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Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 59 No.3

Post-cubist



The modernist style for the Christmas 2021 issue

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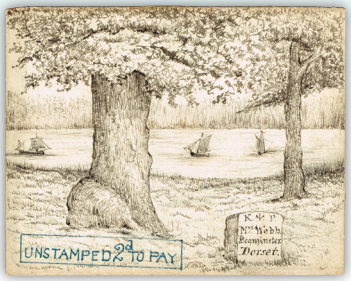
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Editor Chloe Tuck, Royal Mail, 185 Farringdon Road, Floor MP-03, London EC1A 1AA ● **Design and content creation** Ian Boardman, Adesso Creative Ltd ● Price £2.45 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets or by order from Post Office branches ● **12 months' subscriptions** £22.95 UK and Europe; £29.50 rest of the world. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles, PO Box 1373, Sunderland SR5 9PG, UK or subscribe online at royalmail.com/bulletin ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) are priced at £4.99 and are available by post or online ● Copyright and editorial rights are reserved by Royal Mail Group Ltd ● All rights reserved ● Reproduction in whole or part is prohibited without prior permission of Royal Mail Group Ltd ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Zenith Print & Packaging Ltd ● **ISSN** 2633 2310 ● Royal Mail is a trading name and registered trade mark of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203. Registered office: 185 Farringdon Road, London, EC1A 1AA ● Stamp images © Royal Mail Group Ltd.

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Christmas 2021



Heralding the birth – *2nd Class (barcoded)*



Road to Bethlehem – *2nd Class Large (barcoded)*





Heralding the birth – *2nd Class*



Mary and newborn – *1st Class*

Christmas 2021 – Stamp Specifications	
Date of issue	2 November
Number of stamps	Eight (2nd Class, 2nd Class barcoded, 2nd Class Large barcoded, 1st Class, 1st Class barcoded, 1st Class Large barcoded, £1.70, £2.55)
Design	Supple Studio
Stamp size, Format (Perforations)	
Barcoded *(landscape)*	39mm x 30mm, (15 x 14.5)
Non-barcoded *(portrait)*	24mm x 28mm, (14.5 x 15)
Number per sheet	50
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Gravure
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	Self-adhesive

Jorge Cocco © Royal Mail Group Ltd 2021

post-cubist creations



Mary and newborn – *1st Class (barcoded)*



Shepherds with flocks – *1st Class Large (barcoded)*



The three Magi – *£1.70*



Gathering at the stable – *£2.55*



When religious artist Jorge Cocco Santángelo was a boy, growing up in the city of Concepción del Uruguay, Argentina, on the shores of the Uruguay River, he routinely went to sleep clutching a pencil in his hand. And in the night, something extraordinary would happen. When little Jorge woke, his blankets would be covered in drawings. Such seemingly miraculous events are fitting for a man who has devoted his life to expressing the story of Christianity through art, and who painted the nativity scenes on this year's Christmas Special Stamps. The pictures, exclusive to Royal Mail, are executed in Cocco's hallmark style, sacrocubism, so called because of its fusion of post-cubist techniques with sacred subjects. They feature the key moments of Christ's birth: the angel's visit; Mary and Joseph on their way to Bethlehem; the shepherds; the Magi following the star; the stable scene; and the central image of Mary with baby Jesus in her arms. The issue, released on 2 November, includes a Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Souvenir, Stamp Sheet Souvenir, Postcards, Collectors Sheet and Full and Half Sheets. ►



The Miniature Sheet features all eight Christmas 2021 stamps perforated against a complementary background, also painted by Cocco





FD2120-TH



FD2120-PL



FD2120-NP



First Day Cover with the Tallents House handstamp which has a line illustration of an angel heralding the birth of Jesus



Miniature Sheet First Day Cover with the alternative handstamp which has the Bethlehem, Llandeilo location, and an illustration of Mary and baby Jesus

Cocco's style is simple, redolent of synthetic cubism, where the extraneous details of realism, such as clothing textures, the folds and lines of a human face, and detailed backdrops, are removed. Yet his art also exudes spiritual power, for the removal of these details shifts our attention, in sharp focus, to Cocco's representation of divine subjects and events. And for him, the cubist geometries he works into his art are religious symbols. 'The triangle expresses an earthly base and an elevation to the godly,' he once declared. 'The circle reminds us of the eternity because it has no beginning or end.' Such symbols appear woven into the Christmas stamp paintings. Triangles shimmer in shafts of starlight on the £1.70 stamp; halos, portrayed as glowing spheres of radiance, hover about the heads of Mary and Jesus on the £2.55 value; in the First Class picture, Cocco seems to have shaped Mary's headdress and Jesus' swaddling clothes into an 'eternal circle'. While these pictures may well attract a new generation of fans for this 84-year-old artist, they are only the latest in a huge body of work he has built up in over half a century of painting religious subjects.

Cocco's sacrocubist work can be traced back to one life-changing day in 1962, when Mormon missionaries knocked on the door of his home in Concepción del Uruguay. His conversations with them inspired him to convert from Catholicism: during the winter of that year, in the waters of the Uruguay River, Cocco and his wife Myriam were baptised into the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 'My whole vision of my purpose on earth changed. I adjusted the way I lived my life,' he once recalled. 'I understood that my art had to be spiritual, raising people's awareness of that which is beautiful and good.' The first picture Cocco painted after his conversion was of Jesus Christ. And his spiritual and artistic mission has continued uninterrupted ever since. In collections and exhibitions around the world, from Latin America and the United States to Europe and Japan, his paintings reveal great chapters of the Bible story: the sermon on the mount; the feeding of the 5,000; Lazarus's return from the dead; the last supper; the resurrection and the ascension.

In his 80s he may be, but Cocco has sworn not to put his palette down; for he feels that painting a religious testimony is too important for retirement. So it's fortunate that even now, the miracles still come in the night. Cocco doesn't wake to those blanket drawings of his boyhood. Instead, Cocco says, he rises every morning with his head full of new ideas for artistic expressions of the spiritual. Even after all those years, his commitment to art is as unswerving as his faith ●

Article by Andrew Neish



The Collector's Sheet featuring 8 x 2nd Class, 8 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.70, 2 x £2.55

Christmas 2021 – Miniature Sheet Specifications

Date of issue	2 November
Number of stamps	Eight (2nd Class, 2nd Class barcoded, 2nd Class Large barcoded, 1st Class, 1st Class barcoded, 1st Class Large barcoded, £1.70, £2.55)
Design	Supple Studio
Stamp size, Format (Perforations)	
Barcoded *(landscape)*	39mm x 30mm, (15 x 14.5)
Non-barcoded *(portrait)*	24mm x 28mm, (14.5 x 15)
Miniature Sheet size	179mm x 74mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	Self-adhesive



The Presentation Pack includes all eight Special Stamps

Presentation Pack Inner (below)

Christmas 2021 – Prices	
Set of 8 Special Stamps	£9.52
Presentation Pack	£10.45
Miniature Sheet	£9.52
First Day Cover	£12.10
First Day Cover Miniature Sheet	£12.10
Stamp Souvenir	£12.10
Stamp Sheet Souvenir	£12.10
First Day Envelope	£0.30
Postcards (9 in set)	£4.05
Stamp Book (12 x 2nd Class)	£7.92
Stamp Book (12 x 1st Class)	£10.20
Collector's Sheet	£21.75
Full Sheet (50 x 2nd Class Barcoded)	£33.00
Half Sheet (25 x 2nd Class Barcoded)	£16.50
Full Sheet (50 x 2nd Class Large Barcoded)	£48.00
Half Sheet (25 x 2nd Class Large Barcoded)	£24.00
Full Sheet (50 x 1st Class Barcoded)	£42.50
Half Sheet (25 x 1st Class Barcoded)	£21.25
Full Sheet (50 x 1st Class Large Barcoded)	£64.50
Half Sheet (25 x 1st Class Large Barcoded)	£32.25
Full Sheet (50 x £1.70)	£85.00
Half Sheet (25 x £1.70)	£42.50
Full Sheet (50 x £2.55)	£127.50
Half Sheet (25 x £2.55)	£63.75







Stamp Book (12 x 2nd Class)





Stamp Book (12 x 1st Class)

Christmas Quiz

1 This 19p value with a robin 'in the mouth of a pillar box' is from which year?
a) 1995 b) 1998 c) 1983



2 This Christmas stamp of 1966 is the creation of which young artist?
a) Tasveer Shemza
b) James Berry
c) Ann Belshaw



3 Below are two 7p stamps from the 1977 issue, but what featured on the 9p?
a) Three French hens
b) Ten pipers piping
c) Partridge & pear tree





4 This preliminary design for a 1970 Christmas stamp, was for which value?
a) 4d b) 5d c) 1/6d



© The Postal Museum

5 Jorge Cocco Santángelo, describes his style as...? a) Abstract b) Sacrocubism c) Surrealism

How to enter Please send your answers, with your contact address or phone number, marked 'Christmas Quiz', to: Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Or by email to chloe.tuck@royalmail.com.

Prizes The first five correct entries drawn after the closing date win the Christmas 2021 Presentation Pack.

Closing Date 15 December 2021.

August solutions Wild Coasts Quiz 1)a 2)b 3)c 4)c 5)c 6)a

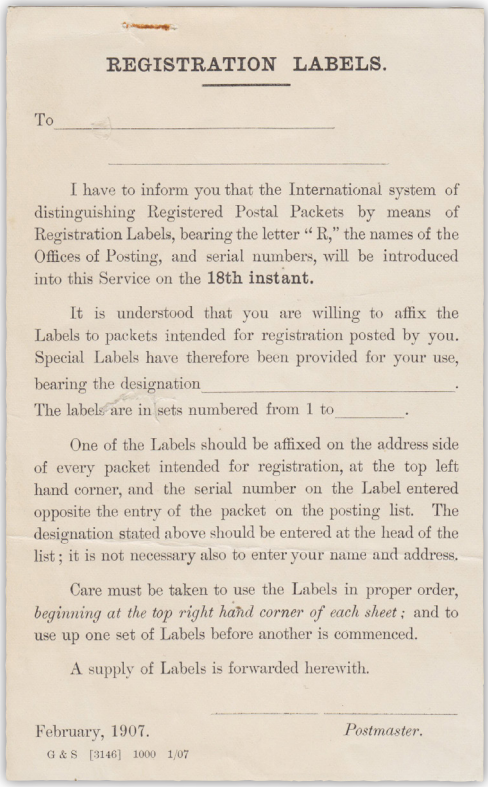
Winners Mr Richard T Smith, Epsom; Dr Graham C Pegg, Bristol; J Cooke, Northwood; Mr B C Taylor, Westminster; Mrs L Bowater, Yarhampton.

Terms and conditions Promotions are open to any reader aged 18 or over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date stated. For prize draws where readers must answer a question, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. Royal Mail's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. Entry implies acceptance of these rules. Prizes are subject to availability. The promoter reserves the right to a) substitute a prize of equal or greater value if circumstances so demand and b) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. The winners' names are available 28 days after closing date. To receive this please send an SAE to The Editor.

Registration labels in the UK PART TWO

The first part of this article dealt with the principles behind registration labels, looked at a range of early types, and covered the background to the introduction of the familiar numbered labels in 1907. This month, we'll take a short look at the main developments in those labels over the next 80 years or so, and finish with a few words on label collecting (which may well itself have a fancy pseudo-classical name, although if so it escapes me at the moment).

Labels for Large Posters A curious feature of British registration labels is that many of the larger 'sub-office' numbers do not represent actual post offices at all. Postmasters were encouraged to arrange for posters who sent 1,000 or more registered packets a year to make up lists of them and affix the labels before bringing them to a post office. Each such poster was allotted its own 'sub-office' number and issued 'B' or 'C' labels as appropriate, and these appear on registered mail from a wide range of companies, government bodies and so on. (In later years, the conditions were relaxed further, and anyone posting at least 20 packets at a time could be allocated labels.)



REGISTRATION LABELS.

To _____

_____

I have to inform you that the International system of distinguishing Registered Postal Packets by means of Registration Labels, bearing the letter "R," the names of the Offices of Posting, and serial numbers, will be introduced into this Service on the **18th instant.**

It is understood that you are willing to affix the Labels to packets intended for registration posted by you. Special Labels have therefore been provided for your use, bearing the designation _____.
The labels are in sets numbered from 1 to _____.

One of the Labels should be affixed on the address side of every packet intended for registration, at the top left hand corner, and the serial number on the Label entered opposite the entry of the packet on the posting list. The designation stated above should be entered at the head of the list; it is not necessary also to enter your name and address.

Care must be taken to use the Labels in proper order, *beginning at the top right hand corner of each sheet;* and to use up one set of Labels before another is commenced.

A supply of Labels is forwarded herewith.

February, 1907. *Postmaster.*

G & S [3146] 1000 1/07

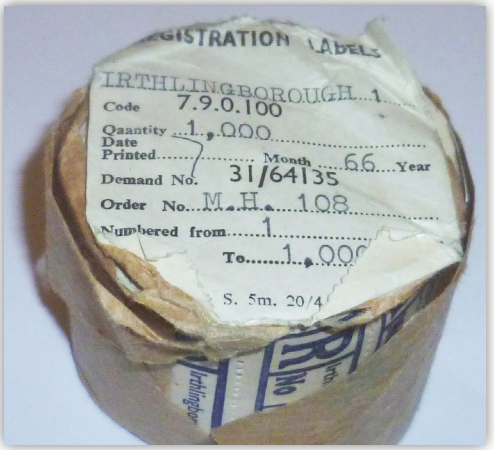
This form was used by Postmasters in 1907 to issue the initial supply of labels to firms agreeing to take advantage of the new system

'B' and 'C' labels used by firms usually have numbers higher than the count of actual sub-offices in the town (or London district), although this is not an infallible guide as new sub-offices would typically be allocated the next available number. On-cover they can be spotted if a 'sub-office' label is used on a letter posted at a head office, or at a sub-office known to use another number, and occasionally if used at more than one office, as here – 'London E.C. 87' labels of merchant bank Wm. Brandt's Sons & Co Ltd are seen used at Fenchurch Street and Leadenhall Street as well as Gracechurch Street



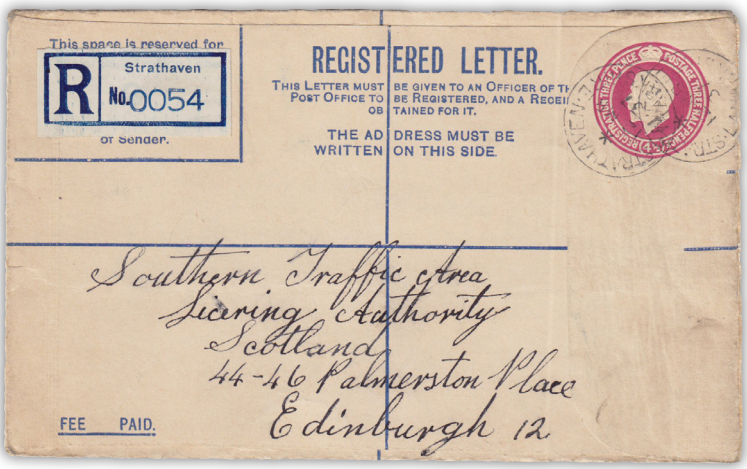
Numbering of Labels The numbers on labels did not increase indefinitely – they were issued in sets from 1 to a maximum number, after which the numbering cycled back to 1 at the start of the next set. Those maxima depended on how many letters were registered at the office in question, the idea being to ensure that the number in combination with the date of posting would be enough to unambiguously identify the letter if an enquiry was necessary. Originally, very small offices might only be issued with single sheets numbered from 1-50 (the very smallest only 1-10), with the maximum increasing to 15,000 for offices registering more than 400,000 articles a year. These varied over the years – by the 1930s four digits was usually the limit for a serial number.

Labels in Rolls The Post Office Circular dated 2 October 1929 announced that Scottish offices would henceforth be supplied with labels in rolls instead of sheets. Offices elsewhere in the UK continued to be issued with sheet labels for another year and a half, but the Circular of 25 March 1931 announced that they too would now begin to receive rolls of labels. Existing stocks were generally used up first, so sheet labels (perforated or rouletted all round instead of only at top and bottom) are seen on covers well into the 1930s. The 'D' labels were the only ones always issued in sheets. ►



An unopened roll of labels numbered from 1 to 1000 issued to Irthlingborough, Northants in 1966. May possibly have been intended for a bulk posting user but not, in the event, needed?





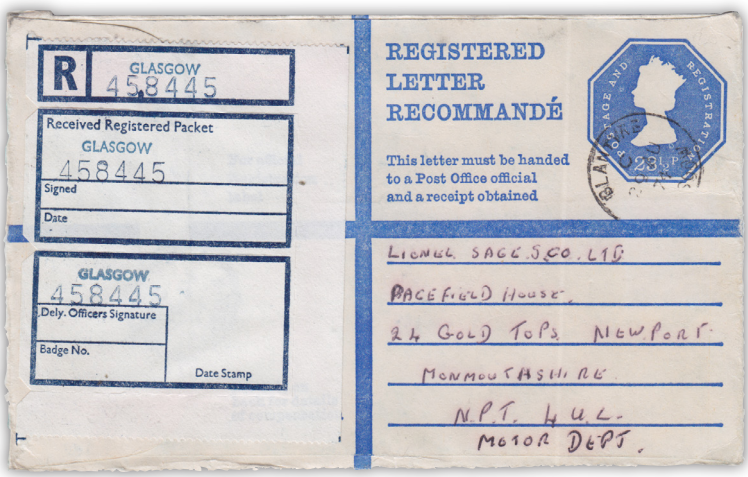
Above: a label dispenser – assuming I've assembled it correctly(!), the roll of labels goes on a spindle which fits into the slots at the sides, with a metal 'tongue' to hold it in place. Presumably there would have been a lid to hold down the labels and make detaching them easier, but that is now missing

Typical example of a roll (a.k.a. 'coil') 'A' label, imperforate at the sides, rouletted top and bottom, used in Strathaven, Lanarkshire in 1937. Note that it has only a four-digit serial number, but all four digits are present including leading zeroes – a change from the original system

Withdrawal of Non-Specific Labels The original arrangement of four types of label only lasted a short time. The Post Office Circular for 17 February 1914 announced that 'D' labels were generally to be discontinued, with offices using them being supplied with 'A' or 'C' labels instead. They remained in use 'in cases of emergency' when an office needed a supply of labels at short notice, were employed on Travelling Post Offices, and saw wide use by Forces post offices during both world wars. 'C' labels lasted a while longer – they were replaced by 'B' labels whenever rolls were introduced at an office, presumably because it would have been impractical to handstamp sub-office numbers on these in advance.



A World War 2 use of a blank 'D' label at FPO 554 in Egypt in 1943. Only the 3d registration fee had to be paid as basic postage on active service was free. This version of the 'D' label with bold sans-serif 'R' was mostly used on Forces mail



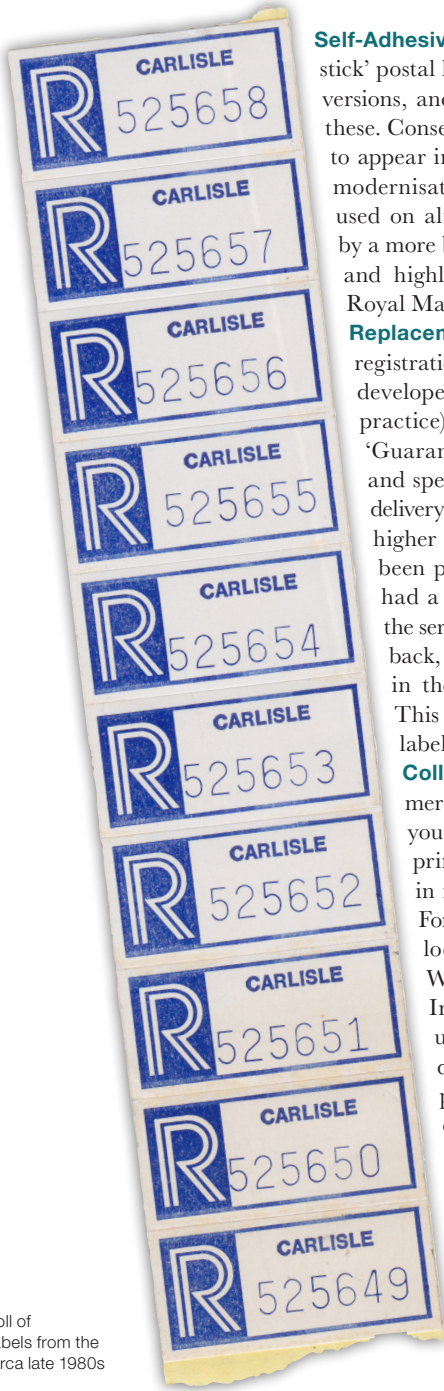
Tripartite label on one of the special 'G' size envelopes with flap at left issued to Scottish offices. The idea was that the bottom part was removed at the delivery office, signed by the delivery postman to acknowledge transfer of the letter to him. He obtained the signature of the recipient on the middle part, which was taken back to the office to be matched up with the bottom part. Covers with a complete label remaining are scarce – they tend to be on letters where one post office or another misunderstood the lengthy instructions!

Scottish Experimental Labels The next major development in the format of registration labels came some forty years later, with an experiment to test the practicality of including the delivery receipt as part of the label, rather than preparing it separately. From 6 November 1972 Scottish offices were issued with large three part perforated labels with gummed margins; these came in rolls of 250, dispensed from a specially designed plastic holder. There was also a special issue of registered envelopes that had been redesigned to leave enough space to accommodate them! The full labels were only supposed to be used on registered letters sent within Scotland, with the extra parts removed as scrap on letters addressed elsewhere. Although the initial six month experiment was extended well in 1974, it was eventually judged unsuccessful.

'Head Office' Labels The experimental labels had just the name of the head office, rather than being separately printed for each individual office, and six-digit serial numbers were used to ensure that there would be no clashes. This turned out not to cause any problems in practice, and was the only aspect of the experimental labels that made it into general use, resulting in a considerable saving in printing costs! In July 1973 labels with six-digit serials (although of the regular size) began to be issued in this format nationwide. From this point on, there is generally no way to identify which actual post office or large user an off-cover label comes from, or indeed even the town of origin – since only the name of the head office appeared on all labels from the surrounding area. ►



A 1984 registered letter posted at the Derby Road, Loughborough sub-office, but with a six-digit label of Leicester, the head office. (With a 'C' letter code – some offices used these to distinguish different sets of labels, so it is possible that this was a local aide-memoire to indicate a particular area under the head office)



A strip from a roll of self-adhesive labels from the Carlisle area, circa late 1980s

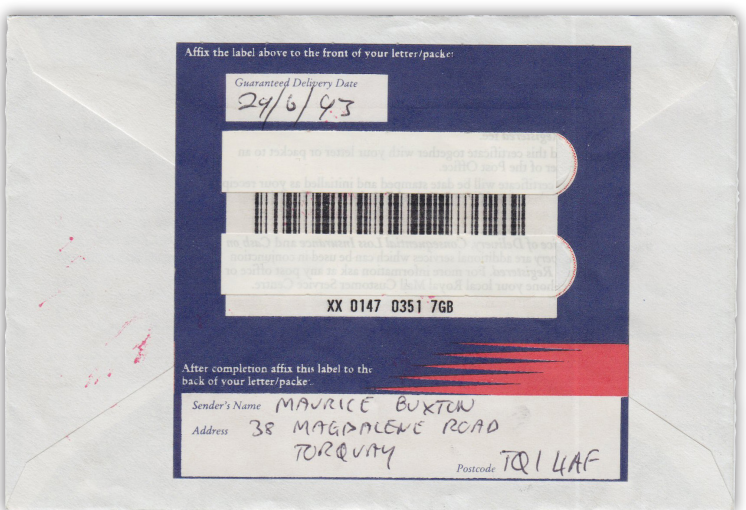
Self-Adhesive Labels In the 1980s, traditional 'lick and stick' postal labels began to be replaced by self-adhesive versions, and registration labels were of course among these. Consequently, from early in 1984 the rolls started to appear in self-adhesive form. This was not the only modernisation involved – the traditional seriffed 'R' used on almost all previous labels was now replaced by a more branding-conscious version, in the standard and highly recognisable double-lined font used by Royal Mail and the Post Office.

Replacement by Barcoded Labels In 1993, the registration and special delivery services (which had developed to have many similarities of handling in practice) were combined into a new service called 'Guaranteed Delivery'. This offered both security and speed, with letter tracking and a guarantee of delivery by a specified time (albeit at a significantly higher price than either service on its own had been previously). Letters sent by this new service had a dark blue and red label with the name of the service on the front, and a barcoded label on the back, with two tear-off strips for receipt purposes in the same manner as the 1970s experiment. This marked the end of the traditional registration label in Britain after some 86 years.

Collecting Registration Labels The above is merely an overview of the major changes – as you might expect, wide usage and multiple printings over a lengthy period of time resulted in many different varieties of registration label. For example, until the 1930s there were distinct local printings of labels for England and Wales, Scotland, and (pre-independence) Ireland; both perforation and rouletting was used at various times, and there were many different fonts and layouts to accommodate post office names (and names of official bodies) of varying length. References can be difficult to come by: the best listing is probably in James Mackay's book Registered Mail of the British Isles (1982), and the US Postal Label Society produced a worldwide label catalogue (although I haven't seen that). Unfortunately both are now out of print, although they should be available on the second hand philatelic book market.

Finally, how to collect? Pioneer collectors often soaked the labels off covers – a practice that makes a modern postal historian wince, both on general principles and because it often means throwing away the information that identifies where (or by whom) the label was actually used. My preference is for labels in situ on the original items, although if I do acquire loose labels I'm quite happy to add them to my collection!





Front and back of a cover sent on the first day of the new combined service – prepared by the author and posted to his mother in order to have a record of the change for his collection!

*By Maurice Buxton FRPSL a long-term collector, and webmaster for the Great Britain Philatelic Society – **www.gbps.org.uk***



Lunar New Year
Year of the Tiger

To be issued on 8 December, this is the eleventh edition to be launched in the Lunar New Year Generic Sheet series and celebrates the 'Year of the Tiger' which runs from 1 February 2022 to 21 January 2023. Individuals born under this sign are believed to be brave, competitive, unpredictable, and confident. They are very charming and well-liked by others. But sometimes they are likely to be impetuous, irritable, and overindulged. The labels feature paper cut-outs representing the five elements of Metal, Water, Wood, Fire and Earth and are the creation of artist Rebecca Sutherland. These five labels are duplicated on the Sheet and are accompanied by the Fireworks stamp from the Smilers® range. The Sheet also features a variety of ten different pictorial labels that depict UK festivities and generic images related to the Lunar New Year. These labels are likewise complemented with the same Fireworks stamp. On New Year's Eve, many Chinese families prepare meals born out of superstitions – dishes with symbolic significance denoting luck. For instance, dumplings are associated with wealth and fish dishes with prosperity ●



Five (duplicated) labels with illustrations of animals from the Chinese horoscope feature on the Generic Sheet





The First Class Fireworks stamp from the Smilers® range – 20 of which feature on the Generic Sheet, each with an adjoining label

The Year of the Tiger Generic Sheet Specifications

Date of issue	8 December
Number of stamps	20 x 1st Class (Fireworks stamp from the Smilers® range)
Design	hat-trick design
Sheet format	Landscape
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	20mm x 24mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	15 x 14
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	Self-adhesive





The Year of the Tiger Generic Sheet featuring Rebecca Sutherland's paper cut-outs



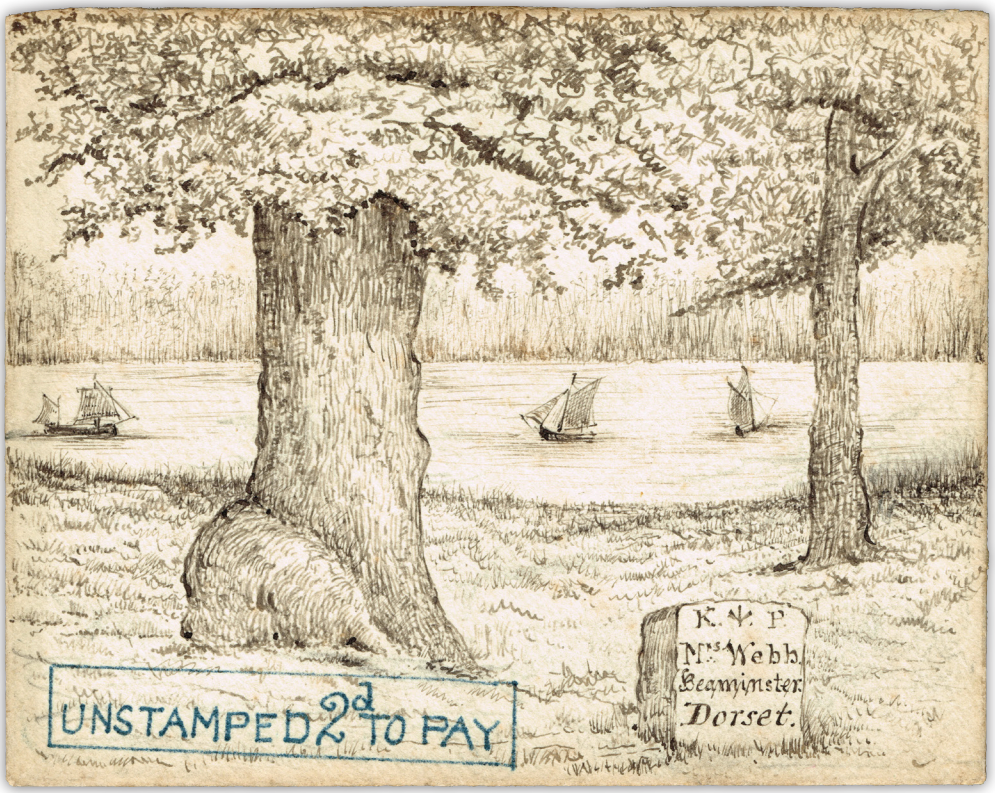


Two of the labels that feature on the Generic Sheet alongside the Fireworks stamp from the Smilers® range

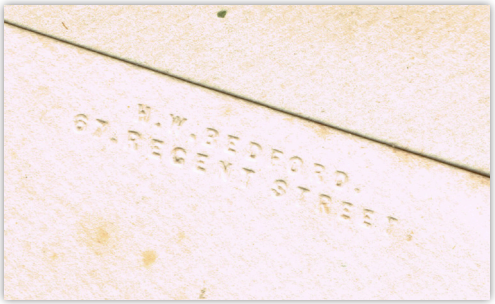
Twopence To Pay

Postal rates in the UK have been changing and developing throughout the last two centuries, and even before that. It is a very complicated subject with early variances through letter rates in the period 1801 to 1839, local post rates 1680 to 1840, and London Penny/Twopenny post rates 1682 to 1840, just to mention a few. However, what was and still is consistent, is the requirement to pay an excess charge if the pre-paid postage is insufficient. This article will look at a few different instances, including one where the sender deliberately placed a message on the envelope indicating a payment was required.

With the advent of the envelope, known to philatelists as a cover (hence, First Day Cover as an example), came the possibilities of adding more than the name and address of the recipient. Why not perhaps add a message, or even an image relating to that message. Or, no words at all, just the hand drawn picture. In this category is our first image in a pen and ink drawing which shows two trees beside a river upon which are sailing ships that appear to be out of scale. No matter, it's a country scene with a square stone with the name 'Mrs Webb, Beaminster, Dorset'. Not a lot for the post delivery person to go on with this cover which is perhaps from late Victorian or Edwardian times, the heyday of the hand illustrated envelope. Beaminster is a small village and even as late as 1921 the population in the census was registered as 1,651 people. However, no stamp attached – well, it would totally spoil the scene, so the illustrator has



added the handstamp 'UNSTAMPED 2d TO PAY' which shows it has been handcut and not in any way an official application. No enclosed letter survives, so that is no help to the mystery of who, why and when. However, on the edge of the envelope flap, as shown in our second image, is the impressed name and address of the personalised postal stationery. Henry W Bedford at 67 Regent Street was a well known London based watchmaker and jeweller, and this artist may have had some connection with him. The postage rate being one penny, with the double deficiency rate then prevalent, it certainly would have been 'twopence to pay'. Much has changed in the intervening years to the present, and double deficiency has long gone. There is now a set additional fee which this writer found to his cost. A letter to a fellow philatelist had a stamp attached that was one penny short of the required amount, but arrived with a sticker proclaiming a total of £1-01 to pay.



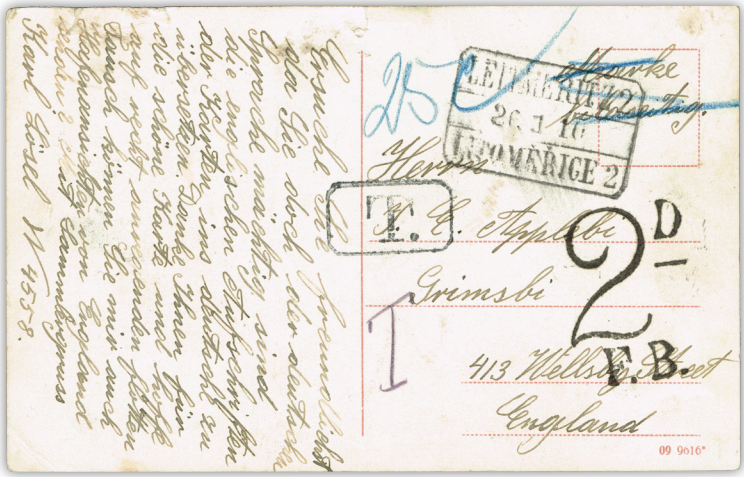
An example of the illustrated envelopes that were popular in late Victorian and Edwardian times is shown on the previous page. Usually they had room for a postage stamp, and one affixed, but this time a different approach has been made with a handstamp stating 'UNSTAMPED 2d TO PAY'. Above is shown the reverse of this undated illustrated envelope to Beaminster which has the name of a London based watchmaker and jeweller in Regent Street. That's more knowledge than we have concerning the addressee – Mrs Webb. It is remarkable how these works of art, for that's what they are, were consigned away to the collecting, sorting, despatch and delivery by the Post Office. How easily they could have been accidentally damaged

Our third image is before the advent of specific 'postage due' stamps that were affixed, with or without an accompanying handstamp. Sent from Marlborough to Frederick Warburton Dunston at his home in the village of Donhead, the sender forgot to add the postage stamp. Before a transit handstamp could be added in Bath even later that day, a '2d 516' handstamp was added with the written words 'Unpaid' and an initial 'B' of the postal clerk. The '516' was the duplex handstamp number from the early 1850s that was used in Marlborough and the twopence was the usual ►

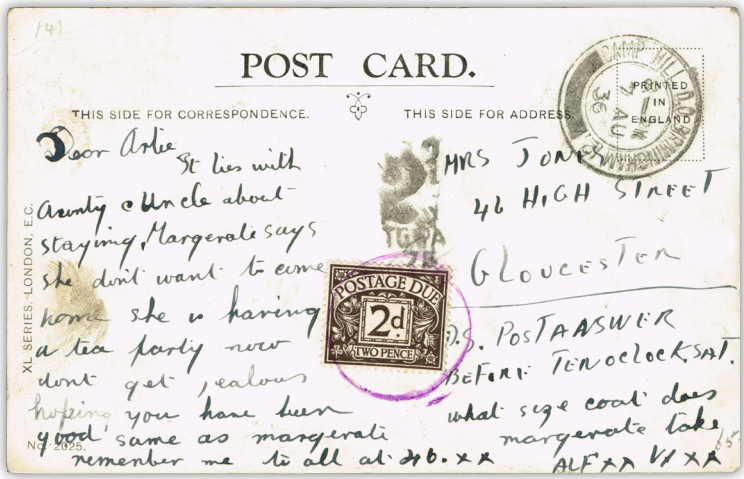


An 1897 cover despatched before the Christmas rush where Frederick W Dunston had 'twopence to pay'. The additional handstamp has the number '516' which was the duplex handstamp number allotted to Marlborough years before. This cannot have been deliberately sent without a stamp unlike the illustrated envelope to Beaminster

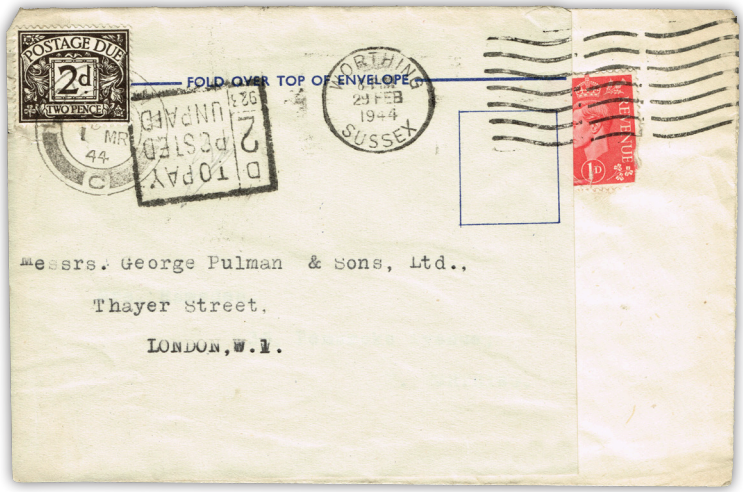
With the handstamp confirming twopence to pay by the addressee in Grimsby, the 'F.B.' denotes that the Foreign Branch of the Post Office has indicated that this is the amount due. No postage due stamp at this time in March 1910, as this would be in the future from April 1914



Now we have it – a postage due stamp advising 'twopence to pay' as well as a handstamp. An unclear postmark is dated 7 August 1936, a time during the short reign of King Edward VIII. Had a stamp been added, it would have had the portrait of the previous king as the new stamps were not issued until the following month



With only part of a stamp suggesting a re-use, a postmark having been on the left edge of the stamp, the required double deficiency of twopence was required to be paid as 'Postage Due'. A square handstamp confirms this postage unpaid



double deficiency amount due. Incoming underpaid or unpaid foreign mail is often a headache to understand. There were six distinct periods with different rules, but they were not always adhered to. Generally, it was the responsibility of the country of origin to mark underpaid mail as such and usually also to inform the country of destination what was missing. Hence the 'T.' tax mark as well as a hand-drawn 'T' on the postcard sent by Karl to 'Grimsbi'. Upon receipt in England the Foreign Branch of the Post Office applied their large '2D' with 'F.B.' handstamp, but the time of 'twopence to pay' handstamp variations without the addition of an added stamp to signify the deficit was coming to a close.

Although the system of charging double deficiency from the recipient had existed since the beginning of postage pre-payment, the Post Office did not introduce labels to signify this until 74 years after the first postage stamp. In a Post Office circular dated 14 April 1914 the announcement was made of the introduction on 20 April of Postage Due Labels of the values ½d, 1d, 2d, and 5d. The first design continued until decimalisation, and three of the four covers shown here have the 'twopence to pay' 2d agate postage stamp added by the post office. What is also shown is the variety in the style of the handstamps applied, as described in the captions to each image ●

Article by Dane Garrod FRPSL



Poster from 1955 advertising correct postage rates; featuring items of mail and stamps and a list of basic postage rates



Three Machin definitives are spaced out so that three handstamps were required on this philatelic item sent by Travelling Post Office. Apart from the single line handstamp that is not applied well, the 2d agate postage due stamp is clear enough. And the handwritten words leave no doubt – 'twopence to pay'

The proposed Anglo-French stamp

The rivalry between countries has been with us for centuries, and much longer, and can throughout history show us times of conflict that are all eventually resolved, somehow. With France and Great Britain being just a 'channel' away, it was inevitable that there would be disagreement leading to open warfare at some time, and this happened again in the early nineteenth century. As the British Victorian era progressed, improvement in relations and understanding led to the visit of King Edward VII to Paris in the spring of 1903, quickly followed by a return visit from the French that prepared the way for the Anglo-French agreement known as the *Entente Cordiale*. Numerous age-long sources of friction between the countries were smoothed away by compromise and concession, and Britain joined with France as allies in the First World War.

On 3 September 1939 Great Britain and France declared war on Germany, following that country's invasion policy within Europe. During the beginning of this Second World War, the following months brought an unprecedented degree of co-operation between the two countries on political, economic and military matters. Although there was no belief that this time 'it would all be over by Christmas', there was hope that an even closer union extending beyond the war would occur. To this end, there was some enthusiasm for seeking philatelic expression as early as late November 1939 when a Monsieur Griffon of Étables in Brittany wrote to both President Lebrun of France and King George VI suggesting a stamp for release in both countries that would be bi-lingual and promoting peace. Nothing specific came of this, but the idea had been brought to the fore, and another initiative on 29 December 1939 took it further.

On that day, the French Premier, Monsieur Edouard Daladier had expressed in a speech the mood of solidarity with Britain and a 'possible federal organisation of the future between the European states' (a forecast of the European Union, no less). In the wake of this and on the following day, playwright and novelist Jean Giraudoux made a broadcast address to Britain in which he described the two nations' historic mutual respect and, to quote *The Times* newspaper, 'proposed as a design for future postage stamp use, the two figures representing France and Great Britain, with their



Fig 1 The stamp design by the French artist-engraver Monsieur Henri-Lucien Cheffer to commemorate the visit to France in 1938 by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. The design shows two symbolic buildings of the two countries, the Houses of Parliament in London and the *Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile* in Paris, as well as the clasped hands of friendship, and was considered a forerunner of the proposed Anglo-French stamp of 1940



Fig 2 The prolific designer Edmund Dulac submitted this design after reading the suggestions in *The Times* newspaper for an Anglo-French stamp. Not following conventional images, the British monarch is not included, nor the French President. Instead it shows representations of Britannia and Marianne, and was submitted to the Post Office Stores Department

leopard and cock'. In a response to this, Dr Ernest Barker who had recently retired as Professor of Political Science at Peterhouse College, Cambridge, wrote a letter published in *The Times* newspaper on 5 January 1940 proposing a common postage stamp circulating as an alternative to the ordinary special stamps of the two countries. He believed that the object would be to further strengthen the close association that had already developed. Further impetus to these thoughts and suggestions were published in the French Press, and Dr Barker re-iterated his proposals to the General Post Office.

Throughout January there was a surge of similar proposals with further letters urging the issue of a stamp to mark allied solidarity in this centenary year of the postage stamp. On the 9th of the month, the British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, in a speech delivered at the Mansion House in London, suggested that the close Anglo-French association that had arisen during the war was too valuable to lose. While public interest increased, the Postmaster General responded to a question in Parliament requesting him to consider consulting the French government regarding 'a Franco-British stamp with a design of two figures representing… the unity of the two countries'. His reply was that, in view of the Postage Stamp Centenary issue due in May, he could not consider another issue at the present time – but he did leave open the possibility of an issue at a later date and indicated willingness to hear further representations. Soon after this exchange in Parliament, the French Minister of Posts wrote to the Postmaster General and described how the suggestion had arisen in his country that the two postal administrations should simultaneously issue a special stamp.►



Fig 3 Following his success with the 1938 French stamp, Henri-Lucien Cheffer produced a design with both the King and the President, and this was accepted by the British Post Office as shown here. However, there was a proviso that it should be redrawn by a British artist to make it suitable for the photogravure process





Fig 4 Above (left) is the design as drawn by Henri-Lucien Cheffer in the three colours of current British stamps, but with the French currency value of 2 francs 50 centimes

Fig 5 Above (right) is the revised design by Edmund Dulac with the King's head facing inwards, the ovals reduced in size and other smaller alterations, and with the British sterling value and the three colours

Fig 6 To the right is the drawing from Edmund Dulac with his alterations, the most visible being the face of HM King George VI facing inwards to match that of the French President, reduced ovals and larger symbols in the two bottom corners



A meeting was arranged to discuss proposals and to decide how difficulties of a common design could be overcome. One such issue was addressed by seeking His Majesty's reaction to the possible omission of his portrait from the design if the French did not want to feature President Lebrun. The alternative would be to represent both countries by heraldic, pictorial or allegorical means, although a common design featuring The King and The President was the option preferred by the GPO. It was thought that with the design, artwork, and printing times required, any proposed stamp could not be issued before 1 September at the earliest. Two years before in 1938, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth had visited France and this had been commemorated with a stamp design from Henri-Lucien Cheffer, a French artist-engraver. The design *(Fig.1)* has two symbolic buildings of the two countries, the British Houses of Parliament and the French *Arc de Triomphe de Étoile*, together with the clasped hands of friendship – a revival of 'entente cordiale'.

Having read the letters in *The Times*, Edmund Dulac, the French-born British stamp designer, submitted an attractive design *(Fig.2)* with the heads of Britannia and Marianne, symbol of the French Republic. In late February, the PMG wrote to his opposite number in Paris supporting the adoption of a special Anglo-French stamp, and pointing out that it was the practice to include the Monarch's head on British stamps and hoped it would be possible to adopt a design in which the heads of the French President and HM The King would form a major part. This request was solved when at a meeting the French Minister submitted another design from Monsieur Cheffer *(Fig.3)* which included the portraits of King George VI and the French President Albert Lebrun. This design was accepted by the British Post Office with the proviso that it should be redrawn by a British artist to make it suitable for printing by the photogravure process. Messrs Harrison and Sons were asked to produce a full-size bromide *(as Fig.3)*, stamp size bromides and three essays in the colours of current British stamps *(Fig.4)*. On 21 March a senior staff officer from the Post Office Stores Department visited Edmund Dulac at his home taking with him images of the French design, as well as Dorothy Wilding's portrait of the King 'for Dulac's guidance' *(Fig.7)*. Edmund Dulac was far from pleased at being requested to redraw such a design, and objected to certain aspects of the design he felt were poor and needed improvement. He was told that as the design had been accepted by both the British and French administrations, no major alterations were possible.

The drawing from Edmund Dulac had reduced size of the ovals, the King's head turned inwards, and other alterations of most of the smaller images *(Fig.6)*. Acceptance of these alterations in Dulac's artwork brought two further bromides from Harrisons on 2 April followed by essays in brown, orange and blue on 3 April *(Fig.5)*. During April, further discussion together with views from the Secretary of the Royal Fine Arts Commission brought several minor changes to improve appearance of the design with the RF emblem emphasised and the flags and background modified. A large bromide *(Fig.9)* was produced to include these alterations and become the master drawing to include all subsequent changes. Further alterations were made to the denomination tablet, central figure and uniform. Another change was to 'paint the ►



Fig 7 The Dorothy Wilding portrait of HM King George VI that was taken to Edmund Dulac at his home to assist in his re-drawing of the French design - something he was far from happy about undertaking



Fig 8 The portrait of Monsieur Albert Lebrun, the French President from 1932 to 1940, which featured on the many essays and printings of the proposed Anglo-French stamp



Fig 9 The large bromide in its final form produced to show all the requested alterations and become the master drawing, and which would include any subsequent changes, such as the revised crown, as shown



Fig 10 Submitted to HM King George VI on 1 May 1940 for his approval was this preliminary colour essay to see 'whether the King is favourably disposed to the general conception of the design'. Fortunately, he was, apart from the King's Private Secretary writing to say that the crown depicted was the old fashioned one and that it was desirable to use the design in current use. Otherwise, the design was thought to be, on the whole, satisfactory



Fig 11 The revised and more modern crown that replaced the earlier one depicted on the drawings and essays, and incorporated into the master drawing

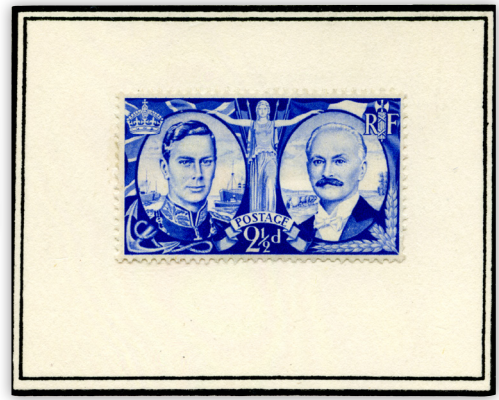


Fig 12 An essay in blue of 17 May produced before further minor alterations, but showing the revised crown, and as submitted to HM King George VI

flag over the wheat' in the lower right hand corner. Essays in blue and orange incorporating all the modifications were submitted on 24 April 1940.

Even then all was not well. On examining the essays further suggestions were made that included 'more overtone' on both portraits, subdue the tug-boat and crow's-nest in the seascape, and removal of the white spot on the end of the King's nose! A preliminary colour essay was shown to HM The King on 1 May, as can be confirmed by the words written beneath the image *(Fig.10)*. Attention was drawn by the King's Private Secretary to the crown depicted being the old fashioned one and that it was desirable to have the crown in current use. Harrisons incorporated a revised crown *(Fig.11)* into the master drawing, subdued the central figure and produced essays on 9 May in red, blue *(Fig.13)*, orange and violet. Although the crown was the right size to balance the French emblem, it appeared too large and too near the King's head. After other minor improvements, the essays in the same colours as those of 9 May were completed on 17 May for consideration. On 24 May, the PMG submitted two essays to the Palace, including one from 17 May *(Fig.14)* with suggested small amendments to be made, for which the King's Private Secretary said 'His Majesty entirely approves of the essay… subject to the minor alterations you mention'.

Harrisons produced two bromides and an approved colour essay, all to be sent to Monsieur Julien in Paris on 4 June 1940. The British thoughts had been that the issue be limited to one or two denominations in order to meet the projected 2 September issue date. Unlike the limited life commemorative issues, it was the intention that this issue should run for the duration of the war. The final essay with the highlights in the King's hair subdued and the white on the flag showing through the frame of the crown and the jewels improved, was submitted on 13 June 1940 *(Fig.15)*. However, fate decided otherwise with the fall of France to Nazi Germany and the occupation of Paris on 14 June. All work on an Anglo-French stamp was then suspended, and it was never to be successfully revived ●

Article by Dane Garrod FRPSL



Fig 13 An essay from Harrisons of 9 May with minor alterations, but with the revised crown too near the King's head



Fig 14 An essay submitted on 17 May with the crown reduced, improvements to the central figure and to the 'lay of the rope'



Fig 15 The final essay with the highlights in the King's hair subdued, the white on the flag showing through the frame of the crown and the jewels improved, was submitted on 13 June 1940

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100 YEARS Remembrance Poppy Day

Whatever our age today, we have all seen throughout our lives the arrival of red artificial poppies early every November, attached to the clothes of friends, relatives and people passing us by in the street. 'It's that time again' we say, as we see firstly the TV presenters with a red poppy in their lapels or pinned to their dresses. But what is this all about, and why? We probably never ask, except for knowing that it's to commemorate those who have given their lives for their country in time of war. To acknowledge this, Royal Mail has issued a number of stamps through recent years, often with the phrase 'Lest we forget'.

The focus of remembrance for the dead of the First World War originally fell on Armistice Day itself, 11 November, commencing a year later in 1919. As well as the National Service in London, events were staged at town and village war memorials, often featuring processions of civic dignitaries and veterans. In the following year of 1920 on Armistice Day, the funeral of the Unknown Soldier took place at the London Cenotaph and a two-minute silence was observed throughout the nation. Buses stopped, electricity was cut to tram lines and trading on the London Stock Exchange was halted. Following the Second World War, it was proposed and agreed that the second Sunday in November would henceforth be named Remembrance Sunday.



26 January 2010
Six poppies on barbed wire stems (issued on a Business and Consumer Smilers sheet)



Within the poppy of 2007 is the haunting image of the soldiers amidst the war-torn Flanders fields, so memorably described in the poem by Canadian Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae



The visible soldier's face in the 6 November 2008 issue (concluding the 'Lest We Forget' series), conveying a sense of loss as well as remembrance of the past, long ago



9 November 2006
Seven poppies on barbed wire stems From the 1st issue of three in the 'Lest We Forget' series – *90th Anniversary of the Battle of the Somme*



8 November 2007
Soldiers in Poppy Flower
The 2nd stamp set in the series commemorated the *90th Anniversary of the Battle of Passchendaele*



6 November 2008
Soldier's Face in Poppy Flower The final issue in the sequence memorialized the *90th Anniversary of the Armistice*



28 July 2014
Poppy, F Strickland From the 1st of five issues in the 'Centenary of the First World War' series. Complementary stamp sets followed annually

The remembrance poppy is an artificial red flower that began as long ago as 1918, followed by the Royal British Legion selling Remembrance Poppies from 1921 onwards to raise funds for ex-service men. Poppies usually grow wild wherever the ground is disturbed, and the opening lines of the First World War poem 'In Flanders Fields' refers to poppies growing among the graves of war victims in a region of Belgium. The poem is written from the point of view of the fallen soldiers and in its last verse, the soldiers call on the living to continue the conflict. Perhaps understandable at the time, but not a theme to encourage peace throughout the world.

After the Armistice that ended the war, the French government formed a charity which used a poppy as its emblem – 'La Ligue des Enfants de France et d'Amérique' (The Children's League of France and America). Madame Guérin – 'The Poppy Lady from France' – was the originator of Poppy Day, cotton and silk poppies being made by widows and orphans in the devastated areas of France and sold as an emblem for remembering those who gave their lives during World War and, simultaneously, raising funds to support the families of the fallen and the survivors. She was in transit back to France from the United States of America in 1918 when the Armistice was signed, when she was enlisted by the French government to return to the States to create the American-Franco Children's League.

Nowadays the remembrance poppy covers all the conflicts that have occurred since the start of World War I and the modern remembrance poppy has been trademarked by veterans' associations in many jurisdictions, particularly in the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth nations, where donations fund the associations' services which include financial, social and emotional support to members and veterans of the armed forces. Remembrance poppies distributed by the Royal British Legion in England, Northern Ireland and Wales come in a wide variety from red paper petals on a green plastic stem with a green leaf as well as silk poppies, poppy wreaths, poppy lapel pins and enamel poppy brooches to mention just a few. The Scottish Remembrance Day poppy is recognisably different from those sold in the rest of the United Kingdom. This has four-lobed red petals and no leaf.

The poppy emblem is worn around the time of Remembrance Sunday, traditionally from All Souls' Day, 2nd November, until the later of Remembrance Day, 11th November, or Remembrance Sunday, the date for 2021 being Sunday 14th November. A national ceremony continues to be held in London at the Cenotaph on Whitehall, starting with two minutes' silence at 11am and concluding with a procession at 1.30pm, the main part of the ceremony consisting of the laying of wreaths of red poppies by members of the royal family and others. ►



14 May 2015
Poppies, Howard Hodgkin
From the 2nd of five issues in the series, an evocative image of broken and torn poppies



21 June 2016
Battlefield Poppy, Giles Revell
From the 3rd issue in the series is an image of a lone poppy amidst a war-torn battlefield, smoking with fire



31 July 2017
Shattered Poppy, John Ross
Readers voted this stamp the most popular of 2017, the image signifying the loss of life in the Great War



13 September 2018
100 Poppies, Z and B Baron
The transparent poppy was created by 100 pictures spliced together to produce a soft image to mark the 100 years



Anna Guérin, 'The Poppy Lady from France' whose idea was for all World War One Allied countries to use artificial poppies as an emblem for remembering those who gave their lives during the war, and to create a method of raising funds to support the families of the fallen and those who had survived thereafter

A recent awareness event in 2011 had a Second World War aircraft dropping 6,000 poppies over the town of Yeovil in Somerset. Three years later in 2014, the major art installation *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* by artist Paul Cummins and designer Tom Piper at the Tower of London captured the imagination of the public. Over the course of several months, five million visitors witnessed an army of volunteers plant 888,246 ceramic poppies in the dry moat surrounding the Tower of London, each one representing a British or Colonial life lost at the front during the First World War.

It is therefore appropriate that Royal Mail has acknowledged the red poppy as a national symbol by the issue of various stamps through recent years. Perhaps two that are most worthy of mention are illustrated here. On 31 July 2017 was issued a first class stamp with a design by John Ross that featured a shattered poppy, clearly signifying the terrifying loss of life that had occurred in what was known at the time as the Great War. In the following year on 13 September 2018 at the end of a series, designers Z and B Baron created a stamp by taking 100 photographs of poppies and by splicing them together produced a transparent soft image to mark the 100 years since the end of the First World War. Finally illustrated is what is believed to be the first recorded representation of Great War poppies on a British envelope. It has a strip of three red poppies and was sent and received within Birmingham on 11 November 1923, which was the fifth Armistice Day commemoration ●

Article by Dane Garrod FRPSL



Believed to be the first recorded representation of Great War poppies on a British envelope is this cover with a three-halfpenny stamp and a strip of three red poppies, posted and delivered within Birmingham, receiving a machine cancellation on 11 November 1923, the fifth Armistice Day commemoration. The Birmingham and Midland Institute is a registered charity founded in 1864 and still very much operational, concerned with the promotion and education of learning in the city, and today continuing to offer arts and science lectures, exhibitions and concerts, with limited free access to the public *(Collection unknown)*

In Flanders Fields
Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae

In Flanders Fields, the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

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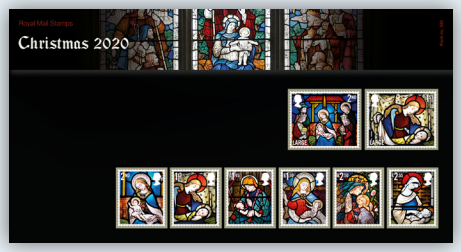
New Issues and Withdrawals

Information correct at the time of going to press

2 November — **Issue** Christmas 2021: Stamps (1 x 2nd Class, 1 x 2nd Class Large, 1 x 1st Class, 1 x 1st Class Large, 1 x £1.70, 1 x £2.55). Presentation Pack. Miniature Sheet. First Day Cover. First Day Cover Miniature Sheet. First Day Envelope. Stamp Souvenir. Stamp Sheet Souvenir. Postcards (9 in set). Stamp Books (12 x 2nd Class, 12 x 1st Class). Collector's Sheet. Stamp Sheets.

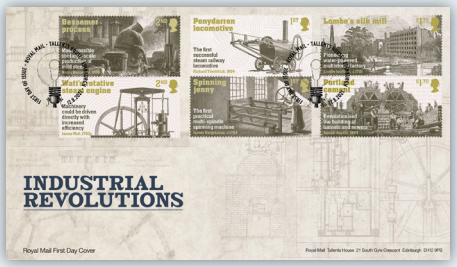


Withdrawal Christmas 2020: Stamps. Presentation Pack. Miniature Sheet. Stamp Books. Postcards.



2 November — **Issue** Annual Collections 2021: Yearbook. Yearpack. Year of Presentation Packs. Year of Miniature Sheets.

12 November — **Withdrawal** Industrial Revolutions: Stamp Souvenir. Stamp Sheet Souvenir.



8 December — **Issue** Lunar New Year: Year of the Tiger Smilers® Sheet (20 x 1st Class).



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