



# SIPA

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## Bulletin

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### GUEST EDITORIAL

#### THEMATIC POSTAL STATIONERY

Recently, I received an interesting letter from fellow Long Islander, Norman Lurch. He had some comments that I felt should be shared with members.

Mr. Lurch is not a topical or thematic collector but found our column as a result of acquiring a sample copy of Topical Time. He is instead a collector of postal stationery. Over the years he has collected the postal stationery of a country, written about it, and then sold the collection to start the process over again.

The point is that he has been familiar with the prices of postal stationery. He makes the interesting statement: "I have found that topical collecting has materially affected the pure postal stationery collector." In support of this position, he refers to the advertisement of a dealer with whom he is familiar. In the ad, Belgian Congo 1912-1927 military cards are advertised at \$40 to 120 each. Norman Lurch states: "About 10 years ago, the complete sets of these cards (about six different sets) containing about 50 to 60 cards each sold for \$100 to \$150 in the Belgian Colonies Study Circle member auctions."

While member auctions tend to produce lower price than one would pay a dealer, the difference here is ridiculous. On the other hand, I don't think that the number of collectors who are seeking crocodiles, elephants, lions, or other subjects shown on these military cards have by themselves so changed the demand that the new market price has risen so greatly. Instead I think that there are two factors involved here.

One is that the topicalist is willing to pay a premium for the one item he or she wants instead of buying 60 items to get the one he wants. In fact, if the buyer has no way to dispose conveniently of the surplus cards, it may be

cheaper to pay a higher price for the one item. Further, the dealer who takes the time to examine and rearrange his stock to meet the desire of topicalists deserves a financial reward for his effort.

I would probably agree that this dealer may receive too much of a premium for his service. In part that it why I have been hoping that more dealers would get into the postal stationery market and welcome topical collectors. Increased competition would lower the premium possible for the dealer. In the meantime, the dealer mentioned by Mr. Lurch, provides the topical collector with just the items the collector wants.

So I request members before they part with funds for thematic items broken from sets to study, analyse and research the dealer market thoroughly.

David A. Detrich  
(Courtesy Topical Time).

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## STAMP NEWS

### BUDDHA

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The kind of seed, sown, will produce that kind of fruit.  
Those who will reap good results.  
Those who will do evil, will reap evil results.  
If you carefully plant a good seed, you will joyfully  
gather good fruit".

- Dhammapada



A spiritual teacher and the historical founder of Buddhism', Siddhartha Gautama is universally recognised by Buddhists as the Supreme Buddha' of our age. Any person, who has awoken from the sleep of ignorance is called a Buddha. Siddhartha Gautama, the buddha, is thus only one among many other Buddhas before and after him. His teachings are oriented towards attainment of this kind of awakening, also called enlightenment, bodhi, liberation or nirvana.

Buddha was born in Lumbini (in present day Nepal) and died around 80 years later in Kushinagar (India). While the date of his birth has been variously reckoned, it is now generally accepted that he was born in 563 OR 566 B.C. In the five centuries following the Buddha's passing, Buddhism spread like a wave throughout the Indian subcontinent, and in Asia where it has flourished for over two millennia. Today Buddhism continues to attract followers around the globe, and is one of the major world religions.

The purnima or full-moon in the month of Vaisakha is connected with three important events in the life of the Buddha, his janana or birth, his attainment of janana or enlightenment, and his mahaparinirvana or achievement of the unconditioned state. According to Theravada Buddhism, the Buddha's parinirvana occurred on the full moon of Vaisakha 544 B.C., and the full moon on May the 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006, marked beginning of the 2550<sup>th</sup> year of the Mahaparinirvana of Gautama Buddha, the one who attained bodhi or supreme knowledge.

The Department of Posts released a set of six postage stamps on the 'Buddha' to commemorate the

occasion. The first stamp depicts a statue from the Gandhara period of Siddhartha when he was still a prince. The second stamp shows a sculpture from Myanmar where Buddha is an ascetic having renounced royal luxuries to meditate on the essential Truth. The third stamp depicts the blissful head of the meditating Buddha (Dharmachakrapravartan or Turning-the-wheel-of-law Buddha) from Sarnath, India, also done in the Gandhara style. The fourth stamp depicts the Bhumisparsha Buddha holding the nectar of immortality in a jar. Some of the numerous incarnations of Buddha, past and future as well as part of the cycle of creation and dissolution of the many worlds feature in the fifth stamp. Hinayana symbols such as the Lotus indicating the blossoming of inner harmony which is the basis of all existence, and the dharma chakra with the various stages of development is shown in the sixth stamp. Theme: Religion, Buddhism, Culture

## NATIONAL PARKS OF INDIA

4X500

31.05.2007

India's rich biodiversity has fascinated people down the ages. We can boast of more than 500 species of mammals, 2,000 species of birds, 500 species of reptiles, and 30,000 species of insects. We also have an ingrained tradition of conservation stretching back in history.

While shooting for sport 'Shikar', posed the greatest threat to wildlife in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it is the destruction of habitat and illegal poaching for commerce that present the major problem to conservation today.

Realizing the danger, sanctuaries for protecting the wildlife, along with their natural habitat, were set up in India from the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century itself and today there are more than 450 Wildlife Sanctuaries and 85 National Parks, around the country.

### Bandipur National Park

The Bandipur National Park is a beautiful forest reserve located in Karnataka. It lies in the shadow of the Western ghats and spreads across an area of about 875 sq.km. at a height of 780-1455m. above sea level. A moderate climate and diverse geographical feature support remarkable variety of flora and fauna. Declared a National Park under the Wildlife Protection Act in 1974, this National Park is best known for its elephant herds and Sandalwood trees. A mix of deciduous and evergreen forest and scrubland supported by the waters of the Moyar River, this forest reserve is home to Indian Elephant, Tiger, Gaur, Sambar, Chital, Four Horned Antelope, Wild Pig, Black Naped Hare and the Indian Porcupine.



### Mudhumalai National Park

The Mudhumalai National Park lies in the state of Tamilnadu and is contiguous to the Bandipur National Park, separated by the river Moyar that flows between the two. It is located on a 1000 mtr. High plateau at the base of the Nilgiri hills with a core area of 104 Sq. km., and was declared as a National Park in the year 1990. Just 321 Sq.km. in area, the hilly terrain provides diverse habitats sustaining a great variety of wildlife including the Tiger, Leopard, Bear, Elephant, Bison, Sambar, Spotted Deer, Four-Horned Antelope, Blackbuck, Hyena, Wild Dog, Porcupine, Jackal, Python etc. Rich in bird life, most families of birds found in the Indian sub-continent including some uncommon and rare species like the Grey Jungle Fowl, Red Spur Fowl, Grey Partridge, Malabar Whistling Thrush, Magpie Robin, Vulture, etc., may be sighted in the Park area.

### Bandhavargh National Park

The Bandhavargh National Park in Madhya Pradesh is primarily known for its tiger population. Bandhavgarh was declared a National Park in 1968. Covering an area of 542.40 sq.km. the forest area comprising of teak forest, grasslands and scrubland has about 22 mammal species and about 250 bird species. This is the place where the famous white tigers were discovered. The other animals inhabiting this hilly Parkland include the Nilgai, Chausingha, Chital, Chinkara, Blackback and Wild boar, as well as two primate species, the Rhesus Macaque and the Hanuman Langur.

### Periyar National Park

The Periyar National Park and Tiger Reserve was established in the verdant stretches of Kerala in 1895 and declared a Tiger Reserve in 1978. The Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary covers an area of 777 sq.km. Deriving its name from the vast and stunningly beautiful Priar Lake, the habitat diversity is reflected in the variety of fauna. There are 35 species of mammals in the Park including its major attraction, the Indian elephant, the endangered Lion-tailed Macaque, Nilgiri Langur, Bonnet Macaque, Malabar Giant Squirrel, Flying Squirrel, Wild Boar, and Barking Deer. Periyar is also the only habitat of the Nilgiri Tahr, which is not seen easily. This National Park is also rich in birds with 265 species including the Hornbill, Stork, Woodpecker, Kingfisher, Raptor, Cormorant and the Darter.

### Kaziranga National Park

Kaziranga National Park is one of the last refuges of the endangered one horned Indian Rhinoceros. Located in Assam on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra River, Kaziranga was declared a reserve forest in 1908, primarily to protect this indigenous endangered species and a ban imposed on poaching of the Indian Rhino. Declared as a Wildlife Sanctuary in 1940 the Park was given the status of a National Park in 1974, and has also been declared a UNESCO world heritage site in 1985. Conservation efforts in this Park have paid off and the figure of 12 Rhinos in the early 90s has now grown to around 1000 Rhinos. Other animals that inhabit the Park are the Elephant, Tiger, Wildboar, Jackal, Wild buffalo, Python, Monitor Lizard, Bison, Leopard, Swamp Deer, Hog Deer, Jungle Cats, Otters, Hoolock Gibbon, etc. Kaziranga is also a bird-watchers' paradise.

Theme : Ecology, National Parks, Wildlife, Animals.

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## PHILATELIC INFORMATION IN THEMATIC COLLECTING

Margaret Morris

There are a number of sources for information on the philatelic, as opposed to the thematic, aspect of collecting. Probably the most obvious is the stamp catalogue. There are all sorts of catalogues, some giving a very simple listing, others treating various issues in considerable depth. There are catalogues of varieties, catalogues of postal stationery, catalogues of air mails, and so on.

Whatever catalogue you start with, and in this country it will very likely be the famous Stanley Gibbons "Simplified", there could come a stage in the development of your collection when you will want to see how certain items are described in the publications of other countries. It can be quite illuminating to check up a stamp and sometimes you can gain valuable information to add to your theme knowledge.

Of course, it is not unknown for catalogues to have mistakes in their descriptions of items and it is only by increasing your knowledge of your theme that these errors will be found out.

Stamp magazines publish much valuable information not only in the form of articles but also such things as useful address, checklists and, of course, book reviews to introduce you to the wealth of literature that exists for the hobby. However, as mentioned in the previous articles when speaking about newspapers,

Perhaps the most famous example of an anachronism in a stamp design, Christopher Columbus is shown supposedly "discovering" the territory with a telescope which was not invented until about 100 years after his death. This is not an error on the part of the stamp designer; he simply copied the coat of arms. This illustration is of a proof the inclusion of the denomination.



When the original issue of "Marine Life" was produced by Barbados in 1965, the 3c stamp was wrongly inscribed "Hippocampus species". In 1966 the set was reissued with a different watermark and the opportunity was taken to correct this to "Hippocampus". Many stamps have incorrect inscriptions and not all of them are re-issued with corrected data.



TWO 15c stamps inscribed "S.Y. Nimrod" exist. This one shows the correct ship. The earlier issue actually depicted another ship, the S.Y. Morning. This stamp was issued to replace the incorrect one which was withdrawn from sale on 31 March 1981.



magazines have to meet a deadline and sometimes there are hiccups in the printing, so once again just be careful when extracting information and check up on your facts.

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Some of the sources outlined in this article as ways of gathering material for your collection are also possible sources of information. For example, you may join a stamp club and gain a great deal of help from your fellow members, from the club library or from visitors giving displays. Knowledgeable dealers can also be most helpful.

If a specialist society exists for your theme then you would find their publications of great benefit. Don't forget that there is a sort of cross-fertilisation process between collectors of different themes. Very often you can get help from some-one in a totally different field for instance, a collector of Communication could find it valuable to listen to someone specialising in Animals or Birds which have fascinating methods of communicating with one another. Again, a collector interested in Explorers may want to get some extra information from someone interested in Ships.

Look at the philatelic items themselves and see what they have to tell you. Postal stationery items from certain countries carry information as to date and quantity printed; this can sometime explain changes in value from one printing to another perhaps due to inflation or increased postal rates. Stamps often carry inscriptions but these can sometimes be wrong and even designs can be wrong too. Have a dip into *Errors in Postage Stamp Design* by Irvine and Seshold and you will get your eyes opened! Always turn covers over to see whether the back can tell you anything.

Some themes require more "philately" than others and if you are planning on doing one of these then you will need to do a bit of reading in the specialist literature and you will find conversations with the "traditional" philatelists helpful. A few examples would be: *The History of the Post* (the Penny Black, Ocean Penny Postage, the UPU, etc.); *World War II* (Prisoner of War Mail, Camp Post, special routings such as via Lisbon); the *Development of the Nations of Europe* (towns which have had different names at different times due to the ebb and flow of boundaries) or *Printing* (paper manufacture, methods of printing, inks, etc.)

Information is something of a two-way process. Whatever background knowledge you bring to your theme may will suggest items which you can include in the collection. Similarly, stamp designs which puzzle you when you come across them can stimulate you to find out more which will in turn enrich the collections.

I should like to give you my favourite example. This is the story of the hunt for information about a stamp, and it brings in all the various sources already referred to.

Many years ago, when I was rather green about such matters, I noticed a little stamp showing a building with twin domes which looked as though it could be some kind of observatory and, therefore in interest for my Astronomy theme. It was inscribed "Poczta" at the top (which, even for me, was quite easy to guess) and "Litwa Srodkowa" at the foot. It cost only coppers so I bought it and tucked it away until I could find out more about it.



Some time passed and I discovered from a kind dealer that "Litwas Srodkowa" was Central Lithuania. This enabled me to look the stamp up in the SG Simplified catalogue, only to find it described as "Thchekewitsch Castle". A disappointment but never mind; at the same time I had found out something about the history of this small country with its short-lived stamps issues and so added to my general philatelic knowledge.

I still kept the stamp and a number of years later, through the library of a stamp club, I became aware of the notable French catalogue Yvert & Tellier. Another disappointment here it was described as "Pont du Nord".

Later still, a visitor to the stamp club gave a display of Germany and brought with him some of the catalogues and handbooks which he used. I flipped through the Michel catalogue and (Oh Joy!) the stamp was described as "Observatorium der Universitat Wilna". That was more like it!

Another year passed and a friend was clearing out some surplus books. I fell heir to a set of the American Scott catalogues. In Scott, this stamp is described as "Poczobut Astronomical Observatory".

Well, it was quite certain that the stamp would find a place in my collection, but how could I find out more? Also, there was a decorative frieze on the building and I thought I could detect animal forms and began to wonder if it could be the signs of the zodiac.

Time passed and in 1972 an Astronomy study circle was formed in the United States as a Unit of the American Topical Association. With over 100 members in various countries, a flood of information started to be published in their magazine "ASTROFAX". Four years later they got to my stamp.

In an article titled "Lithuanian Astronomy", the founding of the observatory at Vilnius University was described; the work of completing the building fell to Poczubot and this is why the observatory bears his name. You now see that the description in Michel and Scott are complementary.

At the close of the article there appeared: "Note : the signs of the zodiac may appear on the ornamental frieze of the Vilnius Observatory building. Can one of our readers supply definite information about this possibility?"

Here Lady Luck took a hand. A friend announced that he was going to visit a pen friend in Vilnius! He kindly said he would try to locate the building. He returned with a set of beautiful photograph which indeed confirmed that the frieze showed the zodiac and other astronomical symbols. Just about the same time I started writing to an astronomer at Toravere Observatory in Estonia and he kindly sent me the beautiful booklet produced for the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vilnius University, with several pictures of the old Observatory.

A special stamp was issued in 1979 for that anniversary, the twin ovals showing some of the old buildings at the left and modern ones at the right. If you look carefully you will see that the design of the 1921 stamp showed only a tiny section of the building which is now dwarfed by others.

From the photographs in the booklet, showing the old observatory in full sunlight, it would appear that the Yvert & Tellier description as the North Gate is wrong, but I still have to find out whether it was ever at any time known as the unpronounceable castle!

You can see now the sort of hunt you can have for information. One final word some people call this sort of thing "research", but be assured that real, genuine philatelic research is very, very rare. What I have just described is more in the nature of "search", and that is what most stamp collectors do. The information that you need exists somewhere. All you want is the right key to unlock it. Seek, and ye shall find. (Courtesy : Stamp News, 1998)

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## THE FRAMA SAGA

Jean Louis Emmenegger

At the beginning of 1974, the Swiss Post planned to introduce a new system to replace its old automatic vending machines. These worked by putting a coin in a slot with the customer receiving a 'real' stamp from a roll held within the machine, Swiss Post invited companies to construct a prototype of an entirely new vending machine offering a wider range of services.

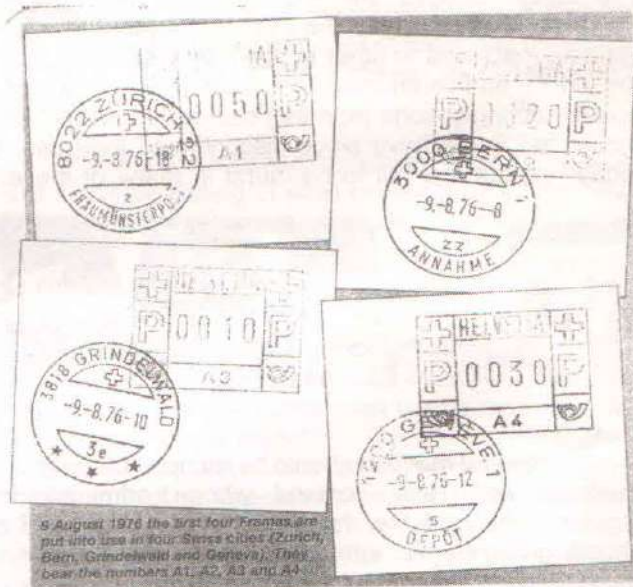
In the end, it was the Frama company (Frama is short for Frankiermaschinen franking machine), located in Lauperswil (Canton of Berne), which won the Swiss Post contract. Basically, the machine that Frama developed also

worked by putting coins into a slot, but it introduced three important differences to the older vending machines.

The old vending machines were stocked with stamps in rolls with the postage value already printed on them. What was new with the Framas was that the postage value was printed separately on each stamp-label by the micro-printer installed inside the machine. This offered the customer the option to choose his own value to be printed on the label, and meant that all types of combinations of postage values could be printed (up to a maximum defined by the machine).

The paper stocked in the Framas was in rolls as in the old vending machines, but many more labels could be accommodated (between 800 in the Framas in Spain and 1500 in those in Belgium), depending on the quality of the paper chosen.

Initially, the design of the Frama labels had to be simple one, because the postage value had to be printed on each label and because the labels were often made of a special gummed paper. But in the later years of Frama operations, improved technology allowed machines to use more colourful pre-printed designs.



The first four Framas were installed in the Swiss cities of Zurich, Bern, Grindelwald and Geneva on 9 August 1976. Each machine had its own type number which appeared on each label it dispensed: 'A1' for 'Zurich 23' (main railway station), 'A2' for 'Bern 1' (central post office), 'A3' for Grindelwald and 'A4' for 'Geneva 1' (central post Office). As might be imagined, envelopes franked with these first Frama labels and cancelled on their first day of use are now top rarities among collectors of such stamp-labels. Only a few people were informed of the introduction of these new vending machines!

In the months and years that followed, many other Framas were installed in cities and towns throughout Switzerland. The yellow Frama/Swiss Post machines, often placed outside the entrance to the post office and always near a mailing box, were much appreciated by

Swiss customers. They found the Framas really easy to use and appreciated having them at their disposal 24 hours a day.

During the early years, the micro-printer in the machine printed the entire text appearing on the label, but later on a major improvement was introduced: the new machines printed only the postage value in black. All the other elements, such as the design and the name of the country, were pre-printed to a high standard. This allowed Frama to offer its labels on full coloured gummed paper (in Switzerland, Liechtenstein and South Africa, to mention a few).

Currently, many Frama machines are still in use in Switzerland, and one can find them dispensing the old one-colour paper as well as pre-printed labels, depending on the machine's location. So far, Swiss Post has issued two sets of coloured Frama stamps: a set of four labels illustrating the four seasons and another set of four depicting postal transport. A new set is due to be introduced in the coming autumn.

## Around the world

The sales success and the customer satisfaction in Switzerland encouraged the Frama company to offer its vending machines to other postal administrations around the world and its success was impressive: a total of 38 postal administrations (see list) decided to install Frama machines! Some have since discontinued their use, but today Framas are still to be found in many of these 38



countries.

Special mention should be made of the Framas in Australia and New Zealand whose administrations regularly changed the designs and the colours of the Labels, giving them an interesting and original appearance. Besides this, many postal administrations sold official first day covers for their Frama labels, usually cancelled with a special postmark.

But the Frama company is now facing serious competition from other manufacturers; the main ones being Klussendorf (Germany), Satas (which at one time had a licence from Frama) and Crouzet (both of France). The advantage these companies have over Frama is to be found in the size of their labels, which are larger than Framas and in the quality of the design that can be pre-printed on them. This explains why the two countries which have issued the largest number of different 'stamps labels' Spain and Portugal went over from Frama to Klussendorf machines.

It is also worth mentioning that the postal administrations installed Framas during national or international stamp exhibitions. There, special labels from Frama machines could be bought, bearing the name of the

exhibition: 'INLADIA 88' (Finland), 'BELGICA 82' (Belgium), 'PIRAUS 85' (Greece) and 'BASLER TAUBE' (Switzerland), to mention a few. The Greek Post Office mainly used Framas during stamp exhibitions, offering an easy way for visitors to send letters and cards franked with a special stamp-label, prepared at a much lower cost than a conventional stamp. Consequently, the Hellenic Post changed the text in the Frama stamp label for each philatelic exhibition, making them very much sought after by collectors!

## Frama's one year experience in the UK

Like many postal administrations, Royal Mail also decided to order some Frama coin-operated machines, in order to test them with its customers. The first day of use of the four British Frama machines was 1<sup>st</sup> May 1984. These Framas are installed at the post offices of the cities of Cambridge (HPO), London EC1 (King Edward Street), Southampton (Shirley) and Windsor (Branch Office). These Framas were officially released as the 'British Post Office First Electronically Produced Computer Labels'.



At first, 32 values were available in steps of ½p from ½p to 16 p. The 16½p and 17p values were added on 28 August. The description given of these new Frama stamp labels was: 'imperforate, unwater-marked labels displaying a machine postage paid impression applied in red on phosphoresced paper with a grey-green background'.

Unexpectedly, these four machines were only used until 30 April 1985 (this is the official last day of use). The next day they were withdrawn. Considering the short period of use of these Framas in the UK, the experience seems not to have been judged very positively by Royal Mail! In one article, we read that the Windsor Frama machine was withdrawn only a month after it was installed.

The Edinburgh Philatelic Bureau was also equipped with one Frama machine and sold first day covers (with postmarks of each of the four post offices and also with its own bureau postmark). This Frama remained in use a year longer, until 30 April 1986, during which time the Philatelic Bureau continued to sell mint Frama stamp labels to customers.

An interesting label to mention here is the one that was printed as a 'post paid' label. It was applied to a little known British Post Office official stationery item called the 'Letter cassette' (see illustration), pre-paying postage at the domestic rate. If the 'Letter cassette' has to be sent abroad, a place to put an additional stamp was provided. It seems that this label inscribed 'POST PAID' at the bottom, served as the design prototype for the British Frama.

Another less well-known use of a Frama label in

the UK is from the machine that Royal Mail installed at the end of the period of usage, at the National Postal Museum in London. From 6 May 1988 to 13 April 1993, visitors could print Frama labels with the words 'SPECIMEN' and 'NATIONAL POSTAL MUSEUM' inscribed on them from this machine.

Many errors of printing, including printing on the gummed side and printing on white test paper (in Windsor), etc, have been found by collectors and have been advertised in most UK philatelic magazines.

Nevertheless, these Royal Mail Framas now form an interesting chapter of British philately.



eresting chapter of British philately.

## Computer stamps and automatic post offices

Collectors of Framas (together with automatic vending machine labels of the same type and functions but built by other companies) now have a new type of label to study: this is the 'stamp label' that can be easily produced with a personal computer printer, at the office or at home, using a simple computer program sold by a few European postal administrations.

These labels called 'electronic stamps' or 'computer stamps' are, of course, accepted by post offices and have the advantage that they don't need to be cancelled and are easily read by the optical systems in mail processing centres! Such 'computer stamps' are now being offered by the postal administrations of Germany (under the name Stamp IT), the Netherlands (under the name Easy Stamp), Switzerland (under the name WebStamps) as well as by Royal Mail, since mid-January 2004 under the name of SmartStamp. These computer

stamps are mainly used by medium to large companies to frank business mail.

In the United States, an Automated Postal Center made by IBM was recently put into use near supermarkets. There, the customer can weigh and send letters and parcels. What is new is that the customer cannot pay with coins (as he can with all Framas and similar automatic vending machines), but only by using a credit card! Once the label is printed out by the machine, the customer can stick it on his envelope or parcel, and then mail it without entering a post office. On this type of label, we can see a so-called 'data matrix' specific to the label and to the buyer! Being no longer anonymous (because the machine gets the credit card number), the Post Office can also track the customer's name if needed, this kind of machine is not considered to be a true vending machine by the vast majority of Frama collectors.

A last experience to report is the one tested in Australia a few years ago (it started in November 1994 but was discontinued a few months later) which saw a bank selling stamps! Here the customers of the Advance Bank, using a special Advance Bank ATM (Automatic Teller Machine) debit card or a Visa card, could purchase official stamps of the Australia Post. They were sold in sheetlets of 20 self-adhesive stamps, in triangular shape, a first for Australia! The initial launch of ATM stamps was restricted to 12 Advance Bank ATMs installed in Sydney and Melbourne.

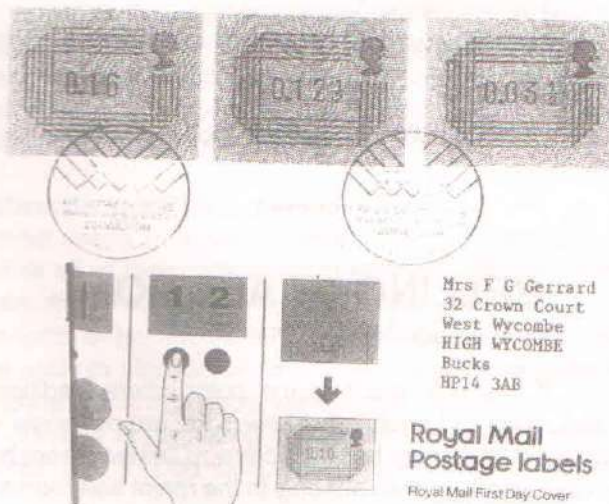
These three recent experiences indicate that we are still at the beginning of what could be called the new electronic printed stamps era.

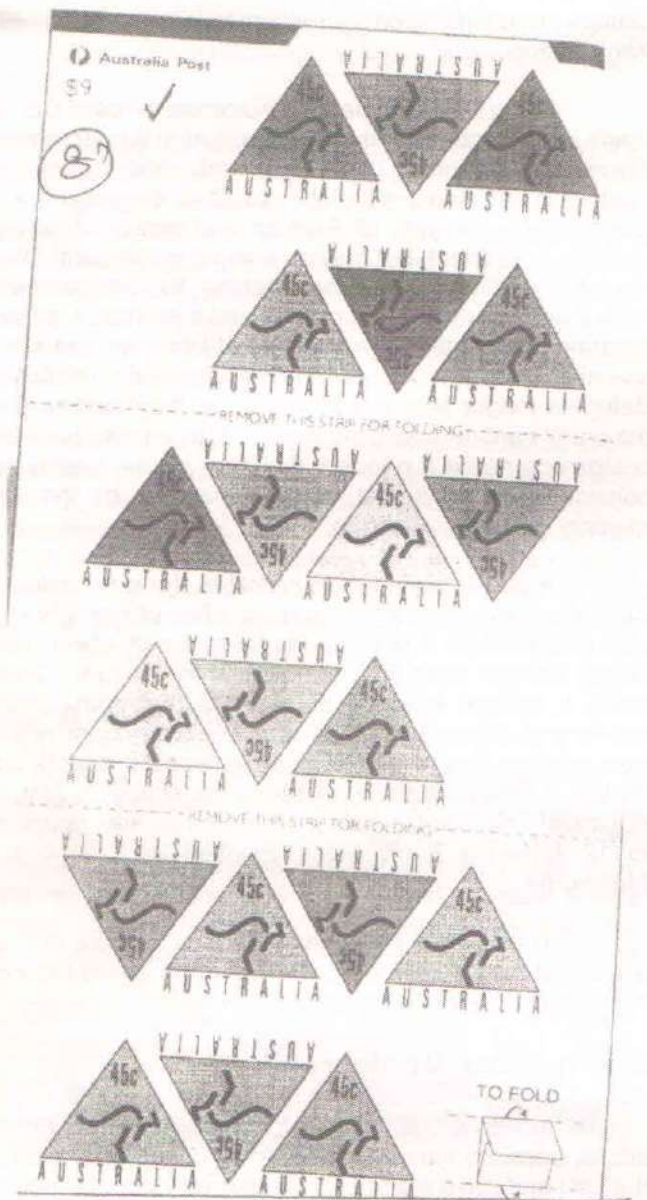
## Ever heard of Montgeron?

In this article, I have focused mainly on Frama labels, because they were used in 38 countries (including the UK) and have made themselves very popular among postal customers and collectors. But before the Frama labels were launched and installed in Switzerland in 1976, an earlier trial of a 'self-service-coin-operated-postage-label-machine' was conducted in France.

It happened in the small town of Montgeron (Essonne), to the south of Paris, from 25 March 1969 to 14 December 1970. There, near the entrance of a super-market, an experimental automatic vending machine (built by Safaa-Satas) was put into use. From it, the customer could print labels after having produced the necessary coins for the amount indicated by the machine. Then, having put the label on his envelope, he could place it in the nearby post box. This stamp vending machine, which used two different types of label during its trial period, was part of a complete self-service automatic post office called Bureau Auxilliarie Automatique, equipped with a public telephone, a telegram sending system, etc.

These French experimental labels from Montgeron are considered by specialists to be the real forerunners of Framas and other ATM stamp labels. Such Montgeron labels are very hard to find especially if used on a cover after all, who was interested in them at that time?





When offered at auctions, such labels on covers reach astronomical prices.

After this Montgeron experiment, ATM collectors had to wait until 1976, before the first four Frama machines were installed in Switzerland! The French Post Office has, however, installed a great number of automatic labels machines in recent years, which the French collectors call 'DIVA' (distributeur de vignettes d' affranchissement) and 'LISA' (libre-service affranchissement). This renaissance has brought back many French collectors to this most interesting collecting field.

Frama labels were used in 38 countries around the world (and they are still used in many of them):

Aland Islands	Malaysia
France	Sweden
Argentina	Malta
Greece	Switzerland

Australia	Mexico
Hong Kong	Spain
Belgium	Netherlands
Iceland	South Africa
Brazil	New Zealand
Ireland	Tunisia
Cuba	Norway
Israel	Turkey
Cyprus	Papua New Guinea
Kuwait	United Kingdom
Denmark	Pitcairn Islands
Luxembourg	Zimbabwe
Finland	Portugal
Liechtenstein	Vatican

### The Michel ATM Catalogue

There is one catalogue covering the subject of automatic vending machines: the Michel Automatenmarken Spezial Katalog (in German). You can find in it, listed country by country, all the types of labels that have been used, with the first and the last day of use, each reproduced in full colour and with complete details. This helps to find the labels that each country (61 countries are listed in the catalogue) that once had postage labels, and by which company the machine was produced (Frama, Klussendorf, Sata, Crouzet, IBM, NCR, Amiel, and many more).

The current edition of this catalogue was published in 2004, it has 512 pages and is priced at €45.

### How they are known

The postage labels of the Frama family (called ATMs by collectors) have different names depending on the country concerned: in English you'll find 'franking labels', 'Postage labels', 'labels of automatic vending machines' or 'vending machine postage stamps', in French they will be called vignettes d'affranchissement and in German they are named Automatenmarken or simply 'ATM'.

One should note also that on eBay, one can find ATM stamp-labels of different countries described as 'Framas', even where the machine builder is not Frama but another company (NCR, IBM, Nagler, etc!)

This is a sign of the world acceptance of the Framas!

(Courtesy : Gibbons stamp Monthly 2005)

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## SELLING AT AUCTION

James Mackay

It has now reached the point where traditional centres, such as London and New York, are no longer as dominant as they were two decades ago. Instead there has been a dramatic growth not only in the major salerooms in



the provincial towns and cities, but also a greater willingness by both vendors and buyers to search the world. This is particularly true in the case of important, highly specialized collections. At one time they would have been consigned to one of the great London sale rooms and perhaps not have sold as well as they might because of the esoteric nature of the material. But nowadays such collections are more likely to be sold in or near the country of origin where demand and appreciation would be keenest. Today, it is very much a case of 'horses for courses'.

### **An excellent idea**

There comes a time when stamps have to be sold. There are some collectors who keep adding to their possessions and never sell anything, and then it becomes the responsibility of their heirs and successors to dispose of the collections, often without any clue either as to its proper value or even the slightest idea of how to go about disposing of it. So this is perhaps the right time and place to remind all philatelists that they are mortal, and that they should leave explicit instructions to their nearest and dearest regarding the disposal of their property. If the collection is valuable one, it is advisable to appoint a philatelic executor to assist the other executors of the estate. There are highly reputable auctioneers who actually provide this as a service to clients with whom they have probably dealt for many years, and mutual trust has developed over that period. An inventory of the better items is an excellent idea, and with the various software package currently available, compiling a computerized record is a relatively simple matter. A copy of this should be filed with an up-to-date will, so that no one is in any doubt as to the extent of the collection and its value.

Sadly, all too often such a commonsense precaution is not taken. I recall one instance in which a large collection of admittedly rather obscure material was hastily bundled up by friends of the deceased who were given little or no time to sort it, because of pressure from the family lawyer to clear everything out of a flat as the nearest and dearest were anxious to sell it. The auctioneer to whom this vast accumulation was consigned did not have the time to go through it properly either, and so the felony of neglect and haste was compounded by indifference. The result was that a lucky purchaser at a provincial auction ended up with a collection that turned out to be worth considerably more than he paid for it.

### **Estimating value**

In most cases, however, philatelists have occasion to sell part or all of their collections in their own lifetime, either when they retire and wish to reduce their collecting interests, or because they have reached saturation point and wish to start something new. If you have collected wisely and built up a good collection you should experience no difficulty in disposing of it when the time comes. Of course, it is a good idea to have some idea of its value

before offering it for sale, and this can be estimated in several ways.

Some collectors keep a detailed account of their purchases so that, at any time, they can tell how much money they have spent on the collection. This, in itself, is a useful basis to work on. Depending on the type and quality of the collection and the length of time which has elapsed since the material was bought, the collector can usually gauge realistically the worth of the stamps or postal history. Keeping a close watch on auctions and the prices realized for comparable items enables you to keep abreast of market movements and notes to that effect should be built into the inventory. Indeed, software programs for compiling such inventories usually include a facility for updating values quite easily.

There are five major methods of selling stamps : to a dealer, to another collector, by private treaty, by splitting the collection piecemeal in the club packet, and by auction. All of these methods have their advantages and disadvantages and which method you choose will depend on certain circumstances. Selling outright to a fellow collector (or rival) who knows your stamps and appreciates the gems can be mutually beneficial, cutting out the dealer or auctioneer who would have taken his profit or percentage.

Such an ideal situation rarely arises however, and inevitably the vendor has to fall back on disposing of his material through outright sale to a dealer or taking the slower, but usually more profitable route through the saleroom.

### **Speedy transaction**

Regarding sale to a dealer, it may well be that he has a client waiting for just such a collection as yours (particularly if he deals in a fairly specialized type of material) and thus his turnover will be quick. Or he may pick out the gems to sell to his better customers and then break up the remainder, putting the individual sets and odd stamps into his general stock. In any event, disposing of the collection to a dealer for a fixed price is a speedy transaction, although it will seldom be as profitable as selling through an auctioneer.

Traditionally, this was a relatively slow process. It might take several months for a collection to be broken up into lots of suitable size and described, so that the descriptions given in the sale catalogue would be as accurate as possible. As the auctioneer received his commission from the vendor it was invariably in his own interest to see that nothing of value or significance was overlooked in the description of the lots. Then the sale catalogues had to be printed and mailed to the auctioneer's regular clients (often numbering several hundreds, if not thousands) several weeks before the sale so that they might have ample time to study them and, in many cases, have certain lots forwarded to them by registered post for

viewing.

That was roughly the scenario back in the 1970s, but since then things have speeded up considerably. The advent of colour photocopiers meant that it was no longer necessary to sent out the actual material for viewing. Photocopies meant that accurate images could be sent out to many clients simultaneously and this method was infinitely more secure than trusting valuable and often unique material to the postal service. In more recent years, the advent of the Internet has enabled salerooms to email images of postal history material or individual stamps to clients a world away in the twinkling of an eye. And now that virtually all auction houses of any importance have their own websites, clients can view the material in forthcoming sales from their own armchairs, viewing and downloading images at will.

### Accurate estimate

Of course, not all potential customers have embraced the IT revolution, and as a result most salerooms continue to produce paper catalogues in the time-honoured way. From the vendor's viewpoint it is probably immaterial how details

the mid-point between the high and low estimates. Only experience will tell both vendor and purchaser what the true worth of material on offer is likely to be.

From the seller's viewpoint, the crucial factor is how much he or she is likely to receive after the sale, and, more importantly perhaps, how soon the requisite cheque will be paid over. In the smaller provincial salerooms payment is usually made within a short time after the sale has taken place. It seems almost axiomatic, however, that the larger and more prestigious the auction house, the longer the time lapse in settling up.

### Auction catalogues

In any event, the auctioneer forwards a list of the lot numbers to the vendor, with the sum realized for each one noted against them. From the total figure is deducted the auctioneer's commission, plus any other charges incurred. At one time these might have included photographic fees, particularly if some items were reproduced in full colour in the catalogue, but since the advent of cheaper colour processes such charges have now all but disappeared. The argument was that this expenses was worthwhile as an outstanding item often gained considerably from this publicity and the price realized was correspondingly higher. Auction catalogues, however, have come a very long way in recent years and colour images are much more the norm. Greater use of pictures in general, often with plates and text of lot descriptions on facing pages, has made sale catalogues infinitely more user-friendly. Moreover, the arrival of the website catalogue enables auctioneers to provide many more illustrations, and the facility for clients to view enlarged images that show every detail of the stamps (as well as the slightest defects) is sometimes even



of

his collection are disseminated to potential bidders. He will be chiefly concerned that the auctioneer has done his job properly, has lotted the material shrewdly and described the salient items adequately and, most important of all, produced an accurate estimate of the likely price realized.

This last criterion is one that often gives rise to rancour and discord. Rightly or wrongly, it is generally believed that some auctioneers deliberately deflate the estimates, so that the actual prices realized will be so much greater. One provincial saleroom has estimates which are roughly half what the lot is likely to fetch, and so experienced bidders know that they are going to have to go up to twice as much if they have any hope of securing a particular lot. In other auctions, however, the price realized may average 20 to 30 per cent above the pre-sale estimate. Conversely, there are some salerooms where the estimates are so accurate that most lots sell at



better than handling the actual stamps.

In some cases it may be necessary to have important items submitted to one or other of the various expert committees for appraisal and authentication, and this is not only expensive but also time-consuming. Of course, it behoves philatelists to get their choicest material expertised long before it comes to the point of selling, but nevertheless, for the protection of vendor, auctioneer and purchaser alike, expertisation is often necessary.

### **Cash advance**

These factors tend to militate against a quick turn-around of collections, but many salerooms now have a policy of making a cash advance, based on a proportion of their valuation of a collection. Such an advance is, of course, subject to the usual interest but this is normally deducted from the net sum realized (after deduction of commission).

A complicating factor concerns the handling of lots which were either unsold or bought in, having failed to achieve their pre-sale reserves. Some salerooms make a charge to the vendor while others waive this so long as they can re-offer the material in the next sale.

Over the years many salerooms have relied more and more on material they have purchased outright from vendors. In such situations the vendor is in the same relationship to the auctioneer as he would have been with a dealer. He offers the collection and receives an immediate cash payment. The auctioneer thus owns the material he is offering in his next sale. There are advantages to both vendor and auctioneer in this method. The vendor gets his money promptly and may not be much worse off than if he had waited for months to receive the proceeds of the sale, less commission. From the auctioneer's viewpoint, outright purchase gives him far greater leeway and discretion in not only lotting the material but also in deciding the right time to offer it for sale. One may cite extraordinary cases of a major collection purchased outright by an auctioneer and not sold for several years; in the meantime the collection is displayed at international exhibitions in order to generate publicity and create greater interest among potential purchasers. As a rule, however, material of this calibre comes under the hammer within a year of outright purchase.

To what extent this practice is now rife is hard to determine. At one end of the scale there are salerooms which openly advertise that they wish to buy collections, accumulations and better individual stamps. As they are not stamp dealers, it follows that the material bought in this manner is destined for a forthcoming sale. At the other extreme, for example, is Stanley Gibbons, one of the largest stamp retailers which also happens to hold regular sales. While the greater part of the material on offer may have been consigned by private vendors, Gibbons will often take the opportunity to dispose of stocks of material that are surplus to trading requirements. From the stance

of the bidder it is probably quite irrelevant how or whence the material in the auction has got there.

### **New technology**

Traditionally, stamp auctions were public affairs, where collectors and dealers attended and bid on the lots that interested them, and these were knocked down to the highest bidder in the room. Things hotted up somewhat when salerooms began offering a facility for accepting bids by telephone, thus enabling collectors in other parts of the country, or even abroad, to take part. The technology developed in more recent years has even allowed simultaneous auctions to take place in different parts of the world, using the Internet and large projection screens at the different venues. Thus bidders in Tokyo can take part in a sale held in Geneva as if they were actually in the same room.

Another phenomenon which has gathered momentum in recent years has been the postal auction or mail bid sale. Of course, public sales have always offered the alternative of bids by post, but the postal auction is entirely conducted on the basis of bids tendered by post, telephone call or fax and now also increasingly by email. The salient feature, regardless of how bids are sent in, is that the sale takes place behind closed doors, the auctioneer deciding the highest bidder and the amount of the successful bid in each instance. This method appears to be just as satisfactory to the vendor as the buyer, and from the auctioneer's viewpoint it drastically cuts down on such overheads as the hire of a suitable venue.

### **Specialist register**

There is one other important factor to consider when choosing an auction house to dispose of your collection. I mentioned earlier that the tendency nowadays is for specialized material to be sold in the country of origin, but most if not all salerooms maintain a register of their regular clients' interests. Some go further and ensure that notification of forthcoming specialized material is circulated to the appropriate specialist societies and study circles, with sample catalogues in many cases. One of the major advantages about selling through Stanley Gibbons is that, being one of the largest retailers, the company has a specialist register which is probably much more extensive than that held by any firm which is only engaged in auctioneering.

Basically, most philatelic auctions operate along traditional lines so far as the seller is concerned, but the Internet offers such dramatic new developments as rolling auctions and on-line sales, where bids may be entered right up to the last moment by email and potential buyers can observe how the bids are going and then decide when to make their play. e-Bay is the acknowledged leader in electronic auctions, but there are now many other organizations which are developing similar systems, albeit on a more modest scale. Online sales have so far proved to be very beneficial to all concerned and from the seller's

viewpoint it has been a secure, swift and efficient method of disposing of materials.

(Courtesy : Gibbon's Stamp Monthly 2004)

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## DOUBLE HEAD ELEGANCE

John Woolford

Rhodesia's double head issue of November 11, 1910 (Scott 101-118), has been studied extensively by experts. The ordinary collector need not be frightened off as there is great interest to be derived from the story of the stamps and their postmarks, which tell us a great deal about the country that is now called Zimbabwe.

The design has always been admired, although the idea of having two heads on stamps was not new even in 1910. Canada had shown two portraits of Queen Victoria on her 1897 Diamond Jubilee set (Scott 50-65). In 1908 the Quebec Tercentenary ½cent showed George V and Queen Mary side by side (Scott 96), although they were then the Prince and Princess of Wales; and the 2-cent had Edward VII and Queen Alexandra for another "double head" (Scott 98). Clearly these stamps were part of the ancestry of the Rhodesian double heads.

It has been claimed that the Rhodesian stamps were the first to show George V as King, but that is not so. Again North America got in first with the Newfoundland 15cent of August 1910 (Scott 97). South Africa was next with her 2½ penny of November 4 (Scott 1), just a week before the Rhodesian issue.

The Rhodesian double heads were intended to commemorate the visit of the Duke of Connaught, but they were retained in use for years, and as they bear no commemorative inscription they are generally regarded as definitives.

The double heads were recess printed by Waterlow, and there is a great range of colors and shades. That has been ascribed falsely to difficulty of obtaining matching ink during the World War1, in fact few stamps of the set were printed after 1913.

The stamps were inscribed "British South Africa Company" as well as "Rhodesia," because in those days this enormous territory, which included the present Zimbabwe and Zambia, was completely administered by a chartered company. Such a system was not unusual then collectors will recall that British North Borneo and British East Africa were also administered by chartered companies.

Rhodesia was separated into Northern and Southern Rhodesia in 1923 when the company gave up its powers of government. In 1910 it was a wild country of over 400,000 square miles, and some of the more remote post offices probably did not have full sets of stamps on

November 11. However, someone at Battlefields Mine in the middle of Southern Rhodesia got some of the stamps postmarked on the day of issue. The ½-penny and 1-shilling are known and there must be others about.



Scott 102 with the "OD" variety



Battlefields Mine was in a gold producing district, and the farms round about were named after famous

battles Waterloo, for example which accounts for the name. In July 1912 the word "Mine" was dropped from the name, which became simply "Battlefields." The name of the country in the postmark was given as "S. Rhodesia" even in those days, but that was a provincial title and was not meant to be the name of a separate country.

Low value double heads are a fertile source of postmarks that help to tell the story of Rhodesia, but the ½-penny also shows one of the most striking constant varieties, known as the "double dot." It occurred on stamp 29 on the sheet, i.e. the ninth stamp from the third horizontal row, and it is easily seen. The effect is of there being two dots beneath the "d" in the right hand figure of value. Anybody finding one should snap it up.

Another interesting variety on a low value this time the 1-penny is the "OD" flaw. It is often missed by quite advanced collectors, and it gives the ordinary person the chance of making a small "find." Look for a break in the white line beneath "OD" of "RHODESIA." As it was on stamps 71 to 75 of the sheet (each sheet had 100 stamps) it is not all that scarce, but it is worth having if you can get it at the price of an ordinary stamp.

Rhodesia was growing quite rapidly early in this century. The railway from the south reached Bulawayo in November 1897, and was pushed through to Salisbury in 1902. Numerous sidings and small stations sprang up, and some only had post offices for a few years.

The extraordinary dry-stone buildings at Zimbabwe in the south-central part of the country were probably begun 500 or 600 years ago. Zimbabwe was probably a clearing center for the gold trade with the east coast of Africa where Arab traders had been established earlier. Fanciful notions have been expressed that Zimbabwe was the land of Ophir and King Solomon's

Mines, but these notions are not taken seriously by many people.

Zimbabwe means "Building of Stone," and the people who lived in the area at the time were probably the forebears of the present Mashona, who are the majority group of tribes in the country. It should be noted that there has never been a tribe calling itself the Mashona; the name is, in fact, a derogatory one coined by the Matabele who entered the country from the south in about 1840. One of the problems of modern Zimbabwe is that the ruins of that



name do not have the same importance for the Matabele, as they had nothing to do with the original buildings.

A post office was opened at Zimbabwe in March 1912, and in June 1914 the name was altered to "Great Zimbabwe." It remained as Great Zimbabwe until 1948 when the office closed. The ruins never ceased to be an interesting tourist attraction, and in more recent years the post office has been re-established there.

In 1924 the British South Africa Co. found itself without a country to rule. Northern Rhodesia (North of the Zambesi) came under the direct control of the British government, while Southern Rhodesia (the present Zimbabwe) became a colony with internal self-government. In April 1924 Southern Rhodesia had her own stamps, and the British South Africa Co. in London was left holding thousands of double head stamps (as well as others that do not concern us in this article).

What to do with them? The advice of various dealers was sought, and the shocking decision was taken to apply back dates to many stamps that had never actually been to Rhodesia.

The postmarks of four towns were used: Salisbury (now Harare), Gwelo (now Gweru) Umtali (now Mutare), and Bulawayo (still Bulawayo).

Beginners should not allow the false postmarks known as "canceled to order" (CTO) - to deter them. They tell an interesting story, and they are quite collectible. Exact

numbers of double heads that were CTO are known, and the scarcest is the 2-penny with 174. Thus, almost all used 2-penny stamps are going to be genuine, and the CTO variety commands a premium. The 7-shilling 6-penny is one of the most difficult double head to obtain either mint or used, as most were used for revenue purposes. There were 10,550 of the 7-shilling 6-penny altogether, of which 661 were CTO. Only 9,550 of the 10-shilling were printed, of which 779 were CTO. Next to the 2-penny, the scarcest CTO is the 2-shilling 6-penny, of which there were 219.

In 1924 the British South Africa Co. was not satisfied with giving double heads these phony postmarks; they also released as 1-pound, which was printed in the wrong colors, plum and red, instead of carmine and blue slate. These are rare (there were only 100), and most of us will never see one.

(Courtesy : Scott Stamp Monthly, 1987)

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## OFF WITH THE HEAD! Richard West

Tony Benn is well-known for liberalizing GB stamp issuing policy during his two years as Postmaster General (PMG). But just how ground-breaking were his views of the question of the Royal portrait, and whether it should appear at all? Benn was a mover and shaker, and undoubtedly got things done, even if he often left those around him feeling totally exasperated. His wish to replace the Queen's portrait was probably as much inspired by his openly republican views than anything else. But was this such a novel idea? The answer is 'no' such thoughts went back a long way. Right back to the first commemorative stamp from the British Post Office, in 1924 for the British Empire Exhibition. The Council of Industrial Design, which for many years had a major influence on GB stamp designs, put down the recommendation that British stamps didn't include the portrait to achieve a fine result. King Edward VIII expressed the view that the proposed stamps for his Coronation might not include the portrait, though the designs prepared by the Post Office featuring Royal Palaces kept to tradition and featured the King's portrait. Edmund Dulac considered that stamp designs without the head were feasible.

### Post Office report

Report prepared by the Post Office in 1957, which included in its recommendations the establishment of a Philatelic Bureau and National Postal Museum, also

commended on the question of the portrait. One of the recommendations read:-

- 1-to use double size postage stamps, with the Monarch's head of the same size as on the permanent issues (this is present practice);
- 2-to use single size stamps with the Monarch's head in miniature;
- 3-to omit the Monarch's head but incorporate an indication of the country of origin' UPU convention, Article 182), e.g., the Royal Cypher.

These views were considered on the grounds of aesthetic and artistic judgement. The Wilding portrait wasn't greatly

favoured by designers. The three quarter view occupied much space on a stamp design, while the tonal qualities of the photographic head made it difficult to integrate with other aspects of a design. Many designers preferred a profile portrait one which could be shown smaller, especially when used on commemorative designs and some made their views very clear. Back then the wheels at the Post Office turned very slowly it would be some years before the Bureau and Museum ideas

came to fruition. Two designers in particular made their views known Michael Goaman and Faith

Jacques. Both were marked to pursue their thoughts. Jacques took some existing stamps, and replaced the Wilding portrait with a more stylized cameo profile. Goaman prepared a new profile portrait, based on a Wilding photograph, submitting this to the Post Office around the end of 1961 in several different, slightly differing, versions. Neither the Goaman nor Jacques ideas were taken further by the Post Office, although the Goaman portrait was used on a set of four which he designed for St. Helena in 1967. He also included his portrait on the designs he submitted for the 1966 Westminster Abbey and World Cup issues, albeit neither was adopted.

Little further progress was made until Benn became PMG in October 1964. Benn earlier felt this matter was of vital importance, and quickly sought the views of designers on the matter. David Gentleman responded first, in January 1965, explaining the difficulties experienced in incorporating the Queen's head into designs in a satisfactory way, and expressing the wish for 'more interesting subjects' appear on British stamps. Gentleman was invited by Benn to put forward ideas on British stamp design, in what has become known as "The Gentleman Album", or more correctly referred to as 'Essays in stamp design', Gentleman was also commissioned to prepare designs for issues in memory of Sir Winston Churchill and to mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Britain. For both he submitted ideas which didn't include the Queen's head, what Benn described as a 'non-traditional' approach.

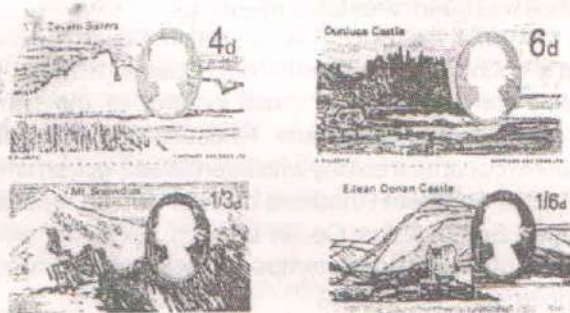
Benn also asked Buckingham Palace if there were other portraits which were considered suitable for stamp design. The Palace supplied a number by Anthony Buckley, portrait incorporated within the M. Farrar Bell frame as used for the Wilding definitives, and also instead of the wilding portrait on Richard Guyatt's design for the 700<sup>th</sup>



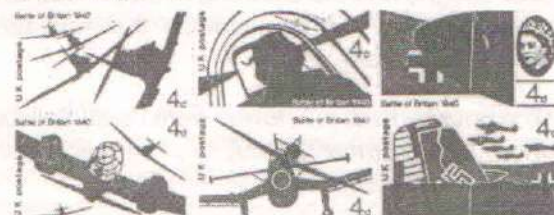
Portrait used by Australia (1955)



ABOVE: Two of the Anthony Buckley portraits, authorised by the Palace, and included on the Northern Rhodesia (1963) and Pitcairn Islands (1965) definitives



ABOVE: David Gentleman Landscapes essays using the Gillick profile



anniversary of Simon de Montfort's Parliament issue (this essay is inscribed 1s 6d and not 2/6 as on the issued

Clark, was still very influential on British stamp design the Stamp Advisory Committee formed to discuss each new issue since 1924 was mainly a void body. Benn and Clark clashed on the nature of stamp design, albeit Clark was aware of the problems encountered by designers and offered to look for a new portrait, not only for commemoratives but also definitives. In addition to Gentleman preparing his album of ideas, Andrew Restall was awarded a Fellowship of Minuscule Design to examine all aspects of stamp design and production.

It's now well-known that Benn had an audience with The Queen at which she was shown Gentleman's ideas for stamp design, many without her portrait, including those for the Battle of Britain issue. Benn gained the impression that The Queen was receptive to the idea. However, he was quickly advised to adopt a more cautious approach to an emotive subject. The Gentleman album was also shown to Sir Harold Wilson, Prime Minister, who immediately expressed support for a profile portrait which Gentleman had prepared: this was seen as overcoming the designers' problem while avoiding tension with the Palace.

But Benn wanted to broaden the debate and show Gentleman's ideas more widely: this was agreed, on the



ABOVE: The same Gentleman cameo portrait used by Hong Kong (1968)

ABOVE: The coinage portrait by Mary Gillich was featured on the 3d St. Helena definitive of 1961

ABOVE: The coinage portrait formed the basis for David Gentleman's cameo design, first used by Great Britain on the Landscapes issues of 1966

basis it was made clear that these were purely experimental ideas. Benn didn't let the matter of the Royal portrait rest developing the designs for the issues for 1966, he not only requested that several artists be asked to submit their ideas, but also took any of these through to essay stage. The art work and essays for the Robert Burns, Westminster Abbey and Landscapes issues provide many options on the question of the portrait, some still omitting it. As these designs developed, the tension between Benn & Clark intensified, resulting in Clark signing, and the SAC being disbanded.

However, something positive did emerge, Gentleman's cameo portrait of the Queen, based on the coinage portrait by Mary Milick, which was used for the first time on 1966 Landscapes issue.

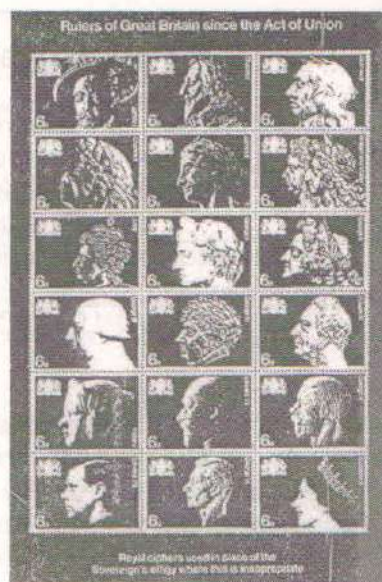
#### Owdon coinage shoot

The search for a new portrait wasn't over. In 1964 Lord Snowdon had taken photographs of the Queen for Arnold Machine to use as the basis for a new portrait on

British coinage. Consequently photograph by Snowdon were applied to use as a basis for a new stamp portrait to five designers. They were Arnold machine Reginald Brill, David Gentleman, Guart Devlin and John Ward. Of these, those by Machine were felt to be by far the superior.. and the rest is history.

(Courtesy : Stamp Magazine, 2003)

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