*The magazine for collectors of UK stamps*

April 2021 | £2.45

Royal Mail

# Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 58 No.8

# The Legend Lives On




Stamps that tell one of Britain's most enduring tales

**CLASSIC SCIENCE FICTION • HM THE QUEEN'S 95TH BIRTHDAY • STAMP POLL RESULTS**




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Issued on
29 March
2021




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Honouring the enduring legacy of music legends celebrating 50 years of rock royalty.

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Royal Mail

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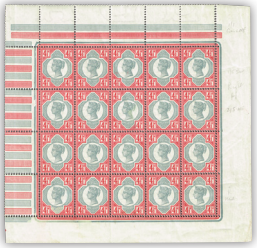



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**Editor** Tim Lees, Royal Mail, 185 Farringdon Road, Floor MP-03, London EC1A 1AA ● **Design and content creation** Ian Boardman, Adesso Creative Ltd ● Price £2.45 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets or by order from Post Office branches ● **12 months' subscriptions** £22.95 UK and Europe; £29.50 rest of the world. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles, PO Box 1373, Sunderland SR5 9PG, UK or subscribe online at royalmail.com/bulletin ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) are priced at £4.99 and are available by post or online ● Copyright and editorial rights are reserved by Royal Mail Group Ltd ● All rights reserved ● Reproduction in whole or parts is prohibited without prior permission of Royal Mail Group Ltd ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Zenith Print & Packaging Ltd ● **ISSN** 2633 2310 ● Royal Mail is a trading name and registered trade mark of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203. Registered office: 185 Farringdon Road, London, EC1A 1AA ● Stamp images © Royal Mail Group Ltd.

# The Legend of King Arthur

Merlin and the baby Arthur
*First Class*

Merlin holds baby Arthur, the future king, whose origins remain shrouded in mystery, and in Merlin's power, until Arthur is revealed to be Uther Pendragon's rightful son and heir




Arthur draws the sword from the stone – *First Class*

Arthur's birthright to the crown of England, according to later romance traditions, is confirmed when he pulls out the sword in view of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the whole court




Arthur takes Excalibur
*First Class*

Arthur's famed sword, Excalibur, is the gift of the Lady of the Lake, and a symbol of his tutelage by Merlin and his mission in the world. Destined for greatness, Arthur excels in all human virtues




Arthur marries Guinevere
*First Class*

Despite Merlin's warnings, Arthur chooses Guinevere as his wife. Her dowry, Malory tells us, is the Round Table, which Arthur will use to build a fellowship of knights united around the values of loyalty and equality




Sir Gawain and the Green Knight – *First Class*

Arthur's nephew and chief counsellor, Sir Gawain, here swings his axe to chop off the head of the Green Knight, whose deadly Christmas game of blows startles Arthur's court and challenges its values




Out of the mists of myth and fable rises The Legend of King Arthur issue – a philatelic tribute to one of the world's best-loved sagas. The ten-stamp set features atmospheric illustrations telling the extraordinary story of the warrior king and his knights of the Round Table. All the most magical moments and colourful characters are featured – including Arthur pulling the sword from the stone; Sir Lancelot slaying the dragon; Sir Galahad on the quest for the Holy Grail; Arthur discovering Excalibur; and his final brutal battle with treacherous son Mordred. Accompanying the stamps issued on 16 March, is a Presentation Pack, Stamp Souvenir and Stamp Sheets. The Pack reveals how a host of writers crafted the Arthurian legend, from Welsh scribes of the Dark Ages to medieval authors Geoffrey of Monmouth and Frenchman Chrétien de Troyes, Sir Thomas Malory with his *Le Morte Darthur* of 1470, and Alfred, Lord Tennyson and his Victorian take on the tale, *Idylls of the King*.

**The Legend of King Arthur – Stamp Specifications**

| | |
|---|---|
| Date of issue | 16 March |
| Number of stamps | 10 (5 x 1st Class, 5 x £1.70)<br>(two horizontal se-tenant strips of five) |
| Design | Godfrey Design |
| Illustrations | Jaime Jones |
| Stamp format | Square |
| Stamp size | 35mm x 35mm |
| Number per sheet | 25/50 |
| Printer | International Security Printers |
| Print process | Lithography |
| Perforations | 14.5 x 14.5 |
| Phosphor | Bars as appropriate |
| Gum | PVA |



The story of Arthur seems all the more appealing thanks to the mystery that surrounds it, and to the efforts of monarchs, priests and poets who have shaped and reshaped the legend for political or creative purposes. English kings, from Edward I to Henry VIII, harnessed Britons' view of Arthur as excelling in all human virtues in order to exert their moral authority and underscore their power. The Victorian builders of the British Empire reimagined those virtues as imperial values: it's no coincidence that scenes from Arthur's life were used to decorate the Queen's robing room in the House of Lords – the symbolic heart of the Empire – when it was refurbished in 1866.

The figure of Arthur himself is swathed in an enigma, which centres on to what extent he was a real person, and how much of his story is fiction. One of the most 'historic' views of Arthur is that 'Arturus' was a rebel commander who led a group of resistance fighters defending Britain against invading Anglo-Saxons in the late fifth and early sixth centuries AD. Other theories say Arthur was a Roman centurion called Lucius Artorious Castus who battled the Picts at Hadrian's Wall in the second century AD. Intriguingly, historians also suggest that the villainous character of Mordred, featured battling Arthur on a £1.70 value, was inspired by Mandubracius, a prince of the Essex-based Trinovantes tribe who betrayed his uncle to Julius Caesar.

From Essex, now, to the South West of England and Wales, where wild shores and mountains, cities and towns lay claim to playing a part in the legend – whether as locations for Arthur's birthplace ►




Knights of the Round Table
*£1.70*

Around the Round Table, knights from Europe and all nations in the British Isles share the same values of loyalty and unite as equals to protect the weak and defend the realm




Sir Lancelot defeats the dragon
*£1.70*

Emblematic since Arthur Rackham's illustrations dating from the early 20th century, Lancelot's slaying of the dragon shows God's grace granted to Lancelot in the fight with the Devil/darkness, despite Lancelot's own sins




Sir Galahad and The Holy Grail
*£1.70*

Sir Galahad, the pure knight, is the epitome of perfection among Round Table knights, and the opposite of his father, Lancelot. His unique success in the Grail Quest reveals the moral failures of Arthurian chivalry




Arthur and Mordred's final battle
*£1.70*

Arthur and Mordred meet one last time in battle, fulfilling their destiny: Arthur's, to be mortally wounded by his own son, and Mordred's, to commit the sin of patricide and treason




The death of King Arthur
*£1.70*

The wounded Arthur departs for Avalon on a barge driven by three queens. This represents hope for the king's return, and the agency of women in healing and in preserving his memory and stories




The First Day Cover with the Tallents House handstamp which features King Arthur's Excalibur sword raised from the water. Opposite: the First Day Cover with the alternative handstamp features the words 'King Arthur'. According to Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur* – one of the best-known accounts of the legends – Camelot was in Winchester, which has been chosen as the appropriate location for the handstamp

and court of Camelot or the hosts of Arthurian relics such as Excalibur and the Round Table. Tintagel, a Cornish coastal stronghold overlooking the tempestuous Atlantic, is said to be Arthur's birthplace. (It was a fortress and port in the fifth and sixth centuries, which converges with the era of rebel leader Arturus). The baby Arthur, held by Merlin on one of the First Class values, was conceived with the connivance of the wizard, according to Geoffrey of Monmouth. Arthur's father, King Uther Pendragon, was madly in love with Ygerna, but she was married to Gorlois, one of his barons, who hid her away in the castle at Tintagel to keep her safe from the king. But Merlin concocted a magic potion to make Uther look like Gorlois, Ygerna was therefore tricked into sleeping with him, and Arthur was conceived.

The Information Card (contained in the First Day Covers) provides more detail behind each of the ten illustrations and the inspiration for the stamp issue






Richard, Earl of Cornwall, Henry III's younger brother, was the first of the nation's great and good to exploit Arthur's allure for his own ends. Richard built his own castle at Tintagel in the 1220s; he swapped three good manor houses for the small patch of land on which to construct his stronghold but the location had no strategic value. With such a deal, Richard seems to have sold himself short, which prompts the conclusion that by establishing himself at Tintagel, his main objective was to use the reflected glory of Arthur as a supreme ruler to strengthen his own hold over the region. Richard's nephew King Edward I also bought into the legend for political purposes. He ordered the construction of a Round Table at Winchester, one of the claimed locations for Camelot. After the turmoil of the Wars of the Roses, victor Henry VII drew on Arthur's allure to help bring in what he hoped would be a stable new era: in 1486 he had his son and heir baptised as Prince Arthur at Winchester Cathedral. And Henry VIII possessed his own Round Table, having it painted so that his portrait was pointedly positioned in Arthur's place.

The death of mythical Arthur, after that last battle with Mordred, features on the final £1.70 value, but his passing resonated in real history. In 1184 Glastonbury Abbey burned to the ground and a few years later, monks claimed to have found the graves of Arthur and his queen, Guinevere, there (some believed Glastonbury was Avalon, where Arthur was taken to have his wounds tended to after the final battle). Some historians think this was a ploy by the clerics to create a pilgrimage attraction with which to raise cash to rebuild the abbey. Others suggest King Henry II, a member of the ruling French aristocracy, encouraged a cult around the bones of Arthur and Guinevere to associate himself with the much admired British monarch, and to divert attention away from his rival Thomas Becket's clique at Canterbury. ►



FD2109-TH



FD2109-PL



FD2109-NP




The Presentation Pack is a beautifully illustrated and fact-packed souvenir written by Professor Raluca Radulescu, a specialist in Arthurian legend. The pack explores the origins of Arthur and gives a fascinating background to the various interpretations through the ages in art and literature. Right: the Presentation Pack outer



Stamp Sheet: 50 x 1st Class



Stamp Sheet: 50 x £1.70




## The Legend of King Arthur – Prices

| | |
|---|---|
| Set of 10 Special Stamps | £12.75 |
| Presentation Pack | £13.65 |
| First Day Cover Stamps | £15.95 |
| Stamp Souvenir | £15.95 |
| First Day Envelope | £0.30 |
| Postcards (10 in set) | £4.50 |

Even in the 21st century, the stories of Arthur thrive. In Wales, for example, tourism chiefs cheerfully promote the country's association with the king. They tell how the 25-ton Arthur's Stone on the Gower Peninsula magically grew from a pebble the king had removed from his shoe and thrown all the way from Carmarthenshire. They also point to the lake at Llyn Ogwen in Snowdonia, with its cool, steely beauty, as the expanse of water which Round Table knight Bedwyr Bedrynant hurled Excalibur into, after Arthur's final, fatal battle. Whether this tale and all the others are true or not, they reflect the power of the Arthurian legend to still fascinate us today ● *Article by Andrew Neish*

# King Arthur Quiz

**1** Which Cornish coastal village is said to be Arthur's birthplace?
a) Charlestown
b) Tintagel
c) Mousehole




**2** Whose son was christened as Arthur in 1486?
a) Henry II b) Edward I
c) Henry VII

**3** The stamp shown below was issued in which year? a) 1980 b) 1985 c) 1990




**4** Who is King Arthur's nephew?
a) Sir Gawain
b) Uther Pendragon
c) Mordred

**5** Which one is the pure knight?
a) Sir Bedevere
b) Sir Lancelot
c) Sir Galahad



**How to enter** Please send your answers, with your contact address or phone number, marked 'King Arthur Quiz', to: Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Or by email to tim.lees2@royalmail.com.

**Prizes** The first five correct entries drawn after the closing date win The Legend of King Arthur Presentation Pack.

**Closing Date** 15 May 2021.

**January solutions** The Bumper Quiz 1)b 2)c 3)a 4)b 5)a 6)c 7)b 8)a 9)c 10)b 11)a 12)b 13)c 14)a 15)c 16)b.

**Winners** Brenda Messer, London; David Browning, Edenbridge; Mr A D Laxon, Swindon; Mr T Dungate, Broadstone; John Edmundson, Halifax.

Terms and conditions Promotions are open to any reader aged 18 or over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date stated. For prize draws where readers must answer a question, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. Royal Mail's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. Entry implies acceptance of these rules. Prizes are subject to 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. The winners' names are available 28 days after closing date. To receive this please send an SAE to The Editor.

# Your favourite stamps of 2020

## Here's how you voted

**Order, stamp and score**

**1st** Painted Lady Butterfly *(178)*
**2nd** River Thames View *(118)*
**3rd** Elizabeth Tower *(75)*
**4th** Hadrian's Wall *(69)*
**5th** Common Carder Bee *(65)*
**6th** Elephant Hawk-moth *(55)*
**7th** Cat's Eye Nebula *(42)*
**8th** Geysers on Enceladus *(40)*
**9th** Jubilant Public *(38)*
**10th** Rupert's Christmas Tree *(37)*

In time honoured tradition, in fact for the 35th year, *Bulletin* readers have taken part in the annual stamp poll – and we're pleased to reveal your favourites. Wildlife subjects continue to be popular, particularly among thematic collectors, and so it's no big surprise that the winning stamp set is Brilliant Bugs, and that three stamps from the issue feature in your top six. The beautiful illustrations by Richard Lewington have clearly made a huge impression, and the issue was timely, given the very real concerns about declining insect numbers – particularly our pollinators. The Brilliant Bugs issue highlighted the crucial role that these tiny creatures play in earth's natural processes. There's no doubt that these stamps have given many of us an enhanced appreciation for their industry and beauty – making them very worthy winners ●




### 1st

**Painted Lady Butterfly**
*1st Class*
Brilliant Bugs,
1 October



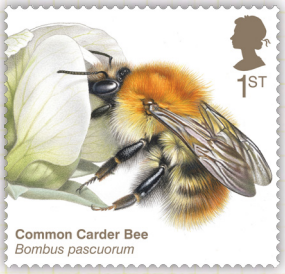

### 4th

**Hadrian's Wall**
*£1.68*
Roman Britain,
18 June




### 2nd

**River Thames View** – *1st Class*
Palace of Westminster, 30 July




### 5th

**Common Carder Bee**
*1st Class*
Brilliant Bugs,
1 October




### 3rd

**Elizabeth Tower** – *1st Class*
Palace of Westminster, 30 July




### 6th

**Elephant Hawk-moth**
*£1.45*
Brilliant Bugs,
1 October

**Stamp sets**

**1st** Brilliant Bugs *(313)*
**2nd** Palace of Westminster *(297)*
**3rd** End of the Second World War *(192)*
**4th** Rupert Bear *(176)*
**5th** Roman Britain *(161)*
**6th** Visions of the Universe *(153)*
**7th** Christmas 2020 *(99)*
**8th** The Romantic Poets *(86)*
**9th** Queen *(50)*
**10th** James Bond *(45)*




**7th** **Cat's Eye Nebula** – *2nd Class*
Visions of the Universe, 11 February




**8th** **Geysers on Enceladus** – *2nd Class*
Visions of the Universe, 11 February




**9th**
**Jubilant Public, 1945**
*1st Class*
End of the Second World War,
8 May




**10th**
**Rupert's Christmas Tree (Frame two)**
*£1.70*
Rupert Bear,
3 September

**1st**



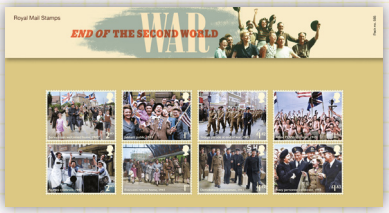

**Brilliant Bugs** – 1 October

**2nd**



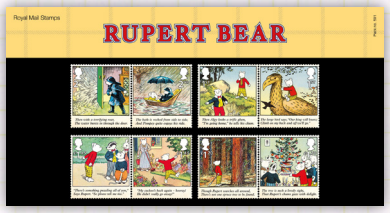

**Palace of Westminster** – 30 July

**3rd**




**End of the Second World War** – 8 May

**4th**




**Rupert Bear** – 3 September

**5th**




**Roman Britain** – 18 June

The voter drawn at random to win the Royal Mail Yearpack 2020 is: Miss Susan M V Brett from Deeside in North Wales

15.4.2021

# Classic




***Frankenstein,* Mary Shelley** – *1st Class*




***The Time Machine,* HG Wells** – *1st Class*




***Childhood's End,* Arthur C Clarke** – *£2.55*




***Shikasta,* Doris Lessing** – *£2.55*

# Science Fiction




***Brave New World,* Aldous Huxley** – *£1.70*




***The Day of the Triffids,* John Wyndham** – *£1.70*

| Classic Science Fiction – Stamp Specifications | |
|---|---|
| Date of issue | 15 April |
| Number of stamps | Six – 3 horizontal se-tenant pairs (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.70, 2 x £2.55) |
| Design | Webb & Webb Design Ltd |
| Stamp format | Square |
| Stamp size | 34.7mm x 34.7mm |
| Printer | International Security Printers |
| Print process | Lithography |
| Perforations | 14.5 x 14.5 |
| Phosphor | Bars as appropriate |
| Gum | PVA |

Illustration: *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley: illustration by Sabina Šinko; *The Time Machine* by HG Wells:illustration by Francisco Rodríguez, reference image of sunrise in the Namib Desert © Magdalena Paluchowska/Alamy Stock Photo; *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley: illustration by Thomas Danthony; *The Day of the Triffids* by John Wyndham: illustration by Mick Brownfield; *Childhood's End* by Arthur C Clarke: illustration by Matt Murphy; *Shikasta* by Doris Lessing: illustration by Sarah Jones; all illustrations © Royal Mail Group Ltd 2021.

## Who says sci-fi is all roaring space rockets, laser blaster battles and conquest-crazed aliens?

The Classic Science Fiction issue shows how great British authors of the genre have tackled some of the biggest issues facing us – totalitarianism to globalisation, twisted technology, and the destruction of humanity itself




First Day Cover with Tallents House postmark which features an illustration of Frankenstein's hand. Opposite: the First Day Cover with the alternative handstamp which features an illustration that's representative of *The Time Machine*. The London NW1 location is where HG Wells worked and also died on 13 August 1946

This six-stamp set is a fitting celebration of over a century of thought-provoking prose that features the works of some of our finest sci-fi writers – Mary Shelley, HG Wells, Aldous Huxley, John Wyndham, Arthur C Clarke and Doris Lessing. The issue is also timely – given that this year sees the 75th anniversary of Wells's death and the 70th anniversary of the publication of Wyndham's *The Day of the Triffids*. It's a fascinating survey of the genre – from Shelley's 1818 gothic novel *Frankenstein*, which exposes the deadly dangers of bad science and hubris, to Lessing's *Shikasta* of 1979, which weaves Sufi mysticism with meditations on colonialism, sexuality and gender. Classic Science Fiction, out on 15 April, is accompanied by a Presentation Pack, Stamp Souvenir, Postcards, and Full and Half Stamp Sheets. While the Presentation Pack examines all the big ideas explored in their novels, the lives of the authors themselves, and the evolution and influence of their work, also tell a fascinating story. Take teenage rebel Mary Shelley, daughter of the great feminist Mary Wollstonecraft and philosopher William Godwin, who shocked her family when she eloped at the age of 16 with the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, then a married father of two.

*Frankenstein* was born in the rainy summer of 1816 by the banks of Lake Geneva, where Mary and Percy were holidaying with their baby son William and friend Lord Byron. One stormy June evening Byron suggested a ghost story writing competition to beat the boredom of being shut inside. Mary struggled to think of a plot, yet later, during a sleepless night, she had the idea of a scientist bringing something back to life. The thought terrified her, yet it became the basis of *Frankenstein*, featured on one of the First Class values, which she completed aged just 19. It was a huge literary leap, for then modern science was in its infancy (the word 'scientist' had not yet been coined). Mary knew, however, of the physicist Giovanni Aldini, who amazed audiences with

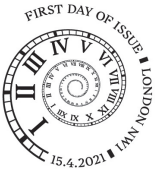



public demonstrations of making corpses move with electrical charges. In the first edition, the author had Victor Frankenstein animate his creature with alchemy; in her 1832 revision, *Frankenstein* was bringing life to that awful melange of body parts with bolts of electricity. And the novel anticipates, by 200 years, the moral challenges of genetic engineering, which Kazuo Ishiguro examined in his 2005 novel *Never Let Me Go*. Yet while *Frankenstein* speaks of sick science and a homicidal monster, it's ultimately about the human experience: Victor falls because of the selfishness of his over-arching ambition for fame and fortune. And his creation embarks on a revenge killing spree, slaying Victor's brother, bride and best friend, not because he is a sci-fi monster, but because he has been shattered – as any human would – by the alienation, betrayal and prejudice he has suffered at the hands of others.

The rest of the novels in the set also tackle the great human questions and societal issues facing this planet of ours. Like *Frankenstein*, John Wyndham's apocalyptic *The Day of the Triffids* (featured on a £1.70 stamp), with its mutated, murderous plants, also touches on the potential terrors arising from genetic experiments that interfere with the natural order. Kent-born science teacher turned sci-fi writer Herbert George Wells was a dedicated socialist, and while his book *The Time Machine* imagines Earth inhabited by outlandish races in the far future (the year 802,701 to be precise), this 1895 classic is a critique of capitalism and Victorian class divisions. Wells's 'Time Traveller' (featured on the other First Class stamp) meets the childlike Eloi, who live a life of leisure and want for nothing. Yet they are preyed upon by the cannibalistic Morlocks. HG Wells presents the Eloi as descendants of the bourgeoisie whose exploitation of the proletariat has given them an easy life. The Morlocks are the vengeful working classes dehumanised by industrialism's remorseless ►



FD2110-TH



FD2110-PL



FD2110-NP

Presentation Pack: the writer Roger Luckhurst takes the reader on a journey back in time, reliving some key moments in the evolution of the genre of science fiction. The illustrations feature striking interpretations of the subgenres of the six science fiction classics featured on the stamps. The full set of six Special Stamps are contained in the pack. Below, is the Presentation Pack inner




exploitation. In this respect, *The Time Machine* is a warning about the destructive nature of the class system and its implications for the future of humanity. Wells's work is full of spot-on predictions about technological advances, including laser weapons (now being developed by the US, Russia and China) and voice-activated wi-fi email. His 1914 novel *The World Set Free* introduced the horrors of atomic warfare. Hungarian émigré physicist Leo Szilard read it – and was inspired to develop the chain reaction method used to unleash the devastating power of the Manhattan Project bombs dropped on Japan in 1945. In *Childhood's End*, appearing on a £2.55 value, Arthur C Clarke tackles great questions of our time. Here, technologically advanced aliens called the Overlords rule Earth remotely under a benign dictatorship, banishing conflict, political strife, poverty and other forms of human suffering as they bring warring nations together in a peaceful world state. Yet the humans are dismayed as they witness their national cultures disappear, and the power of the Overlords' solve-all science withers the need for the comfort of religion. Clarke, himself a physicist and fierce advocate of space exploration, suggests science should not be so all pervasive that it destroys our hankering for spirituality and mysticism. For him, our need to exist with the unknowable and unprovable is part of what makes us human.



It was an intriguing position to take for a man who had lived and breathed science and rationalism since childhood – as a boy, this Somerset farmer's son studied the moon with a telescope he made from a cardboard tube and two lenses. As a man, Clarke accelerated the march of science. In the 1940s, he was predicting our 'conquest' of the moon, and when Armstrong made his one small step in 1969, the US confessed that Clarke's influence had powered NASA's efforts to make the landing a reality. In 1945 he predicted the advent of communications satellites

in geostationary orbits around the Earth. Today the geostationary orbit above the Equator is named the Clarke Orbit in his honour. He didn't always get it right. In the first chapter of 1953's *Childhood's End*, Clarke wrote about the space race taking place between the US and USSR in the 21st century. He had to hastily rewrite the chapter when that race started much sooner…

Aldous Huxley's 1932 dystopian masterpiece *Brave New World*, featured on a £1.70 stamp, anticipated the advances of science and rise of totalitarianism of the 1930s and projected them onto an imaginary future state where individual liberty has been destroyed. Human beings are 'hatched' not born to mothers and fathers. They are chemically and psychologically conditioned to enjoy the narrow existence chosen for them by an all-powerful, technology-driven superstate. They are brainwashed into an endless cycle of instant gratification and obscenely throwaway consumerism that serves to protect the economy of the superstate and the power of its leaders.

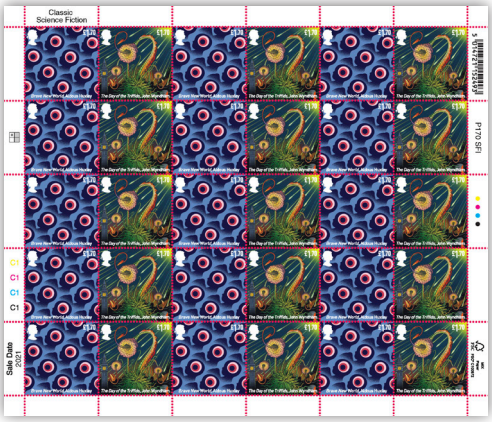
Though written almost 100 years ago, Huxley's vision is eerily prescient about challenges today – the all-pervasive, mind-numbing presence of scroll-down technology, relentlessly globalising corporatism and a push-button consumerism that seems to sap our souls. Laser battles and scary aliens are a lot of fun, but Britain's classic sci-fi masters have always delivered much more meaningful messages and lessons for us all ●

*Article by Andrew Neish*

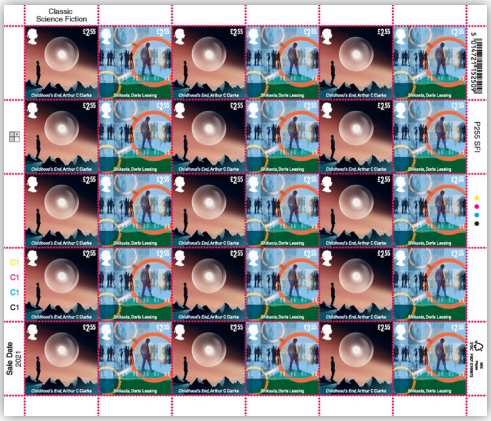
| Classic Science Fiction – Prices | |
|---|---|
| Set of 6 Special Stamps | £10.20 |
| Presentation Pack | £11.10 |
| First Day Cover Stamps | £12.90 |
| Stamp Souvenir | £12.90 |
| First Day Envelope | £0.30 |
| Postcards (6 in set) | £2.70 |
| Half Sheet (30 x 1st Class) | £25.50 |
| Full Sheet (60 x 1st Class) | £51.00 |
| Half Sheet (30 x £1.70) | £51.00 |
| Full Sheet (60 x £1.70) | £102.00 |
| Half Sheet (30 x £2.55) | £76.50 |
| Full Sheet (60 x £2.55) | £153.00 |




Half Stamp Sheet – 30 x 1st Class




Half Stamp Sheet – 30 x £1.70




Half Stamp Sheet – 30 x £2.55

# Typography & the Queen Victoria Jubilee Issue

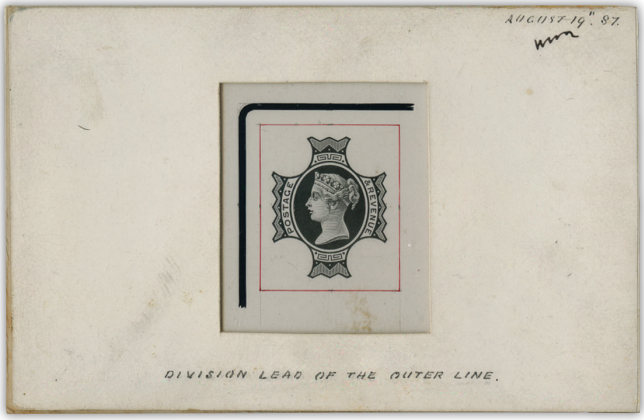
## Part two

In last month's issue of the *Bulletin* we looked at some of the circumstances that led to the founding of the Stamp Committee, the development of the Jubilee issue, and some of the essays, die proofs, and printed stamps of the ½d, 1½d, 2d, 2½d, and 3d values. This second part takes a similar look at the other denominations in the series, and offers a little more about the relationship between the Inland Revenue and De La Rue.

When the planning and developing of the 'Jubilees' began in 1885, Dr Warren De La Rue was the company chairman and a man touched with genius – a Doctor of Philosophy, an accomplished scientist, an astute businessman and also Engraver to the Board of Inland Revenue. However, it was his son Warren William, the Board's 'Deputy Engraver' who was now the major player pulling the strings in the firm's activities. This is evidenced by his initials 'W W D' endorsing a vast array of correspondence and printed proofs. He was instrumental in negotiations and agreeing costings with the Inland Revenue for the various aspects of stamp production – from concepts through to print. Throughout all the preparatory work, De La Rue committed huge amounts of time experimenting with a broad scope of innovative ways to solve technical problems in order to achieve the desired outcomes. The extent of the time,




Marginal setting die proofs for the 4d. The duty plate proof with marginal line in red set close and endorsed 'THE RED TO BE MADE UP BY CUTTING THE EDGE ON THE DIVISION LEADS OF THE INNER LINE DOWN TO THE SAME PLANE AS THE LINE' with an additional 4d as issued alongside with marginal line added in brown ink




The head plate proof is endorsed 'DIVISION LEAD OF THE OUTER LINE' with the marginal line in black set wide. Both are dated 'August 19th 87' and initialled 'WWD' (Warren William De La Rue). These are believed to be a unique set of instructions to the composing room for the divisional leads of the marginal rules

effort and financial resources that had to be allocated to the 'Stamp Scheme' were not anticipated, and were described by Warren William as incurring *'a very heavy outlay indeed, not in any way contemplated'*. This was something that he was keen to emphasise in a letter he wrote to Sir Algernon West, the Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue on 11 November 1886. In fact, so eager was he to stress the challenges hurdled that he championed them in over 5000 words, with eyes on a contract extension. He made the point that if De La Rue were typically initiating work, and committing resources to trial and error experimentation, it was with a view to winning a contract, but given that they already had one Warren William wrote: *Whilst we are aware that your board would have a difficulty in allowing us an adequate pecuniary compensation we are sanguine that they will recompense us in some measure in another manner for the great effort that we have made in their service...'* And then cutting to the chase, he added *'we simply beg respectfully to ask that an endorsement should be made to that contract, extending the term of it, in so as far as it relates to Adhesive Stamps, by ten years beyond the time it has to run...'*. However, in the short term, De La Rue were not offered what they wanted – it wasn't until 1889 that pen was finally put to paper on a new contract with the Inland Revenue.

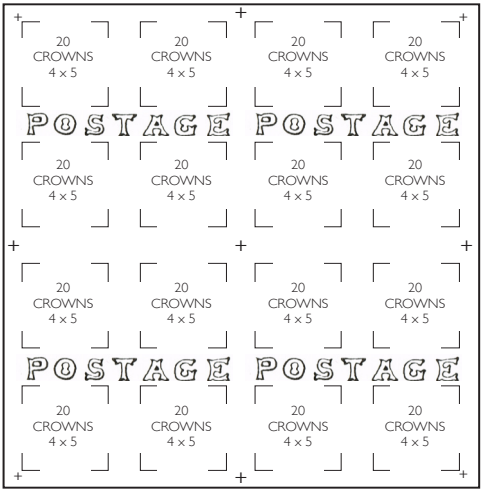


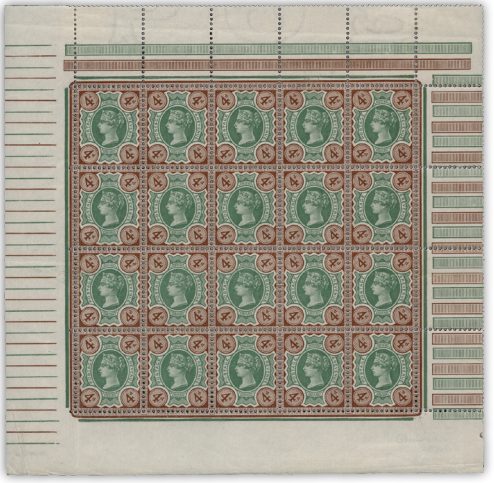

A hand painted essay for the 4d showing the new design feature of colour printing on, and bleeding off, the perforated edges. As always with the Jubilees, the stamps produced were true to the approved layout designs. However, in terms of the colour, it was through printed trials that they were more accurately determined




**4d Green and Brown**
*1 January 1887*

The ***4d Green and Brown*** was designed with colour printing on the 'fringes' which presented significant technical problems that were primarily addressed with 'Jubilee lines'. In addition, to help plates with this new design cope with the rigours of printing, the solution De La Rue came up with was a 20 set pane. This required a new layout for watermarking as illustrated below. Printing started with 80 set (four panes of 20), progressed to 160 set, and finally 320. The Jubilee stamps without fringes were produced in 120 sets to maximise productivity. ►



Above: the watermark layout for the 320-crown mill sheet. Right: a 4d Green and deep brown pane of 20 with full selvedge from setting 4b, showing thin lines to the left, horizontal lined blocks, and also the head plate rules cut away at corners. These unusual sheet markings only occur on the adjoining panes from the two halves of the 320 mill sheets (only occurring on eight of the 16 panes). This example being from the right hand side of the mill sheet, Pane O




**4½d Green and Carmine**
*15 September 1892*




4½d hand painted essay



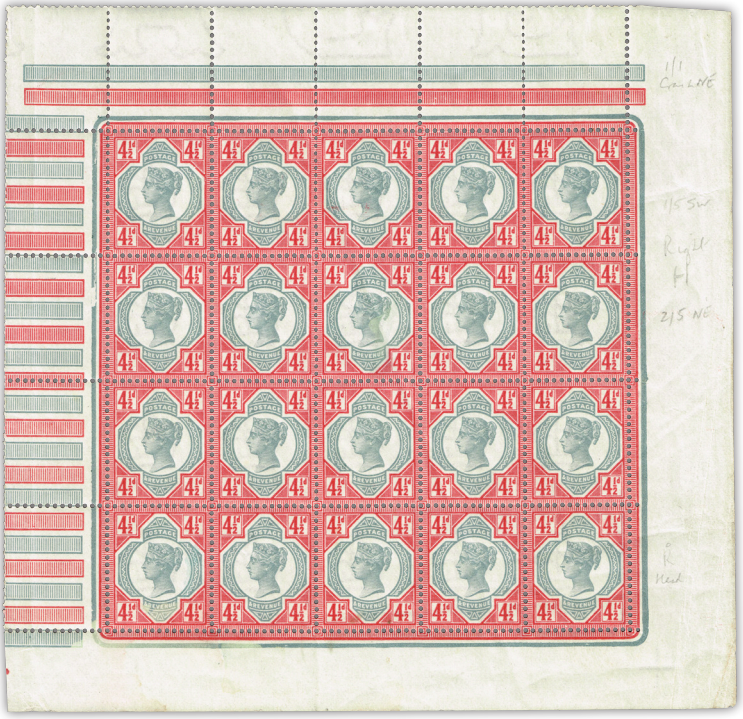

Four of nine 4½d colour trial proofs from the Phillips Collection (Vol XLI p27) housed at The Postal Museum. The first colour scheme shown here most closely resembles the hand painted essay. These are from July 1892, two months prior to the 4½d being issued




4½d Green and carmine




4½d Deep green and carmine. Right: a full pane of 20 Green and dull scarlet stamps. The 4½d stamp sheets comprised 16 panes in a 320 stamp set



The ***4½d Green and Carmine*** issued on 15 September 1892 was introduced for the parcel double rate. Five years later on 1 June 1897, the Post Office reduced parcel rates, which proved to be the value's quietus – the last month that it was printed. However the value was used throughout the Victorian reign as it was also the tariff for Registered Foreign Letter Rate. Four shades are recognised – green and carmine, deep green and carmine, green and deep bright carmine, and green and dull scarlet, the latter illustrated below (left) in a full pane of 20. All printings had continuous marginal lines and were printed in 320 sets (16 panes).

Just one year after the first printing, in 1888 a new plate was required for the ***5d Purple and Blue***, it was discovered that the original die for the duty plate had been damaged. As a result there are discrepancies in the stamps issued. Stamps printed from the original Die I are significantly more scarce and valuable. The head plate has a border of roses and crosses below which sits the Royal Arms, creating what philatelist John Easton described as a 'Jubilee atmosphere'. The second of the three lions in the top left of the shield (illustrated right) has a break in the leg – creating another variety for collectors. The 5d essay shows colours indicative of the printed stamp – more so than many of the other essays in the series. ►




**5d Purple and Blue**
*1 January 1887*



Damaged lion variety




5d hand painted essay




Die I



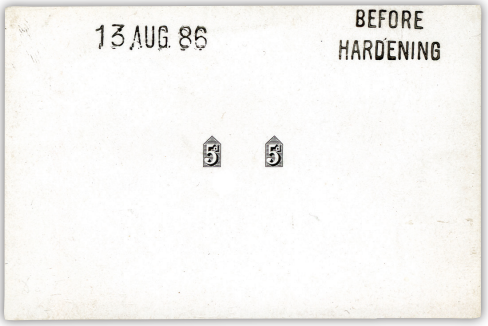
Left Right

Die II

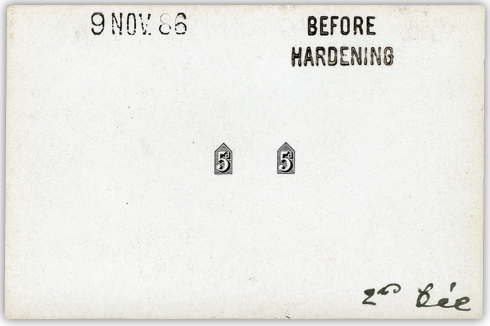


Left Right

Left: 5d head plate die proof printed in black on white glazed card (92 x 60mm) endorsed 'AFTER HARDENING' and dated '13 AUG 86'




5d duty plate die proof (Die I) black on white glazed card (92 x 60mm) endorsed 'BEFORE HARDENING' and dated '13 AUG 86'




5d duty plate die proof (Die II) black on white glazed card endorsed 'BEFORE HARDENING', dated '9 NOV 86' and annotated '2nd Die'




**6d Purple on Rose-red Paper** *1 January 1887*




The accepted design which was dated 24 JUN 85




A hand painted essay – G R Smith's design with Carey's borders in purple and pink on buff. It's essentially the layout for the issued 5d




A bottom marginal perforated colour trial printed in green on orange, gummed, unwatermarked paper

The ***6d Purple on Rose-red Paper*** denomination was printed with additional markings in the margins. These 'pentagon' division markers were positioned every four stamps. They served as guides for the issuing counter clerk as to where strips of 40 x 6d could be separated for £1 worth of stamps (Prior to decimalisation the pound was divided into 20 shillings, each of 12 'old' pence; thus there were 240 'old' pence to the pound). The hand painted essay illustrated left became the layout for the 5d and is the work of G R Smith and Mr Carey.

In actual fact, where credit was due for the design of the Jubilees was a bone of contention, and a source of irritation to Warren William. In a letter to the Stamp Committee of 4 January 1887, he quashed the notion that there was significant design input from the Committee, explaining that *'Every one of the 350 and odd designs which were laid before the committee emanated from us'*. He added that the Committee's only contribution came from Mr H R Page of the GPO who had suggested that The Queen's head




Printed in 1887, 6d Slate purple/rose-red bottom marginal horizontal pair (below row 20) showing the sheet divisional marker between stamps 8 and 9 – evidenced by watermark 'G'. The 'pentagon' also prints between stamps 4 and 5

1887, 6d Purple/rose-red plate 7 or 9 left hand marginal interpanneau block of four from the right hand side of the mill sheet. Printed in setting 3, which was only used for approximately 11% of the print run, therefore intact interpanneau pieces are rare

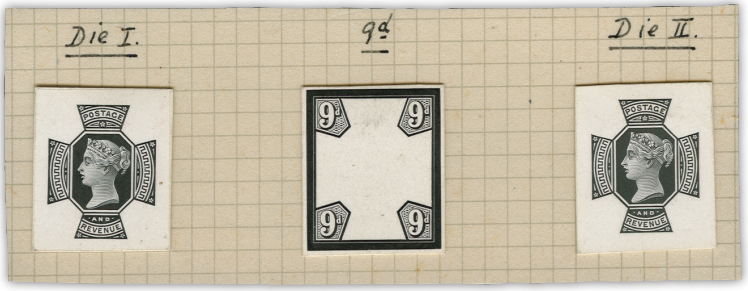


appear white on a solid background. However even recognition of that was tempered with: *'We had long before carried out that idea in the Labuan Stamp but hesitated to adopt it for surface printed stamps'*. Scorn was also poured on reports that officials from the Stamp Committee who traversed abroad to assess stamp production had returned with fruitful ideas that influenced designs – Warren William felt their trip was largely of no 'practical good'.

The ***9d Purple and Blue*** embraced three of the innovations synonymous with the Jubilees – the small head, bi-colour printing and colour bleeding off the margins. The technical challenges of printing these innovations, were already overcome with experimentation in the development and production of the 4d, meaning just three settings were required for this denomination. ►




**9d Purple and Blue**
*1 January 1887*




From 1886, a set of three 9d die proofs, one duty die and both head dies I and II (Die II shows The Queen's head with a larger pendant curl). All three proofs are trimmed to stamp size and mounted on card (41 x 110mm) with endorsements identifying die numbers




The approved hand painted essay which was dated 24 JUN 85



9d Dull purple and blue bottom right hand corner marginal block of six from setting 1 showing part of 'POSTAGE' watermark in interpanneau gutter margin. Setting 1 originates from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd printings (multiples of 20 stamp panes for 80 and 160 set printings) representing approximately 11.2% of the total print run



9d Slate purple and blue bottom right hand corner marginal horizontal strip of three from marginal setting 2, without Jubilee lines but with horizontal lined blocks added and showing part of 'POSTAGE' watermark in interpanneau gutter margin, setting 2 originates from the 4th, 160 set printing and represents approximately 9.9% of the total print run




**10d Purple and Carmine**
*24 February 1890*



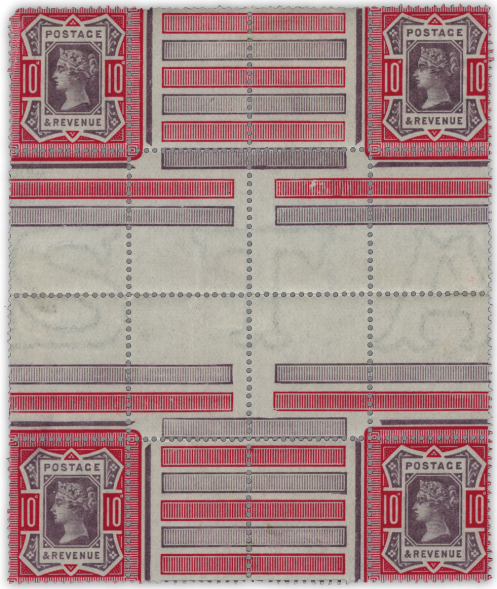

Artist's drawing (which has annotation MARCH 15 89)

The ***10d Purple and Carmine*** was one of the later issues – on 24 February 1890. Only one ink has been identified for the printing of Carmine but Stanley Gibbons list three shades of the stamp – dull purple and carmine, dull purple and deep carmine, and dull purple and scarlet. The design of the ***1s Green*** in common with the halfpenny stamps took on board the Stamp Committee's point that 'the omission of a numeral makes it more dissimilar' and so the value appearing in




10d colour trials. A magnificent piece from the DLR archives bearing four 10d colour trials on white, Crown watermarked paper (line perf 14). The top pair show the head plates – printed in green and the duty plates in bright purple. The bottom pair show head plates – printed in purple and the duty plates in red. The left hand stamp of both trials is cancelled with a crisp black 'B01' trial cancellation. The rows are numbered in manuscript as is 'Colour Adopted' next to the 10d in purple and red. The final choice of colours differed significantly from the colours that the artist chose on the approved essay (top)

10d Dull purple and carmine, interpanneau marginal block of four showing the cross section of the sheet margin and a corner example from each pane. Marginal setting 2b, with the head plate Jubilee line cut away at the corners. Also showing horizontal lined blocks, from the 80 set issue from 1894 onwards. Interpanneau pieces are particularly rare and central interpanneau pieces showing examples from each pane are almost unheard of



words was an additional distinguishing feature for this stamp. Setting 1 for this stamp was used right up until 1898, the Setting 2 with the marginal lines was not used until 1899. Phil Waud of the GBPS highlights that although they are not officially registered in catalogues, there are damaged varieties of this stamp from the first print setting – unsurprising given the longevity of the plates. The ***Is Green and Carmine***, was the last of the Jubilee series to be issued on 11 July 1900. Its primary purpose was to avoid a colour clash with the new halfpenny issued three months earlier in April. Several colour trials from 9 November 1889 exist that bear testimony to the deliberations over colour permutations, the final selection pitched 'primary' ►




**1s Green**
*1 January 1887*




1s Dull green bottom left hand corner marginal, horizontal strip of five, printed from setting 1b (120 set issue, left hand mill sheet) with a sheet division arrow ('pentagon' marker) intact



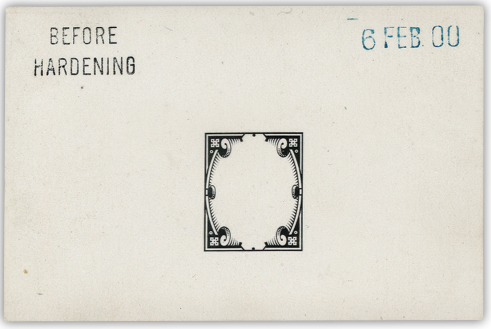

The approved hand painted design for the 1s Green which was dated 24 JUN 85




1s head plate die proof printed in black on white glazed card endorsed 'BEFORE STRIKING' and Initialled 'G F S' in manuscript




1s Grey green bottom marginal horizontal pair showing complete sheet division arrow, printed from setting 2. Setting 2 was only used for the final 13th printing in May 1899 which only formed approximately 8% of the total print run




1s duty plate die proof printed in black on white glazed card endorsed 'BEFORE HARDENING' and dated '6 FEB 00'




**1s Green and Carmine**
*11 July 1890*




1s Green and Carmine colour trial. Bi-coloured paste-up essay with dull purple head plate and pale blue duty plate, mounted on white card (46 x 61mm) numbered '6' and endorsed '9 NOV 99'

All the other colour trials featured here are cropped images from the same set of identically presented, numbered essays, and are dated the same




Dull purple head plate and violet duty plate




Dull green head plate and violet duty plate




Dull purple head plate and orange-brown duty plate




Dull green head plate and orange-brown duty plate




Dull purple head plate and olive duty plate




Dull purple head plate and bright purple duty plate




Dull green head plate and bright purple duty plate




Dull purple head plate and emerald duty plate




Dull green head plate and emerald duty plate

red against its complementary hue – secondary green, for maximum visual contrast between elements on head plate and duty plate, which in turn created a clearly distinguishable stamp from the new blue-green halfpenny.

And so the objectives of the Stamp Committee came to fruition, and De La Rue's role in its success from concepts through to print couldn't be overstated. Indeed, having reflected on all the successful designs, innovations and technical accomplishments, Warren William wasn't shy to emphasise their contribution. In his letter to the Inland Revenue of 11 November 1886 he explained that *'New processes, entailing elaborate and expensive experiments, had to be invented for every stage of the work, and it was only after several failures that we succeeded step by step in advancing matters'.*

Yes, their perseverance paid off, and the Jubilee issue's popularity is commensurate to the disapproval given to its 'green and lilac' predecessors. As John Easton expressed in his book *British Postage Stamp Design – 'Somebody looked at those miserable, naked specimens of 1883 and cried out loudly for ornament – as much as you can cram into it – and colour'.* Generations of stamp collectors around the world are very glad that somebody did ●

*Article by Ian Boardman,* with thanks to Phil Waud FRPSL for sharing his insight. The information in this article has been gleaned from several sources including *The De La Rue Years 1878-1910* – W A Wiseman, *The De La Rue History of British and Foreign Postage Stamps* – John Easton and the *Stanley Gibbons, GB Specialised Stamp Catalogue, Queen Victoria.* Also Ricardo Verra's excellent website 1887jubileeissue.com. Images are reproduced with the permission of Phil Waud: p242, marginal setting die proofs; p245, 5d duty plate die proof; p246, 6d Slate purple/rose-red pair. The Postal Museum: p243, 4d essay; p244, 4½d essay and colour trials; p245, 5d essay; p246, 6d essay; p247, 9d essay; p248, 10d essay; p249, 1s Green essay; p250-251, colour trials. 'Normal' single mint stamps and 4½d pane are from my own collection. All other images are courtesy of Stanley Gibbons, mostly from – *The 'Aureum' Collection.*




The Jubilees also attract interest from collectors of overprints. Particularly in relation to this area, before purchasing, it would be prudent to carefully ascertain the validity of stamps

½d Vermilion overprinted 'SPECIMEN' (type 9)




½d Vermilion overprinted 'CANCELLED' (type 14)




½d Vermilion with "PEARS' SOAP" underprint in blue. This followed a request made to De La Rue from the Postmaster General to investigate the possibility of printing adverts on the backs of stamps. Pears' Soap, 'the world's first registered brand' also conducted their own independent trials in this field after De La Rue had experienced difficulties




Dull purple head plate and deep brown duty plate




Dull green head plate and deep brown duty plate




Dull purple head plate and crimson duty plate




Dull green head plate and carmine-red duty plate

# Long to reign over us

*"I declare before you all that my whole life, whether it be long or short, shall be devoted to your service..."*

Princess Elizabeth on her 21st Birthday, 1947

In celebration of Her Majesty The Queen's 95th Birthday on 21 April, Royal Mail is issuing a limited edition Coin Cover featuring The Royal Mint's new £5 coin. Also of particular interest to Machin aficionados is a unique pane of Machin Definitive and Country Definitive stamps affixed to the envelope. The coin's reverse design by Timothy Noad features the Royal Cypher set against the national floral emblems and The Queen's own words 'My heart and devotion' inscribed beneath. The coin is struck to an immaculate Brilliant Uncirculated finish. Inside the cover is a beautifully illustrated insert which reflects on The Queen's life and her reign.

She was aged 25 when she succeeded to the throne in 1952 and shortly before her 90th birthday she became Britain's longest serving monarch – surpassing the reign of her great-great-grandmother Victoria. And she's certainly been true to her vow of devotion and service to the people of the British Commonwealth that she made as Princess Elizabeth on her 21st Birthday. The promise that she made – four years before her accession to the throne was recorded in a speech that was broadcast from Cape Town whilst on a family tour of South Africa and Rhodesia. She expressed joy, and warm emotive words of optimism as she contemplated a world moving on from the *'terrible and glorious years of the second world war'* – words that







HM The Queen's 95th Birthday BU Coin Cover. The image shows The Queen at the wedding of Princess Eugenie and Jack Brooksbank in October 2018

evidently touched Churchill, and moved him to tears. The young Princess also showed a maturity beyond her years, revealing a pensive disposition of *'serious thoughts, thoughts of life looming ahead with all its challenges and with all its opportunity'*. Indeed there have been many of those along the way – Her Majesty has manifested wisdom and dignity in dealing with them all, and continues to engender the respect and affection of her subjects ●

**HM The Queen's 95th Birthday Stamp Specifications**

| | |
|---|---|
| Date of issue | 21 April |
| Number of stamps | Eight (4 x 1st Class Machin Definitives, 4 x 1st Class Country Definitives) |
| Stamp format | Portrait |
| Stamp size | 20mm x 24mm |
| Printer | International Security Printers |
| Print process | Machin Definitives – Gravure<br>Country Definitives – Lithography |
| Perforations | 15 x 14 |
| Phosphor | Bars as appropriate |
| Gum | PVA |

**Price**

| | |
|---|---|
| Brilliant Uncirculated £5 Coin Cover | £19.99 |

The unique pane comprising 4 x 1st Class Machin Definitives, 1 x 1st Class Country Definitive – England, 1 x 1st Class Country Definitive – Scotland, 1 x 1st Class Country Definitive – Wales, 1 x 1st Class Country Definitive – Northern Ireland







The definitive stamps feature the bas-relief portrait of HM The Queen by Arnold Machin OBE, RA including typography by Jeffrey Matthews MBE, FCSD, FRSA © Royal Mail Group Ltd 2021. The England definitive is designed by Sedley Place and features a sculpture of the Crowned Lion of England by David Dathan. The Scotland definitive is designed by Tayburn and features a Lion of Scotland sculpture by Frank Pottinger RSA. The Wales definitive is designed by Tutssels Enterprise IG and the dragon was forged in Welsh steel by brothers Toby and Gideon Petersen. The Northern Ireland definitive is designed by Rodney Miller Associates and features an aerial view of a patchwork of fields photographed by Richard Cooke.

The Coin Cover insert with The Queen smiling radiantly at Windsor Castle, having conferred the Honour of Knighthood on Captain Sir Thomas Moore




FD2121-TH




FD2121-PL




FD2121-NP

First Day Cover with the Tallents House handstamp and (below) the First Day Cover with the alternative handstamp which has the Windsor location in recognition of one of The Queen's favourite residences. Both envelopes feature the traditional winged horse. There will be a 28 day extension to postmarking availability and all First Day Cover orders must be received by 20 April 2021

# The new Machin Definitive 2nd Class Barcoded Stamp

## Royal Mail pilots barcodes on stamps

As part of its modernisation drive, Royal Mail is piloting the addition of unique barcodes to a limited number of 2nd Class Stamps – issued 23 March 2021. The barcodes will ensure that the stamps in question can be uniquely identified, in a move that could pave the way for innovative customer services in future. The initiative forms part of Royal Mail's ongoing modernisation drive aimed at bringing even greater convenience to its customers.

The initial pilot will see the first barcoded stamps appear on around 20 million 2nd Class UK stamps in Retail Business Sheets sold through Viking Direct and the Royal Mail online shop. The barcodes, which will match the stamp colour, will sit alongside the main body of the stamp, separated by a simulated perforation line. Visit royalmail.com/definitives ●









Machin Definitive 2nd Class Barcoded Stamp

## Machin Definitive 2nd Class Barcoded Stamp Specifications

| | |
|---|---|
| Date of issue | 23 March |
| Number of stamps | One |
| Design | The stamp features the bas-relief portrait by Arnold Machin OBE, RA, with typography by Jeffery Matthews MBE, FCSD, FRSA |
| Stamp format | Definitive Barcoded |
| Stamp size | 39mm x 30mm |
| Printer | International Security Printers |
| Print process | Gravure |
| Perforations | 15 x 14.5 |
| Phosphor | Bars as appropriate |
| Gum | Self-adhesive |
| Number per sheet | 50 |

## Prices

| | |
|---|---|
| Stamp | £0.66 |
| First Day Cover | £1.45 |
| Business Sheet (x 50 Stamps) | £33.00 |







Business Sheet containing 50 x Machin Definitive 2nd Class Barcoded (self-adhesive) Stamps

# New Issues and Withdrawals

Information correct at the time of going to press

**7** April — **Withdrawal** The Declaration of Arbroath: Miniature Sheet.

**14** April — **Withdrawal** National Parks: Stamp Souvenir.

**15** April — **Issue** Classic Science Fiction: Stamps (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.70, 2 x £2.55). Presentation Pack. Stamp Souvenir. First Day Envelope. First Day Cover. Postcards (6 in set). Stamp Sheets.




**21** April — **Issue** HM The Queen's 95th Birthday: BU £5 Coin Cover – Stamps (4 x 1st Class Machin Definitives, 4 x 1st Class Country Definitives).




**26** April — **Withdrawal** United Kingdom – A Celebration: Stamp Sheet Souvenir.

**4** May — **Issue** The Wars of the Roses: Stamps (2 x 2nd Class, 2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.70, 2 x £2.55). Presentation Pack. Stamp Souvenir. First Day Envelope. First Day Cover. Postcards (8 in set). Stamp Sheets. Framed Stamps.

**18** June — **Withdrawal** All stamps and products (excluding framed collectibles) from the following issues: Elton John. Video Games. Visions of the Universe. The Romantic Poets. Coronation Street. Roman Britain. Palace of Westminster.










You can order any of the Royal Mail stamp products listed above, by visiting **www.royalmail.com/shop** or from Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles PO Box 1373, Sunderland SR5 9PG, UK. (Overseas subscribers will need to use a stamp.) Or use the Royal Mail telephone order service on 03457 641 641 (08.30 – 17.00 Monday to Friday). For overseas customers: +44 3457 641 641. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15.

FSC www.fsc.org MIX Board from responsible sources FSC® C019570

**tim.lees2@royalmail.com**

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