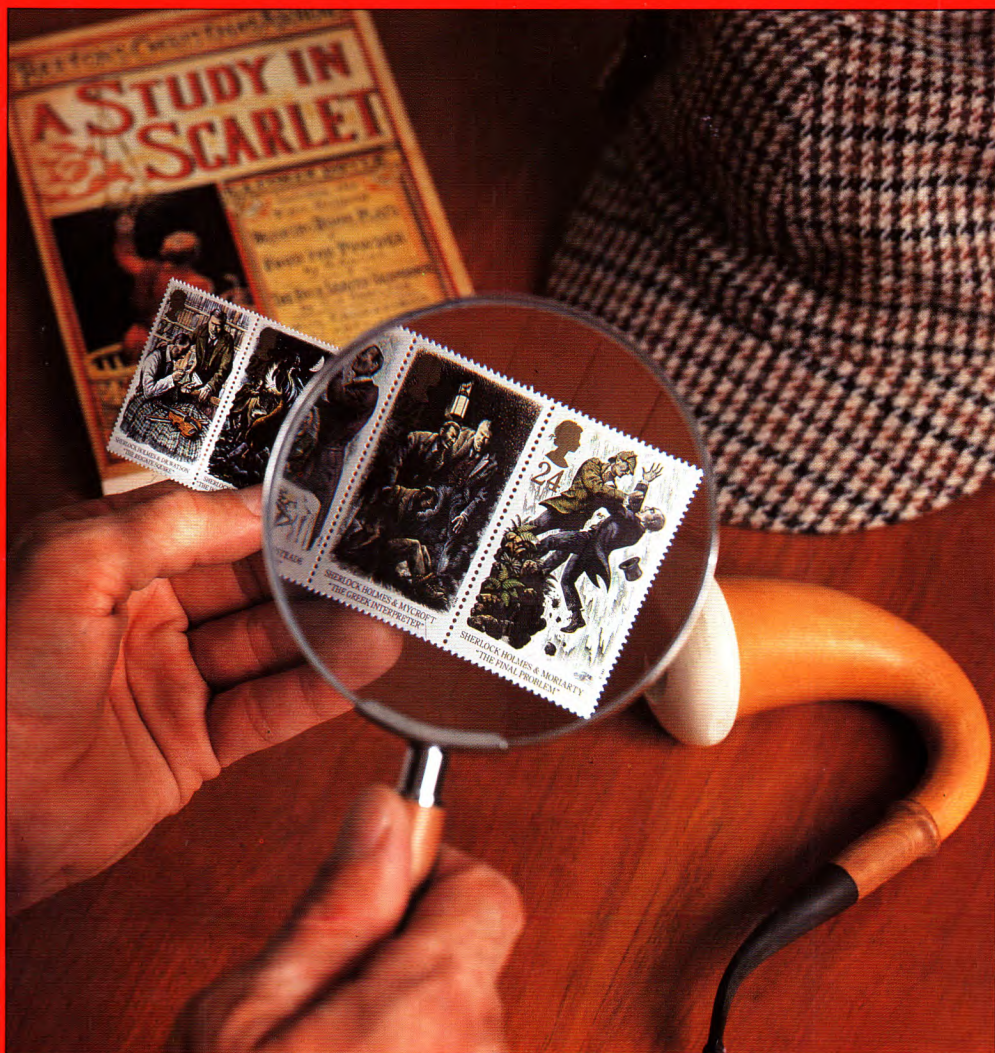


October 1993



British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 31. No: 2 The Royal Mail Magazine for Stamp Collectors Price 70p



British Philatelic Bulletin Publication Series

British Special Stamps

1985 / 1986

186: Nature Conservation: Species at Risk

20 May 1986

British Special Stamps Nature Conservation: Species at Risk



British Herpetological Society, the Royal Society for Nature Conservation and Friends of the Earth, the last-named having specially commissioned the stamps' designer, Ken Lilley, to produce a co-ordinating cover based on the stamp designs.

The British Philatelic Bureau 'First Day of Issue' cancellation featured three birds' eggs in a nest. Lincoln was chosen for the other official pictorial cancellation which pictured a badger - and a single red species not included in the

postcards were numbered 1000 sets were printed. A few of cards exist with the inscription used and inverted, an occurrence. The National Postal did two postcards in this issue. They were two entries in a Post Office photographic competition.

SWA It featured 'Scavenging and robbing up' (Paul West) and 'Poposting' (Alex Cleland). Some cards were produced.

the stamps, by the withdrawal date of 7 sets: 17p - 50,000,000; 22p - 10,000,000; 24p - 6,384,200; and 34p -

1985/86 British Special STAMPS

Publication No:1



By Francis Kennedy

In 1986, the 50th anniversary of Britain's Council for National Parks happily coincided with the decision of CEPT to proclaim that year's theme for all the European issues to be the Protection of Nature and the Environment. The outcome was the issue, on 20 May 1986, of a charming set of four stamps with designs devoted to species of British wild life in danger of extinction.

The Council for National Parks launched a National Parks Campaign in conjunction with the Countryside Commission and the ten National Parks Authorities. Simultaneously a £10 million British Wildlife Appeal was launched, with Sir David Attenborough as

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A new series of **British Philatelic bulletin Publications** is launched this month with **British Special Stamps 1985-86** by Francis Kennedy. This continues the popular articles on each special set of stamps from 1924 onwards, published in the *Bulletin* between 1974 and 1992. Eighteen issues are dealt with in this book, including some of the most popular and interesting designs

of the 1980s. Terence Cuneo captured the power and beauty of Famous Trains, Wilson McLean recalled the music of Handel, Holst, Delius and Elgar and Ken Lilly featured rare British birds and animals. Halley's Comet was controversially depicted by Ralph Steadman. Available from: British

Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT. 40 pages. Retail price £3.95.



Royal Mail

British Philatelic Bulletin

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20 Brandon Street
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

Binders to hold 24 issues, price £6.75. Available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) and to callers only at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP.

Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly **British Postmark Bulletin** giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, Rest of World £21.75.

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Main Feature

Technical Changes Affecting Machin Definitive Stamps 1990-93

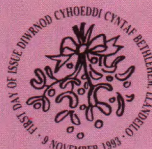
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Dr A R Lane of the Royal Mail Research & Development Centre reviews phosphor tagging, security features, perforations and self adhesive stamps.

Christmas 1993

9 November 1993



This year's Christmas stamps mark the 150th anniversary of the publication of *A Christmas Carol*, written by Charles Dickens (1812-70). Within the book children mingle as equals with adults, and adults rediscover the simple pleasures of childhood. But its main concern was the deprivation, ignorance and iniquities of 19th century society. Dickens proclaimed ignorance "the most prolific parent of misery and crime."

Within a week of its publication some 6000 copies of *A Christmas Carol* had been sold at five shillings each; a reprint was put in hand. Dickens declared the book "a most prodigious success - the greatest, I think."



illustrator, are voluminous, including books for children. He has provided illustrations for works by Ogden Nash, Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice, Roald Dahl, Sir Clement Freud, Lewis Carroll, Evelyn Waugh, and George Orwell.

Technical Details

Printers: Harrison & Sons Ltd

Process: Photogravure

Size: 41 x 30mm

Sheets: 100

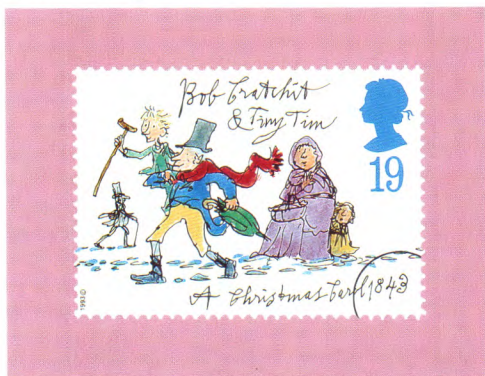
Perforation: 15 x 14

Phosphor: 19p – one phosphor band,
others phosphor coated paper

Gum: PVA Dextrin

Presentation Pack: No. 242, price £1.85

Stamp Cards: Nos. 157a-c, price 25p each



The Christmas Carol characters featured on the stamps are: 19p – Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim, 25p – Mr & Mrs Fezziwig; 30p – Scrooge; 35p – The Prize Turkey; 41p – Mr Scrooge's nephew.

The stamps cover the basic inland 1st and 2nd class rates and the rates for letters to European countries, and basic airmail postcards and letters.

The five stamps were designed by Quentin Blake, OBE, RDI, FCSI. Mr Blake, born 1932, was educated at Downing College, Cambridge and was appointed a Senior Fellow at the Royal College of Art in 1988. He has been a freelance artist and illustrator since 1957. His work has been exhibited on numerous occasions, with a retrospective exhibition at the National Theatre in 1984. His publications, as author and

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, and Philatelic Counters around a week before 9 November, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps cancelled with a pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmark of the Philatelic Bureau, or Bethlehem, price £2.18 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.86 to

ROYAL MAIL MINT STAMEN

Christmas 1993: A Christmas Carol



Before the arrival of the better-off home as the main decoration, joined to make greenery, oar with mistletoe contained a candlelight. The fun of the night, when the boys are rather moulting... the advice which romantic am



Us



The walls and ceiling were so hung about with living green, that it looked a perfect grove.

But they didn't have the whole evening to music. After a while they played at forfeits; for it is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself. Stop! There was first a game at blind-man's buff. Of course there was.

Every one playing forfeits gives something personal to the 'judge'. These belongings are returned when a forfeit is performed to the judge's satisfaction. Here are some suggested Dickensian forfeits: name five characters in A Christmas Carol; sing a carol; guess how many ornaments are on your Christmas tree. The game was

energy of action, that the singer fled in terror.



Just occasionally, the unreformed Scrooge strikes a sympathetic note. We end as we began with Tiny Tim's message for the festive season: 'God Bless

A Christmas Carol was also put on as a play



Christmas 1993

ROYAL MAIL
FIRST DAY COVER



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

A Christmas Carol

overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the British Philatelic Bureau by 9 November.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Philatelic Bureau, or Bethlehem cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, CARDIFF CF1 1AA (Bethlehem postmark). The outer envelope should be endorsed "Pictorial First Day of Issue postmark".

Christmas 19p stamp

Collectors are advised that it will be in order to affix just the 19p Christmas stamp to covers to receive all special cancels ("First Day of Issue", sponsored and philatelic counter) in use on 9 November. The minimum 1st class rule is suspended on this day as the Christmas set includes a 2nd class rate stamp. It should be noted that this concession applies only to the 19p Christmas stamp; covers bearing other than Christmas stamps must bear at least 1st class postage.

Christmas Stamp Books

A book containing twenty 19p Christmas stamps will be available from post offices, the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters. Price £3.80, the book will be on sale at post offices until Christmas Eve unless previously sold out. It will remain on philatelic sale for one year.

Also going on sale on 9 November will be a book containing ten 25p stamps, price £2.50. This will be on trial sale at post offices in the Central TV area, and, for the benefit of collectors, from the usual philatelic outlets. Both books have a festive cover design.



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).



Christmas Aerogramme

This year's Christmas aerogramme will be available at post offices and philatelic outlets from 5 October, price 44p (including 34p aerogramme postage). The price will remain 44p after the new postal tariffs come into force on 1 November. The aerogramme was illustrated in last month's *Bulletin*.

Royal Mail Yearbook

Volume 10 of the Royal Mail *Special Stamps Yearbook* will go on sale on 9 November. The handsomely produced book contains



background information about the development and production of all the special issues of 1993.

The book is hardbound with a matching slipcase and includes sets of the following stamps: Swans, Marine Timekeepers, Orchids, Europa – Art in the 20th Century, Roman Britain, Inland Waterways, Autumn, Sherlock Holmes, and Christmas. The book will be available from the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, Philatelic Counters and main post offices, price £21.

1993 Collectors' Pack

The 1993 edition of the Collectors' Pack will be available from 9 November, coinciding with the issue of the Christmas stamps. Price £12.95. The pack contains all 1993 special stamps mounted on a quality display board with a colourful and informative brochure giving details of the stamp subjects. Available from philatelic outlets and main post offices.

Collectors still requiring the 1992 Yearbook and/or Collectors' Pack are reminded that these will be withdrawn from sale at the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters on 9 November. Price £19.95 and £11.95 respectively. The 1992 Christmas stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards, £3.60 stamp book and souvenir cover will also be withdrawn from sale at the same time.

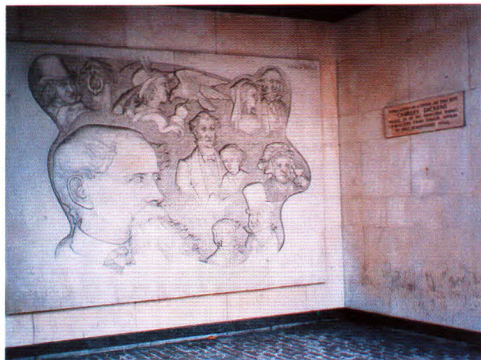
On the Dickens Trail

A Christmas Carol is one of Dickens's best-known and most loved works. It is one of five Christmas books, the series comprising: *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *The Chimes* (1844), *The Cricket on the Hearth* (1845), *The Battle of Life* (1846), and *The Haunted Man* (1848). In the collected edition of these stories, Dickens described the series as "a whimsical kind of masque intended to awaken loving and forbearing thoughts."

Dickens was born at 1 Mile End Terrace, Portsea in 1812, son of a clerk in the Navy Pay Office. The family moved to London in 1814 and to Chatham (Kent) in 1817. Six years later young Charles was back in London, living at 16 Bayham Street in Camden Town and working at a blacking factory. Later, 1833-4, he lived at Bentick Street in Marylebone and from 1834 to 1837 at Furnival's Inn, Holborn whilst working as a reporter on the *Morning Chronicle*. In 1836 he married Catherine Hogarth at St Luke's Church, Chelsea and in March 1837 moved with her and their young son Charles (born 1837) to 48 Doughty Street. This house is now a

Dickens Museum and the only one of Dickens many London homes still in its original state.

As his family grew, with the births of Mamie and Kate in 1838 and 1839, so Dickens looked for a larger home and at the end of 1839 moved to 1 Devonshire Terrace, Regent's Park. This property had a double-bow front and dormer windows above, with a walled garden in which Dickens kept ravens. Dickens lived here until 1851 and wrote *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Barnaby Rudge*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Christmas Carol* and *David Copperfield*. Longfellow visited him at Devonshire Terrace in 1841. The house was demolished in 1958 but characters from Dickens's books can be seen on a sculptured panel on the side of the present building, Ferguson House.



Dickens characters on panel at Ferguson House. (Photo: John Holman).

Dickens then moved to Woburn House, Tavistock Square on the site of the present Tavistock House. There he wrote *Bleak House*, *Hard Times* and other works; Hans Anderson visited in 1857. Dickens built a small theatre in the garden.

In 1856 he bought Gad's Hill near Rochester in Kent and lived there from 1860 until his death 10 years later. Dickens was buried in Westminster Abbey near the graves of Johnson, Garrick, Sir Henry Irving, Sheridan and Handel.

Those who like to follow the "Dickens Trail" will visit his birthplace in Portsmouth, his Doughty Street house and the Dickens Centre at Rochester. But he was very much a London man and inspiration for his characters and scenes came from all parts of the capital. It is not surprising that there are no fewer than 127 references to Dickens in the monumental *The London Encyclopaedia*, by Ben Weinreb and Christopher Hibbert (1983). The works of Dickens typify Victorian London.

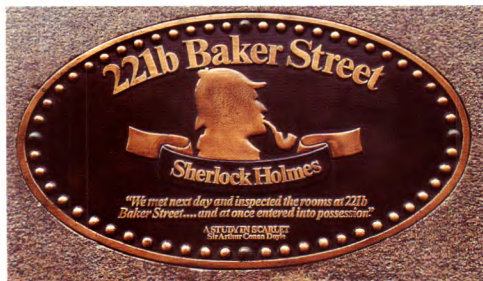
Sherlock Holmes – The Detective

JEAN MATHESON

Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's creation, features on special stamps issued this month. Holmes first appeared in 1887 in a detective novel, *A Study in Scarlet*, and its centenary was marked by Royal Mail's scarlet and grey/black £1 stamp book, designed by Andrew Davidson, (SGFH8) issued on 14 April 1887. Others in the series recalled *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (FH9) and the short stories of the sinister *Speckled Band* and of Holmes' *Final Problem* (FH10 and 11). Conan Doyle's second Holmes novel, *The Sign of Four*, appeared in 1890, but it was the short stories in the *Strand Magazine* from 1891 that really caught the public's imagination.

As Holmes, who was modelled on Joseph Bell, an Edinburgh surgeon, explained in the story of *The Blanched Soldier*, his guiding principle was that "when you have eliminated all which is impossible, then whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth". As a medical student, Conan Doyle had noted Bell's emphasis on careful observation and logical deduction, and it was these attributes that distinguished Holmes' methods from those of other detectives – especially from those of the Yard's Lestrade – and frequently astonished his friend and colleague, Dr Watson. "Like all Holmes' reasoning, the thing seemed simplicity itself when it was once explained", Watson recorded. "Well, I never!" a client exclaimed. "I thought at first you had done something clever, but I see that there was nothing in it after all". "I begin to think, Watson", said Holmes, "that I make a mistake in explaining."

Plaque at 221B Baker Street.



The Sherlock Holmes statue near Conan Doyle's birthplace in Edinburgh. (Photo: John Holman)

Conan Doyle, who preferred writing historical romances, soon tired of his creation. In 1893 *The Final Problem* led to Holmes' confrontation with his arch-enemy, Professor Moriarty, ("the Napoleon of crime") above the Reichenbach Falls. The bereft Watson wrote that "in that dreadful cauldron of swirling water and seething foam will lie for all time the most dangerous criminal and the foremost champion of the law of their generation". For 10 years, Conan Doyle remained obdurate to his readers' pleas – although *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, supposed to be a posthumously-published adventure appeared during that time – but at last he relented, and one night Watson had a mysterious visitor...

Betrayed by a postmark

It is strange that Holmes, who wrote monographs on tobacco ashes, bee culture, tattoos, and who proposed one on "the typewriter and its relation to crime", wrote nothing on using Post Office services in crime detection, for he was well-aware of their possibilities. In *The Retired Colourman* he told Watson "Thanks to the telephone" (then a Post Office service) "and the help of the Yard, I can

usually get my essentials without leaving this room”, while Watson used the London telephone directory in their search for *The Three Garridebs*, and a postmark betrayed the grisly contents of *The Cardboard Box* as coming from Belfast (leading Lestrade – but not Holmes – to the wrong conclusion).

“Did you remark the postmarks of those letters?” Holmes asked ‘Watson in the tale of *The Five Orange Pips*.

“The first was from Pondicherry, the second from Dundee, and the third from London’.

‘From East London. What do you deduce from that?’

‘They are all sea ports. That the writer was on board a ship’.

‘Excellent. We have already a clue. . .”

The Missing Three-Quarter was traced when Holmes duped a telegraph office clerk into showing him a counterfoil. “We progress, my dear Watson, we progress. I had seven different schemes for getting a glimpse of that telegram, but I could hardly hope to succeed the very first time. . . The telegram still remains the only solid thing with which we have to deal, and we must not permit our attention to wander away from it.”

Earlier stamp depiction

This issue will not be Holmes’ first appearance on stamps. In 1972 he was included in Nicaragua’s ‘Famous Fictional Detectives’ series marking Interpol’s 50th anniversary (SG 1838), and again in 1979 in San Marino’s ‘Fictional Detectives’ series (SG 1112). The stories of *The Final Problem* and of Holmes’ return (*The Empty House*) were featured on Turks & Caicos Islands stamps issued in 1984 to celebrate Conan Doyle’s 125th birth anniversary (SG 814/5). *The Second Stain*, a mystery Holmes solved just in time to avert European war, and the unhappy tale of *The Greek Interpreter*, brought to Holmes’ notice by his brother, Mycroft, whom he acknowledged as his intellectual superior, were the subjects of two other values (813, 816).

Holmes featured in many films, most notably those made in the 1930s and 1940s by Twentieth Century Fox and the Universal Studios, starring Basil Rathbone. Some were based – loosely – on the original stories while others, such as *Sherlock Holmes in Washington*, were mere inventions of the script writers. The new medium of television took to Holmes as soon as invented; of many actors, Jeremy Brett’s masterly characterisation for Granada Television since 1984 has possibly surpassed even Rathbone.

Holmes inspired a number of pastiches also, among them one written by Conan Doyle’s son, Adrian, along with John Dickson Carr (*The Exploits of Sherlock Holmes*), August Derleth’s *Adventures of Solar Pons*, Nicholas Meyer’s *The Seven Per Cent Solution* and, more recently, stories by John Gardner. Perhaps the earliest, written in irreverent vein, were Mark Twain’s *The Stolen White Elephant* and O Henry’s *Adventures of Shamrock Jolnes*, where Holmes’ methods were used to deduce that “Dr Whatsup” had recently installed electric light in his house:

‘As you came in, I caught the odour of the cigar you are smoking. I know an expensive cigar; and I know that not more than three men in New York can afford to smoke cigars and pay gas bills too at the present time”.



Fourth book in the Sherlock Holmes series (1987-8).

The Holmes stories continued well into the 1920s, and were issued in one volume in 1928. In his foreword, Conan Doyle wrote “As his methods and character became familiar to the public there was naturally less element of surprise, and the later stories suffered by comparison. As a witty critic remarked, ‘He may not have been killed when he fell over the cliff, but he was never quite the same man afterwards’”. Even Holmes made the occasional small mistake, and had asked Watson to remind him of the case of *The Yellow Face* if he ever became “a little over-confident”, and once he was duped by a woman of “dubious and questionable memory”, as Watson described her. To Holmes, she was always “the woman”. Well into his second century, and never out of print, Holmes is still “the detective”.

© Jean Matheson 1993

Over the falls...

My thanks to readers who have pointed out that the Reichenbach (not Reichenback) Falls are in Switzerland, not Austria, as given in the September *Bulletin* (page 6). The first to bring this to my attention was Douglas Muir of the National Postal Museum who added “May God preserve you from all Swiss and Holmes fans!”. Ed.

New Definitive Stamps

October/November 1993



Several new definitive stamps, books and rolls are due for issue on 26 October to cover the increased postal tariffs which are proposed for 1 November.

Sheet Stamps

Six new sheet stamps will be issued to cover new postal rates: 19p olive green (2nd class inland basic rate); 25p salmon pink (1st class inland/EC countries); 29p light grey (2nd class second step); 36p ultramarine (aerogramme rate); 38p red (1st class second step) and 41p stone (airmail letter basic rate). The 19p and 25p stamps have been printed by Harrisons, the 19p has one phosphor band, the 25p is on Advanced Coated Paper (ACP). Both have PVA Dextrin gum. The other values were printed by Enschedé, have two phosphor bands and PVA gum. All have been printed in photogravure in sheets of 200 and have elliptical perforations on the vertical sides. The new rates for letters to European, non EC countries (30p) and for overseas postcards (35p) are catered for by existing stamps.

Books

Three new machine-vended books will go on general and philatelic sale on 1 November. The new 50p book will contain two 25p stamps; the new £1 book four 25p stamps, and the £2 eight 25p stamps. The covers of the 50p and £1 books will feature the fourth designs in the Postal History and Educational Institutions series; the £2 book the first in a Postal Vehicles series, illustrated by Debbie Cook. The machine books

have been printed by Harrison (50p and £2) and Walsall (£1). All have elliptical perforations on the vertical sides of the stamps.

New £1.40 and £1.64 retail ("window") books will contain four 35p stamps for overseas postcards and four 41p stamps for the basic airmail rate. Both books will contain four airmail labels (etiquettes). These books will be produced by Walsall Security Printers, the stamps printed by offset-litho. They have two phosphor bands and elliptical perforations on the vertical sides. These two books will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters and from post offices and retail outlets with a demand for airmail rate stamps.

Rolls

New stamp rolls will be available from the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and philatelic counters from 1 November containing 19p, 25p, 35p and 41p stamps. All are endways delivery, printed by Harrisons. The 19p stamp will have a centre phosphor band; the others will be on ACP with elliptical perforations on vertical sides.

First Day Facilities

The Royal Mail standard first day cover envelope for definitive stamps will be available from the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters, price 21p. First day posting boxes will be provided on 26 October at most main post offices for the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.





Pictorial First Day handstamps will be available for the Bureau and Windsor.

A FDC service will be provided by the Bureau. Application forms, available from the Bureau and main post offices, should be returned by 26 October. Collectors wishing to prepare their own covers may send covers bearing the new stamps to receive the Bureau or Windsor postmarks to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or South East Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Peascod Street, WINDSOR SL4 1AA. First Day facilities will not be provided on 1 November.

Presentation Pack

A new pack (No.30) containing one of each of the new sheet stamps will be available from 26 October, price £2.20.

Withdrawal of Obsolete Stamps

It is intended to withdraw the 18p, 24p, 28p, 33p, 34p and 39p stamps (including Country versions) from sale at post offices after close of business on 30 October. They will remain on philatelic sale for a further year.

Country Stamps

New 19p, 25p, 30p and 41p Country stamps will go on sale on 7 December – details will be published nearer the time.

Postal Stationery

The prices of aerogrammes; post paid, and mail-pack envelopes will be revised from 1 November. These items, bearing non-value indicator stamp impressions, will not alter.

Please note that at time of going to press, consultation between Royal Mail and the Post Office Users' National Council over implementation of the proposed tariff increase was still in progress. To confirm availability and agreed pricing of definitive stamps, books and rolls, readers should check with their local Post Office 10 days before the planned tariff implementation date of 1 November. Details of postal rates will be displayed in Post Offices.

This announcement about implementation of tariff changes also applies to the Christmas stamps, previewed on pages 32-35.

Technical Changes Affecting Machin Definitive Stamps 1990-93

Dr A R LANE, *Head of Materials Research Laboratory Royal Mail Research & Development Centre*

Since 1990 a large number of changes have been made to the low value Machin definitive stamps. These have occurred for a number of reasons; firstly the phosphor signal has been increased to meet the needs of faster automated facing and cancelling equipment; secondly, contracts for supply of various values from Joh Enschedé in the Netherlands have been established, and finally, the need for improved security has resulted in the introduction of paper free of fluorescent whitening agent, phosphor bars rendered visible by a fluorescent yellow additive, and the creation of elliptical perforations on the vertical sides. After experience with the stamps commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black, some of the darker Jeffery Matthews colours have been avoided because the black cancellation ink was not adequately visible when applied to them. In addition to these changes a self adhesive booklet is shortly to be issued which represents the conclusion of the three year series of developments.

It is important to state that, although the number of varieties has inevitably increased considerably over this period, a strong quality assurance policy in respect of stamp supply has kept the number of "deficiencies", that is products non-conforming to specification, to a minimum. This strategy, which adheres closely to British Standard 5750, has been of great value when so many technical changes were being implemented (Ref. 1).

Stamp Paper Development

Some fundamental changes have taken place in the stamp paper during the three years under review. Initially, as a requirement of the contingency plan for emergency printing of normal tariff stamps in the Netherlands, it was necessary to approve a new supply of paper suitable for the photogravure process. After a period of trials, Coated Papers Limited (CPL) were able to supply a satisfactory grade which was gummed by Enschedé using a PVA adhesive.

This new paper evaluation coincided with the review of security features which decided that

the fluorescent whitening agent could be suppressed, as the loss in whiteness did not detract from the appearance of the stamps. This decision served also to reduce the environmental impact of the stamp by reducing chemical additives. The fluorescent whitener was reduced to about 50% in the first Enschedé 18p issue (2) and left out entirely from the base stock and coating on subsequent make up value printings. A similar approach has been adopted by CPL in respect of Litho base stock, and Harrisons have also removed the fluorescent whitener from most of their coated stock, with the result that by the end of 1993 very little of this material will remain in any stamp papers.

Royal Mail National has also begun to encourage printers to obtain stamp paper from more than one source in order to insure against failure of supply. The necessity for paper changes should not always create varieties and hence gums may become less characteristic in appearance, and all papers become as identical as possible, bearing in mind that more than one printing process is used.

At the present time, Harrisons always print on their own coated grades, although their base stock may come from several different suppliers. Walsall Security Printers and House of Questa most often print on a Coated Papers litho product, while Enschedé print on the CPL gravure equivalent. The new Walsall self-adhesive books are printed on a Coated Papers "Chancellor" grade.

Phosphor tagging for automatic facing, classification and cancellation

The use of phosphorescent pigments to enable letters to be faced and cancelled was first introduced by the British Post Office in 1959 and these materials have been refined according to the needs of new equipment. When the Toshiba TSC 88 culler facer canceller (CFC) was first introduced in late 1991 the letter processing speed of 4.2 metres/second was so much greater than the automatic letter facer (ALF) machines they replaced that the phosphor signal had to be increased by about 50%. At first

it seemed that the faster speed of movement meant that the afterglow was stronger with the CFC, especially as this machine read after about 50 milliseconds, whereas the ALF read typically at about 320 milliseconds. However, a difference arose from the fact that the UV light source of the CFC is smaller and the letters are consequently irradiated for much less time, the phosphor correspondingly receiving a different amount of energy.

This demand for a higher signal level meant that certain designs printed on phosphor coated paper would not emit sufficient light for consistent classification, a fact illustrated by problems with The Green Issue. This fact, combined with the already described needs for



The first use of the fluorescent phosphor bar was that printed on the 18p by Enschedé in November 1991. It is easily distinguished from the Harrison equivalent of the same date under ultra-violet light. The examples shown are from a dealer's first day cover.

more freedom of paper procurement, resulted in a change to the printing of phosphor bars firstly on Greetings stamps and then on Machin definitives. As Enschedé have now obtained the contract to print all definitive value sheet stamps other than basic first and second class rates, they have produced these with bars and the security features since the 6p issued on 27 April.

At the higher values, a decision was made to add phosphor to the 50p stamp because an increasing number of these stamps were appearing in the CFC stream on recorded delivery items.

Security and Quality Assurance Features

In addition to the increased requirement for phosphorescence, the incorporation of fluorescence in the printed bars has allowed greater control of the phosphor printing ink, as well as enhancing the light output. Once the fluorescent whitening agent in the base paper and coating had been suppressed, a yellow fluorescent pigment could be added to the phosphor bars which allowed them to be examined under simple ultra-violet lamps emitting at 365 mμ (millimicron). It has been proposed by staff at the National Postal Museum that this new fluorescence/phosphorescent combination should be termed a "C" type phosphor. The fluorescence enables printers and philatelists to check the bar position and printing quality as if the material were just another colour. The bars therefore fluoresce in the yellow when irradiated at 365 mμ, and phosphoresce in the blue at 254 mμ excitation. A fluorescent compound was incorporated into the stamp bars printed by Walsall and Questa on the retail stamp books from April 1993 for which the litho paper supplied by Coated Papers Limited was also entirely free of optical brightening agent.

It is important at this point to state that, in the terms of this article, fluorescent and phosphorescent materials both emit light but in the case of the former it dies completely the moment the lamp is extinguished, whereas in the latter, there is an afterglow which may last for up to one second but this is dependent on the amount of light incident on the stamp.

In terms of phosphorescence, Royal Mail works to a set numerical value minimum standard which all stamps must pass for operational sorting purposes. No similar standard exists at the moment for the yellow fluorescence as it is used for security and quality assurance purposes only, and does not have to follow strict operational facing requirements. Differences may therefore be observed between the fluorescent brightness of individual stamps but these generally lay within the range of acceptability and do not represent philatelic varieties.

The complete system of quality assurance procedures relating to stamp manufacture and supply has been refined during the period covered in this article, resulting in a new specification for the printing of postage stamps, and further, in order to achieve improved product traceability, it was decided to introduce

warrant numbers to sheet stamps printed by Harrison and Enschedé; the latter offering to include the date of printing as well. These are applied by numbering boxes at Harrison and by jet printer at Enschedé.

Perforations

When improvements were made to the security of the high value Castle stamps, the ideas tested with respect to removal of optical brightener from the paper and introduction of elliptical perforations were afterwards extended to the low value Machin stamps. Although they have only just arrived on the latter design, by the end of 1993 most stamps in sheet or book form should have ellipses equivalent to three normal perforations on the vertical edges. Enschedé have added elliptical dies to their rotary APS perforator and this has been used for all definitives produced in 1993, commencing with the 6p. All retail red books produced since April also have these features.



Three examples of First Class book stamps printed by Walsall. On the left is the early stamp guillotined on the lower edge. At centre is the current product, perforated on all sides, and at right is shown the landscape format self adhesive stamp.

A further requirement of the retail book panes, arising out of security considerations, was that they should have all round perforations. Only Questa had achieved this requirement on the original issues, the other two printers needing to guillotine the upper and lower edges to maintain high rates of output. Vended books are due to follow on 1 November 1993. Sheets of the Country stamps printed by Questa will change to the new elliptical perforation requirements after the tariff increase.

Some security features were examined and rejected. The possibility of creating one or more isolated perforations (Perfins) in the printed background region of the Machin design was



Various security features were considered for low value stamps. Star-shaped perfins were examined in various places on the stamp but abandoned as impracticable. The illustration shown is of a Walsall trial product.

considered but not pursued on the grounds that a star or other shape might accidentally be omitted if the pin were broken, or if worn, the shape might degenerate to a round pin hole and lose any real security benefit. Isolated single pins would be more liable to damage than the existing multiple pin layout for perforation in reciprocating perforator tools.

Although the gauge is the same, the simulated perforations on the new self adhesive stamps are produced by a process of die-cutting, which is a new feature in respect of these stamps.

Self-Adhesive Stamps

Pressure sensitive stamps were, for a long time, issued only on a small scale by island countries where conventional gum gave handling problems due to the high humidity. In the last four years countries such as France, the USA and Australia have entered the market with major launches (3,4). The UK has now joined. The self adhesive stamp, illuminated by UV light, shows the printed bars now common to most low value definitives.



this group with the issue of a 20 stamp book, similar to the other retail products but with a new layout. Having dimensions of 233 x 77mm in the opened form, it is larger than most of its foreign counterparts.

The new security and quality features have also been applied to the pressure sensitive stamp issue which was conceived at a later date and required to conform as closely as possible to the existing first class values. A new pressure sensitive stamp paper/backing board combination had to be fully examined as this was an unknown quantity, and several were evaluated before the current product was chosen. No particular problems were anticipated with the stamp paper because this was largely a tried and tested product, although the "Chancellor" grade had not previously been used by Royal Mail. In all other technical aspects the product remains as close as possible to the specification for gummed stamps. Even the water soluble barrier layer, which allows the stamps to be removed by soaking, is a conventional water soluble stamp adhesive.

The self adhesive, no lick, all you do is peel and stick, stamps have therefore been cast in the conventional Machin mould but converted to the landscape (horizontal) format. Their launch on 19 October brings to an end the present series of varieties of the Machin design.

Conclusions

After this brief review of the technical modifications which have affected all aspects of Machin definitive production, what is likely to be the direction for the future? At the moment changes have been realised which have made the stamps more secure and capable of rapid processing by machine. Self adhesives have also

arrived to offer an alternative to conventional stamps such stamps had been requested by sections of the public for a number of years.

Having accepted phosphor bars for so long, future processing machines with highly developed scanners may be asked to read more information on the stamp surface such as the stamp value if coded in a form similar to that shown in the illustration.

Stamps must remain secure and resistant to counterfeiting, and more improvements in this respect may be made in addition to those required by the technology of increasing automation. Thus, inevitably, further changes will occur, but not perhaps at the rate of the recent past.

Acknowledgement

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Note: *All introductions of fluorescent bars have coincided with the whole or partial removal of fluorescent whitener from the paper.

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Technical Changes to Machin Stamps 1990-93	Date
*Introduction of fluorescent bar on 18p issue, Enschedé (Paper partially fluorescent)	19.11.91
Printing of 50p stamp on phosphor coated paper	21.01.92
*Introduction of fluorescent bars to retail books by Walsall and Questa	06.04.93
Achievement of perforations all round margins of retail book stamps by Harrison and Walsall	06.04.93
*Introduction of fluorescent bars generally on make-up value sheet stamps by Enschedé, commencing with 6p coincidental with introduction of elliptical perforations.	27.04.93
Self-adhesive first class issue by Walsall	19.10.93
Introduction of Fluorescent bars and ellipses to Country sheet stamps by Questa	07.12.93

Stamps of the Four Kings

2. Changes in the Edwardian Series

JAMES MACKAY

The original printings of the ½d stamp in blue-green are particularly prone to colour change; exposure to sunlight or excessive moisture can produce a startling bright blue shade. The fugitive inks used by De La Rue were relatively unstable and prone to variation, but the situation is made more complex by the different types of paper use. Turners supplied ordinary paper to De La Rue who calendered or plate-glazed it prior to printing. The degree to which this surfacing was carried out varied considerably from one batch to the next, and where it was done excessively surface rubbing was liable to occur.

In April 1905 however, the Inland Revenue sanctioned the use of chalk-surfaced paper and this was subsequently used by De La Rue for the 1½d, 2d, 3d, bicoloured 4d, 5d, 6d, 9d, 1s and 2s6d values. Later printings tend to be on more heavily loaded paper than the earlier ones, and this produced a stiffer and more opaque paper which also had some effect on the shades of ink. As collectors classify the De La Rue printings into ordinary and chalk-surfaced paper it may be necessary to use a silver pencil to determine them. This leaves a fine black mark on chalk-surfaced stamps but has no effect on ordinary paper.

The first change in the series occurred in November 1904 when the ½d was altered from blue-green to a distinctive shade of yellow-green to avoid confusion with the 2½d stamp when viewed in poor lighting. For operational reasons it was decided to print the 4d stamp in a single colour – orange – instead of two colours as previously. Colour trials in a wide range of colours were submitted to the Board of Inland Revenue in March 1909. These were printed from the bicoloured plates and can be recognised by the size of the value circles, with a diameter of 0.22in. The following year further colour trials were made from the new monochrome plate and can be recognised by value circles with a diameter of 0.23in. The later colour trials were submitted in April 1910 following complaints about the issued stamps which had made their debut on 1 November

1909. Despite these further trials no radical changes were subsequently made in the colour of the 4d denomination.

So-called mourning stamp

The scale of parcel charges was altered in July 1906, introducing a 7d rate for a 5lb parcel. As this proved to be a popular weight, it was decided to add a 7d stamp to the series. De La Rue prepared a number of designs for this denomination and submitted them to the Board in July 1909. The first essay, with value tablets in the upper corners, was approved subject to the values being enlarged. Two versions of the amended essay were submitted later that year, with or without a fringe round the design. The design as eventually accepted had a coloured frame which strengthened the outline of the foliate ornament in the corners. Colour trials in a wide range of shades from yellow-olive to pure black were submitted in February 1910, but a shade of grey, which had been used for one of the 1909 essays, was selected. The stamp went into production in April and was issued to the public on 4 May 1910. King Edward died two days later and this gave rise to the canard that the 7d was a mourning stamp. This seems to have caught the popular imagination as many of these stamps were purchased as mementoes of the late King, and this explains the relative plenitude of this stamp in mint condition. In fine used condition it is elusive; on parcel labels it is much sought after but used on cover, mainly double-weight registered packets going abroad, it is decidedly scarce.

The 4d was but the prelude to a wholesale switch to monochrome low values. The next denomination to be changed was the 2d, for which De La Rue prepared an entirely new design in 1909. Various essays were submitted and later on colour trials of the accepted design, notable for the wealth of curvilinear ornament in the prevailing Art Nouveau fashion. A distinctive bright purple shade known as Tyrian plum was selected. More than 100,000 sheets of this stamp were manufactured early in 1910 and held in reserve until existing stocks of the bicoloured 2d were exhausted. The King's death



Top: De La Rue stamps. Bottom: Harrison printings.

in May, however, put paid to the idea and the vast bulk of the consignment was rather precipitately destroyed. An example on cover postmarked 6 May 1910 and addressed to the new monarch, King George V, is in the Royal Collection at Buckingham Palace, while a mere handful of unused examples are believed to be in private collections. Stamps with a specimen overprint are much more plentiful.

Stormed out of meeting

De La Rue's ten-year contract expired at the end of 1910, but Sir Thomas Andros De La Rue, the company's chairman, never doubted for one moment that it would not be renewed automatically as it had on previous occasions. The Board of Inland Revenue, however, felt that the greatly reduced costs of production, resulting from the introduction of electricity and improved printing machinery, ought to be reflected in the price quoted. De La Rue made no effort to lower their quotation and were devastated when informed that the Board had decided to split the contract between De La Rue (to continue printing the higher values) and Harrison and Sons (to print the lower denominations). In a fit of pique Sir Thomas said he was damned if he would share the contract with anyone and stormed out of the

meeting. As a result, Harrison and Sons, who had never previously printed stamps, ended up with the entire contract.

Technical problems delayed the introduction of Georgian definitives and, in the interim, Harrisons printed stamps from De La Rue's Edwardian plates, some denominations continuing as late as July 1913. At first Harrisons used the same perforation (14) as De La Rue for the low values, but their printings were made on ordinary paper which lacked the calendared surface. As a result, the ink penetrated the surface unevenly and created rather heavy, blurred impressions. By 1912 Harrisons had negotiated with Turners to plate-glaze the paper so later printings were much clearer. Harrisons now switched to a perforation of 15 x 14, first used for the 3d in September 1911 and subsequently extended to the remaining monochrome low values. The Stamping Branch at Somerset House meanwhile printed the bicoloured stamps, the four high values and the 6d and 7d denominations. These, too, differed in subtle respects from the De La Rue originals, notably the range of inks, quite a few of which were experimental.

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The World Before You

S L GORON *Manager, National Postal Museum*

Where can you see stamps of Allenstein, Eastern Karelia, Serbian Occupation of Hungary, Aden, Zululand, Rio de Oro, Cape Juby together in one place along with the stamps of hundreds of other issuing authorities? The answer is in the National Postal Museum's Stamps of the World Collection. This is a collection of many thousands of stamps from all around the world and going back to 1879, and, in some cases earlier. Some of the earlier types are official reprints of stamps issued before the formation of the Universal Postal Union. This applies, for example, to at least some of the stamps of the German states in the collection.

Although the collection is not specialised in terms of plate, perforation, paper varieties or shades (though there *are* watermark varieties of the British Empire stamps of Edward VII and George V) there are nonetheless many items of specialist interest. Many of the stamps issued

refer to James Bendon's book *UPU Specimen Stamps* published in 1988. American visitors may be particularly interested in the sets of United States 19th century official and newspaper stamps on display. The general collector will find so many of those stamps that stare out from stamp catalogues and which are so hard to find.

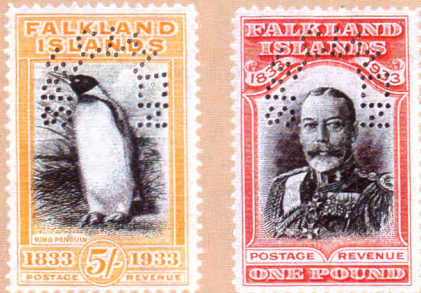
UPU Collection

The basis of the collection is the UPU or Bern collection. It was in 1878, at the Paris Postal Congress, the second such congress organised under the auspices of the Universal Postal Union – the first had been in Bern in 1874 – that a decision was taken whereby each of the then member countries were to send examples of their stamps to the International Bureau of the UPU for distribution to each other member. This constituted part of Article XXIX of the UPU Convention "Communications à



1. *British South Africa Company.*

between 1879 and 1930 bear specimen overprints or perfins. These will have been produced in very small quantities from first printings. Moreover stamps, overprints and perfins are genuine and, as such, can be used by collectors for comparative purposes. Collectors wishing to know more about this subject should



2. *Falkland Islands.*

addresser au Bureau International" and was described as "la collection de leurs timbres-poste". The aim was to provide each member country with the means of checking the genuineness of stamps affixed to items arriving in the international mail service. It also enabled the UPU to keep a check on the colours of the



3. Kenya & Uganda.

stamps used for prepaying the basic mail services – green for internal printed papers, red for internal “fully paid”, blue for international (basic weight step in each case) – during the period that the “colour coding” system was applied.

At the Lisbon Postal Congress of 1885 the number of examples of each stamp to be sent was raised to three and postal stationery was included. The number was increased to five at the 1891 Vienna Congress and reduced back to three at the 1906 Rome Congress. It has remained at three ever since.

The first despatch of stamps by the UPU took place on 4 February 1879 and proceeded thereafter as and when material was received, eventually becoming monthly. The distribution of postal stationery ceased in the early 1960s but the stamp distribution continued until the end of 1992 when it was ceased for reasons of economy. Each member country was then required to send examples of its stamps to each other member country direct. With more than 150 countries in the UPU, success could in no way be guaranteed. Many countries simply do not have the resources to undertake such a procedure and, sure enough, the response has been very patchy. Indeed, such has been the criticism of the decision that the UPU earlier this year agreed to reinstate the former system from the beginning of next year.

Filling the Gaps

Not that the former system worked perfectly. A thorough examination of the UPU collection, housed at the National Postal Museum since the late 1960s, has revealed a large number of gaps ranging over the whole period of the collection. The reasons for this are various: times of war and their aftermath, inadequate supplies of stamps, unsettled political situations or insufficient resources to do the job properly.

Some of the biggest gaps have occurred for periods when countries were not members of the United Nations Organisation of which the UPU is a branch. This applies to such countries as North Vietnam, North Korea, Peoples Republic of China, Taiwan. But even member countries sometimes fail to send stamps for a year or more or send only a certain percentage of their issues.

During the past year or so, the Museum has been attempting to fill as many of the gaps as possible in order to increase the reference value of the collection. This has not been an easy task. While many stamps have not proved difficult to obtain, many others have despite the fact that they may have a catalogue value of only a few pence or have been issued only two or three years ago! And where *does* one find mint stamps of Afghanistan issued prior to the Second World War?

4. USA Navy Dept Officials.



New Stamp Issuing Countries

Recent political events have resulted in the emergence or re-emergence of new stamp issuing countries in the former Yugoslavia and Soviet Union. Some of these countries have

attained UPU membership and have been participating in the stamp exchange. The position of others is as yet unclear as are many of the various overprinted stamps coming out of the former Soviet Union. Museum policy is to acquire these stamps if their status seems reasonable; even if some of them turn out to be bogus, they are still part of philatelic history. With modern stamp issues it is often a question of striking while the iron is hot. Otherwise those gaps may prove very hard to fill.



5. USA Newspaper stamps

The Stamps of the World Collection is naturally strong in the issues of the British Empire, Commonwealth and Dominions. Europe and colonies are also well represented. This now includes stamps of previously unrepresented issuing authorities such as Fiume, Veglia and Arbe, German First World War Army and Occupation issues, and German Occupation of Yugoslavia issues from the Second World War, the French, Rumanian and Serbian Occupations of Hungary, Russia and Spanish Civil War issues. The USA collection includes a good array of the early official and Newspaper stamps. Readers should note that rare early British Colonial stamps, for example the "Post Office" stamps of Mauritius are not to be found in the collection.

Some of the more interesting items that are included are illustrated here.

1. British South Africa Company: "Double Head" issue of 1910-13, overprinted SPECIMEN. Note the double overprint on the 7/6 value and the two printings of the £1 stamp.
2. Falkland Islands. 1933 Centenary set. High values with SPECIMEN perfin.
3. Kenya and Uganda 1922-27 set, very high values overprinted SPECIMEN. The £100 stamp



6. Japan 1906 stamp book & contents.



bears the highest sterling denomination on any postage stamp.

4. USA: 1873 Navy Department Official stamps, imperforate (instead of the normal p.12) and overprinted SPECIMEN. These stamps were probably presented directly by the US Post Office to the British Post Office and are thus likely to be extremely rare in this form.

5. USA: 1875-85 Newspaper stamps, imperforate and overprinted SPECIMEN.

6. Japan: An attractive early stampbook and contents of 1906.

7. Moldova: A recent overprint on a Soviet stamp received as part of the current direct exchange.

The collection also contains several unissued stamps, most notable of which is the 1921 6d Jamaican stamp commemorating the abolition of slavery.

Viewing the Collection

Because the whole collection is so extensive it cannot all be on *public* display at one time. A good proportion of it, however – about 125,000 stamps – can be seen in the pull-out frames in the Museum's main gallery. By the time this article is published all these frames will have been refurbished making them much easier to use than in recent years. We have also started to remount and update the material that has hitherto been on display. This latter process has already started with the Europe section. The stamps are being mounted onto acid-free pages and, where possible, the opportunity is being taken to fill gaps. This will be followed by the British Empire and Commonwealth section, though some of the exceedingly prolific stamp issuers of recent times, e.g. Guyana or St Vincent, will not be brought up to date. There will however be far more Indian Convention and Princely states on display.

All the remaining material currently on display will also be remounted but only selected countries, e.g. Japan, USA will go back in the frames. The rest will be kept in albums that will be available for inspection by visitors to the Museum. The postal stationery collection will continue to be available for viewing by *prior* arrangement. It is nowhere as complete as the stamp collection and stops in the early 1960s. Nevertheless for the postal stationery collector there are still likely to be many items of interest including the many British Colonial items with SPECIMEN overprint. So why not come along to



7. Moldova overprint on USSR stamp.

the Museum to see the Stamps of the World or enquire to see what may be lurking in the postal stationery collection?

The National Postal Museum, in London's Chief Post Office, King Edward Street, London EC1, is open Monday-Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm. Admission free.

NPM Christmas Postcards

The Museum will issue five new postcards on 9 November, coinciding with the issue of the Christmas stamps. The post cards will reproduce official Post Office Christmas cards sent to Portsmouth Head Post Office in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Museum has a large volume of such cards.

The postcards will cost 25p each at the Museum's shop and can be ordered by post in full sets from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

A special handstamp will be available on 9 November. Collectors can send cards/covers to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, KEB, LONDON EC1A 1AA, requesting "Museum's special – 9 November". The Museum's normal Maltese Cross handstamp will also be available – ask for handstamp No.1985.

Stamp Designs on Plates

The Autumn stamp designs (issued 14 September) are the inspiration for Royal Mail's first ever set of collector plates.

The five plates, designed by Charlotte Knox and manufactured by Royal Doulton, will be available from early December and can be ordered now from the British Philatelic Bureau for £19.95 each or £89 for the full set. To ensure delivery by Christmas, please order before 22 November.

Decimal Stamp Books – 11

Specialist Report

D G A MYALL

Self adhesive stamps

A new Machin design which “can’t be licked” will go on sale on 19 October, a week earlier than at first announced. Britain’s first self-adhesive stamps will be available in the Tyne Tees TV area as part of an extended field trial. Twenty 1st class NVIs are contained in a special cover on sale to the general public through retailers. The books will also be available to collectors from the usual philatelic outlets and in a presentation pack.

Almost every aspect of this project is a philatelic first. The most striking feature is the horizontal format of the stamps, illustrated in the August *Bulletin*. The design is by well-known artist Jeffery Matthews, and uses a new version of the lithographic head A, i.e., with flat base and two curves in the hair. The detail is very much sharper and clearer than on the head used for other lithographic NVIs. (It will be designated A3 in specialist handbooks etc.) The

printed by Walsall Security Printers Ltd (WSP), are laid out in three panels; two of nine and one of two. An entirely new paper has been used for the stamps. It consists of three layers: a face paper with a water-soluble layer overprinted with two phosphor bars; a permanent acrylic adhesive; a release liner. The two fluorescent phosphor bars are derived from 5mm and 13.5mm bands but, because the stamps are spaced 4mm apart from each other, the effect is to give each of them two bars from normal 9.5mm bands. The stamps have simulated perforations, with a 3-hole ellipse at left and right, i.e., on the short sides. The self-adhesive stamp has replicated perforations; this was achieved by a “kiss diecut”. The result is a genuine stamp and not just a sticky label. Incidentally, the reason why most stamps have a narrower gauge (more holes per 2cm.) on their short sides is because it is harder to tear paper across the grain (the direction in which the



value has also been redesigned and is larger than normal. The horizontal format may not be to everyone’s taste – all that blank space – but was chosen to enable the stamps to be recognised during the trial and their use monitored. The new format may, therefore, be only temporary. (It would be ideal for the Country stamps, the national symbol serving to balance the design nicely. The new head is the same size as that used on the existing Country issues.)

Although this is a booklet, there is no pane in the conventional sense. The stamps, which are

fibre mainly lie during manufacture). No such requirement applies to these stamps, which do not need to be detached from their neighbours, hence the term ‘simulated perforation’.

As already noted, the printing is much more detailed than that of previous NVIs, and it appears that a much finer screen has been used. Readers interested in such matters might like to know that the screen angle used for the head is 75°, a matter touched upon here last month.

The red-and-yellow livery of retail book covers has been adapted to make the new books

distinctive at the point of sale. In place of the usual reduced illustration of a stamp, the front cover picks up the novel features by showing the new perforation outline partially peeled back. On the back cover, the barcode (100968) is printed vertically in black with a light margin indicator. The closed book has a double fold, with a single gum spot. Surprisingly, there is no closure tab.

Since a tariff increase was pending at the date the books were first placed on sale, the validity notice, which is printed on the outside back flap, makes it clear that the stamps will "always be valid whatever the postage rate" but adds that they may be used as "part payment on heavier items *within the UK*", (emphasis added).

Self-adhesives are comparatively easy to produce in roll form where they are aimed at the commercial market. Royal Mail has chosen the general public for its experiment, hence the decision to issue them in book form and the restriction to 1st-class. Similar stamps issued by other countries have proved to be extremely popular as long as no premium is charged for them. (The public's dislike of surcharges must have been taken into account in the matter of the re-pricing of the Beatrix Potter prestige book.) They are easy to use and considered by many to be more hygienic than the traditional lick. Their UK trial will last at least six months and I for one, hope that all goes well and that these "No need to lick. Just bend, peel and stick" stamps will become a permanent part of Royal Mail's range.

Revised window book covers

The validity notice in existing NVI window books has been revised and is now identical in all five, except, of course, for the necessary reference to first-class or second-class items as appropriate. There is no longer any mention of their use on mail to EC countries. Interestingly, the labels for boxes of 1,000 books of lithographic stamps now have "U.K." printed on them. Despite this, and the apparent restriction of self-adhesives to use within the UK already mentioned, there has been no change in the way these stamps can be used. So long as the UK 60g and EC 20g rates remain the same, 1st-class NVIs will remain valid to prepay both.

Responsibility for producing the books of four has been switched between WSP and Harrison. WSP's books of four by 1st were issued, along with all three books of ten, on 17 August; they do not produce any new stamps (although the pane is new). Harrison's books of

four by 2nd were issued on 7 September and yield new singles: the first photogravure bright blue NVIs with perforation ellipses and other security features.

Third printing of Gift Giving book

This Greetings book has been reprinted again to meet continued demand. The opportunity was taken of dropping mention of use on mail to EC countries, and to correct a small error in the spelling of the designers' name: "Newell and Sorell" to "Newell and Sorrell". The three versions are: Thompson/Sorell; Thomson/Sorell; Thomson/Sorrell. An earlier example of such is the correction from Stuart to Stewart on the covers of the 1987 50p book, third in the Botanical Gardens series.

Corrigenda

Several readers were kind enough to point out two bloomers in my list of single stamps published here in August. The 33p stamps from the £1.32 books do not have phosphor bars, unlike those in the Wales prestige book. The 2p and 24p stamps perforated PPPI and PIPP in the Walsall £1 book are printed on ACP(H)/DEX paper and not on ACP(C)/PVA.

The 1st class Walsall stamps from £2.40 (8.1.93) and 96p (6.2.93) books with PPIP perforation are on Dextrin paper as the IPPP variety. I inadvertently recorded PPIP as PVA. My apologies for any confusion caused.

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New stamp book varieties

Three new stamp book varieties go on sale from 1 November 1993:

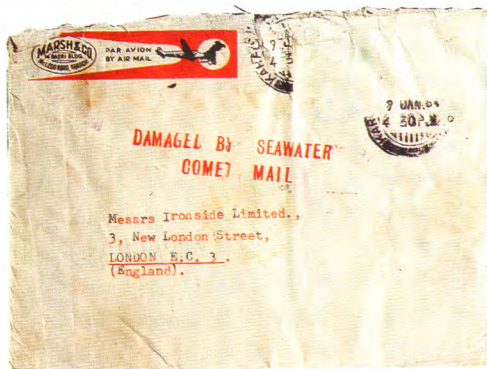
10 x 1st class NVI stamps, printed by Questa, in offset lithography, on paper supplied by Coated Papers Limited and printed with two phosphor bars. Perforation of 15 x 14 with one elliptical perforation on each vertical side. Gum is PVA.

10 x 1st class NVI stamps, printed by Walsall, in offset lithography, on paper supplied by CPL and printed with two phosphor bars. Perforation is 15 x 14 with one elliptical perforation on each vertical side. The reverse of the book carries the Greetings stamps ad panel as used on a book issued on 9 February.

4 x 1st class NVI stamps, printed by Walsall, in offset lithography on paper supplied by CPL and printed with two phosphor bars. Perforation is 15 x 14 with one elliptical perforation on each vertical side. These books of 4 x 1st class NVI stamps were produced with the old style covers but incorporating the new security features.

Cover Corner

Reader H W Manley of Sussex has submitted an unusual cover which he hopes will be of interest to other collectors. This particular cover does not in fact have a stamp on it, although it can be seen where it or they were once stuck. It was posted in Karachi by Air Mail to an address in London at 4.30 pm on 9 January 1954, and is overprinted 'DAMAGED BY SEAWATER - COMET MAIL'. It was resealed in London F S (Foreign Section) on 29 January 1954 and delivered to the addressee in London the following day amongst their ordinary mail. From the dates, it was obviously on the ill-fated Comet 1 - Yoke Peter, the first in service and which disappeared a few minutes out of Rome over the Mediterranean on 10 January 1954.



Royal Mail News

NPM Postal Uniforms postcards

The Museum issued a set of four postcards showing postal uniforms on 14 September.

1993 marks the 200th Anniversary of the first issue of a uniform to Post Office Letter Carriers. In the autumn of 1793 each of the 140 Letter Carriers of the London General Post was issued with a scarlet, cut-away, coat with blue lapels and cuffs, a waistcoat and a beaver hat with gold band. One of the main reasons for the introduction of a uniform was that the men's own clothes presented "a ragged appearance". Another reason, put forward by the Postmaster General Lord Walsingham, was that "if letter carriers were uniformed it would occasion their being observed either if loitering in ale-houses when they ought to be delivering their letters, or if frequenting pawnbrokers shops"! By 1854 over 3500 members of staff had uniforms, the number rising to 98,000 by 1908. In that year the Post Office set up a committee to review the

situation. The result was to divide the uniform wearing ranks into six classes and to reduce the number of uniform patterns from 95 to 56.

The Museum commissioned the well known stamp designer, Clive Abbott, to produce the artwork for the postcards which feature the first four Letter Carriers' uniforms. Nos 93/11-12 were worn by London men with Nos 93/13-14 being worn on a more national basis. Details were given in last months *Bulletin*. Complete sets, price £1, can be ordered from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

Friends of the NPM

The friends of the National Postal Museum recently visited the Royal Mail Transport Services depot at Kidbrooke and the Royal Engineers Museum at Chatham. Postcards were prepared for these visits and limited numbers may still be available from the secretary. Details and information about membership of the friends and their activities can be obtained from the secretary: Ray Pottle, PO Box 40, UCKFIELD, E. Sussex TN22 2SP. The 1993 annual general meeting will be held at the King Edward Hall, Newgate Street, London EC1 on 27 November.

Waterways Stamps

The following plates have been used, in addition to those reported in the July *Bulletin* (page 256): 24p - 2A (x8), 3A (x8) and 4A (x 8); 39p - 2A (x8).

Enschedé Definitives

The 30p and 35p stamps, issued on 27 July and 17 August, were printed from cylinders 1, dot and no dot. The warrant number 013 (30p) and 014 (35p) appear in the left margin of the dot sheet, and the right margin of the no dot sheet.

Christmas Aerogrammes

Two pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps will be available on 5 October for the Christmas aerogramme. Collectors may send aerogrammes, using the reposting facilities on 5 October, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT (Bureau postmark) or Wales & West Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, CARDIFF CF1 1AA (Bethlehem postmark). The aerogramme will cost 44p.

NVI Stamp Books

The prices of stamp books containing non value indicator (NVI) stamps will be revised from 1

November when the new postal tariffs come in force: The new prices will be:

4 x 1st class	£1.00
4 x 2nd class	£0.76
10 x 1st class*	£2.50
10 x 2nd class	£1.90
20 x 1st class Self Adhesive	£5.00

*including books of Greetings stamps.

Single NVI stamps from the sheets issued on 5 October will be 19p (2nd class) 25p (1st class).

Overseas Exhibitions

Royal Mail will be represented at the following overseas exhibitions: Bangkok 93 (1-10 October); New York International (8-10 October); Philatelia, Cologne (22-24 October); and Frimaerker 1 Forum (Denmark, 11-14 November).

Autumn Stampex

Autumn Stampex will be held 12-17 October in Halls 1 and 2 of The Royal Horticultural Society in Victoria. The judging for the competition will have been done before the exhibition opens and the results will be available at Stampex. The presentation lunch, open to entrants and non-entrants, will be held at the St Ermins Hotel in Caxton Street on 17 October. Tickets are available from the Stampex office (Tel. 071-490 1005).

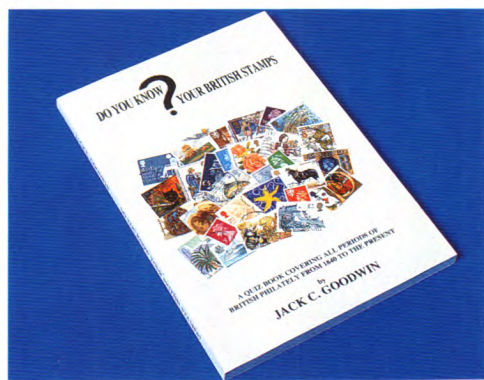
Dealers in stamps, postal history, ephemera, books, accessories, albums, postcards, etc. will be present in both halls. A vast and diverse range of material is always available; many dealers selecting interesting material from their stocks specially for sale at Stampex. Postal administrations will be found in Hall 2, where the Royal Mail stand is located.

A special handstamp will be used on mail posted at the Royal Mail stand. Collectors unable to visit the exhibition can send covers (bearing 1st class postage) to receive this handstamp to: London South Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, 53 Nine Elms Lane, LONDON SW8 5BB. Ask for Stampex handstamp and state date(s) required.

Royal Mail, in association with a software company, has been developing a Collections Management Program known as "Stampmaster". We would be interested in collectors' views on this and visitors to Autumn Stampex will be able to test "Stampmaster" for themselves. This is an opportunity not to be missed – a chance to have direct influence on a potential new product.

Books

We all like to pride ourselves on our philatelic knowledge. Now we are able to put it to the test with **Do You Know Your British Stamps?** compiled by Jack C Goodwin. The book contains no fewer than 1140 questions (and answers) on all aspects of British stamps from 1840 to the present. The quizzes are of two types – a choice of answers to questions, or statements of a true or false nature. The questions do not refer solely to stamps but to related matters. In Test 1 for example we are asked – "The Greetings stamps of 1989 were sold in booklets which also provided 12 labels. How many different types of 'greetings' were represented?" Three choices of answer then follow.



If you want to test your knowledge of colours, how about "What new colour was given the 22p Machin issued on 28 August 1984?" (Test 345), or of printing processes – "Which 1973 set was printed in offset litho and recess by Bradbury, Wilkinson?" (Test 75). Knowledge of stamp design is examined by questions such as "The gathering of vrac is portrayed in which set?" (Test 108), or "The 6d Commonwealth Arts Festival stamp of 1965 portrays carnival dancers from?"

This will be a most useful book for organisers of stamp club quizz nights and will also give individual collectors a great deal of pleasure in "brushing up" their knowledge of GB stamps. Available from: Brenda Goodwin-Wider, Horizons Books, 90 Clifden Road, LONDON E5 0LN. Price £8.95, postage 50p UK, £1 overseas surface mail. Until the end of November 1993 orders will be despatched post free within UK, with copies signed by the author. An ideal Christmas gift for a stamp collector friend or relative.

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: October Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail National, 76-86 Turnmill Street, LONDON EC1M 5NS to arrive by 26 November.

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 Christmas stamps. Answers and winners' names will be published in the January *Bulletin*.

1. Which Cambridge college did Quentin Blake attend?
2. Who wrote *The Stolen White Elephant*?
3. Where was the Postal Congress held in 1885?
4. Who is Secretary of the Friends of the National Postal Museum?
5. On what date was the 1p Enschedé stamp issued?

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 July competition were: K Heason of Nottingham (£75 worth of philatelic products); J Wolf of Middlesex; D Pierce of Clwyd; L Silke of Florida, USA; W Rogers of South Glamorgan; and J Domenech of Spain (Roman Britain presentation packs).

The answers were: 1. Noel Moore; 2. Douglas Muir; 3. Edinburgh; 4. Dr Jean Alexander and L F Newbery; 5. 44p.

Our thanks to all who entered.

Events

2 Oct 93. Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies Autumn Convention at Beacon Community College, North Beeches Road, Crowborough. Dealers stands, displays, etc. Open from 10.00. Enquiries: J E O Hobbs, 12 Ophir Road, WORTHING, W Sussex, BN11 2SR.

2 Oct 93. Stratford-upon-Avon PS Fair & Exhibition at Stratford Town Hall, 10.00-16.00. Dealers, displays, etc. Event supported by The Post Office and Crown Agents. Enquiries: Alan Godfrey. Tel: 0789 764098.

2 Oct 93. Banbury Stamp Society Annual Stamp Fair & Exhibition at Banbury Town Hall, 10.00-16.00. Special juniors corner. Enquiries: John Davies, 3 Longfellow Road, BANBURY, Oxon, OX16 9LB.

2 Oct 93. Torquay Phil Soc Stamp Exhibition at Oldway Mansion, Paignton, Devon, 10.30-16.30. Dealers, auction, car parking, refreshments. Enquiries: R Hulland, Royal Tor, Redcliffe House, Petitor Road, St Marychurch, TORQUAY TQ1 4QF.

12-17 Oct 93. Autumn Stampex – see page 53.

28-31 Oct 93. Stampa 93, Irish national stamp exhibition at Riverside Exhibition Centre, Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Dublin 2. Enquiries: Stampa, PO Box 2723, DUBLIN 1, Ireland.

30 Oct 93. Autumn Rally of Association of Essex Philatelic Societies, at Congress Hall, Middleton Hall Lane, Brentwood. Hosted by Brentwood Phil Soc (Commemorating its 40th anniversary). Open 10.30-17.00. Displays, dealers, quiz. Enquiries: Roy Osborn, Tel: 0277 213601.

30 Oct 93. Cirencester PS 25th anniversary celebrations at King's Head Hotel, Market Place, Cirencester, 14.00-17.30. Displays by leading philatelists Franceska Rapkin and Hassan Shaida. Enquiries: G Smith, Orchard House, Rendcomb, CIRENCESTER, Glos, GL7 7HD.

30 Oct 93. Dorchester & Weymouth Stamp Club Stamp Exhibition at United Church Hall, Charles Street, Dorchester, 10.00-16.30. Dealers, displays, refreshments. Admission 20p, children 10p. Enquiries: B Dennett, 2 Enkworth Road, Preston, WEYMOUTH, Dorset, DT3 6JT.

31 Oct 93. Colchester Phil Soc Stamp Fair at Holmwood House School, Chitts Hill, Lexden, Colchester, 10.30-16.30. Dealers, displays, refreshments. Admission free. Enquiries: D F Sapsford, 24 Thurlston Close, Parsons Heath, COLCHESTER CO4 3HF.

Six Month Digest

Listed below are the issues of the past six months and the proposed dates of issue for stamps until February 1994. Any change in these dates will be notified in the *Bulletin*. British Philatelic Bureau order codes are quoted where known.

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) (Q8032)
28 Jun	Guaranteed Delivery envelope DL (RX005)
28 Jun	Guaranteed Delivery envelope C5 (RY005)
28 Jun	Guaranteed Delivery envelope C4 (RZ005)
28 Jun	Registered Plus envelope DL (RX006)
28 Jun	Registered Plus envelope C5 (RY006)
28 Jun	Registered Plus envelope C4 (RZ006)
6 Jul	50p book – Postal History 3 (TB025)
6 Jul	£1 book – Educational Institutions 3 (TB026)
13 Jul	Inland Waterways stamp cards (AQ263)
20 Jul	Inland Waterways stamps (AS 555)
20 Jul	Inland Waterways pack (AP115)
27 Jul	30p Definitive, Enschedé (DS301)
Jul	Air Cards – (London) (RQ002)
Jul	Air Cards – (Stratford) (RQ003)
10 Aug	Beatrix Potter prestige book (YB007)
17 Aug	35p Definitive, Enschedé (DS352)
17 Aug	Greetings book – revised (JB008)
17 Aug	10 x 1st class book/H (UB076)
17 Aug	10 x 1st class book/W (UB077)
17 Aug	10 x 2nd class book/Q (UB075)
17 Aug	4 x 1st class book/W (UB074)
7 Sep	4 x 2nd class book/H (UB073)
7 Sep	Autumn stamp cards (AQ268)
14 Sep	Autumn stamps (AS560)
14 Sep	Autumn pack (AP116)
14 Sep	NPM PO Uniforms cards (NQ919)

Forthcoming

5 Oct	Sherlock Holmes stamp cards
5 Oct	Christmas aerogramme

5 Oct	NVI sheets 1st class, Q
5 Oct	NVI sheets, 2nd class, Q
12 Oct	Sherlock Holmes stamps/pack
12 Oct	Self-adhesive stamp card
19 Oct	Self-adhesive stamp book
26 Oct	19p Definitive, olive green, H
26 Oct	25p Definitive, salmon pink, H
26 Oct	29p Definitive, light grey, E
26 Oct	36p Definitive, ultramarine, E
26 Oct	38p Definitive, red, E
26 Oct	41p Definitive, stone, E
1 Nov	50p book – Postal History 4, H
1 Nov	£1 book – Ed. Institutions 4, W
1 Nov	£2 book – Postal Vehicles 1, H
1 Nov	£1.40 book (4 x 35p stamps), W
1 Nov	£1.64 book (4 x 41p stamps), W
1 Nov	10 x 1st class book/Q
1 Nov	10 x 1st class book/W
1 Nov	4 x 1st class book/W
1 Nov	19p stamp roll, H
1 Nov	25p stamp roll, H
1 Nov	35p stamp roll, H
1 Nov	41p stamp roll, H
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
7 Dec	N. Ireland 19p, 25p, 30p, 41p
7 Dec	Scotland 19p, 25p 30p, 41p
7 Dec	Wales 19p, 25p, 30p, 41p
1994	
11 Jan	Age of Steam stamp cards
18 Jan	Age of Steam stamps and pack
25 Jan	1994 Greetings stamp cards
1 Feb	1994 Greetings stamps and pack
22 Feb	Prince of Wales stamp cards
Feb	To Pay labels
W =	Printed by Walsall Security Printers;
H =	Harrison & Sons; Q = House of Questa.
E =	Joh. Enchedé en Zonen.

Self-Adhesive comes unstuck

Since the September *Bulletin* went to press changes have been made to the first day facilities for the Self-Adhesive stamp book (19 October). The book will *not* now be available at all post offices on the day of issue, nor will first day posting boxes be provided at all main post offices. The book will be available at main offices with Collections, Post Shops and Philatelic Counters, and first day posting boxes will be provided at all these offices.

The price of the presentation pack will be £5.10, *not* £5.15 as stated in September.

October Digest

Issued in October/early November

5 October: 1st and 2nd class NVI stamps in sheets.

Printing: House of Questa, offset-lithography, sheets of 200, elliptical perforations on vertical sides, PVA gum. One phosphor band 2nd class, 2 bands 1st class.

Note: Available as singles, pairs, blocks, etc to collectors from Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counter.

5 October: Sherlock Holmes stamp cards, Nos. 156a-e. Price 21p each.

5 October: 1993 Christmas aerogramme, price 44p (includes aerogramme postage).

12 October: Sherlock Holmes stamps – 5 x 24p.

Designer: Andrew Davidson.

Printing: The House of Questa, offset-lithography, sheets of 100, perf 14 x 14½, phosphor coated paper, PVA gum.

Pictorial First Day of Issue Postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau, and London NW1

Presentation Pack: No 241, price £1.50.

12 October: 1st class definitive self-adhesive stamp card No D6 10/93 price 21p.

19 October: 1st class definitive self-adhesive stamp.

Printing: Walsall Security Printers, lithography. Issued in books of 20. Perf. 14, 2 phosphor bands, self-adhesive gum. Book price £4.80 (£5 from 1 November).

Pictorial First Day of Issue postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau, and Newcastle upon Tyne.

Presentation Pack: No. 29 Price £5.10.

26 October: Definitives – 19p olive green, 25p salmon pink, 29p light grey, 36p ultramarine, 38p red, and 41p stone.

Printing: Harrison & Sons Ltd 19p and 25p, Joh. Enschedé en Zonen (Netherlands) 29p – 41p. Photogravure. 19p one phosphor band, 25p Advanced Coated Paper (ACP), others two bands. All have elliptical perforations on vertical sides. Sheets of 200. PVA Dextrin gum (19p and 25p), PVA gum (others).

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

Presentation Pack: No. 30, price £2.20.

1 November: £1.40 and £1.64 books containing 4 x 35p and 4 x 41p stamps respectively, plus 4 air mail labels..

Printing: Walsall, lithography, 2 phosphor bands, PVA gum, elliptical perfs on vertical sides.

Notes: These two books will be available from the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, Philatelic Counters, also post offices and retail outlets (35p only) with a demand for airmail rate stamps.

1 November: Stamp Rolls – 500 and 1000 x 19p and 25p; 500 x 35p and 41p.

Printing: Harrisons, photogravure, 19p one phosphor band, ACP others.

1 November: 50p, £1 and £2 books containing two, four and eight 25p stamps respectively. 50p book also contains two labels adjoining stamps.

Printing: Harrisons, photogravure (50p and £2); Walsall, lithography (£1). ACP Harrison stamps, 2 phosphor bands Walsall. Elliptical perfs. PVA Dextrin gum Harrison, PVA gum Walsall.

1 November: 10 x 1st class stamps book.

Printing: Questa, 2 phosphor bars, elliptical perfs. Revised text on inside covers.

1 November: 10 x 1st class stamps book.

Printing: Walsall, 2 phosphor bars, elliptical perfs. Revised text on inside covers.

1 November: 4 x 1st class stamps book.

Printing: Walsall, 2 phosphor bars, elliptical perfs. *Note:* This book was produced with the old style covers but incorporating the new security features on the stamps.

Withdrawn in October

6 October: 1992 Christmas aerogramme.

12 October: Single European Market stamp, presentation pack, stamp card, and souvenir cover.

26 October: Tolkien prestige stamp book.



No perfin enthusiast can expect completion of a collection based on GB perfins and a worldwide collection is even more impossible. New issues are constantly appearing either as new renderings of an existing perfin or completely new letterings or designs. There is no regulatory body systematically listing new issues with the result that a newcomer "off paper" or on just a small piece starts a hunt for examples on a full cover when, quite often, printed matter relating to the sender provides the name of the user.

The revival of interest in perfins is because the vast majority are on easily acquired basic letter-rate stamps, thus providing large quantities of material at little cost. Just as a valuable "sleeper" among stamps may be found in a large mixture, so a rare, short-lived perfin may turn up unexpectedly.

With luck you may come across a perfin of personal interest to you. Among some bits and pieces acquired over the years I found an ordinary 1922 United States 10c yellow with a



"KFC" perfin. Since it was created without my knowledge (or consent!), I can only assume it refers to the Kelloggs Food Corporation, or is that too corny? Perhaps a specialist in US perfins can confirm this assumption or come up with a credible alternative.

More information and help on systematic collecting of perfins is available from The Perfin Society (Honorary Secretary: J. M. Rucklidge, 13 Moncrieffe Road, SHEFFIELD S7 1HQ). Please enclose a stamp for reply. A substantial and useful article on "The Birthright of 'Perfins'" by C Jennings appeared in *Stamp Collecting*, 26 September 1966; and *The Handbook of British Perfins* by John S Nelson is a "must" for perfin addicts.

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New Air Cards

Details were given in the August Bulletin of new air cards depicting London and Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick. These went on sale at the end of July and are available from selected post shops, Collections and Philatelic Counters, price 50p each. Shown here are cards featuring Buckingham Palace (No 2C) and Warwick Castle (3E). The cards bear, on the address side, the Machin head of The Queen, and "Great Britain Postage Paid" indicator as used on aerogrammes.



Railway Letter Stamp

Shown here is the new stamp from the Mid-Hants Railway, issued on 3 July. Details were given in the July *Bulletin* (page 258). The stamp is available at face value, plus postage, from: Postal Co-ordinator, Mid-Hants Railway, ALRESFORD, Hants, SO24 9JG.



September Digest

Issued in September/early October

7 September: 4 x 2nd class NVI book.

Printing: Harrisons, photogravure, elliptical perfs on vertical sides.

Note: Available initially from Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, and Philatelic Counters.

14 September: Autumn stamps – 18p, 24p, 28p, 33p, 39p.

Designer: Charlotte Knox.

Printing: Harrison & Sons Ltd, photogravure, sheets of 100, perf 15 x 14, one phosphor band 18p, PCP 24p–39p, PVA Dextrin gum.

Pictorial First Day of Issue Postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau and Taunton.

Presentation Pack: No 240, price £1.75.

The 24p–39p Autumn stamps are on phosphor coated paper, *not* with 2 bands as announced in August. We regret any confusion caused.

5 October: 1993 Christmas aerogramme, price 44p.

Designer: Trickett & Webb Limited.

Printing: McCorquodale Envelopes Limited.

Withdrawn in September/early October

14 September: The Green Issue stamps, pack, stamp cards and souvenir cover.

15 September: £1.32 stamp book, issued 16 September 1991, contains 4 x 33p stamps printed by Walsall on paper with PVA gum.

Note: A similar book, but with stamps on PVA Dextrin gummed paper, issued 8 September 1992, remains on sale.

21 September: “Window books” issued 22 September 1992 – 4 x 1st and 2nd Walsall, 10 x 1st and 2nd Harrison, Questa, and Walsall.

5 October: 1992 Christmas aerogramme.

Events

8-11 Sep 93. BIPEX (British International Postcard Exhibition) at Kensington Town Hall, London W8.

17-19 Sep 93. 75th Philatelic Congress of G B at Barnton Thistle Hotel, Queensferry Road, 28

Edinburgh. Enquires: T Rielly, 18 Belgrave Road, EDINBURGH EH12 6NE.

18 Sep 93. Preston & District PS Annual Fair at Canterbury Hall, Garstang Road, Preston. About 20 dealers present. Enquiries: P Gaywood, 7 Church Street, Kirkham, PRESTON PR4 2SE; Tel. 0772 684302.

18 Sep 93. Guildford & District PS Stamp Fair & Exhibition at Guildford Technical College, Stoke Road, Guildford, 10.30-17.00. Dealers, refreshments, ample parking. Admission 25p. Enquiries: Mrs T Stokoe, 11 Allden Cottages, Aarons Hill, GODALMING, Surrey, GU7 2LU. Tel. 0483 416066.

25 Sep 93. HAMPEX '93 – Hampshire Phil Fed Convention at Greyfriars Centre, Ringwood, Hants, 10.00-17.00. Specialist societies, stamp displays, refreshments, dealers, etc. Enquiries D J Hiscock, “Beams”, 57 The Street, Old Basing, BASINGSTOKE, Hants, RG24 7BX.

Late News

NVI Stamps in Sheets

As announced in the August Bulletin 1st and 2nd class stamps are to be made available in sheet format. These will go on sale on 5 October and collectors will be able to obtain their requirements, singles, pairs, blocks, part sheets, etc from the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, and Philatelic Counters. Businesses will be able to obtain sheets from Royal Mail Retail in Edinburgh. These sheets will not automatically be available at post offices. Printed by Questa in sheets of 200, the stamps have one phosphor band (2nd class) or 2 bands (1st class). Plate numbers will appear in the sheet margin, the stamps have PVA gum, are on OBA (Optical Brightening Agent) free paper and have elliptical perforations. This will be the first issue of Questa 1st class stamps with elliptical perfs. No first day facilities will be offered on 5 October.



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