

BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 43 Number 3

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Animal Tales stamps • Boots labels • Maximum cards



12x1ST



CHRISTMAS 2005

Royal Mail Mint Stamps



24x2ND



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover Some of Royal Mail's products for Christmas. The Christmas stamps, featuring the Madonna and Child, were previewed in the September *Bulletin*. Photograph by Geoff Dann.

Pages 74-75: *HM Schooner Pickle's Rough Trip Home, November 1805*. Original oil painting by Geoff Hunt. PRSMA.

Issues Some items available only from Royal Mail Tallents House and Post Office Limited philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Guildford, Harrogate, Leicester, London (Trafalgar Square & Eastcheap), Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Stroud, Truro, Windsor & York.

Royal Mail Tallents House 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, UK. Telephone order line (08.30-17.00 Monday to Friday): 08457 641 641; from overseas +44 131 316 7483. Minimum handling charge UK £1.30, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/stamps

1 November

Issue 2005 Christmas stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack, Smilers sheet and stamp books
 ● re-issue (at Post Office branches) 2004 Christmas airletters (national and Welsh).

1 November

Issue 2005 Yearpack, Yearbook, Miniature Sheets Yearpack, and 2005 Presentation Pack Collection.

1 November

Withdrawal 2004 Christmas stamps, presentation pack, miniature sheet, stamp cards, Smilers sheet, and Royal Mail / Isle of Man joint Christmas cover.

30 November

Withdrawal 1st and 2nd class definitives from coils of 1000 (issued July 2001).

1 December

Withdrawal 2003 Yearbook and Yearpack.

A subscription to this magazine makes an ideal Christmas present for a philatelic friend or relation. It keeps them informed of new Royal Mail issues and events in the philatelic world and provides interesting articles by leading philatelists and postal historians. To book a subscription, send the name and address of your friend or relative to Tallents House (address at left). Annual subscription £11.75 UK and Europe, £16.75 rest of world (airmail). Binders and storage boxes are available, at £8.50 and £9.95 respectively.



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The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. ● **Editor** J R Holman ● **Price** £1.10 single copies from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets ● **Annual subscription** £11.75 UK & Europe; £16.75 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address, above) ● Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from Edinburgh address above: £12.25 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world ● **Copyright** Design & text Royal Mail Group plc, unless attributed to a specified author. All requests to reproduce any article should be addressed to the Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ ● **Design** Robert Maude ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Beacon Press ● **ISSN** 0953 8119 ● Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group plc. Registered in England and Wales no 4138203 registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ

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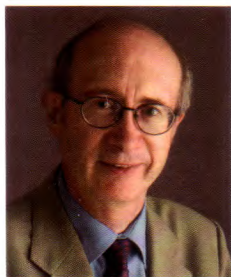
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This month The Editor previews this issue



John Holman, Editor

THE CHRISTMAS STAMPS on sale this month complete this year's special stamps programme – quite an interesting and varied one with issues ranging from Farm Animals and Motorcycles to Jane Eyre, Battle of Trafalgar, and the Royal Wedding. Next month we ask you to vote for your favourite set and individual stamp of 2005. Meanwhile in this *Bulletin* we preview the first set in the 2006 programme, depicting characters from British and American children's literature. For specialist collectors, Glenn Morgan provides a detailed account of the Boots labels, and Richard West begins a new series on postcards featuring stamps and postal history. Next month marks the 50th anniversary of the Great Britain Philatelic Society, and this and next month we include profiles of two pioneer members: Harold Fisher and the much missed Ron Lee. Both of these profiles are by Ron Negus, who also writes about the American Topical Association's website in his popular 'Philately On-Line' feature. As always, I am sure you will find something to interest you in this month's *Bulletin*. JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR ●

Stamp scene News and upcoming events: Glenn Morgan keeps you posted

The Falmouth Packets For a review of this book see www.swmaritime.org.uk/article.php?articleid=396&atype=r

Falmouth Packets book While looking on the internet, I came across a publication unknown to me entitled *The Falmouth Packets*, by Tony Pawlyn (ISBN 1850221758). Price £9.99 softback with 142 pages; 41 illustrations including many colour photographs, ship portraits, maps and newspaper cuttings; 10 appendices, bibliography, a general index and indices of both people and ships. The publisher is Truran Books, a Cornish-based publisher specialising in books on Cornwall, Devon and the West Country, and it was first published in May 2003. The book seems to be out of print, but try your philatelic bookseller, or see the Country Bookshop website www.countrybookshop.co.uk for ordering details.

For information about the Falmouth Packet Archive 1688-1850 online, visit www.falmouth.packet.archives.dial.pipex.com or for details of the ships see www.falmouth.tv/packet_ships.php ●

International exhibitions Belgica '06 will be held in the Brussels Convention Centre from 16-20 November 2006. Competitive classes will include one-frame, open, thematic and youth, although it is now too late for entry applications. It should be an event worth visiting; especially as an early Eurostar allows for a day trip without the expense of a hotel stop-over ●

Two provisional stamp shows are Indepex '06 to be held in New Delhi, India, probably in December of that year, and Efiro '08, scheduled for Bucharest in Hungary from 15-22 June. Israel 2008 is confirmed for Tel Aviv from 14-22 May, and a further reminder that Washington 2006 will be held between 27 May and 3 June in the United States of America ●

Stamp award The 68p value in last year's Royal Society of Arts stamp issue has recently won an Asiago award. Readers will recall that this stamp set did not score very well in the annual *Bulletin* Royal Mail stamp poll last year, probably because of its dominant use of typography, but the Asiago jury favoured it for the 'sober efficacy' shown by its message about waste. As shown here, the text sets out one of the RSA's 21st century objectives: to influence behaviour in a world running low on resources by making it easier to follow an environmentally friendly lifestyle •

The Royal Society of Arts 1754-2004

The RSA's 21st century manifesto seeks to stimulate enterprise, expand education and encourage the policies and lifestyles that will ultimately eliminate waste.



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ZERO WASTE

Society publications The Postal Stationery Society Journal issue for August 2005 contained several articles of interest, including Ceylon Printed-to-order Newspaper Wrappers, Aerogrammes and Folded Letter Sheets from the Holy Land and Victorian Telegraph Forms, plus several shorter items •

The Great Britain Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle's journal *The Bookmark* has been thinner than usual this year (but no less valuable) due to the general lack of new stamp book issues by Royal Mail. However, the August issue contains a useful feature on Walsall Business Sheets and stamp book valuations, together with society business and an index to volume 34 •

The *London Philatelist* for September includes a pull-out section listing its 1643 members at the time of publication. 2005 has seen the most-ever new members recruited in a single year, with 132 in the first eight months. Only 2003 came close, with 99 recruits joining the ranks that year. Major articles within the journal include the British 3d Plate Three with Secret Dots – Perforated, Transvaal Gold Mines and Chinese Labour (partly in colour) and comments on the display from the Royal Philatelic Collection given to the society in September 2004 (also partly in colour) •

The National Philatelic Society's bi-monthly journal *Stamp Lover*, which is so ably edited by Michael Furnell, includes in its August issue the latest part of the cumulative index to the publication and several useful articles including ones on Fred J Melville, Ethiopia and the Galapagos Islands •

The Letter Box Study Group's August *Newsletter* contains the usual fascinating mix of articles, society news and illustrations. It focuses primarily on British boxes, although overseas boxes are starting to feature regularly in a new series. Every issue contains a 'free' black-and-white postcard of a letter box, often in-situ, and this series has just reached card number 108, providing those long-term members such as myself with a fascinating collection of images, most of which have never appeared elsewhere •

Themescene, the journal from the British Thematic Association, contains articles on magic, ferns and pneumatics, as well as all the usual features in its September issue •

The *GBCC Chronicle* for July contains features on British Stamp Validity, Machin FDCs, and a 1965 Pictorial Definitive Essay, plus the usual mix of news and society business •

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Stamp Market Values Priced £10.99, available from philatelic booksellers, WH Smith, Waterstones and bookshops.

New publications IPC Media has announced the publication of *British Stamp Market Values 2006* after a break of many years. Written and compiled by Richard West and Steve Fairclough (both ex-Editors of *Stamp Magazine*), it records around 2500 stamps from 1840 to 2005. Fairclough notes in October's *Stamp Magazine* that 'This book is unique in the GB philatelic world as it gives actual market prices you will get for your stamps.' ●

Orders and enquiries Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Jersey JE1 1AB Channel Islands. See website www.jerseystamps.com

Jersey and Trafalgar The Jersey Post Office has commemorated the bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar with an attractive set of five stamps (in sheetlets of ten stamps per value) and a £2 miniature sheet that feature some of the ships which played important parts in the battle. Priced as a complete unit at £4.31 plus postage and packing, they were designed by Tony Theobald and were printed by BDT in Ireland ●

Machin Collectors Club Membership details: 8 Jannys Close, Aylsham, Norfolk NR11 6DL.

Society news Congratulations to the Machin Collectors Club in recently reaching its tenth birthday. By way of celebration this active group offered for sale to its members two overprinted versions of the so-called Boots labels – one of which had originally been printed by Questa and the other by Enschedé. Each label was also available on separate covers signed by Jeffery Matthews ●

Queen's Collection Some nine frames of New Zealand philatelic material that has been extracted from Her Majesty The Queen's stamp collection is currently on display within the Museum of New Zealand (Te Papa Tongarewa) in the city of Wellington. It will remain on show until mid-January next year as part of the celebrations surrounding the 150th anniversary of the first New Zealand postage stamp ●

ABPS Awards Further details are available from Mrs Susan Oliver, 46 Woodville Road, Ham, Richmond TW10 7QN, or telephone 0208 940 9833. The nomination papers will be sent to you when available.

ABPS Awards The Association of British Philatelic Societies Awards Committee offers two means of recognition for those people who have performed outstanding work for the hobby over a long period of time, and who deserve some special token of esteem. There is the Award of Merit (which takes the form of a framed certificate) and the Congress Medal (specially presented at a ceremony held at Congress each year). If you know of someone who you believe is worthy of recognition, then please consider nominating them for an award ●

Thematica A cheque for £1000 was presented to Jeffery Matthews at Thematica this summer, being the entire proceeds from the sale of 100 covers, sold at £10 each, bearing the 2005 Thematica souvenir sheet, two stamps and a special handstamp all designed, signed and numbered by Jeffery. The money was subsequently donated to Multiple Sclerosis to help scientists find a cure for this crippling disease ●

Mike Holt PO Box 177, Stourbridge DY8 3DE. Telephone 01384 443317.

Dealer lists British stamp dealer Mike Holt has recently published his price list number 32, which comprises three-dozen glossy A4 pages of almost 700 pre-Elizabethan offers, with many illustrations in colour ●

Royal Mail news New issues and products



THE ASHES ENGLAND WINNERS 2005

Shown here is the miniature sheet issued on 6 October to celebrate England winning the Test Match Series (the Ashes). Actual size: 115 x 89mm.



2005 Collections The 2005 Yearbook, on sale from 1 November, will contain information on and spaces to mount all 71 special stamps of 2005; the Royal Wedding miniature sheet is supplied in a separate insert. As always the book provides fascinating background reading to each stamp subject. This year Royal Mail invited 11 distinguished artists to create work to interpret each chapter of the Yearbook; for example Susan Derges' 'Shoreline' (the South-west England stamps) and Peter Blake's 'Indian' and 'Chinese' (Changing Tastes). These bold artworks will delight, amuse and puzzle, depending on your views of contemporary art. The Yearbook was written by Fay Sweet and designed by Kate Stephens. Simon Ball and Marcus James of Royal Mail's Philatelic Sector had overall responsibility for the text and design of this major product, produced annually since 1984.

The 2005 Yearpack, containing the 11 sets of special stamps and the Royal Wedding miniature sheet, will also be available from 1 November, price £34.95 (AR057). The Yearpack was written by Dave Warriner and designed by Kate Stephens.

Two new collections will be available from 1 November. The Special Presentation Pack Collection contains all 14 presentation packs from 2005 in a stylish black box embossed in silver with 'Royal Mail', in which the packs can be stored. It is an easy way to collect all the packs at once and makes an ideal gift. Price £47.45. The Miniature Sheet Collection is a stylishly packaged set of all nine miniature sheets of 2005: Castles definitives, Jane Eyre, Trooping the Colour, Royal Wedding, End of War, London 2012, Trafalgar, Ashes and Christmas. The collection is subtitled 'from Pageantry and Royal Romance to Drama on the High Seas'. Price £24.50 •



2005 Yearbook Price £39.95 standard version (order code AY091) or £75 de luxe leather-bound edition (AY092). The de luxe version is available only from Tallents House.

Customised Smilers sheets

For details of how to order a customised version (with your own image on the labels) pick up a leaflet/order form at a post office, phone 0845 074 2000, or visit our website at: www.royalmail.com/smilers



New Smilers book Please note that the stamps in the Smilers book (4 October) are printed gravure, and not litho as announced here in advance of the issue. We regret any confusion caused.

Christmas Smilers The new Smilers generic sheet for Christmas, available from 1 November, contains 10 1st class and 10 2nd class Christmas stamps showing robins (issued in 2001), price £5.60. The sheet, printed in litho by Cartor, has self-adhesive stamps. The labels feature birds and a cat playing with a snowman; the sheet margin depicts robins and Christmas crackers. The 2004 Christmas Smilers sheet containing 10 1st and 10 2nd class robins stamps, price £5.60, will be withdrawn on 1 November.

Other generic Smilers sheets (all 1st class stamps) still on sale are: Farm Animals (January 2005), Magic! (March), Australian Expo (April), White Ensign (June), and rrv (September), price £6.55 each. An album to house Smilers is available from Tallents House, price £16.50 (order code PA665) •

Christmas stamp books

The cylinders used are: 1st class D1 magenta • D1 yellow • D1 cyan (blue) • D1 black • D1 silver • D1 gold (gold colour on book) • D1 phosphor; 2nd class D1 • magenta • D1 yellow • D1 cyan (blue) • D1 black • D1 dull blue (dull blue colour on book) • D1 silver • D1 phosphor

Christmas This month's special issue is our annual Christmas set, this year featuring the Madonna and Child. As well as the stamps, there is a miniature sheet, stamp books (24 2nd class or 12 1st class stamps), and stamp cards. There are no new Christmas airmails – the 2004 ones (national and Welsh versions) will be reissued. The stamps and related products go on sale on 1 November. For full details see September *Bulletin*. Any unsold stocks will be withdrawn at Post Office branches on 24 December but will remain available from Tallents House until next November.

Please note that the Bethlehem pictorial postmark will be as shown in the September *Bulletin*; it is not being changed, as stated last month •

2006 Special issues The first issue of 2006, Animal Tales, is previewed this month. It is our first joint issue with the us Postal Service. The British Journey series ends in February with 10 stamps of English scenery and buildings: Carding Mill, Shropshire; Beachey Head, Sussex; St Paul's Cathedral, London; Brancaster, Norfolk; Derwent Edge, Peak District; Robin Hood's Bay, Yorkshire; Buttermere, Lake District; Chipping Campden, Cotswolds; St Boniface Down, Isle of Wight; and Chamberlain Square, Birmingham.

Also in February will be an issue to commemorate the great Victorian engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel. *Bulletin* readers voted him the person they would most like to see on stamps in a survey published in April 1997 (page 235) – some 1700 names were suggested! Brunel was voted second only to Sir Winston Churchill in the BBC *Great Britons* TV series. The stamps feature some of his greatest achievements: the Royal Albert, Clifton Suspension, and Maidenhead bridges, Box Tunnel, Paddington Station, and the ss *Great Eastern*. Both February issues will be previewed next month •

Stamp ingots A new series of ingot covers featuring the 1955 Castle high value stamps started on 23 September with the Windsor Castle stamp. This will be followed by the Edinburgh Castle stamp (17 January), Caernarfon (25 April), and Carrickfergus (25 July). The ingot holder bears the corresponding Castle stamp (from miniature sheet) cancelled by a special postmark for the castle concerned. The covers feature 1950s photographs of the castles, with a short history of the castle and a detailed specification of the stamps and ingots on the reverse. Produced in limited editions of 3000, the ingot covers cost £24.95 each plus handling charge (order code AH001 Windsor Castle). Orders to Tallents House, phone 08457 641 641. Collectors placing a regular order for this series will receive a free booklet about the Castle stamps, a Castles miniature sheet, and a collection box, sent out respectively with the Windsor, Edinburgh, and Caernarfon ingots •

Storing the Bulletin Binders and box files are available for storing this and the *Postmark Bulletin*. The sturdy box files, in maroon for the *Philatelic Bulletin* and green for the *Postmark Bulletin* are available from Royal Mail Tallents House, price £9.95 each. Order codes PB349 (Philatelic), PB350 (Postmark). The files will store 30 copies of the Philatelic and about 50 of the Postmark Bulletins. The traditional binders for the Philatelic (BB001) and Postmark (PB322) Bulletins cost £8.50 each •



British Postal Museum & Archive A new exhibition entitled 'Victorian Innovation' is now on show – see Martin Robinson's article in the September *Bulletin*. The Museum & Archive will be open on Saturday on 10 December. A number of special events are being held – call 020 7239 2570 to book a place. These include a series of evening lectures: 15 November, Designing Stamps (David Gentleman); and 6 December, The Future of The Postal Heritage Trust (Tony Conder). 'Behind the Scenes' Archive Tours will be given on 10 November and 1 December •

The BPMA Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. Open Monday to Friday 10.00-17.00 (Thursday 19.00). Telephone 020 7239 2570. e-mail: heritage@royalmail.com

Collect British Stamps The 2006 (57th) edition of the ever-popular Stanley Gibbons *Collect British Stamps* colour checklist will be published on 26 November, price £9.95. It will be available from Royal Mail Tallents House as well as from Stanley Gibbons, and stamp and book shops •

The Pickle post Nigel Fordham describes a dramatic race

THE AFTERMATH of Trafalgar was almost as bad as the battle itself. Despite Nelson's warnings, the British fleet did not anchor and the storm he had foreseen hit the British, French and Spanish ships with equal force, made worse by the damage they had received in the fight. A new fight for survival began, with ships taking in water, undermanned, and without masts, sails and steering gear. In my penultimate article next month, I will relate some of the stories of this difficult time, and look at the key people involved in these events.

November is a very important month in Naval circles, more so for the senior rates mess than the Officers Wardrooms in the Royal Navy. 4 November is Pickle Night! In 1974 a group of Warrant Officers and Chief Petty Officers requested permission to celebrate Trafalgar Night as Officers do worldwide on 21 October. Vice Admiral Sir John Lea foresaw difficulties for guests and speakers, and potentially harmful competition; it was suggested that Senior Rates messes should celebrate the famous voyage of HMS *Pickle*, which ended at Falmouth on 4 November 1805, and so another annual Royal Navy tradition was born. In fact this tradition has moved outside of the Navy, and many international societies and clubs also celebrate the event.



The LONDON GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY.
WEDNESDAY, NOV. 6, 1805.

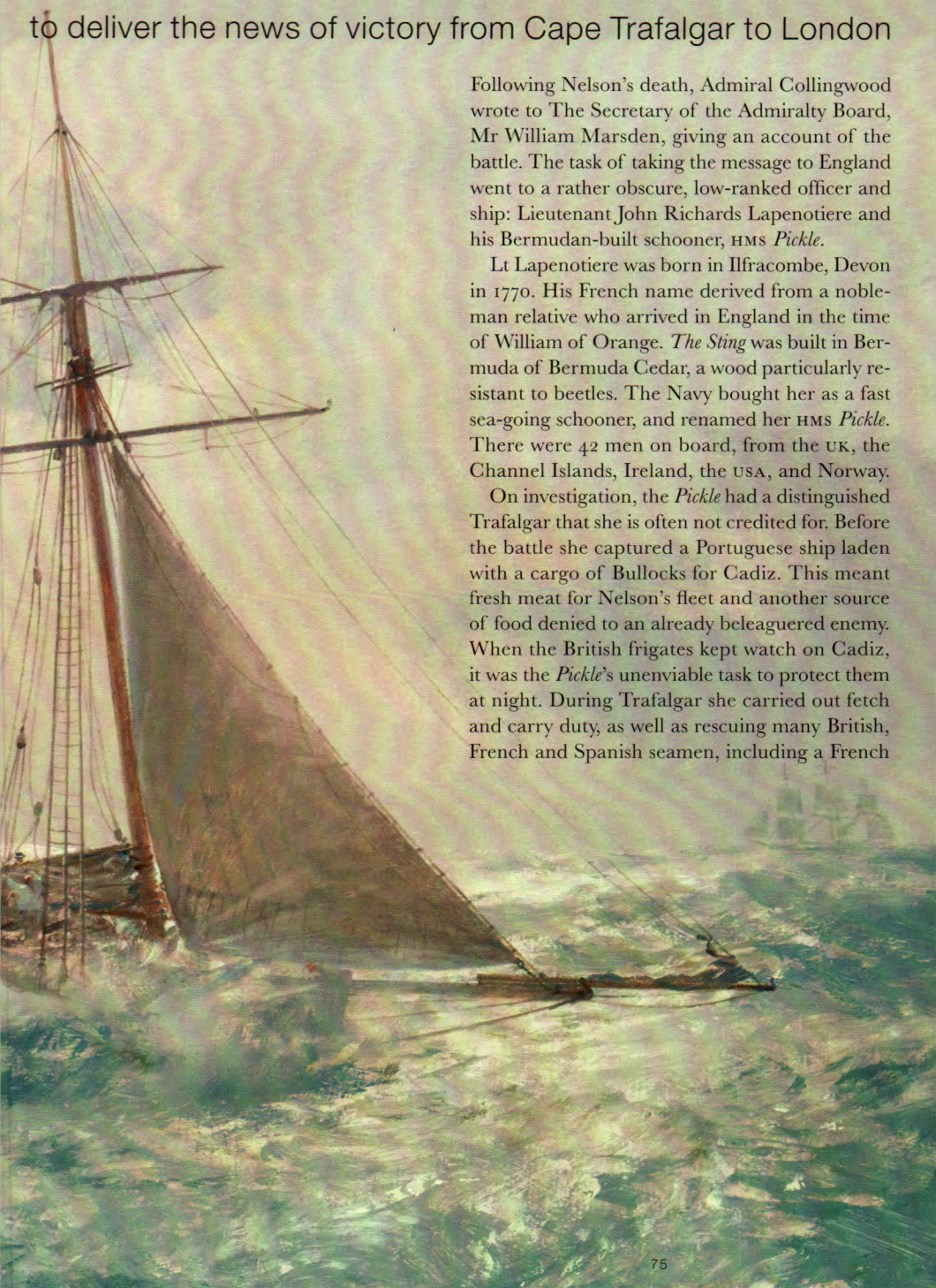
ADMIRALTY-OFFICE, Nov. 6.

Dispatches, of which the following are Copies, were received at the Admiralty this day, at one o'clock A. M. from Vice-Admiral Collingwood, Commander in Chief of his Majesty's ships and vessels off Cadiz :—

SIR, Euryalus, off Cape Trafalgar. Oct. 22, 1805.

The ever-to-be-lamented death of Vice-Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, who, in the late conflict with the enemy, fell in the hour of victory, leaves to me the duty of informing my Lords Commis-





to deliver the news of victory from Cape Trafalgar to London

Following Nelson's death, Admiral Collingwood wrote to The Secretary of the Admiralty Board, Mr William Marsden, giving an account of the battle. The task of taking the message to England went to a rather obscure, low-ranked officer and ship: Lieutenant John Richards Lapenotiere and his Bermudan-built schooner, *HMS Pickle*.

Lt Lapenotiere was born in Ilfracombe, Devon in 1770. His French name derived from a nobleman relative who arrived in England in the time of William of Orange. *The Sting* was built in Bermuda of Bermuda Cedar, a wood particularly resistant to beetles. The Navy bought her as a fast sea-going schooner, and renamed her *HMS Pickle*. There were 42 men on board, from the UK, the Channel Islands, Ireland, the USA, and Norway.

On investigation, the *Pickle* had a distinguished Trafalgar that she is often not credited for. Before the battle she captured a Portuguese ship laden with a cargo of Bullocks for Cadiz. This meant fresh meat for Nelson's fleet and another source of food denied to an already beleaguered enemy. When the British frigates kept watch on Cadiz, it was the *Pickle's* unenviable task to protect them at night. During Trafalgar she carried out fetch and carry duty, as well as rescuing many British, French and Spanish seamen, including a French



woman, Jeannette, from the French ship *Achille*, later reunited with her husband on HMS *Revenge*.

Lapenotiere set sail on 26 October, carrying Collingwood's despatch. Between him and England lay 1000 miles or more of hostile winter sea, the treacherous Bay of Biscay, storms and enemy ships. Just off Lisbon, he met the British frigate HMS *Nautilus*, and told Captain Sykes of the victory at Trafalgar. Sykes, who had been watching Cape St Vincent for the enemy fleet on Nelson's orders, sent a boat to take the news to the Ambassador in Lisbon and set off for England himself; he was determined to reach the Admiralty before Lapenotiere to achieve the glory and fame that would befall the messenger of such great news.

By 31 October *Pickle* rounded Cape Finisterre into a southwesterly gale. She was taking in water faster than her pumps could be worked. The next day, despite all the crew's efforts, she could not be kept on course. Lapenotiere had four carronades thrown overboard and the sails taken in, until at last the gale abated and then blew itself out in

the afternoon. Sails were set again and the *Pickle* pressed on until, with the *Lizard* only a day away, she was becalmed! The crew took to the boats to tow her until a wind returned some hours later. They next encountered Nelson's friend Captain Keates and some passing Cornish fishermen and told them the news. It was this chance encounter with the fishermen, who took the information to Penzance, that leads locals still to commemorate having the news of Trafalgar before London!

Finally on 4 November HMS *Pickle* landed at Falmouth at 9.45am, nine days after leaving the fleet and Admiral Collingwood. By midday Lapenotiere was on board a Post Chaise. A stage-coach journey to London usually took a week but by changing horses nine or 10 times Lapenotiere completed the 264-mile non-stop journey in 38 hours. He travelled by way of Truro, Tavistock, across Dartmoor, Exeter, Honiton, Yeovil, Salisbury, Andover, and Basingstoke. We know the exact details of his route from the expenses claim he submitted to the Admiralty some time later!



Above: Royal Mail's Trafalgar cachet cover (actual size 394 x 124mm). Left: three Bermuda stamps featuring HMS *Pickle*.

Sea Britain 2005 events in November For further information visit the Sea Britain 2005 website: www.seabritain.com

17.10-05.11 Nelson exhibition, Sheringham, Norfolk

21.10-20.11 The Sea, Edinburgh

12.11 Sea Britain Concert, Cambridge

In the early hours of 6 November, and in thick fog, Lapenotiere arrived at the Admiralty via the southern approach, beating Sykes, who had taken a northerly approach, by minutes. At 1 pm, dirty, dishevelled and exhausted from the journey, Lapenotiere was before Secretary to the Admiralty Mr Marsden. 'Sir' he said, handing over Collingwood's dispatch, 'we have gained a great victory; but we have lost Lord Nelson'. Lord Barham, the First Sea Lord, was informed, then the Prime Minister, Pitt. The King was told at 7am.

Lieutenant Lapenotiere was promoted a Commander, and in addition to the £500 awarded to him by the Admiralty, he received a sword worth £100 from the Patriotic fund. He retired to Cornwall with his family in 1811, and died on 23 January 1834 aged 63.

HMS *Pickle* captured a 14-gun French privateer, *La Favourite*, with a crew twice her size, in January 1807 but her distinguished career came to an end when she sank following being grounded on a shoal outside Cadiz on 27 July 1808 •

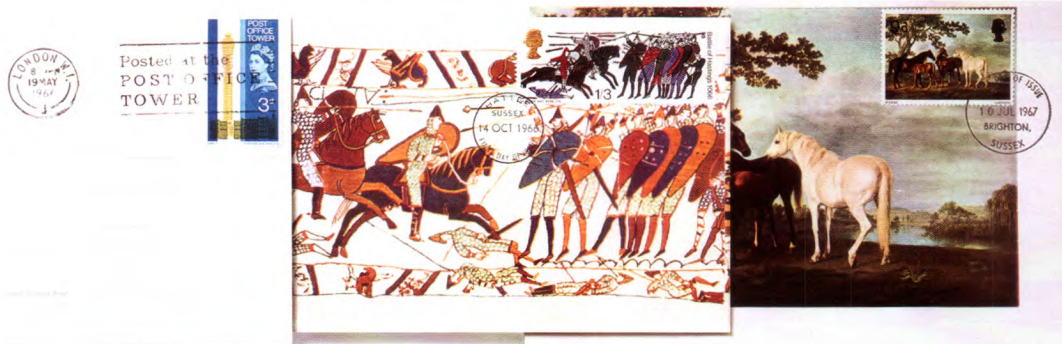
Maximum cards in Britain

by Richard West

MAXIMUM CARDS have never enjoyed any great popularity in the United Kingdom, in contrast to their appeal to collectors in many other parts of Europe. The concept is fairly straightforward: a postage stamp is affixed to the picture side of a postcard, the 'picture' having a direct connection with the design of the stamp. The stamp is then cancelled with a postmark which makes a connection with both the stamp and the card. That connection can be either a place name or a subject. What is generally not sought is a card which simply illustrates the stamp, nor the basic 'first day of issue' handstamp.

Over the years there had been a few random efforts to produce maximum cards linked to British stamp issues, often using postcards readily available from stationers and most, without doubt, cancelled 'by favour' by a local post office clerk trying to be helpful. One opportunity that comes to mind relates to the Post Office Tower. Numerous postcards have been produced showing the Tower, while of course two stamps were issued to celebrate its opening in October 1965 (see October *Bulletin*, page 52). When the Tower was open to the public, items could be posted, receiving a special machine slogan 'Posted at the Post Office Tower'. I used this facility, although I affixed the stamp to the address side, rather than the picture side. Would cards with the stamp affixed to the picture side have been accepted?

It was Cameo Stamps that brought the idea of maximum cards to the attention of British collectors. This company was already involved, producing such cards linked to stamps from several countries in Europe, but it was for the 'England Winners' issue of 1966 that the opportunity arose to test the British market. A postcard had been generally available showing World Cup Willie, so the remaining stocks were secured, and the 4d England Winners stamp affixed onto the picture side, cancelled with the Harrow and Wembley first day of issue handstamp for 18 August. These cards proved instantly popular.



This page From top left: PO Tower cancellation, ideal for a maximum card; the Battle of Hastings, reproducing part of the Bayeux Tapestry; 1967 Paintings, a popular subject for maximum cards, let down by its handstamp; World Cup Willie England Winners card; and Christmas 1966, with the design taking up half the area.

Opposite page Left: British Bridges with slogan for Bridge, Canterbury; handstamped Votes for Women and Christmas 1969 – the 'blank' area on the right could be trimmed off. Right: Philymphia 1970; and a trial to see if maximum cards could be cancelled by machine, 1968.



This exercise was repeated for the Battle of Hastings set, with cards specially printed showing the scenes from the Bayeux Tapestry shown on the stamps. The stamps were handstamped at Battle in Sussex. While there can be no doubt about the attractiveness of these cards, they were causing some concern within Post Office Headquarters. They were regarded as 'embarrassing items', in that the stamps were affixed to the picture side, whose design filled the area. The regulations stated that any design on the same side as the stamps should occupy just half the available space.

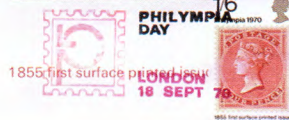
The next issue to receive 'maximum' treatment was that for Christmas, 1966. This time the cards reproduced the stamps but only occupied half the picture side, conforming to regulations, if losing much of the true nature of maximum cards.

Selecting certain British issues, similar maximum cards continued to be produced, the most popular being those featuring famous works of art – and not always keeping strictly to PO regulations. So the disquiet continued, additionally because handstamping the cards was a more time-consuming task than cancelling the same stamps on cover: after all, each card carried only one stamp, and because of the surface of the card, drying of the cancellation ink could be a problem.

It has to be said that those at the Post Office did try to work with the producers of the cards to find a solution, but were possibly not as aware of the marketing opportunities they offered as would subsequently prove to be the case. It was insisted that the design of the cards should only occupy half the available area. The result was



The Madonna and Child Bartolomeo Eusebio MURILLO



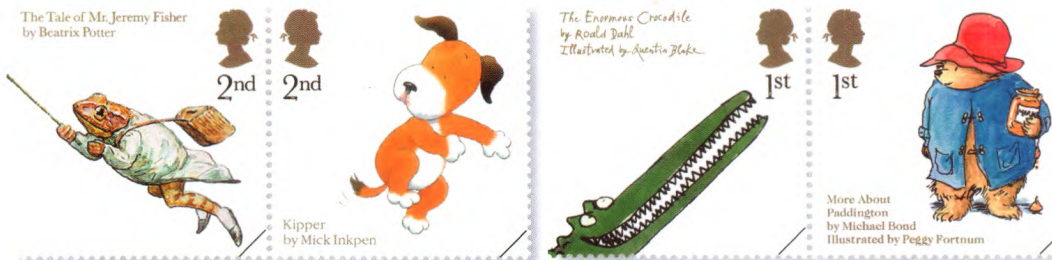
that long cards were produced, the design filling the left-hand half, with the stamp affixed as close to the design as possible. This left an unprinted area of the card to the right of the stamp, which could be trimmed away after the card had passed through the post, so leaving an acceptable-sized maximum card.

The problem of cancellation was more difficult to solve, with the Post Office preferring to machine cancel the cards to speed the operation. I have a number of 'trial' items that were produced in an effort of see whether machine cancellations were the answer, using the 'First Day of Issue' in an envelope die which had originally been generally applied to first day covers before handstamping was introduced. Unfortunately, of course, machine cancellations tend to fill the top

right-hand corner, thus preventing the excess card being subsequently trimmed off. The use of 'first day of issue' slogans is often seen on cards for the 1968 British Bridges set, from such places as Bridge near Canterbury, the Menai Bridge, and Aberfeldy.

However, from then onwards the situation became easier, as more handstamping was accepted, and the design on the cards could fill more of the available space. Sometimes the cards reproduced the stamp design, or at other times were specifically designed to complement the stamps. It had not proved an easy task, producing an item acceptable to both collectors and the Post Office. For the Post Office's part, the realisation began to grow that there was potential in these postcards, and so in 1973 the PHQ card was born •

Animal Tales Royal Mail joins the US Postal



The 68p Caterpillar stamp has two punctures (at bottom left and top right), referring to the similar holes in the pages of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*.

THE FIRST SPECIAL ISSUE of 2006 goes on sale at Post Office branches, Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 10 January. Printed in se-tenant pairs, the stamps depict characters from British and American children's books. The set is a joint issue with the us Postal Service. The designs are: 2nd class *The Tale of Jeremy Fisher* by Beatrix Potter and *Kipper* by Mick Inkpen; 1st class *The Enormous Crocodile* by Roald Dahl and *More About Paddington* by Michael Bond; 42p *Comic Adventures of Boots* by Satoshi Kitamura and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll; 68p *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle and *Maisy's ABC* by Lucy Cousins. The stamps were designed by Rose Design.

Post office branches will be supplied with sheets of 30; sheets of 60, with gutter margin, will be supplied to Royal Mail Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets.

Technical details

Printer De La Rue

Process Litho

Stamp size 35mm square

Sheet size 30 and 60

Perforation 14.5

Phosphor One band 2nd class, two bands others

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Horizontal

Plates and colours

All values D1 brown ● D1 cyan (blue) ● D1 magenta ● D1 yellow ● D1 black ● D1 phosphor

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 10 January, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House Edinburgh or Mousehole, Penzance must reach Tallents House by the date of issue. Price £4.20 UK or £3.58 overseas.

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark) or to the nearest Royal Mail Special Handstamp Centre (Mousehole postmark) marking the outer envelope 'FDO601' or 'FDO602'. Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Mousehole postmark. For details of sponsored handstamps and addresses of the Handstamp Centres see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House. For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.

SMILERS SHEET A new generic Smilers sheet containing 20 Paddington 1st class stamps will be available from Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets, price £6.55. Printed self-adhesive, litho by Cartor.

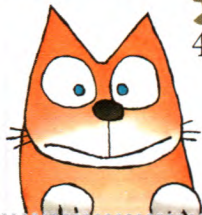
JOINT PRODUCTS A joint Royal Mail/us Postal service first day cover will be produced – details will follow.

Service to celebrate classic children's books

COMIC ADVENTURES OF ROOTS
BY SATOSHI KITAMURA

42

42



Alice's Adventures
in Wonderland
by Lewis Carroll
Illustrated by
Helen Oxenbury

The Very Hungry Caterpillar
by Eric Carle

68

68



Maisy's ABC by Lucy Cousins

Animal Tales

FAVOURITE children's
BOOK ANIMALS

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road

A pack containing the eight stamps (below, price £3.75) and stamp cards (not shown, 30p each) will be available from Tallents House and main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets. The pack was written by Roger McGough, designed by Rose Design with illustrations by Sara Fanelli, and printed by Walsall.



THIS
ROYAL MAIL
FIRST DAY COVER
Belong

People have been telling animal tales for as long as people have been telling stories. This tradition lives on in the world of children's books where the art of the storyteller meets that of the illustrator.



GOLDFISH

Goldfish
are not
cold fish

Mine
kisses me
all over

He sleeps
in a kennel
made of shells

And answers
to the name
of Rover.

KANGAROO

ga kan roo
kan roo ga
ily stop jump
kind talk to
i'm ing you.

STICK
INSECT

I may be a stick-ins
but I'm not thin, I'm th
I married a beautiful stick-ins
who turned out to be a sti

POEMS by ROGER MCGOUGH
ILLUSTRATIONS by SARA FANELLI

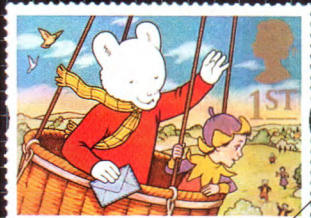
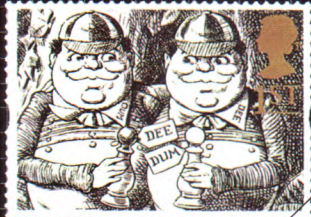
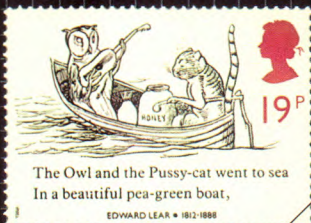


First day of issue postmarks
for Tallents House, Edinburgh
and Mousehole, Penzance.

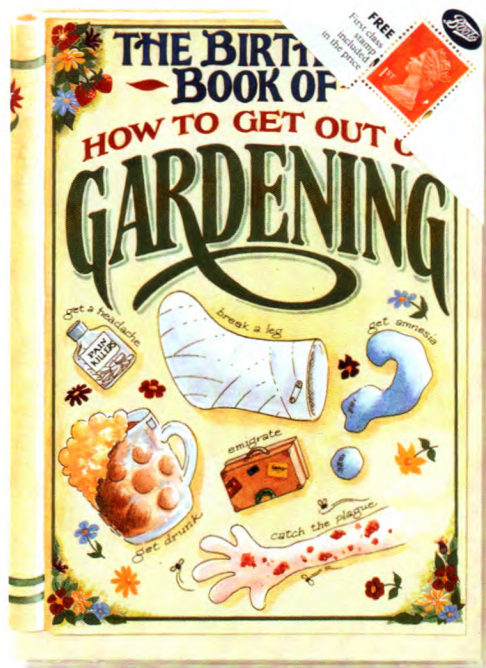
Below, children's literature on stamps: 1988 Edward Lear; 1990 Queen of Hearts; 1993 *Treasure Island*, *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, *The Wind in the Willows* and *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*; 1994 Rupert, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Noggin and the Ice Dragon*, and *Paddington Bear*; 1998 *Magical Worlds*; and 2002 *Peter Pan*.

Children's literature Royal Mail has issued several sets relating to children's literature: 1979 International Year of the Child; 1988 Edward Lear; 1997 Enid Blyton; 1998 *Magical Worlds*; 2002 *Just So Stories* and *Peter Pan*; also 1990 'Smiles', 1993 'Gift Giving' and 1994 'Messages' greetings stamps.

Characters from Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Alice Through the Looking Glass* featured on the 13p stamp in the 1979 set, two of the 1990 (Cheshire Cat, Queen of Hearts), one of the 1993 (Tweedledum & Tweedledee), and one of the 1994 greetings stamps (Alice), and the 63p value of the 1998 issue. Paddington Bear featured on one of the 1994 greetings stamps. Whilst the new 2nd class is the first stamp featuring Jeremy Fisher, other Beatrix Potter characters featured on 1979 and 1993 stamps and in *The Story of Beatrix Potter* prestige book of 1993. •



'Boots' greeting card sheets By Glenn H Morgan FRPSL



'GREETING CARD sheets/labels', 'stamp labels' or 'stamp attachments', as variously referred to by Royal Mail, were introduced by Boots the Chemist during 1994 following research into the best approach. The brief was that Boots wanted to promote sales and increase revenue on its own-brand greeting cards, and to offer postage at the same time as the card, in an attractive and innovative package. Internal trials using cards with stamps inserted, pre-paid stamped envelopes and stamps in glassine bags attached to cards were each considered and subsequently rejected.

Production technology already in use at greeting card manufacturers created the final 'Boots Label' concept: a printed sheet wrapped around the upper right-hand corner of the card prior to shrink-wrapping.

Maintaining secrecy, and therefore competitive advantage, was key, and on 17 August 1994 Boots released this product at 200 stores. There were 90 card designs available initially in three

series of 30 cards, identifiable by the reverse code – M for Male, F for Female and C for Cute, and the envelope colour (yellow, pink and beige respectively). Heavily promoted, cards were sold from display racks in an eye-catching manner.

'Boots Labels' were reprinted before later appearing without branding – the text and logo was instead printed on cellophane where the label was placed. According to official sources, the brand removal was so that any greeting card manufacturer or retailer could use sheets. Indeed, Woolworth's, Comet, MVC, B&Q and Superdrug did subsequently use unbranded sheets in their gift vouchers at Christmas time in 1997-2000. They created a pack that included a £10 or £25 gift voucher, first class sheet and a Christmas card in a cellophane wrapper for £9.99 or £24.99.

The concept fell into disuse at Boots, and they sold off the remaining less popular artworks or commemorations for under 50p. Many collectors loved the labels and mourned their demise, for sheets exist from different printings/printers, had differences in fluorescence and elliptical perforations, and they could be examined at leisure by the thousand prior to purchase, simply by visiting Boots. It is in this way that discoveries were made that would otherwise have gone unnoticed.

Royal Mail sold some printings in packs of 100 labels or as singles, which were still on sale long after they had been removed from Boots stores. The non-Boots version had previously sold out at the philatelic bureau in April 1999, probably due to its use for philatelic overprinting.

The idea of pre-paid greeting cards had failed to fully meet the needs of Boots, not least because the hoped-for increase in sales and profit was not forthcoming. The world had moved on: stamps in books were available at around 55,000 outlets, including Boots. As most customers now carry a stamp book, the concept is unlikely to be resurrected – especially as roughly 70% of all mail is sent second class. These labels remain an interesting chapter in philately and one that can be completed cheaply if basic sheets and a few private overprints are obtained.



The original branded (top) and the subsequent unbranded Boots label sheets.

Generic label information

Stamp 1st class flame-red colour with a 25p initial selling price that rose as postage rates increased on the copies sold by Royal Mail to collectors.

Pane size 85mm × 43mm first printing, 85mm × 42mm on subsequent printings.

Gum Poly Vinyl Alcohol (PVA), creamy on first printing and whiter on subsequent.

Phosphor Two 4mm bands with fluor added (fluor type recorded below against each printing)

Rouletting An inverted v-shaped set of rouletting slits appears on all sheets to facilitate folding. A standard style of cutter was used (short slits, longer ties) except for what is presumed to be the final Questa sheet (longer slits, shorter ties).

Perforations 14.75 × 14

Ellipses Mention is made of two kinds of ellipse on Questa printings. These are either type R (Rugby ball-shaped with pointed ends, or Rounded sides) and type S (Straight sides with blunted ends, or Sausage-like).

Printing process Offset-lithography.

Paper OFNP (non-fluorescent coated).

Pack size 100 labels, which were then boxed in an unknown quantity of packs.

Date of issue Where dates are shown in the listings they relate to the first day of availability.

Boots branded sheets

1st printing: Questa, 17 August 1994

Fluor Yellow

Ellipses R

Warrant number Q405

Packing Shrink-wrapped with a pink self-adhesive label affixed worded THE HOUSE OF QUESTA/GREETING CARD/STAMP ATTACHMENTS/ WARRANT Q405, REEL NO 1002/ 1ST CLASS/QUANTITY 100\$. A pale lemon rouletted only unprinted sheet formed a divider between every 100 sheets, effectively appearing as sheet 101 in the pack. Grey boards were placed at the front and back within each sealed unit.

Notes Known with short bands at base, and with inset left and right bands. At least one copy is known miscut, so that 'up to 60g in UK' is missing although the rouletting is in the correct position. Rouletting and vertical slices being done together, as explained earlier, would explain this. Totally unprinted, but perforated and rouletted, copies are known.

2nd printing: Questa, October 1994

Fluor Yellow

Ellipses S

Warrant number Q434

Packing 1 Shrink-wrapped with a pale green-coloured self-adhesive label affixed worded THE HOUSE OF QUESTA/GREETING CARD/STAMP ATTACHMENT/WARRANT NUMBER Q434 REEL NO1110/ 1ST CLASS/100 LABELS 1 × 25p. A pale lemon rouletted only unprinted sheet acted as a divider between every 100 sheets, effectively appearing as sheet 101 in the pack. Grey boards were placed at the front and back within each sealed unit.

Packing 2 Almost as type one, but with the word NUMBER and NO (after REEL) omitted.

Notes Known missing phosphor, or with short bands at top and with inset left and right bands. Also known on creamy gum instead of whiter, which was possibly left over from the first printing.

3rd printing: Questa, 25 September 1995

Fluor Blue

Ellipses S

Warrant number Unknown

Packing Not available to collectors

Notes Issued sheets are only known in a folded condition, as they were not sold unfolded by Royal Mail in packs or singles to collectors. Known missing phosphor and with right band inset. Clearly this was a late printing, as the unbranded version had already been released before copies of this printing had been found.

Unbranded sheets

1st printing: Questa, 11 September 1995

Fluor Blue with long-wave afterglow

Ellipses S

Warrant number Q486

Packing 1 Shrink-wrapped with a pale green-coloured self-adhesive label affixed worded THE HOUSE OF QUESTA/ GREETING CARD LABEL/WARRANT NO Q486/REEL NO 1166/1ST CLASS/ 100 LABELS 1 × 25p. A pale lemon rouletted only unprinted sheet acted as a divider between every 100 sheets, appearing as sheet 101 in the pack. Grey boards were placed at the front and back within each sealed unit.

Packing 2 Almost as type one, but with s on end of word LABELS making it plural and NO after WARRANT omitted.

Notes Cards were being sold in stores prior to the 11 September official launch date of the philatelically available copies from Royal Mail.

2nd printing: Enschedé, 29 April 1997

Fluor Very dull violet tinted blue

Warrant number Unknown

Packing Shrink-wrapped with an unprinted Kraft paper sheet effectively appearing as sheet 101 in the pack. No printed label was used, hence the lack of knowledge about warrant number.

Notes Better quality, sharper printing than Questa's due to the use of computer-engraved cylinders. The ST of 1ST is thicker on this printing. In fact, when collectors and dealers first saw this sheet, they believed it had been printed by photogravure. First day of availability was given by Royal Mail as 29 April, but collectors had found copies in Boots stores from 20 February 1997, as recorded on covers posted that day. Known with short bands at top and base. This dull violet fluor version was available to collectors from Royal Mail in an unfolded condition in packs and singles.

3rd printing: Enschedé, 1997

Fluor Bright violet tinted blue

Warrant number Unknown

Packing Not available to collectors

Notes Sheets are only known in a folded condition, as they were not sold unfolded by Royal Mail in packs or singles to collectors.

4th printing: Questa, January 1998

Fluor Blue with long-wave afterglow

Ellipses S

Warrant number Unknown

Packing Not available to collectors

Notes Sheets are only known in a folded condition, as they were not sold unfolded by Royal Mail in packs or singles to collectors.

5th printing: Questa, October 1998

Fluor Blue with long-wave afterglow (Novaglo)

Ellipses S

Warrant number Unknown

Packing Not available to collectors

Notes Also known with mixed ellipses – S at left, R at right, probably the result of a single damaged elliptical perforation pin. This means that maybe only one copy in every 55 might exist, as the primary sheet size comprised five columns of 11 labels. (Enschedé's primary sheet comprised 40 labels (5 × 8). Unfolded sheets are not known, as they were not made available by Royal Mail to collectors. The rouletting cuts are longer on this, the final(?) Questa printing.

6th printing: Enschedé, c1999/2000

Fluor Bright blue, almost turquoise in colour

Warrant number Unknown

Packing Not available to collectors

Notes A limited availability late printing is known from Enschedé with a very bright turquoise tint to the fluor instead of violet, which was reported in the philatelic press as available early in 2000 from Kingfisher Group stores in £9.99 gift voucher packs. Unfolded sheets are not known; they were not made available by Royal Mail to collectors.

7th & 8th printings: printer unknown, late 2000

Fluor Type unknown

Ellipses Type unknown

Warrant numbers Unknown

Packing Not available to collectors

Notes For provision with gift vouchers intended for sale in the lead-up to Christmas 2000, it is understood that an order was placed in October by the Kingfisher Group for a new printing of 200,000 sheets and for yet another 50,000 copies in that December. Whether these bear any distinguishing characteristics is unknown. Unfolded sheets are not known, as they were not made available by Royal Mail to collectors.

Privately overprinted sheets

One dealer realised that the space around the stamp could be used to create souvenir definitive sheets by applying text and logos. These are extremely popular, with prices around £3 to £9 each. A listing is given on the following page.

Privately overprinted sheets

Souvenir sheets created by applying text and logos to the space around the stamp. The year, event commemorated and type – Boots (B) or unbranded (U) version.

Stamp show overprints

1995	Singapore 95 (Singapore)	B
	Singapore 95 error: overprint on reverse gum	B
1996	Bangkok 96 (Thailand) 1500 copies	U
	Stamp 96 (UK)	U
	Hongpex 96 (Hong Kong)	U
	Taipei 96 (Taiwan) blue overprint	U
	Taipei 96 colour trial, red overprint. 100 copies	U
1997	Hong Kong 97 (Hong Kong SAR)	U
	Pacific 97 (USA) type 1 'Boots'	B
	Pacific 97 (USA) type 2 unbranded	U
	Moscow 97 (Russia)	U
	Bangkok 97 (Thailand)	U
1998	Stamp 98 (UK)	U
	Israel 98 (Israel)	U
	Ilisapex 98 (South Africa)	U
	Singpex 98 (Singapore)	U
1999	World Stamp Expo 99 (Australia)	B
	IBRA 99 (Germany)	B
	Phillexfrance 99 (France)	B
2000	PhilEuro 00 (Belgium)	U
	The Stamp Show 2000 (UK) black overprint	U
	The Stamp Show 2000 (UK) blue overprint	U
	WIPA 2000 (Austria)	B
	World Stamp Expo 00 (USA)	U
	Indonesia 00 (Indonesia)	B
2001	Hong Kong 01 (Hong Kong SAR)	B
	Stamp 01 (UK)	B
	Belgica 01 (Belgium)	B
	Philanippon 01 (Japan)	B
	Hafnia 01 (Denmark)	B
2002	Philakorea 02 (South Korea)	B
	Munich International Stamp Day 02 (Germany)	B
	PhilEuro 02 (Belgium)	B
2003	AmeriStamp Expo 03 (USA)	B
2004	HongKong 04 (Hong Kong SAR)	U
	Essen 04 (Germany)	U
	Singapore World Stamp Championships 04	U
2005	Naposta 05 (Germany)	U
2006	Washington 06 (USA)	U

Publicity overprints

?	North East Philatelic Weekend	U
1998	Rushstamps 40th anniversary logo	U
	Grimsby Philatelic Society 75th anniversary	U
1999	National Philatelic Society centenary	U
c2000	Rushstamps 1d black Collect British Stamps	U
	Rushstamps 2d blue Collect British Stamps	U
2005	DEC Tsunami appeal: India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand versions (4 sheets)	U
2005	Machin Collectors Club 10th anniversary: Enschedé and Questa versions exist	U

Acknowledgements: Dr Jean Alexander FRPSL and Graham Eyre. Text © Glenn Morgan 2005.

Treasures of the BPMA

Christmas stamps that never were, by Martin Robinson

READERS WILL REMEMBER the five Pub Signs stamps issued on 12 August 2003: The Station, Black Swan, The Cross Keys, The Mayflower and The Barley Sheaf. The 1st class and European rate stamps included the Europa symbol at bottom right, as they represented Royal Mail's contribution to the Europa series, whose theme that year was Poster Art. This was not, however, as things were supposed to be – the original idea had been to illustrate the Europa theme on the annual Christmas stamps, using old Post Office posters as the subject matter. The reasons why this happened will not be generally known until something like 2033, as the minutes of the Stamp Advisory Committee's meetings are subject to thirty-year closure.

Commissioned by Royal Mail, the designers Trickett & Webb selected a series of posters from the BPMA archive and prepared a number of presentation visuals for the SAC. In the end, both the schedule and the concept changed, and the Pub Signs stamps carried the Europa theme whilst the Christmas stamps featured the remarkable ice and snow sculptures of the landscape artist Andy Goldsworthy.

The BPMA has a sizeable collection of original posters, some of which have been reproduced on postcards. Examples include the 'Correct Postal Address' series of five cards issued in May 1994 for the 'Addressing Postcodes' exhibition at the National Postal Museum, and the 'Post Office Savings Bank' set of four cards, issued by Post Office Archives in 1991.

In addition BPMA has all the artwork produced by Trickett & Webb for the proposed issue, both their photographs of the posters and the five sets of stamp-sized visuals based on them for presentation to the SAC. Three of these sets, each of five stamps, are on a 'Post Early for Christmas' theme and feature a whole variety of seasonal images, including Santa Claus, pantomime horses, rob-



Above: proposed Christmas stamp designs by Trickett & Webb, using vintage posters. Right: artwork for a poster by Eric Fraser, used as one of the designs in another proposed set.



ins, reindeer and other animals, Christmas stockings and pillar boxes. The two others have more of a range of messages: Shop Early, Travel Early, Post Early; Send Your Christmas Parcels by Air Mail; Post During Lunch Hour; Pack Your Parcels Carefully; and Address Your Letters Clearly and Correctly.

Had the choice been mine, given my interest in letter boxes, I should have gone for the set of five stamps illustrated here, showing pillar boxes in various guises – and by various hands, including Machan and Huvneers, but not all the posters are signed – as a Christmas stocking, wearing sunglasses (this poster evidently referred to holiday postcards), with a Christmas tree extending a ghostly hand, speaking whilst brandishing a bunch of letters, and singing carols. My favourite single design, not included in the set just mentioned, is from a poster designed by that doyen

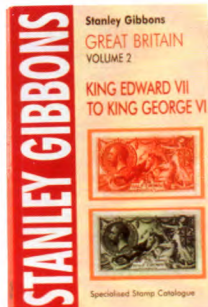
of graphic artists, Eric Fraser, whose handsome illustrations graced the pages of *Radio Times* for 50 years. His design (above) shows Father Christmas flying over a chimney pot against a starry sky and carrying a GPO sack, with the message Shop Early / Post Early / not later than Dec 18.

Amongst the other named artists whose poster work was selected were John Barker, Beaumont, Tom Eckersley, Hass, Mervyn Unger, and F H K Henrion, some of whom are remembered more than others these days, to judge by the results of an internet search •

The British Postal Museum & Archive Open Monday to Friday and selected Saturdays 10.00-17.00, Thursdays until 19.00. Call 020 7239 2570 or see www.postalheritage.org.uk for more details. To make an appointment to view philatelic material call the Curator of Philately, Douglas Muir, on 020 7239 2565.

Friends of Postal Heritage For details write to Mrs Avis Harms, 13 Amethyst Avenue, Davis Estate, Chatham ME5 9TX.

Books **Machins** • Baghdad air mail • 'Four Kings' • Midlands



Machin Handbook update *Bulletin* readers will be well aware of the researches and publications of Douglas Myall on the long-running Machin definitive stamps. Two years ago he published the third edition of his much-praised *Complete Deegam Machin Handbook* (reviewed here in October 2003) – the result of some 10,000 hours of work! He has now produced the first supplement to the *Handbook* – itself some 846 new or updated pages, weighing almost 2kg. This covers new values/colours following the tariff changes of 1 April 2004 and 7 April 2005, and a revised appendix 4 with illustrations of all the decimal miniature sheets. There is a full listing of To Pay labels (postage dues), and a new appendix 13 listing Machin ephemera: souvenir sheets, official photographs, post-buses and Machin tickets, PHQ and other stamp cards, A4 posters, etc. There is an expanded listing of country pictorial definitives in a new appendix 14, which includes FDCs and presentation packs. Complete information and listing is provided of the Byfleet papers and gums, and there are full illustrated details of gradated phosphor band layouts. Clear instructions are supplied for merging the new and revised pages into the *Handbook*. The Supplement includes the Wilding decimal definitives and Castles miniature sheet issued in March – many Machin specialists also include these stamps in their collection. The Supplement costs £35 (plus postage £7.95 UK, £12.50 Europe, £10.30 worldwide surface mail or £19.05 by air-mail). The *Handbook* is still available at £59 excluding postage. A special price is available if you

purchase both *Handbook* and Supplement before 31 December 2005. The Handbook is updated by Deegam Reports, which are issued every two to three months. Owners of the printed *Handbook* who have registered with the author are entitled to free Reports by e-mail. These are in colour and are printable. Printed Reports, in black and white, are also available from the author, for a modest annual subscription.

Orders and enquiries: write to J M Deering, PO Box 2, South Molton EX36 4YZ, e-mail machins@johndeering.demon.co.uk or telephone 01398 341564. Enquiries relating to the contents should be addressed to Douglas Myall at: 2 Elizabeth Avenue, Bridport DT6 5BA, or by e-mail: deegam@btopenworld.com •

Airmails book reissued *The Baghdad Air Mail*, by Wing Commander Roderic Hill, has recently been re-issued by Nonsuch Publishing of Stroud. Hill was a member of 45 Squadron, RAF, and from October 1924 to September 1926, he was stationed in Iraq, flying the Cairo to Baghdad air mail. This book was first published in 1929, and copies of the original printing were always keenly sought after. At the end of the Great War, RAF squadrons were based in Egypt, Palestine and Iraq. The land and sea route for mail from Great Britain to Iraq was via Bombay, and took about one month. In the absence of civil air routes in this area, the RAF began a fortnightly Desert Air-mail Service in June 1921. The RAF continued to operate this essential service until 1928, when the

route was incorporated into the Imperial Airways network as part of their plan to reach India, and ultimately, Australia.

Wing Commander Hill covered the history of the area, how the British came to be involved and the development of the service. The demands of desert navigation and the maintenance of their basic biplanes in harsh conditions were serious problems. This text includes a valuable description of the life of the air mail pilot complete with a range of contemporary photographs showing the very basic conditions under which the service was operated. A number of detailed maps of the route are included. This present reprint is most welcome and will appeal to all readers interested in the development of the early long distance air mail services, especially considering the importance of the line as a predecessor of Imperial Airways. 256 pages softback, price £16 from Non-such Publishing Ltd, The Mill, Brimscombe Port, Stroud GL5 2QG. *Richard Beith* ●

Stanley Gibbons Great Britain vol 2 'Four Kings'

The 12th edition of this specialised catalogue appears six years after the last edition. A thorough revision and significant price increases have been made, along with new information and listings.

In the Edward VII section a new trial printing, a 2d watermark variety and a new 1s proof are additions. The basic stamps have increased by approximately 50%, although the 5s has doubled. Die proofs and colour trials have increased 300-400% and essays about 200%. Of particular note are the prices for 'Pieces Cut from the Striking Books', which have been increased in many cases by 300-400%. The 1911 1/2d perf 14 no watermark increases from £6,000 to £20,000, and the 1906 5d watermark inverted from £700 to £5,000. The most significant price increase, however, is for the Tyrian Plum, rising from £13,000 to £60,000! One notable item that has not changed is the 3d Grey on Lemon perf.14, still at £3,000.

The Departmental Official Issues have risen from a modest 40% to 100% for Office of Works overprints whilst the Board of Education sees the mounted mint 1/2d increasing from £25 to £150 and the 5d from £2,250 to £12,000.

The George V section contains new information on the 1d plate proofs for the Downey head, details of the 1/2d Pencil flaw in the Royal Cypher period, and on the booklet cancelled panes. It is however, the new plate information in the Royal Cypher period that is the major addition to this catalogue. Plate markings are now listed with the official plate and the SG (philatelic) plate number. Some new plates have been added and others re-designated, and helpfully plate conversion charts are provided. This is a most welcome addition and follows some painstaking research, still to be completed for the 1d value. New listings include a Downey 1/2d die 2 control pair, a 1d Royal Cypher colour trial, and a new shade of the De La Rue 10s. The increase in prices for the basic stamps ranges from 30-250%, whilst die proofs, essays and colour trials have increased 200% to 300%. Surprisingly however, no prices have been given for die proofs for the high values, whereas they were priced in the previous edition. The exception is that for the 5s indigo blue, which has increased from £2,500 to £25,000! A feature of this new addition is the pricing of Imprimaturs from the NPM sales for block cypher and photogravure issues. Of particular note are the price increases of some of the photogravure control and cylinder blocks, increasing in some cases by 400% or more, like the 1d type 4 from £11 to £75. The Royal Cypher 1/2d printed double, one albino increases from £550 to £2,500 whilst the partial double print of the same value only increases from £15,000 to £16,000.

The Commemorative issue section includes new information on essays and colour trials for the Silver Jubilee. Price increases are generally between 50% and 100% but significantly, one of very few stamps in the whole catalogue to have remained at the same price is the £1 PUC!

The Edward VIII section contains few changes overall, other than booklets which have increased by 50%, and the Imprimaturs from the NPM sales which are now priced.

In the George VI section new varieties are listed for the high values but not priced. Prices overall have been increased by up to 50% except for cylinder control blocks where increases are from

300% to 1000%, some booklet panes increase by 200% and a few varieties by up to 300%. Imprimaturs from the NPM sales are now priced.

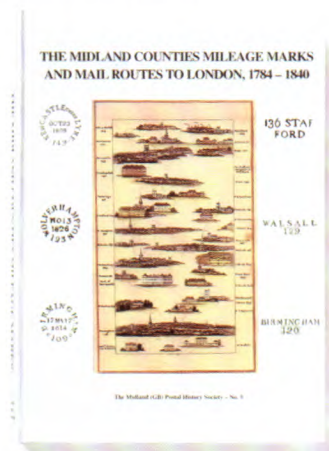
In the final section, Postage Dues, new information has been added on bisects used on cover. Prices have increased by up to 50% except for the ½d simple cypher without watermark which rises from £400 to £2,000.

Of the items covered by the appendices, booklets and protective overprints have had prices increased by up to 100%. Similar increases apply to Channel Island Swastika overprints and some of the varieties. Otherwise, prices have increased by up to 50%. Additions and deletions have been made to the further reading section.

In conclusion, this new edition has seen a thorough revision of prices, some of which, for scarce or rare items, are spectacular. Generally prices for the more basic items have increased by some 50%. Because of the extent of the price revisions, this edition is a must for any serious collector of the 'Four Kings'. *Alan Moorcroft* ●

Midlands Postal History The Midland (GB) Postal History Society has recently published its fifth handbook, *The Midland Counties Mileage Marks and Mail Routes to London 1784-1840*. This project started in 1996 when members were asked to provide details of all mileage mark in their collections, and literature was searched for previously recorded material. The likely reason for the introduction of the mileage stamps was an Act of 1784 which meant that letters through London would no longer be charged as if for two separate journeys, one into London and one out again. In the future, the charge had to be raised on the total distance a letter was carried. It was undoubtedly this key development that led to the introduction of the mileage stamps in 1784 and provided the *raison d'être* for their use over the next 45 years. The book gives details of the Act and the resulting effect it had on the postal service. The use of the first mileage stamps was curtailed after a few years, but a second issue followed an Act of 1801 and from 1825, the issue of all handstamps was recorded in what we now know as the Post Office Steel Impression Books or 'proof books'. Only

one actual mileage handstamp is known to survive – from Presteign, Wales and now preserved in the British Postal Museum and Archive. The book lists examples of the marks under cities and counties: Birmingham, Derbyshire, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Rutland, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire. The listings include a reference number, wording of the handstamp, issue date where known, colour, dates of recorded use, and British County Catalogue reference and dates. Readers should refer to the 'How to Use This Book' section to understand the system used. The various handstamps are illustrated, and the impressions are good and clear following careful computer enhancement to remove backgrounds and extraneous marks – a lengthy and painstaking job, often taking one hour to clean up just one image! The text is enlivened by illustrations of covers, maps, early postcards, photographs, drawings and engravings of postal buildings, vehicles, and inns where mailcoaches called – mostly in black-and-white, but with selected ones in colour. For anyone interested in Midlands postal history this is essential reading and a major addition to the literature of postal history in general. 380 pages, hardbound. Price £39.50, UK postage £7 (this is a large and heavy book). Available from: W J Calladine, 5 Skillins, Kingston St Michael, Chippenham SN14 6RL ●



Eminent collectors Harold W Fisher, by Ron Negus

ALTHOUGH IT IS NEARLY 20 YEARS since Harold Wolf Fisher died, his name remains very well known to all collectors of Great Britain material. His epic work in connection with the plating of the Queen Victoria 1d line engraved issues stands as his lasting memorial. This has formed the subject of a book in five volumes, published by the Great Britain Philatelic Society.



Harold Fisher was born in Crouch End, North London in 1903. One day, in 1921, a picture postcard of the Norfolk Broads arrived at his home, addressed to a former occupant. Looking at the postmark, Harold was astonished to see that it bore an Edward VII stamp and had been posted on 6 April 1906. Why it had taken 15 years to be delivered was a mystery, but it was enough to start Harold Fisher off as a collector.

His collection grew slowly over the years, until he was taken ill with mumps at the start of the Second World War. Having little to occupy his time, he thought he would begin to collect more seriously. A study of his existing material, at that point kept in a shoe box, showed there were more GB stamps than any other country, and his decision to collect Great Britain was made.

The wisdom of that choice is evidenced by the fact that in later life his collections were awarded many Gold and Silver Medals at both National and International Exhibitions. He was particularly proud to receive the Grand Award at the London 1970 show for the best GB exhibit. This included essays, die proofs and colour trials from 1837 onward.

Captain of the Fire Guard A chartered accountant by profession, Harold Fisher served as the Vice-Chairman of the Hire Purchase Trade Association. During the Second World War, he was in a reserved occupation, but saw a considerable amount of active service as a Captain of the Fire Guard, responsible for five streets during the air raids on London.

He combined accountancy with his stamp interests by acting as treasurer for the GB Philatelic Society from 1965 until 1970. He joined the GBPS two years earlier, and was elected as Vice-President from 1968 to 1974. In 1974 he took over as President, and served in that capacity for two years. His contributions to the Society were rewarded with Honorary Life Membership of the GBPS.

On the wider philatelic scene, Fisher was a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London, and gave a display of his GB material there in 1972. He received the Crawford Medal, awarded by the Royal for 'the most valuable and original contribution to the study and knowledge of philately published in book form during the two years preceding the award.' This was given for his book on plating, mentioned previously. Another very prestigious award came in 1981 when he was invited to sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists at the British Philatelic Federation Congress in Guernsey.

Five-volume work *The Plating of the Penny 1840-1864* was Fisher's outstanding contribution to GB philately. This was a development of the original work by Roland Brown, who devised a method based mainly upon actual positions of the check letters on the line-engraved stamps of the period. This required accurate measurement of the distance of each check letter from its frame line and the base of the design. A transparent gauge was designed to allow the collector to measure these distances, and was included in the book.

Given the large number of plates used by Perkins, Bacon to print these stamps over almost a quarter century, the number of possible measurements (allied to other printing differences) runs into many hundreds of thousands. It was the satisfaction that Fisher found in these intricacies of study that allowed him to classify this mass of data for the benefit of collectors worldwide. This effort, distilled in the five volumes of work pub-

lished between 1972 and 1985 allowed Roland Brown's vision to be turned into reality.

For his GB collection, Harold delighted in making detailed drawings of varieties to illustrate his writing up. He liked to obtain and mount spectacular and visible varieties that had well authenticated background stories. Many he owned were rarities. His close interest in Victorian stamps did not prevent him including perforation and printing errors of the twentieth century in his displays. He had two particular dislikes: heavy cancellations and black album leaves!

In philatelic circles, he was noted for the bow ties that he wore on all occasions. In addition to stamp collecting his hobbies included golf, re-

pairing and playing old guitars and painting. His wife, Jeanne, often accompanied him to philatelic events overseas, although she was not a collector herself. They had one son.

Harold Fisher died on 26 May 1986 at the age of 83. His collection was sold by Phillips in September of that year. 95% of the material was sold and the total sale realized £352,560. The highest price paid was for an 1882 mint £1 value on blued paper, which realized £15,500 against an estimate of £10-12,000. Following the sale, which was strong in its very fine classic stamps, imprimaturs and rare essays, many collectors of GB material were proud to add 'ex Fisher' to items now in their collections •

Prize draws Win a 2005 Yearbook and exhibition souvenirs

WE HAVE TWO PRIZE DRAWS this month. Firstly, we have four copies of the new 2005 Royal Mail Yearbook. To enter, simply write your name and address on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope and send it to: Yearbook Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ by 30 November.

Thanks to a reader, we have 10 sets of the attractive Stamp World London 90 souvenir sheets – featuring Penny Black and Twopenny Blue, de-

signs for 1940 centenary issues, and 1890 Penny Post Jubilee postcard and envelope (five items) – and 1981 British Philatelic Exhibition sheet commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Downey Head issue. A further 10 runners-up will receive the 1940 centenary issue and BPE sheets. Send your name and address on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope to: Exhibitions Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ by 30 November •



Philately on-line Ron Negus revisits the ATA thematic site

www.americantopicalassn.org The site includes an application form that can be printed out and returned to the ATA at PO Box 57, Arlington, TX 76004-0057, USA.

stamps organised according to the subjects they depict. These can be provided by post or e-mail at a nominal cost per page.

In addition to their magazine, the ATA has always published literature on thematic subjects. The result has been a series of Handbooks under their imprint, the first of which was issued in 1951. There are now more than 150 Handbooks covering a wide variety of topics. The most recent is entitled *Insects on Stamps*. The site contains a full list of the titles currently in print. Prices for members and non-members are quoted in US dollars for each title, and payment is accepted by credit card or via Paypal.

Recognising that a significant number of stamp collectors have now retired from their main employment, or are approaching that stage in life, the site includes an article entitled 'Collecting for Seniors'. This explains how the creation of a thematic collection can provide a rewarding hobby which is ideally suited to the older generation.

Another new feature of the site is the inclusion of an interactive course called 'Topical Stamp Collecting – the Basics'. This is aimed at collectors of all ages and explains the various stages of building a collection. Although much of the content will seem elementary to existing collectors, the ATA is to be congratulated. This course provides a source of information which will interest any non-philatelic visitor to the site who may be seeking a hobby, and does not know how to go about starting with stamps. So many sites spend time preaching to the converted, while overlooking the opportunity they have available to attract new recruits.

To prove that thematic collecting can be fun, the site includes a spoof article in which Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz* is interviewed about her stamp collection. Whilst aiming to provide a few laughs, this also introduces readers to various aspects of ATA services in a light-hearted way •

WITH THE THEMATICA exhibition coming up at Carisbrooke Hall, London W1 on 25-26 November, it seems appropriate to examine again the major thematic site hosted by the American Topical Association (ATA). I reviewed this previously in September 2001, and many improvements have been made in the intervening four years.

The first change noticeable is the home page, which has been completely redesigned, and now has various main items that can be found on the site listed as headlines. The navigation bar has been expanded from seven headings to 25.

When any 10 or more ATA members have an interest in the same theme, they are encouraged to form a Study Unit. The site lists all the Units currently in operation, along with contact postal and e-mail addresses. Every entry shows if the Unit concerned has a magazine for members and also indicates if they have a website of their own. This listing gives a quick indication of the wide variety of subjects that can be studied through stamp issues – covering everything from African Art to Zoology.

As a taster, the site also contains an index of subjects that have been covered in its bi-monthly magazine *Topical Time*. These articles, submitted by members, provide an insight into the type of detailed information that has been covered in this regular ATA publication since it was started over 50 years ago. Indexes to the current year and previous year's issues of the magazine are also given on the site. Another valuable aid, which is provided for members only, is the checklists of issued

Competitions Win £200 in two easy-to-enter competitions



August identify The detail is from the British Anniversaries Votes for Women stamp of 1968. The winner was Roberta Hanson of Spain.

August knowledge Answers: 1) Waterlow & Sons; 2) 1976; 3) Chris Harman. The winner was B Crittenden of Wiltshire.

Ten runner-up prizes were also sent for each competition. Our thanks to all who entered.

FIRSTLY, identify the stamp from the detail above. Send your answer to November *Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to November *Knowledge* Competition.

- 1 What were the colours of the 1967 159d Machin stamp?
- 2 What is the colour of Britain's first 2d stamp?
- 3 Who designed this year's Christmas stamps?

Send your answer (addressed to either November *Identify* competition or November *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 16 December will each receive £100. Runner-up prizes of presentation packs, FDCs and stamp cards will be awarded in each competition. Royal Mail employees are not eligible •

Events

27-29 October Philatex (London International Stamp & Cover Show) at Royal Horticultural Hall (Lawrence Hall), Greycoat St, London SW1. Thurs 11.00-19.00, Fri & Sat 10.00-18.00, 110 dealers. **Enquiries** 01793 513431 or see www.stampshows.co.uk

29 October North West Federation Convention and Annual Stamp Fair, Canon Slade School, Tonge Moor Road, Bolton, 10.00-16.00. At least 15 dealers, free entry, easy access for disabled, ample free parking, refreshments. **Enquiries** B Fielding, 01204 307252.

12 November Redditch PS 35th Anniversary Stamp Fair at Trinity High School, Redditch. Over 20 dealers and 10 competitions on display. See website www.redditch-philatelic.org.uk for details.

19 November Bolton PS all-day auction at Masonic Hall, Bolton/Radcliffe Road, Bolton. Viewing from

10.00, auction 12.30. 1200 lots. **Enquiries** B Fielding 01204 307252.

23 November National Philatelic Society seminar on 'Conservation and/or Restoration of Your Collection' with David Beech and Professor John West, 13.45. Tickets £4 (or £2 for NPS members) – apply by 8 November. **Enquiries** National Philatelic Society, 020 7490 9610, or www.ukphilately.org.uk/nps

23-24 November Cavendish Auction of the Harold S Wilson Collection of GB & Australian States Railway Mail. **Enquiries** Cavendish Philatelic Auctions, 153-157 London Road, Derby DE1 2SY, telephone 01322 250970 or see www.cavendish-auctions.com

25-26 November Thematica at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2. Fri 10.30-18.30, Sat 10.00-17.00 •

Late news

Ashes miniature sheet The sheets were produced in a printer's sheet of 20 (4 × 5), then guillotined into individual sheets. No cylinder numbers were printed in the sheet margins; colours used were: dark blue, magenta, yellow, and cyan (blue) ●

Philatelists to The Queen Spink are pleased to announce their appointment as Medallists and Philatelists to HM The Queen. Spink and Son has a long and illustrious history of both medal manufacturing and medal design for the Royal family. During the reign of Queen Victoria, Spink were commissioned to produce the medals commemorating her Diamond Jubilee in 1897, and in 1900 were honoured with their first Royal Warrant as Medallists. Spink has now held Royal Warrants throughout six successive reigns and are currently medallists to The Queen, The Duke of Edinburgh, and The Prince of Wales. Spink accepts commissions to design and manufacture medals, orders and decorations and state gifts from the Commonwealth and from countries throughout the world, and provides medal-related services, including supplying and mounting medals, making sashes, neck ribbons and ribbon bars. Spink has had a very close relationship with the Royal Philatelic Collection over the years, and in 2001 auctioned duplicate stamps and covers from the Royal Collection in a landmark sale in London ●

National exhibition The next National Stamp Exhibition will be held at the Riviera Centre, Chestnut Avenue, Torquay, on 24-25 November 2006. The exhibition will include invited displays from the Queen's Collection and Rotary International and sponsored displays by the British Thematic Association and Revenue Society of GB. A number of societies have booked stands, among them the Channel Islands and GB Overprints societies. Some 30 dealers have booked stands, and more are expected. Competitive displays will include Thematic, Revenue, Cinderella and Literature classes, and the Inter-federation competition and youth classes. This will be the 6th national exhibition, following those in Newcastle (1996), Hove

(1998), Glasgow (2000), Chester (2002), and Basingstoke (2004). For further details contact Torquay 2006, 29 Bowhay Lane, Exeter EX4 1PE or see website www.torquay2006.org.uk ●

Roll of Distinguished Philatelists The Roll was established in 1921, and an invitation to sign is regarded as the world's highest philatelic honour. Over 300 have signed the Roll, headed by George V. Nominations can be made by specialist societies and county federations affiliated to the ABPS and by philatelic societies, which should submit nominations via county or national federations. Nomination forms for 2006 may be obtained from the Secretary to the Board of Election, Dr Alan Huggins, Briar Lodge, 134 Berkeley Avenue, Chesham HP5 2RT, and should be submitted by 31 December 2005. Details of the signatories of 2005 were published in the June *Bulletin* (page 295) ●



Glenn Morgan with the Royal Mail Trophy, awarded for his display 'Machin Dummy Stamp Booklets' at Autumn Stampex.

Autumn Stampex Congratulations to two *Bulletin* contributors on their success at Stampex. Glenn Morgan received a vermeil medal and the Royal Mail Trophy for his display 'Machin Dummy Stamp Booklets', and in the literature class Douglas Myall was awarded a vermeil for his Deegam Machin Handbook on CD-ROM. As always, our Royal Mail stand attracted many visitors, especially on day two for the issue of the 1TV stamps. There was also considerable demand for the 42p country stamps and the 9p definitive(!), and much interest was expressed in the Trafalgar stamps, enlargements of which were shown on the stand. Further Stampex report next month ●

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Royal Mail collections make ideal gifts for collectors and non-collectors alike



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Collection Order code PA704
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Miniature Sheet Collection An attractively packaged set of all nine miniature sheets of 2005, including Castles, Royal Wedding, London 2012, The Ashes, and Christmas. Price £24.50 (plus handling charge: £1.30 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 rest of world).

Presentation Pack Collection Fourteen packs contained within this stylish black box embossed in silver with 'Royal Mail'. Price £47.45 (plus handling charge £2.95 UK, £5 Europe, £14 rest of world).

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Royal Mail

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