BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The Royal Mail magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 49 Number 4 | DECEMBER 2011 £1.20

2011 stamp poll • Dahl preview • Church art



Making a welcome return, the Madonna 1st class stamp

BENN & GENTLEMAN • WIN PUZZLE PRIZES • HOUSE OF WINDSOR PREVIEW

Issues and withdrawals



Cover *The Madonna of Humility* by Lippo di Dalmasio (c.1390). A detail of this painting is featured on one of the two Madonna and Child Christmas stamps that have been redistributed each year since their issue in 2007

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2 December	**Issue** Harry Potter: Heroes and Villains Pack
31 December	**Withdrawal** Christmas 2010 Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamp Books, Generic Sheet **Withdrawal** 2009 Yearbook and Yearpack

2 2012 2012 2012 **2012** 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2(

5 January	**Issue** The Olympic and Paralympic Games Definitive Stamps, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamp Books, Coin Cover
10 January	**Issue** Roald Dahl: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Prestige Stamp Book, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards
10 January	**Withdrawal** FAB The Genius of Gerry Anderson: Stamps, Miniature Sheets, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamps Books
12 January	**Issue** Olympic and Paralympic Sports Cover Collection: Aquatics Coin Cover, Rowing Coin Cover
20 January	**Issue** Lunar Year of the Dragon Generic Sheet

Cover photograph: Lippo di Dalmasio, *The Madonna of Humility* © National Gallery, London

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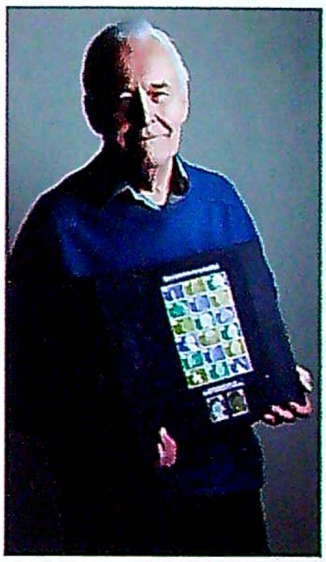
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Postbox and inbox

Aerial camera athletics?

Having read with interest the excellent Aerial Post Prestige Booklet, I have a question – how did the photo of the Coronation Aerial Post come about? It is taken from the air. Was the picture taken from a Zeppelin – for there were surely no helicopters or other photographic-bearing aircraft around then?

J H Witherow, by email

If you mean the aerial view showing the Bleriot over Windsor Castle, it is in fact a very realistic illustration, first published in *Look and Learn* children's magazine, Number 703, 5 July 1975.

First-class letter

Our notes from Hamel

Here in Boxford, Suffolk, the Aerial Post Centenary Miniature Sheet featured in August *Bulletin* has attracted especial interest. Our village postmaster, Richard Gates, is the grandson of the Richard Gates who in 1911 was the managing director of Graham-White Aviation Co, the company that operated Hendon Aerodrome from where the inaugural flight took off for Windsor on 9 September. I thought *Bulletin* readers would be interested to see a



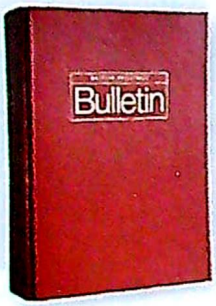
photograph of the mounted display of commemorative items that Richard currently has hung above his counter. At top left is the same photo of the pilot, Gustav Hamel, that features on the 68p stamp. A group photograph, similar to the one on the 1st class stamp, shows Richard's grandfather wearing a boater. On the back is a message, handwritten 100 years ago, which reads: "It was an event fraught with infinite possibilities, for it may prove but the starting point for many and great notable improvements in our methods of transport, the results of which cannot be anticipated."

David Lamming, Boxford

It's a shame we don't have space to show all the photos you kindly sent in. We have passed on your full letter to Peter Lister of the British Airmail Society and Douglas Muir, Curator BPMA.

Keep the mail coming...

The Editor of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* welcomes your letters and the senders of those published will receive philatelic delights as a thank-you. The sender of the 'First Class letter' award will also receive the *Bulletin* binder. Please note that Royal Mail cannot reply to all correspondence and reserves the right to edit for length. Send your letters to: The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail Stamps & Collectibles, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. Remember you can drop us an email too, to bulletin.enquiries@royalmail.com



Schoolboy snippets



Readers' early memories of stamp collecting have reminded me of my own 'debut', as a ten-year-old in 1943. In those days school chums would swap almost anything, including army coat buttons, badges, comics, pieces of aircraft and, of course, stamps. Among my swaps I obtained the 1847 embossed tenpenny and one shilling issue. At that age I had no knowledge of stamps, but I liked things to look neat and decided to trim off the paper surrounding the embossed centre! Ah, well – I still have them both as a reminder.

R Hibbert, by email

Glad you kept them! Above, we show the 1847 1s, on the Philympia stamp of 1970, to demonstrate the extent of your snippings.

Royal Mail News A comprehensive history

Kathryn Saville reviews a new book on the history of the postal service

It's strange to think that this is the first time that the colourful history of the Royal Mail has been given the attention it so richly deserves. In *Masters of the Post* we finally have a comprehensive and very timely account of an institution of which we can all be very proud.

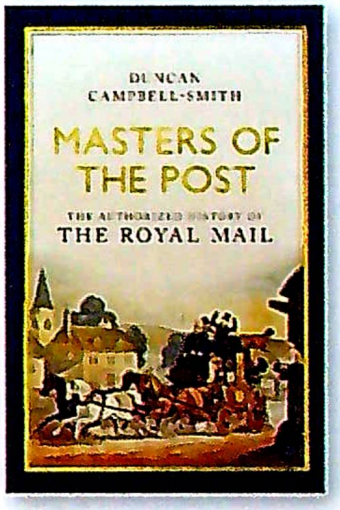
Duncan Campbell-Smith, a former journalist on the *Financial Times* and *The Economist,* has written about behemothic institutions before – his books include *Struggle for Take-Off: A History of British Airways* and *Follow the Money: The Audit Commission, Public Money and the Management of Public Services 1983-2008.* He is also a professional historian, holding the posts of Visiting Senior Research Fellowships at London University's Institute of Historical Research and at the Institute for Contemporary History at King's College.

It is with his historian's eye that Campbell-Smith traces the long journey of our postal service, which he divides into three parts – 'Arm of the State', 'War and Peace' and 'No Ordinary Business'. He begins with one of the many quirky events that are scattered through this sizeable (800 plus pages) tome: the 'recruitment' in 1868 of three cats to control the mice that were wreaking havoc in the Money Order Department, and an agreement that no more than a shilling a week would be spent on the felines' upkeep. It's a clear example of the level of detail that has been unearthed by Campbell-Smith's trawl though Royal Mail's archives.

Of course, our postal service is so deeply ingrained in our culture that it takes a leap of imagination to recreate the days before an official postal system was established, which is where the history starts. But from the extensive correspondence of the Paston family, the appointment by Cardinal Wolsey of Brian Tuke as first 'Master of the Posts' in 1512, through to Elizabethan maps of postal roads, the reader is given a clear picture of the early days of what was to become the Royal Mail.

From there on in, it's an entertaining account of the historical facts – the formation of the general post office in 1657, the move from mail carts to coaches and regular departure times, the slow demise of private posts, the impact of steam power, Rowland Hill's substantial reforms and on into the modern age. Twentieth-century developments are also covered in detail – the struggles of the war years, issues of industrial relations, Tony Benn's tenure as Postmaster General and his establishment of the National Postal Museum, the rise of the commemorative stamp, Dearing's overhaul, Thatcher's privatization U-turn and the recent Postal Services Bill. The book also includes some fascinating illustrations, an appendix listing all of the services' leaders since records began, graphs showing profitability of the business and the relative value of the postage stamp.

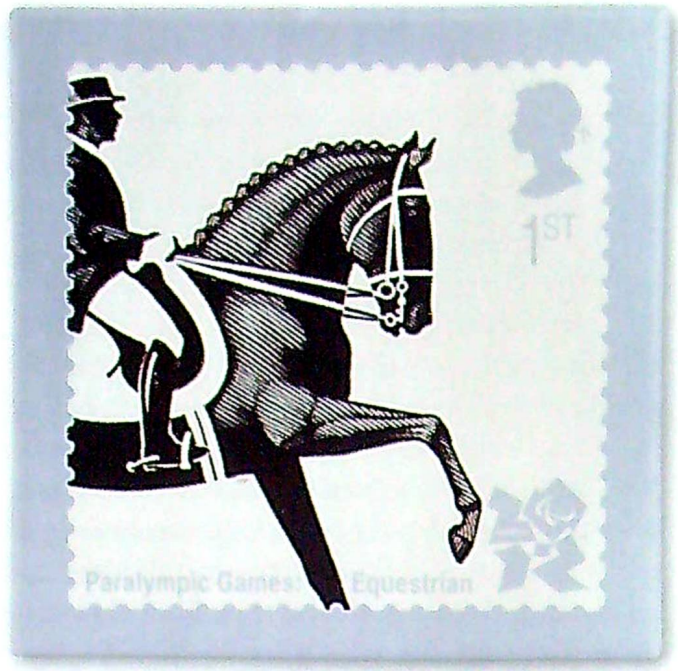
The author succinctly sums up: 'At all points in the story told here, across a great swathe of English and British history, the progress or otherwise of the postal service has held up a mirror to contemporary political life in striking ways.' For anyone interested in stamps, postal history or indeed the wider social history of Great Britain, *Masters of the Post* is a must • ▸



To order your copy of *Masters of The Post* at the special price of £19.99 including postage (rrp £30), please call 0845 313 4444, quoting PENA0290, and mention *Bulletin*

Stamps as art – right, the Equestrian Stamp Canvas and below, Framed Set of Olympic and Paralympic Games stamps of 2011 are available at www.royalmail.com/shop or by phone, 08457 641 641. Also available by phone are the Cufflinks and China Mug shown below, both from The Post Room gift range







Sports stamps on display For sports enthusiasts who think the Olympic and Paralympic Games stamps are just too exciting to hide away in an album, there are two stylish ways to hang them on the wall as commemorative artwork. Official London 2012 Stamp Canvasses are available in three designs featuring elegant stamp reproductions, enlarged to 30cm x 30cm, to make a neat yet striking decor statement. The Equestrian Stamp Canvas (shown above), Rowing Stamp Canvas and Track Athletics Stamp Canvas each cost £20. Also available are handsomely mounted and framed sets of the Olympic and Paralympic Games stamps of 2009, 2010 and 2011 (shown left). Frames measure 32cm x 18.5cm. Price £25 •



A cup that cheers A cup of Rosy Lee is extra-cheering when it comes in the bone china mug shown right (£9.95) – one of three designs from The Post Room, a new post-box themed gift range. To jollify the washing up there's a 100% cotton tea towel (£6.95) and the padblock (£5.95) also comes in handy in the kitchen for shopping lists. A neat red post box badge adorns the silver-plated cufflinks and faux leather wallet, and the resin money-box for grown-ups has all the details of an EII Type A post box (£29.95, £14.95 and £12.95 respectively) •



Potteresque souvenir To coincide with the conclusion of the Harry Potter series of films, Royal Mail is releasing a special souvenir pack of Heroes and Villains that will make a great stocking filler for fans young and old. The pack contains five Dumbledore and five Voldemort stamps (from the Magical Realms stamps issued in March of this year) and an exclusive double-sided colour poster. Price £6.95 •

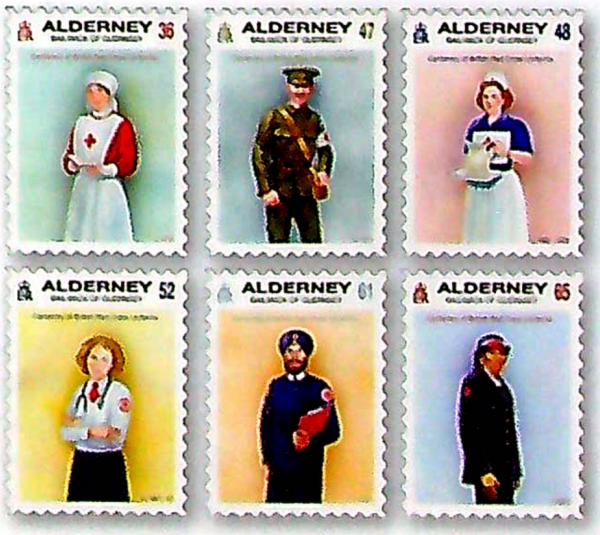
Stamp Scene from John Holman

Society anniversaries The Postal History Society celebrated its 75th anniversary by providing the displays at the Royal Philatelic Society London meeting on 29 September. This was just a few days before the actual anniversary: the first meeting was held on 24 October 1936. Some 45 members of the Society provided a varied range of material, introduced by the Society's President, John Scott. Brian Trotter, President of the 'Royal', commented that with such a fine array, there was certainly something on display to appeal to everyone. Richard Wheatley co-ordinated the displays for this meeting, attended by over 150 Fellows, members and guests present.

The Norfolk & Norwich Philatelic Society has been celebrating its centenary this year. A special centenary postmark, with a Maltese Cross as the centrepiece, was introduced on 13 October and will remain in use until 12 April 2012. Collectors should send covers with at least 1st class postage to Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB requesting handstamp No. 12295 and stating date required, which must not be earlier than the date the cover was submitted. This postmark has been announced in our companion publication, the *British Postmark Bulletin* •

New catalogues Michel has recently published a new edition of its South and Central Africa catalogue covering the issues of Angola, Ascension, Botswana, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Congo-Kinshasa (with Zaire), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nambia (and South West Africa), St Helena, Sao Tome & Principe, South Africa, Swaziland, Tristan da Cunha, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Price €79. Thousands of new stamps have been added since the last edition in 2007. There are many notable price increases for countries pursuing a reasonable issuing policy, and improved illustrations.

The new Michel Eastern Europe catalogue covers stamps of Belarus, Carpathian Ruthenia, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Russia, Soviet Union, Ukraine, and Western Ukraine. More than 150 new perforation varieties of Soviet Union issues are listed, over 69,000 prices are updated and 14,500 stamps illustrated in colour. Price €56. The Western Europe catalogue covers Belgium, GB, Ireland, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands with 67,000 updated prices and over 13,500 illustrations, many now in colour. The listing of the long-running Belgian 'Birds' definitives has been revised. Price €56. For details of all Michel catalogues contact Schwaneberger Verlag GmbH, Ohmstrasse 1, 85716 Unterschieleissheim, Germany or visit www.michel.de •



Guernsey honours Red Cross 2011 This year's centenary of the British Red Cross uniform is marked by six Alderney Stamps from Guernsey Post, showing how Red Cross uniforms have changed over the years. Available until July 2012, the stamps were designed by Robin ▸

Diary dates

December

6 Mail Train, a talk by Julian Stray, curator, at the British Postal Museum and Archive. 7pm, free entry. To reserve a place, call 7239 2570 or email info@postalheritage.org.uk. The talk follows an Open Afternoon (starts 1pm, free entry) of a series of talks and activities for those wishing to find out more about the BPMA and its collections.

8-9 MonacoPhil 2011, Monte Carlo.

January 2012

20 11am-6pm and **21** 10am-4pm York Stamp & Coin Fair, York Race Course, 10am-4pm. Admission free

28-29 Red Rose Postcard and Stamp Club Fair, Barton Village Hall on A6 north of Preston. 9.30am – 3.30pm. Entry 50p.

Carter and printed by Enschede in sheets of ten. The set costs £3.09 or £3.99 in a presentation pack, plus £1.40 p&p. Enquiries to: Guernsey Philatelic Bureau, Envoy House, La Vrangue, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 5SS, or see www.guernseystamps.com •

Auction news Sotheby's auctioned the collections of Lord Steinberg (1936-2009), who founded the Stanley Leisure company in his native Belfast. His success ensured that it became the fourth largest bookmaker in the UK, with 650 shops and 40 casinos. The company was floated on the London Stock Exchange in 1986. Awarded a peerage in 2004, Lord Steinberg's varied philanthropic work included support of many UK and Jewish organisations. Stamp collecting was one of the many activities he enjoyed at leisure, alongside cricket and art. The sale of his collection of British Empire Mint Multiples (6-8 September) totalled over £1.5 million, with 75 per cent of the lots sold. The top lot of the sale was the unique mint block of the Newfoundland 1927 De Pinedo Air Mail 60c Black. Estimated at £120,000-150,000, it sold to a private collector for £168,000 ($270,413). This block is the sole survivor from the issue of 300 stamps.

The second highest price achieved was for British Solomon Islands 1939-51 2½d. Magenta and sage-green Imperforate horizontally. One of the most important error blocks of King George VI's reign, it sold for £60,000 (estimated £60,000-80,000). Proceeds from the sale will go to a number of causes and charities with which Lord Steinberg had been associated, including the fund he started to rebuild Old Trafford, home of his beloved Lancashire County Cricket Club.

Spink's GB auction on 20 September totalled £422,275 and included a letter and envelope sent by Sir Rowland Hill to his brother Arthur in 1865. It made £1000 (est £800-1000). A fine four-volume collection of Edward VIII material including an envelope addressed by him as Prince of Wales, achieved £900 (£800-1000). There were several lots of modern errors. A 1965 3d Post Office Tower stamp with tower completely missing made £2900 (£2000-2500), and a strip of four of the 1967 Paintings 4d stamp with missing new blue colour omitted (only five known) realised £6,500 (£800-10,000). Spink will continue the sale of the 'Chartwell Collection' of Sir Cyril Humphrey Cripps (see September Bulletin, page 12) on 6 December when essays, proofs and issued stamps go under the hammer. A 'Winters Collection Series' auction will be held on 26 January 2012 •



1993 stamp featuring Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. 2012 is a good year for Dickens fans

Dickens of a good show Readers interested in Dickens may like to know of the exhibition 'A Hankering after Ghosts: Charles Dickens and the Supernatural', on show at the British Library in London until 4 March 2012. It examines Dickens' references to the supernatural and what they reveal about the author's personal and occasionally surprising ideas on the phenomena, reflecting the evolving scientific theories and beliefs of Victorian England.

The exhibition is in the Library's Folio Society Gallery, admission free. See www.bl.uk/whatson or phone 020 7412 7332 for more details. To find out about displays of The British Library's vast Philatelic Collections and

for viewing appointments, phone 020 7412 7635. Royal Mail marks the bi-centenary of the birth of Charles Dickens with a special stamp issue in June 2012. A number of characters from Dickens' books have already featured on four stamps marking the centenary of his death in 1970 and on the 1993 Christmas stamps •

Junior awards at Prestwick The Stamp Societies of South-West Scotland have held an annual Stamp and Postcard Festival since 1963, and this year's was held at the Societies' new meeting place at Prestwick Community Centre. The region's junior collectors have always been greatly encouraged and 2011 was no exception – three of them are shown right with trophies won this year.

The Barclays Cup and Minature cup for age group A of the Friends of Thematica Junior Competition, held at Midpex in July, went to Emma Hodge for her entry 'A Scottish Timeline'. Also in the Barclays Cup competition, in age group C, Claire Mitchell was awarded the Barclays Cup for her entry 'Let there be Light'. And at Autumn Stampex Lynne Mitchell won the Melville and Benham trophies in the British Youth Stamp Championships with her entry 'Bobbing along on the Canal' •







Above left: Emma Hodge with the Friends of Thematica's Group A Barclays Cup and Miniature Cup. Left: Claire Mitchell with Group C Barclays Cup from the same competition. Above: Lynne Mitchell with Melville and Benham trophies of the British Youth Stamp Championships

This month in history First taste of the PSB

On 1 December 1969 the Post Office issued the first of what are now known as Prestige Stamp Books. The £1 'Stamps for Cooks' book includes recipes on interleaving pages and on se-tenant labels attached to each pane of stamps. The front cover depicted a dish of baked stuffed haddock. The four panes contained 15 x 5d stamps (the 1st class UK letter rate), two panes of 15 x 4d (2nd class), and a mixed value pane of 6 x 1d, 6 x 4d and 3 x 5d stamps. On this pane, the 4d stamps had a phosphor band at left or right, rather than the normal centre band. The book was on sale at Post Offices in southern England and from the Philatelic Bureau, and exists stapled or sewn with thread – the stapled variety being much the scarcer of the two. In total over 385,000 were sold.



The next Prestige Stamp Book was sponsored by the Wedgwood company and was issued in 1980. Since then over 50 more PSBs have been issued covering subjects as diverse as Christian Heritage, British Rail, Stanley Gibbons, Beatrix Potter, James Bond and the Royal Navy Submarine Service •

The Big Friendly writer A preview of the new issue, celebrating the work of Roald Dahl

Any child growing up in the 1970s – and indeed their parents – will count Dahl's extraordinarily irreverent fictional creations as part of their literary education. Children are generally by far the most trustworthy individuals in his stories and grown-ups are pitiable. This has proved a popular approach – Dahl's books have been translated into over 40 languages and worldwide sales have topped 100 million. Royal Mail celebrates this remarkable achievement with ten stamps, the first special issue of 2012. Six stamps feature characters from six different children's stories by Dahl, as originally drawn by artist Quentin Blake. Four more stamps mark the thirtieth anniversary of Dahl's *The BFG* (The Big Friendly Giant) on the Miniature Sheet.

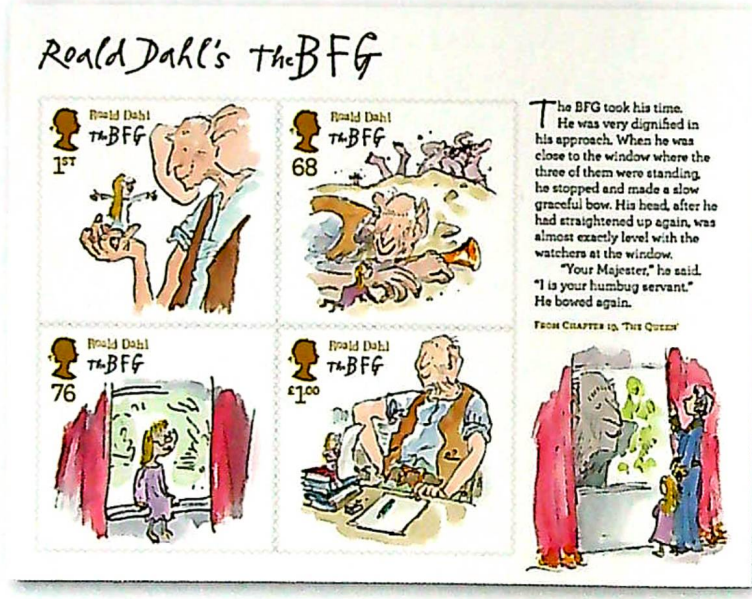
Stamp by stamp: The 1st Class stamp depicts the moment in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* when Charlie Bucket wins the golden ticket to visit Willy Wonka's factory – a story that has enchanted children the world over. The 66p stamp features the light-fingered but *Fantastic Mr Fox*. The 68p has *James and the Giant Peach*, full of anthropomorphic insects. The 76p stamp has the supernaturally gifted *Matilda* as its star. The £1 stamp shows *The Twits*, who enjoy being nasty to each other, animals and children... until, with the aid of the Roly-Poly Bird and the Muggle-Wump monkeys, the animals exact their revenge. Finally, the £1.10 stamp features one of *The Witches*, badly disguised by long gloves and a wig.

Blake's illustration of the pelican from *The Giraffe, the Pelly and Me* appears on the First Day Envelope (30p). The illustrated Presentation Pack contains the new stamps and *The BFG* Miniature Sheet on a separately designed carrier and inside

Roald Dahl Miniature Sheet Specifications	
Date of issue	10 January 2012
Number of Stamps	Four
Size of Sheet	115mm x 89mm
Design	Magpie Studio
Illustration	Quentin Blake
Stamp Format	Landscape
Stamp Size	37mm x 35mm
Printer	Cartor Security Printing
Print Process	Lithography
Perforations	14 x 14.5
Phosphor	All over
Gum	PVA



Right: four stamps on the Miniature Sheets utilise Blake's illustrations from the *The BFG* (The Big Friendly Giant). The right-hand border features an illustration of the BFG meeting The Queen



Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Fantastic Mr Fox, James and the Giant Peach, Matilda, The Twits, The Witches and The BFG © Roald Dahl Nominee Ltd; artwork © Quentin Blake 2004, 2001, 1999, 2001, 2010, 1997, 1983 & 2012

Roald Dahl Stamps Specifications

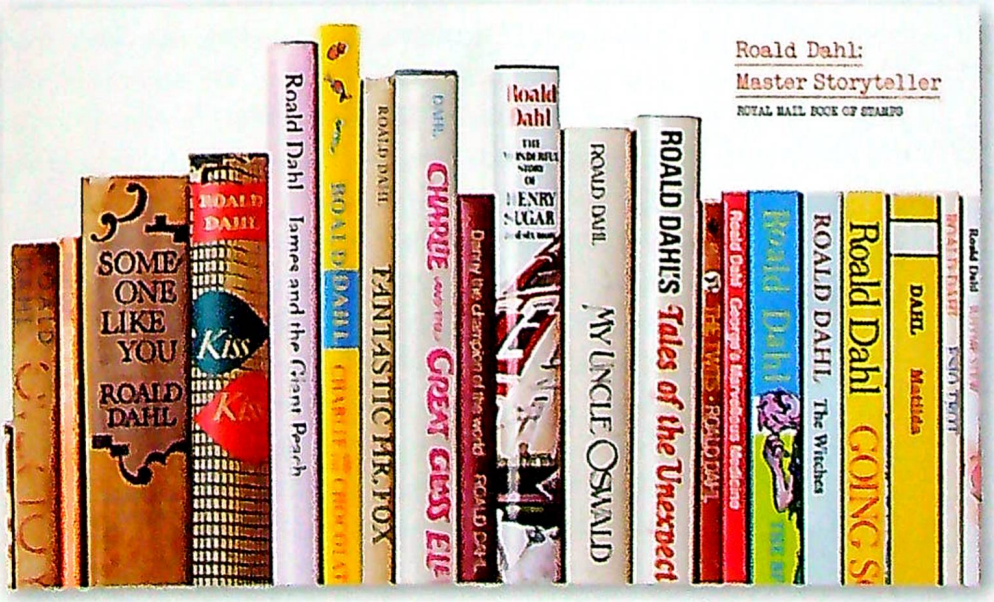
Date of issue	10 January 2012
Number of stamps	Six
Design	Magpie Studio
Illustration	Quentin Blake
Stamp Format	Portrait
Stamp Size	27mm x 37mm
Printer	Cartor Security Printing
Print Process	Lithography
Number per Sheet	25/50
Perforations	14 x 14
Phosphor	All over
Gum	PVA
Sheet formats	Sheets of 25/50, single designs

Roald Dahl prices

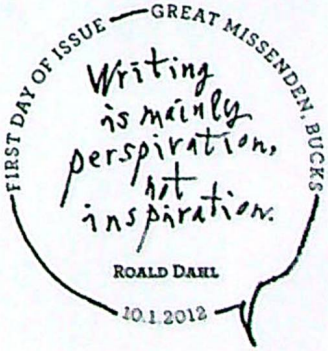
Stamp Set	£4.66
Miniature Sheet	£2.90
Presentation Pack	£8.10
Prestige Stamp Book	£11.47
First Day Envelope	30p
First Day Cover, Stamps	£6.07
First Day Cover, Miniature Sheet	£3.96
First Day Cover, PSB Pane	£4.03
Stamp Cards (11 in set)	£4.95



Donald Sturrock and Quentin Blake talk about Roald Dahl and his work. The delightful Prestige Stamp Book features four unique stamp panes and information about Dahl's books and his own life story – for more details on this charming PSB , see January *Bulletin* •



Above: Dahl's characters, as imagined by Quentin Blake, grace the new series of stamps. Left: Prestige Stamp Book Below and facing page: two pictorial postmarks





House of Windsor and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha concludes the Kings and Queens series

The sixth issue of Kings and Queens stamps is to be released on 2 February, the last in the series that has charted all the Royal Houses since the first pictorial representation of Henry IV in the 14th century, as shown on Kings & Queens I, Houses of Lancaster & York.

House of Windsor Stamps Specifications	
Issue date	2 February
Number of stamps	Five
Design	Atelier Works
Illustrations	Edward VII, 1902, and George V, c.1911, Sir Luke Fildes; Edward VIII, c.1920, Reginald Grenville Eves; George VI, c.1949–52, Denis Quintin Fildes; Elizabeth II, 1954, Pietro Annigoni
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	27mm x 37mm
Printer	Cartor Security Printing
Print process	Lithography
Number per sheet	25/50
Perforations	14 x 14
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA
Sheet format	Sheets of 25/50, single designs

House of Windsor prices	
Stamp Set	£4.00
Miniature Sheet	£2.90
Presentation Pack	£7.40
First Day Cover – Stamps	£5.28
First Day Cover – Miniature Sheet	£3.96
Miniature Sheet Press Sheet	£66.99
Cachet Cover	£9.99
Stamp Cards (10 in set)	£4.50

The House of Windsor set features nine stamps: five with portraits of our monarchs since 1901 and four on a Miniature Sheet that highlight significant individuals and events during their reigns. Strictly speaking, the monarchs of the 20th century belong to the House of Windsor *and* Saxe-Coburg-Gotha – because Edward VII, shown on the 1st Class stamp, took the dynastic title of his father Prince Albert. Edward was the longest serving Prince of Wales, as the son of the long-reigning Queen Victoria, until Prince Charles surpassed his record in April of this year. By the time he came to the throne in 1901, at 60, Edward VII was a popular man of the world and a keen sportsman. He reigned for ten years and on the last day of his life, in 1910, is said to have uttered his last words – 'I am glad' – on hearing that his horse had just one at Kempton Park.

It was Edward's son George V (1910-1936), featured on the 68p stamp, who changed the family name from Saxe-Coburg-Gotha to Windsor in 1917, in response to anti-German public sentiment and to clarify his position at the head of the burgeoning British Empire. George's reign was dominated by World War One and a radically changing political landscape; his private life by shooting and stamp collecting. His son Edward, on the 76p value,

succeeded him. Despite having been well prepared for kingship, Edward reigned for only 11 months before he abdicated, having caused a constitutional crisis by proposing marriage to the American socialite and twice divorced Wallis Simpson.

Somewhat reluctantly, Edward's brother Albert took his place on the throne. He chose to use his middle name and be known as George VI, as shown on the £1 value. He came to the throne at a moment when its public reputation was at a low ebb, but his qualities of quiet courage and loyalty restored the standing of the monarchy. When George VI died in February 1952, his young daughter Elizabeth flew back to London from Kenya as Queen Elizabeth II, shown on the £1.10 stamp. Next year marks the sixtieth year of her reign and to mark the Diamond Jubilee Royal Mail is releasing a definitive stamp issue on 6 February and a special stamp issue on 31 May.

Four new stamps on the Miniature Sheet show the members of Scott's 1912 expedition to the South Pole; Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother evoking the work of the Home Front in World War II; Bobby Charlton in the World Cup winners line-up of 1966; and an image celebrating the long-awaited opening of the Channel Tunnel in 1994. This Miniature Sheet is included with the five monarch stamps in the Presentation Pack. Details of the Cachet Cover will appear in your January *Bulletin* •

Below: the Miniature Sheet is made up of four new stamps featuring events and individuals from the period of the Windsor and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha monarchs

House of Windsor Miniature Sheet Specifications

Issue date	2 February
Stamps	1st, 68p, 76p, £1
Design	Atelier Works
Illustrations	British Antarctic Expedition, photographed by Henry Bowers in January 1912; Royal tour of bomb-damaged London, October 1940; England football team, Wembley 1966; Channel Tunnel, November 1990
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	27mm x 37mm
Sheet size	123mm x 70mm
Printer	Cartor Security Printing
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	14 x 14
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	PVA



Divine by design

A selection of religious art that has inspired the design of a variety of UK Christmas stamps



Above: the stamp featuring Louis le Nain's *Adoration of the Shepherds*, which was one of the three works on the first UK stamps featuring religious art

SINCE THE 1ST CENTURY the story of Jesus's birth and life has inspired creativity among all kinds of artists. Their devotional work has provided a rich source of images for Christian-themed Christmas stamps.

The painterly approach Britain's first stamps featuring religious art were issued for the Christmas of 1967. The *Adoration of the Shepherds* (Neapolitan), Madonna and Child by Murillo, and the *Adoration of the Shepherds* by the le Nain Brothers share the grandiose quality of the Baroque period and were probably painted within 20 years of each of other – between 1618 and 1640. Interestingly, both of the Adorations have had their attributions changed since the late 1960s. The Neapolitan Adoration (c 1630) was first recorded in Seville in the 1770s and may be the work of a Sevillian painter influenced by Velázquez. In 1967 it was attributed to the School of Seville but now carries the Neopolitan monicker. The Le Nain Adoration (c 1640) is now attributed by the National Gallery to Louis rather than all three brothers.

It wasn't until 2005 that religious paintings featured on stamps for a second time. Although the subject – the Madonna and Child – is universal,

Main photograph: Louis le Nain, *Adoration of the Shepherds* ©National Gallery, London





Above left: the three 1970 stamps inspired by the Psalter of Robert de Lisle. Above: the popular 2007 issue which is being redistributed this Christmas

this time the focus was international and demonstrates how different cultures interpret the Bible. The images include works from Haiti, Italy, Australia and the USA. They also span a wide range of artistic styles from Aboriginal to Native American and even unusual media, including in one instance an image made using coloured sand.

In 2007 two paintings of the Madonna and Child, by Lippo di Dalmasio (above, right) and William Dyce (above, far right), were featured on Christmas stamps. They were created in two very different ages but both convey the same strength and poignancy of this special relationship, even when miniaturised to stamp size. Bolognese artist di Dalmasio's *Madonna of Humility* was painted in the 1390s and is the earliest painting on canvas owned by the National Gallery in London. It has been damaged and repaired many times over the centuries, but the grace and the glow of The Madonna has survived – crowned with 12 stars against a disc of golden light and with the moon at her feet.

William Dyce's work looks as if it might have been painted shortly after the Dalmasio, but in fact is a Victorian composition in the Nazarene style, which was heavily influenced 15th-century Italian art. Both of these beautiful Madonna and Child stamps are being redistributed this year.

Pages of beauty The 1970 Christmas issue (above) took its inspiration from further back in art history. The three stamps feature images of the 'Shepherds and Apparition of the Angel', 'Mary, Joseph and Christ in Manger', and 'Wise Men Bearing Gifts' – all taken from the Psalter of Robert de Lisle. This great monument to the European Gothic style is among the finest manuscripts in the British Library's permanent exhibition and was first documented in 1339 but dates from even earlier in the century.

In 1991 illuminated letters from the 14th-century Venetian 'Acts of Mary and Jesus' manuscript (also known as *Vita gloriossime virginis Mariae atque venerabilis matris filii dei vivi veri et unici*), now in the Bodleian Library, were chosen as the subject matter (right). Dripping with the golds, reds and blues synonymous with illumination at the time, the stamp images depict ▸





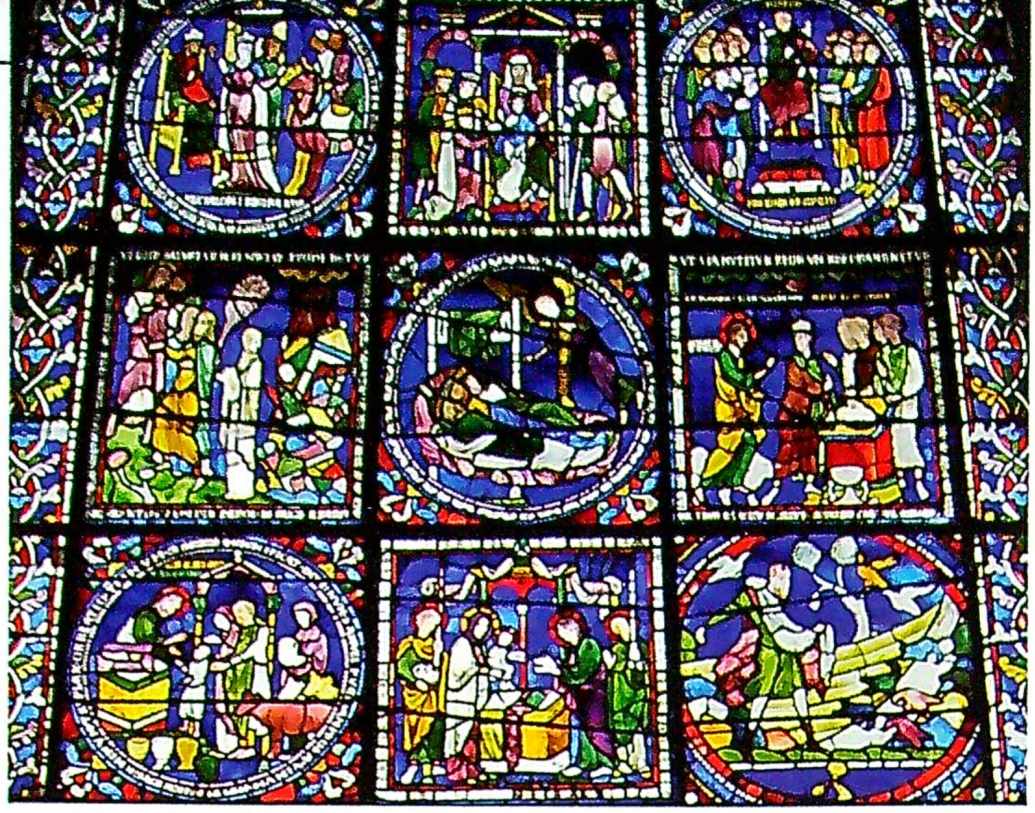
Left: the 1991 Christmas issue, inspired by the Bodleian's 'Acts of Mary and Jesus' manuscript, which includes the page shown above





Above: illuminated manuscript and stained glass in the Spirit & Faith issue of 2000.
Below: one of the 1971 stamps featuring sections of a 13th-century window in Canterbury Cathedral, as shown above, right





the 'Adoration of the Magi', 'Mary and Jesus', the 'Holy Family and Angel', the 'Annunciation' and the 'Flight into Egypt'. Also hailing from the Bodleian Library, one of the 2000 Millennium Projects – Spirit and Faith issue shows illuminations from the 12th-century Latin Gradual, originally from Downpatrick (above, left).

The art of glass The Spirit and Faith issue also included a close-up of the 'Virgin and Child' 20th-century stained glass window in St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Suffolk. The Christmas issue of 1971 (left) again uses images of stained glass, featuring three sections of a 13th-century window in Canterbury Cathedrals, shown above – 'The Dream of the Wise Men', 'Adoration of the Magi', and 'Ride of the Magi' show the beginning of the Christmas story. Some of the earliest and finest stained glass of its kind in Europe is found in this window and its partner – there were originally 12 of them but only two remain, ten having been destroyed in the time of Cromwell.

Just over 20 years later, in 1992, stained glass was the inspiration once more (below) – this time the work of two artists working in the 20th

Below: two of the Pre-Raphaelite inspired stamps of 2009















Above and left: the 1992 issue showing the stained glass artistry of Paul Woodroffe and Karl Parsons

century: Karl Parsons and Paul Woodroffe. Parsons (1884-1934) was responsible for the 'Madonna and Child' (St Mary's, Bibury), 'Shepherds' (All Saint's, Porthcawl) and 'Angel Gabriel' (St James, Pangbourne). Woodroffe (1875-1954) designed 'King with Gold', and 'Kings with Frankincense and Myrrh' (both at Our Lady & St Peter's, Leatherhead).

The 2009 Stained Glass Windows issue employed the medium to great effect (facing page, bottom right). It featured the work of Pre-Raphaelites, showing windows created by William Morris ('Angel Playing Lute' in the Church of St James, Staveley, Kendal); Henry Holiday ('Madonna and Child' at the Church of Ormesby, St Michael, Great Yarmouth, 'Joseph' from the Parish Church of St Michael, Minehead, Somerset, and 'Shepherd' in St Mary's Church, Upavon, Wilts); and Sir Edward Burne Jones ('Wise Men' – Church of St Mary the Virgin, Rye, East Sussex).



Above: the boss stamps and, another example of these extraordinary creations from St Helen's Church, Norwich. Below: a contemporary vestment embroidery from the V&A and the 1976 stamps that celebrated this form of religious art

The bigger picture Church decoration featured on the 1974 Christmas issue, which has church roof bosses as its subject (above). The stamps show the Adoration of the Magi (York Minster), the Nativity (St Helen's Church, Norwich), and two Virgin and Child compositions (from Ottery St Mary and Worcester Cathedral). These intricate works of art were carved and painted between 1224 and 1480 and illustrate the rich imaginations of the regional craftsmen in a time when there was little visual stimulation.

Medieval embroidery was the subject for the 1976 Christmas issue (below). The embroideries, showing the Virgin and Child, Angel with Crown, Angels Appearing to Shepherds and the Three Kings, come from vestments used by clergy in the 14th century. With such a heritage of beauty and diversity of form, there seems no doubt that religious art will continue to appeal to designers and collectors •





Stamp revolutionaries

Tony Benn and David Gentleman were responsible for massive philatelic changes in the 1960s. Here they discuss how it all came about

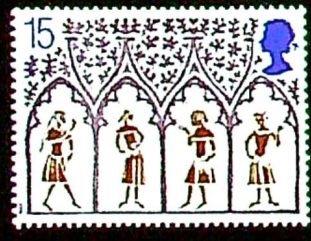


Above: the first commemorative Christmas stamps, commissioned by Benn in 1966, were designed by two sixy-year-olds as part of a competition that attracted over 5,000 entries

Below: a stamp from each of Gentleman's Christmas issues – 1973, 1977 and 1989







IT IS OVER 50 YEARS SINCE Tony Benn and David Gentleman made their very different but equally dramatic entrances into the world of stamps. In their respective spheres of politics and design they proceeded to make a huge difference to the way that UK stamps are perceived, and in the process became friends. December seems as appropriate a time as any to catch up with them. Tony Benn was responsible for commissioning the first commemorative British Christmas stamp in 1966 (ref Vol 48 issue 4) during his well documented period as Postmaster General from 1964 to 1966. And among the 101 stamps designed for Royal Mail by Gentleman are arguably the most popular Christmas stamp issues – 1973, 1977 and 1989.

Those contributions to Christmas stamps were some of their less controversial achievements. The 1960s was, of course, a time when all conventions were looked at with a view to modernisation. Benn and Gentleman's work together just pre-dates the point in time in 1967 when the Wilding photographic portrait of the Queen was superseded by Machin's bas-relief sculpture. During their collaboration in 1965 they were the first to question the size and very inclusion of the Queen's head on all stamps, and this was viewed with considerable suspicion by traditionalists.

Benn began to consider the role of stamps as soon as he became Postmaster General: 'I thought we should develop them – I realised that stamps were a form of art that circulated around the world. I discussed it with my officials who were very conservative and I decided to put out a note asking whether any designers had ideas, and David responded.'

An album of ideas

Gentleman recalls, 'I'd already designed two or three stamp sets for Royal Mail and I found it difficult to place anything else alongside the Queen's head [then the Dorothy Wilding portrait]. It was a clash. So I suggested that commemorative stamps would be much better without the Queen's head at all... I also thought stamps should be more beautiful, more interesting. So Tony said: "Why don't you come up with an album to show whether there's any truth in these ideas?"' That Benn respected Gentleman's work was crucial to this phase. In fact, Benn describes Gentleman as 'one of the best – if not the best – stamp designers in the country'.

Benn still owns one of the three existing copies of the original Gentleman album, the same one that caused all the fuss when he showed it to The

Photography by Paul Stuart. Interview by Uma Ram Nath


Rulers of Great Britain since the Act of Union

Queen in 1965. But was the issue of stamp reform really about politics or simply a question of artistic endeavour – or both? Benn says, 'The reform was about the way we could show Britain's story through stamps... actually it was the design that was important.' Gentleman is equally adamant: 'It was purely a design matter for me.'

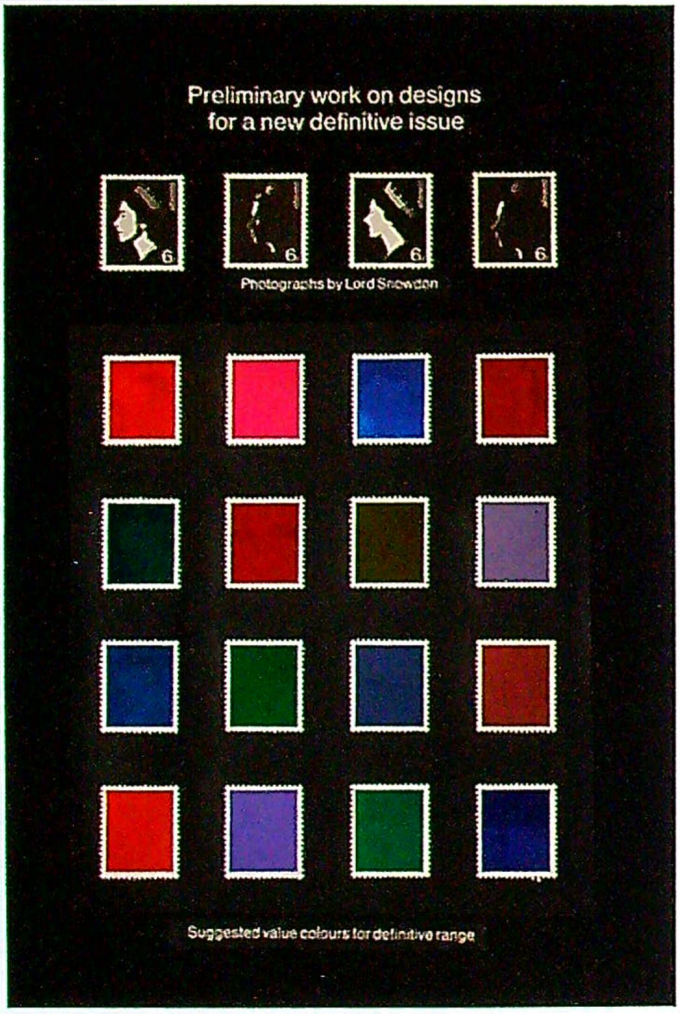
A design challenge

Gentleman called his album *Essays in Stamp Design*. It featured artwork with the Queen's head replaced by the words Great Britain or UK, with royal ciphers and crests. But it also included innovative designs carrying a small silhouette of the Queen, Machin's version of which is still used to this day.

It emerges that Benn didn't tell Gentleman that he was showing his work to the Queen. 'You told me afterwards!' Gentleman laughs at the memory.

Benn's account of his meeting with the Queen to show her non-traditional designs is legendary. 'I began by saying, "I understand that you have banned any change," and she said: "No, not at all". So I said, "I've got some new designs." And she said: 'Can I look at them?' So I showed them to her. And then I said, "Do you see any difficulty about these?" And she said "No. Not at all".'

In a neat tactical move, Benn showed the Queen the racehorse stamps first and he laughs as he recalls that he knew these would really interest her, given her love of riding. The result was an agreement in principle for subtle changes to be made, and for more experimental design and a profile portrait to be used on all stamps. It seemed that Benn and Gentleman had made significant progress.



Below: Gentleman's preliminary work on new designs for definitives included portraits by Lord Snowdon and suggestions for new colours

If Benn thought he had won support for his ideas, he was soon reminded that this was but one battle in a 'war'. 'By the time I got back to my office,' he continues, 'Buckingham Palace had rung the Prime Minister [Harold Wilson], who'd called my office to say the Queen wouldn't have it.' He wasn't hugely surprised, given the context. 'Historically, there was a controversy about having an adhesive stamp at all because, of course, one couldn't lick the back of Queen Victoria's head!'

Not the retiring types

Whatever the motivation, Benn and Gentleman gave us the foundation for the stamps we use today. Given the chance would they do it all again?' Feisty as ever, Benn says: 'Yes, I would. I feel I helped liberate the Post Office from restriction, and I found a brilliant designer, too.' The admiration between the two men is mutual. 'You were a marvellous enabler,' says Gentleman. 'Almost everything that one put on a stamp at that time was potentially revolutionary. It was extremely exciting.'

Both men continue to follow their callings.





Left: Gentleman points to designs that were later used for the 1969 Post Office Technology issue.
Above: one of Gentleman's design proposals that used a symbol – in this case a Royal Coat of Arms – instead of the Sovereign's photograph

Gentleman has designed coins to mark the 200th anniversary of the abolition of slavery and the 100th anniversary of the Entente Cordiale. His work includes books, murals, prints and watercolours.

'Earlier in my life I was interested in expressing other people's ideas as graphically and powerfully as I could,' he explains. 'Then I moved towards expressing my own.' Benn is still spreading the Socialist word with his one-man theatre shows, which are universally sold out. How does he find the inspiration to carry on doing this. 'I believe that the media and the political class underestimate everybody's intelligence,' he replies.

Have they been bitten by the 'collecting bug' themselves? Benn says he doesn't think of himself as a collector but then goes on to reveal: 'I keep a lot of archives. Since I was Postmaster General I've kept every stamp they have sent to me.' Gentleman has archives, too, 'but I don't collect anything,' he says. Benn also has all of Gentleman's books. 'He's one of our most distinguished artists. We've become friends and, through the Stop the War Coalition, we've been able to continue to working together.' (Benn is President and Gentleman designed some of the group's campaigning images.) It's clear that the two men have enjoyed talking over past times and still have a strong desire to work for change •

> ‘Since I was Postmaster General I've kept every stamp they have sent to me’



Left: Gentleman's 1977 Christmas set is still much admired for its graphic simplicity

Nothing new under the sun?



The Christians' Tale issue of 1999, includes King James and 'his' Bible of 1611

One of the most fascinating aspects of the King James Bible is the effect it had on the English language – an effect that endures 400 years later. The aim of the translation was to communicate The Bible clearly to 'the man who pulls the plough'. To that end many common phrases were used and the language was chosen to match the impact of original Greek and Hebrew texts. However, it would be an over-estimation to say that hundreds or even thousands of idioms were first published in the 1611 version.

Linguist David Crystal, author of *Begat: The King James Bible and the English Language* (OUP), found 257 phrases still used in modern English – although only 18 that were unique to the King James Bible, as follows:

East of Eden
Genesis 4:16

Know for a certainty
Joshua 23:13

How are the mighty fallen
Samuel 1:25

A still small voice
Kings 19:12

The root of the matter
Job 19:28

To everything there is a season
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Beat their swords into plowshares
Isiah 2:4

Set your house in order
Isiah 38:1

Be horribly afraid
Jeremiah 2:12

Get thee behind
Matthew 16:23

Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven
Matthew 6:20

Suffer little children
Matthew 19.14

No small stir
Acts 19:23

Turned the world upside down
Acts 17:16

A thorn in the flesh
Corinthians 12:7

Unto the pure all things are pure
Titus 1:15

Much study is a weariness of the flesh
Ecclesiastes 12:12

Let us now praise famous men
Ecclesiastes 44:1

The other 239 common phrases cited by Crystal have been used in previous translations which King James instructed his translators to consult. Much of the most resonant language echoes the translation work of Wycliffe and Tyndale, including such familar expressions as these:

Out of the mouths of babes
Psalms 8:2

A labour of love
Thessalonians 1:3

A rod of iron
Psalms 2:9

A law unto themselves
Romans 2:14

Blessed are the peacemakers
Matthew 5:90

The skin of my teeth
Job 19:20

Pour out your heart
Psalms 62:8

From strength to strength
Psalms 84:7



A right royal year

Richard West looks back at the highlights of 2011, when philately shone through

THE WEDDING of Prince William and Kate Middleton was celebrated all over the world this year and many overseas postal bureaux issued stamps to mark the event, several using photographs taken during the wedding as the basis for their designs. At a time when the daily news is filled with financial gloom, it is gratifying to see that collectors are still enthusiastic about such historic events and are also keen to support the various exhibitions, both national and international. A good sign of this was the long queues at Autumn Stampex.

Above: the happy event of the Royal Wedding was marked by stamps from many countries

New format, new subjects A particular focus at Stampex was the Hytech Post & Go machines, providing stamps not available elsewhere. Both the Machin design and the four sets of Birds of Britain seem to have sparked the imagination of collectors, perhaps because of their relatively short-term availability from machines, or the fact that these could well represent the way in which all stamps will be sold in the future.

Royal Mail has provided a rich mixture of issues – while the suite of royal wedding items stands out this year, other popular themes include Locomotives, the World Wildlife Fund, the Centenary of the First UK Aerial Post and the Thunderbirds miniature sheet. The latter was printed using the microlenticular process by Cartor in association with Outer Aspect of New Zealand.

Shows and winners Autumn Stampex hosted the national competitions with a very high standard from all exhibitors, of which about half were showing at the national level for the very first time. The judges were pleased to award ▸

Facing page, clockwise from top left: Thomas the Tank Engine Miniature Sheet, Arnold Machin Souvenir Sheet, Post & Go Birds of Britain IV, Centenary of Aerial Post Press Sheet of Miniature Sheets, WWF Miniature Sheet FDC including the 2011 Europa stamp, two Hytech machines and the Thunderbirds Miniature Sheet, printed using a microlenticular process

seven Large Gold and twelve Gold medals. The award for the best exhibit went to Arthur Woo for 'The 1859-1865 French Colonies "Eagle" issue', while the best exhibit in just one frame was that showing 'Pioneering Postage stamp Separation in Britain 1840 to 1854' by Ray Simpson.

The Association of British Philatelic Societies held its national exhibition and competition in Sheffield at the beginning of May. Again a high standard was achieved, with the award for the best exhibit going to John Davies for his exhibit called 'A Jubilee Reminiscence', which looks back to the jubilee of the Penny Post in 1890. Midpex followed in July – this well-established event, which focuses more on the specialist societies, had moved to a new venue at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre near Leamington Spa, which proved ideal. Among the exhibits were the competitions arranged by The Friends of Thematica: these include the Barclays Cup competition for young collectors up to the age of 18 (see page 135). There were 50 entries, clearly indicating that there are still many enthusiastic young stamp collectors. This fact was reinforced by the 35 entries in the Stamp Active competition for young collectors, which were shown at Spring Stampex.

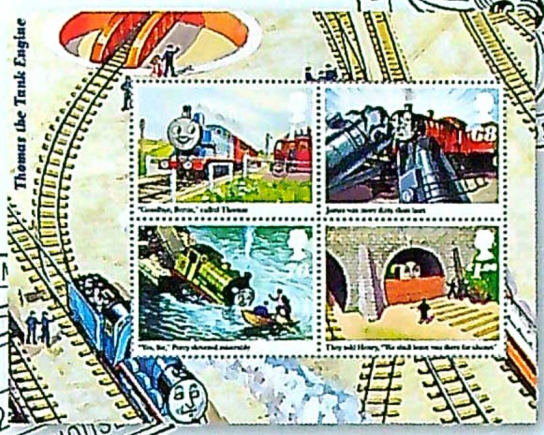
Internationally there were a number of exhibitions at which British collectors competed, most notably Indipex in New Delhi in February. Here three of the British exhibitors were awarded Large Gold medals, while two of the British exhibits achieved Large Gold at Philanippon held at Yokohama in Japan at the end of July and beginning of August. The staging of this exhibition was all the more remarkable, given the tragedy that had struck Japan a few months earlier.

One of the year's most remarkable exhibitions, entitled 'A Meeting of Queens', took place at the Museum of Communications in Berlin over three weeks in September. The majority of the known examples of the first stamps issued by Mauritius – the 1947 1d red and 2d blue 'Post Office' stamps – were brought together for the first time and included those in The Royal Philatelic Collection and the Philatelic Collections of the British Library. While internationally renowned, the status of the Mauritius Blue in Germany is legendary.

While exhibitions devoted to our hobby are absorbing and demand detailed organisation, a focus on reaching out to new groups of collectors is also important. With this in mind, the National Philatelic Society made the rather brave step of taking a stand at the Ideal Home Show in London's Earls Court last month, as this *Bulletin* went to press (more details in your January issue).

Remarkable sales Perhaps unsurprisingly, the 2d 'Post Office' was the star item in the first of a series of auction sales to be held by Spink of 'The Chartwell Collection' of Sir Cyril Humphrey Cripps, who died in 2000. Cripps' fortune from the family metal production business formed a remarkable collection. The unused stamp, which Sir Humphrey had purchased in 1972 for £29,000, sold for £1,053,090. Another remarkable item from the collection, a bottom right hand corner of the sheet example of the Penny Black, printed from plate 2, on a cover dated 13 May 1840, realised £219,000.

The demand coming from China for Chinese and Hong Kong stamps resulted in some amazing auction prices during the year. It seems that ▸


Thomas the Tank Engine


In June 1967 Royal Mail introduced a new definitive stamp design. Arnold Machin's bas-relief portrait of HM The Queen has been acknowledged as a classic icon of British design.
1ST
Arnold Machin 1911–1999


1st Class
up to 100g
002011 9 51840 04


1st Class
up to 100g
002011 9 51840 04


1st Class
up to 100g
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1st Class
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1st Class
up to 100g
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THUNDERBIRDS
41
60
88
97
SUPERMARIONATION






AMAZON ALIVE
WWF
WWF: Safeguarding the Natural World

records are being constantly broken, such as the £712,000 paid for a block of four of the un-issued 1968 stamp that featured a message from Chairman Mao to the Japanese Workers. Another un-issued stamp from 1968, to mark the Great Victory of the Cultural Revolution, sold for £200,000. A corner strip of three of the $5 inverted surcharge on 3c revenue stamp realised £439,000, while a normal pair of the stamps fetched £274,000.

Among the world's rarest stamps are a number with the central design printed upside down. One such is the United States 24 cents airmail stamp of 1918 featuring the Curtiss 'Jenny'. An example of the 'inverted Jenny' was sold this year for £217,000.

Another of the scarce inverted centres – the 1854 four anna stamp of India, with the portrait of Queen Victoria printed upside down, sold for £122,000. Also from India, the First Anniversary of Independence 10 Rupee value of 1948 unused showing Mahatma Ghandi, overprinted 'SERVICE', went for £125,000.

However, auctions do occasionally provide rather unexpected results: in 1973 Bhutan issued a set of seven stamps in the form of playable gramophone records. Dismissed as gimmicks at the time, a set sold for £245 at auction.

Great influencers The Philatelic Congress of Great Britain, this year held at Southsea, recognised some outstanding achievements. Britain's Gavin Fryer, Koichi Sato of Japan, and Raymond Todd of Australia signed the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists. The Congress Medal for service to the hobby was awarded to John Davies, in recognition of his dedication to promoting stamp collecting among the young. The Stamp Active Network makes a similar award each year, and for 2011 this went to Jean Wood who sadly died just a few weeks later.

Another note of regret this year came with the announcement that plans for a new home for the BPMA are abandoned. And, of course, 2011 has been a year of change for Royal Mail – as the Postal Services Bill completed its passage through Parliament, the way is now open for privatization. Meanwhile *Bulletin* looks forward to an exceptional philatelic year ahead, with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and The Queen's Diamond Jubilee offering much to celebrate in the world of stamps •



The cute winner of last year's stamp poll was the dormouse, from the fourth Action for Species stamp issue

Time to vote in your readers' poll

As we come to the end of another year, it is the *Bulletin* tradition to ask readers to vote for their favourite stamps. We value your opinion, so please take a few minutes to study the stamps shown on the next three pages. It's simple and your vote will give you automatic entry into a special prize draw for a leatherbound version of the 2011 Year Book.

How to vote Just write on a postcard the number shown beneath the bottom left corner of your favourite individual stamp and then the names of your top three sets. To be included in the prize draw, you should include your name and address on the card, of course. Please send your votes to 2011 Stamp Poll, *British Philatelic Bulletin,* 1st Floor, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ to arrive by 10 January 2012 •

2011 Stamp poll Vote now for your favourites

11 January
FAB – The Genius of Gerry Anderson



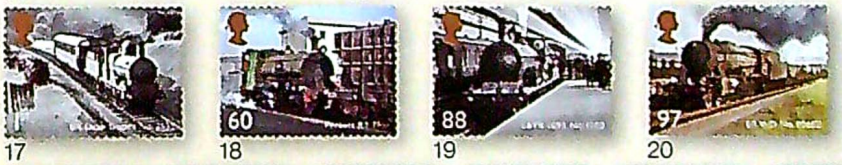
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

24 January
Post and Go Birds of Britain II



11 12 13 14 15 16

1 February
Classic Locomotives of England



17 18 19 20

24 February
Musicals



21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28

8 March
Magical Realms



29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36

22 March
WWF



37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50

12 April
The Royal Shakespeare Company



51 52 53 54 55 56

21 April
The Royal Wedding



57 58

5 May
Morris & Co



59 60 61 62 63 64

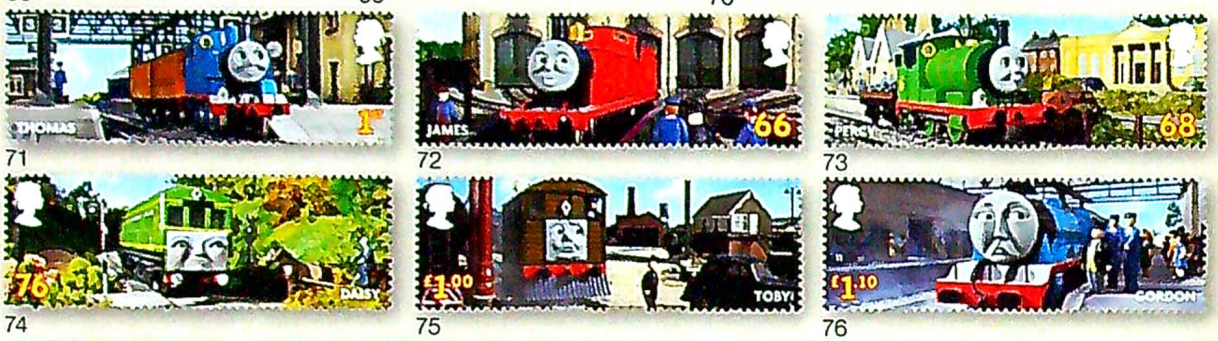
19 May
Post and Go Birds of Britain III



65 66 67

68 69 70

14 June
Thomas the Tank Engine



71 72 73

74 75 76



77 78 79 80

27 July
London 2012 – Olympic and Paralympic Games III



81 82 83 84 85

86 87 88 89 90

23 August
The Crown Jewels


91


92


93


94


95


96


97


98

9 September
Aerial Post


99


100


101


102

15 September
Kings and Queens – The House of Hanover


103


104


105


106


107


108


109


110


111


112

16 September
Post and Go Birds of Britain IV



113



114



115



116



117



118

13 October
UK A-Z Part 1

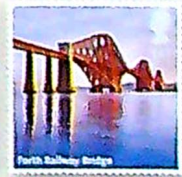

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8 November
Christmas 2011

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Find out how to vote on page 122



Who knows most about the post?

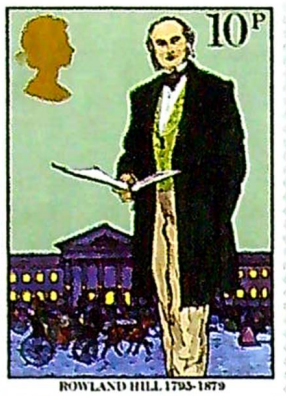
A quiz about postal history - with excellent prizes

Inspired by the publication of the authorized history of the Royal Mail, *Masters of the Post* (see page 101) we thought we'd set you a longer puzzle challenge for Christmas. You may know your stamps but how familiar are you with the intriguing history of our postal service?



1 What was a portmantle?
2 Who launched the very first Penny Post in 1680?
3 In which of Jane Austen's novels does the following quote appear? *'The Post Office is a wonderful establishment... So seldom that a letter, among the thousands that are constantly passing about the kingdom, is ever carried wrong.'*
4 What was the name of the street at the centre of the postal network until 1829?
5 For how many years did Francis Freeling head up the Post Office?
6 Who was Indian Peter?
7 Who was famously refused permission for a private visit to the St-Martin's-le-Grand Post Office before 1839?

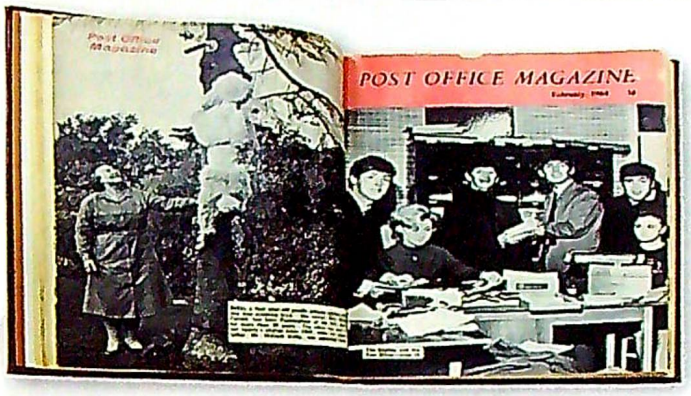


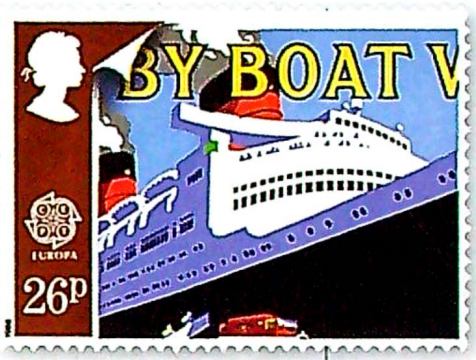


8 About whom were the following words written? *'For seventeen years he did nothing at all but kill animals and stick in stamps.'*
9 What was Benn's bank?
10 What percentage of the Post Office's staff were female by the end of World War II?
11 Where were headquarters of the Post Office's electrical engineers who helped Bletchley Park intercept wartime codes?
12 To what kind of establishment did Freeling ban the delivery of mail in 1825?
13 Who were the Carriers of Cosmography?
14 When did the postal service become a statutory corporation?
15 What percentage of the Royal Mail cannot be privatized, as determined by the Postal Services Act 2011?



Prize draw rules and regulations 1 The closing date is 10 January, 2012. 2 Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 3 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. 4 Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question or solve a crossword, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. 6 Promoter's decision on any aspect of the promotions is final. No correspondence will be entered into. 7 Entry implies acceptance of these rules. 8 Prizes are subject to suitability and availability. The promoter reserves the right to a) substitute a prize of equal or greater value if circumstances so demand and b) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. 9 Winners' names are available 28 days after closing date; send an SAE to Melanie Williams, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail 1st Floor, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. The promoter is Royal Mail Group Ltd, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.





16 Who led the postal service during World War I?

17 Name the first electronic sorting machine used in the UK? (Its nickname was the Rattler.)

18 Where did the Great Train Robbery take place?

19 What was the name of the previous substantial robbery from the Post Office, which took place in 1952?

20 Who was the last mail guard?

21 In what year was the Post Office Tower officially opened to the public?



22 And in what year was the Post Office Tower closed?

23 When were the first regional stamps issued?

24 Seen on the ocean wave, what does RMS stand for?

25 In what year did The Beatles appear on the front of the Post Office magazine, having helped postal workers to sort their fan mail?

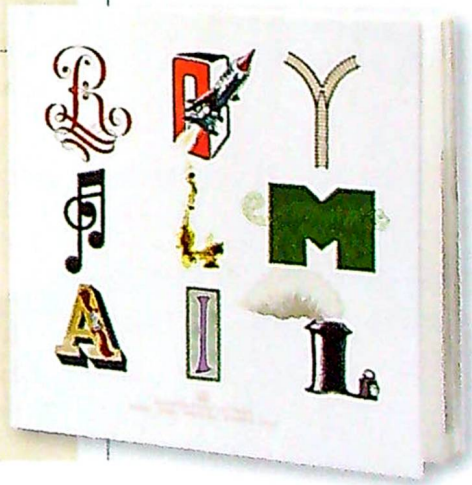


Below: the lavishly illustrated 2011 Year Book will give the lucky winners a whole year's issues at their fingertips

How to enter the prize draw....

Once you've finished the quiz, arrange the initial letters of the answers to questions 3, 11, 17 and 21 (surname only) to form something that Santa Claus would rather not see on his sleigh! Send your answers and name and address to: Christmas Quiz, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, 1st Floor, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ to arrive by 10 January 2012. Usual rules and regulations apply – please see facing page.

The sender of the first correct entry drawn from the postbag after the closing date wins the Royal Mail 2011 Year Book. And ten lucky runners-up will receive a bumper selection of topical special issue stamps.



October Puzzle Page solutions and winners

Identify: 2007 1st Class, Miniature Sheet marking the 40th anniversary of the first Machin definitive. **Winner** A F Parker, Paxos, Greece. *Knowledge:* a) Stoke-on-Trent. b) Minton. c) 5 June 1967. **Winner** G Coates, Chelmsford.

Crossword: Across: 1 Seaside. 5 Oboe. 10 Ego. 11 Aubergine. 12 Theft. 13 Tribal. 15 Priory. 17 As well. 18 Scorer. 20 Ogles. 23 Methodist. 24 Vie. 25 Dodo. 26 Comrade. Down: 2 Evoke. 3 Shatterproof. 4 Debut. 6 Brigade. 7 Even. 8 Red tape. 9 Trainspotter. 14 Plaster. 16 Incited. 19 Rhino. 21 Lived. 22 Amid. *Solution:* Definitive. **Winner** J Cherrington, Tipton.



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