
Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 14 Number 12 August 1977



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Editorial

This issue of the Philatelic Bulletin, our final contribution to the present volume, contains an article offering a brief glimpse into the subject of postcodes — a vital part of mechanisation.

Postal mechanisation, because of its complexities is constantly demanding the attention of the enquiring mind, and which, albeit slowly, is commanding a position in its own right, within the philatelic spectrum.

As new facets of this subject become available for publication, the Bulletin will print them, and as is our policy, by authoritative writers. In the meantime please help us — The Post Office — by continuing to use the postcode.

Students of the postage stamps of King George V will be aware of the recent gap in the 'King's Stamps' story. This is only a momentary pause and the series will continue with part 7 in the autumn.

British Wildlife Commemorative Issue 5 October 1977

Five se-tenant stamps, at 9p each, depicting the Otter, Badger, Red Squirrel, Brown Hare and Hedgehog, are to be issued on 5 October 1977. The special pictorial handstamp provided at the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh, will illustrate a paw mark.

First Day Cover Services

The following first day cover services will be offered by the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh.

Service A

This consists of the official Post Office cover, addressed to the correct postal address of the destination required, and bearing all five stamps. The cover will be cancelled, 'Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh' and despatched for a charge of 63p. For deposit account customers the charge will be 58½p.

Service B

Customers own pre-addressed covers will be given the stamps, cancelled and despatched for a charge of 53p each.

Service C

For bulk orders of 50 or more covers, all to the same address, under the conditions of Service A, the charge is 60½p per item.

The usual first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes.

Application forms, obtainable from the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh, and at all Head Post Offices, should be returned not later than 26 September 1977.

Presentation packs containing the new stamps and costing 55p, will be available from the Bureau and all Head Post Offices from 5 October 1977.

Gems from the RM Phillips Collection

XLVIII The First Experiment for the Background of the One Penny Black



In January 1840, while work progressed on the portrait of HM The Queen which was to be the central feature of the design of the projected postage stamps, trials were made by Perkins, Bacon and Petch of alternative security backgrounds to the head.

For these experiments, they selected various engine-turned security patterns from stock and submitted them to Henry Cole as samples of the background of the stamps and to give him a rough idea of the kind of stamp proposed.

The Perkins printing process began with the original design being engraved on a die of soft steel, which was then hardened. This die was then, under pressure, impressed on a soft steel roller — the engraver's recess design thus becoming a design in relief. After the roller had been hardened it was rolled in on a flat piece of soft steel plate as many times as necessary (the engraver's design being restored to its recess form) and the plate hardened before printing commenced.

The design incorporated in the final printing plate for the 1840 stamps was composed of four separate elements: the chosen security background, taken from stock; the (newly engraved) portrait head; the lettering, frame line and corner ornaments etc; and, finally, the corner letters.

The proof shown here is from a small specially-made printing plate derived from two

dies with different background patterns. The upper row of five impressions was made from a roller taken from the first Heath die — a die subsequently rejected on the grounds of being too fine to transfer well to the roller die and, subsequently, to the printing plate. The lower row are five impressions of the coarser background subsequently adopted, but with the portrait in silhouette.

This proof is particularly interesting in that it demonstrates different stages in the production of the master die, which was as follows: the background design on the stock roller was impressed on a flat piece of soft steel (the primary die), on to which was then marked the exact size of the background required for the stamp and an outline of the head. After hardening, an impression was then taken up on to a second roller (on which the background design and outlined head were now proud of the surface) and the unwanted parts of the background pattern indicated by the marks cut away, including the space for the head. The result of all this work was then transferred from the now hardened roller to a new flat piece of blank soft steel, on to which the engraver would engrave the portrait and marry it into the existing background design. After this had been done, the balance of the design also engraved on the die, and this master die hardened, the completed design was taken up

on another roller. After hardening, this final roller was then impressed repeatedly on the printing plate. The last stage of all was to cut the corner letters on punches of wrought steel, which were then punched on the blank corners of the 240 impressions (a number chosen for easy accountancy as 240 pennies then equalled £1) on the printing plate and the plate hardened before printing commenced.

The five impressions in the lower row of the proof illustrated here were transferred from the

second roller described above on to a specially-produced plate and they show the stage of the die production when the die had yet to have engraved upon it the portrait head.

And so, although not the rarest proof in the R M Phillips Collection, this is one of the most interesting because it demonstrates the problem of the engraver and printer and the necessity for having the background engraved first, so that the portrait might be engraved with sufficient strength.

JEAN FARRUGIA

Edmund Dulac

We have prevailed upon Marcus Arman to review for the Bulletin a recently published biography of the artist and designer — Edmund Dulac. Collectors of KG VI and early QE II postage stamps will be familiar with Dulac's designs, but may know little else about the man. This book fills an obvious gap and because of its philatelic importance, Marcus Arman's deliberations on its content are published as a feature in this issue.

Until this book was published little was known about Edmund Dulac except that in secondhand booksellers' lists the asking price for books he illustrated keeps on rising. Dulac's life and work lacked documentation because he had directed that all papers, sketches and unfinished work in his possession at the time of his death should be destroyed. Because of this directive in his will, which the curious may inspect at the General Registrar's Office, Colin White's achievement is all the more remarkable. Plainly he used a lot of initiative in producing a substantial definitive biography into which has been woven what is virtually a check list of Dulac's work. In his foreword Mr White tells how in searching for facts he took a chance and telephoned Dulac's last known London address. The lady who answered had not only heard of Dulac but knew him well. She generously offered her help and 'from this nucleus came a chain reaction leading to places as widespread as Switzerland, the United States,

France and Spain'. That the journeys Colin White undertook were fruitful is now demonstrated.

What this book does is to take seriatim the story of Dulac's life, emphasising his gifts, skills and development as an artist and, at the same time to mention specifically almost every significant work Edmund produced. The author then proceeds to comment, often at considerable length, on many of Dulac's drawings illustrated in the book, and this is done with such delicacy and sensitivity that the words used extend ones enjoyment and appreciation of the pictures. With just on 150 black and white illustrations plus a further 32 full page colour plates the visual survey of the artist's work could scarcely be bettered.

Just before World War I it became possible to produce near-exact copies of coloured pictures. Carl Hentschel's improved technique of colour photography and three colour printing came in just at the right time to benefit Dulac. The Leicester Galleries (then literally in Leicester Square!) commissioned him to produce a series of illustrations for stories from the Arabian Nights, and Hodder & Stoughton published them in book form with a text compiled by Lawrence Houseman. Dulac was delighted. The gallery sold the paintings and the publishers sold the book which was the best selling gift book of 1907. In that same year 'The Bookman'

reproduced several of the colour plates from the *Arabian Nights* and the reviews were ecstatic. Dulac never looked back.

In the spring of 1914 Edmund began to be influenced by Persian art and despite the troubles in the Balkans his future seemed assured, for he had been offered a generous contract to produce illustrations for gift books to be published in 1915, 1916 and 1917. When war broke out the *Daily Mail* commissioned him to design a set of charity stamps for the Red Cross. These stamps showing Greek heroes and heroines acting out various exhortatory aspects of war were to be the first of many small scale adhesive labels. Years later similar heroic themes were to appear on postage stamps. As part of his work in war time he contributed to a number of the Charity Gift Books sponsored by eminent persons. The *Daily Telegraph* gave him a book on his own in 1915 and 'Edmund Dulac's Picture Book for the French Red Cross' resulted. The water colour 'Belgium' from King Albert's Book of 1914 dramatically showed Belgium as a struggling woman in a smoke and flame filled landscape trying to get free.

Nevertheless 1914-18 was not an easy period for the French born artist who became a naturalised Englishman in 1912. With Frank Brangwyn, Augustus John, William Nicholson, Will Rothenstein and other notable artists of that time he contributed to a series of lithographic posters on the theme 'The Great War — Britain's Efforts and Ideals'. The immediate postwar period found Dulac engaged in a series of splendidly varied commissions, most of which are covered in Colin White's informative biography. Readers of the *Philatelic Bulletin* will however want to know whether Mr White traces Edmund Dulac's path from the illustration of delightful fairy tales to the production of postage stamps, both of his own devising and in partnership with Eric Gill. Those who recall the Gill-Dulac exhibition at the National Postal Museum in the spring of 1970 will be aware how much that collaboration between those distinguished artists enriched the history of British stamp design. Colin White's book adds materially to the

information then recorded. We now know that it was the great typographer Stanley Morison who advised Dulac to submit sketches for new postage stamps in 1933. The furore caused by the greatly simplified stamps issued during the brief reign of Edward VIII led to a vigorous argument in the columns of *The Times* in which the chief protagonists were Gill and Dulac. The views about the design of postage stamps adumbrated by these two men are by no means half a century outdated.

The left profile portrait of King George VI which appeared on almost all the stamps of his reign was Dulac's, for he was convinced that a new portrait would integrate better with the designs he envisaged. In fact this head, a splendid likeness and one of the finest portraits ever used on a postage stamp, was also used on the stamps Eric Gill designed. Colin White explains: 'Starting with a fresh drawing of the King, he prepared a plaster medallion on which he carved the head in low relief. By eliminating



surface irregularities, simplifying planes and angles in order to emphasise the straightness of the forehead, nose and philtrum, underlining the masculinity of the chin by having the hair short and slightly wavy, and extending the line of the neck, Dulac gave the King the classical features of a young Greek hero.' There is a cast of that medallion in the National Postal Museum, but in Mr White's book appears a reproduction of the splendid drawing from which Dulac worked.

The only slip I can find is that on p.176 the 2½d George VI stamp, while incorporating Dulac's head of the Sovereign, was in other respects designed by Eric Gill. It is a pity too that there is only the barest of reference to the combined Anglo-French stamp which the French Minister of Posts proposed in the darkest days of the 1939-45 war. A tentative sketch by M. Cheffer was adapted by Dulac and approved by the King. The course of the war dictated that these stamps were never to be issued.

But such comment is merely to indulge in fault finding for this book really does add to what was previously known and Colin White is to be congratulated on his achievement. That he has probed in so satisfying a manner may be due to the fact that professionally he is a dental surgeon. 'Edmund Dulac' by Colin White is published by Studio Vista Publishers price £10.50.

Editor's Note

Both Colin White's book and Marcus Arman's review of it refer to matters which have been further discussed in earlier issues of the Philatelic Bulletin. A short list of these items follows:-

The Issued Stamps of King Edward VIII	Dec. 1965
Eric Gill and Edmund Dulac Designers of Stamps	April 1970
Eric Gill and Edmund Dulac Artists and Men of Letters	June 1970
The proposed Anglo-French Stamps of 1940	April 1971

Philatelic Societies

Christchurch and District Philatelic Society

The Christchurch and District PS has recently been formed. Readers who are interested in becoming members should write to the Secretary, Mr M T Smith, 39a Walkford Road, Highcliffe, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 5QD.

Poole and District Philatelic Society

The Poole and District Philatelic Society will hold its annual stamp fair and exhibition at the Antelope Hotel, High Street, Poole, Dorset, on Saturday 27 August from 10.30 am, until 6 pm. The event will include members' displays and dealers' stands.

Deal Philatelic Society

The Deal Philatelic Society in conjunction with the Dover District Council are staging an exhibition of postage stamps on Saturday 6 August from 11 am until 7 pm and Sunday 7 August from 2.30-7 pm at the Astor Theatre, Stanhope Road, Deal, Kent. Admission is free. Further details may be obtained from the Secretary, Mrs J Sheppard, 122 Downs Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent CT14 7TF.

Croydon Philatelic Society

To celebrate the 70th Anniversary on 11 September the Croydon Philatelic Society has arranged a celebration programme.

13 September	8pm Auction Small Church Hall St Mary's Church Wellesley Road CROYDON
22 October	8pm Dinner Maple Room Fairfield Halls CROYDON
24-29 October	Display by Crown Agents and Croydon Postal History Sun Lounge Fairfield Halls
29 October	10-5pm Host to Surrey Federation Convention Large Hall St Mary's Church CROYDON

Book Reviews

Collect British Stamps

The Silver Jubilee edition of 'Collect British Stamps', published by Stanley Gibbons, is now available, price 90p. This new edition of the popular CBS checklist comprises 56 pages, and the listings cover all the basic issues of British Postage Stamps up to and including the Silver Jubilee issue of 11 May. All illustrations, as usual, are reproduced in colour and details of watermarks and perforations presented in simple, tabulated form. Also included are the 'Country' issues and the stamps of the Channel Islands, prior to the independence of their respective postal administrations, as well as British postage dues and official stamps.

Harry Hayes Philatelic Pamphlets

Two further booklets in this series are currently available: 'The Royal Tour Trains — Their Postal History and Postmarks'. This work deals with the special postmarks used in 12 countries during royal tours, between 1925 and 1973, many of which are illustrated. It may not be generally known that Angola, Belgium Congo and the United States had a share in the British Royal Visits during these years. This booklet gives the full details.

Railway Travelling Post Offices of Great Britain and Ireland 1838-1975 lists in alphabetical order the vast number of TPOs operated during this period, and illustrates many of them. Changes of operation are also shown. Both booklets have been written by Norman Hill and are available from stamp dealers at £1.50 each or direct from: Harry Hayes, 48 Trafalgar Street, Batley, West Yorkshire WF17 7HA for £1.65 each postage paid.

Stamps for Pleasure—No 5

In Mr Watson's article (Philatelic Bulletin — June 1977) he made reference to the fact that stamp books are listed in Stanley Gibbons publications. Readers may like to be reminded that the 'Commonwealth Catalogue of QE II

Stamps' published by Urch Harris & Co Ltd also lists stamp books and booklet panes in great detail.

Forces Covers The Queen's Silver Jubilee Review of Her Army in Germany Commemorative Cover

Her Majesty The Queen reviewed a representative parade of the British Army in West Germany, at Sennelager on 7 July, as part of the celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of her accession to the throne.

A special cover has been produced to mark the occasion, bearing the new 9p Silver Jubilee Commemorative postage stamp, and cancelled with a handstamp which includes the legend:

Her Majesty's Silver Jubilee The Army Review
7 July 1977
Sennelager

British Forces 7777 Postal Service.

The following cover services are offered:

Cover with 9p Silver Jubilee Stamp — 50p

Cover with a full set (5) of Silver Jubilee
Stamps — 90p

A limited issue of 500 each of three covers, all bearing the full set of stamps and signed by the following Generals are available:

General Sir Roland Gibbs, KCB, CBE, DSO,
MC. Chief of the General Staff £3.00 each

Lieutenant General Sir Richard Worsley,
KCB, OBE. Commander 1st British Corps
£2.50 each

Major General Nigel Bagnall MC.
General Officer Commanding 4th Division
and Parade Commander £2.00 each

Orders should be sent to:

The Philatelic Officer
1 (BR) Corps Postal & Courier Com-
munications Unit RE
British Forces Post Office 33

All proceeds will be donated to Services charities.

Preliminary Designs for the Roses Issue



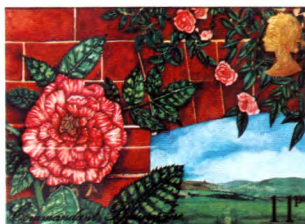
Liz Butler



Liz Butler



David Baxter



Liz Butler



David Baxter



Liz Butler



David Baxter



David Baxter

Stamps for Pleasure

7. Officials and Postage Dues

The Post Office's 'special purpose' issues are a specialised interest for the philatelist, and are generally not so well known to the average collector of modern GB stamps. The official stamps, used exclusively by Government departments, were introduced in 1882 and were finally discontinued in 1904. Furthermore they comprised overprints on the existing stamps of Queen Victoria and, later, Edward VII, and therefore were devoid of any aesthetic appeal. Postage due 'labels' — 'stamps' to collectors and catalogue editors! — are seldom seen unless one receives an underpaid or unpaid letter, though freely available unused at Post Office philatelic bureaux and from stamp dealers.

The first GB official stamp was a Penny Black with the letters 'VR' in the upper corners and the normal sequence of lettering — AA to AL, BA to BL, etc. — in the lower corners. But after more than 3,000 sheets had been printed, problems of administration and financial control resulted in abandonment of the project before they were ever used. That was in April 1840 and while a few unused examples, and postally used, have survived, these are understandably extremely rare. Rowland Hill is reputed to have used some of them for postmark experiments, but Government departments had to 'make do' with the ordinary postage stamps.

Predictably the Inland Revenue, with its countrywide network of revenue officers who probably handled more letters than all the other departments put together, were the guinea-pigs in the use of the stamps overprinted 'I.R. Official' in denominations of $\frac{1}{2}d$, $1d$ and $6d$, in September and October 1882. Additional values followed in 1885, including a £1 intended mainly for registered packages, and there were other changes in the basic stamps until 1902 when the first Edwardian issue — eight denominations — appeared. They were used exclusively by the provincial revenue officers on correspondence or, from the London headquarters, on foreign mail. Consequently most used examples bear provincial postmarks.

The $6d$ 'I.R. Official' of Edward VII is a great rarity, probably the rarest British stamp. It was

withdrawn (with the other officials) almost as soon as it had been printed in March 1904, and very few are known to exist, possibly no more than six postally used. Another famous rarity is the Edward VII $10s$ 'I.R. Official' which is worth rather more with the variety, raised stop after 'R'.

Next, in 1883, came stamps overprinted 'Govt. Parcels' (with the full stop under a short 'T') for the use of all Government departments, followed in 1896 by similar stamps — 'O.W. Official' (Office of Works) and, for the War Office paymasters in the provinces, stamps overprinted 'Army Official'. In 1902 there were stamps for the 'Board of Education' (the $1s$ Edward is a rarity) and two only — the Edwardian $\frac{1}{2}d$ and $1d$ — marked 'R.H. Official' (Royal Household). Last but not least came the 'Admiralty Official' overprinted stamps in 1903. All much more interesting than the present day OHMS/Official Paid envelopes and labels!

Postage due stamps were of later vintage than the officials. They were first issued in 1914 and superseded the variety of manuscript marks indicating the amount due in unpaid postage, usually double the deficiency. It is the duty of the postman to apply the necessary adhesive and to collect the amount due at the time of delivery, a reminder of the 'bad old days' before the advent of postage stamps when the postage was collected, or 'requested', on delivery before one had a chance to examine the letter or to know whence it came!

The postage due stamps were utilitarian in design — simply the face value in a centre panel with the words 'Postage Due' in a curving scroll above and the face value repeated in words at the foot, embellished by the ornamental floral trivia of the early Georgian era. The denominations ranged from $\frac{1}{2}d$ to $1s$ and a $2s\ 6d$ value, mainly for Customs dues, was introduced in 1924. The stamps were typographed and what is remarkable about them is that they survived in their original format and style for 56 years, two photogravure-printed stamps, $4d$ and $8d$, being issued in 1968-69.

All those years there were countless changes of watermark and occasionally of colour, plus the

introduction of 5s (1955), 10s and £1 (1963) 'To Pay' labels to augment the existing 2s 6d. At last new designs in decimal currency, ranging from ½p to £5, came into use in 1970-73, all inscribed 'To Pay', designed in a pleasing modern style by

Jeffery Matthews and printed in rich photogravure tones, evidently aimed to soften the blow of having 'To Pay' on delivery!

JAMES WATSON

An American Looks at British Stamps

My views of British Postage Stamps are based on many years experience as a collector, philatelic writer and columnist for a major newspaper and several stamp journals, as well as active membership of national and local philatelic societies. In these pursuits a quantity of postal and verbal communications has been received from fellow collectors. The views presented here are, in a way, composite, including those of new and advanced stamp collectors as well as those specialising in a particular country or theme.

The departure of the Pilgrim Fathers from England to America in 1620 is the subject of a British stamp, issued in 1970, to commemorate the 350th anniversary of this early migration from your shores. Understandably the Pilgrim Fathers have been similarly depicted on US stamps as has the British settlement of Jamestown.

It was because of the good offices of Benjamin Franklin, born in Massachusetts, and Deputy Postmaster General for the American Colonies, that for a number of years surplus postal funds were remitted to the British treasury. Franklin's portrait has been included in the design of many of our postage stamps and recently in the design of the British 'Bicentennial of American Independence' issue. It was he, born British but later becoming an American citizen, who can rightly be considered as our philatelic ancestor.

In 1840 Great Britain introduced the world's first postage stamps the 'penny black' and 'twopenny blue', printed by the line engraved process, together with early examples of postal stationery, the Mulready envelope and letter sheet. The United States followed suit in 1847

with its first national postage stamps. The term 'national' is used to denote government-issued stamps for use on domestic and international mails, as opposed to the first stamps issued for local and regional services provided by private firms and local government.

The world's first stamps were gummed and imperforate, but did not, however, bear the name of the country of origin. Today this omission remains a feature of British postage stamps, and one of the many facets of stamp collecting which intrigues American collectors. Of particular interest, was the need of the British Postal Administration of 1840 to print the Mulready envelope on 'silk thread' paper and the postage stamps on 'watermarked' paper. These expedients, with others, were necessary in the interest of security, and in an effort to alleviate the defrauding of postal revenue by the public, hence the use of corner letters included in the design of the early stamps. In 1847 the rather beautiful embossed stamps were issued in three denominations, two of which were printed on silk thread paper and one on watermark paper. It was this issue which marked the end of imperforate stamp production in Britain; by 1858 all stamps printed were also perforated and this same year saw the introduction of surface printing. In 1970, to commemorate the International Stamp Exhibition — 'Philympia', three stamps were issued depicting reproductions of the printing processes mentioned. While the original stamps tend to be expensive, the beginner to stamp collecting will be glad to know that the 'Philympia reproductions' are obtainable at modest cost.

In 1887 it was decided to issue a new series of low value definitive stamps, using for the first time a bi-colour printing process; a new departure from the established single colour printing in use since 1840. This series was known incorrectly, and still is, as the 'Jubilee issue', simply because of its introduction during the same year in which Queen Victoria celebrated her Golden Jubilee as the Monarch.

Historically the United States of America is a descendant of the United Kingdom, and the early postal services of the Colonies were an extension of those of the Motherland. We have therefore a considerable interest in British history during and before colonial times. Strangely enough the 750th anniversary of the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215 was not commemorated philatelically in Britain, but the occasion was marked in the United States by the issue of two stamps.

The Battle of Hastings had a significant effect on the course of British history, and the 900th anniversary, in 1966, of the event was commemorated by a set of eight unusual but nevertheless interesting stamps depicting scenes of the battle, taken from the Bayeux Tapestry.

In 1965 the Salvation Army celebrated the centenary of its formation and both the US and British Post Offices acknowledged the humanitarian work of this fine international organisation by issuing stamps for the occasion. Captain James Cook's explorations during the 18th century included voyages along the Pacific coast of North America and in 1968 to commemorate the bicentennial of his first voyage of discovery your Post Office introduced a stamp depicting his ship, and his famous signature.

We in America have more than average interest in Britain's contribution to literature, art and science. The works of the literary giants, Shakespeare, Scott and Dickens are read in nearly every school throughout our country and philatelists were very pleased when the Post Office decided to honour these writers, on stamps. The trans-Atlantic liner Queen Elizabeth II and the Hovercraft, both fine examples of marine engineering; the supersonic

'Concorde'; the single-handed achievement of Sir Francis Chichester's circumnavigation of the world in his boat, 'Gypsy Moth IV'; radar and penicillin are British inventions which are assisting mankind in its day to day existence — all these have been the subjects of commemorative postage stamps.

You have also remembered your great war-time leader, Sir Winston Churchill, on two occasions since the end of World War II, by issuing stamps in his honour. This was of special interest to us, particularly as his mother was born in the United States and he himself was granted honorary American citizenship. He was similarly remembered by us in 1965.

Through your postage stamps, these minuscule ambassadors heralding your culture and way of life, potential visitors to the shores of Britain are forewarned of the places to visit, and events in which to participate. Britain can rightfully be proud of its stamps from the first Victorian to the most recent of the present reign.

ALFRED J MOSES

Bristol and District Federation of Philatelic Societies

The BDFPS are holding their Annual Convention in conjunction with the Bristol and West of England Stamp and Coin Fair to be held at the Victoria Rooms, Clifton, Bristol on 7 and 8 October 1977.

The Fair, attended by leading national dealers, will be one of the largest held outside of London. It will include a comprehensive display of winning entries from the major National Exhibitions. There will also be a large display of Silver Jubilee stamp material supplied by The Post Office and the Crown Agents.

Society members will be present to answer questions and give advice to the public who are interested in extending their knowledge of philately. A competition will be held for young collectors.

British Special Stamps

33. 700th Anniversary of Parliament, 1965



The two stamps — 6d and 2s 6d — issued to mark the 700th anniversary of Simon de Montfort's Parliament on 19 July 1965 (delayed six weeks because of the Post Office overtime ban) were an oddly-matched pair, the former in normal commemorative format, the latter — described in the philatelic press as 'Britain's longest and floppiest modern stamp' — being three times as wide as the ordinary low-value definitive. Criticisms of drab colours and poor quality were, however, more than offset by the interest of the subject and the stirring events which led to the violent death of de Montfort in the same year, 1265.

The 6d stamp reproduced the seal of Simon de Montfort with a matching circular frame bearing the standard Wilding portrait of the Queen and decorative foliage linking them both, the design olive-green on a white background. It was designed by Stewart R. Black, DA, who, at 27, was then Britain's youngest stamp designer. Scottish-born Mr Black studied textile design at the Glasgow Art School and, while teaching drawing at the City of Birmingham College of Arts and Crafts, also freelanced as an illustrator and painter.

The 'monster' 2s 6d stamp, black and pale drab in colour, was the work of Professor R. Guyatt, FSIA, ARCA, Professor of Graphic Art at the Royal College of Art, also a member of the advisory committee of the Council of Industrial Design, which assisted the PMG in matters of stamp design.

Professor Guyatt was evidently briefed to go to 'extreme lengths' to include the whole panorama

of Hollar's engraving, executed in 1647, of (from left to right) Parliament House (now St Stephen's Hall), the Hall (Westminster Hall) and the east end of the Abbey, with the Thames in the foreground. The Queen's portrait is superimposed on the engraving on the right, enclosed within a wreath of foliage.

Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, was born in Normandy, *circa* 1206, the son of a French count. He came to England, having inherited the earldom from his grandmother, and married Eleanor, sister of Henry III. From 1248 to 1253 he served in France as the Governor of Gascony, then he joined the barons in opposition to the King whom he defeated in battle at Lewes in 1264, taking him and his son prisoner. Thereafter he governed England for more than a year — in January 1265 he summoned the first Parliament as at present constituted, of peers temporal and spiritual, and of representatives from counties, boroughs and cities.

They met in various buildings at Westminster, including the Chapter House of the Abbey, and a final public ceremony took place in Westminster Hall. Many of the barons, however, resented Simon's cavalier treatment of them and, later in 1265, Prince Edward escaped from captivity and joined them. In the first decisive battle of the Barons War at Evesham, Simon de Montfort was defeated and slain. Edward I, known as 'Longshanks', was proclaimed King of England in 1272. De Montfort's Parliament, though short-lived, was the prototype of democratic government 'of the people by the people' — it was emulated by Edward I in 1295.

Wenceslaus Hollar, the engraver, was born in Prague in 1607. Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, brought him to England in 1637, and in the Civil War he took part in the defence of Basing House, was captured (1644), but escaped to Antwerp, returning to England in 1652. Following his death in extreme poverty in 1677 and burial in St Margaret's churchyard, Westminster, some 2,750 plates, including incomparable views of London and other British cities, were found. His portrait appears on two Czechoslovak stamps issued in 1953.

The stamps were photogravure-printed by Harrison & Sons in sheets of 120 (6×20) for the 6d, ordinary and phosphor-banded paper, and 80

(8×10) for the 2s 6d, ordinary paper only, watermark 'multiple crowns', which may be found inverted on the 2s 6d value. The 6d stamp is known imperforate between it and the top margin, and is comparatively rare thus. Both stamps were inadvertently pre-released in several post offices in the London area on 8 July, date of issue of the 'Churchill' stamps. Some, indeed, bore the 'First Day' cancellation of the Philatelic Bureau!

Quantities issued (phosphor in brackets) were: 6d 12,973,800 (1,537,920); 2s 6d 4,055,120. Presentation packs: 24,427. The 2s 6d stamp was used extensively on parcels and on 'double-rate' airmail letters.

JAMES WATSON

The Postcode and the Philatelist

As Britain's postal mechanisation programme swings into action, it adds a new dimension to philately and postal history.

Many of the 32 million letters slipping through letter boxes each day throughout the country already carry small luminescent dots — the mark of the new technology and the key to postal mechanisation. These dots on covers, the phosphor on stamps, new postmarks and postmark slogans widen the philatelic interest of the mail.

Interest in mechanisation from philatelists and postal historians is a lucky sideline for the Post Office. Mechanisation is, after all, a way of streamlining the mail network; of trying to keep down postal prices and of helping the Post Office operate more economically.

Mechanisation — which can never replace the postman delivering letters each day — will make the postman's work less arduous as machines sort the mail, read addresses in their own special language and handle mountains of mail much quicker than a man.

The mechanisation programme will be completed by the mid-eighties. But already there is a Postal Mechanisation Study Group — started by Douglas Muir, assistant editor of a philatelist magazine, last October. The Group has traced

the history of British postal mechanisation. 'We study the results and improvements in sorting and cancelling by machine', says Mr Muir. But their study goes further than that. With the help of the Post Office they find out how the space-age sorting machines work — from Automatic Letter Facing Machines and Segregators right up to coding machines and sorting machines that can handle letters at a dazzling rate.

Philatelists have always shown interest in the amount of phosphor on a stamp — ever since the early days of mechanisation. As stamp prices change, so does the arrangement of phosphor on different denominations. Consequently stamps with phosphor make for special collecting.

As mechanised sorting offices become widespread, so do the special postmarks used — like 'Sheffield MLO'; MLO standing for Mechanised Letter Office. In the Autumn, the largest concentration of MLOs so far, finally goes live when Leeds sorting offices becomes mechanised. It means that practically the whole of Yorkshire will be postally mechanised.

Machines need their own special language to handle vast quantities of mail — and this is why the postcode is so important. The postcode is the language of the sorting machines. Machines actually translate the postcode into a language

that can be read by other machines. This means that once a letter reaches a mechanised sorting office, machines take over to speed it anywhere in the country. But without the postcode, this automatic process cannot work. Space-age sorting machines that read the postcode are the hub of postal mechanisation but there are other machines that help speed vast quantities of mail each day.

Once a letter has been collected from any of the 100,000 posting boxes in the UK it is taken to a sorting office to begin its journey.

In the modern sorting office it is first put into a segregator — a long, drum-like machine with slits in its side. The segregator separates all the ordinary, thin letters from the bulkier packages by passing letters through its slits.

In the next stage, the letters — now in orderly piles — are introduced to ALF . . . the endearing abbreviation for an Automatic Letter Facing and Stamp Cancelling machine. ALF can deal with 46,000 letters an hour. And though ALF's name might suggest a small-time image, it is a sophisticated piece of machinery — a complicated array of flying pulleys, belts, wheels and scanners that flip letters round so that stamps are in the same position, sees that first and second-class mail is divided by 'reading' the amount of phosphor on a stamp, and that stamps are properly postmarked.

Then the letters go before a coding desk. One by one, they pass before an operator who works a typewriter-like keyboard. As he types the number and letters of the postcode, they are translated onto the letter in the form of tiny, pale, phosphor dots the colour of pale tea stains. Once the letters have passed automatically from the coding desk they go to an automatic sorting machine — this machine can sort up to 16,000 letters an hour. The sorting machine has an electronic eye that can pick up the postcode's language and sort it into 140 different destinations.

Then the letters go on to the next stage of their journey: by rail, road or sometimes by air they are taken to the next sorting office.

Once they reach it, they are swiftly machine

sorted again, right down to the delivery postman, who need only arrange the letters into delivery order, go out on his walk and pop the letters through the letter box.

So, the postcode is the key to mechanisation. The offices to be equipped over the next three years will handle more than 50 per cent of all letters. To make sure this happens efficiently, customer co-operation is all important to the Post Office.

The full advantages of mechanisation will be realised when writing the postcode comes as naturally as sticking on a stamp.

But already mechanisation has opened a new vista — a new field for philatelists and postal historians.

Royal Visits on Stamps

In June, to supplement its current Silver Jubilee exhibition, the National Postal Museum mounted a special display of Renzo Rossotti's well-known collection 'Royal Visits on Stamps from Queen Victoria to Elizabeth II'. Both exhibitions will remain on view until late autumn.

The Bureau Regrets...

The Philatelic Bureau regrets the delay over the past few weeks in meeting customers' orders and the annoyance this has caused.

Although the Silver Jubilee has been a major factor the real difficulty has arisen from the concentration of the outstanding Jubilee issue, the Heads of Government and the additional 9p stamp, in 4 weeks. This together with the hundreds of thousands of Tour covers has placed an unprecedented demand on print and supply resources and has resulted in a situation which extra help in the Bureau has not been able to speedily remedy.

We offer our sincere apologies and an assurance that everything possible is being done to restore normal service.

Special Handstamps

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting should bear ½p in excess of the normal postage, and should be sent to the Head Postmaster of the town where the special posting box is located or the relevant District Postmaster in London, marking the outer cover 'Special Handstamp'.

6 August 1977 (P/R)

Surrey Police Open Day Mount Browne Guildford 6 August 1977 The Local Police Serving You. Special posting box at the Police Headquarters, Mount Browne, Sandy Lane, Guildford, Surrey GU3 1HG.

11 August 1977 (P/C)

4th Test Match Australian Centennial Tour Leeds 11 August 77. Special posting box at Leeds Cricket and Football and Athletic Company Ltd, St Michaels Lane, Leeds LS6 3BR.

Postmark Slogans

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting bearing the appropriate postage rate should be forwarded to the Head Postmaster of the town where the slogan is to be used marking the outer cover 'Postmark Slogan'.

1 July-31 December 1977 (P)

Newcastle 1927 1977 Brown Ale Golden Jubilee. To be used at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. 2nd class.

15 July-11 August 1977 (P)

Now Open Bass Museum Burton-upon-Trent. To be used at Burton-on-Trent Staff. 1st and 2nd class.

18 July-11 August 1977 (P)

Vale Royal Abbey 1277 Anniversary 1977. To be used at Norwich.

1st class 21 July-11 August 1977

2nd class 18 July-8 August 1977

25 July-20 August 1977 (P)

250th Three Choirs Festival Gloucester 20-28 August 1977. To be used at Gloucester. 1st and 2nd class.

Repeat Campaign

2 July-30 September 1977 (P)

South Woodham Ferrers the Place For Your New Home. To be reused at Chelmsford.

Please Note

That the Postmark Slogan 'Bristol Speedway Fridays April to October' which was first advertised in volume 6 Issue No 23 and then cancelled in Issue No 29 on 29 April 1977 will now be in use from 20 June until 30 October 1977.

P denotes Pictorial

C denotes Circular

R denotes Rectangular

Correction

In the June issue of the Philatelic Bulletin under Special Handstamps, the following entries were included.

4 April 1977-3 April 1978 (P)

Eden Court Inverness The Theatre of the Highlands. To be used at Inverness. Second Class.

4 April 1977-3 April 1978 (P)

Barnardo's Cares About Children Dr Barnardo's PO Box 82 Cardiff CF1 1TZ. To be used at Cardiff. First Class.

4 April 1977-3 April 1978 (P)

Barnardo's Cares About Children Dr Barnardo's Dept X 414 Antrim Road Belfast BT15 5BA. To be used at Belfast. First Class.

They should have appeared under Postmark Slogans. We apologise for this error.

Requests to reproduce articles and illustrations appearing in the *Bulletin* should be addressed to the Editor, Philatelic Bulletin, PMK 3, Postal Headquarters, St Martin's-le-Grand, LONDON EC1A 1HQ.

The annual subscription to the Philatelic Bulletin for 12 issues a year is £1.25 including postage by surface mail to anywhere in the world, or air mail to anywhere in Europe. For airmail to countries outside Europe the subscription is £2.15.

Subscriptions should be sent to the British Post Office Philatelic Bureau, Lothian House, 124 Lothian Road, EDINBURGH EH3 9BB.