The magazine for collectors of UK stamps

October 2020 | £2.45

Royal Mail

Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 58 No.2

Britain's unsung heroes



Brilliant Bugs issue 1 October

150th POST CARD ANNIVERSARY • SALVAGED AIR MAIL • 1964 COMMEMORATIVES

Royal Mail 2020 Yearbook



The 2020 Yearbook contains every Special Stamp issued this year; a total of 145 mint stamps worth more than £160. With 14 chapters written by a commissioned expert for each stamp issue, this stunning 64 page hardback book invites the reader to look again at this year's diverse range of subjects. The Yearbook is strictly limited to 5,000 editions.

Pre-order your copy today at: royalmail.com/yearbook2020

The Yearbook will be despatched from 13 November 2020

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© Peter Eeles

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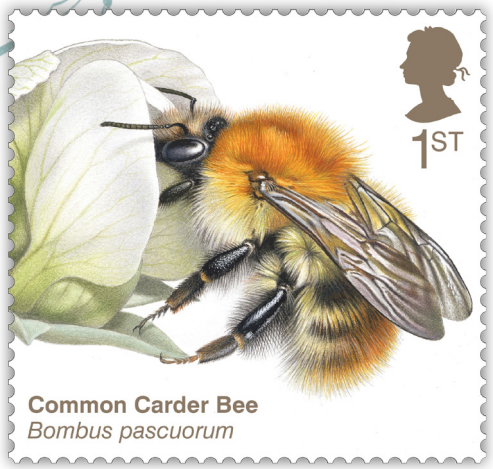
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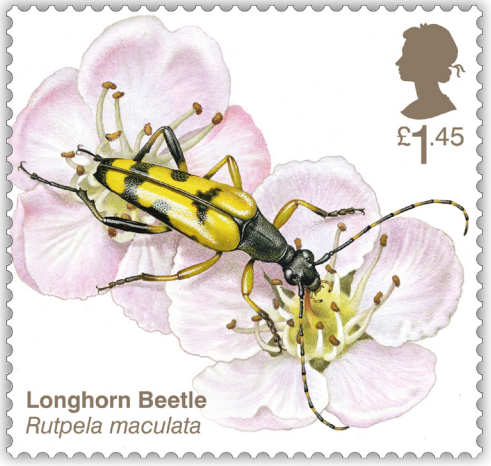
Editor Tim Lees, Royal Mail, 185 Farringdon Road, Floor MP-03, London EC1A 1AA ● **Design and content creation** Ian Boardman, Adesso Creative Ltd ● Price £2.45 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets or by order from Post Office branches ● **12 months' subscriptions** £22.95 UK and Europe; £29.50 rest of the world. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles, PO Box 1373, Sunderland SR5 9PG, UK or subscribe online at royalmail.com/bulletin ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) are priced at £4.99 and are available by post or online ● Copyright and editorial rights are reserved by Royal Mail Group Ltd ● All rights reserved ● Reproduction in whole or parts is prohibited without prior permission of Royal Mail Group Ltd ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Zenith Print & Packaging Ltd ● **ISSN** 2633 2310 ● Royal Mail is a trading name and registered trade mark of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203. Registered office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ ● Stamp images © Royal Mail Group Ltd.

Brilliant





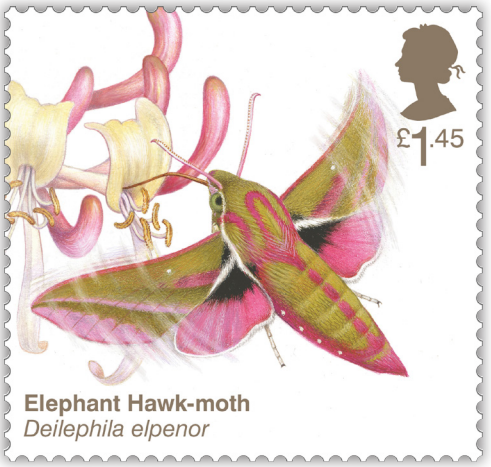
Common carder bee – *Bombus pascuorum* – *1st Class*



Longhorn beetle – *Rutpela maculata* – *£1.45*



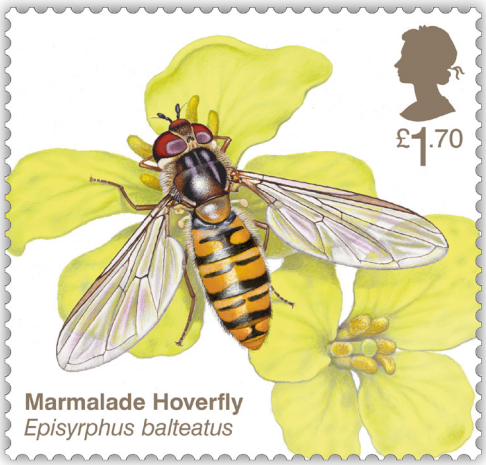
Painted lady butterfly – *Vanessa cardui* – *1st Class*



Elephant hawk-moth – *Deilephila elpenor* – *£1.45*

Bugs

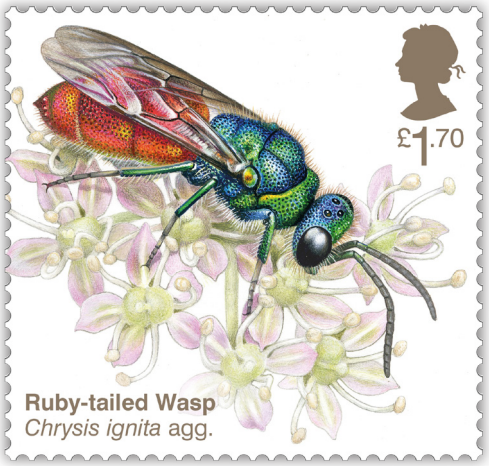




Marmalade hoverfly – *Episyrphus balteatus* – £1.70

They help to 'feed the world', and ensure the beauty of our home – the earth. That's the major contribution of pollinators that number among more than five million* different species of insect, with which we share our unique planet. This global army of 'brilliant bugs' play crucial roles in varied and diverse ways as they assist essential natural processes – facilitating the production and protection of crops, seeds and fruits. Oh, and these industrious and diligent workers were busy recycling before it became fashionable – breaking down dead and decaying matter and making it available for new organisms to utilise.

Busying themselves transferring pollen from the male anther of a flower to the female stigma, pollinators play a pivotal role in much of the ▶



Ruby-tailed wasp – *Chrysis ignita* agg. – £1.70

Brilliant Bugs – Stamp Specifications

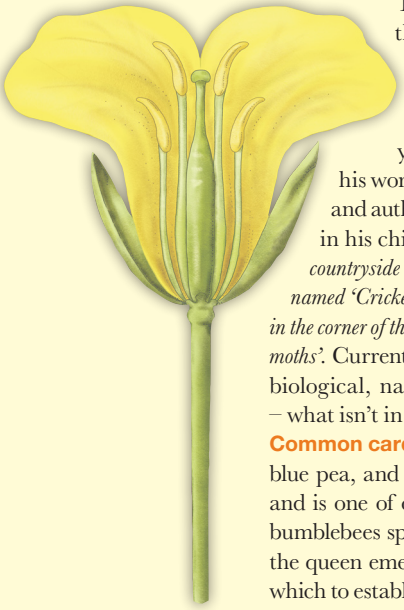
Date of issue	1 October
Number of stamps	Six – 3 x vertical se-tenant pairs (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.45, 2 x £1.70)
Design	Royal Mail Group Ltd
Illustrations	Richard Lewington
Stamp format	Over-square landscape
Stamp size	36.5mm x 34.7mm
Number per sheet	30/60
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	14 x 14.5
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA

*The true figure of living species of insects can only be estimated... conservative estimates suggest that this figure is two million, but estimates extend to 30 million – *Smithsonian*



First Day Cover with Tallents House postmark which features an illustration of a honeysuckle – a key pollination plant

earth's harvest. And it's not just the undertaking of butterflies and bees – moths, beetles, hoverflies and wasps also put in a shift! However, there is evidence that numbers of insects including our essential workers – the pollinators, are declining. Royal Mail's latest stamp issue highlights these concerns and celebrates the enormous diversity, intrigue and importance of pollinating insects in the UK.



The stunningly beautiful and detailed stamp illustrations are the work of Richard Lewington, his prolific portfolio includes the artwork for the Bees stamp issue of August 2015 and the Butterflies issue of 2013. Following his time honing his artisic skills at the Berkshire College of Art and Design over forty years ago, he modestly claims *'I've yet to get a proper job'*, however his works are legion and adorn many of Britain's most highly respected and authoritative wildlife books. His interest in the natural world is rooted in his childhood, he explains: *'some of my earliest memories are of exploring the countryside with my father, and visiting my grandparents' house in the appropriately named 'Cricket Hill' in Finchampstead, Berkshire, where I would race to a small cabinet in the corner of their living room, to stare at my granddad's modest collection of butterflies and moths'.* Currently, Richard is not sure whether to describe himself as a scientific, biological, natural history or wildlife illustrator, but he favours the latter – what isn't in doubt is his rich talent.

Common carder bee This delightful ginger bee feeds on flowers such as large blue pea, and numbers among the 24 species of bumblebee found in Britain, and is one of only seven that are relatively widespread and common. Queen bumblebees spend the winter alone underground. Having not fed for months, the queen emerges in the spring and seeks nectar. She then seeks a nest site in which to establish her new colony which she furnishes with pollen and wax. Her



first brood is all female – workers with diverse roles within the colony, including foraging for pollen whilst the queen holds fort in the nest. The female bee uses a range of combs and brushes on her hind legs to consolidate pollen that collects on her hairy body, which she then stores in her pollen baskets.

Painted lady butterfly A true globetrotter, *Vanessa cardui* travels vast distances from North Africa, the Middle East and central Asia before arriving in Britain and other European countries during the summer. They can be found as far north as Shetland and are one of very few butterflies to migrate to Iceland. In the autumn, these butterflies migrate south in large numbers, often flying at high altitudes to take advantage of favourable winds.

Longhorn beetle The wasp-mimicking longhorn beetle *(Rutpela maculata)* is a frequenter of hawthorn flowers throughout the summer months. Although this species has a lifespan of several years, the adults live for only two to four weeks. The long-lived larvae feed in the decaying wood of trees before pupating and emerging as the stunning black-and-yellow adult beetles with antennae almost the same length as its entire body – the beetle is 13–20mm long.

Elephant hawk-moth The hawk-moth family has some of the largest and most striking of our native moths which number over 2,500 species. The *Deilephila elpenor* is a particularly colourful species, with pink and green wings spanning 45–60mm. The hawk-moth caterpillar may resemble an elephant's trunk to us, but to predators, the eye-shaped markings can cause panic and ward off attacks. When threatened, the larva swells up around the eye-spots to enhance the effect.

Marmalade hoverfly The extremely beautiful and delicate yellow-and-black-striped marmalade hoverfly is frequently seen across Britain, where there are more than 280 hoverfly species. The alternative thick and thin black bands are characteristic of this species. Favouring flat-topped flowers on which to land and feed on nectar, it is commonly seen in gardens ▶

First Day Cover with the alternative handstamp which features an illustration of a thistle – another important pollination plant



FD2018-TH



FD2018-PL

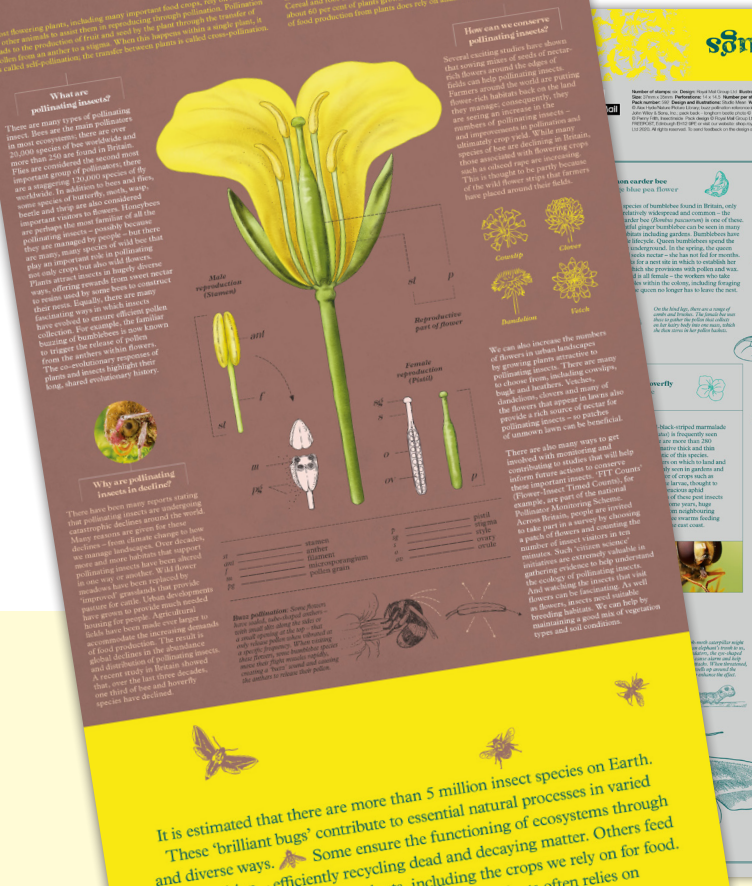


FD2018-NP

Presentation Pack: includes all six Brilliant Bugs stamps and offers insights into pollination, the role of insects, the decline in their numbers, and how we can conserve them. The pack also goes into detail around the insects pictured on the stamps



Presentation Pack Inner



Presentation Pack Outer

and is also an important pollinator of crops such as oilseed rape. In some years, huge numbers migrate to Britain from neighbouring countries; it is not unusual to see swarms feeding on nectar from flowers along the east coast.

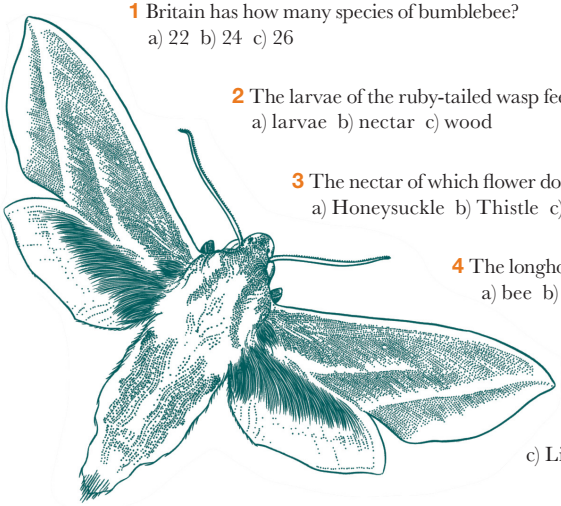
Ruby-tailed wasp The *Chrysis ignita* agg. adult feeds on nectar from flowers such as angelica, the young larvae consume the eggs and larvae of other insect species. The ruby-tailed female lays her eggs in the nests of other solitary wasp species, usually mason wasps, so that the emerging larvae have a plentiful food supply. Ruby-tailed wasps are relatively common flower visitors but their shiny bodies are less well adapted to transferring pollen between flowers, compared to the bees and other insects that are distinctly hairy. If a ruby-tailed wasp from the Chrysididae family is caught while infiltrating a host nest, it rolls its heavily armoured body into a ball for protection ●

Brilliant Bugs – Prices	
Set of 6 Special Stamps	£7.82
Presentation Pack	£8.70
First Day Cover Stamps	£10.05
Stamp Souvenir	£10.05
First Day Envelope	£0.30
Postcards (6 in set)	£2.70
Framed Stamps	£29.99
Framed Stamps signed by Richard Lewington (Limited edition)	£49.99

Brilliant Bugs Quiz







1 Britain has how many species of bumblebee?
a) 22 b) 24 c) 26

2 The larvae of the ruby-tailed wasp feed on what?
a) larvae b) nectar c) wood

3 The nectar of which flower does the elephant hawk-moth favour?
a) Honeysuckle b) Thistle c) Angelica

4 The longhorn beetle mimics a...?
a) bee b) fly c) wasp



5 Which artist illustrated the Brilliant Bugs stamps?
a) Kate Simpson
b) Richard Lewington
c) Linda Farquharson

How to enter Please send your answers, with your contact address or phone number, marked 'Brilliant Bugs Quiz', to: Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Or by email to tim.lees2@royalmail.com.

Prizes The first five correct entries drawn after the closing date win the Brilliant Bugs Presentation Pack.

Closing Date 15 November 2020.

July solutions Queen Quiz 1)b 2)a 3)b 4)c 5)b.

Winners E L Gilbert, Bishop's Stortford; P Constantine, Beaconsfield; Roger Atfield, Kendal; Mrs Celia Rhodes, Woking; Jane Price, Bishops Stortford.

Terms and conditions Promotions are open to any reader aged 18 or over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date stated. For prize draws where readers must answer a question, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. Royal Mail's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. Entry implies acceptance of these rules. Prizes are subject to availability. The promoter reserves the right to a) substitute a prize of equal or greater value if circumstances so demand and b) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. The winners' names are available 28 days after closing date. To receive this please send an SAE to The Editor.

Thematics – bitten by the bug?

That's the collecting 'bug' of course! Both stamp sets shown below from 1981 and 1985 were designed by the late Gordon Beningfield (31 October 1936 – 4 May 1998). He was an English wildlife artist, broadcaster, and naturalist known for his watercolour artworks, most notably of insects. Much of his work involved the study of butterflies. His decision to specialise in the insect led to the publication of his first book, *Beningfield's Butterflies*, which was released in 1974. This specialisation led to his commission to produce artwork for these delightful stamps. Due to his fondness of the insect, he was made President of Butterfly Conservation in 1989 – the UK wildlife charity that's dedicated to saving butterflies, moths and our environment. The 1985 Insects issue paid tribute to Britain's enormous contribution to the study of insects – led by the Royal Entomological Society for over a century. The Endangered Species – Insects issue of January 2008 (top right) was designed by Andrew Ross using photography from the Natural History Museum. The accompanying Presentation Pack was written by Richard Lewington – illustrator of the current Brilliant Bugs stamps, the Butterflies issue of 2013 and the Bees issue of 2015 ●

Butterflies
Issued 13 May 1981



Small Tortoiseshell – *14p*



Large Blue – *18p*



Peacock – *22p*



Chequered Skipper – *25p*

Insects
Issued 12 March 1985



Buff Tailed Bumble Bee – *17p*



Seven Spotted Ladybird – *22p*



Wart-Biter Bush-Cricket – *29p*



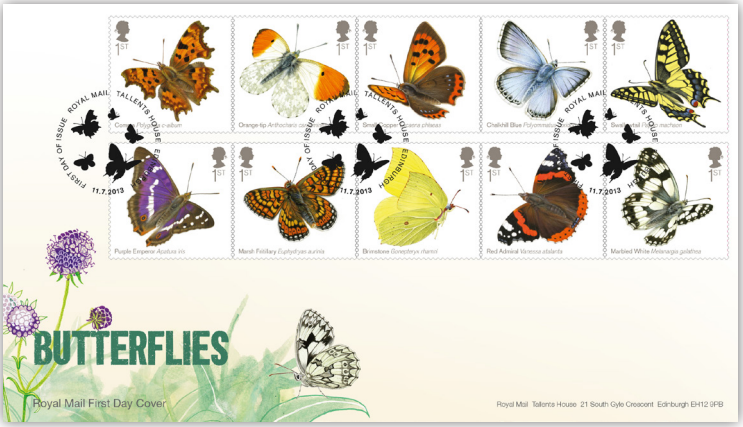
Stag Beetle – *31p*



Emperor Dragonfly, 34p



Endangered Species – Insects
Issued 15 April 2008.
Adonis Blue Butterfly, Southern Damselfly, Red Barbed Ant, Barberry Carpet Moth, Stag Beetle, Hazel Pot Beetle, Field Cricket, Silver-spotted Skipper, Purbeck Mason Wasp, Noble Chafer Beetle – *all 1st Class*



Butterflies
Issued 11 July 2013.
Comma, Orange Tip, Small Copper, Chalkhill Blue, Swallowtail, Purple Emperor, Marsh Fritillary, Brimstone, Red Admiral, Marbled White – *all 1st Class*



Bees
Issued 18 August 2015.
Scabious Bee – *2nd Class,* Great Yellow Bumblebee – *1st Class,* Northern Colletes Bee – *£1.00,* Bilberry Bumblebee – *£1.33,* Large Mason Bee – *£1.52,* Potter Flower Bee – *£2.25*

The Early Days of the Post Card



Dr Lyon Playfair MP

1 October 1870 is a landmark date in British postal history – one that deserves to be ranked alongside 10 January 1840 (the introduction of the Uniform Penny Post) and 6 May 1840 (the first official use of a type of small sticky label readers may be familiar with). On that Saturday, the halfpenny post was introduced, with reduced rates for printed matter[1] and the introduction of a completely new category of postal item for this country – the 'post card' (with which readers will no doubt also be familiar). Since this month marks the sesquicentenary, it seems an appropriate time to look at this development.

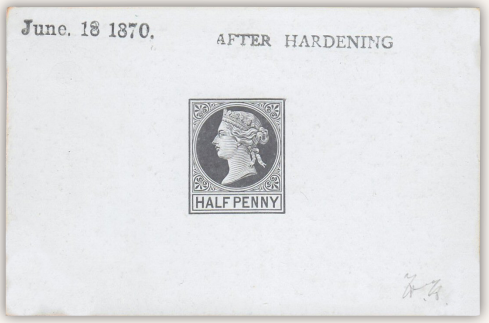
The suggestion of allowing lightweight cards to pass by post at a cheaper price was based on the argument that they were easy for the Post Office to handle, and dates from the 1860s. On 1 October 1869 Austria-Hungary were the first to actually implement the idea, and other countries soon followed their lead. Indeed, the first call for post cards to be issued in Britain came before the Austrian cards had actually been issued, in an article in *The Scotsman* on 17 September 1869 based on reports of the proposal. This was reprinted as a pamphlet and circulated to MPs and other Victorian influencers. The Post Office was reluctant at first, but the suggestion made a good counterpart to the proposed halfpenny post for circulars.

In February 1870 the Postmaster-General was presented with a memorial by Dr Lyon Playfair MP (who himself became Postmaster-General in 1873-74). This was '*supported by the signatures of Members of Parliament, of mayors and merchants of many towns in the United Kingdom, of members of learned societies,*

[1] The reduction of rates for printed matter was prompted by the activities of the 'circular delivery companies' (who delivered such items for ½d or ¼d, albeit with dubious legality). Stamped ½d newspaper wrappers and ½d and 1½d adhesive stamps were also first issued on 1 October 1870, to pay the rates on this class of mail. They however are another story…



The first Austrian postcard



Die proof of the first post card stamp, which was being prepared in anticipation well before the authorising Act of Parliament actually passed on 9 August 1870. This was taken from the master die when the design was completed, shortly after the steel was hardened ready to prepare individual clichés

and of a large number of officers of Volunteers' – i.e. the great and the good of the land. By 27 May the Postmaster-General was able to announce in the Commons that the proposal had been agreed.

The first cards were issued in two sizes – the originally planned 4¾" x 3⅜", and a smaller card of 4¾" x 2⅞". The latter was the result of an examination of typical envelope sizes in the mails – it was considered that it *'would admit of the Card being tied up in bundles of letters without damage to the edges'*. They were sold at face value, singly or in packets of 24 for a shilling, and the smaller cards were also made available in uncut sheets of 42 to make it easier for commercial users to print advertising on the back. The small size became standard for the next three decades, and the larger cards were not reprinted after the initial printing was sold out. ►



First Day uses of the small and large format cards



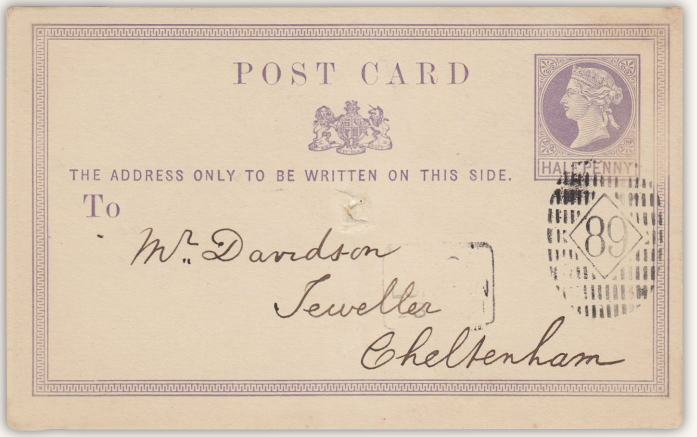


Enlargement of the coat of arms used, which had a curious error – the 'N' in the word 'PENSE' of the Order of the Garter motto was reversed

1875: a card sent from Guildford, left uncancelled there, with London red circular datestamps. These are sometimes sold as 'coloured cancellations', but are not actually cancellations at all – they are simply arrival datestamps that sometimes happen to overstrike the stamp!

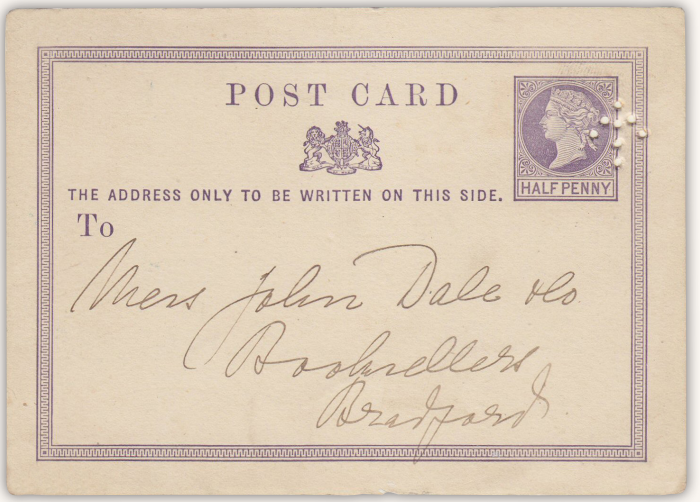


23 January 1871: 'Azemar' trial cancellation for post cards (the datestamp part is a little indistinct, but it's a rare postmark and the only one I have!) The trial period seems to have been distinct from the regular trials of the machine, so may have been prompted by the recent introduction of post cards



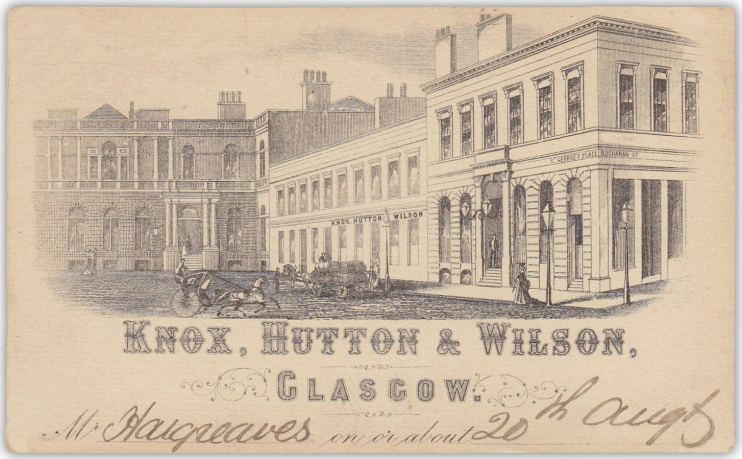
December 1870: the standard 'arrow' Sloper post card cancellation: *'The postage stamps on some of the Post Cards will be obliterated by means of a punch instead of the ordinary obliterating stamp' (Post Office Circular, 12 October 1870)*



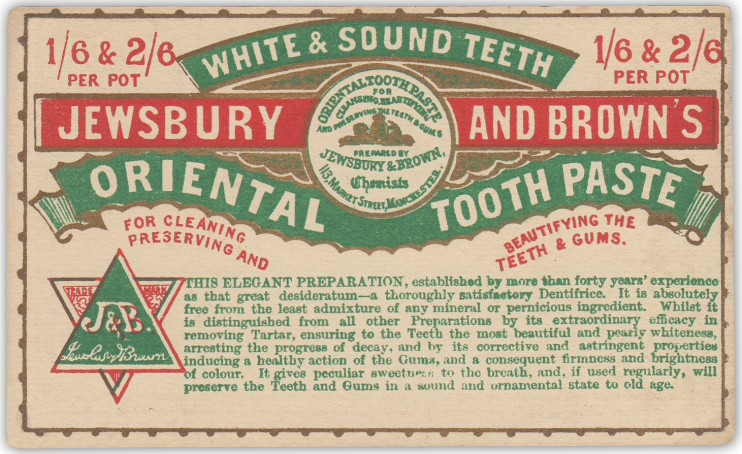


When post cards were first introduced, the Post Office was alarmed by the possibility that so many would be posted that they would be overwhelmed by them. It was therefore recognised that stamps on the cards might well escape cancellation, which in turn required that a rule be brought in to ban the use of 'cutouts' on mail. (In the event it proved perfectly feasible to cancel cards without delaying the mails, and uncancelled cards are not usually seen after the first few years, but the cutout ban was not lifted until 1905.) Special types of cancellation were also tried – perfins from Sloper machines (used in London and Liverpool), clipping the edge of the cards in the manner of railway tickets (some Northern towns, especially Manchester), and in one case a die used in the experimental 'Azemar'[2] cancelling machine. ►

[2] The actual inventors were from Germany and named Fischer & Haas, but GB collectors normally refer to the machine as the 'Azemar', after the patent agent who handled negotiations in this country. The actual die used on postcards is a unique type that is very different from the other trials of the machine, and appears to have been based on the cancellations used in Hamburg at the time

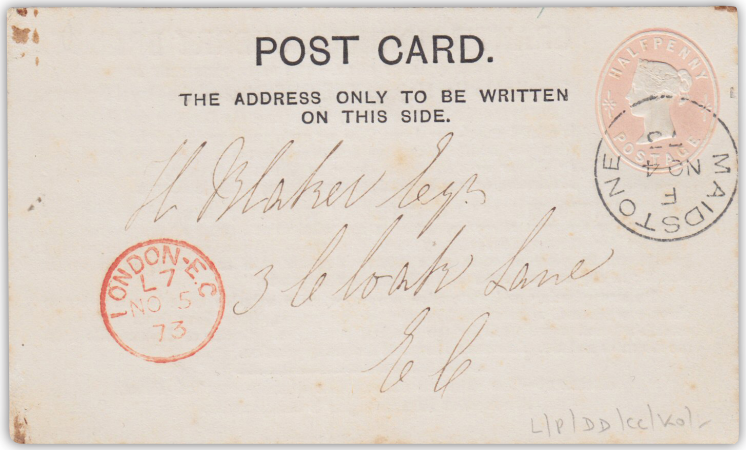


Although the front of the card was reserved solely for the address, users could write or print anything they liked on the back, which occasionally resulted in pictorial or multicoloured designs for commercial purposes

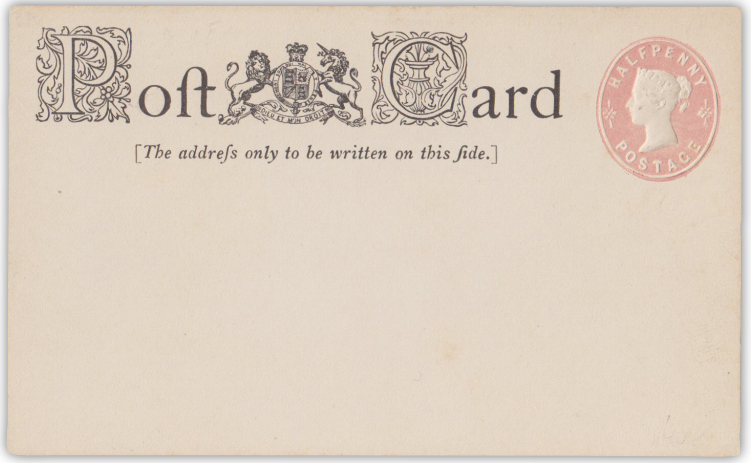


Following complaints from the stationery trade that the Post Office being the sole seller of post cards constituted unfair competition, the 'stamping to order' facility was extended to cards from 17 June 1872. This offered the opportunity to use card stock that was either cheaper or better quality, although as the Postmaster-General's Report for 1872 noted, *'of this concession little use has been made'*. Early stamped to order cards are relatively seldom seen, probably because many commercial users found the sheets more convenient, and in 1875 the Post Office themselves introduced a thicker card (see below).

1875 saw a number of new developments. The first was a simple one, the omission of the word 'To' on the front, a slight nod towards requests for more space for the address on the front (it was considered that the public had probably got the idea by now). Following a suggestion from the keen user of postcards William Gladstone, postcards *'of a superior quality'* were issued from 1 February 1875. The initial issue was experimental, but public



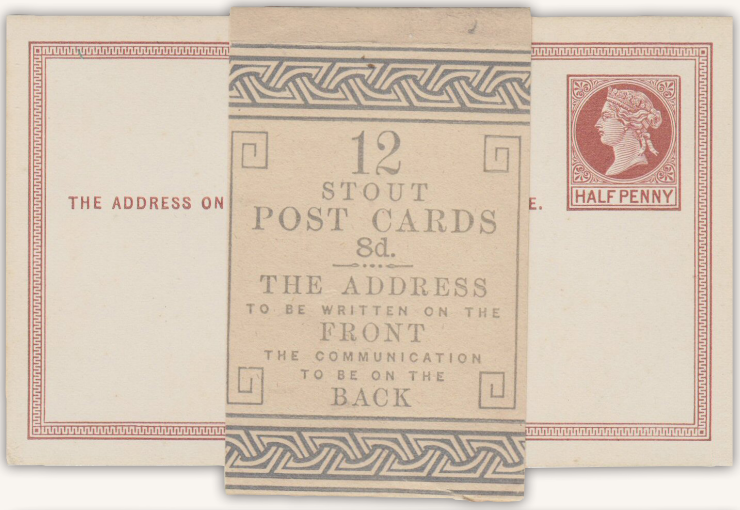
1873: early example of a stamped to order card. The use of an embossed die meant that the cards could only be stamped one at a time rather than in sheets – but stamping to order was done at the Stamp Office, which did not have suitable letterpress capability before 1884



The stamping rules said that 'Post Card' and 'The address only to be written on this side' were to be printed on the front, as with the official cards – although the format was at the user's discretion, which sometimes resulted in over-elaboration! This card was produced by the Chiswick Press – it also included the Royal Arms, which were not supposed to be used on STO cards (but once these cards were accepted in error, it set a precedent)

reaction was so favourable that they were made a standard issue almost immediately. They were termed 'stout' cards, printed on thicker stock than the existing cards (which were now termed 'thin' cards).

A development more wide-ranging than simple design changes was the introduction of postcards for overseas mail (illustrations p 50). The first Postal Union treaty took effect on 1 July 1875, and included provision for cards to be sent between member countries, with the rate set at half the agreed Union letter rate. As the latter expressed in British currency was 2½d, a new card with a face value of 1¼d was required (the only official British postage stamp with a farthing amount in the denomination). It was the same size as the original 1870 large size inland cards, and was printed in brown like the stout inland cards (but on a thin stock, as accounting to foreign countries was done by weight). The Royal Arms were omitted as these were considered inappropriate for a foreign rate card. ►



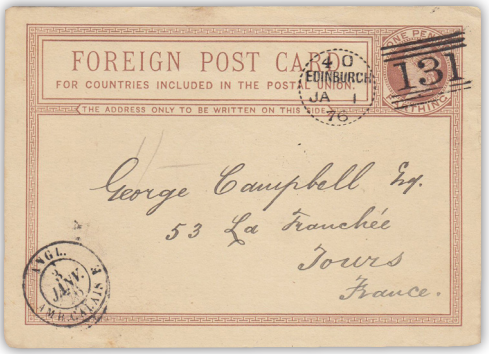
The new stout cards were printed from the same formes as the thin ones, but in brown ink, as De La Rue now had a suitable fugitive ink in that colour. The 'superior quality' stock used for the postcards was whiter and quite rigid, and the price was higher – a penny extra per dozen (as shown on the 'packet bands')



'Thin' cards continued to be issued in the existing format, printed in purple on a card stock that is distinctly flexible by comparison. The use of different colours continued until the redesign of the cards in 1878



1 July 1875: first day use of the new card to Italy (directed via Belgium rather than France, as rates via the latter country were more expensive for the first six months while it was not a member). Sent as a souvenir by William Lincoln, who claimed to have been the first stamp dealer in London



1 January 1876: France's entry to the Union was delayed until this date for internal political reasons, so this was sent on the first day that cards were valid to France. From a reverend gentleman in Scotland, enquiring about supplies of claret for a friend



Inland cards could be used to Postal Union countries if uprated, but as there were no farthing-denominated adhesive stamps, anyone doing this had no option but to make the rate up to 1½d and overpay by ¼d



Cards were only valid to Postal Union countries, and if addressed to non-member destinations were stopped and returned (not even treated as unpaid letters), with an explanatory handstamp added. Canada did not join the Union until 1 July 1878, so this 1876 card could not be forwarded

A new design of inland post card was issued in both thin and stout forms on 1 January 1878. It increased the space available for the address by dispensing with the border, using a new smaller stamp, and moving the text upwards. The size was unchanged, but at the suggestion of De La Rue, the opportunity was now taken to print both in brown: '*When the Thin Post Cards were first introduced, we had no suitable fugitive brown ink… we had to resort to the purple… from an artistic point of view a brown on a buff is much more correct*'. They also had practical rather than aesthetic reasons for the change: '*Another consequence of importance is that the brown ink is absolutely stable in colour, whereas the purple undergoes change by exposure to daylight*'.

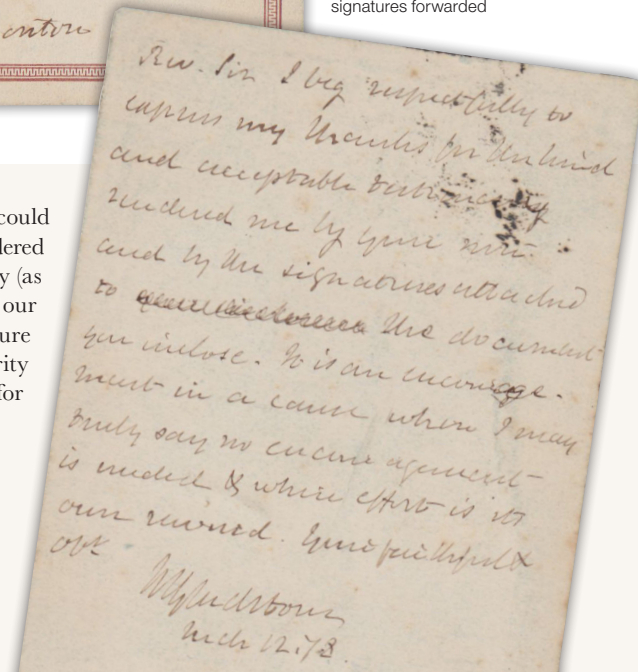
This takes the story up to the introduction of a simple, indeed rather plain design approach to the inland postal stationery cards, one that would continue until the issues of the current reign (with variations, of course, but in the same general style). By this time, the post card was a standard postal item, having rapidly caught on and become very popular, despite initial worries about whether people would be prepared to entrust



On 13 June 1877 De La Rue submitted two alternative designs with a smaller stamp and the coat of arms between the words POST and CARD, one with and one without a border. This hand-drawn sketch labelled 'B' is the second of these, the chosen design. The (crossed out) legend reads: *'Placing the Coat of Arms out of the centre of the space formed by the stamp and the left edge of the card quite upsets the design, as will be seen by the sketch.'* However the opinion expressed in the additional pencilled notes prevailed – *'Certainly not but the arms must be a little more to the left.'* The latter suggestion was subsequently implemented



William Gladstone *'did a great deal to popularise the postcard, for no one could appreciate more than he the advantage of that economiser of time and abbreviator of formality' (W.T.Stead, Review of Reviews, May 1892).* He would apparently often sit in the Commons writing his correspondence during debates. Given the tendency of Victorian MPs to prolix speechifying, this was probably a sensible use of his time. This card of 1878 (when he was Leader of the Opposition) was sent to a man of the cloth to thank him for support and signatures forwarded



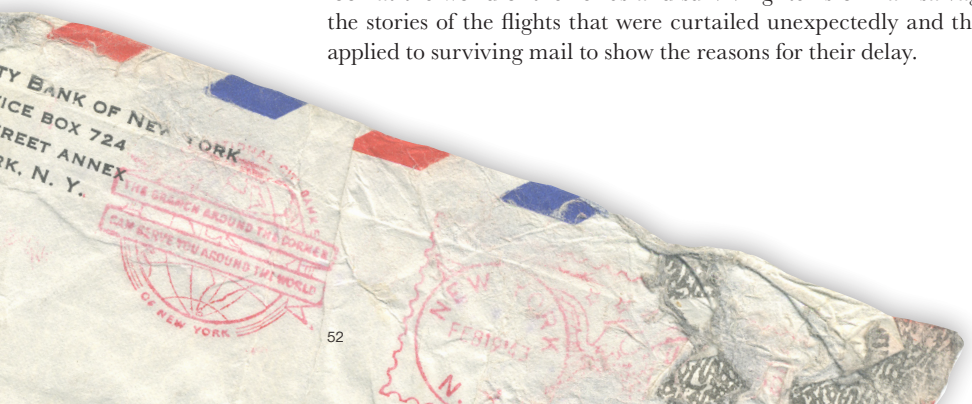
their messages to an open card that anyone could read – cheapness and convenience were considered sufficient recompense for any loss of privacy (as many have discovered with social media in our day). The development of the private picture postcard from the 1890s boosted its popularity to ever greater heights… but that is a tale for another time ●

By Maurice Buxton a long-term collector, and webmaster for the Great Britain Philatelic Society – www.gbps.org.uk

1940s Air crash mail

Dane Garrod delves deeper into the amazing Adrian Hopkins collection and gives fascinating insight into the disasters and salvaged mail

In last month's *Bulletin* we discussed air crash mail from the 1950s, and how postal services met the challenge with retrieval and onward transmission, often in 'ambulance covers' where the envelope, letter or similar was so badly damaged that it could not re-enter the postal system without this facility. This service had begun many years before from the dawn of air travel where mail was carried firstly across the country, then across Europe, and then across the globe. Working backwards through time, we will now look at the world of the 1940s and surviving items of mail salvaged, with the stories of the flights that were curtailed unexpectedly and the cachets applied to surviving mail to show the reasons for their delay.



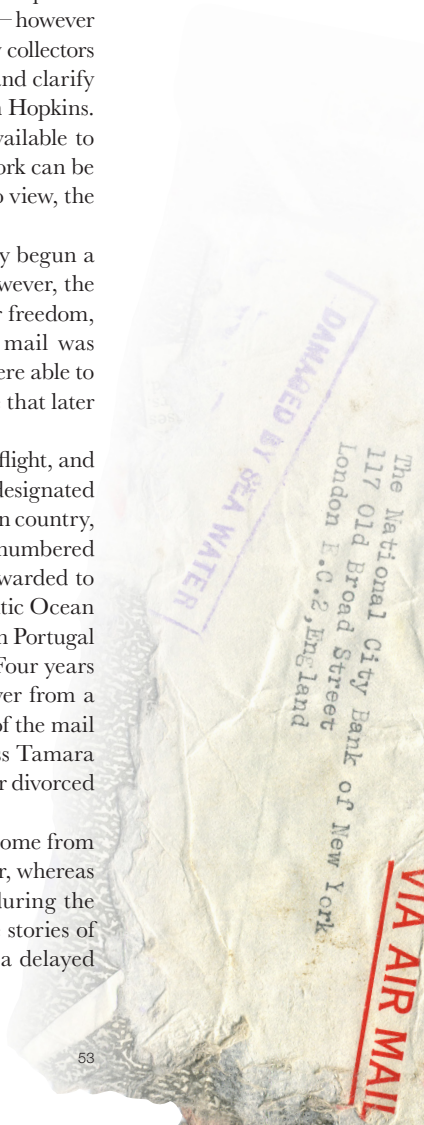
The 1940s can be seen in two inter-connecting parts, with the first half in war and fear of invasion and the second part in slow recovery. In war the bombing caused fear, death and destruction, families separated due to evacuation of children and menfolk going away to fight. Food and clothing were rationed, and this went beyond the 1940s right into the middle of the next decade. With vast numbers of men committed to the armed forces, the beginning of change for women occurred where they joined the workforce and became more independent. Although *In The Mood* by the Glenn Miller Orchestra was the No.1 musical hit of the 1940s, it is Vera Lynn who is recalled by many today for her heartfelt words of *We'll Meet Again*. Sadly, many did not. No doubt many reflect on the decade as one synonymous with sorrow, patriotism and hope.

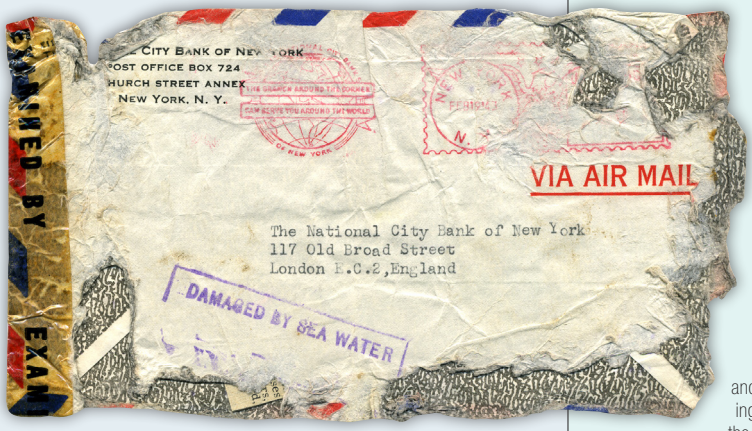
The surviving items of mail from air incidents, accidents or crashes – however we wish to describe them – have been collected by comparatively few collectors in the late 20th century, but one who took much time to research and clarify the stories, as well as the postal markings applied, was Major Adrian Hopkins. Thankfully, not only did he make his research and knowledge available to others, but much of his collection was not dispersed. Some of his work can be seen in the Bath Postal Museum where it is on loan and available to view, the items shown in this article being part of that display.

By the beginning of the decade, the Second World War had only begun a few months earlier, but air travel was already much restricted. However, the carriage of mail was paramount to the continuance of the fight for freedom, and in these trying times there were aviation accidents where mail was damaged, singed, burnt, or even found floating in the sea. Some were able to be rescued and sent on to the intended recipient. It is some of these that later belonged to Major Adrian Hopkins that we illustrate and discuss.

The first illustration (p54) relates to a survival cover from a FAM flight, and these flights had some importance. The US Post Office Department designated any contract air mail route flown by an airline into and from a foreign country, and into and from the US, as a Foreign Air Mail route. These were numbered and are known to postal historians and collectors. FAM-18 was awarded to Pan American Airways with two routes eastbound across the Atlantic Ocean to Europe. The southern route was via Horta in the Azores, Lisbon in Portugal and on to Marseilles, France, and was inaugurated in May 1939. Four years later came this particular incident illustrated by the damaged cover from a bank in New York to another in London in February 1943. Much of the mail was saved, but sadly novelist Ben Robertson and singer and actress Tamara Drasin were not. Actress Jane Froman was seriously injured, and later divorced her husband and married the co-pilot who had saved her life.

Details concerning air salvaged mail confirm that many have come from an accident or incident shortly after the aircraft had taken to the air, whereas a larger number had been subject to damage shortly before or during the landing. The illustrations and details here are varied, but tell the stories of the mail salvaged and the cachets applied before the items took a delayed journey onwards ●



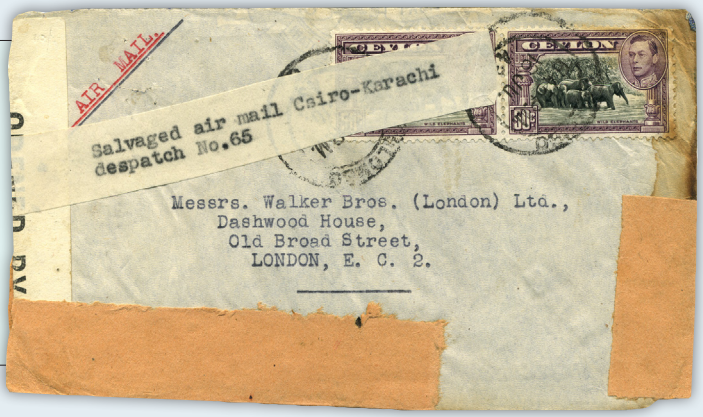


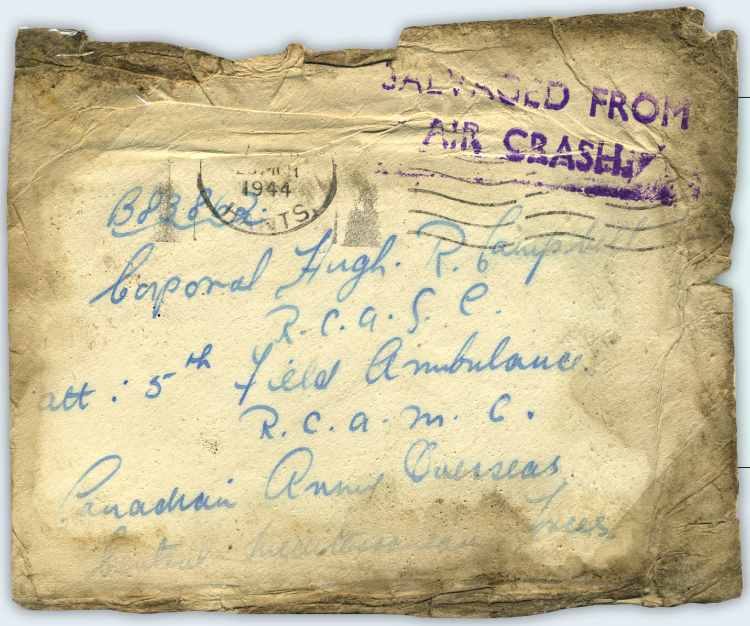
Within a Pan American flight on the Forces Air Mail Route FAM-18 was this cover from the National City Bank of New York to their branch in London. The applied handstamp reads 'DAMAGED BY SEA WATER', which was due to immersion into the Tagus River just before landing at Lisbon in Portugal on 22 February 1943. The flying boat aircraft, Boeing 314 NC18603, was attempting to land in poor weather at 6.47am in the morning, but a wingtip touched the water inadvertently whilst making a descending turn and caused the accident. After drying out and later receipt in London, the cachet was there applied to give explanation for the damage and delay

With two examples of Ceylon King George VI definitive stamps, this damaged registered air mail cover has indistinct handstamps with no visible date, but has the later pencilled date of 19 June 1943. This was war time with security paramount and the location of the accident, date and aircraft involved are not readily known. The pre-printed company envelope was re-addressed before despatch, and was bound for Devizes in Wiltshire. The two-line typewritten label attached does fortunately give the route flown, and states 'Salvaged air mail Cairo-Karachi / despatch No.65'



From Ceylon to London, the datestamp over the two Ceylon 50c black and mauve definitive stamps on the cover can be read as stating '18 JU', although the year – 1943 cannot be seen. Where the accident occurred that caused this damaged mail is not known, but the label attached, that would have been better placed at the lower edge of the envelope, gives some guidance. 'Salvaged air mail Cairo-Karachi / despatch No.65'



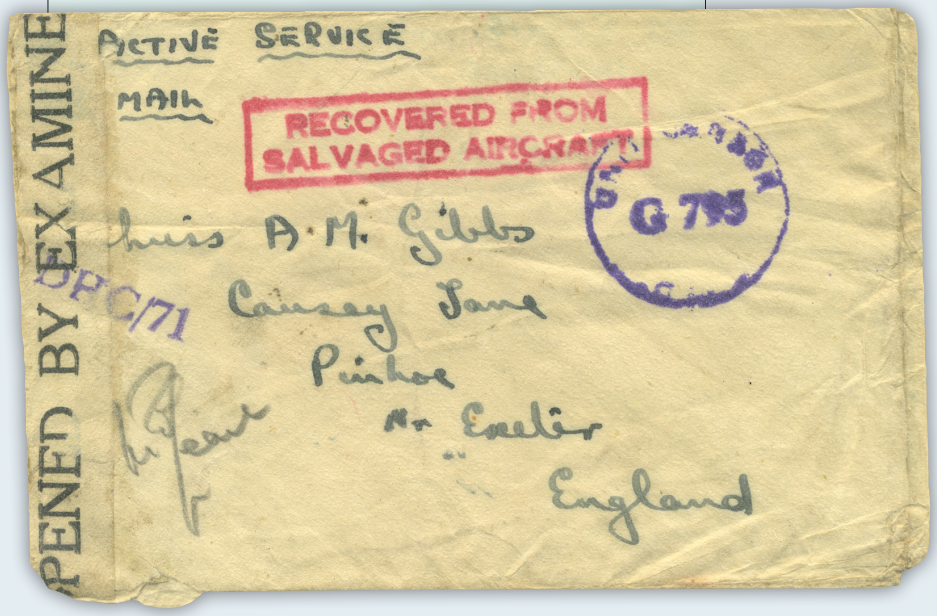


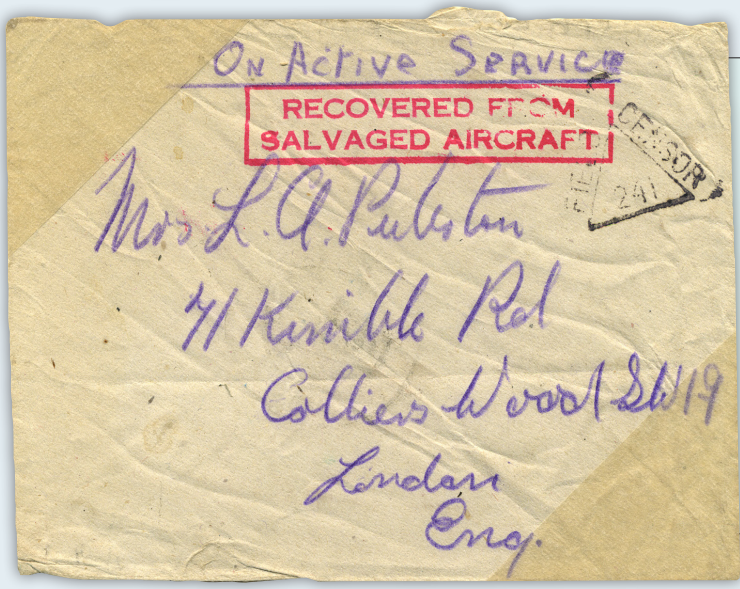
The corporal in the Canadian Army Service did eventually receive this correspondence, but he would have been horrified to see the condition it was in. Posted on 23 March 1944 somewhere in Hampshire – the damage sustained in the crash has lost the city or town on the postmark – the aircraft was almost certainly to have been military. The handstamp 'SALVAGED FROM / AIR CRASH.' gives no clue whatsoever as to where the event occurred



As with the cover above which was from the same aircraft accident and subsequent mail salvage, the amount of damage and dirt is substantial. A member of the Canadian Army overseas was written to from Edinburgh, and the date of despatch can be read – 16 March 1944. The handstamp in purple states 'SALVAGED FROM / AIR CRASH.'

Posted in India in time of war to the village of Pinhoe near Exeter, a member of the military forces wrote to a Miss A Gibbs, probably his 'sweetheart' – we would now say 'girlfriend' – and the commanding officer confirmed he had examined it to ensure nothing had been written to assist the enemy, by adding his signature. An official examiner had also opened the envelope for censorship and re-sealed it with tape. The aircraft involved in the crash, or the date, is unknown, but it occurred near the village of Raitali in the vicinity of Bombay. Later the explanatory cachet 'RECOVERED FROM / SALVAGED AIRCRAFT' was added



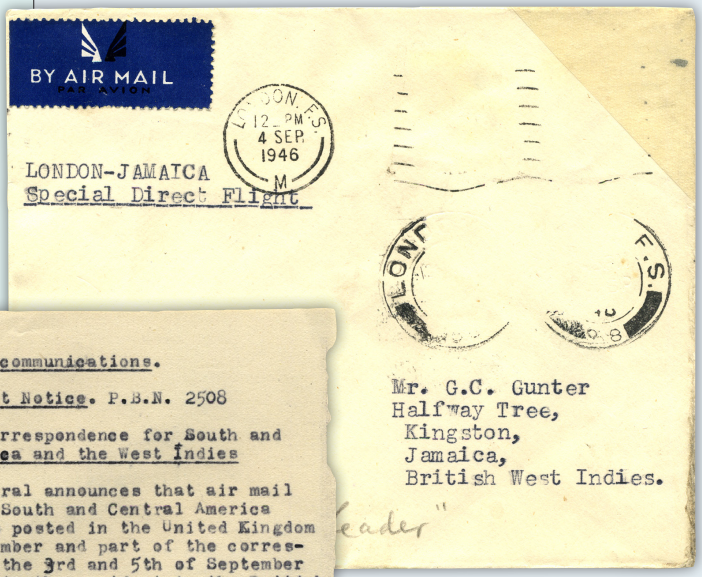


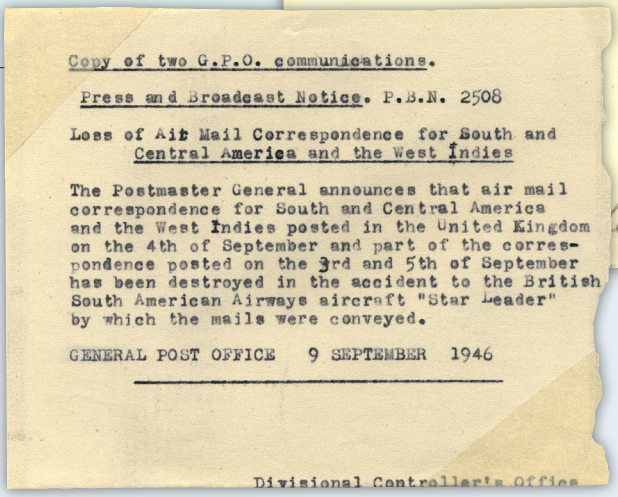
The oblong handstamp in red advising 'RECOVERED FROM / SALVAGED AIRCRAFT' gives no clue as to where and when, but it is believed that the accident was near Bombay and the village of Raitali. Being wartime and military, there are no postage stamps, no dated postmarks showing place of origin or details of transit. The member of the armed forces wrote 'On Active Service' at the top, and no postage costs were therefore necessary. The triangular handstamp confirms that the envelope has been opened by a censor and the contents reviewed and read

Posted by the French Post Office in Paris on 18 September 1946 was this ambulance cover containing the remains of a salvaged postal item. Two weeks earlier on 4 September, Air France Douglas DC-3 F-BAXD lost power in one of the two engines as it took off from Paris/Le Bourget en route to London/Croydon airport with 21 passengers, 5 crew, and bags of mail. The crash was into a factory yard, but fortunately there were a few survivors of passengers and crew. With the ambulance cover is shown a newspaper cutting describing an airliner crash on its way to London. The French printed label in black advises the delay due to an air crash: 'SERVICE POSTAL FRANÇAIS / Correspondance retardée / par accident d'Avion / Prière de ne pas taxer'



Typed with the words 'LONDON-JAMAICA / Special Direct Flight', the cover affixed with three stamps, later washed off in the sea, was posted in London on 4 September 1946. British South American Airways Avro 685 York 1 G-AHEW named 'Star Leader' bound for Buenos Aires, departed Bathurst, Gambia, on 7 September 1946 and crashed into the sea shortly after take-off with no survivors. The typewritten note was forwarded with the delayed mail





Copy of two G.P.O. communications.

Press and Broadcast Notice. P.B.N. 2508

Loss of Air Mail Correspondence for South and Central America and the West Indies

The Postmaster General announces that air mail correspondence for South and Central America and the West Indies posted in the United Kingdom on the 4th of September and part of the correspondence posted on the 3rd and 5th of September has been destroyed in the accident to the British South American Airways aircraft "Star Leader" by which the mails were conveyed.

GENERAL POST OFFICE 9 SEPTEMBER 1946

Divisional Controller's Office

Two covers from those that were on-board BOAC Short S.25/V Sandringham 5 G-AHZB named 'PORTLAND' during its flight from Karachi on 23 August 1947. There was a large volume of mail from a wide range of countries in the Far East, and these two illustrated covers were posted from Hong Kong and China, both on 18 August 1947. The cover from Hong Kong was from the Colonial Secretariat as shown by the two-ring oval handstamp. While attempting to land this flying boat at Bahrain, the captain misjudged the approach and allowed the aircraft to touchdown heavily, and then failed to maintain control during the bounce. The aircraft then struck the water in a nose-down attitude with 10 fatalities from the 26 on board. The Hong Kong cover lost one of its four King George VI definitives in the sea, and later received a one-line boxed purple handstamp explaining that it had been 'DAMAGED BY SEA WATER'





Not every item of air mail that is damaged has entered an aircraft. Unusually, in June 1948 some bags of mail awaiting transit by air from New York/La Guardia airport caught fire. The exact details are unknown, but there are no records to suggest that this fire was as a result of an aircraft accident. However, the mail received a suitable handstamp in purple saying 'DAMAGED IN FIRE / LAGUARDIA FIELD', as shown on this cover addressed to Detroit and posted in England on 21 June 1948



1964 Commemoratives – celebrations of events

In the August issue of the *Bulletin* we reviewed the stamp issue programme for 1963, and how that year was the beginning of a continuing celebration of the British way of life portrayed by commemorative stamps. By now, the end of the Second World War was almost two decades away, and although economic and social recovery had taken time, the mid-sixties were a time of change – less obvious at the time than in retrospect. An element of appreciation of the arts in all its forms, be it music, theatre, sculpture or painting, was now more in the public domain, partly brought about by television and cinema, as well as the younger post-war generation who were in their late teenage years and finding a new vibrant outlook.

The first commemorative issue of the year was not until late April, which was nearly five months since the last issue. However, this was not a single stamp, but a set of five to cover relevant postage rates for inland, surface and airmail letters, and to include a high value stamp. This was a new departure in numbers and this change became more of a standard for the future, although there were variations of pairs and even sets of six, as in September 1965. Entitled 'Shakespeare Festival', there were two images – Her Majesty The Queen on the right, and William Shakespeare on the left. These stamps were to mark the 400th anniversary of perhaps the greatest dramatic genius of the English-speaking peoples, and with this in mind, negotiations and requests for this issue began as early as September 1961. Throughout the next year and beyond, discussions took place and decisions taken until an announcement was made by the Postmaster General in the House of Commons on 22 April 1963 that in one year hence – on 23 April 1964 – stamps would be issued for the Shakespeare Festival. No mention was made of the proposed values.



The Shakespeare Festival issue of 23 April 1964, showing the larger-sized and recess printed 2s 6d (half-crown) value

High value stamps were traditionally line engraved with Bradbury Wilkinson holding the contract at that time, whereas Harrison and Sons Ltd had the contract to print low values using photogravure, by which every commemorative stamp had been produced since 1934. This gave rise to a potential problem of co-ordination, and so it was decided to treat the production of the four low values and one high value stamp as separate projects, with agreement of the title 'Shakespeare Festival'. Many designs from the invited artists were considered, and included images relating to 'The witches and Macbeth', 'Ariel and the Tempest', and 'Richard III and his horse' to quote just three. The selected designs for the lower values were by David Gentleman and were 3d (threepence) with Puck and Bottom from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 6d (sixpence) showing Feste in 'Twelfth ►

Night', 1s 3d (one shilling and threepence) with the renowned balcony scene from 'Romeo and Juliet', and 1s 6d (one shilling and sixpence) depicting King Henry V praying in his tent on the eve of the Battle of Agincourt. These are shown in the illustrations, which also include plate blocks of the two higher photogravure values.

This leaves the 2s 6d (two shillings and sixpence, or half-crown) value to review. Designed by Robin and Christopher Ironside, the design was in two distinct separate cameos, one naturally for our Monarch, and the other illustrating Hamlet contemplating a skull as he declared *'Alas, poor Yorick, I knew*

The four photogravure printed stamps of the Shakespeare Festival issue of 23 April 1964, showing the 3d (threepence), 6d (sixpence), 1s 3d (one shilling and threepence), and 1s 6d (one shilling and six pence) values









Plate block with cylinder numbers 3A. – 2B. – 1C. – 1D. of the 1s 3d value of the Shakespeare Festival issue featuring the famed balcony scene of Romeo and Juliet



Plate block with cylinder numbers 1A. – 1B. – .1C – .1D of the 1s 6d value of the Shakespeare Festival issue showing King Henry V kneeling in prayer on the night before the Battle of Agincourt



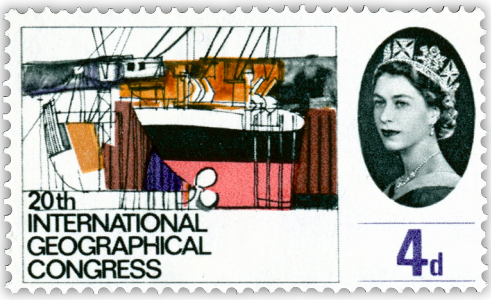
him well'. The printing was in a single colour, unlike the other four stamps of the issue, and is described as deep slate-purple, although different shades are known. These stamps were well received by the public, who could also obtain official GPO first day covers for the first time. This issue included the introduction of a Presentation Pack, and there were also air letters produced showing the Shakespeare image.

Following the success of the 'Shakespeare Festival' issue, it was decided to mark the 20th International Geographical Congress. The first Congress had been held in 1871, and since then one had normally been held at four-yearly intervals. London was chosen in 1964, and the Congress lasted from 20 to 28 July. As usual, many artist designs were sought and considered, and those of Dennis Bailey were selected as first choice by the Stamp Advisory Committee on 2 April 1964. They were submitted to HM The Queen for consideration and were approved on 22 April subject to minor improvements to the proposed lettering and colour. These were submitted to the printers on 4 May with issue on 1 July – a timescale that left little room for error, but all went well. The four stamp values and depictions were 2½d (twopence halfpenny), Urban Development – flats near Richmond Park in London, 4d (fourpence), Industrial Activity – shipbuilding yards in Belfast, 8d (eightpence), Forestry – Beddgelert Forest Park in Snowdonia, and 1/6 (one shilling and sixpence), Technological Development – the nuclear reactor at Dounreay. These were all multicoloured, the 4d being orange-brown, red-brown, rose, black and violet. If a colour was missed in printing and security checking, it's no wonder that perhaps some may have escaped for use. A used example of this fourpenny stamp is known with the red-brown omitted. Perhaps you may wish to look at your copies… ►



The 20th International Geographical Congress issue of four stamps showing varying views of apartment flats, shipbuilding yards, a nuclear reactor and a forest park









In the following month the third issue of 1964 was made. Many consider that these four stamps are some of the most colourful and charming of the decade, celebrating as they do the Tenth International Botanical Congress. Held every five years, each alternate one took place in Europe. The King of Sweden was the Honorary President of the 1964 Congress, which was in Edinburgh. The approved designers are well known by name to philatelists, Michael and Sylvia Goaman. The Stamp Advisory Committee had given strong recommendations that the set by David Gentleman and Rosalind Dease should be selected, but on 15 May 1964, HM The Queen chose and



The well-designed and attractive issue for the Tenth International Botanical Congress held in Edinburgh. The plants, some better known than others, are spring gentian, dog-rose, honeysuckle and a fringed water lily



An attractive First Day Cover for the Tenth International Botanical Congress issue of 5 August 1964 – this one with two handstamps applied at Fareham in Hampshire

approved their second choice recommendation, by the Goamans. Printed by Harrison and Sons Ltd, the four values were different from the preceding two commemorative issues, being 3d, 6d, 9d and 1/3. Again multicoloured, they portrayed Spring Gentian (3d), Dog-Rose (6d), Honeysuckle (9d) and Fringed Water Lily (1/3). Official First Day Covers and Presentation Packs were again available, the packs having the official thistle emblem of the Botanical Congress and being printed at the end of June. Some sample First Day Covers were distributed by the Post Office with the notice announcing the service. These can be identified where a 'CANCELLED' handstamp was applied in black over two values. What errors do we have to look out for? The 1s 3d stamp exists with the yellow partly omitted due to a paper fold, but more interestingly, all four values were accidently released before the official date of issue of 5 August at several post offices and by the Philatelic Bureau, the earliest known date being 27 July.

It is to the event that the fourth issue of the year refers that the British public would have had more knowledge – the opening by HM The Queen of the Forth Road Bridge. Standing alongside the Victorian rail bridge, this new bridge was at the time the largest suspension bridge in Europe and the fourth largest in the world. As ever, a number of artists were invited to submit relevant designs for consideration, including Michael Goaman, Gordon Huntly, William Kempster, Anthony New, and Andrew Restall. It was the designs by the last named that achieved success, with the issue of the 3d (threepence) in black, blue and reddish violet showing the Forth Road Bridge, and the 6d (sixpence) showing both the road and railway bridges. The 6d stamp has been found with the light blue omitted. The Presentation Pack had now become a feature of each issue, and this one for the 'Bridge' is well worth seeking out. The general public of course, not just stamp collectors and philatelists, recall the Forth Road Bridge as an example of something that is never finished – due to its continual maintenance of re-painting that takes so long that it has to start again at one end when the other end has been reached ●





Issued on 4 September 1964 for the Royal opening of the new Forth Road Bridge by HM The Queen are these two stamps at 3d (threepence) and 6d (sixpence)

New Issues and Withdrawals

Information correct at the time of going to press

1 October	**Issue** Brilliant Bugs: Stamps (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.45, 2 x £1.70 – 3 x vertical se-tenant pairs). Presentation Pack. First Day Cover. Stamp Souvenir. First Day Envelope. Postcards (6 in set). Framed Stamps.
5 October	**Withdrawal** Commemorative Sheets: The Post Office Rifles. Animals of the First World War 1914-1918. ANZAC. Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal 30th Anniversary. Canada – Celebrating 150 years.
9 October	**Withdrawal** Queen: Stamp Souvenir. Stamp Sheet Souvenir.
30 October	**Withdrawal** Palace of Westminster: Stamp Souvenir. Stamp Sheet Souvenir.
3 November	**Issue** Christmas 2020: Stamps (1 x 2nd Class, 1 x 2nd Class Large, 1 x 1st Class, 1 x 1st Class Large, 1 x £1.45, 1 x £1.70, 1 x £2.50, 1 x £2.55). Presentation Pack. Miniature Sheet. First Day Cover. First Day Cover Miniature Sheet. First Day Envelope. Stamp Souvenir. Stamp Sheet Souvenir. Postcards (9 in set). Stamp Book (12 x 2nd Class). Stamp Book (12 x 1st Class). Collector's Sheet. Full Stamp Sheet (50 x 2nd Class). Full Stamp Sheet (50 x 1st Class). Half Stamp Sheets (25 x 2nd Class). Half Stamp Sheets (25 x 1st Class).
	Issue James Bond – *No Time to Die*: Collector's Sheet. Framed Collector's Sheet. Souvenir Folder.
	Withdrawal Christmas 2019: Stamps. Presentation Pack. Miniature Sheet. Collector's Sheet. Postcards.
13 November	**Issue** Star Trek: Stamps (12 x 1st Class – 2 x horizontal se-tenant strips of 6). Miniature Sheet (6 x 1st Class). Presentation Pack (12 x 1st Class plus Miniature Sheet). First Day Cover. First Day Cover Miniature Sheet. First Day Envelope. Stamp Souvenir. Stamp Sheet Souvenir. Postcards (19 in set). First Day Cover Prestige Stamp Pane. Prestige Stamp Book (Pane 1: 6 x 1st Class, Pane 2: 6 x 1st Class, Pane 3: Miniature Sheet, Pane 4: Machin Definitives, 2 x 2p, 3 x 50p, 3 x 2nd Class). Limited Edition Prestige Stamp Book. Stamp Book (4 x 1st Class Machin Definitives, 2 x 1st Class Special Stamps). Full Stamp Sheets (60 x 1st Class). Half Stamp Sheets (30 x 1st Class). Press Sheet. Captain's Collector's Sheet. Stamp Sets. Stamp Sheet Set. Framed Stamps. Framed Stamp Sheet. Framed Captain's Collector's Sheet. Limited Edition, Framed Enlarged Prints. Medal Cover (With Stamp Set or Miniature Sheet). Silver Medal Cover (With Stamp Set or Miniature Sheet). The Ultimate Souvenir.
18 November	**Withdrawal** Sherlock: Stamp Souvenir. Stamp Sheet Souvenir.
21 November	**Issue** James Bond – *GoldenEye* 25th Anniversary: Framed Stamps (signed). Souvenir. Souvenir (signed). *All Limited Edition*

The Autumn 2020 Stocklist – Royal Mail's catalogue for all current stamps and collectibles is now available for download at royalmail.com/sending/stamps

You can order any of the Royal Mail stamp products listed above, by visiting **www.royalmail.com/shop** or from Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles PO Box 1373, Sunderland SR5 9PG, UK. (Overseas subscribers will need to use a stamp.) Or use the Royal Mail telephone order service on 03457 641 641 (08.30 – 17.00 Monday to Friday). For overseas customers: +44 3457 641 641. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15.

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tim.lees2@royalmail.com

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