

# Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 10 Number 7 March 1973



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## Introduction

When in 1965, we started reproducing some of the preliminary stamp designs considered by the Advisory Committee we did so with two objectives. Firstly to show something of the range of designs our artists submit and secondly to pay tribute to the exceptionally high quality of the designers themselves. Because only one design for each denomination can be accepted it is inevitable that the

remainder cannot be used but we hope that in some small way the designers' disappointment is lessened by our acknowledgement of their skill. This month we feature some of the designs considered for the recent European Community stamps.

The theme of stamp design is followed in our main article which discusses the problems overcome in producing the King George VI high values.

## The Philatelic Parliament meets in London

The 55th Philatelic Congress of Great Britain will be held in London from 30 April to 4 May 1973, to mark the 25th anniversary of The Civil Service Philatelic Society, who will be host to Congress.

Delegates and members will meet in business sessions at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, W.C.1. This will be a 5 day Congress and there will be a special souvenir envelope. A different pictorial handstamp will be in use each day. Advance information regarding the souvenir envelope and the 5 cancellations may be obtained from A J Brander, 18 Amberley Road, London N13 4BJ.

Full details and illustrations of the cancellations and souvenir cover will be given in the next issue of the *Bulletin*.

## NPM Special Exhibitions

The current special exhibition “The Stamp of Royalty” at the National Postal Museum is being extended until 5 April. On or about 17 April it will be replaced by a new exhibition, “The Young Collector”, designed especially to interest and help all collectors under 18 years of age. A fuller introduction to this exhibition will be given in the April *Bulletin*.



## The King George VI High Values 1939-48

### Part I

I suppose that it must be because they are neither modern, nor classic, nor even neo-classic issues, that the stamps of King George VI's reign are not very fashionable at present. They really do not deserve this neglect; particularly the High Value issues of the reign which must rank among the most successful examples of British Postage Stamp design in monochrome.

The two basic designs used for the 1939-48 high values might seem at first glance to have presented few problems – in fact they are the successful result of a fusion of the artist's original concept with modifications and ideas contributed by The King, the Council for Design in Industry (CDI) and the Fine Arts Commission (FAC).

#### The Initial Steps

King George VI succeeded to the Throne on 10 December 1936 and early in 1937 consideration was already being given to High Value stamps as part of a Coronation issue. This idea had to be abandoned because of insufficient time. High Value stamps were again considered by the Post Office on 13 May, immediately after the Coronation but now in the context of the definitive series.

Subsequently, in discussions with Messrs Waterlow and Sons (who held the contract for printing the high values) three possible sizes and formats were considered for the new 2/6, 5/- and 10/- values. One such, for "Australian" size stamps (ie a vertical format of the same dimensions as the Australian King George V low value definitives) was rejected as too small. The second format, in the same size and shape as the British 2/6 to 10/- stamps of King Edward VII, was found to be practicable in as much as Waterlows had suitable production machinery available. The third alternative was to continue in the format of the 1913-35 "Seahorse" high values.

It was decided that there should be no change in printing process; the new stamps would be recess (line engraved) as had been the practice since 1913 and Waterlows stated

that they could have the new head die engraved in 8-10 weeks and the die for the full design in 10 to 12 weeks. This work would be entrusted to Mr J P Harrison the engraver of all British postage stamp dies (both for recess and surface-printing) since 1910.

The Post Office then approached the Council for Design in Industry with a request for assistance in selecting suitable designers and in assessing their work. Out of a selection of specimen recess-printed stamps shown to him by the Post Office, the Chairman of the CDI (Mr Pick) approved particularly of the "old Tasmanian stamps" – presumably the 1899-1900 pictorial issue.

On the advice of the CDI the Post Office decided to invite three artists to submit work: MacDonald Gill was asked to produce a vertical design using a map of the United Kingdom as the background, and Stephen Gooden a horizontal design centring on a figure of Mercury. The third artist, Edmund Dulac, was asked to prepare both horizontal and vertical designs but in his case no themes were specified. The "instructions to artists" (on 5 October 1937) suggested that one single design might be used for all three values to 10/- and that the same three colours would be used as had been used for the 1934 issue but possibly in deeper shades. The design should leave space for the royal portrait, which would be similar to that already used on the low values and would be provided by the Post Office. The use of a crown was made optional. The Royal portrait provided by the Post Office was possibly taken from a plaster cast of the uncrowned coinage head of King George VI by Paget which had been provided by the Royal Mint in January 1937.

MacDonald Gill's "map" design is not in the Museum collection and no essays appear to have been made from it. The design itself was rejected by the CDI at its meeting on 10 November 1937. At the same time the council decided to accept Gooden's "Mercury" design and a vertical "Arms"

design by Edmund Dulac, both subject to modifications.

The Post Office had essays (two blocks of four) made of Stephen Gooden's Mercury design (see figure 1) but they were rejected by the Postmaster General in November 1937. Ultimately the original artwork was returned to the artist.

Although the Council for Design in Industry in fact rejected two horizontal designs which Dulac submitted at the same time as his arms design, they are most attractive and well worth illustrating here (figures 2 and 3). The National Postal Museum collection also has a King George VI High Value design by Eric Gill (figure 4). This described in the official records as the "Acanthus" design but I have been unable to



Fig 1



Fig 2



Fig 3



Fig 4



Fig 5



Fig 6



Fig 7



find out when it was commissioned or submitted. Probably this was much later than the other designs as it was rejected in June 1938.

### The Development of Dulac's Arms Design

Edmund Dulac, whose original design of 28 October had been accepted subject to modification, submitted a revised version (figure 5) in mid-November 1937. The Post Office, quoting Mackennal's "Seahorse" design (which had been used ever since 1913) as a precedent, suggested that if the crown were omitted it would create a less crowded effect. The design, with this further modification, was prepared as finished artwork (figure 6) from which photogravure essays were printed in brown, red and blue. The design and the essays were shown in January 1938 to

the Postmaster General, who expressed satisfaction with them, and subsequently to the Fine Arts Commission. The Commission expressed the view that the word "Postage" was too crowded and suggested that this could be remedied by using finer lettering and by raising the coat of arms. They also doubted if the coat of arms could properly be used without the crown above it, and advised consulting Garter King of Arms on this. When the point was put to the College of Arms they advised Dulac to restore the crown and to put the Garter round the coat of arms.

Dulac incorporated the suggested alterations in new artwork from which further essays (this time lithographed) were prepared in the three usual colours: brown, red and blue (figure 7).

A G RIGO DE RIGHI

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## Gems of the Reginald M. Phillips Collection in the National Postal Museum

### Part IV: Parcel Post Essays

Many readers will be aware that the Post Office's Inland Parcel Post service was not introduced until 1 August 1883. Before that date many of the private Railway Companies had issued their own special "Prepaid Parcel" or "Prepaid Newspaper Parcel" stamps which form a collecting field in their own right.

It seems probable that the Post Office was contemplating following their example by issuing special stamps for the new service. In the Phillips collection there are five die proofs (two of which are illustrated above) of essays for 6d and 1/- value parcel post stamps, obviously prepared by De La Rue & Co, one being dated 20 October '81 in pencil. Research in the Post Office and De La Rue archives may provide more information about this interesting and rare abortive issue. Instead, a normal postage stamp, the nine-penny green (S.G. 195), was issued on 1 August 1883 to cover the new parcel rate.

A G RIGO DE RIGHI



# The Postmaster General

This title came into being in the seventeenth century but exactly when may be a matter of debate. The "Young Collectors Corner" in the January *Bulletin* stated that Thomas Witherings was the first man to hold the title. In fact he was called "The Postmaster for Foreign Parts and England and Scotland". He held the post from 1632-40 and the first man to be referred to by the shorter title was John Thurloe, Secretary of State. It was not until the Post Office Act of 1657 that the Head of the Post Office became known as the Postmaster General. With the death of Cromwell and the restoration of the monarchy another Act in 1660 made the earlier one legal.

The first man to hold the title under Charles II was Colonel Henry Bishop. The stamp to celebrate the Tercentenary of the "General Letter Office" was issued in 1960, taking the date of the second Act as a base point.

However, John Thurloe was the first man to hold the title and so can be considered the first Postmaster General.

## Stamp Books

Stamp books with front cover designs will be issued as follows:

June	10p	1952 Standard pillar box
June	25p	Save the Children
June	30p	Oyster catcher
May	50p	Canada Life

## The Middlesex Philatelic Federation Convention

This year, the annual convention of the Middlesex Philatelic Federation, representing over thirty societies, is to be held at the Hounslow Manor School, Holloway Street, Hounslow, on 7 April 1973. Doors open at 2.30 p.m.

There will be a public exhibition incorporating competition entries for three

trophies – the Bishop Cup (for stamps); the Dawes Rose-bowl (for postal history); the Mrs Kay Goodman Cup (for thematics – a new award).

Simultaneously, the host society, Hounslow & District Philatelic (membership approaching 200) is celebrating its fortieth anniversary with a special lunch for members and their guests at the "Red Lion".

## British Special Stamp Issues in 1973

### 3 January

European Communities: 3p  
2 se-tenant: 5p

### 28 February

British Trees – The Oak: 9p

### 18 April

British Explorers:

Dr David Livingstone  
Sir Henry Morton Stanley } se-tenant 3p  
Sir Francis Drake: 5p  
Sir Walter Raleigh: 7½p  
Charles Sturt: 9p

### 16 May

County Cricket 1873-1973: 3p, 7½p, 9p

### 4 July

British Paintings:

Sir Joshua Reynolds:  
Self-Portrait: 3p  
Portrait of Nelly O'Brien: 7½p  
Sir Henry Raeburn:  
Self-Portrait: 5p  
The Skater: 9p

### 15 August

400th Anniversary of birth of Inigo Jones:  
St Paul's Church, Covent Garden and  
Court Masque Costumes: 2 se-tenant 3p  
The Prince's Lodging, Newmarket, and a  
Court Masque scene – 2 se-tenant 5p

### 12 September

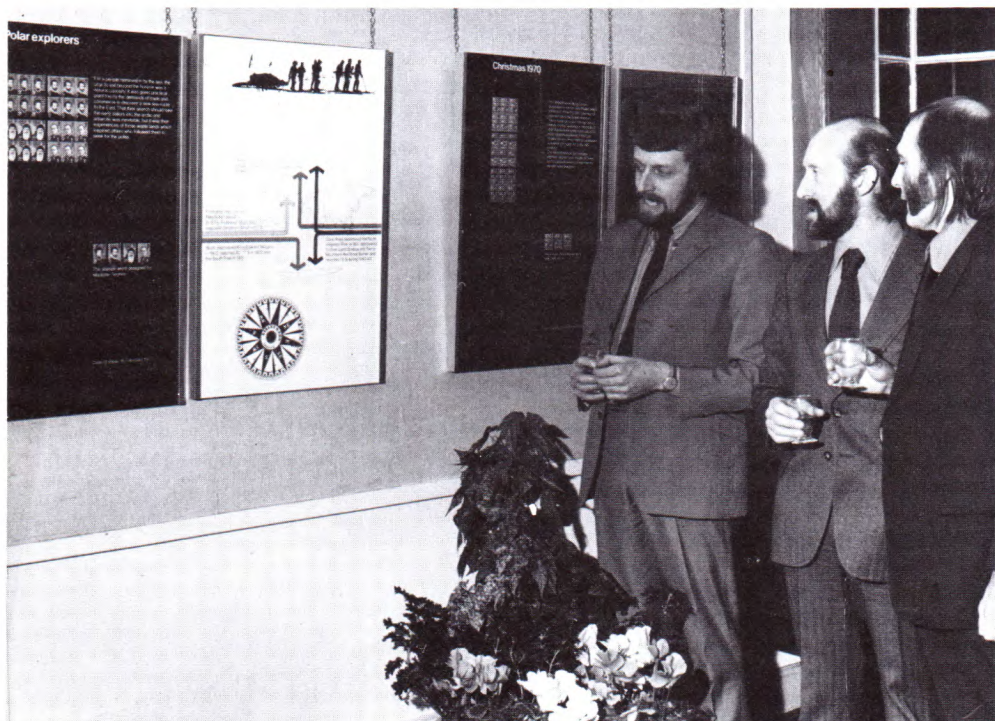
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association  
Conference: 7½p and 9p

### Christmas 1973

Details to be announced later.



## Looking at Stamps



Details of the travelling exhibition were given in the last *Bulletin*. Our photograph shows Collis Clements (L) and Edward Hughes (R) of Clarke, Clements, Hughes Ltd,

designers of the exhibition discussing some of the 70 panels with Don Scarff the Post Offices Philatelic Exhibition Manager.

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## Stamps on Stationery

We have had many queries about the article "Stamps on Stationery" by J Daynes in the January *Bulletin*. In particular, we have been asked whether the illustrated range of embossed and surface printed stamped stationery can be obtained from our counters. The answer is no - although we do sell pre-stamped stationery (stamped envelopes, lettercards, postcards, registered envelopes and air letters) at most main office counters and on order from smaller offices. The surface print-

ing and embossing of stamps on private stationery is carried out by Her Majesty's Stationery Office and the Inland Revenue Stamping Office respectively, and it is these which complete the range illustrated.

This service is primarily an operational one geared to bulk supply and therefore orders of 1000 or less are charged at a standard minimum fee. Full details of the services are available from main Post Offices (forms PAS 633 and PAS 634).



## Bath Postcards on Postal History



Two new postcards commemorating important people and events in the history of the British postal service will be on sale at Bath Head Post Office from 25 April 1973.

It is appropriate that Bath should be organising the sale of the two cards, as this famous city played a key role in the development of the best postal service in the world.

One postcard bears the portrait of Ralph Allen, famous businessman and philanthropist, who was postmaster of Bath from 1713 to 1764. The card is taken from a portrait, from the studio of Thomas Hudson, which hangs in the Victoria Art Gallery, Bath.

The other postcard depicts the "Original Bath Mail Coach", an innovation of John Palmer's, which was the first coach in Britain to be used for carrying mail. The card is taken

from an old print of an original engraving, a copy of which is also held at the Victoria Art Gallery in Bath.

The two cards will be of especial interest to philatelists and postal historians – and also to handstamp collectors. On the first day of issue of the postcards a special handstamp will be used at Bath Head Post Office reading: "Ralph Allen and John Palmer – Postal Pioneers – 25th April 1973 – Bath".

Ralph Allen's portrait shows him at about the age of 60, 40 years after he became postmaster of Bath and started on his long career of improvement of the postal service. In Ralph Allen's youth (he was born in about 1693), the mail system was very slow and unreliable. Almost all post from one town to another had to travel via London – even that from



Gloucester to Bristol. This doubled the delivery time and the cost of sending letters, and was frustrating to private individuals and businesses alike. Ralph Allen gradually introduced a system of mail collection and delivery services between most major towns and cities (called cross posts and bye posts), beginning with those in the West of England and spreading to other parts of the country as they proved to be effective and profitable.

Because of the growth in trade and population in large cities like Bristol, Allen was encouraged to increase the number of collection and delivery services here and elsewhere, and these began to operate on six days a week instead of on only two or three.

Ralph Allen took the risk of introducing many of these services himself – but his rewards were high. He became a very wealthy man, but was not a selfish one, and the City of Bath remembers him as a great benefactor. His other business interests included stone-quarrying, and he developed the use of Bath stone in that locality and elsewhere. A friend of many literary men of his day, Allen was immortalised in poetry by Pope, and by Fielding in “Tom Jones”, where his character is drawn in that of the benevolent Squire Alworthy.

The second postcard features the first mail coach ever used in Britain – a service organised by John Palmer. Mr Palmer, born in 1742, was very interested in the theatrical world, and in his youth was lessee and manager of the two theatres in Bath and Bristol. Though there was only 12 miles between these two places, he found great difficulty in transporting actors and props from one theatre to the other. He solved his problem by organising his own service – details of which were given in our feature in last month’s *Bulletin*.

These two unique cards can be obtained from

The Head Postmaster  
BATH  
BA1 1AA



**RALPH ALLEN** after HUDSON

by permission of the Trustees of the  
Victoria Art Gallery, Bath

They are priced at 4p each and a stamped, self-addressed envelope should be enclosed, measuring at least 4½" × 6". If you wish to take advantage of the opportunity to obtain the cards bearing the special first day of issue handstamp, please enclose 15p for each card, which will cover the cost of the card, the stamp, special handstamp impression, and service charge. For subscribers to Giro, the account number is 215 6016. For all orders, please write CP3 in the top left-hand corner of the envelope – and if you require only one card, please state which.

For personal visitors to Bath, the cards can also be purchased at the Pump Room, and there will be a special posting box there and in the Head Post Office on the first day of issue.

## Postmark Slogans

Unless otherwise stated, items for reposting should be sent to the Head Postmaster of the town where the slogan is to be used, marking the outer cover "Postmark Slogan".

17 January 1973 until further notice

**Monarchy 1000 Celebrate 1000 Years of English Monarchy at Bath this Year.**

To be used at Bath.

1 February - 22 March 1973

**For Happy Holidays Bridlington Free Colour Guide from Dept SN Information Centre.** To be used at Nottingham.

1 February - 22 September 1973

**Hartlepool Britain in Bloom Winners.**

To be used at Hartlepool.

5 February 1973 until further notice

**Remember to use the Postcode.** To be used at: Guildford, Surrey; Aldershot, Hants; Woking, Surrey; Basingstoke, Hants; Chichester, Sussex.

29 January 1973 until further notice

**Remember to use the Postcode.** To be used at Stafford.

1 February 1973 until further notice (P)

**Harlow for your Sport.** To be used at Harlow. This will replace the "Harlow for all your Leisure" campaign.

1 February - 31 May 1973 (P)

**Manchester 73 in Manchester May 17th-June 2nd It's Festival Time.** To be used at Manchester. This will replace the "Fast Freighting from Manchester" campaign.

5 February - 30 April 1973

**Select Bexhill-on-Sea Residence Family Holidays Modern Light Industry Town Guide from Director of Publicity.** To be used at Bexhill-on-Sea.

5 February - 31 March 1973

**Expanding Hastings - The Resort with a Future.** To be used at Hastings.

12 February - 6 December 1973 (P)

**Whitby Yorkshire for Family Holidays Attractive Harbour Sands and Moors.**

To be used at Whitby, Yorkshire.

12 February - 11 November 1973 (P)

**Guide 10p from Room 7 Guildhall Tenby Pems.** To be used at Tenby.

12 February 1973 until further notice

**Remember to Use the Postcode.** To be used at: St. Albans, Welwyn Garden City.

12 March - 9 June 1973

**Remember to Use the Postcode.** To be used at: Harlow, Essex; Bishops Stortford, Herts; Billericay, Essex; Brentwood, Essex; Epping, Essex.

12 March - 22 April 1973

**Remember to Use the Postcode.** To be used at: Taunton, Somerset; Bridgwater, Somerset; Chard, Somerset; Ilminster, Somerset; Minehead, Somerset; Wellington, Somerset.

15 March - 12 September 1973

**1873-1973 A Century of Voluntary Health Service Birmingham Hospital Saturday Fund.** To be used at Birmingham.

**Repeat Campaigns**

Until 24 March 1973

26 August - 10 November 1973 (P)

**Wigan Hub of the North West.** To be re-used at Wigan, Lancs.

1 February - 31 October 1973

**Come Over the Sea to Skye Write Tourist Information Office Portree Skye.** To be re-used at Portree, Skye.

1 February - 30 September 1973

**Stranraer for Sea, Sun and Scenery.** To be re-used at Stranraer.

1 February 1973-31 January 1974 (P)

**Golden Littlehampton Sand and Sunshine in Sussex. Send 7½p for Guide to Mr Post, Council Offices, Littlehampton.** To be re-used at Littlehampton, Sussex.

4 February 1973 - 3 February 1974 (P)

**Gem of the Highlands Write Burgh Information Office Oban.** To be re-used at Oban.

1 March 1973 - 28 February 1974

**Invest in Sunderland.** To be re-used at Sunderland.



25 March – 9 June 1973

11 November 1973 – 26 January 1974

**Modern Wigan Has No Peer.** To be re-used at Wigan, Lancs.

10 June – 25 August 1973

27 January – 31 March 1974

**See the New Wigan for Yourself.** To be re-used at Wigan, Lancs.

5 February 1973 – Until further notice

**Remember To Use the Postcode.** To be used at: St Austell, Cornwall; Bodmin, Cornwall; Wadebridge, Cornwall; Lostwithiel, Cornwall; Padstow, Cornwall.

12 February 1973 – Until further notice

**Remember To Use the Postcode.** To be used at: Bedford; Buckingham; Newport Pagnell; Milton Keynes (formerly Bletchley); Wolverton; Winslow.

12 February – 24 March 1973

**Remember To Use the Postcode.** To be used at: Cambeltown; Oban; Stornoway.

22 April – 12 May 1973

**York Races May 15, 16, 17.** To be used at York.

21 June – 11 July 1973

**York Races July 13, 14.** To be used at York.

2 July – 6 August 1973

**1773 Sheffield 1973 Assay Office.** To be used at Sheffield.

29 July – 20 August 1973

**York Races August 21, 22, 23.** To be used at York.

#### **Please note:**

1 January – 11 December 1973

**Make Ebbw Vale Your Industrial Home.** Please note that this campaign has been postponed – dates will be announced later.

#### **SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT**

*Please note –*

The **Remember To Use the Postcode** slogan will not now be used at Portsmouth as announced in *Postmark Bulletin* Volume 2 issue 18.

#### **THE DATES FOR THE FOLLOWING CAMPAIGNS HAVE BEEN AMENDED**

##### **New dates**

Until 31 May 1973

**Holiday at Bridlington Free Colour Guide From Dept 100 Information Centre.**

1 June – 1 December 1973

**Having a Wonderful Time at Bridlington Wish You Were Here.**

Both to be used at Bridlington.

#### **Philatelic Posting Boxes**

Special philatelic posting boxes will be provided in future at Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, and Motherwell, Lanarkshire, on first days of issues of new stamps.

#### **British Explorers— First Day Cover Services**

For the five stamps to be issued on 18 April 1973 the following first day cover services will be offered by the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh:

*Service A* The full service consisting of the official Post Office cover, addressed as requested, bearing the full set of stamps, 2 at 3p, 5p, 7½p and 9p, postmarked "Philatelic Bureau Edinburgh". The charge is 36p for Deposit Account holders and 38½p for non Deposit Account holders.

*Service B* Customers' own pre-addressed covers will be accepted for servicing with the full set of stamps and the "Philatelic Bureau Edinburgh" postmark for 32½p each.

*Service C* As *Service A* except that a minimum of 50 covers to the same address is required. Price 36p per cover.

Covers bearing British Explorers stamps posted in the special philatelic posting boxes throughout the country will receive first day of issue cancellations.

*Any amendments to these charges necessitated by VAT will be shown on the FDC application form.*

# British Explorers Stamp Issue



Last year, a series of stamps to commemorate British Polar Explorers was released. We continue this theme this year with another explorers series, not as geographically united as the last, but certainly associated with hotter climates.

The designer of the stamps is again Marjorie Saynor and the format is similar, with portraits of the explorers backed by

maps of the areas with which they were associated.

All the background maps are derived from Royal Geographical Society material. Most interesting perhaps is that used on the Drake and Raleigh stamps – a print from the map “*Vera Totius Expeditionis Nauticae*” originally drawn by the Francis Drake expedition in 1579.



The portraits of Drake and Raleigh are taken from works in the National Portrait Gallery. The former derives from a miniature by Hilliard but that of Drake has influences of several paintings. Photographs in the Royal Geographical Society were the basis for the portrayals of Livingstone and Stanley while that of Sturt comes from a photograph of a portrait by Crossland in the South Australian Art Gallery.

**Printing details:**

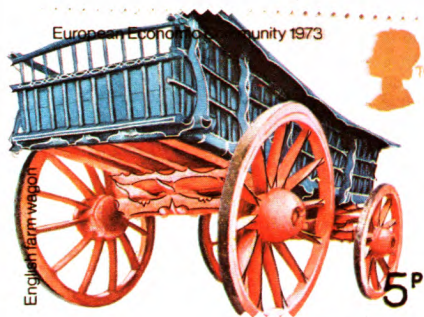
*Printer* Harrison & Sons Limited  
*Size* 41 × 30 mm  
*Perforation* 15 × 14

*Number to sheet* 100  
*Paper* Coated, unwatermarked phosphor  
*Format* Vertical  
*Process* Photogravure  
*Date of issue* 18 April 1973  
*Designer* Miss M Saynor  
*Denominations* Livingstone and Stanley 3p  
 se-tenant Drake 5p  
 Raleigh 7½p  
 Sturt 9p

**Preliminary Designs European Community Stamps**



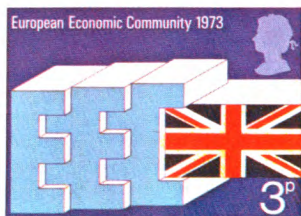
*Philip Sharland*



*Sam Thompson*



*Sam Thompson*



*Philip Sharland*

## Book Reviews

### **Philatelic Terms Illustrated**

by **Russell Bennett and James Watson**

Stamp collecting continues to attract new enthusiasts and these will find this glossary of philatelic terms particularly useful. All collectors will find interest and information in this publication compiled from the Stanley Gibbons reference collection. It is a mine of technical information on such matters as perforations and line engraving as well as more unlikely topics – syllabic characters or marine insurance stamps for example.

This new edition also has 92 full-page colour plates and a wide range of black and white illustrations. It is published by Stanley Gibbons Ltd, 391 Strand, London WC1, price £1.

### **Meter Stamps of Great Britain and Ireland (Eire)**

by **John C Mann**

This study was first published in 1972, the 50th anniversary of the introduction of meter franking machines in this country.

This second edition is enlarged to 63 pages and has many new entries. It is available from J C Mann 19 Chartham Road, South Norwood, London SE25 4HN price 75p including postage and packing.

### **Royal Air Force Flown Covers**

No 10 in the Royal Air Force Museum series of Squadron flown covers will be issued on 2 March next to commemorate the 55th Operational Anniversary of No 72 Sqn. It will show the Bristol Merc used by the Squadron in Mesopotamia in 1918 and the present equipment, the Wessex helicopter. It will be cancelled with a special BFPS commemorative handstamp in use on 2 March and flown on a special flight. Covers will be available on or about 31 March from the Philatelic Officer, No 72 Sqn., RAF Odiham, Basingstoke, Hants, at 25p plus 3p postage.

Since the last announcement of RAF covers in this *Bulletin*, the last in the old series and No 8 and 9 in the Sqn. series have been issued. Details can be obtained from the PRO, RAF Museum, Hendon NW9 5LL.

### **New “To Pay” Label**

It has been decided that customs charges collected by the Post Office on delivery of the item should invariably be accounted for by “To Pay” labels. To enable us to handle effectively the higher values, a £5 label will be issued on 2 April 1973.

The new label, in orange and black, was designed by Jeffery Matthews MSIA, is printed in sheets of 200 and will be available from the Bureau or philatelic sales counters.

### **50p “All Over” Phosphor Stamp**

A 50p stamp with a phosphor coating was issued recently. It first appeared on sale at the philatelic Bureau and all philatelic sales counters on 1 February 1973.

### **Philatelic Bulletins— Back Issues**

Mr R W Linforth, 83 North Drift Way, Farley Hill, Luton, Bedfordshire LU1 5JQ, wishes to buy Volumes 1-4. Mr G Brown, 7 Mary Road, Wells, Somerset, seeks Volumes 1-3, Mr R D S Polley, Grovefield, The Common, Berkhamsted, Herts, Volumes 1-6, and Mr P C Penfold, 17 Holford Road, Wootton, Isle of Wight, Volumes 1-5. Mr E C Holdsworth, 23 Watkiss Drive, Western Springs, Rugeley, Staffs, has Volume 9 for disposal.

### **Special Handstamps**

Unless otherwise stated, items for re-posting bearing at least 3p in postage should be sent to the Head Postmaster of the town where the special posting box is located, marking the



outer cover "Special Handstamp".

24 March 1973 (P)

**Portsea Island Co-operative Centenary  
1873 1973 Founded 24th March 1873  
24 Mar 73 Portsmouth Hants.** Special  
posting box in foyer of Portsea Island  
Co-operative Society Ltd, 106-110 Fratton  
Road, Portsmouth.

## Letters to the Editor

*Dear Sir,*

I read with interest – and sympathy – the many letters printed in recent editions of the *Philatelic Bulletin* which criticise the stamp programme of British stamps. Surely readers understand that the British Post Office cannot please all collectors, each with their own very different ideas on stamp subject planning.

However, I would like to comment on the arrangement of values for the coming season. As in recent years, the Post Office crowd commemorative issues with higher values – often with 3 stamps over the normal letter rate – which can only make it more expensive for collectors to make a worthy collection covering mint, used, first day covers and presentation packs. These higher values have no real use for postal purposes at the time of issue. But when Christmas comes around – the busy time for both parcels and air mail letters – all the Post Office has to offer to the users of its services is a single 7½p value over the normal letter rate. This means that many countries do not see British Christmas stamps, unless the sender asks for the rate to be made up of low value stamps.

Therefore I suggest that, for the 1974 programme, the GPO should have more commemorative subjects, for the benefit of the thematic branch of the hobby, which would be kept to 2½p or 3p values with the occasional higher value. Then for the Christmas issue there should be a much greater range of values giving the overseas mail some coverage. This issue could have either a Christmas theme, or show some aspect of the British way of life over the years.

I would like very much to hear the views of your readers on my ideas for this much talked about subject.

Yours faithfully,

PAUL LADDS

*Telford, Shropshire.*

[The 3p, 5p, 7½p and 9p denominations chosen for our special stamps are suitable for the various letter and air mail rates for Inland and Overseas addresses – *Editor.*]

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Subscriptions should be sent to the British Post Office Philatelic Bureau, 2-4 Waterloo Place, EDINBURGH EH1 1AB.