

January 1996

British Philatelic Bulletin



Royal Mail

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British Philatelic Bulletin

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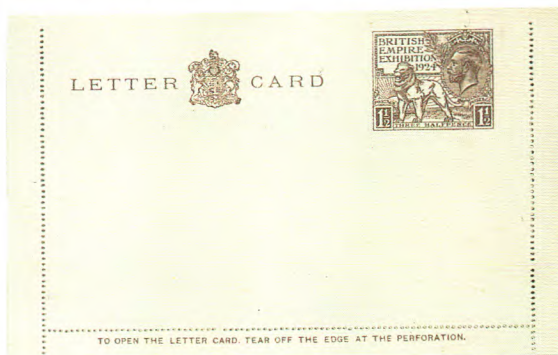
Front Cover: Vanity Fair caricature of 26th Earl of Crawford by Sir Leslie Ward ("Spy") reproduced by permission of the National Portrait Gallery, London. See pages 135 & 146.

Contents

In My View – The Editor interviews Francis Kiddle, President of the Royal Philatelic	132
Exhibition News – Spring Stampex; Stamp '96; Norwex '97	136
Look Before You Lick! – Matt Hinton looks at 1st and 2nd class NVI stamps	142
Royal Mail News – 1996 Greetings Stamps; Stamp Books Update, etc	148
Printed Postage Impressions – Ron Negus provides further information	150
Another Year – the Editor looks back on 1995 and forward to 1996 events	152
Philatelic Museum proposed for Glasgow – Post Office plans announced	153
Stamp Scene – British Thematic Association, new Machin Club, ABPS News	154
Book Reviews – European Stamp Design, Stoneham Catalogue, Congress Handbook	156
Railway Photographs at NPM – Colin Gifford display	158
Competition – Win Queen Victorian 10s stamp, catalogued at £3250!	159
January/February Digest – Forthcoming issues and withdrawals	160
Events – Stamp Fairs and Exhibitions during January and February	160

Main Feature

Twentieth Century Postal Stationery – Part 3 George V Special Stationery	139
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Colin Baker examines Registered Envelopes, Field Service Cards, and the 1924/25 Wembley Exhibition Commemorative stationery

Lettercard for British Empire Exhibition, Wembley 1924

In My View...

1. Francis Kiddle, interviewed by John Holman

During 1996 we will be publishing a number of interviews with leading figures in the philatelic world, asking them about their own collections and how they see the hobby now and in the future. We start with Francis Kiddle, the current President of the Royal Philatelic Society, London.

I met Francis at "the Royal" in mid-October shortly after adding his signature to the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists at the Philatelic Congress and opening new premises of Cavendish Auctions in Derby. Francis travels widely to philatelic events throughout the UK and overseas.

I began by asking about the genesis of his collection. He started collecting at age six, largely as a result of the influence of his brother Charles (still an active collector), recalling an Egyptian stamp showing King Farouk making an impression on him "as it was bigger than the run of the mill stamps." As with most collectors, he moved on from "All World" collecting to concentrate on Commonwealth and later "certain aspects of GB and Commonwealth". He recognises the pleasure of general collecting despite the vast number of new stamps issued each year by over 200 postal administrations.

Getting Going

I asked how he thought most people got started in the hobby, and what advice he would give new collectors. He believes "family is still the key influence in introducing children to stamp collecting, although nowadays probably through aunts and grandmothers rather than fathers and brothers." He doesn't decry first day covers if they serve to bring people into the hobby – "fdds look pretty and can attract grandchildren". However, the key is to progress beyond the fdc stage.

Older people often start collecting as a result of their own childrens' interest, or see stamps as an extension of an existing hobby or their work – "people with an interest in birds go on to form thematic collections." He cited Frank Jones (President of the National Philatelic Society), an engineer, noted for his collection of "Bridges on

Stamps", and Charles Goodwyn (Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection) whose interest in Chinese stamps (and all things Chinese) was stimulated by a lecture on the history of China. Francis believes that for many philatelists "history has to come into it somewhere".

He advises young collectors not to start with new issues of a particular country but with a packet of 1000 worldwide stamps and the Stamps of the World catalogue. "They should play with the stamps" – learn to handle them, identify where they come from and stick them in a simple printed album. "Something will catch the eye", he says, and interest will grow in certain areas. For new adult collectors, he recommends joining a local society to meet other collectors and pick up useful knowledge. Local societies are now "much more accessible than in my youth" and have often taken the place of local stamp shops which have gone in many towns.

Literature

Before becoming President, Francis was Librarian of the Royal where books and journals occupy some 5000 feet of shelving. His own philatelic library takes up about one-tenth that total, but is still a resource of some importance. He buys at least two new books a week. Francis has strong views on philatelic books and believes their expense discourages collectors. He would like to see many new titles on How to Collect at about £1 a book, along the lines of the publications of the British Philatelic Trust. In particular he would welcome a clear guide on mounting a collection. Such a guide could result from a workshop at which successful collectors give "practical demonstrations" of the systems they use.

He is an advocate of loose-leaf catalogues but thinks traditional catalogues will, in time, be superseded by listings on CD-Rom as collectors become more computer literate.

Francis keeps the journals of all 40 societies he has joined, "scanning everything" as it arrives but having a "five-year pile of magazines to go through properly". The only magazine he "reads cover-to-cover" is *The London Philatelist*, "for its good mix of articles". He doesn't scan or read the general philatelic monthlies which I find surprising as they contain many useful articles. He does, however, occasionally look at this *Bulletin*, and that of Australia Post.

He admires the philatelic writings of James Grimwood-Taylor and Barrie Jay, and has "enjoyed reading Robson Lowe over many years".



Societies

Francis believes in local societies where “you learn the mechanics of collecting and meet people with the same general interest as yourself”. Whilst local societies welcome new adult collectors, he thinks it a pity that so few really want children as members. He hopes this will change. Specialist societies differ in that “here you meet people with the same specific interest”. He urges anyone starting a new collection to join the relevant society – to learn about the subject and to acquire material through club packets and auctions where “bargains are to be had”. He believes specialist dealers have a vital role to play in such societies.

Most local societies are, he feels, still run in an old-fashioned way and the Trust needs to tackle this problem, hopefully with a published guide to running local societies. Specialist societies are, in general, better run and financed. He sees growth in the specialist area but the locals are “going downhill”. Many will not be around in 10 years time; he will be “sorry to see them go”. Professional people, who have traditionally run such societies, are having to work much longer hours and cannot give much time to organised philately. Francis himself is the exception to the rule.

I asked about the Royal – was it elitist as is often said. “No”, came the reply, “many of the members are very ordinary collectors. The Society is unique but not elitist”. It is a self-sufficient society, run for the benefit of its members, with its own property, collections, library and museum which more collectors should take advantage of.” He conceded that “it was elitist 10 years ago but not now. New members are encouraged – they are always introduced to the President, welcomed at the

Francis Kiddle (centre) opening the new premier of Cavendish Auctions, Derby, September 1995. Left James Grimwood-Taylor, right Geoff Manton.

first meeting they attend, and shown round the museum.”

The National Philatelic Society also has “an important role, its library is its biggest asset, with a good auction and packet service. It is accessible and good value for money.” Francis urges all collectors to join the Royal and/or the National and at least one local and one specialist society.

Specialised Collecting

Francis started to specialise “really about age 16, again as a result of competition with brother Charles”. He now maintains about 20 specialised collections and proudly proclaims that he has never sold any of his collections, only duplicate material. The 350-page “1890 Jubilee of the Penny Post” collection is his favourite as it is “a period that offers everything I want in serious philately and represents the height of the Victorian age”. He would have liked to have lived 100 years ago.

He delights in “finding the unknown” – any item not easily traced in the literature or perhaps not recorded at all. “Basically I am a researcher”, he states, “if I have an item and don’t understand what it is, I love finding out about it”. Recently he spent two months researching some Swedish locals he had acquired. Cinderellas are another passion. That the President of the Royal is also Chairman of the Cinderella Stamp Club must mean that cinderella collecting is now a legitimate branch of philately.

Francis leads a busy professional life working long hours. Yet, by careful organisation, he finds time for his family, his own collection, and for

organised philately. He spends six hours a week on his own collection, but a staggering 30 hours a week helping to run philatelic organisations – all unpaid and for the benefit of his fellow collectors! As well as the Royal, he is involved with the British Philatelic Trust, his local society, and national and international exhibition judging. It is an impressive record of service.

In deciding what goes into his collections, he has a simple rule – “I include whatever is pleasing to me”. He sees postal history and philately as one and the same, and does not stick to rigid rules about having just mint or used stamps. Stamps used on covers figure largely in his scheme, also proofs, essays, specimens, and “collateral material”. He doesn’t list what he has or wants, simply relying on a good memory. He mounts his material as he researches it and has over 4000 pages completed. But there is still a backlog – “several tea-chests full” awaiting attention. He has written-up in ink, typewriter, and stencils (“very slow”), but now uses a word-processor. He dislikes remounting material, so pages written up in ink remain so. Francis uses SG Senator Standard album pages, placed in protectors and stored in “old record boxes”. He doesn’t use album binders.

Francis mounts all his stamps with hinges. His reasoning is that none of material is that modern, and therefore the loss in value is negligible. However, if he was collecting modern material seriously, eg Machins, then he would use the transparent Showguard type mounts, as there is no point in throwing away good money. He mounts individual stamps or blocks onto a backing card: “Thus if I need to remount them, it is only the backing card which receives the

second mount. As far as covers are concerned, I use the large corner mounts which one licks to moisten the adhesive. I do not like the self adhesive type of mount as the adhesive does spread with time through the album page. One other point, all my sheets are kept within protectors. My reasoning is that stamps are more likely to be damaged from handling them – catching other stamps when handled in a pile of pages – than any effect from the protectors, but not all my protectors are ‘archival’.”

Exhibitions/Museums

Francis first went to Stampex in the early 1960s and to his first “international” at Olympia in 1970 – he recalls the moon rock on display (man landed on the moon the previous year). I asked if there might not now be too many exhibitions? “No, we can’t have too many as long as they are successful”. He wants to see more outside London and is very pleased that a “national” exhibition is planned for Newcastle upon Tyne (November/December 1996). He believes Stampex had become staid at the Royal Horticultural Halls and looks forward to the new venue in Islington which he hopes will prove more accessible than Victoria. He didn’t go to Stamp ‘95 at Wembley but heard good reports of it and hopes to get along to Stamp ‘96.

He is happy with Earl’s Court as the venue for the London 2000 international. “Alexandra Palace in 1990 was a gamble that paid off because of good organisation and excellent weather.” But he feels that London really lacks an excellent exhibition centre, everything under one roof and easy to get too. He praised the recent

1890 Penny Post Jubilee envelope and correspondence card.



international in Singapore as interesting for the general public as well as serious collectors. "It was well laid out and the organisation adaptable to the needs of visitors – extra sales booths being opened as required." Philexfrance in 1989 was another fine exhibition but his favourites were those in the Netherlands in 1988 and 1994 which "catered very effectively for youth".

He likes our own National Postal Museum's "range of exhibits" and hopes to see it expanded in the future. In particular a good library is needed. He had recently toured the new museum in Singapore which took three years to put together – "a good mix of local culture and stamps", with plenty of interactive displays for children and adults. "Exhibitions and museums must", says Francis, "provide things for visitors to do, not just look at."

He spoke of progress at the British Library but is frustrated by the "lack of access" to the Philatelic Collections – with appointments needed to see most material. "They are", he says, "too conservation conscious... things have improved but there is still a long way to go."

Royal Mail and British Philatelic Trust

Francis feels that Royal Mail (RM), the "major player in British philately", still needs to do more to encourage collecting in the wider sense. This could be done directly by RM staff, or through the BPT. He commented on the many changes in top management in RM's Stamps/Philately department in recent years – "it becomes difficult to know who is in charge". He urges the appointment of someone with philatelic knowledge and experience and likely to stay in post as a "Public Relations link". Collectors, dealers and philatelic organisations can use this person (and his/her staff) as a point of contact. Francis finds that in modern business "the best people at selling are those enthusiastic about what they are selling" – a point he thinks RM needs to pay more attention to.

He welcomes the BPT's future involvement in popularising the hobby. With the Association of British Philatelic Societies, it must, at the same time, strengthen the infrastructure of the hobby. Growth in numbers and improved facilities go hand-in-hand. With the BPT providing professional and financial backing and ABPS the human resources, it should be possible to reverse the decline. The image of the hobby needs changing, it must become much less a male preserve. Longer-term, Francis hopes, that TV companies will take an interest – catering for

some 3 million people who collect stamps in some way.

People

Francis emphasises that philately is very much about people and says we should make more of famous or influential people who are collectors. He was pleased that Olympic athlete Fatima Whitbread (collector of Norwegian stamps) opened Stamp '95. He cites actor Leslie Phillips, and John Cadbury (of Cadbury's chocolate) as collectors. We should "promote people already in the public eye as evidence of the appeal of stamp collecting. The greatest boost to the hobby was George V – he made it the hobby of kings." Not only was George V was a serious collector, but the great interest he took in the hobby gave it acceptability. Francis regards him as the major influence in British philately.

He cited the Earl of Crawford (1847-1913) and Alfred F Lichtenstein (1866-1947) as two of the greatest ever philatelists, but would not be drawn on who are today's top philatelists. Yet he singled out Robson Lowe's "tremendous contribution" to the hobby. Many give unstintingly of their time and knowledge; their sterling efforts would easily earn them public recognition in other areas. It is time philatelists nominated such people for the honours list.

Personal Satisfaction

Francis Kiddle's enthusiasm for stamps and the hobby is all too obvious. He is one of a relatively small number of collectors who retain widespread interests and make time for their own collection and for the benefit of others. Election as President of the Royal has given him the greatest satisfaction in his "philatelic career". What two items in his collection, I asked, gave him the most pleasure. "That's easy", he answered, "a pen and ink drawing of the Platypus stamp of Tasmania, produced by De La Rue in the 1880s, and a presentation envelope for the 1890 South Kensington Penny Post Jubilee Exhibition."

I ended, as on *Desert Island Discs*, asking Francis which philatelic book and stamp he would take if cast away on a desert island. He chose the 1st edition of the Williams Brothers' *Fundamentals of Philately* – "not easy reading but most informative", and a supply of the 1866 1d Stamp Duty issue of Queensland – "a glorious design with endless possibilities for plating, checking flaws and shades". I think he would be happy on his desert island.

Exhibition News



Spring Stampex 1996

Stampex moves to a new venue this month after 25 years at the Royal Horticultural Halls. The exhibition will be held at the Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, Islington, London N1 0QH on 24-28 January. The BDC is a short walk from Angel underground station (Northern Line); Upper Street is served by the following bus routes: 4, 19, 30, 38, 43, 56, 71A and 73.

The exhibition will be open from 12.00 (Noon)-19.00 on 24 January, 10.30-19.00 on 25-27 January, and 10.30-18.00 on 28 January. Admission will be £3 on the opening day, £1.50 other times. Free tickets (except opening day) are available by phoning the Stampex office – 0171 490 1005.

Help British Paralympic Team

The British Paralympic Team has achieved marvellous results and enjoys a reputation as one of the most successful sporting teams to have been produced in the UK. The British Paralympic Association is responsible for the co-

ordination of the British team and is primarily involved in the corporate sponsorship of the games and pursues other avenues to raise funds. With this work in mind Stampex has set a challenge to help raise funds, working closely with the BPA and the Royal Mail Olympic sponsorship team. A five-metre area will be marked out on gallery level to represent the pit of the long jump (not including run-up area!) and the aim is to fill this with used postage stamps. This kiloware will then be sold by weight and the amount converted into cash and presented to the BPA. On the first day and the Saturday Paralympic athletes from the British team, will be attending spring Stampex.

Please help raise funds – bring along your used postage stamps. Anyone coming to Spring Stampex with used postage stamps will get in FREE.

Love and Romance

Spring Stampex has not taken place before St. Valentine's day for some time, so the organisers

are arranging a beautiful display of Valentine cards and postcards. One of the UK's leading dealers, Eric Etkin of Argyll Etkin Limited, has kindly agreed to display his personal collection of Valentines. This includes some particularly rare and interesting cards.

Judith Holder, author of *Sweethearts and Valentines*, has also kindly agreed to exhibit her collection of Valentine cards and postcards. Both displays will be on the Gallery Level.



Valentine card from the Sweethearts and Valentines display

For Feline Fanciers

Retired PTS member, John Fosberry, has been an avid collector of cats depicted on stamps and postcards and will be displaying his extensive collection on the Gallery Level. There will also be a display of sculptures of cats which will delight and inspire cat lovers.

For Machin Specialists

Royal Mail has chosen Spring Stampex as the venue for the first ever public displaying of an "Album" of colour trials and proofs from its museum. These "stamps" are not usually available for inspection and part of the material will relate to the work undertaken to establish

the standard colours of Royal Mail definitive stamps. An expert on the display will be on hand to guide visitors and answer specific questions.

Olympic Theme

The theme of the exhibition will be the centenary of the modern Olympic Games, the organisers working in association with the Society of Olympic Collectors. Many frames of Olympic stamps, postmarks and related philatelic material will be displayed and there will be an exhibit of Olympic memorabilia and artefacts from the Olympic Museum in Lausanne, Switzerland, the British Olympic Association; and Brent Council. The last-named are loaning one of the torches used to bring the Olympic Flame from Greece to Wembley in 1948. It is hoped that sporting personalities will attend the exhibition.

Royal Mail Participation

As always Royal Mail will have a stand at the exhibition, where staff from the British Philatelic Bureau will be on hand to answer questions and the full range of stamps, books and related material will be on sale. The Robert Burns stamps will go on sale during the exhibition – on 25 January. A special postmark will be applied to mail posted at the Royal Mail stand. Collectors unable to get to the exhibition can submit covers to receive the postmark to: London Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, LONDON EC1A 1BB. Request the Stampex postmark and state date(s) required. Covers should be submitted not later than the date of the postmark required.

Autumn Stampex, the last held at the Royal Horticultural Halls, Westminster, attracted some 11,744 visitors, a slight increase on Spring Stampex 1995. The organisers were pleased so many children attended. The Youth Activity Area was busy throughout the exhibition and contact made with several schools not previously associated with any national collecting organisation.

Mail by Rail display

David Harrop will provide a display relating to the carriage of mail by train. David's previous displays at Stampex have proved very popular with visitors.

Stamp '96

Following the success of Stamp '95, a second exhibition – Stamp '96 – will be held in

Exhibition Hall 2 of the Wembley Exhibition Centre on 25-28 April. Sponsored by Royal Mail and Stanley Gibbons, the 1996 show will occupy some 5000 square metres, allowing more stands and several large sites for new features and attractions. The organisers anticipate some 5-10,000 more visitors than last year.

Virtually all the dealers who attended Stamp '95 will return, many with enlarged stands. Many new dealers, both UK-based and from overseas, will attend, also further overseas postal administrations, bringing the number of standholders to well over 100.

The exhibition aims to attract a wide range of visitors including specialist, casual and lapsed collectors, and especially new recruits of all ages. Two well-patronised 1995 features will be expanded – the free valuation service and the daily seminar programme. It is hoped to have up to eight talks each day on a wider range of subjects.

Visitor Centre

A major innovation will be a centrepiece Visitor Centre encompassing three services. A pavilion will house an information centre where all the leading philatelic organisations will be represented. A series of philatelic workshops will be conducted by leading experts, and a technical centre will demonstrate all the latest video and computer products, stamp detection equipment, and include a collectors' library.

Stamp Printing & Displays

Visitors will be able to see stamp printing demonstrations from a working press – this will be of interest to specialists as well as the general collector. The number of display frames will be increased from 30 to 100 allowing a major exhibition of rare stamps and material relating to two popular thematic subjects. The displays of Wembley, exhibition, and airmail stamps and postal history were examined and admired by many visitors at Stamp '95. A souvenir cover and cachet will be available at Stamp '96.

For Young Collectors

Stamp '96 will encourage young collectors, schools and families with a range of features including "Design-a-Stamp", Children's Workshop, Competitions, Treasure Hunts and giveaways. The well-used creche facility will be expanded.

A charity auction will be organised, again benefiting The Children's Society.

Journey of a Letter Display

David Harrop will mount a display entitled "From Writing Desk to Letter Box" – showing the journey of a letter from time of writing to delivery. David's display "From Post Boy to Airmail" at Stamp '95 was much admired.

Pre-show publicity

Over 1 million complimentary tickets will be distributed to collectors in the UK and overseas by a variety of channels, including the customer databases of Royal Mail, Stanley Gibbons and other Stamp '96 standholders, leading philatelic magazines, Post Office Counters, W H Smith branches, stamp shops, philatelic societies, and schools.

A number of competitions, with publicity for the exhibition, are being arranged in the national radio and children's TV, in the national press, and relevant magazines.

Norwex 97

This exhibition which commemorates the 350th anniversary of the Norwegian Postal Service will be held at the Sjolyst Trade Fair Centre, Oslo on 16-21 April 1997. It will comprise a specialised world exhibition for postal history and aerophilately, governed by FIP regulations. The first Bulletin and entry forms are now available (enclose 75p for postage) from the British Commissioner: Brian Sole, 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, Esher, Surrey, KT10 0QG.

Exhibition Study Group

Members attending the Annual Convention of the Exhibition Study Group (23-24 September 1995) enjoyed displays and talks on the 1890 Jubilee of Postage Stamps Celebrations (by John Davies), Philatelic Exhibitions, 1934-38 (M Graham-Bonnallic), and Ideal Home Exhibitions (Deborah Ryan). Guest of Honour at the Annual Dinner was Richard Watkins, Managing Director of Stanley Gibbons Ltd. Don Knight presented a cine film about the White City Exhibitions, 1908-14 and later use of the Stadium, including scenes of its demolition in the late 1970s. At the Group's stand at Stamp '96 Alan Sabey will show Wembley material, mostly 1948 Olympics and 1966 World Cup, plus some rare and unusual material from the 1924/5 Empire Exhibition. For details of the Study Group send a stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary: Bill Tonkin, 23 Bramley Way, WEST WICKHAM, Kent, BR4 9NT

Twentieth Century Postal Stationery

COLIN BAKER

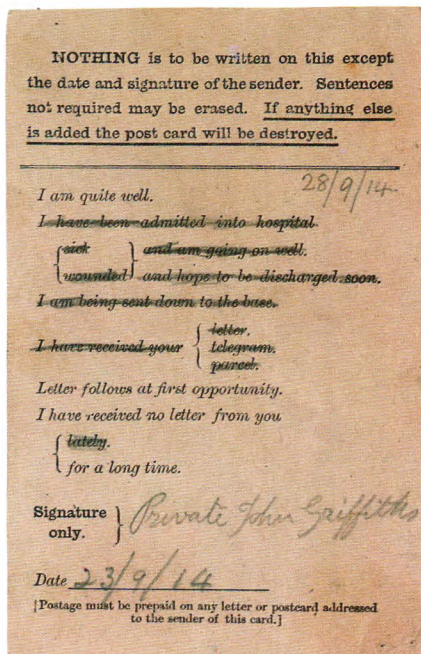
Part 3. George V, Special Stationery

Changes to Registered Envelopes

The postage on registered letters naturally followed the same increases and decreases in postage rates as those for the letter post, with the added complication of an increase in the basic registration fee to 3d in June 1922. Envelopes were prepared to match the new rates, impressed with combined postage and registration stamps appropriately valued. In June 1920 the cost of these combined stamps became 4d (2d postage plus 2d registration). Because registered envelopes were expensive to produce, old stocks of the 2d forces issue and the 3d and 3½d normal issues were used up by adding 2d, 1d or ½d embossed stamps directly beneath the dual registration and postage stamp. In 1921, following further postage rate increases to make the combined registration and postage charge 5d, 3d embossed stamps were similarly added to old stocks of 2d forces envelopes, while 2d and 1d stamps were added to the normal 3d and 4d issues respectively.

Minor changes were made to the layout of registered envelopes during the years of George V's reign, two of which are worth noting. In 1923 the size of the envelope (given as letters F, G, H or K) was printed in the box reserved for the registration label and in 1935 a space was set aside on the reverse of the envelopes for the sender's name and address. This was to ease problems of returning registered letters that the PO found to be undeliverable.

From November 1915 members of the armed forces on active service were allowed free postage, but not free registration or other PO services. Therefore the standard registered envelopes could not be used, since they included the basic cost of inland postage. Rather than overprint these, it was decided to prepare a special Forces Envelope impressed with a new registration fee stamp, similar to that used for all the Victorian envelopes. A new 2d George V die was prepared, the stamp being printed in black on an otherwise standard registered envelope. This special issue came into use late in 1915.

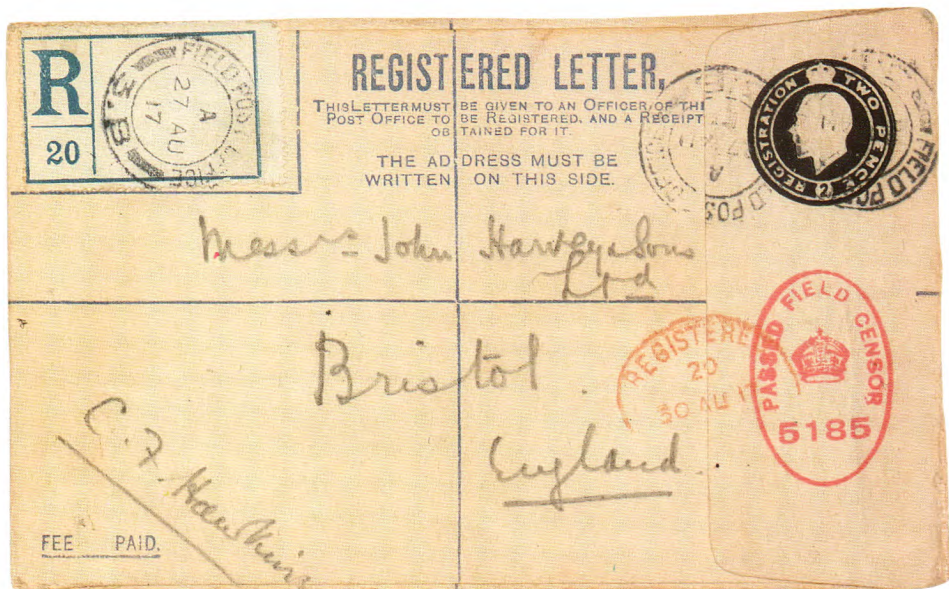


Although field service cards carried a 1d stamp, servicemen were given a free issue. To ease censorship the reverse carried short sentences, those which were not true being deleted by the sender

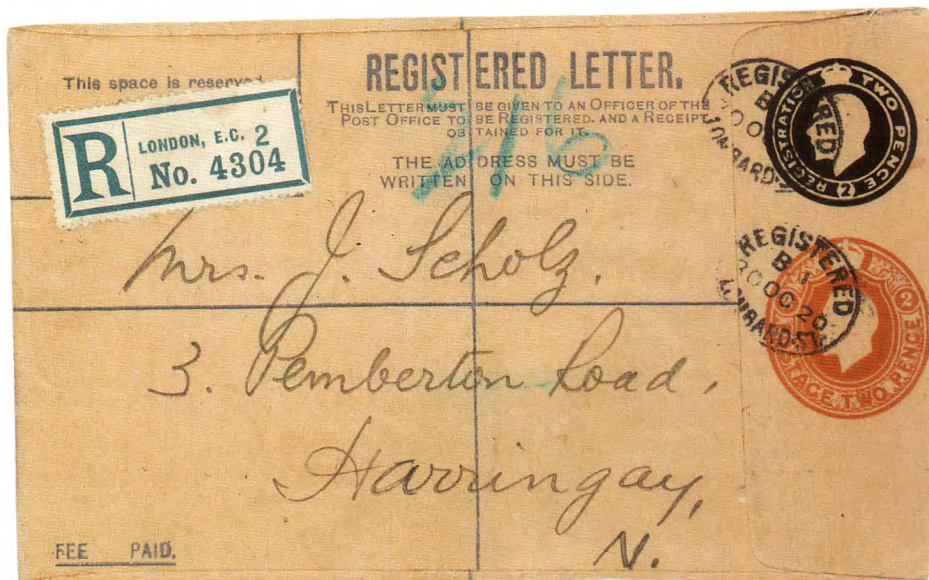
The Field Service Card

In 1912 the War Office proposed the introduction of a simple postcard printed with short messages indicating the health and well-being of the serviceman sending the card. Sentences could be ticked or deleted as necessary and providing nothing else was allowed to be written on the card, censorship would be unnecessary.

The cards were headed "Field Service Card" and were to be distributed free to the troops, but to avoid the possibility of the PO treating them as unpaid mail on delivery in this country it was



The forces registered envelope (top) only carried a 2d reistration stamp, as postage was free to servicemen on active service. Stocks of these were uprated for civilian use in 1920.

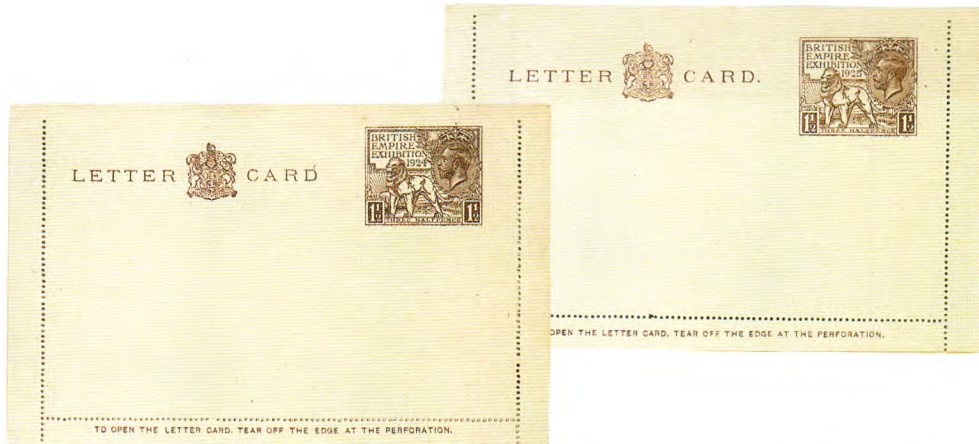


considered essential that they carried a stamp. The use of the "Official Paid" mark was considered, but since the cards were likely to be used abroad, objections were raised by the PO, already concerned at the constantly expanding use of this mark.

The PO finally agreed that the 1d letterpress

stamp should be used. Despite steering away from the use of the Official Paid mark, the PO were refused permission to charge the War Office account with the cost of these cards and in the end they were forced to include all charges in their own accounts.

Of course there was always the possibility that



The second set of commemorative stationery included lettercards impressed with both the 1924 and 1925 British Empire exhibition stamps

if these postcards were not used by the servicemen to whom they had been issued, the stamps might be used as cut-outs, thus defrauding the PO of revenue. However the PO decided that the risk of this was small enough to be ignored in the circumstances.

Initially both sides of these field service postcards were printed in black, the red 1d stationery stamp being added in a subsequent printing run. The stamp was impressed at Somerset House with the same die as that used for stamping private material. These cards were first issued to the troops in August 1914. In October 1914 their production was streamlined and while the wording on the reverse continued to be printed in black, the fronts were printed in one operation so that both the lettering and stamp appeared in red.

Finally in October of the same year armed forces on active service were given the privilege of free postage, after which the Field Service Cards continued to be issued in the same format as before, but without the 1d impressed stamp. Providing mail was endorsed "on active service" no charges were made on delivery.

A Second Issue of Commemorative Stationery

In 1924 an exhibition was mounted at Wembley in which all the countries of the British Empire were represented. To help publicise this event, Britain's first commemorative adhesive stamps were produced. A completely new stamp design was prepared by Harold Nelson depicting the Wembley Lion astride a rolling landscape. This

was used in the production of adhesive stamps in addition to being applied to four different kinds of postal stationery. However, some of the fine detail in Nelson's original design had to be changed to suit the letterpress printing process and the relatively coarse paper and card used to manufacture the stationery products. The PO produced 1d inland postcards, plus inland envelopes, lettercards and foreign postcards, the last three items all bearing the 1½d stamp.

The year of the exhibition had been included in the original stamp design, and when after a few months break it was resumed in April 1925, the stationery, along with the adhesive stamps, was reissued showing the revised date. Thus there were eight new stationery items produced in a little over a year, all being commemorative issues celebrating one event.

The foreign postcard in this series was the first to carry the 1½d stamp and the first issue of a foreign postcard since the rate increase of 1921. All the new commemorative stationery could only be purchased at the post offices located in the exhibition at Wembley. Although this event spanned two years, none of the eight different items were used to any great extent, a fact reflected by their relative scarcity today.

George V passed away on 20 January 1936; his son, Edward VIII, reigned for a mere 10 months until his abdication in December. His reign was too short for the PO to seriously consider introducing postal stationery and George V material continued to be used throughout this period until it was eventually replaced in 1939 by new stationery bearing George VI embossed and impressed stamps. The design and production of these will be dealt with in the next article.

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Look Before You Lick!

9. Unds and Usts

MATT HINTON

"How much eez two unds?", a foreign girl once asked my local postmistress whilst I stood humming, tutting and tapping my foot impatiently. I wouldn't mind so much if she hadn't previously spent 10 minutes arguing her point that sticking more stamps to an overweight package would simply make it weigh more! Of course, the "und" was not a new Euro currency, but the "nd" of "2nd". In this month's article I intend to illustrate how "non value" stamps can, in fact, have great value, as well as considerable interest for the collector.

The first series of Non Value Indicators was issued on 22 August 1989 and consisted of 4 x 2nd and 4 x 1st class books printed in lithography by Walsall Security Printers, as well as 10 x 2nd and 10 x 1st books produced in photogravure by Harrison & Sons. The 2nd class stamps were light blue, as today, with the 1st class being printed in black. The Harrison 1st class stamps were on phosphorised paper, but those from Walsall had two phosphor bands.

Various perforation holes exist "blind" (imperforate) – between stamps 4 and 9, 2 and 3, 9 and 10, 6 and 7, or 4 and 5. Quite a number of the panes were printed on paper containing a lower than normal amount of OBA (Optical Brightening Agent), and a much smaller quantity exists without any gum on the stamps.

Books of 4 x 2nd and 1st class photogravure stamps were issued on 28 November and 5 December 1989 respectively with Walsall printed covers.

Second Series – Change of Colour

On 7 August 1990 the second series of NVI books was issued. The whole concept of stamps without values was intended to help retailers who did not like having to sell make-up values after a rate change. This second series was prepared in readiness for the forthcoming increase in rates (17 September 1990). The 2nd class stamps became dark blue and the 1st class coloured changed to flame (orange). Some 2nd class stamps have the phosphor band 1mm short of the top and a few from the books of 10 are short at the bottom edge. All of these books and stamps were produced by Walsall. One of the slits on the closing tab was later removed or broke off in the printing producing the "Sickle" tab variety.

A few Walsall books of 4 x 1st class contained stamps with an erroneous perforation gauge 13



NVI stamps – the four colours

Other than the multitude of cylinder and plate numbers and blind at base varieties, there is a missing phosphor Walsall 1st class, a 1st class with the right band clear of the edge and a 1st class book with a grey portrait on the front cover. The Harrison books have either a thick or a thin cover.

On 19 September 1989 10 x 1st and 10 x 2nd class books were issued, printed by the House of Questa. Here the stamps, unlike previously, are perforated all round and the panes exist either perforated or imperforate through the margin.

instead of 14. These stamps are catalogued at £2.50 unused, compared to just 60p for the normal stamp (SG 1516c/1516). A number of books exist with a low level of OBA.

Also in this series were 10 x 1st and 10 x 2nd Harrison books where the only variety is a pale yellow crown on a few of the covers. The Questa 10 x 2nd class book exists with either straight (guillotined) or scarce torn perforation around the edges of the panes. Later Walsall books featured a slitless closing tab, a dull inside cover

card and an awful sealant adhesive which leaves books damaged after opening. Obviously someone at Walsall did not like us collectors as much as we like ourselves!

“9 8 9” Variety

On 6 August 1991 the third NVI series was issued. The 2nd class coloured reverted to light blue and the postal information address inside the books was changed from Newcastle to London. Problems with short phosphor bands at the top occurred again on some 10 x 2nd books printed by Walsall, and an exciting new variety appeared on the Questa books. The number of perforations at the top, middle and bottom of the selvedge differs on some books. Some have nine



at all positions, some have eight in the middle and some have eight at all places.

More books appeared on 22 January 1992 with unsightly Olympic and Paralympic logos. Some Walsall books have short bands at the top and the “9 8 9” variety turns up on the Questa books once again. The Harrison 10 x 1st book can be bought for a few pounds with a blind perforation hole between either stamps 4 and 5 or 7 and 8. The logo was dropped after the Olympics, and on 22 September 1992 a fascinating new set was issued.

Blue Barcodes

Not only is there fresh information regarding the use of NVIs overseas and a blue barcode, as opposed to black, but the first printings had a wider cover than later ones and were, in fact, far too big for the panes! As if this wasn't enough to send book collectors such as myself into a frenzy, the glue used to close the books and attach the panes to the covers begins as a lovely latex which can be removed and then reverts to the Demon Glue which revels in taking half the inside of the cover with it as the book is opened. Known



throughout the trade as “Blob Glue”, the books with the the wider covers exist with both types of gum, with “Blob” being very scarce in most cases.

A large number of the Walsall 1st class stamps from the books of four have a wonderful retouch on the shoulder of The Queen, and there are more “blind holes” on the Harrison books. The selvedge varies in size on these, as well. The most popular variation on this is a wide selvedge with the cut line visible and obviously not being adhered to.

Elliptical Perforations

The real security books appeared on 6 April 1993. The main change is the addition of an elliptical perforation hole at each vertical edge. Empty book covers inscribed SAMPLE became available to retailers. Two phosphor bands were added to the 1st class stamps. A small number of books bear these short at the bottom and a few have them completely omitted. The Questa 10 x 2nd class books are available with either cut or torn perforations or missing phosphor.

A tiny number of Questa 10 x 2nd books show a narrow left or right band due to a displacement, and some Walsall 10 x 1st have the bands displaced such that each stamp bears one broad band. Some Questa 1st class stamps have the right band clear of the perforations. Some self-adhesive books of 19 October 1993 exist with the phosphor bands printed twice. These sell for over £60 which in my opinion is greatly overpriced; £15 being a more realistic figure.

There is almost no end to the varieties to be found and studied on the NVIs. For stamps with no value they can be very valuable indeed!

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Illustrations courtesy of Hampstead Castle (Machin dealers)

Royal Mail News

1996 Greetings Stamps

The eighth issue of Royal Mail Greetings stamps will be released on 26 February 1996, comprising ten 1st class stamps reproducing cartoons. The stamps will be sold in a book, including 20 free Greetings labels, available from post offices, selected retail outlets, the British Philatelic Bureau, and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, price £2.50. Some relevant dates for the use of Greetings stamps are given on the inside front cover of the book: Mother's Day (17 March), Easter (7 April), Father's Day (16 June), and Grandparent's Day (28 September).

The stamps were designed by Michael Wolff using cartoons by several well-known names. The works featured are: "More Love" (by Mel Calman); "Sincerely" (Charles Barsotti); "Do you have something for the human condition?" (Calman); "Mental Floss" (Leo Cullum); "Don't ring" (Barsotti); "Dear Lottery prize Winner" (Larry); "I'm writing to you because..." (Calman); "Fetch this, Fetch that..." (Barsotti); "My day starts before I'm ready for it" (Calman);

and "The cheque is in the post" (Jack Ziegler). Each stamp bears the silhouette head of The Queen at top right with the "1ST" (1st class) designation below.

The stamps are printed in a pane of 10 (two rows of five horizontally) with 20 accompanying labels – two each of 10 different messages: "It's only you that's incompatible...", "Best wishes", "Truth is too precious to tell every fool who asks for it...", "Congratulations", "with love", "It takes two to make a neurotic...", "happy birthday", "please write back", "Being a failure isn't as easy as it looks...", and "Whatever it is – I deny it". The lettering on the labels is by Mel Calman; they are separated from the stamps by a gutter margin.

The front cover of the book reproduces Calman's "More! Love" drawing. When closed the book measures 95 x 60mm.

The Cartoonists

The little man, by Mel Calman (1931-94) became familiar to readers of *The Times* and *Evening Standard*. "He is my alter-ego" explained Calman, "I don't know what I would do without him. I imagine that he feels the same way about me." He trained at the Borough Art School and St Martin's School of Art. Numerous books of his work have been published and in September 1995 the British Cartoonists' Association and *The Times* launched the Mel Calman Awards for

MORE!



Sincerely,



Do you have s
for the HUM



Dear lottery.
prize winner.



I'm writing to you
because you don't listen
to a word I say..



FETCH TI
FETCH TI
LET TH
CAT DO





young cartoonists of the year. Winning entries from this competition will be displayed in the National Postal Museum's temporary exhibition gallery from 26 February when the Greetings stamps go on sale. Calman was influenced by James Thurber and amused by, amongst other, Woody Allen, S J Perelman, Heath Robinson, life and people.

Charles Barsotti was born in San Marcos, Texas and began "cartooning" for his college newspaper. He was the last Cartoon Editor of the great American magazine, *The Saturday Evening Post*. His work has featured in *The New Yorker* (since 1970), *Punch*, and many other publications. The work of Thurber and William Steig influenced Barsotti, who enjoys the humour of the Monty Python, Fawlty Towers and Absolutely Fabulous television programmes.

Leo Cullum, born in New Jersey in 1942, is a self-taught cartoonist whose characters make regular appearances in *The New Yorker*, *Barrons* magazine, and the *Harvard Business Review*. Cullum claims he "gives in to the compulsion to

draw" whenever there is a pencil and paper to hand. Some of his cartoons have been influenced by "having grown up with lots of cousins and uncles about, where humour was valued."

Larry (Terence Parkes) was born in Birmingham in 1927 and educated at the city's art college. He drew cartoons for the now defunct *Punch* magazine nearly every week for 30 years. He has also worked for *Private Eye* and a host of other magazines. He claims his cartoon characters are inspired by his family. He is not amused by many of today's young comedians, and tries never to miss TV appearances by Alan Bennett, John Fortune and John Bird.

Jack Ziegler, born in New York City in 1942 and educated at Fordham University, has been a freelance cartoonist since 1972. A contract cartoonist for *New Yorker* since 1974, he has had five collections of his drawings published, and has illustrated many books. The cartoon shown on the stamp is based on the drawing originally published in the *New Yorker* in 1986. His major influences have been Harvey Kurtzman, Robert Crumb, B Kliban, and George Booth.

The Designer

The 10 stamps were designed by Michael Wolff who was born in London in 1933, just a few hours after his parents arrived from St Petersburg to make a new life in England. He was educated at Greshams School and



MENTAL FLOSS

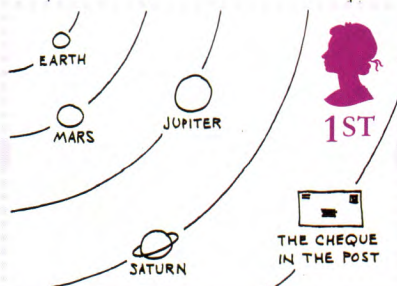


4:55 P.M.



My day starts
before I'm ready
for it..

RING!
RING!



Hammersmith School of Art before joining the Royal Army Service Corps to continue studies into "humanity in institutions". He entered the world of Design in the mid-1950s and in 1964 started Main Wolff & Partners with James Main who was replaced by Wally Olins the following year. The company became the leading European firm in "corporate identity" with clients such as Audi, Apple (the Beatles), British Airports, Renault, and Volkswagen. In 1971 Mr Wolff was elected the first President of the Designers & Art Directors Association. In 1983 he set up the Consortium consultancy company which has undertaken work for the National Health Service, British Library and W H Smith. He served on the Royal Mail Stamp Advisory Committee in the 1980s.

Cartoons

Originally the term *cartoon* (from Italian cartone – large sheet of paper) referred to a preliminary drawing for a painting or tapestry. Perhaps the best-known cartoons are those of Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael.

The term *caricature* (after drawings of Annibale Carraccia, 1560-1609) was first used in English in 1748 at the time of Hogarth. Cartoons or caricatures of politicians and members of the Royal Family were popular in the 18th century – best exemplified in the work of James Gillray (1757-1815) and Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827). In the 19th century, the magazines *Punch* and *Vanity Fair* published cartoons which are still much admired – and collected – today. Sir Max Beerbohm (1872-1956) caricatured Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales (Edward VII) and "Spy" (Sir Leslie Ward, 1851-1922) drew, for *Vanity Fair*, many of the leading characters of the time, including the eminent philatelist, the Earl of Crawford. (A framed example is preserved at the Royal Philatelic Society, London.)

Britain can be proud of many great cartoonists, including Sir David Low (1891-1963), Sir Osbert Lancaster (1908-86), Wally Fawkes ("Trog"), Gerald Scarfe (born 1936), and Carl Giles (1916-95), famous for grandmother in his "Giles Family". Cartoons are an essential part of our newspapers and magazines – including this *Bulletin*.

Many famous people collect cartoons, such as Kenneth Baker, the former Home Secretary, who presented a TV series on the history of cartoons. In a foreword to the book "*We are amused*": *The Cartoonists' View of Royalty* (Bodley Head, 1978), HRH The Prince of Wales wrote of the

importance of being able to laugh at oneself, and reflected that the present Royal Family had been more politely treated by the cartoonists than had George III and his family. The book, resulting from an exhibition of Royal Cartoons at the London Press Club in 1977, features one by Trog based on the 9d Concorde stamp of 1969. Various cartoons using stamp design have appeared in the newspapers in recent years.

Cartoons on stamps

Cartoon-style illustrations, including one of Astronomer-Royal Edmond Halley, by Ralph Steadman, featured on the 1986 Halley's Comet stamps. (A Steadman self-portrait cartoon appeared in the February 1986 *Bulletin*). Other cartoon characters were shown on the 27p and 32p stamps of the 1988 Edward Lear set, and on Quentin Blake's 1993 Christmas stamps. A number of comic strip and animated cartoon characters have been used on earlier greetings stamps – Dennis the Menace, The Bash Street Kids, Dan Dare, Noggin the Nog, and Paddington Bear. The cartoon-style, humorous seaside postcards, made famous by Donald McGill, featured on the 1994 Pictorial Postcards stamps. Amongst recent issues featuring cartoons and comic strips from other countries is a pane of 20 "Comic Strip Classics" stamps issued by the US Post Office on 1 October 1995.

Technical Details

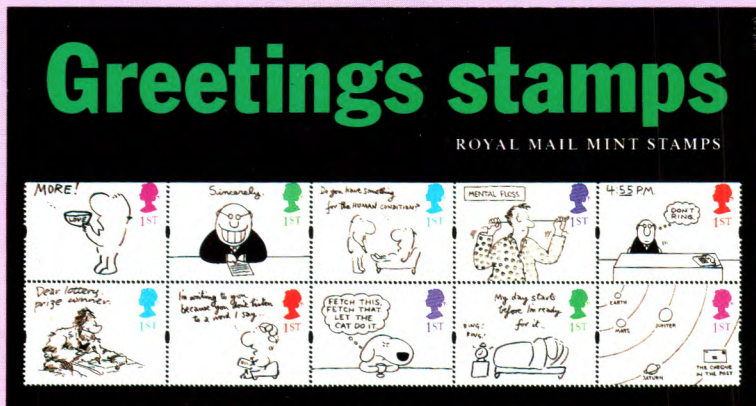
Printer: Walsall Security Printers Ltd
Process: Offset lithography
Stamp size: 41 x 30mm
Perforation: 15 x 14 with elliptical perforation on vertical sides
Phosphor: Phosphor screen
Paper: OBA free (OBA = Optical Brightening Agent)
Gum: PVA

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from the Bureau, PO Counters philatelic outlets and main post offices about a week before 26 February, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps cancelled by a Bureau or Titterhill "First Day of Issue" pictorial postmark, price £3.36 (inc VAT) to UK addresses, £2.86 (no VAT) overseas. Orders for serviced covers must reach the Bureau by 26 February. Titterhill is situated near Haydons Bent, Ludlow, Shropshire.

It's only you that's incompatible...	Best wishes	TRUTH is too precious to tell every fool who asks for it...	congratulations	with love
It takes two to make a neurotic...	happy birthday	please write back	Being a failure isn't as easy as it looks...	It takes two to make a neurotic...
congratulations	Being a failure isn't as easy as it looks...	It's only you that's incompatible...	happy birthday	TRUTH is too precious to tell every fool who asks for it...
Whatever it is - I deny it...	with love	Best wishes	Whatever it is - I deny it...	please write back

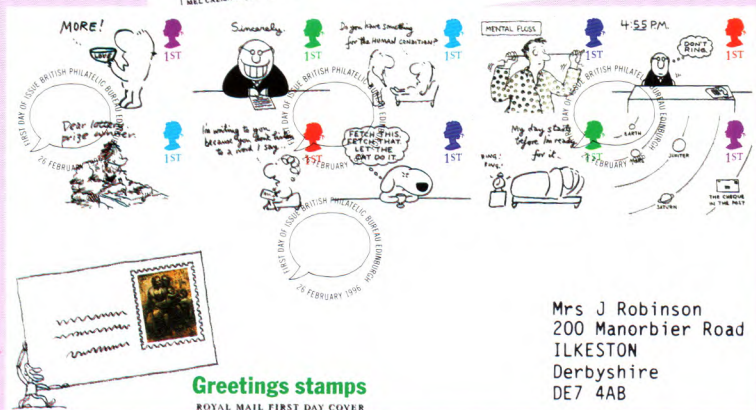


of stamps: ten
issued: 26 February 1996
Designer: Michael Wolff
Illustrator: Michael Wolff
Laid-off: offset lithography
Designs in The Post
1996
1. horizontal
2. vertical
3. vertical
4. vertical
5. vertical
6. vertical
7. vertical
8. vertical
9. vertical
10. vertical

Leo Cullum More love! Do you have something for the
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Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the pictorial postmarks to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Wales & West Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, CARDIFF CF1 1AA (Titterhill cancel). The outer envelope should be marked "FD9603" (Bureau or "FD9604" (Titterhill).

First Day Posting boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) "First Day of Issue" handstamps. Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors. This is available on subscription from the Bureau: £10 UK/Europe, £21.50 Rest of World (Airmail).

Presentation Pack & Stamp Cards

A Greetings Pack (No. G5) containing the pane of stamps and labels will be available from 26 February, price £2.85. Stamp cards, reproducing each of the 10 designs will go on sale about one week before the stamps, price 25p each.

Earlier Greetings Stamps

Several earlier Greetings stamp books are still available from the British Philatelic Bureau, also the 1995 Greetings pack and stamp cards. Details can be found on the Bureau's current stock list.

Railway Aerogrammes

Royal Mail International will issue a set of aerogrammes featuring railway locomotives and trains on 30 January 1996. These will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau as well as post offices.

Stamp Books Update

Shown here are the front covers of the new £1 and £2 machine books which go on sale at the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets on 16 January. They will replace existing books in machines at post offices and other outlets as stocks of earlier books are used up. Details of the new books were published here last month.

Please note that the books with the Olympic logos have been delayed – they are now expected to be available from 6 February 1996, not January as announced earlier.

A new promotional book will be available from 19 February. This will include a Disney promotion, following on from earlier W H Smith and Sainsbury's campaigns. The book will contain ten 1st class NVI stamps. Details next month.

National Postal Museum News

The Museum will issue four "Valentines" postcards on 14 February:

96/1 Handcoloured Valentine card, made about 1860.

96/2 Handcoloured Valentine card, made about 1830.

96/3 "Loves Telegraph" handcoloured Valentine card, made in the workshop of Dobbs Kidd & Co in the 1870s.

96/4 Handcoloured Valentine card, made about 1822.

All four cards are from the NPM collection. Valentines have featured on earlier NPM cards and a fine exhibition of them was mounted at the Museum two years ago (see *Bulletin* March 1994).

The four postcards will be available at the

Museum Shop (25p each) or as a set (£1) from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT. A special Museum handstamp will be used on 14 February 1996. Collectors may submit cards/covers for this postmark to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, LONDON EC1A 1BB. Cards should be submitted no later than 14 February and should bear at least 1st class postage. Request "Museum Valetines Handstamp". The NPM's regular Maltese Cross cancel will also be in use – request Handstamp 1985.



The Waterloo Place Post Office, August 1995 (Photo: John Holman)

Closure of Edinburgh Head Post Office

The main post office in Waterloo Place closed in October 1995 when counter services moved to a new office in nearby St James's Shopping Centre. The foundation stone of the Waterloo Place office, on the site of the old Theatre Royal, was laid by the Prince Consort in October 1861. He spoke of the building as "tending to improve and embellish a city already remarkable for its beauty"; and suggested that sculptured stone vases be added to the facade. The office opened in May 1866. For its centenary the external stonework was renovated and a new counter area constructed. Waterloo Place housed the Philatelic Bureau after its transfer from London in 1966, until the move to Lothian Road in 1974.

Stamp Collecting with The Daily Telegraph

Royal Mail is pleased to be involved in a major supplement to be published in *The Daily Telegraph* on 19 January, shortly before the Spring Stampex exhibition. The supplement will include many features on British stamps, as well as stamp collecting in general. It will serve as good publicity for the hobby. Royal Mail was involved in a much-praised similar feature in *The Sunday Times* in 1989.

More Blue Fluor

The 10p, 35p, and 38p definitives have been produced with the new blue fluor in the phosphor bands. Supplies are now available from the British Philatelic Bureau. There was no first day of issue or availability. The stamps were produced by Enschedé. Collectors are reminded that an ultra-violet lamp is required to detect the fluor. The following is a check list of stamps so far printed with the new fluor;

Sheet stamps – printed by Enschedé: 2p, 4p, 10p, 25p (2 gums), 35p, 38p, 41p, £1.00

Sheet stamps – printed by Questa: 1st, 2nd

Sheets & Coils – printed by Harrisons: 19p, 25p

Books – printed by Harrisons

25p (£1 books)

2nd NVI (Books of 4 & 10)

1st NVI (Books of 10)

Books – printed by Questa

25p (£1 & £2 books) – to be issued 16 January 1996

2nd NVI (Books of 10)

1st NVI (Books of 10)

Books – printed by Walsall

35p (Books of 4)

2nd NVI (Books of 4)

1st NVI (Books of 4 & 10)

Country Stamps – printed by Questa

Scotland: 19p, 25p

Wales: 19p, 25p

All available on request from the Bureau. Stamps issued in books are sold only in the complete books.

Burns Bicentenary Book

The third title in the "British Philatelic Bulletin Publications" series is now available – *Robert Burns Bicentenary*. A copy is being sent free to all subscribers with this issue of the *Bulletin*. Additional copies are available from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, price £2.95 (Order code PB217).

We are sure readers will find it a worthy souvenir of an important anniversary, providing useful background reading to the stamp issue. Four stamps (19p, 25p, 41p and 60p values), featuring some of Burns's best-known works, go on sale at post offices, the Bureau, and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets on 25 January 1996.

Printed Postage Impressions – Some Further Notes

RON NEGUS FRPSL

In the January and May 1995 issues of the *Bulletin*, I wrote a brief introduction to the usage of Printed Postage Impressions (PPIs). These articles led to a number of readers contacting me either to ask for more information or to add extra details to what I had written. The following notes are intended to share the results of this correspondence with other readers who collect this particular facet of modern British postal history.

Perhaps the most interesting type of PPI to be sought is the non-standard design. This can be of any kind provided it has been given Royal Mail approval in advance of it being used on the mailing. Different readers have kindly sent me three examples of these, which are illustrated in Fig. 1.

The first comes from the British Philatelic Bureau and incorporates a drawing of Mr Punch and his dog. It was used on a special envelope which the Bureau employed to send out publicity material for the Greetings stamps issue. The standard octagonal design of PPI, normally employed on mail from the Bureau has been retained, but the left hand frame line has been extended to allow the drawing to be inserted.

The second example, for the Mailsort 3 service in this case, is taken from a promotional leaflet sent out by a brewery, and is designed in the shape of a beer glass. The actual envelope used was also made to resemble a can of beer so

that the whole mailing shot was non-standard. It is interesting to note on this example that whilst the PPI includes the service indicator, a Postal Headquarters licence number and the words Royal Mail, the other mandatory words "Postage Paid" are not shown.

The final specimen is also a Mailsort 3 example and comes from the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. It was used on an envelope containing a fund raising appeal for that well-known charity and is interesting for the way in which a lifeboat has been incorporated within the design. If this feature had been omitted, the PPI would have conformed exactly to one of the 30 standard designs offered by Royal Mail.

In my earlier articles, I mentioned that the licence number allocated to the PPI was usually preceded by the letters HQ or PHQ to show it had been issued centrally by the Postal Headquarters. I am grateful to an overseas reader who sent me the specimens shown in Fig. 2, where the initials "LPR" and "I.L.S." have been used to preface the number. Enquiries made to Royal Mail Streamline have shown that these particular initials stand for "London Postal Region" and "International Letter Service" respectively.

In Fig. 3, another PPI received from overseas shows how the required "Great Britain" wording has been added below a standard inland design to allow the item to be carried on the

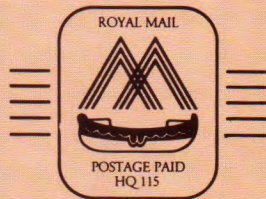


Fig 1. Non-standard, pictorial designs



Fig 2. LPR and I.L.S. designs

international route. This is a good example of how mixed mailings, both home and overseas, can be covered by a common format.

Mailsort Service

One of my correspondents asked for clarification of the three kinds of Mailsort service that I mentioned in my article in the May 1995 issue. His query was whether Mailsort 1 and Mailsort 2 were indicated on the PPI as "M1" and "M2", to distinguish them from the "M" that signifies the Mailsort 3 service. The answer is that the standard "1" and "2" are employed for Mailsort 1 and Mailsort 2 respectively. All three services require the mail to be pre-sorted and bagged before being handed to Royal Mail for delivery. The target delivery times for each service are 1 = Next day, 2 = Within 3 days, and 3 = Within 7 days. Differing rates of discount are given depending upon which service is used.

Another query which arose was whether the method of printing to be used on the wrappers or envelopes was specified for a PPI. Whilst the majority of PPIs will be printed in the conventional way, by typesetting, at the same time as the envelope, it is perfectly permissible to employ rubber stamps or a franking machine. Some organisations also use PPIs that are printed on to self-adhesive labels which are then attached to the wrappers. These alternative methods are far scarcer than the printed versions, however, and the quality of the impression is often poor when rubber stamps are used.

Spirit rather than the letter

Finally, it has been pointed out to me that whilst the regulations I quoted in my articles were quite specific about the size of lettering, position on the envelope, and the standard wording to be employed in a PPI, there are numerous examples

in circulation in which one or more of these regulations have been ignored. I believe that this comes about as a consequence of the nature of the service involved.

The PPIs found most commonly refer to the Mailsort services, either 1, 2 or 3. These services require the sender to perform much of the pre-sorting work that would normally be undertaken in the Royal Mail offices, and, therefore, whether the words "Postage Paid", for example, appear on the PPI is not of vital concern. The absence of a licence number would be considered serious, of course, because of the accounting implications, but whether it appears in 12pt. typeface or 18pt. does not really matter. Under these circumstances, the designers used



Fig 3. Great Britain added to standard design

by the customers of the service have considerable scope to interpret the official Royal Mail regulations to produce PPIs that conform to the spirit of the rules rather than to the absolute letter.

For the purist, this freedom produces a host of minor varieties of PPI, which can help to boost a collection. On the other hand, the collector has the option of ignoring such variations to concentrate on building up his holding of the basic types. Whichever path is chosen, he can be assured that the results will give an interesting sideline collection at very low cost.

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Another Year

1995 was a busy and interesting year for us philatelists and postal historians with numerous issues, exhibitions, and publications vying for our attention and money!

Two sets of special stamps in particular generated comment from *Bulletin* readers. The 19p and 25p "Victory" stamps in the Peace & Freedom set were welcomed as a tribute to all who took part in the Second World War – in Europe, the Far East, and at home. It was good to see so many of you using them on your competition entries (and other correspondence) in May and August, coinciding with the anniversaries of VE and VJ Day. The superb Slania engravings of the Communications set were enjoyed by many who wrote in praise of this issue.

I am currently reading through your views in our 1995 Stamp Poll, announced last month. If you haven't voted yet there is still time – until 26 January – and could win you £500 worth of British stamps, books, albums and other products

Exhibitions

1995 was a year of exhibitions. Spring Stampex included Austrapex with special features relating to Australia. The exhibition was opened by the Australian High Commissioner (Mr Neal Blewett) with TV personality Rolf Harris in attendance. Autumn Stampex took the 50th anniversary of the United Nations as its theme. This was the last Stampex held at the Royal Horticultural Halls. I well recall the first there (1969) with workmen still busy erecting stands and fixtures after the exhibition opened. As the Postmaster General, John Stonehouse, began his speech someone started up a power drill and ministerial words were drowned out! The improvements to Stampex in recent years will now continue in a new venue, and I look forward to reading your comments on the Business Design Centre.

A new exhibition – Stamp '95, held at Wembley in April – proved popular with the vast majority of visitors. Rather different to traditional exhibitions, it included many features

aimed at new collectors. Opened by Olympic athlete and stamp collector Fatima Whitbread, it attracted over 18,000 visitors over three days.

Both Midpex (Coventry) and Thematica (London) were well-attended. Thematica is now an established event, and a second Midpex is already planned for 1997. Another new venture was the "Rare Stamps of the World" exhibition at Claridge's – a veritable feast of stamps enjoyed, if not affordable by, many of the 1000 or so collectors who went along. I look forward to a similar exhibition before too long.

After much speculation, the dates and venue for the London 2000 international stamp exhibition were announced at the international exhibition in Singapore at the beginning of September.

Dedicated Collectors

The new Association of British Philatelic Societies began to make an impact, and its first Yearbook was welcomed as a worthy successor to the former BPF publication. The Association's Newsletter gives details of local and specialist societies, which remain the "backbone" of British philately, kept alive by the unstinting effort by dedicated collectors. Congratulations to the Ipswich, Luton, Sidcup, and Thurrock societies on their 50th anniversaries, Cambridge on its 75th, and Salisbury on reaching its century.

Turning now to individuals and another centenary celebrated – Bruce Auckland, doyen of Scottish postal historians. Veteran dealer and editor Robson Lowe is still very active, and enjoyed his 90th birthday. John Marriott retired as Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection and was honoured with a knighthood. It gives me pleasure to record the award of the Congress Medal to rival editor Richard West (*Stamp Magazine*) for many years service to the hobby. In September Richard handed over Presidency of the National Philatelic Society to Frank Jones, who has a hard act to follow. Another Jones, Lionel, of the National Postal Museum, relinquished the Treasurership of Eastbourne Philatelic Society after a quarter of a century, receiving an ABPS Award of Merit.

Royal Mail

John Tew, Director & General Manager of Royal Mail National moved to the same position in Royal Mail Streamline which provides services for business customers. Mr Tew took a genuine interest in philatelic matters during his 2½ years at National. Hopefully his successor, Adam

Novak, will continue the good work. Alistair Sharp was appointed as Stamp Production & Marketing Manager, and is already becoming known in the philatelic world. Yvette Turner, his predecessor as Stamp Marketing Manager, showed little interest in philately and left Royal Mail to join Capital Radio.

Publications

Amongst important new publications of interest to *Bulletin* readers were new editions of the *Connoisseur Machin Catalogue*, *Collect Post Office Cards*, and *Postal Markings of Scotland to 1840*, a supplement to the *Deegam Machin Handbook*, the British Postmark Society's *Slogan Postmarks of the Nineties*, and Glenn Morgan's work on British stamp exhibition souvenirs.

Looking Ahead

1996 also looks like being an exciting year with Stampex at a new venue, an enlarged Stamp '96, and the ABPS staging its first "national" exhibition at Newcastle upon Tyne in November/December. I look forward to reporting on the London 2000 international as news comes to hand.

The special stamp programme kicks off with the Burns issue this month and the Greetings stamps are previewed in this *Bulletin*. The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust stamps will be shown in next month's magazine. Collectors of the commemorative label stamp books will, I feel sure, be delighted with the third in the series, to be issued in April to celebrate the 70th birthday of HM The Queen.

I wish all *Bulletin* readers many enjoyable hours with their collections during 1996.

John Holman, Editor

Philatelic Museum Proposed for Glasgow

The Post Office is to sell the main Post Office building in George Square, Glasgow to the Glasgow Development Agency (GDA) on behalf of the National Galleries of Scotland for the future home of a national gallery of art and design.

In announcing the sale, Mr Kenneth Graham, Chairman Scottish Post Office Board, said: "GDA's bid offered the best commercial package which includes exciting possibilities for a collaborative venture between The Post Office

and the National Galleries of Scotland. The Post Office plans to transfer part of its priceless philatelic collection, including the world first Penny Black stamps from London into the proposed new art gallery in Glasgow. Our intention to move part of this magnificent historical collection to Scotland from its present cramped accommodation in London underlies the fact that The British Post Office is nationwide."

Mr Graham continued, "We're delighted at the prospect that part of this unique philatelic collection will now be seen by many more than the 16,000 who currently view it each year in London. We estimate that the new gallery in Scotland will be able to accommodate in excess of three quarters of a million visitors a year – 50 times the present number who are able to view the collection in London."



Glasgow's George Square PO. Photo: James Mackay. An article by Dr Mackay on the history of the building will be published here shortly

The proposed National Gallery will take as the starting date for its main displays the year 1837 – the year Rowland Hill presented his study on postal reform, which led to the first adhesive postage stamps three years later. "The addition of a national philatelic collection to a new gallery concentrating on art and design since the accession of Queen Victoria would", says Mr Graham, "be entirely appropriate."

The George Square PO is expected to close in March; the Post Shop will relocate to 47 St Vincent Square, a short distance from George Square.

Following closure of Edinburgh's Waterloo Place PO, the philatelic service is now available at the Postshop, 8-10 St James's Centre, EDINBURGH EH1 3SR, Tel. 0131 556 0478. Open Mon 09.00-17.30, Tues-Fri 08.30-17.30; Sat 08.30-18.00.

Stamp Scene

British Thematic Association

The Association was delighted that its Displays Organiser, Christine Earle, was awarded the Link House Trophy for her exhibit "The Grey Goose Wing" (history of the bow and arrow) at Autumn Stampex. At the BTA meeting on 15 October, Alan Sabey's 80-sheet display demonstrated a walk around the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, 1924-5. The Association was heavily involved in Thematica II at the Carisbrooke Hall last month and will be participating in the Thematica exhibition in July 1996. The BTA publishes a quarterly journal *Themescene*. Details of membership available by sending a stamped addressed envelope or international reply coupon to: Ian Paton (Ref S), 15 Humberstone Road, CAMBRIDGE CB4 1JD.

Machin Collectors Club Formed

It has been a long held belief among many philatelists that the collecting of the Machin issues is beyond them because it is conceived as being either too expensive, too complicated, too involved or too boring. That assumption could not be further from the truth.

In answer to the first point ask yourself a simple question. Where else can you build a superb collection at face value? It has often been said that many of the younger generation are put off philately in general by the high, sometimes artificially high, asking prices for some of the older material on offer. A trip to your local post office or retail outlet can soon reward you with a fine selection of different items that, if purchased with care, that can go straight into any collection.

Is Machin collecting complicated or too involved? As with any other aspect of stamp collecting the further that you get into your subject the more interesting it becomes and then your thirst for knowledge is increased. If you remember that any changes in the Machin issues are as a direct result of Royal Mail's improvements to either their operations or marketing systems, then a natural progression that really is easy to follow will become apparent.

As for being too boring, you only have to look

at any Machin catalogue or dealers price lists to see what a wealth of material has been issued by Royal Mail since 1967 (1971 if you are referring to the decimal issues only).

How far you go into the subject is entirely up to you, but the possibilities are endless. You could decide to collect just single stamps or cylinder blocks, warrant number blocks, vending machine books, retail books, coil issues or even make a study of just one value in all its issued forms – or any combination of these. It all depends on *you*, your level of interest and, of course, your budget. But whichever you decide, your interest will be maintained during the whole year as the hobby is constantly changing.

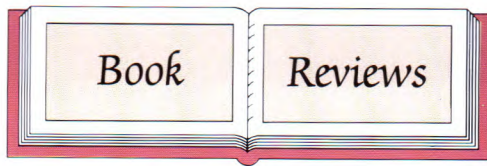
A new collectors club has recently been formed covering all aspects of Machin Collecting. Whether you are just starting out on this fascinating hobby or have been collecting since the Machin design was introduced in 1967, their service could well be of interest to many of you.

Formed by collectors for collectors on a non profit basis, their main function is as an up to date information service, offering members all the latest news on new sheet cylinder printings, phosphor and perforation changes, gum changes, booklet cylinder numbers, coil issues, missing phosphors, miscut booklets, imperfs – in fact anything that would be of interest to any Machin collector. A newsletter is published every month thus ensuring that all members are kept informed of all developments.

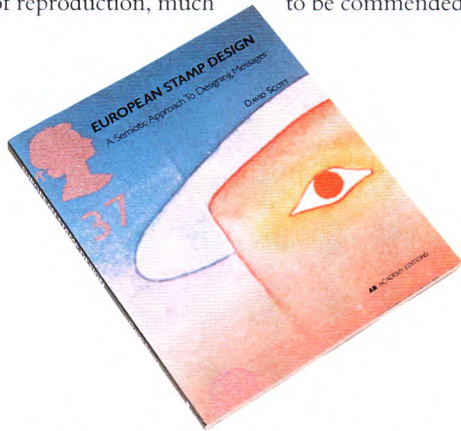
There are many other services that this club offers, too many to go into detail here, but if you would like more information contact Melvyn Philpott on 01263 733586 or write to him at: 8 Jannys Close, AYLISHAM Norfolk, NR11 6DL. He would be pleased to send details to you.

ABPS News

The October 1995 issue of *ABPS News* (newsletter of the Association of British Philatelic Societies) is now to hand. This gives advance information on the Newcastle '96 exhibition (30 November/1 December 1996) – the first national event wholly organised by the ABPS. Tom Poynton reports on the Midpex exhibition in Coventry (10 June 1995), and looks ahead to Midpex '97 (Coventry, 28 June 1997). He expresses forthright views on the London 2000 exhibition. For details of ABPS, contact the Hon. Secretary: John N Hammonds, 31 Wheatsheaf Close, HORSHAM RH12 5TH.



David Scott, Professor of French at Trinity College, Dublin, has written **European Stamp Design: A Semiotic Approach to Designing Messages** in conjunction with an exhibition being staged at The Design Museum in London (until February). For the average philatelist, semiotic analysis may be new but it simply means considering how efficient the stamp is as a sign or symbol. Under analysis, the component classes (the stamp as icon, symbol or index) may interact in quite complicated ways; Scott pays tribute to "the seemingly endless resourcefulness" of designers, amply confirmed by the multitude of illustration, over 1300 interesting examples of minuscule art. This includes 42 colour plates of the highest fidelity of reproduction, much to be commended.



The European countries covered are Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Ireland, with an additional chapter on some British and French Colonies. The GB chapter has relatively few new insights in what is already well-traversed ground. It deals with the "icon" status of the Monarch's Head and some of the commemoratives of 1971-94. Perhaps more should have made here of the work of David Gentleman, especially his invention of the silhouette Head, but the student is pointed to Stuart Rose's *Royal Mail Stamps* (1980) for a fuller treatment of the modern developments in British design.

The chapter on France is much concerned with "icons", in this case "Variations on Marianne 1850-1992", a very good survey. It also shows how the elaborate commemoratives for the 1989 Bicentenary of the French Revolution are complex if analysed on semiotic principles.

For the Netherlands, the two-part history (1920s-40s and the 1960s onwards) proved absorbing reading. The author rightly shows how the Dutch PTT was 50 years ahead of the world in its systematic reassessment of stamp design. A merest hint, however, seemed to confirm my personal feeling that current bold experimentation with photomontage and computer graphics may be moving the Dutch into a blind alley of quite puzzling designs.

The next chapter considers the particular problems of Switzerland in projecting its national identity on stamps. The role of national icons like Helvetia, William Tell and the Swiss Cross; the appropriateness of the beautiful mountain landscape as symbol are all developed but the chapter is rich with examples of many other themes, so skilfully portrayed on stamps renowned for their excellence of design and production.

Scott takes the work of both Edmund Dulac and of Michael and Sylvia Goaman for his chapter on "Designing the Colonies". The remarkably effective series by Dulac for the Free French Colonies is rightly praised, along with his stamps for GB. The work of the Goamans in 1953-80 in designing for GB and newly independent Commonwealth countries has particular strengths, well described here.

David Scott concludes with more post-colonial stamps, those of Ireland. The initial period, 1922-49, is marked by a nationalist and religious picture with emphasis on the Irish language. With the Republic in 1949 Ireland emerges into the mainstream of European affairs, showing as a shift towards a broader cultural identity and more outward looking themes.

Semiotic analysis is clearly a useful theoretical tool though, as with any artistic subject, judging whether a stamp design is "good" or "bad" involves emotional and subjective factors. For the author the Europe in Space stamps which Folon designed for GB in 1991 show "imaginative perspective": in contrast, the *Bulletin* Design Poll found them among "the worst British stamps ever".

As to good points to commend in considering this volume as a piece of bookwork, I put the



superb colour plates in first place. Careful cross-referencing of text to relevant illustration and helpful Notes to each chapter are supplemented by a bibliography and a useful index to (most of) the designers mentioned. I enjoyed seeing, too, illustrations of designers' work in other media, such as posters.

Set against these plus points, the book as a permanent work of reference has unfortunately been marred by some editorial shortcomings. I was saddened to note some misspelled names, such as Roland Hill, Haley's Comet and an inexplicable Slaine for Slania. Cross-reference numbers, appearing constantly throughout, are a trial to use. Figure numbers to the black-and-white pictures do not run consecutively; vital sub-dividing numbers on the colour plates are completely absent. As can happen in bookwork, artistic effect seems to have prevailed over the humdrum business of making sure that reading is smooth and effortless. The book is also in a large "coffee-table" format, which has been known to irritate some philatelists.

Nevertheless, publication of David Scott's book brings truly new material to the study of stamp design and its European perspective is likewise praiseworthy. 142 pages, card covers. Published 1995 by Academy Editions, 42 Leinster Gardens, LONDON W2 3AN at £24.95. ISBN 1 85490 420 5.

James Negus, FRPSL

The 11th edition of the popular **Stoneham Catalogue of British Stamps (1840-1995)** is now available. This reviewer finds this the easiest of all catalogues of British stamps to use, with clear listings and well-illustrated. The introductory pages repay careful reading, containing much useful advice – such as the "Guide to Fakes and Repairs – Be on Your Guard!". The section dealing with fine used stamps states that issues of the present reign with really fine single circle date stamps are difficult to find. Few would disagree with this, but not

perhaps with the comment: "Stamps with parts of 'First Day of Issue' postmarks are totally acceptable, as postally used."

The listings are chronological, with definitives separated from commemoratives – if only all catalogues would do this! For the present reign there are also sections on NVI and Greetings stamps, and the Penny Black anniversary issue. The Channel Islands wartime issues are included, as are Regional/Country stamps, Framas, Postage Dues, Booklet Panes, and Booklets. First Day Covers, Presentation Packs, and PHQ cards are priced under the relevant issue. The Royal Mail reference number for each pack is given, although the PHQ numbers are not quoted for the stamp cards. Major varieties – missing colours, phosphors, and significant colour shifts are listed and, for the most part, priced.

The Frama section includes the scarce printed on white paper, or on the gummed side varieties, and the National Postal Museum "Specimen" labels which were available to visitors for a couple of years from May 1988. The set of 17 NPM labels is priced at £15 printed in red, or £12 in black. Hopefully a note can be added to the next edition to record the fact that the "red" labels can be found in a variety of shades from bright pink to brick-red!

The listings of decimal Machin and Country (Regional) stamps are arranged by paper/gum types rather than by face value or chronologically. It takes a bit of getting used to, but has the advantage of providing ready sorted listings for collectors wishing to specialise in particular aspects of these complicated issues. Prices seem realistic by today's market but surely the current 19p and 25p definitives (sheet stamps by Harrisons), even fine used, shouldn't be priced at 35p and 45p – 10p or 15p should be sufficient. The 60p definitive is priced at £1.25 mint or used – more than in the SG catalogue. The Machin listings include a good range of shades – nowadays a rather neglected area. I rather like the shade description "Butter yellow and brown" (M77e) as opposed to the normal "Orange-brown and deep brown" (M77) for the 1971 bicoloured 10p stamp.

The Wilding section does not distinguish, for single stamps, between cream and white papers although separate listings are found for booklet panes later in the catalogue. The listings are not separated between green, blue, and violet phosphors. One minor error appears on page 68 – the Multiple Crown 2½d was issued first with

Type II diadem, September 1959, Type I followed in October 1961. Thus the dates and prices for Nos W49/50 need reversing. Gibbons now give the date for the 2½d Type 1 Phosphor (W86, SG 614b) as 4 October rather than 7 November 1961, but *Stoneham* keep to the later date.

For “back of book” collectors, there are useful sections on Postal Fiscal, PO Telegraph, Circular Delivery Company, and College stamps although the clarity of some of the illustrations here leaves a bit to be desired.



Over 100,000 copies of *Stoneham* have been sold since it first appeared in 1978, and Editor Wayne Robbins is to be commended on another worthwhile edition. Through skilful pruning of “superfluous illustrations”, he has produced a catalogue of slightly fewer pages than the last edition (1991) “even though 4 further years of issues have been added” – earning him the gratitude of collectors with limited space for their philatelic libraries. 276 pages, card covers. ISBN 0 947868 04 6. Price £12.50. Available from stamp shops or direct from: Sarum Publications, 92 Fisherton Street, SALISBURY SP27QY.

The 77th Philatelic Congress of Great Britain was held at Hayling Island in October when a number of thought-provoking papers were presented and discussed. These are published in the **Congress Handbook** and make interesting reading. James Grimwood-Taylor looks at “The Future of Philately into the next century”. He suggests “Philately is not dying” but its future will be different from its past – “...true of almost every feature of modern life.” He suggests that today’s stressed executives wanting a relaxing hobby need look no further than stamp

collecting. Amongst many telling points are:

“I am not saying that no-one should collect modern commemorative/topical issues, but I do feel that cheap, commercially used off-cover examples of the higher value stamps are preferable, for ‘budget collectors’, than complete (and expensive) mint sets from the post office. ‘Topical’ or ‘Thematic’ collecting is an excellent addition to the range of philatelic activities. I recently judged a most enjoyable group of thematic collections on subjects ranging from cellulose to conservation and safety, and I know that they give enormous pleasure to both their compilers and their viewers. I simply want to distinguish between collecting modern issues by theme (which involves active thought and effort) – of which I heartily approve – and collecting them by number (one-of-each-and-every-stamp straight from a Post Office philatelic bureau) – which, in my opinion, is not ‘collecting’ at all.” Many will agree with him.

C S Holder presented the Kay Goodman Memorial Lecture on “Philatelic Literature” – an erudite paper dealing with journals, catalogues, handbooks, auction catalogues, etc. I take issue with his comment that nowadays “...few commercial journals have much literary merit...” True most serious philatelic studies now appear in specialist society publications, but the commercial journals still carry much useful matter.

Nigel Fordham, Head of the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau, reviews the “Philatelic Activities and Philosophies” of his organisation which has a justifiably proud record. He lambasts administrations that issue too many stamps and the philatelic journals that give them publicity. “The right approach”, he suggests, “is to shun and ignore those Post Offices who continue to exploit and issue unnecessary and undesirable stamps and provide a greater input in both space and journalistic terms towards those administrations who ‘do the right thing’...” Few would disagree.

Colin Tabear’s specialised paper on “Some Aspects of Anglo-US Postal relations 1838/1875”, gives useful information on the shipping contracts and relevant treaties.

The 44-page Handbook provides biographical details of the new signatories to the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, and lists their predecessors since 1921. Price £2 (UK postpaid) from: John Campbell, 9 Gatcombe Gardens, FAREHAM, Hants, PO14 3DR.



"Signal at Night"

Railway Photographs at NPM

From 8 January until 23 February visitors to the National Postal Museum will be able to see an interesting display of railway photographs by Colin Gifford in the temporary exhibition gallery. Five of Mr Gifford's acclaimed photographs featured on the 1994 Age of Steam stamps. The exhibition will appeal to photographers, railway enthusiasts and railway stamp thematic collectors.

Railways have always fascinated Gifford, especially their relationship with landscape, topography and the people who work and use them. This approach was evident in his first book, *Decline of steam*, published in 1965 and still regarded as one of the most influential books of railway photographs. The latest title, *...and gone for ever*, depicting steam on British Railways in the 1960s, was published in 1994 (reviewed here February 1995).

Gifford trained at Harrow School of Art, then spent some time in advertising before working for transport publishers. He is now a freelance

photographer and author and lives in Hertfordshire.

The NPM, King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP, is open Monday-Friday, 09.30-16.30, admission free. It is a few minutes walk from St Paul's Cathedral and underground station. Enquiries: 0171-239 5420.



A trio of Nigel Gresley's famous "Streak" Class A4 pacific locomotives at King's Cross station

Competition

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* 1st prize: GB 1894 QV 10s cobalt letters FJ – THE RARITY, cat £3250 by SG – an excellently centred example with small faults, good cobalt colour and appearance, quite lightly cancelled for this issue, complete with 1994 GB Expert Committee photo certificate of authenticity. Very few collections include this RARITY.

* 2nd prize: GB 1840 1d black, letters GF, fine used four good margins example of plate 2 cancelled by neat perfectly positioned red Maltese Cross. Cat SG £150.

* 3rd prize: Jersey 1969 10s definitive, a lovely unmounted mint example of this key value, SG 28, cat £24.



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To enter the competition send the answers to the questions below with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: January Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL to arrive by 23 February 1996. Each entry must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

1. Who mentions "Blob Glue" in his article?
2. How many people attended Autumn Stampex 1995?
3. Who spends 30 hours a week helping to run philatelic organisations?
4. What is described as "a useful theoretical tool"?

The answers will be found in this *Bulletin*. Competition not open to employees, families or agents of Royal Mail or Omniphil.

Winners of the October competition were: D Lloyd (1st prize); Mrs M Mason, R Bunnage, Cap. P Nielsen, A Marsh and S Ruckapunmetee (2nd); Mrs P Watson, B Pearce, S Grandi, Dr G Pegg, and Mrs M Gillham (3rd). Answers were: 1. Harry Hayes, 2. Newcastle upon Tyne, 3. Leeds, 4. Ken Lilly, 5. Marquess of Carmarthen.

January/February Digest

To be issued in January/February

16 January: Vended Books – £1 and £2. New Royal Mail logo cover design.

18 January: Robert Burns stamp cards

25 January: Robert Burns stamps and presentation pack

30 January: Pictorial Aerogrammes (Railways) – Pack of six.

6 February: NVI stamp books with Olympic/Paralympic logo on cover
10 x 2nd class Harrison
10 x 1st Walsall
4 x 1st Walsall
4 x 2nd Walsall
10 x 2nd Questa.

19 February: 10 x 1st book, Disney promotion

19 February: Greetings stamp cards

26 February: Greetings stamp book and presentation pack

Note: Some items available only from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets at main post offices in: Bath, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Gloucester, Guildford, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London (Lombard Street & Trafalgar Square), Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Romford, Southampton, Southend on Sea, Stratford upon Avon, Truro, Windsor, and York.

To be withdrawn in January/February

16 January: Cats stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards

16 January: NPM Cats postcards *Note:* Cards will be withdrawn from sale at Bureau, but remain on sale at NPM shop.

6 February: 50p, £1 and £2 stamp books – No. 1 in Sea Charts, Inspiration for Victory, and Sir Rowland Hill series.

13 February: 10 x 1st stamp book – Thorntons Promotion

Events – January/February 1996.

until February 1996: Designing Messages: European Stamp design exhibition at Design Museum, Shad Thames, London SE1. Open weekdays 11.30-18.00; weekends 12.00-18.00. Admission £4.50 adults, £3.50 concessions. Enquiries: 0891-715944.

until April 1996: "Victorian Posts" exhibition at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1. Open Mon-Fri 09.30-16.30. Admission free. Enquiries: 0171-239 5420.

2 January-31 March: Display of Ascension 1995 Flowers issue (artwork, essays, proofs, issued stamps) at British Library, Great Russell Street, London WC1. Open Mon-Sat 10.00-17.00, Sun 14.30-18.00. Enquiries: 0171-412 7635/6.

8 January-23 February: Colin Gifford Railway Photographs at temporary exhibition gallery, National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1. (Mr Gifford's photographs were used on the 1994 Age of Steam stamps.)

20 January: Telford Phil Soc Stamp & Postcard Fair at Belmont Hall, Wellington, Telford, 10.00-16.00. Enquiries: P Morris-Jones, 01952-223926.

24-28 January: Spring Stampex at Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, Islington, London N1. Enquiries: 0171-490 1005.

14 February: Display "Great Britain King George V" by D Knight to Guildford & District Phil Soc, at Friends Meeting House, North Street, Guildford, 19.00. Enquiries: Patricia Stokoe, 01483-416066.

27 February: "The Turbulent History of The Postal Service: From Roman Times until 1840" – display by J A Jessop to Bournemouth & District Phil Soc, St John's Churchill Hall, Surrey Road, Westbourne, Bournemouth, 19.45. Enquiries: Mrs P Luscombe, Tel. 01202-395338.

