

British Philatelic Bulletin

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Philatelic Points of View

The Stamps and Philately Division of the Royal Mail wants to hear more from philatelists about matters of concern to them. The *British Philatelic Bulletin* is therefore inviting readers to put forward their comments and suggestions on a wide range of philatelic topics over a six month period.

Attention is being focused on one particular subject area each month. The subject for this month (number two in the series) is the **Royal Mail Stamp Album**.

So, if you would like to express a view or make a suggestion regarding this item, please write to the following address:

Philatelic Points of View
Royal Mail Stamp Album
Room 328
Royal Mail Stamps and Philately
22/25 Finsbury Square
LONDON
EC2A 1PH

At the end of the six month period of "Points of View" there will be a prize of a special stamps Yearbook to the person who has sent in the most interesting suggestion in the opinion of a Royal Mail panel of judges.

Christmas, 1987: It's Magic

17 November 1987

This year's Christmas stamps will be issued on 17 November. The five stamps were designed by Michael Foreman and reflect the magical view of Christmas as seen through the eyes of young children, a secular aspect rather than religious. Designs are also in a child-like style. Issued on the same day are the usual Christmas aerogramme and a special Christmas pack detailed later and the Collector's Pack of the year's special issues together with the 1987 Yearbook.



The **13p** stamp shows a child opening a box of Christmas decorations at the foot of a Christmas tree, a custom introduced and made popular in the 19th century by Prince Albert.



On the **18p** stamp a child is looking out of the window on Christmas Eve anticipating the arrival of Santa Claus. Snow lies on the ground and a star is shining brightly in the sky.



Following on from this in sequence is the **26p** stamp which shows a child in bed dreaming of the arrival of Santa Claus. In the child's dream Santa rides across the star-lit night sky pulled by two reindeer. At the foot of the bed hangs a stocking already filled. (The 26p value replaces the 22p stamp and represents the overseas postcard rate.)



On the **31p** stamp a child is reading a book, surrounded by toys which seem to have come alive. An elephant and teddy bear peer over the child's shoulder, reading the engrossing story.

Finally, on the **34p** stamp a snowman has come alive and looks in through the window at a child playing a musical instrument.

The Christmas aerogramme and the Christmas Pack have also been designed by Michael



Foreman in the same style as the stamps and based on the same themes of snowmen, toys and Santa Claus.

Technical Details

Designed by Michael Foreman, the stamps have been printed in photogravure by Harrison and Sons Limited. In format they are horizontal, 41 x 30mm, perf. 15 x 14, printed on unwatermarked, phosphor-coated paper, except for the 13p value which has one printed phosphor bar. Printing is in sheets of 100 on PVA Dextrin gum.

PHQ Cards

PHQ cards (Nos 106 A-E) featuring each of the five stamps will be available from 3 November, price 15p each.

Presentation Pack

The presentation pack will cost £1.44 and was designed by Carroll, Dempsey & Thirkell Limited. The text, by Neil Mattingley, takes the form of a Christmas story printed on the open pages of a book (entitled "It's Magic"). Photography for the pack was by Andy Seymour with lettering by George Hoye and book binding by Claire Gouldstone.

First Day Cover

The first day cover shows the book design as on the flap of the first day cover. It was designed by Carroll, Dempsey & Thirkell Limited. It costs 16p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover service, one from the British Philatelic Bureau featuring the snowman as on the stamps and associated items and the other from Bethlehem (Llandeilo) featuring a church and a star.

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the five stamps cancelled with either postmark. The charges will be £1.71 (inland) and £1.49 (overseas). Application forms, available from the Bureau and at Head Post Offices should be returned not later than 17 November.

Customers requiring only the special pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped addressed envelope under an outer cover endorsed 'Special First Day of Issue Handstamp' to:

'British Philatelic Bureau' 20 Brandon Street,
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT

'Llandeilo' Special Postmark Duty,
District Head Post Office
15 Wind Street,
SWANSEA SA7 7AA

Christmas Stamp Pack

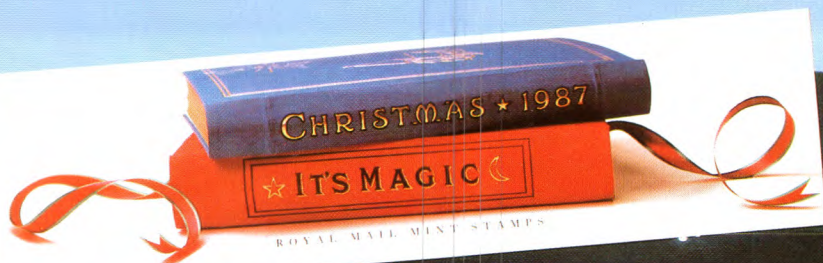
Following the successful introduction last year of a Christmas Stamp Pack, one will go on sale this year on 17 November. It will contain 36 x 13p Christmas stamps and will cost £4.60, a saving of 8p. Michael Foreman also designed the pack taking the themes of snowman, Santa Claus and toys from the stamps.

Printed by Harrison & Sons Limited in photogravure, the stamps will be produced in sheetlet form (ie bordered by a selvage) of 3 x 12 stamps, separated midway by a horizontal gutter, thus producing two panes of 18 stamps.

The sheetlets were printed on Jumelle, four sheetlets comprising one cylinder revolution. Each sheetlet will bear one set of "Traffic Lights", but cylinder numbers will not be shown. Sheet numbers will appear on every second sheetlet. The 13p stamps will have a single central phosphor bar and will be back-printed with a star design.

The packs which are printed by The House of Questa were specially designed with a Christmas tree cut-out, which allows the stamps to be seen, and are sealed within a polypropylene sachet.

The Christmas Packs will be available from most post offices, all philatelic counters and by post from the British Philatelic Bureau.



became a sledge, skidding to a stop over the snow.
To a roar of applause from toy lions and tigers the familiar red face and white beard of Father Christmas appeared.

'Now you'll see what's what,' said the elephant. The Cacophony isn't just a lot of noise. Most of us toys and story-book characters know children who won't be having much of a Christmas. What happens next is that we give Father Christmas their names.'

As they watched, the monkey from the child's storybook went up to the sledge.

'He never forgets a name,' said the elephant.
'Tell me,' said the child, 'do you advise Father Christmas on which present is best?'

'Not exactly,' replied the elephant, smiling at the idea that anyone could tell Father Christmas what to do. 'Though I like to see children getting books. You see, because a story usually has several characters, it's a little like giving children several presents.'

After a lot more talking, the Cacophony came to an end. The sledge lifted off towards the stars and everyone said farewell.

'Why couldn't I have my stocking present?' asked the child.

3

'Would you care for a bun, Mr Elephant?' asked the child, rather politely.

'No thanks. It's time to get back in the story.'

(The child yawned, deeply...)
(Next morning was Christmas. The child told the father and mother what had happened.)

Father said, 'Dreaming is more real than real life sometimes.'

Mother was too busy to listen.

The child looked at the snowman outside. 'Wasn't he facing the other way last night?'

'Yes,' said the mother. 'Great joke. How long did it take you and your father to move him round?' The next thing you'll be doing is taking him for a walk to Long Acre Field.'

The child smiled. 'Christmas is magic.'

THE END



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



TELETYPE UNIT HERE

By air mail
Par avion
Aerogramme



Christmas Aerogramme

As in previous years there will also be a special Christmas aerogramme issued on 17 November, the same day as the Christmas stamps. Costing 30p (and bearing a 26p imprinted stamp) it was also designed by Michael Foreman. The stamp design and illustrated panel reflect the special stamps theme of a child's view of Christmas. The stamp itself has a child gazing at Santa Claus riding across the sky similarly drawn to that on the 26p stamp. The same theme of Santa is shown on the panel with children sledding in the snow and the church from the 18p stamp in the distance.

Printing is in offset lithography by McCorquodale Envelopes Limited.



Photographing Studio Pottery

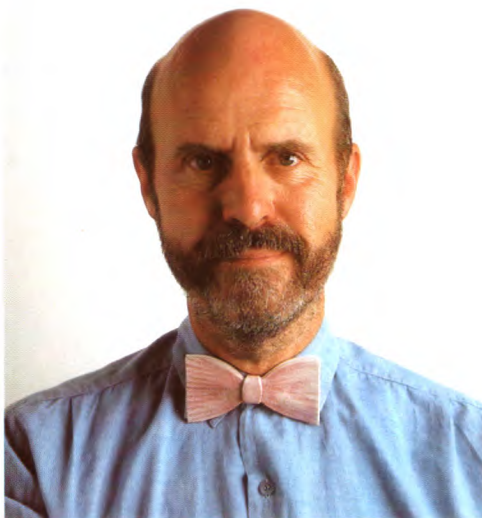
TONY EVANS

As a self-taught photographer my connection with the arts goes right back to the very beginning. In 1963, I was living in London on £3 per week with the ambition to be a photographer, but with no portfolio of work with which to seek commissions. The very first project that I set myself was a series of portraits of young painters about to leave the Royal College of Art. One of these promising fellows was a certain David Hockney.

Almost immediately, I sold one of my Hockney portraits to *Vogue* and then another to *The Sunday Telegraph*. This led to me working on a regular basis with *The Sunday Telegraph's* art critic – Edwin Mullins. And over the next few years I did many portraits of painters, sculptors and potters. Later, I began working in colour for *The Sunday Times Magazine* and then later still there was a 10 year period when I travelled the world doing portraits for *The Radio Times*.

One of the highlights of this particular decade was travelling down to Cornwall to photograph Bernard Leach and then flying to Japan to do a companion portrait of his friend Shoji Hamada, the great Japanese potter.

Throughout my photographic career I have resisted the temptation to specialise. It can, without a doubt, be more profitable to concen-



Tony Evans wearing his porcelain bow tie

trate one's efforts and build a reputation in one small area – some photographers only photograph cars in studios, others only photograph cars outside, some only photograph food for magazines while others only photograph food for advertising agencies (even this has been further refined by the “bottle and glass” fraternity who only shoot drinks!).

I have always preferred to follow my current interests and this has resulted in a very broad range both of style, subject matter and media. Over the years, I have photographed many people, places and things for advertising agencies, books and magazines (including *Esquire* and *The New York Times* in the USA). There has been great variety, which makes for an interesting life, but at the same time the pattern of my work seems to be a fairly smooth progression – one project evolving into or leading to the next.

The one constant has always been the importance of design. In my work I have always been much more concerned about my relationship with the designer or art director, and his or her skills, than the problems of the job itself.



Being commissioned by the Design Division of The Post Office to design and photograph the Studio Pottery stamps was a wonderful challenge – how do you choose just four potters to represent British pottery when a shelf full of books would be hard pressed to do justice to such a broad subject?

Having done that, how do you choose, for each potter, just one pot to sum up a lifetime's work? To complicate matters further, the four pots had to complement each other in shape and colour in order to work as a set; they had to work at a tiny size and they had to be available for photography.

I canvassed numerous "expert" opinions from potters, curators, art critics, writers and historians; read dozens of books; and travelled all over the country looking at hundreds of pots in both public and private collections. I then had to retrace my steps to take the final photographs – all shot in different locations under different conditions.

At one time it looked as if I might have to go to Moscow as a number of key pieces had been sent there for a major exhibition of British ceramics. In fact, I photographed one pot in an Arts Council warehouse with the packers waiting to put it in its crate.



A vital element of the stamp design is the typography which I asked John Gorham to do for me. A master of his trade, John gave his complete attention to each letter in turn. In some cases reducing the artwork down to stamp size upset the proportions of the type and John, scalpel in hand, performed cosmetic surgery on individual letters to redress the balance.

No-one would ever believe that so much time and effort could go into four very simple looking stamps. But I enjoyed every minute of it, the final high spot being when Lucie Rie provided me with a porcelain bow-tie to wear at the official launch of the stamps.

Studio Pottery Covers

Listed are some of the commercial first day covers being produced for the Studio Pottery set to be issued on 13 October.



The Craftsmen Potters Association. With the stamps cancelled by a special handstamp a special first day cover is being produced for The Craftsmen Potters Association of Great Britain. Cost is £4.25 (signed £7.50 or single stamp £2.25). Cheques to A G Bradbury, 2 Fairholme Road, LEICESTER LE2 6GL. Overseas should add 50p.

Battle of Britain. Marking the 47th anniversary of the Battle of Britain a Forces first day cover will have the stamps cancelled with a handstamp featuring a Spitfire. The cover illustrates Battle of Britain pottery. Cost is £3.70 (overseas add 50p) with cheques made payable to RAF Museum Appeal Fund at RAF Museum, Hendon, LONDON NW9 5LL.

Swiftair Swiftpack

In March of this year a new product – the Swiftair Swiftpack for international express airmail – was introduced and announced in the May *Bulletin*. The normal size was 221mm x 110mm, though two other sizes were produced for demonstration purposes. The two larger envelopes (230mm x 162mm and 325mm x 229mm) have now been reprinted for use by business customers with Airstream contracts. The reprints are distinguishable from the previous printing by slightly revised text on the reverse.

Victoria's Britain

BARBARA LAST

Princess Alexandrina Victoria was born in Kensington Palace (GB 1980 SG1124) on 24 May 1819, the only child of Edward, Duke of Kent, and Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg. Her father died when she was eight months old, and, as he had been estranged from his dissolute and eccentric elder brothers for years, the child was brought up isolated from Court circles. Society revolved round the houses of the aristocracy who disdained the disreputable monarchy, and Victoria, when she came to the throne a month after her 18th birthday on 20 June 1837, was quite unknown. Palmerstone wrote, "few people have had opportunities of forming a correct

judgment of the Princess, but I incline think that she will turn out to be a remarkable person, and gifted with a great deal of strength of character."

Victoria's poise, modesty and good sense made a favourable impression. Although under five feet tall, she moved gracefully and with dignity. Fair skinned, with striking blue eyes, she possessed a good sense of humour despite a reputation to the contrary, and a beautiful silvery voice. Her directness of character was matched by an imperious manner, a liking for her own way, and an unforgiving heart. She felt that nothing was too bad for her to say about someone she disliked. Her cousin Prince Albert wrote, "Victoria is said to be incredibly stubborn and her extreme obstinacy to be constantly at war with her good nature; she delights in Court ceremonies, etiquette and trivial formalities."

Victoria's reign was long, covering an immensely wide swathe of social and political changes. The Post Office has issued four stamps for the 150th anniversary of her accession, highlighting some of the major events during those 64 years. Each stamp has a different portrait of the Queen as she grew older. Although throughout her reign British stamps retained the same youthful Wyon head, the Colonies used other portraits, and the one in old age (34p) I believe is based on a photograph by W & D Downey, chosen by Canada in 1897/8. The portrait of the Widow in Britain used by the Post Office was on some official postcards from 1889, the impressed stamp showing the 1885 portrait by von Angeli. This painting was issued as a postcard by the National Postal Museum for BPE in 1986. The regal State portrait of 1859 by Winterhalter is shown with Prince Albert (22p) by the same painter.

They were a particularly happy and harmonious marriage, a love match that deepened with the years. Victoria looked up to her husband with loving respect, always striving to please him. The Duke of Wellington described the Prince as "extremely straight-laced and a great stickler for morality whereas she was rather the other way."



17½p

Kensington Palace



Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference 1973

8p



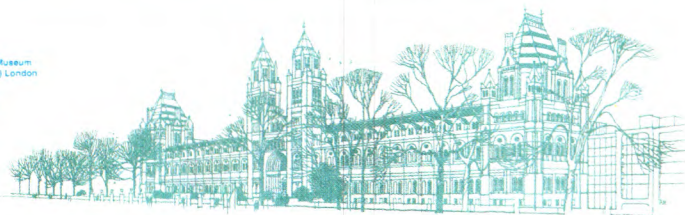
Prince Albert, a wise, upright, conscientious and very intelligent man, devoted himself to the welfare of his adopted country, working quietly behind the scenes. He taught his wife to use her remarkably retentive memory, to be business-like, and to develop an ability for hard work that was to stand her in good stead after his death. He also handled her skilfully, training her to be less impulsive, and to be an impartial constitutional monarch. Typically, the insular British suspected him as a foreigner, but he encouraged the Arts and Sciences, took an interest in industry and the welfare of the working classes, and was a patron of many charitable works.

The Queen paid off her father's overwhelming debts, and bought Osborne House, Isle of Wight, and Balmoral in the Scottish Highlands (Gibraltar 1978 SG405) where they could enjoy the simple life. One of Albert's first duties was to preside over the commission to build a replacement for the Palace of Westminster after the disastrous fire of 1834. The new Houses of Parliament (GB 1973 SG940) were designed to harmonise with Westminster Abbey, and were opened in 1852. But the most famous building associated with Prince Albert was his brainchild, the Great Exhibition of 1851 (18p), involving products from all nations, which set the stan-

dard for future international trade fairs. The prefabricated construction of iron and glass in Hyde Park was dubbed *Crystal Palace* by *Punch*. It was most successful with over six million visitors. The building was re-erected at Sydenham three years later. The rest of the profits helped towards founding the complex of museums, such as the Natural History (GB 1981 book £1.15) and colleges in what was then rural South Kensington, envisaged by Prince Albert as the very centre of arts and sciences following the idealistic Victorian beliefs in the benefits of education for the masses. When he died the Albert Memorial (31p) was erected, considered to be the height of Victorian decorative Gothic architecture. The Prince was the central figure holding the catalogue of the Great Exhibition, surrounded by diverse figures symbolising the Muses and scientists, etc.

Victoria's reign saw the first emergence of women from male domination and the confines of the home. Before the Married Women's Property Act of 1882 everything a woman owned belonged to her husband, for she, in law, was classed with infants, lunatics and felons. The master of the house had total control over his womenfolk and servants. Florence Nightingale, a well-connected lady, had horrified her

Natural History Museum
(British Museum), London
First of six
illustrations by
Ronald Maddox
on Museum
Printed by
Harrison &
Sons Limited



£1.15

Royal Mail
Stamps
Ten at 11½p



relations by interesting herself in common soldiers using the port of Southampton. Hospitals were dark and dirty holes with gas blazing all day and sluttish drink-sodden nurses. She persuaded her reluctant supporters to let her sail with 38 Nightingale nurses to the Crimea in 1854. In the face of military prejudice, and under the terrible conditions at the makeshift hospital at Scutari (GB 1970 SG820), they made a spectacular reduction in the death rate. On her return she founded the Nightingale nursing home at St Thomas' hospital, London, backed by influential supporters like the Queen and Prince Albert. She made nursing respectable.

There was no understanding of the link between dirt and infection, although they realised there was a connection between the length of the operation and the onset of fatal infection. Joseph Lister introduced his carbolic spray (GB 1965 SG667/8) and the basics of antiseptic surgery, but he and his colleagues often operated in street clothes with unwashed hands. The new "Nightingales" spread the gospel of light, air, cleanliness and clean, unpolluted water. Infirmarys for the poor were built to replace the appalling workhouses. William Rathbone, a Liverpool philanthropist thought up the idea of the district nurse (GB 1976 SG999). He divided his city into 18 districts, each with its own nurse for the very poor. Frequent cholera, smallpox and typhoid epidemics were accepted as part of life, and consumption was rife. Infection spread

rapidly through squalid, insanitary towns with their polluted wells. In the "Summer of the Great Stink" of 1858 the open sewer that was the Thames became intolerable and could no longer be ignored. During the 1860s the Victorians constructed 82 miles of sewers, still in use today, and the 1½ miles of the Victoria Embankment incorporated piped gas, clean running water, and the tunnels of the District Line.

The frail Northumberland lass Grace Darling (18p), daughter of the keeper of the Longstone Lighthouse, became a Victorian heroine overnight. The paddler *Forfarshire* was a pioneer coastal steamer well patronised by tourists between Scotland and England. On 7 September 1838 the ship with 63 aboard was wrecked in high winds on the rocks nearby. Grace insisted that she and her father should row out into the gale and tremendous seas in an open cobbie. Nine people were rescued. Grace suffered poor health, and died four years later of consumption.

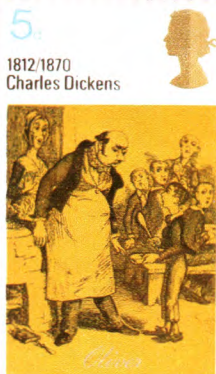
Another formidable Victorian was Mrs Beeton and her *Book of Household Management* (22p), covering all aspects "of the origin, properties, and uses of all things connected with home life and comfort". It was published in one volume in 1861, but originally in monthly instalments in *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine* particularly for the middle class wife. Her book is a delight to dip into for the rigid rules of etiquette and the proper training and duties of the domestic staff. For the first time, in

Victoria's reign, workers wore the same type of clothes as a gentleman. Children's clothing were scaled down versions of their elders' (GB 1979 SG1098), and a series of four stamp books of 1982 (£1.55) illustrate most charmingly ladies' fashions 1830 – 1900.

Most men considered education unnecessary for women, and positively harmful to the working man who would pick up revolutionary ideas. But there were reformers who believed education to be the universal panacea and essential to the masses. By law, in 1870 compulsory primary education was provided, and Shaftesbury's Act of 1842 had stopped women and children working in mines. His philanthropic interests extended also to boy chimney sweeps (GB 1976 SG1003), the mentally sick, army welfare and Nightingale reforms.

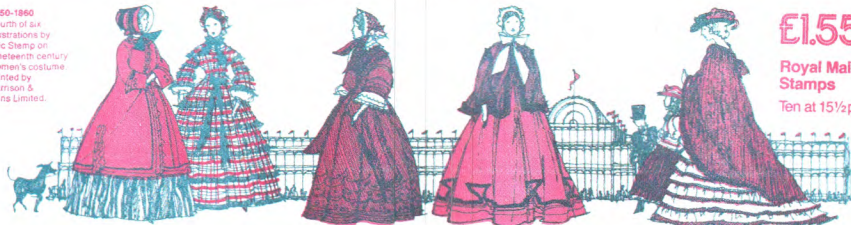
Extended education and new prosperity gave time for leisure pursuits. Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* (GB 1970 SG827) helped to arouse anger at the iniquitous Poor Laws. John Gould, a leading London publisher (Australia 1976 SG637) brought out a series of ornithological books. Much of the text was written by Gould himself who travelled to collect his scientific facts, and his rough sketches of birds were then completed by skilled artists, including his wife Elizabeth. His five volumes of *Native Birds of GB* led to a great interest being engendered in natural history and conservation. Novels by women like the Brontë sisters (GB 1980 Europa) began to appear; *Alice in Wonderland* (GB 1979 SG1094) entertained children, while *Sherlock Holmes in Study in Scarlet* (GB £1 book April 1987) was the first detective story to thrill their parents. Public libraries were introduced to encourage further education, and the Reading Room of the British Library in Victorian times is depicted on the Information Technology stamp of 1982 (SG1196).

Other Arts were not forgotten – music, sculpture, paintings – Landseer's *Monarch of the*



Glen (18p) surveyed nearly every parlour in the land, and his bronze lions guard the foot of Nelson's Column (GB 1911 1d). William Morris brought light, air and chintz designs like the *Strauberry Thief* (GB 1962 SG1192) into interior decorating, and revolutionised public taste. There was time for sport. Most games became established during the Victorian era. Harry Furniss sketched W G Grace (GB 1973 SG928/30), and the first England–Australia Test took place in 1880 (SG1137). The Penny-farthing cycle was invented about 1880, and four years later the Safety Bicycle (GB 1978 SG1067) tempted very daring ladies to ride.

1850-1900
Fourth of six
illustrations by
Eric Diering on
nineteenth century
women's costume
Printed by
Harrison &
Sons Limited.



£1.55
Royal Mail
Stamps
Ten at 15½p



Victorian engineers constructed miles of railways, roads, canals and bridges. They installed water supplies, WCs, telephones, telegraphs and electricity. They built steamships to carry abroad the goods and machinery that poured out of factories and mills, and the thousands of emigrants escaping injustice and starvation to people the colonies. The *Great Eastern* 18,914 tons, was launched in 1858 (22p) designed for the India trade. She was the third of Isambard Brunel's great ships (Nevis 1985 SG318), and he was the most versatile of engineers, creating, among many things, London's Albert Bridge, the Great Western Railway, Paddington Station, and the Saltash Bridge that still links Devon and Cornwall. The *Great Eastern* was uneconomic on the short New York route, but came into her own for 10 years as a cable vessel. Her bulk made her a stable platform to lay the first transatlantic cable. Steam produced a revolution in shipbuilding, the naval ship and merchantman developing in very different ways. Naval officers fought to introduce torpedoes, electricity and other modern warship technology which culminated in the devastating HMS *Warrior* 1861, now to be seen at Portsmouth. The great Jackie Fisher (GB 1982 SG1190) was her gunnery officer, and later as First Sea Lord was responsible for the major early 20th century warships.

The Queen and her subjects were passionately patriotic – proud of the Navy and the Empire that girdled the earth, complacently proclaiming, "We hold a greater Empire than has been" (Canada 1898 SG166). When Mafeking, defended by Baden-Powell (RSA 1982 SG504) in a siege lasting 217 days, was relieved there were scenes of tumultuous rejoicing in London (34p).

The Regiment of Irish Guards was raised in 1900 (GB 1983 SG1221) for service in South Africa and khaki uniforms replaced the traditional scarlet. Winston Churchill, as a war correspondent in 1899 (GB 1974 SG965), enthralled the world by his daring escapes from the Boers.

Philanthropy was based on religion, and most modern charitable societies originated in Victorian times, as the social conscience grew. The Princess of Wales became the first President of the Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen's Families Association (Isle of Man 1985 SG296) after her promise to the men embarking for the Sudan campaign.

The majority of the electorate was unrepresented, including all the new middle class of respectable craftsmen, and the merchants and manufacturers who had created the new prosperity. It was a time of violent contrasts, of violence, unemployment, riots and starvation against unprecedented commercial wealth. There was agitation for the legality of trade unions, extended franchise, the emancipation of Catholics and Jews, and a secret ballot (31p) to guard against intimidation. Intense rivalry between Disraeli (Tory) and Gladstone (Liberal) stabilised the present party system instead of the previous shifting groups. Disraeli (31p) promoted democracy, social welfare, British Imperialism and a strong foreign policy. The new Reform acts gave virtually every male a vote. The Queen could never accustom herself to the new electorate or the party system, but her continuous political experience and retentive memory made her an invaluable advisor. She seemed to know by instinct what her people would think. She dismissed female emancipation as unwomanly, and even Miss Nightingale

who did more than anyone for the status of women contended there were more important things in life.

Prince Albert died in 1861 from typhoid. Victoria always believed the Prince of Wales caused his father's death, and never forgave him. Even his presence in the same room irritated her. She withdrew from public life entirely, but continued her duties as monarch according to her husband's precepts. Albert's rooms were kept as he left them, with fresh water and clean clothes laid out daily. Gladstone annoyed her by treating her as a political institution. Disraeli, whom Albert had considered not sufficiently a gentleman, flattered and entertained the Queen as a woman, and made her laugh. Gradually, she was persuaded to resume some public duties, and at her Diamond Jubilee in 1897 (34p) found she was regarded as a living legend by her admiring subjects. Monuments such as the Jubilee Clock (Isle of Man 1987 SG337) were erected to mark the occasion.

The last event illustrated (34p) was Marconi's success in 1899 linking England by radio telegraph to ships at sea, and to France, the harbinger of modern telecommunications.

The Queen died at Osborne on 22 January, 1901. Approaching quietly along corridors flanked by Indian servants, one scratched softly at the door, and entered overheated rooms crammed with photographs, souvenirs and mementos. During her 64 years as Queen, Victoria restored the dignity of the Crown, and was held in awe as a loving, interfering great-grandmother. Although she mellowed with age, the sight of her down-turned mouth and bulging eyes caused consternation to all, and was never forgotten by the unfortunate object of her anger.



German Souvenirs

At the exhibition Philatelia 87 which is taking place in Cologne from 6 to 8 November 2002 two overprinted stamp books will be available. They are the £1.80 and £1.30 "Keep in Touch" stamp books issued on 21 January 1987. The overprints will be in English (on the £1.30 book) and German (on the £1.80 book) as illustrated. At DM4.50 and DM6.25 respectively plus postage and packing the books can be ordered from:

Mr J Schneider
Georg Roll Nachfolger
Holbeinstrasse 2
Postfach 1346
D 2880 BRAKE
W GERMANY



Another souvenir is being produced in connection with a "British Promotion" fortnight in the Karstadt department store in Nuremberg. A display is being mounted with the help of the National Postal Museum in London and a card will be available bearing an 18p Victorian Britain stamp cacheted "British Post Office in Nuremberg". The period of the promotion and display is from 25 September till 10 October. The card, contained in an illustrated bag, is available at £1 each plus postage from the German agent as above, to whom all enquiries should be addressed.

British Conductors

British Special Issues: No.140

FRANCIS KENNEDY

It was remarkable that in choosing British conductors (as distinct from other musicians) for this issue that all four of them had been knighted for their services to British music, "four worthy musical knights" as the late Sylvester Peat, President of the Philatelic Music Circle called them.

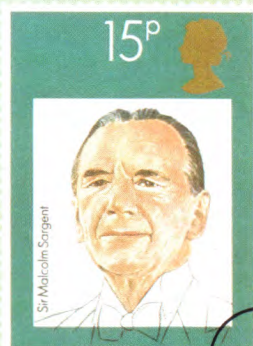
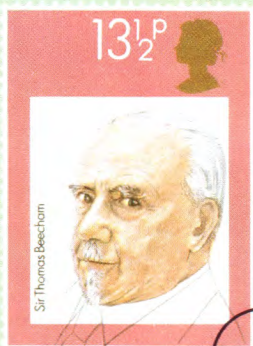
The designer was Peter Gault, whose only other stamp designs were those of the European Architectural Heritage Year in 1975. He did not just use photographs of the four subjects but, using various sources, he drew four new portraits thus unifying their style but retaining the individual characteristics so familiar to the British public.

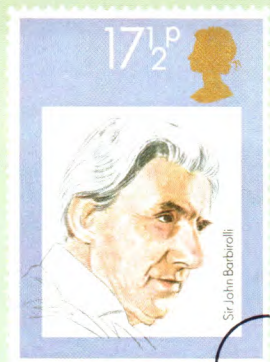
Sir Henry Wood (12p) was born in central London in 1869 and when only 25 years old, in company with Robert Newman, he began a series of what he called Promenade Concerts in the Queen's Hall in 1895. Sir Henry (he was knighted in 1911) lived to enjoy the growth of "the Proms" into a British musical tradition now held annually in the Royal Albert Hall, London. Born of musical parents (by 10 years old he was able to deputise for the organist at St Mary Aldermanbury) this all-round musical genius died in 1944.

Sir Thomas Beecham (13½p) was born at St Helens, Lancashire in 1879 and enjoyed a

financial advantage as the grandson of the inventor of the Beecham pill. His childhood included a well-equipped music room which even boasted a pipe organ. Steeped in music, he was only 20 years old when he made his debut as a conductor, stepping in at short notice to conduct the famous Hallé Orchestra in the absence of Hans Richter. Sometimes regarded as a social bore, his fine qualities as a musician earned the respect and loyalty of all the orchestras he conducted. Beecham's ambition was to establish grand opera in Britain, with a view to vying with Milan and Vienna, and he lost more than one fortune in pursuit of this aim. He was knighted in 1916, but was the only one of the quartet in this series to be made a Companion of Honour, a rare distinction, just four years before he died in 1961.

Sir Malcolm Sargent (15p) was born at Stamford, Lincolnshire, in 1895, the year in which "the Proms" were launched. Some 26 years later, Sargent conducted his own *An Impression of a Windy Day* in a Queen's Hall Promenade Concert at the invitation of Sir Henry Wood. From then on he was closely associated with "the Proms", despite chronic ill-health following tuberculosis as a young man (depriving him of one lung). At the height of his international career he was knighted in 1947 and





conducted his last concert in 1967, only weeks before his death from cancer.

Sir John Barbiroli (17½p) was born in Southampton Row, central London, in 1899, the son of a French mother and Italian father who named him Giovanni Battista but who accepted the convention of anglicising his first name to "John". Barbiroli became a cello player in Henry Wood's Queen's Hall Orchestra and, simultaneously, a member of Thomas Beecham's operatic orchestra at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. After World War I he was appointed conductor of the British National Opera Company and he deputised for Beecham at the Queen's Hall. In 1932, he took over the failing Scottish Orchestra and revitalised it before going to New York to succeed the great Arturo Toscanini as conductor of the New York Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra. In 1943, Barbiroli was back in Britain as permanent conductor to the Hallé Orchestra in Manchester and remained in close association with the Hallé until his sudden death in London, in 1970, just a mile from his birthplace.

The issue was printed by Harrison & Sons Ltd in photogravure on a coated paper, with phosphor in the coating, in sheets of 100 (two panes of 50), perf. 14 x 15. No major printing flaws are recorded but the 17½p is known on chalk-surfaced (coated) paper without any fluorescent treatment. The 12p was inadvertently pre-released at Stockport, Cheshire a day early (9 September). Sales by the withdrawal date (9 September 1981) were: 12p, 45,144,000; 13½p, 10,477,000; 15p, 10,063,000; 17½p, 9,910,000.

Melville Stamp Competition Awards

This year there were more entries for the Melville National Youth Stamp Competition and the standard of entries was higher than before. Presentation of the awards took place at Autumn Stampex/BPE.

Class A (19 to 21)

Small Silver Gilt Medal and Class A Cup Ian R Richards

Bronze Medal and National Westminster Bank prize Robert I Williams

Bronze Medal Gary F Gower

Class B (16 to 18)

Silver Medal and Class B Cup Derek J Armitage

Silver Bronze Medal and Hélène Leverton Award Stephen G Smith

Bronze Medal Gillian Birchnall

Class C (14 and 15)

Silver Medal and Class C Cup Tom Hider

Silver Medal and Cartwright Medal Matthew H Clough

Silver Bronze Medal Adrian G Harris

Bronze Medal Quentin M Padgett, Richard Cardwell, Gary Eaton

Class D (12 and 13)

Silver Medal and Class D Cup Thomas Woodham

Bronze Medal Kate Harris, Deborah S Morris, Michelle Haslem

Class E (up to 11)

Silver Medal and Addie Swainson Cup Jodi K Francis

Silver Medal and National Postal Museum Medal Margaret E Moore

Silver Bronze Medal Michael J Gallagher,

Rebecca L de Dulin, Georgina E M de Dulin

Bronze Medal John E Beechey (2), Jennifer E

Beechey, Sarah J Beechey, Emma J Russell,

Nicholas J L de Dulin, Leanne Davies

Philatelic Society Trophy Sunderland Philatelic Society

Schools Trophy Clacton County High School

The major prize was a trip to Luxembourg in March 1988 to the Youth International Exhibition and this was won by Ian R Richards and Derek J Armitage.

Philatelic Terms Explained

KENNETH F CHAPMAN

No.17: Archer Perforations

It was not until the adhesive postage stamp had been on sale to the public for seven years that the first steps were taken to provide an easy means of detaching stamps from one another by rouletting or perforating.

Henry Archer, a British engineer, first approached the Postmaster General in 1847 explaining that he had *"contrived an inexpensive plan whereby stamps may be instantly detached from the sheet without the operation of cutting, perfect too in every respect, or in other words, in no way mutilated or disfigured like most of the stamps that are now torn from each other..."*

Archer also urged that his scheme would encourage the use of stamps and lessen *"the present objectionable practice of paying the postage"* (in cash – a time-consuming method involving considerable clerical work).

Sample stamps submitted to the Post Office

by Archer consisted of the contemporary 1d red, from plates 70 and 71, *rouletted* 11½ – 12. In practice, rouletting i.e. cutting slits in the paper but not removing any of it, was not successful and Archer turned to fully perforating the stamps on a new machine especially built for the purpose. This machine he patented on 23 November, 1848 (Patent No.12,340). The perforations gauged 16 and were achieved by a perforation "comb" which, at one stroke, perforated a single horizontal row of 24 stamps. Two sheets of stamps were placed side by side on the machine in a moving frame. As the comb struck the row of 12 stamps in each sheet was perforated and the sheets automatically moved upwards, allowing the next horizontal row to be perforated. The process was repeated until the 20 rows in each sheet had been perforated. It was a principle which remained basic to stamp perforating until the advent of a Swedish rotary perforator within the last 10 years.

August 1853. Eight 1d reds with Archer perforations, plate 98, on cover to Prussia.



Penny Reds with Archer's perf. 16 are known from plates 79, 90 to 101 and 105. All these, and the earlier experimental roulettes, occur on stamps with only two check letters and all are from the Alphabet I series (see Alphabet Letters, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, June 1986) but stamps, on or off cover described as having Archer perforations should only be accepted with a Royal PS or BPA certificate of genuineness.

In June 1853 the Treasury paid Archer £4,000 for his machine and the patent rights and they immediately commissioned David Napier & Sons, engineers of Vine Street, Lambeth, London, to build five machines, based on the Archer prototype, at a cost of £400 each. In 1853, these Napier machines used perforations gauging 14 and 16, in the course of what are called Government Trial Perforations (SG 16 and 16a). In 1854 (28 January) the first perforated stamps were issued for public use. They were perf. 16 on Small Crown watermarked paper.

October Digest

Issued in October

13 October **Studio Pottery stamps** 18p, 26p, 31p, 34p.

designer: Tony Evans

printing: Harrisons, photogravure, 35mm x 37mm, perf 14 x 14½, printed on unwatermarked, phosphor-coated paper in sheets of 100 on PVA Dextrin gum.

Bureau f.d. service alternative handstamp – St Ives

presentation pack: £1.31

Withdrawn in October

6 October **28p PCP** (issued 30 March 1983)

75p Questa (issued 21 February 1984)

18 October **Rolls:** 12p ML PVA/Dex; 17p LL PVA/Dex PCP

19 October **Stamp booklets** issued on 20 October 1986:

50p Pond Life No.3

50p Roman Britain No.2

£1 Musical Instruments No.2

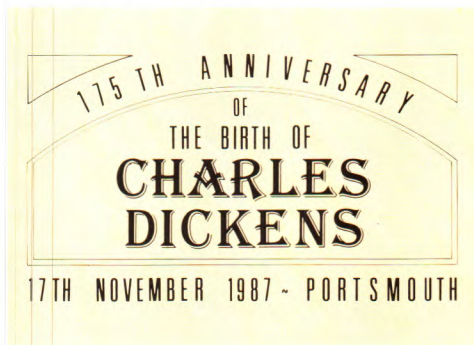
£1.30 & £1.80 Books for Children

20 October **12p definitive** issued on 29 October 1985 (plain and starred)

Christmas Covers

Charles Dickens. Marking the 175th anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens a first day cover has been produced illustrated with an engraving from the first edition of *A Christmas Carol*. The handstamp is from Portsmouth, the birthplace of Dickens. Costing £4.25 with the full set (£2.25 with single stamp) the covers are obtainable from A G Bradbury, 2 Fairholme Road, LEICESTER LE2 6GL (overseas add 50p).

Forces. Bearing a full set of stamps cancelled with the first day cancel of Bethlehem (Llandeil) a cover is being produced illustrating the Forces Headquarters of British Forces in Belize. Costing £4.25 it is obtainable from Director of Appeals, RAF Museum, Aerodrome Road, Hendon, LONDON NW9 5LL.



Royal Mail Stamp Album

The Royal Mail Stamp Album will be available from 17 November 1987 in an updated version. The new edition will contain pages for all the stamps issued since decimalisation until the end of 1987. The price of the updated album will be £52.50 and it will be available from all philatelic counters or by post from the British Philatelic Bureau.

Customers who have already bought the album can bring theirs up to date by purchasing continuation pages. These are supplied in attractively designed envelopes and are also available from philatelic counters and the British Philatelic Bureau.

This year's set of continuation pages will comprise pages for all the definitive stamps issued in 1986 and 1987, plus all the special stamps issued in 1987. The price of this set of continuation pages will be £6.50.

Victorian Printing Methods

Part 2

L N WILLIAMS

Polytyping

For prepayment of postage in Britain the simplest form of the Victorian printing methods was used in the production of the Mulready covers and envelopes. The essence of the method was that only the printing surface – the “relief” surface – of the plate was inked and, in printing, transferred the ink to the paper. The large areas of the paper which were to be uncoloured were below the plate’s printing surface. In that sense the method is the direct opposite of line-engraved recess printing.

For the Mulready covers and envelopes the actual printing surfaces were produced by polytyping.

The first step in production – after the design by William Mulready RA had been chosen – was an engraving on brass. It is called the “die”. The die was engraved by John Thompson, an engraver on wood. He took months over the job, which he never finished because he omitted

This is the second part of the series on Victorian printing methods being published to coincide with the new exhibition of the R M Phillips collection at the National Postal Museum. It continues next month, still on letterpress.

to provide a second leg for the angel at the top right of Britannia’s head.

A reverse was made of the die by suspending it, backed by a weight, over a tray on which hot metal was poured. The weighted die was released to fall on to the fluid but semi-fused metal and was evenly pressed into it.

The result was a “punch”, that is, an exact reverse or counterpart, of the engraved die. In the punch the lines which were eventually to be printed were below the surface of the areas which were to be uncoloured.

Brass die for the Mulready design (courtesy of the Victoria & Albert Museum)





A 2d Mulready envelope addressed to Mulready himself.

The punch was then used to make as many reverses of it as were required. They were exact copies of the original engraving on the die and they are called *clichés**.

The *clichés* were grouped together to make the printing plate. In practice, many punches were made, as were numerous exact copies of them from which *clichés* were struck.

The preparation of the *clichés* and the printing of the Mulready covers and envelopes were carried out by William Clowes & Sons, of Blackfriars, London.

There were two values – one penny and two pence – of each of the covers and envelopes, which differed in design only in the style of lettering in the inscription and words indicating value at the foot and in colour. The one penny cover and envelope were printed in black, the two pence in blue.

Their public reception was disastrous. They were lampooned out of existence. A special machine had to be constructed to destroy the bulk of the vast stock that had been prepared for issue.

*The term *cliché* originated with polytyping; later, it became associated with other forms of plate production which involved casting and stamping metal.

Electrotyping

Full details of the production steps used by the firm known as De La Rue for the earliest stamps they manufactured between 1853 and 1855 are no longer available. That is partly because some of their records were lost as a result of an air raid on the night of 29 December 1940 but mainly because no contemporary correspondence books were made or survived in their records.

Nevertheless, the outlines of the processes are now well known and have been filled in as a result of deduction from studying the stamps and proofs.

There can be little doubt that letterpress (or surface) printing was adopted at least partly for postage stamps as a result of Henry Archer's agitations to obtain adequate remuneration for his work and payment to mechanics to construct apparatus for putting into operation his idea that stamps should be easily dis severable from the sheets by perforating them. He was encouraged to demonstrate perforation on sheets of letterpress printed stamp-like designs – the Prince Consort "essays".

His efforts to perforate the gutters in sheets of line-engraved recess printed stamps had met with many setbacks. The main reason was that



Prince Consort essays in blue and black which have been perforated by Archer, as a trial.

the gutters were uneven, instead of being lined up evenly. The unevenness resulted from stretching of the paper on its being substantially dampened before printing and shrinking unevenly afterwards and again stretching and shrinking as a consequence of the gumming.

Paper damping was not so great and did not cause so many problems in letterpress printing. Indeed, according to the man who prepared the Prince Consort essays – Robert Edward Branstons – although the paper was ordinarily damped for letterpress printing: “I propose not damping the paper for that purpose”†

The first letterpress printed stamps produced by De La Rue were fiscals, Draft and Receipt stamps, printed for the Board of Inland Revenue in 1853.

It has been stated‡ that on the firm’s performance in Fiscal production they secured the printing of the new Fourpence, Sixpence and One Shilling postage stamps two years later and, by an act of poetic justice, [albeit of doubtful justification] the two stamps of 1853 were catalogued as postal fiscals because they were accepted [or, rather, not rejected] by the Post Office after the stamps’ successors had been authorised for use postally by Parliament on 1 June 1881.

The first stage in De La Rue’s preparation of a printing plate for letterpress printing of stamps was the production of the design on a die. In practice, only a steel die came to be used.

For the first Fourpence stamp the services of an engraver, Jean François Joubert de la Ferté, had been engaged by the Board of Inland Revenue. All that was required of him was to engrave the Queen’s head in relief (*en épargne*).

†Report from the Select Committee on Postage Label Stamps (HC/386 21 May 1852) page 45, answer to question 507.

He was provided with a model in the form of a design by Henry Corbould. Joubert, as he was known, was also given the choice of two blank dies from which to select one. The die and its subsequent derivatives were produced at, and by employees of, the Royal Mint.

Joubert cut away the portions of the die surface which were not to print and he left at surface height the lines and areas which were to print. The image which he cut was a mirror image with left and right reversed. A print or proof from the die had the image reading normally, just as it would appear in the finished



Die proof of the head of Queen Victoria, courtesy of R M Phillips Collection

stamps, except that the die proof, being printed with great care on special paper or glazed card, would be a much clearer and finer production than the stamps themselves.

‡The De La Rue History of British & Foreign Postage Stamps 1855 to 1901 by John Easton (Faber and Faber, 1958), page 1.

New Cylinders and Plates

Recent printings of national definitives and booklets have taken place from the following cylinders and plates:

By Harrisons

10p National cylinder 15 on ACP

18p National cylinder 5 on ACP

£1.60 National cylinders 1A3B on HS2

50p 2nd class book cylinders B1 B43 B32 (phos B68) on HS2

£1 book with straight edges cylinders B5 B41 (phos B70) on HS2

£1.30 book cylinders B36 (phos B62) on HS2

By Questa

20p National plates Q11Q11, Q12Q12



"Keeping up to date"

Sir,

Upon reading your comments in the editorial prefacing the July edition of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* I was somewhat amused and annoyed. Whilst I personally do not see anything wrong in you "plugging" the products of The Post Office, I have found from personal experience that "keeping up to date with changes" is not as easy as the simplistic method of acquisition you advocate.

My philatelic interests encompass a collection (and also study of) decimal Machin definitives and booklets. Until two weeks ago, my major source of material was our local sub post office. For about nine months the sub-postmaster had allowed me to look through his stocks of sheet and booklet stamps at fortnightly intervals in order that I could personally view material and decide myself on possible inclusions in my collection. Owing to the nature of the field which interests me, I purchased a large amount of material on each visit. With a change in ownership of the post office this situation changed for the worse. On making the acquaintance of the new owners I was brusquely told that their counter training forbade them from allowing "unauthorised persons" inspecting sheet or booklet stamps. It was not even possible for them to describe the material to me so that I could choose what I wanted owing to the time it would take. With such a negative attitude to collectors, is it any wonder that my collecting activities have been curtailed?

The local post office was not, however, my only source of material. I have an account with the British Philatelic Bureau and obtain items from it. Ordering of items from the Bureau hasn't the same "feel" as visiting a post office, however. In the more specialised fields one almost has to gamble when ordering since, for example, it is not really possible to specify that the booklet you actually want is the one containing a stamp with a particular "splodge" in a certain position. In such cases there is simply no alternative to prior inspection.

Obviously, one solution to this dilemma is to visit one of the philatelic counters around the

country (Birmingham and Nottingham are both about 35 miles away and I don't have a car).

I hope I haven't overburdened you with my philatelic problems, but I do get annoyed when people glibly state "buy your items from The Post Office because they are cheaper at face value". This would be excellent advice if only it could be put into practice.

M J HEATON, Burton-on Trent

The department responsible replies:

We sympathise with Mr Heaton's predicament but his new sub-postmaster is following the correct rules. The Post Office requires its sub-postmasters to carry out many different types of transactions for many different products and holds them responsible for inaccuracies or losses. It is not practical to require them to offer the type of service Mr Heaton received from his former sub-postmaster and indeed the viewing of stock was against security regulations and was carried out at the sub-postmaster's own risk.

Machin Variations

Sir,

The *Bulletin* gives much information on new issues and variations which is invaluable to Machin collectors, but unfortunately some important points pass without mention. Thus, in the "Window" books the 26p stamps have narrow redrawn numerals which become obvious when comparison is made with the sheet stamps, while the 13p stamps have the wide centre band that only occurs elsewhere in the "Pond Life" books. The lay-out of the phosphor bands in the P & O prestige stamp book has been well illustrated, but it was not pointed out that the 1p stamp with a right-hand band in the multi-value pane is quite new (apart from a rare error in the "Roman Britain" book). Furthermore, the uniqueness of the 10p stamp in the "Christian Heritage" multi-value pane has not been noted although the narrow redrawn numerals stand out quite clearly.

It would seem that such matters are at least as important to the collector as changes in the constitution of the gum (surely the least interesting of all variations!) or the nature of the phosphor ink (only ascertainable with the help of a UV lamp and then only with difficulty in many cases).

If shortage of space is an obstacle to inclusion of more information, certain superfluous statements of frequent occurrence could be omitted.

Thus, in the description of a new low-value issue from Harrisons, we are usually told that it is printed by photogravure on unwatermarked paper and perforated 15 x 14. Details of this type could only be of interest to serious collectors, but serious collectors are aware that all low-value definitives printed by Harrisons have been perforated 15 x 14, that the photogravure process has been used exclusively by this firm for the past 53 years and that watermarked paper was abandoned in 1967. Short statements about clearly visible variations such as those mentioned above need take up no more space.

ROBERT ROSCOE, Ponteland, Northumberland

I am sure that Mr Roscoe's complaint is one that is felt by many collectors and it is one that I am fully conscious of myself. When new booklets, in particular, are being produced information is published in advance in the *Bulletin* giving as much detail as is available at the time of going to press. However, this can easily be eight or nine weeks before the issue of the booklets and it is often the case that no actual printed example is to hand. The covers illustrated are normally proofs. Thus, it is not until later, sometimes not until the issue of the booklets, that some variations are noticed. It is certainly not the case that information is withheld because of lack of space. Any significant details noticed by collectors will be published in this column or as a news item as soon as publishing time permits. I trust that this meets the needs of all those concerned as much as is possible. We do try our best! *Editor*.

Stamp Fading

Sir,

With reference to Mr Longhurst's letter (July *Bulletin*) I left about 50 assorted Machins in a south-facing window for six months (March to September 1985). The reds suffered most; the 4d vermilion disappeared completely, and the 6d, 8d, 2½p and 3p magenta, 8p, 11p, 23p and 26p were nearly as bad. Next were reddish colours – 10p orange-brown, 9½p and 25p. Browns and greys were only slightly affected, greens very little and the blues and blacks hardly at all.

At the National Postal Museum last November, Aubrey Walker told us that the brighter the ink colour, the more liable it is to fade, so that choosing colour inks for stamps is always something of a compromise. This, no doubt, is why the same ink colour has so often been used for more than one value.

PETER MURRAY, Haslemere, Surrey

Hafnia '87 P & O Booklet

At the international stamp exhibition, Hafnia '87 in Copenhagen, Denmark from 16 to 25 October, the P & O prestige stamp book will be available from the Nordfrim exhibition stand specially overprinted for the exhibition. The overprint will bear the words "Hafnia 87" and incorporate the official exhibition logo in red. This booklet will only be available at the exhibition, or subject to stock by mail order from:

Nordfrim,
Nordfyns Frimaerkehandel,
5450 OTTERUP,
Denmark.

The price will be £5 (or equivalent currency) plus £1 postage.

Also at the British Post Office stand at Hafnia '87 will be two machines in operation, one demonstrating presentation pack assembly and the other stamp affixing on to souvenir covers. The packs and covers will feature the most recent special issue to Hafnia '87 – Studio Pottery. A card will be available with the pack, stating that the pack was assembled at Hafnia and a cachet will be available for the souvenir cover, for those customers who require it.

British Philatelic Bulletin

Editor Douglas N. Muir

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