The magazine for collectors of UK stamps

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Royal Mail

Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 57 No.10





Streets ahead

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Royal Mail

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Still flying high

60 years after first entering our homes, Royal Mail celebrates Tony Warren's classic award-winning show **292**



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Editor Tim Lees, Royal Mail, 185 Farringdon Road, Floor MP-03, London EC1A 1AA ● **Design and content creation** Ian Boardman, Adesso Creative Ltd ● Price £2.15 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets or by order from Post Office branches ● **12 months' subscriptions** £20.95 UK and Europe; £26.95 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) £8.68 and storage boxes (about 30 copies) £10.16, are also available by post or online ● Copyright and editorial rights are reserved by Royal Mail Group Ltd ● All rights reserved ● Reproduction in whole or parts 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: 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ ● Stamp images © Royal Mail Group Ltd.

Street life



Ena Sharples and Elsie Tanner – *Second Class*



Stan and Hilda Ogden – *Second Class*



Rita Sullivan and Norris Cole – *£1.42*



Hayley and Roy Cropper – *£1.42*

Coronation Street –	Stamp Specifications
Date of issue	28 May
Number of stamps	Eight – four horizontal se-tenant pairs (2 x 2nd Class, 2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.42, 2 x £1.63)
Design	The Chase
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	41mm x 30mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	14.5 x 14
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA

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More amazing than Fifth Avenue, the Champs-Élysées, or Downing Street, *Coronation Street* is the world's most extraordinary story about ordinary people. Watched by millions, admired by the great and the good from the Duchess of Cornwall to Sir John Betjeman, 'Corrie' and its much-loved characters are national treasures. Now Royal Mail marks the show's 60th anniversary with an eight-stamp issue and a Miniature Sheet featuring four stamps. The issue focuses on some of the major personalities – battleaxe Ena Sharples, gossip Hilda Ogden, feisty Bet Lynch, earnest Ken Barlow and his troubled daughter Tracy – who have touched viewers' hearts.

·CORONATION ST.·

Iconic moments from 60 years of entertainment



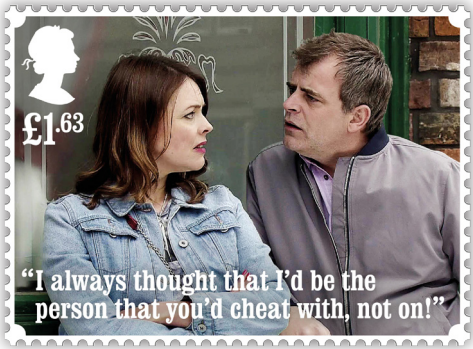
Vera and Jack Duckworth – *First Class*



Deirdre and Ken Barlow – *First Class*



Sunita and Dev Alahan – *£1.63*



Tracy Barlow and Steve McDonald – *£1.63*

The stamp set is accompanied by a Presentation Pack, Stamp Book, Collector's Sheet, Postcards, a choice of Framed Stamp collectibles and limited edition Framed Prints. In addition to the First Day Covers with all eight Special Stamps, a First Day Cover Miniature Sheet is also available.

Our favourite Corrie couples dominate the Special Stamps, from the Ogdens, Duckworths, Deirdre and Ken to the Alahans, and Tracy Barlow and Steve McDonald. The Miniature Sheet pays tributes to the matriarchal bar staff of The Rovers Return – Bet Lynch, Gemma Winter, Liz McDonald and Raquel Watts. The Presentation Pack reveals the inside story of the show. And what a story. In 1960 Salford-born Corrie creator Tony Warren was a young Granada Television writer bored by his job adapting Biggles books for the small screen. So desperate for a change was Warren that he jumped onto an executive producer's filing cabinet and refused to come down until he was allowed to write what he wanted – a show about the north. His wish was granted, and aged just 24 he created… *Florizel Street*. Yes, that was Warren's title – until a Granada tea lady by the name of Agnes thought it sounded like a make of disinfectant, so the show was renamed *Coronation Street*. And it was groundbreaking in the 1960s, showing working-class life with finely drawn characters ►

First Day Cover with stamps cancelled with the Tallents House handstamp. Inspiration is taken from the show's famous title sequence. The envelope design features the flying ducks, a familiar part of the set design from the early years and now considered a show icon

Opposite: First Day Cover with the alternative postmark. The Salford location pertains to the home of the *Coronation Street* studios in Manchester

Due to the ongoing and uncertain situation with regards to the Coronavirus Pandemic and the necessary and unprecedented restrictions applied to individuals' movements, Royal Mail has taken the decision to extend the postmarking timescales. This applies until further notice to First Day Covers ordered directly from Royal Mail and submitted from Post Office branches for cancellation at a Special Handstamp Centre



speaking in authentic northern accents rather than southern BBC English. Now the programme is part of our cultural landscape (and others' too – it's been broadcast in more than 40 countries), enjoyed by everyone from supermarket shelf-stackers to superstars. It's attracted its fair share of celebrity love: Laurence Olivier was a fan, as is Anthony Hopkins, and Status Quo stopped in at The Rovers Return in 2005 for a pre-concert pint.

Big acting names earned their early spurs in the show. Joanna Lumley was Ken Barlow's girlfriend Elaine Perkins in 1973 and in 1966 Ben Kingsley played Ron Atkins, who had an affair with Ken's first wife Val. Yet it's the convincing characters and finely crafted plots that shine. Take the Barlows, featured on one of the First Class values, and Deirdre's affair with cocksure businessman Mike Baldwin in 1983, which gripped the nation. More than 18 million viewers followed the drama, and Deirdre's confession about the fling to Ken. *The Sun* declared The Queen had called Buckingham Palace from

PRE-CORRIE TONY

He's famous for the most famous soap of all, but *Coronation Street* creator Tony Warren first wrote a soap called *Seven, Bessie Street*, which focused on the fortunes of theatre folk. It was never broadcast. His pre-Corrie career also included a stint as a knitwear model.

THE ROVERS RETURN

Named after Lieutenant Philip Ridley, to honour his return from the Boer War in 1902, The Rovers has a colourful history. It survived a lorry crashing into it in 1979, and an arson attack in 2013, which killed a local firefighter and Sunita Alahan, who appears with husband Dev on a £1.63 value. In 2010 the pub was a makeshift A&E centre for locals injured by a tram plunging from the viaduct.





FD2012-TH



FD2012-PL



FD2012-NP

abroad to have the show recorded and sent to her. Corrie addict Sir John Betjeman got involved, commenting: 'I think Ken is a nice man and deserves better.' William Roache, who has played Ken since the show's first episode, holds the Guinness World Record for the longest-serving soap actor. Deirdre's 18-month sentence for mortgage and credit card fraud created a national outcry in 1998. Fans lobbied for her release with a 'Free The Weatherfield One' campaign, and Prime Minister Tony Blair promised to look into her case. Deirdre was released after only three weeks in prison. Appearing on a Second Class stamp are long-suffering Hilda Ogden and husband Stan; she famously yearned for a more glamorous life and constantly competed with her neighbours, but her efforts were often hampered by Stan's drunken, layabout ways. She bought a home cocktail bar after winning on the Premium Bonds in 1971, but Stan spoilt her celebration party by guzzling all the miniatures and filling them with cold tea. 'You great, big, fat lump of human uselessness' was her ►

DEIRDRE'S GLASSES

Deirdre's TV screen-sized specs were so big you could watch a soap on them – and were as famous as her: when Deirdre broke them in 2001 (Dev at the corner shop crushed them with some boxes), ITV allowed Corrie fans to vote on her new pair.

HILDA'S DUCKS

The flying ducks on the Ogdens' living room wall at No.13 *Coronation Street* were symbols of Hilda and Stan's ups and downs (mostly downs). The middle one always pointed downwards, with Hilda regularly (and unsuccessfully) repositioning it as she walked past.



Bet Lynch – *First Class*
(played by Julie Goodyear MBE)



Raquel Watts – *First Class*
(played by Sarah Lancashire)



Liz McDonald – *£1.42*
(played by Beverley Callard)



Gemma Winter – *£1.42*
(played by Dolly-Rose Campbell)

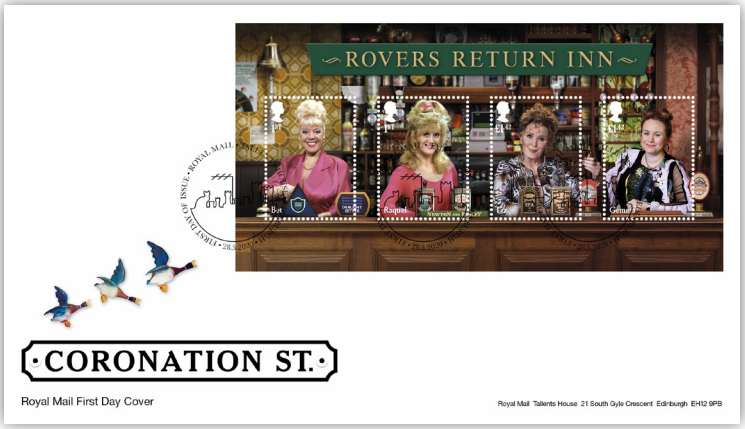


Miniature Sheet: celebrating key characters who have worked behind the bar at the Rovers Return

CELEBRITY VISITS

Corrie is so well-loved that the great and the good are eager to appear on the show. Prince Charles was in a live episode in 2000, 'opening' a council planning office. Status Quo stars Rick Parfitt and Francis Rossi played at Les Battersby's wedding in 2005.

Coronation Street	Miniature Sheet Specifications
Date of issue	28 May
Number of stamps	Four (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.42)
Design	The Chase
Miniature Sheet size	146mm x 74mm
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	27mm x 36mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	14 x 14
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA



Miniature Sheet First Day Cover: with stamps cancelled with the Tallents House handstamp

cutting one-liner when he smudged her famous mountains 'muriel' (another bid to get one over the neighbours). But away from the rows, there was a whisper of love: on the stamp is Hilda's celebrated line 'Woman, Stanley, woman,' said with triumphant, romantic relish when, after a kiss on their second honeymoon in 1977, Stan asks her what her lipstick tastes of. The other Second Class stamp shows hairnet-toting harridan Ena Sharples (Warren based her on his large-framed, formidable grandmother) rowing with the Street's sex siren Elsie Tanner, and Elsie's venomous line: 'That woman's tongue. If it was a bit longer she could shave with it.' In another spat, scary Ena breaks Elsie's front window with one violent swing of her handbag. Even Mrs Thatcher's handbagging never packed that much power. The legendary hairnet, by the way, was Sharples actress Violet Carson's idea, as she refused to let hair and make-up touch her locks. And who could forget the Duckworths and their love-hate marriage (shown in a more cheerful moment on a First Class value)? In one classic 1982 episode, disloyal Jack secretly signs up to a dating agency, under the name Vincent St Clair, dressed in a white suit and gold medallion. Vera finds out and joins the agency too, in the guise of wealthy widow 'Carole ►

ON THE SET

The *Coronation Street* set is realistic, but when high-definition filming was introduced in 2010, props were upgraded so they weren't exposed by the better-quality pictures. Real not plastic bricks were used, and Roy's Rolls now served genuine food instead of imitation fare.

STREET NUMBERS

5,000: There have been more than 5,000 characters in the series. 42: Betty Turpin worked at the Rovers for 42 years. 54,000: The number of cobbles on *Coronation Street*. 7.7: the acreage of the Corrie set in Salford, Manchester.

Munro', complete with ginger wig. They agree on a date, at The Rovers, where Jack exclaims: 'You're no flippin' widow!' Vera retorts: 'No, but I will be ten minutes after I get you home!'

Bet Lynch will be for many fans the star of the Miniature Sheet. Famed for her blonde beehive and penchant for leopard print, she's also adored for her biting, quick-fire quips. Here's just a small selection… With pained grin to Betty Turpin after Alec Gilroy has angered her in a row: 'It's not really a smile, it's a lid on a scream.' With fag in mouth: 'Hang on while I light me breakfast.' To a young barmaid at The Rovers: 'I've got tights older than you, love.' Annoyed with

Presentation Pack: houses all the *Coronation Street* Special Stamps (including the Miniature Sheet). Written by Abigail Kemp, the Presentation Pack takes inspiration from the show's official paper, The Weatherfield Gazette. The pack celebrates in true Corrie style; sporting a lonely-hearts column, crime spotters and even a crossword, using much loved characters and famous storylines from throughout the years. It's a real treat for Corrie fans, maintaining the wit and drama from the nation's favourite soap!



Retail Stamp Book: features four First Class Machin definitive stamps and the Jack and Vera, and Ken and Deirdre Special Stamps





Character Stamp Set



Character Stamp Set: Jack and Vera

Hilda Ogden: 'Are you speaking to me, Hilda, or were it just your corsets rubbing together?'

Coronation Street has enthralled viewers with drama – there have been torrid affairs, turbulent divorces, murder, suicide, fatal fires and other disasters. But Bet's wry take on life encapsulates what many love best about 'the Street': the crackling wit and sparkling personalities of the people who 'live' there ●

'I've got this wonderful idea for a television series. I can see a little backstreet in Salford, with a pub at one end and a shop at the other, and all the lives of the people there, just ordinary things.'

Tony Warren 1936-2016




CORRIE EXCLUSIVE

The Weatherfield Gazette

60

60 YEARS OF CORRIE!

Tony Warren
Coronation Street Creator

TONY WARREN MBE was just 24 when he took his idea of creating a drama about a street full of everyday working-class folk, the people he knew and loved, to the bosses at Granada Television.

Then a virtually unknown child actor was commissioned to write the first few episodes of the new-style programme, even though the producers were unsure how it would be received. They needn't have worried, Warren had hit on a magic formula. The viewers loved it. Tony went on to write for the programme as a consultant and occasional writer throughout his life.

In 2014, the main studio block at *Coronation Street*'s new home at MediaCityUK in Salford was named in his honour. Actor William Roache – who is the age of 75 stars from the street paid tribute to him, calling him "the father of the Street" and "a genius of our time".

ROVERS RETURN INN

Stars past and present come together to celebrate an incredible landmark for the nation's favourite soap

Coronation Street, the world's longest-running TV soap opera, is celebrating its 60th birthday and fans and fans stars alike are joining in the celebrations.

Sixty years after talented writer Tony Warren penned his first scripts, the inhabitants of the fictional northern backstreet with its end-of-the-row pub are still delighting TV audiences in their millions.

Within months of its first broadcast, which went out live on Friday 9 December 1960, *Coronation Street* became the country's most-watched programme, a position it has retained for decades.

Coronation Street's iconic characters are known the world over, with recognised played by William Roache – is still in the cast today, and the current cast is headed by Charlie Hunnam Recruitment.

The famous cobbles have seen train crashes, fires and sieges but there has been plenty of love and laughter too.

The programme's set has moved and expanded and the cast has grown over the years, but the mixture of gritty storylines and quick northern wit is keeping viewers more entranced than ever.

As the anniversary celebrations continue long into the night in The Rovers, we raise a pint of Newton and Ridley's finest and say here's to the next 60 years!

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TRAM CRASH

DECEMBER 2050: THREE people died and many more were injured after a tram plunged from a viaduct in Weatherfield last night.

Emergency services were called to Coronation Street following reports that a tram had crashed and burst into flames, destroying shops and houses. A road accident is understood to have prevented fire engines from reaching the scene for some time.

Eye-witnesses talking to shocked eyewitnesses, an explosion in The Joinery bar beneath the viaduct may have caused the tram's derailment but a full investigation has been launched and a helpline set up, police and the fire service have been drafted in to handle terrific scenes as fire tears smashed into a corner shop.

The victims have been named as Molly Dobbs, 26, whose baby son was rescued, butcher Ashley Peacock, 35, who was married with a son, and a taxi driver, whose body was found underneath.

A makeshift treatment centre was set up in nearby pub The Rovers Return. A fourth body pulled from the rubble is now thought to be that of a woman who was attacked and killed before the crash.

Coronation Street was the scene of a similar tragedy in 1902 when a tram came off the same viaduct, killing a worker.

EXCLUSIVE ISSUE FEATURING NEWS FROM YOUR FAVOURITE STREET

EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

ENA SHARPLES & ELSIE TANNER ARGUE IN THE STREET – AGAIN!

HILDA & STAN OGDEN MOVE INTO №13

VERA & JACK DUCKWORTH HOST PARTY

KEN & DEIRDRE BARLOW REACH BREAKING POINT

RITA TANNER AND NORRIS COLE GOSSIP IN THE KABIN

HAYLEY & ROY CROPPER SPEND A DAY IN BLACKPOOL

DEV & SUNITA ALAHAN MARRY

TRACY & STEVE McDONALD FALL OUT

Coronation Street – Prices

Set of 8 Special Stamps	£8.92
Miniature Sheet	£4.36
Presentation Pack	£14.20
First Day Cover Stamps	£11.35
First Day Cover Miniature Sheet	£5.90
Stamp Souvenir	£11.35
Stamp Sheet Souvenir	£5.90
First Day Envelope	£0.30
Postcards (13 in set)	£5.85
Generic Sheet	£8.80
Stamp Book	£4.56
Press Sheet	£47.96
Character Stamp Set	£9.25
Character Stamp Set - Jack and Vera	£7.90
Character Stamp Set - Ken and Deirdre	£7.90
Rovers Return Miniature Sheet Set	£4.66
Framed Stamps	£29.99
Framed Miniature Sheet	£29.99
Framed Generic Sheet	£29.99
Framed Enlarged Print - Jack and Vera	£59.99
Framed Enlarged Print - Ken and Deirdre	£59.99
Framed Enlarged Print - Hilda and Stan	£59.99
Framed Enlarged Print - Ena and Elsie	£59.99
Framed Enlarged Print - Rita and Norris	£59.99



Character Stamp Set: Ken and Deirdre

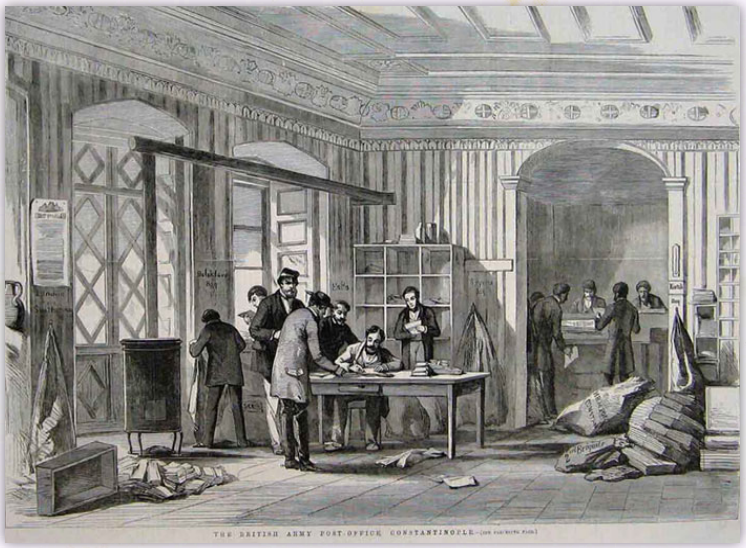


Rovers Return Miniature Sheet Set

The Crimean War
reporting home

Correspondence between servicemen and loved ones back home during the Crimean War created a plethora of items to engage postal historians. Expressions penned were free from the shackles of censorship that were to impinge on communications in subsequent conflicts... they simply told it how it was. The stamps, postmarks, and cachets that grace the covers create rich areas of study for philatelists. This article presents just a very small sample. If you'd like to learn more about this fascinating area of British postal history, an extremely detailed study of postal services during the war by Mike Batty can be found (free to download) on the GBPS website – 6th edition of *1d Red Stars used abroad*

The Crimean War was a conflict fought mainly on the Crimean Peninsula – after the landing of allied forces in September 1854. The Russian Empire was defeated by an alliance comprising the Ottoman Empire, France, Britain and Sardinia – the peace Treaty of Paris being signed on 30 March 1856. The war heralded a new era of military engagement in which armed forces used modern technologies such as explosive naval shells, railways, and telegraphs. This was also a new dawn in reporting warfare – battles being given broad coverage with extensive written documentation. And with the arrival of the first official war photographer Roger Fenton, came the first of the images that shed greater light on the reality of life and death in theatres of war. The conflict was also synonymous with logistical and tactical failures, as well as managerial ineptitudes – pre-eminent at the Battle of Balaclava and the Charge of the Light Brigade. Florence Nightingale's arrival in Scutari also gave birth to modern nursing practices. Entering the military hospital there, she was horrified to witness that typhus, typhoid, cholera, and dysentery were claiming more lives than injuries from combat. Her insistence on sanitisation of environment and equipment, supplemented with good diet and attentive nursing helped to significantly raise the bar of medical care. The value of the standards of cleanliness she insisted upon are widely recognised in the modern world – as mankind struggles against the spread of disease in the current pandemic.



During the campaign a number of field post offices were operating in the Crimea. This picture of the Base Army Post Office in Constantinople appeared in the *Illustrated London News* of 19 January 1856. Assistant Army Postmaster Thomas Angell is depicted wearing a uniform and cap standing to the left of the table



A special rate of 3d a letter applied to military personnel on overseas duty during the war. This entire of 1855 has a strip of three 1d Red-Brown, SG 21, Plate 5, D-A/D-C, tied by a London triple '49' cancellation and addressed to Glenary, Ireland 'via Marseilles'. The letter is headed 'Camp before Sebastopol'. The letter includes news of Russian attacks on the French and insight from the front: 'manning the furthest forward trench just 200 yards from the Redan', 'death of four men from shell fire!', 'an amputation performed without chloroform!', 'the heat and lack of water' and 'rumours that the army will spend another winter in the trenches'



A cover of July 1856 – after the end of hostilities addressed to Stretford near Manchester 'via Marseilles' with a strip of three 1d Red-Brown, SG 29, cancelled by 'star between cyphers' postmarks. Back-stamped with POST OFFICE BRITISH ARMY A cds

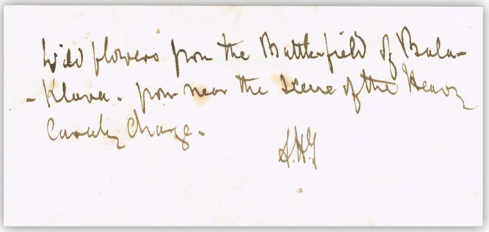


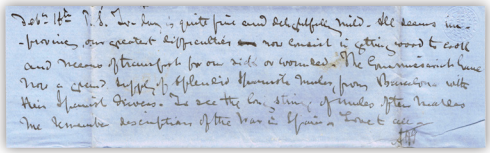
Bottom: August 1854 envelope addressed to Turkey 'via Marseilles per French Steamer', with a 1d Red-Brown, SG 17, and the late usage of a four-margin 2d Blue, SG 14, Plate 4, K-H. An attractive perforate and imperforate combination tied with a Plymouth spoon duplex.
On 14 November 1854 – three months after the letter was sent, a storm hit Balaclava wrecking the supply ship '*Prince*'. A consignment including winter clothing was lost, leaving British troops ill-equipped for the Crimean winter – a public outcry followed back home. The government acted, and the army eventually began to receive fresh supplies of warm clothing in January. The soldiers were grateful, but vexed, the addressee Captain Radcliffe of the 20th Regiment noted: *'I spoke to a man yesterday that was carrying some sheepskin coats on his back, and said what capital ones they were. He said, "Yes Sir, it's a pity they didn't come before so many poor fellows were in their graves". I could not but agree with him.'*

A letter dated 15 February 1855 sent by a soldier of 'The Expeditionary Army Crimea' from a 'camp before Sebastopol'. The obliteration of the stamps was applied on arrival in London, which was the normal procedure except for periods during which special obliterators were in use in the Crimea. The stamps are perforated gauge 16 with the small crown watermark and the printing is of the die I type. The envelope contained 'Wild flowers from the Battlefield of Balaklava, from near the scene of the Heavy Cavalry Charge'









A postscript message was added the day after the letter was written – giving details of a more peaceful day on the front – *'Today is quite fine and delightfully mild. All seems improving, our greatest difficulties now consist in getting word to cross and means of transport for our sick or wounded. The Commissariat have now a grand supply of splendid Spanish mules, from Barcelona with their Spanish drivers. To see the long string of mules often makes me remember descriptions of the War in Spain. Love to all/AHG'*

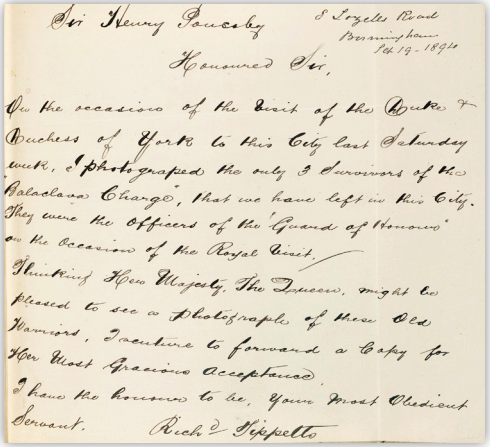


The self-sealing envelope is embossed with the producers branding – Waterlow & Sons



Survivors of the Balaclava charge




Sir Henry Ponsonby 8 Fozetts Road Birmingham Sept 19 - 1894

Honoured Sir,

On the occasion of the visit of the Duke & Duchess of York to this City last Saturday week, I photographed the only 3 Survivors of the Balaclava Charge, that we have left in this City. They were the Officers of the 'Guard of Honour' on the occasion of the Royal Visit.

Thinking Her Majesty The Queen, might be pleased to see a Photograph of these Old Warriors, I venture to forward a Copy for Her Most Gracious Acceptance.

I have the honour to be, Your Most Obedient Servant. Richd Pippetto

A letter dated 19 September 1894 sent by the photographer with a photo – to Queen Victoria's Private Secretary. The three men pictured were survivors of the Charge of the Light Brigade. They were in the guard of honour for the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George V and Queen Mary) to Birmingham in September 1894. Left to right: Sergeant-Major Howes served in the 4th Hussars; Sergeant Parkinson served in the 11th Hussars, and Sergeant-Major Hughes served in the 13th Light Dragoons

Battle of Balaclava Centenary Ball and a Cinderella


Paul Popper/Popperfoto / Contributor

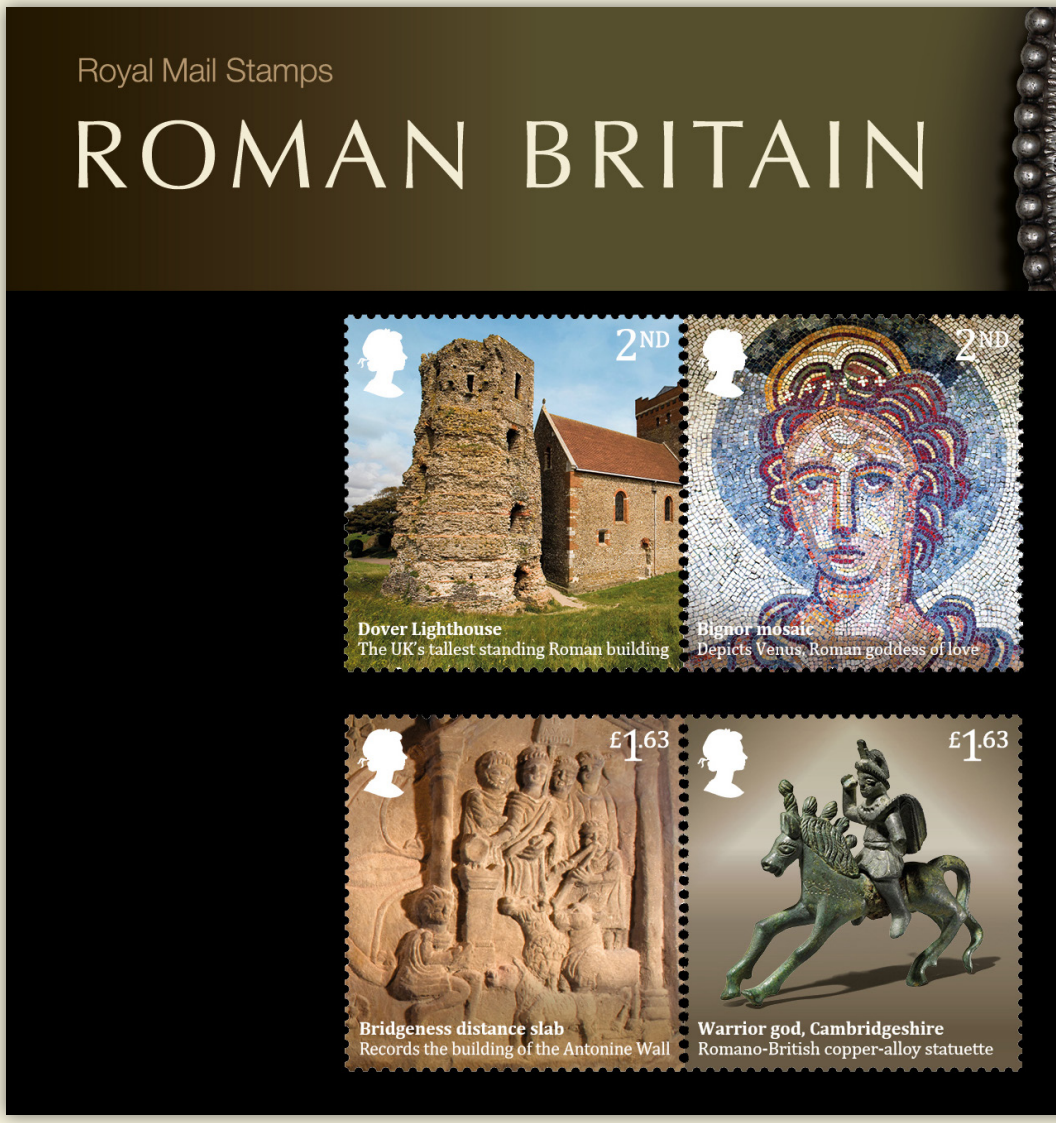
Queen Elizabeth II and Air Marshal Sir Jack Baldwin, Colonel of the 8th Hussars, walk together past a Guard of Honour of troopers in full dress uniform as they arrive at a ball to celebrate the centenary of the Battle of Balaclava, at the Hyde Park Hotel in London, 26 November 1954



This beautifully engraved cinderella depicts the Hyde Park Hotel, built in 1889, as viewed from the park – now the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park. The stamps produced by Bradbury Wilkinson & Co Ltd were printed in sheets of 100, circa 1930. The promotional stamp could be used to accompany regular stamps for postage Smilers Sheet style – and create a philatelic nudge that you've stayed at London's most prestigious hotel when writing to impress!

Article by Ian Boardman, with thanks to Mike Batty for his helpful insights and to Martin Townsend (dealer in fine postage stamps and postal history) for the Crimean War cover pictures. Images of Survivors of the Balaclava Charge and letter – courtesy of Royal Collection Trust © Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020.

What have the Romans done for us?



The Presentation Pack offers insights into life under Roman occupation and information pertaining to all eight stamps – issue date 18 June

Royal Mail has worked with The British Museum in the development of an eight stamp issue which demonstrates the sophistication, technical brilliance and artistry of Roman Britain, through important sites and artefacts. Having successfully invaded Britain in 43 AD, the Romans assimilated much of the country into a Roman province introducing their culture and technology.

There will be a full focus on the Roman Britain stamps and products in the July issue of the *Bulletin*



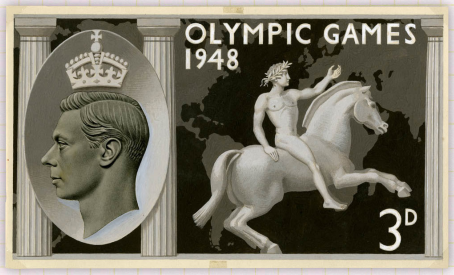
The Romans created a national road network linking towns throughout Britain. They introduced large scale building with stone – constructing villas, theatres, bathhouses and even shopping malls. They brought their pagan gods too, and later, Christianity. They even gave us the name 'Britain'. The stamp issue out on 18 June is a true celebration of Roman life and culture in Britain ●

Olympic Games commemoratives

1948

Somewhat to my surprise, Royal Mail did not plan on having an Olympic Games issue this year (mind you, this turned out to be a good plan, since we aren't having an Olympic Games either). So for those missing their Olympic fix, this article takes a look back at the first occasion the Games were commemorated by Royal Mail – the stamps issued for the 1948 Games held in London.

The Games had of course been held in London previously in 1908 – but that was before the idea of commemorative stamps had been accepted by the British Post Office, and there was no official postal commemoration for those Games at all, not even a special postmark. By 1948, however, the issue of stamps by the host nation was standard, and so the Post Office could hardly avoid following precedent. The original plan was for just two values, as with the Victory issue of 1946 – 2½d (inland and Empire/USA surface rate) and 3d (rest of the world surface rate) – but two more were added, 6d (Zone A airmail) and 1s (Zone B airmail – the 1s 3d Zone C airmail rate could be made up in five different ways using the set). There was also a postal stationery air letter using the 6d design.











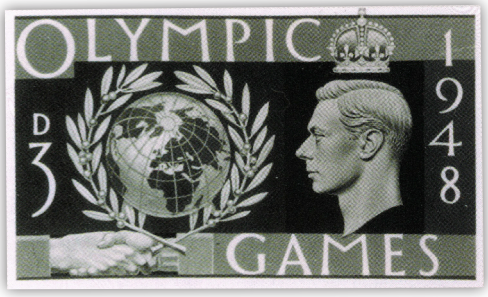




Design As was typical of the time, the design process was somewhat ad hoc. The Council of Industrial Design was asked to name potential artists, and to its list the Post Office added others including previous stamp designers and the four main stamp printers. The brief required that the words 'Olympic Games 1948' be included, that the value appear in *'clear numerals'*, and that space be left for the usual King's head. As for the design itself, what *'remaining space'* was left *'should be devoted to a design suitable to the occasion of the Olympic Games preferably symbolising athletes generally and the international character of the gathering'*. This all resulted in 26 submitted designs. The ones chosen leant heavily on symbolism and classical motifs, and from the aesthetic viewpoint can perhaps best be described as pedestrian, but a look at the rejected designs (held in The Postal Museum) shows that the Post ►

Below: a selection of the rejected designs. One by G Knipe of Harrisons (centre row, far left) was considered, but as it used a Reuters photo of Lord Burghley, winner of the 400m hurdles in 1928, it both posed problems with copyright and risked showing an identifiable individual. The design by A C King of Bradbury Wilkinson (centre row, far right) is worth highlighting as the only one to acknowledge that the Olympics included female competitors as well!







All four stamps included the Olympic rings, although the 2½d had them arranged in a straight line instead of the usual staggered layout – which would not have passed muster with today's branding-conscious International Olympic Committee! This clumsy design choice was somewhat forced – it was a replacement for clasped hands that appeared in the original design above (with the value of 3d)

Office didn't have much else to work with. The successful artists were Percy Metcalfe (2½d), the appropriately-named Abram Games (3d), Stanley Scott of Waterlows (6d), and old hand Edmund Dulac, designer of the Coronation commemorative and 7d-1s definitives (1s).

Issue The stamps were issued in sheets of 120 on 29 July, the opening day of the Games. Although the philatelic services offered by the Post Office at this date were rudimentary, the announcement to staff in the *Post Office Circular* did note that *'Special provision of 3d., 6d., and 1s. stamps and 6d. air letters should also be made at offices in localities where visitors to the Games are likely to resort, or for known large requirements of dealers'.*



First Day Cover of the Olympic set, with the 'Olympic rings' machine cancellation used at Wembley Stadium itself throughout the Games. To a schoolboy in Scotland, so possibly sent by his parent

Occasionally, people wonder if covers bearing commemoratives of this era can be genuinely commercial when definitives of the same values were available. Actually, if anything the opposite applies – commemoratives were to be sold in preference as long as stocks lasted: *'It is the intention that the 'Olympic Games' stamps and air letters should replace the ordinary stamps of corresponding values… until the issue is exhausted'* (*Post Office Circular,* 21 July). Admittedly this does not always seem to have sunk in, as a reminder was needed on 25 August.



Commercial First Day use of the 1s stamp from Wembley (Zone B rate to USA) by athlete Roland Sink, who just missed out on a place in the 1500m final due to a confusion over the different US and European rules for 'dipping' at the tape. Blowing a kiss to Princess Margaret at the opening ceremony earned him a lunch invitation to Buckingham Palace! His return address was given as a PO Box number – as it was not possible to say in advance at which centre competitors would be housed, each country's team was given a London E.C. box number, from which mail was officially redirected. 792 was allocated to the US Olympic team

Issuing continued for quite some time after the end of the Games themselves on 14 August, as it turned out that the overseas rate values had been heavily over-ordered. Scrapping expensively printed stamps would have been a problematic choice in the austerity Britain of 1948, however. A memo of 3 September noted glumly *'the only way to dispose of these stamps is for the Stores to keep pumping them out, holding back the normal 3d, 6d, and 1s stamps'*. Finally, on 24 November the Circular announced that all Olympic stamps had now been sent out. The on-issue period was thus surprisingly extended. ►



Solo usage of the 6d from early October, 3d basic all-up rate to Europe + 3d registration fee. To an address in the Währing district of Vienna (US zone), censored by the Allied military administration

Air Letter A commemorative aerogramme – a first but far from a last for the UK – was planned as part of the issue from the start. The 'air letter' concept had developed during the war, when space on aircraft was at a premium and lightweight airmail stationery a big help. It continued to be popular afterwards, as the standard 6d rate was cheaper to many destinations.

The original plan was for the usual postal stationery contractors McCorquodales to print the complete air letter by letterpress, using dies provided by the Royal Mint, and Scott's design was particularly chosen for the 6d as it was felt it would translate well to that process. In the event, this proved impractical, and although Harrisons offered to print everything in photogravure, the method decided upon was for McCorquodales to print the text and background in letterpress, with Harrisons adding just the stamp by that process. The predictable resulting problems with design registration meant that this is regularly found poorly centred in the box left for it.

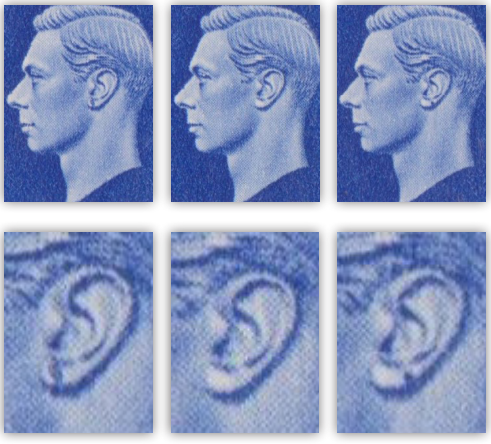


Commercial usage of the Olympic air letter 30 September: to South Africa from a Birmingham firm, advising that the addressee's order of assorted hardware has been registered for shipment and that they hope it will 'soon be called forward'. A relatively well centred stamp, although 'off' towards top right

Varieties As with most issues, there are a number of known flaws on stamps from certain positions in the sheet. Many of them appear in a cylinder block or its vicinity, which always makes varieties more likely to be spotted! Several are listed in the SG *Concise*, others only in the *Specialised*, although back in the day renowned collector W.G. Stitt Dibden identified a number of smaller, less visual ones for specialists to hunt for in his 1959 book on the subject.

2½d: the only catalogued variety is the 'Ear lobe flaw', a dark blob in the lower left of the King's ear, which appears on row 17, stamp 1 (R17/1) of cylinder 2 dot. However, two rows below it (R19/1) there is the uncatalogued 'Nick in ear' – positional cylinder blocks with the ear lobe flaw will therefore normally have both (the number appears next to R18/1).

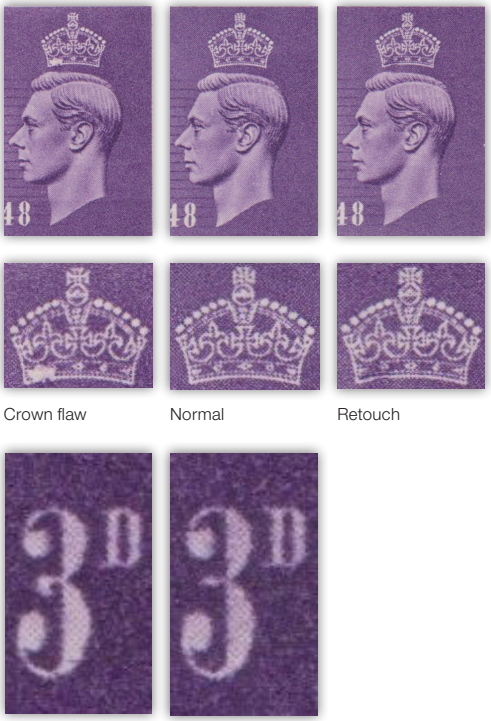




Ear lobe flaw | Normal state | Nick in ear

3d: again, two varieties are handily placed in a cylinder block, this time both listed. The 'Crown flaw' (R20/2, cylinder 1 no dot), a white patch on the base of the crown, is a very clear variety. It was sufficiently obvious to merit a retouch to the cylinder – this was executed well, but slightly overdone, and is still detectable. The stamp above it (R19/2) has the 'Hooked 3', a blob on the end of the middle stroke giving a serifed effect. ►

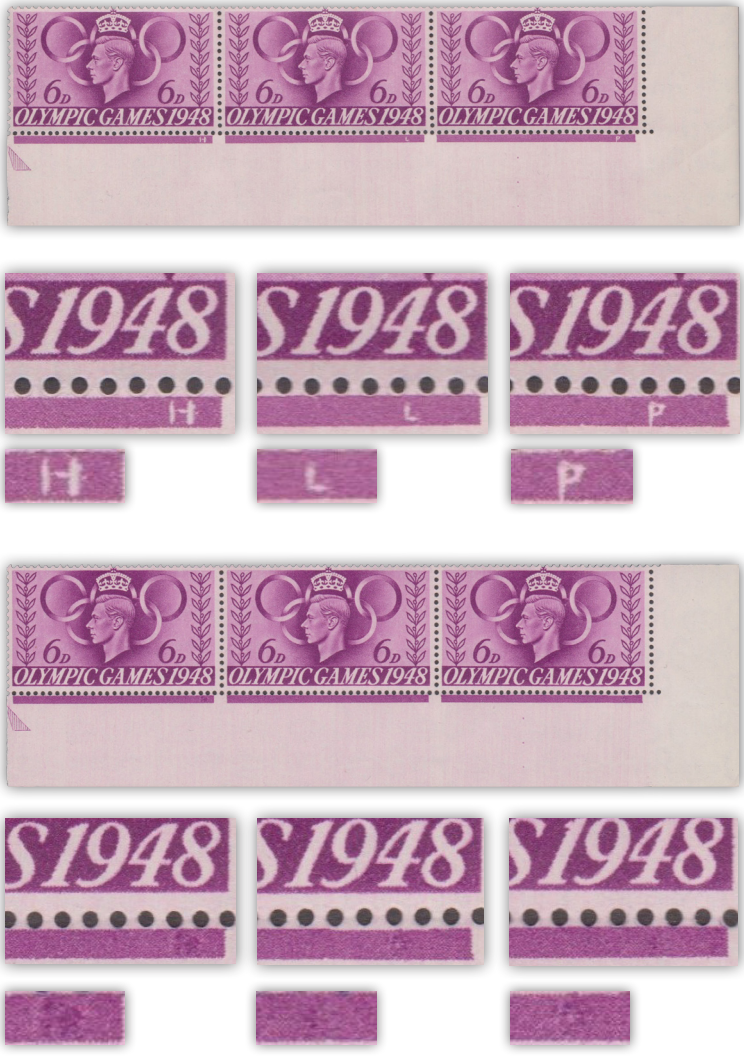




Crown flaw | Normal | Retouch

Hooked '3' | Normal

6d: the notable variety here is not on a stamp, but in the margin. Early printings of cylinder 9 dot had the letters 'HLP' in the 'marginal rules' under the three stamps at the end of the bottom row (R20/4-6). What they stood for is a matter of debate: the probable answer is simply 'Harrisons London Printers', although it has been suggested that they stand for the engraver, H L Palmer. In any case, they were not supposed to be there, and were soon retouched to remove them.



Strip showing the variety, plus enlargements of the letters and retouches – the latter were carried out in three stages, first the 'P', then the 'H', and finally the 'L'. Examples of the intermediate states are very hard to find!

1s: the clearest recorded varieties here are on cylinder 3 dot. One is the 'Extended Cornwall' variety on R7/3 (described more prosaically by SG as 'White blob on Land's End'), which appears on the British outline centrally-placed on the globe (in the place you would expect from those names). 'White spot below 9' (position R8/4) is correct for the stamp as a whole, but as the date is curved appears as a dot below and between the numerals 1 and 9.



White spot below 9





Extended Cornwall



Overprints for use abroad Finally, it's worth mentioning that as was usual at the time, all the stamps were overprinted for use at the various British Postal Agencies overseas in Bahrain, Kuwait, Muscat and Morocco. In most cases this involved changing the currency so they ceased to be valid in Britain, but the Tangier overprints did not, and so as with the original stamps they could in principle be used for postage in the UK until all pre-decimal stamps were demonetised in 1972. I'm not aware of any example of the use of this loophole other than by philatelists though!

By Maurice Buxton member of the Great Britain Philatelic Society.
www.gbps.org.uk











Images of rejected designs are reproduced with the permission of The Postal Museum. Thanks also to Stephen Weir for images in the 'varieties' section and FDC with the full set of stamps. And finally thank you to Tony Stanford for the images of the stamp overprints

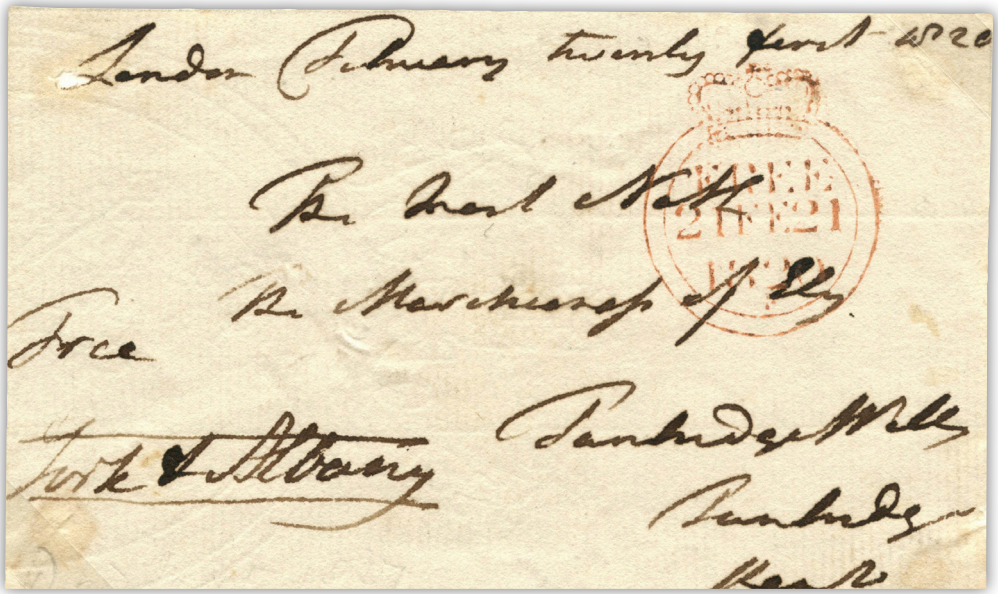
Free Fronts from the Princes



King George III – Coronation portrait by Allan Ramsay, 1762

The legislative history of the Franking System began in principle in 1652, when in that year the Council of State ordered that all letters from Members of Parliament, and Officers of State and Council, should be carried free of postage. From that date and for the next nearly two hundred years, additional Acts of Parliament changed and modified the rules to combat the series of abuses which continued right up to the abolition of the Franking System in 1840. In brief, the Act of 1784 was a new milestone. It required the sender to write at the top of the letter the post town from which it was posted, the date fully in words, and the year.

The autograph craze of the last years of the Franking System has enabled historians, postal and otherwise, to have examples of the cut-out centre part of a letter with these hand written details of place, date, sender and receiver, the writer being obliged to sign in the bottom left corner if they were to obtain free postage. From 1838 when the reforms were clearly in sight, the craze took an unprecedented sprint to the very end, with the Postmaster General's wife, Lady Lichfield, being prominent among those in the lead. The so-called 'free fronts' shown here are from the beginning of the nineteenth century, and originate from four of the sons of King George III. With his wife, Charlotte, their family consisted of nine sons and six daughters. A strong family unit controlled to a degree by the father, resulting in some of the princesses never marrying.



Free front - Duke of York and Albany - 21 February 1820

Prince Frederick Augustus was born in 1763, and became the Duke of York and Albany. On 21 February 1820, he wrote to The Most Noble The Marchioness of Ely in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. As the second son of the King, he was in the line of succession, and after the death of his niece Princess Charlotte Augusta of Wales in 1817, he was heir to the British throne for the years between the death of his father, the King, in 1820 and his own death in 1827 whilst his brother had become King George IV. Signing 'York & Albany' and adding the word 'Free', all the writing is, correctly, in his own hand. The 'Free' handstamp in red is double-ringed signifying Evening Duty, whereas a single ring would be for what was termed Morning Duty. The portrait shown was painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1788.



Duke of York and Albany – portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1788



Free front - Duke of Clarence - 14 August 1821



Duke of Clarence – portrait by Sir Martin Archer Shee, circa 1800

Addressed in the hand of the future King William IV, the free front dated 14 August 1821 is addressed to The Countess of Erroll in Dublin. The Countess was Elizabeth FitzClarence, Prince William Henry's sixth child with Dorothy Bland. Sent from London and signed 'Clarence', the handstamp is again double-ringed. William's reign was short, having followed his brother as king at the age of 64 years, and being succeeded by the Princess Alexandrina Victoria in 1837. The portrait shown is by Sir Martin Archer Shee in around 1800.



Free front - Duke of Sussex - 7 April 1831

The free front dated 7 April 1831 signed 'Sussex' is from Prince Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex, and sent to Lady Clarke's daughter in Gloucester. If only the centre panel of this sheet had not been cut out - for the signature - then the full correspondence would have been saved. As it is, part of some 14 lines can be seen on the reverse. This was again sent after 12 noon and has a double-ringed Free handstamp. The portrait of the Duke is by Guy Head from 1798. Being younger than Prince Edward, father of the future Queen Victoria, he was not in direct line of succession to the throne. However, his life was somewhat unlike his brothers, being the only surviving son of George and Charlotte not to have a military career. He was known for his liberal views, which included abolition of the slave trade, Catholic emancipation, and reform of Parliament.



Duke of Sussex – portrait by Guy Head, 1798



Free front - Duke of Cambridge - 13 September 1816



Duke of Cambridge – artist and date unconfirmed

Prince Adolphus became the Duke of Cambridge, and lived well into four reigns - those of his father, two brothers, and niece Victoria. The slightly earlier free front, in relation to those three from his brothers, is dated 13 September 1816, also from London and sent in the afternoon or evening period. To No.2 Carlton House in Brighton, the addressee is again a woman, as were the other three receivers. Mrs R Keate was the wife of the surgeon Robert Keate, who later became Serjeant-Surgeon to King William IV and Queen Victoria. Adolphus has signed with his title 'Cambridge', to enable postage without payment. From this year of 1816, until 1837, he served as Viceroy of the Kingdom of Hanover on behalf of his elder brothers, George IV and later William IV. When his niece became queen, this role ceased with the end of the union of the crowns of the United Kingdom and Hanover, due to Hanover being under Salic Law whereby a woman could not rule. Thankfully, a law that was not in force in the United Kingdom.

Article by Dane Garrod



The Corrie Quiz

1 Who holds the Guinness World Record for the longest-serving soap actor?
a) Bernard Youens b) William Roache
c) Ben Kingsley

2 At what number house did Hilda and Stan Ogden live?
a) 13 b) 14 c) 15

3 Who played character Elaine Perkins?
a) Anne Kirkbride b) Joanna Lumley
c) Anne Reid

4 Who said 'You great, big, fat lump of human uselessness'?
a) Hilda Ogden b) Ena Sharples
c) Elsie Tanner

5 How many cobbles are laid on Coronation Street?
a) 50,000 b) 54,000 c) 56,000

How to enter Please send your answers, with your contact address or phone number, marked 'Corrie Quiz', to: Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Or by email to tim.lees2@royalmail.com

Prizes The first five correct entries drawn after the closing date win the Coronation Street Presentation Pack.

Closing Date 15 July 2020.

March solutions – 007 Quiz 1) b 2) c 3) b 4) c 5) a 6) b

Winners John Allistone, Dorset; Celia Rhodes, Woking; Mr D Thomas, Littleborough; John Paulson, Derbyshire; Helen Richardson, Newcastle Upon Tyne.

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 the 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 the closing date. To receive this please send an SAE to The Editor.

New Issues and Withdrawals

17 June

Withdrawal James Bond: Stamp Souvenir. Stamp Sheet Souvenir.



18 June

Issue Roman Britain: Stamps (2 x 2nd Class, 2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.63, 2 x £1.68 – 4 x horizonal se-tenant pairs). Presentation Pack. Stamp Souvenir. First Day Envelope. First Day Cover Stamps. Postcards (8 in set).



26 June

Withdrawal Dad's Army: Generic Sheet.

6 July

Withdrawal The Declaration of Arbroath: Commemorative Cover.



7 July

Withdrawal The Romantic Poets: Stamp Souvenir.



9 July

Issue Queen: Stamps (4 x 1st Class, 4 x £1.63 – 2 x horizontal strips). Miniature Sheet (3 x 1st Class, 2 x 1.63). Presentation Pack. Stamp Souvenir. Stamp Sheet Souvenir. First Day Envelope. First Day Cover Stamps. First Day Cover Miniature Sheet. First Day Cover Prestige Stamp Book pane. Prestige Stamp Book (pane one: 4 x 1st Class, pane two: 4 x £1.63, pane three: 2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.63, pane four: 4 x 1p, 4 x 1st Class). Press Sheet. Stamp Book. Queen Album Cover Collector's Sheet. Queen Live Collector's Sheet. Postcards (14 in set). Full Stamp Sheet (1st Class). Half Stamp Sheet (1st Class). Full Stamp Sheet (£1.63). Half Stamp Sheet (£1.63). Framed Stamps. Framed Stamps and Miniature Sheet. Framed Album Cover Collector's Sheet. Framed Bohemian Rhapsody Print Enlargement and Stamp. Bohemian Rhapsody Souvenir Pack. Greatest Hits Souvenir Pack. A Night At The Opera Fan Sheet. Album Collection Fan Sheet. Stamp Mount. The Bohemian Rhapsody Bundle. Queen Legends Bundle. Queen Live Coin Cover (BU/ Silver/Gold).

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