

December 1994



Royal Mail

British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 32. No: 4 The Royal Mail Magazine for Stamp Collectors Price 75p





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British Philatelic Bulletin

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Main Feature

British Christmas Stamps 110

James Mackay reviews the many festive issues since 1966



The Directors and Staff of Royal Mail wish all Bulletin readers a Happy and Peaceful Christmas and New Year

Royal Mail News

Perhaps this section should, this month, be headed "Royal Mail Mews", as it previews a set of five stamps depicting Cats which go on sale at post offices, and philatelic outlets on 17 January.

The designs are based on watercolours by Elizabeth Blackadder who knows each cat from her neighbourhood in Edinburgh. The **19p** stamp (inland basic 2nd class rate) depicts a black cat named Sophie; a Siamese called Puskas and a tabby named Tigger are featured on the **25p** value (basic inland 1st class and EC rate).

On the **30p** (basic rate for European, non-EC countries) is a ginger cat called Chloe and a tortoiseshell and Abyssinian named Kikko and Rosie are portrayed on the **35p** denomination (overseas postcard rate).



The subject of the final stamp, **41p** (basic airmail letter rate) is a sleeping, bicoloured cat called Fred.

The special relationship between cats and humans dates back over 50 centuries to the time when Ancient Egyptians tamed the nocturnal wild cat of the African savannahs. The Egyptians came to venerate them as household gods;

millions were mummified and placed in temples. Ancient traders took cats to Italy from where they spread across Europe. By the 10th century they had reached Britain.

Today cats are popular pets and many owners enter their prized animals in shows. The first proper cat show was held at London's Crystal Palace in 1871.

This will be the first set of Royal Mail stamps devoted entirely to cats although these delightful animals have appeared on a number of British stamps in recent years. The Cheshire Cat is shown on the 13p International Year of the Child stamp of 1979 (SG 1094), a cat with an arched back can be seen in the bottom left-hand corner of the 31p British Fairs stamp of 1983 (1230) and a black and white cat sits on a chimney on the 1983 16p Christmas stamp (1232). A beautiful drawing of a Wild Cat, by Ken Lilley, graces the 1986 31p Nature Conservation stamp (1322) and two Cat drawings by Edward Lear are found on the 19p and 32p stamps marking the centenary of his death in 1988 (1405, 1407). A charming kitten features on the 20p value in the 1990 RSPCA set (1479). Cats have been depicted on a number of Greetings stamps. The Cheshire Cat features in the "Smiles" issues (SG 1486, 1553); black cats can be seen on four of the 1992 "Good Luck" stamps (1539, 1541/2/5); and Orlando the Marmalade Cat dominates the eighth stamp of the 1994 issue (1807).

Technical Details

<i>Printers:</i>	The House of Questa Ltd
<i>Process:</i>	Offset-lithography
<i>Size:</i>	41 x 30mm
<i>Sheets:</i>	100
<i>Perforation:</i>	15 x 14
<i>Phosphor:</i>	19p – one phosphor band 25p – two phosphor bands
<i>Paper:</i>	OPA free (OBA = Optical Brightening Agent)
<i>Gum:</i>	PVA
<i>Presentation Pack:</i>	No. 254, price £1.85
<i>Stamp Cards:</i>	Nos. 167a-e, price 25p each

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office philatelic outlets around a week before 17 January, 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 Kitts Green, price £2.18 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.86 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 17 January 1995.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers on the day of issue, for the Bureau or Kitts Green cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, BIRMINGHAM B1 1AA (for Kitts Green postmark). The outer envelope should be endorsed "FD951" (Bureau) or "FD952" (Kitts Green).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at

most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, 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 Cats stamp to covers to receive all special cancels ("First Day of Issue", sponsored and philatelic counters), in use on 17 January. The minimum 1st class rule is suspended on this day as the Cats set includes a 2nd class rate stamp. It should be noted that this concession applies only to the 19p Cats stamp; covers bearing other than Cats stamps must bear at least 1st class postage.

1995 Stamp Programme Changes

The date of issue of the 1995 Greetings stamps will now be 21 March; this supersedes the provisional date of 31 January given in October's Six Month Digest. The Greetings stamp cards will be available from 14 March. The date of issue of the 1995 Christmas stamps has been brought forward to 31 October from 7 November (date given in October's Royal Mail News).

1995 Scottish Aerogrammes

The two 1995 aerogrammes will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Glasgow School of Art, and feature Prehistoric monuments in Scotland. Dates of issue are still to be confirmed, expected to be during March and July.

The 1994 Scottish aerogrammes marking the centenary of the death of Robert Louis Stevenson (22 March) and the bicentenary of the formation of the Gordon Highlanders (19 July) are still available from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters Ltd philatelic outlets, price 45p each. Scottish aerogrammes were introduced in 1974; 40 have been issued; making an interesting collection featuring Scottish history, culture, heritage, personalities, flora and fauna, and institutions.

Bureau Prize Draw

The British Philatelic Bureau's summer mailing offered customers the chance to win a unique Philatelic Numismatic Cover bearing a gold £2

coin. Over 50,000 entries were received and the draw took place on 21 September. The lucky winner was Mrs E Jones of Aldershot, Hants. The draw was made by Paul Shepherd, a catering assistant at the Philatelic Bureau who in August struck gold at the Commonwealth Games in Victoria, Canada. Paul captured the boxing flyweight gold after beating Kenya's Darcan Karanja by 20 to 9 points in the flyweight final.

The Philatelic Numismatic Cover produced by Royal Mint and Royal Mail to mark the 25th anniversary of the Investiture of the Prince of Wales proved very popular and the Bureau's allocation was quickly sold out. A donation of £20,000 from sales of the covers was made to the Prince's Trust for Wales. Our photograph shows Prince Charles accepting a cheque from Mr Brian Williams, Marketing Director of Royal Mint.



1994 Christmas Stamps

The cylinders and colours used were as follows:

19p P15 (phosphor) 2A (turquoise-green) 2B (greenish yellow) 1C (bright magenta) 1D (new blue) 1E (dull blue) 1F (grey-black)

25p 1A (orange-brown) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (bright magenta) 1D (new blue) 1E (light blue) 1F (bistre) 1G (grey-black)

30p 1A (light brown) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (bright magenta) 1D (blue) 1E (turquoise blue) 1F (new blue) 1G (brownish grey)

35p 1A (deep grey-brown) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (bright magenta) 1D (turquoise blue), 1E (dull violet-blue) 1F (ochre) 1G (brown)

41p 1A (blue) 1B (greenish yellow) 1C (bright magenta) 1D (turquoise-blue) 1E (light blue) 1F (grey)

Golden Mercury Award

Royal Mail has recently won an award for the postal administration which does most to promote philately. The award, made by the International Federation of Stamp Dealers Associations, recognises Royal Mail's ongoing commitment to the youth programme and continuing use of television in advertising new stamp issues.

Runners up were the United States Postal Service for their recent stamp issues on popular American personalities, including Elvis Presley. The Elvis issue stimulated newspaper interest throughout the world and helped to promote stamps to people who might not usually be interested.

Third place went to the Australia Post for their support of "Stamp Month" in Australia which aims to promote stamp collecting for everyone.

The awards were made in Korea during the recent Congress of the Universal Postal Union and international stamp exhibition. The Royal Mail award was received by Mr Bill Cockburn, Chief Executive of The Post Office.

£10 Stamp Winners

Ten of the 31 readers who responded to our invitation for views on the next British international exhibition (May Bulletin) have been sent single copies of the £10 stamp: Mrs A M Bovis (W Sussex); Dr D B Dahm (USA); E G Howard (London); C G Burdon (Essex); Mrs M Coling (Hampshire); Mr & Mrs M Middleton (Norfolk); Ms E A Prigg (Worcestershire); G Thompson (W Yorkshire); I M Paton (Cambridgeshire); and G Shaw (France).

1993 Special Stamp Quantities

Swans

18p	25,239,900
24p	27,256,700
28p	5,186,200
33p	5,299,600
38p	5,292,200
Stamp cards (sets)	104,820

Marine Timekeepers

24p	27,792,100
28p	5,197,300
33p	5,245,800
39p	5,324,900
Stamp cards (sets)	77,320

Orchids

18p	23,266,300
24p	30,377,100

28p	5,496,500
33p	5,777,900
39p	5,634,300
Stamp cards (sets)	80,060

Art in the 20th Century

24p	28,432,100
28p	5,553,500
33p	5,529,800
39p	5,702,400
Stamp cards (sets)	77,540

Roman Britain

24p	26,885,900
28p	5,172,700
33p	5,160,800
39p	6,420,900
Stamp cards (sets)	76,260

Inland Waterways

24p	26,692,400
28p	5,073,500
33p	5,090,300
39p	6,137,800
Stamp cards (sets)	73,100

Autumn

18p	25,731,700
24p	27,124,300
28p	5,038,200
33p	5,041,700
39p	5,775,700
Stamp cards (sets)	74,800

Sherlock Holmes

24p x 5	43,681,200
Stamp cards (sets)	74,660

Christmas

19p	311,923,300
25p	172,898,600
30p	14,614,100
35p	13,616,300
41p	16,872,800
Stamp cards	92,880

Changes to First & Second Class Stamp Books

Royal Mail has updated the branding of its range of stamp books to give a more consistent look to the entire Stamp Book range. The numerals identifying the number of stamps contained in the book, together with all copy on the stamp books is printed in the Stempel Garamond typeface.

Retail stamp books now bear a large barcode on the back cover to facilitate barcode reading for a number of retailers who sell our stamp books. In addition, the back cover of each stamp

book will advise customers of other stamp books available in the range. The first class stamp books will bear an illustration on the left hand side of the front cover which gives the impression of first class NVIs. Similarly, the second class stamp books bear an illustration of second class NVIs.

Six new books with these changes will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office philatelic outlets from 10 January 1995:

10 x 1st printed by Harrisons, Questa and Walsall

10 x 2nd printed by Questa

4 x 1st printed by Walsall

4 x 2nd printed by Harrisons



This new branding will also apply to Greetings, Christmas and international Stamp Books in future, and longer-term to the vended stamp book range.

The books will also feature a change to the copy concerning the Postcodes helpline – which now reads:

“Need a postcode?

Call 0345 111 222 9am-5pm Monday to Friday.

Calls are charged at local rates.”

In addition, copy indicating the validity of NVI stamps, now reads as follows:

“These stamps are valid whatever the current postage rate and may be used for first class items up to 60g within the UK or up to 20g to countries in the European Community (EC). They can also be used as part payment for postage on heavier items to any country provided the full cost of postage is paid for the item.” (*First class books*)

“These stamps are valid whatever the current postage rate and may be used for second class items up to 60g within the UK or as part

payment for postage on heavier items to any country provided the full cost of postage is paid for the item.” (*Second class books*)

Jane Ormrod, Manager Stamp Books

Phillips Gold Medal for Stamp Design

Reginald M Phillips of Brighton (1888-1977) not only gave his magnificent collection of British Victorian stamps to start the National Postal Museum, but initiated a gold medal to be presented to the designer who had made the greatest contribution to British postage stamp design over a five year period. The medal, for the years 1990-94, has been awarded to Howard Brown for his 1991 Maps and 1993 Marine Timekeepers stamps. Mr Brown received the medal at a ceremony at the Museum on 18 November. Previous winners of this prestigious award have been: David Gentleman (1964-69 and 1975-79); the late Stuart Rose (1970-74); Adrian George (1980-84) and Barry Robinson (1985-89).

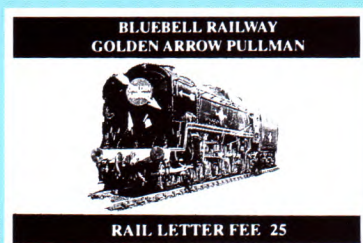
Howard Brown who was born in County Durham, is one of the brightest freelance designers in the UK, with his own consultancy based in West London. He specialises in graphic design for people and companies working in the “arts” field – music publishers, film companies, art galleries, photographers, and the like. His Map and Marine Timekeepers stamps were judged the best and second best issues of the year in our *Bulletin* readers’ polls in 1991 and 1993. Three of the four Timekeepers stamps were amongst readers’ top ten favourite individual stamps of 1993. The Maps stamps were awarded the Italian Asiago prize for stamp design in 1992.

The panel of judges for this year’s award were: Mr Barry Robinson, Head of Stamp Design, Royal Mail (Chairman); Mr Dick Negus and Ms Mary Lewis of the Royal Mail Stamp Advisory Committee; Mr Lewis Bronze, Programme Editor BBC *Blue Peter*; Ms Linda Relph-Knight, Editor *Design Week Magazine*; and Mr John Holman, Editor *British Philatelic Bulletin*. The panel had a difficult task as there have been so many interesting designs over the past five years, a number of which have “broken new ground” in design and philatelic terms. The panel also recognised the important contributions of Tony Meeuwissen (1991 “Good Luck” Greetings stamps), the late Tony Evans (1989 RSPCA), Jean-Michel Folon (1991 Europe in Space) and John Gorham (1990 Queen Mother, 1990 Christmas, 1992 Wintertime).

Stamp Scene

Post Offices Open During 1971

Tom Valentine of Montrose, Angus adds to lists published some time ago of post offices which remained open during the 1971 strike and known to have cancelled first day covers of the Decimal Definitive stamps. He adds Spean Bridge, Inverness-shire, having a cover bearing the ½ p to 9p stamps cancelled with that office's single-ring datestamp.



Railway Letter Stamps

The Bluebell Railway issued a new 25p definitive stamp on 27 August 1994. This features locomotive No. 35027 "Port Line" bearing the head-board for "The Golden Arrow" service. The stamp was designed by QD Printing

Ltd from a photograph by Mike Esau, and printed in sheets of four by Faulwood & Herbert Ltd in offset lithography. Some 2000 were produced. The stamp is available mint at face value, on first day cover at £2.50 or first day postcard at £1.50. Orders of less than £5 should be paid for in mint GB stamps of up to 25p face value and should be accompanied by a suitable stamped, self-addressed envelope (at least 7 x 9ins for covers). This will make processing and despatch of orders simpler and quicker. Orders/enquiries: Peter A Forrester Smith, 64 Gordon Road, CARSHALTON BEECHES, Surrey, SM5 3RE.

The Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway issued its first railway letter stamp on 15 October – this features the Railway's crest. The stamp is of 25p value; printed in sheets of eight. Available unused at face value, on first day cover £2.75. Postage extra. Orders/enquiries: GWR Railway Postal Service, Rose Bank House, Rose Bank, off London Road, WORCESTER WR5 2DZ.



Exhibition Stamp Book

The Portadown & District Philatelic Society issued a book for its Annual Exhibition and Fair on 24 September 1994. This was produced in a limited edition of 150. The front cover features the Portadown Duplex postmark from 1873 and contains within its pages a Royal Mail 50p stamp book containing two 25p stamps. The pages contain details of the Society, local and philatelic advertising. The book is available at £1.25 plus postage from: John Proctor, 15 Dorchester Park, PORTADOWN, Co Armagh BT62 3EA. Books for 1991 and 1992 exhibitions (limited editions of 200 each) are also available from Mr Proctor, price £1.25 each plus postage.

Bulletin Back Issues

A complete set of the Bulletin from Volume 3 to the current issue is available for a reasonable sum which will be offered to charity. Write to: R B, 10 Cockney Hill, Tilehurst, READING RG3 4EU.

Look Before You Lick!

MATTHEW P HINTON

3. Machin Variations

The stamps from the Machin series are all, of course, definitives. Definitives are often thought of as “ordinary stamps”. There are said to be more than 2000 different Machins, of which fewer than 500 of these might be considered basic ones. This means that about 1500 of the series are varieties of some sort. Obviously it is impossible to do them justice in this short space, but I shall mention a few which I think are of particular interest.

Value Varieties

Not all these varieties are listed in the catalogues – there are simply too many. One area usually mentioned is the value varieties. As well as the variations in the setting and type of value, there are other features worth noting. For example, the 3p bright blue stamp from 50p books can be found in a pane of six (five stamps and a label) with the top serif of the “3” omitted on the second stamp in the top row (SG *Specialised Catalogue* UB36d, UB39b, UB41b, etc). The same stamp is also known with thick “p” in “3p” (SG UB42e).



Pane of 3p stamps with top serif omitted on “3” of value (middle stamp, top row)

Screened values are a common feature. For example the 37p red exists both with and without screening dots in the value tablet. In this case, the screened variety is worth more but this can be the other way round – as the 34p slate ACP/PVAD from cylinder 2. The unscreened variety is very difficult to find in this case.

The differences in value settings can be illustrated with the 2½p pink with centre band and FCP/PVA paper; the value position here varies from high to low. Differences in value types are clearly shown on the 3p dark pink ACP/PVAD.

Shades & Inking Varieties

Variations in shades are a particular favourite of mine. Recent examples of this include the 1991 18p light green with centre phosphor band. The most distinctive shade produced here came about by means of a difference in the mix of inks. The result was that The Queen’s head appeared “yellow” (although it doesn’t look very yellow at all to me!). I, and others I have spoken to, prefer this shade to the normal. The variety exists only on copies from cylinder 4.



Shades – 18p “yellow” head (cylinder 4) and “normal” (cylinder 12) and 1p “plum” and “normal”

The comment about it being a more attractive shade than the original also applies to another recent shade variation – that of the 1991 “plum” 1p ACP/PVAD. Such changes in inks more are sometimes more appealing to the eye than the original shade!



“One off varieties” – 9p with vertical line flaw and 10½p with overinking on Queen’s cheek (normals shown for comparison)

Another example of an inking error occurs when the design is flooded with ink. Rather sensibly, the feature is termed “overinked” and has been present on some of the 10½p steel blue stamps of 1978 and also on some of the current 19p olive green.

A one-off variety is shown here. There is a vertical black line through The Queen’s head on the bicoloured 9p orange and black; this may be a Doctor Blade flaw.

Head Types

The design of the Machin head, believe it or not, can vary quite considerably. There are seven main types of head and many more subtypes. For example, one head shows a pearl missing from the necklace and another, used for the Country 10½p values, has a shaded space for one sector of the central cross. It is impossible to explain the heads in any depth here – readers are referred to the *SG Specialised Catalogue*, Vol. 4, *Connoisseur Machin Catalogue* and Douglas Myall’s *Complete Deegam Machin Handbook* (all of which have been reviewed in this magazine).

2nd class NVI with “blind at base” perforation (and normal for comparison)



Underprinted design on reverse – double star

Blind at Base Variety

Some of the straight-edged Walsall printed window book panes, with imperforate horizontal edges, appeared with the lowest perforation holes omitted and this feature is called “blind at base” by some. Books containing this variety have always been popular; but now the single stamps with the missing holes are becoming collectable.

Underprints

During the 1980s, eight Machins were issued with a design underprinted on the reverse of the stamp. This was done in a turquoise colour and

there were three different designs – a star, double star and letter “D” (Discount) as most of the stamps were part of books sold at less than face value.

A Variety Reappears

And finally, in true “News at Ten” style, one of my favourite recent varieties is the Enschedé 6p value which was issued in April 1993 and discovered later in the year to have been printed, in small quantities, with a very broad left band and a narrow right-hand band. It had been a long time since a broad band variety had turned up on a sheet stamp. The most memorable was the yellowish green 8½p which, with a wide left band is very scarce and can be worth from £225. The 6p is worth about £1.25, but it is not the value of the variety which makes it appealing – it is the idea of the varieties of the 1980s re-appearing. Also, the 6p broad band has appeared in such huge quantities (I know I said “small quantities”, but I was comparing it with the whole printing), that there are plenty to go round. Cylinder blocks, date blocks, etc are, however, less easy to locate. Readers may also like to know that there are a lot of Enschedé 6p stamps with a narrow left band, although not as narrow, by any means, as the variety described above.

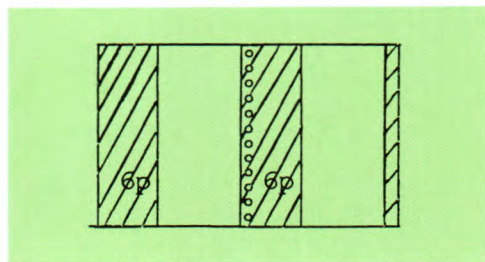


Diagram showing broad and narrow band variety on 6p Enschedé stamp

The potential for collecting is never-ending when factors such as gum, paper, short bands, coils, cylinders, screens, etc are taken into account. The only way to appreciate why hordes of people pay daft amounts of money for tiny pictures of The Queen is to collect the Machins. Then you can see that Her Majesty’s portrait is simply symbolic and that the pleasure comes in studying the features surrounding the symbol. Your collection will not be the same as anyone else’s!

© Matthew P Hinton 1994

Note: The author is grateful to Frank Goldberg and Hampstead Castle for kindly supplying some of the items for illustration.

Wedgwood Benn "PMG Extraordinary"

KENNETH F. CHAPMAN



Anthony Wedgwood Benn, Postmaster General, October 1964-June 1966 (Photo: Gibbons Stamp Monthly)

The appointment of Anthony Wedgwood Benn as Postmaster-General just 30 years ago in 1964 heralded the "big bang" for the General Post Office of the time. Almost immediately the new PMG announced the broadening of the criteria governing the issue of special, or commemorative stamps. No wonder, then, that the late Stuart Rose, in his fine book, *Royal Mail Stamps* (Phaidon Press: 1980) included a chapter he entitled, "PMG Extraordinary".

Just how big a leap forward this was can be demonstrated by a speech made only two years earlier by Miss Mervyn Pike, Assistant PMG, when opening Stampex in London on 16 March 1962. Miss Pike then said the Post Office was proud of its British stamp design tradition: that of the dominance of the monarch's head and the omission of the name of the country. Miss Pike continued, "We at the Post Office regard stamps essentially as a means of paying postage. Postage stamps came first: stamp collecting developed later". (How stamp collecting *could* have preceded the issue of stamps was not explained!)

Finally, the Assistant PMG said that the PO did not believe that stamp collectors would welcome "a large number of stamps each year" and she concluded her remarks thus: "If stamps were issued containing the scenic beauties of Britain or with illustrations of its history and so on, it would be necessary to change their design frequently to do justice to the country's wonderful heritage". Within two years Tony Benn was to show how right Miss Pike's forecast was – and how manageable such a programme of new issues could be.

Genesis of National Postal Museum

It was a co-incidence that, in March 1962 too, the PO received, via Downing Street, a letter from Reginald M Phillips offering to donate his 19th century collection of British stamps as the foundation of a National Postal Museum. The late Kenneth Hind, then a PO Senior Director, who handled negotiations with Mr Phillips, later wrote that during the 1950s the PO "had been gradually modifying its attitude towards philately and philatelists from one of virtual non-recognition to a somewhat guarded acknowledgement of their existence".



Commemorative stamps of the old order – Royal events and postal anniversaries

New Stamp Criteria

Tony Benn plunged in at the deep end. By December 1964 he announced his broadened criteria governing the issuing of "special" postage stamps. At the time issues (other than definitives) were restricted to: Royal anniversaries or occasions; postal anniversaries and occasions; and events of outstanding national or international importance (the latter if Great Britain was a participant).

These were the criteria which guided the PO in 1920s when Britain's first commemorative stamps appeared – the 1d and 1½d British Empire Exhibition (the "Wemblies") of 1924, an international event. Then came the 9th Postal Union Congress of 1929, both a postal and international event with Britain as host. Despite some philatelic black marks for the magnificent £1 stamp ("It's exploiting collectors", complained some organs of the philatelic press of the day"), the PO six years later commemorated George V's Silver Jubilee with four stamps totalling 5½d: the Royal occasion criterion had been invoked. The reign of George VI saw a cautious expansion (including another £1 stamp). Queen Elizabeth II's reign opened, properly, with a four stamp Coronation set (by four different artists – and it looked like it!) and international and postal events were duly commemorated: but there was a loosening up with issues for less impressive events such as National Productivity Year and National Nature Week.

Benn's new criteria read:

- i) to celebrate events of national or international importance;
- ii) to commemorate important anniversaries;
- iii) to reflect the British contribution to world affairs, including the arts and science;
- iv) to extend public patronage to the arts by encouraging the development of minuscule art.

This much broader brief paved the way for a greater variety of "special" stamps, not all of them commemorative but designed to present different aspects of British life of the world at large.

Gentleman and Restall Reports

Another hurdle was overcome in March 1965 when Mr Benn announced in the House of Commons that The Queen had graciously consented to allow non-traditional stamp designs to be submitted for Her approval.

Two major developments evolved from this broader outlook. Firstly, David Gentleman, one of the few artists then capable of producing



Commoners on stamps – Shakespeare, Churchill, Burns (1964–66)

artwork for minuscule reproduction, submitted a long memorandum on his views concerning the possible development of British stamp designs. Secondly, the PO announced a two-year Fellowship in Minuscule Design at the Royal College of Art. J Andrew Restall, a lecturer at Coventry Art School and already an established stamp designer, was granted the fellowship. He wrote an article for *Stamp Collecting* (1966: Vol 107 No.4) entitled, "The Halfway Stage", on the project.

Novelties – unusual shape (2s 6d Parliament, 1965), se-tenant block (Birds, 1966)



Obviously, Restall could not anticipate publication of his final report. He did say, however, that his brief was not geared to the stamp programme of the time. He had concentrated on what he believed to be “major problems in stamp design in general and in British stamp design in particular”. He had tried to take nothing for granted and to question the validity of everything from The Queen’s head to paper size, from perforations to the printing process. During this research, Restall visited Holland, West Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Italy and France to meet freelance designers, engravers, printers, graphic design tutors and others associated in any way with stamp production. Sadly, although it was circulated internally within the PO and, in confidence, to members of the PO Stamp Advisory Committee, the Restall Report was never made public.



Special, non-commemorative, stamps (Landscapes, Technology)

Bureau and Bulletin

One other event had eased the way for the Wedgwood Benn reforms. On 25 March 1963, Reginald Bevins, Benn’s predecessor as PMG, had announced the setting up of a PO Philatelic Bureau. When Frank Langfield, with two colleagues, “opened shop” on 1 May 1963 in an upstairs room in the old Central Telegraph Office (now replaced by the new British Telecom headquarters), nobody could have foreseen the expansion into today’s fully automated Edinburgh operation with a staff of nearly 200.

To Frank Langfield, too, must go the credit for starting this *Bulletin*. No. 1 appeared in September 1963. The very existence of the Bureau and *Bulletin*, both then in very early

stages of their development, were pointers to the way ahead.

It was against this background that Tony Benn “liberated” the stamp issuing policy of the PO. Within a year there was another major event fortuitous to Benn’s aim to increase interest in stamps among collectors and the public alike. That was the transfer of the Phillips Collection to the PO. The symbolic transfer took place at Reginald Phillips’ cliff-top home at Brighton, and Mr Benn, as PMG, signed the Deed of Transfer and personally accepted a representative two of over 40 albums.

Stamps of the Benn Years

Meanwhile, firmly in the saddle, Mr Benn had pushed ahead with his liberalisation.

The 1964 programme of issues had been decided on before he took office. He could not claim to have broken precedent with the Shakespeare Festival issue of 1964 which, for the first time in PO history, featured the portrait of a commoner. It was the insistence of the designer, David Gentleman, that ensured Shakespeare’s portrait appeared on British stamps. the PO excused themselves by saying that the stamps did not commemorate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s birth in 1564: they marked the Shakespeare Festival of 1964 (although no dates appeared on the stamps).

There is no doubt that the Shakespeare precedent encouraged Tony Benn to use the bold portrait of Winston Churchill on the memorial stamps of 1965. If there was one commoner to whom The Queen was willing to give pride of place on “her” stamps, it was Churchill who she held in high regard.

Other innovations of 1965 were the unusually long 2s 6d value of the two stamps for the 700th anniversary of Simon de Montfort’s Parliament and the quite revolutionary se-tenant block of six different designs for the 25th anniversary of the Battle of Britain 4d stamps. Philatelists were intrigued by the novelty but some members of the public were outraged at the sight of a swastika on a British stamp, albeit that the offending symbol was in a submerged Dornier bomber which had received the attentions of the British Hurricanes flying above.

Before leaving office in 1966 the enthusiastic PMG was to support another postal portrait of a commoner, this time of Robert Burns (who had been turned down on a previous occasion), even although there was no evident anniversary to commemorate; and another se-tenant printing, the block of four British birds. These, with the



The first Christmas stamps – designed by children

four-value Landscapes series of May 1966, were examples of non-commemorative special stamps designed to represent aspects of British life, in accordance with the new criteria.

Another legacy of the Wedgwood Benn era was Britain's first issue of Christmas stamps; planned during his period in office but not issued until after his departure. The designs were chosen from entries in a nation-wide school competition initiated by the PMG; some 4484 entries were received from children of all ages up to 16.

David Gentleman shared the invidious task of choosing two winners and came down in favour of the uninhibited work of two six-year old "artists". The mixed public reception of the two stamps excited Tony Benn who, once again, had set a precedent.

Stamp Seminar

In furtherance of his stated policy to employ stamp designs to the fullest advantage, Tony Benn set up an all-day seminar at the Royal College of Art in June 1966 on the theme,

Stamps of the Benn years, 1965-66 issues



"Developments in British Stamp Policy 1964-1966". Invitees included PO personnel concerned with stamp production and distribution, stamp printers, designers, philatelic journalists and representatives of national philatelic organisations.

It was at this seminar that the design proposals the PMG had commissioned from David Gentleman were first shown and acquired convenient recognition as "The Gentleman Album". Novel suggestions by Gentleman included the use of the Royal Arms in place of the reduced Royal Portrait to identify the country of issue; and the linking of designs in a horizontal strip so that they overlapped to produce a story in sequence.

A new Stamp Advisory Committee

No other seminar was held simply because within a week of the 1966 event, a government re-shuffle led the PMG to higher office as Minister of Technology. Benn's successor was Edward Short (now Lord Glenamara), who took the bold step of dissolving the Advisory Panel he had inherited. For a year, the new PMG took his own counsel (and that of his PO officials) on stamp matters and then, in January 1968, a new PO Stamp Advisory Committee was appointed. Its members had interests beyond those of the Council of Industrial Design and the Garter King of Arms (who advised specifically on heraldic matters).

The new SAC, wrote Stuart Rose, "placed less emphases on Establishment Art and more on design, philately and the common man (or woman)". It was Edward Short's way of completing Tony Benn's policy of liberation.

Anthony Wedgwood Benn had held office as PMG for two momentous years during which he revolutionised the outlook, and output, of the PO so far as stamps were concerned. It is not difficult to concur with Stuart Rose's accolade and think of him as the "PMG Extraordinary".

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Ken Chapman has worked professionally in philately since 1928 and is best known as Editor of *Stamp Collecting* from 1951 to 1977. He has also edited *Philatelic Magazine* and *Philately*. From 1968 to 1980 he was a member of the PO Stamp Advisory Committee and served on the Board of the National Postal Museum, 1989-94. He has written extensively for the *Bulletin*, and in 1986 his name was enrolled in the American Philatelic Society's Philatelic Writers' Hall of Fame.

1994 Royal Mail Stamps Poll

Again we are asking readers to vote for their favourite stamps. Shown here are all the special and greetings stamps issued during 1994. Let us know your top three sets and favourite individual stamp (numbered 1-53) on the

enclosed voting form. Also please tell us why you like your favourite set best. We will send 1994 Yearbooks to the first five readers whose voting forms are drawn from all received by 27 January.

The closing date for votes is 27 January 1995 and the results will be published in the *Bulletin*. We look forward to receiving your vote.

A. Age of Steam



1



2



3



4



5

B. 25th Anniversary of the Investiture of The Prince of Wales



6



7



8



9



10

C. Pictorial Postcards



11



12



13



14



15

D. Channel Tunnel



16



17



18



19

E. D-Day



20



21



22



23



24

F. Golf



25



26



27



28



29

G. Summertime



30



31



32



33



34

H. Medical Discoveries



35



36



37



38

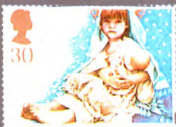
I. Christmas



39



40



41



42



43

J. Greetings (Messages)



49



50



51



52



53



British Christmas Stamps

JAMES MACKAY

In November 1965 Britain made its first Christmas issue, comprising a pair of 6d air letter sheets designed by Michael Goaman and Negus Sharland respectively. The impressed stamps showed a snowflake or an ice crystal, and decorative panels depicted the Adoration of the Shepherds and a montage of snowflakes respectively. The custom of releasing distinctive air letters for the Christmas season has continued ever since.

Adhesive stamps, on the other hand, did not make their debut until 1 December 1966. The designs arose from a children's art competition. Almost 5000 entries were received and eventually the prizes of £20 each were awarded to two six-year olds whose paintings were used for the stamps. The 3d stamp, depicting one of the Three Kings of the Orient, was designed by Tasveer Shemza of St John's Church of England Primary School, Stafford. The 1s 6d stamp was the work of James Berry of Bromley Road Infants School, Beckenham, Kent. It turned out to be quite a year for young James, for he also won *The Observer's* "Paint Daddy" competition and saw his handiwork splashed over the cover of the colour magazine.

Old Masters

By contrast, the issue of 1967 was expanded to a set of three and, in line with the fashion then all the rage, Old Master paintings were reproduced in full colour. An upright format was used for "The Adoration of the Shepherds" from the School of Seville (3d) and Murillo's "Madonna and Child" (4d), but a horizontal format for Louis Le Nain's "Adoration of the Shepherds" (1s 6d).

Having dabbled in sacred art, the Post Office tried a more secular, not to say materialistic, approach in 1968 when Rosalind Dease produced three designs showing a girl with a doll's house (9d), a boy with a train-set (1s 6d) and boy and girl with a rocking horse (4d). Nowadays, I suppose such stereotypical models would not be regarded as politically correct – or the boy would have the doll's house and the girl the Hornby outfit! The official announcement accompanying this issue stated that the PO was

emphasising the joy of giving; but rather it seems to have been the pleasure of receiving that was illustrated.

In 1969 the pendulum swung back towards the religious theme, although the Herald Angel (4d), Three Shepherds (5d) and Three Kings (1s 6d) were given a fresh treatment by the Austrian designer Fritz Wegner in the manner of a medieval illuminated manuscript. An actual manuscript of this type, the *De Lisle Psalter* in the Arundel Collection at the British Library, was the source of the illustrations adapted by Sally Stiff for the set released in November 1970.

Three-Dimensional

Some of the stained glass windows in Canterbury Cathedral provided the inspiration for the set of 1971, designed by the Clarke-Clement-Hughes partnership. Sally Stiff returned to the scene in October 1972 with a set of three which was novel in both design and production. Miss Stiff based her motifs on Angels in early Italian paintings but built them up as collages of various pieces of textile material to create a three-dimensional effect.

This was then translated into multicolour bas-reliefs using a combination of photogravure and embossing.

The Christmas issue was expanded in November 1973 to six stamps, comprising strips of five 3p *se-tenant* and a separate 3½p. All six stamps, designed by David Gentleman, developed the story of Good King Wenceslas based on the traditional carol. Technically, this set was complicated by the use of three types of gum, two types of perforator and the very wide range of cylinders required to produce a very large quantity of stamps employing up to nine colours per design.

A more modest issue took place in November 1974, the Peter Hatch partnership producing a set of four whose motifs were derived from medieval carved roof bosses in York Minster, St Helen's Church Norwich, Ottery St Mary Church and Worcester Cathedral. Although considerable ingenuity was evident in coming up, with more and more unusual topics for designs, the series of 1975 returned to angels and musical instruments. Richard Downer's pleasing set of four, in the manner of the late-medieval limner, were not apparently derived from any specific source.

English embroidery of the 13th and 14th centuries, from the collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum, provided Enid Marx with the inspiration for the set of four released in 1976.

Specifically the 6½p stamp depicted the Virgin and Child from the Clare Chasuble (1272-94), the 8½p featured an Angel with Crown from a pair of panels dating from 1340-70 in a chapel in Hampshire, the 11p depicted the Angel appearing to the Shepherds from an alb dating around 1320-40, and the 13p reproduced the Three Kings from the Butler-Bowden Cope (1330-50).

Twelve Days

In 1977 the Christmas issue reverted to a *set-tenant* strip of five (7p) and a single (9p). David Gentleman was again the designer, but on this occasion he chose another popular carol, "The Twelve Days of Christmas". Each of the stamps depicted two of the subjects in the carol, the 9p value being reserved for the punch-line "And a Partridge in a Pear Tree". I am reminded that the carol is also a feat of memory, and forfeits were exacted from singers who got the verses muddled up. It is a matter for regret, therefore, that the subjects as printed in the sheet were not in the right order.



Religious theme – 1967, 1969

Following the same genre, Faith Jacques (1978) concentrated not so much on a specific carol but on the singers. Thus the 7p depicted a mid-Victorian family singing carols round the tree, while the waifs (9p) and 18th century carol-singers (11p) contrasted with the 16th century mummers performing "The Boar's Head Carol".

There was a reprise of the 1969 series ten years later when Fritz Wegner designed the set of five featuring traditional scenes from the Nativity, complete with adroit use of gold and geometric border patterns. Jeffery Matthews tried a new approach in 1980, his set of five depicting stylised Christmas decorations.

Children's Designs

After a decent interval had elapsed, it was time to test the designing abilities of a new generation

of children. In 1981 a contest was organised through the medium of the *Blue Peter* television programme and this eventually yielded five designs. In 1966 the stamps had borne the names of the winning artists in the margins; this time their ages were included. Samantha Brown, whose rubicund Father Christmas graced the 11½p stamp, was only five years old at the time of the contest and thus passed into the record books as the world's youngest stamp designer. Lucinda Blackmore aged eight designed the Flying Angel (18p) while Sophie Sharp aged eight produced the Three Kings approaching Bethlehem (25p), but the work of Tracy Jenkins aged 14 and Stephen Moore aged 18 (22p) defeated the object of the exercise by being far too adult, sophisticated and accomplished. The essence of good children's stamp design should be that it is artless and infantile, but when you get teenagers producing work that would put many a hardened professional to shame the exercise loses its point to some extent.

Barbara Brown's set in 1982 illustrated five of the best loved carols and it is interesting to compare her treatment of "Good King Wenceslas" (29p) with that of David Gentleman. Tony Meeuwissen (1983) produced a set of five working a symbolic peace dove into whimsical motifs of pillar-box, chimney pots and street-lamp among others.

The 1984 series by Yvonne Gilbert was unusual in several respects. The 13p value was issued in a pane of 20 in a Christmas booklet at a discount, denoted by the double-lined letter D printed on the back of the stamps. The 31p stamp was re-issued on 5 January 1985 for use on covers raising money for the Famine in Africa appeal, distinctive covers being produced for the purpose.

In more recent years stamps have displayed such themes as Pantomime (1985), traditional customs (1986), Christmas seen through the eyes of a young child (1987), Christmas cards (1988), architecture from Ely Cathedral (1989), seasonal activities (1990), illuminated manuscripts (1991) and stained glass windows (1992). Last year's offering celebrated the 150th Anniversary of *A Christmas Carol*, featuring some of the best-loved of Dickens's characters.

If one also takes into account the welter of aerogrammes, presentation packs, PHQ cards and special Christmas postmarks, the British issues of the past three decades amount to a formidable collection.

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Decimal Stamp Books-18

Specialist Report

D G A MYALL

Retail NVI security books

Since the introduction in April 1993 of books containing NVI stamps with security features, including elliptical perforations, there have been only two changes to the text on the inside covers. One affects the notice of validity of NVIs generally; the other contains a message about postcodes. (There were other variations of these texts before the security issues.) The change in the validity notice was mentioned here in October last year and the new postcode message in October this year. Royal Mail calls these books "Security Style" and this column will refer to the variations as the first, second and third NVI security issues. The three editions are, therefore:

- No. 1 validity notice referring to use in UK and EC countries only; postcode message with telephone number and time.
- No. 2 validity notice without territorial restriction; postcode message with telephone number only;
- No. 3 as No. 2 but with revised postcode message giving days and cost etc.

Plate numbers

There have been many changes in plate numbers appearing in stamp books since the last list was given here in June. The number of collectable Walsall books has been increased by the fact that there have been several changes in cover design, associated with special promotions, and some combinations have appeared in more than one cover. Walsall have now completed the introduction of the new cover card with a matt, instead of a glossy, surface on the inside. Also, Walsall have begun to change their phosphor bands from double ("split") ones each side of the vertical perforations, to a single ("solid") band. This change over is now complete except for the £1.64 (4 x 41p) airmail letter book.

Walsall do not number their phosphor plates, so the changeover to solid bands can only be recognised in conjunction with changes in the combinations of colour plates. Questa, on the

other hand, number their phosphor plates but, until very recently, called them all Q1 despite the fact that more than one has been in use. For example, the plate used to print the continuous bands on the 2nd-class NVIs for books cannot be the same as that printing the former interrupted bands. Either there has been a change of policy or the latest Q1 plate has at last worn out, for phosphor plate Q2 has now appeared. There are, however, two of these! One prints the continuous central band on the 2nd-class stamps; the other prints two (left and right) bands on the 1st-class ones.

To help you keep your "plate collection" up-to-date, a table is included here showing all the new lithograph plates introduced since June. There have been no new cylinder numbers for the Harrison photogravure retail books.

The cylinder numbers seen on the two Christmas books are:

- 10 x 25p (*The Magi*) – B1A (orange brown), B1B (greenish yellow), B2C (bright magenta), B1D (blue), B1E (light blue), B1F (bistre) and B1G (grey black);
- 20 x 19p (*Holy Family*) – B1A (turquoise-green), B2B (greenish yellow), B2C (bright magenta), B1D (new blue), B1E (dull blue), B1F (grey black) and B97 (phosphor).

Sample Books

Mention has been made previously of the special book covers supplied without stamps to retailers for display purposes. These have no barcode and have the word SAMPLE printed on the yellow strip. The four with NVIs and the two for the basic overseas airmail rates exist with both the glossy and matt card. The one for the 4 x 60p book exists only with matt card, as does that for the Christmas version.

Display samples are also prepared for the other barcode books. The two for this year's Christmas books are very interesting as they differ from the normal folded versions. They consist of a single, unfolded, card with no printing on the white reverse. The designs are those used on the actual book covers but have a simulated yellow strip at the right with no wording. The cards are similar to those used in display cases at post offices and can no longer, in my view, be called sample books.

Making the Christmas Books

Recently, I was privileged to see the two Libra machines at Harrisons in action. One was making the 1st-class Christmas book and the



Christmas stamp books

other the 2nd-class book. The latter was particularly interesting as the web of stamps was turned over during its journey to meet the covers (the printers call this a kite fold). This was because it contains 20 stamps as against the ten of the 1st-class book, and requires an extra fold. (The other folds in the pane are caused when the cover is folded and sealed.)

Another fascinating operation during the making of these books is a device to monitor one edge of the stamp panes after they are affixed to the covers. This is to ensure that they are neither too short (trimmed close) nor too long. It is only necessary to look at one edge as, if it is too long, then the opposite edge will be too short. Books with panes outside the permitted tolerance are rejected, and have the word VOID printed on them in black. These are removed from the chute before packaging begins.

The fact that these books are extracted and destroyed as waste is not only an indication of the high standards employed at Harrison's but also proof that Royal Mail is dedicated to producing books which meet the exacting

requirements of collectors. The "spoilt" books could easily have been sold to the general public who do not notice, or care about, such things. Such an obligation imposed on the printers by Royal Mail, must increase the overall costs of production and is something to bear in mind when next we ask where the profits from philately go.

Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum

My visit to Harrison's was arranged by the Association. Such opportunities are just a small part of their wide-ranging programme, which includes talks by experts, including Museum staff. Members are entitled to a free set of all NPM cards and a twice-yearly, award-winning, magazine, *Cross Post*. There is something for everybody and, of course, you have the opportunity to help the Museum as a Friend. Why not join now? Write for more information to Ray Pottle, PO Box 40, UCKFIELD, East Sussex, TN22 2SP. Be sure to include a stamped envelope, or an international reply coupon.

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Window (Retail) books – Plate Number Update

Note: The dates given in this table are those when the books were first reported on sale; they may differ from any announced officially. Moreover, since distribution is random, some may have been sold even earlier.

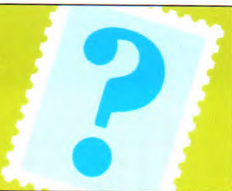
Printer	Content	Barcode	First issue		Second issue		Third issue		Notes
			Numbers	Date	Numbers	Date	Numbers	Date	
Questa	10 x 2nd NVI CB	100265	—	—	Q11 Q11/Q1	6.5.94	—	—	1, 2
					Q12 Q12/Q1	1.7.94	Q12 Q12/Q1	1.9.94	2, 3
					—	—	Q14 Q14/Q1	26.8.94	2
							Q15 Q15/Q1	16.9.94	
							Q16 Q16/Q1	29.9.94	
							Q17 Q17/Q2	7.10.94	
	10 x 1st NVI 2B	100197	—	—	Q2 Q2/Q1	5.8.94	—	—	
					Q3 Q3/Q1	19.7.94	Q3 Q3/Q1	2.9.94	
					—	—	Q4 Q4/Q2	4.10.94	
	4 x 1st NVI 2B	100180	—	—	Q1 Q1 Q1 Q1 Q1 Q1 Q1/Q1			27.7.94	4
Walsall	4 x 1st NVI 2B	100180	—	—	W14 W24 W21	26.3.94	—	—	5
					W15 W25 W22	22.4.94			6
					W16 W25 W23	23.6.94			
					W17 W26 W24	15.7.94			
					W18 W26 W24	20.8.94			
					W18 W27 W25	22.9.94			
					W18 W27 W26	7.10.94			
	10 x 1st NVI 2B	100197	W31 W19 W23	26.7.94	—	—	—	—	5, 7
			W32 W20 W24	4.7.94					6, 7
			W33 W21 W25	29.7.94	W33 W21 W25	1.7.94			6, 7, 8
			—	—	W34 W22 W26	3.9.94			6, 9
					W34 W22 W27	2.9.94			
					W35 W22 W27	18.9.94			
					W35 W22 W28	5.10.94			
	4 x 35p	101262	—	—	W2 W1	3.8.94	—	—	6, 10
	4 x 60p	101897	—	—	W1 W1	9.8.94	—	—	6, 11, 12
		101910			W1 W1	4.10.94			6, 11, 13

Notes:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 interrupted phosphor bands | 'win' and 'lose' books; there was no postcode message |
| 2 continuous phosphor bands | 9 'Stampers' design |
| 3 Q13 Q13 should exist but has not been seen | 10 these books have a rates table instead of a validity notice and the postcode message of the second NVI security issue; the earlier W1 W1 combination had double 'split' bands |
| 4 validity notice and postcode message of the second NVI security issue | 11 rates table instead of a validity notice; postcode message of the first NVI security issue |
| 5 matt cover, double ('split') phosphor bands | 12 original issue |
| 6 matt cover, single ('solid') phosphor bands | 13 Christmas version |
| 7 'Rupert' design | |
| 8 the second issue had the 'Chance to Win a Kite' design; the same combination was used for both | |

Competition

SPONSORED BY:
CLASSICS WITHOUT
TEARS



Win a Great Britain Edward VII £1 Green

This month's competition is sponsored by CLASSICS WITHOUT TEARS from OMNIPHIL – a new source for collectors to obtain scarce classics and high values, post free upon approval, without obligation, selected from their FREE CATALOGUE.

* 1st prize: Great Britain 1902 King Edward VII £1 dull blue-green, a sound nicely used central Guernsey circular postmark example, SG 266, catalogued £300.

* 2nd prize: Great Britain 1840 Queen Victoria 2d blue, four margins example, lightly cancelled with lovely colour, SG 5, catalogued £300.

* 3rd prize: Great Britain 1994 "Boots" 1st class pane ERROR – 5mm miscut resulting in roulette cutting through corner of stamp and missing line of text. With normal for comparison. A striking error!

* 4th prize: A similar error to the 3rd prize, not quite so striking with half line of text missing. With normal for comparison.



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Where do collectors go when they are looking for those scarce classics and elusive high values which add sparkle to their collections?

Where can they be sure that stamps selected are accurately described and guaranteed genuine? They could try auction, but how can they be sure that the price they pay includes no hidden extras whatsoever? (buyer's premiums, VAT, handling charge and post & packing can add as much as 35% extra to pay at auction), and unless the purse overfloweth what guarantee is there of purchasing the lot anyway against opposition?

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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: December Bulletin Competition, Room G06, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL to arrive by 27 January. You may submit as many entries as you like but each must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

1. Who designed the forthcoming Cats stamps?
2. In what year were Scottish aerogrammes first issued?
3. Who opened STAMPEX in March 1962?
4. Which stamp designer collects teddy bears?
5. English embroidery featured on Christmas stamps in which year?

The answers will be found in this *Bulletin*.
The competition is not open to employees, their families and agents, of Royal Mail or Omniphil.

The winners of the September competition were: P Sygrove of Devon (Cape of Good Hope 4d); S Henault of USA (Yugoslavia high value); K Thornhill of Leicester, M do Luque of Spain, J Patel of Birminham, and G Bankual of France (Guernsey 10s stamps). The prizes were donated by Omniphil Approvals.

The answers were: 1. Clement Attlee; 2. £4.99; 3. 1853; 4. Jenny Tylden-Wright; 5. John Dickenson.

Our thanks to all who entered.

1994 Definitives, Country Stamps and Stamped Stationery Checklist

Each December we publish a listing of definitives, country stamps and stamped stationery issued during the year. We hope this 1994 list will prove helpful to collectors in completing their collections. Please read the following notes carefully.

Notes

Printers. (H) Harrison & Sons Ltd., photogravure; (E) Joh Enschedé en Zonen, photogravure; (Q) The House of Questa Ltd., offset-lithography; (W) Walsall Security Printers Ltd., offset-lithography.

Perforations. All definitive stamps, National and Country (Regional), are perforated 15 x 14; they also 'have a three-hole ellipse at left and right.

Paper and Gum. The paper, whether prepared for photogravure or offset-lithography, is either: Non-phosphor coated, free of Optical Brightening Agent (OBA), and overprinted with phosphor bands, (OFNP); or Phosphor coated, free of OBA, (OFPP).

Either may be gummed PVA or PVAD; details are given in the list. The over-printed phosphor bands include a fluorescent additive, ("C" phosphor).

Stamps with no value indicated (NVI) are issued as definitives and as Greetings stamps. Some of the single stamps were issued only in books and can be bought from Royal Mail only in complete books. To help collectors, we quote the relevant order number as given on British Philatelic Bureau stock lists.

25 January

50p Machine book (TB030); Coaching Inns, No. 1 – Swan with Two Necks. Contents two 25p stamps with no phosphor bars, and two Postcode labels; (H), OFPP/PVAD.

£1 Machine book (TB031); Prime Ministers, No. 1 – Asquith. Contents four 25p stamps with two phosphor bars; (W), OFNP/PVA.

Note: Available from Bureau and philatelic outlets from the date shown; on sale from machines at post offices as stocks of earlier (November 1993) books were used up.

1 February

£2.50 Greetings (Messages) book (JB009).

Contents 10 x 1st-class NVI stamps with two phosphor bars, featuring characters from children's literature, and 20 greetings labels; (H), OFNP/PVAD.

Presentation Pack No. G3 (JP003) containing the Greetings book pane, price £2.85.

15 February

To Pay labels, St. Edward's Crown design. Low value set of six: 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p, 20p and 25p, (KS002) and High Value set of three: £1, £1.20 and £5 (LS002). (Q), PVA. Perf 15 x 14 with ellipses.

Collectors' Pack No. 32 (LP002) containing one each of the nine labels as above, price £8.20.

15 February

New C5 envelopes with pre-paid Machin head impression for postage up to 60g, price 31p 1st-class (RY007) and 25p 2nd-class (RY008). The earlier (July 1991) C5 envelopes for postage up to 100g continued on sale.

22 February

£1.90 Retail Book (UB086). Contents 10 x 2nd-class NVI stamps; (W), PVA.

Note: The stamps were as in the earlier (April 1993) Walsall retail books of four but were their first books of 10 x 2nd-class NVIs with elliptical perforations. These books were available from some retail shops from November 1993.

22 February

£2.50 Retail Book (UB087) 'Free Postcards' offer. Contents 10 x 1st-class NVI stamps with two phosphor bars and a promotional interleaf; (W), PVA. The stamps are as in earlier (6 April and 1 November 1993) Walsall retail books.

22 March

Scottish Aerogramme (QS033); Centenary of death of R L Stevenson. Price 45p including aerogramme postage indicated by a 1(st) postage paid impression and the Machin head.

26 April

50p Machine book (TB032); Coaching Inns, No. 2 – Bull and Mouth. Contents two 25p

stamps with no phosphor bars, and two Postcode labels; (H), OFPP/PVAD.

£1 Machine stamp book (TB033); Prime Ministers, No. 2 – Lloyd George. Contents four 25p stamps with no phosphor bars; (H), OFPP/PVAD.

£2 Machine stamp book (TB034); Postal Vehicles No. 2 – Experimental Motor Van. Contents eight 25p stamps with no phosphor bars; (H), OFPP/PVAD.

Note: The £1 book was printed in photogravure by Harrison instead of in lithography by Walsall as formerly. Available from Bureau and philatelic outlets from the date shown; on sale from machines at post offices as stocks of earlier books were used up.

6 June

50p Machine book (TB035); Coaching Inns, No. 3 – The Golden Cross. Contents two 25p stamps with no phosphor bars, and two Postcode labels; (H), OFPP/PVAD.

£1 Machine book (TB036); Prime Ministers, No. 3 – Churchill. Contents four 25p stamps with no phosphor bars; (H), OFPP/PVAD.

Note: Available from Bureau and philatelic outlets from the date shown; on sale from machines at post offices as stocks of earlier books were used up.

14 June

Pictorial Aerogramme (QO031) commemorating the 75th anniversary of Alcock and Brown's trans-Atlantic flight. Price 45p including aerogramme postage indicated by a 1(st) postage paid impression and the Machin head.

1 July

£2.50 Retail Book "Chance to Win a Kite" promotion run in conjunction with WH Smith & Sons. Contents 10 x 1st-class NVI stamps with two phosphor bars; (W), PVA. There were two versions: "Win" (UB094) and "Lose" (UB095) in the ratio 1:49. Winning book covers could be exchanged at WH Smith shops for a Rupert Bear kite. The stamps are as in earlier Walsall retail books.

Note: The promotion expired at the end of September but both books were available from the Bureau from 4 October.

19 July

19p Definitive gum change (DS912). Extended field trial of a new PVA gum, without Dextrin, designed to reduce paper curl; (H).

19 July

Pack of six Pictorial Aerogrammes (QO033)

depicting British birds. Price £2.50 per pack, including aerogramme postage.

19 July

Scotland Aerogramme, (QS034); 200th anniversary of the Gordon Highlanders. Price 45p including aerogramme postage.

26 July

£6.04 Northern Ireland Prestige Stamp Book (YB008). Stamp contents, four panes:

pane 1 4 x 30p Prince of Wales Investiture special issue (as issued 1 March 1994) showing Mourne Mountains, no ellipses;

pane 2 pane of six comprising 1 x 6p and 4 x 25p with two phosphor bars, and 1 x 19p with left bar, se-tenant;

pane 3 pane of nine comprising a pictorial label and eight N. Ireland country stamps, viz: 2 x 19p left bar and 4 x 25p, 1 x 30p, 1 x 41p, all with two bars, se-tenant;

pane 4 pane of four N. Ireland country stamps, viz: 1 x 19p left bar and 1 each of 25p, 30p, 41p, all with two bars, se-tenant.

Pane 1 was on OFNP/PVAD, (H), photogravure; the others were on OFNP/PVA, (Q), offset-lithography. The 19p olive green litho with left bar, the 6p lime green litho with two bars, and the 25p salmon pink litho with two bars, were new single stamps.

The book also contained two tear-out postcards depicting the Giant's Causeway. One of these, Royal Mail Air Card No. PHQ52d(94A), bore an imprinted 35p pictorial stamp of the Causeway and an airmail etiquette. The other, Royal Mail Card No. PHQ52d(94B), did not carry a stamp impression.

Note: The design of the 35p stamp was taken from the 22p adhesive issued in 1981 and 52d was a reference to the 1981 card which reproduced it. The uprating was to meet the current airmail rate for overseas postcards.



27 July

£1 Retail book (UB089). First of a new series of "commemorative label books" Contents 4 x 1st-class NVIs and a "banknote" label showing Britannia, commemorating the tercentenary of the Bank of England; (Q), OFNP/PVA.

Note: The label was attached at the left of the stamps and was consequently folded into the cover during production. Unfolded panes are available from the Bureau (UC001).

9 August

£2.40 Retail book (UB088), containing 4 x 60p slate blue definitive stamps with two phosphor bars, and a pane of four airmail etiquettes; (W), OFNP/PVA. The stamp is an addition to the National range and meets the second weight step for airmail letters.

17 August

25p Miniature sheet containing 1 x 1st-class NVI stamp; (Q). Issued in sealed Greetings card pack sold by Boots the Chemist and included in the price of £1.10. The sheet was folded at the corner of the card but is available unfolded from the Bureau at face value (UC002).

23 August

Large Pictorial Aerogramme (QC001) featuring Garden Birds. Price 50p including aerogramme postage.

6 September

50p Machine book (TB037); Coaching Inns, No. 4 – Pheasant Inn. Contents two 25p stamps with no phosphor bars, and two Postcode labels; (H), OFPP/PVAD.

£1 Machine book (TB038); Prime Ministers, No. 4 – Attlee. Contents four 25p stamps with no phosphor bars; (H), OFPP/PVAD.

£2 Machine book (TB039); Postal Vehicles No. 3 – Experimental Electric Van. Contents eight 25p stamps with no phosphor bars; (H), OFPP/PVAD.

Note: Available from Bureau and philatelic outlets from the date shown; on sale from machines at post offices as stocks of earlier books were used up.

20 September

£2.50 "Stampers" promotion comprising a set of four Retail Books (UP001-4) each containing 10 x 1st-class NVIs and an order form for one of four woodblock rubber stamps; (W), OFNP/PVA. Each front cover depicted one of the four designs.

Note: The offer ended 31 October but the books are still available from the Bureau.

4 October

£1.90 and £2.50 Retail Books with revised postcode message. Contents either 10 x 2nd-class NVIs with single phosphor bar (UB097) or 10 x 1st-class NVIs with two bars (UB096); (Q), OFNP/PVA.

4 October

Philatelic release of the two "Kite" promotion retail books (see 1 July).

4 October

£2.40 Special Christmas version (UL001) of Retail Book containing 4 x 60p as in the earlier (August) books. Festive stickers were attached to the pane of airmail labels and were featured on the front cover; (W), OFNP/PVA.

Note: The previous £2.40 book was taken temporarily off sale from Post Offices and retail outlets.

4 October

Christmas Aerogramme (Three Kings). (QX018) Price 45p including aerogramme postage.

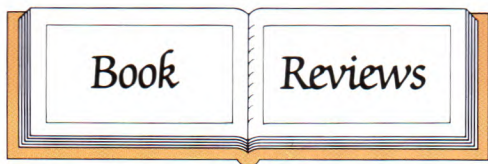


November

International Recorded Service envelope. Price £5 including postage and international recorded service fee indicated by a 1(st) postage paid impression and the Machin head.

Note: New printings of the £1, £1.50, £2 and £5 Castle high values were produced during the year. Although the designs were unaltered, a revised production process yielded stamps of "enhanced image". These stamps, of interest to specialist collectors, are available on request from the British Philatelic Bureau but are not included in the stock list or given numbers.

Royal Mail are grateful to D G A Myall for compiling this listing. The Editor regrets he is unable to engage in correspondence regarding the contents of this annual listing.



Royal Mail's recently published **The Story of Greetings Stamps** by Tim Shackleton – provides an interesting account of the development of Greetings stamps since 1989. In the late 1980s Royal Mail sought to increase the volume of “social mail” (defined as “invitations, birthday cards, news from home or distant friends, good old-fashioned letters that could be read and re-read at leisure”), and stamps specifically designed for the purpose were seen as part of the campaign. Such stamps would have to be suitable for many different applications but need not be too specific in terms of the kind of occasions they represented. “Using the post”, it was felt, “should be fun”.

The author visited and talked to the individual designers and design partnerships involved with these stamps, in chapter 1 recording his visit to the home of artist Philip Sutton, designer of the first Greetings stamps, issued in January 1989. Royal Mail asked Sutton to produce a selection of images, based on their own research into suitable subjects. Amongst the themes suggested were holidays, celebrations, children, and toys. He eventually produced more than a dozen paintings – executed, not in his usual oils, but in a mixture of media – mostly gentle gouache, but with elements of watercolour, charcoal, pen and ink. Sutton admits to being a collector of teddy bears, and in making “...a tremendous number of drawings” of them, “got keen on the one who is wearing an old football scarf”. This became the final stamp in the strip of five. He also has a penchant for painting fruit, and has “always been fascinated by cupids”. For the cover of the stamp book a repeating pattern of teddy bears, cupid's arrows and other imagery derived from the stamps was printed on thin card, with a wide blank space along the right-hand edge. This was fed through the printing press a second time and the blocks of lettering and Royal Mail symbol were added in the empty area. The repeat of the pre-printed pattern was deliberately not the same as the repeat of the lettering – though both patterns are regular, they are occurring at different intervals. When the covers were cut to size, therefore, the stamp books themselves showed subtle variations. It was a playful and

typically ingenious piece of design by Lewis Moberley. It cost next to nothing to implement but it intrigued the public and gave stamp collectors something to think about.

The “Smiles” stamps, first issued in February 1990, caused a stir when they appeared – collectors were amazed, designers were fulsome in their praise and the public loved them. The 10 designs were the work of Mark Pearce, then of Michael Peters and Partners. “The brief”, he told, Mr Shackleton, “was a general one. The stamps had to appeal to a wide spectrum of customers, right across the age range, and they had to be suitable for many different occasions.” His immediate thought was to put the greeting on the outside – “why not make the envelope itself smile?” In selecting the subjects, he chose characters who, in our mind's eye are always smiling – Mona Lisa, the Laughing Policeman, Cheshire Cat and Mr Punch. “This isn't any great intellectual exercise”, he insists, “these are pieces of popular culture, because they were meant to be popular stamps.” Great care was taken in the “cropping” of the images – easier in some cases than others. The close-ups of the mouths of the Mona Lisa and Stan Laurel succeed “because their smile is the aspect of their character we know best”. The teddy bear used for the stamp is now a TV star, having featured on the BBC Blue Peter programme. Credit is given to various illustrators – Kevin Hauff drew Mr Punch, Colin Elgie the Queen of Hearts and Tim Pearce produced a pencil drawing of Stan Laurel. An unusual fact is given relating to the design on the first day cover – the wedge of cheese depicted was rennet-free cheddar – specially chosen to conform to Mark Pearce's vegetarian views.

The “Lucky Charms” set of February 1991 were the work of Tony Meeuwissen who designed the 1983 Christmas set. The final composite designs are “uniquely his own” although the inspiration came from John Gorham, an influential designer who sketched an illustration he felt might be suitable. “It was”, says Meeuwissen, “like a small patch of grass which you were looking at from ground level. The whole image was a kind of trompe-l'oeil effect, incredibly realistic...as you looked at it, you'd see things like a four-leafed clover or a lucky sixpence that someone had dropped, and maybe an empty snail shell...” Meeuwissen transformed Gorham's “intense realism” into a “fantasy landscape”, working, after much deliberation, in a mixture of gouache, pastel and

watercolour, with small elements of collage. These were the first Greetings stamps to bear the "1ST" NVI symbol and, following customers' suggestion, were issued in books that were "as near to credit-card size as possible". The large format of the original "Smiles" pack although much admired was too big for a purse or wallet.

The "Memories" set of January 1992 – the first to be given an official title by Royal Mail – were designed by Lynn Trickett of Trickett & Webb Ltd, with assistance from colleagues Brian Webb and Andy Thomas. In contrast to the broad-based appeal of "Smiles" and "Lucky Charms", the imagery of this set targeted a specific market and was more open than before. Whilst some stamps had clear use in mind (wedding anniversary and 21st birthday), others were of nostalgic if non-specific intent. What, for example were the marbles meant to say? – "Remember when we were kids?", "Come and play?". In most households, the women attend to the buying and sending of greetings cards and Lynn Trickett and Royal Mail ensured the designs should reflect this. The end result has been compared to "looking at an antique stall...you browse through it until you find something that you really like. Photographing the many objects in Lynn Trickett's designs was undertaken by Carol Sharp. Sadly the set, so lovingly put together, was later destroyed by fire and the objects are thus now just memories...

The final chapter looks at the 1993 and 1994 issues – "Giving" and "Messages" – both designed by Newell and Sorrell Ltd. The designs are recognisably variations on a similar theme. The "Giving" set was due to go on sale less than a year after commissioning which gave the designers only a few weeks to progress from rough outlines to finished artworks. The whole of the company's design team came up with ideas for the stamps but those finally issued – based on childrens' characters – were mostly the work of Francis Newell, John Sorrell, Cheryl Briggs and John Simmons. Designing stamps based on existing imagery is not just a "scissors and paste" job as might be thought. Most of the illustrations were gently "tweaked" in some way to make them more suitable for reproduction on stamps. The representation of Long John Silver is by Alan Cracknell, no one illustrator being automatically identified with *Treasure Island*. The drawing of Tweedledum and Tweedledee, by Paul Slater, is closely based on Tenniel's original in *Alice Through the Looking Glass*, whilst the

illustration of *The Wind in the Willows* is a composite by Arthur Rackham (Mole and Toad) with a background by Paul Slater. The way these designs were put together makes fascinating reading. So successful was the 1993 issue that Royal Mail commissioned Newell & Sorrell to work on a similar set for 1994. The full story of that issue is not included in the book – that, as they say, is for another day.

Mr Shackleton's book also deals with the accompanying "Greetings" labels, presentation pack, first day cover envelope and "First Day of Issue" postmarks, as well as the stamps. It will be of considerable interest not only to collectors of the Greetings issues but to anyone studying the ideas and methods of contemporary stamp designers. 48 pages, card covers with dust jacket. A unique sheet of 45 Greetings labels is enclosed Price £9.95. Available from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

The sending of holiday postcards in Britain became a craze in the early years of the 20th century when millions were posted to tell the folks back home how the holiday was going. Huge quantities of these cards survive today and can still be bought cheaply at postcard fairs and specialist shops. They are of interest to postal historians as well as to those studying local history and topography. Demand grew for having the cards stamped at a place of particular interest and the cachets used at Land's End, John O'Groats, Snaefell Summit, etc are all well-known to collectors.

In the early 1980s interest in the Land's End cachets revived as a result of articles in the philatelic press, the publication of the late George Beckwith's catalogue and the setting up of the short-lived Land's End Postcard & Cachet Club. John Owen has continued the studies of George Beckwith and has recently published his own catalogue **A Guide to the Postcard Cachets of Land's End**. The cachets date from 1901 and were applied by the tenant of the First & Last House and by one William Maude, a retired fisherman with an eye for business who stamped his cards "FROM THE/OLD MAN AT THE/LAND'S END" The tenant's cachet took the form of a triangle enclosing the words "LAND'S END" and this was used, in numerous forms, until the 1950s. Other well-known types include the non-pictorial "LAND'S END" within oval, straight-line and boxed "FIRST & LAST HOUSE/LAND'S END" and "LAND'S END" set within a wavy line pattern. Some designs exist

rubber-stamped and printed directly onto the card. Many are found on unused cards although used examples are of greater philatelic significance as they allow the dating and chronological order of the cachets. Mr Owen quotes the earliest reported date for each type, although no doubt collectors using his *Guide* will be able to report earlier dates for particular cachets.

Some of the cachets are not so frequently encountered, for example those applied at the Land's End Post Office, Sennen, (in 1913 and 1920s), and the Hotel (1950). In recent times the use of cachets has revived and several are now in use within the Visitor Centre complex. One used in 1982 inscribed "BREATHTAKING LAND'S END" was objected to by the PO and withdrawn after one month.

In all Mr Owen has recorded nearly 100 main cachet types and allocated a number to each which will be useful for collectors and dealers alike. The valuations he gives are based on current market prices although prices will, of course, vary from dealer to dealer and also depend on the condition of the card and the clarity of the cachet impression. 47 pages, card covers, spiral bound with plastic protector. Available from: J D B Owen, 36 Oxford Drive, Kippax, LEEDS LS25 7JG. Price £8.95, postage £1.

Peter Lister has recently written and published an interesting account entitled **Airway Letters of the United Kingdom** in which, he tells us, he "has tried to compile all the recorded facts of airway letters into a concise document, to enable collectors to be able to retrieve information of flights in an easy manner."

The Airway Letter Service operated for 55 years from 1933 to 1988. Letters could be handed in to an airline for transmission by plane to a destination airport, there to be posted into the postal service or collected by the addressee. The aim was to achieve a quicker delivery than if the letter had been posted in the usual way. It was similar to the Railway Letter Service (which started in 1891) and the airline acted as agent for the Post Office. In addition to the airway letter stamp a postage stamp had to be affixed (to comply with the PO's letter monopoly) and on letters to be collected by the addressee the airline was responsible for cancelling the postage stamp. Airway letters were first flown in April 1933 by the Great Western Railway, using its own air service, under its powers to carry

railway letters. GWR railway letter and parcel stamps were initially used, later a special 3d stamp inscribed G.W.R. AIR MAIL was issued.

Covers carried by the Letter Services of Great Western & Southern Airlines (Isles of Scilly) and Scottish Airways (Stornoway/Glasgow) were given cachets to denote payment of the fee. These services were taken over by British European Airways (BEA) in 1947 and airway letter stamps (or labels) were introduced in 1951. There were some 13 issues by BEA and a further six by British Airways (BA) into which BEA was amalgamated in 1974. BA finally withdrew the service in 1988.

Mr Lister gives details of all the services and illustrates the labels and markings, mostly showing actual covers. Within each section dealing with particular issues of stamps, information is given about covers carried on special flights such as Irish Sea Night Air Mail Service (12 March 1951), and first use of East Fortune Airport as Edinburgh Airport (5 April 1961). The numbers carried in some instances render surviving covers scarce indeed. Very rare covers carried in August 1974 bearing the BA 55p stamp with value amended in manuscript to 54p as the change in the VAT rate from 10 to 8% necessitated this small reduction in the fee. At least six covers are known with amended stamps, but BA clerks soon forgot to amend the stamps and subsequently covers with unaltered stamps became the norm.

Airway Letter Service stamps and covers are less collected than the better-known railway issues and it is to be hoped that Mr Lister's book will stimulate interest. 54 pages, card covers. Price £8.95, postage £1 UK, £2 EC, £3 elsewhere. Available from: Peter Lister, 97 Albany Park Avenue, Enfield Highway, ENFIELD, Middx, EN3 5NX.

New & Forthcoming Books

The 1994 edition of the popular Stanley Gibbons **Collect British Stamps** has recently been published, price £5.95. The 1995 edition of **Collect Channel Islands and Isle of Man Stamps** is due on 27 January, and the 1995 **GB Concise** catalogue on 28 April.

Thematic collectors will be interested in a new title from Gibbons – **Collect Aircraft on Stamps** – due for publication on 9 December. All orders/enquiries to: Stanley Gibbons Publications, Parkside, RINGWOOD, Hants, BH24 3SH, Tel.0425-472363.

Obituaries

Chris Matthews

It was with great sorrow that we learnt of the passing in August, after a long fight against illness, of Christine Matthews, wife of Jeffery Matthews, the distinguished stamp designer. They had been married for 41 years: for 40 of those years they had collaborated in business.

While most collectors will be familiar with the name of Jeffery perhaps fewer will recall the work of Chris. This is because in her professional capacity she took her maternal grandmother's maiden name, Charity Boxall.

Chris and Jeffery married in 1953: a year earlier Jeffery had established himself as a freelance designer working with a close friend, Alan Harmer. Tragically Alan was to die in a boating accident in 1954, but Chris was to step into the breach, acting as secretary and assistant. Indeed, thereafter she was to deal with all the administration, including keeping the accounts.

That was far from all, however. They were partners, with Jeffery designing, and Chris researching, plus casting a critical eye over his work, being able to spot where improvements might be made if a design was not quite right, plus offering ideas when inspiration had escaped. Sometimes she described her ideas as "corny", but more often than not they proved the ideal solution.

Jeffery had been introduced to the Post Office in 1959, his first accepted stamp designs appearing in 1965 for the 25th anniversary of the United Nations.

Their collaboration was first seen philatelically in 1968 with the British Bridges set. Chris had researched the bridges to feature and obtained the necessary photographic material. A few days before the stamps were issued, panic set in: did the bridges shown still exist. A call to the AA confirmed that all was well.

More importantly with that issue the name of Charity Boxall started to appear on material issued by the PO. She wrote the text for the Bridges presentation pack, the first time someone from outside the PO had been commissioned to write for such packs.

There followed a long stream of PO commissions, often naturally linked with Jeffery's stamp designs, but not always. These included the text for the Collectors' Packs of 1973, and 1975-79; 1972 Royal Silver Wedding pack; 1975 Definitive packs (national, Northern



Ireland, Scotland, and Wales); 1978 souvenir book to accompany the 25th anniversary of the Coronation stamps; 1977 Christmas pack; 1980 Famous Authoresses pack; 1980 Christmas pack and first day cover filler card; souvenir book for the 1981 Royal Wedding; pack, filler card and research for the 1984 Heraldry set; pack, souvenir book and research on the portraits used on the 1986 Queen's 60th birthday stamps; and pack for the 1986 Royal Wedding.

There were also articles: for *Stamp Magazine* in 1978, for *Stamp Weekly* in 1968, and for the *Philatelic Bulletin* in 1977, examining the handstamps produced for The Queen's Silver Jubilee Tour which Jeffery designed.

She also undertook two major projects for Uncover, producers of first day covers in the USA. In 1978 this involved writing the text for 66 countries on the Heritage of Postal History, with a further commission in 1990 to tell the story of the Penny Black for an album from nearly 60 countries to mark the 150th anniversary of the world's first adhesive postage stamp.

However, a time came when she had to refuse commissions, as so much time was devoted to assisting Jeffery. Nevertheless, even after illness struck, it in no way dented her happy disposition, her willingness to help others. She remained full of energy, finding time for gardening, playing the piano, or playing the tenor horn (a member in her earlier days of the

Methodist circuit brass band), while her training as a nursery nurse meant she always exuded a love for children. Right up to the end she would spend many happy hours entertaining her four grandsons.

Our condolences to Jeffery and to his children Rory and Sarah Jane, on what has been a great loss, and at an early age, for Chris was just 60.

Richard West

Jock Kinneir (1917-94)

Jock Kinneir, who died in August, will best be remembered for his essays for new definitive stamps, produced in 1965. The 12 designs, commissioned by Stanley Gibbons Ltd, were produced as a souvenir sheet by Harrison & Sons Ltd and included as a free gift in the April 1965 issue of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*. Ten designs featured a profile of The Queen with vignettes showing a hovercraft; sailing at Cowes, the White Horse of Uffington, Tower of London, Jodrell Bank Telescope, Canterbury Cathedral, loading ships, sheep on hillside, the Houses of Parliament; and a nuclear reactor. Two other designs depicted The Queen on horseback, travelling in a state coach. It is interesting that Kinneir did not include "d" (pence) as part of the values on the lower value designs; anticipating by nearly a quarter of a century the dropping of the currency abbreviation. Although the essays were not accepted by the Post Office, they made an important contribution to the debate on pictorial definitive stamps.

Kinneir submitted a number of designs for British special stamps in the late 1960s and early 1970s – some were reproduced in the *Bulletins* of June 1967 (EFTA stamps), November 1969 (PO Technology), and September 1970 (Philypia).

F M Johnson (1914-94)

F M "Johnny" Johnson who died in September, was the son of the well-known stamp dealer H F Johnson, and was himself a noted expert on British stamps. He contributed regularly to *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, and wrote six articles entitled "Postal History and the Stamp Collector" published in this *Bulletin* between May 1975 and January 1976. An engineer by profession, Johnny was employed by Rolls Royce, and in retirement worked a large acreage in Sussex. He was very much of the old-school, well-mannered and of gentlemanly bearing. His enthusiasm for stamps and postal history was evident in his writings and to all who met him.

1995 Vended & Prestige Books

Vended Stamp Books

Three new series of cover designs are to be issued in 1995. The 50p book covers will feature "Sea Charts", marking the 200th anniversary of the hydrography service. The designs, by Dick Davis, show coastlines at extreme locations for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and are taken from material from the Hydrography Office in Taunton. The maps on the covers are shown as black etchings with lettering in red. The four subjects are: John O'Groats, Land's End, St David's, and Belfast Bay.

The designs on the £1 book covers are entitled "Wartime Contributors" and mark the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. Designed by Llewellyn Thomas, each cover will feature a portrait against a background showing the context in which the people worked. The four subjects are Violet Szabo, R J Mitchell, Dame Vera Lynn, and Sir Archibald McIndoe.

The £2 book cover designs will commemorate the bicentenary of the birth of Sir Rowland Hill, postal and educational reformer, railway company director, inventor, artist, etc. Hill is usually credited with the introduction of the adhesive postage stamp. The designs, by the London-based design company The Four Hundred, show various aspects of Hill's work – 1. Instigation of weekend excursions on the London-Brighton railway; 2. Education reform; 3. Mulready envelopes; 4. Postal Districts.

The first in these new series are expected to be issued on 7 February. The order of issue has not been finalised. Details will be published in next month's *Bulletin*.

National Trust Prestige Stamp Book

The 1995 prestige book will be issued on 25 April and will commemorate the centenary of the National Trust. It will contain four panes of stamps:

1. 6 x 25p National Trust special stamp
2. 19p and 25p Country stamps of Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales (one of each stamp)
3. Mixed pane of definitives – top row 10p, 30p and 41p, middle row 19p, label, 25p, bottom row 19p, 35p and 25p.
4. 6 x 19p definitives

The book will be printed by Questa except for the pane of 25p National Trust stamps which will be produced by Harrison. This stamp will be issued in sheet format on 11 April.

December/January Digest

Issued in December/January

10 January: Cats stamp cards

10 January: Stamp books with revised cover designs:

10 x 1st class, printed by Harrison, Questa, and Walsall

10 x 2nd class, printed by Questa

4 x 1st class, printed by Walsall

4 x 2nd class, printed by Harrison

Note: there are no changes to the NVI stamps in these books

17 January: Cat stamps (19p, 25p, 30p, 35p, 41p), presentation pack, and gift pack.

Note: Some items are available only from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT and from Post Office philatelic outlets (Collections, Post Shops Plus, Philatelic Counters) 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 & Trafalgar Square), Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Romford, Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stratford-upon-Avon, Truro, Windsor, and York.

Withdrawn in December/January

6 December: Country stamps (N Ireland, Scotland, Wales) 18p, 24p, 28p, 39p.

6 December: Country Pack No. 26 (December 1991) containing 18p, 24p, 28p & 39p stamps.

13 December: Definitives 4p, 20p, and 50p printed by Harrisons.

17 January: Age of Steam stamps, pack and stamp cards.

24 January: Stamp books – 50p Coaching Inns 1; £1 Prime Ministers – 1

Note: This £1 book contains 25p stamps printed in lithography by Walsall. This particular variety was issued only in this book and the preceding November 1993 book (now withdrawn). Readers wanting this stamp for their collections should order this book without delay. The 25p stamps in £1 books issued from April 1994 onwards have been photogravure printed by Harrisons, as the 25p stamps in 50p and £2 books, sheets and coils.

Stop Press

A 4 x 2nd class Walsall book with revised postcode and validity notices on the inside covers goes on sale at the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets on 6 December 1994. No new stamps are involved.

Future printings of the 25p definitive by Harrisons will be on non-phosphor paper overprinted with two phosphor bands instead of on advanced coated paper. Supplies of this new variation will be available from the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets from 20 December. Owing to the demand for this basic rate stamp, particularly in the run-up to Christmas, supplies of the two band stamp may be issued to post offices before the philatelic release date. Changes to the stamps in 50p, £1 and £2 books will be announced later.

Christmas Gift Offer

A much appreciated Christmas Gift for a philatelist or postal historian is a two year subscription to the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum. Many satisfied Friends have joined us in the past by this route. A bumper gift wrapped package will include your own gift card or dedication and will comprise all of the material which has accrued since the commencement of our financial year, 1 April. This will include two issues of our award winning journal *Cross Post* (Autumn 1992 Stampex silver medal), a copy of the superb *National Postal Museum Review for 1993*, (currently retailing at £5), a mint copy of every postcard issued by the Museum in the current year, plus other very collectable items. The subscription will run through to 31 March 1996. For this festive offer we are reducing the price by £2 to a mere £22. Send your instructions and cheque to Ray Pottle, PO Box 40, UCKFIELD, E Sussex, TN22 2SP.

