

Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 19 Number 3 November 1981



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Designed by Carol Wain ARCA MSAD
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In this edition we illustrate the Christmas stamps to be issued on 18 November. For this the sixteenth year of producing special stamps at Christmas, the Post Office have returned to the same source of design as for the first in 1966 – children.

Christmas is the season of celebration and joy, a time of colourful transformation for a few special days in a timeless tradition of festive gaiety and spiritual hope. A time for sending messages of greeting and goodwill to family and friends both near and far; but most of all Christmas is a time for children.

It is therefore appropriate that the designs should depict Christmas as seen through the eyes of children.

Before the final choice of design for a commemorative issue of stamps is made, many excellent stamp designs are carefully considered. It is with pleasure that we reproduce in this edition a selection of 1980 preliminary designs with our grateful acknowledgement to the designers concerned.

After a number of happy and successful years at Lothian House, the manager and staff of the Philatelic Bureau are moving to new accommodation at:- 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH, EH3 5TT. We wish them continued success in their new home.

JOHN MEMMOTT



1981 Collectors' Pack (No 131)

Designed by Edward Hughes ARCA FSIAD, this attractively illustrated pack in full colour, containing all eight 1981 commemorative stamp issues complete with background notes will be available from the 18 November, price £6.71½p. Obtainable from most post offices, all philatelic counters and the Philatelic Bureau at their new address:- 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH, EH3 5TT.

The Royal Mail Postbus Service—part 3

Len Newbery

15 March 1976.

A new ticket of horizontal format $3\frac{1}{2}$ ' x $1\frac{3}{4}$ ', to take up to four definitive stamps went into use in the Sittingbourne-Wormshill service. A single line with curved corner bordered the left and top sides only. In the top left corner was the familiar Bedford postbus design now reduced to $\frac{3}{4}$ ' long with TICKET approx $\frac{3}{8}$ ' long, and in the other upper corner the heading in two line Post Office lettering – Royal Mail Post Bus. The printing was in red and as in the previous tickets it varied from red to crimson. The card variation of colour was between white and deep cream.

The tickets were again printed by Hewitts, 12 up on their Rotaprint press.

The new tickets gradually replaced the previous upright versions in the above fifteen SEPR services and also went into use in the three new services.

SEPR 17 Henley-on-Thames - Frieth, 20 September 1976.

This service, under the control of the Head Postmaster Reading, uses a type (iii) cancellation with six lines of text, the first and last following the curve of the oval. HENLEY-ON-THAMES = FRIETH / SERVICE No. 10 / DATE / Valid only on date / of issue / POSTBUS. Unlike the other Reading routes a double line hyphen is used between the place names. However as in the case of Newbury - Chaddleworth the two line valid notice is in lower case.

SWPR 2 Wadebridge - Penrose, 19 September 1977.

The tickets were supplied from Brighton. It is understood that eventually this service will use the SWPR ticket described lower down.

The cancellation is a single line circle type (vi) approx $1\frac{1}{4}$ ' in diameter. The text in four lines reads: WADEBRIDGE, CORNWALL / DATE / POST / BUS with the first and last following the curve of the circle.

The cancellation was struck in either violet or black.

Complimentary tickets without postage stamps but with the cancellation struck in black dated 19 SEP 1977 were issued at the inaugural ceremony.

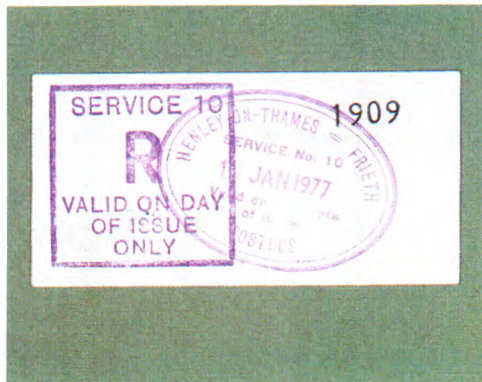
SEPR 18 Redhill - Outwood, 1 October 1979.

This service, the third under the control of Head Postmaster Redhill uses a type (i) cancellation with a three line text: REDHILL – OUTWOOD / DATE / ROYAL MAIL POSTBUS.

Complimentary tickets without postage stamps were issued at the inaugural ceremony. The cancellation struck in black was a singleline, circular, postal cancellation $1\frac{1}{4}$ ' in diameter, with the three line text – the first and last following the curve of the circle – reading REIGATE & REDHILL / 1-OCT 1979 / RH1 1AA.

Return Journey Cachet

The Reading services use a special single line



square cachet (sides 1 1/4") struck in violet on the reverse side of tickets issued for outward and return journeys.



The numbers 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, or 10 were included after SERVICE according to the specific route.

North Eastern Postal Board

All four services operating in this region now use a postage stamp/special cancellation type of ticket.

The tickets of upright format with an overall size of 2 1/2" x 1 3/4" perforated to form a 1/2" stub at top are bound in pads of 50, secured with one wire staple. The top cover and spine is of brown paper and the back of stout brown cardboard.

The white ticket after separation measures 2" x 1 3/4" has four spaces on the upper side to take up to four definitive stamps. The reverse has text in six lines. Both sides are printed in black.

The tickets are printed by Messrs. Porton Printers, Enfield Street, Leeds LS7 1RF.

The cancellations, type (vii), are similar for the four services consisting of a double circle with the text between the circles – the service title in the upper arcs and POSTBUS SERVICE in the lower. In the centre space is a three quarter illustration of a Commer postbus showing a view of the front and off side. The cancellation is undated.

NEPR 1 Louth - Goulceby, 7 November 1973.

The route is a circular one and return fares are not issued.

In the early days of the service use was made of self coloured, pre-printed bus tickets. These tickets, approx 1 1/4" x 1 3/8" in rolls numbered in series of 500 and machine issued, were supplied together with the Ultimate Ticket Issuing Machine by Bell Punch Co., Ltd., London. The reverse side had an illustration of a bus conductor with the slogan Go

by all framed in a single line.
bus

The tear off tickets incorporating the use of postage stamps went into use 2 June 1977.

The text on the reverse side reads POSTBUS / SERVICE / Louth / to / Goulceby / No.

The cancellation struck in red is approx 32mm in diameter with the service name reading LOUTH TO GOULCEBY.

NEPR 2 Rothbury - Alwinton, 11 November 1975.

The original setting of the tickets had the text on the reverse side reading POSTBUS / SERVICE / Rothbury / to / Alwinton / serial number. The third line was 10mm below the second. The serial number was without the prefix No. with the digits centrally positioned.

Later printings had the third line only 6mm below the second. The serial number was now prefixed with No. with the digits some 12mm to the right.

The cancellation struck in violet has the service name reading ROTHBURY TO ALWINTON. The original cancellation was 35mm in diameter. Later a smaller version, 32mm in diameter, was brought into use.



NEPR 3 Rothbury - Biddlestone, 10 January 1979.

The reverse is in the same setting as that for NEPR 1 Louth - Goulceby but with the 3rd, 4th and 5th lines reading Rothbury to Biddlestone.

The cancellation struck in violet is 32mm in diameter with the service name reading ROTHBURY TO BIDDLESTONE.

NEPR 4 Alnwick - Alnham, 10 July 1979.

The ticket and cancellation is in the same format as NEPR 3 with merely the change of service name.

11. K for Kirchner

The fact that there is no major postcard collecting theme with the initial letter 'K' enables me to feature the work of an outstandingly talented and imaginative artist of the early years of this century, one who has already been mentioned in these columns under 'G for Glamour' (June 1981 *Bulletin*) – Raphael Kirchner (1876-1917). Kirchner was second only to the celebrated Alfons Mucha in the representation of 'art nouveau', the controversial and lavish art form of the 1890s. Both artists settled in Paris, Mucha from his home-town in Moravia, Kirchner from Vienna, but whereas Alfons won sudden success with his ornate lithographed posters for Sarah Bernhardt's theatrical performances in 1894, Raphael started as an illustrator of beautiful women in art nouveau settings and quickly found a market – the French picture-postcard publishers – just in time for the great Paris Exhibition of 1900.

Art nouveau, the 'new art', was initially a style of architecture and interior decoration – 'a reaction against convention, combining beauty and fantasy in mystical unreality, offering escape into Arcadia, where Pan held court at festivals where fauns and nymphs danced to the music from his magic pipes' (*The Art Nouveau Postcard*, H Beresford-Bourke). In visual terms, art nouveau was expressed in patterns of plants and flowers with writhing stems and tendrils, and females 'with hair free-flowing in the morning breeze' – 'a paradise of the imagination'. A monthly magazine, *The Studio*, promoted art nouveau and its artists from 1893, illustrating the work of Aubrey Beardsley, Mucha and, later, Kirchner himself. The first art nouveau postcards appeared in 1897 and, while Mucha's decorative panels and posters were produced as postcards by his enterprising printer, Champenois, Kirchner's earliest work was executed for greetings cards, lithographs and picture postcards.

By the time Raphael Kirchner settled in Paris, hundreds of his postcards in the art nouveau idiom had been published in Austria, Germany, Belgium and France, and had been acquired or imported by several British publishers. He used his slim, attractive wife, Nina, a brunette, as his model – he portrayed her as 'an Elfin creature of doe-like charm', conveying 'an innocent yet sophisticated



sensuality'. His early cards were published in sets of ten or twelve and included such provocative titles as 'Enfants de la Mer', 'The Harem', 'Sun Rays', 'Dainty Damsels', 'Flirtation' and 'Leda and the Swan'. Japanese theatre shows – 'Geisha', 'Mikado' and 'San Toy' – were the subject of other popular series, and my illustration shows one of a set published by Henry Moss in 1903 – the elegant Nina smoking a cigarette within a 'heart' (a recognised art nouveau motif) in a decorative gold frame, a superbly coloured and embossed card.

Gradually, as art nouveau began to lose some of its appeal, Kirchner turned more to the glamour card without embellishment, depicting beautiful women in nonchalant *déshabillé* – thus creating the popular 'pin-ups' of the first World War. During the war years, Raphael and Nina visited the United States and it was there that he died suddenly, following an operation for appendicitis. His wife never recovered from the shock of his death – she turned to drugs and eventually became insane.

The postcard catalogues divide Kirchner cards into three periods of publication, and the price ranges for signed cards in excellent condition are: Early (art nouveau), £40 – £50; World War I or 'middle' period, £15 to £25; and 'Bruton Galleries' (post-war) types, £10 – £12. In 1977, a set of six Raphael Tuck 'Proof' (limited edition) postcards of Kirchner's 'Three Maidens' was sold by Christie's for £300.

MALCOLM JAMES

Christmas Stamps Issue

18 November 1981

As mentioned in the November edition of the Bulletin, the Christmas stamps for this year have been designed by children who participated in the BBC 'Blue Peter' television programme competition. The winners and subjects are as follows:

Father Christmas by Samantha Brown, age 5 (11½p); a mosaic collage of Christ by Tracy Jenkins, age 14 (14p); a Christmas angel by Lucinda Blackmore, age 6 (18p); the journey of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem by Stephen Moore, age 16 (22p) and the Three Kings outside Bethlehem by Sophie Sharp, age 8 (25p).

The stamps, printed photogravure by Harrison and Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd are in sheets of 100. Horizontal in format, they measure 41 mm x 30 mm with 15 x 14 perforations. The paper is unwatermarked, phosphor coated, except for the 11½p stamp which has a single printed phosphor bar. The adhesive is PVA Dextrin.

The first day cover (13p) was designed by Sarah Kutkaitis aged 8 and the presentation pack No 130, price £1.07½, was designed by John Gibbs with illustrations by Andrew Dunbar aged 6.

Values and Colours:

- 11½p – Olive bistre, orange vermillion, ultra marine, bright green, black, gold.
- 14p – Bistre yellow, bright carmine, emerald, pale blue, black, gold, blue.
- 18p – Lemon, bright crimson, ultra marine, blue green, black, gold.
- 22p – Greenish yellow, bright crimson, blue, black, gold.
- 25p – Lemon, bright magenta, ultra marine, black, gold.

Cylinders used:

- 11½p – 1A, 1B, 2C, 1D, 1E, 1F
- 14p – 2A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 1F, 1G
- 18p – 1A, 2B, 1C, 3D, 1E, 1F
- 22p – 2A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 1E
- 25p – 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E

Postcards

Postcard reproductions of each of the five stamps



will be available approximately two weeks before the issue date, price 11p each.

Christmas Pictorial Air Letter

The 1981 Christmas air letter, illustrated on the front cover of this month's Bulletin, has been designed by Carol Walklin ARCA MSIAD. It will be issued on 18 November, price 23p of which 20p is postage. Printed by McCorquodale Printers Ltd, it has two phosphor bars.

Christmas Stamp Book

The Christmas 1981 stamp book will be issued on 11 November, and contains 10 each of the 11½p and 14p definitive stamps. Price £2.55. Printed photogravure by Harrison and Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd the 14p stamps are all over phosphor coated, while the 11½p stamps have a single phosphor bar.

The cover depicting a rural winter skating scene was designed by Bill Sanderson.

CHRISTMAS 1981 THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD

British Post Office Mint Stamps



year old Sophie
Lancashire who spends
and drawing.

SUZANNE WOLSTENHOLME



CHRISTMAS 1981
POST OFFICE FIRST DAY COVER



£2.55

Royal
Mail Stamps
Ten at 11½p
Ten at 14p

Christmas
Greetings 1981

Preliminary Designs

Once again we are pleased to reproduce some of the stamp designs submitted in respect of the 1980 issues. They illustrate the continuing high quality of thought and expertise.



Sir Benjamin Britten



Sir Edward Elgar

Peter Gauld



William Gardner



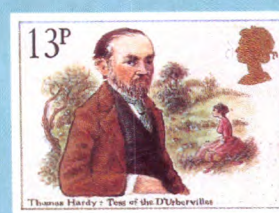
Sedley Place Design



Mary Shelley: Frankenstein



Thomas Hardy: Tess of the D'Urbervilles



Thomas Hardy: Tess of the D'Urbervilles

Barbara Brown

Michael Oxenham



KINGFISHER



HERON



MOORHEN



Banks & Miles

Carol Barker



Sally Stiff

Stuart Rose



Peter Hatch

Carol Walklin



Some Embossed 6d Violets

This month's 'Gem' from the Reginald M Phillips Collection looks at some unfamiliar uses to which the Queen Victoria 6d embossed stamps were put.

The stamp in question was first issued on 1 March 1854 and the 6d rate was used for the registration fee and also for paying the reduced postage rate to Belgium and other countries. The highly-unusual 'bisect' illustrated was used to pay the too-late fee on a letter from London to Ashby-de-la-Zouch. The other stamp illustrated is also remarkable in that the stamp has been pin-perforated and must be a contender for the earliest

known British stamp to be perforated. Both the 6d and 1/- embossed values are known to exist in this condition.

Several other examples of the 6d value used on cover are held in the Museum, notably one to the Captain of *HMS Eurydice* at Barbados, bearing a copy with exceptionally large margins. Visitors to the National Postal Museum can see these and other embossed issues in volume XXX/51 + 52 of the Reginald M Phillips Collection which is permanently on display.



82. Christmas, 1972

Apart from the stylised, airborne herald angel of 1969, the previous three Christmas issues had depicted different versions of the Nativity, so it was perhaps opportune for a change of theme for the three festive stamps issued on 18 October 1972 – three gorgeously-robed angels playing the kind of musical instruments one associates with biblical times: 2½p Trumpet, 3p Lute, and 7½p Harp. The designs, based on early Italian paintings and all attractively coloured, were created by Sally Stiff, and were her first successful venture into the competitive world of stamp design.

Simple musical instruments began to appear early in the history of civilisation. In ancient Greece music was based on a system of modes or scales, while in Europe it was largely the Church which fostered the progress and development of music. Carols, the traditional Christmas music which probably inspired the 'musical angels' theme, were originally dance-songs (not untinted with ribaldry), included in festive revelries all the year round. The influence of the medieval Church frowned them into respectability and the course of time restricted them to Christmas rejoicings.

The instruments shown in the designs are of particular interest as they do not correspond exactly to their colloquial names. The trumpet, for example, is a simple, slender horn resembling the posthorn used by postilions in the 18th and early 19th centuries, while the lute is clearly seen to be a close relative, the cittern, which dates back at least to the 13th century and is the ancestor of the guitar

and the zither. The so-called harp appears to be a lyre which was the most important instrument of ancient Greece, and usually had 4, 7 or 10 strings – virtually a small harp. Both the cittern and the lyre were played with a plectrum (quill or spike), but it is doubtful if the angels were thus equipped!

Sally Stiff of Twickenham, London, a graphic designer and illustrator with the Architect's Department of the Greater London Council, aimed for a set of bright, festive stamps to celebrate Christmas. 'Angels', she said, 'are themselves symbols of happiness and beauty'. From pieces of fabric and other material of different textures, she built up a set of reliefs which were then photographed for reproduction on the stamps.

The Christmas stamps were photogravure-printed by Harrison and Sons in sheets of 100 (10 x 10) with the outlines of the angels embossed, on unwatermarked paper with one centre phosphor band (2½p) or two bands (others). A noted printing variety was the broken ribbon and scratch across the Queen's head which also gave her a deformed lip on the 2½p, while there were numerous omissions of colour – gold and deep grey (2½p), red-brown, bright green and bluish violet (3p), and ochre (7½p) – as well as embossing and phosphor omitted on all values.

Quantities sold were: 2½p 323,277,200; 3p 130,877,400; and 7½p 17,086,600; presentation packs, 105,740.

JAMES WATSON



Forces Covers

The Royal Wedding

The Royal Air Force Museum has produced a flown cover to commemorate the wedding of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales to Lady Diana Spencer.

The covers depict St Paul's Cathedral, and both Royal Wedding stamps were cancelled on 22 July – the first day of issue – with a pictorial handstamp BFPS 1932.

To commemorate His Highness's link with the Services, the covers were taken to:

- 1 HMS 'Bronnington' the ship which he commanded in 1976.
- 2 The Parachute Regiment of which HRH is Colonel in Chief.
- 3 The Army Air Corps HQ, where on 19 December 1970 the Prince was presented with his Army flying badge.

The Royal Air Force flew the covers over the Royal Wedding route and they were subsequently taken to St Clement Danes, the Central Church of the Royal Air Force, which is situated in the Strand, London.

Each cover has been signed by the RAF crew and by the Resident Chaplain at St Clement Danes. They are all individually numbered and certified. The proceeds from sales will be donated to Service charities.

The cost is £2.50 each plus postage (14p in the UK and BFPO addresses, and 31p by surface mail to overseas addresses). Orders with remittances made payable to, 'PSI RAF Brampton', should be sent to Flt Lt D G Downey, JARIC Officers Mess, RAF Brampton, HUNTINGDON, Cambs. PE18 8QL.

TP20: RAF Valley Open Day

This cover commemorates the Royal Air Force Valley Open Day, and the 60th Anniversary of No 4 Flying Training School. The cover was cancelled with BFPS handstamp 1757 on 15 August 1981, and depicts test pilot Duncan Simpson in a Hawk trainer of the Royal Air Force. It is available from Flt Lt A Taylor RAF, No 1 Squadron, Royal Air Force Valley, HOLYHEAD, Gwynedd, LL65 3NY.

Unsigned cover, price 75p, bears an 11½p 'Welsh' Country Definitive stamp, and a signed cover, by the pilot, with a 14p 'Welsh' Country Definitive stamp affixed is £1.05. For overseas addresses an additional 35p is required for extra postage.

RFDC7: Royal Air Force – Flown Covers

This cover illustrates Royal Navy and Royal Air Force Fisheries Protection equipment and the badges of the units engaged in this work. It was flown on the 1500th Ocean Tapestry (Fisheries Protection) Patrol from RAF St Mawgan. Bearing all four 'Fishing' stamps, cancelled with BFPS handstamp 1741 on 23 September 1981, the cover costs £2.15, plus 35p for overseas addresses. Orders should be sent to the Project Officer, Sgt J McClelland, RAF St Mawgan, NEWQUAY, Cornwall, TR8 4HP.

C89: 50th Anniversary of Schneider Trophy

The 50th Anniversary of the outright winning of the Schneider Trophy, is the subject of this commemorative cover illustrating winning aircraft for the years 1914, 1922, 1925, 1931. The cover cancelled on 12 September 1981 with BFPS handstamp 4041, and is available from the project officer, Flg Off G Latham RAF, Royal Air Force Station, St Athan, BARRY, S. Glamorgan CF6 9WA. Unsigned cover bears an 11½p 'Welsh' Country Definitive stamp, price 75p, and a signed cover by the pilot, with a 14p 'Welsh' Country Definitive stamp affixed is £1.05. For overseas addresses an additional 35p is required for extra postage.

C90: 41st Anniversary of the Battle of Britain

This cover issued by the Friends of the Royal Air Force Museum, commemorates the 41st Anniversary of the Battle of Britain, and is linked to the Battle of Britain Open Day at Royal Air Force Station, Abingdon. It is cancelled with BFPS 1755 handstamp on 12 September 1981, and depicts both Spitfire and Hurricane fighter aircraft. Orders should be sent to the Project Officer, Warrant Officer A Bunn RAF, Royal Air Force Station, ABINGDON, Berkshire, OX13 6JB. The cost per cover is 75p with an 11½p 'Scottish' Country Definitive stamp affixed, or signed by the pilot and bearing a 14p 'Scottish' Definitive stamp, the price is £1.05. For overseas addresses an additional 35p is required for extra postage.

Commemorative Covers

Dundee and Newtyle Railway

To mark the 150th anniversary of the Dundee and Newtyle Railway on 16 December 1981, a commemorative cover has been produced by the Angus Railway Group.

The cover illustrates the steam locomotive *Earl of Airlie* super-imposed over a map of the Dundee and Newtyle Railway. The insert bears a chronology of the railway. A limited number of the covers will be signed by the present Earl of Airlie.

The pictorial handstamp used to cancel a Scottish 11½p stamp, on all covers, depicts a replica of Dundee and Newtyle Railway seal.

Fully serviced signed covers are £1 each, unsigned 60p. Both will be sent through normal postal channels unless an additional 20p is included for return packing and postage. Orders, with remittances made payable to the 'Angus Railway Group', should be sent to:- Jim Page, Oakbank, 27 Rankine Street, DUNDEE, DD3 6DY. Tel: 0382 28351.

Leicester Cathedral

To coincide with the Christmas stamps issue on 18 November 1981, the Association of Friends of Leicester Cathedral has produced a limited edition of 1000 commemorative covers – depicting carol singers within the shadow of the Cathedral – bearing all five of the Christmas stamps. A pictorial handstamp will be used to cancel the covers which will be posted at the Cathedral, and a cachet will be applied to this effect. One hundred covers will be signed by the Bishop of Leicester.

The costs are as follows: unsigned covers are £2.50 each, while the signed covers are £4.75 each. Both prices include return postage and packing. Orders, with remittances made payable to A G Bradbury, should be sent to:- A G Bradbury, 35 Northdene Road, LEICESTER, LE2 6FJ.

Harwich Electric Palace Trust

To mark the 70th anniversary of the Electric Palace Cinema, Harwich, on 29 November 1981, a commemorative cover bearing all five Christmas stamps will be available. The stamps will be cancelled with a special handstamp, while the cover will illustrate the Electric Palace Cinema

with an inscription 1911-1981. The cost of the cover is £1.75. Orders with remittances should be sent to:- Mrs D Downes, 40 Gordon Way, Dovercourt, HARWICH, Essex, CO12 3TH enclosing a 9" x 6" stamped-addressed envelope.

Veldale Children's Christmas Cover

Veldale Covers of Kidderminster in association with the local newspaper *The Kidderminster Shuttle* have devised a competition for local children to design a cover compatible with the Christmas stamps issue. It will be available from 18 November 1981 bearing all five Christmas stamps cancelled with a special handstamp. The price is £2 including return postage and packing, and can be obtained from Veldale Covers, 6 Comberton Park Road, KIDDERMINSTER, Worcs. DY10 3DY.

Royal Opening of Tyne and Wear Metro

To mark the Official Opening of the Tyne and Wear Metro system and naming of the sixth Tyne Bridge by Her Majesty The Queen on 6 November 1981 a commemorative cover is now available which illustrates a Metrocar crossing the new bridge.

The cover bears the complete strip of five, 12p 'Rocket' locomotive stamps issued in 1980 to mark the 150th Anniversary of the Liverpool and Manchester railway service and which appropriately identifies Tyneside's historic connections with railway development in this, the bi-centenary year of George Stephenson's birth.

A special hand stamp incorporating the image of the revolutionary Metrocar and naming the event, will cancel the cover which is available at £1.50.

Tyne and Wear Metro is a £280 million development in urban public transport unique in the United Kingdom. The 34-mile system will have 41 stations and many spectacular civil engineering features including Byker Viaduct, the new Tyne Bridge and major underground and interchange stations.

Orders, with remittances made payable to: 'Tyne and Wear Passenger Transport Executive', should be forwarded to:- First Day Cover Department, North House, 17 North Street, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, NE1 8DF.

St John Ambulance Association

On 10 November 1981, a commemorative cover will be available to mark the centenary of the South Cleveland Centre of the St John Ambulance Association. The cover will depict the St John Ambulance emblem and a line drawing of the Royal Exchange, Middlesbrough, the original

headquarters of St John Ambulance in the area.

Bearing a 22p 'Duke of Edinburgh's Award' stamp, cancelled with a pictorial handstamp, the cover will be posted in a special box at the Royal Exchange. A cachet will be applied to this effect. 2000 covers are to be issued of which 100 will be signed by the Lady Gisborough, County President of St John Ambulance.

The costs, including postage and packing are, 90p for UK customers and £1.05 for overseas. The signed covers will cost an additional £1 in each case.

Proceeds from the sales will be donated to the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, and the work of the St John Ambulance Association.

Orders, with remittances made payable to the 'St John Ambulance Association, Cleveland', should be sent to:- Mr G M Wignall, the County Secretary, 11 Cornfield Road, MIDDLESBROUGH, Cleveland, TS5 5QJ.

Fishmongers Company

In association with the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers, the Stewart Petty Charity Appeals has produced a commemorative cover marking Fishermen's Year 1981. The covers illustrate in gold the coat of arms of the Worshipful Company, and all four 'Fishing' stamps are affixed, cancelled on 23 September 1981 with a specially designed handstamp. The covers were posted at Fishmongers' Hall, London. The cost is £2.00 each including return postage and packing to UK addresses, but an additional 11p must be included for overseas destinations. Orders with remittances made payable to: 'Stewart Petty Charity Appeals' should be sent to: Stewart Petty Charity Appeals, FREEPOST WEYBRIDGE, Surrey KT13 0RB. Part of the profit from sales will be donated to Fishmongers' Company's Charitable Trust.

Midlands Postal Board Royal Occasion

To mark the official opening of the new Northampton Head Post Office by HRH The Princess of Wales on 20 November 1981, the Midlands Postal Board has produced a commemorative cover. The cover bears a silver finished die-stamped medallion with the wording, 'HRH The Princess of Wales 20 November 1981' encircling the Northamptonshire rose symbol.

Mint covers, price 13p each, will be available for sale from most philatelic counters. A special handstamp will be used to cancel the covers.

Serviced covers will have both the 14p and 25p

'Royal Wedding' stamps affixed, cancelled with the special handstamp at Northampton Head Post Office, at a cost of 70p each. Orders should be sent to: The Head Postmaster, Head Post Office, 55 Barrack Road, NORTHAMPTON, NN1 1AA, not later than 16 November 1981. Remittances should be made payable to 'The Post Office'. Giro account number 4096010.

Normal reposting facilities will be available. Covers bearing a minimum of 13½p in postage stamps should be sent to the above address, marking the outer cover, 'Official opening new HPO handstamp'.

Bulk orders for mint covers should be sent to Northampton Head Post Office where normal discount and service charges will apply.

Forthcoming Event

Wrexham & District Philatelic Society

The Wrexham and District Philatelic Society will hold its Bi-annual Stamp Exhibition in the Display Hall of the Wrexham Art Centre, at the Public Library, from the 16 to 21 November 1981. The Opening Ceremony will be performed by the Head Postmaster of Wrexham, Mr L Evans at 11 am.

Among the many excellent displays on show there will be a large number of prizewinning collections by members.

Further information can be obtained from Mr J N P White, 8 Foster Road, WREXHAM, Clwyd, LL11 3LT.

Album Leaves

Collectors of first-day-covers and postcards can now buy sets of loose-leaf pages to add to their Post Office albums.

The sets of transparent plastic pages are now available at all post offices already selling Post Office Albums.

In packets of 10, the pages will cost £2.00 for the full-size first-day-cover album, £1.25 for the half-size first-day-cover album and £2.00 for the postcard album.

Book Reviews

New 3rd Edition of 'GB Specialised Part 4'

The new 3rd edition of the 'Great Britain Specialised Catalogue Part 4 - Queen Elizabeth II Decimal Issues', to be published by Stanley Gibbons on November 20th, price £9.50, appears after 2½ years of major developments by the Post

Office both in presentation and technology of Great Britain stamps.

These changes together with all new issues up to May 1981 are dealt with in this edition. In particular, the temporary 'all over' phosphor definitive stamps together with the versions on phosphorised paper are now fully listed. The problems involved in distinguishing between the two types of phosphorised paper are discussed and indications are given as to the stamps on which such variations occur.

The popular PHQ cards are priced for the first time in Section W, which also now includes notes covering the little-known foreign insert cards for presentation packs.

To counteract the growing complexity of modern British stamps, Gibbons have clarified their listings by completely resetting the catalogue in a clearer style without the complicated changes of type size found in previous editions. The confusing 'double column' listings of varieties and most of the abbreviations used in the past have also been abolished.

The carefully up-dated prices in this catalogue show that despite fluctuations in other areas of the Great Britain stamp market, decimal issues have remained firm, with much of the specialist material having shown a steady appreciation.

The Stanley Gibbons Book of Stamps & Stamp Collecting

by James Watson

Published by Winward (W H Smith & Son)

Price £10.95 (plus £1.00 p&p if ordered by post from Stanley Gibbons)

A note on the dust cover of this luxuriously produced 12½ x 9 inches volume reminds us that philately is the most popular collecting hobby in the western world. A few more books of this quality and philatelic literature collecting will speedily outstrip its parent hobby.

An attempt to adequately describe the opulence of its appearance and the quality of its 600 or more full colour illustrations would surely exhaust all the superlatives in the dictionary. Let it simply be said that this book is without doubt the finest introduction to stamp collecting since heaven knows when. At £10.95 in these inflationary times it is little short of a publishing miracle.

The author is already well known to 'Bulletin' readers. James Watson's authoritative and easily read text unites erudition with lucidity in a way which will hold the attention of the veriest tyro and most experienced collector alike. All the illustra-

tions are superb and range from a full page reproduction of the Penny Black to a Royal Observatory meter mark.

The book's twenty sections embrace postal history, classic and modern stamp production methods, forgeries and errors, thematic collecting, starting and writing up collections, laying out album pages and a host of other advice all couched in terms a beginner will easily understand. At the same time each chapter conveys a wealth of detail which will delight the advanced student.

Everyone with a stamp enthusiast in the family should get hold of a copy just as soon as he can. Publications of this quality disappear off the shelves of bookshops like snow off a dyke. Its universal appeal coupled with its informative text and splendid illustrations combine to make this volume the event of the philatelic publishing season.

If you are one of those people for whom only the best is good enough, this is exactly what you have been waiting for.



Posting Boxes

No. 30. This ornate fencing, carrying the cipher of King Edward VII was obviously designed to fit the pillar box which carries the same cipher. The photograph was taken at the Winchmore Hill sorting office, Southgate, London before the new sorting office was built in 1970.

1982 Special Stamp Programme and Issue Dates

1982 special stamp programme—

Charles Darwin 10 February
Portrait of Darwin and: Giant tortoises; Iguanas; Finches; Prehistoric skulls.

Youth Organizations 24 March
Boys' Brigade; Girls' Brigade; Boy Scouts; Girl Guides.

British Theatre 28 April
Opera; Ballet; Drama; Pantomime.

Maritime Heritage 16 June
Henry VIII and 'Mary Rose'; Blake and 'Triumph'; Nelson and 'Victory'; Fisher and 'Dreadnought'; Cunningham and 'Warspite'.

British Textiles 23 July
William Morris – Strawberry Thief, 1883; F Steiner – Silver Tulips, 1906; P Nash – Cherry Orchard, 1930; A Foster – Chevrons, 1980.

Information Technology Year 8 September
Two stamps.

British Motor Cars 13 October
BL Metro; Ford Escort; BL Jaguar; Rolls Royce.

Christmas 17 November
The Holly and the Ivy; While shepherds watched their flocks; I saw three ships; We three Kings of Orient are; Good King Wenceslas.

Withdrawal from Sale of Postal Items

The five 1980 Christmas stamps and presentation pack will be withdrawn from sale at philatelic counters and the Philatelic Bureau on 18 November 1981.

Philatelic Gift Voucher

The Post Office will introduce a philatelic gift voucher scheme from 18 November 1981.

Attractively designed cards will be available

at most post offices, and customers will be able to affix postage stamps to make up the value of the desired sum. The minimum value must be £1.00. The vouchers can be used to purchase the following philatelic items:

- Definitive stamps
- Commemorative stamps
- First day covers
- Presentation packs
- Collectors' packs
- Picture postcards
- First day cover albums
- Postcard albums
- To pay labels
- Philatelic wallcharts
- Stamp books
- Royal Wedding souvenir book

The vouchers cannot be exchanged for cash, nor can money be given for a part-used voucher.

Only philatelic counters carry the full range of items listed but stocks at other post offices are subject to availability. The vouchers can be used only at a post office, or exchanged through The British Post Office Philatelic Bureau, Freepost, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH, EH3 5TT.

Philatelic Bulletin

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Binders are available to hold 24 issues from the Philatelic Bureau price £2.25.

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