

Philatelic Bulletin

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Introduction

At the time of going to press we are uncertain how the power shortage will affect production of the Bulletin. The Editor may be able to cope with the help of a candle but it is fair to assume that our printers may have problems. We shall all do our very best to ensure that the Bulletin reaches you with the minimum of delay.

RAF Museum Cover

A flown cover will be issued in the current Squadron series to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of Operation 'Jericho'. It will show the R.E.7 used in 1915 and the Devon which forms the present equipment of No 21 Squadron. It will be flown to Amiens (where a French Squadron took part in Operation 'Jericho') after cancellation by a special BFPS commemorative handstamp (1424) on 18 Feb-

ruary 1974. It should be available on or about 12 March 1974 from the Philatelic Officer, No 21 Squadron, RAF Andover, Hants, at 25p plus 3p postage. All proceeds will be donated to the Royal Air Force Museum Appeal Fund.

New 30p Stamp Book

This new book, featuring 'Save the Children' on the front cover and containing two panes of 5 x 3p stamps, went on sale at post offices on 30 January 1974.

New Picture Postcard

The fifth card to be issued in the PHQ series is a reproduction of the special stamp for British Trees - The Horse Chestnut. It goes on sale at selected post offices on February 27 1974.

Royal Marines Series of Covers 1974

A special issue in the Series is to be made on 5 February 1974 on the occasion of a Concert by the Massed Bands of the Royal Marines at the Royal Albert Hall in aid of their Museum Appeal.

Eight covers will be issued during the year, which will continue to be illustrated by Charles Stadden and depict a uniform figure against a background of the event being commemorated.

Cover RM 9 will be issued on 13 March, and will commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Battle of Tamaii, when a battalion of the RM Light Infantry, drawn from ships' detachments, formed part of General Graham's force in the Sudan in 1884.

Full details of this cover and of the programme for the year may be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to The Philatelic Officer, Royal Marines Museum, Eastney, Southsea, PO4 9PX.

Proceeds from the sale of these covers are donated to the Royal Marines Museum Appeal Fund.

Experimental GB Postage Stamp Books

The 25-Year Story of the First Post Office Stamp Book

Part II – The Design and Printing of the 1904 Book

In 1891–1895 private companies were given authority to sell memorandum books, each containing a single unused 1d stamp, from automatic machines affixed to the side of Post Office pillar boxes. The story of this interesting early experiment is given in full in the *Philatelic Bulletin*, Vol 8, No 2 of October 1970. However, this private venture was not reflected in any further official correspondence until 16 May 1903, when Mr Cleave of the Inland Revenue wrote to Sir George Murray (Secretary of the Post Office). The letter, which obviously follows on from verbal contacts, assumes that the idea of selling stamps in small books had been agreed, and suggests that the Post Office should “arrange with De La Rue to make up the books and to send them in to me ready for issue to Postmasters”.

Cleave also mentions that “the question (of stamp books) is already under consideration in regard to India” and stresses the need for interleaving stamp panes with waxed paper if the books are carried in breast pockets. He goes on “one great object must be to avoid waste of stamps in making up the books; this can only be done in the manner shown in the specimen books [probably dummy Indian books] which I forward herewith. You must have a side margin for each small sheet of stamps – the full sheet of stamps being printed 12 in a row the books must be made up of half-rows (ie 6 stamps) . . . ; De La Rue already supply similar books to Egypt”.

Two days later King, of the Post Office, minuted Sir George Murray that “the extra trouble of handling [ie accounting for] 2/0½d books at the counter might be balanced against the saving to the counter clerk in not having to tear stamps from the sheets”. On the 21st Murray received De La Rue’s estimate for the printing and preparation of the books. The price was satisfactory, there were sound arguments in favour of having stamp books and so, on 26 May 1903, the Post Office recommended the idea to the Treasury, proposing that the books should contain 24

One Penny stamps, that the postal rates should be printed inside the cover, that the general size etc should follow that of some dummy Indian stamp books†, that the price per book should be 2/0½d to cover the special costs and, most important, that new plates (240 set) should be made with four panes of 60 stamps instead of 2 panes of 120 as usual. These recommendations were approved on 1 June 1903.

Following verbal instructions from Mr Cleave of the Inland Revenue, De La Rue sent him on 26 June 1903 three specimens of the proposed books of 24 One Penny stamps (fig 4) and specimens of suggested covers for the 24 × 1d, 48 × ½d, and the combined ½d and 1d books (figs 5 and 6). After quoting their manufacturing charges per 1,000 for each of the three types of books, Messrs De La Rue asked for authority to make three 240-set special One Penny plates in panes of 60 stamps, reversing “as arranged verbally with you . . . the alternate columns of three stamps, in order that all the books may open the same way”.

In transmitting the De La Rue specimen books to the Post Office (for their views) on 9 July, the Inland Revenue explained the proposed new layout for the special plates and commented that the use of the existing Crown Watermark paper would mean only partial registration of stamps with watermarks. Post Office approval was quickly given and agreement was reached on the books all opening “the natural way” (some of the specimens had opened the other way). De La Rue were given authority for the new plates on 27 July 1903.

This layout devised for printing booklet sheets (fig 7) in 1903 has continued almost unaltered to the present day; indeed it is difficult to see what improvement could be made, given the style and size of stamp book normally produced for the Post Office since 1904.

At the end of August 1903 Mr Cleave wrote to De La Rue asking them to let him have “three or four patterns of the cover as



Fig 4

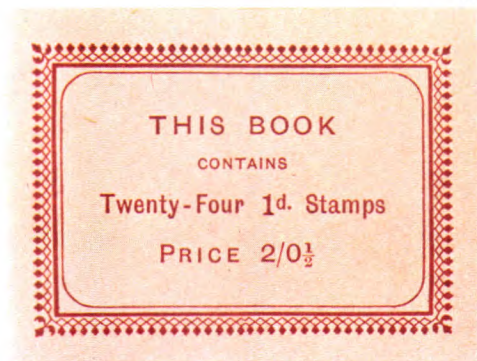


Fig 5

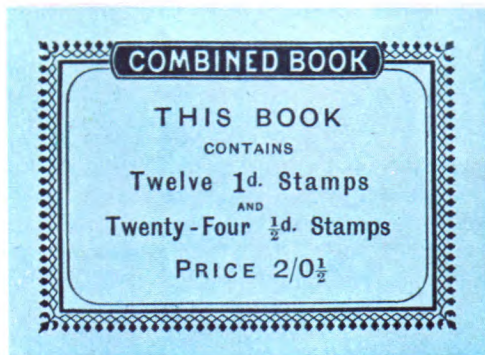


Fig 6

POSTAL ORDERS.
Postal Orders are issued of 41 different values—one for each multiple of 6d. up to 20s., and one for 21s.—the poundage charged being as follows:

Amount of Order.	Poundage.
6d.; 1s.; 1s. 6d.	½d.
2s. up to 10s. 6d.	1d.
11s. up to 21s.	1½d.

TELEGRAMS (INLAND).
6d. for first 12 words, and ½d. for each additional word. Addresses are charged for.



Twenty-four
one penny
postage stamps.
price : 2s. 0½d.

Fig 8

18th September, 1903.

Plate 57.



Fig 7

now proposed . . . the Post Office do not like the cover suggested by you"; obviously there had been some previous discussions on the subject.

Four specimens (on various papers) were duly sent on 10 September (fig 8) but the Post Office indicated a preference for plain

(roman) as against the 'gothic' lettering suggested by De La Rue. Final approval on lettering, design and colour was given on 23 September. On 20 October De La Rue supplied as a further specimen a dummy book with printed cover and containing the appropriate number of panes of perforated blank labels. This was approved subject to the covers being enamelled in red outside and cream inside. The final samples, modified as requested, and again with perforated blank panes were submitted on 27 November. Some were unvarnished ("the colour might come off the unvarnished covers if handled by anybody with a very moist hand"), the others varnished.

Messrs De La Rue were authorised to proceed with the printing and preparation of the new books, with varnished covers, on 28 November 1903.

This, however, was not quite the end of the story because on 22 January 1904, De La Rue wrote to the Inland Revenue that their original quotations for making up books had been based on using the quarter sheets of 60 stamps (printed as four panes on a 240-set plate – see above) "as we did not think it would be possible for larger size sheets to be dealt with, seeing the great accuracy with which the books have to be cut". They now announced that, after some six months of experiments they had succeeded in inventing machinery to make the books from the full 240-set sheets; this would, of course, effect a considerable saving in cost and a new lower quotation was submitted.

Needless to say the new prices were accepted with alacrity by the Inland Revenue who thanked De La Rue for their efforts.

The first Post Office stamp book, containing 24 One Penny stamps, was put on sale on 16 March 1904. The number of these books actually made up appears to have been 1,215,000 though not all may have been put on sale.

A G RIGO DE RIGHI

†These had been prepared for the India Office in April 1902 by De La Rue.

Gems from the R M Phillips Collection

VIII The Prince Consort Essay

The Reginald M Phillips Collection contains a remarkably fine study of this 1850–51 essay, which is both of considerable rarity and of particular interest in the history of British postage stamp production.

Readers will recall that in an earlier series of articles on Pioneer Experiments in the Perforation of Postage Stamps (*Bulletin*, August and September 1971) I mentioned the difficulties caused in trials of Henry Archer's machines by the imprecise laying down of recess plates and variations in the size of the paper due to the wetting necessary for recess printing.

In 1850 Henry Archer arranged with Robert Branston, a well-known engraver, to produce a die for printing stamps by typography (surface-printing). This process was then currently being used by Hulot, the French Post Office printers, for their first issue of postage stamps.

The advantages anticipated were greater cheapness, accurately spaced impressions (the plate being assembled from individual clichés), and no distortion of the paper as this was a dry printing process.

Two different dies seem to have been engraved for Archer and Branston by one S W Reynolds. The first, which bore a representation of the Queen's head, was quickly rejected for that very reason and all impressions from it destroyed. The second, very similar to the One Penny red stamp, carried a representation of Albert, The

Prince Consort, but the engraving was much coarser.

In March 1851, Henry Archer and Branston submitted a proposal to the authorities to print the whole of the postage stamp requirements on the surface-printing principle at a cost lower than that charged by Perkin's Bacon & Co and accompanied their proposal with specimens of the 'Prince Consort' essay in various forms.

The essays were printed, according to Philbrick and Westaby (*The Postage and Telegraph Stamps of Great Britain*, The Philatelic Society, London 1881) in red-brown in sheets of 240 (20 rows of 12) and in black in sheets of 252 (21 rows of 12).

There are 12 types of the essay, distinguished by minor varieties, arranged in three rows of four clichés. A unique proof sheet of 36 of the black stamps in the R M Phillips Collection shows three of these panes of 12 put together horizontally to make up three rows of the complete sheet (fig 1). There is also a block of 12 in the red-brown shade.

The essay was also printed in red and (rarest of all) in blue. Figure 2 shows an almost complete reconstruction of the pane of 12 clichés made up of red, red-brown and black stamps. The sheets of red and black stamps were gummed, the red-brown only exists ungummed.

A few of the stamps were experimentally perforated by Archer. One of these (black)



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3

can be seen on the right of figure 2, and a perforated example in blue is illustrated as figure 3.

Figure 4 shows a pair of incomplete impressions (with blank top and bottom tabs)

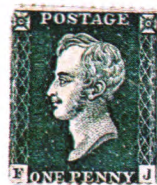


Fig 4

lets) which were probably proofs of clichés made prior to completion of the die. These are of the greatest rarity even as single copies.

A G RIGO DE RIGHI

British Trees (Horse Chestnut) Stamp



designed by David Gentleman. The first stamp in the series also designed by Gentleman, was issued in February 1973.

Printing Details

Printer : Harrison and Sons Limited

Size : 30 × 41 mm

Perforation : 15 × 14

Numbers to Sheet : 100

Paper : Coated unwatermarked all-over phosphor

Format : Horizontal

Process : Photogravure

Sale of Issue : 27 February 1974

Colours : Dark Green, Light Green, Black, Yellow, Grey

A second Tree Stamp, value 10p, will be issued on 27 February 1974. The stamp features the Horse Chestnut tree and is

British Trees (Horse Chestnut) First Day Cover

POST OFFICE FIRST DAY COVER



The Horse Chestnut

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



Presentation Pack British Trees (Horse Chestnut)



British Trees (Horse Chestnut) First Day Cover Services

A special first-day cover and the full range of services will be provided for the British Tree Stamp, value 10p, to be issued on 27 February 1974.

Service A

This is the full service and consists of the official Post Office cover, addressed as requested with the stamp affixed to it. The cover will be cancelled 'Philatelic Bureau Edinburgh'. The charge is 21½p or, for customers with Deposit Accounts, 19p.

Service B

Customers own pre-addressed covers will be accepted for servicing and cancelling with the full set of stamps. The charge is 15½p.

Service C

For bulk orders of more than 50 covers, all to the same address, the conditions of service A apply except that the charge is 19p.

The usual first day of issue facilities will be available for those who wish to post their own cover, at the offices where philatelic posting boxes are provided.

The British High Value Stamps of the 20th Century

6. King George VI, 1951



Often called the 'Festival' high values because they were issued on the same day – 3 May 1951 – as the two commemorative stamps for the Festival of Britain, the second King George VI series of 2s 6d, 5s, 10s and £1 stamps struck a new note in design and presentation.

They were in the long horizontal format which had also become established as the 'commemorative' size and shape, and it looked as though the Post Office finally wanted to divest itself of any association – or *presumed* association – with the upright designs of the first KGVI high-value series, which inevitably had been linked with those of Queen Victoria and King Edward VII.

For some obscure reason, however, the four new stamps were paired in contrasting styles – pictorial, for the 2s 6d and 5s, symbolic designs of well-tried subjects (St George and the Dragon, and the Royal Arms) for the 10s and £1. The only really consistent factors were the 'standard' Dulac/Park profile of the King with its 'floating' crown, the format and the excellent engraved work of Waterlow & Sons, the printers.

The most likely explanation for this ap-

parent juxtaposition of 'informal' and 'formal' designs was that the Post Office found itself between two stools – wanting to compete with the trend for large-size pictorial stamps in the various British Commonwealth territories, yet hesitant in abandoning heraldic and symbolic criteria which had handicapped the creative efforts and ideas of artists and designers for so long. Old traditions die hard!

For the two pictorial designs the Post Office commissioned a specialist in mural painting – Mary Adshead, wife of Stephen Bone, the artist. She had exhibited at the Royal Academy, the New English Art Club and the Women's International Art Club, and she had designed a previous stamp (the 2½d) for the UPU issue of 1949. Her new designs showed Nelson's flagship *Victory* on the 2s 6d green, and the celebrated 'White Cliffs of Dover' – the first sight of England for the cross-Channel commuter – on the 5s red. Later (1957), Miss Adshead designed the 2½d stamp for the World Scout Jubilee Jamboree.

Both subjects were set within an oval 'cameo' against a nautical background of criss-crossed ropes. HMS *Victory*, in which

Admiral Horatio Nelson crowned his career with a memorable victory over the French and Spanish fleets under Villeneuve off Cape Trafalgar in 1805, is probably the Royal Navy's best-known existing vessel, now preserved in Portsmouth dockyard. The stamp is the nearest we've had to a commemorative issue in honour of 'England's greatest sailor' (who was mortally wounded at Trafalgar). Perhaps a 170th-anniversary stamp in 1975 would not come amiss?

The 'White Cliffs' stamp is a period piece, with Dover's Norman castle (an Ancient Monument) above, and an outmoded sailing barge in the foreground, below.

The 10s and £1 stamps were the work of Percy Metcalfe, CVO, RDI, who had designed coinage, medals and seals for many countries, and who had also previously designed one of the UPU stamps – the 3d – and the 2½d Olympic Games stamp of 1948. Mr Metcalfe depicted the rather fanciful renaissance version of St George and the Dragon from the sculptured work by Benedetto Pistrucci on the 10s ultramarine (featured also on 19th-century gold sovereigns), and a stylish rendering of the Royal Arms of King George VI on the £1 brown.

His designs filled the stamps to the edges and the absence of formal borders gave them a refreshingly 'modern' look. The inscribed 'POSTAGE' is in a restrained typeface, perhaps a little too spaced out, the figures of value admirably suited to the overall style. The designer's insistence on 'border-to-border' subjects is equalled only by his ingenuity in placing St George's helmet and the tiny lion surmounting the Royal Arms in between the 'S' and 'T' of 'POSTAGE' without upsetting the balance of the design or disturbing the location of the letters.

The stamps were printed on the Large Cypher watermarked paper, and their present catalogue value, unused, tots up to £13. Used, £4. They had a comparatively short life, for in 1955 they were replaced by the 'Castles' high values. JAMES WATSON

Book Reviews

"Collecting Stamps" by Alan James

Handbooks for the very young collector of stamps are frequently attempted, but it is rare to find one which combines as many virtues as this addition to Blackwell's Learning Library. It is written in careful, simple language, boldly printed as an aid to the youngster who has probably just begun to read for pleasure at the time his interest is captured by stamps.

For all that, the same care extends to the treatment of the essentials of the hobby, ranging from an outline history of stamps to their characteristics; from the basic needs of a young collector to a glance at postal history. Throughout the book the illustrations in black and white or in colour are relevant and thought-provoking. As a work of reference for a collector's first years this book would be excellent value. "Collecting Stamps" by Alan James is published by Basil Blackwell, 5 Alfred Street, Oxford OX1 4HB, Price 70p.

"Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Specialised Stamp Catalogue, Volume 1, Queen Victoria. 4th Edition"

The new edition of the "QV Specialised" appears over three years later than its predecessor, and incorporates the fruits of the research undertaken during this interval.

The listings of the 1841 2d blue have been re-written to take account of the work by A. G. Brewer and F. N. Johnson on the processes by which the line-engraved plates were manufactured. New Maltese Cross cancellations have been added to the listing of the 1840 2d blue and new varieties appear under the perforated 2d blue.

A new feature, which new-comers to the surface printed issues will find useful is a one-page table setting out the changes of type, watermark and colour in this complex area. The 1887 'Jubilee' listings include a number of new varieties – particularly under the ½d, 2d, 2½d, 4½d and 10d values.

The prices have almost all been revised and reflect the continued strength of the market for Victorian issues since the 1970 edition.

The Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Specialised Stamp Catalogue Vol. 1. 4th Ed. is published by Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd, 391 Strand, London WC2R 0XL.

"International Stamp Dealers Directory"

Since the last edition of the International Stamp Dealers' Directory was published there have been many changes in the Philatelic world. This new edition contains much usual information including direct sources of supply, hotels in Europe, exhibitions and courses in Britain and on the Continent, a currency guide, a guide to the philatelic press of the world together with the advertising rates of the various magazines, a list of auctioneers in Britain and overseas and, of course, a comprehensive listing of stamp dealers at home and overseas giving details of services they offer.

The information contained in the volume will, provide stamp collectors, with the names and addresses of dealers they can visit on their travels.

The International Stamp Dealers Directory 1974 is published by Harris Publications Ltd, 42 Maiden Lane, London WC2E 7LW, price £1.50.

"Collect British Stamps"

The 13th edition of "Collect British Stamps" will take the total sales of the SG checklist past the million mark; sadly this achievement coincides with a price increase.

Appearing only some six months after its predecessor, the new edition includes a striking number of price increases. It is likely that those for earlier issues reflect the assessments made for the new edition of the GB Specialised Catalogue Vol. I as well as the current boom in the market.

Among more recent issues there have been extensive changes, and it is interesting to see that some apply to sets still available from the

Philatelic Bureau and sales counters: examples are the 1973 'Tree' issue (SG 902); the 1973 British Explorers (SG 903/907) and County Cricket (SG 908/910). Readers may wish to take the hint!

"Collect British Stamps" (13th Edition) is published by Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd., 391 Strand, London WC2R 0XL, price 35p.

Victorian Letter Box



This early hexagonal pillar box designed by Mr. J. W. Penfold in 1865 is still in use at Princes Street, Truro. There are still some of this type of box in use but their numbers decrease annually to make way for new developments.

However, this particular box is unlikely to suffer such a fate because on the 19th June, 1973 it was listed as a "Building of Special Architectural and Historic Interest" under the Town and Country Planning Act 1962.

Preliminary Designs Inigo Jones Stamps



Rosalinde Dease

Special Handstamps

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting bearing at least $3\frac{1}{2}p$ 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'.
20 April 1974 P/C

Scottish Annual Philatelic Congress
Stirling 20 April 74. Special posting box at Stirling University.

22 April 1974 C

Health Congress RSH Brighton Sussex
22 April 74. Special posting box at the Hotel Metropole, Exhibition Hall, Kings Road, Brighton.

Postmark Slogans

Unless otherwise stated items for reposting should be forwarded to the Head Postmaster of the town where the slogan is to be used with the outer cover marked 'Postmark Slogan'.

9 December 1973–31 March 1974

Visit The Turnpike Gallery Leigh and see National Exhibitions. To be used at Wigan, Lancs on the second class machine only.

30 December–18 May 1974

The British Deaf Association Cares About Lifelong Deafness. To be used at Carlisle.

23 June–24 August 1974

29 September–16 November 1974

22 December–28 December 1974

(1st Class)

2 January–29 December 1974

(2nd Class)

1 January–25 March 1974 (P)

Manchester High School for Girls 1874-1974. To be used at Manchester South.

11–24 March 1974 (P)

Bristol Musical Comedy Club. My Fair Lady 19-30 March Bristol Hippodrome. To be used at Bristol.

Repeat Campaigns

1 January–25 March 1974

Holiday St Ives Cornwall. To be reused at Birmingham.

Special Announcement

The postmark slogan **Forfar for Quality Living** is to be used between 29 October 1973 and 28 October 1974, and **Holiday at Dunoon** is to be used between 1 October 1973 and 30 September 1974, not as stated in the December Bulletin.

'P' denotes Pictorial.

'R' denotes Rectangular.

1974 Stamp Programme

The full details of this year's special issues are:
February 27 British Tree – The Horse

Chestnut, 10p

April 24 200th Anniversary of Fire Service Legislation, $3\frac{1}{2}p$, $5\frac{1}{2}p$, 8p and 10p

June 12 Centenary of UPU, $3\frac{1}{2}p$, $5\frac{1}{2}p$, 8p and 10p

July 10 Great Britons
700th Anniversary of birth of Robert the Bruce, $3\frac{1}{2}p$
Owain Glendwr, $5\frac{1}{2}p$ *
Edward – the Black Prince, 8p
Henry V, 10p

October 9 Centenary of the birth of Sir Winston Churchill, $3\frac{1}{2}p$, $5\frac{1}{2}p$, 8p and 10p

Christmas stamp date to be announced.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

I was very interested in the article in the January issue of the *Bulletin* by James Watson, on the £1 Silver Wedding stamp of 1948. I cannot agree, however, with his closing remarks regarding the more recent Silver Wedding issue: "it was tactful of the Post Office not to burden us with another £1 stamp".

Amongst the many encouraging replies to my first letter to you (August 1971) was a letter from R H S Randles, who hoped that the Silver Wedding of 1972 "would not just be lost as one more issue among a regular programme of other anniversaries etc.". I feel that it was lost, and the one thing that would have prevented this would have been a high (and I *mean* high) value stamp. If they could afford £1 in 1948, surely we can afford £1 now.

I had hoped, when I wrote my earlier letter, for either a £1 or (dare I say it?) £5 stamp, and was very disappointed with the 20p offering. Again, for this year's Royal Wedding, 20p was all we got. Special occasions such as this are few and far between, and I think they deserve a higher value stamp.

I do not intend to enter into the current argument concerning denominations of commemorative stamps in general, but I would ask what postal use the £1 P.U.C. had? If my views are shared by many other collectors, might I suggest a £1 or £5 stamp for the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977?

In the November 1973 issue, M K Young asked what stamps will be collectors' items in 100 years from now. He said "Apart from the obvious P.U.C. £1 and the 1948 Silver Wedding £1 . . ." – why obvious? Of course the designs are superb, but doesn't the fact that they are £1 stamps play some part?

Yours faithfully

R DOWNS

Norwich

Sir,
KING GEORGE VI HIGH VALUE
STAMPS

I was greatly interested in the article (December issue) on the HV King George VI stamps, but particularly in the contemporary assessment of the Design Merit of Edmond Dulac's 5/- Red and 2/6d Brown (later yellow green).

Largely because this assessment seemed so contrary to present day opinions, I had to try to imagine myself in the place of the critic in

1939, with only pre-1939 stamps to assist my judgement. In his place I would probably have reached similar conclusions. However, design itself has developed remarkably in the last 30 years and I would respectfully suggest that the conclusions reached then are no longer valid today, just as truly as if we compared say a 1939 Ford motor car with one of today's designs.

What I am really concluding is that the study of Stamp Design holds even greater fascination for the collector BECAUSE of the constant shift in emphasis; and each time we judge (or try to) a stamp we must see it in the general context of the time of its issue.

When we look back on certain of our GB designs we tend to be over critical because we judge them by today's standards.

However, in spite of these thoughts I am still forced to the conclusion that Dulac's 2/6d and 5/- designs were exceptionally badly out of balance – the mass of detailed interest falling well below centre line and giving the appearance of being bottom heavy.

The later Percy Metcalfe £1 value (GB 512) utilising an almost identical coat of arms is in much better balance – though the format is horizontal.

W A AUBREY WITHAM

Glasgow

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