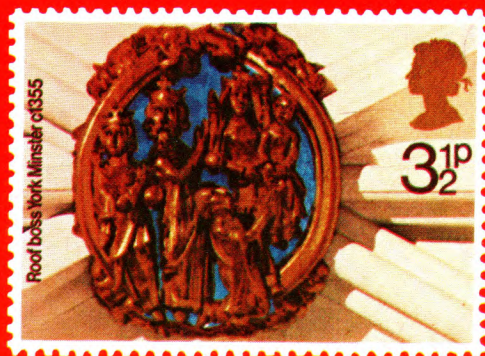


Philatelic Bulletin

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Issue of Experimental Stamps

A short experiment commenced on 13 November with a special issue of the 4½p definitive stamp printed on a new type of coated paper. In all other respects the stamps remain unchanged.

Some eight million stamps have been printed and distributed in areas under the control of the Head Postmasters of Aberdeen, Cambridge, Newport (Gwent) and Norwich.

The stamps are on sale at all philatelic counters and by post from the Philatelic Bureau, Lothian House, 124 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH3 9BB, as long as stocks last.

The new paper exhibits an all-over luminescent quality which may later permit the adoption of an improved method of imparting to the stamp the special characteristics required for machine recognition.

The experiment is not designed to improve the detection of the stamp by the PO's existing processing machinery but is aimed at easing stamp printing problems.

Introduction

In November a special exhibition featuring *The Court Post* was opened in the National Postal Museum, London. It will remain on view until early February 1975. The exhibition features many interesting and rare items from private collections, supported by material from Post Office records and The Court Post Office at Buckingham Palace.

The story of *The Court Post*, as told in the current exhibition, begins in the reign of Elizabeth I of England, when the first Court Post was appointed, although the origins of this Royal service are much earlier.

Our main feature this month is an article on the Court Post Office written by Jean Farrugia who has recently joined the National Postal Museum staff. Mrs Farrugia will be well known to many of our readers as the author of "The Letter Box".

The Post Office
wishes
the readers of the
Philatelic Bulletin
a very happy Christmas
and a
prosperous New Year

Gems from the R M Phillips' Collection

XVIII Draft One Penny Tête-bêche



The 'Draft One Penny' stamp of 1853 illustrated above is most interesting from several different points of view.

Firstly, of course, here is a strip of three stamps of which the centre cliché is inverted. The method of making line-engraved plates, by machine rolling-in of the impression from a transfer roller, makes it virtually impossible for such an error to occur. On the other hand, since typograph (surface-printed) plates were made from an assemblage of separate lead impressions of the die, it is just possible for one impression to be put into the assembly upside down and this is what must have occurred in this case.

De La Rue, the printers, should not be judged too harshly, for the 'Draft' and 'Receipt' stamps which they produced for the Inland Revenue, were the first adhesive stamps they had ever printed. Indeed, this venture was so well received by Somerset House that when, in 1854, the Inland Revenue decided to bring out postage stamps for values above 2d, they gave the contract (for the 1855 Four-penny Carmine) to Thomas De La Rue & Co. and from that moment the company started their great epoch as stamp printers. Nor can I think of any other De La Rue typographed

stamp printed tête-bêche in error. Such other British tête-bêche stamps as *are* catalogued invariably come from booklet panes which have been wrongly cut up or from printers' waste which has 'leaked' onto the stamp market.

The 1853 stamps and a few other fiscal 1d stamps appropriated to a particular duty were not specifically validated for postal use by the Customs and Inland Revenue Act 1881 as were the 'unappropriated' fiscals mentioned in the Act. Nevertheless, the 'Draft' and 'Receipt' stamps of 1853 have for almost a century been regarded as real postal fiscals since they were genuinely accepted by the GPO for postal use. In the R M Phillips' Collection there are numerous postally used examples of both stamps with dates ranging between 1881 and 1884. Among the postmarks seen are a Newspaper Branch 'killer', numeral duplexes and the ordinary oval 'Registered' datestamp in use in 1882.

Judging by the catalogue price, the 'Draft' stamp tête-bêche in pair with normal must be comparable in rarity to the famous KE VII 2d Tyrian Plum or the 1858 One Penny Red Plate 77.

A G RIGO DE RIGHI

The Court Post Office from 1897



Fig 2 Royal Household -
'Lord Steward MH' (1901)



Fig 1 Edward VII
franking stamp (1901)



Fig 3 Edward VIII's
franking stamp (1936)



Fig 4 The 'Queen's Flight'
franking stamp (current)



Fig 5 EIIR franking
stamp (current)



Fig 6 Cancellation stamp,
Holyroodhouse (current)



Fig 7 'Official Paid',
Balmoral (current)

From the beginning of the State postal service in 1635 until 1840 the Sovereign's letters were carried post-free. On 10 January 1840, however, as an example to those, such as MPs, who lost their franking privilege upon the introduction of *Uniform Penny Postage*, Queen Victoria voluntarily surrendered her right to Royal franking. Henceforth, letters from the Queen and her Court bore postage stamps, just like those of her subjects,

although Royal Messengers continued to carry certain letters by hand.

In 1877 a sub-post office was opened at Sandringham House, the private country residence of the Prince of Wales.

No special postal facilities were provided for the Court's mail, however, until January 1897, when a Court post office was opened at Osborne House for the convenience of the Queen's household and to relieve the Sergeant

Footman of what had amounted to the duties of a sub-postmaster. The Court Telegraphist acted as Clerk-in-Charge and a special hand date stamp was issued for his use, the first to be issued for postal use at the Court.

Upon his accession in January 1901 Royal franking was restored by Edward VII, and by May he had approved a design for a personal franking hand stamp incorporating his cypher (fig 1).

In August the Treasury declared that the Royal franking privilege might cover His Majesty's personal correspondence; letters sent by his staff at Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace, Sandringham House, Balmoral Castle and the Royal Yacht at Cowes; and the business correspondence of the Privy Purse Office and the three Household departments, ie those of the Lord Steward, the Master of the Horse and the Lord Chamberlain.

Soon after, the Post Office produced three rubber hand stamps, numbered 1, 2 and 3, for use by the three Household departments concerned. Before they could be issued, however, and because the three departments objected strongly to using impersonal, numbered stamps, the Secretary to the Board of Green Cloth of the Lord Steward's Office suggested a new design with the initials *LS* for the Lord Steward's Office, *MH* for that of the Master of the Horse and *LC* for that of the Lord Chamberlain. These were issued on 28 August.

Similar stamps were later issued for the *Privy Purse* at Buckingham Palace and Windsor; the *Master of the Horse* at the Royal Mews London and Windsor; and the *Lord Chamberlain* at St James's Palace. Others were issued for departments of the *Lord Steward* at Buckingham Palace, bearing the initials *BGC*, *MH*, *PH*, *RL* and *RC*.

The *Privy Purse* stamps were used on correspondence from the Keeper of the Privy Purse, the Assistant Keeper, the Secretary and the Assistant Secretary to the Privy Purse, and the Personal Secretary and Assistant Private Secretaries to The King. The

Master of the Horse stamps were used by the Master of the Horse, the Crown Equerry and Secretary, the Accountant, Clerk and Assessor of Taxes and the Superintendents of the Royal Mews in London and at Windsor. The *Lord Chamberlain* stamp was used by the Lord Chamberlain, Comptroller and Chief Clerk. Of the initialled stamps issued to offices of the *Lord Steward* that with the initials *BGC* was used by the Lord Steward, Treasurer and Comptroller of the Household, and Acting Secretary and Clerk to the Board of Green Cloth and that bearing *MH* was used by the Master of the Household and his Deputy, and the Clerk Comptroller. The *PH* stamp was used by the Paymaster of the Household; the *RL* stamp by the Royal Laundry, and the *RC* stamp by the Gentlemen of the Royal Cellars. All were oval in shape and featured a crown in their design (fig 2).

By November 1902 postage stamps over-printed *RH Official* had also been supplied for use on correspondence from certain outlying offices connected with the Royal Household, ie those of the Examiner of Plays, the Inspector of the Palace of Holyroodhouse, the Housekeepers at Windsor Castle and Frogmore, Gentlemen of the Royal Cellars, the Paymaster of Households and the Royal Laundry, Richmond.

To indicate that no postage was due to be paid on correspondence from the Court which bore autographed signatures or impressions of franking or certifying stamps, post offices regularly despatching such mail were provided with *Official Paid* hand date stamps. The first of these were issued to Windsor Head Post Office and Sandringham RSO on 28 August 1901.

Postmasters were instructed to use their *Official Paid* stamp on any letters sent by The King which bore his signature or an impression of his franking stamp, or were certified by the signature of his Personal Secretary or the Keeper of the Privy Purse, and to keep a record of every letter so

stamped and forwarded free of postage. If they had no *Official Paid* stamp they were to affix postage stamps, unless the letter was addressed to a Government Office.

That Autumn, when the Court was due to move to Balmoral Castle, it was decided to issue to the Court Telegraphist a special *Official Paid* hand date stamp, with a crown in its design, for use at Balmoral and other Royal residences. Pending its issue on 26 September a London *Official Paid* was sent to Balmoral.

In April 1902 a Court post office was established at Buckingham Palace and, unlike the other Court most offices, remained open all the year round. This, too, was placed under the supervision of the Court Telegraphist and in 1906, at the express wish of The King, he was promoted to the rank of Court Postmaster.

By 1911 a Court post office had been opened at the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Others were opened at the Royal Pavilion, Aldershot, for use by the Court when there for military occasions, and on the Royal Yacht during the Cowes Regatta. These were open only when the Court was in residence.

George V's franking stamps were very similar to those provided for Edward VII. The square stamps provided for Edward VIII in 1936, however, included the initial *I* in his cypher, denoting that he was Edward Rex *Imperator* – Emperor of India. Unlike those provided for earlier and later Monarchs upon their accession to the throne, the design of Edward VIII's stamp, based on a sketch he produced early in his reign, did not include a crown (fig 3).

The franking stamps provided for George VI in 1937, although circular in shape and including a crown in their design, were very similar to those designed by Edward VIII a year earlier and included the initial *I* in the Royal cypher. In 1938, however, The King expressed concern that the Royal cypher in his franking stamp was incorrect and so

stamps of a new design, with the cypher in the flowing style adopted by Edward VII and George V, and excluding the initial *I*, were provided.

In 1936 Edward VIII introduced *The King's Flight*. In 1953 this became *The Queen's Flight*. It sometimes carries Court mail, when a special 'Queen's Flight' franking stamp is used (fig 4).

Today, the Court Post Office at Buckingham Palace still provides postal and telephone facilities for the Court and the Royal Household at Buckingham Palace. The offices at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle are open all the year round. Those at Balmoral, Holyroodhouse and Sandringham are set up by the Court Postmaster only when the Court is in residence. Correspondence sent from Buckingham Palace bearing Her Majesty's franking stamp (fig 5) or certifying stamps of offices of the Royal Household is date-stamped with the London SW1 *Official Paid* stamp. Private letters bearing postage stamps are cancelled by a special *Buckingham Palace* hand date stamp. A special *Buckingham Palace* registration hand stamp is also in use. Special cancellation stamps are in use at the Balmoral, Holyroodhouse (fig 6), Sandringham and Windsor Court post offices but special *Official Paid* stamps are used only at Balmoral (fig 7) and Sandringham.

Private letters from certain Royal residences, although not eligible for Royal franking, sometimes carry in addition to postage stamps hand-struck cachets, eg *Office of HRH The Duchess of Kent Marlborough House*, to denote their origin. JEAN FARRUGIA

RAF Covers

A flown souvenir cover will be issued on 15 December 1974 to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Royal Air Force Gliding and Soaring Association. It will show the gliders used by the RAFGSA and be cancelled with a BFPS commemorative handstamp (1481) after which it will be flown by glider to the RAFGSA HQ. It will be available on or about

10 January 1975 from the project officer Sqn Ldr I D MacFadyn, RAF Coningsby, Lincoln, at 30p plus postage.

An illustrated catalogue and reference book of all RAF flown covers officially issued since January 1969 is now available from the project officer, Flt Lt K Anstead, RAF Tern Hill, Market Drayton, at 65p plus 15p postage.

New 7p Definitive Stamp

A new 7p stamp will be issued on 15 January 1975.



Printing Details

Printer: Harrison and Sons Ltd

Value: 7p

Size: 22 × 19mm

Perforation: 15 × 14

No. to sheet: 200

Paper: Coated unwatermarked phosphor

Format: Vertical

Process: Photogramme

Date of issue: 15 January 1975

Designer: Arnold Machin, OBE

Colour: Red-brown

First Day Cover Services

Full first day cover services for this stamp will be provided by the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh, on 15 January 1975.

Service A

Consists of the official Post Office cover, addressed as requested and bearing the 7p stamp, postmarked 'Philatelic Bureau Edin-

burgh' or in this case 'Windsor Berks'. The charge is 20p per cover, or 17½p each for customers with deposit accounts.

Service B

Customers' own pre-addressed covers will be accepted for stamping, and posting on the day of issue, cancelled with either postmark. The charge is 13p per cover.

Service C

For 50 or more covers to the same address, the conditions of Service A apply except that the price is 17½p per cover.

First day of issue facilities will be available at the offices where philatelic posting boxes are provided.

K-Registered Envelopes

To boost production of the K-registered envelope, the Post Office has issued a new version incorporating a separate front flap in a special heat-seal paper.

Neither the size of the envelope – 11½ × 6 in. (286 mm × 150 mm) – nor the 29½p letterpress stamp (25p registration fee and 4½p first-class postage) has changed.

The envelope, which came on sale at the beginning of November, is available from philatelic counters and the Philatelic Bureau, Lothian House, 124 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH3 9BB.

1975 Scottish Pictorial Air Letter Form

A Scottish pictorial air letter form commemorating Robert Burns' birth, goes on sale in post offices in Scotland and at philatelic counters in the rest of the United Kingdom on Monday, 13 January 1975.

Designed by Fraser Haston DA, the letter features a traditional portrait of Robert Burns, illustrates his poems, "Tam O'Shanter" and "To a Mouse" and incorporates quotations from these and others of his poems.

The air letter is printed in blue by McCorquodale & Co. Ltd. It will be sold for 7p and has a postage value of 6p.

Experimental Charity Stamp

22nd January 1975



Several countries including France, the German Democratic Republic, the German Federal Republic, the Netherlands, New Zealand and Switzerland issue postage stamps with a charity surcharge. This stamp is issued experimentally following suggestions that similar arrangements should be made in this country.

The stamp costs 6p: of this 4½p is the current price of sending a letter weighing up to 2 oz by inland first class post, and the extra 1½p is a donation to charity. A part of this 1½p will be used to offset the extra cost incurred by the Post Office in issuing the stamp, and by the Trustees of the Charity Stamp Fund which has been set up to pay to charities the net sums from the sale of the Charity Stamps.

The Post Office part in the experiment is to produce and sell the stamp at post offices throughout the United Kingdom; and to account for and hand-over to the Trustees the net charitable income.

The Trustees are completely independent of the Post Office and were invited to accept office by the National Council of Social Service. The Trustees have selected the charities which will benefit from the experiment. They will scrutinise the account of the money raised, and disburse the proceeds to the various benefiting charities. The Chairman of the Trustees is The Most Honourable John, Marquess of Bute JP and the other Trustees are: Mr Raymond Clarke OBE JP;

Colonel Lionel Evans TD JP DL; The Countess of Mar and Kellie JP; Sir Colin Thornley KCMG CVO, and Mr G B Newe OBE.

The charities to benefit from the experiment all come within the general heading of 'Health and Handicap'.

The National Council of Social Service (NCSS) is the principal voluntary agency in the United Kingdom for the promotion and guidance of social services and acts for those national voluntary organisations which are members. The NCSS worked closely with the Post Office throughout the planning of the Charity Stamp Experiment.

The Charity Stamp will be on sale at post offices throughout the United Kingdom for about one month from the date of issue, and from philatelic counters and the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh, for one year. The results of the experiment will be evaluated at the end of one year.

The purchase of the Charity Stamp is, of course, entirely voluntary. It is sold at post offices only at the customers' request as an optional alternative to the usual postage stamp.

The stamp was designed by Philip Sharland FSA. It bears a representational design on Health and Handicap, the areas to benefit from the charitable contribution.

Printing Details

Printer: Harrison & Sons Ltd

Value: 4½p postage charge and 1½p surcharge for charity

Denomination: 4½p + 1½p

Size: 41 mm × 30 mm

Perforation: 15 × 14

No to sheet: 100

Paper: Coated unwatermarked phosphor

Format: Horizontal

Process: Photogravure

Date of issue: 22 January 1974

Designer: Philip Sharland FSA

Colours: White, dark blue, light blue

First Day Cover Services



First Day Cover designed by Philip Sharland FSIA

An experimental charity stamp is to be issued on 22 January 1975. It costs 6p – the minimum first class postage rate of 4½p plus a 1½p surcharge for donation to charity. Elsewhere in this *Bulletin* the stamp is more fully discussed.

The following first day cover services will be offered by the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh.

Service A

This consists of the official Post Office cover, addressed as requested and bearing the stamp. The cover will be cancelled "Philatelic Bureau Edinburgh" and despatched for a charge of 19p.

For deposit account customers the charge will be 16½p.

Service B

Customers' own pre-addressed covers will be given the stamp cancelled and despatched for 12p per cover.

Service C

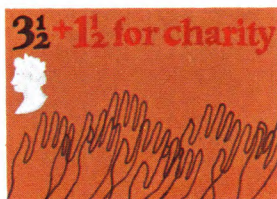
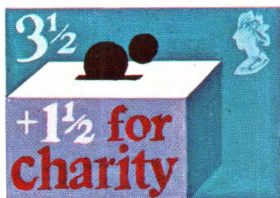
For bulk orders of 50 or more covers all to the same address, under the conditions of Service A, the charge is 16½p per cover.

The usual first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes.

Presentation Pack

No presentation pack will be provided for this stamp.

Preliminary Designs



Philip Sharland



The Shirt-Sleeves Studio



Jeffery Matthews

New Oblong Pillar-Box

The first of a new type of cast iron pillar-box which postmen will find quicker and easier to clear than the traditional type, went into service on 23 October 1974.

During the next 12 months, the Post Office will be installing about 750 of the new boxes in Britain. The first has been installed at Leggat Drive, Bramford, Ipswich.

Oblong in shape, the new pillar-boxes, known as the "G-type", have an improved internal clearance mechanism which can cut emptying time compared with the well-known round boxes. The postman simply hooks his bag beneath the mechanism and pulls a lever and the letters are released from the mail container directly into the bag.

Cutting down the time taken to clear a pillar-box means that bad weather has less chance to spoil mail and the mail-van spends less time at the kerbside.

Taking the place of the plastic tablet, indicating the time of the next collection, is a small rotary dial, use of which will avoid loss or damage of tablets. Together with the notice plate which gives information about collections, the dial indicator is protected by armoured glass. The plate itself is slightly angled-up to make it easy to read.

The new box is manufactured by the Carron Company of Falkirk. The initial contract is for 1,000 boxes, some of which will be combined to make double boxes.

There are 100,000 posting boxes in Britain, of which about 34,000 are pillar-boxes. The first rectangular pillar-boxes, of sheet steel, were erected on 130 sites soon after 1968, but they have not been found to be as durable as cast iron.

Special Handstamps

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting bearing at least 4p in postage, should be sent to the Head Postmaster of the town where the special posting box is located, or the relevant District Postmaster in London,

marking the outer cover "Special Handstamp".

10 May 1975 P/R

Walthamstow Antiquarian Society Diamond Jubilee 10 May 1975

Walthamstow E17. Special posting box will be at the Vestry House Museum, Vestry Road, Walthamstow, London E17. 4 November–28 December 1974

Operation Gatepost Help Emergency and Public Services – Put a Number on your gate. To be used at Slough.

10 November 1974–18 January 1975

Lewisham Concert Hall Catford SE6 4TU 01-690 3431 Billy Dainty and Joe Church in Aladdin Commencing Boxing Day for Six Weeks. To be used at Catford SDO London SE6.

20 December 1974–9 January 1975

Fairfield Croydon 01-688 9291 Roy Castle's Christmas Show December 24 to January 11. To be used at Croydon. **Heritage 75 April 20th to April 30th Edinburgh and the Lothians a Unique Spring Collection.** To be used as follows:

WCDO, London – 30 December 1974 1 February 1975

Edinburgh – 6 January – 19 April 1975 Newcastle upon Tyne – 10 February – 8 March 1975

Birmingham – 10 March – 6 April 1975

Postmark Slogans

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting bearing the appropriate postage rate, should be forwarded to the Head Postmaster of the town where the slogan is to be used, marking the outer cover "Postmark Slogan".

27 November–18 December 1974 (P)

Da Silva's Snow White 16, 17, 18 December Puppet Wonderland 2-3 January Hornsey Town Hall N8 01-348 6881. To be used at Wood Green, N22 5DO.

2-28 December 1974

St Blazey A.D.S. Present Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves Capitol Theatre Jan 7-12 St Austell. To be used at St Austell.

14-20 December 1974

Phone Santa Claus on 01-483 8033. To be used at:

WDO	SW11
NDO	SW16
N2	SW18
N4	SW20
N6	Ilford
N8	Epsom
N10	Leatherhead
N12	St Albans
N14	Borehamwood
N15	Uxbridge
N17	Barnet
N19	Welwyn Garden City
N20	Dartford
N21	Gravesend
E2	Sidcup
E4	Bexleyheath
E6	Southall
E9	Hounslow
E11	Sutton
E12	Watford
E14	Bromley
E18	Twickenham
SEDO	Sunbury-on-Thames
SE3	Romford
SE15	Harrow
SE27	Wembley
Mount Pleasant	Edgware
W3	Pinner
W6	Ruislip
W8	Northwood
W11	Croydon
W14	
WCDO	

28 October-31 December 1974 (P)

The Borough of Copeland Lakes Mountains and Sea. To be used at Whitehaven.

Repeat Campaigns

15 October-31 December 1974

Expanding Hastings Resort with a Future. To be reused at Hastings.

1-31 December 1974

Bridge of Allan Welcomes Visitors at all Seasons. To be reused at Stirling.

Amendment

Please Note that the Postmark Slogan **The Samaritans Distress Despair Phone or Visit in Confidence** will not now be used at Tunbridge Wells (and Tonbridge) from 20 October 1974-21 December 1974 as announced in *Philatelic Bulletin* Volume 11 No 8 April 1974.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

It is a well known fact that most of the 'letters to the Editor' are inspired by moans, groans and various assorted complaints - therefore your comments in the October issue on not receiving so many letters surely seems to point to satisfied and happy customers!

During the past few years, the wishes and suggestions of most of your readers have been (almost) fulfilled, ie uniformity of stamp size, especially within the individual sets; one designer per issue; and last but not least the interesting stamp subjects - even a Railways issue . . . at last!

I would like to suggest that there should be more historical issues. Henry VIII and his six wives would make a splendid issue and so would other well known and romantic figures such as Mary Queen of Scots, Elizabeth I, Lady Jane Grey and the Princes in the Tower. The recent 'Great Britons' issue was very popular, more could follow: Wellington, Wolfe, Nelson, Clive and Cook - the list is endless.

Looking ahead, the American Independence Bi-centennial will be celebrated in 1976, in view of the fact that the American Post Office has honoured Sir Winston Churchill, a

reciprocal issue should be considered for this event.

The 250th anniversary of the birth of one of the greatest portrait painters – Thomas Gainsborough – is in 1977 and this presents an opportunity to show some of the most beautiful women of 18th century England on postage stamps.

1977 is of course Royal Year – Silver Jubilee. This is surely the most important of future stamp issues and I would be very interested to hear what the Post Office and the Stamp Advisory Committee are considering to celebrate this truly great royal and national occasion.

Yours faithfully,

NEVILLE BREEZE

Capetown 8001
South Africa

Dear Sir,

It will be most interesting to read other contributors' ideas in response to the cover display problem raised by Mr Hostombe (Oct '74).

My own (amateur) collecting is limited to Great Britain QE II, without philatelic specialisation, comprising first day covers and fine used copies, with mint blocks of some more recent issues. Over the earlier years of the reign a single FDC with multiple f.u. copies of commemoratives form the general lay-out. The FDCs are protected by clear film and the stamps by mounts; both covers and stamps arranged as self-expression decrees on sheets of black art paper 24" deep by 18" wide. Some sheets hold three or four issues with FDCs; others have multiple FDCs of a single issue.

Should a collector using this method aspire to wider display of his treasures, it is a simple matter to obtain picture frames (or panels) with removable backs to hold selected sheets, thus protected by glass.

One problem arises from this method: to procure suitable folders or binders with stout board covers, leather spine, fold-in

flaps (or "wings"), to house the sheets. A capacity of 1½" to 2" (closed) is indicated. The assistance of any reader who can help with a source of supply would be welcomed.

Yours faithfully,

H GOLDING

St Ives, Cornwall

Dear Sir,

Since reading the short, but quite interesting article by James Watson in the August 'PB' about the commemorative stamps issued for the 1924–25 British Empire Exhibitions at Wembley I have been expecting an "erratum" to be published in the September or October issues; but, its non-appearance now leads me to question, rather than dispute, Mr Watson's statement that the 1924 issue was available only at the Exhibition post office. Even after 50 years I am 99% certain that I bought my 1924 pair at a local post office and that I obtained my 1925 pair at the Exhibition post office which was the only source of supply in that year. I have always held the belief that the restricted issue of the 1925 set has accounted for its relative scarcity – how else could the catalogue price and market value of the 1925 issue be justified and maintained throughout the years at several times that of the 1924 issue?

In the last sentence of his article, Mr Watson states... "Total sales of the 'Wembley' stamps for *both* years were 17 million", but seems unable to expand upon this figure. I and, I assume, the vast majority of your readers subscribe to the 'PB' for the purpose of having authentic reference to the philatelic side of British postal history. Would you please tell us from your records how the 17 million was divided between 1924 and 1925 and, if possible? how the respective figures were split between the 1d and 1½d denominations.

Reference to the stamps in my own collection appears to support my memory because the "line perforation" variety of the 1d is of the 1924 vintage and a used specimen carrying

part of a parcels post cancellation. The unused specimens of both years have comb perforations. Both these facts tend to support the theory of the general availability and usage of the 1924 issue. Surely the production of a very restricted issue would not call for a reprint and the use of a different type of perforating machine. Nor would one expect a unique stamp – the first British commemorative – acquired only under special circumstances to be casually used.

Perhaps some other reader with an even longer philatelic memory than myself can throw some light on this subject.

Yours truly,

H G YOUNG

West Wickham, Kent

James Watson replies:

Your correspondent Mr Young makes several false assumptions which I hope to amend to his satisfaction.

First the question of availability and sales. Among my sources of information was a series of articles “Wembley and the British Empire Exhibition”, published in *The Stamp Lover*, 1954-55, by the veteran philatelist and writer, W G Stitt-Dibden, who made a special study of the Wembley stamps and postmarks.

Here are the relevant details:

“The total sales of both values for both years was 17 millions. Figures given for sales from time to time were quoted in the philatelic press and are as follows (the 1924 figures include both values):

1924 By 4 pm on opening day	
(23 April)	1,000,000
By 12 July	5,000,000
By 28 July	7,500,000
By 23 October	14,000,000
1925 By 17 July 1d value	731,465
1½d value	735,206

The stamps for both years were on sale only at the Exhibition post offices.

From the above it is apparent that the relative scarcity of the 1925 issue is due to

poor sales – the low quantities sold would naturally enhance market values. They were not, in any sense, a “restricted issue”. I doubt if the general public were even aware that the stamps had been reissued with the changed date.

There is no significance in the change of perforation from line to comb in the 1924 issue. The reason was that the small holes of the line perforator gave trouble and it was replaced by the comb perforator. The change was reported in the *Philatelic Journal of Great Britain* of August 1924. Similarly, the use of a parcel post cancellation does not signify that the stamps were generally available outside the Exhibition. In July 1924, parcels were being dispatched from the Exhibition grounds at the rate of 1,500 per week.

Dear Sir,

RE: DISPLAYING FDCs

Your correspondent, Mr P A P Hostombe (letter published in October 1974 issue), might like to copy my idea for displaying my collection of FDCs.

I mount mine and put them in old picture frames, bought cheaply at jumble sales, and hang them up around the house. This creates much interest from all visitors to the house, and is a most unusual form of ‘picture’ – snag is, I am rapidly running out of wall space!

Yours sincerely,
MONICA M GREEN (MRS)

London W13

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