

June 1995



Royal Mail

British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 32. No: 10 The Royal Mail Magazine for Stamp Collectors Price 75p



New Postcards from the National Postal Museum

British Postmark Bulletin

The Magazine for Postmark and First Day Cover Collectors

British Postmark Bulletin - 24/25 - 21 April 1995

British Postmark Bulletin - 24/25 - 21 April 1995

FEATURE ARTICLE

by Val
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NORTHERN ENGLAND SPECIAL HANDSTAMP CENTRE

Reporting address: Northern England



SUMMARY

3760 Devon Cox

SCOTLAND/N IRELAND

Reporting address: Scotland/N I



SUMMARY

3761 Bonham, FOLKI

British Postmark Bulletin

The Royal Mail Magazine for Postmark Collectors

Volume 24, No 23

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- FEATURE ARTICLE Living with a Postmark Collector by Valerie Peachey
- FORTHCOMING SPECIAL HANDSTAMPS
- FORTHCOMING SLOGANS POSTMARKS
- SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS
- PERMANENT PHILATELIC POSTMARKS



HANDSTAMP CENTRE

East SHC, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, SLOUGH SL1 1AA



3763 45 Lakeshills, LONDON N14 4RL

ink Road, LEICESTER LE2 1RA

TONE, Kent, CT20 1SD

ham Drive, Abber Wood, LONDON SW2 4YQ

shown below illustration

3762 W1

note of postcards on 5 collectors: 3760-13 an F note, representing F for Freddie

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The British Postmark Bulletin is the Royal Mail's magazine for Postmark collectors, providing full information on all forthcoming special hand stamps and postmark slogans.

Published fortnightly it also contains information on First Day of Issue postmarking arrangements and includes addresses to send your covers for postmarking.

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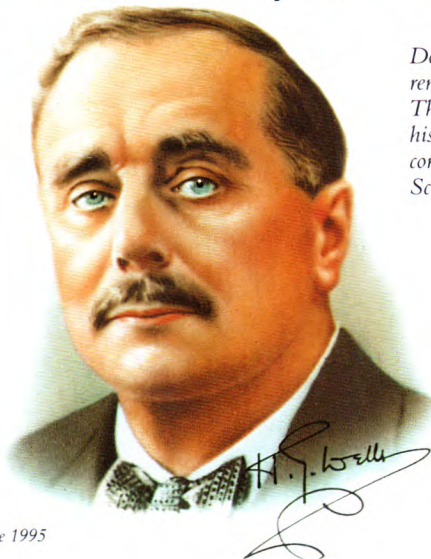
Front Cover: Some of the new postcards issued by the National Postal Museum on 5 May. See April Bulletin, page 229, for details.

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Donald Malcolm recalls a remarkable writer and visionary. The centenary of the publication of his most famous book is commemorated this month by Science Fiction stamps

Illustration of HG Wells reproduced by kind permission of The Mary Evans Picture Library

H G Wells – Genesis of The Time Machine

DONALD MALCOLM

"It was a wonderful experience for a boy to discover H G Wells. There you were, in a world of pedants, clergymen and golfers, with your future employers exhorting you to 'get on or get out', your parents systematically warping your sexual life, and your dull-witted school-masters sniggering over their Latin tags; and here was this wonderful man who could tell you about the inhabitants of the planets and the bottom of the sea, and who *knew* that the future was not going to be what respectable people imagined."

That was George Orwell's reaction to reading Wells as a boy. During his 80 years' lifetime, Wells's work, which was published between 1887 and 1945, brought praise, enmity and controversy and tempers can still get over-heated to-day, especially when his standing as a writer is discussed. *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, 1896, was the first of many books to invoke the wrath of the Establishment.

The passage from Orwell that concerns us here is about the Wells "who *knew* that the future was not going to be what respectable people imagined", an observation that, I think, sums up the science fiction novels and short stories, including the ones that are the subject of Royal Mail commemoration this month.

Wells's great strength was that he could make the unfamiliar seem familiar, almost commonplace. His themes are accessible to his readers. That is not to say that they were simple and one-dimensional. The stories make you think; they are not merely adventure stories.

The Times Literary Supplement of 3 August 1933, reviewing 50 years of the scientific romance, said of Wells, "The essential condition, as he (Wells) quite rightly insists, is to have only one abnormal condition. The reader is willing to take one flying leap from the solid ground of the familiar world, across a gulf without visible bottom, to a new ledge beyond; but, having arrived there, he will want to be shown over that ledge step by step. Ask him to take more flying leaps, and he will probably leap home again – in other words, shut the book in disgust."



H G Wells – *Star Series*, London postcard

Wells asked the reader to suspend his disbelief only once; the story followed logically from that first premise.

A Chain of Events

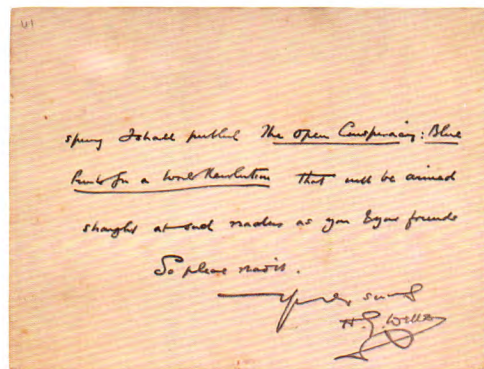
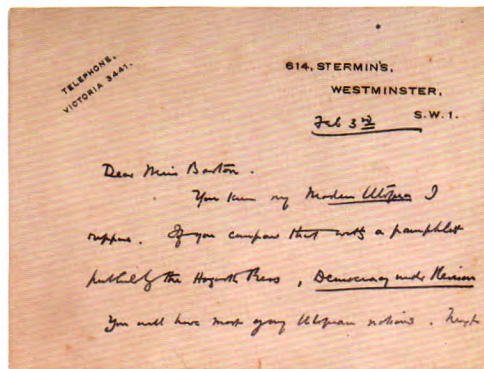
While he was convalescing from an almost-fatal haemorrhage – a player kicked him while he was refereeing a football match – Wells, relaxing on the beach at Eastbourne, drafted, on the backs of those clichéd old envelopes, an essay, "On Staying at the Seaside". At the time, 1893, Harry Cust took over the editorship of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, under the new proprietorship of American millionaire, W W Astor.

Cust accepted Wells' submission within a day and perceptively recognised that here was a writer whose talents could be developed and

expanded. Then followed a chain of events that was to lead to the publication of *The Time Machine* in 1895. Cust introduced Wells to Lewis Hind, the editor of the *Pall Mall Budget*, the *Gazette's* fiction companion, and it was he who suggested that Wells put his scientific training to use in his writing. (Wells took first class honours in Zoology and second Class in Geography from the Normal School of Science, latterly the Royal College of Science, under T H Huxley.)

Another editor, W E Henley, of *The National Observer*, also came into Wells's orbit through Cust. Wells had published a story called "The Chronic Argonauts" in the *Science Schools Journal* for the months of April, May and June 1888. Upon hearing about this, Henley suggested that he re-write the story, in six episodes for the *Observer*, with the title, *The Time Traveller*. Note that the opening sentence of *The Time Machine* is "The Time Traveller (for so it will be convenient to speak of him) was expounding a recondite matter to us." Henley promised to try and find a publisher for the story as a novel.

Correspondence card from Wells to a Miss Barton, c.1934



When he moved on to a new publication, *The New Review*, Henley commissioned Wells to re-write the article/story once again, "in novel form". Heinemann took Henley's advice and gave Wells a contract and £50 for *The Time Machine*. Wells wrote the book in two weeks, at Tusculum Villa, 23 Eardley Road, Sevenoaks. The rooms were rented for that period.

Between 1888 and 1895, *The Time Machine* was, in various guises and radical textual revisions, re-written six times and four different texts published. The short novel bequeaths to us passages of vision and power and after many re-readings, I am still moved by his matchless description of a dying world.

Perceptions of Wells

It is worth pointing out here that, for many people, their main experience of Wells's work is through the medium of the cinema. Of the four novels commemorated, most of Wells's fine writing is lost in three of the film versions, "The Time Machine" (1960), "The War of the Worlds" (1952), and "The First Men in the Moon" (1961).

The Shape of Things to Come was published in 1933 and is not one of Wells's scientific romances. Nor is it as accessible as the early novels. The film, scripted by Wells as "Things to Come", appeared in 1936 and it remains a magnificent cinematic experience. *The Sunday Times* review called it "Jules Vernesque" which, frankly, amuses me, as its conception and depth were far beyond anything that the great French writer attained. Wells was involved in every aspect of the films such as dialogue, costumes, design and music. Sir Arthur Bliss's thrilling, soaring score was the first film music to be issued as an album.

The Stamps

The Royal Mail is commemorating the centenary of the publication of *The Time Machine* with a set of four stamps: 25p *The Time Machine*; 30p *The First Men in the Moon* (1901); 35p *The War of the Worlds* (1898); 41p *The Shape of Things to Come*.

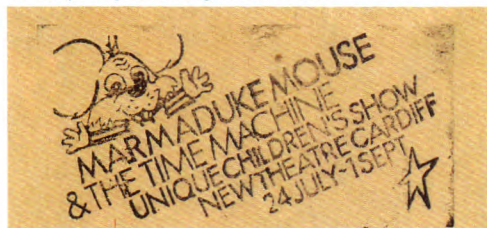
In my opinion, the stamp for *The Time Machine* is the best of the designs, although it reminded me forcibly of a television series, "Time Tunnel". The lettering of "time travel" could have been less rigid, more fluid. I really cannot understand why a portrait of Wells was not featured on at least one stamp.

The writer Bob Shaw, in his book, *How to Write Science Fiction*, says that, to be science

fiction, a story must have the property of "specific otherness". These designs seem to me to lack this requirement. Two of the designs, 35p and 41p, are too cluttered. The colour schemes are bright and reminded me of children's transfers – "dabbities", to give them their Scottish nickname.

The Wells stamps are supplemented by special covers, postmarks, postcards and a presentation pack. This has a text by world-famous writer, Brian W Aldiss, Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. One of the official pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmark is for Wells, surely stretching the association.

Commercial firms will be issuing covers and sponsoring handstamps – I already know of one for Bromley – Wells's birthplace. The H G Wells Society is sponsoring two covers.



1973 slogan postmark for Marmaduke Mouse & The Time Machine

Expanding the Theme

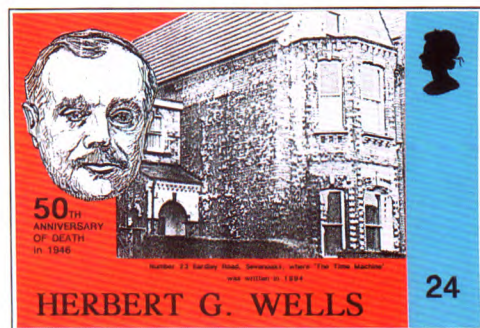
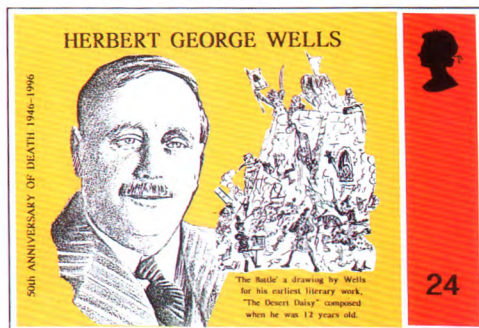
I know of only one (jokey) postmark, from 1973. The slogan reads MARMADUKE MOUSE & THE TIME MACHINE/UNIQUE CHILDREN'S SHOW NEW THEATRE CARDIFF 24 JULY – 1 SEPT. Try the cheap boxes! Wells has appeared on cigarette cards and postcards, one of which, commemorating *In the Days of the Comet*, has a text by Brian Aldiss and was published in 1986. Wells ephemera, such as letters, signatures and illustrations, can be found,

but don't expect them to be cheap. You can, however, be lucky. I picked up a pencil sketch, probably by Tom Browne, and signed by Wells.

The Royal Mail stamps should appeal to a younger age range and that will be a good thing if a new generation is introduced to the world's most popular hobby and to the writings of one of the most imaginative writers of this or any other time: H G Wells.

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Private designs for Wells stamps, by Peter J Westwood



Royal Mail's tribute to Wells – issued 6 June 1995



Decimal Stamp Books—21

Specialist Report

D G A MYALL

Greetings book etc.

This year's greetings book is already providing collectors with lots to look for. So far, 15 different plate number combinations have been reported. That number is likely to rise significantly before the book is succeeded by next year's issue. This is the first time that a Greetings book has been printed by lithography and, as I have mentioned before, lithographic plates do not have anywhere near the life of photogravure cylinders. Moreover, it is common practice when printing postage stamps for Royal Mail, not to use plates to their full extent in order to produce a consistently high quality product. The plate combinations are printed vertically in the inter-panneau gutter between the stamps and labels. Those known at the time of writing are listed in Table 1. The books are packed into shrink-wrapped bundles of 25 barcoded 102320>.

As is now usual, the booklet pane is also available in a presentation pack. This is exactly the same as that in the book. Indeed, some of the plate combinations are common to both. Judging by the numbers, the presentation packs were assembled at an early stage in production. Those combinations common to both books and packs are indicated in the table. The numbers are visible without opening the packs so you do not have to buy unwanted packs in your hunt for completion. Also available is a set of ten postcards reproducing the stamp designs.

Mitchell retail book

Another book having stamps attached to a label was issued on 16 May (despite a goodly supply of them being stolen in April). It is the second in Royal Mail's new series of retail books incorporating a label to commemorate an important historical event. Like the first one, which commemorated the tercentenary of the Bank of England, it has four 1st-class NVIs attached to a pictorial label the size of six small definitives, making the pane the same size as a normal pane of 10 NVIs. Unlike the first issue, however, the label is at the right of the stamps instead of at the left. As a result, the pane of

stamps is no longer creased during the folding stage of production and so cures a serious design fault of the first issue. Nevertheless, unfolded panes are obtainable separately from the books from the British Philatelic Bureau. Will this new service be available, I wonder, for other panes which get folded into their covers? An unfolded Greetings pane plus labels might prove too awkward however. The first commemorative label book was printed by Questa; this one is by Walsall. The plate combination seen was W25 W33 W33.

New international books

The three retail books catering for overseas mail have been issued in the new cover design featuring a block of the stamps inside. They are the 4 x 35p old gold, the 4 x 41p stone and the 4 x 60p slate blue. These values prepay the worldwide rates for postcards and letters (first and second weight steps). The front covers also have the Royal Mail cruciform logotype with the word 'International' underneath. Like the books of NVIs with the block cover design, these carry a larger barcode printed in blue vertically on the back cover. The books are made up into packs of 25 which are shrink-wrapped and given their own barcodes in black. The barcodes are listed below. All have the > symbol at the right as, indeed, all Walsall barcodes do.

<i>Content</i>	<i>Book</i>	<i>Pack</i>
4 x 35p	101262>	101309>
4 x 41P	101279>	101903>
4 x 60P	101897>	101316>

When the 4 x 60p booklet was first issued, on 9 August 1994, it was announced as a 'trial addition to the range' which was to last for three months. It has already appeared with three different covers (with a single stamp illustrated on the cover, a special Christmas 1994 version and now the new design). It is clear that the book has come to stay. Remember, these books are the only source of the 60p stamp. There are no plans at present to issue it in sheet form.

Mishaps

All collectors like to include examples of printing mishaps. Considering the number of stamps issued it is a tribute to the quality control exercised by the printers and by Royal Mail that more do not get out, which is why the few that do are so attractive. British stamp booklets are printed by three firms: Harrison & Sons Ltd, Walsall Security Printers Ltd, and the House of Questa. To show how even-handed I am, here is a recent example from each of them.



Harrison £2 Rowland Hill No. 2 book

The second in the series illustrating the life and work of Rowland Hill has been found miscut. Each book is cut from the primary sheet at points indicated by short lines engraved onto the cylinder and so printed in the colour of the stamps. Collectors call these 'cut lines', the printers call them 'tick marks'. In normally cut books, half of each line appears at the left and right edges of the margin by which the panes are stuck to the books. In a miscut book, the full width line appears in the centre of the margin. The cylinder book is even more interesting. As well as the centre line, the miscut book has the cylinder number at the right instead of at the

left. The two cylinder books of this issue are illustrated.

Walsall "Thornton Chocolates" book

This book was issued on 14 February and contains 10 1st-class NVIs with two phosphor bars. Copies from the first printing were soon discovered with the phosphor omitted. The plate combination was W36 W24 W30 and both plain and plate books are known. Walsall do not number their phosphor plates.

Questa block design book

The book of ten 2nd-class NVIs with a central phosphor bar and the revised cover design was issued on 10 January. It was found with the phosphor omitted on 16 March. The books were from the first plate combination with this cover, Q17 Q17 / Q2 although, of course the phosphor plate number, Q2, was missing from the plate book.

Questa value types

The values on the Questa 1st-class NVIs exist in two forms. Type 1 is much thinner compared with type 2. The differences are illustrated in my *Deegam Machin Handbook*. Until recently, the stamps in sheets were type 1 and those in retail books (but not the prestige books) were type 2. However, the stamps from plate combination Q4 Q4 / Q2 have the thinner type 1 value. This combination was used both for the books with the new block design and for the former books with the single stamp design. Of course, even plain books with these covers and the different value types are easily distinguished. Are all four in your collection?

W H Smith promotion

The success of the "Kite" books of last year has encouraged W H Smith to sponsor another special offer involving books of ten 1st-class NVIs. This time, a coupon on the inside back cover entitles the bearer to 50p off when buying any product from their Quality Bond range. The voucher is valid until 30 September this year and, until it is over, the books cannot be purchased from philatelic outlets. To distinguish the books from normal ones, the yellow strip incorporating the closure tab is printed "W H Smith Special Offer" instead of the usual "Pull Open". The plate combination seen was W38 W26 W33 but, no doubt, others will be found during the promotion.

Table 1 – 1995 Greetings plates

Plates	Notes
W1 W1 W1 W1 W1	1
W1 W1 W1 W1 W2	
W2 W1 W1 W1 W2	2
W2 W1 W2 W1 W2	1
W3 W2 W3 W2 W3	3
W4 W2 W3 W2 W3	

W4 W2 W4 W2 W3	1
W4 W2 W4 W2 W4	
W4 W2 W5 W2 W4	3
W5 W3 W6 W3 W5	
W5 W3 W7 W3 W5	4
W5 W4 W7 W3 W5	3
W5 W4 W7 W3 W6	
W6 W5 W8 W4 W7	
W6 W5 W8 W4 W8	

1 in books and packs 2 packs only 3 books only 4 not confirmed

Table 2 – NVI books, plate update

Printer	Content	Barcode	Single illustration		Block illustration		Notes
			Numbers	Date	Numbers	Date	
Questa	10 x 2nd CB	100265	Q17 Q17 / Q2	7.10.94	Q17 Q17 / Q2	21.12.94	1
			Q18 Q18 / Q2	24.12.94	Q18 Q18 / Q2	7. 1.95	
			Q19 Q19 / Q1	8.10.94	Q19 Q19 / Q2	22. 2.95	
			Q20 Q20 / Q1	4.11.94	—	—	
			Q21 Q21 / Q1	16.11.94	Q21 Q21 / Q1	8. 1.95	
	10 x 1st 2B	100197	Q3 Q3 / Q1	2. 9.94	—	—	2
Q4 Q4 / Q2			4.10.94	Q4 Q4 / Q2	4.10.94	3	
Walsall	4 x 1st 2B	100180	W19 W28 W26	21.10.94	—	—	
			W20 W29 W27	26.11.94	—	—	
			W20 W29 W28	11.11.94	—	—	
			W20 W29 W29	1.12.94	W20 W29 W29	21.12.94	
			W21 W29 W29	2.12.94	W21 W29 W29	23.12.94	
			W21 W29 W30	4.12.94	W21 W29 W30	7. 1.95	
			—	—	W22 W30 W31	29. 1.95	
			—	—	W23 W30 W31	24. 2.95	
			—	—	W23 W31 W32	23. 2.95	
			—	—	W24 W32 W32	18. 3.95	
	—	—	W26 W34 W34	21. 3.95			
	4 x 2nd CB	100272	W11 W13	26.11.94	—	—	
	10 x 1st 2B Rupert	100197	W35 W23 W28	13. 1.95	—	—	4
			W36 W24 W29	17. 2.95	—	—	
	10 x 1st 2B Thornton's chocolates		W36 W24 W30	1. 2.95	—	—	
W36 W24 W31			11. 2.95	—	—		
W37 W25 W32			17. 2.95	—	—		
10 x 1st 2B			W38 W26 W33	28. 3.95	—	—	
		—	—	W35 W23 W28	21.12.94		
Harrison	4 x 2nd CB	100272	—	—	B6 / B9	21.12.94	
	10 x 1st	100197	—	—	B5		5
	10 x 1st 2B		—	—	B5 / B99		4. 4.95

Notes: The dates given in this table are those when the books were first reported on sale; they may differ from any announced officially. Moreover, since distribution is random, some may have been sold even earlier.

1. note the change in phosphor number
2. thick value
3. thin value
4. re-issued
5. phosphorised paper
6. two phosphor bars

Second World War George VI Double Aperture Pillar Box

To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of the Second World War, The Post Office Archives & Records Centre is delighted to announce the latest edition to its historic miniature collection. This, the sixth in the series, depicts a King George VI "C" type Double Aperture box, painted in wartime colours. As with all previous miniatures they are expertly crafted and exact in every detail, right down to the collection plates, which can be read with the aid of a magnifier.

The Double Aperture box first made its appearance in London in 1899 when six experimental boxes were tried out. The idea was suggested by the Assistant Sub-Controller of the Eastern Central District of London, who proposed that, instead of ordinary roadside pillar boxes, oval pillar boxes, with separate compartments and posting apertures for "Town" and "Country" letters, should be installed in his busy District. The trial was deemed a success and they were ordered for general use in London. However, it wasn't until 1905 that this box was extended to the large provincial towns, the first appearing in Newcastle upon Tyne with the apertures marked "City" and "General".



The new miniature in 1/19th scale

When King George VI came to the throne the contract for producing these boxes was with two companies: the Carron Company of Carron, near Falkirk, who got the contract in 1933, and the Lion Foundry in Kirkintilloch, Glasgow, who got the contract in 1936. The new miniature is modelled on the box in Kings Bench Walk, London (a Lion Foundry casting), one of only three of this type of box known in the London area.

TIMES OF COLLECTION

WEEKDAYS

8.45	A.M.	3.30	P.M.	(Ex Sat)
10.45	"	4.30	"	
11.45	"	5.30	"	
12.45	P.M.	6.30	"	(Ex Sat)
1.45	"	7.30	"	
2.45	"	12.0	MIDT	(Ex Sat)

SUNDAYS,

BANK HOLIDAYS AND GOOD FRIDAY

12.0 MIDT

For inclusion in evening despatches,
Night Mails on these days, Post at the
Liverpool St. Stn L.N.E. Railway
before 6.0 p.m.

Letters containing money or valuables should not be posted
in this box but Registered at a Post Office

Collection plate below "London" aperture on miniature box

In anticipation of the war, circulars were issued in August 1939 which gave instructions for the painting of pillar boxes on the outbreak of hostilities. The first, which was to aid the movement of traffic in darkened streets, involved the application of white paint to items bordering the carriage way, this included trees, lampposts, telegraph poles, telephone kiosks and of course pillar boxes. The circular pointed out that "endeavour should be made to keep to a minimum the list of items treated and confine it to cases which would involve real difficulty in darkened streets". The instructions for pillar boxes was "plinths to be painted white over the present black". However, on the next line it gave instructions for the painting of telegraph poles



A postwoman emptying a "banded" box, with detection paint on top, in 1941. Note: at this stage of the War the last three collections of the day have been cancelled

and police and fire alarm posts, these were to have white bands painted on them, "6 inches wide and 6 inches apart from ground level to a height of 3 feet". It seems that these two different painting instructions caused an element of confusion because some pillar boxes received the white band treatment. One of the



The detector paint between the layers of "pillar box" red (sample kindly supplied by Andrew Smith of the Letter Box Study Group)

illustrations shows a postwoman emptying such a box. Incidentally, the next in the miniature series, soon to be launched, will be a similar WW2 postwoman, complete with tin helmet.

The second circular of August 1939, gave notice of the painting of the tops of pillar boxes with a yellowish green detector paint, for the purpose of enabling Air Raid Wardens to detect the presence of gas. Two versions of the detector paint were in service the "Yellow", which was in use 1936-1942, and the "Khaki" which was used from 1941 to 1956. Both paints would change from their original colour to a vivid crimson when in contact with liquid Mustard or the simulant Methyl Salicylate.

During refurbishment of pillar boxes in west London, as the paint on the tops of the boxes was stripped off, the yellow detection paint was discovered between the thick layers of red paint.

As with the previous miniature (the fluted box – see January 1995 *Bulletin*), this new box will be available for a limited period at a special introductory offer to the readers of the *Bulletin* at £19.95, normal price £21.95. Please state *Philatelic Bulletin* with your order. Please note that there is a handling charge of 60p per order. Cheques should be made out to "The Post Office" in £ sterling and orders addressed to: Post Office Archives & Records Centre, Freeling House, Mount Pleasant Complex, Phoenix Place Entrance, LONDON EC1A 1BB.

Kevin Squelch, Archivist

H. & S.D.
Regd. No. 0199/20.
ref.

Circular No. 162/39
Perpetual Department,
Buildings & Supplies Branch)
31st August, 1939.

To:-

Regional Directors
Surveyors
Postmaster Surveyors (extra Regional)
Head Postmasters
Branches of Administrative Departments (partial)

Pillar Boxes - Painting of tops with detector paint.

It has been agreed with the Home Office that Local Authorities may, where they desire, paint the tops of pillar boxes with a yellowish green detector paint, for the purpose of enabling their Air Raid Wardens to detect the presence of gas. The Home Office are issuing instructions that this arrangement is not to be carried out by Local Authorities until they receive notification to "complete Air Raid Precautions plans"; and that all care must be exercised to prevent paint (or the petrol which it would be necessary to use for the purpose of removing the paint) from entering the aperture. The Local Authorities have been asked to get into touch with the Head Postmaster as regards any boxes which they wish to treat in this way.

L.H. 10/228

31st August, 1939.

Last Circular to:-

Regional Directors
Surveyors
Postmaster Surveyors (extra Regional)
Head Postmasters

161/39
161/39
161/39

The 1939 circular on detector paint

Air Mails During the 1919 Railway Strike

Part 1

RICHARD BEITH

Introduction

A national rail strike began in Great Britain at one minute after midnight on Saturday 27 September 1919 and ended at one minute after midnight on Monday 6 October 1919. It seems that the authorities had planned in advance to deal with such a major disruption in communications and an elaborate series of government air services were inaugurated to convey official despatches the length and breadth of the UK. In addition, an aerial post was initiated between London and five major cities in order to carry civilian mails. Again, some postal authorities acted spontaneously and organised

local air services without asking for London's approval and one or two fledgling air companies and a few industrial firms introduced their own services. Mails for continental Europe were also despatched by air. Additional services were provided by road transport and the Royal Navy also carried mails around the coast. As noted, the strike was not long lasting and more and more trains were operated as the strike continued. The demand for the civilian air mail services to and from London was quite low and as the strike progressed the civil mail service and the government despatch service were combined. Nevertheless, this early and short lived carriage



Figure 1: A possible government mail and despatch plane at Renfrew.

Figure 2: An envelope postmarked EDINBURGH 9 AM 2 OC 19, franked at the correct rate of 2/1½d, addressed to London and bearing a manuscript endorsement *By Aerial Post via Glasgow*.



of mail by air within the UK is historically important, a distant precursor to such systems as the current Skynet service.

The Government Despatch Service

Some idea of the detailed scheme put in operation for the emergency can be deduced from a minute dated 4 October 1919:

The present scheme for the conveyance of urgent government despatches by aeroplane provides for the distribution of urgent official packets from London to 70 centres in Great Britain; despatches are also sent to Holyhead, via Bangor, for transmission by sea to Ireland. Despatches are sent by the various Departments to the Home Office each evening and are thence distributed to five main distributing centres as follows: Northolt – by road, Stonehenge, Birmingham (Castle Bromwich), Tadcaster and Newcastle (Town Moor), all four by road to Kenley, thence by aeroplane.

The majority of the 70 or so centres were listed as *Landing Grounds*, but a number were described as *Dropping Grounds*, particularly in the Midlands and as far away as Aberdeen. If the emergency had continued, a big increase in the number of distribution centres was planned. Figure 1 shows an illustration taken from the 6 October 1919 issue of the Glasgow daily: *The Bulletin*. It shows a RAF aeroplane, photographed at Renfrew Aerodrome, Glasgow, probably on 4 October. Part of the original caption states: *TO LONDON BY AEROPLANE – At the end of the week*

Major H G Anderson, FRCS, of Harley Street, consulting surgeon to the RAF, returned to London by air to report for duty at the Air Ministry. Lieut. Reid Walker was the pilot. Can that be the Glasgow-London mail bag in the good doctor's hand?

Official Post Office Internal Air Mails

In London, the Postmaster General announced that air letter services would operate on and from Tuesday 30 September between London and Birmingham, Bristol, Glasgow, Manchester and Newcastle. Letters intended to be sent by these services were to be prepaid at the then ordinary inland postage rate (1½ d) plus a special air mail fee of 2s. per ounce. Specific offices of acceptance and posting times were announced for London.

They were:

GPO (King Edward Building):	not later than 9pm
Central District Office (High Holborn):	not later than 8pm
Western District Office (Wimpole Street)	not later than 8pm

Similar instructions were given out in the five designated cities.

Following experimental flights on Monday 29 September, the public service was actually initiated on Wednesday 1 October, 1919. The last flights were generally on Monday 6 October.

In view of the high air mail surcharge, the mail carried was generally limited to urgent

business correspondence. The total number of individual letters carried was recorded as:

London-Birmingham	156	Birmingham-London	209
London-Bristol	75	Bristol-London	158
London-Glasgow	544	Glasgow-London	875
London-Manchester	283	Manchester-London	258
London-Newcastle	231	Newcastle-London	507

That is, the grand total of surcharged air mail carried on this service was limited to 3296 items, with the longest route: London-Glasgow and vice-versa, being the busiest. A variety of civilian planes owned by small air companies were used over the first days, but as the demand was so low, later flights were combined with the Government Despatch scheme, RAF planes being used. Flights over these distances were not

Table 1 Newcastle inward mails to London							
Date	Latest Time of Posting	Government or Civilian Machine	Time of Departure from Aerodrome	Arrival at KEB	Number of letters carried	Special fees	Delivery into which letters fell
1st	No Service.....						
2nd	8 pm 1st	C machine from Gosforth	7.30 am	2.57 pm	115	£13.10.0	3.30 pm
3rd	8 pm 2nd	C machine from Glasgow calls for mails	5.30 am	8.40 pm	161	£18.8.0	7.15 am, 4th
4th	8 pm 3rd	G machine from Gosforth	5.30 am	3.25 pm	157	£18.16.0	SWDO 5.15 pm
5th	8 pm 4th	G machine from Gosforth	5.30 am	12.05 am 6th Oct	74	£9.6.0	SWDO 7.15 am
6th	No Service.....						

Table2: Continental mails carried to Brussels by Handley Page Limited			
Date	Destination	Weight of mails (lb)	Number of bags
29 September	Belgium	1517	45
30 September	Holland	1078	22
	Norway	402	9
1 October	Belgium	68	6
	Holland	6	1
	Norway	10	1
	Sweden	52	1
	Denmark	371	22
2 October	Belgium	3	1
	Denmark	862	31
	Sweden	946	36
	Norway	<u>272</u>	<u>10</u>
Grand total		5587	185

always a matter of routine in 1919. The first civil plane to leave London for Glasgow on Wednesday 1 October, a Blackburn *Kangaroo* piloted by Mr R W Kenworthy, only arrived at Glasgow's Renfrew airfield at 8.00am on the next day, 2 October. The pilot explained to a reporter from the *Glasgow Herald*, that the delay had been due to unfavourable weather conditions. He had left London's Hounslow airport at 8.00am on 1 October, but came down at Hendon due to fog. Two hours later he took off again and reached Doncaster for refuelling. He had to land at Newcastle due to the bad weather but eventually reached Edinburgh (Turnhouse) in the early evening. He flew on to Renfrew the next morning.

The *Glasgow Herald* perhaps went further than other papers, in that they sent one of their intrepid reporters as a passenger on the return flight of Mr Kenworthy's *Kangaroo* to London. This nonstop flight was recorded in detail. A summary has already appeared in the philatelic press (see Reference below). Details of all these flights, the individual number of items carried and the total fees received can be found in Post Office Archives. A typical record, that for Newcastle-London mail is shown as Table 1. A typical cover from these flights is shown as Figure 2.

Post Office External Air Mails

Considerable quantities of regular continental air mails were flown by air from England over the period 29 September to 2 October 1919. Airco flew to Paris on 29 September with 12 bags of mail weighing 500lb. Handley Page Limited carried the mail to Brussels for four days with many bags of mail for onward destinations, see Table 2. In addition, Supermarine Aviation Works Limited used an ex RAF Supermarine flyingboat to carry freight and some mail on a Southampton-Le Havre route and on 30 September Handley Page Limited carried 1946lb of inward mail from Brussels to Hounslow.

All this continental mail was franked at the normal rates, there were no air mail surcharges.

Reference

Beith, R, "Flying with the Glasgow-London Air Mail of 1919", *Stamp Collecting*, 24 March 1983.

To be continued

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Events – June/July 1995

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

3 June: Yorkshire Philatelic Convention at Wickersley Comprehensive School. Hosted by Rotherham & District Phil Soc. Enquiries: A Burgin, 10 Crownhill Road, Brinsworth, ROTHERHAM, S Yorkshire, S60 5AX.

10 June: Midpex 95 at Midlands Sports Centre for the Disabled, Tile Hill, Coventry, 10.00-16.00. Meeting of specialist societies. Enquiries: M Benford, 01295-780225.

10 June: "Selected Aspects of Aerophilately" – display by Frank Jones to National Philatelic Society, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1, 15.15. Enquiries: NPS, 0171-251 5040.

10 June: Lytham St Annes Phil Soc Stamp & Postcard Fair at Drive Methodist Church Hall, St Annes-on-Sea, 10.00-16.30. Dealers, displays, refreshments. Admission 30p, children 10p. Enquiries: Mrs N Barrowclough, 01253-727056.

24 June: Spring Convention of Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies at Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove, E Sussex 11.00-17.00. Dealers, displays, talk "The Post Office at War" by Christine Finn (14.20). Enquiries: L D Jones, 2 Cherry Garden Road, EASTBOURNE, E Sussex, BN20 8EY.

1-2 July: Thematica 95 exhibition at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2. Enquiries: F B Sole, 01372-467652.

6-8 July: "Rare Stamps of the World" exhibition at Claridges, Brook Street, London W1. Open 6 July 12.00-18.00, 7 July 10.00-20.00, 8 July 10.00-18.00. Admission £10 including souvenir catalogue. Enquiries: 0171 435 8425.

8 July: SWIPEX (South West of England Inter-Federation Philatelic Exhibition) at Guildhall, Plymouth, 10.30-16.00. Dealers, displays, youth corner, refreshments. Organised by Cornwall, Somerset and Dorset & Wessex Philatelic Federations. Enquiries: Mrs M Claydon, 01398 331731.

13 July-1 October: Display of 1982 Ascension 150th anniversary of Charles Darwin Voyage issue (stamps, artwork, proofs, etc) at British Library Philatelic Collections, Great Russell Street, London WC1. Open Mon-Sat 10.00-17.00; Sun 14.30-18.00. Enquiries: 0171 412 7635/6.

Royal Mail News

Shakespeare's Globe Stamps

Five 25p stamps commemorating the opening of the replica Globe Theatre on London's South Bank go on sale at post offices, and philatelic outlets on 8 August. The stamps, printed in a horizontal se-tenant strip, cover the basic inland 1st class letter rate and the basic rate for letters to EU countries.

The designs, by C Walter Hodges, feature London theatres of the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I/VI: The Swan (1595), The Rose (1592), the original Globe (1599), The Hope (1613), and the second Globe (1614). The designs form a composite picture of the London riverside, with the theatres linked by a path. The sequence of the theatres (from left to right) is in topographical order (west to east), not date order. The serpentine path which links them represents Maid Lane (now still surviving for a short distance as Park Street).

Numerous spectators, entertainers and characters from the plays are depicted on the stamps. On the first we see the usual hucksters and hawkers and a quack doctor, here called Dr Dee (because, says the designer, "it's a short name") representing popular science. The lads looking after the customers' horses reminds us of the legend of Shakespeare beginning his theatrical career in this way. Christopher

Marlowe is depicted on the second stamp – nearly all his plays were presented at the Rose theatre.

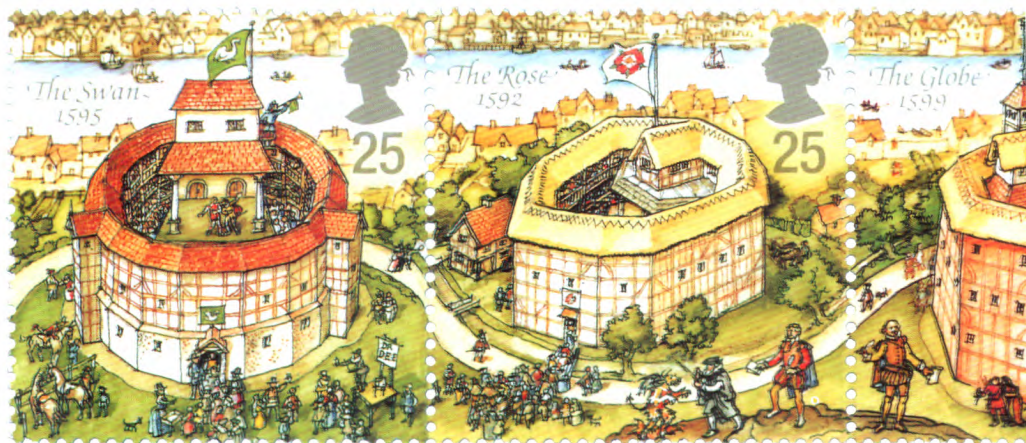
Shakespeare himself features on the centre stamp, with characters from his plays (from left to right) Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, Romeo & Juliet, Hamlet, Richard III, Falstaff, and Bottom the Weaver. The bear on the fourth stamp reminds us that the Hope was built as a convertible theatre-cum-bearbaiting ring. The flag shown on the final stamp is based on the tradition that the signboard at the Globe had a figure of Hercules supporting the Globe upon his shoulders. The designer has transferred this to the flag. These tiny representations add an element of fun to the stamps and students of the plays and Elizabethan social history will enjoy identifying characters and tradesmen.

The Theatres

The early London theatres were established in Bishopsgate and Shoreditch where the leading figure was one James Burbage. Later Philip Henslowe pioneered theatres on Bankside, south of the Thames, where the Liberty of the Clink in Southwark gave freedom from City jurisdiction.

Henslowe, originally a dyer and starchmaker, bought the Little Rose Inn on the South Bank in 1585 and there built the Rose Theatre. From 1591 until his death in 1616 he was in partnership with the prominent actor Edward "Ned" Alleyn (1566-1626), founder of Dulwich College. Shakespeare is believed to have played at the Rose.

The Globe was erected by Richard Burbage (c.1567-1619) and his brother Cuthbert, sons of the actor James (died 1597), who built the



Shoreditch and Blackfriars theatres. The brothers built the Globe in late 1598/early 1599 and used it for summer performances; it was intended that the Blackfriars should be used in the winter months. To raise money for the Globe, Cuthbert Burbage parted with his half-share to six actors, of whom Shakespeare was one. Shakespeare acted with the King's Company at the Globe until 1612. *Hamlet* (1602), *Othello* (1604), *Macbeth* and *King Lear* (1606), and others of his plays were all produced here. The theatre could accommodate an audience of up to 3000. The original Globe burned down in June 1613 when the thatched roof caught fire during a performance of *Henry VIII*. Fortunately there was no loss of life and the actors rescued manuscripts of Shakespeare's plays. Theatres fell foul of the Puritans and the Globe was closed in 1642 and demolished two years later.

The Swan theatre, stood on what is now Paris Garden from 1595 to 1633. The performance there in 1597 of a play reflecting on government – *The Isle of Dogs* by Thomas Nashe and Ben Jonson – provoked a Privy Council order commanding the plucking down of the theatres. Fortunately the threat was not carried out.

Near Bear Gardens (site of an Elizabethan bear pit) stood, from 1614 to 1656, the Hope Theatre. A Georgian warehouse on, or near, the site now houses a small theatre museum.

Rebuilding the Globe

One man's name will always be associated with the reconstructed Globe – film-director Sam Wanamaker (1919-73) who in 1949 found that only a plaque on a wall was all to be seen of the

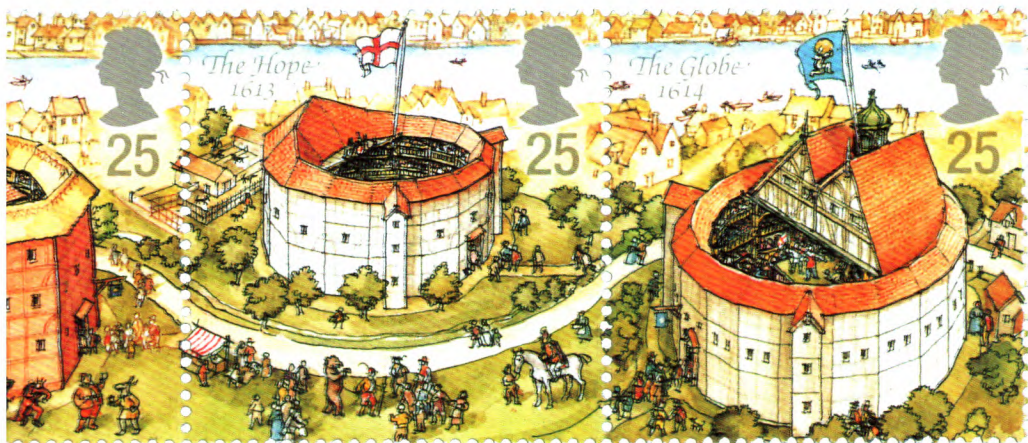
Globe Theatre. It became his passion to recreate the place where so many of Shakespeare's plays were performed. In 1987 Wanamaker's Friends of the Globe acquired land 300 yards from the original site. By the time digging started, some £3 million had already been spent. The reconstruction is as close as possible to the original, mostly in oak, using wooden pegs to join the structure. The bricks are made from London clay. One change from Elizabethan times – the new theatre will include toilets! Visitors to the new Globe will be able to enjoy innovative new plays as well as the works of Shakespeare.

Enquiries about the theatre should be addressed to: Shakespeare's Globe, Bear Gardens, Bankside, LONDON SE1 9EB.

William Shakespeare

Shakespeare was born in Stratford upon Avon in April 1564, son of a glove maker and leather craftsman. In 1582 he married Anne Hathaway, they had one son and two daughters. By 1592 Shakespeare was working as an actor and playwright in London. Amongst the earliest plays were *The Comedy of Errors*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *King John*. Originally he worked with Lord Pembroke's Company, but, by 1595, was a member, with Richard Burbage, of a company called The Lord Chamberlain's Men. In 1601 the Company offended Elizabeth I by performing *Richard II* on the eve of the rebellion by the Earl of Essex. A play on the overthrow of a monarch was ill-timed.

Later James I/VI granted a royal patent to the





The Wanamaker and Crang partnership determined that the re-creation must be made with exactly the same materials and skills of 400 years ago – green oak framing with walls of lime, hair and plaster – researched as painstakingly as the design of the building itself. The re-created Globe is in fact the first timbered building to be erected in London since the Great Fire of 1666. Not a single nut or bolt joins any of the oak structure – all is joined together with wooden pegs and the knowledge of skilled master craftsmen. It was to be a far harder journey to



create Shakespeare's original theatre for the dry architect and the demonstrative actor than either could have feared, opposed as they were initially by politicians, archaeologists, historians and local interest groups. All were eventually won over; building work finally began in 1988. Sadly, as well as being the triumph of both men, the International Shakespeare Globe Centre is their memorial. Neither has lived to see the completion of the project which occupied them for a quarter of a century. Sam Wanamaker died in December 1993 and Theo Crang in September 1994.

Can this cockpit hold the vasty fields of France? Or may we cram within this wooden O the very casques that did affright the air at Agincourt? HENRY V

Company which was then renamed The King's Men. When plague closed the theatres, the Company played at Wilton House, Somerset House, and in the Banqueting House at Whitehall Palace. After the original Globe was burned down in 1613, Shakespeare took no further part in the Company or in the rebuilding of the playhouse. He retired to Stratford, where he died in 1616, aged just 52.

Some of his plays were published during his lifetime, although he made no efforts to see his plays in print. In 1623 the famous *First Folio* edition, prepared by John Hemmings and Henry Condell, appeared. This included the well-known portrait of Shakespeare by Martin Droeshout which was reproduced on four of the 1964 Shakespeare Festival stamps (see below).

Earlier Shakespeare Stamps

Stamps featuring Shakespeare and characters from his plays were issued in 1964 to mark the Shakespeare Festival which commemorated the 400th anniversary of the Bard's birth (SG 646/50). The 3d, 6d, 1s3d and 1s6d stamps were the work of David Gentleman, the recess-printed 2s6d value was designed by Robin & Christopher Ironside. The 26p stamp in the 1982 British Theatre set featured Hamlet (1185) and Shakespeare was portrayed, with John Lennon and the Sydney Opera House and Bridge, on a 34p stamp in the Australian Bicentennial issue of 1988 (1399).

Shakespeare, characters from his plays and the Royal Shakespeare Theatre featured on two aerogrammes issued in 1964, and Stratford scenes are depicted on four of five international air cards (prestamped postcards) issued in August 1993. These are still available from the Bureau – £2.50 per set. (The fifth card in the set features Warwick Castle.)

The forthcoming Shakespeare's Globe stamps are a first in two senses – the first stamps designed by C Walter Hodges, and the first British special stamps produced by Walsall Security Printers.

The Designer

C(yril) Walter Hodges, born in 1909, is a noted historical illustrator and advocate of "educated folklore". He was educated at Dulwich College where he says he was "no use at anything" other than drawing. Fired with the idea of the "romance of artistic life" by reading du Marier's *Trilby*, he went on to study at Goldsmiths College School of Art where he was taught by

Harold Speed and Clive Gardiner, and where he became great friends with Norman Hepple and Rowland Hilder. Graham Sutherland had just left but Mr Hodges recalls him returning to use the etching presses. His father, an advertising manager with Lever Brothers, introduced him to artists and was instrumental in getting him his first job, with R P Gossop. He went on to become an illustrator in advertising and for magazines, especially *Radio Times* with which he is proud to have been associated, describing it as "a great influence... it took over what *Punch* had done, and represented the best of British illustrators." His first work in book illustration was in 1933 and his writing career began four years later. He served in the Army during the Second World War.

His many commissions have included designing stage productions for the Mermaid Theatre. His special studies of Elizabethan theatre have been recognised by the academic world; Mr Hodges has lectured at many universities and holds an Hon DLitt degree of the University of Sussex. His numerous publications include *Shakespeare and the Players* (1948), *The Globe restored* (1953), *Shakespeare's Theatre* (1964), *Shakespeare's Second Globe* (1973), *Playhouse Tales* (1974), and *The Third Globe* (editor, 1981). He has contributed to *Shakespeare Survey* and *The New Cambridge Shakespeare*. In 1979 he acted as Co-ordinator of the Symposium for the Reconstruction of the Globe Playhouse. He lists his recreations as: "music (listening), letters (writing), museums (visiting)".

Technical details

Printers: Walsall Security Printers Ltd
Process: Offset-lithography
Size: 35 x 37mm
Sheets: 100
Perforation: 14½ x 14
Phosphor: Two phosphor bands
Paper: OBA free (OBA = Optical Brightening Agent)
Gum: PVA

Plate Numbers & Colours

W1 (brownish-grey) W1 (black) W1 (magenta),
W1 (new blue) W1 (greenish-yellow)

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office

Counters philatelic outlets around a week before 8 August, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial “First Day of Issue” postmark of the Bureau or Stratford upon Avon. Order forms for first day covers are available from the Bureau, and should be returned to the Bureau by 8 August 1995.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers on the day of issue, for the pictorial cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Midland Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, BIRMINGHAM B1 1AA (for Stratford postmark). The outer envelope should be endorsed “FD9515” (Bureau), or “FD9516” (Stratford).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish



to post covers to receive local (usually non-pictorial) “First Day of Issue” handstamps.

A permanent pictorial handstamp, featuring Shakespeare, is applied to mail handed in at the Postshop at Stratford Post Office, or sent to the Midland Special Handstamp Centre. Covers to receive this handstamp should be sent to: Midland SHC, Royal Mail, BIRMINGHAM B1 1AA, requesting handstamp No. 2714.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail’s magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe; £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards

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

Serviced First Day Covers

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

Stamp Advisory Committee

A number of readers have asked for a current list of members of Royal Mail’s Stamp Advisory Committee. We are happy to oblige:

John Tew (Chairman), Director/General Manager, Royal Mail National

Barry Robinson, Design Director, RMN

Alistair Sharp, Head of Philatelic Marketing and Production, RMN

Jane Ryan, Design Manager, RMN

Alan Williams, Director Public Relations, The Post Office

Lauretta Morris (Secretary), Design Division, RMN

Dr Jean Alexander, Food Scientist & Philatelist

Floella Benjamin, Television Presenter

Simon Heffer, Deputy Editor, *The Daily Telegraph*

Mary Lewis, Director of Design Consultancy

Professor Alan Livingston, Principal of Falmouth School of Art & Design

John McConnell, Design Consultant

Richard Negus, Design Consultant

Elisabeth Santry, Dept of Trade & Industry Representative

Jean Varga, European Stamp Dealer & Catalogue Publisher

The Hon Gwyneth Dunwoody, MP

Extended Sale of Golf Stamps

Royal Mail Scotland and Northern Ireland will have its exhibition unit at the British Open Golf Championship, St Andrews, 20-23 July 1995. The unit will be staffed by a team from the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh. The 1994 Golf stamps will remain on sale until 31 July 1995, allowing visitors to the event to purchase the stamps. The 19p value shows the Old Course at St Andrews.

The set of five stamps costs £1.50, the presentation pack £1.85, and a set of postcards £1.25. Orders should be sent to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

Royal Mail in Switzerland and Singapore

Royal Mail will be officially represented by Philart SA at the Swiss national stamp exhibition – “Basler Taube” – in Basel, 17-25 June. Philart SA will be promoting and selling British stamps

and products and invite existing and new collectors of British stamps to visit them on stand 24. A special Basler Taube cachet will be available at the stand.

Royal Mail will be represented by staff from the British Philatelic Bureau at the prestigious Singapore '95, world philatelic exhibition, in Singapore, 1-10 September 1995.

Postcode Changes on Western Isles

From 16 April postcodes for the Western Isles were changed from PA80-88 to HS1-9. The change coincided with National Phone Day when all telephone codes changed. By using that date Royal Mail hoped to minimise inconvenience to customers needing to reprint their stationery. The old PA postcodes will run concurrently with the new for one year. The code changes are as shown below:

<i>Post-Town</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>New</i>
Castlebay (<i>Isle of Barra</i>)	PA80	HS9
Lochboisdale (<i>Isle of South Uist</i>)	PA81	HS8
Lochmaddy (<i>Isle of North Uist</i>)	PA82	HS6
Leverburgh (<i>Isle of Harris</i>)	PA83	HS5
Isle of Scalpay	PA84	HS4
Harris (<i>Isle of Harris</i>)	PA85	HS3
Isle of Lewis	PA86	HS2
Stornoway (<i>Isle of Lewis</i>)	PA87	HS1
Isle of Benbecula	PA88	HS7

Please note no change to Inward Code
e.g. PA80 5UH becomes HS9 5UH

National Postal Museum News

The Museum issued nine new postcards on 5 May – four featuring the Freddie Mercury stamp collection, and five showing items from the "Victorian Posts" exhibition, now on show. The cards are available, price 25p each, to visitors to the Museum. They can be ordered by post from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, price £1 per set (Freddie Mercury), £1.25 (Victorian Posts).

The cards feature:

95/5 Freddie Mercury's blue stamp album with a selection of pages

95/6 A page from Mercury's collection showing Monaco stamps artistically arranged

95/7 A page from Mercury's collection showing Hungary stamps artistically arranged

95/8 A page from Mercury's collection showing British stamps arranged in the letter "F". Freddie Mercury was born Farookh Bulsara.

95/9 Queen Victoria – photograph by G R & Co, London, 1897

95/10 "The Country Letter Carrier" – watercolour by unknown artist

95/11 "The Fourteenth of February" by G B O'Neil (*Illustrated London News*, 11 February 1871)

95/12 "The Postman" by Thomas Liddall Armitage

95/13 "The Postman" by John Frederick Herring Snr – oil on canvas, c.1880

A poster reproducing selected British stamps of the past decade or so has been produced for the Foreign & Commonwealth Office for use overseas at British embassies. The attractive poster is also available at the NPM shop, price £6.50.

The National Postal Museum houses the British Post Office's own reference collection of British stamps, the Universal Postal Union collection of world stamps and the famous R M Phillips Collection of British 19th century stamps. Details of the scope of the UPU collection were given in an article, "The World Before You" by the Museum's Manager, Stan Goron, in the *Bulletin* of October 1993. In addition the visitor can see interesting and unusual postal artefacts, including historic letter boxes and postmarking devices. The Museum is situated in King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP, a few minutes walk from St Paul's Cathedral and underground station. Open Monday-Friday 09.30-16.30. Admission free. Telephone enquiries: 0171-239 5420.

Prehistoric Scotland Aerogramme

A new Scottish aerogramme – the 42nd in the series started in 1974 – will be available from post offices in Scotland, the British Philatelic Bureau, and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets from 18 July. This will feature a number of the country's best-known prehistoric sites, including Skara Brae, Orkney. The aerogramme has been designed by Tayburn Design and printed by McCorquodale Envelopes Ltd. Price 45p.

Two earlier Scottish aerogrammes are still

available from the Bureau: Gordon Highlanders (issued 19 July 1994) and Glasgow School of Art (4 April 1995). Price 45p each. The Gordon Highlanders aerogramme will remain on sale until 18 July 1995.



New Stamp Books

New 50p and £2 stamp books will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets from 6 June. The cover of the new 50p book will feature St David's Head – No 3 in the "Sea Charts" series. The cover of the £2 book will show Postal Districts – No 3 in the "Rowland Hill" series. The books contain 25p stamps, printed by Harrisons, with two phosphor bands. These books will be available from machines at post offices and retail outlets as supplies of earlier books are used up.



A new 10 x 1st NVI stamp book will be available from Sainsbury's shops from 26 June. This contains an entry voucher, which readers of the July and August issues of Sainsbury's *The Magazine* can use to enter a competition to win a year's free shopping at Sainsbury's. Printed by The House of Questa, the stamps bear two phosphor bands. Please note that this book will not be available from post offices or other retail outlets. Supplies will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets from 5 September.

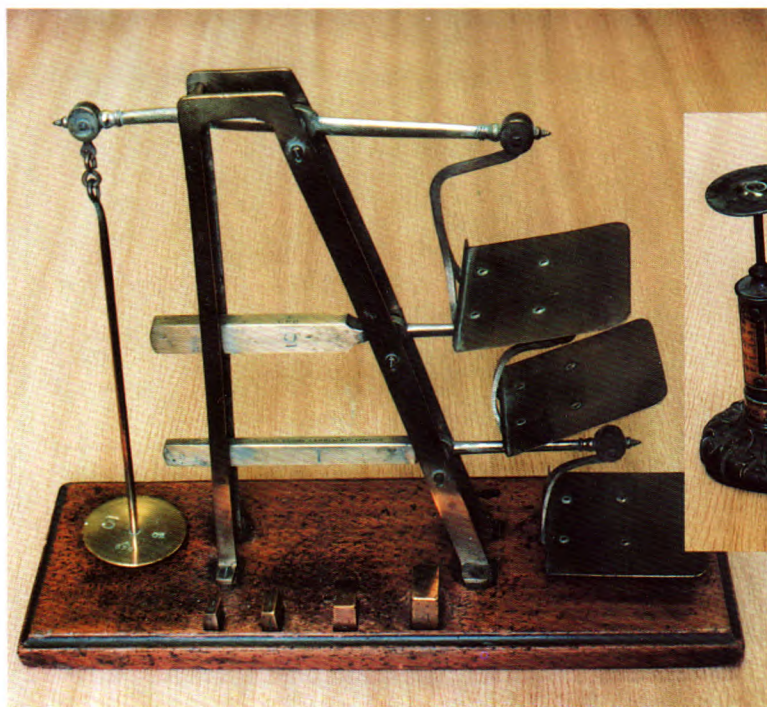
Bulletin Back Numbers

A reader in the Netherlands offers runs of the *Bulletin* from November 1973 to August 1987 and September 1989 to August 1994 to any reader(s) willing to collect or pay postage. Contact: H ter Braak, Wessel Gansfortstraat 22, 1064 NP Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Friends of the Museum Celebrate 10 years

The Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum was formed in April 1985. Ten years on a celebratory luncheon was held at King Edward Hall, London on 8 April, with about 50 guests and members enjoying a fine meal, good company and conversation. Andrew Watton, President of the Association, recalled hearing former Post Office Chairman, Sir Ron Dearing as guest on the radio show "Desert Island Discs". Sir Ron was asked what were his hopes for the future – a new postal museum and the setting up of the Friends of the museum. Andrew spoke of the "highs and low points" over the past decade – happily the former outnumbering the latter. The Friends had enjoyed talks and displays by "premier division" speakers and the large turnout for the AGM was the envy of many philatelic societies. The Museum was, he said "the most latent asset of the Post Office". He looked forward to its future development with the Friends playing a major role. The Museum should be enjoyed by many more people and he looked forward to 1 million visitors each year. Andrew thanked the Friends' Secretary Ray Pottle for all his hard work in organising the luncheon and in many other tasks.

On behalf of the Friends, Andrew presented to Stan Goron, NPM Manager, three attractive Victorian letter scales for the Museum's collection. In congratulating the Friends on their tenth birthday, Stan spoke of the important relationship between the Association and the NPM, and of the "many interesting activities" organised by the Friends. He thanked both his colleagues in the NPM for all their efforts, and Allan Daniell for editing the Friends' fine magazine, *Cross Post*. Stan told of progress at the Museum – greater professionalism in record keeping and collection management had been recognised by the Museums & Galleries Commission's National Registration Scheme. Collection Development was now a key factor, with progress made on the historic vehicles, pillar boxes and artefacts collections. Storage remained a problem in both space and cost, but significant progress had been made in



*The Victorian letter scales
presented by the Friends
to the NPM
(photos: Cyril Macey)*

conservation. He believed the NPM was the first postal museum with its own paper conservation studio and conservator. Visitor facilities were still in need of improvement – and plans for a new museum were still undecided. He praised the good work done by the Friends and hoped the Association would in the future become a “powerbase” for the Museum with each Friend committed to undertaking a specific task benefitting the Museum – by spreading the word about the NPM, giving talks, or even working at the Museum, assisting the staff in sorting and mounting collections.

Barry Robinson, Design Director of Royal Mail National, thanked the Friends for a splendid occasion and offered to give an illustrated talk on stamp design in the future. Last November the Museum was transferred to his department and he was looking forward to a long and fruitful relationship with the NPM. However, as part of ongoing reorganisations, responsibility for the Museum passed, on 1 April, from Royal Mail to the Post Office Secretary's Office. Fortunately Barry's plans for the NPM are going to be progressed. Displays will be extended into the area formerly occupied by the London Chief Post Office, doubling the floor area of the Museum. More large and three-

dimensional objects, connected with the delivery of the mails and mails transport, will be shown. A new temporary exhibition area will house displays appealing to a wider range of visitors and designed to increase media coverage of the Museum and its activities. There are plans to enhance the educational, marketing, and publications work of the Museum. Barry praised the dedication of the staff, and looked forward to the completion of the improvements to the existing museum. He hoped this would provide a “window of opportunity” that in the longer term would lead to a brand new museum. The immediate aim was to double the number of visitors to King Edward Street.

One of the guests at the luncheon was Tony Gammons on his final day as the Museum's Exhibitions Officer. Andrew Watton recalled his distinguished work at the Museum and announced that Tony had received the rarely awarded NPM Medal for his 17 years of service.

A souvenir cover, showing the letter scales presented to the Museum, was produced by the Friends. A limited number are still available – see *Commemorative Covers Review* for details. Enquiries about membership of the Friends: Ray Pottle, PO Box 40, UCKFIELD, E Sussex, TN22 2SP, Tel. 01825-766546.

Stamp Scene

Llangollen Postal Museum

A new postal museum, concerned chiefly with the posts in Wales, was opened by the Chairman of the Post Office Board for Wales & The Marches, Mr Colin Burbage, on 6 April. The Museum is located in the Post Office at 6 Castle Street, LLANGOLLEN, Clwyd, LL20 8RU. Phone 01978-860230 for details of opening times. The Hon Acting Curator is postal historian Mr Derck Lang.

Royal Philatelic Collection Book

Some *Bulletin* readers may be lucky enough to possess a copy of *The Royal Philatelic Collection* by the late Sir John Wilson, Keeper of the Collection. The book was published in 1952 and is now a collector's item in its own right.

Martyn Fry of Royal Mail's Stamp Production Dept recently came across an article in *The Leather Trades' Review* (26 November 1952) which included details of the binding. This may be of interest to some readers. The binding was in "Oasis" – an aniline dyed, natural grained Nigerian goatskin. Some difficulty was experienced in selecting sufficient skins free from flaws to give a cover size of 27 x 17 inches. After sorting for quality the skins were stripped to clear the adulterations present after native tanning (which is noted for resistance to acid decay). The skins were then retanned and the natural grain, characteristic of "Oasis" formed. After further sorting, the skins were dressed and dyed red. The leather was then given a special protecting treatment, before hand-polishing and dry-shaving to meet the requirements of the bookbinder. The completed binding has a ribbed spine, Royal Arms in gold on front and tudor rose design in gold on the back. The book contains two collotype plates showing King George V and King George VI, 12 plates in facsimile colour, 64 monochrome plates and 568 pages.

Copies of this handsome book are occasionally available from specialist philatelic literature dealers and offered at auctions.

Exhibition Study Group

Readers who collect exhibition postmarks,

souvenir sheets and covers may be interested in the following details of the Exhibition Study Group.

We owe our beginning to two collectors of exhibition memorabilia especially postcards, Andrew Brooks and Fred Fletcher, joint authors of *British Exhibitions and their Post Cards, Parts 1 & 2* (1978). It was the interest that these books aroused that led to the forming in 1981, of the Exhibition Study Group by a small band of friends of Andrew and Fred who had similar interests.

These interests range from the 1851 Crystal Palace onwards, from the stamps, and special postmarks used throughout this period, advertising stickers, crested china, commemorative plates and other china ware, medals, postcards, printed ephemera, books, and the whole range of souvenirs commemorating exhibitions, etc, both British and Foreign, including Congress and Philatelic Exhibitions. This is a truly vast collecting field with items costing from pence to rare pieces well into four figures.

Our purpose is to encourage and assist those who are interested in, or are doing research into various subjects related to Exhibitions, to publish details of their work in our Newsletter, so that it can reach other members who may be doing similar work, and see as our aim the collating and eventual publication of this information, either through our Newsletter or in book form. The 332 page *Kelvingrove and the 1888 Exhibition* by Stanley K Hunter was our first major publication and at the Postcard Centenary Fair we launched *Postcards of the British Empire Exhibition Wembley 1924-1925*. This lists over 3900 cards and is a hard back A4 size with 228 pages and 270 illustrations. Two more are currently being worked on by members, one on the post cards of the 1951 Festival of Britain and the other on the Ideal Home Exhibition. Another of our members Alan Sabey has just produced a booklet on British Empire Exhibition Advertising Stickers, our members have also assisted with research on Perfin on Wembley Stamps carried out by the Perfin Society, and this has now been published by them. It is a very sad thing that a collector may spend most of his or her adult life researching and accumulating knowledge on a subject and leave no record behind at the end. This must be the ultimate "waste of time".

We hold a two day convention each year, meeting at York (twice) Manchester (once) and

Crystal Palace (three times). Our seventh and eighth conventions were held at Wembley, and we shall also meet there in 1995. Our convention is held on the last weekend of September, with our Annual Dinner on the Saturday night. The meetings start at 9.30 on both days and consist of displays and talks given by our members, a covering UK and overseas Exhibitions.

A newsletter is sent out four times a year, and this year we have started a circulating packet containing Exhibition Postcards, which will go to all members wishing to receive it. Our annual subscription is £8. For membership information, write to: Bill Tonkin, Secretary Exhibition Study Group, 23 Bramley Way, WEST WICKHAM, Kent, BR4 9NT. Tel. 0181 777 8861.

GB Collector's Database

QB Software announces a further major extension to their IBM compatible GB COLLECTOR'S DATABASE. The database of Specialised Machins and Window Booklets (see May 1993 *Bulletin* p201) has been extended to include all decimal folded and stitched booklets together with a new checklist of booklet panes. Also a less specialised listing of all issues from 1840 which now includes definitives, regionals, commemoratives, aerogrammes, officials, dues, framas, presentation packs, FDCs, PHQ cards, gutter pairs, miniature sheets, year books, and more. Each database costs £15 including postage, or both for £20. An update for registered users including the new data and the latest version of the program is available and costs £10. Enquires: QB Software, Chyrrond Farm Cottage, Crackington Haven, BUDE, Cornwall, EX23 0LF.

Philatelic Writers Society

The Society's Weekend Seminar this year will take place from Friday to Sunday 20-22 October 1995 at The Grand Hotel, Mayenne, France. The annual Society Dinner will take place on the evening of Saturday 21 October. The newly reformed Association de la Presse Philatelique Franco-phone (APPF) has asked for closer links with the PWS and some of their members have been invited to the weekend at Mayenne.

A full programme is in preparation and will include:

A talk by Ian Crane on "Indexing – the key to knowledge", David Beech on "Philatelic Librarianship", Irene Lawford on a subject to be announced, and Major R N Spafford on

"Writing Book Reviews". Allan Berry will be the after-dinner speaker at the Annual Dinner.

Enquiries: Alexander S Newall, 338 City Road, LONDON EC1V 2PX



Stamps of the American Civil War

A small exhibition at the British Library, offers collectors an opportunity to see rare examples from the Library's Philatelic Collections of stamps used by both Union (Northern) and Confederate (Southern) States during the American Civil War.

Among the most unusual items on display are the provisional stamps issued by postmasters of various cities and towns in the Confederacy before general issues were made. The Confederate Government general issues included the 1862 five cents value, printed in London by De La Rue, which evaded the Union Blockade: also included is the master steel die.

Exhibits from the Union side include the 15c stamp from the 1862-66 series. Issued in 1866 after the assassination of President Lincoln, it shows his image in grey-black.

The exhibition is organised jointly by the British Library Philatelic Collections and The Eccles Centre for American Studies which was established at the British Library in 1991.

"Stamps of the American Civil War" is in the British Library Exhibition Galleries, Great Russell Street, London WC1 until 22 September. Opening hours are Monday – Saturday 10.00-17.00, Sunday 14.30-18.00. Admission free.

Railway Stamp Postcard

The North of Ireland Philatelic Society has recently issued its tenth postcard, showing a railway letter cover of 1910. The cover, despatched from Maguires Bridge to be posted on arrival at Tynan, bears a Clogher Valley Railway 2d railway letter stamp and Edward VII 1d postage stamp which received a Dublin-Belfast Up TPO datestamp. The cover was addressed to Ashbourne, Derbyshire.

The card is available from: N Scott, 49 Kingsdale Park, BELFAST BT5 7BZ, price 20p mint, 45p used with first day postmark, postage 30p per order.

Before the Postcode

RON NEGUS FRPSL

The postcode is now such an integral part of addressing our mail it is easy to forget some of the earlier efforts undertaken by the Post Office to ensure deliveries were made as speedily as possible. A case in point was the introduction of the Postal District Codes in London. This took place in 1917, and was a little known consequence of the First World War.

On 1 March 1917, all the households and business premises in London received a printed leaflet entitled "Notice from His Majesty's Postmaster-General". This document started with the words "I wish to appeal to the public in London and to their correspondents in the Provinces to adopt a simple system which will improve the Postal service at the cost of very little trouble to themselves. By so doing they will be helping to save labour and money, which the country requires for War purposes".

The notice explained that the then current method of simply putting District initials in London addresses, such as EC or SW was becoming inefficient. There were no fewer than 112 separate Delivery Offices serving London, which meant that each postal District had to have many different Offices to cover its total area. In the SE District, for example, there were 27 Delivery Offices, and the leaflet went on to explain that "the Post Office sorter can only determine from memory or by reference to street lists to which of these 27 offices a letter, addressed simply SE after the name of the street, should be sent".

The effect of the hostilities was then mentioned. The text continued – "Before the War the Post Office staff from long experience were able to sort the greater number of letters correctly even when they were wrongly or insufficiently addressed. But the majority of these officers are now serving in the Army, and the same skill or memory cannot be expected of their temporary substitutes".

For this reason, it said, a new system of address, under which a number followed the District initials was to be introduced immediately and this would indicate the proper Office of Delivery. For example, NW1 would

M. No. 293.



Notice from His Majesty's Postmaster-General.

LETTERS FOR THE LONDON POSTAL AREA. NEW METHOD OF ADDRESS.

I wish to appeal to the public in London and to their correspondents in the Provinces to adopt a simple system which will improve the Postal service at the cost of very little trouble to themselves. By so doing they will be helping to save labour and money, which the country requires for War purposes.

Many people suppose that a letter to London is correctly and sufficiently addressed if it bears the District initials—S.W., E.C., &c.—after the name of the street. Sometimes this is so, but more often it is not. London, owing to its large area and vast postal traffic, requires 112 separate Delivery Offices. In the S.E. District, for example, there are 27 Delivery Offices, and the Post Office sorter can only determine from memory or by reference to street lists to which of these 27 offices a letter, addressed simply S.E. after the name of the street, should be sent.

Before the War the Post Office staff from long experience were able to sort the greater number of letters correctly even when they were wrongly or insufficiently addressed. But the majority of these officers are now serving in the Army, and the same skill or memory cannot be expected of their temporary substitutes.

I propose, therefore, to introduce forthwith a new system of address under which a **number** placed after the District initials will indicate the proper Office of Delivery. Thus **N.W. 1** will indicate the area served from the North-Western District Office, **N.W. 3** the area served from Hampstead. If the correct number as well as the District initials of the address to which it is directed

55988 784m. 2/17. W. P. Co.

are placed upon a letter, it can easily and accurately be sorted to the proper office. It will be immaterial whether the name of the sub-district—e.g., Hampstead, Blackheath, Kensington—is inserted, omitted or wrongly stated, because it will be ignored.

A small book has been prepared, showing the proper District initials and number for each of the principal streets in London, which will be obtainable free of charge at any Post Office in London or through any of the larger Offices in the Provinces.

I appeal especially to every resident in London to help by putting the new form of address on his stationery, and by drawing the attention of his correspondents to the change, and I would urge everyone, whether resident in London or not, to put the correct district initials and number on any letter, parcel, postcard or other postal communication sent to a London address.

You will thereby save labour in the Post Office, and you will reduce the risk of delay to your own correspondence. Letters which bear the new District numbers will not be delayed for those which do not bear them.

(Signed) ALBERT H. ILLINGWORTH,
His Majesty's Postmaster-General.

GENERAL POST OFFICE.
1st March, 1917.

The correct District-initial
and number for your house are:—

W. C. 1.

refer to the area served by the North Western main District Office, whilst NW3 would indicate that covered from the Hampstead District Office. The notice added "It will be immaterial whether the name of the sub-district, e.g. Hampstead, Blackheath, Kensington, etc, is inserted, omitted or wrongly stated, because it will be ignored."

Reduce risk of delay

To assist users, a small book was issued free of charge and obtainable at all London post offices, and at the larger offices in the Provinces, which contained the proper District initials and number for each of the principal streets in London. As a further aid, each individual notice that was issued had a typed footnote which read "The correct District initial and number for your house are:-" and the appropriate designation.

Signed by Albert H Illingworth, His Majesty's Postmaster-General, this leaflet finished with a further appeal asking that people made use of the new numbering system on any letter, postcard or other postal communication sent to a London address. It concluded with the words "You will thereby save labour in the Post Office, and you will reduce the risk of delay to your own correspondence. Letters which bear the new District numbers will not be delayed for those which do not bear them".

This small item of GB postal history was a significant advance in its time, although not many collectors will be aware of its existence. In this age of bar codes, phosphor dots and other high-tech aids, it serves to remind us of the days when getting a letter to its destination was very much a "people process".

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Stamps in Downing Street



We were very pleased to hear recently that Mrs Norma Major, wife of the Prime Minister, is a stamp collector. Mrs Major told the *Bulletin* that she collects new and used stamps from Australia, New Zealand and Canada, also British commemoratives. We are delighted that Mrs Major is now a regular *Bulletin* reader.

CUSTOMER KNOWS BEST.



The long-awaited new edition of **Collect Post Office Cards** is now available – edited and published by John Bing of Rosendale Stamps. The title disguises the breadth of coverage – this catalogue providing not only a clear and concise guide to PHQ, National Postal Museum, Post Office Archives, National Commemorative, Regional, Guernsey, Jersey and Isle of Man cards, but also to postal stationery and telephone cards. The many colourful postcards issued by the former PO regional headquarters in the 1970s and 1980s enjoyed great popularity; some were produced in limited quantities and their current valuations reflect this. Since the ending of these cards, interest has flagged but the publication of this new edition may well stimulate interest again.

Section 5 on National Commemorative and Promotional Cards is amongst the most interesting and lists many cards which are no doubt missing from many collections. It begins with the Penny Postage Jubilee card of 1890, still quite modestly priced at £18 mint or £24 with Guildhall special postmark. Much scarcer is the 1893 Gardening and Forestry Exhibition card, unpriced mint but commanding a £160 valuation with Earl's Court exhibition special handstamp in violet. More recent cards in this section include four "My School" paintings cards included in the 1989 Anniversaries stamps presentation pack, promotional cards for Royal Mail National and change of address cards of the 1980s and 1990s. Cards issued by Post Office Counters in June 1990 are now recorded (Section 6). The PO exhibition cards, issued between 1987 and 1990 are listed, in Section 8, priced with and without cachets. The first card in the series, was sold at no fewer than 15 different exhibitions, each had its own cachet.

The listings of postal stationery, aerogrammes, aircards, postcards, and lettercards, but not stamped envelopes, is relatively simple, but useful none-the-less. The aircards listing includes the Giant's Causeway stamped card issued in the 1994 Northern Ireland prestige stamp book (the card is valued £1 mint, £1.50 with first day cancel). The postal stationery listings for the Channel Islands and Isle of Man

includes the attractive Manx Christmas and exhibition cards, and those sold by the Manx Postal Museum.

Collect Post Office Cards is available from: Rosendale Stamps, 41 Queen Victoria Street, LONDON EC4N 4SA, price £5.95, postage £1 UK, £2 overseas. 152 pages, card covers.

In the 1960s and 1970s souvenir sheets or cards were produced for many stamp exhibitions – national and local. For a while they enjoyed quite a popularity but then fell from favour. In recent times interest has been rekindled and the publication of Glenn H Morgan's **British Stamp Exhibitions – A Priced Catalogue of Sheets Cards and Labels** will no doubt aid this rehabilitation. The listings include detailed description of each item (colour, printing process, number produced, etc), a reference number and current valuations based on dealers' stocks. The earliest items dates from 1890 – unissued brown and blue stamps of Mauritius "Britannia" designs (SG 39/40) overprinted "LPE 1890" to mark the London Philatelic Exhibition at the Portman Rooms, Baker Street. Originally sold at 6d each, they are now valued at c.£50 each. Some of the earlier material was beautifully produced – for example the 1940 Stamp Centenary sheets of six labels, recess-

BRITISH PHILATELIC EXHIBITION 1981
70th Anniversary Downey Head Issue



By Authority of the Post Office
Letterpress by Harrison & Sons Ltd.

Souvenir sheet for 1981 British Philatelic Exhibition

printed by Perkins, Bacon Ltd showing Tower Bridge, the Penny Black, and the statue of Boadicea with the Houses of Parliament in the background. Some Stampex sheets are of special interest to collectors of modern British issues in reproducing unadopted stamp designs. A number of sheets of the 1970s were postally valid, bearing Machin values applied prior to the abolition of the stamped to order service in 1973.

For collectors interested but unable to afford rare and classic stamps, several sheets bear

faithful reproductions – for example sheets for the 1950 and 1960 London international exhibitions and the London Stamp Fair of 1963; the latter featuring the famous “Post Office Mauritius” stamps. Perhaps the most interesting item listed is the sheet produced for the Daily Mail Schoolboys and Girls Exhibition 1965/66 depicting a block of 1866 British Honduras 1s stamps printed on an original Perkins Bacon press at the exhibition. Each sheet took three minutes to print! No more than 500 copies are believed to exist; Mr Morgan values it at £65.

The foreword, written by *Bulletin* contributor and former Stanley Gibbons Catalogue Editor, James Negus FRPSL, explains the philatelic significance of these exhibition souvenirs and praises the author’s painstaking work on this hitherto neglected subject in philatelic literature. 178 pages, card covers. Available from philatelic literature dealers, or direct from: Glenn H Morgan, c/o British Philatelic Centre, 107 Charterhouse Street, LONDON EC1M 6PT. Price £12, postage £1.

The American Topical Association has published numerous handbooks – well-known and of great value to thematic (topical) collectors. The latest addition, Handbook No. 127, is now available – **John Fitzgerald Kennedy And His Family on Worldwide Stamps**, compiled by Melvin Morris. A short biography of the 35th President of the USA is provided by Clare W Cozard followed by Mr Morris’s catalogue of the stamps from nearly 100 countries, listed alphabetically from Ajman to Zaire. The entries give date of issue, face value, brief design description, and Scott catalogue number. The most prolific country appears to be Paraguay. There is quite an extensive section on Locals & Cinderellas which includes the British contribution to Kennedy stamps – local carriage labels from various small islands and 1971 British Postal Strike stamps. The Cross References section is useful, listing people, places, etc which appear on Kennedy stamps, e.g. former Chancellor of West Germany and Mayor of Berlin Willy Brandt, and Apollo space craft. 40 pages, card covers. Price \$8 postpaid from: JFK Book, American Topical Association, PO Box 630, Johnstown, PA 15907, USA.

In 1993 James Bendon Ltd produced a 250 copy edition of the late Alan W Robertson’s classic work **A History of the Ship Letters of the British Isles**, sub-titled **An Encyclopaedia of**

Maritime Postal History. The 1993 printing being almost sold out, a further run of 250 copies has now been made. First published by the author in instalments between 1955 and 1964, Robertson’s book is recognised as the standard work on the subject. With over 1100 pages it is one of the largest philatelic works ever published, with nearly every page packed with illustrations – maps, post office notices and documents, portraits, handstamps and covers.

This reprint has been produced in two volumes, the first containing sections A-D. Amongst the many topics covered in section A are London Ship Letter Offices, Ocean Penny Postage, Disinfection of Maritime Mail, and Forwarding Agents.

Section B details the various packet services to the Channel Islands, Ireland, the East and West Indies, and elsewhere. Accounts are provided of several famous vessels, including the SS *Savannah*, the first steamship to cross the Atlantic from the USA to the UK (1819) and Brunel’s *Great Western* and *Great Britain*. In section C, on the complicated subject of rates and charges, various postal notices are reproduced, such as the 1839 “Regulations Under which Unstamped Printed Prices Current and Commercial Lists may be forwarded, by Post, to all parts of the United Kingdom, to the British Colonies and Possessions Abroad, and to Foreign Parts, by Packet or Private Ship, at the reduced rate of One Penny”. The sub-section on the “Pictorial Theme of the Mail Ship on adhesive stamps” will interest thematic stamp collectors.

Section D includes, *inter alia*, information on the mail arrangements of HM Yacht *Britannia*, mail recovered from wrecked ships, and the establishment of the Vlissingen-Queenborough seapost service.

Vol 2 comprises Section E – the Catalogue of markings of the “Ship Letter” ports of GB and Ireland – over 180 towns and cities from Aberdeen to Youghal. A pen-portrait of each place, with some reproductions of old topographical prints, adds to the value and pleasure of using this work. The markings are clearly illustrated and many interesting covers are reproduced. This volume concludes with a valuation guide. The same General Index, Alphabetical Index of Ships, and Bibliography is published at the end of each volume.

This handsomely produced reprint is available from: James Bendon Ltd, PO Box 6484, 3307 Limassol, Cyprus. Price £125 the two volumes, including air mail postage.

Competition



Win Block of Four £10 Stamps

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

* 2 x 1st prize: GB 1993 £10 Britannia definitive – block of four, unmounted mint

* 2 x 2nd prize: GB 1993 Britannia definitive – unmounted mint single

* 10 x 3rd prize: British Philatelic Bulletin Publication No 2 – *British Stamp Design 1993* (The Work of the Stamp Advisory Committee)

To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: June Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, LONDON EC2A 1NL to arrive by 28 July. You may submit as many entries as you like but each must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

1. Which brothers built the first Globe theatre?
2. In which year was *The Shape of Things to Come* published?
3. Who opened the Llangollen Postal Museum on 6 April?
4. What started in Britain on 27 September 1919?
5. Who is Secretary of the Exhibition Study Group?

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

The winners of the March competition were:

J Corlett of Isle of Man (Edward VII Admiralty Official), P Schindler of Newcastle upon Tyne (South Africa George V 5s), J Knaud of Netherlands (West Berlin 1949 2Dm), and R Wraight of Kent (Hungary 1931 Graf Zeppelin). The prizes were donated by Avon Approvals. The answers were: 1. Alfriston (Clergy House), 2. Dumfriesshire, 3. Charles Rennie Mackintosh, 4. Bruce Auckland, 5. Single Position Letter Sorting Machine. Our thanks to all who entered.

Stamp '95 Exhibition

Nearly 16,000 people visited the new-look Stamp '95 exhibition at Wembley at the end of April. Designed to cater for new and potential, as well as established, collectors, the majority of visitors I spoke to judged it a success. Many praised the spacious layout, enabling visitors to walk around easily, and the plentiful seating in the cafeteria area. Dealers and postal administration staff were kept busy, as were the "feature stands".

The exhibition was opened by sports personality Fatima Whitbread, herself a collector of Norwegian stamps. She spoke of stamps as "an absorbing hobby for families, clubs and individuals" and thanked the organisers for arranging a charity auction in support of The Children's Society. After opening Stamp '95, she toured the exhibition and spent some time with young artists at the "Design-a-Stamp" Competition stand.

Fine displays of stamps and postal history material provided by Alan Sabey and Hassan Shaïda told the story of the Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924-25. Peter Jennings displayed pages from his award-winning collection "Douglas Gumbley: From Air Mail to Air Letter".

The well produced *Exhibition Guide* included a souvenir sheet, printed by Questa, reproducing the 1d "Wembley" of 1925.

A further report next month. Meanwhile readers' views on Stamp '95 welcome.

John Holman, Editor

Fatima Whitbread with Alistair Sharp of Royal Mail (left) and Paul Fraser of Stanley Gibbons



Cross Post

The Spring 1995 issue of the journal of the Friends of the National Postal Museum, is now available – a special tenth anniversary edition. In his foreword, Andrew Watton, Friends' President, writes: "The Post Office is an evocative organisation. It enjoys a place in everyone's life and brings both happy and sad memories". He argues the case for a "themed museum", citing the success of the Trocadero in London and the Clark's Shoe Museum in Somerset as places where "nostalgia and leisure are big business". He looks forward to the day when "the Post Office creates a proper museum".

The lengthy, but interesting, account of the Friends' first 10 years is based on contributions from Ray Pottle, Jean Farrugia, and Cyril Parsons. A Society of Friends was first mooted by Tony de Righi (Museum Curator 1970-80) in 1978, and followed-up by his successor, Raife Wellsted (Curator 1980-85), impressed by a similar society in Germany with a membership of 58,000! Over 80 people attended the inaugural meeting in April 1985; the first issue of *Cross Post* followed in October. The activities and officers of the Friends are chronicled. A flourishing organisation with over 500 members, nearly 100 people attend Friends' AGMs in recent years, and the Secretary/Treasurer has a fully-equipped office to transact business. How many societies can boast such attendances or facilities?

Stan Goron reviews a decade as Museum Manager. In 1986 "the NPM was seen merely as a stamp museum somewhat on the periphery of the Post Office..." He aimed (1) to broaden the scope of the museum; (2) to increase the professionalism of the museum's operations especially in collection management; and (3) to improve facilities for visitors, staff and the collections. Stan's article makes clear that significant progress has been made as regular visitors will be aware. Stan gives some interesting statistics – the NPM has some 1200 items in the finest collection of Penny Post material in the country, is responsible for a 60-strong PO Heritage Vehicle Fleet, has around 3200 modern stamp artworks and visuals, and some 1700 Elizabeth II registration sheets now properly mounted. He pays tribute to his staff, past and present, the listing of whom is a useful record. Jean Farrugia provides a similar account on PO Archives. In 1985 there was a backlog of 150,000 files to handle and staff dealt with 4500 enquiries a year. The backlog has now disappeared, and over 7000 enquiries are processed.

Other worthwhile contributions include Michael Bament's "The Free Franking System", Cyril Parsons's "Stamp Production and Design changes over the past 70 years"; Elizabeth Bowling's account "My Career in the Post Office – from Anglesey to London 1931-1984"; Tony Gammons's "Post Office Model Vehicle Fleet"; James Negus's "A Decade of Association Souvenirs"; and Tony Peters's "Jersey Penny Post".

Mr Bament tells us that free franking, introduced in 1652, for MPs, peers and officers of state became "...the most colossal abuse and ultimately one of the major factors in bringing about Rowland Hill's now famous plan for cheap penny postage." By the late 1830s over 70% of UK mail probably went free. Mr Parsons reminds us that "there has been more technological change within the printing industry in the last 25 years than in the previous 500". His "Quick Guide to Stamp Printing Processes" – Letterpress; Intaglio; Photogravure; and Lithography – is useful, as are his comments on multicoloured printing, colour registration, and changes in stamp design style.

Ms Bowling recounts the dangers faced by postal staff – as a sub-postmistress she was attacked seven times, including being shot at. She well deserves the BEM awarded to her for bravery. There are some 123 model PO vehicles in the NPM; Tony Gammons hopes a Friend will volunteer to catalogue this collection.

Mr Negus lists the numerous souvenirs – covers, cachets, Christmas cards, etc – produced by the Friends. These form a comprehensive record of the Friends' meetings, visits and other activities.

Cross Post is available from: Ray Pottle, Friends of the NPM, PO Box 40, UCKFIELD, E Sussex, TN22 2SP, price £2 non-members (£1.25 members) plus 50p postage. Details of membership and souvenirs also available from Mr Pottle.

Peace & Freedom Stamps – Cylinders & Colours

19p (Red Cross) 1A (silver) 1B (bistre-yellow) 1C (bright rose-red) 1D (vermilion) 2E (bright blue) 1F (slate-blue) 19p (Celebrating Peace) 1A (silver) 1B (bistre-brown) 1G (grey-black) 25p (United Nations) 1A (silver) 1B (vermilion) 3C (bright blue) 2D (grey-black) 25p (Victory Night in London) 1A (silver) 1B (blue) 1C (grey-black) 30p 1A (silver) 1B (bistre-yellow) 1C (bright magenta) 1D (pale blue) 1E (grey-black) 2F (flesh)

June/July Digest

To be issued in June/July

6 June: Science Fiction stamps and presentation pack.

6 June: Vended stamp books – 50p Sea Charts 3 St David's Head; £2 Rowland Hill 3 – Mulready Envelope. Stamps have 2 phosphor bands.

26 June: 10 x 1st NVI book – Sainsbury's magazine promotion.

Available from Sainsbury's shops from this date; will not be available from Bureau or Post Office Counters philatelic outlets until September.

18 July: Scottish aerogramme – Prehistoric Scotland.

Available from post offices in Scotland, the Bureau, and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets.

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

To be withdrawn in June/July

5 June: D-Day stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards.

5 June: Stamp books – 50p Coaching Inns 3; £1 Prime Ministers 3

13 June: Alcock & Brown pictorial aerogramme.

18 July: Scottish aerogramme – Gordon Highlanders

25 July: Northern Ireland prestige stamp book.

26 July: Bank of England stamp book (4 x 1st class stamps & commemorative label)

31 July: Golf stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards.

Late News

£2 Rowland Hill Stamp Book

The designs for the cover of Nos 3 and 4 in the £2 Rowland Hill book series have been switched. No. 3 (6 June) will feature Hill and the London Postal Districts, No. 4 (5 September) Hill and the Mulready. This supersedes information given in the May *Bulletin* (page 260).

Mitchell Philatelic – Medallie Cover

Would all British Philatelic Bureau customers please note that the price for the Reginald Mitchell PNC should be £12.95, not £13.95 as advertised. Any overpayments will be credited to customers' accounts and can be refunded upon request. Further information can be obtained by calling the Customer Service Helpline on 0131-550 8989.

New Aerogramme

An aerogramme for the Youth Olympics is scheduled for issue at post offices on 4 July.

May Bulletin

We apologise to subscribers whose copies of the May *Bulletin* arrived late. This was caused by a postal dispute affecting Edinburgh. The *Bulletin* is despatched from the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh. We regret any inconvenience caused.

Postage Price Freeze and Commercial Freedom

The Post Office announced on 11 May that postal rates are to be frozen until at least next March. They were last increased in November 1993. PO Chief Executive, Mr Bill Cockburn, said the price freeze would "provide a boost to British economy and industry".

On 12 May the President of the Board of Trade, Mr Michael Heseltine, announced new proposals for the financial framework of The Post Office, allowing more effective competition with foreign and other carriers, arrangements with outside companies, and the lifting of some government control of PO finances. PO Chairman, Mr Michael Heron, and Chief Executive, Mr Bill Cockburn, welcomed the minister's announcement.

