

Philatelic Bulletin

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Introduction

Announcing further details of the 1975 issues of new postage stamps, the Post Office has continued to incorporate in its designs, a reflection of the many interests of the British Public, and 1975 is no exception to the proven rule. Something for everyone.

After the introduction in Great Britain on 22 January of our first *Charity Stamp*, the painter J W M Turner is suitably honoured by the reproduction of four of his works, which commemorate the bicentenary of his birth.

Those interested in architecture will be pleased, we feel sure, about the issue of five stamps on 23 April, to commemorate *European Architectural Heritage Year*. Notable among the selection is, St George's Chapel, Windsor.

Sport is represented on 11 June, when four stamps with *Sailing* as their theme will appear. The fast growing interest in dinghy sailing is depicted.

Railways—150th Anniversary of First Public Railways is the subject of four stamps which will be available on 13 August. The famous 'Locomotion' which travelled between Stockton and Darlington in 1825 is included, as well as a high speed train still under BR development.

Classical English literature is recognised, when the *Bicentenary of Jane Austin's Birth* issue of four portraits of some of the author's principal characters will be on sale on 8 October.

On 26 November the Christmas stamps will be issued, details of which will appear in the Bulletin later in the year.

RMS 'Columba'



Our photograph shows a clock taken from *RMS Columba*, a famous Clyde steamer which sailed between Gourock and Ardrishaig. As a facility for the passengers the steamer was licenced to sell stamps and a posting box was aboard.

The clock bears two inscriptions 'Relic of the First Floating Post Office *RMS Columba* 1878-1935' and 'Presented to Head Postmaster, Edinburgh by David MacBrayne Ltd, Glasgow'.

Gems from the RM Phillips Collection

XIX Cancellation Removal Trials—Prussiate of Potash

In the November 1974 issue of the Philatelic Bulletin I illustrated a sheet of experimental 'Rainbow trial' printings using oil-based inks—one of various avenues explored during 1840 by Rowland Hill, Perkins Bacon the printers and several chemists of repute in an endeavour to find a way to prevent fraudulent removal of postal cancellations.

The two partly complete sheets of Rainbow Trials illustrate another phase of these experiments. The upper sheet, endorsed 'C3 No 11 Plain', bears 10 impressions in red from the

special One Penny experimental plate, six of which have been cancelled 'No 712' and then attempts made to remove the cancellations by the use of prussic acid, creosote, turpentine and tartaric acid. The lower sheets endorsed 'G7 No 12 Prussiate in Paper' is similarly cancelled and similar compounds and chemicals have been used for the attempted removal process.

The treatment of the paper with prussiate of potash is of particular interest as this more or less blued paper is in fact characteristic of most





printings of the One Penny Red from 1841 to 1857. According to J B Bacon ('The Line Engraved Postage Stamps of Great Britain ...' Vol 1 pp 110-112) there is good evidence to suggest that the blueing was formed as a result of wetting the paper (for printing) which acted on two constituents of the red printing ink used - prussiate of potash and alum which contained a little iron. The blueing effect spread from the ink across the adjoining paper. The cancellation removal trials shown here date from between September and November 1840 and their results were incorporated in a report by Hill to the Chancellor of the Exchequer which was accepted on 17 December 1840.

A G RIGO DE RIGHI

Presentation Pack German Insert Cards

The Christmas 1974 presentation pack and the 1974 Collectors Pack were the last to be issued with a German language insert card, because of the lack of demand for these items.

As announced in Vol 9 No 5, German language insert cards were first produced for the Collectors pack in 1969 and have been available on request for all packs issued since that date.

New Philatelic Posting Box

A special philatelic posting box will be brought into use at Galashiels Falkirkshire from 22 January 1975.

Travelling Post Offices of Great Britain

by H. S. WILSON

The Midland T.P.O.

The Midland Railway is usually associated with St Pancras but in fact it was not until 1868 that the Company had direct access to London on its own lines. The Company was formed on 10 May 1844 by the amalgamation of the North Midland, Midland Counties and Birmingham and Derby Junction Railways.

The Midland TPO began as the Rugby and Newcastle RPO between 27 June and 4 July 1845. This, the second RPO to run, had been under discussion for about six weeks, because on 26 May a request had been made for authority to appoint seven new clerks. These were to be trained on the existing RPO. It was reported on 5 July 1845 that the new RPO was working satisfactorily. The amount of mail dealt with increased rapidly and on 23 July a request was made for three additional clerks. The train which left Rugby at midnight, brought forward the mail from London and ran *via* Derby and York to Newcastle. It is interesting to note that the Railway Company made no additional charge for the RPO.

In September 1848 proposals were made for the extension of the RPO to Edinburgh but these were turned down by the PMG, presumably because the London mails to Edinburgh now went *via* Carlisle.

According to the PMG's Minute Book, it was proposed, in April 1850, to run an RPO between Gloucester and Tamworth replacing the Birmingham—Stafford and Birmingham—Rugby night branch trains. Four clerks were to be employed at a cost of £867 10s 0d per year, while a saving of £3000 per year would be made on the branch trains. This duty, which became the southern part of the Midland RPO, commenced on 1 November 1850.

In May 1852 a proposal was put to the PMG that an RPO be run between Tamworth and Derby instead of between Rugby and Derby. This would give a continuous duty between Gloucester and Newcastle and simplify the circulation. I have not been able to determine the date on which this change took place—negotiations with the Railway Companies were still taking place in July 1852. A total of

fourteen officers was required working as follows: three out and back every night between Gloucester and Tamworth with one resting, two each way every night between Tamworth and Northallerton with one resting and two each way every night between Derby and Newcastle with one resting. The RPO left Gloucester at 9 pm and arrived Newcastle at 9 am, left at 4 pm and arrived Gloucester at 4.10 am.

In March 1855 the RPO was accelerated and it was found necessary to extend sorting to Bristol and the Midland TPO, as we know it today, came into being. At the same time the duties were revised so that three officers worked each way between Bristol and Derby with one resting and three each way between Derby and Newcastle with one resting, a total of fourteen still.

There would appear to have been a Sorting Carriage and a Bag Tender in use each way as on 1 July 1864 the door on the Tender of the RPO going North was damaged when passing the turntable at Birmingham. This was due to the coupling between it and the SC not being properly fastened.

The RPO was involved in three accidents in 1867. On 9 April the Up Mail was in a collision with goods wagons two miles from York, on 4 June the Down Mail was in a collision outside Derby and delayed thirty-two minutes and again on 22 July making a delay of seventeen minutes.

By 1868 the amount of mail had so increased that four clerks and nine sorters were needed between Bristol and Derby and six clerks and twelve sorters between Derby and Newcastle. Parcel sorting was introduced on 1 July 1855 with the introduction of the 'Specials'. The instructions for the 'Specials' state: 'A travelling post office carriage and tender and a parcel sorting carriage will run in this train from Bristol to Camp Hill, and the closed letter and parcel mails will be transferred at Camp Hill to the special train from Tamworth. The present train from Birmingham to Normanton and Newcastle with the Midland travelling post

office carriage, and with the addition of a parcel sorting carriage, will leave Birmingham at 11.22 pm as now.'

The train left Bristol at 7 pm arriving Camp Hill at 9.55 pm with apparatus in use at Fishponds, Yate, Charfield, Defford and Droitwich. It left Camp Hill at 10 pm, arrived Birmingham at 10.08 pm and remained there for seventy-four minutes. The special train left Camp Hill at 10.05 pm and arrived Tamworth at 10.38 pm connecting with the Down Special. The Midland TPO going south left Newcastle at 7.08 pm, received mail from the Hull ST at Normanton and connected with the Up Special and the Up Limited at Tamworth.

A letter of 2 March 1886 to the NE Railway Company stated that a Parcel Sorting Carriage should run from Normanton to Newcastle (combined service with the Midland carriage through to Bristol) and should be similar to the Midland 43' PSC. It would appear from this that the PSC which commenced in 1885 had terminated at Normanton.

Agreement was reached with the Midland Railway Company on 13 October 1887 for the provision of two, new, 40' Sorting Carriages at a cost of £330 to the Post Office.

The 1895 Roster of Vehicles shows how the working was tied up with the Derby and St Pancras ST (of which I will write more later). The TPO consisted of two Parcel Sorting Carriages without nets or arms, one Letter SC with delivery arms and one combined Letter Sorting and Bag Tender with nets and arms. The latter carriage ran between Bristol and Derby and its place was taken by the Derby and St Pancras ST between Derby and Newcastle. The parcel carriages did not run on Sunday nights. All the vehicles were jointly owned by the Midland and North Eastern Railway Companies with the exception of the carriage running between Bristol and Derby only, which was owned by the Midland Railway.

According to a Time Bill of 1897, the Down Mail used apparatus at eight sites between Bristol and Birmingham and at four sites

between Bolton Percy and Newcastle.

The 1903 Roster shows that on Saturdays only one PSC was in use, the other standing at Derby with the spare carriages. In 1907, six new 54' Letter Sorting Carriages were built.

On 21 October 1918 the three Letter, Bag and Apparatus Carriages used between Bristol and Derby were placed in reserve being replaced by those of the Derby and St. Pancras ST which had ceased. In December these three carriages, together with two Parcel Carriages, were lent to the military for use between Boulogne and Cologne and were returned in January 1920.

The 1922 List of Duties shows the departure time from Bristol as 7.20 pm instead of 7 pm. This was so that the Bristol and Penzance TPO Up would connect at Bristol in consequence of the Cardiff and York TPO changes.

From 20 September 1926 the TPO North left Birmingham at 10.55 pm instead of 11.22 pm in order to connect with the North Eastern TPO Night Down at York.

On 13 October 1928 the Mail going south was involved in a collision at Carfield which resulted in fifteen people (including a sorter) being killed and thirty injured. On 8 January 1929 the Mail going north was in collision with the goods train at Ashchurch and four people were killed and 21 passengers and four sorters injured.

Apparatus working ceased between 1930 and 1938 but I have been unable to determine the date. The TPO was suspended on 21 September 1940 and was restored on 6 May 1946, but 'Late Fee' posting was not resumed until 7 July 1947.

In the summer of 1949, the railways were hit by a series of strikes, due to the 'lodging turn' issue. One centre of trouble was Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The running times of the mails are so arranged that there is a connection between the Northbound and Southbound TPO's at Derby. At this time, the former arrived at 11 pm and the latter departed at 12 pm. This enabled the Bristol sorters to transfer and travel back the same night, while the mixed teams of

Newcastle and Birmingham sorters made only a single journey between Newcastle and Birmingham each night.

On the night of 29 May 1949, the mail 'Going North' ran normally but the mail 'Going South' was unable to leave Newcastle until midnight, at the earliest, because of a 24 hour strike by the footplate men. This possibility had been foreseen and alternative arrangements had been made. A spare set (two sorting carriages and a stowage van) was stationed at Derby. This set was manned by the Bristol staff and ran from Derby to Bristol at its normal time thus avoiding delay to mails over this section. When the TPO from Newcastle reached Birmingham, some six hours late, the duty was closed and the carriages ran on to Bristol as a closed Bag Tender. A skeleton handstamp was made up for use in the spare set. Two weeks later the same conditions prevailed, so that this stamp was used on 29 May and 12 June 1949 after which date it was broken up.

In 1969 another series of strikes occurred and on the night of 9 July there were no trains running north of Sheffield. On this occasion however, both the North and South TPO's were south of Sheffield when the strike occurred.

The trains ran between Sheffield and Bristol and the sorting duty started and finished at Derby. Between Sheffield and Derby the carriages ran as closed Bag Tenders.

(Reprinted from 'Railway Philately' by kind permission of the Editor.)

First Day Cover Services Turner Paintings

Four new stamps, value $4\frac{1}{2}p$, $5\frac{1}{2}p$, $8p$ and $10p$ are to be issued on 19 February to commemorate the bi-centenary of the birth of J M W Turner the painter. The following first day cover services will be offered by the Philatelic Bureau Edinburgh.

In addition to the Bureau cancellation, an alternative—London WC—will be available as Turner was born in that district.

Service A

This consists of the official Post Office Cover, addressed as requested and bearing the full set of stamps.

The cover will be cancelled 'Philatelic Bureau Edinburgh' or alternatively 'London WC' as requested and despatched for a charge of $41p$. For deposit account customers the charge will be $38\frac{1}{2}p$ per cover.

Service B

Customers own pre-addressed covers will be given the full set of stamps, cancelled and despatched for $34p$ per cover.

Service C

For bulk orders of 50 or more covers all to the same address, under the conditions of Service A, the charge is $38\frac{1}{2}p$ per item. The usual first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with Philatelic posting boxes.

Country Stamps

New denominations of $3\frac{1}{2}p$, $5\frac{1}{2}p$ and $8p$ for N Ireland, Scotland and Wales were put on sale on 23 January 1974. The earlier $3p$ stamp was re-issued simultaneously with one phosphor bar in place of the two bars carried previously.

Presentation packs containing the new stamps were subsequently issued.

Readers should please note that the old values— $2\frac{1}{2}p$, $3p$ (two phosphor bars), $5p$ and $7\frac{1}{2}p$ and packs containing them will be withdrawn from sale on 22 January 1975.

Christmas Stamps

The $3\frac{1}{2}p$ Christmas stamps have been issued in two forms. The first has one phosphor band in the centre—the second has one phosphor band on the right hand side.

The Trade in Souvenirs and Postal Information

A cursory glance at the stalls in an antique market demonstrates that our Victorian forebears knew how to turn an honest penny by marketing souvenirs of all kinds. Many of these period trifles are particularly interesting to postal history cognoscenti for they are tangible reminders of the changes in Post Office services which occurred during the 19th century.

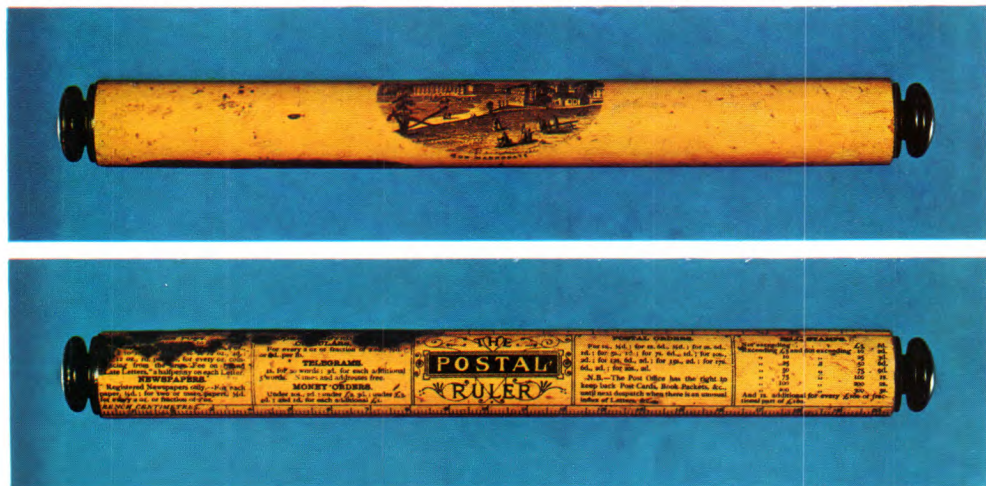
Amongst these gift-souvenirs there were pendants, stamp boxes, letter and stationery racks, and other items specifically designed to be pleasant to look at and useful to the recipient. Both the postal rulers and the paper knife illustrated go further, for they give details of Post Office services and tariffs and could be construed as advertising Post Office services.

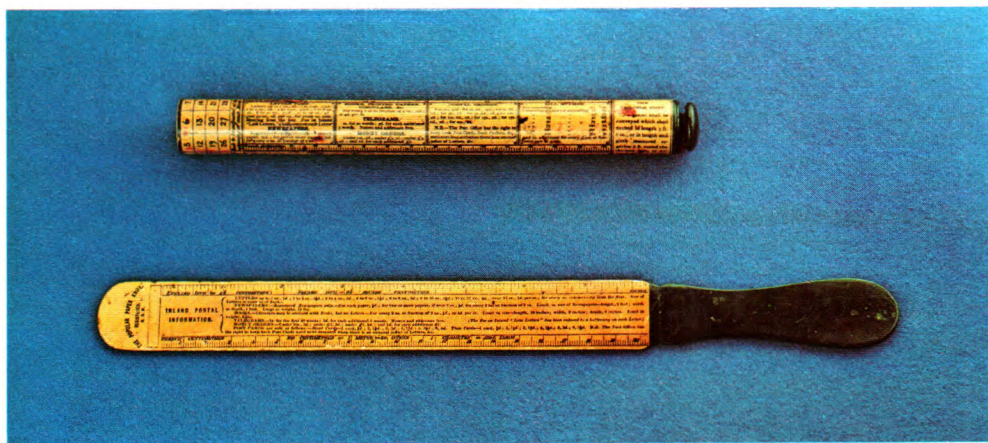
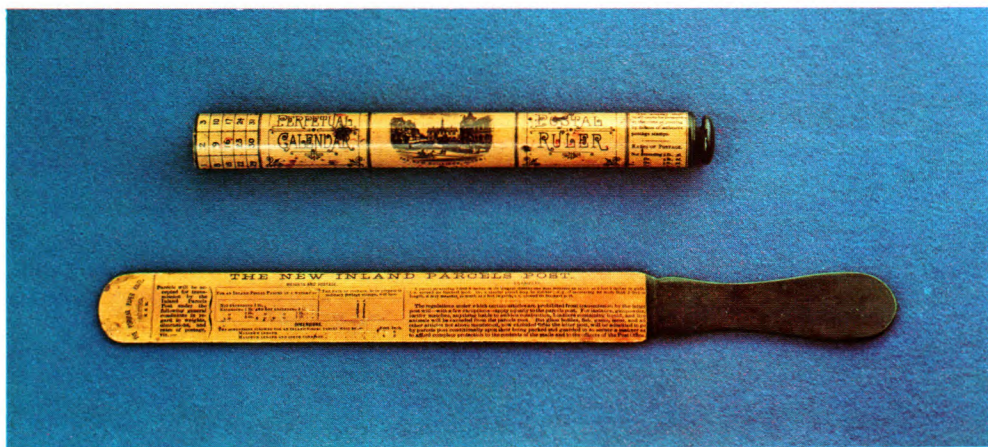
What is interesting is the fact that the information on these utilitarian wooden objects enables them to be dated with some precision. The Postal Ruler, with its vignette picture of Low Harrogate, informs us that telegrams cost 1s for 20 words: 3d for each additional five words. Names and addresses free. No mention is made of the parcel post which did not commence until 1883: the date incidentally when letter-carriers were renamed Postmen. Since the Post Office did not take

over the Telegraph Companies until 1870 this ruler was made and sold between 1870 and 1883.

The Postal Ruler-Perpetual Calendar gives details of the Parcel Post Service restricted to a maximum of 7 lb—the limit was raised to 11 lb in 1886. The telegram charges are as shown on the Low Harrogate ruler and since these were reduced to sixpence for 12 words on 1 October 1885 it can be said with confidence that this item with its engraving of the New Buildings Alton, was made between 1883 and 1885. The popular paper knife, one side of which is devoted to the New Inland Parcels Post is similarly dated 1883-1885.

The pictures and the wording on these and numerous other small wooden objects were made by transferring engravings made on copper or steel plates to the surface of the prepared wood. The box, ruler, or other item was varnished and the face of the print, which had been taken on Japanese paper, was similarly coated with shellac. The print was then laid face down on the object and, when dry, the paper sponged away. This Transfer Ware as it is called was the speciality of the Smith family at Mauchline, Ayrshire. What began as a local trade with a Burns and Scottish bias





developed with the production of souvenirs, decorated for sale locally in London, the University towns, Stratford on Avon, Windsor, Eastbourne, Brighton and indeed any place where local souvenir shops served growing tourist trade. Smiths were certainly enterprising, for transfer ware made at Mauchline was decorated with cameo pictures of Boulogne, Cannes and Nice: other pieces show the patent office at Washington and further pictures show pictures of Sydney, Australia.

The study of transfer ware is in itself re-

warding—(perhaps as a change from stamps?) Smiths of Mauchline were not the only firm making the ware. The finest collection of this specialised Victorian product forms part of the Pinto collection in Birmingham Museum. The writer knew both Edward and Eva Pinto, both of whom died last year. The collection now in Birmingham is their Memorial, as are the splendid books they wrote on Tunbridge and Scottish Souvenir Woodware and on Treen and other wooden Bygones. These books and the collections they describe demand serious attention.

F MARCUS ARMAN

5. Centenary of First Adhesive Postage Stamps, 1940

This was a truly 'British' occasion an event calculated to stir the imaginations of potential stamp designers throughout the country! Everyone anticipated that the commemorative designs would include a replica of the world's first postage stamp, the Penny Black, or at least some reference to it, and in this they were not disappointed. But Britain was at war and whatever elaborate plans the Post Office may have had for a memorable and superlative issue of stamps undoubtedly had to be abandoned. We had to 'make do' with a 'utility' set of six rather nicely coloured and printed stamps bearing the formal heads of Victoria and George VI, issued on 6 May, 1940.

Once again Edmund Dulac, designer of the successful Coronation stamp, contributed ideas for the centenary, but apparently the Post Office and the Royal Fine Arts Commission were harder to please this time, and ultimately a design submitted by H L Palmer and Harrison & Sons was accepted.

The profile head of Queen Victoria was a replica of the original die used for the Penny Black and Twopence Blue, engraved by Frederick Heath from Henry Corbould's

sketch of the 'Wyon' head—William Wyon's City Medal which commemorated the young Queen's visit to the City of London at the time of her Coronation. It was the familiar profile used almost without variation for more than 40 years on British stamps, because, according to legend, the Queen herself would not have it changed.

The matching profile of King George VI was again a familiar one and probably some consolation to Edmund Dulac, for it was his 'definitive' head, introduced on the first stamps of the new reign, in May 1937, and used almost exclusively throughout the King's lifetime. The twin profiles were placed side by side (both looking left as originally conceived and used), and this arrangement required a new and unusual format – a horizontal design half as wide as a normal definitive issue.

The stamps were simply inscribed 'VICTORIA' and 'GEORGE' at the top, flanking the so-called Tudor crown, while the nature of the commemoration was conveyed by the years '1840' and '1940' in bold figures in the bottom corners, with the words 'POSTAGE' and 'REVENUE' in smaller size at the sides.



The denominations and colours were $\frac{1}{2}d$ green, $1d$ scarlet, $1\frac{1}{2}d$ red-brown, $2d$ orange, $2\frac{1}{2}d$ ultramarine and $3d$ violet, corresponding to the colours of the contemporary definitive stamps, and printed in sheets of 160 arranged in 20 rows of eight.

Sales were enormous—for example, almost 313 million of the $2\frac{1}{2}d$ value—and the current catalogue price for an unused set is £1.20. The $2d$ stamp was used, with others, diagonally bisected, in Guernsey, Channel Islands, during the German occupation in World War II, the halves being used with Post Office authority as prepayment of penny postage. Such stamps were first used on 27 December 1940, and the catalogue price of a bisect used on cover is £3.50.

JAMES WATSON

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

NO POWER FOR THE BOSSES

As Christmas stamps seem to be a regular policy feature of the Post Office, it must be congratulated this year on its novel approach by handing the problem to a team instead of an individual, as well as on the success of the finished product.

The explanatory article of the 'how' and the 'where' of production leaves nothing to speculation: we all know now how it is done. I hope therefore, that you will not take it amiss if, after so much work has been done by the team I point out how even such a little variation would have made a worthwhile improvement.

The coloured bosses have provided probably better models for postage stamps than most motifs in recent years, since they have a scale related to stamp size which few subjects have had. They appear like seals and as such have that formal dignity required for a piece of government printing. But because actual photographs were used some have sharp crisp

details while others have shapes which are more mellow and soft. If coloured drawings had been made from the photographs then the results would surely have had a more uniform quality. A 'set' of stamps is no mere philatelist's whim, because the more a stamp designer ignores it the less able he is to solve his brief.

I believe that a weakness of most of our modern stamps has been the use of too many colours, yet I find the bosses themselves strike just the right note for the occasion. Colour for Christmas. But what a pity that the vault ribs were included. All are at different angles and all share the cardinal sin of traditional composition by having lines leading the eye out of the picture in all sorts of confusing directions and colours. Had the backgrounds been plain bright colours, (*ie* formalism instead of realism) how much more easily would the post office counter staff have been able to select the correct value—an essential requirement of an adhesive stamp—and how much more dramatically powerful would the bosses have appeared.

One of the most successful stamp designers has exerted such a strong influence on British stamps that the lettering is in danger of becoming too standardised as witnessed by the Royal Society of Arts bursary in stamp design (see the Penrose Annual 1972). The size of the Queen's portrait and the type face for the value could be an inhibiting feature. Perhaps when the present stock of 'Letraset' numerals has been exhausted we may look forward to a change, and why must the titles be still placed on their sides? When McKnight Kauffer designed railway posters this was the sort of novelty we could expect from such a gifted designer, but he died years ago and few of us are natural contortionists. Had the bosses been turned through 90° and the stamps been given an upright portrait format what an improvement they would have been on anything we have had this reign.

Yours faithfully,

GERALD DAVIES

London SW19

The Government Penny Post

William Dockwra well known as the organiser of a Penny Postal Service had a successful action brought against him by the Duke of York for infringing his postal monopoly. Dockwra's Post was suppressed late in November 1682 and the Government's own Penny Post was immediately instituted.

All Dockwra's messengers and letter carriers were invited to call at the GPO for re-employment in the new service which was established on 11 December 1682.

The new Penny Post initially covered most of London, as it then was, to a radius of 5 miles although it was not long before more distant places were included. Principal offices were established in the City, near St Pauls, the Temple and Charing Cross and were open from 7 am until 10 pm.

The first Controller of the Penny Post was Nathaniel Castleton whose salary of £150 a year compared favourably with his sorters who were paid 2s 6d a day or his messengers who received sixteen pence a day! Castleton was not over successful and was deposed. Despite his previous reputation and the loss of the Court case William Dockwra was appointed to succeed him.

Dockwra fared no better than Castleton and was eventually charged with mismanagement. It was alleged that the receipts of the Penny Post were being reduced by Dockwra so that he could have it transferred to him at a very low rate.

In 1711 the penny postage charged on letters was regularised by the passing of an Act and the distance they could be carried was limited to 10 miles from the Chief Office.

Many contemporary writers gave interesting descriptions of the Penny Post. Robert Seymour, for instance, in his *Survey of London and Westminster* records that to collect and deliver the letters more than 100 messengers were employed and that there were more than 600 receiving houses—'there being one in most great streets'. He goes on to say that publicity was given to the Penny Post by notices which said 'Penny Post

Letters and Parcels are taken in here'. He continues 'at these Houses the Letter Carriers call every hour to carry such letters and parcels as there are to the General Office within their circuit and after the said letters and parcels are duly entered in their Books, they are forthwith sent by others to be delivered as directed: so that all the day they are employed, some in going their walks to bring in, and others to carry out'.

The postmarks of the Government Penny Post were similar to Dockwra's and they changed little until the Penny Post was re-organised in 1794. The usual inscription was 'Peny Post Payd' but paid marks from about 1766 are found with the spelling 'Penny'. Another amendment was the inclusion in the centre of the triangle of two or three letters indicating the day of the week.

The original heart shaped time marks were also adapted by the Government Penny Post until 1683 when circular date stamps were introduced. These date stamps included a letter which indicated the office at which they were used.

The Penny Post lasted, in all, more than 110 years from the time Dockwra introduced it but it became less and less efficient as the years went by. In 1794 Edward Johnson, a Deputy Controller, worked out a scheme for its improvement and an Act of Parliament was passed authorising many changes.

Under the new system the charge for letters from the country to the town was made 2d (except for letters intended for the General Post which were still carried for one penny). The pre-payment of postage on Penny Post letters was made optional and towns and villages more than 10 miles from a Chief Office were brought into the Penny Post.

Long before Lord Beeching recommended the closure of unprofitable railway lines in the 1960s, Johnson rationalised the Sorting Offices in London and reduced the number from 5 to 2. The Chief Office was in Abchurch Lane off Lombard Street and the other, which served Westminster, was established in Ger-

rard Street, Soho. The number of letter carriers was increased to enable 6 town deliveries to be made between 7.30 am and 8 pm.

Another of Johnson's suggestions was that the old triangular 'Paid' stamps should be abandoned and longer and clearer marks used in their stead. Date stamps which showed the time, date and year were brought in as were other marks which indicated that postage had been paid. In 1794 the receiving houses used stamps to identify the house where a letter was posted and a year or so later whether postage was paid or not.

The Penny Post as such came to an end on 5 April 1801 when an Act of Parliament decreed that letters should in future be charged 2d for both town and country districts.

Chelmsford & District Philatelic Society Philatelic Weekend

The Chelmsford & District Philatelic Society recently held their third weekend course at Wansfell College of Residential Education, in Essex, on the border of Epping Forest. The course was again fully booked and proved to be as enjoyable and stimulating as before.

The course opened by Patrick Pearson showing us how to mount a collection and what pitfalls to avoid. The session ended with course members submitting sheets from their own collection for criticism and discussion.

I J Glassborow, auctioneer at Messrs Harmers, took us through all the stages involved from the receipt of material to be auctioned to the completion of a successful sale.

A J Branston, in his 'Tale of Two Forgers' talked about the lives and 'Philatelic' activities of the famous forgers Fournier and Jeffries. The talk was illustrated with material collected after much research and gave us an insight in the depth of knowledge required to detect forgeries. During Saturday afternoon course

members gave brief talks on 'Ten interesting pages from my collection', which was an opportunity for exchanging ideas on different aspects of collecting. In the evening H J Mears, Stamp Production Manager of Bradbury Wilkinson & Company gave well illustrated talks on stamp production, taking us from the initial enquiry and design work to the delivery of the finished product.

On Sunday morning J P Ineson gave his most interesting talk on the Siege of Mafeking and displayed a wonderful collection of siege items, philatelic and others, giving us a vivid impression of what conditions and life must have been like at the time.

To end the weekend, Miss A Grunberg, who had been to Wansfell before, took us a stage further in the development of her thematic collection on the subject of 'Communications'. Again course members participated by submitting 8 sheets from their collections for criticism and discussion. The session ended with a lively discussion on judging in thematic competitions.

The course's success can be attributed to the lively discussions at the end of nearly all the sessions, *ie* the greater 'student' participation in the planned programme.

The course was organised by Marcel Fuller and the sessions were chaired by George W Smith of the Chelmsford Society.

Book Reviews

The Stanley Gibbons 'Elizabethan' Catalogue

The 1975 edition of the 'Elizabethan' appears in a larger format which has enabled the illustrations to be scaled up—a most useful development where varieties are involved.

Studies of the earlier Elizabeth issues of Great Britain continue to produce new discoveries. For example, the September 1955 1d definitive (SG 541) has had two further varieties—the 'spot on d' and 'rose flaw'—added to its list. Nor have more recent issues been neglected by the keen-eyed. The missing serif on the 5p Inigo Jones (Prince's Lodging)

SG 917 is only one of a number of new listings.

However, this year's Elizabethan is also of interest to the less specialised collector for its evidence on the continued rise in prices. Although this catalogue appears little more than two months after the SG 'Commonwealth' there are general increases even in the special stamps of 1973 which have only lately been withdrawn from Post Office philatelic sales-points. The Belgica souvenir pack of 1972 continues its advance, this time to £1.50, while the notable 1969 Collector's Pack increases from £6 to £9.

The Elizabethan Catalogue of Modern Commonwealth Stamps is published by Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd, 391 Strand, LONDON WC2R 0LX. Price £3.50.

Scottish Pictorial Air Letter Form

On Monday 13 January a new air letter form will be available from the Philatelic Bureau, at all post offices in Scotland, and at all philatelic counters in the rest of the United Kingdom, price 7p. The form which bears a traditional portrait of Robert Burns, and illustrations from his poems, 'Tam O'Shanter' and 'To a Mouse' together with quotations from these and other poems, was designed by Fraser Haston and printed by McCorquodale & Co.

1975 Stamp Programme

Further details of the 1975 stamps have been released as follows:

22 January *Experimental Charity Stamp* 4½p + 1½p.

19 February *British Paintings (J W M Turner)*

Burial at Sea
Steamer in a Snowstorm
The Arsenal at Venice
St Laurent

23 April *European Architectural Heritage Year*

Charlotte Square Edinburgh

The Rows Chester
Royal Observatory Greenwich
St Georges Chapel Windsor
National Theatre

11 June *Sailing*
Offshore Racers
Dinghys
Multihulls
Ocean Racing

13 August *Railways—150th Anniversary of First Public Railway*

'Locomotion' (1825 Stockton and Darlington Railway)
Drummond Waverley Class (1876 N British Railway)
Caerphilly Castle (1923 G W 'Castle' Class)
High Speed Train (under BR development)

8 October *Bi-centenary of Jane Austen's Birth*
Emma and Mr Woodhouse (Emma)
Catherine Morland (Northanger Abbey)
Mr Darcy (Pride and Prejudice)
Mary and Henry Crawford (Mansfield Park)

26 November *Christmas*

Special Handstamps

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting bearing at least 4p in postage, should be sent to the Head Postmaster of the town where the special posting box is located, or the relevant District Postmaster in London, marking the outer cover 'Special Handstamp'.

24 January–22 February 1975 (C)

Workshop and District Chamber of Trade 24 Jan 75–22 Feb 75 1875–1975
Workshop Notts. Special posting box will be at the Workshop Guardian Offices, Bridge Street, Workshop Notts S80 1DD.

Postmark Slogans

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting bearing the appropriate postage rate, should be forwarded to the Head Postmaster of the town where the slogan is to be used, marking the outer cover 'Postmark Slogan'.

23 December 1974–17 February 1975 (P)

Tameside a Grassroots Investment. To

- be used at Ashton-under-Lyne Lancs.
- 6 January-16 February 1975 (P)
Chelmsford Says Seat Belts Please. To be used at Chelmsford. 2 Dies 1st and 2nd Class Machines.
- 6 January 1975-6 January 1976
Hartlepool Pipeline to Prosperity. To be used at Hartlepool.
- 8 December 1974-15 February 1975
Turner Royal Academy 16 Nov 74-2 Mar 75. To be used at:
 SWDO, WDO, ECDO.
- 8 December 1974-30 November 1975 (1st Class)
- 2 June 1975-14 September 1975 (P)
Gt Yarmouth: Wish You Were Here. To be used at Gt Yarmouth.
- 27 December 1974-31 January 1975
 1-30 April 1975
 1-31 July 1975
 1-31 October 1975
Tenovus Cares. To be used at Cardiff.
- 5-18 January 1975 (P)
Enjoy a Visit to Dorking Swimming Centre Mole Valley District Council. To be used at Reigate and Redhill.
- 21 January-8 February 1975 (P)
Camping, Outdoor Life and Inland Waterways Exhibition Saturday Feb 8 to Sunday Feb 16 Bellevue Manchester Collac 75. To be used at:
 Bolton
 Macclesfield
 Manchester
 Sale
 Stockport
 Warrington
- 3-16 May 1975 (P)
Look Ahead: with Manchester Unity Odd Fellows Friendly Society Annual Conference Eastbourne 12-16 May. To be used at Eastbourne.
- 13-26 January 1975
 30 June-31 August 1975 (P)
Ancient Order of Foresters, The Friendly Society for 125 Years Brighton District. To be reused at Brighton.

- Will continue until 15 May 1975 (P)
A Cathedral City Brechin the Ideal Centre To be used at Brechin.
- Will continue until 15 May 1975 (P)
Hawick for Woollens Sports and Tourism. To be used at Hawick.
- Will continue until 11 September 1975 (P)
Dundee for Development. To be used at Dundee.
- Will continue until 28 October 1975 (P)
Forfar for Quality Living. To be used at Forfar.
- The Postmark Slogan **Camping Outdoor Life and Inland Waterways Exhibition Saturday February 8 to Sunday February 16 Bellevue Manchester Collac 75** please note that this slogan is due to run from 26 January 1975 (Sunday) to 8 February 1975 as shown in Volume 4 Issue Number 15, 11 November.
- The Postmark Slogan **Fairfield Croydon 01-688 9291 Roy Castle's Christmas Show December 24 to January 11** to be used at Croydon will now be continuous and not as stated in Issue Number 13, 14 October 1974.
- Repeat Campaigns**
 24 December 1974-11 January 1975
Samaritans Swindon 21445. To be reused at Swindon.
- 23 December 1974-31 May 1975
Holiday at Bridlington Free Colour Guide From Dept 100 Information Centre. To be reused at Bridlington.
- 1 June 1975 UFN (P)
Having a Wonderful Time. To be reused at Bridlington.
- Correction**
 Postmark Slogan, 'Operation Gatepost Help Emergency and Public Services' which appeared in the December Bulletin under Special Handstamps in error, should have read 4 November-28 December 1974 and not 10 November 1974-18 January 1975 as published.
- 'P' denotes Pictorial
 'C' denotes Circular

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