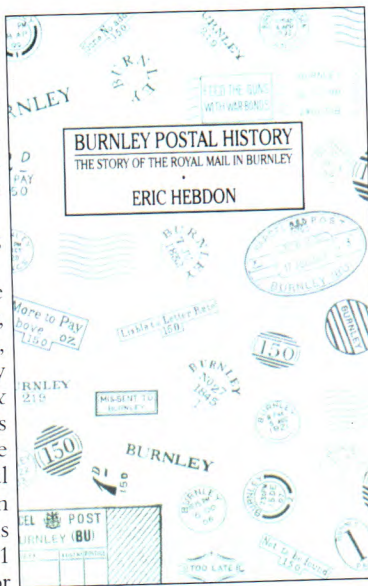
The name Colin Peachey is virtually synonymous with British slogan postmarks! To an impressive list of publications is now added the first of four volumes entitled **In-Depth UK Slogan Postmark Listings: Details of All Towns Using Multi-Town Slogan Postmarks in the UK Over Four Decades 1960-1999** and not inappropriately sub-titled "Colin Peachey's Life Work!" Readers will see why. The book is intended for use with the well-known *Collecting Slogan Postmarks* (1917-69) and subsequent volumes covering 1970-94. These list all slogans, national and local, giving the number of offices using the "national" slogans. The purpose of this new series is to list such offices.

Mr Peachey's Introduction sets out his aims and provides detailed notes on town dies inscribed for "Joint Offices" (e.g. Bournemouth-Poole), and with "Generic Descriptions" which began with "Fylde Coast" in 1966. He describes town die letters, types of machine, die layouts, use in standard and transposed position, and variations in the "Radio/TV Licence", "New Voters List" "Post Early for Christmas", and "Recorded Delivery" slogans. The lettering of modern Universal machine town dies differs between manufacturers. Peachey's own classification system, first published in the *British Postmark Society Quarterly Bulletin* and subsequently in the *British Postmark Bulletin* (17 July 1992), is repeated with 11 clear illustrations. The Main Listings begin with the "World Refugee Year" slogan (January 1960) – number 294 in the chronological sequence starting with the War Bonds slogan of 1917. This volume finishes with No 1417 "Make Fast to the Boat Show" (December 1969-January 1970). Along the way we encounter many old favourites: Radio/TV Licence, Recorded Delivery, Dairy Festival, Greetings Telegrams, etc. The book concludes with a "simplified listing of the 'mainstream' postcode slogans". 154 pages. Price £11.50, postage £1.50 UK, £2.30 overseas, from: Colin Peachey, 19 Moorland Road, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD HP1 1NH.

To commemorate its golden jubilee in 1994 the

Burnley & District Philatelic Society published **Burnley Postal History: The Story of the Royal Mail in Burnley** by Eric Hebdon who, in his Preface, sums up the satisfaction of postal history studies: "The postal history of any area, be it town, county, or country, is best likened to a jigsaw puzzle. As you proceed with research and the accumulation of reference material, new pieces can be found to fit into the puzzle, but always there are gaps remaining and search as you might completion can never be achieved. Parts of the story are missing and may of course be lost for ever, but the fascination always remains that tomorrow, or next month, or maybe next year, you will locate and bring to light fresh information and fill one more gap in your puzzle."

Royal Mail first established a presence in Burnley in 1770 when it was a "small market town with an embryonic textile industry"; population about 2000. The first Postmaster, John Sharpless, used a cottage by the "Boot & Shoe" Inn as his post office. The town's postal history from 1770 to 1900 is chronicled in 11 chapters, one for



each decade, with a further chapter covering the 20th century. There is a listing of 26 Postmasters from Sharpless in 1770 to A Tweedle in 1966, sections on the Letter Post Markings of the Burnley Post Office, and Postal Markings for Specific Purposes, a Glossary and a Bibliography. Mr Hebdon is to be congratulated on a job well-done, although he seems less interested in modern postmarks – some further illustrations of recent slogans, parcel postmarks and special handstamps (if any) would have been welcome. But this does not seriously reduce the value of his work. 156 pages. Price £8 postpaid UK £9.50 overseas from: Burnley & District Philatelic Society, 273 Manchester Road, BURNLEY, Lancs, BB11 4HN.

Posting Boxes

No. 160 Most Westerly Postbox

Our photographs this month, were submitted by well-known *Bulletin* contributor James Mackay. The first shows the posting box at Portuairk, on the Ardnamurchan Peninsula – the most westerly posting box on the British mainland. The box is at the end of a long, winding road, and there is a red telephone box nearby. One wonders who goes to such an isolated spot to post a letter or make a phone call! Another box on the remote Ardnamurchan Peninsula, serving the townships of Achateny, Kilmory, and Ockle, was featured here in January 1985. Dr Mackay wrote about the post office and postmarks of Kilmory Achateny in the *British Postmark Bulletin* of 28 July 1995. The Achateny PO is featured in our second photograph.

Readers interested in letter boxes should consider joining the Letter Box Study Group which has some 700 members. For details send a stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary: Sally Jones, 43 Miall Road, Hall Green, BIRMINGHAM B28 9BS.



Forthcoming Issues

Listed below are the proposed issues for the next six months. Any changes/additions will be notified in this magazine.

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 5 Mar | Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust stamp cards |
| 12 Mar | WWT stamps, pack, postcard book |
| 19 Mar | Stamp books – Olympic/Paralympic |
| Mar | 5p, 20p, 30p definitives – blue fluor |
| 2 Apr | Scot aerogramme – Football |
| 9 Apr | British Cinema stamp cards |
| 16 Apr | 4 x 1st book – Queen's birthday label |
| 16 Apr | Stamp cards – commemorative labels |
| 16 Apr | British Cinema stamps & pack |
| 21 Apr | Queen's Birthday Philatelic/Numismatic cover |
| 6 May | Football Legends stamp cards |
| 13 May | Stamp books (3) – Olympic Promotion |
| 14 May | Football stamps, pack, postcard book |
| 14 May | European Football prestige book |
| 2 Jul | Scot aerogramme – Edinburgh Festival |
| 2 Jul | Olympic stamp cards |
| 9 Jul | Olympic stamps & pack |
| 21 Jul | Burns stamped postcards |
| 30 Jul | Women of Achievement stamp cards |
| 6 Aug | Women of Achievement stamps & pack |
| 27 Aug | Children's TV stamp cards |



Out of the Arc...

Curiosities from the Post Office Archives

17. The Woolly Jumper

On 4 July 1944 a court of enquiry was convened at the General Post Office in Edinburgh. It's purpose was to investigate, "the circumstances under which a sheep was killed during a M36 Grenade practice held by 'A' company, 11th City of Edinburgh (11th G.P.O.) Bn. Home Guard at Carrickknowe on Thursday, 29 June 1944, and to furnish a report.

The incident began when a contingent of 'A' company arrived by bus at Carrickknowe range at about 19.00 hours on 29 July for M36 live grenade practice using the Northover projector and the E.Y rifle. After approximately 10 rounds had been fired, the Sgt.-Major, who was stationed at the control point, drew the attention of the Major and others present to the fact that

he had seen a *sheep jump into the danger area* and thought it had been hit.

Instructions were thereupon issued to cease fire and the Major, his Lieutenant and another went forward and found the sheep mortally wounded. The animal was taken to the clubhouse, and later, *after skilled attempts to bleed it had failed* it died and was conveyed to the slaughter-house at Gorgie.

After hearing various witnesses, the court of enquiry came to the conclusion that clear instructions had not been issued to the look-out flagmen on duty, so they were unaware of what their duties entailed and failed to alert the battalion when the *unarmed sheep entered the firing area.*

Despite a thorough search through our archives material, we have been unable to find any record as to just what sort of *sheep* medical training these individuals are likely to have had!

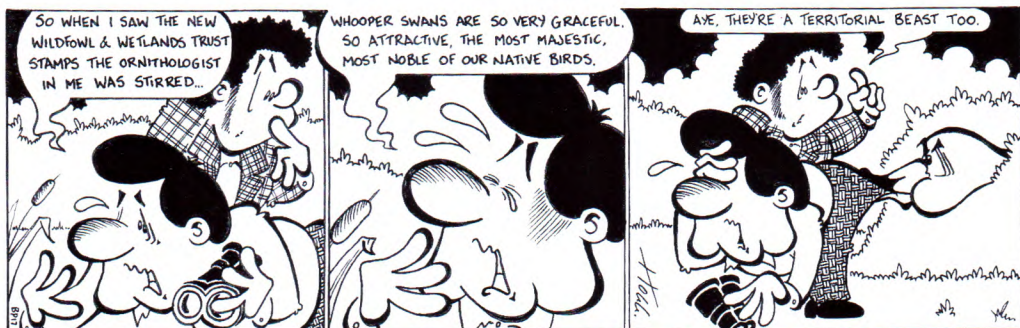
PO Archives ref. POST 56.

Richard Barker Assistant Information Manager

Post Office Home Guard training with grenades and a machine gun (1941)



CUSTOMER KNOWS BEST.



March/April Digest

To be issued in March/April

5 March: Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust stamp cards.

12 March: Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust stamps, presentation pack, and postcard book.

19 March: Stamp books with Olympic/Paralympic logos on cover – 10 x 1st Harrison; 4 x 35p, 4 x 41p, and 4 x 60p Walsall.



March: 1995 Greetings book reprint – blue fluor on stamps, changed greetings events dates on inside cover.

March: 5p, 20p, 30p definitives with blue fluor.

March: £1.50 Caernarfon Castle definitive, PVA gum.

2 April: Scottish aerogramme – Football.

9 April: 100 Years of Going to the Cinema stamp cards.

16 April: 100 Years of Going to the Cinema stamps and pack.

16 April: 4 x 1st class book with commemorative label for 70th birthday of HM The Queen.

16 April: Stamp cards showing commemorative labels for Bank of England Tercentenary (1994), R J Mitchell (1995), and The Queen's 70th birthday (1996)

21 April: The Queen's 70th birthday Philatelic/Numismatic Cover

Note: Some items 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, Guildford, Harrogate, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London (Lombard Street & Trafalgar Square), Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Romford, Southampton, Southend on Sea, Stratford upon Avon, Truro, Windsor, and York.

To be withdrawn in March/April

13 March: Springtime stamps, presentation pack & stamp cards.

29 March: 2p, 4p, 35p definitives, 1st & 2nd class NVI stamps from sheets, 19p and 25p Country stamps (N Ireland, Scotland, Wales) – all with yellow fluor.

29 March: Greetings books – Smiles II (Reprint, 3 March 1992); Gift Giving (Reprints, 15 June and 17 August 1993).

3 April: 50p, £1 & £2 books – Nos 2 in Sea Charts, Inspiration for Victory, and Sir Rowland Hill series.

3 April: Scottish aerogramme: Glasgow School of Art.

10 April: National Trust stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards.

24 April: National Trust prestige stamp book.

29 April: 5p and 38p definitives with yellow fluor

Late News

The 6p definitive with blue fluor will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau during March

