

August 1994



# British Philatelic Bulletin

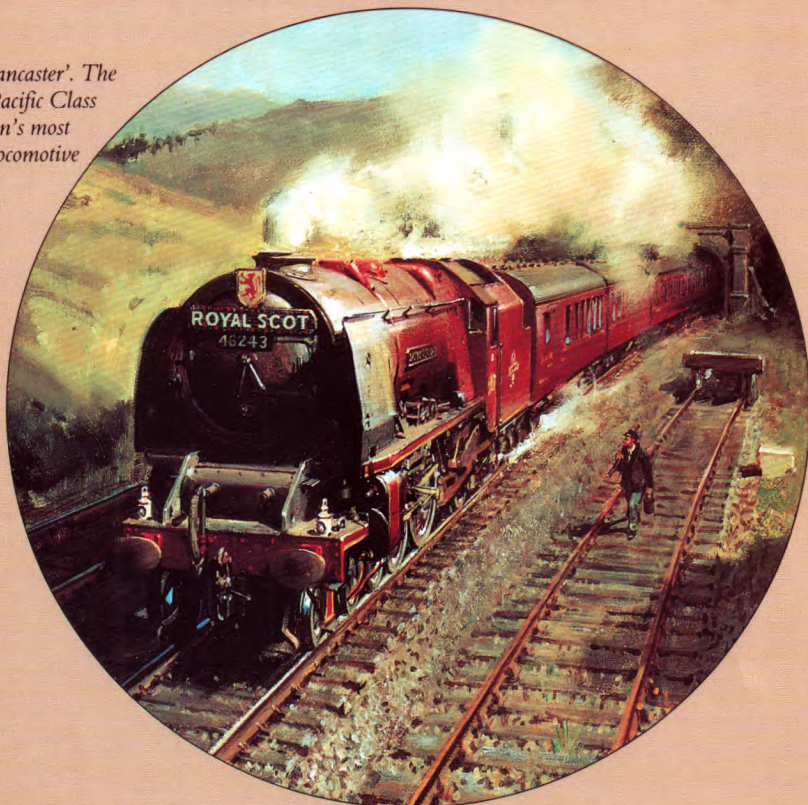
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# British Philatelic Bulletin

## The British Philatelic Bulletin

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Editor: J R Holman

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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.

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## Main Feature

### Decimal Stamp Books – 16 360

Douglas Myall's Specialist Report on the Northern Ireland and Bank of England books and the "Win a Kite" promotional issue.



*Pane from Northern Ireland prestige book with current Country stamps and showing 1958 "Regional" designs*

# Royal Mail News

## Medical Discoveries Stamps

This year's Europa issue, on the theme of Medical Discoveries, will go on sale at post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau, and Post Office philatelic outlets on 27 September 1994.

Technological advances that have enabled doctors to look into the human body have transformed medical diagnostics over the past half-century. British scientists have played a key part in these discoveries.

The **25p** stamp (UK 1st class and European Union basic rate) features Ultrasonic Imaging. An ultrasound scan for pregnant women is now a standard part of antenatal care in Britain, producing a "photograph" of the unborn baby. Less than 40 years ago scientists at Glasgow University saw the possibility of sonar technology (developed for submarine detection) to create fetal images. Ultrasound is a safer alternative to X-rays for examining pregnant women.



The **30p** value (non-EU European countries) depicts Scanning Electron Microscopy which allows imaging of objects less than a few thousandths of a millimetre across. Ordinary microscopes use light and optical lenses to create their magnified images. Electron microscopes, using electrons and electromagnets, can form images magnified up to 100,000 times. A "scanning" electron microscope is so-called as it builds up its images by examining the surface of a specimen directly. The first of these machines were manufactured by the Cambridge Instrument Company in 1965.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging is the subject of the **35p** stamp (overseas postcard rate). This form of imaging allows doctors to examine the atoms that make up the human body, by interrogation with precisely tuned radio waves. The technique exploits the fact that much of the human body is made of water. The nuclei of hydrogen atoms in this water behave like tiny magnets when inside the strong magnetic field of an MRI machine. As these nuclei "relax", they give off tell-tale signals that are valuable clues for doctors on the state of a patient's health.



The **41p** denomination (basic airmail letter rate) features Computed Tomography which uses precise beams of X-rays to take a picture of a slice through the body. The technique was the idea of Godfrey Hounsfield who worked on radar during the Second World War.

The four stamps were designed by Pierre Vermier of Halpin Grey Vermier design group. These are his first stamps for Royal Mail. The left-hand illustrations featured on the stamps are by Jean-Paul Tibbles; the right-hand illustrations courtesy of Acuson Corporation (25p stamp), Science Photo Library (30p and 35p), and the Royal Victoria Infirmary, Radiology Department (41p).





bounce back as echoes at some distance from the screen. Using an industrial flaw detector, Professor Donald first produced images of ovarian cysts, and by 1964 his work had led to the first comprehensive account of foetal skull measurement by ultrasound. Measurement of the size of a baby's skull was to prove an invaluable guide to its development, and this helped to establish ultrasound as a safer alternative to X-rays for examining pregnant women.

#### The scanning electron microscope

Electron microscopes take imaging of objects down to the unbelievable scale of less than a few thousandths of a millimetre across. Ordinary microscopes use light and optical lenses to create magnified images and so, at best, are limited by the size of the photon, the smallest particle of visible light. Electron microscopes, however, use electrons, with a wavelength many tens of times shorter than this, and electromagnets as lenses to bend these electrons. The result is a machine that can resolve image magnifications up to 100,000 times life size.

A 'scanning' electron microscope is so called because it builds up its images by examining the surface of a specimen directly. Its images have a striking three-dimensional appearance, created bit by bit in spots on a screen, in much the same way as the picture on a domestic television set is formed. A fine beam of electrons zigzags across the surface of the specimen, knocking electrons off as it scans. These electrons control the brightness of the spots on the screen, giving detailed information on the surface and fantastic sharpness and clarity. These machines can be used to examine blood cells, picking up abnormalities in cell membranes, such as those seen in sickle-cell anaemia. Cambridge Instrument Company manufactured the first batch of machines in 1965, taking up earlier research by the engineering department at Cambridge University under Charles Oatley.

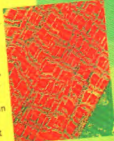


1. An incision first - a nuclear magnetic resonance scan of the human head, recorded in October 1975.

2. An image of an early CT scan of the brain.

3. An early, recognizable shape from a heart, produced by an ultrasound scanner.

4. This image, produced by the Cambridge Instrument electron microscope, shows with extraordinary clarity part of the surface of a wing's eye.



5. A detail of a scanning electron microscope image showing the surface of a wing's eye.



Mrs J Robinson  
200 Manorbie Road  
ILKESTON  
Derbyshire  
DE7 4AB



### Technical Details

*Printer:* Joh Enschedé Security Printers

*Process:* Photogravure

*Size:* 41 x 30mm

*Sheets:* 100

*Perforation:* 15 x 14

*Phosphor:* Phosphor coated paper

*Paper:* OBA free (OBA=Optical Brightening Agent)

*Gum:* PVA

*Presentation Pack:* No. 251, price £1.65

*Stamp Cards:* Nos. 164a-d, price 25p each

### First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office philatelic outlets around one week before 27 September, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps cancelled with a pictorial “First Day of Issue” postmark of the Bureau or Cambridge, price £1.95 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.66 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 27 September.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Bureau or Cambridge cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, or South East Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, SLOUGH SL1 1AA (Cambridge postmark). The outer envelope should be endorsed “Pictorial First Day of Issue postmark”.

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish

to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial “First Day of Issue” handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – Royal Mail’s magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe, £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

### StampMaster GB – Demonstration Discs

In response to numerous requests from customers, demonstration discs are being developed to allow up to 3 months use of the StampMaster GB programme. Thereafter the software will be erased automatically.

With over 1000 computer discs already sold for this revolutionary computerised stamp cataloguing system, Royal Mail are planning to increase the range of computer types that can run StampMaster – starting with the 1995 update, due for launch in January 1995, with versions for Acorn and AppleMacintosh computers. Version 2.0 of StampMaster will include system enhancements as well as all the new 1994 stamps. Demonstration Discs suitable for Acorn and Macintosh are to be added to the existing IBM compatible format in October 1994 and January 1995 respectively.

Royal Mail are extremely pleased with customer reaction to StampMaster, with nearly all users impressed by the range of functions offered and the huge flexibility it allows. In addition to an excellent database handling system, product manager Steve Griffiths points out the information contained in the database alone (in the form of the National Postal Museum’s copyrighted “Chronolist”) is worth far more than StampMaster’s retail price of £49.95, and this is available nowhere else.

StampMaster demo discs are available from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH, EH3 5TT for £1.50. Please state clearly which type is required.

IBM HD 3.5" code PB059

IBM HD 5.25" code PB061

IBM DD 3.5" code PB058

IBM DD 5.25" code PB060

ACORN code PB062

AppleMacintosh\* code PB063

Please allow up to 28 days for delivery.

\*AppleMac software available from 2 January 1995.

### Machin NVI in Miniature Sheet Format

Royal Mail, in conjunction with Boots the

chemist, will be releasing an innovation of considerable interest to Machin stamp collectors later this month. Every year Boots larger stores sell thousands of greetings cards and soon customers will be able to buy Boots brand cards with a 1st class stamp included in the shrink-wrapped package. The stamp will be printed in a miniature sheet format, the sheet being folded across the corner of the card so as to appear as a "flash" across the finished product. Customers are likely to welcome this new venture as it reduces the risk of forgetting to purchase a stamp, or the need to go to elsewhere to buy a stamp. The card packs containing this stamp sheet will be available at Boots shops from late August. The cost of the stamp will be included in the price of the card pack.



Collectors will be able to buy the sheet, unfolded, from the British Philatelic Bureau or from the 35 Post Office philatelic outlets, from 17 August, price 25p. As the stamp is the same as the NVI stamp in books printed by the House of Questa, no first day of issue facilities will be available.

#### Technical Details

**Printer:** The House of Questa Ltd

**Process:** Offset lithography

**Size:** 85 x 43mm sheet (20 x 24mm stamp)

**Perforation:** 15 x 14, elliptical perfs on left & right sides

**Paper:** Non-phosphor plus two phosphor bars

**Gum:** PVA

Please note: the text on the Sheet refers to the retailer's price for the greetings card which includes the cost of the stamp. The Sheet may be purchased from Royal Mail separately for 25p.

#### Pictorial Aerogrammes

Shown here is another of the six Bird aerogrammes issued on 19 July 1994. These are



available in packs of six different designs, price £2.50 per pack. Details were given in the July *Bulletin*. A single larger size aerogramme, complementing this pack of six standard size versions, will be available from 23 August, price 50p. It will feature Garden Birds.

#### Definitive Stamps – Perforation Formats

A brief announcement concerning the perforation format on sheets of definitive stamps printed by Enschedé was published in the Late News section of the June *Bulletin* (page 303). Further information is now to hand. Future printings of 19p and 25p stamps by Harrison & Sons Ltd will not have perforation holes extending fully across the centre gutter of machine sheets. The machine sheets are split into two "counter sheets" before sale. The left-hand counter sheet bears the no dot cylinder number, the right-hand pane has a dot (full stop) after the cylinder number. The change will be most noticeable to collectors of cylinder blocks as both dot and no dot blocks will in future have just one extension hole in the left-hand margin containing the cylinder number. Cylinder blocks of the old format (Cylinder 3 no dot and dot) are illustrated.

On other low value definitives, currently produced by Joh Enschedé en Zonen, one perforation hole will be removed from the perimeter of the sheet, thereby leaving one hole extending into the margin. Dot and no dot



No dot and dot cylinder blocks – Harrisons and Enschedé

cylinder blocks of the 38p value are shown with the outgoing two extension holes in the sheet margin.

Sheets of NVI (Non-Value Indicator) 1st and 2nd class stamps, Country stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and To Pay labels are not affected by the change of perforation format. The changes to margin perforations are part of an ongoing exercise to standardise products, wherever possible, across each of the four Royal Mail stamp printers. While there will always be variations in the production processes, the perforation layouts need not vary.

Sheets of stamps with the new perforation layouts will go into distribution as required. The first will be the 41p definitive printed by Enschedé.

*Jon Blackwell*

*Royal Mail Stamp Production Dept*

### **Tennyson stamp wins major award**

One of Royal Mail's special stamps has won the title of "Most Beautiful Stamp in the World" in a top international design competition. It came top in the Grand Prix de l'Exposition WIPA awards, which are held each year in Vienna and receive entries from postal authorities all over the world.

The 24p stamp marked the 100th anniversary of the death of poet Alfred Lord Tennyson and was one of a set of four issued in March 1992. Designed by Irene Von Treskow, the stamp shows an illustration of Tennyson's poem

"Merlin and Vivien". The judges praised the way the design successfully linked the illustration and a portrait of Tennyson with the declaration of value and The Queen's head.

Barry Robinson, Royal Mail's Design Director, said: "We are obviously very pleased to receive such a prestigious award as it is a further international acknowledgment that Royal Mail produces beautiful stamps. Irene Von Treskow did a wonderful job for us, capturing perfectly the subject theme in a design which is an example to potential stamp designers."

This is the first time Royal Mail has won the Grand Prix de l'Exposition WIPA award, having previously been three third places in 1984, 1987 and 1989.

The WIPA (Vienna International Philatelic Association) award was set up in 1981 by the WIPA 1981 Organisation Committee in collaboration with the Austrian Postal Administration and the Austrian Philatelic Organisation to help promote stamps around the world. All postal authorities which are members of the UPU (Universal Postal Union) are invited to submit one stamp each year to the competition.

*Celebrating Royal Mail's success (left to right) Lauretta Morris of Royal Mail's Design Department; stamp designer Irene Von Treskow; John Orford of Harrison & Sons; and Royal Mail's Design Co-ordinator Jane Ryan.*



## The British Season: A Celebration of Summertime Entertainments

Collectors who like the new Summertime stamps (2 August) will enjoy this book, originally published by Little, Brown and Company and now available in a special Royal Mail edition which includes a set of the stamps mounted on the Contents pages.

The book contains many fine illustrations by Matthew Cook, the designer of the Summertime stamps, with text by Paul Duncan. In the Introduction, he writes: "To most natives of these islands the 'British Season' is traditionally synonymous with strange class rites enacted in fancy dress to the accompaniment of lashings of fizzy drinks and alfresco dining. It conjures up images of British Society milling about the cricket pitch or the paddock, perched by the picnic hamper or in the tea tent, fulfilling the habits of a lifetime in large hats or striped blazers..." The London and Sporting Seasons had their heyday between the Wars, the London season much captured in literature, such as the novels of Evelyn Waugh. Today an alternative

fans, ranging from the monarch to vicarage wives in stout brogues and young married couples from the suburbs."

The Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy (May-June) attracts large numbers of visitors and entrants. Anyone, anywhere may submit an artwork. Over 13,000 hopefuls entered their work in 1993, of these 1800 people were lucky enough to see their efforts on display.

June is noted for a number of important events, including the Derby, Trooping the Colour, and Royal Ascot. No single event on the Season's calendar is capable of depopulating London quite as much as the Derby stakes at Epsom. Derby Day is hugely popular, a national event providing jubilation and disappointment... Trooping the Colour was first performed on the Sovereign's birthday for George III. The parade itself is based on the ceremony used for guard mounting in the 18th century when the battalion providing guards for the day trooped the Colour to be carried on the King's Guard. Ascot is as fashionable and



"People's Season" includes events such as the Royal Welsh Show, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and day trips to Alton Towers and Chatsworth.

The book opens with a pen portrait of the Chelsea Flower Show (May) – an event causing "a flurry of activity in the nurseries and potting sheds of these islands" to get displays finished on time. "The flower show has a wide variety of

popular now as it was in the 18th century. Mr Duncan describes the event as "...a goldfish bowl in which to observe closely the madness and excesses of the British class system in action."

Towards the end of June all eyes turn to Church Road, SW19, – home of the All England Lawn Tennis Club – for the annual festival of fine tennis. Wimbledon itself is regarded as "a

village to whose teashops, pubs and high street an olde worlde persona attaches... attracting the players who like to rent its homes from inhabitants who move out for the duration of the tournament."

The Edinburgh International Festival (August-September) is described as "not simply a gigantic international cultural beano celebrating the higher arts of opera, music and theatre, painting and sculpture... in amongst the galaxy of buskers working the space by the National Gallery, the Romanian clog dancers and the bungee-jumping on the Meadows, its Fringe end is the largest annual audition in the world." The success of the Edinburgh Festival, in all its "myriad mutations" is measured by its attendance – as many as the other 500 annual British art festivals put together!

The Blackpool Illuminations (September-November) date from 1912 when the first display of lights on Princess Parade marked the visit of Princess Louise, the first royal visitor to the town. The Illuminations make the resort Britain's premier holiday resort – the town claims to have more visitors than Greece and the Greek Islands, with a staggering 120,000 holiday beds – more than the whole of Portugal!

In marked contrast to the glitz of Blackpool is the Royal Highland Games at Braemar, noted for its regular attendance by members of the Royal Family. Highland Games are a highly entertaining aspect of the Scottish summer. Someone once described them as "a cross between a nationalist rally, an international village sports meeting and a trouserless eisteddfod." At Braemar the Royal party sits in a "peculiar wooden bothy adorned with branches and bunting – a structure not unlike a garden shed dressed as if for a harvest festival."

The book concludes with a useful listing of addresses and telephone numbers for tickets to the events described.

Matthew Cook is an illustrator who first worked as a reportage artist in 1986 with Operation Raleigh. His work has taken him around Europe, South America, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. His drawings frequently appear in national newspapers. Paul Duncan specialises in writing stories that illuminate the peculiarities of people and the way they live. He is the London correspondent for Italian *Vogue* and his work has been published in a wide range of newspapers and magazines. He has written four books on Italy.

*The British Season* is sure to be enjoyed by all who delight in the events, sporting occasions and places it so amusingly describes and delightfully illustrates. It contains some 29 full-colour, full-page illustrations, plus numerous others, colour and black & white, of smaller size. The designs used on the stamps are amongst the full-page examples. 128 pages, hardbound with attractive dustjacket. Available from British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT and from 35 Post Office philatelic outlets. Price £14.99. Early ordering advised.

## Summertime Stamps – Cylinders & Colours

The cylinder and colours are as follows:

**19p** P14 (phosphor) 1A (black) 2B (greenish yellow) 1C (bright magenta) 1D (brown) 1E (yellow-brown) 1F (new blue)

**25p** 2A (black) 2B (greenish yellow) 1C (magenta) 1D (reddish violet) 1E (yellow-green) 1F (myrtle-green) 1G (new blue)

**30p** 1A (black) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (bright magenta) 1D (yellow-ochre) 1E (deep slate-blue) 1F (blue-green) 1G (blue)

**35p** 1A (black) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (magenta) 1D (slate-lilac) 1E (yellow-green) 1F (deep bluish green) 1G (bright blue)

**41p** 1A (black) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (bright magenta) 1D (deep claret) 1E (light brown) 1F (myrtle-green) 1G (bright blue)

Additional plate numbers can be recorded for the Pictorial Postcards: 19p 2A2A2A2A; 25p 2A2A2A2A and 3A3A3A3A.

## Post Office Philatelic Outlets

A number of readers have asked us to list Post Office philatelic outlets; this we are happy to do. A mail order service is run by Royal Mail from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

Retail outlets are run by Post Office Counters Ltd at 35 main post offices; these outlets stock the majority of items available from the Bureau. These Post Office outlets are variously called Collections, Philatelic Counters or Post Shops Plus. Most are open normal Post Office hours, Monday-Friday and Saturday morning. Post Shops Plus should not be confused with ordinary Postshops which stock a limited range of philatelic products.

New Bond Street PO, BATH BA1 1AJ  
25 Castle Place PO, BELFAST BT1 1BB

51 Ship Street PO, BRIGHTON BN1 1AA  
 1 Pinfold Street PO, BIRMINGHAM B2 4AA  
 The Galleries PO, Castle Galleries, BRISTOL  
 BS1 3XX  
 9 St Andrews Street PO, CAMBRIDGE CB2 3AA  
 28 High Street PO, CANTERBURY CT1 2BA  
 2 Hills Street PO, CARDIFF CF1 2ST  
 2 St John Street PO, CHESTER CH1 1AA  
 19 Head Street PO, COLCHESTER CO1 1AD  
 Hertford Street PO, COVENTRY CV1 1AD  
 10 High Street PO, CROYDON CR9 1HT  
 33 Silver Street, DURHAM DH1 3RE  
 Waterloo Place PO, EDINBURGH EH1 1AL  
 Bedford Street PO, EXETER EX1 1AH  
 George Square PO, GLASGOW G2 1AA  
 Kings Square PO, GLOUCESTER GL1 1AD  
 North Street PO, GUILDFORD GU1 4BB  
 City Square PO, LEEDS LS1 2UH  
 4 Bishops Street PO, LEICESTER LE1 6AJ  
 Lyceum PO, Bold Street, LIVERPOOL L1 4DD  
 Lombard Street PO, LONDON EC3V 9EB  
 Trafalgar Square PO, William IV Street,  
 LONDON WC2N 4DL  
 26 Spring Gardens PO, MANCHESTER M2 1BB  
 24 Sidgate PO, Eldon Square, NEWCASTLE UPON  
 TYNE NE1 7AB  
 Queen Street PO, NOTTINGHAM NG1 2BN  
 St Aldgates PO, OXFORD OX1 1ZZ  
 Slindon Street PO, PORTSMOUTH PO1 1AB  
 64 South Street PO, ROMFORD RM1 1RL  
 12 High Street PO, SOUTHAMPTON SO1 0WE  
 199 High Street PO, SOUTHEAST ON SEA SS1 1LL  
 2 Henley Street PO, STRATFORD UPON AVON  
 CV37 6PU  
 High Cross PO, TRURO TR1 2AP  
 Peascod Street PO, WINDSOR SL4 1AA  
 22 Lendal PO, YORK YO1 2DA

A limited range of Royal Mail philatelic products is on sale at the National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP, open Monday-Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm. The Museum also sells a range of books, postcards, models and other items of interest to philatelists, postal historians and the general visitor. Postcards, models and other items are on sale at Post Office Archives, Freeling House, Mount Pleasant (Phoenix Place Entrance), LONDON EC1A 1BB, open Monday-Friday, 9am-4.15pm.

### **Bulletin Back Issues**

Back issues are available for one year from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, price 70p per copy for issues to October 1993, 75p per copy thereafter.

Some back issues are also available to callers at the shop at the National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP.

For earlier issues a back number service is operated by Mr Maynard Davies of Bristol. He has for sale bound reprints of Vols 1 and 2. Photocopies can be supplied to order of issues from Vols 3-6. Original copies of many issues from Vol. 7 onwards are available. A limited supply of used binders is held. Mr Davies is interested in purchasing issues from Vols 3-6 but has adequate stocks of later issues. He is not able to undertake the time-consuming task of searching and copying specific articles. All enquiries, accompanied by stamped addressed envelope or international reply coupon, should be sent to: Maynard Davies, Hall Floor Flat, 4 Cecil Road, Clifton BRISTOL BS8 3HR.

### **"Post a Hug" Postcards**

Registered charities Barnardo's and Help the Aged have produced four comic postcards showing a family of bears with the caption "Post A Hug: Everyone Deserves One". The Post a Hug campaign is being supported by Royal Mail; recognition of this appears on the address side of the cards. The four cards are being sold at a number of retail outlets. A limited supply of cards has been obtained by the National Postal Museum and are available to callers at the Museum shop (open Monday-Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm). The cards cost 50p each.

### **New "Stamper" Stamp Books**

From September purchasers of books of 10 1st class stamps will be able to send away for pictorial "stamper" (woodblock rubber stamps) and an ink pad. The "stamper", worded "Happy Birthday", "Do not open until...", "Keep in touch" and "What's happening?" can be used to add a personal touch to social mail. Each "stamper" and ink pad can be obtained by sending in the coupon (on the inside cover of the book) with four 1st class stamps.

Four books of 10 1st class stamps, each showing a different "Stamper" on the front cover will be distributed to post offices and retail outlets from 6 September onwards and will go on sale as stocks of earlier books are used up. Philatelists will be able to buy the four books from the Bureau and 35 Post office philatelic outlets from 6 September.

The books do not contain any new stamps. Approximately 5 million books have been produced and will remain on general sale until supplies are exhausted.

# Hi-Tech Help for Stamp Collectors

JAMES MACKAY

There used to be a verse which went something like this:

What distinguishes philatelists  
From stamp collecting boys,  
Is merely the size and sophistication  
Of their electronic toys.

Having got by for more than half a century with a reasonably good magnifier, a plastic perforation gauge and the jappanned tray and benzine dropper which probably came with my XLCR stamp outfit, I was somewhat bemused when I was asked to test and report on a range of the equipment that is currently available. Over the years I must have measured more perfs and squinted at more watermarks than many readers have had hot dinners, using techniques that had hardly altered since Dr Magnus devised the two centimetre scale back in the 1860s.

## Perforation Measurement

So it was with considerable scepticism, and not a little trepidation, that I unpacked the various boxes and beheld their contents. The first gadget was the Perfotronic which measures perforations accurately using computer technology and light. It is also incredibly simple and easy to use; plug it in to the power source, slip the stamp into the slot at the front and press the button on the left. There's a slight whirring, and a flickering, and then – hey presto! A liquid crystal display gives you a digital read-out. I was mounting stamps of Honduras when the parcel arrived so the first stamp I tested was the 5 centavos of 1895 (SG 102). Sure enough, the read-out was 11.5, which accorded with the catalogue, but on re-inserting the stamp sideways I was surprised to get a reading of 11.75. The other stamps in the set registered 11.5 all round, so had I chanced upon a hitherto unrecorded variety? A footnote, however, warns that forgeries are in existence, including stamps perf 11, 12.5 or 14.5. Is my stamp a forgery or the genuine article?

The Perfotronic is accurate to 1/1000 of a millimetre and operates by means of a light sensor. It is truly a quantum leap of which Jacques-Amable Legrand would have been

proud. Straightaway, it has opened up another dimension and from now on I shall be looking at stamps with a more critical eye. At the same time, could I take this opportunity to appeal to editors, catalogue publishers and philatelic bureaux to scrap vulgar fractions when giving gauges of perforation. It seems anachronistic in these days of metrication to find  $12\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{4}$  – even in countries which have otherwise been metric for generations. The metric system permits a much higher degree of accuracy, such as we can obtain from the Perfotronic, and already I note that some postal administrations (Australia is a splendid example) measure the perforations of their stamps to three decimal points.



The catalogue also mentions that those Honduran stamps occur on thin or thick paper. Time, therefore, to try the Mitutoyo micrometer which measures accurately the thickness of anything up to a centimetre. For all practical purposes, however, we are looking at fractions well below a millimetre in thickness. In the case of my Honduran set, for example, the 5 centavos with the wrong perforation registered a thickness of 0.0075mm, whereas others in the set ranged between 0.0085mm and 0.015mm. This is a beautiful precision instrument with a wide variety of applications, but I can see that for really serious study of an aspect of philately which has hitherto been rather imprecise it would be invaluable.

## Watermark Detection

Useful as these gadgets are they pale into insignificance alongside the Signoscope watermark detectors. These come in two sizes: the Signoscope T2 handheld portable model at £85 and the desk-top Professional model at £155. "No inks, no fluids, no damage, just fast and clean" is the manufacturer's slogan and those who have had the disastrous experience of seeing some modern photogravure stamps melt before our very eyes when splashed with old-fashioned benzine will appreciate the security guaranteed by this machine. All you do is place the stamp under the precision ground optical block and insert this into the scope. A thumbscrew on the T2 and a lever on the Professional apply sufficient pressure, then switch on the illumination and there it is, a watermark you can really see and study and measure, for as long as you like – not something that "flits, ere you can point the place" as the benzine evaporates.

For my money, however, I would opt every time for the larger Professional model. I only wish I'd had this extremely useful gadget years ago. When I think of the headaches and eye strain I've suffered from checking the watermarks on GB postage dues and Wilding definitives! At the present time, the most awkward watermarks are probably those employed by the Crown Agents, but with the Signoscope the subtleties of CA spirals are revealed with startling clarity. Incidentally, an extremely useful bonus is the ability of the Signoscope to show up any defects, repairs or fakery.



## UV Scanner

Last, but by no means least, there is the Phililux II HF. Although this is essentially a UV scanner it also has built into it a very accurate perforation gauge and a versatile magnifier which can give up to six-fold magnification and a field of view 50mm in diameter. However, it is as a scanner that it will be mainly employed, both long and short wave tubes being included. The long wave tube has a light wavelength of 366nm and, as the instrument hails from Nuremberg, it comes as no surprise that this standard UV-A burner was designed with the stamps of Germany in mind. On the other hand many other phosphor-treated stamps continue to glow and cannot be activated by this long wave light. For the stamps of the USA and Britain, therefore, you need to use the short wave UV-C light with a wavelength of 254nm. Fortunately these tubes are easily interchangeable. No one attempting to make a serious study of the Machin definitives can afford to be without this instrument. A "philatelist" of the old school said to me recently that when stamps had differences that could not be seen with the naked eye it was time to abandon the hobby and take up telephone cards instead; but that is a shortsighted view (no pun intended). As science finds ever more ingenious ways of loading paper magnetically or electronically, philately must move with the times – and these machines are the ideal tools for this job.

© James Mackay 1994

*Editors Note:* The equipment tested by Dr Mackay is all available from: Safe Albums (UK) Ltd, Freepost, WOKINGHAM, Berks RG11 1BR.

**Win a Perfotronic in this month's competition – see page 363.**

# Out of the Arc ...

## Curiosities from the Post Office Archives

### 4. Horse's Sick Note

Over the years The Post Office has been one of the country's largest employers, sometimes recruiting specialist personnel from the animal world.

The modern Post Office proudly proclaims

the fact that it is an equal opportunities employer. Pictured here is a sick note from 1898 which proves that, in The Post Office, even horses were entitled to medical leave!

*Simon Bates, Information Officer*

*Horse's sick note 1898*

Printed by W. F. GIFFORD & SONS, LTD., Old Bailey, London, E.C.

27 Oct 1898

I CERTIFY that Mr. J C Poffleton's horse of the Post Office  
is suffering from fire shoulders  
and unable to perform his official duties.

He is to resume duty on or before the the 7<sup>th</sup> of November  
or obtain a renewal of this Certificate.

Reverend L. A. C. V. S. Medical Officer.



*Postman, Horse & cart*

# Philatelic Terms Explained

KENNETH F. CHAPMAN

## No 46: Parcel Labels

Rowland Hill's postal reforms implemented in 1840 concerned only the letter post of which the Post Office enjoyed a monopoly. In 1842, Hill turned his attention to a parcel service based on the same principle, that of charging by weight irrespective of the distance involved.

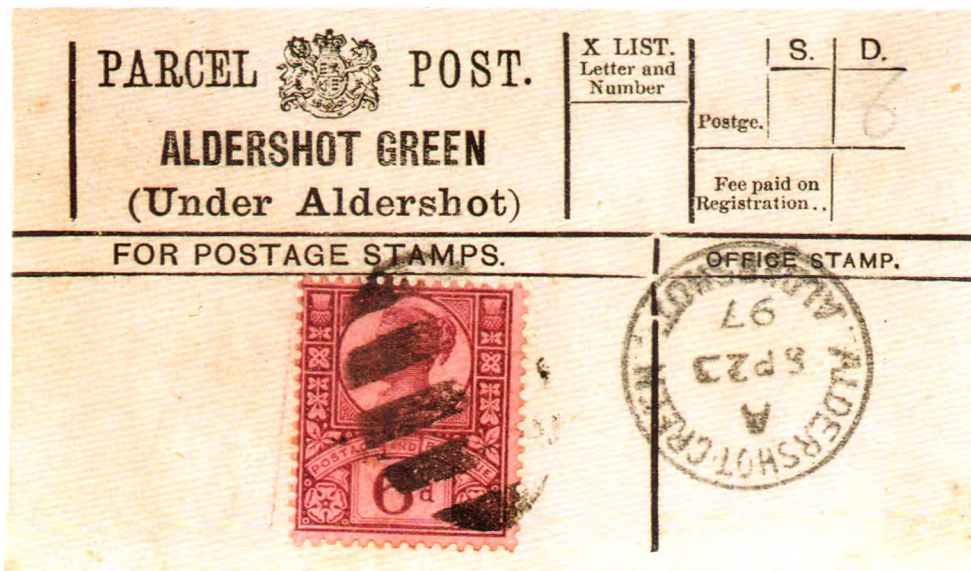
The idea was strenuously opposed by the private road carriers (notably Pickford's), and the railway companies who lobbied Parliament against it. Eventually, in August 1883 – yes, 41 years on! – a parcel post was established in agreement with the railways who, for a period of 21 years, were to receive 55% of all postage paid on parcels carried by them.

By 1883 the Sample Post and Book Post offered a virtual parcel service anyway on items under a pound in weight. The Parcel Post, however, provided coverage for parcels up to 7lbs in weight. Every post office was issued with its own adhesive Parcel Label bearing its name and designation. The regulations laid down that the adhesives prepaying the parcel postage had to be affixed by the customer to the label, which was then datestamped at the side. The adhesives

were cancelled by cork "killers" but from 1885 undated rubber stamps bore the office name.

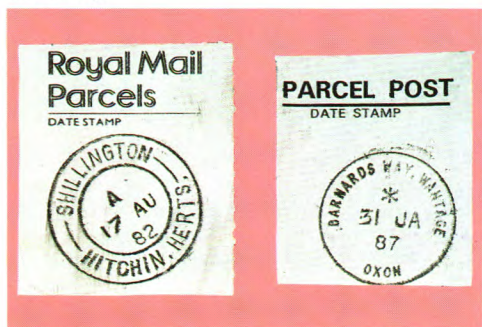
The first issue of labels was headed "PARCELS POST" but the public insisted that as the Letter Post was just that, why should "PARCELS" be allowed rather than "PARCEL". The Postmaster-General (Henry Fawcett) reluctantly gave way to popular opinion and from 1884 onwards all these parcel labels were inscribed "PARCEL POST". The original "PARCELS" type of 1883 incorporated a space below the heading inscribed, "For Postage Stamps and (where used) Date Stamp". Many small offices at that time had no datestamp: in those cases the name of the office and the date were inserted in manuscript. From February 1886 the label was ruled to allow for writing in figures the amount of postage paid. In August 1888 a panel was introduced to the right of the heading with provision for X List-Letter and Number. The system of X-listing, to account for railway-borne parcels, was adopted in 1886, but two years elapsed before provision for a cross-reference between the X-List and the individual parcel was included in the label.

It should be noted that the 55% for the railways only applied to the basic postage and not to any special service fees. Where the Post Office found it more economical on short-haul routes to carry the mail by their own horse-drawn vehicles, then no part of even the basic postage went to the railways. The "X List" panel was to alert the clerks to parcels carried fully or



partly by PO road services for which the railways could not claim payment.

The success of the parcel post can be judged from the fact that 23 million parcels were handled in the first full year of operation. During their life-time, there were several variations of the Parcel Label but all were basically alike. Because the labels frequently bore stamps not normally available to collectors in used condition, vast numbers of stamps were soaked off the labels which then became of less interest to postal historians. They continued in use till the First World War, but were then superseded by facsimile parcel rubber datestamps at the larger offices. The small offices, however, adopted anonymous labels which are employed to this day, identified by the datestamp.



Labels were printed in black on white paper, with some exceptions. Parcels confined to the London area and conveyed by road were printed on blue paper, while labels on parcels carried by the London-Brighton parcel coach were printed on orange paper.

Lesser-known are the private parcel labels, modelled on the official issues but incorporating the name of the firm using them. Examples are: James Shoolbred & Co of London, Marshall & Snelgrove, Pryce Jones Ltd of Newton, Montgomery, and Cadbury Brothers Ltd of Bourneville, Birmingham. For security reasons, these private issues were sometimes "perfinned" with the issuing firm's initials. J & P Coates of Paisley had private labels with the value pre-printed, and validated by means of the Paisley "Paid" datestamp.

The labels, of which this account is no more than a summary, still provide a wide field of study. Full details of the Parcel Post can be found in *Parcel Post of the British Isles* written and published by James Mackay in 1982.

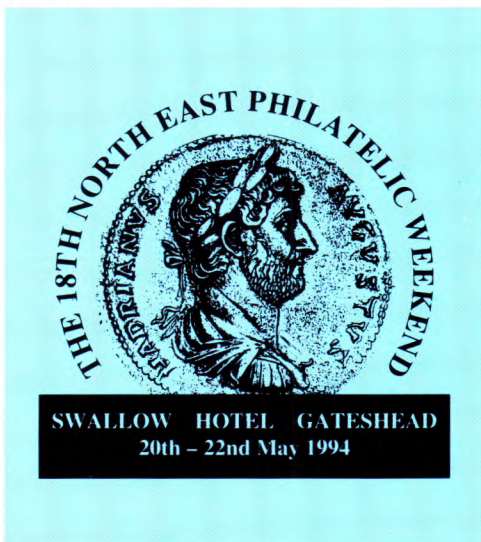
© Kenneth F Chapman 1994

## Stamp Scene

### Northeast Philatelic Weekend Souvenir Booklet

A limited edition souvenir booklet was produced for the 18th Northeast Philatelic Weekend (Gateshead 20-22 May 1994). The booklet has a Hadrian theme and contains Hadrian stamps from the 1993 Roman Britain issue. The booklet covers were printed by The House of Questa. These booklets are private productions, not connected with Royal Mail. Price £2 per booklet; available from Dorothy M Martin, 46 Briardene Crescent, Kenton Park, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE3 4RY. Remittances payable to "Dorothy Martin"; please enclose stamped addressed envelope for reply.

A few of the previous souvenir booklets, produced since 1982 and all with covers printed by Questa, are available. Details on request from Mrs Martin.



### Astro-Space Stamp Society

Russian cosmonaut Georgi Mikhailovich Grechko has recently accepted the post of Honorary Patron of the Astro Space Stamp Society – a British-based society for all collectors of space stamps. Grechko, the 34th Russian in space, is an avid collector of "Space Research" stamps and his collection includes several issues devoted to his own space flights.

Details of the Society can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope or international reply coupon to: Brian Lockyer, 17 Wellington Road, CROWTHORNE, Berks, RG11 7LJ.

# The Next British International - Your Views

In the May *Bulletin* Peter Jennings, FRPSL set out his views about a future international stamp exhibition in Britain. If such an exhibition is staged at the turn of the century, it will be necessary soon to start planning and raising the necessary finance. We asked for readers' comment on Mr Jennings's proposals. In particular we wanted to know if there is a desire amongst collectors for an international exhibition in the UK, should it be in the year 2000 or 2001?, should it be in London, Birmingham or elsewhere? What time of year would be preferable? What level of admission charge should be levied?, and would collectors be prepared to financially support the exhibition, possibly through a share issue? Mr Jennings estimated it would cost £4 million to stage a prestigious exhibition, a worthy successor to the internationals in London in 1950 (Grosvenor House), 1960 (Royal Festival Hall), 1970 (Olympia), 1980 (Earl's Court) and 1990 (Alexandra Palace).

The response was to say the least, disappointing with just 31 of our 36,000 readers expressing comment. It would thus seem that there is little interest in a future international despite the success of the 1990 event – with nearly 100,000 visitors – just four years ago! Have things really changed so dramatically in so short a time?

Many of those who took the trouble to respond (for which many thanks) gave clear answers to the questions posed; the results are tabulated below:

## Location

|               |    |
|---------------|----|
| London        | 13 |
| Birmingham    | 15 |
| No preference | 3  |
| <i>Total</i>  | 31 |

## Year

|               |    |
|---------------|----|
| 1999          | 1  |
| 2000          | 18 |
| 2001          | 5  |
| No preference | 7  |
| <i>Total</i>  | 31 |

## Time of Year

|                      |    |
|----------------------|----|
| April/May            | 3  |
| Summertime           | 2  |
| September            | 0  |
| Off-season (Oct/Mar) | 3  |
| No preference        | 23 |
| <i>Total</i>         | 31 |

## Admission Charge

|               |    |
|---------------|----|
| under £5      | 13 |
| £5 or more    | 1  |
| No preference | 17 |
| <i>Total</i>  | 31 |

## Support for Share Idea

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| In Favour    | 3  |
| Against      | 0  |
| No comment   | 28 |
| <i>Total</i> | 31 |

The sample is perhaps too small to draw many conclusions. There is equal support for both London and Birmingham, (nowhere else was suggested) and those who voted for Birmingham were extremely praising of the National Exhibition Centre. Even some who preferred London accepted that the facilities at the NEC were better than those currently on offer in the capital.

Turning to the timing of the exhibition, the majority favoured 2000 but there was no clear majority of the time of year although no one suggested September – the month chosen for the 1970 (Philympia) exhibition.

Most who commented on admission charges wanted to see them below £5 to encourage the greatest number of visitors. It was felt that the brunt of the cost of staging the exhibition should be borne by the postal administrations and dealers who take stands. Few mentioned sponsorships by companies and those who did wondered which companies would be interested. Financial service companies were mostly suggested. It is encouraging that some readers expressed an interest in a share issue in support of the exhibition.

## What now?

I am sure these views (also opinions of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* readers) will be of interest to those likely to form an exhibition organising committee. They cannot be greatly encouraged by the seemingly tiny support for an exhibition. If it is accepted that there is so little interest in an exhibition, then questions as to location, time of year, admission charges, etc all become largely irrelevant. One thing is clear, however, if there is to be an exhibition, most people would prefer to attend it in 2000 rather than 2001.

More of you may be encouraged to respond now you have seen the opinions already expressed. Further views are still welcome and will be read with interest. Write to: The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL.

The following letter from Mr Patrick Pearson, RDP, FRPSL, Vice President, Federation Internationale de Philatelie, comments on Mr Jennings's suggestions and raises some other matters that readers may wish to comment on.

*Patrick Pearson writes:*

Peter Jennings posed a number of questions in his editorial in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* on the next British International Exhibition which was summarised in the May 1994 issue of the *Bulletin*. In my opinion there are other questions which should be asked first.

His final query was "what do the Royal Philatelic Society, the British Philatelic Trust and the Association of British Philatelic Societies think?" I do not consider this to be the question he should have asked at this stage: the real question is what do British stamp collectors think and want? Unless the ordinary collector-in-the-street wants an "International Exhibition" and is prepared to come to it, it may be better to celebrate the new millennium in some other way. Perhaps by a coordinated series of stamp fairs and theme exhibitions throughout the country during the twelve months leading to 1 January 2001 – in other words take stamps to the people rather than people to the stamps.

Coupled with this is what will the trade support. The opportunity to add to their collections is, I believe, the primary reason collectors visit exhibitions in Europe. Only in Asia do collectors and non-collectors storm the doors of Stamp Exhibitions to look at the exhibits.

The RPS may provide members of the organising committee, the BPT will no doubt be

asked for some type of financial support from seed money to acting as the financial intermediary between Royal Mail and the management organisation as in 1990, and the ABPS and local societies should be an, if not the, active promotional force. It is still the visitors who will count, both to ensure trade support and also if the new Royal Mail, whose future depends on the current Green paper, will consider providing financial backing to a significant extent.

Returning to Mr Jennings other questions, 2000 or 2001? Three major, international exhibitions are already planned for 2000 – Brussels, Vienna and Madrid. A fourth would be, in my view, too many although one of those proposed may drop out. Anyway the idea of one every 10 years is not sacrosanct. The first international was held in 1890 followed by one in 1897 with further exhibitions in Manchester in 1899 and London in 1906. The Junior Philatelic Society (now National Philatelic Society) staged a great exhibition in 1923, the only full international between the wars although there was an air post exhibition in 1934. 2001 has its attraction, the first year of the 21st century rather than the last of the 20th. However will the concept of a new millennium have become stale; people tend to talk of the year 2000 as being a magical number. Personally I prefer 2001 as a 'look forward' rather than 'look back' anniversary.

Where? London, Birmingham or elsewhere. Jennings makes a good case for the National Exhibition Centre. From experience of provincial rather than capital city exhibitions I have some reservations. First London has a population catchment of around 9 million, Birmingham less than 2 million. However good the communications how many collectors will take the day out and, more importantly, return on more than one day. Second, and more vital, are there enough local collectors willing and able to take on the management of such an event. It is impossible to run an exhibition without a sound local base as the American Philatelic Society has recently discovered when planning the Olympilex exhibition to take place during the next Olympic games at Atlanta in 1996. Their original plan to organise it from afar has proved unworkable despite the support of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games with major service facilities in Atlanta. Occasional day trips to view the site and local facilities will, in my opinion, not work. If the exhibition were to

be held at the NEC most of the management team will have to come from local Society members helped, if requested, by advice from those involved with previous internationals. Brum collectors step forward and make your case.

His other points, how should the exhibition be funded and how should it be promoted, will be the responsibility of whoever is running the exhibition, a sound financial plan would be the first task of any organising committee plus identifying the General Manager; I can not immediately see a replacement for the late Leon Rapkin who so successfully managed Stamp World London '90.

Another question Mr Jennings has not asked is "what type of exhibition should be held?" A full scale World Exhibition with all FIP classes or a limited one with only a few classes – as is becoming increasingly common, eg Finlandia '95 for postal history and postal stationery, Indonesia '96 for youth, Budapest '96 for Thematics and literature. If so which classes? To drop postal history in England would be unpopular, no revenues would cause an outcry

in some quarters, thematic collecting needs encouraging. What about no traditional exhibits, no studies of the Penny Black and Two Pence Blue or are these old hat in the 21st century. Should there be a modern philately class, what about youth. Answers please. As well as reducing the space required, a limited exhibition is usually around 1500 frames, the planning for a special exhibition also tends to be easier.

Finally I have, for anyone who would like it, a five year critical path program based on that used up to 1990. The first critical activity, formation of a preliminary management team, took place just over 5 years to go. For an exhibition in the United Kingdom in May 2000 you only have until March 1995 before the domesday clock starts ticking.

### 60p Definitive Stamp Book

Post Office Counters Ltd advise that the books of 60p stamps (issued 9 August 1994), will be available from the post offices listed below. This is in addition to the 35 regular Post Office philatelic outlets (Collections, Post Shops Plus, and Philatelic Counters):

#### London

London Bridge, SE1  
Westminster Bridge Road, SE1  
Lewisham, SE13  
Sloane Square, SW1  
Chelsea, SW3  
Balham, SW12  
Albermarle Street, W1  
Baker Street, W1  
Broadwick Street, W1  
Great Portland Street, W1  
Heddon Street, W1  
South Molton Street, W1  
High Holborn, WC1  
Theobalds Road, WC1

Bangor, Gwynedd  
Battle, E Sussex  
Birmingham (Acocks Green)  
Birmingham (Edgbaston)  
Birmingham (Warstone Lane)  
Bournemouth  
Bristol (Queens Road)  
Cardiff (Albany Road)  
Carlisle

Chelmsford  
Doncaster  
Dundee  
East Kilbride  
Edinburgh (Frederick Street)  
Edinburgh (Hope Street)  
Edinburgh (Morningside)  
Evesham, Worcs  
Exeter  
Glasgow (George Square)  
Glasgow (Hope Street)  
Grantham, Lincs  
Halesowen, W Midlands  
Halifax  
Leeds (St Johns)  
Leeds (Markets)  
Lichfield, Staffs  
Liverpool (Corn Exchange)  
Liverpool (Lyceum)  
Manchester (Chorlton-cum-Hardy)  
Matlock, Derbyshire  
Morpeth, Northd  
Nelson, Lancs  
Newbury, Berks  
Newcastle upon Tyne (Barras Bridge)

Northallerton, N Yorkshire  
Norwich (Davey Place)  
Oswestry, Shropshire  
Paisley  
Perth  
Poole  
Preston  
Rugby  
Salisbury  
Scarborough  
Sheffield  
Slough  
South Shields, Tyne & Wear  
Stirling  
Stockport  
Sutton Coldfield  
Winton (Manchester)  
Torquay  
Weston super Mare  
Weymouth  
Winchester  
Worthing

# Something New in the World of Stamp Collecting

CRISPIN TAYLOR

*Exhibitions Manager, Royal Mail National*

The Autumn Stampex BPE 11-16 October, held at its usual London venue The Royal Horticultural Halls, Victoria, will see an Open Class to encourage those to whom stamp collecting is fun. Rules will be at a minimum and prizes will be useful rather than ornamental. In the competition classes considerable emphasis is placed on philatelic knowledge, treatment, rarity, etc. In the Open Class stamps and/or other philatelic or related material should be used to make an attractive display that will appeal to the people who visit the exhibition.



*Mr W A Wiseman holding the Royal Mail Trophy he won at Autumn Stampex 1993. With him is Julie Dunwiddie, Royal Mail's Manager Direct & Overseas Sales, Philatelic Service.*

The competition classes at Stampex are divided into Traditional, Postal History, Aerophilatelic, Thematic, International and Literature. Entry fees vary (from £15 to £105 this year). There are also 22 trophies and awards for outstanding exhibits.

Amongst these are the Post Office Trophy and National Postal Museum Medal. The Post Office Trophy is awarded in the GB section of the Traditional Class. It was first awarded in 1969 to Mr B L Barker for "QE II Castles High Values". Last year's winner was Tony Wiseman for his exhibit "Army Paid (Stamped) Mail 1807-1914 and Army Official Stamps 1896-1904" The

National Postal Museum Medal is awarded for Queen Elizabeth II GB material in the Traditional, Postal History or Literature Classes. The medal was first awarded in 1982 to Mr J Mason for "The Development of Different Types of Machin Head used on Low Value Definitives". It was awarded last year to Douglas Myall for *The Complete Deegam Machin Handbook*.

The closing date for entry into the Open and Competition Classes is mid-July. Anyone who would like to enter an exhibit at next year's Autumn Stampex, should write for further details to Tony R Finlayson, Secretary, Exhibition Committee, Autumn Stampex BPE, 107 Charterhouse Street, LONDON EC1M 6PT.

## Help for Those Wishing to Exhibit

Help is available for collectors who would like to submit an entry for a national exhibition, but would like some initial guidance. The National Philatelic Society in conjunction with Stampex Ltd have set up an Appraisal Scheme. While no medals are awarded, entries are assessed on the same criteria used to judge the Autumn Stampex. An indication will be given of the medal that might be achieved, together with guidance as to how the exhibit might be developed.

The Appraisal Scheme is open to anyone, whether or not they have exhibited in a National competition. There is a small administrative charge (£5 for NPS members and £10 per entry for non-members this year). Entry forms and further details for the Autumn 1995 Appraisal Scheme are available from the National Philatelic Society, 107 Charterhouse Street, LONDON EC1M 6PT.

**Autumn Stampex 11-16 October 1994**  
**Spring Stampex 28 February-5 March 1995**  
**Autumn Stampex 10-15 October 1995**  
**Enquiries: 071-490 1005**

# Commemorative Labels from 1897

JAMES NEGUS, FRPSL

In July Royal Mail included a commemorative label in a booklet pane, thus beginning a series that will interest numerous collectors. The first subject chosen for commemoration has been the 300th anniversary of the founding of the Bank of England. The omission of such a notable event from the stamp programme for 1994 had already drawn criticism in the press and this is now redressed with the appearance of this handsome label.

Royal Mail have an unenviable task in deciding among the many competing claims put to them each year for particular subjects and anniversaries to be issued as commemorative stamps. Introducing this new category of commemorative labels gives a little more leeway and is to be welcomed.

## Diamond Jubilee

The Bank of England label is wisely not inscribed as a "stamp", so that it should not see any repeat of confusion that arose nearly 100 years ago. When a set of seven appeared at the time of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897 bearing the words "Commemorative

stamp", it is not surprising that they looked as if they would prepay postage.

They would not, as they were unofficial productions. The Post Office themselves were not persuaded to issue any commemorative stamps for this Jubilee or indeed any other event until the British Empire Exhibition in 1924.

The labels, each also inscribed "Diamond Jubilee 1897", portray royalty as follows. In small size, the 1/2d brown, 1d orange and 1 1/2d green have the head of Queen Victoria wearing veil and small crown. There is also a 2d violet depicting Prince Edward as a child, who became King Edward VIII, later Duke of Windsor. Three larger labels in horizontal format complete the set, those of 3d red and 4d blue showing portraits of the Prince and Princess of Wales (later King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra) while the 6d grey has the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George V and Queen Mary). The labels are lithographed on white wove paper, gummed but without watermark. Examples seen were perf 14, but the standard catalogue by Dr Chris Chatfield (ref 1) records them as also existing imperforate. The 2d is



known imperf between stamp and top margin and the labels have apparently even been forged. Both small (1½d) and large (4d, 6d) labels occur in complete sheets of 120 and other values are probably similar.

### Incomplete Story

Something is known of these labels, but as is often the case with “Cinderella” items, not the whole story. It is not certain who manufactured them, though L N and M Williams (2) believed



it was “probably a foreign source”. They were on sale in London through at least two of the main dealers – W S Lincoln and Wallace Brothers (a firm which became H & A Wallace in the 1930s). Though the labels can be purchased unmounted mint to this day, they were also distributed stuck down on special sheets. Mentions in the philatelic literature suggest there must have been several types of these, some headed “Diamond Jubilee Commemorative/Stamp” in English and some in French, also some with a price quoted.

The set had a supposed “face value” of 1s 6d and Harry Rooke (3) reports that some stuck-down sheets at first showed “The set complete 2/6”. He goes on: “Later sheets show this price reduced first to 1/6 and then, apparently in desperation, to 2d!” The French version seems to have fared no better: F E Dixon (4) had one showing a price or “2.75 (francs) altered in blue crayon to 2”. (Whether the francs were Belgian or French is, again, unknown.)

It scarcely needs adding that this dismal record is unlikely to be repeated with the newly issued Bank of England commemorative label!

The Jubilee labels are illustrated by courtesy of Rushstamps (Retail) Ltd, PO Box 1, LYNHURST, Hampshire, SO43 7PP. Ed.

### References

1. *Great Britain Commemorative Labels pre-1950* London: Cinderella Stamp Club, 1991.
2. *Cinderella Stamps*. London: Heinemann, 1970. See pp.117-18.
3. *Philatelic Magazine* Vol. 85 (Apr 1977) p.523.
4. *The Cinderella Philatelist* Vol. 3 (Oct 1963) p.78.

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### Railway Letter Stamps

A new 25p railway letter stamp was issued by the Bluebell Railway on 21 May to mark the official re-opening of Kingscote station on the line’s “northern extension” from Horsted Keynes towards the original starting point at East Grinstead. The stamp, showing a train at Kingscote station, was printed in black and red in sheets of four by Faulwood & Herbert Ltd. A limited edition first day cover was prepared; this bears an enlargement of the stamp design. The railway stamp was cancelled by an oval KINGSCOTE station stamp; the Royal Mail 25p



definitive bears the Gatwick MLO machine postmark. Mint stamps cost 25p, £1 per sheet, first day cover £2.50. They are available from stations on the Bluebell Railway and by post from: P A Forrester Smith, 64 Gordon Road, CARSHALTON BEECHES Surrey SM5 3RE (enclose SAE with order).

The Bluebell is one of a number of preserved railways which carries railway letters under an agreement with Royal Mail.

# Decimal Stamp Books—16

## Specialist Report

D G A MYALL

Summertime used to be when philately took a back seat and outdoor pursuits were followed. This year, however, Royal Mail has other plans for you as there will be an exceptional number of new stamp books on sale. Of course, you might wish to combine the indoor and outdoor aspects of your hobby in your hunt for some of the new books. There are some very attractive rural post offices worth a visit in their own right.

### Vended stamp books

The 50p and £1 books printed by Harrisons were issued on 6 June with new cover designs, the third in the series on Coaching Inns and twentieth-century Prime Ministers respectively. The fourth and last in these two series will be issued on 6 September when they will be joined by the third £2 book in the series illustrating Postal Vehicles. The contents are unchanged and all are printed by Harrisons.

I have seen a suggestion that the September

that this series is beautifully designed and printed and the latest example enhances this reputation. It also continues the established practice of introducing innovations, of which there are two notable examples in this edition. It is the first one to have stamps with elliptical perforations and the first to include stamped postal stationery. One of the two postcards included bears a pre-paid 35p impression which is the worldwide postcard rate.

During production planning the value of the postcard impression was raised from 30p to 35p and this results in the book's total value content of £6.04, at which odd-looking price it will be sold. No cover price is printed on the book, a fact which has facilitated this design change and is possibly a follow-on from the experience with the Beatrix Potter book which was actually sold below the price printed on the cover.

The official first day cover service is limited, as usual, to the mixed pane of nine. This contains the new Northern Ireland 19p country stamp with left phosphor bar. In fact, the other stamps on this pane are also new to the specialist, having bars derived from 8mm phosphor bands, instead of the 9.5mm bands of the sheet stamps. More obviously, perhaps, the three National values on the pane of six are also

**Pheasant Inn.**  
Wiltshire  
Fourth in a series  
of coaching inns  
illustrated by  
Andrew Davidson  
Printed by  
Harrison &  
Sons Limited



*50p book – 6 September*

£1 book may have been printed by Walsall and it is true that an "Attlee cover" from this firm was illustrated in Royal Mail's Spring briefing handout for journalists. However, this was only a proof and all vended stamp books to be issued this year will be printed by Harrisons.

### Northern Ireland Prestige Book

The latest Prestige Book was issued on 26 July. Because these books often contain stamps not available from any other source, collectors either love 'em or hate 'em, but there can be no doubt

new, being the first printings of them in lithography by Questa. If you require these on a first day cover you will have had to prepare one yourself, or obtain one from the many commercial sources catering for you. Maybe, now that new stamps and new se-tenant arrangements are appearing on panes other than the traditional pane of nine with a central label, Royal Mail might increase the Edinburgh Bureau's work load by asking them to offer a FDC service for these also.

Need to know a postcode?  
Tel: 0345 111 222



## Bank of England £1 Book

This book was issued 27 July, the day after the Northern Ireland book, to mark the tercentenary of the Bank of England. It contains a combined label and pane of four 1st-class NVIs each with two phosphor bars, the whole being the size of a normal pane of 10 stamps and folded into the covers accordingly. Unfortunately, this means that the label itself is folded in the process. Obliging, in order to cater for FDC collectors, Royal Mail made the pane available unfolded and separate from the book. They also afforded a 14-day grace period during which covers bearing the unfolded pane would receive the first day of issue postmark. Although this is a new departure for collectors and others wishing to prepare their own FDCs, it has been standard practice for many years for the printers to supply unfolded and unsewn set-tenant panes from prestige books to Edinburgh for their FDC service. Illustrated is a label from a parcel of 1000 panes from *The Times* book supplied for this purpose in 1985.



Harrison and Sons Ltd., High Wycombe

The cover of the Bank of England book does not carry any indication of its content. This was to ensure that it was widely distributed through retail outlets as many retailers might have been reluctant to make it the subject of a special stock

order. The colour and phosphor plate numbers seen are all numbered Q1; the colours are dark blue, light blue, turquoise, light green, pale orange (twice) and flame. Presumably, one of the duplicated plates prints part of the label and the other the stamp, since the total of eight plates requires that the pane go through the four-colour Heidelberg Speedmaster press twice.

## Trial airmail stamp book

A window book containing a pane of four 60p slate blue stamps with two phosphor bars and four airmail labels has been printed by Walsall and will be issued on 9 August. This is a trial addition to the range to meet customer requirements for a stamp for the second weight step, 20 grams, for worldwide airmail letters. This is the first ever 60p stamp to be issued and is a must for every Machin collector. There are no plans at present to issue it in sheet form. The book will be on geographically limited sale through W H Smith and other retailers, and will be available from the Bureau and Post Office Counters' 35 philatelic outlets.

## "Win a Kite" book

Royal Mail will also join with Smiths to promote "Win a Kite" window stamp books. These contain standard panes of 10 x 1st-class NVIs printed by Walsall but are distinguished from the normal books by the printing on the yellow tab strip. Instead of "Pull Open" this reads: "Open now; chance to win a kite". When you open the book, the text on the inside back cover will say either "You've won" or "Better luck next time". Your chance of winning is quite good as one in every 50 books will contain the winning text. You can then exchange the cover for a kite bearing a picture of the ubiquitous Paddington Bear who is now likely to ascend to new heights.



*Kite books – available from philatelic outlets from 4 October (Panels of 10, some stamps folded under to show text)*

The promotion will be exclusively in the retailer's book stores and will last for three months from July to September. After that, from 4 October, you will be able to obtain both books to order from the Edinburgh Bureau and other philatelic outlets, for whom specially selected books will be made available but, of course, you will not win a kite so both types of book should be in equal demand.

### In the pipeline

In November, there will once again be two stamp books each containing Christmas stamps – one with twenty 19p centre band and one with ten 25p on phosphorised paper. The stamps will be from the special issue (not NVIs).

### Change in Questa phosphor

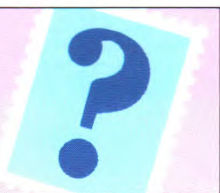
Hitherto, the phosphor bands on Questa's panes of 10 x 2nd-class NVIs have been interrupted, leaving a small gap over the horizontal perforations, i.e., the bars on individual stamps were short at top and bottom, so long as their

registration was correct. This was done for operational reasons, as it was found that the phosphor caused undue wear and tear on the Bickel perforator (although no such breaks occurred on Questa's panes of 1st-class NVIs). Following the installation of new machinery, this special phosphor layout is no longer necessary and the bands on Questa panes of 2nd-class NVIs are now continuous. This change was first seen on 19 May in books with panes from plate combination Q11 Q11/Q1 and with the validity notice referring only to UK rates. The bands are also slightly wider than formerly, 4.5mm compared to 4mm. This new layout obviously required a new phosphor plate but it is, like all Questa plates for phosphor ink, numbered Q1. I understand that the change is permanent so combination Q11 Q11/Q1 is likely to be the only one which appears with both types of overprint.

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# Competition

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SAFE ALBUMS (UK) LTD



## Win a Perfotronic electronic perforation gauge

This month's competition is sponsored by Safe Albums (UK) Ltd who are donating as first prize, a Perfotronic electronic perforation gauge, retail price £172. This is one of a number of impressive items of philatelic equipment tested by and reported on by James Mackay specially for this month's *Bulletin*. Runners up in the competition will receive *Bulletin* binders (supplied by Royal Mail).



## Introducing Safe Albums (UK) Ltd

Safe Albums are the UK market leaders for testing equipment, suitable for use on GB stamps. In addition, Safe produce a comprehensive hingeless album for Great Britain. Safe also offer a special page for *Machins* with 27 pockets, whereby collectors can make up their own collection and write it up according to their needs.

All Safe products are available from good dealers, or if in difficulty, please write to:

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**FREEPOST (RG1792)**  
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**Berks**  
**RG11 1BR**  
**Tel. 0734 328976**  
**Fax 0734 328612**



To enter this month's competition answer the questions below (answers will be found in this month's *Bulletin*), and send with your name and address on a postcard to: August Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL. Entries should arrive by 30 September.

The sender of the first all-correct entry drawn will be sent the Perfotronic (donated by Safe Albums); five runners-up will be sent *Bulletin* binders (supplied by Royal Mail). Answers and winners' names will be published in the November *Bulletin*.

1. Who designed the Medical Discoveries stamps?
2. What colour was the 1d label commemorating Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee in 1897?
3. Who is the Information Manager at Post Office Archives?
4. Who donated a George V letter box to the Mid-Hants Railway?
5. Of what does James Mackay write: "I only wish I'd had this extremely useful gadget years ago."?

The competition is not open to employees of Royal Mail or Safe Albums (UK) Ltd.

The winners of the May competition were:

D Bagley (Ireland); Miss G Young (London); R London (Birmingham); Miss J Riley (N Yorkshire); M Johnson (Newcastle upon Tyne); Miss D Baissac (London); C Grenet-Delisle (France); S Watts (Cambridge); D Barker (Bedfordshire); Miss A Li (Devon); L Moigward (N Yorkshire); and B Carroll (Surrey). The prizes were donated by Tony Lester, philatelic auctioneers, of Coventry.

The answers were: 1. 1963; 2. Douglas N Muir; 3. Captain E E Fresson; 4. £4 million; 5. 5 014721.

Our thanks to all who entered.

Dealers interested in sponsoring the *Bulletin* competition should write, giving details of their company and prizes offered, to: The Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square LONDON EC2A 1NL.

## Posting Boxes

### No. 150 Private Railway Boxes

Alan Foot, Postal Co-ordinator of the Mid-Hants Railway, has submitted photographs of Victorian and George V boxes situated at Alresford and Ropley stations on this preserved railway. The boxes, now painted green, are maintained and opened by MHR staff. All mail posted therein is given a cachet worded POSTED ON THE WATERCRESS LINE before being transferred to Royal Mail. Over the summer months many visitors' postcards are posted in this way. Notices on the boxes testify to their private, i.e. non-Royal Mail, status.



The box at Alresford is owned by Mr W Sait and is on loan to the Railway; the Ropley box was donated to the MHR by Mr Peter Bartlett. The boxes were brought into use in May 1991.

Details of the Mid-Hants Railway and its railway letter stamps (reported from time to time in this Bulletin), can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope or international reply coupon to: A E Foot, Postal Co-ordinator, Mid-Hants Railway, ALRESFORD, Hants, SO24 9JG.



Readers interested in letter boxes should consider joining the Letter Box Study Group which has some 700 members. For details send a stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary: Sally Jones, 43 Miall Road, Hall Green, BIRMINGHAM B28 9BS.

## Postbag

J R HOLMAN



### D-Day Remembered

*Major R R Dixon, CD, Retd of Canada writes:*

"I was delighted to see the stamps produced for D-Day, Normandy, and think they are an excellent set. As a veteran of that landing on D-Day, I was also delighted to see on page 245 of the May *Bulletin* a montage which shows the Stormont Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders, of 9 Canadian Infantry Brigade, 3rd Canadian Division, landing on Juno White Beach on that day, about 11am. This can be confirmed on page 51 of Part III of *The Victory Campaign*, the official Canadian war history, or by the Canadian National Archives. The SDG Highlanders, or 'Glens', was the Regiment I served with, and at that time I was the Battalion Intelligence Officer. As can be seen the infantry companies carried heavy bicycles ashore, in addition to about 60lbs of other equipment. They were discarded at Beny-sur-Mer, later that day without being used.

"I landed in my white scout car from an LcTL further along the beach by a road which led directly to the church in Bernieres-sur-Mer, in the area the battalion was assembling before pushing on.

"The British 3rd Division was landing to our left, and the 6th Airborne had landed before. The 3rd Canadian Division was part of the 1st British Corps for that operation, and were supported by elements of the British 79th Armoured Division's special "Funnies", and other special units, plus the cruiser *Belfast*, now anchored in the Thames.

"My only regret is that the photograph was not captioned, thus to bring tribute, especially to those of the 'Glens' who remain forever in Normandy."

### Answer to a Sticky Problem

Mr A W F Alexander of Bucks writes in response to C W Hawkins's letter in the May Bulletin concerning the difficulty of removing stamps from the backing paper in the self-adhesive book:

"The easy way I have found of removing the 1st class self-adhesives is first to remove the surplus self-adhesive surround to the stamps. This leaves the stamps all by themselves to be used as and when needed."

## Six Month Digest

*Listed below are the issues of the past six months and the proposed dates of issue for stamps until the end of 1994. Any change in these dates will be notified in the Bulletin. British Philatelic Bureau order codes are quoted where known.*

|        |                                         |
|--------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1 Feb  | 1994 Greetings stamps book (JB009)      |
| 1 Feb  | 1994 Greetings stamps pack (JP003)      |
| 15 Feb | To Pay labels 1p-25p (KS002)            |
| 15 Feb | To Pay labels £1-£5 (LS002)             |
| 15 Feb | To Pay labels pack (LP002)              |
| 15 Feb | C5 size envelope 1st class (RY007)      |
| 15 Feb | C5 size envelope 2nd class (RY008)      |
| 22 Feb | Prince of Wales stamp cards (AQ292)     |
| 22 Feb | 10 x 1st class book/W (UB087)           |
| 22 Feb | 10 x 2nd class book/W (UB086)           |
| 1 Mar  | Prince of Wales stamps (AS584)          |
| 1 Mar  | Prince of Wales pack (AP120)            |
| 22 Mar | Scot Aerogramme – Stevenson (QS033)     |
| 5 Apr  | Pictorial Postcards stamp cards (AQ298) |
| 12 Apr | Pictorial Postcards stamps (AS590)      |
| 12 Apr | Pictorial Postcards pack (AP121)        |
| 26 Apr | 50p book – Coaching Inns 2, H (TB032)   |
| 26 Apr | £1 book – Prime Ministers 2, H (TB033)  |
| 26 Apr | £2 book – Postal Vehicles 2, H (TB034)  |
| 26 Apr | Channel Tunnel stamp cards (AQ304)      |
| 3 May  | Channel Tunnel stamps (AS596)           |
| 3 May  | Channel Tunnel pack (AP122)             |
| 3 May  | Channel Tunnel Souvenir book (AW055)    |
| 6 May  | NPM postcards-Postcodes (NQ922)         |
| 31 May | D-Day stamp cards (AQ309)               |
| 6 Jun  | D-Day stamps (AS603)                    |
| 6 Jun  | D-Day pack (AP123)                      |
| 6 Jun  | 50p book - Coaching Inns 3, H (TB035)   |
| 6 Jun  | £1 book - Prime Ministers 3, H (TB036)  |
| 14 Jun | Alcock & Brown aerogramme (QO031)       |
| 28 Jun | Golf stamp cards (AQ315)                |

|        |                                       |
|--------|---------------------------------------|
| 5 Jul  | Golf stamps (AS609)                   |
| 5 Jul  | Golf pack (AP124)                     |
| 19 Jul | 19p definitive gum trial (DS916)      |
| 19 Jul | Pictorial aerogrammes – Birds (QO033) |
| 19 Jul | Scot a/g – Gordon Highlanders (QS034) |
| 26 Jul | N Ireland prestige book (YB008)       |
| 26 Jul | Summertime stamp cards (AQ321)        |
| 27 Jul | Bank of England stamp book (UB089)    |
| 27 Jul | Bank of England stamp pane (UC001)    |

## Forthcoming

|        |                                  |
|--------|----------------------------------|
| 2 Aug  | Summertime stamps                |
| 2 Aug  | Summertime pack                  |
| 2 Aug  | Summertime souvenir book         |
| 2 Aug  | NPM postcards – Uniforms         |
| 9 Aug  | 4 x 60p stamp book               |
| 17 Aug | 1st NVI (Boots sheet)            |
| 23 Aug | Large aerogramme (Garden Birds)  |
| 6 Sep  | 50p book – Coaching Inns 4       |
| 6 Sep  | £1 book – Prime Ministers 4      |
| 6 Sep  | £2 book – Postal Vehicles 3      |
| 20 Sep | Medical Discoveries stamp cards  |
| 27 Sep | Medical Discoveries stamps       |
| 27 Sep | Medical Discoveries pack         |
| 4 Oct* | Christmas aerogramme             |
| 4 Oct  | 10 x 1st books (Smith promotion) |
| 25 Oct | Christmas stamp cards            |
| 1 Nov  | Christmas stamps                 |
| 1 Nov  | Christmas pack                   |
| 1 Nov  | Christmas stamp book (1st class) |
| 1 Nov  | Christmas stamp book (2nd class) |
| 1 Nov  | Year Pack 1994                   |
| 1 Nov  | Year Book 1994                   |

### Notes:

H = printed by Harrison & Sons

W = printed by Walsall Security Printers

\* = provisional date of issue.

**CUSTOMER KNOWS BEST.**



# August/September Digest

*Issued in August/September*

**2 August:** Summertime stamps – 19p, 25p, 30p, 35p, 41p, presentation pack.

**2 August:** "British Seasons" book – illustrations, by Matthew Cook. Includes set of Summertime stamps. £14.99. Available from Bureau and philatelic outlets (see below).

**9 August:** 60p definitive. Issued in books of four. Available from Bureau, philatelic outlets (see below), selected post offices and retail outlets.

**23 August:** Large aerogramme – Garden Birds, price 50p.

**6 September:** Machine Books – 50p Coaching Inns 4 (Pheasant Inn); £1 Prime Ministers 4 (Attlee); £2 Postal Vehicles 3 (Experimental Electric Mail Van). Available initially from Bureau and philatelic outlets, from machines at post offices and retail outlets as earlier stocks used up.

**20 September:** Medical Discoveries stamp cards.

**27 September:** Medical Discoveries stamps – 25p, 30p, 35p, 41p; presentation pack.

*Note:* Some items are available only from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT and from 35 Post Office philatelic outlets (Collections, Post Shops Plus, Philatelic Counters) at main post offices in: Bath, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Gloucester, Guildford, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London (Lombard Street & Trafalgar Square), Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham, Oxford, Portsmouth, Romford, Southampton, Southend on Sea, Stratford upon Avon, Truro, Windsor, and York.

*Withdrawn in August/September*

**16 August:** 35p definitive, issued 10 September 1991. Printed by Harrison, standard (non-cliptical) perfs.

**13 September:** Autumn stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards.

## Events

**13-14 Aug 94.** Bristol & District Federation of Phil Socs Annual Convention at Somerset Hall, Portishead. Open 10.00-18.00. Dealers, specialist society meetings, displays, junior attractions. Enquiries: John Tovey, Tel. 0272 693665.

**16-25 Aug 94.** Philkorea 1994 international stamp exhibition at Korea Exhibition Centre, Seoul, Korea.

**30 Aug-3 Sep 94.** Picture Postcard Centenary Exhibition at Royal Horticultural Society Hall, London SW1. Promoted by Postcard Traders Association, Enquiries: John Bateman, Tel. 0550 777064.

**8 Sep 94.** "Valuables by Post" E K Parker Memorial Lecture by M V Sussex at Sheffield Phil Soc, Carver Methodist Church Guild Room, Rockingham Lane, SHEFFIELD S1 4FW, 19.15. Enquiries: J R Hartley, Tel. 0742 304155.

**9-11 Sep 94.** British Philatelic Congress at Writtle College, Chelmsford. Enquiries: Allan Boyce, 22 Longfield Road, Great Baddow, CHELMSFORD CM2 8DD.

**24 Sep 94.** HAMPEX '94, organised by Hampshire Phil Fed, at Greyfriars Community Centre, Ringwood, Hants.

**24 Sep 94.** Philatelic Music Circle Jubilee Convention in London. Enquiries: Ian Summers, Tel. 0706 826655.

### Postal Memorabilia Displays

David Harrop is arranging displays at:

**6-7 Aug:** Cornish Steam Rally, Tredinnick Farm, St. Issey, Wadebridge, Cornwall.

**20-21 Aug:** Lincoln Steam Rally, County Showground, Lincoln.

**27-29 Aug:** Bedfordshire Festival, Shuttleworth Collection, Old Warden, Biggleswade.

**31 Aug-4 Sep:** Great Dorset Steam Fair, Tarrant Hinton, Blandford Forum (Norwich Union Royal Mail coach will be in attendance).

**10-11 Sep:** Malpas Yesteryear Rally, Hampton Old Hall, Hampton, Malpas, Ches. Enquiries: David Harrop, 15 Hawthorne Road, Heaton Mersey, STOCKPORT SK4 3DQ.

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