BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The magazine for collectors of UK stamps

VOLUME 52 NUMBER 5 | JANUARY 2015 | £1.50

Inventive Britain • Working Sail • Post & Go calendar



On 6 January, new stamps celebrate 150 years of Lewis Carroll's children's story. But who was the real Alice...

JOHN HOLMAN DIARY • THEME CHURCHILL • MARTYN FRY PRINTING • WIN STAMP PACKS

Issues and withdrawals



Front page: hand-coloured-photograph by Lewis Carroll circa 1862. Portrait of Alice Liddell dressed as a street urchin. The New York Public Library, Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature, Owen D. Young Collection.

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6 January	**Issue** Alice in Wonderland: Stamps (2 x 1st Class, 2 x 2nd Class, 2 x 81p, 2 x £1.28, 2 x £1.47), Stamp Book (4 x 1st, 2 x Special Stamps), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (10 in set). Preview on page 111 December *Bulletin*; featured on page 143.
7 January	**Withdrawal** Classic Children's TV: Stamps (12 x 1st Class), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (12 in set).
20 January	**Issue** Smilers® Refresh: Miniature Sheet (8 x 1st Class), (12 x Smilers® stamps, Year of Celebrations). Presentation Pack, Generic Sheet, Stamp Cards (9 in set), Stamp Book. Preview on page 117, December 2014 *Bulletin*).
24 January	**Issue** Winston Churchill Coin Cover: £5 Coin (with 1st Class Churchill Stamp from Prime Ministers issue). Preview on page 102, December *Bulletin*; featured on page 150.
4 February	**Withdrawal** Working Horses: 2 x 1st Class, 2 x 88p, 2 x £1.28 Stamps, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (6 in set)
18 February	**Issue** Post & Go Working Sail: machine-vended stamps, 6 designs, available in Collector Packs. Preview on page 137.
19 February	**Issue** Inventive Britain: Stamps (2 x 1st Class, 2 x 81p, 2 x £1.28, 2 x £1.47), Presentation Pack, Prestige Stamp Book, Stamp Cards (8 in set). Preview on page 134.
20 February	**Withdrawal** Classic Locomotives of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales: Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards. Stamp Books remain on sale until further notice.
20 February	**Withdrawal** Great British Railways No1: Stamps (2 x 1st, 2 x 97p), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards.
20 February	**Withdrawal** Classic Locomotives of the UK PSB.
20 February	**Withdrawal** Football Heroes 2 Retail Stamp Book featuring Dave Mackay and John Charles stamps.

To order philatelic items, including those listed above, contact Royal Mail online at www.royalmail.com/stamps or at Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Telephone order line (08.30 to 17.00 Monday to Friday): 03457 641 641. From overseas: +44 131 316 7483. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15

Contents



A tale of wonder As the Alice in Wonderland issue is released, we tell the extraordinary story behind the world's best-loved children's book **143**

Issues... Ring in the first fresh issues of the New Year.
...and Withdrawals Remember to catch some old favourites coming off sale **130**

Correspondence Airing and sharing your views on modern UK collecting, one reader sets us straight with the Glasgow Police! **132**



Royal Mail Update A Special anniversary, stamps on vans, a charming book... and a request for your vote in the 2014 poll **133**

British brain power From catseyes to the worldwide web: a tribute to great British innovation in our preview of the Inventive Britain issue **134**



Stamps for sail All aboard for your preview voyage around the perfectly ship-shape Working Sail Post & Go set **137**

The *British Philatelic Bulletin* is published monthly by Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● Editor: William Doherty ● Price £1.50 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets (see opposite) ● **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK and Europe, £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Tallents House (address opposite) ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95, available by post from Royal Mail Tallents House ● Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps – available on annual subscription from Royal Mail Tallents House: £12.95 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world ● Stamp images © Royal Mail. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or parts is prohibited without prior permission of the Editors ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Zenith Print & Packaging Ltd ● **ISSN** 0953 8119 ● Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales, No.4138203. Registered office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ

Stamp Scene Time to get out your diaries and take notes from John Holman on the philatelic year ahead **139**

Downing treat January's new Coin Cover leads a parade of stamps that pay tribute to Churchill **150**

Meet the press Royal Mail expert Martyn Fry launches his series on stamp printing **152**

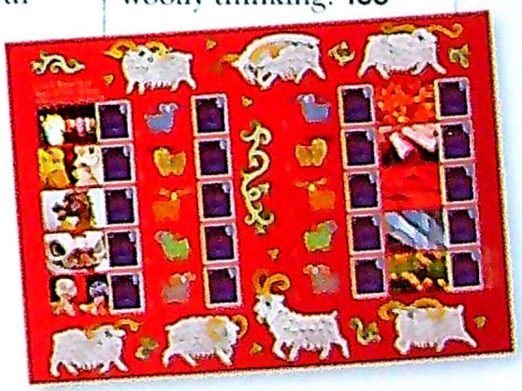


This Month in History David Gentleman's British Ships set **154**

Offshore latest News from the islands **156**

Cover story A tribute to the Battle of the River Plate in WWII **157**

Ewe will like this Your first quiz in the Year of the Sheep allows no woolly thinking! **158**



Correspondence



Check out this charity cover

In anticipation of the 40th anniversary of the UK's only charity stamp issue on 22 January 1975, I thought readers might be interested in this cover signed by all the then Charity Commissioners. It is owned by my sister who was employed by the Charity Commission at the time.

B Knox, by email

We are happy to show this interesting 1975 cover, as many *Bulletin* readers are cover collectors. As part of our celebration of 50 years of Royal Mail Special Stamps, we are currently working on plans to bring back the covers section of the magazine – with up to four more pages to help us bring the latest philatelic covers to your notice.

Kate Shaw, Publishing Editor

Law and wrong order

I would like to clarify a point made during your recent correspondence about the Prime Minister-themed stamp quiz that appeared in October *Bulletin*.

On the November issue letters page, reader Dave Dorgan pointed out that the Robert Peel stamp should not be matched with the stamp celebrating the 150th anniversary of the formation of the Metropolitan Police in 1829, as the Duke of Wellington was PM then, not Peel.

The *Bulletin* response suggested that nonetheless Peel 'founded the first modern police force [ie the Metropolitan Police] when he was Home Secretary'.

In fact the Glasgow Police, created in 1800, was the first ever force in Britain. Peel would have been a 12-year-old schoolboy at the time!

David Bryden, Royal Mail Philatelic Customer Services, Tallents House





You are right, David. The Glasgow force officially came into being when the Glasgow Police Act of 1800 received Royal Assent on 30 June 1800. That September, local merchant John Stenhouse was made Master of Police and he started to recruit, appointing three sergeants and six other officers. After 175 years of service, the force was amalgamated into the newly created Strathclyde Police in 1975.

William Doherty, Royal Mail Editor



Happy New Year to all our readers!

Enclosed with this edition of the *Bulletin* is your voting form to choose your favourite stamps and stamp issues of 2014. Your opinions are very important to us and we are hoping for a record number of responses this year, so please do us proud! Take part and you can enter our prize draw for your chance to win a fantastic 2014 Royal Mail Year Book. The closing date is 30 January 2015.

Royal Mail Update New Year, new Cerutti! William Doherty reveals philatelic firsts for 2015



Cheers for Cerutti The new Cerutti 10 colour press at the recently opened International Security Printers plant at Wolverhampton has completed its debut job – producing the Alice in Wonderland Retail Stamp Book (above). Available from 6 January, the stamp book includes the two First Class designs of the new special issue and the Machin vermillion First Class definitive stamps, which are the first of the year to include the M15L MCIL date code •

Alice in Wonderland Retail Stamp Book – Specifications

Issue date	6 January 2015
Book format	4 x Royal Mail Red 1st Class definitives, 1 x Alice in Wonderland 'Drink Me', 1 x Alice in Wonderland 'The White Rabbit's House'
1st Class stamp format	Portrait 20mm x 24mm
Special stamp format	Square 35mm x 35mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Gravure

A moving collection *Bulletin* readers often tell us that they wish we could see more Special Stamps used on everyday post. So you will be happy to hear that many of this year's new stamp issues will appear on Royal Mail vans, to raise awareness of the Special Stamp Programme. Around 1,500 vans across the country will sport supersized images of the stamps, printed on adhesive vinyls. Vans have already taken to the roads liveried with the Christmas 2014 stamps – and this month watch out for Alice in Wonderland.

'This is the first in what will be an ongoing campaign to feature our Special Stamp Programme across the country using our familiar red postal vans,' said Stamps and Collectibles Managing Director Andrew Hammond when the campaign launched. 'The size and reach of our fleet should help create high levels of public awareness.'

Stamps on vans are set to appear in 26 towns and cities including Liverpool, Sheffield, London, Glasgow, Belfast, Cardiff, Plymouth and Leicester •

Below: this framed stamp is one of the special products released with the new Alice in Wonderland issue. To see the complete range go to www.royalmail.com/alice



Stamp history in store The year ahead has two important anniversaries that will be a focus of attention in the Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles department: the 175th anniversary of the world's first adhesive postage stamp, the Penny Black, which is to be marked with commemorative Miniature Sheets, and the 50th anniversary of Royal Mail Special Stamps.

Another exciting prospect – unmissable for stamp collectors – is the Court of Honour at Europhilex in May, which brings together displays of outstanding philatelic material. Find out more in John Holman's Stamp Scene on page 139, and watch for further details in future editions of the *Bulletin* •

Brains of Britain A new stamp set pays tribute to history-changing innovations by great British boffins – from Catseyes to the World Wide Web

British genius is celebrated with a fascinating new stamp issue showcasing world-changing inventions made in this country during the last 100 years. Inventive Britain features a huge range of innovations, from stainless steel and Catseyes to a code-breaking computer, fibre optics and the World Wide Web. Also in the issue, out on 19 February, is a Presentation Pack, Prestige Stamp Book and Stamp Cards. The set features a historic overview of British invention written by Dr Lesley Paterson of the Royal Academy of Engineering.



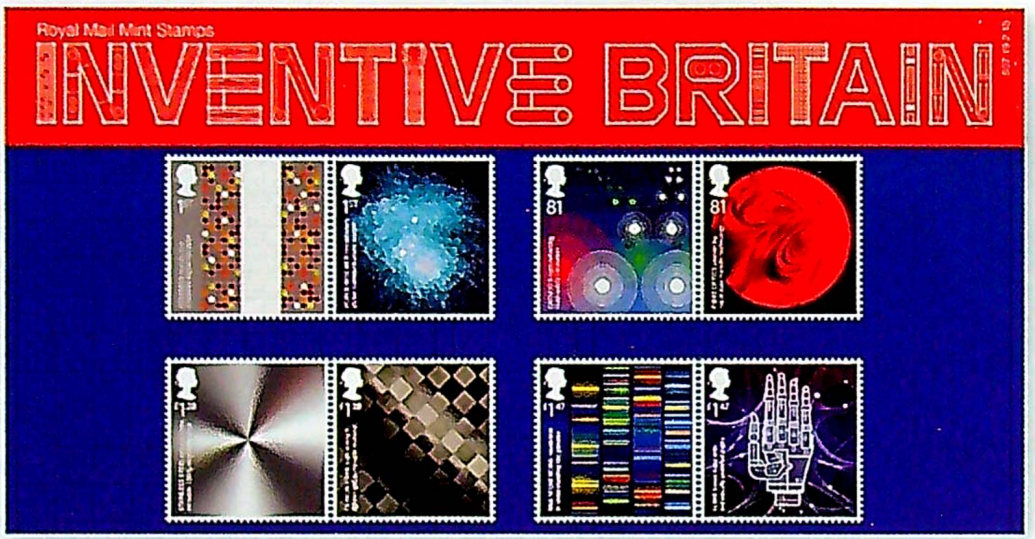
FD1505-NP

Above: Harlow First Day postmark

Right: the Presentation Pack is designed on graph paper style grid. The CAD-style typography incorporates aspects of the inventions in the lettering

Stamp by stamp The Inventive Britain stamps come in a range of values – First Class, 81p, £1.28 and £1.47.

Colossus The Colossus decryption computer was created by Post Office engineer Tommy Flowers. By decoding Nazi communications, the Bletchley Park-based Colossus uncovered enemy plans in the run-up to D-Day. The interceptions contributed to the success of the Allied assault on Normandy and helped to shorten the Second World War. *First Class*



Inventive Britain Stamps – Prices	
Stamp set, Code AS66A	£8.36
Presentation Pack, Code AP398	£8.90
First Day Cover Stamps/overseas, Code AF389	£10.51/£8.76
Prestige Stamp Book FDC/overseas Code HF065	£3.87/£3.23
Prestige Stamp Book, Code YB056	£14.60
Stamp Cards (8 in set), Code AQ217	£3.60

Inventive Britain Stamps – Specifications	
Date of issue	19 February
Number of stamps	Eight
Design	GBH
Stamp format	Square
Stamp size	35mm x 35mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Number per sheet	30/60
Perforations	14.5 x 14.5
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA

Acknowledgements: Colossus, Catseyes, Stainless Steel, Carbon Fibre, DNA Sequencing and i-limb stamp imagery created by GBH, 2015 © Royal Mail Group Ltd 2015; World Wide Web – Internet blog map image © Matthew Hurst/Science Photo Library; Fibre Optics – CGI illustration by Gecko Animation Limited; Catseyes is a registered trade mark of Reflecting Roadstuds Ltd; i-limb is a registered trade mark of Touch EMAS Limited t/a Touch Bionics.



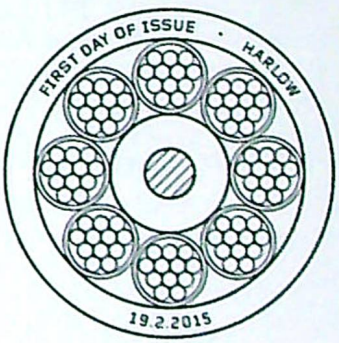
World Wide Web In the 1980s and 1990s software expert Tim Berners-Lee developed the technologies, including HTML and HTTP, that form the basis of the World Wide Web – the global collection of linked resources we now use to learn, communicate and be entertained. *First Class*

Catseyes Four rubber-clad reflective glass beads on an iron base: road surfacing contractor Percy Shaw's simple but ingenious 1934 design transformed road safety and has saved thousands of lives. *81p*

Fibre optics Charles Kao and George Hockham's 1966 research into data-carrying fibre optics – ultra-thin glass pipes transmitting pulses of laser light – led to the digital revolution. Today the internet, telecoms and cable TV are supported by a network of millions of kilometres of fibre optic cables. *81p*

Stainless steel Metallurgist Harry Brearley's chromium and steel fusion created the shiny, corrosion-resistant metal now used the world over. *£1.28*

Carbon fibre In the 1960s William Watt perfected his formula for this light but strong plastic used in spacecraft, golf clubs, cars and more. *£1.28* ▸

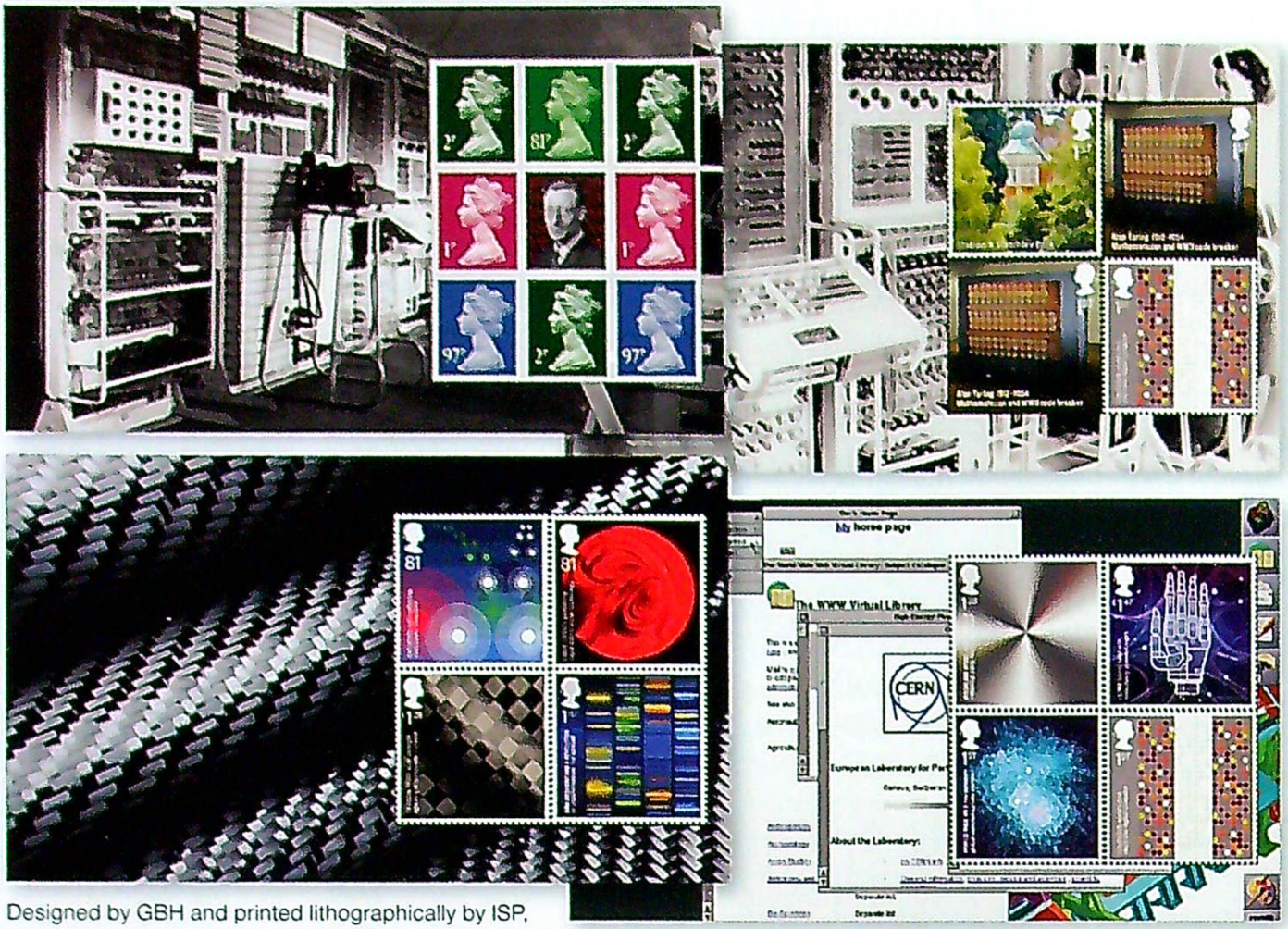


FD1505-PL



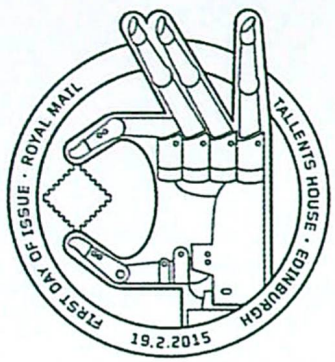
Above: the Inventive Britain alternative handstamp shows a fibre optic cable with the location Harlow, home to the laboratories where fibre optics were invented

Left: the Royal Mail First Day Cover envelope carries a graphic representation of the Union Flag, with CAD-style typography echoing that of the Presentation Pack



Designed by GBH and printed lithographically by ISP, the Inventive Britain Prestige Stamp Book has four panes: Top: Pane 1 – Mixed definitives, 2 x 1p, 3 x 2p, 1 x 81p, 2 x 97p. Above: Pane 3, all Inventive Britain stamps – Catseyes 81p, Fibre Optics 81p, Carbon Fibre £1.28, and DNA Sequencing £1.47

Top: Pane 2 – 1 x Colossus 1st Class Inventive Britain, 2 x Alan Turing 1st Class Britons of Distinction; 1 x Bletchley Park 1st Class UK A-Z. Above: Pane 4, all Inventive Britain stamps – Stainless Steel £1.28; i-limb £1.47; World Wide Web 1st Class; Colossus 1st Class



FD1505-TH

DNA sequencing Cambridge biochemist Dr Frederick Sanger pioneered a new method of mapping DNA, the chemical code in our cells containing the instructions for creating life-building proteins. The ability to sequence DNA is set to transform medicine and improve treatments. *£1.47*

i-limb This revolutionary bionic hand, invented by engineer David Gow, is moved by an internal computer that receives electronic signals from the brain via muscles in the arm. *£1.47*

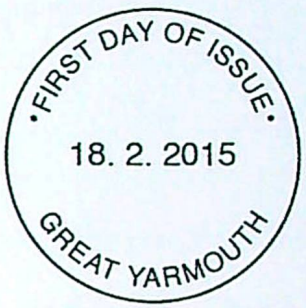
Also in the issue The Prestige Stamp Book features some of the new stamps as well as the Alan Turing stamp from the 2012 Britons of Distinction and the Station X Bletchley Park stamp from the 2012 UK A-Z: Part 2 set.

Orders for Serviced First Day Covers must reach Royal Mail by 19 February. Send stamped self-addressed envelopes on the day of issue to Tallents House (address on page 130) for the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark, shown left. It features a drawing of an i-limb holding a stamp. The alternative pictorial postmark, shown on page 135, has a fibre optic cable with the location Harlow, home to the laboratories where fibre optics were invented •

Read more about science on stamps in next month's British Philatelic Bulletin

Water colours February's Post & Go's celebrate the artists who recorded Britain's maritime history by painting its cargo and fishing fleet

While grand artists painted vast, noble seascapes or the flame and glory of famous naval battles, the 'pierhead' painters paid tribute to the everyday – but no less important – lives of those who worked the ocean and braved its dangers. Now the new Post & Go Working Sail set commemorates the marine portraits created by these amateur yet passionate folk artists: the pictures of the fishing boats and merchant vessels operating out of Britain's ports in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



FD1504-NP

Above: First day postmark with the coastal location of Great Yarmouth
Below: Post & Go Working Sail Collector Pack

Released on 18 February, Working Sail is an exciting departure for Post & Go pictorial stamps, which have so far featured wildlife and natural history. A further maritime Post & Go set launches at Autumn Stampex, and an issue on heraldic animals will be launched in May.

A Collector Pack is also available (shown right), containing the six different designs overprinted first class. Inside the Pack is an informative insert card, with thumbnail biographies of the painters behind each of the six pictures on the stamps. Many of them were self-taught and relied on their technical knowledge of ships to create very accurate artistic representations.

The six First Class stamps show a variety of vessels, including fishing smacks, a herring drifter, a sloop and a pilot boat... ▸



Post & Go British Working Sail – Prices	
Stamp Set	£3.72
First Day Cover UK	£4.94
First Day Cover overseas	£4.12

Post & Go British Working Sail – Specifications	
Date of issue	18 February 2015
Number of stamps	Six
Stamp design	Osborne Ross
Original painters	R Chappell, JW Green, A Harwood, H Lawson, G Race, G Ramsey
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	56mm x 25mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Gravure
Perforations	Kiss die-cut simulated
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	Self-adhesive



FD1504-PL



FD1504-TH

Falcon, 1897, by J W Green (1863-1951). Enthusiastic amateur artist John Wilson Green painted and drew boats at Fleetwood, Lancashire, where he was a well-known local personality. Green worked in ink, watercolour and oil. The *Falcon* was a pilot boat.

Briar, 1907, by Alexander Harwood (1873-1943). The painter of the *Briar*, a herring drifter, was a fish porter for most of his life. He painted hundreds of pictures of Aberdeen trawlers, using watercolour, oil and gouache.

Harry, date unknown, by Reuben Chappell (1870-1940). An oil and watercolour painter, Chappell made his living from selling his work to seamen in Goole, his birthplace, and later in Cornwall. *Harry* was a Humber sloop.

Margaret, 1890, by Henry Lawson (1872-1966). As a teenager, Lawson made extra cash by painting boats. *Margaret* was his father's first vessel and was used for both line-fishing and drift-netting.

Stag, date unknown, attributed to George Race (1872-1957), a Cleethorpes artist who specialised in painting boats like this Grimsby smack as they came into dock. He would sell his paintings to sailors before their ships left harbour again.

Nell Morgan, 1886, by G Ramsey. Little is known about Ramsey but he is understood to have been part of the Norfolk pierhead painter community between 1856 and 1889. He created many excellent pictures of ships, including *Nell Morgan*, the fishing smack on the stamp.

Orders for serviced first day covers should reach Royal Mail by 18 February. Send stamped self-addressed envelopes on the day of issue to Tallents House (address on page 130) for the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark. The non-pictorial alternative postmark has the location Great Yarmouth, a once-famous port for herring fishing. The pictorial alternative mark shows a ship's wheel •

2015 Post & Go Exhibition Programme

In a change to previous programmes, Royal Mail Post & Go will be attending PTS and ABPS-affiliated shows in the UK and selected international venues

Post & Go machines at 2015 exhibitions

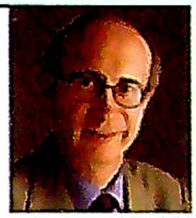
Date	Location	Reel stamp designs
18-21 February	Spring Stampex	Working Sail, Union Flag and Machin Smilers®
17-18 April	86th Scottish Congress Perth	Union Flag and Machin Smilers®
7-9 May	Essen, Germany	Union Flag and Machin Smilers®
13-16 May	Europhilex London	Heraldic Beasts, Union Flag and Machin Exhibition Sheet
4 July	MIDPEX	To be confirmed
14-19 August	FIP Singapore	Union Flag and Machin Smilers® (GB versions available from Tallents House)
16-19 September	Autumn Stampex	The Sea, Union Flag and Machin Smilers®

NB Exhibitions may be added or removed and stamp listings may vary.

Static machines other than those in Post Offices

At the British Museum & Archive is Machine A001 with the static location identifier of 'The B.P.M.A.'.
At the National Museum of the Royal Navy is Machine A002, with the static location identifier 'The NMRN' •

Stamp Scene John Holman keeps you posted on events and activities in the philatelic world



UK diary dates

9 January Strand Stamp Fair, Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1, 9am to 4pm. Information: 020 8946 4480, www.stampshows.net.
10 January National Philatelic Society meeting: Material from NPS Archive, Ted Halliday and David Alford. At the Welsh Centre, 157-163 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8UE, 2.45pm (members' auction 12.45pm).
10 January Telford Stamp, Card and Coin Fair, Belmont Hall, Wellington Centre, Telford, TF1 1LU, 10am to 3pm. Free entry, good range of stalls, free valuations, buy and sell. Enquiries: Bob Hemmings, 01694 720192.
16-17 January York Racecourse Fair, The Grandstand, York YO23 1EX. With 95-plus stamps dealers. Admission free. Information: 020 8946 4489.
24 January Manchester & District Philatelic Traders Association Stamp Fair, Sale Grammar School, Marsland Road, Sale M33 3NH, 10am to 4pm.
31 January GB Philatelic Society displays: Postage Dues, Patrick Frost, 11am; Sheffield Postal History, Frank Walton, 2.15pm. At Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1. Enquiries: P Tanner 01753 887755.
6-7 February Liverpool 2015 stamp fair, Liner Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool L3 5QB. Friday 10.30am to 5pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm. Details and free programme: Fred O'Reilly, 01226 765069 or 07774 524518; Terry Barnett, 0151 486 2610, 07762 360575 or terryhuntsc@tiscali.co.uk.
13 February Strand Stamp Fair – details as 9 January above.
18-21 February Spring Stampex, Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1 (more details below).
19 February Royal Philatelic Society London displays by GB Collectors Club of the USA, RPSL, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1, 1pm. Non-members welcome by prior arrangement – phone 020 7486 1044 •

International exhibitions

This year's major international exhibitions will be taking place in London (Europhilex, 13 to 16 May) and Singapore (14 to 19 August). For information about the Singapore show, contact Peter Cockburn: pfcockburn@aol.com, 01444 811004.

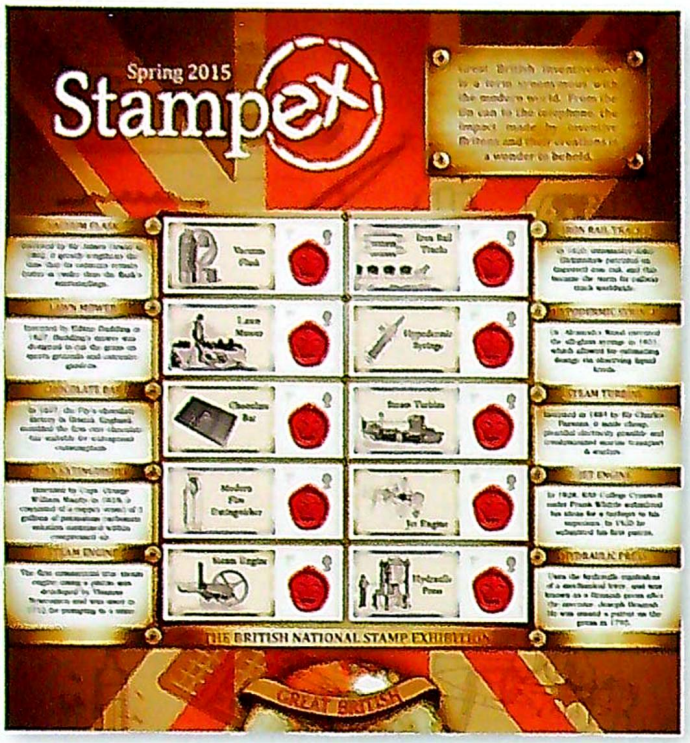
The Court of Honour at Europhilex will include some outstanding items representing significant highlights of postal history, including: the Royal Charter of 1635, signed by King Charles I, that opened up the 'Royal Mail' for use by the public; the original sketch by Sir Rowland Hill in 1839 that became the basis for the design of the Penny Black and Twopence Blue; a Mulready letter sheet used on 6 May 1840; and the incredible 'Atlantic Letter' – this is a Mulready envelope carrying Penny Blacks and Twopence Blues and posted on 15 May 1840, the first item bearing stamps to be sent across the Atlantic.

Also on show will be hollowed-out pieces of driftwood used as mailboats to send messages from the remote island of St Kilda, off the west coast of Scotland, and a letter flown by Alcock and Brown across the Atlantic in 1919. And do not miss the letter carried by Neil Armstrong, Edwin 'Buzz' ▸

Aldrin and Michael Collins aboard Apollo 11 on the first journey to the Moon. For more on the Court of Honour and the London 2015 exhibition, visit www.london2015.net/specialexhibition.

Spring Stampex

From 18 to 21 February, Spring Stampex takes place, as usual, at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1. The event will include a display marking the 60th anniversary of the Great Britain Philatelic Society. Royal Mail will have its usual sales stand and Post & Go area. New special and Post & Go stamps will be issued during the exhibition (see Previews on pages 134 and 137).



The Stampex Customised Sheet entitled Great British Inventions That Changed The World, will be on sale at the exhibition information stand. The Sheet bears ten First Class crown seal Smilers® stamps with adjoining labels showing a vacuum flask, lawn mower, chocolate bar, fire extinguisher, steam engine, iron rail tracks, hypodermic syringe, steam turbine, jet engine and hydraulic press. Stampex enquiries: email info@philatelic-traders-society.co.uk.

2015 is an important year for philatelic anniversaries, which will be reflected in exhibitions across the world. This year will not only mark the 175th anniversary of the world's first adhesive postage stamps, but also the 125th anniversary of the first international stamp exhibition in London. Stanley Gibbons Ltd commemorates three important anniversaries – 175 years since the birth of Edward Stanley Gibbons, 150 years since his first catalogue (price list) was published, and 125 years since the first edition of the *Stanley Gibbons Monthly Journal* (now *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*) •

Stamp-related exhibitions and events

The main anniversary of 2014 was of course the centenary of the start of the First World War (and also the 75th anniversary of the beginning of the Second World War). The first in a series of Royal Mail stamp issues commemorating the Great War was released on 28 July. An exhibition, The First World War and the Bank of England, is at the Bank of England Museum, London EC4 until March 2015. It is open Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm. Information: 020 7601 5545. For details of numerous local events and exhibitions commemorating the First and Second World Wars, see the Imperial War Museums website at www.iwm.org.uk.

Sherlock Holmes stories featured on five stamps issued in 1993, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle appeared on an Eminent Britons stamp of 2009, and Peter Cushing starred as Holmes on a Great Britons stamp of 2013. An exhibition, Sherlock Holmes: The Man Who Never Lived and Will Never Die, is on at the Museum of London until 12 April 2015 (admission charge applies).

Tower Bridge has featured on a number of stamps, most notably the first class in the 2002 Bridges set. An exhibition of paintings and photographs

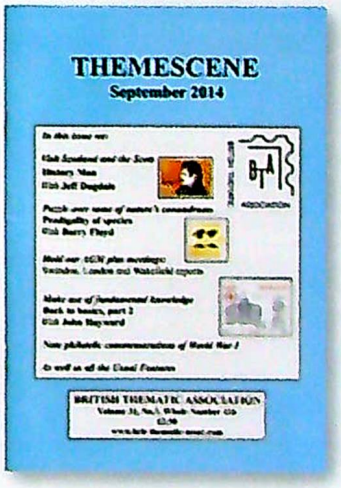
to mark the bridge's 120th anniversary can be seen at the Guildhall Art Gallery in London until 15 January. See www.cityoflondon.gov.uk or phone 020 7606 3030 for details.

A series of events and exhibitions mark the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta during 2015. An exhibition called Law Liberty Legacy at the British Library in London will display the Magna Carta along with its American descendants the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. The exhibition will run from 13 March until 1 September (there is an admission charge). Visit www.bl.uk/magna-carta for information and to see one of the four surviving copies of the Magna Carta. On 2 June Royal Mail is to issue a set of special stamps marking the Magna Carta anniversary •

Society journals

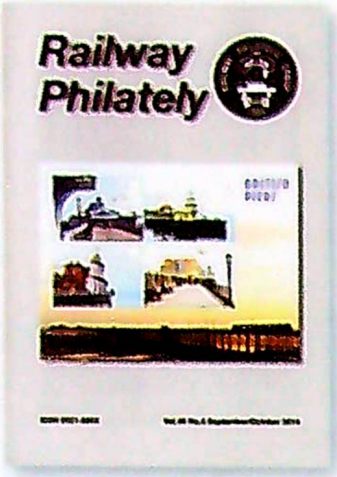
Four erudite articles on Victorian stamps and postal history appeared in the autumn issue of *The GB Journal* from the Great Britain Philatelic Society: Archer-perforated Stamps on Cover, by Ray Simpson; Registered Printed Matter, Letter from Jacob Perkins Regarding his Plate Hardening Patent, by Anthony Wicks; and Queen Victoria Penny Red: Renewal of the Perkins Bacon Contract 1856, from David Slattery. There are reviews of new books on British Presentation Packs and Ocean Penny Postage.

Sent out with *The GB Journal* is the more informal and digestible *GBPS Newsletter* with reports of society meetings and of the forthcoming Diamond Jubilee Festival to mark the Society's 60th anniversary. The meetings reports include illustrations of pages from the displays, which cover a wide range of subjects and are of a high standard. Potential members are welcome to attend a Society meeting or visit the GBPS stand at Spring Stampex for details of membership. The subject of the meeting on 14 March will be Penny Reds Explained, with displays by Bill Barrell and Mike Williams. Enquiries to: Peter Tanner on 01753 887755 or email petertannerHS13@talktalk.net. Membership of the Great Britain Philatelic Society costs £25 UK, £27 Europe, £33 Rest of World airmail (or £27 by seamail).



The September issue of *Themescene*, the journal of the British Thematic Association (BTA), includes features on stamps honouring Sir Walter Scott, Prodigality of Species (marvels of nature), Symbols of Peace and World War I. John Hayward continues with his Back to Basics series, this time dealing with perforations and perfins. Lise Whittle provides a useful Just4Kids section, asking adult readers to photocopy and pass on to youngsters. Recent GB special handstamps are illustrated, and there are reports of a members' meeting in Wakefield and a joint meeting with the Guild of St Gabriel, the thematic group for collectors of religious stamps. The magazine, edited by Wendy Buckle, is an interesting read. For details about the BTA see www.brit-thematic-assoc.com.

The US equivalent of the BTA is the American Topical Association (ATA), which publishes *Topical Time*. The September/October issue includes articles on Ten Largest Castles in the World: UNESCO World Heritage Sites, 'Tiny Trains' (small images of railways on stamps), World War I commemoratives, as well as many reports of ATA activities and those of its numerous chapters and study units. For more about the ATA, visit ▸



www.americantopicalassn.org or write to: ATA Office, PO Box 8, Carterville Il. 62918-0008, USA.

The September/October issue of *Railway Philately*, journal of the Railway Philatelic Group (RPG), is the last edited by Fred Taylor after 19 successful years. The front cover features the British Piers Miniature Sheet, which shows a train on Southend Pier. Articles cover steam locomotives in India, 1891-style railway letter stamps, parcel post labels with RSO postmarks, Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway and Wirral railway parcel and letter stamps. Keith Downing provides his usual excellent coverage of recent issues depicting railways, this time looking at stamps from some 28 countries. The RPG annual UK subscription is £16, which should be sent to Mrs P Peters, 81 Kirriemuir Ave, Glasgow G52 3DP. The Group has recently published a new edition of the *Great Britain & Ireland Railway Letter Stamps 1957-2014* catalogue, listing and pricing the colourful issues of the heritage railways. As well as true railway letter stamps, it also includes many cinderella items produced by railways and others, which are popular with many collectors. The catalogue, edited and updated by Frank J Wilson, is available from Keith Downing, 16 Caves Lane, Bedford MK40 3DR, price £20, postage UK £2.50, Europe and Rest of World surface mail £7, and Rest of World airmail £11 (remittances payable to Railway Philatelic Group). Customers in Europe may send 35 euros in notes.

The Autumn 2014 Newsletter of the British Royal Portraits Stamp Group lists new issues featuring the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince George as well as issues depicting Queen Victoria, George V and Emperor Napoleon of France, King Boris III of Bulgaria and King Siaosi Tupou V of Tonga. For information about the Group contact Allan Rendle: 23 More Close, St Paul's Court, London W14 9BN, allanrendle@hotmail.com •

Collect British Stamps

The 2015 edition of *Stanley Gibbons Collect British Stamps* has recently been published, covering all British issues from the Penny Black to the 2014 Christmas issue. Costing £14.95, it is available from Royal Mail Tallents House as well as from the Stanley Gibbons Strand shop and by mail order from Stanley Gibbons Ltd, Parkside, Ringwood, Hants BH24 3SH •

New state-of-the-art printworks

HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh recently toured the new factory of International Stamp Printers (ISP) in Valiant Way, Wolverhampton.



They were shown round by Managing Directors Paul White and Ian Brigham, saw the stamp production process and met members of staff before The Queen opened the factory. Royal Mail's Martyn Fry was present and a report will feature in a future edition of the *Bulletin*, concluding his series on stamp printing which begins on page 152.

ISP's new Cerutti 10 colour press at Wolverhampton was first used to produce the Alice in Wonderland Retail Stamp Book, Smilers® Book, and 6 x First Class standard Retail Stamp Books •

© Express & Star

A tale of Wonder

As new stamps celebrate the 150th anniversary of Lewis Carroll's masterpiece *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, we reveal the true story behind one of the world's best-loved children's tales





Left: Lewis Carroll's photograph of Alice Liddell aged six and dressed as an urchin. The image was hand-coloured by Carroll

A BLAZING summer afternoon, 4 July 1862. Alice Pleasance Liddell is ten. Today she is on a picnic and boat trip, from Oxford to Godstow, with her sisters Lorina and Edith. Today she will hear a story that will change her life forever and those of millions of children around the world.

In charge of the boat is Oxford don Charles Dodgson, a friend of the family and a colleague of Alice's father Henry, Dean of Christ Church College. As the oars gently clip the sleepy River Thames, Dodgson ▸ *continues on page 146*

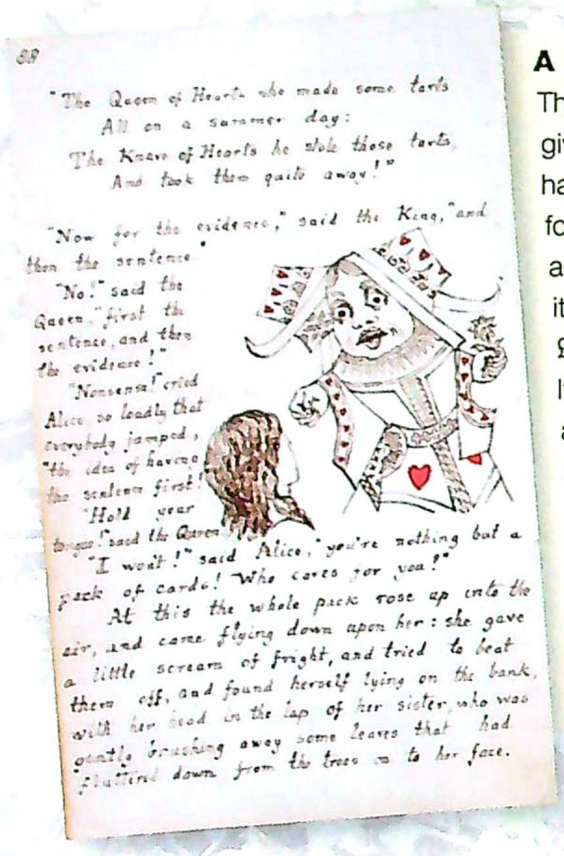


Philatelic fantasy Lewis Carroll's fantastical tale is retold with exquisite pictures in this month's Alice in Wonderland stamp issue

A Wonderful set

Royal Mail's Alice in Wonderland issue marks the 150th anniversary of the publication of Lewis Carroll's masterpiece. Released on 6 January, it features a Presentation Pack, Retail Stamp Book, Stamp Cards and Medal Cover (the cover is out on 5 March). For full philatelic details, see Preview on page 111 of December's *Bulletin*.




"The Queen of Hearts she made some tarts
All on a summer day:
The Knave of Hearts he stole those tarts,
And took them quite away!"

"Now for the evidence," said the King, "and then the sentence."

"No!" said the Queen, "first the sentence, and then the evidence!"

"Nonsense!" cried Alice so loudly that everybody jumped, "the idea of having the sentence first!"

"Hold your tongue!" said the Queen.

"I won't!" said Alice, "you're nothing but a pack of cards! Who cares for you?"

At this the whole pack rose up into the air, and came flying down upon her: she gave a little scream of fright, and tried to beat them off, and found herself lying on the bank, with her head in the lap of her sister, who was gently brushing away some leaves that had fluttered down from the trees on to her face.

A child's present becomes a nation's gift

The original longhand manuscript of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*, given to Alice Liddell by Charles Dodgson as a Christmas gift in 1864, has had a lively and interesting history. Alice, widowed in 1926, was forced to sell it to make ends meet. By 1928 an American book dealer had purchased it at Sotheby's for a then-record price of £15,400 (over £800,000 in today's money). It was resold in 1946 for $50,000, and again in 1948 to a group of Americans. Led by the Librarian of Congress, they brought the manuscript to England on the *RMS Queen Elizabeth* and presented it as a gift to the British people in thanks for their gallantry in the Second World War. It is now in the British Library ●





The White Rabbit On a sunny day by the river Alice spots a rabbit in a hurry. She pursues him down a strange rabbit hole that leads to a great adventure. *Second Class*



Drink Me Alice glimpses a garden beyond a tiny door she is too big to go through. She finds a bottle with a label saying 'drink me'. Alice drinks the potion, then shrinks... *First Class*



The White Rabbit's House The rabbit sends Alice to his house to fetch his gloves. She drinks from another bottle, grows huge, and is trapped in the tiny home. *First Class*



The Cheshire Cat With a big grin, the cat lounges in a tree and explains that everyone in Wonderland is mad. Then he vanishes, leaving his smile hanging eerily in the air. *81p*



A Mad Tea Party Alice attends a bewildering party with the Hatter, the Hare and the much-abused Dormouse, who is used as a cushion then dunked in the teapot. *81p*



The Queen Of Hearts Alice then meets the murderous Queen of Hearts and faces the chop for being cheeky. She is saved by the King of Hearts' gentle intervention. *£1.28*



The Game Of Croquet The mallets are flamingos, the balls are hedgehogs and the hoops are the Queen's soldiers gamely bending themselves in two. Alice finds the match a challenge as the equipment moves of its own accord. *£1.28*



Alice's Evidence Alice goes to the trial of the Knave of Hearts, who is accused of stealing the Queen's tarts. When the Queen demands sentencing first and verdict second, Alice says: 'Who cares for you? You're nothing but a pack of cards!' *£1.47*



A Pack of Cards Alice's jibe breaks Wonderland's spell. The courtiers rise as playing cards and fly at her. She awakes, the cards dead leaves her sister is brushing off her face. *£1.47*



Lewis Carroll's Stamp Case

Lewis Carroll was quite the fan of all things postal. He was a frequent correspondent with the Post Office on the postal service, on issues ranging from prices to regulations. He even designed a cape to protect letters from the elements when they were delivered.

Carroll also found that Post Office regulations relating to commissions on overdue postal orders were unclear. So he produced a questionnaire to seek others' views. But his big contribution to the postal genre is his Wonderland Postage-Stamp Case. This themed case features 12 stamp pockets to accommodate a range of values, from ½d to 1s. Each pocket can take up to six stamps, and there is an extra pocket for the 1d value because of its greater use.

The case's outer part features two images, which Carroll called 'pictorial surprises'. In one image Alice carries the Duchess's baby, which turns into a pig when the inner case is pulled out. In another picture, the same action makes the Cheshire Cat disappear.

In typical Carrollian prose, the writer says of the images: 'If that doesn't surprise you, why, I suppose you wouldn't be surprised if your own Mother-in-law suddenly turned into a Gyroscope!'



Accompanying the case is Carroll's pamphlet *Eight or Nine Wise Words About Letter-Writing*. In it he advises on writing legibly, how not to labour your point, and how to set up a 'letter register', to record one's correspondence ●

continued from page 143 ▸ entertains the girls with one of his improvised tales, as he has done on many similar jaunts. Today the story is different and singularly exciting for Alice. Charles Dodgson – Lewis Carroll's real name – has called the central character Alice, a little girl whose fall down a rabbit hole takes her on an extraordinary adventure. This magical summer day on the water, this 'golden afternoon' as Dodgson later called it, is to inspire one of the greatest ever children's books.

Literary legend Alice was so thrilled by the story (and her 'involvement') that she begged Dodgson to write it down. He did so, setting to work that evening. The tale started with Alice sitting by the river, just as Alice Liddell had only hours before, listening as Dodgson finished his tale during their picnic by a hayrick at Godstow. The rest is literary history, literary legend.

First Dodgson hand-wrote and illustrated the manuscript and called it *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*, presenting it to Alice in November 1864. It was inscribed: 'A Christmas Gift to a Dear Child in Memory of a Summer Day'. It fixed her fate. Throughout her long life Alice Liddell was associated with her little namesake. A year later Dodgson – writing under his rather more famous pen name Lewis Carroll – brought his story to the world, now called *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (a title thought up by Alice's father), it was published as a full-sized book, double the length of the original tale, with new mad, marvellous characters, including the Hatter, March Hare, the Duchess and the Cheshire Cat.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (famously illustrated by leading political cartoonist Sir John Tenniel), along with its 1871 sequel *Through The Looking-Glass*, has been in print ever since and translated into 150 languages. It has made cultural waves in every sense. Not least in the world of philately.

Lewis and Alice: two lives

27 January 1832 Charles Dodgson is born in Daresbury, Cheshire, one of 11 children. As a teenager he entertains his brothers and sisters with his homemade comics.

1846-1849 Dodgson attends Rugby School.

1852 Alice Pleasance Liddell is born in London.

1854 Dodgson (below) earns a First in mathematics at Oxford, and becomes a mathematics lecturer there.



25 April 1856 Dodgson meets Alice for the first time as she plays in the Deanery garden at Christ Church.

4 July 1862 Accompanied by an Oxford colleague, Dodgson takes Alice and her two sisters on a boat trip and thrills them with a story that will become *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.



November 1864 Dodgson presents his handwritten manuscript of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* to Alice (left).



Inspiring stamps, music and movies Alice and other characters have appeared in three GB stamp issues, all of which featured on memorable first day covers, and on stamps in many other countries (see page 149). Carroll himself produced the Wonderland Postage-Stamp Case and wrote his booklet treatise *Eight or Nine Wise Words About Letter-Writing* (see opposite page). He was also clearly very interested in postal service matters. He corresponded with the Post Office on postal rules, regulations and prices.

Alice's adventures have inspired more than 20 films and TV programmes. Bands from Jefferson Airplane to Pete Doherty's Babyshambles have composed songs alluding to the two Alice novels and their characters.

Perhaps surprisingly, Carroll, the man behind this crazy, chaotic, hugely influential legend of a book, with its extrovert, outrageous characters, was himself a shy, stammering maths don, the son of a clergyman who spent almost his entire (unmarried) life cloistered in the hermetically sealed world of Oxford academia. So how has this particular book endured, why so famous? And how did Carroll create such an astonishing work? Well, the two Alice books are eternal classics in part because of that sheer craziness, the situations as well as the characters...

The Cheshire Cat who disappears leaving only his mysterious smile; that merciless dictator the Queen of Hearts; the manic Hatter; a croquet game played with hedgehogs and flamingos; drugs that shrink and grow you; the trial of the Knave of Hearts, darkly farcical enough to make Kafka proud.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland also stands out from the crowd of fairy tale fiction because it so cleverly inverts the natural order of the reader's real world: there is no Victorian hierarchy of strict adults over seen-and-not-heard children. Instead the grown-ups here behave like kids. Alice, a child, must act like an adult to get a grip on the childish adults she meets.

This is also a story about change, about dealing with the anxieties of growing up. Alice must learn to confront a hostile adult world, however childish its inhabitants. There are indeed many layers to this tale.

So how did a reserved maths don, who preferred the company of children to their parents, create such a complex book that resonates with adults?

First, Dodgson had enjoyed a precocious imagination since he was a boy. As a teenager he would delight his siblings at their rectory home in Cheshire with his homemade comic books. (One was called *The Rectory Umbrella*.)

Second, children quite simply inspired this imagination. He often preferred the company of children to adults, and loved telling them stories. Dodgson once remarked that he had 'more child friends than I could possibly count ▸



Above: the song *White Rabbit* was a worldwide hit for Jefferson Airplane. It was written in 1966 by Grace Slick, who cited *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* as a major influence

Below: among the myriad movies and TV productions inspired by Carroll's Alice, Whoopi Goldberg's Cheshire Cat character is a favourite – in Nick Willing's 1999 film *Alice in Wonderland*



July 1865 *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is published under Dodgson's pen name Lewis Carroll. The first print run of 2,000 is shelved because the illustrator John Tenniel objects to the print quality.

December 1865 A new edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is released, carrying an 1866 date, and quickly becomes a bestseller.

1868 Carroll's family move to Guildford.

1871 *Through The Looking-Glass* is published.

1876 Dodgson's *The Hunting of the Snark* is published.

1880 Alice marries Reginald Hargreaves.

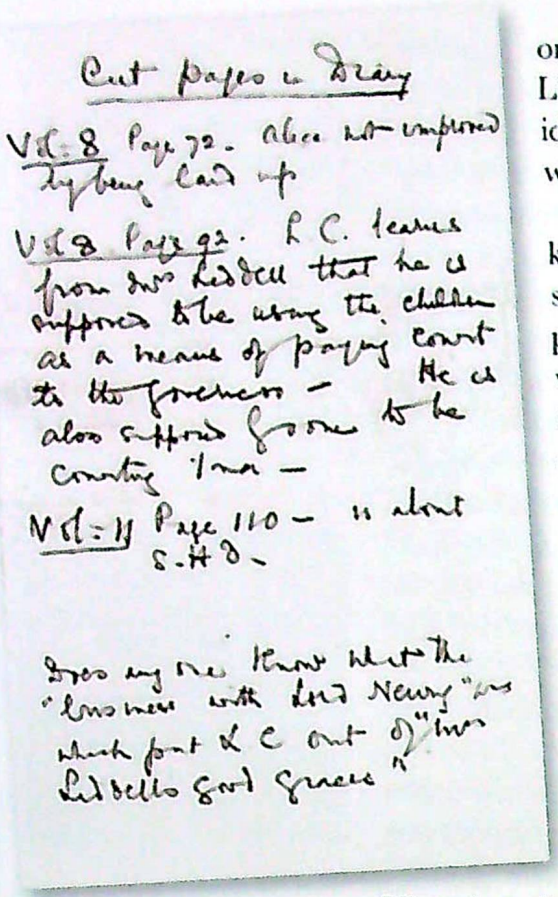


14 January 1898 Carroll dies at the family home in Guildford.

1932 Alice (shown left at 80) gets a doctorate from Columbia University for inspiring Carroll.

1934 Alice Liddell dies aged 82.




Cut pages in Diary

Vol 8 Page 72. Alice not employed by being Cut up

Vol 8 Page 92. L C. learns from Mrs Liddell that he is suppose to be using the children as a means of paying court to the governess — He is also supposed to be courting Ina —

Vol 11 Page 110 — is about S.H.D.

Does any one know what the "business with Lord Newry" was which part L C cut of "Mrs Liddells good graces"

Above: a document that summarises pages missing from Carroll's diary, part of the Dodgson family archive. The note about Vol 8, page 92 mentions rumours that Carroll is courting 'Ina' – Alice's older sister Lorina

on my fingers, even if I were a centipede.' And Alice Pleasance Liddell was his paradigm. He called her his 'ideal child friend'. So ideal, in fact, that when he first met her he felt that the encounter was important enough to mention in his diary.

The fateful meeting came on 25 April 1856. Dodgson, 24, a keen – and pioneering – photographer of his day, had been shooting Christ Church Cathedral. Alice, then four, had been playing in the Deanery garden with her sisters. They saw him at work and were intrigued, as was the Dean, who had an interest in photography. Thus Dodgson came to photograph the Liddell children, including the famous shot of Alice aged six dressed as a waif with torn dress, shown here on page 143. This picture was greatly admired by Poet Laureate Alfred Lord Tennyson, whom Dodgson had also photographed.

A family rift Herein lies the strangeness and, some say, the darkness of the Carroll myth. Especially if we choose to view Lewis Carroll through the tarnished lens of today's world, post-Jackson, post-Savile. Lewis Carroll took around 3,000 photographs before he gave up his hobby in 1880. Half were of children, 30 of which were naked or near-naked. In the Victorian view, such pictures were innocent art studies. But some Carroll commentators raise his love of children and photographing them as a reason for a brief rift between Carroll and the Liddells that occurred in 1863. They suggest that Alice's mother feared for the honour of her daughter. Certainly no further boat trips along the Thames were allowed. Yet a lost extract from Carroll's diary suggests the (temporary) freezing of relations between him and the family seems to be the result of an effort to quell rumours that he was using his friendship with the girls to court Lorina, Alice's older sister, and even the children's governess. And his defenders say he was simply a typical Victorian bachelor, who naturally took on the role of 'uncle' to his friends' children.

Indeed there is no proof of sexual wrongdoing, either with Alice or the many other children he befriended. Certainly Alice Liddell never complained of inappropriate behaviour. She remembered Carroll with happiness, and sometimes teasing affection, once recalling: 'He always carried himself upright, almost more than upright, as if he had swallowed a poker.'

Alice's childhood was clearly worth remembering, idyllic even. As a girl she played in the meadows next to her home, the Christ Church Deanery, and walked the river paths by the Thames. She also attended glittering parties hosted by her parents, Henry and Lorina, who were quite the social darlings of Oxford academia.

Famous Victorians were visitors at the Deanery (Alice's art teacher was John Ruskin) and Henry was respected as the co-author of the influential Liddell & Scott Greek-English lexicon. They were a special family and Alice's young days were contented ones. Yet her life thereafter was marked by the pain of unfulfilled love and family tragedy. Just as the fictional Alice struggled with the trials of Wonderland, so Alice was beset by the trials and heartache

of real life. She grew into a beautiful young woman and fell in love with Prince Leopold, Queen Victoria's youngest son and a Christ Church student, in the 1870s. But their love was doomed. Victoria insisted that he married a princess. He did – the German Princess of Waldeck and Pyrmont in 1882.

Meanwhile Alice had married Hampshire squire Reginald Hargreaves in 1880. She named her second son Leopold (the Prince was his godfather). He named his daughter Alice. Thus their love survived, albeit by proxy in the names of their children. Leopold Hargreaves and his brother Alan were killed in action in the First World War. Reginald, shattered, never recovered from his grief. He died in 1926. Alice struggled on, but the costs of running the couple's Hampshire estate forced her to sell a childhood treasure, the manuscript of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* Carroll had given her so many years before.

A highlight of her later life came in 1932 when, aged 80, she travelled to the United States to receive an honorary doctorate from Columbia University for inspiring Carroll's genius. Yet while the world has continued to embrace Carroll's achievements and the 'ideal child friend' who inspired them, Liddell herself said before her death in 1934 that she had become tired of being the Alice of Carroll's creation. She had moved on from the riverbank and, like all of us, had grown away from the fairytale of childhood. How right, then, that tributes to a little girl's magical journey, such as these latest Alice stamps, can suddenly whisk us back to the world of our childhood imaginings •

By Dane Garrod and Andrew Neish













A literary theme This month's new stamps are an ideal starting point for a thematic collection

Lewis Carroll's characters have appeared on more UK stamps than those of Shakespeare, if you count four different versions of the 1990 Cheshire Cat design! Here is the list:

1979: The Year of the Child Alice features with the Hatter and the Cheshire Cat in one of John Tenniel's memorable illustrations from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The other stamps in the set also feature illustrations from famous children's books.

1990: Smiles The Cheshire Cat, designed by Harry Willcock after John Tenniel, beams between Punch and The Man in the Moon in a ten-stamp booklet.

1993: Greetings Tweedledum and Tweedledee feature large on a stamp in the Newell and Sorell-designed Greetings set.

1994: Greetings Ten more Newell and Sorell designs include the giant Alice, stuck in the White Rabbit's house.

1998: Magical Worlds In this set designed by Peter Malone, Alice and the Red Queen run as fast as they can to stay on the spot, as in the story of *Through The Looking-Glass*.

2006: Animal Tales Helen Oxenbury's illustration of the White Rabbit was used by Rose Design to create a charming stamp in this set of four se-tenant pairs that celebrated favourite characters from children's literature.

2015: Alice in Wonderland See new issue details on pages 134 and 111.

Carrollian subjects have also popped up on stamps in at least 15 countries across the world. And *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* themes are very popular on Cinderella stamps. *We would love to hear from anyone who has any of the above stamps in a thematic collection and would like to tell its story to Bulletin readers* •





50 years on 2015 sets remember the death of an icon and the birth of a new philatelic age

Sir Winston Churchill died on 24 January 1965 and postal bureaux across the world issued memorial stamps in his honour. His death was the end of an era but the start of another for philately: our 1965 Churchill memorial stamp was unprecedented – it was the UK's first to show an eminent public figure and paved the way for Royal Mail's Special Stamps programme. This month three fine UK philatelic tributes pay homage to Churchill on the 50th anniversary of his passing; and this year Royal Mail marks five decades of Special Stamps with commemorative issues.

On 24 January Royal Mint and Royal Mail will issue a stunning Coin Cover (1) with the Churchill stamp from the Prime Ministers series. The Isle of Man Post Office releases a striking eight-stamp set, released on 2 January (2). Guernsey's first issue of 2015, on 22 January, comprises three £1 stamps on an elegant miniature sheet (3) ●

© Alamy

Statesman, soldier, writer and orator...



a



b



c



d









e





Above and left: Churchill's head appears on the reverse of the coin and on the front of the new Coin Cover. Its 'V for Victory' postmark has the location of BLENHEIM PALACE, WOODSTOCK, OXFORD, Churchill's birthplace and ancestral home

Below: the Miniature Sheet from Guernsey's The Life of Winston Churchill issue, also released this month

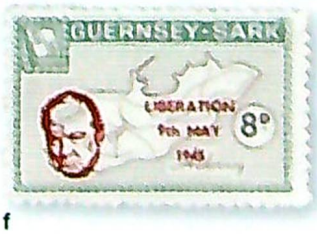
1



2



3



f



g

Key to stamps **a** 1965: designed by David Gentleman and Rosalind Dease from a photograph by Yousuf Karsh, this memorial stamp was issued following Churchill's death on 24 January. **b** 2010: Churchill and Troops, from Royal Mail's Britain Alone eight-stamp Miniature Sheet and Prestige Stamp Book, issued during the London 2010 Exhibition. **c** 2004: Prime Ministers special issue, designed by Together from a photograph by Yousuf Karsh. **d** 2006: Royal Mail stamp bearing the portrait painted by Walter Richard Sickert in 1927, from a set of ten stamps marking the 150th anniversary of the National Portrait Gallery. **e** 1974: Royal Mail, Birth Centenary of Sir Winston Churchill, showing Churchill in Royal Yacht Squadron uniform, as Prime Minister, as Secretary for War and Air, and in South Africa as a war correspondent for several London newspapers. **f** 1965: Guernsey-Sark stamp overprinted with Churchill's face for the 20th anniversary of the Liberation. **g** 1969: Isle of Man, Birth Centenary of Winston Churchill, one of a four-stamp set.



Raw talent

In the first part of a new series Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles Head of Production Martyn Fry reveals the stories behind the raw materials and smart innovation that create great postal products

BEFORE WE LOOK at the raw materials used on stamps it is worth exploring why Royal Mail uses different processes for printing them.



Photogravure, now known simply as gravure, was the method of choice for Royal Mail until the arrival of the House of Questa in 1980 and the introduction of the offset lithography process. Gravure is used for all UK definitives in sheets and books, as well as for Christmas and some Special Stamps. It gives a softer-toned image than the sharper offset litho image and is considered a more secure process, simply because of the set-up cost for gravure printing. (Essentially the investment in a gravure press, as opposed to an offset press, is very high and therefore by definition is more secure because of the financial barrier.) The Machin head was designed with the process in mind.



Offset litho is primarily used for Special Stamps. It is much better than gravure for printing detail and gives that cleaner, brighter image. Recent litho issues include Sustainable Fish and Commonwealth Games.

Intaglio At Royal Mail we would like to use the intaglio process more frequently but costs often prevent its consideration. In recent years we have had a few issues printed by this process but in the main it remains on the wish list.

Top: Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles Head of Production Martyn Fry

Above: the Christmas 2014 issue was printed in gravure on two different gravure presses – the ATN at De La Rue and the Chestnut at Walsall; the Commonwealth Games set was printed in litho by Cartor Security Printing

Stamp papers I remember that during the Eighties there were three grades of phosphor-coated papers produced by Harrisons. Selection of a particular type depended on the stamp design and the likely signal generation. (Phosphor ink, when illuminated during mail processing, gives off an afterglow which can be measured by the detection equipment. This 'signal' needs to be of sufficient strength to be detected and this is controlled through the stamp manufacturing process.)

During this decade, many stamp designers began to favour bleed-off designs on stamps rather than the traditional white borders – and it still is favoured to a large degree. But these bleed-off designs began to cause issues with phosphor-coated paper. The main issue for all the phosphor-coated papers was the inconsistency of signal output. Consequently, the early Nineties saw a move to printed phosphor that was much more controllable and could be adjusted as required.

At the same time, the paper switched to a material that was free from optical brightening agents (OBA). Elongated perforations were also introduced at this time as part of a general focus on security. The OBA-free paper gave production

benefits by appearing dull under the printing inspection cameras, thereby allowing the fluorescent element of the phosphor ink to be highlighted. This continues to be the specified material for all stamps.

Previously, RMS gravure and TR3 litho gummed paper, specially made for Royal Mail, was supplied by Tullis Russell. TR3 has been replaced by Chancellor, an off-the-shelf paper, to shorten delivery lead times.

Water-activated gum The subject of the gum on traditional stamps always reminds me of the letters I used to write in reply to customer enquiries. They used to go something like: 'Obtained from the sap of the acacia tree and dried on the sands of the desert', or some similarly flowery prose!

The problem with early gums was that they were prone to cracking over time. Poly Vinyl Alcohol (PVA) gum, derived from the petroleum industry, was synthetic and was therefore a much more stable product. Harrisons added dextrin (starch) to prevent the gum from stringing in the Jumelle press.

Interestingly, the most common enquiry from customers about the gum is not about its performance but about its handling or make-up. Does it, for instance, contain animal by-products? The answer is no. Or: is there a health risk in licking stamps? Again the answer is no, but we would always advise use of a sponge...

In this health-conscious age, we did come up with the number of calories contained in a stamp. For a standard definitive it is 5.2 calories and for a special stamp it is 14.6 calories. Of course, these figures only apply if you eat the whole thing, which would be good for our revenue but probably not the best nutritionally balanced diet.



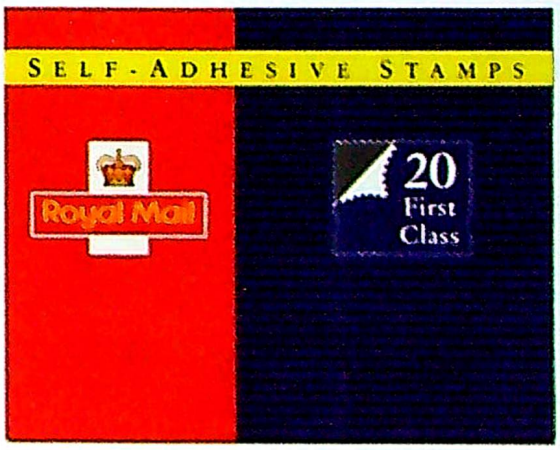
Above: the Prime Ministers issue appropriately relies on Chancellor paper with PVA gum

Pressure-sensitive adhesive There was some concern among collectors at the planned introduction of self-adhesive stamps in the Nineties. Many saw it as the end of the stamp as we know it. Self-adhesive stamps, some purists insisted, were merely sticky labels.

However, many of these fears receded when collectors saw that the quality of the print was exactly the same.

In fact, the anti self-adhesive argument quickly developed into a debate about how best to collect self-adhesive stamps, rather than whether or not people should collect them at all.

The make-up of self-adhesive laminate is totally different from traditional gummed material as Royal Mail learned to its cost with the first issues of a stamp book in 1993. The ageing characteristics were such that within a fairly short period, the stamps fused to the carrier, never to be removed again.



Above: the first book of self-adhesive stamps, introduced in 1993 and sold primarliy in a test area – the Tyne-Tees Television region of north-east England

They also had a tendency to be wipe-clean and peelable – prompting one newspaper to herald them as the world's first reusable stamp!

Essentially the issue was with an imbalance between the release peel and the pressure-sensitive adhesive. However, modern self-adhesive material is extremely reliable and consistent. Collectors have queried the lifespan of self-adhesive stamps but work done by the United States Postal Service demonstrated a longevity equal to gummed stamps •

This Month in History

John Holman sails back to 1969 when legendary designer David Gentleman created the British Ships stamp issue

ON 15 JANUARY 1969 the Post Office released a six-stamp issue called British Ships as a tribute to British shipbuilders and seamen. The issue was no doubt inspired by the impending maiden voyage of *Queen Elizabeth 2* (the *QE2*), and it is likely that the original idea of a stamp(s) marking this was expanded to embrace maritime history from the first Elizabethan era to the second.

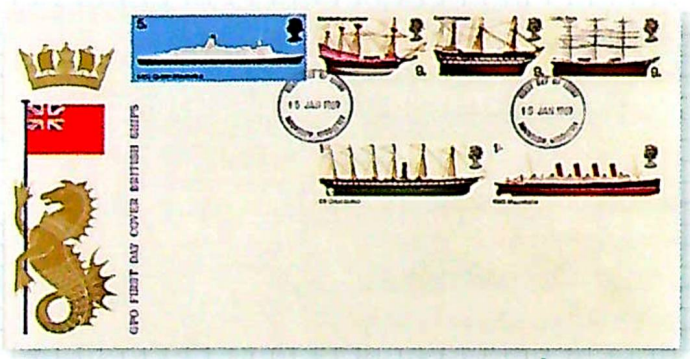
The stamps were designed by David Gentleman using his favourite 'cut-out and stick down' technique. In his book *Artwork* (2002), Gentleman states that the designs (other than the *QE2*) were based on photographs that he took of model ships in the Science Museum, noting that the designs were 'constructed', rather than drawn, from layers of coloured plastic or letrafilm. Spraying ink onto the plastic film gave an impression of realism and solidity. The design of the *QE2* stamp was based on photographs supplied by Cunard. In order to emphasise the white superstructure, Gentleman placed it 'against an optimistic background of travel agent blue'.

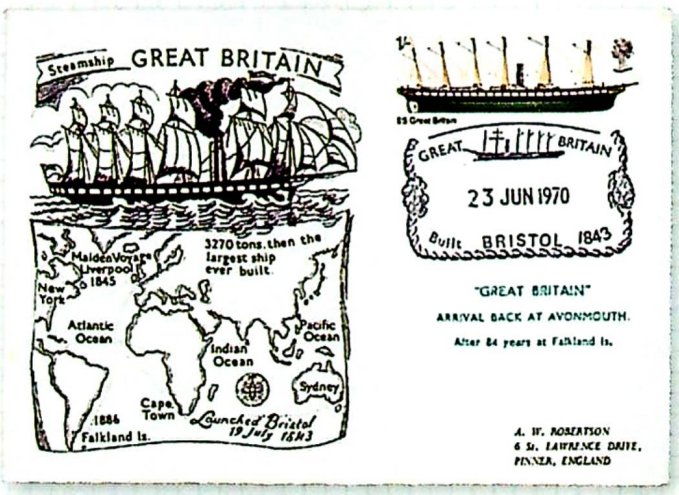
The images of the ships were, Gentleman comments, 'as realistic and as detailed as I could make them; even the masts had a sprayed-on shadowed side'. The results were described as 'commendable' by Stuart Rose in his book *Royal Mail Stamps* (1980). Designs for the issue were also submitted by Clive Abbott, Johan T Polak and Andrew Restall (all included the *QE2*). These were reproduced in the *Bulletin* of February 1969.

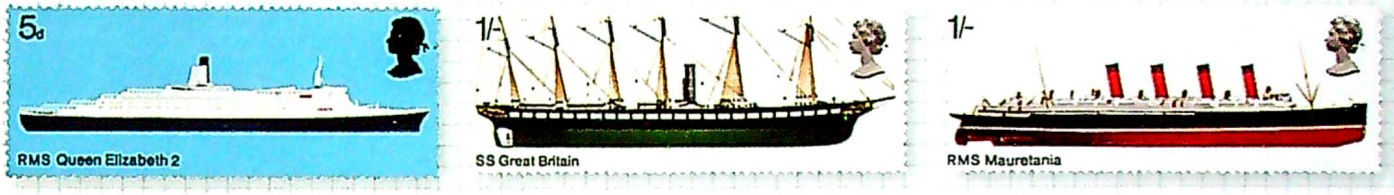
Three of Gentleman's issued stamps were treble normal definitive size and three the normal double definitive size. The treble-sizers were the 5d value featuring the *QE2*, and two 1s stamps, printed se-tenant depicting the *SS Great Britain* and *RMS Mauretania*. The three normal-size 9d values, also se-tenant, featured an Elizabethan galleon, an East Indiaman and the *Cutty Sark*. The 9d and 1s stamps carried the pleasing half-tone image of The Queen's head, first used on the Bridges stamps the year before, and last used on the Robert Burns issue of 1996. The 5d QE2 stamp had The Queen's

Below: GPO First Day Cover with Plymouth as the special postmark location

Below right: a souvenir cover showing the return of the *SS Great Britain* to the UK







silhouette printed in black. The stamps were printed by Harrisons, the 5d in sheets of 72 in black, grey, red and turquoise, the 9d in sheets of 120 in black, brown, ochre, grey, red and blue, and the 1s in sheets of 80 in black, grey, green, red, carmine, brown and greenish yellow. The 5d had one horizontal phosphor band, the 9d two bands and the 1s two bands at right. All are known with phosphor omitted and the *Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Concise* and *Specialised* catalogues list a number of missing colour errors. Rarest are on the *Mauretania* stamp with missing carmine (hull overlay), red (funnels) and both carmine and red. The *Stanley Gibbons Specialised Catalogue* records a number of minor constant varieties, none of sufficient status to warrant a catalogue number or price.



The Post Office produced presentation packs in English and German editions, and the English version can be found with an insert card printed in Dutch or Japanese. A special pack was issued for sale exclusively on board the *QE2* during her maiden voyage. The Post Office first day cover was serviced with a Philatelic Bureau postmark. Covers were also posted by dealers and collectors for first day or CDS postmarks of ports such as Bristol, Liverpool, Portsmouth and Southampton, and for special handstamps at Greenwich (Cutty Sark Stamp Day) or London EC3 (Lloyd's of London). The 1s stamp showing the *Great Britain* was used on souvenir covers in June 1970 to mark its return from the Falkland Islands to Bristol for restoration.

The stamps were withdrawn from sale after one year, and the numbers that were sold ranged from 10.8 million of the 1s stamp to 67.5 million of the 5d first-class stamp. Some 116,526 of the standard British Ships presentation pack were sold, but just 4,416 of the German version. Collectors can also compare these 1969 stamps with later issues showing Elizabethan galleons (The Armada 1988), the *Mauretania* (Ocean Liners 2004), and an East Indiaman and the *Cutty Sark* (Merchant Navy 2013) •





Clockwise from top: British Ships, The Armada, Merchant Navy and Ocean Liners stamps

Island news The first offshore stamps of 2015



Guernsey's next issue, released on 22 January, is The Life of Winston Churchill (see details on page 150), followed on 28 January by Lunar New Year: Year of the Goat 2015 (pictured left). The first 2015 issue for Alderney – called Alice's Adventures in Wonderland – will be out on 5 February (below). Enquiries: Guernsey Philatelic Bureau, Freepost GU267, Envoy House, La Vrangue, Guernsey GY1 5SS, email philatelic@guernseypost.com •





Jersey's next set is Dragons (below) on 6 January, followed by new definitives with holograms (left) – a world first – and Post & Go Protected Species on 18 February to coincide with Spring Stampex. Enquiries: Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Freepost JE793, Jersey Post, Jersey JE1 1AF, www.jerseystamps.com •



The Isle of Man Post Office begins its 2015 issues on 2 January with stamps marking the 50th anniversary of the death of Sir Winston Churchill. Three issues go on sale on 17 February: The 70th Anniversary of VE and VJ Day Miniature Sheet, The 100th Anniversary of World War I – Battle Fronts, and The 175th Anniversary of the Penny Black Stamp. For details of Isle of Man issues, visit www.iomstamps.com or write to: Isle of Man Stamps & Coins, PO Box 10M, Douglas, Isle of Man IM99 1PB •

Stamp images: © issuing postal bureaux

Cover story A historic cover commemorates Britain's first victory of the Second World War

THE NAVAL VICTORY that boosted British morale as the nation stood virtually alone against the Nazis is commemorated in a special 75th anniversary souvenir cover. The Battle of the River Plate, when the German battleship *Admiral Graf Spee* was trapped by the Royal Navy in Uruguayan port Montevideo and scuttled by its commander, marked Britain's first success in the 'Phoney War' of 1939.

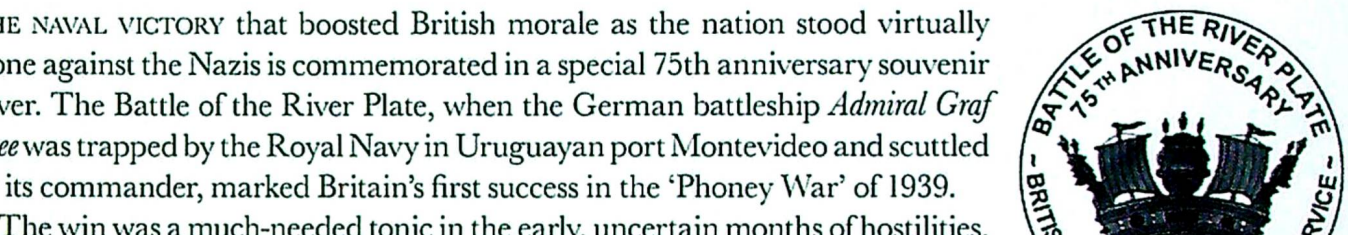
The win was a much-needed tonic in the early, uncertain months of hostilities. The man of the hour was Commodore Henry Harwood, leading a three-ship hunting group intent on bringing down the *Graf Spee* to stop it destroying Allied shipping in the Atlantic. With cruisers *HMS Exeter*, *Ajax* and *Achilles*, Harwood engaged the *Spee*, commanded by Captain Hans Langsdorff, on 13 December 1939. An exchange of fire left *Exeter* and *Ajax* badly damaged, but Langsdorff ran for port. Boxed in by the British, he deliberately sank his ship and shot himself.

The commeorative cover below, created by the British Forces Philatelic Service (BFPS), features the Churchill stamp from the Prime Ministers issue, images and badges of the three British ships and Harwood's pennant. The stamp is cancelled with a unique BFPS numbered handstamp showing the Royal Navy crown, present on all ship's badges. A colour insert tells the story of the battle.

The HMS Ajax & River Plate Veterans Association has supported the cover project. Association archivist Malcolm Collis said: 'Every anniversary of the battle is important, but the 75th has added significance. BFPS has produced a superb collectable cover for this important event and the Association was delighted to have been involved in its design and production.'

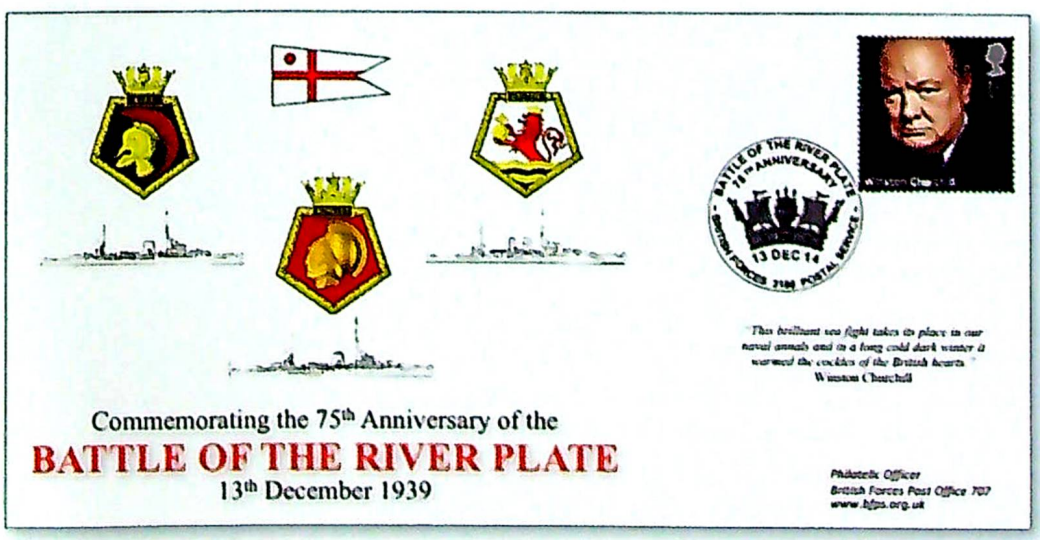
The covers can be bought from the BFPS online shop (www.bfps.org.uk/shop). The price is £6 for the standard cover and £15 for the double signed cover (inc UK/BFPO p&p). This is signed by two survivors of the battle: John Garrard from *HMS Ajax* and Basil Trott of *HMS Exeter*. The covers are also available by post – send a cheque, payable to 'BFPS CIC', to the address on the right ●

The British Forces Philatelic Service fundraises for service charities through philately and is a not-for-profit organisation run by volunteers who are also Forces Veterans.



Orders and enquiries

BFPS
The Old Post Office
Links Place
Elie
Fife KY9 1AX
www.bfps.org.uk



Left: the Battle of the River Plate commemorative cover shows the Royal Navy cruisers *Exeter*, *Ajax* and *Achilles* that took on the German battleship *Admiral Graf Spee*. The special BFPS postmark carries the battle's anniversary date of 13 December

Ewe might just win a heap of wondrous and inventive stamps



1



3



2



4

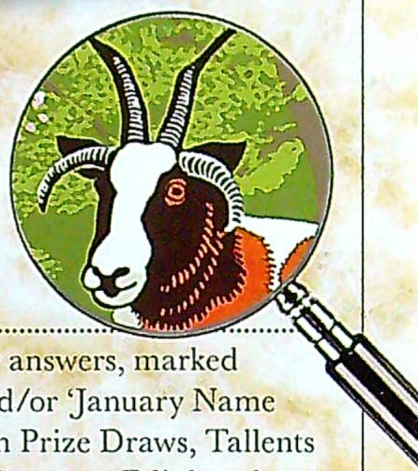
Why baa-ther with other stamp puzzles when ewe get a quality quiz every month in the *Bulletin*? In tribute to the recent Lunar New Year – Year of the Sheep Generic Sheet, our puzzle focuses on that woolly farmyard favourite. Get the answers right and you have the chance to win Alice in Wonderland and Inventive Britain stamps.

1 If these fine-looking fellas from the 1992 Wintertime issue could speak, what accent would they have? **a** Cockney **b** Geordie **c** Welsh

2 What was shown on the stamps in November's Lunar New Year – Year of the Sheep Generic Sheet? **a** Fireworks **b** Gasworks **c** Roadworks

3 The 2005 Farm Animals set featured a breed of sheep. Where is it from? **a** Suffolk **b** Shrewsbury **c** South Kensington

4 Who illustrated the 2012 Post & Go set, British Farm Animals I: Sheep? **a** Robert Spillmore **b** Robert Gillmor **c** Robert Chillmore



Name That Stamp
From the detail under the magnifying glass, identify the breed of sheep featured.

How to enter Send your answers, marked 'Sheep Stamp Quiz' and/or 'January Name That Stamp' to: Bulletin Prize Draws, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. **Closing date** 20 February 2015.

October solutions and winners *Question Time solution* a6, b8, c1, d2. *Winners* A Allison, Bury St Edmunds; A H Lewis, Ilford; D Dick, Glenrothes; C T van Gennep, Netherlands; J Wykes, Stourport-on-Severn. *Name That Stamp solution* William III, 67p, 2010. *Winners* P Clutton, Newport Pagnell; N Jansen, Alderney; A Downey, Dunfermline; A Bridgeman, Beeston; M Burfield, Saltcoats •

Prize draw rules and regulations 1 Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 2 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. 3 Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. The cost of transport to and from a prize venue, where applicable, is not included. 4 Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date stated. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. 6 Promoter's decision on any aspect of the promotions is final. No correspondence will be entered into. 7 Entry implies acceptance of these rules. 8 Prizes are subject to suitability and availability. The promoter reserves the right tc a) substitute a prize of equal or greater value if circumstances so demand and b) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. 9 Winners' names are available 28 days after closing date; send an SAE to The Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. The promoter is Royal Mail Group Ltd, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.

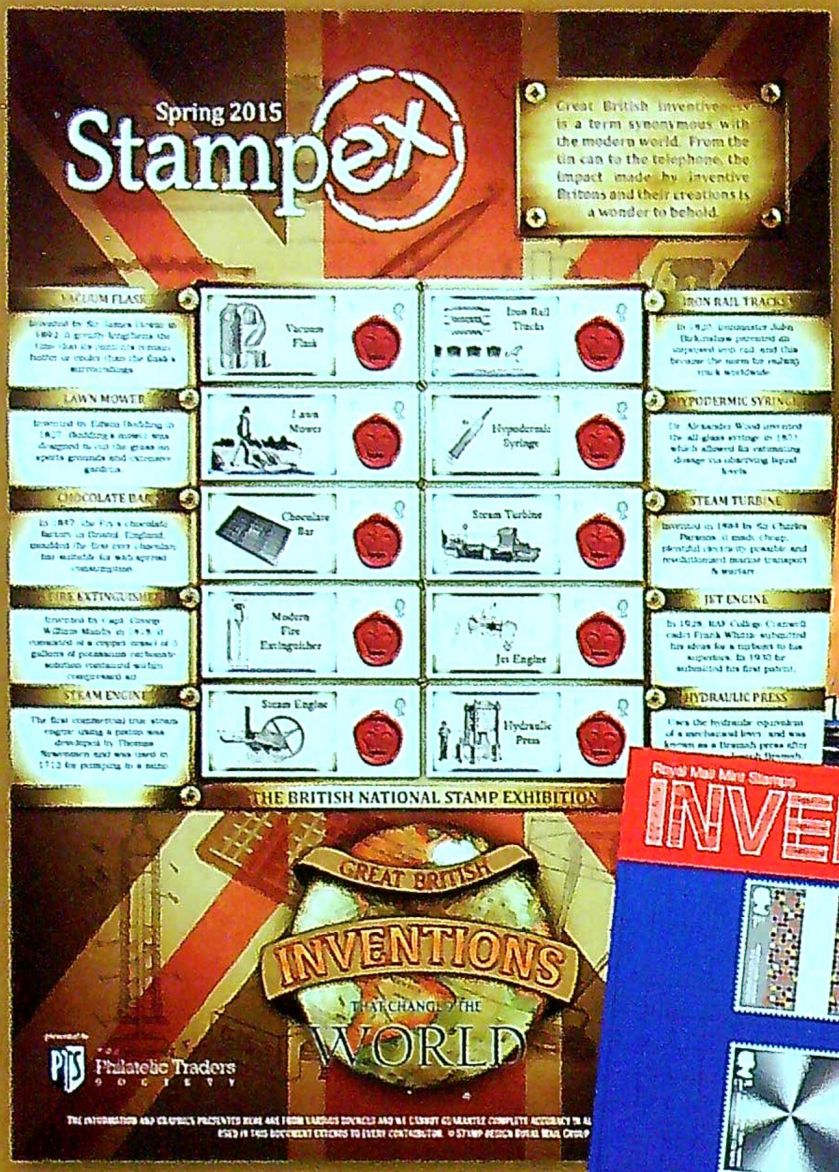
Stamp images: © Royal Mail Group Ltd

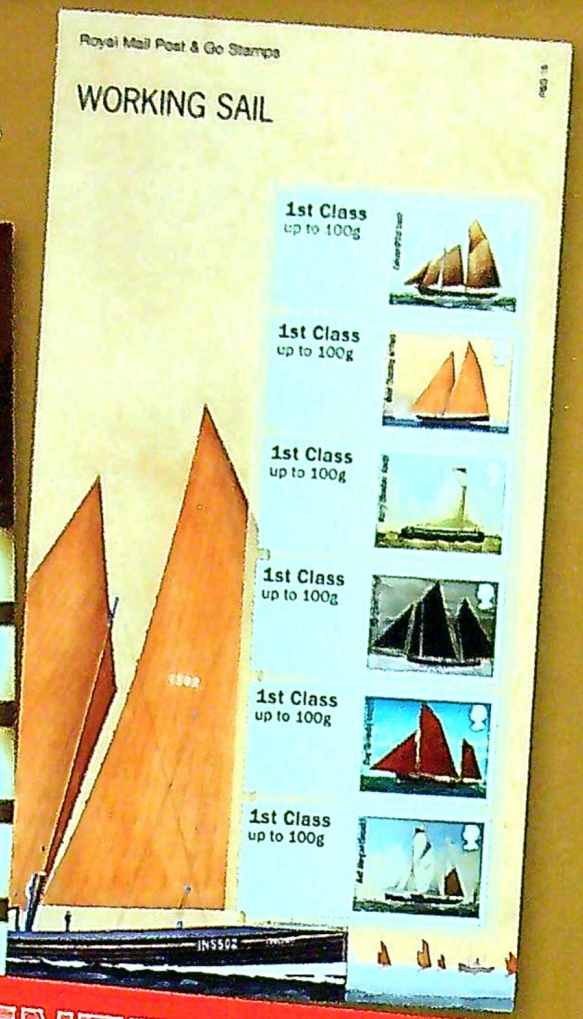


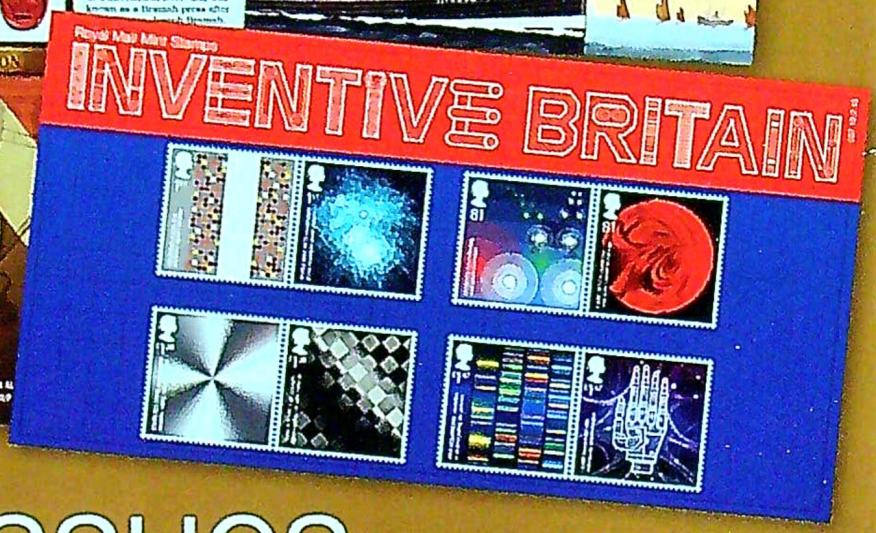
Happy New Year – of the Sheep

The Year of the Sheep starts on 19 January 2015, the date of the Lunar New Year and Spring Festival in China. To coincide with the beginning of the Year of the Sheep, Royal Mail is issuing a colourful celebratory Generic Sheet of 20 stamps. For more details and to order this vibrant sheet, visit www.royalmail.com/stamps or phone 08457 641 641 •

Spring newcomers: the Stampex 2015 Smilers® Sheet, Royal Mail Post & Go Working Sail and the Royal Mail Inventive Britain Special Stamp issue. For more details turn to pages 140, 137 and 134 respectively







Special issues at Stampex

Spring Stampex runs from 18 to 21 February at the Business Design Centre in Islington, north London

This is Europe's finest stamp show and entrance is free. So why not come along to feast your philatelic eyes and meet fellow UK collectors at the Islington stamping ground? There are stamp launches at the Royal Mail stand, Post & Go machines, niche dealers, top-class exhibits, a *Bulletin* prize draw... all this *and* a free catalogue and souvenir postcard. See you there! •

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