

August 1995



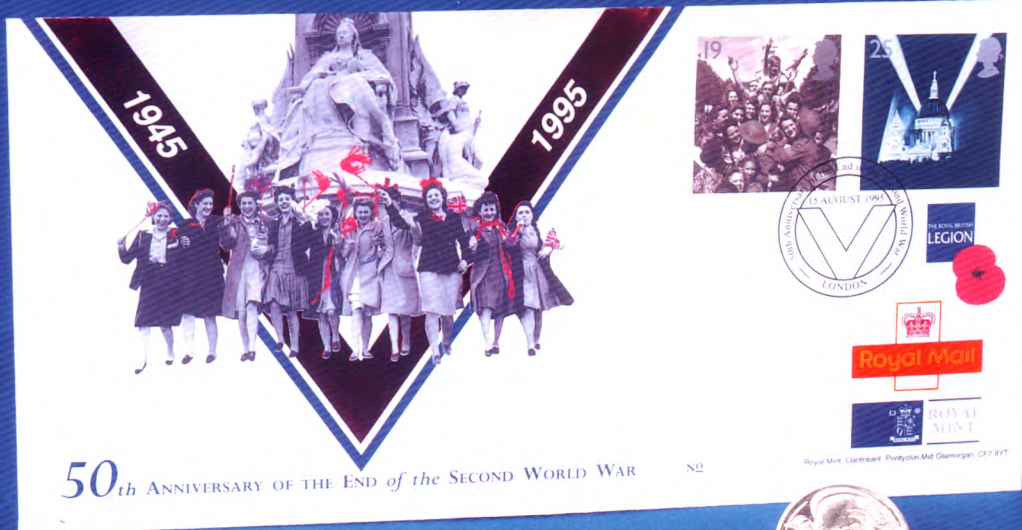
British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 32. No: 12 The Royal Mail Magazine for Stamp Collectors Price 75p



The bicentenary of the birth of Sir Rowland Hill and the centenary of Guglielmo Marconi's first effective radio transmissions will be commemorated on four "Communications" stamps on 5 September.

Celebrating Fifty Years of Peace



Royal Mail, Royal Mint and the Royal British Legion are proud to announce a limited edition "Philatelic Numismatic Cover" to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

The cover bears the 19p and 25p Victory stamps from the Peace and Freedom issue cancelled by a Royal Mint/Royal Mail sponsored special postmark at London. The

design incorporates the "V for Victory" sign. The cover depicts celebrations in front of Queen Victoria's monument, outside Buckingham Palace. Encapsulated in the cover is the brilliant uncirculated Royal Mint £2 coin celebrating victory.

Price £12.95. Early ordering is advised-earlier Philatelic Numismatic/Medallie covers have quickly sold out.



British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.
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British Philatelic Bulletin

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Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly **British Postmark Bulletin** giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, Rest of World £21.75.

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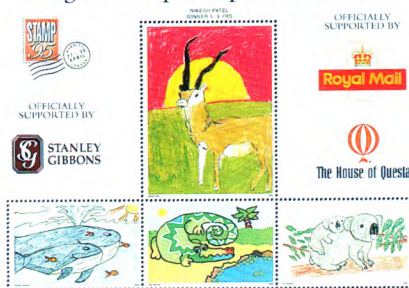
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This Month – Souvenir Sheet Free Gift

Included in this *Bulletin* is a souvenir sheet, produced by The House of Questa, reproducing the winning entries in the "Design-a-Stamp" competition held at the Stamp '95 exhibition and in conjunction with the *Young Telegraph*. See page 359 for details.

Design a Stamp Competition Winners



Commemorative Souvenir Sheet printed at The House of Questa 20th June 1995

*The sheet is supplied
courtesy of Stanley
Gibbons and The
House of Questa*

Royal Mail News

Communications Stamps

Four stamps honouring two of the most famous men in Communications History go on sale at post offices, and philatelic outlets on 5 September. Two stamps feature Sir Rowland Hill, marking the bicentenary of his birth, and two Guglielmo Marconi, commemorating the centenary of his first wireless message.

The 19p stamp (basic inland 2nd class rate) shows a young Rowland Hill set against a petition for Uniform Penny Postage. The 25p value (basic inland 1st class and EU rate) depicts a better-known portrait of Hill as a old man against the background of the Penny Black. Both stamps bear the caption "Sir ROWLAND HILL 1795-1879".

The 41p denomination (basic airmail letter rate) shows a young Marconi with some of his radio equipment in the foreground and with a map of the North Atlantic in the background. The 60p stamp (airmail letters, second weight



set, to 100g) features an older Marconi with an SOS sea rescue in the background. These stamps are inscribed "MARCONI FIRST WIRELESS MESSAGE 1895".

The stamps have been designed by The Four Hundred, a London-based design consultancy; the portraits of Hill and Marconi are the work of Czeslaw Slania, the world's foremost stamp engraver. The portraits and lettering are printed by the intaglio (recess) process – essentially the same method as used for the Penny Black and Twopence Blue in 1840. The background, Queen's head and value are in offset-lithography.

Technical details

Printers: Harrison & Sons Ltd

Process: Intaglio and Offset lithography

Size: 35 x 37mm

Sheets: 100

Perforation: 14 x 14.5

Phosphor: 19p one phosphor band (yellow fluor)

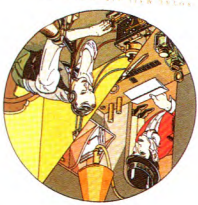
25p-60p phosphor coated

Paper: OBA free (OBA = Optical Brightening Agent)

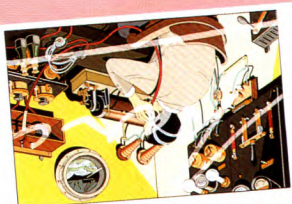
Gum: PVA Dextrin



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



COMMUNICATIONS



most popular and enduring pastimes - stamp collecting.

world. At the same time, they laid the foundations of one of the world's enterprises in Britain and, as other countries followed suit, throughout the imperious to improvements in literacy, social communications and business a public service. More significantly, his reforms provided an invaluable The Post Office then being primarily a source of government revenue into bearing a design by William Mulready. Hill began the transformation of was an immediate success, while the stamped stationery Hill's surprise, his secondary idea of a postage stamp postage stamp were officially issued in May that year. To 1840. Both the pre-paid stationery and the Penny Black uniform penny postage was implemented on 10 January Penny Postage Act based on them was enacted after a two-year campaign (covered by the Penny Postage Act 1840).

central London. A signal was sent by a ship. Yet his invention had extended to the and transmitted messages to vessels at sea, and even his invention was used when the established services communications to France, purchased other wharves. In 1897, a company was formed to manufacture his equipment - this became the trials over increasingly longer distances earned Marconi international acclaim to another rooftop 500 metres away. The success of this and the



COMMUNICATIONS



ROYAL MAIL MINT STAMPS

200.5.939

Plate Numbers and Colours

19p P24 (phosphor) 1A (silver) 1B (red) 1C (black) 5D (black-intaglio)
25p 1A (silver) 1B (brown) 1C (black) 3D (black-intaglio)
41p 1A (silver) 1A (grey-green) 1C (black) 1D (black-intaglio)
60p 1A (silver) 1B (deep ultramarine) 1C (black) 2D (black-intaglio)

Sir Rowland Hill

Sir Rowland Hill (1795-1879) was a remarkable man, described as "mechanic and inventor, artist, draughtsman and architect, astronomer and mathematician, teacher and administrator, human dynamo and Reformer Extraordinary" (Jean Farrugia: *The Life & Work of Sir Rowland Hill*, National Postal Museum 1979).



Rowland Hill, c 1840 (unknown artist, NPM postcard)

His father, Thomas Wright Hill, instilled in his six sons a love of freedom and hatred of injustice and tyranny. Like Rowland (his third son), Thomas Hill was inventive and a born reformer. His wife, Sarah Lea, possessing the commonsense her husband lacked, provided Rowland with a second remarkable parent. Rowland Hill was born in Kidderminster on 3 December 1795. In 1800, when family fortunes declined, the Hills moved to Horsehills (an old farmhouse) near Wolverhampton and two years later they moved again, this time to Birmingham where Thomas Hill ran a school. The prospectus for this school contained the five features that came to be known as the Hills' unique and progressive system of education. By age 12

Rowland was teaching in his father's school. Later to supplement the family income Rowland constructed and repaired scientific apparatus and took work in the Birmingham Assay Office. Rowland and his brother Matthew (1792-1872) became dedicated to the cause of educational reform and in 1822 published *Public Education* which brought them worldwide fame. Five years later a new branch of their model school was opened at Bruce Castle in London.

In the early 1830s Hill was associated with a body formed for the colonisation of South Australia (then unoccupied), later in the decade becoming involved in the project for which he is best remembered – postal reform. His famous pamphlet *Post Office Reform: its Importance and Practicability* was published in January 1837; a Parliamentary Committee was appointed to examine his scheme later in the year. Less than two years later the *Postage Duties Act* was passed (August 1839), and uniform fourpenny and penny postage rates followed in December 1839 and January 1840. Various methods of prepaying postage were considered, including the issue of adhesive postage stamps (or labels). Hill was sceptical about the public reaction to such labels, but they proved highly popular when issued in May 1840.

Hill did not at this time work for the Post Office, but under a two-year contract with the Treasury. In 1842 he was dismissed and subsequently became a director, later chairman, of the London & Brighton Railway. In November 1846 he was appointed Secretary to the Postmaster General, and in 1854 to the more prestigious post of Secretary to the Post Office. He was knighted in 1860. Ill health forced his retirement four years later; he received a Parliamentary Grant of £20,000 and his salary for life as a pension. He subsequently served on the Royal Commission on Railways and prepared his memoirs and a history of Uniform Penny Postage. Shortly before his death, on 27 August 1879, he was granted the freedom of the City of London. The casket containing the grant of freedom, is on display, with other Hill family plate, in the National Postal Museum. Hill was given a state funeral and buried in Westminster Abbey.

Fine statues of Hill – outside the former London Chief Post Office in King Edward Street, and at Kidderminster – were illustrated in the *Bulletin* of February 1989 (page 160) and May 1994 (p.267). Other monuments in Birmingham and Lancaster were shown here in July 1987



*Rowland Hill
statue in
Kidderminster
(MPB postcard)*

(p.246) and May 1990 (p.231). There is a bust of Hill in Westminster Abbey. Good portraits by J A Vinter (after photograph of c. 1879) are in the National Portrait Gallery (register no. 838), and National Postal Museum. A plaque is mounted on the house in Orme Square, London W2 where Hill lived at the time he was working at the Treasury on postal reform (1840-42).

The Kidderminster and London statues featured on postcards issued by Midlands Postal Board and National Postal Museum in 1974 and 1979. Others in the NPM Rowland Hill set show a portrait in oils by an unknown artist, c.1840, and the silver-gilt casket containing his Freedom of the City of London.

Four stamps and a miniature sheet were issued in 1979 to mark the centenary of Hill's death (SG 1095/MS1099). Several special postmarks of 1979 and 1990 (sesquicentenary of Penny Black) feature Hill. Many countries have portrayed Sir Rowland on commemorative stamps – a feature article on these issues will be published here in December, on the anniversary of Hill's birth.

Hill has also featured on a British aerogramme (August 1979) and on the covers of four £2 stamp books issued in February, April, June and September 1995. His link with the Post Office lives on in the Fund that bears his name – details of its work were published here in January 1994 (p.132).

Guglielmo Marconi

Guglielmo Marconi (1874-1937) was born in Bologna, the son of a wealthy landowner and Anne Jameson, of the Irish distilling family. He was educated at the Leghorn Technical Institute and the University of Bologna. Hearing about Hertzian waves, young Marconi worked with Augusto Righi (1850-1920) to see if such waves could be transmitted over greater distances. His early experiments took place on his father's estate in December 1894, broadcasting a signal over a distance of one mile. The Italian government were uninterested in his work and he came to Britain, demonstrating his wireless apparatus to the British Post Office in 1896. He took out the first patent for a system of wireless telegraphy in June 1896. Later demonstrations took place between Lavernock point near Cardiff, Flat Holm Island in the Bristol Channel, and Brean Down, Somerset in May 1897 (see *Bulletin* September 1972), and in 1898 when he was invited by Lloyds of London to install a link for shipping between Ballycastle, Co Antrim and Rathlin Island (7.5 miles). This was the world's first commercial use of wireless. He founded the Wireless Telegraph and Signal Company in 1897, later renamed Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Company in 1900, to establish radio stations on land and sea. The following year messages were sent across the Atlantic. In the 1920s he tested short-wave rather than long wave reception and transmission; by 1930 Marconi ran a worldwide network of short-wave stations. In 1929 he was given the title Marchese (Marquis) and in 1935 toured Latin America and Europe defending Italy's invasion of Abyssinia. He died in July 1937 and as a mark of respect all BBC stations observed a two minute silence on the day of his funeral.



*Marconi's home at Hereford Street, London W2
(Photo: John Holman)*

The 9p stamp in the 1972 BBC and Broadcasting History set (SG 912) featured an oscillator and spark transmitter used in the 1897 experiment. Special postmarks were used at Cardiff (13 September 1972) and at Ballycastle and Rathlin Island (6 July 1973) to mark the 75th anniversaries of the Bristol Channel and Northern Ireland experimental transmissions (postmark numbers 2041, 2283/4 in *Special Event Postmarks of the United Kingdom*, published 1984).

The Italian Post Office has commemorated Marconi on special stamps, and a curious "green portrait" appears on a Canadian stamp marking the centenary of his birth in 1974 (SG 796). Earlier this year the Brazilian Post Office honoured Marconi on a stamp (5 May), and a joint issue from Germany, Ireland, Italy, San Marino and the Vatican followed on 8 June.

A plaque exists on the house in Hereford Road, London W2 where Marconi lived between February 1896 and July 1897 when the first wireless telegraphy patent was granted to him.

Czeslaw Slania

Devotees of finely engraved stamps will welcome the Communications stamps as fine examples of the work of the foremost exponent of the art of stamp engraving – Czeslaw Slania. Born in Poland in 1921, Slania studied graphic art in Cracow and Vienna before joining the Government Printing Works in Warsaw to engrave bank notes and security documents. He first engraved stamps in 1951 and now has well over 900 designs to his credit. He is best-known for his work for the Swedish Post Office since 1960; in 1972 he was appointed to the post of Court Engraver. He has engraved stamps featuring King Gustav VI Adolf, and the present King Carl Gustav, Queen Silvia and their

children. Amongst many memorable commemoratives are the 1993 Stamp Day issue (SG1708/11), the 1972 set celebrating King Gustav VI Adolf's 90th birthday (716/20), the 1972 Sportswomen set (673/7), and the 1981 Film History and 1984 Music miniature sheets.

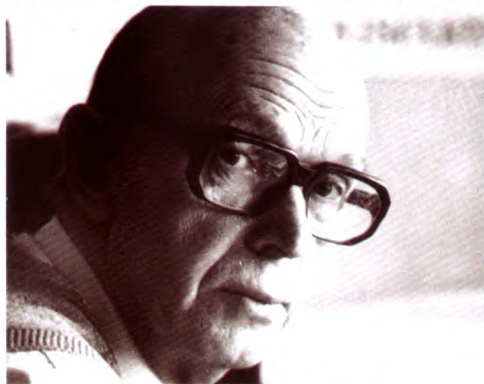
An a unique tribute, Slania engraved three stamps issued in 1991 to commemorate his own 70th birthday (SG 1602/4). These reproduce, in engraved form, a painting of the coronation of Gustav III in 1772. Two stamps, showing details of the King's head, are separated by a label depicting an engraved plate, a burin (engraving tool), magnifying glass, and legend "Czeslaw Slania 70 Ar". The third stamp, some 80mm across (the total width of the other stamps and label) reproduces the complete Coronation scene

Slania is also Court Engraver in Denmark and Monaco. His first Danish stamps appeared in 1962; his Royal subjects include the present Queen; her sisters, Princesses Benedikte and Anne-Marie; and their father, King Frederik IX. His work for Monaco includes exquisite historical portrait stamps of 1975-76 (SG 1213/4, 1271/2), and studies of the current Royal Family. The miniature sheets showing Prince Albert and his mother (the late Princess Grace) are particularly noteworthy (SG MS1110, 1611). A Slania engraving of Princess Grace (Kelly) was used in 1993 for a joint Monaco/USA issue (SG 2119; 2778).

The forthcoming Communications stamps will be Slania's fourth set for Royal Mail, following the 1982 Maritime Heritage, 1984 Royal Mail (Mail Coaches), and 1987 Victorian Britain issues (SG 1187/91, 1258/62, 1367/70). All were "dual printed" in intaglio (recess) and photogravure. For a critique of these issues, see Richard Wiggins's article, "Intaglio Plus...", in the August 1990 *Bulletin* (pp.291-5). The master dies of the Victorian Britain issue are currently on display in the "Victorian Posts" exhibition at the National Postal Museum.

There are now many collectors specialising in "Slania stamps", aided by a Slania Society and a catalogue of his stamps – *Mesteren Czeslaw Slania: Biografi og Katalog* by Ib Eichner-Larsen, published in 1986. Available from Aarhus Frimaerkehandel, Bruunsgade 42, 8000 Aarhus C, Denmark, price 120 Danish kroner. For details of the Czeslaw Slania Study Group write to PO Box 1382, Milwaukee, WI 53201, USA.

In next month's *Bulletin*, James Mackay describes his 12 favourite Slania stamps.



Czeslaw Slania (Photo: Swedish Post Office)



Slania stamps of Denmark and Sweden with Sweden's 70th birthday tribute

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets around a week before 5 September, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial “First Day of Issue” postmark of the Bureau or London EC, price £2.12 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.81 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 5 September 1995.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers on the day of issue, for these cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, LONDON EC1A 1BB (for London EC postmark). The outer envelope should be endorsed “FD9517” (Bureau), or “FD9518” (London EC).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) “First Day of Issue” handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail’s magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on

subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe; £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

Collectors are reminded that it will be in order to affix just the 19p Communications stamp to covers to receive all special cancels (“First Day of Issue”, sponsored and philatelic counters), in use on 5 September. The minimum 1st class rule is suspended on this day as this set includes a 2nd class rate stamp. It should be noted that this concession applies only to the 19p Communications stamp; covers bearing other stamps must bear at least 1st class postage.

Serviced First Day Cover

Fully serviced first day covers, bearing the London EC pictorial first day postmark will be available from most W H Smith shops, offered subject unsold.

Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards

A presentation pack will be available from the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, main post offices, and most W H Smith shops. Stamp cards (25p each) will be available from the Bureau, POC philatelic outlets, and main post offices.

NPM Postcards

The National Postal Museum will issue four new postcards on 8 August, coinciding with the

Shakespeare's Globe stamps. the cards feature Uniforms of staff who guarded the mail. The reference numbers and descriptions are:

95/14. Moses Nobbs, "Last of the Mail Coach Guards". Scarlet coat with gold braid and blue collar. Black hat with gold band. Armed with a blunderbuss and a pair of pistols. Portrait dated 1890.

95/15. Mail Guard 1861. Scarlet frock coat with gold lace facings and blue collar. Letters GPO in gold on each side of the collar. Photograph dated 1910.

95/16. Horse-drawn Parcel Mail Coach Guard c. 1900. Standard dark blue uniform with Guard's hat with wide gold band. Armed with service revolver and sword bayonet.

95/17. Motor Parcel Mail Van 1910. Guard wears standard uniform with Guard's hat with wide gold band. Armed with truncheon and whistle.

The illustrations used on cards 95/14 & 15 are from Post Office Archives, on 95/16 & 17 from the Post Office Photograph Library.

The cards will be available to callers at the Museum shop, price 25p each, or by post from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, price £1 per set. A special Museum handstamp will be used on 8 August. Cards/covers to receive this should be sent to: London Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, LONDON EC1A 1BB, requesting "Museum Special - 8 August". The Museum's regular Maltese Cross handstamp will also be available - ask for handstamp number 1985.

The Museum shop has a wide selection of NPM cards available, also books, models and other souvenirs of interest to stamp collectors and postal historians. The National Postal Museum is situated in King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP, a few minutes walk from St Paul's Cathedral and underground station. Open Monday-Friday 09.30-16.30, admission free. Displays include the R M Phillips Collection of 19th century British stamps and the Museum's own "All World" Collection. A report on the current special exhibition "Victorian Posts" is published in this *Bulletin*.

Stamp Book Update

The date of availability of the fourth 50p, £1 and £2 books in the "Sea Charts", "Inspiration for Victory" and "Rowland Hill" series has been brought forward one day. These books, also the 10 x 1st class book with Sainsbury's promotion will now all be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters

philatelic outlets from 4 September, not 5 September as originally announced.

Also available from 4 September will be a 10 x 1st class book containing a "Someone Special" promotion. Purchasers will be able to send in stamps and book covers for miniature teddy bears or hedgehogs. This follows a successful similar promotion some years ago.

These new books will not contain any new stamps. The 50p, £1 and £2 books will contain 25p stamps with two phosphor bands, printed by Harrisons. The phosphor on the stamps in the £1 book will bear the new "blue" as opposed to "yellow" fluor - of interest to specialist collectors who check their stamps under ultra-violet light. The change in fluor was noted in the July, *Bulletin* (page 325). The 1st class stamps in the two promotional books have two phosphor bands. The Sainsbury's book was printed by Questa, the Someone Special book by Harrisons.

Second World War Philatelic Numismatic Cover

A new PNC, produced by Royal Mail, Royal Mint and the Royal British Legion, will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau from 15 August, price £12.95. The cover, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, features celebrations in front of Queen Victoria's statue (opposite Buckingham Palace) and bears the Royal Mint's £2 celebratory coin and Royal Mail's 19p and 25p Victory stamps (issued 2 May) cancelled by a special 15 August (VJ Day) handstamp. On VJ Day, when the news of Japan's unconditional surrender was flashed around the world, Piccadilly Circus was ablaze with flags and streamers and most of London's streets alive with improvised fancy dress parades and impromptu celebration parties. At 9 o'clock in the morning King George VI had spoken the four words that people the world over had long been waiting to hear: "The war is over".

The reverse of the special £2 coin was designed by sculptor John Mills and features, in his own words, "a symbol of aspiring peace, the calm, bountiful and optimistic image of a Dove". Peace is emphasised, too, in the edge inscription: 1945 IN PEACE GOODWILL 1995, part of the well-known "moral" that prefaces Sir Winston Churchill's history of the Second World War.

Earlier Philatelic Numismatic and Philatelic Medallic covers have proved very popular and early ordering of this Second World War cover is advised.

New Definitives

Readers are reminded that new £1 (low value) and £3 (high value) definitive stamps go on sale on 22 August. They were previewed in last month's *Bulletin*. The obsolescent £1 (Carrickfergus Castle) stamp will remain on sale at the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets until further notice. The plate number on the advance sheet of £3 stamps, seen by the Editor, was 1A.

Postbus News

The new Iveco Ford Turbo-Daily 59.12 in the Royal Mail passenger fleet is now in service on the postbus route serving the tiny village of Laide in Ross & Cromarty, Scotland. The 16-seater bus has galvanised lower panelwork to resist the Winter's salt!



Go-Kart Success

A team from Royal Mail National's Stamp Marketing & Production Dept recently took part in a go-kart competition with teams from stamp printers Harrison & Sons Ltd, Walsall Security Printers Ltd, The House of Questa Ltd and McCorquodale Envelopes Ltd. Shown here is Alistair Sharp, captain of the Royal Mail team, proudly holding the "Best Boss" trophy aloft. Interestingly his tracksuit is a similar colour to the new £1 and £3 stamps! (The team trophy was won by Walsall.)

Stamp '95

In last month's *Bulletin* we reported on the successful exhibition, held at Wembley exhibition Centre in April. Some of your comments on Stamp '95 are published in this month's "Postbag" section.

Four designs from the "Design-a-Stamp Competition" have been printed in a souvenir sheet format by The House of Questa and we are pleased to include a copy of this attractive

item with this *Bulletin*. The sheet reproduces the designs by Nikesh Patel, winner of the 5-9 year old group section, George Cataloni (10-13 years), Anh Nguyen (14-16 years), and Zoe Arbuckle, winner of the *Young Telegraph* competition. The sheet includes the Stamp '95 exhibition emblem, and the logos of Royal Mail, Stanley Gibbons, and The House of Questa. For collectors of exhibition material, it makes a worthy souvenir, along with the sheet reproducing the 1925 Wembley Empire Exhibition 1d stamp which was included in the Stamp '95 exhibition catalogue.

We record our thanks to Stanley Gibbons and The House of Questa for enabling us to include this sheet in the *Bulletin*.



Paul Fraser (Stanley Gibbons), Ken McAllen (The House of Questa) and Rosena Robson (Royal Mail) with the winning stamp designers

Obituary - Ian Barr

We regret to record the passing of Ian Barr who was Chairman of the Scottish Post Office Board from 1984 to 1988. Mr Barr was born in 1927 and educated at Boroughmuir High School Edinburgh. He joined the Post Office in 1955 and held numerous posts in regional and headquarters offices. He was a member of the Civil Service Selection Board, 1966-71 and Chairman of the PO National Arts Committee 1976-87. Ian Barr was a keen advocate of arts sponsorship and as Chairman in Scotland introduced what has been described as "a legendary programme of patronage". Beneficiaries included the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, the Edinburgh International Festival, Mayfest, and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama. Mr Barr's recreations were given in *Who's Who* (1995) as "composing serial

Stamp Scene

Singapore '95

The first world stamp exhibition to be held in Singapore opens at the brand new Singapore International Convention & Exhibition Centre on 1 September. Some 100,000 visitors are expected over 10 days. The exhibition is organised by the Association of Singapore Philatelists under the patronage of the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP) and the auspices of the Federation of Inter-Asian Philately (FIAP), and sponsored by Singapore Post Pte. The slogan of the exhibition is "Uniting The World Through Stamps".

Over 600 collectors will display gems from their collections in some 3000 display frames, and the Court of Honour will include material from the Royal Collection. An exhibition of rare stamps will include the only cover with a Penny Black used on 1 May 1840 (date it went on sale although it was not valid for postage until 6 May); a 1d "Post Office Mauritius" used on Ball invitation envelope; the "Pack" strip of 30 and 60

reis "Bull's Eyes" stamps of Brazil; the unique block of four of the 40c vermilion stamp of France containing a tête-bêche pair; and the Swedish "Treskillig Yellow" error of colour. The auction value of these items would run into several million pounds.

A Youth Corner will cater for young collectors, and items from Singapore's archives will include material not previously seen by the public. Seminars and talks by renowned philatelists, and stamp auctions by international auctioneers will also be held during the exhibition. Daily attractions, contests, and games will make Singapore '95 an event for families visiting the exhibition. About 200 postal administrations and dealers will have sales booths, catering for collectors of all levels. Representing Royal Mail will be Lynne Kendal, Dawn Whiteford and Gary Barnes from the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh, and Alistair Sharp and Sally Russell from Royal Mail National in London.

To promote the exhibition Singapore Post issued five pairs of stamps and miniature sheets featuring Orchids, between April 1991 and March 1995 (SG 653/5, 674/6, 725/7, 755/7, 795/7). The pairs of stamps are separated by a label which shows the exhibition logo; this also features on the miniature sheets.

The fifth Singapore '95 issue (March 1995)



Mail by Bus

Back in February and July 1993 we published letters concerning the carriage of mail on buses in the days before Royal Mail postbuses were introduced in 1968. An interesting letter on this subject was published in the May 1995 issue of *The Scots Magazine*. A Mr Grieves submitted a photograph of a mail van of the 1930s used in Sutherland. The Albion van bore the Royal cipher and was painted in Royal Mail red. The vehicle contained two rows of bench seats. Mr Grieves tells us that he was a driver with David MacBrayne Ltd, one of the last companies to operate buses with mail compartments. Until taken over in 1971, MacBrayne's buses served rural communities in the Western Highlands and Islands. *The Scots Magazine* is published monthly by D C Thomson & Co Ltd of Dundee.

Astro Space Society

Readers quoting this *Bulletin* announcement will receive a mint set of "Night Sky" stamps, courtesy of the Kiribati Philatelic Bureau, when accepted for membership of the Astro Space Society. All new members also receive a mint set of Crown Agents stamps. For details of this enterprising Society send a stamped addressed envelope or two international reply coupons to: B Lockyer, 21 Exford Close, WESTON SUPER MARE, Avon, BS23 4RE.

ABPS Awards 1995

The Association of British Philatelic Societies Awards Sub Committee has announced the awards for service to philately for 1995.

Congress Medal: Richard West – proposed by David Beech & Alan K Huggins, seconded by Frank Jones & Francis Kiddle.

Award of Merit: Paul E Blakey – nominated by Sunderland Philatelic Society; R C Elliott (Mid Devon PS); Cliff J Garside (North-East of England Philatelic Association); Lionel Jones (Eastbourne & South Downs PS); John Newell (Cornwall Philatelic Federation); Christopher M North (Isle of Ely PS); and Frank Pegley (Hampshire Philatelic Federation).

ABPS offers its congratulations to all recipients and thanks them for the many hours of service they have given for the benefit of the hobby.

The ABPS Awards Sub Committee comprises: Alan J Wood (Chair) (Wiltshire Federation), Brian L Asquith (British

Aerophilatelic Federation), Mrs Lesley Hampton (Chair of the National Youth Stamp Group), Bernard Lucas (Yorkshire Philatelic Association), and J J Martin (Society of Postal Historians). Nominations for awards were approved by the ABPS Executive Committee.



Railway Letter Stamp

Shown here is the new 25p stamp issued on 21 June by the Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway. All enquiries to: GWR Railway Postal Service, Rose Bank House, Rose Bank, off London Road, WORCESTER WR5 3DZ. The GWR is one of a number of independent railways which operates the Railway Letter Service Agreement with Royal Mail.

Themescene

The British Thematic Association has recently published the Summer edition of its magazine *Themescene*, edited by Margaret Shaïda. The theme of this issue is in keeping with the season of year. Ian Paton's article, "Philately on holiday" shows how memories of summer holidays can be rekindled on stamps of the countries visited. Buying stamps depicting holiday destinations makes a welcome change from the usual seaside postcard, stick of rock or tacky souvenir. Derek Gallimore of the recently formed Cricket Philatelic Society (see January *Bulletin*, p. 132), writes on "Cricket on stamps", and Stanley Simpson of the United Nations Study Group looks at the different organisations within the European Community. For details of BTA membership write to: Ian Paton, 15 Humberstone Road, CAMBRIDGE CB14 1JD. Copies of *Themescene* are available from Elizabeth Miller, 258 Torrisholme Road, LANCASTER LA1 2TU, price £1.

Look Before You Lick!

6. First and Foremost – Part 2

MATT HINTON

Continued from July

This article continues a look at some more of the varieties available on the Machin pre-decimal series.

Heads

Originally two portraits of The Queen were used – one, with a pale background, on the 10d and 1s, and one, with a solid background, on the rest of the values. This second version contrasted poorly with the bust and so a new design (Head B) was developed. The main differences between the two heads is that “A” shows a flat base whilst “B” is very curved at the bottom and creates a shadow effect beneath it. This was caused by deliberately shining light onto the bust from above.

By far the most dramatic example of the effect the head can have on the scarcity, and thus value, of stamps is that of the 4d olive brown sepia gum arabic (GA) stamp from sheets. The transition from head A to head B coincided roughly with that from GA to Polyvinyl Alcohol (PVA) gum. However, a few sheets of the head B issue were released on the remaining stocks of GA paper. Most of these were used postally and only a very small number escaped the tongues of the public. As a result, head A with GA retails at 20p (SG Spec U11A[2]), and head B with GA attracts a price tag of up to several thousand pounds

(U11B). It is essential to check carefully before purchasing this rarity as PVA gum can appear as shiny as GA and head A, when produced in coils, can often appear curved at the base. The head also affects the value of the 4d scarlet CB GA where “A” (from booklets) fetches about £12 and “B” (from multivalued coils, SG U15B) sells for only around 15p, and the 6d – where “A” (from sheets) is worth 20p (U18A[1]) and “B” (from coils) will cost you about £5 for the 150 screen version (see Part 1 of this article).

Gum

As I mentioned above, the change in heads occurred at about the same time as the change in gum, although the two should not be specifically linked. The original GA caused problems as it is a natural product and supply problems tended to cause price fluctuations. (It is used for many purposes, one of the main ones being as a gloss in books.) It also likes to curl and crack and so an alternative – a synthetic product called Polyvinyl alcohol (PVA) – was developed. The 3d, 4d (sepia and scarlet), 1s, 1s 6d, and 1s 9d values exist with both gums. Other than the 4d sepia, the only stamp where the price differs significantly between the gums is the 4d CB head A scarlet where GA from booklets costs about £12 and PVA from sheets (SG U13A) around 12p.



2d stamp – Types I (Cyl 1) and II

Value

The position of the value tablet tends to vary between multipositives. The 2d from cylinder 1 (SG U5), for example, shows the value much closer to the bust than on copies from cylinders 5 and 6, and from coils (SG U6). The 4d left band and centre band from the "Stamps for Cooks" prestige stamp booklet (SG U16 and U14) show the value much closer to the bottom margin than on copies from other sources. The value tablet contains screening dots on some cylinder 12 examples of the 4d sepia 2B PVA head A (SG U12A[3], and 4d sepia CB PVA head A. Both command a premium but are not particularly scarce.

Screening is also visible in the borders of some copies of the 4d scarlet CB PVA from stitched booklets. They only cost around £2 more than an unscreened variety.

Packs

The presentation packs issued at the time exist with English or German text. The German version being much more desirable is thus much more valuable. Some packs were sold in Japan and contained an insert card in Japanese.

Specimens

A few copies of the "Stamps for Cooks" booklet had their contents overprinted SPECIMEN which results in an overprinted 1d 2B PVA head B (SG U2Bs), 4d CB PVA head B (U14s), and 5d 2B PVA head B (U17s). The 4d retails at about £20, the 5d around £35 and the 1d, in perfect condition, attracts a price tag of about £100 (around £25 with trimmed perforations). A complete booklet would probably sell for about £1000 to £1500 and each separate pane £400 to

£500. It should also be noted that in a print run of 385,750, only 10,848 have the panes attached to one another by staples, the remainder of the booklets were stitched. The stapled versions are, obviously, much scarcer and sell for about £50, as opposed to just £10 for the stitched variety. The "Stamps for Cooks" book also exists with missing phosphor (each pane selling around £150), uncoated paper on the se-tenant pane (mostly broken up and retailing at about £500 for a strip of five), or with a broad band at the left on the se-tenant pane (not on the left two 4d values). This last book can fetch £500.

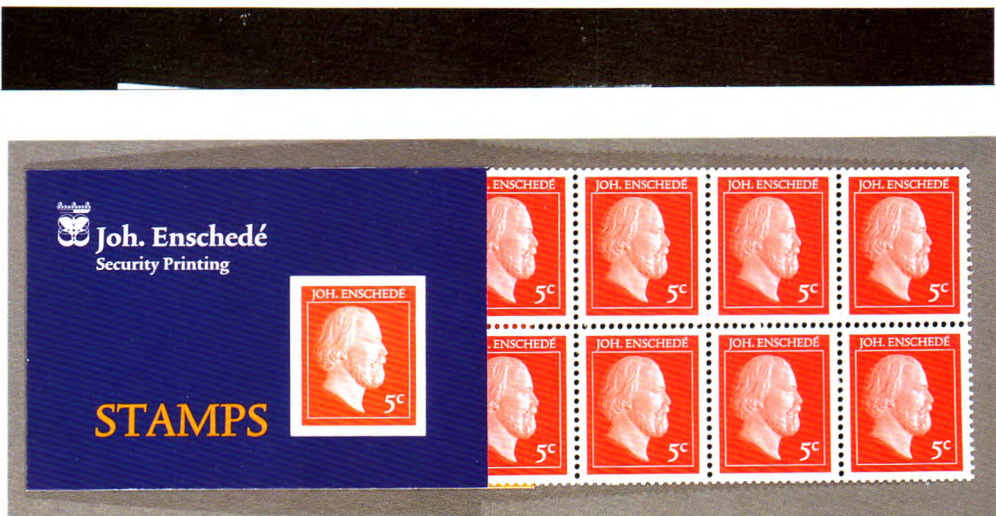
Booklets

Other notable booklets include the January 1969 2s with 2B on the 4 x 4d pane. This is worth £100 or so, against 50p for CB. The CB September 1968 version, however, costs around £500 or more – as opposed to 50p for 2B. Also look out for the 6s book from May 1968 where the gum is PVA. Here the price can be more than 15 times the £15 or so of the GA counterpart. Finally, the December 1970 5s book exists with the 6 x 5d pane partially imperforate. This can retail at upwards of £500. There are plenty more imperforates as well as other errors and varieties to choose from. Most are listed in the SG GB *Specialised Catalogue* Volume 3 which was reviewed in this magazine, in February 1994.

To conclude, my pre-decimal "gem" (although sadly not actually mine!) is the tête-bêche horizontal pair of the 4d scarlet CB PVA. This would cost you a mere £3000 or so!

© Matt Hinton 1995

Illustrations courtesy of Hampstead Castle, Machin dealers



the Walsall book of ten 1st-class stamps with the back cover advertising the Rupert Bear Greetings book. This promotional book was first issued with security stamps (the ones with elliptical perforations) on 1 November 1993. As is usual with Walsall books, new plate combinations appeared at fairly regular intervals and by July 1994 eleven different ones had been used. No more had been seen by the end of 1994 and it seemed that the book had come to the end of its life. This appeared to be confirmed by the fact that the validity notice in these books, which prohibited use of the stamps on certain overseas mail had been overtaken by a change of policy which allowed them to be used on mail to all countries. On 10 January 1995, Walsall's book of ten 1st-class stamps with the new "block" cover design was issued with the plate combination W/35 W/23 W/28. As was to be expected, the new books had the "all-country" validity notice. What was not expected, however, was that on 13 January, a new printing run of books with the Rupert Bear cover and bearing the obsolete validity notice, was issued. We know it was a new printing, not so much because of the date as because it, too, contained the plate combination W/35 W/23 W/28. As a result, when John Doe

Enschedé presentation book

sheet form, while only one, Harrison & Sons, produces all the coil stamps. So far, all stamps in books have been printed by only three of the firms. The exception is Joh. Enschedé Security Printing BV of Haarlem in the Netherlands but this may be set to change.

While Royal Mail goes to great lengths to ensure a consistent stamp product no matter which firm is contracted, it is left to each firm to decide which printing presses and other machinery to use. Probably the most scope for individual initiative is provided by the means used to separate the printed stamps into booklet panes and to attach these to the covers, as well as to print the covers themselves. Each firm which produces GB booklets has its own methods.

Enschedé have the contract to print all the UK standard unified (non-country) sheet definitives other than the basic inland letter rates. They use the photogravure process and an account of their methods was given by Douglas Muir in the *Bulletin* of January 1992. The firm was founded as long ago as 1703 but is thoroughly modern in outlook and equipment. It recently commissioned a new bookmaking machine which incorporates several features of their own

Decimal Stamp Books – 22

D G A MYALL

Greetings book error

This year's greetings book, the first to be printed by lithography, is already providing collectors with lots to look for in the different plate combinations. These can all be found with some diligence and a little help from friends in different parts of the country who may receive different printings. There is one book, however, of which only one example is thought to exist and which will cost you at least £1000, although the lucky finder paid a mere £2.50 for it. It has a double error; both the phosphor cylinder and the silver colour cylinder failed to print. The result is not only a pane with no phosphor bands but one with no figure of value and no Queen's head. The book, which was bought from a post office in Perthshire, was due to be auctioned by dealer Robert Murray of Edinburgh on 19 June after the copy for this article was submitted.

Sainsbury promotion

On 26 June a new book of ten 1st-class stamps went on sale at branches of Sainsbury's and Savacentre in connection with a competition being run in the July and August issues of Sainsbury's *The Magazine*. You have to guess the number of stamp books contained in a Sainsbury's shopping trolley. The inside back cover of the book contains a voucher which enables you to have a free guess. You may have

up to five guesses in each issue of the magazine provided each guess is accompanied by a stamp book entry voucher. The first prize is a year's free shopping at Sainsbury's. There are eight runners up prizes of £100 shopping vouchers. The competition closes 31 August 1995 and the books are available only from the stores until then. From 5 September they can be obtained from the Bureau and philatelic outlets. The books have "Sainsbury's Promotion" on the yellow strip at the right in place of the usual "Pull open" instruction. They were printed by Questa from plates Q4 Q4/Q2.

Questa 1st-class books with type 1 value

I am now able to illustrate the two 1st NVI value types mentioned here in June. The type 1 value in Questa books of ten 1st-class stamps has still been seen only from this plate combination, but this has now been used in the Sainsbury promotion book mentioned above so that makes another one to add to your collection. To complete the picture, I also illustrate the third type of this value to the same scale; this can be found only on the self-adhesive stamp.

Validity notices

It seems that my short note on the subject published in the April *Bulletin* has caused a little confusion through my using the word "re-issued" instead of "re-printed" when referring to



T1 thin value



T2 thick value



T3 large value

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impressive and we could very well see GB stamp books from this firm in the not too distant future. They also print stamps in rolls!

Harrison booklet cylinder B4

Since I wrote my note published in the April *Bulletin*, further information has come to light. Some very clever experts are able to reconstitute the primary printing sheet by studying the minute but constant flaws caused by the photogravure process used by Harrison. Their studies prove that there is only one cylinder numbered B4 after all. This was prepared for the panes of eight stamps used in the £2 machine vend booklet. What appears to have happened is that the bottom half of some panes was removed to make the panes of four for the £1 book. My thanks to Dr Ian Hill for this information.

© D G A Myall 1995

New £3 Stamp First Day Postmarks



29 Aug

4 Sep

4 Sep

4 Sep

4 Sep*

4 Sep

Communications stamp cards

50p book Sea Charts 4

£1 book Inspiration for Victory 4

£2 book Rowland Hill 4

10 x 1st book – Sainsburys

10 x 1st book – Someone Special



4 Sep

5 Sep

26 Sep

3 Oct

3 Oct

3 Oct*

24 Oct

26 Oct

Priority Service envelopes

Communications stamps & pack

Rugby League stamp cards

Rugby League stamps & pack

Christmas aerogramme

10 x 1st book – W H Smith

Christmas stamp cards

Varieties of Yesteryear – 7

KG VI 1d Definitive: The King's Hair Re-styled

FRED GEE

In view of the attention which has been focussed, during the past few months, on the 50th anniversary of the ending of the Second World War, it seems appropriate to introduce into this series of articles, at this stage, a stamp which was in use at that time and which offers to the collector an easily obtainable, but often overlooked, variety. The stamp concerned is the George VI 1d definitive.

Although the colours of the lower value stamps were changed twice (these colour changes were dealt with in James Mackay's article, *Bulletin* March 1994), the designs used for the KG VI photogravure definitives remained unchanged throughout the reign. Not only did the overall designs remain unchanged; the detail within the designs also remained constant throughout, suggesting either that the same multipositives were used for all the printings of each value, or that the technique had by then been mastered of producing successive identical multipositives from the original image. (The "multipositive" is a sheet of duplicated photographic images of the stamp design, from which the printing cylinders are made.)

There was just one exception to this consistency of detail throughout the lifetime of these designs: in the case of the 1d value, when its colour was changed in 1941 to a paler scarlet, a new multipositive was brought into use which showed slight differences from that used for the stamps printed in the original rich deep scarlet. After a time, however, this new multipositive was replaced (or retouched) so that the detail of the 1d stamp became once again more or less identical to its previous state.

The printings from these two different versions of the 1d multipositive can most easily be distinguished if one studies the manner in which the King's hair has been styled above and behind the left ear. In type I (and here I refer to the 1941 paler scarlet stamp) there is a distinct strand of lighter hair falling in an "11 o'clock to 5 o'clock" direction and ending approximately 1mm behind the top of the ear. In type II this lighter strand of hair has been combed out completely.



The 1d definitives of King George VI: the light strand of hair is found only on the earlier printings of the paler scarlet stamp (lower left).

The stamps in the original deeper scarlet (1937-41) do not have the lighter strand of hair, and neither do those printed from 1951 on in pale blue. It is, therefore, only the paler scarlet 1d stamps which were printed from 1941 to 1951 which display this variety. Type II is, if anything, a little less common than type I, but this is still – whether you require a used or a mint stamp – an inexpensive gap to fill.

Fred Gee points out, concerning his article in the March *Bulletin* (page 205), that the caption to the illustration should have referred to the 6d stamps of 1865-69, not 1862-64. © Fred Gee 1995

Late News

An exhibition entitled "Post Haste" opened at the National Postal Museum on 12 July. This features transport and the Post Office's continued exploitation of developing technologies to carry the mail more speedily and efficiently. Report next month.

We regret that the date of the Weston-super-Mare Phil Soc Annual exhibition was wrongly given as 21 July in the July "Events". This event took place on 1 July. We apologise to the Society and to readers for any inconvenience caused by the error.

"Victorian Posts" – NPM Special exhibition

For anyone interested in the postal and social history of Victorian times the National Postal Museum's current special exhibition is a "must". It is a skillful blend of philately, postal history and related documentation and artefacts, well-arranged, clearly captioned, and signposted by some apt and amusing graphics. The exhibition, opened on 9 May, remains on show until April 1996.

Until the introduction of Rowland Hill's reforms in 1840 the Post Office operated solely to raise revenue for the Treasury. This exhibition shows how, during Victoria's reign, the PO's *raison d'être* changed to a more "service" based organisation with a growing social conscience. Purpose built post offices were established with "counter services" – precursors to those we know today. Hitherto postal business had been transacted at postmasters' residential and/or commercial premises.

Exhibition Tour

The tour begins in the entrance/shop area with a free standing display on the life and work of Rowland Hill – concentrating on the period from the production of his famous pamphlet until his death in 1879. (Royal Mail commemorates the bicentenary of Hill's birth with two stamps in the "Communications" set on 5 September.)

The first item on display in the ground floor gallery is a small but delightful drawing of Queen Victoria by Henry Courbold used by Perkins Bacon on banknotes. Corbould, it will be recalled, drew the head of Victoria used by Charles Heath to engrave the die for the Penny Black (see May 1990 *Bulletin*, p.208). On the opposite wall is a larger portrait of Victoria and an engraving of a sorting office, c.1840 (reproduced here).

Two panels tell the story of the Rural Post Revision of the 1850s when PO staff visited every village and hamlet to set up new services and bring many rural communities into the postal network for the first time. By Victoria's diamond jubilee (1897) every house in the country received a mail delivery. On display is a picture of the man in charge of the Rural Revision – Sir John Tilly, later Secretary to the

PO, 1864-80. There is a special study of the changes in north Bedfordshire, including maps, covers and photographs of two old, thatched post offices (Milton Bryan and Soulbury), and rural mail carts. The display headed "Mail by Rail" includes a time bill for the London-Preston service on the London & Birmingham, Grand Junction and North Union Railway, c.1838, and illustrations of Travelling Post Office carriages. The hazards of sorting mail on a fast-moving train are pointed out. A Victorian postal uniform is displayed on a dummy, standing by four Victorian wall and two lamp posting boxes.

The display on the stairs to the mezzanine gallery deals with the introduction of registered mail in 1841 and includes designs for registered envelopes and metal plates, of c. 1860, affixed to pillar boxes warning people not to put letters containing money in the box – rather hand over the counter for registration.

Great Sea Race

The mezzanine gallery exhibits deal with cancellations and the introduction of steam mail ships, the PO Savings Bank, and the Parcel Post. The display explains the development of a combined date and cancelling stamp – popularly referred to as "duplex" by collectors. In April 1838 a "Great Sea Race" took place to New York with Brunel's *Great Western* sailing from Bristol and the *Sirius* from Cork. The *Great Western* set out four days later but arrived just a few hours after the *Sirius*. The race proved the speed and reliability of steam ships for mail carriage. Enter Samuel Cunard of Nova Scotia who, with



"The New Post Office Envelope" caricature by "Moll-Roony"

George Burns of Glasgow and David McIver of Liverpool, set up his company in 1839. They won a seven year contract for a fortnightly mail service from Liverpool to Halifax and Boston. The service to New York started in 1848. This led to rivalry with the Americans and the start of the famous "Blue Riband". The first holder, Cunard's *Persia*, made the crossing in 9 days 5 hours. The display illustrates some of the ships and the *Illustrated London News* (6 July 1844) shows the journey of the Overland Mail from Alexandria to Folkestone. Posters advertise the Ship Letter service, and an interesting PO document shows the colour codes for overseas mail bags, c.1878.

Savings Bank and Parcel Post

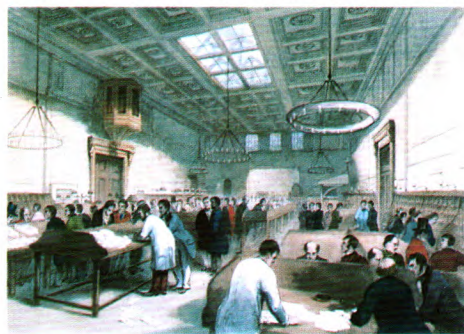
The PO Savings Bank was not set up until 1861 but had been suggested by Samuel Whitbread MP as early as 1807. The minimum deposit of one shilling (5p) was a considerable sum for many working people, so in 1880 a "savings slip" was introduced allowing the poor to affix penny stamps as and when they could afford them. Included in the exhibits is a cartoon of Mr Punch trying to persuade a workman to invest, and photographs of early School Savings Banks. Illustrations from the *ILN* record the introduction of the Parcel Post in August 1883; also shown are early notices and photos of parcel vans. On the landing between the mezzanine and top galleries is a display relating to PO motor transport of the 19th century.

The top gallery displays are a delight to any collector of Victorian stamps, including many registration sheets from the NPM collections. The displays open with the proof sheet of the Penny Black without lower corner letters (1 April 1840, produced for approval by the Chancellor of the Exchequer); a registration sheet of the "VR" Penny Black (15 April 1840, 13 stamps removed); and the original master die. *Readers should note that the proof sheet will only be on show for a limited period.*

The section dealing with the Treasury Competition of 1839 includes material from the Royal Collection as well as the NPM. Essays by Henry Cole, R W Sievier, Francis Coffin, George Dickinson, and James Chalmers are shown, also a printed letter from Chalmers suggesting "slips" to prepay postage (February 1838). On display are examples of the famous "Rainbow Trials" of 1840 and small blocks of 12 impressions with top right corner voided; a fabulous cover bearing a Penny Black and no fewer than nine Twopence Blues; a Penny Black on FDC (6 May); Hill's diary for May 1840 (from PO Archives), and an 1838 printed

Circular by Robert Wallace MP describing the iniquities of the existing (unreformed) postal service.

Two charming portrait renditions, by stamp designer Clive Abbott, of Charles Heath (engraver of the Penny Black) and William Wyon



Victorian Sorting Office, c.1840

(engraver of the famous medal) are featured – used on postcards in the Museum's 1990 "Postal Personalities" series.

Introduction of Envelopes

The general acceptance of adhesive stamps increased the demand for envelopes; their use was commonplace by the 1850s. Displayed are very rare examples from the 1780s, and Napoleonic War period. Contemporary illustrations show the manufacture and folding of envelopes as demonstrated by Waterlow & Sons and De La Rue at the Great Exhibition in 1851. The "Mulready" and its imitator are well represented, including the "Moll-Roony" and John Leech caricatures, a Mulready addressed to its designer, and an illustration of the steam-driven machine used at Clowes to print the envelopes.

Examples of the rare Parliamentary envelopes ("letter covers") of January/May 1840 are shown with the official instructions for their sale and use at the Houses of Parliament (from PO Archives).

Pride of place in the section on "Problems of Security" goes to registration sheets of Victorian stamps. Those displayed will change every three months. Those on show initially were the 1d pink embossed envelope, 1863 1d red with corner letters (plate 76), 1841 2d blue with white lines (plate 3), 1841 1d red (plate 12). Under the heading "The Impact of Printing Technology" are registration sheets of the 1887 "Jubilee" 1s stamp, 1881 1d lilac (plate 3), 1855 4d (plate 1), and a double printers' sheet of the 1883 5d indigo (plate 2) lacking some stamps from the top right hand pane of 120. The work of Jean



Charles Heath – rendition by Clive Abbott (NPM postcard 1990)

Ferdinand Joubert de la Ferté, engraver of the 1855 4d, is recalled.

Before and After the Stamp Committee

De La Rue won the contract to print low value stamps from January 1880, but the dull colours of their "unified" series of 1883/4 caused problems. A committee set up to find a solution looked at over 100 essays in two colours and on various coloured papers. The resulting 1887 "Jubilee" series, pre-1883 and the "unified" issues are displayed, together with artwork, die proof, and registration sheet (plate 2) of the 1884 10s stamp. Especially impressive is the registration sheet of the 1882 £5 even though only half the 56 stamps (two panes of 28) now remain.

Amongst the artefacts exhibited are some attractive Victorian postal balances and letter scales, including those presented to the NPM by its Association of Friends (see June *Bulletin*, p.307). In a display panel near the Manager's office are presentation visuals of the 1987 Victorian Britain stamps, engraved by Czeslaw Slania, together with the master dies and proofs of Slania's engravings. This display is particularly topical as Slania has also engraved part of the

designs of the forthcoming "Communications" set.

Publications

Four useful "handouts" are available free at the exhibition – "Victorian Posts", "The Rural Revision in North Bedfordshire", "The Origin of the Postage Stamp", and "The Introduction of Envelopes". The five postcards produced for this exhibition are on sale at the Museum shop (see June *Bulletin* front cover and p.305). Many of the items on display feature in the "Gems from the R M Phillips Collection" series published in this *Bulletin* between May 1972 and July 1993, and in Douglas Muir's excellent book *Postal Reform and The Penny Black* (reviewed here, June 1990). This book is on sale at the Museum, price £12.50.

Douglas and Tony Gammons are to be congratulated on a well-presented exhibition of interest to casual visitors as well as serious philatelists or postal historians. This was Tony's final major exhibition, he is now enjoying a well-earned retirement.

The National Postal Museum, situated in King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP, a short walk from St Paul's Cathedral and underground station, is open Monday Friday 9.30-16.30. Admission free. Enquiries: Tel. 0171-239 5420.

Out of the Arc...

Curiosities from the Post Office Archives

12. The lighter side

The Post Office has since its inception been the target of satirists, cartoonists, comedians and the like, providing them with a rich source of material.

One of the most consistent was the cartoonist Joseph Lee (1901-75) whose work appeared in a

number of publications. Between 1934 and 1965 Lee worked for the *London Evening News*, where he drew the London Laughs series. The Post Office Archives & Records Centre has acquired 20 of Lee's original drawings from this series, all of which poke fun at the Post Office. Four of these are illustrated here.

These drawings are just some of the many thousands of historical images held by us. They include Posters, Maps, Prints, Engravings, Paintings, Photographs, etc. Further details can be obtained from: Post Office Archives & Records Centre, Freeling House, Mount Pleasant Complex, Phoenix Place entrance, LONDON EC1A 1BB.



"You needn't cheer that one, stupid. He hasn't come thousands of miles for the Coronation. He's just a Postman in his natty new summer ensemble"



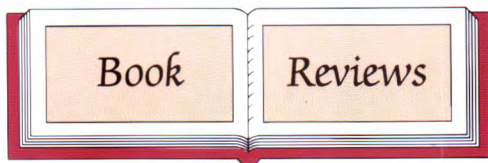
"It's to my brother I' Yorkshire and you can tell your Airman there's a nice large field at the back o' the house"



"Shh, don't wake your daddy he's dreaming of a white christmas"



"No clothing coupons for days? surely they don't expect a pedigree Pekinese to go about in last season's overcoat?"



The National Postal Museum's annual reports – published since 1989 – contain much useful and interesting reading and have become collectors' items in their own right. The *Review of 1994*, now available continues the high standards of its five predecessors. In his foreword, Mr Peter Howarth, Managing Director of Royal Mail, comments on the expansion of the NPM into the area formerly occupied by the London Chief Post Office – enabling the Museum to show off some of its larger artefacts and illustrate the story of mail transport. A more balanced and more interesting, museum will result. Stan Goron the Manager provides a concise overview of his museum during 1994 – a year, he says, “of wait-and-see as far as the Museum's future was concerned. The uncertainties over whether the Post Office was to be privatised or not meant that key decisions were deferred...” Nevertheless the Museum was able to draw up proposals for displays in the old Chief Office area, and to “take-over” the 60-strong PO Heritage Vehicle Fleet. This is not yet available for viewing – emphasis has been on getting all the vehicles together in satisfactory conditions in one place.

Under “Work in Progress” we read of the ongoing research into British special stamp issues, the remounting and cataloguing programme, publication of the “StampMaster GB” computer catalogue, based on the Museum's “Chronolist” of British stamps, work on registration sheets, and the important work carried out by three Friends of the Museum (Mike Bament, Cyril Macey, and Don Staddon). Of particular interest to collectors of modern GB is the news that some 1770 registration sheets of QEII stamps have not been “properly housed together with 60 large sheets of trials and other proofs”. Derrick Page has undertaken sterling work on the NPM's “Stamps of the World” collection – over 4000 pages are now on display. (This important collection was described by Stan Goron in the May 1993 *Bulletin*.) During 1994 some 63 researchers made appointments to see material not on view in the Museum, there were 42 group visits, and the total number of visitors was up 21% on 1993 – due, in part, to the attraction of the Freddie Mercury Collection.

Christine Jones, newly appointed Collections Manager, Artefacts, reports on the material in her care. Items are received almost daily, but despite the backlog awaiting processing, Christine aims to make items available for research, answer public enquiries, and handle requests for loan of NPM artefacts. During 1994 the Museum acquired over 400 pieces of stamp artwork, 687 proofs and essays, 105 postal history items, 125 model vehicles, and 454



"artefacts unclassified" as well as stamps. Some of the most interesting acquisitions are recorded and illustrated in the *Review*, including unadopted artwork of some 1994 and 1995 stamp issues. An eight-page insert provides a detailed listing. Amongst the registration sheets now held at the NPM are those for the 60p stamp issued in books, and the 1st class NVI Boots label.

Mike Bament describes the acquisition of an original Penny Post handstamp (for Rockbeare, Devon) – the handstamp being found by a lady clearing a small stream which runs through her garden. The NPM's major exhibitions of 1994 reflect the wide range of its activities – covering Victorian Valentines and Addressing Postcodes. For the latter the last remaining "SPLSM" machine, originally at Norwich, was brought to the Museum – illustrations show it being "manoeuvred gingerly into position in the ground floor outside the Museum shop."

Alan Griffiths provides a lengthy, well-written account of the 1964 Shakespeare Festival stamps – one of the most popular British stamp issues ever, and certainly the one which put British stamps "on the map" when the PO finally took an interest in philately in the early 1960s. Some delightful unadopted designs for the 2s 6d stamp are shown, as well as photogravure essays for 3d, 6d, 1s 3d and 1s 6d values in designs by Robin and Christopher Ironside (their Hamlet design was used for the 2s 6d stamp, printed in recess).

Krystyna Koscia reports on conservation work – a subject of growing interest to philatelists. Krystyna warns of the need to ensure transparent film protector sleeves or envelopes are chemically stable and inert. Sound advice is given, listing organisations supplying information on paper conservation and companies from which NPM obtains conservation products. Jean Farrugia MBE, the Post Office's Chief Archivist, reports on the work of her department – 1994 was a busy year with the number of researchers, other enquiries, and the number of modern business records handled up by 10, 30 and 70% respectively. Amongst the acquisitions in 1994 was the Carter Collection of TPO material (see January 1995 *Bulletin*, p.130).

The *Review* includes the traditional illustrated annual listing of NPM postcards and special handstamps. Details are given of cards sold out or withdrawn during the year and of the number of items cancelled with the five special cancels and the Museum's regular Maltese Cross

postmark. On the last page, Ray Pottle reports on the numerous activities of the Museum's Association of Friends – including visits to the new Royal Mail sorting office at Preston, Pitney Bowes (meter machine manufacturers), Harrisons, and the Royal Mail Underground Railway.

As always the *Review* has been skilfully edited by Douglas Muir (a former *Bulletin* Editor), and is a pleasure to read cover to cover, or simply to browse through. 32 pages, card covers, A4 format. Available to callers at the Museum shop, or by post from British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT. Price £5.

Postcards of the British Empire Exhibition Wembley 1924 & 1925, by Mike Perkins and Bill Tonkin. 228 A4 pages. Casebound, with dustjacket. ISBN 0 9524065 0 0. Available from; Exhibition Study Group, 23 Bramley Way, WEST WICKHAM, Kent, BR4 9NT, price £17.95

In 1978 Andrew Brooks and Fred Fletcher published a handbook on British exhibitions and their postcards and immediately triggered off widespread interest in this fascinating but hitherto rather neglected field. As a result, the Exhibition Study Group was formed in 1981 and has since gone from strength to strength, producing a number of useful handbooks and catalogues.

This latest monograph, however, is a remarkable *tour de force*, and complements the 1984 publication, by Don Knight and Alan Sabey, of *The Lion Roars at Wembley*, which dealt mainly with the exhibition itself but included a comparatively brief section on collectables, including postcards.

In the intervening years a vast amount of new information has come to light, and many collectors (all meticulously acknowledged) have contributed their findings, with the result that the present volume is a prodigious tome listing, describing and, for the most part, illustrating no fewer than 3900 postcards produced in connection with the Empire Exhibition. These are listed in alphabetical order by subject or publisher, from Adelaide to Zoological Society of London, with copious cross-references where appropriate.

Doubtless this is not quite the last word on the subject; its appearance will inevitably stimulate further interest and bring forth hitherto unrecorded items. The authors are already planning a separate price-guide and supplement to cover this eventuality. *J Mackay*

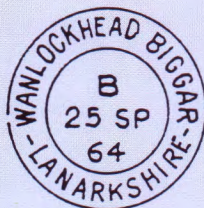
Wanlockhead – Britain's Highest Post Office

JAMES MACKAY

From time to time the question is posed: which is the highest post office in the British Isles? The answer is Wanlockhead in Dumfries and Galloway region. It is situated in the former lead-mining village at an altitude of 451m (1500 feet). Its nearest rival, 200 feet lower and about three miles distant, is Leadhills in Lanarkshire, now the southernmost part of Strathclyde region.

At one time these two villages were linked by a narrow-gauge railway line, mainly serving the leadmines but also carrying passengers, and therefore ranking as the highest passenger line in the UK. Leadhills was the more important of the two villages and boasted the oldest public library in the British Isles (1741) and the longest living person, John Taylor (1637-1770). It lost its record of the highest post office, however, when a receiving house was opened at Wanlockhead on 17 June 1854. Although in Dumfriesshire, due to geographic and communications factors it was actually subordinate to Glasgow over 80 miles to

WANLOCKHEAD



the north and was, in fact, Glasgow's remotest sub office. At that time it was given an undated, framed name-stamp simply inscribed WANLOCKHEAD (1), together with a brass mailbag seal. This "Scots local" handstamp is known only as a backstamp, up to 1860 when such undated stamps were withdrawn.

In that year Wanlockhead sub office was transferred to the control of Abington in Lanarkshire, but on 4 June 1889 it was re-assigned to Lanark. For almost 30 years it had got by without a datestamp but was now allocated a Climax rubber dater (2), but it is unlikely to have been issued as it was granted telegraphic facilities with the call sign WLH. Consequently a neat little steel "thimble" (3) and a new mailbag seal were then supplied. Money order and savings bank facilities were added on 1 September 1891.

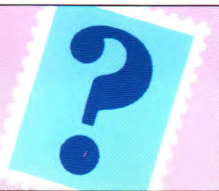
In 1890 Wanlockhead was transferred to Biggar, but reverted to Moffat in 1902 and again came under Abington on 17 February 1903. The following year it was subordinated to Leadhills. Two decades elapsed before it was elevated to the status of an independent sub office (22 September 1924) and given the postal address "Wanlockhead, Lanarkshire"; this error was very quickly pointed out and on 1 October its address was rectified to "Wanlockhead, Dumfriesshire".

Throughout all these changes the postmark remained immutable and the thimble continued to serve as a canceller until 1933 when a double-circle handstamp was supplied. Since then various combined datestamps have been used, their inscriptions reflecting the postal address of this remote hilltop office (4). On 1 July 1935 Wanlockhead was reduced in status, being again transferred to the control of Abington. With the successive reduction of Abington and Biggar, Wanlockhead is now subordinate to Motherwell and on 21 November 1988 became a scale payment sub office with the postcode ML12.

The title of highest post office in the British Isles is not in dispute, but the actual altitude of the office has fluctuated over the years, due to the fact that it has changed hands on a number of occasions (three times in the past decade alone) and therefore been relocated in different houses. The village itself straggles at different heights and angles, about the curve of a hill called the Dod, and consequently the actual height of the office above sea level has varied by as much as 100 feet.

© James Mackay 1995

Competition



Win £100 of British stamps

The prizes for this month's competition are supplied by Royal Mail.

★ 1st prize: Order £100 of British stamps/books/postcards etc – as on current British Philatelic Bureau stock list

★ 2 x 2nd prize: New £1 and £3 Definitives in unmounted mint block of four

★ 5 x 3rd prize: New £1 and £3 Definitives, unmounted mint singles

To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: August Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL to arrive by 22 September. You may submit as many entries as you like but each must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

1. In what year was Marconi born?
2. Who engraved the portraits on the Communications stamps?
3. What was the occupation of Joseph Lee?
4. Which organisation is sponsoring the "Singapore '95" exhibition?
5. Who suggested a PO Savings Bank in 1807?

The answers will be found in this *Bulletin*. The competition is not open to employees, their families and agents, of Royal Mail.

The winners of the May competition were:

G Denton of Wiltshire (PUC £1 stamp); R Jenkins of New Jersey (Penny Black); R Lockwood of Buckinghamshire and F Longbottom of W Yorkshire (Canada 3d "Beavers" stamp).

The answers were: 1. Siobhan Keaney; 2. 1866; 3. Robson Lowe; 4. R J Mitchell; 5. Intaglio.

Our thanks to all who entered.



Stamp '95

A number of readers responded to the invitation in June and July to comment on this exhibition, held at Wembley in April.

Mrs H Bolam of Berkshire "found visiting the exhibition venue to be easier to get to than the Royal Horticultural Halls for Stampex. It was a nicer venue; lighter and airier and all in one place, whereas with the Royal Horticultural Halls, I find I have to keep popping backwards and forwards (to compare prices). I was delighted to see additional postal administrations which do not normally attend Stampex, in particular Greenland and Hong Kong. Maybe a few of the smaller and more obscure postal administrations would like to attend in future. However I was disappointed not to see as many of the regular dealers there as at Stampex. My overall view is that I would prefer to site all stamp exhibitions at Wembley, especially as it has better parking and tube train facilities."

Alan Godfrey of Warwickshire visited Stamp '95 along with his 11 year old daughter. He wrote: "I must say how impressed I was with this new venture. The whole atmosphere was exciting and this was transmitted not only to my

daughter, but also to all the other young people I saw there. I feel sure that the more staid members of the collecting community (and dare I say older collectors), would not appreciate so many children and would prefer the quiet, somnolent ambience of Stampex. However, I am firmly convinced that we must make our hobby as accessible to all ages and sexes and that Stamp '95 was a step in the right direction. It was disappointing that more dealers did not support the event – no doubt through a mixture of motives – perhaps some expecting the event to flop, others who felt that Stampex provided sufficient coverage. If the reactions to Stamp '95 are favourable in the philatelic press, there will be more demand at Stamp '96 or '97. My main concern is that the venue at Wembley may not be the easiest to get to, and on Sunday we had to negotiate access through traffic visiting the carboot sale in the car park, and car parking at £4 certainly offsets free admission. We also felt that the food and drink was expensive, and unlike RHS Halls in Victoria, Pizzahut/Macdonalds are not just round the corner. Despite these minor moans, the nine of us travelling from Warwickshire/Worcestershire had a terrific day out. Roll on the next one!"

D Phillip of Essex thought that "on the whole it was a well organised show with free admission and exhibition guide (pity about the car park charge), plenty of room down the aisles and a good size cafeteria area. The display of the British Empire Exhibition stamps was for me the icing on the cake as these are one of my favourite
The queue outside Stamp '95 on the opening day



GB issues (it is a pity today's commemoratives are not of this quality). One of my reasons for visiting the show was the GB and Hong Kong stands, and the valuation service. Maybe I was expecting too much – my valuation expert just quoted prices from a SG catalogue and did not seem to have any knowledge of what was being shown or told him. The "Antiques Roadshow" (BBC TV programme) has experts in different fields. The Royal Mail had a big stand with only small counters, and did not have sheet stamps available – only booklets and presentation packs. At least I did not have to wait to be served, but was disappointed that I couldn't buy everything from the Bureau stock list. At the Hong Kong stand I bought the latest stamps and miniature sheets, even if I could not find a dealer with early HK miniature sheets for sale. I personally was disappointed with Stamp '95, especially with the Royal Mail stand. I don't think I would go to Wembley again."

Phillips Collection and National Postal Museum

Kenneth F Chapman has received a letter from Frank J Langfield, first head of the British Philatelic Bureau and founding Editor of the *Bulletin*, commenting on his article "Wedgwood Benn PMG Extraordinary" (December 1994). As the article stated, the late Ken Hind was the Post Office representative who negotiated with Reginald M Phillips over the gift of the latter's collection of Victorian British stamps towards a new National Postal Museum. However, Mr Langfield explains that he first handled the correspondence which had passed between Downing Street and Mr Phillips and that it was he, Langfield, who urged the PO to accept the offer made by Mr Phillips. *Inter alia*, Langfield wrote:

I recognised that in his collection Phillips had

recovered most of the material that had gone missing from the official collection over the years and recommended very strongly that we should take up his offer. The recommendation got nowhere. Not until Phillips backed his offer with cash did the Post Office Directorate evince any interest. It was an uphill task trying to generate any kind of recognition of collectors' interests in those days.

It is interesting that both Hind and Langfield express similar views on the official PO attitude towards philatelists in the early 1960s

Editor's note: The late Ken Hind wrote about the setting up of the NPM in the *Bulletin* of April 1990. Mr Langfield recalled the early days of the *Bulletin* and the Bureau here in May 1984 and May 1993.

Guide Dog Appeal

If any readers have any unwanted stamps I would greatly appreciate them for the appeal for Guide Dogs for the Blind (a registered charity) on my local radio station, Great Yorkshire Gold. Some 12.5 million stamps are needed to buy and fully train one dog. It is an on-going appeal: one dog was achieved just before Christmas, and the present appeal just needs 7% more stamps to reach the target. Stamps must be undamaged and have some portion of envelope surrounding them. Please send them to me: Adrian Warner, 6 Thornmead Road, Baildon, BRADFORD, W Yorkshire, BD17 6AR. Readers living in Bradford, Hull or Sheffield might prefer to send them direct to the radio studios in those cities: Steve Fountain Stamp Appeal, Great Yorkshire Gold, Forster Square, BRADFORD, W Yorkshire, BD1 5NE, Commercial Road, HULL HU1 2SG; or 900 Herries Road, SHEFFIELD S6 1RH. On behalf of myself, Great Yorkshire Gold and Guide Dogs for the Blind, thank you very much.

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August/September Digest

To be issued in August/September

1 August: Shakespeare's Globe stamp cards

8 August: Shakespeare's Globe stamps (5 x 25p), and presentation pack

8 August: National Postal Museum Postal Uniforms postcards (set of 4). *Available to callers at NPM shop, by post from British Philatelic Bureau*

15 August: Stamp cards for £1 and £3 definitives (see below)

22 August: £1 Machin head definitive; £3 Carrickfergus Castle definitive. Presentation pack for £3 stamp.

29 August: Communications stamp cards

4 September: Stamp Books – 50p Sea Charts 4; £1 Inspiration for Victory 4; £2 Rowland Hill 4.

4 September: Stamp Book – 10 x 1st Sainsbury's promotion. *Notes: (1) This is date of availability from Bureau and philatelic outlets. This book went on sale at Sainsbury's shops in June (2) Date of philatelic availability of the above books has been brought forward one day from that originally announced.*

4 September: Stamp Book – 10 x 1st "Someone Special" promotion.

5 September: Communications stamps and presentation pack

26 September: Rugby League stamp cards

Note: Some items are available only from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT and from Post Office Counters Ltd philatelic outlets at main post offices in: Bath, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Gloucester, Guildford, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London (Lombard Street, EC3 & Trafalgar Square, WC2), Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Romford, Southampton, Southend on Sea, Stratford upon Avon, Truro, Windsor, and York.

To be withdrawn in August/September

1 August: National Postal Museum Uniforms postcards (issued 2 August 94). *Note: These cards will be withdrawn at the Bureau on 1 August, but will remain on sale at the Museum shop.*

1 August: Summertime stamps, stamp cards & presentation pack

8 August: 4 x 60p stamp book (issued 9 August 94)

22 August: Garden Birds large size aerogramme
5 September: Stamp Books: 50p Coaching Inns 4; £1 Prime Ministers 4; £2 Postal Vehicles 3.

26 September: Medical Discoveries stamps, stamp cards & presentation pack

Events – August/September 1995

until 1 October: Display of Ascension 1982 150th Anniversary of Charles Darwin's Voyage issue (artwork, essays, proofs, issued stamps) at British Library, Great Russell Street, London WC1. Open Mon-Sat 10.00-17.00, Sunday 14.30-18.00. Enquiries: 0171-412 7635/6.

until April 1996: "Victorian Posts" exhibition at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1. Open Mon-Fri 09.30-16.30. Admission free. Enquiries: 0171-239 5420.

12-13 August: Bristol & District Federation of Philatelic Societies Annual Convention at Somerset Hall, Portishead, 10.00-18.00. 30 dealers, National Societies meetings, displays, refreshments, etc. Enquiries: J Tovey, 36 Northville Road, BRISTOL BS7 0RG.

30 August-2 September: 1995 Picture Postcard Show (incorporating BIPEX) at Royal Horticultural Society's New Hall, Greycoat Street, London SW1.

1-10 September: Singapore '95 – world philatelic exhibition, Singapore. Under FIP patronage. Enquiries: Singapore '95, PO Box 1995, Robinson Road, Singapore 9039.

23 September: Hampex '95 & Hampshire Federation Day at Hayling Island Middle School, Hayling Island. Enquiries: J H Jones, 01794 514902.

23 September: Philatelic Music Circle Convention, London. Enquiries: Ian Summers, 8 Alderwood Grove, Edenfield, BURY, Lancs, BL0 0HQ.

23 September: WOPEX '95 – Woking & District Phil Soc Stamp Fair & Exhibition at Trinity Methodist Church Hall, Brewery Road, Woking. 10.00-17.00. Admission free. Dealers, auction, free valuations of philatelic material by Phillips, displays, refreshments. Enquiries: R Trevelyan, 01483 764339.

23-24 September: Annual Convention of Exhibition Study Group at The Century Tavern, Forty Avenue, Wembley. Starts 09.30 each day, annual dinner on 23 September. Enquiries: A Sabey, 0181-843 9920.

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DR JEAN ALEXANDER

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