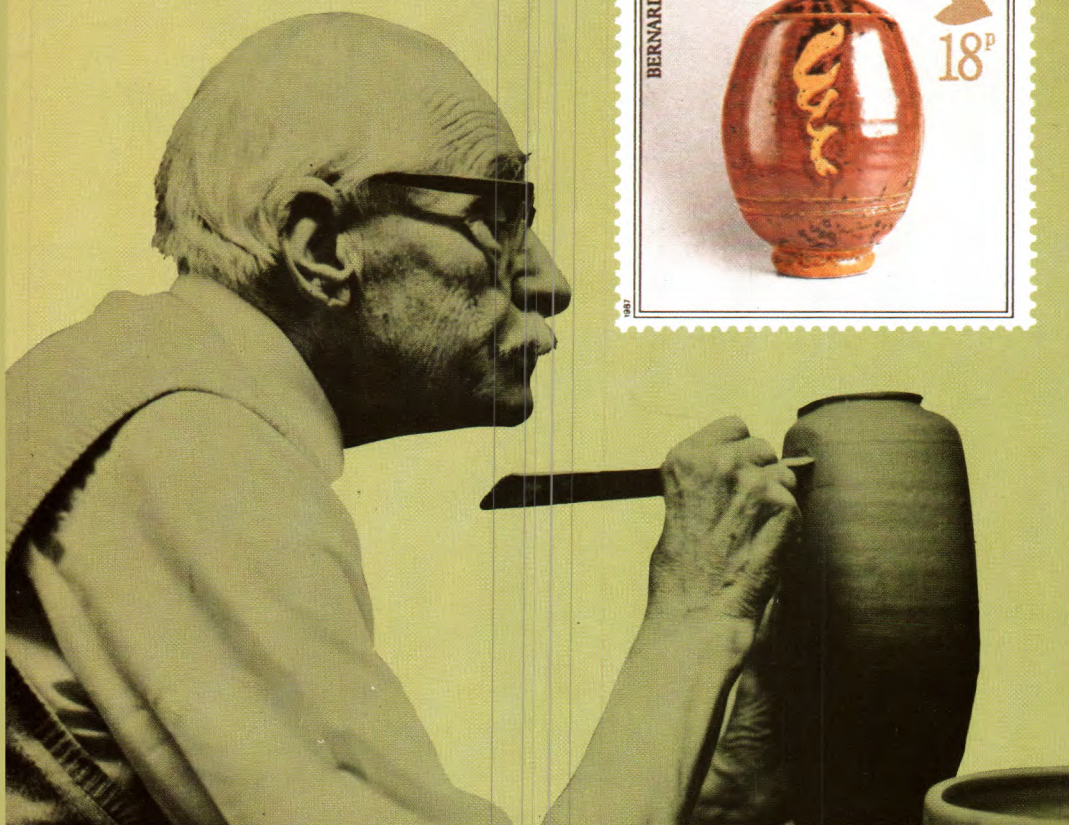


British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 25

Number 1

September 1987



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Philatelic Points of View

The Stamps and Philately Division of the Royal Mail would like hear more from philatelists about matters of concern to them.

Accordingly, in the next six issues of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* we shall be inviting readers to put forward their comments and suggestions on a wide range of philatelic topics.

To assist those who will be dealing with your correspondence, attention will be focused on one particular subject area each month. The subject for this month is PHQ Cards and Postcard Albums.

So, if you would like to express a view or make a suggestion regarding either of these items please write to the address given below. On this occasion we are particularly interested in your views concerning the possible introduction of a postcard album for displaying postcards horizontally. All correspondence should be addressed to:

Philatelic Points of View
PHQ Cards & Postcard Albums
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 the Royal Mail panel of judges.

Front Cover

The front cover features Bernard Leach decorating a pot at St Ives in November 1971 together with the Studio Pottery stamp showing one of his pots. The illustration is courtesy of Eileen Lewenstein of *Ceramic Review*.

Studio Pottery

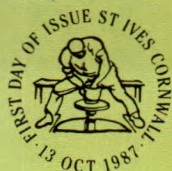
13 October 1987

On 13 October four stamps are being issued for Studio Pottery marking the centenary of the birth of Bernard Howell Leach (1887 – 1979), regarded as the father-figure of the studio pottery movement in Britain. The designs are by Tony Evans, his first for The Post Office, and feature pots by Leach and three other potters.



In the latter part of the 19th century and the beginning of this there was a reaction against impersonal materialism and handmade pots began to be made by such as the Martin brothers in the Fulham Pottery in London. Pots as works of art were made and exhibited from 1912 by William Staite Murray, later to become head of the Ceramics Department of the Royal College of Art.

Bernard Leach learnt the craft of pottery in Japan where he stayed for 11 years from 1909 till

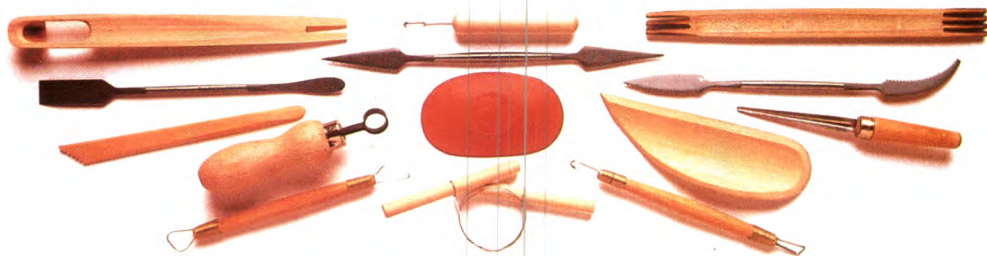


Bernard Leach sketching

1920. He also visited potters in Korea and China. On his return to Britain in 1920 he founded the Leach Pottery at St Ives with Shoji Hamada, a great Japanese potter who had accompanied Leach back to England. He was very critical of the pottery then in common use and said in his book *A Potter's Book* "about nine-tenths of the industrial pottery produced in England ... is hopeless bad both in form and decoration".

Primarily concerned with making well-designed functional pots which everyone could afford, Leach's ideal was to re-establish a standard of quality. His was a blend of classical oriental pottery and traditional English pre-industrial slipware. He liked to relate how the technique of 17th century English slip decoration was revived at St Ives by Hamada and himself after observing the patterns made by blackberry jam and Cornish clotted cream spread on a slice of bread.

A pot by Leach, now in The Holburne Museum and Crafts Study Centre, Bath, is featured on the **18p** stamp.



Thanks to Leach studio pottery in Britain blossomed and many fine potters have followed him. Lucie Rie was born in Vienna in 1902 and came to Britain in 1938. In 1946 she was joined by Hans Coper and they worked together for many years influencing many younger potters.



Elizabeth Fritsch

One of these was Elizabeth Fritsch, a student in a period of bold experiment in the 1960s and early 1970s. An example of her work is on the **26p** value. She coils and builds her pots rather than throwing them on a wheel, and then decorates the irregular shapes with geometric colour patterns either complementing or altering the form of each pot.



Elizabeth was born in Wales in 1940. After education at the Royal College of Art, London, she established her own workshop at Welwyn Garden City. Among various exhibitions she had a one-woman show at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1979.



On the **31p** stamp is a pot by Lucie Rie. Her work employs rich and daring glazes, often embellished by finely scratched decorations. Here she is also shown working on one of her pots on the wheel.



Lucie Rie

Lucie Rie CBE has been a studio potter since 1927. She has had many exhibitions, often with Hans Coper. These have included the Victoria and Albert Museum and several on the continent including in museums in Hamburg and Düsseldorf.

Hans Coper



Hans Coper, whose work is shown on the 34p stamp, was born in 1920, and as a young German engineer came to work with Lucie Rie in 1946. They remained close friends until his death in 1981. His matt stoneware pieces in black, cream or white possess great purity, their shapes often evoking a feeling of early Greek Cycladic figures. He taught at the Royal College of Art and Elizabeth Fritsch said of him "his teaching had the same integrity and strength as had his pots".



From this issue the 26p value replaces the 22p. This follows the reduction of the European postage rate from 22p to 18p and the decision to introduce the overseas postcard rate (26p) rather than retaining a value of use only for non-EEC European countries.

Technical Details

Designed by Tony Evans, the stamps have been printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons Limited. In format they are almost square, 35mm x 37mm, perf. 14 x 14½, printed on unwatermarked phosphor-coated paper in sheets of 100 on PVA Dextrin gum.

PHQ Cards

PHQ cards (Nos. 105 A-D) featuring each of the four stamps will be available from 29 September, price 15p each.

Presentation Pack

The presentation pack will cost £1.31 and was designed by John Gorham with text by Edwin Mullins. Featured are several other pots and potters. On the reverse of the pack appears in black one of the 1982 British Textiles stamps as a related thematic issue.

First Day Cover

The first day cover was designed by John Gorham and costs 16p each. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the Bureau first day cover service, one from the British Philatelic Bureau featuring clay being moulded on a potter's wheel; the other is from St Ives, and shows the figure of a potter with a wheel.

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the four stamps cancelled with either postmark. The charges will be £1.56 (inland) and £1.36 (overseas). Application forms, available from the Bureau and at Head Post Offices, should be returned not later than 13 October.

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

'St Ives' Special Postmark Duty,
Circuit House,
St Clement Street,
TRURO,
Cornwall,
TR1 1AB

Designing the Victorian Britain Stamps

MIKE DEMPSEY

To be given the task of encapsulating the Victorian era on four 40mm x 30mm pieces of paper was, to say the least, horrifying. The sheer enormity of the subject is ample fodder for two dozen stamps. I started by researching the period on a general level. Then I grouped specific areas such as invention, literature, art, heroism etc and ended up with a large cross reference list of possible subjects to illustrate. I eliminated anything that had been covered on earlier special stamps and from the remaining list accumulated as much visual material as possible. It was like a crazy jigsaw puzzle without a completed picture to refer to.



My main problem was to find a successful way of displaying multiple images on single stamps. I have always loved the visual splendour of the Victorian period, particularly advertising art. I thought of the omnibuses and buildings laden with advertisements. The Victorians had an insatiable appetite for quantity, every conceivable manufactured item was decorated, with an enormous amount of detail. Their homes were shrines to the period; on the walls hung walnut and maple frames depicting sometimes heroic events, sometimes the sentimental story telling art of the period. This image of the Victorian drawing room became the linking thread to my jigsaw puzzle dilemma. The idea of a frieze of frames became the backdrop to the four stamps.

The initial designs incorporated full colour reproductions of Victorian paintings with a

monochrome portrait of Queen Victoria superimposed. This approach proved a very difficult printing problem with the complexity of detail in each painting and the massive reduction involved being impossible to achieve. Another way had to be found. I recalled that prior to photography all news events in the Victorian era were illustrated using engravings. This seemed an appropriate avenue to explore. I had an illustration produced in the style of an engraving but it lacked the detail and finesse so apparent in genuine engraving.

So it was suggested that rather than imitate an engraving, why not have the illustrations engraved – obvious! I had been so wrapped up in formulating the composition of each stamp it had not occurred to me that intaglio engraving was the perfect way to pay homage to the Victorian era. From that point on and in collaboration with the brilliant engraver Czeslaw Slania the stamps were born. A lot of blood, sweat and tears on everyone's part, but to see those four little pieces of paper sitting on envelopes winging their way around the world was worth every minute. I can also now impress my children and friends with my concentrated knowledge of the Victorian period (although my dog's not too impressed!).

RDP Nominations

Secretaries of BPF affiliated societies and federations can now make nominations of philatelists to be considered for the 1988 election to the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, to reach the Secretary of the Board of Election by 31 December.

Nominations must be made on the appropriate form which is obtainable from:

Leon V Rapkin
Eaglewood
Oxhey Lane
Hatch End
Middx HA5 4AL

Nominations which have been made in the past three years are still valid for consideration and need not be renewed.

New Stamp Book Covers

Five new stamp book covers are to be issued on 29 September. These will include two counter books and three stamp vending machine books.

The counter books priced £1.30 (containing 10 x 13p stamps with one central phosphor bar) and £1.80 (containing 10 x 18p ACP) will carry a special promotion offering customers the opportunity to send off for a special "Jolly Postman" pack. The pack is based on the *Jolly Postman* book by Allan and Janet Ahlberg, published by Heinemann. Ideal for children aged four to 10 years old, it contains postcards and an illustrated poster with lots of ideas for making letter writing fun. The books are designed by Eric Stemp. Cylinder numbers will appear on every sixth book and both books will appear in both left and right hand formats.

The three machine-vended books include two 50p and one £1 books. The first 50p book (cover No.3 in the MCC Bicentenary series) features the wrought iron decoration on the pavilion roof and the present Lord's Pavilion. Designed by Patricia Howes, the contents are 2 x 18p, 1 x 13p and 1 x 1p with phosphor bands as before.

The second 50p book (cover No.3 in the series on Botanical Gardens features the Mount

Stuart Gardens in Northern Ireland. Designed by Graham Evernden, the contents are 3 x 13p, 2 x 5p and 1 x 1p with phosphor bands as before.

The £1 book cover, No.3 in the Sherlock Holmes series, is entitled *The Adventure of the Speckled Band*. The cover was illustrated by Andrew Davidson from an idea by Mark Collicutt. The contents are 5 x 18p and 1 x 13p stamps, again phosphor bands as before.

All five stamp books will be available initially from philatelic sales counters or by post from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT. The books will become generally available from post offices or vending machines as appropriate once existing stocks are used up. The £1 and 50p Botanical Gardens books will be available only from the new electronic stamp vending machines, now being introduced at selected offices throughout the country. Cylinder numbers of the stamps will appear on every eighth vending machine book.

Straight-edged Stamp Books

For this issue the stamp panes for the 50p Botanical Gardens and £1 Sherlock Holmes books will be produced without perforations on the outer long edges. We continue to find it difficult to meet the requirements of our phila-

MCC Bicentenary

Third in a series of illustrations by Patricia Howes on Lords Cricket Ground

Front: Wrought iron decoration on pavilion roof
Back: The present Lords pavilion
Printed by Harrison & Sons Limited



Mount Stuart

Lilium auratum
Third in a series on Botanical Gardens

illustrated by Graham Evernden
Printed by Harrison & Sons Limited



Sherlock Holmes
"The Adventure of the Speckled Band"
 Third in a series
 from an idea by
 Mark Collicott
 illustrated by
 Andrew
 Davidson
 Printed by
 Harrison &
 Sons Limited



£1

**Royal Mail
 Stamps**

**Five at 18p
 One at 13p**



£1.80

**Royal Mail
 Stamps**

Ten at 18p

**Special
 Offer for
 3 first
 class
 stamps**

**See inside back
 cover for details**

telic customers for books with regular and even perforations. We have investigated the possibility of improving the equipment but this would be expensive with no guarantee that collectors would be satisfied with the results.

We are now experimentally producing these two books with straight edges in a style similar to many other countries. We will look at the reaction to this experiment before deciding whether to make all books straight-edged and I would be interested in the views of *Bulletin* readers. DAVID DALE, Manager, Definitive Stamps

NPM Annual Closure

As in past years the National Postal Museum will close for the week beginning Monday 5 October, re-opening on Monday 12 October. This is to allow essential maintenance to be completed.

The sales counter, situated in the Museum entrance, will, however, remain open during this period.

There will be a new display of the R M Phillips collection at the Museum which will be based on Victorian printing methods. This will be on view from October for one year. A leaflet on the subject will also be available.

BPF Congress at Eastbourne

The British Philatelic Congress is taking place at the Cavendish Hotel, Eastbourne from 10 to 13 September. There will be a special card featuring the 22p Safety at Sea stamp of 1985 which showed Beachy Head Lighthouse. Cost is 20p each (plus 20p postage) and there will be a special postmark for each of the four days also featuring the lighthouse. Serviced cards are 75p each or £3 for a set of four. They are available from the British Philatelic Federation, 107 Charterhouse St, LONDON EC1M 6PT.



Victorian Printing Methods

Part 1: Line Engraved Recess Printing

L N WILLIAMS

The early Victorian producers of postage stamps printed them with painstaking determination – one sheet at a time.

In the earliest days of postage stamp production the presses were worked by hand. The pressman pulled on spokes standing out from the circumference of a large wheel. As he pulled the spokes one after another towards him, his operation worked a ratchet in the press and a plate was forced under pressure beneath a cylinder which revolved in harmony with the plate's motion.

The plate contained the stamp images in lines and dots. They may be considered as troughs and pits (of course, minute). They were sunk beneath the plate's surface. They held the ink. The pressman covered the plate with paper and yielding blankets. The combined movements of plate and cylinder under pressure squeezed them together. The result was that the paper was distorted into the troughs and pits and into contact with the ink.

When the plate reached the limit of its travel, the pressure was released and the plate returned to the pressman. He removed the covering from the paper. He lifted the paper from the plate. As that was done the paper pulled out the ink from the troughs and pits.

The paper then bore the printed impression. The ink stood up in minute ridges and humps from the surface of the paper. The back of the paper was minutely indented where it had been forced into each trough and pit.

That method of printing is, often, referred to as recess printing from line engraved plates.

It was the first method used for producing adhesive postage stamps. The printers who used it were a partnership and the firm name varied over the years; popularly they are referred to as Perkins Bacon and Co.

Line-engraved recess printing was one of three Victorian printing methods used in producing the stamp issues of Great Britain during the reign of Queen Victoria, from their inception in 1840 until her death in 1901.

The other two methods were relief-printing (or letterpress-printing) and embossing.

This is the first in a series on Victorian printing methods. It coincides with the opening of a new exhibition in the National Postal Museum on that subject based on the R M Phillips collection, due in October, and also with the Victorian Britain stamps issued on 8 September.

Letterpress printing was the printing method used mainly by the firm known as De La Rue & Co. but they were preceded by William Clowes and Sons.

Embossing was carried out by the Inland Revenue, Somerset House.

Line-Engraved Recess Printing

The principle of line-engraved recess printing is: into smooth metal are cut troughs and pits, that is, recesses; ink is forced or dabbed into them, but none is allowed to remain on the surface of the metal; then paper is pressed into contact with the metal and forced into the recesses; when the paper is taken away it sucks out the ink, which lies on the paper in ridges and humps corresponding with the troughs and pits in the metal. If the trough or pit is deep and large the corresponding ridge or hump on the paper will be high and large; similarly, a narrow and low ridge results from a narrow and shallow trough. The deeper the trough the more intense the colour of the ridge. A line-engraved design in the metal consists of a series of troughs and pits varying in depth and width; a recess-engraved design on the paper consists of a series of ridges and humps, varying in height, width and intensity.

Stamp production in 1840 required many identical reproductions of a design on to a printing surface. The line-engraved recess printing process could meet the requirements because a piece of steel could be (and can be) softened and then hardened. The technical method used by the Victorian printers was to pack the piece of steel in pure iron filings, and then heat the package. That process, by removing carbon

from the steel, softened it.

Engraving was then carried out on the softened steel by cutting the troughs and pits with special tools. Afterwards, the engraved steel was hardened by heating in contact with carbon, which had the effect of adding carbon to the steel. The piece of engraved steel is called a "die".

A softened narrow cylinder, called a roller (sometimes called a mill or molette) was then placed in a transfer press, which could exert great pressure. The roller was rolled or rocked under pressure across the surface of the hardened steel die. The result was that the surface of the roller was pressed into the recesses on the die. They became ridges and humps which protruded from the roller's circumference.

The roller was in turn hardened. It is called a "roller die". It was then used, again in a transfer press, to roll into a softened plate the ridges and humps standing out from the roller die's circumference, thus causing troughs and pits in the plate. The design on the plate was an exact, identical, reproduction of the design on the die. The design remained, unaffected, on the roller die. This process, known as transferring, was carried out in as many different positions on the plate as were required. In the cases of the earliest stamps, that was 240 times, in 20 rows of 12.

The plate was then hardened and used for printing.

Of course, before printing could take place, before even the die could be produced, preliminary steps had to be taken. The stamps had to be designed.

The Penny Black Design

The amount of care and selection which went into the design of the One Penny Black – and its companion, the Two Pence Blue – has to be inspected to be realised.

Rowland Hill and those charged with the duty of bringing the adhesive postage stamp into use had no direct precedent on which to draw. It was the first of its kind. They had to create a paradigm.

The design determined upon was the Queen's head against a background and completed by an inscription of purpose and value.

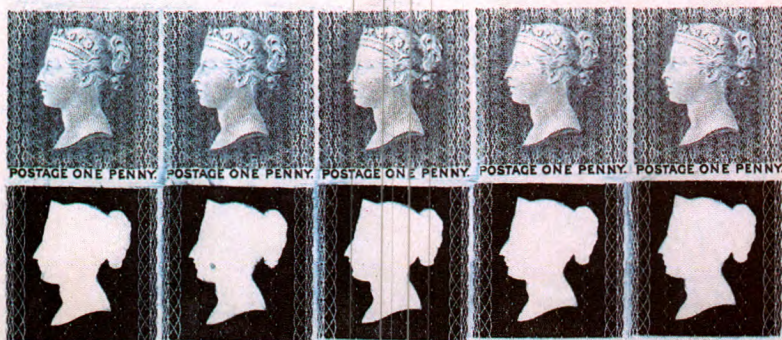
The portrait was engraved by Charles and Frederick Heath. The first attempt proved unsatisfactory. The background was too light and the head was not engraved deeply enough.

The background was taken from a plate bearing stock designs. The chosen stock design was transferred to a roller, the unwanted portions were removed and a space was cleared for reception of the engraved portrait. The design on the roller was transferred to a flat die.

One item which strikingly reveals the need for tonal balance is a proof from a plate of 10 subjects in two rows of five. The upper five subjects picture the first head against a light background with wording at the foot in a line. The lower five depict the head in outline only and a much heavier background, the one eventually adopted for the stamps.

Into the space left for reception of the head on a single die, a fresh engraving of the head was made. It was masterly. It was used.

Top and bottom labels with corner squares



Early proof from a plate of 10 subjects showing the need for tonal balance.



3

Left: Old Original die, and right: the re-engraved die of 1854.

were added. The top squares were filled with a star-like design. The lower squares were left blank for the reception of security devices to be added later.

The die was complete and served as the origin of thousands of images on plates until September 1854, by which time wear had made the die unserviceable. Years later the words OLD ORIGINAL were inscribed on that die.

The unserviceable die was copied in 1854 and William Humphrys carefully worked over the lines of the Queen's portrait, deepening them. That die had the word NEW engraved on it later. It is popularly known as "the re-engraved die".

The Printing Plate

When the die was completed and adjudged to be satisfactory, the next step was to make a roller die of it.

That having been done, the next step was to make a printing plate. The siderographist (the person performing the work) used the roller die in the transfer press on a soft steel plate in 240 different positions one after another so that, in due course, it bore 240 impressions of the design in 20 rows of 12 – 240 because there were, in those pre-decimal currency days, 240 pence in £1.

The transferring of the design in each posi-

tion involved numerous "passes" of the roller die until sufficient depth had been attained, that is, so that even the highest of the protruding ridges on the roller die had been pressed into the plate fully. Each "pass" involved rolling the roller die forwards and backwards under pressure in the particular position being worked on. When the individual image on the plate attained its proper depth, it is referred to as an "entry". The whole process is known as entering the plate.

Entering a plate was an operation which required critical adjustment of pressure and attention to speed. The reason is that soft steel had the ability to flow in front of the line of pressure. If the "pass" was too fast, or if the pressure was too great, a minute wave of metal was pushed forward (or backwards) stretching the design. On the next "pass" the design cut by the roller would not coincide with the design that had already been impressed into the plate. The result was that duplication of parts of the design occurred.

When all the 240 entries had been made, the plate was not complete. Different roller dies were used to impress instructions outside the rows of stamps. On the plate for the One Penny stamp the instructions read:

PRICE 1^d Per Label. 1^s/- Per Row of 12. £1 Per Sheet.

Place the Labels ABOVE the address and towards the RIGHT HAND SIDE of the Letter.

In Wetting the Back be careful not to remove the Cement.



The proof sheet complete but without the corner letters.

Also, aligned with the inscription, a number was engraved to indicate which plate produced the sheet of stamps.

When all those operations had been carried out the plate was still not complete: 480 squares remained blank in the lower corners of the stamp designs. The blanks had to be filled with the security devices in the form of 240 different combinations of letters.

The letters were incused. Each letter was on the face of a plug. In the earliest days the siderographist positioned it as carefully as he could and struck it firmly and repeatedly with a hammer until the letter had sunk sufficiently into the plate. In later months the plug was fitted into an L-shaped holder and the siderographist struck the back of the holder.

In the right-hand stamp corner the letters used were (reading from left to right along the rows) from A to L; in the left-hand stamp corner the letters used were (reading downwards on each vertical column) from A to T. The stamp in the top left sheet corner was lettered "A A". The stamp in the bottom right sheet corner was lettered "T L".

The thought behind the adoption of the

security device was that it would hinder, if not prevent, forgery since suspicion would be aroused by the appearance of many stamps with the same combination of lettering and making differently lettered forgeries would be expensive.

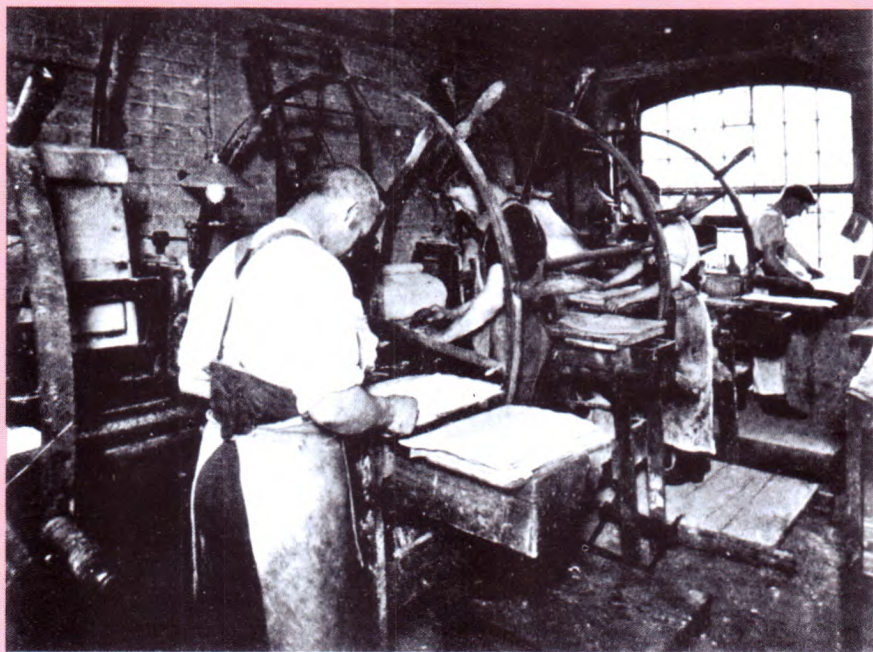
When the plate bore all the complete designs, inscriptions and plate numbers they had to be cleaned up by removing burr, that is, excess metal displaced by the rolling in and incusing processes and lying on the surface of the plate. That done, the plate was hardened ready for printing.

Printing from Line-Engraved Plates

Inking

The ink used for printing from line-engraved plates had to be comparatively stiff. To make the ink more fluid the plate on the press had to be kept warm. That was done by incorporating a heating box in the press beneath the bed on which the plate was laid.

The workman covered the whole surface of the plate with ink. He did it by using a dabber (a cloth pad) and he "punched" ink into the recessed troughs and pits. The surface of the



The printing presses at Perkins Bacon.

plate, that is, the non-printing surface, was then wiped clean and polished.

He wiped it with a wiping cloth to remove most of the surface ink. He removed all but a thin film. Covering his hands with whiting, he rubbed them over the surface, removing the thin film of ink and leaving the non-printing surface clean. Ink was in the printing surface, that is, in the troughs and pits.

Paper

Damp paper is more easily distorted than dry paper and paper previously dampened and stored was laid on the wiped and polished plate.

The paper was then covered with the blanket in the press and the pressman pulled on the spokes to cause plate, paper and blanket to travel under the line of pressure imparted by appropriately adjusted cylinders.

Times involved

Contemporary records of Perkins Bacon and Co (whose archives were presented in 1936 to the Royal Philatelic Society, London) reveal that, even as late as 1864, when the firm had had 24 years' experience of plate making, making a plate took no less than nine days from start to finish at the time when the stamps had letters in all four corners.

As for printing, an average was about 300 sheets of stamps a day from each press.

1988 Stamp Programme Details

Natural History: The Linnean Society. To mark the bicentenary of the Linnean Society, the oldest extant biological learned society four stamps will be issued on 19 January. The designs by Ted Hughes show: *Myoxocephalus scorpius* bull-rout (a fish); *Nuphar lutea* yellow water-lily; *Cygnus columbianus* Bewick's swan; and *Morchella esculenta* morel (a fungus). The illustrations are taken from archival material in the library of the Linnean Society, and give some idea of the wide range of natural history subjects covered by the Society.

Welsh Bible. Four stamps to mark the 400th anniversary of the translation of the Bible into Welsh by Bishop William Morgan, to be issued on 1 March (St David's Day). The designs by Keith Bowen (a Welshman) show portraits of four Welsh Bible translators: William Morgan (first translator of the complete Bible into Welsh in 1588); William Salesbury (main translator of

the New Testament into Welsh 1567); Richard Davies (motivator and part translator of the New Testament into Welsh 1567); and Richard Parry (editor of the revised version of the Welsh Bible 1620).

The translation of the Bible into Welsh was of tremendous importance to Welsh language and culture and was instrumental in ensuring the survival of the Welsh language in its present form.

Sport. This set marks the centenary of the Football League, as well as three other sporting centenaries in 1988 – that of the British Amateur Gymnastics Association and of the Lawn Tennis Association. The issue date is 12 April. Designs by Jake Sutton illustrate football, gymnastics, tennis and skiing.

CEPT – Transport. “Means of Transport and Communication” is the theme recommended for the annual issue of Europa stamps by the Conference of European Posts and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT). The stamps also reflect some transport-related anniversaries and are to be issued on 10 May. The designs by Carroll, Dempsey and Thirkell show the *Queen Elizabeth*, launched in 1938; a Glasgow tram; the *Mallard* railway locomotive which won a world speed record in 1938; and a Handley Page aircraft loading mails.

Australian Bicentenary. To mark the bicentenary of the first European settlement of Australia, made by British settlers led by Admiral Phillip of Bath this set will be issued on 21 June. This will be a joint issue with the Australian Post Office. The designs reflect British and Australian connections in the areas of people, democracy, sport and culture.

Spanish Armada. This set marks the 400th anniversary of the defeat of the Spanish Armada by the English fleet under Lord Howard of Effingham. It will be issued on 19 July. Details of designs will be announced later.

Children's Verse. Based on the centenary of the death of Edward Lear who wrote a great deal of humorous verse for children, this set will be issued on 6 September. There will also be a miniature sheet for this issue which will go on sale on 27 September. Design details to be announced.

Christmas. Issued on 19 November, the traditional Christmas issue will reflect a religious theme.

The Genesis of the Machin Design

Part 9

DON STADDON

One Cast or Two?

It was recorded earlier in this series that there are two basic head types to be found on the Machin definitives. One has two curved lines of shading in the hair and a small pearl missing from the necklace (dark background stamps). The other has one line of shading and a full complement of pearls (gradated and light background stamps). In the February 1987 *Bulletin* the second head is incorrectly stated as having two lines of shading in the hair. I must apologise for the slip up!

The various schools of thought about the origin of these heads have been considered again and again. A number of lines of enquiry were pursued in the search of factual evidence but without complete success. Don Langley, who was responsible for photographing the head at Harrison's, is convinced that only one cast was used in the production of stamps.

Left: the head with two lines of shading in the hair; right: with one in the hair.

The Editor and I met George York, now enjoying a well-earned retirement, who was responsible for stamp production at the time, and worked closely with Arnold Machin during the development period. He also felt that only one cast was used.

What we are certain of is that the final cast was produced for solid dark background stamps. We also know that Arnold Machin worked progressively on the mould after photographic sessions in an effort to produce a cast of which the final selected photograph would not require subsequent retouching.

According to a letter from Harrison's in March this year many casts were made from the same mould with the detail at different depths trying to solve the lighting problems. If the detail was too deep the shadows were too harsh, and if it was not deep enough there was



insufficient shadow to enhance the design. Eventually, a cast was made that gave the right amount of shadow. (Nevertheless, despite Arnold Machin's best efforts, some retouching was necessary to remove a "golf ball" in the cheek.)

All sorts of artificial and natural lighting were tried, and in the end the best result came from a photograph taken inside the factory using north daylight with a precise amount of cloud over the sun.

This shows the amount of care and attention to detail undertaken to produce the perfect result – an approved master positive for the dark background stamps. This was the positive with two lines of shading and a missing pearl.

From this positive a succession of bromides resulted which were retouched and also had a black background overlay laid over the bromide. These were used to make negatives, at twice linear. In turn, these negatives were retouched and used to produce bromides. About 500 attempts were made before one was produced which found general satisfaction.

When it was subsequently decided to have a gradated background for the 1s stamp it was found that the dark background master was not suitable. A spare negative was selected for this purpose which Harrisons believe came from the same cast.

My examination of the available material suggests that it certainly came from the same mould, but not the same cast, at an earlier stage in the development process.

A cast has recently been discovered which supports this argument. This cast has one line of shading in the hair and a full complement of pearls but in every other way is the same as the cast used for the dark background stamps. I have used a process copied from Post Office records to reach this conclusion. It consists of lines connecting various parts of the design on the photographs which in both cases are exactly the same.

Consequently, I now believe, although it is unlikely to be proved, that both heads were derived from the same mould, but at different stages in its progressive modification by Arnold Machin. The spare negative chosen for the gradated background stamps came from work done prior to the production of the cast for the dark background stamps. At that time the mould produced a cast with one line of shading in the hair. This cast also had a complete set of pearls in the necklace.

Machin Exhibition at NPM

Entitled "The Genesis of the Machin Design", an exhibition will open at the National Postal Museum on 8 September and run until March 1988. It will be based on the work done by Arnold Machin and others in the few years which culminated in the issue of the first Machin definitives in June 1967 and the exhibition marks 20 years of the final design.

Much new information will be available to visitors which has come from study of the original files newly come to light. This has meant the discovery that the initial impetus came as far back as 1961 and designs from that period show the need for a profile head for the increasing number of commemoratives that were being issued. Illustrated here is a drawing by Michael Goaman retouched by Harrisons which was suggested for use.



Some of the main items on show include several casts by Machin from the preliminary period together with one of the casts which was actually photographed and used on the stamps. Most of the trial designs and essays have now been firmly dated and put into their correct sequence which in certain cases alters the information incorporated into the articles published over the past two years in the *Bulletin*.

80th Birthday of Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother, 1980

British Special Issues: No.139

FRANCIS KENNEDY

It is safe to say that no other British national alive today commands so much affection and respect as does Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother. Such a sweeping assertion automatically includes Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II who would be the first to recognise the unique position her own mother holds in the hearts of British people of all walks of life and political persuasions. Certainly, those who experienced the Second World War on the home front in Britain recall with pride the example of bravery and calm assurance, allied to a genuine concern for those in distress, during the German bombardment of 1940-43.



Nobody was really surprised when a commemorative stamp was proposed to mark the 80th birthday of the Royal Family's seemingly ageless matriarch. This was the first occasion that a British royal birthday, as distinct from a coronation or royal silver jubilee, had been commemorated in this way.

The issue was exceptional, too, in that it was confined to a single denomination, that of the contemporary first class letter rate of 12p, ensuring that the stamp was available for the widest possible public use. The Post Office very rarely issue a lone, single special stamp because the additional production costs involved cannot be recouped by any anticipated extra sales, but,

on this special occasion, there was no hesitation on the part of the Post Office which rejoiced at the opportunity to issue this stamp on 4 August, 1980 as its own tribute to a remarkable lady.

The design of the 1980 stamp, a simple three-quarters facing head and shoulders portrait of The Queen Mother, was based on a photograph by Norman Parkinson, to which Jeffery Matthews added the lettering and other details. Printing was by Harrison and Sons Limited in sheets of 100 (two panes of 50) in photogravure on phosphorised paper. The major listed constant variety occurs on Row 2, Stamp No.1 (no dot cylinder) and consists of a break in the left hand side where the pearls of the necklace impinge on the frame. Overall sales, before withdrawal on 3 August 1981 were 70,836,000.

The *Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Specialised Stamp Catalogue* notes that examples are known pre-released at Llandudno, Gwynedd, post-marked on 29 July, 1980.

Victorian Britain Cylinders

The cylinder numbers and colours printed of the Victorian Britain stamps to be issued on 8 September are as follows:

18p

Lemon 1A	Rose 1B	Greenish blue 1C	Brown- ochre 1D	Grey- black 2E
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22p

Lemon 1A	Rose 1B	Grey- black 1C	Brown- ochre 1D
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31p

Lemon 1A	Cerise 2B	Brown- ochre 2C	Greenish blue 1D	Grey- black 3E
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34p

Yellow- ochre 1A	Reddish brown 1B	Brown- ochre 2C
------------------------	------------------------	-----------------------

The background tint was printed in photogravure and on each value is pale stone.

The recess colours are: **18p** deep blue; **22p** deep brown; **31p** deep lilac; **34p** myrtle-green.

Victorian Britain Covers

The following are some of the commercial covers being prepared for the Victorian Britain issue of 8 September.

National Trust for Scotland. Four covers are being prepared by Benham featuring Victorian properties which are in the care of the National Trust for Scotland. The houses are: Brodick House, Haddo House, Brodie Castle and Falkland Palace. Covers with the full set of Victorian Britain stamps are available cancelled with a special handstamp in Edinburgh at £3.50 each (£14 per set of four) or signed by the present inhabitants of the houses at £5.50 each (£22 per set of four) from Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd, Westcliff House, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1SZ.



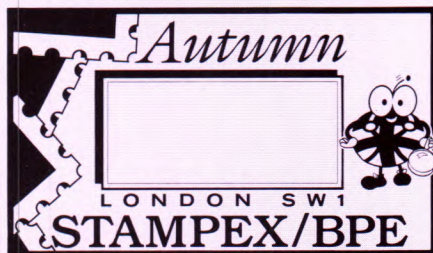
Victoria and Albert Museum. A cover is being produced by Benham featuring a young Victoria dancing with Prince Albert. Bearing the full set of stamps and cancelled by a special handstamp of London SW7 the covers cost £3.50 (£5.50 signed by Sir Roy Strong) and are available from Benham as above.



Crystal Palace. A cover has been produced featuring a print of the Crystal Palace reproduced from a printed textile. Cancelled with a special handstamp of London SW1, they will cost £4.25 with the complete set or £2.25 with the single stamp. Cheques and orders to A G

Bradbury, 2 Fairholme Road, LEICESTER LE2 6GL, overseas orders to add 50p.

Llandrindod Wells Victorian Festival. A special cover will be produced for the Festival which runs from 4 to 13 September. Bearing the Victorian Britain stamps and cancelled on the first day of the stamps with a special handstamp from Llandrindod Wells they cost £2 with the full set or £1 with the 18p stamp only. Orders with remittances to The Festival Office, Town Hall, Memorial Gardens, Temple Street, LLANDRINDOD WELLS, Powys, LD1 5DL.



Autumn Stampex/BPE 87

Autumn Stampex/BPE 1987 will take place at the Royal Horticultural Halls, London SW1 from Tuesday 22 till Sunday 27 September.

There will be a special handstamp used on mail posted at the exhibition and this will have a moveable date and include the Stamp Bug in the design. There will also be a slogan die in use at London SW1 in advance.

Also at the exhibition the Exhibition Card will be on sale with a special cachet for Autumn Stampex/BPE.



Philatelic Terms Explained

KENNETH F CHAPMAN

No.16: Underprints

So far as the stamps of Great Britain are concerned, the term "underprints" relates to an authorised printing on the back of stamps *under* the gum.

The origin of underprints was due to an unauthorised *overprint*, namely the letters "O.U.S." within two parallel wavy lines which, from 1859 to 1869, the Oxford Union Society printed on the face of the then current 1d stamps which the Union supplied free to its members. The overprint was to discourage and/or prevent the theft and improper use of these stamps.

However, the Post Office ruled that the overprint was an illegal defacement of the stamps and the Union was instructed to have the endorsement printed on the back under the gum. Accordingly, the printers of the stamps, Perkins Bacon & Co., carried out the underprinting before the sheets were gummed.

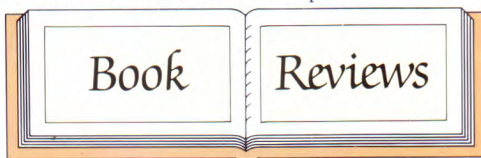


The Post Office permitted the practice of using this form of protective underprinting from 1867 to 1882 and during that period only four organisations, other than the Oxford Union Society, took advantage, officially, of the privilege. They were: J & C Boyd & Co; W H Smith & Son; Copestake, Moore (*later* Hughes), Crampton & Co. (all London firms) and the Great Eastern Railway.

Apart from these officially approved underprints, it is thought that over 40 other firms and organisations underprinted stamps, without approval, on top of the gum. These can only be recognised when found mint or unused since floating used examples off paper destroyed the gum and the underprint.

The only other notable British underprint occurred after official withdrawal of the scheme in 1882. This was when an advertisement reading "Pears Soap" appeared on the back of the ½d vermilion stamp of 1887 – the "Jubilee" issue – in orange, blue or mauve. This rare item is quoted in Gibbons catalogue "*from* £300 each", depending on the colour of the underprint and the condition of the stamp. Another Pears advertisement, reading "Use Pears Soap", was also underprinted, in red, on the ½d vermilion.

Outside Great Britain, advertisement underprints occur in Victorian issues of New Zealand while a further form of underprint of the numeral of face value of the stamp is found on the backs of some Greek stamps of 1861-62.



Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue: Part 1 British Commonwealth 1988 edition. £18.95. c.1040 pp.

The publication of "the red book" heralds the opening of the new philatelic season. This year there are price increases for many GB items including used Victorian material, early phosphor commemoratives, and Postage Dues. Numerous revisions have, as always, been made to the listings.

British Stamp Booklets: History and Series 1 Trials by Jean Alexander and Leonard F Newbery. 20pp + cover. Published by Great Britain Philatelic Society, available at £3 (+ 25p postage) from Peter L High (Personal), Equity & Law House, 84 Park Lane, Croydon CR9 1QX.

This is the first in a series of booklets on GB stamp books and will trace them from their inception to 1971. The series will be published over a number of years. It has been written by the leading authorities on stamp books and the series is set to become the standard work. This first part is profusely illustrated with early trial material and the information given is invaluable. Not light reading, however, and some of the abbreviations are unnecessary and confusing. Yet, when complete, it will provide the answers to nearly all questions, whether specialist or more general. It brings together information from files in PO Archives, hitherto little studied, and from published articles.

NPM Postcards

As reported last month (page 267) the National Postal Museum is issuing a set of three postcards on 8 September. These feature Victorian pillar boxes and coincide with the issue of stamps for Victorian Britain.

Examples of the pillar boxes for two of the cards were illustrated last month. Here is shown a proof of one of the actual cards – that showing the 1872 Penfold (87/9). The other cards show the 1857 box designed by Richard Redgrave of the Department of Science and Art, and the 1856–7 box cast by Suttie and Company of Greenock for use in Scotland.



The cards will be available from the Museum shop, priced 20p each; sets of three will be available by mail order from the Museum priced 60p per set plus 18p handling charge. For mail orders in excess of £18 a handling charge of £1.38p will apply (these orders will be despatched by registered mail). Orders to the National Postal Museum, King Edward Building, King Edward St., LONDON EC1A 1LP.

There will be a special handstamp, in addition to the normal Maltese Cross handstamp, for one month from 8 September. It shows the head of Queen Victoria as used on the stamps of her reign and the Machin head of Queen



Elizabeth II. This also marks the opening of the display in the Museum on "The Genesis of the Machin Design" on 8 September celebrating 20 years of Machin definitives, and the 21st anniversary of the opening of the National Postal Museum in 1966. The handstamp is illustrated here.

Commemorative Covers

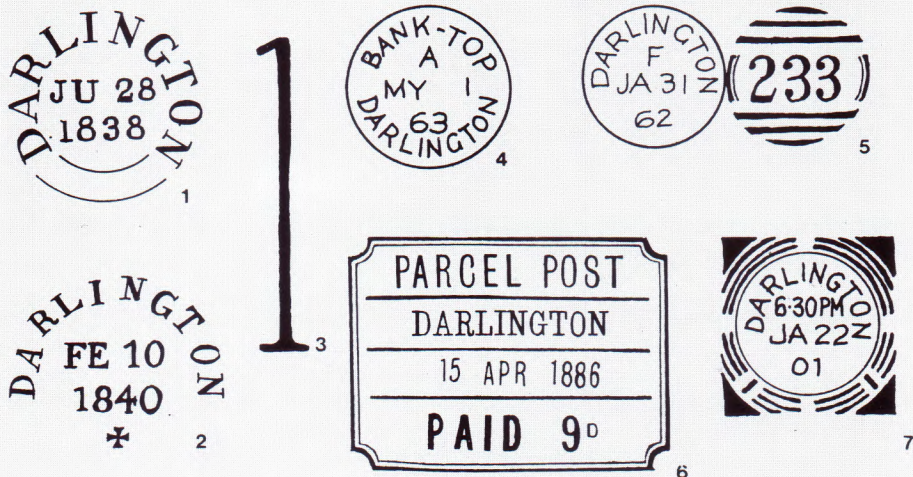
Braemar Gathering. On 5 September a cover and special handstamp will mark the annual Braemar Gathering. The cover design will offer a choice of 75 different clan tartans. Cancelling a Scottish Heraldry stamp the handstamp will be from Ballater, Aberdeenshire. Cost is £2.50 each from Pilgrim Philatelics Ltd, The Braemar Royal Highland Society, Society Office, Braemar, Aberdeenshire AB2 5YQ



**BRAEMAR
GATHERING**
5 SEP 1987
BALLATER
Aberdeenshire

Royal Navy. Marking the Royal Navy Equipment Exhibition from 5 to 11 September a cover has been produced with a special handstamp featuring the logo of the Defence Export Services Organisation. This will cancel a Scottish Heraldry stamp. Cost is £1.20 each with cheques made out to D Def PCS MOD and sent to the Philatelic Officer, D Def PCS, MOD, BFPO 777.

VICTORIAN POSTMARKS OF DARLINGTON



Darlington PS Postmark Card

The Darlington Philatelic Society is to issue its third postcard, this showing Victorian postmarks of Darlington, on 8 September to coincide with the Victorian Britain stamp issue. Three dates shown on the postmarks are of particular interest being Victoria's Coronation day, her Wedding Day and the day on which she died.

The cards will be serviced with an 18p Victorian Britain stamp and cancelled first day of issue with either Darlington fdi or the Darlington Philatelic Counter handstamp at a cost of 30p each, with mint cards at 10p each. Postage is extra in all cases. They are obtainable from Peter F Lyons at 7 Orchard Road, DARLINGTON DL3 6HS, with mint cards also being on sale at the National Postal Museum, London, and the Darlington Philatelic Counter.

September and not in November as listed.

The following are the agents for exhibitions in the near future, together with the cost of each card from them.

Scandinavia	Nordfrim DK 5450 Otterup Denmark
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The cost of each card is £2.

USA	Interpost PO Box 378 Malverne New York 11565 USA
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The cost of each card is £1.50.

France	Ancienne Maison Theodore Champion 12 rue Drouot 75009 Paris France
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The cost of each card is 20FF or 35FF if registration is required. The amount should be sent in French francs, if possible by *Mandat de Versement International* to postal account CCP Paris 382-78 M.

Exhibition Cards

Exhibition cards with the cachets from international exhibitions can now be obtained direct from the British Post Office agents involved. A list of exhibitions was given in the August *Bulletin*. There is one change to this list – Messen in Oslo, Norway will now take place on 5 and 6

Letters to the Editor



"Window Books"

Sir,

I would like to comment on the latest style of stamp books – the "Window" series, introduced last month.

Regrettably, the "window" covers what will obviously be the first or second stamp to be removed, hence detracting from the value of the window which should in practice indicate to the user that there is at least one stamp left in the book.

G A F GRINDE, London N6

Sir,

Congratulations to the Post Office on their new "window" booklets. The small sheetlets look so much neater than the trimmed perforations of previous issues.

My only complaint is: why are there two bar code variants for each type of booklet? Surely, this cannot be for operational reasons as it must be a disadvantage to have two different code numbers referring to the same product.

Why didn't the Post Office issue similar booklets for use in the new style vending machines. What a golden opportunity that was to get rid of trimmed perforations completely.

K HARRISON, Sheffield

(see page 8 for straight-edged book stamps –Ed.)

Sir,

I should be grateful if you would explain why there are two bar code variants for each of the new window stamp books. Collectors need assurance that unnecessary gimmicks are not being introduced simply to make them spend more money.

C J WHITBOURN, Great Ayton, Cleveland

Sir,

Most collectors of GB will ensure that their definitive series is complete, within their own personal range of interest. To this end, it is sometimes necessary to purchase stamp books. It would have been helpful, therefore, if Mr Dale's or Mr Newbery's articles (July and August *Bulletins*) had drawn attention to the fact that the 26p value in the £1.04 booklets had been redrawn. An illustration cannot necessarily be relied on as showing the end product placed on sale.

It would be interesting to know where all the cylinder panes went. Brighton Philatelic Counter received far less than one in five books.

Could the Post Office be persuaded to explain why the bar code variants are essential to this issue, please? It seems just a gimmick to double initial sales.

D A H BYATT, Haywards Heath, West Sussex

David Dale, Manager, Definitive Stamps replies:

Cylinder numbers and searching for them have been a problem with window books. Although one in five books have cylinder numbers they should be confined to the five books with the letter codes A, C, E, G, I and one in three of the bundles of books sent to counters with these codes should contain nothing but cylinder numbers.

The reason for this can be deduced from Mr Newbery's article in the August *Bulletin*, although it is not spelt out. In assembly, a strip of five stamp panes is affixed to a strip of five book covers before the entire strip is slit to make individual books. Since the cylinder numbers always fall in the same position they fall against the same code numbers and are kept together as they are packaged.

Fifty strips of five would typically produce:–
1 bundle x 50 Code A – no cylinder numbers
1 bundle x 50 Code A – all cylinder numbers
1 bundle x 50 Code A – no cylinder numbers
2 bundles x 25 Code B – no cylinder numbers
2 bundles x 25 Code B – no cylinder numbers

This concentration seems to have made it more difficult for some people to find cylinder numbers and the situation has been made worse because not all the books follow the typical pattern described above. There were some teething problems at the printers before production settled down into this pattern and I believe that some books with letter codes B, D, F, H and J contain cylinder numbers. Equally, not all the cylinder numbers are to be found in whole bundles.

I would ask collectors to bear in mind that both the production and sale are trials and one or two teething problems are to be expected. It is certain that 20% of all books issued contain cylinder numbers and so there can be no general shortage.

For the future we will look at ways of improving the distribution but given the way the books are closed there may always be slightly more difficulty in finding window book

cylinder numbers.

There have been quite a few questions about the bar codes and the reasons for having 10 rather than five. The simple answer is that they will be used in different ways during our trials to give more information on book sales. This experimental sale in the Bristol, Nottingham, Preston and York areas has been delayed but is expected to begin shortly. At the time of writing the target date was 1 September.

September Digest

Issued in September

8 September **Victorian Britain stamps** 18p, 22p, 31p, 34p

designer: Mike Dempsey

printing: Harrisons, photogravure and intaglio, 41mm x 30mm, perf. 15 x 14, printed on unwatermarked, phosphor-coated paper in sheets of 100 on PVA Dextrin gum.

Bureau f.d. service alternative handstamp – Newport, Isle of Wight

presentation pack £1.82

15 September **New High Value Definitive** £1.60

printing: Harrisons, photogravure, 30mm x 41mm on unwatermarked paper without phosphor in sheets of 100 on PVA Dextrin.

Bureau f.d. service alternative handstamp – Windsor

presentation pack £1.82

29 September **Studio Pottery PHQ cards**

(Nos105A–D) 15p each

29 September **Stamp books: Jolly Postman**

£1.80 (10 x 18p ACP) left and right

£1.30 (10 x 13p 1PB) left and right

Cricket: 50p machine-vended (2 x 18p 2PB, 1 x 13p 1PB, 1 x 1p 1PB)

Botanical Gardens: 50p machine-vended (3 x 13p 1PB, 2 x 5p 1PB, 1 x 1p 1PB) straight-edged

Sherlock Holmes: £1 machine-vended (5 x 18p 2PB, 1 x 13p 1PB) straight-edged

Withdrawn in September

15 September **RAF issue** – all items

15 September **NPM postcard** SS41

16 September **£1.41 high value definitive**

Studio Pottery Cylinders

The cylinder numbers and colours printed of the Studio Pottery stamps to be issued on 13 October are as follows:

18p

Gold	Lemon	Light red-brown	Chestnut	Light grey	Black
1A	1B	1C	1D	1E	3F

26p

Blue/silver	Yellow orange	Bright purple	Lavender	Bluish violet	Grey-brown	Black
1A	1B	1C	1D	1E	1F	2G

31p

Rose-lilac silver	Greenish yellow	Cerise	New blue	Grey-lilac	Black
1A	1B	2C	1D	1E	2F

34p

Copper	Yellow brown	Reddish brown	Grey lilac	Black
1A	1B	2C	1D	2E

British Philatelic Bulletin

Editor Douglas N. Muir

The *British Philatelic Bulletin* is published monthly by The Post Office.

Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor at:
National Postal Museum
King Edward Building
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LONDON
EC1A 1LP

Annual subscriptions (*Inland, Europe and overseas*)
Surface mail £4.00
Airmail £6.50

Subscriptions should be sent to:
British Philatelic Bureau
20 Brandon Street
EDINBURGH
EH3 5TT

Single copies from philatelic counters: 35p

Binders are available to hold 24 issues from the Philatelic Bureau price £5.00

Printed in Great Britain by Moore & Matthes (Printers) Ltd for The Post Office.