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Our verdict on Royal Mail's new Wild Coasts set



Record-breaker

The most expensive philatelic item ever

Greatest engravings by Sem Hartz

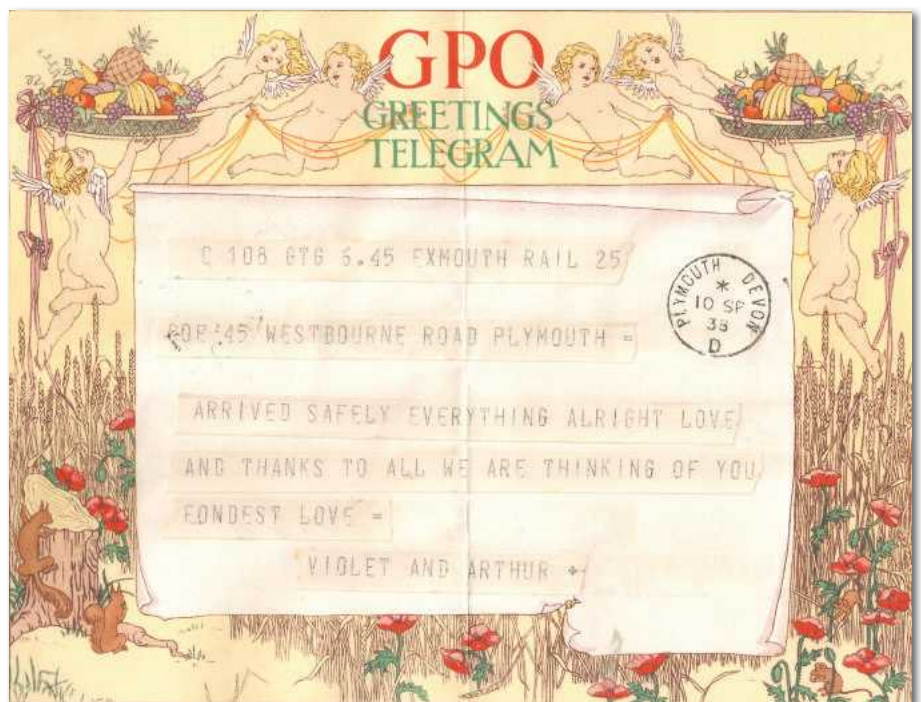


Seats of power

Stamps celebrating government houses of the British colonies

Greetings telegrams

How the GPO rescued the telegram from its reputation as a harbinger of doom



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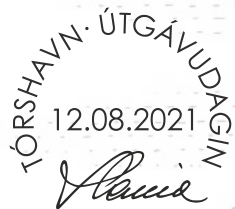
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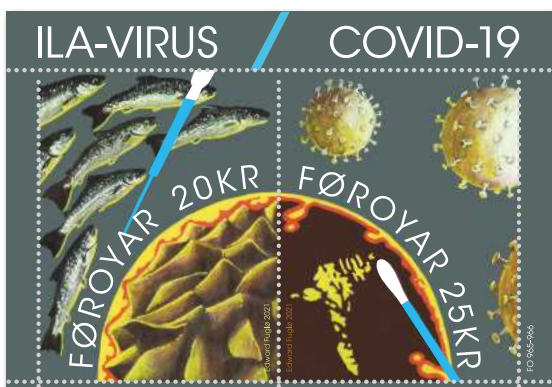
100th birth anniversary of Cz. Slania

In connection with the 100th birth anniversary of Czeslaw Slania, we have issued a souvenir sheet, featuring Slania's portrait. This is a joint issue with Greenland and Denmark. A special folder containing the three mini-sheets and the Faroese blackprint is also available. Design and engraving: Martin Mörrck.



Faroe Islands Stamps

New stamp issues in August and September 2021



ILA-Virus & Covid-19 in the Faroe Islands

In 2001, the Faroese salmon industry was hit by the influenza virus ISA (in Faroese ILA). At that point, farmed salmon was regularly examined for viruses. When Covid-19 was found in the Faroe Islands, they used same testing facilities which were used for testing the ILA-virus. While the outside world was still struggling to get the test capacity ready, the Faroe Islands were already working on an efficient and much cheaper test program.



Art by Ingálvur av Reyni

Ingálvur av Reynis was a visual artist who throughout his long artistic life continued to challenge himself, thus creating a life's work of immense significance to the Faroese visual arts. Art-works: Tinganes, 1947 and "Through time and spaces", 2002.



Bishop's copes

The bishop wears the cope on special occasions, for example when ordaining priests, on church anniversaries, St. Olaf's Day, July 29, and when participating in ecclesiastical events abroad.

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WELCOME

Many of us have become far too wary to get carried away by what Britain's national press likes to call 'Freedom Day'. Lockdowns have been lifted twice previously during the coronavirus pandemic, only to be reinstated.



But this time there are genuine expectations that philatelic life could move back towards what we used to call normal, and those green shoots of recovery can be seen in the renaissance of the stamp fair.

For many collectors, this kind of event is the lifeblood of the hobby, the ideal opportunity to interact with other collectors, with helpful dealers, and most importantly with philatelic material. After 18 months in hibernation, often being tentatively planned but then cancelled, stamp fairs are back!

Stafford Stamp Show went ahead successfully in mid-June, and Midpex in early July. There may have been smaller crowds, fewer dealers, unavoidable compromises and ubiquitous face masks, but the important fact is that they happened.

The organisers of Hampex in September and Salisbury Stamp Fair in October have told us they are confident of going ahead. Between these two events, Stampex should be able to return as an actual rather than a virtual experience. Local fair organisers are beginning to book community halls for the remainder of 2021 and the entirety of 2022.

The final piece in the puzzle is philatelic societies. As I write, many of them will be finalising schedules for a 2021-22 season, and we hope this will soon be confirmed by the resurrection of our listing of selected events in *Stamp Magazine*.

Some say the future is Zoom. But not so fast!

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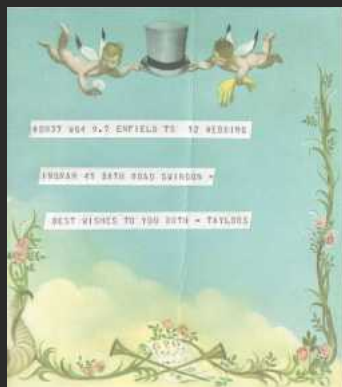
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'Government houses were built in every corner of the Empire'

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'The letter inside the cover offered a snapshot of how the hobby was conducted 75 years ago'

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Modern take on iconic stamp motif of Canada

Canada has revisited the subject of one of its most famous stamps by issuing a set of two marking the 100th anniversary of *Bluenose*, the racing schooner dubbed the 'Queen of the North Atlantic'.

This iconic vessel was the result of a fierce rivalry between the Grand Banks fishing communities of Nova Scotia in Canada and Massachusetts in the United States. Their fastest fishing boats raced against each other for the International Fishermen's Trophy, starting in 1920.

Built in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, in 1921, *Bluenose* won the event that year, and again in 1922, 1923, 1931 and 1938, remaining undefeated in the series.

She was illustrated on a 50c blue in Canada's 1928-29 definitive series, widely considered to be one of the country's most beautiful stamps ever, and has subsequently appeared again on issues of 1982 (a stamp-on-stamp design), 1988 and 1998.

The ship has also been featured on Canada's coinage since 1937, and can be seen on the current 10c coin.

The new stamps, a self-adhesive se-tenant pair of domestic-rate values which come in booklets of 10 and miniature sheets of two, feature illustrations of the ship both fishing (left) and racing (right).

'Bluenose' is a traditional nickname for Nova Scotians, dating from the 18th century.



ABOVE: Canada 1928-29 50c *Bluenose* definitive



ABOVE: Canada 2021 *Bluenose* se-tenant pair

Singapore celebrates high-rise greenery

Singapore has followed up the widest stamp it has ever issued (December issue, page 9) with the six tallest, in a set entitled Skyrise Greenery.

Each measuring 81mm high, they celebrate buildings which have incorporated natural greenery into their design as part of the government's Landscaping for Urban Spaces & High-Rises (LUSH) programme, which was introduced in 2009.

The six projects featured are the Khoo Teck Puat Hospital (completed in 2010), the SkyTerrace@Dawson housing development (2015), the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum (2015), the Oasia Hotel (2016), the Kampung Admiralty community facilities complex (2017) and Jewel Changi Airport (2018).

With values ranging from 30c to \$1.40, these eye-catching stamps were issued on July 1.



100 years of China's Communist Party

A sheetlet of 20 stamps and a postal stationery envelope were released by China on July 1 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China.

The sheetlet of 1.20y values tells the story of the CPC largely in tones of red, yellow and gold, including fluorescent ink, while the envelope's imprinted stamp of the same value is based on the official '100' anniversary logo.

A set of four and a miniature sheet were issued by Hong Kong on the same theme.



Midpex confirms the rebirth of stamp fairs

Midpex, the popular biennial stamp fair organised by the Midland Philatelic Federation, went ahead successfully in Leamington Spa on July 3, heralding what collectors will hope is the start of a return to normality in the hobby.

Some 60 dealers and 40 specialist societies took part, adhering to social distancing and mask-wearing measures but delighted to be able to enjoy a philatelic event after the cancellation of so many fairs due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Clive Jones, the chairman of the organisers, said: 'Although attendance was a little down on previous events, it was a day of great happiness.'



USA design has a mystery message

A new stamp from the United States is a visual riddle, with a mystery message.

Each rectangle in a colourful pattern, which at first glance appears abstract, actually contains a letter, and together they spell out a phrase: 'More than meets the eye!'.

The stamp was inspired by, and launched at, the International Spy Museum in Washington DC, and was designed by its art director Antonio Alcalá.

An extra-large postmark available on the first day of issue, July 14, spelled out a further obscure message in the same style.

The stamp is a non-value indicator for domestic postage, inscribed Forever, with a current face value of 55c.

Ireland toasts Glastonbury

Ireland has issued a booklet of four stamps celebrating the 50th anniversary of England's world-famous Glastonbury music festival.

The designs feature four Irish singer-songwriters who have played at Glastonbury: Christy Moore, Lisa Hannigan, Sinéad O'Connor and Hozier (Andrew Hozier Byrne).



NEWS IN BRIEF

► Stanley Gibbons had its exciting new purchase, the British Guiana 1856 1c black on magenta, shipped to the UK in July, and has commissioned a £30,000 bulletproof display case for its shop in London.

► The Royal Philatelic Society London held its first face-to-face meeting after the lifting of pandemic restrictions on July 22, with 70 members viewing a display of Gibraltar, Malta and Cyprus material from the Royal Philatelic Collection.

► Members of the RPSL have been invited to show 50 frames in the Court of Honour at the Great American Stamp Show in Chicago in August.

► Helvetia 22, the first international exhibition in Switzerland for more than 50 years, will be held in Lugano on May 18-22, 2022. The UK Commissioner is Chris King. E-mail: chris.king@postalhistory.net

► The annual Crawford Medal for the most valuable contribution to the study of philately published in book form has been awarded to James Grimwood-Taylor for *International Postal Reforms*, published in two volumes covering 1550-1839 and 1840-1898.

► A new digital catalogue of stamps celebrating Mahatma Gandhi also offers much information about his life. *Life of Mahatma Gandhi Through Philately* by R Lavanya is available from Amazon.

Isle of Man honours legendary Olympians



The Isle of Man has celebrated the 125th anniversary of the modern Olympic Games with a set of 12 stamps honouring a selection of Great British Olympians.

It portrays six Manx athletes and six non-Manx competitors, in order to represent the achievements of Team GB over the years.

Two of the Manx sextet are the only Olympic gold medallists born on the island: the rower Sidney Swann, who won gold in the men's eight in Stockholm in 1912 and silver in the same event in Antwerp in 1920, and the cyclist Peter Kennerly, who won gold in the team pursuit event at London 2012.

The others are track athlete Maurice Herriott, who won the silver medal in the

3,000m steeplechase in Tokyo in 1964, cyclist Mark Cavendish, who won silver in the men's omnium in Rio in 2016 (and has also been in the news this year for adding to his tally of stage wins on the Tour de France), cyclist Marie Morgan (previously Purvis), who took part in both the 1992 and 1996 Games, and shooter Tim Kneale, who competed in Rio.

The other six British Olympians include some of the greatest of all time, such as the rower Sir Steve Redgrave, who won gold medals at five consecutive Olympic Games from 1984 to 2000, and the athlete Sir Mo Farah, who won the 5,000m and 10,000m double in both London and Rio.

The remaining four are athlete Dame Kelly Holmes, who won gold in the 800m and 1,500m in Athens in 2004, swimmer

Rebecca Adlington, who earned gold medals in the 400m and 800m freestyle events at Beijing in 2008, tennis player Sir Andy Murray, the first man to win back-to-back Olympic singles titles, at London 2012 and Rio 2016, and swimmer Adam Peaty, who broke his own world record to win gold in the 100m breaststroke in Rio in 2016, and retained his title in Tokyo this year.

A 28-page prestige booklet features an additional 24 labels portraying famous Olympians, including Ben Ainslie, Sebastian Coe, Chris Hoy and Daley Thompson.

The stamps were designed by EJC Design, using original artwork which was commissioned by Team GB itself, and issued on July 15. The Manx natives are depicted on 1st class values, and the others on EU-rate stamps.

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Not a lot of Collectors Know This, but some of the stamps they search for were produced in very small numbers ... often down to a few thousands or less of high values.

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Naturally, it may take time – but, generally these stamps can be located, albeit not always in the best condition sought.

Counter intuitively one would think that low value stamps produced in larger printings would be easy to find, but sometimes such stamps may be much more difficult to source than high/higher value stamps ... and the reason why is often, but not always, because ...

few dealers can afford to cost-effectively handle stamps which are theoretically worth pence ...

However, even in the harsh reality

of today's cold 'covid' commercial climate, when you handle stamps cost-effectively, in 'on approval' stamp supply selling-systems, with the added benefit of 'scale', supplying stamps to be selected by hundreds of collector clients ... it is possible, even today, to effectively sell inexpensive stamps and crucially make sufficient profit to stay in business.

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AUCTION HIGHLIGHTS

MAURITIUS 1847 'Post Office' 1d cover

**SOLD FOR
£6,935,000**

The only Mauritius 'ball cover' in private hands recorded the highest price ever fetched by a single philatelic item at Christoph Gärtner's auction on June 26.

After five bidders competed for one of the great British Empire rarities, the realisation of more than £6.9m was more than double the pre-sale estimate.

The cover bears an example of the 1d red-orange from the initial printing of the legendary 'Post Office' issue of Mauritius, the first postage stamps produced by any British colony. Only 27 survive in total: 15 of the 1d and 12 of the 2d blue.

This cover is one of three surviving 'ball covers', used in the early days of the issue to send out invitations to a fancy dress ball held by Lady Gomm, the Governor's wife. It is the only one in private hands, as the other two reside in the Royal Philatelic Collection and the British Library.

The stamp is tied by a boxed 'Paid' handstamp in black, and there is also a boxed 'Penny Post' handstamp at top left. Addressed to H Adam Esq Junior, with no town or street address deemed necessary, the cover has a black 'Mauritius Post Office' circular datestamp of September 27, 1847, on the reverse. This was the seventh day the stamps had been on sale.

The anonymous winning bidder was reported to be a German-speaking collector from Europe. Previous owners have included King Carol of Romania, Hiroyuki Kanai and Vikram Chand.

SOLD BY CHRISTOPH GÄRTNER £6,935,000



CANADA & USA 1851 Unique mixed franking

Robert A Siegel's sale offered a unique mixed franking of the first stamp issues of both Canada and the United States, on a cover addressed to London in 1851.

The Canada stamp is the 1851 3d red (depicting an American beaver), recess-printed on laid paper by Rawdon Wright Hatch & Edson of New York and issued just two weeks before this letter was posted. It was tied by a seven-ring 'target' cancellation.

To this was added a horizontal strip of five of the US 1847 5c red-brown (portraying Benjamin Franklin), recess-printed by the same company on greyish-blue paper. Already in use for four years but soon to be invalidated, these stamps were tied by multiple strikes of New York City's grid cancellation in red.

The sender wrote 'Via United States' and 'By steamer of 7th of May 1851' across the top of the cover; although intended to catch the sailing of the Cunard Line's RMS *Asia*, it was in fact carried by the Havre Line's SS *Humboldt*, on its maiden voyage.

Postal markings include a red 'Canada' framed-arc cross-border handstamp, a red '3' credit handstamp applied at the New York foreign mail office, and a red 'Paid 01' London receiving datestamp of May 19.

Described as 'one of the five most important covers of the United States', this exhibition piece has been owned in recent times by Joseph Hackmey and Bill Gross.

SOLD BY ROBERT A SIEGEL £454,200



AUSTRIA-HUNGARY 1867 3kr error of value on cover

Gärtner's sale also included an extremely rare postally used example of an 1867 error of Austria-Hungary, the 3kr red.

The 3kr was normally printed in green, but in the spring or summer of 1867 a single 3kr cliché was placed in the 5kr plate of 100 by mistake. A batch of faulty sheets was put on sale in Hungary, before being withdrawn when the error was discovered.

Only six copies of the error are known: three singles, one used on piece and two on cover. This cover, undiscovered until the 1930s, was sent from Köbanya (part of Budapest) to Vienna on September 8, 1867, the datestamp leaving the denomination clear.



SOLD BY CHRISTOPH GÄRTNER £436,700

WEST GERMANY 1951-1952 Complete sheets of definitives

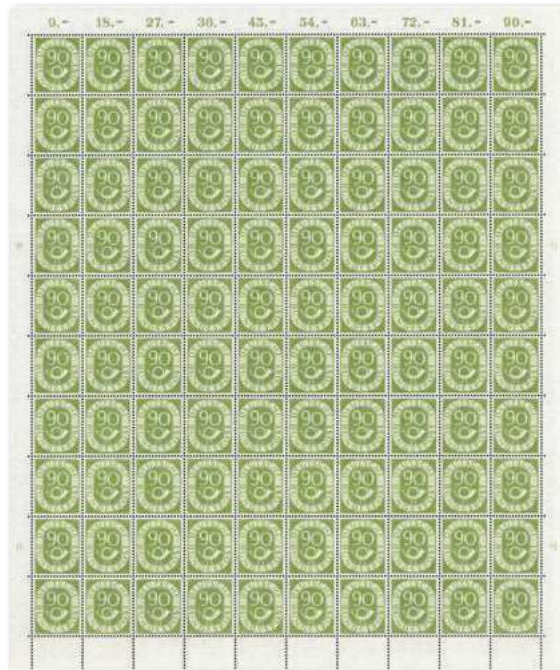
An unusual lot in the Felzmann sale comprised a rare set of complete mint sheets from West Germany's 1951-52 definitive series.

It included all 16 values in the 'Numeral and Posthorn' series, ranging from 2pf up to 90pf, crucially with each sheet of 100 pristine and unfolded.

The stamps were printed in two different formats, with the three top values having larger dimensions and therefore produced in bigger sheets.

Naturally, the collection contained the three catalogued plate flaws, each of which occurs in only a small number of stamps.

SOLD BY ULRICH FELZMANN £111,600

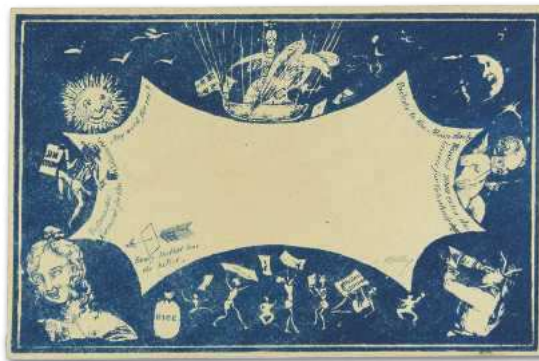


GREAT BRITAIN 1840 Mulready caricature by Hume

Very few copies of the 1840 Mulready No2 caricature cover created by R W Hume of Leith survive, but an unused one came up at Harmers of London.

Printed in deep blue, it illustrated Britannia and an eagle in a balloon, promised 'Packets to the Moon daily' and portrayed the Postmaster General for the Colonies as 'Jim Crow', an African-Caribbean field labourer.

The reverse parodied official advice on posting unusual items.



SOLD BY HARMERS OF LONDON £13,000

JAMAICA 1883 Proofs for new colours

Spink's sale included a unique sheet of colour proofs for stamps of Jamaica which was submitted to the Crown Agents in August 1883.

Headed 'Jamaica Postage Stamps: Existing and Proposed Schemes of Colours', it bore a set of nine stamps, from ½d to 5s, in existing colours, with new colour trials appended for the values up to 6d, letterpress-printed by De La Rue.

Colour changes were needed to bring the series into line with the International Postal Convention. The new colours for the ½d and 1d were required, those for the values from 2d to 6d marked as 'proposed', and those from 1s to 5s marked as 'cannot be improved upon'.

The new colours were approved on November 27, and the stamps rolled out as existing stocks expired between 1885 and 1897.

SOLD BY SPINK £12,000

CHINA 1968 Withdrawn 8f

An example of one of China's most sought-after modern errors came up at John Bull's auction.

The 1968 design showing a worker, a farmer and a soldier carrying copies of *Quotations from Chairman Mao* was inscribed 'The Whole Country is Red', but an error saw the island of Taiwan (then as now claimed to be part of the People's Republic) not coloured red.

When this was pointed out, the stamp was withdrawn from sale, having been available for less than half a day.

This particular example was described as unused but altered by cleaning.

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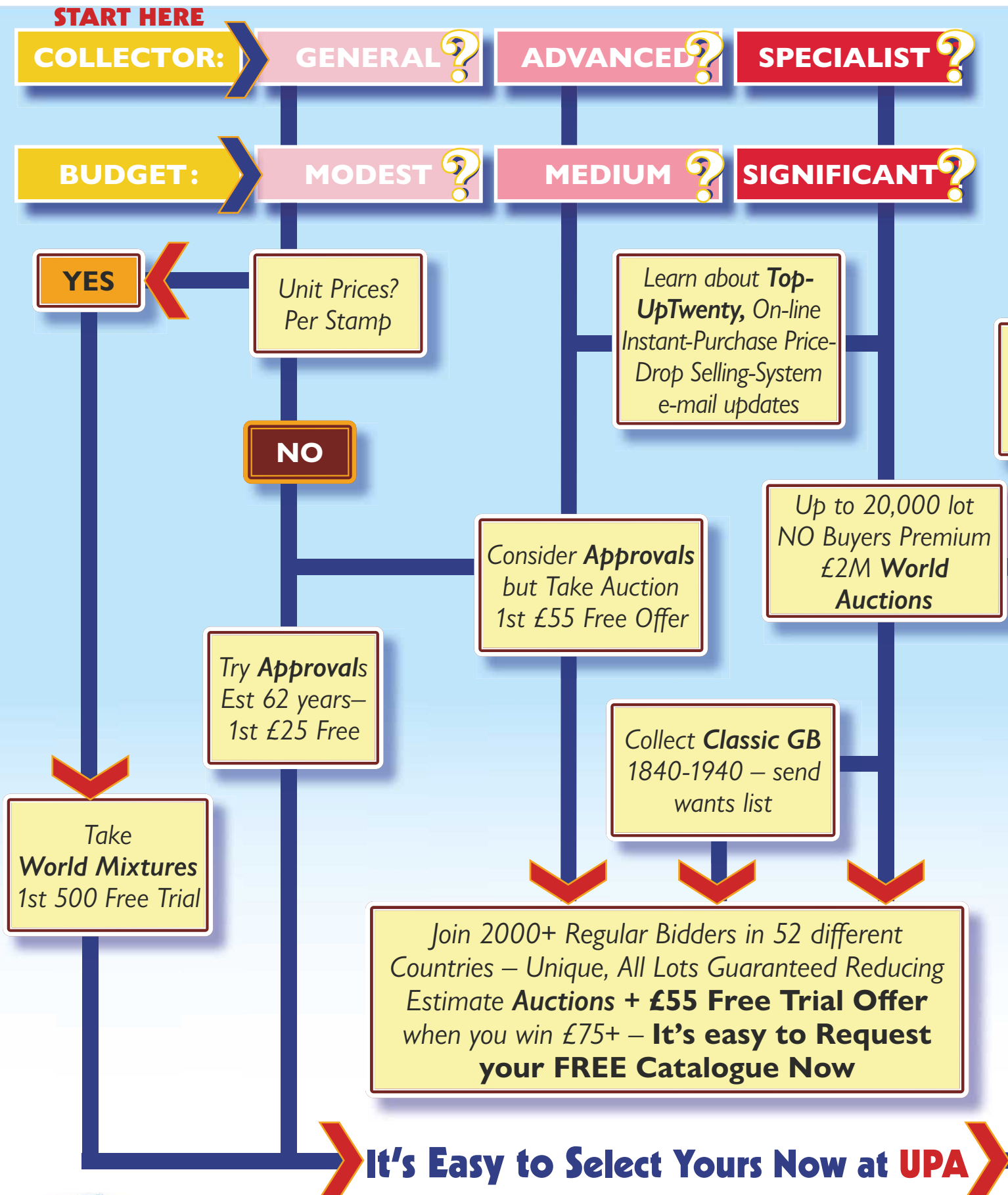
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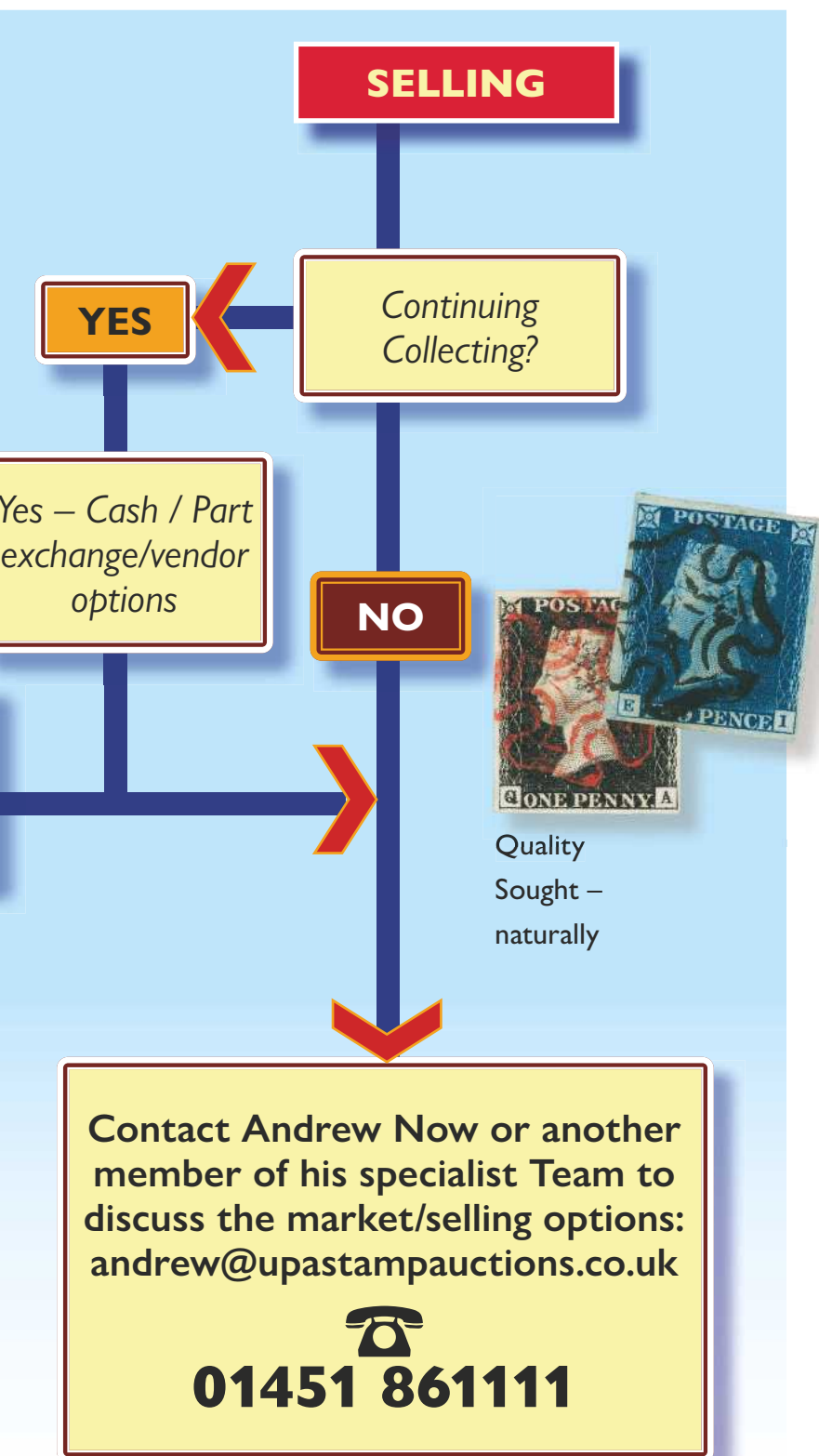
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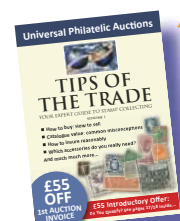
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Bottlenose Dolphin



Spiny Spider Crab



Long-snouted Seahorse

The Wild Coasts special stamp issue, released on July 22, celebrates the beautiful and in some cases surprising diversity of marine life found in British coastal waters.

Nowhere in the UK is more than 70 miles from the coast, and the British Isles provide unique or ideal habitats for a multitude of species.

A set of 10 counter-sheet stamps showcases a wide variety of wildlife, from mammals, fish and birds to crustaceans, molluscs, anemones and coral.

An accompanying four-stamp miniature sheet illustrates the Marine Food Chain, visually demonstrating how energy is transferred from tiny organisms to top predators.

The sheet stamps were designed by Steers McGillan Eves, from photographs, while the miniature sheet was designed by Royal Mail Group, and illustrated by Maïté Franchi.

The issue was printed in litho by International Security Printers.



Orca

1st class NORTHERN GANNET

This distinctive seabird nests in large colonies on cliffs and rocky outcrops, and hunts for fish by contorting its body into an arrow shape and diving spectacularly on its prey. It can hit the water at speeds up to 60mph, with a thickened skull and an airbag in its neck allowing it to survive the impact.

1st class COMMON CUTTLEFISH

This mollusc has an oval-shaped cuttlebone which helps to provide buoyancy, and can change colour and skin texture rapidly to blend in with its surroundings. It has a venomous bite to paralyse its prey, such as crabs and fish, and can squirt ink to deter predators.

1st class GREY SEAL

Almost half of the world's population of this species lives in British waters, with numbers recovering after a slump. Its long and sensitive whiskers and streamlined body help it to hunt for fish in deep, murky water, and it has a third eyelid to protect its eyes from damage when diving.

1st class BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN

Found around Britain and worldwide, this intelligent mammal lives in social groups, called pods, comprising up to 1,000 individuals. It can navigate and hunt for fish in low visibility thanks to echo-location,



Fried-egg Anemone



Cuckoo Wrasse



Cold-water Coral Reef

which involves reflecting sound waves to create a mental picture of its surroundings.

1st class SPINY SPIDER CRAB

Found on southern and western coasts, this long-legged crustacean has a carapace covered in spines, with Velcro-like hooks which are used to attach algae to it for camouflage. It will eat anything from seaweed to starfish.

1st class LONG-SNOUDED SEAHORSE

This fish is one of two species of seahorse found in British waters. Its slow, swaying movements make it almost invisible among seagrass, and it uses its long snout to catch small crustaceans and plankton. It is the male which broods fertilised eggs in a pouch before giving birth.

1st class ORCA

Although sometimes called a killer whale, this mammal is in fact the largest member of the dolphin family. It feeds on a variety of prey including seals, other marine mammals, fish and seabirds. The UK has a very small resident population off the Outer Hebrides, but transient groups may be spotted elsewhere.

1st class FRIED-EGG ANEMONE

This delicate anemone has white stinging tentacles, which it uses to catch passing small prey, but it is named after the orange oral disc which only a small number of individuals have. It can reproduce by splitting itself in half, in a process called longitudinal fission.

PRICES

Set of 10 stamps	£8.50
Miniature sheet	£5.10
Presentation pack	£14.50
Stamp cards	£6.75
First day cover (stamps)	£10.85
First day cover (mini sheet)	£6.80
Press sheet	£78.55



1st class CUCKOO WRASSE

This colourful fish, found near rocky seabeds, has strong jaws and teeth to help it consume shelled prey such as crabs, urchins and molluscs. It begins life as a female, in groups dominated by a single male, but can become male if needed.

1st class COLD-WATER CORAL REEF

Although plant-like in appearance, corals are animals. And despite being widely associated with warmer waters, they have also formed biodiverse reefs in deep northern waters. Many corals incorporate microscopic symbiotic algae into their bodies, to feed on the energy they produce.

MINIATURE SHEET

1st class PHYTOPLANKTON

At level one in the marine food chain are photoautotrophs: plants, algae and some bacteria which convert sunlight into chemical energy through photosynthesis, and thereby fuel anything that eats them. These range from microscopic phytoplankton to seaweed.

1st class ZOOPLANKTON

At level two in the food chain are the herbivores which eat photoautotrophs. These include snails and fish, but at the smaller end of the scale are zooplankton, such as protozoa, tiny crustaceans and animal and fish larvae.

£1.70 ATLANTIC HERRING

At level three in the food chain are primary

carnivores, which eat herbivores.

Zooplankton, for example, are consumed by animals which range from shoals of anchovy and herring to basking sharks.

£1.70 HARBOUR PORPOISE

At level four in the food chain are secondary carnivores, which eat other carnivores. Examples include seabirds, seals, porpoises, orcas and most sharks.

OTHER PRODUCTS

The presentation pack explores the marine habitats which support wildlife, and the complex interaction between species, as well as expanding on the creatures featured on the stamps.

A press sheet of 14 uncut miniature sheets is available, along with the usual stamp cards and first day covers.

VERDICT

COMMEMORATIVE WORTH ★★★★★

It's worth highlighting the diversity of British coastal wildlife, even if it has been done before.

QUALITY OF DESIGN ★★★★★

The photography is beautiful, and the miniature sheet illustration is more educational than usual

WOW FACTOR ★★★★★

These stamps should attract attention if they are used on commercial mail

Signed For and Special Delivery stamps soon to be withdrawn?

Royal Mail Signed For and Special Delivery definitives may be withdrawn from sale in the coming months, despite the continuing rise in parcel volumes being handled by the postal service.

A source at the Post Office revealed to dealer Norvic Philatelics that branches can no longer order fresh supplies of the stamps, and

Royal Mail's UK chief executive Simon Thompson suggested in July that signed-for deliveries could be scrapped due to falling demand.

After the practice of asking recipients to physically sign for packages was interrupted by the pandemic, most customers, he said, were happy to have deliveries left in secure places.

The self-adhesive stamps, featuring the Machin head of the Queen but in a wide format, have been in use for more than a decade.

First issued in 2009 with the inscription 'Recorded Signed For' (amended to 'Royal Mail Signed For' in 2013), the Signed For stamps are printed in orange-red and yellow and come in 1st class and 1st Large values, with date codes in their security overlay.

Issued since 2010, the Special Delivery stamps come in up-to-100g and up-to-500g values printed in two combinations of silver and blue, also with date codes.

As we went to press, Royal Mail had made no official comment on whether these issues will be discontinued.



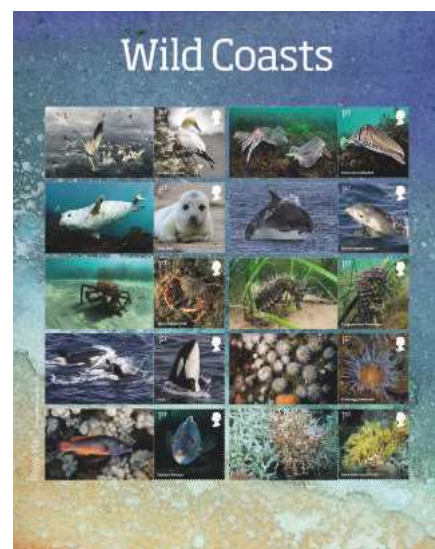
Wild Coasts designs in self-adhesive format

Accompanying the Wild Coasts stamp issue are a retail stamp book and a collector's sheet.

The booklet, the fifth this year to combine definitive and commemorative stamps, contains four 1st class Machins and the Orca and Grey Seal designs.

The collectors sheet, the fourth to be issued this year, includes all 10 1st class stamps from the special issue, alongside labels featuring different photographs of the same marine species.

Unlike the counter-sheet stamps, the designs from these two sources are self-adhesive.



'Unavailable' panes of definitives leak onto the market

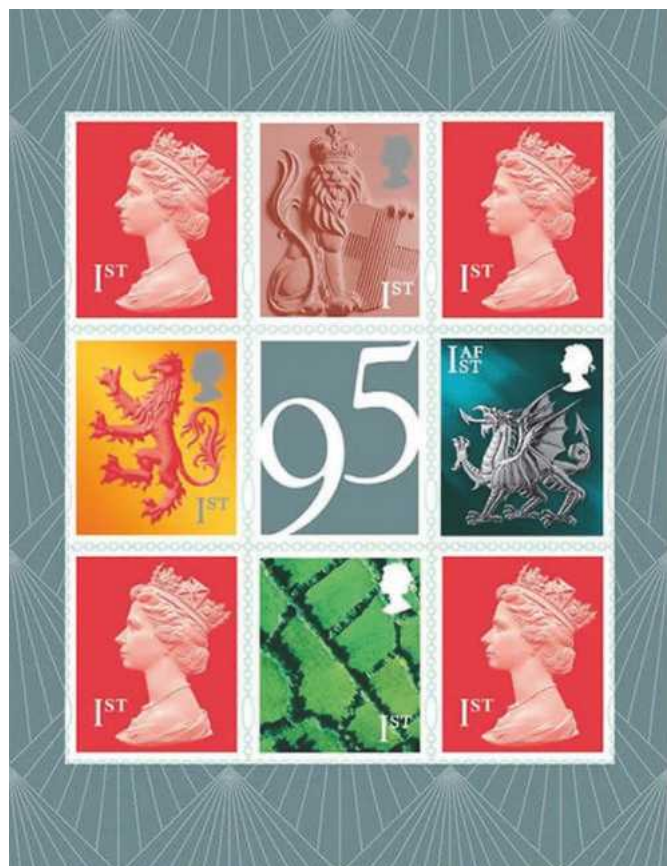
Examples of the pane of eight definitives produced exclusively for coin covers marking the Queen's 95th birthday in April (June issue, page 23) have escaped onto the philatelic market in mint condition, even though Royal Mail has not placed them on sale.

They were available from more than one dealer at the Stafford Stamp Show and Midpex, at prices from £18 upwards, which is more than two and half times face value.

The pane contains four 1st class Machins and one each of the England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland 1st class stamps, arranged around a non-postal label inscribed '95'.

The Norvic Philatelics blog reported that a single Machin from the pane (with the year code '21' but no source code in its security overlay) changed hands for £62 on an internet auction site, and a mint pane for more than £365!

The majority of the panes, mint or used, appear to suffer from small upward or downward shifts of their phosphor bands.



External mail boxes to thwart dog attacks?

Royal Mail is reported to be drawing up plans to encourage people with aggressive dogs to mount external mail boxes, so that letters do not need to be pushed through letterboxes in front doors.

Options include boxes which could be opened by householders using a pin number or a QR code.

The postal administration has no power to mandate such changes, and a promotional campaign to introduce mail boxes would need to be approved by the industry regulator, Ofcom.

Dog attacks on British postmen still average 33 per week, despite falling during the pandemic.



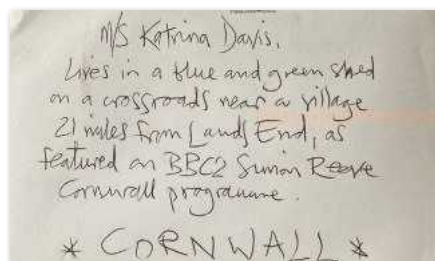
Football's coming home?

Royal Mail posted this clever meme on its Twitter account in the days before the European Championship final between England and Italy at Wembley on July 11.

Wrong name? No address? No problem

Royal Mail won some kudos for successfully delivering a letter to its intended recipient despite the address failing to give a correct name, road name, town name or postcode.

The item was sent to Katrina Davies, in response to her appearance on a BBC television programme. Besides not knowing precisely where she lived, the sender also spelt her name wrong.



NEWS IN BRIEF

> Royal Mail has begun handing out prizes to regional winners in its Heroes of the Pandemic stamp design competition for children (June issue, page 22).

> A six-month review of Royal Mail's 'whole product suite' is underway, according to its UK chief executive Simon Thompson. One result is expected to be a proposal to end Saturday deliveries, which would require a change to the universal service obligation.

> The Post Office is investigating a claim that stamps sold over the counter at a branch in Bashley, Hampshire, were forgeries. A bowling club had its post weighed and stamped there, only for it to be held at a Royal Mail delivery office as unpaid.

> The five Post & Go machines at Royal Navy museum sites are vending stamps with a 'Black Tot Day 31st July 1970' overprint from July 31 to August 31, to mark the 51st anniversary of the termination of the sailors' traditional daily ration of rum.

> Stanley Gibbons has published a 2021 edition of its Great Britain Concise catalogue, priced £37.95

> Slogan postmarks reported recently include 'Armed Forces Day' on June 26, 'Thank You NHS' on July 5, and 'Dog Awareness Week' from July 5-11.

> Residents in part of Southend-on-Sea received apologies in July, after postal deliveries were delayed due to 'swooping seagulls'.

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New Issues: September 2021

GUERNSEY POST

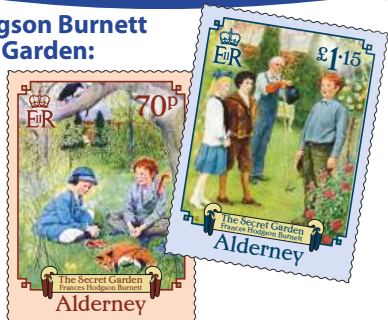
Sepac: Old Maps

Set of 6 stamps: Issue date 01.09.21



Frances Hodgson Burnett & The Secret Garden:

Set of 6 stamps:
Issue date
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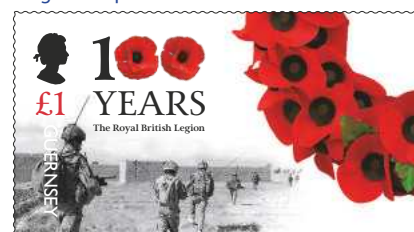
Celebrating the life of Prince Philip

Set of 4 stamps: Issue date 01.09.21



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Letters

GET IN TOUCH

These pages are devoted to giving you the opportunity to have your say. Whether you want to praise or complain, suggest or advise, add information or correct it, or just get something off your chest, we'd love to hear from you.

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The Editor reads all letters, but is unable to answer them all personally. We reserve the right to edit letters for publication.

Forced to buy stamps on the black market

Having complained recently about the sheetlet celebrating the Queen's 95th Birthday, which is intended to be available only on a coin cover at a cost of £19.95 (July issue, page 32), I was able to purchase a mint example at the excellent Stafford Stamp Show in June!

Perhaps Royal Mail has been deliberately misleading people, to boost sales of its expensive cover?

More likely, I am effectively buying on the black market. If that upsets Royal Mail, it serves them right, as far as I'm concerned.

Dr Jeff Newman, Higham Ferrers

Colonial confusion

While talking about Stanley Gibbons' purchase of the British Guiana 1856 1c black on magenta, on Radio 4's *The World at One* programme in July, I was astonished to hear Victoria Lajer, the company's Managing Director, referring several times to British Guiana as an island!

Malcolm Watson, Ryde, Isle of Wight
(genuinely an island)

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Olympic Games mascots have appeared on issues from unexpected places

It was a pleasure to read your substantial feature on the Olympic Games logos and mascots (August issue, page 36).

It was a lot of really useful information collected in one place, especially on the names of designers. However, it understated the appearance of official mascots on worldwide stamps.

For example, the mascot of Montreal 1976, Amik the beaver, did appear on a stamp, in a miniature sheet issued by Cuba.

The same is true of Sam the eagle, the official mascot of Los Angeles 1984, who was featured on a stamp of Benin, and Izzy,

the mascot of Atlanta 1996, who appeared on a stamp issued by Ecuador.

Ecuador, again, issued a stamp illustrating all three mascots of Sydney 2000, Olly the kookaburra, Syd the platypus and Millie the echidna, albeit as a tiny element of a design focusing on the Games logo.

Incidentally, besides China's own issues, the five mascot of Beijing 2008 also made an appearance on stamps or miniature sheets from Bangladesh, Brazil, Dominica and Liechtenstein.

Victor E Afanasiev, Minsk, Belarus



SOAPBOX

Can modern philatelists ever truly get a glimpse inside the minds of collectors who were active 75 years ago? Stephen Teuma examines a primary source

Looking through a job lot of covers which I had bought some time ago, I came across an undistinctive small envelope sent from Edinburgh to Natal in South Africa on December 31, 1946, franked with a King George VI 2½d light ultramarine.

There was nothing special about it, but, as we have all learnt, you always look inside envelopes, because they might contain letters, or other gems.

This particular envelope did indeed contain its original letter, and it discusses the two parties' philatelic interests at length. As it happens, these included *Stamp Magazine*.

I have transcribed the letter for the amusement of modern collectors. As a snapshot of how the hobby was conducted 75 years ago, I found it fascinating.

Stephen Teuma



ABOVE: Cover of December 31, 1946, posted from Edinburgh in Scotland to Durban in South Africa, unremarkable except in its contents, which are a window onto the stamp collecting world of 75 years ago

Dear John,

Your air letter of 26th Novr was duly received here and passed on to Barnoldswick, where I was at the time. I think I noted its receipt obliquely in a letter to Doris, but I am now clearing up my old-year correspondence so I am making a more extended reply, to accompany another small lot of stamps which I had set aside for you. I also send a few journals.

I am glad to know that you are getting a little time off occasionally for philately – nothing like it as an antidote to hard work in other fields.

I sympathise with you in the lack of a recent catalogue and will do what I can to remedy your difficulties. (Not that it will solve them completely — the 1946 Whitfield King does not go much beyond 1943 or 1944, or in some cases 1945, depending on the foreign country, though the Empire is better up to date).

There was some chat a little while ago about a new Whitfield being sent this month, but so far I have not seen any advertisement. In the case of Gibbons, I gather that next year may see three: British Empire, Europe and Rest of the World.

Though I am not sure that Gibbons is as pre-eminent as of yore, dealers are still willing to use their maximum prices, though prices, at auction and otherwise, are much agee these days, and collecting as a speculative medium, must be a bit of a headache.

As to the special issues for the Royal Visit, I see quotations in the stamp papers just now for the releases on 1st February next which may interest you.

One dealer gives his prices as 8/- for the five sets Basutoland, Bechuanaland, Swaziland, South Africa and SW Africa — the latter two in bi-lingual pairs, and all mint, by the way. Another dealer quotes 1/2d a set each for SA and SWA, and 1/9d for each of the other three sets.

A third (a lady in Edinburgh) is booking the five sets used for 10/6d, or mint and used, the 10 sets for 19/6d, but she, I have noticed, is usually dearer than some others on ordinary sets. A fourth offers SA and SWA at 1/3d each and the other three sets at 1/9d. And so it goes.

I haven't myself done much collecting lately. I subscribe to four journals: *Stamp Collecting*, weekly, *The Philatelic Journal*, fortnightly, and the *Stamp Magazine* and (a new publication) *Musson's Stamp Digest*, both monthly, and from the advertisements in these I pick up a few items now and then, but they serve rather for information as to new issues and general intelligence.

Then I get approval selections at about fortnightly intervals from three or four dealers, larger or smaller, usually the latter. One of these was in the Air Force on the continent during the war, and from him I got many of the latest German, Belgian, Dutch and French, but he has now returned to civilian trading and his sources of supply have dried up, or rather such contacts as he made, and a visit to the continent quite recently has resulted in the distinct impression that prices there are too fantastic to make trading profitable.

However I live in hope of better hunting in 1947, and this is my philatelic wish for you.

Yours very dearly,
G W Wright

Convolution of confusing codewords

At an antiques market, I purchased this old postcard, which claims to illustrate a selection of the coded messages that might be sent through the post, based on the position and angle at which a stamp is placed on a card.

Who knew there were so many options, and how easy it would be to send the wrong message or give the wrong impression accidentally?

The cartoon-style stamp resembles the King George V 1911-12 1d red, so I presume the card was printed around then.

Graham Perfett, Aberdeen



Official endorsement for head-hunting?

Your Commonwealth Classics feature on the British Solomon Islands issues illustrating traditional canoes (July issue, page 47) noted that these were once used for head-hunting expeditions.

When the 1939 King George VI pictorial issue brought back canoe designs, I wonder if it occurred to the colonial authorities that the medallion head appears to show the decapitated head of the monarch?

Russ Walker, Glasgow



High-value stamps are a licence to print money...

I totally agree with Reginald Keeley-Osgood's letter regarding the unnecessary high values included in almost every new special issue from Royal Mail (July issue, page 30).

If new issues comprised only 1st class values, I would buy two sets: one for my album and one for my letter-writing wife.

But it seems Royal Mail include the higher values knowing they will not be used, which is like printing money.

Trevor Hughes, Hinckley

...and there's not even a need for £1.70 stamps

In recent complaints from readers about the number of £1.70 values being included in British special stamp issues, one significant point has not been mentioned.

There is currently no need to use £1.70 stamps at all. If you want to send mail to Australia and New Zealand, for which these are intended, using two 1st class stamps (worth 85p each) will do just as well.

R Major, Swindon

Decimalisation rate hike was significant

In your feature on Great Britain's first decimal stamp issues (July issue, page 40), you stated that the increase in the 1st class letter rate from 5d to 3p delivered 'a small but painless profit to the Post Office'.

Yes, if you consider an increase of over 44% to be small!

Steve Fraser, via e-mail

HOT TOPICS

You can debate the philatelic issues of the day, and exchange opinions and information with other collectors, in the Forums section on our website. Visit www.stampmagazine.co.uk



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Spot The Stamp

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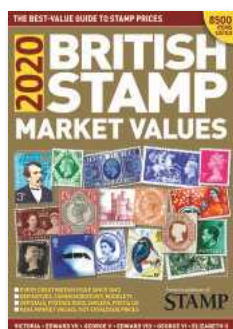
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We have a copy of *British Stamp Market Values 2020*, the authoritative annual price guide from the publishers of *Stamp Magazine*, to give away to one eagle-eyed reader.

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The closing date is September 9, 2021, and the first correct answer drawn from our postbag will win the book. Good luck!



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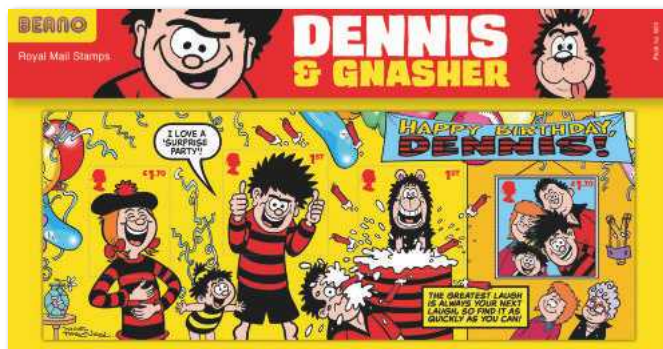
COMPETITION

Royal Mail prizes

WIN



a Dennis & Gnasher presentation pack



We have a presentation pack of the Dennis & Gnasher stamp issue to give away to each of 12 lucky winners, courtesy of Royal Mail.

The set of six and its accompanying miniature sheet celebrate the 70th anniversary of the comic-strip character Dennis the Menace.

To enter, visit www.stampmagazine.co.uk/competitions, answer the question below and fill in your contact details. The closing date is September 9, 2021. Winners will be drawn at random after that date.

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QUESTION

What is the name of Dennis's baby sister, introduced to the comic strip in 1998?

COMPETITION WINNERS

Classic Science Fiction presentation pack

The answer to our competition question in the June issue was Frankenstein, and the 12 lucky winners whose correct answers were drawn at random were David Roberts from Worcester, Tim Cauwood from Sutton, Abdul Rahman from Ilford, Rich Barker from Telford, Anne Bardsley from Oldham, Kieran Symons from Aberdeen, Julie Dodsworth from Nuneaton, Edward Keep from Nottingham, Dave Prince from Leeds, Howard Robinson from Leeds, Iris Waldburger from Nottingham, and Jack Carlin from Doncaster.

Spot The Stamp

The Spot The Stamp winner from the June issue is Pepi Howells from Bridgend, who correctly identified the mystery stamp (right) as the 34p value from the 1988 Linnean Society set, illustrating morel mushrooms.



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... aged 181
– unlikely ...
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had some clients aged 96



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Issued 1940
... aged 81
... Affordable



Issued 1935 ... aged 86
... Carry on Collecting



Issued 1948
... aged 73
... snip up this set



Issued 1951 ... aged 70
... most of us are



Issued 1961
... aged 60
... collection
steaming ahead

Glad tidings

The reputation of the telegram as a harbinger of bad news was challenged by the advent of a self-consciously joyous alternative from 1935. For more than four decades, the greetings telegram brought only good cheer

■ Report by Jeff Dugdale and Jim Mackay

From the mid-19th century until the early 20th century, the telegram represented the fastest way of sending an urgent personal message. Unfortunately, that meant that it was often used to advise of death or disaster.

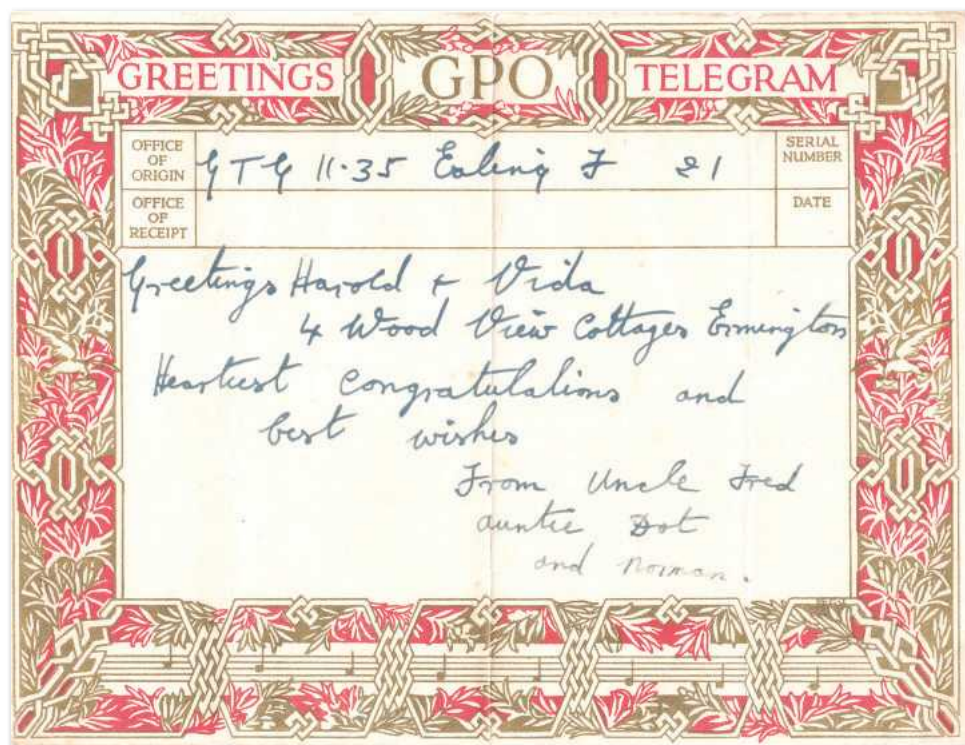
Its reputation as the harbinger of doom reached its zenith in World War I, when it was the means by which parents and wives were informed that their sons and husbands had been killed or were missing in action.

The fear engendered by the arrival of a messenger carrying a telegram was poignantly presented in the short story *The Telegram*, by Iain Crichton Smith, published in 1971. Two neighbours worry about the fate of their conscripted sons as they watch the approach of village's conveyer of telegrams. Whose door will he come to?

It was these negative connotations that prompted the General Post Office to introduce a new style of telegram in the 1930s, one which was reserved for good news.

Fresh start

Illustrated greetings telegrams had been available for decades in other



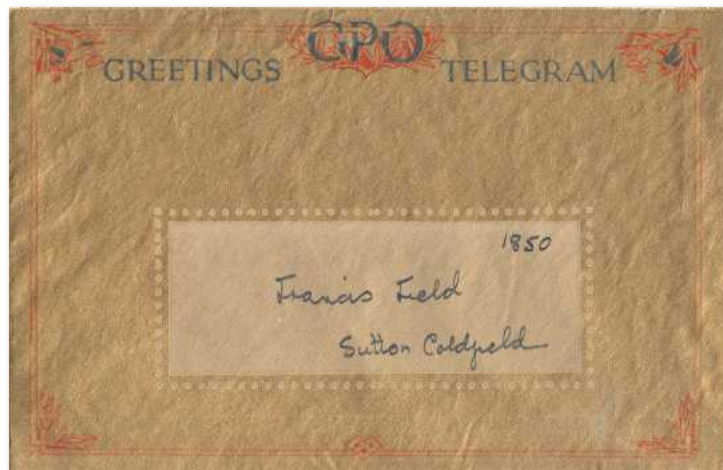
ABOVE: 1935 greetings telegram (type 1) carrying a warm message of congratulation within its elaborately decorated borders

European countries, for example in Germany from 1907 and in Sweden from 1912, as well as in the British dominions and the United States.

By 1925 an average of more than a million were being sent in

Sweden each year, and they were clearly a lucrative source of income because part of the proceeds were donated to charity.

It was hoped that the introduction of a similar option in



ABOVE: 1936 greetings telegram (type 4) and gold envelope, self-addressed to the dealer Francis Field, with a cancellation requested as proof of use on the first day of issue

LONG-DISTANCE COMMUNICATION

PRIMITIVE TELEGRAPHY

In its broadest sense, telegraphy (a word derived from two Greek words meaning 'writing at a distance') has existed in various forms for centuries.

Ancient examples include using drumbeats or smoke signals to send coded messages faster than they could be relayed by word of mouth. These primitive systems are sometimes dubbed the 'bush telegraph'.

From the 1790s, optical telegraphy was developed in the form of semaphore, which entailed signalling messages in code by opening and closing wooden shutters, pivoting mechanical arms on a high-mounted post, or holding flags in different positions in outstretched arms.

In sunnier climes an alternative was heliography, a system adopted by the British in India in the 1870s, in which flashes of sunlight were reflected using mirrors.

But all these methods were obsolescent after electrical telegraphy was invented in the mid-19th century.



ABOVE: West Germany 1965 design illustrating a semaphore station



ABOVE: Great Britain 2013 stamp illustrating the use of semaphore flags on ships

ELECTRICAL TELEGRAPHY

Electrical telegraphy allowed more precise messages to be sent over longer distances, by means of coded pulses of electric current transmitted through wires.

The first commercial electric telegraph system was the Cooke & Wheatstone telegraph, in use in Britain from 1837, but the system devised by Samuel Morse in the United States in 1838 would become the international standard.

At the sending station, an operator would tap on a key to spell out a message in what became known as Morse code; at the receiving station, an armature would make marks on paper tape to record the message, although operators quickly learned to interpret the clicks and transcribe them directly.

Networks of cables allowed for more rapid communication than had ever been possible before. Soon, telegraph offices sprang up in the towns and cities of most developed nations, allowing people to send messages known as telegrams.

By the early 1860s, telegraph wires carried aloft by poles connected the Atlantic and Pacific coasts of the USA, while submarine telegraph cables laid on the ocean floor were beginning to allow rapid intercontinental communication.

Britain's privately-run domestic telegraph services were nationalised in 1870, and operated thereafter by the General Post Office. The GPO issued dedicated telegraph stamps from 1876-81, although these were then discontinued.



ABOVE: Monaco 1987 design honouring the American pioneer Samuel Morse and his electric telegraph



ABOVE: Great Britain 1876-81 1d red-brown telegraph stamp

Britain would not only transform the telegram's reputation, but reverse the GPO's dramatic decline in income from them, brought about by the increasing ownership of telephones and improvements in the efficiency of the postal service, which was significantly cheaper.

To that end, the charge for sending a domestic telegram was reduced from a flat rate of 1s for any number of words to a basic rate of 6d for up to nine words, plus 1d for each extra word.

An extra 3d would be charged for a message sent on one of the new specially illustrated greetings telegrams, but that would still be cheaper than the previous rate.

Artistic impression

In order to make a splash, this new style of message had to look substantially different from the regular telegram.

This was achieved by having the telegram form itself designed by a noted artist, and being delivered in an decorated gold-coloured envelope.

Many of the designers who would be commissioned over the following years were household names at the time, and are still famous today.

They included the painter Rex Whistler, the poster artist Frank Newbould, the graphic designer Macdonald Gill, the cartoonist and sculptor Rowland Emmet and the cartoonist Norman Thelwell.

At least two of them, Fritz Wegner and Linton Lamb, also designed British stamps.

In all, 77 designs of greetings telegram would be issued in the 44 years between July 1935 and October 1979. Some were quite exquisite, while others were pleasingly humorous.

First attempts

Building on the experience of other national postal authorities, the GPO initially decided that there would be only one style of form available, suitable for any happy occasion, with the design to be changed periodically.

Type 1, designed by Margaret Calkin James and issued on July 24, 1935, remained quite formal. Measuring 8½in by 6½in, it retained the 'for office use' boxes of a regular telegram, but was executed comparatively lavishly ▷

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decorative element to the top half of the form, where it comprised a floral illustration and a bird.

Type 10 and type 12, issued in February and May 1938 respectively, departed in style from previous designs in adopting a vertical format, although they retained the same dimensions.

Particularly stylish was type 13, designed by Irene Hyde and issued in August 1938. Its all-round border illustrated a woodland scene populated by fruit-bearing cherubs, squirrels and harvest mice feeding on dropped morsels.

Boom and bust

In the early years, the new initiative seemed to revive interest in this form of communication.

Some 35.2 million telegrams were sent in 1935, and 50.3 million before the end of the decade.

Of these, greetings telegrams initially contributed an average of

in gold and red on a cream background.

The message part was surrounded by floral patterns and angular cartouches. In the vertical margins you can make out two doves bearing envelopes, while the lower margin incorporates the suggestion of a musical score.

This original form was withdrawn after six months and replaced, on January 1, 1936, by a much less fussy type 2, with green, red and gold leaves.

With the introduction of type 4 on June 29, 1936, the 'for office use' boxes were dropped. The pictorial margins, designed by Rex Whistler, had a garden theme, with flowers and fruit spilling out of cornucopias.

Rapid development

The development of the concept continued apace, with designs being replaced every few months as stocks ran out.

Type 7, issued on May 6, 1937, was special in that it was issued to commemorate the Coronation of King George VI a few days later. Further single-purpose designs would follow on an occasional basis, for example for Valentine's Days and for the Coronation of 1953.

Type 8, issued later in 1937 and designed by Claudia Freedman, was the first to restrict the

ABOVE: 1937 greetings telegram (type 8) franked in Chesterfield, showing how teleprinter paper was sometimes used for a message from a distant sender

RIGHT: 1938 greetings telegram (type 13), used to confirm the senders' safe arrival after travelling. Note how the top line has codes relating to the sending office, while the second line has the destination address

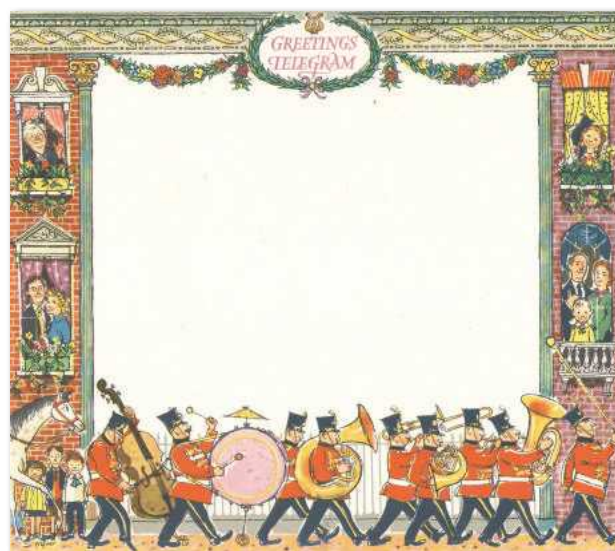


RIGHT: 1942 greetings telegram (type 23), in the smaller wartime 'economy' format, used by siblings to send a typed message to their parents on their silver wedding anniversary





ABOVE: 1952 greetings telegram (type 29), featuring a bucolic scene illustrated by Eric Fraser, carrying a handwritten message presumably celebrating a wedding or anniversary



ABOVE: Unused 1956 greetings telegram (type 35), designed by Fritz Wegner, with a colourful illustration of people enjoying a parading brass band

just under 500 per day, but by 1943 this had increased to almost 25,000 per day, even though wartime economy measures meant they were downsized, printed in fewer colours and delivered in plainer envelopes.

An attractive example was type 23, designed by Kathleen Atkins. Issued in June 1942 as the second 'economy' design, it measured only 7¼in x 4¼in, but carried a multipurpose illustration of a pretty village in which couples of various ages were falling in love, getting married, having children and relaxing in their garden.

'Many of the designers commissioned to illustrate greetings telegrams were household names at the time, and are still famous today'

This was withdrawn when the greetings telegram service was suspended on April 30, 1943. It would remain in abeyance for seven and a half years, as it did not resume until November 20, 1950.

Second coming

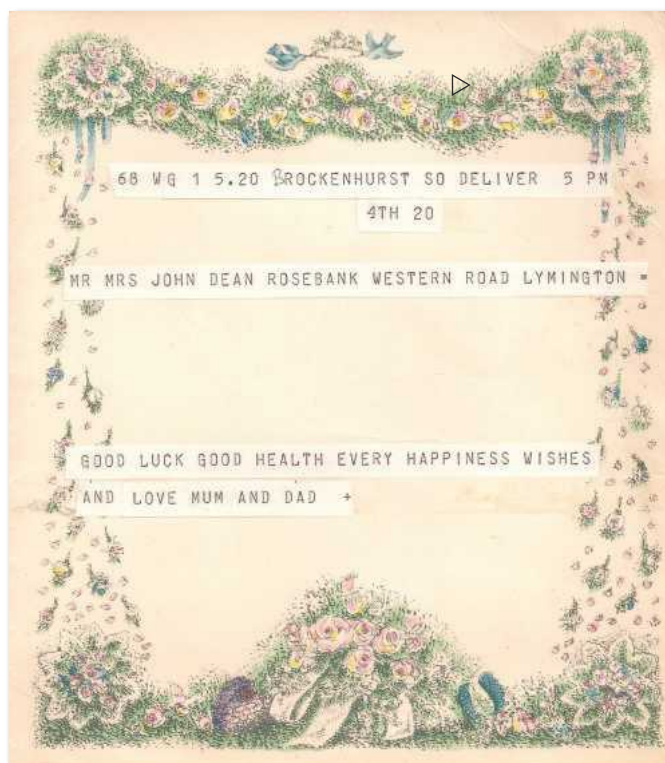
Normal service was restored in 1950, with new designs issued regularly once again and at the

original standard size.

A fine example was type 29, the sixth to be issued after the resumption, with a bucolic theme illustrated by Eric Fraser in 1952. Conveyed mainly in russet and green, it featured a collection of country folk wielding farm implements and a straw-sucking bumpkin leading a haywain.

Type 32, issued in 1953, had

BELOW: Cover and inside face of the 1957 greetings telegram (type 36), the first of a new style printed on folded card and intended for one particular purpose, in this case a wedding



RIGHT: 1961 greetings telegram (type 56), with a design covering all four faces of the card. The outside covers (top) show a newly-wed couple flying in a chariot pulled by winged horses, while the inside faces (bottom) feature cherubs and a cornucopia



larger dimensions of 8½in x 9¾in, and most of the following designs were a similar size.

One of the most colourful was type 35, designed by Fritz Wegner and issued in May 1956. Measuring 7½in x 8½in, this had a very happy illustration with smiling people of all generations enjoying a passing brass band.

Card format

In March 1957 the GPO produced the first of a more ambitious, more luxurious range of greetings telegrams.

Measuring 8½in x 7½in, in vertical format, type 36 was a break from the past in a number of ways.

It was printed on card and, like a traditional folded greetings card, had four faces, two of which were left blank. It also had a very elaborate design, intended for one particular purpose only, in this case to celebrate a wedding.

The front cover was entirely given over to an illustration by Elizabeth Corsellis, showing a bridal party in procession from a village church, presumably towards a reception, the whole scene framed by a riot of flowers, including roses, orchids, hibiscus, irises, lilies and forget-me-nots.

Inside, the garland-of-flowers theme continued, but with a large space left free for a message

of congratulation.

Reading out telegram messages of this sort used to be a traditional part of the Best Man's duties at wedding receptions, so a dedicated luxury greetings card was a logical idea. In retrospect, however, this new format may have sown the seeds of the eventual demise of the greetings telegram as a concept.

Dedicated designs

Single-sheet paper designs continued for a further handful of issues, but after June 1958 more and more of the four-face card designs were produced, until this became the default format.

The dedicated subjects of these

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PORTUGAL

5133 : 1912 First Ceres issue (chalky paper, perf 15x14) short set ¼c to 15c all mint hinged (SG 63/73, cat £704) (11 stamps) ... £50

PORTUGAL

7361 : 1853-1981 mint (a few) and used (most) collection in Minkus printed album (maroon peg binder, titled), with a few classics (some four margin), 1870 straight label 50r green, 80r, 100r, good range middle period definitives with Ceres etc, 1924 Camoens set mint, comprehensive but not complete run 1920s to 1981 used. (2½ kilos) £125

PORTUGAL

7347 : 1952 NATO set mint hinged (SG1065/66 cat £207) plus illustrated unaddressed FDC with special cancels (Mi cat 60 Euros) £45

ROMANIA

7352 : 1945-1980 mainly used collection on plain pages (in two Davo peg binders), with good spread of issues from 1950s, some imperfs and miniature sheets, many hundreds (weight 3 kilos) £150

ROMANIA

6866 : 1959 Vlad miniature sheet unmounted mint (SG MS2670 cat £190) (1 stamp)£25

RUSSIA

6887 : 1923-24 Workers 1R on unwatermarked paper, typo, imperf (SG 354a, Mi 237 II) proof of the red colour only (background and frame), a complete pane of 25 mint, all with horizontal line of perforation (which was used to indicate printer's trial), spectacular block (25 stamps) ... £350

RUSSIA

3920 : 1990s philatelic covers posted on board atomic icebreakers, with special "atomic" cancels, several with 1998 Murmansk local stamps, and several postage due markings (11 covers) ...£10

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SAN MARINO

6248 : 1877 mint range of Three Towers definitives, with various to 10c ultramarine (SG 3 cat £250), 30c (SG 6 cat £1100) and 40c (SG 7 cat £1100). Total cat £2500+ (5 stamps) ... £250

SAN MARINO

6247 : 1877-1894 used range of Three Towers definitives, with 1877 various to 40c (latter with blue cds), incl both 10c, various 189 and 1894 issues, all fine. Cat £435 (20 stamps) ... £50

SAN MARINO

7097 : 1945 Palace miniature sheets perf and imperf mint very light hinge, fine (SG MS308a, both, cat £550) (2 stamps) ... £185

SAN MARINO

7065 : 1932 GPO Building (SG174/78 cat £650) mint light hinge, fresh) (5 stamps) ... £150



SAN MARINO

6251 : 1931 top value 10L Air fine used (SG 173 cat £450) (illus) (1 stamp) ... £135

SERBIA

7137 : Interesting collection of mint (some) and used (most) on Borek printed pages, with good value in early issues, from 1866 Newspaper 1p unused, 1866 Michael 10p pair used on piece, (SG 12 cat £340), first 20p (2) (SG 10) and 40p (SG 11 cat £190), 1867 Newspaper perf and 1p imperf, good run of 1869 Milan to 50p (2 used on piece), later issues virtually complete to 1905, includes 1901 set with both 5D shades, 1903 Assassination with 3D and 5D imperf with sheet margin, and others to 1905. A number of pairs on piece, strips etc adds depth (240 stamps) ... £425

SERBIA

5173 : 1895 etc 10p Due, large range of colour trials or proofs (imperf), mainly different colours, on white card, white or buff paper etc (64 stamps) ... £135

SOMALILAND (BRITISH)

7755 : 1935-1960 mint collection on stock pages, with 1935 Silver Jubilee(hinged), 1938 KGVI set unmounted mint (SG 93/104 cat £150), 1942 KGVI set mint light hinge (SG 105/16 cat £55), 1951 surcharges mint light hinge (SG 125/35 cat £55), 1953 QEII set unmounted mint (SG 137/48 cat £120) etc. Total cat £410 (70 stamps) £135

SOMALILAND (BRITISH)

7756 : 1937-1960 KGVI and QEII mint (light hinge, some u/m), slight duplication, with 1938 Maps 2R, 3R (2), 5R (2), and KGVI lower values, Silver Wedding (5R x 4), 1953 QEII set (SG 137/48 cat £120) etc. (65 stamps) £75

SPAIN

7572 : 1939-48 Franco without imprint issue, specialised run unmounted mint or light hinge with all values and most types (no 1PTS), includes the scarce 10PTS (SG 978), also 4PTSwth imprint (SG 958). Cat £400++ Difficult issue. (39 stamps)£150

SWEDEN

7365 : 1945-c1996 mint and used collection in two Schaubek printed albums (matching maroon peg binders), plus extra plain pages for booklets etc. Fairly complete plus plenty of booklets or combinations. (weight 5 kilos) £285

SWEDEN

7044 : 1855-1977 mint and used collection in Schaubek printed album (maroon springback, titled), with 1858 5ore to 50ore full page of shades or postmark items, 1872 etc Numerals to 1L, 5K Post Office, 1910-1944 good coverage of definitives, commems to middle catalogue values, postwar nearly complete as mint hinged, with booklet pairs or strips where relevant. Also Dues, Officials. 1000++ stamps (weight 3 kilos) ... £300

SWEDEN

7560 : 1858-c2000 mainly used collection arranged in order in nice leather-bound red stockbook, from 1858 Arms set but couple faults, 1872 Numerals perf 14 and perf 13 with most values to 1R, Officials and Dues of same period, 1924 UPU various to 60 ore, 1928 Birthday set mint and used, good range middle period through 1960s and some more recent, about 1000 stamps (weight 1 kilo) .. £285

SWITZERLAND

7599 : Old-time collection on large-size Schwaneberger leaves, with 1850 Orts-Post (SG1, 3 close margins, cat £1900), Rayon I on deep blue paper (SG7 cat £1600, 3 margins, signed Buhler) and on paler blue paper (3 margins, 4th clipped), Rayon III 15r (two, close or clipped), 1854 5r Strubel with yellow thread (SG 33 four margins, cat £130, fresh) and 10r to 40r mostly 1 to 2 margins, 1862 incl 30c vermilion used, 40c green used, good run of 1882 Helvetias with various values to 3F incl both types of 40c, 1908 etc Sitting Helvetia and Tell, some Dues to 500c. High cat for the earlies. (120 stamps) £375

SWITZERLAND

7368 : 1904-1944 used collection on Marini printed leaves, with 1905/07 Standing Helvetias to 3F, Sitting Helvetia and Tell types, commems and National Fete to 1944. AlsoPro Juventute complete to 1944 incl 1937 min sheet used, 1941 min sheet (this is mint), these PJs cat £1500+. (300 stamps) £350

SWITZERLAND

7444 : 1930 45c Air (SG 323) with full blue cds cancel of 1932 Gordon Bennett balloon flight also 2F air (ordinary paper, SG 328 cat £150) with similar blue corner cds of the flight (2 stamps) ... £60

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Fiji heebie-jeebies

Britain's reluctance to spend money on a stamp issue for its new colony of Fiji in 1874 resulted in some strangely amateurish provisional overprints

■ Report by John Winchester

European colonisation of Fiji began in the early 19th century, and a limited postal service was operated by the British consulate from 1858.

In 1870 the *Fiji Times* newspaper set up its own service, and typeset stamps for it. But this would be short-lived due to the advent of the first unified Fijian state, and first government-run postal service.

When a tribal chief named Cakobau proclaimed himself King in June 1871, one of his first acts was to commission a set of stamps.

A wood engraver named A L Jackson was engaged to produce denominations of 1d, 3d and 6d, even though the currency in circulation was dollars.

Jackson came up with simple design based upon a 'CR' cypher (for Cakobau Rex), surmounted by a crown, and sheets of 50 were letterpress-printed by the Government Printing Office in Sydney, New South Wales, on white wove paper, perforated 12½.

Around 25,000 of each value were printed, and put on sale in October 1871, but by January 1872 it was deemed necessary to convert them to a more viable currency.

Two-line surcharges were added, in the form of one word above the crown and the other below the monogram, creating a 2c on 1d pale blue, a 6c on 3d yellow-green and a 12c on 6d carmine-rose.

Cakobau reigned with dubious legitimacy and over a precarious

RIGHT: Fiji 1874 2c on 1d blue with 'VR' overprint to signify the change of monarch which came with British colonial status



economy, and within three years he offered to cede sovereignty to Britain. On October 10, 1874, Fiji was annexed as a crown colony.

The territory's postage stamps needed to acknowledge that the monarch was now Queen Victoria, but there seems to have been some reluctance to allocate funds to this. The first British stamps would therefore be overprints, carried out at the offices of the *Polynesian Gazette* in Levuka.

The outcome would be some of the most unusual provisional issues of the Victorian era.

The overprints, which took the form of a 'VR' monogram (for Victoria Regina) on top of the existing 'CR', were added to stamps that were already surcharged, which was not a professional look.

It wasn't even consistent,

apparently due to a shortage of appropriate type. The top three rows in each sheet received a monogram in Gothic script, with diamond-shaped stops, while the remaining two rows had one in Roman script, with round stops.

There were also half a dozen constant varieties, mostly relating to the size and location of the stops but even extending to using an inverted 'A' as a substitute for 'V'!

In 1875 further surcharges were introduced, as the 6c on 3d and the 12c on 6d were overprinted '2d', and in 1876-77 another different 'VR' monogram appeared.

These provisional issues were in use for four years, until eventually, in 1878, the original woodblock was drilled out and a plug inserted with a 'VR' cypher. From this, new plates were produced in Sydney. ■

MARKET VALUES

The 'pence' denominations of the 1871 King Cakobau issue are catalogued between £65 and £170 in mint condition. The 'cents' surcharges of 1872 are more affordable, but the majority of the 'VR' overprints of 1874-77 have four-figure prices. Great caution is due to forged overprints.

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Vice-regal residences

The Government Houses of the British Empire have colourful histories as bastions of colonial authority. Many have been illustrated on a delightful range of stamps

■ Report by Jeffrey Hyland

They came in all shapes and sizes, and many different architectural styles, but Government Houses were constructed in every corner of the British Empire. At the end of the 19th century, there were more than 120 of them.

They were occupied by the resident Viceroy, Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, Commissioner or Administrator, or later by a Governor-General, and would also play host to the monarch, or other members of the royal family, whenever they made an official visit.

More than 50 remain today, in Commonwealth Realms, Crown Dependencies and British Overseas Territories, each with its own distinctive history.

Witnesses to history

Originally, the title of Government House represented the centre of the administrative life of a territory, personifying both its government and its executive.

As many territories began to



ABOVE: Government House in Nassau, Bahamas, from an old postcard

'At the end of the 19th century, there were more than 120 Government Houses across the British Empire. More than 50 survive today'



ABOVE: Government House is the traditional name for the residence of the sovereign's representative in the colonies, such as a Viceroy or Governor

establish separate executives and legislatures, in national and state parliaments and administration buildings, the Government House evolved to represent the place where the sovereign's representative would reside.

Following independence, as new heads of state were elected, it might ultimately become the State House or the President's House.

However its role developed, each of these residences has witnessed key historic events in the life of its nation. Of those featured on the following pages, one was devastated by a volcanic eruption,

one became a murder scene and two were occupied by enemy invaders.

Cherished buildings

Many Government Houses no longer survive, or have been adopted for different purposes. But some continue to play a central role in the official and ceremonial life of Commonwealth nations.

As centres of authority or as cherished heritage buildings, many have featured on definitive and commemorative stamps over the years, and together these add up to a most attractive collection. ►

Antigua & Barbuda



ABOVE: Antigua 1932 Tercentenary 3d



ABOVE: Antigua 1981 Independence \$5



ABOVE: Antigua 1966-70 50c and 6c definitives

Government House in St John's, Antigua, is a large Georgian property built in the late 18th century and upgraded in the 19th century to become the official residence of the Governor-General.

It was first featured on stamps in 1932, on the 2d, 2½d and 3d values in the King George V pictorial series commemorating the tercentenary of British settlement.

When a definitive series featuring historic buildings was issued in 1966-70, Government House in Antigua was shown on a 50c stamp and Government House in Barbuda (a dependency of Antigua) on a 6c.

A further depiction of the Antigua residence later appeared on a \$5 value in a 1975-76 series, which was reissued with an overprint to mark Antigua & Barbuda's independence in 1981.

Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip stayed at Government House during their extensive Caribbean tour in 1966, and again during their Silver Jubilee tour in 1977. Some parts of the property are still used for official functions, but much of it is in need of restoration.

Australia

The first of the various Government Houses of the states of Australia to feature on a postage stamp was that of Sydney in New South Wales. In 1988, a set of stamps marking the bicentenary of the arrival of the first fleet of British ships featured some early views of the settlement, including Old Government House.

Constructed in 1788-90, of English bricks and local sandstone, this was one of the first permanent buildings in Sydney, and featured the very first staircase in Australia! It served as the official residence of the Governor of New South Wales for around 50 years, but no longer survives.

No fewer than four later residences were featured in a set of 60c stamps issued in 2013 celebrating Australia's architectural heritage.

Government House in Adelaide is Australia's oldest continually inhabited official residence, and every Governor of South Australia has lived there since May 1840.

The 'new' Government House in New South Wales, designed by Edward Blore (the architect to both King William IV and Queen Victoria) and built between 1837-45, is located in the heart of Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens, overlooking the harbour.

Tasmania's Government House in Hobart, completed in 1857, is a fine example of early Victorian neo-Gothic architecture, with a roof of Welsh slate.

Finally, Government House in Perth, Western Australia, built in 1863, is noted for its decorative stonework, turrets and gables.

These residences have hosted royal visitors on multiple occasions, from Prince Alfred in 1869 to Queen Elizabeth in modern times, and are still in official use today.

RIGHT: Australia 1988 The Early Years 37c, showing the original Government House in Sydney

BELOW: Australia 2013 Government Houses set, featuring the later residence in Sydney and those in Adelaide, Hobart and Perth



Bahamas

The distinctive coral-pink Government House in Nassau in the Bahamas dates from 1806, and its style is said to have been influenced by the architecture of the southern United States.

It was featured on a 16c value in a set of four stamps issued in 1978 celebrating Architectural Heritage, with a view that included the statue of Christopher Columbus on its front steps.

The Queen attended a reception here during her Caribbean tour in 1977, but most famously this Government House was home to the Duke of Windsor when he was appointed Governor during World War II.



ABOVE: Bahamas 1978 Architectural Heritage 16c

'One Government House became a murder scene and two were occupied by enemy invaders'

Bermuda

Although the island of Bermuda is only 20 square miles in area, the house and grounds of Government House, overlooking the North Shore in Hamilton, are among the largest in the Commonwealth.

Completed in 1892, to an Italianate design by Scottish architect William Hay, the building was constructed with stone said to have been imported from France.

Government House is the official residence of the Governor of Bermuda, which is a self-governing territory with its own constitution, government and legislature. It was illustrated in a colourful definitive series issued in 1962-68 which featured 17 different buildings, from the General Post Office to the Cathedral.

The Queen has stayed several times, but more infamously the Governor, Sir Richard Sharples, was murdered while walking in the grounds in 1973.



ABOVE: Bermuda 1962-68 3d definitive

Fiji

The fine official residence of the Governor of Fiji, and from 1970 the Governor-General, was built in Suva in 1928, to replace a previous building which was struck by lightning and burned to the ground. It was illustrated on a \$5 stamp issued in 1979.

Today, it is known as the State House, and it has been the official residence of the President of Fiji since 1987, when the country was proclaimed a republic.



ABOVE: Fiji 1979 Buildings \$5

British Virgin Islands

Old Government House on Tortola in the British Virgin Islands was built in the mid-1920s, on the site of a previous residence which had been destroyed by a hurricane.

The building was the official home of the Governor until the mid-1990s, when another new residence was constructed close by, and was subsequently transformed into a museum which includes a philatelic collection.

The British Virgin Islands' set of five stamps for the Stamp World Exhibition in London in 1990 carried portraits of various member of the royal family who had visited the BVI. These included one of the Queen's sister, Princess Margaret (who made an official visit in 1972) against the backdrop of Old Government House.



ABOVE: British Virgin Islands 1990 Stamp World Exhibition 50c

Falkland Islands

Government House in Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands has the unusual distinction of being a battle site, having become a focus of operations following the invasion by Argentina in 1982.

As the official residence of the Governor, the building was defended by a small party of Royal Marines against an assault by Argentinian commandos, before the British were ultimately forced to surrender.

A foreign flag then flew over the building for two and half months before the islands were liberated by a naval task force despatched from the United Kingdom.

Built in 1845, Government House is a large stone edifice with a slate roof, said to be similar in style to a traditional house in the isles of Shetland or Orkney.

It was pictured on the 1s stamp in the 1933 set of 12 commemorating the centenary of British sovereignty, and again on a 15p stamp in a set marking the 150th anniversary in 1983.

In a set marking the 10th anniversary of the liberation of the islands in 1992, it was illustrated on a 68p+32p value, with the 32p surcharge going to a charity for military veterans.

Besides various members of the royal family, the house has played host to the explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton, during one of his Antarctic expeditions of the early 20th century.



ABOVE: Falkland Islands 1933 Centenary 1s



ABOVE: Falkland Islands 1983 150th Anniversary 15p



ABOVE: Falkland Islands 1992 Liberation Day 68p+32p

Gibraltar

Government House in Gibraltar is known as The Convent, having originally been a 16th-century convent of Franciscan friars.

Although heavily rebuilt in largely Georgian style, it still has an open-cloistered courtyard which is often used for formal events and receptions.

This has been the official residence of the Governor of Gibraltar since 1728. One of its incumbents was Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria, whose harsh discipline provoked a mutiny by local troops.

Many reigning monarchs, future monarchs and dignitaries visited during the 20th century, and the grounds have trees planted by King Edward VII, the German Emperor Wilhelm II, the Japanese Emperor Hirohito and Queen Elizabeth II.

The building was best illustrated on a 5s stamp in the 1938-51 King George VI definitive series.

A new design of the same value in the 1953-59 Queen Elizabeth II series focused on the main entrance.



ABOVE: Gibraltar 1938-51 5s definitive

Jersey

Governors and Lieutenant-Governors of Jersey had at least five official residences over the centuries, including the more formidable Gorey Castle and Elizabeth Castle, before moving into today's Government House in 1822, a few years after it was built.

A two-storey villa located on a hill in the parish of St Saviour, a short distance from the centre of St Helier, its interior is dominated by a staircase built of mahogany imported from South America.

During the wartime occupation of 1940-45, the residence was used by the German Commandant of the island. A more welcome guest on many occasions since has been Queen Elizabeth II, in her capacity as Duke of Normandy.

Jersey illustrated Government House, alongside the flag of the Lieutenant-Governor, on a £1 stamp issued as a high-value in the 1976-80 definitive series.



ABOVE: Jersey 1976-80 £1 definitive

Mauritius

Confusingly, two different buildings in Mauritius have been known as Government House, and both have featured on postage stamps.

Chateau de Réduit was built as a fortress by the French in 1749 but later became a fine mansion on a country estate that served as the residence of Governors of Mauritius, and was therefore known as Government House; it is now the State House, and the residence of the President.

It was illustrated on a 35c stamp in the King George VI 1950 definitive series, a design reissued in the 1953-58 Queen Elizabeth II series.

Also known as Government House is one of the oldest buildings in Mauritius, constructed under the earlier French Governors of the island in the capital, Port Louis. It served as an administrative hub, and for receptions and functions, and is still in use today as an official Government building.

It was featured on the 1.20r value in a definitive series issued in 1978 to mark the 10th anniversary of independence.

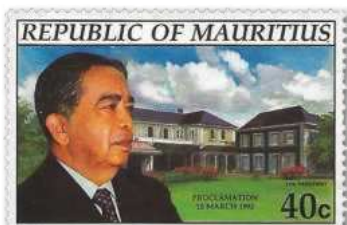
A later set issued to mark the proclamation of the Republic in 1992 featured both Government Houses: the 40c value had a portrait of the President with Le Réduit, and the 4r value depicted the Prime Minister with Government House.



ABOVE: Mauritius 1950 35c definitive



ABOVE: Mauritius 1978 1.20r definitive



ABOVE: Mauritius 1992 Proclamation of the Republic 40c and 4r

Seychelles

Government House in Victoria, on the island of Mahé, was the residence of the Governors of the Seychelles from 1912 to 1976, at which point the archipelago became an independent republic.

Designed by a local architect and built in 1910, it is typical of the colonial architecture of the time, featuring a two-storied verandah with white pillars, and is now classified as a national monument.

There's a good illustration of it on the 40c stamp in the Seychelles' 1962-68 definitive series, which was subsequently overprinted for the use in the British Indian Ocean Territory.

This is one of many former Government Houses which have been given a new name and purpose: it is now State House, the official residence of the President of the Seychelles and a venue for state investitures and diplomatic functions.



ABOVE: Seychelles 1962-68 40c definitive with BIOT overprint

Montserrat

Montserrat was one of the Leeward Islands, which was governed as a group until 1958. So its original Government House was built for the Governor of the Leeward Islands, who was resident in Antigua but used it whenever he visited.

This late 19th-century two-storey official residence was featured on two different designs, the 1c and \$2.40, in the 1951 King George VI definitive series, and both were reissued in the 1953-62 Queen Elizabeth II series.



ABOVE: Montserrat 1951 \$2.40 definitive



ABOVE: Montserrat 1953-62 1c definitive



ABOVE: Montserrat 2017 Soufrière Hills Volcano \$5

Sadly the eruptions of the Soufrière Hills volcano, which destroyed the island's Georgian-era capital of Plymouth in the late 1990s, forced the property to be abandoned due to structural damage. The shell of the building still exists, but it is inaccessible in an exclusion zone.

A set of stamps issued in 2017 featured photographs of many of the buildings damaged during the eruptions, with the \$5 value showing the ruins of Government House.

A new Government House has since been established at Woodlands, as the formal home of the Governor.

St Kitts

Government House in Basseterre, the capital of St Kitts, is the official residence of the Governor-General of St Kitts & Nevis.

The two-storey building, also known as Springfield House, was built around 1834 and was the abode of the Archdeacon of St Kitts for much of the 19th century before taking on its current role in 1946.

A recent royal visitor was Prince Harry, during his 2016 tour of the Caribbean.

A set of six stamps featuring local tourist attractions and architecture, issued in 1989, included a \$2 design illustrating Government House.

The smaller island of Nevis also has a Government House, recently restored after suffering hurricane damage.



ABOVE: St Kitts 1989 Tourism \$2

St Helena

The earliest depiction of a Government House on a postage stamp appeared on the ½d, 2d and 1s values in St Helena's King Edward VII issue of 1903.

The same design was reissued in the King George V series of 1912-16, where it was used for an additional 3d value.

Built in 1791-92 by the East India Company, which governed the remote South Atlantic island before it became a crown colony, Government House is also known as Plantation House.

Its many illustrious visitors over the years have included the Duke of Wellington, the exiled Napoleon Bonaparte, Charles Darwin, Rudyard Kipling, Winston Churchill and King George VI, the latter being accompanied at the time by a young Princess Elizabeth.

The gardens are home to some of the world's oldest tortoises, including Jonathan, who is a remarkable 187 years old.



ABOVE: St Helena 1903
2d definitive



ABOVE: St Helena 1912-16
½d definitive

St Lucia

Following a succession of Commissioners, Administrators and Governors, since independence in 1979 the monarch has been represented on the island of St Lucia by a Governor-General.

His official residence, located on a hill known as Morne Fortune near the capital of Castries, is the third Government House to occupy the site.

The first was destroyed by a hurricane in 1817 before it was even completed, and a timber-framed second was abandoned in 1865 when it began to deteriorate.

Construction of the current building began in 1894, and the large brick-built house is one of the few remaining Victorian buildings on the island.

It incorporates Le Pavillon Royal Museum, which features important historical artefacts and silverware, and welcomed Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip when they visited the island in 1966, and again in 1985.

Similar images of Government House were used for both the 5s value in the 1936 King George V definitive series and the 1s value in the 1938-48 King George VI series.



ABOVE: St Lucia 1936 5s definitive



ABOVE: St Lucia 1938-48 1s definitive

FIND OUT MORE

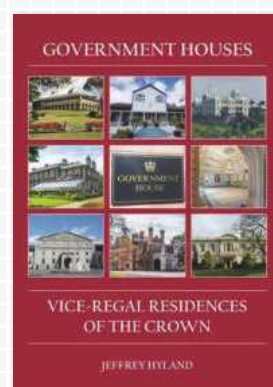
Government Houses: Vice-Regal Residences of the Crown, by Jeffrey Hyland, is a new book about the histories of these buildings throughout the Commonwealth.

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Art of Hartz

With a gift for portraits, Sem Hartz of Enschedé engraved many of the most memorable stamps of the Netherlands in the mid-20th century

■ Report by Adrian Keppel

Samuel Hartz, usually known as Sem, was the most prolific and celebrated Dutch stamp engraver of the mid-20th century.

During a long career at the security printers Enschedé, he produced engravings for at least 15 issues of the Netherlands and 15 of Luxembourg, along with others for the Dutch colonies of Surinam, Curaçao and Dutch New Guinea, and for the Belgian Congo, Zaire, Tunisia and the United Nations.

Born in Leiden in 1912, Hartz grew up in an artistic family. His father was a portrait painter, and his home was often visited by artists.

Interestingly, his father did not wish Sem to follow in his footsteps. On the contrary, he begged the young boy's art teachers (among them the famous Anton Pieck) to discourage him, in the hope that he would opt for a more financially secure career.

Undeterred, Sem attended the State Academy of Fine Arts in Amsterdam, where he studied under the prominent stamp engraver, JJ Aarts. This connection helped him to secure temporary work at Enschedé in 1935.

With two of Enschedé's experienced engravers soon due to retire, Hartz was asked to submit a trial engraving for a stamp in the new Cultural & Social Relief Fund series. It was impressive, and helped him secure a full-time job with the firm from 1936.

His first real assignment was to design and engrave the 1½c and 12½c values for the 1936 edition of the same annual series. The latter was a memorable portrayal of the Renaissance philosopher Desiderius Erasmus.

Hartz would remain closely associated with the series, engraving many more portraits over the following years.

He got to work on stamp issues



ABOVE: Hartz's first stamp engravings were for two values in the Netherlands' 1936 Cultural & Social Relief Fund set, including this stunning 12½c stamp portraying Desiderius Erasmus

for other countries as well, most significantly Luxembourg. This began in 1938, and an early triumph was the 10-stamp 1939 Centenary of Independence set, with its fine portraits of the Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses.

By the outbreak of World War II,

'Hartz did not need a preliminary drawing to work from, instead engraving directly onto a steel plate'



ABOVE: This portrait of Cornelis Evertsen the Younger, for the 1943 Naval Heroes set, was engraved while Hartz was in hiding during World War II



ABOVE: Hartz engraved all the Netherlands' high value definitives of the 1940s and 1950s, including this 1946 design portraying Queen Wilhelmina

Hartz's portfolio already consisted of nearly 40 stamp designs.

The war changed everything, however. The Netherlands was occupied by Nazi Germany, and Hartz was Jewish. As the persecution of Jews intensified, he had to be sacked by Enschedé.

Enschedé continued to offer him some work on an unofficial basis. He engraved two stamps for the 1943 Naval Heroes set, the 7.5c portraying Michiel de Ruyter (although ultimately this was not recess-printed) and the 40c of Cornelis Evertsen the Younger.

Initially these were attributed to Kuno Brinks, to protect the real artist's identity, but after the war Hartz was given due credit.

He would have been asked to engrave a third value, but by then he was in hiding, disappearing even from Enschedé's radar.

Hartz survived the war, and in peacetime re-emerged as busy as ever, resuming his previous position at Enschedé.

As a specialist in portraits, he played a leading role in making the definitives of the period a very popular collectable. Not all were

still recess-printed, but the high values of various Queen Wilhelmina and Queen Juliana sets were, and they were his domain.

Remarkably, he was one of very few engravers who did not need a preliminary drawing to work from, instead engraving his image directly onto a steel plate. On the other hand, his employers did sometimes despair of his habit of overrunning his deadlines.

Hartz was opinionated when it came to the art of engraving, and none too fond of design committees. He wished to work with as vague a remit as possible.

Something he especially abhorred was the tradition of filling up the backgrounds of portrait stamps with cross-hatching; he favoured leaving the background more or less blank, so the portrait stood out more. His engravings of Princesses Irene, Margriet and Beatrix, for the 1946 Child Welfare set, show what he could do, if left to his own devices.

Hartz increasingly found that his views on stamp design deviated from those of the postal authorities, although he always remained fond of his employer, Enschedé.

BELOW: The 7½c + 2½c value from the 1946 Child Welfare set, with its striking portrait of Princess Beatrix

Rather fittingly, his final stamp engraving, in 1969, was a depiction of Erasmus, as his first had been 33 years earlier! Marking the 500th anniversary of the great man's birth, this earthy full-face portrait is still regarded as one of the most beautiful ever issued by the Netherlands. ■





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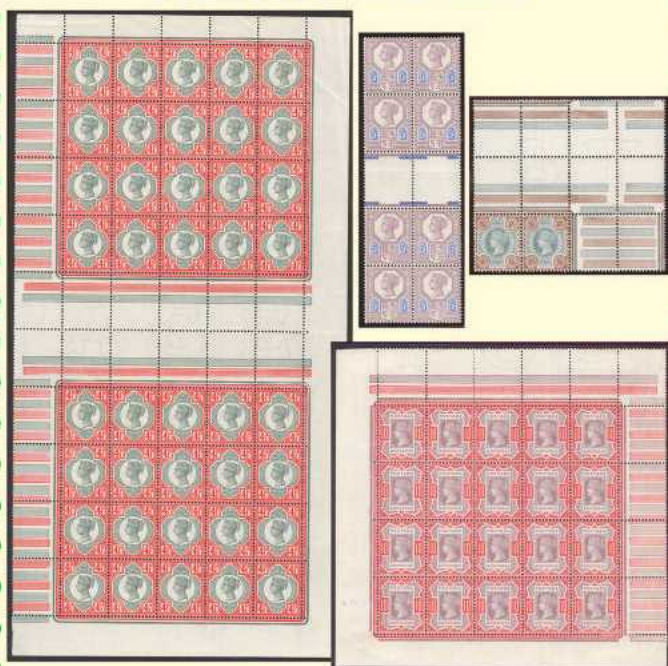
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Extra cover

Besides deliberately encouraging the use of adhesive stamps, the postal reforms of 1840 also inadvertently encouraged the use of envelopes

■ Report by Norman Watson

The introduction of Uniform Penny Post in 1840, along with pre-payment by means of postage stamps, meant the cost of sending mail fell dramatically.

There were also unforeseen consequences to these reforms, and one of them was the increasing popularity of the envelope.

Previously, the price of sending a letter had been calculated by its weight, the distance it needed to travel, and the number of sheets of paper it contained.

This resulted in some astonishing charges. It would often cost several shillings to send documents, which for some was equivalent to a weekly wage.

Understandably, some people would go to extraordinary lengths to keep costs down.

The established way of sending a letter was as an 'entire': folding up a single sheet so that the message was enclosed out of view, and sealing it with wax.

Beyond this, the most common tactic was cross-writing: filling the same side of a sheet of paper with two full pages worth of manuscript, overlapping each other at right-angles.

The poet Robert Burns, who faced paying 4d per sheet travelling up to 80 miles, used to a fold a single huge sheet of paper into a letter. In 1789, he wrote to his friend Mrs Dunlop, 'I have rummaged every stationer's shop in Dumfries for a long and broad, ample and capacious-sized sheet of writing paper...'

Back then, envelopes were not in general use, because they were charged as additional sheets. The



few that existed were hand-made, and laboriously cut to the appropriate shape from a large sheet.

Fanny Dickenson, the wife of paper manufacturer John Dickenson, noted in her diary one day in 1836 that she had been busy 'making envelopes all day' for invitations for a party.

Although its design was pilloried, and it was soon taken out of circulation, the Mulready postal stationery which accompanied the reforms of 1840 can be credited with boosting interest in the use of envelopes. The public quickly realised that a letter could be enclosed in a separate cover with postage remaining at 1d, provided the combined weight did not exceed half an ounce.

The widespread use of envelopes, of course, depended on mass production. In 1845, Rowland's brother Edwin Hill obtained a patent for a steam-driven machine which not only cut out envelope shapes but creased and folded

them too; mechanised gumming, however, was still some 30 years' in the future.

ABOVE: Envelope used on January 6, 1841, posted from Exeter to Manchester by means of a Penny Black from plate 1b

Illustrated here is an early envelope (opened out to show how it was created), used with a Penny Black on January 6, 1841.

Addressed to the secretary of the Manchester & Leeds Railway, it bears a stamp from plate 1b, cancelled by the orange Maltese cross of Exeter, with the town's circular datestamp alongside.

Exeter randomly stamped its datestamp on the front of outgoing mail, rather than on the reverse as was the norm, and occasionally even cancelled the stamp with it.

The Maltese cross shows the thickening lines noted by David Rockoff and Mike Jackson in their seminal reference work on the subject. The authors believed this was due to the obliterator changing through use, rather than being replaced.

Unfortunately, there are no surviving contents with this cover. Whereas the message was always integral to an 'entire', the advent of the envelope brought drawbacks for the postal historian! ■

'From 1840, a letter could often be enclosed in an envelope without increasing the postage rate'

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WHAT'S ON: EXHIBITIONS

UK & WORLDWIDE EXHIBITION DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AUGUST 12-15 USA

Great American Stamp Show

Venue: Donald E Stephens Convention Center, 555 N River Road, Rosemont, Chicago, Illinois 60018, USA.

Contact: GASS

www.stamps.org/
greatamericanstampshow

AUGUST 25-30 JAPAN

PhilaNippon 2021

Venue: Pacifico Yokohama Hall B/C, 1-1-1 Minato Mirai, Yokohama, Nishi-ku 220-0012, Japan.

Contact: Simon Richards, UK Commissioner
simon@sidebell.co.uk
info@philanippon2021.jp
www.japan2021.jp/en

SEPTEMBER 11-12 USA

Omaha Stamp Show

Venue: Westside Community Conference Center, 3534 S 108th Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68144, USA.

Contact: Mike Ley
giscougar@aol.com
www.omahaphilatelicsociety.org

SEPTEMBER 24-26 AUSTRIA

Ovebria 2021 Multilateral Exhibition

Venue: VAZ St Pölten, Kelsengasse 9, 3100 St Pölten, Austria.

Contact: Gernot Abfalterbach
ausstellungsleiterml21@voeph.at
www.voeph.at

SEPTEMBER 29- OCTOBER 2

UK

Autumn Stampex

Venue: Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, Islington, London N1 0QH.

Contact: Philatelic Traders Society
Tel: 01342 830225
info@thepts.net
www.thepts.net

OCTOBER 1-3 USA

Indypex

Venue: Hamilton County Fairgrounds & Exhibition Center, 2003 Pleasant Street, Noblesville, Indiana 46060, USA.

Contact: Indiana Stamp Club
rmarcy@comcast.net
www.indianastampclub.org

OCTOBER 15-17 IRELAND

Stampa 2021 Irish National Stamp Exhibition

Venue: Griffith College Conference Centre, South Circular Road, Dublin 8.

Contact: Stampa, PO Box 12624, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16, Republic of Ireland
www.stampa.ie

OCTOBER 21-23 SOUTH AFRICA

Vrijstaat 2021 National Exhibition

Venue: Kopano Nokeng Conference Center, 14 Mazelspoort Road, Bloemfontein 9326, South Africa.

Contact: Joo van der Merwe
jnc1@vodamail.co.za
www.stampssafrica

OCTOBER 22-24 AUSTRALIA

Newcastle 2021 Stamp & Coin Expo

Venue: Newcastle Showground Exhibition Centre, Newcastle,

New South Wales, Australia.

Contact: John Moore, Commissioner
moore.john@optusnet.com.au
www.newcastlephilatelicsociety.org.au

OCTOBER 22-24 USA

Napex 2021

Venue: Hilton McLean, Tyson's Corner, 7920 Jones Branch Road, McLean, Virginia 22102, USA.

Contact: Napex 2021
wcfortiii@aol.com
www.napex.org

NOVEMBER 19-21 USA

Chicagopex 2021

Venue: Westin Chicago Northwest, 400 Park Boulevard, Itasca, Illinois 60143, USA.

Contact: Kathy Johnson
kij5217@gmail.com
www.chicagopex.org

NOVEMBER 19-22 GREECE

Notos 2021

Venue: Zappeion Conference & Exhibition Centre, Leof Vasilissis Olgas, Athens 105 57, Greece.

Contact: Jon Aitchinson, UK Commissioner
Tel: 01279 980488
britishlocals@aol.com
www.hps.gr/notos2021

DECEMBER 16-18 NETHERLANDS

Hertogpost 2021

Venue: Brabanthallen, Diezekade 2, 's-Hertogenbosch 5222, Netherlands.

Contact: Hertogpost 2020
Tel: +31 73 629 3911
info@hertogpost-event.nl
www.hertogpost-event.nl

FEBRUARY 19-26 UK

London 2022 International Exhibition

Venue: Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, London N1 0QH.

Contact: London 2022
admin@london2022.co
www.london2022.co

MARCH 25-27 USA

St Louis Stamp Exposition

Venue: Renaissance St Louis Airport, 9801 Natural Bridge Road, St Louis, Missouri 63134, USA.

Contact: St Louis Stamp Expo
www.stlouisstampexpo.com

MARCH 31-APRIL 3 HUNGARY

Hunfilex 2022

Venue: Balna Centre, Fovam Ter 11-12, 1093 Budapest, Hungary.

Contact: Bill Hedley, UK Commissioner
ewthedley@gmail.com
www.hunfilex2022.com

APRIL 22-23 UK

ASPS Scottish Congress

Venue: Dewars Centre, Glover Street, Perth PH2 0TH.

Contact: Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies
www.scottishphilately.co.uk

MAY 6-10 TAIWAN

Taipei 2022 International Stamp Exhibition

Venue: Hall 1, Taipei World Trade Center, Hsin-Yi Road, Xinyi, Taipei City, Taiwan.

Contact: Richard Tan,

FIAP Co-ordinator
www.asiaphilately.com

MAY 18-22 SWITZERLAND

Helvetia 2022

Venue: Padiglione Conza Convention

Centre, Lugano, Switzerland.
Contact: Chris King, UK Commissioner
chris.king@postalhistory.net
info@helvetia2022.ch
www.helvetia2022.ch

JUNE 9-12 CANADA

Capex 2022

Venue: Metro Toronto Convention Centre, 255 Front Street West, Toronto, Ontario.

Contact: Frank Walton, UK Commissioner
frank@frankwaldon.com
www.capex22.org

JUNE 10-12 BELGIUM

Antverpia 2022

Venue: Hall 1, Antwerp Expo, Jan Van Rijswijklaan 191, 2020 Antwerpen, Belgium.

Contact: Antverpia 2022
exhibition@antverpiade2020.be
www.antverpiade2020.be

AUGUST 4-9 INDONESIA

Indonesia 2022

Venue: Indonesian Parliament Complex, Jalan Jenderal Gatot Subroto No1, Jakarta 10270, Indonesia.

Contact: John Jackson, UK Commissioner
john.w.jackson@care4free.net
www.indonesia2020.com

WHAT'S ON: FAIRS

AUGUST 15 DRONFIELD

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: Coal Aston Village Hall, Eckington Road, Coal Aston, S18 3AY.

Time: 9.30am-3.30pm
Contact: H V Johnson & Co
Tel: 01909 562927

AUGUST 18 EAST GRINSTEAD

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: Chequer Mead Arts Centre, De La Warr Road, RH19 3BS.

Time: 10am-3pm
Contact: Malcolm Green
Tel: 01342 327554

AUGUST 21 HULL

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: St James Centre, 169 First Lane, Hessle, HU13 9EY.

Time: 9.30am-3.30pm

Contact: H V Johnson & Co
Tel: 01909 562927

SITTINGBOURNE

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: Carmel Hall, Upton Lane, ME10 1JB.

Time: 9.30am-3pm
Contact: Chris Rapley
Tel: 07711 677760

AUGUST 28 GUILDFORD

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: Onslow Village Hall, Wilderness Road, GU2 7QR.

Time: 9.30am-3pm
Contact: Chris Rapley
Tel: 07711 677760

MORLEY

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: St Mary's Church Hall, Commercial Street, LS27 8HZ.

Time: 9.30am-3.30pm

Contact: H V Johnson & Co
Tel: 01909 562927

AUGUST 30 FELBRIDGE

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: Felbridge Village Hall, Crawley Down Road, RH19 2NT.

Time: 9.30am-3.00pm
Contact: Chris Rapley
Tel: 07711 677760

SEPTEMBER 3 LONDON

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, Russell Square, WC1H 0DG.

Time: Friday 9am-3pm
Contact: Kate Puleston
Tel: 020 8946 4489

SEPTEMBER 4 BECKENHAM

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: Azelia Halls, Croydon Road, BR3 4DA.

Time: 9am-3pm
Contact: Ray McQuade
Tel: 020 8395 9285

SEPTEMBER 5 TAPLOW

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: Taplow & Hitcham Woman's Institute Hall, Institute Road, SL6 0NS.

Time: 10am-4.30pm
Contact: David Milton
Tel: 01895 637283

WOLVERHAMPTON

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: Bradmore Social Club, 60 Church Road, WV3 7ER.

Time: 9.30 am-2.30pm
Contact: John Coaten
Tel: 07808 864297

SEPTEMBER 11 DERBY

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: Nunsfield House Community Hall, 33 Boulton Road, Alvaston, DE24 0FD.

Time: 9.30am-3.30pm
Contact: H V Johnson & Co
Tel: 01909 562927

LIVERPOOL

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: St Columba Church Hall, Hillfoot Road, Hunts Cross, L25 0NR.

Time: 10am-3.30pm
Contact: Terry Barnett
Tel: 0151 4862610

SUTTON COLDFIELD

(stamps, postal history)

Venue: South Parade, B72 1QY.

Time: 9.30am-3.30pm
Contact: JRS Fairs
Tel: 01785 259350

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WHAT'S ON: AUCTIONS

UK & WORLDWIDE AUCTION DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AUGUST 11

AJH STAMPS

Venue: The Dunkenhall Hotel & Spa, Clayton-le-Moors, Lancashire BB5 5JP.
Contact: The Laurels, Manchester Road, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 2PF
Tel: 01254 393740
sales@ajhstamps.co.uk
www.ajhstamps.co.uk

AUGUST 11

MARESCH

Venue: online only.
Contact: R Maresch & Son, 6-2 Vata Court, Aurora, Ontario L4G 4B6, Canada
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Fax: +1 905 726 7721
info@maresch.com
www.maresch.com

AUGUST 14

BIL & CO

Venue: Washington Community Centre, Fen Road, Washington, Lincoln LN4 1AB.
Contact: Bil Tilbury
Tel: 01400 230769
auctionsbil@btinternet.com
www.bilandco.co.uk

AUGUST 18-19

PHILEA

Venue: online only.
Contact: AB Philea, Svartensgatan 6, SE-116 20 Stockholm, Sweden.
Tel: +46 8 640 09 78
bids@philea.se
www.philea.se

AUGUST 25

EASTERN AUCTIONS

Venue: postal only.
Contact: Eastern Auctions, PO Box 250, Bathurst, New Brunswick, Canada E2A 3Z2
Tel: +1 506 548 8986
Fax: +1 506 546 6627
yohann.tanguay@easternauctions.com
www.easternauctions.com

SEPTEMBER 1

WARWICK & WARWICK

Venue: The Court House, Jury Street, Warwick, CV34 4EW.
Contact: Warwick & Warwick, Chalon House, Scar Bank, Millers Road, Warwick CV34 5DB
Tel: 01926 499031
info@warwickandwarwick.com
www.warwickandwarwick.com

SEPTEMBER 3-4

HAMBURG

Venue: Kleine Reichenstrasse 1, 20457 Hamburg, Germany.
Contact: Auction Galleries Hamburg
Tel: +49 40 33 71 57
Fax: +41 40 33 13 30
info@auction-galleries.de
www.auction-galleries.de

SEPTEMBER 8

SPINK

Greca collection of

Southern Africa

Venue: Royal Philatelic Society London, 15 Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 7BW.
Contact: Spink UK
Tel: 020 7563 4005
Fax: 020 7563 4037
auctionteam@spink.com
www.spink.com

SEPTEMBER 8

AJH STAMPS

Venue: The Dunkenhall Hotel & Spa, Clayton-le-Moors, Lancashire BB5 5JP.
Contact: The Laurels, Manchester Road, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 2PF
Tel: 01254 393740
sales@ajhstamps.co.uk
www.ajhstamps.co.uk

SEPTEMBER 8

CAVENDISH

Venue: Cavendish House, 153-157 London Road, Derby DE1 2SY.
Contact: Cavendish Philatelic

Auctions

Tel: 01332 250970
stamps@cavendish-auctions.com
www.cavendish-auctions.com

SEPTEMBER 9

SPINK

Stamps & Postal History of Great Britain

Venue: Royal Philatelic Society London, 15 Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 7BW.
Contact: Spink UK
Tel: 020 7563 4005
Fax: 020 7563 4037
auctionteam@spink.com
www.spink.com

SEPTEMBER 11

CHESHIRE STAMP AUCTIONS

Venue: online only.
Contact: Sandafayre, Egerton Court, Haig Road Parkgate, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 8DX

Tel: 01565 653214

stamp@sandafayre.com
www.sandafayre.com

SEPTEMBER 11

SOUTH WEST PHILATELIC AUCTIONS

Venue: Harewood House, Ridgeway, Plymouth, Devon PL7 2AS.
Contact: SWPA, 2nd Floor, The Watermark, Erme Court, Leonards Road, Ivybridge, Devon PL21 0SZ.
Tel: 01752 698089
richardswpa@outlook.com
www.swpa-stamp-auctions.com

SEPTEMBER 16-18

CORINPHILA VEILINGEN

Venue: online only.
Contact: Corinphila Veilingen, Mortelmolen 3, 1185 XV Amstelveen, Netherlands.
Tel: +31 20 6249740
info@corinphila.nl
www.corinphila.nl

LOT TO BE DESIRED

Corinphila Veilingen's online auction in the Netherlands on September 16-18 will include this striking 1961 rarity of Swaziland.

The marginal vertical pair of the 10c on 1s black and deep olive features a double overprint, and comes from the only known sheet of 60 showing this error.

The design, depicting the Havelock Asbestos Mine, was originally issued as part of the 1956 pictorial definitive series. The set was surcharged in 1961, when the British colony switched its currency from the pound to the rand.

The pair shows the plate number 1 and a small part of the Bradbury Wilkinson imprint in the bottom margin.

The starting price is €1,500 (about £1,300).



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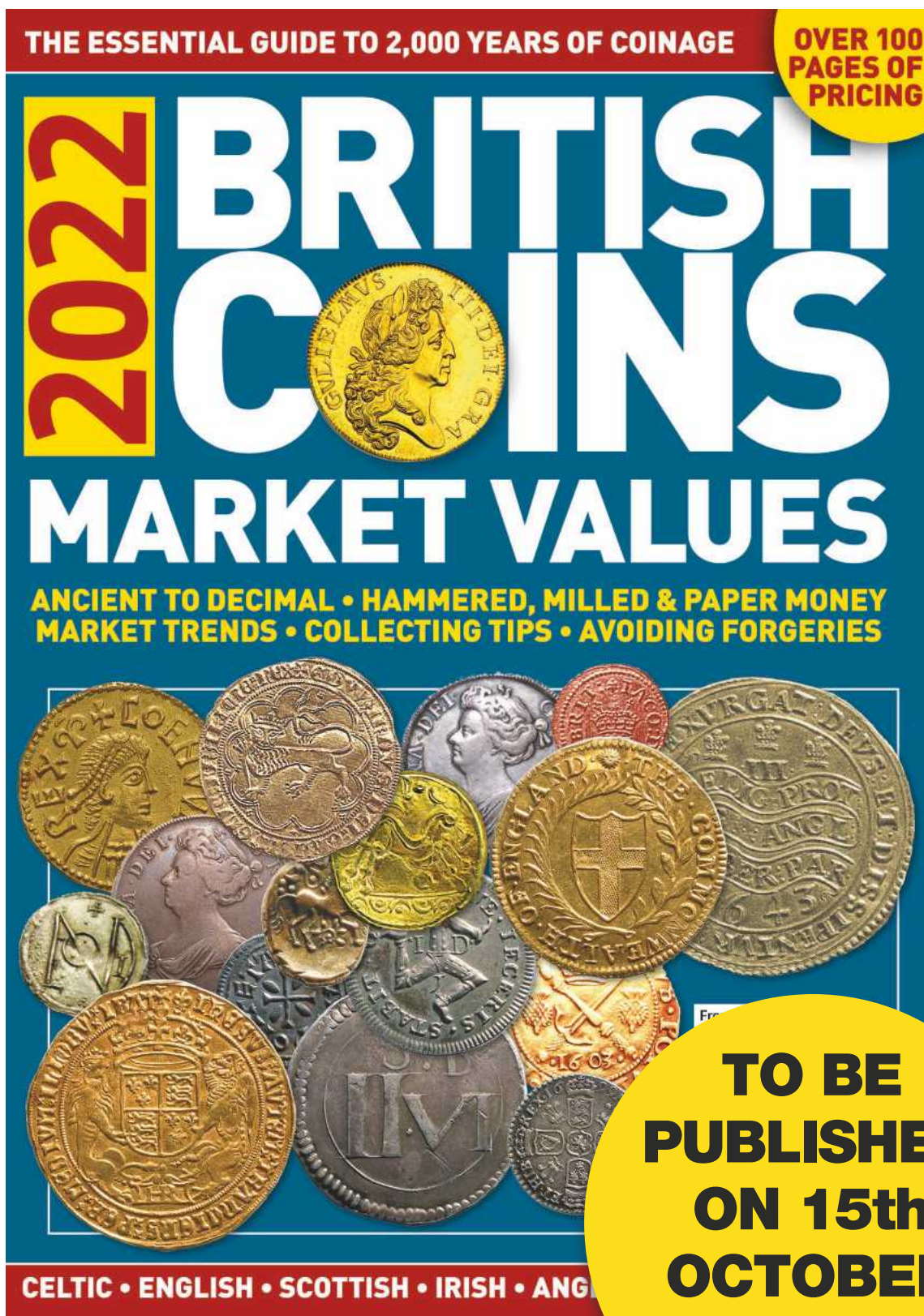
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One of the biggest problems when I collected stamps all those 48 years ago, (before girls came along), was that the stamps I wanted always seemed to cost more than I could afford! So ... just what is it that made me collect stamps in that way?

Q: What made me collect stamps that way? – A: Catalogue Values!

Yes, catalogue values... That's not to say that there's anything wrong with catalogue values per se. However, there is a simple answer, true even decades later, and even today. It was/ is the philatelic industry norm. **This is how 'philatelic' things are done ... aren't they?**

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Hindsight is a wonderful thing isn't it?, but...

with the benefit of hindsight, I suppose the problem was that I hadn't set my collecting boundaries to my budget, but it's so easy to say that now. Even so, why does everything you collect have to be related to catalogue value?

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Loss of privilege

First Ladies of the United States are typically treated with reverence. But the widow of one former President was apparently less well remembered than she hoped

■ Report by John Winchester

In the United States, 'franking privilege' is a long-standing perk for senior politicians. In fact, having been established as early as 1775, it is even older than the republic itself.

Presidents, Vice-Presidents and Members of Congress are entitled to free postage, simply by signing the covers of their outgoing mail. Oddly, the entitlement also extends to the widows of Presidents.

In theory, those eligible for the perk are a clearly defined group, but there are grey areas. Witness the case of Mary Harrison, widow of the 23rd President.

Benjamin Harrison served one term as President, from 1889-93. His first wife died from tuberculosis while he was still in the White House; three years later he married Mary, his late wife's niece and social secretary, but by now he was out of office.

Harrison's death in 1901 left Mary in the curious position of being the only President's widow who never held the office of First Lady. But was she eligible for franking privilege? In 1909 she petitioned for the concession, and it was granted; she would eventually enjoy the benefit for almost four decades, until her own death in 1948.

There was only one hitch. Her post-term marriage left her relatively unknown, and her signature 'Mary Lord Harrison' clearly didn't ring many bells with postal clerks by the late 1930s.



ABOVE: USA special delivery cover of 1939 endorsed 'Mary Lord Harrison' for franking privilege but nevertheless charged 3c postage due

When Mrs Harrison wanted to contact her florist in Indianapolis with all speed in April 1939, she did so entirely correctly, endorsing the cover with her signature and adding a 10c special delivery stamp because this was not covered by the privilege. Noting the absence of a 3c stamp to cover the basic rate, however, a mail clerk slapped on a postage due label! ■

NEXT MONTH

Meeting of minds



Souvenirs of the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain have always been popular collectables, and they come in many different guises

PLUS

■ Stunning stamps inspired by the medieval poetry of Dante

■ The only Australian issues that portrayed King Edward VII

■ The various types of British colony explained

OCTOBER ISSUE

IN SHOPS FROM
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 9

Are **YOU** a Tutter-Nutter



Solving the problem of high philatelic selling prices ...



It is an age-old collectors' conundrum. That stamp or cover you want is just too expensive. Possibly you plucked up courage to ask for it at a cheaper price, only to be snubbed. But nine months later that same philatelic item is 'winking at you' frustratingly sitting there unsold at the same unrealistic selling price ...

It doesn't make sense, does it? – But perhaps understandably when we appreciate the finer aspects of collecting, sometimes these over-ride financial considerations of sound commercial business practice don't they? After all most dealers are collectors at heart, which is why some stamp dealers stubbornly refuse to part with items they cherish at prices that make sense.

Because my pleasure is in the handling and appreciation of rare stamps – this is the reason why I have spent more than twenty years creating successful unique philatelic 'price-drop' selling systems.

Usually, you can find more than 20,000 lots in each unique quarterly Universal Philatelic Auction. ALL lots estimate and reserve **price-drop if unsold**. Just like 1,806 different bidders from 52 different countries in my last auction, you will find that you will only be paying for stamps, with none of those irritating 'hidden' extras/ buyer's premiums, plus **absolutely ALL** lots guaranteed.

More recently I created a new philatelic selling system which I affectionately call **TUT**. Rather than bid, some collectors prefer not to wait ... which is why I invite you to join more than 1,100 different collectors (and some dealers) who enjoy participating in my unique instant-purchase price-drop selling system called **Top-UpTwenty** ... or TUT for short.

With so much on offer, it doesn't matter what you collect. Simply sign-up here for free UPA auction catalogues / on-line auction notifications, and/or my daily new stock/price-drop instant purchase Top-UpTwenty (TUT) e-mails. You will be joining more than 2,500 regular auction bidders, plus 1,100 different '**Tutter-Nutters**', who find TUT's *buy it now or risk missing out* daily E-mails so absorbingly *addictive*. Naturally you can unsubscribe at any time ...

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Collectors 'Crack the Nut' at TUT/UPA

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from / respond to: **Andrew McGavin**

Are You **THINKING** of **SELLING?**

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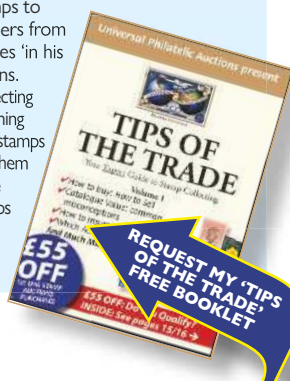
1▶ If You want to learn how the stamp trade works, please read on... When I was 15, I did. I wondered if there was some secret source of supply? So, I bought my 1st stamp mixture, (wholesale I thought), broke it into 50 smaller units, advertised it in Stamp Magazine 'Classifieds', and waited for the orders to roll in... I'm still waiting, 51 years later !...

Wrong Offer ✗ Wrong Price ✗ Wrong Place ✗
(naïve seller) ✓ = ☹️ me but I was only 15 at the time!



ANDREW PROMOTING PHILATELY ON THE ALAN TITCHMARSH SHOW ITV

About The Author ▶ Andrew found his Father's stamps at the age of 10. A year later at Senior School he immediately joined the School Stamp Club. He 'specialised' (!) in British, but soon was interested in Queen Victoria which he could not afford. The 2nd to last boy wearing short trousers in his school year, he religiously bought Post Office New Issues on Tuesdays with his pocket money. He soon found that he enjoyed swapping / trading stamps as much as collecting them. Aged 19, eschewing University he quickly found a philatelic career in London, leading to creating his own companies in stamps. Andrew has authored many internationally published Stamp 'Tips' articles, appearing on Local Radio and National TV promoting Philately with Alan Titchmarsh. Andrew's area of expertise is unusual - in so far as his grounding in collecting and wide philatelic knowledge has given him a deep understanding of Philately. He has studied Philately for the past 51 years, in combination with Commerce and Marketing Expertise, enabling him to create synergies in 'lifetime' interlinked Stamp Selling Systems, selling unit-priced stamps through to handling collections & Rarities up to £700,000 each. Today Andrew is fortunate to be co-owner with his Wife, of Universal Philatelic Auctions (aka UPA) - the Largest No Buyer's Premium Reducing-Estimate System Stamp Auction in the World, creating records selling stamps to 2,261 different bidders from 54 different countries 'in his international auctions. Andrew stopped collecting stamps aged 18 reasoning that his enjoyment of stamps would be in handling them and selling them... He loves working in stamps and looks forward to each philatelic day



2▶ Three years later, attending my first public stamp auctions I wondered how some bidders seemed to buy everything, paying the highest price? It didn't occur to me that they were probably Auction Bidding Agents, paid by absent (dealer) bidders to represent them. I wondered why two collectors sitting side by side muttered to each other "he's a dealer" as if that justified him paying the highest price...

...but did it really? What was the real reason? How could a Dealer pay a higher price than a Collector? It doesn't make sense, does it? Collectors are customers. Customers usually pay the highest price, unless... for a Collector, this was...

Wrong Presentation ✗ Wrong Place ✗
therefore **Wrong Price ✗**

3▶ Fast-forward 48 years later to a British Empire collection, lot #1 in an International Stamp Auction - Estimated at £3,000, but we were the highest bidder at £21,000 - **YES** - some 7x higher. Including Buyer's Premium in the extraordinary sum of £4,788 we actually paid GBP£25,788= upon a £3,000 estimate... **however,** we broke it down into sets, singles, mini-collections etc. We made a profit. Some might say it found its price. Others may say:

Wrong Estimate ✗ Wrong Presentation ✗
Wrong Structure ✗ Wrong Protection of Price ✗

- **Lucky for the seller that 2 well-heeled bidders saw the potential value that day** or it could have been given away... the seller could easily have lost out couldn't he? or she?

So, by un-peeling the layers of obfuscation, hopefully we can all agree:

The Secret is Simple -
it's ALL ABOUT : TIMING

Plus the 3 Philatelic 'P's -
Presentation ✓ Place ✓ and Price ✓

4▶ Understanding the problem... I always remember the car trade had their own little 'bible' - Glass's Guide. I've no idea, I've not even looked - in this internet-dominated world, it may even have disappeared. Well, there's an insider Stamp Trade publication for Stamp Dealers called "The Philatelic Exporter". There's nothing that special about it - and you won't learn much or find massively reduced prices by subscribing - **BUT** - it is a forum, a paper focal point, a last 'bastion' in this on-line transparent world that we inhabit... whereby dealers (and auctioneers) can try and communicate with each other. I publish my own articles there...

Recently I discussed the outcome of my 10 years' simple research, asking dealers and auctioneers 'what is your biggest problem?'

To a man, (why are we almost all men), they replied - "my biggest problem is stock, if I can get more of the right stock I can sell it easily"

Strange that, nobody ever asked me the same question back - because my answer would have been

entirely different (and I don't treat it as a problem) - I seek to satisfy more collector clients than any other stamp auction

This is the reason why my company has such massive advertising. This is the reason why we spend up to 8% of turnover - up to £200,000 per annum in marketing costs. (Most dealers don't even sell £200K per annum).

5▶ Why is that? Because, as the world evolved the **Stamp Market, imperceptibly Changed, and incrementally - Massively**

So, although few will tell you this, it's clearly evident that the problem for most Sellers of Stamps today is no longer absent stock - but **absent collectors in the place they choose to sell their stamps in.** Simply put, other Dealers, Auctions, Stamp Fairs have not invested in marketing to have a strong Customer-core. To be fair, this is not true of all - but it is true of most - so that our former competitor 'Apex' had 800 bidders in a recent auction. In my most recent 20,000+ lot UPA 77th Auction we had 1,793 different bidders from 49 different countries, 95% of whom were Collectors. Some other well-advertised auctions only have 200 bidders (a high percentage of whom are dealers - so that, essentially they are Dealer-dominated auctions) - so that when you sell through them - you're paying up to 18% (including VAT) seller's commission and the buyer is paying up to 25% and more in Buyer's Premium, credit card fees, on-line bidding fee, delivery and insurance etc... **AND all of that so that your stamps may be sold, wait for it - TO DEALERS (and some collectors),** but Dealers, that naturally must make a profit to survive...

6▶ Now, let's examine the cost implications
- **Example:** Your stamp collection sells in public auction for £800. Upon a 25% buyer's premium, the dealer pays £1,000 and it could be more. He breaks it into £2,000+ selling price (much lower and he'll go out of business). The auction charges you a seller's commission of up to 18% (VAT included) upon the £800 sale price. This is GBP£144. Therefore you receive approaching £656 - which is approximately 33% of the dealer's £2,000+/- retail selling price - **BUT... now that we have identified the problem...**

Isn't the Solution Staring us Right in The Face ?

7▶ Why Pay an Auction to Sell to Dealers: Sell to Collectors instead?
In our example with buyer's premium, sellers commission, lotting fees, extra credit card charges, VAT and even insurance - you're already being charged in different ways up to 40% of the selling price to sell, possibly or probably, **to the wrong person.**

Why not direct that 40% cost you're paying to sell to Collectors instead? Sounds good, so why hasn't this been done before ?

8▶ Truth is, it Has been done before... Sometimes the 'old' ways are the best ways aren't they? But in today's enthusiasm to obscure the obvious so that money may be taken, almost surreptitiously, in numerous different ways, (without us apparently noticing until we see the cheque in our pocket) – the transparent 'seller pays' has been deliberately 'obscured' – so much so that, **amazingly**, the latest 2017 European Auction Selling Legislation just introduced – now requires auctions that charge 'buyer's premiums' **to warn the buyer in advance**. Just imagine going into the petrol station, and being warned that the price you're paying to put fuel in your tank is not the real price, you have to pay a premium! Obviously, there would be an uproar...

9▶ How can you cut out the middleman and sell to Collectors instead? Well, I can think of two ways. 1). **DIY** - Do It Yourself selling on eBay. That may be fine for lower grade material – but, would you risk auctioning relatively unprotected rare material on eBay? We don't and we're professionals, so we should know what we're doing. Or 2). Cut out the extra middle-man. **Use my company UPA, which reaches collectors instead.** Here's how it works: Continuing from our previous **Example**:

The auction sold your stamps to a dealer for £1,000 – but You received circa £656

UPA sells them to collectors for you for up to £2,000 – even after 40% commission you receive up to £1,200. Up to £544 more. Now that's amazing, isn't it?

10▶ Sounds Good Andrew, but Can You 'Deliver'? Obviously, nothing is as simple as that, and as we auction stamps to collectors some collections may 'break' to the example £2,000+/- but the stamps may be sold for more or less – especially as we reserve all lots at 20% below, (Estimate £2,000 = £1,600 reserve) and not everything sells first or even 2nd time so prices may come down... Naturally, it's not that straightforward for a dealer either – he may sell at a discount to 'move' stock **OR**, like many dealers he may be sitting on the same unsold stamps, that you see time and time again, in dealer's stocks years later and still at the same unattractive prices... So, I think it is more reasonable for you to expect up to 36% to 50% more, indirectly or directly via my **Collector's Secret Weapon**: Universal Philatelic Auctions, which moves material more quickly, by incrementally reducing estimate (and reserve) price in a structured selling system...

11▶ Q.) What is the Collector's 'Secret Weapon'?

A.) It's called the Unique UPA Reducing Estimate System...

This is a rather long explanation, I don't want to bore you, but 20 years ago, when my wife and I set up Universal Philatelic Auctions I detected that the stamp trade's biggest problem then was not what sold – **but what didn't sell...** So, because I didn't want to try to keep on offering the same either unsaleable or overpriced stock I created the unique UPA Reducing Estimate (and reserve) Selling System. Simply put, if a lot doesn't sell in the 1st auction we reduce the estimate (and reserve) by 11% and unlike other dealers and auctions **WE TELL YOU – 'US'** = once unsold. If unsold after the following auction we **reduce by a further 12%** and **WE TELL YOU 'US2'**, if unsold after a 3rd UPA auction we reduce by a further 13% and **WE TELL YOU 'US3'** and so on till the lot finds its price, is sold or virtually given away...

12▶ Any Scientist will tell you that combinations of ingredients can produce powerful results. So we created the unique combination of my UPA Reducing Estimate System, married (in stone), with UPA's fair 'NO BUYER'S Premium' policy, PLUS each lot carries my total 'no quibble' guarantee – this formula is the reason why within the span of 4 auctions (one year)... 90%-95% of lots broken from a collection have sold.



Contact UPA: 01451 861 111

UNSOLICITED TESTIMONIAL:

Dear Folk at UPA,

I've dealt with the public for 37 + years, and as both a consumer, and a businessman, I have created huge numbers of orders from all over the world from a complete range of suppliers from all aspects of our daily lives.

But I don't believe I have ever encountered such sensitivity, such kind thought, such understanding as I have with you in our initial meeting, our subsequent successful transaction, and now this.

I recall well the item you highlight, and realise that this one item has such colossal personal value, I could never part with it.

It has been an absolute pleasure dealing with yourself, and I am more than willing for you to use this e-mail as commendation to others who may be thinking of disposing of their collection.

Many, many thanks for a memorable experience, and I will try to emulate your thought and care in my own business sphere.

Yours sincerely
D. E. B. Bath, UK

This Unique Philatelic Selling System **Formula** is the reason why we are the largest stamp auction in the UK today with more than 2,250 different regular bidders.

In Hindsight Dealers warned me 20 years ago that my idea wouldn't work. 20 years later I think I've proven that it does. (Reader: Please Request a complimentary UPA catalogue – using the contact details further below)

13▶ OK, Cut to the Chase Andrew, what's the offer? All of my Selling Systems are based upon **selling to Collectors Globally**, so that 95% of stamps sold by UPA are sold directly to Collectors. If you wish to benefit by up to 50% or more, depending upon your circumstance and type of material, by cutting out the middleman – then this offer may be for you. Generally 'time' is the enemy in our lives, and for most dealers not being able to sell stock. Now is the time to let 'time' do the 'heavy-lifting' and consider making 'time' work for you, so that at UPA you can make time your friend.

14▶ AND the SMALL PRINT? Some lots are too small in value for us to offer this system. Other lots may not be suited to selling in this manner (e.g. surplus mint British decimal stamps best used for postage) – especially if the market is heavily compromised by stock overhang

in specific areas. Some Collectors will not wish to use time and systems to leverage price, others will want to agree a specific price and know that they are paid precisely this amount. No client is treated like a number and no client is forced like a square peg into a round hole.

15▶ OK, What Do I Do Next?

- You contact UPA to discuss with Andrew or a highly-qualified Auction Valuer/Describer what you have to dispose of and your options bearing in mind your specific interests / requirements
- If you wish, get a 2nd opinion, but investigate what type of auction / dealer you are dealing with. Is it a Dealer's auction with relatively few collectors? Can you see where / how the Dealer sells? If you can't easily see any pricelists or high quality selling catalogues – that Dealer may sell your stamps to other dealers...
- Finally you ask U P A to collect your stamps, insure in transit for an estimated replacement retail value...

16▶ What Happens then? A member of my Team telephones/e-mails you to confirm safe receipt. 'Overnight' valuations, unless simple, are rare. Valuing stamp collections that have taken tens of years to create takes time. Depending upon your priorities / timescale I, or an experienced member of my Team will contact you to discuss your requirements and the options available to you for the sale of your collection. Provided only that you feel well-informed and comfortable do we agree strategy

17▶ How Strong is the Stamp and Cover Market? Everybody knows that the strongest areas are GB and British Empire. Post-Independence / QEII material sells but if hinged at considerable discount. Mint hinged material pre 1952 is regarded as the industry 'norm' and therefore desirable – but genuine never-hinged commands a premium. Europe sells but at reduced levels, Americas is good, as generally is Asia but the 'heat' has come off China which is still good – and Russia which can still be good. East Europe is weaker. Overall, Rarities throughout can command their own price levels and real Postal History has good demand.

18▶ What Should I Do Next?

Discuss your collection with U P A. Contact Andrew or an experienced member of his Team now...



19▶ Guarantee: I want You to be absolutely Sure So If You're not sure we'll transport and return your stamps for FREE up to £200 in actual shipping cost at our expense. It sounds generous (and it is), but it's far less than the cost of driving 100+ miles each way and 3 to 6 hours in your home valuing your stamps

20▶ My Double Cast Iron Guarantee: We can do a better job valuing your stamps in our office than in your home. If you don't agree I'll pay you an extra £50 for you to pay somebody trusted to open the boxes and put your albums back, in the same place, on the shelf they came from.

21▶ Act NOW: Contact Andrew or an experienced member of his Team using the on-line selling form at our website, by fax, telephone or by mail. We'll work harder for you not to regret the decision to sell all or part of your collection...

Andrew

Andrew McGavin, Philatelic Expert,
Author, Managing Director
Universal Philatelic Auctions UPA

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