

REVIEW

FOR THE GREAT BRITAIN COLLECTOR



A NEW CYLINDER

In this issue

- POSTAL HISTORY
- PHOTOGRAPHY FOR THE PHILATELIST
- THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY
- EXHIBITING

50p

GREAT BRITAIN

DEFINITIVE SETS

		U/m	M/m			U/m
QUEEN VICTORIA						
1887-				1939-48	High values (6v.)	£350.00
1900	Jubilee (14v.)	—	£245.00	1941-42	Light colour (6v.)	£3.00
KING EDWARD VII					Ditto, watermark inverted (3v.)	£12.00
1902-10	De La Rue (0) (15v.) ½d. x 2, 4d. x 2	—	£175.00		Ditto, watermark sideways (3v.)	£26.00
1905-10	De La Rue (c) (9v.)	—	£175.00	1950-51	New colours (6v.)	£3.50
1911	Harrison (perf. 14) (5v.)	—	£60.00		Ditto, watermark inverted (5v.)	£12.00
1911	Harrison (perf. 15 x 14) (5v.)	—	£50.00		Ditto, watermark sideways (4v.)	£3.00
1911-13	Somerset House (8v.)	—	£90.00	1951	"Festival" high values (4v.)	£130.00
KING GEORGE V				QUEEN ELIZABETH II		
1911-12	Downey Head series (12v.)	£50.00	£30.00	1952-54	Tudor (17v.)	£80.00
1912-24	Royal Cypher (14v.) 9d. x 1	£120.00	£65.00		Ditto, watermark inverted (5v.)	£24.00
	Ditto, watermark inverted (5v.)	£25.00	£16.00	1955	Ditto, watermark sideways (3v.)	£4.00
1913	Multiple Cypher (2v.)	£425.00	£195.00	1955	Waterlow "Castles" (4v.)	£335.00
1918	Bradbury "Seahorses" (3v.)	—	£485.00	1955-58	Edward (17v.)	£160.00
1924	Block Cypher (12v.)	£130.00	£65.00		Ditto, watermark inverted (7v.)	£15.00
	Ditto, watermark inverted (3v.)	£2.50	£1.75		Ditto, watermark sideways (5v.)	£14.00
	Ditto, watermark sideways (4v.)	—	£95.00	1957	Graphite (6v.)	£11.00
1934	Photograyure, large format (2v.)	95p	60p	1958	1st De La Rue "Castles" (4v.)	£1200.00
	Ditto, watermark inverted (2v.)	£135.00	—	1958-65	Crowns, ordinary (17v.)	£8.50
1934-35	Ditto, intermediate format (4v.)	£13.00	£7.50		Ditto, watermark inverted (7v.)	£50.00
	Ditto, watermark inverted (3v.)	£50.00	£35.00		Ditto, watermark sideways (7v.)	£7.00
1935-36	Ditto, small format (11v.)	£85.00	£40.00	1958-61	Graphite (8v.)	£90.00
	Ditto, watermark inverted (3v.)	£20.00	£13.00		Ditto, watermark inverted (5v.)	£80.00
	Ditto, watermark sideways (4v.)	—	£115.00	1959	2nd De La Rue "Castles" (4v.)	£335.00
1934	Re-engraved "Seahorses" (3v.)	—	£485.00	1959	Phosphor-graphite (8v.)	£90.00
KING EDWARD VIII				1960	Green phosphor (9v.)	£30.00
1936	K. E. VIII (4v.)		U/m	1960-67	Crowns, phosphor (17v.)	£13.50
	Ditto, watermark inverted (3v.)		50p		Ditto, watermark inverted (10v.)	£150.00
			£10.00		Ditto, watermark sideways (8v.)	£24.00
KING GEORGE VI				1963-68	1st Bradbury-Wilkinson "Castles" (5v.)	£30.00
1937-47	Dark colours (15v.)				2/6 x 2	£3.00
	Ditto, watermark inverted (5v.)		£40.00	1967	Machin gum Arabic (9v.)	£3.00
	Ditto, watermark sideways (5v.)		£135.00	1967-70	Ditto, P.V.A. (16v.) 4d. x 2, 8d. x 2	£5.00
			£85.00	1967-68	Bradbury-Wilkinson no watermark "Castles" (4v.)	£18.00
				1969	Machin high values (4v.)	£25.00

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the PHILATELIC REVIEW

Volume 4 No. 4

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1936 PHOTOGRAVURE HALFPENNY —
A NEW CYLINDER

*Cover: A new discovery — ½d photogravure cylinder 46 stop
— see page 64*

LONDON 1980 AND OTHER EXHIBITIONS

- 49
- 51 I have received the following letter from John Forbes-Nixon, which I reproduce in full.
- 52 “Your editorial to the last issue (vol. 4, no. 3) must obviously provoke a response from me.
- 54 Your comments and views of the 1980 awards were of interest but the second half of the treatise might have been better to have been impersonal and less naïve.
- 55 If you want to become a five-star general you do not join the Catering Corps or the R.A.M.C. By the same token if you enter competitive exhibits and run the gauntlet of National and International judging by others you will preclude yourself from top awards if you collect, say, the Postal History of Much Marcle or Sixpenny Hadley — or dare I say it, carry out however a worthy and esoteric narrow study on a single stamp issue after ‘The Classics’. However unfair this may seem to the researcher, from the majority of collectors these superlative and exhaustive efforts will produce little more than a big yawn.
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Surely the classic stamps of Great Britain must have a wider general appeal for their very status of the World's first stamps — not yet being diluted by the endless issues to follow. Do not belittle the knowledge necessary and difficulty in assembling such a collection of the Classics to an award level either, even if one's interest in philately lies elsewhere.

As a regular contributor to this magazine I would have thought that I had shown from other areas of my collection a broader base and understanding than a mere 'line engraved plater'.

You say you welcome constructive criticism. The name of the Publication is the Philatelic Review not Mike Jackson's King George V Study Circle. See if we can have just a couple of consecutive issues without *any* reference to that reign as indigestion is a painful affair. I keep taking the tablets but ulcers may develop!"

By way of reply to John's letter I offer the following comments and an apology.

I used John's collection as an example because it is one of the best of line-engraved issues and postal history that I have seen; in quality, presentation and, pertinently, depth of knowledge and interest. I did not intend the term 'line-engraved plater' to be taken as being derogatory — quite the reverse in fact, as there was an implied comparison with my own efforts! Seriously, I apologise to John for what upon reflection was misleading and perhaps gave the wrong impression.

It was not my intention to belittle the classic stamps of Great Britain, good collections of which obviously deserve to get high awards. My plea is for a more reasonable and fairer recognition of the later issues. If a plating collection of George V cannot rise above a silver medal because it is of 'less importance' than a plating collection of line-engraved, then it should not have to compete in the same class; they are obviously not being judged by the same set of rules.

I am confused as to what the relationship between exhibition entries and the viewing public really is. To the exhibitor it is a highly personal statement, which, if the advice in the prospectus is

followed, is aimed at impressing the jury. I suspect that very few exhibitors take into account the non-specialist, or even non-collector, who may come across his exhibit when exhibited. I must admit that my own collection is presented somewhat cryptically, and is probably only 100% intelligible to me. It looks neat and as a system works well in presenting the work I have done on it — but how relevant is this in a public exhibition? How often have you stood in front of a collection (even a gold medal one) of an unfamiliar subject and wished the owner was standing next to you to explain it? The answers elude me, but I'm sure that the yawns from the majority of collectors as they stand in front of my exhibit have had little effect on the jury, for good or bad.

Regarding the content of the Philatelic Review, I try to put in as much non-George V material as I can, and needless to say I rely heavily on regular contributions from John and from Sam Lawrence. I would like to point out, however, that the Philatelic Journal of Great Britain, a most worthwhile publication, is usually full of Queen Victoria — but it has never had to apologise for the fact.

M.J.

the PHILATELIC REVIEW

BACK NUMBERS

available from
the publishers

Price 50p
(£2 per volume)

MAKESHIFT 2½d

John Forbes-Nixon

The major reform of the Universal Postal Union established the international basic prepaid rate of 2½d. and countries joined the Union from mid-1875.

Fig. 1 shows the special 2½d rosy-mauve stamp from plate 1 printed specially to service the U.P.U. rate in July 1875 and this example is used early on 12th October 1875.



Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.



Fig. 2 shows a letter to the U.S.A. again franked by the 2½d rate but this time with 1d lilac stamps including a bisected unit. Although this was unofficial it seems to have been allowed and one wonders if it were purely philatelic or the sender was using his initiative having only penny stamps available?

THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY

Sam Lawrence

This is the part story of the stamps that got away. The part story? Yes, as due to "security" the full story is unlikely ever to surface. The stamps referred to are the tête-bêche varieties of SG 575, the 3d Wilding, non-phosphor, with Multiple Crown watermark.

In the back pages of the September 1963 issue of Gibbons Stamp Monthly, which is devoted to small ads., there appeared an advert. offering for sale the above mentioned variety. A private box no. was given and it appeared by the wording that it had been inserted by a private collector and not a dealer.

As I was a keen collector, then, of GB QE2 issues, and as tête-bêche varieties of any reign are very scarce, I promptly wrote off and asked whether a block of four was available. The reply being favourable, I sent a cheque for the block (fig. 1) and in my covering letter I asked for some provenance for the block purchased. The letter received in reply read:

Dear Sir, I acknowledge and thank you for your letter and enclosures dated 18th September, 1963.

In the course of my work, I purchase postage stamps for a few firms on a weekly basis, for general mailing. I purchased this sheet of tête-bêche approximately two months ago from one of two Post Offices I use, but I cannot pin down which one it was. These Post Offices are at High Cross, Tottenham, N.15, and West Green Road, Tottenham, N.15.



Fig. 1.

As can be seen, the seller gave two local Post Offices as the source of his supply but could not be precise as to which in particular had sold him the stamps. The whole thing appeared to me to be quite in order and I put the block and covering letter into my album and thought no more of it.

Some time after there was some to-do in the philatelic press about this variety and

during my next visit to Stampex I took the opportunity to discuss the matter with the then catalogue editor of Stanley Gibbons. I asked the editor whether this variety would be catalogued. He replied quite unequivocally that this variety would never attain catalogue status due to the dubiousness of its origin.

In the 19th December 1968 issue of Stamp Collecting, the following short paragraph was printed on the leader page:

"700 3d Tête-Bêche Pairs in Police Haul. Among the property of the late Tony Maffia, the murdered gangster, police at Brentwood, Essex, found 700 tête-bêche pairs of the Queen Elizabeth 3d purple stamp.

Similar pairs and tête-bêche blocks found their way on to the stamp market in June 1963, when enquiries established that they had come from waste sheets of stamps printed for making into booklets and that they had been stolen after being passed for destruction. The police are in touch with the Post Office over the find".

As can be read, the police were very involved.

We are now about five years on after my original purchase in 1963, but it was a full three years further on that I ran into Derek Worboys, the dealer who specialises in the rarer varieties of Great Britain and the Commonwealth. Much to my astonishment, he told me that he was being prosecuted by the police (the new members

of the Philatelic Fraud Squad no less) for “dishonest handling of the GB Wilding 1958 3d tête-bêche varieties”.

I immediately offered to send him the letter I had showing the provenance of this variety, which offer he accepted and the original letter was despatched to Mr Worboys.

In November 1972 I, along with many others no doubt, received a letter of thanks from Mr Worboys informing me of the trial in the Crown Court and the fact that the judge, after hearing the prosecution case only, threw the case out of court and discharged Mr Worboys. The judge also ordered the costs be paid from public funds.

I saw Mr Worboys some time later and after a few words about the trial I asked him whether the letter I had sent him had had any material effect on the trial. I was very surprised to hear that his counsel had gone to the address on the letter of provenance and found the whole area had been pulled down for re-development. No trace of the signatory of the letter could be found. All he knew was that the prosecuting police officers from the Philatelic Squad had either resigned or were removed and were engaged in unrelated matters at the North Thames Gas Board.

Later, when Mr. Worboys sued the Commissioner of Police at the Bow Street Magistrate’s Court for the return of the stamps that the police had taken from him, neither the Post Office nor the printers



Fig. 2.

Fig. 3.

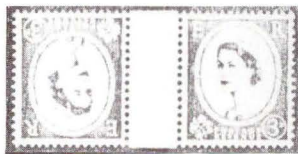


Fig. 4.

could lay any claim to them and the Chief Magistrate ordered the stamps to be returned to Mr Worboys.

I said at the beginning of this article that only part of the story would ever be known publicly because of the security angle, but some questions spring to mind, even if the answers do not.

What exactly went missing from the printers at that time? That is if they did go missing from the printers. I now have in my collection a block of four (fig. 1), a strip of five from the edge of the sheet with inverted watermark (fig. 2), a badly perforated block of twelve (fig. 3) and a gutter pair (fig. 4). As this variety appears quite often in auctions these days we are wondering as to what else will surface in time.

Why was no action taken for years after the event, until the Tony Maffia affair came up? Who were the real villains of the piece? Mr Maffia was not a small-time crook to be caught “fencing” items like these tête-bêche stamps. What happened to the cache of stamps found among the valuables in the late Mr Maffia’s estate? Were they destroyed by the police? How did the stamps go missing from Harrison’s in the first place — that is if they did go missing? And lastly, can anyone add anything to the story of the ones that got away?

As a footnote, it is interesting to reflect that SG catalogue the famous 1/- Stock Exchange forgery, so how long are we going to wait until this variety becomes “respectable”?

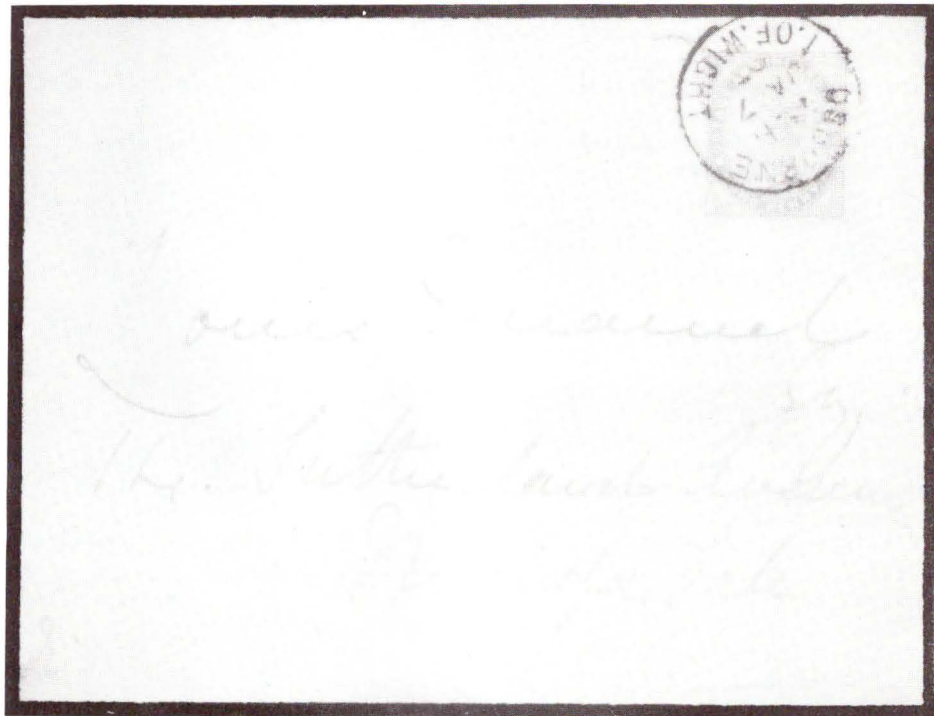
STILL MORE ROYAL OSBORNE

John Forbes-Nixon

Queen Victoria's favourite Osborne did not have its own sub-post office (under Cowes) with its own Osborne circular date stamp until 1897.

Even then this office only operated whilst the Queen was in residence which did not amount to more than seven to fourteen days a year.

Remembering she died on 22nd January 1901 there cannot be much mail prevailing which bears this Osborne c.d.s., an example of which is illustrated on a mourning envelope for 7th January 1897. I wonder if this mourning was still in memory of Albert who died in 1861?



PHOTOGRAPHY FOR THE PHILATELIST

Mike Jackson

Photography Put to Use

Perhaps the most obvious use of photographs in philately is to illustrate flaws and varieties on the album page. If you collect stamps to please yourself, then you can adorn every page with photographs if you choose. But if you enter the world of competitive philately with aspirations of winning awards you will have to think again. As a general rule, photographs should only be used in exhibition entries if they are illustrating something which is difficult or impossible to see without them. Some examples of such useful photographs will be mentioned later on.

Most society displays would be improved considerably if the speaker presented his material first in the form of colour transparencies. Instead of trying to project a mental image of each album page and its treasures into the minds of the people in the audience, the speaker could project a photographic image of each page onto a screen, following them with close-ups of relevant details. This really is an immeasurable improvement over the verbal presentation of a collection to an audience, the majority of whom won't know what on earth you've been talking about until 'viewing time', and then it's too late because they've forgotten what you've said anyway.

Photographs are obviously used extensively in philatelic literature. Philately has a very strong visual content and the majority of articles and books need illustrations. It is both rewarding and practical for the author of such articles to take his or her own photographs.

There are several other applications of photography to philately

which come to mind. Photographs may prove useful for insurance purposes, although photocopies may be adequate — it is best to check with your insurance company. I use photographs a lot for my own reference; to the researcher photographs can be of great value. Take for instance the availability of same-size prints of the 1d line-engraved plates from the National Postal Museum — the relevant print would be essential to the collector studying a particular plate.

The use of photographic images as aids to preparing drawings can result in impressive artwork which can be especially suitable for reproduction if it is rendered in black-and-white. Composite drawings of flaws can be produced in this way. If an enlargement of the relevant stamp is obtained, then the drawing can be produced by using tracing paper, a fine brush and black ink. Fine felt-tips and rulers can sharpen straight edges; mistakes can be scraped away with a scalpel or touched-up in white. The finished drawing is then mounted by its edges onto white card, and if to be used to illustrate an article, is ready for the printer. If it is to be used on an album page, it may be a good idea to re-photograph the drawing. Another technique requires the enlargement to be back-lit while the drawing is made on the back of a piece of album leaf; the back-lighting allows the photograph to show through. This is a bit more tricky but does give you a drawing on a piece of card which matches the album page.

Cameras

Of the various kinds of camera, only one is really suitable for close-up photography; the single-lens-reflex camera (SLR). The simpler, non-reflex cameras have a viewfinder which is above or to one side of the lens. This slight difference of viewpoint does not interfere with the taking of general pictures, but it makes the taking of close-ups extremely difficult. If the subject being photographed is only inches away from the lens (rather than feet) then it becomes apparent that while the lens may be 'seeing' the subject, the viewfinder will be looking over the top or to the side of it. Composing the picture and focusing thus becomes a rather complicated exercise requiring lengthy tests and measurements, always assuming the lens can be made to focus at close range.

The single-lens-reflex camera has an optical system which allows the photographer to actually look through the camera lens, and thus compose and focus his picture accurately. This gives the SLR camera a big advantage over simple cameras in general photography, but in close-up work, through-the-lens (TTL) viewing is more or less a necessity.

The modern SLR has become a very sophisticated piece of equipment, incorporating computer-aided optical design, precision engineering and recent developments in the field of micro-electronics. Despite this, cameras have never been cheaper to buy. At the time of writing (August 1980) there are at least ten different cameras on the market for less than £100 which have the following features (which are standard on most SLRs); slow shutter speeds (e.g. $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 second), through-the-lens (TTL) light metering and interchangeable lenses. These three qualities are more or less necessary for convenient close-up photography.

A look through a weekly photographic magazine will reveal the various cameras available. One of the cheapest, but with an excellent reputation, is the Praktica MTL3, which at around £60 with Tessar lens has all the features required. This camera also uses the M42 thread for attaching the lens to the camera. While this is not as handy to use as the various bayonet fittings now adopted by most manufacturers, additional lenses and accessories are cheaper. (For example a set of three extension tubes can be bought for £3.65 in screw fitting, but for any of the bayonet fittings will cost £26).

Getting Close

There are various ways of achieving a close-up image but the two most useful (and inexpensive) accessories are the close-up lens and extension tube.

Close-up Lenses

These screw into the filter thread on the front of the lens and are probably the most convenient way of getting close. You can buy more expensive multiple-element construction close-up lenses

which will give slightly better results, but for many purposes the inexpensive lenses will suffice. Close-up lenses are measured in dioptres, which is the focal length of the lens expressed as a fraction of a metre. Thus a two-dioptre lens (+2) has a focal length of $\frac{1}{2}$ of one metre or 500mm. With the camera lens focused at infinity the addition of a +2 lens will give a focusing distance of 500mm. When the focusing ring on the camera lens is now turned towards closer focusing distances, this new distance of 500mm is reduced and the image gets bigger. Thus each close-up lens has a focusing range, and I have found it most useful to make a field-size diagram for the various combinations of close-up set-ups which I use. To do this, mark the centre of a piece of white paper with a short vertical line, then set the camera on the tripod pointing down onto the paper. Focus the camera lens at infinity and move the camera up or down until the short line is in sharp focus (and in the centre of the frame). Then, keeping one eye at the viewfinder, carefully put dots on the paper at the four corners of the frame as seen through the camera. Turn the lens to closest focusing, re-position the camera to re-focus on the line and do the same. Make two rectangles from the two sets of dots and you have a diagram representing the range of actual field-sizes possible with that particular lens combination. Such a diagram is most useful for establishing which lens combination to use for a particular job.

Most close-up lens sets come in four dioptres: +1, +2, +3 and +4. Two or even three can be used in combination to achieve higher magnifications, but always put the stronger one nearest the camera lens. I use three lenses, two +4 and a +2, and the results of using these in various combinations on my own camera (an Olympus OM-2) can be seen in the illustrations. As the magnification is increased, either by using a stronger lens or by adding more on, the sharpness, especially at the edges of the frame, decreases. However, the centre sharpness may be acceptable, and after a few tests, it should be possible to mark an area on the field-size diagram which is reasonably sharp, and make sure that the item being photographed lies within that region. A camera lens aperture of f/11 is probably the best one to use with close-up lenses.

An important point to remember is that any automatic couplings between the lens and camera body are retained, and that close-up lenses do not appreciably affect the amount of light entering the camera. The lenses I use are made by Hoya and cost £3.80 each (49mm filter thread — the most common size). Although I have not used it, a 10 dioptre close-up lens sold by H. W. English, 469 Rayleigh Road, Hutton Brentwood, Essex, for about £15 will give better results than the equivalent combination of a +2 and two +4s. This lens is made from two lenses cemented together; an achromatic doublet. (In a simple lens, different colours have different points of focus. This is due to their wavelengths resulting in different angles of refraction. In an achromatic doublet, the 'Chromatic aberration' of one lens can be used to cancel out those of the other).

Extension Tubes

Extension tubes are normally sold in sets of three different sizes, resulting in various lengths of extension when used in different combinations. They fit between the camera and the lens, reducing the close-focusing limit of the latter by increasing the lens-film distance. Focusing with extension tubes is best done by moving the camera (this applies to much close-up work) rather than by using the lens focusing ring, which in these circumstances has a much reduced range. As can be seen from the illustrations, extension tubes can enable the camera to get pretty close to a stamp.

At magnification ratios of about 1:1 or greater (roughly the height of a GB definitive stamp equalling the height of the frame with the camera in the normal position) the lens can be reversed, using a reversing ring. The idea behind this is quite straightforward. Standard lenses are designed for optimum performance when the subject-to-lens distance is greater than the lens-to-film distance. When the lens is extended out in front of the camera, this relationship is reversed. Reversing the lens rectifies this situation and sharper images should result. If you try using the lens reversing ring directly onto the camera (with no extension) the image is blurred around the edges, especially at large apertures, so it is only

recommended for use at magnifications greater than life-size. Incidentally, a reversed lens gives a greater magnification for a given extension.

Other Accessories

More expensive, but worth mentioning, are bellows and macro-lenses. Bellows do exactly the same job as extension tubes but over a continuous range. Correct exposure determination without TTL metering is more complicated unless the same few lengths are used regularly, and the exposures worked out beforehand (see under Apertures and Shutter Speeds).

As an alternative to a standard lens, the macro offers focusing from infinity to $\frac{1}{2}$ or life-size. Such a lens should give even better results than a standard lens when used with extension, but it is usually a lot more expensive and has a smaller maximum aperture. (This latter point is not too important in close-up work, but may affect its choice for general photography where the maximum aperture determines the brightness of the viewfinder image and thus ease of focusing).

Keeping the Camera Steady

I use a tripod with the head mounted below the legs as in the illustration, which allows the camera to point towards the floor. For very high magnifications a steadier set-up would be desirable, and copy-stands are available commercially or can be made. When using extension tubes and a simple tripod, sellotape can be wrapped around the lens and the legs of the tripod to create 'guys' to help prevent the camera mechanisms causing vibration. (A heavy weight suspended from the tripod may also help).

A cable release is also essential to minimise camera movement, although the delayed-action release could be used if the camera has one. To prevent possible reflections in the glass used to keep the subject flat, a black mask with a lens-hole can be used to cover the camera.

Series Showing Field Sizes

1. 50mm Zuiko lens, Hoya + 2 close-up, $\frac{1}{4}$ sec at f/11
2. 50mm, Hoya + 4, $\frac{1}{4}$ at f/11
3. 50mm, Hoya + 4 + 2, $\frac{1}{4}$ at f/11
4. 50mm, Hoya + 4 + 4, $\frac{1}{4}$ at f/11
5. 50mm, Hoya + 4 + 4 + 2, $\frac{1}{4}$ at f/11
6. 58mm Biotar, 35mm extension (tubes), $\frac{1}{2}$ sec at f/11
7. 50mm Zuiko reversed, 53mm extension, 1 sec at f/11

Data

Film: Pan F rated at 50 ASA, developed in ID 11 (stock solution undiluted at 20°C for 7 mins.). Lights: Two 60w household lamps at about 12", lamps covered with tissue. The lens was set at its closest focusing throughout, and so represents the highest magnification possible for each combination.



1



2



3



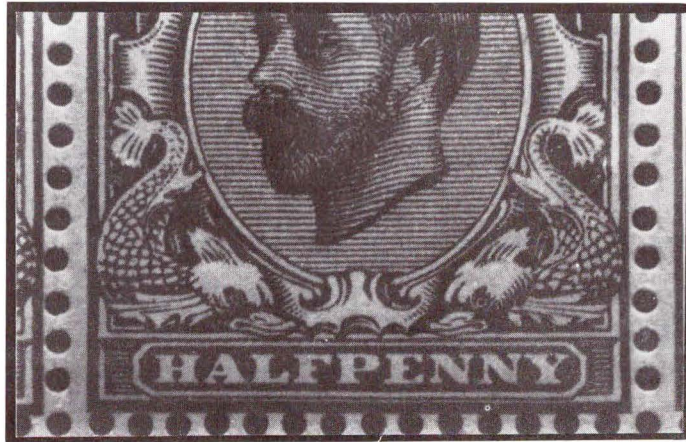
4



6



5



7

Squaring Up

A useful way of getting the axis of the camera lens reasonably perpendicular to the subject plane is to use a flat mirror. This is placed directly under the lens on top of the subject and the camera positioned so that the reflected image of the lens is central on the screen. Most screens have a focusing aid which is centrally placed and can be used to check the position of the reflected image. If they are concentric, then the camera is 'squared up'. A certain amount of fiddling about may be necessary to bring the reflected image into focus, or you may have to settle for an out of focus reflection. If the focusing aid is difficult to see against the dark reflection, try passing your hand repeatedly between the lens and mirror. This will give alternate views of the aid (which should show up on your hand) and reflection and enable the two to be lined up.

Exposure Control

Four elements are taken into account when determining the correct exposure for a photograph; the lighting, the film, the lens aperture and the shutter speed.

Lighting

As with most of the equipment described in this article, the lighting set-up can be as simple or as complex as you wish to make it. I have obtained reasonable results using two ordinary desk lamps, placed either side of the subject at a distance of about a foot, and pointing down at angles of about 45°. Tracing paper (or sheets of album-leaf interleaving in my case) can be taped over the lamps to diffuse the light. Uneven lighting can be a bit of a problem. It is easily overlooked when taking the photographs, but becomes only too evident when the negatives are developed. The use of two lights prevents one-sided illumination, and their position prevents reflections from the glass (covering the stamps) from entering the lens.

Film

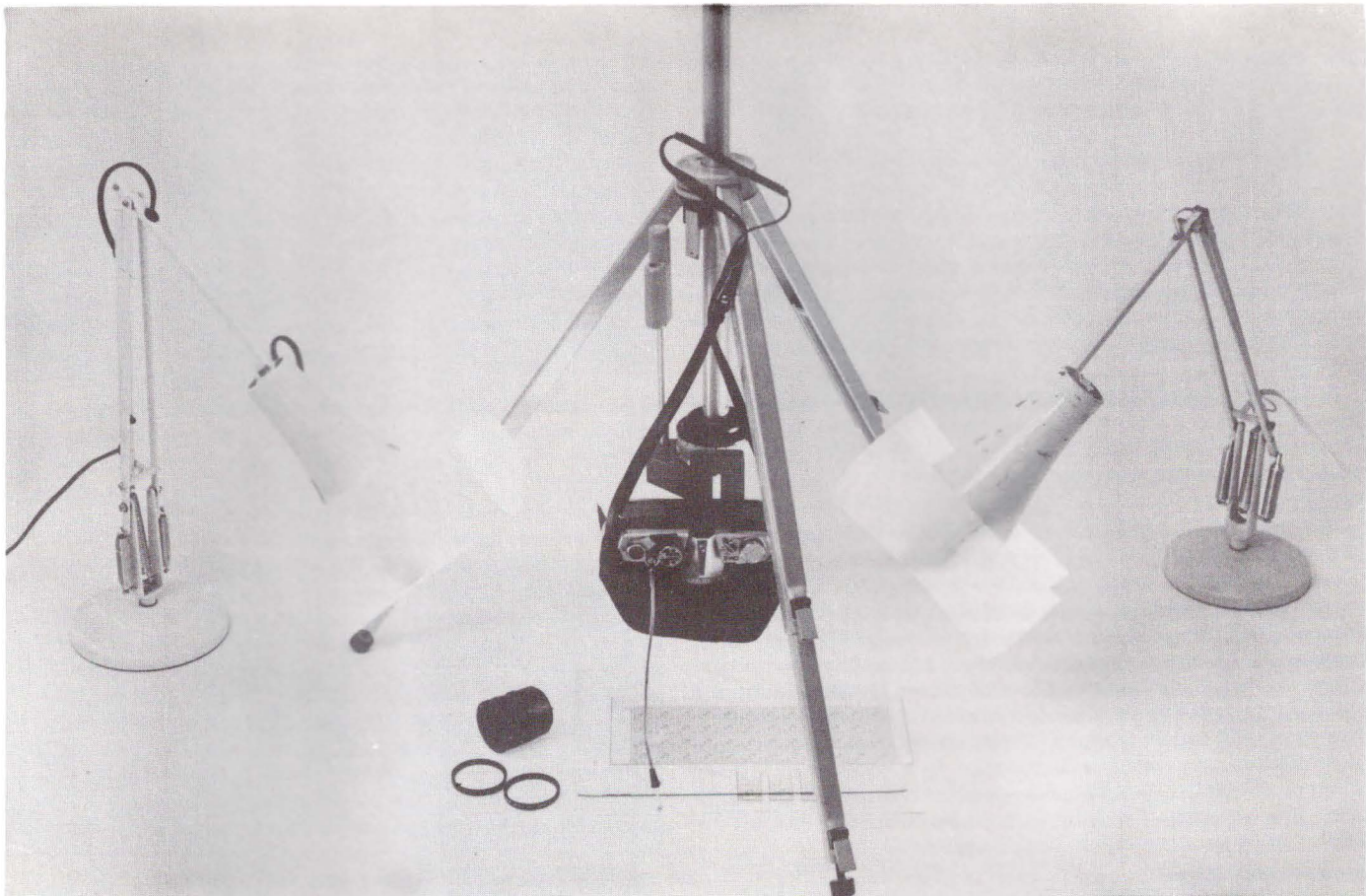
The speed, or sensitivity, of the film emulsion has a direct bearing on exposure determination. A slow film will require a longer exposure (shutter speed) for a given aperture than will a fast one. I use Ilford Pan F black and white film which is rated at 50 ASA. This is a slow, fine-grain film quite suitable for most subjects. Reasonable results could also be expected from a medium speed film such as Ilford FP4 (125 ASA). For colour transparencies I have had good results with Kodak Ektachrome "tungsten" film (as opposed to daylight film). This film has the colour balanced for use in tungsten lighting.

Apertures and Shutter Speeds

With the lighting and film accounted for, the lens aperture/shutter speed combination has to be selected. As we don't wish to freeze fast motion by using a fast shutter speed, we can use a slow speed, especially as the camera and subject are both relatively stationary. This in turn allows the aperture to be small (say $f/11$) which increases the depth of field, and improves the quality of the image, especially as close-up lenses may be in use.

Through-the-lens light metering should take care of getting the right combination — all that is necessary is to make sure the viewfinder is shaded (light entering here can affect the meter), the aperture is at around $f/11$ and the meter needle in the viewfinder is correctly centred by turning the shutter speed dial. If the speed is slower than 1 second (which is probably the slowest speed on the camera), open the aperture until the meter indicates a speed which the camera can accommodate.

If you have a camera which does not have a built-in TTL light meter, the exposure must be determined by using a separate meter (or trial and error). For this, a piece of medium grey card is useful, placed over the subject and the reading taken from this. As mentioned previously, the use of close-up lenses does not appreciably affect the exposure, but if extension tubes are used on a camera without TTL metering, the reduction in light reaching the



The camera set-up. Beside the page of stamps are two close-up lenses and a set of extension tubes. Also note the cable-release, black mask, the glass over the stamps and the tissue-paper 'light diffusers'.

film due to the extension must be accounted for. (This is the main reason for recommending TTL metering for this type of work). The exposure increase can be calculated by the simple formula

$$\left(\frac{\text{Focal length of lens} + \text{extension}}{\text{Focal length of lens}} \right)^2$$

Thus with a lens of focal length 50mm and an extension of 50mm (roughly a set of three tubes) the exposure increase will be 4 times. This is equivalent to two steps on the camera; an original exposure indication of ¼ sec. is increased four times to become 1 sec. It is important to realise that the steps between shutter speeds (or aperture stops) are such that with each step increase the exposure is doubled.

A set of three extension tubes offers seven different lengths of extension so it is a simple matter to work out the seven exposure increases for your particular lens and translate these into approximate step increases for quick reference.

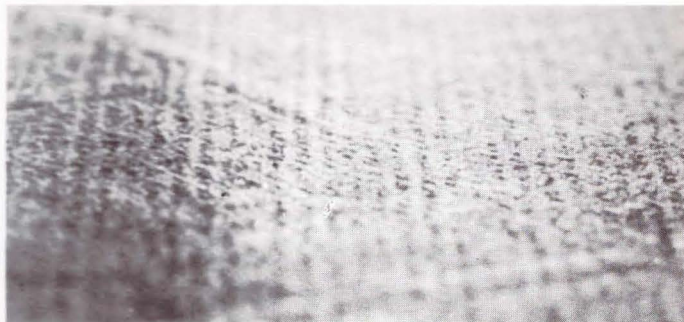
Filters

Although filters have obvious applications in philately, I can only mention them briefly here. If a daylight-type film is used with tungsten lighting, a suitable filter can be obtained to correct the colour balance, which otherwise would be too yellow. Similarly, if tungsten film is required for a photograph in daylight (or flash), another type of filter is available.

But the most useful application of filters in black-and-white photography must be for the control of contrast. For example, a blue filter will darken a stamp printed in red ink. By selecting a filter of the same colour as the stamp, it is possible to visually isolate the postmark, surcharge or whatever else may be printed in black. For the person wishing to produce such results, a certain amount of experimentation will be necessary.

Some Suggested Uses

These five examples (taken from past issues of the P.R.) illustrate how photography can show up characteristics of an item which may be difficult to see normally. Because of this, they could be useful additions to an album page.



Paper Grain. This photograph was taken with the camera at an oblique angle and the light moved until the grain showed up. It illustrates the paper grain on certain early George V paper trials, the direction of which is used to identify different printings. The photograph also shows, incidentally, the limited depth of field to expect when using close-up accessories.



Albino Impressions. A similar technique was used for this photograph of a block which had a secondary impression. Albino prints crop up in many areas of philately, but many (including this one) are difficult to see without holding the item up to the light, so a photograph in this position is of obvious use.



Varnish Ink. Varnish ink varieties occur on certain stamps of George V. To show the shine in the photograph, the lights were again manoeuvred into the right position to reflect the glossy portions of the design.



Watermarks. A most useful technique involves the use of backlighting to show up the watermark (or lack of it as in this example). The stamps were laid on a piece of opal (translucent) acrylic sheet (tracing paper on glass would do), and simply lit from behind. The exposure was as indicated by the camera — in other words, no compensation was made.

Most of the aspects covered in this introductory article could be expanded into articles of their own. As a final tip, constantly experiment and always make notes of the conditions under which the photographs were taken. That way you can establish a technique which should enable you to take good photographs every time. I'm still working at it.

Illustrations:



Stamps in Booklets. Perhaps not a spectacular idea, this booklet pane, still in its booklet, was kept flat by using a piece of glass, the facing page of the booklet allowed to rise up out of focus.

Paper grain on a George V paper trial
George V 1912 1d Die 2 showing a double (albino) impression
1914-23 ½d Green Postage Due printed in Varnish Ink
Cancelled pane from a George V booklet of 1913
½d Block Cypher without watermark, showed alongside a normal example

1936 PHOTOGRAVURE HALFPENNY- A NEW CYLINDER

Our publishers have shown me this cylinder block of six of the George V small format halfpenny photogravure stamp printed in 1936. The control is Y 36 and the perforation Type 5. The cylinder number however, seems to be completely unrecorded. The specialised catalogue, on page 213, mentions that some cylinder numbers are unique, and are probably registration sheets that were put into circulation. Whether this is the case here is uncertain, but it is certainly surprising (to me anyway) that this block could have been in someone's collection and yet remain unannounced to the philatelic world — it is after all over forty years old!

Incidentally, the extra perforation at the bottom of the block is due to the sheet being accidentally folded before perforating. It has subsequently been opened out.

This find must surely be as exciting as the discovery recently of the George VI 1d pale scarlet from cylinder 192 no dot by Mr. R. F. Aston, although in this case I believe two whole sheets were found.

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1910 Downey Head 5d grey-green on white "Hentschel" colour essay. A very fine example using the "wreath" design inscribed MB 93. **£185.00**

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