

Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 12 Number 3 November 1975



Contents

- 2 Introduction
- Christmas 1975 Stamps, First Day Cover Services
- 3 Gems from the R M Phillips Collection
XXIX The Unissued Eight Penny Purple-Brown
- 4 British Special Stamps
15. Sixth British Empire and Commonwealth Games, 1958
Collectors Pack 1975
- 5 Christmas Pictorial Airletter
- 6 National Postal Museum Exhibition
Mails go Underground
- 7 Security Endorsement & Perfin Society of G.B.
Christmas 1975 Stamp Issue 16 November 1975
- 10 Presentation Packs
Stamp Production
Exhibition at Haywards Heath
Special Stamps for 1976
Protecting Stamps—Post Office Research
- 11 Letters to the Editor
- 13 Book Reviews
- 15 Special Handstamps
Postmark Slogans
Repeat Campaigns

Introduction

The subjects chosen for this Year's Christmas stamps are angels. Derived from the Greek word 'Angelos', a messenger, 'angel' is described as being endowed with intellect and free will, superior to man but inferior to God. It is as messengers and servants of God that angels appear in the Christian religion.

In the New Testament we are told how the archangel Gabriel was sent from God to tell Mary that she was to become the mother of Jesus, and how his birth was announced to shepherds by an angel and heralded by a multitude of the heavenly host. Every child is thought to have a guardian angel to watch over

him and protect him from evil.

Artists and writers have imagined them as having human form with wings, and in Christian iconography angels have been almost universally represented by winged human figures. It is with these thoughts in mind that the Christmas stamps were designed.

Christmas 1975 Stamps, First Day Cover Services

Four special postage stamps, values $6\frac{1}{2}p$: $8\frac{1}{2}p$: $11p$ and $13p$, together with an appropriate cover are to be issued on 26 November, commemorating Christmas 1975. Two Christmas cancellations—'Philatelic Bureau' and 'Bethlehem, Llandeilo, Dyfed', depicting a snowflake, will be available. The following services for First Day covers will be provided.

Service A

The official Post Office cover will be addressed as requested, given all four stamps, and cancelled with either postmark. The charge is $57p$, or for customers with deposit accounts, $52\frac{1}{2}p$ each.

Service B

Customers own pre-addressed covers will be given the full set of stamps, cancelled and despatched. The inclusive charge is $47p$ per cover.

Service C

For bulk orders of 50 or more covers to the same address under the conditions of Service A, the price is $54\frac{1}{2}p$ per cover.

Customers who specifically require the Bethlehem postmark, should send their orders to the Head Postmaster (Philatelic Section) Llanelli, Dyfed. All orders for cancellations other than Bethlehem only, should be sent to the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh.

First day of issue cancellations will be given to covers bearing the Christmas stamps posted in special philatelic posting boxes in main offices throughout the country.

Gems from the RM Phillips Collection

XXIX The Unissued Eight Penny Purple-Brown

503

PRICE.

8 Pence
per Label.4 Shillings
per Row of 6.1 Pound
per Sheet of 50.

EIGHT PENCE.



The term 'prepared for use but not issued' describes many great rarities among British stamps—notably the famous 2d Tyrian Plum of 1910 and the undeservedly obscure (but even rarer) 2½d purple on blue paper of 1901.

As a mint single the 8d purple-brown of 1876 is not quite in the same rarity league but where, outside the R M Phillips Collection, is one ever likely to see a multiple comparable to the magnificent corner block of 12 illustrated above as this month's 'gem'.

The genesis of the Eightpenny value was the reduction to 8d per ½ oz as from 1 July 1876 of three important overseas letter rates: the via Brindisi rates to India (formerly 1/-) and Australia (formerly 9d) and the rate to Brazil.

One of the three essays prepared by Thomas De La Rue & Co in April 1876 was similar to the existing 10d value (obsolete and about to be withdrawn) but in purple-brown. Though a different design was selected, it was at first decided to adopt the purple-brown colour for

the new Eightpenny. After a first printing in purple-brown of, it is thought, no less than 2,400,000 stamps, the issuing authorities realised that the colour was rather too near that of the current 2½d value (rosy-mauve) which could lead to confusion or even attempted fraud. Virtually the whole printing was therefore officially destroyed. A new colour—chrome-yellow—was selected but by the time that copies were put on sale (11 September 1876) it was over two months after the new 8d rates had come into force.

The Eightpenny purple-brown was printed from Plate 1; as indeed were all but some 1,200 copies of the issued chrome-yellow; for the latter, plate 2 was used. For some unknown reason, although the 8d rates continued in force (at least to Australia) for six years the special stamp was never much used and it was withdrawn during 1880, the value not being re-introduced until 1913.

A G RIGO DE RIGHI

15. Sixth British Empire & Commonwealth Games, 1958

The critics had a field-day when, on 18 July 1958, fearsome Welsh dragons were unleashed upon an unsuspecting public in the form of new commemorative stamps for the Sixth British Empire and Commonwealth Games in Cardiff. The designs (stated the Post Office) 'reflected the fact that the Games were being staged in Wales'. Witticisms abounded—'Has the Queen become the Empress of China?' and 'Sixth Dragon Games'—but many failed to

appreciate the bold simplicity of the designs, all by experienced stamp artists, and their pleasing uniformity.

The Queen's portrait, the usual 'Wilding' three-quarter face, was used in three different settings and, perhaps with the exception of the 1s 3d, was given due prominence. Reynolds Stone, CBE, RDI, who designed the 3d Victory stamp of 1946, depicted the dragon holding the commemorative ribbon in its jaws on two-thirds of the 3d deep lilac stamp. An old Etonian and graduate of Magdalene College, Cambridge, he was for a short time with Eric Gill, the famous typographer and designer, and subsequently became a freelance designer and specialist in engraved calligraphy and lettering.

William H Brown, Harrison's staff designer who made his début with the 1s 3d Scout Jamboree stamp of 1957, settled for a windswept flag bearing the Games emblem (the Crown surmounted by a dragon!) and the Queen's portrait on the 6d reddish purple, while Patrick Keely, who designed the 4d Scout stamp, extended his dragon to the entire length of the 1s 3d green stamp, with the Queen's head superimposed on its 'middle'. There was little room for the figures of value, perched precariously on the dragon's spiked tail.

The stamps were photogravure-printed by Harrison & Sons on 'St Edward's Crown' (E2R) watermarked paper and issued in sheets of 120. Quantities sold were 3d—320,400,000; 6d—28,595,880; and 1s 3d—9,870,000. Numerous varieties and minor constant flaws are recorded.

JAMES WATSON



Collectors Pack 1975

The Collectors pack for 1975 (No 77) will be issued on 26 November, obtainable from all post offices who normally sell presentation packs. It will be available for one year and will contain all the special stamps issued during 1975, price £2.65. For orders of 100 or more, from the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh only, there is a discount of 15p per pack.

Christmas Pictorial Airletter



FIRST FOLD HERE

Senders name and address
(please show postcode)

An Air Letter should not contain any
enclosure : if it does, it may be surcharged
or sent by ordinary mail.

Designed by Marjorie Saynor
Printed by McCorquodale Printers Ltd

SECOND FOLD HERE

By air mail Air letter
Par avion Aerogramme

TO OPEN, SLIT HERE

The Post Office will issue a Christmas air letter form on 26 November, price 12p of which 10½p is postage. Designed by Marjorie Saynor, it tells the Christmas story in medieval style.

Ten colours were used by McCorquodale Ltd to print the form using the lithography process.



Mails go Underground

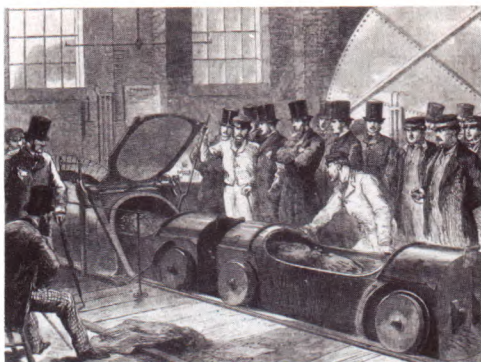
Part of the National Postal Museum's current special exhibition *Railways and the Post* tells the story of mails sent underground, to speed their journey across London on their way to all parts of Britain and across the seas.



The use of pneumatic tubes as a method of transmission—utilising air as a propelling power—was first suggested by the celebrated French engineer M. Denis Papin, who presented a Paper on the subject to the Royal Society in London in 1667. Later, from the 1820s, various experiments were carried out: but none were used for the transmission of mails.

Early in 1863, however, the Post Office inspected London's new pneumatic railway, by which its builders—*The Pneumatic Despatch Company*—hoped to revolutionise the carriage of mails, messages and parcels in the metropolis. Their tube ran 9 ft below ground level, between Euston Station and Eversholt Street, near the NW District Post Office. Its cars, which ran on rails, were of wrought iron and weighed nearly 8 cwt.

Among those present was Sir Rowland Hill,



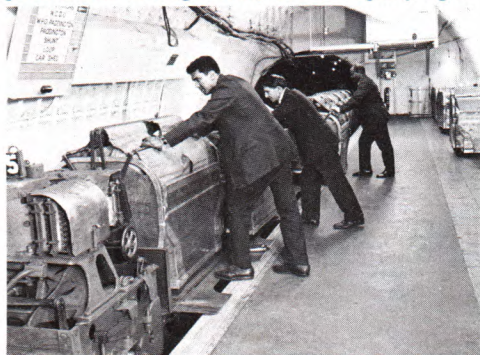
by now Secretary to the Post Office. He was especially interested in the venture since, 11 years earlier, as part of his plan for dividing London into Postal Districts, he had proposed such a way of speeding the mails throughout London.

During these first trials the mails were sucked through the tube to Euston in about 1 minute and, once, two men accompanied the car—and returned, to everyone's relief. Indeed, later, to travel by the tube became the thing to do when in London and one lady, whose courage astonished all, 'shot the whole length of the tube, crinoline and all, without injury to person or petticoat'.

On 20 February, 1863, regular mail despatches between the NWDO and Euston Station began as a working experiment. In the months which followed there were few failures, and the only doubt on the part of the Post Office was whether or not the high cost of the service over that of orthodox mail carts was really justified. However, trials continued until 20 October, 1866, when, because of temporary financial difficulties, the Company terminated its arrangement with the Post Office.

It later recovered, however, and by November 1873, this time with Parliamentary backing, a new tube was operating between Euston Station and the GPO in St Martins-le-Grand, via a central station in Holborn. On 1 December of that year regular mail despatches were resumed; but, although the service was again

found satisfactory and punctual, its speed (though a mere 3-4 minutes) over that of the mail carts was not enough to be of real practical value to the Post Office. The following year, upon the Post Office refusing to enter into a permanent arrangement, the Company again



Containers being loaded onto one of the driverless electric trains which daily handles 38,000 bags of mail.

ended the carriage of mails, with effect from 31 October.

By 1876, after an investment over the years of some £175,000 in the venture, the Company had been wound up, and its terminus in the yard of the GPO had become merely a store for coal and wood. Yet, beneath the busy streets of London, there still remained intact the famous tube railway. Years later, in 1895, the tube was re-discovered, and for a time the man who found it, a consulting engineer, dreamed of restoring it to use, this time by means of electrically-driven cars.

Until they visit the exhibition, few people are aware of the existence of the Post Office (London) Railway—the only one of its kind in the world—which every day speeds over 40,000 bags of mail beneath the busy streets of London.

Opened in December, 1927, this railway links 6 important sorting offices with the main railway termini at Paddington and Liverpool Street. It runs through 6½ miles of tunnels, 8 stations and has some 20 trains rumbling along its tracks at a speed of 35 mph.

Operated by remote control, these miniature trains do not carry drivers, guards or passengers—and they do much to help reduce traffic on the streets of London and to provide an even flow of postal traffic through the sorting offices they serve.

JEAN FARRUGIA

Security Endorsement and Perfin Society of GB

The SEPS, the only British philatelic society devoted to the collection and study of worldwide perfins has just embarked on a new publishing venture.

'Perfins Abstracts' is a new concept in information handling for philatelists. Its object is to cover the published literature on perfins and provide a permanent record by means of published abstracts and indexes. 'Perfins Abstracts' will be issued as a duplicated A4 loose-leaf supplement to the *SEPS Bulletin* with 5 pages being published every other month. Author and Subject indexes will be published at regular intervals.

'Perfins Abstracts' will be sent free to members of the SEPS. Persons interested in joining this society should contact the Treasurer, Richard Husband, 69 Grand Avenue, Surbiton, Surrey, KT5 9HX, England, enclosing the annual membership fee of £1.

BRIAN BIRCH

Christmas 1975 Stamp Issue 16 November 1975

This year's Christmas stamps, values 6½p: 8½p: 11p and 13p will go on sale at all Post Offices from 26 November 1975. Angels, playing musical instruments are the feature of the designs on all four of the stamps.

The stamps, first day cover and presentation pack were all designed by Richard Downer MSIA who was responsible for the design of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association issue of 1973 and also for the Inter-Parliamentary Conference stamp issued in September of this year.



Printing Details

Printer : Harrison & Sons Ltd

Process : Photogravure

Size : 41 × 30 mm

Format : Horizontal

Perforation : 15 × 14

Paper : Coated, unwatermarked.

Second class—single band phosphor.

Remainder—all over phosphor

Adhesive : PVA Dextrin

Sheet Size : 100

Date of Issue : 26 November 1975

Designer : Richard Downer MSIA

Values, Subjects and Colours:

6½p (second class) two angels, one with a medieval harp and the other with a lute. Colours: light/lilac, violet, reddish/violet, gold.

8½p (first class) An angel with a mandolin. Colours: green, blue/green, yellow/green, blackish/green, gold.

11p (Zone B) an angel and a horn. Colours: pink, orange/red, red/mauve, maroon/red gold.

13p (Zone C) an angel with a trumpet. Colours: pale/orange, brown, orange, blackish/purple, gold.



CHRISTMAS



Post Office First Day Cancel

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



Presentation Packs

In the September 1974 *Bulletin* we printed a list of the numbered packs from No. 1 in 1968. The following list completes the series since packs were introduced in 1964.

Shakespeare, issued 23 April 1964
Int. Geographical Congress, issued 1 July 1964
Int. Botanical Congress, issued 5 August 1964
Forth Road Bridge, issued 4 September 1964
Churchill, issued 8 July 1965
700th Ann. Parliament, issued 19 July 1965
Battle of Britain, issued 13 September 1965
P.O. Tower, issued 8 October 1965
Robert Burns, issued 25th January 1966
Westminster Abbey, issued 28 February 1966
World Cup, issued 1 June 1966
British Birds, issued 8 August 1966
British Technology, issued 19 September 1966
Battle of Hastings, issued 14 October 1966
Xmas, issued 1 December 1966
EFTA, issued 20 February 1967
British Flora, issued 24 April 1967
Paintings, issued 10 July 1967
Discoveries, issued 19 September 1967
Gift Pack 1967, issued 27 November 1967
British Bridges, issued 29 April 1968
Anniversaries, issued 29 May 1968

Stamp Production

We have been asked by a reader to comment on the errors found on some modern GB stamps and an assurance that the Post Office is concerned with the problem. We do not, as readers well know, descend into the labyrinthes of 'fly speck' collecting or the mysteries of colour shifts and so on. We accept that some collectors devote their time to the study of such errors while we in turn devote our endeavours towards their prevention.

Stringent security precautions are taken by the firms who print stamps for the Post Office to prevent the accidental or deliberate issue of imperfect stamps. These precautions are reinforced by Post Office officials who oversee every stage of production and distribution.

Final checks are made at Post Offices by supervisors and counter officers before sale. We do all we can to see that no imperfect stamps reach the market but despite the strictest control system, we cannot entirely eliminate the chance that of the millions of stamps printed, a few imperfect ones may occasionally escape detection.

Exhibition at Haywards Heath

The Haywards Heath and District PS are holding an exhibition to promote stamp collecting at St Wilfrid's Centenary Hall, Haywards Heath, West Sussex on Saturday 8 November.

Members of the Society will provide a world-wide display and the Brighton post office Philatelic Unit will be in attendance. The Exhibition will be open from 12 noon to 6 p.m., the opening ceremony being performed by Mr Norman Davies MM, Head Postmaster of Brighton. Admission is free.

Special Stamps for 1976

The following commemorative stamps have been proposed for issue during 1976. Details of dates and denominations will be announced later.

March Centenary of the invention of the telephone

April British Pioneering (Social reformers)

June Bicentennial of the United States of America

June Roses

August British Folk Activities

September 500th Anniversary of printing in England

November Christmas—Details to be announced at a later date

Protecting Stamps Post Office Research

Readers may remember that we published an article in the July 1969 issue of the Philatelic Bulletin, on tests carried out by the Post Office Research Department on two kinds of com-

mercially produced clear films for use in protecting stamps. The materials tested were—Polyethylene Terephthalate and Polypropylene. We have been asked to print the results of these tests, and in consultation with the Research Department, it has been agreed that the information originally published was a little misleading and the suggestion is that the Research Department were investigating ways of protecting stamps from the damaging effects of ultra-violet light. In fact, they were using ultra-violet light to 'age' the transparent films, and to observe any effects of the degraded film on underlying stamps. We are happy to print the following text supplied by the research chemists:

An earlier note concerning the protection of stamps requires amplification as it inferred that the collection in the National Postal Museum requires more efficient protection from the injurious effects of UV light. This is quite misleading, for the type and level of lighting in the Museum has been chosen to reduce this hazard to a minimum. Laboratory tests have been carried out but they were instigated to determine whether the transparent films, used to protect stamps from mechanical damage, might themselves be a source of danger.

There are a number of plastics from which transparent films are manufactured but some may not be safe for prolonged contact with stamps. For example Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC) may, with age, produce hydrochloric acid. Another danger is that substances which are added to soften certain plastics may migrate out and affect dyes.

PVC film has been used in the Museum and while there is no evidence whatever that stamps have suffered damage it would be obviously unwise to risk the continued use of this material.

There are only a few films available which have sufficient clarity and at the same time are unlikely to be injurious. One of these, Polyethylene Terephthalate, was the final choice to replace the then existing film.

Letters to the Editor



Dear Sir,

M C Farrar-Bell's Coronation Design

With reference to Mr James Watson's article in the August *Philatelic Bulletin* (British Special Stamps: 12 Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, 1953) there is a further point concerning the design for the 1/6d value of that set which is, I believe, worthy of a mention in your columns—namely, that Michael C Farrar-Bell's design was used not only for the 1/6d adhesive stamp, but also for the 6d 'stamp' on the special

Coronation Air Letter form which was issued at the same time.

Furthermore, this same design was subsequently further adapted, by the substitution of the word *SIXPENCE* for the Coronation date, to appear as the stamp on the ordinary Air Letter form issued on 1 January 1954.

What makes this even more worthy of note is the fact that it is the only instance amongst the GB Stamps of the present reign where the same design has been used as a basis both for an adhesive and for an Air Letter Stamp.

I am sure many of your readers would find it of interest to see in the *Philatelic Bulletin*, an illustration of these two related Air Letter stamps alongside the 1/6d Coronation stamp, to complete the story of the evolution of Mr Farrar-Bell's design.

Yours faithfully,

Royston, Herts.

FRED GEE

Editors Note :

In reply to Mr Gee's letter we are very pleased to reproduce the 6d 'stamp' from the Coronation Air Mail Letter together with the amended version used for the air letter form issued on 1 January 1954 and the 1/6d Coronation commemorative stamp.

Dear Sir,

The Farthing Essays

In his interesting article on these essays in the R M Phillips collection Mr de Righi states that, 'one can therefore only speculate as to what they were intended for'!

Although it is true no official papers have come to light explaining the proposed use to which the essays were to be put, to our mind there has never been much doubt what it was. The date 1874 provides the clue, for in that year the Universal Postal Union was formed. Among the proposals connected with the Union was one which concerned foreign postage. That was fixed at 2½d for a letter, and originally it was suggested that postcards should cost 1½d each or the equivalent amount in foreign currency. Thereupon it

seems that the British Post Office ordered the production of farthing essays, so that one of those stamps could be used together with a 1d to make up the requisite rate.

Not only Perkins, Bacon & Co provided Essays for that small denomination but De La Rue & Co did as well. Details of them may be found, together with illustrations of them all, in *The British Philatelist*, Vol 28, pages 85-88 (January 1936), and that was the first chronicle in philatelic literature of the essays' existence. Eventually, it seems, the odd farthing was dropped from the postcard rate, which was finally fixed at 1d.

Yours faithfully,

L N AND M WILLIAMS

London, NW11 8AB

I am most grateful to Norman and Maurice Williams for their letter suggesting a much more probable reason for the Farthing essays of 1874, than the one I put forward in my Bulletin article of September 1975.

I now suspect that, having commissioned the Farthing essays, the Post Office or Somerset House had a change of heart late in 1874 and decided instead to produce a special 1½d postcard. Such a 'foreign rate' card (Huggins CP5) was put on sale on 1 July 1875 the plate having been registered on 13 March 1875. The Berne treaty of 9 October 1874 creating the Universal Postal Union, established a 'foreign' postcard rate of half the letter rate, ie 12½ centimes or 1½d. That rate came into force on 1 July 1875 for all the signatories of the 1874 treaty, including, of course, Great Britain.

A G RIGO DE RIGHI

Curator, National Postal Museum

And a further letter, from Mr D Marshall-Webb of Worthing Sussex, prompted by Mr Rigo de Righi's *Farthing Essays* article:

Dear Sir,

Your short article XXVII *The Farthing Essays*, has recalled to my memory, that when I was a boy of about seven my father told me that he

had heard, in his club, that probably the Post Office were going to introduce a $\frac{1}{4}d$ post for letters posted and delivered in the same neighbourhood, if marked 'Local'.

I remember asking him, whether I should still write 'Local' as we had never had a $\frac{1}{4}d$ stamp and the answer was, 'I don't think there was any real need, but I believe that the idea was to sort out local letters locally'.

I was born in 1883 and there must be others of my age or older who could tell us something about this.

Perhaps it was just one of those 'leaks' which may have occurred even before the pressures of today's various media.

It's interesting now to find that $\frac{1}{4}d$ essays were actually made.

Thank you for your wonderful little book.

Yours sincerely,

D MARSHALL-WEBB

Dear Sir,

I can see the point in Mr Young's letter (September issue of *Philatelic Bulletin*) that 'postage stamps should be chosen on the basis of their boldness and contrast in colour and design'. The reproduction of paintings on stamps is a very sensitive matter, dealt with delicacy by the British Post Office in recent years (see other painting issues). The Turner issue is no exception apart from the fact that its viewing produces much more intricate phenomena of psychological perception than such kind of stamps create usually; in comparison with other stamp-sized paintings which are easily to be recognised, the Turner stamps leave a wider scope for gross misinterpretation.

One method to examine the quality of information given by an object is its extreme minimisation of exposure time and/or size to percipients who have to describe their impressions. By gradually prolonging and/or enlarging the exposure the moment will come when the percipient is able to 'structure' his impressions, *ie* the moment he says: 'I got it!' The earlier this moment occurs the better the

object serves its aim that is to provide psychological relevant information (structurisation). As to the Turner stamps this decisive moment might come relatively late: structurisation is more difficult. This does not necessarily mean that the qualitative or artistic value of the stamp/painting 'itself' is poor; it only indicates that its psychological usefulness—and therefore its acceptance by the broad public—is in jeopardy.

How this process works might be roughly but vividly illustrated by the following anecdote told by my local stamp-dealer. An elderly customer—maybe a little bit short-sighted and without glasses—was trying to remove the 'brown spot' in the centre of the 10p stamp by scratching over its surface muttering angrily: 'Is that dirt?' Actually, the 10p stamp is the least fortunate one of the whole set.

Yours sincerely,

KARL HEINZ BECKER BA

Willich, West Germany

Book Reviews

TPO A History of the Travelling Post Offices of Great Britain. Part 2 England—South of the Midland TPO by H S Wilson

This is the second part of what is planned as a three part series covering the United Kingdom, and is written with the same authority and interest employed by Mr Wilson in the writing of part 1. It covers 'the specials' and associated TPOs and is well illustrated with black and white photographs and many cancels, some of which are quite rare. Railway philatelists should be delighted with this work which emphasises the close co-operation which has always existed between the Railways of Great Britain and the Post Office in providing two of major services. Published by the Railway Philatelic Group at £3.25, it is obtainable from the Publications Officer, A J Lowe, 'Rookwood' Bentinck Road, Altrincham, Cheshire.

Stanley Gibbons British Commonwealth Catalogue 1976

With this new edition, the publishers are facing up to 1976 with many improvements in the listings, and, for most stamps of Great Britain and the British Commonwealth up to the end of King George VI's reign, some really drastic price changes, brought about by the ever-increasing demand for GB and other 'fashionable' territories, and by our runaway rate of inflation in which mark-ups are often necessary just to maintain the status quo of existing values. Add to this the shifts in demand which occur periodically and unpredictably, and it will be seen that the stamp market is extremely fluid... and exciting, too! Prices generally are at their highest levels for many years in terms of percentage increases.

Collectors of British East Africa, Falkland Islands, Fiji, the Indian States, Labuan, Mauritius and North Borneo will find that the lists have been revised to include additional printings, perforations or shades, while the GB 'value only' surcharged stamps formerly listed under Muscat are now listed under the longer, but more explicit, title of *British Postal Agencies in Eastern Arabia*. 890 pages. Price: £5.50.

Postal History

"Adhesive stamps can be stuck in an album in catalogue order, filling spaces," writes Martin Willcocks, "but postal history should be more than this."* He does not define postal history but for the benefit of our readers—most of whom will be asking what it is—we quote a recent, tentative, attempt to do so by another devotee of this comparatively new hobby:

the organisation of postal services, including their historical development; and possibly more detailed studies on routes, timings, rates, markings, and so on.

What is not clear from this is that (with rare exceptions) postal historians are collectors: they accumulate and arrange letters, copies of notices, and miscellaneous paper

ephemera from which to deduce details of postal history and as evidence to support any conclusions they reach. We can confidently assert that any local historian who neglects the findings of a postal historian who has studied posts in the same area does so at his peril.

Martin Willcocks gives a very brief review of message writers, their materials, and the conveyance of those letters in the earliest civilisations before he goes on to deal with the English Royal Mail of the fifteenth century. He then gives considerable details of subsequent phases, from Charles the First making his Royal Mail available to the public in 1635 to the mail coach services (which began in 1784) and on to the postal reforms of 1839-40. He intersperses his narrative with racy comments, judgments, and suggestions for further research. He includes two chapters on the London Penny Post from 1680 till 1840, with many illustrations of the various handstamps used throughout those years to mark the letters carried. He deals similarly with local services in other towns and districts, illustrating many of the types of handstamps used by the Post Office.

Alan W Robertson has contributed a short survey of letters carried to and from the British Isles by sea, which has illustrations of special handstamps used from 1765 to 1935. He ends his contribution by suggesting more than two score subjects for future collectors, such as mail communications by sea with the islands around the British Isles; soldiers' and seamen's letters from overseas and the special privilege seapost rates for servicemen; and the many supplementary Post Office instructional handstamps which appear on maritime mail. Also included is information on Scottish and Irish mails by A Bruce Auckland and F E Dixon respectively.

That Martin Willcocks enjoys his subject is patent throughout his book, which apart from its inherent value for reference, can be read for sheer entertainment. He is likely to infect many of his readers with his own enthusiasm, when they will be getting in touch

with one of the dozen societies he lists to learn from its members of collections they are making, which range from photographic copies of fifteenth century letters in the British Library to stamped envelopes retrieved yesterday from a waste-paper basket.

N.B. The author has informed the Bulletin that a few copies of this work may have been sent out with defective binding. These copies should be returned to Robson Lowe Ltd, Granville Chambers, Richmond Hill, Bournemouth BD1 1DQ, Hants, who will replace them and refund postage.

**England's Postal History to 1840 with notes on Scotland, Wales, and Ireland: by R. M. Willcocks: Price £7.50. (Obtainable from H. J. Varnham, 21 Tranquil Vale, London SE3 0BU)*

Special Handstamps

Unless otherwise stated items for reposting bearing at least 7p in postage, should be sent to the Head Postmaster of the town where the special posting box is located, or the relevant District Postmaster in London, marking the outer cover 'Special Handstamp'.

30 January 1976 (P/R)

Trydydd Jiwibili Pont Menai 30 January 1976 Menai Bridge Gwynedd. Special posting box at Menai Bridge SPSO Menai Bridge Gwynedd LL59 5DN.

Postmark Slogans

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

8 September 1975 UFN

For Your Conferences Bridlington With Hospitality Plus Contact the Spa Tel: 78255. To be used at Bridlington. First and Second Class.

26 September 1975-17 January 1976 (P)

Capital of the Centre of Britain Leeds. To be used at Leeds. Second Class.

1 October-23 December 1975

Distress or Despair? Talk in Complete Confidence to the Samaritans 061-834 9000 or 832 4688/9. To be used at Manchester South PDO. Second Class.

14 October 1975-10 January 1976 (P)

Progress with Woking. To be used at Woking Surrey. First and Second Class.

3 November-21 December 1975 (P)

Lowther Wildlife Country Park April-October Tel: 093-12-392. To be used at Penrith. First and Second Class.

Repeat Campaigns

1 August 1975-31 January 1976 (P)

Lee Valley Regional Park For Leisure Information and Literature Phone Waltham X 20711. To be reused at Enfield. Second Class.

14 July 1975-13 July 1976

You Have It Made In Wolverhampton. To be reused at Wolverhampton. First Class.

1 September 1975-28 August 1976

The Samaritans Distress Despair Phone Bognor 25555 in Confidence. To be reused at Bognor. Second Class.

15 October-31 December 1975

Expanding Hastings—The Resort With A Future. To be reused at Hastings.

Until 14 July 1976 (P)

Barnardo's Cares About Children Dr Barnardo's PO Box 1 Ilford IG6 1QC. To be reused at Ilford, Hounslow, Harrow.

Please Note: That for the postmark slogan **Keep Middlesbrough Tidy** the dates of use should now read 1 September-28 November 1975 and not 11 August-7 November 1975 as previously published in Volume 5 Issue No 6.

Please note: That the Postmark Slogan **Estates and Industrial Developments Dept Shaw 44411** which was due to be withdrawn from use at Oldham Lancs on 1 September will now continue until 20 November 1975. 'P' denotes Pictorial 'R' denotes Rectangular

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