

British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 28
Number 2
October 1990



Contents

- 26 Letter Box Postcards
 - Thomas Hardy
 - New Country Stamps
 - Definitive News
 - Mistaken Identity
- 27 Christmas
- 28 Christmas Stamp Book
 - Christmas Aerogramme
 - Royal Mail Yearbook
 - 1990 Collectors' Pack
- 30 John Cary, Mapmaker
- 33 Picture Post
- 34 Postmark Postcards
 - Rugby Postmarks Postcard
- 36 British Special Issues: British Engineering Achievements
- 37 Six Month Digest
 - 1991 Stamp Programme
- 38 Posting Boxes
 - Unavailable for the Usual Purpose...
- 39 Forth Railway Bridge
- 40 Books
- 41 Definitive Update
 - Philatelic Price Changes
- 42 Gems from the R M Phillips Collection
 - Competition
- 43 Royal Mail Exhibition Card
 - Student Stamp Designs
 - Parfum d'Europe
- 44 Post Office Archives Postcards
- 45 Postbag
- 46 Commemorative Covers
- 47 Events
- 48 October Digest
 - Bulletin Back Issues

Letter Box Postcards

On page 38 is illustrated one of the David Shaw Letter Box postcards on sale at the National Postal Museum. Three further cards have recently gone on sale: No. 14 – Liverpool Special Box; 15 – Locally made box at Lawsonford Post Office, Coventry; 17 – George V Telephone Kiosk with letter box at Frodsham, Cheshire. Price 20p each, offered “subject unsold”.

Thomas Hardy

In the July *Bulletin* we featured a photograph of Hardy with his bicycle in a country lane in Dorset in c.1890. The photograph generated interest from readers and we are pleased to feature another portrait of the novelist — this time at his desk, presumably at his home Max



Gate, near Dorchester. The photo is reproduced courtesy of The Trustees of the Thomas Hardy Memorial Collection, Dorset County Museum, Dorchester.

A 20p stamp marking the 150th anniversary of Hardy's birth was issued on 10 July and is still available from the British Philatelic Bureau, “Collections” centres and philatelic counters.

New Country Stamps

New 17p, 22p and 37p Country stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales will go on sale at post offices in the respective countries and at the British Philatelic Bureau, “Collections” centres and philatelic counters on 4 December 1990. Full details will be published next month.

Definitive News

The cylinders used for the 4 September definitives are: 10p — 21; 17p — 17; 22p — 10; 26p — 4; 27p — 1; 31p — 8; 33p — 1. The 50p and £1 books are from cylinder B46 and B45 B1 respectively and the £1.24 (4 x 31p) book from plates W2W1W1.

Mistaken Identity

At least one sharp-eyed reader noticed the mis-identification of the stamp at the foot of column 1 of page 293 in the August *Bulletin*. The stamp is Japanese, not Chinese, as captioned. It was issued in 1956 to mark the 25th anniversary of the National Park Laws, S.G. 753.

Christmas

13 November 1990

The five stamps to be issued on 13 November will be Britain's 25th Christmas issue (first in 1966) and feature traditional Christmas country snow scenes, all with a village church in the background.



The 17p and 22p stamps for basic inland second and first class rates feature children building a snowman and a man and child with a Christmas tree and bunches of holly. Carol singers are shown on the 26p value for European (non EEC countries). The higher value stamps, 31p and 37p, showing tobogganing and skating, are for airmail postcards outside Europe and basic rate letters for airmail zones A-C.

All five stamps reflect the traditional view of Christmas activities as featured on many Christmas cards.

Technical Details

The stamps were designed by John Gorham with illustrations by Andrew Davidson and printed by Harrison & Sons Limited in photogravure. The 17p stamp is on fluorescent coated paper with a single phosphor line; the other values are on phosphor-coated paper.



They are of horizontal format, 41 x 30mm, printed in sheets of 100 with PVA Dextrin gum. Perforation measures 15 x 14.



Presentation Pack

The pack (No. 213) will cost £1.60; it was designed by John Gorham with text by Susan Hill and illustrations by Andrew Davidson. It was printed by Moore & Matthes (Printers) Limited.

Royal Mail Stamp Cards

Cards, featuring enlargements of the stamp designs, will be available approximately two weeks before the stamp issue, price 19p each. They are numbered 131A-E.



First Day Cover

The Royal Mail first day cover will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and main post offices approximately two weeks before 13 November, price 19p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover service — one for the Bureau, the other for Bethlehem, Llandudlo, Dyfed.

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the stamps cancelled with the requested postmark. Application forms, available from the Bureau and main post offices, should be returned not later than 13 November.

Customers requiring only the pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped envelope under an outer cover endorsed "Special First Day of Issue handstamp" to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT (Bureau postmark) or Wales & The West Special Handstamp Centre, Cardiff LDO, Penarth Road, CARDIFF CF1 1AA (Bethlehem postmark).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for those collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.



A number of special handstamps sponsored by stamp dealers and others, will be used on 13 November - details of these will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin*, available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau.

Souvenir Cover

A souvenir cover, of similar design to the first day cover, will be available from "Collections" centres and philatelic counters from 14 November, price 19p. This will be on sale for one year.

Christmas Stamp Book

A book containing 20 second class (17p) Christmas stamps will go on sale at the Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and post offices in a test area (to be announced) from 13 November, price £3.40. The books will remain on sale in the test area until 22 December unless previously sold out. The front cover of the book will feature a snowman.

Christmas Aerogramme

Christmas aerogrammes have been issued annually since 1965. This year's aerogramme features children engaged in Christmas activities such as decorating the Christmas tree. The aerogramme, designed by Jenny Powell and printed by McCorquodale Envelopes Ltd goes on sale on 13 November, price 42p. It will be withdrawn from sale at post offices on 22 December but will remain on philatelic sale for one year.



Royal Mail Yearbook

Volume 7 of the Royal Mail Special Stamps Yearbook will go on sale on 13 November. The handsomely produced book contains background information about the development and production of all the special issues of 1990.

The book is hardbound with a matching slipcase and includes sets of all 1990 special issues. It will be available from the Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and main post offices, price £18.50.

1990 Collectors' Pack

The 1990 edition of the Collectors Pack will be issued on 13 November, coinciding with the issue of Christmas stamps, price £10.50. The pack contains all 1990 special stamps plus the Penny Black miniature sheet, mounted on a quality display board. In addition to the stamps, there is a colourful and informative brochure, giving details of the stamps subjects. The pack will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and main post offices.



CHRISTMAS 1990
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



the kite
outside. It was very bright and our
the air in plumes. I'd never seen the countryside look like
this, softened and changed by the snow. And behind the low
hills the sky was gathering again, heavy with more to come.
Our boots scrunched softly as we trudged along the path
leading to the church. There, beside the
path, we built our snowman. He was a
really good big one by the time we'd done,
with a scarf and an old top hat. I thought
we ought to give him a stocking to hang
up, too - he was one of the family now!
Later on, after lunch, we set off to
fetch the Christmas tree and holly
On the way back,



was part of it all.
On Christmas afternoon and boxing
Day, everybody was out, and, on the slopes
around, we tobogganed, whooshing down and tumbling off
into the snow and lugging the sledges back up to
the top, over and over again. There was the
sound of voices calling and laughing all
around the fields, and then someone
said the pond was frozen hard over,
so we all went to see, and people brought
out skates and there was the zip and hiss
of the blades across the ice and bright
and new jumpers, as
and around in the
bit.
le time, I was remembering
then I was very old, just as
ays told me. When we were young,
mbers were long and hot and it always snowed at
doesn't happen nowadays, they said. But it did.
Christmas that year. Just as I'd known it would.



John Cary, Mapmaker

DR DOUGLAS FERMER

Deputy Post Office Archivist

The Post Office Archives have produced a facsimile edition of John Cary's *Survey of the High Roads from London*, first published 200 years ago in 1790.

The *Survey*, originally issued by Cary as a slim quarto volume, aimed to provide travellers with a guide to the turnpike gates around London and to show the location of inns, milestones, road junctions, parks and commons. The mapmaker announced that his "principal object" was to feature "every gentleman's seat", showing not merely the name of the owner of each large house but lines indicating the viewpoints from which the houses could be seen from the main road. The *Survey*, he hoped, would thus "convey to the traveller, that kind of information which will give pleasure to his peregrinations".

Three subsequent reissues of the *Survey* appeared, in 1799, 1801 and 1810, each with minor alterations. The new reproduction of the first edition will appeal to postal and local historians, or indeed to anyone who would appreciate a very attractive map of their locality as it was two centuries ago.

The Post Office facsimile edition reproduces Cary's elegant maps at actual size but, for convenience of framing, is issued in two looseleaf portfolios: a North Set and a South Set. Each set contains Cary's general maps and preliminary matter, together with A4 sheets for each of the 13 routes out of London into the "Home Counties". Each sheet shows, in sequence, all the sections of one route from London to its destination.

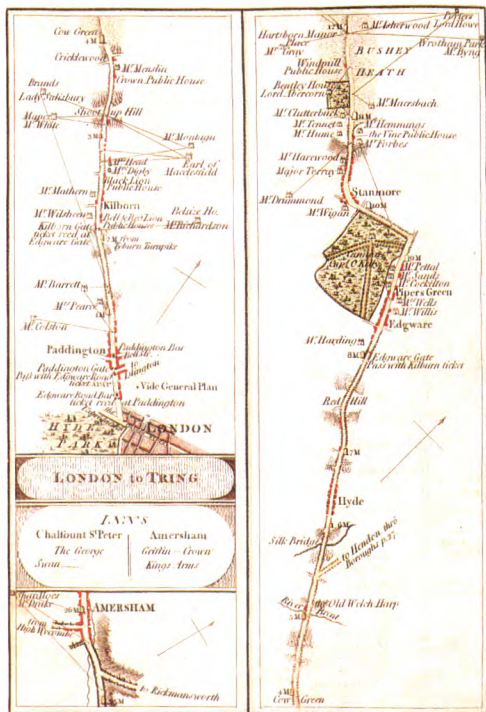
Exquisite Craftsmanship

The production of a new, high quality, bicentennial facsimile edition of the *Survey* perhaps needs no other justification than that of reviving Cary's exquisite craftsmanship. The work of reproducing the hand-coloured original in the Post Office Archives was undertaken by Cook, Hammond and Kell Ltd, who took pains to ensure that modern technology did full justice to Cary's high standards.

The new edition may also serve as a remind-

er of the long and fruitful working relationship between Cary and the Post Office at the peak of the mail coach era.

By the time Cary produced the *Survey* he had already established a reputation as a fine engraver-



Above: Cary's *Survey of the High Roads from London*, 1790. Plates 19 & 20 — London to Tring. Opposite: "General Plan for explaining the different Trusts of the Turnpike Gates in the Vicinity of the Metropolis" from Cary's *Survey of the High Roads*.

er with such works as *Great Post-Roads between London & Falmouth* (1784), Cary's *New & Accurate Plan of London & Westminster* (1787), and the *New & Correct English Atlas* (1787). His prolific output of maps and plans which combined utility with an uncluttered style made his business successful. He worked from premises in the Strand, at the corner of Arundel Street, and advertised himself as "Engraver, Map, Chart

and Print-Seller and Globe-Maker" (Ref. 1).

In the days when postage was charged according to the actual distance a letter was carried, the accurate measurement of the roads was of vital interest to the Post Office and its users. In 1794 Lord Walsingham, one of the Postmasters General, instructed Thomas Hasker, Superintendent of the Mail Coaches, to engage Cary to make an accurate survey of the kingdom's roads. Cary was to receive 9d per mile for the survey, being no more than the actual cost of paying his assistants (Ref. 2). In return he was to have the exclusive right to publish the survey and of dedicating it to the Postmasters General. He was also to have the full co-operation of Post Office officials.

The measurements of the actual road distances between towns, covering more than 9,000 miles, was carried out by Cary's surveyors using "perambulators" — a wheel whose revolutions registered distance. Cary required the measurements to be exact, and instructed his assistants to take note of all road junctions and land marks which would provide useful reference points.

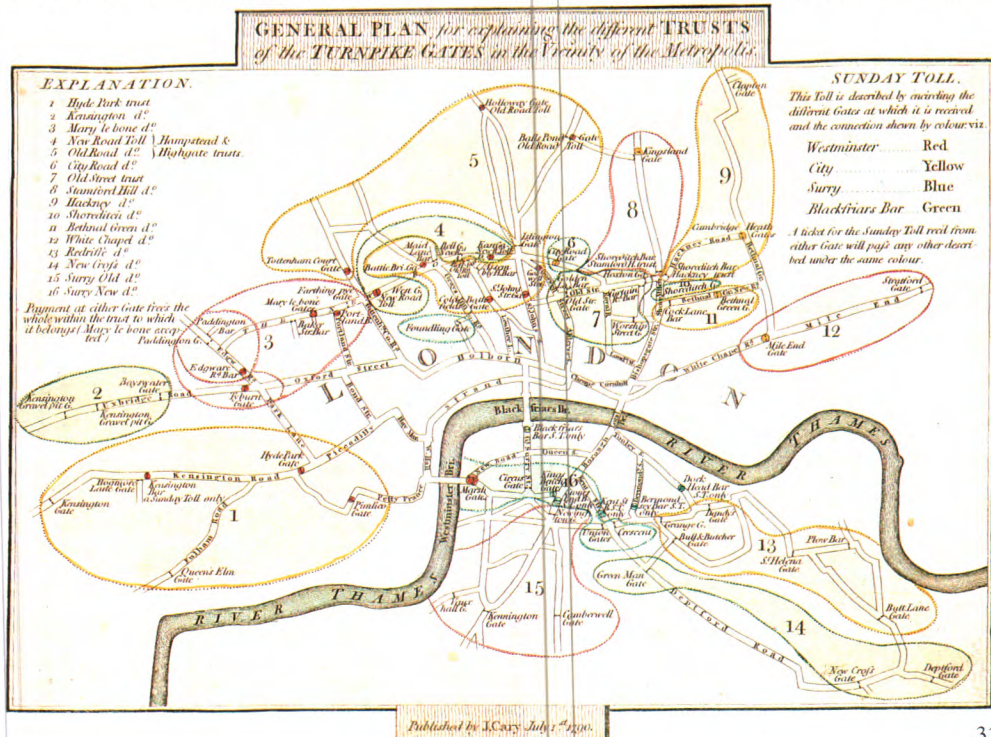
New Itinerary

The results of this original work were published in 1798 as "CARY'S NEW ITINERARY; OR, AN

ACCURATE DELINEATION OF THE GREAT ROADS, BOTH DIRECT & CROSS, THROUGHOUT ENGLAND & WALES; WITH MANY OF THE PRINCIPAL ROADS IN SCOTLAND. From an Actual Admeasurement, made by Command of His Majesty's Postmaster General for Official Purposes Under the Direction & Inspection of Thomas Hasker, Esqr., Surveyor & Superintendent of the Mail Coaches. By John Cary, Surveyor of the Roads to the General Post Office. To which are added, at the end of each Route, The Names of those Inns which supply Post Horses and Carriages; Accompanied with a most extensive Selection of Noblemen & Gentlemen's Seats; A List of the Packet Boats, & their Time of sailing..." etc (Ref. 3).

The work was dedicated to the Earls of Chesterfield and Leicester, the joint Postmasters General in that year. The *New Itinerary* went through 11 editions in the next 30 years, and received the unwelcome compliment of being largely pirated by the publishers of the 12th edition of *Paterson's Roads*, in what Lord Kenyon, finding in Cary's favour in 1801, described as "a most impudent Plagiarism".

The proprietor of Paterson's was Francis Newbery, father-in-law of none other than Francis Freeling, Secretary of the Post Office.



Beaten in court, Newbery applied through Freeling for access to unpublished information supplied to the Post Office by his rival. Though Freeling was naturally anxious to accede he received legal advice that to do so would be a violation of the agreement with Cary (Ref. 4).

Settling Disputes

For Post Office officials the *New Itinerary* became a bible for settling disputes over postage. When Cary applied to the Post Office in 1820 and again in 1826 for assistance in preparing new works and in revising the *New Itinerary*, Sir Francis Freeling endorsed his requests with the testimony that Cary's work was "eminently useful to the Public" (Ref. 5) and that his labours over many years were of course "valuable to us and frequently referred to" (Ref. 6).

On both occasions Freeling put out a circular to all Postmasters (printed at Cary's expense) exhorting them to give the mapmaker information and "every assistance in your power" (Ref. 7).

The Post Office was glad to turn to Cary to settle disputes about mileage whenever mail coach routes were changed. For instance, the removal of the General Post Office from Lombard Street to St Martin's-le-Grand in 1829 gave rise to complaints from punctilious recipients of letters who believed that they had been overcharged because of the adjustment to mileages involved. An impatient Freeling noted that an Act of Parliament actually required him to appoint a new Surveyor, but "This is mere form, and I am anxious that Mr Cary should proceed forthwith". Cary duly returned signed certificates of measurement for disputed distances, and thereafter unjustified complaints received short shrift from Sir Francis (Ref. 8).

Cary died in 1835 at the age of 81 and was buried in Kensington. He is remembered as one of the outstanding figures in the history of English mapmaking. He won the Society of Arts Gold Medal in 1804 for his map of Cardiganshire, but his finest achievement is often considered to be his *New English Atlas* of 1809, showing each county (ref. 9).

His original maps are still much valued by collectors, and the Post Office Archives are pleased to publish the new facsimile edition of the *Survey* as a fitting tribute to his achievements as a cartographer.

References:

1. The standard work on Cary is Sir Herbert George Fordham, *John Cary, Engraver, Map, Chart and Print-Seller and Globe-Maker 1754 to 1835*, Cambridge, 1925.
2. Cary's first bill, dated 18 April 1794, is in Post 10/26, *Hasker's Mail Coach Letter Book*, p.5.
3. A set is held in the Post Office Archives Search Room, Ref. 11.
4. Correspondence in *Newbery's (Paterson's Roads) Right to Publish Results of Cary's Surveys — 1801*, a bound volume in the Archives Search Room Library consisting of documents extracted from Post 40/74.
5. Freeling to PMG 10 Jan 1820, Post 40/219, Report No. 11.
6. Freeling to PMG 14 Dec 1826, Post 40/335, Report No. 577.
7. Circular dated 1 Jan 1821, Ibid.
8. Freeling to PMG 26 Sep 1829, Post 40/450, Report No. 783; Post 40/597.
9. A useful brief history of English mapmaking, with an appreciation of Cary, is Alan G. Hodgkiss, *Discovering Antique Maps*, Shire Publications, 1977.

41

From the Centre of the New Post Office over Blackfriars Bridge to the Post Office Rochester. —

M. Per P. Y.

Elephant & Castle	1 6 36 0
Blackfriars & New	2 4 0 0
New Bridge S. G.	4 3 28 0
Deptford Bridge	5 6 0 0
Blackheath Green Man	6 3 13 0
2 Hooters Hill. Bull	9 5 31 0
Mulling Nags head	11 5 21 0
Bexley Heath Golden Lion	12 6 12 0
Grayford Bear	14 5 0 0
Deptford Bull	16 3 10 0
Shins hole S. G.	17 6 25 0
Stone Bridge	21 0 31 0
Woolflett Queens head	21 6 16 0
Graveyard	23 2 0 0
Wilton Church	24 0 0 0
Chalk Street S. G.	24 5 25 0
Gods Hill Salsburgh	27 6 30 0
Wood S. G.	29 7 8 0
Rochester M. Ho.	30 3 12 0
Post Office	30 3 27 2

I certify that the above is a correct statement

16th Jan 1829 John Cary

A Table of distances between the new Post Office in St Martin's Le Grand and Rochester, certified by Cary in 1829 (POST 40/597).

Picture Post

New "Collections" Centres

Shown here is the new "Collections" centre — the seventh — at The Galleries Post Office, Broadmead, Bristol; it was opened on 9 July. The Galleries is a new multi-million pound shopping complex in central Bristol.



Also featured is the opening ceremony at the Lyceum Post Office in Liverpool on 18 June. With Lynn Rannard, Manager of the new office, is Mr Ken Young, Chairman of Post Office Counters Ltd, and Councillor Dorothy Gavin, Lord Mayor of Liverpool.

"Collections" centres sell Royal Mail philatelic products, stamp accessories, coin sets, pictorial phone cards, etc.

Eminent Victorians

The first photograph shows a detail from the memorial fountain to Henry Fawcett, "the blind Postmaster-General" who introduced the parcel post in 1883. The memorial in Victoria Embankment Gardens, London, dates from 1886, and bears the inscription "Erected to the memory of Henry Fawcett by his grateful



countrywomen". The fountain, designed by Basil Champneys, includes a fine bronze medalion of Fawcett by Mary Grant.

The second picture shows the recently cleaned head of Henry Raikes over the entrance to the former PO Headquarters in St Martins-le-Grand. Raikes was PMG when the building was begun in 1890. Over the entrance in King Edward Street is the head of Arnold Morley, PMG at the time the building was completed in 1895.



Postmark Postcards

JAMES NEGUS

Picture postcards with montages of postage stamps are well known to collectors, notably the long series from Ottmar Zieher of Munich in the "Golden Age". Examples reproducing stamps from a given country are a colourful addition to a specialised philatelic collection.

As a related concept, many postcards have been issued in more recent times that have a postal history interest. They illustrate the postmarks of a particular locality and, for Great Britain, have been sponsored over the years by philatelic societies. A typical example is shown below, namely the fourth postcard from the Darlington Philatelic Society. The eight drawings of Darlington postmarks (1726-1969) are well reproduced and the four cards from this source now provide reference material in themselves.

Darlington and others have supplemented the illustrations with helpful detailed notes on the reverse. The illustration below shows this for the fourth card and it is also an example of a "serviced postcard". The sponsoring society will

sometimes arrange this and such markings are a useful contemporary record of issue and use, since not all cards are dated.

A checklist is appended of the postmark postcards so far traced and I should be grateful to be told of any omissions or corrections via the Editor.

Careful reading of the philatelic press will usually indicate when a new postcard is produced and from whom it can be obtained. As new issues, prices are normally modest but early application is suggested since issue quantities are often very small. For the Stafford card of 8 November 1986, for example, it was reported to be only 300.

There are two versions of the Postal History Society's 1969 card showing Isle of Man postmarks (and its companion card for mail routes). There was a dispute at HM Stationery Office which prevented the Society's postcards being stamped-to-order. Reduced designs were therefore printed on to ordinary (small, 140 x 89mm) 4d. postal stationery postcards instead, ready for use with the first-day special cancel. These postcards are on azure stock with the first 4d. Machin Head design in sepia. The Society applied a boxed cachet LABOUR DISPUTE HMSO/EMERGENCY OVERPRINT and the quantity is reported as 200 of each design.

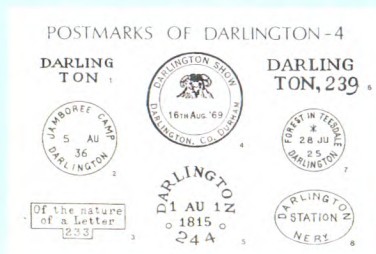
The pair of cards was reissued, presumably when the dispute was over as I have only seen them unused. They have full-size illustrations in a larger format (179 x 119mm). White stock was used and the stamped-to-order postage is the 4d. Machin Head in scarlet.

One or two cards have been reprinted — and marked as such. However this is not so for the Darlington third card showing "Victorian postmarks". In this case the sizes will differentiate: the original (8 September 1987) is 144 x 101mm and the reprint (18 September 1987) is 145 x 100mm. The reprint is also a blacker printing, best seen from the non-illustrated back.

As an attractive and manageable area for the Great Britain collector, postmark postcards have much to recommend them.

Rugby Postmarks Postcard

The Rugby Philatelic Society has produced a postcard reproducing Rugby postmarks from 1715 to 1840. The card, 15p plus postage, is available from the Society's Secretary: David Hardwick, 47 Rugby Road, Clifton. RUGBY, Warwickshire, CV23 0DE.



Checklist of Postmark Postcards

PCGB = Philatelic Congress of Great Britain
PHS = Postal History Society

PS = Philatelic Society

† Postmark illustration as subsidiary feature.

<i>Issued</i>	<i>Postmarks of</i>	<i>Occasion</i>
13.6.39	Liverpool	26th PCGB, set of 8 (reprinted Sep 1988 by Philatelic History Society)
9.9.47	Birmingham	29th PCGB, set of 6
1.10.59	Largs	15th PHS Conference
9.7.60	Bishop Marks	PHS for London International Exhibition
12.4.62	Scotland	Scotex, Glasgow
4.10.62	East Anglian TPO†	18th PHS Conference, King's Lynn
11.6.63	Yorkshire	45th PCGB, Scarborough, set of 4
5.10.68	Perth	24th PHS Conference
4.10.69	Isle of Man	25th PHS Conference, small size do. Reissue, large size
3.10.70	Chichester	26th PHS Conference
10.10.70	Great Northern TPO†	Railway Phil Group Convention, Doncaster
30.9.72	Bury St Edmunds	28th PHS Conference
27.10.73	Falmouth	29th PHS Conference
3.6.77	Edinburgh	Edinburgh PS Exhibition
26.2.81	Merseyside	1st card, PS 75th Anniversary
23.9.81	Colchester	3rd card, by Colchester PS
4.11.81	Merseyside	2nd card, PS 75th Anniversary
25.10.82	Croydon	PO London Region, Opening of Phil Office
21.6.83	Croydon	do. Reissue optd for Charter Centenary
6.7.83	Colchester	4th card, by Colchester PS
3.10.83	Bath	65th PCGB, set of 3
29.10.83	Hemel Hempstead	1st card, PS 20th Anniversary
3.12.84	Hemel Hempstead	2nd card, PS 21st Anniversary
5.4.86	Antonine Wall	Aberdeen PS 75th Anniversary
21.4.86	Darlington	1st card, by Darlington PS
—, 12.85	Stourbridge	Midland PHS for Stourbridge PO Centenary
5.4.86	Antoine Wall	Scottish Congress, Stirling
21.4.86	Darlington	2nd card, by Darlington PS
8.11.86	Stafford	Midland Phil Federation Autumn Assembly
—, 4.87	Petersfield	Petersfield PS 21st Anniversary (reprinted Sep 1987)
30.5.87	North of Ireland	North of Ireland PS 80th Anniversary
30.5.87	Belfast	North of Ireland PS 80th Anniversary
8.9.87	Darlington	3rd card, by PS (reprinted 18.9.87)
8.9.87	Worcester	By Worcester Head P.O.
26.9.87	Petersfield	Reprint optd for Hants Fedn Convention
—, 10.87	Railway Phil Group	21st Anniversary, by Hemel Hempstead Grp
23.4.88	Newcastle Ship Letter	NE Phil Association Convention, Newcastle
23.4.88	N & S Shields ditto	NE Phil Association Convention, Newcastle
22.10.88	Malling	Kent Federation Autumn Rally
15.11.88	Hemel Hempstead	3rd card, PS 25th Anniversary
15.11.88	Hemel Hempstead	2nd card optd for PS 25th Anniversary
5.9.89	Darlington	4th card, by Darlington PS

British Engineering Achievements

British Special Issues: No.161

FRANCIS KENNEDY

The CEPT organises the theme to be adopted for the designs of Europa stamps each year. In 1983, the participating countries were given a broad choice, the theme being, "works of human genius".

The Post Office Stamp Advisory Committee thought that three very modern British engineering feats would provide evidence of British human genius and, accordingly, three stamps were issued on 25 May 1983: **16p**, the Humber Bridge, officially opened by The Queen in July 1981; **20½p**, the Thames Flood Barrier; **28p**, an emergency support vessel for North Sea oil rigs constructed by British Shipbuilders in Port Glasgow. In the lower left-hand corner of each stamp the CEPT symbol and the word EUROPA appear in silver. The normal fourth (highest) value of a special issue was omitted because it did not have a European use at any basic rate.



The **Humber Bridge** is the longest single-span suspension bridge in the world, its two huge towers (almost 500 feet high) supporting cables from which hangs the 4,600-foot central span. The bridge provides a direct link between North and South Humberside, saving road traffic a long upstream detour. The designers

were Freeman Fox and Partners who had gained experience designing the 3,520-foot central span of the Bosphorus Bridge in Turkey.

The **Thames Barrier** (an overall 1,700 feet long) at Woolwich is London's defence against flooding and is generally considered to be the world's finest example of flood control. Normally, shipping can pass freely between the huge piers and over the underwater steel gates set in concrete in the river bed but capable of being raised to provide a solid wall of steel across the river within 30 minutes. The building of the barrier involved civil and mechanical engineering in close partnership which the designers Rendel Palmer and Tritton successfully guided to completion of the project.

Off shore oil-technology is a comparatively new field of engineering in which Britain was already skilled. Even so, building the **Emergency Support Vessel "Iolair"** (Gaelic for "eagle"), British engineers pioneered several processes. This strange "ship", described officially at the time as the most sophisticated of its kind in the North Sea, offered back-up services for all oil platforms in the area. These services included fire-fighting, blow-out capping, heavy lifting by cranes, a hangar and landing pad for the helicopters, rescue facilities for platforms at sea, medical services and a communications centre. All these services could be sustained for three weeks without refuelling or victualling.

Harrisons printing in photogravure, in sheets of 100 (2 panes, 10 x 5), was so good that only one flaw justified full catalogue listing, namely a small area of retouching just above the horizon under the bridge on the 16p stamp (dot cylinder, row 1 stamp 12). Sales for the year to 25 May 1984 were: 16p — 39,498,300; 20½p — 8,365,000; 28p — 7,988,900. The Philatelic Bureau "First Day of Issue" cancellation featured a safety helmet; the alternative postmark, for Hull, showed a diagram of the bridge, emphasising the local association. As usual a presentation pack was produced, also PHQ cards, numbered 67a-c. 210,000 sets of cards were produced.

Six Month Digest

Listed below are the issues of the past six months and the proposed dates of issue for stamps until December 1990. Any change in these dates will be notified in the Bulletin. British Philatelic Bureau codes are quoted where known.

H = Harrison; Q = Questa; W = Walsall, printers
PB = Penny Black Anniversary Definitive stamps
NVI = Non-Value Indicator stamps

10 Apr	Queen's Awards stamps (AS408)
10 Apr	Queen's Awards pack (AP086)
17 Apr	Aerogramme — new logo (QO025)
17 Apr	as above, pack of 6 (QO026)
17 Apr	4 x 20p PB book H/W (UB011)
17 Apr	10 x 15p PB book Q (UB013)
17 Apr	10 x 20p PB book Q (UB014)
17 Apr	4 x 29p book, PCP, W (UB012)
24 Apr	Forth Bridge aerogramme (QS025)
3 May	Penny Black Miniature Sheet (NZ003)
3 May	Penny Black Souvenir Book (AW053)
3 May	Stamp World exh. card (EQ019)
3 May	NPM Personalities cards (NQ903)
3 May	NPM Miniature Sheet card (NQ904)
3 May	PO Archives cards
21 May	Kew Gardens stamp cards (AQ118)
2 Jun	Belgica exh. card (EQ021)
5 Jun	Kew Gardens stamps (AS413)
5 Jun	Kew Gardens pack (AP087)
12 Jun	10 x 15p PB book W (UB016)
12 Jun	10 x 20p PB book W (UB017)
25 Jun	Thomas Hardy stamp card (AQ123)
10 Jul	Thomas Hardy stamp (AS418)
10 Jul	Thomas Hardy pack (AP088)
17 Jul	Scot aerogramme (Glasgow) (QS026)
23 Jul	Queen Mother stamp cards (AQ124)
2 Aug	Queen Mother stamps (AS419)
2 Aug	Queen Mother pack (AP089)
7 Aug	4 x 2nd NVI book, W (UB021)
7 Aug	4 x 1st NVI book, W (UB022)
7 Aug	10 x 2nd NVI book, W (UB023)
7 Aug	10 x 1st NVI book, W (UB024)
7 Aug	10 x 2nd NVI book, H (UB025)
7 Aug	10 x 1st NVI book, H (UB026)
7 Aug	10 x 2nd NVI book, Q (UB027)
7 Aug	10 x 1st NVI book, Q (UB028)
24 Aug	New Zealand exh. card (EQ023)
28 Aug	Gallantry stamp cards (AQ129)
4 Sep	10p definitive — lt. tan (DS103)
4 Sep	17p definitive — dark blue (DS170)
4 Sep	22p definitive — flame (DS222)
4 Sep	26p definitive — stone (DS262)

4 Sep	27p definitive — mauve (DS271)
4 Sep	31p definitive — ultramarine (DS312)
4 Sep	33p definitive — emerald (DS330)
4 Sep	New Definitives pack (DP013)
4 Sep	50p book (3 x 17p) (TB005)
4 Sep	£1 book (3 x 22p, 2 x 17p) (TB006)
11 Sep	Gallantry stamps (AS424)
11 Sep	Gallantry pack (AP090)
11 Sep	NPM Postal Reform cards (4)
17 Sep	£1.24 book (4 x 31p) (UB029)
17 Sep	17p UL (500) roll (DC043)
17 Sep	17p UL (1,000) roll (DC045)
17 Sep	22p WL (500) roll (DC044)
17 Sep	22p WL (1,000) roll (DC046)

Forthcoming

1 Oct	Astronomy stamp cards (AQ135)
16 Oct	Astronomy stamps (AS430)
16 Oct	Astronomy pack (AP091)
16 Oct	Autumn Stampex exh. card (EQ025)
29 Oct	Christmas stamp cards
1 Nov	ASDA National exh. card
13 Nov	Christmas stamps and pack
13 Nov	1990 Collectors Pack
13 Nov	1990 Year Book
13 Nov	NPM Christmas Posters cards

Notes:

1. The 4 x 20p PB stamps book of 17 April has stamps printed by Harrison in covers produced by Walsall.
2. The eight books issued on 7 August contain Non-Value Indicator (NVI) stamps in new colours — flame (1st) and dark blue (2nd).

1991 Stamp Programme

The provisional dates of issue of next year's special stamps are given below. It should be noted that the dates are subject to change; any changes will be announced in the *Bulletin*.

8 January	Dogs
5 March	Science
16 April	CEPT/Europe in Space
11 June	Sport
16 July	Roses
20 August	Dinosaurs
17 September	Maps
12 November	Christmas

The provisional dates for the 1991 Greetings and Prestige (Agatha Christie) stamp books are 5 February and 19 March respectively.

Posting Boxes

114. VR Box in South Africa

Mr P S Wener of Cape Town has submitted this photograph of a Victorian box situated at the corner of Upper Orange Street and Prince Street, Cape Town. The box was manufactured by A Handyside & Co Ltd of Derby and London, and is still in use.



The Collection Plate bears a notice, in English and Afrikaans; the English version reads: "Caution. Letters containing banknotes, coins, blank postal orders or other articles of value, must not be posted in this box. Register them at the Post Office Counter."

Another Victorian post box in South Africa was featured in the June *Bulletin*.

Letter Box Postcards

Again we feature one of the David Shaw letter box postcards on sale at the National Postal Museum, price 20p. This card shows an Edward VIII box at Bawdsey Post Office, Suffolk. Details of the cards available were published in the February and July issues of the *Bulletin*.



British Postbox Series — No. 6. E VIII R Postbox, Bawdsey Post Office, Suffolk

Unavailable for the Usual Purpose...

Kevin Squelch of Post Office Archives has submitted this amusing little minute, dated 16 December 1898, to the Postmaster General (source Post 35/883 min. 23539).

"The Postmaster General,

Your Grace will no doubt look favourably on this application. A gale of wind blew down a tree, the tree fell against a line of telegraph, the telegraph wire carried the tree towards a pigstye, the tree then crashed into the pigstye, and a pig broke a blood vessel from fright, and incontinently died. His carcase was unavailable for the usual purpose.

"The owner is a poor man and makes a piteous appeal for help in his great loss. Perhaps the sum of £1 might be given as an act of grace and sympathy. I annex papers showing that your Grace's predecessor held the death of a pig to be an occasion for official sympathy and commiseration, even though the cause of the death was outside the cognizance and control of the department."

Forth Railway Bridge

On 24 April the Royal Mail issued the 31st in the series of Scottish aerogrammes, featuring the Forth Rail Bridge opened one hundred years ago. Readers may be interested in some background information about the engineers who designed it: Sir John Fowler and Sir Benjamin Baker.

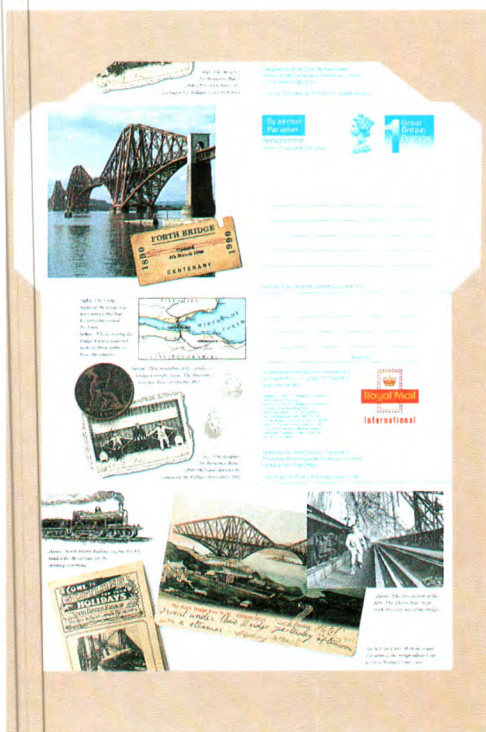
Fowler was born at Wadsley Hall, Sheffield in 1817 and much of his engineering work was concerned with railways, including the construction of London's original underground railway. He was also noted for his work in river improvement schemes and dock construction. Amongst his best-known designs are the Pimlico Bridge (also known as the Victoria or Grosvenor Bridge) which carried the first railway across the Thames in 1860; St Enoch's station in Glasgow; and Millwall Dock. Fowler began work on the Forth Bridge with his partner Benjamin Baker in 1882. Baker, being by far the younger of the two, did the bulk of the physically strenuous work but the ultimate responsibility for the bridge rested with Fowler as the senior designer. The Bridge was opened on 4 March 1890.

Fowler was awarded the KCMG in 1885 for his services as a consultant engineer in Egypt; five years later he received a baronetcy for his work on the Forth Bridge. He gave up standing as MP for Hallamshire in order to complete the Bridge which earned the comment from one of the directors of the project "... the successful finish of the Forth Bridge is a greater crown to a man's life than a seat in Parliament." In his later years, Sir John undertook improvement works on his Highland estate "Braemore"; he died in 1898.

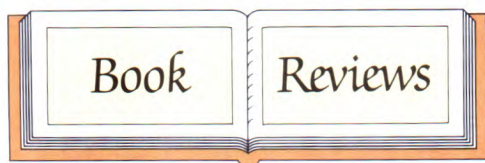
Benjamin Baker was born in 1840 and at age 16 was apprenticed at the Neath Abbey Iron Works. Having completed his apprenticeship he became an assistant to W H Wilson in the construction of Victoria station and from 1862 worked under Fowler on underground railway building. He published articles in engineering journals and became a respected member of his profession. Also under Fowler's direction he went to Egypt to work on ship canals and in 1878 his skills helped transport Cleopatra's Needle to London and to erect it safely without damage to the ancient carvings. During the building of the Forth Bridge, 1883-90, Baker virtually lived on site. He received a knighthood for this work and later (1894-1902) went on to

work as consulting engineer on the Aswan Dam. Recognition of his achievements came with his election as President of the Institution of Civil Engineers. Baker died in 1907.

The Bridge is over 1½ miles long and comprises three main piers consisting of four circular masonry supports built upon a caisson, carrying pillars of hollow steel 360 feet high and 12 feet in diameter, bolted down to each support with 48 steel bolts 2½ inches in diameter and 24 feet long. The two great openings each have a span of nearly ½ mile and offer a clear headway for ships 150 feet above high water for a width of 500 feet. Some 50,000 tons of steel and 140,000 cubic yards of concrete and masonry were used in the construction which cost about £3 million.



A view of the Bridge featured on the front of the aerogramme, on the front cover of "The Scots Connection" prestige book, on the Bureau's First Day postmark for the book (21 March 1989) and on sponsored special handstamps used on 4 and 6 March and 5 June 1990. The Railway Bridge is also to be seen on the 6d stamp issued to mark the opening of the Road Bridge in 1964, built at the cost of approximately £20 million.



One of the most popular aspects of postal history is the study of rates of postage and as those who have delved into it will know it is a complicated subject. Last year Mr C Tabcart published **United Kingdom Letter Rates 1657-1900: Inland & Overseas**; this proved popular and went quickly out of print. A second impression has recently been produced by HH Sales Limited of London. This well-researched book is organised in 10 sections covering: UK Inland rates; Ship Letter rates from the UK worldwide; Privilege rates for members of the Armed Forces; and Packet Letter rates to North and Central America and the West Indies, South America, Africa, Europe, Ottoman Empire, Australasia and the Far East. Three appendixes provide Sterling Currency Equivalents, Place Names — Alternative spellings and modern equivalents, and a Select Bibliography. Users are advised to read the Introduction which clearly sets out what is included and excluded, how to use the book, sources, terminology and abbreviations. A number of illustrations of interesting covers and maps increases the usefulness of this important work. Price £12.95; available from HH Sales Limited, 25 Horsell Road, LONDON N5 1XJ or Vera Trinder Ltd, 38 Bedford Street, LONDON WC2E 9EU.

A new (10th) edition of the **International Stamp Dealers' Directory**, compiled and edited by Graham Phillips and Charles Williams, is now available — especially welcome as the last edition was published 16 years ago. The book contains an alphabetical listing of dealers followed by indexes to UK and World dealers; the UK index arranged by county and the foreign index by country. The Speciality Index gives useful listings of dealers under headings including Accessories, Accumulations, Errors, Framas, Postal Stationery, Wholesale, etc as well as country headings. Other listings include postal administrations of the world, major philatelic magazines (but the *Bulletin* is not included!), stamp catalogue publishers, UK stamp fair and exhibition organisers and a philatelic glossary in six languages. There are also over 100 advertisements which give further informa-

tion of the services provided by some dealers. A most useful book and an essential addition to the philatelic library of collectors who buy regularly from dealers. 180 pages, durable card cover. Price (including postage): £8.60 UK, £9.10 overseas surface mail, £9.50 Europe, £10 Zone A airmail, £10.50 Zone B, £11 Zone C. Orders to: Philatelic Exporter Ltd, PO Box 21, RADLETT, Herts, WD7 8XA.

In recent years interest in cinderella stamps has grown significantly and the literature on the subject is correspondingly increasing. The Cinderella Stamp Club and Frank Godden Ltd have recently jointly published **Great Britain: The Stamps of the Circular Delivery Companies and their Forgeries** by Christopher G Harman, FRPSL. The work begins with a history of the companies which have an important position in the history of postal reform in Great Britain. The local delivery service provided by these companies in the 1860s filled a gap in the market. The lowest price for any sending by the GPO was 1d which meant that bulk mailing of advertising matter and circulars was an expensive affair. The Post Office did not like these companies and eventually in 1870 the PO introduced a lower rate of ½d for postcards, printed papers (up to 2oz) and newspapers. In this carefully researched book Mr Harman provides comprehensive listings (with pricings) of the stamps issued by the following CDCs: Edinburgh & Leith, London, Glasgow, Metropolitan, Liverpool, London & Districts, National, Aberdeen, and Dundee and by the Edinburgh & Leith Parcel Delivery Company and Clark & Co., Edinburgh. Also listed are the stamps issued in 1868 by The Circular Delivery Company Limited for the nine towns listed above; these stamps were printed set-tenant in sheets of 81. Listings are also provided of forgeries of CDC issues. 64 pages, card covers. Price: £6.70 plus 50p postage UK and overseas surface mail, from Cinderella Stamp Club, 35 Smith Street, LONDON SW3 4EP.

Recent & Forthcoming Catalogues

The 8th edition of the Stanley Gibbons *GB Specialised Catalogue* — Vol. 3 *Elizabeth II Pre-Decimal Issues* was published on 14 September (price £15.95). The 42nd edition of *Collect British Stamps* will be published on 30 November (price £2.95). Available from the British Philatelic Bureau, National Postal Museum, stamp dealers and booksellers.

Definitive Update

In Cylinder News in the August *Bulletin* we recorded the existence of the 60p (4 x 15p Penny Black stamps) Walsall book with two instead of three plate numbers. An explanation of this has been received from Walsall Security Printers and is reproduced here for the benefit of specialist collectors: "The 4 x 15p Penny Black anniversary stamps were initially printed from three plates (hence the three plate numbers) but in only two colours. This was effected in order that a degree of tonal control would be possible whilst on press, which at the time allowed a quicker throughput of stamps to Post Office Security Stores. Once the overall tonal gradation was established, the required effect was possible from just two plates."



Examples of the Harrison, Walsall and Questa NV1 stamps issued on 7 August. The Questa stamps are perforated on all sides; those by Harrisons and Walsall have straight edges at top or bottom. Post offices and shops have a selection of the NV1 books on sale, all eight types (see Six Month Digest for details) are available from the Bureau, "Collections" centres and philatelic counters.



The new 10p, 17p, 22p, 26p, 27p, 31p and 33p stamps issued on 4 September (reduced size)

Philatelic Price Changes

Shown below are the revised prices for Royal Mail philatelic products, operative from 17 September 1990:

First Day/Souvenir Envelope	19p
Royal Mail Stamp Card	19p
FDC Album Large	£13.95
Album Leaves (pack of 10)	£4
FDC Album Small	£9.50
Album Leaves (pack of 10)	£2.75
Postcard Album	£13.95
Album Leaves (pack of 10)	£4
Presentation Pack Album	£13.95
Album Leaves (pack of 10)	£4

The price for the 1990 Collectors' Pack will be £10.50, the 1990 Yearbook £18.50 and the continuation pages for the *Royal Mail Stamp Album* £9.50.

The new subscription rates to this *Bulletin* are published on the back cover, the new rates for the *British Postmark Bulletin* are – UK £8.75; Europe £10.75; Airmail £19.50. The basic charge for sponsoring a postmark slogan is increased to £125 with the charge for the first die, extra dies and time charge £85, £75 and £11.50 respectively. Charges for special hand-stamps are not being increased.

Gems from the R M Phillips Collection

178. Mulready Caricature

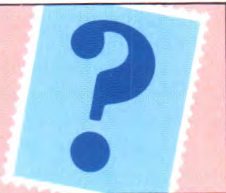
This month's Gem is also featured on one of four new postcards issued by the National Postal Museum on 11 September. It reproduces a Mulready caricature by John Leech, published by Fores, used on 31 May 1840 with a 1d black, plate 3. The design was



described by Major Evans as follows: "Britannia is represented as a smiling lady of fully-developed figure, and with a rubicund nose, scattering numerous Penny Postmen to right and left, each in the regulation uniform, with tail coat, tall hat with gold band, cockade, etc. The Lion is on his feet. He has a black patch over his eye, and his tail is stretched out stiff, and has a row of letters strung along it. On the right is a Planter in a broad-rimmed hat looking up at Britannia, with his thumb to his nose and his fingers outspread. Behind him is a negro holding up a cask. On the left is a group of Chinese. One of them is seated upon some bales marked 'Opium' (a reference to the Opium Wars) while another adopts the same complimentary attitude towards Britannia as the Planter opposite, the long nails of the Chinaman adding to the effect..."

This cover can be seen in the National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP which is open Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 4.30pm and Friday 9.30am to 4pm. The postcard reproducing this cover is on sale at the Museum shop, price 20p.

Competition



Enter this month's competition and stand a chance of winning £50 worth of current British philatelic products of your choice — stamps, stamp books, postcards, presentation packs, postal stationery, etc. Answer the questions below, the answers to some will be found in this month's *Bulletin*, and send with your name and address on a postcard to: October Bulletin Competition, National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP to arrive by 30 November.

The sender of the first all-correct entry drawn will be invited to order £50 of philatelic products; five runners-up will be sent presentation packs of the Christmas stamps. Answers and winners' names will be published in the January *Bulletin*.

1. In which year were the first British Christmas stamps issued?
2. Who designed the 1990 Christmas stamps?
3. On what date was the opening ceremony of the Lyceum Post Office in Liverpool?
4. Who is known as the "blind Postmaster-General"?
5. Which famous bridge featured on the front cover of the £5 "Scots Connection" prestige book?

The competition is not open to staff of Royal Mail Stamps & Philately, the National Postal Museum, their agents and their families. No correspondence will be entered into; the Editor's decision will be final.

The winners of the July competition were: D Kemp of Bedfordshire (first prize); T Jones of Avon; N Moore of Hertfordshire, J Fleming of Co. Kerry, Ireland; G Thompson of W Yorkshire and C Adams of Lancashire.

The answers were: 1. Duke and Duchess of York; 2. Glasgow; 3. Ralph Allen; 4. 5 June 1967; 5. 238; 6. Sir Bryan Nicholson.

Our thanks to all who entered.

Royal Mail Exhibition Card

From 16 October Exhibition Card No. 4 will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau with a special handstamp for Autumn Stampex/BPE, price £1.50 plus handling charge. Cards sold at the exhibition will bear a special cachet. Collectors unable to visit Stampex can obtain the cacheted card from the Bureau, price £1.50. Orders for cacheted cards must be received by the day the exhibition closes, i.e. 21 October.

The card will be available from the Bureau from 1 November with a special handstamp for the ASDA National 90 exhibition. Price £1.50 plus handling charge. Cards sold at the exhibition will bear a special cachet. Orders for card with cachet should be sent to Royal Mail Stamps overseas agent: Interpost, PO Box 378, Malverne, New York 11565, USA. Orders must be received by the date the exhibition closes, i.e. 4 November.



Cards with the Stamp World (3 May), Belgica (2 June) and New Zealand 1990 (24 August) handstamps are still available, price £1.50 each from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT. Note: these cards have the relevant exhibition handstamps but not cachets.

Student Stamp Designs

In last month's *Bulletin*, we gave details of the Royal Society of Arts touring exhibition which includes some of the student stamp designs in the RSA Design Competition of 1989/90. The exhibition will be on show at the Ibstock Brickwork Design Centre, Brook House, 72 Spring Gardens, Manchester M2 2BQ from 19-31 October and at the Ibstock Brickwork Design Centre, 28-32 St Paul's Street, Leeds, LS1 2PX from 8-23 November. Later venues will be published in due course. Details of the RSA Competition were published in the May and July issues of the *Bulletin*.

Parfum d'Europe

This year sees the 20th anniversary of the opening of the Musée d'Histoire des P.T.T. d'Alsace, in Riquewihr. One of a number of French regional postal museums, it is located in a former palace of the Princes of Württemberg — Mömpelgart. This very attractive Renaissance building was restored in 1970 and now houses a permanent collection of artefacts depicting 2,000 years of communications history in Alsace as well as providing space for temporary exhibitions.



To celebrate its 20th birthday the Museum has organised an exhibition comprising a selection of historical postal and telecoms artefacts from no less than twelve EEC countries. The UK contribution, on loan from the National Postal Museum, consists of material relating to the Coronation Aerial Post of 1911. The title of the exhibition, *Parfum d'Europe*, derives from a unique collaboration with a firm of perfumery consultants whereby associated, with each country's exhibit, is a perfume container. This includes a mechanism that can be activated by visitors and which releases a perfume said to be typical of the country in question.

The exhibition runs until 11 November 1990. The museum is open daily, except Tuesdays, from 10.00-12.00 and 14.00-18.00. Entrance costs 18 francs for adults, 7 francs for students and children.

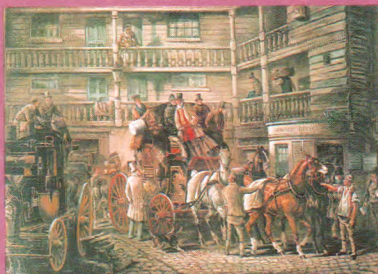
Riquewihr itself is a delightful little town situated in the hills, close to the Vosges, in the middle of the Alsace wine-growing area. It is full of attractive old houses and inns, narrow streets and very popular with tourists. In fact it is just the place to sample architectural, gastronomic and vinicultural delights of Alsace whilst taking the opportunity to learn about its postal history, and, if you can make it by 11 November, savour the perfumes of Europe.

Stan Goron, NPM

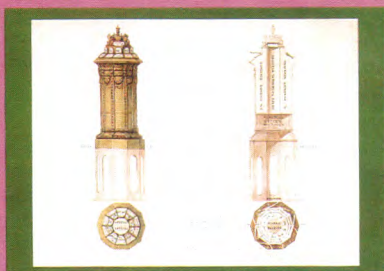
Post Office Archives Postcards



1. Country Post Office, 1837



2. Mail Coach, 1846



3. Improved Letter Box, 1857



4. Uniforms, London Postal Service, c.1863



6. Postman's Knock, late 1850s



5. Postmen's Uniforms, 1894



7. Imperial Airways poster, 1925

Shown here are the seven postcards first issued by Post Office Archives at Stamp World London 90 last May. The cards cost 20p each and are available from Post Office Archives, 23 Glasshill Street, London SE1 0BQ and the National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP. Offered subject to availability.

Postbag

Back in February we announced our intention of publishing, from time to time, a selection of readers' comments and questions; in particular those that would appear to be of general interest.

A number of readers have asked about the perforation gauge of 14½ quoted for definitive stamps printed by Walsall Security Printers — 14p and 19p in £1 book issued in April 1989 and Non Value Indicator and Penny Black Anniversary stamps issued since August 1989. We have checked with Walsall who now confirm that the perforation gauge is 14 and this is the gauge we shall quote in future. Stamps printed by Harrisons and The House of Questa have perforation gauge 15 x 14. Mr Watson of Dorset enquired about the manufacturer of the paper used by Walsall and we can confirm that all Walsall issues have been on paper produced by Coated Papers Ltd. Articles on Walsall and Coated Papers were published, respectively, in the April and May 1989 issues of the *Bulletin*.

The dropping of the 'p' (pence) sign in the value on special issues has resulted in some letters. An explanation has been supplied by Royal Mail Stamps Design Section: We left the 'p' off some stamps because we felt that the designs looked less cluttered and therefore more attractive without it. We have not so far had any operational problems arising from this, so we will probably leave the 'p' off at least some future issues also, if the designs look better as a result.

A number of countries have dispensed with the currency symbol on their stamps - the USA, Ireland, Canada and France all come to mind. Indeed French and Canadian stamps have not have the cents symbol since the 1960s. The first British stamps without the 'p' were the 1985 Christmas stamps and, with the exception of 1990 RSPCA set, has been dropped on all special issues since 1989 Industrial Archaeology. Designers have the choice of including the symbol or not - one might say a case of "to p or not to p"!

Moving on to stamp design in general, we continue to receive letters both in praise and criticism of our stamp issues although in recent months the choice of words used to describe

unfavourable designs seem less in the "Disgusted of Tunbridge Wells" category. Two letters which were very welcome came from Mr Birks of Manchester and Mary Norris of Indianapolis.

Mr Birks wrote: "There has been much criticism in the philatelic press regarding the design of the Victoria/Elizabeth definitives, and to my knowledge little praise. When the Machins were first released they were regarded by many as the "ultimate" stamp of this country — impossible to improve upon because of their simplicity and beauty. There are some collectors, myself included, who believe that the new definitives have achieved the impossible and surpassed the beauty of the original...". Ms Norris compared British and American stamps thus: "US stamps (commemoratives, that is) are virtually all designed as poster art — clear, uncluttered designs, 'free of artistic interference'; sometimes even free of apparent artistic influence. That, combined with sometimes second-rate printing, makes boring and uninspired stamps. One of the best attributes of British stamps is the use of 'impressionistic' designs — perhaps they are not so attractive after cancelling (I don't know as I collect mint) but they are certainly gorgeous as issued. They're miniature masterpieces..."

In September 1989 we featured a George V lamp box now at the Captain Cook Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska. This bears a collection plate for Albert Park Road and a number of correspondents suggested that this was in Salford or Malvern. Mr J H Cook of Worcester checked with Malvern Sorting Office and it seems unlikely that this particular box was ever sited in that town. Mr Isherwood of Cheshire wrote to the Hotel and was informed that the box was purchased from an antique shop on Third Avenue in New York which imported direct from England. It is possible that the plate was originally in another box and was inserted into this George V box prior to its sale.

Finally a number of you have asked about the return of Sunday collections from some letter boxes, in particular when this started. Sunday collections were reintroduced in five areas last November and the service has now been extended nationwide. At present about 2,500 staff are involved in the Sunday operation which will handle some 100 million letters a year. As well as road transport, five planes are used to carry "long distance" Sunday mail, flying to Luton from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Exeter, Southampton and Manchester.

October Digest

Issued in October

16 October: Astronomy stamps — 22p, 26p, 31p, 37p

Designer: Jeff Fisher

Printing: The House of Questa Ltd, offset-lithography, 37 x 35mm, sheets of 100. Phosphor coated paper, perforation 14½ x 14.

Bureau f.d. service alternative handstamp: Armagh

Presentation Pack: (No. 212), price £1.45.

16 October: Autumn Stampex/BPE Exhibition card, price £1.50. Available from British Philatelic Bureau and Royal Mail stand at the exhibition (16-21 October).

17 October: Astronomy stamps souvenir cover, price 19p. Available from "Collections" centres and philatelic counters.

29 October: Christmas stamp cards (Nos. 130A-D), price 19p each.

Withdrawn in October

1 October: 50p (Aeroplanes No. 1) and £1 (Mills No. 1) machine books containing 15p and 20p stamps. *Note: Only source of 15p definitive with phosphor band left (50p book) and 20p with straight edges left and right (£1 book).*

1 October: £1.16 book containing 29p definitives, litho-printed with 2 phosphor bands with straight edges at top, top and right, bottom and right, and bottom. *Note: Only source of these stamps.*

16 October: Lord Mayor's Show stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and souvenir cover.

The Questa 10 x 2nd and 1st class books were withdrawn on 14 September not 18 September as stated in last month's Digest. Also withdrawn on that date were the Harrison 10 x 2nd and 10 x 1st class books with cover reprint (issued October 1989) and the Harrison/Walsall 4 x 2nd and 4 x 1st class books (November 1989). We regret we were unable to give advance notice here of these withdrawals.

Correction: The new Definitives pack issued on 4 September is Number 22, not 23 as stated in the Definitive Update and Digest in the September *Bulletin*. We apologise for any confusion. No. 23 has been allocated to the new Country Stamps pack for issue in December.

Bulletin Back Issues

Back issues are available for one year from the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh and the National Postal Museum in London, price 50p per copy to September 1990, 55p a copy thereafter.

Mr Maynard Davies, of Bristol, operates a non-profit making scheme for collectors to acquire and sell back numbers of the *Bulletin*. Mr Davies has for sale reprints of Vols 1 and 2 bound together between a soft cover at £6 including inland postage. Photocopies can be supplied to order of issues from volumes 3 to 6, price 60p each plus postage. Original copies of many issues from volume 7 onwards are available at 50p each, all plus postage.

Mr Davies is interested in acquiring issues from vols 3-10 but has adequate stocks of later issues. He is not able to undertake the time consuming task of searching and copying specific articles.

Mr Davies has changed his address recently and is now at: Hall Floor Flat, 4 Cecil Road, Clifton, BRISTOL BS8 3HR. All orders or enquiries (with stamped, self-addressed envelope) should be sent to him at this address.

British Philatelic Bulletin

ISSN — 0953-8119

The *British Philatelic Bulletin* is published monthly by The Post Office.

Compiled and typeset by John Holman at:
National Postal Museum
King Edward Building
King Edward Street
LONDON EC1A 1LP

Editorial Adviser Douglas N Muir

Annual Subscriptions
UK and Europe £6
Rest of World (Airmail) £9.25

Subscriptions should be sent to:
British Philatelic Bureau
20 Brandon Street
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT

Single copies from "Collections" and philatelic counters: 55p

Binders, to hold 24 issues, are available by post from the British Philatelic Bureau, price £6. Also available, to callers only, at the National Postal Museum sales counter.

Printed in Great Britain by Moore and Matthes (Printers) Ltd for The Post Office.