

July 1993



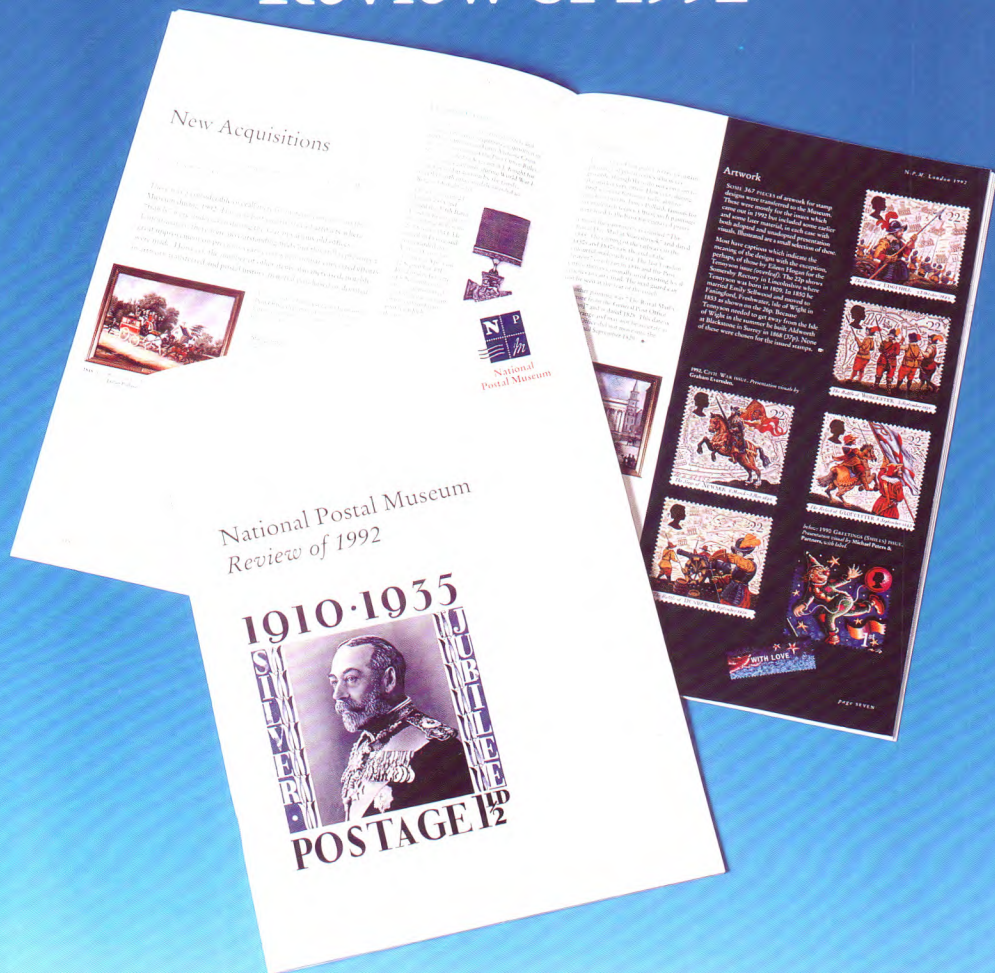
Royal Mail

British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 30, No: 11 The Royal Mail Magazine for Stamp Collectors Price 70p



National Postal Museum Review of 1992



The National Postal Museum houses one of the finest collections of stamps and postal history in the world. This *Review* describes the work done on Britain's postal heritage during 1992 and enumerates some of the Museum's recent acquisitions. It is profusely illustrated



**National
Postal Museum**

in full colour and includes articles on conservation, Post Office Archives, and research into postal history and the 1935 Silver Jubilee stamp issue. 28 pages with over 100 illustrations. A4 format. Price £5 from British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

British Philatelic Bulletin

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The story of Beatrix Potter 252

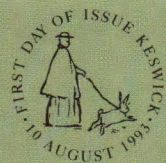
The 1993 prestige stamp book, to be issued on 10 August, tells the story of this much-loved author – the creator of Peter Rabbit.



The Story of Beatrix Potter

Prestige Stamp Book

10 August 1993



The 1993 Prestige Stamp Book, to be issued on 10 August, commemorates the work of Beatrix Potter, one of our best-loved authors of children's books. The year 1993 marks the centenary of a letter that was to become the most famous of all children's books, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Written by Beatrix Potter, the letter was sent on 4 September 1893 to Noel Moore, the five year old son of her former governess. This year is also the 50th anniversary of Beatrix Potter's death, on 22 December 1943.

The stamp book contains 30 pages, illustrating the life of this remarkable lady. We are told of her childhood in London, her early interest in nature study, her letters to children and the publication of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* in 1902. In 1901 she had been unable to find a publisher for the story and had 250 copies privately printed. In October 1902 Frederick Warne produced an edition of 8000 copies; the book proved so successful that by the end of the year 28,000 copies were in print. More books followed and in 1905 Beatrix was preparing to marry her editor, Norman Warne. Sadly Norman died and Beatrix took refuge in her work and in Hill Top

Farm in the Lake District. In 1913 she married her solicitor William Heelis and they settled at Castle Cottage near Hill Top Farm. Their home and her beloved Lake District are illustrated in the stamp book. Beatrix Potter died in 1943. Her name lives on, not only in her books, but in the Lake District where she left some 4000 acres, including Hill Top and 16 other farms, to the National Trust.

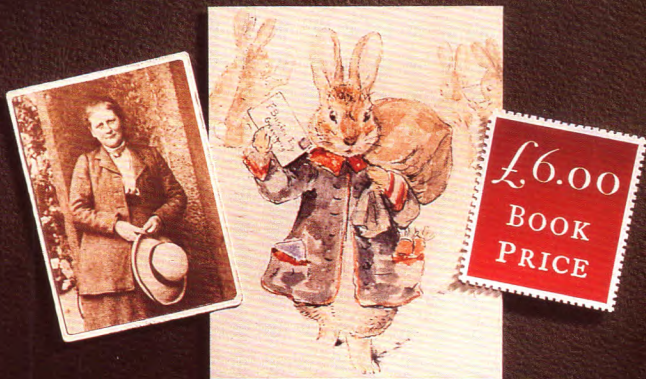
The book contains four panes of stamps, with total face value of £5.64. The retail price of the book is £6.

Stamp Panes

The book contains four panes of stamps, as follows:

1. 4 × 1st class Greetings stamps featuring Peter and Mrs Rabbit (as in "Gift Giving" Greetings book, issued 2 February 1993).
2. 3 × 18p (band left) and 3 × 24p (2 bands) Country definitives, one each for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, printed as horizontal se-tenant pairs for each country, 24p at left.
3. 3 × 2nd class (band left) and 3 × 1st class (2 bands) NVI definitives, printed as horizontal se-

THE STORY OF BEATRIX POTTER™



ROYAL MAIL BOOK OF STAMPS

tenant pairs, 1st class at left.

4. 2 × 2nd class NVI (band left), 2 × 18p definitive (band left), 2 × 33p definitive (2 bands), 2 × 39p definitive (2 bands) and 1 central label.

The pane containing the Peter and Mrs Rabbit stamps was printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd, the other three panes in offset-lithography by The House of Questa.

All stamps cover basic postal rates – 18p basic inland 2nd class rate: 24p basic inland 1st class and EC rate; 33p worldwide postcard rate, and 39p basic airmail letter rate.

All panes have selva, giving a miniature sheet effect, and also have two, vertical columns of rouletting, one near the binding margin for ease of removing the complete stamp pages from the book if desired.

Stamp Variations

The book will yield seven new stamps:

18p definitive, litho, band left (2 copies)

2nd NVI litho, band left (5 copies)

18p Northern Ireland band left (1 copy)

24p Northern Ireland 2 bands (1 copy)

18p Scotland band left (1 copy)

24p Scotland 2 bands (1 copy)

18p Wales band left (1 copy).

The 24p Wales 2 bands and 33p 2 bands were previously issued in the Welsh prestige book (February 1992). The 1st class NVI 2 bands and 39p 2 bands were included in the Tolkien book (October 1992) (1st class NVI and 33p also in Welsh book).

In addition to the stamps, several detachable stickers illustrating some of the more famous characters from Beatrix Potter's books are included.

The Beatrix Potter stamp book was designed by The Partners, written and edited by Judy Taylor. The text was set letterpress by The Hand Press. The illustrations of Beatrix Potter's original works are copy right of Frederick Warne and the book has been produced under licence from that company. The Beatrix Potter characters names and illustrations are trademarks of Frederick Warne.

First Day Facilities

A choice of unstamped "Royal Mail First Day Cover" and "Royal Mail Cover" envelopes will be available from main post offices, the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, and philatelic counters around a week before 10 August, price 21p each. The "Royal Mail First Day Cover" shows an illustration of Beatrix Potter set against

a view of Hill Top Farm. This will be on sale up to and including 10 August. The "Royal Mail Cover" shows original drawings by Beatrix Potter for the Peter Rabbit story. This cover will remain on sale at the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters after 10 August, until further notice.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the "Royal Mail First Day Cover" bearing the mixed pane of 2nd class, 18p, 33p and 39p stamps cancelled with a pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmark of the Bureau or Keswick, price £2.90 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £2.47 to overseas addresses (no VAT).

The "Royal Mail Cover" is offered bearing the pane of four Peter Rabbit stamps, cancelled by the Bureau or Keswick postmarks, at £1.49 UK (no VAT) or £1.27 overseas (no VAT). Orders for serviced covers must reach the Bureau by 10 August.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Bureau or Keswick cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Northern England Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Forth Street NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE NE1 1AA. The outer envelope should be endorsed "Pictorial First Day of Issue postmark".

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

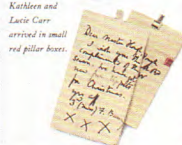
Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe, £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

THE MINIATURE LETTERS

The *Tale of Peter Rabbit* was quickly followed in 1903 by *The Tale of Squirrel*, which had also started as a picture letter, and then by *The Tailor of Gloucester*. No *The Tale of Benjamin Bunny* and *The Tale of Tom Bad Mice*. As her list of books I Beatrix's letters to children changed direction. The picture letters became min- written as if from one book character to another.



The miniature letters sent by Beatrix to Kathleen and Lucie Carr arrived in small red pillar boxes.

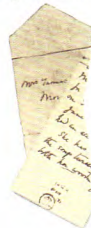


When folded, the letters formed their own envelopes complete with a stamp drawn by Beatrix in red crayon.



The Tailor of Gloucester was also used privately by Beatrix before Warne published a slightly shortened version in 1903.

This miniature letter is to A. Thank from Miss Lucie Carr



Royal Mail News

July Stamp Books

Shown here is the 50p machine book which will be available from the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, and Philatelic Counters from 6 July. The £1 book, also issued 6 July, was illustrated in last month's *Bulletin*.



Scottish Aerogrammes

A new aerogramme, commemorating St Margaret, Queen of Scotland is now available from post offices in Scotland, the Bureau and post offices with philatelic service, price 44p. It was issued on 22 June.

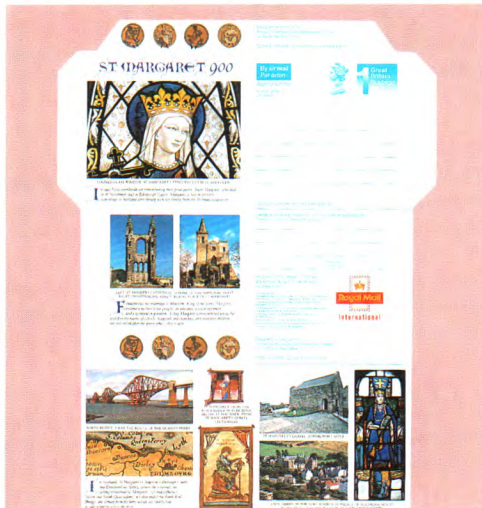
Margaret was born c.1046, probably in Hungary, the daughter of an exiled Saxon prince, grand-daughter of Edmund Ironside. She came to England in 1057 and sought refuge in Scotland after the Norman Conquest. She married King Malcolm III of Scotland in c.1070 as his second wife. Margaret had six sons and two daughters, one of whom, Matilda, married Henry I of England. One of her sons became Abbot of Dunkeld. Margaret was instrumental in bringing church practice in Scotland more in line with the general discipline in the west; when she arrived she found irregularities in the Scottish practice, including the saying of mass "in some barbarous rite". In c.1074, with the support of Archbishop Lanfranc of Canterbury, she founded the Benedictine monastery of Christ Church at Dunfermline, as a daughter house of Christ Church, Canterbury. This particular monastery probably didn't survive long after her death in 1093; the present Dunfermline Abbey is of later date.

A devout and strong willed woman, Queen Margaret sought the introduction of Anglo-

Norman manners into Scotland. She died in Edinburgh just four days after her husband was treacherously killed near Alnwick. Canonised in 1251, her feast day is celebrated on 16 November.

The numbers issued of 1991-92 Scottish aerogrammes were:

Rugby (12 March 1991)	86,000
An Communn Gaedhealach (23 July 1991)	62,750
Nature of Scotland (14 April 1992)	98,050
Scots Guards (23 June 1992)	78,200



Special Issues – Cylinders and Colours

The cylinders and colours for the Europa – Art in the 20th century stamps (11 May) are as follows:

24p 1A (grey) 2B (lemon) 2C (bright magenta) 2D (turquoise-green) 2E (slate).

28p 1A (grey) 1B (pale orange) 1C (light green) 1D (yellow-brown) 1E (bright orange) 1F (new blue) 1G (slate).

33p 1A (grey) 1B (buff) 1C (greenish-yellow) 1D (magenta) 1E (new blue) 1F (grey-black).

39p 1A (grey) 1B (buff) 1C (yellow-ochre) 1D (rose) 1E (red) 1F (new blue) 2G (slate).

The cylinders and colours for the Roman Britain stamps (15 June) are:

24p 2A (grey-black) 2B (pale orange) 3C (light brown) 2D (silver) P5 (phosphor).

28p 1A (black) 1B (greenish-yellow) 4C (bright rose red) 2D (silver) 1E (bright blue) 1F (grey-black) P5 (phosphor).

33p 1A (grey-black) 1B (greenish-yellow) 1C (bright rose red) 2D (silver) 1E (slate) P5 (phosphor).

39p 1A (black) 1B (greenish-yellow) 1C (bright

rose red) 1D (silver) 1E (lavender) 1F (grey) P5 (phosphor).

The plate numbers and colours for the Inland Waterways stamps (20 July) are:

24p 1A (new blue) 1A (greenish-yellow) 1A (bright magenta) 1A (black) 1A (blue) 1A (vermilion) 1A (brownish grey) 1A (sage-green).

28p 1A (new blue) 1A (greenish-yellow) 1A (bright magenta) 1A (black) 1A (blue) 1A (bluish grey) 1A (vermilion) 1A (sage-green).

33p 1A (new blue) 1A (greenish-yellow) 1A (bright magenta) 1A (black) 1A (blue) 1A (vermilion) 1A (greenish grey) 1A (sage-green).

39p 1A (new blue) 1A (greenish-yellow) 1A (bright magenta) 1A (black) 1A (blue) 1A (vermilion) 1A (sage-green) 1A (dull mauve).

Definitives News

The 30p definitive printed by Enschedé of the Netherlands will go on sale at the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters on 27 July. It will be available at Post Offices as stocks of the Harrison stamp are used up.

The 3p and 75p definitive stamps will be withdrawn from general sale at Post Offices after business on 17 July; they will remain on sale at the British Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, and Philatelic Counters until further notice.

Lionel Jones of the National Postal Museum reports new plate numbers for the £10 definitive – 3A (×10) and 4A (×10).

Stamp Book Quantities

The quantities of 50p and £1 machine books issued were as follows:

50p	
Planes 2 (30 Jan. 90)	4,262,675
Planes 3 (4 Sep. 90)	10,127,850
Planes 4 (25 Jan. 91)	422,800
Archaeology 1 (10 Sep 91)	8,284,225
Archaeology 2 (21 Jan 92)	2,052,000
Archaeology 3 (28 Apr 92)	1,275,000
Archaeology 4 (28 Jul 92)	1,050,150
£1	
Mills 1 (Walsall – 30 Jan 90)	187,250
Mills 2 (30 Jan 90)	14,725,424
Mills 3 (4 Sep 90)	21,751,750
Mills 4 (25 Jan 91)	1,763,150
Punch 1 (10 Sep 91)	12,702,250
Punch 2 (21 Jan 92)	3,699,975
Punch 3 (28 Apr 92)	3,035,975
Punch 4 (28 Jul 92)	3,220,915

Royal Mail Cover of Quality Awards 1993

First class design in first day and commemorative covers was highlighted and rewarded when

Royal Mail announced the winners of its second annual “Cover of Quality Awards” for covers produced during 1992 at a special presentation at the National Postal Museum, on 29 April.

Established by Royal Mail to encourage and recognise high standards in cover design, the judging panel made their decision against three key criteria: good cover design; originality of approach; and commercial success. A winner was announced in each of the four categories – Charity/Community; Commemorative; Promotional; and General. The judges also awarded certificates to runners up in all the categories except General.

The winners each received an engraved crystal goblet presented by Mr Colin Pawson, Royal Mail’s Head of Philatelic Marketing; Royal Mail also awarded a prize of £1,000 to the winning charity concerned, the Eagle Lodge Appeal.

The winner of: the Charity/Community category was Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd’s cover using the Single European Market stamp. The runner up was Dawn Cover Productions’ cover celebrating the “Preston Guild” civic festival, using one of the 24p Happy & Glorious stamps.

In the Commemorative category the winner was A G Bradbury’s cover commemorating the 350th anniversary of the start of the English Civil War. Runner-up was J & M Arlington’s East Somerset Railway cover, commemorating the Post Office Kiosk K4, (telephone and posting box), using a 24p definitive stamp.

Winner of the promotional category was A G Bradbury with a cover promoting the return of the Tall Ships to Merseyside in August 1992, using the 24p Christopher Columbus stamp. Dawn Cover Production’s cover marking the official opening of the Manchester Metrolink, using a Happy and Glorious stamp, was runner-up.

Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd were winners of the General category with a cover complimenting the attractive Castle High Value stamps. There was no runner-up in this category.

The judging panel comprised Mr Colin Pawson (Head of Philatelic Marketing), Ms Angela Reeves (Design and Editorial Manager), Ms Jane Ormrod (Enterprizes Marketing Manager), and Mr Kris Menon (Manager Postmarks) of Royal Mail, and Mr Derek Yardley, Chief Executive of the Philatelic Traders Society. Royal Mail will be repeating the Cover of Quality Awards in 1994, for covers produced during 1993.

Stamp Scene

Otto Hornung Honoured

It is with great pleasure that we report that Otto Hornung has been elected one of six new signatories to the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists – regarded internationally as the world's pre-eminent philatelic honour. Mr Hornung will add his name to the Roll at the 75th Philatelic Congress of Great Britain to be held in Edinburgh in September.

Mr Hornung is by profession an international philatelic journalist but probably as well-known in this country as the Secretary of the Philatelic Traders Society (and organiser of STAMPEX) for over 20 years from 1967. He was born in Czechoslovakia and escaped the Nazi occupation in 1939 to fight under the British High Command in the Second World War. He returned to Czechoslovakia but his allegiance with the West led to his settling permanently in England in 1967.



Otto is the London correspondent to major philatelic journals in Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain and Switzerland. He was a founder member in 1952 of the Association Internationale des Journalistes Philateliques (AIJP) and is now its President. For about 10 years until 1990 he was the UK representative for the FIP Commission for Literature, and has served as a literature judge both nationally and internationally. Since 1968 he has been present, in some capacity or another, at most international and many national stamp exhibitions.

Otto's prowess as a collector is as remarkable

as his philatelic journalism. Initially he collected Czech stamps but these were lost in the War; since 1954 he has specialised in the classic stamps of Turkey. He has exhibited regularly, receiving high awards in London and India (1990), New Zealand and Tokyo (1991) and Granada (1992). He has published research papers on the stamps and postal history of Turkey, and displayed Turkish material at the National Postal Museum (see *Bulletin* May 1989, page 235).

His popular *Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Stamp Collecting* (1970) has the unusual distinction of being published with editions in English, German, Danish and Japanese.

Joining Otto in adding the coveted letters RDP after their names will be Istvan Gazda (Hungary), Hiroyuki Kanai (Japan), Knud Mohr (Denmark), Mary Ann Owens (USA) and Diljit Singh Virk Aum (India). Congratulations to all six on this recognition of their philatelic work.

Cross Post

The Spring 1993 issue of *Cross Post* – journal of the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum has recently been published. Edited by Allan Daniell, former Editor of *Stamps* magazine, it contains some useful articles for serious collectors of GB stamps and postal history. Michael Bament reports on the markings on some of the 5200 letters (dating from 1790s to 1870s) deposited at the Museum from the Customs and Excise; Tony Gammons writes on "Arming the Mails" – blunderbusses and timepieces used on mail coaches. Mr Gammons also writes on "London Prison Posts", and Dr A R Lane, of the Royal Mail Materials Laboratory, Swindon, reports on "Improving the Performance of Postal Materials", examining stamp production, cancellation inks and code markings. Patrick Awcock, doyen of postal mechanisation students, writes on "Postal Mechanisation at Brighton" from the Krag machine of 1909 to 1988 (the latest machines will be described in a future article). John Maxwell Jones reports on his visit to the Bundespostmuseum at Frankfurt am Main, and Dr J W M Stone continues a review of the 'Peover Papers' – postal documents of the 17th century. There is an account of Friends' activities, and of the Museum's work during 1991/92.

Cross Post was awarded a silver medal at Autumn Stampex 1992. Available to non-members at £2. Orders/enquiries about membership of the Friends to: Ray Pottle, c/o National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP

Postal Memorabilia Displays

David Harrop will be providing displays at the following events: Upton-upon-Severn Steam Engine Rally, Worcs (24–25 July), Driffield Steam Engine Rally, East Yorkshire (7–8 August), Chelford Steam Engine Rally, Cheshire (14–15 August), St Agnes Steam Rally, Cornwall (21–22 August), Hinton Hill Steam Rally, Devon (29–30 August). The dates for the Weeting Steam Rally given in the June *Bulletin* have been changed to 16–18 July.

Until 3 October Mr Harrop is displaying part of his extensive Postal Memorabilia collection at the Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagans, Cardiff. The Museum is open daily 10am to 5pm. The display commemorates the opening of Blaenwaun post office at the Museum. The re-erection of this office, from Blaenwaun, Dyfed, was sponsored by Post Office Counters Ltd. Royal Mail Cardiff have supplied a GR wall letter box. Information about the Welsh Folk Museum can be obtained from the Museum on 0222 555105. Details of Mr Harrop's displays available from him at: 15 Hawthorne Road, Heaton Mersey, STOCKPORT SK4 3DQ.



Blaenwaun Post Office in its original location (Photo: National Museum of Wales).

Railway Letter Stamps

The Mid-Hants Railway has announced the issue of a new 25p railway letter stamp on 3 July. This will mark the 20th anniversary of the Mid-Hants Railway Preservation Society. The stamp will be available mint at face value, £1.50 per sheet of six. First day covers will cost £2.25, or postcards bearing the new stamp used on the day of issue £1. Postage of 50p (30p if order under £1) should be added. Orders/enquiries to: Postal Coordinator, Mid-Hants Railway plc, ALRESFORD, Hants, SO24 9JG, from whom a Railway Letter Service Newsletter is available (enclose SAE). Railway stamps are issued by a number of independent railways under the Railway Letter Agreement with Royal Mail.

National Postal Museum Review of 1992

The Museum has published a well-produced and interesting annual report since 1988. The 1992 report, entitled *Review of 1992*, is now available – a welcome addition to the series and worthy of a place in a good philatelic library of works on GB stamps and postal history. In his introduction, the Museum Manager reviews the main activities of 1992. Importantly the NPM now has three members of staff actively researching special issues. An article on the 1935 Silver Jubilee issue, by Simon Bates, is included in the Review; hopefully we will see much more from Simon's pen (or word-processor).

In the section on "Work in Progress" we learn of development of the Museum's collections of Meter Marks, Penny Posts, Machins and the massive and important "Stamps of the World" collection. During the course of 1992 the Customs & Excise transferred a huge quantity of files to the Public Record Office. Many letters in these files, were of little historical importance but of considerable postal interest. These have been deposited at the museum and Mike Bament describes the major finds.

Some 367 pieces of stamp artwork were acquired by the Museum in 1992 – a selection of the Tennyson and Civil War designs are illustrated in the *Review*, with details of paintings, letter boxes, postal history items and stamps added to the Museum's ever-growing collections. Conservation work is a vital task of any museum, Catherine Rickman reports on work carried on at the NPM.

The Museum's special exhibitions of 1992 are fully recorded, as are the publications and postmarks produced and used during 1992. Kevin Squelch provides an enjoyable account of the work at Post Office Archives (including a photograph of the Lord Chancellor at the official opening ceremony in March 1992); and Ray Pottle outlines the useful work and imaginative activities of the Association of Friends of the NPM.

As always the report has been skilfully edited by Douglas Muir, and contains numerous colour illustrations that will appeal to stamp and postal history collectors of all levels of specialisation. 28 pages, A4 size, card covers. Price £5, available by post from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, or to callers at the NPM shop.

Gems from the RM Phillips Collection

210. ¼d Stamp Designs

Last month we featured the designs, produced in 1874, by Perkins Bacon for a farthing stamp. This time we show the designs prepared by De La Rue. The seven designs by a De La Rue artist are in green wash with, in two cases, china white lettering. They were clearly intended to be printed letterpress.

No farthing stamps were ever produced for the British Post Office though they are, of course, well known from several colonies.

Why were these designs produced? LN and M Williams suggested an answer in 1975 when they pointed out that 1874 was the year that the Universal Postal Union was formed. Among the proposals connected with the Union was one concerning foreign postage fixed at 2½d for a letter up to ½oz in weight. A post card should cost 1¼d (12½ centimes)

and indeed in 1875 such a foreign rate 1¼d postcard was produced. The supposition is that the ¼d adhesive stamp might have been used to create this fee. However, there was no 1d postcard to uprate. Nevertheless, an essay in blue denominated ¾d is known for a postcard at this time.

It seems more likely that they have been intended for possible cheaper postal rate for printed matter.

These designs can be seen in the open display in the National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP. The Museum is open Monday to Friday, 9.30 am to 4.30 pm. Admission free.

*Douglas N Muir
Curator, Philately, NPM*



Two special exhibitions are now on show at the Museum: George V Silver Jubilee issue and 50th anniversary of Jersey's war-time pictorial stamps.

Thematic Collecting

Part 1 – Background

FRANCESKA RAPKIN, FRPSL

It is difficult to pinpoint exactly when thematic philately became respectable, rather than the poor relation who needs to be humoured. Certainly, a thematic display presented at a society such as the Royal Philatelic Society in London, would have been unthinkable 20 years ago, yet now such a display is given practically every season. The Europeans have been serious thematic, topical or motif collectors for far longer than we have in this country. For too long we have regarded thematics as the stepchild of philately, which is a shame, for carried to its correct conclusion, thematics are a far more demanding discipline than country collecting, and far more personal to the individual.

Highly regarded traditional philatelists are realising that, far from being the Cinderella of philately, collecting by theme is a very disciplined exercise, that involves not only a deep knowledge of philately, but a similar understanding of the subject, so that the whole can be understood by anyone through the philatelic material used, regardless of their lack of subject knowledge. Such detailed knowledge is not required by the traditional philatelist. What other area of stamp collecting today embraces all aspects of philately in the same way? The thematic collector needs to have a sound knowledge of all the world's stamps, as well as being something of a postal historian, marcophilist and possibly also an aero-philatelist. It may be true that collecting pretty pictures is a good introduction to stamp collecting, but comparing this to the serious thematic collector is like comparing the paddler at the sea-shore to a Mark Spitz.

The eminent Swiss thematic collector, Ernst Schlunegger, in his book *Introduction to Thematic Philately* (translated and serialised by the British Thematic Association), states a truth so obvious that it is mostly ignored. He says; "The collector who amasses all the stamps on a subject and then arranges them in alphabetical order according to country and date of issue is not a thematic collector at all, but a specialist collector of that subject. Albums containing every stamp issued which has a flower as a subject, does not make

a thematic collection of flowers". Whether preparing a display, exhibit or purely collecting for one's own pleasure, I believe that it is vitally important that the collection is laid out in a logical and comprehensible manner, for I believe that interest in the collection will soon wane if it doesn't make sense.

Logical Arrangement

To take flowers and plants as an example; from the subject point of view, it makes no sense to lay the stamps on the album leaf as they were released by the issuing postal authority. It is far more logical to lay them out in family groups, by the regions where they are to be found, or by their uses (other than things of beauty) i.e. for medicine or as a source of food.

One of the great charms of thematics is that 10 people can collect the same theme, use the same stamps and cancellations, yet no collection will be the same as the others. Collecting by theme leaves a lot of scope for individuality, something which is not always true of a country collection. One of my own themes is the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin. I know of at least six other collectors world wide who collect the same subject, yet each of us tackles it from a different point of view. Perhaps the sporting aspect is the most obvious, yet these Games were the first that were politically motivated and this gives a very different slant to the subject.

Personal Interests Reflected

Ideally, a thematic collection should be centred around the interests of the owner, whether from



Themescene and Topical Time – journals of the British Thematic Association and American Topical Association.

Bulletin Supplement

Commemorative Covers

Information given here is based on details supplied by the cover producers; requests for further information should be directed to the relevant producer and not to the Bulletin office.

Inland Waterways. On 20 July Royal Mail issues four stamps on the theme of Inland Waterways to mark the 200th anniversary of the Grand Union Canal. A G Bradbury is producing two special first day covers.



The Inland Waterways Association

Printed in full colour this cover depicts five different views along the Grand Union Canal, including the Waterways Museum at Stoke Bruerne and the Ovaltine factory at Kings Langley. Each cover bears a special Market Harborough handstamp – where the IWA held its first rally. Price £5.95, or £9.75 signed by Charles Hadfield, co-founder of the IWA.

Foxton Locks

The Victorian Prints cover (No.78) features an old engraving of the locks at Berkhamstead. These will be franked with a special handstamp at Foxton where there is an impressive system of 10 locks which conveys the narrow boats and small barges uphill from the Grand Junction Canal to the Market Harborough Basin. Limited to 500 copies. Price £6.75, or £9.75 signed by David Stevenson BSc, Chairman of the IWA. Orders/enquiries: A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, LEICESTER LE2 3RA. Prices include UK P&P; overseas please remit in Sterling and add £1.

British Grand Prix – Silverstone. To commemorate 45 years of the British Grand Prix at Silverstone an event cover will be produced,

depicting each car and living driver who has won a Silverstone British Grand Prix. These range from the Maserati 4CLT driven by Baron de Graffenried in 1949 to last year's victor the Canon Williams Renault FW14B driven by Nigel Mansell. The cover bears a 1st class NVI Machin definitive cancelled by an illustrated handstamp for the day. The standard cover costs £2 plus 25p postage and packing. All living Silverstone British Grand Prix victors have been approached to sign a limited number of covers. To date the following have agreed to sign: Baron de Graffenried; J M Fangio; Sir Jack Brabham; Jackie Stewart; James Hunt; Clay Gregazzoni; John Watson; Alan Prost; and the voice of Grand Prix, Murrey Walker. These will be sold at a premium. Please write for an application form, enclosing SAE to: G Lovell, 76 West End, Silverstone, TOWCESTER, Northants, NN12 8UY. All profits to Silverstone Recreational Association.

Stained Glass Museum. The Museum, in the North Triforium, Ely Cathedral, produced a cover showing a stained glass window of St Matthew for the 1992 Christmas stamps, all of which featured stained glass. A special Stained Glass Museum handstamp was used at Ely. Covers are still available at a new price of £4.25 with full set of stamps, or £2 with the 24p value. Orders/enquiries: Mrs S Mathews, Stained Glass Museum, 10 Ferry Lane, Chesterton, CAMBRIDGE CB4 1NT. The cover was illustrated in the January 1993 Commemorative Covers supplement.

Football Covers. Three new covers which form part of the "Official Football Cover Series" are now available. They are printed in full colour, embossed, have special pictorial handstamps and contain informative filler cards: (1) The Coca-Cola Cup Final – Arsenal's dramatic win against Sheffield Wednesday at Wembley (18 April); (2) The FA Cup Final – for the first time in history,

THE OFFICIAL FOOTBALL 15TH No. 10 COVER SERIES No. 10



THE COCA - COLA CUP FINAL 1993
THE COCA-COLA CUP
ARSENAL
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY



THE FA CUP FINAL 1993
THE FA CUP
ARSENAL
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

MATCH RESULT
ARSENAL 2 SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY 1
Mansel Hatters

WEMBLEY
Wembley Stadium Ltd
HAT BOW

the same two finalists met again in the 1993 FA Cup Final (15 May); and (3) Manchester United – 25th anniversary of the Club being the first league club to win the European Cup (29 May). Price £3 each. Orders/enquiries: Dawn Cover Productions, 27 Ashfield Road, Davenport, STOCKPORT SK3 8UD.

Hurricanes over Scotland. Cambridge Stamp Centre offer a magnificent set of covers featuring the Hurricane. The design, based on a new image by the well known aviation artist Peter Castle, features in full colour Hurricanes of 232 Fighter Squadron on patrol over the Highlands of Scotland. Each cover bears a full set of Christmas stamps; all have different postmarks, and have been flown and personally autographed by Hurricane or Battle of Britain pilots. Available for a limited period; set will be supplied in 10 pairs. Enquiries: Cambridge Stamp Centre Ltd, 9 Sussex Street, CAMBRIDGE CB1 1PA; Tel. 0223 63980.

Art in the 20th Century. J & H Covers have available, as part of limited edition series, a cover commemorating Art in the 20th Century. The illustration, as with all covers in the series, is hand-coloured by the artist. Price £4.54 including inland post and packing, cheques payable to "J Iverson". For further information of this and other covers available please send SAE to: J & H Covers, 4 Durham Close, Wooshill, WOKINGHAM, Berks, RG11 9AB.



900th Anniversary of Durham Cathedral.

The Dean of Durham has given the Durham City Philatelic Society permission to produce 900 numbered covers to commemorate the 900th anniversary of the laying of the first stones of the Cathedral. The cover bears the 24p Marine Timekeepers stamp cancelled by the Durham Philatelic Counter handstamp of 11 August. This handstamp features the Cathedral "knocker"; the story of the Cathedral and the "knocker" is enclosed within the cover. Price £1 plus 25p if posting required. Orders/enquiries: C J Garside, 8 Dyncourt, DURHAM DH1 3QB.



150th Anniversary Launching of S S Great Britain. 150 years ago Brunel's magnificent, revolutionary steamship *S S Great Britain* was launched in Bristol on 19 July 1843, the world's first large transatlantic iron ship with screw propeller. Cover No.41 in the international series "The Life and Times of Queen Victoria" will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the launching of the ship in the presence of Queen Victoria's consort, Prince Albert. The full colour cover with special pictorial "Posted on Board S S Great Britain" cachet, and special 19 July postmark costs £2.40, or £3 with a genuine Victorian stamp tied to the cover. As a special offer seven other "Queen Victoria" series covers are available at £11 the collection, inclusive of inland postage and packing; overseas add 90p. Orders/enquiries: G Eldridge, 177 Mousehole Lane, Bitterne, SOUTHAMPTON SO2 4TD.

Sounding Retreat. A Forces cover has been produced to commemorate the Light Division Sounding Retreat on Horse Guards Parade (8-10 June 1993). The cover, reproducing a painting of officers and buglers in contemporary dress uniform, bears the 24p Civil War stamp cancelled by a special Forces Post Office handstamp (No. 2376). Limited to 1000 covers, of which 200 have been signed by General Sir Garry Johnson, Colonel Commandant of the Light Division, and 100 additionally signed by the Colonel of the Light Infantry and a representative Colonel Commandant of the Royal Green Jackets. Price £1.50 unsigned, signed by Sir Garry Johnson £4, signed by three colonels £5. Remittances payable to "Horse Guards Retreat A/C 1993"; funds raised benefit Army and Regimental charities. Orders/enquiries: Project Officer, HQ The Light Division, Sir John Moore Barracks, WINCHESTER, Hants, SO22 6NQ.

Dam Busters. The successful attack on the Mohne and Eder Dams in the Ruhr Valley on 16/17 May 1943 was a combination of flying skills co-ordinated by Wing Commander Guy Gibson (later awarded the VC), the reliability of the Lancaster Bomber, and the unique bouncing bomb, invented by Barnes Wallis. Cambridge Stamp Centre offer an "official collection" of special souvenir covers to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the breaching of the Dams. The covers bear a special pictorial postmark; many have also been flown in the Lancaster of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight over the Derwent Dam. Enquiries: Linda Brand, Cambridge Stamp Centre, 9 Sussex Street, CAMBRIDGE CB1 1PA; Tel. 0223 63980.

a professional or a hobby aspect. Margaret Morris, one of the early recognised thematic collectors in this country, has had a life-long interest in astronomy: what more obvious choice of subject for her main collection? Through her work, her vast knowledge of things astronomical stand her in good stead and help her with her hobby. To start a flower collection if you can't stand gardening, is almost as foolish as buying a boat when you can't stand the water! Perhaps this is one of the main reasons that philately as a hobby has endured over the years, while other hobbies have drifted in and out of popularity. Whether collecting by theme or country, whether young or old, rich or poor, stamp collecting can accommodate all tastes.

Pioneers

Thematic philately is certainly not a new discipline in Great Britain, it only appears that way. The plan to form a national thematic federation was first suggested in the early 1970s, but it never got beyond the talking stage, and it was 1984 until the British Thematic Association came into being. In 1970 and 1971, two thematic exhibitions were held in Luton, but a third exhibition was never held. However, collecting according to the picture on the stamp, rather than the country who issued it, goes back as far as the London Exhibition of 1890, when a Mr Castle exhibited Victoria heads. It would be interesting to know what the judges had to say about such an exhibit! One hears of the occasional thematic collection in the early years of this century, but the real pioneer of this type of collection was Captain Philippe Durand (1879-1976).

When he showed his collection to people who knew little about Canadian philately, he decided to rearrange it in such a manner that he told the history of the country through the stamps. From this first step, Captain Durand went on to form notable collections of Freemasonry, Sport and Recreation, Royal Ladies, Tobacco, Fire, and even a collection of nudes. He subsequently formed the Glasgow Thematic Society in 1948, the first British thematic society, and incidentally, still the only general thematic society in the United Kingdom.

Dubious Issues

Some postal administrators with their eyes on the main chance must certainly take some of the blame for the bad reputation that thematics have earned among some of the establishment. Train stamps from islands that have no railway system and Winter Olympic issues from countries that

have never seen snow, can hardly enhance its reputation. Would these postal administrations still issue these stamps if there were no customers to buy them?

The true thematic collector can, and should, ignore all those issues which he feels do not add to his collection, and here again, the difference between the true thematic collector and the specialist collector of a subject is defined. Once the restriction of collecting everything that has been issued is removed, a whole new panorama is opened up and the myth of completeness is exploded. Whether or not an item is included in the collection will depend entirely on its relevance or the collector's preference, not because it exists. It is only when the collector realises that he, and he alone, sees the limits of his collection, and that he can, and should, refuse anything of which he does not approve, then perhaps the guilty postal authorities will become more circumspect.

Growing Popularity

Collecting by theme, rather than by country, will almost certainly enjoy more popularity in Britain in the future than it does at present; it is only a matter of time. It is already one of the fastest growing branches of the hobby. However, if a collection is to flourish and grow, and not be cast by the wayside, I believe that as much care and thought should be given to the choice of subject and its boundaries as is given to any country collection, perhaps more so.

Not everyone starts collecting stamps in order to exhibit internationally, nationally, or even locally. In fact, probably the reverse is true, for less than one collector in a hundred ever shows his stamps competitively. Nevertheless, I believe that it is quite easy to write up and lay out a collection so that it can be enjoyed by others, and I maintain that the collector too will get greater enjoyment from his own collection if it is logical and well-developed.

The organisation for thematics in the United Kingdom is the British Thematic Association, which publishes a quarterly magazine, *Themescene*, and also arranges meetings and seminars at regular intervals. For further details about membership to the Association, write to: Ian Paton, 15 Humberstone Road, CAMBRIDGE CB4 1JD. The annual "Thematica" stamp exhibition takes place at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 on 3-4 July. This is now a popular and established part of the British philatelic programme.

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Definitives Research and some of Your Views

STEPHEN GRIFFITHS *Definitive Stamps Product Manager, Royal Mail*

In choosing subjects for stamp issues or when refining our definitive range, Royal Mail canvasses views from the public through a variety of sources.

Following a recent "omnibus postal survey" of over 12,000 adults, covering all manner of products and services (not just Royal Mail), some 400 people who said they had an interest in stamps took part in more detailed research in October 1992. Of the 400, 300 were considered "serious" collectors, that is they had bought more than six of the last 10 issues of Royal Mail stamps. The other 100 were "occasional" collectors – having purchased less than six of the last 10 sets.

The main purpose of this research was to gather information and attitudes for long term consideration about the possibility of pictorial and English country definitives.

Pictorial Definitives

Just over half (of all who expressed a preference!) were in favour of a move to pictorial stamps. This result was more marked with occasional collectors than the serious, but those serious collectors who did not want a change generally held this view strongly!

The favoured subject for depiction by occasional collectors was animals, but the serious collectors rated animals last. The "serious" choice was well-known British Landscapes. A good compromise would perhaps be Famous British People, both groups rating this subject highly.

Both groups also mentioned flowers and buildings, the former being more highly rated by the "serious" sector, which is a surprising twist after their views on animals.

County Definitives

English stamps as an addition to the Country or Regional range was massively popular, with enthusiastic support and very few dissenting voices. Over 60 per cent of all collectors felt that a rose emblem should represent England.

Royal Mail were interested also in the views of *Bulletin* readers on changes to the Machin definitive design – published in the November

1992 *Bulletin* (pp.52-55). Both sets of opinion are of help to us in planning our future definitive issues.

Greetings Stamps

Separate research in March 1993 found Rupert the Bear our favourite Greetings character – a long way in front of Peter Rabbit (who didn't collect many votes from male respondents) and the Snowman.



Most disliked were our black and white Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum characters, but especially pleasing was the fact that nearly half of the people surveyed claimed to like all the characters. Just 2 per cent of respondents disliked them all – which may say more about those people than it does our stamps...

Also pleasing has been the number of complimentary letters received about this issue, although one correspondent did take us to task about our obviously sexist selection of predominantly male characters. Suggestions to redress this balance would be most appreciated – it wasn't deliberate, honest!

Editor's Note: The idea of pictorial definitives is far from new. Older collectors, like myself, will recall the designs for small-size, single-colour pictorial definitives put forward by the late C. P. Rang, Editor of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, in 1956. With permission of Mr Hugh Jefferies, the present Editor, we reproduce some of Mr Rang's designs. To me they are almost the perfect definitive – interesting, educational, promotional and dignified. Most collectors seem to favour



retention of the Machin head as the main feature of the (national) definitives. Supporters of pictorial definitives, like myself, hope that one day we might have pictorial Country stamps. Designs similar to those propounded by Mr Rang would certainly spur this collector into restarting his Country Stamp Collection!

Priority Services Labels

Shown here is one of four new self-adhesive labels, introduced from 28 June, in connection with the relaunch of Royal Mail Priority Services. The other labels are for use with the Recorded Delivery; Guaranteed Delivery – Registered; and Registered Plus services. Special envelopes for these services were announced in the June *Bulletin*.



Enschedé Stamp Printing Numbers

Sheets of definitives printed by Enschedé bear a date of printing (this will obviously vary), followed by a printing (warrant) number and the sheet number. The printing numbers used so far are: 1p-008; 5p-009; 6p-011; and 10p-010. The cylinder numbers have been 1 in each case.



Decimal Stamp Books—8

D G A MYALL

Sample window books

Some unusual window books began to appear on retailers' display stands at the end of April. They have the word **SAMPLE** printed down the yellow strip where the words "Pull Open" normally appear, and there is no barcode, just a white space. Inside, there are no stamps and no printed matter apart from the statement that the books were printed by Walsall Security Printers Ltd (WSP). In all other respects the books are identical with the normal post-Olympic books.

The origin of these books lies in a request by a large retail chain store and are the latest evidence of Royal Mail's readiness to respond to the commercial needs of their window book customers. Apparently, members of the public were known to take books from the handy display stands and to forget to pay for them. To counteract this, the retailer asked Royal Mail if they could be supplied with empty covers for display purposes. This was done and ordinary covers, which had had no stamps affixed, were supplied. However, the barcodes on these caused a problem as the empty books were rung up on the till. Members of the public came back to complain that their books had no stamps. To solve this, Royal Mail came up with the idea of the sample books.

There are four types: $4 \times 1\text{st}$; $4 \times 2\text{nd}$; $10 \times 1\text{st}$ and $10 \times 2\text{nd}$. There are no equivalents to

the books of $4 \times 33\text{p}$ or $4 \times 39\text{p}$. The books are supplied in packs of 25 in the usual shrink-wrapped clear plastics with no wrapper band. Books of four are laid 13 one way and 12 the other; books of 10 are laid 15 one way and 10 the other and have WSP's usual rubber band inside the wrapping.

The samples will be kept as an ongoing stock item and are being made available to other retail outlets. They will encourage shopkeepers to place their display stands on shop counters and thus keep stamp books prominently in front of the public. Keep a lookout for these interesting books and if you speak to the shop manager nicely he may even let you have a set; after all, they didn't cost him anything!

Greetings book reprint

The Gift Giving Greetings book exists in two versions. The initial issue contained a minor misspelling; the Bash Street Kids cartoon copyright acknowledgement showed the name Thomson as Thompson. This was corrected when a reprint became necessary. The incorrect barcode mentioned here in May was not, however, corrected since having the same book with two different barcodes would have created more problems than it solved.

Beatrix Potter prestige book

Full details of this book were not available at the time of writing these notes but it is clear that there are going to be mixed feelings about it. For the first time, Country stamps from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will be set-tenant with each other. In fact, three of the four panes will contain se-tenant pairs. Some collectors who collect only se-tenant panes or who break up prestige books for single stamp



4 × 2nd Sample book

variants (as listed in the main catalogues) do not like having panes of unwanted stamps. More variety to the contents of prestige books may meet their needs.

Even more controversial will be the fact that the value of the stamp content at the date when the book is placed on sale will total £5.64 but the book will be sold for £6. I understand that the premium, the first for a British stamp book since 1911, is in recognition of the fact that the NVI stamps will have an increased value after the next tariff change (which is expected to take place during the normal sale period of the book) and because of higher production costs.

Stamp vending machines

Modified vending machines for Post Office Counters Ltd will be phased in from a date to be announced. No details are yet available but it is likely that they will dispense £1 and £2 books.

Single stamps

Several readers have asked that details of new single stamps appearing in books be mentioned in this column. It seems that such a list might prove popular but first it is necessary to define the variables which will determine whether a stamp should be included. At one end of the scale mention could be confined to stamps which qualify for Royal Mail's first day cover treatment but that might be too restrictive to be of much use to collectors. At the other end, some current catalogue and dealers' listings would probably be *too* specialised. I propose, therefore, to limit my lists to stamps which differ by one or more of the following criteria, in addition to obvious changes of value and colour.

Paper and gum

These are important factors and changes are always mentioned in the *Bulletin*. Hints on how to recognise them have appeared in my earlier columns; the last being a mention of the new OBA-free papers introduced into stamp books in April.

Printing method and printer

Photogravure stamps are easily distinguished from the lithographed ones which have appeared in books. The latter do not show any of the regular screening of the image that is an essential part of the photogravure process. A moderately powered magnifying glass, such as 10×, is all that is required. The best place to examine any stamp is at the value; the edges of the white figures are serrated in photogravure but clean

and sharp in lithography. More difficult is to separate the House of Questa stamps from the WSP printings. Fortunately, the NVI stamps present no problem; all Questa's have a distinctly dark mark along the Queen's jawline which is absent from WSP's. Very few non-NVI book stamps have been printed by both firms and I hope to deal with these on a case by case basis.

Perforation

This subject covers the gauge as well as the newly-introduced elliptical holes. Until recently, Questa and WSP used different gauges although their perforators were made by the same firm, Bickel. Variations of deliberately imperforate edges will also be included, although these now survive only in the £1 machine-vended books and may soon disappear even from them.

Phosphor overprints

Official variations in the number and width of any phosphor bars, as well as changes in the type of phosphor used will be listed. This is another heading that helps to distinguish Questa and WSP NVI × 2nd stamps. The bars on WSP stamps are printed from continuous bands down the centre. Those on Questa stamps are printed from interrupted bands so that there is a short gap at the top and bottom of the bars. They are also printed off-centre to the right.

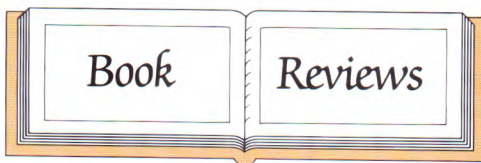
Lists

In my next column I will list all single National and Country stamps, including NVIs, issued in stamp books since the last tariff increase in September 1991 and which differ according to the above criteria. I will also update the new printings list.

© D G A Myall

Keith Bowen Exhibition

Admirers of the stamp designs of Keith Bowen will be interested to know that an exhibition of his work is on show at: The Artworks Gallery, 70 Rosaline Road, London SW6 7QT. Telephone: 071-610 1801. The exhibition will run until the 23rd July and the opening times are from 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday and also on Sunday the 4th July from 2 to 6pm. Mr Bowen designed the 1988 Welsh Bible stamps and the 1992 Wintertime stamps both of which were very popular issues.



The Posts of Sevenoaks in Kent, by Archie Donald.

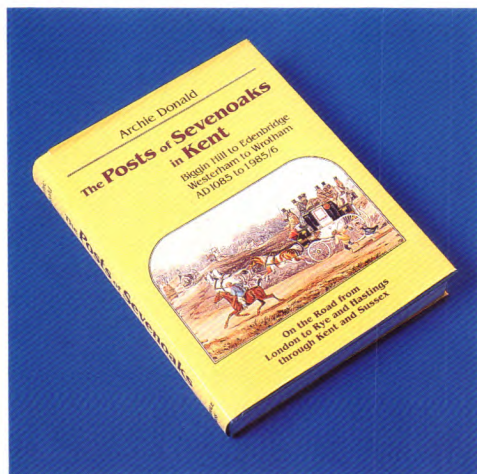
Mr Donald is the nearest thing to a Renaissance man I know. An honours graduate in economics and social anthropology who followed up with a master's degree in educational psychology, he has earned his living as a soldier, photographer and salesman, held a wide range of responsible positions in commerce and industry, and currently heads the Department of Business Administration at South East London College, Lewisham. He has travelled the world in one or other of his professional capacities, his books have been translated into Swedish and Japanese, and amid such a busy and varied life he has found time to write poetry.

His hobbies include archaeology, philately and local history; these and his professional qualifications and experiences have uniquely fitted him to write this impressive book detailing the postal services of Sevenoaks and its surrounding district spanning a period of nine centuries. Not that there were many letters around in 1085, the point at which the book commences; but in view of the town's strategic location on one of the main roads from the coast to London it is hardly surprising that Sevenoaks has a postal record which can be traced, by means of actual correspondence, wrappers and covers, back more than four centuries.

This is a "must" for the social historian and student of commerce and communications. The philatelist and postal historian, needless to say, will find the text replete with examples of the postmarks from 1761 (nothing earlier has been recorded, strange to say). Sevenoaks has the unique distinction of having had an undated name stamp consisting of "7 Oaks" in an oval; this curiosity was briefly employed in the 1840s before the advent of the double-arc datestamps. Oddly enough, some of the more recent postmarks are extremely elusive and include the skeleton used at the Agricultural Show in 1927. The postmarks of the dependent sub post offices range from the numbered stamps of the penny post receiving houses to the single-circle datestamps used at the town sub offices of the present day. Although parcel labels are given due

prominence it seems odd that only a solitary registration label – a manuscript provisional type used at Dynes Road, Kemsing – is illustrated. The postmarks of the mobile post office, Biggin Hill RAF post office, field posts, territorial camps and the Ministry of Defence at Fort Halstead, as well as the strike posts of 1971 and the scout and guide services are all covered.

Nor is postal ephemera ignored; wrappers and waybills, posters and postal notices, parcel labels and couriers' stickers, meter marks and Christmas scout post stamps everything, in fact, from newspaper tax stamps to the latest Trakback barcodes, comes within Mr Donald's survey.



A concise but scholarly text is enlivened by a wealth of illustrations, from actual covers and postcards of all periods to photographs of post offices past and present, postmen and women, telegraph messenger boys, horsedrawn mailcoaches and the colourful mail-coaches of old. Even the full range of pillar, lamp and wall boxes is illustrated. In many respects this book resembles an encyclopaedia of British postal history; but Sevenoaks is probably not untypical of many a market town of its size and importance down through the ages, where its story is, in fact, a microcosm of national postal policy and the way in which it was implemented at a local level.

I can wholeheartedly recommend this book to everyone who has more than a passing interest in postal history, whether his or her studies include Kent or not. 466 pages, hardback.

Available from: Woodvale Press, The Pond House, Craythorne, TENTERDEN, Kent, TN30 6SB. Price £37, postage £3.50.

James Mackay

The 1993 (8th) edition of Stanley Gibbons **Great Britain Concise Stamp Catalogue** is now available, listing definitive issues to the 2p and 24p Walsall litho printings of 9 February and the Orchid stamps of 16 March 1993. This catalogue is ideal for the collector who wishes to collect GB stamp at a more advanced level than the standard SG catalogue (Part 1) but below the level of the *GB Specialised Catalogue*.

There have been a number of price changes since the 1992 *Collect British Stamps* checklist was published last November. The 1990 20p Smiles greetings stamps (SG 1483/92) are up 50p to £1.25 each in used condition, the 1991 "Good Luck" greetings issue (1536/45) up 15p each mint to 75p, up 30p to 90p used. The 1988 Edward Lear miniature sheet is now £8/£8.50, down £4 mint, but up £1 used. The 1989 Industrial Archaeology sheet remains at £6 used, the mint price is cut £2 to the same level. The 1990 Stamp World sheet goes up 75p used to £4. The prices of some of the early Yearbooks are reduced to more realistic levels – the 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987 books are down £20, £10, £25, and £20 respectively to £90, £75, £70, and £50. The prices of some of the early QEII commemorative sets are also more in line with market trends, as are valuations of the 1st class (black) and 2nd class (bright blue) NVIs. However, this reviewer queries the need for used copies of the current 18p and 24p sheet definitives and bright blue (2nd) and flame (1st) NVIs to be valued above the 10p minimum price. Surely they are all in plentiful supply.

For collectors of decimal Machins, the new *Concise* lists some 191 basic stamps; some of the Questa printings and all the Walsall issues have been renumbered. The Machin listing new runs from X841 (½p 2 bands) to X1085 (39p Walsall).

272 pages, soft bound. Price £9.95, available from Stanley Gibbons Strand shop, or by post from Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd, Parkside, RINGWOOD, Hants, BH24 3SH.

Part 7 of **British Stamp Booklets** by Dr Jean Alexander and the late Leonard F Newbery has recently been published by the GB Philatelic Society. The book deals with Series 10 and 11 booklets – Series 10 comprising twenty-six 10s booklets issued between April 1961 and November 1970. The early 10s booklets had "traditional front covers" showing the GPO logo; issues from May 1968 onwards had pictorial covers showing explorers Livingstone, Scott, Mary Kingsley, Shackleton, Frobisher, and Captain Cook. The "pictorial" books contained

Machin stamps. Two scarce stamps were issued only in 10s booklets – the 2d Wilding with Multiple Crown watermark inverted (S.G.573 Wi, catalogued £80 mint) and 3d Wilding phosphor band at left with watermark inverted (615c Wia, £16). The mixed panes of 1d and 4d Machin stamps (S.G.724m, 725l) came only from 10s booklets.

Series 11 comprises the 1969 £1 "Stamps for Cooks" book – the forerunner of today's "prestige stamp books".

As always Dr Alexander and Mr Newbery provide a clear but detailed account, including some useful illustrations of "Pattern Books" for the £1 issue, essays for booklet panes and examples of panes from the £1 booklet overprinted SPECIMEN and with a Post Office Philatelic Bureau datestamp of 8 June 1971.

The book is available from: H H Sales Ltd, The Barn, Heaton Royds, Shay Lane, BRADFORD, W Yorkshire, BD9 6SH, price £4.50 plus 50p postage. Details are available from that address of the previous six parts of this important work.

The Scottish Philatelic Society this year joins the select band of British philatelic societies which have celebrated their centenary. The Society, which meets in Edinburgh, has some 120 members. It is good that as part of the celebrations the Society has published its history, written by Ian J Fleming and entitled **Scotland's First Philatelic Society**.

This interesting account tells us that the founders were mainly German merchants trading in Leith and Edinburgh. There is a fascinating insight into life in the 1890s: early members enjoyed their collecting in style with much conviviality in several hostels in and around Princes Street, Edinburgh. The work of many well-known Scottish philatelists is described, as are the attempts made to maintain regular meetings during wartime. The author has carefully studied the Society's Minute Books and provides useful listings of all SPS office bearers, fellows and prizewinners from 1893 to date. A good read for any having association with the Society, or interested in the history of philately in Britain.

A5 size, soft cover, 36 pages. Price £3, postage 50p, from: IJ Fleming, 3 Dick Place, EDINBURGH EH9 2JS.

The TPO and Seapost Society have recently published **TPO Postmarks of Great Britain 1962-1990** by R M Stubbs and G P Roberts. This

provides an update to *TPO Postmarks of the British Isles* compiled by the late Norman Hill in 1962, but is not intended to be a complete survey of the actual services, but rather a record of all the datestamps which have been used in recent years. Many new handstamps have been issued since Hill's listing, either as additions, replacements or for use on new routes. Further handstamps have come to light which existed at the time of Hill's publication, but which he did not include. Some have found their way to the National Postal Museum after the withdrawal of a TPO service. The most prolific source of information has been the Scrap Book, held at PO Archives, which records over 200 handstamps disposed of in 1965 when final impressions were taken.

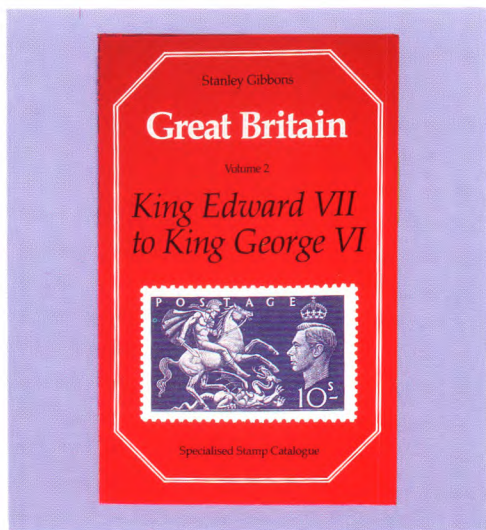
The handstamps used on some 150 TPO services are recorded, with summary histories of some services. For example, the Cardiff-Crewe and Crewe-Cardiff services were established as a Railway Sorting Carriage in 1920 when the Cardiff-York was divided into the Cardiff-Crewe and Shrewsbury-York workings. It became a TPO in 1930 and from May 1988 the duties were reunited to form the Cardiff-York and vice-versa.

Some of the datestamp were short-lived, for example the Stafford-Shrewsbury and Shrewsbury-Stafford Sorting Carriages operated only from 3 June-19 July 1985 when, owing to modernisation work, the normal TPO activity based at Crewe was temporarily transferred to Stafford.

Collectors of TPO handstamps will find much useful information here and will welcome the clearly produced 1000 illustrations. 72 A4 size pages, card cover, spiral bound. Price £7.50 UK post paid, £8 overseas (surface mail), from: G P Roberts, 2 Saxon Close, Hillingdon, UXBIDGE, Middx, UB8 3RW. Remittances payable to "TPO and Seapost Society".

A new (9th) edition of Vol 2 of the Stanley Gibbons **Great Britain Specialised Stamp Catalogue** dealing with the issues of Edward VII, George V, Edward VIII and George VI is now available.

A new feature for this 9th edition is the introduction of unmounted mint prices for basic stamps in the Edward VII and George V sections. To avoid complicating the existing listings these prices are shown at the beginning of each section. As examples of the unmounted prices, the Edward VII De La Rue and Somerset House £1 stamps (M55/6; SG 266/320) are priced each at £750 mounted mint, £1100 unmounted.



Many of the items now listed for the first time are proofs or material of similar status. A number of additional imperforate Edward VII stamps, taken from PO registration sheets, have been added, joining the examples of 10s and £1 values which have been listed for some time. Other proof material new to the catalogue includes six Edwardian die proofs, with two for the 2s. 6d., and further examples from the Downey primary die proofs engraved by J A C Harrison. In the George VI sections a number of additional SPECIMEN and CANCELLED overprints, recently sold at auction, have been added.

Interest continues to grow in plate varieties and a number of additional examples have been added, notably on the Edward VII and George V Profile Heads.

Prices for some specialised material have been considerably revised to reflect recent market activity. There are considerable mark-ups for booklet panes from all reigns and for cylinder blocks from the photogravure period. Panes of six of the Edward VII ½d, 1d and 1½d stamps with upright watermark are substantially increased in price. Valuations for good constant varieties are also increased, for example the George VI 7d with damaged N in REVENUE (Q23c) is up from £30 to £45 and the 1940 2½d Stamp Centenary with loop to crown (QCom6c) is raised £15 to £40.

448 pages, profusely illustrated, card covers. Price £18.95. Available from Stanley Gibbons Strand shop, or by post from Stanley Gibbons Publications, Parkside, RINGWOOD, Hants, BH24 3SH (postage £2.50 UK).

Posting Boxes

142. Australasian Boxes

This month we feature boxes from Australia and New Zealand. Laurie Cabban of New South Wales sent the first photograph, of a fluted box at Alice Springs. Above the box is a plate stating: "This Post Box was made in England between 1859 and 1871 and was presented to the Ghan Preservation Society by Australia Post. Letters posted here will be cleared daily through the Alice Springs Post Office and will bear a special Ghan post mark". Mr Cabban explains that "Ghan" is the old narrow gauge train which ran from Adelaide to "the Alice" from 1929 to 1980. The new Ghan is a standard gauge train, very modern, with every luxury. The name Ghan comes from the old Afghan camel drivers who provided the popular four-footed transport prior to the establishment of the train service. Camels are still used in the area and are, in fact, exported to Pakistan.



The second photo, submitted by J M Beveridge of London is of a "Penfold" box, probably made in Christchurch by P&D Duncan, to specifications from London, in the 1880s. The box was installed outside the museum at Arrowtown, South Island, New Zealand in 1977; it was originally sited in Invercargill. Boxes were painted in "Berger's Signal Red" in 1911, - a universal bright red colour adopted for use on all pillar boxes and hutch posting boxes throughout New Zealand.

Arrowsmith is a former gold mining centre; the museum in the old post and telegraph office is a major tourist attraction.

Competition



Win £75 worth of British stamps

Enter this month's competition and stand a chance of winning £75 worth of current British philatelic products of your choice - stamps, stamp books, postcards, albums, etc. Answer the questions below, the answers will be found in this month's *Bulletin*, and send with your name and address on a postcard to: July Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail National, 76-86 Turnmill Street, LONDON EC1M 5NS to arrive by 27 August.

The sender of the first all-correct entry drawn will be invited to order £75 of philatelic products; five runners-up will be sent presentation packs of the Roman Britain stamps. Answers and winners' names will be published in the October *Bulletin*.

1. To whom did Beatrix Potter write on 4 September 1893?
2. Who edited the National Postal Museum's *Review of 1992*?
3. Where will the 75th Philatelic Congress of Great Britain be held in September?
4. Who are the authors of *British Stamp Booklets*?
5. What is the price of the St Margaret of Scotland aerogramme?

The competition is not open to staff (and their families) of Royal Mail National and its agents. No correspondence will be entered into; the Editor's decision will be final.

The winners of the April competition were: Miss A Swan of Derbyshire (£75 worth of philatelic products); E Swales of Derbyshire; J Griffiths of Cheshire; M Miller of Spain; I Allen of Lanarkshire; and Dr C Jansen of Germany (Roman Britain presentation packs).

The answers were: 1. Tate Gallery; 2. Royal Mail International; 3. Ashted Dastor; 4. olive brown sepia; 5. Ian H Fraser.

Our thanks to all who entered.



1943 Air Letter

Last month Peter Jennings wrote about the issue of the air letter with imprinted 6d stamp in June/July 1943. Tony Edwards of Kent has provided valuable additional information:

"18 June 1943 is the generally quoted date for the introduction of the printed stamp version of the Air Letter form. In fact there was no 'first day' as such, as the Post Office Circulars reveal. The relevant notice is that 16 June 1943, which says: *Air Letters with a 6d stamp printed on them are now available for issue, but as supplies are limited it has been decided that, for the present, their issue is to be restricted to offices in the London Postal Region and the Midland Region.* The notice goes on to say: *requisition supplies in future from... and Stocks of unstamped forms should be used up before the stamped forms are brought into use.*

"The issue date, as far as philately is concerned, is therefore that of the valid earliest postmark; presumably this is where the 18 June comes from. A genuine postmark this early is however unlikely, as normal Post Office procedures would have meant about a two weeks delay before they reached the counter. Although the stamped forms came into use in June 1943 it was some considerable time before they reached the whole country, in fact it is questionable whether they ever did reach the 'whole country'. There are a number of counter notices extending the availability of the forms. That of 11 August 1943 to the Scottish and Northern Ireland Regions, 22 September 1943 to the North Western Region, 10 November 1943 to the South Western and Welsh & Border Counties Regions. The last one is dated 3 May 1944, and extends them to North Eastern Region, but also states that: *Head Postmasters in the Home Counties Region should continue to requisition unstamped forms as at present.*

"There is no indication of when the PO stopped supplying unstamped forms, but a counter notice of 3 March 1954 says *It has come under notice that Civilian Air Letter Forms, which were issued some years ago, are still on hand at some offices and are being issued to the public. HPmrs and DPmrs should arrange for stocks at all offices in their area (including the HO) to be examined and all unstamped air letter forms on hand to be made waste*

locally. By this time, the PO were already supplying the second version of the blue form.

"The demise of the unstamped form is not quite so simple, hence the use of the word 'questionable' in the previous paragraph. They were reissued in 1945 as a temporary measure until the proper, stamped, Forces Air Letter was available. They were however officially accounted for at ½d each, the selling price of the Forces Air Letter being 2d whilst the stamp was only 1½d. The later instructions were to use up all unstamped forms before using the new forms. If the forms still in use in 1954 had been from this issue there should have been accounting instructions along with those for disposal, the lack of these suggests that the remnants were indeed from the original issue rather than the forces issue.

"If anyone has any information on this, or other related topics I would be delighted to hear from them, via the Editor."

1971 Decimal Definitives First Day Covers

Over two years ago we published a list of post offices at which first day covers of the low value decimal definitives were serviced during the Postal Strike. Reports are still coming in of other offices – Mr K Burton of Norfolk sends a photocopy of a cover bearing ½p, 1p, 2½p, 3p, 5p and 7½p stamps cancelled HARROLD/BEDFORD. Mr Burton states that these six values were the only ones available at Harrold PO on 15 February 1971.

Mail by Bus

E Hudson of Blackpool was "very interested" in David Loudoun's letter in February on Scottish bus services carrying mail. Mr Hudson writes: "The routes radiating from Lairg to Lochinver, Scourie, Durness and Tongue were operated until fairly recently by Sutherland Transport & Trading Co Ltd, with a fleet of small Bedford buses containing a mail compartment. Deregulation in 1986 brought competition, and currently, the Royal Mail post bus covers at least the Lairg-Durness service. David MacBrayne also had mail contracts (ships and buses, the latter also Bedfords with mail compartments). Peter Burr of Tongue also ran one route (Tongue-Thurso) with one bus until taken over by Highland Transport twenty-odd years ago".

All letters are carefully read; matters of general interest will be dealt with in "Postbag". The Editor regrets that he is unable to reply personally to all letters.

Six Month Digest

Listed below are the issues of the past six months and the proposed dates of issue for stamps until December 1993. Any change in these dates will be notified in the Bulletin. British Philatelic Bureau order codes are quoted where known.

5 Jan	Swans stamp cards (AQ236)
19 Jan	Swans stamps (AS528)
19 Jan	Swans pack (AP110)
19 Jan	Greetings stamp cards (JQ001)
19 Jan	NPM "People in the Post" cards (NQ917)
2 Feb	Greetings stamps (JB006)
2 Feb	Greetings stamps pack (JP002)
2 Feb	Marine Timekeepers stamp cards (AQ242)
9 Feb	50p book – Postal History No 1 (TB021)
9 Feb	£1 book – Educ. Institutions No 1 (TB022)
9 Feb	10 x 1st class book/W (UB065)
9 Feb	Pen Pal Aerogramme Pack (QA029)
16 Feb	Marine Timekeepers stamps (AS534)
16 Feb	Marine Timekeepers pack (AP111)
16 Feb	High Value stamp cards (FQ001)
23 Feb	Scotland 18p perf 13½ x 14 (SS183)
2 Mar	£10 Definitive stamp (FS100)
2 Mar	£10 Definitive pack (FP009)
2 Mar	Orchids stamp cards (AQ247)
2 Mar	"Air Cards" (4 designs) (RQ001)
16 Mar	Orchids stamps (AS539)
16 Mar	Orchids pack (AP112)
16 Mar	4 x 1st class book/W (UB067)
16 Mar	10 x 2nd class book/W (UB066)
23 Mar	Scot. Aerogramme (Curling) (QS031)
6 Apr	50p book – Postal History No 2 (TB023)
6 Apr	£1 book – Ed. Institutions No 2 (TB024)
6 Apr	10 x 1st class book/H (UB072)
6 Apr	10 x 1st class book/W (UB071)
6 Apr	10 x 2nd class book/Q (UB070)
6 Apr	4 x 1st class book/H (UB069)
6 Apr	4 x 2nd class book/W (UB068)
27 Apr	6p Definitive, Enschedé (DS061)

4 May	Europa stamp cards (AQ253)
6 May	NPM "Gems of the Museum" cards (NQ918)
11 May	Europa stamps (AS545)
11 May	Europa pack (AP113)
7 Jun	Roman Britain stamp cards (AQ258)
8 Jun	1p Definitive, Enschedé (DS012)
8 Jun	5p Definitive, Enschedé (DS056)
8 Jun	10p Definitive, Enschedé (DS104)
15 Jun	Roman Britain stamps (AS550)
15 Jun	Roman Britain pack (AP114)
22 Jun	Scot Aerogramme (Q. Margaret)
28 Jun	Priority Services envelopes

Forthcoming

6 Jul	50p book – Postal History 3
6 Jul	£1 book – Educational Institutions 3
13 Jul	Inland Waterway stamp cards
20 Jul	Inland Waterways stamps/pack
27 Jul	30p Definitive, Enschedé
10 Aug	Beatrix Potter prestige book
7 Sep	Autumn stamp cards
14 Sep	Autumn stamps and pack
14 Sep	NPM PO Uniforms cards
5 Oct	Sherlock Holmes stamp cards
5 Oct	Christmas aerogramme
12 Oct	Sherlock Holmes stamps/pack
2 Nov	Christmas stamp cards
9 Nov	Christmas stamps/pack
9 Nov	Christmas stamp books (1st & 2nd)
9 Nov	1993 Collectors Pack
9 Nov	1993 Year Book
9 Nov	NPM Christmas postcards

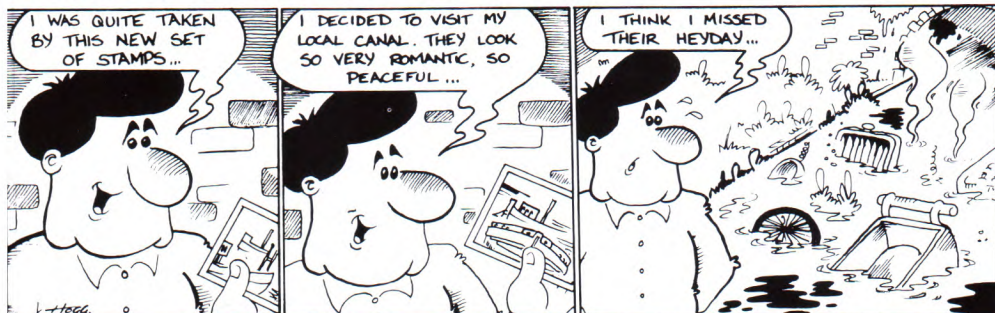
Notes:

The Walsall 10 x 1st book of 9 February bears a reference to Greetings books on the back cover. The stamps in the 6 April 1st and 2nd class books have elliptical perforations on vertical sides.

W = Printed by Walsall Security Printers;

H = Harrison & Sons; Q = House of Questa.

CUSTOMER KNOWS BEST.



July Digest

Issued in July

6 July: 50p and £1 books containing 2 x 1p and 2 x 24p stamps and 2 x 2p, 4 x 24p stamps and 2 labels respectively. Third in Postal History and Educational Institutions series.

Printing: 50p Harrisons, photogravure; £1 Walsall, lithography. Stamps on ACP. The £1 book have straight edges at left and right sides of pane. Both books have stamps with PVA Dextrin gum.

13 July: Inland Waterways stamp cards, Nos 154A-D, price 21p each.

20 July: Inland Waterways stamps – 24p, 28p, 33p and 39p.

Designer: Tony Lewery.

Printing: The House of Questa, offset-lithography, sheets of 100, perf 15 x 14, 2 phosphor bands per stamp. PVA gum.

Pictorial First Day of Issue postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau, and Gloucester.

Presentation Pack: No.239, price £1.55.

27 July: 30p definitive, printed by Enschedé. Sheets of 200, elliptical perfs, 2 phosphor bands. Available initially from Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters.

Withdrawn in July

20 July: Gilbert & Sullivan stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and souvenir cover.

27 July: 50p stamp book – Archaeology No 4, £1 book – Punch No 4.

Events

until Oct 93. “Forces Sweethearts” exhibition at Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1. Sponsored by Royal Mail International. Enquiries: Exhibitions Officer, Imperial War Museum, 071-416 5323.

3 Jul 93. SWIPEX-inter-federation exhibition organised by Cornwall, Somerset & Dorset, and Wessex Philatelic Federations, at Great Hall, Exeter University, 10.30-16.30. Dealers, displays, refreshments. Enquiries: Mary Claydon, “Hazelhurst”, Tiverton Road, Bampton, TIVERTON, Devon, EX16 9LJ.

3-4 Jul 93. Thematica '93 exhibition at Carisbooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2.

Enquiries: F B Sole, 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, ESHER, Surrey, KT10 0QG. Tel: 0372-467652.

17 Jul 93. Telford Phil Soc Stamp & Postcard Fair at Belmont Hall, Wellington, Telford, 10.00-16.00. Enquiries: P Morris-Jones, 190 Holyhead Road, Wellington, TELFORD, TF1 2DW. Tel: 0952 223926.

31 Jul 93. Falmouth Phil Soc Exhibition and Fair at Women's Institute Hall, Webber Street, Falmouth from 10.00-16.00. Enquiries: D Gomm, 18 Hillside Road, FALMOUTH, Cornwall, TR11 4HE

Priority Services Envelopes

New envelopes issued as part of the relaunch of the Priority Services were previewed in last month's *Bulletin*. Shown here are both sides of the small size “Registered Plus” envelope. The “Guaranteed Delivery” envelopes are white paper, bearing the Machin head in deep blue, with the service logo (at left) in blue and red.

