

March 1994

British Philatelic Bulletin



Royal Mail

Volume 31. No: 7 The Royal Mail Magazine for Stamp Collectors Price 75p

Pictorial Postcards 1894-1994

To mark the centenary of pictorial postcards in the United Kingdom, Royal Mail will issue five special stamps on 12 April 1994.

The designs are based on the saucy seaside postcards of Donald McGill (1875-1962) who is seen at work in the photograph below.



British Philatelic Bulletin Publication Series

191: The Royal Air Force

16 September 1986

16 September 1986

Royal Air Force activities were the subject of earlier issues, as in 1965 when the 25th anniversary of the Battle of Britain resulted in Britain's first se-tenant block of six different designs (all at 4d) in printed sheets of 240. There was, also, the 50p value in the mixed anniversaries set of 1968, which marked the 50th anniversary of the creation, in 1918, of the RAF in succession to the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service of the First World War.

This issue of 16 September 1986 marked the 50th anniversary of a vital reconstruction of the RAF in 1936. In that year Bomber, Fighter, Coastal and Training Commands were set up with the result that an efficient – even if small for the task – Fighter Command was ready for the outbreak of hostilities in 1939 to defend Britain, as in The Battle of Britain immortalized by “the few”.

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British Special Stamps

The Royal Air Force

British Philatelic Bulletin

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were: 17p - 35,497,000; 22p - 7,124,200;
6,343,200; 31p - 6,407,700; and 34p -
(000).

The first in a new series of **British Philatelic Bulletin Publications** has been launched with **British Special Stamps 1985-86** by Francis Kennedy. This continues the popular articles on each special set of stamps from 1924 onwards, published in the *Bulletin* between 1974 and 1992. Eighteen issues are dealt with in this book, including some of the most popular and interesting designs of the 1980s.

"To provide added interest to your collection, this book will prove useful information." (Review, *Stamp Magazine*)

"...this is a highly collectable book."
(Stamp & Coin Mart).

Available from:
British Philatelic Bureau,
20 Brandon Street,
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.
40 pages. Retail price £3.95.



Royal Mail

British Philatelic Bulletin

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Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly **British Postmark Bulletin** giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, Rest of World £21.75.

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Main Feature

Air Mails to South America by British South American Airways: 1946–1949

192

Richard Beith examines a little known air mail service.



British South American Airways poster, c.1948.

Royal Mail News

Pictorial Postcards 1894-1994

To mark the centenary of pictorial postcards in the UK, Royal Mail will issue five special stamps on 12 April 1994. They will be available at all post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, Post Shop Plus and Philatelic Counters. The designs are based on the saucy seaside postcards of Donald McGill (1875-1962).

The **19p** stamp (2nd class inland basic rate) shows a bather with Blackpool Tower in the background. Somehow defying gravity as she teeters on one leg, with a crab firmly clamped to the big toe of her raised foot, our polka dotted bather is seen with the Blackpool Tower in the background. The Tower celebrates its centenary this year.

countries) features "wish you were here!" the sun shines while gulls wheel overhead and our day tripper lounges back in a sagging deck chair happily penning the traditional seaside greeting to his friends back home. What could be more appropriate for this stamp issue celebrating the last hundred years of the pictorial postcards in the United Kingdom?

Punch and Judy are shown on the **35p** stamp (Worldwide postcard rate). Once a common sight at every seaside resort, this stamp depicts the traditional Punch and Judy theme, here given a twist by the unusual seating arrangement favoured by the children. In the background are other reminders of our formerly favoured holiday preferences – a pleasure pier and a donkey, also buckling under the weight of its unconcerned rider.

The top value, **41p** (basic airmail letter rate), portrays Tower Bridge in London. The simpler pleasures of a bygone era are remembered in this stamp, with bars of chocolate tumbling from the penny crane. The smile on the player's face will not be disturbed even when one bar is carried off in the jaws of a terrier-like mongrel.



The **25p** value (1st class inland & EC basic rate) depicts "Where's my little lad?" based on the inimitable style of the undisputed master of the comic seaside postcard, Donald McGill, this design depicts a red-nosed holiday maker peering along the beach for his lad, Willie, who sits happily out of sight eating an ice-cream in the shade of his father's enormous stomach.

The **30p** stamp (Europe rate, non-EC

A reminder of home for Londoners can be seen in the depiction of Tower Bridge, which this year, too, is celebrating its centenary.

The postcard was introduced in Austria in 1869. By 1891 the card had conquered Europe and America, and by 1889 cards linked to specific locations were popular. In 1910 more than 100 million were sold in the UK and in the 1930s every seaside town had its array of cards.



POST Valentine's CARD

ROYAL MAIL MINT STAMPS FOR ADDRESS ONLY

Pictorial Postcards
1894 - 1994

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road



The comic seaside postcard is a twentieth century's reaction to the hypocrisies of the Victorians, who insisted that as Thackeray wearily observed, humanity ended at the waist. The comic card revolution can be traced to four main factors: Rowland Hill's introduction of the penny post, Anthony Trollope's invention of the pillar-box, Forster's Education Act of 1870 and the railway companies' introduction of the cheap-day excursion. The contributions of Hill, Trollope and Forster are obvious enough, but it was the railway that made possible the day's outing to the seaside there and back at the cost of a few shillings. Once by the sea a man, or a woman, was free to indulge in all sorts of what H G Wells described as the jolly coarseness of life without harassment by chaperones. Down there, scattered among the paraphernalia of the great burl for the sea, lay the comic postcard. The comic card pervaded all areas of national life, from the saloon bar to the kitchen, bedroom to boardroom, from schoolyard to railway station. But of all the settings, it was the seaside that offered the postcard genre their happiest hunting ground, for it was at the seaside that one took one's clothes off. The floodgates were breached and in. By the time sexual innuendo poured in. By the time George Orwell wrote his definitive essay on the ribaldry of Donald McGill's fat ladies and saucy donkeys the cards were as much a part of the holiday

Blackpool for a break, never mind the local crabs might play a mischievous hand, inspiring a reaction so outraged that even the fish come to the surface to enjoy the fun. At least the victim is appropriately dressed for the occasion, unlike the man writing his 'wish you were here' messages to his friends back home. With dogged British grit, he remains clothed except for his bare feet. On his head he sports one of the great sartorial inventions, the handkerchief knotted at each corner to form the working-class sola topi. He has no intentions of swimming, but he will paddle, hopping gingerly over the shingle before returning to his digs for a deliciously indigestible high tea. Does our holiday-maker experience the occasional pang of homesickness? The card artists have thought of that, too. The fat man trying his luck at the penny crane has a mock-up of Tower Bridge before his eyes, just to remind him of the drudgery awaiting him at home in London. Such thoughts play no part in the life of absconding with a bar which is seen in the act of absconding with a prediction of chocolate. In defiance of the social historians, Punch and Judy remains popular with the children so sophisticated in the art of improvisation that the back of a fat lady is adapted as a comfortable perch. But the most famous bulging stomach about a fat man whose bulging stomach precedes him so outrageously that his little boy is lost to sight. Naturally the little boy is lost to sight. The



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB





Today a huge postcard industry produces cards featuring paintings, portraits, views etc, but the quintessential example of this delightful art form remains the classic comic seaside postcard.

Stamped postcards were first issued in Austria, and by the British Post Office in October 1870. Until September 1894 the public were permitted only to send the Post Office cards. Once private cards were allowed, it was just a few months before pictorial cards made their debut. Amongst the earliest cards were those produced by George Stewart & Co of 92



George Street, Edinburgh before the end of 1894.

The comic seaside postcard is the 20th century's reaction to the prudish hypocrisies of the Victorians, who insisted that, as Thackeray wearily observed, humanity ended at the waist. The comic card revolution can be traced to four main factors: Rowland Hill's introduction of the Penny Post, Anthony Trollope's invention of the pillar-box, Forster's Education Act of 1870 and the railway companies' introduction of the cheap-day excursion.

Donald McGill, the doyen of the saucy postcard was born Fraser Gould in Blackheath and studied naval architecture before turning to cartoons. His first comic design was for a sick relative in 1904, his first comic card followed in 1905. It is estimated he produced no fewer than 10,000 designs, one card alone selling in excess of 2 million copies.

George Orwell wrote a famous *Horizon* essay (1941) on the ribaldry of McGill's cards showing fat ladies and saucy girls; such cards were as much a part of the holiday experience as whelks, winkles and donkey rides. The cards were supposed to be undeniably vulgar designed to tickle the risibilities of schoolboys and shopgirls, factory hands and office clerks. They were based on the smutty joke and the *double entendre*. They obey certain ground rules that have remained unaltered over the years.

McGill, Britain's most prolific postcard designer, is also noted for his drawings having pungent social and political comment during the Second World War, cards of military humour and patriotic designs.

The stamps were designed by Mike Dempsey of Carroll, Dempsey & Thirkell, with illustrations by Bill Dare.

Technical Details

Printer:	The House of Questa Ltd
Process:	Offset-lithography
Size:	30 x 41mm
Sheets:	100
Perforation:	14 x 15
Phosphor:	19p one band; 25-41p 2 bands (all with fluor)
Paper:	OBA free (OBA = Optional Brightening Agent)
Gum:	PVA
Presentation Pack:	No. 246, price £1.85
Stamp Cards:	Nos 160a-e, price 25p each

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the Bureau, Collections, and Philatelic Counters around a week before 12 April, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps cancelled with pictorial “First Day of Issue” postmark of the Bureau or Blackpool, price £2.18 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.86 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 12 April.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Bureau or Blackpool cancels to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Forth Street, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE NE1 1AA (Blackpool cancel). The outer envelope should be endorsed “Pictorial First Day of Issue postmark”.

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial “First Day of Issue” handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail’s magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe, £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

1995 Special Stamp Programme

The Post Office Board has approved the Special Stamp Programme for 1995:

Cats

Spring (Four Seasons)

National Trust (Centenary)

CEP: Peace and Freedom

Communications (Sir Rowland Hill and Marconi)

Shakespeare/Globe Theatre

Science Fiction (Centenary and World Cup)

Christmas

Details of dates of issue and values will be announced later this year.

Royal Mail introduces Commemorative Labels

Commemorative labels are nearly as old as the postage stamp, privately produced labels commemorating Queen Victoria’s visit to

Scotland were printed in 1846. Many such labels were produced in 1897 to mark her diamond jubilee and over the years numerous attractive labels have been issued and are popular with some collectors even though they have no postal validity and are not listed in the standard catalogues.

Royal Mail are introducing commemorative labels in “window books”. The first, to mark the 300th anniversary of the Bank of England, will be in a book of four 1st class stamps to be issued on 27 July. The label will be attached to the four stamps, making a pane of the same overall size as a pane of 10 stamps. This commemorative label can be affixed to envelopes but has no postal validity on its own.

Royal Mail and the Bank of England are producing a “Philatelic Numismatic cover” which will bear the pane of stamps plus and label and a £2 coin issued by Royal Mint to mark the Bank’s tercentenary. Details will be published in a later Bulletin.

Further commemorative labels are being planned – details will be announced in due course.



Special Stamp Yearbook draw

A special draw was arranged to mark the publication of the 10th edition of Royal Mail’s *Special Stamp Yearbook*. The draw took place at the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh on 20 December and the lucky winner was Mrs Jane Guillem of Surrey who receives all nine previous yearbooks (1984-92), catalogued in Stanley Gibbons 1993 *Collect British Stamps* at £474! Our picture shows Julie Dunwiddie, Royal Mail’s Manager Direct & Overseas Sale, who drew Mrs Guillem’s winning entry, with Keith MacDonald, the Bureau’s Marketing Manager.



Royal Mail plates success

Royal Mail launched the first of its collectors' plates last December and over 95 per cent of customers feel that these are either good or excellent value for money. These are based on the designs of the popular Autumn stamps of 14 September 1993. The plates produced for Royal Mail by Royal Doulton are still available, price £19.95 each or £89 for the set, from: Royal Mail Collection, FREEPOST, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 0HN, or from the Post Shops at main post offices in London (Trafalgar Square), Bristol (Galleries), Romford (South Street) and Stratford-upon-Avon (Henley Street). They are also on sale at the National Postal Museum, Post Office Archives, and Selfridges.

Our photograph shows Tracy Healey, a decorator at Royal Doulton's Stoke-on-Trent factory, with Geoff Hamilton, presenter of the BBC's "Gardener's World" programme.

Walsall celebrates Self-Adhesive Stamp

Walsall Security Printers Ltd held a reception on 21 October to launch the new Self-Adhesive stamp. Guest of honour was Mr Bill Cockburn CBE, Chief Executive of The Post Office, who is

pictured here with Mr Adrian Aspinall, Walsall's Managing Director. Many other senior Royal Mail personnel attended the function which was held at the Hamilton Suite, Park Lane, London.

Walsall were very proud to have printed this prestigious product as almost every aspect is a philatelic first. The stamp's main features are the horizontal format and the new lithographic "Head A" design.



Colin Pawson departs ...

Colin Pawson, Philatelic Marketing Manager, will be leaving Royal Mail at the end of March. Over the past 11 years he has become a well-known and respected figure in the philatelic world.

Mr Pawson joined The Post Office, National Data Processing Service in 1970 after leaving the Army. In 1972 he moved to Heathrow Airport as Finance Manager of a newly-implemented integrated cargo clearance system.

With a developing interest in the freight aspects of The Post Office's operation, he transferred to the Parcel Service in 1977, being involved in the development of the successful PO launch into the parcel commitment and freight market. In 1981 he was appointed to the PO's Corporate Finance section working on the multi-million pound building programme of mechanised letter and parcel offices.

In 1983 he was appointed as Stamp Production Manager. With the establishment in 1986 of Royal Mail Stamps as a separate business unit within Royal Mail, he became Controller, Stamp Production and Marketing. He has held his present position within Royal Mail National since 1991 and has been Secretary of the Stamp Advisory Committee since 1983.



Colin Pawson (right), examines sheets of Walsall stamp book covers, with John Wright, Head of Stamp Production.

Colin is one of only a small number of Royal Mail staff who has become a recognised name to stamp dealers and to many collectors. No grey bureaucrat, he has brought his own inimitable style and wit to press launches of new stamps and to the SAC. He has vigorously supported both *Philatelic* and *Postmark Bulletins*, and has recognised the vital role the Royal Mail can play in British philately. In 1987 he presented a paper on "The Post Office and the Support of Philately" to the British Philatelic Congress at Eastbourne.

My colleagues in Royal Mail join me in wishing him well in his new career.

J R Holman

Full Steam Ahead

To commemorate the issue of the Age of Steam stamps on 18 January, the Great Central Railway and Royal Mail arranged for a mail train using the preserved LNER TPO set hauled by LNER A4 class loco No. 4498 *Sir Nigel Gresley*. The train ran from Loughborough and the mail (first day covers), was exchanged through the apparatus sited at Quorn & Woodhouse station. *Photos courtesy of Peter Johnson.*



Sir Nigel Gresley featured on the 17p value in the 1985 Famous Trains issue (SG1272).

Editorial

Since September the *Bulletin* has increased from 26 to 36 pages (including the *Commemorative Covers Review*), enabling us to publish a much wider range of articles and features. This month we give the usual news of forthcoming Royal Mail stamp issues, a look at some new items of postal stationery, review an attractive book reproducing paintings by The Prince of Wales, and include specialist articles on Airmails to South America and George VI issues. There is also a feature on Valentine cards – a popular subject and the feature of an exhibition currently on show at the National Postal Museum. The Museum has recently acquired the stamp collection of the pop singer Freddie Mercury – this will shortly be going on display.

In order that we can plan future issues of the magazine to cater for the varying needs of readers, we are including in this issue a questionnaire which will give us a profile of our readers. When we asked you to complete a questionnaire four years ago we received a marvellous response and hope for the same this time. Please return the enclosed questionnaire to us by 29 April. All forms will go into a draw and blocks of four of the £10 Britannia definitive will be sent to the senders of the first 10 drawn.

Our monthly competition is proving ever more popular since sponsored competitions were introduced last September. We thank the sponsors for the excellent prizes they have provided and hope that further companies would like to join in. Write to The Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 76 Turnmill Street, LONDON EC1M 5NS if you are interested in sponsoring the competition. This month Omniphil Approvals offer mint and used Penny Blacks – we expect a large number of entries to this competition.

Spring Stampex opens at the Royal Horticultural Halls Westminster on 1 March. If you have never been along to this exhibition, do so this year – you will not be disappointed. Royal Mail's stand will as usual be manned by staff from the British Philatelic Bureau, and Post Office Archives and the National Postal Museum will also have stands. The "Stamp Master" computer stamp catalogue demonstrated at Autumn Stampex last October received considerable interest. It will go on sale at Spring Stampex – available on the Royal Mail stand; Stamp Master will also be available by post from the Bureau in Edinburgh, price £49.95.

J R Holman

Posting Boxes

147. Edward VII Boxes

Our first photo this month was submitted by D Lowry of Craigavon, Co Armagh and shows an Edward VII pillar box, painted green, on Dundalk Railway Station in the Irish Republic. Many old boxes, dating back to the time of British rule, are still in use in the Republic of Ireland, painted green – the colour of the Irish Post Office (*An Post*). This box was manufactured by McDowell Steven & Co of London and Glasgow, the company's name appears on the front of the box.

The following details of Edward VII pillar boxes are taken from Martin Robinson's *Old Letter Boxes* (published by Shire Publications):

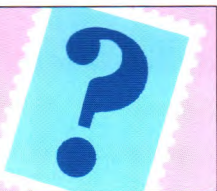
When Edward VII came to the throne in 1901 large, small and dual-aperture pillar boxes were cast with his cypher. Two styles of cypher are known: the first and much rarer is called the "open" type, whilst the second has curled ends to the letters. In 1904 the problem of trapped letters was finally solved by increasing the height of the door and setting the posting aperture within it. The dual aperture box of Edward VII can be found with cyphers on the doors at each end or with one centrally placed cypher.



Our second photo, of an Edward VII lamp box was sent in by Bengt Bengtsson of Sweden. He enjoys reading this "Posting Boxes" feature and looks out for unusual boxes on his trips to the UK. He photographed this box in the village of Croxby, near Caistor, Lincolnshire in 1991. It is obviously well-cared for and has the Royal cypher clearly "picked out" in gold.

Competition

SPONSORED BY:
OMNIPHIL APPROVALS



Win a Mint 1840 Penny Black

This month's competition is sponsored by OMNIPHIL, specialists in APPROVALS. The prizes, supplied by Omniphil, comprise:

★ 1st prize: A mint 1840 1d Black from Plate VI with four margins and original gum catalogued £3000 complete with 1993 Royal Philatelic Society certificate. Retail over £1000.

★ Ten 2nd prizes of used 1840 1d Blacks, with four margins and red Maltese Cross cancel, catalogued £150 each by S G.

★ Three 3rd prizes of nicely used Great Britain 1857 4d large garters S G catalogue £40 each.



Introducing OMNIPHIL Approvals

Omniphil has been supplying fine stamp approvals to thousands of collectors worldwide for over 35 years, during which time they have accumulated vast stocks of quality stamps from Great Britain, The British Commonwealth, Europe and the Whole World.

These are sent on 12 days approval without obligation to purchase so that discriminating collectors can peruse them in the right conditions, peace and comfort, of their own home.

Unlike most other dealers Omniphil are big enough to offer each and every stamp individually available for you to select from their library of over 2856 different approval books – yes, they break every set! Very helpful for collectors with broken sets.

The organisation of their stock does not permit them to handle wants lists or latest issues, but if your collection is missing stamps from 1840 to the 1980s all you have to do is tell them all the countries/areas that you collect and they will send a suitable selection as available without obligation.

At present Omniphil Approvals are offering all *Bulletin* subscribers the opportunity to pick a further 25% worth of stamps FREE OF CHARGE provided subscribers can select stamps to a sales value of £12 plus from each selection requested.

The first 250 *Bulletin* subscribers to receive their approvals will also receive absolutely free of charge an 1841 2d Blue of Great Britain catalogued £35.

Write now telling them all countries you collect and whether you collect mint and used to:.

Omniphil Approvals
Bulletin Blue Offer
PO Box 29
STROUD,
Glos GL6 6RW



To enter this month's competition answer the questions below and send your answers with your name and address on a postcard to: March Bulletin Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 76 Turnmill Street, LONDON EC1M 5NS. Entries should arrive by 29 April:

1. In what year was Donald McGill born?
2. Who designed the effigy for the coinage of George VI?
3. Which pop star's stamp collection has been bought by the NPM?
4. Who was cousin to Dame Elizabeth Brews?
5. Where is Spring Stampex being held?

The answers to all these questions will be found in this month's *Bulletin*. The competition is not open to employees of Royal Mail or Omniphil.

The winners of the December competition were: A F Pond of Hants (1st prize), S S Vaitilingam of Somerset, H S Thorpe of Belfast (2nd prizes), and R B Lamers of Netherlands, M J Metcalfe of Essex, and W J Irving of Zimbabwe (3rd prizes). All prizes were kindly donated by Stanley Gibbons Ltd.

The answers: 1. "Amadis", 2. Nine, 3. 1856, 4. 89,760, 5. 51.

Our thanks to all who entered.

HRH The Prince of Wales Watercolours Book & Exhibition

A lavish book reproducing paintings by the Prince of Wales was first published by Little, Brown & Company in 1991. A special edition is now available containing the five Prince of Wales Investiture Anniversary stamps issued on 1 March 1994. In her foreword, HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother tells us that "ever since he was a small boy Prince Charles has taken an interest in his surroundings, and has developed his powers of observation to the point where painting became a necessary and vital expression of that interest..."

There follows an appreciation of the Prince's

work by Royal Academician John Ward who is conscious that the Prince is "a traveller with time ever at his elbow". His style of painting is described as "fraught with urgency". Mr Ward states "A grasp of the economics of painting is essential and clearly the Prince is a realist".

The paintings are grouped in four sections – English Scenes (15 views), Impressions of Scotland (29), Views of Italy, France and Spain (15), and Images from Further Afield (14). Not surprisingly some of the paintings are of scenes and buildings on Royal estates such as Windsor Castle and Sandringham. In the notes



accompanying each reproduction Prince Charles explains the significance of each work and some of his painting secrets. The appealing "Cottages in the Snow" (Sandringham, 1987) was painted in very cold weather – "I still don't know how I managed to sit in that snow-covered field... without all my fingers freezing off..." The Prince reveals that he "lasted long enough to do the important bits – and before the gentlemen of the press arrived, whose presence has now become another anti-painting hazard!"

The Prince's interest in conservation is illustrated by the notes to the painting "Windmill at Bircham" (Norfolk 1991). When he was a child, he explains, "this windmill had degenerated into a truncated stump, abandoned and sail-less." Now, following purchase by "a talented enthusiast, it has been lovingly restored to its former glory." The two views of Wensleydale, North Yorkshire (1989) and Abbeystead (Lancashire, 1988) will appeal to those who like more rugged scenery. The problems of sketching "View of Peel Harbour from HMY Britannia" (Isle of Man 1989) are described by the Prince who concludes that "this sketch looks exactly as though it has been painted through the wrong end of a telescope while strapped to a moving object!"

Many of the views of Scotland are of Balmoral and its environs. Of drawing the castle itself the Prince writes: "it will doubtless drive you mad with all its turrets, towers, pepper pots and embellishments!", but it remains, for him, "one of the most heavenly places on earth". The mountains of Deeside feature in several water colours as do interesting buildings such as Alltna-Giubhsaich Lodge, "one of the small houses at Balmoral that Queen Victoria used to visit on some of her expeditions...", and a cottage at Invercauld with "splendid old Scots pines providing a solid and reassuring backdrop".

Anyone, like the reviewer, who knows the west coast of Scotland will be only too aware of the dangerous Scottish midge, and will appreciate the Prince's description of it as "a kind of tiny fly which provides exquisite torture for any human being that shows his face in the vicinity". The Prince suffered from midge bites whilst painting "House" – a favourite place in Sutherland. The Scottish section ends with a delightful view of The Queen Mother's home, the Castle of Mey, Caithness.

The scenes of Italy, France and Spain include a view from Villa La Foce showing the "extraordinary barren and empty landscape of

Northern Tuscany" and Noto (Sicily) – "one of those rare towns... which has managed to escape some of the worst ravages of insensitive development and brutal planning". The view entitled "Farmhouse at Les Varrieres" was painted not under "permanently blue, Cezanne-like skies" but "leaden clouds and tropical downpours..."

The final group, "Images from Further Afield", include five views in Turkey, HMY Britannia and escort at anchor off Hong Kong, views painted during an official tour of Gulf Countries (Oman, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Jordan), and two scenes in Africa – Botswana and Tanzania. Of the "View of Desert" (Oman), Prince Charles writes: "The colours in that part of the world can be breathtaking. You would think it was all yellow ochre sand, but in the early mornings and evenings the rock outcrops momentarily become flushed with orange, pink, purple and violet."

This book should appeal to all who appreciate scenery and the Prince's comments reflect his sensitive nature and love of travel and the great outdoors. It makes a worthwhile addition to any collection of the Prince of Wales Investiture stamp issue, extending the range of paintings featured on the five stamps.

Price £25, available from British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT. Early ordering advisable.

Watercolours Exhibition

Royal Mail is sponsoring an exhibition tour of watercolours by Prince Charles, to mark the 25th anniversary of his Investiture and in aid of The Prince of Wales's Charities Trust. The exhibition can be seen at the following venues:

Cardiff International Arena – Cardiff	1 March-20 March
Ulster Museum – Belfast	29 March-23 April
Grosvenor Museum – Chester	30 April-15 May
York Minster Visitor Centre, St William's College – York	21 May-8 June
Sotheby's – London	24 June-24 July
Art Gallery & Museum Kelvingrove – Glasgow	5 August-4 September

Entrance will be £1.50; children under 11 free.

Souvenir covers will be on sale at the exhibition, cachets for each venue will be available, but only to visitors to the exhibition.

Stamps of the Four Kings

6. King George VI Definitive Stamps

JAMES MACKAY

Prince Albert, Duke of York, was suddenly precipitated into the limelight on 11 December 1936 by the abdication of his elder brother, and ascended the throne with the regnal title of George VI. Immediately after the abdication, the Post Office began the work of producing an entirely new definitive series. Plans for further denominations in the Edwardian series were scrapped and the task of producing fresh designs was entrusted to two of the leading graphic artists of the period, Edmund Dulac (1882-1953) and Eric Gill (1882-1940). Still smarting over the controversy raised by the Edwardian stamps, the PO took the precaution of soliciting designs from the artistic establishment, and did not leave the matter in the hands of the printers or the general public.

Dulac had the task of designing the profile of the King, based on the effigy designed by T Humphrey Paget for the coinage, but adapted for two-dimensional reproduction, even though photogravure was already well suited for the faithful delineation of a sculptural relief. Dulac also designed the framework for the denominations from 7d to 1s, but the frames of the lower values were designed by Gill who also produced two designs of his own. The first, used for the ½d to 3d denominations, had the

POSTAGE and REVENUE appeared in seriffed capitals in the vertical side panels and the heraldic flowers of the United Kingdom occupied the four corners. In the low values, the value at the foot was surrounded by a white circle, but this was omitted from the 4d-6d denominations.

Dulac's design for the higher values had the King's profile on a hexagonal ground with a different style of crown at the top and the value in words at the foot. The upper sides of the hexagon were occupied by the words POSTAGE and REVENUE, while the lower sides were filled with spiral ornament. As with the Gill designs, heraldic flowers occupied the corners, but these were larger and more distinctive than the lower denominations.

The stamps were printed in sheets of 240 on paper with a multiple watermark of a Tudor crown and the royal cypher G VIR. The ½d green, 1d scarlet and 2½d ultramarine appeared on 10 May 1937. The other values were released piecemeal, the original series being completed with the issue of the 9d, 10d and 1s on 1 May 1939. Increases in inland parcel rates after the Second World War led to the issue of the 11d on 29 December 1947. The five lowest values (½d-2½d) were also released in coils and booklets and thus exist with sideways or inverted watermarks. Control numbers appeared in the lower left-hand corners of sheets until 1947 and are best collected in corner blocks of six. It is interesting to note that controls were abolished following pressure from the Union of Post Office Workers whose members on the counters complained bitterly of being pestered by philatelists. Although the alphanumeric controls were removed, the cylinder numbers remained; but as collector interest in the latter was minimal they were not considered a problem.

Paler Colours

As a wartime economy measure the composition of the inks used to print the six lowest denominations was altered in 1941, this resulted in stamps having the appearance of much paler colours. The first stamp to appear in this guise



The three designs for the George VI definitives (2½d dark colour).

lettering, values and heraldic motifs in white on a dark ground. The second, used for the 4d, 5d and 6d values, had the lettering and other elements in dark colours against a pale background. In both Gill designs a Tudor crown was placed over the King's head, the words

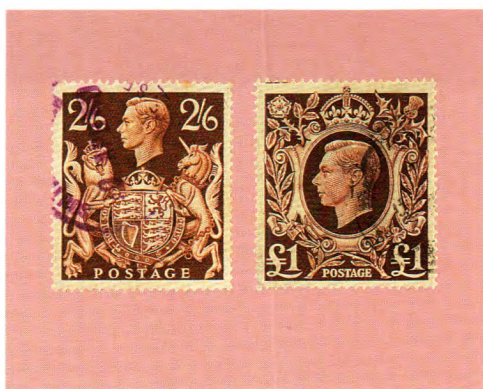


Paler colours, 1941.

was the 2½d, on 21 July 1941, the most widely used denomination since the inland letter rate had been increased in the summer of 1940. The remaining low values in light colours were released between 11 August (1d) and 3 November (3d). Only the three stamps prepaying the basic postal rates were subsequently issued in coils with sideways watermark. All of the light coloured stamps, except the 3d, were issued in booklets, so that inverted watermarks exist.

Until 1940 the UK had adhered strictly to the colour scheme laid down by the UPU in 1891 for the principal international rates: green (printed matter), red (postcards) and blue (letters). The increased postal rates of 1940 destroyed this system, and it was not until October 1940 that an attempt was made to resume the UPU colour scheme. First to change was the 4d, from green to blue, as this denomination now prepaid the basic overseas letter rate. On 3 May 1951 the five lowest values were re-issued in new colours. The 1½d, now prepaying the international printed matter rate, was produced in green instead of brown, the 2½d, prepaying the overseas postcard rate, changed from blue to red, and the changes in the colour of the other values were necessary to avoid confusion. Of the new colours, only the 1d, 1½d, 2d and 2½d were issued in coils with sideways watermarks.

The first high values, recess-printed by Waterlow & Sons, consisted of 2s6d, 5s and 10s, introduced between August and October 1939. Dulac produced an armorial design for the 2s6d and 5s while George Bellew (1899-1993) devised for the 10s a more florid version of the low-value concept based on a mixture of profile, crown, value and national flowers. The colours of two stamps were changed in 1942 – the 2s6d from brown to green and the 10s from dark blue to ultramarine. A brown £1 value in Bellew's design was added in October 1948.



Dulac and Bellew's High Value designs.

Agitation for pictorial definitive stamps (a matter which continues fitfully to this day) prompted the PO to compromise by introducing a pictorial element into the double-sized high values issued on 3 May 1951. The stamps were recess-printed by Waterlow & Sons. Mary Adshead designed the 2s6d and 5s stamps which featured HMS *Victory* and the White Cliffs of Dover respectively, each motif being enclosed in a transverse oval on a solid background decorated with a fish-net pattern.

Percy Metcalfe designed the 10s showing St George and the Dragon (based on the coinage reverse originally sculpted by Benedetto Pistrucci) and the £1 showing the royal coat of arms and supporters. Although released, along with the new colours of the low values, on the same day as stamps celebrating the Festival of Britain, the so-called "Festival" high values were not commemoratives and remained in circulation for more than four years, until superseded by the first printing of the Castles series in September 1955.

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Changed colours, 1950.

Air Mails to South America by British South American Airways: 1946-1949

RICHARD BEITH

Introduction

It was late in the 1930s before the British government decided to plan a British South Atlantic air route for passengers and mail, but the advent of the Second World War in September 1939 put an end to these proposals (Refs 1 and 2). However, as the war proceeded, plans were being laid for peace time air routes. In January 1944, British Latin-American Air Lines Ltd was founded by a group of British shipping interests. In October 1945 the name of the company was changed to British South American Airways Limited (BSAA) (3). Australian born Air Vice-Marshall Donald Bennett, CB, CBE, DSO, a pre-war Imperial Airways Captain and chief of Bomber Command's Pathfinder force, became managing director (4). Following the passage of the 1946 Civil Aviation Act, BSAA was nationalised on 1 August 1946, to be known as the British South American Airways Corporation.

Route development

To the east coast of South America

BSAA's first survey flight left Heathrow on 1 January 1946 for Buenos Aires, Argentina (Fig 1). Bennett piloted the Avro 691 Lancastrian G-AGWG, *Star Light*, stops being made at Lisbon, Bathurst, Natal, Montevideo (4 January) with arrival in Argentina on 6 January. The first regular flight to South America left London for Buenos Aires on 23 March 1946. From the flight of 5 April the Bathurst night stop was omitted reducing the London-Montevideo transit time from 77 to 56 hours. On 24 September 1946 BSAA made the first call at Dakar instead of Bathurst.

To the west coast of South America

The first survey flight took place on 22 April 1946 when Bennett followed the established route to Buenos Aires and then proceeded to London via Santiago-Lima-Bogota-Curacao-Trinidad-Natal-Bathurst. London was reached on 5 May. The formal London-Santiago service was inaugurated on 27 June 1946 with a night stop at Lisbon. Buenos Aires was reached on 29 June (night stop) and Santiago on 30 June.

To the Caribbean

On 17 July 1946 a survey flight was made by Bennett along the route London-Azores-Bermuda - Nassau - Mexico - Belize - Panama - Kingston-Trinidad-Bermuda-Azores-London in the Lancastrian G-AGWI *Star Land*. A regular twice monthly service was inaugurated on 2 September 1946 routed from London to Caracas via the Azores, Bermuda and Jamaica. In 1948 BSAA started operating a weekly London-Jamaica service via Keflavik (Iceland), Gander (Newfoundland), Bermuda and Nassau.

Air Mails

Starting with the very first survey flight on 1 January 1946, it would appear that BSAA carried significant mail loads on virtually all services. However, BSAA's flown covers are little collected and references in today's philatelic literature are few and far between. Why is this so? It is probable that whilst BSAA were delighted to carry such heavy mail loads for the revenue generated, they had little interest in, or appreciation of, the publicity benefits which would have arisen if they had adopted a positive attitude to aerophilately.

East Coast Mails

Bennett has written that mail was carried on that 1 January 1946 trial flight (5) and Hayter confirms that 5000lbs of mail were carried (6). Presumably none of these covers carried any specific marking and hence, none have survived.

Contemporary accounts in the aerophilatelic press suggest that the British Post Office was slow to inform the public about the new mail service. The *Aero Field* commented on the second proving flight:

It was rather annoying to read in the evening press of 21 January (1946) that the machine carried 1400kg of mail. The Post Office announcement appeared as usual when it was too late to take advantage of the opportunity, being dated 24 January and stating that: Air mail correspondence for destinations in South America, prepaid at existing postage rates for air transmission throughout by the North Atlantic route is being forwarded by flights being made by British South American Airways. (7)



1. London Heathrow 1 January 1946 – the first BSAA mail plane leaves for Buenos Aires.

The postage rate was 2s 6d per half ounce, the same rate as had been charged via the North Atlantic and by air from the USA. Baldwin lists covers from Argentina and Uruguay flown on the return of the second proving flight (8). From the first regular flight of 23 March 1946, mail was accepted at 1s 6d per half ounce (postcards 9d) for Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Falkland Islands, The Guianas, Paraguay and Uruguay. Correspondence for these destinations was no longer accepted for transmission by the North Atlantic route (9). First flight covers are known

flown in both directions (10). Although first flight covers are remarkably scarce, regular commercial or family mail from Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, etc, destined for Europe, can be found with manuscript, typed or rubber stamped endorsements such as "Via BSAA" or "Via British South American Airways".

West Coast mails

Mail can be found from the first regular London-Santiago service on 27 June 1946. The souvenir cover franked at the 1s 6d rate shown

as in fig 2 has a LONDON WC machine cancellation for 26 JNE 1946 and a Santiago backstamp for 30 June.

Caribbean mails

The only cover known to the writer was carried on the first return flight from Jamaica to London. This was an air letter franked at the 6d rate and bearing a boxed cachet lettered: AIR MAIL/FIRST FLIGHT/JAMAICA-/London-Via Bermuda/Sept 5 1946/Via "SPEED MAN".

Crashes & Crash Mail

Unfortunately, BSAA operations were not free of serious crashes, indeed it was the total loss of two Avro Tudor IVs at sea in 1948 and 1949 which finally brought about the end of the airline (qv). A total of 10 crashes, many of them involving fatalities, were recorded between 30 August 1946 and 17 January 1949.

The End of BSAA

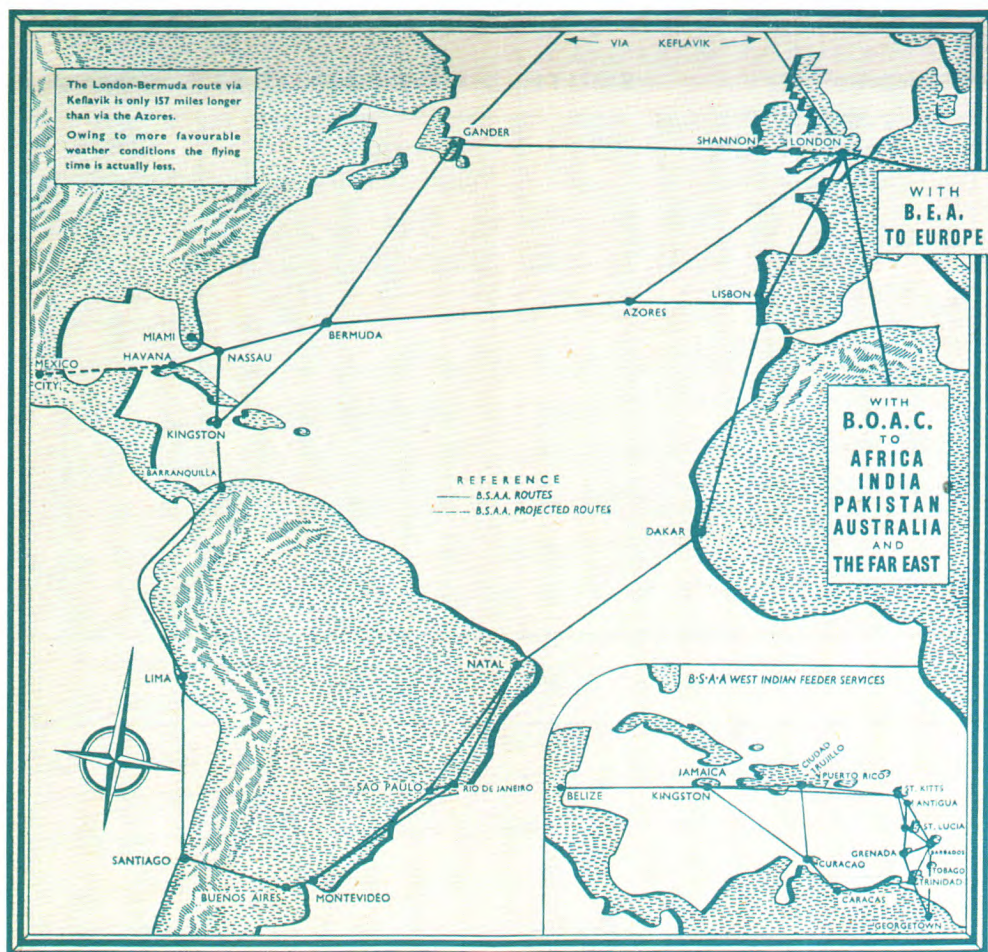
During its first two years of operations, BSAA achieved 74.5 million passenger-miles, but with the loss of 55 passengers. In financial terms, however, BSAA was much more successful. A profit of £107,000 was declared for the year

ending 31 March 1947, at a time when BOAC was losing millions (11). In September 1947, BSAA acquired a controlling interest in British West Indian Airways, overambitiously introducing a fleet of second hand Vickers Vikings which lost money. During the enquiry into the loss of *Star Tiger* on 29 January 1948, BSAA's operating methods were questioned and it was recommended that pilot training be put on a more thorough basis. It was at this time that A V M Bennett left the Corporation. Figure 3 shows the route map from BSAA's September 1948 timetable which probably represents the airline's operations at their peak.

With the unexplained loss at sea of a second Tudor 4, *Star Ariel*, on 17 January 1949, all the Tudors (other than those operating the Berlin Airlift) were grounded, leaving the airline with a severe shortage of aircraft. Services were maintained after a fashion, but with the added problems of the BWIA subsidiary, the end of BSAA was near. As a result of the Airways Corporations Act, 1949, BSAA was absorbed into BOAC on 30 July 1949. The majority of BSAA crew and staff joined BOAC, but BOAC still didn't have any planes with which to operate the South Atlantic routes.



2. Cover carried on first regular BSAA flight to Chile.



3. BSAA Route Map – September 1948.

Acknowledgements: Thanks to the following aerophilatelic friends for photocopies of covers known to them: Hamish Reid, London and Bob Preston, Glasgow.

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Self-Adhesive Forerunners

A number of readers have asked about the forerunner self-adhesive "stamps" produced in 1973. These comprise various values of the Machin head set within an octagonal frame (as printed on postal stationery) printed on self-adhesive paper. Whilst these were valid for postage, they were not produced by The Post Office and were not sold over post office counters. They were legitimately produced under The Post Office's "Stamped to Order"



1/2p value, 3rd series.

service which was withdrawn at the end of October 1973. The following announcement appeared in the *Bulletin* of September 1973, page 2.

"One of the oldest services provided by the Post Office will be coming to an end on 31 October this year. Since 1853 it has been possible for the public to have their private stationery (envelopes, postcards, wrappers and labels) impressed or printed with postage stamps. This work has been carried out for the Post Office by Her Majesty's Stationery Office and the Inland Revenue Stamping Department. However, with the availability of other posting arrangements such as franking machines and printed postage impressions, the popularity of

stamps printed in this way has fallen and the current demand is too small to justify continuing this personal service. Any items handed in for stamping up to and including 31 October will be dealt with in the normal way".

The following details of the "stamped to order" self-adhesive stamps have been kindly supplied by Rushstamps of Lyndhurst, Hants.

In the House of Lords in 1973, Lord Clifford of Chudleigh suggested that the Post Office should encourage the introduction of self-adhesive stamps on health grounds. Two philatelic entrepreneurs took up the challenge. Derek Worboys and John Daynes both submitted orders for the Machin octagonal diestamped designs to Her Majesty's Stationery Office to be produced on self-adhesive paper. These stamps were prepared in late 1973 just prior to the stamped to order service being withdrawn.

Three separate series of stamps were issued. The first series was issued on 10 February 1964 which was the 10th anniversary of the Sierra Leone self-adhesive issue.

The stamps were of 1/2p, 1p, 1 1/2p, 5 1/2p (5p + 1/2p) and 8p (5p + 3p) values, produced with square backing paper. Only 1000 of each value were prepared. They are known on first day cover with London postmark. This set was produced by Derek Worboys.

The second series, issued 19 June 1974, comprises 3p and 3 1/2p values with the wording YOU JUST CANNOT LICK/SELF-ADHESIVE STAMPS FOR/SPEED & HYGIENE to the left of the stamp itself. The 3p value is very scarce. Some of the 3 1/2p exist with additional wording in red: "This slogan embarrasses the British Post Office and must be detached before use". Again both value are known on FDC.

The third series, produced by Mr Daynes, comprises 1/2p, 1p, 1 1/2p, 2p, 2 1/2p, 3p, 3 1/2p, 4p and 5p values produced on circular backing paper.

These forerunner issues are now quite sought after. Limited stocks are held by Rushstamps. A price list is available on request: Rushstamps (Retail) Ltd, PO Box 1, LYNDHURST, Hants, SO43 7PP, Tel. 0703-282044.

To Pay Labels



Shown here are the new series of To Pay labels, issued on 15 February 1994. Each is printed in four-colour offset-lithography to give an overall "Gem stone" colour effect. The colour descriptions are: 1p coral, 2p garnet, 5p amber, 10p emerald, 20p opal, 25p ruby, £1 amethyst, £1.20 turquoise and £5 graphite.

Postal Stationery Update

Robert Louis Stevenson Aerogramme

A new Scottish aerogramme – the 39th in the series started in 1974 – will be available from post offices in Scotland, the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters from 22 March. This will mark the centenary of the death of one of Scotland's greatest writers, Robert Louis Stevenson.

Stevenson was born Robert Lewis Balfour Stevenson at 8 Howard Place, Edinburgh in 1850. (Howard Place is but a short distance from the Bureau in Brandon Street.) His father, Thomas, and grandfather, Robert, were both engineers and it was expected that RLS would follow this career. Grandfather Robert (1772-1850) was responsible for many Scottish lighthouses including that on the Bell Rock (1807). One of his sons Alan, was engineer for the Skerryvore Lighthouse, on a lonely rock 10 miles west of the island of Tiree. This has been described as “the world's most graceful lighthouse” and featured on a Scottish aerogramme issued in 1986.

Young Robert started to train as an engineer at Edinburgh University but later switched to law and qualified as an advocate in 1875. He travelled in Europe during the late 1870s, and in 1880 married Fanny Osbourne in the USA. He returned to Scotland and one of his famous books, *Treasure Island*, began as a story for his stepson, Lloyd Osbourne, whilst on a family holiday at Braemar. From 1885 to 1887 RLS and his family lived in Bournemouth in a house named “Skerryvore” after the famous lighthouse. The house was demolished in 1943. At “Skerryvore” he wrote several of his best-known works including *More Arabian Nights*, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and *Kidnapped*.

Much of the inspiration for the stories came from Scotland and Scottish folk. The regions of Appin and around Kingshouse, Argyll are described in *Kidnapped*, as is Cluny's Cage near Dalwhinnie, Inverness-shire. The Old Kirk at Glencorse, Midlothian and Braxfield House, Lanark feature in *Weir of Hermiston* and

Ballantrae, near Ayr, in *The Master of Ballantrae*. Stevenson spent several holidays at Swanston, Midlothian – the area features in both *St Ives* and *Weir of Hermiston*. His childhood days amongst Edinburgh's wynds, closes and lands form the backdrop for some of the stories. Stevenson dedicated his book of verse *A Child's Garden of Verse* to his Edinburgh nurse Alison Cunningham. Stevenson memorabilia can be seen in The Writers' Museum in Edinburgh and there is a memorial tablet in St Giles Cathedral.

Stevenson spent relatively little time in London. He lodged in Hampstead in 1874 and was a member of the Savile Club. His fondness for the delight of childhood days endeared him to the toy Theatre sheets published by Pollock. He once wrote “If you love art, folly or the bright eyes of children speed to Pollock's”. He had a penchant for the bohemian, reflected in growing his hair long and wearing velvet coats. Although some of his works show great originality, he confessed to “playing the sedulous ape” to other writers.

Stevenson's health was never robust and in 1887 he left Britain for warmer climes, settling on the Vailima estate on the Pacific island of Samoa. There he continued to write, in collaboration with Lloyd Osbourne; producing *The Wrong Box*, *The Wrecker* and *The Ebb Tide*. Although his health improved, he died suddenly from a ruptured blood vessel in the brain on 3 December 1894.

Samoa has paid tribute to RLS on its stamps since 1935. Some have featured Stevenson alone or with characters from his books, and his house at Vailima. British philatelic commemoration has so far been limited to a 1993 Greetings stamp featuring Long John Silver from *Treasure Island*, and the inclusion of his portrait (by Girolamo Nerli, 1892) on a Scottish aerogramme of 1989. This marked the centenary of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, other portraits shown included writers Sir Walter Scott, Robert Burns and Sir Compton Mackenzie, and Mary Queen of Scots and Prince Charles Edward Stewart (Bonnie Prince Charlie).

Marriage to Fanny Osbourne in 1878 fired his creative genius in *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, and *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, which have enthralled generations of readers.



Top: Robert Louis Stevenson (National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh).
Centre: The Castle from Princes Street, an illustration from *Picturesque Notes*.
Left: Long John Silver, an illustration from *Treasure Island* by Morris Orr.

Aerogramme

Air post-adhvir
Lido-adhvir

Great
Britain
Postage

Sender's name and address / Ainm is seòladh an sgrìobhaiche
Please show postcode / Cìoadhaidh cod a' phost

An aerogramme should not contain any enclosure/Na cuir cáil am bronn na litreach seo.



Signs of Hot Louis *Stamen's* *bliss*, from *left to right* *The Mayor of Banquet*, illustration by *Wall Fagot* (Cassell & Co. London, 1911). *The Strawberry Pudding*, London, 1930. *Trains with a Donkey*, in the *Cremes* (Charris & Walton, London, 1911). *Catholics*, illustration by A.C. Mohr (Cassell & Co. London, 1915). *A Child's Garden of Verses* (Longmans, London, 1907). *Memories & Fancies* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1887). *The Black Arrow*, illustration by *Lyons* (Cassell & Co. London, 1915). *Alphabet*, illustration by *W.B. Stott* (Cassell & Co. London, 1915).

Front Cover *Treasure Island*, illustration by *John Cameron* (Cassell & Co. London, 1905).

Background *Treasure Island*, a map of *Treasure Island*.



The Stevenson aerogramme (22 March 1994) is a worthy addition to the series of Scottish aerogrammes which over the past 20 years have commemorated much that is good in Scottish history, flora, fauna and culture. The aerogramme, designed by Richard Smith and printed by McCorquodale Envelopes, will cost 45p. This includes aerogramme postage of 36p.

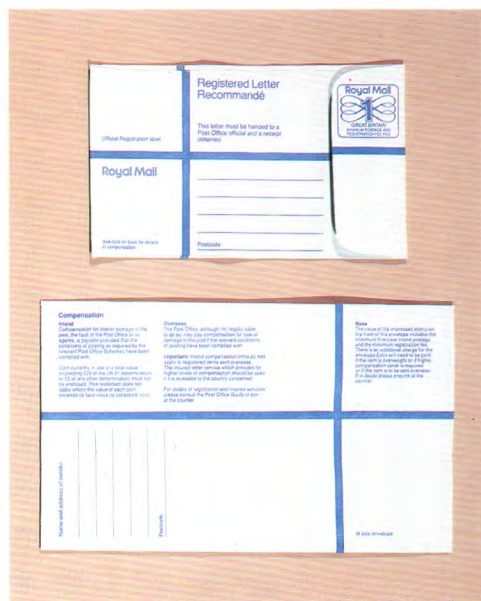
A special Edinburgh "First Day of Issue" postmark will be available on 22 March 1994 when the aerogramme goes on sale. Collectors should send the aerogramme, with envelope for return if required "under cover" to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, George Square, GLASGOW G2 1AA. Ask for Stevenson Aerogramme Handstamp. Please submit aerogrammes as soon as possible on or after 22 March.

To mark Stevenson's centenary numerous events are being staged in Scotland this year, including three exhibitions in Edinburgh – "Jekyll or Hyde" (City Art Centre, July-October), "Pictures of the Mind" (National Library of Scotland, July-October) which is receiving financial support from The Scottish Post Office Board and "Treasure Islands" (Royal Museum of Scotland, August 1994 – January 1995). Details can be obtained from the RLS Centenary Co-ordinator, National Library of Scotland, George IV Bridge, EDINBURGH EH1 1EW, Tel. 031-226 4531 ex. 4411.

The second Scottish aerogramme of 1994, commemorating the bicentenary of the Gordon Highlanders, will be issued on 19 July

businesses from the Post Office Supplies Department at Hemel Hempstead, collectors can obtain single envelopes or packs from the Philatelic Bureau.

A new version of the C5 size envelopes, pre-paid within the UK to 60g instead of 100g has been available since 15 February, price 31p (1st class) and 25p (2nd class). This, plus the C5 100g version, are shown here.



Last call for Old-Style Registered Envelopes

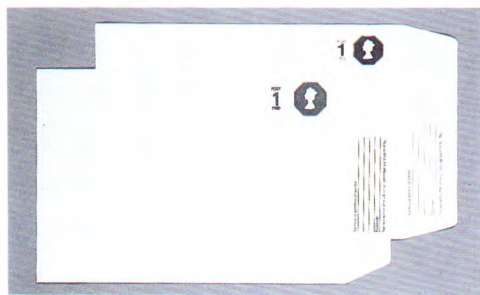
The G, H and K size registered envelopes, first issued in 1986, will be withdrawn from sale at the British Philatelic Bureau on 31 March 1994. The envelopes were replaced last summer by new-style Guaranteed Delivery and Registered Plus envelopes. The three obsolescent envelopes cost £2.30 (G), £2.35 (H) and £2.45 (K). Shown here is the front and back of the G and H sizes.

Specialist collectors of postal stationery will note that there are variations in the printing of the G and H envelopes. These were detailed, by Andrew Whitworth, in the *Bulletin* of January 1991 (page 114).

One of the new Registered Plus envelopes was illustrated here in July 1993 (page 272). One of the new Guaranteed Delivery envelopes will be shown next month. The new envelopes are available from main post offices and the British Philatelic Bureau – details and prices are given in the Bureau's stock list.

New C5 Stamped Envelope

A new series of 1st and 2nd class pre-stamped envelopes bearing a Machin head silhouette of The Queen were introduced in 1991 and have proved popular particularly with small businesses. Packs of envelopes are available to



National Postal Museum News

Love in the Post – NPM Exhibition

The golden age of the Valentine greeting – when Victorian Romeos and Juliets exchanged romantic messages on ornate cards of silver lace, beads, satin ribbons, hearts and flowers – is recreated in the current exhibition at the National Postal Museum.

Mr Stan Goron, Manager of the NPM, said: “The Victorians were supreme in making and sending Valentines and London became a centre of excellence for the beautiful and elaborate ornamentation with which their romantic messages were embellished. It was truly a golden age.

“Our special display of some of the finest examples of the Victorian Valentine makers’ skill is drawn from our own collection, which we have been building up during the past two years. It also reflects the Museum’s policy of broadening the scope of its work to include general aspects of mail as well as philately.”

The custom of sending romantic declarations of love swept across the country in Victorian Britain with the transformation of writing habits which followed the introduction in 1840 of the penny postage stamp, which revolutionised the letter service.

Victorians went to great trouble to choose or make Valentines of embossed or lace paper, adorned with grasses, mosses, flowers, satins, silks, gauze, silver wire, beads and even pearls. Some cards contained perfumed sachets.

In their day, most Victorian Valentine cards cost a penny or two (less than 1p today) – although some were as much as £2 or more. Nowadays, well-preserved examples can change hands for several hundred pounds.

As the century progressed, comic, rude, malicious or vulgar Valentines appeared in greater numbers. A comic “naughty” card in the exhibition depicts a young lady wearing a crinoline; by pulling a tab, the crinoline rises to reveal her pantaloons.

But the vulgar cards so tarnished the image of



the age old love message that by the turn of the century Valentines had all but died out. They were revived in the 1920s by a greetings card producer who felt they would prove popular again. He was right: they have become a major industry worth about £23 million a year.

Mr Goron commented: "the thrill of an unexpected Valentine arriving through the post is just as new as it ever was. Last February, Royal Mail delivered 10 million cards."

The origins of Valentine messages are thought to lie in the Roman Spring festival of *Lupercalia*, celebrated on 15 February, which involved fertility rites. When the early Christian church sought to suppress such pagan customs by replacing them with festivals to honour martyred saints, it chose St. Valentine for this event, although no-one knows which of the two saints of that name, both put to death on 14 February in about 270 AD, was selected. The day celebrates the approach of Spring, when "a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love and birds begin to mate."

Subsequently, it became the custom for young men to draw lots on St Valentine's eve for the women who would become their Valentines for the year. By the mid 1400s, choosing a Valentine was to promise betrothal. In 1477, Dame Elizabeth Brews of Stinton, Akenham, wrote to her cousin John Paston of Norfolk suggesting he might marry her daughter Margery. The first line of her letter reads: "and, cosyn, oppon Fryday is Sent Volentyne's Day and every brydde chesyth hym a make" [mate].

John proposed, and got a reply from Margery addressed: "unto my ryght welebelovyd Voluntyn, John Paston, Squyer, be this bill delyvered" – probably the earliest known Valentine.

Valentine presents were often exchanged on the day – in 1537 Mary Tudor gave Sir Anthony Brown a gold and agate brooch. In later years, it was customary for the man to make the gift, a practice – as Samuel Pepys the diarist records – which could become expensive, although the recipient could properly be another man's wife.

By the middle of the 18th century, present giving lessened in favour of simple love tokens or well-written embellished letters. From such beginnings, stimulated by the appearance in Germany of *Freundschaftskarten* – friendship or lovers' cards the colourful Valentine cards of the Victorian era grew.

Many of the early cards were made by the sender and featured the endless "lovers' knot".

By the end of the 18th century, specialist card manufacturers began to appear, along with the first examples of paper lace.

However, the introduction of the postage stamp in 1840 provided the boost in letter writing that gave the card makers the incentive they needed to turn Valentine card design and manufacture into the Victorian *haute couture* it became.

A set of four NPM postcards featuring Valentine cards costs £1 and may be purchased at the Museum's shop or ordered from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

Freddie Mercury's stamp collection for NPM

A stamp collection built up by the late Freddie Mercury has been bought by Royal Mail and will shortly go on public display at the National Postal Museum.

The rock star's collection, part of a larger collection amassed by his father Mr Bomi Bulsara, includes examples of both mint and used stamps from various parts of the world. It was one of our lots entered by Mr Bulsara into an auction at Sotheby's on 17 December. A total of £8090 was raised for the Mercury Phoenix Trust, an AIDS charity set up by the remaining members of Queen, following the death of their leader in 1991.

Royal Mail paid £3220 for the lot containing Freddie Mercury's blue stamp album and thousands of his father's British Empire stamps, some of which date back to 1860. The Manager of the NPM, Mr Stan Goron, said: "the collection includes stamps collected by Freddie Mercury as a boy and those collected by his father. His father's collection contains a wide variety of stamps from all over the world, including some good examples of those issued by the Commonwealth countries which are of particular interest to the Museum. Freddie Mercury's collection includes a comprehensive selection of stamps from Zanzibar, where he was brought up as a boy".

The Museum, located within the London Chief Post Office, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP, is open to the public Monday – Friday 9.30am – 4.30pm. Admission is free. It is a few minutes walk from St Paul's Cathedral and underground station. The Museum houses extensive collections of British, Commonwealth and world stamps, some of which are unique. The centrepiece display is the Reginald M

Phillips Collection of British stamps of the reign of Queen Victoria; this includes rare examples of Penny Blacks, Penny Reds and Two Penny Blues.

Friends of the National Postal Museum

The Friends have an impressive programme of events for 1994, including visits to the National Army Museum, the British Philatelic Bureau, Didcot Railway Centre, Mail Rail (Mount Pleasant), Preston Automated Mail Centre, Pitney-Bowes (manufacturers of meter machines), and a tour of letter boxes in the Maidstone area. In addition to the visits, various lectures are being held in London. Souvenirs are produced of most events. For full details of membership of the Association of Friends and its activities, send a stamped self-addressed envelope, or international reply coupon, to: R G Pottle, PO Box 40, UCKFIELD, E Sussex, TN22 2SP, Tel: 0825-766546. A review of the Autumn 1993 issue of *Cross Post*, the Association's journal, was published here in January, page 132.

New PO Archives Postcards

The Post Office Archives & Records Centre launch a new set of postcards at Spring Stampex

on 1 March.

Each set is individually numbered and packed, with the issue being strictly limited to 2500 sets. Reproducing original artwork by the artist J Ramsey Wherrett (1914-60), these beautifully illustrated cards portray four members of Post Office staff in a colourful, cartoon-like way. The designs, like the two previous issues, were for posters, although these particular designs were never actually published. Forming part of the Archives collection, their reference numbers are as follows:

- Post 109/180 – The Postman
- Post 109/181 – The Mail Van Driver
- Post 109/182 – The Telegraph Boy
- Post 109/201 – The Counter Clerk

This very attractive and individual set of cards will be available exclusively from the Archives, price £1. Please note that all cheques should be made payable to "The Post Office" and that a handling charge of 60p applies to all orders.

All orders should be addressed to: The Post Office Archives & Records Centre, Freeing House, Mount Pleasant Complex, (Phoenix Place Entrance), LONDON EC1A 1BB, Tel. 071-239 2570.



Stamp Scene

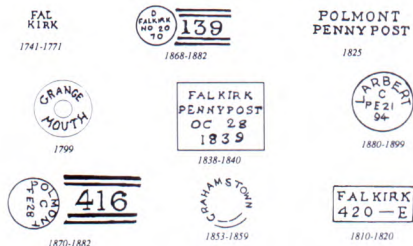
Scottish Philatelic Congress

The 65th Annual Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies will take place in the Town Hall, Falkirk, Stirlingshire on Saturday and Sunday 19-20 March 1994. The host society will be the Falkirk Philatelic Society, one of the Association's younger enthusiastic clubs.

On 19 March the doors will be open from 9.00am to 5.00pm. The host society will present a 60 frame display and the entries for the National Competition will also be on show. Many of the country's major dealers will be attending as will be the British Philatelic Bureau. The official opening will be held in the Council Chamber at 11.00am, when a paper will be read and the major awards for the year presented.

Sunday 20 March will be "Collectors' Day" when there will be displays by many Scottish and specialist philatelic societies. There will also be special society meetings. Information about all Scottish philatelic societies will be available to potential members on both days. Open from 10.00am to 4.00pm. On both days entry is free and there will be ample free parking available. Refreshments will only be available on the Saturday. Enquiries: T J Woods, 32 Bryan Street, HAMILTON, Lanarkshire, ML3 0JW.

Postmarks of Falkirk & District



The Falkirk PS have prepared a special cover – featuring the Falkirk Steeple – and cancellation for the event. A postcard featuring early postmarks of Falkirk is also available. Orders for postcards should be sent to J M Anderson, "Taradon", Wallacestone Brae, FALKIRK, Stirlingshire, FK2 0DH. Price 25p each plus 25p postage & packing.

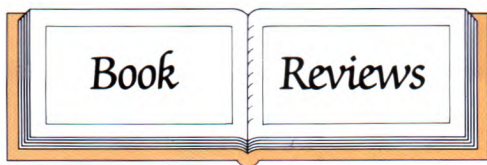
Philatelic History Society

The July/October 1992 issue of the Society's journal, *Philatelic Paraphernalia*, is now available – delayed for various reasons. As always the



journal contains interesting articles on this byway of philately. Collectors in the Manchester area will be interested in the recollections of philatelists in that city in the 1890s written by P L Pemberton in 1945-46. One Mancunian dealer, Dolph Ostara, offered to buy "Post Office Mauritius" stamps at £350 – an illustration of the desired stamp being stolen from his shop window after a "smash and grab" raid. Illustrations show Ostara's shop, also that of Heywood's, stamp dealers of Paton Street, Piccadilly. Jeremy Moyle provides a useful bibliography relating to the famous stamp firm of Whitfield King, followed by a reprint of a detailed article on this company by Fred Melville. The Editor, Victor Short, illustrates a rare wrapper used to send out *The Philatelic Catalogue*, published in April 1873. It was published by James R Grant & Co – the trading name of E L Pemberton.

This issue of *Philatelic Paraphernalia* was long delayed as the printers went into liquidation and the printing plates disappeared. Eventually Mr Short was able to recover these and the magazine printed. The next issue is scheduled for publication mid-1994. Readers interested in joining the Philatelic History Society should contact Mr Short at: Hunters Lodge, Cottesmore Road, Ashwell, OAKHAM, Leics, LE15 7LJ, Tel. Oakham 757539.



British Postage Due Mail, 1914-1971, by Michael Furfie. Available from the author: 37 Town Tree Road, ASHFORD, Middlesex, TW15 2PN. Price £6.50 (US\$10) UK, Europe, worldwide surface mail, £8 (\$12) Worldwide Airmail. Remittances payable to "C J Furfie".

The time-span of this attractive volume covers the period of the pre-decimal postage due and to pay labels. The labels themselves are not discussed *per se* – neither the background to their adoption in April 1914 nor the production and philatelic aspects except in the most cursory terms. Similarly the vast subject of charge and explanatory marks associated with the handling of unpaid or underpaid items and other infringements (invalid stamps, posted out of course or contrary to regulations) is left alone, the reader being directed to other books dealing with such matters.

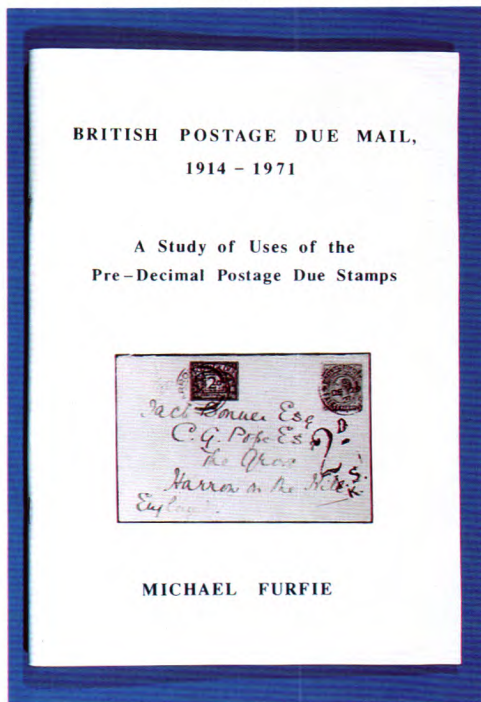
Mr Furfie concentrates instead on actual usage, with some 50 covers, postcards, wrappers and dockets illustrating the employment of the labels. A minor criticism is his use of the term postage due *stamps*, contrary to the prevailing practice of reserving that word for those adhesives (and impressions on postal stationery) which denote the *prepayment* of postage.

Introductory sections define what is meant by a postage due cover. In its complete form this is an item which is deficient in postage or infringes regulations in some way, thereby attracting some sort of charge and/or explanatory marking at the office of collection, with a corresponding postage due or to pay label affixed and cancelled at the delivery office. Of course, many items (especially nowadays!) are to be seen with charge marks but lacking the appropriate to pay labels. Such covers, though not without interest, obviously rate less to a collector than those bearing the correct labels.

The core of the book, however, summarises the round dozen sets of labels from 1914 to 1971, differing in watermark, paper and latterly even in printing process, but having a basic design that remained unchanged throughout the entire period. In this context Mr Furfie touches on the "to pay" labels (the higher denominations

thus inscribed) which were intended primarily for the recovery of customs duty and handling charges on parcels arriving from outside Britain. There are useful tables of inland postal rates and the range of surcharges that might arise for various reasons during each period.

The surcharging of registered mail is discussed in some detail, particularly the treatment of packets posted out of course and those containing coin which were subject to compulsory registration. The UPU rates and regulations from 1914 onwards are explained, alongside the treatment of underpaid mail going abroad, or coming into Britain. The changes in regulations and operational practices over the years are outlined, with appropriate illustrations.



A chapter is devoted to redirected mail, when the original charge was not collected and a fresh label had to be added before delivery, necessitating the use of special rubber stamps inscribed CHARGE NOT COLLECTED/FRESH LABEL REQUIRED. Separate sections deal with the handling of forces mail during wartime, the misuse of British stamps on mail arriving from abroad, redirected foreign underpaid mail, forwarded or undeliverable parcels returned to sender, bundled postage due charges, the treatment of packets from the Channel Islands

after the introduction of their own stamps in 1969 and the handling of packets from Rhodesia bearing stamps since UDI which were not recognised by the UK. The last named even resulted in distinctive red and white labels explaining that "stamps issued in Rhodesia of the kind used on this postal packet have no legal basis."

The author has devised an ingenious system of scarcity codes, based on the labels used and the rates or regulations they covered, although he somewhat limits their usefulness with a stern warning at the outset forbidding the quotation of these codes, directly or indirectly, in connection with goods offered for sale or at auction. 75 pages, A4, card covers.

James Mackay

Forthcoming Book

A report of the work of the Royal Mail Stamp Advisory Committee on the special stamp issues of 1992 was published last April (reviewed here in May). Copies are still available from the British Philatelic Bureau. A review of the Committee's deliberations on the 1993 issues will shortly be published – full details in next month's *Bulletin*.

Postbag

J R HOLMAN



Aerogrammes

Mr C S Baker of Wiltshire writes:

"In the January 1994 *Bulletin* Kenneth Chapman wrote about Aerogrammes and Airgraphs in the series "Philatelic Terms Explained". Unfortunately some of the detail contained in the article concerning aerogrammes is either misleading or inaccurate. Perhaps you could set the record straight.

"In the third paragraph Mr Chapman states that during the Second World War Air Mail Letter Cards were first issued by the Australian Government following advice given to them by Douglas Gumbley. However, Mr Lee in his book *British Forces Air Mail Letter Cards and Air Letters*, gives clear evidence that the British authorities were the first to issue these "cards" to forces in the Middle East, and that it was the Australian authorities who subsequently instituted a similar system.

"Although true the UK issued its first Air Mail Letter Card in March 1941, the use of these was restricted to forces stationed in the Middle East and the Mediterranean area. The postage rate for these 'cards' was 3d, but they had no impressed stamp since many were sent free of postage by forces on active service. Those that were not despatched under this system were prepaid at the 3d rate with a British 3d adhesive.

"The release in the UK of an unstamped Air Mail Letter Card did not occur until December 1942, but this was a temporary measure which was subsequently replaced in June 1943 with an 'Air Letter' impressed with a 6d stamp. However, earlier than this, from July 1941, UK civilians were able to purchase prestamped 2½d Air Mail Letter Cards, although their use was restricted to correspondence sent to prisoners of war and internees held by German forces and their allies (ie. not to prisoners in Japanese hands).

"Although it is true to say that pictorial views were first used on British Aerogrammes in 1963, this overlooks the commemorative issues for the Olympic Games in 1948 and the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953, not to mention that for the Parliamentary Conference in 1957.

"Mr Chapman correctly states that the 6d rate for aerogrammes lasted until 1966, but fails to mention that in April 1945 a 1½d forces air letter was issued. Indeed forces airmail rates were generally below those which applied to civil airmail."

Imperial Mail Delivery

R Pidgley of West Sussex and K C Burton of Norfolk wrote concerning Kris Menon's article in the January *Bulletin*. Mr Menon has asked us to publish two corrections. Simla is 5000 feet not miles above sea level, and the illustration was of the Public Library not the Post Office. The article revived memories of the British Raj for a number of readers.

All letters to the Editor are carefully read; matters of general interest will be dealt with in "Postbag". The Editor regrets that he is unable to reply personally to letters.

The Gift Giving Greetings book (issued 2 February 1993) was *not* withdrawn from sale at post offices on 31 January 1994 as stated in January's *Bulletin*. The book will remain on sale until supplies are exhausted.

Six Month Digest

Listed below are the issues of the past six months and the proposed dates of issue for stamps until August 1994. Any change in these dates will be notified in the Bulletin. British Philatelic Bureau order codes are quoted where known.

7 Sep	4 x 2nd class book/H (UB073)
7 Sep	Autumn stamp cards (AQ268)
14 Sep	Autumn stamps (AS560)
14 Sep	Autumn pack (AP116)
14 Sep	NPM PO Uniforms cards (NQ919)
5 Oct	Sherlock Holmes stamp cards (AQ274)
5 Oct	Christmas aerogramme (QX017)
5 Oct	NVI sheets 1st class, Q (DS243)
5 Oct	NVI sheets, 2nd class, Q (DS184)
12 Oct	Sherlock Holmes stamps (AS566)
12 Oct	Sherlock Holmes pack (AP117)
12 Oct	Self-adhesive stamp card (DQ001)
19 Oct	Self-adhesive stamp book (UB078)
26 Oct	19p Definitive, olive green, H (DS199)
26 Oct	25p Definitive, salmon pink, H (DS250)
26 Oct	29p Definitive, light grey, E (DS292)
26 Oct	36p Definitive, ultramarine, E (DS360)
26 Oct	38p Definitive, red, E (DS380)
26 Oct	41p Definitive, stone, E (DS410)
26 Oct	New Definitive pack (DP016)
1 Nov	50p book – Postal History 4, H (TB027)
1 Nov	£1 book – Ed. Institutions 4, W (TB028)
1 Nov	£2 book – Postal Vehicles 1, H (TB029)
1 Nov	£1.40 book (4 x 35p stamps), W (UB082)
1 Nov	£1.64 book (4 x 41p stamps), W (UB083)
1 Nov	10 x 1st class book/Q (UB080)
1 Nov	10 x 1st class book/W (UB081)
1 Nov	4 x 1st class book/W (UB079)
1 Nov	19p stamp roll, H (DC860)
1 Nov	25p stamp roll, H (DC862)
1 Nov	35p stamp roll, H (DC864)
1 Nov	41p stamp roll, H (DC865)
2 Nov	Christmas stamp cards (AQ280)
9 Nov	Christmas stamps (AS572)
9 Nov	Christmas pack (AP118)
9 Nov	Christmas stamp book (1st class) (UB084)
9 Nov	Christmas stamp book (2nd class) (UB085)
9 Nov	1993 Collectors Pack (AR031)
9 Nov	1993 Year Book (AY036)
9 Nov	NPM Christmas postcards (NQ920)
7 Dec	N. Ireland 19p (IS191)
7 Dec	N. Ireland 25p (IS250)
7 Dec	N. Ireland 30p (IS300)
7 Dec	N. Ireland 41p (IS410)
7 Dec	Scotland 19p (SS192)
7 Dec	Scotland 25p (SS250)
7 Dec	Scotland 30p (SS300)

7 Dec	Scotland 41p (SS410)
7 Dec	Wales 19p (WS192)
7 Dec	Wales 25p (WS250)
7 Dec	Wales 30p (WS300)
7 Dec	Wales 41p (WS410)
7 Dec	Country stamps pack (CP011)
14 Dec	4p Definitive, E (DS044)
14 Dec	20p Definitive, E (DS207)
14 Dec	50p Definitive, E (DS504)

1994

11 Jan	NPM Valentines postcards (NQ921)
11 Jan	Age of Steam stamp cards (AQ286)
18 Jan	Age of Steam stamps (AS578)
18 Jan	Age of Steam pack (AP119)
25 Jan	1994 Greetings stamp cards (JQ012)
25 Jan	50p book – Coaching Inns 1 (TB030)
25 Jan	£1 book – Prime Ministers 1 (TB031)
1 Feb	1994 Greetings stamps book (JB009)
1 Feb	1994 Greetings stamps pack (JP003)
15 Feb	To Pay labels 1p–25p (KS002)
15 Feb	To Pay labels £1–£5 (LS002)
15 Feb	To Pay labels pack (LP002)
15 Feb	C5 size envelope 1st class
15 Feb	C5 size envelope 2nd class
22 Feb	Prince of Wales stamp cards (AQ292)
22 Feb	10 x 1st class book/W (UB087)
22 Feb	10 x 2nd class book/W (UB086)

Forthcoming

1 Mar	Prince of Wales stamps and pack
22 Mar	Scottish Aerogramme – R L Stevenson
5 Apr	Pictorial Postcards stamp cards
12 Apr	Pictorial Postcards stamps and pack
26 Apr*	50p, £1, £2 books
26 Apr	Channel Tunnel stamp cards
3 May	Channel Tunnel stamps and pack
6 May	NPM postcards-Postcodes
31 May	D Day stamp cards
6 Jun	D Day stamps and pack
6 Jun	50p, £1 books
28 Jun	Golf stamp cards
5 Jul	Golf stamps and pack
19 Jul	Scot Aerogramme – Gordon Highlanders
26 Jul	N Ireland prestige book
26 Jul	Summer stamp cards
2 Aug	Summer stamps and pack
2 Aug	NPM postcards-Uniforms

Notes:

W = Printed by Walsall Security Printers;
H = Harrison & Sons; Q = House of Questa.
E = Joh. Enchedé en Zonen.
* = provisional date of issue.

March Digest

Issued in March/early April

1 March: Prince of Wales Investiture 25th Anniversary stamps – 19p, 25p, 30p, 35p, 41p.

Designer: Paintings by HRH The Prince of Wales.

Printing: Harrison & Sons Ltd, photogravure. Sheets of 100, PVA Dextrin gum. Perf 15 x 14 one phosphor band (with fluor) 19p, phosphor coated paper others. OBA free paper.

Pictorial First Day of Issue Postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau and Caernarfon.

Presentation Pack: No. 245, price £1.85.

22 March: Scottish Aerogramme – Centenary of death of Robert Louis Stevenson. Price 45p (includes 36p postage).

Designer: Richard Smith.

Printing: McCorquodale Envelopes Ltd.

Pictorial First Day of Issue Postmark: Edinburgh.

5 April: Pictorial Postcards stamp cards.

Withdrawn in March/early April

15 March: Retail books – 10 x 2nd class and 4 x 1st class, issued 16 March 1993.

15 March: Orchids stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards.

22 March: Scottish Aerogramme – Royal Caledonian Curling Club (issued 23 March 1993).

31 March: Pictorial aerogramme, pack of 6 (issued 1 August 1989); Aerogramme pack – 1 x pictorial, 5 x standard (issued 17 April 1990); 50th Anniversary single aerogramme (no star) and pack of 6 (with star) (issued 1 December 1992).

31 March: Registered envelopes G, H and K sizes (first issued 23 September 1986).

5 April: 50p stamp book – Postal History 2 and £1 book – Educational Institutions 2 (issued 6 April 1993).

5 April: Retail books – 4 x 2nd class, and 10 x 1st class (Walsall); 4 x 1st class and 10 x 1st class (Harrison); and 10 x 2nd class (Questra) (issued 6 April 1993).

Events

Until 13 Mar 94. "From Post Boy to Air Mail" exhibition, coinciding with "Collectormania" at the Museum of Science & Industry, Liverpool Road, Castlefield, Manchester. Open 10.00-17.00 Mon-Sun. Museum enquiries: 061-832

2244. Enquiries about the Post Boy to Air Mail exhibition to: David Harrop, 15 Hawthorne Road, Heaton Mersey, STOCKPORT SK4 3DQ.

Until 31 Mar 94. "Valentine Cards" exhibition at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1. Open 9.30-16.30 Mon-Fri. Admission free.

1-6 Mar 94. Spring Stampex at Royal Horticultural Society Halls, London SW1. Enquiries: STAMPEX, 107 Charterhouse Street, LONDON EC1M 6PT. David Harrop (address above) will be displaying his collection of shipping items, including Packet boat captain's flint-lock pistol and many other items dealing with the carriage of mail by sea.

19 Mar 94. Kent Federation of Philatelic Societies Spring Rally at Chantry Country Primary School, Ordnance Road, Gravesend, 9.30-16.30. Competition, Displays, Dealers, Raffle, Refreshments. Enquiries: M Thompson, 77 St Marks Avenue, Northfleet, GRAVESEND, Kent, DA11 9LN.

26 Mar 94. Rayleigh PS Annual Stamp Day at Mill Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh, Essex. Open 10.00-17.00, admission free. Dealers, Post Office counter, Raffle, Licensed bar, refreshments. Raffle tickets, £1 per book of five available from address below. Enquiries: R E How, 5 Dalys Road, ROCHFORD, Essex, SS4 1RA. Tel. 0702 544632.

23 Apr 94. Telford Phil Soc Stamp & Postcard Fair at Belmont Hall, Wellington, Telford, 10.00-16.00. Enquiries: P Morris-Jones, 190 Holyhead Road, Wellington, TELFORD, TF1 2DW. Tel. 0952 223926.

13-15 May 94. Hobbies, Toys & Collectors' world exhibition at Barbican Exhibition Centre, London EC2. Royal Mail stand selling philatelic products.

20 May 94. Vintage Years Exhibition at Kensington Town Hall, London. Royal Mail stand selling philatelic products.

