

October 1995



British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 33, No: 2 The Royal Mail Magazine for Stamp Collectors Price 75p



CHRISTMAS
STAMPS

Celebrate the centenary of the Rugby Football League with a Royal Mail/ New Zealand Post joint commemorative cover



Royal Mail and New Zealand Post proudly announce a limited edition commemorative cover to mark the centenary of the founding of the Rugby League at Huddersfield in August 1895. The cover, featuring rugby balls and a stylised globe, bears the British 30p and NZ \$1.80 Rugby League Centenary stamps cancelled by special first day handstamps.

The Royal Mail stamp features one of the all-time great players

James Sullivan – the first to score over 400 points in a season and over 6000 in his long career. The New Zealand Post stamp depicts the NZ national side, the Kiwis, in action against GB. The British stamp bears a 3 October postmark for Headingley, Leeds where the first international between GB and NZ was played. The NZ stamp is cancelled Wanganui, 26 July 1995.
Price £2.95.



Early ordering advised; this cover is likely to appeal to Rugby League fans as well as philatelists, cover and postmark collectors.

**British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.
Tel. 0131 550 8989**

British Philatelic Bulletin

The British Philatelic Bulletin

is published monthly by Royal Mail, Royal London House, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL.
Editor: J R Holman

Price: 75p single copies from Collections, philatelic counters, and National Postal Museum.

Annual Subscriptions:

UK and Europe £8.50
Rest of World: £12.50.

Subscriptions should be sent to:
British Philatelic Bureau
20 Brandon Street
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

Binders to hold 24 issues, price £7. Available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) and to callers only at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP.

Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly **British Postmark Bulletin** giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, Rest of World £21.75.

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Artwork by Mathieson Design
United House, North Road
LONDON N7 9DP.

Typeset by Pinnacle Images Ltd,
50/52 Great Sutton Street,
LONDON EC1V 0DJ.

Printed in Great Britain by
Clement & Foster Ltd,
LONDON SE1 3AA.

ISSN: 0953 8119

Contents

Royal Mail News – Christmas Stamps; 1996 Stamp Programme, etc	36
Stamp Scene – Forthcoming Exhibitions; 1957 Scouts Perfin discovery, etc	42
Competition – Win Joint 1946/1995 Victory FDC	45
Out of the Arc... – Circular Delivery Company stamp in Post Office Archives	49
Look Before You Lick! – Matt Hinton looks at the 1984 Frama labels	50
The Genesis of Adhesive Postage Stamps – James Mackay on pre-1840 “stamps”	53
ABPS News – Newsletter of the Association of British Philatelic Societies	55
Decimal Stamp Books – 23rd of Douglas Myall’s specialist reports	56
Varieties of Yesteryear – Fred Gee examines the 1d Postal Fiscals	59
Book Reviews – Guide to Royal Mail Philatelic Services; Fish on Stamps	60
St Kilda Mailboats – James Mackay recalls an unusual form of mail transport	62
Events – Stamp Fairs and Exhibitions during October	63
October/November Digest – Forthcoming issues and withdrawals	64

Main Feature

A League Apart

46



Margery Wharton celebrates the Centenary of the Rugby League and the League World Cup with a review of Rugby stamps, postmarks and covers

Royal Mail News

1995 Christmas Stamps

This year's Christmas issue comprises five stamps showing robins – a bird traditionally associated with the festive season. The stamps go on sale at post offices, and philatelic outlets on 30 October. Please note this revised date; the stamps were earlier announced for issue on 7 November, then 31 October.

The **19p** stamp (inland 2nd class basic rate) shows a robin sheltering in the aperture of a posting box. The **25p** value (inland 1st class and EU basic rate) depicts a robin sitting on iron railings, with holly in the background. On the



30p denomination (Europe, non-EU countries rate), a robin is featured on a doorstep with milkbottles (note the Christmas bottle tops), whilst the **41p** stamp (basic airmail rate) shows a robin sitting on a road sign. Finally the **60p** stamp (airmail second weight step) depicts a robin on a doorknob, in front of a seasonal decoration.

As one of the most popular British birds it is perhaps surprising that the robin has appeared on so few British stamps. It made its debut on one of the four Birds stamps of August 1966 (SG 698) and features on the 31p value of the 1983



Earlier robin stamps

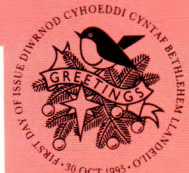
Christmas set (1235). A tiny robin sits on the hat of the snowman on Michael Foreman's 1987 34p Christmas stamp (1379). Robins feature on the 1977, 1992 and 1993 Christmas aerogrammes as well as this year's issue, and on the front covers of 30p stamp books dated October and December 1971 (SG DQ60/1).

The 1995 Christmas stamps are the work of Ken Lilly who designed the 1986 Nature Conservation stamps. These were voted the most popular stamps of the year by readers in our first *Bulletin* Favourite Stamps Poll. It remains to be seen if Mr Lilly's Christmas stamps are amongst the most liked of 1995.

This is Britain's 30th issue of Christmas stamps. The first set, comprising 3d and 1s6d stamps, was issued on 1 December 1966, using designs from a children's competition. Over 130 Christmas stamps have since been issued – see James Mackay's article "British Christmas Stamps" in the December 1994 issue of this magazine.

Christmas Robins

Royal Mail Mini Stamps
A CHRISTMAS 1995



THE POTTING SHED OLD KETTICE END

Dear Jenny Wren,



This letter comes to you with Christmas greetings wishing you much joy and a Happy New Year, as you creep, shy and mouse-like, among the branches of your hedgerow home. I wonder if you know why it is that we robins appear on so many cards at Christmas? Partly perhaps it is because people think of us as friendly birds, bright and cheerful in the winter cold. Christmas, of course, is a time for good cheer and kindness.

But I think the real reason, Jenny, why so many Christmas cards bear pictures of robins is this.

Long, long ago, when pottmen first began to deliver letters to people's homes, each wore a uniform with a coat of a brilliant shade of red. The same red that I wear upon my breast - "Good morning to you, Robin postman," they would say as they came to their front doors to collect their letters. So when it became the fashion to send greetings through the post at Christmas time, who else but us red-breasts were the best choice to appear on the cards?



Perched upon railings or upon snow-laden branches we were, perhaps with a sprig of holly or of mistletoe in our beaks, sometimes carrying a letter, doing what we...



CHRISTMAS ROBINS Royal Mail First Day Cover

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Technical details

Printers: Harrison & Sons Ltd
Process: Photogravure
Size: 41 x 30mm
Sheets: 100
Perforation: 15 x 14
Phosphor: 19p – one phosphor band
25p–60p two phosphor bands
Paper: OBA free (OBA = Optical
Brightening Agent)
Gum: PVA Dextrin

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets around a week before 30 October, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial “First Day of Issue” postmark of the Bureau or Bethlehem, Llandeilo, Dyfed, price

£2.47 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £2.11 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 30 October 1995.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers on the day of issue, for these cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, CARDIFF CF1 1AA (for Bethlehem postmark). The outer envelope should be endorsed “FD9521” (Bureau), or “FD9522” (Bethlehem).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) “First Day of Issue” handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail’s magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe; £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

Collectors are reminded that it will be in order to affix just the 19p Christmas stamp to covers to receive all special cancels (“First Day of Issue”, sponsored and philatelic counties), in use on 30 October. The minimum 1st class rule is suspended on this day as this set includes a 2nd class rate stamp. It should be noted that this concession applies only to the 19p Christmas stamp; otherwise 1st class postage is required.

Serviced First Day Cover

Fully serviced first day covers, bearing the Bethlehem pictorial first day postmark, will be available from many W H Smith shops, offered while stocks last.

Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards

A presentation pack (price £2.10) will be available from the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, main post offices, and most W H Smith shops. Stamp cards (25p each) will be available from the Bureau, POC philatelic outlets, and main post offices. The pack has been written by Dick King-Smith, one of Britain’s most popular and prolific children’s authors.

Christmas Stamp Books

Books containing twenty 19p, ten 25p and four 60p Christmas stamps will be available from post offices, the Bureau, philatelic outlets, and many retailers from 30 October, price £3.80, £2.50, and £2.40 respectively. The front covers reproduce



the design of the relevant stamps, 19p, 25p, or 60p.

Christmas Stamp Pyramids

These attractive robin stamps are captured forever in colourful optical glass pyramid-shaped paperweights – a perfect Christmas gift. The pyramids are available from the British Philatelic Bureau, price £24.95 each. Please quote which value stamp you require in the pyramid – 19p, 25p, 30p, 41p, or 60p.

Christmas Aerogramme

This year's Christmas aerogramme will be available from post offices, the Bureau, and philatelic outlets from 3 October. Price 45p (includes 36p aerogramme postage). It was illustrated in last month's magazine.

Christmas Gift Pack

An attractively produced Gift Pack containing a presentation pack, first day cover and set of stamp cards will be available from 30 October. This is the fifth such pack, following 1994 Channel Tunnel, 1994 Christmas, 1995 Cats, and 1995 National Trust. The pack, price £6.50, will be available from the Bureau, philatelic outlets, and selected W H Smith shops. It makes a reasonably-priced Christmas gift, especially for a young collector.

Withdrawal of Christmas Stamps

Any remaining stocks of the 1995 Christmas stamps, stamp books and aerogramme will be withdrawn from sale at post offices on 23 December. All will remain on sale at the Bureau and philatelic outlets for one year from the date of issue, unless sold out earlier.

The 1994 Christmas stamps (£1.50 set), stamp books (£2.50 and £3.80), presentation pack (£2.25), and stamp cards (£1.25 set) will be withdrawn from sale at the Bureau and philatelic outlets on 31 October 1995, also the 1994 *Yearpack* (£15.95) and *Special Stamps Yearbook* (£22.50 standard version, £75 leather bound). The 1994 Christmas aerogramme (45p) will be withdrawn from sale on 3 October.

1995 Royal Mail Yearbook

Volume 12 of the Royal Mail *Special Stamps Yearbook* will go on sale on 30 October; the handsomely produced book contains background information about the development and production of all the special issues of 1995. The book is hardbound with a matching slipcase and

includes sets of the following stamps: Cats; Springtime; National Trust; Peace & Freedom; Science Fiction; Shakespeare's Globe; Communications; Rugby League Centenary; and Christmas. The book will be available from the Bureau, philatelic outlets, and main post offices, price £22.50 (standard), £75 (leather bound).

1995 Yearpack

The 1995 *Yearpack* will be available from 30 October, price £15.95. The pack contains all special and greetings stamps mounted on a quality display board with a colourful and informative brochure giving details of the stamp subjects. Available from the Bureau, philatelic outlets, and main post offices.



NPM Postcards

The National Postal Museum will issue four new postcards having a Christmas theme on 30 October. These will be available to callers at the Museum shop (25p each), or by post from the

British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street,
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT (£1 per set).

A special Museum cancel will be available on 30 October. Cards/covers to receive this should be sent to: London Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, Farringdon Road, LONDON EC1A 1BB requesting, "Museum Special/30 October". The Museum's regular Maltese Cross stamp will also be available – request handstamp 1985.

Still available from the Bureau are the following sets of the NPM cards: Christmas (1 November 1994); Cats (17 January 1995); Victorian Post Office (5 May); Freddie Mercury Album (5 May); and Guarding the Mail (8 August). Price £1 per set, except Freddie Mercury – £1.25 (5 cards). The 1994 Christmas set will be withdrawn from sale at the Bureau on 31 October 1995.

Some earlier cards are still available to callers at the Museum shop which is open Monday-Friday 09.30-16.30. The shop also sells Royal Mail stamp cards (PHQ cards) and cards of other publishers having a philatelic/postal history theme. A number of books, models and other souvenirs are stocked.

The Museum houses the Post Office's reference collections of British and overseas stamps, the famous R M Phillips Collection of British stamps of Queen Victoria, and postal artefacts. The current special exhibition (until April 1996), is "Victorian Posts" – reflecting the postal and social history of that fascinating period. The "Post Hastel" exhibition includes postal vehicles, posting boxes and other artefacts. These two exhibitions were reviewed here in August and September 1995 respectively.

The NPM, in King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP, is just a few minutes walk from St Paul's Cathedral and underground station. Admission free. Enquiries: 0171-239 5420.

1996 Stamp Programme

The provisional dates for the special and greetings stamps are:

25 January	Robert Burns
26 February	Greetings
12 March	Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust
16 April	British Cinema
14 May	European Football
14 May	European Football prestige stamp book
9 July	Olympic Games
6 August	Women of Achievement
3 September	Children's TV

1 October Classic Cars
28 October Christmas

Changes to these dates will be notified in this magazine.

Two Scottish aerogrammes will be issued – Scottish Football and The Edinburgh Festival – provisionally scheduled for 2 April and 2 August respectively. New £1 and £2 machine-vended stamp books are scheduled for January, April, June, and September – subjects and dates to be announced.

Work on the selection of stamps for 1997 and 1998 is now at an advanced stage. Readers wishing to submit ideas for 1999 and subsequent years should write to: Stamp Programme Manager, Room 202, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL. Readers are reminded that events and anniversaries should be of national or international importance. The criteria and conventions for special stamp issues were published here in October 1994 (page 38).

The subjects chosen for special stamps are discussed by various committees and senior officials within Royal Mail before going to the Post Office Board for final approval. Selection of stamp designs is entrusted to the Stamp Advisory Committee, made up of representatives from the worlds of the arts, design, media, philately, public service, as well as Royal Mail. The current membership of the SAC was given here in June 1995 (page 304).

New Definitive Stamp Pack

A new pack containing the current range of low value definitives will be available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets, from 21 November, now price £5.45. The pack contains the following values: 1p, 2p, 4p, 5p, 6p, 10p, 19p, 20p, 25p, 29p, 30p, 35p, 36p, 38p, 41p, 50p, 60p, and £1. All are from sheets printed by Harrisons (19p and 25p) or Enschedé (other values), with the exception of the 60p which is issued only in books of four printed by Walsall.

Rugby League Stamps

The cylinders and colours are as follows:

19p P25 (phosphor) 2A (blue) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (magenta) 3D (new blue) 1E (grey-black) 1F (black)
25p P26 (phosphor) 1A (slate-purple) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (magenta) 1D (new blue) 1E (grey-black) 1F (black)
30p P26 (phosphor) 1A (slate-green) 1B

(greenish yellow) 1D (bright purple) 1E (new blue) 1E (grey-black) 2F (black)

35p P26 (phosphor) 2A (slate-black) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (magenta) 2D (new blue) 1E (black)

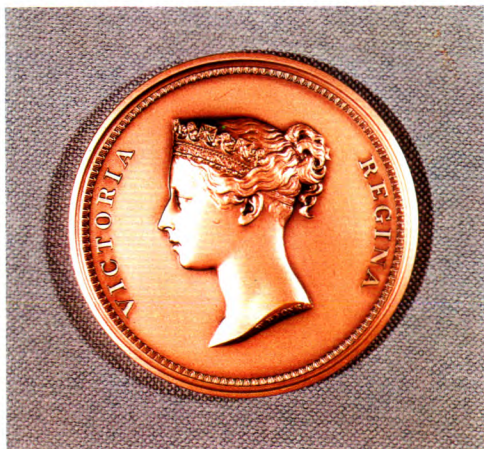
41p P26 (phosphor) 1A (bluish grey) 1B (orange-yellow) 1C (magenta) 1D (new blue) 1E (grey-black) 2F (black)

William Wyon Bicentenary

To commemorate the bicentenary of the birth of the celebrated engraver William Wyon, Royal Mail and Royal Mint have produced a Philatelic Numismatic Cover. This attractive cover, bearing the new £1 definitive cancelled by a special handstamp and a commemorative medal, was offered in last month's *Bulletin*. Collectors may send their own covers for the special postmark, not later than 29 October, to: London Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, LONDON EC1A 1BB, requesting "Wyon handstamp 29 October". Covers should bear at least 1st class postage.

The "Wyon head" of Queen Victoria, first engraved on a medal marking her visit to the City of London in 1837, was used on all British stamps of Victoria's reign. Wyon's story was told in a two-part article by Tony Gammons in the April and May 1990 issues of this magazine. Wyon's grave, in West Norwood Cemetery in London, is now maintained by the National Postal Museum (shown here April 1991, page 187). Wyon featured on a NPM postcard issued in May 1990, one of 12 depicting Postal Personalities.

Wyon's famous medal (National Postal Museum, London)



Bulletin Publications Success

We are pleased to announce that the two books in the British Philatelic Bulletin publications series received awards in the fourth New Zealand National Philatelic Literature Exhibition, held under the patronage of the New Zealand Philatelic Federation in June. James Negus's book *British Stamp Design 1993: The work of the Stamp Advisory Committee* was awarded a bronze medal, Francis Kennedy's *British Special Stamps 1985/86* a certificate of merit. The exhibition attracted over 60 entries. Both books are still available from the Bureau, price £4.99 (Stamp Design), £3.95 (Special Stamps). They were reviewed here in April 1994 and November 1993.

A number of other works on British stamps and postal history received awards: Archie Donald's *The Posts of Sevenoaks in Kent* (gold), Alan Finch & Colin Peachey's *Special Event Postmarks of the UK Vol. 3* (silver-bronze), Glenn Morgan's *British Stamp Exhibitions: a priced catalogue* (silver), Neill Oakley's *Great Britain & Ireland Railway Letter Stamps* (silver-bronze), and J T Whitney's *Collect British Postmarks* (Large Silver). All have been reviewed here. *The London Philatelist* and *The Stamp Lover*, journals of the Royal and National Philatelic Societies received vermeil and silver awards. *Ident*, journal of the Postal Mechanisation Study Circle received a large silver, its *Newsletter* a silver. Our congratulations to all authors and editors.

Stamp Scene

Autumn Stampex 1995

Autumn Stampex/BPE will be held 10-15 October in both halls of the Royal Horticultural Society in Greycoat Street and Vincent Square, Westminster, London SW1. The exhibition, organised by the Philatelic Traders' Society Ltd, will have over 125 stamp dealers and postal administrations in attendance. A vast array of philatelic material will be available for the beginner, as well as specialist and thematic collectors. Many standholders will have accessories, literature, and ephemera for sale. All dealers are members of the PTS and are happy to give advice and to look at material offered for sale.

Autumn Stampex will include the British Philatelic Exhibition, with display frames in both halls; entries cover all classes and levels of collecting. Visitors will be able to vote for their favourite entry in the "Open Class". All voting forms will be entered into a free prize draw.

Special Displays

1995 marks the 50th anniversary of the United Nations and the United Nations Study Group will mount a special display in Hall One. The UN Postal Administration will be attending, their latest commemorative issues will be available. Also being celebrated in 1995 is the bicentenary of the birth of William Wyon, Chief Engraver to the Royal Mint, best remembered for the head of Queen Victoria used on the Penny Black and all subsequent British stamps of her long reign. A comprehensive and beautiful exhibit on Wyon will be shown on the stage area of Hall Two.

For younger visitors, the National Youth Stamp Group Committee's "Kids' Korner", in Hall One, will be an attraction. In conjunction with Stampex Ltd a Youth Activity area will operate throughout the exhibition. Entitled "My Back Garden" it will be decorated with attractive backdrops; children will be able to select various stamps and affix these to a sheet to create their own personal back garden.

Opening Times

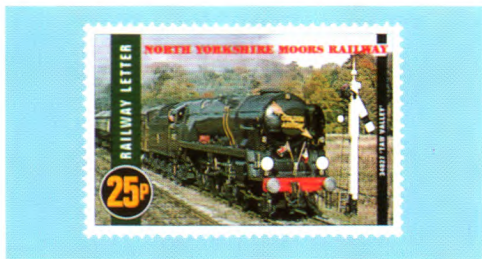
10 October	12.00-19.00
11-14 October	10.30-19.00
15 October	10.30-17.00

For complimentary tickets (not valid on opening day) call the Stampex office on 0171-490 1005.

Exhibition Handstamp

As usual Royal Mail will have a stand in Hall One where the current range of stamps, stamp books, postcards and postal stationery will be on sale. Staff from the British Philatelic Bureau will be on hand and look forward to meeting old and new customers.

All mail posted at the Royal Mail stand will receive a Stampex special handstamp. Collectors unable to visit the exhibition can submit covers, bearing at least 1st class postage, to: London Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, Farringdon Road, LONDON EC1A 1BB. Request the Stampex handstamp and state date(s) required.



Railway Letter Stamps

The North Yorkshire Moors Railway will issue a new 25p stamp showing Bulleid "West Country" Pacific locomotive No. 34027 "Taw Valley" on 6 October. This will be printed in sheets of eight by Walsall Security printers. Stamps are available mint at face value plus 30p postage (80p airmail outside Europe). Orders/enquiries about first day covers/postcards to: Mrs M Atkins, 5 Tiber View, Brinsworth, ROTHERHAM, S Yorkshire, S60 5EA.

The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway has announced the suspension of its railway letter service from 20 July 1995. No letters have been carried by rail since that date. The company hopes to resume the service towards the end of the year once administrative difficulties have been resolved. Further news will be published here as we receive it.

Astro-Space Stamp Society

The first 25 readers who request details of this lively Society will receive the Australia Post publication *Mission to Planet Earth*. The offer is restricted to readers in the UK who should enclose a self-addressed envelope bearing 98p in stamps. Once these books have been distributed,

enquirers will be sent helpful astro-philatelic information to start space collecting. Write to: Brian Lockyer, 21 Exford Close, WESTON-SUPER-MARE, Avon, BS23 4RE, quoting this *Bulletin* announcement.

Jersey Priority Service Envelopes

In February (page 175) we gave details of the introduction of Priority Services in Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man. Guernsey have been using priority service envelopes since August 1994 and Jersey has now followed suit. Two envelopes are available, both bearing a NVI device of the island's coat of arms. The envelopes are designated PS1/2 and measure 225 x 115mm and 235 x 167mm respectively. Price £3.25 each, they can be used for Special Delivery, Registered, Registered Plus, International Recorded/Registered, and Swiftair. Orders/enquiries: Jersey Philatelic Bureau, PO Box 304, Postal Headquarters, JERSEY, Channel Islands, JE1 1AB.

1957 Scouts Perfin Discovery

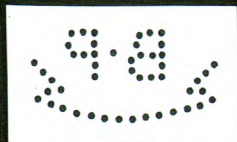
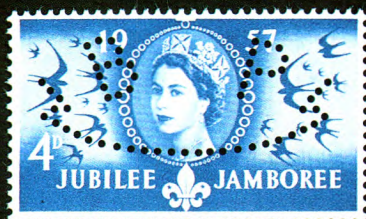
Avon Approvals, sponsors of last month's *Bulletin* competition, have unearthed a supply of the 1957 Scout Jubilee Jamboree stamps with "B.P" perfin. Could this stand for Baden-Powell, founder of the Scouts? The stamps and perfin are illustrated here. Enquiries: Avon Approvals, PO Box 29, STROUD, Glos, GL6 6RW.



Minimum postage and
minimum fee paid
Fix additional postage
if necessary

Stampa '95

Stampa '95, the 24th Irish National Stamp Exhibition, will take place 20-22 October at the Riverside Exhibition Centre, Dublin 2. The show will open 11.00-20.00 on Friday 20 October, and 11.00-18.00 on Saturday and Sunday, 21-22 October.



This is Ireland's premier philatelic event, attended by thousands of collectors from all over Ireland, as well as from the UK, USA and Western Europe. The venue is the most up to date in Dublin, fully carpeted and well-furnished, with a very convivial inhouse "pub" and café. The friendly atmosphere of this small but busy show has enticed many collectors from outside Ireland to come back every year. The show is supported by the Irish Post Office, the Irish Philatelic Traders Association, and the Federation of Philatelic Societies of Ireland.

Good hotels near the venue cost from £29 per person, and inclusive weekend flight and hotel packages cost from £120 from the UK, \$400 from the USA, and similar deals are available from many other countries. Full details of inclusive travel packages may be obtained from Aer Lingus, RyanAir, or Irish Tourist Board offices. Collectors wishing to combine a visit to Stampa with a holiday are well catered for, as Dublin is an excellent venue for an autumn break, with its attractive and historic buildings, interesting shops and markets, hundreds of pubs, superb golf courses, etc. The famous Wexford Opera Festival is on at around the same time as Stampa – Wexford is only two hours drive from Dublin.

Collectors are invited to become members of Stampa. The benefits of membership include a free season ticket to Stampa, a free catalogue of the show, an exclusive philatelic souvenir in the form of an overprinted An Post miniature sheet, reduced entry fees and more. Membership costs only IRE12.50 (UK£12.50, DM30, US\$20). Membership application forms are available from: Stampa '95, PO Box 2723, Phibsborough, DUBLIN 7, Republic of Ireland.

Newcastle '96 Exhibition

The Association of British Philatelic Societies is promoting its first national philatelic exhibition at Newcastle-upon-Tyne at the end of 1996. "Newcastle '96" will take place between Friday 29 November and Sunday 1 December, at the Civic Centre, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and will comprise a number of different elements.

"Eurapex '96" is a national level aerophilatelic exhibition, with international participation, which will provide international qualification standard, plus invited exhibits on special subjects. This part of the event is being organised by the British Aerophilatelic Federation and some exhibits are already committed following early publicity among its members.

"Interfed '96" is an Inter-Federation competitive exhibition and it is hoped that all Federations will take part. This will be a reorganised and revitalised version of the former event.

Accommodation can be arranged for those wishing to stay for the weekend at the Swallow Imperial Hotel, where the Awards Dinner will be held on Saturday, 30 November. This hotel has all modern facilities including a health club and a swimming pool and is within easy walking distance of the Civic Centre.

The entire event is being hosted and organised locally by the North-East of England Philatelic Association and further details can be obtained from: Mr Pat Rothnie, 16 Curlew Hill, Lancaster Park, MORPETH, Northd, NE61 3SH.

Communications Display at NPM

Last month we reported on the National Postal Museum's "Post Haste!" exhibition in the area formerly occupied by the London Chief Post Office. The exhibition tells the story of the posts from Roman times to the present, with a glimpse into the future. On view are letter boxes, vehicles, and many smaller objects such as mail coach firearms.

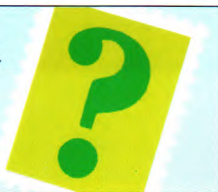
The area where the Philatelic Counter used to be now houses temporary exhibitions, the first relating to the Communications stamps is on show until the end of October. Panels record the work of Sir Rowland Hill and Guglielmo Marconi with interesting quotations from the two men. Hill recalled in his childhood "the terrible inconvenience of being poor...my mother was afraid the postman might bring a letter while she had no money to pay the postage." Marconi said of his achievements, "the idea was so elementary, so simple in logic that it seemed difficult to believe no one else had thought of putting it into practice."

The display includes unadopted designs by Debbie Cook and George Hardie as well as the final artwork, by The Four Hundred design group, for the issued stamps; enlargements of the portrait engravings, with the actual dies engraved by Slania; sheets of the issued stamps and related products – first day cover, stamp cards, and presentation packs. Such displays are normally shown at press previews but are not so often seen by the general public.

Also worth seeing is the NPM's major exhibition "Victorian Posts" which continues until next April – see report in August *Bulletin*.

Competition

SPONSORED BY:
THE BENHAM GROUP



Win Joint 1946/1995 Victory FDC

The prizes for this month's competition are supplied by Benham.

*** 1st Prize** a 1946 Victory First Day Cover with the rare "Don't Waste Bread" slogan, together with the 50th Anniversary stamps issued this year.

*** 5 x 2nd Prize** a VE-Day First Day Cover signed by John Patrick Kenneally VC. John won his VC by charging a machine gun post twice and was one of the most extraordinary VC winners of World War II. This cover has also been flown in the VE-Day Fly-past.

*** 5 x 3rd Prize** Five thematic covers to delight horse lovers: The Royal Welsh Show 1994.



Introducing Benham

For 30 years Benham have been the specialists in GB First Day Covers. They deal with all collectors from the absolute beginner to the top specialist.

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To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: October Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL to arrive by 24 November.

1. Who writes "York Talk"?
2. Where is the ABPS promoting its first national exhibition in 1996?
3. In which northern city is the Rugby League headquarters?
4. Who designed this year's Christmas stamps?
5. Who petitioned Parliament on behalf of Francis Worrell Stevens in 1889?

The winners of the July competition were: A Kent, A Protonotarius (1st prizes); M De Lorenzo, A Phillips, G Holmden, A Crouch (2nd prizes); D Nye, P Zeljko, J Eggleshaw, Y Axon, R Powell, J Lieb, P Stowe, E Price, A Smith, F Hambrook (3rd prizes).

The answers were: 1. 33,600; 2. Major C Draper; 3. Orkney; 4. 1d British Empire Exhibition 1925; 5. Pete Daniels.

Our thanks to all who entered.

A League Apart –

Rugby League celebrated in philately

MARGERY WHARTON

On 28 October 1995, the Rugby World Cup Final will be staged at Wembley Stadium in London. I have not forgotten about the Rugby Union World Cup in South Africa last May but the professional code of Rugby League is also celebrating not only the staging of the World Cup but the Centenary of its formation in 1895.

To many people in Britain, League is played somewhere “up North” and relatively few outside the M62 corridor and Cumbria have watched a live match. However, thanks initially to the BBC with floodlit Rugby League in the 70s and more recently to Sky Sports, with live “Big League” twice a week, TV has brought the game to many armchair fans, as well as northern exiles. The free-flowing, passing and running game with no line-outs or mauls, played 13-a-side, is much more of a spectator sport than its parent in the Union code. The top club games attract larger crowds than most lower division professional soccer matches.

The World Cup Tournament

England and Australia will kick-off in the first match of the Halifax Centenary Rugby League

World Cup at Wembley Stadium on 7 October and, if form is followed, should meet up there again for the Final three weeks later. In between, 10 nations in three groups will play matches not only in the north of England but also in venues in Wales and Gateshead to attract fresh spectators. TV audiences will watch in almost 70 countries. This is the 10th Rugby League World Cup, and the first which is genuinely global. Newcomers to the competition include Tonga, Western Samoa, Fiji and South Africa although their quality has still to be tested against the “older” nations of England, Wales, Australia, New Zealand, France, and Papua New Guinea. Australia has won the World Cup on the last three occasions; most recently defeating England in October 1992 at Wembley by 10-6. This World Cup competition will be the largest single gathering of senior nations in the game’s history. In addition there will be an “emerging nations” competition, for countries which have only recently taken up the sport.

The Rugby League Centenary

However 1995 sees not only the staging of the World Cup but also the centenary of the formation of the Rugby Football League in 1895, and it is this event which is celebrated in the set of five stamps, printed by Harrisons in photogravure and designed by Christian Birmingham in his first commission for Royal Mail, issued on 3 October. (For full details see *1977 Challenge Cup commemorative cover*





Rugby stamps of Fiji, France, NZ, and Samoa (Bulletin September 1995.) The British Rugby League teams are celebrating the event by reverting to their original team strip colours and designs ("grandpa" shirts but not baggy shorts!) for the shortened 1995-96 season, before the introduction of the Super League in April 1996.

New Zealand has the honour of being the first country specifically to issue stamps for Rugby League, with a set issued on 26 July 1995 for the Centenary. This set consists of four stamps: 45c Early Rugby League, \$1 Mini Footy (for children), \$1.50 Provincial Rugby League and \$1.80 International Rugby league. The 45c



1991 and 1995 Rugby Union World Cup issues

stamps are also issued in booklet form and the highest value has also been produced in a miniature sheet commemorating a famous last-minute victory by New Zealand over Australia. The Australians are so rarely defeated that it has to be cause for celebration!

There have been rugby stamps issued by many countries but all have been connected with Union, although the incidents shown could in most cases (apart from line-outs) apply to either code. Countries which have issued stamps include Australia, New Zealand, Eire, Fiji, France, Tonga, W. Samoa, Rumania, and South Africa, as well as Hong Kong which staged the World Sevens tournament.

The new issue on 3 October is the first time that Rugby League has been commemorated on British stamps, but the Centenary of the formation of Rugby Union Football was shown on a 9p stamp as part of the "Anniversaries" series issued on 25 August 1971. In 1980, as part of a set commemorating sports Centenaries, issued on 10 October, the 13½p value depicted Welsh Rugby Union players. The 1991 Rugby Union World Cup Championship was held in England and a 37p stamp was issued on 11 June to celebrate that event. Aerogrammes from Scotland and Wales have also shown Rugby Union players as part of their design, and the Northern Ireland £6 booklet issued in 1994 showed a rugby pitch in one illustration.

Special Event cancellations

However, commemorative handstamps have occasionally been sponsored by some English Rugby League clubs to celebrate special events in their history. The first was on 22 July 1972 when St Helens RLFC celebrated their winning of the Challenge Cup at Wembley (some 10 weeks earlier!) by issuing a pictorial envelope and handstamp which showed Wembley Stadium and the Cup itself. The date was the occasion of the St Helens Show and the Cup was on display at one of the stands. I remember being allowed to hold the Cup, emblazoned in its red and white ribbons – it was very heavy!

In 1973, Wakefield Trinity (so-called after the original Church team) celebrated their centenary with a special handstamp on 23 May, and in 1974 Warrington RLFC celebrated six wins as knockout champions in a match against near-neighbours Widnes. The cancellation is dated 26 August 1974.

Not to be out-done, in 1977 Widnes RLFC celebrated their third consecutive appearance at the Challenge Cup Final at Wembley on 7 May against Leeds. Unfortunately, although they won

in 1975, their other two appearances were not successful. Rather surprisingly (or perhaps because of the cost of commemorative cancels these days), the most successful team of the past decade, Wigan RLFC, with eight successive Challenge Cup wins from 1988 to the present, and a multitude of other successes, has never produced anything philatelic to celebrate its achievements.

In a classic Humberside encounter at Wembley in 1980, Hull Kingston Rovers defeated arch rivals Hull to take the Challenge Cup. They waited until the 80th birthday of the Queen Mother to produce a commemorative handstamp on 4 August.

The final handstamp was produced in 1981 for the inaugural match of Carlisle RLFC on 8 September. Perhaps special cancels were seen as



Rugby League meter impressions

a bad omen for there have been none since!

However, the Rugby League Headquarters in Leeds has its own meter mark, and two distinct ones have been in use. Both are in red; the first lasted certainly from 1985 to at least 1990 but in the early 90s, the Rugby League decided to revamp its image and a new logo appeared in the *St Helens and Warrington special handstamps*



shape of a rugby ball superimposed with Roman and Arabic numerals for "13", and this appears on the meter mark from League headquarters in use today.

A private meter mark showing a Rugby League player was used by a sportswear firm in Halifax and two varieties of this have been recorded. It is perhaps a coincidence that the Halifax Building Society is to be the major commercial sponsor for the forthcoming World Cup Series.

Overseas, in Papua New Guinea, a 10t postal stationery envelope was issued showing a Rugby League player; a special cancellation was used on 28 July 1984 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Papua NG joining the international Rugby League Federation.

However, for now, the Australians are going to have the last word. A delightful meter mark used in New South Wales over several years shows a player passing the ball out of a tackle with the slogan "Rugby League – The Greatest Game of all".

It is possible to form a thematic collection on Rugby League, and no doubt there will be several commemorative cancellations in connection with the World Cup and Centenary celebrations, as well as stamp issues from the participating countries. The game is developing a totally new image after a century, making more people aware of its attractions. Royal Mail has produced some beautiful stamps to make a good start to a new sporting theme that has been overlooked for far too long. I have to agree with the Australians: it is "The Greatest Game of All".

Acknowledgements

Rugby and Philately: Rugby Football Thematic Catalogue – second edition 1995 by Giuliano G Rossi.

An Illustrated History of Rugby League by Robert Gate 1989

Paul Harrison, Media Manager, The Rugby Football League, Leeds.

British Philatelic Bulletin, September 1995.

For further information on forming a collection of stamps, covers and postcards with Rugby (of either code) as a theme, there is a society to cater for your needs. The International Guild of Rugby Theme Collectors has approximately 150 members. The Hon Secretary is D R Gwynn, Black Park Farm, Llanrhidian, SWANSEA SA3 1EE, and a newsletter is published quarterly.

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Out of the Arc...

Curiosities from the Post Office Archives

14. Circular Delivery Company

During the middle part of the last century, the Circular Delivery Companies had been defying the Postmaster General's monopoly by delivering mail at one quarter of the official Book Post rate of 1d for 4oz.

A cover bearing Circular Delivery Company stamp and cancellation (above) and, below, a Circular Delivery Company card



The case went to court in 1868 and it was found that the companies had been operating illegally. This was the death knell for them and the last of the companies folded in June 1869.

Reference: Post 30/235 E2433/1873

Frank O'Neill
Information Manager

Post Office Archives is open to the public Monday-Friday, 09.00-16.15. A leaflet giving details of the services can be obtained by sending DL size stamped addressed envelope to: Post Office Archives, Freeling House, Mount Pleasant (Phoenix Place Entrance), LONDON EC1A 1BB.

For further information on Circular Delivery Stamps see Philatelic Terms Explained No. 43 – *Bulletin*, February 1994

Great Britain: The Stamps of the Circular Delivery Companies and their Forgeries. By Christopher G Harman. Published by Cinderella Stamp Club and Frank Godden Ltd, 1990. (Reviewed in *Bulletin*, October 1990).

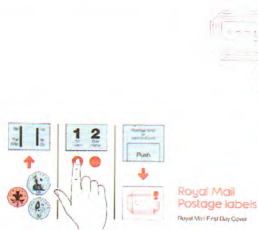
Look Before You Lick!

8: Frama Drama and Postage Dues

MATT HINTON

At first, the Royal Mail Postage Labels appear to have nothing in their favour. They are almost homogenous, they are ugly and apparently boring and the headlines in the dealers' adverts of the late 1980s such as "Investment Special!" and "These Prices Cannot Be Sustained" have almost dried up because, of course, the Framas – as they are known – are now cheaper than they were a decade ago.

However, the labels are an important chapter in British philately. In this article I shall explain why. The imperforate, unwatermarked labels display a machine postage paid impression applied in red on phosphorised paper with a grey-green background. The labels were issued from experimental machines in London, Cambridge, Southampton, and Windsor and, at first, 32 values were available in steps of $\frac{1}{2}$ p from $\frac{1}{2}$ p to 16p. These were issued on 1 May 1984; $\frac{1}{2}$ p and 17p values were available to the public from 28 August. They were used for postage then and are still being used for postage now as dealers try to clear unwanted stocks.



1984 "Frama" first day cover

Errors

Being dispensed from machines, there are naturally many errors of printing. One example is a label displaying the value "0.00". I expect the purchaser was a little miffed at first, but – as the label now sells for £70 – I am sure that they were not disappointed for long!

Another similar error is a label of a "0.01" denomination where the printing is extremely weak due to an almost complete dry-printing of the red ink. This can be obtained for about £10.

Six values appeared, and were purchased by a

collector, with the ink applied to the gummed side in error. "Never previously offered!" was the claim in a 1995 price list, despite having been previously offered – seven years previously, to be precise! Nevertheless, 15 copies turned up in total, the $12\frac{1}{2}$ p and 16p being the most common, retailing at around £50 and the scarcer 3p, 13p, $16\frac{1}{2}$ p and 17p are available for about £150. Forgetting the dubious claim that they have never been offered before, it is testimony to the fact that the Framas have been far less popular than was predicted that this small number of errors has not been snapped up during at least seven years.

The paper used for the labels can be of interest. One roll of the paper employed in the Windsor machine was a plain white "Tester" version and the grey-blue background is not present. The majority of the values affected were, understandably, those used for the current first and second class rates – $12\frac{1}{2}$ p and 16p, and these are worth about £50, despite still being offered for up to £100.

NVI and Specimen Labels

A 35th value can also be obtained for about £5. It is a kind of NVI Frama with a '1 Post Paid' caption, similar to that on pre-paid envelopes. It was produced for Post Office marketing purposes. It could be called the first NVI! It was produced for the "Post-a-Book" service and for the "Letter Cassette Pack" offer of September 1984 – March 1985 (See *Bulletin* July 1989, page 277).

One Frama dispensing machine, that had never actually held the position of supplying the labels to the public, is now preserved in the National Postal Museum. For a while from May 1988 it delivered "SPECIMEN" type labels in denominations of 1p from 1p to 17p. The quality of print is not as good and the design is different



NVI label on "Letter Cassette Pack"



Frama machine outside London Chief Post Office, 1984 (Photo: John Holman)

– the value is contained within a square with “NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM SPECIMEN” written around the sides. A few dealers sell these for a few pounds and they make an interesting *National Postal Museum Specimen label (enlarged)*



addition to a Frama collection.

The official souvenir First Day Covers are now priced quite highly. The original 32 values on a set of illustrated covers will probably fetch over £10.

I think that the Framas were a great idea and I was amazed that they were withdrawn. I am still amazed that years later we have no means of acquiring any value of stamp other than first class after closing of shops and post offices. I also wonder what happened to the four machines?

It is no wonder that the Framas do not enjoy a place in many albums but they do form an important part of philatelic history and it is useful to know a little about them.

To Pay Labels

Bearing in mind the increasing popularity, and prices, of Postage Due (To Pay) labels, I would like to briefly outline a few varieties on these stamps.

The first series, of 1914-23, includes a 1d value which is available as a deep or pale printing and the deep version exists on a chalky paper (worth about £5), the 3d was printed in both a violet and bluish violet shade and the 1s can be obtained in a pale or deep shade. The watermarks appear inverted, reversed and generally all over the place. The second series was issued between 1924 and 1931 with the 3d available printed on the gummed side (£50) and more watermark errors.

The third series of 1936-37 included the 5d in two varying shades of brown – one more yellow than the other. The fourth to eighth sets all included watermark inverted varieties, and the sixth series included a few imperforate 4d labels which sell for around £100 per pair. The ninth series appeared in 1968 and was printed by typography with Polyvinyl Alcohol Dextrin gum, although some of the 2d and 4d were produced on paper with PVA gum. The 4d with PVA was printed a little later by photogravure and a few of the 1970-75 values exist overprinted with vertical black bars for use in Post Office Training Schools, although these should not have got onto the philatelic market. Also, look out for the gum variations on this set – all values are affected bar the ½p, 7p and 11p. The paper varies between phosphor and non-phosphor, too.

Postage Due labels are particularly sought after on covers. An interesting mixed franking of 1982 and 1994 labels were illustrated in my “Check your Post” article last November (p72).

© Matt Hinton 1995

The Genesis of Adhesive Postage Stamps

JAMES MACKAY

In all the celebrations marking the bicentenary of the birth of Sir Rowland Hill, the epithet of "Father of the Postage Stamp" has been frequently mentioned; yet, one has to pose the question, did he really deserve this title?

Neither the prepayment of letters by stamps, nor the use of adhesive labels to prepay taxes, were novel in the 1830s; the prepayment of postage on letters by means of adhesive labels was.

Since the time of William Dockwra's London Penny Post in 1680 *handstruck* postage stamps existed in Great Britain, and many other postal administrations used *handstruck* stamps to indicate postal prepayment also.

Fiscal Stamps

From 1694 onwards fiscal stamps had been embossed on thick blue paper to denote the duty payable on legal documents. As the documents themselves were engrossed on parchment or vellum, the embossed stamps were glued to one corner, and then, for good measure, secured by means of a lead staple which was sealed on the

Embossed fiscal stamp with lead staple; adhesive labels



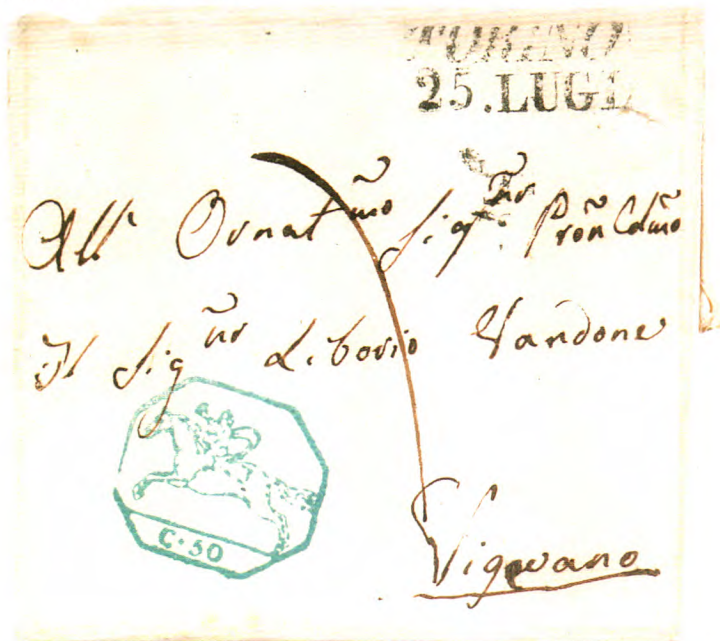
reverse of the vellum by means of a small upright rectangular adhesive label. This label, though not a fiscal stamp as such, was in the dimensions adopted in 1840 for the Penny Black. Moreover, the early types incorporated die numbers and the later versions had check letters in the corners – both features introduced into the adhesive postage stamps of Britain in the 19th century.

Since 1802 adhesive labels had been used by the Board of Excise to prepay taxes on patent medicines and other dutiable articles. These labels were elaborately engraved as a precaution against forgery, and undoubtedly played their part in determining the character of the adhesive postage stamps.

Letter Sheets

Stamped wrappers or letter sheets, on which the device indicating prepayment was printed or impressed *before* the letter was written, also existed before 1840. If we discount the Sardinian letter-sheets of 1819-20, with their printed or embossed stamps in denominations of 15, 25 or 50 centesimi, as paying a tax rather than a postal charge (and this supposition can be argued back and forth interminably), we cannot overlook the embossed wrappers and letter sheets used for prepaid correspondence in Sydney, New South Wales, from 1838 onwards.

In June that year Charles Whiting, a printer and stationer of Beaufort House in the Strand, London, gave evidence before the Commons Select Committee on Postage, and testified that he had proposed the use of stamped wrappers and envelopes, which he termed "go-frees", as far back as March 1830. Whiting had married the widow of Sir William Congreve who, in 1821, had patented a process of compound plate printing, by which impressions could be printed in two or more colours at a single operation. This process utilised plates which fitted into each other, and produced stamps in two colours, incorporating embossing if necessary, and resulting in an article which was both ingenious, artistic and fraud-proof. In 1839 Whiting submitted essays to the Treasury Competition



and was one of the four winners of the £100 prize. Although his proposals were not implemented he later collaborated with William Wyon in the design and production of the embossed penny pink stamps used for stationery from 1841 till the end of the century.

Newspaper Tax

Since 1712 there had been a tax on newspapers, denoted by a red stamp impressed in the upper right-hand corner of the front page. This was a fiscal stamp, but as it automatically conferred free transmission by post it has been argued that it should be regarded as a postage stamp. This is the same specious argument applied to the *Cavallini* of Sardinia, but when the newspaper tax was abolished in 1855 newspapers sent by post continued to use the same, or similar, stamps, the ancestors of the postage paid impressions (PPIs) of the present day.

Publishers resented this "tax on knowledge" and perennially campaigned against it. Charles Knight, writer and magazine publisher, mounted a campaign in 1834 and got his friend and neighbour, Matthew Davenport Hill (MP for Hull) to raise the issue in the House of Commons. When the problem of treating unstamped newspapers sent by post was raised, Knight suggested that "a penny stamped frank

should be issued by the government". During the debate in Parliament on 22 May 1834 Matthew Hill stated that Knight recommended a stamped wrapper for such newspapers as were sent by post, and that such a wrapper should be sold for a penny by the distributors of stamps (i.e. the agents of the Board of Stamps and Taxes who handled fiscal stamps).

Matthew Hill, it should be noted, was the elder brother of Rowland Hill who, consciously or unconsciously, borrowed Knight's ideas, although, interestingly, he later credited Charles Whiting with the concept of postal prepayment.

There is no doubt that the idea of prepaying charges by means of stamped wrappers was widespread by the mid-1830s. Gustav Schenk, in *The Romance of the Postage Stamp* (1962) stated "In 1811, a Scottish shipping line used adhesive stamps for its private postal service, though unfortunately little is known about these". Tantalisingly, no more explicit details are given; it would be interesting to know the name of this company and the circumstances in which it used the alleged labels. However, there is evidence to suggest that adhesive labels were, in fact, used by freight companies and parcel carriers long before 1840 to denote payment of their charges; but because such items as parcel wrappers were ephemeral, and the serious study of this aspect of



Board of Excise Medicine Tax label



Inverness Courier newspaper tax stamp

communications has only begun to develop in recent years, nothing tangible has so far emerged. Sufficient is known concerning the methods of handling and accounting for these parcels to suggest that some form of labelling was employed.

James Chalmers and Dr Gray

Significantly, the year 1834 figures in several of the claims advanced on behalf of other postal reformers. Foremost is James Chalmers, the Dundee bookseller, stationer and newspaper proprietor, who took a keen interest in problems of posts and communications. In 1825 he successfully proposed a scheme which led to a great acceleration in the coach service between Dundee and London. It is highly probable that he studied the problem of postal reform following the agitation in Parliament of Robert Wallace (MP for Greenock) who, coincidentally, was Rowland Hill's inspiration also.

In November 1837 Chalmers wrote to Wallace suggesting some form of stamped labels, and the following February produced the celebrated Chalmers essays. He was unaware that Rowland Hill had previously published a similar idea (22 February 1837) in a pamphlet on postal reform, containing the famous words: "Perhaps this difficulty might be obviated by using a bit of paper just large enough to bear the stamp, and

covered at the back with a glutinous wash..." which is now regarded as the earliest definition of an adhesive postage stamp.

In 1887, when the controversy between Patrick Chalmers and Pearson Hill (sons of the protagonists) was at its height, Judge Tiffany examined the evidence. By that time Patrick Chalmers had pushed his father's invention back to 1834, thus ante-dating Hill by three years. The sole proof of this was a deposition by a Mr Whitelaw then in his 80s, who had worked for Chalmers in Dundee and remembered his employer "setting to work to draw up a plan of adhesive stamps when it had been settled that the Penny Postage system was to be adopted". In 1834 the Penny Postage system had not been heard of, let alone settled, so the evidence put forward by Whitelaw, relying on his memory of events in his youth more than half a century earlier, was highly suspect.

The year 1834, however, also figures in the only claim made against Rowland Hill in his own lifetime. Dr John Gray of the British Museum was impelled to challenge Hill in the correspondence columns of *The Times* after Rowland was knighted. Gray claimed to have pioneered postal reform, including the introduction of prepayment by means of adhesive stamps as early as 1834. Gray's bibliography lists almost 1200 articles and pamphlets published by him between 1819 and 1874 on all manner of subjects, from snakes and butterflies to artisans' education and municipal drainage. He also wrote copiously on decimal coinage and is best remembered by philatelists for his early stamp catalogues – but nowhere in this mass of writings is there any published account of postal reform, far less the suggestion of adhesive stamps.

Other Contenders

Samuel Roberts of Llanbrynmair, a Welsh non-conformist with a deep interest in many social problems, claimed to have been engaged in postal reform since 1827 and said that he had advocated adhesive stamps about seven years later, but here again, he published nothing at the

time to support his claim. In 1889 the Marquess of Carmarthen petitioned Parliament on behalf of Francis Worrell Stevens "the real Inventor of the Penny Postage System". Stevens claimed to have submitted plans for adhesive postage stamps to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1833. By an interesting coincidence a fellow master at his school, Albion House, Loughton, Essex at the time was none other than Rowland Hill. He discussed his ideas with Hill who borrowed his papers. Shortly afterwards Stevens emigrated to South Australia where he forgot all about the matter, until 1876 when he learned of Hill's fame and promptly wrote to him accusing him of breach of copyright. Sir Rowland never replied to this. Stevens' petition eventually reached the Post Office, but there the matter rested and no action was taken.

Ferdinand Egarter, postmaster of Spittal in Austria, produced 1 kreuzer labels and one of these was found in 1938 on a letter dated 20 February 1839 addressed to Klagenfurt. The label had a light-brown burele background, with the letters "O.P." which may have denoted *Orts Post* (local post). The authenticity of this item has been challenged, and until other examples turn up judgment must be reserved. Both Yugoslavia (1936) and Austria (1979) have issued stamps honouring Laurence Kosir or Koschier as "ideological creator of the postage stamp". On 11

May 1836, while employed as a civil servant at Laibach (Ljubljana) in Slovenia, he submitted a scheme to the Austrian government for postal reform including the use of adhesive labels. The postal authorities, however, merely filed the memo and forgot all about it.

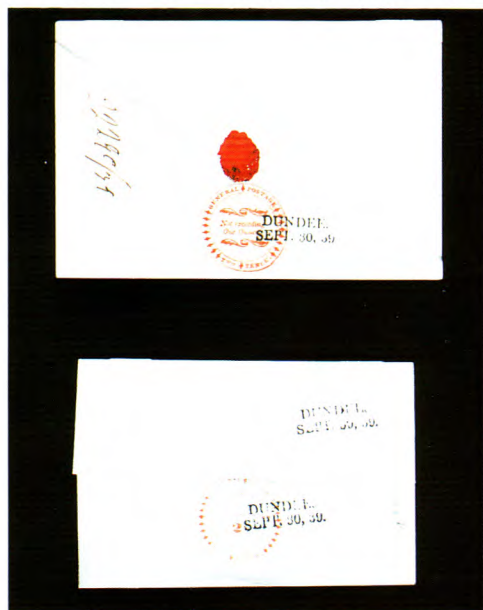
In 1831 a type-set label inscribed 40 lepta in Greek was produced in connection with a charity raising money for refugees following the insurrection in Crete. A cache of correspondence from Athens to Piraeus in the 1830s bore several of these labels, and the claim has been made that they did postal duty. Although this is preposterous – Greece did not adopt stamps until 1861 – the *Tesserakonta Lepta* labels were probably the first charity labels anywhere in the world, and reinforce the view that gummed labels, as a medium for denoting a charge of some kind, were widespread long before 1840.

Of course, the argument could be settled decisively should any of the *Billets a Port Paye* – slips gummed with isinglass which Renouard de Villayer employed in connection with the Paris Petit Poste of 1653-65 – should ever come to light. They have no bearing on developments in Britain in the 1830s for the very existence of Villayer's service did not surface until a search was made of French archives in the 1840s. So far, no examples of these "stamped wafers" have been found, although their existence is mentioned in contemporary papers, and there was even a mid-17th century poem which praised them.

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ABPS News

The July 1995 issue of **ABPS News**, the lively newsletter of the Association of British Philatelic Societies reports on the British Philatelic Trust's strategic plan, the successful Midpex exhibition in Coventry (10 June), Swinpex and the first AGM of the ABPS (Swindon, 17 June), recent ABPS awards to collectors who have served the hobby well, and the new Llangollen Postal Museum. Details are given of a major new exhibition to be held in Newcastle upon Tyne, 29 November-1 December 1996, and of the activities of numerous local and specialist societies. Useful reading for all who want to keep up to date with the British philatelic scene. 84 pages, paper covers. For details of the ABPS write to the Membership Secretary: A Bosworth, 34 Richmond Way, MAIDSTONE, Kent ME15 6BN.



Chalmers essays on cover (National Postal Museum, London)

Decimal Stamp Books - 23

D G A MYALL

The new fluorescent ink

A change of major significance, which will ultimately affect all decimal stamp books and which has already produced six new single stamps for the Machin specialist, is currently taking place. It involves the fluor added to the phosphor inks used to overprint the bars on stamps and was announced in the July *Bulletin* (page 325). Before describing the new issues, a word or two about how to identify the new ink may be helpful. The first thing to stress is that the change is not apparent to the naked eye. You will need an ultraviolet lamp to see it. For this reason, Royal Mail does not regard the stamps as new issues.

Phosphors and Fluors; the difference

Phosphors and Fluors are substances added to the inks used to overprint the bars on modern GB stamps. Both absorb energy in the form of ultraviolet (UV) radiation and re-emit it at a changed wavelength, making the ink visible to the human eye. The principle difference is that a phosphor continues this altered emission for a brief period after the UV source is switched off (known as the 'afterglow') while a fluor does not. The irradiation is most easily achieved by exposing the stamps to a UV lamp. A portable model specially designed for stamp collectors may be bought for about £20. Such a lamp will open up a whole new world to you, enabling you to detect not only the changes which are being made to the materials used in modern GB electronic stamp tagging but also forgeries, repairs, etc. A UV lamp is probably the most

important tool a collector of modern GB stamps could possibly buy. Viewing conditions are important. Complete darkness and a period to allow the eyes to become acclimatised is best, but modern portable UV lamps permit daylight viewing.

When examining stamps under a UV lamp, there are three complications which you need to know about. First, fluorescent substances may be present in the actual paper stock, either deliberately or accidentally. Second, the existence of an afterglow from the phosphor bands can be affected by the wavelength of the UV source itself. (UV lamps used by philatelists produce either short-wave or long-wave UV, although some are adapted to provide both.) Third, a fluor can be added to a phosphor so that *both* are present in the ink mix. If you look at tagged stamps with the lamp switched on, you are seeing the *fluorescence*. If you switch the lamp off, any residual emission will be caused by *phosphorescence*.

Space does not permit a fuller explanation of the phenomenon called phosphorescence here and I want only to draw attention to the change in the fluorescence. From about 1991, the practice of adding fluorescent 'optical brightening agents', or OBAs, to the paper stock ceased. At about the same time, a fluor was added to the ink. It is the change in the appearance of the ink, and not the paper, to which I am referring in this article. The new ink fluoresces a dull pale blue and is very easily distinguished from the bright yellow of the ink formerly in use. Because they are fundamentally different printing processes, photogravure and lithographic inks are of slightly different compositions. The new fluor used in the Harrison books appears whiter than that used in the Questa and Walsall books. However, there is no possibility of confusing either of them with the former yellow fluor.

The first machine book with blue fluor stamps.

Archibald McIndoe
(1900-1960),
pioneering plastic
surgeon, who gave
new life to critically-
burned airmen.
Fourth in a series
commemorating
the end of the War.
Engraved by
Llewellyn Thomas.
Printed by
Harrison &
Sons Limited.



The reason for the change is operational. The yellow fluor interfered with the efficient operation of the Philtec readers used in the NP4000 mail sorting machines. These have fluorescent as well as phosphorescent detection capability and were apt to be confused by the yellow fluor. While the new machinery does not require *any* fluor additive in order to operate on GB stamps. Royal Mail announced that it has been decided to 'retain a neutral fluor to aid security and manufacturing quality control'. The blue fluor is not recognised by the sorting machinery and fluors play no part in mail sorting, being used as a quality control at the printers.

The changed ink is being introduced gradually but the intention is that it will entirely replace the yellow variety over the next few months. Meanwhile, many of the current books are appearing in two versions, with yellow and blue fluor, and interested readers will wish to know of them so that they may obtain examples of both varieties. Remember, though, you will need a UV lamp. I have listed below all the varieties known to me at the time my copy had to be sent to the Editor. Keep a lookout for other changes. They will not be announced in advance by Royal Mail as they are not considered to be new issues. My next article will bring this report up-to-date.

Books with yellow fluor only

So far as known, the following recent issues do not exist with blue fluor stamps:

(1) 50p Charts No. 4, Giant's Causeway; issued 4 September 1995; printed from cylinders B5/B2 (the phosphor number is not legible).

(2) £2 Rowland Hill No. 4, Uniform Penny Postage; issued 4 September 1995; printed from cylinders B4/B2.

(3) £2.50 W H Smith special offer, 10 x 1st-class NVIs, printed from plates W38 W26 W33, issued 24 April 1995. (This book is available only from Smith's shops. There will be a philatelic release on 3 October but with which fluor was not known at the time of writing.)

(4) £2.50 J. Sainsbury promotion, 10 x 1st-class NVIs, printed from plates Q4 Q4/Q2, issued 26 June 1995. (This book is available only from Sainsbury stores. A philatelic release had been announced for 4 September but with which fluor was not known when this article was written.)

(5) All three international books (4 x 35p, 4 x 41p, 4 x 60p) printed by Walsall are believed at press time to exist only with yellow fluor and thick cover card. (See below for an explanation of the types of cover card used by this firm.) The experimental book of 4 x 60p with the single

stamp design on the front cover was withdrawn from sale on 8 August but the edition with the block cover design is still on sale.

Books with both yellow and blue fluor

The books which have so far appeared with both fluors are as follows: (1) £1 machine vend. The third issue (R. J. Mitchell, issued 16 May 1995) has yellow fluor. The fourth issue (Archibald McIndoe, issued on 4 September 1995) has blue fluor, producing a new single Machin stamp for the specialist. The cylinder numbers are the same in both editions: B6/B1. Incidentally, the second edition, Vera Lynn, issued 4 April 1995, exists with and without (yellow) fluor phosphor bars. It was intended to be issued only without bars but some machines in Safeway stores were filled with a barred version. These are likely to be comparatively scarce.

(2) £2.50 Harrison book of 10 x 1st-class NVIs with the block design on the front cover. This was issued with yellow fluor on 4 April 1995 and was first seen with blue fluor on 4 August 1995, yielding another new single. The cylinder numbers are B5/B99 in both cases.

(3) £2.50 Questa book of 10 x 1st-class NVIs with the block design on the front cover. This was issued with yellow fluor on 21 December 1994 and was first reported with blue fluor on 1 August 1995. The plate numbers are Q4 Q4/Q2 in both cases. These stamps have the type 1 value mentioned here in August, producing another new specialist single.

(4) £1.90 Questa book of 10 x 2nd-class NVIs with the block cover design. Issued with yellow fluor on 21 December 1994 and first reported with blue fluor on 1 August 1995; another new single. Plate combination Q21 Q21/Q2 exists with both fluors; earlier ones have yellow fluor only.

(5) 76p Harrison book of 4 x 2nd-class NVIs with the block cover design. Issued with yellow fluor on 21 December 1994 and first seen with blue fluor on 4 August 1995, producing one more new single. In both cases the cylinder numbers are B6/B95.

(6) £1 Walsall book of 4 x 1st-class NVIs with the block cover design. Issued with yellow fluor on 21 December 1994 from plate combination W20 W29 W29.

(7) £2.50 Walsall book of 10 x 1st-class NVIs with the block cover design. Issued with yellow fluor on 21 December 1994 from plate combination W35 W23 W28.

The picture is a little complicated so far as Walsall books are concerned because there has been a change in the card used to print the covers.



The 'black box' variety indicating a book sold by a retailer.

Cover card on Walsall red books

There has been an authorised but unannounced change in the cover card used for the two normal (non-promotional) red books printed by this firm. The new card is thinner than that formerly used, is rough rather than smooth and is not so white. It can best be identified under UV light (another use for your new lamp). The new card has a violet speckled fluorescence. This is not the first change to the cover card used at Walsall. An earlier change was reported here in June 1994.

As far as I can ascertain, books of 4 x 1st from plate combination W28 W36 W36 exist with both kinds of card and with yellow fluor. Combinations W29 W37 W37 and W29 W37 W38 exist only with thin card and yellow fluor. Combinations W29 W38 W39 and W31 W39 W40 exist with thin card and blue fluor, first seen 1 August 1995, producing the sixth single stamp with the blue fluor from booklets.

Books of 10 x 1st from plate combinations W35 W23 W28 and W38 W26 W33 exist only with thick cover card and yellow fluor. Combinations W40 W28 W35, W41 W30 W35 and W41 W30 W36 are known with the thin cover card and yellow fluor. Books from W42 W31 W37 are, so far, the only ones seen with the thin card and blue fluor (19 August). Single stamps with the blue fluor from this source are identical to those from the books of four mentioned above.

Books with blue fluor only – Benji and Harry

The £2.50 'Someone Special' promotional book of 10 x 1st-class NVI stamps issued on 4 September and printed by Harrison from cylinders B5/B99 exists only with the blue fluor. Until 31 January 1996, a ceramic figure, Benji Bear or Harry Hedgehog, can be obtained, together with one of four personalised greetings cards, for four mint 1st-class stamps and two

proofs of purchase (the coupon at the back of the book plus the cover of another book of 10 x 1st-class stamps, including another Benji book). This is the first promotional book printed by Harrison with security perforated stamps. Unexpectedly, there is no printing at all on the yellow tab, not even the usual 'Pull Open'. (An early press release stated that this would read 'DETAILS INSIDE' but many small details get changed between a press release and a production run.) Single stamps from this book are the same as those from the normal Harrison books of 10 with the blue fluor. The book exists in two versions, with and without a small hollow black box near the barcode, made up from dots. This should not be confused with the black marker bar made up from dotted vertical lines which appears on some Harrison books and which marks every 25th book for packing purposes. The books with the box are for sale through retail outlets while the 'no box' books are sold only through post offices. To enable the correct type of book to be despatched from Edinburgh, the barcodes on the bundles of 50, although the same number, are printed in blue if the bundle contains 'black box' books and in black if it does not. The distinction is to enable separate response figures to be compiled.

Greetings book error

A footnote to my report in the August *Bulletin* is provided by a reader from High Wycombe. He was sent a first day cover from the Edinburgh Bureau on which all the stamps had no phosphor, no Queen's head and no values. I think I am right in stating that these covers are serviced from sheets and not from individual books so this lucky reader may not have been the only one to have received such a nice cover from this source. Check yours carefully.

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Varieties of Yesteryear - 9

The 1d Postal Fiscals 1868-81: Three different Corner Ornaments

FRED GEE

In article no. 8 of this series, in introducing the 1881 1d lilac as the first GB stamp which was designed to be used for both postal and revenue purposes, I referred to the Revenue stamps which, up to that time, had existed alongside the postage stamps. A lot of collectors have tended to treat these Revenue stamps almost as "Cinderella" material (that is, if they know of their existence at all) but, in my view, they definitely merit a place in any collection of GB Victorian postage stamps, because the 1881 *Customs and Inland Revenue Act* which led to the introduction of the 1881 1d lilac, not only provided that 1d postage stamps would thenceforward also be used for revenue purposes, but conversely authorised the use for postage of any remaining stocks of the 1d Inland Revenue stamps. (Fiscal Stamps of higher values were authorised for postal use by a later Act of Parliament.)

And so, for several years from 1881, Revenue stamps were used to prepay postage and, indeed, became known to philatelists as "the Postal Fiscals". In 1881 there were in use three types of 1d stamps inscribed "Inland Revenue", all printed in fugitive lilac ink – a larger format (30 x 25mm) stamp which had first been issued in 1860, and two stamps approximately the same size as the standard postage stamps (22 x 19mm). In design terms, these two smaller stamps were clearly predecessors of the "Postage and Inland Revenue" 1d lilac: they were basically of the

same design, but whereas the first (issued in 1867) had a cross-hatched background in its corner panels, the second (1868) had an uncoloured background relieved only by frame lines and a small ornament in each corner. And it is this second of the smaller 1d Revenue stamps which, on closer inspection, can be seen to come not just in two varieties, but in three.

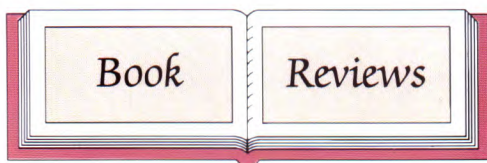
To identify the three versions of this stamp, the detail one needs to examine is the ornament between the curled ends of the inner frame line in each corner. This ornament consists of a diamond shape at the inner end and a "handle" pointing out towards the corner. In type A (that is, as the stamp with the uncoloured corners first appeared in 1868) this ornament is relatively small, only about 1mm end-to-end; in its final form (type C, issued from 1878 onwards) it is much larger, being more than 2mm long and extending almost into the corner of the stamp; while somewhere between these two extremes is type B (1877), just under 2mm in length but not extending as far into the corner of the stamp as type C. It is sometimes difficult to distinguish types B and C, but the type A ornament is so much smaller as to be easily identifiable.

The Inland Revenue 1d stamps are very common – nearly 1000 million were printed – so if you wish to add them to your collection it should not be too difficult to find examples either used as Revenue stamps or used postally after 1 June 1881. But remember to look carefully at the corner ornaments!

© Fred Gee 1995

The smaller format 1d Inland Revenue stamps: with cross-hatched background (left); with Type A corner ornaments (used for the original revenue purpose); and (right) with Type C ornaments (used postally).





The recently published **Guide to Royal Mail Philatelic Services** aims "to set out for our customers the range of stamps and associated products which we produce, the services we offer the collector, and details of how to obtain them." Also given are contact points for more information about particular products or services, or to send suggestions. The listing of products includes the different types of stamp book (vended, retail, greetings, etc), postal stationery (priority service envelopes, Swiftpacks, Airpacks, etc) produced primarily for postal needs, as well as items intended mainly for collectors such as first day covers, presentation packs, and stamp cards. Perhaps less well-known are the "Stamp Storage and Cataloguing Products" – Royal Mail Albums for covers, packs, and cards, binders for this magazine, and the *StampMaster* computerised cataloguing system – based on the National Postal Museum's listing of British stamps.

The Definitions section sets out what Royal Mail means by "variations" to definitive stamps. These involve "visible and intentional changes" to perforation, paper, phosphor placing, gum, and printing process, also some "non-visible changes" to paper, gum and phosphor "which are not immediately apparent to the naked eye". Variations do not usually qualify for "first day of issue" treatment, but are normally afforded "first day of availability" status which is defined.

The "Where to Obtain Stamps, Products and Postmarks" section advises on availability from post offices, post shops, the British Philatelic Bureau, National Postal Museum, Special Handstamp Centres, stamp dealers, independent retailers, and overseas sales representatives. Under the heading "Special Services" can be found information on the Royal Mail Collectors' Club (for young collectors, up to age 16), Bureau services, and postmarking services – mostly provided by the six Special Handstamp Centres in London, Birmingham, Cardiff, Glasgow, Newcastle upon Tyne, and Slough. Reference is made here to other publications – *Royal Mail Postmark Guide* and *Royal Mail Postmark Slogan and Special Handstamp Guide*, the

latter mainly concerned with how to sponsor postmarks. Copies of these are available from the Bureau. The chief source of information on forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans is the *British Postmark Bulletin* – a companion publication to this magazine. It is available on subscription from the Bureau from where a sample copy can be requested.

Addresses are given for the Bureau, Post Office Counters Ltd headquarters, and the Collectors' Club. The address in Royal Mail to which to write to suggest a subject for a possible stamp issue is also given.

This 16-page *Guide to Royal Mail Philatelic Services* is available from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, price £2 as a contribution towards the costs of production and postage.

Yet another new thematic catalogue/handbook (No. 129) arrives from the American Topical Association, this time on **Fishes, Angling, and Finfish Fisheries on Stamps of the World**. Compiled by Victor G Spinger and Maynard S Raasch, it lists some 1370 species of fish depicted on over 9000 stamps. Included are "regular issues" (postage stamps), locals, and some labels or bogus issues. The listings are alphabetical by country and include date of issue, denomination, description and Scott catalogue numbers where so listed. There are useful listings of family assignments for genera, and common names for species of fish as well as a listing of families and genera.

The British listing amounts to 15 stamps from the 1965 Commonwealth Arts Festival 6d showing a fish made of reed to the 1989 Food & Farming Year 27p. Presumably the fish on the 1994 Pictorial Postcards 19p cannot be identified! The main British contribution to this theme is, of course, the 1983 British River Fishes set commemorating the tercentenary of Isaak Walton, author of *The Complete Angler*. Also listed under the GB heading are stamps of the Isle of Man, and issues of the Glasgow Circular Delivery and Glasgow Delivery companies on which a fish is shown in the Glasgow coat of arms (also featured on 1975 Scottish aerogramme). Stamps of Guernsey and Jersey, and locals such as Herm and Summer Isles, are listed under their respective names.

In their introduction the authors make clear that where the scientific name of a fish appears on a stamp, that name is quoted exactly as it appears, including any misspelling or erroneous

rendering. Any corrected scientific name, spelling or reidentification is given in brackets. They also warn that there are no officially established common names of fish, except perhaps, for most fish of the continental USA and Canada; they cite the standard reference used. The "Selected References" listing will be of value to specialist collectors, especially those concerned with exact naming of species. 10 plates of illustrations. 120 pages card covers. ISBN 0-935991-25-1. Price \$14 postpaid from: Fish Handbook, American Topical Association, PO Box 65749, Tucson, AZ 85728, USA.

The July 1995 issue of **Great Britain Collectors Chronicle**, quarterly journal of the Great Britain Collectors Club, contains several articles of interest to readers of this magazine. Tom Current writes on 19th century registered envelopes and Counter Training School stamps, and postal historians Peter Chadwick and Vivien Sussex report on some interesting postmarks of the 17th and 18th centuries. V B Crookes looks at the postmarks developed by Albert Hoster of Germany, and Tom Current writes on the Post Office Telegraph System. For collectors of more modern material, Larry Rosenblum's "Machin Mania" and "Stamp Births" columns will be of interest, as will "Deegam Report" – an update to all the Deegam Publications of *Bulletin* contributor Douglas Myall.

Richard Colberg examines Victorian perfin and Colin Weaving the George V Seahorses. In "York Talk" Harry Hayes reports on unusual postal labels and markings, Mike Jackson (Editor of *The GB Journal*), supplies a "GB Miscellany", and Bob Ausubel's "Channel Hopper" feature looks at Jersey stamps associated with the naturalist Gerald Durrell who died in February.

For details of the GB Collectors Club write to: Frank Koch, PO Box 309, Batavia, OH 45103-0309, USA.

At a meeting in Germany on 4 April 1970 a group of collectors formed a study group for British stamps and postal history, the *Forschungsgemeinschaft Grossbritannien*. Twenty-five years later the group remains active with 220 members, during which time it has produced a quarterly magazine, its *Rundbrief*. The 100th issue appeared in June 1995 as a special celebration of the anniversary and, running to an impressive 76 pages and numerous illustrations, it contains much of interest to the GB collector.

Messages of congratulation are featured first

in this number, among which Dr Alan Huggins and Mike Jackson from the UK join with colleagues from Europe in extending their good wishes. A solid section of study articles follow, two from British authors having parallel texts in English and German: these are by John Holman (The introduction of Decimalisation) and Gerry Bater (Great Britain Overprints). Members' contributions (German language only) come from Study Group Leader, Gero Schmitz-Le Hanne (Cancelled charge-marks 1860-75); Erhard Zietlow (Flag cancels 1897-98); Karl-Albert Louis (New discovery on the Queen Victoria emblems watermark); Heinrich Dröge (Merchant Stranger's Post and Postal Reforms); and Wilhelm Oehlschläger (Window booklets).

Present-day developments are amply covered, too. Hermann Walter has a 16-page section *Neues von den Machins* with a full update on elliptical perforations and the latest booklets. Bernhard Weiss then deals with the new issues of special stamps, the ongoing changes arising from postal automation, and current postal markings. *Rundbrief* Editor Johannes Michalowsky concludes with a useful news bulletin on such items as the Alan Wilson court case, the theft of Mitchell booklets in transit, Royal Mail financial results, and so on. This must be a helpful service in keeping members abreast of happenings in Britain.

Several other interesting sections complete this outstanding celebratory *Rundbrief*. A review of new pages for a printed album – the Lighthouse Specialised Machins – is followed by a contents list of current journals that members should know of. This includes ones from the cognate German study groups for Channel Islands and Isle of Man, also Ireland, together with the GB Philatelic Society of Switzerland and, from our own country, *The GB Journal*, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, and *Cross Post*. Current books are briefly noted, though without authors or publishers. Study Group news and a 180-lot Auction list fill the remaining pages.

It is a fitting memento of the 25th anniversary, a production of high quality that is greatly to be commended. A pleasing souvenir sheet is enclosed as a gift, the £1 PUC reproduced with specimen overprint. *Rundbrief* No.100 is available to non-members for DM 12 (plus postage) from Ralph Ebner, Gasstrasse 9, D-42657 Solingen. For membership itself contact Dipl.-Ing. Heinz Reck, Heideweg 109, D-40470, Düsseldorf, Germany.

James Negus

St Kilda Mailboats

JAMES MACKAY

For eight months over the winter of 1876-77 the radical journalist John Sands was marooned on the remote island of St Kilda, and subsequently described his experiences in a little book. The high-point of his enforced stay occurred in January 1877 when the Austrian barque *Peti Dubrovacki* was wrecked near the island. The nine survivors joined Sands in his exile but strained the slender resources of the St Kildans. Sands then devised a means of sending a message to the outside world: he carved a little canoe out of a log and placed a letter, enclosed in a pickle bottle, in the hold. The sailors trimmed the rigging and corrected the ballast and the boat was launched on 30 January. A week later, it was found at Birsay in Orkney and the letter forwarded to Lloyd's agent at Stromness on 8 February. A second "mailboat" was despatched

Thereafter the St Kildan mailboat became one of the islanders' gimmicks. They were launched for the delight of tourists in summer and for the request for provisions from an ever-charitable public in winter. Between 1885 and the island's evacuation in 1930 about a score of mailboats were found as far afield as North Uist and Norway. The traditional mailboat consisted of a boat-shaped piece of wood hollowed out to contain a small bottle containing letters and coins for postage. This was then sealed and attached to an inflated sheep's bladder as a buoy, the 'hatch' being inscribed in pokerwork "ST. KILDA MAIL, PLEASE OPEN". From 1906 the Post Office instituted a payment of half a crown (12. 5p) to the finders, thus putting the system on an official basis.

Surviving Mailboats

The last of the mailboats before the evacuation in August 1930 was found in Norway three



on 5 February and found at Poolewe 22 days later. As a result of this ploy, HMS *Jackal* came out to St Kilda on 22 February and took Sands and the Austrians to the mainland.

This novel means of communication was not repeated till September 1885 when a three-day storm devastated the island and destroyed the precious store of grain and potatoes. The islanders were facing starvation when Alexander Ferguson, the 14 year-old son of the island's ground officer, sent off five mailboats asking for help. One was recovered at Gallan Head, Lewis and produced the desired results, including a nationwide appeal on behalf of the stricken island.

months later and later forwarded to the owner of the island, Sir Reginald MacLeod of MacLeod at Dunvegan Castle, Skye where it is now on display. Other mailboats which are or were preserved include those at the Head Post Office, Lerwick; Bruce Castle Museum, Tottenham; Kelvingrove Museum, Glasgow; the Scottish National Trust, Edinburgh; the Museum of the Philosophical Society, Scarborough; and the British Museum. A fine example is also on display in the West Highland Museum, Fort William and is illustrated here.

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An article on St. Kilda's more recent postal history, by Richard Beith, was published here in November 1994. Alan Knowles reported a mailboat launched in 1981 in "Stamp Scene", February 1995. Ed.

Events – October/November 1995

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

2 October-31 December: Display of St Kitts 1991 Flowers issue (stamps, artwork, proofs, etc) at British Library Philatelic Collections, Great Russell Street, London WC1. Open Mon-Sat 10.00-17.00; Sun 14.30-18.00. Enquiries: 0171-412 7635/6.

6-8 October: 77th Philatelic Congress of GB at Forte Posthouse, Hayling Island, Hants. Organised by Assn of British Phil Socs. Enquiries: J Campbell, 01329-845492.

7-9 October: Cinderpex at International Student House, Great Portland Street, London W1. Opens 10.00. Includes Cinderella Stamp Club auction on 8 October (members only). Enquiries: Glass Slipper, 01759-368577.

10-15 October: Autumn Stampex at Royal Horticultural Society Halls, London SW1. Open 10 Oct 12.00-19.00, 11-14 Oct 10.30-19.00; 15 Oct 10.30-17.00. Enquiries: 0171-490 1005.

14 October: Thurrock & District Stamp Club Stamp Fair at Oddfellows Hall, Dell Road, Thurrock, 10.00-17.00. The Club is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

20-22 October: Philatelic Writers Society Weekend Seminar at The Grand Hotel, Mayenne, France. Enquiries: A S Newall, 338 City Road, LONDON EC1V 2PX.

20-22 October: Stampa – Irish national stamp exhibition at Riverside Exhibition Centre, Dublin 2. Open 20 Oct 11.00-20.00, 21-22 Oct 11.00-18.00. Enquiries: Stampa '95, PO Box 2723, Phibsborough, DUBLIN 7, Ireland.

21 October: Salvation Army Phil Soc Annual Convention at the Citadel, Gillygate, York, 10.30-16.00. Display by Ken Daws "The Story behind the Stamp" and other talks from 11.00. Admission free. Sales table, refreshments. Enquiries: H Hayes, 01904-764660.

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

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

28 October: Association of Essex Phil Socs Autumn Stamp Day at Spring Lodge, Powers Hall End, Witham, 10.30-16.30. Hosted by Witham Phil Soc in its 25th anniversary year. Free admission/car parking, dealers, exhibitions, quiz, refreshments. Enquiries: Mrs P Slugocki, 3 The Avenue, WITHAM, Essex, CM8 2DN.

28-29 October: Scotex – Scotland's National Stamp Exhibition & Postcard Fair – at Clyde Hall, Clyde & Jamaica Streets, Glasgow. Enquiries: F Tonelli, 01382-224946.

4 November: Cornex '95 – Cornwall Phil Fed Annual Exhibition & Fair at Public Halls, Liskeard, 10.00-16.00. Admission 30p (accompanied children free). Enquiries: John Booth, 01579-340079.

CUSTOMER KNOWS BEST.



October/November Digest

To be issued in October/November

3 October: Rugby League Centenary stamps, presentation pack, and postcard booklet.

3 October: 1995 Christmas aerogramme.

3 October: Stamp book – 10 x 1st – W H Smith promotion. *Note: date of philatelic availability, on sale from Smiths shops from April.*

23 October: 1995 Christmas stamp cards.

30 October: stamps, presentation pack, stamp books (20 x 19p, 10 x 25p, 4 x 60p), and gift pack (*to be confirmed*).

30 October: National Postal Museum Christmas postcards.

30 October: 1995 Yearpack and Yearbook.

21 November: Definitive stamp pack, 1p-£1.00 values.

Note: Some items are available only from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT and from Post Office Counters Ltd philatelic outlets at main post offices in: Bath, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Gloucester, Guildford, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London (Lombard Street, EC3 & Trafalgar Square, WC2), Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Romford, Southampton, Southend on Sea, Stratford upon Avon, Truro, Windsor, and York.

To be withdrawn October/November

4 October: Stamp books – 10 x 1st “You’ve Won” and “Next Time”; 10 x 1st and 10 x 2nd printed by Questa; 4 x 60p with Christmas labels (all issued 4 October 1994)

31 October: 1994 Christmas stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards, stamp books, and gift pack.

31 October: National Postal Museum 1994 Christmas postcards. *Note: cards will be withdrawn from Bureau but remain on sale at NPM Shop.*

13 November: 1994 Yearbook and Yearpack.

Late News

Definitives – New Fluor

Specialist collectors interested in the new fluor used on British stamps (see July *Bulletin*, page 325) will wish to know that supplies of the 4p definitive, 19p Scotland, 19p Wales, and £1.40 book (4 x 35p) with this new (blue) fluor will shortly be available from the British Philatelic Bureau. There will be no first day of availability. Collectors are reminded that the fluor is only visible under ultra-violet light.

The £1 Inspiration for Victory No 3 book (issued May 1995) exists with 25p stamps bearing yellow and blue fluor. Supplies of both types are available on request from the Bureau.

The 25p Scottish and Welsh stamps with new fluor can now be ordered from the Bureau; we regret they were not available during July as earlier announced.

Cylinder Update

The cylinders used for the 1995 Christmas stamps, seen at time of going to press, are:

19p P28 (*phosphor*) 1A 1B 1C 1D 1E 1F

25p P31 1A 1B 1C 1D 1E 2F

30p P29 1A 1B 1C 2D 1E 2F

41p P31 1A 1B 1C 1D 1E 1F

60p P31 1A 1B 1C 1D 1E

Colours will be published next month.

Stamp Books

£3.80 (20 x 19p) B4 (*phosphor*) B1A B1B B1C B2D B1E B1F

£2.50 (10 x 25p) B7 B1A B1B B1C B1D B1E B1F

£2.40 (4 x 60p) B6 B1A B2B B1C B1D B1E B1 Additional plate numbers for Shakespeare stamps: W6 W6 W6 W6 W6.

Lionel Jones, NPM Philatelic Officer, reports cylinder 1 for the new £1 definitive and plates 1A, 1D, and 1E for the £3 in the Museum’s reference collection.

