

British Philatelic Bulletin

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Variation to Existing Definitive Stamps

10p definitive stamps are to be produced on phosphor coated paper. All low-value definitive stamps (up to 50p) will now be printed on phosphor coated paper with the exception of the basic second class letter rate, currently 12½p, which will continue to be produced with one phosphor bar.

The 'new' 10p stamps will initially be available from philatelic sales counters or, by post, from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, from 14 December 1983. These stamps are not regarded as new issues and no official first day facilities will be offered.

In this edition, as 1983 draws to a close, we look forward to the New Year 1984, and what it will bring. Hopefully 1984 does not sound as ominous as it once did, now that it is virtually upon us! The first special stamp issue scheduled for next year will be a set commemorating the 500th Anniversary of the College of Arms and will be released on 17 January. The stamps, which depict coats of arms, are unusual in that they have been printed in a new square format, and they are featured in this edition.

We are also pleased to include a special feature which celebrates 50 years of Messrs Harrison & Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd holding the British Post Office Stamp Printing Contract, which they first secured in 1934. Of all the different development phases of British stamps, this period is probably the one which has seen the most far-reaching changes. It would also be interesting to try and guess just how many millions of stamps Harrisons have actually printed for the British Post Office during this time!

After celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year, we in the Bulletin are looking forward to 1984, and hope to carry all our regular features as well as specialised articles and other philatelic items. If you do not already have one, Christmas is an ideal time to take out a yearly Bulletin subscription for yourself or collector friends — providing an unusual and useful Christmas present. On that note, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all our readers for their past support, and wish them a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.

CHARLES GOWEN



Greetings on the Wing

*"Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated
The bird of daunting singeth all night long".*

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, Act I

An estimated one hundred million greetings cards are exchanged in Britain during the Christmas festive season. This year those cards and messages dropped into post boxes will bring a special smile to nature lovers the world over. Nearly five million cards are entrusted to the Royal Mail: this year they will carry an extra message of goodwill from the colourful flocks of small birds who stay in these islands to brighten the long winter months. With a charming touch of seasonal fantasy the 1983 Christmas stamps designed by Tony Meeuwissen, use feathered messengers to spread the simple tidings of the Christmas message: communication with loved ones, peace and harmony.

Though wild birds figure constantly in the imagery of the Old Testament, they are conspicuously absent from the Gospel accounts of the Christmas story. In most well-known carols too our feathered friends are forgotten for the more spectacular delights of massed choirs of angels. This traditional Czech carol is one of the few amongst the classic favourites of the Oxford Book of Carols to use the pretty device of winged messengers of glad tidings:

*"A pigeon flew over to Galilee
He strutted and cooed and was full of glee
And showed with jewelled wings unfurled
His joy that Christ was in the world".*

The Birds, *Oxford Book of Carols*, 103

In artistic representations of the Christmas story birds have fared better. They frequently flutter into the glowing canvasses of the masters of the Middle Ages and Renaissance: Nature's witness to countless Adorations and Nativities in picturesque settings. Indeed, in more than one Flemish Nativity scene, birds and angels perch in cheerful companionship on the stable roof above the Madonna and Child.

But these are in the main exotic birds. The Old Masters preferred the brilliant plumage of peacocks, cage birds and doves. Only with the revival of Christmas festivities in the nineteenth century did the wild birds of Britain enter the decorative world of Christmas imagery.

Mansell Collection



When the London printing firm of Goodall and Son commenced production of the first widely available Christmas cards in the early 1860's, birds were the first popular design element, along with holly, mistletoe and pretty children. Surprisingly, few Christmas cards in these early days had any religious content: like most of the customs introduced to help revive the ancient message of Christmas they relied on pictures of Dickensian jollity rather than religious fervour to spread the Christmas spirit.

The Dove was the one exception. Symbol of the Holy Spirit descending on Christ in the Gospels, it was also the ultimate image of peace and goodwill amongst mankind. Noah's dove flying back to the Ark with her olive branch, as promise of a new beginning, has remained the most potent expression of the true Christmas message of hope and faith.

Alongside the lofty sentiments inspired by the dove, the Victorian illustrators of the latter years of the century also showed a more prosaic fascination with humble farm-yard birds: perhaps in cheerful anticipation of Pickwickian feasting. On some of the first comic cards turkeys, ducks, geese and hens strut their way through snowy scenes, in blissful ignorance of their ultimate contribution to Christmas cheer.

Less explicable was the sudden vogue for pathetic pictures of dead birds which remained one of the most popular card images for a period of several years. The Victorian love of morbid



sentimentality is clearly revealed in the tiny cards of dead blue tits and sparrows in the snow that sold in their thousands in the 1890's: surely one of the strangest devices to wish a 'happy' Christmas.

But it was the live and chirpy British robin who provided the most enduring of all Christmas decorative images. Enshrined in folk legend as the bird who eased a thorn from Christ's crown on his way to Calvary, with a splash of blood dying its breast bright red; Robin Redbreast provided the perfect colourful counterpoint to a snowy white Christmas.

On cards, cakes, crackers, wrapping paper, tree ornaments and street decorations, robins are as much a part of Christmas lore as mince pies, Father Christmas and carols. Robins comical, robins sad; dressed-up as Father Christmas or shivering in the snow; perched on chimney-tops or pecking at crumbs: each household is sure to receive a small flock by Christmas morning.

The wren too stepped from ancient folklore into many Christmas pictures, based on the now almost forgotten rural tradition of 'Hunting the Wren' on St. Stephens Day, December 26th: a custom which dates back to the old pagan festivities overlaid by the Christian celebrations.

It is the fragility and innocence of wild birds that makes them such ideal messengers of the Christmas spirit. Even the current vogue for highly realistic

bird paintings on 'non-Christmassy' cards reawakens thoughts of home and shelter where:

*"The sparrow hath found her an house
And the swallow a nest for herself"*

Psalm 84

A flock of birds can symbolize peace and concord at Christmas. "Birds in their little nests agree" is perhaps the only line universally remembered from Isaac Watts' once best-selling *Divine Songs for Children*. And their struggle through the cruel winter recalls Christ's promises in Matthew and Luke that not a sparrow shall fall to the ground and be forgotten.

On the letters, parcels and cards sent all over the world from Britain this Christmas, the more traditional Christmas birds will be joined by a flurry of goldfinches, nightjars, magpies, blue tits, blackbirds, nuthatches, pied wagtails and doves — and one small and friendly cat declaring a Christmas truce! "The time of the singing of birds is come" heralds the Song of Songs for a time of celebration and joy to be shared. And a traditional Scottish carol by William Dunbar asks the birds of the air to spread the Christmas message far and wide:

*"Celestial fowls in the air
Sing with your notes upon height
In firthès and in forests fair
Be mirthful now with all your might".*

Rorate, *Oxford Book of Carols*, 125

SUZANNE WOLSTENHOLME

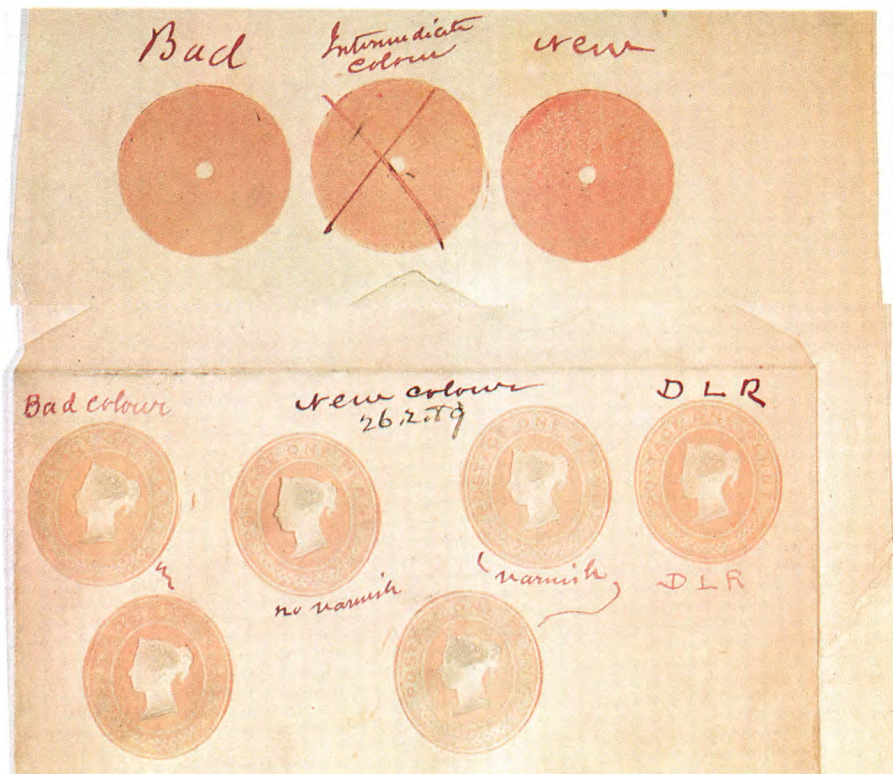
1889 Ink Trials

One of the many interesting fields for both collecting and studies are the embossed issues of Queen Victoria. The Gem from the Reginald M Phillips Collection this month looks at an unusual item which falls within this particular category.

While embossed postage stamps as such had a relatively restricted life because of the technical problems of the time, embossed stamp impressions on postal stationery continued from the reign of Queen Victoria right up to modern times. The development of embossing as a method for producing postage stamps or postal stationery is well illustrated in the R M Phillips Collection. The particular item illustrated can be found in volume XXX/58 of the Collection which is housed in the National Postal Museum. This particular envelope was produced in 1889 and shows trials for ink using

circular targets and one penny embossed stamps. The original notations made at the time can be clearly seen. Also on display (and dating from 1889) can be seen the ten pence brown on a telegraph form and embossed to order on an envelope, (XXX 56/7). The final item in the "embossed story" is a document dated 19 March 1892 which bears impression of the nine different values in use at the same time. Each is overprinted "Specimen" and the document is endorsed "The New Colours" (XXX/59).

Visitors to the National Postal Museum can see "the embossed story" and other treasures of the R M Phillips Collection on display there. The Museum is open five days a week, Mondays-Fridays, the opening hours being 10.00am-4.30pm (4.00pm close on Fridays).



104. 62nd Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference, 1975

An aerial view of the Palace of Westminster was featured on the special 12p stamp — issued on 3 September 1975 — for the 62nd Conference of the Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union held in London. The stamp was designed by Richard Downer and was given a rather mixed reception by the press and public, largely due to the unfamiliar viewpoint which compressed the majestic buildings of the Houses of Parliament 'into insignificance', while the inclusion of part of Westminster Bridge across the blue Thames was described as 'disconcerting'.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union was founded in 1889 by an Englishman, William Cremer (later Sir William), and a Frenchman, Frederic Passy — two men, politician and economist respectively, who shared the ideal of peaceful co-existence. Cremer was an active trade unionist and pacifist who founded the Workmen's Peace Association, the germ

of the International Arbitration League. He won the Nobel peace prize in 1903. Passy, who was also an author, was a member of the Chamber of Deputies, a founder member of the International Peace League, and a member of the International Peace Bureau in Berne from 1892. In 1901 he shared the Nobel peace prize with Jean Dunant, founder of the International Red Cross. Today, the Inter-Parliamentary Union aims 'to promote personal contacts between members of Parliaments of all countries, to support the developments of democratic and parliamentary institutions, and to work for peace and international co-operation'.

The stamps were photogravure-printed by Harrison and Sons in sheets of 100 (two panes of 50, 10 x 5) on unwatermarked paper with 'all-over' phosphor. Apart from a few minor blemishes and retouches, there were no significant flaws in the printing.

JAMES WATSON



The Corbould Drawings of 1837 and the Wyon Head Essays

The following article has been supplied, at our request, by Mr George W Smith of Chelmsford, Essex. The story is most interesting and cannot be ignored. The Bulletin articles referred to are from the 'Gems from the R M Phillips Collection'.

EDITOR

The articles which appeared in the January and March 1983 issues of the Philatelic Bulletin of these related subjects, contain several inaccurate statements and the Editor has kindly asked me to comment on them.

In the earlier article concerning the Corbould Drawings, the illustration of the crowned head in the surround of oak leaves has been reversed and should be facing right. It is necessary to mention this in order to avoid confusion if reference is made to previous writing on the subject. This head and the rather similar one "in the niche" can be assumed to be after originals by R J Lane who drew many Royal portraits from life. This suggestion seems to be confirmed by comparison between the enlarged drawing made by Corbould on the same piece of paper as the "Queen in the niche" which very closely resembles Lane's portraits of Victoria which were issued to the public in 1837 and 1838.

The two other, uncrowned, heads by Corbould have been spoken of as connected with William Wyon for the reason that they closely resemble the head on the coinage which was issued in 1838, engraved by Wyon "from his own model from life."

Regarding these four drawings by Corbould, the previous Curator of the National Postal Museum, Mr A G Rigo de Righi, wrote to me in 1976 stating that "he was not happy about the implication that they had any direct relation to the design Corbould did for the Penny Black, knowing as we do that they were used for a number of other purposes".

They were in fact commissioned for use on bank notes and were so used, Perkins Bacon having no thoughts of being involved with the production of a postage stamp until late in 1839.

It is quite wrong to state that Wyon engraved the City Medal from a Corbould drawing, but it is known that Corbould made a drawing from that medal, this being necessary for the engravers of the

die to be used in the recess process of printing the postage stamps. Wyon himself would not have needed any such drawing as he had his own "model from life" which he made at Kensington Palace in 1834, possibly in plaster or wax and perhaps five inches or so in diameter as was usual, and this would have sufficed for any future engravings of medal dies by Wyon.

So it is quite in error and misleading to have stated that "While the finished engraving (for the Penny Black) was slightly modified.... it still faithfully reflected the sketches made by Corbould (in 1837)". It had nothing whatever to do with those sketches, and the need to refer to them did not exist — Wyon's resources were complete in themselves and the Penny Black is a faithful reproduction of his medal head which was described by R J Lane as "the most exquisitely perfect and true portrait of the Queen."

The City Medal bears the date of the occasion which it commemorates — 9th November 1837, but it was not issued until 1839, the year in which Wyon exhibited it at the Royal Academy.

Regarding the Wyon Head Essays for proposed use on postal stationery, the circumstances were quite straightforward — Wyon himself engraved the embossing die from his own original. So it is again quite wrong to state that "this head was taken from the sketches of Henry Corbould", with a further confusing reference to the City Medal as though that also followed Corbould and his sketches which were in fact those intended for bank notes.

It is to be hoped that these straightforward facts are the ones which will be quoted and re-quoted in future references to these interesting times and if readers wish to know more of this particular aspect of the circumstances, the following references might be useful.

- 1) Philatelic Bulletin Vol.10 No.1 Sept. 1972. Article by Marcus Arman.
- 2) G.B. Journal Vol.14. No.2 May 1976 "The Origin of the 1837 Victoria in the Niche."
- 3) G.B. Journal Vol.15. No.5 October 1977 "The Queens Heads of 1837"

GEORGE W SMITH

Heraldry Stamps Issue

17 January 1984

Heraldry is the name which came to be given to a system of hereditary symbolism and identification which sprang up in western Europe during the twelfth century and was developed thereafter by the heralds.

Heraldry differs from other and more ancient forms of personal and corporate symbolism in that firstly, its display follows certain conventions and is controlled by responsible officers; secondly, the shield is the principal vehicle for the display of the distinctive heraldic devices, known as 'arms' or 'coat or arms'; and thirdly, arms are regarded as an ensign of honour, for they stem from the Crown.

It is at The College of Arms, situated in the City of London, where heralds devise and Kings of Arms, pursuant to royal authority, grant and assign armorial bearings to eminent men and women and worthy corporations in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and all Commonwealth Countries of which the Queen is Head of State.

In Scotland, however, Lord Lyon King of Arms is the sovereign's representative in all matters heraldic and the court of the Lord Lyon is the Scottish equivalent to the College of Arms. A further heraldic set of special stamps related to Scottish Heraldry may be issued in a future year.

In 1984 the College celebrates its 500th anniversary. To coincide with this historic event the Post Office will issue on 17 January 1984 a set of commemorative postage stamps illustrating the coat of arms of the College (16p), Richard III (20½p), The Earl Marshal (28p) and the City of London (31p).

The stamps are designed by Jeffery Matthews FSIAD who will be remembered for his montage of London Buildings on the 50p 'London 1980' stamp.

First Day Cover Services

The following services for first day covers will be provided. Two pictorial handstamps will be available. 'London EC' and 'British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh'.

SERVICE 'A'

This consists of the official first day cover — price 14p — addressed to the correct postal address of the destination required and bearing all four stamps. The cover will be cancelled, 'London EC' or 'British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh', as requested and despatched.

SERVICE 'B'

Customers' own pre-addressed covers bearing the correct postal address, will be given stamps, cancelled as requested and despatched.

The following charges will apply:

	Inland	Overseas
Service 'A'	£1.38	£1.20
Deposit Account Customers	£1.33	£1.16
Service 'B'	£1.24	£1.08

The first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes. Application forms, available from the British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh, and at all Head Post Offices, should be returned not later than Friday 6 January 1984.

Printing Details

The stamps are printed photogravure by Harrison and Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd in sheets of 100. The format is square and the stamp size is 34mm x 34mm with 14½ x 14½ perforations. The paper used is unwatermarked, phosphor coated with PVA dextrin adhesive.

Values and Colours

16p — lemon, brown, rosine, bright blue, grey-black, black.

20½p — orange-yellow, rosine, bright blue, grey-black, black.

28p — orange-yellow, brown, rosine, bright blue, green, grey-black, black.

31p — lemon, rosine, bright blue, grey-black, black.

Cylinders used to be advised.

Postcards

Postcard reproductions of each of the four stamps will be available from 3 January 1984, price 13p each.

Presentation Pack

A presentation pack, number 150, designed by Jeffery Matthews, containing all four stamps will be available from 17 January 1984, price £1.15.

Souvenir Covers

Souvenir covers — price 14p each — designed by Jeffery Matthews will be available from Philatelic counters only on the day after the stamp issue, 18 January 1984.



HERALDRY

Royal Mail Mint Stamps

1007/124



HERALDRY

Royal Mail First Day Cover



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



8. London's Tower Bridge

Of the score or so bridges crossing the Thames in the London area, the most picturesque and universally admired is undoubtedly the grandiose Tower Bridge, named for its close proximity to the majestic Tower of London. The Bridge was designed by the architect Sir Horace Jones in conjunction with the engineer, Sir John Wolfe Barry, KCB, fifth son of the eminent architect, Sir Charles Barry, RA. The work of construction was begun on 22 April 1886 under the eagle eyes of the City of London Corporation — it was completed in 1894 at a cost of £1,500,000, and it was officially opened by Edward, Prince of Wales (later Edward VII) on 30 June of that year.

The Gothic towers, each 120 feet above the river piers, embrace the twin steel bascules which, spanning 200 feet of roadway, can be raised by hydraulic machinery, electrically controlled, to allow the passage of large ships. Some 140 feet above high

water is a raised footway between the tops of the towers (and reached by stairs within the towers), which was recently opened to the public after being closed since 1909, when it attracted an abnormal number of suicides. The outer spans with chain suspension are each 270 feet in length.

My postcard — No. SV538 in the 'National' series published by Millar and Lang of Glasgow — shows the scene of the opening with HMS *Landrail* leading the procession of ships into the Upper Pool. A very similar scene was painted in oils by the artist, W L Wyllie — the picture is now in the possession of the City Corporation. For many people Tower Bridge has become the symbol of London. When, some years ago, the old London Bridge was sold and removed, stone by stone, to Arizona in the United States, many Americans thought they were getting the Tower Bridge. Thankfully they were mistaken!

MALCOLM JAMES



Philatelic Counters

Posting Boxes

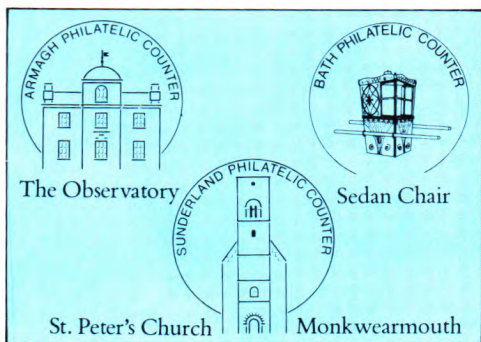
Handstamps

On 3 January 1984 Armagh and Sunderland join the growing number of offices with special handstamps cancelling mail posted at their philatelic counters.

Items for reposting should bear 3p in addition to the normal postage, and should be sent to the offices shown below. The outer cover must be endorsed, 'special philatelic handstamp' and must bear normal postage. Items will not be back-dated with a postmark prior to that which appears on the outer cover.

ARMAGH — The Head Postmaster, Head Post Office, 46-50 English Street, ARMAGH, BT61 7AA.

SUNDERLAND — The Postmaster, Market Square Branch Office, 43-45 Market Square, SUNDERLAND, SR1 3LL.



New Philatelic Sales Counter

A new philatelic sales counter will open at the Head Post Office, New Bond Street, BATH, BA1 1AA on Tuesday 10 January 1984.

Hours of business at the new counter are 10am-5.30pm Monday to Friday: closed for lunch 12.30pm-1.30pm. To coincide with the opening, a special pictorial handstamp will be introduced to cancel mail posted in the office. The postmark shown depicts a sedan chair and will be available on each day that the philatelic counter is open. For customers who are unable to call at the office, normal re-posting facilities will apply. Covers should be sent in an outer envelope addressed to The Head Postmaster at the above address.

There are now 58 philatelic counters with their own postmarks.



No 54. Our photograph this month's is of the posting box in the main square of Bethlehem next to the Church of the Nativity. We offer our thanks to Mr Hans Gabriëls of Voorschoten, Netherlands, for sending the picture, who also assures us that the crown and cypher are still neatly painted nearly 30 years after the British Postal Administration ceased to operate in Israel.

Harrison & Sons – Printers of Post Office Stamps

1984 marks the 50th anniversary of Harrison & Sons of High Wycombe continuously printing the stamps for Great Britain by the photogravure process.

The traditions and history of Harrisons as a printing concern can be traced back to Richard Harrison, who in 1557 was recorded as a freeman 'of the mystery and art of printing.' The present company was started by Thomas Harrison in London in 1750 and incorporated in that year.

Looking back over the years, there are many important dates in the history of the company. In 1881 it was awarded its first Post Office Contract, this was for embossing green 1/- stamps on telegram forms. In 1910 Harrisons were given a Post Office contract to print postage stamps in quantity. To carry out this work, which involved printing over a million stamps a day, a factory was acquired at Hayes, Middlesex, and production started in 1911. In 1924, after years of experimental work, they produced the first photogravure postage stamps in this country — the King Fuad I definitive for Egypt. This was also the first time that the photogravure process, normally used until then for the reproduction of works of fine art and maps, had been used anywhere in the world to print stamps in quantity.

But to the staff at High Wycombe, no date has quite the significance of 1934. In that year Harrisons acquired a factory in High Wycombe after having secured the main British Postage Stamp Printing Contract for which they were to use the new photogravure process: 50 years later the work continues.

Although the Post Office Contract for printing stamps is the biggest contract for Harrisons, the company also prints postage stamps for 120 other countries, which includes some of the major definitives in the world market. Harrisons are able to print stamps by the three major printing processes, ie intaglio (or recess), photogravure and lithography, and they also have a facility to produce stamps with a combination of photogravure and intaglio, a process many believe to be the most aesthetically satisfying of all. This method was used for the 'Maritime Heritage' stamps in 1982.

The company is very proud to have produced all the royal special issues since 1934 and the Queen afforded them the rare honour of visiting the factory



The final checking department where any minute errors in colour registration and perforations are spotted.

on two occasions; in 1952, and again in 1977 when she went to see the printing of the stamps issued to commemorate her Silver Wedding.

The Jumelle press, which prints the major part of the Post Office Contract, was installed in 1970 and can print sheets of 200 special issue stamps or 400 definitive stamps at speeds of up to 15,000 sheets per hour and either sheeting or re-reeling off the machine. Harrisons have assiduously developed a major technological facility, rotary perforating, and can proudly claim to be among the world leaders in the technique of simultaneous printing and perforating.

In 1967 Harrisons won The Queen's Award to Industry for Technical Innovation and they have also won many other awards including prestigious international distinctions for their quality printing.

They employ some of the finest craftsmen in the world for printing stamps and, in spite of all the modern technology now available, hand skills are still necessary to meet the high standards of work which the Post Office demands as, indeed, do other stamp issuing authorities.

In parallel with these stamp printing

developments, Harrisons developed specialised paper coating and gumming methods in order to maximise printing and perforating quality. This work is now as much a part of the company as stamp printing, and Harrisons are acknowledged as being among the world leaders in such production and holding a major share of the world market.

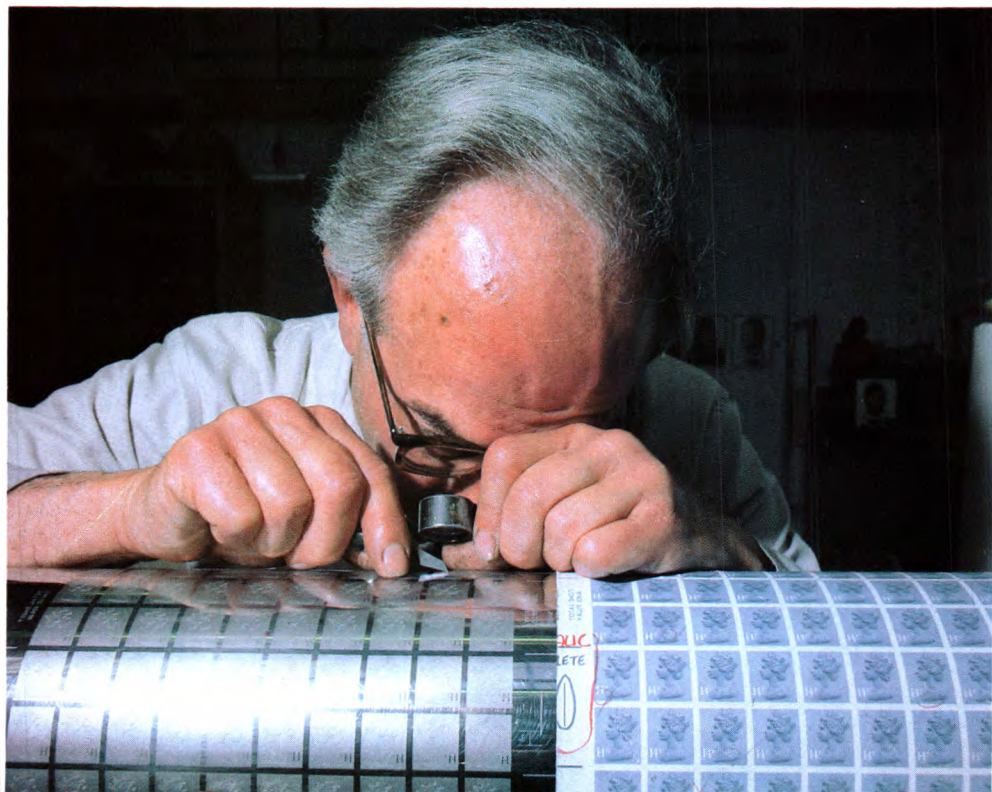
Coupled with these achievements the company has developed a high security factory with the facilities and workforce necessary for the highly specialised security printing skills, and is now engaged in a wide spectrum of security printing.

Stamps remain the company's predominant product. A country depicts in its stamps examples of its heritage, achievements in the arts and science, and its culture. Every stamp is therefore an ambassador.

What more exciting or responsible work could any printer be privileged to undertake?

To commemorate this event, Harrisons will issue a philatelic cover specially designed for them by Jeffery Matthews, the designer of the elegant 'Heraldry' stamps. It is these stamps which will be affixed to the cover, cancelled with a pictorial handstamp on 17 January 1984. The cost is £2 for the cover bearing the 16p stamp only, or £3.25 with all four stamps affixed. A few covers will be available, signed by the designer, for £5.25 each.

Orders with remittances made payable to: 'Harrison & Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd' should be sent to them at the Marketing Department, Coates Lane, HIGH WYCOMBE, Bucks, HP13 5EZ. All prices quoted include return postage and packing.



An engraver makes minor adjustments to a photogravure print cylinder.

Stampex 1984 – Two Shows

At a meeting between representatives of Stampex Ltd, and British Philatelic Exhibition Ltd, held under the auspices of BPF Ltd, discussions have been held to assess the common ground for staging future National exhibitions. A large degree of agreement was reached on the holding of a single exhibition in the Autumn of 1984. Further talks have been held and an official announcement will be made.

The Stampex spring show — 6-11 March 1984 — will go ahead as already announced.

New National Postal Museum Postcards

A new NPM postcard SS19 featuring reproductions of The Wyon Medal, a pair of VR 'penny blacks' and a pair of 'twopenny blues', is currently on sale in the National Postal Museum, price 20p. Bulk orders for 100-249 cards will receive a discount of 10%, and for 250 or more cards a discount of 20% is offered. A handling charge of 17p will apply to orders of up to £18 while orders in excess of £18 will be despatched by registered post and a handling charge of £1.17 will apply. Normal reposting facilities are available; customers may send their cards for handstamping with the Maltese cross cancel, correctly addressed and bearing stamps to the value of 3p above the minimum postal rate to, The National Postal Museum, King Edward Building, King Edward Street, LONDON, EC1A 1LP in an outer cover bearing correct postage and marked 'NPM cancellation'.

This is the first of a series of cards to be produced annually at the request of Mrs Elsa Phillips, wife of the late Reginald M Phillips, when the open display frames housing part of his famous collection is changed each year.

A further postcard will go on sale coinciding with a new Airmails exhibition 'Half Way Round the World', to open in the Museum on 5 January 1984. The exhibition will cover the first 15 years from the Paris service in 1919. A special handstamp, illustrated, will be in use during the exhibition.

The costs are as stated above.



Stamp Collectors Diary

A new addition to the wide range of philatelic items sold by the Post Office, is the Stanley Gibbons 'Stamp Collectors Diary' for 1984. The diary features extensive philatelic information as well as philatelic dates and addresses. It will be on sale at all Philatelic Sales Counters, the British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh, and the National Postal Museum, price £2.50.

Withdrawn Items

The items listed will be withdrawn from sale during December 1983.

16p 'British Engineering' stamp — stocks exhausted.

£2.20 Christmas discount stamp book — 24 December.

Book Reviews

Stanley Gibbons Simplified Catalogue of Stamps of the World 1984 Edition, Vol. 2 Countries K-Z

The Simplified Catalogue was first published in 1934 and has over the years become something of an institution in the philatelic world. In order to cope with the very considerable number of new stamps now issued every year this work has been split into two volumes. Volume 1 (Countries A-J) was published in August and Volume 2 (Countries K-Z) was published in October. The two volumes together list some 231,000 stamps, of which 52,200 are illustrated. It is interesting to note that the first Simplified — half a century ago — listed 51,000 stamps and illustrated 6,338.

Price revisions have been made as necessary, in particular for Mexico, Peru, Portugal, Thailand and Venezuela. Also there has been a general review of prices for stamps depicting birds, reflecting prices in the new Stanley Gibbons 'Collect Birds on Stamps' catalogue. Interest in thematic collecting is growing and bird stamps are amongst the most popular.

'Stamps of the World' is of inestimable value to thematic collectors, comprising the only complete listing of all basic stamps issued since 1840. The catalogue numbers quoted are those given in the

standard Stanley Gibbons Stamp Catalogue (Parts 1-22), to which collectors will refer for more detailed information on dates of issue, perforations, watermarks, shades, etc.

The cost of the catalogue is £11.50.

Collect British Postmarks

by Dr J T Whitney

This is the third edition of this excellent volume, comprising nearly 300 pages of detailed information arranged for easy reference. By following the author's notes and making intelligent use of the pricing, a good idea of the value of postmarks on cover or piece can be deduced. The book also includes a valuable section giving the postage rates for England, Scotland and Ireland from 1638 to 1968, which enables postal historians to check that the rates on particular covers are those for the distance that the letter had to travel.

Published by Messrs Longmans, the book is very good value for money at £7.50 and can be obtained from most good bookshops.

Autographed copies can be obtained by readers of the Bulletin for £8.50 by writing direct to the author, Dr J T Whitney, 75 Church Road, Hadleigh, BENFLEET, Essex SS7 2DR.

Forces Covers

Royal Air Force Christmas Issue

To coincide with the issue of the 'Christmas' stamps, a Forces Commemorative cover (RFDC 23) will be available as 'Greetings from Bethlehem'. It will begin its journey from Bethlehem, Israel, and be flown to the Royal Air Force Museum where the full range of 'Christmas' stamps will be affixed and then cancelled at Bethlehem in Wales. The cost is £3.20 per cover which includes postage and packing. Orders should be sent to the Director of Appeals, RAF Museum, Aerodrome Road, Hendon, LONDON NW9 5LL. As with last year's Forces cover for Christmas, 'Greetings from the Falklands'; all proceeds will be devoted to Registered Service Charities.

Royal Navy

The fortieth anniversary of an engagement between HMS 'Enterprise' and 'Glasgow' and ten German destroyers on 28 December 1943 will be marked by the issue of a commemorative cover. The cover illustrates HMS 'Enterprise' and 'Glasgow' together with the ships' badges and the destroyers. A 16p

'Christmas' stamp is affixed cancelled with a pictorial handstamp, number BFPS 1822. The cost is 80p.

Alternatively the cover bearing a 28p 'Christmas' stamp, cancelled as above but signed by Lieut Comdr Diggle RN, serving aboard HMS 'Glasgow' during the action, and Lieut Comdr F J Bourgat DSC RN, Lieutenant aboard HMS 'Enterprise' during the action, is priced at £2. In addition the cover signed by Lieut Comdr Bourgat only with a 20½p 'Christmas' stamp affixed and cancelled, the charge is £1.30.

Orders with remittances made payable to, 'The Fleet Air Arm Museum', should be sent to: The Philatelic Officer, RNAS Yeovilton, YEOVIL, Somerset, BA22 8HL, accompanied by a 7" x 5" stamped addressed envelope.

Commemorative Covers

Christian Worship

A Christmas cover commemorating 1350 years of Christmas Worship at St Mary and St Ethelburga Church at Lyminge, Kent, is now available. An illustration of part of the church is featured on the front, enclosed in a decorative gold block border. A full set of the 'Christmas 1983' stamps is affixed cancelled with a pictorial handstamp on 16 November. All covers are signed by the Rector of Lyminge, and the cost is £3.50 each.

Orders with remittances made payable to, Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd at 22-28 High Street, HYTHE, Kent CT21 SAT.

South West Mechanised Letter Office

To commemorate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II officially opening the new South West Mechanised Letter Office at Nine Elms Lane, LONDON SW8 5BB on 8 December 1983, a pictorial commemorative cover has been produced.

The first South Western District Office was a temporary building in Little Charlotte Street (now Palace Place). A permanent building between Stafford Place and Bucking Gate was occupied in June 1861; the next move to Howick Place was on 20 November 1894 which continued to be the District Office until the Outward Sorting function was transferred to the new SWDO building on 19 September 1983.

The covers will cost 14p. For collectors requiring serviced covers bearing a 12½p Christmas Stamp and a special one-day rectangular handstamp, the charge will be 44p. Orders for serviced covers should be sent

to the Philatelic Duty, South Western District Office, 53 Nine Elms Lane, LONDON SW8 5BB, to arrive no later than 8 December 1983. Remittances made payable to the Post Office should be sent direct to the office or by Giro transfer to account no 518 1003.

Mint covers will also be available from all London Postal Region philatelic counters and philatelic offices, all main post offices in the South Western District Office area, or by post from the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh where normal handling charges will apply.

The City of London

The British Post Office are to issue a set of 4 stamps on 17 January 1984 to celebrate the quinqucentenary of the founding by Richard III of the Royal College of Arms in 1484. The stamps will feature the Coats of Arms of The Royal College of Arms, Richard III, the Earl Marshal and The City of London.

Greenberg and Porter are to produce official commemorative covers for the Corporation of The City of London and three of the City's leading institutions — The Bank of England (who coincidentally celebrate the 250th Anniversary of their move to Threadneedle Street), The Stock Exchange and Lloyds of London to accompany the City of London stamp. Each cover depicts the City of London Coat of Arms printed in gold and a line drawing of a well-known scene associated with each organisation. A specially designed postmark has been sponsored for use in the City on the day of issue.

For every cover sold a donation will be made to the Lord Mayor's Charity Appeal and a maximum of only 750 covers for each of the four organisations will be made available to the General Public. There will be 5 different special signed editions limited to 100 each signature and numbered.

Those wishing to obtain these covers should send a cheque or postal order made payable to 'Greenberg & Porter' to:-

The City of London Covers, Greenberg & Porter, 13 Fordyke Road, Becontree Heath DAGENHAM Essex RM8 1PJ

Prices, all post paid are as follows:

Any one of the 4 covers with a single City of London Stamp affixed	£2.00
Any one of the 4 covers with all 4 Coats of Arms stamps affixed	£3.50
All 4 covers, each with a single City of London stamp affixed	£7.50
All 4 covers, each with all 4 Coats of Arms stamps affixed	£12.50
Any one of the 5 signed covers available	£5.50

Wilberforce Council

The Wilberforce Council for Human Rights, is sponsoring a special hand stamp in Hull for the 35th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on the 10th December 1983.

In addition there will be 6 commemorative covers each bearing 5 designs in colour taken from The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Portfolio of Graphics, created by Otavio Roth — the set covering the 30 Articles of the Human Rights Declaration.

The covers will bear the 'Royal Silver Wedding' stamps of 1972, or the 'Royal Wedding' stamps of 1981, or 'Christmas 1983' stamps.

The cost for advance orders will vary according to requirements.

Free details from, The Wilberforce Council for Human Rights, Salisbury Hall, Park Road, HULL, HU3 1TD.

Philatelic Bulletin

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