

BRITISH PHILATELIC

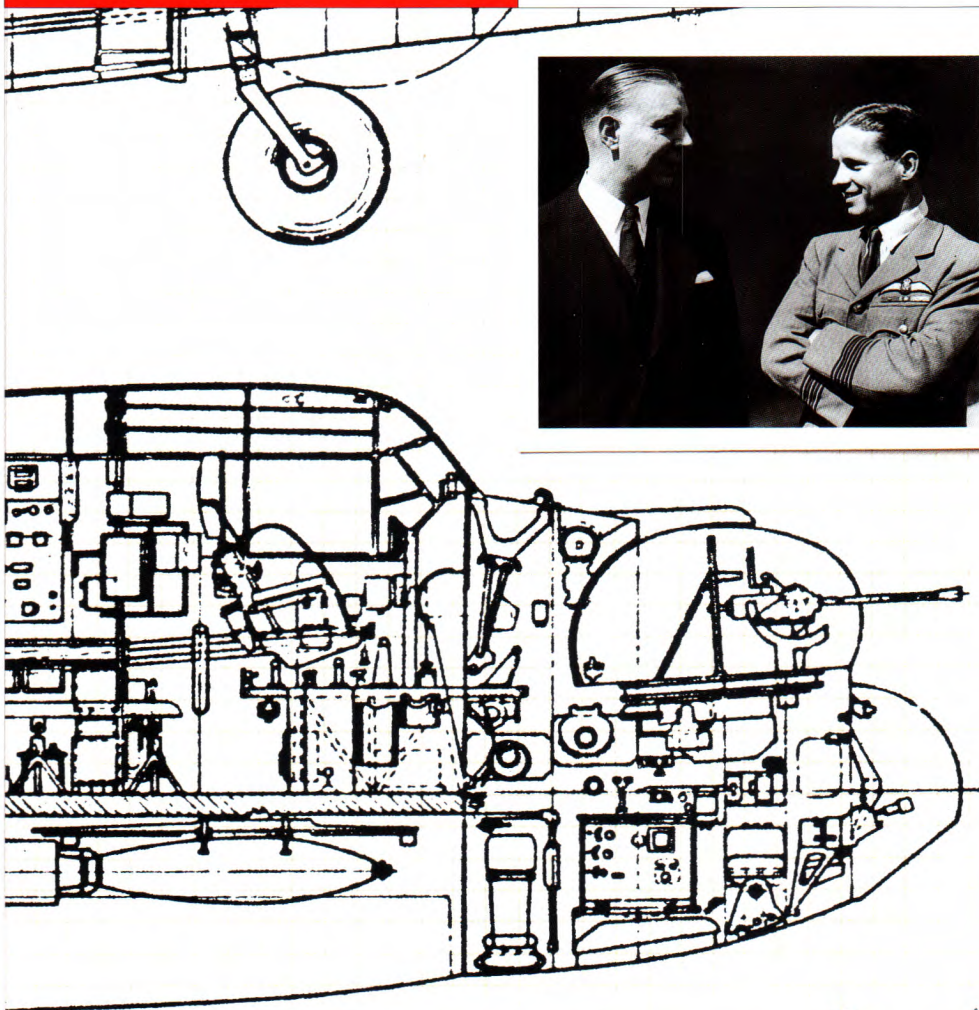
The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

Bulletin

Volume 34 Number 9

MAY 1997 • 85P

Architects of the Air stamps
• The stamps of George VI



Roy Chadwick
ROY CHADWICK

Forthcoming issues & withdrawals



Cover Royal Mail's new Architects of the Air stamps are featured on page 260. The photograph shows Roy Chadwick, designer of the Avro Lancaster, with Wing Commander Guy Gibson VC, outside Buckingham Palace after the investiture for the dams raid, 22 June 1943. Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London.

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

5 May	Withdrawal NPM Robert Burns postcards. <i>Note:</i> Withdrawal from Bureau, will remain on sale at Museum.
6 May	Issue Tales of Terror stamp cards
12 May	Withdrawal 10 × 1st Olympic Scratchcard book (three versions)
13 May	Issue Tales of Terror stamps and presentation pack
13 May	Withdrawal Football Legends stamps, pack and stamp cards, and European Football Championship prestige book
27 May	Issue 2p, 4p, 5p, 10p, 30p & 39p definitives printed by Harrison, EME cylinders
3 June	Issue Architects of the Air stamp cards
10 June	Issue Architects of the Air stamps and presentation pack
17 June	Withdrawal 1996 Olympic Games aerogramme
26 June	Withdrawals 25p, 29p, 35p, 36p, 38p & 41p definitives – all printed by Enschedé, blue fluor (except 36p yellow fluor). Includes both gum variants of 25p ● 19p, 25p, 35p & 41p and mixed value (1 × 4p, 3 × 5p) coils

Contents



George VI First issued 60 years ago this month, George VI stamps

featured work by Eric Gill, Edmund Dulac, Reynolds Stone and Abram Games. Jean Matheson looks back.

270

The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, Royal London House, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Editor** JR Holman • **Price** 85p single copies from Collections, philatelic counters, and National Postal Museum • **Annual subscriptions** UK and Europe £9.50, rest of the world £13.50. 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 above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, rest of world £21.75 • **Copyright** Unless copyright attributed to specific authors, all articles and features may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Requests to reproduce copyright articles should be sent to the Editor, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119

Issues & withdrawals for May and June **258**

This month The Editor previews this issue **260**

Royal Mail news New Architects of the Air stamps; NPM aircraft postcards; Changes to definitives; 1998 stamp issue dates; Philatelic postmarks **260**



Pacific '97 Opening in San Francisco, 29 May **266**

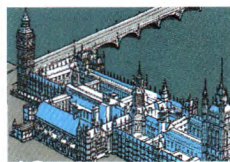


Stamp scene

Thematica; Philatelic weekend; Bridlington Philatelic Society **267**

North Atlantic air mails by Richard Beith **268**

The House of Commons Post Office The Editor talks to the Postmaster **274**



Eminent early collectors Leslie L R Hausburg, by Ron Negus **278**

Student stamp designs Winning entries from The Royal Society of Arts competition **280**

Full steam ahead The Talyllyn Railway Letter Service, by Postmaster Sara Eade and designer Neill Oakley **281**

Postbag **284**

Competition Win an ultraviolet lamp **285**

Books Letter sorting; Alexander Graham Bell **286**

Events **287**

This month



THIS MONTH we commemorate various anniversaries of interest to philatelists. It is 60 years since of the Coronation of King George VI and the issue of the first stamps of his reign; no doubt some readers will recall buying the stamps at their local post office. Also in May 1937 took place an Atlantic Coronation flight to carry the first photographs and films of the Coronation to the USA. Forty years ago, in May 1957, the narrow-gauge Talylllyn Railway in Wales issued railway letter stamps, reviving a service introduced in the 1890s. Today several preserved railways issue such stamps under agreement with Royal Mail. I hope you will find the articles on these subjects, by Jean Matheson, Richard Beith and Sara Eade, of interest.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the first US postage stamps, an event commemorated by the Pacific '97 international exhibition in San Francisco this month. We wish the exhibition every success and hope all visitors will enjoy the material on display. Some of the attractions at the exhibition are previewed this month.

As I write, we in Britain are awaiting the General Election on 1 May. It is appropriate, therefore, that this *Bulletin* includes a feature on the House of Commons Post Office and the splendid work of John Arnold and his staff.

Good news from the National Postal Museum – repair work is nearing completion and it is hoped to reopen at the end of June. By way of encouraging you to visit, we include this month a booklet on Victorian stamps, illustrating a few of the many treasures in the Museum. This booklet is No 4 in Bulletin Publications series, additional copies are available from the Bureau, price £2.95. Happy reading! JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR •

Royal Mail news Architects of the Air • Definitives change of printers • New post- marks • 1998 stamp issue dates

The designers The stamps are the work of Turner Duckworth, a graphic design group with offices in London and Los Angeles. These are their first stamps for Royal Mail.

Architects of the Air stamps Five stamps honouring eminent aircraft designers go on sale at post offices, and philatelic outlets on 10 June 1997. Each stamp features a cloud-effect portrait of the designer superimposed by his famous aircraft. The Queen's head, value and caption are in silver.

The **20p** stamp (inland 2nd class basic rate) features the Supermarine Spitfire mk 11A, and Reginald Joseph Mitchell (1895-1937) its chief designer. Just a year before his death he witnessed the fighter soar into the sky. The Spitfire, noted for its elliptical wings, was developed from Mitchell's pioneering sea planes. To this day Mitchell is remembered for his technical brilliance and the aesthetic appeal of his designs. In 1995, on the centenary of his birth, Royal Mail issued a commemorative label pane, and his portrait adorned the front cover of the third £1 stamp book in the Sec-

'The aeroplane is the symbol of the new age'

The architect Le Corbusier wrote these words in 1935. Up until this era the biplane reigned supreme: two wings faced together by diagonal struts inherited from earth-bound structures such as bridges. The fuselage followed a similar pattern of triangulated members covered by canvas like the wings. But two technological trends were revolutionising the performance and appearance of aircraft. First was the realisation that the outer membrane could become a vital part of the structure: cloth gave way to planks of wood and then skins of metal. The other innovation was to replace the pair of trussed wings with one single cantilevered wing. At the same time architects and engineers were transforming the landscape with cantilevered structures to create a new concept of space; skyscrapers were gravity-defying vertical cantilevers charting new boundaries in the sky.

© 1997 The Royal Mail. All rights reserved. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.



ARCHITECTS OF THE AIR

ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Sydney Carr

Hurricane

to the new

prototype

driving force

Carr

could be

companies

shoulders

compensation

we view the

consumer products as it is for aircraft

The most beautiful dream that has haunted the heart of man since Icarus is today

reality: pronounced Biondi early this century. If at its peak architecture and flight are

about fusing the spirit with the physical practicalities to create a beautiful object, then

the two are linked. Aviation began as an offspring of the engineering that makes

possible a work of architecture. Today architects study their designs in wind tunnels

and computer simulations, and use new materials which would not exist without the

aerospace industries. In a single lifetime the child has grown to be bigger and faster,

with a wealth of knowledge to return to the parent.

SIR NORMAN FOSTER



and World War series. The Spitfire has featured on many stamps from around the world, including four of the six 4d stamps in the 1965 Battle of Britain set.

The 26p denomination (inland 1st class and EU basic rates) depicts the Avro Lancaster mk 1, designed by Roy Chadwick (1893-1947). Chadwick experimented with all-metal planes for Avro and devised metal stressed-skin fuselages. Amongst his greatest achievements were the Anson, the first operational monoplane to enter RAF service, the Lancaster bomber and the Tudor - Britain's first pressurised production airliner. Sadly he died in a test flight of this aircraft. His design sketches foreshadowed the delta-wing design of the Vulcan bomber. He was said to be a fair artist and violinist. An Avro Type 683 Lancaster was shown, with Sir Arthur 'Bomber'

Technical details

Printers Harrison & Sons Ltd

Process Photogravure

Size 41 x 30mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 15 x 14

Phosphor One band 20p, two bands others

Paper OBA (Optical Brightening Agent) free

Gum PVA



Harris on the 31p History of the RAF stamp of 1986.

Ronald Eric Bishop (1903-89) and the de Havilland Mosquito B, mk XVI feature on the **37p** value (airmail postcard rate). As head of design for de Havilland, Bishop devised the all-wooden Mosquito. In the early 1940s its Rolls Royce Merlin engines powered the fastest aircraft in the RAF, giving it the lowest loss rate of any aircraft with Bomber Command. The home-based fighter version was responsible for shooting down 600 enemy raiders and 600 flying bombs in just 60 nights. Bishop is also remembered as the designer of the Comet, the first jet airliner, which featured on a 50p stamp book cover in 1990. A DH98 Mosquito was featured, with Lord Portal, on the 1986 34p RAF stamp.

The **43p** stamp (basic airmail letter rate) depicts George Carter (1889-1969) and the Gloster Meteor F mk 8. Carter, of the Gloster Aircraft Company, worked with Frank Whittle, pioneer of the jet engine, on the Meteor – the first operational jet aircraft which entered service in 1944 and soon set world speed records. The 37p stamp in the 1991 Scientific Achievements set featured a Gloster Whittle E28/39 airplane, marking the 50th anniversary of Whittle's jet engine.

The **63p** value (airmail letters, second weight step) features Sir Sydney Camm (1893-1966), a contemporary of Mitchell, and creator of the Hawker Hunter FGA mk 9. He is best-known perhaps for the classic fighter, the Hurricane which was shown on two 1965 Battle of Britain stamps, the 17p 1986 RAF stamp, and on a £1 book cover in 1980. Camm, described by Sir Henry Royce, as 'slow to decide and quick to act' was the driving force behind the vertical take-off Harrier.

'1947', writes Sir Norman Foster in the presentation pack, 'was a pivotal point in the history of world aviation which is inseparable from the lives of the five great British aircraft designers celebrated. In that year it was possible to take stock of the past and to glimpse the future: when Roy Chadwick tragically died in one of his own creations, when speed records were smashed by the pioneering jets.'

An article, by G E Drabble, on British stamps featuring aircraft was published here in September 1990.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets around a week before 10 June, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial 'first day of issue' postmark of the Bureau or Duxford, price £2.64 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £2.25 overseas (no VAT). Orders for covers must be received at the Bureau by 10 June. Collectors may send their

own stamped covers on the day of issue, for these cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA (for Duxford postmark). The outer envelope should be marked 'FD9709' (Bureau), or 'FD9710' (Duxford).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) 'first day of issue' handstamps. For details of special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe; £21.75 rest of world (airmail).

PRESENTATION PACK AND STAMP CARDS A presentation pack (price £2.25) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, and main post offices. The pack has been written by Sir Norman Foster, architect, aircraft enthusiast and designer of the new American Air Museum in Britain, to be opened by HM The Queen at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford near Cambridge on 1 August 1997. The 70,000 sq ft exhibition area will house Europe's finest collection of historic American combat aircraft from a First World War biplane to the giant B-52 jet bomber. A Philatelic Numismatic Cover (PNC) is to be issued in August on the anniversary of Chadwick's death.

American Air Museum enquiries Imperial War Museum, Duxford Airfield, Cambridge CB2 4QR. Telephone 01223 835000.

NEW MARGINAL MARKINGS The no dot sheets of these stamps have colour shade boxes for each basic colour – cyan (blue), magenta, black, and yellow – in the top left sheet margin. The dot sheets of the aircraft stamps have the traditional colour registration marks in this position ●

NPM Aircraft Postcards On 10 June the National Postal Museum will issue a set of four postcards to commemorate Aircraft (Aviators), coinciding with the Architects of the Air stamps. A special handstamp will be available on 10 June, cards and covers should be sent to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB. As readers are aware the Museum is temporarily closed for repair and not expected to reopen before late June. However customers who usually purchase postcards at the Museum can make an appointment (Monday-Friday) with the Shop Manager, Barry Tennant on 0171 600 8938, who will be happy to provide this issue for sale ●

Aircraft postcards price £1 the set, can, as usual, be obtained on mail order (post free) from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, quoting reference NPM 97/9-12.

NPM enquiries including latest on reopening date, should be made on 0171 600 8914.

1998 stamp issues Provisional dates of issue for next year's stamps are:

27 January Endangered Species

3 March The Queen's Beasts

1 April Comedians

2 June Lighthouses

30 June Health

11 August Carnival

8 September C S Lewis

6 October Speed

2 November Christmas

All dates given here are subject to change – any alteration will be published in the *Bulletin*.

A set recalling major events and personalities of 1997 will be issued in January, and the 1998 prestige stamp book in September ●



1p and 50p by Harrison & Sons (left) and Enschedé (right)

Definitives change of printers New printings of the 2p, 4p, 5p, 10p, 30p and 39p definitives produced by Harrison & Sons in photogravure, using EME cylinders, will be available from the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets from 27 May. Supplies will go into use at post offices as stocks of the earlier Enschedé printings are used up.

The 1p, 6p, 20p, 26p (gold), 43p, 50p, and £1.00 stamps, printed by Harrisons, were released in April; the 31p, 37p and 63p values will follow in August and the 26p in rust (replacing the gold stamp) in November. The £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 Castle stamps will in future be printed by Enschedé rather than Harrisons; new printings are scheduled for philatelic release in late July.

As *Bulletin* readers will know Walsall Security Printers (wsp) are now printing British stamps in photogravure as well as lithography. Following successful trials, the official start of pho-

togravure production took place on 23 January when Mr Adam Novak, Director and General Manager of Royal Mail National inaugurated printing of the 37p Jekyll and Hyde value in the Tales of Terror set. The sheets rolled smoothly through the seven cylinders printing the yellow, magenta, cyan (blue) and two black colours, also fluor and phosphor. Under ultra-violet light the fluor shows up clearly on the right side of Jekyll/Hyde's head. The colour cylinder numbers appear in the sheet margin in reverse order to the order of printing.

Both Mr Novak, and Mr Adrian Aspinall, Executive Chairman of wsp, spoke of the co-operation between Royal Mail and the printers. wsp are particularly proud of the gold awards they received as Royal Mail suppliers in 1994, 1995 and 1996. Amongst the Royal Mail officials at the ceremony was the *Bulletin* Editor who was intrigued to see the cylinders for the Dracula stamp stored, awaiting use, in wooden boxes closely resembling coffins!

wsp will in future print the Country stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales; new printings will go on philatelic sale on 1 July with supplies subsequently going into use at post offices as required ●

Special stamps colours The cylinder numbers and colours for all four Missions of Faith stamps are: 1A (greenish yellow) ● 1B (magenta) ● 1C (new blue) ● 1D (grey-black) ● 1E (gold). Cylinders for the four Tales of Terror stamps are: w1 (grey-black) ● w1 (black) ● w1 (new blue) ● w1 (magenta) ● w1 (greenish yellow) ● w1 (fluorescence). The Wives stamps in the Great Tudor issue were also printed from cylinders 2A1B2C1D1E, as well as 1A1B2C1D1E reported here in January ●

Stamp design success The Chase design group of Manchester were amongst the finalists in the Epica, Europe's Premier Creative Awards, for 1996 for the 100 Years of Going to the Pictures stamps issued in April last year. Interestingly this set was the least popular in our *Bulletin* stamp poll for 1996 ●

New philatelic postmarks Pictorial postmarks were introduced for each of the former philatelic counters in the early 1980s. Updated designs, now mostly inscribed ROYAL MAIL, followed by the town or city name, were introduced from 18 March 1997. Collectors wanting examples of these should send covers, franked with at least 1st class postage, to the relevant Special Handstamp Centre quoting the reference number of the postmark required. The postmarks are listed below under the relevant Centre:



Midlands Handstamp Centre

Royal Mail, Birmingham B1 1AA:
Birmingham 4642 • Coventry 4650
• Gloucester 4657 • Leicester
4662 • Nottingham 4671 • and
Stratford-on-Avon 4678



Wales and West Handstamp

Centre Royal Mail, Penarth Road,
Cardiff CF1 1AA:
Bristol 4644 • Cardiff 4647 •
Chester 4648 • Exeter 4654 •
Plymouth 4673 • and Truro 4679



Scotland/N Ireland Handstamp

Centre Royal Mail, 57 Queen
Street, Glasgow G1 3AZ:
Belfast 4641 • Edinburgh 4653 •
and Glasgow 4656



London Handstamp Centre

Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant,
London EC1A 1BB:
Croydon 4651 • London EC
(shows St Paul's) 4664 • London
EC3 (Tower of London) 4665 •
London SW 4666 • London WC
4667 • and Romford 4675



South East Handstamp Centre

Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough
SL1 1AA:
Bath 4640 • Brighton 4643 •
Cambridge 4645 • Canterbury
4646 • Colchester 4649 • Gatwick
4655 • Guildford 4659 • Norwich
4670 • Oxford 4672 • Portsmouth
4674 • Southampton 4676 •
Southend on Sea 4677 • and
Windsor 4680



Northern England Handstamp

Centre Forth Street, Newcastle
upon Tyne NE1 1AA:
Durham 4652 • Grimsby 4658 •
Harrogate 4660 • Leeds 4661 •
Liverpool 4663 • Manchester 4668
• Newcastle upon Tyne 4669 •
and York 4681

BY AIR MAIL *par avion*

Royal Mail

New airmail label The self-adhesive airmail label (etiquette) has been redesigned and now includes the Royal Mail name. The new design is also used on the new standard aerogramme (1 April) and the Alexander Graham Bell and Captain Cook aerogrammes issued in March •

New PO Country Chairmen Danny Carty OBE and Kenneth Graham respectively Chairmen of the Northern Ireland and Scottish Post Office Boards have recently retired. Mr Carty, who joined the PO in 1958 held various appointments including Assistant Controller of Posts in Scotland, before becoming Chairman in November 1980. He served as a member of the CBI Council and the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry. His successor is to be announced.

Kenneth Graham, Chairman in Scotland since November 1988, was formerly Group Managing Director of Scottish Universal Investments Ltd and Lonrho's Chief Executive in Scotland. As Chairman he opened the Stampway to the World exhibition in Glasgow in 1990 and has contributed forewords to the books sponsored by the Scotland Post Office Board, most recently *Operation Survival: A Celebration of People and Nature in Scotland* (see January *Bulletin*). The new Chairman is John Ward CBE, former Resident Director IBM Scotland and North of England, former Chairman CBI Scotland, and Visiting Professor of Accountancy at Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh •

The US Postal Service issued two 32c stamps featuring a stagecoach and ship, inscribed Pacific '97 on 13 March. Further 20c, 40c, 50c and 60c stamps are scheduled for issue during the exhibition, also 20c and 40c stamped postcards.

Pacific '97 San Francisco, 29 May to 8 June

THE NEXT international stamp exhibition of 1997 opens at the Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco on 29 May. The exhibition which runs until 8 June, celebrates the 150th anniversary of the first United States postage stamps. The organisers are particularly pleased that the US Postal Service, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and the National Postal

Museum will have a major presence at the exhibition which it is hoped will attract over 150,000 visitors. Special programmes are being staged for young visitors and seminars and talks will be presented by renowned philatelists.

Several leading British collectors will be exhibiting at Pacific '97 and Dr Alan Huggins, Francis Kiddle and Patrick Pearson will serve on the jury, with John Levett on the expert committee. The UK commissioner for the exhibition is Richard Payne.

Royal Mail will have a stand, manned by staff from the British Philatelic Bureau, selling a wide range of stamps and other philatelic items. Over 20 UK dealers will have stands at the exhibition •



Stamp scene Thematica • 21st Northeast philatelic weekend • Bridlington celebrates

Thematica This national thematic exhibition and fair, started 11 years ago by John Fosbery and Maurice Gale, is now an esteemed twice-yearly event in the philatelic calendar. A group of thematic collectors has recently discussed how the exhibition side should progress into the 21st century and how it can help the British Thematic Association promote thematic as the way forward to encourage new collectors both young and old. Collectors, societies and federations are invited to become a 'Friend' or 'Patron' of Thematica on payment of an annual subscription of £20 or £100. In addition to the normal thematic fair, the John Fosbery Trophy and BTA competitions, a number of workshops are planned together with a youth area set aside to promote thematic to the younger collector.

The first of this year's Thematica exhibitions will be held at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 on 28-29 June. As well as dealers from Britain and overseas, there will be the 16-sheet competition for the John Fosbery Trophy to find the most original and visually attractive entry, decided by the votes of visitors, and the BTA Trophy awarded to the best two-frame entry, with medals awarded according to standard attained. Meals and refreshments will be available, as well as plenty of tables of chairs for visitors to swap stories or even stamps. Admission free, opening hours are Saturday 28 June 10.30-17.30, Sunday 29 June 10.30-17.00. A champagne and strawberry reception will be held on 28 June for Friends and Patrons of Thematica. The next exhibition will be held 21-22 November •

Northeast philatelic weekend The 21st weekend will be held at the Swallow Hotel, Gateshead, 16-18 May. The programme covers many aspects of philately catering for both new and advanced collectors. The four guest speakers are all specialists in their own field. The weekends are noted for their friendly atmosphere and newcomers are assured of a warm welcome. For details send a large stamped addressed envelope to Mrs D M Martin, address opposite. The souvenir booklet for the events contains the pane issued to celebrate The Queen's 70th birthday and a strip of 1st class labels; the cover depicts the Bewick Swan. The booklet, not connected with Royal Mail, is produced in a limited edition, price £2. Some earlier booklets from previous weekends since 1982 are still available •

Bridlington Society celebrates The Bridlington & District Philatelic Society recently celebrated its 50th anniversary with an entertaining talk on forgeries by Graham Childs of Harmers of London. The display from the Harmers forgeries reference collection included Cape of Good Hope woodblocks. Members and guests enjoyed a jubilee cake prepared by Ann Stockhill and toasted the Society and members past and present. A stamp fair and exhibition will be held at Spa Hall, Bridlington on 7 June •

Enquiries from collectors

Brian Sole: 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, Esher KT10 0QG. Telephone 01372 467652

Brian Asquith: Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches SM5 4PQ

Colin Mount: Intrinseca, Southampton Road, Ringwood BH24 1HU

Enquiries from dealers

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

Orders or enquiries (send SAE) to: Dorothy M Martin, 46 Briardene Crescent, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 4RY

For details of the Society and its activities contact Malcolm Stockhill, 104 Sewerby Road, Bridlington, YO16 5DA. Telephone 01262 677394

North Atlantic air mails The 60th anniversary of the double

by Richard Beith



THE SEPTEMBER 1996 issue of the *Bulletin* celebrated the 60th anniversary of the double Atlantic flight of the *Lady Peace*: New York-Llwynyclyn (Carmarthenshire)-Croydon-Southport (Lancs)-Newfoundland-New York.

Eight months on, we commemorate another double Atlantic flight which shared two features with the earlier event. Firstly, the chief pilot for both flights was the same: Captain Dick Merrill of Eastern Airlines, and secondly, the return flight again used the sands at the Lancashire resort of Southport as the runway to New York.

The 1937 flight Captain Merrill had not been put off by his forced landing in Newfoundland. By the late spring of 1937 he was ready for another flight, this time hoping to return all the way to New York. His aim was to demonstrate the possibilities for commercial flight across the North Atlantic, the timing of the flight being arranged so that he should be able to carry photographs and the first films of the Coronation of George VI back to the USA on behalf of Hearst newspapers. This time, Merrill and his co-pilot, fellow

Eastern Airlines colleague, Jack Lambie, decided on a twin-engined plane, the Lockheed *Electra* 10-E NR 16059, christened *Daily Express*, after the British newspaper. At the time of the flight the plane was registered to the Anglo-American Goodwill Coronation Flight Inc of Washington DC, of which Dick Merrill was President and the previous owner Frank J Quinn, the Secretary-Treasurer.

The plane was powered by two Pratt and Whitney R-985 Wasp Junior engines and seven additional fuel tanks were fitted in the cabin and six in the centre wing section to provide a total capacity of 1270 gallons.

Setting off from New York on the afternoon of 8 May, they reached Croydon Airport in 20 hours 27 minutes, after a brief stop at RAF North Weald. By chance, they were able to carry the first dramatic photographs of the destruction of the *Hindenburg* which had occurred on 6 May. With the experience of the 1936 flight behind him, Merrill again chose to start his return flight from Southport Sands. The *Electra* was made ready for departure at 6 am on Thursday, 13 May, but they

Atlantic crossing of the Lockheed Electra *Daily Express*

Covers carry cachets in blue or red, inscribed ANGLO-AMERICAN GOODWILL CORONATION FLIGHT.

Covers signed by Lambie and Merrill are known. These covers bear the following postmarks:

● NEW YORK NY GPO MAY 8 2 PM 1937 ● LONDON EC 2.15 AM 13 MY 37 ● NEW YORK NY GPO, MAY 14 5 PM 1937

References

Beith, R Southport Sands to New York, *Air Mail News*, December 1989 pp75-9

Nixon, S Capt Henry T 'Dick' Merrill, 1894-1982, *Air Line Pilot*, January 1983

Thanks to Ken Clark, British Aerophilatelic Federation

waited in vain for the arrival of the Coronation newsreels from the south, the connecting plane being delayed by fog. They eventually left Southport at 9.13pm, with only still photographs of the Coronation events on board. A large crowd of local citizens gathered to see them off. They reached Floyd Bennett Field, New York, in 24 hours and 22 minutes after a brief stop at Squantum Naval Air Station, Quincey, Massachusetts, to check the fuel gauge. This double Atlantic crossing, using a commercial plane and carried out within a seven day period, was a notable achievement and was not duplicated until the August 1938 double flight of the four-engined FW 200: Berlin-New York-Berlin.

Aerophilatelic souvenirs In contrast to the September 1936 flight, Merrill and Lambie carried about 15,000 souvenir covers on the double trip which are still easy to locate. (They are listed in the American Air Mail Society catalogue under reference: TO 1280.) The 1½d GB Coronation stamp (SG 461) was used on its first day of issue. The covers were heavily promoted at the time by

the New York firm of Gimbels and by the British aerophilatelists FJ Field Ltd of Sutton Coldfield. In addition to the covers postmarked in London, a much smaller quantity, perhaps 20 in all, were posted in Southport for carriage on the return flight. One such cover using a printed Prince of Wales Hotel, Southport, envelope was illustrated in the local paper, *The Southport Visiter*, for 5 June 1937, with its SOUTHPORT LANGS 6.30AM 13 MY 37 postmark. The writer is not aware that any of these Southport-New York covers have survived in British aerophilatelic collections. As the new Coronation stamps were not available in Southport until the main Post Office opened at 8am, ordinary George VI and Edward VIII definitives were used.

Postscript What happened to the Lockheed *Electra*? It was utilised in the search for the missing Soviet airmen, Levanevsky et al, who were alleged to have disappeared during an attempted over-the-North Pole flight from the USSR to the USA in August 1937. In 1938 this Lockheed was exported to the USSR ●

George VI A look back at the stamps of George VI, first issued 60 years ago this month by Jean Matheson



Unadopted designs for 1937 Coronation stamps by Eric Gill (left) and Edmund Dulac (middle), and the issued stamp by Dulac. The stamp was based on the photograph above, by Dorothy Wilding.

LAST DECEMBER a Fort Belvedere, Windsor postmark recalled King Edward VIII's dramatic abdication in 1936, an event marked also by a recent cover bearing the King's portrait, patterns of his uncirculated coinage, and packs of specimens of the stamps that went on sale that September sixty years ago: the deep green ½d, deep scarlet 1d, the 'brown lake' 1½d and deep ultramarine 2d (SG 457-460). These stamps, the first to be produced from a photograph, were praised by some for their simplicity and execrated by others for the receding Crown hovering near the Monarch's 'guillotined' head. The general public rushed to buy these novelties, and *The Times* reported that in some cities the usual 10 days' supply sold within 24 hours of issue.

Joining the fray in *The Times* correspondence columns were Eric Gill, etcher, typographer, and a Royal Designer to Industry, who liked the stamps' lack of 'stupid ornamentation', and Edmund Dulac, a renowned illustrator and a medallist, who thought them ill-designed, with unsuitable lettering and a poor likeness of the King. Because preparations for a Coronation on 12 May 1937 were well-advanced when King Edward abdicated, it was felt that the new King George VI, and his Consort, Queen Elizabeth, should be crowned then, and Gill and Dulac were put to the test when the Post Office presently chose them to design new stamps to be issued by that date.

Dulac soon abandoned the image provided by the PO and, from a plaster cast, produced the head that would appear on nearly all King George's stamps. The ½d-6d stamps (SG 462-70) designed by Gill, showed a Tudor Crown over the Dulac head. On the 7d-1s values (SG 471-5) Dulac incorporated a different Crown in his hexagonal frame for the head, and in the corners were national flowers larger than the sprigs on Gill's stamps. The words 'Postage' and 'Revenue', omitted from King Edward's stamps, were re-instated on King George's.



Stamp by Eric Gill with the Dulac head

The Coronation Only the lowest denominations could be available in time for the Coronation. Even the novel Coronation stamp had briefly to serve as the 1½d definitive. This first British stamp to show a Monarch and Consort was Dulac's alone. He sent autographed specimens to two friends, joking that in time they might fetch as much as 6d each.

Based on a study by Dorothy Wilding, photographer to fashionable society, the stamp showed the King as Admiral of the Fleet, with the Queen in formal gown and tiara, among Coronation Regalia (SG 461). As Duchess of York, the Queen had figured on a Newfoundland stamp in 1932 (SG 226) and has now appeared on sufficient British and Commonwealth stamps to form a thematic collection. As Queen Mother she would inspire the first stamp to mark a Royal birthday, when Jeffery Matthews framed Norman Parkinson's photograph of her in a white border as backing for the legend (SG 1129), and John Gorham's stamps celebrating her 90th birthday repeat, on the 34p, the portrait that Newfoundland used long ago. The 29p too, echoed an earlier stamp, showing full-face Queen Elizabeth in the gown and jewels she wore for the Silver Wedding profile photograph.

In 1937, Queen Elizabeth in Coronation robes appeared alone on Australia's 5s stamp (SG 176), but generally King and Queen were shown together, as in a border of Maori design for New Zealand (SG 599-601), inset upon a view of Victoria Falls for Southern Rhodesia (SG 36-9), and on stamps for the Colonies and Dependencies.



Australia's 1937 5s stamp, with Queen Elizabeth in Coronation robes

High values Great Britain's highest values were issued mid-1939. The Crown, omitted from Dulac's design based on the Royal Arms, was restored on advice from the College of Heraldry, which then submitted a design by the Somerset Herald, G R Bellew; an obituarist in 1993 called him 'a designer, an artist, and a perfectionist in all things'. The King chose Bellew's design, asking only for minor alterations to letters and figures, and Dulac's also, asking that the Royal Arms be enlarged, and his own head correspondingly reduced. Dulac's 2s 6d and 5s values (SG 476-7), and Bellew's ornamental frame of national flowers around the Dulac head on the 10s stamp (SG 478), remained in use until 1948, a £1 value in the Bellew design – the first for almost 20 years – having joined them in 1947.



Dulac's 2s6d stamp, 1939

War-time ink shortages meant paler stamps – there were even proposals to save paper by issuing stamps half-size. But even in those days the centenary of the adhesive postage stamp could not pass unmarked in its birthplace, and Queen Victoria and her great-grandson, George VI, figured on



Centenary of the postage stamp by H L Palmer, with lettering by Eric Gill

Opposite above left to right: Special stamps for the return of peace, by Reynolds Stone and H L Palmer; Royal Silver Wedding by G T Knipe.

Opposite below left to right: Olympic Games by Dulac, UPU anniversary by Mary Adshead, and Festival of Britain by Dulac

commemorative stamps issued on 6 May 1940. Dulac had prepared a new head for Queen Victoria, to face the King's, but Harrison's H L Palmer's stamp bore the familiar Wyon head, so both faced left on the one-and-a-half-times sized stamp needed to accommodate them (sg 479-84). The lettering was a final contribution to stamp design from Gill, who died that year. To him, such work was only for times when he lacked other commissions, while Dulac became increasingly absorbed in its intricacies.

Peace The return of peace called for the first special stamps in several years. At this time, the PO – at the insistence of the Board of Trade – broke with its former advisers, the College of Heralds and national fine art institutions, and entered a – sometimes ambivalent – relationship with the new Council of Industrial Design. While it accepted the COID's nomination of the sculptor, Reynolds Stone, to design the 3d stamp (sg 492), it sought no collaboration on Palmer's 2½d (491), which was criticized for its crowded design of buildings, transport, flowers, and massive 'V' for Victory formed from searchlights backing the King's head. But Stone's stamp fared little better, mocked for including Masonic symbols, and the PO taken to task for pricing this 'better' stamp for overseas postage.

1948 commemoratives On 10 May 1948 two stamps, marking the third anniversary of the Channel Islands' liberation, illustrated the local seaweed harvesting. The 1d scarlet by Harrison's J R R Stobie, and the 2½d ultramarine by Edmund Blampied, a well-known Jersey artist, although intended primarily for the Islands, were valid for postage throughout the UK and available on the mainland – but at only eight Head Post Offices. Relatively unknown at the time, and unappreciated, they were our first pictorial stamps.



Unadopted designs for 1948 Silver Wedding and proposed 1940 Anglo-French stamps

In 1948 there was general acclaim for the upright format blue £1 stamp that the COID nominee, Joan Hassall, designed for the Royal Silver Wedding (sg 494). Miss Hassall incorporated Crown, value and the dates '1923-1948' to seem parts of the 'silver' frame for Dorothy Wilding's photograph of the Royal couple in profile. G T Knipe of Harrison's used the same photograph for his simple horizontal format blue stamp (493), and both stamps, issued on 26 April, omitted the words 'Postage' and 'Revenue' for the first time since King Edward's stamps. Philately owes the King, too, some acknowledgement for these stamps, produced at the eleventh hour after he rejected designs based on the PO's suggested theme – the King and Queen at Windsor Castle – and Miss Hassall's alternative, framing them in a garland of bells and blossoms.

On 29 July that year, four horizontal format stamps marked the Olympic Games' opening at Wembley (sg 495-8). The numismatic artist, Percy Metcalfe, designer of a 1937 Coronation medal, diverged from the Olympic rings' customary grouping to align them on the 2½d ultramarine. He, and Stanley Scott of Waterlow's who designed the bright purple 6d, incorporated the traditional laurels, Metcalfe's wreathing the globe, and on Dulac's



is brown the Winged Victory reflected the Olympics' origins. On the 3d violet, Abram Games, poster artist, depicted an athlete's head thrusting through the globe.

The Universal Postal Union's 75th anniversary on 10 October 1949 called for the fourth issue of special stamps within 18 months – more than were issued in the King's father's quarter-century reign. This brought more newcomers to stamp design, with the mural and portrait artist, Mary Adshead, centering the King's head against the hemispheres on the 2½d ultramarine, and H Fleury showing on the bright purple 6d, appositely if not clearly, the goddess Concordia carrying letters to the world. Metcalfe based his 3d violet on the UPU monument at Berne – altering the detail – and Bellew on the 1s brown (his final stamp design) girdled the globe with a posthorn (SG 499-502).

Festival of Britain New high value stamps appeared in 1951. Mary Adshead's green 2s6d and red 5s bore, respectively, oval-framed images of Nelson's HMS *Victory* and White Cliffs of Dover (SG 509-10) illustrating how stamp design was changing since the time when Gill and Dulac agreed on one point: that a stamp was not a picture. Metcalfe, on the other hand, incorporated Pistrucci's St George and Dragon in his blue 10s, while his brown £1 rendering of the Royal Arms, although differing in many details, was reminiscent of the Dulac 5s of earlier years (SG 511-2).

These horizontal stamps were issued on 3 May, simultaneously with those marking the Festival of Britain (SG 513-4). Games's 4d ultramarine featured his Festival symbol – Britannia's head impaled on the north point of the compass, flags strung from east to west. Dulac's scarlet 2½d showed Britannia stately in the type of helmet she had worn on the George v's 'sea horse' values, a horn of plenty for a Kingdom now at peace, and communications symbolised by the wand of Hermes, messenger of the gods. These were the last special stamps before George VI's untimely death. Throughout his reign he had held decided views on many of the designs submitted to him, and sometimes offered pertinent advice and comments ●

Acknowledgements

Drabble, G E Royal Anniversaries, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, March 1993, pp159-61

Last, Barbara Nine Royal Decades, *Bulletin*, August 1990, pp286-8

Mackay, James Stamps of the Four Kings: King George VI Definitive Stamps, *Bulletin*, March 1994, pp190-1

Rigbo de Righi, A G The King George VI High Values 1939-48, *Bulletin* March 1973, pp3-5 & April 1973, pp3-5

Watson, James British Special Stamps, *Bulletin* November 1974, pp4-5 (1947 Coronation), March 1975, pp5-6 (1948 Silver Wedding), April 1975, p4 (1948 Channel Is Liberation), July 1975, p11 (1951 Festival of Britain)

Watson, James The British High Value Stamps of the 20th Century, *Bulletin*, January 1974, pp4-5 (1948 Silver Wedding), February 1974, pp10-11 (1951 'Festival')

McCarthy, Fiona *Eric Gill*, Faber & Faber, 1989

Rose, Stuart *Royal Mail Stamps: A Survey of British Stamp Design*, Phaidon Press, 1980

White, Colin *Edmund Dulac*, Studio Vista, 1976

The House of Commons Post Office

The Editor visits the Palace of Westminster to talk to the Postmaster

EARLY IN MARCH I was privileged to spend a day at the Houses of Parliament as guest of Mr John Arnold who joined the Post Office in 1962 and has been Postmaster at the Palace of Westminster for the past nine years. He clearly enjoys his job and is proud of the work that he and his 33 staff do for peers, MPs, officials, and the many visitors to the Palace. It must be remembered that what we call the Houses of Parliament is still technically a Royal palace although the last king to occupy the original building was Henry VIII back in the 16th century.

As can be imagined the Commons PO deals with large quantities of mail each day, mainly letters sent by constituents to MPs and their replies. The earliest records of mail to the Commons date from the time of the Civil War and by the late 1690s boxes were provided outside the Commons chamber from where Members could collect their mail at their convenience. The boxes did not have secure locks and one Richard Froggatt was apprehended for stealing letters. Thereafter more careful control was introduced. Mail was taken to the House by Letter Carriers from the GPO in the City. The names of some of these carriers are recorded, Francis Coltson was appointed in 1768, with Charles and William Coltson in 1781 and 1799 respectively. Henry Lawford, appointed in 1854, became the first Postmaster 17 years later. John Arnold is the 17th Postmaster and hopes the title will continue.

The PO was housed in a small room at the southwest corner of the Members' Lobby after the Palace was rebuilt after the fire of 1834. Fifty years later this moved to the southeast corner and was expanded in 1892. The Telegraph Office in the Central Lobby was instituted at the same time and both offices enlarged in the 1900s. In 1891 the office dealt with 17,258 incoming and 51,637 outgoing telegrams. The last inland telegram was despatched on 1 October 1982 – the item is preserved in Mr Arnold's archives book.

In the 1920s the Postmaster and his staff were hard-pressed dealing with the volume of mail which often included gifts for all MPs. In one week alone they handled 30 sacks of tins of toffees shortly followed by 30 sacks of packets of cigarettes – one for each MP.



After the Commons chamber was damaged by a bomb in 1941, the PO was housed in a corridor between the Central and Members' Lobbies where it remained until new premises were ready in 1950. A special uniform and distinctive badge was then provided for House of Commons postmen on the personal order of the Postmaster General.



In 1941 the Commons chamber was severely damaged by a bomb and the MPs then met in the Lords chamber, with their lordships moving into the Royal Robing Room. Thus many of the great Parliamentary debates, and Churchill speeches of the Second World War took place in the Lords rather than the Commons chamber.

The Post Office today John Arnold is responsible for postal services to several premises within the 'Parliamentary Estate' – the Palace of Westminster and nearby buildings containing offices for MPs and various departments such as Finance, the Library, etc. The main PO counter, often used by visitors, is in the Central Lobby at the end of St Stephen's Hall (on the site of a former chapel), with separate counters for MPs in the Commons Lobby, and in one of the outbuildings opened in 1991. These provide a full range of counter services, such as the sale of stamps, postal orders, issue of licences, despatch of parcels, priority service mail, etc. The Central Lobby counter opens at 8am and stays open as long as one or other House is sitting, sometimes all night! Both Commons counters stay open until half an hour after the Houses rise. The outbuildings counter operates standard opening times, Monday to Friday.

Mr Arnold is quick to point out that his staff provide services of all three main Post Office businesses – Royal Mail, Post Office Counters Ltd, and Parcelforce. For administrative purposes he reports to Royal Mail's Area Manager at the London South sorting office in Nine Elms.

Incoming mail All incoming is handled at the London SW1 delivery office in Victoria. When the House is sitting the first delivery of mail arrives at the Commons sorting office at 1am, with further deliveries until 7am. All this is treated as the 'first delivery' and sorted ready for the arrival of MPs and staff. MPs tell Mr Arnold how they want their mail delivered – either to their secretaries in the outbuildings, forwarded to their home or constituency addresses, or to be collected.

The Commons sorting office contains 'pigeon-holes' for each of the 651 MPs (659 from next election), arranged alphabetically. The amount of mail varies from MP to MP, although most seemed to have quite a few letters when I visited. The pigeon holes have to be rearranged following a general election to take account of new Members. Having gone through this in 1992, John Arnold was quite relaxed about repeating the exercise after the forthcoming election. 'We work over the weekend following the election', he told me, 'so as to be ready when MPs come in for swearing-in during the following week.' During the election campaign former MPs are barred from using their offices and mail is redirected to their constituencies.

In addition there are some 90 pigeon holes for different departments such as the Lower Table, Fees, Admissions, and Computer offices, Refreshments, Library, Thomas Cook (for MPs' travel arrangements), even the Book-stall! New sorting equipment, provided by Royal Mail, was introduced last year with a ceremonial opening by the Speaker, The Rt Hon Betty Boothroyd MP.



EM Pike, the longest-serving Postmaster, held the post for 24 years from 1879 to 1903.



When John Arnold took over he found 20 of the posting boxes in bad repair and new ones were made of English oak (from trees blown down in Windsor Great Park during the 1987 storm), by students of the City of London Polytechnic (now Guildhall University). A reception, in the Speaker's House, was held when the new boxes were presented to the House by The Post Office in 1992.

Mail is sorted and bundled up for the appropriate department in the nine outbuildings and John Arnold's staff deliver and collect between the buildings. There are up to eight deliveries of mail from the SW1 delivery office each day, with the second and third deliveries at 11.20am and 2pm. The Commons sorting office is manned around the clock, except at weekends. A small sorting office within the House of Lords handles about 10 per cent of incoming mail.

Despatch of mail There are numerous collections of mail from some 28 posting boxes throughout the Palace. Some have just a single collection each day; others, such as at the Central Lobby counter, up to 16 beginning at 6.30am. The last normal collection is at 11pm, but there are early morning collections if one or both Houses are still sitting.

In the outgoing mail office a Stamp Cancelling Machine applies the 'House of Commons sw1' postmark in black to mail bearing stamps or to House of Commons prepaid envelopes. This machine was introduced in the mid-1960s by Postmaster General Tony Benn to cut down on the work of handstamping all mail. Some items, however, still receive House of Commons and House of Lords handstamps, both keenly sought by postmark collectors.

Mail from officials bears a rubber certifying stamp to show its status and red 'Official Paid' House of Commons or House of Lords handstamps are applied by the postal staff. The most frequently seen certifying stamp is that of the Speaker's Dept, others include Black Rod, and Clerk of the Parliaments. Up to 20,000 items are despatched each day when the House is sitting, rather less than incoming as much correspondence is posted by MPs from their constituencies or by ministers from their government offices.

Mail from the outbuildings is not handled in the Commons despatch office but goes direct to the main London South sorting office at Nine Elms where it receives a 'House of Commons sw' (no 1 after sw) machine cancel. This is always applied in red, readily distinguishing it from mail processed in the Palace of Westminster itself.

Many letters from MPs now receive this machine postmark; a 'House of Commons/s.w.' handstamp is also used at Nine Elms.

Internal mail A considerable amount of mail is generated within the Palace and the outbuildings. Letters and packets addressed to MPs, from fellow Members, ministers and officials, are placed in the Letters



Board in the Commons Lobby, run by Parliamentary rather than PO staff. Each Member has a pigeon hole in this Board and his or her name is illuminated if there are letters to collect. All items are given a certifying stamp of the Speaker's Dept including the initials LB for Letters Board. Any letters still in the board at 11pm are cleared and handed over to the PO, weighed to calculate a handling charge, given the Official Paid datestamp, and delivered to members in the next morning's post (described above). This explains why collectors of Parliamentary mail can find covers addressed to MPs with both the LB marking and Official Paid handstamp. Large quantities of mail are distributed via the Letters Board and, I was told, the LB handstamps need frequent replacement.

Parliament on stamps The Palace of Westminster has featured on surprisingly few British stamps: Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, 1961 and 1973; Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference, 1975; and one of the Australian Bicentenary set of 1988. The Clock Tower features on the 50p 'London 1980' stamp; the old Parliament buildings on the long 2s6d stamp of 1965 marking the 700th anniversary of Simon de Montfort's Parliament; and the portcullis Parliamentary emblem

on one stamp for the 40th anniversary of The Queen's Accession, 1992. Parliament has featured on numerous Commonwealth issues such as the 1946 Victory omnibus series and the Rhodesia 1965 Churchill commemoration stamp.

As well as the operational postmarks mentioned above, many philatelic cancels in recent years show the Palace or the Clock Tower; these were, however, applied at a Royal Mail sorting office or special handstamp centre.



Tour of the Palace The Palace of Westminster is a fascinating place – a veritable rabbit-warren of corridors, rooms and passage ways. Under the expert guidance of John Arnold I saw more than I had seen on previous visits. It is surprising just how small the Commons chamber is compared to the Lords. Perhaps the most interesting place is Westminster Hall, the oldest part of the Palace and scene of many momentous occasions in British history including the trial of King Charles I. In more recent times

For details of public admission to the Palace, or a copy of the factsheet, phone 0171 219 4272.

it has been used for the lying in state of Sir Winston Churchill, addresses from The Queen, and speeches by visiting overseas statesmen. I went up the Clock Tower to hear to Big Ben (the name of the bell, not the tower) chime 12 noon when it is actually broadcast live on the BBC World Service. It was not so deafening as I feared, but the ascent and descent of over 300 steps tested my fitness! But the view from the top was well worthwhile and I learned much from the guide. The vital role of the Palace's PO was brought home to me by the warm greeting given Mr Arnold by peers, MPs and officials wherever we went in the building.

For more information on the House of Commons PO and postmarks readers are referred to a factsheet no 60 produced by Chris Pond of the Commons Public Information Office in 1992, James Mackay's *Official Mail of the British Isles*, published 1983, and Colin Peachey's articles in the *British Postmark Bulletin* 2 December 1994 and 13 December 1996. Visitors may post mail at the Central Lobby counter to receive the House of Commons machine postmark; Mr Arnold regrets he cannot service covers sent in by collectors as the reposting service does not apply to his office •

Some material quoted by permission from PIO factsheet number 60 (Parliamentary copyright, House of Commons reserved)

Eminent early collectors The wide-ranging interests and expertise of Leslie L R Hausburg, by Ron Negus FRPSL

LESLIE LEOPOLD RUDOLPH HAUSBURG was just nine years old when he began collecting stamps. This early introduction came about one day in 1881 when he and his younger brother saw their father destroying some old correspondence in their home in Penshurst, Kent, and asked if they could keep the stamps from the envelopes. His brother eventually stopped collecting and took up photography as a hobby, but Leslie continued to add to his collections throughout his school-days in Tunbridge Wells and at Clifton College.

His interest in stamps continued when he went to Trinity College, Cambridge in 1891 to read mathematics. A year later, a college friend, Mr Geldard, proposed Hausburg for membership of the (now Royal) Philatelic Society, London. With the application being seconded by Douglas Garth, then Secretary of the Society, Hausburg was elected on 28 October 1892. A week later, his father sent eight guineas (£8.40) to secure Life Membership of the Society for Leslie, who was now in his 20th year.

By 1894, Hausburg had obtained his degree, with honours, and undertook an apprenticeship

in electrical engineering. He completed this successfully, but never entered the profession as he had ample private means. He chose instead to travel, and visited most parts of the world. During these visits, he always contacted the leading collectors and dealers at every port of call and added to his collections.

Wimbledon finalist Hausburg was a skilled amateur tennis player and represented his University regularly. He also took part in the Wimbledon Championships, and in the early 1890s was a losing finalist in the Men's Doubles, partnered by C O Hatton. It was during a tournament that he first met his wife, Beatrice, who was a sister of the then famous tennis-playing Riseley brothers. Beatrice and Leslie married in 1895, and after their marriage often played as mixed-doubles partners in various competitions.

One of his wife's brothers married the daughter of M F Castle, who was a prominent member of the Philatelic Society. Thus, Hausburg and Castle became acquainted through tennis and actually met initially at a tournament in Brighton

in 1894. Their joint passion for stamps ensured a close friendship that lasted for their lifetime. In 1897, after attending a tournament in Nice, the two men journeyed together to Paris where Castle introduced Hausburg to many of the leading Continental dealers, and he was able to augment his collection significantly.

His philatelic interests were wide-ranging and, whilst he built up a very fine Australian collection, he also made notable collections of India, Hong Kong, Grenada, Jamaica, South and Central America and, in his later years, of the first issue of Greece. One of Hausburg's most notable purchases was made in 1903 when he paid the huge sum of £400 for one of the 14 known copies of the 1854 Western Australia 4d, 'Swan' with the inverted frame.

An expert plater

As a collector, Hausburg always studied his specimens in great depth, and was an expert at plating. Charles J Phillips said of him 'in this line, in my opinion, he has never been excelled by any collector in the world'. Sir John Wilson,

Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collections, writing in *The West End Philatelist* (March-April 1954, page 19) said of Hausburg '...it is doubtful whether there was ever a greater student of the stamps themselves. His genius in reconstructing plates and stones was extraordinary, and it was not limited to any particular printing process, as witness his work on Mexican or New Zealand engraved issues, Victorian or Haitian surface-printed and Victorian, Indian or South American lithographs'.

He was always keen to share his findings with fellow collectors, and published more than 30 different papers on his researches in *The London Philatelist*, the *Philatelic Record* and *Gibbons' Monthly Journal*.

His most notable literary work was the publication in 1907 of a monograph entitled *The Postage and Telegraph Stamps of British India*, which received much critical acclaim.

His expertise as a philatelist was soon noted at the Philatelic Society and in 1900 he was appointed to the Council. He served on the Publications and Programme Committees of the Society, and when Gordon Smith died in 1905, Hausburg took his place on the Expert Committee. In the following year, London was the venue for an International Philatelic Exhibition, and Leslie Hausburg shared the task of organising the event with another well-known Society member, H R Oldfield.

Secretary of Royal This was to be a fore-runner to later collaboration between these two eminent

collectors. In 1913, the death of J A Tilleard, then Hon Secretary of the Royal (as the Philatelic Society, London had now become) led to Hausburg being asked to take over the post. In the following year, the Articles of the Society were altered so that Joint Honorary Secretaries could be appointed, and H R Oldfield joined Hausburg in this shared role, and remained thus until Hausburg died.

Another task undertaken willingly by Hausburg whilst in office was to act as Hon Secretary of the National Philatelic War Fund – established in 1915 by representatives of all sections of philately to hold auctions to raise money for the Red Cross. Four auctions were held in 1915-17 and large sums of money raised: the success of this venture was due largely to Hausburg's personal efforts.

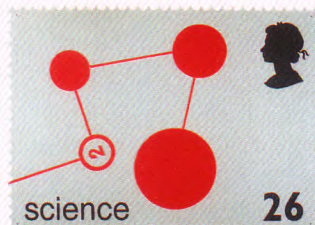
The hard work he had put in to these various activities eventually led to a breakdown in his health and from the spring of 1917, he was confined to his home at Weybridge, Surrey being nursed constantly by his wife. In late June, he contracted pneumonia, and on 3 July 1917 died aged 45. After his death, his main collection of Victoria was sold to King George V for almost £¹/₄ million at current prices. The balance of his collections were purchased by Thomas H Hall, later President of the Royal Philatelic Society ●



'Millenium' student stamp designs

Entries were judged by Dennis Bailey, Ronald Maddox (stamp designer), Barry Robinson (Design Director Royal Mail), W F Rodgers (Questa) and John Orford (Harrisons).

A look at some of the winning entries in the postage stamp section of the Royal Society of Arts design competition



EACH YEAR the Royal Society of Arts organises a design competition for students at colleges of art. The competition is sponsored by leading companies and organisations, including Royal Mail and two of its stamp printers – Harrisons and Questa. Established in 1924, the competition aims to identify young designers of outstanding promise and to bring their talents to the attention of industry.

Of particular interest to *Bulletin* readers are entries in the postage stamp section of the competition. The brief for the 1996/97 competition was to design stamps marking the Millenium. The winners were (above, clockwise from top left) Stephen Tongay and Stuart Hall of Richmond upon Thames College in association with Kingston University, Joanna Finlason of Southampton Institute of Higher Education, Clare Skeats of Bath College of Higher Education, and Richard Garner of the University of Salford.

The Postage Stamp section of the RSA competition started in 1971; subjects in recent years have included Shakespeare's Globe, Summertime, Peace and Freedom, Childrens' TV, and Christmas. Some of the winning designs have featured in the *Bulletin* and other philatelic publications. The best designs in the 1985/86 competition, by Sarah Godwin, were subsequently used for the 1987 Sir Isaac Newton issue •

Full steam ahead The Talyllyn Railway Letter Service, by Postmaster Sara Eade and designer Neill Oakley



Talyllyn Railway Letter 20p



No.1 Talyllyn built 1865 by Fletcher Jennings

For details of Talyllyn stamps and covers write to Sara Eade, Postmaster, Talyllyn Railway Company, Wharf Station, Tywyn, LL36 9EY.

THE TALYLLYN RAILWAY in mid Wales is proud to celebrate the 40th anniversary of its Railway Letter Service on 23 May. The service is authorised by The Post Office and is a descendant of the original Railway Letter Service Agreement of 1891 between the Postmaster General and the then operating Railway Companies. Its Postmaster, Sara Eade, reflects on a job that has to cater for philatelists and tourists alike.

The Talyllyn Railway was built specifically to carry slates from the Bryn Eglwys quarries near Abergynolwyn to the coast at Tywyn, a distance of about seven miles. The Railway, built to a 2 ft 3 in gauge was opened in 1865 and closed in 1950. Rescued from oblivion by railway enthusiasts, it is now a major tourist attraction.

The Talyllyn Railway started the railway preservation movement in 1950 and just seven years later in May 1957, the railway issued its first railway letter stamp or should I say 12 stamps, for in fact, two sheets were produced with the same designs but in different colour ways. This first issue must have been a nightmare for collectors and is one of the things we keep in mind today when deciding what to produce and how to produce it.

We work on a three year programme so that we have a fair idea about what to celebrate, new stamps, cover and cancel designs and the practicalities like copyright and permissions, etc in plenty of time, though that doesn't always sort

out everything. There was the year when we got the date on the cancel wrong, and the year we got everything done and then asked the PO to cancel the stamps at Aberystwyth and half of the covers were damaged.

We have a policy of trying only to produce stamps and/or covers for significant events in the life of the railway or the surrounding area so the PO's 1988 Bible issue was linked to Mary Jones' walk from Llanfihangel y Pennant, near to Tywyn, to Bala to buy a Bible which led to the founding of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The centenary of Marconi's first wireless message was commemorated as there was a Marconi wireless station at Tywyn and his yacht could often be seen at Aberdovey. In the year 2000, the Preservation Society will be 50 years old so plans are well in hand for special stamps.

Each cover is usually printed with the appropriate design and a postal address together with the vital 'to be posted at...'. The envelope is fitted with a filler card and then the Talyllyn Railway letter stamp is applied. We are only allowed to place this on the bottom left hand side of the envelope. This stamp is then cancelled and the PO first class stamp is added last as this is the most expensive element. The covers are then carried by train.

In the season, this is easy and we usually carry them on the first available train so that we can get them to the sorting office in plenty of time to

be cancelled. Mail trains carry a 'Mail Special' headboard and a compartment is reserved for the box and its minder.

On arrival at the destination station, the box is taken to the local sorting office where we have our own cancel. As we only produce covers to coincide with a PO stamp issue very occasionally, the covers can be available for sale on the day of production.

Out of season, we have to arrange a special train, when a diesel locomotive or a steam locomotive, coach and guards van will convey the covers to comply with the regulations.

We have, on two occasions, operated a night TPO with a special headboard and TPO Night Up and TPO Night Down cancels. On both occasions, a guards van was 'transformed' to double as a Travelling Post Office and throughout the week of 25-30 May we shall be operating a promotional Travelling Post Office to feature the service as well as offering travellers the opportunity to send souvenir covers and postcards via the railway.

At the top of the drive at Wharf Station stands a Victorian post-box, a fitting link to the modern Post Office, for a railway incorporated by an Act of Parliament in 1865.

Today all our designs are discussed by the committee and worked up by Neill Oakley, the compiler of the Railway Letter Stamp Handbook, and we use a variety of printers depending on what we want the finished design to achieve. We try very hard to produce the covers on the actual anniversary date and this does, sometimes, cause us some practical problems. Items produced on 31 December or 1 January cannot usually be cancelled until 2 January and whilst we could use a 'to be called for' facility, when the railway is authorised to cancel both the Talyllyn and PO stamps, we have found that the collectors prefer PO stamps to be cancelled with a PO cancel.

But the service has a more practical side as throughout the season each train carries a posting box and stamps and members of the public can produce their own souvenir covers or cards which they can post on the train. We also produce a wide range of pre-stamped covers and cards which the general public can buy, write and



post whilst visiting the railway. Each major station carries stamps and pre-stamped covers and cards and volunteer staff are only too happy to help especially with providing the correct postage for the overseas visitors.

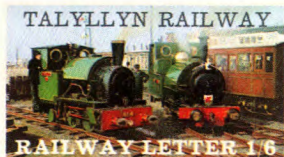
As we celebrate our 40th year of operation, our plans include a celebration weekend, displays and speakers, a dinner, a gravity mail train, a miniature sheet of four stamps commemorating the 1891 agreement, 1957, the start of the Talyllyn Railway Letter Service, the 1974 agreement and the 40th anniversary celebrations in 1997. Later in the year we will be producing a pre-printed envelope and stamp to mark the centenary of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee; this will be available from 22 June until the end of Victorian Week in August.

Operating a Railway Letter Service is a lot of hard work but it's also a lot of fun too and anyone wanting to see us in operation is welcome to join in with our 40th anniversary celebrations •

Neill Oakley, designer of recent Talyllyn Railway stamps, writes The Talyllyn Railway has a policy of issuing stamps for important anniversaries and the needs of the service only, believing that producing too many issues reflects badly on the integrity of the service. Although theory does not always match practice, advance plans are made to ensure a programme of events is spread appropriately over two or three years. If suitable occasions are identified by the Railway Letter Service Committee possible subjects or design elements are discussed. Usually it is left to the designer to sketch out rough drafts and seek comments before approval is given to develop the



**TALYLLYN
RAILWAY LETTER 1/3**



**TALYLLYN RAILWAY
RAILWAY LETTER 1/6**



**TALYLLYN RAILWAY
RAILWAY LETTER FEE 25**

Designer/Cynlluniwr: Neil
Printed by/Argraffwyd

The House of Questa

final artwork. Some railways employ professional designers but the TR appears happy with my services, perhaps because I only charge for pencils and ink.

An important aspect of designing railway letter stamps, unlike Royal Mail issues, is the amount of lettering required in the design to ensure that each stamp is not mistaken as being valid for postage. For a number of the Welsh narrow gauge lines, this problem is compounded by a policy of including the Welsh form of the text. With so much to incorporate recent Talyllyn anniversary issues avoid more text by placing the appropriate legends in the margins of the sheet. This has the added benefit of not limiting the stamp design just to the anniversary and allowing its use on other occasions.

Originally, my lettering was hand-drawn or dry transfer, and then computer generated in horizontal lines. The latter meant that when lettering on a curve was required, the individual characters would be cut up and pasted into the correct position. Better control of computers now allows me to produce the various colour separations and layouts direct. These are supplied to the printer as a series of individual sheets with notations as to the colour and stamp design to which they apply.

Since I am not a trained artist or graphic designer, my pictorial designs would not be achieved without gathering a great deal of reference material. Usually this is a combination of historic views and my own sketches or recent photographs. With artwork prepared to the correct dimensions, but four times linear scale, I try to include as much detail as I can even if, despite

the quality of modern reproduction, the smallest items may be lost in the final stamp. Better that than discover bare patches exist because the printer has excelled himself.

The completed file of artwork is sent to the printers accompanied by instructions as to the colours, format of the sheet and the quantity of stamps to be printed. Frequently, when the design has only one or two colours, there is seldom need for the printer's preparations to be approved. When security printing is involved, and all parties wish to see the highest standards, a proof can identify slight changes which might improve the colour balance, enhance detail in a particular area of a photograph or reveal a misunderstanding about the instructions. Any alterations are noted on an accompanying form and both are returned to ensure all the changes are completed.

Over the years the Talyllyn Railway has used a number of different printing firms chosen according to the type and complexity of the individual job. When ordering the small print runs preserved railways require, the setting up of the printing plates and machines is a major proportion of the expense. Unit costs have to be kept low to make the whole process viable and this has sometimes meant issuing one or two-colour stamps when finances are limited. Through the hard work and co-operation of Margaret Atkins at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, a number of railways now co-ordinate their printing of stamp designs to permit the employment of the highest quality security printing. Not only do the stamps look superb, they are also produced with round-holed perforations rather than the cheaper line-perforations, or roulettes •

Postbag



Prince of Wales visits Ukraine I am a member of a philatelic club in Sevastopol (Ukraine) and specialise in British stamps and FDCs and also philatelic material of many countries dedicated to the history of relations between Russia and GB. Many others in the club have similar interests.

Sevastopol has a special place in the history of the Crimean War, 1853-56, between Russia and GB, France and Turkey. The British Memorial Complex, with the cemetery of the last English military men in this war, is near Sevastopol.

The Prince of Wales visited Sevastopol in November 1996 to take part in ceremonies relating the 140th anniversary of the end of the Crimean War. He visited the places of the famous Balaclava and Inkerman battles, also the British Memorial Complex. The Sevastopol Philatelic Club overprinted some Post Office stamped covers to commemorate the visit. I enclose a copy, which I hope will be of interest to your readers. SERGEY A LINCHEVSKY, SEVASTOPOL, UKRAINE

First day covers As a person who first became interested in philately a long time ago but had to give it up for a considerable time I have found, on my return to the hobby a couple of decades later, some strange shifts in present-day thinking. One of these concerns first day covers.

I was advised originally that these had to (1) actually pass through the post, 'naked' and on their own merit as mail and therefore (2) have an address written, stamped, typed or printed on

them. The only concession to their status was that they could be posted in special boxes in order that a special handstamp cancellation could be applied to them by the Post Office, or that they could be sent under cover to the Philatelic Bureau for similar treatment. A later, apparently grudging, relaxation was that a peelable address label was permitted: this meant that covers could be acquired after their 'sell by' date from various sources and one's own address substituted – but an un-addressed FDC was not acceptable; that basically indicating it had never been legitimate mail – each had to bear an address to which it had to be delivered!

In present times, of course, FDCs are a major business, but (1) they are dispatched under cover, (2) the stamps are cancelled with datestamps specially commissioned for the occasion, but which are never postally used, and (3) there is very often little or no space left on the envelope to accommodate any address. In other words, they are pictorial objects, not postal ones, their only claim to being philatelic is that stamps are included as part of the overall design, and they might as well be created on sheets of paper or card. The same applies to 'special' covers.

In those early days, too, one could obtain stamps from many small countries (Monaco and San Marino spring to mind) which printed them by the million, well in excess of their own legitimate postal requirements; unashamedly for the sole purpose of selling them as a commodity, to raise national revenue. These had a carefully-applied circular datestamp neatly placed over the common corner of each otherwise mint stamp in a block of four, were described scathingly as 'cancelled to order' – and were looked down on with great scorn as items of 'phoney philately'.

Am I on my own in seeing a parallel? HAMISH BRUCE, CARLISLE

Bulletin back issues Mr J Jones of 51 Irby Road, Heswell L61 6UY offers for sale vols 8-13 • Mr M Timbrell of 15 Shepherds Way, Cirencester GL7 2EY offers vols 7-8, 9 (Nos 4-12), 11 (No 12), 12 (complete), and 13-33 to anyone willing to collect or pay postage •

Competition Win an ultraviolet lamp worth £74.95!

THIS MONTH'S COMPETITION is sponsored by the leading Machin specialists John M Deering. Appropriately, the first prize is a UVITEC Micro 'Dual' (short/long-wave) ultraviolet lamp. Why 'appropriately'? Because a UV lamp is vital for studying phosphors and (latterly) fluors, and so for fully appreciating Machins.

John M Deering are primarily a firm of specialist stamp dealers, who after more than 16 years' experience are recognised as among the world's foremost experts – and largest dealers – in the Machin definitive series which started in 1967. Their comprehensive range includes regionals and high values; singles and coils; all types of booklets; cylinder, plate, date and warrant blocks; and specialised Machin FDCs. Naturally, they also offer (and are keen to buy) perf, phosphor and colour shifts and every other error and variety associated with Machins.

But there is much more than that. They can supply virtually any philatelic accessory: not just UV lamps but catalogues, albums, and the best-selling Measuring Magnifier – an excellent tool for accurately checking all the measurable aspects of stamps. They are also the official distributors of *The Complete Deegam Machin Handbook*. Moreover, a frequent comprehensive New Issue service, tailored to each collector's personal requirements, is available. Most New Issue material is discounted against full retail prices, offering collectors significant savings; and every distribution is accompanied by a complete, detailed, illustrated list. John Deering himself contributes a regular and popular feature to *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* in the form of his 'Machin Watch' articles.

For the firm's New Issue brochure pack and a complimentary selection of publications (including window booklets and regionals price-lists, and 'Modern GB Update' – a regular newsletter, covering new material and some older gems, which is available by subscription), please write to: **John M Deering, PO Box 2, South Molton, EX36 4YZ. Telephone 01398 341564.**

To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: May Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL to arrive by 20 June. Entries must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded. The answers will be found in this *Bulletin*.

- 1 Who joked that his autographed stamp might one day fetch 6d?
- 2 Who designed the Architects of the Air stamps?
- 3 How many posting boxes are there in the Palace of Westminster?
- 4 Who died on 3 July 1917, age 45?
- 5 What are the dates for the Pacific '97 exhibition?



1st prize UVITEC Micro 'Dual' (long-wave and short-wave) Ultraviolet lamp, sold for £74.95

2nd prize £1 (4 × 25p) 'Inspiration for Victory' No 4 vending booklet, missing phosphor, with at least one full-perf single, sold for £35

3rd prize Measuring Magnifier, sold for £14.99

The winners of the February competition were M Harvie of Dundee (1st prize), A Hansen, Humlebek, Denmark (2nd) and J Hughes, Kent (3rd).

The answers 1) KVB 193D; 2) St Columba; 3) 1000; 4) Kate Greenaway; 5) Bristol Philatelic Society. Our thanks to all who entered.

The competition is not open to employees, their families and agents, of Royal Mail or John M Deering.

Books Automatic letter sorting by Patrick Awcock • A life of Alexander Graham Bell, by James Mackay

Automatic Letter Sorting in the United Kingdom Volume 1: Direct Sorting Machines, 1st and 2nd Generation Coding Desk Idents

This, the first part of volume 1, was written by Patrick Awcock, the well-known postal mechanisation expert, who has been involved with the subject for more than 30 years. He has an obvious source of collectable envelopes sent to an address in East Grinstead as these make up many of the illustrations in the book.

The first thing to say is that this is a publication which is not for the faint-hearted, being designed for the serious student, probably with a mathematical bent, rather than the casual observer. Don't expect pretty, coloured pictures. There aren't any.

If, like me you do not have a ready source of used envelopes, you might be put off. But you should not let that influence you too much. The history of the development of postal mechanisation is very interesting even if you choose to illustrate it with just a few key examples. This history is written up in the book and it makes a more than useful contribution in that respect. Like everything else in this technological age changes can be extremely rapid, and it needs dedication such as this to create a detailed record for the benefit of future historians.

This makes it a virtual necessity for most collectors of UK postal mechanisation material. I say 'most collectors' because if your only interest is Aberdeen, Croydon, Liverpool or Manchester among the 15 areas not covered you can forget it! They are not included. This first part covers those areas where coding desks have been withdrawn and not those where desks are either in use or are available for use in an emergency. Parts 2 and 3 are planned to complete the exercise when all coding desks are finally withdrawn. This is not now expected until 1999 at the earliest.

This first part is planned to be a final work, but real life being what it is, I will not be surprised if

something turns up to alter the author's plans. If so, a postscript or two will be necessary for the sake of completeness and accuracy.

For those readers who are not into the subject idents are letters, numbers or a combination of the two which identify the desk used to apply the coding dots during the sorting process. Idents may also be applied to envelopes to identify the operation as well as the desk. They are part of the quality control process.

For the collector they are of interest because they have individual characteristics which enable mechanisation developments and changes to be monitored. They are also subject to variations which are considered to be very collectable.

The book provides a glossary of typical idents and then gives detailed listing by area, by type of coding desk, together with variations wherever they occur.

It also explains the different sizes and types of coding dots, which were the subject of a number of changes over time.

Scarcity is not mentioned. However it is reasonable to assume that idents having a short period of use are not likely to be very thick on the ground.

Nor is it a price list. It is not a subject which lends itself to that. However items are traded between members of the Postal Mechanisation Study Circle and some of these make reasonably high but not exorbitant prices.

In conclusion I consider this to be an important work of reference for collectors who are interested in postal markings, especially post codes. It is a partwork which will reach completion only when parts 2 and 3 are issued. At £11.50 postpaid UK (£12.50 overseas), it is not cheap but considering the amount of work which has gone into it, and the probably limited market, pretty good value for money. Available from the author, Smallacre, Chelwood Gate, Haywards Heath RH17 7LY. *Reviewed by D W Staddon* ●

Sounds Out of Silence: A Life of Alexander Graham Bell

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of this great inventor, principally remembered for the telephone – the subject of numerous centenary stamps in 1976. To mark Bell's sesquicentenary a Scottish aerogramme was issued in March, and this new biography by *Bulletin* contributor James Mackay has been published. Alexander was the son of Melville Bell, inventor of Visible Speech which revolutionised phoenetics and linguistics. Inspired by his deaf mother to try to communicate with deaf-mutes and teach them to speak, he explored the mechanism of speech, sound and hearing, and discovered the principles of the telephone, arguably the most important invention of all time. Without it, the gramophone, radio, television, internet and videophone could not have been possible. Bell also invented the iron lung and pioneer aircraft, improved the breeding of sheep, and co-founded the National Geographical Society. Dr Mackay follows Bell's career from his early days in Edinburgh, through studies and teaching in London and Europe to fame and riches in North America. Of particular interest are Bell's fruitless dealings with the Post Office, then responsible for telecommunications as well as posts. In 1874 he wrote to Richard Culley, Chief Superintendent of Telegraphs, about his experiments but received a pompous stock reply. Mackay comments: 'In mitigation, Culley was a very sick man... Had his assistant, William Preece, dealt with the matter, the outcome might have been very different. Preece had the vision and the imagination that Culley lacked. Twenty years later he would be the first to appreciate the genius of Marconi.' Bell was affronted by the po attitude and for a while ceased his experiments. Later, in the USA, he made the historic first telephone call to his assistant Tom Watson on 10 March 1876. The rest, as they say, is history. The book contains interesting photographs of Bell's inventions and family portraits.

320 pages. Available from booksellers or Mainstream Publishing, 7 Albany Street, Edinburgh EH1 3UG. Price £20, postage £2.70 UK, £4.50 overseas •

Events

National Postal Museum The Museum is expected to reopen in June after rebuilding work. **Phone** 0171 600 8914 for latest information

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

Until 4 May 'Keeping You Posted' exhibition at Museum of Lancashire, Preston. Open 10.00-17.00 (not Thurs & Sun). Admission charge. **Enquiries** P Gaywood 01772 684302/J Rayment 01722 264061

3 May South Wales Phil Socs Annual Convention at Princess Royal Theatre, Civic Centre, Port Talbot, 10.00-16.30. Admission 30p. Dealers, PO sales counter, displays, etc. **Enquiries** G N Prior, 20 Heol y Sheet, North Cornelly, Bridgend CF33 4EY

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

16-18 May Northeast Philatelic Weekend at Swallow Hotel, Gateshead. Speakers, displays, discussions, etc. **Enquiries** Mrs D M Martin, 0191 285 5115

18 May Machin Collectors Club Annual Fair at Catthorpe Manor, Catthorpe, Leics. **Enquiries** M Philpott, 01263 733586

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

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

FIVE WAYS TO SHOW YOUR COLLECTION AT ITS BEST



Half the pleasure in collecting stamps and related philatelic products is their presentation. And what finer way to display your collection than in official Royal Mail albums.

Whatever you collect, be they first day covers, presentation packs, stamp cards, stamp books, cylinder blocks, or simply single stamps, there is a Royal Mail album to keep your collection in pristine condition. Royal Mail albums are made of hardwearing leather-look material with gold-embossed covers. Continuation pages are available as your collection grows.

Both **First Day Covers** and **Presentation Packs** Albums hold up to 70 covers/packs • The **Postcards** Album accommodates 130 Royal Mail stamp cards • The **Universal** Album (supplied with slip-case) allows you to tailor make an album to suit your own needs, containing pages for single stamps, blocks, covers, packs, even postal stationery • The **Stamps** Album contains traditional gradille album pages for you to arrange your collection as you wish.

Prices £19.95 each Universal and Stamps Albums, £16.50 each others.

British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT
UK Telephone order line 0345 641 641

