

Philatelic Bulletin

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Dorchester and Weymouth Exhibition

The Dorchester and Weymouth Stamp Club are holding their Eighth Annual Exhibition on Saturday, 15 November 1975, from 11 am–6 pm in the United Reformed Church Hall, South Street, Dorchester. Admission—10p Adults, 5p Children. Seven dealers stands will be in attendance.

The Exhibition is to be opened by Mr R A Wheeler, of Bournemouth—a specialist in the stamps and Postal History of Tibet. This year the Exhibition is incorporating the Wessex Philatelic Federation competition for the Thompson Cup.

Refreshments are available all day and ample car parking facilities will be available in the Charles Street car park by the rear of the hall.

Introduction

On 22 October the Post Office will issue four new postage stamps. They are to commemorate the bi-centenary of Jane Austen, the authoress, and only the second lady commoner to be so honoured—the first being Florence Nightingale in 1970.

Jane Austen was born at Steventon in Hampshire on 16 December 1775, the youngest child of the Rev. George Austen, Rector of Deane and Steventon. The Austens were very much a county family and their daughter Jane was tall and slender, graceful with fine features and curly brown hair. Between October 1796, when she began writing 'Pride and Prejudice'; and her death in 1817, Jane Austen wrote six major novels which have passed into the accepted canon of English literature. Four of them—'Sense and Sensibility', 'Pride and Prejudice', 'Mansfield Park' and 'Emma' were published, all anonymously, during her lifetime. 'Northanger Abbey' and 'Persuasion' were published posthumously, and it was in their brief biographical prefaces that the secret of Jane Austen was first publicly revealed.

Her countless admirers have included the Prince Regent, Trollope, George Eliot, Coleridge, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Sir Walter Scott, to name but a few.

Jane Austen Bi-centenary—Steventon

On Wednesday 22 October 1975, the first day of issue of the Jane Austen Bi-Centenary commemorative stamps, there will be a philatelic centre and exhibition at the Church Hall, Steventon from 9 am to 6 pm. A special souvenir cover produced by the Jane Austen Bicentenary Committee will be available, details from Bicentenary Philatelic Officer, Olde Meade, Steventon, Basingstoke, Hants, RG25 3BH. The Post Office will provide a special display and philatelic counter.

Gems from the RM Phillips Collection

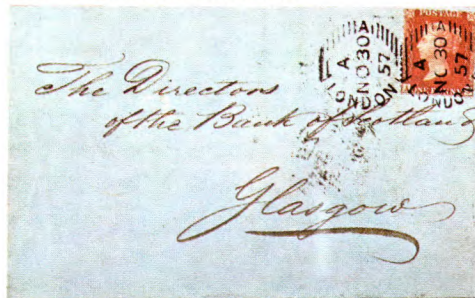
XXVIII Pearson Hill's Machine Cancellations

Hand cancellation and handstamping of mail, especially letters, became a problem in the larger Post Offices within a few years after the introduction of Uniform Penny Postage. Firstly there was the enormous increase in the number of items handled. The total number of letters (excluding free official correspondence) passing through the post in 1840 was 169 million; this had increased to 322 million in 1847 and 379 million in 1852.

Unless very carefully maintained and cleaned, and applied with the skill deriving from long practice, the post office handstamps produced poor and sometimes illegible impressions. Shortage of competent staff, cramped working conditions and a constantly increasing volume of mail aggravated the problem.

Measures to remedy the situation had been considered for some years when in October 1853, the Postmaster General, Lord Canning, asked Pearson Hill (Rowland Hill's son who had joined the Post Office in 1850) to devise if possible a machine which would give a clear and legible impression upon letters (of the date stamp) and ensure a more thorough obliteration of the postage stamps themselves. Work on this had to be suspended shortly afterwards but was revived in 1856 and made even more urgent when the Trial Judge in the Madelaine Smith poisoning case (1857) spoke critically, in his summing-up, of the Post Office's responsibility for smudgy and illegible postmarks where the date of an envelope was a crucial piece of evidence.

Pearson Hill produced a prototype model of his first stamping machine in March 1857. With this, he claimed, he could obliterate 60-65 letters a minute, but this rate could be increased to 120 letters a minute on a properly-made machine. Mr W Bokenham, the Controller of the Circulation Department, who was asked for his views reported that the prototype was sufficiently promising to justify the expense of making a proper machine to try out its real capabilities. Mr Hill, he said, had "succeeded in surmounting the difficulties



under which all other stamping machines have hitherto failed!"

It was for this machine that Pearson Hill had taken out Patent No 832 (registered on 15 September 1852) for "Machinery for Stamping, Marking or Printing and Arranging Papers, Letters etc . . ." which he stated was "particularly adapted for applying the date stamps and obliterating stamps to letters . . . sent through the Post Office." The machine, which was worked by foot or steam, was additionally designed to count and sort letters and to be self-adjusting for envelopes of varying thicknesses.

The first step towards rationalisation of postmarks, and time-saving in applying them, had been taken in 1853-54 when combined date and obliterator handstamps (known to philatelists as 'duplex' handstamps) were brought tentatively into use first in the London Chief Office and then in large provincial offices. The idea had first been put forward in the late 1840's. The purpose of Pearson Hill's new machine was to mechanise, and therefore considerably speed up, the application of these relatively new 'duplex' combined date-stamp/cancellors.

The new machine, constructed as a result of Bokenham's recommendation, was put into use in September 1857 but was discarded after about 6 months trial mainly because, whilst giving an excellent impression, it was found to injure, and in some cases actually destroy the letters. It was also regarded as costly.

Three types of duplex markings from the

Pearson Hill machine(s) are known for 1857-58. All three differ from normal 'duplex' cancellors in that the 2 parts of the handstamp are identical. One (the rarest) has no town name and bears September dates. (Westley type 52*). It may well be exclusive to Pearson Hill's original machine as used for comparison or test purposes. The other 2 types (Westley types 53 and 54) include the word London. All are rare on cover.

Illustrated above as this month's 'Gem' is a superb example on cover of Westley's type 53, which was produced by Pearson Hill's machine during its first trials in September-November 1857. Not only is the cover notable for its excellent quality but it is of importance as a fine example of the first trial in the world of a machine cancellation.

As a result of a report by Bokenham on the trials (5 December 1857) an amended version of the machine was built which applied a type 54 (cancellation (known as the 'Opera glass') during further short trials in March 1858 after which it was abandoned.

Undiscouraged by this failure, Pearson Hill submitted (in May 1858) a smaller entirely new machine for manual operation which he called the 'Parallel Motion'. It and a later model were tried out (in competition with machines devised by Charles Rideout) over the period 1858-59.

Preference was given to Hill's machine and 20 were bought for use in London. In 1865 the

use of the Parallel Motion machines was recommended to the larger Country Offices and in November 1866 Pearson Hill introduced his 'Pivot' machine by means of which the postman doing the stamping could 'follow up' his letters (as in hand stamping) instead of having to draw every letter to the machine. This made for greater speed.

But above all the real virtue of the new machines lay in their ability to produce really clear postmarks, thus meeting the demands for legible datestamps.



One of the original Parallel Motion machines (probably dating from 1865 or later) has been preserved in Post Office archives and is illustrated here. This particular machine is fitted with a Manchester 498 cancellation and date stamp.

A G RIGO DE RIGHI

*H C Westley "Postal Cancellations of London" 1950.

The Travelling Post Office Service

A major part of the National Postal Museum's current special exhibition *Railways and the Post* is devoted to the story of the Travelling Post Office service—a service which grew with the railways and one which was the first of its kind in the world.

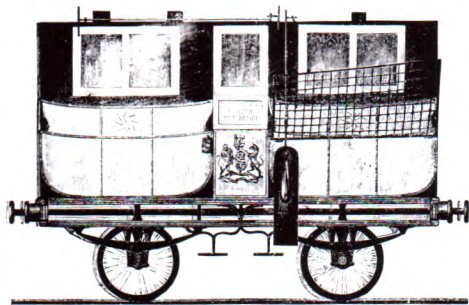
The idea of employing special Mail Coaches, in which the Guard could sort and tax letters while still on the road to London, had occurred to Rowland Hill, the great postal reformer of the 19th century, as early as 1826. Eleven years

later, as the Post Office was preparing to switch from road transport to the long line of railway then being laid between London and Birmingham (to connect with the Grand Junction Railway to Liverpool), Frederick Karstadt, a Post Office Surveyor, developed the idea. Under the existing mail coach system, frequent stops were made to change the horses and refresh the passengers and, at certain stages, these were long enough for the sorting and exchange of bye-mails; despatch arrangements

all along the way, and along the bye-roads, being regulated to coincide with the London coach's timetable. Karstadt, realising that the train's stops would not be long enough for this, thus throwing all the existing intricate arrangements into chaos, put forward a plan for special railway carriages fitted out for the sorting and exchanging of mails en route.

His plan was approved and it was decided that an experimental 'travelling post office' should be established on the Grand Junction Railway, between Birmingham and Warrington. And so, early in 1838, the first Travelling Post Office (a converted horse-box) was put into service. It was declared to be an immediate success—enabling the Post Office to "duplicate time, by travelling and working at the same instant".

Soon, arrangements had been made for the provision of four railway carriages specially designed as Travelling Post Offices. The first of these ran from Euston to a point just north of Bletchley, where the mails were transferred to the road Mail Coaches. In September 1838 the London and Birmingham Railway was opened throughout its length, joining the Grand Junction and North Union lines to give a direct and continuous route to the North and, shortly after, the TPO service was extended to Preston.



The first purpose-built TPO 1838

The first TPOs had no apparatus for exchanging the mail bags while the train was in motion—the train just had to slow down while

the bags were thrown out, the Mail Guard seizing the incoming bag from the end of a pole thrust towards him.

The first apparatus submitted to the Post Office was designed by Nathaniel Worsdell. But shortly afterwards, because the Post Office considered Worsdell's price for his invention too high, his apparatus was re-devised by an employee of the Post Office, John Ramsey. Lineside standards for the new apparatus first came into use at Boxmoor, near Hemel Hempstead in 1838. Ten years later it was simplified and greatly improved with nets fixed at the side of the railway track to catch the bags dropped by the TPOs. Hitherto, they had been dropped down a chute while the train slowed down.

Between 1902 and 1930 special adhesive labels were in use for attachment to delicate items; these bore the legend "This Packet has been diverted from the usual route, as it appeared to be too fragile for transfer by Mail Apparatus".

Today, because of increased speeds reached by trains, enabling more stops to be made without affecting the timetable, and an extended use of mail van services, bags are no longer exchanged by lineside apparatus. The last apparatus (at Penrith)—virtually the same in method of working and design as that on the first TPOs—came out of service on the night of 4 October 1971.

Sorting Carriages were the first vehicles to be fitted with gangways, forming a communication between carriages. Necessary to facilitate the sorting and making-up of bags, the Post Office agreed to pay for the experiment. Found successful, they were first introduced on the Great Western, South Eastern and London North Western routes in the early 1860s.

In 1857 London began to be divided into 10 Postal Districts—each exchanging mail bags not only with other District Offices but also with Post Towns outside London.

Between 1857 and 1869, to lessen the work in London of sorting and making-up bags for

such towns, District Sorting Carriages were introduced. In these (unlike TPOs) letters from London were sorted and made-up into direct bags for Post Towns and, on journeys up to London, the correspondence divided into Postal Districts.

At first, the public could hand in late letters to the TPO Mail Guard without paying a fee for the service. Later, however, in about 1860, a Late Fee of 2d (reduced to ½d in 1880) was introduced, payable by means of an extra postage stamp, on letters handed in up to the time of the departure of the train.

Letter boxes for the receipt of Late Fee letters have been provided on TPOs since 1882 and, today, such boxes are fitted into the body of the carriage. In addition, portable letter boxes were sometimes suspended from the side of ordinary carriages for short periods at stopping places.

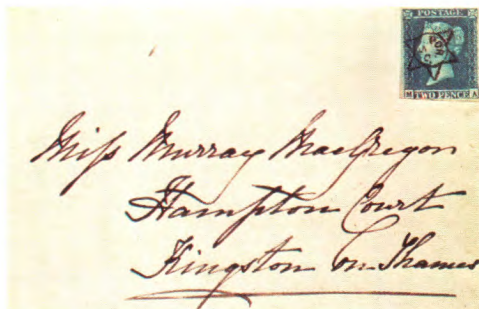
In the early years of the service the men of the TPOs risked serious injury or death, and suffered dreadful working conditions—poor ventilation and no seating or sanitation—and many travelled as much as 40 nights consecutively. Few could afford their ‘rests’ or annual leave, which meant losing their Trip Allowance of a few shillings a day.

Between 1860 and 1867 there were 28 accidents in which TPO men were seriously injured or killed. Fumes given out by oil lamps and the wax lamps used for sealing the bags caused nausea and affected the brain and the commonest causes of early retirement—sometimes at the age of only 34—were paralysis, nervous debility and mental derangement. Very few could safely “bear the wear and tear of the Travelling Post Office” above 15 years.

In 1859, to ensure a more punctual working of the Night Mail trains to and from the north of Scotland, and to enable them to be accelerated, it was decided to limit passenger and other traffic conveyed by them. Henceforth, the TPO was made a ‘Limited Mail’.

But the greatest of all changes in TPO working came in 1885, with the introduction of Special Mails—the sole use of the train

being devoted to Post Office purposes. The service, first known as the NW Down Postal (*Night*), was amalgamated in 1923 with the Caledonian TPO (*Night*), to form the *Down Special TPO* (Euston–Aberdeen). The Specials ran as Bag Tenders during the Second World War even when all other TPO operations ceased.



Letter from Osborne—addressed in the Queen's own hand—carried by the Portsmouth Sorting Carriage 1870. The letter bears a 2d Blue, plate 4, imperforate stamp—16 years after issue! Was it an old stamp hurriedly found by the Queen just as the Mail Cart was about to depart? (Copyright A G Brewer)

Today, 48 TPOs provide a web of postal communications reaching out to every corner of England, Scotland and Wales and between them processing some 400 million letters a year.

The 4 main TPOs are known as the *Up Special* (Aberdeen–Glasgow–Euston), the *Down Special* (Euston–Glasgow–Aberdeen), the *Great Western Up* (Penzance–Paddington) and the *Great Western Down* (Paddington–Penzance). The *Up Special* is the longest TPO, comprising 12 Post Office vehicles—7 sorting carriages and 5 stowage vans.

Together, the TPOs complete a giant network—designed to contract time and distance—and every journey is an integral part of a complex system of finely dovetailed schedules reflecting the close relationship between the Post Office and the Railways which has developed over the last 145 years.

JEAN FARRUGIA

14. 46th Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference, 1957

Scarcely had we waved goodbye to the Boy Scouts who had visited us for the Jubilee Jamboree in August, when, virtually without warning on 12 September, 1957, a new commemorative stamp was issued—M C Farrar-Bell's definitive 4d additionally inscribed 'Parliamentary Conference', reading vertically upwards and downwards within the narrow 'spandrel' area bordering the medallion portrait of the Queen, with '46th' within the medallion, under Her Majesty's chin. The Inter-Parliamentary Union, founded in 1889, held its 46th Conference at Church House, Westminster, during September.



Obviously the Post Office were given insufficient notice of (a) the event, and (b) the Government's desire for a commemorative postage stamp, and they were obliged to employ the makeshift design. (Nevertheless they managed to produce a 6d air-letter sheet with a design depicting the Queen, the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Bridge for the same event!)

Both stamp and air-letter were strongly criticised on aesthetic grounds by the public, and the philatelic and national Press—the *Manchester Guardian* described the air-letter as 'monumentally unimpressive', and referred to 'squeezed' lettering and the 'enigmatic 46th' on the stamp.

But, even with all their design and printing resources, it is difficult to envisage what else the Post Office could have done about issuing a suitable stamp in the time available to them. There were comparatively few stamps available in sufficient quantities for adaptation. Other, previously-issued, commemorative

stamps would have been quite unsuitable: the current 2s 6d 'Carrickfergus Castle' would have been ideal for overprinting—but there would have been an outcry about the high face value. The crunch was that there was no alternative to using one of the existing definitives—and the 'Wilding' 4d, of which there were ample stocks and which, fortuitously, had generous 'white' space in its design, in and around the medallion, was the obvious choice. (A horizontal overprint would have marred the Royal portrait or obliterated 'Postage-Revenue'.)

The stamps were photogravure-printed by Harrison & Sons in the normal definitive sheet arrangement of 240, and some varieties and minor flaws are recorded. The quantity sold was extremely low—10,472, 160 stamps.

JAMES WATSON

Jane Austen Bi-centenary Stamp Issue

22 October 1975

Four new postage stamps are to be issued on 22 October to commemorate the bi-centenary of Jane Austen. The stamps, depicting well-known characters from four of her novels, have been designed by Miss Barbara Brown. They, together with four postcards portraying enlarged versions of the stamps, as well as the usual presentation pack will be available from the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh and most post offices in the United Kingdom. The cost of the postcards will be 7p each, and the presentation packs 52½p each.

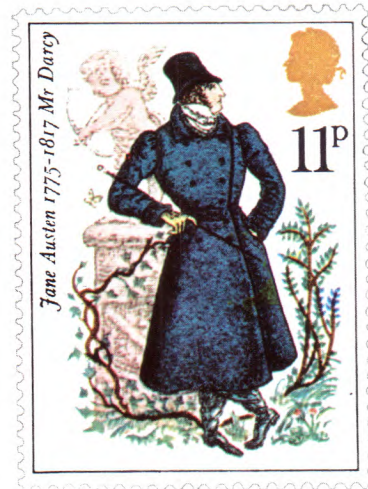
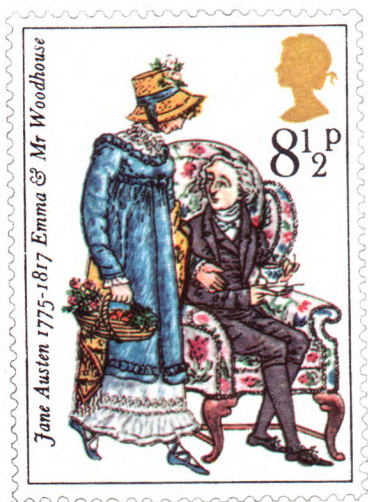
Application forms for First Day Cover services, obtainable from the Philatelic Bureau and all Head Post Offices, should be returned not later than 13 October 1975.

Printing Details

Date of issue: 22 October 1975

Designer: Miss Barbara Brown

Values and subjects: 8½p Emma and Mr. Woodhouse, 10p Catherine Morland, 11p Mr. Darcy, 13p Mary and Henry Crawford.



Printer: Harrison and Sons Ltd.

Process: Photogravure

Size: 41 mm × 30 mm

Format: Vertical

Perforation: 15 × 14

Paper: Coated unwatermarked all over phosphor.

Number to sheet: 100

Colours:

8½p Buff, Red, Blue, Green, Black, Grey, Gold

10p Yellow, Grey, Red, Green, Black, Gold

11p Yellow, Blue, Red, Brown, Grey, Black, Gold

13p Buff, Red, Green, Black, Blue, Gold



Postal History and the Stamp Collector

Part 4. Registered Mail and its Associated Cancellations and Handstamps

Although a form of registration for certain mail was known from the 1780s, the introduction of Uniform Penny Postage in January 1840 made no provision for the special treatment of mail with valuable or important enclosures.

This soon resulted in complaints of losses due to theft and on 6 January 1841, the Post Office introduced a new registration system, where, for an additional prepaid fee of 1s, a letter would receive special treatment during transit. In this new system the Post Office issued a receipt but did not pay any compensation should loss have occurred.

The table drawn up in Fig. 1 gives a brief

resumé of the rates associated with registration together with notes on methods adopted, from the earliest examples, up to the period when compensation for loss was first initiated.

Although a handstamp with 'Registered' in curved form with a crown above was known used by the Foreign Office prior to 1840, the new registration system introduced in January 1841 did not use any special cancellation or instructional handstamp initially. Registered mail of this period usually shows 'Registered' in manuscript, with either 1/- in red in m/s, or, more rarely, the 1s additional fee paid in adhesive stamps, in addition to the correct postal rate for weight.

Fig 1

Period	Date	Registration Rate	Remarks
1	1787-1836	£1 1s 0d 5s 0d	Only available for letters going abroad and limited only to port of despatch. Inland fee applied only between London Office and destination (Ref 1).
2	1836-1841	2s 6d	Both outgoing and inland rates reduced. All Inland letters containing coin or jewellery were compulsorily registered by Post Office without additional charge.
3	Jan 1840	Discontinued	Bankers parcels containing banknotes still had a special privileged rate up to Jan 1841.
4	Jan 1841	1s 0d	This new rate had to be prepaid.
5	1848	6d	Reduction in registered letter rate.
5A	Nov 1856	6d	Special concession introduced—if unpaid letter posted in box with normal postal rate, it would be delivered at twice normal registration rate ie $2 \times 6d = 1/-$.
6	Aug 1862	4d	Reduction in registered letter rate. Letters passing through normal post but obviously containing coin compulsorily registered and charge of 8d made on delivery.
6A	Jan 1863	4d	Unpaid registered letter fee introduced in November 1856 reduced to 8d.
7	Jan 1878	2d	Reduction in registered letter rate. Introduction of compensation up to £2 0s 0d in case of loss. The use of blue lines and specially printed envelopes also introduced.

In the later 1840s, special handstamps began to appear at some of the larger towns consisting of a straight line 'REGISTERED'.

An example of a registered cover of Period 5 in the table is illustrated in Fig. 2, in this case the only evidence, apart from the additional 6d rate, is the 'Registered' in m/s in red on the top left corner. Fig. 3 shows another cover used in Period 5 and illustrates the 'Registered-Crown' handstamp mentioned earlier in this article and used here at a much later date and applied at the port of exit. This particular example was used to Germany in March 1862 i.e. 6d registration rate + 6d postal rate. Some of the special handstamps which were beginning to appear are seen on this cover, the oval type used both at Liverpool, the city from which it was sent, and at London, as a transit mark. Both these illustrations, Figs. 2 and 3, show that the adhesive stamps were cancelled with the normal numbered devices of the city of origin i.e. Manchester (498) and Liverpool (466) respectively.

Fig. 4 shows a further development, the use of both instructional handstamps and a cancellation used on the adhesive stamp specially allocated for registered mail. This example is of particular interest as it was used on 7 September 1863 (Period 6/6a) when the registration rate was 4d, the use of a 6d stamp indicating that the postal rate must have been 2d for a weight over $\frac{1}{2}$ oz up to 1 oz. The vertical oval containing the number 15 (Number 14 also) was allocated to the London Inland Office for cancelling the adhesive stamps on registered mail. In addition, Fig. 4 shows another type of instructional handstamp, the 'Lombard Street-D-Registered Letter' in sector shape and used at the original receiving office, the oval London mark would have been applied at the Head Office.

The practice of using special cancelling dies for the adhesive stamps on registered mail was not general though Liverpool used an experimental duplex (Spoon type) device during Periods 5 and 6.



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

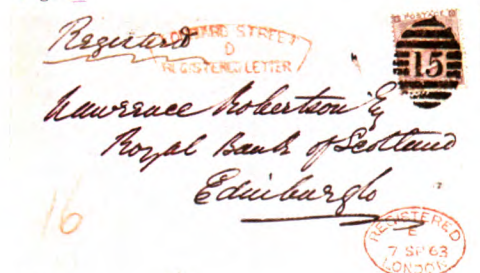


Fig. 4

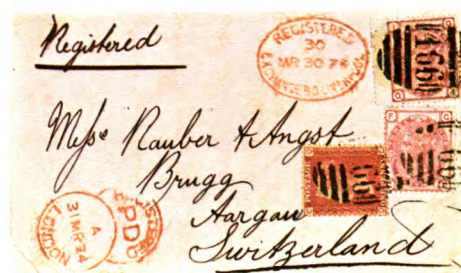


Fig. 5

Many different designs of instructional handstamp are to be found varying with different towns and cities. One unusual type is illustrated in Fig. 5 and used to indicate that the letter was registered and the full rate paid to destination—Switzerland. This letter was used



Fig. 6

on 31 March, 1874 in Period 6/6a, registration rate 4d, postal rate 3d.

The last type to be mentioned in this article is shown in Fig. 6 which illustrates a circular 'Hamburg-Crown-Registered' handstamp. Similar marks are known with Prussia, Malta, Constantinople, France, Belgium and other European countries and were struck on arrival to indicate the source of the registered mail from overseas. Some of these handstamps are very rare.

In conclusion it must be pointed out that only a very small section of the registration system has been described but the collector will have already seen that the subject provides an excellent collecting theme in itself. Some of the periods could be taken alone and would provide considerable scope for expansion and further discovery.

F M JOHNSON

The Economics of the Mail Coach

Keeping a Mail Coach on the road even when coach travel was at its peak around 1833 seems to have been a dicey business. Unless the proprietor was a good manager his costs would soon outrun his takings which of course included receipts from the Post Office for the conveyance of Mails. There is nothing particularly new about cost-effectiveness or profitability!

The price of horses for fast travelling coaches was high. A horse for the crack teams working out of London cost at least £23 and the average working life harnessed to a fast coach was no more than four years—often less. These horses had to be in tip-top condition. Safety going down hill depended upon sound fore legs. Good hind legs and well spread feet essential for pulling power depended on the force applied from the fulcrum formed by the hinder feet. Blemished horses did not find their way into the coach trade. Despite the need to change horses every ten miles or so—a stage was reckoned as ten miles—fantastic speeds were achieved in the four horse power days. The Exeter day coach, the Herald, from

the Saracen's Head, Snow Hill London, completed the 173 mile journey up hill and down dales in a mere twenty hours. The Devonport Mail took twenty-two hours to cover 227 miles. And yet, because of the stages, the horses were not overworked and it was said that no animal working for man had a better life than the English Coach horse. He was sumptuously fed, kindly treated, was allowed to work only for one hour in twenty-four and could take his ease for the remaining twenty-three hours.

The Coach was 'worked', in both directions, by a number of proprietor-contractors spread along the road at twenty mile intervals and each proprietor covered both the ten mile stretch of road on his right and a similar stretch to his left, and had to provide one horse per-mile of the road he served. At the end of each lunar month a settlement took place between the 'proprietors'. Assuming there were four of these contractors covering 80 miles of the road the gross earnings of the coach at £10 a mile would have been £800 which, less expenses, was divided between

these four men. Needless to say the proprietors, like every other entrepreneur, found their costs ran away with most of the profits. They knew enough about horses not to overtax these animals on whose efficiency their business depended. The first charge on that £800 was the road tolls on the turnpikes, Government duty, coach hire, two coachmen's wages, porters' wages, rent or charges for booking offices and the cost of washing and cleaning the coaches. All this could have come to £150, leaving £650 to keep *eighty* horses and to pay the horse keepers for a period of twenty-eight days. And 80 horses in 28 days need a lot of fodder. It was reckoned that it cost £2 to keep a horse per week and each proprietor with 20 horses to look after needed about £160 to cover his out of pocket expenses. The overall expenses to be deducted from that £800 earned came therefore to about £790—a small enough profit margin to be divided between the four

proprietors. No wonder that a coach earning £10 a mile only just broke even. Contemporary writers, while insisting that to pay its way a coach had to earn much more than £10 per mile also emphasised that the horser's profit often depended on the luck that he had with his stock.

Writing in 'The Mirror of Literature, Amusement and Instruction' of 5 January 1833 an unidentified correspondent maintains that: "In the present age, the art of mechanism is eminently reduced to the practical purposes of life, and the modern form of the Stage Coach seems to have arrived at perfection." While the mechanism has changed that perfection of the Mail Coach maintains its romantic image. No pub in town or country is complete without its POLLARD or ALKEN print showing the Royal Mail and its four horse-power team. And what would the Christmas card trade do without the Royal Mail four-in-hand?

By F MARCUS ARMAN

Royal Air Force Covers

The following covers are planned for issue during September.

Squadron Series No 46 Squadron at Thorney Island will disband on 31 August and this sad event will be commemorated with a cover showing the Andover, the Squadrons' last equipment, which will be cancelled by BFPS 1916, the date of the formation of the squadron, and flown on the squadrons' last flight. The cover should be available on or about 30 September from F/O R Togneri, No 46 Squadron, RAF Thorney Island, Emsworth, Hants at 33p plus postage.

The 1975 Battle of Britain Anniversary cover will be devoted to the famous No 111 Squadron. It will show the squadrons' Phantom aircraft, be cancelled with the commemorative BFPS 1517 and flown in the Phantom. It should be available on or about 15 October from Squadron Leader I Macfadyen, 111 Squadron, RAF Coningsby, Lincs at 33p plus postage.

Air Display Series The last but one cover in the

1975 programme for this series will be the Royal Air Force Lancaster of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight (AD 15). The Lancaster cover will be flown at RAF Stafford Open Day after cancellation with BFPS 1508 on 6 September. It should be available on or about 10 October from Flt Sgt K Bailey, RAF Stafford, Beaconside, Stafford, at a cost of 33p each plus postage and the proceeds of all the covers will be donated to the Royal Air Force Museum Appeal Fund.

1 October 1975 marks the 50th Anniversary of the formation of the first University Air Squadron at Cambridge. A cover in the RAF Squadron series (RAF(SP)9) will be issued to commemorate this event showing the Avro 504, Tutor and Bulldog Aircraft. It will be cancelled with the appropriately numbered BFPS handstamp (1925) and flown by the squadron. It should be available by 30 October from Sqdn Ldr J H Nutkins, Cambridge University Air Sqdn, 2 Chaucer Rd, Cambridge CB2 2ED at 33p plus postage 6½p.

Also in the Sqdn series is a cover (RAF(SP) 10) to be issued on 29 October 1975 marking the 50th Anniversary of the Royal Observer Corps. This will show the Snipe, The Royal Observer Corps Spitfire and Concorde. Cancelled by a special BFPS handstamp (1493) it will be flown and should be available on or about 25 November from Cpl R Bellamy, RAF Rudloe Manor, Hawthorn Wilts at 33p plus 6½p postage.

Bath Exhibition of Jane Austen Stamps

The City of Bath, which played a lively role in Jane Austen's life and in her novels, is to stage a major Post Office exhibition of the Jane Austen stamps in the celebrated Pump Rooms from 6 October for three weeks.

Bath's celebrations to mark their famous novelist's bicentenary also include the issue of an elegantly designed first day cover to complement the Jane Austen stamps. Orders for the cover, price 65p including the stamps and servicing, should be sent to the Pump Room, Bath BA1 1LZ.

Covers will be cancelled with a special Bath handstamp to be used only on 22 October in the City.

Hinckley and District Philatelic Society Stamp Fair and Exhibition

The Hinckley and District Philatelic Society will open its second Stamp Fair and Exhibition on 11 October 1975 in St John's Ambulance Hall, Brunel Road, Hinckley.

The exhibition will consist of 24 frames of material supplied by members of the Society, including the Grand Prix—The Ray Beal Trophy, currently held by the Chairman. Besides a special Post Office display and Sales Counter, 12 dealers will be in attendance, but the centre piece of the exhibition will be a 19th century stamp printing press. It is hoped that a continuous film show, screening Post Office films, can also be arranged.

Middlesex Philatelic Federation Juniors Day

The Pinner Philatelic Society will be hosts at the forthcoming Middlesex Philatelic Federation Juniors Day, to be held at West Lodge School, West End Lane, Pinner, Middlesex on 15 November 1975 from 2–5 pm. For further details please write to Mr John Smith, 16 Wood End Avenue, South Harrow, Middlesex HA2 8NX.

Book Reviews

Check List of Postage Stamps About Music

The Philatelic Music Circle published their Check List about musical stamps about a year ago (reviewed here in Vol 12 No 2). A supplement has now been issued listing amendments resulting from further research, new issues, and renumberings as they now appear in SG '75 catalogues. The supplement is available from main dealers or direct from The Checklist Editor, Philatelic Music Circle, Room 22, 44 Fleet Street, LONDON EC4Y 1BN, price 50p (plus postage). Copies of the 1974 Checklist, (which incidentally received a Bronze Medal Diploma at ESPANA '75) are still available from the same address at £2.00 (post free if supplied with the supplement).

Recent Changes Stamped Stationery

A new range of ready-stamped stationery went on sale at the Philatelic Bureau and other philatelic sales counters on 29 September when the new postage rates were introduced. The new selling prices of all items comprise an increase in the postage rate, stationery element and registration fee. A complete list of the new ready-stamped stationery and their new selling prices follows.

Postcards

Printed with 8½p stamp, 9½p each, 93p for packet of 10.

Lettercards

Printed with 6½p stamp, 8½p each, 80p for packet of 10.

Printed with 8½p stamp, 10½p each, £1.00 for packet of 10.

Envelopes

Size A (146mm × 95mm)

Printed with 6½p stamp, 8p each, 77p for packet of 10.

Printed with 8½p stamp, 10p each, 97p for packet of 10.

Size B (235mm × 120mm)

Printed with 6½p stamp, 8½p each, 80p for packet of 10.

Printed with 8½p stamp, 10½p each, £1.00 for packet of 10.

Registered Letter Envelopes

Printed with 53½p stamp (registration fee 45p, postage 8½p).

Size G (156mm × 95mm), 56½p each, £5.65 for packet of 10.

Size H (203mm × 120mm), 57p each, £5.70 for packet of 10.

Size K (292mm × 152mm), 60½p each, £6.05 for packet of 10.

The Forces Registered Letter Envelope, Size G2, 48p each, is on sale from the Philatelic Bureau only.

Air Letter Forms

Printed with 10½p or 11p stamp, 10½p and 11p each.

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".

11 August–7 November 1975

Keep Middlesborough Tidy. To be used at Cleveland. 1st and 2nd Class.

26 August–26 October 1975

Blackpool Lights 5 September–26 October. To be used at Blackpool. 1st and 2nd Class.

1 September–31 December 1975

In Distress or Despair, the Samaritans, Phone Amersham 5000, Day or Night. To be used at Amersham. 2nd Class.

22 September–26 October 1975 (P)

Mansfield District Festival 1975 5–25 October. To be used at Mansfield first and second class.

29 September–6 December 1975

N.T. Northcott Theatre Exeter's Professional Theatre. To be used at Exeter 2nd Class.

1 October 1975–20 February 1976

Civic Barnsley Bobby Crush Aladdin Bobbie Kent 26 December–21 February. To be used at Barnsley. 1st and 2nd class.

12 October–22 November 1975

1525 to 1975 Newcastle Royal Grammar School. To be used at Newcastle Upon Tyne. 1st Class.

Repeat Campaigns

15 July 1975–14 July 1976 (P)

Nairn for Holidays Golfers Paradise Golden Sands. To be reused at Nairn. 1st and 2nd Class.

28 July 1975–27 July 1976 (P)

Portsmouth and Sunny Southsea for the Holiday of a Lifetime. To be reused Portsmouth Head Office. 1st Class.

28 July 1975–27 July 1976 (P)

Portsmouth and Southsea Naval Port-Premier Resort. To be reused at Portsmouth Head Office. 2nd Class.

28 July 1975–27 July 1976 (P)

Portsmouth and Sunny Southsea for the Holiday of a Lifetime. To be reused at Cosham SO. 1st and 2nd Class (the three dies will be all transposed).

12 September 1975–11 September 1976 (P)

Dundee for Development. To be reused at Dundee. 1st Class.

'P' denotes Pictorial

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