

British Philatelic Bulletin

Number 12

August 1983

£4 Book of Stamps and Story of the Royal Mint



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Editorial

The summer months are traditionally a quiet time in the philatelic world, with many collectors enjoying the (hopefully) fine weather on their holidays. This year, however, in addition to the new £1.30 parcel stamp (3 August) and the British Gardens Commemoratives (24 August), two new Stamp Booklets are also being issued. These are the prestige £4 Stamp Book sponsored by the Royal Mint (14 September), and the new £1.45 Discount Stamp Book (10 August). Details of both books are included in this edition, and we hope that collectors take their copy with them on holiday to help them remember the first days of issue!

Looking to the future, the next edition of the Philatelic Bulletin heralds our twentieth birthday. We are planning a special issue to commemorate this event, and it will contain articles by a number of our old friends, as well as regular features. The centrepiece will be a special article on the Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh, also celebrating its twentieth anniversary this year, written by members of the Bureau Staff.

In the meantime, we would like to wish all our readers a pleasant summer, and look forward to the autumn and the start of the new 'philatelic season'.

CHARLES GOWEN

Telecom— Technology Showcase

A new picture postcard is now available, illustrating an original first world war postcard, depicting a trench 'Telephone Station in the British Lines on the Oise'. The postcard has a 16p 'British Army' commemorative stamp affixed, cancelled on 6 July 1983 (the issue date of the 'Army' stamps) with a special handstamp. The cost of the postcard is £1.30 which includes return postage and packing. Orders with remittances made payable to, 'British Telecommunications', should be sent to: Telecom-Technology' Showcase, Baynard House, 135 Queen Victoria Street, LONDON EC4V 4AT.

A Nation of Gardeners

Over 2000 gardens in the British Isles are open to the public at some time each year. Varied soil conditions and a climate without extremes have fostered a range of plants and trees from all over the world for gardeners and visitors to cultivate and admire. Above all, fashions in garden design have undergone such profound changes in Britain over the past four centuries that perhaps no other nation can offer such diversity of enjoyment for the garden lover.

With today's accent on conservation restoring many of the finest gardens to their original scheme, Britain's gardens, private and public, avoid the bland uniformity of a national style. Instead, as gardening became the national passion, its rich variety of individual styles reflected the country's long tradition of historical and social change. Yet movements in garden design and horticulture are never abrupt; the seeds of change of one century often flowering only in the next.

As the writer Horace Walpole noted in 1770, 'Gardening is one of the first arts to succeed to that of building houses'. In Britain the story of this art goes back to Roman times. Excavations begun in 1961 of the Roman villa at Fishbourne on the Sussex coast reveal outlines and beds of the type of formal garden introduced to Britain from Italy: the first wave in a tide of foreign influences that were to leave their mark on the British landscape.

With the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, the arts of gardening disappeared in the West for seven or eight hundred years; surviving only in cloisters where monks and nuns grew herbs and plants for culinary and medicinal purposes.

The pleasure garden returned to Britain in medieval times. An increase in wealth and leisure allowed noblemen and rich merchants to indulge in small enclosed gardens that created an image of paradise in an often hostile environment. Today little remains of these charming medieval gardens outside snatches of description and the glowing miniatures of medieval manuscripts. Their designers and builders have vanished alongside their creations.

From Tudor times onwards the picture becomes clearer. With several surviving gardens restored to their former glory, the enthusiast can travel Britain to find fine examples of each movement in garden design over the past four centuries.

The typical garden of French and Italian influence which emerged in the one hundred and fifty years following the Wars of the Roses was a square or rectangular enclosure, sited in front of the house to be viewed from the front windows or raised banks and terraces. Crossed by two main alleys, square or oblong beds filled the space between.

The range of flowering plants was still small and the predominant feature was the 'knot': a design traced out in low clipped hedges of box or herbs, filled with coloured gravels, sand or dwarf plants.



Pitmedden House

The Great Garden of PITMEDDEN HOUSE depicted on the 31p stamp provides a fine example of the tastes of seventeenth century gardeners and their delight in formal pattern and order. Near Oldmeldrum, west of Aberdeen, this rectangular garden, enclosed by three high terraces and a wall was originally laid out by Sir Alexander Seton, 1st Baronet of Pitmedden, in 1675. During the nineteenth century, Pitmedden became a kitchen garden and the formal knot layout was destroyed.

In 1952 Major James Keith gave Pitmedden to the National Trust for Scotland. In conjunction with the Royal Horticultural Society, the National Trust and the National Trust for Scotland have played a leading role in the care and conservation of Britain's finest gardens representing the country's gardening history.

No plans for Pitmedden's old knots remained and so in 1955 new designs were devised in the spirit of the original. Three of the scrolls and patterns in box and lavender were based on incorporating the Seton family arms.

Other seventeenth century features of Pitmedden are the raised terraces and twin pavilions which allow a bird's-eye view of the

overall pattern. Some garden historians find the authenticity marred by the herbaceous borders and the flowering annuals bedded out within the box edging. But this colourful display makes Pitmedden a favourite tourist attraction, introducing many summer visitors to the charms of a bygone age of garden design.



Towards the end of the seventeenth century the enclosed knot garden expanded into a parterre: a large flat terrace in which beds, plants and ornaments were arranged symetrically in a grandiose pattern of box edging, often including water features and sweeping alleys.

This formal, architectural approach to gardens, inspired by Louis XIV's gardener, Le Nôtre, and his plans for Versailles, was the model for all major British gardens in the early eighteenth century.

Then, as the concept of liberty penetrated all aspects of thought, the restraints of the formal garden were gradually abandoned for a 'natural', idealised landscape following the 'genius of the place'. Walls and hedges disappeared in favour of wide, open parkland with a softening of harsh lines and the accent on clumps of trees, lakes and streams.

A taste for romantic and literary allusions added temples, ruins and crumbling grottoes at focal points, while vegetable and fruit gardens were well concealed behind walls.

Blenheim Palace

The gardens and grounds of **BLenheim Palace** at Woodstock in Oxfordshire, featured on the 28p stamp, offer visitors the opportunity to compare the formal and natural aspects of eighteenth century gardening.

The construction of Blenheim by Sir John Vanbrugh was the gift of the nation to John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough after his decisive defeat of the French in 1704. A suitably palatial 'military' garden was laid out by Queen Anne's preferred gardener, Henry Wise (1653-1738). Inspired by the formal French style, terraces of parterres formed a rigid and impressive overall pattern.

Then in the 1760's Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716-1783) – thus called because when called in to advise he would always say that a site showed 'capabilities' – was asked to replace Wise's formal display with the new fashion of 'natural' landscape. The parterres were demolished, grass swept up to the palace walls and the entire vista

shaped and softened with the clumps of trees and natural features that leave the signature of a Brown landscape. Even Vanbrugh's canal north of the garden was flooded into a serpentine lake; half submerging the elaborate classical bridge to create one of Blenheim's most striking features.

Blenheim was not alone. Few large scale formal gardens in Britain survived the 'gardening revolution'. Then early this century the ninth Duke of Marlborough commissioned the French designer, Achille Duchêne to restore Wise's concept; recreating a formal garden with box trimmed parterres for the east front, an orangery on the north and in the 1920's, a spectacular water parterre for the west front.

This restored formality near the house now forms a harmonious contrast with Brown's parkland beyond.



By the late eighteenth century a more extensive interest in plants was creeping into garden design. The architectural styles of preceeding centuries had little place or sympathy for plants. But since the Middle Ages, a separate stream of gardeners had developed: the plantsmen whose interest lay in the cultivation and breeding of flowers, trees and shrubs for their own sake.

From the herbals of the sixteenth century a stream of garden books and manuals had stimulated the improvement and introduction of new varieties. Exotic imports from the New World and the Far East had been arriving with British explorers to be carefully tended by plant enthusiasts in smaller, specialist gardens and hothouses. In 1601 Britain's first Botanic Garden was founded in Oxford and soon commercial nurseries were springing up to cater for the demand for new plants. Although starting behind her European neighbours, Britain soon surpassed them with a solid core of plantsmen botanizing, improving and sending out collecting expeditions all over the world.

The foundation of the Royal Horticultural Society in 1804 gave a focus to the collecting impetus and the dissemination of new knowledge. The arrival of even more plants, together with the concern for scientific endeavour that marked the Victorian age, moved the garden away from a work of architecture to a showcase for plants and trees.

The influential Humphry Repton (1725-1818) brought back flower beds around the houses of

his parks and later, in more modest domestic gardens, J C Loudon (1783-1843) advocated the 'gardenesque' style as a setting for superbly grown individual plants.

But increasing trade and travel brought not only exotic seeds and samples in Wardian cases. Travellers also came back with a jumble of impressions of garden styles from all over the world. Now the smartest gardens had to have a 'theme' to provide the perfect setting for the new arrivals from India, South America, Africa and China.

Biddulph Grange

A masterpiece among the 'eclectic' gardens of the nineteenth century is BIDDULPH GRANGE in Staffordshire, created by James Bateman (1811-1897) and illustrated on the 20½p stamp. A keen horticulturalist from his earliest youth in Lancashire, Bateman became fascinated by orchids whilst studying at Oxford. With family wealth he was able to sponsor collectors in South America and to start some of the finest collections of tropical orchids in Britain. Later books on orchidaceous plants with superb lithographic plates by the leading artists of the day became landmarks of horticultural literature.

Shortly after his marriage in the 1840's Bateman acquired an old farmhouse on bleak Biddulph Moor, North Staffordshire. After completing his mansion, he embarked on one of the most remarkable gardens of Victorian times.

At this period it was fashionable for gardens to have an Indian, Roman, Grecian, Japanese or Swiss flavour. Bateman, nothing daunted, combined all his favourite foreign influences to create a landscape of unrivalled exoticism.

'China', isolated from the rest by huge mounds of rocks and trees is reached through a dark, rocky tunnel. Visitors emerge onto the balcony of a Chinese pavilion with a view across a perfect miniature lake with a laquered bridge ringed by exotic trees. Studded about the rest of the twenty acres are an Italian terrace, a lake garden, a Victorian 'stumpery' with strange root formations and an Egyptian scene complete with sphynxes. Even the Egyptian tomb emerges on the other side as a 'Cheshire' cottage garden.



A less appealing aspect of Victorian energy and endeavour came from the advances in greenhouse construction. The possibility of growing thou-

sands of exotic annuals over the winter fostered the craze for garish and regimented displays of summer bedding plants to provide a blaze of colour with no pretence at natural growth. A stiff Italianate type of garden grew up to cater for this new fashion which today is happily seen mainly in Britain's magnificent municipal and public parks.

Fortunately simple cottage and country gardens had survived to inspire a new generation of gardeners in the early twentieth century when even the most modest town and suburban houses were designed to have their own plot of garden.

William Robinson (1838-1935) attacked both the artificial bedding out approach and the academic plantmen by reminding designers that although botany was a science, gardening must remain an art. His theory that plants should be left to develop their own natural forms where they grow best, within an architectural framework, was brought to its highest art by Gertrude Jekyll (1843-1932) whose exquisite planting schemes inspired a new approach to gardening at home and abroad.

Sissinghurst Castle

One of the most enchanting gardens to influence the course of twentieth century planting is the six acres of SISSINGHURST CASTLE in Kent, depicted on the 16p stamp. Around the restored buildings of the Tudor and Elizabethan mansion, the poet and novelist, Victoria Sackville-West and her author and diplomat husband, Harold Nicholson, created one of the loveliest gardens in England where 'the strictest formality of design is fused with the maximum informality in planting'.

Starting in the 1930's and over a period of twenty years, husband and wife joined the strong reaction against the late nineteenth century formal carpet bedding and the 'gardenesque'. He planning, she planting, they created a series of 'outdoor rooms'. Edged by old walls and hedges of yew, rose and hornbeam, the garden forms a romantic succession of small enclosures in the sixteenth and seventeenth century manner, each with its own highly original colour scheme.

Of all the separate gardens perhaps the favourite is the White Garden: a symphony of white and pale grey tones. But the old rose garden, the nut grove, the lime walk, the orchard ablaze with daffodils in spring and dripping with climbing roses in summer and the orange and yellow glow of the cottage garden ensure that expert and amateur alike will find something to admire at all times of year.



This new sensitivity to form and colour has typified new gardens over the past few decades, which have seen the growth of gardening as the nation's most popular pastime. Few large scale private gardens have been created since the 1930's but smaller plots of land, labour saving tools and scientific advances have brought garden design and maintenance within the scope of the talented amateur, producing a greater display of individuality than ever before.

Professional British gardeners are creating and maintaining magnificent gardens the world over. From country mansion to town window box, Britain can be proud of its gardening tradition.

Whatever the shape of gardens to come, they will surely echo the words of one of Britain's most talented amateur gardeners, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the Royal Horticultural Society: 'If ever there were a nation of gardeners, I think we in this country can claim that distinction.'
SUZANNE WOLSTENHOLME

New High Value Definitive Stamp

Information concerning this new stamp appeared in the July Bulletin together with the Technical Details. The paper referred to should have read, 'coated, unwatermarked' and not phosphor coated. We are sorry about this.

David Gentleman: Darwin Commemorative Stamps

David Gentleman, the designer of the Darwin commemorative stamps, has asked the Post Office to make it clear that the adaptation of these designs by MBI Sumner Incorporated for embossing on gilt foil as 'golden replica' first day covers was made without his agreement or co-operation.

The Post Office is happy to clarify the position and express its regrets to Mr Gentleman for any misunderstanding to the contrary which may have arisen.

The Barry Robinson Column

When the Editor invited me to contribute a regular feature to the Philatelic Bulletin, my initial reaction was one of unrestrained enthusiasm. Here was an ideal opportunity, he said, to discuss many of the interesting aspects of stamp design and production that are rarely seen in philatelic literature; an opportunity to highlight the work of many people behind the scenes whose contribution, though vital to the success of every new issue, seldom rates a mention. My enthusiastic response, admittedly, was not unconnected with the fact that I saw it as an opportunity also to put the record straight where I felt it needed straightening!

The initial enthusiasm, however, soon evaporated in the face of cold reality. I asked myself what enlightenment can I really bring to the world of philately? What gems of information can I impart that philatelists and collectors do not know already? More to the point, are the aspects of stamp design and production that interest me of any interest to them? Was I about to suffer the fate of the unfortunate chap who found himself addressing a gathering of people only to realise too late that he was actually addressing the wrong meeting?

Not being a collector or philatelist myself, I decided to consult a respected philatelist of my acquaintance before stepping into what appeared to be a lion's den. Whilst this did not exactly allay all of my fears, it did help to clarify the approach I should take.

Primarily, I will be looking at various stages of stamp design and production. I hasten to add that I hope to avoid falling into the trap of viewing everything from some lofty tower of design par excellence. As far as possible, I hope to look at the whole subject from the viewpoints not only of Post Office stamp design but also of individual designers, artists and illustrators as well as of printers and the Stamp Advisory Committee. Along the way, I trust that there will be enough tasty morsels to whet the appetites of even the most hardened philatelist and collector.

This series is not intended to be the last word on stamp design and production. There are too many experts around to let that happen anyway!



My aim, in fact, will be to put flesh on some well-established bones – including a few of contention.

Initially, I will be looking at the subject of stamp themes. A great deal has been written on thematics but very little in the context of how and why, and by whom, themes are chosen – yet it is an area which provokes no shortage of comments and suggestions.

I will be examining the criteria upon which stamp themes are decided and explaining the reasons why the most obvious or the most popular themes have to be rejected from time to time. I will also be looking at the timescales involved in the Post Office's stamp programme.

Later, the subject of stamp design will come under close scrutiny. There are many popular misconceptions about stamp design. For example, it is often believed that when three artists or designers are commissioned for a particular stamp issue they all work to the same brief. The fact is, however, that they may find themselves working from different briefs on the same subject. Why?

Then there is the question of the choice of designer or artist. What criteria determines the choice? Do we rely heavily on experienced stamp designers and artists? What about people who have never worked in the medium before? How much licence is the designer or artist given in his or her interpretation of the brief?

This brings us on to the selection and approval stages. Who decides? Here we will be looking at the composition and workings of the Stamp Advisory Committee. Is its decision final? How is the Royal approval obtained?

After that, I shall be turning my attention to stamp print production. The most obvious controversy here lies in the argument about the respective merits of the gravure and litho processes – an argument that is likely to rage on for many years to come. What are the differences and, more to the point, when does one process

offer advantages over the other? And what about Intaglio – are we giving sufficient encouragement to the traditional craftsmanship of the stamp engraver?

Apart from the actual printing techniques involved, I shall also be looking at all the other vital stages in production – paper coating and gumming; the repro stage from final artwork; the production of gravure cylinders and litho plates; and the perforation techniques employed. What recent developments have been implemented at each of these stages? What differences will these changes make?

Stamps are the central core of a much larger range of collectors' items. First-day covers, presentation packs, postcards and airmail covers all have their devotees and I hope to throw some new light on each of these areas.

For many people, the first day of issue marks the birth of a new stamp. The truth, of course, is that by that date the stamp's history stretches back something like two years. Invariably, it is a history which is very interesting indeed since progress from the outline list of stamp themes right through to the first day of issue is seldom without its share of success and disappointment – not to mention the unexpected!

BARRY ROBINSON

DESIGN ADVISER TO THE POST OFFICE

Philatelic Sales Counters

New Counter in Armagh

A new philatelic sales counter opened on 6 June 1983 at the Head Post Office, 46-50 Upper English Street, ARMAGH, Co Armagh, BT61 7AA, replacing that at Newry, Co Down, which has closed.

The hours of business at the new counter are 9.00am-12.30pm and 1.30pm-5.00pm Monday to Friday. There will be no Saturday service.

Cardiff

On Monday 11 July 1983 Cardiff Philatelic Counter moved from its position in the Westgate Street office to The Hayes Branch Office, Oxford House, 2, 4 Hills Street, CARDIFF CF1 2ST. The hours of business are: 10.00am to 4.30pm Monday – Friday; 10.00am to 12.30pm Saturday.

Bradford

Readers will wish to know that the addresses

published in the June edition of the Philatelic Bulletin in connection with the Bradford Philatelic Sales Counter, were slightly inaccurate. The postcode for the Forster Square, Branch Office is BD1 4TW and not as printed. The address of the Head Post Office is Royal Mail House, Forster Court, BRADFORD, West Yorkshire, BD1 1AA. We apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused.

New Discount Stamp Book

From 10 August 1983, a new discount stamp book containing 10 x 16p definitive stamps, will be available from all post offices and philatelic sales counters. The charge will be £1.45.

The book is the first of an occasional series with covers illustrating Britain's Countryside, designed by Ronald Maddox. The first subject is Lyme Regis harbour, Dorset.

The stamps are printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd. — the stamps on the Chambon press, and the covers on the Libra book-making machine. The paper is phosphor coated, unwatermarked.

The pane of stamps will consist of two rows of five, one above the other, and the reverse of each will bear a 'D' printed in non-toxic blue ink.

The books will be withdrawn from sale on 20 September 1983 to be replaced by a non-discount book, in the 'Britain's Countryside' series, details of which will be announced later.

Philatelic Counter Handstamps

On 15 August 1983, Hereford, Gloucester, Plymouth and Northampton join the growing number of offices with special pictorial handstamps cancelling mail posted at the philatelic counters. These will be followed on 22 August by Newport (Gwent), Hull, Grimsby and Ballymena. These will bring the number of philatelic counters with their own postmarks to 49.

Items for reposting should bear 3p in addition to the normal postage and should be sent to the offices listed below. The outer cover must be endorsed 'special philatelic counter handstamp'

and should bear normal postage. Items will not be back-dated with a postmark prior to that which appears on the outer cover.

Hereford, The Head Postmaster, Head Post Office, Admin Building, Station Approach, HEREFORD HR1 1AA.

Gloucester, The Head Postmaster, Head Post Office, Philatelic Duty, GLOUCESTER GL1 1AA.

Plymouth, The Head Postmaster, Head Post Office, 29 Central Park Avenue, PLYMOUTH PL1 1AA.

Northampton, Head Post Office, Customer Services, Barrack Road, NORTHAMPTON NN1 1AA.

Newport, The Head Postmaster, Head Post Office, Mills Street, NEWPORT, Gwent NPT 1AA.

Hull, Head Post Office, Customer Services Division, 60 Lowgate, HULL HU1 1AA.

Grimsby, The Head Postmaster, Head Post Office, 64 Victoria Street, GRIMSBY, South Humberside DN31 1AA.

Ballymena, Head Post Office, Philatelic Duty, 51-63 Wellington Street, BALLYMENA, County Antrim BT43 6AA.



'SEVEN TOWERS' CREST



THE CATHEDRAL



THE DOCK TOWER



THE OLD HOUSE



HUMBER BRIDGE



TRANSPORTER BRIDGE



QUEEN ELEANOR'S CROSS



DRAKE'S MEMORIAL

De La Rue's Third Scheme

The application of the 1881 Customs and Inland Revenue Act heralded an important change in the postage and revenue stamps of Great Britain. With stamps being used for both fiscal and postal purposes for the first time (the 1d lilac appeared on 12 July 1881), official policy veered towards producing what was called 'the unified series'. A scheme was submitted by T Jeffrey (the Controller of the London Postal Service) which was printed by De La Rue & Co, who subsequently submitted four schemes of their own. This month's gem from the Reginald M Phillips Collection looks at De La Rue's third scheme, which was dated 17 November 1882.

All the schemes submitted are featured in the Phillips Collection and De La Rue's third scheme can be found in volume XXXVIII / 5. The hand-

printed essays covered the values from 1/2p right through to £5, the only exception being the 1d value which had already been issued. The essays were all inscribed 'Postage Revenue' or 'Postage & Revenue', the intention being that the former could only be used for Postage and the latter for either purpose. De La Rue also suggested with this scheme that the proposed set of stamps should only be printed in three colours, mauve, green and red. While none of the submitted schemes were in fact accepted outright by the 1884 Stamp Committee which was formed for production of a 'Unified Series', several of the suggestions incorporated were eventually adopted.

Visitors to the National Postal Museum can see the complete story leading up to the introduction of the Unified Series, in the Reginald M Phillips Collection.



Royal Mint Stamp Book



A prestige stamp book, price £4, will be issued by The Post Office on 14 September 1983, illustrating a fascinating account of the Royal Mint. The history of the Royal Mint can be traced back for more than 1000 years. Now the company is one of the largest and most modern mints in the world, and strikes coins for over 50 different countries.

Designed by Barrie West, the book which is sponsored by the Royal Mint, will contain four panes of definitive stamps made up as follows: Pane A 6 x 12½p; Pane B 6 x 12½p; Pane C 6 x 16p stamps, 2 x 3½p stamps and 1 x 3p stamp; Pane D 9 x 16p stamps.

Illustrated in colour, the book will be available from all Post Offices, and by post from the British Philatelic Bureau, EDINBURGH.

The accompanying line drawings illustrate the make-up of the four panes and the positions of

the phosphor bars. Panes C and D will be printed on phosphor coated paper.

Stamp Printing Details

Designer: Arnold Machin
Printer: Harrison & Sons
(High Wycombe) Ltd
Process: Photogravure
Paper: Coated, unwatermarked
Adhesive: PVA dextrin
Perforations: 14 x 15
Colours: 3p Dark Pink, 3½p Light
Reddish Brown, 12½p Light
Green, 16p Light Mushroom.

First Day Cover Services

The following services for first day covers will be provided.

Two special pictorial handstamps will be available: 'Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh' and 'Llantrisant Pontyclun Mid Glam'.



SERVICE A

This consists of the official Post Office cover, price 14p, addressed to the correct postal address of the destination required, and bearing all the stamps from Pane C (value £1.06). The cover will be cancelled 'Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh' or 'Llantrisant, Pontyclun, Mid Glam' as requested, and despatched for a charge of £1.50 (overseas customers £1.31). For deposit account customers the charge will be £1.45 (overseas customers £1.26).

SERVICE B

Customers' own pre-addressed covers bearing the correct postal address, will be given the stamps from Pane C, cancelled as requested, and despatched for a charge of £1.36 (overseas customers £1.19) per cover.

The usual first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes. Application forms available from the Philatelic Bureau, and at all Head Post Offices should be returned not later than 5 September 1983.

Souvenir Covers

Royal Mint Souvenir Covers – price 14p – will be available from philatelic sales counters from 15 September.

12½p	12½p	12½p	12½p
12½p	12½p	12½p	12½p
12½p	12½p	12½p	12½p

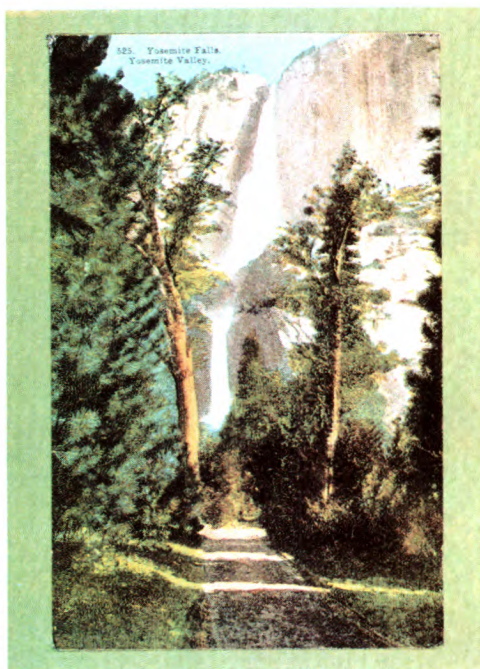
16p	16p	16p	16p	16p	16p
3½p	3p	3½p	16p	16p	16p
16p	16p	16p	16p	16p	16p

Postcard Stories

5. The Yosemite Valley

When the Queen and Prince Philip visited the West Coast of America in March this year they encountered some of California's worst weather – unprecedented rain-storms and tempests. After a gruelling week of official appearances and sudden changes in schedule, the royal couple spent a quiet week-end in the Yosemite National Park (emphasis on 'sem') in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The Yosemite Valley has been described as the most wonderful gorge of its kind in the world – more impressive even than the immense Grand Canyon in Arizona. It lies 140 miles east of San Francisco, is 6 miles long and from ½ to 1 mile broad, girt by perpendicular walls thousands of feet deep and traversed by the Merced River in a succession of waterfalls of great height, the whole presenting 'a scene of mingled grandeur and beauty'.

The Yosemite Valley was discovered in 1851, and a national park of 1,140 square miles was



established, including the Valley. The main cataracts in Yosemite Creek are the Ribbon Falls – at 1,612 feet the second highest falls in the world, and the Upper Yosemite Falls, 1,430 feet out of a total fall of 2,565 feet. Smaller, but equally spectacular, falls are the Bridal Veil (620 feet) and the Nevada (594 feet). (The highest falls in the world are reputedly the Angel Falls in Venezuela – 3,212 feet). My postcard, published by the Boysen Studio in the United States shows the principal falls in the Yosemite Valley.

MALCOLM JAMES

Book Reviews

Regus Guide to British Regional Cards and Covers

The Fourth edition of this catalogue lists all known post cards and covers issued by Post Office Regional Boards and Head Postmasters, also the National Postal Museum, up to January 1983. Up to date market values are given for Unused, First Day Used, Errors and varieties. Card types and trial printings are described in detail and are well illustrated. Postcode and promotional cards are included. The inclusion of a map of the UK Postal Regions on the inside front cover is an indication of the attention to detail and the extent of research that has been put into this fourth edition which makes it 'a must' for all collectors of Post Office cards and covers.

The postmark enthusiast is well catered for with information on F Day special handstamps and local cancellations. Post Office cachets are also listed where known on regional cards and covers.

The catalogue is available now through dealers or direct from the publisher: Regus Publications, Regus House, Longhurst Lane, Mellor, STOCKPORT SK6 5PY. Price £2.30 +25p post/packing.

Yorkshire Air Mails by Richard Beith

The author has been a member of the Yorkshire Postal History Society for a number of years. In recent years his own interests in the field of postal history have centered around the carriage of mail by air and it was thus an easy decision for him to assemble all the accumulated information on Yorkshire Air Mails in the files of the Society, into book form, adding to it as much extra information as he could glean from the aerophilatelic literature.

The book follows a straightforward chronological sequence so that details of the relatively few official Yorkshire air mails are sandwiched between information on the early Doncaster Aviation Meetings, notes on RAF Post Offices in Yorkshire, and details of recent commemorative postmarks. For the sake of completeness, the boundaries of Yorkshire have been defined in a rather elastic fashion – for example he has included recent unofficial flown covers to and from Humberside Airport.

Price £4 plus 33p for inland postage packing, the book can be obtained from, Mr Ronald Ward, Yorkshire Postal History Society, 48 Banner Cross Road, Eccleshall, SHEFFIELD, S11 9HR.

1983 Supplement for 1980 Check List of Postage Stamps about Music

This self-explanatory check list made its appearance at the time of LONDON 1980 in the form of an A5 loose-leaf binder of over 150 pages listing all the stamps and miniature sheets embracing a musical subject. In 1982 a Supplement of 48 pages updated this. The publisher has produced a further Supplement to this list, comprising pages of new issues, newly-found old issues, and amendments to the earlier entries. The references used in the listings are the 1983 versions of both Stanley Gibbons and Scotts' Catalogues and their monthly magazines.

With the proliferation of new stamps being produced, all music philatelists must keep their main reference catalogue up-to-date, so that all purchasers of the 1980 list will have to acquire this attractively bound packet of new leaves, whilst other collectors of music stamps can now get the updated combination. The former category will not need to be reminded that items are listed chronologically within alphabetically-arranged countries: additional lists are included of locals and vignettes, also of stamps including the CEPT emblem of four post-horns (which many may not find 'musical').

The price of the new 1983 Supplement is £2.00 post free in the UK or USA \$3.00 for Transatlantic purchasers (seamail). (Airmail extra at cost). These funds can be sent by cheque, sterling notes, dollar bills or by Giro Transfer. If required with the 1980 list, binder and the 1982 Supplement, please remit by cheque or banknote for £7 or \$15.00 (check) or \$12.00 (bills).

Orders should be sent to, A H R Grimsey, c/o BPF, 316 Vauxhall Bridge Road, LONDON SW1V 1AA.

Posting Boxes



No. 50. We have to thank Mr. R. C. Bray of Christchurch, Dorset, for sending this month's illustration of an excellent Queen Victorian fluted 'pillar' box with a vertical aperture. Situated in Mudeford, the local inhabitants refer to sending a letter as, 'posting in Queen Victoria'.

Forces Covers

Presentation of New Guidon to 16th/5th Lancers

On 15 July 1983 HM The Queen, as Colonel-in-Chief of The Queen's Royal Lancers, presented the Guidon to the 16th/5th Lancers. The event occurs every 25 years. To mark the occasion, a commemorative cover is now available illustrating a mounted 16th Lancer Troop of 1850, a Scorpion armoured vehicle, a 16th/5th Lancer Lieutenant in modern battledress, and the legend, 'Presentation of the Guidon to 16th/5th The

Queen's Royal Lancers by HM The Queen'. The covers are cancelled with a pictorial handstamp BFPS 15783 and the cost is £1 each. In addition, the cover as above, signed by the Commanding Officer, is available price £2, or, signed by the Colonel of the Regiment for £2.50. As an extra, the covers signed by both Officers may be obtained for £5.

Orders with remittances made payable to, 'PRI 16th/5th Lancers', should be sent to, PRI 16th/5th The Queen's Royal Lancers, Assaye Barracks, TIDWORTH, Hampshire, SP9 7AB accompanied by an 8" x 5" stamped addressed envelope.

2nd Infantry Division, York

HM The Queen visited the 2nd Infantry Division at York on 16 May. The Divisional HQ and its Signal Regiment recently returned to Britain after serving overseas for 41 years.

To mark the occasion a commemorative cover is now available depicting soldiers of the Peninsular and Crimean Wars, the Second World War, and a soldier in modern combat dress, against a background of York minster. A 15½p 'Commonwealth' stamp is affixed cancelled with a pictorial handstamp BFPS 1809. The cost is £1. A limited number of covers signed by the Divisional Commander, Major General Patrick Palmer, are available, price £2. Orders with remittances made payable to 'GOC's Fund', should be sent to: The Philatelic Officer, HQ 2nd Infantry Division, Imphal Barracks, YORK, YO1 4AU, accompanied by a 9" x 5" stamped addressed envelope.

Cardiff Searchlight Tattoo

The Tattoo will take place within the confines of Cardiff Castle between 4-13 August 1983. To commemorate the event a special cover will be available during the period of the Tattoo, illustrating the Castle, the Cardiff Coat of Arms, and the Regimental Mascot of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, together with handler in full dress uniform. The cover will bear a 20½p 'British Army' stamp cancelled with a pictorial handstamp BFPS 1802 and the cost is £1. A limited number of covers, signed by the Lord Mayor of Cardiff, and alternatively by the General Officer Commanding Wales, are £1.50 each.

Orders with remittances made payable to the 'Philatelic Bureau PCDD RE' should be sent to: The Philatelic Bureau, Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, LONDON NW7 1PX together with a 7" x 5" SAE bearing a 16p stamp.

Commemorative Covers

National Army Museum

A philatelic cover is currently available, produced in conjunction with the National Army Museum of Chelsea commemorating the 12th Anniversary of the Museum's move to London. It was established in 1960 by Royal Charter. The cover illustrating a number of soldiers from various regiments will have all five 'British Army' stamps affixed and cancelled with a special handstamp. The cost is £3.30 including postage and packing. In addition a limited number of covers have been signed by Major-General the Earl Cathcart CB DSO MC, Chairman of the Society of Friends of the National Army Museum, and are available at £4.30 each including postage and packing. Orders with remittances made payable to, 'Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd' should be sent to, 22-28 High Street, HYTHE, Kent, CT21 5AT.

Whittington CC

The Whittington Cricket Club, Shropshire, will commemorate 125 years on 20 August 1983 with the issue of a philatelic cover. It will illustrate the score card of the Club's first match. 300 covers will have the 17½p 'Cricket' stamp affixed, 75 of which will be signed by Bob Willis and Andy Lloyd. The remainder will be signed by Andy Lloyd only. In addition non-signed covers will be available bearing a single 26p 'British Army' (The Royal Green Jackets) stamp, or, a 16p definitive stamp. All covers will be cancelled with a pictorial handstamp depicting a batsman in action. The following charges will apply. Covers signed by Bob Willis and Andy Lloyd, £5; signed by Andy Lloyd only £3. The cover with 26p stamp, £1.60, or with a 16p definitive stamp £1.50. For collectors who require covers sent in an outer envelope an extra 25p should be added for postage and packing. Orders with remittances made payable to 'Whittington Cricket Club' should be sent to, Mr H I Davies, The Old Manor House, Whittington, OSWESTRY, Salop, SY11 4DG.

New Penlee Life-boat

The naming ceremony of the new Penlee life-boat, RNLB 'Mabel Alice' took place on 18 July

1983 and a Philatelic cover is now available depicting the 'Mabel Alice'. A 16p 'British Army' stamp is affixed cancelled with a pictorial handstamp. The price is £1.20. A limited number, signed by the Coxswain, are offered at £2.50 each. Other covers in the RNLB series are available for Aith (Shetland), Arbroath, Girvan, Whitstable, Southend, Lyme Regis, Flamborough, Blyth, Hoylake, Fowey and Selsey. Full details may be obtained concerning dates and 'special' covers for these events from, RNLB Philatelic Agents, 33 St George's Place, CANTERBURY, Kent, CT1 2XX on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope.

Donations from the sale of covers are credited to the local station commemorated.

Royal Corps of Naval Constructors Centenary

The RCNC is a civilian body of professional Naval architects, mechanical and electrical engineers who design and manage the upkeep of the warships of the Royal Navy. It commemorates its centenary this month with the issue of a special cover illustrating the 'Centenary Logo' and bearing a 29p 'Maritime Heritage' Stamp cancelled with a pictorial handstamp. The price is £2.50. Full details of this and other covers may be obtained from, Cotswold Covers, Liege House, MARSHFIELDS, Wilts SN14 8LZ.

The Royal Welsh Show

On 21 July 1983, The Royal Welsh Show held at Builth, Powys, was honoured by a visit from HM The Queen, the first occasion on which the reigning monarch has visited the show. The band of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh Fusiliers was also part of the show. To commemorate the event a philatelic cover is now available illustrating the Royal Welsh Show Crest, and bearing a full set of 'British Army' stamps cancelled with a specially designed handstamp. The cost is £2 including return postage and packing. Orders with remittances made payable to, 'Royal Welsh Agricultural Society Ltd', should be sent to, The Secretary, at Llanellwedd, BUILTH WELLS, Powys, LD2 3SY.

Capability Brown - Fenstanton Church, Fund

Capability Brown was Lord of the Manor of Fenstanton from 1768 until his death in 1783. He is buried in Fenstanton Church Yard.

To commemorate the bicentenary of his

death, a special cover will be available from 24 August depicting a profile of Brown against a landscape of undulating greensward and belts of woodland. All four 'British Gardens' stamps will be affixed, cancelled with a specially prepared handstamp. The cost is £3. In addition, the cover as above but bearing the 28p 'British Gardens' stamp only, the price is £1.25. Both charges include return postage and packing. Orders with remittances made payable to: 'Fenstanton Church Appeal', should be sent to: Mr Jack Dady, 5 Church Lane, Fenstanton, HUNTINGTON, Cambs PE18 9JW.

National Coin Week

A philatelic cover is currently available commemorating National Coin Week. It is die-stamped in two colours and depicts the National Coin Week logo. The cover is available with a choice of two handstamps: 'National Postal Museum - National Coin Week Exhibition 18 April 1983' and 'New £1 Coin Issue Llantrisant Pontyclun 21 April 1983'.

The covers can be ordered from David Fletcher Ltd, to whom remittances should be made payable, at 3 Station Square, Coventry CV1 2GT. The charge is £1 each plus 25p per order for postage and packing.

Biddulph Grange Hospital

1983 is the bicentenary of the death of Capability Brown. On 24 August the Post Office will issue a set of four stamps featuring famous gardens in Britain, each created in a different century. Biddulph Gardens will appear on the 20¹ 2p value. The other stamps will depict Pitmedden, Scotland 17th Century, Blenheim (Oxfordshire) 18th Century and Sissinghurst (Kent) 20th Century.

The Biddulph Grange Gardens were established by Mr James Bateman who came to live at The Grange in 1842. His aim was directed towards providing congenial conditions for a wide variety of tree and plant life from all over the world. The beauty of the Grange Gardens is enhanced by rocks, covered ways of stone, archways, cavern-like passages and cleverly hidden surprises in the form of secret gardens, such as 'Egypt' and 'China'.

Since 1928 Biddulph Grange has been an Orthopaedic Hospital; at one time much devoted to the care of children. The Lancashire Health Authority was responsible for the hospital and maintained the upkeep of the grounds, until 1948

when Staffordshire took over and continued the good work.

Biddulph Grange Hospital League of Friends are producing a commemorative cover to mark the inclusion of the Grange Gardens in the set of stamps. A member of the League, Anne Ferris, has designed the cover and the special hand stamp. Proceeds from the sale of these covers will be used by the League for their many and varied commitments to the patients.

Serviced Covers bearing the set of four stamps cost £1.60p each. Those bearing the 'Grange' stamp only, cost 85p each.

They can be obtained by sending remittance payable to 'Biddulph Grange Hospital League of Friends' and a 9" x 5" stamped addressed envelope to:- Mr W Hargreaves, 13 Coppice Close, Biddulph, STOKE ON TRENT ST8 9EU.

Capability Brown

To commemorate the bicentenary of Britain's best known landscape designer, the Landscape Institute have produced a commemorative cover to coincide with the issue of 'British Gardens' stamps on 24 September 1983. The cover depicting an etching of Brown, is cancelled with a pictorial handstamp at Kirkharle, Northumberland, Brown's birthplace.

Bearing the 'Blenheim Palace Gardens' (28p) stamp, the covers are £1.75 each, and with the full set of 'British Gardens' stamps, the cost is £3.25 each. In addition 100 covers will be signed by the present Duke of Northumberland, descendant of the 1st Duke, who commissioned Brown to improve the landscapes of Alnwick Castle and Syon House, Middlesex. These will cost £5 each.

Orders with remittances plus 25p extra for postage and packing, made payable to, 'North East Landscape Group', should be sent to, Bloxham Stamps, 61 Whitley Road, WHITLEY BAY, Tyne and Wear, NE26 2ED.

International Churchill Society

The 21st cover in the continuing series by the International Churchill Society will use the forthcoming Blenheim Palace 28p value of the 'British Gardens' commemorative stamps issue of 24 August. Postmarked London, this limited edition will mark the 75th Anniversary of Sir Winston and Lady Churchill's wedding, at the Church of St Margaret's Westminster on 12 September 1908. Covers will be mailed automatically to all ICS members from London on that day.

Founded in 1968, the International Churchill

Society strives to preserve the memory and legacy of Sir Winston and is recognised as a non-profit charitable organisation. ICS publishes a quarterly magazine *Finest Hour*, which is at present running an updated checklist of Churchill stamps. Other ICS services of interest to philatelists include free classified ads, a standing auction of Churchilliana for members only, discounts on a variety of Churchill philatelic items, and regular articles on the 1500-plus Churchill commemorative stamps and labels issued since 1945.

For further details and a membership application, please contact ICS at the following addresses: UK: 88A Franklin Avenue, Tadley, BASINGSTOKE, Hampshire RG26 6EU. USA: PO Box 385, Contoocook, New Hampshire 03229. Canada: 20 Burbank Drive, Willowdale, Ontario M2K 1M8.

Forthcoming Events

Clevedon Stamp Club

This is a new stamp club which meets every second Thursday in the month at 7.30pm in the Community Centre, Princes Road, Clevedon, Avon. On 20 August the club will hold a Stamp Fair and Exhibition at the Royal Pier Hotel, Clevedon. Further information concerning the Stamp Club and also the Fair can be obtained from: Mrs Sheila Wilkins, 18 Wood View, CLEVEDON, Avon, BS21 6TH enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for reply.

Surrey Federation Convention and Stamp Fair

For the first time, the Annual Convention and Fair of the Federation of Surrey Philatelic Societies will take place at Guildford. It will be held in Guildford's Civic Hall on Saturday 10 September from 10.30 to 4.30.

This year marks the 25th Anniversary of the Surrey Federation and also the 40th Anniversary of the Guildford and District Philatelic Society, whose members are organising the Convention. The event will be opened by the Society's most distinguished Honorary Life Member, Mr John Marriott, MVO FRPSL, RDP, Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection and President of the Royal Philatelic Society.

Other features of the Convention and Fair will include displays of the entries by Surrey Philatelic Societies for the Mason Cup; displays by Guildford members; and a Post Office Philatelic

Counter. Some 30 dealers will be present from all parts of the country, catering for the needs of the beginner and the expert in stamps, postal history and postcards.

Deal Philatelic Society

A stamp fair and philatelic display organised by the Deal Philatelic Society, will take place on Saturday 6 August 1983, at the Astor Theatre, Deal, from 10.30am-5.00pm. Admission is free.

British Philatelic Federation Congress 1983

The Bath Philatelic Society will host the 1983 Congress between Tuesday 4 October and Friday 7 October. The City of Bath has made civic buildings available: the Guildhall to be used for Congress business; the Pump Room for the Banquet and the Concert Room for the Evening Club/Dining Room. Full details are available from, Mr M R Hewlett BA FRPSL, The Hermitage, Village of Box, CORSHAM, Wiltshire, SN14 9DT.

Philatelic Bulletin

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The Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by:

British Post Office
Postal Headquarters
Philatelic Marketing Section
Room 321
22/25 Finsbury Square
LONDON
EC2A 1PH

to where correspondence on editorial matters should be sent.

Annual subscriptions (*Inland, Europe and overseas*)

Surface mail £3.50

Airmail £5.75

Subscriptions should be sent to:

British Philatelic Bureau
20 Brandon Street
EDINBURGH
EH3 5TT

Single copies obtainable by personal callers from philatelic counters price 30p.

Binders are available to hold 24 issues from the Philatelic Bureau price £3.75

Printed in Great Britain by
Cripplegate Printing Company Limited
for The Post Office
