

BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Volume 36 Number 5

JANUARY 1999 • 85P

Millennium Travellers' Tale
• 10 years of Greetings issues



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover A detail from *Waterloo Station – Peace*, one of a pair of posters by Helen McKie for Southern Railway, celebrating the centenary of the opening of Waterloo Station in 1948. Illustration: Science & Society Picture Library.

Royal Mail's Travellers' Tale stamps are previewed in this issue, page 144.

Late news

Cylinder numbers reported for the gravure-printed *Questa* books (1 December) are all Q1. In the 1st and 2nd NVI books the number can be found in the margin opposite the first or second row of stamps. The number for the 'E' stamp (19 January), printed by Walsall, is W1.

Issues Note some items are available only from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Gatwick Airport, Glasgow, Gloucester, Grimsby, Guildford, Harrogate, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London (Lombard Street and Trafalgar Square), Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Truro, Windsor and York.

4 January

Withdrawal Greetings books: *Flowers Express* (1997) and *Chocolate Express* (1998) promotion books

7 January

Issue Millennium Inventors' Tale stamp cards

12 January

Issue Millennium Inventors' Tale stamps and presentation pack

19 January

Issue £1.20 stamp book containing 4 × 'E' (Euro-pean mail) NVI stamps

19 January

Withdrawal Endangered Species stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards

26 January

Issue Millennium Travellers' Tale stamp cards

1 February

Withdrawal 10 × 1st Disney promotion book

2 February

Issue Millennium Travellers' Tale stamps and presentation pack

2 February

Withdrawal Diana, Princess of Wales stamps and presentation packs (English and Welsh versions)

16 February

Issue Profile on Print prestige stamp book

23 February

Issue Millennium Patients' Tale stamp cards

23 February

Withdrawal The Queen's Beasts stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards

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The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, Royal London House, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Editor** JR Holman • **Price** 85p single copies from Collections, philatelic counters, and National Postal Museum • **Annual subscriptions** UK and Europe £9.50, rest of the world £13.50. Subscriptions should be sent to British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7. Available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) • **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 • **Copyright** Unless copyright attributed to specific authors, all articles and features may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Requests to reproduce copyright articles should be sent to the Editor, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119

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HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

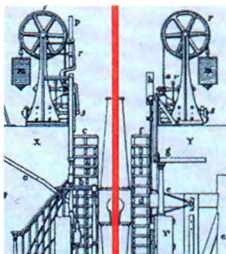
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This month The Editor previews this issue

THE FIRST of our 12 sets of Millennium stamps during 1999 will go on sale on 12 January – they were previewed last month. The second set – ‘Travellers’ Tale’ – is previewed this month, together with the second of the prestige stamp books relating to the Stamp Show 2000 exhibition. The contents of this book are likely to make it just as popular as the ‘Wilding’ book issued last March.

Within Royal Mail there were lengthy discussions about the form our Millennium stamps programme would take. One of the key players in these discussions was Philip Parker of the Design & Editorial Division. Philip provides the background to the concept of 12 sets each on a particular tale in this *Bulletin*.

This month we mark the 10th anniversary of the issue of our first greetings stamps, on 31 January 1989. They generated quite a lot of interest amongst the general public as well as in the philatelic community; this first set is now quite scarce, catalogued by Stanley Gibbons at £28 unused and £20 used. To mark the anniversary we begin a series of articles on the greetings labels that were issued with the stamps and invite you to vote for your favourite of the nine sets of greetings stamps – see page 143.

Last month we asked you to vote for your favourite stamps and *Bulletin* author of 1998 – if you haven’t already done so there is still time. Voting forms should be returned by 22 January and will be entered in a prize draw. So fill the form in now and good luck! JOHN HOLMAN •

Royal Mail news New prestige stamp book

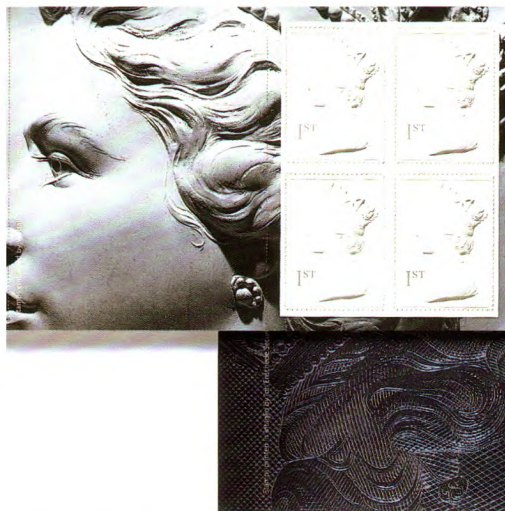
• Definitives changes • Stamps on the radio



The new Machin design was announced in March 1967 by Postmaster General Edward Short (now Lord Glenamara), right, who described it as ‘one of the greatest stamps of all time’. Centre, Arnold Machin. Photograph courtesy of Lord Glenamara.

The Stamp Show 2000 prestige stamp book The second of three special prestige stamp books to promote The Stamp Show 2000 (Earl’s Court, London 22-29 May 2000) will be issued on 16 February. The book, entitled ‘Profile on Print’, will cost £7.54 and contains 29 1st class NV1 definitive stamps, 17 printed in standard size in flame (orange) colour, and 12 in larger size (41 × 30mm) in black or embossed on white paper. The book is of special interest to collectors in that it contains Machin design stamps printed in five different processes.

The text pages will be printed by Questa who will assemble the book. It yields three new stamps: 1st NV1 printed in recess, typography and embossed. The recess stamp has been engraved by Czeslaw Slania – the world’s foremost stamp engraver (see articles the *Bulletin*, August and September 1995). Slania engraved the 1982 Maritime Heritage, 1984 Mailcoaches, 1987 Victorian Britain, and 1995 Communications (Rowland Hill and Marconi) sets. The gravure and litho stamps in the book are as existing printings by De La Rue and Questa. Note that the typo (letterpress) stamps will probably be the last produced under the Harrison name.



The book contains five panes

Pane 1 8 x 1st flame printed in gravure by De La Rue, plus central label showing marginal arrows and colour dots from stamp sheet margins

Pane 2 4 x 1st, larger size, embossed on white self-adhesive paper, value in grey, printed by Walsall Security Printers

Pane 3 4 x 1st, larger size, black, printed in recess (intaglio) by Joh Enschedé Stamp

Pane 4 4 x 1st, larger size, black, printed in typography (letterpress) by Harrison & Sons Ltd

Pane 5 9 x 1st flame, printed in lithography by The House of Questa



The text tells the story of the introduction of the Machin design. In 1965 The Queen's consent to consider proposals for a new definitive stamp was announced and Arnold Machin and four other artists and designers commissioned to produce a new profile rendering of The Queen's head. Machin based his work on studies he had made previously for coins, but his true inspiration derived from the Penny Black. He felt that its simplicity and elegance gave it a timeless quality. He eschewed a photographic portrait for a sculpted relief; photographed and printed, this would produce a striking 3D cameo effect. The first three values went on sale in June 1967 and the series was completed, with high values, in March 1969. From June 1970 onwards stamps were issued with decimal values and the Machin design is still very much alive 32 years later. The book includes photographs of Machin and Slania at work and details of the printing processes.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets and main post offices about a week before 16 February, price 25p.

Orders for the Royal Mail covers bearing panes 1-4 cancelled with a pictorial 'first day of issue' postmark of the Bureau or London SW1, must reach the Bureau by 16 February. Alternatively, collectors may send their

First day cover prices

With pane 1 (gravure stamps and label) £2.86 UK, £2.44 overseas

With pane 2 (embossed), 3 (recess) or 4 (letterpress) each £1.64 UK, £1.40 overseas.

UK prices include VAT

Please note Royal Mail will not be providing covers with pane 5 (litho), but collectors' own covers bearing this pane can be submitted for first day postmarks.

Sponsored special hand-stamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK and Europe; £21.75 rest of world)

own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Bureau or London postmarks to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB. The outer envelope should be marked 'FD PSB9901' (Bureau), or 'FD PSB9902' (London SW1). A non-pictorial London SW1 handstamp will also be available from the London SHC, quoting reference 'FD PSB9902NP'.

First Day posting boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors to post covers to receive the pictorial London SW1 handstamp.

Any of the stamps in the book can be used, singly or in combination to qualify for all first day, philatelic and sponsored handstamps in use on 16 February •

Inventors' Tale The cylinders and colours are:

20p 1A (silver) • 1B (deep grey) • 1C (pale olive-grey) • 1D (greenish grey) • 1E (grey-black) • 1F (rose-red) • P76 (phosphor)

26p 1A (greenish yellow) • 1B (bright magenta) • 1C (new blue) • 1D (black) • 1E (silver)
No phosphor number: ink numbers read upwards in sheet margin, ie 1E at top

43p 1A (silver) • 1B (greenish yellow) • 1C (bright crimson) • 1D (new blue) • 1E (black) • 1F (bright magenta) • P77 (phosphor)

63p 1A (greenish blue) • 1B (greenish yellow) • 1C (cerise) • 1D (new blue) • 1E (black) • 1F (pale lemon) • P77 (phosphor)

Bilingual postmarks Covers to receive bilingual postmarks should be sent to the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF1 1AA.

Quote 'FD DEF 9902 Bil' for pictorial or 'FD DEF 9902 NP Bil' for non-pictorial.

Inventors' Tale first day postmarks In addition to those announced last month, bilingual Welsh/English versions of the Greenwich pictorial and non-pictorial designs will be available in accordance with Royal Mail's policy on the 'Welsh Language Scheme'. These handstamps can be obtained by sending covers to the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF1 1AA quoting numbers FD9902 Bil (pictorial) or FD9902 NP Bil (non-pictorial) •

On the air Early in January Radio 4 will broadcast a half-hour documentary on the story of British Special Stamps. Author of the past three Royal Mail Special Stamps Yearbooks, Fay Sweet, has produced the programme entitled 'Benn's Gallery'. Former PMG Tony Benn MP narrates the story of the development of the commemorative programme from the 1960s to its present-day incarnation including interviews with many of the personalities involved with the programme, including some of the designers of the 1999 Millennium stamps. Broadcast details were unconfirmed at time of going to press. Please check a listings magazine early in the month •

Definitive change Royal Mail will issue new £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 stamps on 9 March. These will be in the same size as the 1p-£1 stamps showing the Machin head of HM The Queen but printed in recess (intaglio). They will replace the Castles stamps first introduced in October 1988. Details of the stamps and first day arrangements will be published next month •

New E stamp Readers are reminded that a book containing four stamps with 'E' (Europe) coding to cover the basic letter rate to Europe will go on sale on 19 January. This will initially be available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets but will go on sale at selected post offices and retail outlets as existing stocks of the 4 × 30p stamp books are used up. The new 'E' stamp was previewed here last month.

In addition to the first day postmarks mentioned last month, there will also be bilingual Welsh/English versions of the Folkestone pictorial and non-pictorial postmarks, in accordance with Royal Mail's policy on the 'Welsh Language Scheme' •

Stamp scene Exhibits and Societies news

• Guernsey *Britannia* stamp • StampMaster

Collect '98 and Stamp & Collectables The second 'Collect' International Collectors' Fair, was held at Olympia 2 Exhibition Centre, London, 23-25 October. As at the 1997 event there were dealers in stamps, postal history, coins, banknotes, phonecards, books, ephemera, comics, advertising tins and packets and much else besides. Over 40 of the 100 standholders offered stamps, first day covers or postal history. It was a friendly event with collectors busily ferreting around for unusual material and your Editor noted a number of leading philatelists. The fair was opened by Wendy Richards, star of the TV programmes *Eastenders* and *Are You Being Served*, who signed postcards in aid of the Variety Club charity. The organisers, Stanley Gibbons were satisfied by the attendance of 3341 which was sadly down on 1997 owing to the atrocious weather on the Saturday.

The Stamp & Collectables event in Manchester (13-15 November) was a brave attempt to hold a major fair in the north west. The dealers present had some good material for sale but there were not enough dealers, certainly not enough visitors, and no displays or exhibits. Hopefully the sponsors will re-think the nature of this event if it is to take place again •

GB Journal The November/December issue of this excellent magazine of the Great Britain Philatelic Society, contains features of interest to both philatelists and postal historians. Don Brookfield looks at George VI varieties (8d definitive and UPU 2½d), Steve Bainbridge provides plating notes for the George V ½d Royal Cypher, W A Wiseman writes on the Inland Revenue Stamping Department, 1878-1910, and there are interesting notes on registration labels, the Robert Folkard Collection, Treasury and mystery essays •

StampMaster Companion Philatelic Software Ltd announce a new programme, StampMaster Companion. This is also primarily a Great Britain programme, but with international components too. It is very visual, with close to 10,000 stamp images in total. Although there is some overlap with the features of the established *StampMaster GB* programme, there are a large number of extra capabilities, such as comparing stamps side by side, entering in collection records 'in bulk', browsing through image by image rather than by textual description, and so on. There is much of educational value too, with one section providing details and example stamps on around 1250 postal authorities and other stamp issuers, past and present •

Missing colour discovery Stamp dealers Steven Scott recently acquired two sheets containing the 26p Speed stamp with red colour (value) missing. One vertical column is affected on both sheets, yielding 15 stamps with colour completely missing and five partial omissions. At the time of going to press, copies are still available, including a complete cylinder block •

A 'Collect' for 1999 is already being arranged – place and dates to be announced.

The Great Britain Philatelic Society Andrew Lajer, The Old Post Office, Hurst, Reading RG10 0TR. Telephone 01189 344151

StampMaster Companion Price £49.95 from Philatelic Software Ltd, Valley View, Coleman's Lane, Nazeing, Essex EN9 3EA

Enquiries 0171 836 2341

Brighton & Hove '98 This second Association of British Philatelic Societies exhibition was every bit as good as its predecessor in Newcastle two years ago (see *Bulletin* February 1997). It was a hard act to follow and all credit to the ABPS, British Thematic Association, Cinderella Stamp Club, Revenue Society of Great Britain, and Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies for a fine show. The standard of the displays was high and there was something to suit virtually every taste. The 12-frame display from the Royal Collection included GB postal fiscals, telegraphs, college stamps, and issues of Cyprus, Falklands and Mauritius. The section on modern GB sets – 1976 Roses, 1981 Butterflies, 1985 Insects, and 1991 Dogs – included essays, imperf errors, and the extremely rare missing value on the 13p Roses (one mint and one used on cover). Also in the Royal display were pages from the album of Tsarevich Alexi (see *Bulletin* December 1997). The display by the Royal Philatelic Society included GB overprints, and postal stationery of Europe, Australia, Falklands, Sarawak, etc.

The display of Brighton postal history, by Howard Longden, included numerous old prints and postcards to add to its interest. Unlike many town postal history displays, this did not finish at 1840 or 1900 but came right up to the present. Brighton hosted the Philatelic Congress in 1932, 1946, 1956, 1966 and 1989 so, not surprisingly, Congress covers and postmarks featured in this fine display.

The National Postal Museum showed George V material, including bro-mides and artists drawings of the designs, control blocks, colour trials for PO Savings Bank receipt stamps, and much else. Nearby was the stand of the Friends of the NPM offering a wide range of souvenir covers, postcards and publications.

Amongst the most interesting of the displays of GB stamps was A Walker's exhibit, on behalf of the North of England Philatelic Association, of Machin pre-Decimal Booklets which contained dummy books, stamps with specimen overprints and tête-bêche imperf panes, one of 24 5d stamps from a booklet sheet (four panes of six) actually purchased over a post office counter in August 1970! In the Literature Section, Margaret Morris's *Bulletin* publication *An Introduction to Thematic Collecting* won a silver award and the Warwick & Warwick Trophy for the best thematic book.

There was no admission charge although £2-£5 would have been reasonable in view of what was on offer; the catalogue was a modest £1 but there were no souvenir covers or exhibition postmarks. The dealers present offered a wide range of material, although covers and postal history seemed to predominate over stamps. A few of the dealers' stands looked a bit untidy – a point for organisers to note for the future. Signage of the display panels also needs attention but these were minor irritations in a feast of stamps. Both Newcastle and Brighton & Hove have set high standards for the organisers of Glasgow exhibition in November 2000.

HM The Queen has consented to material from the Royal Philatelic Collection being shown at the Glasgow exhibition. Exhibits from the Royal Collection have been seen at exhibitions in England and at internationals abroad, but this is the first time that it will travel north of the border ●

Britannia stamp The Guernsey Post Office has recently issued a new £5 definitive featuring the former Royal Yacht *Britannia* which is now on show in Edinburgh's historic port of Leith. The ship, described as 125 metres of streamlined elegance, has witnessed many historic occasions and welcomed many key figures on board, including Presidents Mandela and Clinton, and Ghandi. A tour of *Britannia* begins at the Visitor Centre where a film tells the ship's story. On board the ship visitors tour the Bridge, State Dining Room, Queen's and Duke of Edinburgh's bedrooms, the Engine Room and much else. *Britannia* is open every day except Christmas Day but tickets must be pre-booked prior to arrival, by phoning 0131 555 5566. Tickets are also available at the Edinburgh Tattoo Office, 32 Market Street, Edinburgh.

The new Guernsey stamp, designed by Mark Wilkinson and printed by Questa, is the first value in a new Maritime definitive series. *Britannia* has featured on a number of stamps, for example a 23p definitive from the Isle of Man in 1993 (SG 546), Tristan da Cunha 1977 Silver Jubilee 10p (212) and St Helena 1987 Royal Visits 38p (503) •



The stamp's clear art deco design, enhanced by gold foil and embossing, evokes the style of 1930s posters advertising holidays in Guernsey. It is available from the Guernsey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Guernsey GY1 1AB.

GB philately web site Larry Rosenblum of the GB Collectors Club in the USA informs us that he has started his own web site devoted to Great Britain philately. For those (like the Editor), not into new technology, the GBCC can also be contacted at: 9384 Hunter's Creek Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242, USA. The Club's 1999 Convention will be held in Washington DC in June •

Larry Rosenblum's web site
<http://www.gbstamps.com>

The GBCC can be reached at
<http://www.gbstamps.com/gbcc>.

Literature list James Bendon has produced a new Philatelic Literature list covering Aerophilately, Bibliography, Forgeries, General Works, Maritime, Military, Philatelic History, Postal Stationery, Revenue Stamps, and Philately & Postal History by Country. For a copy of this useful list write to: James Bendon Ltd, PO Box 6484, 3307 Limassol, Cyprus •

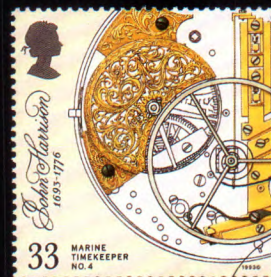
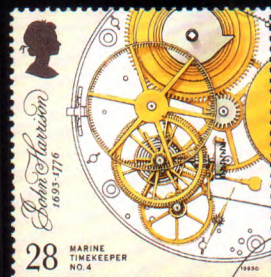
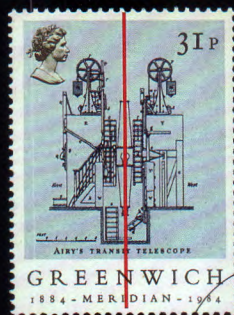
TPO book Peter Johnson's book *Mail by Rail – the history of the TPO and Post Office Railway* was reviewed here in May 1996. Autographed copies of the book, normally £16.99, are available at £15 postpaid from the author at: 4 Parkside Close, Leicester LE4 1EP •

Stubbington Philatelic Society The Society, which celebrates its 20th anniversary this month, meets at Crofton Community Centre on Saturdays, 10-11am – an arrangement that suits junior and senior citizen members alike. Enquiries to K Wheeler, 7 Canterbury Road, Stubbington, Fareham PO14 2LY •

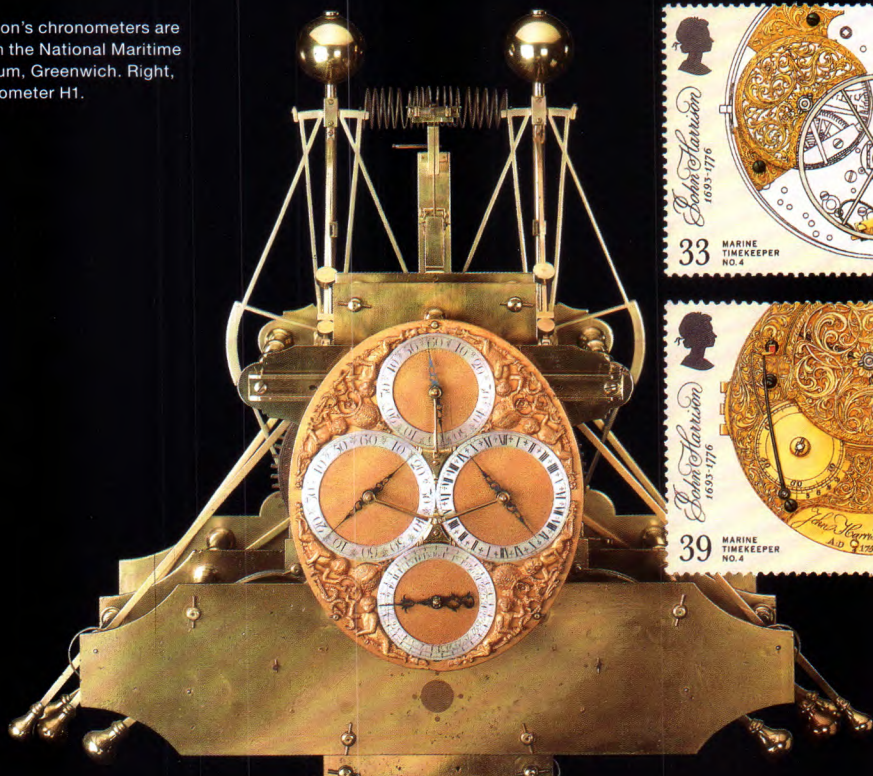
Inventors' Tale *Timekeeping*
by David Gentleman, below

Greenwich 1984 centenary of the Meridian, and the Old Observatory, on Astronomy issue 1990, centre

Harrison's chronometers
Four stamps were issued in 1993 for the tercentenary of John Harrison's birth, right. They show different layers of his 1759 chronometer H4.



Harrison's chronometers are now in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Right, chronometer H1.



British inventors James Mackay describes the first set of Royal Mail Millennium stamps

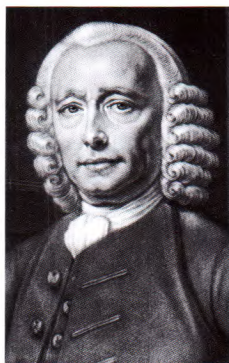
THE INAUGURAL SET of four stamps, released on 12 January to begin the year-long countdown to the Millennium, highlights aspects of British invention which pertain to time: measuring, saving, freezing and accelerating it. The British contribution to the technological development of mankind is truly prodigious, and even if the entire series of 48 Millennium stamps were devoted to this, it would not be sufficient to do the subject justice. Some aspects of British inventiveness, of course, will be illustrated in some of the later issues of the series. Conversely, the subjects of the January set have already been touched upon in previous stamps, as well as in postcards, prestige booklets and special postmarks, so that it is possible to integrate the latest set into a collection with the theme of time, in the broadest sense.

Chronometer perfected The subject of the 20p, designed by David Gentleman, is establishing time. The stamp contains two related elements showing a portion of John Harrison's marine chronometer and a map with the Greenwich Meridian clearly marked.

John Harrison was the outstanding horologist of his period. Born in 1693 at Foulby near Pontefract, Yorkshire, he was the son of a carpenter. In 1715 he made a clock with wooden wheels, now preserved in the Science Museum, South Kensington, and in 1726 invented the gridiron pendulum, an ingenious device which maintained a constant length regardless of variations in temperature. He also invented the recoil escapement and pioneered the going ratchet.

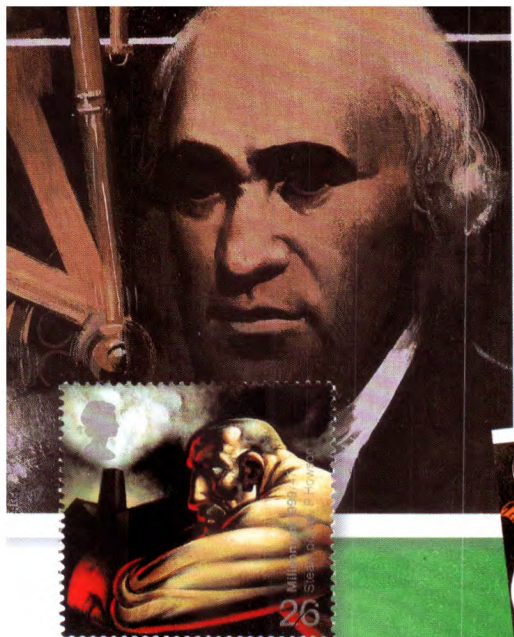
In the 18th century Britain led the world in navigation and global exploration, both made possible by major scientific developments. It was no coincidence that the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, founded by Charles II in 1675, was next door to the Royal Naval College. Britain took the lead in devising a method of accurate timekeeping at sea, which would enable mariners to work out their longitude. Hitherto maritime time-keeping had relied on such crude methods as a sand-glass, existing clocks (operating by pendulum) being useless in the pitching and rolling motion of ships at sea. Only sophisticated mechanisms which compensated for atmospheric and temperature variations, could provide an answer to the problem. A measure of the importance attached to this matter lay in the size of the rewards offered for its solution.

In 1713 the Longitude Board of the British government offered prizes of £10,000, £15,000 and £20,000 for the successful construction of chronometers which would determine longitude within 60, 40 and 30 minutes respectively. It became Harrison's lifelong ambition to achieve success, and after experimenting with several pocket watches (now known as H1 to H4) over many years he eventually perfected a chronometer (H5) which he took to London in 1761.



John Harrison was the foremost horologist of his period. In 1761 he created his chronometer H5, winning the prize first offered by the Longitude Board 48 years earlier.

The 1993 tercentenary issue opposite shows, from top: a decorated dial with precision centre-second indication; the escapement, remontoire and fusee with automatic maintaining power; timekeeping mechanism, including balance and spring and invar bimetallic temperature compensation; and the pierced and engraved back of the movement.



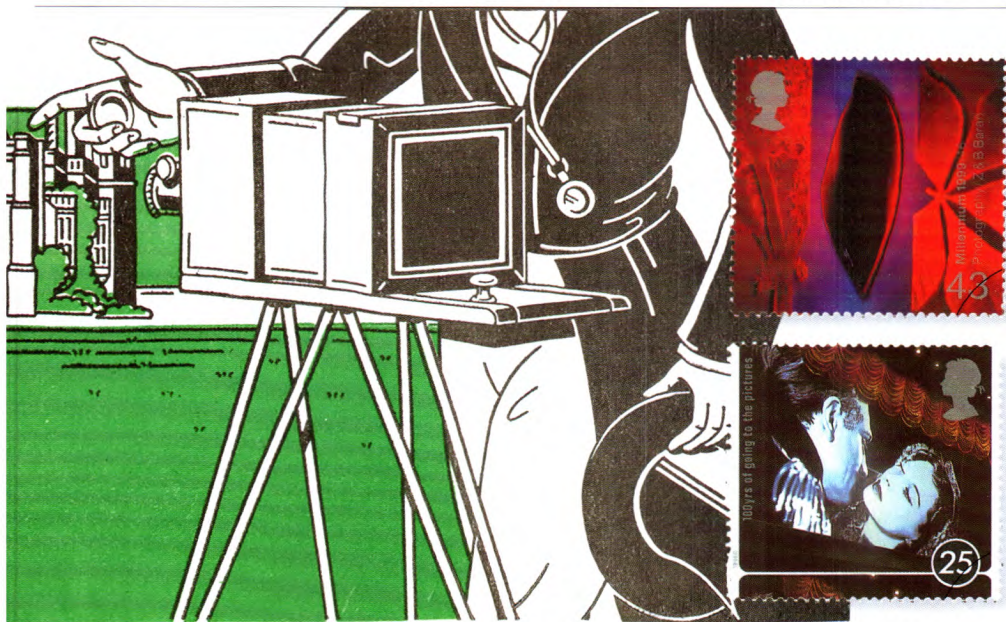
Steam Power The belching chimney of a 'dark Satanic mill' can be seen in the 26p stamp by Peter Howson.

James Watt appeared in the 1989 *Communicating Genius* series of postcards produced by the Scottish Post Office Board, top.

His son William was despatched on a voyage to Jamaica to test it, and when he returned to Portsmouth in 1762 it was found to have lost only 1 minute 54 seconds. This was amazingly precise, and enabled the calculation of longitude within 18 minutes. Harrison claimed the full reward (today worth about £2 million), although a niggardly government took 11 years to pay up. Harrison did not live long to enjoy the fruits of his success, for he died in London in March 1776.

The tercentenary of his birth was marked by a set of four stamps (shown on page 138) designed by Howard Brown and David Penny and issued in February 1993. The stamps featured different layers of the H4 chronometer, which Harrison completed in 1759. The vast majority of the 19 first day handstamps associated with this issue concentrated on ships, but the Antiquarian Horological Society sponsored a postmark at Ticehurst, West Sussex incorporating an escapement.

The Greenwich Meridian, the imaginary line of longitude that runs through the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, was adopted as the international standard for time and longitude in 1884, as a result of an international conference in Washington DC. The centenary was celebrated in June 1984 by four stamps showing the world viewed from space (16p), a chart of the English Channel (20½p), the Observatory (28p) and Airy's transit telescope (31p, shown on page 138). Among the special handstamps associated with this issue was one honouring the award of the Copley Gold Medal to John Harrison in 1749, and a London handstamp showing a clock referring to Greenwich Mean Time. The 1990 Astronomy series which included a 37p showing Stonehenge, associated with ancient rites at the summer solstice connected with primitive measurement of time.



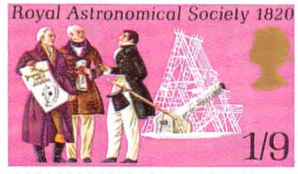
Steam power Peter Howson designed the 26p symbolising steam power which revolutionised travel in the 19th century and was also a considerable time-saver in the performance of many tasks. The stamp celebrates the work of James Watt who harnessed steam power to drive the Industrial Revolution. It seems strange that Watt (1736-1819), the inventor of the separate condenser which made steam power practicable, has never yet appeared on a British stamp, though he has been thus honoured by Albania, Grenada, Hungary, Mali and the Wallis & Futuna Islands among others. He has so far had to be content with appearing in the 1989 'Communicating Genius' series of postcards produced by the Scottish Post Office Board and in the 'Scots Connection' £5 prestige booklet. The new stamp shows a brawny figure, symbolising the musclepower which had been the mainstay of industry until the 1780s, gazing disdainfully at a tiny figure stoking a furnace.

Freezing time Husband and wife team Zafer and Barbara Baran have marked the freezing of time on the 43p stamp with a motif alluding to the development of photography. Although it was a Frenchman, Nicéphore Niepce, who produced the first successful photograph in 1826, it only really became a practical proposition 10 years later when Henry Fox-Talbot produced a negative in order to create a positive image. The Barans visited Lacock Abbey in Wiltshire where Fox-Talbot lived and experimented with photography, and built up the stamp image by using some of his original negatives, reprinting them and treating them with colour. Without photography there would be no film, celebrated by a set of five 'stills' in 1985 and a set of five marking the centenary of the cinema in 1996.

Photography The 43p stamp by Zafer and Barbara Baran alludes to the development of photography (top). Photography is, of course, the basis of many stamp designs.

Five stamps celebrated the centenary of the cinema in 1996 (above).

Stamp books issued in 1989 commemorated the work of Henry Fox-Talbot: top centre, Debbie Cook's illustration for the £1.90 book, and, above left, the £1.40 book cover.



Computers The 63p stamp by the world-renowned artist and sculptor Sir Eduardo Paolozzi, above, shows the outline of a human head, inside of which is an amalgam of anatomical detail and computer circuitry.

Charles Babbage was shown on the 1991 stamp above centre, and Sir John Herschel on the 1970 1s9d anniversary stamp above right.

Two of the handstamps from Greenwich sponsored by Benham, right. A stopwatch and speedometers featured in some handstamps associated with the recent Speed stamps.



Computers The fourth of the Inventors' series has been designed by Sir Eduardo Paolozzi, probably best known for his colossal bronze of Newton in the forecourt of the new British Library. His psychedelic profile brings the tale down to the 20th century and the invention of computers.

Automatic calculation began in 1622 with the first slide rule, and Charles Babbage conceived the notion of a mechanical computer in the early 19th century. As a Cambridge undergraduate, Babbage (1791-1871) and his friend John Herschel vowed to raise the standards of mathematics in Britain. While Sir John Herschel went on to become one of the greatest astronomers of all time, Babbage devoted much of his life to the construction of a calculating machine. When construction was al-

most complete, Babbage abandoned it to concentrate on an analytical machine, but the government refused to subsidise the project any longer.

Thus it was not until the Second World War that a computer in the modern sense was born. Mathematicians, such as Alan Turing, and scientists were recruited to work around the clock at the Government Code and Cipher School at Bletchley Park to crack the German codes and decipher the enemy's secrets. Post Office engineers built an electronic machine called Colossus to accelerate automatic code-breaking. It became operational in 1943, the world's first practical computer.

Greenwich handstamps Readers may also like to note that there have been several pictorial handstamps from Greenwich, sponsored by Benham, since 6 April 1997 (1000 days before the new Millennium). Each of them has concentrated on a landmark of British history in the past 1000 years, and incorporated a clock-face with the hands pointing to midnight on the crucial Millennium eve. So far, there have been handstamps marking the Battle of Hastings in 1066, the murder of Thomas Becket in 1170 (14 July 1997), Magna Carta in 1215 (22 October 1997), Robert Bruce at the siege of Stirling Castle in 1314 (30 January 1998), the Battle of Agincourt in 1415 (10 May 1998) and the Gunpowder Plot in 1605 (26 November 1998) •

£100 Prize draw Vote for your favourite Greetings stamps

ROYAL MAIL issued five 19p greetings stamps on 31 January 1989 – the first of nine sets which have proved popular with the general public and created a new area for philatelic study.

Shown here, to remind you, is one stamp from each of the nine sets. We invite readers to nominate their favourite set. Simply write the set number, 1-9, on the back of a postcard (or a sealed envelope) and add your name and address. Send to: Greetings Stamps, British Philatelic Bulletin,

22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL to arrive by 22 February. The sender of the first card drawn on that day will receive £100. Twenty runners-up will be sent greetings stamps presentation packs and first day covers.

Please note that the Smiles stamps were originally 20p value, later reissued (26 March 1991) with 1st class indicator. The Cartoons stamps exist overprinted with a phosphor screen or with two phosphor bands (11 November 1996) •



1 First issue 31 January 1989



2 Smiles 6 February 1990



3 Good Luck 5 February 1991



4 Memories 28 January 1992



5 Gift Giving 2 February 1993



6 Messages 1 February 1994



7 Greetings in art 21 March 1995



8 Cartoons 26 February 1996



9 Flowers 6 January 1997

The Travellers' Tale

The second of the 12 sets of Millennium stamps to be issued this year is on the theme of travel.

Opposite Isambard Kingdom Brunel, photographed in 1857 by Robert Howlett. As chief engineer of the GWR, and the builder of mighty steamships, Brunel was 'the engineer of his age', who helped to create a new world of speed.

Traveller's Tale stamps go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 2 February. The **20p** stamp (basic inland 2nd class letter rate) is *Jet Travel* by George Hardie. Regular international air travel developed in the 1930s with weekly services from London to Cape Town. In the same decade the gas turbine jet engine was developed which led to the de Havilland Comet as the first jet airliner. The 50th anniversary of Whittle's jet engine was commemorated by a 37p stamp in 1991, and a Comet was depicted on the cover of a 50p stamp book issued in January 1990. Supersonic travel arrived with Concorde in the late 1960s – a joint British/French project. Early mailplanes, and a 1930s blue airmail van and post box, were shown on three of the UPU Centenary stamps of 1974, and on the 34p value of the Transport & Communications set of 1988.

The **26p** value (basic 1st class inland letter rate) features *Liberation by Bike* by Sara Fanelli. Cycling became a popular activity after the development of the modern safety bicycle in 1885. People used bicycles to get to and from work and for short excursions and holidays. Women, in particular, found it a useful mode of transport and the image of 'a woman atop her cycle became', writes historian Jeremy Black, 'a powerful symbol of female emancipation'. Four stamps marking the centenaries of the Cyclists Touring Club and British Cycling Federation were issued in 1978.

The **43p** value (basic airmail letter rate) is entitled *Linking the Nation*, by John Lawrence. Isambard Kingdom Brunel, says Professor Black, was 'the engineer of his age. His large, iron-clad steamships reflected his work at the forefront of technical innovations'. Collectors will enjoy the detail of this design, the intricacies of the railway tunnel and station canopy as well as the railway porter and passengers at the foot of the stamp.

Technical details

Printers and process 20p & 63p Joh Enschedé Stamps, gravure • 26p De La Rue Security Print, gravure • 43p Enschedé, litho

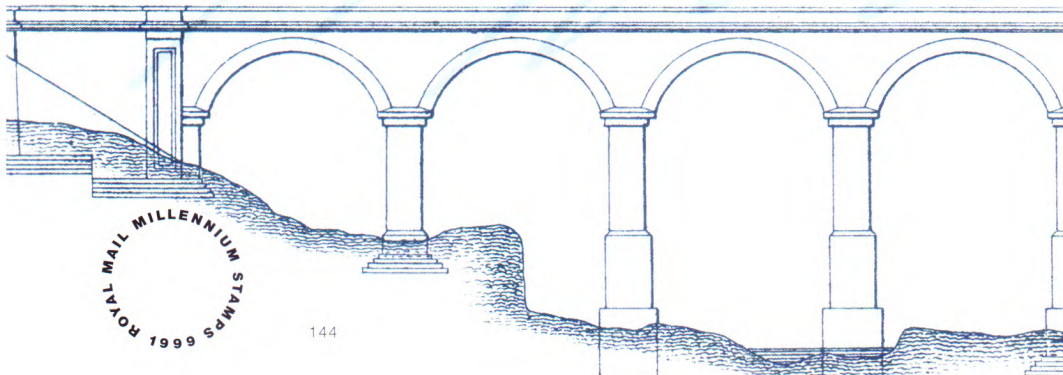
Size 37 × 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 × 14.5

Phosphor One band 20p • two bands others

Gum PVA





George Hardie's design for the 20p stamp, titled *Jet Travel*, symbolises increased air travel for business and pleasure. Regular international air travel developed in the 1930s, and large quantities of mail now travel by air in the UK and overseas.

John Lawrence's design for the 43p value recalls the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and early 19th centuries. Entitled *Linking the Nation*, it depicts rail travel and the steamship era – the heady days of Isambard Kingdom Brunel's Great Western Railway and his famous *Great Britain*.

The 26p value features *Liberation by Bike*, by Sara Fanelli. Cycling became popular in the late 19th century, and bicycles still play an important part in delivering the mail. A motorised cycle carrier of 1902 featured on the cover of a £2 stamp book in 1993.

The 63p stamp, *Cook's endeavour*, is by Andrzej Klimowski. The portrait of Cook is from the National Maritime Museum, London, and the tattooed Maori face and Australian flora from Banks' *Florilegium* are from books in the British Library. Cook appears on stamps from many countries.



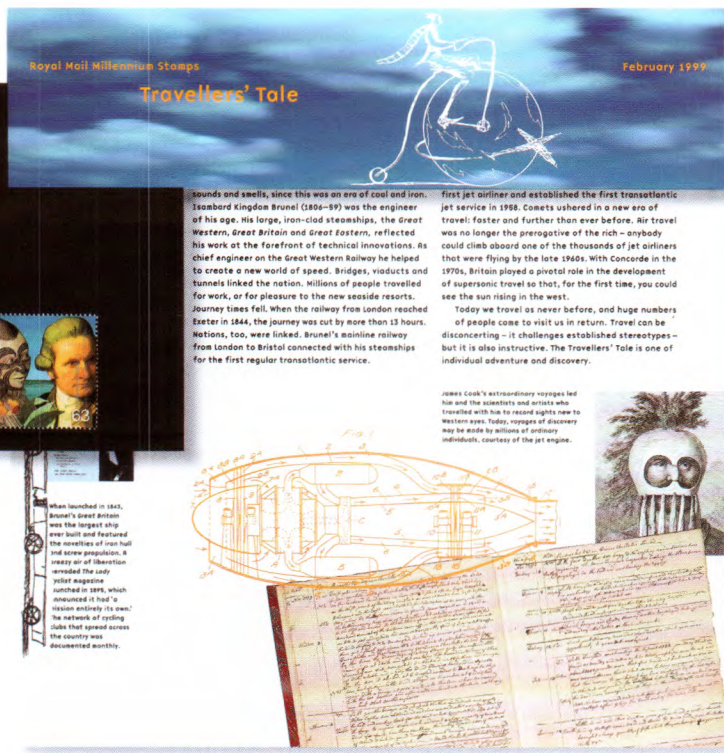
George Hardie is the designer of three £1.70 stamp book covers issued in 1984-5 and two of the Channel Tunnel stamps of 1994. He trained at St Martin's School of Art, and is an admirer of Edward Bawden (see 28p Contemporary Art stamp of 1993).

Sara Fanelli, born in Florence in 1969, studied at Camberwell College of Art and at the Royal College of Art. She is well-known for her children's books, including *Wolf and A Dog's Life*. Sara is an author and an illustrator.

John Lawrence, born in 1933, is a noted book illustrator and wood engraver. Educated in Oxford, Hastings and London, he has held numerous teaching posts. He is represented in leading museums including the Ashmolean, Victoria and Albert and National Museum of Wales, and has illustrated over 100 books. His designs were used on four £1 stamp book covers in 1993.

Brunel was voted the person *Bulletin* readers would most like to see on a British stamp (see *Bulletin* April 1997). GWR locomotives and trains featured on stamps issued in 1975 and 1985 and two of his famous ships – the *Great Britain* and *Great Eastern* on stamps of 1969 and 1987. A GWR locomotive named *Isambard Kingdom Brunel* was shown on the cover of a £1.25 stamp book in 1983 and three GWR locomotives featured on one of Royal Mail International's railway aerogrammes issued in January 1996. Despite the increased use of aircraft, railways and ships still play an important part in transporting the mail.

The 63p stamp (second step airmail letter rate), *Cook's endeavour*, was designed by Andrzej Klimowski. According to Professor Black, 'the log of Captain James Cook is more than an amazing story of nautical adventures; it is also a scientific record of information about distant lands.' Cook's voyages changed the map of the world and led to a new type of scientific exploration by Darwin in the 19th century. Captain Cook has featured on stamps from many countries and his signature and ship *Endeavour* were shown on a British stamp of 1968. Cook and his ship featured on a commemorative aerogramme in 1997. Margaret Morris wrote about Cook stamps in her booklet *An Introduction to Thematic Collecting* – issued free with the April 1998 *Bulletin*.



Andrzej Klimowski was born in London. He studied sculpture and painting and poster design at art colleges in London and in Warsaw. His work has been exhibited in the UK, USA, Poland, the Netherlands and Japan. He lectures and writes widely on the arts.



FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 2 February, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Coventry must reach the Bureau by 2 February. Price £2.20 UK (including VAT) or £1.88 overseas (no VAT).

Alternatively, collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Birmingham B1 1AA (Coventry postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9903' (Bureau), or 'FD9904' (Coventry). Collectors can post or hand in covers at main post offices – all covers will be given the Coventry postmark. A non-pictorial Coventry postmark will also be available for collectors who do not want a pictorial design, by sending covers to the Birmingham Handstamp Centre, requesting 'FD9904NP'.

Bilingual versions will be available for the Coventry pictorial and non-pictorial handstamps, in accordance with Royal Mail's policy on the 'Welsh Language Scheme'. These can be obtained by sending covers to the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF1 1AA quoting reference FD9904 Bil (pictorial) and FD9904 NP Bil (non-pictorial).

Handstamps sponsored by cover producers and others will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). Covers may be posted bearing just the 20p Travellers' Tale stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 2 February.

MILLENNIUM PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated pack (price £1.85) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets. The pack, written by Prof Jeremy Black of Exeter University, was designed by The Chase.

A Royal Mail Millennium Stamps Album, now available, contains an introductory page, 12 double page spreads with subject information facing a page on which to mount each set of stamps, and three FDC and three presentation pack pages. The album, with slipcase, costs £19.99; sets of pages only £9.99 ●



Travellers' Tale cylinders & colours

The cylinder numbers on Enschédé sheets read upwards, ie start 1A at bottom

20p 1A (pale grey) ● 1B (greenish blue) ● 1C (bluish-violet) ● 1D (grey black) ● 1E (vermillion) ● 1F (silver) ● 1G (phosphor)

26p 1A (silver) ● 1B (greenish yellow) ● 1C (cerise) ● 1D (new blue) ● 1E (black) ● 1F (vermillion) ● P77 (phosphor)

43p 1A (bronze) ● 1B (stone) ● 1C (grey-black) ● 1D (phosphor)

63p 1A (greenish yellow) ● 1B (bright magenta) ● 1C (new blue) ● 1D (grey-black) ● 1E (silver) ● 1F (phosphor)



The millennium in 48 'easy pieces' Philip Parker outlines



Hulton Getty

THIS MONTH sees the first issue of Millennium Stamps – four works of miniature art which launch Royal Mail's very special 'super set' of 48 stamps. In total, 48 leading image-makers have contributed to this, Royal Mail's largest ever commissioning of artwork, in the footsteps of past great Post Office commissions, such as Benjamin Britten and W H Auden for the immortal film *Night Mail*, and Abram Games and Enid Marx for stamp design.

What is interesting about the project is its democracy – as it unfolds throughout the year, a Royal Academician will sit next to a master weaver; a silversmith next to a distinguished documentary photographer; a woodcut engraver next to a collage artist. Stamps are a great leveller.

But why these 48 subjects? Why this particular approach?

Recognising that the millennium is the commemorative period, Royal Mail wanted to create a stamp programme that stood out and contributed to the national celebrations. The Special Stamp programme has a reputation as a principal commemorative collectible as well as a principal institution; what was created had to be, by definition, 'extra special'.

The decision to attack the millennium in a meaningful way was made early in 1997. A pro-

gramme over two calendar years was considered beginning in 1999 which would concentrate on the past 1000 years. Work progressed on several fronts over the spring – desk research to determine the key events and personalities over the millennium; conceptual research to create a framework to link such events together; design research to consider suitable approaches.

Initially, half a dozen different conceptual approaches were generated and debated. These ranged from the perhaps more obvious such as issuing 10 sets in the year and allocating a century a set, to the more abstract, including an A-Z of the millennium (A for atom, B for bicycle, C for computer, D for democracy, etc).

To prevent the research 'drowning in a sea of dates', some ground rules were formulated: that the stamp approach would seek to be emotive and try to make history relevant to today; and that it would seek to be inclusive, so that there would be something for everyone in the UK, that it would explore both continuity and change through the millennium.

As is often the case with ideas, two or three merged together and the 'Tales' concept was born in July. The inspiration for the tales idea came from tackling the problem of making history less abstract, particularly for people who had perhaps

the architecture of Royal Mail's millennium stamps for 1999

not collected stamps before, and so entice new collectors to purchase the stamps as a memento of the millennium, for themselves or as gifts.

A thought experiment was proposed to try and make history more immediate. For example, consider the life of a soldier over the last millennium. Clearly, warfare has changed: from medieval conflict to the pike and musket era of the Civil War to the global conflict of World Wars to today, where in a post Cold War era the role of the armed forces is redefined. The technology and organisation of, say, a soldier's life has changed, but surely the emotion experienced remains the same. This could be traced through contemporary sources. The epic poem, the *Brus*, charted something of the events of the Scottish war of independence, contemporary handbills and letters recorded events in the Civil War, the writings of the war poets in the First World War trenches brings home the sacrifice and pathos, and contemporary accounts of British peace keepers in the Balkans would give an insight into today's role. This was the literary basis for the idea of a Tale. It is a story of continuity through the millennium (the profession of the soldier) as well as a story of change (the manner and extent of warfare).

A tale such as this could be applied to different areas to provide a way to look across the centuries and feature how life has changed; but also look at history from the viewpoint of today, and eke out those events, inventions and creations that have shaped the way we are. Hence it could have more relevance to the public. Hence there could be an inclusive feel. Rather than producing a high political commentary of kings and politicians, an inclusive idea of history was followed, and the names of the tales: Patients, Workers, etc, try to encourage this inclusivity.

Desk research eventually proposed, as you might imagine, hundreds of possibilities, but these were reduced to around 18 different conceptual areas, such as 'health and medicine', 'science', 'the fine arts'. Early research included a meeting with Lord Baker of Dorking (former Home Secretary), who was developing his pro-

posed Museum of British History. The Museum's remit would be very much like the stamp programme's: to present history in an accessible, and yet stimulating way. Chief historical adviser to the project was Jeremy Black, Professor of History at the University of Exeter who was recommended. Black was contacted and, shortly before the general election in May, his advice was sought on initial concepts. Although specialising in the 18th century, he lectures widely on all historical areas, and in particular focuses on the 'inclusive' rather than high political commentary which Royal Mail wanted to address.

Research into modern historical interpretations occurred in parallel to determine the contemporary view of history. From this came an understanding of the importance of a number of themes. One was an appreciation that in the past, British history has been synonymous with English history, and that the interaction of the component parts of the UK was important. Another was an appreciation that British culture has evolved greatly over time, particularly through the influx of people into these shores, as well as the waves of emigration where British ideas were exported around the world. Hence the idea of a set on migration (Settlers' Tale) became vital. Similarly, the story of the democratisation of society has fuelled so many social and political changes in the last two centuries that it could not be excluded. Hence a Citizens' Tale. Other areas were also deemed essential – the human impact on the landscape (Farmers' Tale), plus British invention, fine art as well as popular culture (Entertainers' Tale) and an appreciation of the spiritual significance of the millennium (Christians' Tale).

To cut a long, long story short, the desk research, tales framework and the idea to issue 12 sets in a year (making it more like a regular magazine) met and, with a great deal of distilling, a matrix of 12 tales and a selection of subjects for each over chronological time periods took shape. Some subjects commended themselves as being difficult to overlook (Isaac Newton's contribution

to science), others came out of the very considerable research (the early Norman migration to the Scottish lowlands). Four subjects for each set were debated and determined, but the matrix was so constructed that to change one subject had implications for those around it.

The subject matrix is rather like a spider's web, remove one strand and other areas start to unravel. For example, *Inventors' Tale* does not include that great British (or rather Scottish) gift to the world: television. However, since TV is such a major determinant of modern culture it had to be included. Hence in *Entertainers' Tale*, a dalek from *Dr Who* is featured as the metaphor for the cult nature of TV – a premier form of entertainment which has the power to bring people together. To have lost TV from this *Tale* would have forced a rethink of the *Inventors' Tale*.

And the word 'metaphor' is a potent one. Royal Mail has created a matrix, or rather a mosaic of the millennium. It presents original interpretations of 48 major influences that have shaped the way we are today: how we think and what we do, who we are and how we express ourselves as a nation. The 48 are each metaphors for wider eras of change and impact on the world, rather than a list of the top 48 people and events of 1000 years. No doubt throughout 1999 we will be deluged with colour supplements giving their own spin on the top 48, or 100, or 1000 events of the millennium. However, Royal Mail hopes that the statement it has created with the unfolding programme will stand apart as a significant contribution to the nation's celebrations, as a major work of arts patronage and talking point for philatelists around the world. Where else, for example, could you acquire fine art prints of 48 top image-makers, covering 1000 years of experience, and all for well under £20? Or for free when received in the post?

So, in this way the architecture of the programme took shape, a period of fervent activity in the latter half of 1997, followed by detailed research over the next months as the remaining few holes were filled and ideas strengthened. And the year 2000 beckons, demanding a similar, but different approach. Continuity and change reign ●

1998 Definitives checklist



We hope this list will prove helpful to collectors in completing their collections. Please read the following notes carefully. We quote British Philatelic Bureau order numbers (prefixed TB, DS, etc) as given on Bureau stock lists. Some stamps were issued only in books and can be bought from Royal Mail only in complete books.

Low Value Definitive and Country stamps

Printers D, De La Rue Security Print Ltd; E, Joh Enschedé Stamps; Q, The House of Questa Ltd; W, Walsall Security Printers Ltd. Unless otherwise stated stamps are gravure printed, have PVA gum, perforation gauge 15 × 14 (with ellipses at lower left and right sides) and two phosphor bands. Dates quoted are those the stamps were first available from the Philatelic Bureau; in some cases stamps were reported on sale earlier elsewhere

Wilding definitives

10 March 20p light green, phosphor band left, W ● 20p light green, phosphor band right, W ● 26p rust, W ● 37p rhododendron, W



From left: mixed pane from Breaking Barriers prestige book, 13 October (only source of stamps with perf gauge 14); mixed pane of 20p, 26p and 37p Wilding stamps from Definitive Portrait prestige book, 10 March (the only source of these stamps); mixed pane from Breaking Barriers

These four stamps were issued only in the Definitive Portrait prestige stamp book (SB001); all are perf 14.

Machin definitives

6 April 2nd (phosphor band centre) & 1st class, self-adhesive upright format, E, coils of 200 (DC899, DC898). Also issued in sheets of 100, W, 22 June (DC902, DC901)

5 May 30p, W, from 4 x 30p book (UB167). Sheet stamps printed by D.

13 October 10p, 43p, 2nd class (phosphor band left) & 2nd class (phosphor band right) perf 14, W, from Speed prestige stamp book (YB013). Other printings of 10p & 43p stamps are perf 15 x 14; first issue of 2nd side band stamps.

1 December 1p, 20p (phosphor band centre), 26p, 2nd (phosphor band centre) & 1st class, Q, from £1 & £2 machine books and 10 x 2nd and 10 x 1st books (TB062, TB063, UB172, UB171). Previous printings by Q were offset-litho.

Country stamps

13 October N Ireland, Scotland, Wales 20p one band right, & 26p, perf 14, W, from Speed prestige book (YB013). 20p sheet stamps one centre band; sheet stamps both values are perf 15 x 14, also 26p in BBC prestige book, 1997. Welsh stamps without p (pence)

Mixed value and pictorial label stamp panes

10 March Definitive Portrait prestige stamp book, D: 1) pane of nine 26p Wilding definitive; 2) pane of six 20p Wilding definitive; 3) mixed pane of 20p, 26p & 37p Wilding definitives and pictorial label; 4) mixed pane of 26p & 37p Wilding definitives.

13 October Breaking Barriers (Speed) prestige book, W: 1) mixed pane of 43p definitives and 20p country stamps; 2) mixed pane of 2nd class and 26p country stamps; 3) mixed pane of 10p and 43p definitives and 2nd class stamps.

14 November Prince of Wales book, pane of four 1st class with pictorial label, W, offset litho (UC009 unfolded pane).



Camcorder and create-a-card promotion books (philatelic release dates 27 August and 7 September)

Stamp Books

2 February 10 × 1st D, 'Disney' promotional book (UP019)

10 March Definitive Portrait prestige book (SB001)

5 May Books with revised text relating to use of NVI stamps and new European postal rates: £1 (2 × 1p, 1 × 20p and 3 × 26p) and £2 (1 × 20p, 7 × 26p) Q (UTB060, TB061), 10 × 2nd and 10 × 1st D (UB160, UB159), 10 × 2nd Q (UB162), 4 × 2nd, 4 × 1st and 10 × 1st W (UB164, UB163 and UB161), 4 × 30p, 4 × 37p, and 4 × 63p W (UB167, UB 165, UB166). Note: The 4 × 37p book has a tourist design front cover showing London sights.

23 June 10 × 1st D 'Woolworth' (Peugeot) promotional book (UP020). Note: First day of philatelic availability, on sale at most Woolworth stores from late April or early May.

27 August 10 × 1st, D, Camcorder promotional book (UP021). Note: First day of philatelic availability, on sale at retail outlets from 1 July.

7 September 4 × 30p W (UP024), 4 × 37p W (UP023), and 10 × 1st class D (UP022), 'Make their post memorable' (Create a Card) promotional books. Note: First day of national and philatelic availability, on sale at selected post offices in the Midlands from 3 August.

7 September 10 × 1st Q, printed litho (UB168). Text changes to cover since previous Q 10 × 1st book.

(Stamps new to specialist collectors because they have longwave phosphor – see *Bulletins*, June 98, p315, August, p375, December, p119.)

13 October Breaking Barriers (Speed) prestige book (£6.16), W (YB013). Contains three panes of definitive/country stamps and one pane of four 20p Speed stamp. (The 20p Speed stamp was first issued in sheets, September 1998. The sheet stamp is perf 15 × 14, has centre phosphor band and copyright symbol, book stamp is p14, side band phosphor and no copyright symbol.)

14 November 4 × 1st W, printed litho, with Prince of Wales pictorial label (UL006)

1 December £1 & £2 machine books (TB062, TB063) and 10 × 2nd & 10 × 1st (UB172, UB171), Q. Previous Q books contained stamps printed offset litho.

Presentation packs

11 August High value national definitives, £1.50, £2, £3, £5, E (£11.85) (FR001)

20 October Low value national definitives, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 20, 26, 30, 31, 37, 39, 43, 50, and 63p, £1 and 1st and 2nd class (£5.50) (DR003)

20 October Country stamps, N Ireland, Scotland, and Wales 20p, 26p, 37p & 63p in one pack (£4.75) (CR001)

Royal Mail thanks D G A Myall for his help with this listing. The Editor regrets that neither Mr Myall nor himself is able to engage in correspondence regarding its contents.

The National Postal Museum News and 1997/98 *Review*



The **Review** is available from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT. Price £5

National Postal Museum The Museum, in King Edward Street, near London's St Paul's Cathedral, closed to the public on Christmas Eve. First opened in 1966, the Museum had been visited over the years by many thousands of stamp collectors, postal historians and others with a general interest in the postal service. For many regular visitors to the former London Chief PO and the Philatelic Counter, the closure of the NPM will mark the end of an era.

Christine Jones, Post Office Head of Heritage, explains the reason for the closure is to enable staff to concentrate all their activities on making sure that the collections will be packed ready for relocation, mainly to accommodation at Post Office Archives, sometime this summer and in advance of the new owners of King Edward Building taking possession. From January onwards, there be limited access to the NPM collections, only by appointment and when the material is accessible. Items packed ready for moving will not be available. Until a new building is available, the philatelic collections and all the staff will share the PO Archives' premises at Freeling House, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB. Christine and her staff regret the inconvenience the closure and move will cause, but will do their best to accommodate reasonable requests to view philatelic material. All enquiries should be made on: 0171 776 3636.

The Museum has published its *Review of 1997/98*, as always skilfully edited by Douglas Muir, the Curator Philately and former Editor of this

Bulletin, Stamp Collecting and Philatelic Magazine.

In his foreword, John Roberts, PO Chief Executive, recalls his visit to the Museum last August when he was able to thank the staff for their hard work and 'to meet people from outside The Post Office who are strong supporters of the Museum and its work'. They will be heartened by Mr Roberts' commitment to 'the guardianship of our heritage' and 'to create an attraction that will do justice to the proud history of the The Post Office.' In her introduction, Christine Jones reviews the past 18 months, particularly the role the NPM played in the wider museum world, staff changes, and the Museum's featuring in several radio and TV programmes. The section on 'Work in Progress' shows the scale of the NPM collections. The number of postal history albums continues to expand, and has now reached 182, some 3642 20th century registration sheets have now been catalogued and boxed, and the NPM received over 10,000 new issue stamps, miniature sheets and books from the Universal Postal Union during the period under review. Several Friends of the NPM continue to give valuable part-time assistance at the Museum and Archives.

Simon Bates reports in more detail on PO Archives. New computers were installed and new information sheets produced on a range of subjects from pillar boxes, to air mail, to PO uniforms. Customer facilities were improved with the acquisition of a specialist book photocopier so it is now easier to photocopy pages from the

many bulky volumes in Archives. Looking to the future, Simon writes: 'The Archives' main priority will continue to be improving access to the collections. Hence our continuing efforts on the cataloguing front and the production of new finding aids... We will also continue to work with the Public Record Office on ways in which we might make records available to the public earlier than under the current "30-year rule".'

One of his colleagues, Richard Barker, looks at the centenary of postal motor transport with details of the NPM's 'heritage fleet' of 56 vehicles from the 1930s. A few have been included in the Museum's Post Haste! exhibition but the majority remain in store in Gloucestershire where, unfortunately, there is as yet no public access. Krystyna Koscia provides her usual interesting report on Paper Conservation, this time describing work on postal orders and registration sheets and a method of mounting and storing. She adds useful contact addresses for collectors interested in conservation matters.

The section on Recent Acquisitions illustrates some of the many, and diverse, items added to the NPM collections – from a sheet of the unissued 30p Joyce Grenfell stamp to a large slate Royal Cypher once affixed to a now demolished PO building in Chesterfield. Some interesting pre-stamp covers are illustrated, also 24 items of stamp artwork for the Cinema, Great Tudor, Missions of Faith and Architects of the Air issues, also a proposed Easter set.

The Museum can be justly proud of the exhibitions it has staged over the years and the last ones are recorded here: Golden & Glorious (marking The Queen's golden wedding), The Queen's Stamps – Mediterranean, Going Places..., It's Only a Game (sports stamps), and other smaller displays staged at the Museum and elsewhere. Most of the major exhibitions have been recorded in the *Bulletin* and we look forward to reporting on future exhibitions at a new museum.

Lionel Jones writes on the Dead Letter Office – hitherto a little known and poorly documented subject. Included in his account are illustrations of two attractive covers in the Museum's DLO collection. Similar research articles, by Doulas

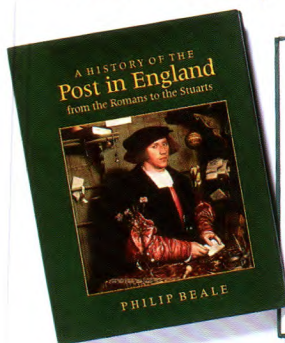
Muir and Tony Butler, concern the early stamps of Palestine and postal orders. Douglas wrote on Palestine in the *Bulletin* of May 1998, and in *The London Philatelist*, July/August 1998. The *Review* concludes with the customary useful listing of new NPM publications, postcards and postmarks. The number of items postmarked ranged from 3558 with the Sub-Post Offices handstamp on 12 August 1997 to just 281 with the It's Only a Game postmark of 25 June 1998. During 1997 some 4545 items were posted to receive the Museum's well-known Maltese Cross postmark.

Supplied with the *Review* is a separate four-page history of The Post Office & King Edward Building by Andrew Perry. In medieval times the site was covered by monastic buildings. King Edward Street was named after Edward VI in 1843, and the foundation stone of KEB was laid by Edward VII in 1905. The building opened in November 1910 and housed the London Chief Post Office until 1994, and the headquarters of Post Office Counters Ltd since March 1997. Now both the NPM and POCL will vacate the building which is to be taken over by Merrill Lynch. The 32 years of the NPM in King Edward Street is chronicled in the *Review* by *Bulletin* Editor John Holman, a regular visitor to the Museum for most of that time, and who worked there from 1988-92 when the *Bulletin* was based at the NPM. Illustrations show Reginald Phillips handing his collection of Victorian stamps to the Postmaster General in 1965, and the official opening by The Queen in 1969 •

Cross Post The Autumn 1998 issue of the magazine of the Association of Friends of the NPM is now available. This contains well-written and illustrated features on the Royal Wedding postmark of November 1947, Joseph Ady (1770-1852) and the Returned Letter Handstamps, overprinted stamps of GB, and the postal history of Staines. There are reports on the Museum's last exhibition – It's Only a Game, and of the Association's activities •

Cross Post is available to non-members, price £2. For details of the Association, contact Ray Pottle, PO Box 40, Uckfield TN22 2SP. Telephone 01825 766546.

Books History of the post • Haslemere • First Day Covers



A History of the Post in England from the Romans to the Stuarts by Philip Beale. Casebound, 284 pages.

From Ashgate Publishing
Direct Sales, Bookpoint Ltd,
39 Milton Park, Abingdon
OX14 4TD. ISBN 1 85928
404 3

A History of the Post in England from the Romans to the Stuarts To the layman, postal services probably began in 1840 with the Penny Black; postal historians, of course, are aware that there was a regular public postal service since the establishment of the General Letter Office in 1660, and perhaps even as far back as 1635 when King Charles made his famous Bagshot Declaration, throwing open the Royal Mail to the general public as a means of raising revenue without recourse to Parliament.

The Royal Mail itself, confined to the king, his court and the officials who gathered the taxes and administered the kingdom, has a far greater antiquity and the appointment of Sir Brian Tuke as Master of the Posts to Henry VIII is regarded as a starting point, although the Historical Summary published by the Post Office half a century ago stated that 'the germ of the Postal Service was the organisation of relays to carry the King's despatches... from 1482'.

It therefore comes as something of a shock to learn, from this closely written and extremely well-researched book, that a postal service has existed more or less continuously since Roman times. Good government depended on an efficient communications system and this, prior to the development of the telegraph and telephone, depended on the transmission of the written word. The Romans wrote with a stylus on reusable wax tablets, confining papyrus and parchment to less ephemeral messages and legal documents, but the discovery of over 800 letters written on thin

slivers of wood at Vindolanda on Hadrian's Wall in recent years has revised our ideas. Beale even illustrates one such letter from Claudia Severa, inviting her friend Sulpicia Lepidina to her birthday party. That surely speaks volumes for the sophistication of Roman life in Britain.

The Roman *cursus publicus* used a variety of wheeled vehicles on well-made roads, but even throughout the so-called Dark Ages sufficient letters have survived to indicate that cultural life continued. Most of the letters from this period are ecclesiastical, the earliest now extant dating from about 704 and written in Latin on vellum. From the Norman Conquest onwards, however, merchants letters as well as those of Church and State become much more common and even the leather mailbags have survived, as well as numerous pictures showing postboys and mailcarts, or people reading or writing letters.

Successive chapters deal with the refinement of the Royal Mail in the Middle Ages, medieval highways and travellers, and the services operated by the Church, merchants and the burgesses of the rising towns. There are chapters on the roads, the organisation of the posts and the carriers themselves. The section dealing with the Tudors and early Stuarts is the most detailed and occupies about half of the book, being supported by five appendices. Not the least important aspect is an extremely comprehensive bibliography. All in all, this is a major contribution to a hitherto rather neglected aspect of English socio-economic history. *Reviewed by James Mackay* •

Collect GB First Day Covers The 1998/99 edition is, as its 25 predecessors, a useful and well-presented guide to this popular area of philately. Known as the Booth Catalogue after its compiler, it includes covers from the introduction of the Uniform 4d Post on 5 December 1839 (priced, incidentally at £450) to the 1998 Carnival stamps. For new users of the catalogue, the introductory notes are worth careful reading. Established collectors may find the comment (page 5) on 'official covers' of interest and the compiler invites comments from collectors on this 'confusing area'. The sections covering the reigns of Victoria and Edward VII are of necessity thin as there were no special issues. Both definitive and commemorative stamps of George V are listed together, but are separated from George VI onwards. The Elizabeth II definitives listings include regionals, booklets, coils, dues, and gum, perforation and paper changes. The lowest price for a FDC of the first special set – 1924 Empire Exhibition (75th anniversary coming up!) is now £225. Covers of the Edward VIII issues are always popular and the listings include covers posted on 10 and 11 December 1936 (day he signed the abdication and the day it received Parliamentary ratification) are included as well as first days of the stamps themselves. Within the listings are shown selected postmarks and covers. It is interesting to note the variety of covers produced for the issues of the 1940s, 50s and 60s, mostly sold 'blank' for collectors to address and post themselves. Many of the illustrated covers bear the typed addresses of collectors. Hand-addressed covers are nowadays frowned upon and there is a warning that from 1966 onwards most such covers are worth only 25% of catalogue prices. The catalogue includes a worthwhile 18-page special colour section on covers of the 1929 PUG set and GB overprinted issues, a list of dates in PO history, and helpful philatelic addresses. Most collectors, however, will be more concerned with the values of covers they have or have still to purchase and it is evident from the prices just how scarce some covers with slogan postmarks are, for example 1966 World Cup with 'World Cup City Sheffield' slogan at £420 (compared to standard FD post-

mark at £10), or 1967 3d & 1s6d Christmas with 'First Ever Christmas Present' slogan at £275 (£2). Clearly the value of some modern FDCs is vastly disproportionate to the opprobrium attached to them in some quarters of the philatelic world •

Collect GB First Day Covers 328 pages. Price £5.99, postage £1 UK, £2 overseas, available from First Day Publishing Company, PO Box 947, Lewes BN8 6ZS

The Post of Haslemere by Peter Moorey. The study of the postal history of individual towns has developed enormously in recent years, and provides us with a greater depth of detail than is possible in county or regional studies. The quality of these productions varies considerably, and this book must rank among the more idiosyncratic. Despite its title, it is confined to the early period, and only the postmarks up to 1857 are illustrated. The history of the Haslemere post office is decidedly patchy, and derived mainly from local historical sources, no attempt having been made to work through the PMG's Minuted Papers preserved in Post Office Archives.

Sub post offices are ignored, with the notable exception of Grayswood, a description of which (with two photographs) occupies two pages. The reader learns that Marie Moorey, postmistress in 1912, was a relative of the author, although the relationship is not explained. She was the daughter-in-law of George Moorey, broom-maker to Queen Victoria, whose story is recounted on an earlier page. These personal touches add to the endearing quality of this book.

Haslemere had close connections with Henry Bishop of datestamp fame, and John Wornham Penfold associated with Victorian pillar-boxes. Alfred Lord Tennyson lived in the district and his long poem *Rizpah* (1868) deals with the gruesome fate of a mail-robber. Mail robberies, in fact, loom large in this book, accounting for fully a third of the contents. It is to be hoped that Mr Moorey will produce a sequel dealing with Haslemere's more recent postal history in due course. *Reviewed by James Mackay* •

The Post of Haslemere 64 A4 pages. Published by the author, 28 Border Road, Shottermill, Haslemere, Surrey GU27 1PF. £7.99 (UK) or £9.50 (overseas). ISBN 0 9533944 0 9

Postbag

Stamps availability and design I'd like to comment on Mr Martin's observations (October). I too have difficulty obtaining commemoratives from the local post office if I don't immediately visit during the first hours they are on sale. And many times I find that sub post offices in the town are not even sent more than a token quantity, often for those who have reserved them, or only in packs. Over the years this situation has become more and more pronounced, because I remember when it was never a problem and availability was spread uniformly.

May I also add that I am disenchanted with the designs of many British stamps, especially the increasing lack of white borders which makes the stamps look like untidy labels when torn along their perforations, and also the occupational propensity to print headings and legend (if any) in unreadable, small, ill-positioned, and part-invisible gold or silver ink. I would also like to see a standard 'font' design used for the value, so as to give British stamps a family look. Since few if any readers have made comments in these areas, I would like to know what others think. I for one no longer acquire every British stamp set, but only ones exhibiting quality of design. It was the Horror set of May 1997 which killed it for me.

DAVE STRICKLAND, DONCASTER ●

Exhibitions galore How do other readers feel about the plethora of exhibitions in the UK? At one time we just had Stampex, now that is held twice a year, there is the innovative Stamp exhibition at Wembley in April, and this year further exhibitions in Hove and Manchester. On top of that there is Thematica twice a year, Scotex in Glasgow, a major Postal History fair at the Royal Horticultural Halls, not to mention hundreds of local fairs and exhibitions. I feel that the organisers should try to avoid exhibitions too close together, for example Manchester, Hove and Thematica were all in November. Also do we need Stampex and Stamp exhibitions in the year 2000 as well as the big international event at Earl's Court? PETER MAINS, LEEDS ●

Babs When I read that one of the racing cars depicted on the Speed stamps was called 'Babs', it reminded me of something my aunt told me a few months ago. My aunt's grandfather, Walter Andrews was a coach builder for 'Van den Plas'. During his work he often met John G Parry Thomas. Sometime before Parry Thomas was due to make his speed record attempt my great grandfather asked whether he had decided on a name for the car. Parry Thomas replied that he had not and whether he had any ideas. Walter replied that he had a lovely granddaughter, Muriel, the youngest of three girls, who the family called 'Babs'. Parry Thomas consequently used the name. My aunt was very pleased but devastated when she later heard of his tragic death. I hope this little bit of history will be of interest to readers. G BOWDEN, BEXLEYHEATH ●

Definitive update The decision to issue new Scottish country stamps (to mark the opening of the Parliament in Edinburgh) is welcome news. After 27 years it is time the country stamp design was updated. Hopefully there will also be new designs for Wales and Northern Ireland. Can we hope that this change presages a new definitive design? The ideal time to start a new series would be February 2002 to mark The Queen's golden jubilee.

MARY PARKER, DURHAM ●

Christmas stamps The 1998 Christmas stamps are excellent – one of the best, if not the best, of the Christmas issues since 1966. They are clear, colourful and reflect the Christmas message. Royal Mail has redeemed itself for the rather gloomy 1996 set and the somewhat frivolous 1997 issue. At time of writing I am awaiting the December *Bulletin* with details of the first of the Millennium sets. I am hoping this series will reflect all that is best of British, both past and present, and in so doing attract many new recruits to the hobby of stamp collecting. P P SMART, BRADFORD ●

The Editor is always pleased to receive contributions for Postbag, especially letters adding information to that already published. He regrets he is unable to reply personally to letters.

Greetings stamps labels The first issue, by Lionel Jones

SPECIAL GREETINGS LABELS were included in the first Greetings stamps book, 10 years ago this month. Labels in books, however, are not new. Printed labels of the same dimensions and perforation as postage stamps to which they were adjoined, were usually created to utilise the residue of watermarked stamp paper remaining after pages of uniform size, matching the booklet cover, had been printed with stamp value equal to a pre-determined selling price. The St Andrew's Cross label in 1906 books is well-known to collectors.

The potential to use these stamp-size areas of paper as revenue-raisers developed slowly from 1924; in the main the textural matter printed upon them was postal propaganda which predominated for the next 64 years although some pictorial devices were mixed with the lettering during this time.

Fully pictorial labels did not appear until 1989 with the advent of Greetings stamps with which to personalise one's mail. These articles will record the labels issued in the Greetings stamp books over the past decade •



The 12 labels in the 1989 Greetings book were attached by an inter-panneau gutter to the stamp pane.

The designs were by Lewis Moberly and Philip Sutton produced the illustrations and typography of the booklet cover and labels.

Production was by Harrisons using the Jumelle press which can print up to six colours in a single pass. The paper was phosphor coated and the adhesive PVA Dextrin. The labels (and stamps) were perforated on the APS perforator, gauge 14.75 x 14.25.

Cover corner



IN SEPTEMBER we featured two unusual hand-painted covers. This time we show the front and back of a cover submitted by S.J. Smith of Essex. He tells us it is one in a small collection sent to his wife in her RAF days by her elderly bed-ridden

Uncle Albert (A.W. Deans) living in Fareham, Hants. These morale-boosting covers contained more than the usual family news – some sheets were decorated with further wartime themes. This particular cover was postmarked 3 July 1942 •

Posting boxes 183

THE FIRST of this month's photographs, submitted by Luigi Cobisi of Italy, shows a British box outside the main entrance of the Central Mail Room at Castille Place, Valetta, Malta. Mr Cobisi tells us that there are still a considerable number of old red letter boxes still in service on the island.

The second illustration is of a George V box at the Handbridge Sub-Post Office, Chester. The photograph, taken in January 1998, was submitted by Mr E L Auerswald of Liverpool •

For details of the Letter Box Study Group send a SAE or IRC to the Membership Secretary, Mrs V Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES. The Group produces many interesting publications and postcards.



Prize competition Win £100

WE START THIS MONTH our new regular competition. Simply identify the 1993 stamp from the detail shown below and send your answer, name and address on a postcard (or back of a sealed envelope) to: January Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL. The sender of the first card drawn on 22 February will receive £100, twenty runner-up prizes will also be awarded. The competition is not open to Royal Mail employees •



The winners of the October competition were: P G Fortescue, Wiltshire; D J Hawkins, Sussex; and G Steffensen, Denmark. The answers: 1) Irene von Treskow; 2) Milan; 3) Richard Ashwell; 4) Banavie. Our thanks to all who entered.

Events

The National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP is now closed to the public. There is limited access to some of the collections – by appointment. **Enquiries** 0171 776 3636

Until 6 April Scarfe at the NPG – exhibition of works of Gerald Scarfe, including original artwork for 1998 Comedians stamps. At National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London WC2H 0HE. **Enquiries** 0171 306 0055

Until further notice Postal Memorabilia displays at Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln. **Enquiries** D Harrop, 15 Hawthorn Road, Stockport SK4 3DQ

16 January Display 'Victorian Inland Mail' by Austin Davis, GB Philatelic Society, at British Philatelic Centre, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1, 11.00. **Enquiries** A J Lajer (GBPS Membership Secretary) 001189 344151

2 February North of Ireland Phil Soc Grand Auction from the collection of Robert Scott, at Hunterhouse College, Lisburn Road, Belfast, 19.30 (viewing from 17.30). **Enquiries** N Scott, 01232 795530.

**HAVE ONE OF
BRITAIN'S BIGGEST
MILLENNIUM
CELEBRATIONS IN
YOUR HOME**

On 31 December 1999 you will probably be celebrating the new millennium with a New Year's Eve party. Why not start the festivities a year early with a little celebration every month?

That's what Royal Mail will be doing – with its Millennium Collection, a particularly special set of 48 stamps issued at monthly intervals during 1999. It's Royal Mail's tribute to the last thousand years of British history, celebrating the important people, inventions, social changes and artistic achievements. Each stamp has been designed by one of today's leading artists and

designers, including Peter Blake, David Hockney and Sir Eduardo Paolozzi. The stamps will be available in sets, in presentation packs and on first day covers. Collections of the 12 covers can be ordered at a special price of £26.40 up until 11 January. Simply send your name, address and remittance to British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT or call the UK order line on 0345 641 641, open Monday-Friday 08.30-17.00. Overseas customers should write to the above address or call 131 550 8989.

Millennium stamps go on sale on 12 January.



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Reference 98 QMA

