

Philatelic Bulletin



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LAWRENCE 1795 / HARRISON

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Introduction

We promised in last month's Bulletin that we would print an article on the Post Office Railway and do so in this issue.

Details are given of the first day cover services for the amended Regional stamps of 16 September. The special conditions for these stamps should be carefully studied to avoid disappointment.

Don't forget that the Letters to the Editor column is available for your views and comments to be aired and while we can only print a small selection of those received we take note of them all and publish those which cover the widest range of topics.

The Birth of a Postage Stamp

Trying to assess the excellence or otherwise of particular postage stamps is one of the joys of collecting these miniscule objets d'art. There will be, of course, differences of opinion as with every other aesthetic judgment. Some will favour portraits, flower studies, landscape or other particular subject matter on stamps and opinions will be strongly held about the manner in which the subject is interpreted by a particular artist be he John Constable or Pablo Picasso.

Having allowed for wide divergencies in taste as regards the 'subject matter' of stamps the successful interpretation of the basic design depends on the achievement of an effective synthesis between the work of the artist-designer and that of the printer. Over the years the considerations which have affected this relationship have changed materially because of technological improvements in production methods – both in the studio and at the printing works.

Whatever printing process is employed however the criteria of excellence depends on whether the admixture of the artist's skill as designer and that of the printer exploits to the full the skills of both the artist and printer working as a team.

As compared with earlier processes the photogravure method of printing stamps is the most flexible means of production known.

By no other means could complex designs, in as many colours as Jacob's coat, be incorporated in the stamps of our era, nor could so wide a tonal range be achieved. Any pictorial or graphic image produced by an artist can be reproduced either to a reduced or enlarged scale by this photogravure method. The modern camera is a tool both in the hands of the artist and in the hands of his collaborator the printer – and a fantastically versatile instrument it is.

Freedom of scale at the drawing board permits the artist-designer of the stamps of our day to produce his ideas on a piece of paper

some $6" \times 3\frac{1}{2}"$ and the effectiveness of this design when reduced to stamp size can be judged, in the first instance, by taking reduced size photographs from the drawing. We have hundreds of these original 20th century artists' drawings in the Museum, together with stamp size black and white photographs of them.

The translation of the original art work into trial stamps presents no great difficulty. A series of photographs through colour filters is made and these prints are converted into a series of dots on a trial plate – or on a roller for production runs. These 'dots' arranged in 250 lines to the inch, rather like a television screen, are then chemically eaten into the plate which, at this stage, resembles a honeycomb in miniature. It is these hollows none of them deeper than .0015 of an inch which hold appropriately coloured inks from which the printed image in that colour is produced. The super imposition of colour on colour by this means increases the range of colours and tones to an almost illimitable extent.

Credit for the introduction of photogravure stamps is due to Messrs Harrison & Sons whose first links with the British post office date from 1880 when they were awarded a contract for telegraph forms incorporating embossed stamps. In 1911 they commenced printing typographed stamps. Harrisons are now the oldest firm in the business and were given, last year, the coveted Queen's award for industry.

The photogravure breakthrough for printing stamps commenced in 1934. Virtually all the UK stamps since then, apart from the recess printed high values, together with millions of stamps for countries overseas, have been made by this process. Photogravure is a complicated business involving the work of many highly trained craftsmen all of whose skill is essential to achieve quality output at the end of the production line. Only the most elementary principles have been touched on in this article.

No more flexible method of colour printing has, as yet, been invented – but who shall say

what the future may hold?

Stamp production in the 19th century and in the earlier days of this century by the Intaglio engraving process or by the Electrotype surface printing method while similarly involving close collaboration between the artist and the printer, differed in that the engraver of the master die involved a third person in the design team. Photography played no part in the process. The artist had to draw his ideas freehand to stamp size or reduce them to stamp size by means of a pantograph. From these drawings, and the Museum has a fascinating range of them in the Reginald M. Phillips' collection, the die-maker engraved on steel the master die from which the printer produced 240 replicas on a plate from which the stamps were printed.

The multiplication of the master die image on to the printing plate for the line engraved stamps was done by means of a transfer roller; that for the surface printed stamps from 1855 until 1912 when the process was superseded by photogravure, was by the Electrototype method whereby a layer of copper was deposited on replicas derived from the master die. There are marked differences in the character of the engraved stamps as compared with those which were surface printed. The image printed by the Intaglio printing process stands proud on the surface of the paper – rather like a relief map – and it is this which gives the line engraved stamps their vigour and robust quality; characteristics which Henry Corbould, Artist; Charles Heath, Engraver, and Perkins the Printer of the first ever postage stamps of 1840, exploited to the full.

The change to surface printing by the Electrototype process for which credit must go to Warren De La Rue, resulted in a subtle but perceptible change in the relationship between artist, engraver and printer. The same portrait of Queen Victoria, drawn by Henry Corbould, was translated anew into a die by Jean Ferdinand Joubert de la Ferté, but the depth of the new engraving and its conception generally had to be geared to the printing process of De La

Rue – it was a very different die to that of Heath. Joubert's 4d Carmine of 1855 was an outstandingly successful stamp. Not so the One Penny Venetian Red surface printed stamp of 1879, which was almost the same in conception as the line engraved penny stamp of the previous year. What came off in terms of line engraved was an emasculated thing when translated into a surface printed stamp.

Just as a shelf of oak cannot be made to look like teak and a handwoven fabric differs from a machine product, the excellence of stamps is dependent upon the right use of materials and processes and a sensitivity to the design considerations involved.

The stamps in your collection, suitably magnified, will illustrate the points made in this article. The real thing cannot be reproduced in the *Bulletin* so as to bring out the subtleties of the different printing methods employed over the last 128 years.

F. MARCUS ARMAN

Withdrawal of Bureau Stock Items

The 3d and 1s 6d 1967 Christmas stamps will be withdrawn from sale on 26 November 1968.

Bureau Topics

It will greatly help the Bureau if, when ordering stamps, any queries not directly relating to the stamps being ordered, can be written on a separate sheet of paper bearing the customer's name and address. The enquiry can then be dealt with separately without danger of being overlooked when the stamp order is completed, or of the order being delayed while the enquiry is pursued.

It will materially assist us if deposit account holders ensure that sufficient credit remains in their accounts to meet the cost of the new High Value stamps to be issued on 9 September. A full range First Day Cover of this series will require approximately £2. Why risk delay or disappointment due to lack of funds?

Private Mail Carriers

What is believed to be one of the last remaining instances of the private carriage of mails in England was recently brought to our notice, and we hope it is of interest to our readers.

In 1906, the GPO invited tenders for the supply of motor vans and drivers to carry mail from Wymondham Station in Norfolk to Norwich, East Dereham, Holt, Blakeney, Fakenham and other towns in the district. The contract was secured by J. J. Wright and Sons Ltd of Dereham, and the first deliveries were made in a foot of snow on 1 January 1907.

Since then, the service has been maintained continuously, in spite of difficulties created by the two World Wars. The shortage of drivers

was particularly acute during the First World War, but the position was helped when a clergyman from Little Plumstead, Norwich, volunteered to help. He drove the mail van during the week and returned to his parish each Sunday. At one time, three generations of the same family were all driving the mail vans, and the grandson of the original driver still carries out this duty today.

The photograph shows the first mail van at Fakenham at the commencement of the service in 1907. We should like to thank Mr R. H. Wright, of J. J. Wright and Sons Ltd, for lending us the photograph and supplying the information.



Postmark Slogans

The slogan 'Canvey Island Isle of Homes Holidays and Industry' will be in continued use at Canvey Island from 17 May 1968 until 16 May 1969.

'Goole Ships with Speed' will be used in the transposed position at Goole from 10 July 1968 until 9 July 1969.

'Expand in Kings Lynn A Welcome Awaits Industry and Employees from London Apply Town Hall Tel. 5001' will be used in the transposed position at Kings Lynn from 10 July 1968 to 10 July 1969.

'150 Anniversary Institution of Civil Engineers 1818-1968' will be used at Dumfries in the transposed position from 5-10 August.

'Join or Start a National Savings Group Tall Oaks from Little Acorns Grow' will be used in the transposed position from 1 July until 13 September at Edinburgh, Edinburgh NWDO, Falkirk, Greenock and Hamilton.

'Invest in National Savings. Let Glasgow Flourish' will be used in the transposed position from 30 September until 20 December at Glasgow NDO, SDO, WDO, SEDO, SWDO, W3DO, E3DO.

'International Order of Good Templars Centenary 1968' will be used in the standard position at the following offices: Canterbury 15 July to 12 August, SWDO and WC1 22 July to 19 August, Blackburn 5 August to 2 September, Cirencester and Swindon 12 August to 9 September.

'Mirror Dinghy Championship 2nd-6th September Newquay' is in use in the transposed position at Newquay from 29 June to 6 September.

'Swanage Gem of the Dorset Coast The Family Resort with High Sunshine Records' is in continued use at Swanage from 4 April 1968 to 2 April 1969.

The slogan 'Bexhill-on-Sea for Autumn Holidays' will be re-used at Bexhill-on-Sea from 1-31 October.

'Buxton Centre for Conferences and Exhibitions. All the year round' will be used in the transposed position at Buxton from 1 October to 30 November.

'This is Cheltenham Safety Week' will be used in the transposed position at Cheltenham from 28 October to 2 November.

'Harlow the Lovely Town' will be used in the transposed position at Harlow from 1-31 October.

'Hull - Gateway to Europe' will be re-used at Hull from 12 July 1968 to 11 July 1969.

'Sandown Isle of Wight for Record Sunshine' is in re-use at Sandown until 31 May 1969.

'Shanklin Isle of Wight for Record Sunshine' is in re-use at Shanklin until 31 May 1969.

'Visit United Counties Show Carmarthen 8-9 August 1968' will be used at Carmarthen until 7 August 1968. The first day of use of this slogan has not yet been fixed.

'Pick an English Worcester' will be used at 50 offices including Edinburgh, all 10 London District Offices, Canterbury, Chester, Colchester, Leicester, Plymouth and Carlisle, in transposed position wherever possible, from 26 August to 7 September.

'British Piano Fortnight Oct 5-19 1968' will be used in the standard position from 5-19 October at Western District Office, London W1.

'Three Choirs Festival Gloucester 25-30 August' will be used at Gloucester transposed from 1-28 August.

'Antiques Fair Chesford Kenilworth Sept 24-28' will be used in the transposed position at Coventry from 1-28 September.

'New 4d and 5d Stamps for Northern Ireland 4th September 1968' will be used at 9 offices in Northern Ireland including Belfast, Londonderry, Armagh, Ballymena and Coleraine in the transposed position from 19 August to 4 September.

'Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cyfarfod Coffa Crwys Gwener Awst 9 Y Barri A'r Fro 1968' will be used in the transposed position at Barry, Glamorgan from 3-9 August.

'New Stamps for Scotland 4th Sept 1968' will be used at 20 offices in Scotland including Ardrossan, Bathgate, Coatbridge, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow from 1 August to 4 September. All in the transposed position except Glasgow which will show slogan in the standard position.

'One Putt for £22,916 Alcan Golf Championships Southport October 2-5' will be used in the transposed position at Birmingham and Hockley from 19 August to 28 September.

'Remember to use the Postcode' will be used in both the standard and transposed positions at Cambridge from 7 October to 7 December. This slogan will also be used at Chester, Holywell, Mold and Flint from 5 August until further notice.

'Llanelli for Industrial Expansion Grants Available' is in use at Llanelli until 29 June 1969.

'Aberdeen Garden City by the Sea' will be used at Aberdeen in the standard position until 28 September

'Anniversary Year Celebrations BSO 75 Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra' will be used in the transposed position at Bournemouth until further notice.

'Via Bristol for fast Economical Cargo Handling' will be used in the transposed position at Bristol until further notice.

'Buxton Centre of Britain's 1st National Park Peak District National Park' will be used in the transposed position at Buxton until 30 September.

'Weymouth Pavilion Theatre and Ballroom' will be re-used at Weymouth until 25 August.

'Bi-centenary Captain Cook 1768 1968 Whitby' will be used in the transposed position at Whitby until further notice.

'Jodrell Bank Open Daily 2 pm to 6 pm Easter to October' will be used in the transposed position at Manchester until 5 October.

'For Sale on 4th Sept New Stamps for Wales and Mon' will be used in the transposed position at 10 Offices including Cardiff, Barry, Bridgend, Swansea and Carmarthen from 12 August to 4 September.

'Whitley Bay Flower Show August Bank Holiday Weekend' will be used in the transposed position at Whitley Bay from 12-31 August.

'Isle of Man New Stamps 4th September 1968' will be used in the transposed position at Douglas and Ramsey from 4 August to 3 September.

1968 Christmas Stamps

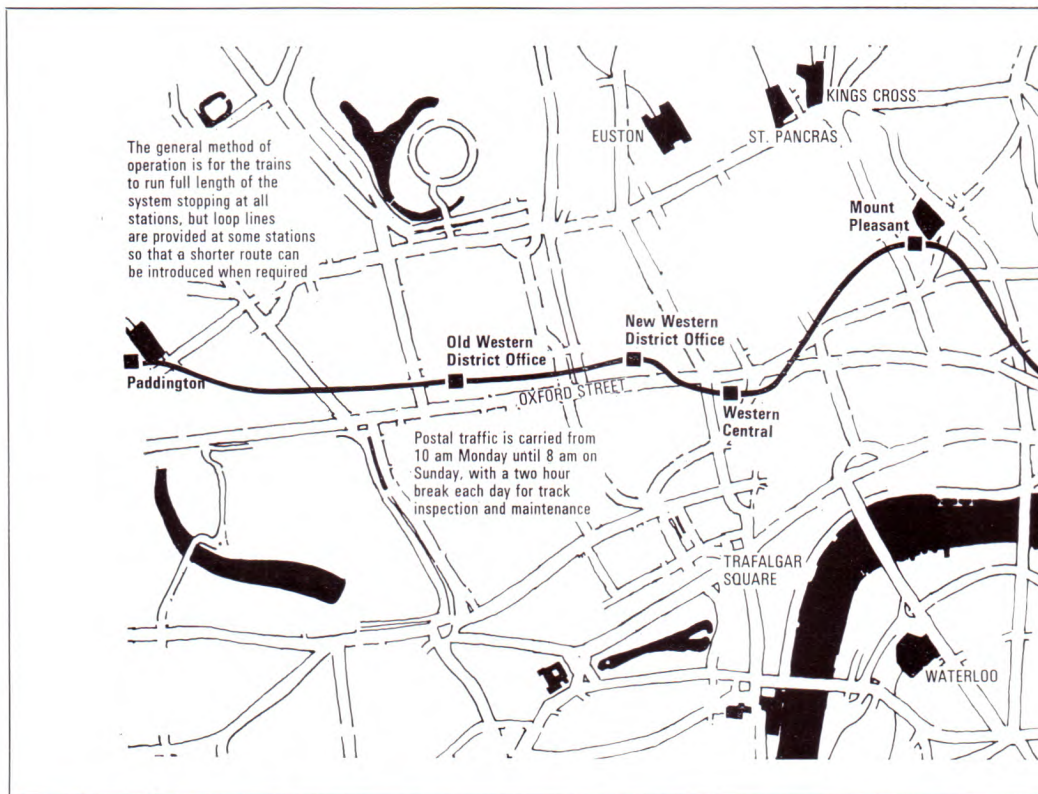
As previously announced the 1968 Christmas stamps will be issued on 25 November. However, due to the introduction of the new letter post tariff on 16 September, a 4d stamp will be issued instead of the 3d. The 9d and 1s 6d remain unchanged. Full details will be given in a future issue of the *Bulletin*.

Philatelic Posting Boxes

A philatelic posting box will be provided at Ilford from 12 August 1968. The handstamp will read 'Ilford and Barking Essex'.

Special philatelic posting boxes will be provided at Morecambe and Northallerton (Yorkshire) from 9 September 1968.

The Post Office Railway

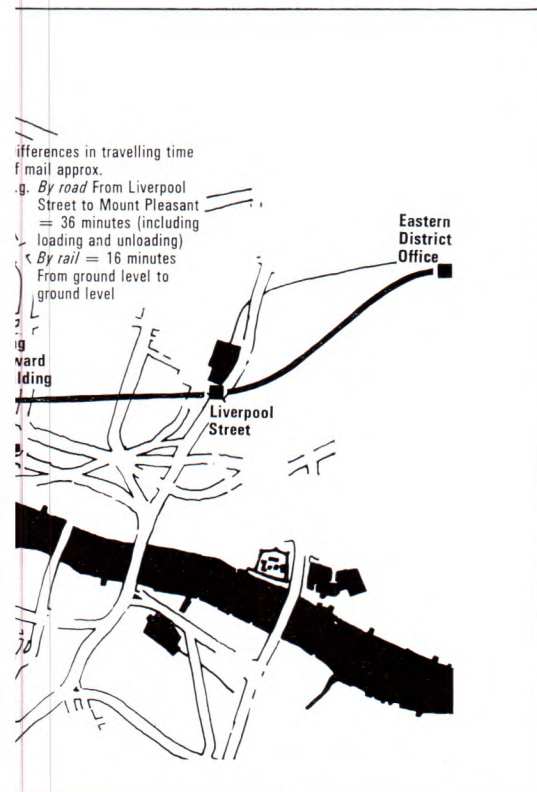


The fortieth anniversary of the GPO Railway, which was marked by a recent exhibition in London, prompts us to print a further article on this unique transport system. Our earlier article of July 1966 was one of the most popular we have published and we are sure that the many thousands of new readers will find this one as interesting.

With the huge range and variety of the services run by the Post Office, possibly the most unexpected is the operation of its own underground railway beneath the streets of London. With its $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles of tunnels, eight stations and some forty trains, the Post Office railway is the only system of its kind in the world; automatically controlled, its trains operate without drivers or guards, and carry

no passengers. Instead, they carry mailbags – over 45,000 of them each day.

As will be seen from the diagrammatic map, the railway runs from the GPO's Eastern District Office in Whitechapel to Paddington main line station, serving Liverpool Street station and six important sorting offices, including Mount Pleasant, one of the largest in the world. The trains run in a single nine-foot diameter tunnel, but at stations the main tunnel divides into two seven-foot diameter tunnels, each with a platform and two tracks, one for stopping trains and one for through trains. Each station is situated nearer to ground level than the main running tunnel; in this way, the acceleration and deceleration of the trains is assisted by the 1 in 20 gradient on each side of



increased to over 35 miles per hour by a voltage of 440 volts DC. Battery powered locomotives are stationed at convenient points along the line for the purpose of towing clear any train that might break down in service.

The safe and efficient working of a railway is obviously vital. To this end, the track is divided into sections, and as a train enters a particular section, it operates a relay which cuts off the current to the section it has just left, thus safeguarding itself against collision from behind. The operation of trains in certain station areas is controlled by levers operated in special cabins. These levers are both electrically and mechanically interlocked, providing a high degree of safety.

The trains usually run in sets of one or two cars. Each car consists of a body suspended between two motorised bogies; it is 27 feet long and carries four containers each having the capacity to transport fifteen bags of letter mail, or six bags of parcel mail. The trains are kept in good running order at the Car Depot, situated in the basement of Mount Pleasant Sorting Office. Within the depot the trains are powered by overhead supplies, and run on non-electrified track. The Post Office Railway technicians, aided by machine tools and other equipment, work around the clock to keep trains running. Routine adjustments and greasing are required every 2,500 miles, while a complete overhaul is customary after the completion of each 80,000 miles. Each of the sixty cars in service has covered a distance of around $1\frac{1}{2}$ million miles.

The railway has had important secondary advantages. The Post Office's traffic on London streets has been reduced and the railway has done much to ensure an even flow of mail through the sorting offices it serves. A mail van in the dense London traffic takes eighteen minutes more than the train to travel between the terminal stations; in fog or other bad weather, the difference is greater still. Multiply this saving by the numerous journeys that are involved each year, and the tremendous advantage to be gained by the Post Office Railway becomes apparent.

the station, saving time and reducing electricity consumption and brake wear. Also, since the mail has less distance to travel between the station platform and the ground level, the transit of the mail is speeded up, especially since each station is equipped with lifts, and chutes – several stations also have moving band conveyors and elevators. The human element in the handling of the mail is minimised as far as possible.

As in most underground railway systems, the trains are powered by electricity which is supplied through a centre conductor rail between the running rails. Within the station areas, a low traction voltage (150 volts DC) gives the train a speed of about seven miles per hour, while in the main tunnels, the speed is

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

My daughter Julie aged 12½ years has been unhappy beyond measure at the recent loss of her entire stamp collection. This consisted of over 5,000 stamps, mounted in three albums. They were in a case along with S. G. catalogues, stock book etc.

The case and contents are gone for ever because of an awful mistake. We have been very busy redecorating our house and as a consequence have put very large amounts of refuse outside for the dustmen to collect. There is no doubt now as to what happened – it was confirmed by one of the dustmen today who remembers taking it and putting the case into the ‘cruncher’.

Julie has been a keen collector since the age of seven and used to save her pocket money to buy new issues as they came on sale in the post offices. Her father and myself have bought her two new albums and some stamps to start her off again, although we can never replace the hours and hours she devoted to her hobby.

Yours faithfully,

MRS D. L. ADAMS

London, SE26

(This is an extract from a letter from Julie's mother. I am sure that Julie would welcome any stamps that readers may have spare to give to her. The address is: 48 Highclere St., London, SE26. Ed.)

Dear Sir,

I have been reading your *Bulletin* now ever since it appeared in magazine form, and continue to find it extremely interesting.

I should like to mention two points which do not seem to have been raised by other readers: can you not issue pictures of new issues as soon as possible in the *Bulletin* instead of leaving this to the press? As for stamp-issuing policy, it seems that each special issue has a face value between 2s 3d and 3s 10d. I feel that the values should be restricted to 4d and 9d, in favour of occasional airmail values,

but not as often as at present. This would mean that such issues as bridges, birds, paintings etc. could have more designs, but still keeping within a limit, say, of 2s 6d for each issue.

Yours faithfully,

M. F. CLARKE

London W13

(We will reproduce the new stamps in advance whenever possible. Ed.)

Dear Sir,

It seems that the 1s 6d, 1s 9d denominations of pictorial issues are often favoured with the most attractive designs. There are very many people in this country who do not realise that there are special stamps over 4d and millions who never see them. They might be potential collectors.

As the 3d and 4d stamps must be the commonest why not give them the finest designs? There will soon be special letters to cost 5d. With 3d, 4d, 5d and 1s all the postal rates could be covered.

Please let us have a nice 5d stamp!

Yours faithfully,

A. D. FIRTH

Surbiton, Surrey.

Dear Sir,

I have just completed 12 months' enjoyable reading of your *Bulletin* and to be able to share some of the views of other philatelists makes the hobby so much more interesting. I have a comment and one or two views I would like to make myself.

Firstly, in reply to W. J. Ross of Cheshire (June issue) an FDC including all 18 values is just not on – you could not call it an FDC for a start. No, just the 4 new issues please.

Why doesn't the GPO vary the values on commemorative stamps instead of the usual 9d, 1s, 1s 6d, and 1s 9d values? I would like to see 1d, 2d, 6d, 8d, 10d or 1s 3d and higher values. Also when there is more than one commemorative issue such as those on 29 May, why can't

British Forces Postal Service

they be issued on different days so as to get a different cover instead of one FDC for 4 stamps and including the other values not seen on the present commemorative stamps? The GPO could always issue stamps to make up the totals for overseas postage rates, *ie* 10d and 8d instead of a 1s 6d stamp. If the designs are not forthcoming the GPO could always issue two stamps of the same design with different values.

I wonder what other philatelists' views are on this?

Yours faithfully,

J. A. HOPGOOD

Singapore

Dear Sir,

I do not have the enviable collection of Presentation Packs as owned by Miss Spendlove (*May Bulletin*) but I wonder how many over there 'got in' on the two packs of stamps put out by the GPO and sold at the British Exhibition, New York, 10-26 June 1960? One was 'Sixteen Experimental Stamps' priced at 50 cents, and the other 'Twelve Regional Stamps' priced at \$1.50. Both packets are window type envelopes and full details supplied. Just fancy, two complete sets of phosphor graphites at 25 cents per set! I wonder how many of these were sold at the Exhibition. They certainly were, to say the least, a good buy!

Now a little comment on the letter of S. Boardman. There was at FIPEX, The International Philatelic Exhibition, New York, 1956, a truly beautiful and extensive display of Victorian and Edwardian Stamp Cases and Boxes by Mr and Mrs Frank A. Godden of the widely known album firm and if you or your contributor would contact these kind people or their successors and include some pictures and/or a short article in a future issue of the *Bulletin*, it would be well received by your readers.

Cordially,

ROBERT C. BARTON

New York, USA

Navy Days - Plymouth

The British Forces Postal Service is providing a Forces Post Office for the Navy Days at Plymouth from 31 August to 2 September 1968 inclusive.

The post office will be on board *HMS Fearless* and to mark the occasion a new datestamp illustrated below which incorporates the Combined Services Amphibious cypher will be in use.



Specially printed commemorative covers will be available price 6d.

Enquiries for datestamp impressions and covers in respect of this display only should be forwarded to:

Forces Post Office,
Crownhill Fort,
Plymouth, Devon.

New Regional Stamps

With the introduction of the two-tier service on 16 September this year, changes in the range of regional stamps will be necessary. New 4d and 5d stamps for the six regions will be put on sale on 4 September 1968 at all post offices in the appropriate areas, at the Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh, and the philatelic sales counters at London, Glasgow, Liverpool and Blackpool.

The design of the 5d stamps will be the same as the current 4d but the colour will be Stewart blue. The new 4d stamps will be issued in

sepia brown, the colour of the 4d new definitive stamp. To avoid confusion with the new blue 5d the current blue 4d stamps will be withdrawn and the 3d will be sold to exhaustion.

The new stamps will be sent automatically from the Bureau to our customers who have standing orders for the regional series.

The Bureau will be providing a first day cover service on this occasion. The full service (A), under which the Bureau will provide a specially designed envelope appropriate to the regional stamps specified by the customer, address it as required, affix one complete set of stamps (4d and 5d), and cancel with either the Bureau's special 'First Day of Issue' handstamp or, alternatively, arrange for the cover to receive the appropriate regional 'First Day of Issue' cancellation, will cost 3s 9d per cover. Under service (B), the Bureau will affix one set of stamps (4d and 5d) to the customer's own pre-addressed envelope, and cancel them as under service (A). The charge for service (B) will be 1s 9d. The regional cancellations will be Belfast (Northern Ireland), Cardiff (Wales and Monmouthshire), Douglas (Isle of Man), Edinburgh (Scotland), Jersey (Channel Islands) and Guernsey (Channel Islands). The closing date for orders for first day covers is 28 August 1968.

NB Philatelic Bureau deposit account holders with standing orders for stamped first day covers will *not* automatically receive them on this occasion; they must complete the appropriate order form and return it to the Philatelic Bureau.

For collectors who wish to prepare and post their own covers, philatelic posting boxes will be provided in each region. Only covers bearing both stamps for the particular region will receive the first day of issue handstamp.

The specially designed covers will be on sale at all Crown Offices in the particular region, price 6d. *Each region will sell only those covers designed for it*, but covers for all regions will be available from the Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh, and from the philatelic sales points at the London Chief Office, Liverpool, Black-

pool and Glasgow. Covers will not be sold at English offices, because the regional stamps will not be on sale in England (with the exception in both cases of the London Chief Office, Liverpool and Blackpool). First day cover application forms will, however, be available from all philatelic posting box offices (including those in England).

There will be no presentation packs for this issue, and orders for mint stamps by post should be sent to the Philatelic Bureau.

The First High Value Stamps

In the early years of postage stamps there was little or no demand for denominations of more than a few pence but as the post became more and more popular the demand for higher values increased. Large rates of postage were commonplace and the record is thought to have been held by a firm who had to stick seventy-seven single 1s stamps to one packet! This state of affairs could not be allowed to last and on 1 July 1867 the first large size high value stamp – the 5s – was introduced followed, in 1878, by the 10s and £1.

The 5s stamp was coloured rose and bore a Maltese Cross Watermark. Both corner lettering and plate numbers were incorporated in the design. Plates one and two were used for the general issue of the stamps which were originally printed in sheets of eighty but Plate four, which was originally eighty was subsequently changed to fifty-six in a single pane of seven horizontal rows of eight. The perforation was $15\frac{1}{2} \times 15$.

The 10s were printed from Plates one and two and were coloured grey green with the same watermark and perforation as the 5s as were the £1 printed from Plate one only. This stamp was brown lilac.

It was decided in 1882 to print all the stamps on blue fiscal safety paper which bore an anchor watermark and the change took place between November 1882 and February 1883.

The colours were not changed but the perforation was altered to 14 × 14. The paper used was a stock size for fiscal stamps and the margins bore a watermark 'Inland Revenue'. Due to the different size of paper it was not possible to print in sheets of eighty and the plates were re-arranged to form a single pane of fifty-six stamps.

Die proofs and colour trials of all the stamps are known including imperforate 'Specimen' overprints for the 10s and the £1 values.

Balloon Post 1870

In 1870 during the Franco-German War Paris was surrounded by German armies and cut off from the world at large. The only sphere in which the French proved unbeatable was in the air and on 23 September 1870 the first manned balloon left the capital.

During the next few months sixty-six balloons had transported 164 people, 400 homing pigeons and more than ten tons of mail out of the beleaguered city. The return service – by pigeons carrying microphotographic messages – was not as effective although a fair proportion got through. (An article on this Pigeon post appeared in Volume 2 No. 10 of the *Bulletin*). One of the mail carrying balloons gave its crew a hair-raising flight and the mail bag helped to save their lives!

On 24 November the balloon took off at 11.40 pm with a two man crew. When dawn came they found themselves over the North Sea and to prevent descending into the water they were forced to lighten their load by jettisoning the mail bag which was fished out of the water forty-five hours later near Norway. The balloon continued on its way until fifteen hours after it left Paris it landed on a mountain in the Telemark district of Norway.

Covers carried by this balloon the 'Ville d'Orleans' can occasionally be seen but are fairly scarce and most of them had the stamps soaked off while they were in the sea.

It was at about the same time on 1 October 1870, that the first printed post cards were

issued in Great Britain and during the following few weeks mail carrying balloons were released from the Crystal Palace in London. The first and third flights came down at Folkestone about eighty miles away and items postmarked Hythe on the following day are known to exist. The only known card from flight two was despatched by balloon on 18 October 1870 and date-stamped 19 October 1870 at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk.

Withdrawal of 5d (Sepia/Brown) Definitive Postage Stamp

The 5d (sepia/brown) definitive postage stamp was withdrawn from sale at all post offices at close of business on 1 August.

This arrangement is operationally necessary because of the need to ensure as far as possible that all 5d stamps are the same colour (blue) when the new letter service starts on 16 September.

For the benefit of philatelists the 5d (sepia/brown) definitive stamp will continue to be available from the Philatelic Bureau, 2-4 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh 1; the Philatelic Counter, London Chief Office, King Edward Street, London EC1 and the recently opened Philatelic Counters at Glasgow, Liverpool and Blackpool, for a further 12 months or until sold out.

First Day Cover Regulations

For the British Paintings issue of 12 August we have again waived our rule that first day covers must bear the full range of stamps to receive the special handstamp cancellation.

For this issue covers bearing one or more of the stamps and posted in one of the philatelic posting boxes will be cancelled with the first day of issue handstamp.

Special Handstamps

'Esperanto Societo Jubilea Jaro Newcastle-upon-Tyne' will be used on 10 September 1968 at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. A circular design – no motif.

'Parish Church Restoration Kettering Nor-thants' will be used on 12 August at Kettering. A circular design – no motif.

'H.M.S. Fearless – British Forces 1071 Postal Services' will be used from 31 August to 2 September 1968 in connection with the Royal Navy Open Days. A circular design with a motif showing the Amphibious Warfare Tri-service Crest.

'24th Conference of the Postal History Society' will be used on 5 October 1968 at Perth. A circular design – the motif shows a lamb with a flag with the word Perth below. This is a copy of the postmark used at Perth in 1750.

'Philatex 68 Woburn Bletchley Bucks' will be used from 10 to 12 August 1968 at Bletchley Bucks – a circular design with a motif of the ducal coronet in the centre.

'Epsom and Ewell Philatelic Society 21st Year Borough Show Exhibition' will be used on 31 August at Epsom. The handstamp has a motif of a Key diagonally across a rectangular design.

'Highland Games Aboyne Aberdeenshire' will be used at Aberdeen on 4 September. A circular design with a motif showing a man in a kilt putting the shot.

'4th World Congress of Anaesthesiologists London S.E.1' will be used at the South Eastern District Office from 9–13 September. A circular design with a motif showing the symbol of the conscious – unconscious in the centre. Items for reposting should be sent under cover to the District Postmaster, South Eastern District Office, Borough High Street, London, SE1.

Items for reposting for the 'HMS Fearless' handstamp should be sent under cover to The Officer-in-Charge, Forces Post Office, Crown-hill Fort, Plymouth, Devon. Items for reposting for the other handstamps should be sent under cover to the Head Postmasters concerned.

'Gweinidog – Bardd – Archdderwydd CRYWS 1875–1968' will be used on 9 August at Barry, Glamorgan on the occasion of the National Eisteddfod. A rectangular design with a motif showing the breast plate which is part of the Archdruid's ceremonial regalia.

'E. Midlands Fed. of Stamp Clubs Convention Bedford' will be used on 5 October at Bedford. A rectangular design with a central motif showing the skyline of the town with the bridge in the foreground.

'Twenty-one Today East Kilbride Glasgow' will be used at Glasgow on 8 August. A rectangular design – no motif.

'Bi-centenary of Captain Cook's Departure from Plymouth 1768–1968' will be used on 26 August at Plymouth. A rectangular design – the motif is a map showing Cook's journeys round the world.

'Macy's Newhaven Conn. British Festival Newhaven Sussex' will be used from 5–21 September at Lewes Sussex – a circular design with a motif of the Union Jack in the shape of an open umbrella.

'Macy's New York British Festival London EC' will be used at East Central District Office from 5–21 September. A circular design with a motif of the Union Jack in the form of an open umbrella.

Stop Press

New High Value Definitive Stamps

Owing to printing difficulties the issue date of the new high value stamps has been postponed. Full details of first day cover services and the new issue date will be announced later.

Conditions

The Philatelic Bureau, 2-4 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh 1, will be pleased to supply any number of stamps shown on its current order form, subject to stocks being available, in mint condition only. For stamps not shown on the form, enquiries should be made of a stamp dealer.

We do not guarantee to supply stamps from particular cylinders or plates, position or cylinder blocks, particular editions of books or books with selected watermark.

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