

British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 25

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December 1987



18p

Bull-rout *Myoxocephalus scorpius*
THE LINNEAN SOCIETY 1788/1988

to moment I am
shall my Dear
aid him in get
I know that
is. So is a photo
said what I ha

fewish. You observe that all the fish on which I have
various should be omitted; let this be done by all
best. The artist had in view in noticing so many of

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Editorial

DOUGLAS N MUIR

It seems only yesterday that we were celebrating Christmas last year. Time certainly flies! Already in this issue of the *Bulletin* we announce details of the first issue of 1988, that for the bicentenary of The Linnean Society. The programme for the rest of the year promises a great variety of interest in the subject matter, and even more attractive designs. Next year will also see the issue of the first miniature sheet in aid of the international exhibition "Stamp World London 90" to be held in London at Alexandra Palace in May of 1990.

In connection with the *Bulletin* one more item will be put on sale in the new year. Many readers have written to complain about the present binders for the *Bulletin*. Because we have increased the size of the magazine, now a standard 24 pages, the binders will not hold 24 issues. At the moment we are investigating the possibilities of redesigning the binders, in a more attractive up to date format, so that 24 copies can be held comfortably. This will be made available in the early part of the year and an announcement will be made in these pages. Our apologies to any readers experiencing difficulties with the present binders.

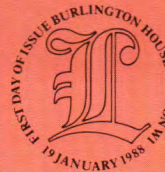
May we at Royal Mail Stamps and Philately take this opportunity of wishing all our readers a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year, full of collecting interest.

Front Cover

The front cover shows the 18p Linnean Society stamp on a background featuring part of the letter which appears on the stamp. The letter was from Jonathan Couch to Mr McLeay of The Linnean Society in 1823 (material having been supplied by Gina Douglas of The Linnean Society).

The Linnean Society

19 January 1988



The Linnean Society of London, the world's oldest learned body devoted to biology and natural history, celebrates the 200th anniversary of its foundation in 1788. To mark this four stamps are being issued on 19 January featuring plants and animals from some of the Society's collections. The stamps were designed by Edward Hughes.

Carl Linné, later ennobled as Carl von Linné, is better known by his Latin name of Carolus Linnaeus. Born in 1707 in Reashult in the Småland province of Sweden, he studied medicine at Lund and Uppsala universities, gaining his doctorate in the Netherlands. His interests turned to natural history and he went on several plant-hunting expeditions, perhaps the most celebrated of which was to Lapland when still a young man. He invented the international system for naming living things which is still used today, as well as the system of classifying them in groups of species, genera, families and so on, and Linnaeus himself named thousands of living things. This system was first published in his *Systema Naturae*, first drafted in 1735.

The primary impulse for the establishment of the Linnean Society of London came in 1788,

headquarters in Burlington House, Piccadilly, together with a magnificent collection of biological books and journals, manuscripts, letters and illustrations given or bequeathed by naturalists and fellows over the last 200 years.



Portrait of Linnaeus (1707–1778)

Some of these form the basis of the designs of the stamps.

The illustrations on the stamps are all from the Society's collections. On the **18p** stamp is the short-spined sea scorpion, or bull-rout, *Myoxocephalus scorpius*. This is a northern fish that



some ten years after Linnaeus' death, with the purchase of his collections of plants, animals, books and manuscripts by Sir James Edward Smith. The Society was granted its first Royal charter in 1802 and purchased the Linnaeus collections from their owner in 1828. These are now permanently housed in the Society's



occurs only rarely in British waters. The illustration and manuscript remarks upon which it is superimposed are by Jonathan Couch FLS, (1789–1870) who spent most of his life as a doctor at Polperro in Cornwall.

Chosen for the **26p** value is the yellow waterlily, *Nuphar lutea*, found in lakes, ponds and streams throughout the British Isles. The illustration is by a descendant of the portraitist Sir Joshua Reynolds, Major Joshua Swatkin FLS (1855–1939), who latterly lived in Wiltshire. The text is from an annotation by Sir Thomas Frankland in the margin of a copy of *Flora Angelica* by William Hudson.

Bewick's Swan, *Cygnus columbianus*, is shown on the **31p** value. It exists in two varieties: *C. columbianus* proper from North America and its counterpart *C. columbianus bewickii* from Europe and Asia. The illustration is by Edward Lear FLS (1812–88), famous for his nonsense rhymes and drawings for children. By profession, Lear was a painter and illustrator of *Title page of Flora Graeca edited by J E Smith, in the Society library*

distinction and also a keen naturalist. Accompanying Lear's swan is a note by William Yarrell who first recognised that Bewick's Swan was a distinct species from the Whooper Swan.

For the **34p** value the morel *Morchella esculenta* was chosen. This fungus, which is



widespread in Britain, is edible and often used in cooking. Unlike most fungi it is usually found in spring. The illustration is by the celebrated botanical artist James Sowerby (1757–1822) and the letter was written by one B McForster in 1821 to Sir James Edward Smith, founder president of the Linnean Society.

Technical Details

Designed by Edward Hughes, the stamps have been printed in photogravure by Harrison and Sons Limited. In format they are horizontal, 41 x 30mm, perf. 15 x 14, printed on unwatermarked, phosphor-coated paper. Printing is in sheets of 100 on PVA Dextrin gum.

PHQ Cards

PHQ cards (Nos 107 A–D) featuring each of the four stamps will be available from 5 January, 1988, price 15p each.

Presentation Pack

The presentation pack will cost £1.31 and was





Tuffilago Tuffura

"Coltsfoot" from Flora Londonensis 1777, in the Society library

designed by Edward Hughes, with text by Patrick Roper and photography by Andrew Cockrill. It was printed by Clement & Foster Limited.

First Day Cover

The first day cover shows some of the natural history books as on the flap of the presentation pack and was also designed by Edward Hughes. It costs 16p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover service, one from the British Philatelic Bureau featuring *Linnaea*

borealis the logo of the Society, and the other from Burlington House London W1 featuring the monogram "L".

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the four stamps cancelled with either postmark. The charges will be £1.56 (inland) and £1.36 (overseas). Application forms, available from the Bureau and at Head Post Offices, should be returned not later than 19 January.

Customers requiring only the special pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped addressed envelope under an outer cover endorsed 'Special First Day of Issue Handstamp' to:

'British Philatelic Bureau' 20 Brandon Street,
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT

'London W1' Special Postmark Duty
Western London Letter District Office
35-50 Rathbone Place
LONDON W1P 1AA





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Outline "In T.P.
Linn. London 1753.
Stylisation by
Valdemar Edvardt.

numerical marginal
illustration designed
with annotations by
Richard Dore, F.R.S.

Printer: William
the Society in 1858 that Darwin and
Wallace's theory of evolution by natu
ral selection was first promulgated.

used today, as well as the system of
classifying them in groups of species,
genera, families and so on in ever
wider circles of generality. The
Linnaean system of naming
broadly entails each species
having two scientific
names, the first the generic
and the second the specific. The
yellow water-lily on one of the
stamps, for instance, is called *Naphal
lata*, but there is also a smaller Briti
sh species, the least yellow water-lily,
which is called *Naphal pumila*. Same
genus, different species.
Linnaeus himself named thousands
of living things. The plant to which



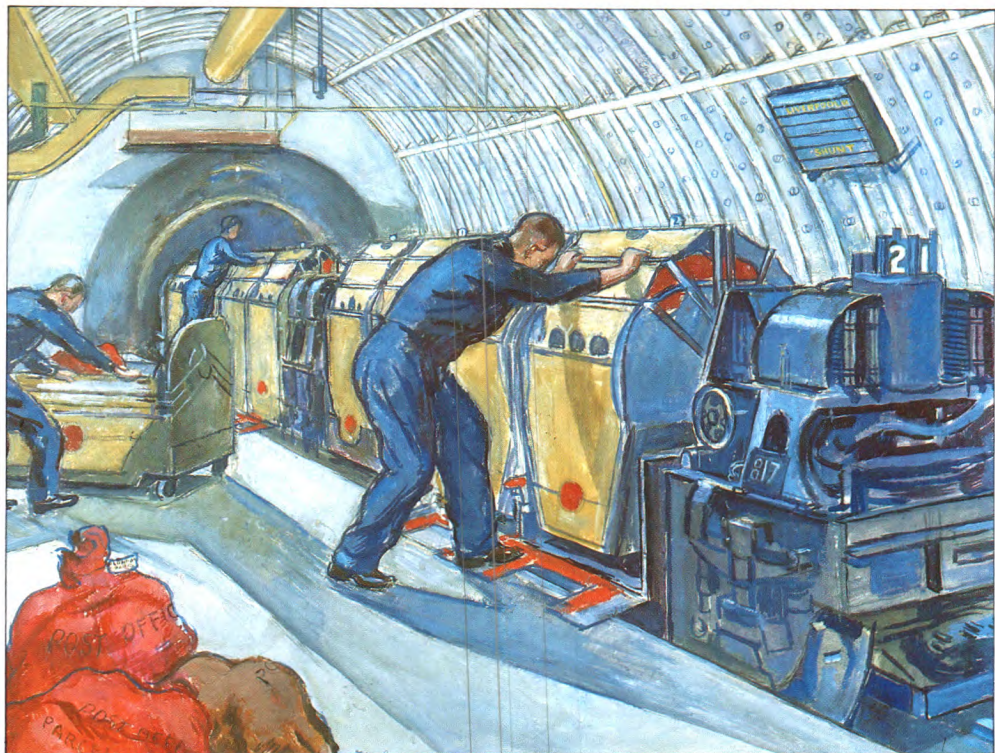
tion is by Edward Linn (1707-1788),
famous for his nonsense rhymes
and drawings for children but by pro
fession a painter and illustrator of
great distinction and also a keen
naturalist. Accompanying it is a note
by William Yarrell, also a Fellow
of the Linnæan Society, who first recog
nised that Bewick's Swan was a dis
tinct species from the Whooper Swan.



The Linnæan Society
ROYAL MAIL WINDSTAMP



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



New NPM Postcards in January

As announced in the November *Bulletin* (page 53) the National Postal Museum is issuing a set of three cards on 11 January 1988 with a railway theme. This is to coincide with its major exhibition for 1988, "Railways and the Post"

The subjects were chosen from the Post Office Archives' poster collection:

88/1 *Loading the mail on the Post Office Underground Railway* by Archibald Ziegler ARCA

88/2 *The interior of a Travelling Post Office* by George Charlton NEAC

88/3 *Loading mail at Euston Station* by Grace Golden ARCA

These designs, along with many others, were commissioned by the "Poster Advisory Group" between 1934 and 1938.

Illustrated here is the actual poster forming the basis of one of the cards – 88/1. The cards will cost 20p each or by mail 60p per set of three (plus a handling charge of 18p) from the National Postal Museum, KEB, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP.

There will be a special postmark in use for the duration of the exhibition and also a special one day handstamp for 20 January which is the 150th anniversary of the first running of a Travelling Post Office in Great Britain on the Grand Junction Railway.

"Railways and the Post" at NPM

The 150th anniversary of the first, experimental Travelling Post Office falls on 20 January, 1988. To commemorate the event the National Postal Museum's major exhibition for 1988 will be devoted to the carrying of mail by rail.

The story begins on 11 November 1830 when the Royal Mail was entrusted to the railway for the first time, running the 30 miles between Liverpool and Manchester. The exhibition continues with the introduction and development of the Travelling Post Office network. The Post Office's own Underground Railway will also be featured. On show in the entrance to the Museum will be a scale replica of a TPO and lineside apparatus.

"Entente Cordiale"

The Proposed Anglo-French Postage Stamp, 1940

TONY GAMMONS

Early in 1940, there was a movement, supported by correspondence in *The Times* and elsewhere, for the issue of special postage stamps which would be sold both in Britain and France to symbolise the unity of the two countries at war with a common enemy. On 23 January 1940, Geoffrey le M Mander, MP for Wolverhampton, put down a question in the House of Commons asking the Postmaster General "if he will consider consulting the French Government with a view to issuing, in conjunction with government, a Franco-British postage stamp, as a sign of unity of the two countries". In reply the Postmaster General, Major George Tryon, stated that "as arrangements have been made to issue a special series of postage stamps in May next to commemorate the centenary of the first postage stamp I am unable to consider the issue of another special stamp at the present time".

Mander raised the question again on 31 January and receiving the same answer asked Major Tryon whether he would bear in mind the suitability of a stamp similar to that issued by the French Government on the occasion of the King's visit to Paris in July 1938, representing the Houses of Parliament and the Arc de Triomphe (Fig. 1). He asked the PMG if he was



Fig.1

prepared to consider "representation from representative bodies both French and British, in the matter". Major Tryon replied that he would be happy to take into consideration any approach made on the subject.

Similar pressure was being put on M Jules Julien, the Minister of Posts, Telegraphs and

In the early days of World War II it was thought that the issue of a stamp jointly by France and Britain would strengthen morale. This became more urgent with the invasion of France. Here is the story of an issue that never was.



Fig.2

Telephones in Paris, as a result of which on 26 January 1940 he wrote to Major Tryon putting forward the idea of a Franco-British postage stamp saying that he would be "strongly disposed to carry out this proposal the adoption of which would constitute a fresh confirmation of the close union of our two countries". On receiving the letter Tryon wrote to the Deputy Director General of the Post Office suggesting that "M Julien's letter puts a different complexion on the matter" and that he (Tryon) was "disposed to agree with the suggestion for an Anglo-French stamp"! At the same time as this exchange of correspondence was taking place, and having read the letters in *The Times*, Edmund Dulac offered a design for a Franco-British stamp to the Post Office Stores Department. (Fig. 2)

Before replying to M Julien it was thought advisable to contact the King's Private Secretary, the Rt Hon Sir Alexander Hardinge GCMG, KCB, MC to see whether "His Majesty sees any objection, in principle, to the issue of a special Anglo-French stamp". The letter also outlined the design possibilities, the first being a design in which the heads of the King and the President of

the French Republic formed the main feature. The second would be a design built round national heraldic emblems such as the British lion while the third could be a "pictorial or allegorical design much favoured by the French". In his reply Hardinge stated that "the idea of a stamp of a common design for sale in each country is one that commends itself to His Majesty" and he would like, in due course, to see any design which was likely to meet with the approval of the French.

On 21 February Tryon wrote to the French Minister supporting the adoption of a special Anglo-French stamp. He also pointed out that it was the practice to include the Monarch's head on British stamps and hoped it would be possible to adopt a design in which the heads of the French President and the King would form a major part. As far as the date of issue was concerned it was not thought possible to bring out another special issue before September 1940.

It was agreed to hold a meeting in London on 18 March at which the two postal administrations could discuss, along with other matters, the new stamp issue. As far as the British Post Office was concerned a number of points required consideration before attending the meeting. It was thought that experience with the Centenary Stamp issue did not hold out much hope that artists in Britain were likely to put forward acceptable designs and in any case it was unlikely that the French would agree to

participate in the elaborate procedure that the British Post Office usually adopted in obtaining stamp designs.

If the King's head was not to appear on the stamps it would mean having the name of the country on British stamps for the first time and while Great Britain would suffice for practical purposes the term did not cover the whole country and might give rise to complaint, for example, from Northern Ireland.

It was also thought unlikely that a well balanced design would be possible if the British version included the words "Postage Revenue – Great Britain" together with the value tablet. Most of these problems were virtually solved when, at the meeting, the French Minister submitted a design by the French artist M Cheffer which included the portraits of King George VI and the French President M Albert Lebrun (Fig. 3). The design was accepted by the British Post Office with the proviso that it should be redrawn by a British artist to make it suitable for printing by the photogravure process.

Messrs Harrison and Sons were asked to produce a full size bromide (as Fig. 3), stamp size bromides and three essays in the colours of the current 1½d, 2d and 2½d values (Fig. 4). On 21 March Mr Dell, a senior staff officer from the Post Office Stores Department, travelled to Edmund Dulac's home at Morcombelake in Dorset taking with him the full size and a stamp



Fig.3



Fig.4

size bromide of the French design. Also supplied was Dorothy Wilding's portrait of King George VI, No. 09382G "for Dulac's guidance" (Fig. 5).

Dulac thought the design "was a very bad one" and "felt morally injured" at being asked to redraw such a design. His main objections were that the ovals were too large and took up so much space that there was insufficient room for the details, the King was looking away from the President and the central figure was poor. He felt the only course open to him was "to make drastic alterations to the design to make it relatively satisfactory". Dell explained that as the design had been accepted by both the British and French administrations no major alterations were possible. Dulac promised to have his drawing of the design ready by 1 April and requested a photograph of the French President which was supplied on 27 March (Fig. 5).

The drawing (Fig. 6) was received at the Post Office Stores on 1 April together with a letter containing "very strong criticism of the design". Dulac had reduced the size of the ovals, turned the King's head inward, reduced the allegorical figure, put in "a crown from the regalia" and changed the Ensign to the Union Jack. He had also altered the ships in the seascape behind the King's head. A 2½d value tablet had been included in the design surmounted by "postage", The word "revenue" had been omitted



Fig.5

with the agreement of the Treasury. The Controller of the Post Office Stores, Mr R Fanshawe, took the design to Post Office headquarters where it was decided to ignore Dulac's criticism and to ask Harrison's artists to carry out any further alterations to the design.

Harrison's produced bromides (Nos. 198 and 199) from Dulac's artwork on 2 April followed by essays in brown, orange and blue on 3 April (Fig. 7). Although Dulac's drawing was regarded as a fine piece of work it was thought to be too delicate and as a result the first essays were "poor and requiring a month's work to perfect". In the meantime Harrison's were asked to strengthen the tones by retouching the positive plates and essays with stronger background tones were submitted on 8 April 1940.

All the illustrations for this article come from the National Postal Museum and were part of the display in the Court of Honour at the Capex international exhibition. The article will conclude next month when Tony Gammons will discuss the several changes which took place with the essays right up to 17 June when the issue had to be abandoned due to the fall of France to the Germans.



Fig. 7



Fig. 6

Christmas Ramblings

BARBARA LAST

Each year I think about Christmas stamps, and get the urge to play about with the Christmas story. Angels, shepherds and Magi elbow each other out of the flood of miniature masterpieces. In my mind I arrange my miniscule works of art into Schools – Flemish, Renaissance, Early English or what you will. I flirt with painters. I revel in tapestries, illuminated Books of the Hours, church ceilings, stained glass windows. And there I stick, my mind bursting with ideas but submerged in explosions of colour.

Then, how about children's Christmas art? Also, there are Christmas Stockings and Puddings, mistletoe and holly, carols, snowflakes and scenes straight from Dickens. Santas come by sleighs and planes, and even disguised as Donald Duck. Before anyone tells me that I have not done my homework, and something does not appear on stamps – just wait, it will.

You cannot get away from Christmas cards. Do you send philatelic cards to philatelic friends? If you are members of the same society you send and receive the same greetings. In our house, after the usual family stampede to reach the postman, I hear the comments as they peruse the day's catch. "Hmm, stamps again", or "Another of Ma's men".

I then thought of Christmas presents. We put up a "wants" list in the kitchen – nobody is bound by these requests, but they help me to buy the correct highly technical tools as gifts that they require, or *them* to club together for expensive items. But it is a very curious thing that as soon as I ask for anything philatelic they groan and moan and sigh and scowl. "Why don't you ask for something *interesting*?"

"Interesting" is surely in the mind of the beholder. There is a limit to the number of knitting and sewing machines, cookers, mixers and freezers I can use to delight my family. Am I interested in tents, fibre-glass, car accessories, mountaineering/surfing/wet suit gear, tools, golf, cycling, radio, electrical and carpentry wherewithalls that at various times have cluttered up my kitchen? I merely hover wide-eyed while technical details are explained, and if you listen to a nut-by-nut account of a car's inside

sometimes knowledge is inadvertently acquired. On one occasion whilst stationary on the motorway in clouds of steam, to my horror I heard my mouth of its own accord diagnose (correctly) that it might be fanbelt failure. To this day my driver regards me with suspicion. He cannot believe that I can just about distinguish the front from the back of a car, and that I once dumbfounded the family by identifying one by make instead of colour. If you have ever lugged, as a present for your husband, a wilful sash bar cramp from London to Norwich, and thence by bus and feet into the beyond of Norfolk, one gets to know the deviousness of one's lethal burden. I have never forgotten the insults eyed at me by fellow travellers – you have heard of speaking looks?

Christmas postcard with a postal theme (courtesy Ian Wilkinson)

A BRIGHT AND HAPPY XMAS



Look behind and you will view
Other treasures sent to you.

1306

Did you know there were similarities between engineering, house construction and philately? When I heard my husband mention he had to look at his cylinder block, I thought he was at last showing an interest in stamps, and eagerly offered him mine. My "coils" bear no resemblance to his, and when we speak of "plates", "panes", "controls" and "gutters" we might as well live on different continents. My "movable box" and chaste "strips" are not portable TVs and erotic dances. Above all, when I mention Bishop Marks and matched pairs I do not refer to holy men or my pair of twins.

Now, I must be fair. Sometimes, when in a very mellow and accommodating mood, they have bought the odd philatelic gift ... catalogues and literature from the children who I succeeded in catching young ... a pair of tweezers once, when I have "borrowed" theirs ... a typewriter, for which I pay my dues by acting family scribe. My UV lamp is viewed with such suspicious horror that I can only use it when alone. Once, after watching my razor blade argue with Hawid strips, they silently handed me a Stanley cutter with a multi-purpose snap-off blade. It makes me feel like a desperado with a flick-knife, but I now own a full complement of fingers and toes.

I have great difficulty thinking up feminine fripperies. My "wants" is an ever-growing list of nautical, historical and philatelic literature that threatens to make us move house for lack of room. In their eyes, these are acceptable as "books". In case any enlightened relative hands me cash, that goes on covers and accessories. Accessories? Well, these are chosen by myself, so sometimes the family find they have unsuspectingly bought the philatelic sort. That's the trouble with the English language, it's so imprecise when to them, even the words "stamps", "dies" and "bars" have different connotations.

Exhibition Cards

The following should be added to the list of overseas agents selling British Post Office exhibition cards:

Japan

British and Overseas Philatelic Agencies Ltd
PO Box No 80
Shibuya
TOKYO 150-91
JAPAN

The cost is £2.50 (£1 for the card plus £1.50 for postage, packing and handling). The amount should be sent in Japanese yen.

Italy and Switzerland

De Rosa SA (Intl)
Av Du Tribunal Federal 34
CH 1005 LAUSANNE
SWITZERLAND

The cost including card is 5.50 Swiss francs. The amount should be sent in Swiss francs. (This cost is approximately £2.25 - £1 for the card plus approximately £1.25 for postage, packing and handling.)

Linnean Society Covers

The Linnean Society. The official first day cover of the Society will feature a lithograph of a Bewick Swan (reproduced by kind permission of the British Library) and will be cancelled with a special handstamp in London W1, the Society's headquarters. Cost is £4.25 full set (signed £7.50, single stamp £2.25). Orders to A G Bradbury, 2 Fairholme Road, LEICESTER LE2 6GL (overseas add 50p).



A new series of "silk" covers will be available in 1988. Each cover will have a reproduction in a silk-like material of a cigarette card reflecting the theme of the stamp issue. The series begins with the Linnean Society issue and the card depicts a yellow water-lily. Cost is £5 each, orders to the above address.

Post Office Archives

Over the Christmas period Post Office Archives will be closed to the public on and from Thursday 24 December until Monday 4 January, 1988.

The **National Postal Museum** will be closed on public holidays only.

Victorian Printing Methods

Part 4: Embossing

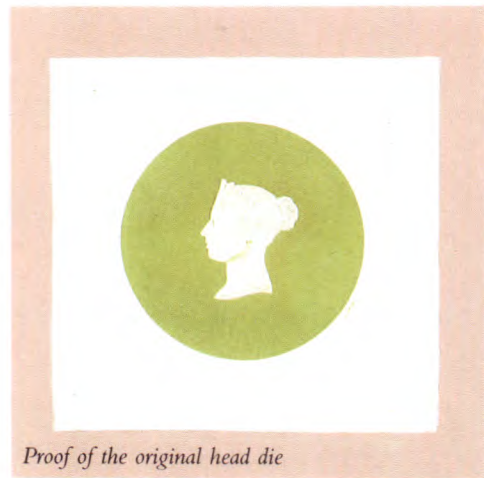
L N WILLIAMS

Die Plain

The printing process known as embossing consists of distorting the paper into greater or less relief. If no colour is used in the process, it is referred to as die plain. When the process involves the use of colour on the non-relief portions of the embossed design, the term used is cameo stamping.

Even before adhesive postage stamps were in active production, examples of both those varieties of embossing were provided by Robert W Sievier in 1839 as part of his entries for the "Treasury" competition awards for, in the words of a Board of Treasury Minute of 6 September 1839, "suggestions or proposals as to the manner in which the stamp may best be brought into use." Some 2,600 suggestions or proposals were received.

The essentials of the process of paper distortion by embossing were common to both,



Proof of the original head die

whether or not colour was to be used in the embossing. Basically, the paper was distorted by pressing it between a die in recess and its counterpart in relief, called the force.

The die, of softened steel, was engraved in recess in the usual way, that is, the parts to be in relief in the embossing were cut out of the die to greater or less depth as required by the design.

This is the fourth and last part of the series coinciding with the new exhibition of the R M Phillips collection at the National Postal Museum.

those parts which were to be unaffected by the embossing were left at the surface height of the die. Some more detailed consideration of the processes appears in connection with the embossed adhesive postage stamps.

The engraver was called a die sinker, to reflect the substantial depth of metal he cut away and to contrast with the comparatively shallow cuts made for line-engraved recess printing.

Siever's "essays" as they are called involved the skills not only of the die sinker but also of an engine turner and a mechanic to perfect a copy. He stated as much in text accompanying one of his essays which was embossed, surrounded by a relief-printed, engine-turned design in green and blue, on a page of *London and Westminster Review* for March 1840.

Cameo Stamping

In relation to postage stamps and postal stationery, the use of embossing was envisaged early on by Rowland Hill. That is clear from a recommendation by him on 6 December 1839 to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the commissioning on 11 December 1839 of a die from William Wyon, chief engraver at the Royal Mint, whose 1837 City Medal portrait of Queen Victoria was used as the model for the Penny Black and Two Pence Blue of 1840, and all subsequent issues of Great Britain during her reign.

The die was commissioned, doubtless, for use on the fourth category of stamps referred to in a Treasury Minute dated 26 December 1839, namely, "Stamps to be struck on paper of any description which the public may send to the Stamp Office for that purpose". The minute was modified later in detail so far as it affected the public but not the stamps.

On a die proof, dated 25 January 1840, the cameo head of Queen Victoria, without a pendant curl to chignon (the large coil or hump of hair at the back of the head) cut by Wyon was surrounded by a framing of two bands of engine-turning, the outer band inscribed "POSTAGE 1D: HALF OZ:" around the top. The framing surround was ordered from Charles Whiting, some of whose entries for the "Treasury" competition had included embossing. By a later decision, the wording on the die proof design was changed to "POSTAGE ONE PENNY".

In regard to this design it has been stated* that the articulated lathe work on the border of most of the essays produced during the first half of 1840 was the work of Alfred Deacon, a distinguished engraver in the employ of Charles Whiting. Deacon was considered to be the most skilled engraver in such work.

Production of the finished article was delayed beyond the intended date of issue, namely, 1 May 1840. However, impetus to the rapid production of embossed covers and envelopes was provided by the public ridicule heaped on the Mulreadys, which resulted in their printing being abandoned and the vast stocks prepared for issue being destroyed.

The amount of detailed consideration and care devoted to production of the finished article used for embossing the one penny and two pence envelopes, which were issued in January

and April 1841 respectively, are reflected by the not inconsiderable number of different essays that portray the changes in detail leading up to the appearance of the stamped envelopes.†

A new die, modified from the die that Wyon was commissioned to produce in December 1839, was completed and registered on 20 January 1841. On the new die a pendant curl was added to the chignon.

This die was used in the production of one penny and two pence envelopes. In the one penny die the wording was curved around the upper part of the surrounding framework. It was curved around the lower part of the framework of the two pence die.

Working die production and presswork were similar for the envelopes and for the adhesive stamps of 1847 and in the production of other items for which embossing was involved. They are considered later.

Embossed Adhesives

When the postage rate to America and some British colonies was fixed at 1s, inconvenience was experienced in using multiples of the one penny and two pence stamps, which were all

**The British Postage Stamp* by Robson Lowe, 2nd edition p.177 (1979)

†See, e.g., *British Postal Stationery* by A K Huggins (2nd ed. 1970)

Essay and first issued postal stationery dies



that then existed. Consequently, preparation of adhesive stamps of higher value was embarked upon and designs were prepared by Ormond Hill, supervisor of stamping in the Inland Revenue section at Somerset House, son of Edwin Hill and nephew of Rowland Hill.

Early in 1847 and based on those designs, as appears from the Reginald M Phillips collection in the National Postal Museum (Vol. XXX, page 5), William Wyon at the Royal Mint submitted essays for one shilling and for ten pence stamps. Each had an octagonal framed surround to an embossed head without pendant curl to the chignon. The inscriptions were simply POSTAGE ONE SHILLING clockwise from left to right in the upper part and POSTAGE TEN PENCE anticlockwise from right to left in the lower part. The essays, which are coloured respectively yellow-buff and yellow-green, are unique. They were accompanied by pairs of the head surrounded by unframed octagons in colours.

After modifications to the head, design, background and inscription, the one shilling was issued on 11 September 1847 and the ten pence on 6 November 1848. They were followed by a sixpence on 1 March 1854.

The Die

Die production at the beginning in 1839 and for some years afterwards was carried out exclusively at the Royal Mint.

Production of the original or primary die involved cutting out from a circular piece of soft steel the portrait comprising the design's central feature. The art of die sinking consisted of determining on and effecting the different depths of removal to give three-dimensional form to the portrait.

When the die sinker had completed his work, that die was hardened. The process used was, in essentials, the same as that utilised for hardening dies employed in line-engraving recess-printing and, indeed, for letterpress printing.

This hardened primary or original die was the matrix for the design sunk into it and proofs were embossed from it. They exhibit the surrounding circular surface.

That die was employed in a coining press to make a counterpart in soft steel. Some work could be carried out on the counterpart. On it the die's design protruded, with the omission of any portions which had been removed. The counterpart was hardened. The hardened counterpart was referred to as a punch or patrix.

Subsidiary dies

The hardened patrix was used in the coining press to make an exact copy of the primary or original die in soft steel. The copy is termed a subsidiary die.

The subsidiary die was worked upon by the engraver or die sinker. For each value of the adhesives a differently shaped pendant curl was added to the chignon on the relevant subsidiary die.

Also the circular die's surface was scribed in straight lines to form, for the one shilling and ten pence stamps, an octagonal outline. The excess outside the octagon was to be cut away, leaving the remaining surface for reception of the octagonal frame containing the lathe work to receive the inscription of value.

When the work on each subsidiary die was complete it was hardened. From it a punch was made.

Working dies

Each subsidiary die punch was used to make as many working dies as were needed in producing the stamps. Each individual working die was distinguished by two minute letters "W" followed, with one exception, by full stops and followed or preceded by a number towards the right of the neck truncation.

For the one shilling stamps two working dies were made: W. W. 1 in 1847 and W. W. 2 in 1854. For the ten pence stamps no fewer than four dies were used: W. W. 1 in 1848; 2 W. W. in 1850; 3 W. W. in 1853; and 4 W. W. in 1854. Another, 5 W. W., is known and records were stated to exist of a sixth die*.

Only a single die was used for the six pence stamps, which had four straight and four curved lines making up the octagon. It is referred to as 1 W W, without stops.

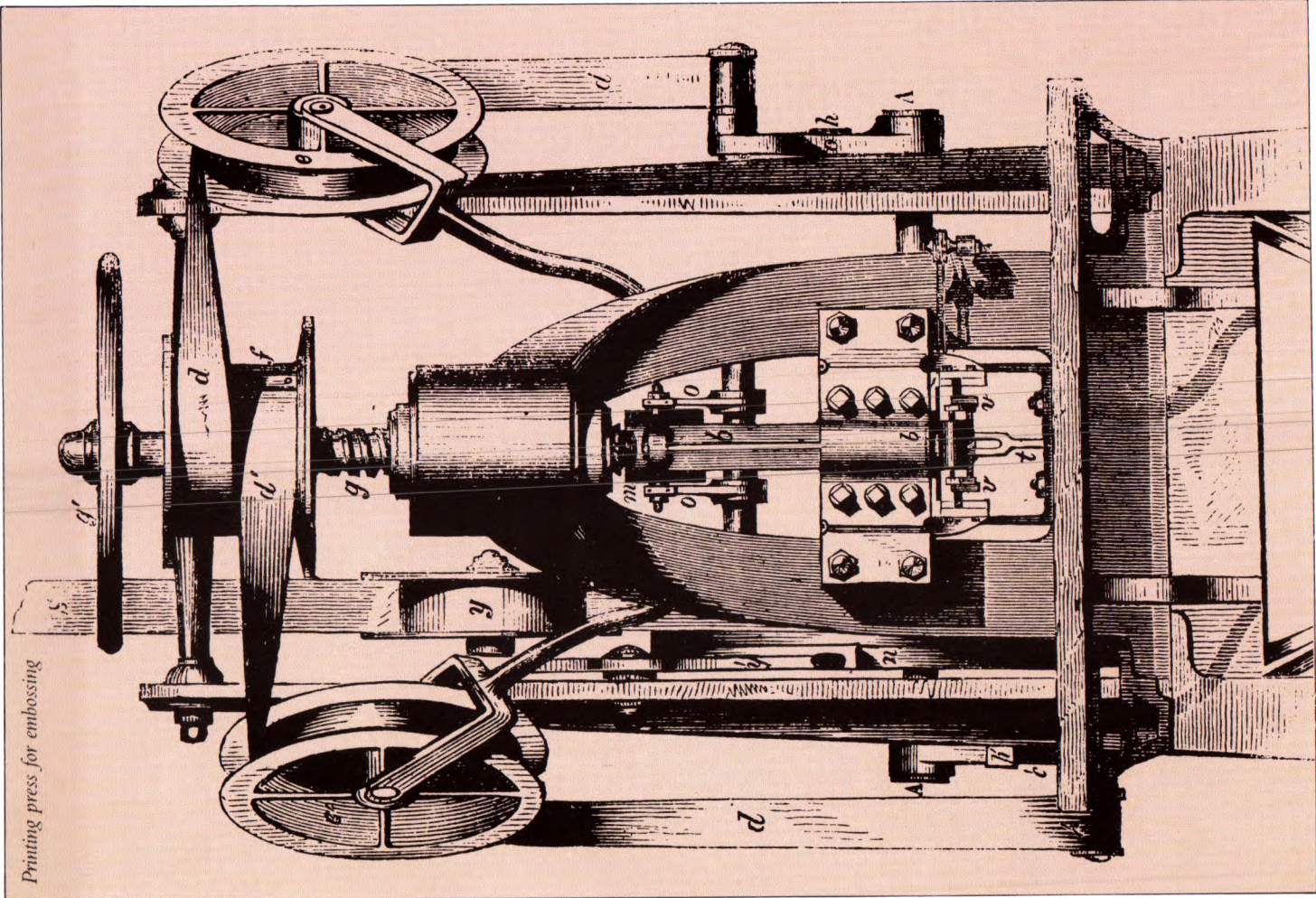
Force or Counterpart

In order to carry out the embossing, each working die had to have a force or counterpart. That consisted of material with a raised surface to fit into the recesses on the working die and force the paper into them.

The material used at Somerset House for the force or counterpart was leather. The leather was struck blow after blow by the working die until a complement to it was formed in the leather.

* *The Postage and Telegraph Stamps of Great Britain* by Philbrick and Westoby, page 96 (1881).

Printing press for embossing



The Press

The machines in use at Somerset House for the embossed postage stamps had been supplied many years earlier by Dryden Brothers, of Lambeth. By those presses the stamping office produced the embossed revenue stamps used for many different fiscal purposes.

In the machine the working die was held beneath a weight and suspended above the force. While the die was so suspended, its flat, non-recessed surface was inked with an appropriate colour by an inking roller.

The force or counterpart was on the bed on the machine, immediately below the die.

The material to be embossed – for postage stamps, the material was paper – was placed in position immediately above the force.

The press was operated by releasing the weight, allowing gravity to carry the die downwards on to the paper, which was forced on to the counterpart and was, thereby, distorted on being pressed between the die and the counterpart.

Those machines or presses made an ear-shattering noise and some improvement in working conditions was effected by Edwin Hill, his son, Ormond and Daniel May, a mechanic. Instead of depending solely on gravity to provide the necessary embossing force, the improved machine, steam driven, contained an endless belt of leather which drove a screw-threaded piston, held in position above the counterpart. When the machine was activated, the piston was driven downwards on to the paper in contact with the counterpart.

Sheets

The presses could operate to produce only one stamp at each descent of the weighted die or the piston respectively. No provision was made for mechanically guided movement of the paper, which had to be hand-held in position and moved by hand after each descent of the die.

As a consequence the spacing of stamps in the sheets was irregular and often they overlapped. The paper used had Dickinson silk threads in its substance and was gummed by Perkins Bacon & Co before being sent for embossing. The sheets on which the press operated were small in that, for example, for the one shilling stamps, they measured something under five inches horizontally and 6½ inches vertically, according to a sketch of an unprinted mill sheet†.

The layout of the finished sheets as printed

were: one shilling – 20 stamps in five rows of four stamps each; ten pence – 24 stamps in six rows of four; and six pence – 40 stamps in two panes (probably tête-bêche) of 20 in five rows of four.

Because the stamps were embossed one at a time, the numbers of sheets produced vividly call to the mind's eye the tedium which the work must have exerted on the press operators. According to Wright and Creeke‡ the numbers printed (as distinct from the numbers issued) were: one shilling – 373,000 sheets between 26 June 1847 and October 1856; ten pence – 122,000 sheets between 14 May 1847 and 18 October 1854; and six pence – 166,498 sheets between 27 January 1854 and 3 October 1856.

It is, perhaps, more surprising that any rows and columns – even pairs – of stamps should be reasonably well spaced than that irregularities and overlapping of impressions, sometimes substantial, should have occurred.

Inadequate lighting was, probably, the cause of some sixpence stamps being printed on the gum. To reduce the risk of repetition of the errors Ormond Hill, in February 1855, ordered that the gum was to be slightly coloured for the six pence stamps. That value, unused, exists with greenish gum instead of toned or yellowish.

†See *The Postage Stamps of Great Britain Part Three: Revised Edition* K M Beaumont and John Easton eds., page 151 (1964)

‡A *History of the Adhesive Stamps of the British Isles* pp 61 ff., (1899).

Scouts & Guides Exhibition

The Scout and Guide Stamps Club will be holding their annual exhibition at Baden-Powell House, Queen's Gate, South Kensington, London SW7 5JS on Saturday 20 February. Entry is free and the exhibition is open from 11 am till 6 pm. The venue will be in the main hall of Baden-Powell House which is on the ground floor.

New Cylinders and Plates

Recent printings of national and country definitives have taken place from the following plates:

By Questa

5p National Q25, Q26

20p National Q13Q13, Q14Q14

18p Scotland Q5Q5, Q6Q6

Christmas, 1980

British Special Issues: No.142

FRANCIS KENNEDY

Christmas comes but once a year – but that is almost too often for a Post Office trying to ring the changes on design possibilities for an annual issue of stamps.

Broadly speaking, religious and secular designs alternate year by year and in 1980 artists were given a “secular” brief. It took an experienced designer, in this case Jeffery Matthews, to produce five different but cohesive designs based on Christmas decorations. The delicacy of the designs combined with a restrained use of colours (five colours for each of the 10p, 12p and 13½p stamps and only four colours for the 15p and 17½p) combined to give the right, seasonable atmosphere to the issued designs. These were: **10p**, a decorated Christmas tree; **12½p**, candles, decorations and ivy in the form of an Advent wreath; **13½p**, mistletoe spray and apples with decorations; **15p**, paper chains with

decorative crown and bell; **17½p**, holly wreath and decorations.

Issued on 19 November 1980, printing was in photogravure by Harrisons in sheets of 100 (two panes of 50), perf. 15 x 14, on all-over phosphor paper except for the 10p which had a single, central 4mm phosphor bar to activate sorting as second class mail. Some of the all-



over phosphor stamps have a glossier surface than others and so the Post Office issued a statement explaining that superficial variations could occur because of the complex interaction of materials during the phosphor coating process. While, on Post Office instructions, the general counter staffs made no distinction, philatelic counters and the British Philatelic Bureau were prepared to supply these varieties to order.

There were many minor constant flaws and Gibbons *GB Specialised Stamp Catalogue* also lists and illustrates four more major flaws as follow: **10p**, broken branch above left-hand bird's head (stamp 3/3, no dot cylinder) and a broken bauble (stamp 9/8, dot cylinder); **12p**, break in outline of left-hand small candle (stamp 9/7, dot cylinder); **13½p**, severed string above upper right-hand apple. The 12p is known imperf between the stamp and lower margin and it also exists cancelled “Sussex Coast” on 13 November, 1980, six days before the official release.

Following withdrawal from the British Philatelic Bureau on 18 November, 1981, sales were reported as: **10p**, 277,875,000; **12p**, 142,673,000; **13½p**, 18,180,000; **15p**, 17,525,000; **17½p**, 16,225,000.

Philatelic Terms Explained

KENNETH F CHAPMAN

No. 18: Matched Pairs

So far as British stamps are concerned, a "matched pair" consists of two stamps, one a 1d black of 1840 and the other an imperf 1841 1d red, printed by the same plate and coming from the same position in the sheet, as indicated by the check letters in the lower corners.

The situation arose from the change to red (more accurately, brown-red) for the 1d stamp because it was feared that red (and even black) cancellations could be cleaned off black stamps and the stamps used again. By printing the stamps in a really fast red-brown ink and cancelling them with a more resistant black ink, cleaning and re-use would be made more difficult.

The change was authorised in August 1840 but experiments to find the perfect inks delayed printing until 30 December and the first red stamps appeared in mid-February 1841.



Matched pair from plate 1 (courtesy of the R M Phillips collection)

With the plate lay-out and stamp design unchanged, temporary use was made of some of the plates used for printing the outgoing 1d blacks. The plates so used were 1b (ie plate 1 heavily re-engraved), 2, 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11. Specialised knowledge of the black plates obviously helps in recognising red printings from those plates since the basic check letter variations, re-entries and other tell tale marks lead to identification.

Naturally, only imperforate 1d reds need consideration and then only those on white (or

pale cream) paper can qualify because when plate 12 came into use as the first "red only" plate, the paper began to show a degree of blue tinting, from pale to a quite distinct blue tinge which is absent from all the earlier red printings from black plates.

Edward VII Display at NPM

Part of the Edward VII display put on by the National Postal Museum in the Court of Honour at Hafnia 87, the international exhibition in Copenhagen, is now on show in the Museum. It comprises four sections. The first covers the introduction of the Edward VII definitives including the Emil Fuchs drawing of the head. There follows a series of sheets on the introduction of single coloured stamps, in particular a series of colour trials for the 2d which culminated in the production of the "Tyrian Plum". Finally, there are two sections on trials for the introduction of stamp books, and on postal stationery.

This is now on show at the Museum, and will continue for a short time.

New Issue of "Crosspost"

A new issue of *Crosspost*, the journal of the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum, has just been published. It contains a number of articles including one on the Eric Gill George VI definitives, the Prepayment of Postage in Cash and the second part of John Holman's article on Private Posts. Also included are reports on recent displays by the National Postal Museum, including the display in the Court of Honour at Capex. Information about the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum can be obtained by writing to the Secretary, National Postal Museum, KEB, King Edward St., LONDON EC1A 1LP.

New Gibbons GB Stamp Album

A new low priced album for the younger collector of Great Britain stamps has been published by Stanley Gibbons. The album provides spaces for a basic collection of Great Britain stamps from 1840 up to approximately mid 1988. With 96 pages, limp binding, the album costs £2.50.

December Digest

Withdrawn in December

1 December 1986 Christmas 12p stamp

Philatelic Points of View

The Stamps and Philately Division of the Royal Mail wants to hear more from philatelists about matters of concern to them. The *British Philatelic Bulletin* is therefore inviting readers to put forward their comments and suggestions on a wide range of philatelic topics over a six month period.

Attention is being focused on one particular subject area each month. The subject for this month (number four in the series) is Royal Mail Stock Books (see below).



So, if you would like to express a view or make a suggestion regarding this item, please write to the following address:

Philatelic Points of View
Royal Mail Stock Books
Room 328
Royal Mail Stamps and Philately
22/25 Finsbury Square
LONDON
EC2A 1PH

At the end of the six month period of 'Points of View', there will be a prize of a special stamp Yearbook to the person who has sent in the most interesting suggestion in the opinion of a Royal Mail panel of judges.

Book

Reviews

Stanley Gibbons Stamp Collectors Diary, 1988. £3.45. Published jointly by Stanley Gibbons and William Collins.

The diary contains 64 pages of philatelic information for both experienced collectors and novices. Details of Post Office philatelic services are given together with an outline of the 1988 programme. Bound in leathergrain with an attractive dust jacket. This is also available from philatelic counters.

Collect British Stamps (39th edition). Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd, 90+pp, £2.25.

This is the 20th anniversary edition of a most popular checklist. All issues are listed to the end of 1987. It is also available from philatelic counters.

Great Britain Specialised Stamp Catalogue Volume 3: Queen Elizabeth II Pre-decimal Issues. 7th edition, 436pp+, limp binding. Published by Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd, £12.95.

Major editorial work has resulted in a separate section for Wilding booklet panes with separate numbering for cream and white paper printings. An appendix gives postal rates for the period as taken from Post Office Archives listings. Prices have been reviewed, mostly upwards.

Collect Benham Covers 1987. 3rd Edition, 1987, 72pp, £3.25 published by Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd.

Published again after three years, it contains a complete listing of all covers produced by the firm over the last 10 years.

Commemorative Covers

Britain-Australia Bicentennial Committee.

A number of special covers are planned, the first will be issued on 26 January to mark Australia Day. A special handstamp will be used at Portsmouth and some covers will be hand-stamped by the Australian Philatelic Bureau in Sydney. Cost: handstamped in Portsmouth – £2.50; in Sydney – £3 (overseas add £1). Orders with remittance to CoverCraft (BABC), PO Box 713, LONDON SE19 2HH.



Perforations

Sir,

It would seem that Kenneth Chapman must have originally written his interesting article on Archer perforations (*Bulletin*, October issue, page 42) some time ago since he refers to "the advent of a Swedish rotary perforator within the last ten years". In fact, the so-called "Lawnmower" came into operation considerably before that. The first mention of its use which I can find was for the multi-value coil issued on 27 August 1969. It later perforated five values in sheet form (with Gum Arabic) in 1972/3, starting with 3p two bands from cylinder 8 issued on 23 August 1972, then the larger part of the printings (single-pane) of Country 5½p centre band in 1975, and ended up, for sheet stamps at least, with a printing of 8p centre band from cylinders 13 and 14 in 1979 (also single-pane).

The implication in Mr Chapman's article that the Swedish Rotary in effect replaced the comb process is slightly misleading. His point might perhaps have been better made by reference to the two row comb perforator which is integral to the Chambon press and is still in use today (with one exception for booklets only) while adding that comb perforators are of their nature too slow for the long print runs currently required, and have been large replaced by rotary perforators such as the Kampf and APS perforators connected with the Jumelle press.

J M DUTTON, Leatherhead, Surrey.

Victorian Printing Methods

Sir,

With reference to Norman Williams' article on Victorian Printing Methods, I must take issue with one comment.

It is a commonly held belief that the early Draft and Receipt stamps were only accepted as being able to prepay postage after 1 June 1881 by some sort of oversight. It is true that the Customs and Inland Revenue Act of that year only authorised "the use of penny adhesive stamps not appropriated by any words on the face of them to postage duty or to any particular

description of instrument" to be used as postage stamps. However, the Post Office Notice to Postmasters of June 1881 stated clearly that "In future the ordinary adhesive penny receipt stamp may be used as a penny postage stamp."

Obviously, the penny receipt stamp most widely available was the small penny "Inland Revenue" (SG F23) and this stamp was, in fact, widely used as a postage stamp before the general availability of the "Consolidated" penny lilac at the end of July 1881. However, the term "penny receipt stamp" had a much wider application and quite properly applied to the larger penny "Inland Revenue" stamp of 1860 (SG design F8), the combined "Draft Payable and Receipt" of 1855 (SG design F4) and this stamp overprinted "Inland Revenue" (SG F8). It is a fairly natural follow on to this that, if the combined "Draft Payable and Receipt" stamp was valid, the individual "Draft" and "Receipt" stamps should also be accepted. That they were not widely used is more a comment on their availability than on their validity. Thus, I believe that the Gibbons listing is absolutely correct for those stamps which were *authorised* for postage by the Post Office, although not strictly by Act of Parliament. There is no "doubtful justification" whatever as Mr Williams suggests.

The reason for these changes is often not so widely known and was to do with the way that the Post Office accounted various duties to the Revenue. Instead of needing to keep separate figures for each of the various fiscal stamps sold by the Post Office, a single overall annual figure was negotiated. This eased the administration of the accounting very considerably but meant that the Post Office had less interest in making any distinction between postage and fiscal stamps. Also, I have always presumed that the Post Office could be asked to refund monies on fiscal stamps and, since they could no longer recover this from the Inland Revenue, they would lose out and might just as well accept fiscal stamps to pay postage.

Mention is made in the article of De La Rue winning the contract for the higher value postage stamps in 1855 on the basis of their performance in making the "Draft" and "Receipt" stamps. This has always struck me as slightly fortunate in that the Revenue overlooked one error. The penny "Draft" stamp is the only occasion that a tête-bêche error has been made among the stamps of Great Britain as far as I am aware. What an embarrassment for the firm that on their very first attempt to print a stamp for

the British Inland Revenue they should make such a drastic mistake.

C G HARMAN, Richmond, Surrey.

Sir,

In the second part of my article on Victorian Printing Methods (October *Bulletin* page 46) an error unfortunately occurred in Joubert de la Ferté's name. For "François" read "Ferdinand" – my unaccountable slip, for his name has been well known to me for many years; my apologies for the misinformation to all concerned.

Perhaps it should be stated that the illustration on the same page (not selected by me) is of the "revenue" head engraved in 1853, not the smaller and differently shaped 1855 fourpence head.

I am indebted to George W Smith of Chelmsford, for having drawn my attention to these matters.

L N WILLIAMS, London NW11

Stamp Fading

Sir,

I made a sort of collage of British and German stamps a few years ago, and it is hung (behind glass) on a wall near, and at right angles to, a west-facing window. There are about 50 different used stamps displayed, and some are duplicated. The only stamps to show unmistakable signs of fading are two 8p definitives. They are side by side, but one has faded to a deep pink colour while the other is now a pale orange. They must be from different printings but I have no idea which. Any comments?

MAURICE A LINCOLN, Newcastle upon Tyne

Almost all inks consist of mixtures of pigments which differ in light fastness. Probably, the mixture in this case was slightly different, not enough to be very noticeable at the time but enough to produce the different fading which has taken place. *Ed.*

Sir,

Reading Peter Murray's letter on the subject of stamp fading in the October *Bulletin* prompts me to ask if anyone has deliberately faded a £5 Machin.

I ask this because I have in my collection two distinct shades of this value. One is the normal deep violet blue with the salmon colouring in the head and value (from cylinders 13A3B) and the other one (which came to me on piece

postally used) is what I would describe as steel blue with no trace of salmon colouring.

I would be interested to hear if anyone else has come across this shade, which is very distinctive and I cannot imagine it to be a faded violet blue. I appreciate the pink colour was not fast and if exposed to sunlight the colour would disappear.

F HOLMES, Appleby in Westmorland, Cumbria

Victorian Britain

Sir,

I should like to make two comments regarding the very attractive article which appeared in the August issue concerning this fine issue of stamps.

The portrait of Victoria "As a young woman" is credited to W C Roth which I think is an error. The miniature, I believe, is by Sir William C Ross who held the official appointment of "Miniature Painter to the Queen". I have an engraving from a miniature by Ross of a slightly different pose but obviously made at the same time. I doubt the existence of Roth.

Secondly, regarding the "official photograph of Diamond Jubilee 1897", am I right in thinking that this illustration is from an engraving and not from Downey's photograph?

GEORGE W SMITH, Chelmsford, Essex

With regard to the portrait of Victoria as a young woman, this was supplied by a picture library credited to Roth, though Ross does seem more likely. Mr Smith is quite correct about the Diamond Jubilee photograph. What was illustrated was an engraving based on the Downey photograph. Ed.

"Keeping up to date"

Sir,

I am surprised that Mr Heaton (October *Bulletin*) "got away with it" for so long, with his very lenient former sub-postmaster! I confess that I, too, am guilty of imposing on the good nature of a sub-postmistress who obligingly "bonks" (where I indicate, and *lightly*) each set of new issues so that I have clean used in addition to mint and first day cover, etc. When I "tried this on" in a town post office, the answer was "We aren't supposed to do it", so I appreciate the favour. After all, if all customers wanted similar favours ...

As for inspecting sheets, one can see why Post Office officials should not also be "collectors" – not that they'd have time! I do think that Mr Heaton was expecting rather much, though I grinned at the thought of his audacity!

Please let me add a completely unrelated footnote. The Christmas stamps look delightful. Rather dated, perhaps (how many children, alas, believe in Santa nowadays?) but then, so am I! I went to bed just like the child in the 26p stamp, except that it was with a waiting bolster-case, not a stocking. Happy memories. However long I stayed awake, I never caught *him* coming down the bedroom chimney! Thank you for this forthcoming nostalgic pleasure.

Mrs SYBIL SAREL, Stromness, Orkney

The First Pillar Boxes

Sir,

Perhaps you would be interested in the enclosed photographs, if you have not yet seen this particular post box.

The Guernsey Post Office sells a very attractive pottery replica for use as a money box, and I was able to obtain one on a recent visit to Guernsey.



This post box is apparently mentioned in the *Guinness Book of Records* as the oldest pillar box still in service in the British Isles and dates from 8 February 1853. It is in Union Street, St Peter Port.

It is the "sole survivor in the Channel Islands of the boxes erected by the then Postal Surveyor for the area, novelist Anthony Trollope" (as quoted on the replica package).

A further paragraph states that the Guernsey Post Office instituted enquiries as to the liveries used in the 19th century. It is believed that the

original livery was dark red, this colour was applied in 1980 and the cypher and inscriptions were picked out in appropriate colours. On 7 October, 1981 a commemorative plaque was unveiled (not shown in my photographs) and the box returned to everyday service from that date, having been out of commission for two weeks for re-painting.

P J CHRISTOPHER, South Wirral, Cheshire.

Jean Farrugia in her book The Letter Box (1969) discusses these early boxes at some length and the one in Union Street in particular. It is still on its original site. A report in the Jersey Times of 26 November 1852 gives a clear and very valuable eye-witness account of their appearance.

The Post Office Receivers are now erected and in full use, and a very great convenience they are to the public. They are made of cast-metal, are about four feet high and are hexagonal. On three of the sides, near the top, are the Royal Arms; on two sides the words Post Office; on the other the words Letter-Box; with a protected receiver. A sliding cover allows the collector to unlock the receiver and remove its contents. They are painted red and fitted in solid granite blocks two feet deep and raised four inches from the ground.

Another example exists in Bristol, presented by the Guernsey Post Office in 1969. Ed.

British Philatelic Bulletin

Editor Douglas N. Muir

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