

British Philatelic Bulletin

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WITH LOVE



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Stamp Collecting with the Sunday Times

Royal Mail Stamps & Philately are pleased to be co-operating with *The Sunday Times* in a series of five features on stamp collecting to be published in that newspaper from mid-January to mid-February.

The issue dated 15 January will include a free first day cover envelope for the Birds stamps (17 January). This cover will be unique to Sunday Times readers and will bear the name of the newspaper and of the Royal Mail.

The issue of 22 January will contain an "All World Stamp Album" which will include spaces for stamps from all continents, a stamp identification guide, etc.

In the 29 January issue readers will find a packet containing 10 large pictorial foreign stamps and various special offers for starter kits and albums, also a free ticket to Spring Stampex (28 February/5 March) and discounted membership to the Stamp Bug Club.

In time for posting for St Valentine's Day, the issue of 5 February will contain a unique Royal Mail Valentine's Day Greetings Postcard with the 19p Cupid Greetings stamp (issued 31 January) affixed.

The final issue in this series, on 12 February, will contain a "Great Britain Stamp Album" which will provide spaces for all 1989 issues as well as for some older issues.

These free gifts are bound to be popular, especially the pack of stamps to be included in the 29 January issue. One hundred Penny Blacks will be "salted" amongst the 1.5 million free packs being given away with the newspaper.

Details of this interesting project are being sent to those schools which regularly receive mailings from the Youth Philately section of Royal Mail Stamps & Philately and it is expected that publicity will be displayed in main post offices.

Exhibitions

The British Post Office will be represented at the "India 89" international exhibition in New Delhi from 20-29 January and will provide full philatelic facilities at Spring Stampex at the Horticultural Halls, Westminster from 28 February to 5 March. The usual, highly popular, Stamp Bug area, for young collectors, will once again be provided.

Greetings Stamps

31 January 1989



Britain's first Greetings stamps will be issued on 31 January; the background to this issue was published in last month's *Bulletin*.

The stamps will be sold in a book containing two of each of the five stamps, each of 19p value (UK first class and EEC countries basic rate). The stamps, designed by Philip Sutton, feature: a rose; cupid; yacht and rainbow; bowl of fruit and teddy bear. The subjects were chosen after consultation with card producers; these subjects being the most popular designs for greetings cards.

Attached to the block of 10 stamps are 12 greetings labels – 10 different designs, that showing the rose being used on three labels. These are variously inscribed CONGRATULATIONS (1 label), BEST WISHES (3), HAPPY BIRTHDAY (4), HAPPY ANNIVERSARY (1), WITH LOVE (2) and THANK YOU (1). The designs of the labels

complement the stamps, showing yachts' pennants, rainbow, rose, teddy bear, etc. The labels can be detached and affixed to envelopes, either near the stamp or on the flap of the envelope. The labels themselves have no postal validity.

Whilst these stamps are designed specifically for greetings mail, they can, of course, be used to prepay postage on any letters or parcels.

Technical Details

The stamps have been printed by Harrison & Sons Limited in photogravure on phosphor-coated paper, perforation 15 x 14, PVA Dextrin gum.

First Day Cover

A first day cover envelope will be available from mid-January, price 17p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover





Greetings

ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER stamps

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

service, one at the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh and one at the appropriately-named village of Lover, Salisbury, Wilts.

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with a horizontal strip of five stamps (one of each design) cancelled with either postmark. The cost will be £1.41 for UK customers (including VAT), £1.23 for overseas customers (no VAT applicable). Application forms, available from the Bureau and main post offices, should be returned not later than 31 January.

Customers requiring only the special pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped addressed envelope under an outer cover endorsed "Special First Day of Issue handstamp" to:

British Philatelic Bureau	20 Brandon Street EDINBURGH EH3 5TT
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Lover	Special Postmark Duty Mail Circulation Group Letter District Office Station Road SWINDON SN1 1AA
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First Day of Issue posting boxes will, as always, be available at most main post offices for

collectors who wish to post their own covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial, "First Day of Issue" handstamps

Souvenir Cover

A souvenir cover, of similar design to the first day cover, will be available from all philatelic counters from 1 February, price 17p. This can be used to obtain relevant postmarks after the first day of issue and will be on sale for one year.

Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards

There will be no pack or stamp (PHQ) cards for this issue.

St Valentine's Day Card

A special Royal Mail Valentine's Day Greetings Postcard is being produced – see the feature on Stamp Collecting with The Sunday Times on page 114 of this *Bulletin* for details.

Cylinder Numbers

The cylinders and colours used for these stamps are as follows:

B1A (grey-black) B1B (greenish-yellow) B1C (bright rose) B1D (bright rose-red) B1E (new blue) B1F (light green) B1G (gold).

Book Cover

The design of the Greetings stamp book cover had not been finalised at the time of going to press; it will be illustrated in next month's *Bulletin*.

Designing the Bird Stamps

DON CORDERY

As with many other artists, I find the most daunting stage of any new project is to begin!

The decision to restrict the theme of the stamps to coastal birds was made jointly by the Royal Mail and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Looking back I feel this was a welcome restriction. With over 240 birds listed for the British Isles, the limitation to coastal species certainly eased the dilemma of choice.

I began with a list of RSPB reserves around the British coastline plus a list of the birds commonly seen. Two birds came immediately to mind – the **avocet** (being the RSPB symbol) and the **puffin** (visually a graphic gift with its highly coloured summer bill).



My first thoughts and rough ideas were far too complicated. I envisaged each bird image stood against a background, showing a recognisable landscape feature from a relevant RSPB reserve. Some of the designs worked fairly well at the scale I was using but appeared over fussy when viewed through a reducing glass to actual stamp size.

So, having spent several days researching various locations, and trying to decide if there was time available to visit the reserves to make drawings or take photographs, I discarded the background material completely in favour of a bold, simple approach. Having made this decision I felt immediately more relaxed and began

drawing the birds in various positions using as much of the available space as possible – sometimes with parts of the drawings almost touching the edges.

As work progressed, the predominant black and white plumage of the avocet and puffin suggested the idea of having a graphic theme linking the four designs as a set. The black and white theme also provided a criterion in choosing the remaining two birds, the **oystercatcher** and **gannet**.

Even with these major decisions behind me I was amazed at the number of hurdles and stumbling blocks still to be encountered. For instance, the need for consistent placing of the



sovereign's head and price denomination very often interfered with a particular position chosen for the individual birds. The diminutive scale of stamps makes them quite unique in the design field. It is a delicate balancing and arranging of all the elements, and – at times – most frustrating. I feel that when a stamp design is good it somehow looks just right and *deceptively simple*.

I welcomed the suggestion to visit Harrison's the printers to discuss the technical problems likely to be incurred in translating my work to stamp size. Comments and suggestions were made about my working methods and I subsequently made one or two very subtle adjustments in my approach to the final designs.

Design Matters

3. How stamps are printed by the photogravure method

BARRY ROBINSON

Design Adviser to The Post Office

Although the designer can utilise the full colour spectrum, the printer has a limited number of cylinders to ink. He, therefore, has to print one ink on top of the other in such a way as to produce all the colours and subtleties of shade of the artist's original work at stamp size.

Most Royal Mail special stamps produced by photogravure require six or seven colours – seven is the maximum number which can be used in a continuous print run on the “Jumelle” press at Harrison & Sons Limited, although three more inks can be added when photogravure is combined with the intaglio process. The 1985 litho-printed Safety at Sea stamps produced by Waddingtons Security Print Limited required eight inks: this was achieved by printing four colours in one pass through the printing press and adding the other four colours in a second print run.

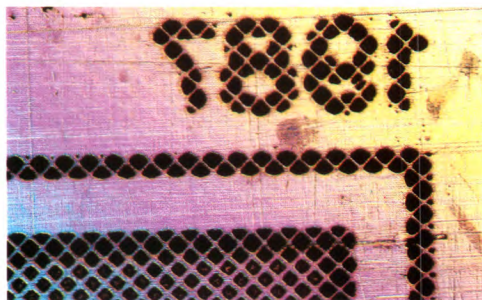
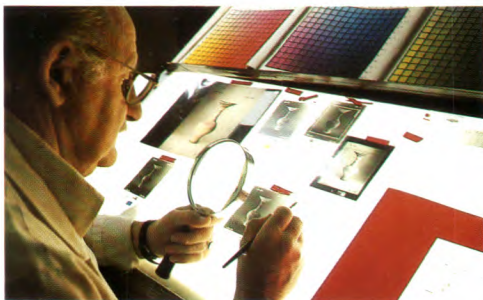
The first task in stamp production, consequently, is to determine how many and which colour inks will be required. Subtle colours, like the flesh tones in the 1985 Arthurian Legend stamps, need very careful consideration since each of these may require a special combination of inks to achieve the desired effect.

The artwork is then photographed. By using a series of filter lenses which mask out all but the

The negatives are then hand retouched. By increasing or decreasing the strength of each colour, the retouchers ensure as perfect a match as possible with the original artwork. Great care has to be taken where the original artwork is unusually large, such as Terence Cuneo's painting of the *Cornish Riviera* on the 1985 Famous Trains 34p stamp, since minute details will disappear altogether or merge into other details when reduced. Fine details can be re-established by the skill of the retoucher – it is easier to do this at four times enlargement than at actual stamp size.

A positive of each negative is made at actual stamp size and placed in close contact with a sheet of gelatine-coated film, known as autofilm. Both the positive and the autofilm, which is already screened, are then exposed to a beam of light.

The screen is a lattice mesh which transforms the image on the positive into thousands of tiny dots, each dot representing an ink cell. Whilst all the cells are the same size, the strength of colours depends on the depth of each cell. Royal Mail special stamps are produced with 250 screen; this means there are 250 cells per linear inch or 62,250 cells per square inch. A glass plate containing the ruled screen of fine lines reversed



colour required, a master negative of the artwork is produced for each colour needed in the final printing – the image at this stage being made to four times stamp area. Special effects, such as the gold and silver stars on the 1985 Christmas stamps, are positioned on transparent overlays and photographed separately.

out of a dark background is placed in contact with the gelatine-coated autofilm and exposed to light. Since gelatine hardens when exposed to intense light, a hardened grid pattern with intervening soft cells is obtained on the surface of the autofilm.

When the continuous tone positive of the

stamp image is exposed to the screened autofilm, the light shows through at varying intensities, depending on whether each image area is light or dark. If an image area is dark, little light gets through to the cells and the gelatine remains soft. In other image areas, the gelatine in the cells hardens to a depth dependent on the intensity of light getting through.

By placing the autofilm, gelatine side down, on a copper plate and leaching it with warm water, all the hard and soft gelatine is transferred to the plate. After painting out the unprotected



areas of copper, the plate is immersed in acid which etches into the copper. Etching is deepest where there is the least amount of hard gelatine – these cells will contain more ink than others and correspond to the strongest colour areas of the stamp.

The copper plate now carries an image, etched in reverse. A full set of plates, one for each colour separation, is then produced. After the initial proofing, these are scrutinised by engravers who are able to correct any slight flaws, such as spots or blemishes. Using magnifying glasses – remember each cell covers an area of only 0.003 sq in – these skilled craftsmen



deepen those cells found to be too shallow by further etching and correct those which are too deep.

When the engravers have completed this precision work, the plates are positioned on a small proofing press and an "essay" or test stamp is produced. The "essay" is then submitted to The Post Office and the Stamp Advisory Committee for approval. When the "essays" for



a new stamp issue have been accepted by The Post Office and the SAC, they are submitted to HM The Queen for Royal Approval; printing begins only after this has been received.

Step and Repeat

The final colour separation negatives are used again to produce, not single positives as before, but stamp-size multi-positives. A special "step-and-repeat" camera is employed for this purpose.

The camera moves horizontally and vertically, exposing the negative at each stamp position in turn until multiple rows of exposures have been completed on a large photographic plate. Since it is essential that the multi-positive of one separation negative is exactly aligned with the multi-positives of every other separation negative, the movement of the camera is precisely controlled by computer equipment which works to an accuracy of 0.002 of an inch across the width of the plate.

Multi-positives are then thoroughly checked – and corrected where necessary – and various control markings are added. There are basically two types of markings. One type is detected by sensing devices on the printing equipment to control the precise registration of one colour on top of another and paper alignment for perforating. The other type aids manual checking and includes colour dabs or "traffic lights" – these show whether all the colours have printed – and sheet values.

Final multi-positives are transferred onto copper-coated steel printing cylinders in the same way as "essay" plates are created. The separated images are first transferred to gelatine-coated autofilms, already screened; the autofilms are then placed face down on the cylinders and leached in water, thereby transferring the gelatine to the cylinders; and, finally, the cylinders are immersed in acid where the image is etched into the copper in reverse.

When the engravers have corrected any flaws

or blemishes on the cylinders, the copper is coated with chromium – this is much more durable and, therefore, better suited to the rigours of repeated print impressions than copper.

Paper Preparation

Since the production of Royal Mail special stamps involves the most exacting printing requirements, stringent care has to be taken in the choice and preparation of the paper used. Harrison's computer equipment precisely controls the application of special treatments to the paper to ensure consistency in moisture content, thickness and weight. One side is coated with a formulation of china clay which provides a smooth base for the application of high-quality printing inks; phosphors are incorporated in the coating base. The other side is coated with a non-toxic gum which, when moistened, will secure the stamp to an envelope or package.

A reel of treated paper is mounted at one end of the massive "Jumelle" printing press. This is a special press developed by Harrisons which can print up to seven colours by the photogravure process. It also has a section for intaglio printing which can print three colours – intaglio can be combined with photogravure in the same run.

The entire printing process, including paper tension, colour density and register, ink viscosity and printing pressures, is electronically controlled – operators can monitor progress on displays at each end of the 35-metre long machine.

As the continuous web of paper passes between each printing cylinder the impression roller receives an electrostatic charge from the roller which attracts the ink lying in the recessed cells of the cylinder onto the paper. After passing each cylinder, the web of paper goes through a hot-air chamber where the ink is almost instantaneously dried. The web then passes onto the perforating unit and, finally, to cutting equipment which precisely slices the web into sheets of completed stamps.

Throughput on the "Jumelle" is extremely fast. Over 2 million special stamps – printed, perforated and sheeted – can be produced every hour if required. The press could also be running definitives from the other end of the machine at the same time.

In the penultimate article in this series, Mr Robinson considers which process is best for printing special stamps.

Friends of the NPM

Stamp designer Jeffery Matthews gave a fascinating insight into his work at a recent meeting of the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum. He became a designer in 1949 and has worked as a freelance since 1952. His first commission from the PO came in 1959 for a stamp for the tercentenary of the PO charter; one of his designs was shortlisted and essayed but not chosen. His first issued stamps were the 1965 United Nations pair – these had slightly "quirky" borders, the deliberate colour overlaps being designed to overcome colour registration problems.

His wife helped in the research for the 1968 Bridges stamps – Jeffery's designs were used for the 4d and 1s 9d values. He is perhaps best known for his designs for stamps commemorating royal events – 1972 Silver Wedding, 1978 Coronation anniversary, 1980 Queen Mother's 80th Birthday, 1981 and 1986 Royal Weddings and 1986 Queen's 60th Birthday. The 1972 Royal Wedding project involved an immense amount of work, the idea was to emphasise the married couple aspect rather than royalty. Special photographs were required but it was difficult to fit this into the royal programme. Eventually the photographs of The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were taken, separately, by Norman Parkinson at Buckingham Palace on the morning of the state visit of the Emperor of Japan. Mr Matthews met The Queen again at Harrisons when Her Majesty visited to see the stamps in production.

One of his favourites was the 1980 Christmas issue as he had total freedom and the work was entirely his own drawing. He also enjoyed working on the two Heraldry sets (1984 and 1987), the subject being one of his loves. The 28p stamp in the 1984 set includes the Garter Arms. When prepared the design did not include this but when the artwork went for approval to the College of Arms, Jeffery found out that the Earl Marshall had just been made a Knight of the Garter and the design had to be amended accordingly.

All the Friends present enjoyed Mr Matthews' talk and he kindly – and patiently – signed first day covers bearing his stamps. Details of the Association of Friends can be obtained from the Hon Secretary, Ray Pottle, c/o National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP.

Posting Boxes

No.96. Featured this month is a Victorian wall box situated in the wall of the church of St Andrew in the village of Wormingford near Colchester in Essex. The box is of the type manufactured by W T Allen & Co in the period 1881 to 1904. Parishioners at Wormingford can



post their letters after Sunday service ready for the first collection on Monday morning. Similar boxes were featured in Posting Boxes Nos 25 (May 1981) and 64 (October 1984).

Our thanks to Mr A M Reid of Ayrshire for supplying a photograph of this box.

Stampex Ulster

Following the success of earlier exhibitions held since 1975, "Spring Stampex Ulster 89" will take place at the Panorama Suite, Europa Hotel, Great Victoria Street, Belfast on Saturday and Sunday 11 & 12 February 1989, opening hours 10am to 6pm. In addition to dealers from Great Britain and Northern Ireland, some 20 overseas postal administration will be represented by CAPHCO Ltd (formerly Crown Agents Stamp Bureau). The Irish Post Office will be loaning material for a display. A special limited edition philatelic souvenir will be on sale at the exhibition and visitors may have material valued free by one of the resident experts. Enquiries concerning the exhibition should be addressed to: Stampex Ulster, 11 Victoria Street, BELFAST BT1 3GA, telephone Belfast (0232) 231954. A second exhibition is planned for September.

Royal Mail Exhibition Card

The Royal Mail Exhibition Card No. 2 bearing two Bird stamps cancelled with a handstamp marking the SPRING STAMPEX exhibition in London (28 February-5 March 1989) will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau from 28 February, price £1.20 plus usual handling charge.

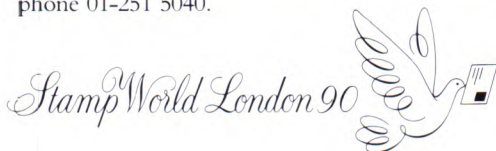
Cards on sale at the PO stand at the exhibition will bear a Stampex cachet. Collectors unable to visit the exhibition can obtain cacheted cards from the Officer-in-Charge, Philatelic Counter, London Chief Office, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1AA, price £1.20 plus handling charge. Orders for cacheted cards must be received by 5 March, the day the exhibition closes.

This will be the final issue of card No. 2, a new design of card will be issued to coincide with the Philexfrance exhibition in Paris (7-17 July 1989).

Supplies of card No. 2 with the five previous exhibition handstamps are still available from the Bureau, price £1.20 each. These are: Finlandia (1 June 1988), Sydrex (30 July 1988), Autumn Stampex/BPE (27 September 1988), Filacept (18 October 1988) and ASDA National 88 (20 October 1988). Orders should be addressed to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

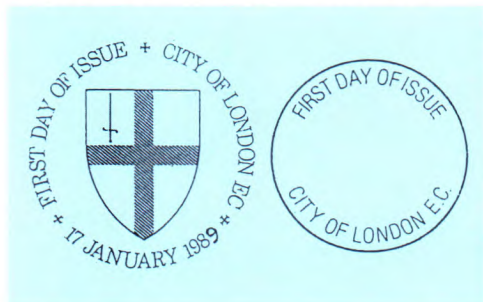
Stamp World London 90

Readers are reminded that Bulletin No 1 for STAMP WORLD LONDON 90, the international stamp exhibition to be held at Alexandra Palace in May 1990, is now available. The bulletin gives the regulations which intending exhibitors need to know in order to prepare their provisional entry forms. Entry forms must be returned to the exhibition organisers by 1 May 1989. Overseas collectors should return entry forms to their national commissioner by 31 March to allow time for the forms to be forwarded to London. Requests for copies of the bulletin and enquiries about the exhibition should be addressed to: Stamp World London 90, PO Box 1990, LONDON EC1M 6NE, telephone 01-251 5040.



City of London Handstamp

The London East Central and London Foreign Section offices in King Edward Street have recently been combined into one unit under the title "City of London Letter District Office". To reflect this change a pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamp incorporating the City of London shield will be available for all special stamp issues commencing with the Birds issue on 17 January. This handstamp will be used in addition to the normal single ring "First Day" handstamp which will be amended to read CITY OF LONDON E.C. instead of just LONDON E.C.



Collectors wishing to obtain these handstamps under the reposting facility should send their covers to: Special Postmark Duty, City of London LDO, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1AA. The outer covers should be clearly endorsed "City of London Pictorial Handstamp" or "First Day of Issue Postmark". Covers for cancellation must bear one or more of the appropriate new stamps.

Stamp Book Quantities

In the January 1988 *Bulletin* details were given of quantities issued of stamp books of 1983-85. Similar numbers for some 1986-87 issues are given below:

Price	Cover (date)	Quantity
50p	Pond Life 2 (29/7/86)	5,213,148
50p	Pond Life 3 (20/10/86)	362,643
50p	Pond Life 4 (27/1/87)	289,417
50p	Roman Britain 1 (29/7/86)	304,640
50p	Roman Britain 2 (20/10/86)	9,273,036
50p	Roman Britain 3 (27/1/87)	3,369,484
50p	Crickets 1 (14/4/87)	5,498,000
50p	Botanical Gdns 1 (14/4/87)	700,000
£1	Mus Instruments 1 (29/7/86)	300,100
£1	Mus Instruments 2 (20/10/86)	586,268

£1	Mus Instruments 3 (27/1/87)	298,008
£1	Sherlock Holmes 1 (14/4/87)	263,950
£1.20	National Gallery (29/4/86)	3,398,855
£1.20	Graphology (29/7/86)	551,825
£1.30	Teddy Bears (20/10/86)	5,881,285
£1.30	Keep in Touch (27/1/87)	1,536,477
£1.30	Gardening (14/4/87)	3,185,925
£1.50	National Gallery (29/4/87)	1,097,275
£1.50	Graphology (29/7/96)	406,700
£1.70	National Gallery (29/4/86)	7,125,411
£1.70	Graphology (29/7/86)	658,816
£1.80	Rabbits (20/10/86)	7,317,187
£1.80	Keep in Touch (27/1/87)	7,079,571
£1.80	Gardening (14/4/87)	1,432,372
£5.00	British Rail (18/3/86)	350,325
£5.00	P & O (3/3/87)	321,100
£1.20	Christmas (2/12/86)	5,000,816

1987 Royal Mail Stamp Card (PHQ Card) Quantities

Quantities produced (sets) can now be given for the 1987 Royal Mail Stamp Cards (previously referred to as PHQ cards).

Flowers (PHQ 99)	170,000
Isaac Newton (PHQ 100)	165,000
Architects (PHQ 101)	165,000
St John Ambulance (PHQ 102)	160,000
Scottish Heraldry (PHQ 103)	155,000
Victorian Britain (PHQ 104)	155,000
Studio Pottery (PHQ 105)	150,000
Christmas (PHQ 106)	200,000

Aerogramme Quantities

The issue figures for recent pictorial aerogrammes are as follows:

Christmas (17 November 1987)	1,230,300
Year of the Bible (29 March 1988)	70,000
Glasgow Garden Festival (24 May 1988)	99,000

Stamp Card Multipack

A new Royal Mail product – a multipack of Royal Mail Stamp Cards (PHQ cards) – is to be launched early in 1989; details will be given in the *Bulletin* shortly.

Birds Exhibition

An exhibition of artworks, essays and issued stamps featuring birds will open at the National Postal Museum on 10 January and will run to the end of February. The exhibition will be a combined effort between the NPM and the Bird Stamp Society.

New Stamp Book Covers

New 50p, £1, £1.40 and £1.90 books will be issued on 24 January. The 50p cover will feature *The Pirates of Penzance*, second in the Gilbert & Sullivan series, design by Lynda Gray. The contents will be as for the September book: 14p band right, 2 x 19p two bands.



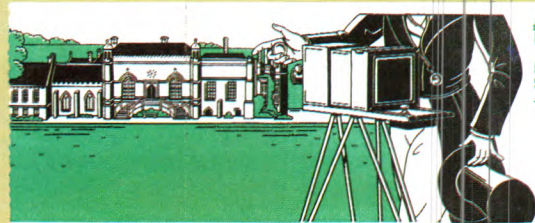
£1.40

Royal Mail
Stamps
Ten at 14p



50p

Royal Mail
Stamps
Two at 19p
One at 14p



£1.90

Royal Mail
Stamps
Ten at 19p



£1

Royal Mail
Stamps
Four at 19p
Two at 14p

The £1 book shows a scene from *David Copperfield*: David and little Emily with Peggotty and Mr Barkis setting off for a day's holiday. This is third in the Charles Dickens series, illustrations by Liz Moyes. The contents remain as for the September issue, viz 2 x 14p band right and 4 x 19p two bands. The booklet pane has straight edges on the left and right side.

The £1.40 and £1.90 counter books com-

memorate the 150th anniversary of William Henry Fox Talbot submitting a paper to the Royal Society outlining his invention of the positive/negative photographic process. The £1.40 cover shows the photographer in the foreground and Lacock Abbey, his home, in the background. The illustration on the £1.90 book shows a negative and positive photographic

paper print and some darkroom equipment from the Fox Talbot Museum situated near the Abbey. The books contain, respectively, 10 x 14p stamps with centre band and 10 x 19p stamps on Advanced Coated Paper.

All four books will be available initially from the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters and from post offices as stocks of the previous issue become exhausted.

New Window Books

Two new window books – 56p and 76p – are scheduled for issue on 24 January – both Type 3, size 75 x 49mm (including yellow tabs). The covers are printed by Walsall Security Print and the stamps by Harrison & Sons Limited – 14p with centre band and 19p on Advanced Coated Paper. The panes of four have straight edges on three sides, yielding new stamp variations.

The books will initially be on sale only from the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters but will be available from post offices in Northern Ireland and in the Bristol, Preston,

Nottingham and York areas as stocks of earlier issues are exhausted.

Birds Cylinders

The cylinders and colours used for the Birds stamps were as follows: 19p 2A (grey) 1B (orange-yellow) 2C (orange-red) 1D (dull ultra-marine) 1E (grey-black) 1F (silver) 27p 2A (grey) 1B (bistre) 3C (rose) 1D (steel-blue) 1E (lavender) 1F (silver) 2G (grey-black) 32p 1A (grey) 1B (bistre) 1C (scarlet) 1D (orange-red) 1E (lavender) 1F (silver) 2G (black) 35p 1A (grey) 1B (lemon) 1C (rose carmine) 1D (green) 2E (new blue) 1F (silver) 1G (black)

Window Books Prototypes

L F NEWBERY

At the commencement of the exercise it was decided the issued books were to have panes of four or ten stamps. Initially the panes would have a selvedge on all sides. However The Post Office wanted panes without a selvedge but owing to production difficulties this was not possible. As the intention was for books to be vended by the outside trade, eg supermarkets, chain stores, card shops, etc., bar codes were to be printed on the covers for accountancy purposes. Books intended for sale at post offices were to have a different code.

A number of prototypes were prepared in different formats with differing closures. These fall into two main groups:

1. cover with two folds, "Purse" format with cut-out clasp.

2. cover with one fold, "Cheque Book" format with cut-out clasp.

Some contained a pane of stamps from regular counter sheets and were of no special significance, others contained a pane of perforated blank labels whilst the remainder were just folded cover shapes.

The numbers used are those used in the mounted series of prototypes in the National Postal Museum; the numbers have no special significance other than for identification.

Group 1

7. White unprinted laminated cover with tuck in closure A and a slit in back fold. Window cut-out 19 x 23mm. Prototype when closed 55mm long x 58mm tall. Contents pane of 4 x 12p stamps affixed by selvedge.

13. As number 8 but containing pane of 4 x 17p stamps.

8. White unprinted laminated cover with closure B and a semi-circular cut-out on edge of back fold. Window cut-out 19 x 23mm. Prototype when closed 50 x 58mm. Contents pane of 4 x 17p stamps.

10. White unprinted laminated cover with closure C. Window cut-out 16 x 20mm. Prototype

when closed 111 x 58mm. Contents nil.

19. White unprinted laminated cover with closure A and a slit in back fold. No window cut-out. Prototype when closed 106 x 58mm. Contents pane of 10 x 17p stamps.

20. White unprinted laminated cover with closure D and semi-circular cut-out on edge of back fold. Window cut-out 16 x 20mm. Prototype



when closed 106 x 58mm. Contents pane of 10 x 17p stamps.

The prototypes in Group 1 when not considered after the initial examination.

Group 2

1. White unprinted laminated cover with closure E. Window cut-out 19 x 23mm. Prototype when closed 127 x 58mm. Contents pane of 10 x 12p stamps.

6. White unprinted laminated cover with closure E. Window cut-out 19 x 23mm. Prototype when closed 66 x 58mm. Contents pane of 4 x 12p stamps.

9. White unprinted card cover with cut-out 23 x 27mm, laminated window only on the inside. No clasp, peelable gum sealed on edge. Prototype when closed 70 x 60mm. Contents pane of 4 perforated blanks.

9A. White unprinted card cover with cut-out 23 x 27mm, laminated window only on the inside. No clasp; peelable gum, sealed on edge. Prototype when closed 95 x 60mm.

11. White laminated covers with clasp E. No window cut-out. Prototype when closed 100 x 58mm. Contents none.

11A. As number 11 but when closed 65 x 58mm.



15. Second class colour proof (with red laminated cover); closure F. Cut-out self adhesive peelable seal on short edge. Contents pane of 4 x 12p stamps. Prototype when closed 65 x 58mm.

14. As 15 but with pane of 10 x 12p stamps. Prototype when closed 125 x 58mm.

16. As 15 but with pane of 10 x 17p stamps. Prototype when closed 125 x 58mm.



17. Red laminated cover with closure G, cut-out 16 x 20mm. Prototype when closed 68 x 60mm. Contents pane of 4 x perforated blanks.

27. Red laminated cover with clasp H. Cut-out 16 x 20mm. Contents pane of perforated blanks miscut.

22. 1988 reprint of issued books with clasp I. Books B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I issued in test areas.

This article by Mr Newbery describes the prototypes of the window books. As readers will know trials have been going on to ensure that the design of window books meets the requirements of customers. For the background to this see the articles by Ken Walker and David Dale in the May and October Bulletins. Ed.

Stamp Books, October 1986 – October 1987

The names of the phosphor chemicals were wrongly given in Mr Newbery's article under this title in the August Bulletin. The correct names are as follows: SA = Sulphanilic acid; PABA = Para amino benzoic acid and TPA = Terephthalic acid.

1988 Special Stamps Poll

Yet again we are asking readers to vote for their favourite stamps. Shown here are all the special stamps issued by Royal Mail Stamps during 1988. Let us know your top three sets on the enclosed voting form, plus the reason why you like your favourite set best, and we will award 1988 Yearbooks to the five readers whose comments are the most original and interesting.

The closing date for votes is 28 February 1989 and the results will be published in the *Bulletin*. We look forward to receiving your vote.



1. Linnean Society



2. Welsh Bible



3. Sport



4. Transport & Communications



5. Australian Bicentenary



6. Armada



7. Edward Lear



8. Christmas

British Stamps of Medical Interest

TOM WILSON

Health holds an engrossing interest for all of us and the physician occupies a unique place in our society. Thus "medical philately", stamps and postal markings featuring medical subjects, is a topic that attracts a growing number of collectors.

If you compare Great Britain to countries like France and the USSR, the British postal authorities have been somewhat grudging about celebrating famous doctors but all credit to them for the pair of stamps in 1965 to commemorate the centenary of antiseptic surgery with Baron Lister and his carbolic spray (SG 667/8).



On the 1s stamp in the 1967 "British Discoveries" set (SG 753), there is a realistic picture of penicillium mould growing across a Petri dish to remind us of Sir Alexander Fleming's discovery of Penicillin in 1928. A special Sir Alexander Fleming handstamp was applied to mail posted at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington on the day the stamp was issued, 19 September 1967; Fleming undertook much of his research at the hospital.

John Keats' literary work was commemorated by a 3p stamp in 1971 (SG 884). Less well-known is the fact that he was a licensed apothecary but he abandoned his profession in favour of poetry.

David Livingstone studied at Charing Cross Hospital and obtained his degree in medicine from Glasgow in 1840. But it is as a missionary

and explorer that he appears on one of the two 3p stamps in the 1973 "British Explorers" set (SG 923).



In that same year "The Doctor" made history; W G Grace was shown, in sketches by Harry Furness, on three stamps personifying "County Cricket" (SG 928/30). He was a physician, with a respectable practice in Bristol, as also were his father and his brothers. Grace appears again on the 34p Australian Bicentenary stamp of 1988, a joint issue with Australia Post (SG GB 1398, Australia 1147). A special W G Grace postmark was used at his birthplace – Downend, Bristol – on 16 May 1973 when the three "County Cricket" stamps were issued.

Hampton Court Palace, depicted on British stamps of 1978 and 1980 (SG 1058, 1153), has its place in medical history; it was while residing there between 1620 and 1628 that Sir William Harvey wrote his monumental work *De Motu Cordis*, in which he set out the true circulation of the blood.



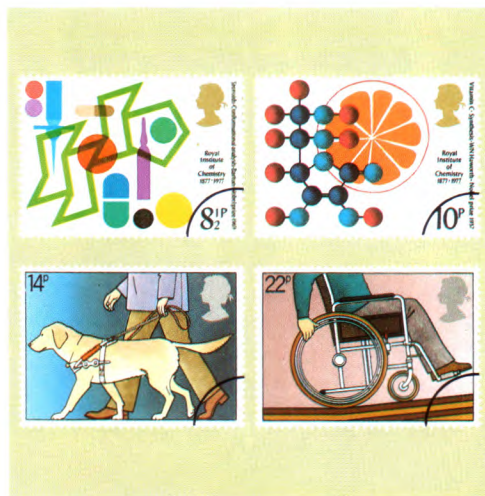
Charles Darwin's death centenary was recorded with a set of four in 1982 (SG 1175/8). Controversy arose over David Gentleman's somewhat unusual design. Darwin's place in biology is unassailable; although he studied

medicine at Edinburgh from 1825 to 1828, he never practised.

Health and handicapped charities benefitted from the experimental British health stamp of 1975 (SG 970). The stamp sold at 6p, 4½p representing postage, 1½p the charity surcharge. The income raised by the surcharge was distributed among 11 charitable organisations which included deaf children, cancer research, the RNIB, the Cheshire Homes and others. Some 7 million stamps were sold and £57,000 raised for charity.

Benjamin Franklin, who ran an apothecary's shop in Philadelphia's first public hospital, is honoured on the 11p stamp issued in 1976 to mark the American bicentenary (SG 1005). His image was taken from a bust by JJ Caffleri, now in the Royal Society of Art in London.

The Royal Institute of Chemistry set of four issued the following year (SG 1029/32) deserves notice because it recognises Sir Derek Barton's work on steroid chemistry (cortisone and the "birth-pill"); Sir Norman Haworth who synthesized Vitamin C at Birmingham University; and the joint effort of A J Martin and R L Syngé on partition chromatography, which is as important in pathology as it is in pharmaceuticals.



1981 was the International Year of the Disabled and the British set of four, designed by John Gibbs and issued on 25 March (SG 1147/50), showed how sufferers from blindness, deafness and physical disability can be helped.

Later that year the 22p stamp in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award set shows a first-aider at work (SG 1164). The 17p value of the British

Council jubilee set of 1984 (SG 1263), is of interest on two counts –the principal subject is a genial children's nurse from Nigeria; whilst the background is filled with the structural molecular formula of "a drug." Unfortunately, even the Post Office Press Bureau could not identify it for me, but it looks like a sex hormone.



The centenary in 1963 of the International Red Cross was rewarded with a set of three (SG 642/4), the designs of which, in my view, should get a prize for ineptitude. But the centenary of the foundation of the St John's Ambulance Brigades in 1987 was celebrated by an exemplary set of four line drawings based on photographs (SG 1359/62).

The profession of nursing must not be overlooked. The 9d value in the 1970 set of "Anniversaries" (SG 820), features Miss Florence Nightingale in a colourful setting in attendance on soldiers in as astonishingly well-appointed hospital ward. Despite the fact that the lady is seen to be holding a lamp, surely this cannot be Scutari? A Queen Alexandra's military nurse in uniform graces the 3p stamp marking the 50th anniversary of the Royal British Legion, issued in 1971 (SG 887). The Queen's District Nurse on the 11p Telecommunications stamp of 1976 appears to be making an "emergency call" – it must be; the catalogue number is SG 999!

Stamp Books and Postmarks

The earliest stamp books which are of interest to the "Medical" collector are the 50p issues of 1971/2 (SG DT1/8). The first four issues depict

the Large Bindweed, Primrose, Honeysuckle and Hop (*Humulus lupulus*) famous as an appetiser and digestive! The four books with 1972 dates featured the Common Violet, Lords and Ladies (an irritant poison), Wood Anemone and Deadly Nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*): despite its poisonous properties, belladonna is used medicinally in minute doses as an antispasmodic.

In 1987-8 a set of four £1 "Sherlock Holmes" books was issued (SG FH8/11). These depicted scenes from *A Study in Scarlet*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Mystery of the Speckled Band* and *The Final Problem*. Their significance lies in the fact that their author, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle qualified in medicine from Edinburgh and gave up medical practice to become a writer.

A separate article would be needed to discuss the great variety of British slogan cancellations which have a medical theme – on this subject the writer is not an authority. Examples I have come across include "Blood Donors Urgently Needed", "Don't Risk Rubella – Be Wise, Immunize!", "World Mental Health Year, 1960", "Remember Muscular Sclerosis", etc. Amongst the more recent slogan campaigns have been AIDS – DON'T DIE OF IGNORANCE (January/February 1987) and STOP THE PUSHERS! DIAL 100 "FREEPHONE CHESHIRE DRUG-WATCH" (Chester, October 1988).

Materia Medica on British Stamps

Many British stamps feature flowering plants that are also herbs and simples which have been used in folk medicine. The 1937 definitives of King George VI as well as the "Wilding" definitives of the present reign carry designs which feature the national flowers – rose, thistle, daffodil and shamrock. As they do not form the main feature of the design, they may be excluded from some thematic collections.

The posy of Spring Flowers on the 3d value of the 1963 National Nature Week set (SG 637), occupies the main area of the design. The posy includes Oxeye Daisies (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*) – diuretic and sudorific; Buttercup (*Ranunculus*) – a homoeopathic remedy for eczema; and the Bee (*Apis mellifica*) – also used in homoeopathy for bites and stings. The 4½d value includes Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) which yields creosote for the toothache, besides Hart's Tongue Fern (*Scolopendrum*) – an expectorant.

The International Botanical Congress set of 1964 (SG 655/8), had Spring Gentian (antipyretic and bitter tonic); Dog Rose (laxative, ophthal-

mic); Honeysuckle (expectorant and antispasmodic) and Fringed Waterlily (tranquilliser). A notable set of six are the Spring Flower stamps of 1967 (SG 717/22); these were designed by the Rev William Keble Martin and Miss Mary Grierson of Kew. They include Hawthorn (cardiotonic); Bramble (gargle for sore throat); Bindweed (vigorous purgative); Viper's Bugloss



(for coughs and fevers); Oxeye Daisy (v.s.); Coltsfoot (expectorant); Buttercup (v.s.); Wood Anemone (homoeopathic "cure-all"); Dog Violet (expectorant); Primrose (expectorant and diuretic) and the Red Campion which in spite of its beauty appears to have no medicinal value.

Postcards and Stationery

The first Post Office picture card appeared in July 1973: appropriately it was an enlarged copy of the 3p "County Cricket" stamp showing Dr W G Grace. This was followed in 1974 by a card reproducing the 10p "British Trees" stamp (SG 949) showing the "Horse Chestnut" (*Castanea*) – from whose seeds are extracted a decongestant for bronchitis. The Sweet Briar appears on the 13p stamp of the 1976 Roses set (SG 1009) – this too was produced as a PHQ card.

The national flowers feature prominently on Stuart Rose's design for the Coronation aerogramme of 1953. A Scottish aerogramme issued on 23 April 1985 depicts Liburn, the hospice of the Scottish Association for War Blinded which then celebrated its 70th anniversary.

I hope this resume of philatelic material featuring doctors, nursing, the Red Cross, drugs and simples, medical history and the conquest of disease will be of interest to readers and give some indication of the breadth – and fascination – of the theme.

Design Award for Royal Mail Yearbook

The Royal Mail Special Stamps Yearbook for 1987 has won joint first prize in a top annual design competition. The book, issued in November 1987, contains all of the special stamps of 1987 with a detailed account of the background to each issue and information about the designers and their work.

Printers Jolly and Barber entered the book in the competition organised by *Print Buyer* magazine. Shown here, with the award and the Yearbook, are David Morris, Director of Jolly & Barber, and Angela Reeves, Design Co-ordinator of The Post Office.



The 1984 edition of the Yearbook was awarded top honours as the "best example of a complete book" by *Design and Art Direction* magazine in 1985.

The 1988 Yearbook went on sale on 15 November and is still available from the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters, price £16.95. The book contains sets of the Linnean Society, Welsh Bible, Sport, Transport & Communications, Australian Bicentenary, Armada and Christmas stamps and the Edward Lear miniature sheet. Drawings from the Lear stamp series are featured on the Yearbook's slip case. The book was designed by the Royal Mail with Carroll, Dempsey and Thirkell Ltd and written by Tim Shackleton.

Phosphor Variations

There have been a number of reports in the philatelic press claiming that Phosphor Coated Paper (PCP) has been used recently by Harrison & Sons after an interval of three years. The £1.90 window books (cylinder B7) in particular are said to exist on both Advanced Coated Paper (ACP) and PCP and examples are being offered for sale by dealers.

It might be helpful to set out The Post Office view on this. Neither the Harrison nor The Post Office quality assurance systems have detected any significant variations in the type of phosphor used and since stamps from every reel of paper are tested it is hard to believe that an old reel of PCP might have been used.

However there have been several batches of paper recently with less Optical Brightening Agent (OBA) than usual. These have been close to The Post Office's minimum standards for whiteness rather than well above as is usually the case.

It may well be that the visible difference being claimed as PCP is in fact due to low(ish) OBA. If so, it will be found across a wide range of low value sheets, books and specials and will not be confined to a few types of window books as so far reported.

David Dale
Manager, Definitive Stamps

Improvements in Postal Services

A new hi-tech sorting machine, especially developed to speed the handling of large letters, is being introduced in a drive to improve service. Until now these letters, known as "large flats", had to be sorted manually because of their size, so slowing down the handling process. The new "Flat Sorting" Machine, planned for sorting offices across the country, will speed large letters through the system, processing 9,000 items an hour. The machine has been successfully tested at London's South West District Office.

Another major development is the use of the Royal Mail's road fleet to intercept Travelling Post Offices before they reach London. Royal Mail road services will collect and deliver Home Counties and South East England mail to TPOs at such points as Hitchin and Luton, rather than travel to traffic-congested mainline London stations. This way, valuable hours will be saved.

Philatelic Terms Explained

KENNETH F CHAPMAN

No. 27 Reprints

Unfortunately, the word reprint means one thing to a philatelist and another thing to a stamp printer, and that invites confusion.

To dispose of the non-philatelic use of the word first, a stamp printer normally refers to a "reprint" when a new supply of an existing stamp or issue has been printed from a plate or cylinder(s) which produced the original issue. To a collector these "reprints" are "new printing(s)" and are of little interest unless there are identifiable differences in shade, watermark, paper or perforation between the printings. War-time emergencies tend to produce such differences as the detailed studies of the King George VI Commonwealth printings by Potter and Shelton clearly demonstrated.

To a philatelist, a "reprint" is a stamp printed from an original plate or cylinder(s) subsequent to the stamp's withdrawal from issue and, sometimes, after it has been demonetized and rendered postally invalid. Such reprints have been made for various reasons, some official, some for private gain.

Great Britain provides only a very limited selection of reprints on the philatelic scene. The best known is the so-called Royal Reprint of 1865. In fact, Robson Lowe says in *The British Postage Stamp in the Nineteenth Century* (page 162), that these are proof impressions taken from the 1d (red), die II, plate 66 after it had been withdrawn from use. The proofs were pulled in black and were imperforate and on inverted large crown watermark. Proofs were also taken in carmine rose. These were said to have been produced at the request of Queen Victoria "for the amusement and edification of the royal children" (Sutton: *The Stamp Collectors' Encyclopedia*). In 1872 proof sheets were pulled of the 1/2d carmine-rose, 1d carmine-rose, 1 1/2d carmine-rose, the 2d blue; and one sheet of the 1d in black from plate 27, die II, originally used for the 1d red. These were for display at the South Kensington Exhibition of 1872. All these reprints were officially authorised.

There are numerous examples of authorised reprints from other countries, generally of obso-

lete issues reprinted for display by post offices at national and international stamp exhibitions.

One former British territory was seriously involved in private reprints. Heligoland, a North Sea island was seized from the Danes in 1807 and eventually ceded to Germany in 1890 in exchange for German interests in Zanzibar. The distinctive stamps issued under British administration ceased to be valid in 1890 but some of the printing plates (made in Germany where the stamps had been printed in Berlin for the British Post Office) passed into private hands. As a result, reprints which are distinguishable mainly by shade and gum differences, flooded the stamp market. Some of these reprints are known with forged Heligoland cancellations in an attempt to turn them into rare "used" stamps. Reprints also exist of various Transvaal stamps issued by Boer administrations.



The so-called "Royal Reprints" of 1872

The most notorious reprints are the "Seebecks" of Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua. Nicholas Seebeck of the Hamilton Banknote Company of New York contracted to supply these countries with a new definitive issue of stamps each year provided he was allowed to use the obsolete plates to print as many stamps as he wished for sale on the philatelic market. Technically, the "Seebecks" were invalid for postage (the original issue having been withdrawn) but to collectors of the period they were fine unused stamps of the countries concerned. Although the market in the genuine stamps was depressed by the dumping of the Seebeck reprints, the irony of the situation today is that the reprints are sought after by specialist collectors to whom they are of greater interest than the genuine stamps.

Competition



Enter this month's competition and stand a chance of winning a First Day Cover of the new Castle High Value stamps signed by the engraver Chris Matthews. Answer the six questions below, the answers to which will be found in this month's *Bulletin*, and send with your name and address on a postcard to: January Bulletin Competition, National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP to arrive by 28 February 1989.

The sender of the first all-correct entry drawn will be sent the cover signed by Chris Matthews. The senders of the next five correct entries drawn will receive *Bulletin* binders. Answers and winners' names will be published in the April *Bulletin*.

1. How many Greetings labels are included in the Greetings stamp book issued on 31 January?
2. How many special stamps can be printed, perforated and sheeted on the "Jumelle" press every hour?
3. Royal Mail Exhibition Card No 2 was issued to coincide with which international exhibition last June?
4. How many sets of Royal Mail stamps were issued in 1988?
5. Which person produced the "most notorious reprints"?
6. Who is the new Chairman of the Scottish Post Office Board?

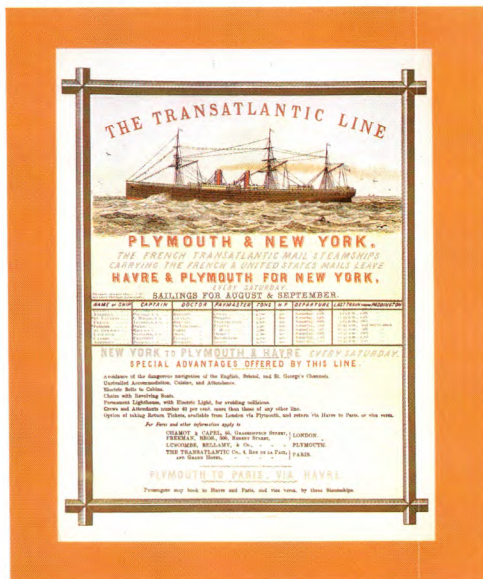
The competition is not open to staff of Royal Mail Stamps & Philately, the National Postal Museum, their agents and their families. No correspondence will be entered into; the Editor's decision will be final.

The winners of the October competition were: J Billington of Lancashire, L Backman of Sweden, P Scott of Yorkshire, J Allsopp of Switzerland, A Mudge of Devon and J Karlsson of Sweden.

The answers were: 1. 15 November 1988, 2. King Edward VII, 3. Charles Wesley, 4. Barry Robinson, 5. The Transatlantic, 6. Liverpool Museum.

Our thanks to all who entered.

National Postal Museum News



The first of the Museum's cards for 1989 will be issued on 1 February to coincide with the opening of the Transatlantic Mail exhibition; the cards will be numbered 89/1-3. Two show postal notices, one a timetable poster of a shipping line. The first PO notice, of May 1876, is headed "Polar Expedition – Despatch of Mails For" and concerns the expedition of Captain Allen Young in the Steam Yacht *Pandora*.

The instruction to postmasters of June 1840, headed "Mails for North America" gives details of the packet mails to North America in future going by "steam vessels" from Liverpool instead of Falmouth.

The poster of The Trans-Atlantic Line, c. 1880, shows one of their vessels and gives the dates and times of sailings of the "French Transatlantic Mail Steamships carrying the French and United States Mail".

The cards cost 20p each and can be ordered by post from the National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP. Minimum order 60p, postage 19p on orders up to £20, £1.59 on orders over £20 (sent by registered post).

Details were given in the November *Bulletin* of new cards on sale at the Museum. Stocks of the three GPO posters cards and one of the two cards published by the Hemel Hempstead PS are now exhausted and no further orders can be accepted.

Gems from the R M Phillips Collection

160. Fore's Coaching Envelope



The many caricatures of the Mulready envelope started a craze for illustrated envelopes and amongst the best and best-known were those published by Fore's of Piccadilly. The drawings were prepared by Richard and James Doyle, whose work is to be found in the early issues of *Punch*. The envelope featured here is to be seen on page 30 of Volume 9 of the Phillips Collection.

Addressed to Wallingford, Berkshire, it bears a "King William St" postmark and a "Too Late" strike. The envelope is inscribed

FORE'S COACHING ENVELOPE at the top and has the imprint "London Published by Messrs Fores, at their Sporting & Fine print Repository & Frame Manufactory, 41 Piccadilly – corner of Sackville Street" at the foot.

This and many other illustrated envelopes can be seen in the Phillips Collection at the National Postal Museum during normal hours: 9.30am to 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 9.30am to 4pm Friday.

New Chairman for Scottish PO Board

Mr Kenneth Graham took up his post as Chairman of the Scottish Post Office Board on 2 November, taking over from John Mackay who resumes his full time responsibilities as General Manager, Northern Letters Territory. As Chairman, Mr Graham will head the SPOB which represents corporate Post Office policies and views in Scotland and liaises with the Post Office Users Council for Scotland and with

Scottish institutions. Mr Graham, aged 60, was educated at Wesley College and College of Technology, Dublin. His early career was in mechanical engineering. In 1974 he joined Scottish & Universal Investments and was Group Chief Executive & Managing Director from 1982 until his retirement in May 1988. Amongst many executive appointments, he has been Chairman of Harrison & Sons Ltd, stamp printers. Mr Graham, who lives in Perthshire, has three children; his leisure interests include sea angling, hill walking, rugby and swimming.

Commemorative Covers

Birds. To coincide with the issue of Birds stamps, a special cover has been produced by the Leicestershire & Rutland Ornithological Society. The cover depicts a full colour picture of the Great Crested Grebe, reproduced from John Gould's *Birds of Great Britain*. Covers bearing all four Bird stamps cancelled by a special handstamp at Leicester cost £4.50, signed by Bill Oddie or Ronald Hickling (President of the Society) £8.75; covers with single stamp are available at £2.50. Prices include UK postage, overseas customers add 50p. Orders/enquiries to: A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, LEICESTER LE2 3RA.



Burns Howff Club Centenary. Robert Burns spent the last eight years (1788-96) of his life in Dumfriesshire. During this period the Globe Inn in Dumfries was his favourite "howff" (pub) and to this day this fine old tavern is preserved as a memorial to Scotland's national poet. In January 1889 the Burns Howff Club was founded, originally with the idea of holding a dinner to mark the poet's birthday. The Club is sponsoring a slogan cancellation which will be used at Dumfries throughout January 1989 and a special handstamp will be used on 25 January. A souvenir cover showing the Globe Inn and the Skirving portrait of Burns with first class stamp cancelled with the special handstamp can be ordered from the Club Secretary, David Smith, 22 Cargenbridge Avenue, DUMFRIES, price £1.50 UK & EEC countries, £2 elsewhere.

Royal Agricultural Society of England. 1989 is Food & Farming Year and the 150th anniversary of the Royal Agricultural Society of England. A full-colour first day cover is offered by Mr G Eldridge bearing Food & Farming stamps issued on 7 March cancelled with a "special pictorial 7 March first day handstamp".

The covers with the four stamps cost £3.50, covers with one appropriate stamp £1.70 each. Overseas customers add 60p postage. All orders/enquiries to: G Eldridge, 177 Mousehole Lane, Bitterne, SOUTHAMPTON SO2 4TD.

St Alban the Martyr Church, Nottingham. To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the consecration of the church a special cover has been produced and a special handstamp used on 15 November. One thousand covers were produced, 500 with the 19p Christmas stamp, 500 with the full set, price £1.20 and £3 respectively. Some 230 full-set covers have been signed and are available as follows: signed by Lord St John of Fawsley, Lord Soper and the Bishop of Peterborough £10; by the Archbishop of Canterbury £20; by the Bishop of Peterborough and the Rev Brian Walshe (retiring vicar) £8; by Rev Walshe £6 and by Tony Marlow MP, Michael Morris MP and the Mayor of Northampton £8. Postage 35p extra. Orders/enquiries to: Mrs Margaret Hill, 71 Longland Road, Headlands, NORTHAMPTON NN3 2QE.

Oldchurch Hospital. A special cover was produced to commemorate the opening by HRH The Princess Margaret of a new body scanner at Oldchurch Hospital, Romford on 15 November. A special handstamp was in use on that day, and a posting box provided in the Hospital's Out Patients Dept. Covers bearing the five Christmas stamps cancelled by the special handstamp are available, price £4.50, covers with single stamp £1.75. A limited number of full-set covers have been signed by snooker player Steve Davis, price £6. Orders/enquiries to: Mrs P Boon, Scanner Appeal Office, Oldchurch Hospital, ROMFORD, Essex, RM7 0BE. Remittances payable to "Oldchurch Hospital Body Scanner Appeal".

Lundy Island. The island of Lundy in the Bristol Channel is famous for its puffins and the Lundy Philatelic Bureau has sponsored a special handstamp at Bideford on 17 January. This features a puffin in flight and is worded LUNDY ISLAND BRISTOL CHANNEL - BIDEFORD DEVON. A special cover bearing the 19p puffin stamp cancelled at Bideford and a new Lundy 3p local carriage label cancelled on the island will be available, price £2.65. A limited number of covers bearing all four Bird stamps will be serviced, price £4.35; also the Royal Mail Stamp Card (PHQ card) with the 19p puffin stamp at £1.85 or the full set of cards at £6.85. Postage & handling 55p. Orders/enquiries to: Lundy Philatelic Bureau, PO Box 931, SLOUGH SL2 3RX.

Letters to the Editor



Birth of the Bulletin

Sir,

I remember very well the birth of the *Philatelic Bulletin* in 1963, and I was glad to see reference to the first editor, Frank Langfield, who played a large part in what was, for the Post Office of that time, a tentative step into a new field. It was only some four or five years previously that the then head of the Stamp Duty told me, "You must realise that the Post Office produces stamps to indicate the pre-payment of postage. That is all." Times have (fortunately) changed!

I feel that the *Bulletin's* silver jubilee should not pass without some tribute to Terry Hornsey, who was the moving spirit behind the formation of the Bureau and the *Bulletin*. He several times took steps that would, he was aware, probably result in chaos, but which would force the Post Office to provide more staff and a better service to philatelists. He was a lively head of the branch, to whom GB collectors owe a great deal.

K J LEY, Pinner, Middx

Formula Required

Sir,

Please can anyone help me by producing a formula which will determine the day of the week from a circular datestamp giving the date, month and year.

I did have this formula some years ago, but have mislaid it.

F WRIGHT, 4 Howard Road, Clacton-On-Sea, Essex, CO15 5HW

Museum Excavations

Sir,

It was quite a surprise for me to see the illustration of the 1s 6d value stamp for the 1963 Lifeboat Conference stamp, artist unknown, on page 17 of the September *Bulletin*.

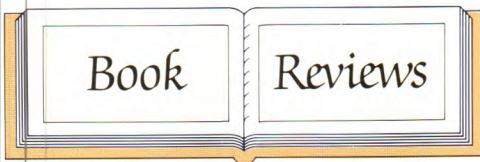
The design was one of a set of three stamps submitted by me, which also included a design for the 2½d value showing a lifeboat and lifebelt rendered in the Institution's colours, and a design for the 4d value showing a rendering of the RNLI flag and another type of lifeboat.

It is interesting to note that in the original brief some control was exercised by the then GPO over colour for the denominations. I quote from the "Instructions to the artist":

The 2½d denomination will be printed in two basic colours, the 4d in up to five basic colours and the 1/6d in up to three basic colours. The background colour shall be as shown. The 2½d value – red. 4d value – light blue. 1/6d value – steel blue. The secondary colours and any combination of them with the background colour, is left to the free choice of the artist.

The colour aspects of stamps has, of course, been of particular interest to me lately as I have recently been engaged on designing the new range of colours for Definitives.

JEFFERY MATTHEWS, Beckenham, Kent



Postmarks of England and Wales by James A Mackay. 352pp, limp binding, A4 size. Available from the author: 11 Newall Terrace, DUMFRIES DG1 1LN, price £17.10 UK, £19.25 overseas, postage paid.

Yet another impressive tome from the pen (or rather word processor) of James Mackay; a book that will be welcomed by all who use and revere his many works on postal history. The first edition of this title was published in 1980 and was widely acclaimed. This new edition runs to 100 pages more than its predecessor with nearly 2,000 more illustrations – 6,593 in total. The book is arranged in 51 chapters covering subjects as diverse as The General Post, Uniform Penny Postage, Skeleton Datestamps, Postage Meters, Registration of Mail, Express Delivery Postmarks, Disaster Mail, Railway, Airmail and Maritime Postmarks, Dumb Cancellations and Errors and Curiosities.

Mr Mackay not only provides collectors with information about (and illustrations of) postal markings of all kinds but the relevant background details of their use. The information has been compiled from research in the PO Archives and from the reportings of a small army of collectors around the country. This book, like Mr Mackay's other works, will be updated by his *Postal History Annual*.

January Digest

Issued in January

- 3 January **Birds Royal Mail Stamp Cards (Nos. 115A-D)** 16p each
- 17 January **Birds stamps** 19p, 27p, 32p, 35p
designer: Don Cordery
printing: Harrisons, photogravure, 30 x 41mm, printed on phosphor coated paper, sheets of 100, PVA dextrin gum
Bureau f.d. service alternative handstamp: Sandy, Beds
presentation pack: £1.35
- 24 January **Stamp books: Gilbert & Sullivan No 2** 50p machine-vended (1 x 14p band right, 2 x 19p 2 bands)
Charles Dickens No 3 £1 machine-vended (2 x 14p band right, 4 x 19p 2 bands, straight edges)
Fox-Talbot £1.40 (10 x 14p centre band) left & right margin
Fox-Talbot £1.90 (10 x 19p ACP) left & right margin
- 24 January **Window book: 56p Type 3** covers printed by Walsall Security Print, stamps by Harrisons (4 x 14p centre band, straight edges on three sides of pane)
Window book: 76p Type 3 covers printed by Walsall, stamps by Harrisons (4 x 19p ACP, straight edges on three sides of pane)
- 31 January **Greetings Stamp Book** 10 x 19p (two each of five designs) plus 12 labels
designer: Philip Sutton
printing: Harrisons, photogravure, 41 x 30mm, printed on phosphor coated paper. PVA dextrin gum.
Bureau f.d. service alternative handstamp: Lover, Salisbury, Wilts

Withdrawn in January

- 18 January **Linnean Society (Natural History) issue** - all items
- 25 January **January 1988 stamp books**

1989 Digest

Listed here are the dates of the main issues for 1989. Those marked with an asterisk are provisional. More detailed information will be found in the "Digest" each month.

17 January	Birds
24 January	New Book Covers
31 January	Greetings Stamp Book
7 March	Food & Farming
21 March	£5 Prestige Stamp Book
4 April*	Scottish Aerogramme
11 April	Anniversaries
16 May	Games & Toys
June*	Pictorial Aerogrammes
4 July	Industrial Archaeology
25 July	Ind Arch Miniature Sheet
5 September	Microscopes
17 October	Lord Mayor's Show
14 November	Christmas

Each set of special stamps will comprise four stamps, except Christmas when the usual five values will be issued. The values for the Birds stamps are 19p, 27p, 32p and 35p, the Greetings stamp book contains ten 19p stamps, two each of five designs.

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