

Philatelic Bulletin

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New Prices for Philatelic Items

The following new prices came into force from 26 January 1981.

Postmark Bulletin	£4.75
Philatelic Bureau Services	
Service A	12p
Deposit A/C	7p
Service B	12p
Special Handstamps	
Fixed date	£120.00
Interchangeable date	£125.00
Handstamping charge	2p
Postmark Slogans	
Local	£75.00
National	£120.00
First die	£50.00
Additional dies each	£45.00
Time charge	£6.50

The design of postage stamps has always been controversial. In 1839 all 2600 designs in the Treasury competition for the World's first adhesive stamp were rejected; instead it was the combined efforts of three eminent Victorian artists which culminated in what was to become the 'penny black'.

Today, with regular commemorative issues, the design of stamps is one of the most demanding forms of graphic art, and no less controversial than in 1839.

Stanley Gibbons International Ltd in conjunction with the Post Office is currently holding an exhibition dealing with the development of stamp design from 1839 to 1972, at The Design Centre, London, until 28 February 1981. The exhibition will also examine the development of stamp production following the establishment, in 1947, of the Stamp Advisory Committee.

The new members of this committee who will advise The Post Office for the next few years is shown elsewhere in this edition of the Bulletin.

During 1981 we will feature articles on this interesting area of philatelic study, illustrated with a selection of designs together with details of production and distribution.

Philatelic Sales Counters

In the January issue of the Bulletin we reported that the new philatelic sales counter situated in the Head Post Office, 65, Sandgate, AYR, KA7 1AA would open on 12 January. In fact the new sales counter opened on 19 January 1981. We apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused.

The philatelic counter, Liverpool, has been transferred to new premises at: Head Office Counter, Whitechapel, LIVERPOOL, L1 1AA.

Collecting Machin Definitives Part 5 Flaws and Varieties

These can provide interesting, sometimes amusing and occasionally lucrative sidelines. Into this category fall sheets or part sheets of stamps with perforations completely missing. Alternatively the perforations may be grossly misplaced to the extent that they go through instead of around the stamp design. Totally missing colour varieties are usually found in the multi-coloured commemorative and pictorial stamps but there have been examples of the bi-colour Machin definitives with one of the colours missing. Phosphor errors are also sought after, especially the missing phosphors and the major shifts of phosphor bands. Some of these are scarce and expensive, but most are fairly common and cheap.

The wrong types of phosphor, either as a contaminant or as a substitute for the standard specification, also attract attention by collectors although there are some problems of definition causing misunderstanding and confusion. Minor ink, paper or perforation varieties can be found which are not constant throughout a print run. For example, a scrap of paper attached to the web may go through the printing press before dropping off. This may leave a small patch of missing colour on the stamp showing where the paper scrap had been



lodged by a characteristic indentation in the paper. A perforating pin may become bent or broken.





The photogravure printing process is used for the production of most Machin definitives. In essence this means combining a master negative of the Queen's head with the appropriate value panel, using it for the production of multipositives, then transferring these in a cell pattern on the printing cylinder.

Any flaw on the master negative will affect all of the images on the multipositive. Any flaw on a multipositive image will be transferred to the printing cylinder. If a multipositive is used in the production of more than one cylinder, such a flaw may appear on them all.

The next process involves transferring the multipositive to the printing cylinder by means of a carbon tissue (a light-sensitive gelatine coated paper). Firstly the tissue is placed under a glass plate on which the photogravure pattern has been etched, then exposed to light. The light which passes through the clear lines between the cells on the glass plate hardens the gelatine and makes it water resistant. The cells themselves, being unaffected by light remain water soluble.

The gelatine is then re-exposed behind the multipositive which allows light to penetrate in varying degrees. Dark areas on the multipositive, which make up the stamp design, will allow varying degrees of light through.

As a result, the design appears in cell pattern on the gelatine, with full colours being water soluble, toned areas partly soluble, and non-colour areas water resistant.

Foreign matter, hairs, dust specks and such like, on the multipositive or gelatine will limit the passage of light. As water soluble images they will be transferred to the printing cylinder, so leading to the production of coloured flaws. Some of these flaws exhibit the characteristic screening dot pattern. A scratch on the multipositive allows light through causing the gelatine to harden and become resistant to water. This will lead to an uncoloured reproduction of the scratch on the stamp.

The gelatine tissue is rolled on to a blank cylinder and then developed in warm water. This dissolves the soft gelatine so exposing the copper on which the design will be etched in a weak acid solution. Hardened, water resistant areas of gelatine repel the acid solution.

Any foreign matter becoming attached to the

This example shows a major retouch beneath the Queen's chin on the lower 1p stamp. In this case it is in a mis-cut booklet panel in which the 8p stamp is on the right instead of the left.

This results in a perforation hole being either out of line, or missing altogether. In a different category are the constant flaws, so called because they occur on consecutive sheets from a particular cylinder or plate. Many such flaws are minute fly-specks, to be seen only under magnification, and having little interest to the average collector. Even flaws visible to the naked eye may command only modest attention if they have little effect on the appearance of the stamp or, from the stamp catalogue editor's view-point do not photograph very well.

Constant flaws can be found either as colour added, or some of the colour missing. Added colour may be accidental or deliberate in the case of retouches to the cylinder.





cylinder or any areas of accidentally hardened gelatine, may prevent the copper from being etched. This will result in patches of missing colour on the stamps. If the gelatine has been scratched or otherwise damaged, for instance when being rolled on to a cylinder, it will allow the acid solution to penetrate otherwise insoluble areas, so etching the copper. Coloured flaws, without screening dots, will then result. Proofs, taken from a new cylinder by a special proofing machine, are 'spotted' for flaws by both the printer and the Post Office. Patches of missing colour will need attention, especially if they are noticeable by the naked eye, and these will be dealt with by retouching the cylinder.

If a cylinder is used for several print runs it may be given further attention by the engraver, even to the extent of working on previous retouches. Collectors identify these as various stages of a flaw or variety.

The 'doctor blade' has produced some spectacular effects at times. This is the blade on the printing press which wipes surplus ink off the cylinder before printing.

In order to remove every trace of unwanted ink from the printing cylinder, the doctor blade must be precision-ground to produce intimate contact with the cylinder.

During use, uneven wear or hard particles may result in slight damage to the blade which gives rise to 'doctor blade faults'.

Mistakes in the print on the sheet margin occur from time to time. A common example concerns the ink cylinder number which comes in two versions, with and without dot. Sometimes the dot is left off, then inserted later. Sometimes it is engraved in front of the number and left there. On other occasions it may be touched out and re-engraved in the correct position after the cylinder number.

D W STADDON



ABC of Postcard Themes

4. D for Dogs

Anyone collecting 'Dogs' on picture postcards will have a much wider range of choice – of breeds and varieties – than, for example, with cats, and most types can be found on cards published from the turn of the century to the 1930s – the period of most interest to collectors. Dogs – probably the most popular of domestic pets – are classified into sporting and non-sporting breeds, but pets can be made of any of the 120-odd separate breeds. Sporting breeds include Afghan hounds, Beagles, Bloodhounds, Foxhounds and Greyhounds etc., also the Gun-dogs – Setters, Pointers, Retrievers and Spaniels, and Terriers – Airedales, Borders, Cairns, Foxes, Kerry Blues, 'Scotties', Sealyhams and West Highland terriers. Non-sporting breeds include Alsatians, Boxers, Bulldogs, Collies, Dalmatians, Great Danes, Newfoundlands, English sheepdogs, Poodles, Welsh corgis and many more, while the 'Toy' dogs (which prefer laps to kennels) are represented by the Chihuahuas, King Charles spaniels, Pekingese and Pomeranians.

Serious studies of dogs will be found on cards signed (and sometimes unsigned) by artists known for their skill in portraying animals. There were numerous specialists in this field, among them Cecil Aldin, Norah Drummond, Dorothy Travers Pope and Maud West Watson. Often these cards were published by Raphael Tuck and chromolithograph-printed by the best German printers. Series titles included 'Faithful Friends', 'Our Dogs' and 'Sketches of Dogs', while a beautiful embossed series was produced by Tuck. Dogs appear in hunting scenes and on greetings cards, hauling milk-carts on Belgian and French cards, and with actresses and models on 'glamour' cards. The model striding along with her borzoi is as familiar on Edwardian postcards as she is in fashion magazines of the present day.

Dog studies and sketches were published on postcards by the leading dog-food manufacturers – notably Melox, Spratts Dog Food and Viscan Dog Biscuits, while the famous St. Bernard – the 'brandy dog' – noted for its rescue work in the Alpine snows, appears on Swiss cards. The British bulldog usually accompanies John Bull on patriotic cards, and the familiar H.M.V. trademark – the dog



listening to the gramophone – has been adapted by several comic artists, e.g. 'His Master's Vice', in which the horn of the gramophone is replaced by a large funnel inserted in a whisky bottle. Comic cards are numerous – Tom Browne produced some sets of six and several single-episode cards picturing dogs in comic situations, while of course the celebrated 'Bonzo' is featured on many cards by G. E. Studdy. Louis Wain, the 'cat man', also drew dogs – a noted one is 'The Auctioneer' in which Mr Bulldog is offering a puppy for sale. Dogs can be seen chasing unfortunate postmen in the traditional manner, walking primly in the park with 'milady' and making characteristic stops at lamp-posts. 'The Elongated Dachshund' is a favourite comic theme and there are dogs with wagging (wire) tails on novelty cards.

In February 1979 the Post Office issued four stamps in recognition of the annual Crufts Dog Show, founded by Charles Cruft, general manager of a dog-biscuit firm, in 1886. The stamps – and the accompanying PHQ postcards, depicted the Old English Sheepdog, Welsh Springer Spaniel, West Highland Terrier and Irish Setter. My card this month is a magnificent embossed study of an Irish Setter – Tuck 'Art' postcard No. 3762 – postmarked 'Harrogate', March 1902. This tribute comes from the *Philatelic Bulletin* of January 1979: 'Irish Setters are not only handsome, poised dogs, they are also wonderful companions. They are good hunting partners for men, reliable household protectors for women and even-tempered rough-and-tumble playmates for children.'

MALCOLM JAMES

Queen Elizabeth II Definitive Stamps – Technical Details

Because of the growing interest in the more technical details of stamp production, such as the printing press used, method of perforating, we have gathered together as much information as possible concerning the decimal issues from their introduction.

During the next few months we will publish lists which relate to definitive sheet printings only, which are as comprehensive as our records permit. They may not be one hundred per cent complete, for example, it may have been necessary to make a temporary cylinder change whilst the cylinder in use was being cleaned. Such a change was not always recorded, particularly if the temporary cylinder was in use for only an hour or so.

If readers have positive evidence that other printings exist, we shall be pleased to publish the

details after verification.

We would like to acknowledge the help and advice afforded to us by Dr. A S Law – three times winner of the Post Office ‘Stamper’ Trophy. Dr. Law has kindly made available details of early printings from his own independent records.

Readers may wish to know what is meant by the following abbreviations:

GA – gum arabic
PVA – poly vinylalcohol
PVA/DEX – poly vinylalcohol/dextrin
PCP – phosphor coated paper
OCP – original coated paper
FCR – fluorescent coated paper
PPP – phosphor printed paper.

Also that the number after a printing press denotes the number of printing units, e.g. Halley 2.

Value	Cylinders		Printing Press	Perforator	Gum	Printing Date	Coating	Comments
Colour	Phos							
$\frac{1}{2}p$	1	?	Thrissell	Grover	GA	Aug '70	OCP	Phosphor cyl. not recorded, very short run
	2	4	Timson 2	Grover	PVA	Aug '70	OCP	Also with inverted phosphor cylinder
	2	2	Timson 2	Grover	PVA	Oct '70	FCP	
	2	2	Timson 2	Grover	PVA	March '71	FCP	
	4	4	Timson 2	Grover	PVA	June '71	FCP	
	2	1	Thrissell	Grover	PVA	Oct '71	FCP	
	2	7	Halley 3	Swedish Rotary	GA	Sept '72	FCP	
	2.	7	Halley 2	Grover	GA	Sept '72	FCP	Also reported with PVA gum
	2	7	Halley 2	Grover	PVA	Sept '72	FCP	
	7	17	Jumelle	Kampf Pin Rotary	PVA/DEX	Oct '73	FCP	
	8	17	Jumelle		PVA/DEX	July '74	FCP	
	7	17	Jumelle		PVA/DEX	Jan '76	FCP	
	8	17	Jumelle		PVA/DEX	Jun '76	FCP	
	8	21	Jumelle		PVA/DEX	Jun '77	FCP	
	8	30	Jumelle		PVA/DEX	Feb '78	FCP	
	8	30	Jumelle		PVA/DEX	July '79	FCP	
	7	none	Jumelle		PVA/DEX	Sep '80	PCP	
								Variations in degree of gloss

De La Rue Dummy Stamps



The 'dummy' stamps which are illustrated above were most probably produced by the De La Rue Company in 1884-85. This month's 'Gem' from the Reginald M Phillips collection is about these 'dummy' stamps which were produced for the first experimental stamp booklet.

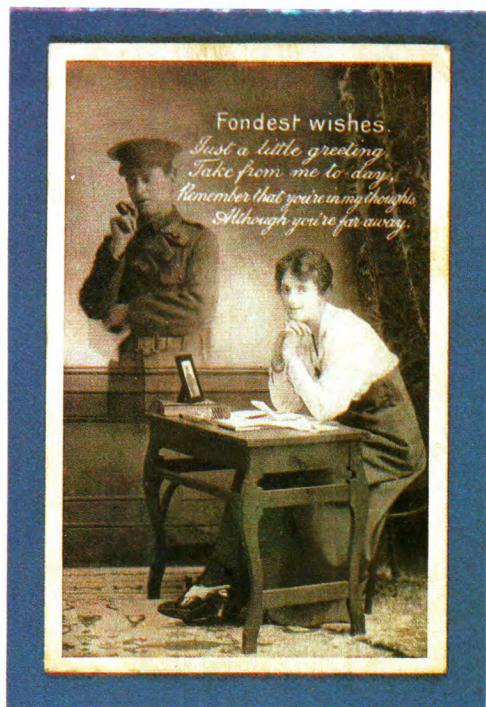
The Inland Revenue first raised the idea for stamp booklets in 1879 when they considered issuing the Receipt stamps in booklet form. On 4 February 1885, De La Rue and Company wrote to Somerset House enclosing three sample books each containing 120 stamps. Further sample

booklets were submitted in June 1885. The sample stamp was described as having the Queen's head in the centre, with 'De La Rue' in the upper panel and 'London' in the lower. (As illustrated).

These items can be found in volume XLIV of the Phillips Collection in the National Postal Museum. There are also two die proofs as well as sheets of thirty (in dull green and in carmine) and booklets with varying combinations. This particular design was also used for the colour trials of certain postage stamps of India in 1900 and of Barbados in 1902 respectively.

The Proud Collection First World War Forces Mails

In the first World War, forces mail posted in the U.K. unfranked was specially treated in that the recipient was only charged the normal postal rate and not the double 100% surcharge. The example illustrated sent from the Portsmouth area also has an unusual hand-struck half penny.



Reproduced by kind permission of Mr E Proud

Victoria Cross Exhibition National Postal Museum

Sergeant Knight, the only member of the 2/8th Battalion, The London Regiment (Post Office Rifles) to be awarded the Victoria Cross, is remembered in an exhibition of postal history,

medals, prints and militaria currently on display in the National Postal Museum, London, marking the 125th anniversary of the inauguration of the Victoria Cross in 1856. The exhibition which ends on 1 May 1981, concentrates on the campaigns of the first 25 years of the awards, including the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, and the Zulu War. There is also a section dealing with Sergeant Knight who won the Victoria Cross in France in 1917.

A special postcard depicting a painting, by Terence Cuneo, of the action during which Sergeant Knight won his award, is on sale at the Museum during the period of the exhibition. The Maltese Cross postmark normally in use at the Museum will be temporarily replaced by a new postmark illustrating the Victoria Cross. This handstamp will be withdrawn at the close of the exhibition.

A handbook of the exhibition is available to visitors price 80p, or by post at 96p.

The postcard is available to visitors, price 20p, or, by post at 32p. Customers who require the postcard returned to them with a 14p stamp affixed cancelled with the special handstamp, the cost will be 46p.

THE VICTORIA CROSS EXHIBITION 1856-1881



International Year of Disabled People Stamps Issue

25 March 1981

The International Year of Disabled People 1981, proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly, is of enormous value in showing that it is the individual person and their ability, not their disability, which counts. 'Disabled people', in this context, are those who are physically handicapped, deaf, blind, speech impaired and mentally handicapped.

Four special stamps to be issued by The Post Office on 25 March 1981 reflect some of these themes.

Guide Dogs (14p) enable blind people to get about with relative ease. Sign Language (18p) is one way of communicating with deaf people. The Wheelchair (22p) – Access is important, particularly at work, enabling disabled people to use their abilities to the full. Mouth and Foot artists (25p) can encourage the disabled to express their personality through art.

First Day Cover Services

The following services for first day covers will be provided. Two special pictorial handstamps will be available: 'Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh' and 'Windsor'.

SERVICE 'A'

This consists of the official first day cover, addressed to the correct postal address of the destination required and bearing all four stamps. The cover will be cancelled: 'Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh' or 'Windsor', as requested and despatched.

SERVICE 'B'

Customers' own pre-addressed covers bearing the correct postal address, will be given the stamps, cancelled as requested and despatched. Application forms, available from the Philatelic Bureau, and at all Head Post Offices should be returned not later than 16 March 1981.

The following charges will apply:

	Inland	Overseas
Service 'A'	£1.16	£1.01
Deposit account customers	£1.11	96½
Service 'B'	£1.03	89½

The usual first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes.

Presentation Pack

The presentation pack, containing all four stamps, and costing 96p, will be available from 25 March 1981.

Postcards

Postcard reproductions of each of the four stamps will be available approximately two weeks before the issue date, price 11p each.

Printing Details

Designer: John Gibbs

Printer: Harrison & Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd

Process: Photogravure

Paper: Coated, unwatermarked

Phosphor: Pre-treated

Adhesive: PVA Dextrin

Format: Horizontal

Size: 41 mm x 30 mm

Perforations: 15 x 14

Sheet size: 100

Values and Colours

14p: Lemon, rose-red, prussian blue, dull purple, bistre-brown, silver.

18p: Yellow-orange, red-orange, emerald, black, silver.

22p: Yellow-brown, chocolate, turquoise-blue, black, vermilion, silver.

25p: Lemon, vermilion, bright blue, red-orange, olive-brown, black, silver.

New Stroud and District Philatelic Society

It is intended to form a philatelic society in Stroud and district in 1981. At present, stamp collectors are served by societies in Gloucester, Cirencester, Cheltenham and Bristol. It has been realised for some time that whilst there are many philatelists in the Stroud Valleys, very few belong to a local society. It is for this reason that a new philatelic society is to be formed. If you are interested please contact Mr D Page, 'Ridgeways', Bussage, STROUD, Glos. GL6 8BB.

Commemorative Covers

Radley College Concert Tour

A party of 50 musicians and gymnasts from Radley College and St. Helen's School, Abingdon, will tour Scandinavia in March 1981. To mark the event, a commemorative cover designed by a member of the college is currently available bearing the 'Folklore' stamps and cancelled 6 February 1981. A number of covers are signed by eminent musical personalities including Dame Janet Baker, Yehudi Menuhin, Jessye Norman, Plácido Domingo and Dame Joan Sutherland.

Further details and order form can be obtained from: Col. G.W. A. Napier, The Downings, 5 Bazehill Road, Rottingdean, BRIGHTON BN2 7DB.

The British Library Valentine Card

To coincide with the 'Folklore' stamps issue on 6 February 1981, the British Library will produce a reproduction Victorian Valentine card and complementary envelope, after an original Valentine of about 1860. Five hundred of these will be specially hand coloured while the envelope, bearing a single 14p 'Valentine' stamp, will be cancelled with a British Library pictorial handstamp: the cost is £5 each. Uncoloured card and envelope, as above, is available at £1.25. For collectors who require a full set of 'Folklore' stamps affixed to the cover the cost is £2.

The covers are available by post from The British Library Philatelic Agents, PO Box 20, CANTERBURY, Kent CT1 2XX. Orders should include an additional 20p for postage and packing. Remittances to be made payable to the Agents.

Fully serviced covers will be on sale to visitors to the British Library Philatelic Sales Counter in the King's Library at the British Museum. The covers bearing the 14p Valentine stamp are also available to personal callers to the National Postal Museum, King Edward Building, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP between 10 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. from 6-13 February 1981, at £1.25 each, or by post for £1.35. Envelope ordered from the National Postal Museum will not be despatched under separate cover.

Headington Quarry Morris Dancers

A commemorative cover is currently available

bearing all four 'Folklore' special stamps cancelled with a pictorial handstamp dated 6 February 1981. The cover depicts traditional folk dancing by the Headington Quarry Morris Dancers of Oxford, and is priced at £2.50 plus 15p postage and packing. Orders with remittances made payable to Hawkwood Stamps should be sent to 60 Hawkwood Crescent, Chingford, LONDON E4 7PJ.

Forces Covers

Royal Navy

A commemorative cover is now available marking the 65th anniversary of the sinking of the German gunboat, 'Hedwig von Weissman on Lake Tanganyika - February 1916'.

The cover illustrates 2 motor gunboats being hauled by 2 steam traction engines across Africa, and bears a set of 'Sports' stamps cancelled by BFPO handstamp 1723 depicting the badge of H.M.S. 'Cutlass': the cost is 70p. In addition, the cover as above, signed by Capt. P G Dickens DSO DSC RN(Retd) Commanding Officer Motor Torpedo Boats, 1943, and Lt Cdr B Westlake RN Commanding Officer HMS 'Cutlass' (Fast Patrol Boat No 1), is available price £1.95. Alternatively the cover signed by Lt Cdr B Westlake only is £1.15.

Orders accompanied by a 7" x 5" stamped addressed envelope, and remittance made payable to the FAA Museum, should be sent to: The RN Philatelic Officer, Fleet Air Arm Museum, RNAS, Yeovilton, YEOVIL, Somerset, BA22 8HL.

Italy honours Philatelic and Postmark Bulletins

These British Post Office publications were awarded a bronze medal and diploma at the recent Philitema 80' International Stamp Exhibition held at Cinisello Balsamo, Italy.

74. Literary Anniversaries, 1971



This was the second series of literary anniversaries — Dickens and Wordsworth were commemorated in June 1970 — and the designs portraying three of Britain's illustrious poets were again the work of Rosalind Dease, based on contemporary drawings and engravings. The choice of subject was of course governed by the appropriate anniversary dates, and it was fortuitous that three 'literary giants' were eligible for commemoration — 3p John Keates, 150th anniversary of death; 5p Thomas Gray, bicentenary of death; and 7½p Sir Walter Scott, poet and novelist, bicentenary of birth. The stamps appeared on 28 July 1971.

Miss Dease essayed numerous designs — some in vertical format — and had problems in obtaining a suitable likeness in each case, as many of the early portraits, busts and sculptures were somewhat fanciful versions. None of these difficulties is apparent in the three matching profiles which were printed in black against coloured backgrounds, accompanied by facsimile signatures of the three poets. The Queen's head was printed in gold and then embossed. Ronald Maddox submitted alternative designs featuring the historic places associated with the three celebrities — Keats' house in Hampstead, Stoke Poges (Gray's home and grave) and Abbotsford (Scott's last home on the Tweed).

John Keats, 1795-1821, was born in Finsbury, London, the son of a livery-stable proprietor. He was apprenticed to a London surgeon and subsequently practised medicine himself, but from 1817

he devoted himself to literature. Beset by financial difficulties and threatened by consumption, he sought a sunnier clime and died in Rome. His principal works were 'Poems' (1817), which contained much of his finest verse; 'Endymion' (1818), 'Lamia', 'Isabella and other Poems' (1820); and a series of magnificent odes — 'To a Nightingale', 'On a Grecian Urn' and 'To Autumn'. Keats' letters are many and famous.

Thomas Gray, 1716-1771, was born in Cornhill, London, and devoted his early life to the study of Greek literature, producing (in 1747) his 'Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College', and (in 1750) his greatest work, the 'Elegy written in a Country Churchyard'. The church was that of Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire, beside which is the poet's grave; his mother lived at nearby Stoke Court (then West End Farm). Other works include a notable 'Ode to Adversity', 'The Pindaric Odes', 'The Progress of Poesy' and 'The Bard', all of which were mainly classical in form and romantic in expression. In 1768 he was presented by the Duke of Grafton with the professorship of Modern History at Cambridge, a sinecure office with £400 a year.

Sir Walter Scott, 1771-1832, distinguished poet and one of the greatest of British novelists; was born in Edinburgh. Professionally a lawyer, he early chose a literary career and his first success was 'The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border' (1802), followed by 'The Lay of the Last Minstrel' (1805), the first poem which gained him popular favour, then 'Marmion' (1808) and 'The Lord of the Isles' (1814). His last 18 years was the period of

the Waverley novels, first published anonymously, which won world acclaim — 'Waverley', 'Guy Mannering', 'Old Mortality', 'Rob Roy', 'The Heart of Midlothian', 'The Bride of Lammermoor', 'Ivanhoe', 'Kenilworth' and numerous others. In 1826 he faced financial ruin when his publisher and printers failed, but he continued to write to the end. He is buried at Dryburgh Abbey.

The stamps were photogravure-printed by Harrison and Sons in sheets of 100 (10 x 10) on unwatermarked paper with two phosphor bands. Printing flaws included the gold (Queen's head) omitted (3p and 5p), gold embossing omitted (7½p) and phosphor omitted (all values). Quantities sold were: 3p 61,635,564; 5p 9,767,700; 7½p 7,678,266; and presentation packs, 104,724.

JAMES WATSON

New Stamp Advisory Committee

A new Stamp Advisory Committee was recently appointed by the Post Office for the period 1981-1983.

The Committee's main function is to advise on the development of the design of special stamps from the artwork stage to the final essay, to be submitted for the Queen's approval.

In addition to the Post Office members, the Committee consists of experts in design, philatelists and representatives of public opinion.

Members of the new Committee, some of whom have served on the previous Committees, are:

The Chairman, Nigel Walmsley, Director of Postal Marketing, The Deputy Chairman, John Mackay, head of the Counter and Stamp Marketing Division.

Dr Jean Alexander: Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society, London and an expert on Great Britain's stamps. She is a thematic collector, and in collaboration with her husband, writes regularly on Great Britain stamp issues.

Lady Casson FSIAD: Fellow of the Royal College of Art. She has a private practice as architect and designer for private and public buildings and interiors, and is design consultant to various companies.

Michael Colvin: Conservative MP for Bristol (North West).

Keith Grant: has been director of the Design Council since 1977.

Roger de Grey RA: Principal of the City and Guilds of London Art School.

Dr Alan Huggins: Senior Assistant Secretary of University College, London; a life-long philatelist, a past President of the Great Britain Philatelic Society and a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society; he is also an editor, and author of philatelic and other works.

Andrew Mantle: assistant secretary in charge of the Posts and Giro Branch, Department of Industry.

Richard Negus FSIAD FSTD: a past President of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers. He is a partner with his wife, of Negus and Negus, design consultants.

Eric Ogden MP: Labour Member of Parliament for Liverpool from 1964.

Mrs Gabrielle Pike CBE JP: Chairman of the Woman's Forum and past National Chairman of the National Federation of Women's Institutes. Her experience of public life covers service on the food standards committee of the Ministry of Agriculture, the National Trust, the ITA and the Advertising Standards Authority.

Lord Reilly MA, Hon Des RCA, Hon FRIBA, Hon FSIAD: was Director of the Design Council until June 1977. He is a member of many public bodies including the Council of the Royal College of Art, the design panel and environment panel of the British Railways Board, and the Historic Buildings Committee of the GLC.

Barry Robinson: Design Advisor to the Post Office.

Professor Herbert Spencer RDI Dr RCA: Professor of Graphic Arts at the Royal College of Art; Master of the Faculty of Royal Designers for Industry and Vice President of the Royal Society of Arts.

Book Reviews

The Commonwealth Catalogue of QEII Stamps

1981 Edition.

*Published by Urch Harris & Co. Ltd,
7, Richmond Hill Avenue, BRISTOL, BS8 1BQ.*

The publishers have long enjoyed an enviable reputation for giving sound advice and reliable information to collectors. Their latest QEII Commonwealth catalogue enhances that reputation – all 3lbs 6ozs of it.

Among its virtues is a welcome concern for the reader's eyesight. It must be one of the most easy to read catalogues at present on the market. Its clear typeface and layout serves as an example to those printers who sometimes forget that not all purchasers enjoy perfect eyesight.

The foreword reminds us that prices of rare Commonwealth items are currently escalating at more than 40% per annum and continuing to pick up steam. That piece of unpleasant news comes as no great surprise. Nowadays choice material is much more likely to turn up in a safe deposit than between album pages.

Mr Urch offers some handy advice to beginners. He suggests they might start off with a new territory from its inception. One merely wishes to sound a cautionary note: some of these territories have a disturbing habit of sprouting high value issues every few weeks. That is one reason you need a catalogue you can trust.

Anyone whose interests lie in QEII issues of the Commonwealth need look no further than this one. Its comprehensive listing and realistic pricing makes it a very good buy indeed.

The Postal History Annual: 1980

by James A. Mackay.

*Available from the author at 11, Newall Terrace,
DUMFRIES, DG1 1LN.*

Price £3.35 (UK), £4.25 (O'seas) postage paid.

A couple of years ago the author, an acknowledged expert, produced a massive history of British postal markings which elicited voluminous correspondence from readers. This, coupled with the emergence of a large amount of new material, soon necessitated a handbook of addenda and corrigenda. The 1980 Annual is the second such

supplement. It should prove every bit as popular as the first.

Owners of the original volumes will be extremely grateful to Mr. Mackay for sparing them the need to purchase a new set of textbooks each year. He deserves a word of thanks – and the cost of printed matter being what it is he will certainly get it. Nicely produced and generously illustrated the Postal History Annual is very welcome.

Islands Postal History Series: No. 11 Scottish Islands Supplement & Catalogue

James A Mackay.

*Available from the author at 11, Newall Terrace,
DUMFRIES, DG1 1LN.*

Price £3.40 (UK), £4.25 (O'seas) postage paid.

Since Mr Mackay completed his monumental ten volume history of Scottish Islands postal services a considerable amount of new information has come to light. A good deal of this is due to the author's request for advice of hitherto unrecorded items and suggestions for amendment or revision of his original text. Postal historians have always responded generously to such appeals.

When the major work appeared it was clear that we had something of an event on our hands. An in-depth postal history study of that sort does not surface every day. Nothing was more certain than that everyone with relevant material would start to leaf it through furiously. At the same time local postal records would get well mulled over, archives be dusted off and memories given a good jogging. That is how postal history gets unearthed.

To serious students this supplement is full of interest. Owners of the original volume will find it indispensable.

Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue: Specialised Listing of Elizabethan Commonwealth Stamps 1981 Edition.

*Published by Stanley Gibbons Ltd,
391, Strand, LONDON, WC2R 0LX.*

Price £11.95.

The end of 1980 saw the arrival of the big battalions and every year they get bigger. This one weighs-in at a cool 4lbs with 1231 pages. It is the

seventeenth in line, listing and pricing more than 30,000 stamps. That is a very far cry from the days when every schoolboy confidently aimed at an 'Omnibus' collection by the time he reached his fourteenth birthday.

Some idea of its popularity and usefulness can be gathered from the fact that SG had to print no less than 17 editions in fifteen years. As the foreword says 'The growth in the number of new stamps has been phenomenal'. So has the growth of prices! A Dulac 1953 full-face Coronation stamp will now set you back £9.

The big SGs are unique and the word which springs to mind to describe their tone is 'magisterial'. Who else would tell a postal administration that its stamps were 'either issued in excess of postal needs or have not been made available to the public at face value'. To do that in cold print you have to carry a lot of clout.

That is what you get for your £12 less 5p and if you want majestic authority you must pay up and look handsome.

Stanley Gibbons Specialised Catalogue: Volume 3.

Queen Elizabeth II Pre-decimal Issues: 5th Edition.

*Published by Stanley Gibbons Ltd,
391, Strand, LONDON, WC2R 0LX.
Price: £8.50.*

In consequence of its rarity, all GB specialised material is greatly sought after and commands very high prices. Purchases of rare stamps by non-collectors for investment purposes is also forcing up prices. We may all deplore the tendency but it cannot be ignored.

Any sane man who operates in a field where single specimens may cost hundreds of pounds immediately goes out in search of the best possible guide. If his speciality is QEII pre-decimals this book is precisely where his search ends.

It is the 5th edition of Part 3 of SG's flagship, a four volume reference work which is justly claimed to be without equal anywhere in the world for specialised GB listing and pricing. It represents the last word in philatelic literature and carried off the 1980 London Gold Award just to prove it.

With their uniform layout and in traditional red hard covers, the four volumes of this series form an invaluable part of any advanced collector's library. There is nothing quite like them and regular reference to their pages is said to be what separates the men from the boys in stamp collecting.

If you want the 'top of the line', here it is!



Posting Boxes

No 21. This small modern letter box at Abbots Morton, Worcestershire has had its own thatched pillar constructed to suit the thatched cottages in the vicinity. Many letter boxes can be found in very attractive settings such as this.

Philatelic Bulletin

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