

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Bulletin

Volume 34 Number 10 JUNE 1997 • 85P

30 years of Machin stamps •
All The Queen's Horses



All The Queen's Horses: four stamps featuring ceremonial horses commemorate the British Horse Society's 50th anniversary.



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover A horse in the Royal Mews being re-shoed. Royal Mail's new All The Queen's Horses stamps are featured on page 292. Photograph courtesy HGV.

Late news The aerogramme marking the Royal Golden Wedding, announced here in March, has now been cancelled. Royal Mail regrets any disappointment caused.

Cylinders used for the new Harrison printings of the 2p, 4p, 5p, 10p, 30p and 39p released on 27 May are all numbered 1 (colour) 45 (phosphor). The shade differences between these and the former Enschedé printings are particularly noticeable on the 2p and 39p. The numbers for the 20p and 43p values, issued in April, are 16 (colour) 46 (phosphor) and 1 (colour) 45 (phosphor) respectively.

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

1 June	Withdrawal Aerogrammes: Standard (issued April '90), and Pen Pal (February '93)
3 June	Issue Architects of the Air stamp cards
10 June	Issues Architects of the Air stamps and presentation pack • National Postal Museum 'Aerial Post' postcards. Please note there will now be five cards in this set, not four as previously announced. Cards available only from Museum and Bureau.
17 June	Withdrawal 1996 Olympic Games aerogramme
26 June	Withdrawals 25p, 29p, 35p, 36p, 38p & 41p definitives – all printed by Enschedé, blue fluor (except 36p yellow fluor). Includes both gum variants of 25p • 19p, 25p, 35p & 41p and mixed value (1 × 4p, 3 × 5p) coils
30 June	Issue Hong Kong philatelic numismatic cover
1 July	Issues Scottish aerogramme – Nature of Scotland • Country definitives Northern Ireland and Scotland 20p, 26p, 37p & 63p printed by Walsall in photogravure • Country definitives Wales 20, 26, 37 and 63 pence values printed by Walsall in photogravure. Note that there is no 'p' sign after value • All The Queen's Horses stamp cards
1 July	Withdrawal Scottish aerogramme – Edinburgh Festival
7 July	Withdrawal £1 & £2 machine books, £1.48 (4 × 37p) & £2.52 (4 × 63p) books, all issued 8 July '96
8 July	Issue All The Queen's Horses stamps and presentation pack
8 July	Withdrawal Olympic stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards
14 July	Withdrawal £2.60 W H Smith promotion book (10 × 1st)

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Edward Short, the Postmaster General, with the Machin head, March 1967.

Main feature The first Machin stamps were issued 30 years ago this month. The Postmaster General at the time was Edward Short, now Lord Glenamara, who told the *Bulletin*: 'Thirty years ago it fell to me to introduce a new definitive stamp. Arnold Machin's sculpture portrait of The Queen was exquisite. To enhance its beauty on the stamp I removed the vertical words 'Postage' and 'Revenue' which, when I first suggested their removal, the Post Office solicitors told me were a legal requirement. The result was the world's most beautiful definitive stamp which has reigned supreme in the philatelic world for three decades. History will undoubtedly place it alongside the Penny Black.'

Leading collector Douglas Myall recalls the introduction of the Machin stamps on page 299.

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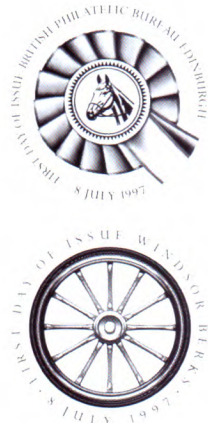
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All The Queen's Horses

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

The designer The stamps are the work of Jean Luc Benard, best known for his high-profile work in advertising. His exquisite calendar produced for London Zoo has raised much-needed cash for the Zoo and won professional photographic awards. To photograph the horses for the stamps, M Benard worked in studios erected at the Royal Mews and at the Barracks in Hyde Park. Prior to this commission, he photographed horses at a stud run by his sister in Normandy.



Presentation pack and stamp cards A presentation pack (price £1.85) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from the Bureau, Post Office outlets, and main post offices. The pack has been written by Philippa Kerr.



Royal Mail news All the Queen's Horses • Country stamps and high values changes • Hong Kong PNC • Scottish aerogramme

All The Queen's Horses Stamps featuring four of HM The Queen's horses, used for ceremonial duties, go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 8 July 1997. The issue commemorates the 50th anniversary of the British Horse Society.

The **20p** stamp (inland 2nd class basic rate) features St Patrick – an imposing Irish Grey, standing 17 hands 1 inch, described as having 'deep intelligent eyes and a graceful white waterfall of a tail.' He was acquired by the Royal Mews at age four and after a year's training was in regular use in London. St Patrick, who wears Number 3 State Harness ordered by King William IV in 1836, is used with three other horses, to pull the Irish State Coach for the State Opening of Parliament.

The **26p** denomination (inland 1st class and EU basic rates) depicts seven year old Thompson, a Household Cavalry black horse. He stands at 16½ hands. Most Household Cavalry horses are bred in Ireland to produce large horses with steady temperament and strength in legs and joints – essential for pounding the city streets. The monarch is Colonel-in-Chief of the regiments of the Household Cavalry whose mounted squadrons escort her on state occasions. Their horses are normally acquired at the age of four and trained at Windsor and then at Hyde Park. The horses' names indicate the year they were brought into training, 'T' referring to 1994.

Janus, who features on the **43p** stamp (basic airmail letter rate), is a one tonne 13-year old drum horse with the Blues and Royals, one of the two senior regiments of the Household Cavalry. He measures 17 hands 1½ inches and is described as a 'stately, deeply-impressive pinto skewbald' (bald referring to a white-faced horse). Drum horses are difficult to find, so the Royal Stud breeds horses for this special duty. Other drum horses are called Spartacus, Constantine, and Leonidas. A Blues and Royals drum horse features on the final stamp in the 1989 Lord Mayor's Show se-ten-ant strip; the Blues and Royals escort features on the second stamp.

The **63p** value (airmail letters, second weight step) features River Star who is 20 years old this year (equivalent to 80 human years). At 16 hands 2 inches, he is a fine middle-weight hunter, often used to pull the carriages bearing ambassadors to present their credentials to The Queen. He is ridden by The Duke of Edinburgh at the Trooping the Colour ceremony each June. The Queen at Trooping the Colour featured on the penultimate stamp in the 1992 Happy & Glorious se-ten-ant strip, and the fourth photograph on the 1986 60th birthday stamps shows Her Majesty on Buckingham Palace balcony after the Trooping the Colour ceremony in 1958.

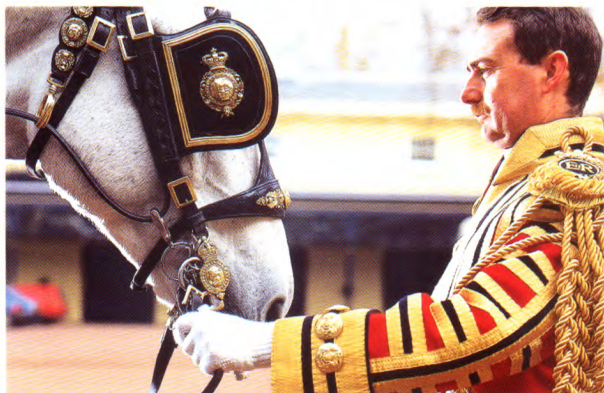
HORSES ON STAMPS Horses, real and in artistic representation, have featured on numerous British stamps: 1929 Postal Union Congress £1; 1951



As one of the finest working stables in existence, the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace provides a unique opportunity for visitors to see a working department of the Royal Household. The Monarch's magnificent gilded state carriages and coaches, including the unique Gold State Coach are housed here, together with their horses and state liveries.

The Mews is open Tuesday to Thursday (12 noon-16.00) until 3 August, Monday to Thursday (10.30-16.30) 4 August-2 October and Wednesday (12 noon-16.00) 3 October-31 December. Last admission is 30 minutes before closing time.

Enquiries: 0171 839 1377 (09.30-17.30).



10s definitive, 1960 General Letter Office 3d; 1966 Battle of Hastings; 1967 Paintings 9d; 1968 Paintings 1s9d and Christmas 4d (rocking horse); 1991 Anniversaries 7½p and Christmas 7½p; 1974 Great Britons; 1976 Caxton 8½p; 1978 Horses; 1979 Horseracing Paintings, Police 13p, and Christmas 8p; 1980 Liverpool & Manchester Railway 12p (4th stamp); 1981 Folklore 18p (Morris dancing); 1983 Fairs 16p & 31p; 1984 Mail Coaches; 1985 Arthurian Legends 31p; 1986 Domesday Book 31p; 1989 Lord Mayor's Show; 1992 Civil War 39p; and 1993 Inland Waterways 33p. Seahorses featured on the popular George V high values. *I am sure sharp-eyed readers will find other horses on our stamps* ED.

Technical details

Printers Walsall Security Printers Ltd

Process Offset lithography

Size 37 × 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 × 15

Phosphor One band 20p ● two bands others

Paper OBA (Optical Brightening Agent) free

Gum PVA

Plate numbers and colours

W1 (scarlet-vermilion) ●
W1 (black) ● W1 (magenta) ●
W1 (new blue) ● W1 (greenish yellow) – all values

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets around a week before 8 July, 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 Windsor, price £2.20 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.88 overseas (no VAT). Orders for covers must be received at the Bureau by 10 June. Collectors may send stamped covers, on the day of issue, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA (for Windsor postmark). The outer envelope should be marked 'FD9711' (Bureau), or 'FD9712' (Windsor).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) 'first day of issue' handstamps. Details of sponsored special handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 rest of the world).

As the set includes a second class rate stamp, collectors may submit covers bearing just the 20p stamp for all first day, philatelic and sponsored handstamps in use on 8 July ●

Country stamp changes New printings of the 20p 26p, 37p and 63p Northern Ireland and Scotland country stamps will be available from the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets from 1 July 1997. They will go into use at post offices in the two countries as supplies of the earlier printing are used up. The new printings, by Walsall Security Printers in photogravure, replace those by The House of Questa in lithography. WSP have used EME (Electro-Mechanical Engraving) cylinders for this new printing. The stamps are regarded by Royal Mail as variants so no first day of issue facilities are being offered.

At the same time new printings of the Welsh 20, 26, 37, and 63 values, also by WSP in photogravure, will go on philatelic sale. These will qualify for full first day treatment as the design has been modified by the removal of the p (pence) symbol after the value. This is in line with Royal Mail's policy relating to products and literature for use in Wales, forming part of The Post Office's Welsh Language Scheme prepared under the Welsh Language Act of 1993. (The Welsh for penny is *ceiniog*.) The new stamps will go on sale at post offices throughout Wales as existing supplies are used up.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES A Royal Mail first day cover envelope for the Welsh stamps will be available (25p) and first day posting boxes provided at first day offices in Wales and at offices in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland with a philatelic outlet. Covers posted at non-Welsh offices (except London and Windsor) will be forwarded to Cardiff for the pictorial first day cancel. The Bureau will provide a cover bearing the four Welsh stamps cancelled by Bureau or Cardiff first day postmarks, price each £2.13 (UK, including VAT) or £1.82 (overseas, no VAT). Orders must be received by 1 July. Collectors may submit covers to receive these cancels, quoting reference FD DEF 9703 (Bureau) or FD DEF 9704 (Cardiff) to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF1 1AA •

High value changes New printings of the £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 Castle stamps, by Joh Enschedé en Zonen of the Netherlands, will be available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets from 29 July. These have been printed in recess (intaglio) in the same way as the outgoing Harrison printings. The new printings, which will go on sale at post offices as required, are regarded as variants by Royal Mail and thus no first day of issue facilities will be provided. The four castles have been re-engraved so specialist collectors will notice subtle differences between the Enschedé and Harrison printings.

Sheets of the new £1.50 and £5 were received as this *Bulletin* was being prepared. There is a noticeable shade difference between the two printers, the Enschedé stamps being rather paler than the Harrison. There are numerous minor differences in the castles, most noticeably seen in the windows. On the £1.50 look, for instance, at the larger window at right on the building on the left of the stamp: on the Harrison printing the window comprises vertical lines whilst it appears solid on the Enschedé. On the



Presentation pack A pack containing the four new Welsh stamps will be available from the Bureau, philatelic outlets, and main post offices in Wales from 1 July, price £1.80.

Architects of the Air stamps

The cylinder numbers and colours are:

20p 1A (silver) ● 2B (greenish yellow) ● 1C (magenta) ● 1D (new blue) ● 1E (black) ● 1F (grey) ● P50 (phosphor)

26p 1A (silver) ● 1B (greenish yellow) ● 2C (magenta) ● 1D (new blue) ● 1E (black) ● 1F (grey) ● P52 (phosphor)

37p 1A (silver) ● 1B (greenish yellow) ● 1C (magenta) ● 2D (new blue) ● 1E (black) ● 1F (grey) ● P51 (phosphor)

43p and 63p 1A (silver) ● 1B (greenish yellow) ● 1C (magenta) ● 1D (new blue) ● 1E (black) ● 1F (grey) ● P51 (phosphor)

£5 there is a small 'chimney pot' on the left battlement near the centre of the Harrison stamp, but this is not present on the Enschedé printing. On both Enschedé stamps there is no upper serif on the c of CASTLE in the caption, and on the £5 the w of WINDSOR appears as an overlapping v, readily distinguishing it from the Harrison stamp. Plate numbers 1A (gold) 1A (burgundy or brown) appear in the left sheet margins of both stamps, with small 'traffic lights' in the upper right margin ●

Hong Kong PNC A joint Royal Mail/Royal Mint philatelic numismatic cover will be available from the Bureau and Royal Mint from 30 June, coinciding with the transfer of Hong Kong from British to Chinese rule. This will bear the pane of four 1st class stamps with Hong Kong pictorial label (issued 12 February 1997) and a Hong Kong \$5 coin. Price £12.95. Early ordering advised ●

Scottish aerogramme A new Scottish aerogramme – the 46th since the series started in 1974 – will be available from the Bureau, philatelic outlets and over 2000 post offices throughout Scotland from 1 July 1997, price 45p. This features nature of Scotland – an article on this will be published here next month. Still available from the Bureau are the 1996 Edinburgh Festival and 1997 Alexander Graham Bell aerogrammes, price 45p each. The Festival aerogramme will be withdrawn on 1 July 1997 ●

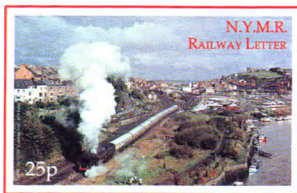
Stamp scene GB errors ● Two new railway letter stamps ● Scottish philatelic congress ● Midpex and Thematica exhibitions



Spectacular GB errors Warwick & Warwick have recently discovered a part-perforated half sheet of the 1979 Rowland Hill 10p stamp, yielding three imperf pairs. These are to be auctioned in July. Warwick & Warwick sold an imperf pair of the 1996 Women of Achievement 26p (Margot Fonteyn) for £360 in their February sale. Enquiries: Warwick & Warwick Ltd, Pageant House, Jury Street, Warwick CV34 4EW.

Stanley Gibbons March auction included a new discovery – the 1997 Flowers greetings book with missing gold (Queen's head and value), blue-green and phosphor which made over twice the expected realisation at £10,350! Enquiries: Stanley Gibbons Ltd, 399 Strand, London WC2R 0LX ●

Railway letter stamps The North Yorkshire Moors Railway issued two new 25p stamps on 19 April marking the 150th anniversary of steam on the Whitby to Pickering Railway. One features a steam train leaving Whitby, with the sea and Abbey in the background; the other shows a photograph of Class A4 no 60007 *Sir Nigel Gresley* entering Pickering station in 1996. Printing was by Walsall Security Printers in sheets of eight (four pairs). Price 50p the pair, £2 sheet. On 21 April the Railway reissued a 25p stamp of 1995 overprinted for the golden wedding of The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh. Price 25p single, £2 sheet of eight. Please note the change of date for this stamp from that announced here in March. For the 30th anniversary of the formation of the NYMR Preservation Society, four 25p stamps, printed by WSP in sheets of eight (two blocks of four) will be issued on 6 June. These feature loco no 69023 *Joem* at Grosmont; no 45428 *Eric Treacy* and Bedford OB coach at Goathland; no 65894 at Levisham; and no 2005 in a snow-covered Pickering station. In the gutter between the two blocks of stamps are traffic lights, plate numbers and text. Price £1 block of four, £2 sheet. Postage 30p UK, 80p overseas airmail. For details of FDCs see *Commemorative Covers Review* •



Orders and enquiries

NYMR/RLS, 5 Tiber View,
Brinsworth, Rotherham
S60 5EA

Scottish Philatelic Congress The 68th Annual Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies took place 22-23 March in the Town Hall, Falkirk. Previously held at Bridge of Allan near Stirling, and later the campus of Stirling University, the Scottish Congress moved its venue to Falkirk in the 1980s, the aim being to provide a location in the very heart of Scotland which was easily accessible from all points of the compass.

Falkirk Town Hall, with ample car-parking and good catering facilities, as well as its spacious main hall and stage accommodating upwards of 45 dealers, a foyer for Royal Mail and the British Philatelic Bureau, and numerous rooms for society meetings and other functions, is the ideal venue for a popular event which brings collectors from all parts of Scotland and farther afield. A sign of the times, however, was the closure of the Council Chamber, due to 'the cuts', which meant that the opening ceremony and awards had to be conducted in the Lesser Hall which was filled to overflowing.

This year's host was the Paisley Philatelic Society which set the tone of the event by linking it with commemoration of the 1904 *Scotia* expedition to Coats Land in Anartica, a reminder that the Scottish National Antarctic Expedition of 1902-4 was sponsored by the Paisley thread company of J and P Coats. A famous photograph from the expedition shows Gilbert Kerr, in full Highland regalia, playing the bagpipes to a penguin, and this forms the charming vignette adorning the Congress souvenir cover. The pictorial handstamp featured a map of Antarctica with a whale superimposed. One suspects that Margaret Morris, an avid collector of whales and whaling as a thematic subject, had a hand in this. Right on cue, a sperm whale, nicknamed Moby, beached himself in the Firth of Forth, duly



reported on national TV news. (Sadly the whale died after a few days).

The host society mounted an excellent and varied display running to 60 frames, beginning with the postcards and postal history of Paisley, not forgetting the saga of the Paisley Rocketeers formed by John Stewart 60 years ago to develop rocket mail. Appropriately four frames were devoted to Antarctica and the *Scolia* expedition, and there was a selection of material from the J and P Coats collection.

The opening ceremony was performed by Ian Taylor, a director of Coats, himself a keen philatelist. Following the presidential address by Robert Barclay the cups and trophies in the national competition were presented by Mrs Alan Lacey.

This year's signatory of the Book of Scottish Philatelists was Dr James, Mackay, the philatelic author and journalist and a frequent contributor to the *Bulletin*.

The British Postmark Society held its first provincial meeting; members and friends were entertained by a number of widely varying displays which included the postal history of Banbury, Coventry and Falkirk, the postmarks of the Royal Highland Show, Scottish camp posts, Scottish first day handstamps and ink-jet 'slogans' Many of the local and specialist societies also held meetings in the Lesser Hall on Sunday ●

For further details contact the Midpex Secretary: Mervyn Benford, Cloudshill Cottage, Shutford, Banbury OX15 6PQ.

Midpex The first Midpex exhibition, styled 'the exhibition for national/specialist philatelic societies', was held in June 1995 and judged a great success. The second exhibition takes place at the Midland Sports Centre for the Disabled, Cromwell Lane, Tile Hill, Coventry on 28 June 1997. Over 60 societies will be providing displays, and some 40 dealers will be present. The exhibition is being organised by the Hungarian Philatelic Society of Great Britain and the Midland Philatelic Federation with support from the Association of British Philatelic Societies and the British Philatelic Trust. Amongst the specialist societies taking part will be the British Decimal Stamps Study Circle, Great Britain Philatelic Society, and Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum. The exhibition will be open from 10.00 until 16.00. Refreshments will be available and the venue is close to Tile Hill railway station from where transport connections can be made to Inter-City services via Birmingham New Street and Coventry. ●

Enquiries about exhibitions
Thematic Exhibitions, PO Box
8843, London N3 1HL.
Telephone 0181 343 2434.

Thematica The first of this year's Thematica exhibitions will be held at the Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 on 28-29 June. Doors open at 10.30, admission free. As well as numerous displays by leading thematic collectors, visitors will be able to browse through the stocks of dealers from the UK and overseas, take part in stamp workshops, vote for their favourite display, and enter a grand draw with 25 prizes. A childrens' corner will cater for younger visitors. Meals, and light refreshments will be available at the nearby Victory Services Club.

Each year the exhibition becomes more successful. Over 1500 collectors attended the 10th Thematica in 1996, enjoying the informal and friendly atmosphere. The next Thematica will be held 21-22 November ●

Preparing for the Machins D G A Myall on the origins of a stamp 'which simply cannot be improved for its purpose'

The year 2BM Thirty years ago, who would have thought that stamps with the Machin head would have lasted so long? A whole generation of collectors has grown up who have known no other definitive design on sale at their post offices. Their predecessors, based on a portrait of The Queen from a photograph by Dorothy Wilding, lasted less than half that time. Why was the change made? What aesthetic influences were to affect the outcome? How would the new stamps be received by the public and collectors? To find out, come back in time with me to the year 1965 or 2BM (Before Machin). In March of that year it was announced in the House of Commons that 'The Queen has given her consent to the preparation of a new series of definitive stamps on which the Royal portrait would be sole feature'. The sole feature! Well, apart from the value, I suppose, but even so, an exciting prospect indeed.

The Wildings All the Wilding definitive stamps used the same beautiful portrait, considered at the time of its introduction to be 'less formal than a sculptured head'. However, the necessity to include the words 'Postage' and 'Revenue' as well as the national flower emblems of the four principal countries comprising the United Kingdom, led to some cluttered surrounds. The need to juxtapose a photograph and symbols created an awkward problem for designers. Moreover, the symbols were meaningless to many. The national definitives comprised seven different designs by five artists: Mary Adshead, Edmund Dulac, MC Farrar-Bell, G T Knipe and Enid Marx. Each was a brilliant montage within the limits imposed but they varied greatly. The very first two, issued on 5 December 1952, differed in a major respect; the 2½d had the letters ER, the 1½d did not. Further variety in design was added by the high values from yet another artist, Lynton Lamb, and there were others on the postal stationery. In 1958, regionals were added with heraldic emblems and floral symbols. Altogether, the Wilding definitives were a hotchpotch and far from a unified set.

During the Wilding period, the first experiments in electronic sorting of mail took place, leading to stamps with graphite and phosphor lines, with three different phosphors being used. Until 1966 there were two versions of most stamps: with and without phosphor, the former on sale in areas where Automatic Letter Facing machines had been installed. Another popular feature was that all the Wilding definitives were printed on paper with a watermark, a device which has always appealed to collectors who especially prize stamps with inverted or sideways watermarks. The announcement that the Wildings were to cease disappointed many.

Post Office policy In 1965, the Post Office was known as the General Post Office (GPO); a department of state and its staff were civil servants. The minister in charge was known as the Postmaster General, or PMG.



Despite, or maybe because of, the variety of the designs, the Wildings were, and still are, very popular with collectors. They had several philatelic features which made them attractive to those who wished to do more than just collect them.

The mid-1960s were a period when many existing values and standards were being questioned and freedom of expression was much in vogue. Stamp design was not immune from this climate. The then PMG, Anthony Wedgwood Benn, launched a number of policy initiatives which were to lead to more attention being paid to the subject. In 1965 he invited the public to submit suggestions not only for subjects for stamps but also for ideas on stamp designing. In March of that year, at the same time that the intention to change the definitives was disclosed, he announced his intention to establish a Fellowship of Minuscule Design at the Royal College of Art. The following December, the first Fellow, Andrew Restall, was appointed, charged, *inter alia*, with producing a report on which the PMG could base a national policy on stamp design, although he was not to have any direct influence on the new definitives. Another indicator of change was a series of seminars on the future of stamp design, the first of which was held in June 1966 with participants invited from stamp designers, printers, philatelic journalists and art critics. These were to lead to the more broadly based Stamp Advisory Committee, replacing the former Panel of the Council of Industrial Design, disbanded on 31 March 1967. By that time all the design decisions for the new stamps had been taken. The Panel was a prime instigator of the definitive design change. In this, it was strongly supported by Stuart Rose FSLA who had headed the GPO's design section since 1963. He later adapted the Machin head for incorporation into postal stationery designs.



Essays for the new definitives

Why a profile? It was clear from the start that the PMG's decision to extend stamp design to pictorials, which did not commemorate any particular person or event (commemoratives and pictorials are together now called special issues) would result in a multiplicity of new subjects and this raised a number of design problems. These stemmed mainly from the fact that artists found it difficult to incorporate the Wilding portrait into their subjects, the monarch's head being a necessity if the unique privilege of omitting the country's name was to be maintained. One solution was to use a cameo head which still continues on the special issues. However, for the permanent series, which had to be universally recognised as a national symbol without the country name, something more dignified was required than 'an insignificant little silhouette floating in space', as one critic described the cameo head. It was agreed that, if it were skilfully done, a sculptured profile, standing out from its background, could create an emblematic image which might serve unchanged for some time, perhaps even for the rest of Her Majesty's reign. Such an idealised design, rather than a realistic photograph, would not become dated; it would owe nothing to changing graphic fashion, but would be timeless.

Profile portraits of the monarch have been used on the stamps of all reigns, although not exclusively so. Gradually, the classic simplicity of the Penny Black was lost with the addition of ornament and heraldic symbolism, the Victorian era culminating in a dozen different designs of the 1887-1900 Jubilee issue. Subsequently, attempts were made to get back to making

the profile the main feature, notably in the stamps of King Edward VIII.

These were probably the most uncluttered designs ever seen up to that time. However, floral emblems and the word 'Revenue' returned with the stamps of George VI and this trend continued with the Wildings. It was time to go back to first principles.



Machin's solution The story of how Arnold Machin's work led to the first Machin stamps has been told often and well and will not be retold here. Suffice it to say that it did not spring up complete and ready-made. Much effort went into refinement of the design during the two years of its gestation. Early essays showed The Queen wearing a tiara but it was eventually decided to use the same diadem that had appeared on the Wilding portrait. The words 'Postage' and 'Revenue' were omitted at quite a late stage. Anything that was not absolutely essential was excluded; there were no emblems (although these were later added to adaptations for country issues).

The culmination of these endeavours was a press preview of the 4d sepia on 6 March 1967 at which the PMG, Edward Short, described it as 'one of the greatest stamps of all time'. Few disagreed, one journalist's lament that it was a 'reversion to invalid antiquarianism' being a lone voice. Thirty years on, who would venture to join him?

The first Machins – 4d, 1s and 1s9d went on sale on 5 June 1967; I recall buying them at the Birmingham Head Post Office on the day of issue. Why has the Machin lasted so long? First and foremost, the design is superb, it simply cannot be improved for its purpose. Although it has been used in almost 100 colours it has never lost its artistic or functional effect. Second, continued innovation and technical advance have ensured that collectors' interest is maintained if they are prepared to look behind the image.

The separation of a profile head from its background in a monochrome stamp is best achieved by the tonal flexibility of the photogravure process and perhaps this explains why Royal Mail have recently expressed their preference for it, all but eschewing the use of lithography for these beautiful stamps. This will ensure continued achievement of their original purpose and maintain their popularity with collectors worldwide although, sadly, there will not be another 30 years of them •

In November 1965, five artists were asked to submit designs for the new stamps based on a profile portrait. The commission went to Arnold Machin OBE, RA who had already made a plaster cast for the new coinage. He has admitted that he was inspired by the Penny Black, itself derived from a bas-relief.

Above, Arnold Machin during a visit to the National Postal Museum, September 1987

The first Machins on FDC, 5 June 1967



Look before you lick 15 Machin varieties, by Matt Hinton

Right 1p and 5p definitives with Quality Assurance Number in left and right sheet margins

Opposite page 8p stamp on uncoated paper (right), with normal for comparison, at 170% actual size



THIS ARTICLE marks in some way, the end of an era. I have written mostly on decimal varieties in the *Bulletin* since July 1994 and this will be the last such piece. In future I shall be concentrating on the equally significant pre-decimal issues and I hope that you will find them just as fascinating.

Numbers letter us check quality I tend to think that there is one sure way of telling whether a product is one which it would be fair to describe as a 'quality' item – whether it has the word 'quality' emblazoned across it or not. The clothes, for example, which are most likely to fall apart within two days tend to be those which are keenest to boast how well-made they are!

The word 'quality' has become a bit of a buzzword in recent years, so I guess it was only a matter of time before it leaked into the world of philately.

However, the term vanished as quickly as it appeared – being used from 1991 to describe the so-called 'Quality Assurance' numbers. Never heard of them? The name was changed to 'Warrant' number very shortly after they first

appeared (now you remember!) – no-one seems to know why. These are the three-digit numbers which appear close to the serial number on sheets of Machins. As if to prove my point, 'quality' is not a word which would describe them. They are dull black and appear as if they have been whacked on by means of a disintegrating rubber handstamp.

Their use is in detecting the relevant batch when a production error occurs. They form no pattern at all – for example on the 50p the first few QA numbers were 810, 923, 728, 891... – and there are some interesting varieties on some of the blocks. The 18p blocks with numbers 672 and 870 can be found both with and without screening dots in the value tablet and about a third of the 24p 957 blocks can be found with a low level of Optical Brightener Agent (OBA) in the paper (detectable with an ultra-violet lamp). 18p 870 blocks can be collected with a noticeable white flaw in the design and some 24p 871 blocks bear a strangely 'yellow' Queen's head.

Perhaps there exists a need for quality control over the numbers themselves – two turned up

with just two digits, and one with five! They were the 6p 00676, 19p 36 and 19p 64. (The standard numbers – 676, 036 and 064 also exist).

None of the blocks is over-costly and a few mounted together on a page look very striking. If you have never collected cylinder and plate blocks, why not start with these? They are very much under-researched and you may discover something I haven't! (Just don't try to steal my job!)

Extra hole A little-known variety, which is a favourite of mine, is the so-called '17-pin' feature which occurred a few years ago on a whole load of values – namely the Harrison 1p, 3p magenta, 12p emerald 13p, 16p, 17p grey-blue, 18p olive, 20½p 22p green, 23p, 24p violet, 26p rosine, 28p violet, 31p, 34p and 50p. It is recognisable by an extra perforation hole added between columns one and two and appears quite odd. You should check your singles collection, although it is more often collected in marginal blocks because of its position on the sheets. It occurs only on the no dot sheets.

Prices for marginal and cylinder blocks of six showing the variety range from about £5 to several thousand pounds. It is not an error for the 'completeness' obsessed collector, unless you have extraordinarily deep pockets!

Uncoated paper Uncoated paper is a significant error whereby the paper surface of the stamps is not given the usual chalk coating. This leaves the surface visibly much duller and with no reaction to ultra-violet light, similar to original coated paper (OCP) stamps. The design appears rather blurred and paper fibres can be seen on the stamp surface, especially when viewed under weak magnification. The silver test (touching the paper with silver) gives no reaction and the paper may also be a little thinner and appear slightly translucent.

Decimal Machin values affected include the 1½p with two phosphor bands (2B), 3p ultramarine 2B, 5½p CB, 6p emerald 2B, 6½p, 8p CB and the large 50p ultramarine. The most scarce and valuable of these is the 8p CB which sells, when



available, for about £500 or more. The same value but with two bands can, however, be picked up for less than £10! It's a funny world, philately!

Displaced phosphor Collectors of displaced phosphor bands should check the value types carefully. The ½p with original coated paper (OCP) and PVA gum is worth about £40 with T1 value and a broad left or right band, but the same stamp with T2 value fetches up to and over £250! A similar thing is true of the ½p with FCP paper and PVA gum – T1 retails at around £400 with a broad centre band, but T2 can be picked up anywhere for less than £30! All these come from books.

It is not just Harrison printings which are affected by broad displaced bands. The *Questa* 18p, 33p, 39p and 2nd class are affected by the feature as well as the *Walsall* 1st class and 25p. Again, all are from books. Check your copies carefully!

Missing colour is not all there Only one of the decimal series can be labelled as having been genuinely affected by the missing colour feature – the 10p bicoloured value on FCP paper. It looks quite incredible without the orange brown colour and fetches about £200. The pre-decimal 186d value exists with turquoise omitted – both on gum arabic and PVA printings.

ps Many thanks for all the letters I have received from you; I look forward to hearing your view on the new 'series' ●

Empire air mails The Empire Air Mail Scheme to East and



The 'all-up' Empire Air Mail Scheme was opened in three stages, as shown on the map opposite. Stage 1 to East and South Africa was opened 60 years ago this month on 29 June 1937.

The Empire flying boat was designed specifically for the Empire air routes. *Calpurnia*, below, entered service in 1937

EVER SINCE aeroplanes carried the mail, the British Post Office has been particularly concerned to provide fast air mail services to the countries of what today we call the Commonwealth, known in the 1920s and 30s as the Empire. For example, the first regular London-Karachi service was inaugurated in March 1929 and the first regular air mail service to the East African colonies operated from February 1931 and this was extended to South Africa in January 1932. These and other such services had one thing in common: postal rates were higher than those by the traditional sea and land routes. A 1932 air mail leaflet for spring 1932 gives the following postal rates for a half ounce letter: Egypt 3½d, Kenya 7d, Rhodesia N & S 9d, South Africa 1s, Iraq 6d, India, by air to Karachi 6d, by air to Delhi 8d. As the 1930s passed by, rates did come down: from November 1934 Cape Town could be reached for 6d per half ounce.

Late in 1933, the British government started to discuss the ideal of a flat rate, no air fee surcharge, air mail service for all letters, postcards and letter packets exchanged between those Empire countries which could be



This cover is a typical example of first flight southbound mail. Posted in Chalford it is franked at the new rate of 1½d using the recently issued Coronation stamp cancelled with a CHALFORD, STROUD GLOS date stamp for 7.45pm 25 JU 37.

Addressed to Umtali in Southern Rhodesia it bears two manuscript inscriptions: 'Inauguration of flat rate of 1½d for Airmail on the African route' and, correctly, 'no airmail label required'. Imperial Airways called this 'Flight no DS1' DS standing for Durban South.



Top Presentation of ISMs, September 1957

Above A selection of ISMs featuring different monarchs

mounted by the Imperial Crown which bore a ring to suspend a ribbon.

New statute in 1906 allowed the nomination of ladies, so there were now distinctive designs for both men and women. The women had the same central medallion design as the men, but it was surrounded by a wreath of laurel, in bronze, surmounted by the Imperial Crown in silver.

In 1920, the design of the medal was changed to that of a silver circular medal for both men and women. The obverse was the 'civil head' of George V; the reverse, designed by M Gilbert Bayes, depicted a finely sculptured male figure, seated, gazing out across the sea towards the setting sun. It is symbolic of rest after labour, and the words 'For Faithful Service' are written below the figure. The 'crowned head' of George V was

substituted for the uncrowned 'civil head' in 1931, and subsequent monarchs have been indicated by 'crowned effigies'.

Presentation of the medal to PO staff was usually made by the Head Postmaster at a local ceremony attended by senior management, colleagues, and friends. The PO became a public corporation on 1 October 1969, so members of the PO are no longer regarded as being civil servants. However, staff who had on Corporation Day completed 25 years unblemished service were still entitled to receive the medal on their retirement. Ivor 'Ike' Haynes is thought to be the last Royal Mail employee anywhere in the UK to be awarded the ISM. He retired in June 1995 after clocking up over 50 years of PO service •

In my view... Margaret Morris, one of Britain's foremost thematic collectors, discusses her collections, writing and work in promoting the hobby with James Mackay

AT THE San Francisco International Philatelic Exhibition this month, Margaret Morris, one of Britain's foremost thematic collectors, receives the Distinguished Topical Philatelist award from the American Topical Association, the first person outside North America to receive this prestigious award.

Margaret Isobel Watson began collecting stamps about the age of seven or eight. At that period, just before the war, many girls dabbled in stamps, so it was not out of the ordinary. The earliest stamps she remembers nostalgically were the Coronation omnibus issues of 1937, the Belgian railway stamps and the triangular airmails of Mozambique which she bought with her pocket money. This was a time when most newsagents still sported cards of stamps in their windows.

At the age of 13, however, when most of her schoolmates were discarding their albums, Margaret almost died of peritonitis. She recovered slowly and lost a year and a half out of school. She was strictly forbidden to play games or even run about and in enforced idleness she turned to her stamps. Family correspondence with South Africa naturally gave her an interest in the stamps of that country. Later, she turned her attention to the Gold Coast (now Ghana). When a new monarch came to the throne Margaret decided to concentrate on Commonwealth stamps portraying the young Queen.

Her favourite reading during her long convalescence was Arthur Mee's *Children's Encyclopaedia*. This, and her grandfather's passion for astronomy, gradually steered her in the direction for which she later became so well known. A sideline collection of stamps depicting the stars and the planets began as a result, and Margaret recalls poring over a Gibbons Simplified Catalogue and making lists of likely stamps to add to the collection. During this period, Margaret was



continuing her education the hard way – studying at home – but she sat her University entrance and went on to take a degree, in astronomy of course. Subsequently she was employed as a research assistant in the University observatory, and recently retired from this appointment. In a field which is male-dominated, however, Margaret has always held her own, becoming the first lady President of the Astronomical Society of Glasgow in 1968.

This ability to outshine the male sex has also extended into the philatelic world, where men outnumber women by at least 20 to one. Margaret joined her local club, the Ayrshire Philatelic Society in 1951 and eventually became its President. Her first display was quasi-thematic and pointed the contrast in the design of the Georgian and Elizabethan pictorial definitives of the Commonwealth. After moving to Glasgow, she joined the Caledonian Philatelic Society and became its President in 1961. At that time the CPS held an annual dinner and it was customary to invite the President of the rival Glasgow Philatelic Society who happened to be Edwin Morris, reader in the department of building science at Strathclyde University. Inevitably their paths crossed philatelically and otherwise. They mar-

Opposite Margaret Morris with Robert Morten from Australia, at Marton, Yorkshire, the birthplace of Captain Cook.

Opposite and below Stamps from Margaret's many collections: Greenland, Captain Cook, Pre-Columbian Art, Whales and Whaling and Astronomy.



ried in 1968 and spent their honeymoon in Iceland, a country in whose stamps and postal history Edwin specialised. After his death, Margaret sold Edwin's GB collection but retained his Iceland and, in fact, has continued to add items of postal history to it.

Not to be outdone, she developed an interest in the stamps and postal history of Greenland and managed to personalise helicopter covers when she visited that country in 1994. Margaret was a founder member of the Vikings, a group of collectors interested in Scandinavia, who meet informally in each other's houses. In due course associated groups, the East Coast Vikings (Edinburgh) and the Northern Vikings (Aberdeen), started up but they all get together at Perth each September to rape and pillage and do all the things Vikings habitually do. Well, rather they have a one-day seminar covering all aspects of stamps and postal history from Greenland to Aland. Most meetings have a specific topic; everyone makes a contribution. She is a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society London, a member of the National Philatelic Society and 16 specialist societies, from the American Society of Polar Philatelists to the Captain Cook Study Unit, of which she is currently President.

Wide-ranging interests The range of Margaret's interests is reflected in the awards she has received in local society competitions, winning the Glasgow Quaich twice (for postal history) and the Frank Brown Rose Bowl for traditional philately (stamps issued 50 years prior to the date of competition). But thematic collecting is her chief passion and she made her national debut at Stampex in 1956 with a thought-provoking exhibit entitled 'What Makes Stamp Collectors?' Three years later her superb display of Astronomy, entered through the Caledonian Society, won her first prize in the thematic class, and in 1965 and 1966 she was awarded silver medals at the British Philatelic Exhibition.

Subsequently she won the BPE Link House challenge cup (1971) and the Stampex Omniphil trophy (1974 and 1975). She first took part in an international exhibition in 1963 (Aerophila in Brussels). Among her numerous awards have been the Herman Sieger Gold Space Award (Polpex 1973) and a vermeil medal at Tembal, Basle in 1983. Since the thematic rules were revised, however, the best she has managed have been silver medals. 'I'm now in the process of rewriting, in the hope of trying again and doing better,' she said. These days she concentrates

more on judging (in both thematic and youth classes).

Display methods I asked her about methods of mounting and writing up her collections. 'I am not one of the unhinged,' she says wryly. As a scientist she is acutely aware of the deleterious effects of various types of gum on paper long-term. 'Some museums even advocate the removal of the gum from their mint stamps', but she compromises by using Hawid strips for unmounted mint stamps of great value. Having experimented with various kinds of album page for her Astronomy collection, she now prefers plain Ivorex 3-sheet acid-free boards which she has cut to the dimensions of the Godden leaves. The Whaling collection is mounted on cards with a horizontal format, allowing for the write-up to be mounted on panels on the left side, while the collection devoted to Pre-Columbian Art is mounted on almost square yellowish cards with rounded corners. Formerly writing up was done with an electronic typewriter but these days she prefers a word-processor with a laser printer.

Glasgow 2000 Margaret's promotional work for the hobby is vast and varied. She has given displays and talks to stamp clubs and lay groups (such as schools, women's institutes and rotary clubs) all over the UK, from Aberdeen and Elgin to Hastings and Portsmouth. She has broadcast on radio and television, aiming particularly at the younger audience. In 1973 she organised the first visit of the British Air Mail Society to Glasgow, associated with an exhibition at the People's Palace. She did such a good job of this that she was appointed Organising Secretary for the mammoth exhibition of Glasgow's philately and postal history, staged in the Kelvingrove Art Galleries as part of the celebration of the city's octocentenary in 1975 – the largest philatelic exhibition held north of the border up to that time. She is now Co-ordinating Secretary for Glasgow 2000, a national exhibition which promises to be three times as large as the recent Newcastle '96 show.

She helped set up the Scottish National Exhi-

bition, with all the preparation of rules and regulations, as well as the training of judges, 'a task which took several years'. She served as a delegate to the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies, especially in the period running up to 1960 when the Glasgow Philatelic Society hosted the annual Congress and she became its first Lady President. In 1992, she was appointed Keeper of the Book of Scottish Philatelists and was responsible for suggesting that framed diplomas should be presented to signatories.

Margaret belongs to all the societies in the Glasgow area and confesses that some weeks she is out at meetings every evening. 'I am not one of those people who studies the syllabus and dismisses the subject because I'm not interested in it' she says. 'Certainly, I study the syllabus, then consult catalogues and handbooks to bone up on the subject, so that I can look at the display and get a lot more from it.' She never stops learning; even a poor display can show one how not to do it!

Grass roots Margaret feels that attending club meetings and stamp shows is vital not only as a means of getting information but as a way of keeping in touch with the grass roots of the hobby. 'It's all part of the learning process,' she adds. 'Seeing what other collectors are up to keeps me abreast of the latest developments and trends.' This is reflected in her thematic collections. Anyone who doubts that this is serious philately would surely have his eyes opened on a perusal of her themes (Whales and Whaling and Pre-Columbian Art have long since joined Astronomy). To make her point, she showed me a display of the Polish 1000mk stamp of 1923 portraying Copernicus, a specialised study which includes proofs and colour trials, plate flaws and varieties and an astonishing array of covers and cards reflecting the astronomical rise (no pun intended) in postal rates during the hyperinflation of that year.

I asked her whether she felt that she was type-cast as a thematic collector. She shook her head vigorously, though she conceded that many so-called thematic collectors were merely putting

together an assemblage of pretty pictures, which could just as well be cigarette cards. Then, puckishly, she produced an array of cigarette cards illustrating whales and whaling! But then she confessed that her interest in the subject led her far beyond philately, and she showed me a veritable museum of whale memorabilia.

Margaret is an active member of many societies, both local and national, and conducts a voluminous correspondence with fellow enthusiasts in every part of the globe. She used to belong to the Lone and Invalid Collectors' Society – 'not because I was alone or an invalid, but because it's a worthwhile thing to help others'. She cut her journalistic teeth, so to speak, by contributing short pieces to the *Philatelic Circulator*, and

from this she graduated to writing thematic articles for the now defunct *Stamp and Postal History News*, edited by Guy Averill in the 1980s. Since then, she has written prolifically for *Topical Time*, the ATA journal, as well as occasional features for the British monthly magazines, and even an article in *The London Philatelist*. She is currently writing an extended series on Greenland for *Scandinavian Contact*. She edited *Themescene* for the British Thematic Association for seven years and also wrote *Thematic Stamp Collecting* in the series of Gibbons guides. It's now 20 years since this book, arguably the best on thematic collecting, was published and it would surely be worth revising and bringing out a new edition •

Decimal stamp books 33 Specialist report by D G A Myall

1st class NV1 in gold –
Harrison and Walsall
printings

Postcode enquiries tel: 0345 111 222
Customer Services Helpline tel: 0345 740 740
Monday to Friday (calls charged at local rates)

B13



Postcode enquiries tel: 0345 111 222
Customer Services Helpline tel: 0345 740 740
Monday to Friday (calls charged at local rates)

W1



Gold stamps and a new image Two books, each containing 10 × 1st class NV1s in gold were issued on 21 April in commemoration of the golden wedding anniversary of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. They were printed by Harrison and Walsall. The Harrison cylinder numbers are B13 gold and B12 phosphor. Walsall used their new Chesnut press, described in the *March Bulletin*, resulting in the first GB gravure definitives printed by this firm. Surprisingly, they used two colour cylinders instead of the expected one and their phosphor cylinder was not numbered. Both colour numbers are W1 although

both, as far as I can see, printed exactly the same colour. They appear against either the top or the bottom row of the pane in the usual upward-reading Walsall format and without any 'box' as used by Harrison. The fact that the Walsall numbers appear in two positions means that they are engraved on the cylinders more than once.

If the stamps are held at an angle to the light so that it is reflected in the metallic ink used, both firms have achieved the desired golden look but if viewed from above they are markedly different, Walsall's appearing with a much darker, almost brown, background and a paler head.

When viewed under a moderate magnification (I use a 10x glass) the Walsall stamps are more blurred than those of Harrison, possibly because the latter used the well-tried Klischograph engraving machine while Walsall used another make.

Only books of 10 are affected by the change in colour; books of four will continue to contain flame stamps. The change is temporary and the contents will revert to flame on 19 November. Even then, the stamps will not be quite the same as those in the post-Olympics books issued on 4 February. The reason is that Royal Mail has obliged all its stamp printers to change to a 'new image'.

So what is different about this new image? There is no new artwork as such but Harrison 'created an image from material they already held and supplied this on disk to Walsall and Enschedé'. All three firms print definitives in gravure and their cylinders are prepared by Electro-Mechanical Engraving, or EME. This method replicates the single image supplied to them on disk, although the values (and marginal markings such as cylinder numbers) have to be added separately. The new image is firmly based on the original Machin head known to collectors as Head B2 but there are some major differences, not confined to the extra sharpness derived from EME cylinder making. Among these are a general increase in contrast, along with a paler head to make it stand out better from the uniformly dark background, a clean rounded base, the absence of the shadow at the right of the mouth, a clear curved line on the nostril and full, almost sensual lips with a spot on the front of the lower one. I have decided to call the new head B4 in the sequence described in my *Machin Handbook* (reviewed in April *Bulletin*). Although both printers used the same image, the one on Walsall's book of 10 gold stamps appears larger than that on Harrison's.

As well as the gold stamps, the new image has been used for the Harrison books of 10 x 2nd class issued on 29 April. It will also be used in the four Walsall books of four stamps containing NV15 (both classes), 37p and 63p, to be issued on 26 August. However, use of the new image is not

confined to stamps for booklets; it will be used on all future small-sized definitives. Enschedé used it, in a smaller size, for the horizontal self-adhesive coils of 18 March, and on the new greetings card ('Boots') label issued 29 April. It has also been used on the Harrison sheet and coil stamps of 21 and 29 April and 27 May and will be used by Walsall on the new Country (Regional) stamps due on 1 July. The change-over is not scheduled to be completed before November. Machin collectors are having a very busy time of it just lately.

A sticky question A reader writes that he is experiencing a problem opening the covers of retail (window) books without damaging the inside faces. He does not say, but I think that his problem concerns the books printed by Walsall and Questa. The glue used by Harrison is rubber based and their covers separate easily. Also, the remains of the Harrison adhesive can be rubbed off, leaving no trace. Although the purist might disapprove, I routinely remove this residue from the Harrison books in my collection for fear that it might in time deteriorate and spoil the display of opened books. The glue used by the other printers is of the kind known as hot melt and has a different composition. It is very tenacious and Walsall books, in particular, do not open easily although they normally use a single spot of glue compared with the two used by Questa. A few years back, collectors complained about the damage caused by this type of adhesive and some changes were made to it. I understand that a rubber-based gum cannot be used for technical reasons. The only advice I can offer is to open the covers very carefully, pulling them apart on first one side and then the other until only a small part of the gum spot is holding the two parts together. Another method, which takes a bit of practice, is to slide a letter opener into the book and slice through the gum with a quick flick.

Landor I have been asked by several people why the words 'Landor Postcard' appear on the labels on cartons of 1000 books of 4 x 37p, the worldwide rate for airmail postcards. The same words

appeared on the labels for books of 4 x 35p, the postcard rate under the former tariff. The origin of Landor dates back to a Royal Mail branding exercise during the early nineties whereby a company called Landor Associates recommended a complete re-branding of Royal Mail products, including stamps, books, envelopes, etc.

The Landor report proposed a re-design of the covers of retail (window) stamp books while retaining the red/yellow colouring and other successful parts of the brand image. This led to the introduction of the current style books with the block of stamps shown on the left-hand side of the front cover in place of the replica of a single stamp. (That was a relic of the very first window books which had a cutout through which one of the stamps inside could be seen and which led to their being called window books by collectors.) The new design was more eye-catching and was adopted. During the change-over between old and new stock, there was a need to identify deliveries of the new 'Landorised' books from the old style ones. This is the source of the Landor Postcard legend on the carton label. It has probably served its purpose by now!

Another Landor proposal was that stamps should be reproduced in specific colours to reflect the service provided. For example, first-class would be blue; second-class would be green. However, set against a background of a three or four years' public awareness campaign carried out by Royal Mail to emphasise flame and blue as the first and second-class identifiers, this recommendation was not adopted, the only exception being business pre-paid envelopes which are now blue and green as suggested.

Marks & Spencer bubble packs These have now gone off sale. They provided an unusual sideline for GB booklet collectors and there were some unexpected finds for those who were fortunate enough to have access to one of the few stores which carried the promotion. Among these were packs with the books upside down and one with two books of 1st class stamps inside. Someone somewhere has an unexplained deficit in his accounts.



Marks & Spencer bubble pack – 1st class

A piece of cake The 'Send-a-Cake' promotion which ran from 9 September to 31 December last year (mentioned here in October) was one of the most successful of Royal Mail's periodic special efforts to stimulate sales of first class stamps. The promotion was run through 19,500 post office and up to 60,000 retailers. Readers of this column will recall that the covers of the retail books involved were marked to distinguish which of these was the source of a redemption, the books sold by retailers having a small black square on the back cover. A final analysis had not been made at the time of writing but altogether, over 400,000 redemptions were made. That's an awful lot of cake. Alison Talbot, Royal Mail Consumer Stamps marketing executive, said: 'Because it was so over-subscribed, we were having to really work round the clock to get those cakes out'. The uptake was 66% more than for the 1995 offer of the ceramic figures Benjy Bear and Harry Hedgehog where a similar marking of retail covers with a black square was made ●

Books Scotland and Philately series • Revenue stamps • Travelling Post Offices • Postal History of Bristol

Scotland and Philately series Stanley Brown, with the help of Ken Norris, has completed his popular Scotland and Philately series on postmarks, commemorative covers and other philatelic souvenirs featuring Scottish places, events and people. Number 7 in the series *Perthshire and Angus* illustrates covers relating to the Aberfeldy Bridge stamp of 1968, the Declaration of Arbroath (1970), Queen Mother's 80th birthday (1980), Carnoustie Golf (1994) and Scottish aerogrammes of 1988 and 1989. Covers produced in honour of James Chalmers, a rival claimant to Sir Rowland Hill as inventor of the adhesive postage stamp, are also shown. Book 8 *Scottish Highlands* takes us on a philatelic journey from the Crinan Canal to John O'Groats. Amongst the many interesting covers shown en route are ones commemorating the centenary of Inverness (1995), and opening of the Visitor Centre at Culoden Battlefield (1984).

Book 9 on the *Scottish Islands* (other than Shetland) covers postmarks and special covers from Islay, Mull, Skye, Orkney and Iona for which five handstamps were recently used in connection with the Missions of Faith stamps. Shown are commemorative handstamps marking the 50th anniversary of the remote island of St Kilda (subject of a 25p stamp in 1981), and the 250th anniversary of the landing of Bonnie Prince Charlie on the Hebridean Island of Eriskay. On the back cover of the book is reproduced the 1995 Prehistoric Scotland aerogramme showing the Stones of Callanish (Lewis), Jarlshof (Shetland) and Skara Brae (Orkney). Book 10 *Thirty Years of Congress Covers* illustrates nearly 50 souvenirs of the Scottish Philatelic Congress and related philatelic exhibitions and events. Although the first annual gathering of Scottish philatelists took place in 1924, it was not until 1962 that the first special postmark was used. The authors provide a useful list of Congress venues since 1962. The special handstamps and covers feature Scottish people, history, buildings and culture.

The 10 books in this series will remind many of enjoyable holidays in Scotland, as well as providing useful information for a Scotland thematic collection. The previous six titles cover Perth, Shetland & Fair Isle, Aberdeen & North Sea Oil, Dundee, Fife and Clyde. All 10 books are priced at a modest £1.20 each postpaid from: Stanley Brown, 14 Buchan Drive, Perth PH1 1XQ •

The Revenue Stamps of the Channel Islands: The Story of the Stamps and their Usage This fifth edition of John Simpson's well-known work, first published in 1983, puts 'on record all the known details concerning the Revenue stamps of the Channel Islands and the Sales Tax stamps of Guernsey along with other fiscals of both Islands.' He notes a growing interest in revenues now they are recognised as a separate class for exhibition purposes. New research has involved considerable re-writing and further information about the Guernsey embossed revenue dies has been added. There are more illustrations and the book is 10 pages longer than the last edition (1991). The work is arranged in three sections covering Revenues, Other Fiscals and Sales Tax Stamps. The Revenues section contains separate sub-sections for Jersey, Guernsey and Alderney. Similarly the Other Fiscals section is divided between Guernsey and Jersey with separate background and catalogue sections. The history and catalogue of the Guernsey Sales Tax Stamps of 1940-46 are the work of David Gurney. Jersey revenue stamps are of attractive designs and high quality printing, featuring island views, the coat of arms and the ubiquitous Jersey cow. The Bailiff issues are still used with 75,000 of each of the 50p, £10 and £100 values being printed in 1996. The catalogue prices reflect the scarcity of some items but many cheap enough for collectors who wish to add a few examples to their GB/Channel Islands collection. 98 pages. Price £9 postpaid from CISS Publishing, 63 Ravensbourne Gardens, Clayhall, Ilford IG5 0XH •

The Travelling Post Offices of Great Britain and Ireland by Harold S Wilson. Twenty years ago Harold Wilson compiled three volumes dealing with the history of the travelling post offices. They immediately became the standard work on the subject, but have been out of print for many years. In 1988 Mr Wilson began the work of welding the text into a single volume, at the same time revising it and bringing it up to date. While this reflected to some extent the developments which have taken place since the 1970s, it was further research (stimulated by the appearance of the original volumes) which has led to a radical revision, amounting in some parts to a wholesale rewriting of the narrative. At the same time, vast improvements in the cheap printing technology over the intervening period have made possible the expansion of the illustrations. The net result is an encyclopaedic work which will surely be the standard work on British TPOs well into the next century.

The first 27 chapters follow broadly the pattern of the earlier volumes devoted to England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland in turn, but a chapter has been added to cover the subject of Bag Tenders whose distinctive BT postmarks add a staggering 60 illustrations to the work. These rubber handstamps, introduced in the 1970s, were intended for purely administrative purposes, but inevitably examples have come into the hands of collectors, and of course are to be found on way-bills, dockets and other ephemera associated with the railway transmission of mail.

The introductory chapters have been considerably expanded and many new illustrations added. For example, the section devoted to the apparatus for picking up and putting down mailbags now has diagrams of the equipment, as well as examples of the postal markings and labels applied to registered fragile packets which were not to be handled in this manner. In addition to over 1120 different postmarks, there are photographs of the sorting tenders and travelling post offices. All in all, this is a worthy successor to the earlier volumes and should prove absolutely indispensable to both railway buffs in general and collectors of TPO material in particular.

300 A4 pages. £21 post-free till June, then add £4.50 postage. Available from the author: 17 Heath Avenue, Littleover, Derby DE23 6DJ.

Congratulations to Mr Wilson for receiving the Philatelic Writers Society Nugent Clougher Award for postal history research for this book. ED ●

An Introduction to the Postal History of Bristol

Compiled by Michael Smith, Brian Purcell and Ian Baillie, this handsome book marks the centenary of the Bristol Philatelic Society. Its 20 sections cover everything from the beginnings of the postal system, 1660-1700 to postal mechanisation from 1975, including ship letters, penny posts, mileage and other marks, prepaid postage, railway marks, registered mail, special event handstamps, and slogan cancellations. Each section contains well-chosen illustrations of covers, postmarks or Bristol views. In the 18th century Bristol was second only to London (in England) in economic importance with its merchants taking advantage of the opening up of the New World. Not surprisingly, the first Royal Mail mailcoach service was introduced from Bristol to London in 1784. In the section headed 'Ship letters', the difference between ship and packet letters is explained. Bristol, with Falmouth, handled nearly all the ship letters going to and from the West Indies, until Bristol was eclipsed by Liverpool. From the 1830s the great developments in vessel design, such as Brunel's *Great Western* and *Great Britain*, resulted in faster transatlantic mails. Modern postal markings receive equal treatment with their predecessors and there are illustrations of modern printed postage impressions, two-coloured Bristol meter marks, and the ink-jet printed messages used from 1994. Perhaps a bit more attention could have been given to the stamps connected with Bristol from the 1968 Paintings (St Mary Le Port church) to 1996 Women of Achievement (Dorothy Hodgkin, University Chancellor). Nonetheless, it is a worthy commemorative book and a useful addition to the literature on local postal history.

66 pages. Price £10, postage 75p UK, £1.50 overseas, from Brian Purcell, 98 Charlton Road, Keynsham, Bristol BS18 2EY ●

Competition Sponsored by Omniphil Home Service: win a mint 1840 2d Blue



1st prize GB Queen Victoria 1840 2d blue Plate 2, letters TH, fine mint, original gum, 3 margins example in the scarce deep blue shade. Exceptionally fine fresh colour, SG cat £7000, Classics Without Tears selling price £650 – less than 10% SG!



2nd prize GB QV 1840 1d black letters TF good to fine used 4 margins example of the intense black shade cancelled by red Maltese cross clear of profile. SG cat £200, CWT price £60.

3rd prize GB George V 1918 5s rose-red Seahorse, Bradbury printing. Good mint full original gum crackled example which appears unhinged. SG cat £200, CWT price £55.

The winners of the March competition were T Roberts of Kent (1st prize), F & L van Rijn, Netherlands (2nd) and D Wood, Aberdeenshire (3rd).

The answers 1) Walsall Security Printers; 2) Graven Images, Glasgow; 3) 24 April 1997; 4) Frederick Adolphus Philbrick; 5) Oxford Union Society. Our thanks to all who entered.

FIRST PRIZE in this month's competition, sponsored by Omniphil Home Service, specialists in approvals by post, is a mint 1840 2d blue catalogued £7000!

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At present Omniphil Approvals offer all *Bulletin* subscribers, who have not applied before, the opportunity to pick a further 25% worth of stamps *free of charge* via their £200 Loyalty Bonus Program provided subscribers select stamps to a sales value of £12 plus from each selection requested.

The first 250 *Bulletin* subscribers to receive their approvals will also receive an 1841 2d blue, catalogued £40, absolutely free of charge.

Write now, stating the countries you collect and whether you collect mint and used, to: **Omniphil Home Service Bulletin Blue Offer, PO Box 29, Stroud, GL6 6RW**

To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: **June Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL** to arrive by 25 July. Entries must posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

- 1 Which famous philatelist worked at Bletchley Park in 1944-45?
- 2 Who designed the All The Queen's Horses stamps?
- 3 Which firm will in future print the Castle High Values?
- 4 What does the abbreviation EAMS stand for?
- 5 Who described the Machin as 'one of the greatest stamps of all time'?

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

Bletchley Park Britain's best kept secret, by James Mackay



IN WARFARE it is vital to know what the enemy is doing and to anticipate his next moves, but until 1909 when the British government allocated £7000 a year, there was no formal intelligence service anywhere in the world. Out of this grew such organisations as Naval Intelligence, headed by the formidable Mansfield-Cumming (the original 'M' of the James Bond stories), and the various branches of Military Intelligence, M15, M16 and so on. The intelligence services expanded enormously during the First World War, but even in peacetime they were active in the secret war against Bolshevik subversion and later on they kept a close watch on the activities of Communists, Fascists and labour agitators.

In 1938, following the Munich Crisis, the intelligence network was rapidly expanded again as war approached. On the eve of the Second World War a group of intelligence officers, headed by Alexander Denniston, scoured the English countryside looking for a secure base for the Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS). In the end they settled on Bletchley Park, a country estate 47 miles northwest of London, at a major road junction and convenient for rail services. It became the most important communications centre in the history of modern warfare.

By 1944, on the eve of D-Day, more than 12,000 people were employed at Bletchley Park. They included some of the most brilliant academic and intellectual figures in Britain: linguists, mathematicians, cryptanalysts, engineers and pioneers in an entirely new field – computing science – which would develop enormously before the war was over. Among the staff was a young Cambridge graduate who would later become one of Britain's most prominent philatelists and keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection – Sir John Marriott, KCVO, who served at Bletchley Park in 1944-45.

Both sides recognised the vital importance of being able to send and receive coded messages secure in the knowledge that the enemy could not decipher them. From the 1920s the Germans developed the enciphering machine named *Enigma* which could produce 150,000,000,000,000,000 encoding permutations for every letter typed. Unknown to *Abwehr*, (German intelligence), Polish cryptanalysts had got hold of early commercial versions of Enigma and had been monitoring later modifications in the machine. In July 1939, fearing that the Nazi invasion of Poland was imminent, at a secret meeting in the Pyry Forest vital information on

A price list of the covers and other philatelic souvenirs currently available can be obtained by writing to D J Chapman, Bletchley Park Post Office, c/o Central Services, 33 Wharfside, Fenny Stratford Milton Keynes MK2 2AZ.



Enigma was passed to both GC&CS and French intelligence services.

The Germans, however, greatly increased the number of possible permutations by increasing the machine's interchangeable rotors from three to five and then to eight. It required the mathematical genius of Alan Turing, and the development by Professors Newman and Flowers of *Colossus*, the world's first practical computer, to overcome the formidable problems of breaking the Enigma codes; but this achievement gave the Allies the key not only to German transmissions, but Japanese intelligence traffic as well. Thus Bletchley Park assumed a role of worldwide importance. The very existence of Colossus was top secret until it was declassified in 1975. Ironically, the US Postal Service is currently issuing a 32¢ stamp celebrating the 50th anniversary of what America claims to be the first computer, likewise developed for military purposes.

After war, Bletchley Park was rapidly wound down. In 1948 the Post Office moved in and used much of the 56-acre estate for the Clerical, Engineering and Drawing Office training schools. Nevertheless, the intelligence services continued to maintain a presence in a small corner of the estate, but after half a century this aspect of Bletchley Park was decommissioned in 1987. Four years later, the owners of the estate announced their intention of selling Bletchley Park for redevelopment. To counter this, the Bletchley Park Trust was created to secure the site and re-create the wartime atmosphere.

Since 1991 the Trust has created in the grounds a number of museums, notably those devoted to cryptology and the history of computing. Subsequently other museums have been established covering such aspects as wartime aircraft, amateur radio, uniforms and equipment, the diplomatic services, the US Army, radar and electronics. The Military Vehicle Trust has a collection of wartime vehicles, while there are collections of wartime fire engines, model boats and a model railway exhibition mounted by the Milton Keynes Model Railway Society. The mansion itself houses Churchill memorabilia. Members of the Computer Conservation Society, formed in 1989, have been working on the rebuilding of a fully-operational Colossus machine, in H Block, which actually housed Colossus No 9 in 1945.

The postal history of Bletchley Park is, like many aspects of the organisation, still shrouded in mystery. A postroom functioned during the war period, handling incoming and outgoing mail and selling stamps and postal orders, but it did not have sub post office status and therefore had no counter or parcel handstamps. Today, however, there is the Bletchley Park Post Office, run by 'postmaster' D J Chapman. This is a re-creation of a typical post office of the war period and is therefore more of a museum-piece than an operations office; but it has produced its own souvenir covers since 1994, covering the 50th anniversaries of D-Day, VE Day and VJ Day, as well as aspects of the life and times of Sir Winston Churchill.

The Bletchley Park museum complex is open every weekend from June to October, and admission costs £3 (adults) or £3 (children and senior citizens). Bletchley Park is only 150 yards from Bletchley railway station and there is free car-parking in the grounds. For further details contact the Bletchley Park Trust, The Mansion, Bletchley Park, Milton Keynes MK3 6EF or telephone 01908 640404.

Win free tickets and commemorative covers
Bletchley Park have kindly donated free admis-

sion tickets and a selection of their commemorative covers for a special *Bulletin* draw. We have 10 pairs of tickets to give away to the first 10 readers whose cards are drawn on 25 July. (Normal admission to Bletchley Park is £3 each.) The next 12 will be sent a commemorative cover bearing a full set of special stamps cancelled by special Bletchley Park handstamp. Simply send your name and address on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope to: Bulletin Bletchley Park Draw, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL ●

Events

National Postal Museum The Museum is currently closed for rebuilding work. **Phone** 0171 600 8914 for latest information on reopening

Now showing Postal Memorabilia displays at City Square Post Office, Leeds and Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln. **Enquiries** D Harrop, 15 Hawthorne Road, Heaton Mersey, Stockport SK4 3DQ

29 May-8 June Pacific 97 international stamp exhibition at Moscone Center, San Francisco, USA. **Enquiries** UK Commissioner, RCA Payne, Anso Corner Farm, Hempstead, Saffron Walden CB10 2NU

7 June Bridlington & District PS Stamp Fair & Exhibition at Spa Hall, Bridlington, opens 10.00. Dealers, displays, raffles and other attractions. AGM of Yorkshire Phil Assn. **Enquiries** M Stockhill, 01262 677394 or K Walker 01262 672488

14 June London Cinderpex (cinderella, revenue and poster stamps) at International Students House, Great Portland Street, London W1, opens 10.00. **Enquiries** T Williams, 01709 548187

21 June Bristol Stamp Day, marking centenary of Bristol Phil Soc, at Tyndale Centre, Whiteladies Road, Bristol, 10.00-16.30. Displays for newcomers and specialists. Valuation and advice service. **Enquiries** J Tovey, 0117 969 3665

28 June Midpex '97 at Midland Sports Centre for the Disabled, Cromwell Lane, Tile Hill, Coventry, 10.00-16.00. Specialist societies, dealers, free parking, near rail station. **Enquiries** M Benford, Clouds-hill Cottage, Shutford, Banbury OX15 6PQ

28-29 June Thematica '97 at Carisbrooke Hall, 63 Seymour Street, London W2. **Enquiries** Thematic Exhibitions, 0181 343 2434

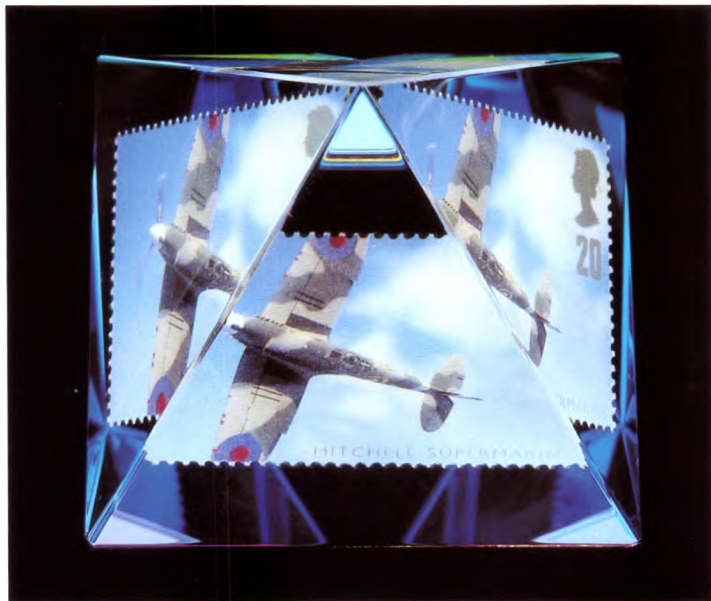
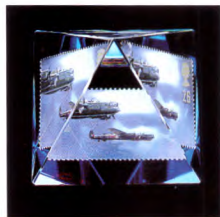
12 July Swipex (South West Inter-federation Philatelic Exhibition) at Peter Chalk Centre, Exeter University, 10.00-16.00. Displays, 27 dealers, National Youth Stamp Group, refreshments, etc. Admission 50p, under 15 free if with adult. **Enquiries** Mary Claydon, 01398 331731

12 July Telford Phil Soc Stamp and Postcard Fair at Civic and Leisure Centre, Wellington, Telford, 10.00-16.00. Auction at 15.00. Free car parking. Admission charge. **Enquiries** P Morris-Jones, 01952 223926

13 July Northern Cinderpex (cinderella, revenue and poster stamps) at Pudsey Civic Centre, opens 10.00. Parking, near New Pudsey railway station. **Enquiries** T Williams, 01709 548187

24-26 July Rare Stamps of the World exhibition at Claridge's, Brook Street London W1. Includes exhibits from Royal Collection and National Postal Museum. **Enquiries** Harmers, 0171 629 0218 ●

ROYAL MAIL STAMP PYRAMIDS



Royal Mail launched Stamp Pyramids with the 1992 Christmas stamps. These contain mint stamps mounted on the base of a 'Crown Quality' optical glass pyramid processed to produce some beautiful and intriguing optical effects. As the pyramid is viewed from different angles, the background colour changes and the stamp 'disappears' due to multiple internal reflection. Pyramids make attractive paperweights or ornaments and ideal presents for fellow philatelists.

They can be made to offer with any special or greetings stamp currently available from the Bureau or high value Castle definitives. Price £24.95 each.

Pyramids can be ordered now for the Architects of the Air set, price £24.95 each or £100 the set of five (special offer price until 31 July 1997). State clearly stamp(s) required. Allow 28 days for delivery.

British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT
UK Telephone Order Line 0345 641 641



Royal Mail