

British Philatelic Bulletin

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Withdrawn Items

The following items will be withdrawn from sale on 15 November 1984.

Christmas 1983 stamps issue, presentation pack and Christmas aerogramme.

Cover illustration: Christmas 1984 special discount stamp book containing 20 x 13p 'Christmas' stamps, on sale from 20th November, price £2.30.

Editorial

Once again, as the philatelic activities of 1984 draw to a close, the end of the year is signalled by the issue of the Christmas stamps. These are due on 20 November, and this year the theme of the issue is The Nativity. Full details of the stamps and the Christmas stamp booklet, which for the first time contains special stamps, can be found in this issue. We are also starting a new series by Len Newbery, who will be providing information on new stamp book issues and looking into the production background. We are sure that readers will find his column of interest.

The new handstamping rules and regulations which we published in the September Bulletin took effect from 1 October 1984. They have attracted a generally favourable response from both collectors and dealers alike, and hopefully they now provide the philatelic service that is wanted. One point that arose when reviewing the new rules, was the lack of a permanent handstamp at the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh. While special handstamps are regularly available for new stamp issues, none is provided at the Bureau for the cancellation of items at other times. The possibility of introducing such a handstamp is currently being considered, on the same lines as those in use at all 64 philatelic counters. We would like to hear from readers on whether they feel it would be useful for such a handstamp to be provided.

Further details of the 1985 Special Stamp issue programme are now available. These are included in a special supplement to the November Bulletin, and give details of the subjects being depicted on individual stamps. The programme is rich and varied and should provide issues of interest to all types of collectors.

Finally, some good news for readers following the holding of the Bulletin's price through the recent tariff increase. The Bulletin will continue to have 20 instead of 16 pages after December 1984. Due to economies being made we are able to continue giving readers this benefit. We will continue to provide collectors with more information on current activities in the stamp world, as well as additional special features written specially for the Bulletin.

CHARLES GOWEN

The German Occupation of the Channel Islands

Part 2 — Guernsey

The first effect of the German Occupation of Guernsey was a shortage of British stamps, which could no longer be obtained from London, and after a few months supplies of the ½d and 1d denominations began to get really low. It was therefore decided to produce some stamps locally and work on an issue was started in October 1940. By December, however, supplies of the 1d stamp became exhausted before the local product was ready. The German authorities therefore suggested that the British 2d stamps should be bisected diagonally and each half used as a 1d stamp. This procedure was adopted and on 24th December, 1940 a post office notice was issued which was published in the two local newspapers, the *Evening Press* and *The Star*:

NOTICE

The Post Office advises that further supplies of 1d Postage stamps are not at present available and that, until further notice prepayment of Penny Postage (for Printed Papers etc.) can be effected by using one half of a 2d stamp provided that division is made by cutting the stamp diagonally.

It is emphasised that the bisection of stamps should be done carefully and that correspondence bearing half stamps not cut in the manner indicated will be liable to surcharge.

Although the bisecting was authorised on Christmas Eve, the mails had by then been collected and stamps were not cancelled until 27th December, as the two previous days were public holidays.

Five different stamps were bisected, the ordinary King George VI 2d, the Postal Centenary 2d, both of which were on sale at the Post Office, and some King George V 1912-22, 1924-26, and 1934-36 2ds which were in the hands of private collectors but still valid for postage. It has been estimated that the following quantities were used: George V 1912-22 and 1924-26, 600 altogether; George V 1934 photogravure, 500; George VI 1938, 16,000; Postal Centenary, 100,000. They remained valid until 22nd February, 1941, but were cancelled on the 24th for mail received up to midnight on the 22nd.

Many of the bisects were used philatelically by collectors who sent them to themselves and to their

friends. Those used by local government departments and firms to send out bills and receipts are worth considerably more than the 'made to order' covers.

It is known that one German officer obtained several thousand of the two George VI 2nd stamps from Germany, bisected them and stuck them on unaddressed envelopes, and took them to the Head Post Office and ordered them to be cancelled. These were taken back to Germany after the Liberation and later brought back to London and sold to a British wholesale stamp dealer. The market now seems to have absorbed them and most of them have had names and addresses added.

Unauthorised Bisects

Only the 2nd bisect was authorised, but examples of the King George VI 1d and the Postal Centenary 1d and 3d are known bisected and used for half their value and the Postal Centenary 2½d is known bisected and used as a 1d stamp. The examples seen are all on commercial covers and have been accepted by the Post Office without surcharge. When they are offered for sale they readily fetch £400 to £500 each.

Swastika Overprints

When the bisecting of the 2d stamp was authorised, the Germans conceived the idea of overprinting each half with a swastika. Some trials were made and forwarded to Germany for approval, but the proposal was rejected and orders were given for all the trial stamps to be destroyed. However, as usual, some examples escaped destruction and at least two have been seen with a small swastika struck twice on each. They are now valued at several hundred pounds each.

The King George VI 1d definitive is also known with several small swastika overprints and some examples are known to have been brought back from Guernsey in 1940 by members of a Commando unit which raided the island.

The Occupation Stamps

When the decision was made in October 1940 to issue locally produced postage stamps, the Guernsey Press Company, commercial printers and publishers of one of the local newspapers, *The Evening Press*, were commissioned to undertake the work and Mr E W Vaudin, the firm's artist, was asked to



prepare a design.

The Germans had forbidden the use of the King's head or any other connection with Britain, so Mr Vaudin used what are commonly called the Arms of Guernsey, but which are in fact the personal Arms of the Sovereign of England, and the unsuspecting Germans let him get away with it.

He first prepared rough sketches and then made finished drawings of approximately 76 x 70 mm (3 x 2¾ in.) on Bristol board.

Two different designs were prepared for a 1d stamp, based on the Bailiff's Seal and the local coinage. Somewhat similar designs had also been used for Guernsey revenue and social insurance stamps before the war.

Proofs were made of the accepted design and imperforate examples are known in black on ungummed paper and in red on cream paper with brown-tinted gum.

Mr Carol H Toms prepared a printing plate of 30 subjects of the 1d stamp. From this plate sheets of 60 stamps were typographed in two operations, the top half of the sheet first, then the bottom half. Some sheets can be found with the fifth and sixth horizontal rows out of alignment because the automatic printing machine had failed to line up the

paper properly. The paper used for the first printing and part of the second was pre-war Samuel Jones paper already gummed. That used for all other printings and values was locally gummed.

The 1d stamp was issued on 18th February, 1941, and the press notice authorising it read as follows:

NOTICE — POSTAGE STAMPS

As from 9.0 am on TUESDAY, the 18th inst., penny postage stamps will be available for purchase at the Head Post Office, Smith Street, and at all Sub-Offices in the Baililwick where Money Order or Savings Bank business is normally transacted.

The present arrangement whereby 2d stamps, cut diagonally, provide for penny postage will cease on Saturday, the 22nd instant.

Post Office, Guernsey. H C CHAPPELL
17th February, 1941. *Acting Head Postmaster*
Genehmigt (Approved)
Nebenstelle Guernsey
der Felk Kommandantur 515
I.V. DR. BROSCHE
Kriegsverwaltungs — Assessor
den 17 Febr. 1941.

The stamps were printed on plain unwatermarked paper and were rouletted 7 (or 14 due to blunt points). They are known in scarlet on thin paper through which the design can be seen from the back, and on thick paper, in vermilion and orange-vermilion from the printings made in 1943 and in carmine from the printing of December 1943. They are also known completely imperforate (four sheets are known), imperforate between horizontal or vertical pairs, imperforate between stamp and sheet margins and a 1d from the first printing is known doubly printed.

Strip of ½d imperf. between horizontal pair; ½d printed on the gummed side (top).



Strip of 1d showing first two stamps imperf. between horizontal pair (bottom).

½d Stamp

A ½d green was issued on 7th April, 1941, after publication of the following notice:

NOTICE — POSTAGE STAMPS

As from 9.0 am Monday, the 7th April, locally printed Half penny Postage Stamps will be on sale at the Head Post Office, Smith Street, and at all Sub-Offices where Money Order or Savings Bank business is transacted.

Post Office, Guernsey. H C CHAPELL
1st April, 1941. *Acting Head Postmaster*
Genehmigt (Approved)
Nebenstelle Guernsey
der Feldkommandantur 515
(Verw.) DR. REFFLER
Kriegsverwaltungsrat.
den 1 April, 1941.



Mint set of ordinary stamps



½d from 4th printing showing imprint

The stamps were printed in sheets of 60 (6 x 10) on plain unwatermarked paper, rouletted 7 (or 14 due to blunt points). They are known in a number of shades, due to the different printings: emerald-green (April 1941), blue-green (November 1941), yellow-green (February 1942; November 1944) sage-green (September 1942), olive-green (February 1943), deep olive-green, and deep yellow-green (July 1943). They are also known imperforate between horizontal or vertical pairs, imperforate between



1d imperf. between vertical pair

stamp and sheet margin and the ½d deep yellow-green exists printed on the gummed side (one sheet). Offsets are also known with the design printed in reverse on the back of the stamps, caused by the design transferring from a wet inked sheet or by a sheet of paper missing in the printing press and the impression being taken by the underlay and then transferring to the back of the next sheet.

2½d Stamp

A 2½d ultramarine was issued on 12th April, 1944, on German orders to conserve paper. Sales were restricted to ten copies per person.

The stamp was printed in sheets of 60 (6 x 10) on plain unwatermarked paper, rouletted 7 (or 14 due to blunt points). There are two shades, ultramarine and deep ultramarine, and it also exists imperforate and imperforate between horizontal pairs.

Watermarked Paper Varieties

In March 1942 a printing of the ½d and 1d stamps was made on paper with an overall watermark of loops and the word ARMA. It had been imported from France and was intended for printing currency notes. The ½d stamp was issued on 11th March, 1942 and the 1d on 7th April, 1942. They were both sold out within three weeks of issue and are scarce used on commercial covers.

Proof sheets

Unnumbered sheets of the ½d and 1d stamps were presented to the Bailiff of Guernsey by the Guernsey Press Company and are now in the States Greffe, together with an imperforate sheet of the 2½d, which was also presented to the Bailiff.

Imprints

The imprint of the Guernsey Press Company appeared on every printing and is found under stamps 55 and 56 on the first printing of the 1d., and under stamps 57 and 58 on all other printings of the 1d, ½d and 2½d. The imprints on all sheets printed up to December 1943 are as illustrated. They reveal the name of the printer (Guernsey Press Co.), the number of the printing, the quantity printed (120M = 120,000), and the date of the printing. After December 1943, only the printer's name was given, the other data being omitted. Even the name was finally reduced to PRESS TYPE or 'PRESS'. The full list of imprints is as follows:

½d

1,240M/3/41; 2, 2 x 120M/6/41; 3, 3 x 120M/6/41; 4, 4 x 120M/11/41; 5, 5 x 120M/2/42; 6, 6 x 240M/2/42; 7, 7 x 120M/9/42; 8, 8 x 120M/2/43; 9, 9 x 120M/7/43; 10, 10 x 120M/10/43; 11, Guernsey Press Co., (stop and comma); 12, Guernsey Press Co. (stop only); 13, Guernsey Press Co. (stop only — bottom margin 15mm).

1d

1, 120M/2/41; 2, 2 x 120M/2/41; 3, 3 x 120M/6/41; 4, 4 x 120M/6/41; 5, 5 x 120M/9/41; 6, 6 x 240M/11/41; 7, 7 x 120M/2/42; 8, 8 x 240M/4/42; 9, 9 x 240M/9/42; 10, 10 x 240M/1/43; 11, 11 x 240M/7/43; 12, Guernsey Press Co.; 12 (second half), PRESS TYPE; 13, 'PRESS' (inverted commas unlevel); 14, 'PRESS' (inverted commas level); 15, 'PRESS' (inverted commas level — bottom margin 12 mm).

2½d

1, Guernsey Press Co.; 2, 'PRESS' (inverted commas unlevel); 3, 'PRESS' (inverted commas level); 4, 'PRESS' (inverted commas level — bottom margin 15 mm).

The stamps were withdrawn from sale on 13th April, 1946, but the last day cancellation was 14th April.

Numbers printed were: ½d, 1,772,160; 1d, 2,478,700; 2½d, 416,640. Watermarked paper: ½d, 120,000; 1d, 120,000.

Forgeries

A number of ½d and 1d stamps are known on a thin transparent paper and differing in colour, roulette

and gum from the 1944 printings from which they purport to come. In the 1d stamps the back legs of the leopards are broken. It is believed that these were espionage forgeries made in London, like those of France, Germany, Holland and Italy. Whatever their purpose, they are very rare and I have seen no larger multiples than blocks of four.

In 1975 some modern forgeries of the stamps were produced in Belgium or Holland were sold as facsimiles on the British market. They are in sheets of 25 without any margins, printed on a very white paper, with thin colourless gum. The rouletting is the same as for the genuine stamps, but the stamps are more clearly separated. The leopards have broken hind legs and tails. The two pearls at the top left of the stamps are separated, whereas in the genuine stamps they are joined together. The forgeries are sometimes mixed with genuine stamps to make up mint sets of three values.



Registered cover with 1d imperf. between vertical pair

Postal Stationery

Only one item of postal stationery is known for Guernsey during the Occupation. From August 16th, 1940, the States of Guernsey and Jersey maintained a joint Purchasing Mission in France, with its headquarters at the Villa Hirondele, Granville. The Guernsey representatives were provided with special blue envelopes bearing the two-line inscription 'ETATS DE GUERNSEY/GRANVILLE'. These were sent back to Guernsey post free through the German feldpost. They are, however, extremely rare, probably because of the paper shortage in Guernsey, which caused incoming envelopes to be re-used several times.

BILL NEWPORT

(Illustrations by courtesy of Harmers of London and Royale Stamp Company Ltd.)

The Railway Letter Service

Part 2

Having in the first article in this series looked at the railway letter service in general and at the stamps of the Talylyn Railway, we now examine the issues of two more Welsh narrow gauge railways — the Festiniog and British Rail's Vale of Rheidol line.

Ffestiniog Railway

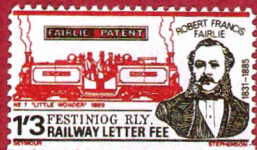
The Ffestiniog Railway runs from the small coastal resort of Porthmadog (formerly called Portmadoc) to the slate town of Blaenau Ffestiniog, a distance of 13¼ miles. The railway was authorised by an Act of Parliament in May 1832 and opened for goods traffic in April 1836. Built to a gauge of 1' 11½" (60cm), the line was horse-worked until 1863 when four steam engines *Princess*, *Prince*, *Mountaineer* and *Palmerston* were introduced. Passenger services began in 1865 and continued until 1930. Following the decline in the slate industry, the railway was closed in 1946 but was not forgotten. A group of enthusiasts — inspired by the success of the preservation society which reopened the Talylyn Railway — got together in 1951 to ensure the line's survival. A new Ffestiniog Railway Company was formed in 1954 and passenger services restarted (from Portmadoc to Boston Lodge Halt) in July 1955. Gradually the service has been extended — to Minffordd (1956), Penrhyn (1957), Tan-y-Bwlch (1958), Dduallt (1968), Gelliwig (1975), Lyn Ystradau (1977),

Tanygrisiau (1978) and finally to Blaenau Ffestiniog (1982). A ceremony commemorating the completion of the reopening took place on 30 April 1983 — guest of honour was the then Speaker of the House of Commons, Mr George Thomas (now Viscount Tonypanody).

The old company although party to the original Railway Letter Agreement of 1891, did not issue railway letter stamps. The very few letters handled seem to have been for philatelists; parcel stamps were affixed to show that the fee had been paid. The new company reintroduced the railway letter service on 28 May 1969 when four stamps were issued — 1d depicting a horse-drawn slate train of c.1849, 6d Portmadoc station in c.1870, 1/-train and car of the 1920s and 1/2d train headed by locomotive *Merddin Emrys*. A 1/3d stamp was issued in June 1970 to take account of the increased railway letter fee, hitherto 1d and 1/2d stamps had to be used together. The 1/3d stamp was of similar design to the obsolete 1/2d value.

Following decimalisation in 1971, stocks of 1d, 1/-, 1/2d and 1/3d stamps were surcharged for use as 5p, 10p and 15p stamps. A new definitive series was issued in July 1971 (three at 5p, one at 15p), low value 1p, 2p and 3p stamps followed in October 1973. Two of the 5p stamps depicted Ffestiniog locomotives, the third featured the harbour at Portmadoc in the 1870s. A view of Tan-y-Bwlch station, also in the 1870s, was shown on the 15p stamp. The low value stamps portrayed prominent people in the railway's history — W A Maddocks, C E Spooner and Sir H W Tyler. A third definitive series (5p 10p, 15p stamps) featuring locomotives was issued in May 1978, a 20p stamp was added in July 1981.

Several commemorative stamps have been issued — centenary of Robert Farlie's patent (1969), centenary of the first bogie coaches (1972), 150th anniversary of Port Madoc Harbour (1974), 150th anniversary of Stockton & Darlington Railway (1975), centenary of locomotive *Merddin Emrys* (1979) and 150th anniversary of the Railway's Act of Parliament and reopening to Blaenau Ffestiniog (1982). The Farlie stamp of 1969 is interesting — it depicts the *Little Wonder*, a double-ended locomotive of type unique to the Ffestiniog Railway. Two of the four 'Farlies' are still 'in steam' — *Merddin Emrys* and



Earl of Merioneth. Two of the 1863 locomotives are also still in use — *Prince* and *Princess*; they are shown on the Stockton & Dalington Railway 15p commemorative and 1978 5p definitive respectively.

Undated oval handstamps are used to cancel railway letter stamps; these are currently in use at Porthmadog, Minffordd, Tan-y-Bwlch and Blaenau Ffestiniog stations. A dated, circular cancel is used on postage stamps on letters addressed 'To be called for'. A number of special pictorial handstamps have been used since 1971 including ones to commemorate the return to service of *Prince* (21 April 1980), the Royal Wedding (22 July 1981) and the special reopening ceremony (30 April 1983).

transfer to the Ffestiniog Railway 'to be posted on arrival' into the normal course of post.

Vale of Rheidol Railway

This line — also built to the 1' 11½" gauge — was opened in 1902. It runs from Aberystwyth to Devil's Bridge in Dyfed (formerly Cardiganshire), a distance of 12 miles. Originally operated by the Cambrian Railways, it later became part of the Great Western Railway and is now British Rail's only narrow gauge and steam-operated railway. Railway letter stamps were introduced in July 1970 — 1d, 6d, 1/3d and 1/7d stamps depicting respectively a train approaching Devil's Bridge; Vale of Rheidol Railway Company crest and British Rail logo; locomotive *Prince of Wales* and locomotive *Rheidol* (now scrapped). The 1d and 1/3d stamps were surcharged 5p and 10p in 1971 pending the issue of new 10p and 5p definitives in July 1971 and June 1972 respectively. The new 10p stamp featured a train near Devil's Bridge, the 5p stamp a map of the railway. The 6d stamp was surcharged 16p in February 1973 following the increase in the letter fee in May 1972. Low value 1p and 2p stamps followed in August 1973 — of non-pictorial design, slightly reminiscent of the 1891 original railway letter stamps. A 15p definitive featuring the locomotive *Rheidol* as it appeared in 1903 — with spark-arresting chimney and dumb buffers was issued in March 1975. This locomotive was originally built for use on a Brazilian coal railway but was never shipped to south America and came to the Vale of Rheidol Railway after service on a quarry line at Talybont, north of Aberystwyth; it was scrapped in 1924. Modifications including the removal of the spark-arresting chimney took place in 1904 and it is in this form that it is depicted on the 1/7d definitive stamp. Despite the increase in the letter fee to 20p in November 1980, there was no 20p stamp until May 1981 — and then a provisional 20p on 10p surcharge. A 20p stamp featuring *Prince of Wales* was issued in June 1982. Although inscribed '1902 1982' to mark the railway's 80th anniversary, it serves as a definitive stamp. *Prince of Wales* is one of two locomotives built specially for the Rheidol Railway in 1902, the other *Edward VII* was scrapped in 1931. Two similar engines — *Owain Glyndwr* and *Llywelyn* were built in 1923.

Undated handstamps for cancelling railway letter stamps are used at Aberystwyth and Devil's Bridge stations and one inscribed 'TRAIN POST' is applied to mail handed to the guard by passengers on the train or at the unstaffed stations and halts. A dated circular cancel is applied to postage stamps on



1971 15p definitive cancelled with Portmadoc station handstamp.

In August 1980 five (*Ffestiniog*, *Tallylyn*, *Vale of Rheidol*, *Welshpool & Llanfair* and *Llanbaris Lake*) of the eight lines which form the joint marketing panel of the Welsh Narrow Gauge railways issued two railway letter stamps which could be used on any line. The stamps were of similar design, one inscribed in English, the other in Welsh. They depict the marketing panel's logo and the inscription 'THE GREAT LITTLE TRAINS OF WALES' together with the names of the five railways. The stamps marked the tenth anniversary of the panel. Letters bearing the stamps were transferred from one line to another via British Rail, for example covers despatched from Devil's Bridge on the Vale of Rheidol Railway were carried by B.R. mainline service from Aberystwyth to Porthmadog for

'To be called for' letters. Special pictorial cancels have been used on occasion — for example to commemorate the 50th and 60th anniversaries of locomotives *Owain Glyndur* and *Llynwelyn* (14 September 1973 and 2 May 1983).

Readers interested in acquiring copies of the stamps of these two railways should write to: Railway Letter Service

Dept., Ffestiniog Rly., Harbour Station, PORTHMADOG, Gwynedd, LL49 9NF and Rail Express Parcels Dept., B.R. Aberystwyth Station, ABERYSTWYTH, Dyfed, SY23 1LH.

Next time we will look at the stamps of two more Welsh narrow-gauge lines — the Llanberis Lake Railway and the Welshpool & Llanfair Railway

JOHN HOLMAN



Vale of Rheidol Rly. — 1/3d stamp from the original set of four (1970), 10p stamp of 1971 showing train near Devil's Bridge and 2p definitive of 1973 — design based on the original railway letter stamps of 1891.

Decimal Stamp Books

The object of this column is to provide collectors of stamp books with the maximum amount of background information possible, supplementing that already given in previous Bulletins prior to the release of stamp book New Issues.

The numbering is that used by the Great Britain Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle in their Bookmark catalogue.

DB5 (5) Christian Heritage Prestige Stamp Book — £4, 4/9/1984.

For basic details and illustrations see August 1984 Bulletin pages 284/5.

The book contains four interleaves illustrated in full colour and four stamp panes with the stub illustrated in black and the colour of the adjoining stamp.

The sequence of the interleaves and stamp panes is — front cover, interleaf (Becket), 17p (Cranmer), interleaf (Pilgrim's Progress), 13p (Wilberforce), interleaf (Elizabeth Fry), se-tenant pane (Eros), interleaf (Keir Hardie), 13p (Lilian Baylis), Back cover.

Covers, interleaves and stamp panes are all sheet fed printed 12-up. In order to facilitate collating the component sheets are numbered 1-10. These numbers together with other marginal markings including cylinder numbers and traffic lights are trimmed off with the waste in the book making and binding processes.

The books are sewn with black thread and the spine covered with a strip of black binding.

Printing Details

The paper used for the covers is Humptsman Silk 250 G.S.M. and for the interleaves Ikonerix 115 G.S.M. The sheet size of both is 17" x 20" (432mm x 508mm).

The covers and interleaves, 12-up three columns x 4 — were printed on a Roland Litho press.

The stamp panes also 12-up (3 x 4) were printed on a Rembrandt press.

17p (Cranmer) (3 x 2) Cylinder B6 on Advanced Coated Paper.

13p (Wilberforce) (3 x 2) Cylinder B2 and phosphor cylinder B63 on FCP with single side band left or right

Se-tenant (Eros) (17.17.17. Cyliners B1 (17p), B1 10.17.13 (13p), B22 (10p)

17.17.17.) and phosphor cylinder B64 on FCP.

The 17p and 10p have two phosphor bands and the 13p one band on left.

13p (Lilian Baylis) (3 x 2) This was also printed from cylinder B2 and phosphor cylinder B63.

The stub cylinders were unnumbered.

The cylinder numbers were placed above the stub in column I and the traffic lights in the lower right selvedge opposite the stamp pane 4 in column III. As stated above these are trimmed off with the

waste though a book with a sliver of traffic lights may occasionally occur.

The sheets were perforated on a Grover perforator.

Binding and Packing

The 12-up booklet masses are collated and then guillotined into columns of four on a Polar guillotine. These columns are first sewn on a Singer sewing machine and then the spine is covered with a strip of black binding on a backing machine.

The bound columns have their final trimming and cut into the issued books. They are bundled in twenty-fives — five each way.

Previously Prestige books of stamps were packed in stout brown paper parcels. Many complaints were received from customers because of damaged corners through the packing being unable to withstand rough handling in transit.

In the present issue very great care has been taken by the printers, Harrison & Sons Limited, to prevent this damage, Stout cardboard boxes have been used with foam strips lining the box and separating bundles of books. The bundles of 25 books have a card insert between every fifth book as a further guard against damage.

L F NEWBERRY

Gems from the RM Phillips Collection CXVIII

Treasury Competition – Entries

With the intense interest shown by Victorians in postal reform in the 1830's, it is not surprising to come across one or two familiar names on the list of entrants to the Treasury Competition.

One such name is James Chalmers, 4 Castle Street, Dundee, often referred to as the Dundee Bookseller.

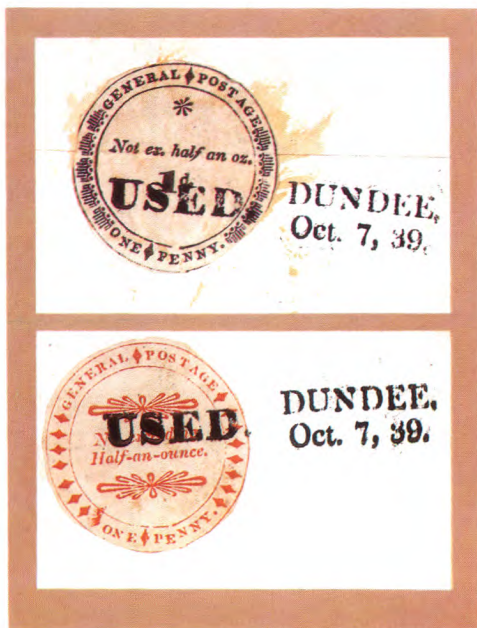
James Chalmers had been very active in the postal reform groups in the 1830's and indeed in February 1838 had published a pamphlet which included illustrations of postage 'labels'. This gave rise to later claims, hotly disputed, that Chalmers had 'invented' the postage stamp. However, what can be said is that Chalmers was the first recorded person to produce 'essays' and to advocate cancellation of 'labels' with a mark that included date and post town.

The essays Chalmers submitted to the Treasury Competition were quite different to those he had previously published. The competition ones' all being circular and measuring about 30-31mm diameter. There were six in all, 3 at 1d and 3 at 2d, each design having a varying centre design. All were obliterated with the words USED or DUNDEE with the date SEPT 24, SEPT 30 or OCT 7. The essays are printed in black on white or grey wove paper, and brick red on buff wove or grey wove or laid wove.

Although these designs, like the rest of the entries, were not used, they contained an idea that was to eventually be used by the Post Office some twenty years later, that of using the post town and date of posting in the stamp cancellation.

The Reginald M Phillips Collection housed at the National Postal Museum contains two examples of the penny essays submitted on 7 October 1839. They can be seen in Volume 1/15 during normal opening hours of 10am-4.30pm Mon-Thurs, 10am-4pm Fridays.

JOHN MEMMOTT
Assist. Curator



2. An Edwardian Railway

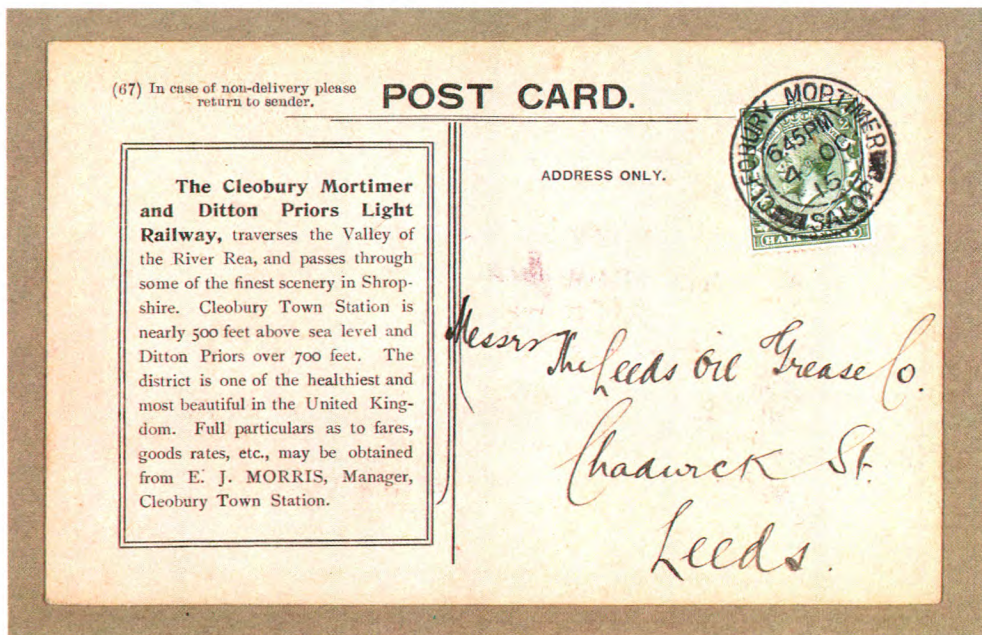
During the latter half of the 19th century the railways in England, Scotland and Wales proliferated to an extraordinary degree. In the rural areas local lines — sponsored by town councils, colliery owners and industrialists — sprang up like new-sown grass in the Spring. Often they were simple, primitive lines providing little more than a link between two or more small towns, but perhaps the only means of transport between them. Sometimes also the local lines were 'feeder' lines, connecting with the existing main line services. The Light Railways Act of 1896 enabled more local authorities and entrepreneurs to promote their own individual railways, and it was in November 1908 that the Cleobury Mortimer and Ditton Priors Light Railway (in Shropshire) was first opened, after many difficulties of land clearance and finance, for passenger traffic.

From Cleobury Mortimer Junction (with the G.W.R. Bewdley-Tenbury Wells line), the C.M. & D.P.L.R. ran along the valley of the River Rea, north/northwest to Ditton Priors, a distance of just

over 12 miles, via the stations at Cleobury Town, Stottesdon and Burwarton — a fair climb as Ditton Priors is 700 feet above sea level. A year later the C.M. & D.P.L.R. began to show a profit, the operations catering more or less equally for passengers and freight. Substantial revenues accrued from the transport of stone from local quarries. Eventually (1922) the C.M. & D.P.L.R. became part of the G.W.R. system and was closed to passenger traffic in 1938. It was used extensively during and after World War 2 by a local naval establishment and finally closed down in 1965.

For collectors of the postal history of the 'little railways' of Britain, interest devolves upon the postal stationery used by station-masters and managers, and upon the postmarks employed at terminal towns and places *en route*. My illustration shows a C.M. & D.P.L.R. correspondence card postmarked 'Cleobury Mortimer — Salop 4 OC 15', addressed to The Leeds Oil & Grease Co. at Leeds with a request for '1 cwt. waste' (oil).

MALCOLM JAMES



Christmas Stamps Issue

20 November 1984



The theme for this year's Christmas stamps is 'The Nativity'. The basic concept of the stamp designs is that the events portrayed should be seen as clearly as if they happened yesterday. To achieve this the designer was asked to imagine herself as a photographer sent back in time to record the subject for posterity. The result is a portrayal, very close to photographs in its realistic treatment, which demands the same immediate response as pictures in a newspaper. The subjects and denominations are as follows:

The Holy Family — 13p, Arrival in Bethlehem — 17p, Shepherd and Lamb — 22p, Virgin and Child — 31p, Offering of Frankincense — 34p.

Designed by Yvonne Gilbert, the stamps are printed photographically by Harrison and Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd in sheets of 100. They are horizontal in format measuring 41mm x 30mm with 15 x 14 perforations. The paper is unwatermarked with PVA dextrin adhesive. The first day cover, price 15p, and presentation pack, are designed by Ashted Dastor.

Values and Colours

13p (FCP-single phosphor bar) stone tint, lemon, bright rose, chestnut, black, red brown. 17p (advanced coated paper) stone tint, chrome yellow, cerise, cobalt, black, dull blue. 22p (phosphor coated paper) stone tint, greenish yellow, bright rose, new blue, black, olive grey. 31p (phosphor coated paper) stone tint, lemon, bright rose, dull blue, black, light brown. 34p (phosphor coated paper) stone tint, lemon, bright rose, turquoise green, brown olive, yellow olive.

Cylinders used

13p: 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e.
17p: 1a, 1b, 3c, 1d, 3e.
22p: 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 2e.
31p: 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 3e.
34p: 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e.

Souvenir Cover

A Christmas souvenir cover, price 15p designed by Ashted Dastor available from all philatelic counters from 21 November 1984 and will remain on sale for a period of 12 months, or less, if stocks become exhausted.

Presentation Pack

A presentation pack, number 157, containing all five Christmas stamps will be on sale from 20 November, price £1.38.

Postcards

Postcard size reproductions of each of the five stamps will be available from 6 November 1984, price 14p each.

1984 Christmas Stamp Book Cylinders

B2a, B1b, B1c, B1d, B2e.





Above: The Adoration of the Kings in a fifteenth-century window in Hungary. Middle: Jesus in the manger with the Virgin Mary and Joseph. Below: A scene from the Nativity.



Magi were often combined in early Christian art. In Venetian paintings, the three kings are shown as shepherds, and as such they are accompanied by their women and dogs as well as sheep. Raphael painted his three kings as shepherds in a Greek Arcadia. Some later Italian painters show the shepherds playing bagpipes and wearing sheepskin jackets typical of that part of Italy. Most renderings of the Magi are based on early church legends and represent them as kings, three kings. One, the King of Ethiopia, is shown as a negro or moor. The gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh symbolised a threefold faith: Jesus as King, as God and as man. Many of these interpretations of the nativity say as much about their own times and attitudes as they do about the birth of Christ. In our own era, the desire to see things as they really are, as expressed in these stamps, clear and unvarnished without the patina of time, says something positive about this Year of Christian Heritage.



Three nativity scenes. Top: A sixteenth-century mural in the Church of St. Neophytos in Cyprus. Middle: A sixteenth-century icon in the Church of St. Neophytos in Cyprus. Below: A sixteenth-century icon by Leonardo da Vinci in the Treasury of the Lower Church of the Basilica at Assisi in Italy.



114. Racket Sports, 1977

The cry of 'Who's for tennis?' was probably first voiced by Henry VIII when he had a court built at Hampton Court in 1530 (it is still there). The first club was set up at Leamington Spa in 1872, while the first Wimbledon Championships were held in 1877. It was the centenary of the later event which inspired the Post Office to issue the four 'Racket Sports' stamps on 12 January 1977, which, designed by Andrew Restall, featured lawn tennis, table tennis, squash and badminton. The designs showed games in progress with the players in silhouette and trajectories of the balls in flight.

8½p Lawn Tennis: The (British) Lawn Tennis Association was formed in 1888, and today the International Lawn Tennis Federation numbers more than a hundred countries as members and associates. In 1968 the Wimbledon Championships were opened to amateur and professional alike, and in recent years Wimbledon has become the Mecca for both players and enthusiastic supporters of the game and, of course, a major annual television event. 10p Table Tennis: Perhaps due to the vagaries of the English climate, the Victorians took their tennis indoors *circa* 1890, and 'Ping Pong' (from the sound of celluloid balls on the table) has since become one of the most popular indoor sports. It enjoyed a revival in the 1920s when the Table Tennis Association was formed. Fortuitously, in 1977, the World Table Tennis Championships were staged at the new national Exhibition Centre in Birmingham.

11p Squash: The game is a development of the sport of 'rackets' and is said to have originated at Harrow School in 1850 when the boys played 'knockabout' while waiting for a game in the rackets court. The ancient game was called 'Fives' using three walls and is still played in some public schools. The sport has its own Squash Rackets Association with world championships, but is more a 'keep fit' exercise than a spectator sport. 13p Badminton: The sport developed from the children's game of battledore and shuttlecock around 1870 and takes its name from Badminton House, the Earl of Beaufort's seat in Gloucestershire, where it originated. The Badminton Association was formed in 1893.

The stamps were photogravure-printed by Harrison and Sons in sheets of 100 (two panes of 50,

10 x 5), the first special issue to be printed experimentally on phosphorised paper. Listed varieties include, on the 8½p stamp, an extraneous white centre line running diagonally through the serving line, and a black patch above the player's upraised hand; and on the 13p, screening dots omitted at the foot of the stamp by the players's foot. Quantities issued were: 8½p 37,120,000; 10p 8,240,000; 11p 7,420,000; and 13p 6,790,000.

JAMES WATSON



Famous Trains Stamps Issue 22 January 1985

Few products of the industrial age held more colourful appeal than the British steam-hauled passenger train. The Post Office will issue on 22 January 1985 five special stamps illustrating famous steam locomotives.

First Day Cover Service

The following services for first day covers will be provided. Two pictorial hand-stamps will be available, 'Bristol' and 'British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh'.

SERVICE 'A'

This service consists of the official first day cover — price 15p — addressed to the correct postal address of the destination required and bearing all five stamps. The cover will be cancelled, 'Bristol' or 'British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh', as requested and dispatched.

SERVICE 'B'

Customers own pre-addressed covers bearing the correct postal address, will be given the stamps, cancelled as requested and dispatched. The following charges will apply:

	Inland	Overseas
Service 'A'	£1.82	£1.59
Deposit account customers	£1.77	£1.54
Service 'B'	£1.67	£1.46

The first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes. Application forms available from the British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh, and at Head Post Offices should be returned not later than 11 January 1985.

1985 Melville National Junior Competition

The 1985 Melville National Junior Stamp Competition will not be held in March as in previous years.

An announcement will be made early in 1985 to give further details of the Competition.

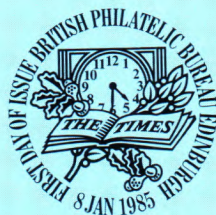
The Times Stamp Book 8 January 1985

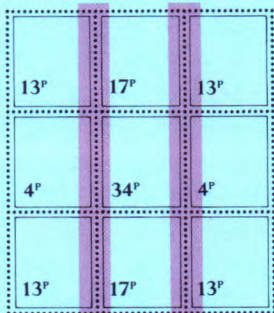
The story of 'The Times', probably the most famous newspaper in the world, is told in words and pictures in a new prestige stamp book to be issued by the Post Office on 8 January 1985. The book chronicles the newspaper's development, from its beginnings in 1785, when it pioneered modern journalism, providing a definitive account of news and events, something which had not been undertaken before. 1985 marks the bicentenary of the founding of 'The Times', which has developed into an important part of Britain's heritage.

The book and first day cover have been designed by David Driver, Head of Design at 'The Times' newspaper, while the text was prepared by Philip Howard, Literary Editor of 'The Times'. Photographs are by Charles Milligan.

Four panes of definitive stamps are included, made up as follows: Pane 'A' 6 x 17p stamps: Pane 'B' 9 x 13p stamps: Pane 'C' 4 x 13p, 2 x 17p, 2 x 4p, 1 x 34p stamps: Pane 'D' 9 x 17p stamps.

Illustrated in colour, the book, price £5, will be available from most post offices, and by post from the British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh.





The accompanying line drawings illustrate the make-up of the four panes of stamps and the positions of the phosphor bars. Panes 'A' and 'D' are printed on advanced coated paper (ACP)

Stamp Printing Details

Designer: Arnold Machin

Printer: Harrison & Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd.

Process: Photogravure

Paper: Coated, unwatermarked

Adhesive: PVA dextrin

Perforations: 14 x 15

Colours: 4p peacock blue

13p light brown

17p steel blue

34p sepia

First Day Cover Services

The following services for first day covers will be provided.

Two special handstamps will be available: 'London WC' and 'British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh'.

SERVICE 'A'

This consists of the official Post Office cover, price 15p, addressed to the correct postal address of the destination required and bearing all the stamps from

pane C (£1.28). The cover will be cancelled 'London WC' or 'British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh' as requested, and despatched for a charge of £1.77 (overseas customers £1.54). For deposit account customers the charge will be £1.71 (overseas customers £1.49).

SERVICE 'B'

Customers' own pre-addressed covers bearing the correct postal address, will be given the stamps from pane C, cancelled as requested, and despatched for a charge of £1.62 (overseas customers £1.41).

The usual first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes. Application forms available from the Philatelic Bureau, and at Head Post Offices should be returned not later than 21 December 1984.

Reposting Facility

The two special pictorial handstamps may be obtained under the re-posting facility. An addressed envelope with pane 'C' affixed under an outer cover endorsed, 'Special Handstamp Times Stamp Book', should be sent on the day of issue to: The British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH, EH3 5TT, or, The District Postmaster, Philatelic Duty, W.C.D.O., 21-31 New Oxford Street, LONDON, WC1A 1AA.

Posting Boxes



No. 65 Our illustration was sent to us by the Head Postmaster, Shrewsbury to whom we say, thank you. The posting box, resplendent in new paint and freshly decorated EDWARD VII cypher, stands near the public library in Shrewsbury. It is a type 1 standard cylindrical pre-1904 model.

National Postal Museum News

Details of new exhibitions to be held in the National Postal Museum are now available. In the main gallery of the museum, the following exhibitions are scheduled:—

From 6 November 1984 — An exhibition featuring postal orders, to coincide with the re-introduction of the Gift Card Service. A special museum postcard in the SS series depicting an unissued design for a postal note, is also being produced.

From 8 January 1985 — A special exhibition features the Times prestige stamp book which is to be issued on that day. A special SS postcard will also be produced.

From 22 January 1985 — An exhibition to

coincide with the issue of the Famous Trains stamps on that day, and featuring the 150th anniversary of the Great Western Railway. A special SS postcard will also be issued.

The Mail coach exhibition which is currently on display will run until 26 April 1985. This will be replaced by a short duration exhibition on the theme of British overprinted stamps. A special exhibition celebrating the 350th anniversary of Public Postal Service will open on 30 July 1985 and will run for the rest of the year. Further details on the exhibitions will be printed as soon as these are available.

Commemorative Postcards

Royal Mail Postage Labels

Two special philatelic postcards depicting the 16½p and 17p Royal Mail Postage Labels were issued on 28 August 1984. This was the day of issue of the two new labels. The cards are available either mint at 50p the pair, or £2.00 per pair used with the appropriate Royal Mail postage Label affixed, cancelled with a 28 August 1984 Postal Museum Maltese Cross Handstamp. Orders with the appropriate remittance, plus a minimum of 25p to cover postage and packing, should be sent to: Cathedral Stamps, 8 Embankment Place, Charing Cross, LONDON, WC2N 6NN. Various other special cancellations are available on these postcards, and details can be obtained on application to Cathedral Stamps.

Telecom Technology Showcase

A new postcard (Ephemera No 10) will be issued on 20 November 1984 to coincide with the release of the Christmas stamps. The limited edition card depicts a reproduction of a 1930's art poster of rural winter scene entitled 'Underground Cable Maintenance'. The price of the mint card is 10p.

A souvenir postcard (SPC No 9) will also be issued on 20 November 1984. This will be available bearing the 17p Christmas stamp, cancelled with a special handstamp, and bearing a special first day of sale cachet, at £1.10 each.

Further details of serviced cards can be obtained from the Telecom Technology Showcase. Orders by post should also include 40p for postage and packing. These should be sent with the appropriate remittance to:—

Telecom Technology Showcase, Baynard House, 135 Queen Victoria Street, LONDON, EC4V 4AT.

Hemel Hempstead Philatelic Society

The Society has produced a further postcard illustrating a selection of Hemel Hempstead postmarks, mainly 20th century. The cards will bear a 17p 'Christmas' 1984 stamp cancelled on 3 December, the HHPS 21st birthday. There will be no special postmark. The card is also available with the 17p 'Christmas' stamp affixed but cancelled with the Hemel Hempstead first-day-of-issue handstamp on 20 November. The following charges will apply: mint postcards are 20p each plus 30p postage and packing. Serviced cards cancelled on 20 November or 3 December (please state which date) are 50p each plus 30p postage and packing.

Orders with remittances made payable to 'Hemel Hempstead Philatelic Society' should be sent to:

HHPS, 19 Moorland Road, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, Herts, HP11NH.

Book Reviews

Check List and Price List of GB Aerogrammes

By Andrew A Whitworth

Although it is not printed in book format, readers may be interested in this work, consisting of 22 A4 size pages, because there appears to be no recent publication available on GB Aerogrammes other than in booklets dealing with FDCs, and which only cover the subject in a very simplified form. As well as updating and clarifying certain aspects of previous works, the author has included a considerable amount of additional information, and their scope has been widened to include unstamped aerogrammes issued by The British Post Office for use with adhesives.

For readers who would like a free copy of this check list, please send a 9" x 6½" fully addressed envelope bearing a 24p postage stamp to: Andrew A Whitworth, 1 Prizet House, Helsington, KENDAL Cumbria LA8 8AB.

Collect British Stamps (35th Edition)

The latest edition of Stanley Gibbons popular publication is now available from the usual philatelic outlets and all Post Office philatelic counters (including Taunton), at £2.25. It includes all issues up to and including the British Council stamps. This checklist with stamps illustrated in full colour, remains an ideal guide for collectors of GB stamps wanting easy-to-follow listings. This edition includes a full listing of Post Office Commemorative First Day Covers, phosphor band omitted errors, as

well as set prices for many definitive issues and Traffic Light Gutter pairs. Another feature included for the first time are details of the Royal Mail Postage Labels, with prices for sets and the Post Office first day cover. The new edition is also available from Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd, 5 Parkside, Christchurch Road, RINGWOOD, Hants, BH24 3SH plus 30p extra for postage and packing as well as the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH, EH3 5TT where normal handling charges will apply.

Stanley Gibbons Simplified Stamps of the World Catalogue, Volume 2, Countries K to Z

With some 4,300 new stamps and 1,070 new illustrations added, the latest edition of the Stanley Gibbons Simplified Stamps of the World Catalogue, Vol 2 countries K to Z, was published on 26 October 1984, price £12.95. Together with Volume 1, which was published on 7 September, these two catalogues provide a straightforward listing of over 240,000 stamps issued since 1840. Prices have been updated and brought into line with the latest editions of Gibbons' standard 22 volume catalogue. In addition, several sections have been specifically revised for this edition, including Liberia, Liechtenstein, Saar, San Marino, Spain, Switzerland, USA and Vatican City.

Collect First Day Covers/Collect Post Office Postcards

The 1985 editions of these popular catalogues are now available. They have both been updated since the last edition and contain much useful information for collectors. Priced at £2.95 each, the catalogues represent good value for money, and are on sale at all philatelic counters (and Taunton) and by post from the British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh. Alternatively, it may be obtained direct from BBP Publications Ltd, EVESHAM, Worcestershire WR116TB, or 22-28 High Street, HYTHE, Kent CT21 5AT.

Forthcoming Events

GM Stamp Fairs

Fairs will be held by GM Stamps at the following locations:

Chelmsford: to be held on 3 November and 15 December at The Pavilion, County Cricket Ground, CHELMSFORD.

Bishop's Stortford: to be held on 4 November at the Rhodes Centre, South Road, BISHOP'S STORTFORD.

Dunstable: to be held on 10 November and 22 December at The Queensway Hall, Queensway, DUNSTABLE.

Hertford: to be held on 11 November and 16 December at The Castle hall, Fore Street, HERTFORD.

Letchworth: to be held on 18 November and 30 December at The Plinston Hall, Broadway, LETCHWORTH.

St Albans: to be held on 8 December at The Jubilee Centre, Catherine Street, ST ALBANS.

Admission is 20p at all Venues (children free) and further details can be obtained from G A Sinclair, GM Stamps, c/o National Westminster Bank, WARE, Herts.

Welsh Philatelic Society

The second meeting of the 1984/5 season of the Welsh Philatelic Society will be held from 11 am to 4 pm on Saturday 10 November 1984. This will be at the Gliffaes Hotel, Crickhowell, Powys. The varied programme will include a local Postal History Display and a talk on Postcards, as well as a number of short displays by participants. Anyone interested in attending should contact the Secretary, Mr D Daunton, 21 Torkington Road, WILMSLOW, Cheshire, SK9 2AE.

Forces Covers

70th Anniversary — Battle of The Falklands 8 December 1984

To mark this important Royal Naval victory on 8 December 1914 a philatelic cover will be available illustrating the 1914 Battlecruiser, HMS 'Invincible' and the German armoured cruiser 'Scharnhorst'. The cover will bear a 13p Christmas 1984 stamp cancelled with a pictorial handstamp BFPS 1852, the cost is 90p.

Alternatively, the cover bearing the 22p Christmas stamp, cancelled as above but signed by Captain the Hon. N J Hill-Norton RN, Captain, HMS 'Invincible' 1984, and Captain J W Boutwood DSO RN (Retd) Midshipman in HMS 'Inflexible' 1914, will be available price £2.10.

In addition the cover, with a 17p 'Christmas' stamp affixed, signed by Captain the Hon. N J Hill-Norton only, the charge will be £1.35.

Orders with remittances made payable to, 'The Fleet Air Arm Museum', should be sent to The Philatelic Officer, RNAS Yeovilton, YEOVIL, Somerset, BA22 8HL, accompanied by a 7" x 5" stamped addressed envelope.

70th Anniversary of Destruction of Emden

A special philatelic cover has been produced to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the destruction of the German cruiser, Emden, on 9 November 1914 by HMAS Sydney. The cover depicts HMAS Sydney of 1914, also the German cruiser Emden, as she was before the battle, and as she lay as a wreck until 1950. The cover will bear a single British Council Stamp cancelled by a special handstamp featuring the ship's badge of HMAS Sydney. The price of the covers is 90p if unsigned, or £1.35 signed by Captain R D Whitton OBE RAN, Naval Adviser to the Australian High Commission. Some covers are also available at £2.10 each signed by Captain H Browning DSO OBE RN Retd as well as by Captain Whitton. Orders with the appropriate remittance made payable to the Fleet Air Arm Museum should be sent to: The Royal Naval Philatelic Officer, Fleet Air Arm Museum, Yeovilton, YEOVIL, Somerset, BA22 8HL, accompanied by a 7" x 5" stamped addressed envelope.

Commemorative Covers

Birth of Prince Henry

A special philatelic cover has been produced to commemorate the birth of Prince Henry on 15 September 1984. The cover depicts an embossed nursery rocking horse, and only a limited number have been produced. The covers will each bear a single special issue stamp cancelled with a special 'state trumpet' postmark. Each cover will be numbered and will include an information card. The price of the covers is £2.50 each including postage and packing. Orders with the appropriate remittance made payable to Stewart Petty Covers, should be sent to: Stewart Petty, Freepost, WEYBRIDGE, Surrey, KT13 OBR.

Christian CND

A special philatelic cover is being produced by Christian CND to commemorate Christian Heritage Year and coincide with the issue of the Christmas stamps on 20 November 1984. Christian CND is one of the largest specialist groups within the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and is concerned with work in churches. It concentrates on the moral and spiritual issues implicit in the campaign and encourages study and prayer in support of CND's aims of total abolition of

nuclear and all weapons of mass destruction.

The cover depicts the Christian CND symbol, and includes an interesting questions and answers leaflet. It will be cancelled with the official Post Office first day of issue handstamp at Bethlehem, and is available bearing only the 17p value or the complete set of Christmas stamps. The price of the cover is £1.30 for those bearing the single stamp, or £2.75 for those bearing the full set of stamps. These prices include postage and packing for inland orders, but for overseas orders £1 should be added. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to: Christian CND, First Day Cover, 11 Goodwin Street, LONDON, N4 3HQ.

50th Anniversary of Aberdeen Airport

A special philatelic cover has been produced to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Aberdeen Airport on 16 September 1984. The covers bear a first class postage stamp and have been cancelled with a special handstamp. The cost of the covers is £1.50 each. Orders, with the appropriate remittance made payable to 'Aberdeen Airport Open Day Account' should be sent to: Miss Ros Gourgey, Publications Department, British Airport Authority, Aberdeen Airport, Dyce, ABERDEEN, AB2 0AF.

Last Day of ½p Postage Rates

A special philatelic cover has been produced to commemorate the last day of use of the ½p in postal rates. The covers are printed in four colours with an informative cachet, and bear odd ½p stamps cancelled with a Windsor pictorial postmark on 1 September 1984. The price of the cover is £1.20, 3 for £3.25 or 10 for £9.50, inclusive of postage and packing. Orders with the appropriate remittance should be sent to G K Eldridge, 29 Chalk Hill, West End, SOUTHAMPTON, SO3 3BY.

National Association of Boys' Clubs

The National Association of Boys' Clubs (NABC) celebrates its Diamond Jubilee in 1985 and a special limited edition of philatelic covers are being produced to commemorate the occasion. As well as marking the Diamond Jubilee, the covers will also celebrate the International Year of Youth.

Ten illustrated philatelic covers are to be produced in 1985, depicting some of the variety of activities pursued in Boys' Clubs. These will be cancelled with a special handstamp featuring the Boys' Club logo, and will carry single stamps of each new special issue in 1985 and feature major NABC Diamond Jubilee events. The covers are also

available bearing the full set of special stamps. Full details can be obtained on application to NABC Cover Collection, 24 Highbury Grove, LONDON, N5 2EA.

Labour Party Conference, Blackpool 1984.

A special philatelic cover has been produced to commemorate the Labour Party Conference held from 1-5 October 1984 at the Empress Ballroom, Winter Gardens, Blackpool. The cover has been sponsored by the Union of Communications Workers (UCW) and depicts a view of Blackpool seafront and tower. The covers will bear a 16p 'Royal Mail' Stamp cancelled with a special handstamp which was in use from 1-5 October 1984. The price of the covers is £1.00 each plus 25p for postage and packing. Orders with the appropriate remittance made payable to the 'Labour Party' should be sent to; Steve Billcliffe, National Fundraiser, Room 402, 150 Walworth Road, LONDON, SE17 1JT.

Philatelic Bulletin

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