




National Postal Museum

The Philatelic Year 1991



The Philatelic Year 1991

Contents

Foreword	3
<i>Sir Bryan Nicholson, Chairman of the Post Office, provides the foreword.</i>	
Introduction	4
<i>David Lane, Director and General Manager, Royal Mail National, presents the report.</i>	
Work in Progress	5
<i>Description of work undertaken in the Museum during the year which still continues: accessing, listing, cataloguing, mounting and computerisation.</i>	
	
Exhibitions	7
<i>Reports on the exhibitions held in the Museum and those attended (or contributed to) overseas.</i>	
Pearson Hill Machine	10
<i>Description of the world's first stamp-cancelling machine and how the replica was built to mark the Museum's 25th birthday.</i>	
	
Conservation	13
<i>Catherine Rickman describes the problems of conserving maps and modern stamp papers; also the Mulready wood-block.</i>	
'Hen and Chickens'	16
<i>A centre-cycle of 1882 acquired by the Museum in 1991.</i>	
New Acquisitions	17
<i>Some of the items acquired during 1991 including postal history, artefacts and unadopted artwork for stamps.</i>	
	
Silver Jubilee	20
<i>The oldest and latest stamp cancelling machines celebrate the Museum's 25th birthday.</i>	
Meter Collection	22
<i>Progress in the cataloguing and mounting of the Museum's collection of meter machines and marks.</i>	
British Philatelic Bulletin	24
<i>The year's work on the Bulletin which is typeset and published from the Museum.</i>	
Publications	26
<i>A listing of postcards published during the year with postcard and postmark figures.</i>	
Association of Friends	28
<i>Report by the Secretary on the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum.</i>	

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

The replica Pearson Hill stamp cancelling machine operated by Tony Gammons, superimposed on one of the original patents.

Printed in the United Kingdom at
The House of Questa

©National Postal Museum, 1992

National Postal Museum Board

David Lane *Chairman*
Kenneth F. Chapman
Jean Farrugia
Stan Goron
John B. Marriott
Douglas N. Muir
David Paton
Ian Robertson
Alan Wiltshire

National Postal Museum Opening Times
9.30 am to 4.30 pm (Monday to Friday)
Closed at weekends and all Bank and Public
Holidays
Admission free

Foreword

Sir Bryan Nicholson,
Chairman and Chief Executive of the Post Office,
provides the foreword to
the 1991 annual report.



IN 1991, the National Postal Museum celebrated its 25th birthday. Conceived in the early 1960s and initially opened in 1966 following the donation by Reginald Phillips of his superb award-winning collection of British stamps from the reign of Queen Victoria, the Museum was enlarged to its present size and inaugurated by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1969. With the incorporation of the Post Office's philatelic archive and a continuing influx of new material, the Museum contains a veritable treasure house of British philatelic material, much of it unique. As Chairman of the British Post Office, which in 1840 was first in the world to introduce adhesive postage stamps, I am proud that this heritage has been preserved for us today and for posterity. I would also like to congratulate the National Postal Museum on its 25 years' service to the Post Office and the nation and for its continuing endeavours in maintaining a high standard of professionalism and mounting a varying and interesting range of displays. This Annual Report bears ample testimony to the endeavours and to the success achieved. Times change, however. During the past 25 years a large quantity of additional material has been added to the collections, not just philatelic material, but all manner of postal artefacts - pillar boxes, carts, franking machines, handstamps - the Museum is, after all, the museum for the whole of the Post Office. It is also bursting at the seams. Display methods have also changed as have public expectations of what museums have to offer.

1991 saw the start of a fundamental reorganisation of the Royal Mail, one to carry what is one of the nation's largest businesses, through the 1990s and into the 21st century, with enhanced performance, quality of service and customer satisfaction. This reorganisation, due to be in place by April 1992, also gives us the opportunity to stand back and assess the Museum's role for the future. Up to now the Museum has, in accordance with its origins and available space, been largely a philatelic museum. To be a proper postal museum, one that reflects the full history of the British Post Office and its present services and mission, requires much more. Whether and how this can be achieved is currently being reviewed, and I, for one, am looking forward to the answers.

Bryan Nicholson

Introduction

THE Post Office Group is organised into three operating businesses - Royal Mail, Post Office Counters Ltd and Royal Mail Parcelforce, each with its own Managing Director and management committee reporting to the Post Office Chairman and Board. The National Postal Museum, although having the whole of the Post Office as its remit has in recent years organisationally been managed through a business centre, Royal Mail Stamps. As a result of some significant organisation changes within Royal Mail, designed to make Royal Mail more accountable to the customer, the way the Museum is managed has now changed. Royal Mail has now been organised into nine geographical operating Divisions, replacing the former 64 letter districts, and three Strategic Business Units (SBU) - Royal Mail National, Royal Mail International and Royal Mail Streamline.

The National Postal Museum and former Royal Mail Stamps have now been incorporated into Royal Mail National under myself as its Director and General Manager. Royal Mail National is the largest of the business units with a revenue responsibility of approximately £2.8b and being responsible not only for all matters relating to stamps and philately and the Museum but also for the growth on non pre-sorted inland postal services, postcoding, electronic mail, etc.



David Lane, Director and General Manager, Royal Mail National, introduces the report on the year 1991 in the National Postal Museum, London.



Keith Fisher, formerly General Manager, Royal Mail Stamps and the Chairman of the NPM Board has moved to become Director of International Affairs at Royal Mail International. We wish Keith every success in his new post and are very grateful for the support he gave the Museum in recent years. Because of the importance with which I view the Museum and its potential, I propose to continue the principle Keith set, by chairing the NPM Board.

Another member of the NPM Board to retire in 1991 was Ken Hind, ERID. Ken's association with the NPM began before the Museum even existed for it was he who in the early 1960s, conducted the negotiations with Reginald Phillips about the setting up of the Museum and the donation of the Phillips collection. Ken's connection with the Museum has been continuous since then. The Museum owes a great deal to Ken and we wish him well for the future.

A further, familiar NPM figure to retire, albeit at the start of 1992, has been Harry Reeves. Harry served as a custodian for 10 years and many visitors will remember him for the enthusiasm and wealth of information with which he usually greeted them as they entered the main gallery. Harry's interests are many and varied and I am sure he will have a

Harry Reeves at his retirement

very busy retirement! Harry's place has been taken by Keith Dumas. During the year we also welcomed Frank O'Neill and Mehmet Ali as full-time custodians, and Liz Arthurs as the Museum secretary.

One sad note was the lengthy illness of David Paton, the Deputy Manager. At the time of writing David was on the way to recovery and we wish him speedy improvement.

The big event of 1991 was our 25th birthday. To provide a focal point for the celebration we commissioned a working replica of the world's first stamp cancelling machine, designed by Pearson Hill in 1857. Details of this replica and the celebrations will be found elsewhere in this report. "Stamping the Mail" and "Maps and the Post Office" were our main exhibitions of the year. These have proved very popular with visitors.

A good deal of work went on behind the scenes to research the exhibitions and to deal with the large amount of new material entering the Museum's collections. Most notable of the latter, apart from the Pearson Hill replica, were a "Hen and Chickens" cycle, the late Len Newbery's collection of retail stamp booklets, and the original Mulready woodblock authenticated by Douglas Muir, the NPM's Curator Philately, in 1990. Those of you interested in modern world stamps will be pleased to note that mounting of the UPU collection in albums is now more or less up-to-date.

Inadequate accommodation and resources continue to limit the processing, conservation, storage and display of the collections. Following my appointment, I am now reviewing our needs and will be looking to clear away some of these limitations to protect and optimise our heritage. Sir Bryan also states in his foreword the present re-organisation has provided the stimulus to review the options for the future. In the meantime, the Museum will continue to provide a good service and in the spirit of good Customer Service will be drawing up its own service standards for the benefit of all visitors.

The Association of Friends continued to thrive in 1991 with several members, including the late Len Newbery, providing valuable assistance. To these and all my colleagues at the Museum a sincere thank you for another good year.

Work in Progress

As always, a large amount of necessary work went on in the Museum behind the scenes which did not result in new displays to the public. Activities such as cataloguing, accessing, documentation, computerisation, mounting and re-mounting continued and some new collections began to be formed. Several Friends of the Museum provided able assistance with the collections.

GB Reference Collection

The *Chronolist of British Stamps* has been completed by Dr Jack Goodwin and a copy may be seen at the main gallery desk. This work gives details of the 3,500 stamps issued by Great Britain since 1840. Appendices provide an index of names of people, list of watermarks, tabulation of issues of each type per year, a postal events listing for each year and a chronolist of postal telegraph stamps.

This volume is kept up to date each year. In process is a revision of the postal fiscals of 1881 and 1883 in keeping with further studies on the subject. Further, for stamps up to 1902 notes have been added as to their location in the Reginald M Phillips collection (by volume and page number). This has also been added to the beginning of the main GB reference collection displayed in the main gallery which contains stamps from 1902 to date only.

Fiscals

In preparation for a 1992 display of postal fiscals and revenues contained in the Phillips collection work has been done on those volumes of his collection. Mr Phillips had not been able to complete work on the subjects in Volumes XLIII and XLIV, namely postal fiscals, railway stamps, telegraph stamps and revenues.

George V Shades

The collection of George V shades has progressed well and may be completed in the coming year. This work will not be on display, but will be available for examination upon prior request.

Help from Friends

The U.P.U. collection was brought up to date with the help of the late Len Newbery and Mike Bament who subsequently began work on the postal history collection of Penny Posts. This will be the subject of a

This section covers the considerable work that continues over a long period of time, such as accessing, listing, cataloguing and mounting.

report next year. Jack Peach's work on the meter machines and marks is recorded elsewhere. Others have assisted with proof reading.

Cyril Macey spent some time mounting a collection of revenue stamps. These are specimens that had been in the care of Post Office Archives and were transferred to the Museum. They needed to be mounted on the conservation-quality Museum sheets and recorded for future reference. He also began work on our collection of master dies. He notes: "In the basement are stored some dies which needed wrapping in waxed paper to prevent rusting or other similar damage. I was delighted to come across some old dies of the souvenir sheets that were issued at the B.P.E. Exhibitions of many years past showing British Empire stamps of 1924, and also some other souvenir sheets as well as some early and more recent stamps." This work is

NPM card showing an octagonal ornolu stamp box

continuing.

Don Staddon has been working on the Museum's collections of Machins. This includes a substantial number of essays, proofs and trials, as well as the stamps themselves.

He writes: "The material is steadily being brought together, written up, and mounted in albums, with each album providing a basis for study of the development and production of National and Country sheet-printed definitives, coils and stamp books. Included are many items which have not yet been shown to the general public.

"As the work has progressed gaps have been identified, and ways of filling them discussed with the Curator, Philately. It now looks as though at least four, possibly five albums are needed for proofs and essays. This number will probably double when issued stamps are included."

All such work is very helpful and much appreciated by Museum staff, especially as it is done on a voluntary, unpaid basis.

Stamp "Furniture"

The Museum has a collection of stamp boxes, letter balances and associated items and during 1991 Marjorie Humble, a well-known expert in the field, prepared a catalogue of the holdings. Here she describes the



collection and the work involved.

"With my own interest in such 'philatelic collectables', being asked to take on this task was more like being offered dinner at the Ritz than hard work. This is a fascinating collection. Many of the pieces could be described as *objets d'art*, they are so attractive. It comprises the late Frank Godden's collection on loan to the NPM, selected items donated from the vast collection of the late Ernest Hugen and other donated material, including those generously given by Post Office staff. The period covered follows the introduction of the Penny Black in 1840 to the early 20th century for the stamp boxes and other items, although some of the letter balances were registered by astute businessmen prior to that date. Many of these collectables came from Europe and the Far East, and called for research on markings and dates which made it all the more interesting. There is always something new to discover.

"It was inevitable that, with the advent of the stamp, so-called 'desk furniture' should follow. Loose stamps had to be held safely and securely in something. The stamp boxes came in all manner of materials, shapes and sizes: in wood, glass, cloisonné, Tunbridge Ware, porcelain and precious metals, to name a few. Apart from the simple box type, single or multi-compartmented designs included (among many) books, chests of drawers, envelopes, chalets and coal scuttles. Others are integrated in desk sets with inkwells and pen trays. Many are represented in the Museum collection and all have interesting aspects.

"The Tunbridge Ware boxes are one example, in their manufacture. Made from local, naturally coloured woods, they often contain over 1,000 minute tesserae comprising the frame and face of Queen Victoria in an area of roughly an inch. Silver envelopes holding single stamps were worn on ladies' chatelaines or gentlemen's watch chains - the latter no doubt stretched across ample Victorian or Edwardian stomachs. These are now much sought after by ladies as decorative jewelry, as pendants or on bracelets.

"A fine piece from the Ernest Hugen collection is the rarest item in the Museum collection. It is an octagonal ormolu stamp box which resembles a Chinese pagoda in shape, with convex sides, all of which open outwards and down to reveal the stamp cases. The square centre compartment presumably held nibs. To date, it is unique and it is illustrated on an NPM postcard. This is my favourite exhibit, the more so because I dusted and polished it (and others from the collection) many times prior to it being shown at international stamp exhibitions.

"The letter balances and scales are again attractive and interesting. Made in various designs, such as 'candlesticks' - spring-operated, some with a bell at the base which one assumes was for calling the servant to take a letter to the post, some with ornate designs around the base, and others with two pans and weights with letter postal rates inscribed either on the pan or on a plaque on the base. Some scales were hand-held and carried in the pocket. The name Salter is associated with many of the types manufactured and is



The new Edicon computer being set up

still known today. Two of considerable interest are the Henry Hooper letter scale, registered on 12 August 1839 (Hooper being one of the "astute businessmen" referred to earlier) which is sometimes referred to as the Rowland Hill balance because of the reference to his penny postage on the coin-like counterweight. There is also the Ratchliffe letter scale, also quite rare, which is based on weights similar to rolling pins which were picked up according to the weight of an item. Both are from the Hugen collection. Most are illustrated in Douglas Muir's book on Postal Reform and the Penny Black.

"I could write pages on the interest and charm of these philatelic accessories. Their diversity is endless, reflecting philatelic and social history. However, space does not permit. I can only say - come and see for yourself the selection which is on display."

Postmarks

The Museum's collection of modern postmarks was kept up to date. Every special handstamp used by the Royal Mail (as listed in the *British Postmark Bulletin*) was added to the collection together with a selection of slogan postmarks submitted by local Royal Mail offices and extracted from incoming Museum mail. Also added were Post Office and Royal Mail commemorative covers used in association with special postmarks. John Holman has mounted up an extensive, three-volume, collection of such covers including 15 produced during 1991. Some of these covers are only given to dignitaries at events such as the opening of new Royal Mail buildings and are thus produced in limited quantities and rarely seen by collectors.

Examples of the trial Klüssendorf machine postmarks used at London SE (on "Paid" mail) and at Liverpool have been added to the collection.

Postal Mechanisation

During 1991 over 100 covers have been added to this collection, about half compris-

ing covers bearing messages applied by ink-jet printer at Liverpool Mechanised Letter Office; these include ROYAL MAIL INVESTING IN LIVELY LIVERPOOL and MARIE CURIE MILLION DAFFODIL FIELD OF HOPE, LIVERPOOL. Covers bearing OCR (Optical Character Recognition) idents have been added from, amongst others, the Cambridge, Chelmsford and Exeter offices. Experimental ink-jet postmarking machines were demonstrated to the philatelic press at the Museum in August. Impressions of the various markings were made and have been added to the Postal Mechanisation Collection.

Edicon Computer

1991 saw the installation of the Museum's "Edicon" photoimaging and cataloguing system. The equipment consists of a video camera and light stand, an IBM-compatible computer with large capacity hard disc and colour monitor with output to either a laser printer or colour photo printer. The software, developed by Eastman Kodak, will enable colour images to be associated with text when cataloguing the NPM collections.

Special Stamps Reference Collection

A collection is maintained of stamps, first day covers (with different postmarks), stamp (PHQ) cards, presentation pack, printer's presentation folder, press photographs, and other related items for each set of special stamps. First day covers are normally obtained bearing the Bureau "First Day of Issue" postmark applied by High-Speed and Swiss machines and by handstamp. Similar postmark impressions, where appropriate, are obtained for the "alternative" first day office, for example Southampton for the Maps stamps of 17 September 1991. These items are mounted on large-size album pages; two further volumes, containing 1991 issues, were added to this collection during 1991.

A similar collection has been started for Definitive and Country stamps.

Exhibitions

THE main exhibition held in the Museum in 1991 was "Stamping the Mail" which opened in the ground and mezzanine floors in May. Until that time the "Postal Reform" display had continued from 1990. In the main gallery there was a new Phillips display marking the 150th anniversary of the Penny Red and two shorter term exhibitions: "The Post Office in the time of Edward VII" and "Maps and the Post Office". Material from the collections was also shown abroad.

"Stamping the Mail"

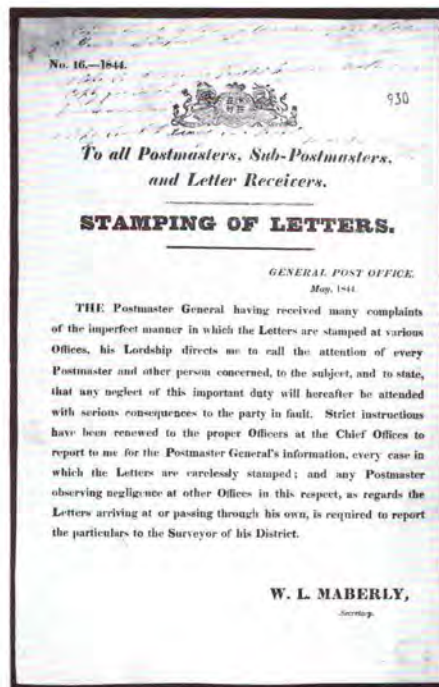
"Stamping the Mail" covered a period from the late 16th century till 1960. It showed the variety of markings used by the Royal Mail on letters and the manner in which they had been applied. A letter needs to be marked or "stamped" to indicate various things, the most common of which are:

1. to show the place, date (and possibly time) of posting - to avoid delay in its delivery
2. the postage stamp (if present) must be obliterated - to prevent re-use
3. to indicate prepayment or postage due.

Other possible markings are often *instructional* to show what should happen to the letter - that it should be sent by a particular route or service; that it had been inspected for some reason; that it had been refused, or payment declared invalid and a charge was to be raised; that it was to go free; or that the contents were in some way particular.

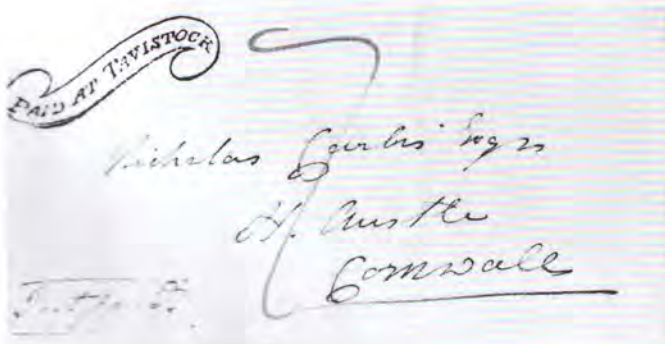
Originally, such markings were in manuscript. They began to change to "stamps" in 1661 when Henry Bishop introduced the first postmark as a handstruck marking. These handstruck "stamps" developed until they showed time, date and place of posting.

A number of exhibitions took place in the Museum during the year and material was also shown abroad. A retrospective view is given here.



Post Office notice of 1844 about stamping the mail

Fancy stamp of Tavistock (left) and a 1798 letter delivered through the Foreign Office (right)



There were nine sections to the display: Manuscript markings; Bishop Marks; Handstamps up to 1840; London Local Posts; Local Penny Posts; Handstamps after 1840; Machine Markings; Instructional Markings; and Slogans & Specials.

When adhesive postage stamps were introduced in 1840 they were obliterated with a cancellation to prevent fraudulent re-use. This was at first a separate operation and marking from that indicating date and place of posting. However, it was realised that these two handstamps could be combined into one operation - cancelling the stamps and giving the required information. Thus, "duplex" stamps were created, and these were eventually simplified into one marking which fulfilled all obligations.

Further simplification came with mechanisation from 1857 onwards when an ever greater proportion of mail was cancelled or "stamped" by machine. From 1917 these machine cancellations have often contained a slogan advertising a campaign, holiday resort or (more recently) firm.

Other operations, however, including indications of postage due, are still carried out by hand either in manuscript or by handstruck markings, right up to the present day. All these areas were described and illustrated in the display.

Penny Red Anniversary

The first new display in the main gallery was a selection of the R M Phillips collection chosen to mark the 150th anniversary of the Penny Red. It consisted of a large number of cancellation and printing ink trials used in the selection of the colour of the new stamp in 1840.

Despite all the thought that had gone into the security devices incorporated in the Penny Black to prevent fraudulent re-use it was soon apparent that these had failed. Various people had succeeded in removing the red Maltese Cross cancellation without damaging the underlying postage stamp and so new inks had to be found for both the printed label and the cancellation.

Rowland Hill had asked Perkins, Bacon & Petch to produce new inks to print the 1d and 2d labels. They created a small printing plate, firstly of three and then of 12 impressions, especially made from the 1d die. The upper right corner of each stamp was made void to prevent any examples being used to prepay postage. From May to November 1840 these labels were printed in a wide variety of colours - black, blues, lilac-rose and shades of green and red. These have become known as the Rainbow Trials which were then given to various chemists for testing.



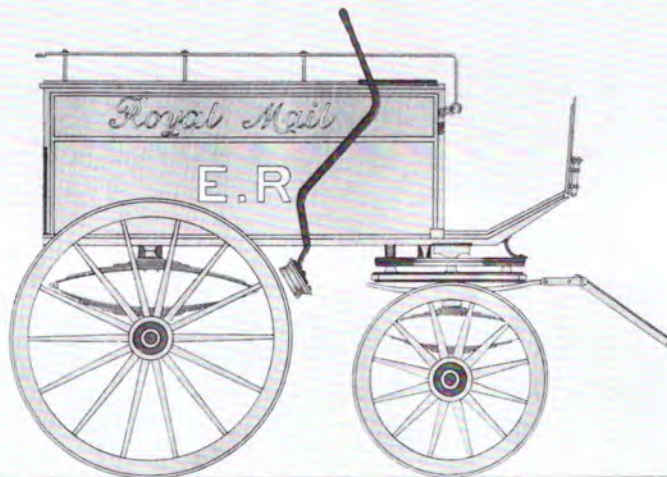
"Rainbow Trials" suggested by Rowland Hill in September 1840 to replace the 1d black and first 2d blue

The Phillips collection contains impressions of the plate of three, and the various stages and colours of the plate of 12. To these were added some of the cancellation trials, and registration sheets from the Post Office collection of the issued Penny Red and second Twopenny Blue.

The Edwardian Post Office

Of the short-term displays in the main gallery the first was "The Post Office in the time of Edward VII". This mainly photographic exhibition was centred round a Sub-Office counter, made of wood and glass, found boarded-up in a forgotten room at Ringmer, Sussex Post Office. The base is Victorian but the top may be of a later date. It had been fully restored with new mouldings being made for the front. Items of the period were used to fit out the counter (which has remained on show after the close of the exhibition).

LIGHT SINGLE HORSE VAN FOR RURAL WORK.



DIMENSIONS		INSIDE MEASUREMENTS	
LENGTH OF BODY AT TOP FROM END TO BACK OF DRIVER'S SEAT	4. 3 ¹ / ₂	DEPTH OF BODY BELOW DRIVER'S SEAT	1. 7
" " " " AT BOTTOM ALONG FLOOR OF VEHICLE	5. 2	HEIGHT TO FLOOR OF VAN	3. 4
WIDTH OF BODY	4. 0	" " OF HIND WHEELS	3. 10
DEPTH " " AT BACK	2. 0	" " OF FORE WHEELS	2. 8

WEIGHT OF VAN ABOUT 5 CWTs

SCALE INCH EQUALS 1 FOOT

Original drawing of a horse-drawn van for rural work

The Edwardian era was one of change. Horse-drawn mail vans began to give way to motor vans. Stamp cancelling machines were coming into more general use. These changes were reflected in the display. Photographs showed the first motorised coaches for the parcel post between London and Brighton and one of the Museum's Krag stamp cancelling machines (first introduced in 1905) was exhibited. Other developments included rural post shelter huts and the "Dockree" bag holder.

"Maps and the Post Office"

In September a large display began in the main gallery to coincide with the issue of stamps marking the 200th anniversary of the Ordnance Survey. This was extended to the end of March 1992.

"Maps and the Post Office" showed how the Post Office has used and created maps for its own purposes from the 18th century to

Edwardian postman





Sylvia Nayoam from Indonesia and Dr Christopher Board of the London School of Economics (delegates to the International Cartographers' Association conference) with Douglas Muir and a waywiser.

the present day, with the maps illustrated and explained by postal and other items. It celebrated the 200th anniversary of the Ordnance Survey and explained the issue of stamps on 17 September 1991 featuring maps of Hamstreet, Kent. Many of the maps were on loan from Post Office Archives and had been specially cleaned and conserved for the exhibition. Catherine Rickman describes this elsewhere in this report.

A map is a representation of all or part of the Earth's surface at a size which is convenient for use. On a map much more can be seen than on the ground and so it is very useful. However, national maps are still rather large and this meant that new display frames had to be specially made to accommodate them in the given space.

Without maps the Post Office could not exist. Letters cannot be transported, nor

Skien British Week with Karl Gronli, Douglas Muir, David Ratford the British Ambassador, and Per Sigurd Lauvstad



delivered, nor (in the past) charges evaluated without distances being known together with the exact location of the addressee. For all these maps are essential.

The exhibition was divided into six parts: 1. Introduction; 2. Circulation of Letters; 3. Circulation of Letters (Local); 4. Modern Maps; 5. Maps on Stamps; and 6. The Map Stamps/Hamstreet. There were also some maps on the stairway of the Museum, especially featuring the division of London into postal districts in 1857.

In the first section were two of the Museum's three 'Waywisers' or surveyors' wheels which were used from about 1720 to measure distances on the ground. There then followed a number of maps and atlases dating from 1790 to 1850 showing the circulation of letters, and the methods of transport used, in England and Wales, Ireland and Scotland.

Before 1840 the main postal routes emanated from London. Letters were charged according to the distance travelled and the number of sheets of paper contained, and the charges, which were high, were normally paid by the recipient. The main postroads were served by mailcoaches, often daily, after 1784 but the minor ones had horse posts or even foot posts. After the mid 1830s mail was transferred more and more to the growing railway network and mailcoaches ceased about 1846.

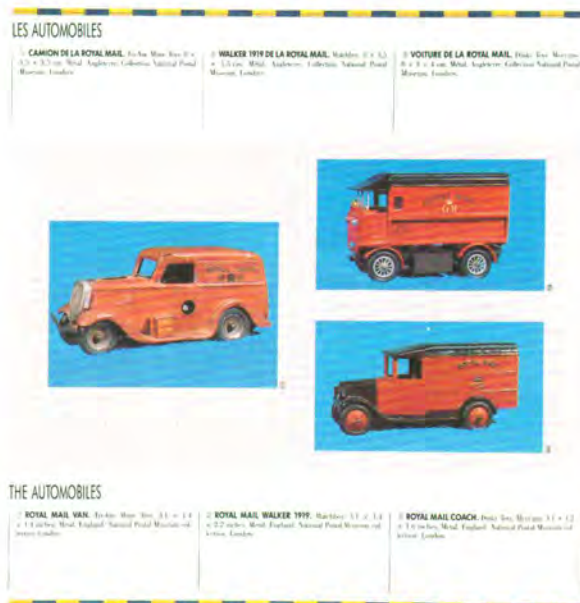
Circulation maps were required to show the methods of transport and the distances for charges to be raised.

In the third section were some maps created to show delivery areas. From 1774, delivery within a post town was free, though certain localities had free delivery before this. The boundaries of the town had to be delineated so that free delivery could be

established and thus plans of towns were prepared showing the delivery areas. From time to time this area was extended and new plans or maps were required.

In the modern section how postcodes are allocated was explained with the help of commercial maps and detailed internal Post Office ones.

The final sections showed artwork and essays of British stamps which contained maps as part of their designs and a detailed description of how the Hamstreet stamps were designed and printed. A lot of original material was on loan from Harrison & Sons Ltd, the printers, in connection with the printing of the 24p stamp.



A page from Les Jouets de la Poste showing items on loan from the NPM

Overseas Exhibitions

Displays of items from NPM collections took place at two venues overseas during the year. The first was held in the Musée de la poste in Paris from 6 February to 25 May when a number of items were loaned for the exhibition "Les Guichets de l'enfance" about postal toys. Items loaned came mainly from the Wilkinson collection of money boxes, in the form of letter boxes, and Post Office vans. The French postal museum produced a magnificent catalogue (in both French and English) entitled *Les Jouets de la Poste*, and a page from that is illustrated here. A remarkable number of games, trains, telegraphs, toy postmen and post offices were also included in the exhibition gathered from around the world.

In November a display was taken to the Norwegian town of Skien which was having a British Week. A selection of material illustrating The Genesis of the Machin Design was taken over and mounted in conjunction with the Skien philatelic society who had provided more general displays of GB stamps and postal history. This exhibition was opened by the British Ambassador to Norway in fluent Norwegian.

Pearson Hill Machine

AS part of the "Stamping the Mail" exhibition, and to mark the National Postal Museum's silver jubilee, it was decided to try to produce a full-scale working replica of the world's first stamp-cancelling machine, devised by Pearson Hill in 1857. The experimental machine had been used for a short period in London but had long since been scrapped. Only the patent drawings remained and, it was not clear if these would be sufficient to make a working model. However, Ian Fraser of the Royal Mail Engineering Department in Swindon was given the task of finding out. The result, after many months, was a remarkable machine operating in the Museum and adding greatly to our knowledge of early postal mechanisation and to our admiration for the ingenuity of Hill.

Pearson Hill, son of Rowland, joined the Post Office in 1850, aged 18, as a clerk in the Secretary's Office. His remarkable mechanical ability was of great use to the department with various devices to his credit, though, today, he is best known for his development of stamp cancellers.

Hill submitted a patent for his machine on 25 March 1857 (finally approved in September of the same year) and subsequently reported in writing to his father who had become Secretary to the Post Office in 1854. In this letter of 3 April he noted: "Having for a long time past endeavoured, during leisure hours, to devise a machine which might advantageously be employed in stamping letters - the object in view being to obtain clear and legible date stamps, and a more perfect obliteration of the postage

The highlight of the year was the construction from the patent drawings of a full-scale working model of the world's first stamp cancelling machine devised by Pearson Hill.



Above: Tony Gammons operating the machine

Below: Envelope cancelled by the original machine (left) and the souvenir cover cancelled by the replica (right)

labels, and, if possible, to save time in the performance of the stamping duties generally, I beg to acquaint you that I have now devised a machine which will, I believe, accomplish the object in view."

He had already demonstrated the machine to the Postmaster General, Rowland Hill and others in the form of a rough wooden model. This he had managed to operate at an average speed of 60 to 65 letters per minute and he asked that the department allocate funds for the construction of a more sturdy machine which could undergo proper trials at greater speeds. Funds were agreed and a prototype machine was built by Messrs Simpson under the direction of the Department's consulting engineer, Arthur Cowper.

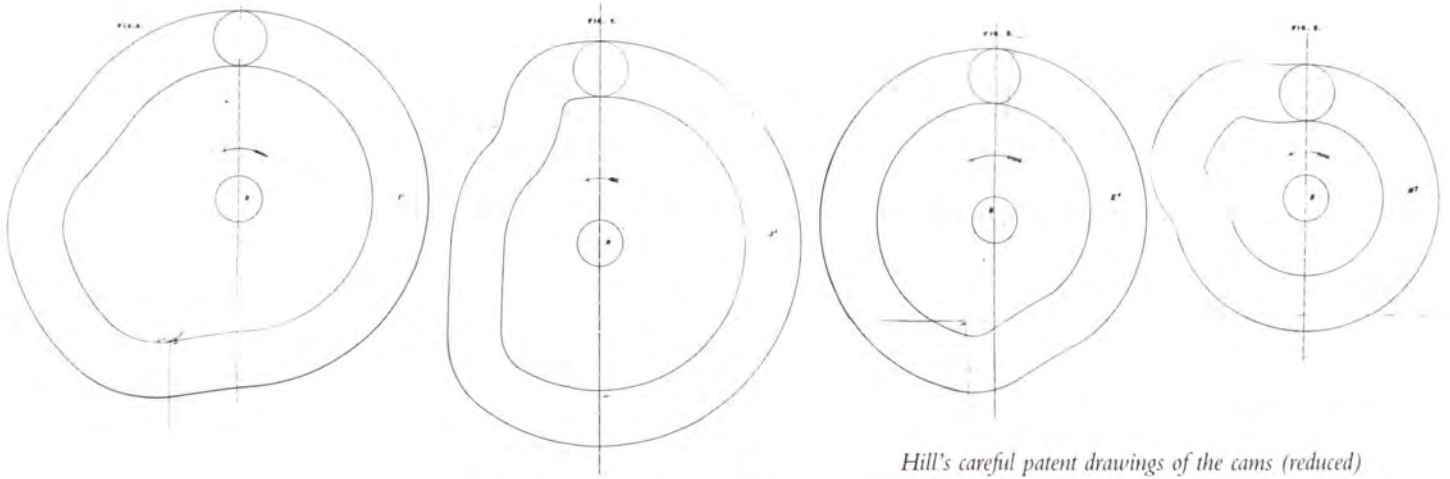
This first stamp-cancelling machine came into use in September 1857 in the London office. The first postmark used had no indication of place, but the second better known example includes the name LONDON and the code A. On this was based the design of the cachet used by the Museum in its replica. The original was made up of three parts of steel but it was found more expedient to produce a rubber die for the model. Later, in 1858, Hill produced his 'parallel motion' machine but this was much smaller and more simple than his original prototype.

In the written specification for the patent Hill describes how the machine was intended to work. "The letter is introduced into the machine by hand ... its position being regulated by a fixed or moveable stop or gauge. The stamp or marker, supplied with ink or colour by an inking apparatus, or similar means, is pressed or driven against or upon



Pearson Hill 1832-1898
Inventor of the world's first stamp cancelling Machine 1857





Hill's careful patent drawings of the cams (reduced)

the letter, so as to produce the required stamp or mark. The letter is carried by fingers or nippers, or other means, to a trough or case, into which it is forced by a presser or plunger, or by fingers, which propel forward the column of letters as they accumulate ... The letters are counted by a self-acting counting apparatus, which is so arranged, that it only acts when a letter is placed in the machine, and ceases to act when no letter is introduced ... The various motions are produced by cams and eccentrics, or cranks, or other well-known mechanical means, and the machine may be driven by hand or by the foot, or by power, as may be most convenient." Much of this was not to become clear until the model was built.

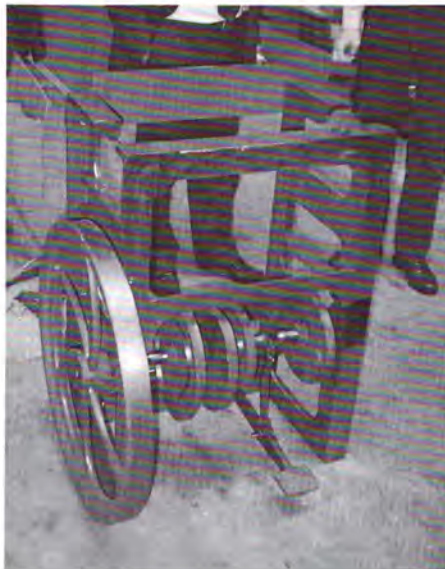
The patent for the experimental prototype did not include actual working drawings. Those that were appended were sometimes half-size, sometimes full-size and most had views of the machine with all components shown in one plane. Each part had to be separated out from what was, to the layman's eyes, a meaningless jumble of lines, and had to be interpreted with the aid of the written specification.

After spending hours ploughing through this specification, Ian Fraser decided that it would be possible to produce a full-size replica, and one that could be made to work. Construction of the machine was contracted out to Geoff Blyth of Professional Developments in Bishops Waltham, near Southampton, and he and Ian were to work closely together over several months.

Although the original machine had been built up from castings it was initially suggested that the replica be constructed from sections of welded steel, or aluminium, finished to look like the original. However, after discussions with a local foundry it was discovered that it would be cheaper to produce castings using simple wooden forms pressed into moulding sand - in other words, as it had been made originally.

Not everything was described in Hill's patent. For example, the shape of the replica flywheel is based on a contemporary one fitted to a spinning machine at a local silk mill. This shape, apparently, allows the casting to distort slightly while cooling without breaking the spokes.

As the tops of the main frame castings were to be machined to take the table-top the



The machine during construction

preliminary assembly was done upside down on a large face plate. When this had been done the frame was turned the right way and the crankshaft was then assembled.

The cams when finished



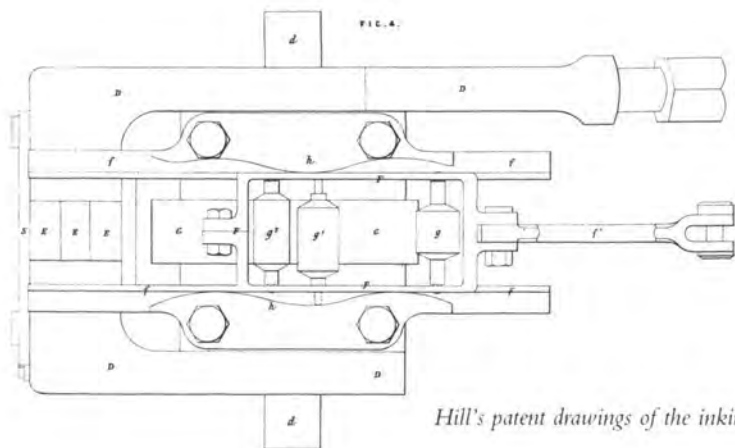
The Cam Wheels

The next parts to be fitted were the cam wheels and the treadle mechanism. The five cam wheels drive the ingenious letter stacking and patting mechanisms. These cam wheels could be described as the core of the machine. Pearson Hill had drawn them very carefully in the patent but these would determine whether the machine worked or not. Because of the care with which they had been drawn Ian Fraser and Geoff Blyth were fairly confident that they would work but they could not be sure. They contemplated using computer projections to establish this but decided that this would have been too time-consuming and expensive.

The cam profiles are machined into the face of the wheel, the drive being transmitted to the links by way of small wheels. On the replica these wheels have been faced with neoprene to keep the noise level down. At this stage, with shaft, fly-wheel and cam wheels fitted, it was possible to operate the treadle with one's finger tips. Happily, when other mechanisms were added it was found that the cams operated the letter stacking mechanism perfectly.

The Letter Stacking Mechanism

The stacking mechanism has to be the most ingenious part of the machine. Each freshly



Hill's patent drawings of the inking mechanism

stamped cover was placed at the *bottom* of the stack of previously stamped items. This seemingly impossible feat is achieved by a clever interaction between three sets of fingers all driven by the carefully moulded cam wheels. The fingers come up through the table, lifting the cover and trapping it under a transverse bar. The whole mechanism then moves to the back of the machine and releases the cover, leaving it lying on top of other brass fingers. These then lift the cover to the base of the stacking mechanism and the curved set of fingers then drop down ready to receive the next cover. A "patter" nods up and down to ensure that the covers sit squarely in the wooden rack. This is a simplified description of a rather complex process which in many ways has to be seen to be believed.

When the replica had been completed the effort required to treadle the machine was considerable and it also needed to turn at a fair speed, making feeding the covers a somewhat daunting task. This was solved by powering the machine by an electric motor, one of the very few concessions to modern technology.

The Stamping Head

After fitting the table Ian and Geoff turned their attention to the stamping head which is probably the most complex part of the machine. This is driven from a small crank fitted on the end of the crankshaft. The length of the vertical operating rod is adjust-

able allowing the die pressure to be varied.

Ink is held in a small brass pot fixed to the table. This is transferred to the inking rollers by a large wheel which sits in the mouth of the pot. The ink is then rolled on to a floating plate and transferred from there to the die by two more rollers. One of these rollers spreads the ink over the plate by means of curved runners on the die head which moves the roller from side to side. The front roller inks the whole die while the second only inks the stamp obliterating part of the die. This double inking of the obliterating part of the die was also to be a feature of Pearson Hill's later cancelling machines.

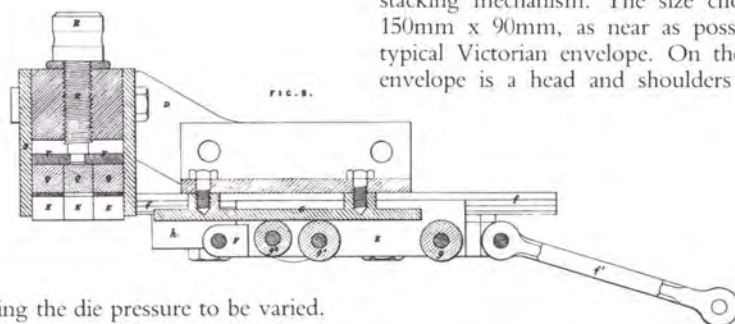
The original machine had a three-part metal die sitting on rubber blocks in the die holder. As the replica was only to be used in applying cachets on special NPM envelopes it was decided to use a one-piece rubber die.

Another feature of the original was a letter-counting mechanism which is also operated by the nodding of the die holder. When a letter is cancelled the counter rod

comes into contact with the letter and is pushed upwards and operates the counter. If, for any reason, there is no letter in place the rod falls through a hole in the table and does not operate the counter. This counting mechanism is incorporated in the replica but does not actually count the number of "stamps".

Cover and Cachets

It was never intended that the replica be used to cancel live mail. Rather it would use a cachet to stamp illustrated envelopes, specially produced for the purpose. During the building of the machine, when the letter lifting fork and curved bar had been fitted, Douglas N Muir took dummy envelopes and cards of various sizes down to Bishops Waltham and tried them on the embryo stacking mechanism. The size chosen was 150mm x 90mm, as near as possible to a typical Victorian envelope. On the printed envelope is a head and shoulders view of

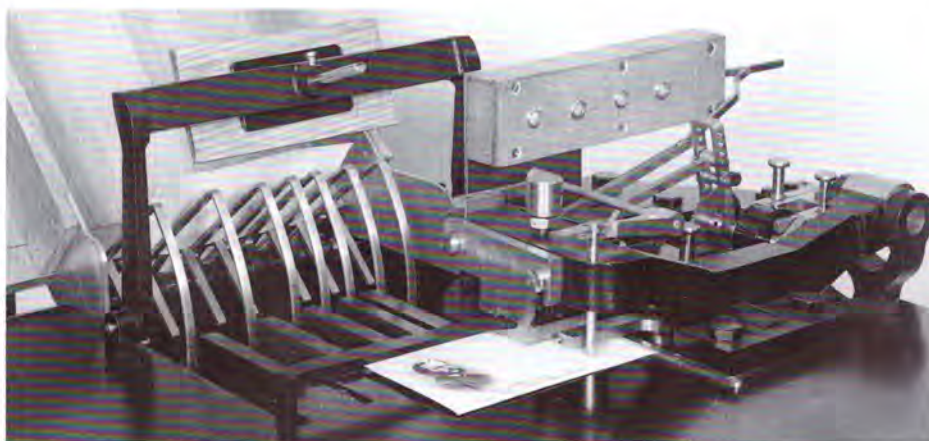


Pearson Hill of about the right period.

The design for the cachet was based on the Museum's proof strike of Hill's original machine dated 4 November 1857. The new cachet had the letter A at the top of the original replaced by NPM and the date changed to A/AU 30/91 - i.e. the date of the unveiling of the replica in the Museum.

After delivery of the machine on 19 August, sparkling in its new coat of paint, the printing mechanism was tested. While it was possible to get good impressions over most of the cachet, the top of the design was often completely missing. After various tests it was realised that the cause of the missing top was the make-up of the cover. The flap caused part of the strike to be on a thicker part of the cover than the rest. Using a rubber rather than a steel die it was not possible to use sufficient pressure to overcome the problem fully, but enough good examples were printed for demand. The 30 August die was run until the end of September when a 1991 impression was introduced which ran until the end of the year when it was replaced by a 1992 version.

The inking mechanism and stacking system when completed



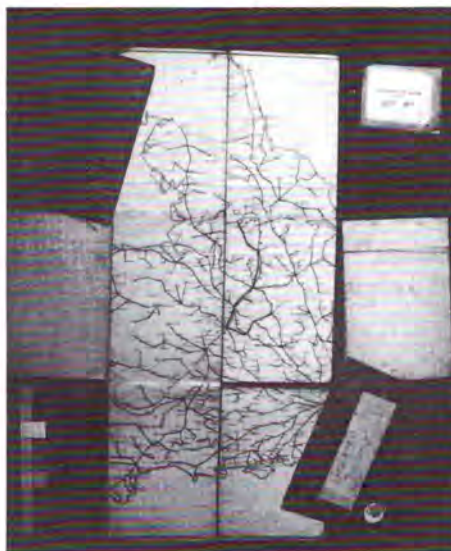
THE 1991 exhibition, "Maps and the Post Office", was my main paper conservation project for the Museum last year. Preparing the maps for exhibition had begun in 1988 with work for the Post Office Archives, who lent many of them to the Museum. Apart from removing dirt and repairing mechanical damage, the conservators' work on these maps included the adaptation of a (usually) printed image intended for handy reference to one suitable for display. This transformation involves changing the maps from a folding format (in which they are vulnerable to physical damage) to a permanently flat one.

Altering the format can mean a loss of historical information in the interests of preservation. For example, the *Circulation of Letters, 1807* map was originally issued with a linen backing on to which the map (first cut up into rectangular sections) was glued, with a small gap between each section acting as a hinge. This format enabled the map to be neatly folded into its marbled paper covers. But often the maps have shed their old covers long ago. Cary's *Pocket Plan of London, 1791*, for example, had been reinforced with a 20th century lining of white cotton, although the original label was carefully preserved by sticking it on the back.

Many of these folded maps were kept in the Archives in slip cases and, because of the tough original linen backing, were only moderately damaged by time and use. But, in some cases, repeated folding and unfolding, together with lack of protection from dirt and pollution in a previous collection, had led to drastic results. Bowles' *Two-sheet plan of London and Westminster and Borough of Southwark, 1814* was one such, and the Commission of Enquiry *21st Report London* map was also disintegrating, although in a less startling manner.

Some basic attempts had been made recently to rescue these maps so that they could continue to be used. Bowles' was lined with the same white cotton as Cary's, but without the beneficial interlayer of the original linen, and the Commission of Enquiry London map was reinforced on the back with gummed glassine tape, thankfully not Sellotape. The maps had continued to deteriorate despite these measures because of repeated folding. Even those in fairly good condition had lost fragments of paper over the years. In general, the earlier the map, the better the

Paper conservation is always an important part of Museum work. Here, the conservator, Catherine Rickman reports on progress during the year.



Circulation map of Derby, 1807 showing the map as it was before conservation

paper (being handmade), while later issues such as the Commission of Enquiry map were printed on such short-fibred and weak paper that they could not withstand constant handling.

An important consideration when conserving maps is that their dimensions may be subject to small alterations as a result of treatments involving moisture. Paper expands by about 2 to 5% when it is wet, and if dried under tension, will not return to its original dimensions. Consequently, the scale may no longer be accurate after treatment. However, since most of these maps had been lined or relined before, the latest intervention was not judged to be crucial.

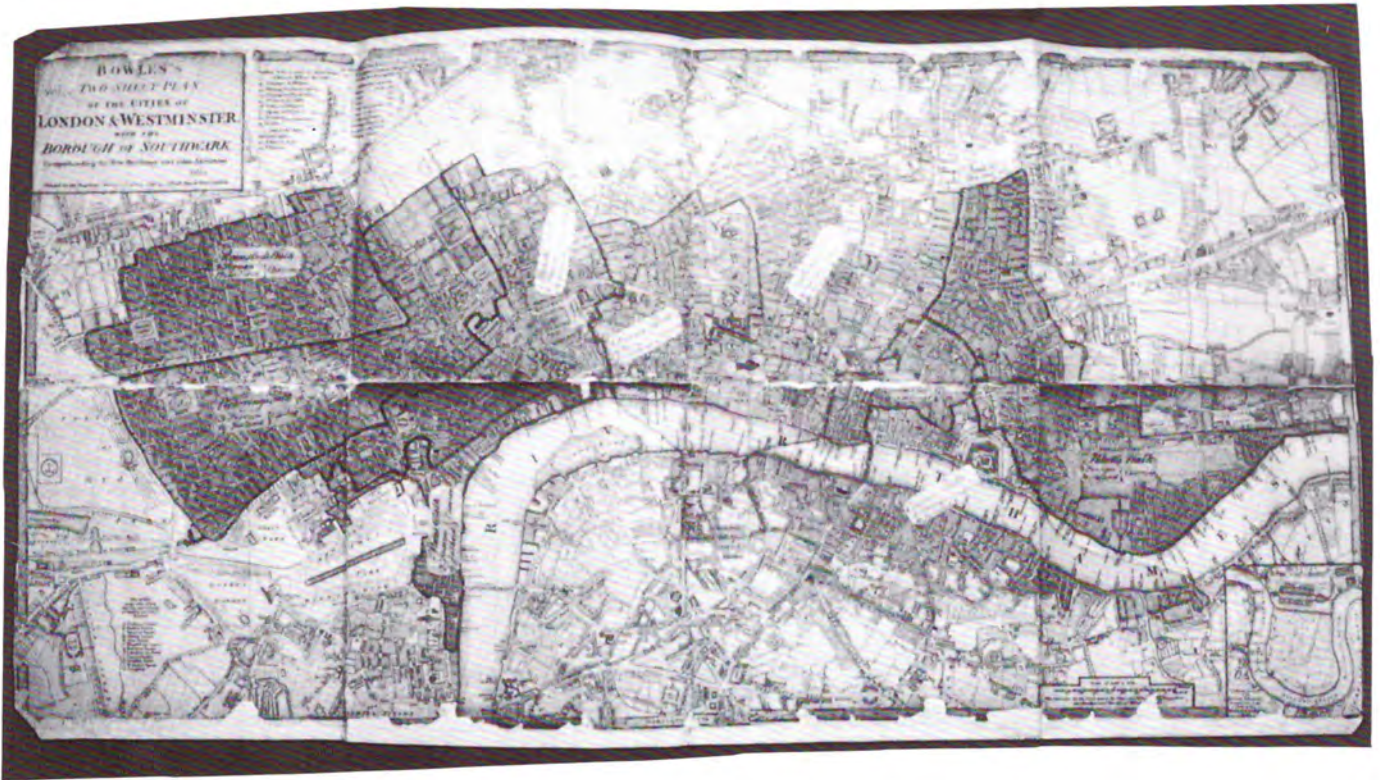
The first stage of conservation treatment was to surface clean the maps. With many years of handling, and the previous attempts at repair, a lot of the dirt was ingrained. But it is important to remove as much surface grime as possible, otherwise it will be fixed by subsequent treatment. Next, we tested

the pH of the paper and backings, as well as the solvent-sensitivity of printing inks and coloured additions, to determine the best course of treatment. Old backings and repairs were removed, usually after introducing some moisture to soften the glue in the form of ultrasonic humidification or poultices made of methyl cellulose. The numerous broken fragments of original paper no longer held together by these backings were carefully preserved, to be re-attached later. In the case of the Bowles map, hand-written additions, on tabs of paper stuck over the map, were lifted off with the help of a small steam machine. These tabs were fragile and some needed local repairs with Japanese paper and starch paste to prepare them for re-use.

Most of the hand colouring on these maps, comprising the vital information about routes and charges unique to the Post Office, had been applied in water soluble colours. We had to be very careful not to get the paper too wet in the course of treatment, otherwise the colours might have bled or offset. So the removal of old acidic and discoloured lining adhesives from the back also had to be completed with the help of poultices and steam.

Once each section of the map was de-backed and cleaned, we then re-lined them on a modern conservation-quality cartridge paper, treated with an alkaline buffering solution to guard against any residual acidity in the maps. Our main problem at this stage was the aligning of the separate sections, making sure that all the features of the map matched up as far as possible. In the case of the Bowles map, it could never be right, as the original assembly of the map, which was printed on two sheets of paper, was not correct and the large number of missing areas along the old folds had deprived us of clues. Dozens of tiny fragments detached from around these areas were placed in position towards the end of the treatment, but even so there were holes. These were later infilled with new hand-made paper, toned slightly with watercolour to blend it in with the map paper. No re-touching of missing areas was done, as is customary with archival material.

The fragile condition of some of these maps demanded very lengthy conservation treatment. In the case of Bowles' map that meant about 25 hours of work in the studio.



Above: Bowles' London and Westminster and Borough of Southwark Two-sheet Plan, 1814 before conservation

Left: Detail of the Bowles map after removal of the modern cotton backing and with the tabs removed



Right: The same detail of the Bowles map after conservation showing paper infills along the damaged folds and with the tabs restored



But the alternative was a map that could be neither used nor enjoyed and which would otherwise continue its rapid progress of disintegration.

To protect the maps in future, the Post Office Archives has decided to store them like works of art, rather than works of reference. This change in status saw the maps fitted into overthrow mounts made of museum-quality mount board and housed in transparent Melinex folders in plan chest drawers. This makes the maps large and awkward to use but, with their everyday use obsolete, the compactly folded format of earlier years is no longer appropriate. Instead, they can be framed for display or consulted by researchers without handling the paper directly. Where original labels and wrappers existed, these were mounted with the map, or kept close by.

Modern Stamp Papers

1991 was also the year when I was forced to think about the conservation aspects of modern stamp papers. A minor flood in one of the storage areas of the Museum soaked a collection of recent proofs and essays. Although the wet material was efficiently rescued by Museum staff and dried before any danger of mould growth could threaten, nonetheless some items were seriously damaged by the water because they were printed

on so-called coated paper.

High quality printing, such as stamp production, requires a very smooth paper surface to take fine detail and sharply defined, flat areas of colour. On modern papers, this surface is partly achieved by calendering with hot rollers and partly by adding fillers and coatings to the paper. In the case of stamp papers, the coatings on the image surface may be of two main types: an inert, chalky substance mixed with a binder to give a white, opaque and sometimes glossy finish; and a phosphorescent material (virtually invisible to the naked eye) to aid in the sorting and cancellation of mail. On the back of the paper is a coating of gum: gum arabic in the past, now a form of hydrolysed starch known as dextrin. All these added materials make modern stamp papers potentially vulnerable to moisture. The coatings may separate from the paper when wet, or they may stick adjacent sheets of paper together.

When water got into the Museum's store last November, a collection of progressive proofs for Christmas 1988 stamps was exposed to moisture and, with the sheets stapled together as they had come from the printers, they became compacted and could not be separated immediately without tearing. Tests in the conservation studio since have shown that the sheets can be parted, but

there will be loss of gum and possible damage to the other coatings.

With the Post Office aiming for a minimum shelf life of only 25 years for the stamps it issues, water damage is not the only serious concern in the long term preservation of modern stamp papers. It will be interesting to see in future how the stamps of today, especially those with pressure-sensitive adhesives being tried out in the United States, compare with the early ones. During 1992 I plan to find out more from the Post Office's paper-makers and printers about the materials they use, and to apply this information in considering conservation and preservation measures for modern postal materials.

One piece of equipment which I may be adding to the studio this year should be of interest to philatelists. It is a Vacuum Tweezer Unit, designed for handling light and fragile items like stamps. This compact machine (the motor is about the size of a paperback book) enables the user to pick up a stamp and place it accurately without the slightest risk of damage from fingers or metal tweezers. The price is £160, it is easy to use and you can have a demonstration from the supplier: Stephen G. Rees-Jones, Shepherds House, Rotten Row, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1LJ. (tel. 0273 473696; fax. 0273 473117)

Mulready Woodblock

One bad case of wood deterioration required emergency treatment during the year. This concerned the Mulready woodblock made of boxwood which had been on loan to the Museum for some time, kept in a stable environment and thus in good condition while it was here. The owner decided to sell the block at auction and it was unfortunately removed from the Museum to an office which was centrally heated. The result was severe cracking. After purchasing the block at auction the Museum asked the conservators Plowden & Smith to try and save it.

They report:

"The grain of the woodblock had opened up



Above: The undamaged block

Below: The cracked block after humidity treatment



quite dramatically with cracks radiating from near the centre, the most obvious being at the top edge.

"The block was placed in a sealed container with a relative humidity of 55% and this was then gradually raised to 85%. The high humidity was maintained for six weeks while gentle pressure was applied to the perimeter of the block to encourage the cracks to close up slightly. However, the shrinkage of the block was so fixed that improvement was not perceptible. ... The most obtrusive cracks have been filled with a beeswax/carnauba wax mix with pigments to match the surface colour of the block. A humidity controlled case has been made and conditioned and the woodblock fitted in it." This tragedy emphasises the need for constant, proper care of all artefacts.

'Hen and Chickens'

PERHAPS the most exciting acquisition during 1991 was an example of the so-called 'Hen and Chickens' or centre-cycle, used to deliver packets and parcels in the 1880s. It was transferred to the Museum from the public relations unit of London and South East from a store in Lewes.

The 'hen and chickens' or 'hen and chicks' is so-called because of its appearance. Between four small wheels is one large wheel with a crank and steering handle which is connected by a Hooke's joint to the axles of the four small wheels. A flexible frame consisting of two jointed fork bars surround the main wheel and pivot on the crank axle. As the frame is composed of two forks jointed near the crank, the front or back wheels may be lifted off the ground, or may be set so that all the wheels run. Brackets above the small wheels supported a large basket at each end for carrying correspondence and packets and over 50lb in weight could be carried without making the machine run heavier. The machine was employed to cope with the increased loads which rural postmen were called upon to carry following the introduction of the parcel post in 1883.

This centre-cycle had been invented and patented by Edward Burstow, a well-known Horsham architect. It was exhibited in May

The 'Hen and Chickens' or, more accurately, the centre-cycle was the most splendid of the Museum's acquisitions during 1991. It was used during the 1880s to deliver parcels.



Above: Maurice Williams (Chairman, Australia Post) with the NPM 'Hen and Chickens'

1882 at the Westminster Aquarium, London (now replaced by Central Hall) and at other exhibitions. As a first experiment some six cycles were used by the postmen and messengers of Horsham from October 1882, and they were returned daily to Burstow's yard for any necessary repairs, oiling and storage. In November of the same year it was demonstrated at the National Postal Congress being held in Eastbourne.

However, the Head Postmaster of Coventry (the centre of cycle manufacture) was dismissive of the Horsham initiative and, despite being used successfully for some time in Horsham and the surrounding rural area, the experiment was allowed to cease.

One machine was used by a boy messenger and the other postmen on rural posts to Faygate, Itchingfield, Slinfold, Warnham and Rusper. The boy messenger was Albert Chitty and he and the other postmen wrote a letter in November 1883 to Edward Burstow testifying to their great satisfaction with the machines. They had "no hesitation in saying the Centre-Cycle is vastly superior in every respect to any other wheel machine, running exceedingly easy when heavily loaded, and the best yet invented, having most successfully answered all the requirements for our purposes."



Below: 'Hen and Chickens' in use at Horsham in 1882



New Acquisitions

During the year a large number of new acquisitions were received by the Museum. Some of the more interesting are described here.

IN comparison to 1990 last year saw fewer new acquisitions though these still amounted to quite a large number. Because of a concerted effort to find items in post offices up and down the country the number of three-dimensional objects increased considerably though postal history items were fewer.

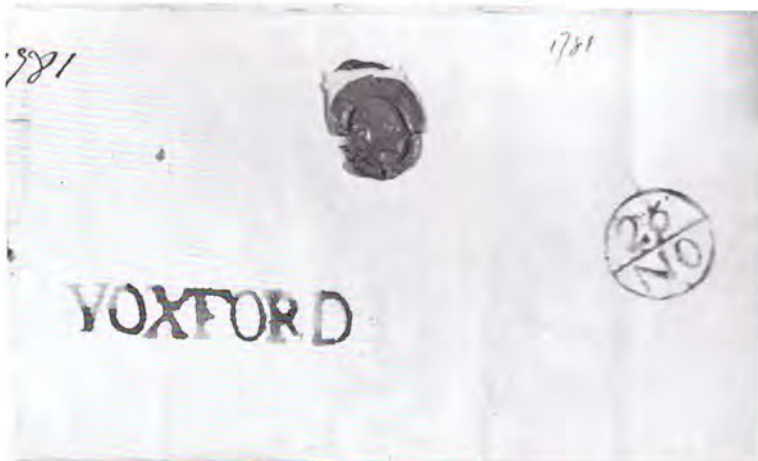
The majority of items are gifts from other Post Office departments and the following listing gives some idea of the diversity and quantity of material received:

Stamp artwork (adopted and unadopted)	84
Registration sheets of stamps etc	52
New cylinders & plates (stamps)	76
Three-dimensional objects	210
Books and documents	119
Slogan dies and handstamps	344
Proofs and essays (cards)	340
Postal history items	170

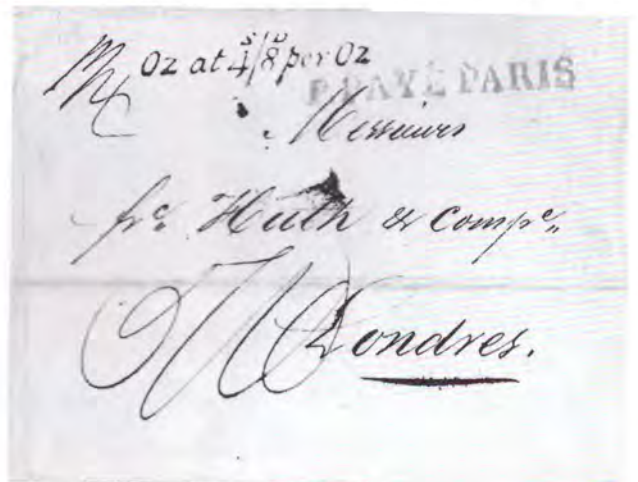
The reduction in the number of pieces of artwork received was largely due to a lack of suitable storage accommodation.

In addition to the above figures two large collections of material were received. One was transferred from Post Office Stores and consisted of several volumes of National Insurance fiscal stamps, including some very high values not previously recorded. The other collection was bequeathed by the late Len Newbery. The collection comprises a very specialised study of stamp books from August 1989 to April 1991, including the Penny Black Anniversary issue, Greetings stamps and the 1990 Christmas book.

Left: 1781 letter from Yoxford with unrecorded mark



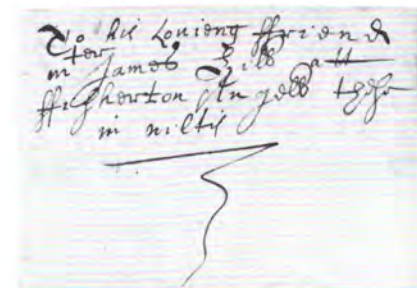
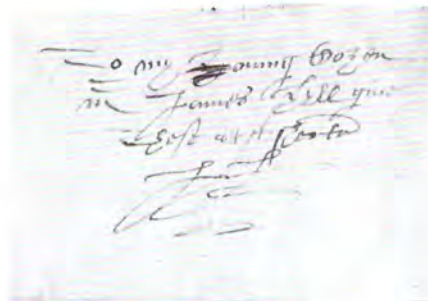
Right: 1825 letter to London via Paris with handstruck charge marking



Postal History Items

A few of the many fine items of postal history acquired are illustrated here. Two letters from the Civil War period of 1644/45 partly fill a gap in the Museum's collections as we are very weak in that area. Other items are fine examples of town and instructional markings and several markings of Penny Posts properly used in the period of their existence.

Overleaf are three examples of trial cancellations for the new postcards introduced in 1870. These 'Sloper' cancellations took the form of holes punched in the imprinted stamp in the form of an arrow (for London and Liverpool) or a clip at the side of the card (for Manchester). This type of cancellation lasted from 1870 till 1876.



Above: Civil War letters of 1644/5

Three-dimensional Objects

The most important object added to the Museum's collections was the unique Mulready woodblock engraved by John Thompson in 1840. This had been on loan to the Museum for some time but was then put up for sale. When acquired it need urgent conservation treatment which is described in that section of this report.

Other than that the year produced many calls from sorting and delivery offices nationwide to remove to the National Postal Museum such items as delivery barrows, clocks, cancelling machines, posting boxes, stamp-vending machines, uniforms, sorting frames, right down to pens and inkwells.



Front and reverse of a 1931 letter from St Kilda

We took custody of a beautiful public writing table complete with overhead fittings for holding telegram "A" forms and money order applications. This large table now occupies a space in the main gallery and is used for information leaflets for visitors.

Handstamps and seals to be used on wax continue to arrive in large quantities as do slogan dies. Handstamps, old and new, are cleaned and catalogued on a continuing basis and can be viewed by appointment but work upon the slogan dies has had to be deferred.

Licence to Let Post Horses

Robert Thursfield of Burton on Trent, son of the former owner, is holding up a wooden sign which from 1779 postmasters, innkeepers and others wishing to let horses for travelling 'post' were required to display at the front of their premises. They needed to be in possession of a current licence price 5s which permitted them to offer this service to travellers. They were then able to let horses or relays of horses for short periods for journeys along post roads.

From 5 July 1779 all those licensed to let were provided by the Treasury Commissioners with tickets of various types and bills for accounting the revenue from the hiring. Rates of hire commenced at 1d for every horse for every mile travelled in a day or part of a day. If the distance could not be ascertained then the duty payable was 1s for the day. The mileage, or day, tickets had to be purchased from the hirer in advance of the



Robert Thursfield holding Post Horse Licence sign

journey and then had to be presented to tollgate keepers, who in turn made them available to the Commissioners or their local collectors. The weekly accounts required to be maintained by postmasters and innkeepers were then compared with tickets from toll keepers.

This ticket system was abolished in 1853 whereupon a licence fee based upon the number of horses and carriages kept by postmasters and innkeepers was substituted for the nominal 5s licence.

The Post Horse and Stage Carriage Duty in all its forms was finally abolished in 1870.

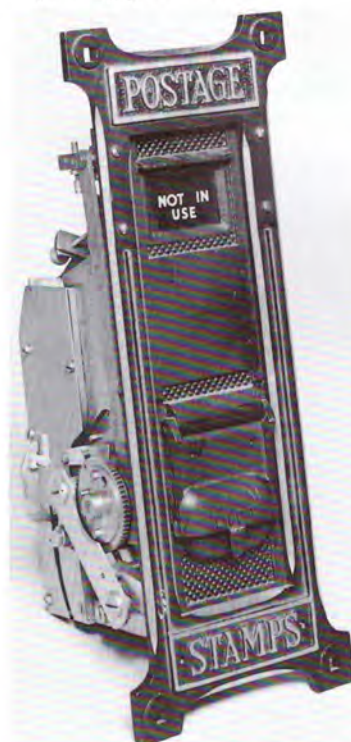
St Kilda Postal History

A collection of postal markings, photographs and press cuttings relating to the remote Scottish island of St Kilda was purchased at auction and has been mounted up by John Holman. This includes a cover postmarked ST KILDA on 27 August 1930 and taken of "per last dispatch" when the island was evacuated, a cover bearing a scarce 1930 private cachet, and covers datestamped with the double-ring handstamp used 1959-62. Covers bearing the well-known "Puffin" and "Tin Can Mail" cachets used since 1959 are well represented. Some modern material including the 25p National Trust of Scotland stamp showing St Kilda, issued in 1981, and special St Kilda handstamps of 1980, 1981 and 1989 have been added to this collection. The photographs of the island and its inhabitants are evocative of a way of life now long past.

Railway Letter Stamps

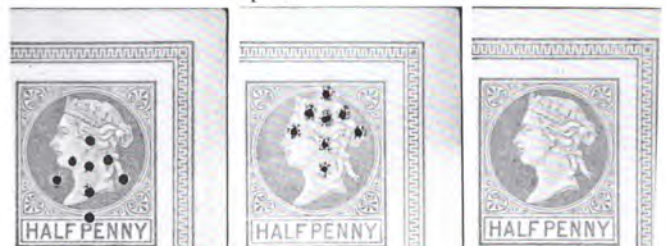
The Museum has purchased, at auction, selected items from the Railway Letter Stamp collection of the late Captain H. Jackson, author of the modern catalogue of these issues, published in 1979. It was appropriate that we acquired these items during 1991 - 100 years after the introduction of the Railway Letter Post. These stamps have yet to be mounted, to join material from the A J Lowe collection acquired during 1990. Some of the stamps from the Lowe collection were displayed in the Museum main gallery early in 1991 to mark the Railway Letter Post centenary. Other together with railway letter material in the Phillips Collection, were shown by John Holman and John Armstone in a Railway Letter Stamp display to the Friends of the Museum on 11 May.

Sheets of new railway letter stamps, the first day covers, produced by the North Yorkshire Moors Railway are sent to the Museum and mounted in an album. The collection of NYMR issues is almost complete.



1959 B4 stamp vending machine

Examples of Sloper cancellations from London, Liverpool and Manchester





1990 Thomas Hardy. Presentation visuals of 31 March 1989 by John Gibbs

Artwork received during 1991



1991 Dogs. Presentation visuals by Nick Thirkell



1991 Christmas. Presentation visuals by H & P Design



Silver Jubilee

FOR the 25th anniversary of the opening of the National Postal Museum it was decided to have a special celebration with the theme of stamp cancelling machines. On 30 August the replica of the Pearson Hill machine of 1857 was unveiled to the public and three of the latest experimental machines were installed for the day to indicate current lines of investigation.

The Pearson Hill machine is described in detail elsewhere. On the day it was unveiled by Keith Phillips, General Manager, Research and Development and operated by Tony Gammons dressed in appropriately inky Victorian costume. Some three other modern machines were arranged by Dr A R Lane of the Post Office's Research and Development department in Swindon. All were in operation (though one only at the last minute) and all provided examples of items processed for visitors as souvenirs. A small display about the Pearson Hill machine including newly acquired envelopes bearing strikes of the original machine was supplemented by one of the Museum's own Krag machines.

Below: Alastair McCabe demonstrates the prototype ink-jet cancelling machine to Mike Bament (with the special "cancellation")

30 AUGUST
1991

NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM
KING EDWARD STREET
CITY OF LONDON EC

During 1991 the National Postal Museum celebrated its silver jubilee with a party. The oldest and the latest cancelling machines were on view.



Ron Vick, Ian Fraser (both of Post Office Research and Development), Geoff Blyth (of Professional Developments) and Douglas Muir

Ink Jet Printing

All stamp-cancelling machines commercially available until now have used letterpress technology to place the cancelling impression on to the stamp. The inks used were very simple, consisting of a finely divided carbon black in an oil suspension. This, however became increasingly susceptible to removal allowing the stamp to be re-used.

The Post Office set up a study to improve the consistency of the readability of the cancellation and to increase the security of the impression. A number of programmes have been undertaken to achieve these aims including a look at the ink make-up.

As a result the cancellation ink has been replaced with a more secure formulation, but during the work it was noticed that the ink used in some droplet-on-demand printer was very difficult to remove. This has prompted further work on the use of ink jet printers to cancel mail. The main advantage is the flexibility of the change in the impression. The image can be scanned in from a piece of artwork and within a couple of hours it can be translated into a form that can be used by the printers. It is possible to produce images to the required standard where all the information is readable on all envelopes.

On show in the Museum basement was large, heavy prototype for a further machine

Ken Chapman, Marjorie Humble and Ken Lake admire a Krag machine





Jack Peach, Patrick Aucock (British Postmark Society), Tom Norgate (Postal Mechanisation Study Circle), Tony Few (Domino) and Don Staddon examine the Domino ink-jet printer

ed plate or chemically etched into a steel plate.

3. Ink is flooded over the surface of the printing plate so the impression is filled with ink and a doctor-blade removes the excess.
4. A rounded silicon rubber pad descends on to the printing plate and the now tacky ink adheres to the surface of the pad.
5. The pad is lifted away from the plate and descends on to the item transferring the impression on to the item.

A trial had been conducted at the London North Special Handstamp Centre (in King Edward Building) with a pad canceller of Belgian manufacture. The example on show at the Museum was of German origin and it subsequently went into service at the Centre.

A special mark was designed featuring King Edward Building and this was applied to souvenir covers printed with the same design.

All in all, visitors could see how the Museum had progressed in 25 years and how the latest research in the Post Office into stamp cancelling was bearing fruit.

that would be usable in a normal working environment. The mail is stacked on the right of the machine and is removed letter by letter into the main belt path. Letters are then moved into the main belt and carried at constant speed past the printers. These are triggered by a photo beam and place the three parts of the image on to the letter at the correct time to produce the final, complete image. Finally, the letters are removed from the main belt and are stacked ready for removal on the left of the machine.

A special "cancellation" was designed for use on the machine for the day.

Another application of ink jet printing was demonstrated in the main gallery. This was a machine manufactured by Domino of Cambridge. Similar machines have been in use at Liverpool since 1989 to put quality of service and other messages on live mail. The demonstration machine applied messages to both paper and three dimensional objects.

Pad Printer

A third new machine on show was the latest pad printer. Post Office Research has investigated various methods of printing impressions of philatelic cancellations and concluded that pad printers offered the best solution. Pad printers are widely used in industry for such applications as printing on the face of keypads, calculators, model cars, plates, tablets and even golf balls. Their major advantage over other printing methods is the ability to produce a high quality impression on a surface which is not flat.

The method of operation is as follows:

1. Artwork of the required design is produced on film.
2. A printing plate is made either photographically engraved on a polymer-coat-

Ian Fraser demonstrates the Pad canceller (with the souvenir cover and cachet)



City and International King Edward Building London EC1A 1AA



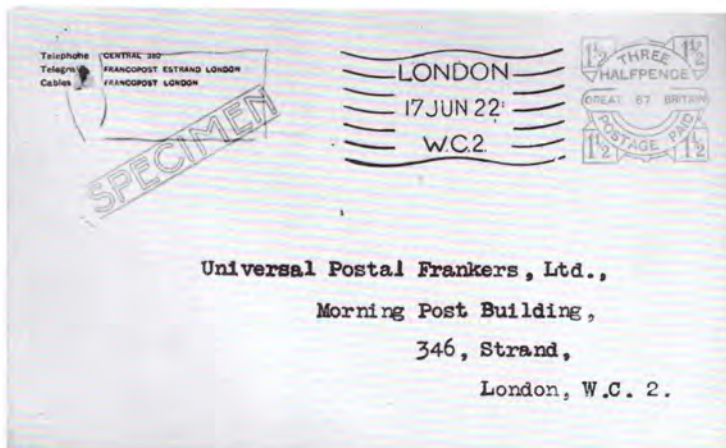
Meter Collection

OVER a number of years the Museum has acquired, from various sources a considerable quantity of material related to meter franking. This has been stored more or less as received. From early in 1991 I have been able to assess the material available and arrange it in some semblance of order prior to mounting for reference and display purposes.

The main groups of material acquired are:

1. An important collection of franked covers etc purchased in 1977. This was assembled by H J Howard employed in the Secretary's Office of the Post Office at the time meter franking machines were introduced. The collection covers the period from 1920 to 1954 but is strongest in the early material. There are many specimens and proofs prepared by the first two manufacturers just before and during the first year of being granted licences. The companies concerned were Postage Meters & Machines Co. offering the American Pitney Bowes machine, and Universal Postal Frankers Ltd selling a machine developed from the New Zealand Moss design. Included in the collection is also similar early material from Neopost Ltd, the third company to be granted a licence a year or two later.
2. A collection of machines, instructional and advertising leaflets, parts lists, stationery, books and some meter frank marks, mainly from Pitney Bowes machines. The collection was donated by M J Sheppard, at one time an employee of Pitney Bowes Ltd.

Universal Postal Frankers Ltd specimen of June 1922 (printed rather than franked)



A start has been made by one of the Friends to organise the NPM collection of meter marks and machines. Here Jack Peach reports progress.



Specimen from Moss Model D machine demonstrated to PO officials September 1920



Moss Model D specimens from Cape Town

Postage Meters and Machine Company specimen of June 1922 (made by their Model A machine)



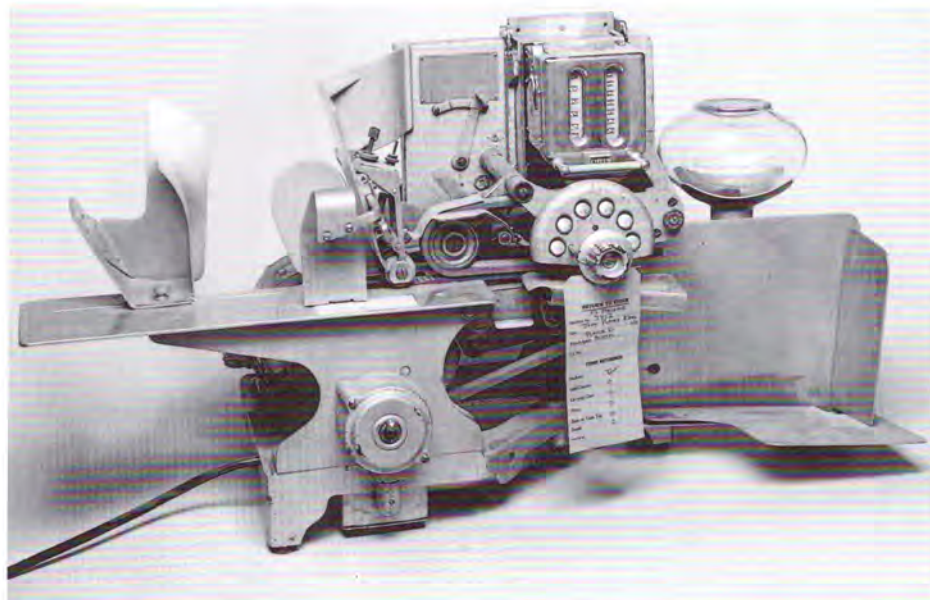
listing has been prepared and is published here in shortened and amended form. Of note are a Pitney Bowes model FS machine; a U.P.F. Midget mk 3; a U.P.F. multivalve; a Neopost limited value and a Hasler model F66 machine. The Sheppard collection of ephemera has been surveyed and separated into broad groups. It is intended that this material be collected together into groups machine by machine so that the 'hardware'

and related documentation are readily available for reference and study.

A start has been made with the cataloguing of the Howard collection and, to date, the items related to the U.P.F. model NZ and Pitney Bowes model A machines have been arranged in chronological order for mounting. Where possible different dies used on the same machine have been assembled, again in chronological order.



Above: Early limited value Neopost machine of 1930 (N001)



Left: Pitney Bowes limited value FS machine complete with glass bowl (PB001)

Meter Machines

No.	Manufacturer	Type*	Model Base	Introduced	Drive	User	Notes
H001	Hasler	MV	F88	1933	Electric	Hasler	Values 0 to 9.99½ + instruction manual
H002	Hasler	MV	F66	1965	Electric	Hasler	Values 0 to 9.99½ + instruction manual
H003	Hasler	MV	F1202		Electric	Hasler	Values 0 to 9.99½ + instruction manual
N001	Neopost	LV	LV	1930	Hand		6 values: ½d, 2d, 2½d, 3d, 4d, 6d
N002	Ronco Neopost	LV	105	1964	Hand	Nemo Heat Treatment Ltd	10 values: ½ - 6; purchased on 26/3/88
N003	Ronco-Vickers (Postalia GmbH)	MV	60.2400.0048	1967	Electric	City of Canterbury, Treasury Dept, 8/12 Dave John, Canterbury, Kent	meter unit separate
PB001	Pitney Bowes	LV	FS		Electric	John Player & Sons Ltd	Values 6: 1½d, 2d, 2½d, 3d, 4d, 6d; Meter series - CV, introduced 1935, Cover casting dated 1950; meter removed
PB002	Pitney Bowes	MV	5510	1964?	Electric	Tuckers Ltd, Gateside Road, Queens Drive, Industrial Estate	meter removed
PB003	Pitney Bowes	MV	5470	1964?	Electric	Stephen Heath Ltd, Thane Road, Lenton Industrial Estate, Lenton, Notts	meter removed
PB004	Pitney Bowes	MV	5410	1964?	Electric	Stephen Heath Ltd, Thane Road, Lenton Industrial Estate, Lenton, Notts	meter removed
PB005	Pitney Bowes	MV	5501	1964?	Hand	Pitney Bowes	Values 3 Bank; 0 by 1p to 10.99
PB006	Pitney Bowes	MV	6333A	1971?	Electric	Intsel Ltd, 85 Gracechurch St., London EC3V 0AA	Operating instructions and record card
PB007	Pitney Bowes	LV	Simplex	1954	Hand?	National Postal Museum	
UPF001	Universal Postal Frankers	FV	Midget MK3	1926	Hand		5 values: 2d, 2½d, 3d, 6d, 1/-
UPF002	Universal Postal Frankers	MV	Universal Multi-value	1932	Hand	National Dock Labour Board	Values: 0 to 9/11½d
UPF003	UPF-Frankopost	MV	Universal Multi-value	1932	Hand?	Rolls Royce	Values: 0 by ½d to ?
UPF004	UPF-Frankopost	LV	Simplex Minor	1950	Hand		Values: ½d to 6½d
UPF005	UPF-Frankopost	LV	Simplex Major	1953	Hand	Butlins	25 values: ½d to 1/0½d
UPF006	UPF-Frankopost	MV	Automax AZ3748	1958	Hand & electric		Values: 0 to 99/11½d

*FV = fixed value; LV = limited value; MV = multivalve

THE past year was a very mixed year in the fortunes of the *Bulletin* and its Editor. We lost two of our most respected contributors, and were forced to change printers half way through the year. Despite this the 12 issues were published more or less on time and contained news and background articles covering a wide range of subjects, hopefully something to interest all collectors of GB stamps and those whose interests extend to the story of the postal services and to British philatelic organisations and events.

Special Issues and Stamp Design

The usual preview features were provided for the year's eight sets of special stamps and the two Greetings issues (Good Luck and Smiles). The Map stamps, issued in September, were most interesting from a printing point of view and the subject of a special feature article by Douglas Muir in November. Background information on the World Student Games was published in July. Barbara Last's article "Scientific Exploits" in March provided background to the Scientific Achievements issue. Sadly this was Barbara's final article for the *Bulletin*; she died early in June. Thematic collectors will miss her useful and well-written contributions. For those interested in numbers, the quantities of spe-

The British Philatelic Bulletin, the Royal Mail's magazine for stamp collectors, is compiled and typeset at the National Postal Museum by John Holman who reviews the issues of 1991.



John Holman at work

cial issues of 1989 and 1990 were published in April and December respectively.

Francis Kennedy's popular review of past special issues continued with accounts of the seven sets from British Gardens (August 1983) to Europa (May 1984). Some 169 issues have now been covered since this series began in 1974.

In December 1990 readers were asked to vote for their favourite set of special stamps of 1990. Some 1,850 replies were received. The poll results, and a selection of readers' comments, were published in April. Heading the poll were The Queen Mother's 90th birthday stamps, very closely followed by Christmas, and the RSPCA set. The Gallantry issue was fourth, followed by the Europa (Buildings), Astronomy, Queen's Awards, and Kew Gardens sets and the Thomas Hardy stamp. The Queen Mother set brought out the full range of patriotic feeling - praise for Her Majesty's devotion to public duty as well as affection for her as a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. The choice of portraits, under her four different titles, was admired.

The Christmas issue was well-liked. described by one reader as "at long last...

festive stamps with a theme the general public can understand, appreciate and enthuse over." The reason for the popularity of the RSPCA set was simple, the readers' love of animals. Tony Evans's photographs of the kitten, rabbit, duck and puppy were particularly appealing. Rather less popular were the Kew Gardens stamps. There was general disappointment that artistic impressions rather than photographs of the Gardens had been featured. All comments were read by me - an enjoyable, if time-consuming, annual task.

My thanks go to Harry Reeves, Museum custodian, who, for the third year running, patiently opened the poll envelopes and totalled up the votes. The poll for the 1991 special and greetings stamps was announced in December. By the end of 1991 nearly 1,000 voting forms had already been received.

Royal Mail sponsors the Stamp Design section of the annual Student Design Competition of the Royal Society of Arts. The subjects of the 1989/90 and 1990/91 stamp competitions were the Student Games and Shakespeare. Some of the winning designs were featured in February, August, September and December.

Machin Issues

Notes and news on Machin definitives and Country stamps were published throughout the year with several specialist articles. Len Newbery, our contributor on stamp books for many years, sadly died in April. His enthusiasm for and great knowledge of stamp books is greatly missed. Len's final articles, on Stamp Books of 1989-90 and Mark III and Mark IV Window Books were published in January, June and August. That part of his collection on which these articles were based is now, as he wished, in the Museum. The popular Agatha Christie prestige book inspired an unusual article on postal references in her books, written by Jean Matheson, published in June.

The February article marking the 20th anniversary of the introduction of decimal stamps generated considerable interest, particularly the listing of offices remaining open during the postal strike and at which first day covers were postmarked on 15 February 1971. Nearly a year on, I am still receiving reports of additional offices from readers, taking my original list of about 40 offices to

British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 29
Number 4
December 1991



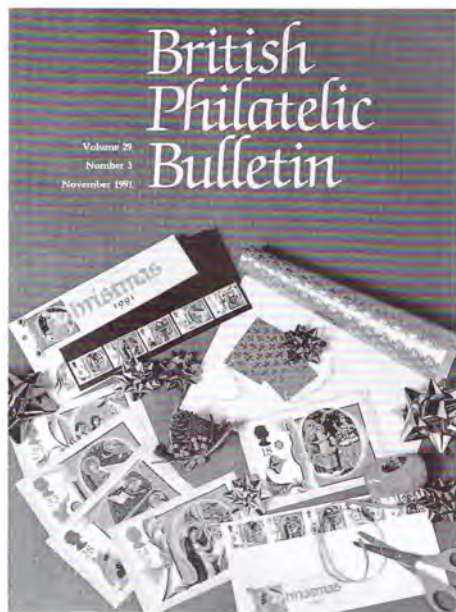
over 150! The March article by Dr A R Lane of the Post Office Research Centre on self-adhesive stamps was also of considerable interest to many readers. Dr Lane traced the story of self-adhesive stamps from the first issue by Sierra Leone in 1964.

The new High Value stamps (24 March 1992) were previewed in October - the castles have been re-engraved and the Queen's head (different design) will now be printed in optically variable ink as a security measure. An article, by Dr Lane, on this ink will be published in the *Bulletin* early in 1992. To cater for readers who like information in list form, the annual listing of definitive and country stamps appeared in December; lists of general withdrawal dates of obsolete definitives and of Royal Mail colour designations for all decimal definitives were published in April and September.

During 1991 the National Portrait Gallery staged an exhibition of the work of Dorothy Wilding (1893-1976) whose portrait of The Queen was used on the 1952-67 definitives and on commemorative stamps to 1966. An article on the Wilding exhibition was published in July.

Exhibitions & Philatelic Organisations

During the year we reported on the Stampway to the World exhibition in Glasgow, the 'Pearls for Everyone' exhibition in Stockholm and Spring Stampex in London. Reports on the Museum's exhibitions on the Post Office in Edwardian times and Stamping the Mail were published in March and August with the first parts of an article entitled "Stamping the Mail" by Tony Gammons in November and December.



The UK is rich in philatelic organisations but sadly many collectors know little of them. I was pleased, therefore, to start a series on "National Philatelic Organisations in Britain" by James Negus, who has been involved with philatelic organisations for many years. The Royal and National philatelic societies, the British Philatelic Federation and its annual congress, the Philatelic

Traders Society, and the British Philatelic Trust came under Mr Negus's scrutiny; further articles are planned.

Regular Features

Ken Chapman's "Philatelic Terms Explained" series continued with articles on Line and Comb Perforations, Maltese Cross cancellations, and RSO postmarks. The long-running "Posting Box" feature still attracts readers' photographs - a considerable number remain on file awaiting publication. Amongst those featured during 1991 were boxes in Glasgow, Hong Kong, Gibraltar, Australia, USA and the 1911 aerial post box in Windsor.

Many readers like the "Gems of the Phillips Collection" which in 1991 included features on the Penny Red and Twopenny Blue ink trials marking the 150th anniversary of the issue of the Penny Red, and the centenary of the railway letter service. For students of Victorian issues, Ken Lake's February article on the Penny Blue and Jack Peach's articles on the Pearson Hill Stamp Cancelling Machines (June & July) made fascinating reading. The January issue included Part 2 of James Mackay's "Global Tribute to the Penny Black" recording the 150th anniversary issues of 1990. During the year over 30 new books and catalogues relating to British stamps and postal history were reviewed.

General

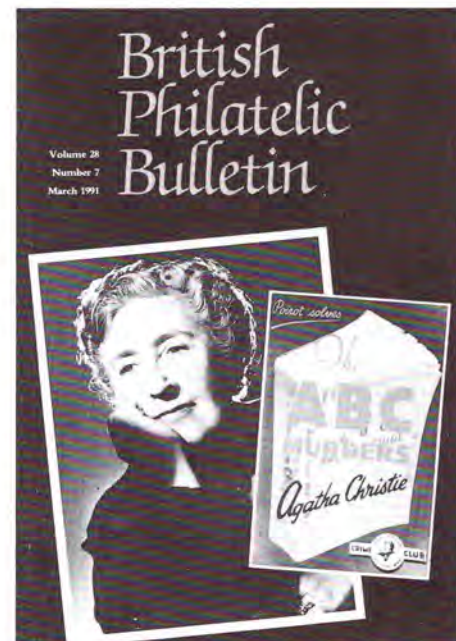
G E Drabble's popular series "Themes of British Special Stamps", begun in September 1990, continued with comment on issues featuring Sport (January), Architecture (April) and Flowers (October). Further articles will follow. Readers' letters published in the "Postbag" feature have added to our philatelic knowledge and interest. Such letters are always welcome. News of the Post Office Archives, the Friends of the NPM, and of involvement in youth philately by Royal Mail and others have all been recorded. A list of the 33 Collections and philatelic counters was published in May detailing the special Philatelic Counter postmarks, times of opening, etc.

As always, I must thank colleagues throughout Royal Mail for their help throughout the year, particularly Paul Burnett of the Design Division who supervises the printing of the *Bulletin*, and freelance designer Angus Mathieson. Dr Jean Alexander's expert indexing skills can be seen in the index to Volume 28, published in August.

The *Bulletin* still does not have its own office, sharing the Museum's "work room" with six other staff. Lack of space means that *Bulletin* files are stored in a basement room, involving a 20-minute "round trip" to consult them. Better accommodation is hoped for during 1992. In August the future of the *Bulletin* was discussed as part of a thorough review of all Royal Mail activities. After lengthy discussions, it was agreed to continue publication but consideration must be given to subscription income as the *Bulletin* does not cover production and distribution costs and is heavily subsidised by Royal Mail. Resulting from this review, I am

spending more time on the managerial, planning and promotional aspects of running the *Bulletin*. Being the sole "editorial staff", some of the tasks I have undertaken in the past, more properly the duties elsewhere of an assistant editor or editor's secretary, have had to take a "back seat" or have lapsed.

A change in printer resulted in some delay to publication of the August and September issues but the new printer, Raithby Lawrence of Leicester, are now doing a good job.



Postmark Bulletin

Compilation of this *Bulletin* was transferred from the British Philatelic Bureau to the Museum in 1988. Published fortnightly, the *Bulletin* provides advance information of special handstamps and postmark slogans. It is despatched to some 1,200 subscribers from the Bureau in Edinburgh. During 1991 over 350 special handstamps were announced, about a dozen and nearly 100 local slogan campaigns. Amongst the more interesting slogans were those inscribed in Punjabi, Bengali, Urdu and Gujarati to promote the BBC2 "East" programmes.

In June the *Postmark Bulletin* celebrated its 20th anniversary - it has come a long way since the first 4-page issue of June 1971. In the early days it was unillustrated and didn't even give reposting addresses for collectors to send their covers. Illustrations and detailed information are now provided, together with the occasional article on old or current postmarks and reviews of books of interest to postmark collectors.

My thanks go to colleagues in the seven Special Handstamp Centres, Royal Mail local offices, the Forces Postal Service, Royal Mail Engineering and the Bureau for their help in supplying information, printing and distribution of the *Bulletin*. Special thanks are due to Mrs Liz Arthurs, the Museum's new Secretary, for her rapid transformation of my dreadful hand-written text into presentable typed copy from which the *Bulletin* is printed.

Publications

AFTER the exceptional year of 1990, publications by the National Postal Museum returned to normal. No books or catalogues were published but some 17 postcards were produced with attendant postmarks, and cachets were used at both Spring and Autumn Stampex. A commemorative envelope was also printed for use in the Pearson Hill machine.

Factsheets were also produced for the various exhibitions and displays in the Museum and were made available free to visitors.

The normal Maltese Cross cancellation for mail posted at the Museum was brought back into regular use on 2 January 1991, having been replaced during 1990 by the handstamp marking the 150th anniversary of the penny black. Exceptionally, it was used on 10 February and 6 May (when the Museum was not open) to mark the 150th anniversary of the penny red and National Stamp Day respectively. However, as of 1 November it came into use on every day of the year.



NPM 91/1 The Postmen of Shenley, Hertfordshire c. 1912 (Post Office Collection)

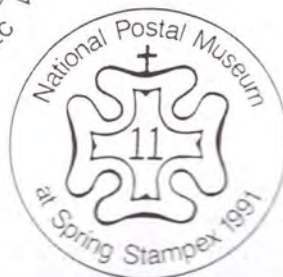
NPM 91/2 Sub-Post Office at Hildenborough near Tonbridge, Kent (Post Office Collection)



New Museum publications in 1991 included 17 postcards with associated postmarks, and factsheets about exhibitions.



NPM 91/3 Member of the Corps of Women Drivers and Grooms, formed to man the mail vans during the 1914-18 War (Post Office Collection)



NPM 91/4 Rural postman in summer uniform delivering mail (NPM Collection)



NPM 91/5 Rotary handstamp by Kirkwoods of Edinburgh used in Manchester in the late 1850s (NPM Collection)

NPM 91/6 Pearson Hill 'Parallel Motion' machine. Developed by Rowland Hill's son, Pearson, this self-inking handstamp was in use at the London Chief Office from 1859. (NPM Collection)



NPM 91/7 Hand-operated Krag 'Continuous Impression' cancelling machine. Developed in Norway this simple but efficient machine was introduced into Great Britain in 1907 after trials in London. (NPM Collection)



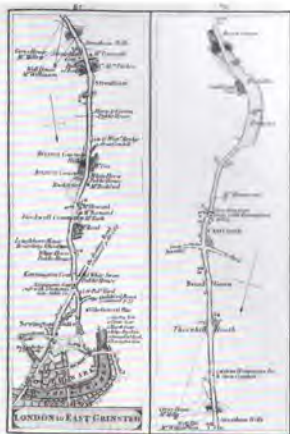
NPM 91/8 The Duke and Duchess of York after applying the special slogan postmark at the opening of the Mount Pleasant Sorting office on 2 November 1934. (Post Office Collection)



NPM 91/9 Maps and the Post Office - Part of John Cary's *Survey of the High Roads from London, 1790*. London to Rochester 1. (Post Office Archives)



NPM 91/10 Maps and the Post Office - Part of John Cary's *Survey of the High Roads from London, 1790*. London to Rochester 2. (Post Office Archives)



NPM 91/11 Maps and the Post Office - Part of John Cary's *Survey of the High Roads from London, 1790*. London to East Grinstead 1. (Post Office Archives)

NPM 91/12 Maps and the Post Office - Part of John Cary's *Survey of the High Roads from London, 1790*. London to East Grinstead 2. (Post Office Archives)



NPM 91/13 Maps and the Post Office - Part of John Cary's *New Map of England and Wales with part of Scotland*, Second Edition, 1816, from information supplied by the Postmasters General. Showing the location of Ham Street, Kent. (Post Office Archives)



NPM 91/14 Official Christmas card sent by officers of the GPO London to their colleagues at the South East District Office, London in 1885. (NPM Collection)



NPM 91/15 Official Christmas card sent by officers of the GPO London to their colleagues at Paddington District Office, London in 1887. (NPM Collection)



NPM 91/16 Official Christmas card sent by officers of the GPO London to their colleagues at Paddington District Office in 1888. (NPM Collection)

NPM 91/17 Official Christmas card sent by officers of the Liverpool Post Office to their colleagues at Paddington District Office, London in 1892. (NPM Collection)



1991 Postcard Print Figures

- 14 Jan **Post Office in Edwardian Times** (91/1-4)* 7,000 (sets)
- 14 May **Stamping the Mail** (91/5-8)* 7,000 (sets)
- 17 Sept **Maps and the Post Office** (91/9-13)* 7,000 (sets)
- 12 Dec **Christmas** (91/14-17)* 5,000 (sets)

* still on sale



Postmark Figures

- 14 Jan **Edwardian Exhibition** 3,436
- 14 May **Stamping the Mail** 2,971
- 12 Sept **Silver Jubilee** 1,000
- 17 Sept **Maps and the Post Office** 7,649
- 12 Dec **Post Early Christmas** 4,326
- 1991 **Maltese Cross** 11,417

Association of Friends

THE year following Stamp World London 90 at Alexandra Palace had to be quieter from all aspects. In the early part of 1991 the Gulf War curtailed the Friends programme. We were scheduled to visit the British Forces Post Office 777 (RE) at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, London but due to the vast influx of mail passing through that office for the Middle East we were asked to postpone our meeting. I am happy to be able to report that a year later we shall undertake that visit.

During May Friends enjoyed a superb day at the Museum to honour the centenary of the Railway Letter Service. Dismissed too hastily as 'Cinderella' material this fascinating subject provided most enjoyable displays and talks. John Armstone introduced the subject from its 1891 beginnings and went through

CROSS
POST

Journal of the Association of Friends
of the National Postal Museum
Volume 4, Number 1
Autumn 1991



Rural Postmen's Shelter HD, Shenley (Hertfordshire) c. 1912

the decades up to the nationalisation of the railways in 1948. John Holman then took over by displaying a lot of material from the issues of some 17 minor railways which have flourished since the Beeching axe. Finally, Lionel Jones treated us to a display of British Revenues and Fiscals revealing stamps which had been on sale over Post Office counters for purposes entirely unconnected with postage, which at times we all tend to overlook.

Approximately 90 Friends and their guests attended the Annual General Meeting held in King Edward Hall in November. As

The Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum was formed in 1985. Here, the Secretary, Ray Pottle, reports on their activities in 1991.



The Annual General Meeting

usual the formal matters were dealt with quickly so that we could move on to listen to our two speakers from the Ordnance Survey. David Harris and Graeme Smith from the Information Division provided superb lectures, illustrated by slides from Ptolemy to the present day. The Royal Mail had issued a set of four stamps to celebrate 200 years of mapping in Britain by the Ordnance Survey, the official mapping agency.

Kevin Squelch (Post Office Archives) with Ray Pottle, Len Newbery and Don Staddon



Every Friend attending the meeting was given a cover, designed by Eric Ivens, handstamped with the NPM 17 September postmark and cacheted for 23 November 1991. Housebound Friends and those overseas members could also purchase a cover with the full set of stamps. This is just but one of the little things that the Friends do so well.

The editorship of our own magazine *Cross Post* changed hands. Doug Myall retired on medical advice and Allan Daniell stepped into the breach and brought out a superb issue following a hiccup or two at the production stage.

1991 was the year during which Friends who were able to devote time on a regular one day a week basis to working on the Museum's treasured possessions. Details appear elsewhere in this report.

Death took its toll during the year of many well-known and loved Friends: Edgar Lewy, Thomas Alexander, John Aronson, Ken Davis, Barbara Last, Len Newbery and Maurice Woolner - some of whom were well-known to you through their writings in the philatelic press. In a year of recession I am happy to report that our membership numbers held up very well indeed. If you are not a member why not write for details to the Honorary Secretary, Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum, KEB, King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP.



The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial statements. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses and income. The document further explains that proper record-keeping is essential for identifying trends, managing cash flow, and complying with tax regulations. It also notes that detailed records can provide valuable insights into the operational efficiency of the business and help in making informed decisions.

In addition, the document highlights the need for regular reconciliation of accounts. This process involves comparing the internal records with the bank statements to identify any discrepancies. By doing so, the business can catch errors early and prevent them from escalating. The document also discusses the importance of having a clear system for organizing and storing financial records, whether in physical or digital form. This ensures that all information is easily accessible and secure.

Finally, the document stresses the importance of transparency and accountability in financial reporting. It encourages businesses to provide clear and concise reports to stakeholders, including investors and creditors. This helps build trust and confidence in the organization's financial health. The document concludes by reiterating that diligent financial record-keeping is a cornerstone of successful business management and long-term growth.