

Philatelic Bulletin



Volume 5: Number 6. February 1968



Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
SOME EARLY STAMP CANCELLING MACHINES	3
THE ART OF THE STAMP	4
O.B.E. FOR MR R. F. YORK OF HARRISONS	4
POSTMARK SLOGANS	6
CANCELLING TO ORDER AND EMBARRASSING PACKETS OR 'WHEN IS A POSTMARK A POSTMARK?'	7
CORRECTIONS	7
NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM NOTES	8
POST BY AIR	10
INTERPEX 1968	11
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	12
SPECIAL HANDSTAMPS	14
FIRST DAY OF ISSUE – MACHINE CANCELLATION	15
HIGH VALUE OLD DEFINITIVES	15
NEW GUM FOR STAMPS	15
CONDITIONS	15

Introduction

Two of the most controversial subjects which have bothered philatelists for many years are the 'cancelled to order' problem and maximum cards. Our policy on both questions has been constant but we feel that the time is ripe for us to re-state it, and do so in this edition.

There are no new stamps to write about this month and we are able, therefore, to give a wide variety of articles on both stamps and postal history.

We have had a gratifying number of Letters to the Editor and hope to receive many more. We obviously cannot print them all but we are interested in them and choose a representative selection.

STOP PRESS

NEW STAMP ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A new Stamp Advisory Committee has been appointed by the Postmaster General, the Rt. Hon. Edward Short, M.P. The Chairman is Mr G. R. Downes, C.B., Director, Operations and Overseas Department of the Post Office. The members are:

Mr Brian Batsford, M.P.

Mr Kenneth F. Chapman

Professor Richard Guyatt, F.S.I.A., A.R.C.A.

Mr R. A. G. Lee

Mr Anthony Lousada

Mrs Louise Pearce

Sir Paul Reilly, M.A.

Mr George Rogers, C.B.E., M.P.

Mr Stuart Rose, F.S.I.A.

Mr Herbert Spencer, R.D.I., F.S.I.A.

The Committee consists of experts in design, representatives of public opinion in general and philatelists.

Full details including bibliographical particulars of the members of the Committee will be given in next month's Bulletin.

BOAT SHOW BIRMINGHAM

The Bureau will be exhibiting at the Boat and Leisure Show at Bingley Hall, Birmingham from 17th February to 2nd March, 1968, and members of the Bureau staff will be in attendance to provide information about the services offered. In addition, all current commemorative and pictorial stamps, together with definitives and the full Regional series will be on sale. A special handstamp will be used engraved 'Boat and Leisure Show'.

WITHDRAWAL OF BUREAU

STOCK ITEMS

Stocks of the undermentioned stamps etc. are now exhausted.

3d Welsh Phosphor (watermarked)

9d British Paintings

2s Booklets (P.C.)

10s Booklets (Plain)

The special £1 Christmas gift pack will be withdrawn from sale at the close of business on 19th February, 1968.

Some Early Stamp Cancelling Machines

In the first years after the introduction of postage stamps cancelling impressions were made by means of wooden date stamps. The impressions were often defective and complaints of illegibility were common.

In 1857 a treadle machine was devised by a Mr Pearson Hill not so much to accelerate as to perfect the process of stamping and after trials it was brought into use in London. The machine gave a clear impression but was soon discarded on the grounds that the output of 50–60 letters a minute compared unfavourably with hand stamping and that it was noisy and liable to mutilate correspondence.

Mr Pearson Hill later developed a simple hand operated instrument and in March 1860 twenty of these were obtained at a cost of

£7 5s for each machine with its appropriate die!

The machine consisted of an arm attachment, springing from a base plate fitted to the vertical framing on the stamping table and extending over the stamping surface. The die was fitted at the outer end of the arm and was brought into use by hand pressure. It returned to its original position after each stroke by means of a rubber stay.

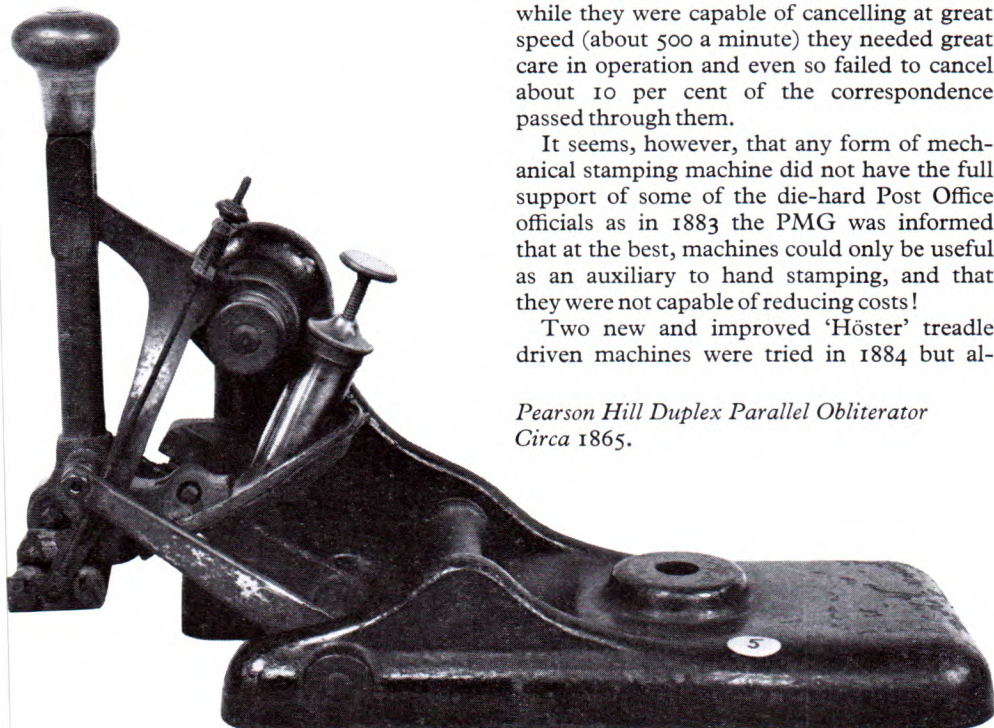
Between 1860 and 1867 a pivot was added which made it possible for the 'arm' to swing through a horizontal plane and so made for more rapid and easy working. About this time these machines became part of the normal equipment of the larger offices in London and the provinces and remained so for many years.

Other inventors had, over the years, submitted treadle driven machines for trial and while they were capable of cancelling at great speed (about 500 a minute) they needed great care in operation and even so failed to cancel about 10 per cent of the correspondence passed through them.

It seems, however, that any form of mechanical stamping machine did not have the full support of some of the die-hard Post Office officials as in 1883 the PMG was informed that at the best, machines could only be useful as an auxiliary to hand stamping, and that they were not capable of reducing costs!

Two new and improved 'Höster' treadle driven machines were tried in 1884 but al-

*Pearson Hill Duplex Parallel Obliterator
Circa 1865.*



O.B.E. for Mr R. F. York of Harrisons

though they were never found to be satisfactory due to a continual record of breakdowns, a few of them were kept in use for ten years.

Another treadle machine – the ‘Etheridge’ – had a very short life when a test of it showed in 1887 a turnover of only 90 letters a minute.

In the early 1890s a further hand-operated machine known as the ‘Malin’ was tried but once again the speed did not exceed 100 letters a minute and consequently did not displace the ‘Pearson Hill’ nor was the supremacy of the latter seriously threatened by the experimental electric machine known as the ‘Hey Dolphin’.

This American machine was seen working in New York by two of our Savings Bank officials who reported on its capabilities when they returned with the result that a trial of it was arranged in London.

The trial was a huge success as between 500 and 600 letters a minute could be cancelled efficiently but because of the complexity of the equipment and the prohibitive cost of rental quoted, the Company were informed that their machines would not be adopted. This was in 1895, and as a later instalment will show, the question of adopting the ‘Hey Dolphin’ was raised again later.

(to be continued)

The Art of the Stamp

The travelling exhibition presented by the Victoria and Albert Museum will not now be on view at Llandefni between 17th February and 10th March as stated in the January *Bulletin*. During this period the exhibition will be on show at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London SW7.

Mr R. F. York, works director of Harrison & Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd, has been awarded the O.B.E. in the New Year’s Honours List.

Mr York has been the major personality in postage stamp production for many years, introducing new technical ideas and advances in the printing and production processes, leading to marked improvements in design and colour. These in turn have effectively increased interest in British stamps resulting in a beneficial effect on philatelic sales particularly in the export field.

Mr York’s career in the stamp world began in 1934 when he joined Harrisons as odd job man in the stamp perforating department. Four years later he became overseer of the department and from then on his determination and will to succeed led him through most departments and managerial positions in the High Wycombe factory. He became an associate director in 1963 and works director in 1966. He is now in charge of production for the company.

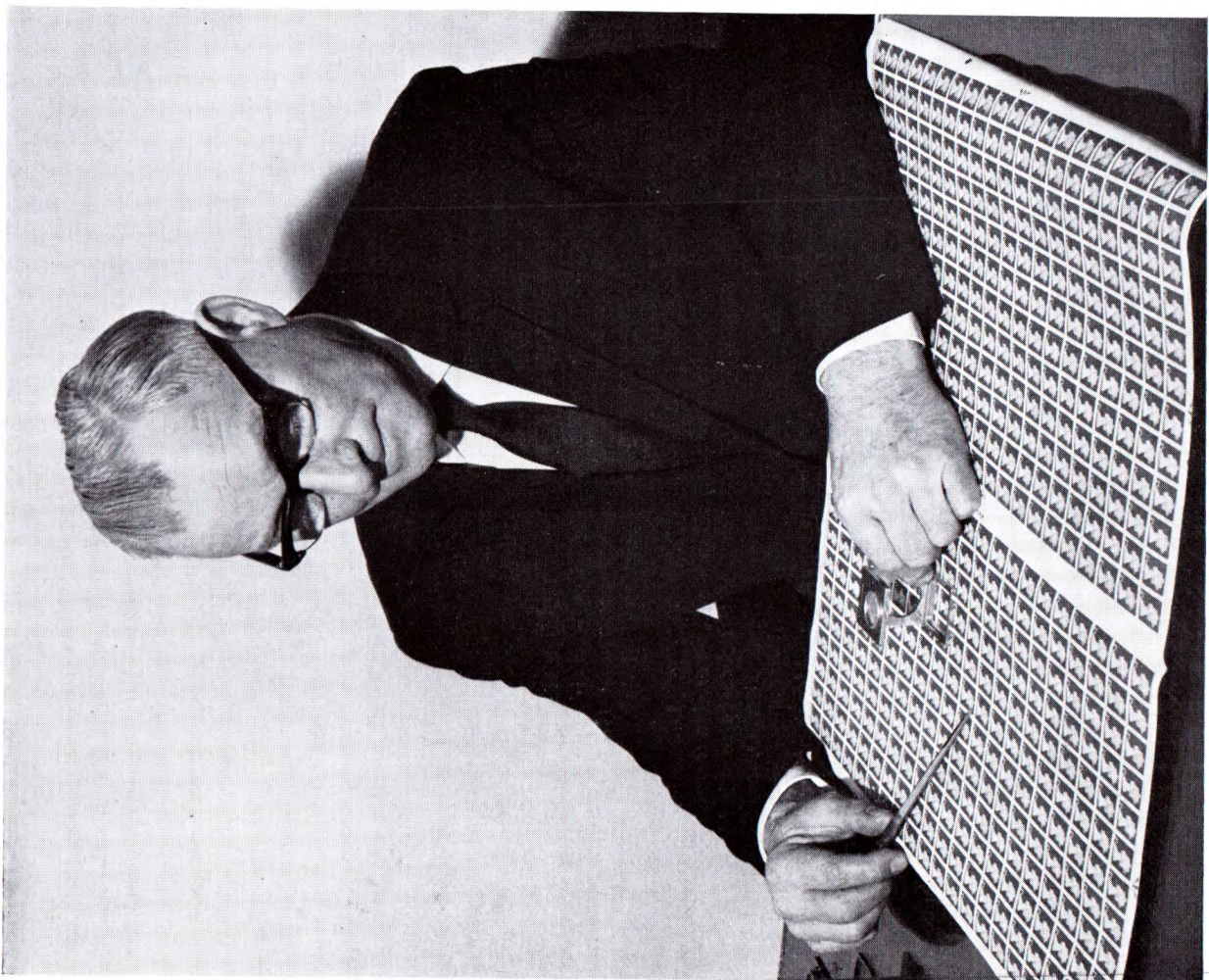
One of Mr York’s greatest attributes is a knack, based on his wide experience, of visualising a finished stamp from artwork which is several times larger. This enables him to liaise closely with the Post Office and to advise on design and colours which will produce the best results.

Advances in printing and production processes for which Mr York has been largely responsible, include the application of phosphor lines for automatic letter sorting, gold blocking and embossing stamps such as for the 1966 British Christmas issue, and the ability to print stamps in as many as nine colours.

We offer our congratulations to Mr York.

RIGHT

Mr R. F. York of Harrison & Sons (High Wycombe) Ltd was awarded the O.B.E. in the New Year’s Honours List for his contribution in the production of postage stamps.



Postmark Slogans

'Thomas Hardy Festival July 7-20, 1968, Guide from Festival Office' will be used in the transposed position at Dorchester from 5th February to 20th July.

'You'll Come to Love Eastbourne Sun Trap of the South' will be used in the transposed position at Eastbourne from 26th February until further notice.

'Make a Date with Eastbourne Sun Trap of the South' will be withdrawn on 25th February.

'Shepton Mallet Gateway to the Mendips' will be used in the transposed position at Shepton Mallet from 8th February to 26th June.

'Skipton Gateway to the Yorkshire Dales' is in continued use at Skipton from 20th February, 1968 to 19th February, 1969.

'The British Sailors Society 1818-1968, 150 years in Service for the Sailor' will be used from 2nd-30th March in the standard position at W.8, W.1, S.W.1, Manchester, Durham, Leeds, Cardiff, and in the transposed position at Southampton, Bristol, Guildford, Windsor. The slogan will also be used in the standard position at York from 3rd-30th March.

'Dorchester - Home of the Slavic & Oriental Mission (Caring for Orphans)' will be withdrawn from Dorchester on 4th February.

'See The Bible Come To Life Exhibition 5-9 March 68' will be used in the transposed position at Coleraine from 9th February to 7th March.

'Shop in Comfort at Cumbernauld's Unique Town Centre' will be re-used at Glasgow from 28th December to 10th February and from 25th February to 10th March.

'London Borough of Lewisham Music and Drama Festival Get Your Syllabus Now' will be re-used at Catford S.D.O. Lewisham from 8th January to 16th March.

'However You Travel Bath Delights Visitors' will be used in the transposed position at Bath from 5th February until further notice.

'Happy Family Holidays Cleethorpes' will be re-used at Grimsby from 1st January to 30th June.

'You Dig Harlow Why Not an Allotment' will be re-used at Harlow from 1st February to 29th February.

'Hull - Capital of Humberside' will be in continued use at Hull from 12th January to 11th April.

'Inter Tie Tees Side International Eisteddford 27th July - 4th August, 1968' will be used in the transposed position at Redcar, Saltburn-by-Sea and Guisborough from 1st March to 30th May.

'Ship Through Newport (Mon) The Home of the Mole Wrench' will be used in the transposed position at Newport, Mon. from 1st February to 1st May.

'Ulster Week in Manchester 4th March-9th March' will be used in the transposed position from 26th February to 9th March at Manchester Head Post Office (Newton Street Letter Sorting Office) and in the standard position at Manchester Eastern District Office, Northern D.O., Salford D.O., South Eastern D.O., South Western D.O., Southern D.O., Wythenshawe D.O.

'Oswestry Welcomes Industry with Space for Work and Leisure' will be re-used in the transposed position at Oswestry from 3rd March to 14th May.

'Top Touring Centre Plymouth in the West' will be used in the transposed position at Plymouth from 4th March to 3rd August.

'The Pantiles Royal Tunbridge Wells' will be used in the transposed position at Tunbridge Wells from 1st February until further notice.

Cancelling to Order and Embarrassing Packets

or 'when is a Postmark a POSTmark?'

For some time we have been under pressure from some collectors and philatelic dealers to 'cancel to order', i.e. to accept both addressed and unaddressed philatelic items at the counter, datestamp them and return them to the customer without sending them through the post.

We know that this service would be welcomed by a proportion of our customers. It would make it 100 per cent certain that the items were not lost or damaged in the post, and we are aware that the service is provided in some other countries. But we have kept our official ear pretty close to the ground on this question and we are convinced that many dealers and, we believe, the majority of collectors, do not want it – they want a postmark that is a *postmark*, that is to say, evidence that the item bearing it has passed through the post in the ordinary way.

While therefore we are willing to arrange for first-day covers posted in our special philatelic boxes to be carefully date-stamped by hand instead of being passed through a stamp cancelling machine, we are not prepared to 'cancel to order'. So please do not ask our counter clerks to do this: you would be inviting them to misuse their date stamps and this renders them liable to disciplinary action.

Because philatelic items after date-stamping are sorted, carried in mail bags and delivered just like other correspondence, it is essential that they should conform to the conditions which apply to postal packets generally. These conditions have not been conceived in an arbitrary manner, but have been born of long and practical experience. They are designed to help the rapid handling of mail and they contribute materially to the efficiency of the postal service. If these conditions were flouted generally, as is already attempted by some, there would be a deterioration in the speed of delivery and an increase in the cost.

We describe items which are not made up in the manner prescribed as 'embarrassing packets'. They are prohibited, and if they are found in the post they are liable to be held or

returned to the sender. The types of philatelic items on which we are having to take firm action include those with the address on the back or on the left-hand side; cards and envelopes (some maximum cards fall into this category) where a design or other printed matter has not been confined strictly to the left-hand half; and items with the stamp elsewhere than in the top right-hand corner. Other embarrassing packets are letters or cards which have been re-posted with a fresh stamp, without the old stamp and postmark having been covered by an adhesive label.

Some people will think that we are being too strict in the line we have taken. But, when we look at the past, we find that interest and value lies in philatelic items because they are part of postal history, that is, they relate to postal activities that were actually current at the relevant time. We are sure that this will hold good for the future also. We may create some trade in the short term, or make life easier for ourselves and other people, by divorcing philately from the postal services, but this policy would surely lead to a gradual debasement of philately and to an eventual dwindling of interest in it.

Thus our object is to maintain the quality and the genuineness of the philatelic services we provide. We believe this to be in the long term interest both of the Post Office as a seller of philatelic services and of British philately generally.

Corrections

The postmark in present use at Ripon should read 'Park at Leisure – Shop in Ripon – Shop with Pleasure' and not as shown in the *Philatelic Bulletin*, Volume 5 Number 5, January 1968.

Due to an unprecedented mix up we said in the January *Bulletin* that philatelic posting boxes were being provided at Epsom, Kirkcaldy and Sutton. This is not so and we offer our apologies for any confusion caused.

The Death of The Dandy Roll

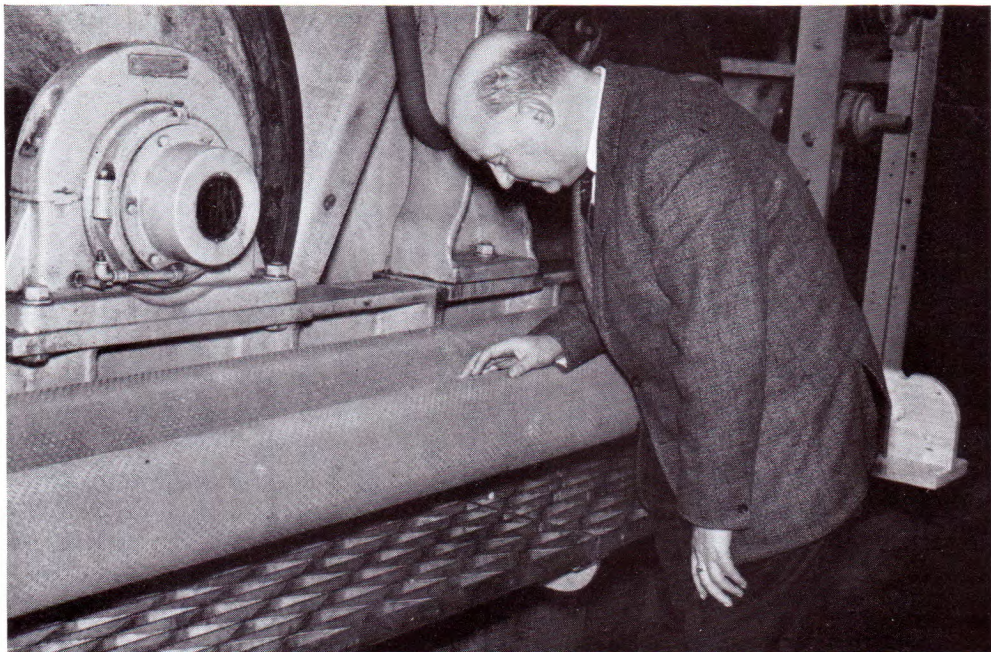
This somewhat macabre title has been used to introduce the obituary notice of the security device used by paper manufacturers when making paper for postage stamps over the last one hundred and twenty seven years i.e. since 1840.

It was by means of the Dandy Roll that watermarks were literally 'built into' the structure of the stamp paper at an early stage in its making. With the introduction of all phosphor lined stamps in the new U.K. Definitive series introduced in 1967 this security device was abandoned. Because of the recent technological improvements, such as the electronically operated machines which count and record the number of sheets of paper made available to the printers, watermarks became an unnecessary extra.

The abandonment of this particular security

device in 1967 was as revolutionary a step as that taken in 1880 when control marks were omitted from the new stamps of that time, the first fruits of the consolidated contract which the House of de la Rue won in competition with other security printing firms. The technical advances of that era similarly made control marks an unnecessary security refinement.

Between July 1860 and 1880 the marks were imprinted at Somerset House on sheets of stamp paper before the paper was made available to the firm printing the stamps and they indicated the denomination of stamps for which particular batches of paper were to be used. Each sheet of paper was stamped twice at the right upper and left lower corners and the contractors were debited with the cost of each sheet at the total value of the stamps to be printed on it. Accountability was the essence of these arrangements. The hazard that stamps might be printed without authority was



Post by Air

A new chapter in postal history was opened on the 18th February 1911 with the introduction of the first ever official aerial post. Surprisingly, the scene of this revolution in postal techniques was Allahabad, India when, with the special permission of the Indian Post Office authorities, mail was despatched from the Exhibition Post Office across the River Jumna to Naini.

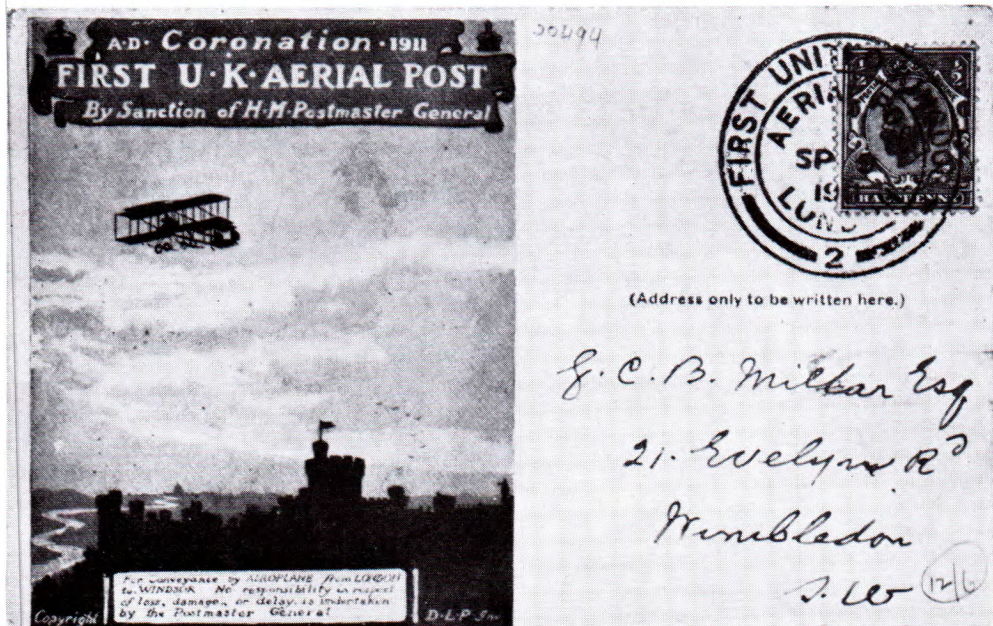
The letters and postcards, which were limited to one ounce in weight, were enclosed in outer covers addressed to the Chaplain, Holy Trinity Church, Allahabad, and were accompanied by a fee of 6 annas, which the Chaplain removed and donated to a fund for a new hostel in the city. The Chaplain then passed the correspondence to the Post Office, where the stamps were cancelled with a special date-stamp bearing the inscription 'First Aerial Post, U.P. Exhibition, Allahabad, 1911' and a design of the aeroplane used for the flight. The special date-stamp used was destroyed on

the following day, and thus the stamp is now something of a rarity.

Following the example set in India, the first aerial post in Britain was organized by a Mr D. Lewis-Poole and a Captain Windham to commemorate the Coronation of King George V. It was originally intended that the service should operate between Hendon and Windsor during the week of the Coronation and the following week; however, the Aerial Navigation Act of 1911 made this arrangement impossible.

Instead, the first flight took place on Saturday, 9th September and was an unqualified success, the 21 mile journey being completed in a mere 10 minutes in spite of an unfavourable headwind.

Only special pictorial postcards and envelopes issued by the organizing committee with the sanction of the Postmaster General were conveyed by the aerial service, and these had to be posted in one of several special boxes





something plainly to be avoided – as indeed it still is.

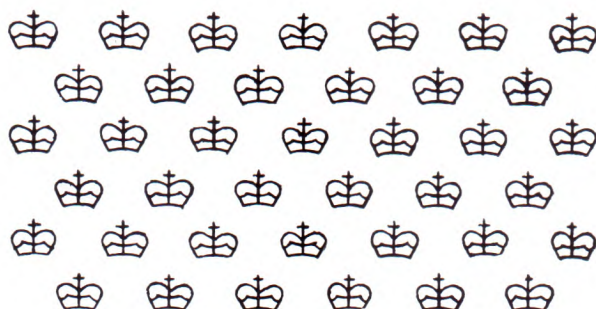
These control marks must not be confused with the marginal control letters and/or numbers which appeared on sheets of G.B. stamps until late in 1947 when they too were abandoned.

To return to our obituary of the Dandy Rolls, about to be destroyed, they are some seven feet long, two feet in diameter and made of wire mesh on which the repeat watermark motive is slightly raised.

Paper making is much the same by both hand and machine processes. Stamp paper today is made from wood pulp. Until recently esparto grass was used. Other types of paper are made from rags or similar fibrous material. The selected material is pulped in

water – one part solid to 99 parts liquid and it is this mixture which is fed onto the wire mesh bed of the paper making machinery. The essence of the process lies in the agitation and draining of the pulp so as to produce a fibrous felt which after further processing becomes the paper we use for stamps as well as for innumerable other purposes. In the course of this processing, while the pulp is still wet the Dandy Roll patterns restrict the felting of the fibres momentarily leaving behind the built in familiar ‘watermarks’. As a fitting accompaniment to an obituary notice we reproduce a photograph of a Dandy Roll before its retirement, together with a sample of recent watermarks.

F. MARCUS ARMAN



installed around London. The first collection was made on the Friday, 8th September.

The postcards and envelopes bore a copy-right design of Windsor Castle in green, brown or red, and were issued already stamped. The charge for an inland postcard was $6\frac{1}{2}d$ and that for an inland envelope was $1s\ 1d$; for postage abroad extra stamps had to be affixed. The envelopes and postcards were stamped with a special postmark – 'First United Kingdom Aerial Post' and the date and, when they had been collected from the special boxes mentioned above, they were taken to a central post office and then to Hendon Aerodrome for conveyance to Windsor.

At Hendon, they were put in a special bag which was firmly attached to the seat of the aeroplane. The aviator, who took on the role of temporary postman and had, as such, to sign the usual Post Office declaration, was provided with a standard letter bill, on which he entered his departure and arrival times.

Unfortunately, on the Monday, 11th September, the newly established service suffered its first casualty. A Mr Hubert carrying 200 lb. of mail crashed just after commencing his journey. The aviator was crushed by the engine of his aeroplane and suffered two broken thighs. Apart from this, however, the experiment proved to be quite a success, and turned out to be the forerunner of today's modern Air Mail service.

Both the Post Office and StanGib Ltd, its agents in the USA, are to exhibit at this important international philatelic exhibition to be held at the Americana Hotel, New York between March 1st–3rd.



The Philatelic Bureau will be represented and any of our readers visiting the exhibition will be welcome at our stand.

THE NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM

at London's Chief Post Office

King Edward Building GPO EC1 (near St Paul's Tube Station)

is open Monday to Friday 10.30 am to 4.30 pm

ADMISSION FREE

The Museum's current Exhibition entitled

The Wind of Change 1880-1900

deals with the Victorian stamps of that period.

A description of this exhibition appeared in our January 1968 issue.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir,

Having just read the first letters to the Editor, and enjoyed them, as I enjoy reading my *Bulletin*, I must say that R. H. Field's letter will most certainly provoke some correspondence; appended are my remarks:—

1. Too many special issues? I think that the present amount now issued, approximately six, are about right, but feel that special issues should celebrate events or anniversaries etc., not just Bridges or Paintings.

2. Special issues on sale too long! Certainly not for less than a month, as if these were withdrawn in, say, a week, some people would never even see them.

3. Certainly no stamp which could be classed as gimmicky, as per the recent issues of Sierra Leone.

4. New Definitives: these I feel are in good taste, attractive and simple yet symbolic, although I hope that the new high values will be in a different context.

5. Christmas stamps? Yes, and the reason for the October release should be obvious. Isn't it?

Yours faithfully,

F. K. SMITH

Keighley, Yorkshire

Dear Sir,

In December's *Bulletin* the very first 'Letter to the Editor' by R. H. Field I do not thoroughly agree with and this is why:—

No. 1 said 'Too many special issues in the course of a year tends to cheapen them'. The average collector does not just collect stamps for the money but as a hobby.

No. 2 said 'Special issues are on sale too long — it should be for a few days only, certainly under a week'. If that would be the case, in South Africa the South Africans would not be able to get half the amount of stamps that are published.

No. 3 I thoroughly agree with. *It would* be a nice change to have a different shape of stamp.

No. 4 read 'Beautiful as the new definitives are, they are no improvement on the King

Edward VIII issue'. I used to collect all countries' stamps but now because of the beauty of G.B. stamps I got more interested in them so now I specialise in them.

No. 5 criticised Christmas stamps, though I agree it was rather foolish to publish them in October.

Yours sincerely,

RICHARD GERBER (*Aged 11*)

Johannesburg, South Africa

Dear Sir,

May I join issue with R. H. Field on two of the points he raises in his letter in the December Magazine.

2. Special issues are on sale too long. Perhaps Mr Field is free to dash out to the nearest Post Office, on the morning of a new issue of stamps, but many of us are very busy people and sometimes have to make an extra effort to get to a Post Office before they are sold out.

5. Why a Christmas stamp in October. The answer is simple. Overseas mail for Australia and New Zealand in particular, must be sent off in October if it is to reach its destination by Christmas. I, for one, was delighted to be able to place the lovely Christmas 4d stamps on my overseas mail this year, and I hope they continue with this practice.

Yours sincerely,

MISS W. WENG

London SW9

(*Our thanks to the many other readers who replied to Mr Field's letter. Ed.*)

Dear Sir,

I am a keen collector of G.B. stamps and find the issues of recent years quite excellent, especially the new definitive series.

However there is one point I would like to make: to have a comprehensive collection I feel I must have the cylinder block of each value. Some people collect these because of their potential value but I regard them as official registrations of the particular cylinder

to which I can always refer. At the moment however it is almost impossible to obtain them from Post Offices and the Bureau.

I would like to suggest that the printers produce all sheets with four sets of cylinder numbers – one in each corner; there would then be sufficient to go round and the GPO could guarantee one per quarter of a sheet. The case against will no doubt be put by dealers, that the GPO would destroy the market by increasing the number available.

The fact remains that the present set-up is to their advantage at the expense of collectors.

Yours faithfully,

B. D. GURNIER

London NW2

(May I have readers' views on this interesting and controversial suggestion please. Ed.)

Dear Sir,

I have in my collection what must be one of the earliest accidental errors in a postmark. It accompanies a one penny black cancelled by a red maltese cross and reads (in black) 'ROTHES.. JN 6 8140'. The 'AY' ending of the place-name is not readable, but the remaining lettering and numerals are very clear. Can any of your members antidate this?

Yours faithfully,

E. MILNE-REDHEAD

Petersham, Surrey

Dear Sir,

I was particularly interested in the article in the December *Bulletin* on the Jubilee of the Penny Post, as I have a copy of the book giving all the details of the celebrations and Exhibitions, consisting of 330 pages, and this makes most interesting, as well as amusing, reading.

The details of celebrations in the Provinces include Grosmont (Mon) where the Post-

master reports 'I beg most respectfully to state that last night at ten o'clock myself and also the Morton letter carrier went into the ruins of Grosmont Castle and sang the first verse of 'God Save the Queen', and gave three cheers for her Most Gracious Majesty' whilst at Vigo Street, London, 'I remembered Her Majesty with hearty good wishes at ten o'clock on the 2nd July, although alone at my office'. At Collinstown (Co. Westmeath) the P.M. reports 'I beg leave to inform you that I successfully performed the pleasing duty of cheering Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen at 10 p.m. this Jubilee night, though entirely unaided as my wife was unable to remain up later than 8.30 p.m.'.

At the larger establishments the proceedings were more grandiose – at Hemingford Road, London, the Postmaster invited the twelve messengers to spend the evening with his own family and a few friends, and at 8 o'clock they all assembled in his conservatory for light refreshments. Later they adjourned to the drawing room for a programme of reminiscences by the Receiver, music and singing, the reading of papers, and the display of a valuable collection of over 11,000 stamps. He goes on 'In the course of the evening a few well-chosen words of advice and encouragement were spoken to the boys in a homely way by the Rev. H. C. Dunning'. Shades of Samuel Smiles!

Like the earlier Mulready, the Jubilee envelope suffered from caricatures and I have one by the well-known comic artist, Harry Furniss, signed by him. It is well worth close examination and comparison with the original, which it closely resembles.

I also have in my possession two of the 'Tube Post' post-cards issued at South Kensington for 1d each, and some of the special cancellations used on envelopes and registered mail.

The whole forms a very useful side-line to my G.B. collection and is illustrative of the Victorian era to a high degree. The subject could very well form a further and fuller article in the *Bulletin* at a later date.

I hope the above is of interest, and would like to send my good wishes for the continued growth of the *Bulletin* to which I have been a subscriber since No. 1.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN L. SHORT

Maidstone, Kent

Dear Sir,

With reference to your correspondent J. W. Jenkin, Sutton Coldfield, in the letters column of the *Bulletin* for December, there is indeed a British Postmark Society, which was formed in 1958, and at present is limited to 400 members. The annual subscription is a modest 10s for which you receive a very useful Bulletin four times a year; displays etc. by members are held in London mainly, but recently a Midlands Group has been formed.

The Society members collect all types of G.B. Postmarks from Pre-stamp and Postal History to Modern Machine Marks, Slogans, and Hand Stamps, and in fact the study of 20th century G.B. postal markings is probably covered by a large proportion of members, and the collecting and recording of information is carried on in all parts of the country, and this is collated and presented in lists and articles in the quarterly Bulletin.

Also the B.P.S. publish the catalogue of Slogans, and other useful books on Machine Marks, Hand Stamps, etc., etc.

The Secretary is Mr Pearson, 42 Corrance Road, London SW2

Yours sincerely,

JOHN WORRALL

Shepton Mallet, Somerset

Dear Sir,

I found the letters in the December issue of the *Philatelic Bulletin* very interesting. I expect they will keep being so. Here is another and I hope you have room to publish it.

My point concerns definitives and it all started when there was speculation about

issuing a new definitive set (which will look very colourful and attractive). I set about collecting together as many of the old type as possible and this naturally brought me to the regional issues. I asked myself, 'Will they issue new style regionals?'

Also, when I thought more carefully, I realised that these are stamps for each separate region of Great Britain with the exception of England. You might argue that England has its stamps in the shape of the general definitives, but the other regions have these generals *as well as* their own regionals. And the old definitives were even more general than the new ones, having the emblems of the four main regions on them.

So I ask two questions which I hope will be answered in the *Bulletin*.

1. Will regionals be issued in the new style?
2. Will England be issued with its own regionals in the near future?

Yours faithfully,

M. W. J. BENNETT

Crowthorne, Berks.

(When the present regional stamps are replaced they will bear the same Queen's head as the definitive range but there are no plans for an English regional issue at present. Ed.)

Special Handstamps

'Stampex Norwich' will be used at Norwich 24th and 25th May, 1968. Circular design with motif of Norwich Cathedral in centre.

'Birth of Teesside, Stockton on Tees TEESSIDE' will be used 1st April, 1968 at Middlesbrough. Rectangular design with STORK motif in centre.

'43rd Annual Conference Rotary International GB & I' will be in use at Blackpool 4th to 7th April, 1968. Circular design with Rotary International badge as central motif.

'Opening of New Methodist Church Cheadle Hulme' will be used at Stockport 2nd March, 1968. Rectangular design with motif of man on a horse on left hand side.

First Day of Issue – Machine Cancellation

To obtain our special first day handstamps it is necessary to have the full set of the new stamp issue affixed to the cover.

There are, however, an increasing number of firms who use a first day cover as a publicity aid and for their benefit we will accept covers which bear sufficient stamps to cover either the letter post or printed paper rate.

Provided that at least 1,000 items are posted we will cancel the stamp/s with a special first day of issue *machine* cancellation, a specimen of which is shown. Advance notice is required for arrangements to be made and your local Head Postmaster will be glad to give full details of the service.



High Value Old Definitives

The high value new definitive stamps will go on sale later this year. Before this, however, we shall see some interesting variations in the present range. Dates given are as near as we can estimate.

£1 The unwatermarked, uncoated stamp is now available.

10s There is about four months' stock of the current watermarked stamps. On the exhaustion of this, unwatermarked, uncoated stamps will be issued.

5s There is about four months' stock of the current watermarked stamps. On the exhaustion of this, unwatermarked, uncoated stamps will be issued.

2s 6d There is about four months' stock of the current watermarked stamps. After this, watermarked, coated stamps will be issued, and stock should last about 1-1½ months.

Depending on the date of exhaustion of these, unwatermarked, uncoated stamps may be issued until the new definitive appears.

The reason for all these variations is the need to use up uncoated or watermarked paper before the appearance of the new definitives.

New Gum for Stamps

A synthetic adhesive is to replace gum arabic on postage stamps in the near future.

Gum arabic, which comes from acacia trees in Africa, has become increasingly difficult to obtain, and stocks are running short.

Over the past few years Harrison and Sons, in conjunction with the Post Office, have been making extensive tests and trials to find a synthetic adhesive to take its place. Finally, a completely non-toxic, tasteless, odourless and practically invisible substance, Polyvinol Alcohol, has been found to be satisfactory. Delivered in powder form and processed to a Harrison-developed formula, it will be applied in liquid form to the stamp paper in the normal way.

In spite of its name the new adhesive has practically no taste and is even less visible on the back of stamps than the present adhesive.

Stamps bearing the new adhesive will be introduced when stocks of the old type are exhausted.

Conditions

The Philatelic Bureau, 2-4 Waterloo Place, Edinburgh 1, will be pleased to supply any number of stamps shown on its current stock list, subject to stocks being available, in mint condition only. For stamps not shown on the list, enquiries should be made of a stamp dealer.

We do not guarantee to supply stamps from particular cylinders or plates, position or cylinder blocks, particular editions of books or books with selected watermark.

Stamps are NOT supplied cancelled to order. Remittances, which *must* be sent with orders should be made payable to 'GPO Philatelic Bureau' and should include a handling charge of 6d for orders under 10s, and 3s 9d for orders of 10s and over (9d and 4s respectively for orders to Overseas Countries, other than the Commonwealth). For orders to be sent by Air Mail the cost of the airmail postage should be added. Stamps are not accepted as payment for orders.

Articles and illustrations appearing in the *Bulletin* are the copyright of the Postmaster General. Requests to reproduce this material, which should be addressed to the Editor, Philatelic Bulletin, OOD/CSD, GPO Headquarters, London EC1 will receive prompt and careful consideration. Annual subscription, 12 issues 7s 6d including postage by surface mail to anywhere in the world, or airmail to anywhere in Europe. For Air mail to countries outside Europe, subscription 25s 6d.

Subscriptions should be sent to the Philatelic Bureau, 2-4 Waterloo Place, EDINBURGH 1.

Printed in Great Britain by Westerham Press Ltd. for the General Post Office, St. Martin's-le-Grand, LONDON EC1.