

Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 9 Number 6 February 1972



Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
THE POST OFFICE AT STAMPEX	2
BRITISH PIONEER AIRMAILS	2
THE YEARS 1878-80: A	
WATERSHED IN BRITISH STAMP	
PRODUCTION (PART 1)	3, 4, 5
BOOK REVIEWS	5, 6
BICENTENARY - ROYAL	
ENGINEERS ON GIBRALTAR	6
NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM	
SERIES - MILITARY COVERS	6
BRITISH POLAR EXPLORERS -	
SOME BACKGROUND NOTES	7, 8
BRITISH POLAR EXPLORERS	
STAMP ISSUE	8, 9
THE POST OFFICE AND THE	
MARKETING OF STAMPS	9, 10, 11
1972 STAMP PROGRAMME	11
STAMPS ON TELEVISION	12
THE PHILATELIC SIGNIFICANCE	
OF A FIRE AT A STARCH	
FACTORY	13
FURTHER SCHOOLS MATERIAL	
FROM THE POST OFFICE	14
VICTORIAN LETTER BOX	14
SPECIAL HANDSTAMPS	14, 15
POSTMARK SLOGANS	15

Introduction

Stampex is almost with us once again and we shall be there to welcome old friends and new customers. We are breaking new ground this year by providing a special cover for visitors and by having an Edwardian Post Office on our stand as used on TV. Details are given in our Stampex feature.

Few of our readers were able to attend the Seminar on philately at Sussex University in the autumn but we are able to give this month the major part of Brian Crowther's talk on the marketing of British stamps. A re-statement

of our policy will always be of great interest especially to our newer readers.

The long awaited details of dates and denominations of this year's special issues have been released and we can now plan our philatelic year. The thematic collector is well catered for among the many subjects to be featured and the enthusiast will surely find much of interest.

The Post Office at Stampex

Stampex this year will be held at the Royal Horticultural Society's New Hall, Westminster, London SW1 between 28 February and 4 March.

The Post Office will put on a display of current items and have a large sales counter to cater for customers requirements. Representatives from the Philatelic Bureau will be in attendance to help with advice on our philatelic services.

As an added attraction the Post Office stand will include a replica of an Edwardian Post Office used in one of Thames TV programmes "The Rivals of Sherlock Holmes".

For the first time a special Post Office commemorative "Stampex" cover is being produced which will be sold only at Stampex. The covers, if posted in the special posting box at the Exhibition, will be cancelled with the handstamp in use on that day. The covers will cost 5p each.

British Pioneer Airmails

A booklet has been produced to complement the exhibition at the National Postal Museum illustrating the story of the carriage of mails by air. The booklet, at a price of 29p post free, is available from the Bureau only.

Anyone interested in this fascinating subject will find the booklet *British Pioneer Airmails* a useful work.

The Years 1878-80: A Watershed in British Stamp Production (Part 1)

In the year 1878 two distinct types of postage stamps were sold over the counters in British post offices. On the one hand were the values most commonly used for printed papers, samples and letters – the $\frac{1}{2}d$, $1d$, $1\frac{1}{2}d$ and $2d$ postage stamps which were printed (as in two cases they had been since 1840) in the line engraved process by Messrs Perkins Bacon. On the other hand there were all the values above $2d$ which Messrs De La Rue printed by the surface printing process which they had perfected in the early 1850s.

Within two years all this had changed, all postage stamps were printed by a single process using fugitive inks, and this revolution had been accompanied by a number of important consequential changes such as the abandonment of the use of corner letters. This new order lasted for quite a time; 33 years passed before line-engraved stamps (the “Seahorses”) were again on sale, and the next great printing change was not until 1934 when photogravure replaced surface printing.

In building up the magnificent collection of nineteenth century British postage stamps which, through his generosity, now forms a key part of the philatelic treasures of the National Postal Museum, Mr Reginald M. Phillips paid considerable attention to acquiring material illustrating this important period of change. Over 50 pages in the collection show the types of essays submitted by the chief firms which tendered in 1879 for the contract to print the One Penny value, those submitted by the successful tenderers, De La Rue, and the unique artists drawings, essays and die proofs submitted in 1879-80 by the same firm for the $\frac{1}{2}d$, $1\frac{1}{2}d$ and $2d$ values.

From Post Office archives the Museum has recently been able to add to these treasures of the R. M. Phillips’ collection the actual essays etc. submitted for the 1879 tender together with important official documents and minutes of the period. The story of these two momentous years can now be told in full and every significant development illustrated with original materials from

the R. M. Phillips’ or the Post Office collections.

The Change in the One Penny Stamp

The story of the two momentous years starts in April 1878 when the Board of Inland Revenue (then responsible for stamp production) was made aware of objections to the current One Penny stamp (with letters in all four corners). The Post Office, in particular, said that obliterating marks could be removed from this stamp because it was not printed in a fugitive colour.

This complaint (which also applied to the $\frac{1}{2}d$, $1\frac{1}{2}d$ and $2d$ stamps) was passed on early in May by the Inland Revenue to Perkins Bacon, who were told that the defect had been revealed by official experiments carried out in April. In the R. M. Phillips’ collection there can be seen three original sheets of stamps from these experiments. Two bear Perkins Bacon line-engraved stamps and the third specimens of De La Rue surfaced printed values. Many of these stamps have been treated with ether, benzene or chloroform. While these chemicals removed cancellations from the Perkins Bacon issues without affecting the stamps themselves (fig. 1) the application of the same chemicals to the surface printed issues resulted in the bleaching or smearing of both stamp and cancellation equally. Although Perkins Bacon tried to remedy the fault by experimenting with fugitive inks (“in prettier colours”) of which they submitted samples on no less than four occasions between May and the end of 1878, nevertheless on 23 December the Inland Revenue gave them six months notice of the termination of their contracts for printing the low denomination postage stamps.

The Post Office’s expressed preference for surface-printing as being more secure than line-engraving (a process which did not lend itself satisfactorily to the use of fugitive inks) was not the only objection to the issues printed by Perkins Bacon. Difficulties had, for instance, been experienced by the Post



Fig. 1

Office in handling the One Penny stamps soon after printing as the ink tended to come off on the hands of those who counted the sheets. Furthermore, the darkness of the colours used made a date stamp difficult to read if used as an obliterator; the surface of the paper was rougher than that of the surface printed issues; and the excessive amount of gum used made the sheets of stamps thick and clumsy to handle. Some of the criticisms were valid and inherent in the line-engraved process, others could have been remedied.

Probably an equally important reason for a change was the extent to which artistic tastes had altered since 1840. The justly praised early-Victorian dignity and good taste which were the essence of the Perkins Bacon designs of 1840 and even of 1860 and 1870 were considered old-fashioned by 1879; the best that can be said of the De La Rue designs which replaced them is that they faithfully mirrored the taste of late-Victorian England.

Having considered various procedures the Board of Inland Revenue decided early in

1879 that the best method of getting a satisfactory contract for the One Penny would be to invite suitable firms to submit tenders. Possibly bearing in mind the 2,600 (not very satisfactory) essays submitted on the occasion of the Treasury Competition in 1839 the Board considered "that it would be unsafe to invite an open competition for this contract".

The main conditions laid down in the invitation to tender were: (i) that the stamps should be surface printed; (ii) the inks used should be highly fugitive; (iii) that the gum should be of a special character and (iv) that the contract should be for a period of 7 years. The original invitation was sent out on 3 April 1879 to seven firms: Perkins Bacon, Bradbury Wilkinson, Waterlow Bros., Charles Skipper and East, McCorquodales, De La Rue and James Truscott. This last firm in fact declined

to tender. The six firms which agreed to tender were supplied, for experimental purposes, with ten sheets "of the sort of paper on which the stamps will probably have to be printed." The paper supplied was a thin wove, in sheets measuring $20\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{3}{8}$ ", watermarked Anchor (S.G. type 47), similar to that currently being used for printing several postage and revenue stamps.

All the six firms produced specimen stamps and essays; many of these have been known and available to collectors from the proofs (on unwatermarked paper) retained by the printers. The specimens actually submitted were, however, mostly printed on the watermarked paper provided by the Inland Revenue, every sheet of which had to be accounted for.

(This fascinating story will be continued in the March and April Bulletins – Editor).

Book Reviews

"Advanced Philatelic Research" by Patrick Pearson

Don't be put off by the title of Patrick Pearson's admirable guide to getting more interest and pleasure from philately. This is *not* a handbook for those dedicated collectors whose chief delight lies in illustrating the various stages of a re-entry or a recut letter on an 1841 Penny Red. Rather is it a guide for the collector (of any age) who is growing out of the stage of accumulating two copies (mint and used) of every stamp and wants his hobby to become a more serious and absorbing interest.

Clearly and lucidly the author explains what the various aspects of philatelic research are and just what is involved in studying the "plating" of a stamp or a surcharge, or in unravelling the fascinating complexities of international postal conventions. The title of this book might well have been "Be Your Own Philatelic Detective" because researching in stamps or postal history brings forth the

Sherlock Holmes so often concealed behind the outward aspect of the Collector in the Street. And who better to be your guide in the field of research than Patrick Pearson, member of the Expert Committee of the Royal Philatelic Society and of the Council of the Postal History Society? The range, quality and variety of the research which he has applied to his own collection is well demonstrated by the illustrations on pages 82 and 111 of this most useful and rewarding guide to the pleasures of philately. Nor is the writing of it without its lighter side. After discussing one famous "problem" stamp, Patrick Pearson goes on to say:— "As no records exist of the reason for the issue of this value or variety the true facts can only be a matter for conjecture. For the argumentative this sort of research has great attraction!"

Advanced Philatelic Research is published by Arthur Barker Ltd., London, price £1.75

R.R.

"Collect British Stamps"

Hard on the heels of the eighth edition, published little more than six months ago, comes the Ninth – the latest, up-to-date edition which includes all the special issues, definitive and regional stamps issued during 1971. Numbers are in line with the main Gibbons Catalogue, and the concise listings cover all the basic issues, including all stamps with different watermarks or perforations, but not shades, errors and other specialised items. More than 40 pages of valuable data are augmented by stamps in colour – and prices have been revised throughout.

Collect British Stamps is published by Stanley Gibbons Ltd. price 25p.

RAF Catalogue

The 3rd Edition of Sgt. David O'Doherty's priced Catalogue of RAF Covers 1966-71 is being published on 1 February. This year it appears as a separate volume of some 50 pages in a more handy size. Plans are also being made to publish a supplement in 1973 to keep the Catalogue up to date. As before, the Catalogue deals not only with the very popular RAF Museum series of covers, but with other covers issued by RAF Stations from 1966 onwards.

Copies are obtainable at 25p post free from A. G. Groom, Hon. Sec. Raflet Stamp Club, 6 Grove Court, Falkland Grove, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 3DL.

Bicentenary - Royal Engineers on Gibraltar

The Bicentenary of the Royal Engineers on the Rock of Gibraltar will be celebrated on 6 March 1972 when the Freedom of Gibraltar will be conferred on the Corps.

A commemorative cover has been approved for issue by the Corps Committee of the Royal Engineers. The design shows a Royal Engineer of 1772 in full ceremonial uniform with the Rock of Gibraltar in the background. Covers will be franked with a specially designed British Forces Postal Service

handstamp featuring The Royal Engineers of 1772 and 1972, and will also be stamped with a special cachet of the conferring of the Freedom of the City of Gibraltar.

The cost of the commemorative covers is 40p each. A limited number will be autographed by General Sir Charles Jones, GCB, CBE, MC, the Chief Royal Engineer and these will be available at £1.00 each.

Orders for covers, accompanied by the correct remittance, should be sent to:

The Philatelic Officer
Corps of Royal Engineers
Royal School of Military Engineering
CHATHAM
Kent.

National Army Museum Series - Military Covers

The final covers in Groups 1, Famous Regiments, and 2, Historical Uniforms will be issued in February 1972.

7 February 1972

Group 1 No. 12 – The Queens Own Highlanders commemorating their Regimental Birthday.

7 February 1972

Group 2 No. 12 – Portrays uniforms of the Cameron Highlanders circa 1857.

Cover No. 5 of *Group 10* will be issued on 20 February 1972 and will portray the Crimea Medal

Special pictorial British Forces Postal Service handstamp will be used to cancel the covers.

Orders should be sent with remittance of 25p for each cover to:

The Philatelic Officer
National Army Museum Appeal
Duke of Yorks Headquarters
Kings Road
Chelsea
LONDON SW3 4RX

Overseas customers please add 5p for postage by surface mail or the 20z rate for air mail.

British Polar Explorers - Some Background Notes

Sir James Clark Ross (1800-1862)

James Clark Ross entered the Navy when he was 12 and after service in several ships sailed in William Parry's expeditions including the one in 1827 which endeavoured to reach the North Pole over the ice from Spitzbergen.

In the Felix Booth expedition of 1829-33 he had the principal share in the sledging operations on the coasts of Boothia and King William Land and was the discoverer of the magnetic pole on 1 June 1831.

He concentrated on magnetic surveys and in 1838 was employed by the Admiralty on a survey of the United Kingdom and in the following year was appointed to carry out a geographical and magnetic exploration of the Antarctic.

His two ships *Terror* and *Erebus* left England in September 1839 and first crossed the Antarctic Circle on 1 January 1841. Shortly afterwards he discovered a long range of high land which he named Victoria and a range of ice cliffs which appeared to bar the way to the pole. The expedition lasted some four years and on its return Ross was knighted and received many honours.

He continued to be the recognised authority on all matters relating to Arctic navigation until his death at Aylesbury in 1862.

Sir Martin Frobisher (1535-1594)

Sir Martin, one of the most able seamen of his time is best known for his Arctic explorations during his three voyages in search of a North West passage to India and Cathay, and is remembered by Frobisher Bay in Baffin Land.

One of his sailors brought home from the first journey a piece of black pyrite which was thought to contain gold. On Frobisher's subsequent voyages considerable effort was spent on searching for more of the ore and some 200 tons were brought back. Most of it proved worthless however and for some time Frobisher was discredited.

In 1580 Frobisher regained favour and captained one of the Queen's ships the *Foresight*, and in 1588 commanded the

Triumph in the great Armada fight. He was knighted at sea during the encounter.

In 1590, he went as vice admiral to Sir John Hawkins and in the following years distinguished himself in many battles. He died in 1594 after being wounded in action and is buried in St Giles Cripplegate in London.

Although a comparatively young man when he died Frobisher's skill as a navigator and explorer was supreme and he will be remembered both for this and for his bravery as one of England's naval heroes.

Henry Hudson

Hudson's personality is vague and difficult to document and his achievements as an explorer have been widely exaggerated and misrepresented. While it is true that the river, the strait, the bay and the large track of land which bear his name have kept his memory in the forefront of people's minds not one of these was, in fact, actually discovered by him.

He served both the Muscovy Company and the Dutch East India Company and made several voyages of discovery to the far north, trying to prove the existence of a sea route to the Pole. He explored Greenland, Spitzbergen, Novaya Zemlya and tried to find a strait through N America at about lat. 40°.

In 1611, after trouble with his crew Hudson, his son and seven others were cast adrift in a small boat and never seen again.

There is little doubt that he was an intrepid explorer who pushed his explorations further than his predecessors and left a better record of them. Only ill fortune prevented him achieving more success.

Robert Falcon Scott (1868-1912)

The most famous of all British Antarctic explorers, Robert Scott, was born at Devonport on 6 June 1868.

He joined the Royal Navy and served in *Boadicea*, *Spider*, *Amphion* and as first lieutenant in the *Majestic*, the flagship of the

Channel Squadron. In 1899 he was offered command of the National Antarctic Expedition which was to undertake the scientific exploration of South Victoria Land and the ice barrier and the penetration of the interior of the Antarctic continent.

The expedition was organised by the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal Society and although the personnel was drawn very largely from the Navy, the ship – *Discovery* – sailed under the merchant flag. Scott's first expedition to the Antarctic did much valuable work between 1902 and 1904.

On his return Scott was promoted to captain and went back to naval duties where he commanded in turn the *Victorious*, the *Essex* and the *Bulwark* until in 1909 he became naval assistant to the Second Sea Lord of the Admiralty. In the same year he announced his plans for a new Antarctic expedition during which he hoped to reach the South Pole.

His ship the *Terra Nova* sailed in June 1910 and winter quarters were made near the *Discovery's* old anchorage. At the same time the Norwegian, Roald Amundsen, was also in Antarctica making his plans for an attempt on the Pole.

Captain Scott's party set out on 1 November 1911 and after a heroic journey beset with bad weather and extremes of temperature, reached the Pole on 18 January 1912 only to find that they had been forestalled by Amundsen.

Tragedy soon struck on the return journey as Petty Officer Evans died under the strain and temperatures as low as -47°F weakened the rest of the party. By early March it was a race to get to the food depots and blizzards continually delayed them. On 21 March, only 11 miles from One Ton depot, the party camped for the last time. A blizzard stopped them from making a dash for safety and the whole party died about the end of March 1912. Their bodies and valuable geological specimens were recovered 8 months later by Dr E. L. Atkinson. A cross to the memory of Scott and his companions was erected at Observation Hill on Ross Island.

After his death Captain Scott received many honours, and statues in London and Christchurch, New Zealand, stand as permanent tributes to a brave man.

British Polar Explorers Stamp Issue



Some of our special stamps are issued to reflect the British contribution to world affairs and the British Explorers set to be issued on 16 February 1972 comes into that category. The stamps, respectively 3p, 5p, 7½p and 9p, honour Sir James Clark Ross, Sir Martin Frobisher, Henry Hudson and Robert Falcon Scott.

The stamps which were designed by Marjorie Saynor show portraits of the explorers and background maps. The portrait of Ross is taken from a print held by the Royal Geographical Society superimposed on a map of the South Polar Sea printed in 1841. Frobisher's portrait is taken from a painting in the famous Bodleian Library Oxford and the map adapted from "Part of the World" by Desceliers 1550. A detail from "The Last Voyage of Henry Hudson" by John Collyer held by the Tate Gallery, London, gives Hudson's portrait which is backed by a map adapted from Petrius Plonicus World Map published in 1592. The portrait of Scott is taken from a photograph held by the Royal Geographical Society and the background taken from the "Track Chart" of the main southern journey of the British Antarctic Expedition of 1910-13 and the comparative Atlas by Bartholomew 1949.

Printing Details

<i>Printer :</i>	Harrison and Sons
<i>Size :</i>	41 × 30 mm
<i>Paper :</i>	Coated, unwatermarked, phosphor lined
<i>Perforation :</i>	15 × 14
<i>Stamps per sheet :</i>	100
<i>Colours :</i>	3p Light blue, pink, brown, yellow, black, dark blue, gold, red. 5p Orange, red, brown, black, buff, gold. 7½p Light brown, violet, black, dark brown, beige, blue, gold. 9p Pink, blue, yellow, red, dark blue, black, gold.

Presentation packs will be on sale at the Bureau and all Head Offices priced 29½p.

The Post Office and the Marketing of Stamps

by *Brian Crowther, Head of Philatelic Marketing.*

Of the many influences on the future of philately the principal omission is often the viewpoint of the average collector. I am bound to seek to remedy this both in my private role as a medium range collector and as one whose responsibility might be defined as identifying what the mass of collectors want from the British Post Office and providing it.

The most important development in philately during the last 20 years has been the movement of postal administrations into the promotion and sale of their stamps to collectors. This has introduced into the selling of stamps the professional approach which an administration brings to its normal postal operations. This attitude is usually coupled with a detachment from stamps or philately as a hobby, which is in marked contrast to the personal commitment of so many members of the philatelic trade.

When the marketing of stamps is viewed in this way it is immediately apparent that remarkably little is known about collectors' tastes or the psychological factors which impel so many to collect stamps and a few to become obsessed by them (at least one murder has been committed for the sake of a rare stamp).

Within the last few weeks the Post Office has obtained initial results from research into these factors which has been commissioned in an overseas market. I must stress that these conclusions are tentative and possibly incomplete, but they struck me at once as worthy of debate.

The motives which have been identified are the desire to own things of value; the desire for completeness; the urge to hunt or chase an elusive quarry; and the wish to exercise personal control. The prime satisfactions

appear to be pride of ownership and personal accomplishment and the sense that one has created something unique and important. A notable finding is that the 'educational' value (in terms of factual knowledge) and the aesthetic satisfaction provided by stamps which are so often cited as reasons for collecting, are really no more than side benefits. Others are the relaxation to be enjoyed from the hobby and the opportunity for social contacts which it offers.

The study has also suggested sources of frustration which may lead to collectors giving up their hobby. Besides those which can be readily foreseen such as lack of money or time, there are deeper factors such as recognition by the collector of his limited knowledge or lack of tenacity. Conversely collecting may prove to be too easy to motivate the collector: once he has completed a country or acquired an elusive item, he may lose interest. This may account for advanced collectors disposing of countries in which they have specialised and directing their philatelic energies elsewhere.

There is an urgent need for us to know how valid and universal these findings are; whether other factors exist; and which of them (and in what relative degree) are important for the mass market which we seek to develop. It is quite possible that the identification of these dynamic factors may lead to radical changes in the manner in which we offer our stamps to collectors and promote the hobby.

However, the principal factor in any marketing operation must be the product – the stamps which we issue. Hitherto, our stamp programme has been determined by a number of influences, not all within Post Office control. It must now be recognised that commitment to philatelic marketing with increased profit as its aim implies acceptance of new disciplines in some aspects of stamp issuing policy.

Apart from this new factor, we must assume that political considerations are bound to determine certain of our stamp issues as they have done in the past. However, the major

influence on the future of British stamps will continue to be the requirements of postal operations: handling the volume of postal traffic which we do, this is inevitable. But we are now in a period of change and in framing our stamp policy we must take care to distinguish real operational needs, such as the phosphor bands which are now standard on our stamps, from such conventions as the "need" for a complete, uniform definitive series (other than small stamps of the denominations which are to be sold in rolls or booklets).

It may be of interest to set out what we regard as our needs in a special stamp programme designed for a mass market in this country and overseas. We consider an annual programme with a total face value of about £1.25 to be fair to the collector and sufficient to enable us to produce a reasonable profit. Within the programme issues should be frequent enough to sustain interest and each of sufficient face value to make the set worth handling by overseas dealers. The subjects which I regard as the most decisive factor for capturing the interest of collectors should be distinctively British, but of interest to collectors in the philatelically significant areas of the world (Western Europe, North America, Japan, Australasia and South Africa). The treatment of the subject should be acceptable to the mass of collectors, and designs should exploit any possible appeal to the growing thematic market.

However much we learn about the motives of collecting and our customers' tastes, we must continue to work at our philatelic services, to ensure that they match the needs of customers and that they are as efficient and profitable as we can make them. Here we are still perhaps in the grip of history. The Philatelic Bureau was our first sales point, and some years passed before it was supplemented by our network of specialised counters. As we learn more about collectors' requirements, we must be prepared to adapt our sales organisation to produce the optimum balance

between mail order services available to customers throughout this country and in most areas abroad and facilities for personal shopping in the larger post offices. The most advanced work on this aspect of marketing may be the widespread facilities which we provide for collectors who wish to service their own first day covers.

Our publicity too must develop to match our changing pattern of services. So far we have done little to promote the collection of British stamps on a local basis. The future is likely to see much more activity in the local press and possibly radio. Another pressing need is to increase the volume of information available to collectors to enable them to develop their individual approaches to the hobby. Here we must particularly be on our guard against the confusion of information with any attempt to dictate to the collector how he should collect.

Our efforts to expand our market abroad are likely to show the same general approach, although we still have made little progress in developing a distinctive marketing approach suited to the particular requirements of important foreign markets. We shall continue to work mainly through the local dealer network, supplemented by the services of the Philatelic Bureau. As necessary, we shall also extend our network of agents and distributors where they can be useful in performing promotion work, in maintaining stocks in distant markets and in feeding back important marketing information.

I have deliberately left to the last the question of the relationship of the Post Office to the philatelic trade in this country. It has been encouraging to find that during the last few years our efforts to promote British Stamps have been recognised by the more enlightened members of the trade as being of ultimate benefit to themselves. The truth is that the philatelic trading functions of the Post Office and the private sector are complementary: the Post Office sells new issues at face value for a reasonable time while the dealers

handle the older issues and varieties of the new issues. Both will benefit from any increase in the market, and it is a hopeful sign that the recent venture by the Stamp Collecting Promotion Council has involved the Post Office and the Crown Agents as well as the trade.

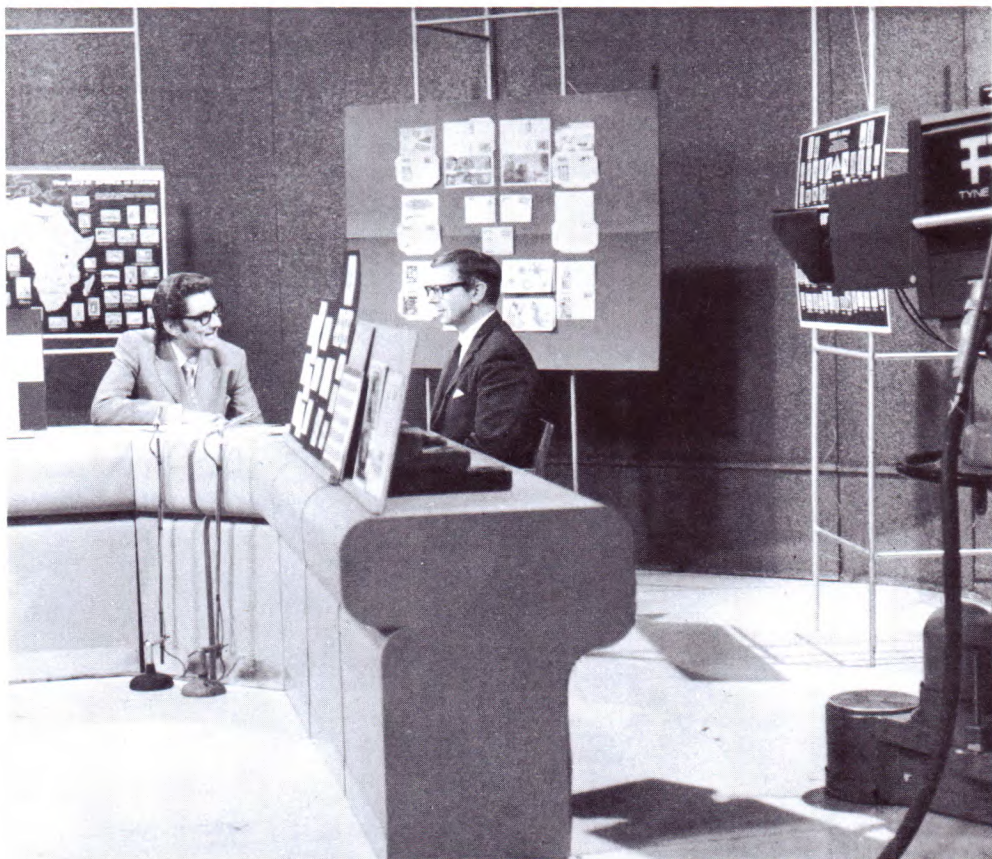
(This article is based on a talk given by Mr Crowther at a philatelic seminar at Sussex University.)

1972 Stamp Programme

Some favourite themes are included in the special issues due for release in 1972. The details are:

Polar Explorers	16 February
Sir James Clark Ross	3p
Sir Martin Frobisher	5p
Henry Hudson	7½p
Captain Robert Falcon Scott	9p
General Anniversaries	26 April
50th Anniversary of the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun	3p
150th Anniversary of formation of HM Coastguard	7½p
Centenary of birth of Ralph Vaughan Williams	9p
British Architecture	21 June
Greensted-jonxta Ongar Church Essex	3p
Earl's Barton Church Northants	4p
Letheringsett Church Norfolk	5p
Helpringham Church Lincs	7½p
Huish Episcopi Church Somerset	9p
50th Anniversary of BBC and start of daily broadcasting	13 September
	3p, 5p, 7½p
75th Anniversary of the first wireless transmission across water by Marconi and Kemp	13 September
	9p
Christmas 1972	18 October
	2½p, 3p, 7½p
HM the Queen's Silver Wedding	20 November
	3p, 20p

Stamps on Television



By courtesy of Tyne Tees Television

Professor John West, the Director of the Philatelic Unit at the University of Sussex was recently the expert on Tyne Tees television programme "Time Out" – a programme which focuses hobbies. Professor West was interviewed by Brian Shallcross.

In addition to answering many questions the Professor displayed items from his own

collection and material from the Post Office, the Crown Agents, Stanley Gibbons Ltd. and the Stamp Collecting Promotion Council. Included in the array were slides of the world's most highly priced stamp, the British Guiana 1856 one cent, the reduced sized last war issues of George VI and some exquisite hand designed stamps from the Indian Native States.

The Philatelic Significance of a Fire at a Starch Factory

F. MARCUS ARMAN

A fire at a starch factory led, inadvertently, to the discovery of British gum, which in the early years of the 19th Century was used extensively by calico printers, by makers up of stationery, and for postage stamps and other industrial purposes.

The discovery was made in 1821 in the village of Chapelizod by the banks of the Liffey to the west of Dublin. Then, as unfortunately now, there were troubles in Ireland. The use of potatoes in the starch factories aroused vehement opposition, for it increased the price of this staple foodstuff.

On the 5 September 1821 King George IV embarked at Dunleary harbour on his return to England from Dublin. To commemorate the occasion the ancient Irish place name of Dunleary was blotted out and the port was renamed Kingston. That night as men sat drinking or dining in taverns the cry of 'fire!' was heard: the starch factory near Chapelizod was ablaze. The factory stores, not being particularly inflammable were for the most part saved from the fire by revellers from nearby hostelrys. The stores, however, were so freely deluged with water that the starch was washed away in ankle-deep streams over the roads and lanes and into the Liffey.

The next morning a journeyman printer woke with a hangover. Like many others he had been celebrating the previous evening and had run to the banks of the river when the cry of 'fire!' was heard. He dimly recalled carrying buckets of water and the sound of the hiss of water on the hot iron factory floors. When he tried to dress he struck trouble, for his clothes were gummed together! The sleeves of his jacket had to be picked open bit by bit; what money he had left after his night out was glued into his pockets. Familiar as he was with the qualities and uses of Gum Arabic as used in the printing office where he worked, he realised that the fire at the starch factory had produced some kind of gum. Revisiting the scene of the fire the journeyman printer found in the roadway lumps of calcined starch which had been well watered the night before. He and

his colleagues took some home, tested it in their trade and proved its qualities. Next they bought a quantity of starch, heated it in a frying pan, added water and discovered that they could easily produce a gum which seemed as suitable for commercial use as gum-arabic but at a fraction of the cost. The secret was not at first exploited with success and eventually passed into the hands of a manufacturer who made the gum in such quantity that it found a ready market in printing works. Gradually the secret spread.

When the world's first adhesive postage stamps were introduced in 1840 it was at first doubtful whether adhesive labels could be made sufficiently well at a low price. Gum arabic being costly British gum presented a ready alternative. The manufacturer made a contract with the stamp printers Messrs. Perkins, Bacon & Petch to supply it in quantity for the labels.

In 1841 it was rumoured that the adhesive on postage stamps was a deleterious substance, made of decayed fish and other unpalatable materials. The Great British Gum secret was then revealed: the public were advised that the postage label 'poison' was in fact concocted from potatoes.

The printers used brushes to apply the hot gum to the back of the printed sheets of stamps. There were many variations in the colour of the gum, from brownish shades to an almost colourless variety. Difficulties arose because stamps often became detached from letters in course of transit through the post and in consequence the quality of the gum was kept under review. Many gum trial samples of the 1850's escaped the waste paper basket and may be seen in the National Postal Museum.

After 1855 it was customary to add some gelatine to the potato starch gum and from 1864 double gumming was the practice. Early in 1968 'Polyvinol Alcohol' replaced gum arabic as the adhesive on British stamps. The techniques of stamp production follow the technology of the times.

Further Schools Material from the Post Office

Teachers who use our stamps and services, as a starting point for lesson topics, and the organisers of school stamp clubs, will be interested to hear of several new items being produced.

"Explorers" material

This consists of a wallchart on "Polar Exploration" with illustrations by the stamp designer, and a booklet containing brief lives of each of the explorers featured on the stamps, plus reproductions in miniature and the texts of documents, associated with either Frobisher, Hudson, Ross or Scott.

The material is offered free to all teachers etc, and will be available from about the issue date of the stamps.

Enquiries should be addressed to:-

Schools Officer

PMk4

Postal Headquarters Building

St Martin's-le-Grand

LONDON EC1A 1HQ

The Post Office Books

The Post Office has joined with Macmillan Education in the publication of three new books for Primary Schools, by Leonard Sealey, already well known in this sphere. The books are:-

- 1 *Our Postage Stamps* - on the design and production of British Stamps, and the study of their subjects.
- 2 *Letters in the Post* - about the mail service.
- 3 *Using your Post Office* - mainly about the services available at a local Post Office.

Each is illustrated and contains suggestions for suitable activities. The retail price of the books is 27p each.

Enquiries should be addressed to:-

Macmillan Education Ltd

Houndmills

BASINGSTOKE

Hants

The catalogue numbers of the books are 333 11611 9, 333 11612 7, and 333 11613 5. What will the computer think of next!

Victorian Letter Box



This letter box, standing amid a circle of stone sets is a centre piece of the old world village of Nether Winchendon. It is one of the two Victorian letter boxes in Buckinghamshire; the other being at Eton.

Nether Winchendon lies seven miles North West of the market town of Aylesbury.

We are grateful to Mrs G. E. Smith of Bierton, Aylesbury, for the loan of her photograph.

Special Handstamps

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting, bearing at least 3p in postage, should be sent to the Head Postmaster of the town in which the special posting box is located.

16 March 1972

**Rotary International Golden Jubilee
16 Mar 1972 Rotary Club of Sunderland.** Special posting box at Continental

Hotel, Sunderland SR1 1QD.

18-28 July 1972

International Scout Camp Blair Athol Perthshire. Special posting box at the Camp Blair Athol Perthshire.

13 May 1972

UK Thematics 1972 2nd International Thematic Stamp Exhibition 13 May 72 Luton, Beds. Special posting box at the Luton Youth House, St Mary's Road, Luton, Beds.

Postmark Slogans

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting should be sent to the Head Postmaster of the town where the slogan is to be used, marking the outer cover "Postmark Slogan".

17 January 1972 - 16 January 1973

Leeds Says Be Wise Look Before Crossing. To be used at Leeds.

17 January 1972 - 16 January 1973

Leeds A Capital City For Work And Play. To be used at Leeds.

31 January - 13 February 1972

Come To The Great London Fair Jan 17th - Feb 28th. To be used at Four District Offices in London: Mount Pleasant, Croydon, Paddington and Western Central DO.

1 February - 31 December 1972

Visit London Zoo Any Time Of Year. To be used at North Western DO, London.

1 February - 31 December 1972

Congleton Charter Celebrations 1272-1972. To be used in the Congleton Stamp Cancelling Machine at Macclesfield.

1 February - 31 December 1972

Visit Shakespeare's Town. To be used at Stratford-Upon-Avon.

1 February - 11 April 1972

Burnham-On-Sea Somerset's Family And Touring Resort. Guide 5p Dept Y Information Bureau. To be used at Burnham-On-Sea (Somerset) and Sheffield.

7 February 1972 - Until further notice.

Remember To Use The Postcode. To be used in Fife at: Kirkcaldy, Cupar, Glenrothes, Leven, St Andrews, Elie, Anstruther, Lady Bank, Burntisland, Dunfermline, Lochgelly, Cowdenbeath, Kinross.

27 March 1972 - Until further notice.

Remember To Use The Postcode. To be used at Chester, Rhyl and Wrexham.

16 April - 29 April 1972

Northern Ireland Spastics Week May 1st-6th NICOD. To be used at Belfast.

Repeat Campaigns

29 December 1971 - 20 February 1972

29 February - 4 April 1972

Cambridge Tour 1st Information

From City Librarian Tel. 58977. To be reused at Cambridge.

1 January - 31 March 1972

Wigan - Hub Of The North West. To be reused at Wigan, Lancs.

1 February - 31 December 1972

Aberystwyth For Sun Sea Scenery: Haul - Mor - Goly Gfa Guide 5p From Town Hall. To be reused at Aberystwyth.

21 February - 28 February 1972

Visit Cambridge. To be reused at Cambridge.

27 March - 30 September 1972

Jodrell Bank - Open Daily 2 pm to 6 pm Easter - October. To be reused at Manchester.

6 March - 29 April 1972

1 May - 31 May 1972

Hereford Cider Festival 26 May-3 June 72 to be used at Hereford.

1 January - 31 March 1972

Brighton And Hove The Princely Resorts to be used at Brighton, Sussex.

1 January - 31 December 1972

Dudley For 50 Years The Home of Metallisation to be used at Dudley, Worcs.

27 February - 26 August 1972

Come Over The Sea To Skye. Write Tourist Information Office, Portree, Skye will be used at Kyle, Ross-shire.

Articles and illustrations appearing in the *Bulletin* are the copyright of the Post Office. Requests to reproduce this material should be addressed to the Editor, Philatelic Bulletin, PMk 3, Postal Headquarters, St. Martin's-le-Grand, London EC1A 1HQ.

The annual subscription to the *Philatelic Bulletin* for 12 issues a year is 50p including postage by surface mail to anywhere in the world, or air mail to anywhere in Europe. For air mail to countries outside Europe the subscription is £1.40.

Subscriptions should be sent to the British Post Office Philatelic Bureau, 2-4 Waterloo Place, EDINBURGH EH1 1AB.