

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

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Bulletin

Millennium Settlers' Tale
stamps • The large Machins



‘The last of England o’er the
sea, my dear, Our homes to
seek amid Australian fields.’

The Settlers' Tale continues Royal Mail's series of
stamps for the Millennium

Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover Migrations from Britain are the subject of one of the new Millennium Settlers' Tale stamps from Royal Mail. The stamps are previewed in this issue. Photograph by Geoff Dann.

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

Liverpool philatelic outlet will move from Whitechapel to the Liverpool St John's Post Office, Houghton Way, Liverpool L1 1AA from 8 March.

1 March	Withdrawal 37p and 63p definitives from coils (issued July 1996)
2 March	Issue Millennium Patients' Tale stamps and presentation pack
9 March	Issue Definitives (Machin head) £1.50, £2, £3 and £5, and presentation pack
16 March	Issue Retail books (4 × 1st Walsall, 10 × 1st by Questa and Walsall) and Flowers Greetings book, all with inner cover copy change relating to European postal rate
23 March	Withdrawal Lighthouses stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and aerogrammes
30 March	Issue Millennium Settlers' Tale stamp cards
6 April	Issue Millennium Settlers' Tale stamps and presentation pack
22 April	Withdrawal Comedians stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards
27 April	Issue Millennium Workers' Tale stamp cards

Please note The Definitive portrait prestige stamp book (issued 10 March 1998) will not be withdrawn after one year but remain on sale until further notice

Revised postal rates Royal Mail propose to revise certain postal rates next month. The main proposed change is a reduction of 1p on the basic 2nd class UK rate from 20p to 19p; the 26p basic 1st class rate remains unchanged as does the 30p rate to Europe. The overseas airmail postcard rate, and basic and first step airmail letter rates all increase by 1p to 38p, 44p and 64p respectively. If the new rates are agreed between Royal Mail and the Post Office Users National Council, they will come into effect from 26 April. It is proposed to issue new 7p, 38p, 44p and 64p stamps on 20 April and the 19p olive-green stamp will be re-introduced. Full details next month.

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This month The Editor previews this issue

THE THIRD of our 12 sets of 1999 Millennium stamps – Patients' Tale – go on sale on 2 March; they were previewed last month. We include this month a feature on earlier British stamps on the theme of health, and preview the fourth Millennium set – Settlers' Tale, to be issued on 6 April. Two of the stamps in this set tie-in well with some earlier commemorative issues.

In January we began a series of articles to mark the 10th anniversary of greetings stamps. In this issue Lionel Jones looks at the labels that accompanied the second greetings issue, the Smiles set of 1990. On 9 March Royal Mail issues new £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 stamps in the Machin design, so it is appropriate that our Machin expert, Douglas Myall, recalls earlier high values bearing the Machin portrait of The Queen.

It hardly seems any time since Autumn Stampex but Spring Stampex is already almost upon us. Amongst the attractions at the exhibition will be a special display marking the centenary of the National Philatelic Society which was founded (as the Junior Philatelic Society) by Frederick Melville, one of Britain's greatest philatelists and philatelic writers. JOHN HOLMAN •

Stamp scene Exhibitions news • Scottish Philatelic Congress • GB Journal • Machin Collectors Club

Enquiries 0171 490 1005

Opening times

3 March	12.00-19.00
4-6 March	10.00-18.00
7 March	10.00-16.00

National Philatelic Society
0171 336 0882

Spring Stampex The first of this year's Stampex exhibitions, organised by the Philatelic Traders' Society, takes place at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1, 3-7 March. Admission will be £3 on the opening day, £1 other times. A free ticket (valid all days) was enclosed with last month's *Bulletin*. Further tickets are available from the Stampex office, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT.

Opening times are: 3 March 12.00-19.00; 4-6 March 10.30-18.00, and 7 March 10.30-16.00. Amongst the many attractions will be a major display by the National Philatelic Society to mark its centenary. The National Youth Stamp Group will be providing a Kids Corner for the amusement of younger visitors. The Royal Mail stand will offer the full range of stamps and philatelic products, including the first three issues of Millennium stamps. A special handstamp will be applied to mail posted at the stand or sent to Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB requesting Stampex postmark and stating date(s) required. Covers, bearing at least 1st class postage, should be submitted by the date of the postmark required •

Enquiries C Rainey, 01268 726687 or T Davis, 0181 946 4489

London International Stamp & Cover Fair The 5th of these Fairs, with over 100 dealers, will be held at the Royal Horticultural Hall 2, Greycourt Street, London SW1 on 3-6 March. Admission free •

Stamp '99 The fifth of these popular exhibitions will be held at the Wembley Exhibition Centre, 15-19 April. Sponsored by Stanley Gibbons and Royal Mail, the exhibition will include attractions for collectors of all ages.

Part of the exhibition will be given over to 'Trains '99' – a special display of stamps and philatelic material relating to railways. This follows the popular Birdpex exhibition at Stamp '98. Sponsored by Stanley Gibbons, the British Philatelic Trust and the Railway Philatelic Group, it will include both competitive exhibits and special invited displays, featuring the only Railway Thematic exhibit to gain an International Large Gold Medal.

For the first time, the joint ABPS and BPT Exhibition Committee will be holding an 'Exhibitors Surgery' throughout the exhibition. New, potential, or established exhibitors may bring along their pages of philatelic material and receive personal advice and guidance by national and international judges. The Royal Mail stand will have on sale the full range of philatelic products, including the first four issues of Millennium stamps. A special handstamp will be applied to mail posted at the exhibition or sent to the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB. Please state Stamp '99 handstamp and date(s) required. Covers should bear at least 1st class postage and be submitted by the date of the postmark requested •



A free Stamp '99 entry ticket is enclosed with this *Bulletin*.

The next national exhibition supported by the ABPS (Association of British Philatelic Societies) – Glasgow 2000 – will be held at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre on 17-19 November 2000. After the success of the Newcastle and Brighton & Hove exhibitions (1996 and 1998), the Scottish philatelic community is excited by the prospect of what will be the largest philatelic event ever held north of the border. Glasgow 2000 has invited displays from individual collectors or societies covering a wide range of philatelic and postal history subjects. Amongst the displays will be a look at the different ways in which philatelic material can be collected and enjoyed, from the pre-stamp craze for the franking signatures of the rich and famous, through classic studies of the 'new-fangled postage stamps', to the modern interest in postal history, airmails, thematic collecting, postcards and cinderella material. There will be a section devoted to the posts of Glasgow, and a varied display of Scottish postal history material from early times to the present, reflecting changes in Scotland, from a remote, backward country to the vigorous society of today. Finally, a world-wide selection will feature some of the many different postal history subjects that intrigue collectors.

The competitive exhibits will be in four classes: International and National Level Postal History, Informal Postal History (including cinderella and an open competition), and International Literature. All Federations, affiliated to the ABPS, are invited to compete for the Inter-Federation Competition Trophy.

An exhibition prospectus has been prepared; copies are available by sending a c5-size stamped addressed envelope with 39p postage to Paul McGowan at the address opposite •



Glasgow 2000 enquiries to the Co-ordinating Secretary, Margaret Morris, 81 Ellon Way, Paisley PA3 4BW.

For an exhibition prospectus send a C5 size SAE with 39p postage to Paul McGowan, 50 Laburnum Lea, Hamilton ML3 7GZ.

Australia '99 Information on website: <http://www.Australia99.com.au>

Australia '99 The Australia '99 exhibition will be opened by the Governor General of Australia on 19 March. Supported by Australia Post, this prestigious exhibition will include stamps and postal memorabilia, valued at approximately A\$150 million. The Smithsonian Institute's RMS *Titanic* exhibit retraces the last hours of the ship's mail and telegraph room which held some 3400 bags of mail; the exhibit will feature, among other things, the last telegrams despatched, and a replica lifeboat from the recent film. The International Olympic Committee exhibit highlights the Games from 1896 to 1956 through posters and Olympic stationery. The National Postal Museum will be sending the Freddie Mercury Collection for display – this proved extremely popular when shown at Capex in Toronto in 1996. Derrick Page from the NPM will be on hand to answer visitors' questions.

New Australian stamps, featuring historic sailing ships, will be officially launched during the exhibition, and visitors will see limited edition stamps being printed on a six-metre long Heidelberg colour press. There will be a Family Day on Sunday 21 March when children will be admitted free ●

IBRA '99 enquiries IBRA Philatelie GmbH, Mainzer Landstrasse 221/223, D-60326 Frankfurt, Germany

IBRA '99 This exhibition (Nuremberg, 27 April-4 May) commemorates the 150th anniversary of the first Bavarian stamps. New stamps from the German Post Office (Deutsche Post AG) will be issued during the exhibition and the Portuguese and Uruguay Post Offices will be issuing IBRA stamps. The exhibition will occupy 35,000 square metres of the Nuremberg Fair area, with some 250 postal administrations and dealers stands. Sponsored by the German PO, the Federation of German Philatelists and the German Dealers Association, it will be the fourth international in Germany, following Berlin, Hamburg, and Munich in 1930, 1959, and 1973. Admission will be free, and young visitors will be catered for by a crèche, playground and youth centre with computers and competitions ●

WIPA 2000 Bulletin 1 for the WIPA 2000 exhibition (Vienna, 30 May-4 June 2000) is now available from the British Commissioner, Brian Sole, 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, Esher KT10 0QG. Please enclose three 26p stamps ●

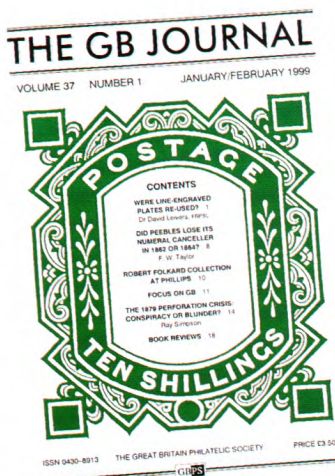
Scottish Philatelic Congress
For further details contact Ian Anderson, 01324 714413.

A souvenir postcard will be available – see Commemorative Covers Review for details

Scottish Philatelic Congress Dundee & District Philatelic Society will host the 70th annual Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies which opens at Falkirk Town Hall at 09.00 on 20 March. There will be a 60-frame display of members' material, entries for the national exhibition, many leading dealers and the British Philatelic Bureau. Congress will be officially opened at 11.00 by Ian Flett, Dundee City Archivist; Mrs Flett will then present the awards for the year and the trophies for the national exhibition. Sunday 21 March will be Collectors Day with local and specialist societies displays and meetings. Admission free, ample free parking, refreshments available on Saturday ●

Machin Collectors Club M Philpott, 8 Jannys Close, Aylsham, Norwich NR11 6DL

Machin Collectors Club This Club has gone online with its own Web page on the Internet. To find out about this active Club, contact www.machins.mcmail.com, or write to the address opposite ●



possible. These effects are most marked in the 7, 8, and 8, columns from 2b. For the most part the outline of the ghost impression would place it ponding true one that is seen with fresh entries and re-entries. This particular plate. Although several other plates that were stored for periods show the same form. Throughout Plate 9 there are lateral vertical and oval scratches (Fig. 3) which could speculate were related to clearing or repairs of the plate cleaned the corrosion and removed these extraneous lines.

tence that a plate had been previously used?

re-use of plates occurred would require at best contemporaneous logs, Bacon's records or other authoritative sources that plates had been reused had been ground off. These records have been thoroughly examined but have been forthcoming apart from those mentioned above. Ion of design, not explicable by known mechanisms, might provide after re-use.

Some variation in effectiveness would not be surprising. As any small print or revealed by wear, the orientation of the plate during use could be either the same or inverted relative to the original. It would consider looking for relevant inverted marks.

st in November 1859. By this time all 1d Die I and up to Plate 40 of and defaced (19th batch).¹ Plate 9 was used intermittently with and corrosion to develop. This corrosion affected the whole plate (and stamps) gradually took the form of duplication of POSTAGE of faith is needed to discern this but later it becomes quite clear inference for are-used plate as no other explanation fits. The original is either one penny or twopenny. If we can speculate that one plate but should be reviewed as possible candidates?

number of years and also suffered corrosion and repair. As stated earlier, Of note is the gradual development of corrosion in some blooms continue to term HB; a re-entry (i.e. fresh entry) although as of the NW star. Unfortunately the importance of this lettering regressively (Figs 4-7) but becomes quite blurred in late states as changes though less markedly. CE, on the other hand, shows



Fig. 4 — Early example showing almost normal NIF size



Fig. 3 — Duplication of rays develops progressively.



Fig. 6



Fig. 7 — Late perf. 14 copy

Figs 4-7 — 2d Plate 4 HK showing progressive duplication of NW star

GB Journal The January/February issue of the GB Philatelic Society's journal contains much of interest to serious collectors of GB stamps. David Leivers examines the possible re-use of Victorian line-engraved plates, F W Taylor writes on the Peebles numeral canceller of the 1860s, and Ray Simpson looks at the capability of the Napier perforating machines and the circumstances in which responsibility for stamp perforation was transferred from Somerset House to De La Rue in 1880. The journal also includes a report of the Robert Folkard Collection auction at Phillips, book reviews, and advertisements for specialist material. For details of the Society contact Andrew Lajer, Old Post Office, Hurst, Reading RG10 0TR •



Letter box collection Left to right: 1866 Penfold, 1856 Fluted, 1897 Rural Lamp box, 1857 Wall box, 1859 Round, and 1952 Standard Elizabeth II

Orders and enquiries BFM
Collectables, PO Box 69, Fleet
GU13 9YN

Letter box collection A new collection of six miniature letter boxes is being offered by BFM Collectables. These feature boxes from 1856 to 1952 and include the first standard box of 1859 and the first pillar box of the present reign. The hand-crafted and painted boxes are four inches tall. Price £8.95 each or £45 for set ●

Royal Mail news Welsh stamps • Rowland Hill Awards • New definitives and books

Patients' Tale stamps The cylinder numbers and colours are as follows, given in order reading up the margin from the imprint.

20p Q1 (greenish yellow) ● Q1 (bright magenta) ● Q1 (new blue) ● Q1 (black) ● Q1 (silver) ● Q1 (phosphor)

26p Q1 (greenish yellow) ● Q1 (bright magenta) ● Q1 (new blue) ● Q1 (black) ● Q1 (silver) ● Q1 (deep turquoise-blue) ● Q1 (phosphor)

43p Q1 (greenish yellow) ● Q1 (bright magenta) ● Q1 (new blue) ● Q1 (black) Q1 (deep bluish green) ● Q1 (silver) ● Q1 (phosphor)

63p Q1 (greenish yellow) ● Q1 (brightmagenta) ● Q1 (new blue) ● Q1 (black) ● Q1 (silver) ● Q1 (blue-black) ● Q1 (phosphor)

Questa stamp books

A sharp-eyed reader, Mr E Westrope, has pointed out that the stamps in the 10 × 1st and 10 × 2nd books issued on 1 December 1998 are perforation gauge 14. This is confirmed by Royal Mail's Security Print section as within the specification given the printer. Questa will continue to use this gauge for these books ●

1999 Rowland Hill Awards Royal Mail is delighted to continue its commitment towards the hobby of stamp collecting with its sponsorship of the third annual Rowland Hill Awards which will take place at the Gibson Hall, London on 8 April. The awards were established to recognise achievements and innovation in the promotion of the hobby. Judging for the 14 categories is organised by the British Philatelic Trust, a registered charity which aims to encourage the growth of stamp collecting, the Philatelic Traders' Society, which represents the stamp trade, and Royal Mail, which together make up the Rowland Hill Awards body. Royal Mail Innovation Awards recognise contributions which add a new dimension to stamps and stamp collecting in the fields of journalistic excellence, innovations to the special stamp programme, product innovation, and post office excellence.

The BPT presents Initiative Awards that celebrate personal commitment to developing and encouraging stamp collecting. Award categories include Youth Work, Young Collector, Authorship, Research, Community Work, Teamwork, and New Horizons.

The third partner – the PTS – makes the Business Excellence Awards that celebrate the commercial resourcefulness of the philatelic trade, including personal contributions as well as business enterprise and retail development. All nominations received by 15 January have been appraised by the three awarding bodies and shortlists drawn up for the final decisions by specially appointed judging panels. The winners will be announced at the Awards ceremony on 8 April.

For further information regarding the Awards contact John Whittaker, Promotions Manager, Royal Mail, on 0171 614 7262 ●

New Welsh stamps Last July we announced that new Scottish definitives would be issued in 1999 to mark the Scottish Parliament. It has now been agreed that similar stamps will be issued for Wales, linked to the new Welsh Assembly. There will be four stamps for each country, for the inland 2nd and 1st class rates, basic European rate, and airmail second weight stage. The date of issue and designs will be announced shortly ●

Royal Mail Stamp Album The 1998 supplement (continuation pages) for the Royal Mail Stamp Album is now available from the British Philatelic Bureau, price £11.95 ●

Aerogramme news The three aerogrammes issued with the Lighthouses stamps last March will be withdrawn from philatelic sale on 23 March 1999. Three new aerogrammes, for sale in England and Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales will be issued with the Millennium Workers' Tale stamps on 4 May. The usual Christmas aerogramme is scheduled for issue in October ●

New definitives and stamp books Readers are reminded that new £1.50, £2.00, £3.00 and £5.00 stamps go on sale on 9 March. These will be in the same size as the 1p-£1 stamps showing the Machin head of HM The Queen, engraved by Czeslaw Slania, and printed in recess (intaglio) by Joh Enschedé Stamps of the Netherlands. (Slania also engraved the recess stamp in the *Profile on Print* prestige book issued last month.) Shown here are the first day postmarks for the new definitives; it was not possible to illustrate the postmarks in last month's preview.

Four revised books will be available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets from 16 March: 10 × 1st XVI books, printed by Questa and Walsall, 4 × 1st Walsall, and the 10 × 1st Flowers greetings stamp book. Each will include additional copy on the inside cover of the book; please note that the first class rate is no longer valid to Europe. The stamps are the same as in earlier books. The revised books will go on sale at post offices and retail outlets as required.

A special book will be issued on 12 May, coinciding with the Millennium Workers' Tale stamps. This will contain eight 1st class definitives and one each of the 26p Settlers' Tale and Workers' Tale stamps. A further new book, containing four 1st class stamps and a pictorial label commemorating the Berlin Airlift will be issued on 12 May. A Philatelic Medallion Cover (PMC) will also be available, bearing the commemorative label pane cancelled by a special postmark ●



Profile on Print prestige book The stamps in four of the five panes all bear two phosphor bands, on the third pane the phosphor bands are printed under the recess (intaglio) printing. On the embossed stamps the phosphor covers the background around The Queen's head and can be seen under ultra-violet light ●

Post Office acquires German parcels operator The Post Office announced in January that it has made its first major foreign acquisition – the complete take-over of German Parcel, the third largest private carrier in Germany with annual sales of £250m. German Parcel also holds 23 per cent of the shares in General Parcel, the international company offering services in 30 European countries.

The German Parcel system centred on Neuenstein, north of Frankfurt, is the most modern parcels distribution centre in the world, handling some 2 million parcels for next day delivery every week.

The acquisition includes the take-over of 24 franchise businesses through which the company provides parcel services in Germany and also to and from the rest of Europe.

Announcing the deal in London, John Roberts, Chief Executive of The Post Office, said: 'German Parcel is a formidable operation. At a stroke we have hugely enhanced our world-wide parcels capability. This is a landmark for the British Post Office – we have been hoping to make a major international acquisition for several years.' ●



Edward Jenner Appropriately for the 20p stamp, Peter Brookes has portrayed a cow, with a milkmaid in the background. Jenner is pictured in silhouette on the cow's flank, inoculating his youthful guinea-pig. Portrait by James Northcote, 1803.



British medical advances As the Patients' Tale stamps go on sale, James Mackay looks at British medical pioneers

CONSIDERING the enormous contribution made by British doctors and nurses, this is a subject which has received relatively scant attention from British stamps so far. For stamps portraying William Harvey (who discovered the circulation of blood), one would have to look to stamps from Argentina and Russia, for Edward Jenner to Grenada and Liberia, for Sir Ronald Ross who pioneered the campaign against malaria, to Sweden. This deficiency was remedied to some extent by Transkei whose annual issues honouring pioneers of medicine portrayed Harvey and Lister (1982), Jenner and Florence Nightingale (1983) William Morton (1984), W S Halstead (1985), Sir James Simpson (1987) and James Lind (1993), the naval surgeon who pioneered the use of lime juice as an anti-scorbutic.

The third instalment of Royal Mail's year-long countdown to the Millennium will be issued on Tuesday 2 March, in the same almost square format as the previous issues in the series. The stamps, numbered 40 to 37, focus on aspects of the nation's health, with particular reference to advances in medicine and nursing care.

Vaccination The subject of the 20p stamp in the latest series is vaccination, pioneered by Edward Jenner. Born at Berkeley, Gloucestershire on 17 May 1749, he was the son of the local clergyman. After schooling at Wotton-under-Edge and Cirencester, he studied medicine under Daniel Ludlow of Sudbury and in 1770 went to London to study under John Hunter at St George's Hospital, where he saw some of the 45,000 people who died annually in the British Isles from one of the most virulent killer diseases of the time – smallpox.

While serving his apprenticeship under Daniel Ludlow, Jenner had observed that milkmaids were noted for their flawless beauty, whereas so many other people were disfigured by the scarring of smallpox. This was explained to him by an old-wives' tale that milkmaids contracted cowpox, which left no scarring but protected the girls from the much more virulent smallpox. Over a period of five years (1775-80) he investigated this phenomenon and came to the conclusion that a form of cowpox did indeed provide immunity to smallpox.

He was unable to put his ideas to the test until 14 May 1796, when he inoculated an eight year-old boy, James Phipps, with matter from the cowpox blisters on the hands of a milkmaid, Sarah Nelmes. On 1 July the boy was inoculated for smallpox but the disease did not develop. In 1798 Jenner published his findings in *Inquiry into the Cause and Effects of the Variolae Vaccinae*, announcing his discovery to the world.

Opposition by the medical profession greatly hampered Jenner's work, but vaccination began in earnest in 1803. By 1805 over 12,000 people had been inoculated and the death rate from smallpox fell from 2000 to 620 per annum. Appropriately for the 20p stamp, Peter Brookes has chosen a picture of a cow, with a milkmaid in the background.



Earlier British stamps have paid tribute to the work of Sir Joseph Lister. Stamps were issued in September 1965 to celebrate the centenary of antiseptic surgery, and depicted Lister's carbolic spray on the 4d, while the man himself appeared on the 1s value, above.

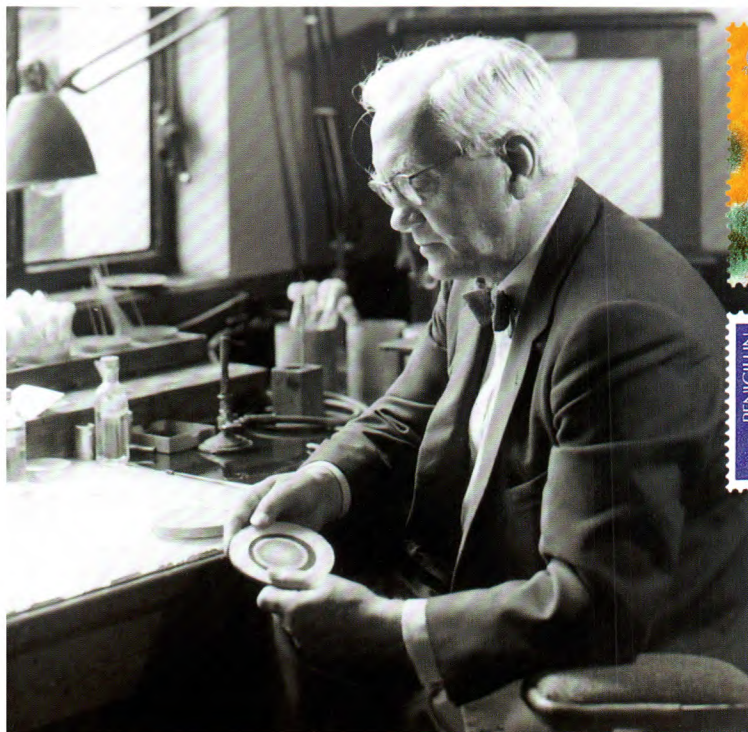
Florence Nightingale and her 38 nurses reached Scutari in time to deal with the wounded from Balaklava, and later from Inkerman. Within months of her arrival, the death toll among British troops had plummeted. The 'Lady with the Lamp' is vividly depicted on Fritz Wegner's 1970 9d stamp, at far left, marking the 150th anniversary of her birth. The Patients' Tale stamp by Susan Macfarlane shows nurses around a patient at the point of emergency admission to hospital.



Lady with the lamp Nursing, the subject of the 26p stamp, is one of the oldest professions open to women. It dates from the early years of Christianity when the care of the sick was regarded as a religious duty, reflected in the names of the oldest hospitals, such as St Thomas's and St Bartholomew's in London. The training of nurses on a quasi-religious basis began in Germany in 1836 with the foundation of the Protestant Deaconesses of Kaiserswerth, but took a quantum leap during the Crimean War (1853-56), thanks to the efforts of Florence Nightingale.

Born in 1820 in Florence (after which city she was named), but brought up in Hampshire, she began visiting hospitals in 1844. In the winter of 1849-50 she travelled in France and Egypt and was introduced to the work of the sisters of St Vincent de Paul. Subsequently she studied nursing at Kaiserswerth before taking up her post as Superintendent of the Hospital for Invalid Gentlewomen in Chandos Street, London in August 1853.

In 1854 *The Times* reported on the appalling conditions suffered by the sick and wounded in the Crimea. Florence Nightingale immediately offered her services to her friend Sidney Herbert, then Secretary for War, and soon afterwards she set out for the Crimea. She returned to England a national heroine and in 1860 the first Nightingale School of Nursing was established at St Thomas's Hospital, London. By the time of her death in 1910 she had revolutionised nursing, setting standards later copied around the world.



Alexander Fleming, left, in his laboratory in 1954, a portrait by Howard Coster. Fleming's discovery was the subject of the 1s value in the Discoveries set of 1967, and it is interesting to compare Clive Abbott's treatment, above, with the new stamp, top.

Antibiotics The 43p, designed by Mike Dempsey, shows the penicillium culture which Sir Alexander Fleming observed, almost by accident, and from which he developed the first of the great antibiotics, penicillin. Born at Lochfield near Darvel in Ayrshire in 1881, Fleming was educated at Kilmarnock Academy and St Mary's Hospital, London, where he worked under Sir Almroth Wright on vaccine therapy and developed a particular interest in bacterial infection and antisepsis. His service with the Royal Army Medical Corps in the First World War earned him a mention in despatches and further opportunities to study bacterial infection at close quarters. His discovery, in 1928, of the antibacterial properties of the *Penicillium notatum* mould has been described as 'a triumph of accident and shrewd observation'.

While researching influenza, Fleming, not the neatest of workers, went off on holiday leaving a Petri dish containing staphylococcus open to the air. During his absence the dish became contaminated with the fungus *Penicillium notatum* which destroyed that part of the bacterial colony with which it came in touch, exactly as shown on the stamp. Fleming published his research in 1929, proving that penicillin killed staphylococcus bacteria, even when diluted 800 times. Knighted in 1943, he received many other honours until his death in 1955. Fleming's discovery was previously the subject of the 1s stamp in the Discoveries series of September 1967.

Discovering penicillin was one thing; extracting and developing it proved a very difficult problem, and it was not until 1939, when Fleming's work was carried on by the Australian pathologist Howard Florey (1898-1968), and the German Jewish biochemist Ernst Chain (1906-79), at Oxford that penicillin became a practical proposition. By 1943 sufficient penicillin had been stockpiled to treat British and Allied forces during the Second World War, and undoubtedly saved the lives of countless thousands. Penicillin became generally available in 1946, the year after Fleming, Florey and Chain shared the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine.



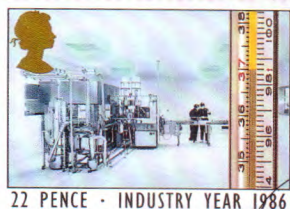
The 63p stamp, designed by Antony Gormley

Test-tube baby British scientists pioneered in vitro fertilisation (IVF), a major breakthrough in the treatment of infertility. Putting it simply, this entails the fertilisation of an ovum (the female egg) by sperm in test-tube conditions, outside the mother's body, and the subsequent transfer of the embryo to the womb so that the foetus may develop in the normal way to birth at full term.

This technique was developed in the late 1970s by the British scientist Robert Edwards, who collaborated with the gynaecologist Patrick Steptoe (1913-88). In 1978 Steptoe successfully delivered Louise Brown, the world's first baby to result from an IVF experiment. Today Louise, the first of the 'test-tube babies', has reached healthy adulthood.

The technique consists of removing several ova from the woman's ovaries and mixing them on a glass culture plate with specially prepared semen. The sperms fertilise the ova and several embryos develop. These are carefully examined by an embryologist and several of them are inserted into the woman's uterus, the unused embryos being frozen and stored for possible future use. The crucial stage comes when one or more of the embryos implant into the wall of the uterus, thus leading to an otherwise normal pregnancy. The technique has now been extended to men with a very low sperm count, a single healthy sperm being taken and injected directly into an egg. In the UK, about 7000 IVF babies have been born over the past five years alone ●

Text © James Mackay 1999



A quartet of January 1986 dedicated to Industry Year included this 22p showing a thermometer and a pharmaceutical laboratory.



A set of four issued 27 September 1994 publicised British medical discoveries of recent years, from ultrasonic imaging to computed tomography.



National Postal Museum

Until the Museum reopens, we will be featuring each month some of its many treasures



A block of 44 1d Brown, with Archer's experimental perforation 16. At least four different combs are known to have been used for experimental perforation 16. Three have distinctive peculiarities and the third, of which this block is an example, has none. For the purpose of identification it is called Comb 3.

ALTHOUGH the Museum galleries are now closed to the public, the staff at King Edward Street are busy packing stamps and artefacts ready for the move to temporary accommodation at the Post Office Archives, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB. Meanwhile, material not already packed for the move, can be seen by prior appointment.

Until the Museum re-opens, we will feature each month some of its many treasures, beginning with two fine items from the R M Phillips Collection of Victorian stamps. The first comprises a block of 44 (severed into 16 and 28) of the 1d brown, plate 48, with Archer's experimental perforation 16. The vertical measurement of all Archer's combs was 23mm, whereas the later 1854 combs measured 23½mm. This block is almost free of varieties but there are traces of re-entry on AH.

The Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum remains active, with a series of visits and events planned for 1999. The Friends will take a stand at the 70th Scottish Philatelic Congress at Falkirk Town Hall, 20-21 March, and hope to be at the Stamp 99 exhibition at Wembley in April. They will be present at the Midpex 99 exhibition in Coventry on 3 July. Visits are being arranged to the Royal Mail Warrington Rail Terminal, Joh Enschedé Printers in the Netherlands, Rexam Envelopes (McCorquodales), and Bath Postal Museum. The 1999 Annual General Meeting will be held at Mount Pleasant on 27 November. The Friends will be producing 10 postcards during 1999; the first five will feature items from the R M Phillips and Frank Staff collections. For details of all Friends activities contact Ray Pottle, PO Box 40, Uckfield, TN22 2SP. Telephone 01825 766546 •



The second item shown is a fine block of eight of the 1840 Twopence Blue, corner letters FA-GD, with part of the left margin inscription: 'In Wetting the Back be careful not to remove the Cement'.

For an appointment to see Museum material not already packed, ring 0171 776 3636.

The Settlers' Tale

The fourth in the series of 12 Millennium stamps sets for 1999 is on the theme of settlers

Technical details

Printers Walsall Security Printers

Process 20p lithography, others gravure

Size 37 × 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 × 14.5

Phosphor One band 20p ● two bands others

Gum PVA

Settlers' Tale stamps go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 6 April. The design of the **20p** stamp (basic inland 2nd class letter rate) symbolises migration to Scotland. By the 12th century the Normans had imposed their culture and administration in England. One of the noble Norman families to make the move to lowland Scotland was the de Brus family, and their migration is one example of how the great Scottish families came into being. From this lineage came two kings of Scots, including Robert Bruce (1306-29), hero of the Scottish War of Independence, who featured on one of the Great Britons stamps of 1974. Other great Scottish families of similar Norman descent include the Frasers, Lindseys, Sinclairs and Gordons.

The **26p** value (basic 1st class inland letter rate) features the Pilgrim Fathers. In 1620 the *Mayflower* sailed from Plymouth bound for America with on board a group of Puritans who, in 1608, had uprooted themselves from their native Nottinghamshire and settled in the Netherlands in an attempt to escape persecution at home. Seeking the religious freedom that still eluded them, the Puritans negotiated with a London stock company to finance a pilgrimage to the New World. After a 66-day voyage, 102 settlers (35 of them Puritan) were deposited near Cape Cod at the site of New Plymouth. Within the first year nearly half the settlers died, but thereafter the health and the economic position of the colonists improved. Now universally known as Pilgrim Fathers, they were initially called the Old Comers or Forefathers. The Pilgrim Fathers and the *Mayflower* were shown on a 1s6d stamp in 1970, marking the 350th anniversary of their voyage. The us Post Office also issued commemorative stamps for the 300th and 350th anniversaries, in 1920 and 1970 (SG 556-8, 1416).

The important colonisation of Australia is recalled by the design of the **43p** value (basic airmail letter rate) which shows a sailing ship, aspects of settlement and the kangaroo and emu from the Australian coat of arms. James Cook took possession of the eastern coast of Australia in the name of the Crown on 22 August 1770. Two problems facing the British government in the early 1780s – the need for a naval base to defend trade in the eastern seas and a replacement for the lost American colonies where convicts could be transported – were solved in 1787 when the First Fleet set sail for Australia carrying naval crews, marines and 788 male and female convicts. On 26 January 1788 a settlement was established at Sydney Cove. In the following century, the Colonial Office assisted thousands to emigrate, and by mid-century the Australian colonies were legislating to accept only immigrants who could make a full economic contribution.

Cook's signature and his ship *Endeavour* featured on a 1s9d Anniversaries stamp in 1968, and Cook himself on the recent Travellers' Tale 63p stamp. The bicentenary of Australian settlement was commemorated in 1988.





Migration from one part of the UK to another, depicted on the 20p stamp, established the ethnic fabric of these islands. The Pilgrim Fathers, on the 26p, sailed from Plymouth bound for America, seeking religious freedom. The settling of Australia is recalled by the 43p, while the 63p symbolises migration to the UK, a new home for many immigrants over the centuries.



A Kenyan Asian family arrives at Luton airport, 1968. In the late 1940s, immigration from the West Indies and southern Asia was actively promoted, and the first settlers, 492 Jamaicans, arrived in June 1948 aboard the *Empire Windrush*.

The 20p stamp is the work of John Byrne, born in Paisley in 1940, and educated at the Glasgow School of Art. He is both an artist and a writer of plays for the theatre and TV (*Tutti Frutti* and *Your Cheatin' Heart*). He wrote and directed the 1996 film *The Slab Boys*.

The 26p design is by Wilson McLean, born in Glasgow in 1937, designer of the Europa/Music Year stamps of 1985. A winner of the prestigious Hamilton King Award and several Gold Medals of the Society of Illustrators, McLean has built his reputation on immaculately designed paintings, often for top corporate clients.

The 63p stamp (second step airmail letter rate) features a multicoloured humming bird, symbolising migration to the UK which has become home for millions of refugees and immigrants over the centuries. Many have come from Europe; others from further afield. After the Second World War, many Commonwealth servicemen and women who had fought opted to stay in the UK. From the late 1940s large-scale immigration from the West Indies and South Asia was actively promoted to fill labour shortages in transport, foundry work and the new National Health Service. The first settlers – 492 Jamaicans – arrived in June 1948 aboard the *Empire Windrush*. Over the centuries immigrants have brought with them their own customs and cultures to add to those already here, resulting in the vibrant and diverse society that is modern Britain. The cultural impact of the black community was recalled by the four Notting Hill Carnival stamps issued last August.



The 43p value is by Jeff Fisher, known to collectors for the 1990 Astronomy set.

The 63p is the work of Gary Powell, his first design for Royal Mail.

Travellers' Tale presentation pack, written by Prof Jeremy Black of Exeter University, and designed by The Chase.

*'The last of England O'er the sea, my home,
Our homes to seek amid Australian fields.'*

FOOD MARSHES BECOMES 'SOMMER'

There are a mix. During the previous millennium, to 801000, successive waves of invasion and settlement had brought the Celts and the Romans, and then Angles, Saxons, Jutes and Vikings to Britain. This trend continued in our millennium. First, there was the fresh Danish invasion bringing Cnut (Canute) to the throne of England in 1016, thus making England part of a Scandinavian empire. Next came William the Conqueror's successful invasion from Normandy in 1066. Having overrun England, the Normans and their successors pressed on to conquer Wales and establish a presence in Ireland. There was, however, no conquest of Scotland. Instead, Normans migrated there in response to Royal invitation, especially that extended by David I (1134-53). It was from these early settlers that such leading Scots as Robert the Bruce and the royal House of Stewart descended.

This movement of settlers to Scotland was one of the most prominent examples of a process of migration within the British Isles that has helped to mix its peoples. Most of this migration was driven by people's desire to improve their economic life: settlers seeking land to cultivate, country girls going into service in the towns, workers drawn to the factories supplying goods for the empire, Irish labourers building the railways of Victorian England.

Economic opportunity and a desire for a new life, free of the political and religious constraints that existed in Britain, also sometimes took many people abroad. In 1607 a permanent colony was established in Virginia. The Pilgrim Fathers who sailed to Massachusetts on the *Mayflower* in 1620 found greater political and religious freedom than in England. Possibly as many as 200,000 people emigrated from the British Isles to North America during the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries most movement was still to what was to become the United States – between 1815 and 1901 the often-perilous journey was made by more than eight million people, many of them Irish fleeing the appalling consequences of the potato famine. There was

also a growing movement of settlers to Canada and Australasia. Whereas James Cook's voyage to Australia was an epic of exploration, emigrants were part of an organized process greatly eased by the introduction of steamships, which considerably cut journey time. Entire parishes transplanted themselves to Australia in search of a new life.

Thanks to this emigration, British culture and customs spread around the world. Modern travellers can find Burns night celebrated on every continent from Johannesburg to Toronto, and British-style Christmas lunches being eaten on the sunny sands of Sydney.

Britain also took in many migrants, and continues to do so. Many came from the near continent: European Jews in the latter part of the nineteenth century and Poles and Ukrainians in the 1940s. Others came from further afield. There was a substantial Chinese immigration a century ago, principally to ports such as Cardiff, London and Newcastle. From the 1980s, large-scale immigration to Britain was from the West Indies and South Asia, an actively sponsored inflow to fill a labour shortage in transport, foundry work and nursing, although numbers were limited by Immigration Acts from 1962.

The experience of immigrants has varied. Many found opportunity, others hardship or prejudice. Although racial discrimination is illegal under the Race Relations Act (1977), there continues to be discrimination and tension. Prejudice reflects a lack of knowledge of the long-term history of immigration into Britain, and a failure to grasp that it has helped to make our country a dynamic, vital and interesting place in which to live. On the streets of towns and cities up and down the country there are signs of an active cultural mix: people, clothes, shops and restaurants, dozens of languages and dialects can be heard. In both the short and long terms, language reflects the impact of immigration and emigration. English itself has been enhanced and enriched by a vocabulary that reflects the movement of people into and out of the country.



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FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 6 April, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Plymouth must reach the Bureau by 6 April. Price £2.20 UK (including VAT) or £1.88 overseas (no VAT).

Alternatively, collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF1 1AA (Plymouth postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9907' (Bureau), or 'FD9908' (Plymouth). Covers can be posted or handed in covers at main post offices for the Plymouth postmark. A non-pictorial Plymouth postmark will also be available, by sending covers to the Cardiff Handstamp Centre, requesting 'FD9908NP'.

In accordance with Royal Mail's policy on the 'Welsh Language Scheme', bilingual versions of the Plymouth pictorial and non-pictorial handstamps can be obtained by sending covers to the Cardiff Handstamp Centre quoting reference FD9908 Bil (pictorial) and FD9908NP Bil (non-pictorial).

Sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). Covers may bear just the 20p Settlers' Tale stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 6 April.

MILLENNIUM PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated pack (price £1.85) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets. A Royal Mail Millennium Stamps Album, with pages for the 1999 issues, also three FDC and three presentation pack pages, is available from the British Philatelic Bureau. Price: album and slipcase £19.99; sets of pages only £9.99 •

Patients' Tale stamps Readers may be interested to know that a fine screen of 720lpi (lines per inch) was used by Questa for printing this issue. Fine screens were also used for the Endangered Species, Lighthouses and Health stamps – see *Bulletin*, October 1998, pp52-55 •



The large Machins A survey by D G A Myall

Below, original high values on first day cover, 5 March 1969

FROM THE VERY EARLIEST DAYS, the standard size of GB low value definitives has been $20.5 \times 25\text{mm}$ and the so-called high values have been larger, although the exact size has varied. The term 'high value' has become somewhat imprecise over time as inflation has led to today's high value becoming tomorrow's low one. In this article I want to take a look at the large size stamps with the Machin head, regardless of whether they would today warrant the description high value.



The diagram shows the sheet layout of pre-decimal issues, and the perforation of the four plate blocks: P, perforated through margin; I, imperforate margin; and E, an extension hole in the margin.

Far right, the first decimal stamps: 10p, 20p and 50p of June 1970 and revised £1 of December 1972.

Right, original 1969 £1 (left), and the 1972 re-design.



Pre-decimal issues Four recess-printed stamps to the values of 2s6d, 5s, 10s and £1 went on sale on 5 March 1969, the first day of that year's Stampex. The official colours were announced as peat brown, raspberry red, sapphire blue and blue-black respectively. The stamps had originally been scheduled for issue on 9 September the previous year but their launch was delayed because of 'technical difficulties in printing'. These were concerned mainly with the ink filling in the rectangular lines of shading in the background causing the colour to appear uneven. They were eventually overcome by changes in the paper employed and variations in paper thickness and coating are known even in the issued stamps. The paper was unwatermarked (as are all Machins) and there were no phosphor bands. The gum used was PVAL.

The new stamps were 29.5 × 34.5mm overall in 'portrait' format (where the short sides are at the top and bottom) as distinct from the stamps with the Castles design which they replaced and which were in 'landscape' format (where the short sides are at the left and right). Like their smaller counterparts, the new stamps comprised the value and the Machin head only, preserving the classic simplicity that had made the design so popular with the public. They were printed by Bradbury Wilkinson and Co Ltd on rotary sheet-fed machines. Two of the firm's engravers were given the delicate and highly skilled task of engraving The Queen's profile to match the gravure head used for the small format stamps. One of these was approved by Her Majesty and put to use. The sheet layout was in four panes of 40 stamps, each pane comprising five rows of eight columns. While each plate had only a single number, each pane was distinguished by adding a suffix letter to three of them. The sequence is shown in the diagram opposite (not to scale). The whole sheet was perforated by a single row comb perforator from bottom to top before being quartered, and the pin layout meant that the four plate blocks were perforated differently. This can be seen from the diagram, where P = perforated through the margin, I = imperforate margin and E = an extension hole in the margin. The gauge was 12.

Decimal intaglio stamps Britain's first decimal stamps went on sale on 17 June 1970, eight months before D-day. The values were: 10p cerise, 20p olive-green, 50p sapphire blue and £1 blue-black. New colours for the 10p and 20p were necessary because they did not have exact equivalents in the pre-decimal currency. Pre-decimal stamps remained valid for postage until 29 February 1972 but confusion between the 10s and 50p stamps during their dual validity did not matter for they had the same monetary value.

The new stamps were again printed by Bradbury Wilkinson on unwatermarked coated paper gummed PVA. The plates were, however, with the exception of the £1, produced by a new method. Instead of transferring each impression singly onto each plate, a master plate of 100 (10 rows of 10) impressions was made and printing plates then produced from this by electrolyte. The new sheet layout was to make it easier for counter clerks to keep a tally of their decimal stock. Later, double pane plates of 200 were made. Although the right-hand plate number was given an A suffix, each pane was derived from a master plate of 100, so it is possible to find the same plate flaws on each pane.

The presence of a 10p was a surprise as it was lower than the decimal equivalent of the 2s6d (12p) and the cost of printing that had been under examination. The large format 10p only just made it into the decimal era which began on 15 February 1971, being replaced with a small format photogravure stamp on 11 August. However, it still retained some prestige in being bi-coloured until it was changed to a single colour in 1976 'in an effort to reduce printing costs'. The 10p was unique in being the only one of the set to be printed on phosphorised paper.

Much thought was given to the exact placing of the head and value to achieve the best artistic balance. Except for the £1, for which the original master die was used, the head was placed .5mm further to the right on the decimal stamps and the space between the value figures and the bottom frame was increased. These two changes allowed room for the broader numeral 0 used for the decimals. Also, the opportunity was taken to

widen the spaces between the lines of the background in order to avoid the problem of infilling encountered with the pre-decimals. Thus, although there are still 29 lines of shading from the left frame to The Queen's nose despite the repositioning of the head, there are only six lines instead of eight from the tip of the diadem to the right frame. The head itself is the same size in the pre-decimal and decimal versions. The positioning of the head and value on the £1 value was brought into line on 6 December 1972.



Photogravure stamps: left, the £1, £2 and £5 of 1977 and above, the later £1.50 and £1.60 values for parcel rates.

The photogravure issues By 2 February 1977, it had become clear that the cost of recess printing could no longer be justified for values below £1 and on that day new £1, £2 and £5 Machin stamps were issued in photogravure (see photograph above). They are the largest Machins ever issued, measuring 30 × 40.75mm overall. They were bi-colour printed by Harrison & Sons Ltd on the Jumelle press in sheets of 100 (2 panes of 5 × 10) on Fluorescent Coated Paper gummed Dex, without phosphor bands and perforated 14 × 14.75. The images were laid down sideways, hence the larger gauge on the long sides which is designed to facilitate separation across the grain of the paper where it is more difficult to tear (which is why small format stamps are perforated 14.75 × 14).

Stamps above £1 have traditionally been used as make-up values, there not usually being a weight step in any tariff corresponding to any of the values. This changed on 3 August 1983, when the large format photogravure series was joined by a £1.30 stamp especially to pre-pay the mini-

mum inland parcel rate (1kg) current at the time. Later increases in this tariff led to a £1.33 value on 28 August 1984, £1.41 on 17 September 1985, £1.50 on 2 September 1986 and £1.60 on 15 September 1987. No subsequent stamps were issued for this purpose but the £1.50 Machin survived as a make-up value until the Castles designs were re-introduced in 1988.

Conclusion The large format Machins offer an interesting, if expensive, field for study. By the time that you read this, they will have been joined by the first large format NVIS in the *Profile on Print* prestige book issued on 16 February 1999. These are likely to be the last in view of the decision to issue all Machins, including values up to £5, in the small format on 9 March. On that date, the Machin head will once again unify the complete range of definitives •

Editor's note An earlier article on these stamps was published as no 8 in Don Staddon's series *The Genesis of the Machin Design* in May 1987.

Chairman's comments Adam Novak, the Director and General Manager of Royal Mail National and Chairman of the Stamp Advisory Committee, discusses early reactions to the 1999 stamp programme and looks forward to the Rowland Hill Awards and Stamp '99.

How well are the Royal Mail Millennium stamps being received? Early signs are that the response has been overwhelmingly positive. The most heartening aspect, based on the experience of the Philatelic Bureau, is that the programme is attracting many new collectors to the hobby. This is surely a development which will be welcomed throughout the philatelic community. Because of the highly innovative nature of the Millennium stamps, we expected something of this kind. However, results so far indicate that our expectations will be exceeded.

For exactly the same reasons we also expected that some collectors would find the approach so different that they would tend to reserve judgement on the stamps until more of the year's programme unfolded. With the first two issues of 1999, for example, most collectors immediately welcomed the designs of individual stamps, especially those by David Gentleman and John Lawrence, but probably took a little longer to warm to the overall theme of each issue.

Judging by comments we have had on the third issue of the year – Patients' Tale – collectors generally seem to be getting quicker in recognising the homogeneity that makes each of the 1999 issues so distinctive and exciting. As the year's programme unfolds, this aspect will grow stronger and stronger. I am convinced that, long before the end of the year, any reservations will be transformed into 'must not miss' attitudes.

Two other events which also come into the 'must not miss' category are the Rowland Hill Awards, at the Gibson Hall on 8 April, and Stamp '99, at the Wembley Exhibition Centre 15-18 April.



Popular Millennium designs: David Gentleman (top, *Inventors' Tale*) and John Lawrence (*Travellers' Tale*)

The Rowland Hill Awards, now in their third year, have quickly established themselves as the most encompassing and prestigious awards available for philately. These awards, however, are not simply about recognising and rewarding achievement. Equally important is the incentive the awards provide to the whole philatelic community to improve the quality of its activities and to reposition the hobby for the new millennium.

If the hobby is to survive in the long term, it needs to attract a constant influx of new talent and new ideas. And I believe it can only do that if it is projected and perceived as vibrant, topical

THE
Rowland Hill
 AWARDS

Guests enjoying the Rowland Hill Awards ceremony, 1998



and intellectually stimulating. As we are already seeing, the Millennium stamps are making a valuable contribution to this endeavour.

The Rowland Hill Awards underline the fact that this has to be an industry-wide effort. Royal Mail, of course, has a pivotal role to play in this in partnership with the British Philatelic Trust and the Philatelic Traders Society. We are delighted to continue our commitment towards the hobby of stamp collecting by co-sponsoring the event once again.

A total of 14 awards will be made on the evening of 8 April. Four of these will be for innovation awards sponsored by Royal Mail: innovations to the special stamp programme, product innovation, journalistic excellence and post office excellence.

The British Philatelic Trust is sponsoring seven initiative awards to promote and encourage the growth of stamp collecting. These categories include youth work, young collector, authorship, research, community work, teamwork and new horizons.

Our other partner, the Philatelic Traders Society, will make the business excellence awards that celebrate the commercial resourcefulness of the philatelic trade by honouring personal contributions as well as business enterprise and retail de-

velopment. A full report of the awards evening will appear in the *British Philatelic Bulletin*.

A week after the awards comes Stamp '99 at the Wembley Exhibition Centre. Don't miss it since it will be the last big philatelic event in this country in this century – and in this millennium!

As usual, we will be having a major presence at the event. This includes a main Royal Mail stand encompassing a one-to-one counter-clerk service for philatelists and a self-service shop for impulse buyers and new collectors.

We will also have a special Royal Mail Design A Stamp Competition stand for children. Entrants will be able to design a stamp image on a particular theme – the winner will see his or her winning design printed into a souvenir sheet. Children will also have the opportunity to win prizes at the Royal Mail Children's World stand where they can play interactive games based on a variety of stamp themes.

While Stamp '99 may be the last major UK philatelic event of this millennium, there is no doubt what the first major philatelic event will be in the new millennium. Royal Mail-sponsored Stamp Show 2000, at Earls Court 22-28 May next year, is the big one! Plans are well developed for this and I hope to discuss these in more detail in a future contribution •

Eminent early collectors The Earl of Kingston, one of the 'Fathers of Philately' by Ron Negus FRPSL

THE EARL OF KINGSTON was the third President of the (later Royal) Philatelic Society, London and took over this prestigious office from Judge Philbrick in 1892. He had joined the Society in 1887. Three years later, he showed part of his magnificent collection of Great Britain at the London International Exhibition, and was awarded a gold medal.

This was a suitable award for a display that included such rarities as proofs of the Mulready envelopes on India paper, the VR Penny Black essay, specimens of the original Heath die of the 1d without the engravings of the head and an almost complete set of GB issues of the previous 50 years in mint condition. These included a large block of the Plate x1 Penny Black with margins, and an entire sheet, less one corner stamp, of the 1s green embossed issue of 1847.

The latter sheet had been obtained by the Earl one evening whilst dining with the Duke of Devonshire. During the course of the meal, the Duke had shown the Earl the stamps which he had loose in the drawer of his desk, and, not being a collector himself, had given the specimens to the Earl at face value. The Earl liked to recount this story of his good fortune when displaying his material.

The earldom was an Irish title, and the Earl was also referred to as Henry Ernest Newcomen King-Tenison, having been granted a Royal licence to add his wife's maiden name of King-Tenison to his own surname in 1883. This lengthy version of his name appears on the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, on one of the side panels which list the 43 collectors deemed by the originators of the Roll in 1921 to be the 'Fathers of Philately'. Apart from his philatelic activities, the Earl was also a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Connaught Rangers, a magistrate for the counties of

Roscommon and Leitrim, and the Lord Lieutenant of Roscommon County.

His estate in Ireland, where the Earl often used to invite his philatelic friends to stay, contained a river that was noted for its fine salmon fishing. Amongst those who came to visit was the well-

known Birmingham dealer, W T Wilson, and he is recorded as having said that the Earl often drove him to distraction with his habit of taking rifle shots at the salmon which he had patiently hooked.

Despite having to spend time in Ireland attending to his public and military duties, the Earl was present at meetings of the Philatelic Society whenever he was able. He soon established his place through his wide philatelic knowledge, and his ability to share this with fellow members with great courtesy and charm. His collections, which were housed in a number of leather-bound albums, were brought along regularly to meetings for examination by all, and were notable for the geometrical arrangement of their contents. As well as the mint specimens of Great Britain, for which his collection was renowned, the albums also contained other fine material from British North America, the West Indies, and other Commonwealth countries.

As well as obtaining and mounting the specimens in his collections, the Earl was also a keen student of philately. He demonstrated this with three papers he gave before the Philatelic Society during the 1894 season. Two of these dealt with the production of British stamps of 1854 and 1860 respectively, and the third covered the subject of 'de-oxidation of postage stamps'. Ill-health prevented him from giving further presentations, and he told his audience after giving the above paper at the last meeting he attended in 1894 that he thought his days were numbered.



In 1895, the Earl was taken ill again with a serious stomach complaint and underwent surgery. This seemed to be successful, and the medical advice was that he should spend some time convalescing abroad. As a result, he went to Egypt, but his condition did not improve, and on 13 January 1896 he died in Cairo at the relatively young age of 48. He was survived by his wife and their only son, who became the 9th Earl, but did not share his father's interest in philately.

The Earl's collection came on the market and

was bought by two major dealers, Mr W H Peckitt and Charles J Phillips (acting for Stanley Gibbons Ltd) for the large sum of £1800. Given the intervening rates of inflation, this sum would be equal to just under £100,000 in today's money. As well as its monetary value, the significance of the Earl's collection can be judged by the fact that Charles Phillips wrote an article describing its chief contents in the November 1896 issue of his important magazine *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal* •

Posting boxes 185

THIS MONTH we feature the new stamps being issued by the Isle of Man Post Office on 4 March. When the Isle of Man took over responsibility for running its own postal services in 1973, it inherited all existing buildings, vehicles and posting boxes. They are still painted red. The stamps feature three pillar and three wall/lamp boxes. The 10p shows the large oval box at Kirk Onchan PO. Only 75 such boxes were made in GB, of which 50 are situated in and around London. The wall/lamp boxes shown on the 20p, 25p and 63p values are respectively at Ballaterson (Ballalough), Spaldrick (Port Erin), and Baldrine Station. The 21p denomination features an Edward VII pillar box at Laxey Station, and the 44p a small oval box at Derby Road, Douglas. Only 50 of these boxes were ever manufactured in GB. Boxes of all reigns, except Edward VIII, are to

be seen on the Isle of Man. The presentation pack produced by Isle of Man PO includes an interesting account of boxes on the island; we are told that the earliest box was sited near Ramsey in 1873 and that in the 1930s there was a blue air-mail box outside the Head PO in Douglas.

The stamps were designed by the Agency Limited using photographs by Valerie Cottle and Albert Lowe; they were printed by Walsall Security Printers. Stamps are available mint or CTO at £1.83 a set, packs and FDCs at £2.23 from the Isle of Man Philatelic Bureau, PO Box 10M, Douglas, Isle of Man IM99 1PB.

For details of the Letter Box Study Group send a SAE or IRC to the Membership Secretary, Mrs V Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES. The Group produces many interesting publications and postcards •



Books Bolaffi • Stanley Gibbons • Nene Valley Railway



Bolaffi 1998 International Hardbound. Price £40, postage £2.50 UK, £5 overseas, from Steven C Kander (Philatelists) Ltd, 20 Broadfields Avenue, Edgware HA8 8ER.

Bolaffi 1998 International This lavishly produced book records and illustrates over 1100 items which achieved the top record prices at philatelic auctions during 1997. There were no British stamps amongst the top ten, headed by a cover bearing the 1d Post Office Mauritius which made \$1,564,630 at a Feldman auction in Zurich in November 1997. The only known mint example of Hawaii's first stamp realised \$575,000 in New York in June. Some 67 British items are listed – mostly, as might be expected, Victorian line-engraved stamps. Pride of place goes to a Penny Black imprimatur, plate III, TL, state 2 corner marginal showing plate number 1 and inscription. This realised \$73,460 at a Spink auction in London in May. A similar item, plate 1a, showing plate number 2, made \$66,690 in the same sale. A beautiful horizontal strip of six, grey-black, Plate 1a, corner letters TG-TL went for \$40,740. A Black on cover to Lancashire, backstamped 6 May 1840, realised \$26,660 and fine blocks of four of the VR Penny Black and 1840 2d blue plate 1 made \$24,800 and \$66,690 respectively. The entries on Victorian high values include a mint 10s greenish-grey (SG 135) and £1 brown-lilac (186a) which fetched \$42,510 and \$40,740 respectively. A block of four £1 green showing broken frame variety (SG 212-212a) went for \$11,520. Two rare Edward VII Official stamps came under the hammer – 10s IR OFFICIAL (\$23,030), and 1s BOARD/OF/EDUCATION (\$16,680 and \$28,500). An example of

the famous Edward VII 2d Tyrian Plum, unissued at the time the king died, made \$14,420. Two lots of Second World War propaganda forgeries – Liquidation of Empire overprints on George VI stamps – went for \$10,280 each.

The book is a delight to all who appreciate beautiful stamps and covers, whether or not they can afford to own any •

Stanley Gibbons Publications Charles Nissen's *The Plating of the Penny Black Postage Stamp of Great Britain, 1840*, first published in 1922, remains the standard guide to the world's most intensely studied stamp. Fine copies of the book, complete with photographs, fetch up to £600 at auction. Stanley Gibbons announce that a new edition of this book is being made available, in a limited edition of 400 copies. The original text has been completely reset, augmented by notes made over the years by members of the Gibbons GB Specialist Stamp Department to their reference copy of the book, providing details of additional identifying characteristics not noted by Nissen and McGowan. A foreword to the new edition has been contributed by Charles Goodwyn, Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection •

The Plating of the Penny Black Postage Stamp of Great Britain, 1840 Price £205 leather bound or £135 cloth bound. Early ordering is advised from the SG Strand shop or Stanley Gibbons Publications, Parkside, Ringwood BH24 3SH. Mail order free phone 0800 611622.

Hold Up at Sears Crossing published by the Nene Valley Railway, is an account of the Great Train Robbery of 1963 by one of their members, Bill Williams. The only surviving Travelling Post Office coach from the robbed train is now being restored on the NVR. Mr Williams account will be of interest to all TPO enthusiasts. Proceeds from the sale of the book go towards restoration of the TPO coach. An exhibition relating to the Great Train Robbery can be seen at the Railway until October 1999 •

Hold Up at Sears Crossing Price £6.95 plus 70p postage from Nene Valley Railway, Wansford Station, Stibbington, Peterborough PE8 6LR.

Postbag

Self-adhesives Am I alone in wondering why self-adhesive stamps are still not being seriously promoted by Royal Mail? After another unpleasant session licking a couple of hundred stamps this Christmas I really find it extraordinary that we cannot be provided at the very least, with self-adhesive Christmas stamps. Other countries seem to be able to do this – why not us? OLIVER R J PARR, LONDON W11 ●

Millennium stamps I was looking forward to this major series with great excitement. However this expectancy soon evaporated when I saw pictures of the first stamps.

The decision to use a different designer for each individual stamp has proved to be unwise, turning an inspired theme of ‘Tales’ into a mishmash of conflicting design concepts and techniques. The Inventors set is particularly hard on the eye and when presented together on an envelope presents an ugly clash of styles and ideas. The Travellers suffers the same problems. I very much hope Royal Mail revert to the tried and tested principle of commissioning a single designer for each issue. Each stamp in a set will then flow together as a co-ordinated design and will be a coherent set of images. PETER FITCHETT, CHELTENHAM ●

Millennium stamps To date I have seen the first eight of the proposed 100 Millennium stamps and like all but two – rather more than I expected to like. I am especially keen on Peter Howson’s Steam Power (Inventors set) which captures the feel of the grimy factories of the industrial revolution, and John Lawrence’s Linking the Nation stamp (Travellers) which is a tribute to the genius of Brunel. I for one voted for a Brunel stamp in your poll in December 1996. A pity he is not himself on the stamp but we have one of his trains, ships and bridges. The two stamps I don’t like are the 43p in the Inventors set – is it a coffee bean? – and the 26p Travellers – not up to the standard of the other three. I am looking forward to seeing the designs of further Millennium sets. JOYCE WOODWARD, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE ●

Questa gravure stamps I have just obtained the new £1 and £2 machine books printed in gravure by The House of Questa and compared the stamps to the sheet equivalents by De La Rue (Harrison). On the 20p and 26p Questa The Queen’s head appears slightly brighter but the background colour matches well the De La Rue printings. On the 1p Questa the head appears a little darker, as does the background. On all three Questa stamps The Queen’s eyebrow appears more pronounced (especially on the 1p) and the values are positioned slightly nearer the left edge of the design. It will not be easy to tell the stamps apart as singles, particularly used copies – the work of the two printers is closely matched. Incidentally, I can find no appreciable difference between the sheet and booklet versions of the 20p and 26p Christmas stamps. The angel’s wings on the 26p appear slightly more green on the booklet stamps but that’s about all! KEN MARKS, PORTSMOUTH ●

Stamp design With regard to Mr Strickland’s letter (December), I cannot entirely agree with his comments on stamp design. I feel he was far too lenient in his criticism. I feel that stamp design has reached an all-time low and it is getting ever more difficult to pick out anything worthwhile. It is not a matter of picking out the best but deciding which is the least horrible. It is high time profit took a back seat and stamps were again issued for special occasions only. The general public are not interested in what stamps are on their mail as long as it is delivered. We, the collectors, are being exploited and the most worrying thing is that we know it and still carry on encouraging it. R L C HERRING, REDRUTH ●

National Postal Museum For many years I worked in the city of London and regularly visited the Museum in King Edward Building, at the same time as buying stamps for postage and my collection from the main and philatelic counters of the London Chief Post Office. On my last visit to London I was saddened to see that the Chief Office

is no more and to learn that the Museum would be closing. When I visited regularly, the Museum was mainly stamps, so on my last visit I was intrigued to see that the display in the former PO area included mail vans, bicycles, posting boxes and much else. The other visitors seemed to be enjoying the displays as much as myself. The staff were, as in the past, friendly and helpful, and the shop offered a good selection of goods, not just postcards. I hope it won't be too long before the Post Office announces a new home for the Museum so that today's generation of city office workers can pop in at lunch time as I used to do. Hopefully too, a wider-based Museum will attract more tourists, school parties and others to learn about the fascinating history of the Post Office. PETER MORRITT, EXETER •

No philatelic honours I looked carefully through the recent New Years Honours List and whilst I found awards for meritorious service in all manner of activities, there were none for philately. There are said to be 3 million collectors in the UK – a not insignificant percentage of the population, yet none of the many active workers in the hobby are recognised. What about all the unpaid officials of national, local and specialist societies that put in long hours in organising meetings, producing books and journals, organisers and judges of exhibitions, and those who share their knowledge in articles in the philatelic press? Surely it is time some were honoured, alongside those who give of their time and expertise in other ways? G L ARNOLD, NOTTINGHAM

I agree with Mr Arnold's comment. Dr Alan Huggins received the MBE in 1996 for his work as Chairman of the British Philatelic Trust but this is the only time I can recall an honour for philatelic work, other than the knighthood given to Keepers of the Royal Philatelic Collection, an honour in the personal gift of the sovereign. I have often heard it said that had the late Robson Lowe's research and writings been in a subject other than philately, he would have been knighted long ago. Hopefully the Rowland Hill Awards might stimulate interest in recognising good works in the philatelic community. ED •

New definitives I second Mary Parker's call (January *Bulletin*) for a new definitive series to start in February 2002 to mark The Queen's golden jubilee. Even the most ardent Machin collector must have had enough of this design by now! G J ELLIOTT, LONDON SW6 •

Sharing the load I must admit to being a bit alarmed when the 12 sets of Millennium stamps for 1999 were first announced. However I soon applauded the fact that with 48 stamps this is less than were issued in 1998. Now I note we are having new high value (£1.50-£5) stamps, two prestige books, Scottish stamps and probably new definitive values if the postal rates go up. This does not allow for any additional commemoratives that might be required, such as the Princess Diana stamps in 1998. The high values seem unnecessary to me as the Castles haven't been around that long and are perfectly satisfactory stamps. I hope that once the Millennium series is over we can have far fewer stamps. It is time some other Royal Mail customers helped contribute towards the Royal Mail (and Government) coffers – we collectors have borne the brunt for a good few years. How about increased charges for overseas airmail – ridiculously cheap compared to what it used to be – or higher prices for direct mail (the so-called junk mail)? Come on, Royal Mail, let's share the load a bit! JEREMY WILSON, LIVERPOOL •

Bulletin back issues I wish to dispose of back issues from September 1970 to the present, most of which are in binders, and would be very pleased to donate these free of charge save for cost of carriage to anyone wishing to enquire – it would be particularly nice to help a young person new to the hobby. K M BRYANT, The Roundhouse, Goodstone, Bickington, Newton Abbot TQ12 6LJ •

The Editor is always pleased to receive contributions for Postbag, especially letters adding information to that already published, so benefiting fellow philatelists. He regrets he is unable to reply personally to letters.

Greetings stamps labels The 1990 issue, by Lionel Jones

THE 1990 GREETINGS STAMPS – 10 × 20p featuring ‘Smiles’ (SG 1483/92) – went on sale on 6 February 1990. The 12 labels were inserted loose-leaf into a cover together with the stamps, also loose-leaf. The cover, or ‘booklet’, sold for £2 and came sealed in plastic, accessed by a tear-off

strip. The labels, in plain colours, bear Greetings text – shown, by market research, to constitute the most frequent reasons for sending greetings mail: Happy Birthday, With Love, Happy Anniversary, etc ●



The labels were designed by Michael Peters & Partners Ltd who also designed the stamps which received a BBC Design award (see September 1990 *Bulletin*, p2).

Printing of the labels was by Harrison's using the Roland offset lithographic press with up to six colours. The paper was clay-coated litho paper, with PVA dextrin gum. The labels, and stamps, were perforated on a Grover sheet-fed machine, gauge 14.75 × 14.

Cover corner

THIS MONTH'S cover, submitted by Mary Grindley, is of an ordinary letter sent at the 3d postal rate in March 1963. The envelope, containing bank notes was found opened in the post and officially sealed using brown PO tape. It was then forwarded by registered post and given the PO label stating that it had been 'compulsorily registered' because of the contents. The recipient was obliged to pay 1s6d, indicated by the 6d and 1s postage due stamps, both cancelled by the WELLINGTON SHROPSHIRE cds. Wellington is now part of the new town of Telford. The Compulsorily Registered label is not often seen ●



Competition Identify the stamp from the detail and win £100

SIMPLY IDENTIFY the 1998 special stamp from the detail shown and send your answer, name and address on a postcard (or back of a sealed envelope) to: March Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL. The sender of the first card drawn on 23 April will receive £100. Twenty runner-up prizes will also be awarded. The competition is not open to Royal Mail employees •

The winners of December's competition were P Earle, Yorkshire; Mrs C Wake, Northumberland; and S Choi, Canada.

The answers 1) 12 January 1999; 2) E; 3) D Tarry; 4) National Youth Stamp Group. Our thanks to all who entered.



Events

3-6 March London International Stamp & Cover Show at Royal Horticultural Hall 2, Greycoat Street, London SW1. Over 100 dealers. Admission free. **Enquiries** C Rainey, 01268 726687, or T Davis, 0181 946 4489

3-7 March Spring Stampex at Business Design Centre, London N1. Includes major display marking centenary of National Philatelic Society. **Enquiries** 0171 490 1005

6 March Display 'GB Airmail Etiquettes, 1920-52' by Frank Jones, GB Phil Soc, at Spring Stampex, 14.30. **Enquiries** A Lajer (GBPS Membership Secretary), 01189 344151

6 March Streetly Phil Soc Stamp Fair at Community Centre, Foley Road East, Streetly, Sutton Coldfield, 09.30-16.00. Dealers, displays, refreshments. Admission 25p adults, children 10p. **Enquiries** L Rennison, 0121 308 2260

19-24 March Australia '99 at Melbourne Exhibition Centre. **Enquiries** UK Commissioner A Brander, 10 Garden Close, East Grinstead RH19 4JS

20 March Displays '1879/80 Tenders', and 'British Mail to Overseas Destinations' to GB Phil Soc, at

British Philatelic Centre, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1, 11.00 and 14.30 respectively.

Enquiries A Lajer 01189 344151.

20 March Kent Federation of Phil Socs Spring Rally at Homewood School, Ashford Road, Tenterden, 10.00-16.30. Hosted by Ashford Phil Soc. **Enquiries** D Todd, The Cottage, Bockhanger Lane, Kennington, Ashford TN24 9BP

20-21 March 70th Scottish Philatelic Congress at Falkirk Town Hall. Opens 09.00 20 March. Displays, national exhibition, dealers, British Philatelic Bureau, souvenir postcard. **Enquiries** T Woods, 32 Bryan Street, Hamilton ML3 0JW •

21 March GB Decimal Stamp Book Study Group meeting at Albright & Wilson Recreation Club Hall, Langley, West Midlands. Close to Junction 2 of M5. Lunch will be available. **Enquiries** T Wilkins, 3 Buttermere Close, Brierley Hill, DY5 3DS.

27 March North of Ireland Phil Soc Exhibition & Fair at University Road Methodist Halls, Fountainville Avenue, Belfast, 10.00-16.30. Stamps, postal history, accessories, postcards, etc. Admission free. **Enquiries** N Scott, 01232 795530 •

HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF



In March 1969 the higher value Machin definitives were issued, printed in recess (intaglio). Now 30 years later, almost to the day, the Machin £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 stamps are being issued in the same size as the lower values to produce a uniform definitive series from 1p to £5. However the higher values continue to be printed in recess – a printing method dating back to the Penny Black. The stamps were engraved by the celebrated Czeslaw Slania and printed by

Joh Enschedé of the Netherlands. The £1.50 is now in rust, the colours of the other values remain the same as the Castles they replace.

The four new stamps are available singly, in sets (£11.50) or in an attractive presentation pack (£11.85).

Available from British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT or Post Office Counters philatelic outlets.



Reference 98 QQA

