

Philatelic Bulletin

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William Caxton 1476

13^p

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Editorial

Many of our readers who belong to philatelic societies have had the opportunity of seeing some of the first class films produced by the Post Office. Those who have not had that pleasure may be interested in the new film catalogue of which we give details elsewhere in this Bulletin. We can confidently recommend the various films with a philatelic content as an excellent prelude to a Society evening.

New Stamp Rolls

Rolls of 500 stamps in 6½p and 8½p denominations will go on sale at most main post offices on October 13. The 6½p roll with cost £32.50, the 8½p roll £42.50. They will also be avail-

able from Post Office philatelic counters and the Philatelic Bureau, Lothian House, 124 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH3 9BB. The rolls will be suitable for use in some types of stamp affixing machines used by businesses; the stamps are printed for sideways delivery.

Christmas 1976 Stamps

Four special postage stamps, values 6½p: 8½p: 11p and 13p, together with an appropriate cover are to be issued on 24 November commemorating Christmas 1976. Two Christmas cancellations—'Philatelic Bureau Edinburgh' and 'Bethlehem, Llandeilo, Dyfed', depicting a needle and thread will be available.

The following services for First Day covers will be provided.

Service A

The official Post Office cover will be addressed to the correct postal address of the destination required and given all four stamps. The cover will be cancelled with either postmark. The charge is 57p, or for customers with deposit accounts 52½p.

Service B

Customers own pre-addressed covers, bearing the correct postal address, will be given the full set of stamps, cancelled and despatched for a charge of 47p per cover.

Service C

For bulk orders of more than 50 or more covers to the same address under the conditions of Service A, the price is 54½p per cover.

Customers who specifically require the Bethlehem postmark, should send their orders to the Head Postmaster (Philatelic Section) Llanelli, Dyfed. All orders for cancellations other than Bethlehem only, should be sent to the Philatelic Bureau Edinburgh.

First day of issue cancellations will be given to covers bearing the Christmas stamps posted in special philatelic posting boxes in main offices throughout the country.

Gems from the RM Phillips Collection

XL The Official Imitation of the One Penny Red

From the very first decision in 1839 to produce adhesive postage stamps the possibility of forgery (to defraud the revenue) had been an ever-present anxiety to Rowland Hill and the Stamping Department of the Inland Revenue. Early in November 1856 Ormond Hill (Rowland Hill's nephew) who was Assistant Superintendent of the Stamping Department asked Messrs Perkins Bacon for a small supply of the actual ink then in use for printing the One Penny red stamp. Ormond Hill apparently wanted this ink for proofing the die of an imitation of the One Penny which the Inland Revenue had commissioned from a skilled engraver; presumably to ascertain whether this could be done successfully.



Though Perkins Bacon in fact refused to supply the ink (as they were entitled to do) Ormond Hill did have a few impressions made from the forged die; one of which he

sent to Mr J B Bacon (of the printers). Bacon's verdict (on 25 November) was that 'although I can easily detect it from several points of dissimilarity . . . it is very well done and would deceive any ordinary person who was not prepared for it.'

Illustrated as this month's 'gem' from the Reginald M Phillips collection in the Museum is one of the two known copies of the 1856 official imitation—the other copy being in the Royal collection. So that readers can judge for themselves how good an imitation it was a pair of genuine One Penny stamps are shown below.

In fact, there were very few attempts at postal forgeries of the line-engraved One Penny, and their poor quality was such that they were very quickly detected. (See 'The Line Engraved Postage Stamps of Great Britain' by E D Bacon, Vol I pp 179-182.)

A G RIGO DE RIGHI

First Day of Issue Facilities

First day of issue facilities have been withdrawn from South Shields and Hartlepool. The nearest offices offering these services are Newcastle and Middlesbrough respectively.

Philatelist Honoured

We offer our congratulations to Monsieur Alexandre Varga, President Directeur General de l'Ancienne Maison Theodore Champion, on being nominated Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur, for his services to philately.

The company Theodore Champion has been the British Post Offices' philatelic agent in France since 1971.

National Postal Museum

The National Postal Museum will no longer open to the public on Saturday. It will, however, open on Thursday from 10 am until 7 pm. Normal hours of opening, 10 am until 4.30 pm, will still apply on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

William Caxton

One of the most fascinating facts about Caxton as England's first printer was that he took to printing at about the age when most rich people in the fifteenth century retired. He did this in order to publish his own translation of a foreign work into English.

Caxton was born about 1422. As he tells us in the prologue to his *History of Troy*, he 'was born and learned mine English in Kent, in the Weald, where I doubt not is spoken as broad and rude English as in any place in England'. The first real date we know for Caxton was that in 1438 'William Caxton was apprenticed to the merchant, Robert Large'; this record of his apprenticeship can still be seen in the records of the Mercers Company. Robert Large was a rich silk merchant who became Lord Mayor of London in 1439-40, and had many connections with the Low Countries. When Large died in 1441 Caxton went to live in Bruges which was then one of the centres for the wool trade in Europe. He obviously prospered and in 1463 we hear of him becoming Governor of the English Nation of Merchant Adventurers in the Low Countries. This gave him power to settle trading disputes and generally to supervise the English trading community and to act where required. He remained in the Low Countries for some thirty years, until in 1470 he took service with Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, probably as some form of adviser.

There was at this time a natural affinity between the political and economic ambitions of the Kings of England and the Dukes of Burgundy: in 1468 Edward IV of England's sister Margaret had married Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, and master of the Netherlands. Thus many Englishmen had mixed with the tradition of French and Burgundian literature to be found in that court, and a demand had been created for this literature to be made available in the English language. As early as 1469 Caxton had begun translating Raoul Le Fevre's *Recueil des histoires de Troye* but the translation was not completed until 1471. It was probably his desire to make this,

and other translations, available to a wider audience that encouraged him to learn the then relatively new art of printing.

Printing from type (individual metal letters) was begun in Western Europe in Germany in the early 1450's, and the first printed book is commonly accepted as the 42 line Bible printed by Gutenberg, Fust and Schoeffer, and completed by them in the middle of 1455. Printing came late to England, and it was not until 1476, twenty years later, that Caxton set up his printing press in Westminster.

Even in Cracow in Eastern Europe there was a press printing books in 1474, and, as Colin Clair reminds us, there were no fewer than seventy towns in Europe with printers before England received its first press.

Caxton, having completed his translation in English of the history of Troy, printed it in Bruges in 1474. In the following year, again in Bruges, and again in English, he printed a translation of the *Game of Chess*, an allegory based on a game of chess, which he was later to publish in England in an illustrated edition. Both these books were printed in the heavy black types similar to the Gothic Black Letter types used by Gutenberg, and it is thought that Caxton learnt the art of printing in Cologne in Germany. These heavy black types we find very difficult to read as we are used to the lighter roman/Italian types that developed later. Many people looking at a Caxton for the first time find it difficult to realise that the language is English, though if one tries hard it becomes easier to read. These books were printed on continental paper, as indeed were his later books, and we do not know in detail what the printing presses that Caxton used were really like. They were probably adaptations of the screw principle used for wine presses and in papermaking, with a stone bed on which lay the type, and a wooden screw with a flat platen of wood or metal which would enable the type to slip easily from under the platen to be changed. This basic pattern was common to all presses down to the nineteenth century, and can be seen

in the hand presses in use even today, the only development being the control by which the platen is moved down on to the type and evenly pressed.

In 1476 Caxton moved back to England, and on 29 September (Michaelmas) he began the lease on a shop from the Abbey of Westminster. Lawrence Tanner has established that the first printing press was established in a house 'adjoining to our close to the Chapter House (of Westminster Abbey), on the left hand side of the path leading to the South or Poets' corner door, and that the shop was more or less associated with the production of books from that date until 1531-2'. His earliest known piece of printing is an indulgence form for issuing to contributors towards raising a fleet against the Turks. It is dated in ink 13 December 1476 and is now in the Public Record Office. The first dated book printed in England is an edition of the *Dictes or Sayengs of the Philosophes* which was finished on 18 November 1477, but it has been suggested that he began his book printing in England earlier than that, perhaps with the *History of Jason* with its dedication to Edward IV of England. Obviously the success of his new enterprise would depend on the support of the royal court. This court had developed continental tastes and liked the stories of chivalry, romance and morality which Caxton translated and printed in English editions. During his lifetime he printed more than ninety books, seventy four of which were in English, and twenty-two of which were his own translations. One of his greatest contributions to English was in establishing the native vernacular language in printed form, and in establishing texts of the early English writers such as Chaucer (whom he printed twice, the second time from a better manuscript) and Malory (in 1485 he printed his *Morte D'Arthur*). His printing of these texts helped to make the English, spoken in London, better known, and established its pre-eminence.

Although many works had circulated in manuscript for generations, it was only the

advent of printing that made it possible for much larger editions to be readily available at more reasonable prices, but the prices of volumes printed by Caxton were expensive by modern standards, and would have meant that only the rich could afford them. The only price we have for a Caxton is the 13s 4d (about 67p) ascribed to copies of a Sarum *Legenda* printed for Caxton in 1488 and valued in 1498. By comparison there is a copy of the *Nuremberg Chronicle* in Guildhall Library which has a note inside the cover saying that it was purchased for 66s 8d in 1496.

In 1481 Caxton first introduced woodcuts into his works in *The Mirrour of the World*. In 1483 he printed his largest known work, *The Golden Legend*, which consists of 449 leaves, and is printed on a larger sheet of paper than is used for any of his other works, being 22" by 15½". This has a number of woodcut illustrations. He followed it in 1484 with an edition of the *Fables of Aesop* with as many as 186 woodcuts. In 1487 Caxton made use of his well-known woodcut device over which there is much conjecture. It was put on a church service book printed for him by Maynyal in Paris, and was probably used to show that even if he was not the printer he was the publisher. Church service books, which involved printing certain passages in red, always provided technical problems for early English printers. In only three books is Caxton known to have printed a second colour, and he did this rather crudely by removing the black ink and putting in red ink before pulling the sheet once only for the two colours.

Caxton died about 1491. Although his fame popularly rests on his being England's first printer, he was also its first publisher and its first editor, and in all these his contribution was to be a lasting one, setting the pattern for what was to follow in the years ahead. It is all of this that we are celebrating in this the five hundredth year after the printing of the first book in England.

PETER STOCKHAM

Further Reading: Colin Clair: *A History of Printing in England* (1965). Richard Deacon: *William Caxton* (1976). N F Blake: *England's First Publisher* (1976).

Stuart Rose Retires

Stuart Rose, the Designer Adviser to the Postal Business of the Post Office retired on 2 October 1976.

He studied at the Central School of Arts and Crafts and held several important commercial design appointments—including that of Art Editor of 'Design' magazine from 1947–1953.

In 1962 he was appointed part-time Typographical Adviser to the PMG and full time Design Adviser in 1968.

He has been a member of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers since 1936, becoming a Fellow in 1953 and President in 1964.

It is his work with stamp design that he is best known to Bulletin readers. He was a member of the Council of Industrial Design Stamp Advisory Committee until 1962 and member of the Post Office Stamp Advisory Committee since 1968.

Stuart Rose was awarded the CBE in the Queens Birthday Honours List of 1974 and in the same year received the Reginald M. Phillips of Brighton Award for Postage Stamp Design for his contribution to design through his work as adviser to the Post Office and his designs of the Ulster Paintings issue of 1971 and British Painters of 1973.

The first recipient of the Phillips Award was David Gentleman who has contributed the following note which puts into words something of the respect which designers and his colleagues feel for Mr Rose.

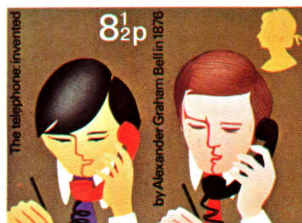
Stuart Rose this month relinquishes the post he has held since 1968, of Design Adviser to the Post Office. The many designers whose work he has commissioned during this time have come to respect him both as an able and resourceful fellow-professional and as a sensitive and discerning friend; someone who is alive not only to the puzzling and often conflicting demands which can complicate an apparently simple job, but also to the skills and interests of the individual designers: qualities which must somehow be brought into play to achieve any vigorous and original design.

Except at the very simplest take-it-or-leave-it level, all design work depends on some kind of rapport developing between designer and client. This is especially important where the process is long-drawn-out, as it is in producing a stamp. Briefing, preliminary discussion, presenting designs to the Stamp Advisory committee, essaying perhaps several times, is likely to take many months, and a design can go off the rails at any stage in the process. I'm sure that all the designers who have worked with Stuart Rose in recent years must, like me, have felt the benefit of his understanding, tact, and good humour, particularly at more tense moments when minor problems suddenly erupt to wreck an idea. And we must all have appreciated his lightness of touch on the tiller, realising that while he shared our problems he did not claim to have any preconceived solutions. A design adviser who knew in advance precisely what he wanted would be a sort of Procrustes; his solutions, while efficient and economical, would be mere formulae; Stuart Rose's strength has lain in his readiness to let people discover and develop their own potential within the framework necessarily imposed by the job.

His own elegant and exacting typographical standards are further reflected in a wide range of printed matter for the Post Office; in his impeccable development work on the definitive stamp designs; and of course, in the corporate identity programme he set in train, almost without precedent in its range and complexity. But what his fellow-designers will think of with especial warmth is his ready welcome in the office overlooking Postman's Park, whether to sort out a difficult design problem or to discuss a new essay with George York, or for one of the Christmas parties that very much revealed his own style, cheerful and without pomposity. Designers of course don't really retire at all, and Stuart and Dodo Rose's many friends, in wishing them well, will look forward with great interest to seeing in what direction he turns his skills in the years ahead.

Telephone Stamps Preliminary Designs

By Andrew Restall DA MSIA MSTD



The History of the Aerogramme and the Start of Commercial Air Mail — Part Six

Christmas Issues 1965-1975

Great Britain's first pictorial Christmas Air Letter forms were put on sale on 1 November 1965. They cost 10d each including 6d postage, and were popular enough with the public for the Post Office to issue a special Christmas form each year since.

In 1965, Michael Goaman designed the form depicting the Nativity scene and the 6d impressed stamp a stylized snowflake and Star of Bethlehem. The other form was ornamented with a pattern of stylized snowflakes by Richard Negus and Philip Sharland. Their 6d impressed stamp showed a geometrical representation of a snowflake. Both stamps incorporate the Dorothy Wilding portrait of the Queen.

1,000,800 of each type of form were printed by Charles Skipper and East at Basingstoke, using the lithographic process. After printing, the forms were sent to McCorquodale and Company Limited, of Wolverton, in uncut sheets of eight. After cutting, gumming and security counting the forms were handed over to the Post Office Supplies Department.

In 1966, Clive Abbott designed a form depicting a lighthearted representation of Santa Claus in Reindeerland. The form was issued on 1 November 1966, with an impressed 9d stamp designed by Michael and Sylvia Goaman, depicting a Christmas rose, foliage, ribbon and a pine cone. The Dorothy Wilding portrait of the Queen was replaced by the cameo portrait adapted by David Gentleman from the coinage design by the late Mrs Mary Gillick. The form cost 10d.

The 1967 two special forms were issued on 1 November, one with a religious theme designed by Eric Fraser depicting the three wise men offering their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the Child Jesus, and the other designed by Clive Abbott showing a partridge in a pear tree, being based on a legend 'On the First Day of Christmas'—the opening line of which appears beside the design. Both forms have the same 9d impressed stamp showing a design of brightly-coloured Christmas candles at varying heights, de-

signed by Michael and Sylvia Goaman.

Two special forms were issued on 1 November 1968. Geoffrey Trenaman designed the form showing a stylized airship containing Father Christmas looking through a telescope for the good children on earth. He also designed the address panel depicting Father Christmas firing a cannon with the words '25 DEC 1968' coming out of the barrel. The other form designed by Peter Gauld, shows an angel in flight.

In 'Nativity Scenes' appearing on the form issued on 29 October 1969 was designed by Fritz Wegner, who also designed the three Christmas stamps issued on 26 November.

The design on the address panel of the form depicts a herald angel over Jesus, Mary and Joseph. For the first time in a pictorial issue the design did not fill the whole panel. In this instance, part of the instruction panel shows the three shepherds and the three kings with their gifts. The impressed 9d stamp, incorporating the profile of the Queen by Arnold Machin, shows the flight into Egypt. Approximately 2,500,000 forms were printed of what to my mind, is one of the best Aero-grammes issued by Great Britain.

The front of the form issued on 28 October 1970 shows the 16th century window, depicting the Nativity, which can be found in Great Malvern Priory Church, Worcestershire. The 15th century window in the church of St Peter and Paul, East Harling, showing the adoration of the shepherds, provided the design on the reverse of the form, designed by Peter Gauld.

The design on the impressed 9d stamp shows an angel also taken from a window in the church of St Peter and Paul. Approximately three million forms were printed using the gravure process, and for the first time the name of the artist and name of the printers appear on the form.

In 1971, Julian Gibb designed the form issued on 13 October. It depicts a design of DOVES based on the calligraphic style of Edward Cocker (1631-1675), a London school-

master and author. The form incorporates the words 'Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year' and the equivalent greetings in four other European languages (French, German, Spanish and Italian) on the wings of the dove. The form cost 6p including 5p postage.

The form issued on 18 October 1972 was designed by Laurence Scarfe and shows various conventional Christmas motifs, including Christmas tree decorations, stars and snowflakes. The design was cut engraved on blocks from which a print was taken. This was then photographed for use by the printers, McCorquodale & Co Ltd.

The form issued on 21 November 1973 showed a motif of Christmas designs which included, doves, stars, Christmas trees and Father Christmases and was designed by Hulme Chadwick and Partners.

Peter Gauld designed the form issued on 27 November 1974 which was illustrated with three Christmas carols—'The Twelve Days of Christmas', front panel, 'While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night', back panel and 'We three Kings', impressed 6p stamp. The form cost 7p.

The form issued on 26 November 1975 was designed by Marjorie Saynor, tells the Christmas Story in medieval style. The form cost 12p, including 10½p postage.

In 1976, the Post Office are again issuing a special Christmas Air Letter form.

Next time, the final instalment of this short series on THE HISTORY OF THE AEROGRAMME.

PETER JENNINGS FRPSL

Philatelic Film Shows

Anyone interested in films about the postal services and stamps will be interested in seeing a copy of our new films catalogue. It is packed with all the information you need; story synopses on the films and the how-and-where of borrowing them.

The catalogue is free. Most of the films are available on free loan as well. Some, however, do carry a small hire charge but the catalogue gives details.



Many of the films are international award winners, all are available in optical sound 16mm. Because we realise that 16mm sound projectors do not exactly grow on trees we have made a number of our films available in 8mm—Super and Standard Eight—with magnetic stripe sound.

So, if you, or someone in your club, has an 8mm sound projector you have the equal opportunity with the 16mm owners to put on a first class film show for family, friends and fellow stamp collectors.

To get your copy of the film catalogue, just write to The Films Officer, Room 436(K), FREEPOST, Postal Headquarters, St Martin's le Grand, London EC1B 1HQ.

You don't even have to put a stamp on the envelope! Regretfully we have to restrict this offer to UK readers because the problems involved with Customs formalities in sending films to and from overseas are just too formidable.

The Mail MUST Arrive

The Story of James Langley

The Centenary of the Stoke Poges School to which we referred in the last Bulletin has prompted Eileen Loader—herself a resident—to let us have the story of a former sub post-master of the village.

A hundred years ago when the newly-built school in Stoke Poges was opening its doors to welcome the first pupils, a new sub-post-master had just been appointed to the village. His name was James Langley and he soon became a familiar sight to the local children as he drove his horse-drawn mail cart through the village carrying the mail from Slough to Stoke Poges and then on to Gerrards Cross. His wife and daughter would look after the office for him (it was also a savings bank and money order office) while he was out with the day's delivery.

James Langley who was born in 1828 in Great Marlow, tended sheep for a farmer almost as soon as he could walk, quarrelled with his family before he was ten and ran away to London. At the time of Queen Victoria's Coronation he was pushing a truck around London streets. He became a house painter for several years and then got married in 1857. Like the prodigal son (though with a better record) he returned to Marlow in 1859. In 1861 he tendered for the mail service between Marlow and Maidenhead and obtained the contract. Then he settled down to the real work of his life and for the next thirty years he carried Her Majesty's Mails, first between Marlow and Maidenhead, then Chesham and Taplow, and finally between Slough and Gerrards Cross.

In those days there was very little traffic on the roads but nevertheless he never started on a journey without making sure he had with him his posthorn, a brace of pistols and a shovel; while on dark nights he used to tie a bell to the axle of the cart to try and prevent collisions. One night, on the mail run from Chesham to Taplow, Langley arrived at the Saracen's Head at Beaconsfield and asked the postal official on duty to take the Beaconsfield bag from the mail cart. This he did and banged

the lid of the cart, the customary signal to the horse to resume the journey. Accordingly, the horse started off for Taplow, seven and a half miles distant leaving Langley inside the Saracen's Head! To the surprise of the postal official at Taplow, the mail cart arrived driverless but on time, the horse having done the journey alone on schedule as usual. Fearing for both Langley's safety and possible dismissal for dereliction of duty, the Taplow official unloaded the local mail and set off in search of his missing friend. He eventually found the weary and footsore Langley tramping towards him full of fears as to the fate of the mail but overjoyed to learn that it had arrived safely. On relating this story later James Langley remarked "Ah! I wonder if these much-talked-of motor cars are likely to be of much service to the Post Office as my good old horse in a crisis like this."

Another time he was driving down a hill on a very dark night and came across a gipsy encampment, all too late he was conscious of a donkey lying full length in the road fast asleep. He couldn't stop in time and drove right over him, the next minute he was in the ditch with his mail cart on top of him. The donkey was uninjured but James Langley's description of the noise that he made left no doubt that it was very annoyed. Despite the mishap Her Majesty's mails arrived at the next stop on time.

The great snow storm of January 1881 has gone down in history as one of the worst of the century and there are many thrilling stories of how, despite all difficulties, the mail went through. James Langley was, of course, out in that storm with his mailcart and at one point in the road plunged into a huge snow drift. For a while, horse, cart and driver were completely buried. With the aid of his shovel (which he always carried with him) he managed to dig himself, the cart and his horse free. Eventually, he rode into Slough with his precious mail intact to receive a great welcome, although on this occasion, he *was* a little late!

Apart from letter mail he carried officially,

Langley was allowed to act as a private parcel carrier, an activity which brought him in on average an extra £30 a year. The advent of the Post Office parcel post service in 1890, resulted in the banning of this perquisite—it was replaced by an annual increment of £5 to his Post Office salary to cover the work of carrying the parcels officially instead of in a private capacity. Such was the reward for years of loyal service!

James Langley was more than just a mail man. His accomplishments were surprisingly diverse. He had learnt wood-carving and drawing when he was in London and became especially interested in studies of the human face and figure. When he was at Gerrards Cross, waiting to do the return journey to Stoke Poges, he began a collection of natural curiosities. Rummaging among the roots of old trees he was often struck by the extraordinary resemblance portions of roots and bark bore to living creatures. The Duke of Somerset, an occasional visitor to the Post Office when collecting his letters, was very interested when he saw what James Langley was doing, and gave him permission to explore his park for similar material that took his fancy. The gem of the collection was a huge piece of flint bearing, quite distinctly, the well-known features of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield. 'Picked up in Bucks, just as it is and in his own county' said old James Langley.

He had quite a sense of humour and when the Parcel Post was first mooted Langley carved from wood his own idea of what the postman of the future would look like. His model had mail bags and parcels strapped all over him and leading to the post office a dog which he had found, on which the licence had not been paid and which was unmuzzled! He carved as a companion figure to this, a postman of 1720 which showed a more leisurely and easy going 18th century carrier of the mails!

In 1891, when he retired from the Post Office, James Langley opened a 'Cyclists' Retreat' at 6 William Street, Slough, where

'wheelmen and wheelwomen can rest and refresh' and in a back room established his 'Museum' which included examples of his carvings as well as the odd bits of roots, branches of trees and flints which he had acquired on his travels. He was also an artist and if he had been trained might have achieved great things; a self-portrait in oils bears witness to his artistic ability. Much as the old man loves his roots and his flints the most treasured articles in the Museum were the posthorn, the pistols and the Royal Arms which occupied an honoured position on the walls as reminders of the fact that he once carried Her Majesty's Mails.

EILEEN LOADER

New Postcard

A new postcard showing a train on the Liverpool-Manchester railway which carried the first mail on a public railway will be issued by the North Western Postal Board on 11 November 1976.



It will be available from the philatelic sales counters at Abingdon Street, Blackpool FY1 1AA, 23/24 Victoria Street, Liverpool L1 1AA, Spring Gardens, Manchester M2 1AA or from the Head Postmaster, 2 Springfield Street, Warrington WA1 1AA or 28 Wallgate, Wigan, Lancs WN1 1AA price 8p plus postage. A special cachet will be available if required in which case the price will be 15p plus postage. Ordinary cancellations only will be offered. The card measures 8" x 3 3/4".

24. National Nature Week, 1963

Two designers with widely differing backgrounds and experience contrived to achieve a good measure of uniformity with their designs for the 'Nature Week' stamps, issued on 16 May. National Nature Week was organised by the Council for Nature to publicise the natural history movement and the importance of conserving Britain's fauna and flora.

Flora—in the pleasing arrangement of a posy of buttercups and daises (with a busy bee collecting nectar)—was the subject of the 3d yellow, green, brown and black stamp, designed by Waterlow-trained, Harrison's staff artist, Stanley Scott. The Post Office, with collective tongues in cheeks, suggested that the pale pink background was reminiscent of 'the haze of summer': one wonders which particular summer they had in mind, nevertheless it was a nice thought.



Michael Goaman's 4½d multicoloured design was the first British stamp to be printed in five colours—black, blue, yellow, magenta and brown-red—and thus represented an important development in stamp printing. It was an attractive design giving a stylized impression of 'woodland life', with a rather 'polar-bearish' badger prominent in the foreground and a greater spotted woodpecker almost sitting on the badger's tail. Elsewhere in the design, the naturalist may observe a reclining fawn, a long-tailed tit, a brimstone butterfly, woodlark and harvest mouse in the wheat.

The background to the 'birds and beasts' is comprised of the spreading leaves of the

beech, noted for its smooth, silvery bark, together with 'lords and ladies' (the common arum, *A. maculatum*, also cuckoo-pint or wake-robin), and harts-tongue, the fern *Scolopendrium vulgare*. There was just room for the Queen's head in the upper right and the face value in the top left corner.



The stamps were photogravure-printed by Harrison and Sons in sheets of 120 (6 × 20) on 'multiple crowns' water-marked paper, ordinary and phosphor-banded. There was an amusing variety—a brown 'caterpillar'—on the petals of the top daisy: it occurred on the second stamp of the third row on sheets bearing the cylinder-numbers 1A 3B 1C 1D 'dot', and it exists in several states, eventually being retouched or corrected.

Quantities sold (phosphor in brackets) were:
3d 148,560,000 (8,640,000); 4½d 12,480,000 (1,140,000).

JAMES WATSON

Coming Events

The British Decimal Stamps Study Circle

The British Decimal Stamps Study Circle will be holding a meeting on Saturday, 13 November 1976, at Regent House, St Philip's Place, Birmingham. There will be an informal get-together at 10 am and again at 2 pm followed by a talk from a member of Harrisons the printers and a display by Dr Douglas Latta, of artists' preliminary drawings of commemorative issues. Refreshments will be available.

Anyone wishing to join the Study Circle are asked to write to Mr A C Craigen, 28 Highclere Drive, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP3 8BY, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

Exhibition of Swansea Postal History

An exhibition of the postal history of Swansea is to be staged in the Philatelic Sales Office, Cardiff from Monday, 18 October 1976 for a period of two weeks. The display is being staged by the President of the Federation of South Wales Philatelic Societies, Mrs E L Morgan RDP FRPSL. Included in the exhibition will be a selection of covers of the Swansea Postal area dating from 1738 to 1904. The hours of opening are: Monday to Friday 10 am to 4.30 pm, Saturday 10 am to 12.30 pm. There is ample parking space within the city and a multi storey car park opposite the office.

Thames Valley & District Convention

The Second Annual Convention of the Thames Valley and District Federation of Philatelic Societies will be held at the Conservative Club, Ock Street, Abingdon on Saturday, 9 October 1976 from 1.00 pm to 5.30 pm.

The Annual Competition will be judged in advance and the entries will be on show and the trophy will be presented by the Federation President Mr K F Chapman.

There will be a display, refreshments and dealers will be in attendance.

An Auction will be held at 4.00 pm.

Dorchester & Weymouth Philatelic Society

The Dorchester and Weymouth Philatelic Society are holding their Ninth Annual Exhibition on Saturday, 13 November 1976, from 11 am-6 pm in the United Reformed Church Hall, South Street, Dorchester, admission 10p Adults, 5p Children.

The Exhibition is to be opened by Mr L Chilton, Head Postmaster of Dorchester.

Refreshments are available all day and ample car parking facilities will be available in the Charles Street car park by the rear entrance to the hall.

Forces Covers

A Royal Air Force cover (HA8) commemorating Air Chief Marshal Lord Dowding the leader of Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain will be cancelled by a special handstamp (BFPS 1534) for the 36th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain on 4 September 1976. The cover will depict a Battle of Britain scene, and be flown in one of the remaining Spitfires or Hurricanes. It should be available on or about 15 October from the Project Officer: Group Captain W S O Randle, RAF Museum, Hendon, London NW9 5LL at 35p plus 6½p postage.

Three further covers in the RAF Air Display Series were issued during August.

RAF(AD)18—The Eagles

RAF(AD)19—The Blue Herons

RAF(AD)20—The Silver Birds (Austria).

These can also be obtained from the RAF Museum, Hendon at 35p each plus 6½p postage. All proceeds to the RAF Benevolent Fund and RAF Museum Appeal Fund.

A Royal Naval Air Service cover to mark the 75th Anniversary of the launching of the first submarine, is to be issued on 2 October 1976 and will be cancelled with a special handstamp (BFPS 1551). It will depict Holland boat No 1 at its launch with a representation of a submarine Coxswain's badge in the top right hand corner of the cover design and underneath a picture of the submarine HQ at Gosport, HMS Dolphin; with a submarine badge in the bottom lefthand corner.

The covers will be available any time after 2 October 1976 at a cost of 33p each with signed covers at £1.62p and 81p each from:

Commander P F Cole DSC RN Ret, Royal Naval Philatelic Officer, Royal Naval Air Station, Yeovilton, Somerset.

Special Handstamps

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting should bear $\frac{1}{2}p$ in excess of the normal postage and should be sent to the Head Postmaster of the town where the Special Posting Box is located or the relevant District Postmaster in London, marking the outer cover 'Special Handstamp'.

22 November 1976 (P/R)

'Watson House Golden Jubilee 22 Nov 76 London SW6'. Special posting box at British Gas Corporation Watson House, Peterborough Road, London SW6 3HN.

Postmark Slogans

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting bearing the appropriate postage rate should be forwarded to the Head Postmaster of the town where the Slogan is to be used marking the outer cover 'Postmark Slogans'.

1 September 1976–31 August 1977 (P)

'Sun Sea Scenery—Haul Mwyl Heli Aberystwyth'. To be used at Aberystwyth. First Class.

6 September–23 October 1976 (P)

'Mansfield District Festival 1976'. To be used at Mansfield. First and Second Class.

9 September–23 October 1976 (P)

'University of Surrey Tenth Anniversary Charter Granted 9 September 1966'. To be used at Guildford. First and Second Class.

13 September–30 October 1976

'Travelcard Brighton's Road and Rail Big Value Weekly Ticket'. To be used at Brighton. Second Class.

Repeat Campaigns

1 August 1976–31 July 1977 (P)

'Kelso'. To be reused at Kelso, Roxburghshire.

21 November–25 December 1976

17 April–14 May 1977

'The Samaritans Distress Despair

Phone or Visit in Confidence'. To be reused at Tunbridge Wells. Second Class.

PLEASE NOTE:

That all the Postmark Slogans which were published in the August Bulletin appertaining to Harlow will now terminate on 29 August 1976.

'P' denotes Pictorial

'R' denotes Rectangular

Book Reviews

Yn Post Manninagh

This is the first publication to list and price all known postal markings of the Isle of Man. The picture of the Manx post which emerges is drawn from many sources and will undoubtedly be of use to students of the Island's Postal History.

'Yn Post Manninagh' compiled by Dr J T Whitney is available from him at 38 Hazlemere Road, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex SS7 4AE price 80p inland, £1 Europe, \$2 elsewhere.

The Woodstock Catalogue of British Elizabethan Decimal Postage Stamps Part II Special Issues

To meet the increasing difficulties of publishing annually a complete, specialised catalogue of the Elizabethan issues, the Woodstock Catalogue has changed to a sectional format. As with the SG specialised, the editors have chosen decimalisation as the significant time-break.

They have produced within a handy compass a most useful listing of the decimal special issues up to the 1976 Social Reformers. It is refreshing to find a catalogue which has been based on a consistent logical plan. The preface is a set of general notes on the relevant facts about paper, printing, sheet markings, perforations, gum and phosphor. The listings of each issue include particular details on the provenance of such varieties as imperforates and missing colours.

On pricing the editors' policy has been to reflect market prices current at the press date

rather than levels from which purchasers might expect a discount. At a time of inflation this policy has its risks, but it is a valid one, provided that the catalogue is updated annually and its users accustom themselves to using its prices as a 'base above which' they are likely to buy. A notable innovation is the inclusion of prices for the newly popular gutter pairs.

The catalogue is published by the Woodstock Catalogue Co Ltd, 18 Elm Grove, Prescot, Merseyside, L34 2RX. Price £1.25.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir

COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS

It seems to me a great pity the 'system' does not enable the vast majority of this country's population to participate 'postally' in the frequent series of commemorative stamps. This is because we are not catering for 2nd class postings except at Christmas. It has to be admitted that in the general mail our colourful stamps are conspicuous by their absence. The position seems quite the reverse in most other countries. In this country who are you really catering for?

Yours sincerely

*Brentwood
Essex*

JACK SMITH

Editor's Note

There are practical reasons we do not include a stamp at the second class rate in our special issues. The first thing we do to letters, after they have been collected and brought into the sorting office, is to 'face' them, that is order them with the address side uppermost and the stamp in the top right-hand corner so that the stamps can be cancelled. At the same time and as part of the same operation, our facers separate the first and second class mail. Facers need to be able to tell at a glance the class of service to which each letter belongs; when they cannot do this readily the separation rate is clearly slowed down. If we pro-

duced special stamps at both the first and second class rates obviously facing would be slowed down for a considerable period while facers got used to the stamps. By producing pictorial stamps at the first class rate only we ensure that they are clearly identifiable as such and this problem is avoided.

We make an exception to this policy each year when we issue a single second class Christmas stamp, which is in heavy public use for a concentrated period, making the problems of recognition manageable.

Dear Sir

I would like to place on record the sincere thanks of Morris Men of many Clubs—there are now something in excess of 200 known Clubs—for the honour and privilege of having their art brought before a very wide section of the population, by means of a single postage stamp.

Many felt that the write-up in your July 1976 Bulletin concerning the issue of this stamp was an excellent introduction to the dance and its tradition, to a still very largely uninformed general public. The writer of your article noted in particular the feat of Will Kemp who performed this marathon in 1599, known as 'nine daies wonder'. I would wish to draw to your attention, as also I'm sure many of your readers would be interested to know that with the progress of time, the nine daies wonder is to become a 4½ daies wonder next Easter, when the Morris Clubs of London are to follow a similar route. The difference being that it will be undertaken by a number of Morris Clubs—in relay fashion—as opposed to one individual, who danced originally. The 4½ daies wonder will commence on the afternoon of Maundy Thursday (from London) and anticipated arrival in Norwich is thought to be around lunch-time on Easter Monday.

Yours faithfully

*Eltham Park
London SE9*

JOHN WELLS
Bagman of the Morris Ring

Requests to reproduce articles and illustrations appearing in the *Bulletin* should be addressed to the Editor, Philatelic Bulletin, PMK 3, Postal Headquarters, St Martin's-le-Grand, LONDON EC1A 1HQ.

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Subscriptions should be sent to the British Post Office Philatelic Bureau, Lothian House, Lothian Road, EDINBURGH EH3 9BB.