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THE SOCIETY DOES NOT NECESSARILY AGREE WITH THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS

Welcome to a new volume of *The GB Journal*, and a new look — I hope you like it. The old style was introduced thirteen years ago, at the beginning of 1987, and we thought it was time for a change. If nothing else it celebrates a rather special year, for not only is 2000 the last year of the 20th century, but it is the first ‘century leap day’ since the 1751 Act of Parliament addressed the problems inherent in changing from the Julian to the Gregorian Calendar. This Act, 24 Geo. II, c.23, was entitled *An Act for Regulating the Commencement of the Year, and for Correcting the Calendar now in use* and did three things to reform the calendar: it moved the beginning of the year from 25 March to 1 January; it omitted the eleven days 3–13 September 1752; and it changed ‘hundreth’ years (e.g. 1800, 1900, 2100) which were leap years in the old calendar into common years, *except* for the ‘four-hundreth’ years beginning with the year 2000 and continuing with 2400, 2800, etc., which remain leap years. So this year is the first opportunity to put this last part of the legislation into effect, nearly 250 years after the Act was passed.

All this is explained lucidly in Harry Dagnall’s excellent book *Give Us Back Our Eleven Days*, which he published in 1991. In the book Harry urges his philatelic friends to wait until 1 January 2001 to post their ‘first-day-of-the-century’ covers but I agree with him that the most interesting commemorative cover would be postmarked on 29 February 2000 — the first century leap day of the Gregorian Calendar.

Incidentally, for the benefit of the BBC, Royal Mail and anyone else still not sure when the new century begins, a clear explanation can be found on the US Naval Observatory’s web site, which also explains where the first sunrise will be. It might also be worth looking up Greenwich 2000’s web site which had two ‘countdown clock’ pages, one to the year 2000 and one to 2001, as well as many other pages devoted to this year’s celebrations.

US Naval Observatory: <http://aa.usno.navy.mil/AA/faq/docs/millennium.html>

Greenwich 2000: <http://greenwich2000.com/millennium/home.htm>

MIKE JACKSON

Photogravure — The Official Sizes

Leslie Wilkinson

I have been most interested in the various articles (GBJ, Vol. 37, pp. 64, 80 and 96) on the photogravure sizes as I too have been puzzled as to why so many apparently different sizes were necessary. Unfortunately information in Post Office files is difficult to find and it has been necessary to trawl through a number of files to get to the facts.

It must first of all be made clear that apart from one minor change affecting sideways delivery coils (which I will come to later) the area allocated to each definitive stamp had remained constant for many years at 0·8 x 0·95 in. with a standard gutter perforation margin (the distance between each stamp) of 0·0625 in. ($\frac{1}{16}$ th). The stamp image size is the area size less the perforation margin. These measurements were those used for the first (Large Format) photogravure stamps. Because of the well-known perforation problems the gutter margin was quickly changed to 0·075 in. (Intermediate Format) and this measurement applied to both sheet and booklet stamps. On page 49 of *British Stamp Booklets*, Part 3, is illustrated an advertisement cylinder layout which clearly shows printed '·075 gutters'. When this still proved insufficient the final reduction was made with the gutter margin being increased to 0·095 in. (not 0·09375 as quoted by Graeme Webster in GBJ 37/96, which he has since confirmed to me was checked by physical measurement of the stamps but could just as easily have been 0·095 in. due to fuzziness at that stage). Again this size applied to both sheet and booklet stamps.

Roll stamps proved more of a problem. The machinery was new and numerous modifications were necessary. As an aside in one report, it was mentioned that the Stationery Office were experiencing difficulties with a similar machine for the production of surface printed Insurance Stamp rolls. They too were forced to go back to Waterlow for supplies in the interim period.

The circumference of a standard photogravure cylinder was 19·95 in. For end delivery rolls there were 21 stamps ($21 \times 0·95 = 19·95$) round the cylinder and 24 across.

After initial trials, authority was given on 19 October 1934 for an increase in the width of the gutters from 0·0625 in. to 0·07 in. (I have not found any reason why gutters were not changed to 0·075 as for the sheet and booklet stamps), and by the beginning of January 1935 this had been changed to the now standard Small Format gutter of 0·095 in. It has long been known that the first printings of Rolls E and L were of an unusual size and with a gutter margin of 0·07 in. this would give a stamp image size of 18·542 x 22·352 in. Records however show that up to the end of 1934 Harrison had delivered the following rolls:

E (1d) 5600 K (1d) 200 L (1½d) 3413

It is therefore possible, although not proved, that these could all have been in the 'odd' size and that therefore odd-sized K rolls may also exist.

Sideways rolls had a different problem. To fit on the cylinder 25 stamps were placed sideways round the cylinder with 20 across, in two blocks of 10 separated by a margin (25 x 0.8 = 20 in.). Easton (*Postage Stamps in the Making*, page 231) suggests that a 20 in. cylinder was used but this is not borne out by the facts. The printers overcame this by reducing the total stamp area by 0.002 in. to 0.798 x 0.948 in. (25 x 0.798 = 19.95) and the gutter margin by the same figure to 0.093 in. leaving the stamp with the same image size as other Small Format stamps.

Stamp sizes can therefore be summarised as follows, stamp area 0.8 x 0.95 in. all cases:

	Gutter	Stamp Width		Stamp Height	
		Inches	Millimetres	Inches	Millimetres
Large Format	0.0625	0.7375	= 18.7325	0.8875	= 22.5425
First rolls E, L, K(?)	0.07	0.73	= 18.542	0.88	= 22.352
Intermediate Format	0.075	0.725	= 18.415	0.875	= 22.225
Small Format	0.095	0.705	= 17.907	0.855	= 21.717
Sideways delivery coils stamp area	0.798 x 0.948 in.				
	0.93	0.705	= 17.907	0.855	= 21.717

Intermediate Format includes both sheet and booklet stamps. Small Format includes sheet, booklet and end delivery coils. Those are all the official sizes found in Post Office records.

Why then have so many different writers given different figures for these stamps? Some can simply be explained by differences in rounding up or down. There is also the problem of accurate measurement as photogravure printing by its very nature tends to have irregular edges. There is also the possibility of expansion/contraction of the paper. Although this normally occurred with printing on dampened paper it could occur during dry printing and gumming as is evidenced by a report on some paper from Portals (John Allen) sent to the Government Laboratory in 1934 for testing which includes the following:

Stretch	Machine direction	2.3%
	Across	.3%

which would be more than sufficient to account for some of these differences.

There is no doubt that different measurements can be found which do not conform to the official sizes and I would appreciate views from other members who may have greater knowledge of printing techniques.

Acknowledgement and References

I should like to express my thanks to the staff at Post Office Archives for their help in tracing the relevant files: Ref. PO 33/4972; PO 52/527; PO 52/988. ☒

Photogravure Sizes — Further Observations

W. de L. M. Messenger

Having seen the draft of Leslie Wilkinson's authoritative article elsewhere in this issue on the sizes of the KGV Photogravure stamps, and further to articles by myself, Harvey Russell and Graeme Webster (GBJ, Vol. 37, No. 4, pp. 64–69 and 80; No. 5, pp. 96–97), I should like to add a few observations:

First, we must be grateful to Leslie for ferreting out the official data (which was what I had hoped my original contribution would lead to!).

Second, it is apparent that the official dimensions were stated in fractions of an inch, not millimetres, therefore, notwithstanding my preference for metrics, I believe that the sizes should be given primarily in inches.

Third, since the basic requirement was adequate width of the gutter, this dimension should be used as the principal definition of each size. However, the gutter width can be measured only on multiples: for identification of singles the stamp image sizes are also essential. As a result of this and my second observation, above, I should like to see size expressed in the catalogue thus:

Large: gutters 0·0625 in.; stamps 0·7375 x 0·8875 in. (18·7325 x 22·5425 mm)

(This may appear rather lengthy, but there seems to be room in the SG *Specialised Catalogue*).

Fourth, the ratios of height/width of Large (1·203), Special roll (1·205), and Intermediate (1·207) are, not unexpectedly, very close together. Small (1·212) seems markedly different. Is there a reason?

Fifth, Messrs John Allen's figures for stretch:

Longitudinal 2·3%

Transverse 0·3%

imply the following dimensional increases (inches):

	<i>Width</i>	<i>Height</i>
Upright watermark	0·002	0·02
Sideways watermark	0·016	0·0025

yet almost all writers, except Jean and Perkins, record dimensions less than the official ones. Only Jean and Perkins are practically correct. The low values obtained by others must be due to the fuzziness of the printing resulting in the outermost edge of the image being almost invisible. ☒

A Cover of Character

John Forbes-Nixon



Missent to Canada. This letter of 6 April 1858, intended for Kingston, Canada, first went to Kingston-on-Thames in the UK, despite having the correct Packet Mail postage of 1s 2d. Notwithstanding the original endorsement 'via Southampton' the letter was sent from Liverpool, arriving in Canada on 22 April 1858.

KGV Photogravure perforation

Harvey J. Russell

With regard to both Graham Mark's and Michael Sefi's comments on my idea of the method of perforating (GBJ, Vol. 37, No. 6, pp. 115–116), in *The Postage Stamps of Great Britain*, Part 4 on p. 35 there is a description of the Type 4 combhead: 'This machine only differed from Type II in that there were two extension pins instead of one'. On page 31 is the description of the Type 2 combhead, and the way in which it was used: 'This machine was set to perforate the single sheets from side to side'. While this may well have been the method used for the KGV issues prior to the issue of the photogravure stamps, I can see no real operating advantage in separating the double pane sheet, only to put one pane through the perforator left side first (Type 2/4), and the other pane right side first (Type 2A/4A). For the latter, the batch of sheets would have had to have been turned 180° anyway, so it appears that my only mistake was in assuming that the sheets were perforated prior to separation.

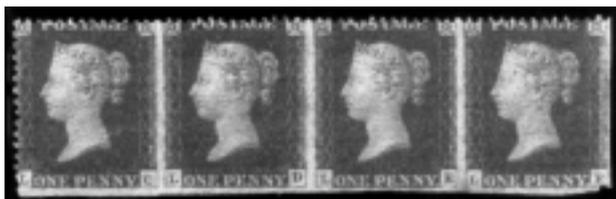
As to the locations of the respective post offices, Kingswear was a sub-office of the Dartmouth Head Post Office in 1906, and was still under Dartmouth in 1941. Unless there were changes to/from Brixham HPO in the intervening period, Kingswear would have sent their stock and cash requisitions to Dartmouth, not to a 'foreign' HPO, as Brixham would have been classified.

Picking up on Michael Sefi's final paragraph, I was simply not aware that I could write to Buckingham Palace with queries. ☒

Government Trial Perforation 14?

Ray Simpson

Andrew Lajer described and illustrated (GBJ, Vol. 37, No. 5, p. 99) a strip of four 1d reds (LC-LF) from Die 1, Alphabet I, Plate 74 which was, allegedly, a product of the Government Trial Perforation 14 (*see illustration*).



The description Andrew gave was that on the RPSL certificate No. 167119 dated 26 June 1996. Readers should, however, be aware that the RPSL also issued an earlier certificate (No. 156493) for the same strip then giving the opinion that the perforations had been forged.

Whatever the reason for the issue of the second certificate, there can be no real doubt that the perforations are forged. All Somerset House's early perforation machines were of the comb perforation type. Short of removing the remaining vertical pins (!), there is no way that a comb perforator could produce a strip perforated along the top with a vertical perforation at the left side of stamp LC, but no other vertical perforations. Even if the sheet had been perforated in the inverted position, it would still have been impossible to obtain this effect.

Government Trial Perforation 14 has always been something of a mystery. As the *SG Specialised Catalogue* makes clear, there has never been any evidence to support the contention that the Die 1, Alphabet I, perforation 14 stamps were the result of a trial. Nobody has ever produced a convincing explanation of how sheets of stamps which originated from plates defaced many years earlier (December 1848 and October 1851 for Plates 74 and 113 respectively) were still available in 1854. The Inland Revenue accounting procedures, and their waste disposal policies, make it very unlikely that old sheets of stamps were left lying around for years.

The research that Peter Sargent and I have undertaken in preparation for our book *Stamp Perforation: The Somerset House Years 1848 to 1880* (to be published early this year) lends no support for the existence of a Government Trial Perforation 14. On the contrary, there are grounds for fundamental doubt about the genuineness of the stamps previously identified as emanating from this trial, despite the existence of certificates for some of them. An enlarged photocopy of the block of four stamps (JK/KL) from Plate 74, previously considered to be genuine, has been subjected to careful scrutiny. This reveals that the line of perforations, both horizontal and vertical, are irregular. With comb

perforation irregularities do occur, but they are replicated on each row of stamps. In the case of this block the irregularities are not replicated. The only logical conclusion is that the stamps are not comb perforated. It must therefore be concluded that, however they were produced, they were not perforated on a Napier or other comb perforating machine. In our opinion these are not a Government trial perforation and are probably fakes.

Returning to the strip illustrated by Andrew Lajer, the existence of this 'impossible' item reinforces the existing suspicions about the other stamps alleged to be from Government Trial Perforation 14. Karl Louis, who has done a lot of pioneering work on the origin and provenance of both forged and genuine stamps, raises the strong probability that this strip is in fact from the same sheet as the JK/KL block previously mentioned. After the strip of four stamps failed to sell in Phillips' auction in September 1997, I had the opportunity of examining it briefly before it was broken up. That examination served only to reinforce my concerns about its genuineness. About a year ago, stamps LC and LF were offered for sale by a dealer as singles. I do not know what has happened to LD or LE. Now that the strip has been broken up, the faking will, sadly, be less obvious.

Wherever the original manufacturer of these items may be, and whatever his or her motives, that person must surely be deriving much quiet amusement at the enduring credulity of philatelists.

Whilst on the subject of perforation, my old friend W. de L. M. Messenger suggests in the last edition of the GBPS *Newsletter* (No. 260) that Rowland Hill may have given Henry Archer one or more of his specimen sheets of the Die 1, Alphabet I, stamps from 'Black' Plate 8 for his 1848 perforation experiments. Why would he do that when perfectly good sheets printed from plates in current use were readily available? It was not in fact Rowland Hill, but his brother Edwin (then Supervisor of the Stamping Department of the Inland Revenue) who became closely involved with Henry Archer's perforation experiments, and who contributed significantly to their eventual success. ☒

KGV Photogravure 1d *Printed on the Gummed Side*

Graham Mark, FRPSL

Further to the articles by Harvey Russell, myself and Michael Sefi (GBJ, Vol. 37, No. 5, pp. 90–92 and No. 6, pp. 115–16) I have now been able to do some more digging into the contemporary literature and into my boxes of sale catalogues. Whilst only *The British Philatelist*, of the journals mentioned in my previous letter, carried any report of this variety I have found that Charles Nissen advertised this stamp (without price) in *The Stamp Lover* of January 1935, on page 239.

In the May 1935 edition of *The Stamp Lover*, pp. 352–54 Frank Woolford, the MD of Grover & Co., indicated that the perforating machines for the photogravure issue took mill sheets 480-set. The article concerned the web printing processes and perforating up or down the sheets. But it appears that sheets from the sheet-fed german presses were perforated across the sheets from the side.

Hugh Vallancey's booklet *British Photogravure Stamps 1934–1935*, published in March 1935, listed the 1d printed on the gummed side. It is unlikely that Hine-Haycock's find would have been Vallancey's source; Nissen's find of the previous October seems more likely. Sale catalogues have also been searched and I have found two dozen lots offering this variety in mint marginal examples and one used. The findings have been grouped by margin/perforation type.

The comments by SG Auctions in 1977 and 1985 are puzzling. The Royal Philatelic Collection block of nine, from the top left of the sheet, with two extension holes in the top margin and perforated through the left margin could have come from the same sheet as a block from the right side with imperforate right margin but not from the same block unless it was a very large piece. Maybe the current owner of the block and the correspondence can tell us more.

Hine-Haycock said the control was V34 but no control copy has been seen over a long period in the auction houses I have surveyed, and indeed no bottom marginal copy. This seems odd!



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 5



Fig. 4

KGV PHOTOGRAVURE 1D PRINTED ON THE GUMMED SIDE

<i>Date of sale</i>	<i>House</i>	<i>Sale No.</i>	<i>Lot No.</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Realisation</i>
<i>Corresponding to Harvey Russell's Fig. 1:</i>					
6 May 1971	RL	3507/8	2453	block of 4 with correspondence from Buckingham Palace	£50
4 Mar. 1977	SG	5429/31	852	block of 4, right wide margin imperf. 'With 4 letters (3 from Buckingham Palace) with regard to a multiple of 9 stamps from which this block was taken and bought for the Royal collection.'	£925
6 Dec. 1985	SG	5638	1527	same lot with same description (Fig. 1)	£1500
15 June 1983 (Pearch sale)	RL	4784	536	single right margin wide imperf.	£184
<i>Corresponding to Harvey Russell's Fig. 2:</i>					
21 May 1985	Har	4444	368	single right narrow margin perf.	£396
5 Sept. 1987	Ph	26794	726	single right narrow margin perf.	£310
11 Dec. 1990	Chr	4435	3877	single right narrow margin perf. (Fig. 2)	
28 June 1991	SG	5704	2805	single right narrow margin perf.	£190
19 Jan. 1965	Har	3291/2	351	pair, right narrow margin perf.	£26
6 Nov. 1967	Har	3480	256	pair, ditto,	£57 10s
13 Apr. 1978	RL	4256/8	884	top right corner copy, perf. top & right (Fig. 3)	£350
11 Dec 1990	Chr	4435	3876	top margin perf. (Fig. 4)	?
<i>Corresponding to Harvey Russell's Fig. 3:</i>					
20 Nov. 1968	Rar	3550/2	467	single top margin 2 ext. (illus. shows ext. holes)	£35
10 Nov. 1970	Har	3676/7	394	single top margin 2 ext. (illus. cut down)	£32
2 Sept. 1993	Ph	29343	737	block 4 top margin 2 ext.	£520
30 Apr. 1957	Har	2711/2	274	block 4 left narrow margin perf. (Fig. 5)	est. £80
18 Mar. 1969	Har	3575	323	single left narrow margin perf.	£30
20 May 1992	Har	4584/6	2270	single left narrow margin perf.	£242
<i>Not illustrated in sale catalogues:</i>					
12 Jan. 1955	RL	1336/7	548	marginal single	£12
12 Mar. 1973	RL	3728/9	513	marginal single	£42
7 May 1964	RL	2430/1	1162	marginal single	£10
28 June 1974	SG	5291/2	975	marginal single	£90
9 May 1956 (Adams sale)	RL	1484/5	389	marginal block of 4	£52 10s
22 Oct. 1958 (Field sale)	RL	1748/9	382	marginal block of 4	£40
15 July 1953 (Musson sale)	RL	1207/9	637	used single, not marginal, light machine cancel	
<i>Key:</i>					
Chr	Christie's	Robson Lowe	Har	Harmers of London	Ph Phillips
RL	Robson Lowe		SG	Stanley Gibbons Auctions	☒

The Mutilation of Postage Stamps for the Pre-payment of Telegrams

Sam Lawrence, FRPSL

In 1870 the Post Office took over the operation of telegraph services and a standard rate of 6d for 12 words was agreed upon. By 1876 special telegraph stamps had been printed and used, but in 1881 telegraph stamps were abolished and postage stamps became the norm for the pre-payment of telegrams.

Three parties were involved in the despatch of a telegram: the sender; the office used to send the telegram; and the receiving office. The sending office accepted the telegram, worked out the charge, and used stamps to account for the payment. This copy of the telegram, with the stamps affixed thereon, was kept at the sending office for as long as the Postmaster deemed fit and was then destroyed.

1ST DE LA RUE, WMK ST EDWARD'S CROWN



10s values cancelled 'REGENT STREET' in May 1964

2ND DE LA RUE, WMK
MULTIPLE CROWNS

*Cancelled with
'TRAFALGAR SQUARE
B.O.' 25 October 1964.*



BRADBURY WILKINSON, WMK MULTIPLE CROWNS



*Cancelled
'CAMBRIDGE CIRCUS'*

*Cancelled
'EARLS COURT'*

*Cancelled
'LEICESTER SQUARE'*



Cancelled 'PARSONS GREEN'

*Cancelled
'CAMBRIDGE CIRCUS'*





As can be seen from the selection of commemorative issues, any stamp in the counter book was used. These are all non-phosphor and used around 1964. The only non-London cancellation is 'CLIFTONVILLE MARGATE' on the pair of 2s 6d Shakespeare stamps.



All of these low value definitives are wmk Multiple Crowns, non-phosphor, and were issued in the 1960s.

The postage stamps used were mutilated in some way: sometimes damaged stamps were used; some were mutilated by tearing; and some were punched. Illustrated here is a selection of such stamps from the 1960s which escaped destruction. In some cases the type of mutilation can be related to the office, e.g. the 2s 6d and 5s Castle stamps used at Cambridge Circus both have a distinctive neat round hole. Incidentally, there are no creases on any of the punched stamps illustrated, unlike the creases which are found on booklet panes treated in a similar way.

When the telegraph system, along with the telephones, separated from the Post Office in 1981 the telegram service was withdrawn from post office counters. However, telegrams can be used to this day, through British Telecom — but only by telephone. Greetings telegrams, a good selection of which exists, can still be sent in this way. ☒

Airmail Etiquettes

Michael H. Lockton

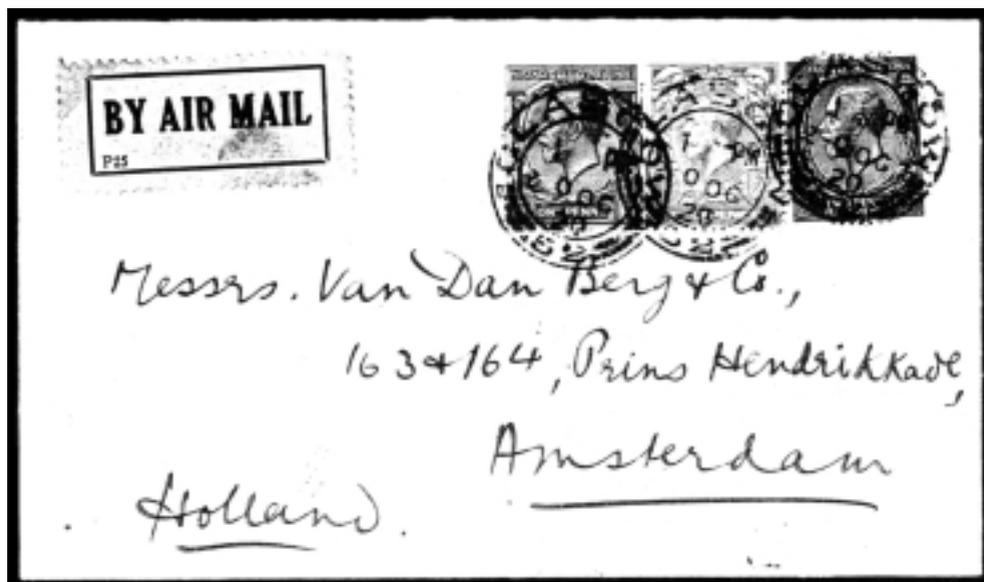


Fig. 1

As one of the branches of Postal History that I collect is British Postal Labels, I was very pleased to be able to attend the very fine display of Airmail Etiquettes given by Frank Jones to the GBPS on 6 March 1999.

He stated that the first labels in this country were issued by the GPO on 17 August 1920 and that covers used in 1920 bearing one of the first issue were not common. Indeed after over 15 years of collecting airmail etiquettes, the earliest example he had been able to acquire was dated 4 November 1920. By a stroke of good fortune, upon looking at my earliest airmail cover with an etiquette, I find it is dated 20 October 1920 (*see Fig. 1*). It was posted in Glasgow and addressed to Amsterdam where the envelope was backstamped on 22 October. The airmail service to Holland commenced on 5 July 1920 and was suspended on 1 November. This letter must have been flown to Amsterdam on 21 October as there was no service on 22 October. As will be seen from the illustration, the cover carries KGV stamps to the value of 5½d which makes up the air fee of 3d per oz plus 2½d continental letter rate.



Fig. 2

However, the reason for writing this article was primarily to illustrate the second cover (see *Fig. 2*). This particular envelope was sent Registered Airmail from London to Paris at a cost of 10d. The envelope with contents must have weighed just over 1 oz. and the 10d rate would have been made up as follows: 2½d + 1½d letter rate + 2d registration fee + 2 x 2d air fee. The important point is that it was posted at Threadneedle St BO on 17 August 1920, the day airmail labels were first officially available. (It is backstamped in Paris at 21:45 hrs). It would appear that the labels were not available on that day at Threadneedle St.

I was keen to illustrate this cover as I would not want it to ‘acquire’ an airmail label at some future date (such labels are readily available in mint condition) and in view of the scarcity of material used in 1920 with airmail labels, an item used on the first day would fetch a considerable sum on the open market. Having opened the debate, it would be interesting to hear from other readers with early airmail covers bearing Post Office labels. ☒

BOOK REVIEWS

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE GREAT BRITAIN LINE ENGRAVED 1d AND 2d STARS 1840–1864. Volumes 5–8. Kenneth William Statham. Size A4, wire-bound. Published by Eric Paul Ltd, 1999. Boxed sets of Volumes 5 & 6 together and Volumes 7 & 8 together, price £100 each set plus p&p. Available from Eric Paul Ltd, PO Box 44, Marple, Cheshire SK6 7EE.

The Society has received the generous gift of four further volumes of the above work covering the 1841 1d red imperforate issues Plates 57 to 131. Doctor Statham's monumental work continues to be recognised for its contribution to the field of GB philately by the further and deserved awards it has received, although he appears to be far too modest to accept them in person! It is the largest and most comprehensive study of the Line-Engraved issues to be undertaken and committed to print. It has very usefully pulled together all the familiar works and he has considerably expanded them with his own rigorous researches.

The whole is easily accessible, I particularly like the facility, because of the wire-bound format, of being able to conduct my researches on a flat surface. The generous use of paper, which I suppose I should not commend on 'green' grounds, does make the information more immediately obvious and is very tempting to use to record one's own notes. Ken Statham's stamina in seeing this project through is truly incredible, I wonder if he really appreciated when he started how long this marathon would take. These four volumes should now join the four earlier works on the shelves of any serious philatelic library that has an interest in these early issues of GB.

WPB

STANLEY GIBBONS GREAT BRITAIN SPECIALISED STAMP CATALOGUE, VOLUME 2, THE FOUR KINGS, 11th edn. Size 216 x 138 mm, 504 pp., softbound. Published by Stanley Gibbons, 1999. Price £24.95. ISBN: 0-85259-472-0.

In their Preface to this new edition of Volume 2, David Aggerberg and Robert Oliver hope that readers will 'be pleasantly surprised' at the improvements. Well I certainly was, and the new clean look resulting from completely resetting the text is a great improvement.

As well as the expected overall minor revisions there are some changes to the arrangement of the catalogue. Unmounted mint prices now join the mint and used in the main listing instead of in separate tables (which makes it easier for me to calculate how much I'm losing when I mount my stamps). Booklet panes have been taken out of their old places and placed in new sections, although they are not near to the listings of booklets which remain in an appendix. This grouping of the booklet panes makes sense if you collect booklet panes, but perhaps not if you collect panes as part of an issue. But overall it is probably the most logical and best way to present them. The 1911–24 panes are in a section curiously called (at least to me) 'Booklet panes in Typography'. I have always wondered why the

term 'typography' is used to refer to the letterpress process. It is a mystery, especially when you consider how important the whole business of printing and printing terminology is to philatelists. I believe that the correct terms should be used wherever possible, and it doesn't help when SG continues to use the term incorrectly. Ironically, SG use 'typography' correctly in their Preface.

The King Edward VIII and King George VI listings now include the prices for First Day Covers which originally appeared in the *Great Britain Concise Catalogue*. (Now that the *Specialised* owes a favour to the *Concise* I hope we'll see some more specialised listings appearing in the latter). A great deal of work has gone into this edition of Volume 2 and the quality of production, which had been allowed to deteriorate for the last few editions, at last reflects the superb contents.

MJ

THE USE OF THE 1894 CODED TIME SYSTEM IN BRITISH POST OFFICES.

John A. E. Moy. Published by J. A. E. Moy in conjunction with the British Postmark Society, 1999. Size A4, comb-bound, iv + 140 pp., 197 illus. Price £10 plus £2 p&xp (UK). Available from J. A. E. Moy, Tree Tops, Cobham Way, East Horsley, Surrey KT24 5BH. ISBN: 0-9518560-1-4.

Since John Moy published his earlier work on the 1894 Coded Time System, in 1991, much new information has come to light, resulting in this new enlarged version. The tabulated data for each office has been revised and simplified to show the earliest and latest dates of use for each type of postmark, the coded times used, and an indication of the number of items known to the author. Forty-eight English, eleven Irish and two Welsh offices have been added. There are no new Scottish or London offices, probably reflecting the degree of attention given to these two areas by collectors.

There is a tremendous amount of information in this work and I'm sure it will be appreciated by all GB postal historians.

MJ

COLLECT BRITISH STAMPS, 2000 (51st) edn. Size 194 x 164 mm, soft-bound, 168 pp. Published by Stanley Gibbons, 1999. Price £7.95. ISBN 0-85259-481-X.

The first time this journal reviewed *Collect British Stamps* was in 1971: it was the 7th edition and had 68 pages. Twenty-eight years later this new 51st edition has exactly 100 more pages. It also has a new binding, a 'flat back' style rather than saddle-stitching; the text has been reset; and the illustrations benefit from new colour reproduction. The book includes all issues up to 26 November 1999. The fact that this popular guide is in its 51st edition speaks for itself.

MJ

Re-use of Line-Engraved Plates?

Mike Batty

The article by Dr David Leivers, 'Were Line-Engraved Plates Re-Used?', GBJ, Vol. 37, No. 1, pp. 1–7, contained much interesting information for the aspiring student of the early Victorian issues. On a point of accuracy, he may have underestimated the number of plates used, the One Penny Stars alone being printed from a total of 290 plates (comprising 278 plates from which stamps were issued, the 'VR' plate and 11 unissued reserve plates) during the period from 1840 to 1864. In addition there were the Twopenny Star plates and the 'plate number' series.

Whilst I accept that it was entirely plausible for former plates to be re-used, I was not wholly convinced by the evidence relating to 2d Plate 9 presented in the article.

Allowing for the limitations of the photographic reproductions of 2d Plate 9 GJ and 2d Plate 9 IJ (Dr Leivers' Figs 1 and 2) accompanying his article, could it be that these are shadow entries developing beneath worn impressions? If the original impressions rocked-in to this area of the plate had been too high and also slightly offset to one side, their removal by burnishing and polishing would still have left compressed or hardened metal beneath the surface of the metal plate, even when the new impressions had been entered. Evidence of what lay beneath the surface would only emerge at a later date, perhaps if there had been some slight plate wear during its time at press.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

This is best illustrated by referring to a matched pair of the 1d Plate 157 MK, formerly in the Wiggins Collection. The original impression was entered about 1.4 mm too high, removed and then a fresh entry made prior to printing. Evidence of the original entry, distinctive marks in the upper corner squares, remains on the imprimatur sheet registered on 16 September 1852, and on the printed stamps first issued imperforate (*Fig. 1*) and then perforated 16 during 1852–55. Plate 157 was one of the series of unhardened plates. Examination of the perf. 16 worn impression (*Fig. 2*) shows a very distinct shadow entry. As a result of plate wear now exposing the harder metal beneath, the original entry of ‘ONE PENNY’ can clearly be seen in the printed area above the value on this later printing. ☒

ALFRED J. KIRK

It is with much regret that I have to advise members of the death of Alf Kirk, who died in St Peters Hospital, Chertsey on 8 November 1999. Although not a Founder Member Alf joined the Society soon after its formation and for many years took an active part in helping run the Society, as a Council Member for a number of years and in two stints as *Newsletter* Editor. In his first stint Alf not only wrote the copy for the *Newsletter* but also typed it, duplicated it and dispatched it to members. Older members will remember Alf as the custodian of the ‘Society Typewriter’ and its peculiar spelling capabilities! Alf also undertook the revision of the standard publication on the stamps of King Edward VIII which was published by the Society. He also wrote numerous articles for *The GB Journal*.

His special interests were Penny Reds, Bishop Marks (of which he had examples of most years of use) and the Postal History of London — Camberwell in particular, where he lived for many years — but he also formed collections of other areas of GB and some foreign countries. He was always willing to help and advise any member who approached him. For his many services to the Society he was elected an Honorary Life Member in 1988, an award of which he was very proud.

From his always smart, upright appearance he looked a typical Sergeant Major although in fact he was a Warrant Office in the Artillery during World War II and only left the Army because his wife asked him to. Alf unfortunately lost his wife some 18 months ago and missed her terribly. He had not enjoyed the best of health for some years but still maintained his interest in stamps and the GBPS and was always pleased to meet and correspond with members. He also became a member of the local Bookham Stamp Club where he attended as regularly as health permitted.

He leaves behind a son, Clive, who is the local vicar in Molesey to where Alf moved some years ago. Our sincere condolences go to his family.

LW

Numbered Sheets of the 1924 Wembley Issues

Leslie Wilkinson

Whilst carrying out research on stamps issued in rolls I came across a reference to the printed numbers which appear on the upper right corners of the earliest sheets of the 1924 Wembley commemorative stamps. The appearance of these numbers came as a surprise to the Post Office and caused some consternation!

On investigation it transpired that Waterlow had been in the habit of numbering sheets of stamps produced for Colonies, quite apart from the control letter and number which were always at the bottom of sheets. Not realising this, Post Office Stores did not think to tell Waterlow when they began to print, that this number was not required. The first — numbered — sheets printed were sent to the Chief Office Counter and Wembley. Although the Post Office had arranged that large quantities of stamps ordered by certain dealers would be supplied from the Chief Office Counter, most dealers seem to have made their purchases at Wembley, as did collectors who purchased whole sheets. Being early in the field they obtained those with the number at the top.

Immediately Post Office Stores became aware of these numbers, Waterlow was instructed that these were not required.

This matter rumbled on for some time, the sheets sent originally to Wembley had all been sold but no new supplies had been sent to the Chief Office Counter, so presumably those on hand there were numbered sheets. On 11 December it was decided to withdraw the entire stock from the Chief Office Counter and replace it with un-numbered sheets as necessary.

This was done and among the stock returned were 1,335 1d sheets and 1,250 1½d sheets of which 835 1d sheets bore the number.

From then on these sheets were kept separate and appear as a separate item on all future stock reports until they were eventually destroyed. ☒

KGV Photogravure with inverted watermark — a correction

I apologise for two typographical errors on page 100 of Volume 37 in the piece by Harvey Russell about inverted watermarks on the one penny and three-halfpenny photogravure stamps. In both cases the ‘½’ character is missing. Paragraph 1, Line 4 should read ‘from Cylinder 1 (stop), and 1½d from Cylinder 34’; and Paragraph 3, Line 6 should read ‘stamps listed, and on the 1½d from Cylinders 34 no’.

MJ