

British Philatelic Bulletin

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Forum

JEAN FARRUGIA Post Office Archivist

Domesday year, with its celebration of Britain's oldest public record, prompts me to ask which records in my charge might be its equal as regards Post Office history. This raises more important questions, eg *what* do we save today and *how* do we reach our decision?

We cannot keep everything and, as Records Manager, I have to discourage colleagues from clogging registries with obsolete files a day longer than absolutely necessary. The Post Office's statutory obligations under the Public Records Act 1958 also require me to effect ongoing reviews of files surviving five years, weeding out those of no operational use but also identifying and preserving those of potential historical value (be reassured — if in doubt, we keep!) Survivors are reviewed again in 25 years time, the most important reviewing stage since a final decision must be made, and those selected catalogued for public inspection under the '30 year rule' and, like *Domesday Book*, kept for all time!

How do I reach my decisions at the review stages, when to destroy the 'wrong' records could deny future researchers the chance to pursue a subject not necessarily recognisable today as historic? I cannot hope to please everyone; but to help me make the 'right' decisions I endeavour to keep in touch with changing trends in collecting interests through, for example, the *Bulletin* and other philatelic magazines. Societies, too, kindly deposit their journals in our Search Room, all of which I read. I also try to visit major philatelic exhibitions and, as far as the demands of my working day permit, talk to those researching in Archives, to see for myself what selections of the past help them and how far my selecting policy of today is in line with their needs and interests. Happily perhaps, the final decision on what is thrown away is not mine alone, since no 25-year-old survivor may be destroyed without a final check by a PRO Inspecting Officer, who must ensure that the Post Office destroys no public record of national importance. However, much of what has already proved to be of irreplaceable research value is not in file form, and ranges from Post Office publications, committee reports, and internal briefing to items of particular interest to collectors, such as records of issued hand-stamps etc. Keeping

abreast with changes in Post Office services and methods, and record-keeping procedures, also plays an important part in my aim to seek out and preserve as many such records as I can identify as soon as possible after their creation.

And if I could save only one record of 1986, to be our *Domesday Book* of the future? I think it would have to be the *Post Office Guide*!

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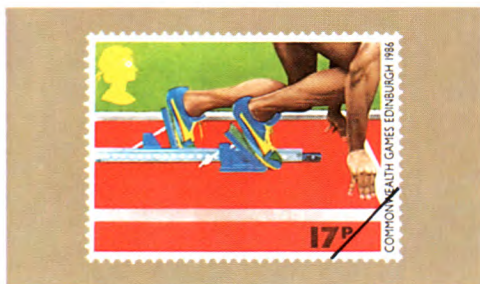
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Sport – Commonwealth Games & Hockey

15 July 1986

On 15 July* the Post Office is issuing five stamps featuring sports, designed by Nick Cudworth — the first stamps he has designed for the Post Office. Four of the stamps are for the XIII Commonwealth Games being held in Edinburgh from 24 July to 2 August, and the fifth value marks the World Hockey Cup being held in London for the first time from 4 to 19 October. All five stamps have a legend indicating which event is being celebrated. The designs are careful to avoid the depiction of any recognisable, living athlete or, indeed, any advertising of makers' names on clothing or equipment.



The 17p value shows a sprinter on his blocks ready for the gun. This represents track events at the Commonwealth Games, all of which are taking place in the Meadowbank Stadium in Edinburgh.



On the 22p stamp, the subject chosen is rowing. Apart from other sporting anniversaries, 1986 also marks the 50th anniversary of the British Canoe Union.

For the 29p value, weightlifting was chosen as a subject. The vinyl-covered discs added to the bar are colour-coded to indicate the weight added by the company supplying the equipment to the Commonwealth Games.



The 31p stamp features a contribution from the host nation (Scotland) with shooting, the marksman sporting the insignia of the home team. The rifle shown is a full-bore British target rifle, 7.62mm. Beside it is a telescope sitting on a tripod. The marksman looks through this after shooting to see where the shot hit the target. In the last Commonwealth Games Scotland won the gold medal for full-bore target shooting.



All the above four values depict events which are taking place as part of the Commonwealth Games. First staged in 1930 as the British Empire Games, they have twice before featured on British stamps. The first time was in 1958 when the sixth Games were held in Cardiff. A second set appeared in 1970 when the ninth Games were held in Edinburgh, for which the Meadowbank Stadium was built. Held every

* This date of issue has been altered to accommodate the extra issue of stamps for Prince Andrew's wedding.



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four years this is the first time that the Games have taken place in the same place twice.

The 34p stamp celebrates hockey. This year marks the centenary of the Hockey Association, the governing body for men's hockey in England and the first of the game's modern associations. Thus, the Association will be hosting the sixth World Hockey Cup in London and the Federation of International Hockey Congress. The competition will be held at Willesden Stadium and twelve of the world's top teams will be participating including England as the host country.

Technical Details

Designed by Nick Cudworth the stamps have been printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd. In format they are horizontal, 41mm x 30mm, perf. 15 x 14 on unwatermarked, phosphor-coated paper, printed in sheets of 100 on PVA Dextrin gum.

PHQ Postcards

PHQ cards (Nos. 94 A-E) featuring each of the five stamps will be available from 1 July, price 14p each.



Presentation Pack

The presentation pack will cost £1.54 and was designed by Design House and illustrated by Jeffrey Fisher with text by Mike Barden and photographs from Sporting Pictures (U.K.) Ltd.

First Day Cover

The first day cover was designed by Design House and costs 15p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover service, both from

Edinburgh. One will be from the British Philatelic Bureau depicting athletes on their starting blocks; the other is from Edinburgh itself and features Edinburgh Castle.

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Post Office cover addressed to the destination required with all five stamps cancelled with either postmark. The charges will be £1.78 (inland) and £1.59 (overseas).

Application forms, available from the Bureau and at Head Post Offices, should be returned not later than 7 July 1986.

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 the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon St., EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, or Special Postmark Duty MLO, Brunswick Road, EDINBURGH EH7 1XX.

First day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes.

Prince Andrew's Wedding Stamps

As previously announced the Post Office is celebrating the wedding of Prince Andrew and Miss Sarah Ferguson with a set of special stamps. The issue date has now been changed to 22 July, the day before the wedding, with the Sports set being brought forward to 15 July.

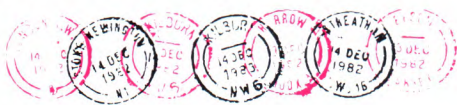
There will be two stamps, with values of 12p and 17p, with a common design featuring portraits of the couple.

A first day cover service will be provided by the British Philatelic Bureau with the official Post Office cover addressed to the destination required. Both stamps will be cancelled by one of two postmarks — either that of the Bureau or that of London SW. The charges will be 63p (inland) and 55p (overseas).

Application forms, available from the Bureau and at Head Post Offices, should be returned not later than 11 July to the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon St., EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

The presentation pack, costing 50p, will also go on sale on 22 July. PHQ postcards (Nos 95 A-B) will go on sale on 8 July, costing 14 each.

Letter to the Editor



'Detained in France During German Occupation'

Sir,

With regard to the article in the March *Bulletin* regarding the cachet 'Detained in France during German Occupation' I am pleased to show you the cover in my possession. As you will note the cachet is struck in black on my example and not in violet as was suggested.

LUTON

C N MARTIN

Several other examples were sent in by readers from Switzerland, Argentina and elsewhere — Editor.



Postmarking Arrangements for Royal Wedding

Special non-pictorial handstamps will be in use at most Head Post Offices on 23 July for the Royal Wedding. The handstamps will carry the name of the office and the date only. Covers posted in special posting boxes or sent via the reposting facility will be given the 'Royal Wedding' handstamp.

Scottish Aerogramme — Enlightenment

On 5 August a new Scottish aerogramme will be issued to coincide with the Edinburgh Festival, the theme for which is 'Enlightenment'. The aerogramme design features the period between 1730-1790 known as the Scottish Enlightenment. Designed by Forth Studios with illustrations by John Martin and printed by McCorquodale Envelopes Ltd., the aerogrammes cost 30p. As usual they will be available from all offices in Scotland including the British Philatelic Bureau, and at philatelic counters elsewhere.

Invasion!

BARBARA LAST

The Celts in Britain had given considerable assistance to their kinsmen in Gaul against the Romans, and Julius Caesar (Italy 1929) eventually determined to carry the war across the Channel. At midnight in late August 55B.C. he sailed with 6,000 men and 80 transports, "and with the morning light saw the white cliffs of Dover crowned with armed men".

The invasion fleet landed near Deal, and as the transports grounded, the islanders rode into the surf to attack with chariots and horse. Leaping into the sea, the legionnaires advanced into the shower of stones and javelins, and Caesar brought up his warships, and with catapults and arrows fired at the British flank. The native chiefs finally surrendered. But Caesar's supporting fleet of 18 cavalry transports was swept away, and his fleet damaged by the high tide of the full moon. Later the Romans withdrew to Gaul with prisoners and hostages.

Caesar returned the following year with five legions and 2,000 cavalry, overwhelming the natives with the sight of his great fleet of 800 ships. The tribes stopped their incessant squabbling and for a time banded together, and avoiding pitched battles, kept pace with the Romans on their march northwards. A mobile force harried the invaders by leaping out of their chariots to attack, and leaping back to retreat into the forests and marshes at speed. After crossing the Thames the defenders dwindled in numbers as the tribes began to make terms individually, and Caesar was able to negotiate a settlement, returning to Rome with more hostages. For nearly a hundred years Britain had no occupying power but sent a fixed annual tribute to Rome.

In 43A.D. a Roman invasion force of about 20,000 conquered the island. The tribes were too independent to unite, and subjugation was a painful experience. Garrisons were established at Colchester and Lincoln, and the British were driven westwards, still fighting a fierce guerilla war. London developed into a rich and busy trading centre with the largest basilica or civic building north of the Alps.

But the Romans made a grave error of judgment and flogged Boadicea, Queen of the Iceni, and ravished her daughters. Previously the Iceni had been one of the most co-operative of the tribes, but this atrocity inflamed the whole country, and the

natives all rose to avenge the insult. Retribution was terrible. The 9th Legion from Lincoln was slaughtered without trace, and Boadicea swept through the main Roman centres, and razed Colchester, London and St. Albans. Tacitus claimed that in the three towns over 70,000 were massacred "by sword, cross, gibbet or fire", and a deep layer of ashes in City excavations bear witness to this tribal revenge. Suetonius, who had just destroyed the seat of British resistance on Anglesey, marched eastwards, and his men, heavily outnumbered, vanquished the tribes by superior discipline and tactics. No quarter was given. The Romans garrisoned Chester and York, built Hadrian's Wall to keep out the Picts, erected the *pharos* at Dover, and for nearly 400 years protected a rich and peaceful Britain. A Roman Centurion (GB SG888) marked York's 1900th anniversary in 1971. Constantine the Great was born in York in 274A.D., and was proclaimed emperor there by the legions in 306A.D. A charming series of Christmas stamps from St. Helena, designed by Jennifer Toombs, shows medieval glass from the windows of the parish church of Ashton-under-Lyne, recording Constantine's birth (St. Helena 1985 SG453) with the ancient Britons and Romans dressed in 15th century garments!



As the power of Rome declined, so from about 367A.D. did savage attacks increase from the Teutonic tribes, who made their way down the west coast of Europe, crossed the Channel, and invaded the south and east coasts from Southampton to the Humber. Their open longboats crewed by 30-40, and powered only by the oars of 14 men, were ideal for nosing up the creeks and shallow waterways. These fierce Anglo-Saxons who originally came to pillage, stayed to farm. Theirs was no planned invasion, but rather a mass migration from about 441A.D., with the invaders settling in loose communities bound by ties of blood and oaths of loyalty. This was the time of the great warrior, or *Dux bellorum*, Arthur (GB 1985 SG1294), who stemmed the advance of the pagan hordes for

equivalent to the present day counties of East Anglia and the Midlands. Alfred founded the first English fleet by building war-galleys larger than the Viking ships and defeating the Norsemen at sea before they could land. Gradually Alfred's half-Welsh, half-Saxon people became victorious, and Alfred, knowing he could not stem the Norse invasion indefinitely, in his great wisdom offered peace. The Danes returned to their homes, the Saxons ruling in the south, and Danelaw operating in the north, although the coasts continued to be harried by raiding bands.

Alfred, with his capital at Winchester, was inspired with the great vision of a united Christian England with the centres of civilisation and learning restored. It did not come about in his time, but he laid the foundations. His great-grandson Edgar was the first acknowledged king of all England, and parts of his Coronation service at Bath 973A.D. are still used today. King Edgar visited Chester the following year, and was rowed on the River Dee by eight lesser kings (IOM 1974 SG51). He commanded Magnus Haraldson of the Isles, the descendant of Vikings who had seized Man in 938A.D., to rid the seas of marauding Norsemen. Magnus had a fleet of about 3,600, and a fight between his men and a Norse fleet is seen on IOM SG52.

Edgar's son, Ethelred II the Unready, fled ignominiously from the Danes, and King Canute of Denmark took the throne, becoming by right of conquest King of England, Norway and Sweden, ruling justly after Alfred's example. Unfortunately he died in 1035, and eventually the English royal house was restored seven years later in the person of Ethelred's son, Edward the Confessor (Guernsey 1969 SG13). A pious incompetent, he was totally absorbed in devout works and the building of his abbey church at West Minster (GB 1966 SG687). He nominated William his cousin and Duke of Normandy, as his successor, but upon his deathbed in January 1066 switched to his brother-in-law Harold, who was duly elected by the Witan (Parliament), although he had previously, under constraint, forsworn the English throne and promised to uphold William's claim.

Harald Haardraada, King of Norway (SG 1950 SG408), was another contender for the crown, wishing to incorporate Britain into his Scandinavian empire. In September Haardraada's fleet landed near the great Viking centre at York. Harold, waiting for William in the south, marched his men at speed up the old Roman road, and after covering the last 30 miles from daybreak on 25 September, his warriors fell upon the Vikings at Stamford Bridge, where Haardraada perished.



roughly 50 years. Little is known about this Romano-British leader, most of the romantic traditions attached to his name being medieval additions, but the Welsh Annals refer to his death in 539A.D. and the "strife of Camlann, in which Arthur and Medraut (Mordred) perished, and there was a great plague in Britain and Ireland".

The Saxons overran the southern counties, and Cerdic's vessels took Southampton. Cerdic, Saxon chieftain and first king of Wessex, was the ancestor of Alfred the Great, and the virtual founder of the British monarchy. The 1d coin of Cuthred (d.661) another descendant was featured on the 35p stamp book of 1973.

Saxons gave their name to Essex, Sussex, Wessex and Middlesex — the lands of the East, South, West and Middle Saxons. Our knowledge of this period comes from the Venerable Bede, and Anglo-Saxon Chronicles. Dynastic rivalry was intense between the tribal confederations of the 7th and 8th centuries, but gradually their people became converted to Christianity, and several Saxon kings were crowned on the Coronation Stone still to be seen at Kingston-upon-Thames.

The advent of their distant kinsmen, the Viking pagans from Norway and Denmark, was calamitous. Their dragon-prowed longboats with striped sails swept in from the north, slaying, ravishing, plundering. Seizing horses they rode inland, spreading terror by fire and sword, and carrying off young men and women as slaves. The great centres of culture and learning in the abbeys and monasteries were obliterated. Wessex alone remained, hopelessly outnumbered, as the last Christian kingdom of England. By paying protection money in the form of danegeld Alfred bought time to organise resistance, while the Danes haggled and divided their land into states roughly



William's invasion fleet, depicted on Gordon Drummond's Europa 1982 (Guernsey SG254) design, had been waiting for a favourable wind. His ship *Mora* (Poland 1963 SG1374), surpassing all others in speed and size, had been given to him by Matilda, his wife, and flew the standard of St. George (still flown by the Navy today) which had been presented to him by the Pope. A transport "packed from bow to stern with men and horses" is shown on GB SG711. The news of William's landing was immediately galloped north to York, and Harold's army marched grimly south to repel this new invasion. His own house-carls were the finest infantry in Europe, but they were worn by the forced marches, and most of his army were peasants, no match for William's mounted warriors. At dusk on 14 October 1066 on Senlac Hill near Hastings Harold fell, surrounded by his slain. A Norman wrote, "In the English ranks the only movement was the dropping of the dead ... those sons of the old Saxon race, the most dauntless of men".

The Bayeux Tapestry, stitched for Queen Matilda, illustrates the Norman invasion and

conquest of England. Scenes from it were chosen for Britain's 900th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings, and there are many postmarks based upon it. William vowed to build an abbey should victory be his. Battle Abbey was duly constructed and is used as the motif for Battle philatelic handstamp. Jennifer Toombs pictured Harold and William with a Saxon churl drawing their attention to Halley's Comet which appeared at that time, and was incorporated into the tapestry (Jersey 1986). France's offering (SG1722) showed William and his birthplace Falaise Castle, together with his landing at Pevensey.

William I was crowned in the new Westminster Abbey (GB SG687), and set about a massive programme of rebuilding castles and churches. His keep and palace, the White Tower of the Tower of London, was built in 1078 (SG1054) within the Roman fort and city walls. His castle at Windsor guarded the upper reaches of the Thames. As a king he was devout, clear-sighted, and an able but ruthless administrator. He commissioned the Domesday Survey to facilitate taxation throughout the land, and introduced Norman feudalism, all men being first and foremost the King's men. His barons were compelled to pay homage and taxes, and provide a fixed number of mounted, armoured knights to support the Crown. The barons in turn protected their tenants, and farmed out their lands in a similar fashion to vassal knights. The new GB stamps illustrate four different classes of serf, freeman, knight and baron in contemporary style, although they are the artist's own interpretation. William grafted a framework of feudal rights on to the old Saxon and Danish customs which he left more or less unchanged. Norman remains up and down the country bear witness to the last great invasion of England, and the beginning of the welding together of William's polyglot subjects into one nation — the English.



Philatelic Terms Explained

There are many subscribers to the *British Philatelic Bulletin* who are comparative newcomers to stamp collecting and, as their interest in the hobby deepens, they come across technical terms with which they may not be familiar. This new series of short articles by KENNETH F. CHAPMAN will explain the philatelic significance of some apparently ordinary words and will endeavour to simplify some of the technical terms which are specifically philatelic in origin and application.

Alphabet Letters

Practically all British stamps up to 1884 included in the corners of their designs two or four letters of the alphabet. Originating with the Penny Black of 1840, on which letters appeared in the two lower corners, the idea was to deter forgery — every stamp on a finished sheet of 240 images differs from one another. The printed sheets of stamps consisted of 20 horizontal rows of 12 stamps. In the top row the stamps were lettered AA, AB, AC on up to AL. The second row contained the letterings BA, BB, BC on to BL. Each row down the sheet progressed alphabetically until the 20th row became TA, TB, TC on to TL. Thus there are 240 different Penny Blacks on each complete sheet. The letter combinations make it possible to allocate any single stamp to its precise position in the sheet. For example: a stamp lettered EK would be the eleventh stamp in the fifth row, i.e. stamp No. 59 in the sheet.

Beginning with the Penny Red of 1858, letters appeared in all four corners. The lower corner letters were as before and the upper corners carried the same letters in reverse order: e.g. EK, lower corners and KE upper corners. Therefore, in allocating a four-letter stamp to its sheet position, the upper letters have to be ignored.

The purpose of the four letters was to discourage the bisection of two used stamps from which unpostmarked halves could be joined and re-used. To practise this deceit (which was not widespread, despite official concern that it was possible), a stamp user would have to find two identically lettered



stamps and use the opposite halves of each to provide a lettering combination beyond suspicion.

Originally, the letters (sometimes called check letters) were hand-punched on to the printing plate before the surface was hardened and put to press. Over the years, different punches were used and advanced collectors of British line-engraved two-letter printings from 1841 onwards (the 1d red and 2d blue) study these and group them into Alphabets I, II, and III. A fourth group, Alphabet IV, consists of letters *hand-engraved* direct on to the plate and, therefore, exhibiting specific characteristics which identify these stamps as being from either Plate 50 or 51.

New Standard Aerogramme

A new standard aerogramme will be issued on 24 June. In place of an imprinted stamp there will be a new postage symbol. Designed by Martin Newton, the aerogrammes have been printed by McCorquodale Envelopes Ltd and will cost 26p each. They will also be available in packs of 5. Available initially from philatelic outlets, they will go on general sale as present stocks are exhausted.



The Early Days of the Postal Service

Part 5: The Mailcoach Service

TONY GAMMONS

For centuries before the start of the mailcoach service a system for carrying the mail operated along the great highways of the kingdom, horses being stationed at posthouses positioned at regular intervals along the way for the use of the postboys carrying the mail between one stage and another. Despite the improvements carried out by the turnpike trusts in the 1760s the postboys' work was arduous and ill-paid. By 1770 the incidence of mail robberies had become so frequent, the Bristol rider being robbed once a week for five weeks, that the Post Office was forced to look at a variety of allegedly 'robber-proof' carts.

Most of these were totally impractical, the *Gentleman's Magazine* of October 1771 describing one as 'having wheels eight feet high with a body the same as a coal cart', and in a later edition one that was 'quite round in an imitation of a garden rolling stone and hangs on the axle tree between wheels which are seven feet high'. One cart was tried out on the North Road, keys being issued to postmasters along the route to unlock it and take out their mail. When the cart reached Enfield, the postmaster could find no way to open it and had to send an urgent message to London for the inventor of the contraption to come in a post-chaise and show him how to open it.

The arrival of the London mailcoach at the Post Office, Bristol. c. 1788.

The answer to the problem of attacks on the vulnerable postboys came from John Palmer, a young theatre manager of Bath. He drew up what he called his 'plan for reform', after referring to the slow methods of the mail carrier, 'the idle boy without character, mounted on a worn-out hack, who, so far from being able to defend himself or escape from a robber, is more likely to be in league with him'. He compared actual conditions on the Bath Road, showing how a letter sent unofficially by coach from Bath at 4 pm on Monday would reach London by 10 am the next morning, whereas by post the letter would not be delivered until 2 pm or later on Wednesday. His remedy was to send mail by fast, light, armed coaches running to a strict timetable. The coaches would carry four inside passengers and would be exempt from paying tolls. Palmer felt that the improvements offered by his plan warranted a substantial increase in postage rates, charging by short stages of twenty miles instead of the existing eighty miles.

Palmer had friends in high places and through one of these, John Jeffreys Pratt, later Lord Camden, M.P. for Bath he gained access to William Pitt, then at the Treasury, before whom he laid his plan. Pitt was attracted by the scheme, partly because of its



obvious advantages but mainly because it offered an opportunity to increase revenue by raising the postal charges instead of imposing an unpopular tax on coal, as he originally had in mind.

The Post Office objected strongly to the proposals; some of the senior officials foresaw a serious diminution of their income and patronage by Palmer's activities and it must be said that some of the Post Office's objections were valid. The problem was that Palmer, along with other postal reformers, had no idea of the complexities of running the service. For example, in London, it had been the practice to wait for the arrival of all mails before sending them out for delivery. Palmer changed all that: with his interest in the Bristol coach he saw to it that the mail from the new coach was delivered the moment it arrived and all the other mails were kept waiting. Again, before 1774, the post frequently deviated from the high road to serve adjacent villages. On the Bath road, for example, the postboy left the turnpike between Hungerford and Marlborough in order to go through Ramsbury. Under Palmer's plan the coach stayed on the turnpike and missed Ramsbury. On many roads on which a mailcoach service was started the bye and cross-posts were thrown into confusion. Palmer would have none of this, claiming that all services would be improved by his plan.

Palmer was confident that if he was allowed to test his plan over the road between Bristol and London, already greatly improved by the work of the turnpike trusts, his coach could beat the passenger stage coach service on that run.

Pitt, now Prime Minister, called a meeting with Palmer, the Postmaster General and the principal officers of the Post Office. Overruling all objections he directed that a trial should take place from 1 August 1784. At the end of July five contractors were found to horse the new coach: Wilson from London, Froment from Thatcham, Porter between Marlborough and Calne, Williams at Bath and Dover at Bristol.

The coach left Bristol at 4 pm on 2 August loaded with mail and carrying four inside passengers. Passing through Bath at around 5.20 pm the coach continued through the night towards London, reaching the General Post Office in Lombard Street at 8 o'clock the next morning. A journey time of 16 hours and exactly on schedule, Palmer's scheme was declared an immediate success by the public; but the business houses and merchants of London objected to the early closing of the mails: 5 o'clock at the receiving houses and 7 o'clock at the GPO. Previously, the mails had not left London until midnight but under the new system the coaches left at 8 pm.

General Post-Office.
The Earl of CHESTERFIELD, } Postmaster-
AND } General
The Earl of LEICESTER,

London to Bristol Time-Bill.

Mile	Time	Arrived at	Departed from
0	4 pm	Bristol	2 Aug
10	5.20 pm	Bath	2 Aug
20	6.45 pm	Marlborough	2 Aug
30	8.15 pm	Calne	2 Aug
40	9.45 pm	Wootton Bassett	2 Aug
50	11.15 pm	Devizes	2 Aug
60	12.45 am	Salisbury	3 Aug
70	2.15 am	Amesbury	3 Aug
80	3.45 am	Reading	3 Aug
90	5.15 am	Wokingham	3 Aug
100	6.45 am	Winchester	3 Aug
110	8.15 am	Andover	3 Aug
120	9.45 am	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
130	11.15 am	Bournemouth	3 Aug
140	12.45 pm	Portsmouth	3 Aug
150	2.15 pm	Southampton	3 Aug
160	3.45 pm	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
170	5.15 pm	Andover	3 Aug
180	6.45 pm	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
190	8.15 pm	Bournemouth	3 Aug
200	9.45 pm	Portsmouth	3 Aug
210	11.15 pm	Southampton	3 Aug
220	12.45 am	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
230	2.15 am	Andover	3 Aug
240	3.45 am	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
250	5.15 am	Bournemouth	3 Aug
260	6.45 am	Portsmouth	3 Aug
270	8.15 am	Southampton	3 Aug
280	9.45 am	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
290	11.15 am	Andover	3 Aug
300	12.45 pm	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
310	2.15 pm	Bournemouth	3 Aug
320	3.45 pm	Portsmouth	3 Aug
330	5.15 pm	Southampton	3 Aug
340	6.45 pm	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
350	8.15 pm	Andover	3 Aug
360	9.45 pm	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
370	11.15 pm	Bournemouth	3 Aug
380	12.45 am	Portsmouth	3 Aug
390	2.15 am	Southampton	3 Aug
400	3.45 am	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
410	5.15 am	Andover	3 Aug
420	6.45 am	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
430	8.15 am	Bournemouth	3 Aug
440	9.45 am	Portsmouth	3 Aug
450	11.15 am	Southampton	3 Aug
460	12.45 pm	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
470	2.15 pm	Andover	3 Aug
480	3.45 pm	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
490	5.15 pm	Bournemouth	3 Aug
500	6.45 pm	Portsmouth	3 Aug
510	8.15 pm	Southampton	3 Aug
520	9.45 pm	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
530	11.15 pm	Andover	3 Aug
540	12.45 am	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
550	2.15 am	Bournemouth	3 Aug
560	3.45 am	Portsmouth	3 Aug
570	5.15 am	Southampton	3 Aug
580	6.45 am	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
590	8.15 am	Andover	3 Aug
600	9.45 am	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
610	11.15 am	Bournemouth	3 Aug
620	12.45 pm	Portsmouth	3 Aug
630	2.15 pm	Southampton	3 Aug
640	3.45 pm	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
650	5.15 pm	Andover	3 Aug
660	6.45 pm	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
670	8.15 pm	Bournemouth	3 Aug
680	9.45 pm	Portsmouth	3 Aug
690	11.15 pm	Southampton	3 Aug
700	12.45 am	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
710	2.15 am	Andover	3 Aug
720	3.45 am	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
730	5.15 am	Bournemouth	3 Aug
740	6.45 am	Portsmouth	3 Aug
750	8.15 am	Southampton	3 Aug
760	9.45 am	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
770	11.15 am	Andover	3 Aug
780	12.45 pm	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
790	2.15 pm	Bournemouth	3 Aug
800	3.45 pm	Portsmouth	3 Aug
810	5.15 pm	Southampton	3 Aug
820	6.45 pm	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
830	8.15 pm	Andover	3 Aug
840	9.45 pm	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
850	11.15 pm	Bournemouth	3 Aug
860	12.45 am	Portsmouth	3 Aug
870	2.15 am	Southampton	3 Aug
880	3.45 am	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
890	5.15 am	Andover	3 Aug
900	6.45 am	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
910	8.15 am	Bournemouth	3 Aug
920	9.45 am	Portsmouth	3 Aug
930	11.15 am	Southampton	3 Aug
940	12.45 pm	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug
950	2.15 pm	Andover	3 Aug
960	3.45 pm	Sturminster Newton	3 Aug
970	5.15 pm	Bournemouth	3 Aug
980	6.45 pm	Portsmouth	3 Aug
990	8.15 pm	Southampton	3 Aug
1000	9.45 pm	Woolfardisbury	3 Aug

By Command of the Postmaster-General,
T. HASKER, Esq.

London to Bristol mailcoach time bill, c. 1790.

With the trial of the Bristol road proving successful, Palmer wanted to extend his plan to other roads. He asked Pitt to give him a permanent appointment which would give him general control of the Post Office and its expenditure. A draft of an appointment under the Crown for life was drawn up at the Treasury. However, this would have required a new Act of Parliament and although Pitt wished to give Palmer his full support he was not prepared to go as far as pressing for a new Act. Palmer would have to be content with an appointment as Comptroller General of the Mails under the Postmaster General. This he found impossible to accept, taking the view that he had his appointment directly from Pitt and the Treasury. Although working at the GPO, his office at 87 Lombard Street was known as 'Mr. Palmer's Post Plan-Office', he felt that it was quite in order for him to ignore any communication from the P.M.s G that cast doubt on his plan.



The Swan with Two Necks, one of London's major coaching inns.

Extending the Service

On 28 March 1785, after further pressure from Pitt, the Post Office announced the start of the second mailcoach service — that between London and Norwich. In May the first cross-post mailcoach ran between Bristol and Portsmouth and by the end of the year coaches were running to Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Portsmouth, Poole, Gloucester, Swansea, Hereford, Camarthen, Milford Haven, Worcester, Ludlow, Birmingham, Shrewsbury, Chester and Holyhead. To help him implement his scheme Palmer employed a number of new men, one of whom, Francis Freeling, was to become Secretary to the Post Office in 1798 and one of its greatest administrators.

The mailcoach service soon spread to all corners of the kingdom, Palmer claiming new standards for punctuality and security. The coach from London to Edinburgh, for example, cut the journey time from the 85 hours taken by the postboy to 60 by coach.

It was in his claims over security that Palmer was to show his greatest weakness, that of being prepared to ignore the facts if they did not suit his purpose. Palmer had said that 'Before the reform the expense incurred in rewards for apprehension and prosecution of mail robbers had run into several

thousand pounds, but after the plan had been put into operation not a single robbery had been committed and no expense incurred.' Although it was true that no coach had been held up and robbed, all the highwaymen and foot-pads had done was to transfer their attention from the main post roads to the local and cross-posts where mail was still being carried by unarmed postboys on horseback or in mail carts.

Despite the apparent success of the service, the coaches were causing trouble. Palmer had laid down only vague guide lines for the design of the early mailcoaches and many contractors had coaches built from inferior materials. In a letter to the contractors in 1786 the Post Office said "thus it is that Mail Coaches are so frequently breaking down that scarce a day passes without one, two, three or more of them arriving some hours after the appointed time". The answer to the problem came from John Besant, a London coach builder, who had built a new coach to a 'patent design'. Palmer decided to make exclusive use of the design and the first patent mailcoach appeared on the road in the spring of 1787 with the rest of the service being equipped within a year. On Besant's death in 1791 the furnishing of mailcoaches was continued by Besant's partner, John Vidler.

Besant had been in debt when he died and his widow agreed to give up her share of the patent to Vidler if he 'forgave' the debt. Vidler's Millbank works, carried on after 1810 by his sons, supplied all the mailcoaches for the next 40 years.

The Post Office, following a Commission of Enquiry, then put the contract up for open tender.

The End of an Era

The average speed of the mailcoaches on the various routes out of London had reached 10 miles an hour by the time Queen Victoria came to the throne. The run to Bath and Bristol was still one of the fastest. The coach left London at 8 pm and was in Bath at 6.32 am and Bristol by 7.45 am, in ample time for breakfast — 114 miles in less than 12 hours. The famous 'Quicksilver', the only mailcoach to be given a name, ran to Devonport at slightly over 10 miles per hour. The fastest service to Holyhead, by way of Shrewsbury, did the 261 miles in less than 27 hours in 1837, two hours faster than in 1830. The Manchester service in 1837 was one hour fifteen minutes faster than in 1830.

Despite these improvements, the contractors were finding it hard to keep the service going against strong opposition from the improved stage coaches, which offered swift, comfortable, day time travel. The Post Office relaxed the regulations regarding the carrying of outside passengers. The Brighton Day Mail, put on the road in July 1838, was allowed to carry up to eight 'outsiders'. Where a mailcoach service could no longer be sustained the Post Office arranged for the mail to be carried on stage coaches.

It was, however, the development of the railways that was to bring the coaching era to an end. The first mail carried by railway was that between Liverpool and Manchester on 11 November 1830. Other railways gradually developed, taking away most of the mailcoach passengers, and by the early 1840s many of the London based mailcoaches were being withdrawn from service.

The final journey of the London-Louth mail coach was unusual, and took place in December 1845. Starting from London in the traditional style, the coach duly delivered its mails to Louth and from there started back on its final stage to Peterborough, carrying the London mail. At Peterborough, the horses were unharnessed for the last time and led away. The coach itself was loaded bodily on to a flat truck for the first part of its homeward journey to London, via the newly-opened branch line to Blisworth, still carrying its mails and accompanied by the Post Office guard.

The last regular London-based mailcoach service was the London to Norwich via Newmarket, it's



The London to Bath mailcoach easing its way through a flood.

contractors being given notice to quit in the spring of 1846. Some of the cross-post mails lingered on into the mid-1850s, linking up with the ever growing railways; but the great days of the mailcoaches were over.

Those who preferred the sound of the mail guard's horn to the deafening blast of a train's engine would have had sympathy with this coachman's lament:

Them as 'ave seen coaches afore rails came into fashion
'ave seen something worth rememberin'.
Them was 'appy days for old England, afore
reform and rails turned everything upside down,
and men rode, as nature intended they should, on
pikes (turnpikes), with coaches and smart active
cattle and not by machines like bags of cotton
and hardware.

Stamplink '86 Handstamp

As reported last month Stamplink '86 is a mobile stamp promotion co-ordinated by British Ferries in conjunction with the British Post Office, the PTT of France and the Post Offices of Jersey and Guernsey. The exhibition will be on board the MV *Earl Granville* from 9 to 20 June. A special handstamp will be used for items posted on board. Items for reposting should be sent to the Head Post Office, Slindon St., PORTSMOUTH PO1 1AA.



Dick Davis – Medieval Life Designer

The **Medieval Life** stamps, due on 17 June, were designed by Dick Davis of Tayburn and illustrated by Magnus Lohkamp. Here, the designer discusses his approach to the subject.

Exam results (or the lack of them) testify to my sketchy understanding of history at school, but I did manage to retain a very simplistic mental picture of the feudal system in which lords enjoyed a privileged position near the top of a pyramid supported underneath by peasants and slaves. In between were fighting men and freemen and somehow everyone depended on the system for their survival.

This was the inspiration for the design of the four stamps which depict the chief protagonists in this struggle.

One great advantage of the medieval approach to illustration is the very literal way in which relative importance and scale were expressed — unrestricted by 'modern' conventions of time and space. It was decided that Magnus Lohkamp's illustrations should adopt the same principles and thus, ploughing and harvesting, interiors and exteriors can all be shown simultaneously.

I have also tried to achieve something of the same anecdotal quality and wry humour that characterises

much art of the period. A dog bites the carpenter, while a lady woos her knightly prey from the castle battlements and a solitary horseman rides from one stamp into another through a landscape seen from changing viewpoints.

Nine hundred years have passed since the Domesday Book was completed. These stamps attempt to show glimpses of the everyday life in 11th century England that lies between the lines of facts and figures recorded in William the Conqueror's incredible survey.

Medieval Life Cylinders

Cylinders and colours used in the printing of the Medieval Life stamps to be issued on 17 June are:

17p

grey	yellow-brown	vermilion	lemon
1A	1B	1C	1D
bright emerald	orange-brown	brownish grey	
1E	1F	1G	

22p

brownish grey	yellow-ochre	red
1A	1B	1C
greenish blue	chestnut	grey-black
1D	1E	1F

31p

brownish grey	yellow-brown	vermilion
1A	2B	1C
green	Indian red	grey-black
1D	1E	1F

34p

grey	yellow-ochre	bright scarlet
1A	2B	1C
grey-brown	new blue	lake-brown
1D	1E	1F
grey-black		
1G		

Mulready Exhibition at V&A

An autobiographical exhibition of William Mulready R A, the designer of the first postal stationery, will open at the Victoria & Albert Museum in South Kensington, London on 2 July and run until 12 October. Entitled 'William Mulready — Images of Childhood' it comprises all the graphics by Mulready amongst which will be the work he did for the postal stationery of 1840. Items on loan from the National Postal Museum include registration sheets of the wrappers, a proof signed by Rowland Hill and various caricatures. From Post Office Archives comes Rowland Hill's diary.



Domesday Covers

The following are some of the commercial first day covers being prepared for the issue marking the 900th anniversary of the Domesday Book on 17 June. All postmarks can also be obtained under the re-posting facility.

Winchester. Cancelled with a handstamp from the place where the Book was originally kept and with a full set of stamps this cover by A G Bradbury costs £4 (£2.25 with 17p stamp, signed £7.50). Orders to him at 2 Fairholme Rd., LEICESTER LE2 6GL (overseas 50p extra).

Domesday Committee. The National Committee for Domesday 900, in conjunction with the Public Records Office are producing a set of first day covers and other souvenirs. The chief first day cover will be cancelled at London WC2. Details from 'Official Domesday Souvenirs', P.O. Box 1086, LONDON SW1A 0DB.

Historical Association. Featuring a monk at work in his scriptorium a cover has been produced for use with a special Gloucester cancel. With a full set it costs £3.80 (£2 single stamp, £7 signed) from Covercraft, P.O. Box 713, LONDON SE19 2HH.

Freemen of England. Cancelled with a special handstamp at Oswestry covers with the full set cost £5 or £2.50 with 22p stamp from A G Bradbury, 2 Fairholme Road, LEICESTER LE2 6GL (overseas 50p extra).



Worthing Cub Scouts. As part of their 70th anniversary celebrations Worthing Cub Scouts are holding a fete, the theme of which is Medieval Britain. Marking this they are sponsoring a special handstamp for the Medieval Life stamps. Cost £3 + 25p p & p with the full set (£1 + 25p single, £5 + 25p signed) from M C Budd, 23 Greenland Rd., Durrington, WORTHING, West Sussex BN13 2RR.

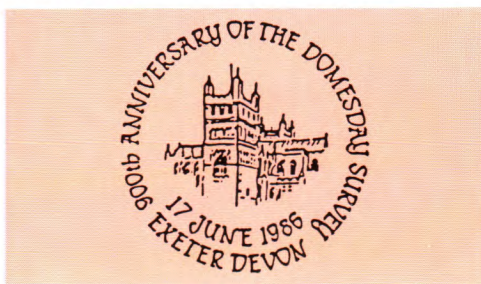
Forces. A cover (RFDC45) will link Tattershall Castle in Lincolnshire with the RAF station at Coningsby. The cancel marks the 75th anniversary of the start of restoration of the castle — available at £3.70 from Director of Appeals, RAF Museum, Aerodrome Rd., Hendon, LONDON NW9 5LL (overseas 50p extra).

Hereward The Wake. Marking the launch of the Hereward Country theme for the tourist promotion of the Fens a special cover is available postmarked at either the Isle of Ely or Peterborough, costing £2.50 each. Orders to East Cambridgeshire District Council, Hereward Cover, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, ELY Cambs. CB7 4PL.



Domesday cancels. Special covers inscribed with the town names matching the 81 Domesday spelling cancellations will be available serviced with the 17p stamp. A complete set of covers will cost £60 plus £2.50 for registered postage. Orders to Historic Relics, 95 Calbourne Road, Balham, LONDON SW12 8LS.

Exeter Cathedral. A luxury silk-look Benham cover is available featuring Exeter Cathedral with a pictorial postmark at Exeter. Cost is £3.50 with the full set of stamps (signed by Dean £5). Another cover will show a medieval illustration and be postmarked at the Domesday Exhibition in London WC2 also at £3.50. Both honour the Exon Domesday, normally held at Exeter. Cheques should be made payable to Exeter Cathedral (allowing postage of 30p) and sent to Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd, Westcliff House, Westcliff Gardens, FOLKESTONE, Kent CT20 1SZ.



Mails to and from India

Part 1

D HAMMOND GILES

The story of the India-U.K. mails from the 17th century until the mid-19th century, when the P & O Line became responsible for the carriage of all sea mails between the two countries, is a fascinating one.

Imagine the thoughts of the early writers who had gone to India to serve the East India Company, knowing when they despatched a letter 'home' that it would take nine months to a year, perhaps, to reach Britain, and some two years before a reply could be received! Perhaps even it might never reach its destination, but be lost with the carrying ship on the long and hazardous sea journey. Such were the frequency of these disasters that the writers would invariably send a duplicate letter by another ship in the hope that one at least would arrive. In those days all correspondence had to be hand written and then laboriously copied out, for there were no typewriters or carbon paper at that period.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, letters were conveyed between the two countries by private arrangements, usually through the ship's master or a travelling friend. By the Post Office Act of 1660 letters brought into Britain by merchant ships were

made 'subject to Inland Postage' but as the ships' masters received no payment on such letters, nor did they incur any penalty for not handing them over, few letters were handed to the Post Office, and naturally, no Post Office markings are found on such letters.

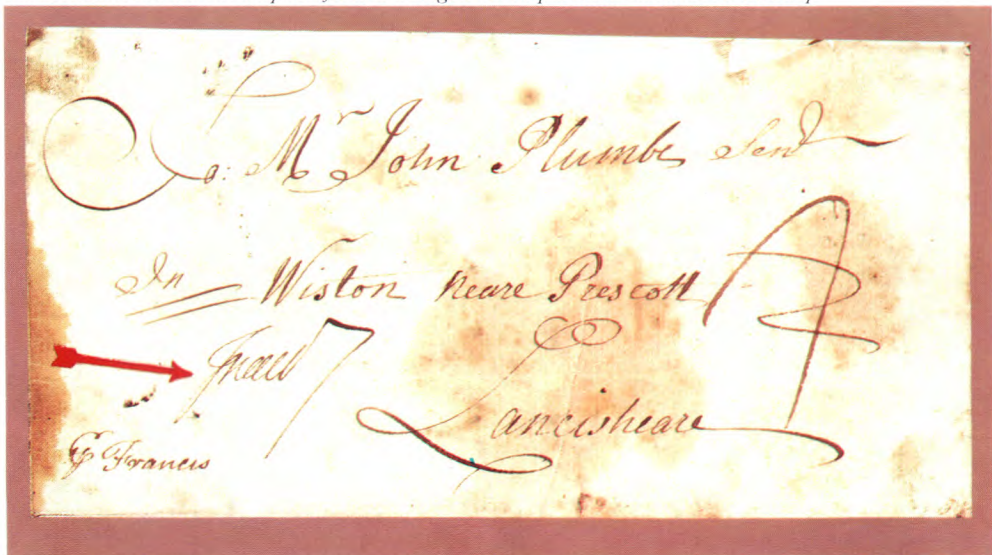
In order to capture more of the incoming mail the Post Office, at the beginning of the 18th century, began to offer voluntarily to pay a gratuity of one penny for every letter handed over at the port of arrival. This gratuity became legal under the Act of 1711, when letters became subject to two rates, the ship's captain's fee and the inland postage, and the combined rate was usually shown in manuscript, sometimes preceded by the words 'In all'.

British Ship Letter Receipt Stamps

It was not until 1766 that ship letter handstamps were first used on the incoming mail, when following the Act of 1765, there was a general issue of port (named) stamps, such as the 'London/Ship Lre' stamp.

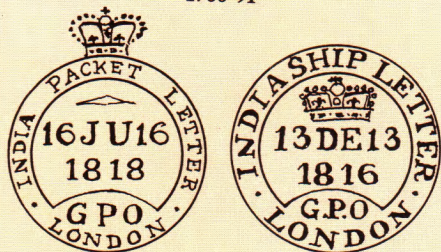
This mark was used on letters emanating from all

From Bengal (7 Nov. 1724) to England (London 7 July 1725) and marked 'In all 7' being 1d for the captain's fee and 6d for inland transit to Prescott. Probably disinfected at Sandgate Creek quarantine station in the Medway.



LONDON SHIPLETS

1766-91



London India Ship and Packet Letter stamps.

parts of the world during 1766-91, but the majority were on letters from India, with which the greatest maritime commerce was then carried on and London was the home port of most of the ships of the Hon. East India Company. Similar stamps were used at other ports and from 1798 the design of this handstamp was changed from time to time for all ports in Britain.

British Ship Letter Despatch Stamps

Before the 18th century outgoing letters to India were also privately arranged with the masters of the ships sailing from British ports. The Act of 1711 then made the despatch of letters by private ship illegal if they could be sent by the Post Office regular packets but there was then no packet service to India. By the Act of 1799 the Post Office was authorised to despatch letters by vessels that were not regular packets but the Hon. E.I.C. refused to co-operate with the Post Office or order their captains to carry such mail. The only means, therefore, of sending letters to India was in the 'care of the captain' of one of the E.I.C.'s ships or 'by favour' of a passenger or member of the ship's crew. Thus, no British ship letter handstamps are found on letters despatched to India before 1815.

At last, in 1815, the British Post Office arrived at a compromise with the Hon. E.I.C. and took over the India-U.K. mails, subject to certain concessions to the Company, and under the Act of 1815 monthly packets were established albeit at a high rate of postage, though letters sent by 'private ship' incurred a lower rate. For the first time as a result of

India Study Circle for Philately

The saga of the East Indiamen carrying the mails via the Cape and the improvement brought about by the use of the Overland Route and steam communication is extensively illustrated in an exhibition at the National Postal Museum held in conjunction with the India Study Circle for Philately. This display of maps, letters, postal notices and pictures provides evidence of the transit times, rates of postage, alternative routes used and both British and Indian handstruck stamps of identification, and a host of other relevant information.

The Anglo-French Convention of 1836 was the turning point of sending mails by the most direct overland route, and the India Study Circle have considered it fitting to celebrate the 150th anniversary of this Convention by putting on this display from 23 June to 12 September 1986.

The India Study Circle is a leading postal research organisation dealing with postal history, philately, and all branches of research pertaining to India and neighbouring countries over which the Indian postal administration at one time extended. Any interested postal historian or philatelist who wishes to know more of the activities of the study circle should contact the Hon. Secretary, R S Nuttall, Parkside, 2 St. George's Road, GREAT YARMOUTH Norfolk NR30 2JR.

this Act letters despatched to India were stamped with London handstruck marks, to distinguish 'packet' letters from 'ship' letters.

No effort was made to improve the service by providing a new fleet of fast packet ships and the service proved to be no quicker than the former private ships. This, together with the heavy 'packet' postage rates, became subject to severe complaint from the public. The Act of 1815 was therefore repealed in 1819 by an Act which allowed the despatch of letters to the East Indies by means other than the Post Office. Letters sent through the Post Office were stamped to indicate that the postage had been prepaid but letters sent through other channels i.e. by private ship, were not stamped at all in Britain.

Early Indian Handstruck Stamps

Most letters between Britain and India arrived at, or were despatched through, the main Presidency ports

of Madras, Calcutta and Bombay and the earliest reference to ship letter postage being liable to levy in India appears in the Warren Hastings Post Office reforms of 1774 under which letters coming from seaward were liable to half postage which was paid on delivery. No Indian ship letter receipt stamps, however, have been seen before 1807.

The earliest reference to postage on letters sent to Europe is in the Bombay *Courier* of 1793 and also in the contents of a private letter written from Madras in 1794 where the rates were quoted — and very heavy they were too. No trace of any postage rates on letters sent seaward from Calcutta have been found before 1798 but three covers from Calcutta, all dated 1794, have been recorded with the earliest Indian ship letter despatch stamp as illustrated.

A great variety of Indian ship letter stamps were used from 1799 and those of particular interest are the stamps used during the short life of the English Ship Letter Act of 1815, more commonly known as 'King's Post' marks, some of the stamps incorporating the words 'King's Postage' in their make-up.

Cape Route

All letters so far referred to were conveyed by the long and tedious, not to say, dangerous route via the Cape, and most were carried, after the repeal of the 1815 Act, by the ships of the Hon. E.I.C. on behalf of the Post Office, but were subject to certain concessions when compared with rates charged on letters to Britain from elsewhere in the world other than the East Indies.

The fact, however, remained that the letters were all involved in a very long transit time, because the same slow old-fashioned square-rigged East Indiamen continued to be used still taking up to nine months or more per voyage. From 1813 the East India Company lost its monopoly of trade with the East Indies and trade through other channels increased steadily, demanding a quicker service.

With the introduction of vessels propelled by steam, and the crossing of the Atlantic by steamship in 1819, thoughts turned to the use of steamers to carry mails to and from India. In 1825, the *Enterprize* 479 tons, under Captain Johnson, journeyed by the Cape to Calcutta taking 113 days proving that it was possible. But the time taken for the journey was disappointing.

Thoughts then turned from the Cape route by steamer to a shorter alternative way that had occasionally been used in the past, namely the overland route, either via the Persian Gulf and across from Basra to Aleppo, or via the Red Sea and

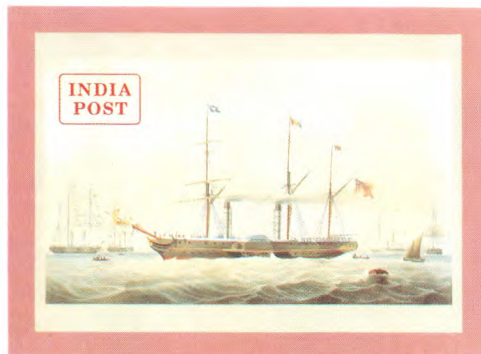
overland from Suez to Alexandria and then via the Mediterranean to Britain.



The earliest Indian Ship Letter despatch stamp and 'King's Post' marks.

New NPM Card

A new card (SS40) is being issued by the National Postal Museum on 23 June to mark the exhibition 'India-UK Mails'. It will feature the SS *Hindustan* opening the P & O's new mail service east of Suez in 1843, and it is reproduced courtesy of the P & O. The card costs 20p mint (with a handling charge of 18p on orders up to £18) from the National Postal Museum, KEB, King Edward St., LONDON EC1A 1LP. There will be no special first day facilities.

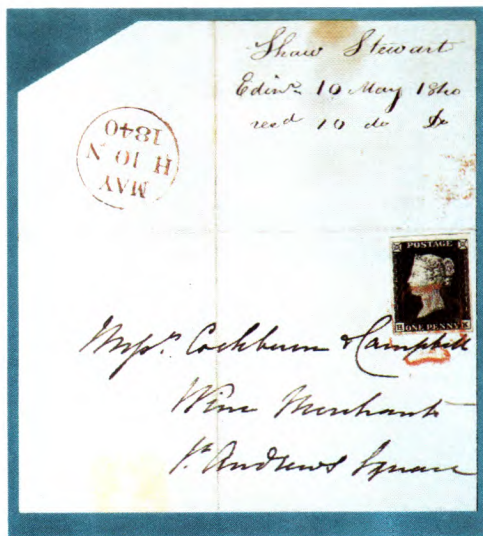


Cover from the First Sunday, 10 May 1840

JOHN MEMMOTT

To complement last month's 'Gem', a 'First Day Cover' from 6 May 1840, I have chosen for this month's 'Gem' from the R M Phillips Collection, a cover posted on the first Sunday, 10 May 1840. Bearing a single Penny Black stamp from plate 1A, check letters HK, the item was posted in Edinburgh to a local wine merchant.

This item can be seen in Volume IV/4 of the R M Phillips Collection at the National Postal Museum during normal opening hours — 9.30 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Thursday and 9.30 am to 4.00 pm on Fridays.



Books Recently Published

Catalogues recently received

Collect Channel Islands and Isle of Man Stamps — Stanley Gibbons, 3rd edition £2.95.

Commonwealth Two Reigns — New Zealand & Dependencies — Stanley Gibbons, 1st edition £4.50.

Commonwealth Two Reigns — Far East — Stanley Gibbons, 1st edition £4.50.

Middle East (Part 19) — Stanley Gibbons, 3rd edition £16.50.

Collect Mammals on Stamps by Hanne and Jens Eriksen — Stanley Gibbons, 1st edition £7.50.

Stoneham Catalogue of British Stamps — 8th edition £6.50.

Collecting British First Day Covers — A G Bradbury 5th edition £4.95.

GB Stamps of 1985 by Martyn Yeo — Horseshoe Publishing £1.95.



cations plc and include 40p for postage and packing. On the first day a limited number will be available with a first day cachet.

June Digest

Issued in June

2 June **Scottish Postal Board cards** SPB 15-20 — crofting; six cards in folder, 84p.

3 June **Medieval Life PHQ cards**, Nos 93 A-D, 14p each.

17 June **Medieval Life stamps** 17p, 22p, 31p, 34p.

designer: Tayburn Design Consultants/
Magnus Lohkamp

printing: Harrisons, photogravure, 41mm x 30mm, perf. 15 x 14, sheets 100, PVA Dextrin, phosphor-coated paper.

Bureau f.d. service alternative hand-stamp — Gloucester

special Domesday-spelling f.d. hand-stamps at 81 locations

presentation pack £1.25

(continued overleaf)

Cableship Postcard from Telecom

Telecom Technology Showcase are issuing a card on 18 June to mark the 25th anniversary of the Anglo-Canadian cable. The card shows a painting by Pears of c. 1939 of HMS Alert a Post Office Telegraph ship repairing deep sea cables. The ship was built in 1918 and sunk by enemy action with all hands in 1945. The card costs 10p and is available from Telecom Technology Showcase, 135 Queen Victoria Street, LONDON EC4V 4AT. Cheques should be made payable to British Telecommuni-

- 23 June **National Postal Museum card SS40** —
Mails to India 20p
24 June **ACP definitives** — 26p, 34p photo-
gravure Harrisons
24 June **New Standard Aerogramme**

Withdrawn in June

- 17 June **Safety at Sea stamps** 17p, 22p, 31p, 34p
Safety at Sea PHQ cards
Safety at Sea presentation pack

On 30 April all packs of Royal Mail Postage Labels were withdrawn from sale and the Christian Heritage prestige stamp booklet was withdrawn on 30 May.

Commonwealth Games Cover

A special souvenir cover will be available for those stamps specifically marking the Commonwealth Games. Costing 15p each (or £1.14 for the cover and the four stamps) this can be obtained at all Scottish Postal Board counters, philatelic counters and the British Philatelic Bureau. A special handstamp with an interchangeable date will be in use at Edinburgh Head Office for the sales period of 24 July to 2 August (the period of the Games). The reposting facility will operate to service orders: Special Postmark Duty, HPO, Royal Mail House, Brunswick Rd., EDINBURGH EH7 1XX.



Scottish Postcards for Crofting

On 2 June the Scottish Postal Board will issue six colour postcards representing crofting life. This is to mark the centenary of the Crofters (Scotland) Act which gave the small farmer security of tenure for the first time at a fair rent. Designs are based on six paintings commissioned from the Edinburgh-based artist Archie MacAlister.

The paintings are entitled:

1. Morning in Wester Ross
2. Hebridean Malt
3. Landing Island Sheep
4. Communications
5. Weather in Caithness
6. Island Lobsterman



The cards will be available in a descriptive folder and all text will be in both English and Gaelic. With the folder, the set is priced at 84p and it is available from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon St., EDINBURGH EH3 5TT (18p handling charge inland).

Two special handstamps will be used in connection with the cards from 16 to 19 June at Edinburgh and Inverness. These are obtainable under the reposting facility by writing to the Special Postmark Duty at the Head Post Offices concerned. There will also be a slogan postmark, first and second class, at Inverness from 2 to 23 June.

British Philatelic Bulletin

Editor Douglas N. Muir

The *British Philatelic Bulletin* is published monthly by the Post Office.

Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor at:

National Postal Museum
King Edward Building
King Edward Street
LONDON
EC1A 1LP

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British Philatelic Bureau
20 Brandon Street
EDINBURGH
EH3 5TT

Single copies from philatelic counters: 30p

Binders are available to hold 24 issues from the Philatelic Bureau price £4.00

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