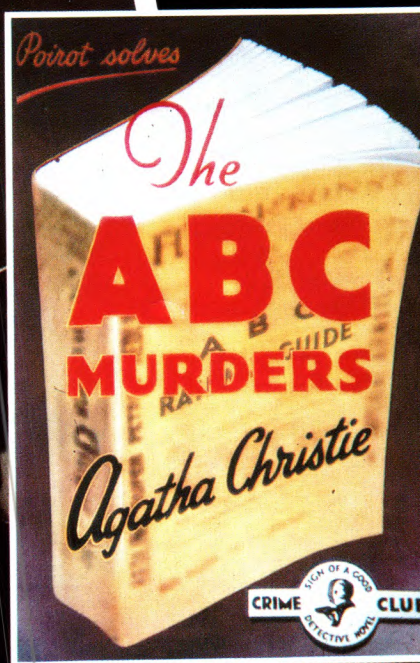


British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 28
Number 7
March 1991



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Our front cover features a portrait of Dame Agatha Christie and one of her famous books, courtesy of Angus McBean and Harper Collins Publishers. A prestige stamp book entitled "Alias Agatha Christie" goes on sale at post offices on 19 March. It was previewed in last month's Bulletin.

Royal Mail Stamp Album

The 1990 supplement to this album is available from the British Philatelic Bureau and "Collections" centres, price £9.50. It houses special issues, Greetings stamps, the Penny Black miniature sheet and 1990 definitive issues listed in the June *Bulletin* (page 247) plus the 1st and 2nd NVI stamps issued on 7 August, 10p, 17p, 22p, 26p, 27p, 31p and 33p values of 4 September, 31p litho stamp of 17 September and the 17p, 22p, 26p and 37p Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales Country stamps of 4 December. Please note that the 1989 stamps listed in the June *Bulletin* are provided for in the 1989 supplement.

The *Royal Mail Stamp Album*, with pages for all definitive, country, and special stamps and to pay labels of 1970-87, costs £52.50. 1988 and 1989 supplements are available, price £8.95 and £9.50. The album contains spaces for all Machin definitive and Country stamps listed in the Stanley Gibbons *Collect British Stamps* checklist, i.e. stamps with different phosphor arrangements and perforations. The album and slip-case are hand-made, covered in navy-blue "leatherette" finish Kivar. The binder is padded with the Post Office crest blocked on the front cover and spine. The pages are high quality cartridge paper with hand-mounted crystal clear mounts.

Scientific Achievements Stamps

Please note that the four stamps to be issued on 5 March will comprise 2 x 22p, 31p and 37p, all printed in separate sheets, as detailed in the February *Bulletin* (page 123) and *not* 2 x 22p and 2 x 37p printed se-tenant as was initially intended and announced in the January (page 99). Any confusion is regretted.

The presentation packs for the Scientific Achievements (5 March) and Europe in Space (23 April) stamps will both contain a ticket allowing free entry for a child to the Science Museum in London when accompanied by a paying adult. This free entry is worth £1.75.

Swindon First Day Handstamp

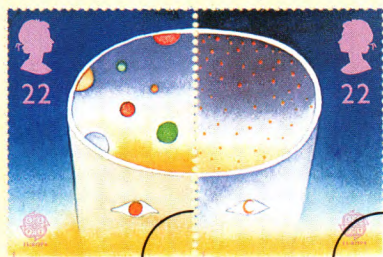
From 5 March Royal Mail Swindon will use a pictorial (railway locomotive) First Day of Issue handstamp in addition to the standard, non-pictorial First Day handstamp. Reposting address: Special Postmark Duty, Royal Mail Swindon, Holbrook House, Station Road, SWINDON SN1 1AA.

Europe in Space

23 April 1991



The 1991 Europa stamps, to be issued on 23 April, have as their theme "Europe in Space" – adopted by the Conference of European Posts and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT), to honour the major contribution to our knowledge of the Universe being made by European astronomers at La Palma in the Canary Islands. The stamps comprise se-tenant pairs of **22p** and **37p** stamps featuring thought-



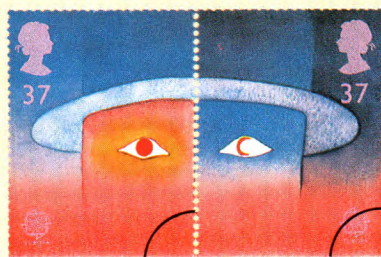
provoking illustrations designed to challenge us to explore questions which astronomers at La Palma may one day be able to answer. The 22p stamps cover the basic first class inland and EEC rate and the airmail outside Europe basic rate (up to 10g) is catered for by the 37p values.

Peering out into worlds that may well have disappeared before ours was created, and at distances from us which defy imagination, astronomers have little difficulty in transcending earthly boundaries. Their perspective of our planet – which less than 600 years ago was believed to be the centre of the Universe – is a humble speck of dust while our own galaxy is really of marginal significance since it is dwarfed by millions of others infinitely more vast. Above all, they realise that, despite tremendous advances in astronomy in the last 30 years, they have barely scratched the surface. To them, knowledge shared on an international scale is more than good manners – it is a vital necessity.

The spirit of international co-operation is clearly demonstrated by the work at *El Observatorio del Roque de los Muchachos* (Observatory of

the Rocks of the Two Boys) on La Palma in the Canary Islands. There is based a multi-European team of astronomers from Britain, Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Spain and Ireland. The observatory is situated at an altitude of 2,350 metres – above the cloud levels and so ideal for astronomical observation. La Palma was chosen in the 1970s when the Royal Greenwich Observatory found that the British weather and urban lighting were causing difficulties at its Herstmonceux (Sussex) site. Today the Observatory's Isaac Newton telescope stands at La Palma alongside another British telescope (William Herschel) and telescopes from other European nations. All are computer-controlled; movements of the Herschel, the third largest reflector in the world, can be operated by astronomers from computers at the Royal Greenwich Observatory's Cambridge headquarters.

The designs of these stamps, by Jean-Michel Folon, are far from conventional and aim to get the general public and stamp collectors to think about the wonders of space and the fact that our planet is but a tiny fragment of the Universe. In so doing the artist wishes us to realise that Time



as we are used to thinking of it is insignificant; we need to try to visualise Time as infinite. The 22p stamp designs aim to inspire thought of looking out into space beyond the Earth; the 37p designs suggest us as we might be seen by others – if, as may well be, there is life on other planets.

As yet we do not know but there is no conclusive proof that such life does not exist. If the designs of the stamps make us ponder such questions they will have fulfilled their purpose well.

Technical Details

The stamps were designed by Jean-Michel Folon and printed by Harrison & Sons Limited in photogravure on phosphor-coated paper. They are of vertical format, 31 x 40mm, printed in sheets of 100 with PVA Dextrin gum. Perforation measures 14 x 15.

M. Folon is a highly-acclaimed Belgian artist who now lives in France. He is well-known for his exhibition poster designs. He designed two stamps for the French Post Office to commemorate the Philexfrance international stamp exhibition in 1982 (S.G. 2520-1).

Presentation Pack

The pack (No. 217) will cost £1.50; it was printed by Raithby, Lawrence.

Royal Mail Stamp Cards

Cards, featuring enlargements of the stamp designs, will be available approximately two weeks before the stamp issue, price 19p each. They are numbered 134A-D.

First Day Cover

The Royal Mail first day cover will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and main post offices approximately two weeks before 23 April, price 19p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover service — one for the Bureau, the other for Cambridge.

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the stamps cancelled with the requested postmark. Application forms, available from the Bureau and main post offices, should be returned not later than 23 April.

Collectors may send their own cards/covers for the pictorial postmarks; these should be sent on the first day of issue in a stamped out envelope endorsed "Pictorial First Day of Issue Postmark" to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT (Bureau postmark) or South East Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail Windsor, Peascod Street, WINDSOR, Berks, SL4 1AA (Cambridge postmark). Collectors wanting their cards/covers

returned under cover should enclose a suitable addressed envelope. This need not bear additional postage stamps, the postage being already paid by the stamps affixed to the covers for postmarking.

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for those collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

A number of special handstamps sponsored by stamp dealers and others, will be used on 23 April — details of these will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin*, available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau.

Souvenir Cover

A souvenir cover, of similar design to the first day cover, will be available from "Collections" centres and philatelic counters from 24 April, price 19p. This will be on sale for one year.

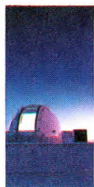
Air Packs

A new product — Royal Mail International's padded "AirPack" — went on trial sale at main post offices in the London and Anglia areas last September. Ideal for sending items of up to 500g weight by the airmail small packet service, it bears a POSTAGE PAID ILS 25 GREAT BRITAIN printed postage impression and an attractive

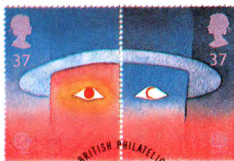


aircraft design. Measuring approx. 395 x 330mm, European and Worldwide versions are available, price £2.25 and £4.99 respectively. It is expected that the packs will go on national sale at main post offices from April. Please note that these packs will not be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres or philatelic counters.

Royal Mail First Day Cover



EUROPE
IN SPACE



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Background images:
CCD image, captured by the
Isaac Newton Telescope, of
the Crab nebula and a
view of planet Earth taken
from space.



of La Palma at an altitude of
2,350 metres, is one of the
best sites in the world for
astronomical observations.
A prevailing temperature
inversion in the area keeps
cloud levels below the
observation site and ensures
clear, pollution-free skies
virtually the whole year round.

La Palma was chosen in the 1970s
when the Royal Greenwich
Observatory, realising that
British weather and encroaching
urban lighting hampered
observations from the Isaac Newton
Telescope at Herstmonceux

Civil in Sussex, approached Spain about
relocating the telescope on the island. Today,
the Isaac Newton Telescope stands on top of
La Palma alongside the Anglo-Dutch William
Herschel and Jacobus Kapteyn Telescopes,
the Anglo-Danish Carlsberg Automatic
Meridian Circle, the Swedish Solar and
Stellar Telescopes and the Nordic
Optical Telescope.

A CCD camera on the Isaac
Newton Telescope and
computer enhancement
produced this image of the
NGC 7752 and NGC 7753
galaxies.

A revolutionary feature of
these telescopes is the fact that
they are computer-controlled.

suggest that this process is...
The cycle of day and night, the Sun and
the Moon, the solar system – all of these we
understand to some degree. But what about
galaxies, quasars and the universe? Is the
artist tempting us to take the hat off earthly
constraints and delve into a totally new
dimension – to visualise time which has no
beginning and space which has no boundary?

Does the all-pervasive eye represent us
looking out or someone else looking in?
Although astronomers have yet to
find positive evidence of life as we know it
beyond this planet, they have proof that the
conditions which life needs are common in
the universe. What is more, their scientific
training challenges them to ask why, if life is
sustainable on this insignificant planet, it
should not exist elsewhere?

Experiments are, in fact, being carried
out with the William Herschel Telescope to
determine whether other planets exist in orbit
around nearby stars. The motions of these
stars will show if they have planets pulling
them from side to side. And, if such planets
are found, what then?

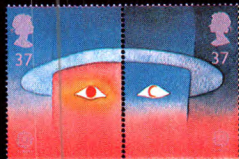
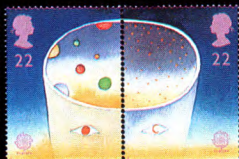
In the future, astronomers
could well be beaming radio-
messages to these planets in the
knowledge that, if there is to be
a reply, it will be a long time
returning. Even though radio
waves travel at the speed of light, they would
take years to arrive. Tau Ceti, the



Royal Mail Mint Stamps



EUROPE IN SPACE

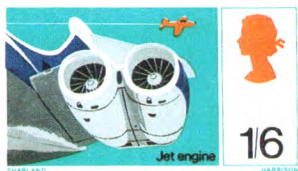
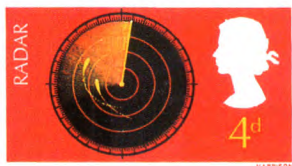


Scientific Exploits

BARBARA LAST

At last some more of our most famous scientists are receiving recognition on postage stamps, an honour long denied to them by their own country as if science was something of which to be ashamed. A beautiful set marks the bicentenaries of two great men, Faraday and Babbage, whose profiles are presented, most originally by Peter Till, with the workings of their genius visible in their heads. The other two stamps were designed by John Harwood to commemorate fiftieth anniversaries, and show the discoveries, not the men.

Sir Frank Whittle took out the first turbo-jet patents in 1930, and although Heinkel was the first to actually fly a jet plane in 1939, Whittle's design of the Gloster E28/39 plane in 1941 led to the jet age and universal air travel. His VC10 twin-jet engine appeared on a British stamp of 1967 (S.G. 754), and the new 37p stamp illustrates the jet plane over a map of Britain.



The 37p value marks the development of radar during the Second World War and is a companion to the radar screen on another British stamp of 1967 (S.G. 752). It shows the sweep of a radar beam extending from Dover to Scotland, the technological discovery that was a crucial wall of protection in the defence of this country during the Battle of Britain. Sir Robert

A. Watson-Watt (1892-1973), born at Brechin, Angus, joined the Meteorological Office in London in 1915 researching on the radio location of thunderstorms. Four years later he took out his first patent for "radio-location", and progressed rapidly upwards. Finally he became Scientific Adviser on Telecommunications to the Air Ministry & Ministry of Aircraft Production, responsible for the development of Radio Detection And Ranging (RADAR). By 1935 he could estimate the distance of an approaching aircraft some 40 miles away, and by the start of the Second World War a network of radar stations was in position. The Home Defence Battle of Britain stamp (Isle of Man, 1990, S.G. 449), clearly shows the four CH (Chain Home) radar masts, probably those that were at St Margaret's Bay, Dover, an ex-radar operator friend tells me. Although targetted by enemy bombers, these frail-looking radar towers were difficult to destroy as destructive blast waves passed through the open metalwork. Later in the war portable radar allowed fighters to attack enemy targets at night. Radar has since been widely developed for numerous navigational aids both at sea and in the air, as well as for everyday police speed traps and weather forecasts.

Computer Forerunner

Charles Babbage (1791-1871) came from Devon. As a sickly child his education was spasmodic, but his passion for algebra outstripped his tutors' mathematics. He was, with Herschel, a founder member of the Analytical Society which brought about a mathematical revival in England, took an M.A. degree at Cambridge, and became a Fellow of the Royal Society. Babbage was prominent and untiring in all scientific activities, and was most assiduous with Herschel and Baily in the founding and running of the Astronomical Society (GB, 1970, S.G. 823).

About 1812 the first idea came to him of calculating numerical tables by machinery. Machines which executed a single arithmetical operation existed, but were difficult in use.

Babbage's machine ensured the accurate calculation of an entire table without any further adjustments from the operator. His description of his small engine was acclaimed by the Astronomical Society and awarded its first gold medal. He thereupon set about the construction of a much larger machine with encouragement from the Royal Society and a government grant. After four years Babbage's highly-strung nerves forced him to go abroad for his health, and on his return there were endless arguments and financial difficulties which led to the final abandonment of the whole project in 1842 after a period of some 14 years.

The machine could calculate a wide range of analysis with a print-out of the results, and it led to the invention of annotation which could machine-interpret any mechanical action. Part of the machine went to the South Kensington Science Museum, and work started in November 1990 to complete the 3-ton Difference Engine, the forerunner of today's desk-top machines. The rebuilding of this hand-cranked computer, with its pulleys, ratchets and gears, to Babbage's designs, will cost £500,000, almost exactly equal in value today to the £17,000 public money Babbage spent upon it in addition to his own. Disraeli, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, said that the only use for the machine would be to calculate the vast amount of money squandered upon it. Although much slower, Babbage's Difference Engine would have had computing powers similar to today's advanced pocket calculator. "The Table of Logarithms of the Natural Numbers from 1 to 10800" was another product of this brilliant man who left a mass of sketches and incomplete original works.

Father of Electricity

Michael Faraday (1791-1867) was a shortish, vigorous man of great vivacity and hearty laugh. He was generous, deeply religious, and very independent. This natural philosopher came from a poor Yorkshire family but was born and bred in London. He began his scientific career as Sir Humphry Davy's laboratory assistant at the Royal Institution, where he made a tremendous number of discoveries, including the pain-killing effect of inhaling ether and the discovery of benzene. But above all he was fascinated by the properties of electricity, discovering and formulating the theory of electro-magnetic induction, and producing his laws of electrolysis. He invented the first electric



Statue of Michael Faraday outside the Institution of Electrical Engineers, Victoria Embankment, London (Photo: John Holman)

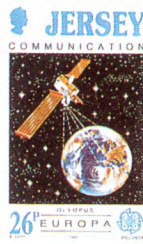
generator to produce continuous electrical current – a vital rung into the modern electrical age. The farad, a unit of capacity, is named after him. Faraday Building, Southampton University, is shown on the 1971 5p Universities stamp (S.G. 891), and Faraday Base, the Antarctic geophysics observatory for atmospheric research, on a British Antarctic Territory stamp (S.G. 161).

Faraday himself was a difficult man to honour publicly, refusing a knighthood and the Presidency of the Royal Society because he felt his brain to be deteriorating. He died in a small house on Hampton Court Green which the Queen put at his disposal.

Europe in Space

It is most apposite that the inventors of computers and electric generators should be commemorated on stamps in 1991, the year when "Europe in Space" is the theme chosen for Europa issues, for without their contributions the conquest of space would be impossible. Jersey's interesting and colourful issue, designed by Alan Copp, features Earth Resources, Oceanography, Meteorology and Communication.

The space giants are undoubtedly the USA and USSR, but European countries have been



series of satellites circumnavigate the globe close to the poles, and use remote sensing techniques to observe all earth resources, and the effects of environment changes and pollution (LANDSAT of 5 of 1984 is shown on the 20p Jersey Europa stamp). Data received by large steerable dish antennae is stored either as computer tapes or as photographs — or rather, vivid, dramatic false-colour images, all available to the public. Britain's National Remote Sensing Centre, works closely with ESA, and holds extensive LANDSAT archives. Also in this group is METEOSAT of 1977 (Jersey 26p stamp), which was the first European meteorological satellite, and travelled "fixed" in the same spot above the Equator at a speed synchronised with the Earth's rotation, i.e. in geostationary orbit. Cloud and temperature data are received at Lannion, Brittany, and at Bracknell, Berks, for onward transmission by landlines, but METEOSAT images can be received direct live from the satellite using only small dish antenna.

ERS-1 (Jersey 20p stamp) is ESA's first earth resources remote sensing satellite which is due to be launched into polar orbit by Ariane-4 from France's Kourou Centre in French Guyana. Its radar and other microwave sensors will improve the understanding of oceanography, and the interactions of oceans, polar ice and atmosphere.

Early Bird

INTELSAT was a global commercial telecom system by a partnership of 83 nations, all members of ITU. The most famous of all was INTELSAT 1 (Barbados, 1985, S.G. 788) known as "Early Bird", in operation 28 June 1965, which made transatlantic TV possible for the first time when placed in geostationary orbit over the Atlantic. INTELSAT operating over the Pacific, was assembled by British Aircraft Corporation, Bristol, the first commercial satellite assembled outside the USA. The INTELSAT system played a major part in all ten USA Apollo manned flights with support communications and TV coverage. Solomons 1987 S.G. 606 illustrates a telecommunication control room. ESA's OLYMPUS high-powered Direct Broadcasting Satellite (Jersey 26p stamp) was launched in 1989 by a consortium led by British Aerospace. It carries experimental communications equipment primarily intended for business use, such as video-conferencing and schools tele-education.

The military SKYNET I and II were launched for Britain from November 1969 to provide

active in co-operative ventures like Spacelab. Skylab 3-1973 and photographs of Ascension Island taken from it featured on an Ascension stamp (S.G. 185). This pressurised laboratory was designed for four men to live and work on board for missions of 7-30 days. It was put into orbit and supported by the US Shuttle, and NASA is responsible for training European scientists. The member countries of the European Space Agency (ESA) are Germany, Italy, France, UK, Belgium, Spain, Netherlands, Denmark and Switzerland in order of proportional contributions to the costs. ESA was established in 1974 after the collapse of the European Launcher Development Organisation following the failure of the rocket "Europa". The British ARIEL 1-6 (launched by the USA from 1962) were a continuing series of small research satellites studying electron density, terrestrial radio noise, etc. Britain's pumpkin-shaped R-3 PROSPERO, launched by Black Arrow rocket from Woomera, Australia, in October 1971, tested new components in space for telemetry and power supply systems.

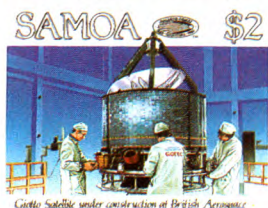
The US meteorological satellite NIMBUS of 1964 (Dominica, 1973, S.G. 374) was superseded in 1972 by the improved and enlarged ERTS-LANDSAT systems. Butterfly-shaped with solar panels, and height controlled by computer, this

communications between the UK and ships and military land bases overseas. The first day SATCOM SKYNET II was in operation on HMS *Ark Royal* was marked by a special cachet on 24 January 1975.

Only short training sessions of 2-3 months are needed for the six scientists, doctors, engineers and photographers who fly by Shuttle to space stations. Teams are now including Europeans, following the example of the Russians who have just confirmed that a British astronaut will fly on the Soviet Mirspace mission this May/June.

Giotto

One of the most exciting recent projects was the international programme to investigate Halley's Comet which returned in 1986. ESA launched the Giotto space probe (Mauritius, 1986, S.G. 723) to examine the composition of the Comet's tail, and Giotto is shown under construction at British Aerospace on Samoa S.G. 725. The multicolour camera aboard the robot tracked the



Comet nucleus during and after the flyby, and Fiji S.G. 740 shows the image taken on 13 March 1986 from a distance of about 18,000km. The nucleus appeared to be solid and larger than expected, with a diameter of 6km. Russia's Interkosmos Venus/Halley programme involved eight European nations, and the Vega probe (Russia, 1986, S.G. 5630) was launched on a flight trajectory past the planet Venus, and onto Halley's Comet. One of my favourite proofs of international co-operation is the small Russian 50k miniature sheet showing the Comet surrounded by ESA's Giotto, the Soviet's Vega I and II, and the Japanese Planet A probes.

Britain has been, and is, involved with many space projects. With this wonderful, exciting wealth of space technology from which to choose, I feel the less said about the GB Europa issue the better.

Acknowledgements to Jersey Postal Administration.

Gems from the R M Phillips Collection

183. 1841 1d "B Blank" Error

Shown this month is an attractive error found on some printings of the 1d red-brown from plate 77, affecting the first stamp in the second row. The second corner letter A was omitted, giving rise to what has become known as the "B Blank" error. A fine example can be seen in the Phillips Collection, Volume 16, page 23, together with two examples (one on cover) of the corrected error, with the A added.

The B Blank error is much sought after by collectors and priced at £4,000 in the Stanley Gibbons *Great Britain Specialised Catalogue*. The corrected stamp is priced at £500.



A fine selection of 1841 1d red-brown and 2d blue stamps from the Phillips Collection is currently on view in the open display frames in the main gallery of the National Postal Museum. Many others can be seen in the pull-out frames.

The Museum in London's Chief Post Office, King Edward Street, London EC1, is open Monday-Thursday 9.30am to 4.30pm and Friday 9.30am to 4pm; admission free.

A reminder to readers that the Museum's major exhibition "Postal Reform and the Penny Black" will end on 26 April, to be replaced on 14 May by "Stamping the Mail" which will run until April 1992.

The main gallery exhibition "Post Office at Work in Edwardian Times" will run until 30 August.

Six Month Digest

Listed below are the issues of the past six months and the proposed dates of issue for stamps until August 1991. Any change in these dates will be notified in the *Bulletin*. British Philatelic Bureau order codes are quoted where known.

4 Sep	10p definitive – lt. tan (DS103)
4 Sep	17p definitive – dark blue (DS170)
4 Sep	22p definitive – flame (DS222)
4 Sep	26p definitive – stone (DS262)
4 Sep	27p definitive – mauve (DS271)
4 Sep	31p definitive – ultramarine (DS312)
4 Sep	33p definitive – emerald (DS330)
4 Sep	New Definitives pack (DP013)
4 Sep	50p book (3 x 17p) (TB005)
4 Sep	£1 book (3 x 22p, 2 x 17p) (TB006)
11 Sep	Gallantry stamps (AS424)
11 Sep	Gallantry pack (AP090)
11 Sep	NPM Postal Reform cards (NQ905)
17 Sep	£1.24 book (4 x 31p) (UB029)
17 Sep	17p UL (500) roll (DC043)
17 Sep	17p UL (1,000) roll (DC045)
17 Sep	22p WL (500) roll (DC044)
17 Sep	22p WL (1,000) roll (DC046)
1 Oct	Astronomy stamp cards (AQ135)
16 Oct	Astronomy stamps (AS430)
16 Oct	Astronomy pack (AP091)
16 Oct	Autumn Stampex exh. card (EQ025)
29 Oct	Christmas stamp cards (AQ140)
30 Oct	Our World Book – 2 (PA117)
1 Nov	ASDA National exh. card (EQ027)
13 Nov	Christmas stamps (AS435)
13 Nov	Christmas pack (AP092)
13 Nov	Christmas stamp book (UB030)
13 Nov	Christmas aerogramme (QX012)
13 Nov	1990 Collectors' Pack (AR020)
13 Nov	1990 Year Book (AY020)
13 Nov	NPM Xmas Posters cards (NQ906)
27 Nov	Mixed Value Roll (DC849)
4 Dec	N Ireland 17p (IS170)
4 Dec	N Ireland 22p (IS222)
4 Dec	N Ireland 26p (IS262)
4 Dec	N Ireland 37p (IS370)
4 Dec	Scotland 17p (SS170)
4 Dec	Scotland 22p (SS223)
4 Dec	Scotland 26p (SS262)
4 Dec	Scotland 37p (SS370)
4 Dec	Wales 17p (WS170)
4 Dec	Wales 22p (WS222)
4 Dec	Wales 26p (WS262)
4 Dec	Wales 37p (WS370)
4 Dec	Country stamps pack (CP009)

29 Dec	Dogs stamp cards (AQ146)
8 Jan	Dogs stamps (AS441)
8 Jan	Dogs pack (AP093)
14 Jan	NPM Edwardian PO cards (NQ907)
5 Feb	Greetings (Good Luck) stamps (JB002)
19 Feb	Science stamp cards (AQ152)
26 Feb	Spring Stampex exh. card (EQ028)



Forthcoming

5 Mar	Science stamps & pack
12 Mar	Scot Aerogramme (Rugby)
19 Mar	Prestige stamp book
26 Mar	Greetings (Smiles) stamps
9 Apr	CEPT/Space stamp cards
23 Apr	CEPT/Space stamps & pack
14 May	NPM Stamping the Mail cards (4)
28 May	Sport stamp cards
11 Jun	Sport stamps & pack
2 Jul	Roses stamp cards
16 Jul	Roses stamps & pack
July	Scot Aerogramme (Gaidhealach)
6 Aug	Dinosaur stamp cards
28 Aug	Dinosaur stamps & pack

Note: The Agatha Christie prestige book (19 March) contains three new stamps: 17p, 22p and 33p definitives, all litho-printed for the first time. See February *Bulletin* for details.

BPF Yearbook 1991

The *British Philatelic Federation Yearbook and Philatelic Societies' Directory* for 1991 is now available. It includes invaluable information on British philatelic organisations – local and specialist societies, stamp insurance companies, magazine publishers, stamp museums, philatelic bureaux, stamp lecturers, expertising services, etc. The Yearbook has been compiled by Herbert Grimsey who has recently retired as BPF Secretary after many years of devoted service. Price £7.50 from: British Philatelic Federation, 107 Charterhouse Street, LONDON EC1M 6PT.

New Scottish Aerogramme

Original Scottish cap and badge dating from 1871



Scottish Rugby XV
Triple Crown and
GRAND SLAM 1990



Five Nations Championship 1990
Ireland 10 Scotland 13
Scotland 21 France 0
Wales 9 Scotland 15
Scotland 15 England 2



Murrayfield, home of Scottish Rugby since 1925, and venue for Scotland's first match against England securing the Triple Crown and Grand Slam



The Scottish Team v. England in the first ever International in 1871. Note the "long" Johns



The Venue: Radium Place, Edinburgh. The Score: Scotland 1 Goal, 1 try, England 1 try



Original Scottish cap and badge dating from 1871



The Calcutta Cup was presented to the RFU in 1878 by the Calcutta Rugby Club to be used as a challenge trophy, played for annually by England and Scotland

The Greenlands, Melrose, home of Rugby Sevens



RUGBY WORLD CUP 1991
The Rugby World Cup was inaugurated in 1987
Hudders, New Zealand



Group 1
1 New Zealand
2 England
3 Italy
4 USA

Group 2
5 Scotland
6 Ireland
7 Zimbabwe
8 Japan

Group 3
9 Wales
10 Australia
11 Western Samoa
12 Argentina

Group 4
13 France
14 Fiji
15 Canada
16 Romania

Games at Murrayfield
5 October Scotland v Japan
9 October Scotland v Zimbabwe
12 October Scotland v Ireland
19 October Quarter Final
26 October Semi-Final

Designed by Don Burston & Associates
Printed by McQuay-Norris Envelopes Limited
for the British Post Office

TO OPEN FLIT HERE (G) FOSGLACH (G) EARR AN SEO

By air mail
Par avion
Aerogramme
To open, please attach to an airmail



Great Britain
Postage

SECOND FOLD HERE (AN DARA FILL EACH AN SEO)

Postmark

An aerogramme should not contain any advertisements. It must not bear any station or sight don't for use



Photograph of Murrayfield, courtesy of Peak TV
Photograph of first Scottish team, played in 1871, courtesy of the Scottish Rugby Union
Photograph of the Calcutta Cup, courtesy of the Rugby Football Union
Photograph of Hudders, 1987, The Calcutta Cup, courtesy of the Rugby Football Union

Designed by Don Burston & Associates
Printed by McQuay-Norris Envelopes Limited
for the British Post Office

FIRST FOLD HERE (AN EARR FILL EACH AN SEO)

Shown here is the new Scottish aerogramme to be issued on 12 March; it marks the Rugby World Cup. The aerogramme, designed by Don Burston & Associates, will be available from post offices in Scotland, the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres and philatelic counters, price 42p (includes 32p postage). Scottish aerogrammes were introduced in 1974; this is the 33rd in the series.

Edwardian Post Office Exhibition

A new exhibition entitled "The Edwardian Post Office" can be seen at the National Postal Museum until the end of August; it includes many archive photographs showing the collection, processing and delivery of mail during the reign of Edward VII (1901-10).

Before motorised transport and sorting office machinery, much strenuous manual work was involved in handling heavy bags of mail. Fortunately the Post Office has always been blessed with an inventive workforce; in the early 1900s a sorter, Arnold Dockree, put forward an idea for a bag holder. The existing system used a basket fed by a hopper, when the basket was full the hopper had to be removed and the letter bundles or parcels transferred to a bag. This system needed two men to operate it and was wasteful of space. Dockree's holder could be operated by one man and took up very little room in the "closed" position. Although no longer official issue, the holders are still being used throughout the country. Dockree's original drawing for his bag holder and an example of the holder can be seen in the exhibition.

Edward's reign saw the Post Office changing from horse-drawn to motorised vans, beginning with the "Parcel Mail Coach" fleet. These large horse-drawn coaches had been introduced in 1887 when the Post Office decided to take as much parcel traffic as possible off the railways. In the early 1900s the increasing cost of horse feed forced the Post Office to look at alternative means of carrying heavy parcel traffic. On 2 June 1905 the first of the "motor coaches" left London for Brighton. Earlier coach guards had carried firearms but the motor guards were armed with a whistle and truncheon.

The high cost of horse feed also caused the Post Office to look for alternative means of carrying the mail in rural and urban areas. The decision as to which vehicle to use was often left to the local Postmaster. Photographs of the London-Brighton motor parcel coach and a motorised tricycle used at Clapham are on display.

Many rural postmen had a long wait between the outward (delivery) part of their duty and the return (collection) to their office. Many were able to find shelter at local farms, others were not so lucky. One surveyor reported finding a rural postman huddled by a wall in a field trying to keep out of the driving rain, having to wait six hours before making the return journey to his office. To overcome the problem the Post

Office organised shelter huts, which were to cost not more than £10. At first these huts were designed locally; later standard specifications were drawn up. Some of these huts may still exist in remote areas. Drawings and specifications for these huts are shown in the exhibition. Two of the most interesting items on show are a Krag postmarking machine and an early Post Office counter. Krag machines, manufactured by the Krag Maskinfabrik Aktie Selskab of Oslo, Norway, were tested at London offices in 1905-6 and introduced generally by 1908. The counter comes from the sub office at Ringmer, Sussex; it was found boarded up in a forgotten store room in the mid-1980s. While the base is certainly Victorian, the grill and glass panel are probably later.

Four NPM postcards showing a sub postmaster at work; postman delivering in rural area; horse-drawn parcel van; and horse-drawn mail cart, produced in connection with this exhibition, are available, price 20p each plus handling charge. The Museum, in London's Chief Post Office, King Edward Street, EC1, is open Monday-Thursday 9.30am to 4.30pm, Friday 9.30am to 4pm, admission free.



NPM postcard showing horse-drawn mail cart at Shenley, Hertfordshire

Stamping the Mail

The Museum's major exhibition for 1991, entitled "Stamping the Mail" will open on 14 May and run until April 1992. A set of four postcards connected with the exhibition will be issued on 14 May.

A main gallery exhibition "Maps and the Post Office" will open on 17 September, day of issue of the Maps stamps, and run until the end of the year.

The 1991 edition of **Collect Benham G.B. Covers** is now available – an essential work of reference for collectors of the many covers and cards produced by Benham since the British Energy stamps of January 1978. Many of the early issues are now in scarce supply, reflected in the pricing. For example the four “Benham Small Silk Covers” produced for the 1980 Birds set is now priced at £75; the silk postcards for the 1981 Royal Wedding set at £35. All are illustrated (black & white) making a useful source for thematic collectors looking for attractive modern material to add to their collections. Price £4.50, postage 50p UK. Available from: Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd, The Bayle, FOLKESTONE, Kent, CT20 1SD.

Alan Wilson's **Specialised Machins Catalogue** was reviewed here in January 1990; 28 new pages to this loose-leaf catalogue are now available. These list material from the 15p/20p postal rate period (October 1989/September 1990) and new information, some hitherto unpublished, in window books. Enquiries to: Alan Wilson Ltd, 18 Bedford Gardens, LUTON LU3 1BX.

The Stamp Publicity Board's exhibition “The Post in Scotland” held at the Glasgow Museum of Transport from October 1990 to January 1991 was much admired and it is pleasing that the exhibition is permanently commemorated in a lavishly produced 96-page book entitled **The Post in Scotland** by James Grimwood-Taylor, a leading postal historian and writer. The book has five chapters on the carriage of Mail by Land dealing in turn with the post in Scotland prior to 1707, from unification (1707) to the 1830s, the decade of reforms, 1830–40; from 1840 to the present day; and new Post Office systems and services since 1840. Sea and air transport play a vital part in the distribution of mail around Scotland; such are covered by three chapters entitled Domestic Scottish Mails by Sea; International Scottish Mails by Sea and Scottish Airmails 1910 to the Present Day. The two final chapters deal with Scottish Regional Stamps and “The Scottish Connection” – British stamps having a Scottish theme. The text is well-



James Grimwood-Taylor with his The Post in Scotland book at the Stampway to the World and Post in Scotland exhibition, Glasgow, October 1990 (Photo: John Holman)

written, informative but entertaining – this is no dry academic tome. Of great interest will be the many fine colour illustrations of stamps, postmarks, covers and means of postal transport. The stamp illustrations range from the magnificent block of 48 1840 Twopence Blues – the well-known “Buccleuch Find” to the three special stamps issued in 1990 showing the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh and the School of Art and Templeton Carpet Factory in Glasgow. Postal history illustrations range from a letter from Edinburgh to London in 1593 to a “wreck cover” salvaged from an aircraft crash at Prestwick on Christmas Day 1954. There are useful checklists of Scottish Country (Regional) stamps, Scottish aerogrammes and special stamps featuring Scotland. Some of the material shown at the exhibition, and illustrated in this book, was provided by the National Postal Museum and Post Office Archives. *The Post in Scotland* is published by the Stamp Publicity Board in conjunction with Royal Mail Stamps and the Scottish Post Office Board, the Chairman of which, Kenneth Graham, has provided a Foreword. Available from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, price £15 postpaid.

National Philatelic Organisations in Britain

1. Royal Philatelic Society, London

JAMES NEGUS, FRPSL

The idea of a Society that would undertake the serious study of stamps gained ground in Britain in the 1860s. It led to a meeting on 10 April 1869 in the vicinity of the British Museum, when eight collectors formally constituted themselves The Philatelic Society, London.

That was the modest beginning of the leading national philatelic organisation (the prefix "Royal" was granted in 1906). HRH The Duke of York had, in fact, been President since May 1896 and, on accession as HM King George V in 1910, this eminent philatelist became the Society's Patron. Royal Patronage has continued since, its practical expression seeing pages from The Royal Collection displayed at each season's opening meeting to a very large audience.

The present Keeper's comments to the display are placed on permanent record in the Society's journal, *The London Philatelist*, published without break since January 1892. Thanks to its longevity and the calibre of its contributors, *The London Philatelist* now comprises one of the greatest archives of detailed philatelic study.

Separate publications are even older than the journal, the first two-page pamphlet (on Spanish postmarks) appearing in 1873. The Society's active encouragement of publications since then has resulted in numerous handbooks and monographs of outstanding quality.

The Royal Philatelic Society has owned its own premises in Devonshire Place, Marylebone, since 1925, now much rebuilt and refurbished. On various floors there are the Meeting and Council rooms, the Library and the Museum, also accommodation for the famous Expert Committee. The Committee's work for the general good of philately, the never-ending task of certifying genuineness or otherwise of items submitted, has been undertaken ever since 1894. It is backed by extensive reference collections and documentation.

Equally as historic is the Society's Library, whose centenary was celebrated in 1987. This magnificent collection of books, catalogues and journals, is available to members for consultation and personal or (UK) postal loan. Numer-



41 Devonshire Place (Photo: Roger Worboys, Chartered Architect, London SW15)

ous dies, plates, obliterators and interesting artefacts are stored and displayed in a room recently redesigned for the Museum.

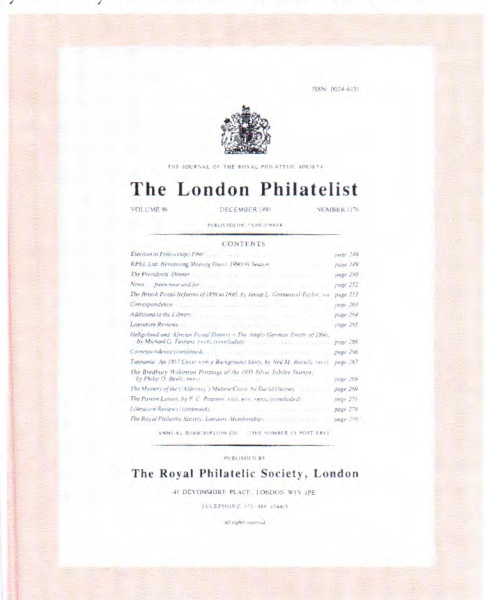
The Society holds meetings twice a month from September to June and they are of two kinds. In the first the stamps are displayed in frames for the whole of the afternoon, a written account being available or published later in *The London Philatelist*. These displays may be joint efforts by a study group and the Royal's President and others will comment and express appreciation over tea in the Large Library. The second type of meeting is an evening one with a somewhat more formal "paper", a spoken summary to the material placed in the frames for study and subsequent discussion. Contributors of displays all receive to acclaim an engraved plaque at the hand of the President.

The international standing of the Royal Philatelic Society is very evident at its meetings, members from abroad counting it an honour to be invited to exhibit in London and coming long distances to do so. The Society has appointed eminent Representatives in many of the countries where there are Fellows and members; when there is an International Exhibition in an overseas venue special meetings are often arranged there. The Society has fully supported each International Exhibition held in London

itself through the whole century of 1890 to 1990.

Membership of the Society currently stands at about 1,600, roughly half of whom are overseas. The only proviso when applying to join is that the applicant is an amateur collector, so is a person not engaged in the philatelic trade. A proposer and seconder are needed but there is no kind of stipulation that a member has to be an advanced philatelist.

Each year the Society's Council elects a number of members as Fellows and these may use the letters FRPSL after their names. Other marks of recognition are three coveted Medals awarded annually and named after famous philatelists. The best paper in *The London Philatelist* receives the Tapling Medal and the best display of the season the Tilleard Medal. The most valuable publication contributing to philatelic knowledge over the preceding two years may be awarded the Crawford Medal.



Another Medal is also awarded occasionally to honour a Fellow or Member giving outstanding service to the Society itself. A rare distinction, too, is to be named as an Honorary Fellow: seven gentlemen and one lady currently enjoy this status.

The Royal Philatelic Society is an active and hard-working body. In former years it suffered from a problem of image as a rather stuffy and exclusive club, but visitors to any of the well-attended meetings will soon realise this is quite out of date. It welcomes new members and has,

since 1989, appointed County Representatives throughout the UK as part of this process. The enviable high reputation built up by so many philatelists for more than 120 years is well maintained by this most civilised Society.

Address for information: Hon. Secretary, The Royal Philatelic Society, London, 41 Devonshire Place, LONDON W1N 1PE. Tel. 071-486 1044/5.

Cylinder News

New plates are reported for the Walsall NV1 books issued on 7 August 1990 – 4 x 1st W1W2W2 and W2W3W3; 4 x 2nd W2W1W2; 10 x 1st W2W2 and W3W3W3; 10 x 2nd – W3W3W3. The 50p machine book (3 x 17p, issued 4 September 199) is reported from cylinder B48 in addition to B46 previously recorded.

The 20p Welsh Country stamp is reported from plates Q5Q5 and Q6Q6; the £1 Castle high value from plate 1I; the £2 from plates 1I and 2N and the £5 from plate 1E.

The Walsall 4 x 1st book with perforation 13 x 13½, resulting from a printer's error, are from a limited part of the W1W1W1 printing only.

Post Office Archives Cards

Post Office Archives regret that the issue of postcards announced for 26 February has been postponed. A new issue date will be announced in due course. The Archives Stampex cachet has been cancelled. Any disappointment and inconvenience is regretted.

Charles Babbage

In the preview of the Scientific Achievements stamps in the February *Bulletin* it was stated that Charles Babbage was born at Totnes, Devon in 1792. A F Wilson of Coulsdon and V H Burrough of London NW6 have written in to point out that whilst this information has been given in many reference books, recent research has shown that Babbage was in fact born in Surrey in 1791. He was born on 26 December 1791 in his father's house in Walworth, Surrey (now London), not far from the Elephant and Castle. His birth was recorded in the baptismal register of St Mary Newington on 6 January 1792. His family did indeed come from Totnes, his parents having recently married and come to live near London.

We are obliged to Messrs Wilson and Burrough for enabling us to correct the record.

Self-Adhesive Stamps: Are they here to stay?

DR A R LANE

Chief Chemist, Post Office Research Centre

Historical Details

In 1935, the world's first self-adhesive price label was produced in California by R. Stanton Avery. This company persevered with the product, which rapidly became accepted in the States with an application to the fast growing mass-produced, consumer goods market. In the post-war years a need was seen for a company to specialise in the manufacture of the self-adhesive materials in sheet form and to this end the Fasson company was established in Holland in 1953, at Leiden. Later, in 1969, a British subsidiary of this company commenced trading from near Newcastle upon Tyne.

Since that time, the products have undergone continuous development to provide label materials which are easy to apply and which relate to the stationery and domestic market as well as retail goods outlets. They have become totally accepted as a means of labelling without the drawback of moistening the gum; a process which may be either laborious or distasteful to the person concerned.

Postage stamps are labels which indicate the payment of the correct rate for collection and delivery of a mailpiece. They have not, however, followed the rapid progression to the self-adhesive form which occurred with the other forms of label. There have been several reasons for this, but primarily the adhesive, which was satisfactory for label attachment, was not stable enough for stamp requirements. The technology of the printing process used for labels was also not as advanced as that required for postage stamps. Stamps have always been expected to be durable products with stable, water soluble gum and perforated edges. These concerns have not prevented experimentation to the rear side of the stamp paper. When laminated it was in intimate contact with the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer.

Nearly 30 years after the appearance of the price label, the World's first self-adhesive stamps were issued by Sierra Leone in February 1964. The paper used for these stamps was made by Samuel Jones & Co. A torrent of issues followed this launch, mostly from Sierra Leone and

Tonga, the latter distributing a Merchant Marine issue in 1972 and a Boy Scouts issue in 1973.

As these stamps were produced in sheet form with die cut edges, the traditional rectangular shape could be abandoned and unusual shapes became the norm. There were mangos, open books and banana stamps from Tonga and scrolls, anvils and birds of prey from the Land of Iron and Diamonds, Sierra Leone.

Most of these stamps were produced in England by Walsall Security Printers, who continued throughout the seventies to increase their customer base with Barbados and by 1974, Norfolk Island requesting stamps to be printed on self-adhesive base paper.

The trend reached Europe in that same year, when, in May, Gibraltar issued a Universal Postal Union Centenary booklet containing self-adhesive stamps. These were sold out by 11am on the same day. Samuel Jones also provided the paper for this issue, commenting that the product was a duplex ply of coated stamp paper held by the adhesive to a silicone release backing sheet designed to allow easy removal for application without licking. The reverse side of the sheet was available as an advertising medium. This sophisticated stamp paper was declared to be more expensive than the normal gummed variety but its prestige value was considered to be great.



Self-adhesive stamp — Sierra Leone, 1964

These products had all been aimed at the collector and had not been designed for processing by any kind of automated letter facing equipment. Neither had all the material properties been perfected to satisfaction, for by Christmas 1974, when the United States decided to attempt this type of stamp and made one of the three 10c commemoratives in a pressure sensitive form, the adhesive used subsequently showed severe ageing problems, becoming discoloured and migrating to the stamp surface,



The King of Tonga on self-adhesive stamps, 1987 resulting in a considerable darkening of the stamp design. After this experiment, the U.S. was discouraged from attempting any further trials for 13 years.

By 1977, Fasson were also supplying material for stamp printing. The base paper was coated with a solvent based acrylic adhesive, which would adhere perfectly to a wide range of substrates, including glass, tinfoil and rigid and flexible plastics. Stamp papers as light as 60 g.s.m. could be laminated to siliconised kraft backing papers of variable strengths, weights and colours which could accept images of advertising quality. These were dimensionally stable and extremely resistant to curling.

The early 1980s produced very little in the way of stamp developments but the performance of the constituent materials, particularly the adhesive, showed further improvements. Wall-sall Security Printers continued to print for Tonga and other island nations on subjects which had a wide appeal to collectors, Navigators and Explorers of the Pacific and the 75th Anniversary of the Girl Guides were two examples from Tonga. They additionally produced a 12 stamp book for Tonga in 1987, com-

memorating the coronation of the King, which suggested the trend for the future.

A water soluble material was also perfected by 1987 which could be applied to the rear side of the stamp paper. It was thus in intimate contact with the pressure-sensitive adhesive material. This allowed the stamps to be removed from paper by the application of water. It was used in conjunction with the Fasson product and was introduced for the US and Canadian booklets in 1989.

A greater confidence in these products was evident from 1986 onwards when most of the developed nations embarked upon a trial of public opinion as to whether these new stamps represented a direct replacement for the conventional stamp for letter traffic. Nearly all of these products were presented to the public in book form.

Recent Developments in Industrialised Countries

The **United States** Postal Service was influenced by a health lobby which suggested that it was unsanitary to tear and pass stamps by hand across counters. They were also aware that the Japanese Post Office were producing a book of self-adhesive stamps. (Investigations by Royal Mail Stamps have not shown any health risks with postage stamps, tests showing that traditional stamps are hygienic and do not transmit disease.)

In May 1987, a decision was made to investigate the possibility of a further issue of pressure sensitive stamps. Fasson, 3M, Brown Bridge, and Nichimen America, representing the Japanese, were given outline specifications in the second half of 1987 and these all submitted base paper samples for test in early 1988. Trials continued during that year with a print trial in Richmond, Virginia in June 1989 and die-cutting trial in Connecticut the same month. These exercises were carried out by Sennett Enterprises, Inc. on behalf of the American Banknote Company in Chicago, who were to be the eventual printers. At the trial stage, however, rolls of die cut material were shipped to the Chicago plant of the American Banknote Company for inspection and final conversion into booklets. The Eagle and Shield design on the stamps was printed by the photogravure process in four colours plus phosphor for tagging purposes.

The product emerged as a sheetlet measuring 159 x 86mm intended for folding into book

form by the customer. It contained 18 Eagle 25c stamps and cost \$5, incorporating a premium of 50c. They were described as EXTRAordinary Stamps, and had directions for folding and use printed on the cover. They were EXTRA convenient; no licking was required (S.G. catalogue no. 2416).

Five million of these sheetlets or books were printed on Fasson base paper and offered for sale



US trial book, vended from machines

in November 1989, in time for the World Stamp Congress in Washington. They were sold in 15 chosen cities across the USA and were accompanied by a questionnaire to be completed by the customer.

In addition a number of the stamps were obtained in coil form from printed areas adjacent to the sheetlet layout. These were sold to large commercial institutions for bulk mailing activities. The latest indications from the US are that more stamps will be produced in this coil form, with no premium charged.

Canada was just ahead of the USA with the timing of their pressure sensitive stamp launch. The Canadian product was also a \$5 book, but was of much larger dimensions, 155 x 84mm. A quantity of 1 million were produced for the sale date of 30 June 1989. The book contained 12 stamps of 38c each and the overall book cost of \$5 represented a premium of 44c towards the additional cost of production. This issue was successful enough to be repeated on 8 February 1990 when the million books contained stamps priced at 39c; the cost of the book remained at \$5, however.

The pressure sensitive base paper used for this issue was developed by Fasson, Canada to stringent Canada Post adhesive requirements in terms of blocking and curl tests and water solubility. The 90 g.s.m. surface paper was

coated by Henry and Leigh Slater Limited of Bollington, England, a company who have since withdrawn from the stamp paper market. The design was printed by Ashton-Potter Limited of Toronto by the offset-litho process in five colours. The stamps were diecut on a continuous web and carried the standard four-sided fluorescent tagging marks.

This issue was aimed in part at ladies, who might wish to carry books of stamps in their handbags. It is certainly the largest of the books seen in this recent surge of interest in self-adhesive stamps. Canada Post Corporation found that less than a quarter of the general public were willing to pay a premium for stamp books of this type, but considered that the new stamp might reach a volume of 2% of the total market initially. Their flag stamp is certainly an attractive product.

In the East, **Japan** also produced a ready-folded book in early 1989. This was a smaller book, of dimensions 87 x 51mm, containing only six stamps of mixed value, diecut as the others. The first items were contained in an open-ended plastic cover. It is assumed that the self-adhesive base paper came from Kanzaki Paper Corporation and that the books were printed and manufactured by the Japanese Printing Bureau.

The first book, containing three 40y and three 60y stamps, was issued on 1 March 1989. As a tax was applied to Japanese postal rates shortly afterwards, another book was issued which contained two 41y and four 62y stamps showing shells. This latter book was available from 1 April 1989.

Australia produced a self-stick stamp in 1990, in the form of a 100 stamp coil. This product is aimed at small businesses, where staff may not wish to lick hundreds of stamps at a time.

The base paper used for this product is Jac-PS stamp paper manufactured by Jacpaper Australia Pty. Ltd to Australia Post specifications, including phosphor tagging. Pemara labels of Notting Hill in Victoria printed the stamps on a nine colour Kopak continuous-web rotary letterpress machine, the web being four stamps wide. The rotary die cutting tool used for these stamps produced a simulation of a perforated edge.

The original product was packaged in a handy dispenser pack selling at A\$41, with no premium. Strips of three stamps only were also available to collectors, who did not wish to purchase the pack. These products were issued

on 16 May 1990 and were followed after a price increase by a similar product of 100 43c stamps on 3 September 1990.

France introduced a book of self-adhesive stamps on 29 January 1990. The product includes 10 stamps each of value 2f.30, printed in single colour, line-engraved in the new "Marianne" design. The red stamps have die-cut, square edges and are affixed to a light weight paper cover. They are phosphor banded



Marianne on French 2f.30 self-adhesives, 1990

according to the standard operational requirements. No premium is charged, but the product is manufactured to a lower budget cost than the Canadian and American examples. The book measures 67 x 52mm and is on general circulation.

The printing works of "La Poste" at Périgueux are set up to make this product in large quantities on a continuous basis. At present the rate of issue is 5-6 million books per month, which makes this the largest pressure sensitive product so far and the only one occurring on a continuous basis.

The Current Situation

Clearly, these last two years have seen a transition from the sale of self-adhesive stamps for the purely commemorative smaller issues primarily aimed at philatelists, to a test of these stamps for normal mailing purposes by major countries having complex mail networks. The need for optimum operational performance has put new demands upon these products, such as the requirement that the adhesive must hold the stamp to the letter and not be removed by the forces of the letter facing and sorting process. They must also be suitable for fluorescent or phosphorescent tagging, which enables the stamps to be faced and cancelled by automatic machines.

There remains the test of public opinion as to

whether the market will tolerate the charge of a premium for this type of stamp. Early results in the USA suggest that relatively few people are willing to pay extra for this type of stamp, although they realise that it offers certain advantages in terms of hygiene and ease of affixing to envelope surfaces. If the costs of production can be reduced to near to that of the present web printed sheets and stamp books, as seems possible, these products may well increase in volume. However, it must be stated that stamps should be as secure as possible from imitation and reuse. Whether these new products can satisfy the demands made by more rigorous security requirements remains to be seen.

The Future

In view of the extensive and diverse programmes of development being carried out at present, it seems unlikely that there will be a rapid reverse to the self-adhesive trend.

The United Kingdom has recently introduced the range of red stamp books which are available widely and sold in a sealed condition. These products have been extremely well received and satisfy any public concern about the hygiene of stamps handled by others, although a study of some years ago did indicate that no diseases were communicated in this way. Opinions indicate that certain people would welcome the introduction of self-adhesive stamps in this country; others, including many collectors, are unsure. There could be a potential market for coils of 100 stamps among small businesses which do not want to go to the expense of a franking machine.

The pressure sensitive stamps are not, by their nature, produced in the same way as the conventionally gummed varieties. There are restrictions to the printing processes that can be used, particularly in respect of the recess techniques of photogravure and intaglio, especially if high quality or high volume is required. The technology leans to an extent, still, on the methods used for label printing, such as rotary letterpress or flexography, and more development is required before all stamp printing methods achieve the highest quality on pressure sensitive base stock. In contrast, the die cut edging is probably more precise than the standard form of pin or rotary perforation.

However, if these stamps are accepted generally, as the labels have become, there will presumably be encouragement towards their use in most countries.

Posting Boxes

118. Glasgow Posting Boxes

Shown this month are two boxes — ancient and modern — in Glasgow. The first is the oldest post box in Scotland and is now preserved in a reconstructed street in the Museum of Transport in Glasgow's famous Kelvin Hall. The box is one of the first National Standard boxes produced by Cochran and Company during the period 1859-66. Mail posted in this box is given a boxed cachet reading POSTED IN OLDEST POST BOX IN SCOTLAND. This cachet (various settings) has been in use for about 20 years. Other



National Standard boxes were shown in Posting Boxes No. 5 (December 1978) and 107 (January 1990).

The second box, in London Road Glasgow, is one of the new "K" type boxes introduced in July 1980. It bears the Scottish crown and no E II R cipher; the Scottish crown was first used on 164

posting boxes in 1954. The "English" equivalent with the St Edward's Crown and Royal Cipher was shown in Posting Boxes No 62 (August 1984). Behind the box in the background can be seen the Peoples' Palace — a museum of Glasgow's social history. Both photographs were taken by the Editor, John Holman, when he visited the "Stampway to the World" and "The Post in Scotland" exhibitions in Glasgow last October.

Readers interested in letter boxes are reminded of the existence of the Letter Box Study Group — details of which can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary: Sally Jones, 43 Miall Road, Hall Green, BIRMINGHAM B28 9BS.

I have on file a considerable number of photographs and transparencies sent in by readers for this "Posting Boxes" feature — enough to last for the next few years. I regret I cannot accept any more and should be grateful if readers would not send any more in. Thank you. Editor.

British Philatelic Trust

Last month we recorded the presentation of £199,000 by Royal Mail Stamps to the British Philatelic Trust. This brought to £1,070,000 the total handed over from the premium income from the sale of the three miniature sheets issued to support Stamp World London 90.

The Trust wishes to place on record its appreciation and thanks to RMS for its continuing help and co-operation in assisting the Trust to support many aspects of philately in the UK. The £199,000 will be placed to the Trust's Capital Fund and suitably invested to generate additional income which will allow the Trust to sustain its existing support programme, the costs of which have exceeded revenue for the past three years.

Besides funding the British Philatelic Centre, the Trust funds the exhibition side of Autumn Stampex and many activities organised by the British Philatelic Federation, Stamp Publicity Board, local philatelic societies, school and youth organisation stamp clubs, and public libraries. Especially important is the Trust's scheme for supplying philatelic literature to school and youth stamp clubs — detailed in the January *Bulletin*, page 120. Enquiries about the Trust's work should be sent to its Secretary, John Littlebury, at: British Philatelic Trust, 107 Charterhouse Street, LONDON EC1M 6PT.

March/April Events

The **GB Philatelic Society's** meeting on 16 March will include displays of "Proofs and Stamps of King Edward VII" (John Kirkham), "Booklet Issues - King George V to Queen Elizabeth II" (Ian Harvey) and "The Surface Printed Issues" (Dr D Latto). Venue: British Philatelic Centre, Charterhouse Street, London EC1, 11am. A provincial meeting will be held in Newcastle on 13 April. An article on the society was published in the May 1990 *Bulletin*. Details of membership from: A J Walker, 42 Jesmond Road, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE2 4PQ.

The **Welsh Philatelic Society** caters for those with an interest in all Welsh postal material. On 23 March the society will meet at the Leisure Centre, Swansea; on 6 April at University College, Bangor. Full details of membership and meetings from: Gwynne Morris, 27 Tan y Bryn, Llanbedre DC, RUTHIN, Clwyd, LL15 1AQ.

The **Rayleigh & District Philatelic Society** will be holding its annual Stamp Day exhibition and fair at the Mill Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh on 23 March, 10am to 5pm, admission free. There will be a Post Office sales counter and about 25 dealers in attendance selling stamps, postal history, postcards and cigarette cards. The displays will include French stamps (by David Pashby) and Bridges thematics (Frank Jones). A raffle, first prize a microwave oven, will be held in aid of Leukaemia Research. Raffle tickets are also available from the Secretary, address below, price £1 per book of five tickets. Enquiries: R E How, 5 Dalys Road, ROCHFORD, Essex, SS41 1RA.

The **62nd Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies** will be held at Falkirk Town Hall on 23-24 March. Many well-known dealers will be present and various societies will provide displays. A special cover has been produced by the Perth Philatelic Society, price 50p serviced from: James McLaren, 15 Murray Place, PERTH PH1 1BP. Enquiries about the Congress and philatelic societies in Scotland to: T J Woods, 32 Bryan Street, HAMILTON, Lanarkshire, ML3 9JW, tel. 0698-283067.

The Spring Convention of the **Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies** will be hosted by the Bognor and District Stamp Club at the United Reformed Church Hall, Linden Road, Bognor on 20 April, opening at 10am. Enquiries: J E O Hobbs, 12 Ophir Road, WORTHING, W Sussex, BN11 2SR.

Railway Letter Stamps

To mark the centenary of the railway letter service on 1 February, the Talyllyn Railway produced a commemorative cover featuring a line-drawing of Talyllyn Van 5 used in the late 1890s and early 1900s to carry mail. The cover bears a strip of five bilingual 5p/c stamps to make up the 25p railway letter fee. These 5p/c stamps, similar in design to the 2d railway letter stamps of 1891, were issued in January 1990 (illustrated in March 1990 *Bulletin*, page 167). The commemorative cover costs £2, postage 40p. Orders/enquiries: Sara Eade, Postmaster, Talyllyn Railway, Wharf Station, TYWYN, Gwynedd, LL36 9EY.



The Bluebell Railway issued a new 25p stamp on 2 August 1990; this features British Railways Standard Class 9F loco No. 92240, built in 1958 and recently restored and returned to service on the Bluebell Railway. The stamp was printed in sheets of four by Faulwood and Herbert Ltd of Brighton. Mint stamps are available at face value, first day covers with the four Royal Mail Queen Mother stamps cost £2.95 or £1.25 with single Queen Mother stamp. Postage 30p. Orders/enquiries: Bluebell Railway, Sheffield Park Station, UCKFIELD, E Sussex, TN22 3QL.

On 27 January 1991 the Mid-Hants Railway issued a 25p stamp to commemorate the centenary of the railway letter service; printed in sheets of six. Mint stamps at face value, first day covers at £2.25 each (three versions) can be ordered from: Postal Co-ordinator, Mid Hants Rly, ALRESFORD, Hants, SO24 9JG, postage 30p. Further 25p stamps, featuring locomotives, will be issued on 29 March (URie S15 No. 506) and 15 September (American built S160 No. WD701). Full details in Mid-Hants Railway Letter Service Newsletter, available by sending a SAE to the above address.

Philatelic Terms Explained

KENNETH F CHAPMAN

No.36 Line and Comb Perforators

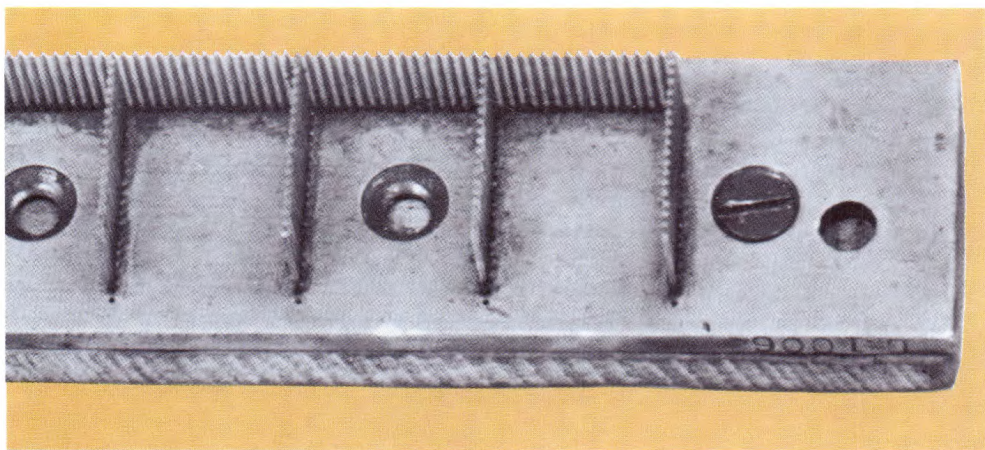
Modern methods of perforation, whereby completed sheets of stamps emerge from a rotary printing press already cut and fully perforated, are a far cry from the hand- or treadle-operated machines which produced the world's first regularly-issued perforated postage stamps in 1854 (the GB 1d red).

The resulting, but now obsolete, "line" and "comb" perforators interested early students of perforated stamps. Quite often two collectable varieties of an otherwise identical stamp emerged. More importantly, to many specialists, was the fact that one of the two varieties was much rarer than the other and, therefore, more valuable when, for instance, the major portion of a printing for a given stamp was line perforated and a small remainder of the same printing was comb perforated for some technical reason.

at one strike. After each strike the stamps were moved up by the depth of one stamp and the machine perforated the next white line of paper. In due course, the entire sheet would be perforated horizontally. Next the paper would be turned through 90 degrees, and the whole process repeated to complete the perforating of the sheet. This somewhat imprecise method meant the perforation holes tended to overlap at the corners of most stamps giving jagged, or missing, corners to the stamps themselves.

This tendency was accentuated when two single perforating heads of different gauges were employed, one for the vertical strike and another for the horizontal, giving rise, for instance, to a stamp gauging perf 16 (horiz.) x 14 (vert.).

Comb Perforation. In this case, a complete row of stamps (usually horizontal) is perforated on three sides simultaneously at top and the two sides leaving that row completely imperforate along the bottom of the stamps. The sheet is then moved so that the "comb" strikes the next horizontal row, completing the perforating of the row above and perforating the vertical sides of stamps in row number 2. The comb continues down the sheets until perforating is completed, the last strike producing the perforations along the bottom of the last row of the



A comb perforator (Photo: Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd)

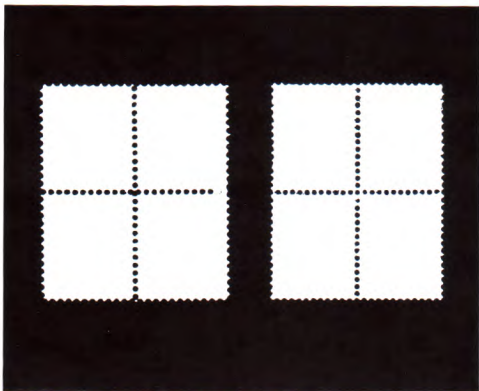
Line Perforation. This is the most elementary form of perforating. The printed sheets of stamps, all *imperforate*, are manhandled from the printing machine and set up in small batches (or even one sheet at a time) on the table of a hand- or treadle-operated perforator which perforates one line between two rows of stamps

sheet, the pinholes at the sides falling on to the lower sheet margin.

Double, treble and even quintuple comb heads have been used at times. These perforate two, three, or five rows at a time, ensuring a faster output.

Harrow. A refinement of the comb perforator

is the "Harrow" especially constructed to perforate simultaneously *all* the stamps contained within a souvenir or commemorative miniature sheet, or small panes of stamps within a special printing of definitives.



Stamps perforated by line (left) and comb (Photo: Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd)

Characteristics of each method. As hinted above, line perforating tends to create ragged corners at most intersections. Another tendency is for the vertical rows of perforation to be slightly out of true due to the shifting of the paper between strikes. Comb perforating avoids the overlapping of perforating holes but there still remains the possibility of a vertical shift, especially with a single comb. A multiple comb can only be subject to such small variations once each strike, at the point where a new set of two three or five rows is applied to the sheet. Rows within the compass of one strike cannot exhibit any vertical variation.

It should not be forgotten that a comb can be set with pins differently spaced along the spine and the side pieces. Most Great Britain issues of King George V are comb perforated and are gauged 15 (horiz.) and 14 (vert.). This arrangement was deliberate to allow easier separation in the horizontal direction (perf. 15) and lessening the chances of unwanted breaks in the vertical direction (perf. 14) while the stamps were being handled by Post Office counter clerks.

Greetings Cylinders

The cylinders and colours for the Good Luck Greetings stamps (5 February) are: B1A (silver) B1B (greenish yellow) B2C (bright magenta) B1D (new blue) B1E (grey-brown) B1F (blue-black).

Baji Kapadia Honoured

The Post Office maintains a Roll of Honour for staff who have given excellent public service. Seventeen employers were honoured at a ceremony, hosted by the Deputy Chairman, Mr Ken Young, in London in December. We are pleased to record that one of the 17 was Mr Baji Kapadia of Royal Mail Stamps who was nominated for planning and managing the Royal Mail presence at the Stamp World exhibition.

Also worthy of mention is 87-year old Jane Wilson of Elvanfoot, Scotland, who recently retired after 71 years Post Office service, including 62 years as a subpostmistress.

Walsall Books Modified

As a result of comments from customers about the adhesive used to seal the window books produced by Walsall Security Printers, modifications are being made to these books. The problem of the glue tearing the fibres of the book cover has now been overcome by the use of a new hot melt glue system with an improved adhesive. A new type of board – Stirling Artboard – is being used for the covers in place of Ikonorex board. The new board is manufactured in Germany to the following specifications: substance – 250 grammes per square metre; caliper – 200 microns; gloss – 74%; brightness – 95.3%.

The opportunity has also been taken to change the size of the thumb tab – the new and slightly smaller tab cut out brings the Walsall books more into line with those produced by Harrisons and Questa.

These modifications will be of interest to specialist collectors of stamp books, but as the stamps themselves remain the same these books will be of limited interest to most collectors. Thus the modified books are not being given a philatelic first day of availability; supplies will be distributed from March onwards as fresh stocks are required at post offices and other retail outlets.

Machin stamp expert Don Staddon reports that books of 10 x 2nd class (dark blue) NVI stamps printed by Walsall from plates W4W3W4 were on sale by mid-January 1991.

The 50p definitive in new colour — sand, issued March 1990 — is reported from cylinder 36, previous printings were from cylinder 35.

British Fairs

British Special Issues: No.164

FRANCIS KENNEDY

Andrew Restall made a come-back to stamp designing with this colourful issue, released on 5 October 1983. Restall's earlier designs included the "fuzzy" British Commonwealth Games issue of 1970 and the Racket Sports stamps of 1977 with the controversial black lines indicating the flight of the ball and shuttlecock in flight during a rally. It was Restall, too, who held a two-year fellowship at the Royal College of Art (1965-6) in order to research overall the designing and production of stamps with a view to future developments.

Fairs in Great Britain can be traced back to the time of the Roman invasions. They were holiday occasions as the Latin derivative of fairs, *feria* (holidays) indicates. From medieval times,

the St Bartholomew Fair was founded in 1133 under a charter granted by Henry I and it continued until 1855 (on the site of the present Smithfield meat market) when its charter was withdrawn because of the fair's close association with what, today, would be called "blue" theatre. The stamps marked the 850th anniversary of the first St Bartholomew Fair.

Restall's designs cover every aspect of the travelling fairs with the result that they tend to be rather "bitty" except for the **16p** with its concentration on the standard wooden horse roundabout or merry-go-round. The **20½p** features the Big Wheel, helter-skelter tower and performing animals: note, too, the steam traction engine. Side-shows are the subject of the **28p** while the **31p** design is concerned with certain country town fairs when trading in animals such as horses and ponies is the main reason for the fair.

It is a tribute to the printers, Harrison & Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd, that only one significant constant flaw is listed by Stanley Gibbons. This is on the 20½p stamp (dot cylinder, row 6,



travelling fairs combined trading in lace, trinkets and such-like with the provision of relaxation in the form of roundabouts and swings, together with other forms of entertainment including performing humans and animals.

The advent of steam power and, later, electricity permitted the development of more sophisticated moving attractions including scenic railways and "dodgem" cars.

Apart from travelling fairs, a number of English towns are obliged to hold fairs on specified days in accordance with a Royal Charter granting the original permission. In London,

stamp 3) and shows a break in the structure of the Big Wheel to the right of the air balloon in the top left corner of the design.

The issue was withdrawn on 4 October 1984 when the overall sales were: 16p – 38,000,300; 20½p – 7,938,000; 28p – 7,442,000; 31p – 7,113,400. The official "First Day of Issue" cancellations were used at the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh, featuring a steam traction engine, and at Nottingham, showing a flying-boat roundabout in the centre. The PHQ postcards for this issue were numbered 70a-d; 190,000 sets of cards were produced.

Picture Post

Our first photo shows the Templeton Carpet Factory on Glasgow Green - a magnificent Victorian building which featured on the 37p stamp in the 1990 Europa set. Details of the building were published in the March 1990



Bulletin (page 162). The second photograph shows a cake in the form of the stamp design in the People's Palace museum which is also situated on Glasgow Green. Included in the display case with the cake is a piece of carpet, produced in the factory, for the *Queen Mary* which was built on Clydeside. The factory is now used as offices.

The Europa stamps will be withdrawn from sale on 5 March 1991; others in the set featured Alexandra Palace, London (20p), Glasgow School of Art (20p) and the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh (29p).

Competition



Win £50 worth of British stamps

Enter this month's competition and stand a chance of winning £50 worth of current British philatelic products of your choice — stamps, stamp books, postcards, albums, etc. Answer the questions below, the answers to some will be found in this month's *Bulletin*, and send with your name and address on a postcard to: March Bulletin Competition, National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP to arrive by 30 April.

The sender of the first all-correct entry drawn will each be invited to order £50 of philatelic products; five runners-up will be sent presentation packs of the Sport 91 stamps. Answers and winners' names will be published in the June *Bulletin*.

1. Who designed the Europe in Space stamps?
2. Which sport is being featured on the first of two 1991 Scottish aerogrammes?
3. Which 1985 set of special stamps was designed by Clive Abbott?
4. Who is the author of *The Post in Scotland* book?
5. Which country was the first to issue self-adhesive stamps?
6. The Guildhall Medal marked whose visit to the City of London?

The competition is not open to staff of Royal Mail Stamps, the National Postal Museum, their agents and their families. No correspondence will be entered into; the Editor's decision will be final.

The winners of the December competition were:

L Kennedy of West Yorkshire (£50 worth of Royal Mail products); D Gale of Isle of Man; M Bortoletto of Italy; G Lawrence of West Yorkshire; J Stott of Essex; and J Poulain of France (Dogs presentation packs).

The answers were: 1. National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham; 2. a light flintlock musket; 3. sand; 4. National Postal Museum, London; 5. Prince of Wales (later George IV); 6. Harold S Wilson.

Commemorative Covers

Information given here is based on details supplied by the cover producers; requests for further information should be directed to the relevant producer and not to the Bulletin office.

Victoria Cross. A full colour commemorative cover, No 33 in a series "The Life and Times of Queen Victoria", was produced by G Eldridge for the Victoria Cross stamp. The VC was instituted by Queen Victoria; the medal is made of bronze from Russian guns captured at Sebastopol during the Crimean War. The cover, with informative historical text, bears the 20p VC stamp cancelled by a special London SW "VC For Valour" handstamp of 11 September. Orders/enquiries: G Eldridge, 177 Mousehole Lane, Bitterne, SOUTHAMPTON SO2 4TD, price £1.90 (overseas add 60p for postage). A cover signed by five Gorkhas, all holders of the VC is available, details on request from Mr Eldridge.

Duxford Spitfire. In conjunction with the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, a small collection of autographed covers commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Spitfire has been produced. RAF Duxford was the first RAF station to receive operational Spitfires; the first being delivered in 1938 by Jeffrey Quill. Each cover is signed by pilots and others involved with this aircraft. Full details from: Cambridge Stamp Centre Ltd, 9 Sussex Street, CAMBRIDGE CB1 1PA.

Air Attack on Coventry. A limited edition (500) commemorative cover was produced by the Coventry Philatelic Society to mark the 50th anniversary of the major German air attack on Coventry on the night of 14 November 1940. The cover shows the old cathedral as it appeared after the blitz and a drawing of the new cathedral which now stands besides the ruins of the old. The cover bears the 20p George Cross stamp cancelled with a special Coventry handstamp of 14 November; also two cachets – one marking the anniversary, the other is worded "forward in friendship". Price £2. Orders/enquiries: K Trehwella, Coventry Philatelic Society, 6 Stoneleigh Avenue, Earlsdon, COVENTRY CV5 6BZ.

Scientific Achievements. A G Bradbury of Leicester is producing a number of covers in connection with this set of stamps (5 March). Marconi Radar Systems have given permission

for a cover featuring a painting by Roy Huxley of radar pioneers Wilkins and Watson-Watt about to perform their historic experiments near Daventry in 1935. The painting was commissioned by Marconi Radar Ltd in 1985 to celebrate "50 years of Radar". Price £6.75 (limited to 500) or £9.75 artist signed (100).

The Royal Society of Chemistry, founded in 1841, and celebrating their 150th anniversary, have commissioned a cover bearing the Society's coat of arms die-stamped in full colour. The cover will bear a specially sponsored postmark at Burlington House, the Society's headquarters. Price £5.75.

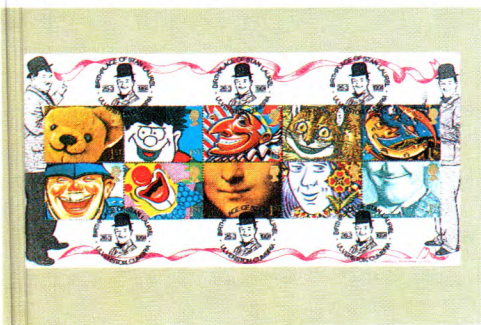
The Science Museum cover will feature a collage showing the four scientists (and their work) honoured by the stamps – Faraday, Babbage, Whittle and Watson-Watt, together with the Science Museum logo. The covers will bear a special handstamp for Lutterworth, Leics where Whittle developed the jet engine. Price £5 or £9.75 signed by Dr Neil Cossons, OBE, Director of the Science Museum. All three covers available from: A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, LEICESTER LE2 3RA, prices include UK postage, overseas add 50p and please remit in sterling.



Pawprints. To coincide with the issue of the Dogs stamps on 8 January, the Pawprints Appeal of the North Staffordshire RSPCA produced a first day cover and sponsored a special Pawprints handstamp at Stoke on Trent. The Pawprints Appeal was launched last March to raise money for a new dog kennels and animal shelter to replace Longton Dogs Home. Covers are available with the full set of Dog stamps or with single stamp, price £5.50 and £3 respectively. Orders/enquiries: P Withers, Meadowcroft, Meadow Drive, Blurton, STOKE ON TRENT ST3 3DT. Remittances payable to "P Withers"; monies raised will go to the Pawprints Appeal.

Greetings Stamps. Benhams produced first day covers for the Good Luck Greetings stamps issued on 5 February. Covers bearing all 10 stamps cancelled with special Rainow, Macclesfield, Cheshire or Wishford, Salisbury, Wilts pictorial handstamps are available, price £5.99 each. The handstamps feature, respectively, a wishing well and rainbow and a black cat and shooting star. "Silk" covers and cards are also available bearing single stamps at £19.99 per set. These bear designs based on paintings specially commissioned from well-known artist Michael Terry. Postage 40p on all orders. Orders/enquiries: Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd, The Bayle, FOLKESTONE, Kent, CT20 1SD.

British National Space Centre. To coincide with the Europe in Space stamps (23 April), the BNSC have commissioned a first day cover. BNSC was formed to direct UK civil space activities and develop future policy – with the main thrust of Britain's policy being executed through the European Space Agency. It also supports a national programme of research and development through universities, research establishments and companies. The cover bearing the four stamps cancelled by a sponsored handstamp costs £5 or £9.75 signed by Heather Couper, Past President of the British Astronomical Association. Overseas customers add 50p postage. Orders/enquiries: A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, LEICESTER LE2 3RA.



Greetings (Smiles). A G Bradbury is producing a first day cover featuring comedian Stan Laurel for the "Smiles" NVI Greetings stamps to be issued on 26 March. One of the 10 stamps depicts Stan Laurel. The cover bears all 10 stamps cancelled by a special Stan Laurel handstamp at Ulverston, Cumbria – his birthplace and where a Stan Laurel Museum is situated. The cover costs £7.50 (£8 overseas) postpaid. Orders/enquiries: A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, LEICESTER LE2 3RA.

Whittle Jet Engine. Benhams have produced two covers to mark the 50th anniversary of the first flight of the Whittle Jet Engine. The first cover features the original flight at Cranwell and bears an anniversary postmark, price £5.35 or £8.35 signed by Wing Commander Beaumont who made the first flight in the Canberra, Lightning and TSR2. The second cover features the modern Tornado and has a Brockworth, Gloucestershire handstamp. Price £5.35 or £8.35 signed by Marshall of the RAF Sir Keith Williamson, who made his name flying Lightnings. Flown and cacheted covers also available. All orders/enquiries: Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd, The Bayle, FOLKESTONE, Kent, CT20 1SD.

World Clowns Convention. A limited number of special covers has been produced to commemorate the World Clowns Convention to be held at Bognor Regis, 12-17 March 1991. The covers will bear 1990 Greetings (Smiles) stamps cancelled by a special handstamp of 17 March. Covers with the Clown Smile stamp cost £2, with other Smile stamps £1.50. Orders/enquiries: World Clowns Convention Office, Marketing Department, Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road, LITTLEHAMPTON, W Sussex, BN17 5LF.

Grand National. A selection of covers are available for the 150th anniversary of the world famous Grand National steeplechase. Amongst the signatories are jockeys Pat Taffe (Gay Trip) and B Fletcher (Red Rum), and Lord John Oaksey and Jenny Pitman. The covers bear cachets giving details of signatory and winning horse. Details available (please send stamp or SAE) from: G Eldridge, 177 Mousehole Lane, Bitterne, SOUTHAMPTON SO2 4TD.

Faraday/Royal Military Academy. 1991 marks the 250th anniversary of the foundation of the Academy at Woolwich in 1741 and the 200th anniversary of the birth of Michael Faraday, featured on one of the 22p stamps in the Scientific Achievements set. Faraday was head of the Department of Science at the RMA Woolwich from 1829-58. J & M Arlington Ltd have produced for the Academy a first day cover showing the RMA buildings at Woolwich and Sandhurst and Faraday conducting experiments. The cover bears the Faraday stamp with special Sandhurst handstamp of 5 March 1991. Price £2.75 postpaid UK, from: FDC Headquarters, RMA Sandhurst, CAMBERLEY, Surrey, GU15 4PQ. Remittances payable to "The Accountant RMAS".

March Digest

Issued in March

5 March: Scientific Achievements stamps – 2 x 22p, 31p, 37p.

Designer: Peter Till (22p stamps); John Harwood (31p & 37p)

Printing: Harrison and Sons Limited, photogravure, 31 x 40mm, perf. 14 x 15, phosphor coated paper, sheets of 100, PVA Dextrin gum.

Pictorial First Day of Issue postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau and South Kensington, SW7.

Presentation Pack: No. 216, price £1.40.

6 March: Scientific Achievements stamps souvenir cover, price 19p. Available from “Collections” and philatelic counters.

12 March: Scottish Aerogramme – Rugby World Cup, price 42p (includes 32p postage).

Designer: Don Burston & Associates

Printing: McCorquodale Envelopes Limited.

19 March. £6 Agatha Christie Prestige Book.

Contents: Definitive stamps – two panes of 6 x 17p; one pane of 9 x 22p; one mixed value pane of 6 x 22p, 2 x 33p and one label.

Printing: The House of Questa, offset-lithography, perf. 15 x 14, PVA gum. 17p stamps have centre phosphor band, 22p and 33p on phosphor coated paper. *Note:* this book yields three new single definitive stamps – 17p litho centre band, 22p litho PCP, 33p litho PCP.

Pictorial First Day of Issue postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau and Marple, Cheshire.

20 March: Agatha Christie book souvenir cover, price 19p. Available from “Collections” centres and philatelic counters.

26 March: Greetings Stamps Book containing 10 x first class (NVI) stamps featuring Smiles (designs as 1990 20p Greetings stamps) and 12 greetings labels, price £2.20.

Designer: Michael Peters and Partners Limited

Printing: Harrison and Sons Limited, photogravure. 41 x 30mm, printed on non-phosphor paper overprinted with two phosphor bars, PVA Dextrin gum. Perf. 15 x 14.

Pictorial First Day of Issue postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau and Loughton, Lincs.

27 March: Greetings stamps souvenir cover, price 19p. Available from “Collections” centres and philatelic counters.

Withdrawn in March

5 March: 1990 Europa (CEPT) stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and souvenir cover.

12 March: 50p definitive – colour ochre, issued 21 May 1980.

19 March: 1990 £5 London Life Prestige Stamp Book. *Note:* this book is already sold out at the British Philatelic Bureau; any remaining stock will be withdrawn from “Collections” centres and philatelic counters on 19 March.

Postman Pat Starter Pack

Stanley Gibbons Publications have recently launched a starter pack containing a *Postman Pat Stamp Album*, 50 different thematic stamps, *Enjoy Stamp Collecting* booklet (recently revised by the Editor of this *Bulletin*), 100 stamp hinges, stamp tweezers and a magnifying glass. The pack, ideal for young collectors, is available from Stanley Gibbons Strand shop, stamp and hobby shops or by post from Stanley Gibbons Publications, Parkside, RINGWOOD, Hants, BH24 3SH. Price £2.99, postage £1 UK.

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