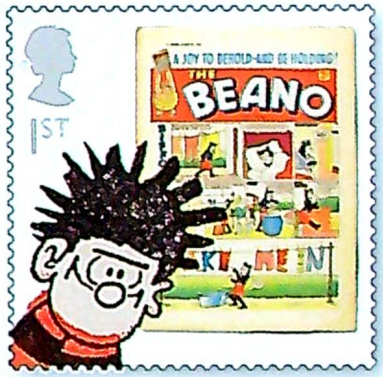
BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The Royal Mail magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 49 Number 7 | March 2012 £1.20

The age of steam revisited • Jubilee portraiture • Comics



Ten new stamps celebrate much-loved British comics

Issues and withdrawals



Cover Desperate Dan is one of the ten much-loved characters on the Royal Mail Comics stamps, issued on 20 March. *The Dandy*, *The Beano*, *The Topper*, *Bunty*, *Twinkle* and associated characters ®© DC Thomson & Co. Ltd. 2012

To order philatelic items, including those listed on the right, contact Royal Mail Tallents House at the address below. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on the Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/shop Selected items are available at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets at main post offices in: Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, London (Eastcheap and Trafalgar Square), Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southend on Sea, Stevenage, Stroud, Trowbridge, Truro, York and Newport, Isle of Wight

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1 March	**Issue** City of Cardiff Coin Cover
7 March	**Withdrawal** Magical Realms: Stamps, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards
8 March	**Issue** Classic Locomotives of Scotland, Great British Locomotives 2: Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Name Plate Cover
20 March	**Issue** Comics: Stamps, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Pin Badges, Framed Stamps
21 March	**Withdrawal** WWF: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Prestige Stamp Book, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards. All Action for Species issues: Birds, Insects, Plants, Mammals
29 March	**Withdrawal** Tariff 2010 Machin and Country Definitives: Stamps, Presentation Packs, Europe 20g and Worldwide 20g Stamp Books, 2010 Year of Miniature Sheets Collection and 2010 Year of Presentation Packs Collection
1 April	**Issue** London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Sports Cover Collection: Judo and Triathlon
10 April	**Issue** UK A-Z Part 2: Stamps, Presentation Pack, Cards, Composite Souvenir Stamp Sheet
10 April	**Issue** Titanic: Commemorative Sheet
11 April	**Withdrawal** The Royal Shakespeare Company: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards
24 April	**Issue** Post & Go British Farm Animals 2, Pigs: Stamps

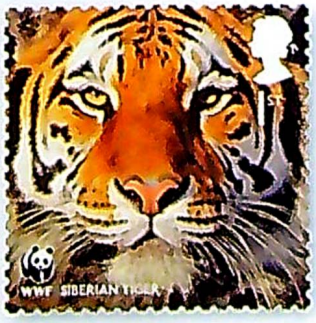
Contents





Portraiture of our times John Keyworth, Curator of the Bank of England Museum, explains the design of the banknote images in the Diamond Jubilee Definitives issue **207**

Issues and withdrawals In with the new and cheerio to the tiger **194**



Postbox and inbox A selection of your letters and emails **196**

Royal Mail news A new sheet commemorates the *Titanic*, classic pigs breeds star on Post and Go British Farm Animals 2, plus a Cardiff coin cover **197**

You told us! Feedback from the *Bulletin* readers' survey **201**

UK A-Z A first glimpse of Part 2 of UK A-Z, an alphabetical tour of the nation on stamps, from M to Z **202**

Stamp Scene John Holman with the latest news from philatelic circles **204**



Japes and scrapes Paul Gravett charts the golden age of British comics and characters we thought would live for ever **211**



Postmarks John Newcomb explores the subtleties of the humble packet stamp **215**

Great Scot! Railway expert Dugald Cameron shares some personal reflection on the age of steam locomotives **216**



Breeding is everything A closer look at two of the traditional breeds of farm animals featured on illustrated Post and Go issues **220**

Puzzles Philatelic teasers and a cryptic crossword, with great prizes to be won **223**

The ***British Philatelic Bulletin*** is published monthly by Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● Editor: William Doherty ● Price £1.20 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets (see opposite) ● **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Tallents House (address opposite) ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 issues) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail Tallents House ● Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps – available on annual subscription from Royal Mail Tallents House: £12.25 UK and Europe; £24.95 rest of the world
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Postbox and inbox

First-class letter

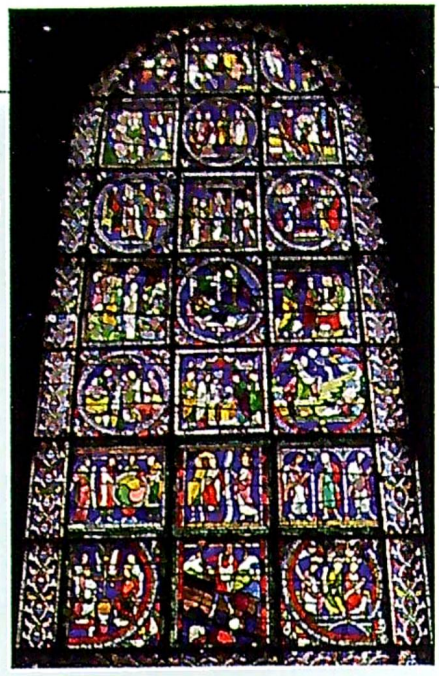
California collector

Following correspondence about the date of the first Royal Mail Year Book, I checked my library and found a letter from the Editor dated February 1985, informing me that the first, the 1984 edition was so sought after that I was too late to have it in my collection! I do have every one since then to 2010 and await delivery of my 2011 copy. The earliest letter I can find to the *Bulletin* is dated February 1970, following my visit to the 'The Flying Scotsman' on its trip through Fort Worth in Texas.

At age 83 I have been a collector for 70 years and have a lot of of wonderful covers from 10 Downing Street when Churchill was there and my girlfriend was his secretary (shorthand and typing). These are unique but I don't want them to fall into the wrong hands. Do you have any suggestions as to what to do with these items?
David Young, California

We very much enjoyed your letter but sadly it had to be cut for publication. There are some interesting covers on the subject of the Flying Scotsman U.S and Canada Tour you mention. (Also, see *Great Scot!* on page 216.) To readers wishing to pass on items to a good collecting home, we advise that the first ports of call might be a local philatelic society – many of which have libraries and will know of interested collectors – and then a GB collectors association in the US.

Canterbury conundrum



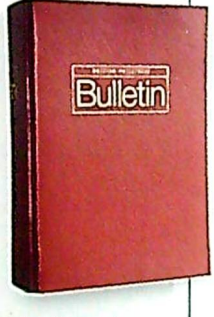
My husband and I both enjoy reading *Bulletin*. He is the collector and meticulous about his stamps, but not I! He noticed that in the article 'Divine by Design' in December Bulletin, a 7½p stamp is shown with the caption explaining that it is one of the 1971 series 'featuring sections of the 13-century window in Canterbury Cathedral, as shown above'. But in photograph of the Cathedral window, the pane portrayed on the 7½p stamp is not shown. Maybe you can explain?
Isobel Blaikley, London

Nice to hear from a *Bulletin* household! We had two more letters with the same query, and here is our explanation: we did not have space to show either the whole stamp set or the whole window in sufficient detail, so opted for part of each. The panes shown in the window section are those used in the stamps *not* shown. And the pane shown on the stamp is not shown on the window section. The illustration above may help you pick out all three 1971 stamps – with a magnifier!

Complete archive available

I have a complete run of *Bulletin*s to December 2010 for disposal, available free to anyone who can collect from the Isle of Wight.
Brian Stoodley, Shanklin, bstoodley@tiscali.co.uk

Thank you for your generous offer. Interested readers should write to the Editor, who will pass on their contact details to Brian Stoodley. Runs of *Bulletin* are also sold on eBay, requesting pick-up rather than mailing. And charity auctions may also appreciate *Bulletin* archives as a donation.

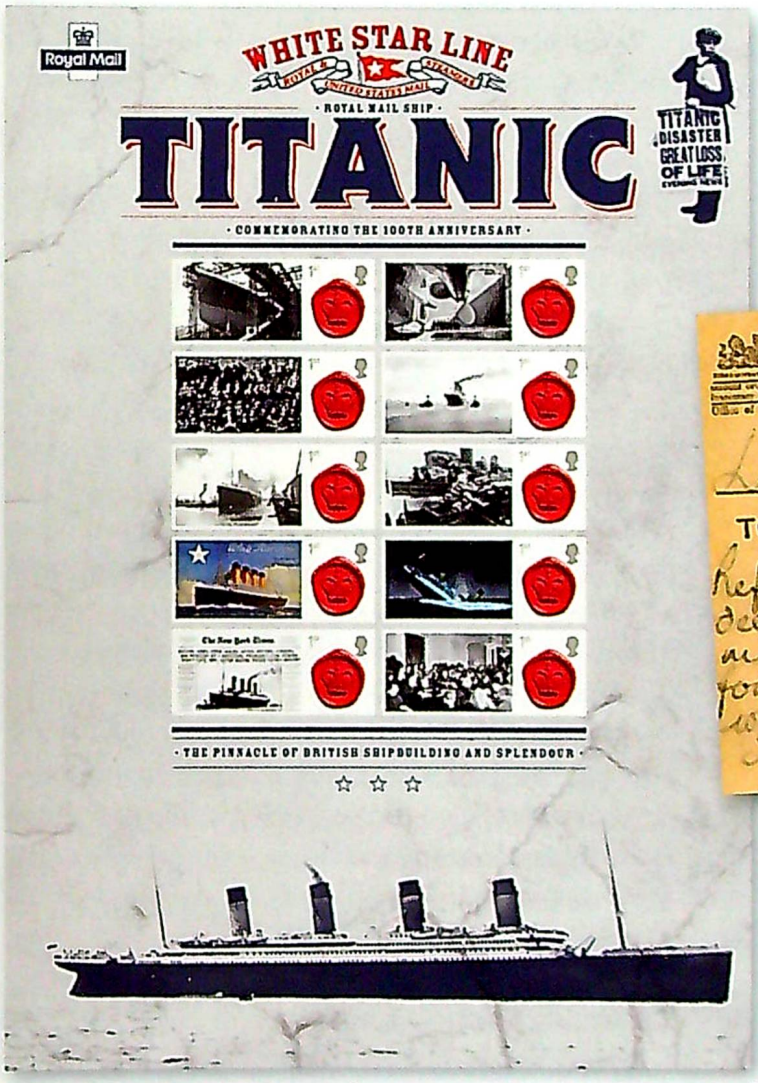


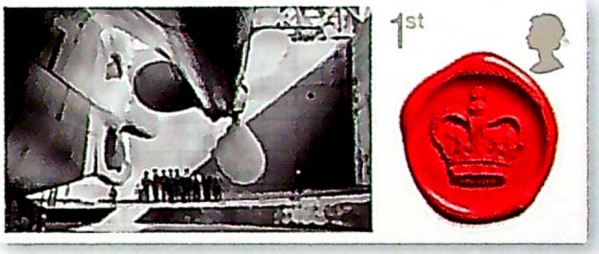
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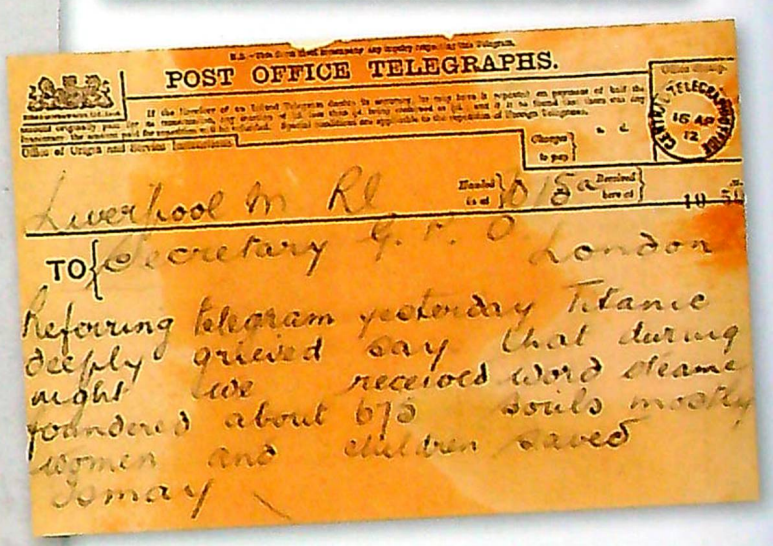
The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent,Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Or email bulletin.enquiries@royalmail.com

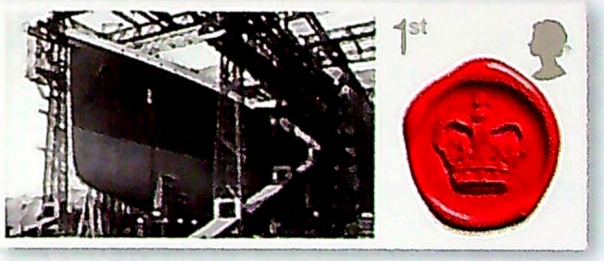
Readers' letters published will receive philatelic delights as a thank-you. The writer of the 'First-class letter' award receives the *Bulletin* binder.

March update 100th anniversary of the *Titanic*, more Post & Go's down on the farm and a cool Cardiff Cover









Marking the 100th anniversary of the *RMS Titanic*, Royal Mail issues a Commemorative Sheet on 10 April. The history of the *Titanic* and Royal Mail are closely interlinked, as the ship was commissioned to carry mail and so the letters RMS (Royal Mail Ship) were used in the ship's name. On 10 April 1912, when the grand new White Star Line liner set sail from Southampton on its maiden voyage to New York with 2,223 people on board, travelling among them were two British postal workers together with three counterparts from the US Postal Service. There is evidence that they valiantly tried to save the mail when the *Titanic* collided with an iceberg four days later, but all five individuals were among the 1,522 people who perished when she sank.

The new Commemorative Sheet carries ten first-class stamps, each with the 'crown seal' Smiler® stamp and a label alongside featuring a variety of images of the *Titanic* story, such as her construction in the dockyards, the launch, the crew, White Star Line publicity, a *The New York Times* headline and the public enquiry that followed the disaster. The sheet background shows the White Star Line emblem at the top and a *Titanic* picture below the stamps. Price £13.95 •

Above: the commemorative sheet includes images of the construction and launch of the *Titanic*. Also shown above, but not part of the sheet, is a telegram from a collection held at the The British Postal Museum and Archive, sent at the time of the *Titanic* disaster



The animals come in six by six This year Post and Go stamps are following the theme of British Farm Animals, exploring some of the many breeds of sheep, cattle and pigs to be found on farms in the UK. Already released is the first issue of Sheep (see page 166 in February *Bulletin* and the article 'Breeding is Everything', on page 220) and on 24 April the Pigs are unpenned!

Stamp by stamp Robert Gillmor's lino-cuts have captured the distinctive characteristics of the following breeds of pigs.

Berkshire pigs are said to be Britain's oldest pig breed, originally bred around the market towns of Faringdon and Wantage in the Vale of the White Horse (which prior to the 1974 county boundary changes was in Berkshire but is now in Oxfordshire). They are early-maturing pigs, with short black hair, often with white hair on their legs, faces and tips of the tails. You cannot miss the Berkshire ears – large and upright and often leaning forwards.

Gloucestershire Old Spots are big and meaty, with a white coat that has large, clearly defined black spots. A few years ago fashion called for only one or two spots, but today breeders have decided that if you are going to have a spotted pig, then it should have plenty of spots, which should be clearly defined and black – but not blue. Distinctive lop ears cover the faces of Gloucestershire Old Spots, coming all the way down to the snout.

Oxford Sandy and Black pigs have existed for 200 to 300 years and are one of the oldest British pig

Post & Go British Farm Animals 2, Pigs – Specifications

Date of issue	24 April
Number of stamps	Six
Stamp design	Kate Stephens
Stamp illustration	Robert Gillmor
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	56mm x 25mm
Printer	Walsall Security Printers
Print process	Gravure
Perforations	Kiss die-cut simulated
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	Self-adhesive

breeds. Sometimes referred to as 'Plum Pudding pigs' or 'Oxford Forest pigs', they are the traditional farmers' and cottagers' pig in central England, especially around Oxfordshire. The breed is suited to the outdoors, being good at foraging and not prone to sunburn, and has an excellent temperament and mothering abilities. The coat is a light sandy to rust colour, with random black blotches (rather than round spots) with a white blaze, socks and tassel (tufts of hair) on the tail.

Welsh pigs are white, with lop ears meeting at the tips just short of the pig's nose. This breed has a long level body with deep strong hams and legs set well apart. It is well known as a hardy pig and able to thrive under a wide variety of conditions, both indoors and outside. George Eglington, acknowledged as the founder of the modern Welsh breed in the 1950s, described the perfect Welsh pig as 'pear shaped' when viewed either from the side or from above.

Tamworth pigs are believed to be the oldest pure British breed, descended from wild boars and the ancient indigenous species known as the Old English Forest pig. They are very hardy and do well in northerly areas where winters are severely cold and windy. The breed has maintained its status because at the end of the 18th century, when many native British breeds were 'improved' by crossing them with Chinese and Neapolitan stock, the Tamworth breed was deemed unfashionable and hence left alone.

British Saddleback pigs originate from the amalgamation of two similar breeds, the Essex and Wessex Saddleback. The British Saddleback was recognised in 1967 when the Wessex Saddleback and the Essex breeds were amalgamated. This pig has a clearly defined belt of white extending over the shoulders and continuing over the forelegs. The rest of the body is black, sometimes with white feet and the tip of the tail.





Top: for the alternative First Day of Issue pictorial postmark, the village of Swine (five miles outside Hull) has been chosen for the obvious piggy connection. Above: the Tallents House Post & Go First Day of Issue postmark shows a map of the British Isles

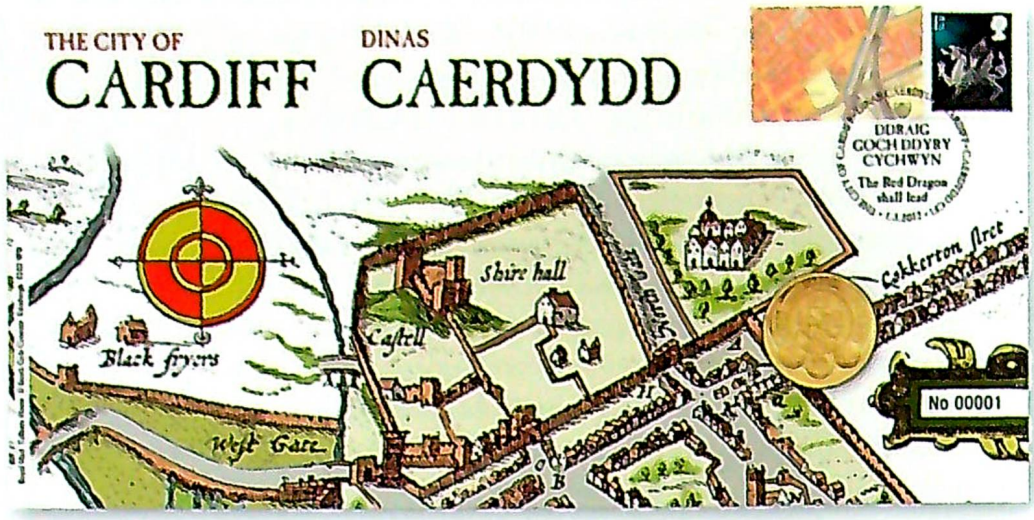
How to catch a First-day pig Post and Go British Farm Animals Pig stamps are available from Post and Go machines in selected Post Office® branches (list available from Tallents House at the address on page 194) from the date of issue. The selected letter tariff and code numberings are printed on demand by the machine.

The six different stamps are also available as a Stamp Set, printed in a sheetlet form and inserted in an attractive card (designed by The Chase), with a profile of the artist Robert Gillmor as well as information about each breed, written by Jack Byard, an expert on British farm animal breeds. The Stamp Set is available from Tallents House and is overprinted with First Class values and a philatelic code in gravure.

Orders for serviced First Day Covers have to reach Royal Mail by the first day of issue, 24 April 2012. Customers may also send stamped envelopes on the day of issue to Royal Mail, Tallents House to obtain the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark (shown above right). Customers who hand in or post stamped Royal Mail First Day Cover envelopes at main Post Offices® on the day of issue will receive the pictorial SWINE, HULL postmark (as shown top right), a place name chosen for obvious reasons! Alternatively, customers may send stamped envelopes to any of the Special Handstamp Centres for the pictorial or plain SWINE, HULL postmark • ▸



Above: the pictorial postmark on the fourth in the Capital Cities Coin Cover Collection celebrating the City of Cardiff, shown right. Price £15.95

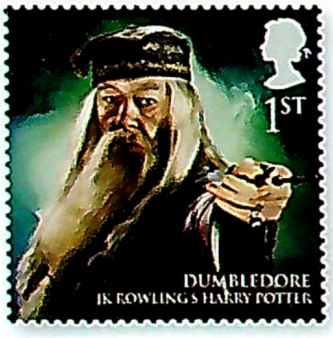


Cardiff Coin Cover Fourth in the charming Capital Cities Coin Cover Collection – following London, Belfast and Edinburgh – is the Cardiff Coin Cover, issued on St David's Day, 1 March. The numbered, limited-edition cover features a brilliant uncirculated £1 Cardiff coin from the Royal Mint, together with a unique combination of the Welsh Country Definitive stamp, a label illustrated with a map of Cardiff and the special bilingual cancellation mark with the words 'The Red Dragon shall lead' in Welsh and English.

The map on the Cardiff Coin Cover is taken from John Speed's map of 1610. It reveals many aspects of the city's development in the Middle Ages, including the walled castle and the Priory of the Dominican Black friars (who had arrived in Cardiff in the 13th century). The foundations of the Priory remain for all to see today, in Coopers field beside Cardiff Castle.

The £1 coin, issued by the Royal Mint in brilliant uncirculated nickel-brass, measures 22.50mm in diameter and weighs 9.50g. It features the Welsh heraldic dragon at the centre and civic symbols below, including Cardiff Castle •

London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Sports Cover Collection Released next month and in May are the latest four coin covers in this collection. On 1 April Judo and Triathlon covers are released, and on 6 May the subjects are Wheelchair Rugby and Volleyball. The Sports Cover Collection features 50p commemorative coins from the Royal Mint, with designs involving the respective sports. The backs of the covers carry information on the respective sports and the LOCOG hologram, which confirms them as official licensed products •



March farewells This month two poplar special stamp sets have completed their allotted year of travelling the world on mail. On page 194 you will find the dates of your last chance to buy Magical Realms Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards and Stamps, including Dumbledore stamp shown left, celebrating JK Rowling's achievement with Harry Potter. The Heroes and Villains pack – released last December to coincide with the Blu-ray and DVD launch of the final *Harry Potter* film – will remain on sale. Also withdrawn this month is the WWF issue, voted second favourite of the year in our 2011 Readers' Poll •

What the readers say Kate Shaw reports on the results of your 2011 quick-tick *Bulletin* Survey

IN SEPTEMBER'S *Bulletin* we asked you to take part in a reader survey with a total of 25 questions. The editorial team are most grateful to the 472 readers who took the time to tick all the boxes and write helpful comments. This is a good response rate – it's clear that *Bulletin* subscribers are loyal readers •

98% of respondents think *Bulletin* gives value for money

Broad opinions A reassuring 89% of respondents expressed an overall opinion of *Bulletin* as 'good' or 'very good'. The six people thought it 'poor' or 'very poor' gave delivery dates and content as their main reasons. The most popular motive for subscribing to *Bulletin* emerged as 'to give me details about Royal Mail new issues', while 89 respondents like to 'keep my finger on the pulse of philately.'

We're not sure whether to be reassured or disappointed that half of respondents said that no issue of Volume 48 in particular stood out in their memories! The issues recalled by the other half of respondents were broadly spread across the year, with June 2011 as the best-remembered at 9% •

68% want to read more about GB stamp designers

74% would like to see *Bulletin* onlline

Favourite *Bulletin* reading It appears that the majority of respondents tend to read *Bulletin* from cover to cover, with the exception of the Online Review and Puzzles page, which around a fifth of respondents 'rarely' or 'never' read – as we rather expected because of their more niche subject matter. However, we will be keeping those two pages, as they are at least 'sometimes' read by over 80%. The most popular Royal Mail pages are Issues & Withdrawals and Preview pages detailing forthcoming special issues, which are 'always' read by 81% and 82% respectively. John Holman's Stamp Scene retains its popularity among regular editorial pages, read 'always' or 'usually' by 84% of respondents.

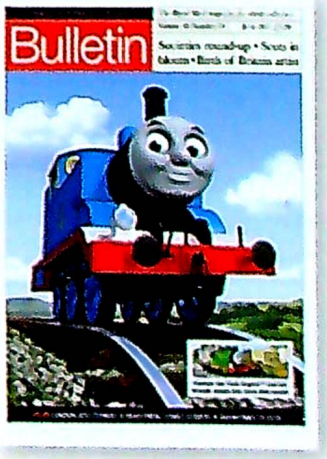
John Holman also stood out from an evenly spread pack of *Bulletin* writers, with 28% of respondents choosing him among their favourite contributors, followed by Richard West with 15% and Martin Robinson with 10% •

46% want to read more about specialist collectors of UK stamps

Value for money? We are happy to report that 98% of respondents rate their subscription as 'very good' (45%), 'good' (31%) or reasonable (22%) •

Collecting No big surprises here: 65% of respondents collect GB definitives, 42% Machins and 46% a wide variety of thematics, with History and Transport the most popular •

Demographic information 472 people took part in the survey (4% of the total distributed), 83% of whom were male. About half were over the age of 65 and 44% between 35 and 64 years old. Over 70% had undertaken further education and around a fifth had a higher degree. While the large majority (86%) live in the UK, we also received surveys from a proportionally large group of readers overseas. The *Bulletin* editorial team very much appreciate readers' participation in this survey and extend special thanks to the 49% of respondents who have been subscribers for more than 20 years •



Above: the June 2011 edition of *Bulletin* stood out in the memory of 9% of respondents.



UK A-Z Part 2 Next month sees the second part of a 26-stamp odyssey around the UK



The White Cliffs of Dover on the A-Z UK Part 2 pictorial

An alphabetical tour of UK landmarks on stamps continues next month with UK A-Z Part 2 10 April. Part 1 issued last October, took us from A for Angel of the North to L for Lindisfarne Priory (see pages 8 and 47). The forthcoming Part 2 celebrates great British locations beginning with the letters M to Z.

Stamp by stamp Locations have been chosen from acrosss the British Isles:
Manchester Town Hall is a grand example of Victorian neo-Gothic architecture, designed by Alfred Waterhouse and completed in 1877.
Narrow Water Castle stands on the County Down bank of the Clanrye River. It is one of the finest 16th-century buildings in Ireland.
Old Bailey is the Central Criminal Court of England and Wales. Designed by EW Mountford, it was built on the site of Newgate Prison and opened by King Edward VII in 1907. On the dome stands a bronze statue of Lady Justice.
Portmeirion in North Wales was created by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis between 1925 and 1975 in the style of an Italian village. It is now a popular tourist attraction, owned by a charitable trust.
The Queen's College is a constituent college of the University of Oxford. Founded in 1341 by Robert de Eglesfield, its classical frontage was designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor during 18th century rebuilding.
Roman Baths brought spa technology to England in the 1st century and the Roman Baths complex is now a site of historical interest in the city of Bath, attracting a million visitors a year.
Stirling Castle is one of Scotland's largest castles

UK A-Z Part 2 – Specifications

Issue date	10 April
Number of stamps	Fourteen
Design	Robert Maude and Sarah Davies
Stamp format	Square
Stamp size	35mm x 35mm
Printer	Cartor Security Printing
Print process	Lithography
Number per sheet	30/60
Perforations	14.5 x 14.5
Phosphor	All over
Gum	PVA
Sheet format	Two sheets of 30/60 with six se-tenant designs per sheet (M to R, S to X). One sheet of 30/60 with two se-tenant designs repeated (Y and Z)



and the site of a stronghold for rulers since 1110, because of its strategic position overlooking the Forth.

Tyne Bridge links Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Gateshead, and at the time of its opening by George V in 1928 was the world's longest single span bridge.

Urquhart Castle is splendidly situated beside Loch Ness. One of the largest strongholds of medieval Scotland, its history can be traced back to St Columba.

Victoria and Albert Museum is the world's largest museum of decorative arts, officially opened in 1857 and named after Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

The White Cliffs of Dover are part of the North Downs, facing the narrowest part of the English Channel and symbolising homecoming for UK travellers.

Station X was a covert World War Two radio interception station at Bletchley Park. Block C was used to break the Enigma Code.

York Minster is the glorious, second-largest Gothic cathedral in northern Europe, completed in 1472.

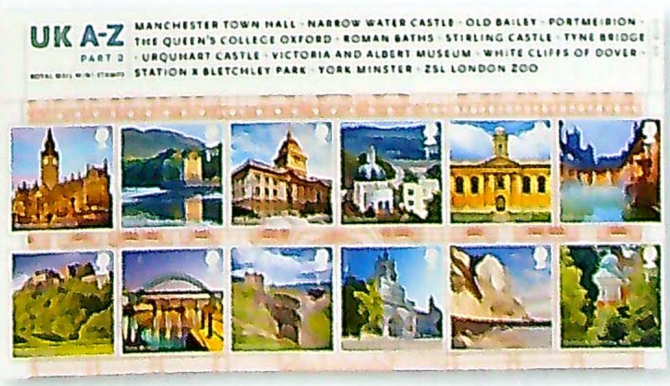
ZSL – The Zoological Society of London – manages London Zoo, which houses 755 species of animals.

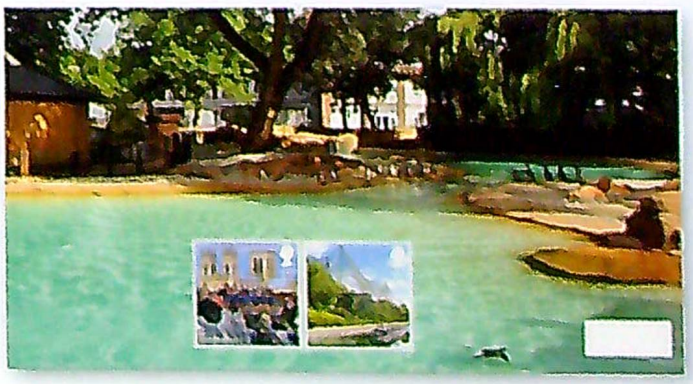
A-Z Composite Sheet All 26 stamps of UK A-Z Parts 1 and 2 are to feature on a one Stamp Sheet next month. Find full details in your April *Bulletin* •



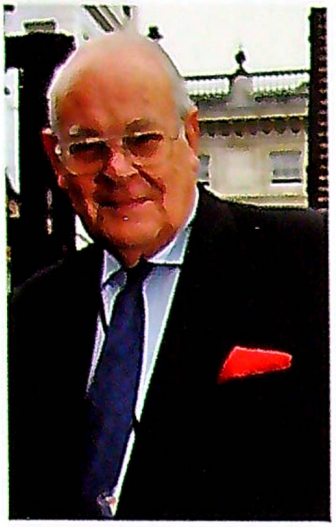
Above: Tallents House postmark with Mons Meg seige gun. Below left: Presentation Pack, with inner sleeve, below

UK A-Z Part 2 – Prices	
Stamp Set	£6.44
Presentation Pack	£6.95
First Day Envelope	30p
First Day Cover M to R, UK/non-UK	£3.79/£3.16
First Day Cover S to Z, UK/non-UK	£4.89/£4.08
Stamp Cards (14 in set)	£6.30
Composite Stamp Sheet UK A-Z Parts 1 and 2	£11.96





Stamp Scene John Holman reports on recent and forthcoming events in philately



Above: Michael Sefi, Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection appeared in the BBC TV programme about George V

In the media I much enjoyed 'The Peoples Post' programmes on the history of Royal Mail, broadcast on BBC Radio 4 in December. Dominic Sandbrook, the presenter, told a complicated story in an interesting and amusing way. It was also good to see stamps mentioned in a BBC2 TV programme on King George V in early January. This included a short sequence with Michael Sefi, Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection, talking about King George V and his interest in stamps. The shelves containing the many red leather albums housing the stamps of the King's reign were shown. Finally, in the series 'Great British Railway Journeys', also on BBC2 in January, the presenter, the former Cabinet minister Michael Portillo, travelled on the now moth-balled Post Office underground railway in London. An article on this unique railway, by Len Stanway, was published in the *Bulletin* in August 2010 •

Society meetings this month At the next meeting of the Royal Philatelic Society London, on 15 March, Patrick Maselis will display 'The development of Postal Services in New Zealand 1827-55', followed, on 29 March by the Sir Daniel Cooper lecture, by Dr Alan Huggins, on 'Postal Stationery to 1869'. Visitors are welcome at the meetings, at 41 Devonshire Place, London W1, by prior arrangement with the Society's Administration Office on 020 7486 1044.

On 10 March John Davies displays '1890 Penny Post Jubilee' at the National Philatelic Society (NPS) meeting, held at the Phoenix Centre, alongside the BPMA in London. For details of NPS membership and activities write to National Philatelic Society, c/o BPMA, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL, phone 020 7239,2570 or e-mail nps@ukphilately.org.uk. The National Philatelic Society was founded as the Junior Philatelic Society in 1899.

The GB Philatelic Society (GBPS), founded in 1955, is the main society for collectors of GB stamps, especially pre-Elizabeth II issues. On 31 March, Gerald Marriner will display Postage Dues (11am) and Barrie Cook and Tony Stanford GB Overprints (2pm) at the Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1. The Society is planning a special 'George V' meeting at Autumn Stampex on 29 September. For GBPS details contact Peter Tanner, 13 St Hubert's Close, Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 7EN or visit www.gbps.org.uk •



Vehicle Club meeting The Post Office Vehicle Club will hold its annual Vehicle Gathering at the Amberley Museum & Archive on 15 April. The event attracts entries from owners of preserved GPO, Post Office, British Telecom and Royal Mail vehicles from the 1930s to the early 21st century.

Among the entrants expected are two newly completed restorations – a 1975 Bedford HA mail van in Welsh livery (believed to be the only genuine HA mail van surviving), and a 1990 Bedford Mini postbus, the only one bought by the Post Office. The Amberley Museum, is situated on the B2139,

mid-way between Arundel and Storrington, adjacent to Amberley railway station which is served by an hourly service from London Victoria. The Museum is open 10am to 5.30pm, with last admission at 4.30pm. 2012 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of Post Office Vehicle Club which will hold a second Vehicle Gathering at the BPMA's Museum Store at Debden, Essex on 15 September. For full details of the Club, its activities and publications, contact Mark Skillen on 01433 670200 or 07816 5155216, or write to him at Ollerbrook Barn, Edale, Hope Valley, Derbyshire S33 7ZG, or see the Club's website www.povehclub.org.uk •

Living people on US stamps The United States Postmaster General, Patrick R Donahoe, has announced that the US Postal Service (USPS) will issue its first stamp honouring a living person, probably early in 2012.

'This change will enable us to pay tribute to individuals for their achievements while they are still alive to enjoy the honour,' said Donahoe.

At the time of writing the selected subject has not been announced and it will be extremely interesting to see who is chosen. The USPS is asking the public to suggest the top five living people who should be on stamps, on Facebook and Twitter, as well as by the more conventional method of mail •



Island issues Jersey Post's will comprise six stamps and a miniature sheet in the current Aviation History series on 10 March. The designs, by Tony Theobold, who specialises in aviation stamps, feature aircraft from the 1930s to 1960s. The issue marks the 75th anniversary of Jersey Airport. Enquiries to: Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Freepost JE793, Jersey Post, Jersey JE1 1AF or visit www.jerseystamps.com

Guernsey Post's next issues will be Prince William's 30th birthday and on this year's Europa theme of 'Visit...', both scheduled for 23 May. On the same new Alderney stamps commemorate the bicentenary of the birth of Charles Dickens. Enquiries to: Guernsey Philatelic Bureau, Envoy House, La Vrangue, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 5SS, or see www.guernseystamps.com •

New Ireland catalogue Stanley Gibbons Ltd has published a new (5th) edition of the popular 'Ireland' catalogue, a comprehensive listing of the stamps of Ireland from the Provisional Government overprints of 1922 to the Irish ▸

Diary dates

March

7 Steve Bence speaks at Leamington and Warwick Philatelic Society: 'Potpourri on WW1'. Visitors welcome, 7.15 pm at Oddfellows Hall, Clarence Terrace, Warwick Rd, Leamington Spa, CV32 5LD.

9 NPS Seminar – 'An Appraisal of Cinderella Collecting' by Francis and Charles Kiddle; 7.30pm at The Phoenix Centre, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. Phone 020 7239 2571

20 Cardiff Philatelic Society – the Committee entertains! 7.30pm at:- Llanishen Baptist Church, Fidlas Road, Llanishen, Cardiff CF14 5LZ. For details contact secretary@cardiffphilatelicsociety.org.uk

29 Huddersfield Philatelic Society): 'Zeppelin Mail' by Geoff Reynolds (Redcar). Contact Jack Lemm on 01484 714120.

April

15 The Post Office Vehicle Club's annual Vehicle Gathering at Amberley Museum and Archive.

Horse issue of September 2011. Prices have been carefully revised throughout to give an accurate picture of current values, with a number of increases to earlier issues in particular.

Watermark varieties, shades, plate flaws, major errors, postage dues, and booklets are all listed and on cover 'multipliers' are provided for all stamps to 1945. New varieties added since the 4th edition in 2008 include new shades in the GB overprints, overprint errors and watermark varieties. Illustrated in colour, 128 pages. Price £15.95 from Stanley Gibbons Strand shop or by post from Stanley Gibbons Publications, 7 Parkside, Ringwood, Hants BH24 3SH •

Forth Bridge painting There is an old saying, 'it's like painting the Forth Bridge', meaning that a task is never finished. Well, painting of the said Bridge has recently been completed after a decade and the new coat of paint is expected to last 20 years. Over 1,500 people were involved, including 400 on a single day. Some 240,000 litres of special paint was used, the same as used on oil rigs. The Bridge, opened in 1890, is crossed by 200 trains daily. It featured on the 6d stamp marking the opening of the neighbouring Forth Road Bridge in 1964, and featured in its own right on a 1st class in the A-Z series in October 2011.



Above: the newly painted Forth Bridge features in 2011's UK A-Z Part 1, where it is identified as the 'Forth *Railway* Bridge' to distinguish it clearly to the rest of the world from the Forth *Road* Bridge

The centenary of its opening was commemorated by a special Scottish aerogramme and a feature in the *Bulletin* in October 1990. It was also shown on the front cover of 'The Scots Connection' prestige book of 1989 and featured in Part 1 of the UK A-Z, issued last year •

This month in history – John Holman recalls the new 6d Postage Due stamp of 1962

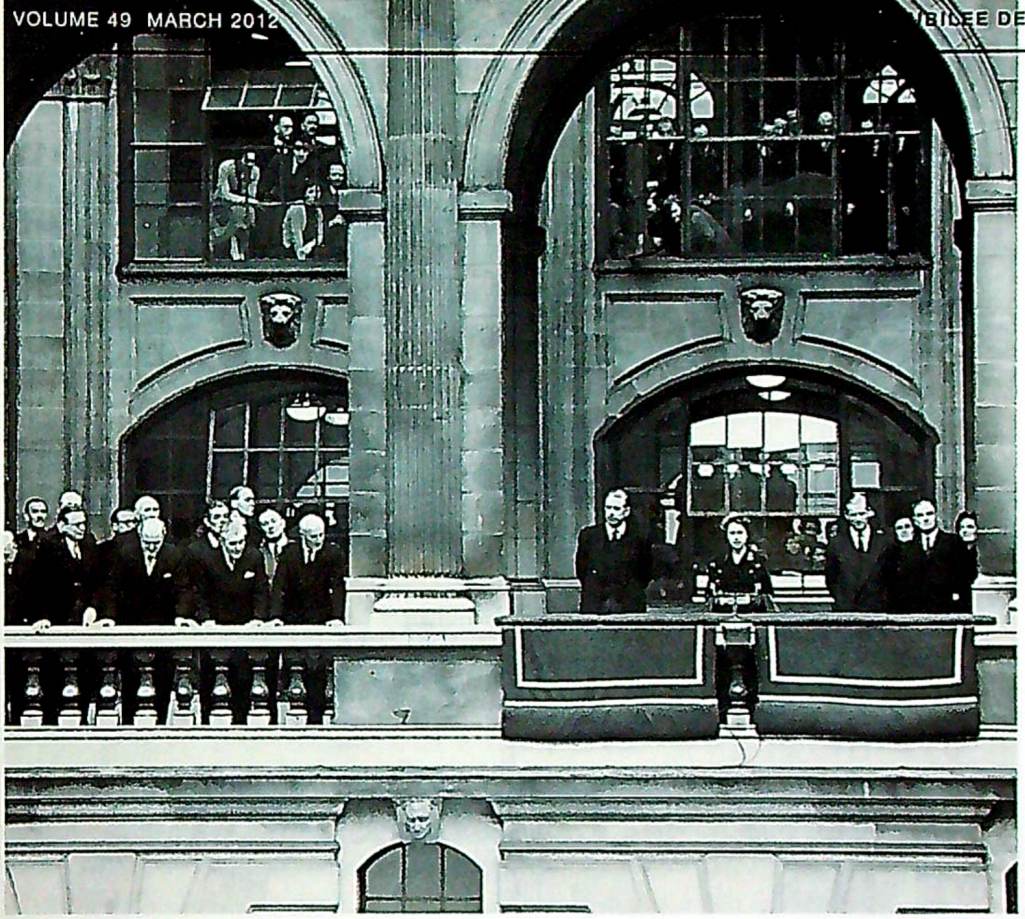
1962 was a thin year for collectors of British special stamps, with just one set of special stamps marking National Productivity Year. Collectors of definitives fared better with new printings of Wilding values on a 'whiter paper' to improve their appearance. In addition there was a new 6d value added to the range of Postage Due stamps on 29 March. Postage Dues were introduced in 1914 and one basic design remained in use for over 50 years until decimalisation. Values up to one shilling were inscribed POSTAGE DUE, and higher denominations, mostly used to collect customs charges, TO PAY.

In those days postage due was levied at twice the deficient postage and the new 6d stamps was used on unstamped basic weight UK letters which should have had a 3d stamp affixed. In fact the 3d letter rate was introduced in October 1957 so the new 6d stamp took nearly 4½ years to be issued. It was printed in purple, similar in hue to the 6d definitive, in typography (letterpress) as were all postage due stamps.

The first printing was on a cream paper, a 'whiter paper' printing followed in January 1964, and an unwatermarked, chalky paper version in September 1968. The letter rate increased from 3d to 4d in May 1965, but a new 8d postage due wasn't ready until October 1968, the first to be printed in photogravure. Postage Dues in decimal currency designs were issued in 1970-75, 1982, and 1994, but by the mid-1990s their use was declining and ceased altogether in January 2000 •.



Above: on 29 March 1962 this new 6d Postage Due stamp was issued

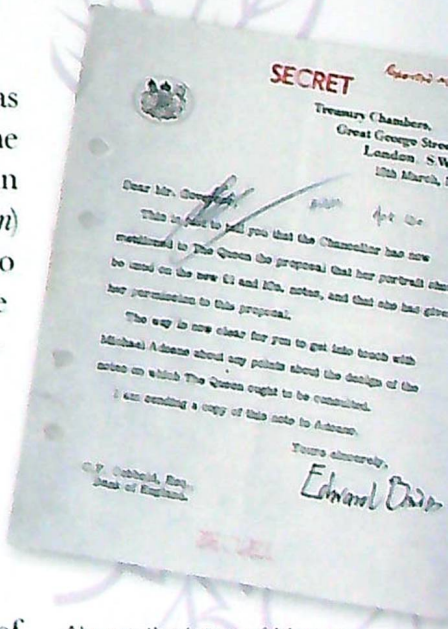


Left: The Queen addresses the assembled staff at the Bank of England in December 1952

From Bank to stamp

The history behind the Diamond Jubilee Definitives banknote portraiture, as explained by John Keyworth, Curator of the Bank of England Museum. Report by Kate Shaw

The Diamond Jubilee Definitives Miniature Sheet released last month was the first of a number of Royal Mail special issues designed to celebrate The Queen's sixtieth year on the throne. Alongside the new Diamond Blue Machin definitive, the Miniature Sheet (as previewed on page 136 in January *Bulletin*) brings together for the first time five official portraits of Her Majesty – from two coins, two banknotes and the first definitive of her reign. Last month (on page 179) Dr Kevin Clancy, Director of the Royal Mint Museum, discussed the coinage portraits. And here we turn our attention to the history and artistry behind the banknotes featured on the new stamps – the royal portraits on the £1 note that appeared in 1960 was designed by Robert Austin; and on the £5 note, issued in 1971 and designed by Harry Eccleston.


SECRET

Treasury Chambers,
Great George Stre
London SW

Dear Mr. Cobbold,

This is just to tell you that the Chancellor has now submitted to The Queen the proposal that her portrait sho be used on the new £1 and £5s. notes, and that she has give her permission to this proposal.

The way is now clear for you to get into touch with Michael Adeane about any points about the design of the notes on which The Queen ought to be consulted.

I am sending a copy of this note to Adeane.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Bridges

C. F. Cobbold, Esq.,
Bank of England.

Above: the letter of March 1956 informing the Bank of England that the Queen had given permission for her portrait to be used on banknotes

Connections between the Bank and the monarchy

Although Queen Elizabeth II was the first monarch to be shown on Bank of England notes, there is a long-standing connection between the Bank and the monarchy, as John Keyworth explains:

'All of the nation's banknotes have featured the royal portrait for more than 50 years, as a result of the historic connection between Bank and the ▸

Images ©The Governor and the Company of the Bank of England



Above: Steel Master die for the Series C £1 banknote of 1960, showing in reverse the portrait featured on one of the new Jubilee definitives

monarchy. This connection began around 1694, in the first years of the formation of the institution of the Bank of England. The Bank's founding charter bears the Great Seal of King William III and Queen Mary, because these two joint monarchs headed the list of investors in what was then a revolutionary new project of establishing a national bank for England. That connection continues today. Since 1946 [when the Bank ceased to be a privately owned stock company and was nationalised], members of the Court of Directors, the Bank's governing body, have been appointed by the monarch and the most significant symbol of that connection is the use of the royal portrait on banknotes.'

According to a centuries-old custom, the accession of the Queen Elizabeth II in February 1952 was proclaimed by the Lord Mayor of London from the steps of the Royal Exchange, situated opposite the Bank, which was specially illuminated and decorated for the occasion. A month later The Queen signed a royal warrant appointing members of the Bank's Court of Directors. And in the December the new young Queen visited the Bank for a lunch and gave a formal address to the assembled staff.

By the following year, the idea of placing The Queen's portrait on a bank note was already 'in the air' amid national celebrations of the Coronation:

'Following the Second World War and the austerity of the post-war years, the opportunity for a national celebration of the Coronation of the new young Queen in June 1953 was seized upon with enthusiasm– from street parties to new coinage, from bunting on official buildings to postage stamps – some said in the spirit of a second Elizabethan age.'

The Bank of England soon began to consider issuing the monarch's portrait on a banknote, but the idea was not new, as John Keyworth points out.

'In the early 19th century the idea of using a figurative engraving as an effective anti-forgery design was recorded at the suggestion of a Mr W Morgan who, in 1804 noted, "that a Portrait of the King, engraved in the line way, by the best Engraver, should be printed on all Bank Notes." Morgan's idea had not been adopted and had lain dormant for 150 years until revived in the mid 1950s.'

It was three years after the Coronation that the Governor of the Bank of England received the letter from the Treasury Chambers, as shown on previous page, conveying the Queen's permission to the proposal that her portrait should be used on the new £1 and ten-shilling notes.





Above: the Diamond Jubilee Definitive stamp showing the royal portrait by Robert Austin. The engraving was based on the sketch shown above the stamp – drawn in pencil on tracing paper and taken from a black and white photographic portrait

The Robert Austin banknote portrait

Born in Leicester in 1885, Robert Sargent Austin RE, RWS, RA was an established artist, illustrator and engraver. He was already widely regarded as a leading printmaker, when he was commissioned to design The Queen's portrait for the first of the Bank of England's 'Series C' banknotes. His line engraving technique had reached a notable pinnacle in the 1930s and was considered in the art world to be of a level of perfection not seen since masterworks of Albrecht Dürer in the early 16th century. This artistic pedigree was perfectly suited to the commission for the banknote portraits, as the required design solution had to achieve the fineness and intricacy of line

necessary to discourage forgery, as well as the beauty and authority befitting the first portrait of a monarch to be carried on a Bank of England note.

> 'The delicacy of line and meticulous cross-hatching on banknotes demands a great deal of experience and discipline,' John Keyworth comments. 'The frame for the engravers work is very small indeed and further restrictions are imposed on the design by the fact that it must be printed from an engraved plate – the master die – and with no points liable to wear when it is reproduced on high-speed printing machines. Notes that are printed in different years must look absolutely identical.'

Nowadays much of the engraving is created with the aid of computer technology, but in the 1950s the process would begin with a series of photographs from which Austin produced a tonal drawing, always bearing in mind the scale of the finished portrait and the contrasting tonal areas required for the engraving. Shown on the facing page is an early drawing by Austin for the 1960 royal portrait, in pencil on tracing paper. The tones of the drawing had to be translated into a linear engraving and then, working with a microscope and eye glass, transferred onto a steel plate from which the master die could be created.

This level of miniature detail, artistry and manual dexterity was a result of Austin's years of training and practice. As a teenager he attended the Leicester Municipal School of Art and went on to the Royal College of Art in London. His years as an art student and his early career were interrupted and no doubt influenced by World War One and Two. After the 1914-18 war he returned to the Royal College of Art to study etching under Sir Frank Short and gained a scholarship to study engraving in Italy. During the 1920s, regarded as the final decade of the etching revival, he worked in very fine detail on copper plates, in almost Pre-Raphaelite style. During the Second World War Austin worked as a war artist recording the work of women in the nursing services and the Royal Air Force. In 1945 he returned to England, again to the Royal College of Art, this time as Professor of Engraving.

The Austin portrait Series C £1 note was withdrawn on 31 May 1979. Since Austin's portrait of 1960 there have been four different royal portraits – Reynolds Stone's on the 1963 £5 note; Harry Eccleston's on the 1970 £20 note and the 1971 £5 note, and Roger Withington's on today's notes, showing a more mature portrait.



Above: the Diamond Jubilee Definitive stamp showing the royal portrait on the Series D £5 banknote, first issued in 1971, with the original drawing by Eccleston on which the engraving was based

The Harry Eccleston banknote portrait

Robert Austin taught Harry Eccleston at the Royal College of Art and it was Austin who introduced him to the Bank of England in 1958. Eccleston became an artistic designer at the printing works and by 1967 the institution was sufficiently impressed to create for him the position of full-time banknote designer – a position he held until 1983. He then stayed on for three more years as a consultant until his retirement in 1986.

His royal portrait on the £5 note of 1971, as featured in the Diamond Jubilee Definitives Miniature Sheet, shows the Queen wearing the robes of the Order of the Garter, and was also used on the subsequent £1 note in 1978. Eccleston's meticulous preliminary drawings for the banknote portrait involved ▸

several sittings with The Queen. (During the same period he produced preliminary drawings for the portrait of the Duke of Wellington, after the painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence, for the reverse of the £5 note.)

'Eccleston's portrait is less girlish than Austin's,' notes John Keyworth, 'and, although the Queen wears the same crown on both notes, there is more fullness to the hair over the forehead in Eccleston's, in the style of the early 1970s. In Austin's portrait The Queen looks to her right, towards the centre of the banknote. In Eccleston's the high-necked robes add a gravitas to the Queen's direct gaze out of the note towards the viewer, while her shoulders remain angled toward the centre of the note, as is the tradition.

'There can be few adults alive in the UK who have not handled Eccleston's work on banknotes on a daily basis and seeing them on stamps gives us the opportunity to regard them with fresh eyes, as intricate works of art.'

During his 25 years at the Bank of England, Harry Eccleston was concerned with two main projects: firstly the development of a computer engraving system that would allow speedier production of banknotes; and secondly what was known as 'perception research' (working with Dr Ivor Stilitz), with the aim of developing ways of making it easier for the public to detect forgeries. Of his work with Stilitz, Eccleston said that he learned 'how instinctively wrong one could be'. It is also interesting to note that his personal artistic work moved towards a minimal, almost abstract austerity – concerned with what he called 'the nuts and bolts of seeing' – in contrast to the elaboration required of the banknote design for which Eccleston is likely to be best remembered.

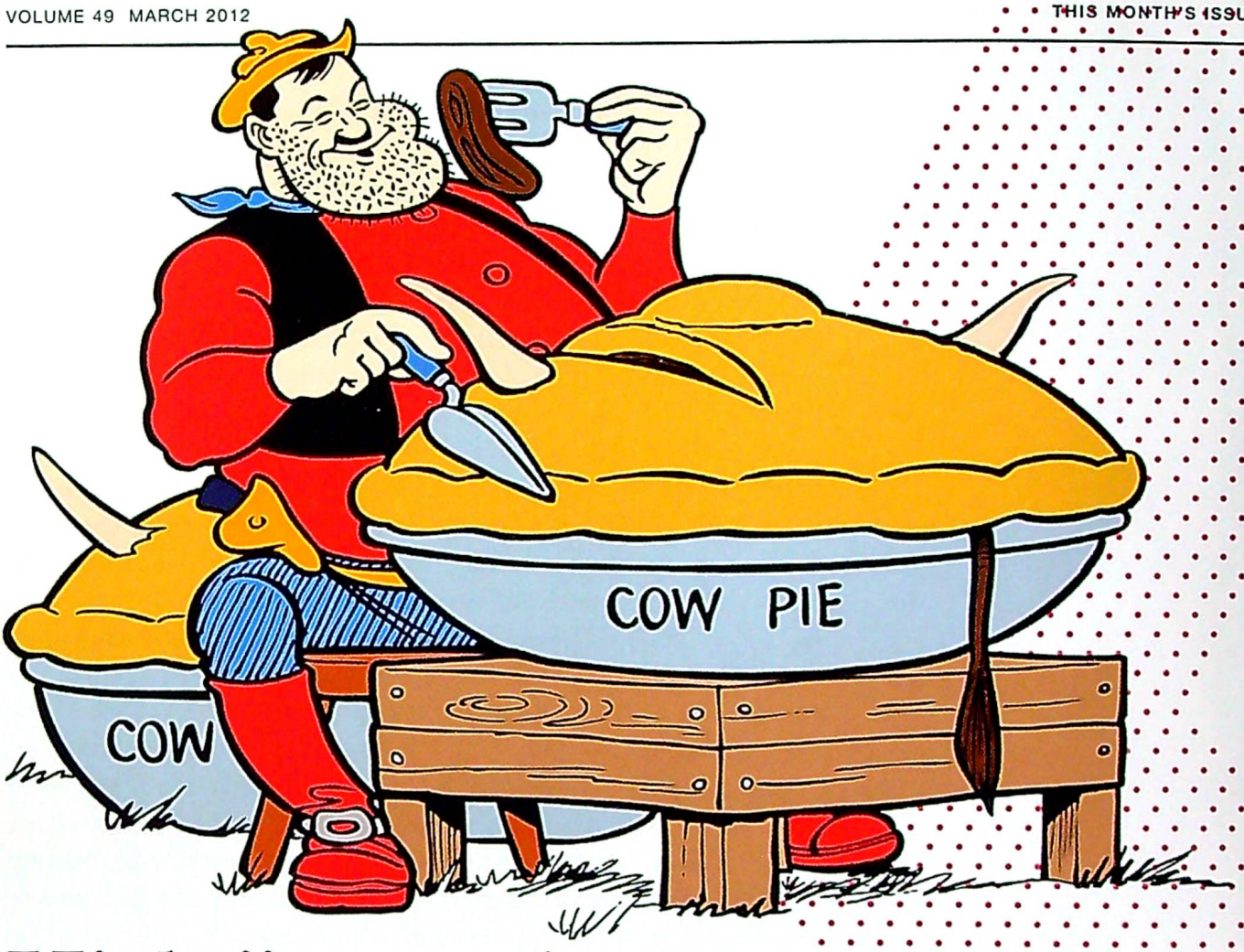
More iconic portraits in store on stamps

The Diamond Jubilee Miniature Sheet (below) is the second of three stamp issues of 2012 celebrating The Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The first was The House of Windsor and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha issued on 2 February, which includes a 1954 portrait of The Queen. The next is a special eight-stamp issue issued on 31 May, featuring images of Her Majesty in the six decades of her reign •

Original examples of the work of Robert Austin and Harry Eccleston are exhibited at The Bank of England Museum, Threadneedle St, London EC2R 8AH. Phone 020 7601 5545 for opening times or visit www.bankofengland.co.uk/education/museum



Right: the Diamond Jubilee Definitives Miniature Sheet was issued last month, bringing together iconic royal portraiture of banknotes, coinage and stamps



High jinx and spiffing fun!

Paul Gravett, author and aficianado of the comic strip celebrates the funnies

WHEN EXACTLY was the golden age of British Comics? One answer might when you were 10 or 12 year old, or whatever age it was when you first discovered your favourite comic character. That early epiphany can be so powerful; it can imprint a lifelong companion in your imagination. Desperate Dan, Dennis the Menace, Dan Dare, Beryl the Peril, Roy of the Rover, the Four Marys, Buster, the Steel Claw, Nurse Nancy and Judge Dredd are the ten much-loved figures that appear on the Royal Mail's new Comics issue and all have won an enduring affection from their original junior readership, many of whom have remained faithful into adulthood.

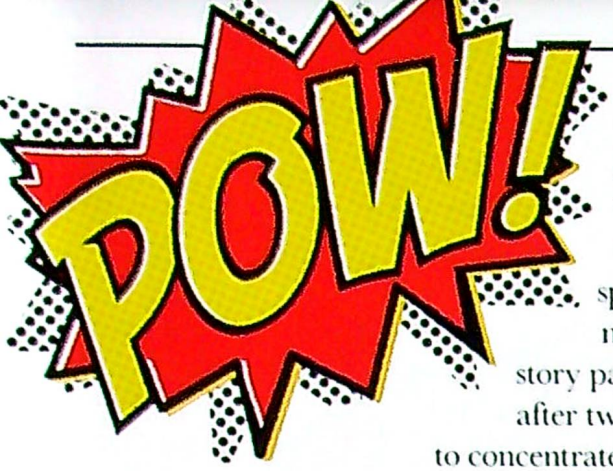


Top: Desperate Dan tucks into his favourite pie

The Scottish influence

Another answer to the golden age question would be 75 years ago – the year when DC Thomson, the canny family-run newspaper and Dundee periodical publishing giant, first tempted thousands of children to part with two whole pennies of their pocket money – which would have bought a gigantic bag of ▸

Desperate Dan ©DC Thomson & Co. Ltd 2012



sweets in those days – for a brand new weekly comic called *The Dandy*. (This now seems an odd choice of name, as the word 'dandy' was a derisive term for a narcissistic fop, although also used in the phrase 'fine and dandy'.) This was the dawn of a special time, as Thomson's reinvented their proven weekly newsprint format, which they had used since 1921 for their boys' story papers, *Adventure*, *The Wizard*, *The Vanguard* (which was dropped after two years), *The Skipper* and *The Rover*. But *The Dandy* was the first to concentrate on comedy and the popular illustrated cartoon strips.

Comedy was in the Scottish air. From the mid-1930s onwards, Thomson's had found that the weekly strips in their Fun Section of *The Sunday Post* newspaper – famously The Broons family and Oor Wullie, drawn by Dudley D Watkins – were proving hugely popular. The editorial team must have been aware of the soaring success of *Mickey Mouse Weekly*, too, also priced at tuppence. This classy package, produced in crisp photogravure colours and halftones by the American owners in 1934, mostly featured work by British cartoonists.

DC Thomson knew that the timing of *The Dandy's* first issue was critical, so it was launched on Friday December 4th 1937 – on the last weekday of school – as an early Christmas gift for children to give to themselves, or ask their parents to buy for them. Significantly, they put a wordless cartoon on the front cover. Korky the Kat, a feline counterpart of Mickey Mouse, steals a fish from a restaurant chef, replacing it with a stuffed, ornamental one from a display case. A fuming diner gets the stuffed version, while Korky enjoys the real thing. No matter what their literacy level was, any child could enjoy the visual slapstick unfolding over the nine panels. Among the fresh characters inside was Desperate Dan, a superman before Superman, a cowboy from Cactusville – part Wild West, part 1930s Dundee. Another attraction, of course, was the free gift, in *The Dandy*'s case a tin whistle called the 'Express Whistler'.



Below: star of *Twinkle*, Nurse Nancy helps some ailing toys

Heroes and antiheroes

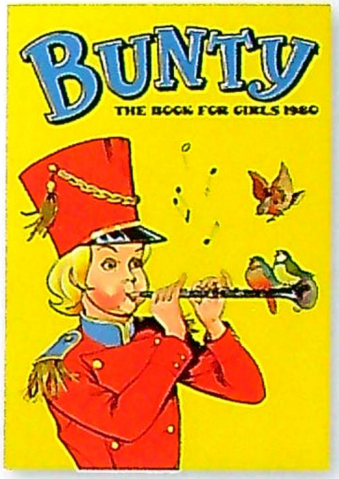
Countless characters before and since *The Dandy*'s launch have built a loyal following for Britain's comics. Thanks to the post-war baby boom, there were even more children hungry for entertainment in the early 1950s. This golden age saw a new approach to humour in the form of Dennis the Menace, who stormed into *The Beano* in 1951. (The word 'beano' is short for bean-feast, a colloquial term for a festive occasion. It is also the name of a dietary supplement used to reduce flatulence, but it is likely that the former definition inspired the comic's title.) Dennis the Menace was drawn by David Law, from a kid's perspective, and was more rooted in young readers' reality than magical fantasy. His success sparked hordes of mischief-makers, including the outrageously naughty Beryl the Peril, also by Law, who arrived in *The Topper* in 1953.

Meanwhile *Eagle*, launched in 1950, with Dan Dare offering a vision of an optimistic, technologically advanced tomorrow, anticipating the space race. Frank Hampson and his studio of assistants painted in dazzling colours and with an extraordinary hyper-realism based on photo references of scale models and family and friends co-opted into

Nurse Nancy, Bunty and Beryl the Peril ©©DC Thomson & Co. Ltd. 2012

strange costumes. Science fiction had never looked so utterly convincing. This 'Pilot of the Future' has lived on into the 21st century, through various makeovers to go on to star in computer-animated cartoons and hard-hitting graphic novels. *Eagle* raised the stakes in boys' comics and among the rivals that followed was *Tiger* in 1954, whose biggest star was ace footballer Roy Race of the Melchester Rovers, another comic legend who survived losing his goal-scoring left foot in a helicopter crash, going on to manage an Italian team. Roy became so popular that he spawned his own comic.

Comics specifically aimed at girls also blossomed in the Fifties, led by *School Friend* in 1950 and joined by DC Thomson's *Bunty* in 1958, home to The Four Marys until the comic's demise in 2001. In the same way Dennis the Menace's madcap pranks resonated with readers' everyday lives, so this quartet of pupils at St. Elmo's girls-only boarding school – one aristocratic, two middle-class and one working-class – came to reflect readers' experiences of class difference. To target pre-school girls, Thomson's also devised the charming *Twinkle* in 1968, in which Nurse Nancy and her grandfather ran a hospital for toys.



Above: still going strong in 1980, the *Bunty* annual offered a year's round-up of adventures.
Below: watch out! Beryl the Peril is heading your way.

Into the modern age

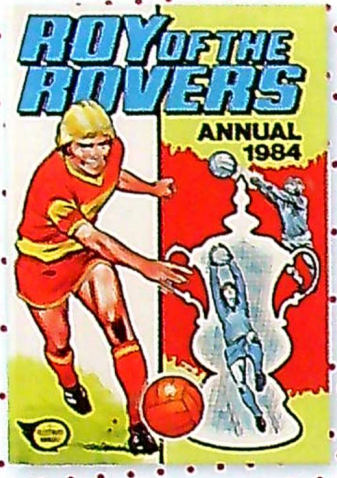
The swinging Sixties brought yet another golden age when the cheeky cloth-capped *Buster* – son of the *Mirror's* Andy Capp – arrived, headlining his own weekly. The superhero and spy crazes spawned a host of strange, ▸

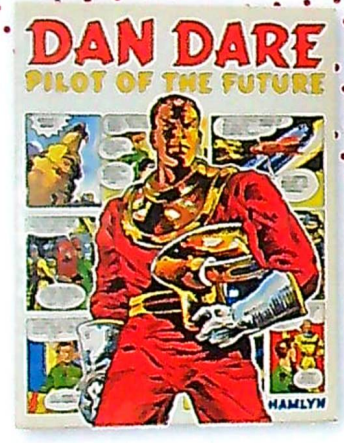


uniquely British heroes, such as the stretchable Victorian escapologist Janus Stark, the pointy-eared super-fiend the Spider, the alternately miniature then monstrous Galaxus, and the Steel Claw, initially an invisible master criminal but later a costumed crusader, dynamically illustrated by Jesus Blasco.

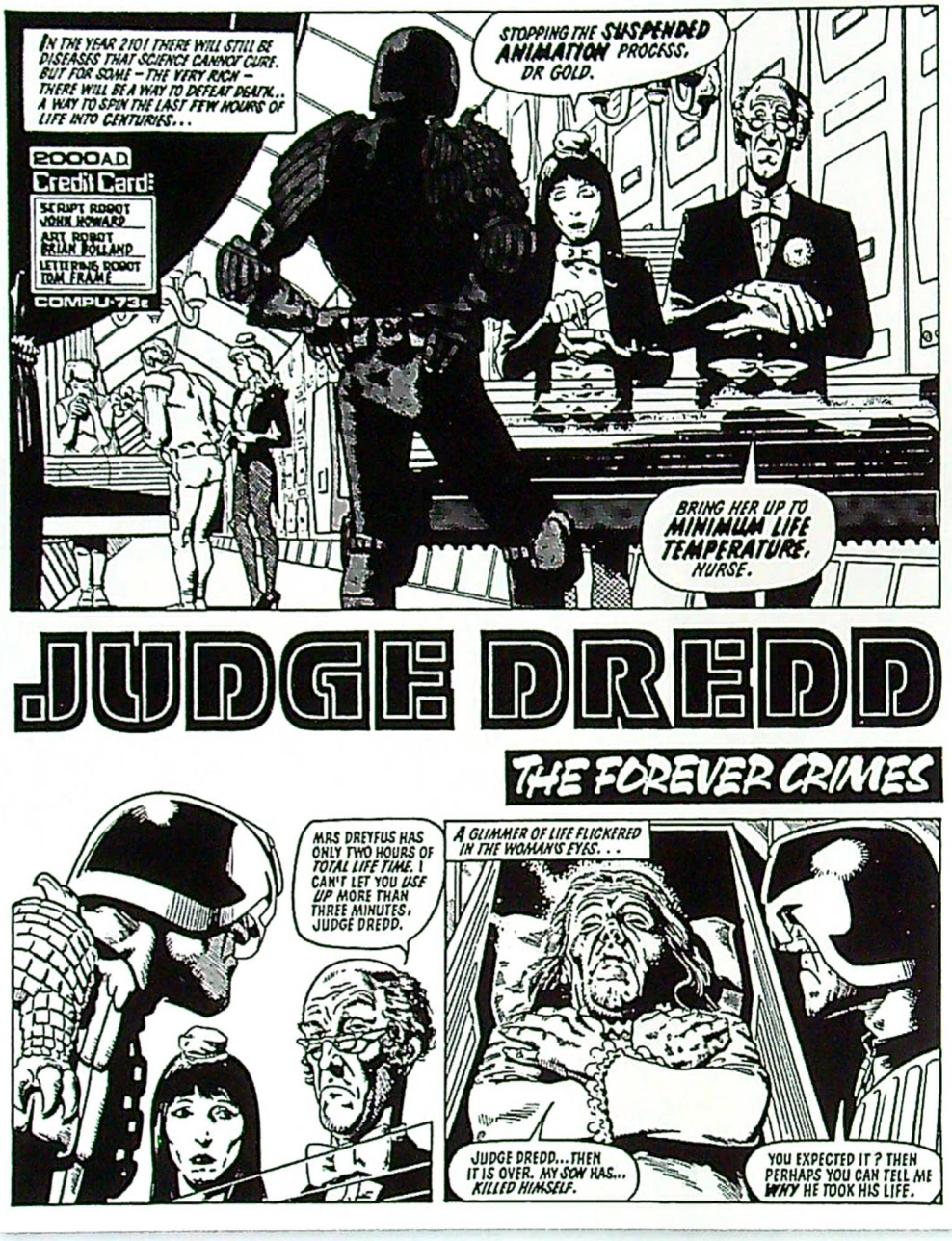
From his first appearance in the second issue of *2000AD* in 1977, Judge Dredd was a striking symbol of a dystopian police state. Still relevant, Dredd's haunting world sometimes comes uncomfortably close to our present day. There have been other excellent comics since *2000AD*, from the adults-only cheekiness of *Viz*, launched in 1979, to the recently launched *Phoenix*. But the ten titles featured in the new Royal Mail stamp issue [previewed on page 172, February *Bulletin*] capture perfectly a golden age of great British comics. In my opinion those glory days never ended. They have lasted 75 years and counting... •

Paul Gravett is a journalist, curator and lecturer. His books include 'Great British Comics' (Aurum Press, 2006). For more information visit www.paulgravett.com





Above and right: boys' comics covered a huge breadth of subjects, allowing small men to dream of acts of heroism on the football pitch, in the wider universe and beyond



Judge Dredd © 2012 Rebellion A/S. All rights reserved. Used with permission. www.2000ADonline.com

Catching awkward ones John Newcomb on humble postmarks applied to unreceptive surfaces

FOR THE FIRST 50 YEARS of the postage stamp Victorian postal workers only used unyielding metal instruments for applying postmarks. These were not ideal for cancelling stamps on the many kinds of packets: hard wooden boxes, soft fragile objects, newspapers, even 'puffies'. (What is a 'puffy?' you may ask – just imagine a small wad of cotton wool wrapped in thin paper.) And so little rubber stamps with moveable type for the date came into use (1). They were called Blackwells and and intended to be applied *gently* to avoid damage. They have, broadly speaking, remained in use ever since, with a dateless austerity version (2) appearing in World War Two.

Most mail-handling is now automated, but letters that are not flat or have stamps in the wrong place have to be picked out as 'Unmachineables'. The number of such items requiring postmarking by hand has diminished over time with the increasing use of meter-franking machines, Printed Postage Impressions, Horizon labels and Smart Stamps, and the cancellation of some stamps on items handed over counters in post offices. However, there remains a residue of packets posted in letter boxes that still need stamping. Maybe even this task will ultimately be eliminated, which would be sad news for collectors!



1


2



3

Types of cancellers Today two kinds are used. One has loose type inserted into slots to indicate the day/month/year (3). There is space for clock time, not often seen now. The other kind (4) has integral date bands that can be rotated as necessary. Impressions are usually round, but some are oval (5) or rectangular (6). There is great variety of inscriptions. Some reflect the town of the Mail Centre (4), some a group of towns (7), and others are 'generic' (3), indicating the surrounding area from which mail is collected. Some include identifying numbers; most do not.



4



5

Oddities occur At the Jubilee Mail Centre, into which mail from a wide area of Surrey and Middlesex is drawn, a spelling reminiscent of a familiar phrase from *Only Fools and Horses* has appeared (8). At Greenford code numbers rose to astronomical heights (9): for several years re-use of the same number was studiously avoided. At Watford there was a specialised group of small marks known as 'blobbers' (10) for uncancelled items cropping up during specific processes (OPL = Outward Primary Letters). Bilingual inscriptions appear too (11): CAERGOG as one word is curious; CAER is Chester's name in Welsh; and GOG is an abbreviation of the Welsh for North. The Portsmouth postmark inscription (12) suggests that Portsmouth is located on the Isle of Wight.



6

So next time the postman delivers a packet, do check out the postmark! •

John Newcomb is a member of the British Postmark Society



7



8



9



10



11

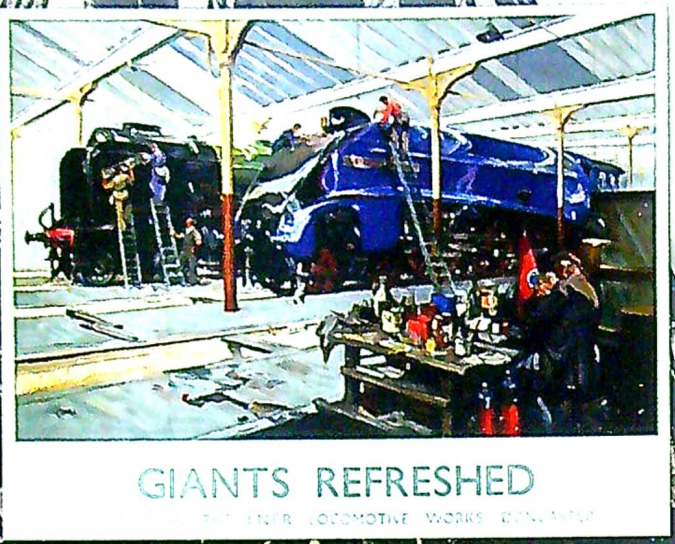


12





Left: the 'Clan Mackinnon' on the Classic Locomotives of Scotland £1.10 stamp; and the 'Glen Falloch' and 'Glan Loy' at Ardlui in 1959 on a First Class value. Both stamps are released this month in the Classic Locomotives of Scotland Miniature Sheet





Above: this 1947 poster, promoting the London and North Eastern Railway, is part of the National Railway Museum's vast 'unseen art' collection. The recently opened Art Gallery at the National Railway Museum in York (next to the main railway station) hosts a programme of temporary exhibitions to gradually bring to public view nearly two million items of railway-inspired works of art from across the world

Left: the author's own work, *A Time of Transition, Glasgow Central Station, January 1964*

Reproduced by permission of the National Railway Museum / Science & Society Picture Library

Great Scot!

Railway expert Dugald Cameron shares his personal reflections and his favourite artwork that captures the marvellous age of steam

I LIKED going to school. That is to say I enjoyed the train journey to and from my local station, Yoker High, to Charing Cross, Glasgow, on the old North British/LNER line. It was 1944, the age of steam. I liked being taken to school behind 'Glen Douglas' and others such as the D11, 'Laird of Balmawhapple'. The locomotives used on the 8.22am from Dalmuir were an interesting bunch, Glens and Directors for the most part but there was the odd Loch and B1, too. Coming home from school, there were N2s and V1/V3 tanks. Of course, I managed the odd cab ride from a friendly driver – inconceivable these days – arriving home bearing the sooty evidence of riding in a steam locomotive cab.

The origins of a passion

Prior to this, my mother must have been something of a closet rail enthusiast, for she enjoyed explaining the intriguing names of those morning engines. When I went to kindergarten, she always escorted me on the train, probably to avoid any chance of my escape. At Charing Cross I was handed over to a bigger boy who got on at Jordanhill – Hugh Gould, who was a 'big wheel' in the High School Railway Club, remains a great friend and had a distinguished career on British Railways. Thus the seeds of my lifetime enthusiasm for railways were sown, alongside a passion for aviation, engineering and drawing. They have sustained me for around 70 years, and have been shared with a long-suffering wife!

Landscape and machine

There are no better examples of the art of engineering than the design and building of the railways. I marvel at how the lines used the terrain through which they were laid, and at the great innovative feats of civil engineering that were required – tunnels and viaducts like that of 'Glenfinnan', built by 'Concrete Bob' McAlpine (shown on the new Classic Locomotives of Scotland Miniature Sheet) and, of course, the Forth Railway Bridge. They powerfully symbolise engineering at its greatest, serving not only a useful purpose but also providing truly inspirational sights.

The Scottish landscape provides such a varied backdrop to the railway. The image of the former Highland Railway locomotive, 'Clan Mackinnon' (shown on the £1.10 stamp, above left), against the dour hills of the Isle of Skye perhaps exemplifies the contrast of romance and reality.

Then there were the evocative names of the Glens and Directors – the latter continuing the NBL (Northern British Locomotive Company) tradition of taking inspiration from the novels of Sir Walter Scott – and the wonderful concoction of steam, coal smoke, oil and noise as they thundered by. I can

still summon it all up in my mind whenever I get the whiff of steam. I well remember 'Glen Dessary', 'Glen Dochart', 'Glen Falloch' and 'Glen Loy' (the latter two shown on facing page) on the West Highland Line for which they were designed and built by the North British Railway at its Cowlairs works between 1913 and 1920.

Striking imagery

I also recall with great fondness the railway posters pasted up with a repellent sludge, which was used on both sides – in particular the peerless Terence Cuneo's *Giants Refreshed* of 1947 (now part of the National Railway Museum's art collection). Cuneo, a truly great artist who fired my imagination then and his work continues to inspire me now.

I couldn't *have* the locos or aircraft for real but I could draw them and there are many school exercise books containing my early efforts. Drawing is a way of 'owning' something which you cannot otherwise have, modelling even more so. My oil painting *A Time of Transition – Glasgow Central Station, January 1964*, shows two steam locomotives next to a suburban electric train – the old and the new, side by side. But perhaps the greatest image of the railways is, for me, Turner's masterpiece *Rain, Steam and Speed* – a wonderful evocation of the magical mixture of earth, fire, air and water (shown opposite).

Transport hubs

Another considerable legacy from the age of steam is the architecture – those 'cathedrals of steam'. Stations were built to last, which is being recognised and appreciated more now than ever. Witness the renewal of the Midland Railway's great Victorian station and hotel at St Pancras, for instance. What a pity that wiser and more imaginative minds were not in play when the decision to demolish the wonderful Doric *propylaeum* [monumental entrance] at Euston was taken in 1963 and, even more importantly, the Great Hall. If it still survived today it could have been a wholly inspiring gateway to the North. What a way to celebrate that early engineering achievement, the London and Birmingham Railway, by using such a magnificent symbol from the golden age of Pericles!

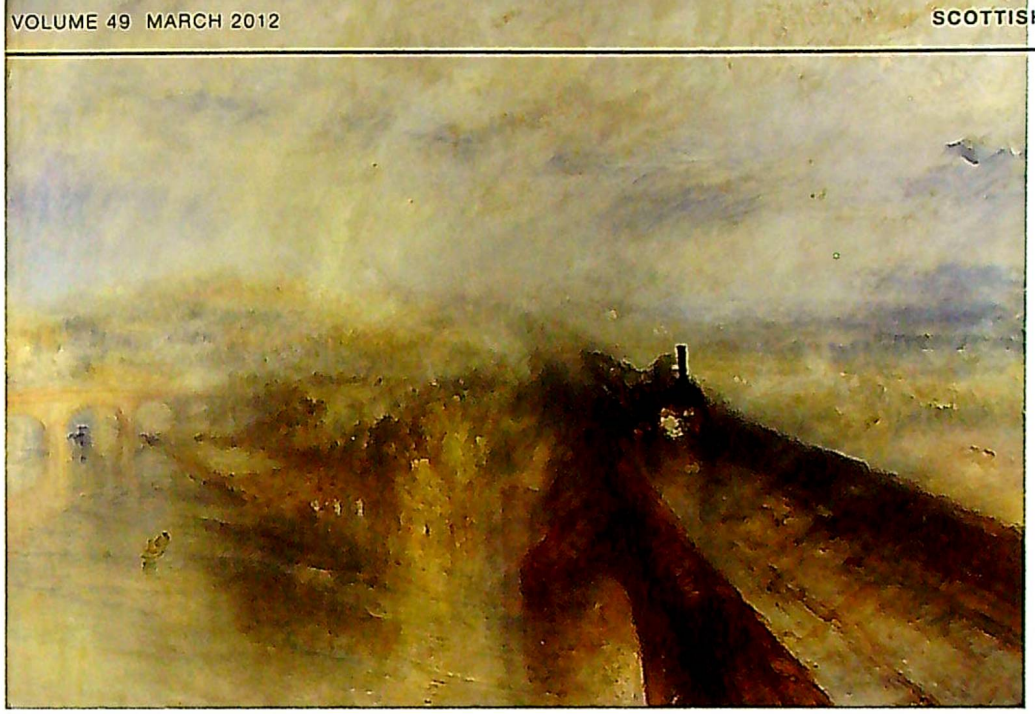
Below: London's Euston station in the 1950s, where steam trains arrived from western Scotland



There were, however, more humble examples of railway architecture to be found all over the country. Thankfully, enterprises like the Bluebell, Keighley and Worth Valley, and Ravenglass and Eskdale Railways are keeping some of the original stations – and trains – in fine condition.

Sadly, the railway buildings around industrial enterprises such as coal mines and docks survive much less often. In a way, their demise has been the speediest as the last steam locomotives in regular use in Scotland were industrial ones. Long after the demise of steam on British Rail in August 1968,

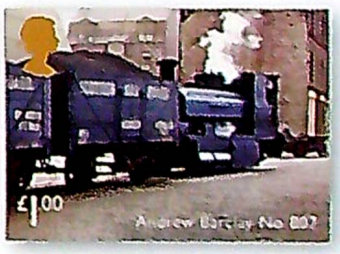
©Hulton-Deutsch Collection/Corbis



Left: a favourite work of the author's – *Rain, Steam and Speed* by Turner, whose technique is examined in a new exhibition 'Turner Inspired: In the Light of Claude', opening this month in the Sainsbury Wing of London's National Gallery

the National Coal Board ran BR's old stock, and there was a Barclay fireless example running in the 1980s too, at ICI, Ardrossan on the North Ayrshire coast. To imagine these old workhorses in action, visit the renovated 'pug', *Bon Accord*, which worked the rails at the Aberdeen Gas Works, built in 1897 and now makes the occasional journey at the Royal Deeside Railway. Or try one of the specialist tour companies such as West Coast Railways and Strathspey Railway – visit www.holidayscotland.org.uk/articles-railways.htm for details of these and other companies that offer steam train experiences.





Above: the 'Andrew Bain' on the 68p stamp
Below: the 'Bon Accord', shown on the £1 stamp working on Miller Street, Glasgow.
Top left: Turner's *Rain, Steam and Speed*

Saved for posterity

In the late 1950s, 4-4-0 No 256, BR 62469, 'Glen Douglas' was fortunately preserved by a Scottish Region General Manager with real foresight. James Ness restored her to something near to original condition and livery. She was retired in 1965 – joined by the only extant Glasgow & South Western Railway, 0-6-0 tank, No 9 – and exhibited in Glasgow's Transport Museum. Also preserved by Ness and put into working order in 1959 was Great North of Scotland Railway Class 'F', LNER Class D40 4-4-0 No 49, BR 62277, 'Gordon Highlander' – often referred to as the 'Sojer'. She is now at the SRPS Museum at Bo'ness. They were the final design of the classic GNSR 4-4-0 represented by the elegant 62277, 'Andrew Bain' (above, right).

Steam has continued to flourish in the dedicated hands of the enthusiast movement, both on preserved lines and the mainline. This has allowed those who never knew it in everyday service to experience the steam engine at work. I recently had the pleasure of a trip from Crewe to Glasgow behind Stanier Pacific number 6201, 'Princess Elizabeth'. To hear and smell an express steam locomotive at full belt climbing to the summits of Shap and Beattock was memorable! This was a celebration of the record runs from Euston to Glasgow and return by that very locomotive in November 1936 – truly amazing and a great credit to all those who strived to preserve it in 1963 and have managed to keep it fit for mainline operation since. No mean feat in today's regulatory climate. Nothing can or will deter the determined enthusiast – long may there be those who will keep the flame alive •

©National Gallery Picture Library



Breeding is everything

Simon Ball ponders on the pedigree of farm animals featured in the new Post and Go series

THE FUTURE is looking brighter for the UK's regional breeds of farm animals, despite some losses in the late 20th century. Concerns about animal welfare and a more discerning palate among meat-eaters may seem odd bedfellows, but together they have ensured that our heritage breeds will survive for many years to come. And now we can appreciate their particular characteristics on our mail, with the current series of British Farm Animals Post and Go stamps.

Choosing the breeds

There are hundreds of different sheep and pig breeds on the planet, so narrowing the choice down to just six breeds for each Post and Go set was quite a task. The starting point was to look for those that resembled the ancestral stock from which today's animals are derived and then choose five regional breeds from around the UK.

Let's start with the sheep. Possessing up to six horns, the Jacob certainly looks quite ancient and, indeed, images of similar spotted sheep are found on 3,000-year-old Middle Eastern ceramics. Jacobs were well established in the UK by the mid-17th century but, like many old breeds, went into a steep decline as 20th-century agricultural business sought fast-growing standard breeds such as the Suffolk to fill the supermarket shelves.

Above: the Jacob is a small, piebald, multi-horned sheep. Below: the Jacob sheep on the Sheep issue of Post and Go British Farm Animals



Fortunately many of these breeds have staged a bit of a comeback recently, as small producers like Scotland's Puddledub Buffalo and Angus Farm have exploited the demand for free-range outdoor-reared meat. They sell it through farm shops, farmer's markets and on the internet. Puddledub's Steve Mitchell tells me: 'On the farm we have

Chris Price, Getty Images

selected animals that, like our buffalo, can range freely on whatever pasture is available. Unlike intensive reared modern sheep, the Jacob needs very little intervention to stay healthy – it's an exceptionally good reproductive sheep and the meat has a fantastic flavour.' Steve's customers must agree, as his 'Juicy Jacob' sales are growing fast.

Hardy herds

Another ancient breed is the Soay, which is thought to be practically identical to the ancestor of all domestic sheep – the mouflon. Smaller than most modern sheep, it is much hardier, having adapted to the island of Soay's extreme weather conditions. Soay is an uninhabited islet in the St Kilda archipelago, 65 kilometres out in the Atlantic from the Western Isles of Scotland. Usually black or brown, the breed's close resemblance to prehistoric sheep led to experimental archaeologists choosing the Soay for the Iron Age flock at Butser Ancient Farm in Hampshire.

Derived from the Swaledale and the Scottish Blackface, the Dalesbred is a hardy hill breed favoured by farmers around Upper Wharfedale in the Yorkshire Dales and in the central Pennines. Much prized for its carpet-quality white fleece, the Dalesbred can easily be identified by its grey nose and the distinctive white spots on either side of its face.

As you would expect, the Welsh Mountain Badger Face also has very distinctive facial markings. There are two basic varieties: the light-fleeced Torrdu (black belly in Welsh), which has black stripes above the eyes and a black stripe from the chin, under the belly to the tail and the Torwen (white belly), which has dark fleece with a white belly stripe.

The handsomely coiffed Leicester Longwool produces on average five kilograms of high-quality spinning wool every year, though amounts of up to 15 kilograms are not unheard of. There are a couple of flocks of this endangered breed hanging on in the Yorkshire Wolds, where it copes well with the poor pasture and extreme winters.





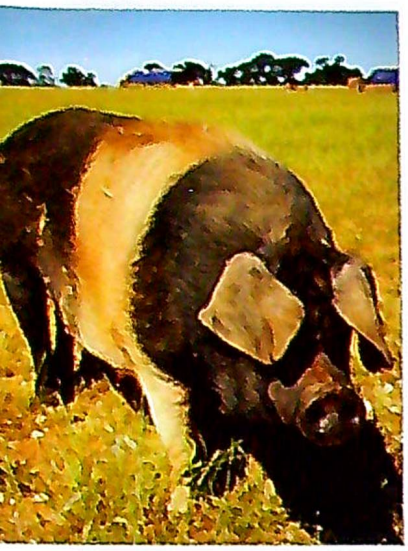
Top: a distinguished Welsh Mountain Badger Face sheep of the *Torrdu* type. Above: this Soay sheep roams the uninhabited island of Hirta in the Outer Hebrides, not far from the Isle of Soay where the breed originated

Porcine ancestry

Domestic pigs are descended from wild boar and, like sheep, exist in many different breeds. An amalgamation of the former Essex and Wessex Saddleback breeds, the British Saddleback, with its distinctive pink saddle over a predominantly black body, made up almost half of the UK's pig population in the 1940s. In 1955 the Howitt Report on pig production selected the Welsh Pig, the British Landrace pig and the Large White pig breeds for the UK national herd. This official focus on a limited number of breeds led to a serious decline in the Saddleback's fortunes and those of most other pig breeds.

By the middle of the 1980s many old breeds were all but extinct. What 'saved their bacon' was a combination of an appreciation of fuller flavours by the UK consumer, informed by celebrity chefs such as Rick Stein, together with the rise of organic farming and concerns about the welfare of intensively reared indoor pigs, including the Welsh.

Outdoor reared breeds like the Oxford Sandy and Black, with their bristles and coloured skin, are naturally protected from the sunburn that the ▸





Above: British Saddleback with its pink 'saddle' over a black body.
Above right: a pair of Tamworths like these had the nation rooting for them when they escaped the chop in 1998

indoor-raised white pigs are susceptible to. Their meat also has a higher fat marbling content than that of white pigs, making outdoor pork more succulent and far less likely to dry out when roasted.

Eastern promise and Prince's choice

Tamworths bear the closest resemblance to the traditional Old British Forest pig because they became unfashionable in the 18th century and therefore avoided being improved with Asian and Neapolitan stock. Well adapted to colder climes, in sunshine they have to roll in mud to avoid sunburn. This red bristly pig is sometimes crossed with wild boar to produce a distinctive gamey pork.

Popular in Japan where its meat is sold as 'Black Pork', the Berkshire is one of the UK's oldest pig breeds. It first came to public attention during the Civil War, when Cromwell's army discovered just how tasty the pigs of Reading were. Subsequently improved with Asiatic bloodlines, today's Berkshire is dark with a white flash on the face and socks.

The Gloucestershire Old Spot pig is called 'Old' because in 1913, when an association was formed to develop this breed, the pig had been known by its spots for as long as any of the members could remember. Originating in the Berkeley Vale in Gloucestershire, the Old Spot was frequently kept in perry and cider orchards where it foraged windfalls. Old Spots are among one of the pig breeds kept by Prince Charles. And there is no truth in the legend that its spots are bruises caused by falling fruit!



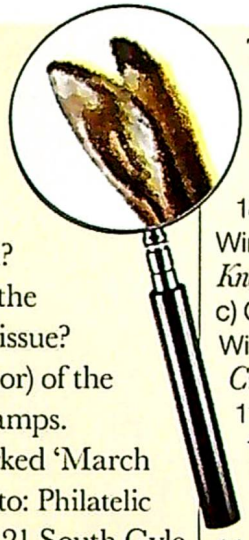
Above: this cute Gloucester Old Spot pig – one of Prince Charles's favourite breeds – is hardy enough to enjoy a stroll in the snow

Cattle breeds in waiting

Following the flyaway success of the Post and Go British Birds stamps, the Post and Go British Farm Animals series began last month with Sheep (reviewed on page 166 of *Bulletin*) and continues on 24 April with the release of Pigs (preview on page 198). Cattle will feature in a third set later in the year, so watch out for more accounts of great British breeds in *Bulletin* •

Rogan Macdonald, Getty Images

Prize draws Pick up a pen – it's puzzling time



Identify and Knowledge

1 *Identify* the stamp from the detail, right, with its name and year of issue.

2 Test your *Knowledge*:

a) Who created the The Queen's portrait on the first stamp of her reign?

b) Which GB stamp featured Dennis the Menace prior to this month's Comics issue?

c) Name the designer (not the illustrator) of the Post and Go British Farm Animals stamps.

How to enter Send your answers, marked 'March Identify' and/or 'March Knowledge' to: Philatelic Bulletin Prize Draws, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, EH12 9PB. **Closing date:** 10 April 2012.

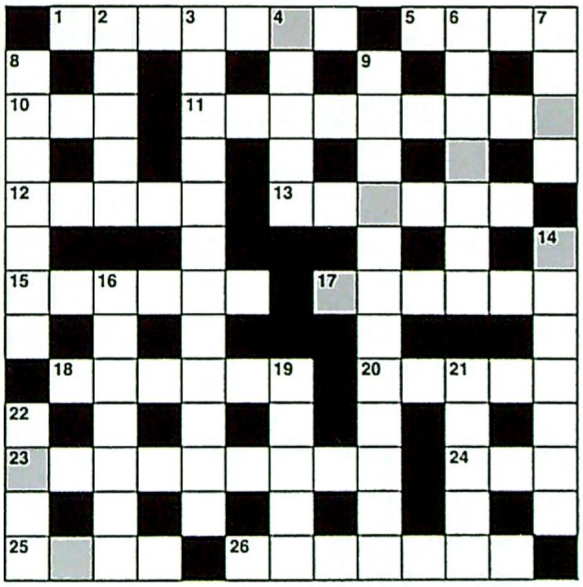
The first ten correct entries drawn after the closing date win the Comics issue and the Classic Locomotives of Scotland Minature Sheet •

January solutions *Identify:*



18p Dragon, Mythical Creatures, 2009.
Winner: P Cross, Ipswich.
Knowledge: a) Hat Trick. b) Noggin.
c) Greyhound of Richmond.
Winner: P Brooker, Pulborough.
Crossword: Across: 1 Emigres. 5 Isis. 10 Oil. 11 Eternally. 12 Train. 13 Tattoo. 15 Cosmic. 17 Turtle. 18 Boughs. 20 Taboo. 23 Esperanto. 24 Fen 25 Rods. 26 Message. Down: 2 Malta. 3 Green fingers. 4 Event. 6 Sold out. 7 Soya. 8 Contact. 9 Instructions. 14 Recount. 16 Stopped. 19 Since. 21 Befog. 22 Weir.
Solution: hinges. Winner: U Webster, Lincoln.

Cryptic Crossword Complete the puzzle below, then rearrange the letters in the grey squares to form a stamp-related word. Send that word, with your name and address, to 'March Crossword' at the address above. The first three correct entries drawn after 14 February win the UK A-Z Composite Souvenir Sheet



CLUES ACROSS

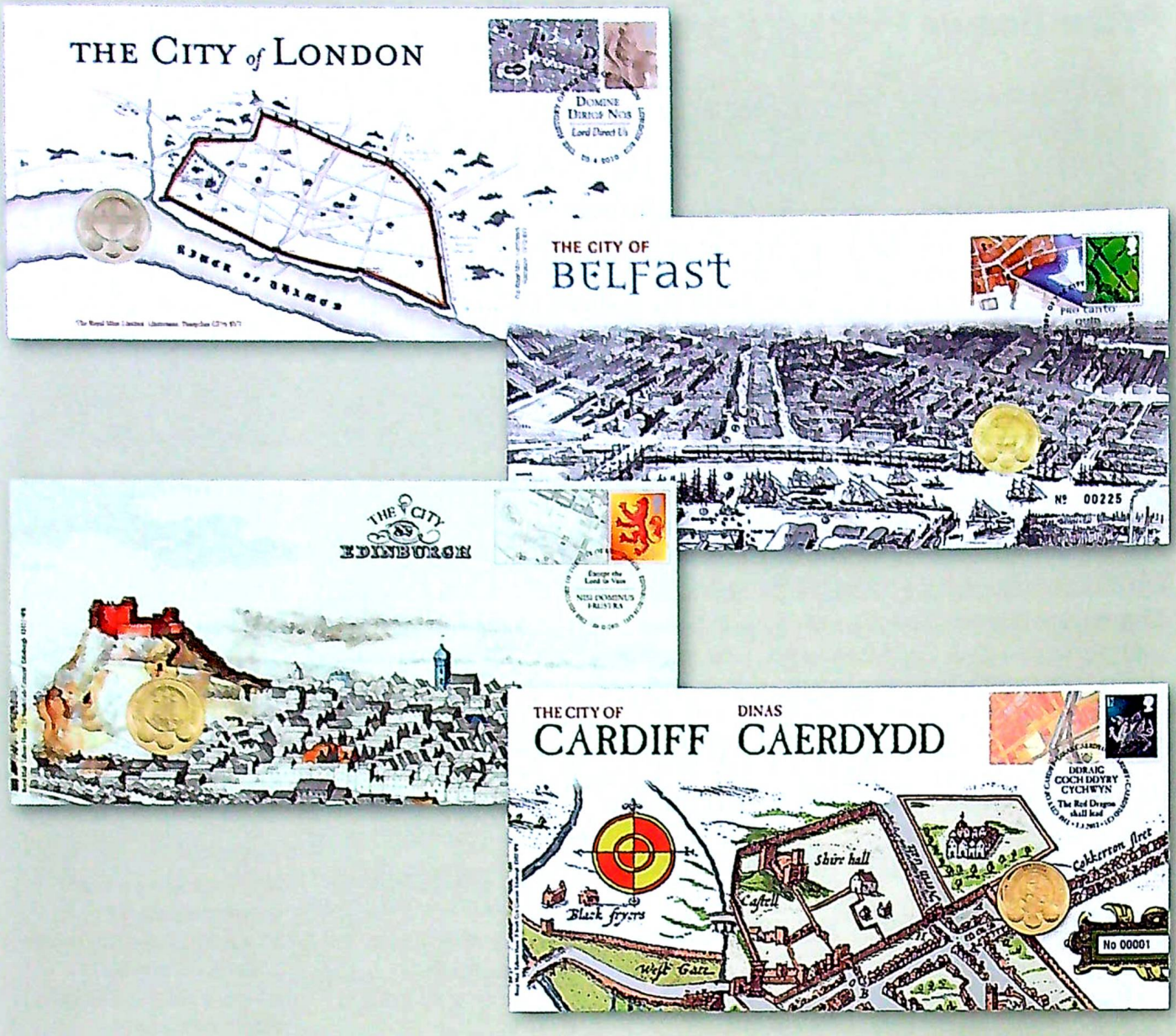
1 Holly at riot gave hunting cry (5 2)
5 Sound of laughter in a ditch (2 2)
10 Mostly false name Muhammad took (3)
11 Presenter finds girl put on weight, right? (9)
12 One in Panama, perhaps, acquiring one Caribbean country (5)
13 Guards in Red Sea republic protecting leader of Oman (6)
15 Claim a narrow surface loudly (6)
17 Strong horse as yet unreliable, right? (6)
18 I'm born and I live for drink (6)
20 Message from head of embassy brought with post (5)
23 Scented oil makes father and Lou itch madly (9)
24 Admit urban development has not begun (3)
25 Turf with a mixer (4)
26 Verity, irately shaking (7)

CLUES DOWN

2 A little liberal with one courtroom defence (5)
3 Important person in Star of Bethlehem? (7,5)
4 Sharpen your opener, darling (5)
6 Left in pain by my old pseudoscience (7)
7 Crooked, heartless creator of the Fat Controller (4)
8 Dimwit, obese, brought before principal (7)
9 Full time horn blowing's mediocre (3,2,3,4)
14 Filling for chocolate could be plainer (7)
16 Sort of company that's inadequate? (7)
19 No Latin de luxe models sweat! (5)
21 Happening at the back without rings (5)
22 Chooses the wrong spot (4)

Prize draw rules and regulations

1 The closing date is 10 April 2012. 2 Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 3 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. 4 Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question or solve a crossword, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. 6 Promoter's decision on any aspect of the promotions is final. No correspondence will be entered into. 7 Entry implies acceptance of these rules. 8 Prizes are subject to suitability and availability. The promoter reserves the right to a) substitute a prize of equal or greater value if circumstances so demand and b) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. 9 Winners' names are available 28 days after closing date; send an SAE to The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. The promoter is Royal Mail Group Ltd, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.



Capital covers!

The Capital Cities Collection of limited-edition Coin Covers is completed this month with the City of Cardiff Coin Cover, issued on the appropriate date of 1 March, St David's Day. Covers celebrating the City of London, Belfast and Edinburgh have been issued over the past two years on St George's Day, St Patrick's Day and St Andrew's Day respectively.

Each cover holds the relevant brilliant uncirculated official £1 Coin from Royal Mint and carries a unique combination of Country Definitive stamp, label and cancellation mark. Illustrated with heraldic symbols and an antique map or cityscape drawing, these collectable covers make splendid souvenir gifts for visiting friends. Price £15.95 each.

Royal Mail

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