

January 1995

British Philatelic Bulletin



Royal Mail

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British Philatelic Bulletin

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Main Feature

Royal Mail and Philately 136

Royal Mail's annual stamp sales total £1.3 billion. In the first of a two-part interview, the *Bulletin* Editor talks to the man in charge – John Tew, Director & General Manager of Royal Mail National. They discuss definitives and special issues, stamps for particular uses, and the next UK international stamp exhibition.



The second part of this interview will be published next month.

Royal Mail News

1995 Special Stamp Programme

The Cats stamps – to be issued on 17 January – were previewed in last month's *Bulletin*. Next month we publish details of the Springtime and 1995 Greetings stamps, to be issued on 14 and 21 March respectively. Readers may welcome some preliminary information about these and subsequent issues.

The Springtime stamps complete the four "Seasons" issues, begun with the popular Wintertime set in 1992. The five stamps, of horizontal format, feature 3-D sculptures, created in situ in Spring, by Andy Goldsworthy. Printing is by Harrison's.

The 1995 Greetings book contains 10 1st class stamps, designed by Newell & Sorrell, reproducing details from works in various art media – painting, engraving, book illustration, photography, sculpture, etc – by famous artists such as Renoir, Eric Gill, L S Lowry, Beryl Cook, and Rodin. The stamps, accompanying labels and stamp book covers are being printed by Walsall Security Printers.

The National Trust set (11 April), commemorating its centenary, features the variety of work carried out by the NT in protecting land, conserving art, saving the coasts, and repairing historic buildings. The five stamps, of vertical format, reproduce photographs by the late Tony Evans whose work was used on the 1987 Studio Pottery and 1990 RSPCA sets. The stamps will be printed in photogravure by Harrison's. The alternative First Day of Issue postmark will be for Alfriston, Sussex – site of the first building acquired by the NT – the medieval Priest's House.

A prestige stamp book containing definitive, Country and NT stamps will go on sale on 25 April. The alternative postmark will be for Tintagel, Cornwall where the Trust preserves a medieval building which was once the village's post office.

The theme for the 1995 Europa issue, on 9 May, is "Peace and Freedom"; the stamp designs, by Jean-Michel Folon, mark the 125th and 50th anniversaries of the British Red Cross and the United Nations. The five stamps, of "nearly

square" format (35 x 37mm), will be printed by Harrison's. The alternative First Day of Issue postmark will be for London SW.

The Science Fiction set, on 6 June, marks the centenary of the first publication of *The Time Machine* by H G Wells. The designs, by Siobhan Keaney, illustrate well known novels by Wells, including, of course, *The Time Machine*. The four stamps, of "nearly square" format, will be printed by The House of Questa. The alternative First Day of Issue postmark will be for Wells, Norfolk.

A se-tenant strip of five 1st class stamps will be issued on 8 August to mark the opening of the new Globe Theatre in London. Shakespeare wrote *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Richard II* during 1595. The stamps, of vertical format, were designed by C W Hodges, and will be printed by Walsall Security Printers – the first time they will have printed special stamps for Royal Mail. The alternative First Day of Issue postmark will be for Stratford-upon-Avon.

The Communications set, on 5 September, commemorates the 200th anniversary of the birth of Sir Rowland Hill and the centenary of the first transmission of radio in September 1895. The stamps, designed by The 400 Group, feature portraits of Hill and Guglielmo Marconi, who in 1896 worked with the Post Office in London and demonstrated his work publicly in the UK. The stamps, of "nearly square" format will be printed in intaglio (recess) and lithography by Harrison's. The alternative First Day of Issue postmark will be for London EC. Sir Rowland Hill was commemorated by four stamps in 1979 marking the centenary of his death; Marconi's experiments were commemorated by the 9p stamp in the 1972 Broadcasting Anniversaries set.

The centenary of the foundation of the Rugby League and the staging of the Rugby League World Cup in the UK will be commemorated by five stamps on 3 October designed by Christian Birmingham, these will feature famous players from the Rugby League Hall of Fame. Of "nearly square" format, the stamps will be printed by Harrison's. The alternative First Day of Issue postmark will be for Huddersfield.

The 1995 Christmas stamps will be issued on 31 October. Details of the designs, name of designer and printer will be announced later.

"Chocy Book"

Following the success of various promotional



stamp books, most recently "Stampers" (September 1994), Royal Mail will be issuing a 10 x 1st class book on 14 February offering purchasers the chance to send for Thornton's chocolates. In return for four 1st class stamps the promotional book cover, and the cover of any other book of 10 1st class stamps, the customer will be sent (or sent to a nominated relative or friend), a box of four Thornton chocolates and a personalised greetings card. The cover of the promotional stamp book illustrates the chocolate box, chocolates and the choice of four greetings cards available. The offer will run to 30 June 1995.

This promotional book will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets from 14 February and from post offices and retail outlets as stocks of earlier books are used up. The stamps and book cover have been printed by Walsall, and as the stamps are the same as those in earlier books, no first day of issue facilities will be provided. The book cover design is by Grey Integrated.

New Machine Books

The first in a new series of 50p, £1 and £2 books will be available from the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets from 7 February. The books will be available from machines at post offices and retail outlets as stocks of earlier books are used up.

The new 50p series marks the bicentenary of the hydrography service and the first book features a chart showing John O'Groats on Scotland's north east coast. Subsequent issues will feature charts showing the position of Land's End, Cornwall (4 April), St David's Head, Wales (6 June), and the Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland (5 September).

The new £1 series is entitled "Inspiration for Victory" and marks the 50th anniversary of the

ending of the Second World War. The first book, on 7 February, features Violette Szabo with subsequent issues depicting Dame Vera Lynn (4 April), Reginald J Mitchell (16 May) and Sir Archibald McIndoe (5 September).

The designs of the £2 books will commemorate the bicentenary of the birth of Sir Rowland Hill, beginning, on 7 February, with a design showing Sir Rowland as director of the London & Brighton Railway. In this capacity, Hill introduced weekend excursions on the railways. Subsequent designs will feature Hill's educational reforms (4 April), the famous Mulready envelopes (6 June), and the introduction of postal districts (5 September). The last two are a tribute to Sir Rowland's extensive reforms of the postal service, for which he is best remembered.

The new books will all be produced by Harrisons and contain 25p definitives as in current books. Printed in photogravure, on advanced coated paper, the stamps will have elliptical perforations on the vertical sides. The 50p book contains a pane of two stamps and two "postcode" labels; the £1 and £2 books contain



panes of four and eight respectively. As the stamps are the same as previously no first day of issue facilities will be provided.

New Mixed Value Coil Strip

A new mixed value coil – often referred to as Readers' Digest coils – will be available from the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets from 31 January. This will contain three 5p and one 4p definitive stamps making up the 19p 2nd class postage rate. Printed by Harrisons on advanced coated paper with standard (non-elliptical) perfs. As the basic stamps are not new, no first day of issue facilities will be offered.

Collectors will be able to buy individual strips, but not individual stamps from the strips.



Complete coils of 700 strips will also be available.

Mixed value coils date back to 1969, coils in the Readers' Digest series started in 1981.

PO Archives acquires TPO Collection

The Post Office Archives & Records Centre has recently acquired an important private collection of Travelling Post Office documents and photographs. The collection, formed by the late Derek John Carter, who worked for the Post Office for 39 years, was donated by his widow to the Royal Mail's TPO section and transferred to Archives last year. It is believed the collection incorporates the earlier collection of Alan Harvey, a former manager of the TPO section. Some of the material duplicates that already in the Archives, but many documents fill significant gaps. The Carter Collection is available for research and has been given Archives reference POST105/1-143. A useful catalogue of the collection has been compiled and can be consulted at the Archives which is located at Freeling House, Mount Pleasant (Phoenix Place entrance), London EC1A 1BB, Tel. 071-239 2570. Open Monday-Friday 09.30-16.15.

Bureau Prize Draw

Last month we reported that Mrs E Jones of Aldershot won a unique Philatelic Numismatic Cover in a recent Bureau Prize Draw. Over 50,000 entries were received and Mrs Jones's

entry drawn by Paul Shepherd, winner of a gold medal at the 1994 Commonwealth Games, who works at the Bureau. Our photo this month shows Paul with the Bureau's Marketing Manager, Keith Macdonald.

Cats Stamps

Five stamps featuring delightful drawings of cats – the work of Elizabeth Blackadder go on sale at post offices on 17 January. Readers may be interested in some biographical details of the designer.

Elizabeth Blackadder, OBE, RSA, RA was born at Falkirk in 1931 and educated at the University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh College of Art where she taught from 1962 to 1986. Now based in Edinburgh, she travels extensively to paint and to visit galleries and museums. In recent years she has made several visits to Japan. Her work, in oils and watercolours, includes landscapes, still-lives and, by commission, portraits. Awarded the OBE in 1982, Elizabeth Blackadder is a member, honorary member or fellow of the Royal Academy, Royal Scottish Academy, Society of Scottish Artists, Royal Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts, Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolours, Royal West of England Academy, Royal Watercolour Society, Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers, Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland, and Royal Society of Edinburgh. Her work has been recognised by the award of honorary doctorates by the University of

Edinburgh and Heriot Watt University. She is married to the painter John Houston.

Always interested in plants and gardens she grows flowers, especially lillies, tulips and irises, as subjects for her paintings. She is very fond of cats and at present has three who have the run of her studios and often appear in her paintings – although not always intentionally! Rosie, the oldest and the “top cat” is an Abyssinian, Kikko a tortoiseshell and white; Fred is described as “black and white and very lively”.

Of her work featuring cats she writes: “At first I found it difficult to tackle the subject of cats in paintings and drawings. I wanted at all costs to avoid sentimentality or ‘cuteness’ and I looked hard at drawings and paintings of animals by painters who I admired and who had managed to avoid this pitfall. I try to make my cats look like real animals and the more I drew them the more I find out about them. I hope that the drawings for the stamps convey some of this feeling.” Collectors and the public will soon be able to judge for themselves.



National Postal Museum News

Stan Goron, NPM Manager, has recently been elected Secretary of the International Association of Transport & Communications Museums (IATM), which has some 200 members worldwide. UK members include the BT, RAF, London Transport, National Motor, National Railway and National Tramway museums, and the British Library Philatelic Collections. Other postal museum members include those in Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland. IATM holds an annual conference and acts as a professional focus point for museum directors and customers whose remit covers transport and communications.

The NPM is now the sponsor for the Royal Mail Heritage Vehicle Fleet, comprising 55 vehicles, some over 60 years old. Within the limited budget available, initial efforts are being

directed at assembling, protecting and housing the vehicles in one location. Eventually they will go on public display. Whilst sponsored by the NPM, the fleet is managed by Royal Mail Consultancy Services Group – Road Transport.

The Museum will issue four new postcards on the theme of Cats on 17 January, day of issue of the Cats stamps. The cards will be available from the Museum shop, price 25p each, or in sets (£1) from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

A special handstamp will be used on the day. Cards/covers to receive this cancellation should be sent to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, KEB, LONDON EC1A 1AA. Please state “Museum Special – 17 January” required. The Museum’s regular Maltese Cross handstamp will also be available

News Stamp Book Vending Machines

Some 3000 new stamp book vending machines will be installed at post offices and Royal Mail sites by the end of 1995. The majority will replace existing 50p machines at sub post offices, others will be located at railway stations, airports and other prestige sites. The new machines are battery operated, accept £1 coins only, and dispense the £1 book containing four 25p stamps. Although most machines will be situated on Post Office Counters’ sites, Royal Mail will continue to own and maintain the machines. Sub postmasters will continue to be responsible for the servicing of the machines.

New Style Post Boxes

Royal Mail have developed a new style posting box for use in supermarkets. Manufactured in reinforced plastic, the first of the new boxes will be installed shortly. The Royal Mail manager in charge of the project is Suzanne Stinton. Who knows, one day the new box may be referred to as the “Stinton” in similar fashion to the 19th century “Penfold”.

Christmas Presentation Pack

A number of readers have queried the increased price of the 1994 Christmas presentation pack. This pack costs £2.25 as it is a different format from standard, incorporating doubled card and window cuts to enable purchasers to personalise the pack by inserting their own favourite photographs. We regret the standard price of £1.85 was quoted in the October and November *Bulletins*. The Editor was unaware of the revised price when these *Bulletins* went to press. We regret any confusion or inconvenience so caused.

Stamp Scene

Cricket Philatelic Society

This new society, for collectors of cricket covers and stamps, aims to: 1. provide the appropriate medium to enable members to contact each other about their hobby, and to buy, sell, and exchange items with each other; 2. compile records of all cricket stamps issued and all cricket covers produced, and eventually prepare Master Listings for the mutual benefit of all members; and 3. produce and circulate a quarterly Newsletter to update members on the Society's objectives.

Interested readers should contact: Derek Gallimore, The Grange, 30 Pinewoods Avenue, West Hagley, STOURBRIDGE, West Midlands, DY9 0JF.

1995 Picture Postcard Show

The Postcard Traders Association has decided that the 1995 exhibition – to be known as the “1995 Picture Postcard Show” (incorporating BIPEX) – will be staged at the Royal Horticultural Society's New Hall, Greycoat Street, London SW1 – venue for the successful Postcard Centenary Exhibition last September. The dates for the 1995 exhibition will be 30 August to 2 September. This supersedes the information about 1995 BIPEX given at the end of the report on the Centenary Exhibition in November's *Bulletin* (pages 68-9).

The November 1994 issue of *Picture Postcard Monthly* contains the usual mix of features and news items. Derek Pocock looks at Missionary Postcards, Mike Taylor writes on Sheffield's Rivers as shown on cards, and Alun Turner on the cards published by Frederic Fisk of Tottenham. The anniversaries of Concorde and Citroen are recorded by Sheila Ansell and Margaret Gibson and Elizabeth McKendrick-Warden goes back to the playground with a review of “School Days” postcards. The magazine is available from many postcard dealers, at postcard fairs and direct from the publishers: Picture Postcard Monthly, 15 Debdale Lane, Keyworth, NOTTINGHAM NG12 5HT. Annual subscriptions: £20 UK, £25 Europe Airmail; £36 USA/Canada Airmail; £40 Rest of

World Airmail; £24 surface mail outside Europe.

Stamp '95 Exhibition

Following a significant resurgence in both the hobby and business of stamp collecting, Wembley Exhibition Centre is to host a brand new exhibition, called STAMP '95, which is aimed at all levels of the stamp collecting fraternity.

Whether it be for the beginner, traditional established collector or trade dealer, STAMP '95, which is being held 27 – 30 April 1995, promises to fulfil the needs and interests of the entire philatelic industry, and at an excellent exhibition facility that does justice to the requirements of standholders and visitors alike. Research has shown that in the UK and in many overseas markets, the increase in leisure activities and, the trend of earlier retirement, has lead to a major uptake in traditional hobbies, of which, stamp collecting offers one of the widest appeals.

As a proactive hobby, stamp collecting provides interest and accessibility for a wide



variety of collectors, from school children to businessmen and women, from housewives, through to senior citizens. For those who may be beginners, or are rekindling their interest in stamps and are looking to enjoy the appeal and educational aspect of the hobby, getting started is relatively inexpensive.

Entrance to the exhibition will be free, and catering for the very wide needs of such a diverse collector base, STAMP '95 aims to offer a much broader feature profile than existing philatelic exhibitions, and is designed to appeal to the entire stamp collecting marketplace. Activities will include “free” seminars by leading philatelic experts; a charity stamp auction; “free” valuation service by a major auctioneer; stamp and postal history exhibits; competitions; etc.

For junior collectors, in addition to receiving free junior visitors packs, there will be many special attractions, including popular children's characters, and for parents with young children, there will be a dedicated, supervised children's area.



In conjunction with postal administrations, special exhibition cachets will be available, providing collectors with a unique opportunity to obtain a special commemorative cancellation.

About 100 leading companies will have trade stands, displaying a wide variety of wares. These will include album and accessory suppliers; stamp and postal history dealers; publication houses; auctioneers and postal administrations, offering collectors an opportunity to meet the industries' leading experts, face-to-face, in a friendly relaxed atmosphere.

STAMP '95 exhibition opening times; Thursday 27 April 12.00-20.00; Friday and Saturday 28-29 April 10.30-19.00; Sunday 30 April 10.30-17.00.

Wembley Exhibition Centre is well known for its ease of access, excellent parking and first-class exhibition facilities. And to further enhance access for visitors, STAMP '95 organisers are laying on a free courtesy coach shuttle service from Wembley Park underground station to the exhibition hall. Coach trips to STAMP '95 will also be available for visitors from several major cities across Britain.

The organisers of STAMP '95 are Tomorrows World Exhibitions, who have many years experience in organising successful international public and trade exhibitions. The exhibition is being jointly supported by Royal Mail and Stanley Gibbons, with a view to further enhancing the awareness and accessibility of stamp collecting to both the general public and the philatelic trade.

Commenting on the launch of STAMP '95, Mr Paul Fraser, Chairman of Stanley Gibbons, said, "by supporting STAMP '95 at Wembley Exhibition Centre, we aim to enhance and extend the accessibility of support, information and materials to all kinds of stamp collectors from all parts of the world. STAMP '95 will meet the needs

and objectives of the modern day philatelist, encouraging beginners by bringing the hobby more up-to-date, giving greater support to the hobby for collectors of all ages, and to give the stamp collecting trade all of the support it deserves in furthering this excellent pastime."

Julie Dunwiddie, Direct and Overseas Sales Manager, Royal Mail National, said, "We are very happy to be supporting STAMP '95 with Stanley Gibbons. We believe it will be a first class addition to the philatelic calendar of events for 1995 and will help create a brighter future for stamp collecting."

Association of British Philatelic Societies

The fourth issue of the Association's *ABPS News* has recently been published and contains some interesting articles as well as details of ABPS activities and news from philatelic societies around the country. Brian Asquith writes on 100 years of stamp auctions held by Phillips and on three early 19th century covers from Trieste. Irene Lawford describes the activities of the Philatelic Music Circle which celebrates its silver jubilee this year, and Lesley Hampton reports on the important work of the National Youth Stamp Group. It is pleasing to read later that Mrs Hampton received the British Philatelic Congress Medal for 1994 for all her efforts in promoting the hobby over many years. Children hold a very high profile in her philatelic life and she enjoys the "Stamp Active Days" held at many clubs and schools up and down the country.

Primarily membership of the ABPS comprises local and specialist stamp clubs and philatelic societies, of which there are over 500 in the UK. Individuals can become "Friends" and "Patrons" for minimum contributions of £15 and £50 respectively. Details from the Hon Treasurer, M J Elliot, 15 Darian Way, Keymer, HASSOCKS, W Sussex, BN6 8BH. Other enquiries should be addressed to the ABPS Hon Secretary; John Hammonds, 31 Wheatsheaf Close, HORSHAM, W Sussex, RH12 5TH.

Dutch Postal Museum acquires Post Office Mauritius

The Netherlands PTT Museum has recently purchased the fourth, and only remaining available, Post Office Mauritius 2d in mint condition. This stamp is perhaps the world's most famous and valuable uncanceled stamp. Two others are in London (Royal Philatelic Collection at Buckingham Palace, and the British Library), and a third is owned by the state



of Mauritius - purchased in 1993 for 1.5 million Swiss francs. The purchase of the fourth example by the Dutch PTT Museum was financed entirely by the Amphilex Fund without recourse to the financial resources of the Dutch Post Office or the Museum. The Museum will respect the wishes of the seller not to disclose his name or the purchase price. The Amphilex Fund was set up in 1978 following the Amphilex international stamp exhibition, with the aim of buying important philatelic items for the Museum.

The stamp was on display at the Museum during October but for conservation and security reasons, it will only be exhibited periodically. All enquiries about the Museum should be addressed to: PTT Museum, Zeestraat 80, 2518 AD 's-Gravenhage, Netherlands.

Post Office Memorabilia Displays

David Harrop will be displaying a selection of vintage Post Office related toys at the Stoneleigh Toy Fair, Exhibition Hall, National Agricultural Centre, Royal Showground, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, on Sunday 15 January, 10.30-16.00.

Mr Harrop has a permanent display of items from his extensive collections of PO memorabilia on show at the Manchester Transport Museum, open Wednesday, Saturdays and Sundays, 10.30-17.00. This display includes vintage letter boxes, cycles and carts. Another permanent display is provided at the Crewe Railway Age which reopens for the 1995 season in March. Mr Harrop's display at the Brookside Garden Centre has now been removed and the exhibits transferred elsewhere. For further information about these displays write to: David Harrop, 15 Hawthorne Road, Heaton Mersey, STOCKPORT SK4 3DQ.

Bulletin Back Numbers

Mike Stevenson offers a run of the Bulletin from September 1965 to December 1993 to any reader willing to collect from his home. Contact Mr Stevenson at: 2 The Moors, Thatcham, NEWBURY, Berks, RG13 4YZ, Tel. 0635-869816.

Scout Stampex Exhibition

The Scout and Guide Stamps Club will be holding their annual exhibition at Baden-Powell House, Queen's Gate, South Kensington, London SW7 on 18-19 February. The exhibition will be open 11.00-17.00 on the Saturday, 10.20-16.00 Sunday, admission free. A wide variety of Scout/Guide stamps, covers, postcards and other philatelic material will be available. Enquiries about the Club and/or the exhibition to: Peter Duck, 081-891 5746.

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1994

Collect British Stamps - New Edition

The 1994 edition of Stanley Gibbons's popular *Collect British Stamps* colour checklist is now available. This lists all stamps from the Penny Black and Twopence Blue to the 1994 Christmas issue, also Postage Dues, pre-postal independence Channel Islands and Isle of Man stamps, Royal Mail Postage Labels ("Framas"), and Official stamps. Available from Stanley Gibbons Strand shop, Stanley Gibbons Publications, Parkside, RINGWOOD, Hants BH24 3SH or the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT. Price £5.95.

Varieties of Yesteryear

3. George V 1912 Definitive Series: A New Die for the 2d Value

FRED GEE

In the last article I recounted some of the problems associated with the production of Britain's first photogravure postage stamps – the 1934 definitive series. The subject of this article is one of the stamps of the typographed (surface-printed) set which the photogravure issue replaced.

The 1912-type definitives had enjoyed a life of over 20 years. In those two decades there had been different printers of these stamps; different papers and watermarks; and numerous different inks, these last resulting in an enormous variety of shades. There were also some interesting "accidental" varieties, such as the "QNE" error on the 1d stamp, and the "PENCE" error on the 1½d. Yet, surprisingly, the actual surface design of each value remained unchanged – that is, for each value the printing plates continued to be produced from the original die – throughout the whole of the period – with just one exception, and that was the 2d stamp.



Even with the brighter ink, Die I (the used stamp) did not give as clear an impression as Die II

The colour selected for the 2d value was a yellowish orange, and as soon as this stamp appeared, in August 1912, it was realised that this shade was not a very practical choice. The yellowish ink just did not show up strongly enough on the finer lines of the design and the stamp consequently had a rather faded and washed out appearance. Even at this very early stage consideration was given to the possibility of

cutting a new die, with stronger lines, to give the 2d stamp a healthier appearance, but in the event it was decided to strengthen the colour rather than the die, and in November 1913 a different ink was introduced, resulting in brighter orange shades for subsequent printings of this value.

However, the appearance of this particular value was still regarded as being not entirely satisfactory and eventually, in 1921, after a long delay which was no doubt attributable in part to the exigencies of the wartime years, a new die was cut which, it was hoped, would give a stronger impression. All the 2d stamps printed from September 1921 until the introduction of the photogravure replacement in January 1935 were from plates using this new die.

There are three obvious differences between the two dies, and one hardly needs a magnifying glass to see these. 1 – The frame around the stamp design consists of two lines: a relatively thick outer line, and a thinner line between it and the areas of solid colour. On stamps printed from die II the finer, inner line is about halfway between the outer frame line and the solid colour of the design, whereas on die I stamps the inner frame line is close to the areas of solid colour. 2 – The white line enclosing the words TWO PENCE is relatively thin on die I, whereas on die II it is much thicker. 3 – Die I has four complete lines of shading between the top of the King's head and the surrounding oval, but die II has only three such lines of horizontal shading.

Die I was in use for nine years and die II for over 13 years, and around the time of the transition from die I to die II, 2d was the most commonly used postal rate in the UK. Plenty of examples of both types have therefore survived so, if both dies are not represented in your collection, it shouldn't be too difficult for you to fill that gap.

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British Philatelic Bulletin Publications

No. 1 *British Special Stamps 1985-86*
By Francis Kennedy. £3.95

No. 2 *British Stamp Design 1993*
By James Negus. £4.99

Both 36 pages, full colour illustrations

Available from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20
Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT

Royal Mail and Philately

The Editor talks to John Tew

John Tew – Director & General Manager of Royal Mail National – is the man in charge of UK postal services, including marketing and service specifications for the 1st and 2nd class services, and Royal Mail (RM) departments dealing with the design, production and marketing of stamps and related products. His sphere of influence ranges from Priority Services to Postcodes, from the British Philatelic Bureau to the National Postal Museum, and from Mail Redirection to Meter-franked Mail. About half of his 400 or so staff are based at Royal Mail National's Finsbury Square headquarters, the rest at the Address Management Centre in Portsmouth, the Bureau in Edinburgh and the Museum in King Edward Street.

His views and decisions are of major importance to collectors of current British stamps and to all concerned with RM's involvement with the hobby of stamp collecting, for example our relationship with the British Philatelic Trust and the sponsoring of major stamp exhibitions.

Needless to say his time is much in demand and I was very pleased that he agreed to talk to me about some of the concerns *Bulletin* readers, and other collectors, have expressed to me about RM's stamp policy. It soon became clear that Mr Tew regards philatelists and stamp collectors as an important – if relatively small – group of RM's customers and, mindful of the special needs of collectors, will, wherever practical, try to find ways of meeting these needs.

Special Issues

We began with special stamps, discussing the number of issues and number of stamps within each issue. Many collectors feel there are too many and that special stamps are simply no longer "special". RM now issues nine sets of specials each year but if we were to please all the organisations and individuals who request such issues, we would be issuing special stamps every working day of the year! Many worthy anniversaries, events, personages are suggested for stamps every year and the selection process is



rigorous but fair to ensure a balanced programme. "We would not", said Mr Tew, "want a programme heavily biased towards sport or flora/fauna although that would delight two of our lobbies".

Probably unknown to most collectors is the extensive research RM carries out into the subjects for future stamp issues – involving groups, both adults and children, of collectors and members of the general public. Also sought are the views of Post Office counter staff and sub-postmasters – the very people who sell the stamps and know first hand the public's reaction to them. Analysis of this research sometimes shows that potential stamp subjects expected to score well are of relatively little interest to the public and/or collectors. Likewise other subjects achieve a higher popularity rating than expected. "Overall", says Mr Tew, "we aim each year for a programme that includes subjects of wide appeal, particularly to non-collectors, hoping that the subjects will stimulate their interest in stamps as collectable items."

I raised the point that some subjects chosen, whilst deserving of stamps, did not really warrant a set on their own; some 1994 issues

falling into this category. I suggested that the previously used device of issuing a "General Anniversaries" set should be reconsidered as a workable, if not ideal, compromise. Worthy subjects would be commemorated but the number of issues and stamps could be reduced. Mr Tew did not dismiss this out of hand, but pointed out the design and marketing difficulties. Such mixed sets are not always satisfactory from a design angle, for example the 1992 Europa set, and the public are often confused by sets marking diverse anniversaries or events. Such sets become difficult to promote and the diversity reduces the overall impact of the issue. However he agreed that the question should be looked at again as there "may well be sets where this can be satisfactorily achieved". He cited the forthcoming Communications set (5 September 1995) which links the anniversaries of Sir Rowland Hill and Guglielmo Marconi. Having seen the stamps, I can confirm that this is a good, unified set, and should please collectors.

Although I couldn't convince Mr Tew that there should be a reduction in the number of sets, he did give an assurance that RM has no plans to increase the number of special issues beyond nine. That statement will, I am sure, be welcome news to the vast majority of collectors. Wary of giving a hostage to fortune, he added that the public might expect RM to issue additional stamps for events of major national significance such as a home team winning the World Cup or a coronation – not that we are anticipating that at the present. Such additions to a previously announced programme would obviously be "a one-off" and could be regarded as commemoratives in the old, true sense of the term.

Finally we touched on design – always a difficult matter as there are as many opinions on British stamp designs as there are collectors! Often what the general public likes, collectors do not and vice-versa. The Pictorial Postcard stamps, for instance, were generally popular with the public who appreciated the fun element, but less favoured by the collecting fraternity. Greetings stamps are likewise much more readily accepted by the public. Sales of mint special stamps (loose and in presentation packs) amounts to almost 75% of RM's philatelic revenue, Greetings stamps barely 1%.

Mr Tew commented on the "worldwide reputation RM enjoys for stamp design" and the need to safeguard this. Design styles would, and should, vary from issue to issue but should never

be "too obscure". We want the public to enjoy using the stamps and thus designs should be bold enough to make them look at the stamp they are affixing to their mail. It has to be stressed that RM, whether in the public or private sector, faces growing competition from other mail services and the postage stamp is a vital part of our identity. Customer loyalty to the "RM brand" as exemplified by our stamps is taken very seriously within the business.

To the many awards RM has received for stamp designs can now be added the "Golden Mercury" award, reported in last month's *Bulletin*. This was awarded for RM's efforts in promoting stamp collecting, in particular the TV advertising of special issues.

The amount of "behind the scenes" work that goes into stamp design should never be underestimated, nor the lengthy deliberations, even agonising, that goes on at meetings of the Stamp Advisory Committee. The future of the SAC is currently under review, but, says Mr Tew "a body of informed opinion, however constituted, will be necessary to ensure that the accepted designs reflect well for Britain".

Definitives and Stamp Books

In the past definitive stamps were regarded within RM as the poor relations to the special issue. We had to have definitive (and Country) stamps but there was little promotion of them to the public or philatelists. With the need to ensure greater awareness of RM within the enormous "communications marketplace", the humble definitive stamp has become a unique symbol of our service. Great efforts have gone



Retail stamp books – on sale at 70,000 outlets nationwide

on over the past eight years to make stamps much more freely available and books of 1st and 2nd class stamps are now on sale at over 50,000 retail outlets as well as nearly 20,000 main and sub post offices. The red retail (or "window") books are now part of everyday purchases in supermarkets, corner shops, newsagents and garages.

The need to provide retailers with a product they are happy to sell has meant ongoing change to stamp books and this had enormous ramifications for the collector. Mr Tew recognises this and accepts that keeping up with the changes is demanding in collectors' time. But the changes are necessary from a commercial, business point of view and are not produced for philatelic sale. Some collectors suggest that RM makes vast sums from the philatelic sales of window books. The figures show otherwise – sales of stamp books to collectors amount to 0.0000001% of total stamp sales which, for postage and collecting, add up to a staggering £1.3 billion each year.

Mr Tew sees the collecting of stamp books as forming a worthwhile collecting area in its own right. It is likely that future collectors will not be so "hooked" as were their predecessors on the idea of "completeness". Instead of trying to collect every definitive and special stamp, books, presentation pack, first day cover, stamp card and item of postal stationery produced, future collectors are more likely to concentrate on specific aspects and build up more philatelically worthwhile collections than was possible under the "one of everything approach". This more concentrated approach has long seemed to me both sensible and desirable – as well as inevitable.

Changes to definitive stamps and books are often needed quickly to meet demand and RM switches between printers to ensure the best standard of print, cost and delivery time. (The putting out to tender of stamp printing contracts must also conform to EC or GATT regulations.) In these respects, RM operates as any other large company – a fact not always appreciated by collectors. RM is a multi-million pound business, with thousands of retail outlets for its products. It is not, or ever really was, some bespoke corner-shop type operation as some collectors envisage, or hanker for.

The frequent changes can cause collectors problems, especially when the prior announcement is short or the availability restricted. Mr Tew accepts that in some instances

announcement and availability could have been better handled and steps are being taken to try to improve on both. However we cannot guarantee that we will always be able to give as much notice as we would like or ensure the stamps or books go on general and philatelic sale at the same time. We cannot, for example, hold back on supplies of retail "window" books to post offices or retailers serving millions of customers so as to ensure first availability to a fairly small number of collectors.

Confusion sometimes arises as to what RM, collectors and dealers mean by a stamp "variety" or "variation". Why, for example do some stamps qualify for a "first day of issue" treatment, whereas others are afforded the lesser status of "first day of availability". Why are some variations available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets, and not others? John Tew accepts there is a need for RM to define its "stamp products" and to set out their availability. Thus a *Guide to Royal Mail Philatelic Services* is in preparation, along the lines of the *Postmarking Guide* first published in 1991 (see September 1994 *Bulletin* for details of second edition). Publication of the new *Philatelic Guide* is expected early in 1995 and will be announced in this *Bulletin*.

Stamps for Particular Users

Greetings stamps, launched in 1989, have proved very popular with the general public and should, says Mr Tew, be seen as part of RM's attempts to meet the needs of particular groups of customers – in this instance the very large greetings card market. Stamps for another major market – tourism – are under consideration. There is a demand for such stamps from both overseas visitors to the UK and indigenous holidaymakers. Tourist stamps, sold in books, would probably feature historic buildings, scenery and landmarks; they would supplement the Machin definitive range in a similar way to the Greetings issues. Stamps of appropriate design for "occasional use", such as Mother's Day, might also be considered at some future stage.

Collectors will have to decide for themselves which of these new types of stamps they want to include. The introduction of tourist, "occasional use" or other type "specific customer stamps" offers a challenge to collectors and the opportunity to start from "day one" a worthwhile specialised collection. Greetings stamps already offer this, and no doubt some

collectors are putting together collections of the stamps and books together with examples used "commercially" on covers with the Greetings labels, and related promotional material. Over time such a collection could tell the story of "Social Mail" as well as being a worthwhile philatelic study. A number of collectors and dealers already see an interest growing in "Promotional Stamp Formats" - the Bank of England commemorative pane and the Boots "miniature sheet" issued in July and August. The important consideration for collectors is to recognise "a new collecting specialism", and decide to start from day-one. In the past this opportunity has usually coincided with a new monarch or a new definitive series. Now the opportunity comes with new types of stamps for the many different users of the post.

Financial Support for the Hobby

As is well-known RM has given considerable financial support to the hobby since 1981 through the good work of the British Philatelic Trust. Funds from the sale of miniature sheets have also supported the staging of the 1980 and 1990 international exhibitions.

The Trust has recently submitted to RM its plans for the next decade and these are being given careful consideration by John Tew, advised by staff from RM departments concerned with philately. RM hopes to continue to support the Trust's work in making grants to societies, the provision of philatelic literature, and the funding of Stampex.

Ways of promoting the hobby of stamp collecting, and in particular increasing the number of young and female collectors and family participation in the hobby, are being considered within RM and significant funds will be allocated for this important purpose. Mr Tew is clear that RM money must be spent to benefit the greatest number of collectors - at all levels of their "philatelic development" and throughout the UK rather than for a relatively small number of more advanced collectors, particularly in London and the South East.

The next International Exhibition

Collectors are already looking forward to a major international exhibition in the UK in the year 2000 or 2001. There is no question, says Mr Tew, of RM not being involved but the level of involvement will depend on the aims of the exhibition's organising company or committee. RM are looking towards a prestigious, well

organised exhibition that caters both for existing and potential collectors. How to attract current non-collectors to the exhibition must exercise the organisers' minds. This will require some imaginative thinking, as will funding the exhibition.

Sponsorships - as for sporting events - should be sought from appropriate and well regarded companies. RM would expect to be amongst those approached for sponsorship.

No decision has been reached about the issue of miniature sheets in support of the exhibition. Sales of the sheets for the 1990 exhibition were less than for 1980, suggesting some "collector resistance" either to miniature sheets as such and/or to the raising of funds in this way.

Mr Tew has noted the debate, in the *Bulletin* and *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, as to the location for the international exhibition. Whilst recognising that the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham offers better facilities than existing exhibition halls in the capital, he believes that London would attract more visitors - essential for the viability of the exhibition.

John Tew started his Post Office career in 1963. He received training in numerous functions such as Finance, Operations, Training (as a lecturer), and as Personal Assistant to the Chairman of the Wales & The Marches Postal Board.

His first senior appointment, in 1978, was as Controller Sales and Marketing; firstly in Wales, later in South East of England. In 1983 he became National Sales Controller; in 1986, following the separation of Royal Mail and Parcellforce, becoming responsible for setting up a dedicated Royal Mail sales force.

In 1990 he joined a project team of six people responsible for making major organisational changes to Royal Mail - the UK's second largest organisation! From that organisational change John became Director Sales & Customer Service, transferring in April 1993 to his current post as Director & General Manager of Royal Mail National a strategic business unit with a budget of some £2.8 billion.

Next month we will continue the interview with Mr Tew, discussing the role of the Bureau, the provision of other philatelic outlets, special handstamps, the National Postal Museum, thematic collecting and RM's plans for promoting the hobby of stamp collecting.

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The Development of Victorian Postal Stationery

COLIN BAKER

4. Overseas Postcards

When the postcard was first introduced in this country in 1870 its use was limited to destinations within the British Isles, any attempt to send it abroad resulted in it being treated as an unpaid letter and it was surcharged accordingly. Pressure was placed on the Post Office to extend the use of postcards to foreign destinations, but it took seven years for this to be implemented. However, when overseas cards were finally introduced in 1877 they gave rise to a number of features which were unique to postal stationery.

The first overseas postcard was prepared following agreement by the General Postal Union (forerunner of Universal Postal Union), that these be accepted by all member countries as part of the normal mail. At that time membership of the GPU extended mainly to those countries which we now call Western Europe, plus the USA and Egypt, and so the possible use for an overseas postcard was limited. The GPU agreement also set the postcard rate at exactly half that of the basic letter rate to countries in the Postal Union, which in the case

of Britain was 2½d, and so the postcard rate became 1¼d. This was a unique rate which has never been repeated and it is the only time the farthing was ever used as part of a postal rate in this country, although it was frequently used when setting the selling price of stamped stationery.

The GPU agreement covering overseas postcards only allowed them to be sold at their face value and no premium could be added for printing and distribution. This directly opposed the selling arrangements for inland cards whereby the cost of producing these was passed to the purchaser to allow greater competition between the PO and private publishers. (See part 3 of this series). Since no premium could be charged above the price of the stamp, private publishers were unable to compete with the official version and no private cards were ever produced. However, it was sometimes the practice of private companies to overprint PO cards, although until the regulations were changed in 1897 only the reverse of these cards could carry any message.

The first foreign postcard, the 1¼d rate being half the basic letter rate to countries in the General Postal Union.



UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
 POST CARD—GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND
 (GRANDE BRETAGNE ET IRLANDE)
 THE ADDRESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE.



The 2d post card issued in 1883 for the route via Italy to India and the far east.

Ireland Excepted

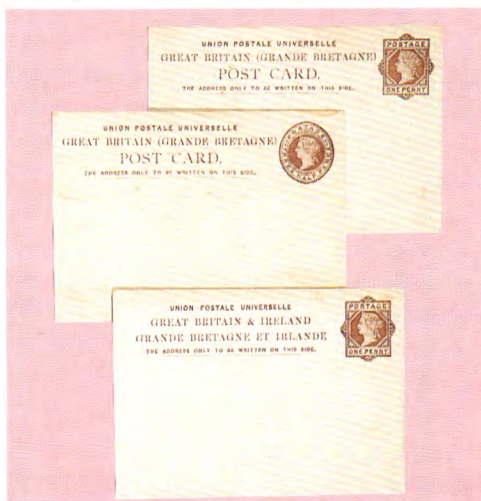
As the membership of the GPU, and subsequently the UPU, expanded, so did the possibility of sending postcards to a greater number of destinations, many of which were spread around the world. At the time Britain's overseas postal rates were also decreasing, which included the postcard rate to Europe, and so it soon became necessary to abandon the original 1½d card and prepare new ones in 1d and 1½d values.

The first overseas card was simply headed "Foreign Post Card/For Countries Included In The Postal Union", but the heading of the next issue in 1879 read "Great Britain (Grande Bretagne)". At that time the postal administration of this country covered the whole of the British Isles, including Ireland and the Channel Islands. This second heading upset the people of Ireland by omitting that country from the front of the card, and following representations by Irish Members of Parliament new postcards were prepared for issue five months later with a revised heading correctly reading "Great Britain and Ireland". However, only the 1d card was re-issued, the sales of the 1½d card not warranting a further printing.

During this period both the letter and postcard rate to many countries depended on the route taken. The overland journey via France and Italy to countries as far away as Australia was much quicker than the journey by sea via the Cape of Good Hope, and postal rates reflected this, the faster journey attracting the higher rate. From 1889 rates to many places bordering the Indian Ocean were 1½d via the Cape and 2½d via Italy. Cards were sometimes marked "via" a

specific country or port to ensure transit by the quicker route. It is possible, therefore, to find different value cards used in the same period, sent to the same destination but by different routes, although most people tended to opt for the more expensive but quicker transit time.

In 1883 a further change was made to overseas postcards. Although the basic layout remained similar to the earlier redesigned cards their size was increased following public pressure for larger cards to allow more space for correspondence. In addition a new 2d value was added to cater for the reduced postcard rate for the route to the east via Brindisi in Italy.



1879 Foreign Post Cards. The heading on the first two cards upset the Irish people and this was soon changed to the heading on the third.

With the success of the inland reply card, it was agreed by the UPU that subject to agreement between member countries they should prepare overseas versions and that the originating members' stamps would be honoured for the return postage providing the reply cards met certain requirements, such as bilingual headings and instructions. From 1883 the British PO prepared reply cards to match all single overseas cards, except for the 3d British Empire card, which had a short life and was sold in limited numbers. Reply cards were not considered appropriate for this issue. However, not all countries accepted foreign reply cards; those refusing to do so included Denmark, Greece, Russia, USA, Japan and many of the

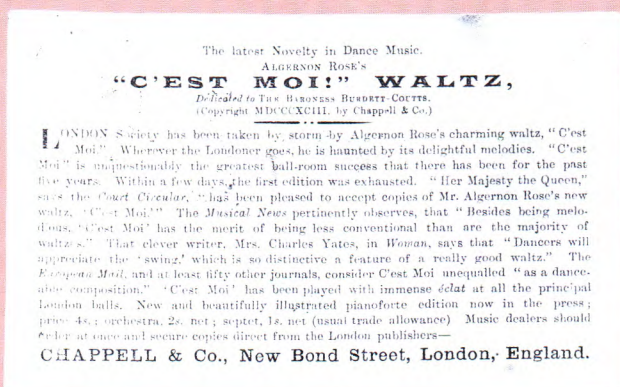
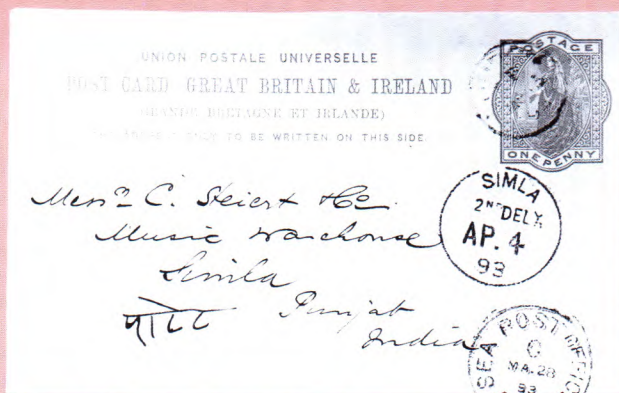
French, Dutch and Portuguese colonies.

A New Stamp Portrait

The postcard service continued to expand and it eventually reached Australia, New Zealand and Fiji in 1889, but with the rate set at 3d for the route via Italy, the issue of yet another card was required. The new cards were needed in a hurry, but the normal 3d postage stamp die was not suitable for printing onto the coarser surface of postcards. De La Rue suggested they prepare a new 3d die for this purpose and in September of that year the 3d British Empire card was issued. This card was shortlived, but it introduced yet another feature which deviated from the PO's normal policy.



The three foreign postcards (1889, 1892, 1893) which used the portrait of Queen Victoria painted by Heinrich von Angeli.



1892 Foreign Postcard with printed advertisement on reverse by Chappell & Co.

The stamp which was used on all overseas cards from this issue onwards included a contemporary full length portrait of Queen Victoria taken from the painting by Heinrich von Angeli which he had completed in 1885. This was the only occasion when British postage stamps showed her as anything other than a very young Queen, all other issues being based on the William Wyon engraving showing her as she was in 1837.

By October 1891 the overseas postcard rate to nearly all destinations had fallen to 1d, the last few landlocked countries in Southern Africa benefiting from this reduced rate six months later. Thus had finally come about a universal postcard rate and a new card was prepared. This also used the same portrait of Victoria based upon von Angeli's portrait of her, but both the size and thickness of the new cards were reduced in order to lessen the total weight, and therefore the cost to the PO of sending cards overseas.

The colour chosen for the card was changed to red, which was the UPU adopted colour for stamps for overseas postcards. New reply cards similar in design to the new single cards were also prepared and issued at the same time.

Finally in 1899 the overseas card was modified following a relaxation of the UPU rules relating to what could be included on the front of postcards and the PO took the opportunity to incorporate the coat of arms onto the front. At long last overseas cards carried the same Royal authority which the inland postcard had always enjoyed.

Thus in just over 20 years, from its initial shaky beginning and unique postage rate, the cost of the overseas postcard had been reduced to 1d to all countries and it had become a much needed and well used system of rapid communication around the world.

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Microscopical differentiation of the 1988 and 1992 High Values

HEINZ RECK, FRPSL

On 18 October 1988 a new series of High Values, designed by the Duke of York, was issued. The stamps had been printed in intaglio by Harrison & Sons Ltd. The second edition was issued on 24 March 1992 with added security against forgery at the expense of Royal Mail. This edition was also printed by Harrisons with nearly the same design as the previous one. However, for printing the Machin head a metallic ink, invented in Switzerland, was used. For additional security phosphor was added to the printing ink. It was the mixture which had already been used for some time for the low value Machins and got its name *C Phosphor* from the producing company *Cartax*. The added

phosphor can be recognised easily by a conventional checking under a lamp operating at a wave length of 254 nm.

What has been said here so far is obviously no news for the interested collector. Less known is the fact that for the second edition, though nearly identical as far as the design is concerned, new plates had been engraved. Figures 1-8 show the differences of the plates, considerably enlarged, at some significant parts of the designs. These microscopical photographs have been taken by the author.

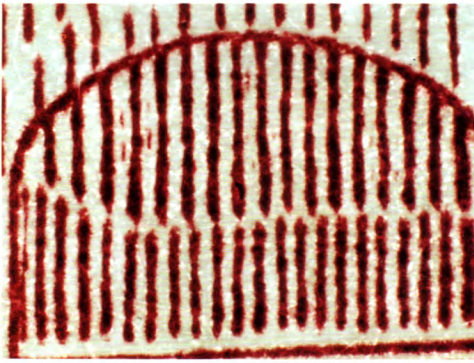
Reference: A R Lane, "Optically Variable Ink", *British Philatelic Bulletin*, April 1992, pp. 176-8.
© Heinz Reck 1995



1: £1 Carrickfergus Castle, 1988. Area above the small boat on the right hand side of the scene. There are only vertical strokes.



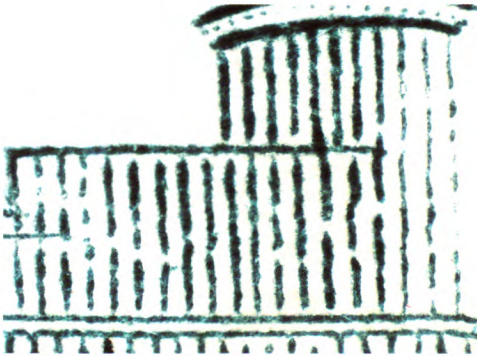
2: £1 Carrickfergus Castle, 1992. Area above the small boat on the right hand side of the scene. There are vertical and horizontal strokes.



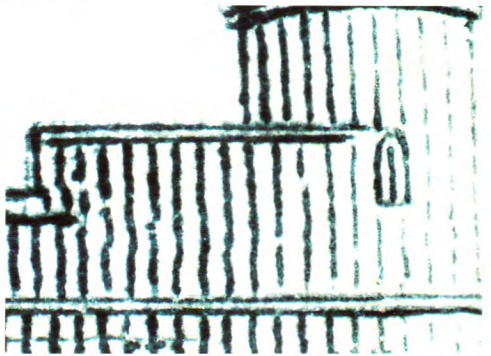
3: £1.50 Caernarfon Castle, 1988. Tower gate area. There are only vertical strokes and no windows.



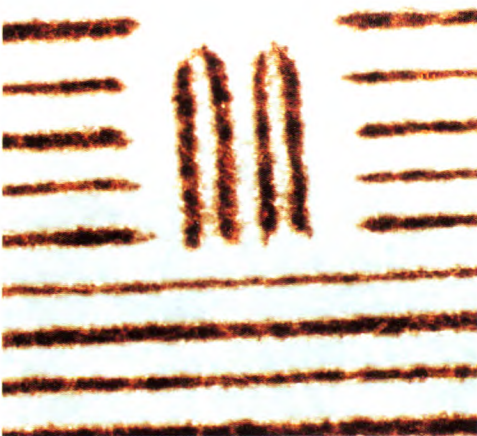
4: £1.50 Caernarfon Castle, 1992. Tower gate area. There are vertical and horizontal strokes and four windows.



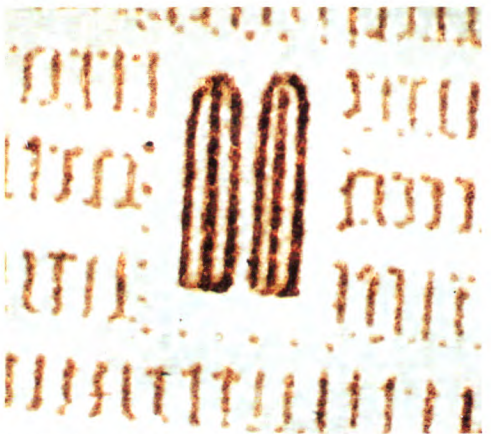
5: £2 Edinburgh Castle, 1988. Area at the second tower from the right. There is no window, and the top of the battlement consists of one single line.



6: £2 Edinburgh Castle, 1992. Area at the second tower from the right. There are two windows, and the top of the battlement consists of two lines.



7: £5 Windsor Castle, 1988. Area of the rectangular tower in the centre of the scene. The windows consist of two lines only, the wall shows only horizontal lines.



8: £5 Windsor Castle, 1992. Area of the rectangular tower in the centre of the scene. The windows consist of three and four lines, respectively, the wall shows interrupted vertical lines.

Philatelic Terms Explained

KENNETH F CHAPMAN

No 49: The Stock Exchange Forgery

The "Stock Exchange" forgery of the 1870 1s. green stamp of Great Britain has fascinated generations of collectors, not only because of its existence but also the strange history of its discovery and the official enquiries which followed.

As recently as 1993, Dr Ian Ray presented some new facts when he displayed to the Royal Philatelic Society his remarkable specialised study of this famous forgery. The brief history which follows incorporates information which was first made public by Dr Ray, a nuclear physicist who applied his analytical mind to the subject.

The forgeries, all of which are only known in singles and all cancelled with the genuine STOCK EXCHANGE EC hand cancellation of dates between 3 June 1872 and 13 June 1873, did not come to light until 1898 when a young stamp dealer, Charles Nissen (later to become the leading specialist trader in GB stamps) purchased from some workmen a quantity of stamps torn off telegram forms used in 1872.

Nissen was looking for plate flaws on the 486 one shilling stamps in the purchase. He thought that some of them were not quite so clearly printed as others and he eventually set aside 307 of the stamps for closer examination which showed that they were printed on thinner paper than normal and that they lacked the spray of rose watermark found on the genuine stamps. In short all the 307 "different" stamps were forgeries, all of which had been cancelled on the same day, 23 July 1872, at the telegraph counter of the Stock Exchange Post Office.

Excited by his discovery, Nissen asked permission to go through Stanley Gibbons stock of the 1870 1s. green and found a further 100 examples, all also cancelled on 23 July 1872. Unknowingly, Gibbons had been selling forgeries without any comment.

Sensing a scoop for *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal*, Charles Phillips (then head of SG) reported the find to the Inland Revenue authorities and, simultaneously published an article "Great Postage Stamp Fraud" on 30 July

1898 – that is 26 years after the fraud had taken place. The article which gave no credit to Nissen, was illustrated with enlarged pictures of a forgery and a genuine 1s. green. Details distinguishing the two pictures were given but it was left to De la Rue, printers of the genuine stamps to point out that the forgery illustrated by Gibbons bore the impossible lettering "KS" in the lower corners. Nissen and Gibbons had missed the most obvious pointer to forgery.

It was clear that the forgery had been a successful attempt to defraud the Post Office at the Stock Exchange in London. That office handled thousands of telegrams daily, the basic rate being 1s. for the first 209 words and 3d. for each subsequent batch of five words. Brokers sending telegrams in bulk were allowed to fill in the message forms which were date stamped immediately and the messages despatched at their leisure, the telegraph staff added the necessary stamps according to the length of the message and the broker was sent an account which he settled the following day.

When a single telegram, or a small quantity was involved, the clerks calculated the cost which was paid on the spot in cash and the stamps were applied and cancelled by the clerks. Both methods meant that the public did not handle the stamps at all. Once despatched, the telegrams were held on file for three months in case of any queries arising, following which they were despatched under contract for pulping.

The system was ideal for any postal official who wished to introduce forged stamps and then balance the stocks by extracting genuine stamps to the "value" of the forgeries. The stolen stamps could then be sold outside at a tempting discount to any tradesman who was not too particular about his business ethics. The scheme appeared to be foolproof since the forgeries would be pulped without ever being seen outside the Post Office.

PO investigators were following a cold trail in 1898 following Nissen's discovery but they received a jolt when another dealer, H F Johnson acquired from a trade colleague in 1910 a batch of 33 of the forgeries, all from plate 6 and all less obviously forged in view of the improved impressions. These newly found forgeries still lacked a watermark and all bore genuine Stock Exchange cancellations dated either 31 October 1872 or 13 June 1873. In the meantime further plate 5 examples had been discovered for different dates in June and July 1872.

Conclusive evidence that the fraud was an



Queen Victoria 1s green – genuine (left) and Stock Exchange forgery (Photos: Gibbons Stamp Monthly).

inside job came with one of the plate 6 forgeries on a piece of a telegram form which had been cancelled with the 31 October 1872 handstamp before the application on top of the cancellation of a stamp which, in turn, had been cancelled on that same day. It came from one of the telegrams sent on credit and showed that only a PO employee could have applied the stamp. The only surviving member of those staffing the Stock Exchange telegraph counter in 1872-73 was finally interviewed by investigators in 1915.

He was 78 year old George Edward Smith. When aged 35 he had been assistant controller at the Stock Exchange PO. His service records included references to irregular attendance, lax supervision of staff and a liking for gambling. In 1876, aged 30, he had retired on health grounds and for 39 years had been a PO pensioner. Smith denied all knowledge of the fraud but considered it likely that some of his staff (all conveniently dead by 1915) could have been involved. Although Smith was described by the interviewing officer A J Waldergrave, as a “shifty and unprincipled officer of doubtful veracity” he was not charged with any offence and continued to draw his pension until his death.

How the forgeries were printed

Students of the forgeries, supported by De La Rue, have concluded that the forgeries were printed singly from a letter-press (typographed) die, the check letters being varied by the use of inter-changeable lettered plugs. The lettering was haphazard and without regard for the AA to TL lettering which covered the 240 positions of stamps in a normal sheet. Following the De La Rue reference to the impossible combination of

“KS”, there were 14 other “impossibles” found among the plate 5 forgeries. The plate 6 stamps yielded a further 17 examples.

Where the forgeries came from

The source of the forgeries, all of which reached the market through the philatelic trade, was finally traced as Hamper Mill, Watford.

In 1911 following a tip off (probably from a disgruntled workman who missed the share out), the PO found tons of unpulped telegram forms, all stamped, which should have been destroyed in 1872-73. The mill was no longer working but the owner Joseph Gutteridge Smith refused an offer by the PO to buy the entire lot. He wanted more than was offered and it was only after his death in 1915 that his heirs agreed a price and the PO repossessed the forms.

No action would be taken against Smith because the contractors from whom he bought the forms had not passed on the PO stipulation concerning destruction within six months. Among the tons of unpulped forms from telegraph offices throughout the country, only those from the Stock Exchange office yielded forgeries and these, of course, were unrecognised by the workmen who raided the stocks at random to secure the stamps of all denominations still on the forms for sale to the stamp trade.

Postscript

Dr Ray's fine fully documented collection of the Stock Exchange forgery was sold intact to a European collector in Sotheby's sale of 17 December 1993 for £57,000 – surely a record for a collection of forgeries of a single stamp.

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Printed Postage Impressions

RON NEGUS FRPSL

For the average person, sticking a stamp on the corner of an envelope prior to posting is a commonplace action that requires little effort. But, if you have a few thousand envelopes to post, fixing the stamps becomes a significant task, and businesses need to consider other ways of indicating that the postage has been prepaid. For large mailings, the use of Printed Postage Impressions (PPIs) can be an attractive option.

These pre-printed alternatives to stamps or franking machine markings appeal to companies that are regularly involved with direct mail or the distribution of promotional literature, or to those that have large numbers of identical items to be despatched by post. As an official service offered by the Royal Mail, the PPI is part of modern G.B. postal history, and collectors will

find that building a representative collection is a fascinating exercise.

When the PPI facility was introduced in April 1966, a basic design of a rectangular boxed frame was employed. Shortly after the two-tier postal service was introduced and a standard design of PPI came into use – this measured 1.5 by 0.75 inches and contained a service indicator, the words POSTAGE PAID, the name of the office of posting and a licence number allocated by the Post Office (Fig. 1). As the use of the facility grew, seven more PPI designs were introduced which included circular, triangular and octagonal frames to enclose the same basic details that were shown in the original layout (Fig. 2). With the new designs, the name of the office of posting was sometimes replaced by a PHQ serial number, indicating the licence had been issued centrally by Postal Head Quarters. Details of these early PPIs are described in an article by Michael Briggs in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* in May 1985.

In October 1993, Royal Mail issued an updated version of its manual entitled *Printed Postage Impressions: The Complete User's Guide*.

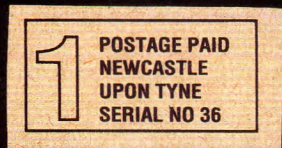


Fig 1

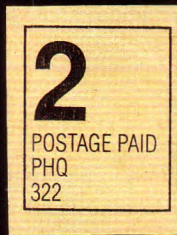


Fig 2



Fig 3



Fig 2



This includes design specifications for the 30 standard PPI layouts that are now authorised – the original eight, plus 22 new layouts. Permission may be granted for non-standard designs, however, provided they are approved by Royal Mail in advance. In addition to the full details on how to reproduce each standard design using conventional artwork studio techniques contained in the *Guide*, Royal Mail will also supply the information on computer disc for incorporation in material produced by Desk Top Publishing programs.

There are three classes of Royal Mail service indicators that can be used in a PPI. The figure “1” is used for items to be sent as first class letters or packets, the figure “2” for second class items, and “M” for those to be carried, at a discounted postage rate, via the Mailsort 3 service. In some earlier forms of PPI, the service indicators “R” (for rebate) and “P” (for parcels) were used but these have been discontinued. Parcelforce now have their own design of PPI for use on parcels.

For items intended solely for overseas mailing, a single PPI design is used. This is a rectangle, 42 x 25mm bearing the words “ROYAL MAIL” at the top. On the second line, the words “POSTAGE PAID” or “PORT PAYE” are shown. Then, line 3 contains the user’s licence number and the design is completed with a fourth line that reads “GREAT BRITAIN”. When mixed mailing is involved, both inland and overseas, the normal first or second PPIs are allowed, but the words “GREAT BRITAIN” must be added in full to the standard design (Fig. 3). In such cases, it is also necessary to indicate, on the upper left corner of the envelope, the type of overseas service to be used, for example “Airmail Printed Papers”.

The regulations state that all items in a single PPI mailing must be identical in size, shape and weight. They have to be posted at the same class and presented in bundles of convenient size, with addresses the same side up and facing the same way. To qualify as a PPI user, businesses need to mail an average of 250 inland items or more per day, or to spend more than £12,000 per year on postage.

The design specifications include limitations on the size of the PPI, which has to have a maximum length of 75mm and a maximum depth of 45mm. The lettering is also required to have a minimum height of 6mm for the service indicator and 2mm for all other words, which must be printed in capitals only. PPIs must be placed in the top right hand corner of envelopes,

cards, wrappers or labels. The top and right hand limits of the PPI must be no more than 20mm from the edges of the envelope or card, and the lower edge must be no less than 68mm from the bottom of the envelope or card. Any practical colour may be used to reproduce the PPI, subject to acceptance by Royal Mail, but it should contrast strongly with the colour of the envelope. In practice, a high proportion of PPIs are found printed in black on white envelopes and cards, but reverse printing with white letters on a black or coloured ground is sometimes used for effect.

The licence numbers that appear in PPIs are only for administrative purposes, to allow the cost of postage to be charged out. They are allocated by local Royal Mail offices as well as by central headquarters, and lists of users are not published. The regulations do require PPI users to include a return address on their envelopes, however, and this can sometimes be a guide for matching licence numbers with specific users. For this reason, some collectors of PPIs prefer to keep the whole envelope.

The scope for a collection of PPIs can be seen from the details already given. At the most basic level, there are 29 standard designs (excluding the single design reserved for international mailings) which can each occur with one of three service class indicators, giving a total of 87 combinations. In addition, examples will be found with both local and centrally allocated licence numbers, some will have the extra “GREAT BRITAIN” line for overseas usage, and a varied range of colours are also possible. There are also many ways in which the standard designs have been interpreted by individual artwork studios, with differences occurring in size, sequence of wording, type faces used, and so on. It is likely, therefore, that a collection of a couple of hundred different PPIs can be built up without much difficulty.

Apart from forming an interesting collection in their own right, PPIs have the advantage of being in widespread usage. Envelopes bearing them arrive in most people’s post quite regularly, and, whilst the contents may be of no interest, it is well worth taking a second look at that envelope before consigning it to the waste-paper bin. Nowadays, of course, the “M” service indicator – for Mailsort 3 mailings – is amongst the most common, and a subsequent article will look at this particular form of PPI in more depth.

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The Fluted Pillar Box

Since the pillar box was first introduced into this country by Anthony Trollope in 1852, it has appeared in a wide range of shapes and sizes. There was no standard design for early boxes, with each district surveyor seemingly being given considerable freedom in the choice of pillar boxes for his particular district. It wasn't until 1859 that the first national standard pillar box was introduced.



1. *Giant fluted box*

The fluted box, of which there were three different variations, owe their origin to John St. Lawrence Beaufort, surveyor of the Birmingham District. The first of these boxes, designed by Mr Edge, the architect, was ordered in late 1855 from Smith and Hawkes of the Eagle Foundry, Broad Street, Birmingham. The body was cast in the form of a Doric column with a vertical posting aperture. They had an elongated domed roof upon which sat a crown on a tasselled cushion. Their overall height was about eight foot. The price of the three sample boxes that were ordered, was ten times the usual amount. There seemed to be a misunderstanding



2. *Fluted vertical aperture box*

respecting their size and cost and consequently no more were ordered. The basic design however remained, and a variation was ordered from Smith and Hawkes in September 1856. This box had now lost its domed roof with ornamentation but was "made with feet, like lamp boxes".

The third and final variation was produced in 1857. The posting aperture was changed from a vertical to a horizontal position as well as the "feet" being removed. As examples of Smith and Hawkes's boxes appear outside of the Birmingham area we can assume that other surveyors also obtained their boxes from Birmingham.

The Post Office Archives & Records Centre, is pleased to announce the launch of the latest in



3. *The new miniature*

Competition

SPONSORED BY:
OMNIPHIL APPROVALS



Win a GB Queen Victoria 2s. Brown

This month's competition is sponsored by OMNIPHIL, specialists in APPROVALS. The prizes supplied by Omniphil, comprise:

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- * 2nd prize: Australia 1915 5s. Kangaroo – the key value from the 1915 set, SG 27 catalogued £250, sound used with light circular postmark.
- * 3rd prize: Australia 1938 George VI 3d blue, the scarce Die II, SG 168b, a fine mint lightly hinged example, catalogued £60.
- * 4th prize: Canada 1942 George VI the \$1 blue "HMS Cossack" destroyer, SG 388, a very popular value in exceptionally fine lightly hinged condition, catalogued £55.



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If you have not already tried OMNIPHIL APPROVALS you may be in for a pleasant surprise. One of the most important features of their service is that they offer each and every stamp individually available, without obligation, upon 12 days home approval, so that you can fill your empty gaps.

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Presently Omniphil are offering all *Bulletin* subscribers the chance to participate in their "WE'LL PAY YOU £100" Discounts Promotion – so if you have not already applied now is your chance.

The promotion has, not surprisingly, proved popular and all *Bulletin* subscribers replying have received absolutely FREE OF CHARGE a GB 1841 2d blue, catalogued £35. Naturally there is a limit of one reply per household, so if you have not already replied you are invited to do so now, to receive your free 2d blue plus a selection of approvals without obligation to purchase.

The organisation of their stock does not permit them to handle wants lists or latest issues, but if your collection is missing stamps from 1840 to the 1980s all you have to do is tell them ALL the countries/areas that you collect and they will send a suitable selection as available without obligation.

Write now stating all countries you collect and whether you collect mint and used to:

OMNIPHIL APPROVALS
BULLETIN BLUE OFFER
PO Box 29
STROUD
Glos GL6 6RW



To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: January *Bulletin* Competition, Room G06, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL to arrive by 24 February. You may submit as many entries as you like but each must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

1. Who is commemorated on a £1 stamp book issued on 7 February?
2. Where was Elizabeth Blackadder born?
3. What do the initials GPU stand for?
4. What is the budget of Royal Mail National?
5. In which year were Printed Postage Impressions introduced?

The answers will be found in this *Bulletin*.

The competition is not open to employees, their families and agents, of Royal Mail or Omniphil.

The winners of the October competition were: Mrs B Payne of Dorset (Cape of Good Hope 6d); I Cooper of Leicestershire (1d black); D Kirby of Hants (World Cup 6d error); and J Fauring of Denmark (Wedgwood 1/2p side band). All prizes were donated by Avon Mixtures.

The answers were: 1. Yvonne Gilbert; 2. Captain Eric Starling; 3. 51 years 11 months; 4. Folkestone; 5. Paris.

Our thanks to all who entered.

Book

Reviews

Royal Mail has recently published **The Story of Definitive Stamps**, written by two well known philatelic journalists – Richard West, Executive Editor of *Stamp Magazine*, with Douglas N Muir, former Editor of *Stamp Collecting*, *Philatelic Magazine* and this *Bulletin* and now Curator, Philately at the National Postal Museum.

In nine, extremely well-illustrated chapters, the book traces the history of British definitives from the Penny Black and Twopence Blue to the present Machin in all its many varieties. Chapter 1 deals with the low value definitives from 1840 to the Wilding issue of Elizabeth II and includes many superb and interesting illustrations such as a Penny Black used on the first day of validity, the page of Hill's diary where he recorded its issue, and the die and printing presses used in the production of the first stamps. Chapter 2 reviews the pre-1969 High Values which include some of the finest and most dignified stamps ever issued, such as the George V Seahorses, the George VI Royal Arms £1 and Elizabeth II £1 Windsor Castle. The skill of the engraver's art is shown in one of the photographs.

"The Time for Change" (Chapter 3) describes the flurry of activity in the mid-1960s leading up to the issue of the ubiquitous Machin in June 1967. Various designers were involved but "the concept that gained most favour was that of Arnold Machin, who used as his inspiration the classic Penny Black design. Simplicity was the principle he adopted... It was not felt necessary even to include the legend POSTAGE on the design." The illustrations show Machin at work

on his cast of The Queen's head and various designs considered before "the Machin" emerged. The impact of the introduction of the two-tier post (1968) and decimalisation (1971) on definitive stamps is recorded in chapter 5. "Few people", write West and Muir, "could have anticipated the levels of inflation that were to be witnessed over the years immediately following decimalisation." Annual postal rate increases became the norm, with two rises in 1975 alone. Inflation and longevity are the main reasons for the proliferation of Machin values, colours and varieties – a joy to many collectors, but a nightmare for others.

The sesquicentenary of the Penny Black was commemorated by "double head" definitives in 1990 and an impressive miniature sheet. It is rather a pity that these most interesting issues are afforded just two pages. There is no mention of the 15p and 20p anniversary stamps being issued in books as well as sheets.

Stamps in coils and books are described in chapter 6 with some good illustrations. This section concludes with the introduction of self-adhesive stamps in 1993. The recent innovations in stamp security, particularly of the High Values, are described in chapter 7. The enlarged illustration of the £10 stamp emphasises the intricacy of the design and a block of the stamp is shown under ultra-violet light to demonstrate the fluorescent ink on Britannia's shield.

Country stamps (better known to collectors as "Regionals") get a chapter to themselves – and deservedly so as they now form a major collecting area. Some unadopted designs from 1958 and 1971 are reproduced as well as examples of issued stamps, first day covers and panes from Scottish and Welsh prestige books. The final section, headed "Collectable", tells of the introduction of presentation packs containing definitive stamps in 1960, of first day cover services in 1967, postcards reproducing definitive stamps in 1993 and the encapsulation of High Values in crown optical glass pyramids.

The book concludes with a useful Glossary to the terms used. Specialist collectors of definitives may not find here much they didn't already know, but should appreciate the choice and reference value of the illustrations. Less experienced collectors will find this book a useful primer. 56 pages including end-papers. Hardbound. At £9.95 it represents good value by today's book prices. Available from the British Philatelic Bureau, Post Office philatelic outlets and the National Postal Museum shop.



HOURS OF COLLECTION			
	A.M		P.M
1	8.30	4	2.30
2	10.30	5	4.30
		6	5.45
	P.M	7	6.45
3	12.15	8	9.30 EX SAT

SUNDAYS
BANK HOLIDAYS
AND GOOD FRIDAY

P.M	5.45
-----	------

LETTERS CONTAINING COIN, PAPER MONEY
OR JEWELLERY, SHOULD NOT BE POSTED
IN THIS BOX BUT SHOULD BE REGISTERED
AT A POST OFFICE

4. Collection plate on miniature box

its series of painstakingly crafted and beautifully finished historic miniatures. This, the fifth in the series, is the third and final variant of the fluted box. It is modelled on the one in the Post Office Collection and of the five that are known to have survived four are still in use. The box has been set in 1882 and is thus painted in the familiar red livery, which replaced green as the standard colour for letter boxes in 1874. It bears both a collection plate and an indicator tablet and, as with the rest of the series, is in 1/19 scale. As with the popular Penfold miniature the collection plate is exact in detail and can be read with the aid of a magnifier.

It wasn't until 1878 that experimental indicator tablets were tried out on roadside boxes in Liverpool before being introduced generally in 1881-82. The indicator holders put on the fluted boxes were screwed into one of the grooves in the top of the door. A piece of metal was then welded in the groove just above the holder in the main column, so when the door closed the tablet could not be removed.

The other method was to flatten out the metal



5. 1878 experimental indicator tablet



6. Ridge on main column stopping tablet from being removed

between two grooves on the top of the door and attach the holder there. This left the ridge above the holder, on the main column, from stopping the tablet from being removed.

With its attention to detail and historical accuracy, the fluted box is sure to be just as popular as its predecessors and will be followed by further miniatures in the Spring of 1995. These are the first of eight new miniatures which have been planned for the next few years. It is available at a special introductory offer to the readers of the *Bulletin* at £19.95, normal price £21.95. Please state *Philatelic Bulletin* with your order. Please note that there is a handling charge of 60p per order. Cheques should be made out to "The Post Office" in £ sterling and orders addressed to: Post Office Archives and Records Centre, Freeling House, Mount Pleasant Complex, Phoenix Place entrance, LONDON EC1A 1BB.



7. Postmen collecting mail from fluted box



Redrawn Country Emblems

Jim Dutton of Surrey comments on Matthew Hinton's article in September's *Bulletin* (pages 18-19):

Matthew Hinton is to be congratulated for drawing attention to an interesting development of our Regional definitives in his new "Look Before You Lick!" series which aims to stimulate the more careful study of the stamps in one's albums. It is, after all, such study which turns stamp collectors into philatelists and leads, in the long run, to greater knowledge, research and the advancement of the hobby.

However in tackling the Redrawn Country Emblems, Mr Hinton has tried to condense a "quart into a pint pot". The change-over process was in no way systematic and there are a number of further points which readers, now checking their stamps, should bear in mind.

1. The emblems on the first lithographic printings (by Waddington and Questa) in 1981 differed, mostly in minor detail, from those on their photogravure predecessors, issued since 1971. In order to rectify the variations, Jeffery Matthews was commissioned to redesign the emblems. In dealing with the litho issues, the 1981 emblems should, therefore, be counted as Type 1.

2. The first redesigned emblems can be seen on the 16p, 20½p and 28p Scottish stamps of April 1983. Oddly enough the next issue – 17p, 22p and 31p of October 1984 – reverted to Type 1. Mr Hinton correctly points out that the Scottish 13p and 17p of January 1985 were the first instances of Type 2 with Type 1 predecessors.

3. There is one readily visible way of identifying Type 2 singles for Scotland and Wales: the absence of an upward stroke in the lion's "armpit" in the case of the former and the larger connected wingtips for the latter. The N Ireland Type 2 is more difficult but with the help of suitable magnification the smaller dots in the band of the crown as well as the joined pearls will help.

4. The rare Scottish 31p Type 2 with perf. 13½ x 14 was not actually due to a "wrong perf. comb". Waddington produced a short print run of this stamp, using the same perf. gauge as they always

had, shortly before the contract for Scottish issues passed to Questa. The stamp went into distribution in December 1985 and had a short life. A Questa 31p, with perf 15 x 14, was issued on 29 April 1986.

5. It should be made clear that the transition from perf 13½ x 14 to 15 x 14 did not coincide with the variations in the emblems. The Scottish emblems changed in April 1983 (see 2, above), but there was no perf. change until Questa took over early in 1986. For Wales and N Ireland the perf. change dates from January/February 1984, but the emblem changes did not take place until January 1986.

The redesign was a progressive rather than a one-off operation – best illustrated by the strengthening of the lines on the Welsh dragon's wing and body. Note the difference between the 16p and 26p of the February 1982 set; the latter can be classified as Type 1a. In addition there are no less than three varied sub-types in the case of N Ireland, eg solid inking of the hand, replacement of the line on the hand, etc.

6. Mr Hinton mentions short bands on the 13p N Ireland and Wales stamps; this is also found on the Scottish 13p of November 1986.

7. Readers interested in this complicated, but fascinating, subject are referred to articles by Jeffery Matthews (*Bulletin* May 1986) and myself (*Gibbons Stamp Monthly* April 1992). Good illustrations of the emblem variations are to be found in the Stanley Gibbons *Concise* and *Specialised* catalogues; *Connoisseur Catalogue of Machin Stamps*; and Douglas Myall's *Complete Deegam Machin Handbook*.



Wales 15p last of photo set, 11½p first of litho set, 26p Type 1a and 12p first of Type 2.

Posting Boxes

No. 152 Preserved Boxes

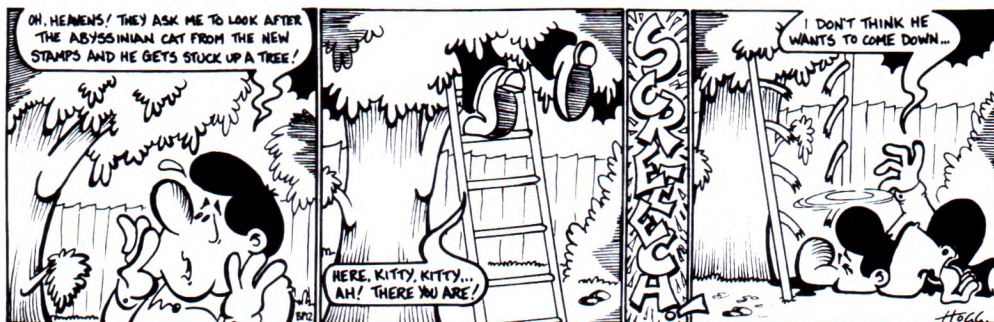
The photographs reproduced this month were submitted by the *Bulletin's* designer, Angus Mathieson. They feature a Victorian wall box at Ledburn, Buckinghamshire. The box was taken out of service some years ago but rescued and re-sited outside the village pub with an appropriately inscribed plaque below. The collection plate tells us that this box used to be emptied at 9.15am and 4.55pm and at 3.45pm on Sunday. As collections are, of course, no longer made from this box, the aperture has been blocked up to prevent people posting letters.



R G Elliott of Great Yarmouth has submitted a cutting from a local paper reporting the restoration and return to service of two Victorian postboxes. The Penfold boxes are now in use on the forecourt of St George's Theatre and in the grounds of the Library. Both boxes were in a bad state of repair and have been skilfully restored by Royal Mail engineers from Great Yarmouth and Norwich, working in their spare time. The boxes will be a great attraction for visitors to the Norfolk seaside town.

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

CUSTOMER KNOWS BEST.



January/February Digest

Issued in January/February

10 January: Cats stamp cards.

10 January: Stamp books with revised cover designs:

10 x 1st class, printed by Harrison, Questa, and Walsall

10 x 2nd class, printed by Questa

4 x 1st class, printed by Walsall

4 x 2nd class, printed by Harrison

Note: there are no changes to the NVT stamps in these books.

17 January: Cat stamps (19p, 25p, 30p, 35p, 41p), presentation pack, and gift pack.

17 January: National Postal Museum postcards – Cats theme. Four cards, available to callers at the NPM shop and by mail order from British Philatelic Bureau.

31 January: Readers' Digest mixed value roll (coil) – 3 x 5p and 1 x 4p stamps.

7 February: Vended stamp books: 50p – Sea Charts No. 1; £1 Inspiration for Victory No. 1; £2 Rowland Hill No. 1.

14 February: 10 x 1st class book, printed Walsall. Cover features Chocolates promotion.

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

Withdrawn in January/February

10 January: National Postal Museum cards 94/1-4 – Valentines.

Note: Cards will be withdrawn at Philatelic Bureau but will remain on sale, to callers, at NPM shop.

17 January: Age of Steam stamps, pack and stamp cards.

24 January: Stamp books – 50p Coaching Inns 1; £1 Prime Ministers – 1.

Note: This £1 book contains 25p stamps printed in lithography by Walsall. This particular variation was issued only in this book and the preceeding November 1993 book (now withdrawn). Readers wanting this stamp for their collections should order this book without delay. The 25p stamps in £1 books issued from April 1994 onwards have been photogravure printed by Harrisons, as the 25p stamps in 50p and £2 books.

14 February: 1982 To Pay labels 3p-£5 values.

Note: 1p and 2p values and presentation pack sold out at Philatelic Bureau.

Events – January/February 1995

until April 1995: "Addressing Postcodes" exhibition at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1. Open Mon-Fri 09.30-16.30. Enquiries: 071-239 5420.

21 January: Telford Phil Soc stamp and postcard fair at Belmont Hall, Wellington, Telford, 10.00-16.00. Enquiries: P Morris-Jones, Tel. 0952-223926.

28 February-5 March: Spring Stampex at Royal Horticultural Society Halls, Westminster, London SW1. Open 28 Feb 12.00-19.00; 1-4 Mar 10.30-19.00; 5 Mar 10.30-17.00. Stampex will include "Austrapex 95" exhibition of Australian philately. Enquiries: STAMPEX, 107 Charterhouse Street, LONDON EC1M 6PT, Tel 071-490 1005.

Late News

The 25p 2-band Harrison definitive, which went on philatelic sale from 20 December, is from cylinder 5, warrant number 201. The gum is PVA Dextrin.



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