

British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 24

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The Story of
P&O
1837-1987

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Editorial

DOUGLAS N MUIR

Stamp World London 90

'Stamp World London 90' is the next international stamp exhibition to be held in London. It takes place from 3 to 13 May 1990 at Alexandra Palace, at present under reconstruction, which will be London's newest exhibition centre.

It is anticipated that about 3,500 frames will be available for competitive exhibits and 250 stands for dealers and postal administrations. The organisation of 'Stamp World London 90' will be carried out by a company called 'Stamp World Exhibitions' with the support of the British Philatelic Trust and the British Post Office.

Following extensive damage by fire in 1980 Alexandra Palace is at present being rebuilt. For the exhibition the Great Hall, West Hall and New Hall will be used (about half of the complex) together with various rooms as required. When complete the vast Alexandra Palace complex will have bars and restaurants to suit all tastes and will incorporate a hotel and various leisure activity areas. The design and layout will take the best of Victorian architecture and combine it with all modern facilities and equipment.

Concern has been expressed about access from central London, but in fact it can easily be reached by train (10 minutes from King's Cross) or Underground and facilities will be upgraded and publicised by the time of the first exhibition to take place in the new complex, which will be in 1988. There are also extensive car parking areas which are free.

Patronage of 'Stamp World London 90' was granted by FIP (the international federation) at its Congress held in Stockholm in September 1986 and the prospectus will be available during the early part of 1988.

P&O £5 Prestige Stamp Book

3 March 1987

A new prestige stamp book to mark the 150th anniversary of the first mail contract with P&O (The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company) is to be issued by The Post Office in conjunction with P&O on 3 March 1987.

Designed by Aitken Blakeley Designers with text by Stephen Rabson (P&O Group Librarian) the book tells the story of P&O from its inception in the early 1800s to the present day and contains a full £5 value of definitives. A first day cover service will be provided for the mixed value pane which contains a 26p stamp with two phosphor bars, the first time that this value has appeared in this form.

P&O, most famous as a shipping line, is today a diversified group of some 200 companies operating in over 40 countries throughout the world. It originated in a partnership in 1822 between Brodie McGhie Willcox and Arthur Anderson who built up a shipping business in London linking Britain and the Iberian Peninsula. In 1835, they joined with Captain Richard Bourne of Dublin to run regularly between London and Iberia under the name 'Peninsular Steam Navigation Company' and in



Peninsular Steam Navigation Company.

TAGUS, of 600 Tons and 300 Horse Power.
ROYAL TAC, of 650 Tons and 364 Horse Power.
BRAGANZA, of 650 Tons and 364 Horse Power.
IBERIA, of 650 Tons and 364 Horse Power.
LIVERPOOL, of 500 Tons and 160 Horse Power.

BRANCH VESSELS.

PENINSULA, plying between Cadix & Seville.
GUADALQUIVER, to ply between San Lucar & Seville.
ESTRELLA, and SOL, plying between Cadix, San Mary's, & Port Royal.

The Royal Tar

Commander.

Will start from off Blackwall, on *Sunday* the *11th* inst. 1837
at 10 o'clock, and from Falmouth, 36. Monday, 30. 1837
WITH HER MAJESTY'S MAILS,
In charge of *Admiralty Agent*.

**For VIGO, LISBON, CADIZ,
And Gibraltar,**

CALLING OFF OPORTO, weather permitting, and the Ocean Mail, not having been
returning by the same Route.

The Branch of Falmouth will call at Lisbon, to pay Legation's children in the Colonies, and which
apply also for the use of the Office.

RATES OF FARE.

From	To	First Class	Second Class	Third Class
From or to London		£12 10 0	£11 10 0	£10 10 0
From or to Falmouth		£15 10 0	£14 10 0	£13 10 0
From or to Gibraltar		20 0 0	18 0 0	16 0 0
From or to Falmouth		10 0 0	9 0 0	8 0 0
From or to London		£12 10 0	£11 10 0	£10 10 0
From or to Falmouth		£15 10 0	£14 10 0	£13 10 0
From or to Gibraltar		20 0 0	18 0 0	16 0 0
From or to Falmouth		10 0 0	9 0 0	8 0 0
From or to London		£12 10 0	£11 10 0	£10 10 0
From or to Falmouth		£15 10 0	£14 10 0	£13 10 0
From or to Gibraltar		20 0 0	18 0 0	16 0 0
From or to Falmouth		10 0 0	9 0 0	8 0 0

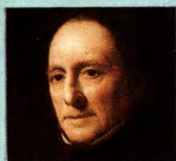
Intermediate Distances. (Passengers in India.)

From	To	First Class	Second Class	Third Class
From or to London		£12 10 0	£11 10 0	£10 10 0
From or to Falmouth		£15 10 0	£14 10 0	£13 10 0
From or to Gibraltar		20 0 0	18 0 0	16 0 0
From or to Falmouth		10 0 0	9 0 0	8 0 0
From or to London		£12 10 0	£11 10 0	£10 10 0
From or to Falmouth		£15 10 0	£14 10 0	£13 10 0
From or to Gibraltar		20 0 0	18 0 0	16 0 0
From or to Falmouth		10 0 0	9 0 0	8 0 0

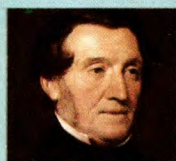
Children of Passengers under Three Years of Age to go free; under Ten Years of Age, to pay as
Second Class Passengers, and above Ten, as Cabin Passengers.

Passengers not proceeding after taking their Passage, to forfeit Half the Passage Money.

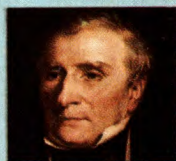
Peninsular Steam handbill 1839



Willcox



Anderson



Bourne

August 1837 signed the first commercial contract for carrying mails by sea between Falmouth, Vigo, Oporto, Lisbon, Cadiz and Gibraltar. When the contract was gained in 1840 for a monthly run to Alexandria their company became The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company and was incorporated by a Royal Charter. The great imperial mail routes to India, the Far East and Australia were established in less than 15 years. The stamp book traces these developments with many full colour illustrations and brings the story up to date with the expansion of the P&O Group. A running footnote illustrates in cameo sketches the development of some of the more important ships from William Fawcett, built in 1828 (also shown on the front cover) to Royal Princess of 1984.

William Fawcett 1828



Hindustan 1842



Mooltan 1861



Nepaul 1876



Himalaya 1892



Technical Details

The book will contain 12 full colour pages and four panes of definitive stamps arranged as follows:

Pane 1 — 9 x 18p (ACP)

Pane 2 — 9 x 13p (one central phosphor band)

Pane 3 — 5 x 18p, 2 x 13p, 1 x 26p and 1 x 1p (phosphor arrangement illustrated)

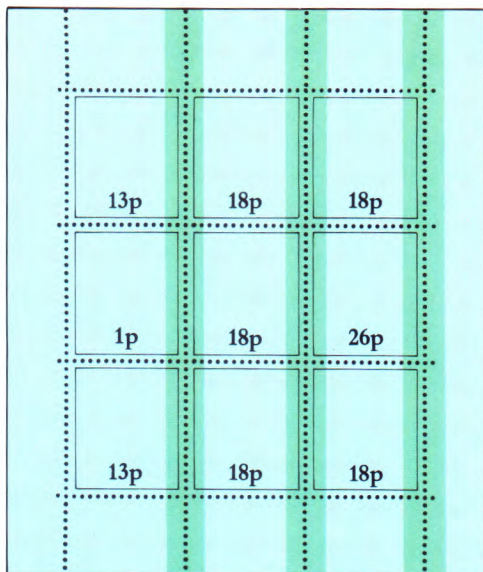
Pane 4 — 6 x 13p (one central phosphor band)

Each pane will be bordered by a selvedge of a half stamp width. The stamps are printed by Harrison & Sons Ltd in photogravure and there will be a first day cover service for the mixed value pane. Offset litho was used to print the front cover and the intervening pages of text and illustrations. The phosphor used in the phosphor bands will be the new ink.

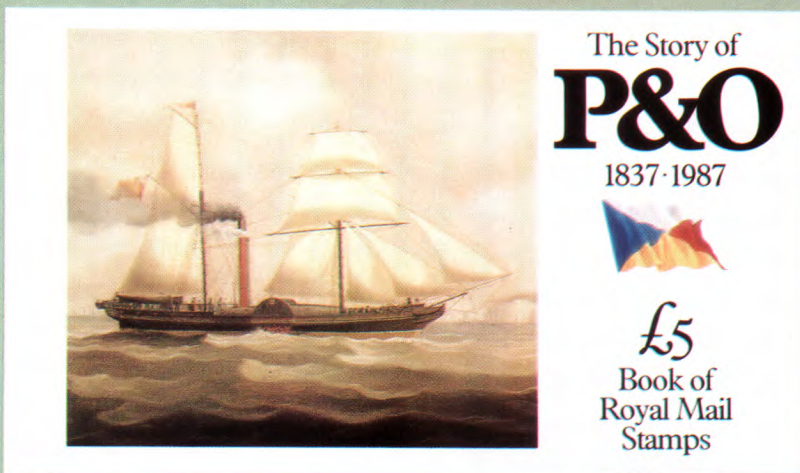
First Day Cover

The first day cover was designed by Aitken Blakeley Designers and features the *William Fawcett* as shown on the front of the stamp book. It costs 16p and the usual first day of issue facilities will be provided on 3 March at offices with philatelic posting boxes.

The British Philatelic Bureau will provide its usual first day cover service and there will be two



Phosphor band arrangement



Stamp book cover

Morea 1908



Viceroy of India 1929





The Story of P&O

1837-1987

£5

Book of
Royal Mail
Stamps

Royal Mail
First Day Cover

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



First day cover



Great Liverpool

special pictorial handstamps, one for the Bureau with the wording 'P&O/1837/1987', and the other for Falmouth featuring the *William Fawcett*. The official Royal Mail cover, addressed to the destination required bearing the mixed value pane cancelled with the pictorial postmark required will be serviced by the Bureau. Charges will be £1.95 (inland) and £1.70 (overseas). Application forms, available from the Bureau and at Head Post Offices, should be returned no later than 3 March.

Customers requiring only the special pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped addressed envelope under an outer cover endorsed 'Special First Day of Issue Handstamp' to:

'British Philatelic Bureau', 20 Brandon Street,
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

'Falmouth' Special Postmark Duty,
District Office, Circuit
House, St Clements St.,
Truro, CORNWALL TR1 1AB.

Special Canberra Covers with Cachet

A number of first day covers bearing the mixed pane of stamps from this book are to be carried on board the *Canberra* from Pattaya (Bangkok) to Southampton, the latter part of her 1987 world cruise. These personally addressed covers will carry a first day postmark and a special cachet testifying that the cover was carried on the *Canberra*. The reverse side of the envelope will have a map of the voyage the cover has taken.



Royal Princess

These covers will be available from the Bureau only at £3 each and orders should be received at the Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT by Friday, 20 February. The covers will not arrive in the United Kingdom till 7 April when *Canberra* docks at Southampton.

Himalaya 1949



*Royal Princess
1984*



January Stamp Books

Details of the new issue of stamp books on 27 January were given last month (December *Bulletin* p. 75). Illustrated are two of the new covers.

The **£1 booklet** (containing 5 x 18p, 1 x 13p stamps) continues the Musical Instruments theme and shows the Bass Clarinet. The design is by Martin Newton with an illustration by Stanley Paine.

The **50p Roman Britain** book (containing 2 x 18p, 1 x 13p, 1 x 1p stamps) was designed by Norman Battershill and shows Portchester Castle, Hampshire.

There will be three other books put on sale on 27 January. These are the **50p Pond Life** book (containing 3 x 13p, 2 x 5p and 1 x 1p) which will feature the Great Pond Snail and the Great Ram's Horn Snail on the cover. The design was by Peter Morter.

The two counter books continue the 'Keep in

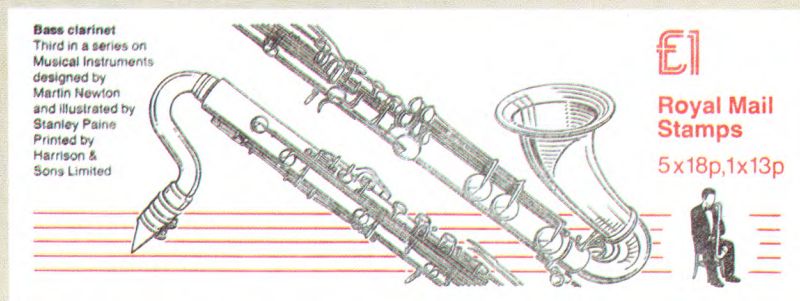
Touch' theme. Containing 10 x 13p stamps (£1.30) or 10 x 18p stamps (£1.80) both carry a special promotion offering customers the opportunity to send off for a special 'Keep in Touch' stationery gift pack.

Stamps are printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd. on the Chambon press with the covers produced on the Libra bookmaking machine. Cylinder numbers will appear on every sixth counter book and on every eighth vending machine book. The £1.30 and £1.80 counter books will appear in both left and right hand formats.

All five books will be available initially from philatelic sales counters or by post from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT. They will become generally available from post offices or vending machines once existing stocks are used up.

Phosphor band layouts of the £1 Musical Instruments and 50p Roman Britain books (available only from the new electronic stamp vending machines in the Brighton area) were illustrated in the December *Bulletin*.

All phosphor bands in the books are printed for the first time with the new phosphor ink which is also being introduced on the 13p National definitive.



Alfred Lammer – Flower Photographer



Alfred Lammer was born in Austria in 1909 and completed his education at Munich University. He came to Britain in 1934 and in 1938 studied at the Reimann School of Photography in London. Lammer spent the war years in the Royal Air Force, was awarded the DFC and bar and was twice mentioned in dispatches. He became a British citizen in 1941.

After the war Lammer worked for Studio Briggs as a photographic assistant in order to gain practical experience in the discipline he now intended to make his life's work. Eventually he set up as a freelance photographer concentrating mainly on portraits of children, but also undertaking advertising and architectural work.

His career as a photography teacher started in 1948 when he was asked by Ifor Thomas to work at the Guildford School of Art. From 1956 he was official photographer for the Council of Industrial Design (now the Design Council) but returned to teaching in 1964, first as head of Photography at Guildford School of Art, then as head of Guildford Arts Centre. Since 1976 he has taught on a part-time basis at the Royal College of Art in London.

Lammer had always been interested in the shapes and colours of plants and the interplay of light among their leaves and flowers, but it was not until the introduction of the single lens reflex camera that he was able to start achieving the photographic effects that he sought. These enabled him to frame and focus plant portraits with a degree of precision that had not previously been possible. His pictures are normally taken on 35mm Kodachrome 64 film and he develops and prints them himself. His work has been exhibited at the Royal College of Art, Imperial College and the South London Botanical Institute.

With his highly developed sense of form, line and colour, Lammer is extremely self-critical and has only chosen to preserve 160 of his plant portraits. The subtlety of the colour transitions, the way he uses both reflected and transmitted light (stained glass, his other great photographic love, is dependent for its effect on transmitted light) and the dynamism of his pictures all speak for themselves.

Reprinted from the presentation pack to be issued on 20 January.



Official British Inland Airmails

Part 1

JOHN C W FIELD

From 1980, The Post Office has been utilising air services based on Speke Airport (Liverpool) to speed up cross country mail deliveries within Great Britain. Some collectors might overlook this — simply because today we tend to look on things with a world-wide eye. We are accustomed to long-distance routes; to the knowledge that our letters to Europe will be carried by whatever means that will provide the fastest delivery (and that does not necessarily mean airmail as anyone who has travelled on cross-Channel ferries will have noted); to the almost commuter-like trans-Atlantic service that Concorde can provide (and carry airmail in the form of international Datapost), and so on.

Some collectors, however, may compare this with the inter-war years when not only were European countries blazing airmail trails to their colonies or commercially-viable — not to mention politically-viable — destinations, but also experimenting with, or developing, air mail services within their own countries.

Logically enough, air mail services within one's own country are known as *inlands* to the air post historian, and certainly during the 1930s 'British Inlands' was a with-it subject to collect and to study.

The most comprehensive book on British Inlands was published in 1940: *The Air Mails of the British Isles*, by H Stanley Redgrove. Mr Redgrove's study concentrated upon the period from 1933 to 1939, and it is quite fascinating to read his story of air mail services and their associated stamps (both semi-official and unofficial), vignettes and stationery, postmarks and cachets.



Fig. 1. This award was made by the Birmingham Aero Club to a Mr G Jones for the 'Highest Flight/Aug 2nd 1910'. The Club held its meetings at Castle Bromwich Airfield and was for model aircraft flying only.

Mr Redgrove began his first Chapter by commenting upon the monopoly that the Postmaster-General (as he was) had in the carriage of mails. Just as today, in 1933 a special mail-carrying concession was made to railway companies. In order to utilise the comparatively new form of transport the Great Western Railway initiated a passenger-





Fig. 3. The unofficial flight: cover from Cardiff to Plymouth, with the 3d. Prepaid Newspaper Parcel stamp: 12 April, 1933.

carrying aeroplane service between Cardiff Airport (for Cardiff and Newport) and Roborough Aerodrome (Plymouth), via Haldon Aerodrome (near Exeter, and from which there was a motor-bus connection to and from Teignmouth and Torquay). If you glance at a map you will see that this represented a great saving in distance, because in those days a railway train would have had to go up to Gloucester before turning south for the seaside resorts.

The pilot and machine were supplied by Imperial Airways: Capt Gordon P Olley and G-AAGW, a Westland Wessex tri-plane.

So what has this to do with airmail collecting? Quite simply, someone — 'a dealer, of course' can I hear some readers saying? — thought it would be a good idea to get some flown covers carried on the first flight of this service. The proposition seems to have put GWR into some consternation, because although it was allowed to carry *railway* letters the company was unsure as to its status if it accepted *airmail* items. An arrangement came to the rescue, whereby the dealer (Mr A Phillips, who actually lived in Newport) travelled as a passenger and carried the mail with him. Such covers were to be charged at the regular railway letter fee of 3d. for an

Fig. 4. The return flight, Plymouth to Cardiff, showing the oval Parcels Department cachet of GWR Plymouth North Road.

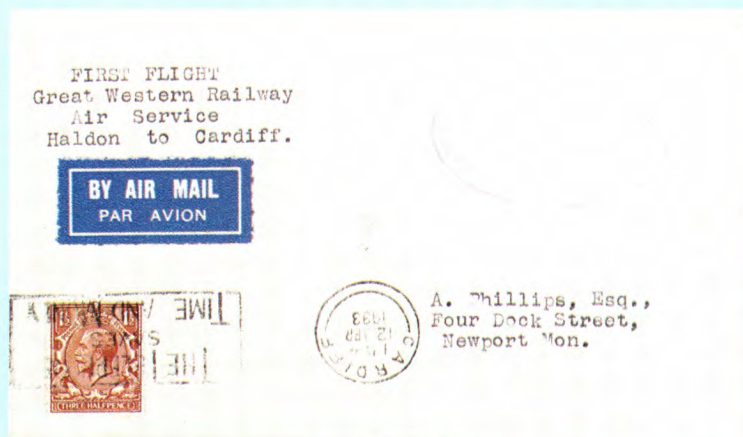




Fig. 5. Extension to Birmingham: 22 May, 1933. Showing the semi-official 3d. Triplane airmail stamp.

item not exceeding 2oz on weight.

The receipt for this fee took the form — at Newport and Cardiff — of the normal GWR black-and-green newspaper parcel label. Unfortunately this label was not available at Plymouth, so the Company's oval parcels department cachet was applied. Perhaps, on second thoughts, this should not be considered to be unfortunate: the opposite, surely, because this marking provided variety to the covers.

So, on 12 April, 1933, came the second — albeit unofficial — regular internal airmail service within Great Britain.

The first? Well, I consider the 1911 Coronation Aerial Post to be the first regular service, and that was sanctioned by the Post Office.

Of course, the question was raised as to whether a railway company that also operated an air line could accept (under its railway letter concession) mail to be carried by its air service. In view of what would appear to be a rather complex legal problem it always strikes me as being strange that the resulting air stamp (because the Postmaster-General eventually agreed that not only could GWR carry mail officially on its air service, but also they could issue an air fee stamp) was issued for use on the service of 15 May, 1933: only a matter of five weeks after the unofficial mail service.

Perhaps these things could be arranged more quickly in those days, or perhaps the negotiations had actually commenced before the unofficial April mail flight.

However, the principal thing to record for the air post historian is that the 3d. semi-official airmail

stamp was the first to be issued within Great Britain. At the time that Mr Redgrove wrote his book it was also the only such item, but since the war we have had, of course, the Airway Letter Service stamps issued by British European Airways and continued by British Airways.

The designer of the GWR stamp was Mr G Sawyer, and it was printed in sheets of 20 by Messrs Waterlow and Sons, Ltd., of London.

Thus, the GWR airmail service became official with its flight from Cardiff to Plymouth on 15 May, 1933. The pilot on that occasion was Capt F Dismore.

A week later the service was extended to Birmingham on a once-a-day frequency (including Sundays; the original West Country service was twice-a-day). According to the time-table printed in Mr Redgrove's book the daily flight actually began at Birmingham, through to Plymouth via Cardiff and Haldon. As a matter of interest in view of the publication by Alec Henshaw of his autobiography and his testing of Spitfires during the war from the Castle Bromwich works and airfield, it might be worth while pointing out that this was Birmingham's first civil aerodrome until Elmdon was opened in 1939. I well remember driving past the Castle Bromwich site during the early years of the peace and seeing a 'Spit' set up as a monument at the gates to the field. The area is now developed and I have forgotten where the memorial went.

A later GWR development occurred on 17 July, 1933, when the motor-bus service between Haldon, Teignmouth and Torquay was re-routed to include Newton Abbot from which place mail was accepted

and delivered to, as from that date. GWR's last mail flight was on 30 September, 1933. However, that was a day of fog, and only mail from Birmingham to Cardiff was postmarked.

It should, no doubt, be recorded that because mail was accepted by the airline for flight and not put into the normal postal circulation until after flight, the postmarks cancelling the regular stamps are normally those of the place where the machine landed. For example, a letter from Cardiff to Birmingham would receive the GWR Cardiff cachet, but the postal cancellation would be that of Birmingham.

In concluding this section, it might be said that collectors may study not only the routes, but also the semi-official stamps, changes in cachet types, and so on. Although the following year (1934) was of importance because the Post Office awarded two mail-carrying contracts — one of a local nature, the other of a national nature — quite a lot of interesting semi-official if not truly unofficial mail-flying took place in 1933-34.

Commemorative Covers

Flowers. A special first day cover has been produced for the National Association of Flower Arrangement Societies of Great Britain. Cancelled on 20 January with a special handstamp of London SW1 incorporating the NAFAS logo, the cost will be £4 (£7.50 signed). Orders and remittances to A G Bradbury, 2 Fairholme Rd, LEICESTER LE2 6GL. Overseas orders add 50p for airmail.



Royal Navy. Marking the 70th anniversary of the sinking of the submarine U83 by the Q-ship *Famborough* a cover is being produced to be cancelled on 17 February 1987. Cost is £1.10 (£1.55 signed, £2.30 double signed.) SAE 7" x 5" with orders and remittances to Fleet Air Arm Museum (Royal Navy Philatelic Officer), Royal Naval Air Station, Yeovilton, SOMERSET BA22 8HT.

1985 Special Issues Quantities

Of the special issues released in 1985 the following quantities were issued to counters:

Issue	Value	Quantity issued to Counters
Famous Trains (22 January)	17p 22p 29p 31p 34p	37,698,600 7,916,200 7,472,200 7,314,900 7,050,500
Insects (12 March)	17p 22p 29p 31p 34p	39,534,200 7,812,500 9,495,200 7,223,900 6,932,600
Europa — European Music Year (14 May)	17p 22p 31p 34p	36,849,700 7,805,800 7,148,700 6,806,100
Safety at Sea (18 June)	17p 22p 31p 34p	36,372,000 9,078,400 7,057,400 6,757,600
350 Years of Royal Mail (30 July)	17p 22p 31p 34p	36,318,300 7,682,100 7,087,500 6,772,700
stamp books (containing 10 x 17p)		5,057,650
Arthurian Legend (3 September)	17p 22p 31p 34p	37,582,500 7,783,500 7,272,100 6,984,300
British Films (8 October)	17p 22p 29p 31p 34p	36,204,900 7,740,300 7,264,600 7,122,300 6,792,200
Christmas 1985 (19 November)	12p 17p 22p 31p 34p	284,590,600 150,799,500 17,357,500 14,786,000 13,101,200
stamp books (containing 20 x 12p)		3,098,600

Postal History from the Channel Islands

1. Guernsey to India

JOHN SIMPSON

This entire letter (Fig. 1) was sent from Guernsey to India, 25 April, 1795, by Miss Ann de Havilland to her brother, Mr Thomas de Havilland, who was an ensign in the Honorable Company's Corps of Engineers at Trichinopoly, India. It was addressed c/o Messrs Perchar & Brook, London, who were forwarding agents between 1792 and 1795. The agents crossed out their own names and Trichinopoly and added Madura.



Fig. 1

There is an interesting variety of markings on the front including the Guernsey 'downward curve' introduced in 1794 and used until 1801. This type measures 46mm wide (there were two later types) and is often seen. The London Unpaid mark of Ap 27 95 (the B merely distinguishes the particular handstamp) is in black.

The weight is given as 4oz and the charge raised as 7 (pence), the correct rate for a single letter from the Channel Islands to London — 1d for the Guernsey agent, 1d for the ship's captain and 5d for the postage from Weymouth to London which was in the 80 to 150 miles range. The 7 has been crossed out and 'from Europe 5/-' written at the bottom. On arrival at Madras (known then as Fort St George or — to the natives — China-Patam) the oval mark 'Post not Paid' was applied and the letter sent on to

Madura, some 240 miles to the south-west on the Coromandel Coast. The date of arrival is stamped, bottom right, as '13 Sep.'. It would seem that Thomas was not at Madura, but had returned to Trichinopoly, about 60 miles nearer to Madras, as Madura has been crossed through and Trichinopoly again written in. The one mark about which I cannot find any information is the manuscript 'Returned Cash': can anyone help?

The actual letter makes interesting reading and I will quote a little of it.

"The last ship brought us no news from you: we attribute it to your being up the country and not knowing when the ships set sail, but you ought to do like us, write and send your letters by post to some seaport Town or other where they would be in a way of reaching us. However I am giving you advice without knowing perhaps there is no post established where you are."

The story is carried a little further by another letter (Fig. 2) to Thomas from his other sister Mary, also berating him for never writing home. This was sent from Guernsey on 16 June 1809 and bears the third type of the Guernsey downward curve which was in use from 1807-1810 and is the smallest and the



Fig. 2

scarcest of the three types (and always a weak strike). The London agents were then Messrs Brock & Mesurier, who seem to have been in the business from 1798 to 1810. The London mark is the later single circle morning duty one in red of 22 June 1809 and the cost from Guernsey of 11d shows the inflationary effect of the Napoleonic Wars. By then Thomas had become a Captain at Bangalore. This was a strong fortress 60 miles north of Seringapatam, the capital of the State of Mysore: the rate 'from Europe' has increased by 50% to 7/6. The 'Post not Paid' mark was again applied at Madras in January 1810 but, this time there is no 'Returned Cash' mark. I would like to know more about this: it intrigues me.

NPM 'Jubilee' Cards

Illustrated are proofs of two of the three cards to be issued by The National Postal Museum on 6 January. The third card was shown in last month's *Bulletin* (p.91). The set of three cards, marking the so-called 'Jubilee' issue of 1887 will coincide with a major display in the Museum to run for the whole of 1987.

The set of cards will cost 60p (plus 18p handling charge) and will be available from the National Postal Museum, KEB, King Edward St., LONDON EC1A 1LP. A special handstamp will be in use for the duration of the exhibition.



Posting Boxes

No. 84. This photograph of a George V wall box was sent in by P J M Dodd of Seaford. It is a type known as a Ludlow box with a distinctive enamel plate for use at sub post offices. This is situated at Peshurst, Kent.



The Museum Piece

PO Pillar Boxes

This very rare Edward VIII letter and packet aperture, made of cast iron, comes from the front of a main post office. It forms part of the official Post Office pillar box collection which is held in The National Postal Museum.

Phosphor Band Variations

Stamp Books 1984-1986

L F NEWBERRY

A book of stamps provides a customer with a quantity of stamps catering, either singly or in combination, for the initial step of the Inland letter rate. They are sold with a folded cover containing a pane of ten stamps, all second class, all first class or six first class + four second class at post office counters. Depending on the current postage rates they are available, also with a folded cover, containing a pane of four, six or eight stamps from vending machines.

The stamp paper used has either a Fluorescent coating (FCP), or a Phosphor coating (PCP) and is gummed with PVA Dex.

The stamps are gravure printed and perforated on a Chambon press and made into books on a Libra book making machine by Harrison & Sons Ltd at High Wycombe.

The use of a phosphor compound on postage stamps, an essential part of the mechanical sorting of mail is either in the form of printed phosphor bars or as a phosphor coating. For booklet stamps PCP is restricted to panes of first class stamps only whilst for second class and mixed value panes FCP is used in conjunction with printed phosphor bars.

The provision of the correct phosphor band, one for second class and either two or the use of phosphor coated paper for first class, in the single value counter books is simple. For mixed value books often an intricate pattern has to be devised.

Currently the only books with mixed values are the three series of machine vended books 50p DB 9 ex F2,H and J machines, £1 DB 15 ex K machines both series slanted towards First Class usage and 50p DB 14 also ex K machines slanted towards Second Class usage.

For production reasons the panes have to be in a 2 x 2, 2 x 3 or 2 x 4 format and for operational reasons total either 50p or £1. The choice of values from the current range has to receive very careful consideration. Recently there have been several issues where the contents have totalled 51p, £1.02 and £1.03 and were rounded down.

For the upright printings of the counter books the bands are etched in rings around the cylinder spaced to give single centre band 4mm wide (CB) for the 2nd class panes. For the mixed value panes the bands 4.75mm wide in complete or broken rings are so spaced to be printed over the vertical gutter

between the stamps to give the 2nd class stamps one side band left (SBL) or one side band right (SBR). Further in the mixed panes the broken bands are shortened top and bottom so that any normal movement during printing will not produce bleeding on to the 2nd class stamp above or below and give it a possible first class treatment on the sorting machine.

The machine book stamps are sideways printed and as a consequence the phosphor bands have to be etched in lines, complete 'or broken along the cylinder to give SB, 2B or CB.

The phosphor cylinder number in the selvedge is so placed that when the cylinder is lined up with the colour cylinders it will print alongside the colour numbers and appear on the same pane in the issued books (synchronised). The cylinder numbers appear in every sixth consecutive counter book and in every eighth consecutive machine vended book.

The phosphor cylinder in relation to the colour cylinders can be rotated the full 360° so great care has to be taken in lining up before locking. Any rotary movement out of synchronisation would not affect the centre or side bands of the upright printings. However the phosphor cylinder number would shift in relation to the colour numbers. This movement is usually confined to a few mms. either side of the colour numbers on the cylinder pane though occasionally the phosphor number is in another book. As the stamps themselves are unaffected this type of phosphor shift is outside the scope of this article.

Invariably the 150 screen is used because the thicker cell walls allow for a deeper etch. The resultant coarse screen is operationally better than the finer 250 screen. 250 screen is used for the colours.

Certain issues were made on back printed paper surplus from the 1985 Christmas stamp book issue. The coated and gummed paper was printed reel to reel on an Albert machine in a web width of 890mm from a cylinder 1035 set and 686mm in circumference. The cylinder was laid down as 23 rows of 23 stars and 23 rows of 22 stars making a total of 1035 set. The stars were of a 5 pointed two line design. The paper was then slit to two webs of 438mm wide for subsequent use on Jumelle. Before being used for the Chambon printings the surplus was again slit to

Chambon working width.

Counter 'Discount' issues were back printed on the Chambon at the same time as the stamp print run in the following sequence:— back print, colours, phosphor bars (for second class only), perforation. To enable both sides of the web to be printed without turning the web takes a looping path known as perfecta. The back printing cylinder was laid down as 12 rows of 10 motifs making the total of 120 set. Two designs have been used, a two line D and two line five pointed star.

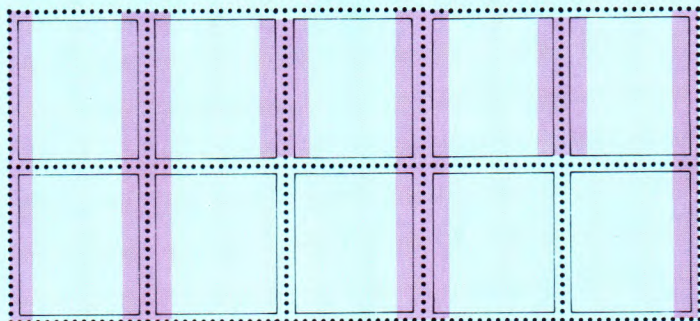
The ink used for the back printing was Supra

Green a non toxic ink used also to tint the PVA Dex gum.

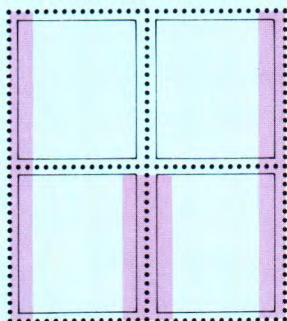
Whilst the back printing does not affect the phosphor bars format in combination this does provide further variations.

Missing phosphor bars usually occur at the beginning of a run during the lining up period and during the run partial and missing phosphor from 'dry print'. Those issued are probably salvaged from waste books and occur regularly in course of production and treated as waste.

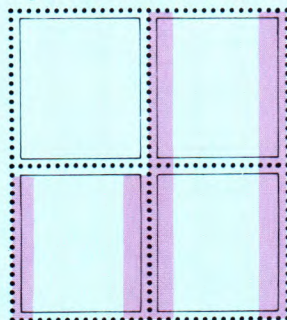
Mixed Value Book Layouts



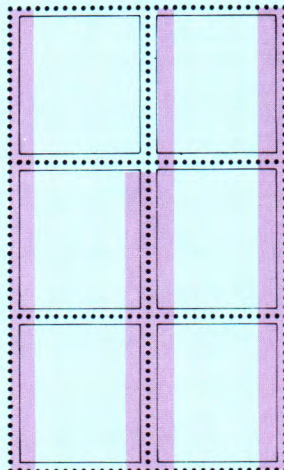
£1.54 and £1.50 books



50p books (Pond Life K)



50p discount books (with label)



£1 books (French Horn)

Stamp Book Contents

3 September 1984 — 3 November 1985

Initial Inland Letter Rate: 13p (second class), 17p (first class).

machine-vended

50p Orchids series (four designs) 3 x 1p (CB), 2 x 4p (CB), 3 x 13p (CB)

counter books

£1.30 Trams series (four designs) 10 x 13p (CB)
£1.70 Social Letter Writing (three designs) 10 x 17p (PCP)
£1.55* Social Letter Writing (one design) 10 x 17p (PCP backprinted D)
£1.54 Postal History series (four designs) 6 x 17p (figs 5,6,7), 4 x 13p (figs 2,3)
error — phosphor bars reversed 6 x 17p (figs 2,3,5), 4 x 13p (figs 6,7)

4 November 1985 — 19 October 1986

Initial Inland Letter Rate: 12p (second class), 17p (first class).

machine-vended

50p* Pillar box (one design) 3 x 17p (figs 5,8 backprinted stars) + label
Pond Life (two designs) also without stars (12 August 1986)
250 screen phosphor on all.

machine-vended (new K machine)

50p Roman Britain (one design) 2 x 1p (CB), 4 x 12p (CB)
£1 Musical Instruments (one design) 6 x 17p (PCP)

counter books

£1.20 Pillar Box Write Now (one design) 10 x 12p (CB)
National Gallery (one design)
Graphology (one design)
£1.70 Pillar Box Write Now (one design) 10 x 17p (PCP)
National Gallery (one design)
Graphology (one design)
£1.50 Pillar Box Write Now (one design) 6 x 17p (figs 5,6,7,9,10,11,12)
National Gallery (one design) 4 x 12p (figs 2,3)
Graphology (one design)

20 October 1986 — date

Initial Inland Letter Rate: 13p (second class), 18p (first class).

machine-vended

50p Roman Britain (one design) 1 x 1p (fig 2), 1 x 13p (fig 3), 2 x 18p (figs 9,10)
error phosphor reversed 1 x 1p (fig 3), 1 x 13p (fig 2), 2 x 18p (figs 10,9)

machine-vended (new K machine)

50p Pond Life (one design) 1 x 1p (CB), 2 x 5p (CB), 3 x 13p (CB)
£1 Musical Instruments (one design) 1 x 13p (fig 2), 5 x 18p (figs 5,9,13,14)

counter books

£1.30 Children's books (one design) 10 x 13p (CB)
£1.20* Christmas (one design) 10 x 13p (CB backprinted star)
£1.80 Children's books (one design) 10 x 18p (CB)

*discount book

Source of Single Stamps

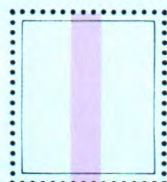


Fig. 1

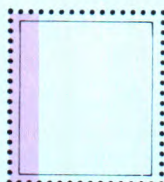


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

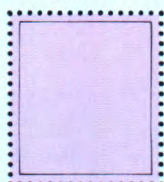


Fig. 4

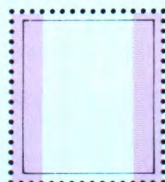


Fig. 5

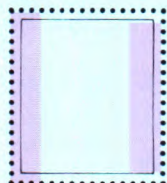


Fig. 6

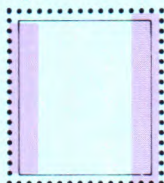


Fig. 7

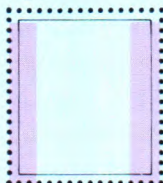


Fig. 8

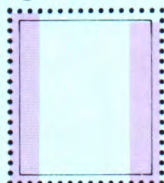


Fig. 9

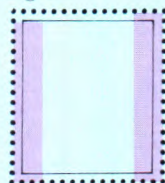


Fig. 10

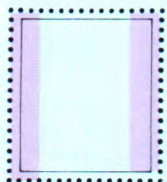


Fig. 11



Fig. 12

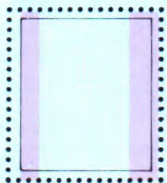


Fig. 13

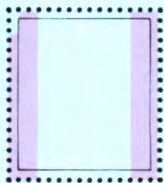


Fig. 14

Fig. 1 one central band

Fig. 2 side band left

Fig. 3 side band right

Fig. 4 PCP

Fig. 5 two side bands

Fig. 6 2 bands; right short top and bottom

Fig. 7 2 bands; left short top and bottom

Fig. 8 2 bands; both short at top

Fig. 9 2 bands; right short at top

Fig. 10 2 bands; left short at top

Fig. 11 2 bands; right short at bottom

Fig. 12 2 bands; left short at bottom

Fig. 13 2 bands; left wide of perfs.

Fig. 14 2 bands; left cut top left

1p	centre band centre band left band right band	(value T1, head B2) (value T3, head B2) (value T3, head B2) (value T3, head B2)	50p books Orchids, Roman Britain (K) 50p book Pond Life (K) 50p book Roman Britain (theatre) 50p book Roman Britain (theatre)
4p	centre band	(value T3, head B2)	50p books Orchids
5p	centre band	(value T2, head C)	50p book Pond Life (K)
12p	centre band left band right band	(value T3, band B2) (value T3, band B2) (value T3, band B2)	£1.20 books £1.50 books £1.50 books
13p	centre band centre + star left band right band 2 bands fig. 6 error 2 bands fig. 7 error	(value T2, head D) (value T2, head D) (value T2, head D) (value T2, head D) (value T2, head D) (value T2, head D)	£1.30 books, 50p Orchids, Pond Life (K) £1.20* Christmas £1.54 books £1.54 books £1.54 books £1.54 books

17p	PCP	(value T2, head D)	£1.70 books, £1 violin
	PCP + D	(value T2, head D)	£1.55* book
	2 bands	(value T2, head D)	£1.50 books, £1.54 books
	2 bands fig. 6	(value T2, head D)	£1.54 books
	2 bands fig. 7	(value T2, head D)	£1.54 books
	left band error	(value T2, head D)	£1.54 books
	right band error	(value T2, head D)	£1.54 books
	2 bands errors figs. 9,10,11,12	(value T2, head D)	£1.50 books
	2 bands 250 screen + star	(value T2, head D)	50p Pillar box
	2 bands 250 screen (no star)	(value T2, head D)	50p Pond Life (2)
	2 bands fig. 8 250 screen + star	(value T2, head D)	50p Pillar box
	2 bands fig. 8 250 screen (no star)	(value T2, head D)	50p Pond Life (2)
18p	PCP	(value T4, head B2)	£1.80 books
	2 bands	(value T5, head B2)	£1 French Horn
	2 bands fig. 9	(value T5, head B2)	50p Roman Britain (theatre)
	2 bands fig. 10	(value T5, head B2)	50p Roman Britain (theatre)
	2 bands fig. 13	(value T5, head B2)	£1 French Horn
	2 bands fig. 14	(value T5, head B2)	£1 French Horn

Book Review

The Connoisseur Catalogue of Machin Stamps, 7th Edition 1986. 224pp. £9.95.

I am confident that the new edition of this well known catalogue will prove to be very popular with specialist and non-specialist alike.

Editing was by James Negus, catalogue editor at Stanley Gibbons 1977-1981, and since then a freelance philatelic editor and writer. He is not an in-depth collector of Machins other than postal stationery, but he has demonstrated a clear grasp of the subject and how it should be presented.

There is plenty of background information for people like me who are as interested in that aspect as we are in the stamps themselves, but what I particularly like is the uncomplicated yet comprehensive way in which stamp and booklet details are displayed. An enormous task it must have been, and Mr Negus gives full recognition for the help and encouragement he received from a number of people, including those Machin luminaries — Andrew Watton, Douglas Myall, Joe Spiteri and Jim Dutton.

Illustrations, in black and white throughout, are extremely clear and used to good effect in distinguishing the different value types to be found in the Machin series, of which there are many.

Substantially increased in size, this new edition includes not only stamps but also presentation packs, Post Office first day covers, postal stationery as you might expect, and major errors. However, other than cylinder and plate numbers no attempt has been made to record constant flaws or sheet markings which in some cases might be as interesting and

informative as phosphor errors.

Price estimates where given are designed for guidance only, and there is no guarantee that B Alan Ltd., the catalogue publishers, have them in stock.

The cut off date for listings was the end of 1985 so you should not expect to find 1986 material included. At £9.95 the catalogue looks very good value, and should be well up the list of things to buy with your Christmas present money.

DON STADDON

New Cylinders and Plates

Recent printings of National and Country definitives have taken place from the following cylinders and plates.

By Harrison's

1p ACP cylinder 14

26p ACP cylinder 6

26p ACP cylinder 2

£1 cylinders 8A3B

£5 cylinders 14A3B

By Questa

2p ACP plates Q15/Q16

4p ACP plates Q5/Q6

5p ACP plates Q17/Q18

20p ACP plates Q3/Q4

22p Scottish ACP plates Q1Q1/Q2Q2

26p Scottish ACP plates Q1/Q2

28p Scottish ACP plates Q1/Q2

26p Wales ACP plates Q1/Q2

28p Wales ACP plates Q1/Q2

26p Northern Ireland plates Q1/Q2

28p Northern Ireland plates Q1/Q2

Rowland Hill Centenary 1979

British Special Stamps No.131

FRANCIS KENNEDY

This was the first set of stamps designed by Eric Stemp, although he had designed stamp booklet covers previously. Stemp is a fashion illustrator whose skill at picturing clothes for *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* was applied to period costume of the 1840s. A frock-coated Rowland Hill, set against the St. Martin's-le-Grand headquarters of the Post Office of the day, was the subject for the 10p stamp. A contemporary bellman of the General Post, in the distinctive red uniform, pictured on his rounds in London collecting letters for inclusion in the night mails to the provinces, appeared on the 11½p stamp.



The separate London Post service provided its letter carriers with blue uniforms, as pictured on the 13p stamp. Finally, two customers of the improved service, a Victorian lady of 1840 and her daughter are featured on the 15p, setting out to post a letter franked with a Penny Black, the first adhesive postage stamp and the novelty of the moment.

Post Office resistance to Rowland Hill's "wild and visionary scheme" (as the then Postmaster-General, Lord Lichfield, called it) for reducing postage on all letters up to ½oz. in weight to 1d, irrespective of distance, resulted in Hill working in the Treasury and conducting operations virtually by remote control. He never became Postmaster General, as is so often stated in error, but he did succeed one of his opponents, Col W L Maberly, as Secretary of the Post Office, serving in that capacity for a decade from 1854 to 1864.

The quantities of the sheet stamps issued were: 10p, 74,720,000; 11½p, 18,210,000; 13p, 17,200,000; 15p, 18,470,000.

The comparatively slow printing process for the miniature sheet on the sheet-fed Rembrandt machine at Harrison's required that it went to press in April 1979 when the appropriate stamps were 9p, 10½p, 11p and 13p. Subsequently, the decision was taken to raise these four basic rates and the stamps became 10p, 11½p, 13p and 15p. As a result, the total printing of 5,000,000 of the miniature sheets (i.e. 20,000,000 stamps) was destroyed and a new printing begun. Hence the delay in issuing the revised miniature sheet with a face value of 49½p but sold over Post Office counters at 59½p, the premium being allocated towards official Post Office support for the London International Stamp Exhibition of 1980, as the marginal inscription implies.

None of the unissued sheets has been known to reach the public although, of course, examples are held in the National Postal Museum. There are some of the issued sheets of the second printing in which one or more of the colours are missing. These miniature sheets were printed 'nine-up' before being perforated and cut into nine singles. Advanced collectors have managed to 'plate' the sheets, that is to allocate singles to their places in the nine positions and thus reconstruct the sheet as originally printed. Quantity issued was 5,230,000.

It was ironic that an increase in postage rates in 1979 should have delayed the release of four stamps issued to mark the centenary of the death in 1879 of Rowland Hill, the man whose postal reforms brought about enormous *reductions* in postage rates when he introduced the Uniform Penny Postage for the whole of Great Britain and Ireland in 1840. The normal sheet printings of each of the four values of the centenary stamps were released on schedule (22 August, 1979) but the miniature sheet containing one stamp of each value was deferred until 24 October.

Philatelic Terms Explained

KENNETH F CHAPMAN

No.8 Key and Duty Plates

In the closing decade of the Victorian era many stamps of the British Empire's colonial territories (but not the Dominions) shared a common stamp design which varied only in the name of the colony concerned and the denominations of the stamps.

De La Rue submitted the idea to the Crown Agents, who were responsible for commissioning all colonial stamps, on the basis that it was an economical way of producing colonial stamps which also had the political advantage of underlining the imperial link between the colonies involved.

The scheme depended on the provision of a 'key-plate' which would print the Queen's head, within a circle around which was a frame carrying the word 'POSTAGE' on either side of the head. A panel was left blank along the top of the design and a hexagonal blank was left at the bottom. The blanks would be filled, at a second printing operation, by the name of the colony and the denomination (face value) of the stamp, these latter to be printed by a 'duty-plate'.

To demonstrate the feasibility of the scheme and to show a range of colour variations available, De La Rue prepared essays which carried the inscription 'IMPERIUM' in the name panel. In the event, it was decided to print the key (head) plate in purple for the pence values, the name and denomination being added by the duty plate in different colours: green for the ½d value; red for the 1d; blue for the 2½d (the

three so-called 'UPU colours') and violet for the 6d value. For values from 1s upwards, the key plate printing was in green and the duty plate again varied in colour for each denomination.

Edwardian printings exist with the 'POSTAGE' — 'POSTAGE' inscription and also with 'POSTAGE' and '& REVENUE' and the King's head in a scalloped frame in place of the circular one. All the King George V issues are as the Edwardian second type and both these types make use of coloured papers for some values; viz — 3d, 4d and 5s on yellow paper, 1d and 10s on green paper, 2s and 2s6d on blue paper and £1 on red paper.

Some colonies (including Cyprus and Gibraltar) adopted the key and duty plate system but used their own designs for the key plate.

Other colonial powers who made use of similar arrangements were France ('Commerce' type), Portugal ('Ceres' type) and Germany ('Hohenzollern yacht' type).

More Scottish Definitives by Questa

On 27 January the 22p, 26p and 28p Scottish definitives will go on sale printed by The House of Questa for the first time. Previously, they were printed by Waddington Security Print Ltd. and the change follows the policy to transfer all security print work from them to The House of Questa, now part of John Waddington PLC.

The stamps will be printed in offset litho on Advanced Coated Paper (ACP) in sheets of 200, perf. 15 x 14. Initially, they will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon St., EDINBURGH EH3 5TT and philatelic counters. They will become generally available from other post offices in Scotland when stocks of the current 22p, 26p and 28p stamps run out. There will be no special first day of issue facilities for these stamps.

More Country Definitives on ACP

On 27 January five more stamp values are to be released on Advanced Coated Paper (ACP). They are: **Northern Ireland** 26p, 28p.

Wales 26p, 28p, 31p.

This follows Post Office policy to produce all definitive stamps on ACP, except second class basic value and values of 50p and above.

The stamps are printed in offset litho by The House of Questa in sheets of 200, perf. 15 x 14. Initially, they will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters but will become generally available from other post offices in the countries concerned as stocks of the current values run out. There will be no special first day of issue facilities for these stamps.



An unappropriated key plate proof attached as a specimen to De La Rue's letter of 10 February 1896, regarding the special key plate for the Leeward Islands. Illustration courtesy National Postal Museum.

New Definitive Presentation Packs

Five new definitive presentation packs are to be issued on 3 March 1987.

These will be:

Pack No. 13 High Value containing £1, £2 and £5 stamps selling for £8.22.

Pack No. 9 Low Value 1p, 2p, 3p, 4p, 5p, 7p, 10p, 12, 13p, 17p, 18p, 20p, 22p, 24p, 26p, 28p, 31p, 34p, 50p and 75p stamps, price £4.24.

Pack No. 10 (Scotland)

Pack No. 11 (Wales)

Pack No. 12 (Northern Ireland)

The Country packs contain 12p, 13p, 17p, 18p, 22p, 26p, 28p, 31p Country definitive stamps, price £1.89 each.

The high value pack, which was first issued in 1977, is to be brought into line with other definitive packs in terms of design and size. The pack will not include the £1.50 'parcel' stamp. This stamp value will be included in a separate 'parcel' pack later in the year. This pack is designed by Martin Newton.

The low value and country packs were last issued in 1984. The stamps included in the new packs will be those values currently available from philatelic outlets and will include the 7p and 12p values which were withdrawn from general sale on 18 October 1986, but which have never appeared in a presentation pack. The packs are designed by Sedley Place Design Ltd.

All of these packs are printed by Moore and

Matthes (Printers) Limited.

The high and low value National definitive stamps were printed by Harrison and Sons Limited in photogravure apart from the 2p, 4p, 5p, 20p and 75p values which were printed by The House of Questa in offset litho who also printed all of the country stamps.

All five packs will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters from 3 March 1987. The present definitive packs will be withdrawn from sale at close of business on 2 March 1987.

Archives Catalogue for Newly Released Files

Post Office Archives have produced another catalogue for sale to researchers. Classified Post 122/No.2, it lists by subject those HQ files that were 'minuted' in 1956 (ie given a permanent file number) and which have been selected for permanent preservation. The contents span the years 1883-1973 although under the '30 year rule' only those files predating 1957 can as yet be made available to the public.

Excellent cross-referenced, the catalogue contains many files of absorbing interest to philatelists and postal historians. There are some 166 A4 pages spiral bound and as before this has been compiled by computer.

Price is £3.50 inclusive of postage and orders should be addressed to Post Office Archives, Freeling House, 23 Glasshill St., LONDON SE1 0BQ.

Gems from the R M Phillips Collection

141. The Early Letterpress Era

Imprimaturs of the 1862 3d value with small white corner letters. Neither were issued to the public — the example on the left is in state one, with shaded spandrels; that on the right is an 'abnormal' from plate 3 with white dots.

These items can be seen in Frame 21 of the open display of the R M Phillips collection at the National Postal Museum during normal hours — 9.30 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Thursday and 9.30 am to 4.00 pm on Fridays.



Letters to the Editor



50 Years of British Mobile Post Offices

Sir,

By now you and your readers will be well aware that this year marks the 50th anniversary of the inauguration of Britain's first Mobile Post Office; both the South Eastern and the Midlands Postal Regions issued picture postcards (SEPR 50 and MPB 18) depicting early MPOs, while the Autumn 1986 edition of Cross Post contains an 8-page feature article which traces the origins of the MPO and gives details of vehicles and datestamps.



You will be well aware of the problems of correcting any error of fact once it has appeared in print, particularly if the statement is apparently authoritative, for example from the Post Office! Regrettably, the caption on MPR 18 contains errors of fact and I am concerned that in years to come collectors will rely on information in that caption and quote it as fact. Thus, I hope that you will find space in your journal to attempt to put the record straight.

From my researches in Post Office Archives and elsewhere, I have established that the British Post Office's fleet of three MPOs was built up over a period of 13 years; they do not all date from the 1930s, as the caption on MPB 18 would have us believe, 'GPO2, one of *three* historic mobile post offices in service from the mid-'30s...'. Details of the three are as follows:

No. 1 (GPO1) was inaugurated by the Postmaster General on 30 September 1936 and attended its first event, the Marden and District Commercial Fruit Show on 7-8 October 1936.

No. 2 (GPO2) was delivered to the Post Office on 5 April 1938.

No. 3 was a product of the postwar era and was a trailer as distinct from the articulated vehicle of GPOs 1 and 2. The growing demands of organisers of agricultural shows, sporting events and other outdoor gathering for postal facilities led the Post Office to provide this third vehicle in 1949.

The caption to MPB 18 goes on to say that GPO2 was 'restored to pristine condition', while one journal enlarged on this theme in its report on the issue of the postcard by talking of MPB 18 showing 'the meticulously restored 1930s mobile post office known as GPO2'. Of course, it is possible that the colour scheme and trim for No. 2 was slightly different from No. 1 (it was completed 18 months later), but from the papers preserved in Post Office Archives the only difference recorded was that No. 2 had two teleprinters! However, the colour photograph of GPO2 (on MPB 18) differs in some details (*italicised*) as compared with the following contemporary description of No. 1:

(The body and tractor) 'are both cellulose finished on the outside with the familiar 'Post Office red'; *the roofs and mudguards are black* and the rear wheels of both units are fitted with black cover plates with 'flying wing' ornaments painted red. *Around the waist of the post office body is a golden-coloured moulding*, and the GPO monogram of the same hue appears on each side as well as on the rear door'.

It is also interesting to compare the colour scheme and trim on SEPR 50 (which shows GPO1) with that on MPB18! I assure you that I am not knocking the efforts of those who undertook the restoration work, only questioning whether they checked up on documentary evidence for the vehicle's original livery.

Aylesbury, Bucks.

CRH PARSONS
Editor, Cross Post



British Fair Play

Sir,

For some time I have been concerned at your use for the word 'British' in the title of your bulletin and of the bureau. This concern has been changed to a feeling of wild panic in discovering today that the air letters on sale in the Post Office bear, not, as granted by the Universal Postal Union, the head of the Sovereign, but an unpriced device beaming the words 'Great Britain'.

We are now, it seems, offering to the world, for this air letter is entirely used for overseas post, our apparent agreement to national dignifications.

Sir, we have lost our Empire, we may no longer be the workshop of the world, but we have a unique privilege in the postal sphere which we seem to be prepared to throw away, without even a fight.

Perhaps I am the only person left who believes that this is the finest nation in the world and that our heads should be held high. If so, then please tell me. Otherwise, I hope that you will use your influence both to reverse this typically self effacing decision over the air letter and to stand on your own feet and remove the word 'British' from your title. The assumption ought to be that everything is British unless the title says that it is not.

Ascot, Berkshire

M MACFARLANE

P.S. Are these air letters sold in Northern Ireland?

We are very proud indeed to use the Queen's head on our stamps and have no intention of abandoning it. However, it has been omitted from the new aerogrammes and replaced by the country of origin in conformity with international regulations. This will no doubt give little satisfaction to Mr MacFarlane but for the benefit of *Bulletin* readers it may be worth going over the reasoning.

There is no formal exemption from the UPU regulation which requires all member administrations to print the name of the country on stamps but we have never conformed to it for historical reasons. In other respects however we feel that as a responsible postal administration we should respect UPU regulations and for this reason have long followed a similar but separate regulation that required 'Great Britain' to appear on all franking meters and on those Post Paid Impressions (PPIs) posted to overseas addresses. When we decided to omit the price indicator from aerogrammes to avoid uprating after tariff changes they fell under the UPU's definition of a PPI rather than a stamp. We have therefore followed regulations in indicating the name of the country in words rather than using the Queen's head.

'Great Britain' is the name by which we are known both amongst the bureaucrats (the UPU again) and collectors (of GB material). In addition to franking machines and PPIs it is used in 'paid' stamps and dies issued to offices to indicate postage prepaid in money. In using the term we are thus following postal tradition — and the aerogrammes are sold in Northern Ireland.

DAVID DALE

Manager Definitive Stamps

The Inland Revenue

Sir,

In her excellent article *The Inland Revenue: Printer and Distributor of Stamps*, (September *Bulletin*) Jean Farrugia mentions on page 13 that the Board of Inland Revenue retained among other things the actual manufacture of medicine and coffee labels! Why? I can understand the other items but not the two above. I would be more than grateful if somebody could let me know the answer, for I am sure there must be a lot more puzzled readers.

The article evoked many memories as when I was an office boy (many many years ago) I was employed by an insurance company in the City of London. The highlight of my week was the Wednesday taxi journey to Somerset House with parcels of insurance policies for impressing with the revenue stamp, and watching through the grill the operator embossing the specials, those policies for high amounts and taking these back with me to the office, the others being collected the following week. Oh how I looked forward to Wednesdays!

In closing may I say how much I enjoy the *Bulletin* each month, the standard is always so consistently high and the articles readable without being swamped by technicalities above the heads of the 'average' reader.

Llanerchymedd, Gwynedd

J E TEAGUE

Telecom Valentines Card

Telecom Technology Showcase will issue a St. Valentines Day card on 28 January featuring the first Post Office Valentines Greetings Telegram designed by Rex Whistler and issued in 1936. The design was illustrated in the November *Bulletin* (p.61 — The Museum Piece). Cost is 10p per card (first day of sale cachet 40p per card) plus 40p handling charge with remittances made out to British Telecommunications plc, from Telecom Technology Showcase, 135 Queen Victoria St, LONDON EC4V 4AT.

Flowers Cylinders

The cylinder numbers and colours printed of the Flowers stamps to be issued on 20 January are as follows:

18p

Silver 1A	Greenish- yellow 1B	Rosine 1C	Deep green 1D	Black 1E
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22p

Silver 1A	Greenish- yellow 1B	New blue 1C	Greenish- blue 1D	Black 1E
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31p

Silver 1A	Greenish- yellow 1B	Scarlet 1C	Blue- green 1D	Deep green 1E	Black 1F
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34p

Silver 1A	Greenish- yellow 1B	Magenta 1C	Dull blue 1D	Deep green 1E	Black 1F
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PHQ Card Quantities 1985

Quantities produced can now be given for the 1985 PHQ cards.

Card No.	Subject	Issue date	No. of cards produced (sets)
PHQ 81 A-E	Famous Trains	8/1/85	216,000
PHQ 82 A-E	Insects	26/2/85	174,980
PHQ 83 A-D	Europa-European Music Year	30/4/85	156,410
PHQ 84 A-D	Safety at Sea	4/6/85	177,012
PHQ 85 A-D	350 Years of Royal Mail	16/7/85	182,160
PHQ 86 A-D	Arthurian Legend	20/8/85	176,160
PHQ 87 A-E	British Films	24/9/85	190,160
PHQ 88 A-E	Christmas 85	5/11/85	189,180

January Digest

Issued in January

- 6 January **Flowers PHQ cards** (Nos. 99 A-D) 15p each
- 6 January **18p Country definitives** for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, printed by The House of Questa in offset litho on ACP.
- 6 January **NPM 'Jubilee' cards** set of three 87/1-3 60p
- 20 January **Flowers stamps** 18p, 22p, 31p, 34p **designer:** Alfred Lammer **printing:** Harrisons, photogravure, 35 x 37mm, perf. 14½ x 14, sheets 100, PVA Dextrin gum, phosphor-coated paper.
- Bureau f.d. service alternative**

handstamp — Richmond **presentation pack** £1.27

27 January **13p National definitive**, printed in gravure by Harrisons with new phosphor ink in the central phosphor band.

27 January **Country definitives** printed by The House of Questa in offset litho on ACP

Scotland 22p, 26p, 28p

Northern Ireland 26p, 28p

Wales 26p, 28p, 31p

27 January **Stamp books: "Keep in Touch"** £1.80 (10 x 18p PCP) left and right £1.30 (10 x 13p 1PB) left and right

Roman Britain: 50p machine-vended (2 x 18p 2PB, 1 x 13p 1PB, 1 x 1p 1PB)

Pond Life: 50p machine-vended (3 x 13p 1PB, 2 x 5p 1PB, 1 x 1p 1PB)

Musical Instruments: £1 machine-vended (5 x 18p 2PB, 1 x 13p 1PB)

All the phosphor bands in the books have new phosphor ink.

Withdrawn in January

6 January **1p Definitive PCP** (issued 12 December 1979)

13 January **Industry Year issue** — all items

13 January **£1.20 and £1.50 January 1986 stamp books**

British Philatelic Bulletin

Editor Douglas N. Muir

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