

British Philatelic Bulletin

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TPO Cover

On 29 September British Rail held a "West Anglia Gala Day" with events at Cambridge, Kings Lynn and Enfield Town stations. A special cover showing a modern locomotive, Travelling Post Office coach and Thomas the Tank Engine was produced. This is available with TPO handstamp for £1 plus postage. A limited number of covers were signed by the Chairmen of The Post Office and British Rail, Sir Bryan Nicholson and Sir Robert Reid. Some may still be available, price £10 each. In addition to the cover, three "souvenir stamps" were produced showing a Heron, Thomas the Tank Engine, and BR staff and locomotive. These are available in sheets of nine (three of each design)

at £1 plus postage. All orders/enquiries regarding covers and souvenir stamps to: John Boothroyd, West Anglia Enterprises, British Rail, Station Road, CAMBRIDGE CB1 2JW.

A Royal Presentation

On 11 September (day of issue of the Gallantry stamps), the Chairman of The Post Office, Sir Bryan Nicholson, visited the National Postal Museum to present two Post Office gold Penny Black Anniversary medals. The first, for The Queen, was presented to Sir William Heseltine, Her Majesty's Private Secretary. The second was presented to Stan Goron, Manager of the NPM, to be kept in the Museum. Only four such gold medals were struck; the other two have been presented to the Dept of Trade & Industry and to the organisers of the Stamp World exhibition.

Shown here are Sir Bryan (left) and Sir William admiring the medal which Sir William accepted on behalf of The Queen.



Astronomy Plate Numbers

The colours and plate numbers for the Astronomy stamps (16 October) are as follows:

22p 1A (cream) 1A (grey) 1A (dull blue-green) 1A (slate-blue) 1A (blue-green) 1A (orange-red) 1A (gold) 1A (black); also 2A2A2A2A2A2A2A2A.

26p 1A (black) 1A (yellow) 1A (dull purple) 1A (pale cream) 1A (brown-rose) 1A (new blue) 1A (greenish yellow) 1A (vermilion) 1A (gold)

31p 1A (black) 1A (cream) 1A (pale cream) 1A (yellow-orange) 1A (salmon) 1A (lemon) 1A (vermilion) 1A (gold)

37p 1A (black) 1A (pale buff) 1A (olive-bistre) 1A (pale cream) 1A (pale flesh) 1A (flesh) 1A (grey) 1A (rose-red) 1A (gold)

Country Stamps

4 December 1990

New 17p, 22p, 26p and 37p Country stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales will be issued on 4 December. They will be on sale at post offices in the respective countries and at the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres and philatelic counters. The designs will be the same as previous issues, the colours of the new stamps being the same as the national definitions: 17p dark blue, 19p flame, 26p stone and 37p red. These values cover the basic second class inland rate; the basic inland first class and EEC countries rate; the non-EEC European rate and the new combined rate for basic weight airmail letters.

Country stamps, then referred to as "Regional Issues" made their debut in 1958 with 3d stamps for Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man and 3d, 6d and 1s3d stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Various additions to the range of values followed — 2½d stamps (postcard rate) for the three islands in 1964, 4d and 5d stamps for each region in 1966 and 1968 respectively and 9d and 1s6d stamps for the three main regions in 1967. The stamps for Guernsey and Jersey were taken off sale when the islands became "postally independent" in 1969. New decimal stamps for the remaining four regions were issued in July 1971. The Isle of Man also became postally independent in 1973 since when the stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have been referred to as "Country" issues. Numerous new values have resulted from postal rates increases and the stamps enjoy popularity with many collectors who have built up specialised collections.

The background story to the introduction of the "Regionals" was given by Jean Farrugia in a series of articles in the *Bulletin*: August 1978 (Scotland), September 1978 (Wales), October 1978 (N Ireland), November 1978 (Isle of Man), January 1979 (Jersey) and February 1979 (Guernsey).

Technical Details

The 12 stamps have been printed in offset-lithography by The House of Questa Ltd in sheets of 200. The 17p stamp is printed on



fluorescent paper with a single phosphor band; the other values are on Phosphor Coated Paper. Perforation is 15 x 14 and the gum PVA Dextrin.

First Day Facilities

First day cover envelopes, price 19p each, will be available from the Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and main post offices in the respective countries. Pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmarks will be available at the Bureau and for the three Country capitals: Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff. First day covers will be provided in sets of three — one set with the Bureau postmark, the other with the postmarks for the three capitals. Application forms, available from the Bureau, "Collections" and philatelic counters, should be returned by 4 December.

Collectors preparing their own covers may send them for the pictorial postmarks to: British

Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT (Bureau postmark); Scotland & N Ireland Special Handstamp Centre, Glasgow LDO, George Square, GLASGOW G2 1AA (Edinburgh and Belfast postmarks — state clearly which is required) or Wales & The West Special Handstamp Centre, Cardiff LDO, Penarth Road, CARDIFF CF1 1AA (Cardiff postmark).

First day posting boxes will be available at all offices which normally provide them in each of the three countries and at all "Collections" and philatelic counter offices in England. Covers posted in these boxes will receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

Presentation Pack

A "New Issue" Pack containing all 12 stamps will be available from the Bureau, "Collections", philatelic counters and main post offices in the respective countries from 4 December, price £3.35.



Themes of British Special Stamps

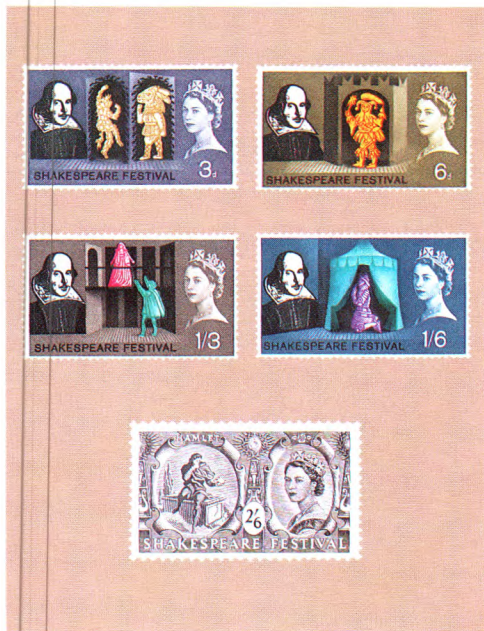
2. Literature

G E DRABBLE

The Post Office has been very kind to British literature in the last 26 years. We have seen 11 issues with a total of 40 stamps directly or indirectly devoted to this theme, and moreover, several of these issues arguably represent some of the best stamps ever produced by the Post Office. The list shows that these 40 stamps have successfully covered an eclectic range of British literary heritage. The Shakespeare Festival was commemorated in 1964, followed by a tribute to Robert Burns in 1966; the anniversary issue of 1970 marked Dickens and Wordsworth, and the following year, anniversaries of Keats, Gray and Scott were remembered. Jane Austen had a set to herself in 1975 and in 1979, classic children's literature was the theme of the issue marking the Year of the Child. Famous woman writers were accorded a tribute in 1980. In 1985, the theme "Arthurian Legend", while not strictly and exclusively literary, was in fact a celebration of Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*. Few would seriously deny the literary quality of the Welsh Bible, marked by the issue of March 1988, and later, in September of that year, Edward Lear must surely be allowed a place in the annals of British literature. The latest issue, a single 20p stamp on 10 July 1990, marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Thomas Hardy.

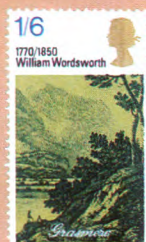
First Folio

The Shakespeare Festival celebrated the 400th anniversary of the Bard's birth, traditionally on St. George's Day, 23 April. Policy at the time did not permit issues commemorating people and events from history; the Festival, however, was a happy compromise. The issue, consisting of a set of four stamps designed by David Gentleman, with a fifth 2s6d stamp, designed by Christopher and Robin Ironside, is worthy of the subject. The four matching low values depict scenes from four of the best-known plays, flanked by the well-known "First Folio" Shakespeare bust and The Queen's head, although in deference to The Queen, the original left-facing bust has been reversed, to face inwards. Gentleman used his technique of design from woodcuts. The characters — Puck and



Bottom, Feste, Romeo and Juliet, and Henry V — appear in contrasting colours, giving the impression of well-lit figures on a darkened stage. The 2s6d stamp is a fine example of engraving, and shows Hamlet with Yorick's skull, and The Queen's head in matching, though unequal sized scrolled vignettes. One might criticise the inclusion of the word "Hamlet"; the scene shown should be sufficiently familiar to render the title superfluous. The single grey stamp contrasts and complements the four lower values to make a very pleasing and harmonious issue.

The Burns issue on 25 January 1966 of two stamps designed by Gordon F Huntly, appeared after the policy of not depicting characters had been relaxed. The designs are competent without being exciting, printed in three colours and using portraits by Archibald Skirving and Nasmyth, against backgrounds of the St Andrew's Cross, and a frieze showing details associated with the poet's life.



A very attractive set consisting of four septenarian 5d stamps in block with a matching fifth 1s6d value, designed by Rosalind Dease, appeared on 3 June 1970 and marked the centenary of the death of Charles Dickens, and the bicentenary of the birth of William Wordsworth. In the whole issue, eight colours were used, but with considerable discretion, and with powerful effect. The design of the Dickens stamps consisted of reproductions of contemporary illustrations by "Phiz" and Cruickshank, in black, the colour being restricted to a uniform background frame, respectively in orange, magenta, blue and olive; the value, printed in the background colour of the complementary stamp in each pair; The Queen's head, in gold, and a single-worded title in silver. The format was the same for the higher value, with a Grasmere scene, and the title "Grasmere", with a pale green background. The issue, Rosalind Dease's fourth commission, must rank as a favourite with many collectors.

Facsimile Signatures

The deaths of John Keats and Thomas Gray, and the birth of Walter Scott were marked by an issue on 28 July 1971 of three stamps, again by Rosalind Dease. The design was a head-and-shoulders drawing in black on a uniform coloured ground, with The Queen's head in gold. Each stamp bore a facsimile signature of the subject, in each case, a profile facing left. The subject titles are printed sideways with their corresponding dates. The portraits were adapted from photographs and engravings.

It would have been a bold decision not to acknowledge Jane Austen on the bicentenary of her birth. The issue of four stamps was the work of Barbara Brown, who, with this first appearance in the arena of stamp design, succeeded in producing a very charming set of four drawings of Austen characters: Emma Woodhouse and her father, Catherine Morland, Mr Darcy, and Mary and Henry Crawford. Each stamp uses six or seven colours, but again,

considerable restraint is used and each tableau, on a white background, has the muted colouring of an early Victorian print. An enlarged set, without the concomitant philatelic details, and suitably framed, would make a delightful display on a wall. The characters are named, but any lover of Jane Austen would recognise them.



Children's Literature

An issue on 11 July 1979 was dedicated to the United Nations Year of the Child, but took as its theme, children's literature. Edward Hughes, the designer, produced an attractive set of four stamps, consisting of drawings of characters

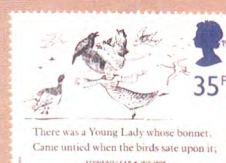
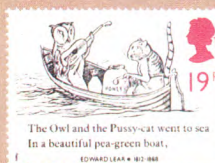
from *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (Beatrix Potter), *The Wind in the Willows* (Kenneth Grahame), *Winnie-the-Pooh* (A A Milne), and *Alice in Wonderland* (Lewis Carroll). These are drawn in outline, and coloured, a remarkable effect being obtained by leaving the lower part of each stamp white. Again, six or seven colours were used but with remarkable restraint. The Queen's head is in silver, and the stamps are in matching pairs, with The Queen's head top-left, and value bottom-right on two stamps, the remaining two being opposite — a concession to the collector who looks for a tasteful arrangement on the page.

Barbara Brown made a welcome return with her second commission on 18 June 1980. The design of four stamps conformed to the Europa theme for 1980 of "Famous People", and comprised portraits of four famous authoresses. Barbara Brown is a specialist in miniature work, and submitted the final artwork in actual stamp size — a considerable achievement. The four portraits — of Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Emily Brontë and Elizabeth Gaskell — occupy



about a third of the horizontal format. In the background are vignettes of scenes from appropriate works. As with many other effective designs, considerable effect is produced by leaving much of the stamp white, and uncluttered, save for the CEPT symbol in silver on two of the stamps.

Yvonne Gilbert had already made her mark in stamp design with the Christmas issue of 1984 when her set of four stamps depicting Arthurian Legend appeared on 3 September 1985, to mark the 500th anniversary of the printing of Sir



Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*. Four scenes from the work are presented with extraordinary clarity and beauty, in similar warm-toned colours to those used for her earlier issue. The pictures fill the frame, and nothing is added but an unobtrusive Queen's head in silver, and the value, a title being printed vertically along the left margin. The classic quality of the work epitomises the famous legends and one feels that Malory, could he have seen these representations of the stories, would have approved.

Contemporary Calligraphy

Bishop William Morgan's translation of The Bible into Welsh was published in 1588. Four hundred years later, on 1 March 1988, the event was marked by an issue of four stamps, designed by Keith Bowen, who based his designs on portraits of the four principal actors in the drama: Morgan; Salesbury, Davies and Parry. (In the March 1988 issue of the *Bulletin*, Keith Bowen gives a piquant description of his hunt for sources of information for this brief.) The stamp size was unusual: 35 x 37mm. Each stamp

has a coloured sub-frame, 31 x 18mm, on which the portrait appears, although it overflows into the white background at top and bottom. The remaining space is taken up by descriptions of the subjects, in elegant contemporary calligraphy, in Welsh, with an English translation. The upper margins bear The Queen's head, very small, in bright and contrasting colours and the values. The details add up to a very satisfying and original issue, which achieved third place in the subsequent Stamp Poll for the year, being eclipsed by the Linnean Society issue and the Armada.

The same year, on 6 September, the centenary of Edward Lear's death was marked by four stamps, designed by Malcolm Swatridge of The Partners design team. The designs are almost starkly simple, consisting of samples of Lear's drawings for some of his nonsense rhymes and other material, but the cream-coloured paper with the coloured Queen's head adds interest to what otherwise might have been a dull issue — an issue which offers us a timely reminder that Lear was primarily a draughtsman, and only

incidentally a writer of nonsense verse. But verse, however nonsensical, which lasts for over a century entitles it to a place in British literature.

The single Hardy stamp, designed by John Gibbs and issued on 10 July 1990, shows a well-



known portrait of the novelist and poet above Clyffe Clump — typical of the Dorset countryside so vividly described in his Wessex novels. His dates of birth and death, 1840 and 1928, appear at the foot of the design.

We in Britain may consider ourselves fortunate in the possession of our literary heritage. Those among us who also confess an interest in philately are additionally fortunate in possessing commemorations of that heritage, consisting for the most part of artistic and technical work of a very high order.

Events

Scotex, Scotland's major stamp show will be held at the Clyde Hall, corner of Jamaica and Clyde Streets, Glasgow on 3 and 4 November; organised by the Scottish Philatelic Traders' Association. Enquiries: Frank Tonelli, 15 King Street, DUNDEE DD1 2JD, Tel. 0382 24946.

On 10 November the **Association of Essex Philatelic Societies One-Day Workshop** will deal with collecting stamps, postal history and thematics, presentation of a collection and how to present a display to local societies. It is intended that the workshop will be of particular use to new or younger collectors. The event will be held in the Essex County Cricket Club pavilion, Chelmsford, starting at 10am. Price, including lunch and refreshments during the day, £8. Details from: A H Boyce, 22 Longfield Road, Great Baddow, CHELMSFORD CM2 7QH.

The 8th **Autumn Assembly of the Midland Philatelic Federation** will be held at the Motorcycle Museum, situated between Coven-

try and Birmingham on the A45 at the junction of the M42, on 10 November (10am to 5pm). The event is hosted by the Solihull Philatelic Society and there will be competitions in the following classes: Stamps, Postal History, Aerophilately, and Thematics. Admission 30p adults, 10p juniors and senior citizens. Refreshments and car parking available; 20 dealers will be present. Enquiries: Roy Thompson, 23 Burnthurst Crescent, Shirley, SOLIHULL B90 4UJ, Tel. 021-744 9128.

Student Designs Exhibition

The Royal Society of Arts touring exhibition, which includes some of the student stamp designs (see July *Bulletin*), will be at the Grays School of Art, Garthdee Road, Aberdeen AB9 2QD from 3-14 December. It will then move on to the Design Works, William Street, Felling, Gateshead, NE10 0JP from 14-31 January.



Shown here are some of the designs by Alison Cook of the London College of Printing.



Royal Mail Special Stamps Yearbook 1990

On 13 November, coinciding with the issue of the Christmas stamps, Volume 7 of the Royal Mail Special Stamps Yearbook will be published. This very interesting and beautifully illustrated book contains background information about the development and production of all the special stamps issued in 1990.

The book is hardbound with a matching slipcase and includes sets of the RSPCA, Europa (Buildings), Queen's Awards, Kew Gardens, Thomas Hardy, Queen Mother, Gallantry, Astronomy and Christmas stamps. It is available from the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters, main post offices and some sub-offices. Price £18.50.

Collectors' Pack 1990

The 1990 edition of the Collectors' Pack will go on sale on 13 November, price £10.50. It will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters, most main post offices and some sub-offices. The pack will contain all 35 special stamps issued during 1990 and the Penny Black miniature sheet mounted on a quality display board. In addition to the stamps, there is a colourful and informative folder giving background details about each of the stamp subjects.

Christmas Aerogramme

Shown here is the 1990 Christmas aerogramme which goes on sale on 13 November, price 42p. It was designed by Jenny Powell.



Six Month Digest

Listed below are the issues of the past six months and the proposed dates of issue for stamps until April 1991. Any change in these dates will be notified in the Bulletin. British Philatelic Bureau order codes are quoted where known.

H = Harrison; Q = Questa; W = Walsall, printers
PB = Penny Black Anniversary Definitive stamps
NVI = Non-Value Indicator stamps

3 May	Penny Black Miniature Sheet (NZ003)
3 May	Penny Black Souvenir Book (AW053)
3 May	Stamp World exh. card (EQ019)
3 May	NPM Personalities cards (NQ903)
3 May	NPM Miniature Sheet card (NQ904)
3 May	PO Archives cards
21 May	Kew Gardens stamp cards (AQ118)
2 Jun	Belgica exh. card (EQ021)
5 Jun	Kew Gardens stamps (AS413)
5 Jun	Kew Gardens pack (AP087)
12 Jun	10 x 15p PB book W (UB016)
12 Jun	10 x 20p PB book W (UB017)
25 Jun	Thomas Hardy stamp card (AQ123)
	Thomas Hardy stamp (AS418)
10 Jul	Thomas Hardy pack (AP088)
17 Jul	Scot aerogramme (Glasgow) (QS026)
23 Jul	Queen Mother stamp cards (AQ124)
2 Aug	Queen Mother stamps (AS419)
2 Aug	Queen Mother pack (AP089)
7 Aug	4 x 2nd NVI book, W (UB021)
7 Aug	4 x 1st NVI book, W (UB022)
7 Aug	10 x 2nd NVI book, W (UB023)
7 Aug	10 x 1st NVI book, W (UB024)
7 Aug	10 x 2nd NVI book, H (UB025)
7 Aug	10 x 1st NVI book, H (UB026)
7 Aug	10 x 2nd NVI book, Q (UB027)
7 Aug	10 x 1st NVI book, Q (UB028)
24 Aug	New Zealand exh. card (EQ023)
28 Aug	Gallantry stamp cards (AQ129)
4 Sep	10p definitive — lt. tan (DS103)
4 Sep	17p definitive — dark blue (DS170)
4 Sep	22p definitive — flame (DS222)
4 Sep	26p definitive — stone (DS262)
4 Sep	27p definitive — mauve (DS271)
4 Sep	31p definitive — ultramarine (DS312)
4 Sep	33p definitive — emerald (DS330)
4 Sep	New Definitives pack (DP013)
4 Sep	50p book (3 x 17p) (TB005)
4 Sep	£1 book (3 x 22p, 2 x 17p) (TB006)
11 Sep	Gallantry stamps (AS424)
11 Sep	Gallantry pack (AP090)
11 Sep	NPM Postal Reform cards (4)
17 Sep	£1.24 book (4 x 31p) (UB029)

17 Sep	17p UL (500) roll (DC043)
17 Sep	17p UL (1,000) roll (DC045)
17 Sep	22p WL (500) roll (DC044)
17 Sep	22p WL (1,000) roll (DC046)
1 Oct	Astronomy stamp cards (AQ135)
16 Oct	Astronomy stamps (AS430)
16 Oct	Astronomy pack (AP091)
16 Oct	Autumn Stampex exh. card (EQ025)
29 Oct	Christmas stamp cards

Forthcoming

1 Nov	ASDA National exh. card
13 Nov	Christmas stamps
13 Nov	Christmas pack
13 Nov	Christmas aerogramme
13 Nov	1990 Collectors Pack
13 Nov	1990 Year Book
13 Nov	NPM Christmas Posters cards
27 Nov	Mixed Value Roll (17p)
4 Dec	N Ireland, 17p, 22p, 26p, 37p
4 Dec	Scotland 17p, 22p, 26p, 37p
4 Dec	Wales 17p, 22p, 26p, 37p
8 Jan	Dogs
5 Feb	Greetings stamp book
26 Feb	Spring Stampex exh. card
5 Mar	Scientific Achievements
19 Mar	Prestige stamp book
16 Apr	CEPT/Europe in Space

Notes:

1. The eight books issued on 7 August contain Non-Value Indicator (NVI) stamps in new colours — flame (1st) and dark blue (2nd).
2. The Post Office Archives cards are not available from the British Philatelic Bureau; they are on sale at PO Archives and the National Postal Museum.
3. The dates for 1991 issues are provisional.

New Mixed Value Roll

A new Mixed Value Roll will go on sale at the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres and philatelic counters on 27 November. This contains 700 strips of 3 x 4p and 1 x 5p stamps (17p), printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons Ltd on Advanced Coated Paper, PVA Dextrin gum. No first day of issue facilities will be provided.

Pearls for All Exhibition

An exhibition entitled *Pärlor för Alla* (Pearls for All) is on show at the Postmuseum, Lilla Nygatan 6, Gamla Stan, Stockholm, Sweden until 27 January. Included in the displays are Penny Black and Mulready material from the National Postal Museum, London. The Postmuseum is open daily, admission free.

Gems from the R M Phillips Collection

179. 1878 £1 Die Proofs

The first British 10s and £1 stamps, printed in greenish grey and brown-lilac respectively, were issued in September 1878. The Phillips Collection contains a fine selection of these stamps including the artist's original drawings in brown – described by Robson Lowe in his book on the collection as “splendid examples of the art of the miniaturist”. Progressive die proofs in black

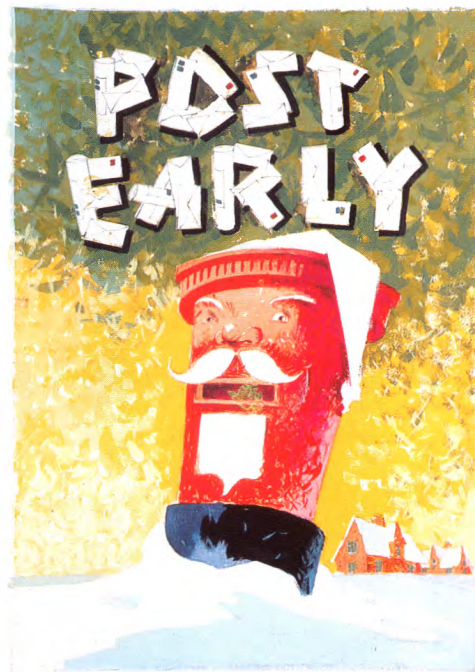


on glazed card follow – 10 of the 10s and nine of the £1. These are dated between 16 April and 6 May 1878 and form the most complete series of their kind. They were selected by Phillips over a 20 year period, acquired mostly from the collections of H C V Adams, R Hugh Sennett and William Sugden. Shown here is the seventh £1 die proof dated 27 April 1878 – Phillips noted on the album page that the horizontal lines below the neck had been strengthened from the previous proof.

The National Postal Museum, in which the Phillips Collection is housed, is located in the London Chief Post Office, King Edward Street, London EC1. The Museum is open Monday to Thursday 9.30am to 4.40pm, Friday 9.30am to 4pm, admission free.

NPM Christmas Poster cards

On 13 November the Museum will issue four postcards reproducing Post Office Christmas posters: (1) Post Box; (2) Santa Claus and map of Europe; (3) mounted soldiers carrying map; (4) Santa Claus and postman. Price 20p each, minimum order 80p, plus handling charge of



22p on orders up to £22. Orders should be sent to: National Postal Museum (Mail Order), King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP. A special handstamp will be used at the Museum on the day of issue. Collectors unable to visit the Museum can submit cards/covers for this handstamp to: London North Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail City & International, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1AA.

Inverness PO Centenary Cover

To mark the centenary of the Post Office at 14-16 Queensgate, Inverness, a commemorative cover has been produced showing the original and existing buildings. It bears the Penny Black Anniversary stamp cancelled by a special 27 September handstamp. Limited edition of 1,000; price £2.75. Orders/enquiries: Business Customer Care Unit, Royal Mail Inverness, 14-16 Queensgate, INVERNESS IV1 1AA.

Picture Post

Post Box Graveyard

Shown here is a site to please (or dismay) all letter box enthusiasts — a Post Office storage yard in north west England. The photographs were taken by David Paton, Deputy Manager of the National Postal Museum, during a visit to identify the types of boxes stored there. Some of



the boxes have now been transferred to the Museum for restoration and safe-keeping. The NPM's aim is to create a collection of each major type of box in order that future generations can enjoy this important part of Post Office history. Mr Paton would be pleased to hear from readers who know of the whereabouts of redundant letter boxes.

Painswick Post Office

In the February *Bulletin* we featured the fire mark affixed to Painswick Post Office in Gloucestershire. Readers Peter and Sally Lee of Leamington Spa have sent in this photograph of a model they are constructing (one-twelfth size) of the Painswick office. To date they have spent over 650 hours on the model. Such is the detail that they are even including tiny chocolate bars and greetings cards in the goods displayed inside the office. The model was the subject of a feature in the *Stroud News & Journal* in July.



Rowland Hill Statue, Kidderminster.



Rowland Hill Statue

Courtesy of Harry Wright of Cardiff we feature a postcard (sent during the 1914-18 War) of the statue of Sir Rowland Hill at Kidderminster, his birthplace. The plinth bears the inscription "To his creative mind and patient energy the world is indebted for the Penny Postage introduced 1840".

Yet More Letter Boxes on Cigarette Cards

IAN G WILKINSON

Those of you who read my first article on this subject in the March 1988 issue of this *Bulletin* (pages 160-3) may recall a cigarette card issued in 1888 entitled "Last Round". This was one of a set of 50 un-numbered cards by W Duke & Sons in the USA, titled "Postage Stamps packed in Duke's Cigarettes" and the text on the back of all these cards reads as follows:

"We pack in each box of our cigarettest one of this series of fifty handsome picture cards, illustrating mail matters, and paste on each A FOREIGN POSTAGE STAMP from a collection of over a thousand varieties, ranging in value from ONE CENT TO ONE DOLLAR each. Not only the beginner but the owner of a large collection will find amongst our stamps such as he could never find before."

Now thanks to Victor Short of Oakham, I am able to show you another card from this same set, this one being titled "By the Way". It shows the same type of box as the other one but this time depicts a very attractive young lady posting a letter in it – the other card showed a postman emptying the box. The stamp that is affixed to this second card, as will be seen, is quite a reasonable copy of the 1841 2d blue.

Who would have thought of looking at a set of cigarette cards showing British Army Distinguishing Marks to find a pillar box? Nevertheless there is one in this set of 50 cards issued in 1928 by B Morris & Sons Ltd under the title "Victory Signs". This card shows the emblem for the 244th S.B.A.C. and the caption on the reverse tells us: "Post Haste, as signifying movement at the utmost speed was the keynote of the supply units serving the troops in the trenches, either with ammunition or food. The sign of the postal letter box adopted by this unit, well indicated the spirit of the unit, which 'delivered the goods' with unfailing regularity and with expedition." This card is No. 32 in the set and, not surprisingly, none of the others have a postal connection.

I guess you have to be at least 60 years old to remember the cartoons showing the exploits of "Henry" as illustrated by Carl Anderson and which appeared in various publications in the



Top: Henry card (c.1936); 1841 2d blue on Duke's card of 1888

Bottom: 1973 Trade Card showing pub sign; "Victory Signs" card of 1928

1930s. Many of these also appeared on cigarette cards issued with Kensitas cigarettes (Remember "Four for your Friends"?), produced by J Wix & Sons, Ltd. In all, between 1935 and 1937, they issued no less than five series of Henry cards each consisting of 50 cards which gives some idea as to how prolific this cartoonist was. All these sets were large size cards (as illustrated) and the first two sets were also reproduced in postcard size, presumably with their tins of 50 or 100 cigarettes. Not only were these cards un-numbered, they carry no indication as to which set they come from. However, I especially like

this particular card as it is the only one I know of that shows the little tin money box pillar boxes that I have collected for the best part of 20 years. (*Mr Wilkinson's collection has now been acquired by the National Postal Museum and a selection of boxes is on display in the main gallery.*)

My last card is not in fact a cigarette card but what the catalogue describes as a "Non Tobacco Issue" or often referred to as a Trade Card and this one was issued by the brewers, Whitbread & Co. Ltd. Between 1951 and 1974 this company issued some 17 sets of "Inn Signs" the first three of which were printed on metal. Most sets consisted of either 50 or 25 cards but the one illustrated comes from the only set of 15 cards which they put out in 1973. This card is No. 15 in the set and, as they state on the back, this pub sign is one of their more modern ones. "The Pillar Box" was the local pub for the postmen who worked at the main Mount Pleasant sorting office at that time but now, alas, it has been renamed.

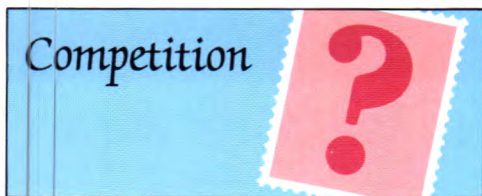
BPF Congress

The 72nd British Philatelic Federation Congress was held at Girton College, Cambridge from 20-23 September. Four new Distinguished Philatelists signed the famous Roll: Guiseppe Barcella of Italy, Ritchie Bodily of the UK, Jairo Londono Tamayo of Colombia and Jean-Paul Schroeder of France. The Roll was initiated in 1921 with King George V being the first signatory.

Ritchie Bodily in well-known in UK philatelic circles, especially for his interest and research into Mulready envelopes and caricatures and illustrated printed and hand-drawn or painted envelopes postally used between 1840 and 1900. The interest culminated in the co-authorship of *British Pictorial Envelopes of the 19th Century* published in 1986.

Secretaries of BPF affiliated societies and federations are reminded that nominations to be considered for election to the Roll in 1991 must reach the Secretary of the Board of Election by 31 December 1990. Nomination forms are available from: L V Rapkin, Eaglewood, Oxhey Lane, Hatch End, PINNER, Middx, HA5 4AL.

Derick Ray was Chairman of Congress; the Congress Medal was awarded to Neil M Russell for his philatelic work over many years; Awards of Merit went to M P Birks, A J Brander, P A C Cattell, Dr A M Goodbody, M Leonard, M Preston, W M Rae, L G Rowe and M Young.



Enter this month's competition and stand a chance of winning the 1990 Royal Mail Special Stamps Yearbook containing all the special issues of 1990. Answer the questions below, the answers to some will be found in this month's *Bulletin*, and send with your name and address on a postcard to: November Bulletin Competition, National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP to arrive by 31 December.

The senders of the first five all-correct entries drawn will each be sent a Yearbook; five runners-up will be sent presentation packs of the Christmas stamps. Answers and winners' names will be published in the February *Bulletin*.

1. In which year were the Shakespeare Festival stamps issued?
2. Who designed the 1966 Robert Burns stamps?
3. Which Gloucestershire post office is the subject of model-making?
4. Where in London is Flamsteed House?
5. What was the total face value of the 1953 Coronation set?
6. In what year were 9d and 1s6d stamps issued for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales?

The competition is not open to staff of Royal Mail Stamps & Philately, the National Postal Museum, their agents and their families. No correspondence will be entered into; the Editor's decision will be final.

The winners of the August competition were: M Hogarty of New Zealand, M Measures of Warwickshire, Mrs S Morris of Surrey, Mr Hammond of Lancashire (signed covers), W Waldock of Birmingham, M Sauvé of France, J Stubbs of Staffordshire, J Cousins of W Sussex, I Smith of Hong Kong and N Mortimer of Staffordshire (presentation packs).

The answers were: 1. For Valour; 2. Bradbury Wilkinson, 3. John Sussex, 4. 7 May 1963 and 5. 1928.

Our thanks to all who entered.

Celestial Bodies

BARBARA LAST

Astronomy is the science of heavenly bodies, their nature, distances, movements, and their relations with the Earth and universe, vitally necessary to us as clocks, calendars and navigational beacons. Armagh Observatory, celebrated for its pioneering study of star flares, commemorates its 200th anniversary with four stamps (22p, 26p, 31p and 37p, issued 16 October) that trace the development of astronomy from the earliest times to the present day. The new set also marks the centenary of the British Astronomical Association, a premier organisation for observational astronomy.



Our remote ancestors stargazed, leaving as evidence Babylonian mathematical and astronomical tablets, and in western Europe, the construction of megalithic monuments dating roughly from 2000-1000BC. Newgrange passage grave, Co. Meath, (Ireland 1983, S.G. 556), the Gaelic name of which means "cave of the sun", and unique Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain, seen on the new 37p value, were meticulously aligned to focus the Sun's rays onto certain spots at the solstice. The Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322BC), used 56 spheres to represent the stars, noted their interaction,

and deduced that the Moon's phases were caused by the Sun's rays and the Earth's shadow.

Aids to Navigation

The Phoenicians navigated by the Pole Star and Ursa Major, also seen on the new 37p stamp, a knowledge they kept to themselves. The first to sail by night, they took the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon in c. 950BC, and in 611BC made a year-long voyage from the Arabian Gulf, round the foot of Africa, to the Straits of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean. The pattern of the stars was recognised as aids to navigation, that practical astronomy which determined a ship's position at sea.

The earliest scientific instrument to calculate latitude was the astrolabe, used by Hipparchus c.190- c.120BC (Greece 1965, S.G. 994) at Rhodes. He worked out the first system of fixing latitude and longitude, made the first accurate star catalogue, and calculated the length of the year to within six minutes. The marine astrolabe was used at sea c. 1480, and a handsome one was salvaged from the Dutch India-man *Batavia*, wrecked in 1629 (Australia 1985, S.G. 993). There are all manner of navigational instruments depicted on stamps, and I was surprised that the compass was only perfected in the 14th century.

The pattern of star movements was carefully observed, and Ptolemy, c. 90-168AD, claimed that the Earth was the centre of the universe, the Sun and planets revolving round it — a theory that everyone, particularly the medieval Church accepted as perfectly reasonable and obvious. But the Polish Copernicus, 1473-1543, disagreed and proposed that the solar system had the Sun as its centre. The theory was quite unacceptable to the Church. Galileo, 1564-1642, (Italy 1983, S.G. 1800) made a host of exciting and challenging new discoveries by using a primitive telescope which proved that the Earth could not be the only centre of motion. He observed four moons of Jupiter (Maldives 1988, S.G. 1262), phases of Venus, sunspots, craters on the Moon, and that the Milky Way was a massed collection of stars. Galileo believed the

Copernicus theory but was forced to recant by the Inquisition in 1633. Condemned as a heretic, the first steps to rehabilitate this great scientist were taken by The Pope as recently as 1983.

Mercator Projection

The new 31p stamp depicts more sophisticated methods of basic astronomy, and charting.



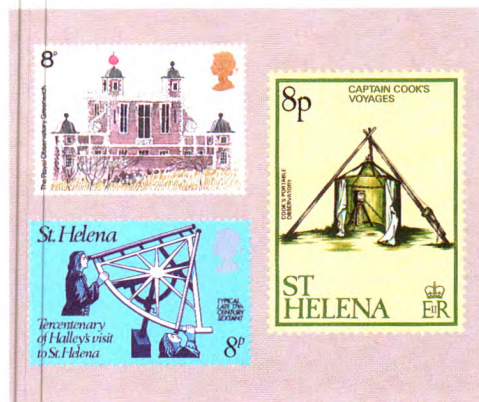
Gerardus Mercator, 1512-94, (Belgium 1962, S.G. 1813), the Flemish geographer constructed terrestrial and celestial globes and introduced the "Mercator projection", i.e. lines of latitude and longitude into flat charts which made navigation easier. The Dane Tycho Brahe, 1546-1601, improved the accuracy in the measurement of star positions. An Ascension stamp of 1971 (S.G. 137) shows Brahe's quadrant, the supernova of 1572 and the observatory he founded at Hven where observations that he made on Mars were later used by Johann Kepler for his laws on planetary motion. A West German stamp of 1971 (S.G. 1594) marked the 400th anniversary of Kepler's birth, showing his astronomical calculus.

British Scientific Advances

The 17th and 18th centuries encouraged the flowering of fresh scientific thought, and Isaac Newton, 1642-1727, was the giant, proving with his *Principia Mathematica* (GB 1987, S.G. 1351) that physics played a crucial role. His laws of gravitation answered all queries on the movements of the tides. Newton owed much to the good offices of his friend Edmund Halley, 1656-1742, who was a notable navigator and

astronomer in his own right. When in command of HMS *Paramour* (Tristan 1986, S.G. 405) he became so frustrated with his navigating officer that he locked the lieutenant in his cabin, and brought his ship home himself. He made a chart of the Southern stars while staying on St Helena for over a year. But his greatest work was the study of the orbits of comets, and deducing through the application of Newton's Laws of Motion that Halley's Comet had an elliptical 76-year cycle. He became convinced that the comet observed at intervals since 240BC were all manifestations of the same body. This he proved by predicting and observing its return in 1682, and the new 26p stamp shows a string of comets with their tails turned away from the Sun.

Halley became the second Astronomer Royal in succession to John Flamsteed who lived in the first Royal Observatory building at Greenwich, known as Flamsteed House (GB 1975, S.G. 977), also shown as the little house on the new 31p stamp. Halley's forecast of the Transit of Venus in 1769 had far-reaching results, for it took Captain James Cook to the Pacific (Norfolk Island 1969, S.G. 99) with his portable observatory (St Helena 1979, S.G. 348). Charles Green was the official astronomer, an experienced scientist from the Greenwich Observatory. He was now responsible for the transit observations at Fort Venus, Tahiti. Sadly he died of malaria on the way home.



Accurate timekeeping, essential to finding positions at sea, was eventually achieved with the Larcum-Kendall chronometer used on Cook's second and third voyages. William Wales was the astronomer then, and is seen on a se-tenant strip of stamps from the New Hebrides in 1974 (S.G. 193). Wales published navigational tables as a result of these voyages.

Today's Giant Telescopes

Today's giant optical telescopes have developed from Newton's invention — his small reflecting telescope (Ascension 1971, S.G. 139). Mount Palomar Observatory (USA 1948, S.G. 963) houses the 200-inch Hale reflecting telescope (Ascension 1971, S.G. 142) named after George Hale who founded and directed three US observatories and persuaded obliging millionaires to finance them.



The most powerful British optical telescope is now the 120-ton William Herschel perched on La Palma's 8,000ft Roque de los Muchachos, Canaries, seen on the right of the new 22p stamp. The Royal Observatory Greenwich left Greenwich for Herstmonceux in Sussex in 1947 because the glare from street lights, etc blotted out the stars above. But Herstmonceux proved disappointing and the Observatory moved its eyes 1,900 miles south in 1985 to the second darkest place on Earth. La Palma, far out in the ocean, is almost free of cloud and light pollution, and stars shone brilliantly in a black sky. The 2.5m Isaac Newton telescope, previously at Herstmonceux, and the 4.2m William Herschel are only two of the seven telescopes on this island, and are managed at the Royal Greenwich Observatory, Cambridge. La Palma Observatory was officially opened in June 1985 in a major ceremony with the sovereigns of Spain, Holland, Sweden, Denmark and Britain's Duke and Duchess of Gloucester — all countries that share the site or the projects. The Anglo-Danish specialised transit circle telescope, for example, moves only along the north and south meridians, recording the precise movements of stars that cross that line.

The new William Herschel is named after the Hanoverian musician who made the best telescopes of the time. As Court Astronomer to George III he was a first class observer, and discovered the eleventh planet, Uranus. His telescope revolved on a brick wall buried beneath the ground. It is illustrated on the new 26p stamp, and also on the British 1s9d stamp of 1970 (S.G. 823) which commemorated the 150th anniversary of the Royal Astronomical Society. Sir William, his son Sir John, a pioneer of celestial photography, and Francis Baily who worked on eclipses and the density of the Earth, are all depicted as founders of the Society.

Electromagnetic Radiation

Heinrich R Hertz, 1857-94 (West Germany 1957, S.G. 1178) detected longwave electromagnetic radiation, predicted earlier by the Scot James Clark Maxwell. Celestial bodies emit radiations at all wavelengths, including radio range. Radio telescopes are huge dish aerials which collect long wavelengths, and the 76.2m dish of the Lovell Radio telescope at Jodrell Bank, Cheshire (GB 1966, S.G. 701) is most famous, named after Professor Sir Bernard Lovell, Britain's pioneer of radio astronomy. A radio telescope provides information, not otherwise obtainable, from faint radio signals from



way out in space. If we ever receive signals from other civilisations in our nearest galaxies Andromeda and Milky Way, some 2 million light-years away, it will be by virtue of radio telescopes.

Modern astronomers observe the sky, not through the telescopes, but from screens of computers, where physics and mathematics are all important. The new breed of scientist seeks to solve the fundamental queries about the fate of the universe — will it continue to expand for ever at ever increasing speed, or will it collapse under its own weight into a huge Black Hole? These immensities, I must admit, I can hardly comprehend.

Acknowledgements: *The Daily Telegraph*.

NPM Report for 1989

The second annual report of the National Postal Museum, entitled *The Philatelic Year 1989*, is now available from the NPM, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP, price £2. The 1988 report was well received, both for its interesting content and stylish presentation.

In his introduction, the Manager, Stan Goron, records that the Museum's charter was revised during 1989 and important extracts, including the Acquisitions and Disposal policies, are given in the report. "These", writes Mr Goron, "are fundamental to our collection development aims and also explain how, and under what circumstances, surplus material may be disposed of." He records the departure of two members of staff — John Memmott, Deputy Manager, and Richard Fell, Philatelic Officer, and their replacement by David Paton and Lionel Jones.

Under "Work in Progress" is described the continuing mounting of stamps supplied by the Universal Postal Union and the development of a basic reference collection of British issue and preparation of a *Chronolist of British Stamps*, listing some 3,278 stamps from 1840 to 1989. The considerable number of "New Acquisitions" in 1989 included some 515 pieces of stamp artwork, 728 handstamp and slogan dies and 2,006 postal history items. Some of the attractive artworks are illustrated as are 18th century letters from the Turner Bequest (Scottish postal history). No fewer than 1,676 3D objects were acquired, most importantly a fine collection of actual and model letter boxes and miniature postal vehicles formed by Ian Wilkinson. Some of this collection is now on display in the Museum's main gallery; proving very popular with visitors.

Research work undertaken by Museum staff concerned Post Office Packet ships and Postal Reform and the Penny Black — reported on by Tony Gammons and Douglas Muir. John Holman reports on this *Bulletin* and the *British Postmark Bulletin*, both compiled by him at the NPM.

The special exhibitions of 1989 including "The Atlantic Ocean", Letter boxes and Uniforms, and The Ottoman Empire are chronicled. One of the most interesting features of the 1988 report was the article by the Museum's conservatrix, Catherine Rickman. Again she provides further fascinating insights into the specialised world of paper conservation. The

"Publications" chapter records NPM postcards and postmarks of 1989. The report ends with the Museum Charter and a report, by Ray Pottle, of the increasing activities of the Association of Friends.

Our World Images of Nature Vol.2

The second book in the successful "Our World" series went on sale at the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and post shops on 30 October, price £7.50. Designed and printed by Australia Post, the book contains stamps relating to the environment from Australia, Canada, Sweden, United Kingdom, United Nations and the USA. The British set comprises the Kew Gardens stamps issued in June. The book is lavishly illustrated and has text in four languages. The illustrations, of the flora and fauna of three continents, cover the wildlife of the Australian high country, the forests of Canada, Swedish Arctic and Antarctic exploration. London's Royal Botanic Gardens, medicinal plants assisting United Nations health efforts and the lighthouses of the rugged US coastline. The stamps are housed in a folder which can be inserted in a pocket on the inside front cover of the book.

The first in this series of books was published on 9 October 1989 (see October 1989 *Bulletin*) and is still available, price £7.50. Collectors can order both books from the Bureau at a special price of £12.

Postal Mechanisation Study Circle

The entries for the Secretary's Cup were judged by Patrick Awcock (last year's winner) and John Holman, compiler of this *Bulletin* on 8 September. The winner was Martin Lynes for an entry of covers processed by early GB direct sorting machines at Brighton, Norwich, Luton, London Mount Pleasant and the London Foreign Section. Runner-up was John Notton for a specialised study of the Optical Character Recognition machinery, involving careful examination of commercial mail to one address, looking at the material from an operational point of view. The PMSC has over 150 members; details can be obtained from the Secretary: Tom Mullins, 27 Elizabeth Road, Hunters Ride, HENLEY ON THAMES, Oxon, RG9 1RA. Members of the Study Circle receive two useful publications — *Ident* magazine and a Newsletter to keep them up to date with mechanisation news.

Posting Boxes

115. EIRR Box in Cameroon

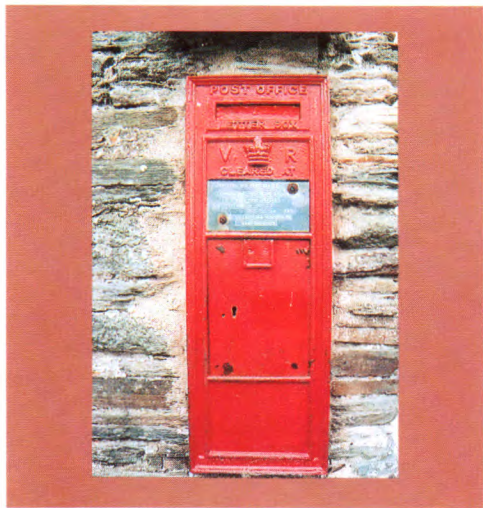
This month's box stands in the town of Limbe in the south west province of Cameroon and as Mr A R Glass, who submitted the photo, writes



was obviously erected when this part of Cameroon was administered by Britain as a United Nations Trust Territory. Despite its weather-beaten appearance, it remains in use.

Posting Box Postcards

Featured here is card No. 7 in David Shaw's "British Postbox Series" showing a Victorian box at the Old Post Office, Tintagel, Cornwall.



This is one of a number of David Shaw cards on sale, price 20p each, at the National Postal Museum. Details were published in the February and July issues of the *Bulletin*.

Friends of the NPM

The 1990 AGM of the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum will be held in the basement of the King Edward Hall, King Edward Street, London EC1 on 24 November, from 11am to 4.30pm. The formal business session will be kept as brief as possible to allow plenty of time for the guest speakers, David Aggersberg, Stanley Gibbons Catalogue Editor, and Hugh Jefferies, Editor of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*. It is appropriate they should visit in 1990 as the catalogue celebrates its 125th anniversary and the magazine its centenary. It is also the 150th anniversary year of the birth of Edward Stanley Gibbons. A memento of the event will be given to all present at the AGM. Readers interested in attending should contact the Friends' Secretary, Ray Pottle, address below, as soon as possible. A charge of £6 will be made for refreshments and lunch. A visit to Post Office Archives is planned for April 1991. There are now over 400 members of the Association of Friends – details of its activities and benefits of membership can be obtained from: Ray Pottle, c/o National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP.

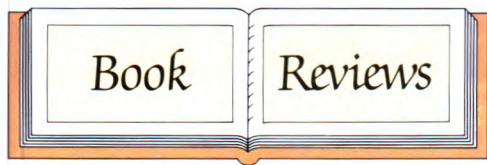
Christmas Postcards

The National Postal Museum is selling a number of colourful cards produced for the festive season by David Shaw and Rosalind Wicks, listed below. All 20p each plus 22p handling charge on orders up to £22 and £1.97 over £22 (sent by registered post). Orders to: National Postal Museum (Mail Order), King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP. All offered "subject unsold".

The David Shaw cards are: *Happy Christmas* No. 6 – photograph of a snow-covered letter box at Thorpe Vasset, Yorkshire; *Christmas Wishes* No. 4 – drawing of Father Christmas and children posting cards in a letter box, and *Christmas Greetings* Nos. 1 & 2 featuring drawings of children posting cards in letter boxes.

The Rosalind Wicks cards (all drawings) are: No. 4 "Going Green" – children painting a red Penfold letter box green; No. 6 "Just Caught the Post" – girl posting letters with postman arriving to empty box, and No. 8 "A Merry Christmas" – mother and children with an Edward VIII wall letter box.

See page 60 of this *Bulletin* for details of new NPM postcards showing Christmas posters.



Postal History Display of Oldham have recently published a useful little book **Charge Marks of The 4d Post 1839-1840** by P J Chadwick. This book explains and illustrates the 4d Post and deals with the various rates in existence at the time. It covers comprehensively the uses of the 4d handstamps in separate chapters dealing with England and Wales, Ireland and Scotland. In England there was no general issue of "4" handstamps for the Uniform Fourpenny Post. The Scottish authorities in Edinburgh had a number of handstamps made by Kirkwood which were distributed, apparently ahead of time, to some of the major post offices. The result is that there are about a dozen different handstamps used in Scotland which all appear very similar — they are usually referred to as the "Kirkwood" handstamps. They were used at Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Haddington, Inverness, Leith, Perth and Stonehaven. Study was made of the manufacturers' proof books and the locally made handstamps get a chapter of their own. The use of the 4d handstamps within the subsequent Penny Post is also examined and the London District Post is treated separately. Four appendices deal with the handstruck chargemarks of the General Post; handstruck chargemarks for forwarded mail of the London District Post; copies of impression from the Kirkwood proof book; and list of handstruck "4" handstamps in the Fletcher collection (British Library). 56 pages, card covers. Price £5 plus 50p postage, from Postal History Display, 146 Chapel Road, OLDHAM OL8 4QJ.

The 1991 (10th) edition of **Collecting British First Day Covers** by N C Porter, designed and edited by cover producer A G Bradbury is now available. The listings are arranged in two sections: Commemoratives (including Greetings stamps) and Definitives, with useful introductory notes on handstamps and slogans. Especially helpful is the Permanent Pictorial Handstamps section, listing and illustrating Philatelic Counter and National Postal Museum handstamps and the growing number of "tourist"

handstamps such as those showing Buckingham Palace and the Tower of London. The listings are complete to the Thomas Hardy issue of 10 July (Commemoratives) and the Window Books of 12 June (Definitives). The prices for some not so old definitive covers are now quite astounding, for example 1973/4 covers with the 20p, 50p and £1 "Contractors Paper" stamps are priced at £175, £300 and £375 respectively! Clearly very few such covers were prepared. The catalogue contains 376 numbered pages, hundreds of black & white illustrations of covers and postmarks and 24 pages of colour illustrations and advertisements. Price £12 postpaid from: A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, LEICESTER LE2 3RA.

The 1991 (93rd) edition of the Stanley Gibbons **Part 1 British Commonwealth Catalogue** was published on 31 August. The GB listings are complete to the Kew Gardens issue of 5 June; the latest Machins included are the booklet stamps of 17 April. The Machin low values listing continues to grow and now numbers from X841 (1971 ½p 2 bands) to X1019 (1990 29p litho, phosphorised paper). The stamps are listed by printer — Harrison, Questa, Waddington and Walsall. The NVI and Penny Black Anniversary stamps are listed separately. Prices are much as in the *Concise* catalogue published in May but the unused prices for the £1, £1.60, £2 and £5 Machin high values are increased. The price of the 1989 Greetings stamps rises by £1 unused, £1.50 used. For collectors interested in older issues, a number of errors have been added to the pre-QEII listings. The price of the 1951 George VI high values is increased unused by 50% to £90; the 1939-48 set is up by £25 to £300. The catalogue contains some 1,280 pages and is now becoming rather heavy to lift. At £27 — just over 2p per page — it remains good value for money by present day book prices. Available from Stanley Gibbons Strand shop, stamp dealers, booksellers or by post from Stanley Gibbons Publications, Parkside, RINGWOOD, Hants, BH24 3SH (postage £2.50 UK, £5 overseas).

Forthcoming

The 42nd edition of Stanley Gibbons **Collect British Stamps** colour checklist will be published on 30 November, price £2.95. It will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and the National Postal Museum as well as through stamp dealers and book sellers.

Commemorative Covers

Information given here is based on details supplied by the cover producers; requests for further information should be directed to the relevant producer and not to the Bulletin Editor.

Colchester Searchlight Tattoo. The cover produced for the 1990 Colchester Searchlight Tattoo bears a representation of Tattoo events and a single 20p Thomas Hardy stamp cancelled by British Forces Postal Service handstamp No. 2226. Price £2. Also available in limited numbers are previous Tattoo covers for 1978, 1980, 1984 and 1986 at £1.25 each and for 1988 at £1.50. The set of six 1978-90 cost £6.50. All postpaid UK, overseas please add 50p. Proceeds to charities. Orders/enquiries: R A M Light, Colchester Forum Rotary Club, 12 Parsons Hill, COLCHESTER CO3 4DT.

Great North Run. Royal Mail Newcastle upon Tyne have had a cover produced and designed by Stewart Renshaw of Dawn Cover Productions to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Great North Run. The cover is in full colour and depicts the Tyne Bridge with the runners in full flow. The cover bears one of the Gallantry stamps cancelled by a special 10th Great North Run handstamp of 16 September. The handstamp was sponsored by Royal Mail and designed by Mr Renshaw. Price £1 plus self addressed 9 x 6" envelope. Orders/enquiries: Herby Carden, Special Handstamp Centre Manager, Royal Mail House, Forth Street, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE1 1AA. Remittances payable to "Royal Mail, Newcastle upon Tyne".

Pittenweem Festival. To celebrate the 10th Pittenweem Arts Festival (4-12 August) a cover showing the coat of arms of the Royal Burgh of Pittenweem was produced; with a reduced copy of the Festival programme as an insert. The cover bearing the 1989 19p puffin stamp (the puffin being the Festival logo) cancelled by a special 4 August handstamp is now available. As the opening day of the Festival coincided with The Queen Mother's birthday a unique cachet reading "Happy Birthday Queen Mum from Pittenweem" was applied in red ink. Only 300 covers were produced, price £2.25 each. Covers bearing the 20p Queen Mother stamp but with the cachet in purple are available, price £1.30. A limited number of covers with full set of Queen Mother stamps were serviced, price £2.60. Orders/enquiries: J D Mackinnon, 44 High Street, PITTENWEEM, Fife, KY10 2PL.

Queen Mother/The Children's Society. The Society produced a cover as part of its tribute to The Queen Mother, Patron of the Society. The cover shows the charity's logo below the wording "In Celebration of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's 90th Birthday". The special handstamp, used on 4 August, shows Alnwick Castle, Northumberland. Fifty covers with the full set of stamps, signed by the Duchess of Northumberland are on sale, price £10; unsigned covers £3.95, cover with 20p stamp £2.75. The whole edition is limited to 1,000 covers. Orders/enquiries: The Children's Society, 4th Floor MEA House, Ellison Place, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE1 8XS, Tel. 091-232 4923.

RAF Northolt. This Battle of Britain station celebrates its 75th anniversary this year. To commemorate the Battle and the 75th anniversary a cover (reference JS(AC46)) has been produced featuring aircraft associated with RAF Northolt, the Officer's Mess and the Polish War Memorial. The cover is being sold in aid of station charities and the Reach for the Sky Appeal. All covers have been flown in a 32 Squadron aircraft carrying Polish Battle of Britain veterans from Warsaw to Northolt to attend a Battle of Britain reception. The cover bears a Battle of Britain handstamp, flight cachet and pilot signatures. Price £3.50. A limited number have been signed by the Polish Ambassador to Britain (£25), and Polish and British Battle of Britain aces (£10). The names have not yet been confirmed but there will be four covers with separate signatures. Orders/enquiries: Philatelic Officer, No. 32 Squadron, RAF Northolt, West End Road, RUISLIP, Middx, HA4 6NG. Remittances to "RAF Northolt 75th Anniversary".

Rotary Club of Torquay. To commemorate the 70th anniversary of the first Rotary Club in Devon on 1 December 1990 a cover and handstamp will be available. The cover design, by a student of Torquay Girls' Grammar School, winner of a competition organised by the Club, depicts a Rotary Tree of Goodwill against a background of Torbay. This is appropriate as the Club was a pioneer in promoting such trees as a means of collecting funds for charitable purposes. Profit from the sale of the cover will go to charities supported by the Club, in particular the Torbay Hospital Research and Education Centre. The cover with first class stamp, will cost £2.50. Orders/enquiries: G R A Wootton, 51 Ellesmere, Lower Warberry Road, TORQUAY TQ1 1TR.

Postbag

We continue to receive a number of letters about NVI stamps and the following letter from R A Hall of Keighley and the reply by David Dale, Manager Definitive Stamps, Royal Mail Stamps may be of interest to readers. Mr Hall first:

"When the first issue of NVI stamps arrived I thought the Post Office had missed a point. It seemed that when postal prices inevitably rose the public could take advantage of NVI and buy stamps in advance of the event. But as the stamps were in all other ways the same as the current 15p and 20p stamps I became more thoughtful. Initially I had thought that the concept of NVI could solve the expensive problem of altering stamp colours when rates rose — just simply sell the stamps at the new higher rate. OK! A few (?) would buy in advance but compared with the present costs of colour changes etc it would be worth it. How naïve! Now I see both value indicated and NVI stamps are to be changed to cater for the new postal rates. There is only one possible conclusion to draw and that is that the idea of NVI type stamps was just (another) ploy to get the gullible collector to buy more stamps. For me it is the straw that broke...etc. If it is not just another commercial ploy would you please explain the thinking behind the introduction of NVI or just reply with one word — 'Rumbled'."

Mr Dale's reply: "None of our activities in issuing the new red stamp books or with definitives in general have been intended to raise money from collectors. We are aware that the cost of collecting stamp books has risen and we are trying to limit the number of varieties, for example by limiting the number of types each of the printers produce. The stamp book programme is being driven by genuine postal need, as we now sell three times as many books as we did just two years ago, whilst the number of sales outlets has increased by 250%.

"The first NVI books were an experiment and as such, we originally intended to take them off sale just a few weeks after the tariff change in October 1989. In fact they were kept on sale

until the Penny Black Anniversary stamps were introduced in January 1990. Of course some may say that the Penny Black Anniversary stamps were unnecessary, but we felt it was appropriate to mark the sesquicentenary through the definitive range rather than by using special stamps.

"Once we had decided to replace the Penny Black stamps with new NVIs, it seemed best to use the new colours which will be in use after the next letter tariff comes into effect (*on 17 September 1990. Ed.*). The black and light blue were special colours associated with the Penny Black and Two Penny Blue and black especially is not the best colour for long term use.

"Another point is that in spite of the growth in stamp books, the great majority of our stamps are still sold from sheets. There are advantages in having the minority of NVI stamps the same colour as the majority of value stamps, particularly in the period immediately after the tariff change. There is a possibility that they might slow down the sorting of mail as it would be more difficult to tell at a glance whether the correct postage had been paid.

"The last point is under review and we have not yet decided whether the colours of NVIs will be changed again or maintained as flame and dark blue. We will continue to accept the black and light blue NVI stamps as paying basic first and second class postage for the foreseeable future."

G W Smith, author of a recent book on James Heath (reviewed here in February) has written concerning misinformation given about sketches of Queen Victoria the August "Gems from the Phillips Collection".

Mr Smith writes: "Those sketches were not prepared in connection with the first stamps of 1840 and obviously had nothing to do with them. They were drawn by Corbould in 1837 when the design of the postage stamps had not been considered and were commissioned by Perkins Bacon for use in bank note designs. Such earlier drawings were not required when the design of the postage stamps was being worked out — Rowland Hill specified (16 December 1839) that a drawing was to be made, for that purpose, of the head on Wyon's City Medal — and that was that." Readers interested in reading further on this subject are referred to Mr Smith's article "The Corbould Drawings of 1837 and the Wyon Head Essays" in the December 1983 issue of the *Bulletin*.

November Digest

Issued in November/early December

1 November: Royal Mail Exhibition Card No. 4 with special handstamp for ASDA National Exhibition, price £1.50. Available from Bureau and Royal Mail stand at the exhibition.

13 November: Christmas stamps — 17p, 22p, 26p, 31p, 37p

Designer: John Gorham, illustrations by Andrew Davidson

Printing: Harrison and Sons Limited, photogravure, 41 x 30mm, perforated 15 x 14. Phosphor coated paper, except 17p — one phosphor band. Sheets of 100, PVA Dextrin gum.

Bureau f.d. service alternative postmark: Bethlehem, Llandeilo, Dyfed.

Presentation Pack: No. 213, price £1.60.

13 November: Christmas Stamp Book, price £3.40. Contains 20 x 17p Christmas stamps. Available from post offices in the Central Television area, the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres and philatelic counters.

Printing: Harrison and Sons Limited

13 November: Christmas aerogramme, price 42p.

Designer: Jenny Powell

Printing: McCorquodale Envelopes Ltd

13 November: 1990 Royal Mail Special Stamp Yearbook, price £18.50. Contains all special issues of 1990. Available from Bureau, "Collections", philatelic counters and main post offices.

13 November: 1990 Collectors' Pack, price £10.50. Contains all special issues of 1990 plus Penny Black miniature sheet. Available from Bureau, "Collections", philatelic counters and main post offices.

13 November: National Postal Museum postcards, price 20p each. These feature Post Office Christmas posters — (1) Post Box; (2) Santa Claus and map of Europe; (3) mounted soldiers carrying mail; (4) Santa Claus and postman. Available from Bureau, National Postal Museum and "Collections".

14 November: Christmas souvenir cover, price 19p. Available from "Collections" and philatelic counters.

27 November: Mixed Value Roll — 3 x 4p, 1 x

5p (17p)

Printing: Harrison & Sons Ltd, photogravure, ACP, PVA Dextrin gum.

4 December: Country stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales — 17p, 22p, 26p, 37p

Printing: The House of Questa, sheets of 200, PVA Dextrin gum, Perf. 15 x 14. The 17p stamps have single phosphor band, others Phosphor Coated Paper.

Bureau f.d. service alternative postmarks: Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh

Presentation Pack: No. 23, price £3.35.

Withdrawn in November

13 November: 1989 Christmas stamps, presentation pack, souvenir cover and aerogramme; 1989 Collectors' Pack

14 November: 1989 Royal Mail Special Stamps Yearbook

27 November: Northern Ireland 14p, 19p, 22p, 23p, 28p and 32p stamps; Scotland 14p, 19p, 22p, 23p, 28p and 32p stamps; Wales 14p, 22p, 23p, 28p and 32p stamps (19p already sold out); Country Stamps New Issue Pack No. 17 (contains 14p, 19p, 23p and 32p stamps).

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