

Bulletin

Northern Ireland regionals •
British speed record stamps

Malcolm Campbell, seemingly born for speed, won his first race in 1910, aged 25. But racing was not enough: he began a quest to become the fastest driver on earth. He achieved this goal in 1924 with the first of his nine Land Speed Records – no other driver has captured so many. In July the following year, on the seven mile long Pendine Sands in Wales, he took Bluebird to **151mph**

Five new stamps honour the Campbells, Segrave, Parry Thomas and Cobb: four decades of brilliant achievement in the Land Speed Record.



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover photograph Malcolm Campbell in an early *Bluebird* at Brooklands, by courtesy of Hulton Getty. Royal Mail's new Speed stamps are previewed on page 356.

Please note that the Bureau is now out of stock of the three stamp cards reproducing the Bank of England, R J Mitchell, and Queen's Birthday labels. The standard aerogramme of 1 April 1997 was withdrawn on 30 June. Current stocks of aerogrammes (single and in discount packs) are on the heavier paper introduced in June 1998.

Issues Note some items are available only from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath, Belfast, Birmingham Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester Colchester, Coventry, Croydon Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter Gatwick Airport, Glasgow Gloucester, Grimsby, Guildford Harrogate, Leeds, Leicester Liverpool, London (Lombard Street and Trafalgar Square) Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Truro, Windsor and York

3 August

Issue 10 × 1st NVI, 10 × 1st Greetings, 4 × 30p and 4 × 37p books with 'create a card' promotion details on covers. *Note: these books will be available from selected post offices in the Midlands from 3 August; they go on sale in other areas and from philatelic outlets from 7 September*

11 August

Issue High Values Pack containing £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 Castles stamps printed by Enschedé

11 August

Withdrawal Post Offices stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards; National Postal Museum Post Offices cards. *Note: NPM cards to be withdrawn at the Bureau, will remain on sale at NPM shop*

18 August

Issue Carnival stamp cards

25 August

Issue Carnival stamps, presentation pack and philatelic numismatic cover. *Note: The PNC will be available only from the Bureau*

25 August

Withdrawal Stamp books 4 × 2nd, 4 × 1st, 4 × 37p and 4 × 63p, issued 26 August 1987

27 August

Issue Camcorder promotion book. Date of philatelic availability; on sale at retail outlets from 1 July

1 September

Issue Royal Mail International aircards (five cards)

7 September

Issue 10 × 1st NVI book printed by Questa (lithography) with cover text changes. *Note: the stamp books issued in the Midlands on 3 August will be available elsewhere and from philatelic outlets from this date*

8 September

Withdrawal Enid Blyton's Famous Five stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards

14 September

Withdrawal Holiday promotion stamp book, issued 15 September 1997

22 September

Issue Speed stamp cards

22 September

Withdrawal BBC prestige stamp book

29 September

Issue Speed stamps and presentation pack

Contents



This month's souvenir sheet free gift, provided courtesy of The House of Questa

Included with this Bulletin is a souvenir sheet produced by The House of Questa, showing the winning entries in the Comedy stamp design competition held at Stamp '98. Further details in Royal Mail news. **359**

The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, Royal London House, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Editor** JR Holman • **Price** 85p single copies from Collections, philatelic counters, and National Postal Museum • **Annual subscriptions** UK and Europe £9.50, rest of the world £13.50. Subscriptions should be sent to British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7. Available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, rest of world £21.75 • **Copyright** Unless copyright attributed to specific authors, all articles and features may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Requests to reproduce copyright articles should be sent to the Editor, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119

Issues and withdrawals
August and September **354**

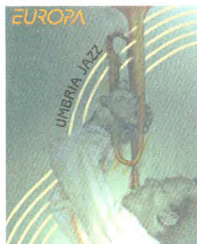
This month The Editor previews this issue **356**

Royal Mail news Speed stamps; NPM displays; Scottish definitives next year; RelayOne service; Aircards; New packs and books **356**



Stamp scene Auction news; GBCC National Convention; Railway letter stamp **361**

National Festivals The Europa stamps theme this year **363**



The regional stamps of Northern Ireland Brian Warren describes the pre-decimal definitives **364**

Overprinted British stamps James Mackay looks at stamps of the Postal Agencies **368**



The commemorative postmarks of Czechoslovak Forces in Britain by Richard Beith **372**



Decimal stamp books
Part 41 by DGA Myall **375**

Exhibition news Israel '98; Portugal; Ilapex **377**

Competition Win Safe stamp dryer **379**

Posting boxes **379**

Postbag **380**

Events for August and September **381**

Index to volume 35, by Dr Jean Alexander **382**

This month The Editor previews this issue

THIS MONTH we preview the Speed stamps to be issued on 29 September. A Speed Records prestige book – to be issued in October – will be described next month.

Our main feature this month looks at the pre-decimal stamps of Northern Ireland, reminding us that it is 40 years since the introduction of 'regional' stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, also for Guernsey, Jersey, and the Isle of Man. The islands, of course, now run their own postal services and issue their own stamps, but country issues for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are still with us.

We are pleased, for the fourth year running, to include a souvenir sheet reproducing the winning designs from the Design a Comedy Stamp Competition held at the Stamp '98 exhibition at Wembley in April. We are obliged to the House of Questa for making the sheets available.

Once again Dr Jean Alexander provides a useful index as we complete Volume 35. Next month's issue marks the *Bulletin's* 35th anniversary: it started as a newsletter for the newly-established Philatelic Bureau in September 1963. JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR •

Royal Mail news Speed stamps • Exhibits at the NPM • Scottish definitives next year



First day cover prices £2.56
UK (including VAT), or £2.18
overseas (no VAT)

Speed Five colourful stamps to mark the 50th anniversary of the death of Sir Malcolm Campbell – Britain's most prolific speed record breaker – go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 29 September. The stamps show classic wheel-driven cars that broke the world land speed record for Britain, from Malcolm Campbell, to his son Donald.

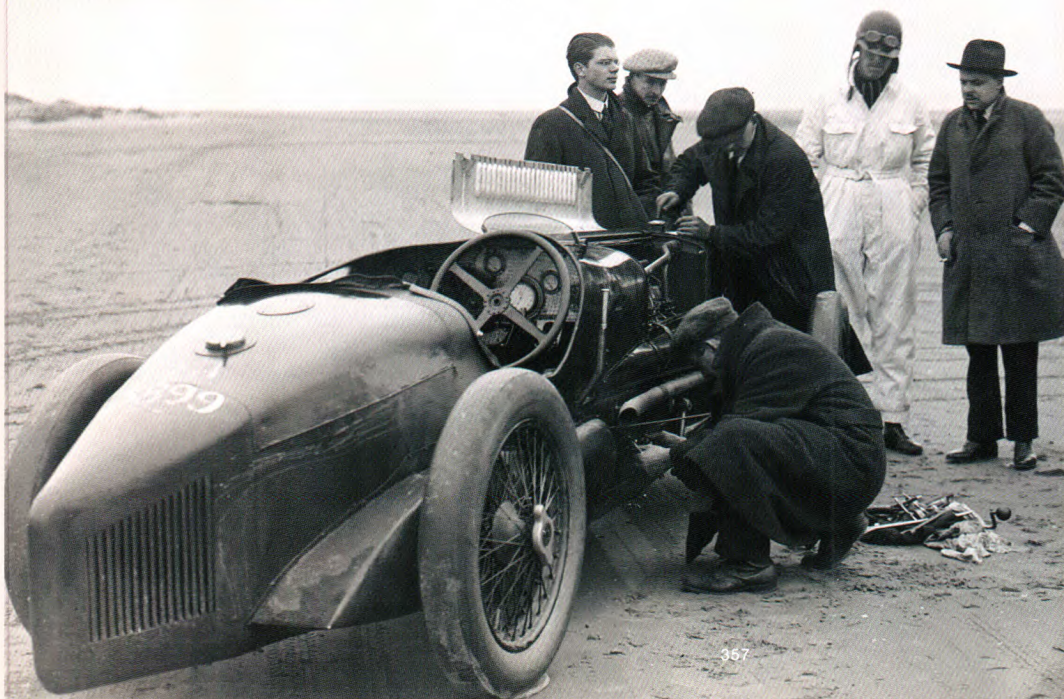
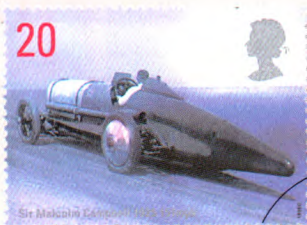
The **20p** and **26p** stamps (basic inland 2nd and 1st class letter rates) show Campbell's *Bluebird* and Sir Henry Segrave's red Sunbeam which respectively reached 151 and 152 mph in 1925 and 1926. The **30p** (European basic letter rate) features John G Parry Thomas's *Babs* which reached 171mph in 1926. The **43p** and **63p** stamps (airmail basic letter rates) feature John R Cobb's *Railton Mobil Special* and Donald Campbell's *Bluebird* CN7 which reached speeds of 394 and 403 mph in 1947 and 1964.

The Campbells' *Bluebird* and *Bluebird* CN7 can be seen at the National Motor Museum, Beaulieu, Hants; Parry Thomas's *Babs* is on display this summer at the Museum of Speed, Pendine, Wales; and Cobb's *Railton Mobil Special* is at the Brooklands Museum, Brooklands, Surrey.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 29 September, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by pictorial 'first day of issue' postmark of the Bureau or Pendine, Carmarthen must reach the Bureau by 29 September.

The stamps were designed by Roundel design group, their first for Royal Mail.

Below, Major Henry Segrave (in white) looks on as his Sunbeam is prepared for his Land Speed Record attempt at Southport, March 1926.





Speed Great British Land Speed Records

Royal Mail First Day Stamps



291 29 346

Stamp cards will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets at 25p each.

Prestige stamp book A

Speed Records stamp book, to be issued on 13 October, will contain some of the Speed stamps plus definitives. Details next month.

Presentation pack A well-illustrated pack (price £2.15) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets.

The pack has been written by Neil Carr-Jones, a speed record historian and membership secretary of the '750 Motor Club' which holds race meetings throughout the year. He has been closely involved in the development of the electric land speed record attempt in the new *Bluebird* to be driven by Donald Wales, grandson of Malcolm Campbell.



Technical details

Printers De La Rue Security Print

Process Gravure

Size 41 x 30mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 15 x 14

Phosphor One band 20p ●
two bands others

Gum PVA

Alternatively, collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF1 1AA (Pendine postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9815' (Bureau), or 'FD9816' (Pendine). Collectors can post or hand in covers at main post offices for local (mostly non-pictorial) first day handstamps. Sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). Covers may be posted bearing just the 20p Speed stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 29 September; the normal 1st class rule is waived for the day ●

RelayOne service Royal Mail has launched a new high tech service, bridging the gap between e-mail and traditional mail. With Microsoft Network, the new Royal Mail RelayOne service allows anyone with access to the Internet and a RelayOne compatible web browser (Internet Explorer or Netscape Navigator) to send letters and documents by post. Documents sent using RelayOne are received at the Electronic Services Centre at Mount Pleasant, London where they are printed, put in distinctive envelopes and despatched by 1st class mail. RelayOne rates range from £1.50 to £10 ●

New Scottish definitives next year As announced in last month's *Bulletin*, four new 20p, 26p, 37p and 63p Scottish definitives will be issued in summer 1999 to mark the Scottish Parliament. Themes for the stamps will be selected following a BBC Scotland programme in the autumn. This will provide the opportunity for debate, and give viewers the chance to nominate their preferred theme through BBC Scotland or the Scottish PO Headquarters in Edinburgh. John Ward, Chairman of the Scottish PO Board, says 'The Post Office's wish to involve the people of Scotland in helping to select themes for the stamps (other than The Queen's head and value) is in keeping with the spirit of democratisation and participation represented by the Parliament itself.' When the themes are chosen, Scottish artists and designers will be commissioned to develop interpretations. As with all stamps, final approval will rest with HM The Queen. A preview of the stamps, together with all the design approaches, will be held in Edinburgh before the stamps go on sale at Scottish post offices. The selection process will be repeated for a replacement set of Scottish definitives to be issued when the new Parliament building opens early in the new Millennium.

A first day cover, presentation pack and postcards will be available; full details will be published here in due course •

New aircards Royal Mail International are producing a new set of pre-stamped aircards showing designs entitled 'Flowers and Herbs', 'Train', 'The Procession' (animals), 'London' (pictorial map) and 'Hello' (modern art). They will be sold singly from selected post offices, the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets. The date of issue is expected to be 1 September. A Christmas aircard will be issued with the Christmas aerogramme on 6 October •

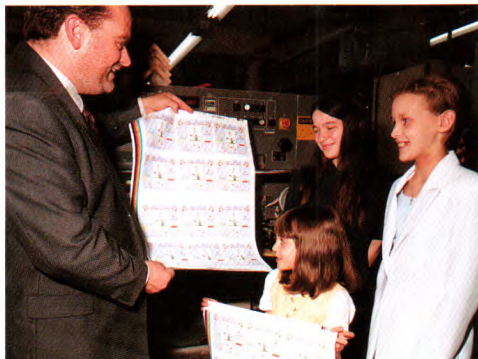
Comedy Stamp design awards Over 900 children entered the Design a Comedy Stamp Competition, organised by Royal Mail and The House of Questa at Stamp '98 at Wembley in April. Most of the designs were of a high standard and the judges, John Ryan and John Whittaker of Royal Mail and Paul Singleton of Questa had a tough job to select the winners. The winners in the 5-8 years age category were Rachel Rogers of Hertfordshire, Zahra Strettle of Tyne & Wear, and Insiyah Anjari of Middlesex. In the 9-11 years group, awards went to Bethany Vaughan of Hants, Kristian Kimonides of Australia, Lauren Dyer of Surrey, and Joanne Row of Essex. The winners in the 12-14 years group were: Anne Wilkins of Surrey, Samantha Walker of Surrey and Hayley Newell of Bucks. Samantha Walker and Kristian Kimonides were amongst the winners in the 1997 Design a Horror Stamp Competition.

Above, Paul Singleton of Questa shows sheets of their winning designs to (left to right) Rachel Rogers, Anne Wilkins and Bethany Vaughan •

Magical Worlds stamps The cylinders and colours used were the same for each value:

1A (silver) • 1B (greenish yellow) • 1C (bright magenta) • 1D (new blue) • 1E (black) • 1F (gold) • The phosphor numbers were P67 for the 20p stamp, P68 others

Carnival correction The perforation gauge of the Carnival stamps is 14 × 14.5, not 14 as stated last month. Apologies for any confusion.



Brian R Bell

Comedians correction

The perforation gauge of the Comedians stamps is 14.5 × 14, not 15 × 14 as stated here in March. We regret any confusion caused.



Unadopted artwork by Barry Wilkinson, prepared in expectation of Scottish success in the 1978 World Cup: from 'It's Only a Game' at the NPM.

This will be the last special exhibition at the NPM's present home in King Edward Street; details of the Museum's new location will be announced in due course.

The NPM, in King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP, is open Monday to Friday 09.30-16.30, admission free.

National Postal Museum Currently on show at the NPM are 'It's Only a Game' (sports), 'Victorian Posts', and 'Going Places with the British Post Office' special exhibitions as well as the permanent displays from the famous R M Phillips Collection of Victorian stamps, and 'All-World' and thematic issues. The 'Post Haste!' exhibition of postal vehicles, letter boxes and artefacts is on the ground floor.

To coincide with the World Cup and Commonwealth Games, the Museum's latest special exhibition, entitled 'It's Only a Game', features stamps, artwork and other sporting memorabilia,

emphasising the universal appeal of sport. Support of national or local sides brings together often disparate sections of society, participation in recreational sports improves our health, and major sporting events provide an excuse for a great day out. The exhibition will appeal to players and armchair fans alike. Stamps and unadopted artwork of the June 1966 World Cup issue nostalgically recall England's finest footballing hour.

Also on display is artwork for never-issued stamps marking British contribution to alpine ski racing in 1975, and material from Britain and around the world commemorating sporting greats such as Bobby Moore, Pelé, W G Grace, Brian Lara, Fatima Whitbread, and Jesse Owens. As its title suggests, the exhibition recognises that playing sport does not have to mean winning, and emphasises the mass participation of recreational sports through artwork and stamps from the 1975 Sailing, 1978 Cycling, and 1977 Racket Sports issues. Sporting events such as the Grand National, Wimbledon and Cowes Week are featured in material from the 1994 Summer-time and 1979 Horse Paintings issues.

The museum has recently published three new books in the *Special Stamp History* series: these cover 1929 Postal Union Congress, 1935 Silver Jubilee and proposed George v Memorial issues, and 1936 proposed Edward VIII Coronation issue. Price £7.50 each from the Museum shop or by post from the Bureau in Edinburgh. Reviews will be published shortly •

New pack and books A presentation pack containing the current Enschedé printings of the £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 Castle stamps will be available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets from 11 August, price £11.95. The Cam-corder book, on sale at selected outlets since 1 July, will be available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets from 27 August. This contains 10 1st class NV1 stamps printed by De La Rue, price £2.60.

New books of 10 × 1st NV1, 10 × 1st Flowers greetings, 4 × 30p and 4 × 37p, with details of a Royal Mail 'create a card' promotion on the covers, will go on sale at selected post offices in the Midlands from 3 August. These books will be available in other areas, from the Bureau and philatelic outlets from 7 September. A standard 10 × 1st book by Questa with updated text will also be available from 7 September •

Stamp scene GBCC Convention • Auction news • North East philatelic weekend

Louis Grunin Mulready collection A fine collection of some 262 Mulreadys and other Victorian postal stationery was auctioned by Spink in London on 2 April. This achieved £537,709 including premium, with 11 items realising over £10,000 each. The famous 'Lady Louis' Mulready envelope went for £40,000. This bears five Penny Blacks and three Twopence Blues cancelled with the distinctive orange Maltese Cross of Bristol. Addressed to Lady Louis, Malta, and sent via Falmouth, it is one of the great pieces of British philately. The only recorded example of the 2d envelope used on the first day went for £24,150. Sent from London to Waltham Cross, it bears a light red Maltese Cross and TP/ENFIELD on the front and Waltham Cross datestamp of 6 May 1840 on the reverse. A third type, J W Buchanan letter sheet, used from Nuneaton to Sutton Coldfield in July 1841 went for £5,750. The only other known example of this letter sheet is in the National Postal Museum. Not every item in the sale was however a great rarity – six pieces, including two Treasury essay letter sheets, went for under £100 each. The catalogue for the auction is itself a collector's item with most items illustrated in colour •



Star auction piece The original sketch by William Mulready (addressed to himself) from which the design was adopted. Executed in ink on wove paper, the artwork, seemingly rather hastily prepared, shows numerous aspects incorporated in the finally accepted design, with the exception of a train crossing a viaduct at the base where the value tablet was eventually inserted. Estimated at £30-40,000, it realised £78,500.

Enquiries Spink & Son Ltd,
5 King Street, London SW1Y
6QS. Telephone 0171 930
7888

Penny Black FDC makes £220,000 On 24 June Stanley Gibbons auctioned a magnificent cover sent to Kirkcudbright, Scotland on 6 May 1840. It bears a block of ten Penny Blacks – the largest known multiple of the world's first adhesive postage stamp used on cover. This unique item, which realised £220,000, was one of the 70 rarest stamps and philatelic documents in the world displayed at an exhibition in Monaco last November •

Enquiries Stanley Gibbons
Ltd, 399 Strand, London
WC2R 0LX. Telephone 0171
836 8444

GBCC National Convention The Great Britain Collectors Club held a most successful second Annual National Convention in Broxborough, Mass, in conjunction with the Philatelic Show '98, 1-3 May. Winner of the Tom Current GBCC Founder's Award for the best GB exhibit at the show was Michael D Dixon, exhibiting under the *nom de l'exposition* of Ann G Lowfyll. He won the coveted Wedgwood Grecian Clock in pale blue jasper for his display 'Great Britain: Development of Air Mail Letters to 1953'. The keynote speaker was Mike Raguin, noted international exhibitor and expert on, among other things, Scottish Experimental Duplexes. President Gordon Milne gave a presentation '50 Years of Collecting GB', followed by a sampling of British beers and cheeses – the gift of Milne and Ann Triggles, GBCC Director and Show judge •

Enquiries GB Collectors Club,
9384 Hunter's Creek Drive,
Cincinnati, Ohio 45242, USA

The 1999 Convention is to be held in Washington DC in June

Enquiries about the 1999 weekend to Mrs D Martin, 46 Briardene Crescent, Kenton Park, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4RY

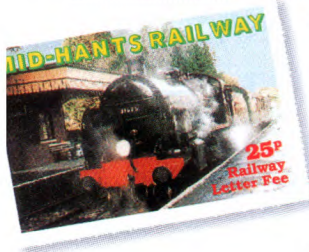
North East Philatelic weekend As always participants had an enjoyable time at this annual event at the Swallow Hotel Gateshead, 15-17 May. The weekend started with an interesting display of a forthcoming CD-ROM computer program designed for all ages and levels of collectors. It allows users to tailor the databases to their own needs; further additions to the database, which pictures all UK stamps, include software to print album pages and exhibition sheets. After dinner, the weekenders engaged in a 'Stamp Quest' talking for up to three minutes on 10-sheet displays which included Air Meetings, Zeppelins, American Civil War Songsheets and Colour Shift Covers. Displays of photographs and souvenir items from previous weekends were of interest to those attending for the first time. The second day began with an invited display by David Hiscock on 'Lighthouses', dealing with their history, construction, the life of lighthouse keepers and related matters. Giving a vote of thanks, John Jefferies presented Mr Hiscock with a FDC of the GB Lighthouse stamps cancelled at 'Lighthouse'. This was followed by 'Tom's Travels' – an original display of picture postcards by Pamela Hiscock. After lunch, guests visited the Metro Centre, the new 'Angel of the North', or the local stamp dealer before a second display by David Hiscock, this time on GB greetings telegrams, and their successors 'Telemessages'. On Sunday, Richard Wheatley's display on 'Various Aspects of Egypt' included some specially produced errors from the Palace collections of Egypt. The final display of the weekend was again by Pamela Hiscock on the theme of 'Pirates'; she told of the supposed one-legged pirate who inspired Robert Louis Stevenson to write *Treasure Island*. After Sunday lunch some guests visited a stamp fair before heading home ●

Enquiries Jack Davey, 01276 28173 or Harold Capsey, 01344 424984

Successful Society auction Over 80% of the 780 lots in Camberley & District Stamp Club's auction on 25 April were sold above their reserves. Over £10,000 was paid by successful bidders and the Club donated £600 to charities. The key item was a 1916 cover to UK from Cyprus, from the officer-in-charge of the Mule Depot, British Mission with the Royal Serbian Army. The cover was franked with the intaglio Crown, FAMAGOUSTA (sic) CYPRUS mail bag seal. It realised £2150 – nearly 10 times the reserve price ●

Obituary: Martin Willcocks We regret to record the recent death, age 77, of R Martin Willcocks RDP, the well-known postal historian, who worked for Robson Lowe before setting up in business with his father. He will be remembered particularly for the five volume *British County Catalogue of Postal History*, published between 1978 and 1990 ●

Railway letter stamps The Mid-Hants Railway issued a new 25p letter stamp on 26 May. Designed by Neill Oakley and printed in sheets of nine, it features Southern Railway Class U loco no 31625, photographed by Cedric Johns. Stamps are available at face value plus postage 30p on orders under £1, 50p over £1. A further 25p letter stamp was scheduled for issue on 11 July to mark the 150th anniversary of Waterloo station. Orders & enquiries: Postal Co-ordinator, Mid-Hants Railway PLC, Alresford SO24 9JG ●



National Festivals Shown below are some of this year's Europa stamp issues, on the theme of National Festivals and Public Holidays. The British set, which will be issued on 25 August, features the Notting Hill Carnival.



Europa stamps are issued by most European postal administrations. The theme is decided by Posteurop.

Northern Ireland pre-decimal regionals by Brian Warren

Although they do not attract the same level of attention as national definitives, 'Regionals' or 'Country' definitives can provide the specialist collector with much of interest, reflecting the many changes in the national definitives of the period. Particularly noteworthy for their variation in designs are the £sd issues.



AS A COLLECTOR of the modern definitive issues of my native Ireland, I have always taken an interest in the 'Regionals' issued for use in Northern Ireland. The 'Regionals' as they are known by us collectors or 'Country' definitives as the Royal Mail prefers to call them do not appear to generate as much interest as the national definitives. However, they provide a specialist collector with much of interest, reflecting the many changes which have occurred in the national definitives during the same period. Their great advantage is thankfully the Royal Mail's continued policy to confine the series to the four principal postal rates. This enables a basic collection to be expanded without undue cost and difficulty. The £sd issues are particularly interesting given the variation in designs and, therefore, this article is confined to the pre-decimal issues.

The campaign for Regional issues In October 1946, there was a proposal for Regional issues and tentative designs were prepared by Harrisons. This was not proceeded with, although a Liberation issue for the Channel Islands was issued in 1948 and could be regarded as the first regional issue, given that they were primarily for sale on the Islands. In 1953, a campaign for pictorial national definitives was launched and in June 1956 *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* published a series of pictorial designs for a proposed issue, several showing regional scenes. In July 1956, the Postmaster General announced that The Queen had approved the issue of regional stamps but





This page The five final designs, left, and the three issued stamps of 1958, above.

Opposite page Cylinder blocks of 1967 9d and 1968 4d olive-sepia with perf encroachment in the bottom margin

that The Queen's portrait was to remain the dominant feature. Local advisory committees were appointed for each of the regions and design competitions were arranged.

The £sd designs In the case of Northern Ireland, the committee agreed that a number of local artists should be invited to submit preliminary designs and that five symbols representative of the regions should be incorporated – the Red (right) Hand of Ulster; the Arms of Northern Ireland (without supporters); the six-pointed Crowned Star with the Ulster Red (right) Hand on it; the Flax Plant (with or without leaves); and a field-gate with typical Ulster pillars. The Red Hand of Ulster was to be incorporated in all the designs together with the letters 'ER' if practicable. Apart from the Arms of Northern Ireland, all were to appear on the final set. Twenty four designs were submitted of which eight were shortlisted for completion.

The final five designs subsequently produced are shown above, with the issued stamps: 3d (by William Hollywood), 6d (Leonard Pilton) and 13d (T Collins). The committee's reserve choice was another of William Hollywood's designs which was featured on a National Postal Museum card issued in 1983 to mark 25 years of Regionals. The issued 13d design was one of three stamps featured on the cover of a £1.46 definitive booklet issued in the same year to mark the same anniversary. The original artwork for the issued designs was featured on one of the book-

let panes contained within the Northern Ireland prestige booklet issued in 1994. All stamps incorporated the Dorothy Wilding portrait of The Queen. Further details of the initial design process from which the foregoing summary has been extracted is set out in Jean Farrugia's article published in the October 1978 issue of the *Bulletin*.

The initial issues All of the £sd issues were photogravure printed by Harrison & Sons. The first 3d stamp for the inland letter rate appeared on 18 August 1958 on paper watermarked multiple crowns without the royal cypher; the regionals were the first stamps to be issued on paper with this watermark. 6d (European letter rate) and 13d (airmail letter rate) stamps followed on 29 September 1958. The stamps were on sale at all offices in Northern Ireland in place of the equivalent value in the Wilding series. The 3d (and later 4d and 5d) values were double pane printings consisting of two panes (no dot and dot) each of 240 stamps set out in 20 rows of 12 stamps, the panes being guillotined before issue. The 6d, 13d (and later 9d and 15d) values were from single pane (no dot) printings. Initially, the 3d, 6d and 13d stamps were printed on a cream paper but from early 1962, a 'whiter' paper was introduced on a national basis and used for subsequent printings of these and all later values. It is difficult to distinguish the two papers in the absence of marginal copies/blocks. Under a uv lamp, the 'whiter' paper gives a slightly brighter reaction.



The three 4d, 5d, 9d and 1s6d stamps of 1966-69, above, and a slogan advertising the new 4d and 5d stamps in 1968



Rate and paper changes Following an increase in postal rates in 1965, a new 4d value (letter rate) in the same design as the 3d was issued on 7 February 1966. New 9d and 1s6d values were issued on 1 March 1967 to replace the 6d and 1s3d which had been rendered obsolete due to the increase in rates. The 9d and 1s6d values were the first Northern Ireland regionals to have phosphor bands (2 bands – violet phosphor) following the now widespread use of automatic letter facing equipment. The 3d value (postcard rate) was re-printed and now incorporated a single phosphor band (9 June 1967) followed by the 4d (2 bands) on 2 October 1967. The foregoing stamps were also printed on watermarked crowns paper with gum arabic.

During 1967-68, the national 'Wilding' definitives were replaced by the Machin design but there was no move to change the design of the Regional issues until after decimalisation. The new Machin stamps were printed on unwatermarked chalk-surfaced paper and, as a result, all subsequent regional printings appeared on the new paper. At the same time, the Post Office was changing over from gum arabic to PVA gum. The 4d (2 bands) was the first Northern Ireland value to appear on un-watermarked paper and exists either with gum arabic or PVA gum. The PVA version does not appear to have ever been on sale in Northern Ireland and was not discovered until after this 4d ultramarine printing was withdrawn from general sale in September 1968. The stamp remained on philatelic sale and in October 1968

sheets with PVA gum were sold at the London Philatelic Counter and at the British Philatelic Exhibition Post Office. Although the total number of sheets sold are estimated at about 50, given that they were all philatelic sales, the individual stamp remains relatively common. The 1s6d was re-issued on 20 May 1969 on un-watermarked paper with PVA gum. The 9d value did not appear on un-watermarked paper.

The introduction of two tier postage in 1968 necessitated the re-issue of the 4d with a single phosphor band and the release of a new 5d value (2 bands) on 4 September 1968. The use of un-watermarked paper and PVA gum was now standard. The opportunity was taken to bring the colour of the 4d in line with the equivalent national definitive by changing it from ultramarine to olive-sepia. An innovative special slogan cancel was used to publicise the new stamps. It was soon realised that in poor light it was difficult to differentiate by reference to colour, the first class (5d Royal blue) and second class (4d olive-sepia) stamps due to their dark colours. Both national and regional 4d values were altered to vermilion and the new Northern Ireland 4d was released on 26 February 1969.

During the pre-decimal period, no Northern Ireland regionals were printed on more than one cylinder although as noted above there are a number of paper, phosphor and gum variations. A full list of all values, papers and cylinder blocks is set out in the accompanying table. In addition, a number of perforation format variations occur

Postal
History

10

Silver
Jubilee
of the
first
Regional
Stamps

£1.46

Royal Mail
Stamps6 at 16p
First Class4 at 12½p
Second ClassStamp book cover of 1983,
showing 1s3d stamp of 1958

Value	Issue date	Description	Cylinder	No dot	Dot
3d	18.09.58	Watermarked: Cream paper	3	●	●
3d	21.05.62	Watermarked: White paper	3	●	●
3d	09.06.67	Watermarked: 1 phosphor band	3	●	●
4d Blue	07.02.66	Watermarked: no phosphor bands	1	●	●
4d Blue	02.10.67	Watermarked: 2 phosphor bands	1	●	●
4d Blue	27.06.68	Unwatermarked: 2 phosphor bands (GA)	1	●	●
4d Blue	23.10.68	Unwatermarked: 2 phosphor bands (PVA)	1	●	○
4d Olive	04.09.68	Unwatermarked: 1 phosphor band	1	●	●
4d Vermilion	26.02.69	Unwatermarked: 1 phosphor band	1	●	●
5d	04.09.68	Unwatermarked: 2 phosphor bands	1	●	●
6d	29.09.58	Watermarked: Cream paper	1	●	○
6d	04.06.62	Watermarked: White paper	1	●	○
9d	01.03.67	Watermarked: 2 phosphor bands	1	●	○
1s 3d	29.09.58	Watermarked: Cream paper	1	●	○
1s 3d	09.11.62	Watermarked: White paper	1	●	○
1s 6d	01.03.67	Watermarked: 2 phosphor bands	1	●	○
1s 6d	20.05.69	Unwatermarked: 2 phosphor bands	1	●	○

During the pre-decimal period, no Northern Ireland regionals were printed on more than one cylinder although there are a number of paper, phosphor and gum variations. This table shows a full list of all values, papers and cylinder blocks.

● exists

○ does not exist

on the 3d (White paper), 3d (1 band), 6d (both papers) and 1s 3d (both papers) values eg the 3d (1 band) cylinder block from the 'no dot' sheet exists with either a single extension hole in the left margin and an imperf bottom margin or vice-versa. A number of constant varieties are also readily available which enable the collector to expand a basic collection.

First day covers and presentation packs First day covers exist for all basic value and colour changes although there was no official FDC service provided by the Post Office, except for the 9d and

1s6d values issued in 1967 and the 4d and 5d values issued in 1968. A 'first day of issue' slogan cancel was available for the initial 4d value issued in 1966. The only individual presentation pack was produced in 1970 containing the seven values then available (3d, 4d olive-sepia, 4d vermilion, 5d, 9d, 1s3d and 1s6d). Earlier, in 1960, all 12 regional stamps of the period including the three Northern Ireland values were issued in presentation packs, one for sale in the UK and a rarer version for sale in New York ●

Overprinted British stamps Part 2: James



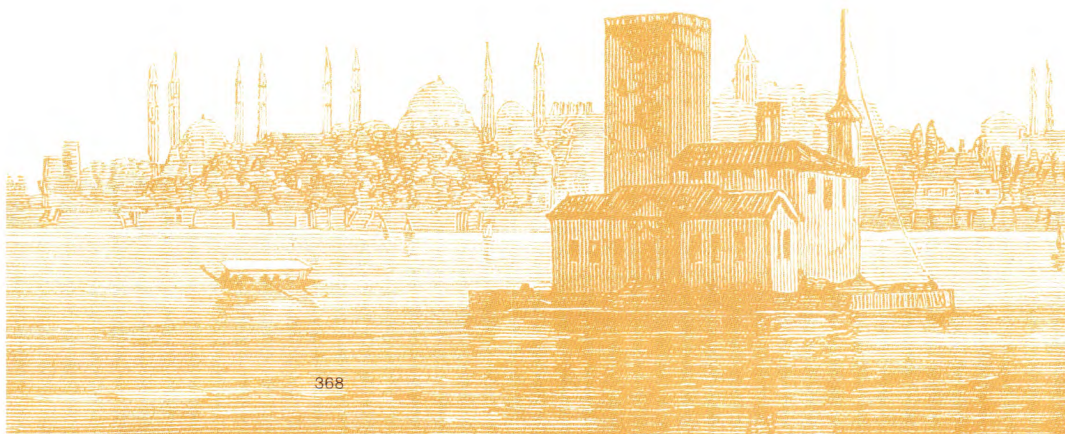
British stamps surcharged for use in British Levant, 1902-21

THE BRITISH POST OFFICE had a very long tradition of operating postal services in other countries which lacked the facilities for handling overseas mail. British 'offices abroad' were established from 1814 onwards, following the organisation of British packet routes at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Pre-payment was gradually adopted from 1840 onwards, using crowned Paid handstamps. Ordinary British stamps were eventually employed in many overseas offices, from Argentina (1860) to Egypt and Nicaragua (1882). These British post offices were gradually phased out after the foundation of the Universal Postal Union, and the various countries assumed responsibility for their own overseas services when they joined the Union.

British Levant British post offices were established in the Ottoman Empire from 1832 onwards. At first little mail other than consular correspondence was handled, but during the Crimean War a branch of the Army Post Office was opened at Constantinople and used ordinary British stamps. Later this expanded to other cities, and stamps, from 1/2d to 5s, may be recognised by the British-style postmarks of Constantinople (from 1857), Stamboul (1884), Smyrna (1872), Beirut (1873) and Salonica (1900).

This system might have continued without any variation, but for the sudden depreciation in Turkish currency which took place in 1884. In order to prevent speculation in British stamps it was decided to release them overprinted in Turkish paras and piastres to cover the principal postal rates. The 2 1/2d, 5d and 2s6d stamps were thus surcharged 40 paras, 80 paras and 12 piastres respectively. This procedure continued with the Jubilee series of 1887, with the addition of the 10d surcharged 4 piastres. The stamps are found listed under 'British Levant' in the Stanley Gibbons Catalogue (part 1).

In February 1893 a shortage of the 40pa denomination was met by surcharging a quantity of 1/2d vermilion stamps at Constantinople. As the surcharge die was subsequently misused to create a further quantity of provisionals for the stamp trade, the Gibbons catalogue warns collectors



Mackay looks at the Postal Agencies stamps

that 'this stamp should only be purchased from undoubted sources' – whatever they might be. Edwardian stamps were also surcharged in due course. There was quite a spate of new issues in the years immediately before the First World War, with Harrison and Somerset House printings, either with the original De La Rue style of overprint or with slightly different founts of type. Not only are these Harrison and Somerset House issues elusive, but they bristle with errors and varieties. Finally stamps of the George V series were released in April 1913 and continued till the end of September 1914, when Turkey suppressed all the foreign post offices on its territory.

British post offices were re-opened at Constantinople and Smyrna in February and March 1919 respectively. At first they were operated by the Army PO and used various Field PO handstamps, but they reverted to civilian control in mid-1920. Ordinary British stamps were used at Constantinople during the military period, but a stock of pre-war stamps was discovered at Smyrna and this was utilised till mid-1920. Ordinary British stamps continued thereafter till August 1921 when stamps surcharged in Turkish currency were revived. Both the low values to 1s and the Bradbury Wilkinson printing of the Seahorse high values were surcharged in various denominations from 30 paras to 180 piastres.

From 1905 onwards it was found expedient to issue British stamps without surcharge but with a distinctive overprint **LEVANT**. On 28 December 1909 all values except the ½d, 1d and 2d were withdrawn from sale. Thus only these three denominations of the Georgian series were released in 1911-13. They were, of course, withdrawn in 1914 but reintroduced in 1919-20.

In 1921 the Levant overprint was applied to contemporary George V stamps from 2d to 2s6d. Due to the war between Turkey and Greece, resulting in the occupation of Smyrna by the latter, the 1921 overprints and surcharges could not be placed on sale in the British PO there. Consequently their use was confined to Constantinople. The British office in Smyrna closed in September 1922 when the city was recaptured by the Turks. Neither of the offices in Beirut and Stamboul was re-activated after the war.



The Levant overprints were intended for use on parcels, printed matter and newspaper packets, the retention of sterling simplifying accountancy for the steamship and railway companies transmitting these classes of mail. In effect, they superseded un-surcharged British stamps which had continued to be sold at the five offices from 1885 onwards. Above, overprints of 1905 and 1916.

In Constantinople, below, the British Post Office survived until 27 September 1923. The curious career of the Salonica office will be dealt with in the next part of this series.





British stamps overprinted for Tangier and Morocco Agencies, 1935-37

Tangier A British postal agency was established at the consulate in Tangier in 1857. No postage stamps were provided from London and the Consular staff had to obtain them from Gibraltar. Mail thus franked was sent to Gibraltar for cancellation with the A26 obliterator used there. When the Gibraltar post office was transferred from the Postmaster General to the Colonial Office on 1 January 1886, and began issuing its own stamps, Gibraltar issues were put on sale at Tangier. From 1898 till 1906 Gibraltar stamps overprinted **MOROCCO AGENCIES** were used at Tangier and other postal agencies in the sultanate of Morocco. On 1 January 1907, control of these agencies was transferred from Gibraltar to London again and thus British stamps overprinted **MOROCCO AGENCIES** came into use.

Like the procedure adopted in the Levant, stamps merely overprinted but not surcharged in local currency were employed on parcels to facilitate steamship company accountancy. In the 1930s these stamps were also used on airmail correspondence. These un-surcharged overprints were on sale throughout Morocco including Tangier until 1937 when they were replaced by ordinary, un-overprinted British stamps. The latter had, in fact, been on sale at Tangier since 1927 if not earlier. Un-surcharged, but overprinted stamps were re-introduced in August 1949 and continued in use for parcels and airmail till 31 December 1956. These issues not only included the definitives of each period (as well as the short-lived issue of Edward VIII in 1936), but also the Silver Jubilee and Coronation commemoratives of 1935 and 1937. The Elizabeth set to 1s in the original Tudor watermark was issued in 1952-5, but only the 2½d value of the St Edward's Crown watermark set was ever released.

For much of the 19th century Britain had been the dominant power in Morocco, due to the strong personality of the British minister Sir Drummond Hay, and during his long career (1844-85) he prevented France and Spain from extending their influence. Much of Hay's work, however, was negated by the Madrid Conference of 1880; and in 1893-4 Spain waged a successful military campaign against the Rifs of the north. The Entente Cordiale of 1904 struck a bargain: Britain would have a free hand in Egypt while leaving the French free to expand their interests in Morocco. In October that year France and Spain signed an agreement which, while paying lip service to the notion of Moroccan territorial integrity, effectively split the sultanate into zones of influence. By the Algeiras Conference of 1906, Spain was placed in a strong economic position, and this was reflected in the decision to issue British agency stamps the following year surcharged in Spanish pesetas and centimos. These, too, were withdrawn



from sale on 31 December 1956, when the British postal agencies in general were closed down.

In March 1907 Dr Emile Mauchamp was murdered at Marrakesh. This and other outrages against French and other European nationals provoked France into landing troops at Casablanca after the town was shelled by the cruiser *Galilee*. Gradually the French grip on Morocco tightened and in March 1912 Sultan Mulay Hafid was forced to accept a French protectorate. The following November the boundary between the French and Spanish zones was redefined.

British stamps surcharged in pesetas continued to be used in the French zone, however, until 1917 when stamps surcharged in francs and centimes were issued. Britain gave up all extra-territorial rights in the French zone, including the postal agencies, on 8 January 1938. During that period the definitives of George V and Edward VIII, the Silver Jubilee set and the 1937 Coronation stamp were surcharged in French currency, but only the ½d of the George VI series (5 centimes) was released before the offices in the French zone were closed.

When the Franco-Spanish convention was drawn up in November 1912, Tangier was set apart as an international and demilitarised zone about 100 square km in extent. British stamps surcharged in Spanish currency continued in use till 1927 when ordinary British stamps were permitted. At the same time, stamps without a currency surcharge, but overprinted TANGIER were brought into use.

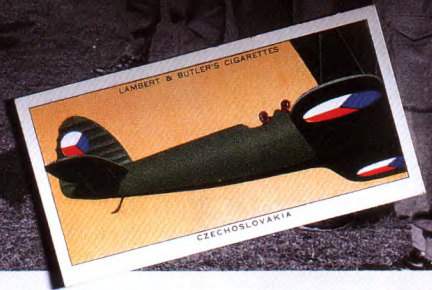
When the British agencies closed at the end of 1956, a special concession was made in the case of Tangier which was permitted to retain its British office till the end of April 1957. This allowed the centenary of its establishment to be suitably commemorated, and the British PO certainly made hay while the sun shone by re-issuing the entire Elizabethan series, up to 10s, with a centenary overprint. The 9d of this issue is known with TANGIER omitted, the dates 1857-1957 alone giving the clue to its identity •

British stamps surcharged in Spanish (centimos) and French (centimes) currency, 1924-40



A Prince from Lebanon, left, and a Levantine gentleman of the 19th century.

The commemorative postmarks of the Czechoslovak Forces in Great Britain, 1940-44 by Richard Beith



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MANY MEMBERS OF THE Czechoslovak Forces decided that they could best serve their country by vanishing from their homeland and reaching friendly territory. Influenced by memories of the Czechoslovak Volunteers who fought on the allied side in France in the Great War, France became their first destination, though many also reached the Middle East. With the outbreak of war Czechs and Slovaks in France were brought together at a camp at Agde on the south coast, between Marseille and the Spanish border. While Czech and Slovak pilots flew with the French Air Force, the land forces were only committed to the battle against the German invader when the fall of France had become inevitable. Most of the troops returned to Agde and most of these were then taken to the UK from the port of Sète with the help of the Royal Navy.

Hence the Free Czechoslovak Forces reached British shores in midsummer 1940 and remained here until August 1944, when the majority returned to France as fighting units. Czech and Slovak pilots were integrated into the RAF after their arrival, many taking part in the Battle of Britain. Five Czechoslovak Squadrons were eventually formed. In postal history terms, mail to and from the airmen is virtually indistinguishable from any other RAF mail, all the pilots and crews using the normal RAF postal services. However, an occasional depot cachet (non-postal) can be found.

With the ground forces, the story is quite different. They had operated a Field Post service while camped in France and a postal system, at first called the Czechoslovak Army Post, was soon established in this country. Initially, normal mail was handled via the civilian post office next to their camp, but philatelic mail, always a Czechoslovak speciality in the days of peace, was soon to appear with the creation of a range of expressive commemorative postmarks. Until early in 1941 these only appeared on propaganda souvenirs and on philatelic mail stamped by favour. From that date the British GPO allowed these special postmarks to be used on ordinary mail, initially with the letters also cancelled by normal British postmarks.

From May 1941 the Czechoslovak Field Post Office was allowed to have its own bilingual regular postmark which was generally used as the sole postmark on mail for delivery in the UK and for transmission abroad. The regular FPO cancellers are not considered further in this present article.

During all this period, the Czechoslovak Government-in-exile, headed by President Beneš, was based in London, and their propaganda department would lose no opportunity to promote awareness of their homeland and their first aim of the restoration of an independent Czechoslovakia at the end of the war. Hence in addition to events such as exhibitions and public concerts by their Army Choir, a wide range of historical and political events were regularly commemorated by these special postmarks.



The infamous Munich Agreement of September 1938 resulted in the Czechoslovak Republic being forced to surrender most of its border territories to Nazi Germany. The eventual German invasion of the rest of the country in March 1939, the formation of the German Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the creation of the independent state of Slovakia, loyal to Berlin, were obvious precursors to the outbreak of the Second World War.



Commemorative postmark of 7 March 1944, anniversary of the birth of President Masaryk

Opposite Winston Churchill and President Beneš (far left, saluting) reviewing Czechoslovak troops near Leamington Spa, April 1941.

Commemorative postmarks: top left, 4 May 1941 in honour of General Štefánek; bottom left, 28 October 1943, anniversary of the founding of the republic; right, 5 March 1942, the third anniversary of the German invasion of Bohemia and Moravia.

Czechoslovak Army bases in Britain

Cholmondeley Park, Malpas, Cheshire: July–October 1940

Leamington Spa, Warwickshire: October 1940–May 1942

Ilminster, Somerset: May–August 1942

Lowestoft, Suffolk: August 1942–May 1943

Dovercourt, Essex: May–September 1943

Desborough, Northants: September 1943–May 1944

Galashiels, Selkirk: May–August 1944

Bridlington, Yorkshire: August 1944

Events commemorated by postmarks on a regular basis

7 March Birthday of President Masaryk (1850–1937), founder of the Republic (1941/1942/1943/1944)

15 March Anniversary of German breaking of the Munich Agreement (1941/1942/1943)

4 May Anniversary of death in 1919 of General Štefánik, Slovak patriot (1941/1944)

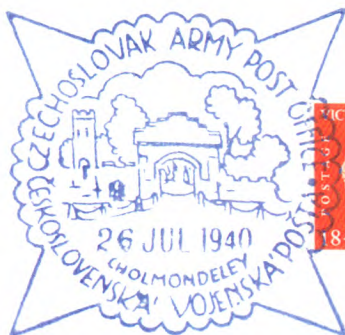
28 May Birthday of President Beneš (1884–1948) (1941/1944)

15 September National poet Petr Bezruč (1867–1958) (1940/1941)

28 October Anniversary of Proclamation of First Czechoslovak Republic in 1918 (1940 (used from 28.9.40)/1941/1942 (used from 1.8.42)/1943)

17 November Closure of universities and massacre of students in 1939 (1942/43)

The first Czechoslovak Army commemorative postmark, below, included the camp's location – a breach of security which was soon removed.



The Czechoslovak Army had a number of bases during their stay in Britain. These are listed (left) to encourage postal historians in the given locations to research local material.

It didn't take long for the first handstamp to appear (below). This was used at Cholmondeley on 26 July 1940 to commemorate the first visit of President Beneš to review his troops and shows a view of the entrance to the Park where the troops were housed under canvas. The name Cholmondeley was included at first, but within hours it was realised that to give the location of the camp was a breach of security and it was removed from the mark. The same mark can also be found dated 28 September and 13 October, without the camp name. The mark can be found on duplicated souvenir folders showing the tented camp, often used to cancel a stamp of the Stamp Centenary set issued that year.

Most of the special postmarks were issued to honour particular events in Czech and Slovak recent history, several appearing in successive years on the same date (left). Handstamps have also been used on 28 September to commemorate the death of St Wenceslas.

Other events commemorated were: opening of artillery camp (4 December 1940); anniversary of Czechoslovak victory at Zborov in 1917 (2 July 1942); 5th anniversary of death of President Masaryk (14 September 1942); Exhibition of Czechoslovak Stamps in London (roller cancellation) (12–20 November 1943). These postmarks were often applied in colours other than black; red and blue inks are common.

Further reading The Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain (CSPSGB) is the best source of further information on this and other aspects of Czechoslovak philately. Of particular relevance are the following three of their monographs.

NO 1, *Czechoslovak Army and Air Force in Exile 1939–1945* by W A Page (1981) + Supplement (1982), available as a combined re-issue (1994); NO 5, *Czechoslovak Army in France* by Roy E Reader (1987) + Supplement (1992); and NO 10, *The 25th Anniversary of Czechoslovak Independence – The 1943 London Exhibitions*, by V J Kralicek and W A Page (1996).

Further information on CSPSGB publications is available from the Hon Secretary, R A Dixon, 39 Braybank, Bray, Maidenhead SL6 2BH. Membership information is available from Mrs D Y Gren, 146 Old Shoreham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea BN43 5TE. •

Decimal stamp books 41 Specialist report by D G A Myall



Walsall 4 x 1st books with cylinder numbers opposite rows 1 (above) and 2 (below), from 9-up and 10-up printings.

Back covers of De La Rue (D) and Walsall (W) 10 x 1st books showing different text regarding books of Greetings stamps.

Blue fluor phosphor modification The reason for the changes in the phosphor inks used by Walsall and Questa noted last time is related to the source of supply for the phosphor and the subsequent blending to produce the printing inks. The production changes, which were agreed with the Royal Mail, resulted in the change in the afterglow (phosphorescence) but are within the tolerance specified for the tagging to be read by the automatic mail sorting systems. De La Rue have not changed their phosphor ink.

Walsall perforations and other changes In my last column I mentioned the appearance of gravure-printed panes in some wsp booklets with comb (Bickel) as well as rotary (APS) perforations. Bookmaking at Walsall involves bursting the panes from the printed web after sheeting, a method which does much to maintain good perforations. The bursting machines were set for litho-printed stamps and needed some modifications to achieve optimum separation for those printed by gravure. While these were being carried out, wsp reverted to their former methods, including sheeting the web followed by perforating by a Bickel machine. As these were modified, they went back to APS perforating of the web on-line.

As well as the Bickel perforators, wsp now use a Bickel bookmaking machine. This requires a

different cylinder layout, the chief difference being that these cylinders have a circumference of nine books instead of 10. All 9-up printings will be APS perforated.

To date, the only 9-up cylinders used for booklet stamps are w2 and w3 for the panes of 4 x 1st and w2 for panes of 4 x 2nd. The cylinder numbers on panes printed 9-up are against row 1 of the relevant panes; those on panes printed 10-up appear against row 2. Another difference between books made on the new Bickel machine and those made by the earlier method is that the covers on the Bickel books are narrower. In general, finished Bickel-made book covers are 48mm high, compared with the 50mm of other wsp books.

It is curious that there are two cylinders numbered w2 for the panes of 4 x 2nd. Remember, books with the number at the bottom of the pane selvage were printed 10 to a column and have the wider cover. Books with the number at the top of the selvage were printed nine to a column and have the narrower cover. Make sure you have both of them in your collection.

Cover changes The outside back covers of all recent retail books contain information about the availability of other books of stamps. The wording differs with the content of the book. For example, books of 10 x 2nd class NV1s draw attention

to the availability of books of 1st-class stamps and books of 4 × 2nd-class NV1s inform one that both 1st and 2nd class stamps are available in books of 10. In general, the same message appears on books with the same content, no matter which firm printed them. However, slightly different text is used on current books of 10 × 1st class NV1s from De La Rue (formerly Harrison) and Walsall. The De La Rue version also appeared on their books of 10 × 1st gold stamps but not on the later books of 10 × 1st flame; these had the same shorter version as on the Walsall books. So far as I know, the two versions do not exist in the same cover.

No message appears when the space is taken up with a promotion; see, for example, the book of 10 × 1st class promoting the Win a Peugeot 106 car sold by Woolworth stores and now available from the Edinburgh Bureau.

New plates and cylinders The Quеста £1 and £2 machine-vend books exist with three different covers. The original set issued 8 July 1996 had an error in the rates table, showing the 200g 2nd class letter rate as 47p instead of 45p. This was corrected in covers appearing from January 1997. Following the recent change to the 20g letter rate to continental Europe, the rates table has been modified and now refers only to inland letters. These began to appear from April this year. Stamps with the modified phosphor referred to at the beginning of this article appear only in the

last two of the three covers. The plate combinations known so far are given below.

A list of the plate combinations for the original and first promotional versions of the Flow-ers greetings book was given here in August last year. This continues to be a great favourite with the public and, being printed by lithography from six colour plates, the number of combinations continues to grow. There has been a second promotion with this stamp content, featuring ChocExpress chocolates. Also, the original version continues to be issued in between promotions. Then there is the use of the modified phosphor. It seems that an update is overdue.

All 29 combinations of the non-promotional version given on page 370 of the August 1997 *Bulletin* have the original phosphor; they are the only ones to do so. In addition, this version exists with the modified phosphor from combinations: w9w10w15w8w7w12, w9w11w16w8w7w12, w9w10w16w8w7w12, w10w12w16w9w6w11.

To the 12 combinations listed last August for the first promotional version must be added: w6w6w10w5w3w10. Combinations known to date for the ChocExpress promotion are given below.

Because of the way these books are distributed all over the country it is possible that not all combinations have been reported. A late discovery of w4w3w2w3w4w3 for the Cartoons greetings book was made in May this year and is extremely scarce, so it is worth keeping a lookout for unreported combinations ●

Questa £1 and £2 machine-vend book plate combinations			
The phosphor number follows the solidus.			
Corrected rates			
£1	Q3 Q3 Q3 Q3 Q3 Q3 / Q1	£2	Q2 Q2 Q2 Q2 / Q1
	Q4 Q4 Q4 Q4 Q4 Q4 / Q1		
	Q5 Q5 Q5 Q5 Q5 Q5 / Q1		
	Q5 Q5 Q5 Q5 Q5 Q5 / Q2		
	Q6 Q6 Q6 Q6 Q6 Q6 / Q2		
Revised table			
£1	Q6 Q6 Q6 Q6 Q6 Q6 / Q2	£2	Q3 Q3 Q3 Q3 / Q1
	Q7 Q7 Q7 Q7 Q7 Q7 / Q2		Q4 Q4 Q4 Q4 / Q1
	Q8 Q8 Q8 Q8 Q8 Q8 / Q2		
	Q9 Q9 Q9 Q9 Q9 Q9 / Q2		

ChocExpress promotion combinations known to date	
All the new combinations have stamps with modified phosphor	
W11 W13 W16 W10 W9 W15	W12 W16 W18 W11 W9 W16
W11 W13 W17 W10 W9 W15	W12 W16 W19 W11 W9 W16
W11 W14 W17 W10 W9 W15	W12 W17 W19 W11 W9 W16
W11 W15 W17 W10 W9 W15	W12 W17 W20 W11 W9 W16
W11 W15 W18 W10 W9 W15	W12 W18 W20 W11 W9 W16
W11 W15 W18 W10 W9 W16	W12 W18 W21 W11 W9 W16
W11 W16 W18 W10 W9 W15	W12 W18 W21 W12 W10 W17
W11 W16 W18 W10 W9 W16	W12 W18 W22 W12 W10 W17

As far as I know none of the new combinations has been used for presentation packs.

Exhibition news A report on Israel '98, by Franceska Rapkin • Portugal '98 • Ilsapex

Israel '98 This international exhibition in Tel Aviv to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel and of the first Israeli stamps is now a memory. The standard of the exhibition was remarkably high – considerably more exhibits were awarded medals of silver-gilt and above than in the lower medal ranges. Of these, 42 were large gold medals and 82 gold. British competitors did very well. Large Gold Medals with a Special Prize were awarded to Zvi Alexander, Trevor Davis, Gerald Sattin and David Springbett; Gold Medals with a Special Prize to Franceska Rapkin and Arthur Woo, and without special prizes to Bernard Berkinshaw-Smith, Hugh Feldman, Zeev Galibov, Barrie Jay and Cyril Metliss. Christopher Cruttwell, John Duggan and Denis Vandervelde were awarded Large Vermeil while Francis Kiddle, Nora Hargreaves and Patrick Pearson each received a Vermeil. Otto Hornung was the only British exhibitor in the championship class with his Ottoman Postal History.

There was some incredible material on display, particularly in the National Class exhibits. For me, two of the most moving pieces were a couple of postcards at the beginning of Zvi Alexander's invited exhibit, written by Theodor Herzl the founder of the Zionist Movement, to his daughter. From a philatelic point of view, there were certainly more important pieces in the collection, but the correspondence from father to daughter was poignant and made one see Herzl in an entirely different light.

The British institutions received fulsome praise for their contribution to the Court of Honour, and deservedly so. Charles Goodwyn, Keeper of the Royal Collection; David Beech of the British Library; and Douglas Muir of the National Postal Museum really pulled out the stops to bring along the most suitable material. The British contribution related almost entirely to the Mandate period, most of which was unique and had never been seen before by the public. David Beech also brought along some of the rarities from the Tapling Collection, such as the unused 2d blue Post Office Mauritius and the 1d red used on cover. The many visitors certainly appreciated the opportunity of seeing these and there was a steady stream of visitors at the Court of Honour throughout the period of exhibition. In the large and varied section of invited exhibits, many related to Holy Land philately. Amongst the contributors was Alan Huggins with British Levant Postal Stationery and Zvi Alexander with Jewish Colonies in the Holy Land.

After the first few days, parties of children were escorted around the exhibition frames by knowledgeable collectors. Hopefully this will have encouraged some of the children to take up stamp collecting. Among the spectacular pieces from the Alberto Bolaffi collection, most interesting for the philatelist was the original sketch of the Penny Black, signed by Rowland Hill. Other contributors to the Court of Honour were the Museum of Communication, Bern, and The Olympic Museum, Lausanne.



Among the items on display in the Court of Honour that most attracted young visitors was the space suit worn by French Astronaut Jean Loup Chetien during the Franco-Soviet Soyuz T-6 mission. This was one of the spectacular pieces from the Alberto Bolaffi collection who also brought along other space-related items.

Britain was also well represented by the dealers, including Argyll Etkin, Gerald Ritchie Bodily, Carmichael and Todd, Michael Chipperfield, Euro-Yu, Stanley Gibbons, Harmers of London, Stephen Kander, Spink (Stamp Department) and Stampdile. Royal Mail was amongst the postal administrations who came to Tel Aviv.

The impression was that it was a happy exhibition. The organising committee appeared to be working well together as a team. An early complaint was that few visitors came into the farther halls – always a problem when an exhibition has to occupy more than one venue. However, frequent announcements were made throughout the day, and when I visited the farther reaches of the show, there were certainly plenty of people around. At the end of the exhibition, it was estimated that some 60,000 people had visited the show. Although I did not watch television or listen to radio, I understand that the exhibition was advertised and posters announced that a stamp show was taking place.

There were some criticisms of the way exhibitors were treated at the opening ceremony and at the Palmares (awards ceremony). Perhaps minor criticisms, but valid for collectors who had taken a great deal of time and effort to prepare their exhibits. Speaking for myself, it was a friendly, relaxed exhibition and the organisers can feel justly proud of most of their efforts ●

Portugal '98 Belem Cultural Centre, 4-13 September. The Portuguese PO has issued three sets of stamps marking the 500th anniversary of de Gama's voyage; the stamps incorporate the exhibition's astrolabe logo.

Portugal '98 To mark the 500th anniversary of Vasco da Gama's route between Europe and India, Lisbon is hosting a world exhibition, Expo '98, on the theme 'The Oceans – a heritage for the future', 22 May-30 September. From 4-13 September, the Portugal '98 international stamp exhibition will be held at the Belem Cultural Centre on the banks of the River Tagus. Heading the impressive list of the 'Commission of Honour' of the exhibition is Dr Jorge Fernando Branco Sampaio, President of Portugal. The exhibition is being staged by the Portuguese Post Office and the Portuguese Philatelic Federation under FIP and FEPA patronage. The international jury includes Franceska Rapkin and John Sussex of the United Kingdom. Admission to the exhibition will be free. The Portuguese PO was established by King Manuel I in 1520 and was in private hands until 1797. The following year, Queen Maria I issued a decree concerning maritime mail for 'the easiness of the internal communications of the Kingdom, and of My Overseas Territories' ●

Isisapex '98 will be held at the Gallagher Estate Exhibition Centre near Johannesburg, 20-25 October 1998

Isisapex '98 This will be the first FIP-supported exhibition in South Africa. The complete exhibition of 2000 competitive frames, a prestigious Court of Honour, world renowned invited exhibits, dealer and postal administration stands will all be housed in one hall. Meeting and conference rooms are on the complex. The competitive classes will be Traditional Philately, Postal History, Postal Stationery, Aerophilately, Thematic Philately, Revenues, Youth, and Philatelic Literature. The exhibition is jointly sponsored by the Society of Israel Philately (Johannesburg) and the South African Philatelic Dealers Association. The South Africa PO's miniature sheet promoting the exhibition was shown here in February 1996, page 171 ●

Competition Win an electric stamp dryer

Sponsored by Safe Albums (UK) Ltd Now is your chance to win an electric dryer worth £147. This product won the coveted Royal Mail Rowland Hill Award earlier this year for its innovation. It was reviewed in the January *Bulletin*. Two runners up in the competition will receive philatelic publications supplied by Royal Mail.

Safe Albums are the UK market leaders for testing equipment such as the Perfortronic electronic perforation gauge, the prize in our August 1994 *Bulletin* competition. Of particular interest to collectors of modern GB stamps is the comprehensive Safe GB Machin Album.

To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: August Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL to arrive by 25 September. Entries must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

- 1 Who designed the forthcoming Speed stamps?
- 2 Which postal historian died recently, age 77?
- 3 In which country is an international stamp exhibition being staged on 20-25 October 1998?
- 4 When was a British postal agency established in Tangier?

The answers will be found in this *Bulletin*. The competition is not open to employees, families or agents of Royal Mail or Safe Albums (UK) Ltd ●



Safe products are available from your local dealer, or in difficulty please contact: Safe Albums (UK) Ltd, FREEPOST (RG1792), Wokingham RG11 1BR. Telephone 0118 932 8976. Fax 0118 932 8612

.....
The winners of the May competition were T Galsworthy of Essex, Mr and Mrs L Percy of Derbyshire, and C Grenet-Delisle of France

The answers were 1) Vince Frost; 2) 1919; 3) Clachan; 4) 1870; 5) Herbert Samuel. Our thanks to all who entered.

Posting boxes 178

THIS MONTH'S photographs were submitted by a regular contributor, Norman Atherden of Liphook. Both show wall boxes and were taken during the summer of 1997. The first shows the box at East Tytherley near Salisbury. It is of the First Standard type, 1857-59, constructed by Smith & Hawkes. The second is located at Ford, near Stow-on-the-Wold, Gloucestershire; again a First Standard type but with pedimented top. It was manufactured by Smith & Hawkes in 1859. Both clearly show the words 'CLEARED BY' beneath the crown and VR cypher. The collection plate shows two collections a day Monday-Friday, and one on Saturday ●

For details of the Letter Box Study Group send a SAE or IRC to the Membership Secretary: Mrs V Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES. The Group produces many interesting publications and postcards.



Postbag



Pre-payment of postage Top left and middle, two printed postage impressions (PPIs); right, two meter impressions; bottom left, a post paid machine postmark.

Paid mail George Howell (*June Bulletin*) provides a useful breakdown of today's mail. Like him I receive lots of mail with PPis and meters but am not sure what he means by Post Paid postmarks. Can you illustrate one in the *Bulletin* sometime? I will then watch out for them on my letters. KEVIN COOPER, CARDIFF •

Special stamps Mr Howell raises some interesting points in his letter in June. I admire his patience in recording his incoming mail in detail. My wife and I receive about 20 letters a week, about one-third bear stamps and I note the number with special issues. In case this is of interest to other readers the figures for 1997 were: Greetings (Flowers) 2; Henry VIII 1; Missions of Faith 2; Horror 1; Aircraft 5; Queen's Horses 2; Post Offices 2; Enid Blyton 0; Christmas 57; Golden Wedding 5; Total 77.

Given our average delivery of 20 letters a week, mail with special stamps amounted to approx 7% of the total. Most of our mail bears printed postage impressions, followed by meter marks, then definitives. I am afraid I cannot get at all interested in PPis but do find some meter marks quite interesting. I suppose in time less and less mail will bear adhesive stamps so we collectors will have to look to meters and PPis. At least they are better than faxes and print-outs from e-mail! G L MOORE, LONDON E17 •

Special stamps The letters from Mr Howell and Mr Izmidlian in June struck an immediate chord with me and having read, a few pages earlier, of Royal Mail's grandiose plans for the 1999/2000 issues, I felt obliged to comment. I find that, with

the exception of one or two philatelic dealers who like to delve into their old stock, only a few smaller businesses use postage stamps on their mail, and then only definitives. As far as my personal mail is concerned I find that well under 5% carries any special stamps, and perhaps that is an overstatement, except for the Christmas issues, which appear to be very popular. I was particularly surprised not to receive any mail bearing the Diana stamps. My experience seems to be borne out by others. From friends I receive used stamps which I send in bulk to charities, and these supplies contain very few special stamps. I tend not to use the specials myself as it is far more convenient to have a booklet in my wallet and a roll of self-adhesive stamps at home, although I always use greetings stamps on greeting card envelopes and specials on overseas mail because I know my friends abroad appreciate them. It is a pity many people are not aware of greetings stamps as I think the Memories issue is one of the most attractive I have seen. I have to ask why so many special issues are planned for the next two years when they are apparently of such little interest to the general public. E T SMITH, WARE •

Pre-paying postage I read with great interest the letter from Mr Howell in the *June Bulletin*. I do not record the stamps or other forms of pre-payment on the letters I receive but like him note the relatively small number of commemorative stamps. So far I haven't seen any Princess Diana stamps other than on first day covers sent to myself. Perhaps everyone is keeping them rather than using them for postage! Also I receive very few greetings stamps. I agree with Mr Howell

that there is some interest to be found in the paid postmarks, printed postage impressions and particularly meters. I have built up a small collection of meter impressions with pictorial slogans, some related to British stamp issues, or to my thematic interests. On the whole these meters are better applied than ordinary postmarks, and being in red make quite colourful items for the collection. You published an article on meters by James Mackay in January 1997; I hope there will be a follow-up article sometime. PETER SHARP, WEST DRAYTON, MIDDX ●

Europa The first Europa stamps were issued in 1956 although Britain didn't join in until 1960. There was a second issue the following year and a single stamp in the Anniversaries set of 1969 but nothing further until 1980 by when stamps were issued in a particular theme rather than a common design. Have you ever published a list of the themes since the resumed Europa stamps in 1980? MARY EVERETT, GLOUCESTER

No we haven't published a list so provide one now. The themes are now set by Posteurop, formerly the CEPT (Conference of European Postal & Telecommunications administrations). Stamps used to include the CEPT symbol; replaced since 1993 by a stylised 'EUROPA'. The theme approach to issues started in 1974 so we provide a listing since then rather than 1980 when Britain joined in: 1974 Sculpture, 1975 Paintings, 1976 Traditional Crafts, 1977 Scenery, 1978 Buildings, 1979 Communications, 1980 Famous People, 1981 Folklore, 1982 History, 1983 Work of Human Genius, 1984 25th anniversary of the CEPT, 1985 European Music Year, 1986 Nature Conservation, 1987 Architecture, 1988 Transport and Communications, 1989 Games & Toys, 1990 Buildings, 1991 Europe in Space, 1992 Landfall in the Americas (Columbus anniversary), 1993 Contemporary Art, 1994 Medical Discoveries, 1995 Peace and Freedom, 1996 Women of Achievement, and 1997 Tales & Legends.

On the 1998 theme of National Festivals and Public Holidays, Royal Mail will issue four stamps featuring the Notting Hill Carnival on 25 August. ED ●

Events

Now showing It's Only a Game (Sports), Going Places with the British Post Office, and Victorian Posts exhibitions at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP. Open Mon-Fri 09.30-16.30. **Enquiries** 0171 776 3636

August Grimsby & District Phil Soc Stamp Fair and Exhibition at Memorial Hall, Cleethorpes. Marks the Society's 75th anniversary. **Enquiries** M Willcock, 01472 691447

2-5 September Picture Postcard Show 1998 (formerly BIPEX) at New Royal Horticultural Hall, Greycoat and Elverton Streets, London SW1. Dealers, displays, etc. Organised by Postcard Traders Association. **Enquiries** Michael Day, 0151 339 5422

4-13 September Portugal 98 international exhibition commemorating the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the sea route to India by Vasco de Gama, Lisbon, Portugal. **Enquiries** J Sussex, Bridge House, Main Street, Elvington, York YO4 5AA

10-13 September Praga 1998 international exhibition at National Art Gallery and Postal Museum, Prague, Czech Republic. Organised by Union of Czech Philatelists. **Enquiries** Mrs Y Wheatley, 7 Manor Croft, Leeds LS15 9BW

12 September Preston and District Phil Soc Stamp and Postcard Fair and Exhibition at Canterbury Hall, Garstang Road, Preston, 10.00-16.00. 17 dealers. **Enquiries** P Gaywood, 01772 684302

26-27 September Exhibition Study Group annual convention at Century Tavern, Forty Avenue, Wembley Park. **Enquiries** B Tonkin, 23 Bramley Way, West Wickham BR4 9NT

26-27 September TPO 814 weekend at Didcot Railway Centre. Mail Exchange demonstration, postal vehicles, sales stands. **Enquiries** P Silver, 51 Abingdon Road, Drayton, Abingdon OX14 4HW ●

Index to volume 35 Compiled by Dr Jean Alexander

Airmail See also Postal
stationery, Aerogrammes
Christmas flight *Martin* 112
Empire Scheme *Beith* 176
Etiquettes 55
Paisley Rocketeers 220
Pillar box miniature 103
Shetland anniversary *Beith* 90

Awards

Children's literature 294, 347
Rowland Hill *Novak* 204, 228,
312
UPU Stamp Design 136
Youth 139, 359

Biography

Adams, Richard 39
Bain, Neville 231
Balls, Martin 120
Beckton, W D *Negus* 46
Bevan, Aneurin ('Nye') 262
Carroll, Lewis *Mackay* 323,
336
Davis, Dick 164
Heaton, John H *Mackay* 304
Higlett, George A *Fryer* 125
Holman, John 22
Martin, Dorothy 114
Matthews, Jeffery 133
Maude, Robert 145
Morgan, Glenn 171
Moubray, Jane 42
Muir, Douglas 243
Myall, Douglas G A 122
Novak, Adam 115
Post Office appointments 39,
231, 260
Rapkin, Francesca 297
Rielly, Thomas 297
Roll of Distinguished
Philatelists 42, 297
Tilleard, John A *Negus* 248
Witham, William Aubrey 78

Book reviews

27, 61, 124, 147, 189, 218,
253, 284, 316, 349

British Library

Philatelic Collections 44,
Morgan 88, 169, 329

British Philatelic Bulletin

Author award 235

Cancellations

Czech forces in GB *Beith* 372
Ink-jet postmarks 286

Pictorial handstamps 136,
286, (L)351
Slogan: Logie Baird 50

Channel Islands

Occupation *Amery* 18

Cinderella

Printers' samples 174, 175
Summer Isles 61, 233, 296

Definitives

See also Booklets
1997 Checklist 152
Country: N Ireland *Warren*
364, Scottish 359, Welsh
(L)29
Gold stamps 230
High value 327, 360
Enschédé castles (L)59,
(C)66, 179
Machin (L)59
Cylinders 2, 40, 68, *Staddon*
110, (L)254, *Myall* 250
First day cover 191
Gold stamps 230
Shades (L)350
New fluor *Myall* 315
Presentation pack 54, 217
Self-adhesive 104, 199, 231,
263, 295, 327
Wilding *Hinton* 52, 154, 216
Prestige booklet 134

Design

Children's competition 359
Coronation 1953 27
Europa stamps 363, (L)381
Wilding lettering of values 283

Designers

Bellew, Sir George 133
Brian Delaney Assoc 9
British designers *Witham* 15,
(L)126, (L)222
Davis, Dick 164
Dulac, Edmund 27
Frost, Vince 261
Gentleman, David *Witham* 72
Kripe, George 134
Malone, Peter 292
Matthews, Jeffery 133
Maude, Robert 102, *Maude*
144, 294
Millington, Terence 26
Milne, Jonathan 9
Searle, Gerald 198
Slania Study Group 70

Events

31, 42, 63, 95, 127, 191, 203,
223, 233, 255, 287, 319, 329,
351, 362, 381

Exhibitions

Birdpex 232, 344
Brighton & Hove '98 138, 267
Collect '97 98
Empire Exhibition 1938
Matheson 278
Essen '98 266
Ilsapex '98 378
Indepex '97 106
International 203
Israel '98 377
Juvalux '98 298
Lorca '98 202, 298
Midpex 10, 43
Monaco 1997 *Mackay* 82
Portugal '98 378
Praga '98 346
Rare Stamps of the World 14
Singpex '98 346
Stampa '97 42
Stampex 11, 71, 170, 266,
298
Stamp '98 202, 232, 344
Stamp Show 2000 267
Thematica 14, 70, 298
Worthing Exhibition 346

George V

Definitives – 1922 Irish over-
prints *Gee* 206
Stamps issued in rolls (B)203

Museums

See also NPM
Bath Postal Museum 330
Llangollen Postal Museum
331

National Postal Museum

26, *Muir* 246
Association of Friends 12, 68,
168
Exhibitions 105, 137, 169,
200, 230, 264, 295, 327,
360
Artefacts 61
Dead letter and greetings
cards 61
Etchings into stamps 68,
105
Golden and Glorious 26, 60,
68, 105
Palestine discoveries *Muir*
272, (C)290
Royal Collection 'The Med-

iterranean' 26, 68, 105

Obituary

Auckland, Bruce 45
Beningfield, Gordon 328
Dease, Rosalind 77
Jaques, Faith 44
Lowe, Robson *Negus* 86, 233
Marx, Enid 328
Myers, Fred 331
Newport, O W 297
Reck, Heinz 265
Service, W W (Bill) 136
Thompson, Roy 45
Willcocks, Martin 362

Overseas

British issues overprinted
Gee 206, *Mackay* 332, 368
Israel *Mackay* 274, (C)350
Mauritius stamp anniversary
13, 107
Palestine discoveries *Muir*
272, (C)290
Princess Diana issues 265
Royal Golden Wedding
Morgan 88
Shanghai 83

Paper

9, 155, *Myall* 283

Post boxes

31, 35, 59, 127, 159, 190,
200, 222, 255, 287, 319, 379

Post Offices

Brora award 137
Colchester Postshop 40
Shawford 106

Post Office Archives

Cake design 316
Miniatures 103
Savings banks *Bendall* 57

Postal history

1890 Penny Postage Jubilee
(L)126
Crathie *Matheson* 85
Dover Packet Service 254
Imperial Penny Post *Mackay*
304
Official Mail *Holman* 22

Postal mechanisation

Muir 244
Graphite lines 53, *Mackay* 92,
155, 156

Phosphor-graphite *Hinton* 216

Phosphor *Myall* 282

Sorting Centre postcards 68

Postal stationery

Aerogrammes

Christmas 7, 359

Coronation 27

Lighthouses 166, 201, 231, 239

Magical World 264, 293, 327

Olympic Games airletter 242

Scottish 40

Software listing 189

Standard 264

Welsh 264, 294, 326

Pictorial aircards 7, 359

Pictorial airpacks 40

Rarities *Baker* 148, 213, 268, 300

Victorian card (L)351

Postbag

29, 59, 159, 191, 254, 286, 318, 350, 380

Postbuses

Miniature 138

New service 9

Scottish *Robinson* 308

Southeast *Robinson* 208

Postcards

Friends of NPM 68

Maltese Cross Cancel 281

Postal Van 331

Picture Postcard Annual 189

Printers

De La Rue ink jet system 295

Harrison take-over 66

Harrison presentation cards 171, 172, 173, 242

Railway letter stamps

13, 43, 71, 233, 362

Royal Mail

Aberdeen Mail Centre 8

Belfast Mail Centre 328

RelayOne Service 358

Sorting Centre postcards 68

Stamps marketing 117

Societies and Associations

ABPS 61, 297, 316

Astro Space Stamp Society 43, 139

Bristol Postal History Group 169

British Philatelic Trust 330

Concorde Study Circle 296

GB Collectors Club 296, 361

GB Philatelic Society 203

Germany & Colonies PS 12

Glasgow Thematic Society *Morris* 281

Methodist Phil Soc 12

NPS appraisal scheme 107

Northern Ireland 106

Portadown and District

Philatelic Society 12, 139

Postage Due Mail Study

Group 70, 139

Raflet Stamp Club 44

Slania Study Group 70

Sussex Philatelic Societies 43

Welsh Philatelic Society 265

Special stamps

1948 issues *Gee* 240

1957 Parliamentary Conference *Hinton* 53, (L)159

1965 Arts Festival 326

1966 Christmas 50

1972 BBC 50

1972 Silver Wedding 68

1974 Fire Service 76

1976 Cultural Traditions 326

1989 Lord Mayor's Show 326

1990 Alexandra Palace 51

1996 Quantities issued 103

1997 Architects of the Air 9

Christmas 33, 36

Enid Blyton 41

Golden Wedding 2, 4, 41,

Cooke 79, *Matheson* 84, 167

Henry VIII 226

Horror souvenir book 7, 39

Poll (L)29, 104, 108, 234

(L)318, 330, 350

Queen's Horses (L)126

Year Book and Pack 39

1998 Carnival 322, 324,

(C)359

Christmas 295

Comedians 196, 231,

(C)328

Diana (January insert), 194,

Novak 204, (L)254, 329

Endangered species 98,

100, *Maude* 144

Lighthouses 162, 164, 201,

233, *Mackay* 236

Magical Worlds 290, 292,

Mackay 336, 359

NHS 258, 260

Queen's Beasts 130, 132,

166, 226, (L)254

Speed 356

David Gentleman issues 72

Queen's Head (L)350

Stamp Advisory Committee

Queen's bouquet 167

Stamp booklets

Christmas 40, *Myall* 121

Cylinders 9

Decimal books *Myall* 54, 121, 180, 250, 282, 314, 375

De La Rue *Myall* 340

Gold stamps 230

Greetings 250

New 9, 41, 68, 258, 264

NVI Commonwealth Heads of Government label 9, 40

Prestige 41

BBC 9, 48, 56, 181, 250

Wilding 134, 168, (L)222,

251

Private booklet 329

Promotional books

Camcorder 295, 327

ChocExpress 104, 181

create-a-card 360

Holiday 9, 56, 230

Disney 136, 169, 181, 250

Woolworth 258, 264, 295

Quantities 41

Walsall 250, 314

Wilding definitive panes 54,

156, 282

Stamp collecting

Auction: Double Geneva 169

Blue Peter Stamp Annual 69

Computers and Internet 138, 202, 230

Cover collecting *Williams* 185

National Youth Stamp Group

203, 297

School stamp exhibition 265

Scottish competition 106

Soaking stamps (L)286

Stamp albums 69, 107, 137,

168, 329

Stamp dryer *Mackay* 157

Terminology *Myall* 250, 315

Times supplement 200

Thematics

BBC *Mackay* 48

Christmas 112

Golf 239

Health 262

Lighthouses 162, 164, 201,

231, 233, *Mackay* 236, 286

Music stamp 107

Royal Golden Wedding

Cooke 79, *Matheson* 84,

Morgan 88

Sherlock Holmes *Negus* 140,

182

Victoria

Alice stamp case 323

Mulready and Penny Blacks at auction 361

Watermarks

Wilding definitives *Hinton* 52, 154, 217, *Myall* 282

Authors

Amery, Sidney 18

Baker, Colin 148, 213, 268, 300

Balls, Martin 117

Beith, Richard 90, 176, 372

Bendall, Colin 57

Cooke, Daniel E 79

Gee, Fred 206, 240

Hinton, Matthew 52, 154, 216

Holman, John 22, 171, 243

Mackay, James 48, 82, 92,

157, 236, 274, 304, 332,

336, (L)350, 368

Martin, Dorothy 112

Matheson, Jean 84, 278

Maude, Robert 144

Morgan, Glenn 88

Morris, Margaret 228, 281, (April booklet insert)

Muir, Douglas 243, 272,

(C)290

Myall D G A 54, 121, 180,

250, 282, 314, 340, 375

Negus, James 86, 140, 182

Negus, Ron 46, 248

Novak, Adam 115, 204, 312

Parker, Philip 347

Rapkin, Francesca 377

Robinson, Martin 208, 308

Staddon, Don 110

Warren, Brian 364

Williams, Derek 185

Witham, William A 15, 72,

(L)222

Notes

(B) = book

(C) = correction

(L) = letter

Author's names are in italics

April 1997 issue contained a supplement: *An Introduction to Thematic Collecting* by Margaret Morris. Each issue contained a supplement listing Commemorative Covers.

THE DEFINITIVE PORTRAIT PRESTIGE STAMP BOOK



Royal Mail's prestige stamp book for 1998 tells the story of the introduction of the first definitive stamps of The Queen's reign and the 1953 Coronation issue.

The issued stamps are illustrated in full colour as well as reproductions of some of the unadopted designs. There is also a study of Dorothy Wilding (1893-1976), the society photographer whose portrait of The Queen was used on the first definitives, hence their popular name of 'the Wildings'. The Wilding portrait was also used on commemorative stamps until 1966.

The prestige book includes four panes of Wilding design stamps but in decimal currency – 20p, 26p and 37p. These have already proved very popular with collectors and have attracted much attention in the philatelic press.

'Three cheers for the Wilding prestige booklet!' John Deering, *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*

'Looks very smart... sets a high standard for the rest of the series of three linked with The Stamp Show 2000.' Queensman, *Stamp Magazine*

The book is still available from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, price £7.49.

British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT

