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Contents

- 195 Australian Bicentenary
- 198 Designing the Transport & Communications Stamps
- 199 New Railway Letter Stamps
New PO Exhibition Card
- 200 Nazi 'Black' Philatelic Propaganda of the
Second World War
- 202 NPM "How a Stamp is Made" Exhibition
TPO Anniversary Card
Friends of the NPM
- 203 NPM Transport Postcards
New Bulletin Binder
Museum Piece
Glasgow Garden Festival
- 204 British Philatelic Bureau Silver Jubilee
- 206 Gems of the R M Phillips Collection
Royal Visit to Los Angeles
- 207 National Railway Museum "Mail by Rail"
Exhibition
- 208 British Special Issues: No.146 50th
Anniversary of the NTS, 1981
- 209 Changes in TPO Operations
Armada Stamps
18p Coil on ACP
- 210 The Fall and Rise of the Stamp Book
- 213 May Digest
Transport & Communications Cylinders
Book Reviews
- 214 New Parcels SuperService
North East Philatelic Week End
Posting Boxes
Commemorative Covers
- 215 Letters to the Editor
- 216 Commemorative Covers

Editorial

JOHN HOLMAN

The leading feature in this month's *Bulletin* concerns the Australian Bicentenary stamps, to be issued on 21 June. This set is an important "first" in three respects. To begin with, it is Britain's first "joint issue" with another postal administration. Such joint issues have become quite popular in recent years, the Australian PO issued a joint "Happy Birthday Australia" stamp with the US Postal Service earlier this year. The Australian versions of the forthcoming stamps have the Bicentenary logo in place of The Queen's silhouette and, of course, have the value in cents rather than pence.

The second "first" is the fact that both countries will be selling each other's stamps. The Australian stamps, first day cover, presentation pack and maximum cards will all be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters.

In addition the stamps are the first British issue to have been designed by an overseas postal administration, being the work of Australia Post. Various elements of British Europa/CEPT stamps have been common to all European issues but this is the first time a complete overseas design has been used.

Of all our former "colonies" we have perhaps the strongest links with Australia. During the 1950s and 60s many thousands of us "Poms" emigrated to Australia and hence many British families have relatives "down-under". Each year thousands of Britons visit Australia and Australians make return visits to the old country. The bold – and unusual – stamps will be used on both inland mail and airmail letters to Australia – reminding the recipients of the close links between the two countries.

Late News

An aerogramme commemorating the Glasgow Garden Festival will go on sale at post offices throughout Scotland on 24 May. The date of issue has been brought forward from that originally announced in the January *Bulletin*. Costing 30p, the aerogramme will also be on sale at the British Philatelic Bureau and at philatelic counters.

Australian Bicentenary

21 June 1988



Four stamps will be issued on 21 June to commemorate the bicentenary of the arrival of the First Fleet in Australia in January 1788. The stamps – 18p and 34p, printed in horizontal set-tenant pairs – were designed by Australia Post and comprise the first British “joint issue” with another postal administration. Stamps in almost identical designs will be issued by Australia Post on the same day.

The bicentenary celebrations have attracted considerable media attention, special programmes have been shown on British television and the royal visit by the Prince and Princess of Wales to witness the arrival in Sydney of a replica “First Fleet” on 26 January received widespread coverage. Further interest will be shown this month when HM The Queen visits Australia to open the new Federal Parliament Building, which is featured on one of the new stamps.

Australia was first sighted by the Spaniard Luis de Torres in 1606 and 10 years later the Dutch reached the west coast. Abel Tasman, after whom Tasmania is named, reached the south east coast by the mid 17th century. The new discoveries were known as New Holland but no attempt was made at settlement. The first British connection came in 1688 and 1699 with visits by William Dampier but it is Captain James Cook who is usually associated with Australia. Cook mapped the coast of New Zealand in 1769 and in 1770 traced the coast of Australia from Cape Howe to Cape York. He took formal possession for Britain and named the territory New South Wales.

Following the American War of Independence convicts were no longer transported to the Carolinas but kept in “hulks” in British rivers and harbours. In 1779 Sir Joseph Banks, who had accompanied Cook in 1770, recommended that a convict settlement should be formed in Australia. The first fleet of some 700 convicts and 200 guards sailed from Portsmouth in May 1787 and arrived in Botany Bay in January 1788. The first colony was established at Port Jackson a few miles away; this has since developed into the city of Sydney.

The four stamps reflect the strong historical, constitutional, sporting and cultural links between Britain and Australia. All four stamps have as their background the Australian flag comprising the “Union Jack” and six stars. The first of the **18p** stamps highlights the historical connection, featuring an early settler and a 19th century clipper ship of the type that sailed between Britain and Australia. The second 18p value illustrates the constitutional link, showing The Queen, the Palace of Westminster and the new Federal Parliament Building in Canberra with its distinctive flag pole. Australia operates a “Westminster” style Parliament – the upper house comprising the Senate, the House of Representatives being the equivalent of the British House of Commons.



Sporting links form the subject of the first **34p** stamp which portrays one of the World's best-known cricketers, Dr W G Grace and a tennis racket. Cricket and tennis are perhaps the two most popular sports in Australia and it will be remembered that the current Wimbledon champion is an Australian – the ebullient Pat Cash. The second 34p stamp concentrates on the cultural links featuring the new Sydney Opera House with the famous Harbour Bridge in the background with portraits of Shakespeare and John Lennon representative of the literary and musical links between the two countries.

Technical Details

Designed by Garry Emery for Australia Post, the stamps have been printed in lithography by

The House of Questa Limited. They are of square format, measuring 34.7mm, printed in sheets of 100 on phosphor coated paper with PVA Dextrin gum. Perforation is 14½. The colours and plate numbers are the same for both values, double pane sheets with A and B numbers: 1A/1B (deep ultramarine) 1A/1B (orange-yellow) 1A/1B (scarlet) 1A/1B (black) 1A/1B (bluish-grey) 1A/1B (emerald).



The Australian stamps – the Bicentenary logo replaces the Queen's profile, the value is expressed in cents

PHQ Cards

PHQ cards (Nos 111 A-D) featuring each of the four stamps will be available from 6 June, price 15p each.

Presentation Pack

The presentation pack (No.191) will cost £1.26 and was designed by The Partners with text by the novelist Thomas Keneally. It was printed by Clement & Foster Limited.

Souvenir Book

A 40-page souvenir book containing both the British and Australian sets of stamps will go on sale at the Bureau, philatelic counters and all main post offices on 21 June, price £3.95. The book will remain on sale at post offices until 19 August unless previously sold out; it will be available from the Bureau and philatelic counters for one year. Entitled "Links", the book will explain the historical, constitutional, sporting and cultural links between the two countries.

First Day Cover

The fdc design features a map of Australia, a kangaroo and parrot. It costs 16p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the fdc service, one from the British Philatelic Bureau featuring stars

and a globe, the other from Portsmouth shows one of the vessels of the First Fleet.

A fdc service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the four stamps cancelled with either postmark. The charges will be £1.50 (inland) and £1.31 (overseas). Application forms, available from the Bureau and main post offices, should be returned not later than 21 June.

Customers requiring only the special pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped addressed envelope under an outer cover endorsed 'Special First Day of Issue Handstamp' to:

'British Philatelic Bureau' 20 Brandon Street
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT

'Portsmouth' Special Postmark Duty
Letters District Office
Slindon Street
PORTSMOUTH PO1 1AA

Sale of Australian Items

Because of the "joint" nature of this issue, the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters will be selling the Australian Bicentenary stamps, first day cover, presentation pack and maximum cards until 31 December 1988.

The four Australian stamps (2 x 37c, 2 x \$1) will cost £1.80 a set, presentation pack £1.95. First day covers bearing the four stamps with special cancel will be £1.90, a set of four maximum cards £2.75.

Australia Post are producing two special fdc's bearing respectively the British 18p and Australian 37c stamps and British 34p and Australian \$1 stamps, the British stamps cancelled at Brighton, East Sussex and the Australian stamps at Brighton, South Australia. Enquiries to: Philatelic Bureau, GPO Box 9988, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia. The covers may also be available from dealers in the UK.

Collectors wishing to prepare their own "joint" fdc's may affix Australian Bicentenary stamps to covers bearing the British stamps with first day cancel to be sent to the Australia Post Philatelic Bureau to have the Australian First Day of Issue handstamp applied. These should be sent to Melbourne as soon as possible after 21 June.

Designing the Transport & Communications Stamps

MIKE DEMPSEY

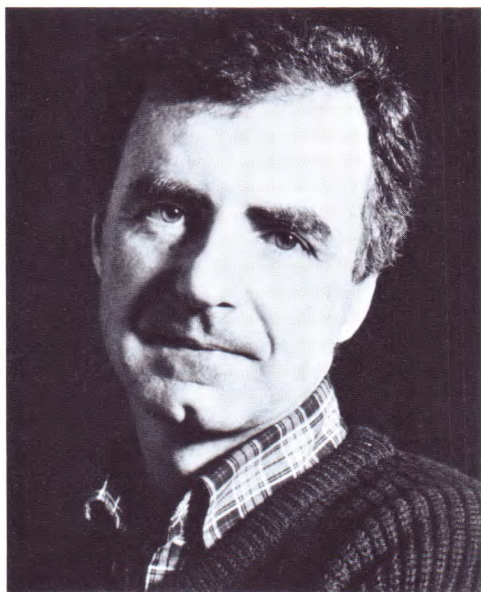
Lines from the Bacharach and David song "Trains and Boats and Planes" filtered into my head after being briefed on the Transport and Communications stamp issue.

The initial idea was to explore the possibility of using existing transport posters (such as those to be found in the archives of the London Transport Museum or the National Railway Museum in York) and reproduce them on the stamps. But as with many initial ideas they change and developed when the problem solving aspect of design comes into play.

It soon became apparent that the prospect of finding four posters that would not only convey the concept of travel by rail, sea, road and air but, more importantly, work as a sympathetic set, was not going to be possible. After considering the problem for some time, the idea of a multi-level concept started to surface. As well as showing the movement of people by different modes of transport it became clear that a subtle postal connection could be represented on each stamp extending the idea of communication further.

I also decided to present the illustrations in poster form which conveyed yet another aspect of communication, Advertising. I decided early on to treat the designs in a nostalgic way, primarily because the romantic heyday of travel was very much the 1920s and 30s. It also transpired that there were several anniversaries occurring in 1988, most notably the 1938 British rail speed record set by *Mallard*. It had always been one of my favourite locomotives; I remember pinning up a centre spread from *The Eagle* on my bedroom wall. This beautiful sleek powerhouse was worthy of celebration on a British stamp.

As I researched more images fell into place until I had four contenders. The style of illustration to convey my idea had to be just right. For this I collaborated with award winning illustrator Andrew Davidson, whose talents were breathtaking. He not only works in water colour and gouache but is also a virtuoso wood engraver. His enthusiasm for the idea added that extra magic to the project. Whilst I raided



various archives, Andrew set off, camera in hand, to an assortment of transport museums up and down the country. We met regularly to compare notes and plot our path. The first presentation to the Stamp Advisory Committee featured *Mallard* (18p), *Queen Elizabeth* (26p), a London Transport B-type bus (31p) and Imperial Airways *Horatius* (34p). I wanted to create the illusion of looking at a section of a poster, this was accentuated by the use of lettering which cuts off at one side, visually conveying the sense of a larger poster. In addition to this I turned one corner over as if it were peeling off, to give a 3D effect, completing this with a shadow for emphasis.

The SAC liked the approach but wanted them simplified and suggested changing the brick-work backdrop. I then experimented with the backgrounds changing from brick-work to a pebble-dashed rendered feel. I also changed the 31p stamp to feature a Glasgow Corporation tram, the *Coronation*, which came into service in 1938. They went once more before the Committee. They were given the thumbs up but a little

more simplification please; now into the home straits. We polished and perfected the four little gems to make them shine. Still not happy with the backdrop I re-presented them using a flat brick colour which was finally adopted. It is amazingly gratifying to compare my original notebook scribbled concept with the finished stamps and see the direct link.

Mr Dempsey also designed the Victorian Britain set, see September 1987 Bulletin.

New Railway Letter Stamps

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the travelling post office, the Nene Valley Railway will issue a 20p railway letter stamp on 10 May. This will be of similar design to the Railway's first stamp (issued 4 June 1986) showing the locomotive *City of Peterborough* but of 20p instead of 25p value and with the inscription TPO/150/1838/1988. The stamps are printed in sheets of 12 and are available mint at face value. Three FDCs are available – with special TPO handstamp and 18p Mallard stamp cancelled with special handstamp depicting a TPO catching net – £2, rail only cover with Mallard stamp cancelled with Wansford Station datestamp – £2 and numbered edition of 400 addressed to and signed by Sir Fred Catherwood, MEP for Cambridgeshire and Mike Dempsey, designer of the Transport & Communications stamps – £4. Postage 25p (50p overseas) extra. All orders/enquiries to: Nene Valley Rly, Wansford Station, Stibbington, PETERBOROUGH PE8 6LR. A further stamp will be issued in July to

commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Mallard's record run.

The Festiniog Railway in north Wales will issue a se-tenant pair of 20p stamps on 10 May to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the introduction of steam locomotives on the railway. The stamps are expected to show *Prince*, one of the original locos, and one of the double-ended Fairlie locos. Orders/enquiries to: Festiniog Rly Co (RL Dept), PORTHMADOG, Gwynedd, LL49 9NF.

The Talylyn Railway will also issue a new 20p stamp on 10 May – featuring locomotive No.6 *Douglas*. A special cover was issued on 1 March for the Welsh Bible stamps, price £1.75 with single stamp, £3.50 with full set. Orders/enquiries to: Talylyn Rly, Wharf Station, TYWYN, Gwynedd, LL36 9EY.

New PO Exhibition Card

The second exhibition card will be issued to coincide with the Finlandia exhibition in Helsinki on 1 June. The card has an abstract design and will bear two of the Transport & Communications stamps cancelled at the British Philatelic Bureau with a 1 June 1988 datestamp. The datestamp will be inscribed with the exhibition's name and venue. Cards without the exhibition cachet can be ordered from the Bureau, price £1.20 plus normal handling charge.

The same card will be available at later exhibitions – Sydrex (Sydney, Australia, 30 July-7 August) with two Australian Bicentenary stamps cancelled 30 July; Autumn Stampex-/BPE (London, 27 September-2 October) with two Edward Lear: Verse for Children stamps cancelled 27 September; Filacept (The Hague, Netherlands, 18-23 October) with two Edward Lear stamps cancelled 18 October; ASDA National 88 (New York, 20-23 October) with two Edward Lear stamps cancelled 20 October and Spring Stampex (London 28 February-5 March 1989) with two Royal Society for the Protection of Birds stamps cancelled 28 February.

Cacheted Finlandia cards can be obtained at the exhibition or by written application prior to or during the exhibition run to: Nordfrim, Nordfyns Frimaerkehandel, 5450 OTTERUP, Denmark, price £1.20 plus handling, postage and packing. Details of how to obtain cacheted cards for the other exhibitions will be published in the *Bulletin* at the appropriate time.



Nazi 'Black' Philatelic Propaganda of the Second World War

L N WILLIAMS

British 'Black' propaganda during the Second World War, philatelically considered, was subtle – as evidenced by the 'Himmler Head' stamps produced with the intent of setting Hitler against Heinrich Himmler because he was, the propaganda suggested, preparing to assume power¹.

The term 'Black Propaganda' was adopted in analogy to 'Black Magic', 'Black Mass' and 'Black Market' by the Political Warfare Executive, headed by Sefton Delmer, as explained in his book *Black Boomerang* (London, 1962). Propaganda which was 'black' was more or less untruthful, as opposed to 'white' propaganda which was strictly factual.

So subtle was the Himmler bogus stamp that, according to both Delmer and the reputed engraver, Ellic Howe², the scheme was a complete failure because the public, including philatelists, were far too unobservant to notice that it was not an official issue.

The Nazi war propaganda machine, too, produced philatelic propaganda. However, far from being subtle, it was crude. So crude was it that it failed to spell a cardinal word accurately – although, it is to be observed, the misspelling is, even nowadays, not noticed and the word is often referred to as though it was what it ought to have been.

According to Wolfgang Prätzsch³ – he summarises earlier views – the idea of producing the Nazi philatelic propaganda occurred to Himmler when he heard about the British black propaganda stamps bearing his features that had been dropped over the Ruhr in 1943.

He was determined to reply by using the same weapon. Instructions were given to the Sicherheitspolizei (SS), with headquarters in Berlin to design and print British stamps.

The order was passed on to Section 'VI-F-4'. The printing shop was under the command of Major Bernhard Krüger in Oranienburg-Sachsenhausen. That was a notorious concentration camp.

At that place a staff of specialists had been assembled to produce masterly forgeries of currency, passports, licences, university degrees and other documents required for overseas

agents. The nickname of the stamp undertaking, 'Water Wave', derived from the wavy-lined watermark in the paper which was used.

Three designs were provided for forging: King George V 'Silver Jubilee' series of 1935; King George VI 'Coronation' 1½d of 12 May 1937 and George VI definitives ½d to 3d of 1937. The designs were tampered with in various respects to import an alleged Soviet influence on the Western allies.

So far as concerned the 'Silver Jubilee' ½d stamp the tampering affected the inscription and each of the thirds into which the central design was divided. In the central one-third, the head of George V was replaced by the head of Stalin. The inscription at the top SILVER JUBILEE was replaced by two Stars of David flanking THIS



WAR IS A, and at the foot ½ HALFPENNY ½ by a hammer-and-sickle device on each side between the denomination and the words JEWISH WAR – the cardinal misspelling referred to earlier.

In the left-hand one-third, the date '1910' was replaced by '1939' and the Crown was surmounted by a Star of David. In the right-hand one-third, the date '1935' and the wreath were replaced by '1944' and a five-pointed star and a hammer-and-sickle device.

The 'Coronation' 1½d was altered by replacement of the upper inscription with a Star of David on each side of S S S R BRITANNIA. The Crown had a hammer superimposed with a sickle and five-pointed star as the right half. The interlaced monogram was altered to S S S R. At the right a hammer-and-sickle against a five-

pointed star background replaced the ampulla. At the foot, the inscription became TEHERAN . 28.11.1943.



The definitives, which had minor alterations indicating Soviet and Jewish influence, were provided with multitudinous different over-prints, such as those indicating 'Liquidation of Empire' with a colony's name and 'Murder Ruin' between bombs.



They are listed in detail in *Michel Deutschland Spezial Katalog*. They were first listed in any detail in a work by Joachim Hosang, of which the second edition (1955) is in English and has the title *Stamps in Battledress*.

Not until 1987 was anything recorded generally of what is termed 'artwork' in connection with the 'Silver Jubilee' and 'Coronation' Nazi black propaganda stamps. On 12 November that year, Southebys offered two lots which were described in the catalogue as follows:

595 Great Britain: 1939-45 German Propaganda Forgeries 'THIS WAR IS A JEWISH (sic) WAR' ½d. green Michel 1, water-colour artwork in shades of green with black infill on white card 198 x 125mm. mounted on buff card with the issued GB 1935 ½d. Silver Jubilee Stamp, which was a model for the forgery, affixed below; probably unique.

The catalogue description of the next following lot was:

596 Great Britain: 1939-45 German Propaganda Forgeries 'S S S R BRITANNIA/TEHERAN 28.11.1943' 1½d. deep lilac-brown, Michel 2, watercolour artwork in shades of lilac-brown with white on white card 247 x 175mm with manuscript 'ERSTELLT: VLF 4 NOACK 44' below together with the issued Great

Britain 1937 Coronation 1½d. stamp, which was a model for the forgery, mounted in to buff folder; probably unique.

Beside each of the lots appeared an estimate of £300-400. The Silver Jubilee lot was knocked down at £1,200, the Coronation at £1,350.



Artwork for the forged 1935 Silver Jubilee and 1937 George VI Coronation stamps.

Illustrations of forged stamps, courtesy of Peter C Rickenback, London NW3; of artwork, courtesy of Southeby's

As to the misspelling of JEWISH for JEWSH: it is remarkably illustrative of seeing what is thought to be there instead of what in fact is there.

The misspelling in the 1987 auction catalogue has been noted. It was repeated in publicity material sent out by the firm. Perhaps more remarkable is the fact that, when an illustrated report of the sale appeared afterwards in a leading Jewish weekly, published in London, the stamp inscription was also rendered as JEWISH.

1. L N Williams 'Britain's Black Propaganda Bogus Stamp', *British Philatelic Bulletin* August 1986, pp 242-3.
2. Ellic Howe, *The Black Games* (Michael Joseph, 1982).
3. Wolfgang Prätzsch, *Unternehmen Wasserwelle – A handbook of German forged stamps for Great Britain of World War II* (Lund, 1987).

NPM "How a Stamp is Made" Exhibition

As a sequel to the successful "Genesis of the Machin Design" exhibition, the National Postal Museum is mounting a display telling the story of "How a Stamp is Made". Taking as its theme the Scottish Heraldry issue of 21 July 1987, the display follows the various stages through which the 18p value passed from the original presentation visuals to the issued stamp. This exhibition opens on 9 May and will continue until 30 September.

The display begins with the presentation visuals (artwork) submitted by John Martin and Jeffrey Matthews. Colour separation negatives, twice stamp size, are produced from the accepted artwork and "refined" by Harrison's artists. The negatives are then sandwiched between sheets of glass and sealed with "opaque" tape. In order to show the fine detail of the separation negatives, visitors to the exhibition will be able to view them through a light box. Stamp size film positives, and the "essay plates" for the first and second essays, will be shown together with pulls from both plates. Second essays were submitted to The Queen on 19 December 1986. Also featured will be the multipositive films used to produce the printing cylinders, one for each colour. "Spotting sheets", used to check for any imperfections, and "progressives" form a major part of the display. It is hoped to have a cylinder on show although this will not be from the Heraldry issue as these cylinders had to be "wiped clean" to the used for the "square format" Studio Pottery issue of 13 October 1987.

The Museum wishes to thank Harrison & Sons Ltd for their co-operation in mounting this exhibition which is bound to be of interest to all students of stamp production as well as collectors of modern British commemorative stamps.

The NPM, situated in London's Chief Post Office, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP, is open Monday-Thursday 9.30am-4.30pm and Friday 9.30am-4pm, admission free.

TPO Anniversary Card

To mark the 150th anniversary of the first running of a travelling post office a publicity card has been produced by The Post Office PR Unit London & South East. Illustrated in the March *Bulletin*, it features a replica TPO vehicle

of 1838 and a present day TPO coach No. 80375. Half the printing of this card bearing 18p definitive stamps were cancelled with a North West Night Down TPO datestamp of 20 January, the remainder will be cancelled on 10 May with the same datestamp on the 18p Mallard stamp. These cards will be available from the National Postal Museum a few days after 10 May, price £1 each plus 18p handling charge for mail orders. Orders to: NPM, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP.

Friends of the NPM

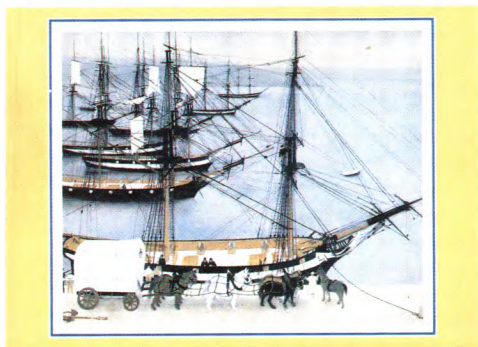
About 40 members of the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum attended a seminar at the Museum on 12 March to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Travelling Post Office. Talks were given by Nigel Wilson of the Post Office's TPO section, Peter Johnson, author of *The British Travelling Post Office* and Harold Wilson, a noted collector of TPO covers. Nigel Wilson explained the importance of the TPO network in maintaining the standard of delivery for first class mail. Some 335 million letters are handled by TPOs each year – 8 per cent of all first class traffic. There are currently 37 TPOs with 665 staff, ranging from the 12-coach Up Special (Aberdeen-London) with 80 staff to the one-coach Huddersfield-Whitehaven TPO with just three sorters.

Mr Johnson showed many slides featuring TPO coaches, both ancient and modern, and covers bearing TPO postmarks. He amused his audience with stories of how some collectors obtain TPO cancels. After a buffet lunch, Harold Wilson talked about the beginnings of the TPO and 19th century postmarks after which some 120 pages from his collection were displayed. Built up over 35 years, the Wilson Collection includes many rare and some unique items. The seminar concluded with the showing of the classic 1936 film *Night Mail*. Friends were able to see the "Railways and the Post" exhibition (including more material from the Wilson Collection) and to buy the TPO anniversary postcard with 20 January TPO cancel.

The next function for the Friends will be a special showing of the "How a Stamp is Made" exhibition on 25 May. Details of the Association can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, c/o National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP.

NPM Transport Postcards

Illustrated here is one of the three Transport cards to be issued by the National Postal Museum on 6 May (National Stamp Day). The cards, numbered 88/4-6 feature subjects from the Post Office Archives' poster artwork collection – *Mails for the Packets arriving at Falmouth, 1833* (H S Williamson), *Loading the Mails for the Empire, Croydon 1934* (Williamson) and *Mobile Post Office at Henley Royal Regatta, c 1937* (Adrian Hill).



NPM Transport card 88/4 – Falmouth, 1833

The cards cost 20p each or by mail 60p per set of three (plus 18p handling charge) from: National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP. They will also be available from the British Philatelic Bureau.

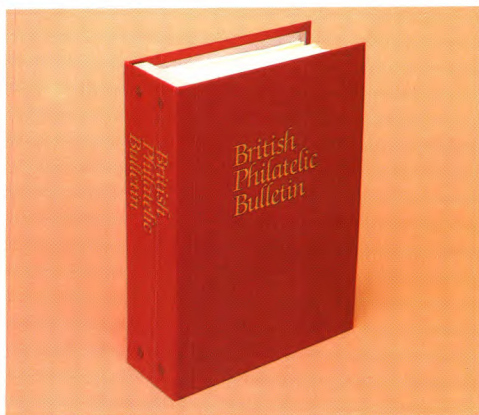


Preliminary designs for the special NPM handstamps to be used on National Stamp Day and day of issue of the Transport stamps

Three handstamps will be available at the NPM on 6 May – the standard Maltese Cross cancel, the special "Railways and the Post" exhibition cancel and a one-day National Stamp Day cancel featuring an airmail postbox of the 1930s. A further one-day special will be in use on 10 May when the Transport stamps are issued; this will depict air routes to Europe. Cards and covers for posting to receive these cancels should be sent to: Special Postmark Duty, EC Letters District Office, LONDON EC1A 1AA.

New Bulletin Binder

In last December's Editorial we recognised the problem many readers were having with the present binder. We are pleased to announce that a redesigned binder will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau from mid-May. The binder, in red, has the title *British Philatelic Bulletin* in gold on the front cover and on the spine. It has been designed to hold 24 issues of the enlarged (24 page) *Bulletin*. The price remains £5; all orders should be sent to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.



Museum Piece

One of the latest acquisitions of the National Postal Museum is one of the vending machines manufactured by Frama AG, in trial use from May 1984 until April 1985. This has been transferred from the Post Office Research Centre at Swindon. It is planned to put it on show in the Museum from 6 May, National Stamp Day, and it can be operated by visitors to produce specimen labels by the insertion of an appropriate coin. These labels, of a new design, will not be postally valid, and will be available to visitors only.

Glasgow Garden Festival

Britain's second national garden festival opened in Glasgow on 28 April. A post office operates at the Festival, offering the full range of counter services. A datestamp worded GLASGOW GARDEN FESTIVAL OFFICE is in use on registered mail and documents. Similar datestamps were used at the Stoke-on-Trent Festival in 1986 and at the Liverpool International Garden Festival in 1984.

British Philatelic Bureau Silver Jubilee

In an after-dinner speech on 25 March 1963 the Postmaster-General, Mr Reginald Bevins, announced the setting up of a Post Office Philatelic Bureau. A few weeks later on May Day 1963 the Bureau opened for business in the old Telegraph Office alongside Postal Headquarters in King Edward Street, London. This was to be the first of many steps in a gradual process of providing the collector of British stamps with a comprehensive and efficient philatelic service. Hitherto the Stamp Section in London's Chief Post Office had served the needs of stamp dealers but the collector had been largely overlooked.

To begin with the services provided by the Bureau were sparse and the publicity given to them was initially low-key. The Bureau would supply all current definitive, regional and postage due stamps as well as commemorative stamps. The first stock list produced also included a few obsolete items such as the 11d definitive and the 2d one band phosphor stamp.

A first day cover service had been provided by the PO, as a one-off exercise, for the 1957 Scouts stamps, six years before regular first day of issue facilities were to be introduced. "First Day of Issue" slogan postmarks were first used for the Paris Postal Conference stamp of 7 May 1963. The Bureau's FDC service started with the National Nature Week issue (16 May). Collectors could send addressed covers to the Bureau where the stamps were affixed and postmarked with the London EC "First Day of Issue" slogan (envelope design). London EC machine cancels were used for the Lifeboat Conference and Red Cross Centenary issues later in the year. The "First Day" cancel was inscribed "Philatelic Bureau" for the COMPAC Cable stamp of 3 December 1983.

From 1964 onwards special PO FDC envelopes were provided and the slogan gave way to a handstamp. The FDC service offered for the Shakespeare Festival stamps was heavily subscribed and the Bureau's small staff worked long hours to process the covers as well as keeping up with the orders for mint stamps. All the Shakespeare FDCs had the stamps affixed in

London and were then taken by van to Stratford-upon-Avon where the "First Day of Issue" handstamp was applied. The Bureau's own First Day handstamp began life with the Geographical Congress issue on 1 July 1964.

In 1966 the Bureau moved from London to the Head Post Office in Edinburgh and a philatelic sales counter was opened in the London Chief Office. Then in 1974 the Bureau moved from the HPO in Waterloo Place to Lothian Road and finally in 1981 it moved to its present address in Brandon Street.

There are now over 200 staff, under the control of the Manager, Tony Parton. Each year they process millions of orders from collectors all over the world. Although they have a computer to assist them, the individual needs of collectors still require considerable human effort by the staff to ensure satisfied customers. Collectors wanting cylinder or traffic light blocks, gutter pairs, etc are supplied with these wherever possible.

The Bureau today supplies many more products than its predecessor of 1963. Added to the range have been presentation packs (1964), PHQ cards (1973) and more recently a large range of albums. Amongst other items stocked are publications, NPM postcards, coils of stamps and postal stationery. Full details are given on the Bureau Stock List and Order Form. The main publication is, of course, the *Bulletin* which started life as a somewhat dull duplicated newsletter in September 1963 and is now a regular glossy monthly magazine, sent to over 50,000 subscribers. It is edited at the NPM in London but subscriptions and its despatch are all dealt with in Edinburgh.

The Bureau prepares and despatches the *British Postmark Bulletin*, published fortnightly since 1971, to about 2,000 keen postmark collectors who require the advanced information on all special handstamps and slogan postmarks.

Late in the 1970s a decision was taken by the Bureau to install a computer "in-house" rather than continue to use a service centre 200 miles away in Leeds.

Currently there are two computers used by



The British Philatelic Bureau, Brandon Street, Edinburgh

the Bureau for processing customers' requests. A Burroughs B6900 is used for all main processing and an IBM Series 1 to produce addressed FDCs.

There are more than 40 visual display units stationed around the Bureau so that staff can immediately change (update) or interrogate any customer's account in order to answer written or telephone enquiries. The average time it takes the computer to update an account or reply to an interrogation is under five seconds. The Series 1 computer is used to print the customer's address directly onto FDCs which are then cancelled with the correct postmark and despatched through the postal system to the customer.

The address label on this *Bulletin* envelope was produced by the Bureau's computer. Once a month all the names of paid-up subscribers are printed on plain paper. This list of addresses and *Bulletin* envelopes are taken to a labelling machine which cuts up the listing paper and applies the label to the envelope.

The envelopes plus the *Bulletins* and leaflets

are then loaded onto another machine which inserts one *Bulletin* and one of any accompanying leaflets into an envelope before sealing it. Using two such machines it takes about two days to despatch each month's *Bulletin*.

One service the Bureau provides receives relatively little publicity yet is an important public relations exercise. Each year thousands of children write to Father Christmas in Reindeerland, Toyland, etc. All such mail is directed to the Bureau and the children are sent an attractive card bearing a message from Santa. During December it is all hands to the pumps at the Bureau to ensure that Santa's letters are delivered by Christmas Day and that those customers who have ordered philatelic items – perhaps as a Christmas gift – receive them on time.

The Bureau has come a long way since 1963 but Tony Parton and his staff are not resting on their laurels; they are always looking for ways of improving their service to the collector – and we wish them well for their next 25 years.

Gems of the R M Phillips Collection

152. Victorian Printing Methods

Featured this month is a great variety amongst the Postal Fiscal issues. A 1d stamp worded RECEIPT ONE PENNY printed in blue was issued in October 1853, a similar stamp but inscribed DRAFT instead of RECEIPT and printed in ochre followed in late October.

The plate was registered on 10 October. One cliché in the forme was upside down causing the penultimate stamp in the fifth row to be *tête bêche* in error. This was corrected and the plate re-registered on 20 October. Shown

here is one of only three known examples of the error. A similar strip of three is in the Royal Collection, a block of four is also known, catalogued by Stanley Gibbons at £8000.

This item can be seen in the open display – Victorian Printing Methods – of the R M Phillips collection at the National Postal Museum during normal hours: 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 9.30am to 4pm on Friday.



Royal Visit to Los Angeles



The Duchess of York talks to designer Arnold Schwartzman whilst her husband discusses stamp design with Barry Robinson, Design Adviser to The Post Office at the "UKLA" exhibition earlier this year. Photographs by the Duke will feature on forthcoming British high value definitives.

National Railway Museum "Mail by Rail" Exhibition

A permanent exhibition under this title was opened at the National Railway Museum in York by Mr Bill Cockburn, Managing Director of Royal Mail Letters, on 1 February. The exhibition charts the fascinating social and technical history of the transport of mails from the 18th century to date. Sponsored by The Post Office, the opening of the exhibition was timed to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the Travelling Post Office. The highlight of the exhibition is an original TPO vehicle of the 1880s, the carriage has been fully restored by the Museum and a walkway allows public access to view the sorting area inside the coach. Lineside bag exchange equipment, in use until 1971, for picking up and dropping bags is also on display.

To enhance the exhibition there is a touch-screen information system showing the modern day working of the mails transport network and the TPO. With the help of this "hands-on" computer display, visitors can trace the route of a letter posted in one town, destined for another and using rail transport, thus discovering the role of the TPO as a focus of the modern postal operation. Video presentations and displays tell the story of "Mail by Rail" in words and pictures.

Dr John Coiley, Keeper of the NRM and Mr Bill Cockburn, Managing Director of Royal Mail Letters, aboard the 1880s TPO at the "Mail by Rail" exhibition. The posting box bears the inscription "Letters posted here must bear an extra Half Penny Stamp."



50th Anniversary of the National Trust for Scotland, 1981

British Special Issues: No.146

FRANCIS KENNEDY

The first and the last shall be Scottish: that appears to have been the Post Office approach to the issue, on 24 June 1981, exceptionally of five stamps marking the 50th anniversary of the National Trust for Scotland which was founded on 1 May 1931.

The larger National Trust covering England, Wales and Northern Ireland was founded in 1895 so its 50th anniversary occurred, awkwardly, in 1945 while its centenary has yet to take place. That is why the National Trust for Scotland got in first and was allowed 14p and 25p stamps in the set while the 18p England, 20p Wales and 22p Northern Ireland stamps completed the issue.

For the artist, Michael Fairclough, this was the first time he had been commissioned to design postage stamps. He chose his subjects with care and adopted a bold "poster" design approach, lacking fine detail but lively in colouring. The **14p** featured Glenfinnan and Loch Shiel in Inverness-shire. Glenfinnan provided a typical Highland landscape with, from the Scottish viewpoint, a bonus in that it was where Prince Charles Edward Stuart raised his standard on landing there in 1745. The 64-foot monument tower (in the foreground of the design), was erected in 1815 by Alexander McDonald, 10th Chieftain of Glenaladale to mark the 70th anniversary of the event.

The impressionist view of Derwentwater in Cumbria on the **18p** stamp was a surprise choice to represent England. An extensive range of subjects was available and the Lake District had already been included in the 1970 Literary Anniversaries set. The 1s 6d value of that set (SG 828) showed a view of Grasmere based on a Farrington engraving, the literary connection being William Wordsworth's association with Grasmere.

The **20p** stamp, featuring the imposing limestone cliffs of Stackpole Head in Dyfed, represents Wales. This eight-mile range of cliffs is a popular holiday area where the NT has several cottages for letting.

The **22p** stamp depicted a scene from County Antrim, which had also been chosen to



represent Northern Ireland in the 1966 Landscapes issue (SG 690). This time it was the famous Giant's Causeway, with its unusual basalt and volcanic rock formations, that filled the bill. Celtic mythology suggests that the causeway was built by a giant called Fenn MacCool in an attempt to reach Scotland on foot. Historical fact locates the Giant's Causeway as a graveyard of the Spanish Armada treasure ship *Girona*, wrecked there in 1588.

The second Scottish design, on the **25p** stamp, was of windswept St Kilda bequeathed to the NTS in 1957, following its complete evacuation in 1930 by the civilian population. Lying 140 miles west of mainland Scotland, St Kilda is noted for the highest cliffs in the British Isles.

It is a remarkable tribute to the printers, Harrison & Sons Ltd, that not even the SG *GB Specialised Stamp Catalogue* lists any major printing flaw or the omission of any colours. The sheets comprised 100 stamps (two panes of 10 x 5) on phosphorised paper, perf. 15 x 14. Sales before withdrawal on 23 June 1982, were: *14p*, 43,308,000; *18p*, 10,498,000; *20p*, 12,427,000; *22p*, 9,920,000; *25p*, 9,561,000.

Changes in TPO Operations

A review of the Travelling Post Office network has recently been completed and as a result various changes are being implemented with effect from 16 May:

1. The NWTPO is re-routed down the Trent Valley line avoiding Birmingham. It will start from Euston later than at present.

2. A new London-Shrewsbury TPO is attached to the NWTPO from Euston and detaches at Rugby to go via Coventry, Birmingham and Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury.

3. A new Dover-Manchester TPO takes the path of the old NWTPO between Birmingham and Crewe and re-routes mail from the South East around London to meet with the new NWTPO at Crewe.

4. The Up Special below Crewe is re-routed down the Trent Valley line to arrive earlier at Euston. A portion for Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Coventry detaches at Crewe.

5. A new Shrewsbury-London TPO connects with the Up Special at Rugby.

6. The Preston-Euston bag tender is retimed earlier away from Crewe and a Watford stop is substituted for the present Warrington, Stafford and Rugby stops to arrive earlier at Euston.

7. A new Manchester-Dover TPO provides much later B1 outlets for the South East from offices in the NW and Midlands.

8. The current South West Up and Down TPOs will cease.

9. The Crewe-Cardiff and York-Shrewsbury TPOs will be amalgamated into a York-Cardiff TPO, calling additionally at Manchester.

10. The Cardiff-Crewe and the Shrewsbury-York TPOs will be amalgamated into a Cardiff-York TPO.

Armada Stamps

A strip of five 18p stamps will be issued on 19 July to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the Armada, one of the most decisive battles in the history of Europe. The stamps form a composite design showing the Armada at five points along its course from the arrival off The Lizard to its routing in the North Sea. Further details of the stamps, first day cover, presentation pack and postcards will be published in next month's *Bulletin*.

Meanwhile collectors might be interested to know that since late March packets of Kellogg's cornflakes have been appearing in shops with a special promotional offer. In exchange for eight packet tokens, collectors can send for either a special souvenir cover bearing the five Armada stamps cancelled with a special handstamp or a replica Spanish coin. Applicants will also be sent details of the PO's Stamp Bug Club. A similar promotion was staged in 1980 when over ½ million customers received souvenir covers bearing the Liverpool & Manchester Railway stamps.

The stamps and associated products are on show at the Armada Exhibition at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich which opened on 20 April. A ticket allowing free admission to the exhibition, which continues until 4 September, will be included in the presentation pack which goes on sale on 19 July.

The stamps, products and artwork will also be exhibited at the "Living Crafts" event at Hatfield House on 5-8 May.

18p Coil on ACP

18p NL stamp rolls, printed on Advanced Coated Paper (ACP) will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters from 3 May. The previous printing was on Phosphor Coated Paper (PCP). The new printing is not regarded as a new issue and no first day of issue facilities will be offered.

The Fall and Rise of the Stamp Book

KEN WALKER

Consumer Mail Marketing Manager, Royal Mail Letters

The stamp book is making a comeback as a standard UK household item. That may seem a strange way to launch into an explanation of current stamp book policy in the UK but it is the key to understanding many of the changes that have taken place over the past five years. Discounts, back-printing, promotional books, new vending books, window books, bar codes can only be explained in the context of an on-going campaign to change the stamp buying habits of the average UK customer. To understand the origins of that campaign and to chart its successes and failures it may be useful to go back a few years.

The issue of the £1.30 Postal History book in May 1981 was probably a more significant stage in the development of UK stamp books than the changeover from stitched books more than 10 years earlier. The issue of this mixed first/second class book marked the resurgence of interest within the PO of the stamp book as an important customer household product. The mix of six first class stamps and four second class stamps was a reflection of average purchasing habits and the intention was to attract new customers to stamp books.

By the early 1980s stamp book sales had slumped to 17½ million books per annum and were gradually losing popularity with stamp buyers. The measures that were put in hand at that time and the changes introduced over the intervening years have led to a complete turn around – with 60 million books being sold in 1987 and every likelihood of 150 million being sold by 1990. To achieve this a number of changes were introduced over the years:-

1. Discount Stamp Books

A month long trial of discounted stamp books in Bolton and Southampton proved successful in 1981 and marked the beginning of a period when price discounts were used to re-awaken the interest of customers who had switched to buying loose stamps. The newspaper coupon (15p off a stamp book) was chosen for a national campaign in May 1982 when millions of money off coupons were printed in the national press. A

four-fold increase in books occurred during the promotional period and proved very popular.

Discounts then became a regular feature, with a major change occurring in late 1982, when the newspaper coupon was replaced with books that were specifically printed for the discount, ie with the discount price printed on to the book and with the stamps back-printed (usually with a “D” or a festive star at Christmas).

The Christmas promotions changed over the years with a switch from first/second class definitives, to second class definitives and eventually to the most recent format of 20 second class Christmas stamps. The 20 stamp book has now been superseded by the 36 stamp Christmas pack – which in 1986 was also part of the Christmas stamp discount promotion.



The current Recipe Cards promotional book

2. Promotional Covers – as alternative to discounts

Although there will continue to be opportunities to offer selected discounts on stamp books, the PO was also exploring other ways of maintaining the new wave of interest in stamp books, sold across the counter. That is how the current range of promotional books offering a range of useful products (retail value £1-£1.50) for about 50p worth of stamps came into being – with the cover design reflecting the theme of the offer. The offers are usually orientated towards letter-writing products but have also covered gardening, children's books, handwriting analysis and cookery. It is not rare to find over 100,000 applications for some of these offers with one particular item attracting 350,000 requests.



3. The return of the Stamp Vending Machine

Stamp vending machines have never been away but there are a number of initiatives currently in progress which will greatly increase the quantity and format of stamps vended by machine. The first significant change came in 1984/5 with the decision to move away from a policy of including a wide range of stamps in the 50p vended books so that customers could "make up" the correct value of virtually any letter/card to any destination in the world. Our market research told us that 95 per cent of customers using vending machines only wanted basic UK rates and over 80 per cent wanted first class stamps. They did not like small value stamps in their books. Our policy now is to include as many full value stamps as possible in a book – even where this means providing extra value to the customer (eg 3 x 17p for 50p or current £1 book containing £1.03 worth of stamps). With a fixed value vend of 50p it will not always be possible to provide full value definitives but it should be possible with the £1 book for the foreseeable future.

The introduction of the recent electronic stamp book machine in 1986 was significant as it marks the beginning of a £1 vend and a new 50p book. The new book was necessary to give customers using the new machines a genuine

choice between first and second class stamps. It may not always be necessary to have two 50p books, but the new machines have the flexibility to change vend value, so that it is not inconceivable that we might have a 60p or 70p vend at some time in the future.

There is a lot of development work going into new vending equipment at the moment and it is likely that we will be experimenting with new equipment and new products in 1988/9. For example, Christmas stamp packs were on sale in 1987 through a PINPOINT vending machine which debited the credit cards of Barclaycard users rather than accepting cash. Inside many main post offices vending machines are also being installed which accepts all coins, dispense first/second class stamps from a coil and dispenses change, if necessary. Although it is not possible to say what specific machines and products will be introduced over the next few years, the one thing that is certain is that the number, quality and flexibility of stamp vending equipment will increase considerably and that the number of machine vended stamps will have doubled by 1990.

4. Window Books

The introduction of "window books" in August 1987 caused a considerable amount of comment in the philatelic press. Some of that comment – particularly from overseas observers – was based on a misunderstanding of our objectives and intentions in this area. A more detailed background may, therefore, be useful to give collectors an insight into the policy which lies behind a lot of these initiatives.

We intend to make it easier for customers to buy stamps in the UK. To do this we have introduced a wide range of initiatives:

1. to improve the service at post office counters (quick service positions, encouraging more sub offices to sell stamps in non-PO part of their shop);
2. to improve our stamp vending machines and to increase the number available (24 hour machines in outside locations, quick service machines inside post offices) and
3. to extend the number of outlets selling stamps by encouraging card shops, newsagents, grocery outlets to stock stamps.

This broadly based initiative is already under way and is a major priority for the Royal Mail



Selling the new window books in a Yorkshire corner shop

over the next two or three years. It is the extended sale of stamps in retail outlets which has led to the development of the new window books so perhaps it would be useful to focus on that initiative.

It is common practice in many overseas countries to be able to buy postage stamps from hotels, kiosks, etc. It is also possible (and legal) to do so in the UK, but it is not so widespread – mainly because of the size and strength of our local post office network. The result has been that while the majority of our UK customers are perfectly happy with their stamp purchasing arrangements, there are some customers (eg overseas visitors, young people, bill-payers) who were finding it difficult to buy stamps. A test market exercise was, therefore, devised to measure the benefits of wider stamp availability.

One of the immediate needs in that test market was the development of a new range of stamp books:

1. books of four first/second class stamps were introduced as more than 70 per cent of

customers normally bought less than £1 worth of stamps at a time;

2. new covers were required to ensure that the books would be noticed in the shops, hotels;

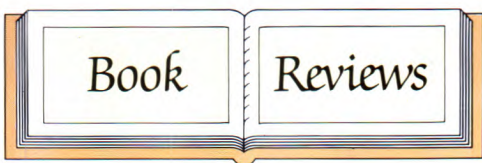
3. bar codes were introduced because an increasing number of retailers will not accept new products which do not carry a bar code and

4. a book of 26p stamps was introduced to meet the needs of overseas visitors for postcard stamps in tourist areas.

The new books went on sale in post offices in the test areas in early September 1987 and in non-PO shops from 28 September. For accounting reasons, the PO books carry different bar codes from those on sale in the 850 newsagents, tourist sites and card shops in the test areas: Bristol BSI-28, Nottingham NG1-25, Preston PR1-9 and York YO1-8.

The books are a major departure from our existing range and may well be modified in the

light of customer comments. That is all in the future, however. In the meantime we await the results of the test market with some interest, as that will have a major bearing in the future of stamp book design and production for the next five years.



May Digest

Issued in May

6 May **NPM cards (3) – Transport & Communications – Falmouth, Croydon, Henley (88/4-6)** 20p each

10 May **Transport & Communications stamps** 18p, 26p, 31p, 34p

designer: Mike Dempsey

printing: Harrisons, photogravure, 41mm x 30mm, printed on un-watermarked, phosphor-coated paper, in sheets of 100 on PVA Dextrin gum.

Bureau f.d. service alternative handstamp: Glasgow

presentation pack: £1.31

Withdrawn in May

4 May **National definitives** 3p PCP (issued 22/10/80)

11 May **British Architects in Europe issue** – all items

31 May **Royal Mail Exhibition Card No. 1** (issued 13/6/87)

Transport & Communications Cylinders

The cylinder numbers and colours printed of the Transport & Communications stamps to be issued on 10 May are as follows:

18p

Brown 1A	Yellow 2B	Rose-red 2C	Dull blue 3D	Deep brown 1E	Reddish violet 1F	Black 2G
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26p

Brown 1A	Yellow 1B	Orange-vermilion 1C	Dull blue 1D	Violet-blue 1E	Bright emerald 1F	Black 1G
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31p

Brown 1A	Yellow-orange 1B	Carmine 1C	Dull purple 1D	Violet-blue 1E	Bright green 1F	Black 1G
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34p

Brown 1A	Orange-yellow 1B	Carmine-rose 1C	Bluish-violet 1D	Bright blue 1E	Sepia 1F	Black 1G
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Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Specialised Stamp Catalogue Volume 4 Queen Elizabeth II Decimal Definitive Issues. 5th Edition, 480 pp, limp binding. £14.95 (postage £1.50 UK, £2.50 overseas) from S.G. Publications Ltd, Parkside, Ringwood, Hants, BH24 3SH.

The ever-growing number of Machin definitive and country stamps has resulted in the need to split these from the commemorative stamps which will be listed in a forthcoming Volume 5. This results in a volume of manageable size and will be welcomed by those who do not collect the special issues.

Individual sections deal with the engraved high values, photogravure sheet and coil stamps, booklet panes, multi-value coils, lithographed issues, regionals, Royal Mail Postage Labels and postage dues with separate appendices covering booklets and perforators. A useful, illustrated check list of the photogravure definitives is provided, cross-referencing all specialised catalogue numbers with those in the standard S.G. catalogues and identifying the source of each stamp (sheet, booklet, coil).

Stamps printed on Advanced Coated Paper are now listed as are stamps with New Phosphor Ink, window books and booklet panes with deliberately imperf margins. The section dealing with the Litho Country stamps has been extensively revised.

Prices have been thoroughly revised with some basic "standard catalogue" stamps increased considerably since *Collect British Stamps* was published in November – for example the full set of Royal Mail Postage Labels is now £37 unused (up from £25), the Northern Ireland and Welsh 12½p, perf 15 x 14 up to £5 each unused (from £1.50).

The 3½p error in deep olive brown [U116(2)] rises from £500 to £750. Some price reductions are noted – eg the Isle of Man 2½p and 3p FCP are reduced to 35p and £1.50 from 85p and £2 unused. Priced for the first time are the 17 pin varieties on certain Machins. As always a catalogue that will repay careful study.

New Parcels SuperService

A new SuperService parcel service was launched by Royal Mail Parcels in February. This is intended for contract customers and offers a 48-hour guaranteed delivery to 95 per cent of UK addresses, a free weekly data report, instant telephone confirmation of delivery, written proof of delivery option, free insurance, fully documented service, and high care - all at a highly competitive price.

Collectors of PO labels will be interested to know that all SuperService parcels will bear a distinctive red and yellow label onto which is entered the delivery address and a consignment number.

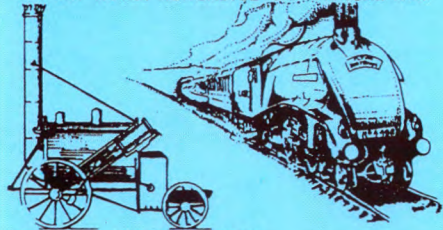
Royal Mail Parcels offer four services: StandardService (the new identity for the traditional parcel service), SuperService, Datapost and International Parcels (economy distribution to virtually anywhere in the world).

North East Philatelic Week End

The 12th North East Philatelic Week End is to be held at the Airport Hotel, Newcastle-upon-Tyne from 3-5 June 1988.

The programme is designed to include many aspects of philately catering for both new and advanced collectors and will be enjoyed in a congenial and friendly atmosphere. All newcomers will be most welcome.

12th NORTHEAST PHILATELIC WEEKEND AIRPORT HOTEL NEWCASTLE 3rd - 5th JUNE 1988



FAMOUS LOCOMOTIVES
OF NORTHEAST ENGLAND

It is intended to produce a commemorative booklet with a railway theme. These will be printed by The House of Questa but are in no way connected with the British Post Office. For further details please send a stamped addressed foolscap envelope to: Dorothy M Martin, 46 Briardene Crescent, Kenton Park, NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE NE3 4RY.



Posting Boxes

No.90 Submitted by Christopher Mylne of West Lothian is this photograph of the posting box on the Hebridean island of Eriskay. This island lies off the south shore of South Uist and is accessible only by ferry. Postal collection and delivery is only three times a week so that the collection time stated on the box is Mon, Wed, Fri only at 11am. Except for a few stunted trees inside the shelter of garden walls, there are virtually no trees on Eriskay and certainly no pavements or streets. Not unnaturally, therefore, the box is fixed, for prominence and convenience, to a telegraph pole at a junction of roads and near several crofts, not specifically at any one but more or less equidistant from several, a compromise in convenience.

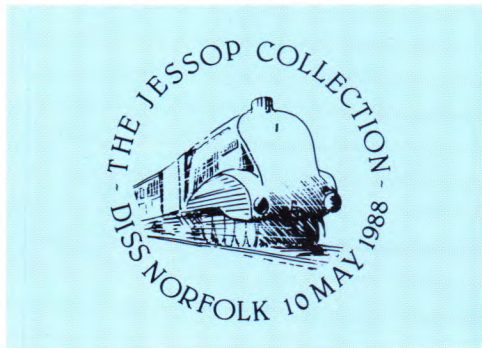
This lamp box is of the present reign showing just a crown instead of the royal cypher.

Commemorative Covers

Witney Trade Fair. The 1988 Witney Trade Fair will be opened by Geoff Capes and will be held in the Oxfordshire town from 8-11 June. A special handstamp will be used on commemorative covers. Covers with 18p commemorative stamp cost 50p, with full set of commemorative stamps £1.50. Fifty of the full set covers will be autographed by Mr Capes, price £3. When ordering please state which 1988 commemorative stamps you would like affixed. All profits from the sale of these covers go to local charities. Orders to: Branch Manager, Post Office Counters Ltd, 2/4 Market Square, WITNEY, Oxon, OX8 6LN.

Great Western. To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the maiden voyage of Brunel's famous steamship *Great Western* from Bristol on 8 April 1838 and the first regular transatlantic steamship service, a special cover has been produced. The cover bearing a Bristol pictorial postmark dated 8 April 1988 is available from: G K Eldridge, 177 Mousehole Lane, Bitterne, SOUTHAMPTON SO2 4TD, price £1.60 UK, £2.10 overseas.

Glasgow Trams. To coincide with the Transport & Communications stamps, a special cover is available to mark the 90th anniversary of the electric tram system in Glasgow. The covers will bear the 31p tram stamp and a pictorial Glasgow tram postmark. The first electric tram ran from Mitchell Street to Springburn on 13 October 1898. Price £1.80 (£2.30 overseas) from: G K Eldridge, 177 Mousehole Lane, Bitterne, SOUTHAMPTON SO2 4TD.



Jessop Collection. Currently on tour under the title 'The Jessop Collection' is an exhibition of railway paintings by David Weston and photographs by Colin Garratt – both well known in their respective fields. The exhibition will be at Bressingham Steam Museum on 10 May where a special 'silk' cover will be available featuring a painting of *Mallard* by David Weston. A special Mallard handstamp will be applied at Diss, Norfolk. Covers with full set of Transport stamps cost £5 or £7.50 signed by David Weston (overseas add 50p). Orders/enquiries to: A G Bradbury, 2 Fairholme Road, LEICESTER LE2 6GL.

Football League. The British Society of Football Philately have produced a set of covers marking the centenary of the League. The set of 10 covers, bearing postmarks relating to the original League clubs, cost £7.20. Orders/enquiries to: M K Stockhill, 104 Sewerby Road, BRIDLINGTON, North Humberside, YO16 5DA.

Letters to the Editor



Phosphor Bars and Dots

Sir,

Attention should be called to certain statements in Kenneth Chapman's article on "Phosphor Bars and Dots" in the January *Bulletin*. Certain readers might perhaps find some comments a little misleading.

It would, for instance, have been helpful if in describing the post-1968 position he had from the start drawn a clear distinction between counter sheets and single value coils on the one hand and booklets and multi-value coils on the other. Until the introduction of PCP the former category uniformly showed, as indeed is correctly stated, two side bands on all values other than that for the second class rate which had a single central band. But in both booklets and m/v coils there are numerous exceptions to this norm to be found, which have continued up to the present day.

This may partly explain why several minor inaccuracies and one major error have, perhaps as the price of over-condensation, crept into his sentence which begins: "The width of the phosphor bars varied...". The points which arise are in sequence:

1. Between 1968 and 1979 the width of the bands on counter sheet stamps did not vary but remained constant throughout: 2 bands ($\frac{1}{2}$ x 9.5mm on each side) for all values except the second class rate which had a 4mm centre band. Nor was there any change in the band-width of m/v coils whether 2B or CB. In 1977 there was a reduction in the band-width from 9.5 to 8mm but only in m/v booklets.

2. There was no sudden and comprehensive change to PCP in 1979 as is implied. The first value with PCP (8 $\frac{1}{2}$ p) had appeared as early as 1976, and, while the majority of the then current values did change in 1979, the $\frac{1}{2}$ p and 11p continued as 2B/FCP well into 1980. Another exception was the 10p G5 m/v coil issued in January 1980 with each of the two values CB/FCP.

3. *Pace* Stanley Gibbons, the term "all-over phosphorised paper" is again slightly misleading. In the case of what specialists prefer to call

PCP the phosphor was incorporated in the coating and not applied directly to the paper, unlike a short-lived experiment in 1979 (1p, 2p and 10p) when the phosphor was applied all-over to the paper in advance of the ink printing. SG term this latter paper "All-over" Phosphor (Fluorescent Coated) Paper", but the two papers are more conveniently known as PCP (phosphor coated paper) and PPP (phosphor pre-printed paper).

4. It is incorrect to say that after 1979 all stamps appeared with "all-over phosphorised paper" (ie PCP) apart from the second class value. There are plenty of examples of subsidiary values appearing later with a CB in both booklets and m/v coils; the first class value is to be found with 2B in m/v and discount booklets; and the "Prestige" books have produced 2 band 2p (Wedgwood), 34p (Times) 31p (British Rail) and 26p (P & O) stamps.

5. Specialists draw a distinction between the terms "bands" and "bars", the latter relating to bands which are short at top or bottom (or both) in m/v books containing vertically se-tenant pairs of different rates (eg 1980 £2.20 Christmas book). The short bars were introduced to avoid the effect of possible phosphor slippage between stamps of different rates which could lead to the anathema of second class promotion.

6. So at last to the major error: the second class value did not, as is claimed, still have "only the vertical phosphor bar at the left". There has in fact been no SBL counter sheet stamp since the 2d Wilding, which was superseded by a 2-band version in 1961.

JIM DUTTON, Leatherhead, Surrey

Early Post Offices of Cyprus

Sir,

The article on the Early Post Offices of Cyprus by Jack C Goodwin in the February *Bulletin* was of considerable interest to those of us who live here. Some of the buildings that housed the old postal agencies still exist but alas the march of progress takes its inevitable toll. At the site of the Zygou agency, there are still some buildings but these will soon be immersed in the waters of the new Kouris River Dam.

There was one very small error in the map of Cyprus on page 137 which showed the Karpas towns of Rizokarpaso and Yialousa transposed.

It may be of some interest that there is today an Austrian PO (complete with Postmaster)

operating in Cyprus to provide postal services for the Austrian soldiers serving here in the UN force.

L C SHARPE, BFPO 567

Commemorative Covers

Chelsea Flower Show. A cover showing George V and Queen Mary visiting the Show in c. 1930 has been produced by the Royal Horticultural Society to commemorate the Show's 75th anniversary. Covers bearing 26p Linnean Society stamp and 24 May special handstamp cost £2 from: Secretary (Chelsea Covers), Royal Horticultural Society, PO Box 313, Vincent Square, LONDON SW1P 2PE.

Transport Stamps. Tony Evans, designer of the 1987 Pottery stamps, has produced six attractive cards for the Transport stamps. A set of four cards, one for each stamp, with first day postmarks costs £9.95; a larger card with full set, £5.95. Postage & packing 95p. A card featuring Mike Dempsey, designer of the Transport stamps, with special "Designer" handstamp is also available. Further details next month, meanwhile enquiries to: Tony Evans, Penbryn Hall, MONTGOMERY, Powys, SY15 6TY.

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