

BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 37 Number 3

NOVEMBER 1999 • 85p

Artists' Tale Millennium set •
2000 years of Christianity



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover The Artists' Tale, the final set of Millennium stamps this year, celebrates the rich diversity of the arts in Britain. The stamps are previewed in this issue on page 80. Photograph by Geoff Dann.

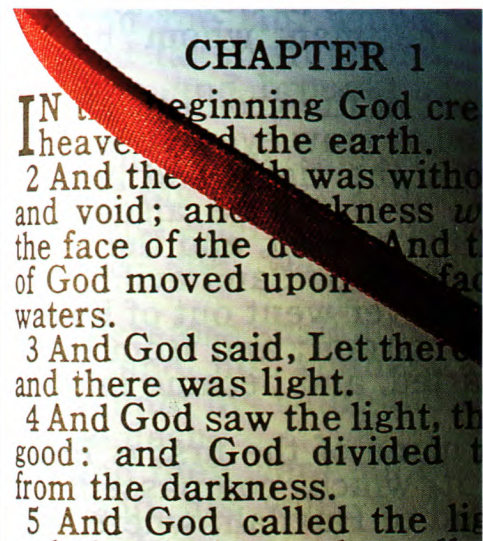
1 November	Withdrawal 1998 Christmas stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and stamp books (10 × 26p, 20 × 20p); 1998 Year Pack and Year Book
2 November	Issue Millennium Christians' Tale stamps, presentation pack and stamp books (10 × 26p, 20 × 19p)
30 November	Issue Millennium Artists' Tale stamp cards
7 December	Issue Millennium Artists' Tale stamps and presentation pack; 1999 Yearpack and Yearbook (standard and leather-bound versions)
7 December	Issue Millennium miniature sheet stamp cards (five)
14 December	Issue Millennium miniature sheet and presentation pack

Note The Millennium miniature sheet will also be available on a Royal Mail Millennium Moment Commemorative Document and Coin Cover. These will bear special 31 December and 1 January postmarks. These items must be ordered by 30 November from the British Philatelic Bureau or by using an order form available at post offices. Orders will be despatched during January.

Rowland Hill Awards Nominations are now being sought for the various Award categories. *Bulletin* readers are invited to submit nominations for the Post Office Excellence and Product Innovation Awards using nomination forms enclosed with this *Bulletin*.

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

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The *British Philatelic Bulletin* is published monthly by Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. • **Editor** JR Holman • **Price** 85p for single copies, from Post Office Counters philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £9.50 in UK and Europe, £13.50 rest of the world. Subscriptions should be sent to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7, available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address as above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK and Europe £10, rest of the world £21.75 • **Copyright** Unless copyright is attributed to a specific author, any article or feature may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Requests to reproduce any copyright articles should be addressed to the Editor, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119

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Autumn Thematica is at the Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 on 24-25 November. Seymour Street is a short walk from Marble Arch underground station.

Open 10.30-18.30 Wednesday, 10.00-17.00 Thursday. Admission free.

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

Friend/Patron subscriptions should be sent to Brian Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches SM5 4PQ.

Thematica Despite the heat and the rain, over 1600 collectors visited the Thematica exhibition in London on 26-27 June. They were impressed not only by the wealth of material in the Dealers Hall but by the quality and interest of the exhibits. Richard Saundry's 'Royal Achievements' was the winner of the John Fosbery No Rules Trophy, with Iain Stevenson's 'Food and Wines from France' in second place. The British Thematic Association Cup was won by Lesley Marley's 'A Whale's Tale'. Appropriately the trophy was presented to her by Margaret Morris, newly appointed President of the Association, herself a thematic collector of Whales. Amongst the visitors to the exhibition were stamp designers Clive Abbott and Jeffery Matthews, judges of the children's Millennium stamp design competition. The winning entries will be on display at Autumn Thematica 99.

Collectors are invited to become a Friend or Patron of Thematica for a donation of at least £20 or £100 respectively, and help a dedicated band of enthusiastic collectors by putting a little back into the hobby •



1930s telephone cable lorry Stanley Gibbons Collectables are producing an exclusive 1930s GPO cable and telephone pole lorry. It features hand-crafted drums and poles and the vehicle is a converted Lledo model. Issued in a limited edition of 250 only (with numbered certificate), price £15.95 postpaid from Stanley Gibbons Strand shop or by mail order from Stanley Gibbons Ltd, Parkside, Ringwood BH24 3SH. UK mail order line 0800 611622 •

For copies contact Pauline Bennion, Stanley Gibbons Ltd, 399 Strand, London WC2R 0LX. Telephone 0171 836 8444.

Stanley Gibbons have recently published a new GB stamp price list covering issues from Queen Victoria to the present, including Royal Mail collector and souvenir packs, yearbooks, prestige books, Machin FDCs, etc. The special offer prices in the list are valid until 30 November. Similar lists are available for Australia, British Europe, Channel Islands & Isle of Man, Falklands, and New Zealand; also thematic lists for Aircraft, Birds, Marine Life, and Railways, and a very useful Philatelic Literature list •

For details of the Society contact Andrew Lajer, Old Post Office, Hurst, Reading RG10 0TR.

GB Journal The July/August issue of the journal of the Great Britain Philatelic Society includes features on the overprinted 1/2d stamps of the Office of Works (by Peter Mollett), George V photogravure sizes (W de L M Messenger & H J Russell), Maltese Cross variety (P E Robinson), Recent Fake Overprints (Ian Harvey), and a survey of the 480-Crown Mill sheet paper types 1880-1913 (Terry Pusterla), plus book reviews and advertisements from specialist GB dealers and auctioneers. It is essential reading for specialist collectors of pre-Elizabeth II British stamps •

Edward VII posting box at British Library Visitors to the Post Impressions exhibition at the British Library can post mail in an Edward VII box to receive the special exhibition postmark. The box was provided by Andrew Fane, Royal Mail Collection Planning Manager, and was located prior to the opening of the exhibition on 3 August. The positioning of the box involved the use of a track stair climber (as shown in the photograph) which enabled the box to be lifted and rotated on rubber mounted tracks as it was located in the British Library foyer. This and additional spreader boards ensured the protection of both the box and the Library's floor as the box weighs nearly half a tonne. The box will remain until the exhibition closes on 18 January. Mail posted receives a special postmark depicting the British Library clock tower. Readers unable to visit the exhibition can send covers, with 1st class stamp, to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB, requesting handstamp number 6189. Covers must be submitted not later than 18 January.

Details of the exhibition were given here by Philip Parker in August, September and October. It is open daily from 09.30 (11.00 Sunday) until 18 January but closed for Christmas/New Year, 25 December-4 January •



John Whittaker

Cavendish Auctions In the GB Postal History section of their 24 July auction, a Birmingham '75' roller cancel on a cover with six 1d reds reached £345 and a Hollymount Maltese Cross cancelling a 1d red on a part 1844 cover realised the same. A redirected cover with 1d blacks tied by red and black crosses made £1035 and a 1652 letter signed by two of Charles 1's trial judges went for £460. An 8 May 2d Mulready sold for £920. Yorkshire postal history was keenly sought, a collection of Penny Post covers (ex Willcocks) making £301 against an estimate of £150. The next GB auction will be held on 4 December, along with world-wide collections and Australasian and European material •

Details of next GB auction
Cavendish Philatelic Auctions
Ltd, 153-157 London Road,
Derby DE1 2SY. Telephone
01332 250970.

Christmas/New Year post arrangements There will be no deliveries or collections of mail on 25-27 December, and no deliveries and only limited collections on 28 December. Normal arrangements will apply on 29-30 December, with no deliveries or collections on 31 December-2 January. There will be no deliveries and limited (Sunday-style) collections on 3 January. Full normal service resumes on 4 January.

Special arrangements are being laid-on for philatelic postmarking of mail with 31 December and 1 January dates. These arrangements were published as a supplement to the August *Bulletin* and will be repeated here next month.

Any remaining stocks of Christmas (Christians' Tale) stamps, stamp books and aerogrammes will be withdrawn from sale at post offices on 24 December; they will remain on philatelic sale until further notice •

Royal Mail news Airpacks • Album cases • Varieties in Millennium stamps



Airpacks are available at postshops and main post offices, but not from the British Philatelic Bureau or philatelic outlets. See also *Bulletin* March 1991 p148 and January 1997, p134.

Orders and enquires

Complete Collections Ltd, 8 Teasel Way, West Moors, Farn-down BH22 0PQ. Telephone 01202 872315. Fax 01202 894804.

Special offer Bulletin readers can order two or more slipcases at a special price of £8 each postpaid UK only. Orders must be received by 30 November.

Royal Mail album slipcases Luxury padded PVC slipcases are available for the range of Royal Mail philatelic albums: First Day Cover (burgundy colour), Presentation Pack (brown), Postcard (tan), Stamp Album (red), and Universal (dark brown). Each slipcase is covered and lined in matching PVC to the relevant album, with thumbcut on open edge. They provide all-round protection for your album and stamps. Price £9 each postpaid UK; enquire for overseas prices.

The relevant Royal Mail albums are available from the British Philatelic Bureau and selected Post Office Counters outlets; slipcases from Complete Collections Ltd (opposite) •

Millennium stamp varieties Specialist collectors will notice certain differences between the 64p Scientists' Tale stamp from sheets, printed by Ques-ta, and those in the Solar Eclipse miniature sheet by De La Rue. The sheet stamp is perf 13.5 x 14, that in the miniature sheet is 14.5. The PVA gum on the miniature sheet stamp has a bluish tinge, not present on the Ques-ta stamp. The distance between the phosphor bands is greater on the miniature sheet stamp. The bright magenta colour is more prominent on the miniature sheet stamp on which the rings of Saturn have a pinkish hue compared to 'grey' on the Ques-ta sheet stamp.

There are also subtle differences between the 26p Farmers' Tale stamp in sheets (De La Rue) and the Millennium book (Walsall). The distance between the bands is wider on the Walsall stamp and the bands have clearer edges. The lettering is slightly thicker on the Walsall stamp and the ploughman's left arm is more complete than on the DLR printing. The background colour is slightly darker on the DLR stamp; there is more black in the furrows at the bottom of the Walsall stamp. The gum of the DLR stamp has a blue tinge, whereas the Walsall gum appears white in comparison •

Post Office Heritage Collections A proof of the 1d Mulready on India paper

THE COLLECTIONS of Post Office Archives and the former National Postal Museum (now closed) include much of interest to postal historians as well as philatelists. This month we feature a proof of the 1d Mulready envelope on India paper. This was printed from the original brass block with the value added from a second block and the panel containing the word POSTAGE from a third. From these brass blocks the printing stereotypes were made. The Mulready envelopes and letter sheets were issued at the same time as the Penny Black.

PUBLICATIONS Copies of the National Postal Museum's *Review* of 1996 and 1997-98, also the first four of its *Special Stamp History* books (1929 Postal Union Congress, 1935 George V Silver Jubilee and 1936 proposed Memorial stamps, 1936 proposed Edward VIII Coronation, and 1953 Coronation) are all available from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT. The *Reviews* cost £5 each, the *Special Stamp History* books £7.50 each •

Association of Friends The Friends of the NPM continues with events and visits, also publication of the *Cross Post* journal and postcards featuring items from the PO Heritage Collections. The Association will hold its annual general meeting at the Phoenix Suite, Mount Pleasant, London EC1 on 27 November. Souvenir covers are being produced.

The Association offers its usual gift package of a special two-year subscription – an ideal Christmas (or birthday) gift for any philatelist or postal historian. The annual subscription for UK members normally costs £15, overseas £20. For the festive season only, the two-year subscription is just £25 UK, £35 overseas – a saving of £5. On joining, a new Friend will receive material produced since 1 April 1999, including copies of *Cross Post* magazine. New material issued up to 31 March 2001 will be despatched as it becomes available. To ensure delivery by Christmas, please order by 30 November. Please state clearly the name and address of the person you want the subscription for.

All enquiries about membership, souvenir covers, postcards and gift subscriptions to: Ray Pottle, PO Box 40, Uckfield, TN22 2SP. Telephone 01825 766546. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope or international reply coupon with written enquiries •



This proof of the 1d Mulready envelope is in the Reginald M Phillips Collection of Victorian stamps, which can be seen by prior appointment at Post Office Heritage Collections, Freeling House, Mount Pleasant (Phoenix Place entrance), London EC1A 1BB.

Enquiries 0171 239 2570

Britain's remotest post office Souvenir for Glasgow 2000



Alexander Ferguson took this photograph outside St Kilda's post office on 23 September 1919.

John Mackenzie is on the left, with three of the island's leading figures: Malcolm (Calum Dall) Macdonald, Finlay Gilles, then aged 64 and the oldest inhabitant, and Neil Ferguson Senior, brother of Alexander. Neil was precentor of the Kirk, *maor* (ground officer or deputy to the Factor), storekeeper and, from 1906 to 1930, the island's post master. Seated on the step is Neil Ferguson Junior, born in 1898. Flanking him are little Neil Mackinnon and his sister Rachel.

TO RAISE FUNDS for Glasgow 2000, the national stamp exhibition in Glasgow in November 2000, a famous old postcard has been reprinted.

The original sepia postcard was published by Alexander Gillies Ferguson, a native of St Kilda, who migrated from the loneliest of the British Isles at the turn of the century and eventually became established as a merchant in Glasgow where he specialised in handwoven tweeds from the Hebrides. He had his own yacht, appropriately named the *St Kilda*, and every autumn made a voyage to 'the edge of the world' to take delivery of the islanders' cloth and other products. He made his first visit after the First World War in September 1919, being accompanied by John T Mackenzie, factor for the estates of the Macleod of MacLeod at Dunvegan (including St Kilda).

The St Kilda sub post office, established in 1900, was originally located in a ground-floor room in the Factor's House, but was moved to the shack next to the Ferguson house in 1913 when accommodation was required for the staff of the wireless station supplied by the *Daily Mirror*, following an appeal by that newspaper to provide Britain's remotest island with a regular means of communication.

The original postcard was never used at St Kilda in the proper postal sense, for the island was evacuated in August 1930, two years before

Alexander Ferguson published it as part of a series which he supplied to Neil Gillies who returned to the 'desert isle' each summer to greet the tourists off the cruise ships *Hebrides* and *Dun-ara Castle*. The Post Office refused to reopen the sub post office in the summer season, so Ferguson had a private rubber datestamp made and this was used as a cachet at the side of the postage stamp which would be cancelled at the first port of call of the steamer on its return voyage: Tarbert (Harris), Lochmaddy, Lochboisdale, Uig, Dunvegan, Mallaig or Oban, depending on circumstances. Later McCallum, Orme & Company produced their own tourist postcards and each of the ships applied a distinctive rectangular rubber datestamp.

The sale of both the Ferguson and McCallum, Orme postcards ceased abruptly when sailings were terminated by the outbreak of the Second World War and never resumed. Today, even mint specimens of the original cards are extremely elusive, while used examples, with the appropriate cachet and postmark applied on disembarkation, are of the greatest rarity. JAMES MACKAY ●

Glasgow 2000 reprints 50p each, or five for £2, + 40p inland postage and packing. Available from Jeffrey Stone, 20 Springfield Road, Aberdeen AB15 7RR. Telephone 01224 315210. It is hoped to mail some cards from St Kilda, with appropriate cachet and postmark. Further details from Jeffrey Stone.

2000 stamps Philip Parker presents a sneak preview of the second year of Millennium stamps

TECHNICALLY speaking, the Third Millennium does not begin until 1 January 2001. Yet the symbolism of our calendar reaching the year 2000 has spurred an explosion of national activity. The Millennium Commission, for instance, is investing £2 billion of lottery money in hundreds of projects at thousands of sites. Some £100 million is also being distributed to local authorities, parishes and community groups to support year-long festivals. Add to this the 'Dome' at Greenwich, and no other country in the world is marking the year as extensively as the UK.

Companies and individuals alike are also celebrating. Leading The Post Office's activities are the 'Millennium Stamps' from January 1999 to January 2001 inclusive. The 1999 programme is nearly complete: 48 images inspired by the past 1000 years, each executed by a leading image-maker. The second leg is about to begin – another 'super set' of 48 stamps in monthly issues, each retaining the same dimensions and off-square format of their 1999 brethren, and with The Queen's head, value and two-lined caption in the same position.

The difference, however, is in the content of the year and the concepts behind it. Whereas the 1999 issues were chronological (travelling through time), the new programme will be geographical in spirit (travelling around the UK). It takes as its inspiration 48 of the many projects which are coming to fruition over this millennium period.

The selection of the projects has been made to convey the diversity of activity. Most have received funding from the Millennium Commission, and range from the regeneration and planting of huge forests to the creation of village greens, from multi-million pound centres providing a 'hands-on' experience of technology, to the floodlighting of parish churches.

The 2000 stamps had to be very different from the 1999 programme. The challenge was to make a series which recognisably belongs to the Millennium family, but is suitably different, provid-

ing something of a 'snapshot' of the UK as it marks the Millennium. Rather than exclusively featuring the buildings, monuments and objects which are rising up, the intention is to convey the visions of the different projects – and this is to be done through photography. All 48 of the year 2000 stamps will be photographic in design, lending a 'documentary' feel to the subject matters and visually tying them together.

The language used to name the monthly issues has been considered to create a different feel from the Tales of 1999. For example, the first four issues of 2000 are titled 'Above and Beyond', 'Fire and Light', 'Water and Coast' and 'Life and Earth'. These rather elemental pairings of words refer to the features which join the diverse projects together. In 'Above and Beyond' (January), the four projects share an 'aerial' theme, in this case owl conservation in Cumbria, a national space centre in the midlands, an aerial walkway erected above a Derbyshire gorge and a public centre for viewing Scottish seabirds (more details in next month's *Bulletin*).

A full geographic spread has been sought in the selection of millennial projects, so that all countries and regions are represented. This is expressed through each month's issue forming a thematic journey. So in 'Above and Beyond', the journey commences in Cumbria, heads south to Leicester, north to New Mills and ends by crossing the border to North Berwick. By the end of 2000 there will be 12 such thematic journeys criss-crossing the UK. One source of inspiration for this journey concept is the National Cycle Network, the first project to receive Millennium Commission funding, which is a UK-wide network of thousands of miles of tracks for cyclists as well as walkers and the wheelchair-bound. Most of the principal millennium projects are connected by this network. It is hoped that the year 2000 'philatelic travelogue' will provide another way of connecting all parts of the UK together ●

China 99 A Beijing exhibition report from Franceska Rapkin

CHINA 99, the last major international exhibition of the century, has been relegated to the history books. The philatelic year that started on a high note with Auspex in Melbourne ended on another high note in Beijing.

This is the first time that a full world international exhibition has been held in China, and the Chinese can be justly proud of their achievement. The organising Committee proved that it is possible to learn by observing others and adopting the positive aspects of earliest exhibitions.

The exhibition was held in five halls of the Beijing International Exhibition Centre. The three halls where the exhibits were housed, were inter-linked by covered corridors, as were the dealers and postal administration halls opposite. The Chinese are still in the early stages of a philatelic future (but learning rapidly), and were perhaps less reluctant to move between the dealers and exhibition halls. The area around the national exhibits, thematic class and experimental classes were always crowded, the others less so. A nice touch on behalf of the organising committee was to supply a brief resumé of the contents of the exhibits in Chinese. This was attached to the first frame of each exhibit. Over the ten days of the exhibition, these introductory sheets were extensively used by the locals. It is something that organisers of future exhibitions might like to adopt, especially in non-FIP language countries.

For the first time, I was the British commissioner for a major world exhibition, with 27 exhibits. Only the US carried more, and they had two commissioners to carry out the task. Apart from the sheer amount of material that I carried, the receipt of the exhibits went extremely smoothly. Every exhibit was checked against the inventory and was immediately taken away to be mounted. Things went less smoothly for the dismantling – the one major hiccup throughout the show.

Before leaving for Beijing, tales of over one million pre-sold tickets had filtered through, and one had visions of fighting one's way into the halls each day. In reality, these figures were exaggerated. Just under half a million was a more

realistic figure. The queues on the opening day were considerable, and at the exhibit of HM Queen Elizabeth II in the Court of Honour, they remained so throughout the show, but the passage through the halls was never a real problem.

The British contingent did well, gathering three Large Gold medals, four Gold medals, nine Large Vermeils and seven Vermeil medals. Other than in Literature, no British exhibitor received less than Large Silver. These days so much emphasis is laid on the highest awards that it is frequently forgotten that it is necessary to gain 75-80 points for a Large Silver medal, and that too is no mean achievement. This was possibly the first time that there were two British contenders for the Grand Prix international, Barrie Jay for his exhibit on 'London's Postal History' and Trevor Davis with 'Australian States Overseas Mails Prior to Joining the UPU', both of which were in the Postal History Class. The award eventually went to Hiroyuki Kanai of Japan for his Traditional exhibit of Japan. There still seems to be a reluctance to give the major award to anything other than a traditional exhibit.

The displays on British subjects by British exhibitors covered a wide range: GB Prestamped Foreign Rate Postcards (Dr Alan Huggins); GB The Downey Head 1910-13 (Michael Sefi); Glasgow, Some Aspects of Postal History (Miller McGrath); Cross Channel Mails in War and Peace, 1793-1843 (Geoffrey Oxley); and the Maltese Cross (Trevor Pickering). Stanley Gibbons Ltd received a Vermeil medal for the Part 1 (GB & Commonwealth) catalogue and a Large Vermeil for the 8th edition of Vol 4 of the GB Specialised catalogue. John Duggan received a silver for his book *England Flights of the Graf Zeppelin*.

China 99 proved that it is possible to hold a very large full world exhibition without any gimmicks or side shows, and that in the Far East, philately itself is sufficient to bring in the crowds. Whether we have the means to recapture our enthusiasm for stamp collecting or whether its future lies in the Orient remains to be seen ●

Christmas stamps

Shown here are some of this year's issues from around the world

ROYAL MAIL'S CONTRIBUTION comprises the Christians' Tale set, in the Millennium series, issued on 2 November. Pages from Dorothy Martin's Christmas stamp collection will be published in next month's *Bulletin* •



Christian millennia The Christians' Tale set

Although the United Kingdom is a multicultural society, it is a predominantly Christian country; and as the Millennium marks the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ, it is appropriate that one of the sets in the Millennium series should be devoted to Christianity itself.

THE BIRTH of Our Lord, which has given rise to the celebration of Christmas all over the world, is the subject of the 64p stamp in the Christians' Tale set, which goes on sale on 2 November. This was designed by Craigie Aitchison, a 73 year old Scottish artist who has a long and distinguished

career, with numerous one-man exhibitions over the past 40 years. Aitchison is only the latest in a long line of artists and craftsmen who have enjoyed the patronage of the Church over the past 2000 years.

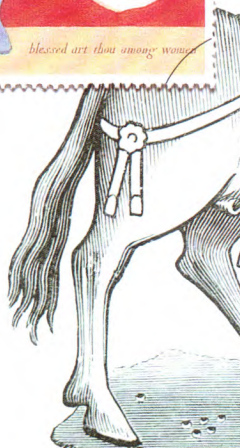
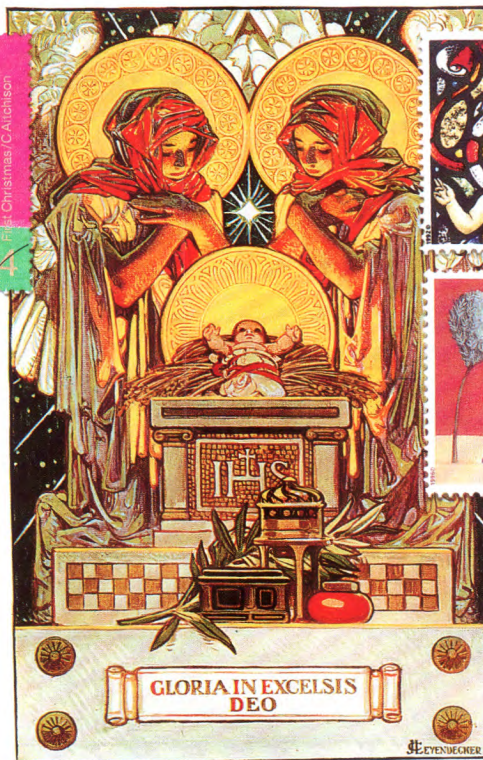
Even before Constantine the Great made Christianity the only religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century, skilled artisans were creating frescoes, mosaics and bas reliefs that told the story of Christ, his birth, his mission and his final passion. The Nativity theme has been reworked and retold countless times down the centuries in every conceivable artistic medium. Some of this rich diversity of artistic treatment has been featured on the range of Christmas stamps issued by Royal Mail over the past three decades, from Old Masters to children's drawings, from medieval illuminated manuscripts to contemporary collages.



First Christmas, by Craigie Aitchison, employs elemental iconography of Christ's birth: the flash of light and the Star of Bethlehem symbolising the heralding of the good news. Aitchison was appointed CBE in 1999.

Above right, the Nativity on stamps of 1992 and 1996.

Centre right, a 14th-century drawing of Geoffrey Chaucer. Pilgrims of medieval England were vividly described in his collection of narrative poems, *The Canterbury Tales*.



spans 2000 years, as James Mackay reports

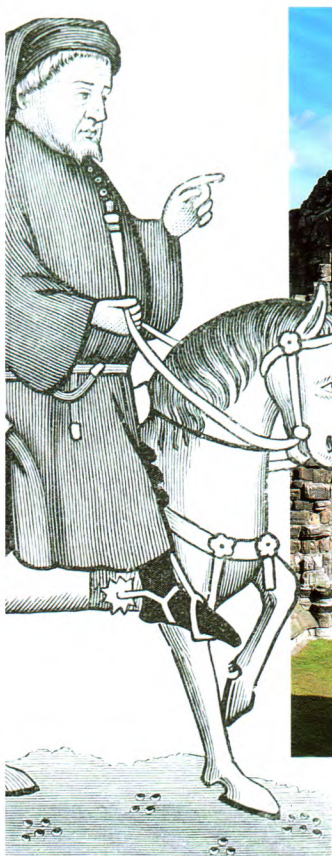
Medieval survival Within the broad sweep of Christianity there are many divisions. Until the 6th century the Holy Catholic Church, one and indivisible, was supreme in matters spiritual and extremely influential in matters temporal as well. In form, belief and practice, there was a uniformity about Christianity; the prayers, ritual and sacraments, conducted in Latin, were familiar throughout the civilised world. One aspect of medieval Christianity which survives to this day is the pilgrimage. Like many Christian practices, it was borrowed from the Jews for whom a pilgrimage to Jerusalem was a sacred duty. It will be remembered that Jesus himself was on such a pilgrimage at the time of his arrest, trial and crucifixion.

Pilgrimage became an essential feature of Christianity in the 4th century when St Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine, journeyed to Judaea. To this day, there is something special about making a pilgrimage to the sacred sites of the Holy Land, while for Muslims a *Haj*, or pilgrimage, to Mecca entitles them to the honorific title of *Al Haji*. For Christians, especially those living on the fringes of Christendom, a pilgrimage to Rome became a major ambition; but if that was impossible, there were plenty of holy sites closer to hand which were the object of veneration.



Above, one of the *Canterbury Tales* pilgrims on a 1976 issue, marking 500 years of printing in Britain.

Below, a detail of St Andrews Cathedral by Catherine Yass, on the 44p Christians' Tale.



Canterbury (above, on 1969 Architecture), the well-spring of Anglo-Saxon Christianity in the time of St Augustine, and where Thomas a Becket was martyred in 1171, was a must for English pilgrims.

Destruction at St Andrews, left, continued until 1826 but the ruins survive to impress a modern-day pilgrim.



Iona was the first choice for a pilgrimage to Scotland. Here St Columba had launched his mission in 563, as portrayed above on one of two stamps by Clare Melinsky, marking the 400th anniversary of his death in 1997.



King James VI of Scotland, once dubbed the Wisest Fool in Christendom, succeeded his cousin Elizabeth as King James I of England in 1603.

St Andrews was a prime favourite with pilgrims not only from Scotland, but also from much farther afield: Germany, the Low Countries and Scandinavia. In its heyday the cathedral of St Andrews, dramatically situated above the shore, was one of the largest in Christendom and unsurpassed in the beauty of its setting. Here, according to legend, St Regulus brought the relics of the Apostle Andrew in 347AD, though historians and archaeologists are inclined to the view that the earliest church was probably erected in the 7th century.

Work on the cathedral began in 1161 under Bishop Arnold but it was not completed till the time of Bishop Lamberton in the early 14th century, and was consecrated, in the presence of King Robert Bruce (19p stamp of the Soldiers' Tale set) in 1318. Despite severe storm damage in the 15th century, the cathedral retained its magnificence until 1559 when it was plundered and vandalised by reforming zealots, inflamed by the oratory of John Knox. What the reformers began, the good burghers of St Andrews completed, regarding the cathedral as a ready source of dressed masonry with which to build their houses.

King James Bible King James I/VI is best remembered for his association with the Authorized Version, otherwise known as the King James Bible, which was published in 1611. The 350th anniversary of this literary landmark was celebrated by Australia whose Christmas stamp of 1960 showed an open Bible with an appropriate text. Not long after ascending the English throne, King James convened a meeting of churchmen at Hampton Court in January 1604, out of which arose this project, undertaken by 54 of the most eminent scholars and divines over the ensuing seven years. They were recruited on merit alone, irrespective of party or ecclesiastical leanings, and divided into six teams. Their translations were reviewed by the bishops, who presented the text to the Privy Council for ultimate approval by the King himself, who took a keen personal interest in the work. Workmen employed by Robert Barker of London spent 1008 days setting, revising, correcting and printing the text.

The Wesleys The brothers John (1703-91) and Charles (1707-88) Wesley, the 15th and 18th children of the Revd Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth, came from a long line of Anglican clergymen. Educated at Charterhouse and Westminster respectively, both graduated from Christ Church College, Oxford and entered holy orders. In 1728 they began a methodical study of the scriptures which earned them the derisive nickname of Methodists, but from informal beginnings arose a great evangelical movement a decade later. The established Church, alarmed at their preaching methods, denied them pulpits, so they conducted open-air services before inaugurating the first Methodist Chapel at Bristol in 1739.

John Wesley travelled extensively, preaching into old age. His first mission to Ireland in 1747 was recalled by a 52p stamp of 1997 marking the 250th anniversary. Wesley's ministry in the Channel Islands is also recalled on a 3p stamp of Jersey (1974) and five stamps of Guernsey (1987) •

Nativity by J C Leyendecker, and Chaucer p76-77, Mary Evans Picture Library; St Andrews Cathedral p77, Crown © reproduced by permission of Historic Scotland; King James I/VI p78, and John Wesley p79, National Portrait Gallery London; Bible page p79, Geoff Dann.

Text © James Mackay 1999

CHAPTER 1

IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

2 And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3 And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

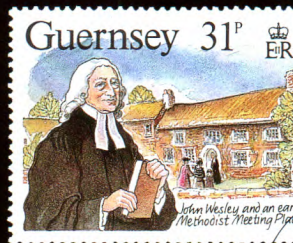
5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

6 ¶ And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7 And God said, Let the waters bring forth



The 26p Christians' Tale stamp, by Clare Melinsky, shows King Jame proudly displaying the open Bible Brody Neuenschwander's design for the 19p stamp, below, feature: 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing', the best-loved of 6500 hymns written by Charles Wesley. The ministry o his brother John, left, is recalled by Channel Islands and Eire issues.



The Artists' Tale The last of the 12 sets of Millennium stamps for 1999 celebrates the diversity of the arts in Britain's culture



An illustration from one of the earliest books printed in England, Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, printed by William Caxton. Opposite, *Rocking Chair no2* by Henry Moore, whose characteristic semi-abstract figures are known throughout the world.

The final set of the 12 Millennium issues of 1999 will go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 7 December. The theme is Artists. These colourful stamps feature specially commissioned paintings by four leading contemporary British artists. The **19p** stamp features 'World of the stage' by Allen Jones, **26p** 'World of music' by Bridget Riley CH, **44p** 'World of literature' by Lisa Milroy, and the **64p** 'New worlds' by Sir Howard Hodgkin. Their paintings can be seen in the 'Post Impressions' exhibition, sponsored by Royal Mail, at the British Library, London until 18 January.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 7 December, price 25p.

Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Stratford-upon-Avon must reach the Bureau by 7 December. Price £2.22 UK (including VAT) or £1.89 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT or to the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, St Stephen's Street, Birmingham B6 4AA (Stratford postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9927' (Bureau), or 'FD9928' (Stratford). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Stratford postmark. A non-pictorial Stratford postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre: request 'FD9928 NP'.

Bilingual Welsh/English versions of the Stratford handstamps can be obtained by sending covers to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 1AA, quoting reference 'FD9928 Bil' (pictorial) and 'FD9928 NP Bil' (non-pictorial).

Details of sponsored handstamps for 7 December will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. Covers may bear just the 19p Artists' Tale stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 7 December.

Cylinders and colours

19p W1 greenish yellow ● W1 bright magenta ● W1 new blue ● W1 black ● W1 silver

26p W1 lemon ● W1 orange ● W1 pale new blue ● W1 violet-blue ● W1 black

44p W1 greenish yellow ● W1 bright magenta ● W1 new blue ● W1 black ● W1 gold

64p W1 greenish yellow ● W1 yellow ● W1 bright turquoise-green ● W1 bright magenta ● W1 new blue ● W1 black ● W1 gold ● W1 silver

Phosphor cylinder W1 on all values

Caxton Chaucer by permission of The British Library; *Rocking Chair no2*, bronze by Henry Moore (1898–1986), Christie's Images London/Bridgeman Art Library





**Technical details**

Printer Walsall Security Printers

Process Gravure

Size 37 x 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 x 14.5

Phosphor One band 19p ● two bands others

Gum PVA

Central gutter Horizontal



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



MILLENNIUM PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated Artists' Tale pack (price £1.90) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets. A Millennium Stamps Album, with pages for the 1999 issues, is available from the Bureau. Price: album and slipcase £19.99; sets of pages only £9.99. Pages for the 2000 issues are expected to be available during November, price £9.99. A presentation case has been produced to display the Millennium packs and covers. Enquiries: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT ●

2000 Millennium issues The 2000 series begins on 18 January with a set entitled 'Above & Beyond', followed by Fire & Light (1 February), Water & Coast (7 March), Life & Earth (4 April), Art & Craft (2 May), People & Place (6 June), Stone & Soil (4 July), Tree & Leaf (1 August), Mind & Matter (5 September), Body & Bone (3 October), Spirit & Faith (7 November), and Sound & Vision (5 December). Please note that some of the titles are subject to change. A Millennium definitive will be issued on 6 January. Details of this and the Above & Beyond set will be given next month ●

Yearpack £19.95; Yearbook £25.95; Leather-bound Yearbook (from Bureau only) £75.

1999 yearpack and yearbook The Yearpack and Yearbook containing all 48 Millennium stamps and the Royal Wedding issue, will be available from the Bureau, philatelic outlets and main post offices from 7 December ●

Millennium miniature sheet A Millennium miniature sheet containing four new 64p stamps, designed by David Gentleman, will be issued on 14 December 1999, price £2.56.

The designs of the stamps are based on his 20p Inventors' Tale stamp issued in January. Collectors will notice subtle differences in the designs of the four stamps in the sheet. The sheet is of horizontal format (120 × 88mm), printed by De La Rue Security Print in gravure. The four stamps bear two phosphor bands.

A first day cover envelope will be available, price 25p, and pictorial first day postmarks provided for the Bureau and Greenwich London SE. Serviced covers can be ordered from the Bureau, price £3.43 UK, £2.92 overseas; please state postmark required. Collectors can post their own covers at main post offices to receive the Greenwich postmark, or send covers to the Bureau for the Bureau postmark (reference FD 9929) or to the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB for the Greenwich postmark (FD 9930).

A non-pictorial Greenwich postmark (FD 9930NP) will also be available from the London Handstamp Centre and bilingual versions of the pictorial and non-pictorial Greenwich postmarks will be used at the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 1AA – request FD 9930 Bil or FD 9930NP Bil. Details of sponsored handstamps for 14 December will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*. Collectors may affix the complete sheet or any combination of stamps from it for all first day and philatelic postmarks in use on 14 December.

The sheet will be available in a presentation pack, price £2.90, and there will be five stamp cards (25p each), one showing the complete sheet, the others each of the four stamps. In addition, the sheet will be available in a Royal Mail Millennium Moment Commemorative Document and on a Coin Cover including Royal Mint's £5 Millennium coin. The sheet on these items will be dual-cancelled with special Greenwich postmarks of 31 December 1999 and 1 January 2000. Both commemorative document and coin cover must be ordered in advance either from the British Philatelic Bureau or by using an order form available at post offices. Price £12.99 Commemorative Document and £22.50 Coin Cover; prices include postage and packing. Each Document will be numbered and accompanied by a certificate to confirm this. All orders will be despatched to customers during January.

The special Royal Mail Greenwich 31 December and 1 January postmarks will be available through Royal Mail's reposting service – details of these and other sponsored postmarks for these two dates will be published in the *British Postmark Bulletin*. Details of the special dual postmarking arrangements for the Millennium were published as a supplement to the August *Bulletin* and in the *Postmark Bulletin* of 23 July. They will be published again here next month. ●



Post Impressions The work of 'Millennium photographers' is on show at The British Library, as Philip Parker describes



WE TEND to assume that a photograph will have a naturalistic quality, it will be 'photorealistic'. Yet the photographic stamps exploring 'Photography' (January's *Tale*), 'Faraday's electricity' (August) and 'St Andrews pilgrimage' (this month) contain some of the most abstract elements or 'unreal' intensities in the 1999 programme. Add to these Snowdon's Dalek, a close up of penicillin mould, planet Saturn, a still life of a potato, Don McCullin's poignant war graves composition and an aerial shot of 'Satellite agriculture', and photography has provided some of the year's most arresting images.

At the British Library the original artwork of these and the other 1999 stamps are on display with many related treasures from the Library's collections and other lenders. For example, items from the Fox Talbot Museum at Lacock Abbey accompany the original artwork for the 'Photography' stamp created by Zafer and Barbara Baran (above). The challenge facing the husband and wife team was to create an image celebrating the invention of modern photography by William Henry Fox Talbot in the 1830s; essentially to make a photograph about 'photography' and the negative-positive process. At the Fox Talbot Museum they were allowed access to the inventor's archive where they uncovered albums of his 'pho-

togenic drawings' – images created using paper negatives. Three Fox Talbot images of leaves were selected and photographed. The Barans used an extensive process of making positive and negative films which were used as masks for further exposures. As the Barans suggest, the resulting image marks something of a collaboration between them and the inventor himself.

Catherine Yass is another contemporary photographer who stands on the border between photography and fine art. Her image of St Andrews cathedral is issued this month and was the result of two separate trips to St Andrews, hours waiting for the skies to clear and a change to her usual technique. Normally she combines a positive transparency with a blue negative. For the stamp image she used another piece of film, a night-time shot of the floodlit cathedral from the same angle. All films were combined on computer; the intense blue is the result of the negative, the glowing feel of the stone is from the night shot. Yass outlines her work on the audio installation at the exhibition, concluding: 'What seems to have worked quite well is that it's almost like a small illumination in a manuscript.' Appropriately, her work is displayed along with an ancient map of pilgrim routes and an edition of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* printed by William Caxton in the 1480s.

One can also hear Richard Cooke discussing the detailed preparation and execution of his 'Satellite agriculture' image. The photograph was months in preparation, with the right field carefully selected and the best weather conditions awaited.

Aerial photography is Cooke's speciality. His first image to appear on a stamp was the 28p value in the 1984 Greenwich Meridian set, featuring the Royal Observatory. Cooke is particularly pleased that the Millennium theme has come full circle for his stamp work •

Post Impressions is at The British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1. Free entry. Open every day.

The creator of popular philately Ron Negus recalls Fred J Melville, founder of the National Philatelic Society in 1899

THE SHORT OBITUARY BELOW, from *The Daily Telegraph* of 13 January 1940, noted the passing of one of the most outstanding philatelic journalists of his generation. Had wartime paper restrictions not been in force, the newspaper would have certainly devoted much more space to his obituary. Melville's column, which had appeared weekly in the *Telegraph* from 1910 until the late 1930s, was instrumental in attracting many new collectors to the hobby.

Apart from his writing and editorial activities, Melville is also notable as the founder, and first President, of the Junior Philatelic Society (JPS) re-named the National Philatelic Society in 1965. This new organisation was formed by Melville after his application to join the Philatelic Society, London (subsequently, the Royal Philatelic Society) in 1899 was refused because, at 17 years old, he was a year below the age at which members were admitted. He acknowledged the importance of the senior Society, however, by originally naming his own group the Junior London Philatelic Society, when he formed it in November 1899. In a letter to their Secretary in December 1899, he explained that this new Society's object was 'to take first rank amongst societies for juniors, as the premier society has already done amongst those advanced collectors.'

Early interests F J Melville, known universally amongst collectors as 'Freddie', was born in Edinburgh on 25 February 1882. Two years later his family moved to London, so that his journalist father could take up a new post as correspondent for the *Scotsman* newspaper in the House of Commons. Freddie was enrolled as a pupil at the Westminster School, and it was there in 1895 that he edited a small magazine for the school's Field Club. Initially, this production was duplicated, but later issues were printed by the editor on a small hand-press that he had acquired.

A couple of years before this, he had gone with his father to an exhibition of West Indian stamps



MR FRED J MELVILLE, the authority on philately and for many years the Philatelic Correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*, died in London yesterday, aged 57. Known all over the world as a stamp expert, a national exhibitor, and a writer on philately, he was on the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists.

organised by the Philatelic Society, London. During this visit, he was given a copy of the Society's magazine, the *London Philatelist*, and subsequently claimed that this started his interest in philatelic literature, and was the beginning of his philatelic library. Forty years later, in 1933, during a house move, he said that he had great difficulty in finding suitable accommodation to house his library, which, the removal firm told him, occupied cases that totalled about eight tons in weight!

This is not surprising since he had always collected any philatelic books that he came across, plus all the important magazines. Anything that could be a useful reference source found its way on to his shelves. This love of the written word led him to suggest the formation of the Philatelic Literature Society in 1907, and he was an active member of this Society until it was dissolved in 1929. When it ended, its remaining funds and assets were divided equally between the libraries of the Royal and Junior Philatelic Societies.

Editor and author The foundation of the JPS and its subsequent development over the next 40 years under his presidency must be regarded as Melville's major achievement, but his prolific activities as an editor, writer and lecturer about stamps kept his name before collectors everywhere. In the editorial role, his schoolboy efforts were followed in 1899 with the launching of the *Young Stamp Collector*, a magazine that only lasted for six issues before it was amalgamated with the *Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly*.

In 1908, Melville started the official journal for the JPS, called *The Stamp Lover*; he was editor until his death 32 years later, apart from a very short break during the First World War. The following year he took over a weekly publication called the *Postage Stamp* when its then editor, E J Nakivell, died. He was also the editor of *Stamp Collectors' Fortnightly* from 1921, and of *The British Philatelist* from 1932.

Melville was the author of more than 100 books, the first a simple pamphlet of just eight pages, written in 1897 and entitled *Stamp Collecting*. This was priced to sell at one penny, and it

was given poor reviews in the philatelic journals of the day. Melville recognised its shortcomings, calling it 'a useless little penny pamphlet', and in later years he tried to find copies so that he could withdraw them from circulation. Thus, the booklet has become a rare work amongst philatelic literature collectors. In 1903 he wrote his first general handbook on the hobby entitled the *ABC of Stamp Collecting*. This was a great improvement on his first effort, and was enthusiastically received by collectors. So much so that a second, and American and Spanish editions were produced. The first of many books he wrote on single countries appeared in 1904 under the title *Postage Stamps of Great Britain*, and this was also used as a guide and souvenir in the following year at an exhibition run by the JPS in London. From 1908 until 1936, the 28 single country titles, published as the 'Melville Stamp Books' series, satisfied a growing demand amongst collectors seeking inexpensive and readable books rather than the large and erudite works that had been characteristic of philatelic publishing in the late Victorian era. His final general philatelic book, which went to press just before his death, was titled *Modern Stamp Collecting*. In 1941, LN & M Williams produced a 64 page booklet giving a bibliography of Melville's writings, having initially printed this in serial form in *The Stamp Lover*, whose editorship they had taken over from Melville a year earlier.

Stamp production Another great area of interest for Melville was the way in which stamps were physically produced. He displayed great knowledge of printing processes during an impressive lecture he gave to members of the Master Printers' Association at Stationers' Hall in 1925. His lecture notes subsequently appeared as a booklet. He had previously published *Postage Stamps in the Making* in 1916, after parts of it had been serialised in *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal*. This was the first of what had been intended as a two-volume book, but the intervention of the War prevented the completion of the second part. It was not until 1948 that John Easton produced a fully revised edition, based upon Melville's original under the same title.

Collecting interests Melville built and disposed of collections of various countries during his career. He liked postal history, because of the stories evoked by the covers that passed through his hands, and in 1936, he proposed and organised the formation of the Postal History Society, which elected him as their first President. Apart from postage stamps, Melville was fascinated by Cinderella items of all sorts.

His significant work *Phantom Philately* (1923) examined bogus 'stamps' from around the world and gave their histories plus details of the people who were responsible for their production and distribution. The book is still considered essential reading for Cinderella philatelists.

He also liked revenue stamps, and joined the Fiscal Philatelic Society in 1912. He was elected to their committee, and displayed his collection of Russian Locals to that Society in 1918. This collection was housed in four separate albums.

Melville's enthusiasm as a propagandist for philately was legendary, and from his early days with the JPS he was in great demand as a public speaker. He gave talks throughout the country dealing with his stamp subjects from a populist viewpoint, by concentrating on the stories behind them, and illustrating many of his talks with lantern slides.

He attended most of the major international exhibitions, and at many of these he was a leading juror. His knowledge of the hobby and his work in making it more popular were recognised by his being chosen as one of the original signatories on the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, instituted at the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain at Harrogate in 1921. This organisation had already occupied much of Melville's time, and he had served on a committee of Congress in 1911 that had compiled *A Glossary of Philatelic Terms*. He was awarded the Congress Cup in 1935.

It is probable that overwork was responsible for the breakdown he suffered in the spring of 1939. Although he regained his strength slowly, he was unable to attend to his editorial duties in full. Towards the end of the year, he was discharged from hospital and was able to return to

his flat in Herne Hill. The improvement in his health was short-lived, however, and suddenly his strength gave way and he died on 12 January 1940, at the early age of 57. Before his final illness, he had been looking forward to being involved in the celebrations for the centenary of the Penny Black, but fate decreed otherwise.

The following tribute, published in *The Postal History Society Bulletin* in April 1940, was written by an unnamed colleague from the JPS shortly after his death, and sums up his achievements so well. 'To philatelists of nearly two generations, the name of Fred J Melville has been one of paramount significance. That name has stood for the best and the brightest side of philately. On the cover of a book, or at the head of an article, it has been the hallmark of an entertaining, though studious, treatment of the subject; beneath the title of a magazine it has meant that the contents have been carefully and efficiently edited; at the head of a society or exhibition committee, it has signified that the control of that society or exhibition was in able hands.'

Freddie Melville never married, and the mourners who joined his brothers and his sister at his funeral included representatives of organised philately from all parts of the UK, to say farewell to this remarkable man •



A library for all Richard West, *Stamp Magazine* Editor-at-large, describes the facilities and benefits of the NPS library



The National Philatelic Society and its library can be found at the British Philatelic Centre, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT, close to Smithfield Market and a short walk from Farringdon Station (Thameslink and London Underground) and Barbican Station (London Underground).

COLLECTORS in the UK are exceptionally fortunate: they have access to one of the finest philatelic libraries in the world. London in fact can boast three libraries: in the British Library, and The Royal Philatelic Society London, but the most easily available is that of the National Philatelic Society.

This year the NPS celebrates its centenary. Launched in November 1899 at a meeting held in Clapham, London as the Junior Philatelic Society by the legendary Fred Melville, it is little surprising that a library should feature among the many services provided by the society. Fred was an enthusiastic supporter of the hobby, encouraging others, and ever willing to share his knowledge through the many books and pamphlets he published.

While it is not certain when the Society's library was created, a reference to its existence first appeared in 1903. What is certain over the years, and is still as relevant today, is that the strength of the library lies in the fact that many collectors, authors and publishers have been happy to donate catalogues, books and periodicals.

The library has some 1750 feet of shelving, housing a multitude of books, mainly in the English language, covering all disciplines, from coun-

try collecting through to thematics, aerophilately and revenues. There are, however, also extensive holdings of books in other languages.

However, one of the main strengths of the library has to be its range of magazines. Virtually every commercial magazine and society journal is to be found, some dating back as far as 1860. Many of the periodicals have been carefully bound, thanks to the generous contributions made by the British Philatelic Trust. Such binding not only protects the journals, it also means that access to a particular magazine is easy. Indexes exist to help those seeking articles on any particular country or subject. Fortunately, many societies, in particular specialist societies, are happy to provide copies of their journals for housing in the NPS library.

Another strong feature is the auction catalogues. There is a record of all the major sales held by the leading British auctioneers, together with the prices realised.

For those seeking information about exhibitions, not only those staged in the United Kingdom, but also the major international events, a comprehensive archive is being established of all exhibition catalogues, plus the pre-exhibition bulletins and final lists of awards.

Catalogues are available, not only the current editions from Stanley Gibbons, but also the major overseas catalogues, such as Scott (USA), Yvert & Telier (France), and Michel (Germany).

As mentioned, the array of books in the English language is extremely comprehensive, covering virtually every aspect of collecting. Whatever your own sphere of interest, if a book has been published on the subject, it is likely a copy will exist in the NPS library.

A full index exists of all the library's holdings: the former card index system is quickly being replaced, and it should not be long before all the information is available on computer.

A few years ago the British Philatelic Trust purchased an archive. Created by an enthusiastic

collector, it contains cuttings of articles published in magazines, arranged in country order. This proves an easy way of tracing articles about a country's stamps, and is much in demand.

Understandably, increasingly the library is acquiring works published electronically. Many catalogues are now available on CD-Rom, and are not only available in the library, but can be accessed through its computers.

The ability to make full use of the library is, of course, one of the benefits of membership of the NPS. The Society meets every month (except August) at the British Philatelic Centre for an auction followed by a talk and display. There is also a flourishing exchange packet, while the Society publishes its own journal, *Stamp Lover*, six times a year, keeping members informed of activities, and published articles of wide interest.

The Centre was opened in 1986. The building is owned by the British Philatelic Trust, which invited the NPS to move in its offices and library. At 107 Charterhouse Street, there is also a very convenient meeting room, which is available to all societies for hire subject to availability (as might be expected, Saturdays are extremely popular, and tend to be booked well in advance).

In fact, so extensive are the NPS holdings that not all can be housed in the library itself. There is also a basement store, although in this store everything is kept in careful order, and so can be accessed with ease.

However, you do not have to be a member of the NPS to enjoy the advantages of the library. You can consult the library on payment of a small daily fee. Photocopying facilities are available. If you are a member of a society which meets at the Centre, it is possible for the library to be open for use during the meeting.

In general, the aim is to have the library open during normal working hours from Tuesday to Friday each week; in addition the library is often open on a Saturday, and certainly on the second Saturday of each month when the NPS holds its monthly meeting.

As with the officers of most societies, those who help to keep the library open, ensure that all the books are kept in order and fully catalogued are

all volunteers. Without their generous contribution of time, the library would not function. Not only time: those who help in the library have a good knowledge of the books held, and are usually able to assist with any enquiry about what has been published on a particular subject.

Equally generous are those who donate books, and such donations are more than welcome. Recently, stamp dealer Argyll Etkin was moving premises, and needed to prune its own reference library. Much that was no longer wanted was given to the NPS. There are times when such donations mean that the NPS has duplicates. These are always put to good use, often by helping other philatelic libraries to fill their gaps, or at times being sold, with the money being used to purchase works currently not held by the library.

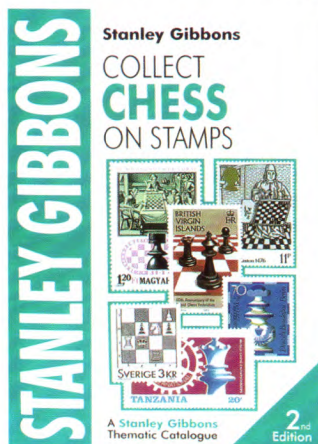
Being a member of the NPS of course means you can gain maximum benefit from the library. You can visit as often as you wish, undertaking your own research within the peaceful surroundings (and free refreshments are on hand). Alternatively, books can be borrowed, so you can continue your delving at home.

For those unable easily to reach the British Philatelic Centre, members are able to borrow books by post, and, of course, there is still the option of receiving photocopies.

If you would like to know more about the NPS library, why not write to the Society at the British Philatelic Centre. Alternatively, you will find that the society often has a stand at the major exhibitions such as Stampex and the Stamp event held each year at Wembley. At Federation Conventions, there is often a representative from the British Philatelic Centre on hand, who will be happy to tell you more about the organisations to be found there.

So often we fail to recognise the great debt we owe to so many who have taken the trouble to put their own researches down on paper, either as magazine articles or as books. We should also welcome the fact that through the generosity of the National Philatelic Society, and its band of volunteers, all can take advantage of this treasure trove thanks to the NPS library •

Books Chess on stamps • Societies • Collins Gem Stamps



Collect Chess on Stamps 72 pages, card covers. Price £6.95, UK postage £1.50. Available from addresses below.

Collect Chess on Stamps The second edition of the Stanley Gibbons thematic catalogue *Collect Chess on Stamps* has recently been published. It lists nearly 600 stamps showing chess or related subjects, of which over 160 have been added since the first edition of this catalogue was published in 1992. Stamps are listed by country, chronologically with SG catalogue number, face value, brief description of design and price. Single stamps from sets including non-chess stamps are priced individually, sets of chess stamps are priced only in complete sets. There are four British chess stamps: 1976 Caxton 11p, 1989 Games & Toys 32p, 1993 Greetings Tweedledum and Tweedledee holding pawns, and 1998 Magical Worlds 63p showing the Red Queen and Alice.

Compiled by James S Young, this useful listing includes a potted history of the game of chess, the Chess Olympiads and the World Chess Championships. These list the dates, venues and winners of the two events. The first Men's Olympiads were staged in London in 1927, England coming third after Hungary and Denmark, and again in the UK, at Folkestone in 1933. The Women's Olympiads, introduced in 1957, have yet to be held here. The World Chess Championship has been staged in London on several occasions.

The book's Subject index is divided into seven sections: Competitions, Associations, Anniversaries, etc; Personalities; History of Chess; Modern Chess Games on Stamps; Chess Pieces; Associated Board Games; and Chess in Art. The entries give the country and SG catalogue number of the relevant stamp. Gary Kasparov, World Champion 1985-93, for example, features on stamps from 14 countries.

Other SG thematic catalogues currently available are: Aircraft (1994), Birds (4th edn, 1996), Fish (1999), Fungi (2nd edn, 1997), Railways (3rd edn, 1999), and Shells (1995) •

Stanley Gibbons Catalogues New year 2000 editions of the Part 1 *British Commonwealth and Stamps of the World* catalogues are now available. Volume 1 of Part 1 covers GB and countries A-I, Volume 2 countries J-Z, price £29.95 each. *Stamps of the World* lists some 340,000 basic stamps issued since 1840. Vols 1 & 2 Foreign countries A-J and K-Z, price £28.50 each. Vol 3 Commonwealth countries will be published on 26 November, price £26.50. A new (11th) edition of Volume 2 of the GB *Specialised* catalogue, covering the issues of Edward VII & VIII and George V & VI, is £24.95. A new *Collect Irish Stamps* catalogue, including FDCs, presentation packs, errors and inverted watermarks, costs £7.95 •

Stanley Gibbons publications Available from SG Strand shop or by mail order from Stanley Gibbons Publications, Parkside, Ringwood BH24 3SH. UK mail order phone line 0800 611 622.

National & Specialist Society Handbook The 1999 edition, published by the Association of British Philatelic Societies, is a mine of information for specialist collectors. As well as details of the ABPS, useful data is included on the British Philatelic Trust, Stuart Rossiter Trust, philatelic insurance, expertising services, and catalogue publishers. The bulk of the publication is a listing of specialist societies within the UK, from the Alba Stamp Group to the Yugoslavia Study Group. Details are given of the area covered by the society, its meetings, journal and other publications, ser-

vices to members (exchange packet, auction, library, etc) and the name and address of the secretary and editor. In addition there is a listing of national and other societies. There is a helpful index of countries of the world applicable to UK specialist societies: for example collectors of Venezuela should join the Spanish Main society. This is followed by an index by subject (theme), from Aero/Astro to Zoology. Another very useful section is headed 'Countries of the World' and lists (as appropriate) each country's philatelic bureau, postal/philatelic libraries and museums, stamp catalogue covering its issues, national federation, philatelic magazines, dealers organisation, expertising service, and societies specialising in that country. Under USA there is an extensive list of specialist societies, many of a thematic nature. It is interesting that France boasts no fewer than 22 philatelic museums, with nine in Germany and 11 in the USA. In contrast Great Britain has three – the British Library, and the Bath and Llangollen postal museums. The National Postal Museum is, sadly, no longer listed •

National & Specialist Society Handbook 256 pages, card covers. From ABPS, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT. Price £10, UK postage £1.

Stamps is one of a series of pocket-size 'Collins Gem' books which includes *Babies' Names*, *Calorie Counter*, *Healthy Eating*, *Insects*, *Snakes*, and *Understanding Dreams*. Written by James Mackay, with Hugh Jefferies, Editor of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, as Consultant, it is aimed primarily, but not exclusively, at new collectors. Mackay has a pragmatic approach to the hobby: 'The beauty of stamp collecting is that it is so flexible... You could spend millions of pounds chasing the great rarities, but you would probably have just as much fun tracking down nicely-used examples of the latest commemoratives from your office mail.' The book has nine parts: Introduction, Identifying Stamps, Types of collection, Specialised Collecting, Postal History, Postmarks, Cinderellas, Rare Stamps, Forgeries and Fakes, with a concluding Compendium covering Inscriptions, Foreign Alphabets, Glossary, and Useful Addresses. Each part is colour-coded for easy reference,

guiding the reader from starting a collection to aspects of specialised philately. The Identifying Stamps section describes many different types of stamps: definitives, commemorative, omnibus and joint issues, charity stamps, airmails, postage dues, etc, also booklet and coil stamps, and postal stationery. Joint issues began in the 1930s when countries of the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente issued stamps simultaneously although the designs had little in common. Issues involving two or more countries celebrating a common event really began with the Canada/USA St Lawrence Seaway commemoratives of 1959.

Mackay believes that thematic collecting has now 'developed to the point at which it is not even necessary for the stamps to show a picture or even a detail which obviously links it to the chosen subject.' He cites a Swedish stamp of 1998 which featured a cinema in Halmstad. As the first film shown there was *Jerusalem*, based on the novel by Selma Lagerlöf, the stamp merits inclusion in a collection of Judaica. He divides thematic collecting into 'Subject Collecting', 'Purpose of Issue Collecting' and 'Stamps Tell a Story'. The second of these, known in America as 'incidental philately', covers stamps marking a particular incident or event, widened to encompass everything issued in connection with a specific event, whether as part of an omnibus series or not. The many mourning stamps for President Kennedy, Churchill, Princess Diana and Mother Teresa come into this category. The sections on Postal History and Postmarks are sound; that on Cinderellas wide-ranging, including revenues, railway letter and strike post issues, British Christmas charity post stamps issued since 1981, and recent Dutch and Swedish locals resulting from postal deregulation. 'Many collectors', writes Mackay, 'are now watching these developments keenly, with a view to building up collections of the local issues of the new millennium...'

The Compendium section might be expanded in a future edition, and a few minor errors corrected. Profusely illustrated in colour throughout its 256 pages, this book makes an attractive and, at £4.99 from booksellers, a reasonably priced Christmas gift •

Postbag

Exhibiting modern issues The *Bulletin* is widely distributed and read, particularly by modern philatelists amongst whom I count myself, being a specialist collector of the pre-decimal Machin definitives. I first took the magazine back in the late 1960s when these issues were current. There has been, and I sense there still is, something of a credibility gap between the traditional philatelists concerned with largely 19th century issues, maybe nudging into George V, and the serious modern collector. This division in the hobby can do nothing but harm, especially as modern collectors now constitute a very significant proportion of the collecting body.

I have however been encouraged in the last year or two, albeit on a personal level, that bridges are beginning to be built, and this being so, we must take full advantage of it.

At Philalexfrance in Paris this July, a Machin entry (80 sheets) 1967-71 was awarded a Large Vermeil. Within the Traditional Class (Europe) in which it was entered, not one of the other 61 entries went beyond the 1940s and the large majority concentrated on 19th century issues.

Through the readers of the *Bulletin* I would encourage the serious modern collectors to take up the challenge and start to display their collections to a wider audience. It has taken 25 years of persistence to gain this foothold in the international scene, and the opportunity is there to be grasped. To my mind much of the present modern collector/dealer network is too introverted, an observation which could also be made about the 'classics' collectors, and this has given rise to the present stand-off. Understandably the judges and juries of the national and international exhibitions are chosen from those with established knowledge, reputation and experience, built up over time, but these judges now include people in their 40s and 50s who will be conversant with QEII issues. As collectors we must ensure they receive plenty of quality modern material to evaluate and on which to increase their knowledge.

Irrespective of the period, examination of the minutia of a particular issue can be rewarding to

the individual researcher, but less so to a wider audience, and potential exhibitors need to realise this. With nearly 50 years of QEII issues alone available for exhibition there is a wealth of material to display and now a willingness to give the material the status it deserves. Advice and encouragement is readily accessible from many sources. Past disagreements should be replaced by a general acknowledgement that our hobby's viability and vision into the next Millennium rests on co-operation rather than controversy. TONY WALKER FRPSL, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE ●

Millennium issues The aliens have landed and are here working in London! How can I be so sure? Unfortunately I didn't see their flying saucer but judging from the opinions in every stamp magazine or philatelic publication and from the many people I have spoken to, this year's Millennium stamps have little appeal. Few condemn the concept (I think it's ingenious), but most of the stamps are disliked with the odd exceptions, and we all know which ones these are – they will feature in the *Bulletin's* Favourite Stamps of 1999 poll. Is there anyone who likes these stamps?

So to come back to my original statement. The Design Committee obviously have totally 'alien' tastes and are completely out of touch with the rest of us, or else they are like horses with blinkers on and choose to ignore public opinion. Bring back designs like the Lighthouses issue of 1998! S STRETTLE, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE ●

Dating the Millennium I never cease to be astonished at what appears to be a world-wide acceptance of the year 2000 being the first year of the 'new' Millennium, when it is, in fact, the last year of the second Millennium. When counting to 1000, do you stop at 999 and reckon 1000 to be the first unit of the second 1000? Of course not. If however you are celebrating the year 2000 as the last year of the second Millennium, you are spot on, although there are some parts of the second Millennium that are better forgotten than celebrated. J BOWMAN, KIRKCALDY ●

Greetings stamps labels 1993 Gift Giving, by Lionel Jones

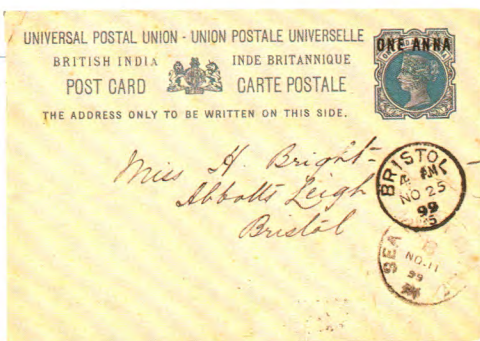
THE 1993 GREETINGS STAMPS featured famous characters from children's books, comics and films, such as Long John Silver, William, Mole and Toad, the Snowman, and Bill Badger and Rupert Bear. The 20 labels that accompanied the stamps were attached by an inter-panneau gutter. The labels bear four different messages and illustrations relating to the stamps and the message labels, for example a spider to go with the William stamp, slice of cake for the Rupert stamp, and ice cream cone for the Snowman stamp.

Like the stamps they were designed by Newell and Sorrell, and printed by Harrison & Sons Ltd on their Jumelle press. They were perforated on the APS perforator, gauge 14.75 x 14. Note that the labels in the two left hand columns are narrower (37mm wide) than those in the other three columns (40mm). The stamps and labels were sold in books and in presentation packs. The pack was sold out by April 1995; remaining stocks of the books were withdrawn from philatelic sale on 29 March 1996.



Cover corner

THIS MONTH'S ITEM, 100 years old this month – was submitted by Geoff Isherwood of Cheshire. It comprises an Indian stamped postcard with a 1½ anna blue stamp surcharged ONE ANNA in black. The stamp itself is uncanceled but the card bears a SEA POST OFFICE datestamp of 11 November 1899 and a BRISTOL arrival datestamp of 25 November. Addressed to a Miss H Bright of Abbots Leigh, Bristol, it was sent from McDougall Clark & Co, Merchants & Army & Civil Service Agents, of Calcutta. The printed message on the reverse informs Miss Bright that at the request of Mrs Bright (presumably her mother) a package of condiments has been despatched to London via the Suez Canal. The package was to be delivered through Davies, Turner & Co of Lime Street, London and Miss Bright



advised to contact them 'should any delay occur in your receiving the package'. The message ends: 'the said firm will also receive any packages you may wish transmitted to India to our care'. Although slightly damaged and repaired, this is an interesting piece of Anglo-Indian postal history.

Competition Identify the stamp from the detail and win £100



The August detail was from the Millennium stamp Cook's endeavour. David Rowe of Berkshire won first prize, and 20 runner-up prizes were also sent. Our thanks to all who entered.

SIMPLY identify the special stamp from the detail above and send your answer, name and address on a postcard (or back of a sealed envelope) to November Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y

8HQ. The sender of the first card to be drawn on 10 December will receive £100. Twenty runner-up prizes will also be awarded.

The competition is not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

Until further notice Postal Memorabilia displays at Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln; Manchester Postal Museum, Wythenshaw Park, Manchester; and Oldham Post Office. **Enquiries** D Harrop, 15 Hawthorn Road, Stockport SK4 3DQ

Until 18 January 2000 'Post Impressions' display of Millennium stamps and related artefacts, books, manuscripts, etc, sponsored by Royal Mail, at British Library, Euston Road, London NW1. **Enquiries** 0171 412 7332

6 November Stuart Rossiter Lecture: Postal Reforms 1837-41, by Charles Goodwyn at British Library, London NW1, 11.00. Free tickets from John Scott, 60 Tachbrook Street, London SW1V 2NA

11-13 November National Philatelic Society centenary events. **Enquiries** 0171 336 0882

13 November Three Counties Club Competition and Fair run by Camberley Stamp Club at Collingwood College, off A30 between Camberley and Bagshot. Dealers, exhibits, etc. **Enquiries** H Campsey, 40 Quintilis, Roman Hill, Bracknell RG12 7QQ

13 November Maidstone & Mid-Kent PS Stamp Fair at the Grove Green Community Centre, Maidstone, close to Junction 7, M20. 10.00-16.00. **Enquiries** B Stonestreet 01622 675784

20 November-31 January 2000 Millennium Postcard Exhibition at Bradford Industrial Museum, organised by Bradford Postcard Society

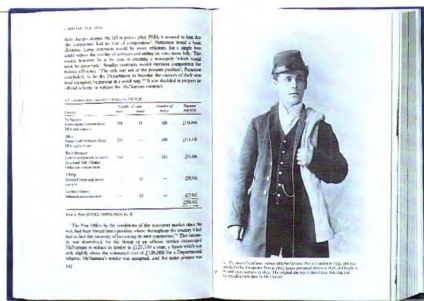
24-25 November Thematica II (Autumn thematic stamp exhibition) at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2. Open 24th 10.30-18.30; 25th 10.00-17.00. Dealers, exhibits, Childrens' activity section. Admission free. **Enquiries** 0181 343 2434

27 November Woking & District PS 50th anniversary exhibition and fair at Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Brewery Road, Woking. Court of honour includes display from Royal Collection. **Enquiries** J Lea, 21 Pine Close, Horsell, Woking GU21 4SJ

27-28 November Scotex: Scottish Exhibition Centre, Clyde Way, Glasgow. **Enquiries** Ray McMillan, Scottish Philatelic Trade Association, 0131 538 3683 •

Win a book History of The Post Office by Dr Martin Daunton

WE HAVE eight copies of Dr Martin Daunton's book *Royal Mail: The Post Office since 1840* as prizes in a special draw. Simply write your name and address on a postcard, or reverse of a sealed envelope, and send to: Book Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. The senders of the first eight cards drawn on 10 December will be sent one of the books. Dr Daunton's 406 page book was reviewed in the *Bulletin* in November 1985 •



Late news

Autumn Stampex There were some fine exhibits of British stamps at this exhibition (London, 22-26 September). These covered a wide range, but sadly there were none of stamps of the present reign. Lady Mairi Bury won the Royal Mail Trophy for her Queen Victoria Jubilee Issue exhibit, and the Harmers Silver Jubilee and GBPS Hassan Shaïda Trophies for Edward VII 1902-11 which illustrated the diverse range of shades and quality of printing of this issue. The Phillips Trophy went to Mr A Green for 'The Restoration Post Office 1660-1711' which showed the workings of the General Letter Post Office under the 1660 Act, known as the Post Office Charter. Large Vermeil medals were awarded to I Edmondson, C Y Reid, and H S Wilson for displays of Irish Railway Letter Stamps, 1891-20; Victorian Registered Mail; and Early TPOs.

The exhibition's premier award, the Silver Mailcoach Trophy, went to Dr J H Barwis for his display 'The Half Lengths of Victoria' (Australia) for which he also received the NPS and PTS Trophies. The Thematic and Youth entries included some very interesting and well thought-out exhibits, reflecting the enthusiasm of their owners for their subjects. In the Literature section, the *Bookmark Catalogue of British Decimal Stamp Books* (reviewed here last month) received a Large Silver Gilt medal.

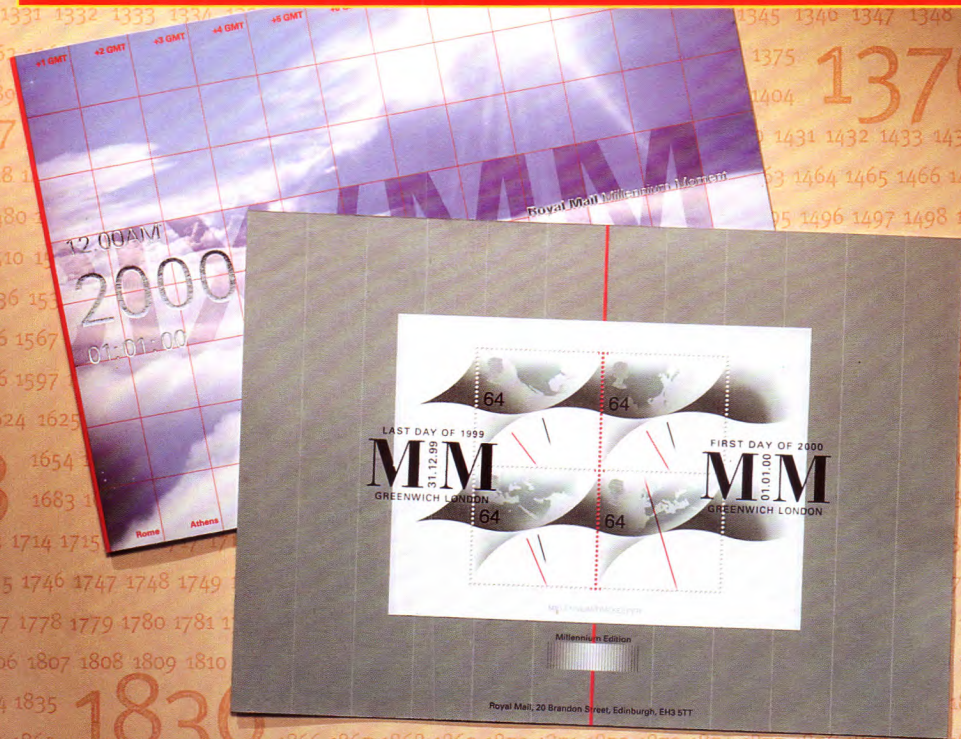
Dealers offering everything from modern issues to classic stamps and postal history catered for

visitors looking to add material to their British collections. Staff on the Royal Mail stand were kept busy, stand manager John Whittaker reporting good sales of the new Scottish and Welsh country stamps, and the World Changers and Millennium stamp books •

Cavendish results At their auction on 11 September a 1d Mulready letter sheet used on 6 May 1840 went for £1265 (estimate £650), an 1860 cover with a 1d stars/LC perf 14 tied by a red London duplex cancel made £862 (£500), and an 1865 cover from Nottingham to Tahiti franked with two 1s and with 'AP' (All Paid) applied at Payta reached £690 (£600). A 1913 £1 dull blue-green 'Seahorse', mounted mint, went for £552 (£500). The top price for a single item was £2990 (est £1000) for a letter of 1334 from Queen Philippa, wife of King Edward III. A cover which survived the Tay Bridge disaster in 1879 made £1400 (£800). The sale included the first part of the 'Ecosse' collection of Scottish Maritime Postal History. An example, possibly unique, of the Telegraphic cancel used on the steamer *Iona* made £1150 (£500) and a postcard of 1910 bearing an Edward VII stamp cancelled St Kilda went for £110 (£75). The 3-4 December sale will include much GB material including mint Penny Blacks and Postal History •

Enquiries Cavendish Philatelic Auctions Ltd, 153-7 London Road, Derby DE1 2SY

**IT'LL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE THERE'S A
CHANCE TO OWN SOMETHING LIKE THIS AGAIN.
1000 YEARS TO BE EXACT**



Midnight, 31st December 1999. The dawn of a new millennium. This unique moment requires a unique memento. To mark the event Royal Mail are producing a limited edition* commemorative document.

The Millennium Moment Commemorative Document, priced £12.99, comes in a lavishly designed colour folder containing a miniature sheet, known as the Millennium Timekeeper. This sheet bears four beautifully designed 64p

stamps, cancelled with the dates 31st December 1999 and 1st January 2000. These will be post-marked Greenwich, the home of time.

To order this unique marker in time, you must apply by 30th November. That's 1999, not 2000. These are available through all post offices until 13 November 1999 or contact the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT. UK telephone order line 0345 641 641. Overseas (44) 131 550 8989.



Reference 99-ABB



Full terms and conditions of this offer can be obtained by request in writing to: Royal Mail, MM Customer Service, Dept 3757, Sunderland SR9 9SR or phone 0870 167 8191. Orders of the Millennium Moment items will be despatched by post between 4 Jan-20 Jan 2000. Royal Mail will acknowledge receipt of your order within 30 days of receiving your application form.
*The production of the *Millennium Moment Commemorative Document* will be limited to a maximum number of one million items. Millennium Moment is a trademark of the Post Office.