

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Volume 35 Number 5

JANUARY 1998 • 85P

Bulletin

Postal stationery • Philatelic
Hound of the Baskervilles

On the 650th anniversary of the Order of the Garter, five new stamps feature the Queen's Beasts, created by sculptor James Woodford RA for the Coronation in 1953.



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover photograph The White Lion of Mortimer, one of the Queen's Beasts sculpted by James Woodford. Royal Mail's Queen's Beasts stamps are featured on page 132.

Photograph courtesy of RCHME. © Crown copyright. Reproduced with permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office and James Woodford.

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, Norwich Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth Portsmouth, Southampton Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage Stratford-on-Avon, Truro, Windsor and York.

5 January

Issue Flowers Greetings book with 'ChocExpress' promotion. Stamps same as books issued January and February 1997

12 January

Withdrawal Asda promotional book (10 × 1st)

13 January

Issue Endangered Species stamp cards

20 January

Issue Endangered Species stamps and presentation pack

20 January

Withdrawal Great Tudor (Henry VIII) stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards

2 February

Issue 10 × 1st book (NVI definitives) with Disney holiday promotion

3 February

Withdrawal 1st & 2nd class and 37p & 63p stamp books issued 4 February 1997

11 February

Withdrawal Hong Kong stamp book (with pictorial label) and unfolded

16 February

Issue The Queen's Beasts stamp cards

24 February

Issue The Queen's Beasts stamps, presentation pack and philatelic numismatic cover

Events

17 January

GB Philatelic Society displays: Revolution of 1870 (D Brookfield) and Lilac & Green Issues (O Fooks) at British Philatelic Centre, Chaterhouse Street, London EC1. Opens 11.00. **Enquiries** A Lajer, 01189 344151

30 January

Until 31 January: Big Stamp show at Central Hall, Westminster. **Enquiries** 01279 871110

25 February

Until 1 March: Spring Stampex at Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, London N1. **Enquiries** Stampex, 0171 490 1005

28 February

GB Philatelic Society display: George VI on cover (S Holder) at Stampex, 14.30. **Enquiries** A Lajer, above

Contents



Postal stationery rarities

In part one of a new series, Colin Baker looks at items of postal stationery issued or used in limited numbers, which have now become rarities **148**

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 and withdrawals 130

Royal Mail news The Queen's Beasts stamps; New prestige stamp book; NPM exhibitions **132**

Stamp scene Societies news; Youth philately awards; GB Collectors *Chronicle* **138**

The Philatelic Hound of the Baskervilles by James Negus **140**



Process of elimination

Designing the Endangered Species stamps, by Robert Maude **144**



Books Life on Eriskay; Adventures in Topical Stamps **147**



Checklist of definitives for 1997 **152**

The Wilding definitives Part 3: Multiple Crowns Watermark issues, by Matthew Hinton **154**

Product report The Safe stamp dryer, by James Mackay **157**

Competition Sponsored by Fourpenny Post: win FDC subscription **158**

Posting boxes **159**

Postbag Letters to the Editor **159**

Royal Mail news The Queen's Beasts stamps • New prestige stamp book • Disney stamp book • Exhibitions at the NPM



Presentation pack and stamp cards A well-illustrated pack (price £1.65) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets.



The pack has been written by J P Brooke-Little, formerly Clarenceux King of Arms, and one of the team that created the original Queen's Beasts in 1953. He has also written the filler card for the first day cover.

The Queen's Beasts Five 26p stamps featuring six heraldic beasts go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 24 February. The stamps are printed in a horizontal se-tenant strip. The set is issued on the occasion of the 650th anniversary of the Order of the Garter – the oldest order of chivalry, instituted by Edward III in 1348. The beasts depicted are based on those created for The Queen's Coronation in June 1953. These were six-foot high sculptures which supported shields of Royal Arms and badges and were conceived to symbolise The Queen's royal descent and to guard Her entrance to Westminster Abbey. The five stamps feature: the Lion of England and Griffin of Edward III; Falcon of Plantagenet and Bull of Clarence; Lion of Mortimer and Yale of Beaufort; Greyhound of Richmond and Dragon of Wales; and Unicorn of Scotland and Horse of Hanover.



In accordance with tradition and protocol the Hereditary Earl Marshal of England, the Duke of Norfolk, arranged the ceremony of The Queen's Coronation, assisted by Garter King of Arms, Sir George Bellow, and the heralds at Her Majesty's College of Arms, who are the Earl Marshal's staff officers. Sir George, for whom I worked during the Coronation, was a man of great artistic sensitivity and it was he who conceived the idea of creating a series of beasts. Sir George was also on the stamp advisory panel convened to



of Clarence, another Yorkist beast, supports the Royal Arms of France and England quartered. The Yorkist claim to the throne came from the ancient Mortimer family, and hence the white Lion of Mortimer occurs, supporting a shield of the white rose of York on a sun against a Yorkist colours of blue and murrey (mulberry colour).

Having commemorated York, a beast was sought to represent the House of Lancaster. The yale is a mythical, spotted antelope, reputedly with the ability to swivel its horns to defend itself from attack from all quarters. It holds the crowned portcullis, a Lancastrian badge, on a shield of the Beaufort colours of white and blue. This was a much-favoured badge of Henry Tudor (who became Henry VII), as may be seen in his chapel in Westminster Abbey.

Henry VII was a Welshman with a dash of Lancastrian blood in his veins. By his marriage with Elizabeth, heiress of the Yorkist Edward IV, he united the rival factions of York and Lancaster. Both roses are combined, royally crowned and on the Tudor liveries of white and green, on the shield supported by the next beast, the Greyhound of Richmond. Henry was once Earl of Richmond and used the greyhound associated with that Earldom. The Welsh personality of the Tudors is commemorated by the red dragon. This fierce beast was an ancient Welsh emblem which Henry VII and his Tudor successors used as a supporter to their arms. It holds a shield of the arms of the last native Prince of Wales, Llewellyn the Great. This is still borne on a white shield, placed over the Royal Arms, by the Prince of Wales.

The Stuarts succeeded to the throne when James VI of Scotland was crowned as James I of England. He introduced the Scottish unicorn as a supporter of the Royal Arms, to which were added the arms of Scotland. George I, grandson of James and Elector of Hanover, succeeded the throne in 1714. Thus the white Horse of Hanover was chosen as the final beast in the series, supporting the arms used until the claim to the French throne was finally abandoned in 1801 at which point the French blues were removed and the lions of England, Irish harp and Scottish lion were placed in the positions in which they remain to this day.

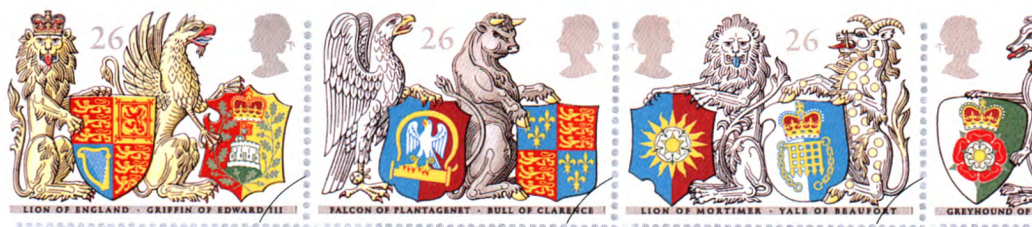
J. P. BROOKE-LITTLE, formerly Clarenceux King of Arms



was used by Edward III on his signet or private seal. This most ancient beast holds a shield on which is the most modern royal badge, featuring the round tower at Windsor Castle. This was approved by George VI in 1917 as a badge of the royal family, henceforth to be known as 'the House of Windsor'.

Edward III claimed the French throne through his mother, Isabel of France, and so quartered the arms of France (a blue shield strewn with gold fleurs-de-lis). His tenuous claim led to the Hundred Years War. He also sired the dynasties of York and Lancaster which clashed over the throne in the Wars of the Roses. Although the white falcon was used by Edward III, it became a Yorkist symbol. "It's not easy", said the sculptor, "to depict gracefully a bird sitting down and supporting a shield". The black Bull





THE
QUEEN'S BEASTS
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



Cynil Macey

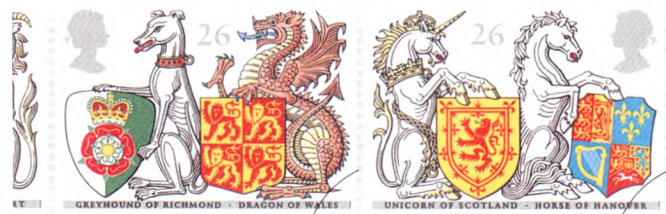
The idea of the series of beasts was conceived by Sir George Bellew (1889-1993), Somerset Herald 1926-50, and Garter King of Arms 1950-61, who is known to philatelists as designer of the George VI 10s and £1 high values and 1949 UPU 1s stamp. Sir George was on the stamp advisory panel for the design of the first definitives of the present reign.

His idea was inspired by the series of beasts which decorated Henry VIII's pavilion at the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1513 and the later series at Hampton Court and St George's Chapel, Windsor and can be seen on the stamps showing these buildings issued in 1975 and 1978. Royal Academician James Woodford was commissioned to produce 'The Queen's Beasts'. After small plaster models he went on to make the six-foot high beasts which were moulded in clay and the final castings, in plaster, were coated to protect them from the elements. Amongst later models are the set carved by Mr Woodford in Portland stone which can still be seen at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Full details of the beasts and their historical significance is given in the presentation pack, written by Mr Brooke-Little.

These are the first stamps printed in intaglio and lithography since the 1995 Pioneers of Communications issue featuring Sir Rowland Hill and Guglielmo Marconi. Many collectors appreciate stamps printed in intaglio – the line-engraved process used for the Penny Black and Twopence Blue in 1840. Please note that the phosphor bands are so printed as not to overlap The Queen's head and the silver panel, naming the beasts, at the foot of each stamp.

The designer The stamps are the work of Jeffery Matthews, pictured above, well-known to *Bulletin* readers as the designer of many British stamps, including the 1984 and 1987 Heraldry sets which commemorated the 500th anniversary of the College of Arms and the 300th anniversary of the revival of the Order of the Thistle.

Features by Mr Matthews on his work on the 1972 Silver Wedding, 1984 College of Arms, and 1986 Queen's 60th birthday issues and the national symbols used on country stamps were published here in November 1972, January 1984, March and May 1986.



FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets around a week before 24 February, price 25p. Orders for the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial 'first day of issue' postmark of the Bureau or London sw,

Technical details

Printers De La Rue Security Print

Process Intaglio (recess) and offset lithography

Size 41 × 30mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 15 × 14

Phosphor Two bands

Gum PVA

price £1.89 UK (including VAT) or £1.61 overseas (no VAT), must reach the Bureau by 24 February. Alternatively, collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB (for London sw postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9803' (Bureau), or 'FD9804' (London sw).

First day posting boxes will be provided at main post offices for collectors to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) 'first day of issue' handstamps. Sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere)

PHILATELIC NUMISMATIC COVER A PNC bearing the five stamps cancelled with a pictorial City of Westminster London sw1 postmark for 24 February, and an encapsulated Royal Mint £1 coin will be available from the Bureau, price £12.95. These covers, produced in limited editions, are very popular – early ordering is advised •



George Knipe's design of the 5d, 6d and 7d 'Wilding' – now used for 20p, 26p and 37p values in the prestige book.

Wildings return in new prestige stamp book The first of three special prestige stamp books to promote The Stamp Show 2000 (international stamp exhibition to be held in London in May 2000) will be issued on 10 March, price £7.49. The book, entitled 'The Definitive Portrait' will be of particular interest to collectors as it contains stamps of the Wilding portrait design but in decimal values – 20p, 26p and 37p. The stamps, printed in light green, rust, and rhododendron respectively, are in the design used for the 5d, 6d and 7d stamps first issued in July 1953 and January 1954. The stamps show the value in words – TWENTY, TWENTY SIX and THIRTY SEVEN, without pence, and as the originals bear the inscription POSTAGE REVENUE. The design, featuring the Wilding portrait of The Queen in an oval frame with the national floral emblems of the constituent parts of the United Kingdom in the four corners, was by George T Knipe, a staff designer at Harrison & Sons Ltd (now De La Rue Security Print). He also designed the 1948 Silver Wedding 2½d stamp and submitted designs for the 1948 Olympic and 1953 Coronation issue. The Royal portrait is from a photograph by Dorothy Wilding (Mrs D Leighton Pearce, 1893-1976), used on British stamps from 1952 until 1967.

The 26p and 37p stamps have two phosphor bands, the 20p one band at left or right, yielding four new single stamps. All stamps have elliptical per-

26p	26p	26p	20p	20p	20p	26p	20p	37p	26p
26p	26p	26p	20p	20p	37p	Label	37p	26p	37p
26p	26p	26p	20p	20p	20p	26p	20p	37p	26p

forations on the left and right sides. The book has been printed by Walsall Security Printers, the stamp panes in gravure (EME cylinders), the other pages in offset-lithography.

Above Pane layouts with an indication of the phosphor bands. We hope to show the actual panes next month.

THE WILDING STORY The book shows the full range of low value Wilding definitives (1/2d to 1s6d), different heads of The Queen considered for the first definitives, Dorothy Wilding with some of her portraits of famous people, details of values, inscriptions and floral emblems from the Wilding stamp designs, unaccepted designs for the definitives and Coronation stamps, and the issued Coronation set. The text tells the story of the designing of the first Elizabeth II definitives and Coronation stamps.

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 about a week before 10 March, price 25p. Orders for the cover bearing the mixed pane with pictorial label cancelled with a pictorial 'first day of issue' postmark of the Bureau or London sw, price £2.73 UK (inc VAT), £2.32 overseas (no VAT), must reach the Bureau by 10 March. Alternatively, collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB (London sw postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD PSB9801' (Bureau), or 'FD PSB9802' (London sw).

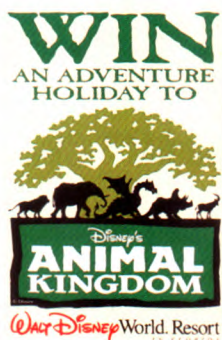
First day posting boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) 'first day of issue' handstamps. Sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere).

The 20p stamp in the book will qualify for all philatelic handstamps in use on 10 March; the 1st class rule for special handstamps being waived for the day ●

The book contains four panes as follows Pane 1: 9 × 26p.

Pane margin shows Wilding portrait of The Queen ● Pane 2: 6 × 20p (three with phosphor band left, three band right). Margin shows stamp designer Edmund Dulac (1882-1953) at work ● Mixed pane: top and bottom rows 20p (band right), 26p, and 20p (band left); middle row 37p, pictorial label, and 37p. Margin illustrates front page of *The Daily Telegraph*, 3 June 1953, showing Royal Family on Buckingham Palace balcony after the Coronation ● Mixed pane: top and bottom rows 37p and 26p; middle row 26p and 37p. The margin shows design features from the 1953 Coronation stamps, including Dulac's head of The Queen on the 1s3d value.

The second book in the Stamp Show series, to be issued in 1999, will be on the subject of the Machin definitive stamps.



Disney stamp book A 10 × 1st class stamp book including a Disney Holiday promotion offer on the covers will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic outlets from 2 February and from post offices and other retail outlets as stocks require. The promotion offers 15 family holidays to Walt Disney World Resort in Florida to visit the spectacular new 'Animal Kingdom' theme park which opens in May. The back cover features five animals with scratch surfaces; purchasers rub off the surface to reveal whether they have won a holiday. Claims must be made by 27 March. The book contains the

standard 1st class NV1 stamp, flame colour, printed, by De La Rue Security Print (formerly Harrisons), whose imprint appears on the book cover ●

Endangered Species colours

Plate numbers and colours for the Endangered Species stamps (issued on 20 January) are:

20p 1A (black) 1A (new blue) 1A (magenta) 1A (greenish yellow) 1A (deep blue) 1A (pale lavender-grey)

26p 1A (black) 1A (new blue) 1A (magenta) 1A (greenish yellow) 1A (deep blue) 1A (pale yellow-olive)

31p 1A (black) 1A (new blue) 1A (greenish yellow) 1A (deep blue) 1A (pale bluish grey)

37p 1A (black) 1A (new blue) 1A (magenta) 1A (greenish yellow) 1A (deep blue) 1A (pale greenish grey)

43p 1A (black) 1A (new blue) 1A (magenta) 1A (greenish yellow) 1A (deep blue) 1A (pale dull mauve)

63p 1A (black) 1A (new blue) 1A (magenta) 1A (greenish yellow) 1A (deep blue) 1A (pale grey-brown)

British stamp wins top awards The Universal Postal Union (UPU) conducted an international competition to select three stamps issued in 1995 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations which best portray the goals, ideals and objectives of the UN. The British 25p stamp in the Peace and Freedom set was awarded second prize. The same stamp, designed by Jean-Michel Folon, won the top award in a simultaneous competition, staged by the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP), for the best designed UN commemorative stamps. The gold award, with the FIP's globe logo in its design, was presented to Barry Robinson, Design Director of Royal Mail National, and Keith Fisher of Royal Mail International, former General Manager of Royal Mail Stamps, at a ceremony in Geneva in October ●

Obituary Some of our older customers will recall the name W W (Bill) Service who has recently died. Mr Service, born in 1919, joined the Post Office as a sorting clerk and telegraphist in 1935 and was promoted to an overseer in 1944. As Head Postmaster of Edinburgh from 1965, he lobbied for Edinburgh as the new home for the Philatelic Bureau when the Postmaster General agreed its move from London. He took a keen interest and helped promote stamp collecting not only in the UK but worldwide. He became Head Postmaster of Glasgow from 1971 until he retired in 1979. Following his retirement, a Bill Service Trophy was instituted for the popular displays by philatelic societies at the philatelic counter in the former Glasgow Head Post Office in George Square ●

New philatelic handstamps New pictorial Royal Mail handstamps showing major local landmarks were introduced in March 1997 (see May 1997 *Bulletin*, p265). A revised bilingual handstamp for Cardiff, and a new handstamp for Stevenage were introduced on 8 December 1997. Covers should be sent to the Special Handstamp Centres at Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF1 1AA or Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA ●

National Postal Museum Visitors can still see the 'Golden and Glorious' exhibition marking the golden wedding anniversary of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh. The exhibition concentrates on the 1953 Coronation and 1972 Silver Wedding issues, including the unused designs. The NPM's book on the Coronation issue, price £7.50, was reviewed here in September. The Silver Wedding stamps were the work of Jeffrey Matthews, designer of the forthcoming Queen's Beasts set.

The 'Victorian Posts' exhibition remains on show on the ground and mezzanine floors and in the main (top floor) gallery visitors can see the famous R M Phillips Collection of British Victorian stamps, the Museum's 'All-World' and other collections. The 'Post Haste!' exhibition on the ground floor tells Post Office history through displays of vehicles and artefacts. The Museum's well-stocked shop offers a wide range of books, postcards, and souvenirs. Mail handed in at the shop receives a unique Maltese Cross handstamp; covers may also be sent to Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB •



Design for 1953 Coronation stamp by Mary Adshead, from the 'Golden and Glorious' exhibition.

The National Postal Museum in King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP, is open Monday-Friday 09.30-16.30, admission free. Enquiries: 0171 776 3636.

1998 stamp programme The 1998 programme of special stamps and prestige stamp books is as follows.

20 January	Endangered Species
24 February	The Queen's Beasts
10 March	Stamp Show 2000 prestige stamp book
24 March	Lighthouses
23 April	Comedians
23 June	Health

21 July	Children's Fantasy
25 August	Carnival
29 September	Speed
November	Land Speed Records prestige stamp book
2 November	Christmas

Definitive update The NPM reports the following plate numbers on late printings of the Castle stamps by Harrison: £2 4I and 4J; £3 1L and 1M. The registration sheet of the 1st class NVI coil stamp, printed by Harrison, and issued on 29 April 1997 is from cylinder R6.

Royal Mail stamp album Continuation pages for the 1997 definitive, country and special stamp issues are now available from the British Philatelic Bureau, price £11.95. The supplement also provides for the Hong Kong and the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting pictorial label panes •

Enquiries to British Philatelic Bureau, telephone 0131 550 8989. UK orders may be phoned on 0345 641 641.

Britain's best post office Each year Post Office Counters Ltd organises a competition to find the best post office in the UK. The public nominate post offices and a national winner is selected from regional finalists. The winner for 1997 was Brora Post Office in Sutherland, Scotland, run by Ian and Christina Terry. Local people praised the excellent service, improved access for the disabled, the help given to elderly customers, and fund-raising for local charities. Beddgelert PO – the 1995 winner – featured on the 43p Post Offices stamp issued last August •

Stamp scene Youth philately awards • GB Collectors Club *Chronicle* • Societies news



Early mail bus model In the early 1900s the General Post Office contracted the Great Western Railway 'Road Motors' to carry their mails between Helston and The Lizard in Cornwall. A special handstamp to commemorate the 75th anniversary of this service was used at Helston on 17 August 1978. From original photographs of the vehicle, BFM Collectables has produced a 4 inches long model of the bus, with crown and Royal cypher and GWR markings on the side.

The model is available in a limited edition of 175, with numbered certificate, price £18.75. Orders and enquiries: BFM Collectables, PO Box 69, Fleet GU13 9YN. Telephone 01252 614367 (office hours) •

The *Chronicle* is edited by Frank J Knock of PO Box 309, Batavia, Ohio 45103-0309, USA

GB Collectors *Chronicle* The Great Britain Collectors Club's *Chronicle* for October, contains interesting notes on British stamps, ancient and modern, from a multiple usage of the 1887 'Jubilee' stamps to the differences on the front cover of the London 1980 stamp books of 1979 and 1980. Harry Hayes looks at modern British postmarks and Harold M Stral reports on designs featuring the head of Elizabeth II within earlier stamp designs – creations, called the 'Elizatorians', from the ever-fertile imagination of Gerald King who produced Wonderland and Snark Island fictitious stamps some years ago •

Anyone wishing to 'surf the net' can find the pages on: <http://www.abel.net.uk/~stirrups/ddps.htm>

First on the Internet Dundee & District Philatelic Society has recently become the first Scottish philatelic society to be on the Internet with information on its activities. It has an earlier distinction of being the first English speaking philatelic society in Scotland – the first using German(!) at its early meetings. The Internet pages give details of the Society's meetings and membership subscriptions and its programme for 1997-98. Those who prefer the written word, enquiries should be sent to the Society's Secretary: Mr P Dix, c/o Drug Development (Scotland), Ninewells Medical School, Ninewells Avenue, Dundee DD1 9SY •

Brighton & Hove '98 Following the great success of the Newcastle '96 exhibition (see *Bulletin* February 1997), the Association of British Philatelic Societies (ABPS) will be staging its next national exhibition at Hove Town Hall, 20-22 November 1998. The exhibition will have as its centrepiece three competitive sections in 'the alternative collecting disciplines' of thematics, cinderellas, and revenue stamps – supported by the British Thematic Association, Cinderella Stamp Club and the Revenue Society of Great Britain. There will also be the established Interfed and youth competitions between the county and regional federations. The disciplines in

the Interfed competitions will be Traditional Philately, Postal History, and Aerophilately. There will also be an international philatelic literature competition. An international seminar is expected to include contributions from France, Belgium and the Netherlands and it is hoped to have exhibits from the Royal Collection and the National Postal Museum. A further national exhibition, under ABPS aegis, will be held at the Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre, Glasgow in November 2000. ●

Astro Space Stamp Society In association with the Crown Agents, the ASSS has organised a competition, inviting readers to choose their favourite Crown Agents stamp on a Communications or Space-related theme, issued in 1996-97. Three collections of the Crown Agents Hong Kong Returns to China miniature sheets are the prizes. All entrants will receive a stamp gift and should state clearly the stamp they are selecting, and their name and address. Entries should be dated, mention *British Philatelic Bulletin*, and sent with a stamped addressed envelope or two international reply coupons to the address opposite. ●

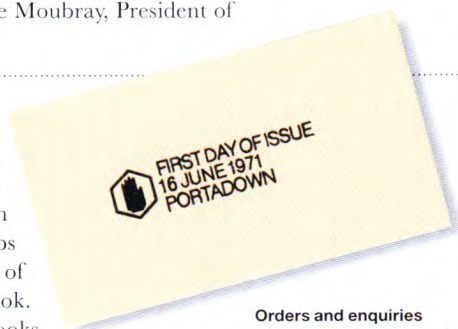
Entries to B Lockyer (Dept CA-96/97), 21 Exford Close, Weston-super-Mare BS23 4RE

Postage Due Mail Study Group Journal No 3 of this new Group, published in September, includes of particular interest to collectors of British postage due mail. Patrick Frost provides a well-written and illustrated account of Invalid stamps and other disallowed frankings, and a shorter piece on a po letter of 1894 requesting parcel postage from sender. Ken Snelson reports another 'Redirected after 24 hours/to Pay' mark. Other articles deal with postage due matters in the USA, Hungary, and New Zealand. An accompanying Newsletter, giving details of the Group's activities, reports that it now has 115 members. ●

Enquiries Peter Williams, 41 Manvers Road, Liverpool L16 3NP

Outstanding service to youth philately Awards were made during Autumn Stampex to Lesley Hampton and Doreen Day for outstanding service to youth philately. Doreen received the 'Bill Hart Award' for her work over many years running junior clubs in Sussex, and Lesley Hampton received a large model of a 1920 Post Office van in recognition of her work for the Melville National Youth Stamp Competition and the National Youth Stamp Group. The awards were presented by Jane Moubray, President of the Royal Philatelic Society London. ●

Philatelic Society stamp book The Portadown and District Philatelic Society produced a souvenir book, in its series featuring local postmarks, for its Annual Exhibition and Fair on 27 September 1997. The front cover features the Portadown first day of issue postmark for the Ulster '71 stamps of 16 June 1971; the book incorporates eight pages of local advertising and a Royal Mail £1 stamp book. Price £1.50 plus postage. A number of earlier books are still available. ●



Orders and enquiries
J Proctor, 15 Dorchester Park,
Portadown, BT62 3EA

The booklet of 14 July 1987, below right, showed a footprint framed in a magnifying glass to represent *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. The background illustration below is enlarged from the booklet's back cover, wood-engraved by Andrew Davidson.

The Philatelic Hound of the Baskervilles

Sherlock Holmes devotees are now so well served with philatelic material it may be time to specialise, reports James Negus



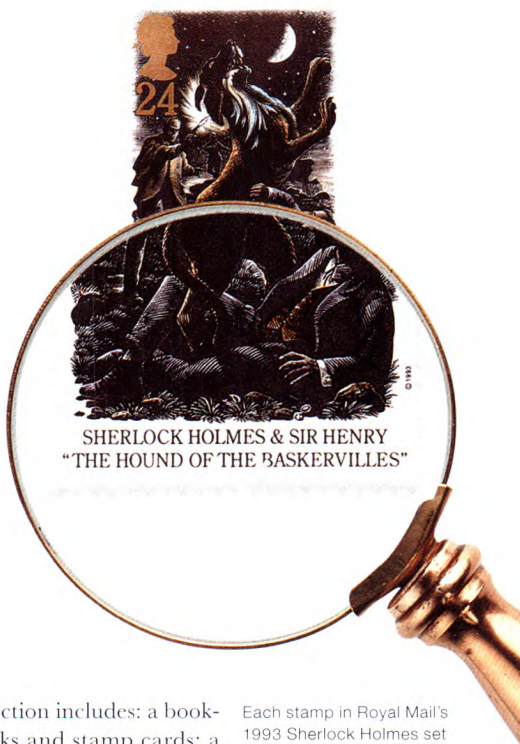
THE LAST TEN YEARS have seen philatelic recognition of Sherlock Holmes growing so much that a sizeable collection can be formed on a single aspect. Such a one is certainly the Hound of the Baskervilles.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's magnificent classic is possibly the most widely known of all the Holmes stories. It is the best of the four long stories and acclaimed by many as the best of the entire canon. Having rid himself of Holmes over the Reichenbach Falls in 1893, Conan Doyle was more or less forced to bring the detective back. Unrelenting public demand left him little option and his property was too valuable to him commercially. The formal 'return' came in 1903 in *The Adventure of the Empty House*, when readers found that only Moriarty had perished over the Falls. Before this, in August 1901, Conan Doyle had begun his serial in *The Strand Magazine* about the terrifying Hound of the Baskervilles, presenting it as one of Holmes's cases pre-Reichenbach. Concluding after nine instalments in April 1902, the serial came out immediately in book form, remaining in print to this day.

The range of material available for thematic collection includes: a booklet cover; stamps and associated presentation packs and stamp cards; a prestige booklet; special postmarks; commemorative and first day covers; and picture postcards. The Hound also featured on a cigarette card in 1923, now fortunately reprinted, and which some might be interested to have.

Booklet cover The first appearance of the Hound among British issues was simply its footprint (opposite). A series of four £1 booklets in 1987-88 illustrated some Sherlock Holmes stories on the centenary of publication of the first, *A Study in Scarlet*, with wood-engravings by Andrew Davidson.

Stamps This same technique – by the same designer – was employed for a set of five stamps in an unusually deep format issued by Royal Mail on 12 October 1993. The centenary celebrated this time was that of Holmes's reported death over the Reichenbach. One of the stamps in the set-tenant strip showed a rearing Hound being dispatched by Holmes at the climax of the story in a dark moonlit scene on Dartmoor. The genesis of the whole set is explained in my *British Stamp Design 1993*, Publication No 2 in the *Bulletin* series. Welcome as these stamps were for the Holmes theme, I always felt the dark colours of two of the designs (including the Hound) detracted somewhat. Their quality is seen to better advantage in the enlarged versions on the stamp cards and these must find a place in the collection. These cards can be found as maximum cards for the issue.



Each stamp in Royal Mail's 1993 Sherlock Holmes set has a hidden letter in the design: look for the letter D below Sir Henry Baskerville's left leg. When the whole set is examined, the letters spell out D-O-Y-L-E. A neat touch, though a fellow-member of my local stamp club once pointed out they could spell Y-O-D-E-L equally as well. Maybe designer Davidson was making a subtle allusion to the country where Holmes allegedly perished – Switzerland?



Comoro Islands 200f issue, showing a clichéd Sherlock Holmes with the author erroneously named 'Sir Conan Doyle'. A rather spindly and unconvincing Hound also appears, a tribute to its status as the most famous of the stories. The stamp comes perf and imperf. It was also surcharged 15f and reissued in February 1981.

The sheets of stamps have marginal markings, which many collect. The printer's imprint in this case will be worth acquiring, as it falls in the lower left margin below the Hound stamp: it shows five 'Q' logos (Questa).

Worth noting with the 1993 Holmes set is the very short period in which the common face value of 24p was valid as the inland letter rate. Commercial use on cover is worth looking out for, as this 24p rate for first class mail lasted only for a further three weeks. From 1 November 1993 ordinary covers are normally found with an extra 1p Machin.

When the Tales of Terror set was issued by Royal Mail on 13 May 1997, the top value of 43p was accorded to the Hound of the Baskervilles. In the style of Ian Pollock's unconventional treatment of all four values, the Hound is presented in a version distinctly at odds with popular iconography of the well-loved gothic horror that the stamps portray. Pollock has gone back to reading what the original stories suggest and has turned aside from the subsequent accretions, largely based on films.

I must confess this was for me a disappointment, especially as another issue within the last year evoked such happy memories. In celebration of the Centenary of the Cinema, Robin Ollington designed Guernsey's set of five issued on 6 November 1996 and which gave accurate portraits of great Screen Detectives. For the 35p Basil Rathbone was chosen in his famous role as Sherlock Holmes. For a century, numerous actors have interpreted the detective on stage, screen, radio and TV and each generation believes the current characterisation to be the *definitive* Holmes. Such it was for me, a teenager watching Rathbone at the cinema in wartime London. The films drew me (and countless others) to reading the stories and so fostering a life-long affection for 221B Baker Street and its remarkable occupant.

Basil Rathbone had created Holmes on screen in March 1939 with 20th Century-Fox's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Its importance in film history is its faithfulness to period detail and its respect for Conan Doyle's original words. It was an immediate success, followed by many more films and radio broadcasts with this fine actor condemned to be Holmes forever (like others in his profession he eventually tired of the role). Rathbone's portrait and the film itself are thus singularly relevant to the Hound theme. An FDC filler card reproducing the film's poster is noted later with Maurice Tanner's covers.

Guernsey's Screen Detectives set was also issued as a miniature novel, a £7 prestige booklet of stamps interleaved with a story written to accompany a competition. If exploded booklets do exist, the 35p Rathbone stamp will be found se-tenant with the other four values (from opposite page 1), also as a vertical strip of three (opposite page 9).

The last stamp to be mentioned marks the actual first appearance of the Hound of the Baskervilles. The Comoro Islands issued a 200f on 25 February 1980 for the 50th anniversary of Conan Doyle's death (left). Finally, for those worried about absolute completion, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is naturally among the (repeated) list of Conan Doyle's books shown as background on a \$2 Turks & Caicos miniature sheet issued on 16 July 1984.

This accompanied S Karp's set of four for the 125th anniversary of Conan Doyle's birth; adding to the author's portrait and the usual magnifying glass, Holmes and Watson are recognisably inspired by movie portraits of Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce.

Presentation packs Royal Mail's presentation packs are always good value for the thematic collector and the one for the 1993 Holmes set is particularly fine. Christopher Somerville's text splendidly captures the enduring appeal of the great detective and the illustrations to Keith Bassford's pack design make several references to the Hound. One is of the cover of the book's first edition (George Newnes, 1902). There is also a lobby card for another seminal film version, the celebrated 1959 Hammer Films colour production where Peter Cushing portrayed Holmes. On the back of the pack the second in the montage of stills has Peter Cushing again as Holmes, when he came to re-create the role for a BBC television series in 1968. (The filler card to Royal Mail's first day cover has a further strip of stills from the same films but with different scenes.) The presentation pack for the other British issue, 1997 Tales of Terror, is notable for its text by Professor Christopher Frayling. Its artistic design is advanced, but not very user-friendly, and it yields only two cloud scenes and an indistinct photograph of the head of the Hound from an ancient film.

Special postmarks Of the 25 special postmarks on offer for the Holmes set in October 1993, only one was specifically for the Hound. Bradbury, however, prepared covers with a place-association datestamp, namely 'Princetown, Yelverton, Devon'. Conan Doyle was at the Duchy Hotel, Princetown, early in April 1901, writing his great story and exploring Dartmoor. The further datestamp is recorded of Widdecombe-in-the-Moor, a few miles east of Princetown, but I have not seen it.

Another exuberant array of special postmarks became available when the Tales of Terror set appeared in May 1997. Dracula had the edge, but five out of 25 postmarks were for Holmes and three of these referred specifically to the Hound of the Baskervilles. Bradbury's was from Princetown, the Hound full-face; Cambridge Stamp Centre's from Dartmoor, Dartmouth, gave a (rare) complete view of the animal; while Steven Scott's depiction – this one from Baker Street – was of Sherlock's silhouette. The 'Devon' postmarks were applied in Cardiff; that for 'Baker Street' came from the Mount Pleasant handstamp centre in London.

There were numbers of special and first day postmarks with Guernsey's Screen Detectives set in November 1996, of which one specially relates to the Hound. Here Sherlock's silhouette flanks a partial view of the dog as it advances menacingly. This postmark was first day, but on 1 May 1997 the Hound was singled out for its own celebration, this time in full-face behind a magnifying glass. The overlap in theme between Britain's Tales of Terror set and Guernsey's Screen Detectives prompted some of the popular double-dated covers, mentioned next time ●



Of the 25 special postmarks on offer for the Holmes set in October 1993, only one was specifically for the Hound. Sponsored by Benham, it has a magnificent head and is labelled as coming from 'Black Dog, Crediton, Devon' (and was applied in Cardiff).

Next month Mr Negus will describe some of the many commemorative covers and postcards associated with Sherlock Holmes stamps.

Process of elimination Designing the Endangered Species



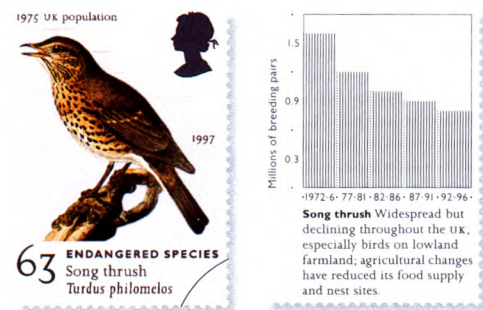
At the Earth Summit in 1992, the UK, along with over 150 other countries, signed the Convention on Biological Diversity, 'to halt the world-wide loss of animal and plant species'. The 'Biodiversity Action Plan', a commitment to the Convention, identifies species and habitats at risk: the Endangered Species stamps were to represent these 'action plan species'.

THE APPEARANCE of a designed object, whether built on a grand scale or printed on a small piece of paper is, with rare exception, the product of a chain of decisions involving many people with diverse priorities. The chain begins with a problem to be solved, and the formulation of a brief expressing a set of goals. It becomes the designer's function to steer a path between priorities toward fulfilling these goals, and his challenge to do so in a manner which fulfills his own.

Royal Mail's design brief for the Endangered Species stamps was formulated around the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan, which in turn resulted from the 1992 Earth Summit. This identifies 116 rare or rapidly declining UK species, to be the target of particular efforts to reverse their fortunes. The stamps were to represent these 'action plan species'.

Having been directed to submit designs utilizing existing illustrations, I began the search for images at the Natural History Museum, among the illustrated volumes published before photography competed with the natural history artist. A task already formidable due to the wealth of published material and the number of species, the search was greatly complicated by changes made over the years to both their common and Latin names.

stamps, by Robert Maude



The search for images began among the illustrated volumes at the Natural History Museum, where the uncertain work of identifying species was greatly aided by the librarians.

Two sets of designs were then submitted: the conventional approach opposite, and another relying on two-sided printing to communicate more effectively the reason for the issue. A visual of this alternative is shown above left, at this stage including dates in the chart. Detailed information supporting the chart was to appear on the reverse, as shown above right. When sufficient assurances could not be obtained regarding the safety of printing over the gum, the reverse printing was abandoned, but detailed charts were incorporated in the presentation pack, right, and first day cover filler card.

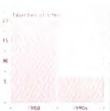
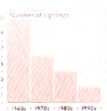
Beyond simply locating illustrations, initial design work was determined by the goal of engaging the public with the reasons for the stamp issue: an attractive set of appealing illustrations, while a not unworthy aim in itself, would in this case be a missed opportunity. To achieve this goal, I proposed to combine each illustration with a bar chart, an immediate and graphic representation of the extreme perils faced by each species, along with supporting text. Both sides of the stamp would be employed to accommodate the resulting complex package of information. As well as allowing a more complete story to be told, the added public interest to be generated by this unusual step would, importantly, focus attention on the stamps' message.

Realizing this proposal may have proved impractical, I also submitted a set of conventional single-sided designs, without additional text or graphic elements. Royal Mail preferred the two-sided option, and work began to gather the data for translation into graphic form, alongside the process of selecting the final set of species which would comprise the set.

As well as the obvious requirement that each illustration be of the highest quality, other priorities influenced the selection process. Some species were excluded due to their relative security, while others were preferred for their appeal. The design approach also imposed certain restrictions: each subject would be cut out, so excluding illustrations with overlapping elements, and each had to be oriented so as not to obscure the background

Last chance to see...

The wealth of animals and plants, their genetic material and the interactions between them make up the Earth's living resource: its biodiversity. Humans are part of this, dependent on it for our survival and prosperity. Yet the push towards increasing our prosperity threatens wildlife as habitats are destroyed, degraded and polluted, and rare species hunted to extinction.



Devil's bolete *Glauca Weissia multicapsul mugwort Mossy sto green feather-moss weed Ribbon-leaved Green shield moss C wort Starfruit Lady'*

Floating water plantain *Schismatomma grapi dock Early gentian Young's helleborine orchid Fen orchid Three-lobed water crowfoot Kills cotoneaster Eyebrights Western ramping-fu path moss Holly-leaved naiad Mountain scur marsh saxifrage Derbyshire feather moss Act*

The author Robert Maude moved to England from the USA in 1974 and stayed to attend art college. Following an education at Pentagram Design, he began his own practice in 1985, and has since worked for a wide variety of corporate and individual clients, including Reuters Limited, Ove Arup, the RIBA, WH Smith and WWF.

His own publications of photography and illustration have been exhibited in Europe, the USA and Japan, and have been purchased by the Tate Gallery for their permanent collection.



Win signed first day cover

Robert Maude has agreed to sign 25 Royal Mail first day covers bearing his Endangered Species stamps.

For a chance to win one of these signed covers send your name and address on a post-card (or back of an envelope) to: Robert Maude FDC, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL. The draw will be made on 20 February.



1975 UK population



1997

20 ENDANGERED SPECIES
Dormouse
Muscardinus avellanarius

The pipistrelle bat (top, by Archibald Thorburn, 1920) is relatively secure, while the dormouse was favoured for its public appeal. William Jardine's illustration (centre, 1838) satisfied all the criteria of the design approach, unlike Thorburn's dormouse shown on page 144. Above, Jardine's original illustration and a visual prepared from it.

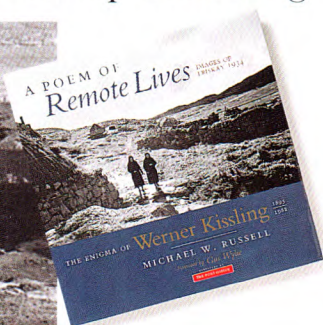
chart. To reflect the wide diversity of life at risk, each stamp was to represent a different kind of species: initially a mammal, bird, fish, insect and plant, and later, a fungus.

When fish proved impossibly troublesome, they were replaced by molluscs, a decision which brought its own difficulty: some action plan molluscs are too small to have been seen in detail before modern times, so few antique illustrations exist. The shining ram's-horn snail is therefore a newly-commissioned illustration, its 3mm diameter shell having been photographed under a microscope for the illustrator's reference.

Eventually, six species were selected, and essays were produced for the face of each stamp. Successful trials were produced of the reverse, printed over the adhesive. At this point however, in an unforeseen turn of events, sufficient assurances regarding the safety of the reverse printing could not be obtained, and this aspect of the design was to proceed no further.

Although the stamps were of course designed to communicate independently of the reverse detail, without this additional information the full meaning of the background charts may be less complete than originally envisaged. Even so, if the design functions as intended, in counterpointing an immediate recognition of the placid illustrations with a later realization of the disturbing message behind them, it will achieve its purpose and successfully express the reasons for the issue ●

Books Life on remote Eriskay • Topical stamp collecting



The Scottish Post Office Board has supported a new book *A Poem of Remote Lives: Images of Eriskay 1934*, written by Michael W Russell. The handsomely produced book traces the fascinating and enigmatic life of Dr Werner Kissling (1895-1988) born into enormous wealth in Germany and dying in near poverty in his adopted country of Scotland. In his preface, the new Chairman of the SPOB, Mr John Ward, writes: 'A key point of contact for us in Kissling's long and remarkable life... was his special place in 'Scottish' film and photography: above all with his unique record of real working life on Eriskay in 1934 - *A Poem of Remote Lives*. This film was made at the time John Grierson had established documentary film making at the Post Office; the GPO Film unit became a legend in the history of film. A Maurice Harvey film - *The Islanders* - made in 1939 also featured Eriskay, showing the po's contribution to island life. Eriskay lies in the outer Hebrides, between South Uist and Barra and is famous as

the landing place in 1745 of Prince Charles Edward Stewart (Bonnie Prince Charlie) and as the setting for Sir Compton Mackenzie's *Whisky Galore*. The population of this beautiful island is still served by a community post office, adjoining the island's single shop.

Three chapters recall the making of the film and its content, the others deal with Kissling's varied career as a soldier, diplomat and scholar. Some 35 of Kissling's photographs of Eriskay and its people are reproduced - a wonderful reminder of a more leisurely age. Also shown is the Leica III camera used by Kissling on Eriskay in 1934. Anyone interested in island life and the history of film will enjoy this book. Price £25 paperback from good bookshops. Published by Neil Wilson Publishing Ltd, 303a The Pentagon Centre, 36 Washington Street, Glasgow G3 8AZ •

*The post box on Eriskay featured as No 90 in our Post-
ing Boxes series, May 1988. ED*

Adventures in Topical Stamp Collecting This second edition of a popular work by George Griffenhagen and Jerome Husak, is rightly described as an essential guide for both beginner and advanced topical (thematic) collectors. For the novice, there is an explanation of the difference between a subject and a thematic collection; comparative listing of the most popular topics in the USA and other countries; tips on selecting a new topic; sources of information, selecting album pages; mounting philatelic material; writing-up;

and advice on acquiring elusive philatelic material. The book, arranged in six chapters, is profusely illustrated, including 68 colour pictures of items owned by eminent collectors in North America. The Appendix provides useful listings of thematic handbooks, societies and periodicals. Whilst the bias is obviously American, this book will be of value and enjoyment to all thematic collectors. 96 pages. Price \$22 postpaid (\$20 to ATA members) from: American Topical Association, PO Box 65749, Tucson, AZ 85728, USA •

Postal stationery rarities by Colin Baker,

IN EXACTLY THE SAME WAY that some adhesive stamps stand out as rarities (and carry an appropriate price tag), so a number of postal stationery items also fall into the same category, although their fame, and therefore their value, does not always reach the same dizzy heights as that of their adhesive counterparts. In any case, price alone is not always an indication that a stamp or piece of stationery is in short supply, for postal markings or secondary printings may also influence the asking price.

Collectors need to be aware of stationery which has been philatelically inspired and which has been made deliberately rare, particularly material produced in the latter half of this century under the stamped to order system. This subject will be dealt with in a special section in the last article of this series.



This series of four articles will discuss those items of postal stationery which were issued or used in limited numbers and as a result have become rare. Included will be stationery sold to the public by the Post Office as well as that which was privately produced and stamped at Somerset House. Three earlier series of articles on postal stationery by Mr Baker were published here in September 1994-April 1995, September 1995-August 1996 and November 1996-March 1997.

Cancellations and first day of issue Unlike many postage stamps, particularly the modern varieties, the first day of issue of postal stationery does not normally concern collectors, although there are two major exceptions. The Mulready envelopes and lettersheets released at the beginning of May 1840, and intended for use from 6 May of that year, will always command a substantial premium if used before or on that date. Other early uses, including covers posted on the first few Sundays, are also eagerly sought after, giving rise to an appropriately enhanced price. Other Mulreadys with a higher than normal price tag are those used years after the issue was withdrawn from sale.

Before the Post Office first issued pre-paid envelopes and lettersheets, proof copies of Mulready's design were distributed to Members of Parliament and Government officials. These were prepared before the value or other markings and instructions had been added. In later years proof copies of all stationery stamp dies in varying states of completeness were also made, although for consideration by a much smaller number of people. Although these proof copies have no postal validity, they help to tell the story of the many steps which make up the history of postal stationery. The small number of proof copies of all stationery dies which are available to collectors keep prices high.

Before the Post Office first issued pre-paid envelopes and lettersheets, proof copies of Mulready's design were distributed to Members of Parliament and Government officials. These were prepared before the value or other markings and instructions had been added. In later years proof copies of all stationery stamp dies in varying states of completeness were also made, although for consideration by a much smaller number of people. Although these proof copies have no postal validity, they help to tell the story of the many steps which make up the history of postal stationery. The small number of proof copies of all stationery dies which are available to collectors keep prices high.

On 1 October 1870 the postcard was introduced to the British public, exactly a year after the world's first postcard came into being in Austria. Although over half a million postcards passed through London alone on

part 1



that first day of use, only a small number have survived to today. Once again, the value put on a postcard with a 1 October 1870 cancellation far exceeds the price put against any cards posted on subsequent days, and the same can be said of newspaper wrappers, although their first day cancellation is not sought after with the same fervour as that of their postcard counterparts.

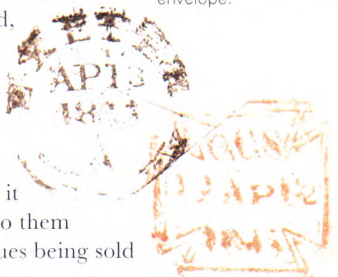
Soon after the postcard was introduced, experiments were carried out to try to speed up the cancellation of the high numbers of these passing through the post. Batches of cards were punched with a design of perforations through the stamp or had their edges clipped to show that they had been used. Manchester clipped the edges of postcards, while Liverpool and London perforated the stamp in the design of an arrow; London also used an orb, Birmingham and others punching a hole. This system gave no indication of the cancellation date and only the Post Office knew at the time where the cards had been posted. There were also complaints from the public that parts of their messages were being lost and so the idea was gradually dropped. Because the number of cards cancelled in this way was small, and not a great many have survived, they do not appear in dealers stocks very frequently and when they do are appropriately priced.

One other type of cancellation which does not survive in large numbers today is the specimen overprint. In order that Postmasters throughout the country would be aware of all the different types and values of available stationery before it was issued and used by the public, copies were distributed to them to be held for reference purposes. To avoid these special issues being sold

Left proof copy of Mulready's design for Britain's first postal stationery.

Top specimen cancellations such as these ensured the items could not be postally used but would be kept for future reference.

Above The Post Office 2d envelope manufactured from silk thread paper. Although it cannot be considered a true rarity, the 2d envelope released by the Post Office in 1841 was never a very popular item with the public. Finding a used example can be difficult (especially one used in the correct period) and the asking price will reflect this. Below, back stamps on this envelope.



Opposite Background, 1944 stationery airgraph form, the only postal stationery form ever used for airgraphs.

Left, stationery postcards issued in 1944 for sending by airmail to prisoners and internees held in the Far East. The postage rate of 3d, reduced to 1½d in 1945, was not excessive, but for obvious reasons numbers used were small. Since these are now sought by a large range of collectors, they rarely appear on the market in a used condition. Even mint examples can be difficult to find.

Right, The much more rare 1943 6d airletter with solid lines for the address.

It is well worth keeping an eye open for these seldom-seen wartime issues, which are becoming more and more difficult to locate as the popularity of collecting postal stationery gradually increases.



The stationery stamp on the reverse of the 1944 airgraph

to the public (either deliberately or inadvertently) they were cancelled with a 'specimen' handstamp of which various sizes and print types were used. From the end of the 19th century all items of stationery, also overprinted with a specimen handstamp, were sent to member countries of the UPU so that they could also identify official issues should the need arise.

Considering the limited number of items cancelled in this way and the high percentage of those which must have been lost or destroyed, they are still modestly priced, many collectors believing these to be neither mint nor used. They nevertheless served a very useful purpose in their day and are an important part of the history of this branch of philately.

Another handstamp which has created a rarity from a fairly mundane item of stationery is the triangular inspectors mark. The sudden reduction of inland postage rates in 1922 (from 2d to 1½d for letters) would have left some firms with stocks of envelopes and postcards stamped at the incorrect rate. Wherever possible these were exchanged for correctly stamped stationery and a ½d refund was made for each one. But some stationery had been prepared and printed for firms particular needs and an exchange was not possible. A ½d refund was still made in these cases, but to make sure this was only given once, the envelopes and postcards were stamped with a triangular inspectors mark. These envelopes have not survived in great numbers, while postcards are extremely rare.

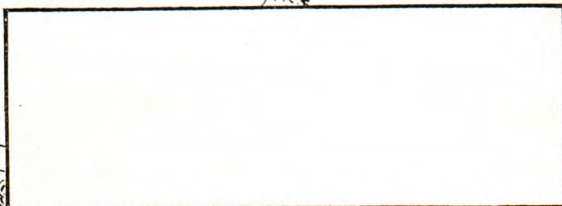
Some firms elected not to bother obtaining a refund and occasionally 2d envelopes can be found with an extra 1d adhesive used to overseas destinations at the 3d rate.

Elusive airletters Although airletters were only introduced in this country in the middle of the 20th century, they have already produced their crop of rarities. Different print settings on the first 6d airletter of 1943 gave rise to solid lines for the address on the front of the item rather than the normal string of dots. There is a considerable difference in the prices asked for these two varieties.

During the Second World War a special stationery airgraph form was prepared for Christmas 1944. Families in Britain wrote their message inside a seasonal border and posted the form to a special collection centre where it was photographed and the negative sent to forces serving overseas. As soon as these had been printed and delivered to the troops, the original forms were destroyed, so that only a few mint examples of the original forms have survived today.

Commemorative airletters were introduced in 1948 starting with the Olympic Games issue, and most of these are still readily available to collectors. Finding true commercially used copies can sometimes be very difficult however, since large numbers of airletters which appear on the philatelic market have been cancelled with a first day of issue or special postmark. In addition some issues were not produced in large numbers. Look out for the 1963 version illustrated with views of Tower Bridge and the Houses of Parliament, and also the 1964 Shakespeare issue with the corrected name of the Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford ●

For details of the Postal Stationery Society (founded 1992) contact D Taylor Smith, 23 Britannia Road, Norwich NR1 4HP



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS
1944

SENDER'S NAME
AND ADDRESS.

俘虜郵便

PRISONER OF WAR POST
SERVICE DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION



俘虜郵便

PRISONER OF WAR POST
SERVICE DES PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION



TO:—

Service No. & Rank

Name

BRITISH PRISONER OF WAR

Camp

(including No., if any)

BRITISH PRISONER OF WAR

FROM:—

Name

Address

BY AIR MAIL

AIR LETTER

IF ANYTHING IS ENCLOSED
THIS LETTER WILL BE SENT
BY ORDINARY MAIL



NEW YEAR

No 16503165.
CNR. E. W. PALMER
7 PROOP RANGE BTY
SCHOOL of ARTILLERY
C. M. F.

Checklist of 1997 definitives

1A
1A

Joh. Enschedé Stamps



Left Enschedé printing of £3 high value (29 July)

Definitives

18 March 2nd and 1st class (flame), self-adhesive, E coils of 100 (DC888, D887)

1 April 1p (DS015), 6p (DS064), 43p (DS431), 50p (DS507) and £1.00 (DS103), H sheets. 43p also in coils of 500, 26 August (DC896)

21 April 26p gold, H sheets (DS264), also in BBC prestige stamp book, 23 September (YB012); 1st gold, W sheets (DS265) and books of 10 (UB148); 1st gold, H books of 10 (UB149), also in Holiday book of 10, 15 September (UP018) and BBC prestige book, 23 September (YB012)

29 April 20p centre band, H sheets (DS202); 2nd, W sheets (DS203) also in books of 4, 26 August (UB152); 2nd, H books of 10 (UB150) and coils of 500 and 1000 (DC891); 1st flame, H coils of 500 and 1000 (DC890), also in books of 10, 18 November (UB157); 1st flame, E litho in promotional stamp pane (UC007)

27 May 2p (DS029), 4p (DS047), 5p (DS059), 10p (DS107), 30p (DS305) and 39p (DS392), H sheets.

26 August 31p (DS314), 37p (DS373) and 63p (D631), H sheets; 37p also in coils of 500 (DC895); 1st flame, W books of 4 (UB151), also in books of 10, 18 November (UB158) and sheets (DS268).

23 September 20p phosphor band right, H, BBC prestige stamp book (YB012)

18 November 26p rust, H sheets (DS267)

Note: supplies of 20p and 26p (rust) stamps printed by Harrison using the old acid-etched cylinders on PVA-gummed paper (previously Dextrin gum) were in general distribution by early April and late February respectively. They were not given philatelic distribution.

We hope this list will prove helpful to collectors in completing their collections. Please read the following notes carefully. We quote British Philatelic Bureau order numbers (prefixed TB, DS, etc) as given on Bureau stock lists. Some stamps were issued only in books and can be bought from Royal Mail only in complete books.

Low value definitive and Country stamps

Printers E, Joh Enschedé Stamps, gravure; H, Harrison & Sons Ltd (re-named De La Rue Security Print, 8 September 1997) gravure; Q, The House of Questa Ltd, offset lithography; W, Walsall Security Printers Ltd, gravure or offset-litho. Unless otherwise stated stamps are gravure printed using EME (Electro Mechanical Engraved) cylinders.

Gum All stamps PVA gum unless otherwise stated.

Perforations 15 x 14 (self-adhesive stamps 14 x 15) with ellipses at lower left and right sides.

Phosphor Two bands unless otherwise stated.

Dates First availability from the Bureau; some stamps reported on sale earlier elsewhere.

Colours Colours are quoted for the 26p and 1st NVI definitives as these values are current in two colours – rust and gold 26p and flame (orange) and gold 1st NVI.



W1

WALSALL SECURITY
PRINTERS LTD

Postcode enquiries tel: 0345 111 222
Customer Services Helpline tel: 0345 740 740
Monday to Friday (calls charged at local rates)

W61

W62

W49

Postcode enquiries tel: 111 222
Customer Services Helpline tel: 0345 740 740
Monday to Friday (calls charged at local rates)

W69

W56

W59

From left Mixed pane of 20p and 26p stamps from BBC prestige book (23 September) – the only source of the 20p side band right stamp; Welsh 63(p) printed in gravure by Walsall (1 July); pictorial label panes – Hong Kong (12 February) and Commonwealth Heads of Government (21 October), both litho printed by Wallsall.

Below 26p and 1st gold, printed by Harrison and Wallsall (21 April)

Country stamps

1 July N Ireland 20p one band (IS202), 26p (IS264), 37p (IS372) and 63p (IS631), W sheets • Scotland 20p one band (SS202), 26p (SS265), 37p (SS373), and 63p (SS631), W sheets • Wales 20(p) one band (WS202), 26(p) (WS264), 37(p) (WS372) and 63(p) (WS631), W sheets. Note: these stamps are without the p (pence) currency symbol.

23 September N Ireland 26p and 37p, H, BBC prestige book (YB012) • Scotland 26p and 37p, H, BBC prestige book (YB012) • Wales 26(p) and 37(p), H, BBC prestige book (YB012)

Mixed value and pictorial label stamp panes

12 February Hong Kong book, pane of four 1st class (flame) with pictorial label, W offset-litho (UL004 stamp book/UC006 unfolded pane)

29 April 1st class stamp pane, flame, E offset-litho (previously printed by Questa) (UC007) Note: stamp pane popularly known as 'Boots label', this is the only lithographed Machin stamp printed by Enschedé

23 September BBC prestige stamp book, H – (1) pane of six: 2 x N Ireland 26p & 37p, Scotland 26p & 37p and Wales 26(p) & 37(p) printed in horizontal se-tenant pairs; (2) pane of eight: four 26p and four 1st gold definitives and pictorial label (BBC2 test card); (3) pane of six: three 20p (right band) and three 26p definitives printed horizontally se-tenant (YB012)

21 October Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting book, pane of 4 x 1st class (flame) with commemorative label, W offset-litho (UL005 stamp book/UC008 unfolded pane)

Stamp Books

13 January 10 x 1st (flame), W. Asda promotion (sold at Asda stores from October 1996). Stamps as in previous issues (ie litho-printed).

4 February 4 x 2nd W (UB144), 4 x 1st (flame) W (UB145), 10 x 2nd H (UB140), 10 x 2nd Q (UB141), 10 x 1st H (UB142), 10 x 1st W (UB143), 4 x 37p W (UB146) and 4 x 63p W (UB147). Revised cover design – no Olympic symbol. Stamps printed using acid-etched cylinder (H) or litho (Q or W) Note: stamps in 10 x 1st and 10 x 2nd Harrison books exist with Dextrin or PVA gum. The PVA variants were in general distribution by early April; no philatelic distribution was made • £1 (2 x 1p, 1 x 20p and



3 × 26p) (TB058) and £2 (1 × 20p, 7 × 26p) (TB059) Q. As July 1996 issue but amended postal rate on inside front cover.

12 February 4 × 1st (flame) W, with Hong Kong pictorial label (UL004). Stamps printed litho

21 April 10 × 1st (gold) H (UB149), 10 × 1st (gold) W (UB148)

29 April 10 × 2nd H (UB150)

26 August 4 × 2nd W (UB152), 4 × 1st (flame) W (UB151), 4 × 37p W (UB153) and 4 × 63p W (UB154). Revised (tourist) cover design for 4 × 37p book

15 September 10 × 1st (gold) H, Holiday promotion book (UP018)

23 September BBC prestige book (£6.15), H, containing three panes of definitive/country stamps and one pane of four 20p Children's TV stamp (first issued in sheets, September 1996) (YB012)

21 October 4 × 1st (flame) W, printed litho, with Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting pictorial label (UL005)

18 November 10 × 1st (flame) H (UB157), 10 × 1st (flame) W (UB158)

High value national definitives

Printer Joh Enschedé Stamps, intaglio (recess) and silk-screen (Queen's head), sheets only

Perforations 15 × 14 with ellipses on vertical sides. Note: these stamps previously printed, in recess only, by Harrison.

Gum PVA

29 July £1.50 burgundy (FS156), £2 blue (FS025), £3 purple (FS303) and £5 brown (FS055) ●

Royal Mail thanks DGA Myall for his help with this listing. The Editor regrets that neither Mr Myall nor himself is able to engage in correspondence regarding its contents.

The Wilding definitives by

THE WILDING definitives were re-issued between October 1958 and August 1960 with yet another style of watermark in the paper – the 'Multiple Crowns' design. The original 16 values to be affected by this change were the ½d orange-red, 1d ultramarine, 1½d green, 2d red-brown, 2½d carmine-red, 3d deep lilac, 4d ultramarine, 5d brown, 6d deep claret, 7d bright green, 8d magenta, 9d bronze-green, 10d Prussian blue, 1s bistre-brown, 1s3d green and 1s6d grey-blue. This replaced the previous St Edward's Crown watermark and it is simply a design where approximately seven crowns appear on each stamp on the sheet, booklet pane or coil, and no lettering is present, as before. The new watermark was made necessary by the introduction of 'regional' stamps; the use of the E2R watermark would have been inappropriate on Scottish issues. There was no 11d stamp on the new watermarked paper but an entirely new value – 4½d, printed in chestnut, was added in February 1959.

Watermark varieties Multiple Crown stamps are affected by the sideways and inverted watermark varieties, up to and including the 4d. It only occurs on booklet (inverted) and booklet and coil (sideways) stamps, and affected up to half of the copies emanating from booklets. The reason for this is that sheet stamps were, at the time, produced by Harrison's method of feeding continuous reels of paper consisting, almost always, of 480 stamps – a double sheet. Sideways-inverted watermark stamps can have the image inverted either to the left or right, and all inversions and sideways-inversions are deliberate, resulting from the way the primary sheets of booklet panes were fed into the printing cylinders. Sometimes the left sideways inversions are slightly more scarce, and thus a little more valuable, than their right-side-ways counterparts. The reverse can also be true.

The only real gem here is the 2d with the watermark inverted – catalogued at £75. It should also be noted that the ½d can be found with one of the crowns inverted. This is not scarce, and occurred on coil stamps.

Matthew Hinton. Part 3, Multiple Crowns watermark issues



Top: the two shades of the 4d. Above: The Multiple Crown watermark, and graphite lines on 1d.

Above: se-tenant panes from 2s booklets – 1963 and 1965.

Perforation varieties There also exist stunning partially perforated examples of the ½d, 1d, 3d and 4d and completely imperforate copies of the 1d, 2½d (both types), 3d, 4d and 6d. The 1½d and 6d can be collected perforated on one side only, and imperforate on the other three. All are worth upwards of several hundred pounds. They can be collected in complete panes from booklets, and pairs from sheets. You should also look out for single sheet stamps attached to the sheet margin with no perforations between.

Paper From 1962, a whiter paper was introduced for the production of the Wilding series. This introduction was a gradual process, and there are variations in exactly how white the whiter paper is and it can often be hard to tell between the two types. Cylinder blocks, with the number of the printing cylinder used visible, can also help – as different cylinders were sometimes used for the different papers and the fact that the change coincided with changes in shade can also be helpful. The cylinders are listed in the Gibbons *GB Specialised Catalogue* volume 3. Some ½d and 2½d (Type 2) stamps were produced in 1963 on chalky paper, issued in 2s 'Holiday books'. Both exist with normal and inverted watermark, and were

the first British stamps of different values printed se-tenant. Further se-tenant panes followed in 1964 and 1965.

Several of the stamps were produced on slightly thicker paper. The cylinder 70 (non-phosphor) 3d value was also printed for a while in 1964 on a new experimental paper. This can be distinguished by the presence of a — in the side margins, usually four times per sheet. The paper is also a little thicker. The paper of some 6d stamps is also different – of pink appearance; and this variety retails at about £25.

All aboard Jubilee line! A number of sheets of the 3d value were produced with a letter 'R' clearly visible in the rightmost jubilee line (beneath R. 20/12 – the last stamp in the sheet). This is a term used for the coloured bars seen in the selvedge below the bottom row of stamps. The variety occurred on two cylinders – 37 and 41 (both no dot), and was retouched in two stages. The examples produced from cylinder 41 show the feature more clearly than those from 37, but the cylinder 37 retouch was more thorough and leaves only an uneven marginal rule. Cylinder 41 examples can fetch £100, so they are well worth looking out for. The 4½d can also be relatively easily

found with a 'phantom frame' below the bottom right stamp on the sheets produced by cylinder 8 (no dot). This appears as a guide line around the incomplete jubilee line.

Shade The 4d value was produced in 1965 in a deeper shade than previously, the cylinder having been more deeply etched. There are also notable variations on the 6d value, and slight differences on the other values – although these were not deliberate.

Presentation packs The 1960 presentation pack, described in my article on the St Edward's Crown watermark stamps, contains two values (1½d and 11d) with the St Edward's Crown watermark stamps, as well as the ½d, 1d, 2d, 2½d, 3d, 4d, 4½d, 5d, 6d, 7d, 8d, 9d, 10d, 1s, 1s3d and 1s6d with Multiple Crowns, and retails at around £50. It is inscribed either '10s8d' or '\$1.80' for sales in the USA.

Graphite Between November 1958 and August 1959 the ½d, 1d, 1½d, 2d, 2½d, 3d, 4d and 4½d were re-released with graphite lines, as with the Edward's Crown issue. This was a result of the introduction of the ALF – Automatic Letter Facing machine, described in James Mackay's article in the November *Bulletin*.

The 1½d, issued only in booklets, is quite scarce – more so, in fact, with normal than inverted watermark. It can sell for up to £50 with good perforations. Misplaced lines on the 3d and 4d fetch hundreds of pounds, maybe even four figure sums on the 4d, whilst such errors are worth very little on the 1d value.

Flaws There are hundreds upon hundreds of minor constant flaws and varieties on all Wildings. To list them all here would take up several complete issues of the *Bulletin* – many are to be found in the *SG Specialised Catalogue*. I mention just two of my favourites, and I recommend you check your examples to see if you have any. Some 10d stamps have a scar on The Queen's nose and I like the variety on the 9d where the daffodil flower is detached from the stem. I am also fond

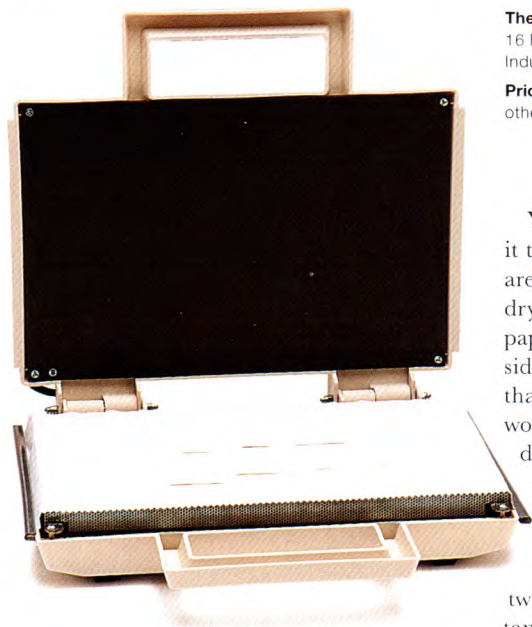
of the variety on the 5d where a bug appears on the flower. The 1s is listed with a 'double impression' which can sell for anything up to £100.

Booklet panes Booklet and booklet pane collectors should note that the printing cylinder number appears on some panes and the dot (or absence of one) is also visible. This number increases the value of the pane considerably and different numbers can fetch (sometimes dramatically) different prices. In the article on the St Edward's Crown watermark stamps I mentioned a booklet pane where a dot had been erroneously added to a no dot cylinder number. This dot was noticed after the panes had begun to be produced on Multiple Crowns watermark paper, and it was gradually retouched such that the pane can be collected with either the dot, the dot removed, or the intermediate example with just a smudge where the dot had been.

The Wildings were produced at a time of great volatility in the stamp world, and represent a significant time of change and experimentation. A collection of the basic values is important in itself, but it is a good idea to obtain a selection of varieties, and even errors, as these display best the effects of the technology in place at the time ●



Product report The Safe stamp dryer, by James Mackay



The Safe Stamp Dryer Available from Safe Albums (UK) Ltd, 16 Falcon Business Park, 38 Ivanhoe Road, Hogwood Lane Industrial Estate, Finchampstead, Berks RG40 6QQ.

Price £147, UK postage £5.15, Europe £18.45, enquire for other places.

You plug it in at the mains, switch on and allow it to warm up for about ten minutes while you are getting a quantity of stamps out of soak. The drying area is about the size of an A4 sheet of paper, on which you lay the stamps carefully, face side down. Great care must be taken to ensure that all stamps are lying flat. One other tip I would give, and that is to bring the heated cover down onto the drying area very slowly and carefully, as any sudden displacement of air can disturb the stamps – as I found out to my cost; opening the cover after the requisite ten minutes drying time I discovered that two stamps had got neatly folded and the resultant creases were irrevocable. I accept that this was entirely due to my carelessness, but it is a point to watch for.

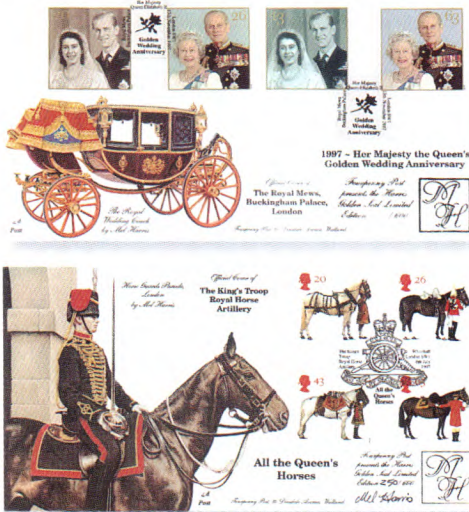
The manufacturers' instructions include tips for the proper soaking of stamps and in particular draw attention to the need to ensure that all the gum is washed off the back before putting stamps into the Dryer. Gently rubbing the backs of stamps under running water is recommended to ensure best results, otherwise your specimens may stick to the drying plate.

If the instructions are followed to the letter, then you will end up with perfectly dried, flat specimens, ready for the packet, stockbook or even album page. My only reservations are the price – £147 – and the time consumed. Bearing in mind that the drying area caters for only about two dozen stamps at a time, I could easily spend an entire evening coping with the stamps that come off my mail each week. Again, however, the manufacturers suggest that 'little but often' is a good maxim – that, and changing the water frequently to ensure that diluted gum does not create problems ●

UNLESS you are wedded wholeheartedly to stamps in mint condition, you will sooner or later have to cope with the chore of soaking used stamps off their backing paper. I suppose it was inevitable that some genius somewhere (in Germany, as it happens) would come up with the solution by inventing a machine for the purpose. I hasten to add that the process is not, as yet, fully automated, as you still have to spend back-breaking hours over a sink or basin, skiddling about in warm water, teasing the wretched stamps off the bits of envelope and postcard and segregating them from the rubbish before the machine takes over.

The Safe Stamp Dryer is certainly a big advance over the patent drying books which have been around for some years now, and a far cry from the sheets of blotting paper common in my youth (and, for all I know, still preferred by traditionalists). This gadget, reminiscent of a sandwich toaster, actually operates on the same principle, although the heating element is considerably reduced and the pressure is much less.

Competition Win 1998 Fourpenny Post first day cover subscription or a Fourpenny Post first day cover



Two equal first prizes of a full year's subscription to Fourpenny Post first day covers for 1998 (about ten covers worth over £50)

3rd prize Queen's Golden Wedding issue Official first day cover of The Royal Mews, Buckingham Palace, usually £12.95

4th prize The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery Official first day cover (all The Queen's Horses issue, July 1997), usually £12.95

5th prize Sanquhar Post Office Official cover (Sub-Post Offices issue, August 1997), usually £9.90

6th prize Hong Kong Commemorative label booklet first day cover (February 1997), usually £7.50

THIS MONTH'S COMPETITION is sponsored by Fourpenny Post, dealers in blank, serviced and cds (Counter Date Stamp) first day covers

Fourpenny Post since 1996 have produced a series of famous stamp artist designed, award-winning first day covers, available as blanks, for each GB commemorative and definitive issue of stamps. Most are available for collectors and dealers nationwide to buy and service their own covers (list of stockists available on receipt of an SAE). Fourpenny Post are the only company who provide blank ordinary and blank official covers for collectors to purchase and service using the re-posting service offered by Royal Mail Special Handstamp Centres.

The design team includes Anne Yvonne Gilbert (designer of three sets of GB stamps), Mel Harris (designer of stamps for five overseas nations), Tony Lewery (designer of one set of GB stamps) and Robin Ollington (new to the team, designer of stamps for Guernsey, Gibraltar and Alderney). Approaches from other artists are welcome.

Enquiries for all the Fourpenny Post and Harris Golden Seal Series of covers and products should be addressed to the producers, **Fourpenny Post, 30 Dinsdale Avenue, Wallsend NE28 9JD. Telephone 0191 262 8844.**

To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or the back of an envelope to: January Bulletin competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL to arrive by 27 February. Entries must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

- 1 Which new value was added to the Wildings Multiple Crowns series?
- 2 Who died in his adopted country in 1988?
- 3 What are the dates of Spring Stampex 1998?
- 4 Who designed the Queen's Beasts stamps?
- 5 Which letter is behind Sir Henry Baskerville's leg?

The answers will be found in this *Bulletin*. The competition is not open to employees, or their families and agents, of Royal Mail or Fourpenny Post.

The winners of the October competition were: A Peel of West Yorkshire, P G Laing of Pennsylvania, USA, and C Bond of Cheshire. The answers were: 1) John Gorham; 2) Dr J T Whitney; 3) 350,000-400,000; 4) Orchids; 5) Science & Technology and Nature of Scotland/Ornithology. Our thanks to all who entered ●

Posting boxes 172

Martin Robinson, author of *Old Letter Boxes* (first published 1987) comments on the feature in the October *Bulletin*: The rectangular pillar box in Petersfield is not the same type as the one illustrated in the *Bulletin* in December 1968. The 1968 Type F box was made of sheet steel panels in single and double versions. It originally had a stencilled cipher but this was replaced with a bolted-on cast version. Its other main feature was the tilting clearance mechanism which can be seen in the December 1968 photo (also in Jean Farrugia's book *The Letter Box*). There are very few of these boxes left: the one in the photo shown here was in central Birmingham. The Type G box was made between 1974 and 1980 of the more traditional cast iron, again in single or double versions. Keen letter box spotters recognise different sizes and styles of the royal cipher and the maker's name (Carron) may or may not appear on the back of the box. A compartment at the side can hold a delivery postman's second pouch. Many of these boxes are still in service all over the country. The second photo shows a Scottish crown version – in Sheffield! ●



For details of the Letter Box Study Group send a stamped addressed envelope to the Membership Secretary: Mrs V Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Green, Birmingham B20 1ES

Postbag

1957 Parliamentary Conference stamp I read with interest Matthew Hinton's article in the October *Bulletin*. The 4d Parliamentary Conference stamp was 'designed' by me! The Chairman of the British section, Col Stoddart-Smith, pressed the Postmaster General to issue a stamp which I advised was not covered by our then stamp issuing policy and the PMG duly refused. Stoddart-Smith, an MP himself, kept nobbling the PMG and kept getting the brush-off until at the last minute of the eleventh hour the PMG gave way. There was absolutely no possibility of getting an artist to produce a design, even by Harrison's in-house team. Even if Harrison had produced something there would have been no time to get it back to me to approve so I got a sheet of 4d, as giving the best opportunity to work on, and with a mapping pen drew the lettering around the frame to give Stoddart-Smith something a bit different from a simple overprint. I shot it off to Harrison's for urgent production without proofs and was horrified when I saw the finished product. In my haste I had overlooked the '46th' and Harrison's had stuck it in just under The Queen's chin.

The stamp was absolutely slated in the design press, most of all by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). They were the people who were at that very moment busy designing and building high-rise flats which 30 years later were to be torn down as abominations. The practice of shaping lettering around inserts was a typically Victorian practice and I have seen it used in latter years, there being fashion in design as in everything else. FRANK LANGFIELD, BRISTOL ●

Mr Langfield set up the Philatelic Bureau in 1963 and was the first Editor of the Bulletin. His articles on the pioneer days were published here in May 1984 and May 1993. ED

Bulletin back issues P H Mattocks of 60 Cambridge Road, Wigmore, Gillingham, Kent ME8 0JH offers vol 17 to the present, plus four binders and a few odd *Bulletins* from vols 15 and 16 free to the first person to collect them or who is willing to pay postage ●

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 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 quadrille album pages for you to arrange your collection as you wish.

Prices £17.95 Universal binder and slipcase, £16.50 each others.

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

