

BRITISH PHILATELIC BULLETIN

THE
PRE-DECIMAL
REGIONAL STAMPS

PUBLICATION N°14 BY MARTIN ROBINSON

Scotland



Wales & Monmouthshire



Northern Ireland



Isle of Man, Guernsey & Jersey



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This year marks the 50th anniversary of the first Regional stamps, for Scotland, Wales & Monmouthshire, Northern Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey, and the Isle of Man. This publication tells the background to their issue and the story of their 13 years of use prior to decimalisation and invalidation.

The first regional stamps of 1958

The idea of definitive regional stamps goes back to Guernsey's request for a stamp of local interest to mark George V's Silver Jubilee in 1935. A design was submitted to the GPO, but the idea was rejected. Proposals for stamps for Northern Ireland in 1937 and the Isle of Man in 1939 were similarly ruled out. In 1946-47 the whole idea of regional stamps was discussed in great detail within the GPO but was eventually dropped for a variety of reasons, but led to the issue of two Channel Islands pictorial stamps in 1948. The Isle of Man asked in 1949 for a regional issue to mark the Festival of Britain in 1951, but this request, too, was turned down.

These 1946-47 discussions covered several issues which would have had to be explored later when the idea of regional stamps was taken up again in 1956. These included the identification of appropriate regional emblems and how to include them whilst retaining the monarch's head as the key feature of the stamp design; and whether to include regional symbols in a larger or smaller range of low value definitive stamps. The College of Arms was consulted about suitable heraldic emblems, and Harrison & Sons provided bromides of possible designs.

The GPO had also to take advice about possible political sensitivities, both nationally and internationally, especially with regard to UPU regulations and its own reputation for moderation in the matter of stamp issues. It got as far as thinking about appointing regional consultative bodies and drawing up instructions for artists. In the end, though, it was the pressure of work (for the printers and the GPO) and the shortage of supplies (particularly of watermarked paper) in the immediate post-war period that caused the matter to be shelved and preference given to the proposed issue of stamps for the Olympic Games of 1948. The only concession would be a special issue in the same year of two pictorial stamps for the Channel Islands.

However, in November 1951 the Assistant PMG was asked in Parliament by a Scottish MP whether he would 'consider the issue of special and individual designs in postage stamps for Scotland'. This received the abrupt reply 'No, Sir!' The MP persisted, suggesting that 'this could be done with great benefit to the trade and industry of Scotland, and with considerable profit'. A GPO memorandum of the following year detailed the objections to the issue of stamps for Scotland, chiefly that stamps would also have to be issued for Wales, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Islands, and England. Having to produce and sell seven instead of one design for each denomination would result in intolerable complications. Past requests for Scottish stamps had been rejected by the Home Office on the ground that it 'would encourage separatist tendencies'. In any case the lower value definitive stamps already bore in the design emblems of the four main parts of the UK in the thistle, the rose, the daffodil and the shamrock.

The matter was not forgotten, and correspondence within the GPO during 1956 revealed that the issue of regional stamps was under active consideration. There was some opposition on practical grounds, for example the fact that since the war post offices had taken on a good deal of extra work from other Government Departments with the result that customers often had to queue for longer periods (they would have become well used to queuing for almost everything during the war!). Another official (himself a philatelist) expressed the view that 'too many commemorative issues are to be deprecated, [but] if there is behind the present suggestion some desire to meet national sentiment, it would in my opinion, be much better to issue a few commemorative stamps, e.g. Burns bi-centenary, Shakespeare, etc, rather than to issue anything of a permanent nature'.

At a policy meeting in February 1956 the Assistant PMG put forward a proposal that special stamps of 2½d, 6d and 1s values should be issued in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland respectively. These would only be on sale in these countries, and would incorporate the Sovereign's portrait within a pictorial design. This would provide



1948 Channel Islands Liberation stamps.



Bromides for 1946-47 unissued stamps for the Isle of Man.

Bromides for 1946-47 unissued stamps for Scotland



a variety of design without completely abandoning the GPO's conservative policy, and there would be a financial gain, possibly of some £250,000 from such an issue. It was agreed that a paper be drafted for submission to the Home Affairs Committee about providing regional stamps of standard definitive size, differentiated by some symbolic decoration.

After further consultation within the GPO and with regional bodies, matters had advanced so far by July 1956 that the PMG was able to write to The Queen's Private Secretary, explaining that it was proposed to issue new stamps in the 2½d, 4d and 1s3d denominations for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and a 2½d stamp each for Jersey, Guernsey and Isle of Man, and asking that the proposal be submitted to The Queen. The PMG added reassuringly that the modifications proposed were modest and limited to the surround and border. The basic design, as well as the size and colour, of the stamps would remain unchanged and the head of Her Majesty would continue to be the dominant feature. The border would bear symbols appropriate to the country concerned in place of the present symbols. The dominance of the sovereign's head on all the stamps would symbolise the unity, combined with diversity, which provides the continuing strength of the British tradition. The sale of the stamps would be confined to post offices in the respective areas but they would be valid for postage anywhere in the UK. The PMG was informed that Her Majesty was pleased to give informal approval to his proposal and looked forward to seeing the designs proposed.

Later that month the PMG spoke to lobby correspondents at the House of Commons about the proposal, which was clearly a new departure. It was not intended to reverse the GPO's conservative policy, but 'to make a quite important modification of it'. The main reason was to recognise the 'ancient status of the countries and islands concerned ... [and] give pleasure to their people who, whilst proud of their common allegiance, cherish their national identity'. The first question asked was if the new stamps were to be pictorial, and the answer was definitely no.

Reaction to the PMG's announcement was mixed. National and provincial newspapers generally gave a cautious welcome, but the philatelic press opposed the proposals. The 'revolutionary' reversal of the GPO's existing policy caused astonishment, and the 'curiously half-hearted' alteration of the existing stamps' designs was puzzling. Some feared that the new policy might undermine the dignity of the British postage stamp tradition, despite the fact that the element of change involved was derided as 'infinitesimal'. *The Times* said: 'Her Majesty's stamps are noble things. They deserve better than to be cheapened'. *Stamp Collecting* published letters attacking the PMG's proposals: 'The Postmaster-General has at one blow shattered the high reputation and finest traditions that this country has held in the philatelic world'; and 'it would do much towards bringing us down to the level of certain Central American countries'.

The next problem was organising the designing, approval and printing of the stamps. Any plans for issuing regional stamps by July 1957 were abandoned. There had been delays in setting up the regional consultative committees and negotiations about the designs were taking far longer than anticipated; there was much more work to be done before the designs could be sent to the printers for the

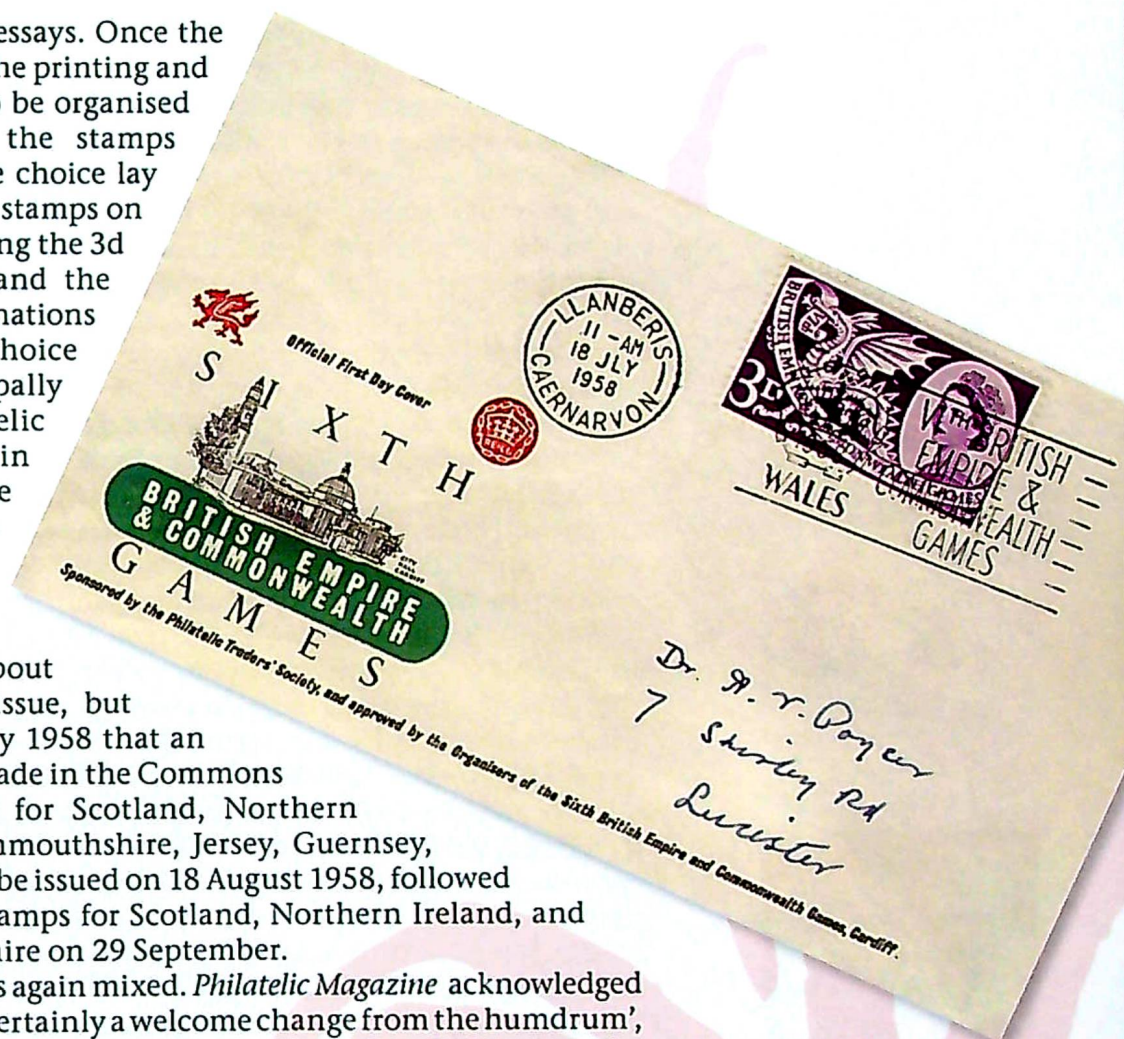
preparation of colour essays. Once the designs were chosen, the printing and distribution needed to be organised depending on how the stamps were to be issued. The choice lay between issuing all 12 stamps on the same day and issuing the 3d denominations first and the 6d and 1s3d denominations later. The latter choice was favoured, principally to maintain philatelic goodwill, bearing in mind the planned issue of the Empire Games stamps during the same period.

It was important to end speculation about the stamps' date of issue, but it was not until 16 July 1958 that an announcement was made in the Commons that new 3d stamps for Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales & Monmouthshire, Jersey, Guernsey, and Isle of Man would be issued on 18 August 1958, followed by the 6d and 1s3d stamps for Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales & Monmouthshire on 29 September.

Initial response was again mixed. *Philatelic Magazine* acknowledged that the stamps were 'certainly a welcome change from the humdrum', but also considered that 'broadly speaking, the designs are far too fussy and too much is crammed into too little.' *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* summed up the stamps as 'something of a hotchpotch, with some better than others ... To describe these designs as 'obscure symbolism' is no exaggeration'. *Stamp Collecting* thought that 'on the whole, people like the new stamps'.

The stamp designs

Following HM The Queen's approval in July 1956 of the issue of three stamps each for Scotland, Wales & Monmouthshire and Northern Ireland together with one stamp at the basic letter rate for Guernsey, Jersey and Isle of Man, it was proposed that local advisory committees should be set up to select designs. Notes of guidance were to the effect that the basic design, colour and size of the stamps should not be altered and that the head of The Queen should remain the dominant feature and not be changed in any way; the name of the country should not be incorporated in the design; and there should be a different design for each of the three values proposed (2½d, 4d and 1s3d). A single artist might submit designs for all three values if the committees wished; but in any case the number of artists invited should not exceed three or four, and the stamps should be printed by the photogravure process.



Issue of the Empire Games stamps in July resulted in the Regionals being issued on two dates. The Empire Games stamps also featured the Welsh dragon as the Games were held in Cardiff.

Scotland



An advisory committee for Scotland was formed in October. Under the chairmanship of the Lord Lyon King of Arms, such bodies as the Royal Scottish Academy, the Royal Fine Art Commission for Scotland and the Edinburgh College of Art were represented. It agreed that about 12 artists should be invited to submit preliminary designs for the new issue and drew up a list of those they thought should be invited.

They also agreed a list of Scottish symbols for the guidance of the artists. Heraldic symbols suggested included a Crowned Thistle, HM The Queen's Royal Badge for Scotland (featuring the Scottish Crown); a Saltire; a Lion Rampant (ie in a climbing position) in a tressured shield, HM The Queen's Scottish ensign of public authority; a Sejant (ie sitting) Lion on or off crown, or part of him holding both sword and sceptre; a Unicorn crowned, who might be collared and chained; and any or all of the Honours of Scotland (eg the Crown, sword and sceptre). Also included in the list were a flower symbol in the form of the Thistle, the Scottish national emblem; and any Pictish or Celtic symbols or designs – perhaps to form a border, or background design. In their instructions the artists were reminded that the foregoing heraldic symbols traditionally identified Scotland at home and abroad, and were the only means by which the Scottish character of stamps could be officially and legally shown. The artists were all from Scotland, and each was invited to submit three or more preliminary designs by the end of January 1957.

By the close of the competition 47 designs had been submitted and the committee selected seven to take forward; but with several modifications. This first shortlist included preliminary versions of the three designs which were eventually adopted: by Gordon F Huntly and John B Fleming, both of the Glasgow School of Art, and by Archie B Imrie of the Edinburgh College of Art. The other four were another design by Fleming and designs by William McLaren, George Mackie of Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen and Mrs Elizabeth Odling. At this stage three designs were considered possible choices for the 2½d (later 3d), 4d (later 6d) and 1s3d values, respectively.

At its meeting in October the committee studied the completed designs and asked for colour essays of four of them. Considering these in December and February it eventually selected Huntly's design for the 3d stamp, Fleming's for the 6d and Imrie's for the 1s3d, with McLaren's as the reserve choice, suggesting that when they were laid before the Queen, the PMG might wish to make the point that the committee felt that all three, and particularly those for the 3d and 1s3d values, were immediately and strikingly recognisable as Scottish and that they would be sure to appeal to Scottish people at home and overseas. The committee's selection was submitted to The Queen on 17 April and her approval was given two days later.

And so these new definitive stamps – the first to be specially produced for Scotland – were issued on 18 August 1958 (3d) and 29 September 1958 (6d and 1s3d). The portrait of The Queen used in all three values, and indeed on all the regional stamps, was that by Dorothy Wilding.

Featured in the design of the 3d value was the Saltire (St Andrew's Cross) encircled by a Crown (Her Majesty's Saltire Badge). This, the

Scotland
– some unadopted designs.



Stuart Barrie



George Mackie



William McLaren

statutory (1385) identity badge of Scotland, was shown in the special form 'environed of an open Crown' used prior to the reign of James V. In this form the Saltire is found as a Royal Badge and connected with the Order of the Thistle. The Crown depicted was a version of the Crown of Scotland, showing the slightly dipped top seen in this Crown in the 17th century. The designer of this stamp, Gordon F Huntly, had studied at the Glasgow School of Art. He later became a Newberg Medalist, a Bellahouston Scholar and an elected member of the Society of Industrial Arts; he was on the teaching staff of the Glasgow School of Art. He designed the Robert Burns stamps of 1966.

The 6d value featured in its design strongly conventionalised Thistles of Scotland. The designer of the stamp, John B Fleming, had been awarded the Diploma in Mural Painting at the Glasgow School of Art, later becoming engaged on design work for interior decoration. He was a free-lance illustrator and cartoonist for the *Glasgow Herald* and *Scottish Field*, a member of the Society of Industrial Artists and the Society of Scottish Artists and was also on the staff of the Glasgow School of Art, teaching design.

Featured in the design of the 1s3d value were two crowned and collared Unicorns. One supported a flag showing a Lion Rampant (Her Majesty's Scottish Ensign) and the other a flag showing St Andrew's Cross. The flag tassels were in the form of thistles. The stamp's designer, Archie B Imrie, had studied at the Edinburgh College of Art and had won the Royal Scottish Academy Travelling Scholarship for Drawing and Painting. He later became a freelance designer specialising in printed design, his work including publicity for the Scottish Council of Industrial Design and the Edinburgh Festival. He specialised in portrait painting and was on the teaching staff of the Edinburgh College of Art.

Another matter which had arisen during the planning of the stamps was that of watermarks. Clearly the 'E2R and crown' would be unsuitable for Scottish stamps (no doubt the Post Office well remembered the sensitivities aroused when the first 'E2R' pillar boxes were erected in Scotland, HM The Queen being indisputably the first Elizabeth of the Scots). Happily she agreed in January 1957 to the adoption of the Multiple Crown watermark. The omission of the angular 'E2R', it was said, would in any case lead to better paper manufacture and printing.

Another troublesome area was that of postal stationery. In January 1955 the Secretary of the Scottish National Congress had written to Postal Headquarters with a resolution stating that 'the postal stationery is an insult to Scotland, because all the envelopes bear stamps in the shape of an English rose, a symbol distasteful to the other parts of the United Kingdom' and called for their immediate replacement with new designs acceptable to Scottish opinion. The GPO acknowledged that there had been suggestions in the Scottish press calling for this change, but nothing that was considered strong pressure, and in view of the positive publicity afforded by the issue of the stamps, the question of changing the postal stationery was quietly dropped.



J. B. Fleming



Elizabeth Odling



Conrad T. McKenna



V S James



C. F. Tunnicliffe



R. L. Gapper



Mary Adshead



H. Martin

Wales & Monmouthshire



The advisory committee for Wales & Monmouthshire was formed of representatives of bodies such as the Welsh Committee of the Arts Council, the Royal Cambrian Academy of Art, the National Museum of Wales and the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales. At its first meeting in December 1956 the committee agreed that the principal emblem for the new stamps should be the Welsh Dragon, and that the Leek should be included in the design. It also agreed that six artists should be invited to submit preliminary designs for the new issue, each of whom was invited to submit three or more sketches by 1 April 1957.

The artists were told that since the new stamps were to form part of the existing UK definitive series the border design should be symbolic, not pictorial. They were also told that the principal emblem should be the Welsh Dragon, represented as 'passant', ie looking to the dexter side (the viewer's left), with three paws on ground and the dexter fore-paw raised; and that the Leek should also be included in the design. To provide a greater space for artistic treatment, they might move The Queen's portrait either vertically or diagonally, but the head must remain the dominant feature. The words 'Postage' and 'Revenue' were to be included.

Some 25 designs were submitted, and from these, seven were selected, but with a number of modifications. This first shortlist included versions of the three designs by Reynolds Stone which were eventually adopted, plus one other produced by him. The other three were by Mary Adshead, V S James, of Cardiff College of Art, and H Martin. On 1 October the basic UK letter rate of 2½d was increased to 3d and the former 4d rate for overseas letters increased to 6d, the existing 1s3d rate for airmail letters remaining unchanged. These changes were embodied in future work on the designs.

After deliberating from November to April 1958, the committee finally recommended Stone's designs for all three values, with James's design as reserve choice. The final selection was submitted to The Queen on 7 May and approved the following day.

The stamps, the first to be specially produced for Wales & Monmouthshire, were issued on 18 August 1958 (3d) and 29 September 1958 (6d and 1s3d). The Welsh dragon, which appeared in all three of Stone's accepted designs, has been used as an emblem in Welsh legend since earliest times and was well established before the time of heraldry. The Leek, included in the 3d and 1s3d stamps, has both a military and religious association. Its military connection dates back to the battle of Crécy in 1346, when Welsh soldiers are believed to have worn 'leeks in their Monmouth caps'. The Leek is also linked with St David, who is said to have been very fond of this vegetable.

Reynolds Stone (1909-79), a descendant of Sir Joshua Reynolds, was educated at Eton and Magdalene College, Cambridge, then studied printing at the Cambridge University Press. Later he worked under Eric Gill and for the Wessex Press, Taunton, before undertaking freelance work as a designer and specialist in book decoration. He received many commissions from bodies such as the National Trust, the Arts Council, and HM Stationery Office. After wartime service in the RAF he designed the 3d Peace stamp of 1946, the first of many for the GPO. Apart from the Welsh regionals, his later successes

included the 3d of the Empire Games stamps, issued only a month before the regionals, the 1960 Europa and 1963 Paris Conference Centenary issues, and the General Letter Office Tercentenary 3d of 1960. His other work included banknotes and Sir Winston Churchill's memorial in Westminster Abbey.

Northern Ireland



In June 1956 the PMG wrote to Lord Brookeborough, the Northern Ireland Prime Minister, about the proposal to amend the design of some stamps by including regional symbols, and that Wales and Scotland would also be affected. Lord Brookeborough replied that: 'While we are quite happy with existing arrangements which emphasise the unity of the Kingdom, we would not wish to be the 'odd man out' if Scotland and Wales are to have their own special issues.'

So an advisory committee for Northern Ireland, was set up under the chairmanship of the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Senate, with representatives of The Queen's University of Belfast, Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (Northern Ireland), Museum and Art Gallery of Belfast, Belfast College of Art, and Irish Linen Merchants' Association.

At its first meetings the committee agreed that some five Northern Ireland artists should be invited to submit preliminary designs for the new issue. The committee also agreed for their guidance five symbols representative of Ulster: the Red Hand of Ulster; the Arms of Northern Ireland; the six-pointed Crowned Star with the Ulster Red Hand on it, the Flax Plant; and a field gate with typical Ulster pillars. It agreed that the Red Hand of Ulster should be included in every design, and the letters ER if practicable; but that the artists might combine two or more of the symbols. The invitations to the artists selected were sent out at the end of December. Each artist was invited to submit three or more designs by 7 February 1957.

Some 24 designs were submitted and the committee selected eight as possible choices. The shortlist included early versions of the three designs which were subsequently adopted, by William Hollywood, Leonard Pilton, Thomas Collins plus five others. The committee met several times over six months and finally chose Hollywood's design for the 3d value, Pilton's for the 6d value and T Collins's for the 1s3d. Its reserve choice was another of Hollywood's designs. Further improvements to the essays were suggested, so a second set of essays was produced in March, and these were approved by The Queen in May. The Northern Ireland stamps were issued on 18 August (3d) and 29 September 1958 (6d and 1s3d).

Featured in all three values were the flax plant, symbolising Northern Ireland's connection with the linen industry, and the Red Hand of Ulster, which dates from ancient times and was used in the seal of the O'Neills, the royal house of Ulster, and later incorporated in the Arms of the Province and in the Arms of the Government of Northern Ireland. Also featured in the design of the 3d value was the six-pointed Crowned Star, representing the six counties of Northern Ireland. The stamp's designer, William Hollywood, had studied at the Belfast College of Art and was working as a freelance artist and designer of printed publications.



Reynolds Stone - designer of the Welsh stamps

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Northern Ireland - some unadopted designs.



W. Hollywood

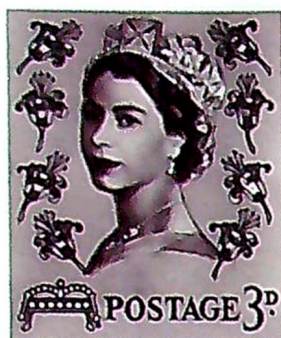


L. Pilton



L. Pilton

Guernsey
- some unadopted designs



E. Piprell



E. Piprell



Unknown



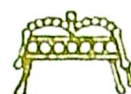
John Brinkley



Catherine Dovey

The 6d value had a background representing linen woven with a diamond pattern and flanked by panels containing stylised flax plants. Its designer, Leonard Pilton, had studied at the Manchester Regional College of Art and was later appointed Senior Lecturer at the Belfast College of Art, specialising in the teaching of textile design. In 1955 his poster of Newcastle, County Down, was used by the Post Office Savings Bank.

The special feature of the 1s3d value was a five-barred field gate with typical whitewashed stone pillars, for long a characteristic feature of the Ulster countryside. The stamp's young designer, Thomas Collins - then in his early twenties - came from Portadown and had studied at the Belfast College of Art. He was about to take up his first appointment as a teacher of arts and crafts at a school in Portadown.



Guernsey

The Guernsey committee, consisting of members of the Guernsey Art Committee, together with an art connoisseur and an heraldic expert, agreed that the Guernsey Lily and William the Conqueror's Crown should be incorporated in the design of the new stamp. The committee's recommendation that the Conqueror's War Cry 'Dex Aie' should also be featured in the design had to be rejected, since these words might confuse foreign postal administrations as to the country of origin. The committee invited four local artists to submit designs in January 1957; 14 designs were submitted, the committee selecting three by Eric A Piprell to take further.

At later meetings the committee studied Piprell's completed designs, and was unanimous in re-affirming its earlier preference but doubts were expressed about the correctness, from an heraldic point of view, of combining the initials 'ER' with the Conqueror's Crown, so a fresh version of the preferred design was produced, omitting these initials. Essays of the new design and reserve choice were considered in May and confirmed.

The basic 3d letter rate stamp for the Bailiwick of Guernsey was issued on 18 August. Featured in the design of the stamp were the crown of William the Conqueror (taken from the silver penny of William I, Duke of Normandy, minted during the period 1069-72) and the Guernsey Lily (*nerine sarniensis*), which has been associated with the Island since the middle of the 17th century - it is said that the bulbs were washed ashore from a ship in distress and took root in the island, hence the name 'Nerine', a sea nymph, daughter of Nereus, and 'Sarniensis', the old name for Guernsey.

The designer of the stamp, Eric A Piprell, was born in Guernsey in 1929. He was educated in Guernsey and later studied for several years with H Sandwith, a Fleet Street freelance journalist and commercial artist. In February 1949 Piprell joined the Guernsey Press Company Limited as a commercial artist but in June 1957 he moved to London and was working in the art department of Rotaprint Ltd.

In 1964 it was agreed that an additional definitive stamp should be issued for Guernsey in the denomination of 2½d for use on picture postcards. Similar stamps were also to be issued for Jersey and the Isle of Man. Since the island authorities were anxious for the new stamp to be issued in time for the tourist season, it was agreed that

designs shortlisted in 1957-58 by the advisory committee should be considered. Designs by Piprell were selected as first and reserve choices, respectively and the essays subsequently produced received Royal approval in May. The new stamp featuring the Guernsey Lily and the Crown of William of Normandy was issued on 8 June.



Jersey

A committee of prominent citizens, including senators, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and the Tourism Committee, the President of the Société Jersiaise and a local philatelist, was brought together to consider the issue of a basic letter rate stamp for the Bailiwick of Jersey, and agreed that the Royal Mace and the Arms of Jersey, together with the rays of the sun and foliage representing agriculture, should be included in the design; but that the inclusion of the initials 'ER' should be left to the artist's discretion. The committee suggested that two local artists, plus others, should be invited to submit designs, and in the event nine designs were received, three of which were chosen for further development. These were a design by Edmund Blampied and two of William M Gardner's designs. At this stage the committee favoured Blampied's as first choice, followed by those of Gardner.

Technical difficulties about printing the preferred choice were expressed, so the committee selected as its first choice one of Gardner's designs, with his other as reserve. Essays were considered at the committee's last meeting in May, which confirmed its first and reserve choices, but with the recommendation of minor improvements in the graduation of tone, changes which could be made at the printing stage. The selection received Royal approval on 21 May. The Jersey stamp, for the basic 3d letter rate, was issued on 18 August.

Featured in the design were the Royal Mace of Jersey, which had been presented by King Charles II to Jersey in 1663 and which was borne before the Bailiff at sittings of the Royal Court and of the Assembly of the States of Jersey; and the Arms of Jersey, which dated from 1279 when King Edward I granted a Public Seal to Jersey. Also included was foliage portraying the fertility of the Island, which had resulted in the establishment of important agricultural and horticultural industries. The designer of the stamp, William M Gardner (1914-2000), was awarded a Student and Travelling Scholarship by the Royal College of Art and subsequently lived and worked on the Isle of Oxney in Kent. He was on the Royal Mint's official panel of artists, and designed and engraved seals, coinage and medallions for UK, Commonwealth and foreign use. He also wrote and illuminated rolls of honour and books of remembrance for clients including the Guards regiments and the House of Commons.

Early in 1964 it was agreed that an additional definitive stamp should be issued for the Jersey in the denomination 2½d for use on picture postcards. As in the case of Guernsey and the Isle of Man, the island authorities were anxious for the new stamp to be issued by June, when the tourist season began, so it was agreed that designs shortlisted in 1957-58 by the advisory committee should be considered, and essays of these submitted for The Queen's approval. Designs by

Jersey
- some unadopted designs.



William Gardner



Unknown



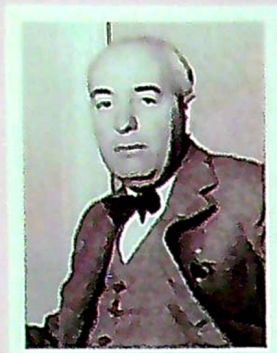
Unknown



Abram Games



Enid Marx



Edmund Blampied – designer of the Jersey 2½d stamp



J. H. Nicholson



J. H. Nicholson



Margaret Lockwood



Ada Humphreys

Blampied and Gardner were selected as first and reserve choices. The printing difficulties originally foreseen for Blampied's design were overcome and the essays received Royal approval on 7 May.

The new stamp, featuring the Royal Mace and Arms of Jersey, and foliage symbolising the Island's botanical fertility, was issued on 8 June. The designer, Edmund Blampied (1886-1966), was born a Jerseyman; he studied in France and Britain and exhibited oils, etchings and watercolours in both countries and elsewhere. As well as the 1964 2½d, he designed stamps for use under the German occupation of 1940-45 and the 1948 Channel Islands Liberation 2½d stamp.

Isle of Man



Represented on the advisory committee for the Isle of Man stamp were the Manx Museum and local art and other bodies, and at its meeting in January 1957 they agreed that the border of the new stamp should feature the Arms of the Kingdom of Man ('The Three Legs') in a shield and the interlaced pattern known as the 'Ring Chain', characteristic of early Manx Crosses. It was also agreed that 'Postage' should be included in the final design (but not necessarily in the preliminary sketches); but 'Revenue' should not as the stamp would not be used for fiscal purposes on the Island. The committee recommended the names of a number of Manx artists and invitations to these were sent out in mid-March.

A total of 17 designs were received and in May the committee selected three. These were two designs by John H Nicholson and one by Margaret E Lockwood, in this order of preference but with some suggested modifications. For Nicholson's designs these included repositioning the shield, changes to the chain border design and the inclusion of the word 'Postage'; and, for Lockwood's, the omission of the Norse ship which was a feature of the chain border at the top. After further consideration at meetings between December and May 1958 the committee confirmed its choice, albeit with a number of further improvements. Royal approval was granted on 21 May. The Isle of Man stamp for the basic 3d letter rate was issued on 18 August.

Featured in its design were the Legs of Man, armoured and spurred, on a shield – the Arms of the ancient Kingdom of Man. The Legs were in the form in which they appear on the Manx Sword of State, the 13th century weapon which is borne before the Lieutenant Governor at the annual open-air Tynwald Assembly. The Celtic ring chain pattern forming the border design was taken from decorative carvings on Manx runic Crosses, a characteristic pattern dating from the Norse period in the Island's history.

The designer of the stamp, John H Nicholson (1911-88) was an elected member of the British Water Colour Society, a Fellow of the Institute of British Decorators and Interior Designers and

Isle of Man 3d stamp used on first day of issue.



a Member of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours. He had designed and executed the shield bearing the Coats of Arms of the Island and its four towns for the Royal Yacht Britannia, and had also executed three illuminated addresses on parchment presented to King George V and to Queen Elizabeth II. He was on the staff of the Douglas Art School, teaching interior decorating and lettering.

At the end of 1963 it was agreed that an additional 2½d definitive stamp should be issued for use on picture postcards. As in the case of the Channel Islands, since the island authorities were anxious for the new stamp to be issued by the beginning of the 1964 tourist season, it was agreed that designs shortlisted in 1957-58 should be considered as an alternative to the usual competition.

After local discussion further designs by Nicholson and Lockwood were selected as first and reserve choices, respectively. The new stamp, the second to be designed by Nicholson and featuring the Legs of Man and the Celtic ring chain pattern characteristic of Manx runic Crosses, was issued on 8 June.



John H Nicholson
- designer of the two
Isle of Man stamp designs.

Stamp issue and later changes

A month after the British Empire and Commonwealth Games stamps, the new 3d stamps for Scotland, Wales & Monmouthshire, Northern Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man were issued on 18 August 1958 and the 6d and 1s3d stamps (Scotland, Wales & Monmouthshire and Northern Ireland only) on 29 September 1958. A supplement to the Post Office Circular was sent out on 6 August with details of the stamps and arrangements for their issue. After information about supplies and a warning against premature sale, a section on 'selling arrangements' made it clear that 'except in Monmouthshire the new stamps will replace the existing permanent series stamps issued in sheets in the areas concerned; the existing 3d, 6d and 1s3d stamps in sheets will be withdrawn. The existing 3d stamps will continue to be available in books and the 3d and 6d stamps in rolls as at present.

'At offices in Monmouthshire stamps with the Welsh & Monmouthshire symbols will be sold in normal course but if the existing designs are specifically asked for they should be supplied. All offices in Monmouthshire should hold a stock of the general series 3d, 6d and 1/3d for this purpose.

'All offices stocking the new stamps should sell them in lieu of the 3d and, where appropriate, the 6d and 1/3d values of the British Empire and Commonwealth Games stamps, unless such stamps are specially asked for; stocks of these stamps should be maintained to meet such demands [...] The new stamps will be valid throughout the United Kingdom for postage and revenue purposes in exactly the same way as the present stamps. Stocks of stamps of the superseded 3d design should be returned from all appropriate offices, except those in Monmouthshire, to the SupD [...]

'The new stamps will not be on sale over counters outside the respective areas. Anyone asking for stamps not available at the office at which the inquiry is made may be advised that the stamps are available by post from the Head Post Office Cardiff (Wales & Monmouthshire issues), Edinburgh (Scotland), Belfast (Northern Ireland), St Peter Port

DF 128 NEW POSTAGE STAMPS FOR WALES & MONMOUTHSHIRE, DF 128
SCOTLAND, NORTHERN IRELAND, GUERNSEY, JERSEY AND
THE ISLE OF MAN

1 Dates of issue The new postage stamps for Wales & Monmouthshire, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man, announced in the Post Office Circular of 2nd July, 1958, will be issued as shown below:—

The 3d. stamps for all areas—18th August, 1958.

The 6d. and 1s. 3d. stamps for Wales & Monmouthshire, Scotland and Northern Ireland—29th September, 1958.

2 Initial supplies of the 3d. values in sheets of 240 stamps are being despatched by SupD on or about 11th August in accordance with requisitions already received. Advice of despatch of the 6d. and 1s. 3d. values will be given in a later Post Office Circular.

3 Further Supplies On and from 18th August (for 3d. stamps) and 29th September (for 6d. and 1s. 3d. stamps) requisitions from offices in the areas concerned will be met by the appropriate new issue and, except in Monmouthshire, no special annotation or requisition, will be necessary. To meet the special selling arrangements in Monmouthshire (see paragraph 7 below) requisitions for the existing (3d., 6d. and 1s. 3d.) stamps in sheets should be marked "General Series", a separate requisition being used for them.

4 Premature sale ON NO ACCOUNT MAY THE NEW 3d. STAMPS BE SOLD OR USED FOR ANY PURPOSE BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF BUSINESS AT POST OFFICES ON MONDAY, 18th AUGUST OR THE NEW 6d. AND 1s. 3d. STAMPS BEFORE MONDAY, 29th SEPTEMBER. If any postal packet bearing any of the new stamps is observed in the post AT ANY OFFICE before the appropriate dates it should be withdrawn for a note to be made of the address, the office of origin, date of posting and any other details appearing on the outside of the packet which are likely to assist in discovering where or how there has been a premature leakage. The date stamp impression should then be obliterated and the packet sent on to its destination. An immediate report should be made to the PSD/HMB, Headquarters Building, St. Martin's-le-Grand, LONDON, E.C.1. Sub-Postmasters should forward any such report to their Head or District Postmaster. If any letter, packet or parcel bearing any of the new 3d. stamps is tendered for registration or acceptance before 18th August, it may be accepted but the poster must be informed that the item will not be forwarded until the new stamps are current and the item must not be date stamped until then, i.e. on 18th August. A similar procedure should be followed if any letter packet or parcel bearing any of the 6d. and 1s. 3d. stamps is tendered before 29th September.

5 Every parcel of the new stamps despatched by the SupD to Head Postmasters for the initial distribution will contain a sufficient quantity of form SD 2826 to enable a copy to be enclosed in every package of the new stamps sent from the Head Office to a Sub-Office (including a Branch Office). The notice is a warning against premature sale, exhibition, or use of the new stamps for any purpose before the authorised date.

6 Selling arrangements Except in Monmouthshire the new stamps will replace the existing permanent series stamps issued in sheets in the areas concerned; the existing 3d., 6d. and 1s. 3d. stamps in sheets will be withdrawn. The existing 3d. stamps will continue to be available in books of stamps and the 3d. and 6d. stamps in rolls of stamps as at present. The existing stamps will also of course continue to be issued in sheets to all offices not stocking the new stamps.

7 At offices in Monmouthshire, stamps with the Welsh & Monmouthshire symbols will be sold in normal course but if the existing designs are specifically asked for they should be supplied. All offices in Monmouthshire should hold a stock of the "general series" 3d., 6d. and 1s. 3d. stamps for this purpose.

8 All offices stocking the new stamps should sell them in lieu of the 3d. and, where appropriate, 6d. and 1s. 3d. values of the British Empire and Commonwealth Games stamps, unless such stamps are specially asked for; stocks of these stamps should be maintained to meet such demands. Offices not stocking the new stamps should continue to sell the British Empire and Commonwealth Games stamps in normal course as at present.

9 Validity of the new stamps The new stamps will be valid throughout the United Kingdom for postage and revenue purposes in exactly the same way as the present stamps.

10 Return of surplus stamps Stocks of stamps of the superseded 3d. design should be returned from all appropriate offices, except those in Monmouthshire, as soon as possible after 18th August to the SupD, 91-99, Pentonville Road, LONDON, N.1, or Russell Road, EDINBURGH. Stocks of superseded 6d. and 1s. 3d. stamps should be returned as soon as possible after 29th September to the SupD, Maylands Avenue, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, or Russell Road, EDINBURGH.

Post Office Circular giving details
of the first Regional stamps.



Decimal stamps, July 1971
— designs for Isle of Man,
Northern Ireland, Scotland,
and Wales.

First day cover of Welsh
6d and 1s3d stamps



(Guernsey), St Helier (Jersey) and Douglas (Isle of Man). If stamps for more than one area are wanted they may be obtained by post from the Divisional Controller, London Postal Region [...]

'The new stamps have a different watermark, showing only a crown; this watermark will be introduced into all postage stamps as existing stocks of paper are used up. Full size reproductions of the stamps, but in black and white, are shown to enable officers everywhere to familiarize themselves with the designs.'

The regional stamps continued in use until decimal stamps were introduced for Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Isle of Man on 7 July 1971. The remaining £sd stamps were withdrawn from philatelic sale on 25 November 1971 and invalidated from 1 March 1972. They had already ceased to be valid for Guernsey and Jersey from 1 October 1969 when the islands issued their own stamps. The Guernsey and Jersey regionals were withdrawn from sale locally on 30 September 1969 but remained on sale at British Philatelic Counters for a further year. The Isle of Man issued its own stamps from 5 July 1973 and on the previous day a special postmark was used at Douglas and Whitehaven (which in the 19th century was the Head Office controlling Douglas) to mark the last day of British Postal Services on the Island.

After the issue of the original regional stamps many changes took place – in paper, watermark, the addition of phosphor bands and new values necessitated by changes in postal rates (the issue of 2½d stamps for the three islands in 1964 has already been referred to). All the £sd regional stamps were printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons on continuous reels. The 3d, 4d and 5d values for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were printed in double panes, ie 480 stamps with 'dot' and 'no dot' panes of 240, whilst all the other values and the island issues were printed in single panes. The first stamps were printed on cream paper but, starting in February 1962 a whiter paper was used, when filtration of the water used in manufacture was introduced at the Ivybridge mills in Devon, where the GPO's stamp paper was produced. During July 1963 several months' supply of the Isle of Man 3d stamps were printed on chalk-surfaced paper left over from the printing of a special 1961 commemorative issue. These were considered to be better in quality and appearance to previous 3d stamp.

Only the multiple crowns watermark was used for regional stamps, but from 1967 a chalk-surfaced paper without watermark was used, as for the Machin definitives. The adhesive used was gum arabic until 1968, when PVA gum was introduced. Because of the installation of Automatic Letter Facing machines in Glasgow, Scotland became the first region where stamps were sold with phosphor bands. The 3d, 6d, and 1s3d stamps printed with phosphor bands went on sale in the Glasgow Head Postmaster's area on 29 January 1963. Phosphor bands were introduced for the other regions in May and June 1967. Further details of the types and format of phosphor bands may be found in the Gibbons *Specialised Catalogue* Volume 3: Queen Elizabeth II Pre-decimal Issues.

It was necessary to issue new values, using the existing designs, to keep pace with postal rate changes: 4d blue on 7 February 1966 for all six regions; 9d green and 1s6d grey-blue on 1 March 1967 for Scotland, Wales & Monmouthshire and Northern Ireland. The introduction of the first and second class rates on 4 September 1968



1964 2½d stamps for Guernsey, Jersey, and Isle of Man.



The design of the 3d was subsequently used for the 4d (three colours) and 5d values. Isle of Man stamps shown.



The designs of the 6d and 1s3d stamps were subsequently used for 9d and 1s6d values. Northern Ireland stamps shown, with first day postmark.

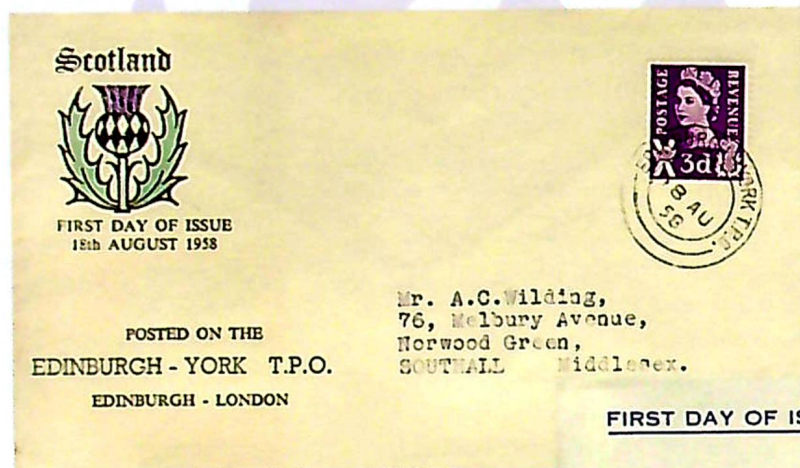
brought about the 4d olive-sepia and the 5d blue; the colour of the 4d was changed to vermilion on 26 February 1969, in line with the national definitives.

The regional stamps are remarkably free of major errors, only the Jersey 2½d is noted imperf on three sides. A number of stamps exist with phosphor omitted and, as is usual with photogravure printed stamps, a number of interesting constant varieties are found on particular stamps in the sheets - these are listed in the SG Specialised catalogue.

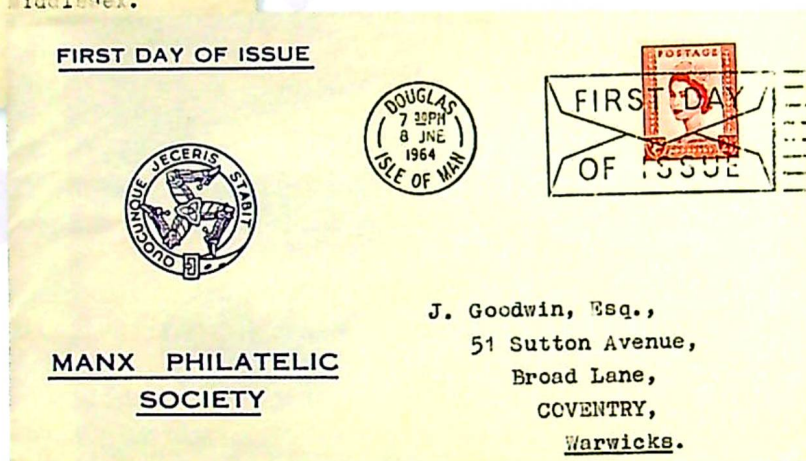
Amongst the most interesting variation is the Northern Ireland 4d blue phosphor with PVA gum rather than gum arabic. The PVA supply was printed ready for use when the colour of the stamp changed to sepia. The 4d blue stamp was never issued in Northern Ireland but a supply was sold at the London Philatelic Counter and at a stamp exhibition post office. Probably not more than 70 sheets were sold, about 16,800 stamps in total.

Postmarks, first day covers and other souvenirs

On 7 May 1963 the GPO made available special First Day of Issue machine postmarks at 30 offices, and these were available for the Guernsey, Jersey and Isle of Man 2½d stamps issued on 8 June 1964. For the earlier issues dealers and collectors had to make do with whatever operational handstamps or machine postmarks they could arrange, including an appropriate EDINBURGH-YORK TPO postmark on a 1958 Scottish 3d stamp. On 7 February 1966 a 4d blue stamp was issued for each region, and the First Day of Issue machine postmarks were available, but only at offices in the regions concerned, four in Scotland, seven in Wales, two in Northern Ireland, one each in the



Scottish 3d stamp used on first day cover with Edinburgh-York TPO postmark.



First day cover - Isle of Man 2½d stamp, 1964.

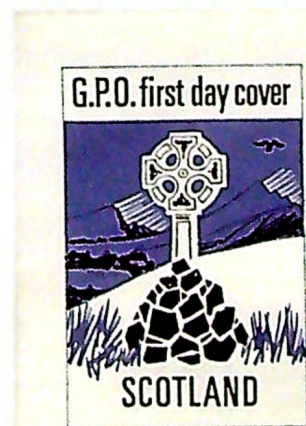
islands, and one at Gloucester, apparently in error.

The first official first day covers with 'First Day of Issue' handstamps were available for the issue on 1 March 1967 of the 9d and 1s6d values for Scotland, Wales & Monmouthshire and Northern Ireland; and on 4 September 1968 for the 4d and 5d stamps for all six regions. Pictorial first day of issue handstamps were introduced for the first decimal stamps on 7 July 1971. Postmark slogans were used to advertise the 1967 issues at four offices in Scotland, seven in Wales and two in Northern Ireland, and in 1968 at 18 offices in Scotland, 10 in Wales, eight in Northern Ireland and two in the Isle of Man. In June and early July 1971 slogans used at Scottish and Welsh offices announced the forthcoming issue of decimal stamps.

First day covers of the Scottish 3d stamp can be found bearing patriotic labels with the portrait of Robert Burns set on a background of the St Andrew's Cross, the denomination 'Twa Plack' (an old Scottish coin), the quotation 'Now's the day and now's the hour' (from Burns's poem 'Bruce to his Men at Bannockburn', which begins with the equally famous line 'Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled'), and the dates 1759-1959, commemorating the bicentenary of the great man's birth. Another label also shows Burns and the Scottish flag, with the well known lines from 'To a Mouse': 'The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men / Gang aft agley / An' lea'e us nought but grief and pain / For promis'd joy.' Although against postal regulations banning labels which might be confused with stamps from the front of letters, these labels were often postmarked, no doubt by sympathetic postal workers.

The 41st Philatelic Congress of Great Britain was held in Torquay from 9-12th June 1959, and to commemorate the Congress's Golden Jubilee Harrison & Sons produced a card bearing all six of the 3d regionals issued the previous year, which could be postmarked with the special Congress handstamp. For Scotex, held on 12-14 April 1962

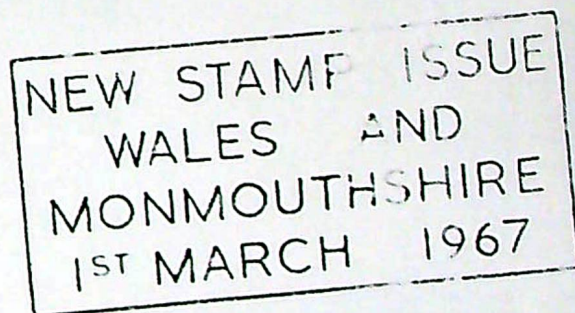
Slogan postmark advertising new regional stamps, 1967-68.



First day cover Scottish 9d and 1s6d stamps, 1967.



Martin Robinson,
The King's School,
Macclesfield.



Tom Spence, Esq.,
22, Elmbank Crescent,
Glasgow. C.2.

FDC of Scottish 3d with
Robert Burns patriotic labels.



Souvenir of 1959 Philatelic Congress with 3d regional stamps affixed and tied by Congress postmark.

Scottish regionals reproduced on Scotex exhibition souvenir sheet, 1962.

at the McClellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, Harrison & Son produced a miniature sheet containing black prints of the three Scottish regionals. These were printed in photogravure on gummed paper watermarked Harrison & Sons, London.

50th anniversary

To mark the 50th anniversary of the first regional stamps in 1958, a miniature sheet and prestige stamp book go on sale on 29 September 2008. The miniature sheet includes the original designs of the Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales stamps but now designated as 1st class stamps. These revalued 1958 stamps will also be included as one of the panes in the prestige book, the other three panes will comprise the respective 1958 stamps in a se-tenant arrangement with the current 1st class country stamps for each country.

An exhibition marking the 50th anniversary opened at the British Postal Museum & Archive in May and will run until April 2009.

Miniature sheet commemorating 50th anniversary of regional stamps, September 2008.



Acknowledgements

The author is grateful for permission to use material from articles written by Jean Farrugia in the *Philatelic Bulletin* from August 1978 to February 1979. He also acknowledges the help given by the relevant Stamp Histories written for the British Postal Museum & Archive by Andy Pendlebury and Giles Allen. Gibbons *Specialised Stamp Catalogue* Volume 3: Queen Elizabeth II Pre-decimal Issues is essential reading, as are *Collecting Slogan Postmarks*, *Slogan Postmarks of the Seventies*, *Special Event Postmarks of the United Kingdom* and *Twenty Years of First Day Postmarks*, all published by the British Postmark Society (Colin Peachey, 19 Moorland Road, Hemel Hempstead HP1 1NH). Thanks, too, for help and encouragement from Douglas Muir and John Holman. Unadopted stamp designs are reproduced by permission of BPMA; other illustrations are from the author's collection.

The Author

Martin Robinson, a retired school teacher, is well into his fifth decade as a stamp collector, and has been writing for the philatelic press for 40 years. His main interests are GB stamps and postal history, including machine dies & handstamps, instructional marks & priority services, TPO & station postmarks, paquebots, military camps, royal & parliamentary mail, philatelic exhibitions, Warwickshire postal history, postal stationery and greetings telegrams, as well as letter boxes, Post Office vehicles and postbus services.

He has written extensively on his collections, publishing *Old Letter Boxes* (Shire Publications, 1985) and many articles for a variety of magazines, most recently the *British Philatelic Bulletin*, for which he was twice nominated for a Rowland Hill award. He is a member of the British Postmark Society, Letter Box Study Group and Leamington & Warwick Philatelic Society, whose chairman he was in its 25th and 50th seasons.



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