

National Postal Museum

The Philatelic Year 1989



The Philatelic Year 1989

Contents

Introduction 3

Stan Goron, Manager of the National Postal Museum, presents the report.

Work in Progress 4

Description of work undertaken in the Museum during the year which still continues: mounting of material, listing, GB display and computerisation.



Unadopted stamp-size presentation visual by Ronald Maddox for the Industrial Archaeology stamps.

New Acquisitions 6

Some of the items acquired during 1989 including unadopted artwork for stamps, material transferred from Harrison & Sons Ltd and three dimensional objects.

The Wilkinson Collection 10

The most important single acquisition – a collection of letter boxes, real and model, and miniature postal vehicles.



Research 12

Publication of the results of research undertaken during 1989 including Falmouth packet captains and the printing of the Mulready.

British Philatelic Bulletin 16

The year's work on the Bulletin which is edited, typeset and published from the Museum.

Exhibitions 18

Reports on the exhibitions held in the Museum during 1989 and the awarding of the Phillips Gold Medal.

Conservation 21

The Museum's conservator, Catherine Rickman, describes some of the techniques used to conserve items during the year.



Catherine Rickman moistening a fragile artefact before treatment.

Publications 24

Listing of the postcards and map published during the year, with print figures for current postcards.

Museum Charter 26

Publication of the revised National Postal Museum charter together with short notes on the members of the Board.

Association of Friends 28

Report by the Secretary on the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum.

Editor: **Douglas N Muir**

ISSN 0955 – 9248

Published by:

The National Postal Museum

King Edward Building

King Edward Street

London EC1A 1LP

tel. 071 239 5420

Photographs: **R Tidnam (Othens of Greenwich)**

Price: £2

Front Cover

Unadopted artwork by Mary Adshead for the 1963 Paris Postal Congress Centenary issue featuring a mailcoach.

Printed in the United Kingdom by Moore & Matthes Group Ltd.

© National Postal Museum, 1990

National Postal Museum Opening Times

9.30 am to 4.30 pm (Monday to Thursday)

9.30 am to 4.00 pm (Friday)

Closed at weekends and all Bank Holidays

Introduction

Stan Goron, Manager of the National Postal Museum, introduces the report on the year 1989 in the National Postal Museum, London.

FOR the National Postal Museum 1989 proved to be as busy and exciting a year as 1988, which was so vividly described in our previous *Annual Report*. The life of a dynamic museum is never dull. There are exhibitions to plan and produce, research to undertake, new accessions to document, catalogue and integrate into the collections, enquiries to answer and a host of other things that usually go on behind the scenes away from public gaze. But it would be wrong to forget that public gaze. All museums exist not just to preserve and research their collections but also to provide stimulating and informative displays to their visitors, to help them with their queries and research needs. At the National Postal Museum we aim to do all this in a positive and friendly manner.

In fact, the Museum's objectives are set out in our charter. This was revised during 1989 and approved by the Post Office Board. Important extracts can be found later in this report. It is worth mentioning in this context that much of the National Postal Museum's collections have the status of Public Records for the care of which special obligations apply. For example, the removal from the Museum, for display purposes, of any Public Record over 30 years old requires the permission of the Lord Chancellor's Office, and sufficient notice to obtain it!

The extracts from the Charter include our Acquisitions and Disposal Policies. These are fundamental to our collection development aims and also explain how, and under what circumstances, surplus material may be disposed of. With the approval of the revised Charter, the National Postal Museum was able to apply for, and receive, full registration status under the Museum and Galleries Commission's recently introduced Registration Scheme.

During 1989 much of our attention and effort was directed towards 1990 and the important anniversaries to be celebrated then. This will all be detailed in our next *Annual Report* but suffice it to say that Douglas Muir, our Curator Philately, spent many long hours in the Public Record Office, Kew and the Victoria & Albert Museum researching for his new book on Postal Reform & the Penny Black.*

Postal Reform & the Penny Black: A New Appreciation. Price £12.50.

The programme for the main gallery started with a display of artwork and essays for previous bird-stamp issues to coincide with the set for the centenary of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. This was then followed by a new venture in the Ottoman Empire display - for which we invited an eminent philatelist, Otto Hornung, to display a selection of his fine Ottoman material. This display was augmented by a selection of contemporary coins, banknotes and maps. For the rest of the year visitors to the gallery could see a display of selected old postal uniforms and pillar-boxes.

John Holman continued to edit and publish the *British Philatelic Bulletin* and the *British Postmark Bulletin* to a high standard throughout the year and the Museum continued its programme of issuing relevant and well-produced postcards for sale. For some of the cards in the Historic Postal Personalities series we commissioned special artwork from Clive Abbott, the well-known stamp designer and artist.

Additions to the collections continued to stream in especially from the British Post Office and the Universal Postal Union. We also purchased Ian Wilkinson's unique collection of model posting boxes and vehicles. Our collection of full-size posting-boxes was also augmented.

During the year we said farewell to two of our colleagues and welcomed two new ones. John Memmott, for several years Assistant Curator, retired and was replaced by David Paton, a man of wide Post Office experience who has already made his mark on the Museum. Richard Fell, the Philatelic Officer, left the Museum to work for the Royal Mail in Twickenham, and was replaced by Lionel Jones, author of *United Kingdom Savings Stamps, Labels & Coupons*.

Lastly, and very importantly, we welcomed at the end of the year three external members to the Museum Board: Ian Robertson, Director of the National Army Museum; John Marriott, Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection; and Ken Chapman, philatelist and philatelic writer. I hope all our new colleagues and Board members will enjoy working at and with the Museum and I would like to end by extending my thanks to all my colleagues on the Board and at the Museum for another wonderful year.

David Paton,
Deputy
Manager



Lionel Jones,
Philatelic
Officer

Despite this, we were still able to put on a varied range of exhibitions at the Museum. The major display for the year was "Crossing the Atlantic" - a depiction in philatelic and pictorial form of the various ways and directions in which people have traversed the Atlantic Ocean. On the international front we participated in two exhibitions abroad: at Philexfrance where we exhibited a display of modern British stamps at the British Post Office stand and at the Slania exhibition on the delightful island of Mainau in Southern Germany.

Work in Progress

This section covers the work that continues over a long period of time such as accessing, listing, cataloguing and mounting, tasks that never end.

DESPITE much of the attention of the Museum staff being directed towards the exceptional celebrations taking place in 1990 there was still a lot of more routine work done and various developments took place which will begin to transform operations in the background. Perhaps the most important of these was the introduction of computers during 1989 and reports were commissioned as to how best they might be used for the benefit of staff and public alike. The collections continued to grow and the documentation of accessions became a greater burden. Documentation, however, is of crucial importance and considerable improvements were made during the year in the detail and quality of our records.

UPU Stamps

The Commonwealth and Foreign gallery display changed little in 1989, although work continued on the long-term plan to transfer all stamps to the new conservation-quality pages with protective shields. Work done in 1989 reached countries beginning with the letter G, and these new pages are being

mounted in albums. Also, as in 1988, stamps of selected countries were kept *au courant*. A decision will be taken soon on possible alteration of the stamps on display. However, as all of these stamps remain on old paper any changes in the present display would involve remounting of the present pages or having the new display contain only the remounted stamps from c. 1945 (Foreign) and c. 1975 (Commonwealth). In any case, years of work are necessary to both up-date countries and to have all stamps on the new conservation paper.

Thematics

In 1989, no new categories were added to thematics on display. However, preparation of a multi-subject display using British stamps only was almost completed. A further

display with the text in French was produced for overseas exhibitions.

Display of British Stamps

Work on the permanent gallery reference display of British stamps was a priority during 1989 and has been completed for the period 1911 to date. This is an apparently straight-forward chronological exhibit and follows the completed *Chronolist of British Stamps*. The addition of earlier stamps remains a priority.

The work *Chronolist of British Stamps - the First 150 Years* has been completed by Jack Goodwin and is now on computer for use of the Museum staff. As explained in last year's *Report* this project was a natural outgrowth of work on the new permanent gallery display of British stamps. However, whereas the present display commences with the year 1911, the *Chronolist* commences with "NPM 1" in 1840.

The 'book' numbers some 309 pages and gives details of 3,278 stamps issued to the end of 1989. There is a 'chapter' for each year, with an introduction of that year's stamp activity. Stamp numbers follow in strictly chronological order, thus giving the Post Office view of issuing activity. As the preface to the *Chronolist* relates, only stamps of intentional difference are included. Thus, the varieties, errors and slight colour differences noted in some commercial stamp catalogues are omitted. Criteria guidelines were given in the 1988 *Report*.

Appendices provide a study of such matters and number and type of stamps issued each year, index of persons involved in the making of stamps, highlights of policy year by year (many notes of the 'first' and 'last' of this and that), *et cetera*.

De La Rue Records

All the original De La Rue volumes have now been rebound and they are not normally available for viewing. They are available, however, in microfilm form which can be read on a new reader-printer shown here. This has been well used over the past year.

Record Collections

Record collections of each new issue of stamps are now being established. These



The new microfilm reader-printer

contain all the ephemeral material available produced surrounding an issue. Mainly this consists of press releases, photographs, posters, leaflets and brochures together with anything special such as additional covers or prints. These collections are not intended to be put on display but rather to act as reference material to record exactly what was produced at the time. Several volumes were mounted during the year for the period 1982-1988 and the accumulating of material continued.

Postal Services

Postal services are always developing. New labels or markings often appear with little or no advance warning and the Museum continues to obtain them as and when it is possible. Some express services such as Datapost can have many different types of label both inland and overseas. Receipts, labels and markings are all collected.

A new internal accounting system was introduced on parcels in August 1989 to more accurately record the revenue due to Royal Mail Parcels. This consisted of forms for Inland and International traffic with colourful, numbered labels which were attached to the parcels. Previous parcel labels were also obtained for business customers at varying weights. These are illustrated.

Letter Boxes

Letter boxes which come to the Museum from operational locations often need treatment before they can be added to the collection. In 1989 two boxes were treated. Both had their bases cut off and new base plates added. This is to make them more stable to keep or move and to show them in the form normally seen. One of the boxes was a Penfold which came with the Wilkinson collection. The other came from Kingston LDO and needed to be shot-blasted as well.

Documentation & Computerisation

A report was commissioned during 1989 on documentation from Museum consultants. This was to identify the requirements for this and see how best we might fulfil them. Documenting items as they come into the Museum and as they go out on loan etc is a chore, but it is essential.

The aim of a museum documentation system was defined at the beginning of the report in the form of a question: "Does it enable the museum to prove unequivocally, in the event of disaster or enquiry: The identification of an object, the whereabouts of the object and the ownership of the object." This may seem self-evident but with the huge number of items already in the Museum, and the ever-increasing number of new accessions and loans, the documentation necessary is very time-consuming.

Hitherto, all documentation has been manual in the form of written entries in registers and records of album pages mounted. In the new system as recommended in the report there will be a manual entry system whereby all objects entering the Museum will be listed and described. However, accession and cataloguing will take place on computers. Eventually, this



Parcel labels for business customers (above) and the internal accounting label introduced for parcels.



Below: examples of postmarks: Blackpool counter handstamps - original and replacement for one day; Messing cum Inworth handstamp for George Bush and the slogan for lead-free petrol (in green).



18 OCT '88



NOV 17 '89

will be of great use both to staff and people using the Museum but completion will be many years off. Two computers were acquired by the Museum and were used for various tasks to enable staff to become familiar with their capabilities and how best they might be used. Fuller use of these is expected as time goes on.

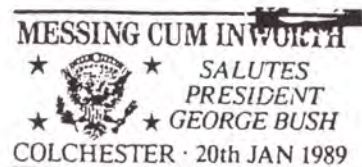
Postmarks

The Museum maintains a collection of all special handstamps used to commemorate exhibitions, events, anniversaries, etc — as announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*. During 1989 over 250 such handstamps were used, ranging from the well-known (and long-established) ones for STAMPEX and the British Philatelic Federation Congress to "one-offs" for the launching of new lifeboats or football matches. Many are used on the days of issue of new stamps. A selection are shown here.

The Royal Mail provides handstamps at philatelic counters and several offices have special pictorial "tourist" postmarks (an article on these was published in the June 1989 *British Philatelic Bulletin*). The Museum has a collection of these and tries to obtain examples of any modifications - for example a replacement Tower of London handstamp, used at the City of London LDO, was brought into use early in 1989 when the previous handstamp became too worn to use.

Several philatelic counters were closed in November 1989 and their handstamps taken out of use. The handstamp for the Blackpool counter worded BLACKPOOL LANCASHIRE, was destroyed before all the requests for last day cancellations were met. A replacement cancel, wrongly worded BLACKPOOL FYLDE WYRE was used for the 17 November 1989 last day date.

The Museum also maintains collections of slogan impressions on cover and also the metal dies sent in by LDOS once the slogan campaign is over. The impressions are sent in by LDOS and "rescued" from mail received at the Museum, principally the *Bulletin* competition entries. The most interesting slogan during 1989 was the WE ♥ LEAD FREE, in use 3 April - 31 May, and applied in green ink. The Museum has examples from many of the 166 offices which used this slogan. Human error resulted in some being applied in black and of other slogans applied in green; the Museum has some examples of such oddities.



New Acquisitions

OVER the year in question a very large number of items were added to the Museum's collections. These were either gifts or transfers or purchases against some special need. The following list will give some idea of the extent of the material:

Artwork for stamps - adopted and un-adopted	515
Registration sheets of stamps etc	89
New cylinders or plates (blocks)	196
3D objects (including the Wilkinson collection)	1676
Books and documents	602
Handstamp and slogan dies	728
Proofs and essays	160
Postal history items	2006

In addition there have been some 28,000 single stamps and other items for the Museum's collections and reserve stocks. Perhaps of greatest interest in this group was a large collection of National Health and Insurance stamps including some very high values. This is particularly useful as it is the official mounted and annotated reference collection.

Below: 3d Gold Coast design with alternative overlay separate.



1989 was a year for a considerable number of acquisitions. Some of the more important and interesting ones are described here.

Harrisons Transfer

Not all the items acquired were new. Transferred from Harrison and Sons Ltd were a number of pieces of artwork prepared for use on colonial stamps in the 1920s. These are of considerable interest and are published here for the first time. Among them was a small group of items produced for the Gold Coast issue of 1928.

The issued stamps were the first pictorials of the Gold Coast showing Christiansborg Castle, Accra and they were printed in gravure by Harrisons. The artwork transferred shows two alternative views of the Castle. While the hand-painted frame and the head of George V remain the same the view of the Castle varies. On an overlay cut to fit is another view of the Castle, the shoreline in particular being different. With these unused pieces of artwork was a proof of a postcard with the design of the issued stamps inscribed "Second set of proofs sent Dec 6th 1928"

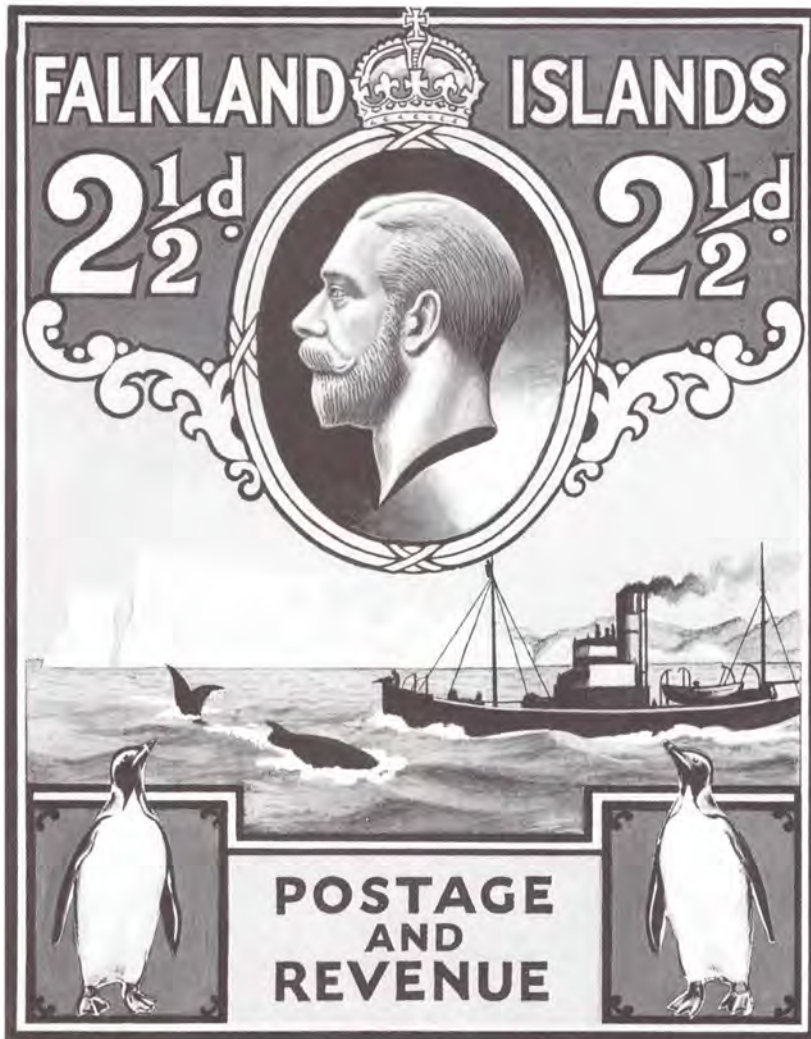
One large piece of artwork relates to an attempt by Harrisons to get the printing contract for the Falkland Islands. In 1929, stamps were issued there featuring a fin whale and gentoo penguins, a slightly controversial design at the time because of the artistic licence taken with the whale. This issue was printed recess by Perkins Bacon.



*Above: 3d design with the overlay applied
Below: Postcard proof with the issued design.*



*Second set
of proofs sent
Dec. 6th 1928*



From Harrison's has come the artwork for a gravure issue with much the same subject. Hand-painted in shades of black, white, grey and blue-grey it depicts a whaler in operation with penguins as part of slightly simplified frame design. An iceberg lurks in the background. The contract was clearly awarded to Perkins Bacon but according to Ronnie Spafford essays are known from this design by Harrison's. Stylistically, it is very similar to the Gold Coast design.

There is a large and interesting section concerned with Egyptian material, in particular the beginning of the Kingdom of Egypt in 1922. Harrison's had produced in letterpress the issues of the preceding year in the sultanate of Ahmed Fuad. These were now required to be overprinted with a crown and the text (in Arabic) "The Kingdom of Egypt, 15 March 1922". Overprinting took place locally and then in London between December 1922 and the following February and a number of proofs are preserved. It was thus natural that Harrison's should be considered for the first portrait series of King Fuad of 1923 and there are a number of proofs and essays and sheets of trials of gravure-printed stamps.

These are always taken as being the first stamps that Harrison's printed in gravure but some correspondence dealing with this issue raises some interesting questions. The first

stamp was that of 5 millieme and there are receipts for sheets dated 22 March 1923 ("We received 15,998 sheets in the first consignment."), the stamp being issued on 16 April of the same year. However, subsequently there are two copies of statements indicating that stamps were received from Holland by post on 20 September 1923 and that paper



was delivered to Holland for the printing in 1924. One letter from the firm in question identifies it as Nederlandsche Rotogravure Maatschappij, Leiden so it would appear that at least the 5m value was initially printed by them. Proofs were also sent of a £2 value on 19 March 1924 from a Mr L. Levisson of The Hague.

Illustrated here is an original piece of artwork for the £1 value showing King Fuad in military uniform. This was proofed in brown-purple and orange but the issued stamp differs in the detail of the legend and is in different colours. No date is given for either artwork or proof.

Slogan Dies & Handstamps

Some 324 handstamps of both India rubber and steel have been passed to the Museum by numerous Letter District Offices, Counters and other Post Office departments. In addition some 400 slogan dies have been deposited after withdrawal from usage. A start was made during the year to add newly arrived machine slogan dies to a computer listing.

Of particular interest amongst the handstamp arrivals was a dozen steel types formerly employed on TPOs.

BWS Y POST BRENHINOL
ROYAL MAIL BUS
BUILTH WELLS - PAINSCASTLE

BWS Y POST BRENHINOL
ROYAL MAIL BUS
NEWTOWN - NEW MILLS



Postbuses

A number of the handstamps transferred to the Museum were those cancelling postbus tickets now no longer in use. At the same time Len Newbery kindly donated a collection of postbus material together with documentary background material. John Holman has amalgamated this with the Museum's own collection which is in the process of being created. The resultant pages will go on display in the main gallery in 1990.

Three-Dimensional Objects

Included in this large area are seal presses, weights and scales, mailbags, model vehicles, post boxes, uniforms, dies for stamp cancelling machines, badges, a helmet and even a gas mask.

Sealing presses can be of two types,

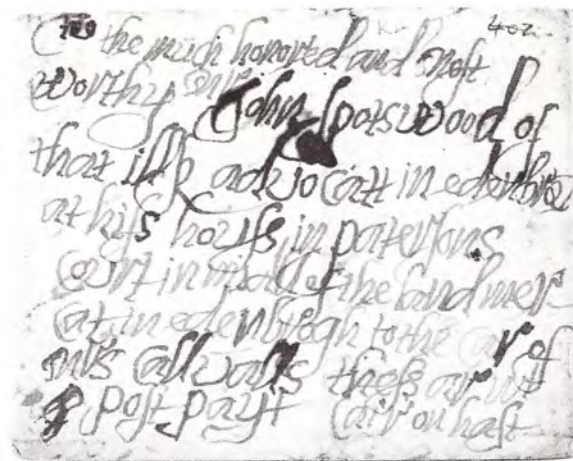


Above: Nazi mail bag

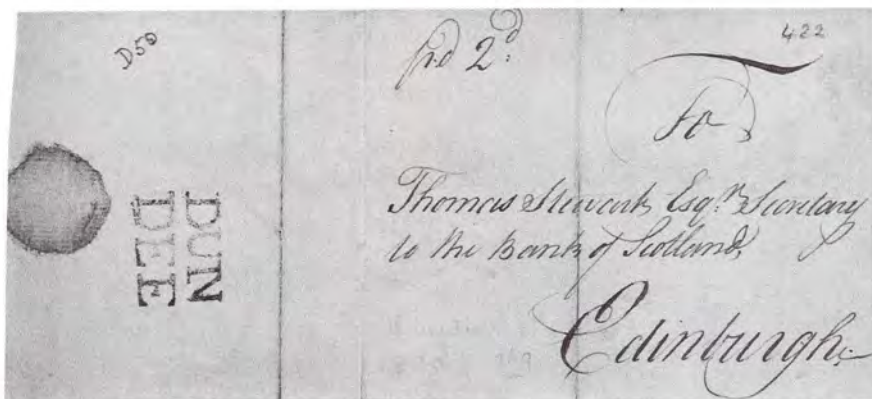
namely those which impress office codes of former head offices on to the currently used tinplate seals, and the heavy cast types which squashed lead seals and impressed office codes at the same time.

One of the most interesting acquisitions was a German mailbag of the Nazi era. This is believed to be one of four brought back from Cairo after World War II by someone who was in the RAF. It was found in an attic in Bridport. On one side is the German eagle

Right: Unmarked letter to Edinburgh of 1722. (Turner bequest)



Below: 1769 letter with Dundee marking. (Turner bequest)



surmounting a swastika. On the other is the inscription "H. Vpfl./1939".

Postal History

The majority of pieces accessed under this heading were purchased to fill gaps in the Museum's collections or to enhance a special exhibit. Amongst the most notable were several entires from the Uniform Fourpenny period, some with handstruck markings, others in manuscript. Other major acquisitions were 96 patents of a postal nature and a mounted set of Ogdens Royal Mail cigarette cards of 1909.

In addition part of the Sidney Turner bequest of postal markings was returned to the Museum after many years at the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh. The collection was specifically of Scottish postal history and contained some 514 entires. This could now be reunited with the many other volumes already held in the Museum.

The earlier of the two items illustrated dates from 30 May 1722 and was sent at a time when very few towns had post offices or name stamps. It is addressed 'To the much honored and most worthy Sir John Spotswood [Spottiswood] of that ilk advocatt in edenburgh [?] in midst of the lawne mercat in edenburgh to the corner of the castle walls these our wt [?] is post payt.' As can be seen much of the writing is almost illegible.

The other item is an entire dated 3 August 1769 and bears a two-line 'DUN/DEE' mark having been sent again to Edinburgh. Postage paid was 2d.

Artwork

As is usual perhaps the most interesting of the new acquisitions were the pieces of artwork received from the Design Division. Comprising both adopted and final artwork, and presentation visuals there were some 515 items of which some 300 would represent the production of a 12-month period. The additional pieces were transferred because of the Design Division's move during the year.

On the opposite page is a selection of pieces of artwork prepared for special issues and which were received in the Museum during 1989.



Birds, January 1989. Three presentation visuals by Ken Lilley dated 26 November 1987. They show (left to right): an osprey at Loch Garten, Scotland; an avocet at Havergate Island, off Suffolk; a red kite at Gwennffrw, Wales.

Lord Mayor's Show, October 1989. Presentation visuals by Jeffery Matthews from April 1988. These actual size drawings were submitted showing the idea of 'civic regalia' subsequently discarded. Linked by the mayoral chain are treasures of the City of London.



Birds, 1989. Presentation visual by Ken Lilley of a puffin at Rathlin Island, Northern Ireland. 26 November 1987.

Birds, 1989. Presentation visual by Maurice J Pledger of a corncrake. 16 November 1987.

Sir Isaac Newton, 1987. Presentation visual by Sarah Godwin of a man walking in space. 9 August 1985.



The Wilkinson Collection

BY far the largest and most important acquisition made during 1989 was Ian Wilkinson's collection of miniature letter boxes and model postal vehicles and related material. It is described here by Lionel Jones, Philatelic Officer of the Museum and himself a member of the Letter Box Study Group:

Acquiring the Wilkinson collection was an opportunity not to be missed and has provided for the Museum a vast store of material the like of which is unlikely ever to be amassed again.

The precise number of pieces contained in some 16 tea chests will only be known when computerisation is completed, but 4,000 is probably a fairly accurate calculation.

The material falls into the following categories:

model post boxes	864
model postal vehicles	245
model postmen	50
street posting boxes (actual)	13
private posting boxes (actual)	5
objects incorporating post boxes	204
time plates and collection tables	70

The most important collection obtained during 1989 was that of Ian Wilkinson's miniature letter boxes and model postal vehicles.



A rare tinplate Royal Mail van with G.V. cypher, made in Germany by JO HA Kü. Registration numbers differ front and rear.

postal theme

postcards	800
cigarette cards	225
greetings cards etc	300
stamps, covers, postmarks	400

It can be seen from this listing that the wide range of subjects covered by Mr Wilkinson's labour of love will enable the Museum to provide continually changing small displays in cabinets in the main gallery and will give greater variety for those whose interests lie in postally-related areas other than stamps.

Model Vehicles & Postmen

The majority of these toys and models represent postal vehicles of the UK but there are a number from other postal administrations.

Many of the finer pieces are complete with their original packaging and winding keys - a condition in which all serious collectors of model and toy vehicles dream of finding their chosen subjects.

The model postmen section, although containing only 50 pieces is almost a complete range of what has been produced in total by all recorded past and current toy and model manufacturers.

Post Boxes

The large accumulation of 864 post boxes was Ian Wilkinson's main objective. Anything which appears letterbox-like has been included, fashioned in wood, china, various metals, glass, rubber and plastic. Many of the boxes had actual uses as salt or pepper pots, string dispensers, tape measures, musical boxes, to name but a few. Home safes and money boxes are a very large sector in the pillar box collection and much in evidence are the past attempts by children to extricate saved coins with the aid of knives etc. Many of the tinplate items in all groups originally served as biscuit or sweet tins.

Of the actual letter boxes brought in with this collection, 11 are lamp boxes of various



A range of model pillar boxes and related items on show in the Museum.

cyphers, one a Victorian wall box and one a pillar box of the Penfold design. Some of these boxes will shortly be sand-blasted, and then repainted prior to taking their place in our permanent basement display area.

Accompanying these withdrawn street posting boxes is an accumulation of some 70 mixed enamelled and plastic time plates and collection tablets, representing most of the sizes and shapes which have been introduced over the years.

There are also a few beautifully constructed private posting boxes of polished wood, in most cases complete with their locks, hangings, and warning notice plate. Private posting boxes would have been installed in the fronts of prestigious hotels, hospitals, and public buildings in multiple use. Today, the service still exists but there are very few actual boxes, the mail usually being picked up from business premises in mail bags.

A large quantity of material in the collection comprises models such as cottages, village shops and other buildings into which is incorporated a posting box and sometimes a postman. Many of these are hand-painted pottery.

The purchase also provides the Museum with only our second example of a mail coach guard's long-horn.

Cigarette cards, greetings cards, stamps, covers and postmarks account for some 1,500 separate items, all bearing in the main, a postbox theme within their designs. Some, however, are upon more general postal subjects.

Ian Wilkinson has written a note for this *Report* describing "How it all Began":

I suppose I have always been a compulsive collector (or is it a hoarder?). When I was a child it was stamps, cigarette cards, match box labels, Dinky toys etc. All these collections went when we were bombed out of our house during the Second World War and serious collecting did not begin again until the early 1960s when I resumed stamp collecting.

Soon after we moved to Chesham some 20 years ago, I found a piece of crested china with the Chesham town crest on it, and that started yet another collection. At the shop where I bought it the proprietor agreed he would look out for Chesham items for me and on my next visit he offered me a gas mask that he assured me was once worn by a man who lived in Chesham (he was a great salesman) but that one I didn't swallow. Next time, it was a small tin pillar box money box that he was positive had been sold by Woolworth's in Chesham before the war. It bore the Royal Cypher of King George V. It was not that I believed him this time but when I saw it I remembered that I had had one just like it in my younger days and I can remember being very fond of it, even if it never had much money in it! So this, coupled with my philatelic interest and the fact that he only wanted 2p for it, made me decide that I would give it a good home. I did not know it at the time but this started



Ian Wilkinson in his home surrounded by his collection of actual and model pillar boxes.

yet another collection that was to become a dominant part of my life for the next 20 years.

At first, this was confined to pillar boxes of all shapes, sizes, and uses and eventually there were over 1,000 of them. But slowly, toy mail vans, model postmen and other postal-related items were just as eagerly sought. Of course, pillar boxes on stamps, on cigarette cards, on postcards, on almost anything, were all grist for the mill. Naturally, the interest spread to real letter boxes, particularly when I discovered that sometimes you could buy scrap ones from the Post Office and slowly I got to know a few other people who had a similar interest.

At first I thought I was unique in collecting letter boxes. And then in 1976, with Ron Hall from Leamington Spa and the late Loudon Morton from Glasgow, we formed The Letter Box Study Group. We had decided that so long as we could find 25

to 30 others with sufficient interest in the subject, it would be worth circulating a newsletter, which I have edited ever since. If only we had known then what we know now! Today there are well over 600 members in the Group who, between them, have now surveyed what must be almost half of the 100,000 letter boxes in Great Britain. The Group's 'Listing' details over 400 types of letter box that we know do, or believe could, exist and members have discovered boxes that were previously thought to be 'extinct'.

Further information about The Letter Box Study Group may be obtained by sending an s.a.c. to The Secretary, LBSG, 43 Miall Road, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 9BS. The Group holds informal meetings around the country and issues quarterly newsletters and free postcards - all for a modest subscription of £3.50 a year.

Research

WITH the various important exhibitions in 1990 in mind research in 1989 concentrated mainly on areas connected with them. In particular, a great deal of research was put into the areas of postal reform and the origins of the Penny Black. This was to lead to at least two exhibitions in the following year, the publication of a book and it also served as the basis for advice to many enquirers both from within the Post Office and from outside organisations. At the same time the commemorative issue in 1940 for the centenary of the Penny Black was also investigated and written up properly, providing a number of surprises as to the contents of the collection. Prompted by the exhibition on transatlantic mail Tony Gammons investigated packets and their captains, resulting in a lecture to the Friends of the National Postal Museum.

Research at the Museum by philatelic students was again mainly in the Correspondence and Day Books of De La Rue. These cover the day-to-day production by that company of stamps and stationery of colonial and some other territories up to about 1940 (but entries by that time are no longer complete). Service to these students was improved by the installation of a microfilm reader-printer which enabled

Research into philatelic matters and postal history played a large role in the activities of 1989. Most was done on computers newly installed. This enabled much more rapid information retrieval and thus more speedy results.

researchers to look at the records more speedily and have an immediate printed copy of anything required. It also meant that the original volumes were less liable to damage by constant handling.

Post Office Packets and their Captains

Tony Gammons writes:

The National Postal Museum's major exhibition for 1989 was mounted to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the setting-up of a packet agency at Falmouth. A number of covers, carried by Falmouth Packets, were obtained, some of which were endorsed with the name of the packet carrying the correspondence. In order to produce as complete a caption as possible for

each Falmouth Packet cover, reference was made to the several excellent works on the subject.

Although it was possible, by referring to voyage records, to find the name of the packet it soon became apparent that assigning a captain to a cover was not going to be so simple. I had been using sections B1 to B8 in Alan Robertson's *The Maritime Postal History of the British Isles* to allocate names but I found that on certain covers the captain's name in the list did not agree with that on the cover.

To resolve the problem I paid a visit to Post Office Archives and looked through the commission books in Post Class No. 58. This showed that although Robertson's listing was accurate as far as it went it only recorded the captain's first appointment. In a number of cases this did not matter as the captain could remain with a packet throughout his career. For example, John Bull commanded the *Duke of Marlborough I and II* from 1802 through to at least 1814. However, other captains could be given a commission on a voyage by voyage basis.

This situation was common during times of war when losses and damage to the fleet saw the Post Office hard pressed to provide a regular service across the Atlantic. A packet would sail with captain No. 1. On return, the ship could be taken over by captain No. 2 for the next trip. It would then be possible for captain No. 1 to be re-appointed for the next voyage. It is these second and subsequent appointments that are not always shown in published listings. Captains also "disappear" from the Falmouth entries only to return at a later date.

Having "put the exhibition to bed" I decided to undertake listing the appointments of all the packet captains from the various stations. The size of the project meant that the work had to be done mostly at weekends and to date some 240 names have been listed. At the moment the data is being entered even if it does not make much sense! For example, Arthur Clark was appointed to the *Diligence* packet on 13 February 1769 and reported captured on 13 July 1779, and again on 10 April 1781. The only problem here is that Clark had been

The Windsor Castle in action with the French privateer La Genii. 1807.





Acting captain of the Windsor Castle, William Rogers boarding La Genii.

given the *Queen Charlotte* on 4 April 1781 and the *Diligence* seems to have passed to Samuel Steele in October 1780. Steele was reported captured with the packet on 8 August 1781. Another entry has a captain being appointed to two different ships on the same day.

When the listing is complete it is intended that, by searching through the various packet records in Post Office Archives, a potted history of each captain's service be added to the entry. While preparing a talk for the Friends of the Museum this was done for a small number of names.

James Cock's entry is as follows:

name James Cock
ship *Mary* 14/4/1809 temp
Diana 23/5/1810 vice *Mary* lost at Malta
Townsend 30/7/1810 new packet for Demerara
Countess of Chichester 2/4/1814 vice Rogers, *Townsend* capt
station Falmouth
Mary in action in 1810

The *Townsend* was attacked by the American privateers "Tom" and "Bond" on 23/11/1812. After a long fight the packet was taken but was in such a bad state that the packet was "given up" to Cock who took her to Barbados. The partially repaired packet set sail for England with the mail. She was attacked by an American privateer which she repulsed, she reached home on 18/1/1813. She was attacked and taken by the French frigate "La Clorinde" on 16/2/1814. Post Office ref 39b/1813 91b/1814. Cock died in service aged 36 his widow was allowed a pension of £40 per annum 195b/1816.

When all the information has been gathered it is hoped to put it all on to a database, such as Rapidfile, and sort not only by captain's name but also into the various Packet Stations. It should also be possible to produce a listing by Packet similar to that in Alan Robertson's work. Eventually, bound print-outs will be deposited in the Museum and Post Office Archives.

Postal Reform & the Penny Black

A large part of the research carried out in 1989 was concerned with conditions leading up to the issue of the Penny Black. Although quite a lot had already been published on this subject, nevertheless it was felt that a great deal more could still be done. So it was decided to pursue this through most of the year in preparation for the celebrations of 1990 (the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black). Research took place not only in the collections of the Museum but in libraries, archives and record offices around the country.

The principal source of new information was the Public Record Office in Kew. In the years leading up to 1840, and thereafter, the Treasury was responsible for the Post Office, and their files are housed in the PRO. Contained in these are a series of papers on postal reform and various reports by Rowland Hill who worked at the Treasury to implement his plan. Originally, all submissions to the Treasury Competition of 1839 would also have been kept with these files but at some time in the 19th century most were dispersed.

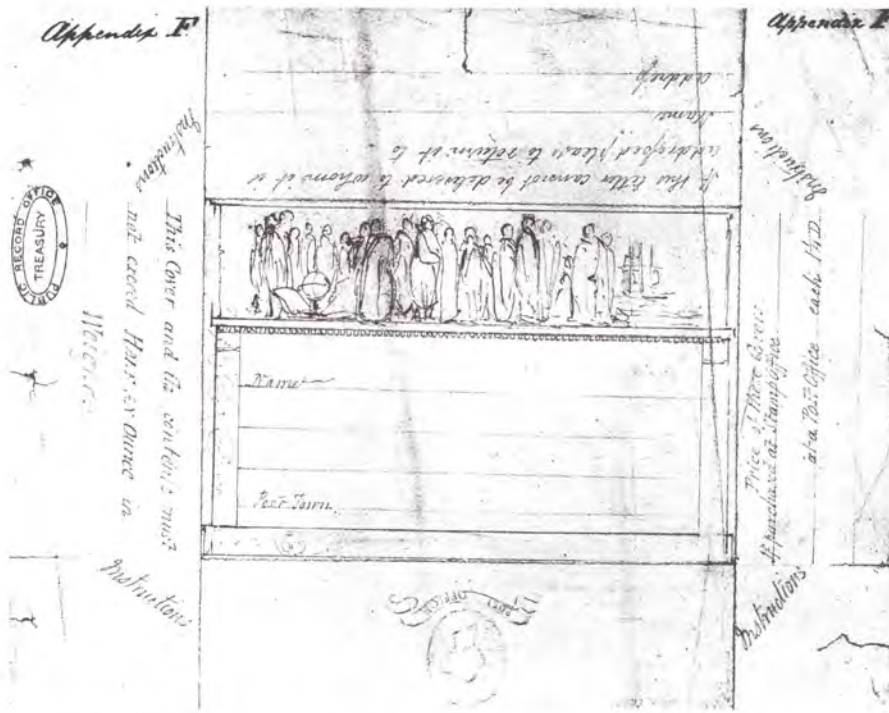
These records were of course in manuscript, tightly folded together and rather dusty. To deal with them they had to be photocopied and transcribed which took a considerable time, there being over 700 foolscap pages of writing now difficult to read.

Much of this material had never been published before. Perhaps the most important part of it was the report by Hill on the entries to the Treasury Competition. Various drawings and designs were attached to this, again largely unknown.

Another major source was the Treasury registers for the period. These listed every letter to be received at the Treasury and thus included lists of the entries to the Treasury Competition. From the long lists compiled it became possible to allocate names and dates to nearly all of the entries still extant. Strangely, it transpired that some of the entries had actually been submitted anonymously, this, despite the fact that there were monetary prizes for the best ideas. This information was to be used during 1990.

Most of the other related research took place in Post Office Archives or in the Victoria & Albert Museum where the Henry Cole papers and collection are held. These sources of information were in addition to study of items in the National Postal Museum. There, items were taken from their album pages and in many cases had old backing papers removed by our conservator. This often revealed new information or confirmed suspicions.

While the story of the designing and production of the Penny Black had been well researched, that of the Mulready stationery was very sketchy. Examination of correspondence hitherto unnoticed and of proofs in the Cole, Phillips and Royal collections allowed a much clearer picture to emerge. Unfortunately, unlike Perkins Bacon, the correspondence files and day books of William Clowes no longer exist. As



Henry Cole's original drawing for the letter sheet attached to Hill's report.

a result, production records have had to be reconstructed as far as possible.

A visit to Clowes' present printing works in Beccles in Suffolk produced little in the way of records but in their printing museum were illustrations of printing presses as existed in Clowes' former works in the 1830s. These steam-driven presses had two operators, one outside feeding sheets of paper into the machine and one actually inside the machine removing the printed items. This must have been extremely dangerous.

In terms of design what became known as the 'Mulready' began life as a drawing by the indefatigable Henry Cole. This is to be found in Rowland Hill's report on the Treasury Competition entries of December 1839 in the Public Record Office. Henry Cole was an ardent postal reformer and by this time Hill's assistant at the Treasury. Although himself an entrant in the Competition he helped Hill to read the entries. The resulting report



Above: Henry Corbould's rejected design full of classical symbolism.

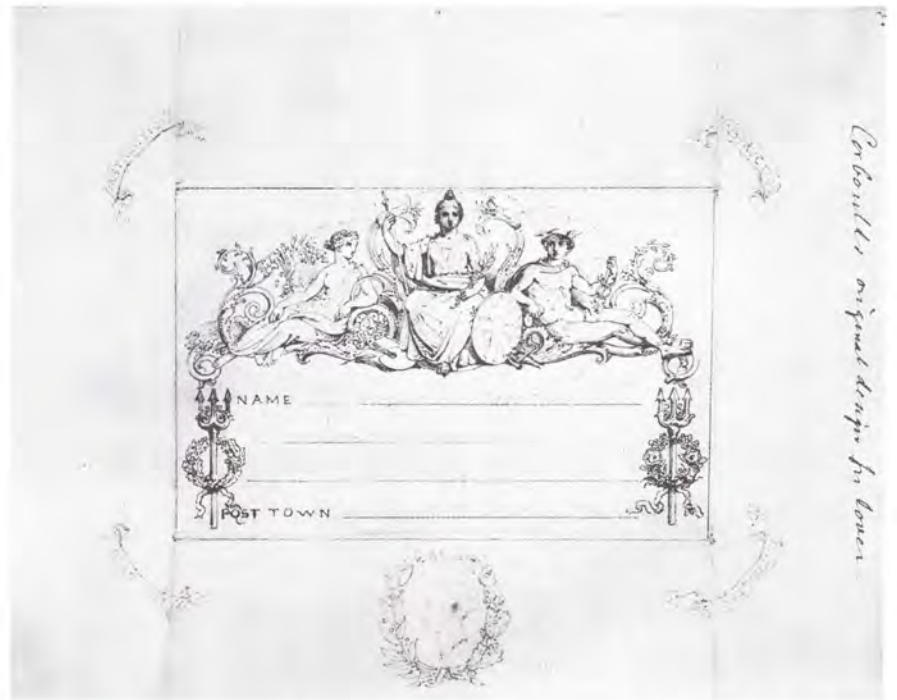
Left: William Mulready's initial design based on Britannia and depictions of people of the world, together with the steam tug at the foot.

recommended various methods of prepaying postage including letter sheets and envelopes and the suggested design for this was prepared by Cole. A decorated panel included room for the address and was surrounded by panels giving various instructions for use.

When the report was accepted and Hill was instructed to proceed to obtain designs Cole was approached by Henry Corbould in early December 1839 with a classical design similar in format to Cole's original concept. This is now in the Cole collection in the Victoria & Albert Museum. It has a central, seated Britannia with Mercury (the Messenger of the Gods) and probably Ceres beside.

However, this design seems to have been unacceptable for Cole was instructed to apply to William Mulready, a Royal Academician of Irish origins. Within a very short space of time he had produced a first design based on Britannia and the benefits of cheap communication spreading round the world. Although rather rough, this incorporates most of the elements contained in the final design and was described as 'poetic' by Cole.

A more finished version was provided



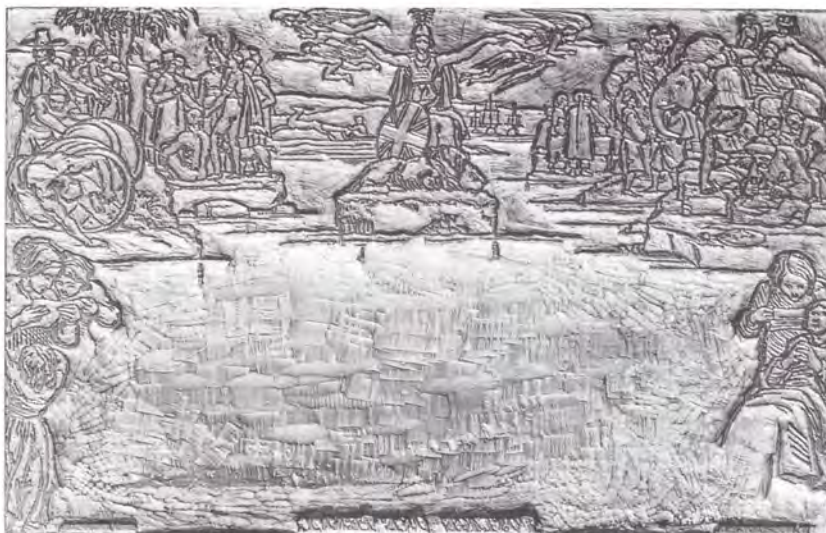
omitting the viaduct with the little steam tug at the foot and one or two other minor aspects. Mulready's design was to be used for both the letter sheet and the envelope and, when issued, was to cause an outcry. It was lampooned in caricatures both verbal and pictorial and was so scorned that it had to be quickly replaced. Many of the caricatures were based on political grounds with references to the Opium War with China and some of the leading Whig ministers. Others ridiculed Mulready's Irish origins, of which he was rather sensitive, and many scurrilous comments were passed on drunkenness and other supposed characteristics. The Irish at that time were very lowly regarded.

With the design completed Cole handed it over to John Thompson, the famous wood engraver, and a friend of Cole's. With his

very skilful technique creating the effect of metal in engraving black lines Thompson produced a wood cut probably in January 1840. This included the names of artist and engraver in minute script and the legend POSTAGE ONE PENNY exactly in the style as finally printed. The next stage would have been to produce a mould and from this a brass plate, with some of the finer points engraved out.

The original brass plate is still extant with a hole for the value. Close examination of the background shows the marks of chisel on wood, though these do not accord with the marks on the wood cut that exists. From this brass die, together with the typecast panels, stereotypes were taken to make up into the printing forme. It took a long time to prepare the die, and Thompson had only finished all the rough work by 8 March 1840, having been visited by Cole quite regularly to check up on progress.

Stereotype printing takes impressions from a fixed immovable forme. A mould is made from the relief surface. Molten metal is



Above: The woodblock of Mulready's design engraved by John Thompson.

and would not sell, production ceased. However, this still left a large quantity of paper both at Clowes and at Dickinson's mill which had been ordered. This was eventually used up in printing the replacement envelopes using a variant of Wyon's embossed head for the stamp.

This last had been developed by William Wyon and Whiting throughout 1840. Originally, it had been intended to stamp paper supplied by the public but difficulties had arisen getting a good impression. There was also a fair amount of competition between Wyon and Whiting as to who could produce the better die and where the fault lay in producing impressions of the quality required. A long series of dies was produced with the Queen's head engraved by Wyon and different surrounds prepared by Whiting. Eventually, a very simple surround was used.

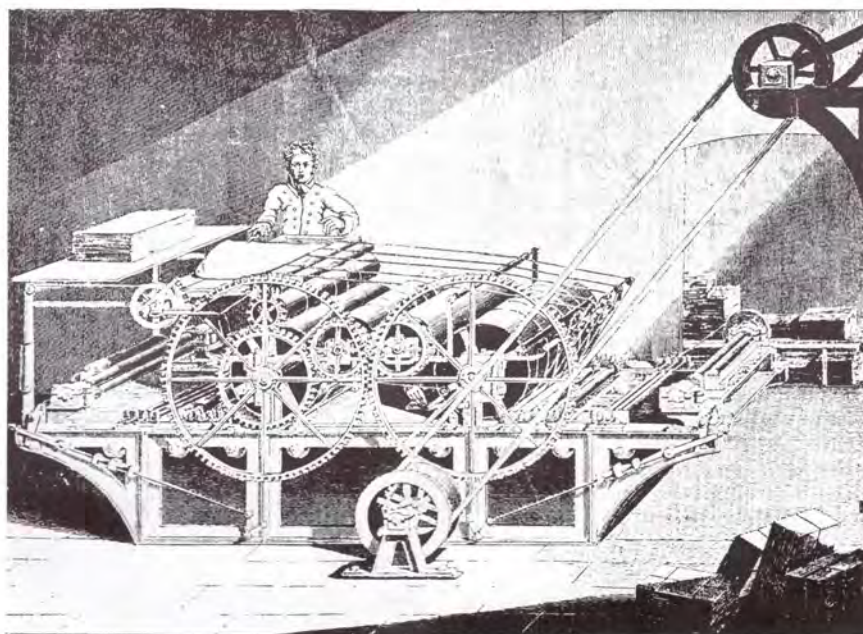
Research done in all these fields in 1989 resulted in new information being available for exhibitions in 1990 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black (and the Mulready). It was published in greater detail in the book *Postal Reform & the Penny Black*.



The master die in brass prepared by John Thompson from his woodblock. Victoria & Albert Museum.

then poured upon this to obtain a cast of which the surface is in relief, identical to the original. As many of these casts or stereotypes are taken as are required to create the printing forme. In the case of the Mulready the central design was surrounded by instruction panels. These were set in type in hot metal by Charles F Whiting and moulds from them were set around the stereotypes of the central design. Separate stereo numbers were individually inserted at the wish of Rowland Hill. The printing formes of the letter sheets and envelopes both consisted of 12 stereotypes, and various formes were produced.

Printing was on special security paper produced by John Dickinson with silk threads running through it. When it became obvious that the Mulreadys were unpopular



One of the steam-driven presses at William Clowes' works with the hands of the second operator visible in the middle of the machine.

LAST year, 1989, was an interesting year for collectors of modern British stamps with the introduction of Greetings stamps, the first Non-Value Indicator stamps, the first stamps printed by Walsall Security Printers and the first stamp book containing Country issues. All these innovations were reported on in the *Bulletin* as well as giving details of each new special issue and articles on past issues, thematic collecting and, of course, news of events and organisations of interest to collectors of British stamps.

Special Issues and Stamp Design

Barbara Last continued her useful series of articles giving background information to recent special issues; during 1989 she wrote on "Sea Birds and Waders", "Festival of Food", "Images of Scotland", "Our Industrial Archaeology", "Microscopology" and "The Making of the Lord Mayor". Such articles are also of value to thematic collectors, as was Tom Wilson's article "British Stamps of Medical Interest" published in the January issue. Francis Kennedy continued with his popular series on special issues of the past, dealing with the sets issued in 1982.

Readers interested in stamp design would have enjoyed the articles by Barry Robinson, Head of Design at Royal Mail Stamps & Philately. His "Design Matters" articles began in the October 1988 issue and continued to May 1989 with a follow-up article, answering some readers' comments, in November. His articles dealt with printing in photogravure, the merits of different printing processes and "Where does British Stamp Design and Production go from here?" On 29 June 1989 Mr Robinson was presented with the Phillips Medal for his contribution to stamp design at a ceremony at the Museum - duly reported in the *Bulletin* for September. Barry was particularly pleased with the designs of the 1989 Anniversaries stamps, based on firework displays; the actual displays (on Dartford Marshes, Kent) were featured in the April issue.

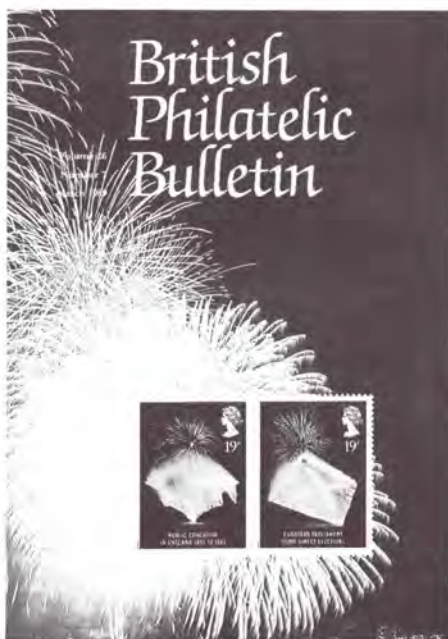
Two designers wrote about their work — Don Cordery about the Bird stamps in the January issue and Ronald Maddox about the Industrial Archaeology stamps in October.

The British Philatelic Bulletin, the Post Office's magazine for stamp collectors, is compiled and typeset at the National Postal Museum by John Holman who reviews the issues of 1989.

(These two articles proved a happy choice as these two issues were subsequently voted the most popular stamps of 1989 by *Bulletin* readers.)

In January readers were asked to vote for their favourite issue of special stamps in 1988; some 2,100 replies were received and the results of the poll published in May. The three most popular sets were: Linnæan Society, Armada and Welsh Bible.

The Royal Mail sponsors the Stamp Design section of the annual Design Competition run by the Royal Society of Arts. Details of this competition, and illustrations of some of the student stamp designs were published in the August, October and December issues.



Machin Issues

There is no doubt that interest in the Machin definitives remains strong and throughout the year the *Bulletin* has tried to provide up-to-date information on new issues for both the "average" and the specialist collector. David Dale, the Manager Definitive Stamps, RMS&P, has contributed background information and Len Newbery, doyen of stamp book collectors, submitted three articles of value — on Window Book Prototypes (January), Greetings Book (May) and Mark III Window Books (August). Mr Newbery's advice to me during the year has been much appreciated. Another of our regular contributors, Don Staddon, completed his survey on "The Machin Head on Stamps" in February with a look at the Country issues. The articles on Walsall Security Printers; Coated Papers Ltd (suppliers of paper to The House of Questa); and The Post Office Research Centre in the April, May and September issues proved popular with readers as did the 1989 List of Definitive and Country issues published in December.

Exhibitions

During the year information was published about the forthcoming Stamp World London 90 international exhibition. I was particularly pleased to publish important articles by James Negus, FRPSL about British exhibitions of 1940, 1950 and 1960 in the September, October and November issues (the 1970 and 1980 exhibitions were the subjects of articles published during 1990). The Museum's special exhibitions were reported on as was the impressive "Stampway to the World" exhibition (November) and exhibitions held at the Bath Postal, Bruce Castle and Falmouth museums. As space permitted details were published of philatelic events and society meetings.

The "Gems of the Phillips Collection" continued to provide readers with illustrations of some of the most interesting items in the Museum. During 1989 the articles dealt with De La Rue Dummy stamps, 1870 and 1881-3 colour trials and the Treasury Competition essays.

Mention was made from time to time of the activities of the Association of Friends of the NPM and new issues of its journal *Cross Post* were reviewed.

Regular Features

Kenneth Chapman's "Philatelic Terms Explained" is proving a most useful series; five articles were published during the year explaining Reprints, Used Abroad, Unappropriated Dies, Newspaper Stamps and Paquebots.

The "Posting Boxes" series continues to attract a lot of interest. This began in July 1978 and the 100th article was published in May 1989. During 1989 the Royal Mail introduced replica Penfold letter boxes in a number of areas and details (and illustrations) were included in the series. I have on file a considerable number of photographs sent in by readers for this feature, so many in fact that I have, reluctantly, had to ask readers not to submit any more!

The publication of books on British stamps and postal history shows no signs of abating and during the year some 24 books were reviewed. I shall always be pleased to receive copies of new books from publishers, book reviewing is one of the more pleasant aspects of producing a magazine. Also the standard of a magazine can often be judged by the extent of its reviews.

A monthly competition was introduced in September 1988 and during 1989 the number of entries averaged 1,500 per month. It is pleasing to see how many come in from overseas, most noticeably from the Netherlands, USA and New Zealand.

Research Articles

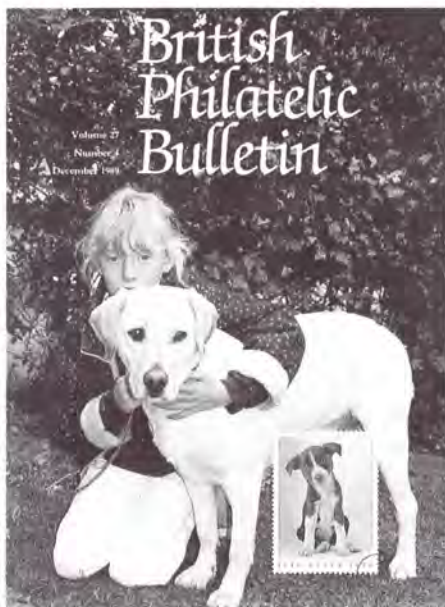
Two of my colleagues at the Museum submitted articles based on the results of their researches. Douglas Muir (Curator Philately) wrote on the 1948 Olympics stamps in the February, March and April issues. These articles were much praised by collectors of Olympic stamps; some of the material described in the articles was shown in the Museum's Olympics exhibition in the Autumn of 1988. Douglas also contributed a short piece on the Uniform Fourpenny Post to the December issue - marking the 150th anniversary of the introduction of this uniform rate.

Tony Gammons (Exhibitions Officer) who put together the Museum's Atlantic Exhibition (February 1989-April 1990) contributed four articles dealing with "Polar Postmasters" of the Arctic and Antarctic in the March, April, May and June issues. Much of the material mentioned was on show in the exhibition. Tony also wrote on "Ship Letter Telegrams" in July (based on material found in Post Office Archives — his second home!) and produced potted biographies of Sir Brian Tuke and Sir Francis Freeling for the July and October issues. These two worthies were amongst 13 postal personalities featured on Museum postcards issued between July 1989 and May 1990 (described elsewhere in this Report).

Alan Finch, of the British Postmark Society, contributed a useful article on Tourist Postmarks published in the June issue. This stimulated interest in these engaging, but often overlooked, postmarks.

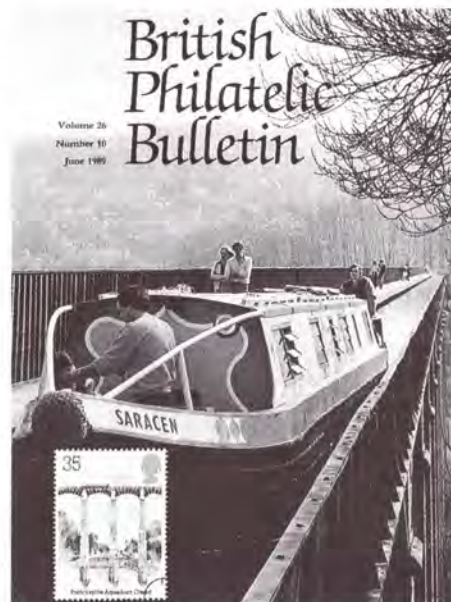
General

Although I am the only full-time *Bulletin* staff, there are a number of people involved in its preparation. I must thank my colleagues at Royal Mail Stamps & Philately Headquarters in Turnmill Street, London, at the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh and here at the Museum for their help throughout the year. Particular thanks go to Paul Burnett at Turnmill Street who is, in fact, the magazine's Production Manager. The skills of freelance designer Angus Mathieson and printers Moore & Matthes ensure the professional appearance of the *Bulletin*. The attractiveness of Angus's front cover designs is often commented upon. For the record, his daughter and doggie grace the front cover of the December issue although he himself has not yet featured. Recognition must also be given to Dr Jean Alexander for compiling the annual index; the index to Vol. 26 was published in August.



Compiling and typesetting the *Bulletin* takes up most of my time, with the typesetting facility being upgraded during the year. But anyone who has magazine experience will know that many other duties are involved, not least answering enquiries from readers and others. I am also involved with the *Postmark Bulletin* (see below) and manage some routine Museum work. The general running and administration of the *Bulletin* is not all I should like it to be and will hopefully be improved in the future. My aim is to bring such administration up to the standard of the best commercial philatelic magazines; I think the magazine and its readers deserve as much.

Hopefully, one item of trumpet-blowing will be permitted here — during 1989 I was pleased to receive from the Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Museum of Weston, Massachusetts a Vermeil Certificate awarded to the *Bulletin* at its 13th Annual Literature Fair.



Postmark Bulletin

The compilation of this *Bulletin* was transferred from the British Philatelic Bureau to the Museum in June 1988. The *Bulletin* is published fortnightly and gives advance information of special handstamps and postmark slogans. It is despatched to subscribers from the Bureau in Edinburgh. Information about the forthcoming postmarks is supplied to me from RMS&P headquarters and from the 64 Royal Mail Letter District Offices around the country. The Museum's Secretary, Mrs Pat Burton, has the unenviable task (cheerfully undertaken) of translating my handwritten copy into a typed master copy from which the *Bulletin* is printed by ROMEC (Royal Mail Engineering) in Edinburgh.

Whilst it is not always possible to give more than a few day's advance notice of some postmarks, every effort is made to announce postmarks at least one week before use. Strenuous efforts are also made to obtain illustrations for publication in the *Bulletin*. Occasionally, a postmark goes into use without prior notification and I am obliged to eagle-eyed Colin Peachey of the British Postmark Society for ensuring that such postmarks do not go unnoticed for long.

The Museum has an impressive collection of special handstamps and postmark slogan impressions transferred some time ago from Post Office Archives. Impressions were regularly sent to the Archives until the early 1980s but the system seems to have broken down somewhat thereafter. I now obtain for this collection impressions, on plain, stamped covers, of all new special handstamps and a selection of postmark slogans. Some of these covers, bearing handstamps used on the days of issue of new stamps, are now on display in the Museum's main gallery.

Information about subscription rates for both the *Bulletins* is available from the National Postal Museum.

Exhibitions

During the year a number of exhibitions took place in the Museum including one with an eminent philatelist. A retrospective view is given here.

THE Museum's major exhibition for 1989 had as its theme "The Atlantic Ocean". It opened on 1 February and ranged from the voyages of the Portuguese explorers of the 1400s through to recent crossings by boat and balloon. The exhibition commemorated the tercentenary of Falmouth as a Post Office packet station and the 50th anniversary of a direct air mail service from Britain to America.

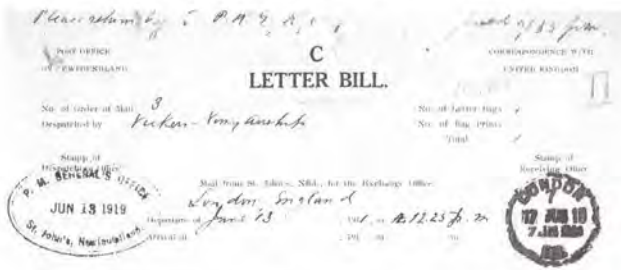
The display opened with the Portuguese sailors who made voyages of discovery to the Atlantic islands and down the west coast of Africa, and continued with the voyages of Columbus. Also featured were the exploration and colonisation of the Americas together with the efforts made to find a North West Passage to China and thus the

exploration of the polar regions. As a thematic display much of the history was told by means of photographic enlargements of modern stamps.

Polar exploration, however, was largely explained by means of covers and artefacts from the actual expeditions as the organisers often produced their own stamps and had postal facilities. The Antarctic story began with the first recorded crossing of the Antarctic Circle by Captain Cook in 1773

and ended with the British Graham Land Expedition of 1934-7. On show were the handstamps, and the original artwork for the postmarks, produced for Shackleton's expedition of 1921. The Arctic part of the exhibition included the voyages of Sir John Franklin, Sir James Clark Ross and Captain George Nares.

The airmail section included a cover carried by the airship *R34* on the return leg of her double crossing, the letter bill from the Alcock & Brown flight and the letter bill and a cover from the ill-fated Hawker attempt - all dating from 1919. Covers carried by the *Graf Zeppelin*, *Hindenburg* and *Domier DO-X* in the 1930s were featured as was a cover addressed to President Franklin D Roosevelt carried on the inaugural Imperial Airways service. This period was brought up to date with post-war BOAC first flight and early Concorde covers.



Letter Bill of mail carried on their Vickers-Vimy aircraft by Alcock and Brown.



Letter salvaged from the ill-fated Hawker attempt to fly the Atlantic in April 1919.

Contributed Displays

In the early part of 1989 there were two displays in the main gallery contributed by outside philatelists. The first was in conjunction with the Bird Stamp Society to mark the issue of stamps for the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Several of the Society's members supplied displays from their collections and the Museum contributed artwork from various GB issues of the past and the unadopted artwork of the Birds stamps. This display was subsequently on show at Spring Stampex.

The second display was on the stamps





Otto Hornung (centre) with Keith Fisher, General Manager, Royal Mail Stamps & Philately (left) and the Turkish Ambassador, His Excellency Nurver Nures (right).

The four letter boxes displayed were replicas of the famous Penfold box of c.1872-79; the "Liverpool Special" of 1863; the "First National Standard" of 1859-66 and the elaborate "Science and Arts" box designed for use in London, Edinburgh, Dublin and other major cities in 1857-59. Reproductions of old prints of the postal service and unadopted stamp designs showing postal uniforms expanded the theme as did various hats, badges and Post Office firearms.

Rare cover sent at the end of 1862 unstamped attracting a postage due label used on the first or second day of issue.

and postal history of the Ottoman Empire from the award-winning collection of Otto Hornung. Included were studies of the first issue of stamps, many of the postmarks and a remarkable number of fiscals. A large number of the items on display were very rare. Added to these collections were various coins and banknotes and the Turkish handstamp from Nablus. The exhibition was opened by the Turkish Ambassador, His Excellency Nurver Nures.

Letter boxes and Uniforms

For the rest of the year there was a display of letter boxes and Post Office uniforms.

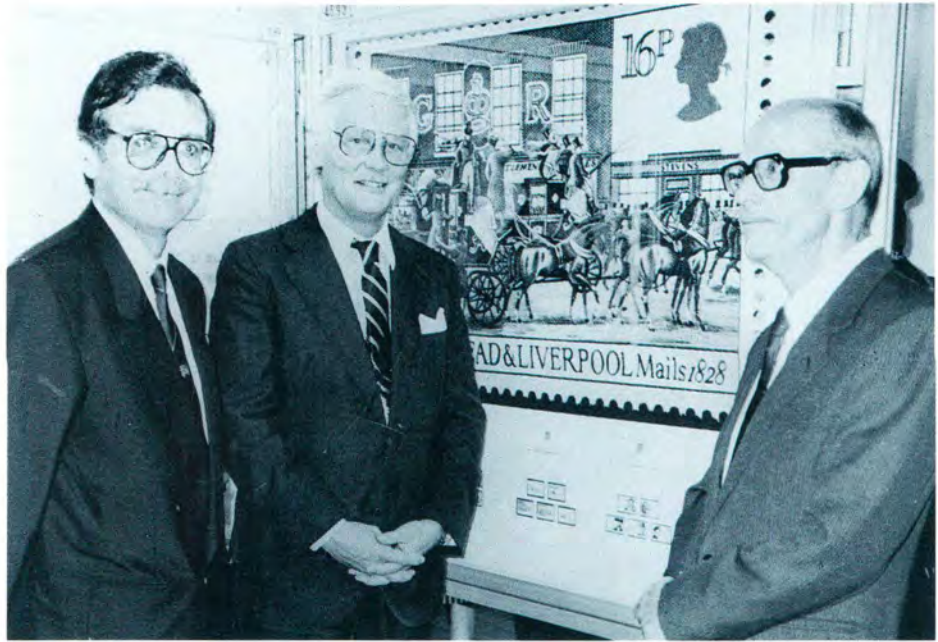
The uniforms shown were those for the London Twopenny Post letter carrier, 1837-55; a letter carrier of 1855-61; a military tunic pattern uniform of 1868-1910 and the London river postman uniform as worn by George Thomas Evans from 1845-72.

Letter-carriers' uniforms of 1793-1855, 1837-1855 and 1855-1860.



Czeslaw Slania

Czeslaw Slania is perhaps the world's best known stamp engraver, responsible for over 800 stamps from 14 different postal administrations. An exhibition of his work took place at the home of Countess Sonja and Count Lennart Bernadotte on the island of Mainau in Lake Constance, West Germany. The Museum contributed some of Slania's work for the British Post Office including the dies and essays of the 1984 issue for the 200th anniversary of the first mailcoach.



Czeslaw Slania (right) at the Insel Mainau exhibition with Stan Goron (left) and Jan Mårtenson (head of the UN Bureau in Geneva).

Penny Black Anniversary Definitives

The press preview or launch of the 1990 Penny Black Anniversary Definitives took place at the beginning of November. Exceptionally, this had a small display of items from the Museum to do with postal reform, the Penny Black and the Mulready stationery. This display was transferred to the Museum immediately after the press preview and remained there for the last few weeks of the year. Thus it acted as a prelude to all the celebrations planned for the 150th anniversary.



Left: Part of the Penny Black Anniversary definitive exhibition for the press preview.

R M Phillips Medal

The R M Phillips gold medal is awarded every five years to the person considered to have made the greatest contribution to British stamp design. In 1989 the judging panel, drawn from the members of the Stamp Advisory Committee, considered that this should be presented to Barry Robinson, Head of Design for Royal Mail Stamps under



Barry Robinson (right) receives the Phillips Gold Medal from Bill Cockburn, Managing Director of Royal Mail Letters.

whose guidance and inspiration British stamp design had become more imaginative than ever before. The presentation was made in the Museum in June by Bill Cockburn, Managing Director of Royal Mail Letters.

Barry Robinson, 43, has been Head of Design since 1980, having joined The Post Office as design co-ordinator in 1977.

Conservation

LAST year details were given of conservation measures which had been taken in the environment of the Museum and of the new materials which were being introduced to house the stamps and other philatelic material. During 1989 all controls were carefully monitored to ensure that lighting levels, air temperature and relative humidity were kept within the necessary limits to avoid damage to the artefacts.

At the same time work progressed in transferring material from the old album pages on to those made from conservationally acceptable paper. This long-term project will continue over the next few years. All new material is mounted on the new pages, printed specially for the Museum.

A fourth report on conservation in the National Postal Museum collections was commissioned from our conservator, Catherine Rickman, and a number of items were treated by her in preparation for the major displays which were to take place in 1990.

For this Report Catherine Rickman writes:

During 1989 about 30 items from the Phillips Collection and the Post Office

2. An indicator strip is wetted with de-ionised water and placed in contact with the paper to be tested.



Conservation is one of the most important aspects of the work of any museum. In last year's report basic information was published about requirements. More details are given here of what has been done during the year.



Testing for pH

1. Non-bleeding dye patches change colour according to the acidity or alkalinity of a solution or the paper itself.

3. Blotting paper and a glass weight ensure close contact between the indicator strip and paper.



Collection came to my studio for conservation treatment. I visited the Museum on average every three months to collect and deliver this work, to discuss future conservation projects with Museum staff and to make spot checks on environmental conditions in the galleries. Then, in October to November, I spent several days and a total of about 15 hours examining albums and individual items for a survey report on the Post Office Collection of philatelic material. This 30-page report, commissioned by the Curator of Philately, was intended to identify specific priorities for future conservation treatment, as well as giving an overall picture of the condition of the Collection.

Carrying out conservation treatment on philatelic material involves many of the standard paper conservation procedures which might be applied to any manuscript, print, drawing or document on paper. The conservator usually takes a treatment through the following basic stages: testing for pH (alkalinity or acidity) and the sensitivity of paper and media to water and other solvents; surface cleaning with brushes and erasers to remove dust and superficial grime; removal of old hinges and backings; further cleaning of the paper if possible to remove deeply ingrained dirt,

4. After a few minutes the indicator strip has changed colour and is compared with a reference scale to read the pH.





Cleaning

5. A proof on very thin "India" or Chinese paper stuck to a heavier European paper. Cautious wet treatment to remove foxing - the proof is first sprayed with de-ionised water.

stains and soluble contaminants; de-acidification and sometimes re-sizing; repair and infilling of missing areas or tears; re-lining if the paper is very fragile, and finally re-mounting on an acid-free support or mount

Many of the items from the Museum which have been through my studio this year have been treated along these lines. Mostly from the Phillips Collection, they included a few registration sheets and individual stamps. These often need different treatment and will be the subject of further study to find appropriate procedures during the coming year.

As part of the Post Office Collection survey carried out in 1989, the Museum's superb collection of early registration sheets was examined and many of them were found to need at least some of the conservation treatments listed above. One of the most obvious problems with these sheets of Penny Blacks, Penny Reds and Twopenny Blues is that the manuscript ink originally used for annotations on the back is unstable. Not only has the ink, which would initially have been nearly black, faded to light brown in some cases, but it has also exhibited its acidic composition by eating through the paper on which the stamps are printed. In the best cases, the ink simply shows as faint brown lines on the front of the stamps, in the worst (where the manuscript is most dense) it has turned the paper into a lace-work of holes and fractures.

The reason why the ink has caused such damage is that it probably contains gallic and sulphuric acids. The recipe for many writing inks in the 19th century included oak galls and copperas, or ferrous sulphate, and this combination is fatal for paper which is attacked by both acids and iron. The destruction of cellulose fibres (which is what paper is made of) is a gradual one in this case. Initially, the ink would appear to do no harm. Now, it is too late to reverse the process, but at least it can be arrested by



6. The dampened proof is placed on wet blotting paper over a low pressure vacuum suction table.

8. Discolouration is drawn into the blotting paper and with repeated applications of cleaning solution and water, the stain is gradually removed.



a neutralising treatment.

Neutralising the pH, or de-acidification as it is called, is a standard process in paper conservation. It involves the application of alkaline chemicals, which de-activate free acids and prevent their further formation from atmospheric pollutants or other contaminants. Alkaline de-acidification agents are often used in a solution of water, but with iron gall ink inscriptions, like the manuscript on the registration sheets, water



7. With the vacuum pump on, a very dilute ammonia solution is applied to the foxing spot.

cannot be used as it would make the ink bleed. Instead, the alkali has to be dissolved in an organic solvent, methanol for example. This is one reason why de-acidification is a specialist process which can only be carried out in a conservation studio or laboratory. Methanol and many other organic solvents are poisonous and must be used in a fume cupboard, where they evaporate completely, leaving behind the neutralising alkaline buffer.

De-acidification has to be approached with caution for other reasons, too. Apart from the risk to the health and alertness of the conservator due to the solvents used, the alkaline compound can affect a printed, or painted, image in unexpected ways. Although stabilising the paper, raising pH can destabilise pigments, perhaps altering their chemical composition from a brightly coloured substance to a dark and muddy one.

Another problem with the early registration sheets is old glue deposits, perhaps left over from their attachment to an earlier album or ledger page. The glue has disfigured the stamps with ugly stains. As the staining is partially water-soluble, in theory it is possible to reduce it, at least in those areas where there is no manuscript ink.

A more striking form of deterioration



9. A selection of tools used in paper conservation: a horse hair sieve for refining starch paste; a dahlia sprayer for wetting paper; brushes of goat and badger hair for applying paste and smoothing paper



Lining

10. Lining of a fragile Mulready proof, printed on very thin unsupported "India" paper. First the lining paper is wetted and pasted.

has occurred on the sheets of Twopenny Blue stamps and some of the Penny Reds. The former were probably printed with prussian blue pigment, but its fine, clear hue has been obscured by a mottled darkening, almost to the point of black in some cases. Although philatelists identify this effect as "oxidation", it was not obvious at first what had happened chemically to the colour of the stamps. Prussian blue is not a notably unstable pigment and it was unlikely to have turned black under normal conditions. Neither did there appear to be any coating or ground on the paper which could have been the culprit. However, there is one pigment, commonly used in the 19th century, which darkens in the presence of sulphur. Lead white, or basic lead carbonate, had already been encountered on some 1839 essays in the Collection and a standard technique for reversing sulphidated lead white had been effective then. I tested this technique on a small area of one of the Twopenny Blues

13. The pasted lining paper is supported along one edge on a wooden stick and lowered into place on the back of the proof.



11. The proof is dampened and placed on the bench face down.

and found that the black discolouration dramatically disappeared.

After consulting with Tom Collings, a conservation chemist and co-author of the new British Library publication, *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials*, my conclusion was that lead white had been mixed with prussian blue, which is a very finely divided pigment with great colouring power, to extend the printer's ink. Although protected to some extent from atmospheric sulphur (as sulphur dioxide, a ubiquitous pollutant) by the oil in the ink, the basic lead carbonate had nonetheless oxidised to lead sulphide, which is black or brown. The treatment I tested on the stamps changed the lead sulphide to lead sulphate which is again white, and returned the colour to its original deep blue.

The entire sheet of stamps could be treated in this way, but the process does need to be carried out in a fume cupboard. With such a valuable and unique part of the Collection the Museum is understandably

14. Working on the back of the newly lined and still wet proof a soft brush is used to ensure that no air bubbles are trapped between the proof and the Japanese paper.



12. Wrinkles and creased corners are carefully eased out so that the proof is quite flat.

reluctant to allow these registration sheets to leave their premises. Treatment will therefore have to be limited to what little can be done in the Museum without specialist facilities, or to a short period of work in the studio where the stamps will be accompanied by a member of Museum staff.

The disfiguring effects of oxidised pigment will never be more than a minor problem in most stamp collections. In general, black stains on paper are likely to be of less mysterious origin: mould growth or surface dirt, for example. The main cause of concern for the philatelic conservator remains poor quality mounting materials. The publication mentioned above goes into considerable detail on this subject and may prove to be a welcome addition to the call for readily available acid-free album pages and reliable, inert plastic protectors.

For further information on paper conservation and paper conservators contact:

The Secretary
The Institute of Paper Conservation
Leigh Lodge
Leigh
Worcester
WR6 5LB
Tel. 0886 32323

The Information Officer
The Conservation Unit
Museums and Galleries Commission
7 St. James's Square
London
SW1Y 4JU
Tel. 071 839 9340

Publication details:

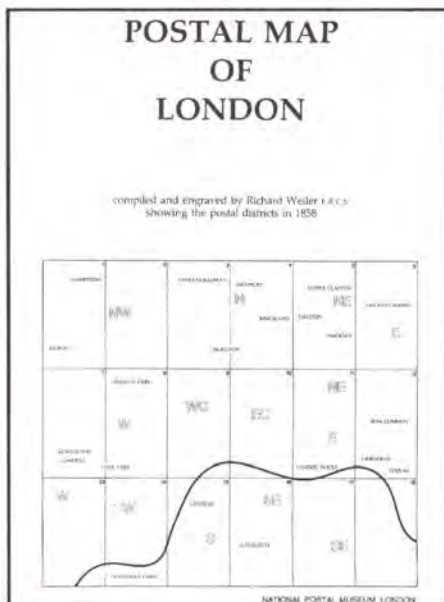
T J Collings and R F Schooley-West, *The Care and Preservation of Philatelic Materials*, The British Library, 1989. £12.95 from The British Library, Publishing and Marketing, Great Russell Street, London WC1E 3DG.

Publications

DURING the year some 14 postcards were issued including a number to publicise the exhibition Stamp World London 90. Associated with these were appropriate postmarks which tended to coincide with the issue dates of special stamps. These are all detailed below.

For Stamp World London 90 it was decided to produce a series of 12 cards leading up to the exhibition in May 1990. These featured 'Postal Personalities' from Sir Brian Tuke up to William Mulready. The people chosen, both from inside and outside the Post Office, contributed in a major way to the development and running of the postal services or the design of the first postage stamps and postal stationery.

Some of the important personalities chosen had no suitable portrait extant and so Clive Abbott was commissioned to paint them in watercolour, basing his portraits on drawings, busts or engravings of the correct periods and then clothing the people in garments of the times.



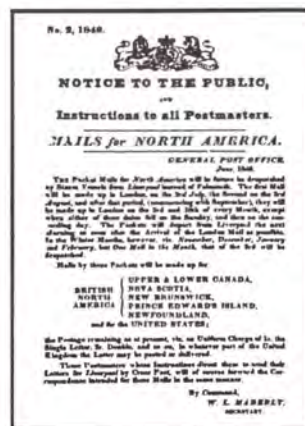
Other publications included the reproduction of a postal map of London compiled and engraved by Richard Weller FRCS showing the first division of London into postal districts in 1857-8.

Factsheets were also produced for some of the exhibitions held in the Museum and were made available free to visitors.

New Museum publications in 1989 consisted mainly of postcards with associated postmarks. A postal map of London in 1858 was also produced together with various factsheets about exhibitions.



89/1 Postal Notice No. 2 of 1840 notifying the change in the port of departure for North American mails. (Post Office Archives Postal Notice Collection)



89/3 Poster for the Transatlantic Line's service from Le Havre and Plymouth to New York. (Post Office Archives ref. Post 29/233, PKT 332L/1877)



89/2 Postal Notice No. 18 of 1876 showing the arrangements for sending mail to the 'Nares' Arctic Expedition by the yacht Pandora. (Post Office Archives Postal Notice Collection)



89/4 Uniform of General Post letter carrier 1793-1855. Initially supplied to London letter carriers only. The issue of uniforms was extended to letter carriers in principal provincial cities from c.1834.

89/5 Uniform of London Post letter carrier 1837-1855.

89/6 Letter carrier's uniform 1855-1860.

89/7 The Penny Black. The world's first adhesive postage stamp. 6 May 1840.



NPM/SWL90/2 Sir John Coke, 1563-1644, and Sir Francis Windebank, 1582-1646, installed as joint 'Masters of the Posts' on 1 July 1637 by King Charles I. (Renditions by Clive Abbott)



NPM/SWL90/5 John Palmer 1742-1818. Theatre manager of Bath, revolutionised postal transport by setting up a network of fast, light, mail coaches running to a strict timetable. (Post Office Collections)

89/8 The first sorting machine used in Britain was the Transorma; introduced on 7 October 1935, it worked successfully at Brighton until June 1968. Issued in conjunction with the British Philatelic Federation Congress being held at Brighton on 8, 9 and 10 June 1989.



NPM/SWL90/3 Henry Bishop, 1611-1691, installed as 'Master of Running Messengers' on 14 August 1660. Appointed Postmaster General by Royal Proclamation dated 16 January 1661. (From the Collection at Parham Park, West Sussex)



NPM/SWL90/6 Sir Francis Freeling, 1764-1836. Began his career in the Post Office at Bristol. Later became Secretary to the Post Office, 1798-1836, one of the Post Office's great administrators. (Post Office Collections)

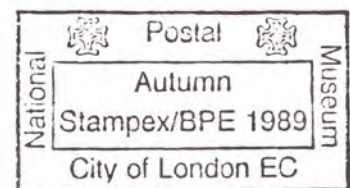


Stamp World London 90

NPM/SWL90/1 Sir Brian Tuke - d.1545, known as the first 'Master of the Posts', c.1510-1545. (National Gallery of Art, Washington DC)



NPM/SWL90/4 Ralph Allen 1693-1746. Postmaster of Bath, revolutionised the postal service by 'setting cross posts' between the major post roads. This gave a direct link between major provincial towns. (Post Office Collections)



1989 Postcard Print Figures

1 Feb	Transatlantic (89/1-3)* 10,000 (of each)
5 May	Uniforms (89/4-6)* 11,000 (of each)
5 May	Penny Black (89/7)* 22,750
5 May	Brighton BPF Congress (Transorma) (89/8)* 11,600
25 July	Postal Personalities 1 (SWL90/1-3)* 15,800 (sets)
17 Oct	Postal Personalities 2 (SWL90/4-6)* 15,000 (sets)

*still on sale

Museum Charter

1. Statutory Obligations

* To effect the Post Office's statutory obligations in respect of all Public Records held in the National Postal Museum.

* To ensure that all Public Record material held in the National Postal Museum is identified and recorded as such.

2. Objectives

* To preserve, display and provide facilities for research on:

The Post Office Collection of British stamps and associated material including artwork, essays, proofs and registration sheets as augmented from time to time by newly acquired material, either by transfer, presentation or purchase.

The R M Phillips Collection, in accordance with the Memorandum of Gift dated 2 April 1965.

The Post Office Collection of postage stamps of other administrations provided under the auspices of the UPU or other bodies.

* To promote in appropriate ways in the United Kingdom and elsewhere knowledge of these collections.

* To develop NPM collections, and to display British and overseas stamps.

* To act as a depository for the post-1969 UPU Collection, displaying this as far as possible or desirable.

* To act as a depository for historic artefacts such as postage stamp dies, slogan dies and postboxes.

* To disseminate definitive information on philatelic and related subjects.

* To produce internal and external exhibitions.

* To provide advice to The Post Office on philatelic matters.

* To produce suitable sales items and to provide a retail outlet for these.

3. Acquisition Policy

To acquire by transfer, purchase, donations, bequest or exchange:

Public Record and issued material produced by the British Post Office of a philatelic or related nature, or illustrative of postal services.

"Postal history"† and related material relevant to British postal history, so that representative collections may be formed.

Modern foreign stamps received from the Universal Postal Union.

High quality collections of foreign stamps and/or postal history material.

Postal artefacts of an appropriate size and nature.

4. Disposal Policy

Any unwanted duplicate material may be disposed of in accordance with agreed and appropriate procedures, as set out in the explanatory notes.

5. Conservation

* To ensure that the safety and integrity of the collections is maintained at all times.

* To ensure that the ambient conditions (temperature, humidity, light intensity) in the Museum are conducive to the long term preservation of all items.

6. National Postal Museum Board

The General Manager, Stamps and Philately shall have fully managerial responsibility for the NPM. The Chairman of the Post Office shall appoint members to the NPM Board to give the General Manager and his staff advice on matters where their advice is sought and on any other matters where the Board consider their advice would be appropriate.

†The phrase "Postal History" here refers to pieces of mail sent through the post with or without postage stamps but with postally significant markings.

Members of the Board



Keith Fisher
(Chairman)

Keith Fisher: Chairman of the National Postal Museum Board; General Manager, Royal Mail Stamps and Philately since January 1985; Trustee, British Philatelic Trust since 1986. Joined the Post Office in 1963 in the West Midlands and moved to London in 1968.

Stan Goron: Manager of the National Postal Museum since 1986. Joined the Post Office in

Jean Farrugia



Stan Goron

1970. Committee member of the Royal Numismatic Society.

Kenneth F. Chapman: Philatelic writer and former editor of (amongst others) *Philately*, *Stamp Collecting* and *Philatelic Magazine*; Member of the Post Office Stamp Advisory Committee 1968-1980; worked professionally in philately since 1928. Enrolled in the American Philatelic Society's Philatelic

Ken Hind



Kenneth F. Chapman

Writers' Hall of Fame (1986).

Jean Farrugia: Post Office Departmental Record Officer and Archivist since 1980. Joined the Post Office in 1952 and has spent almost all her time in the National Postal Museum (as Assistant Curator) or Post Office Archives. Author of *The Letter Box* (1964) and several other publications.

John Marriott





Douglas N. Muir



David Paton



Ian Robertson



Alan Wiltshire

Ken Hind: Joined the Post Office 1948 and involved in stamp production since 1951. Directed the setting up of the Philatelic Bureau and the *Philatelic Bulletin* and was involved in the development of the Machin head design. Chief Post Office negotiator with Reginald M Phillips for the project to set up the Museum based on his collection. Retired in 1980 and member of the National Postal Museum Board since its inception.

John B. Marriott: Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection since

1969, Member of the Royal Philatelic Society London since 1951, Council Member since 1969 and President 1983-6. Signed the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists in 1972, and international jury member since 1970. Specialist in the philately of Trinidad. Worked (1943/5) on codes and cyphers at Bletchley.

Douglas N. Muir: Curator, Philately, National Postal Museum since January 1988. Former editor of *Philatelic Magazine*, *Stamp Collecting* and *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Founded the Postal Mechanisation Study

Circle in 1976 and is currently its President. Author of *Postal Reform & the Penny Black: A New Appreciation* (1990).

David Paton: Deputy Manager, National Postal Museum since 1989 and Secretary to the Board. Joined the Post Office in 1964. Deputy Court Postmaster 1982-1989 serving at the royal residences of Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle and Balmoral.

Ian Robertson: Director, National Army Museum, Chelsea since

January 1988. Fellow of the Museums Association, President 1986-8. First Chairman of Museum Enterprise Limited, the Museums Association's trading company. Started his Museum career in 1965 and Curator of the Passmore Edwards Museum 1967-1988.

Alan Wiltshire: District Head Postmaster, Royal Mail City and International since 1988. Joined the Post Office in 1960. Responsible for King Edward Building in which the National Postal Museum is housed.

Explanatory Notes

Acquisition Policy

The Policy of the National Postal Museum is to acquire the following categories of material by purchase, donation, bequest, exchange or transfer as appropriate.

Philatelic

* Public Records relating to philatelic products issued by the British Post Office both in the UK and abroad (eg former British Post Offices in Morocco, Levant etc). This relates to philatelic artefacts off-file transferred to the National Postal Museum from Post Office Archives or directly from the originating sections, or obtained by other means from outside the Post Office.

* Philatelic material issued by the British Post Office in the UK and abroad, and any material (eg publicity material) relating to those issues.

* "Postal History" material (eg letters, covers, postcards, labels, waybills) relating to services operated by the British Post Office in the UK and abroad, and services operated between the UK and other countries. Such material to be acquired to enable the Museum to form representative collections of a general or specialist nature, or for inclusion in particular exhibitions. Acquisition shall be either by purchase on the open market or by private treaty, or by way of donation or bequest. Acquisition by purchase shall be based on an annual purchasing plan submitted to, and approved by, the National Postal Museum Board.

* Documents, maps, timetables etc, relating to any of the National Postal Museum's philatelic collections or displays and which serve to illustrate or clarify those collections or displays.

* Philatelic material received from the Universal Postal Union.

* High quality collections of foreign or Commonwealth philatelic material received by way of donation or bequest and which may serve as reference and/or research material.

* Dies, plates, cylinders relating to postage stamps and stamped stationery issued by the British Post Office and revenue stamps sold by the British Post Office.

Non-Philatelic

* Public Record material illustrative of products sold or available over Post Office counters (eg postal orders, money orders, revenue stamps, telegrams, international reply coupons, licences, stamps sold on behalf of agency customers etc) and examples of the issued products.

* Public Record material illustrative of labels, stickers etc produced by the British Post Office and applied to packages passing through the mail (eg registration labels, recorded delivery labels, customs labels, Datapost and parcelpost labels etc) and examples of the issued products.

* Documentary material relating to any Post Office service (eg handouts, give-aways, service brochures) that enable a reference collection to be maintained for those services.

Artefacts

Artefacts of suitable size and relevance, used in British Post Office operations in the UK or abroad and produced by or for the Post Office. This includes uniforms, pillar-boxes, posting-boxes, franking machines, handstamps, scales, badges, mechanised equipment, writing implements, lamps, videos and other electronic records, etc.

The National Postal Museum will not acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any material unless the Museum Board or responsible officer is satisfied that the Museum can acquire a valid title to the material in question and that in particular it has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country) in which it may have been legally owned, in violation of that country's laws.

This Acquisition Policy will be reviewed at least every five years.

Disposal Policy

* Public Record material once selected for preservation will not normally be disposed of, but where a case for its disposal or transfer is considered justified, no such disposal or transfer will take place without the approval of all of the following:

- a. The General Manager Stamps & Philately (Chairman of the NPM Board) and, if possible the NPM Board. If

there is inadequate time for NPM Board approval, a retrospective report will be made to the Board.

b. The Secretary to the Post Office.

c. The Public Record Office.

d. The Lord Chancellor's Office.

* Issued philatelic and related material surplus to NPM requirements will be disposed of in the following ways:

i. new British Post Office stamps will be destroyed in accordance with normal Post Office practice;

ii. material bought on the open market will, subject to the approval of the General Manager Stamps & Philately or NPM Board, be returned to the market or offered for sale or exchange to one or more other potentially interested museums or libraries.

iii. material received and accepted by way of donation or bequest will not normally be disposed of, but where any such material becomes surplus to requirements, and the terms of acceptance permit, the material will be offered for sale, exchange or gift to other potentially interested museums or libraries, or if no interest is shown, put on the open market. None of this will be done without the prior approval of the NPM Board.

iv. any modern philatelic material (eg first day covers), received from overseas administrations or their representatives, and surplus to museum requirements will be donated to the British Library. Unwanted philatelic magazines will be donated to the British Library, recognised philatelic organisations, or other interested museums.

* Issued examples of non-philatelic material mentioned above, and which are surplus to NPM requirements will usually be destroyed. In some cases they may be offered to the British Library or other interested museums.

* Artefacts accepted by the Museum will not normally be disposed of.

* Some material accepted by the NPM may be transferred to the Post Office Archives if the Manager of the Museum and Post Office Archives agree that the Archives are a more suitable place of deposit.

Association of Friends

THE year 1989 saw the steady development of the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum. Large attendances were drawn to the meetings of Friends and their guests.

In March, the Friends visited Post Office Archives at Freeling House, London SE1 where Jean Farrugia and her staff arranged to open for us on a Saturday, providing a veritable treasure chest of many varied and interesting books, documents, seals, records, posters, uniforms and badges. Archives has one of the best collections of British social history since the 1680s and Friends were able to see many original documents that have survived the years. This is a visit we plan to repeat.

Then in May we had a fine meeting at the Museum on British Mail Coaches and Routes. Our two speakers, Rev. Christopher Beaver and John Parker gave us an insight into both the old and the modern. Christopher loves delving into old newspapers, time-tables, parliamentary reports, Post Office Archives and any source which will verify or cross-reference the establishment or existence of a coach route over which the Royal Mail was carried.

John Parker brought us up to date for he is the driver of the coach and four undertaking all the official celebratory runs in modern times for the Post Office. Friends saw a film of the Bristol to London run in 1984 celebrating the bicentennial of the first carriage of mail by coach in Great Britain.

We learned of all the problems of transshipment of horses and carriages across Europe and wondered at the sheer physical, hard work that went into the training and handling of these magnificent animals.

In September Tony Gammons entertained us with 'Crossing the Atlantic' in support of the exhibition at the Museum. We learned - again as the result of long hours of research in Post Office Archives - of the hard times endured by packet captains and crews, and the daily risks both to them and the mails from privateers who roamed the seas seeking booty.

An NPM card bearing the special Friends cachet for the AGM.

The Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum was formed in 1985. Last year was one of consolidation and expansion. Here, the Secretary, Ray Pottle, reports on their activities.



Above: Ray Pottle looking at poster artwork at Post Office Archives during a visit by the Friends.

Loading Mail on the Post Office Railway
Archibald Ziegler ARCA
Commissioned by the Post Office Poster Advisory Group c.1938.
From the Post Office Archives' Poster Artwork Collection.



The Museum, situated in King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP, is open from 9.30am - 4.30pm Monday to Thursday and 9.30am - 4.00pm Fridays, admission free. Closed weekends and Bank and Public Holidays.

Printed by Clement and Foster Printers, London SE1 3AA

To venture to sea in those days was like going to war. The packets were armed but often out-gunned and the order of the day was always the same - not to let the mail be captured by the enemy. It had to be sunk, hence duplicate mail was despatched by separate ships in the hope that at least one of them would get through to its destination.

Tony was followed by an excellent display of cover material put together by Geoffrey Oxley on letters that had actually crossed the Atlantic.

Finally, at our very well-attended Annual General Meeting, after we had dispensed with the formal business of the day, was given over to Eric Ivens who designs cachets and handstamps and commemorative covers. After lunch, Richard Blake, who designs postcards, mostly of a postal nature, entertained us all with the evolution of the mail coach and then on to his other cards which become much more alive when one hears the reasons and stories behind the illustrations.

In 1989 officers of the Association changed with the positions of Chairman, Treasurer and Editor of *Crosspost* all changing hands quite smoothly, and total membership increased.

National Postal Museum, London EC1A 1LP 8811



JH
NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM
KING EDWARD STREET,
LONDON, EC1A 1LP.

