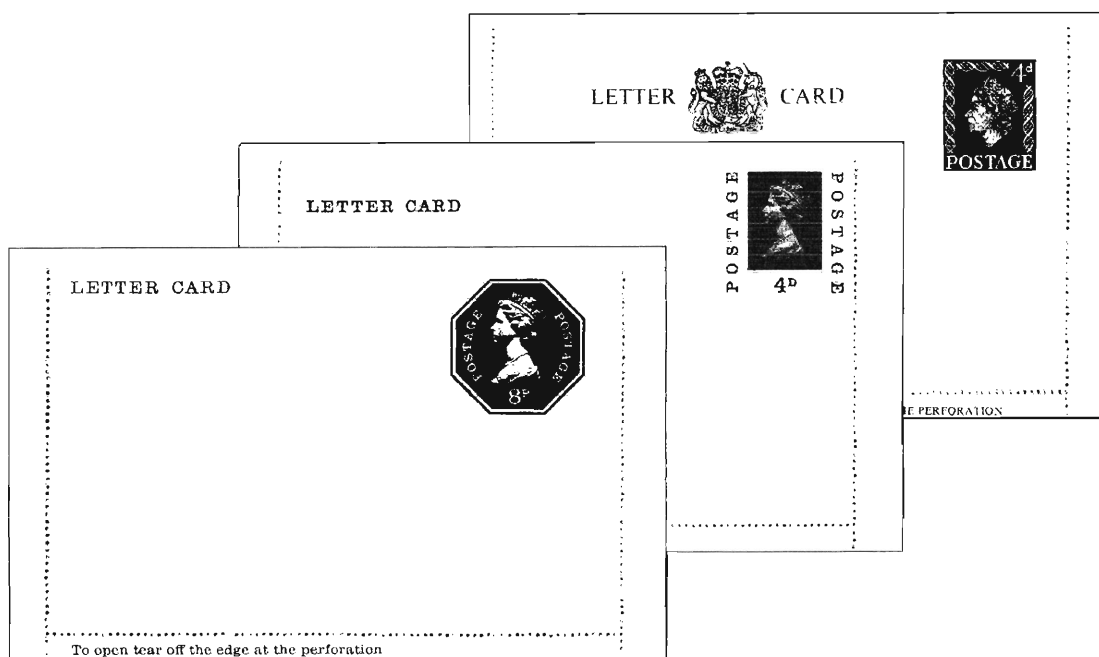




THE POSTAL STATIONERY SOCIETY

Journal Vol. 10, No. 2 June 2002

SERIAL NUMBER 23



The Development and Demise of the Lettercard in Great Britain

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The Management Committee.

The affairs of the Society are managed by four officers:- Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and a number of ordinary committee members from whom Post Holders are appointed.

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EDITOR'S COMMENTS

(The views expressed here are those of the Editor and do not necessarily reflect those of the Committee.)

The June issue of the Journal has been expanded to 20 pages to give room for a wide range of items including articles, book reviews, news items, queries and Society affairs. I hope that members find something to their liking in this issue. I aim to cater for a membership, worldwide, *united* in their interest in 'Postal Stationery' yet *diverse* in not only the specific areas of interest but also in the degree of specialism and expertise. My thanks go to all those who have sent in contribution for inclusion in this issue of the Journal.

What I am able to publish in the Journal is determined mainly by what members contribute. If you would like to send in items for publication, I would be pleased to hear from you. I would also welcome any comments on the Journal to enable me to improve upon what has been achieved so far

John Barker.

SECRETARY'S NOTES, JUNE 2002

Society Subscriptions

Now that we have introduced the facility for members to pay their subscriptions up to five years in advance, a number of you have asked how you will know when you need to pay your subscription once again. It is intended that with the November newsletter, all members will receive a notice informing them how many years in advance they have paid, or whether they need to pay their subscription for the coming year.

Subscription Receipts

In an attempt to keep the costs of running the society to a minimum, it has been decided not to issue receipts for members subscriptions unless members specifically ask for one. So if you would like a receipt, please write to Sam Barkley, the treasurer, and he will send one to you. However if a receipt is not needed, you can assume that your subs have been received and noted by the treasurer if you receive the Society's publications.

Society's AGM

The Society's annual general meeting will take place on Saturday 19th October 2002 at the British Philatelic Trust headquarters, 107 Charterhouse Street, London, starting at 11.00am. Items for discussion, together with a draft agenda, are being formulated at the moment and will be notified to members

through the September issue of our Journal. If any member has any matter which they wish to raise, would they please write to me as soon as possible so that it can be included in the meeting agenda.

Chester 2002

I have received further details from the organisers of this year's National Philatelic Exhibition to be held at Chester on 29th and 30th November 2002. These include detailed arrangements for the event, accommodation information and awards banquet, competition entry forms and rules. The closing date for the receipt of entry forms for the competitions is 31st August 2002. If any member would like to receive a copy of these details please write to me noting exactly what information you require.

Monograph No 4

Sheila Marshall, one of our UK members who collects postal stationery issued by the Channel Islands, has written to me concerning the illustration of the Guernsey airletter printed on the inside front cover of the Society's latest monograph on the development of the aerogramme in Great Britain. She points out that this airletter was not issued in 1973 to commemorate the centenary of Gumbley's death, but it was issued on 5th August 1980 to celebrate the centenary of his birth.

SOCIETY CALENDAR 2002/2003

CALENDAR FOR 2002

Saturday 19th October 2002

At the British Philatelic Trust, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC 1. (See map on page 16)

10.30 am. Auction lots set out for viewing.

11.00 am. Society's AGM

11.30 am. Display of postal stationery of Natal, by our Vice-Chairman, Keith Hanman.

1.00 pm. Viewing auction lots.

2.15 pm. Society's annual auction.

The meeting is expected to close by 4.30 pm.

CALENDAR FOR 2003

Saturday 22nd March 2003

At the British Philatelic Trust, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC 1. 11.00 am.

Invited display of British South Africa by our Vice-Chairman Keith Hanman, followed by

members displays. Members are invited to bring along a maximum of 30 sheets each and to give a display of not more than 10 minutes with a further 10 minutes for viewing.

Saturday 28th June 2003

Midpex. Tile Hill, Coventry, 10.00 am. to 4.00 pm.

The Society will have a table with a static display to promote the collecting of postal stationery and the benefits of joining our Society to attract new members.

Saturday 25th October 2003

At the British Philatelic Trust, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC 1. 10.00 am to approx. 4.30 pm.

Society's AGM, display and auction.

THE DEVELOPMENT AND DEMISE OF THE LETTERCARD IN GREAT BRITAIN

Colin Baker

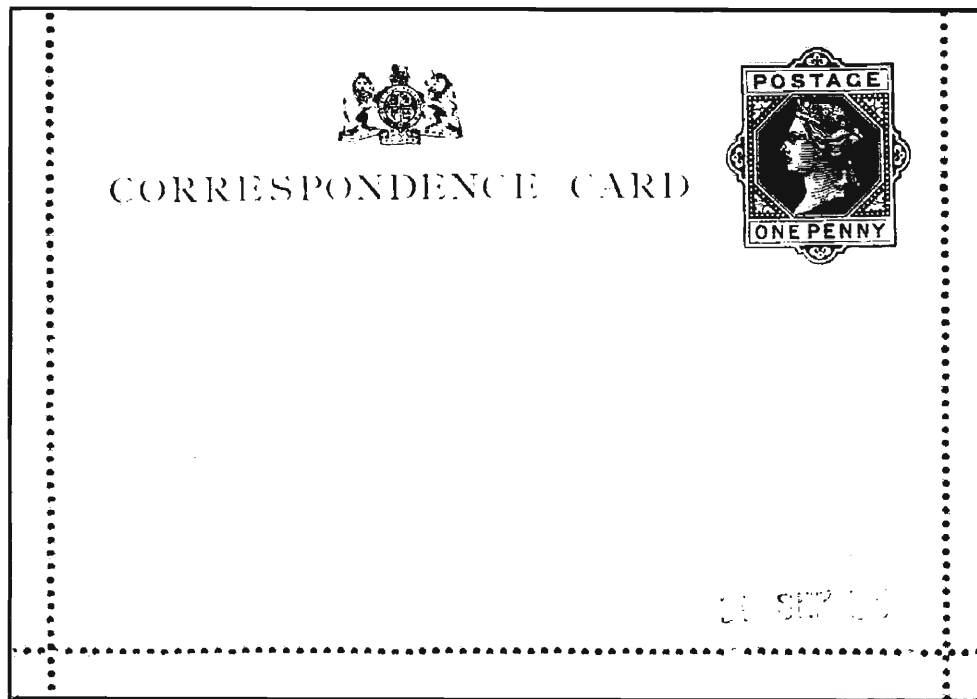


Fig. 1 An 1883 essay for a correspondence card. It would be another 9 years before the lettercard was eventually released for use by the public.

On 1st October 1869 Austria was the first country in the world to introduce a postcard. The British Post Office quickly followed suit with their own version exactly 12 months later, issuing the first British postcard on 1st October 1870. Priced at $\frac{1}{2}$ d, half the cost of the basic letter rate, it was immediately adopted by the British public who used it as diversely as possible, from advertising a wide range of services and products to acknowledging letters and orders.

Despite its popularity, the postcard had one major drawback. Because it only consisted of a small flat sheet of cardboard, it was unable to keep a secret. The back of the postcard could be read by anyone, from the postman to a servant. A new medium was required which sat halfway between being a letter and a postcard. Something that was simple and easy to use, but at the same time retained the privacy of the written message. The need for a lettercard was born.

As early as 1871 a British patent was taken out by Charles Akin (although he was an Hungarian by birth) for a card to be folded in two, gummed around the edges for security, but perforated just in from the edge to facilitate easy opening. Nobody took up this idea and the patent was allowed to lapse. Over the next few years there were calls for a reduction in the cost of sending a letter and proposals were received from the public for the introduction of lettercards with a reduced rate of postage, but the Post Office made no attempt to produce these.

However, in 1883 the Post Office asked De La Rue, who at the time printed all the Post Office postal stationery in Great Britain, to prepare an essay for a lettercard. De La Rue produced what they called a Correspondence Card (Fig. 1) to a design very similar to that described in Charles Akin's patent. It was printed in blue and used the 1d postal stationery stamp taken from the design first prepared for the 1879 Overseas Postcard.

However, once again the idea of issuing a lettercard was not pursued and the matter was dropped for several more years.

In 1891 De La Rue was again asked to prepare an essay for a lettercard. Under Post Office guidance the design they produced was very similar to that of the lettercard as issued the next year, except that the instructions on the reverse were printed at the top rather than in the centre of the back panel, and guidelines for the address were provided. Since no guidelines had ever been added to postcards, wrappers or envelopes in the past, it is strange that either De La Rue or the Post Office should have felt it necessary to include them in this 1891 essay for a lettercard. These guidelines were deemed unnecessary and did not appear on the lettercard as issued.

The Post Office version of the British lettercard appeared on 11 February 1892. All of the instructions on both the reverse and the front of the lettercard, together with the 1d stamp, were printed in maroon on a thick blue card which did not make it easy for some writing inks to be easily distinguished from the colour of the card. Although the colour of the lettercard was not ideal, it filled the 20 year old gap between the postcard and a letter, and quickly became a popular and well used item of stationery.

The introduction of the postcard in 1870 had been accompanied by a postal rate reduction to half that of the basic letter rate and the public was anxious to see a similar drop in the rate for sending lettercards. It had been hoped that these would be sent at $\frac{3}{4}$ d (three farthings or threequarters of a penny), but the Post Office was not keen to see any reduction in their revenue and firmly rejected any such suggestion, with the result that lettercards had to be sent at the normal postage rate for letters. Thus, unlike postcards and wrappers, there were few regulations governing their use and they could (and occasionally did) contain other papers and correspondence providing the weight limit for the prepaid postage was not exceeded.

The basic design of lettercards remained very similar over the years, right up to their withdrawal on 1st February 1982, when numbers sold fell to such an extent that the Post Office felt unable to continue to issue them.

Only the one type of lettercard was produced in Queen Victoria's reign between 1892 and 1901. When she was succeeded by Edward VII, the first lettercard issued for his reign varied only in the monarch's head, even the border design of the 1d stamp remained the same as it had been in the Victorian period. But finally in 1911, at the end of Edward VII's reign, the colour of the card used in the production of lettercards was changed to white to help people see and read messages more clearly

George V's reign saw significant changes in postage rates, including two increases in the basic letter rate, which of course also applied to lettercards. These increases were caused by the spiralling costs of the First World War, which lasted for more than four years, the financial burden of which continued during Britain's subsequent economic recovery. The cost of sending a lettercard rose from 1d to $1\frac{1}{2}$ d in 1918 and then to 2d in 1920, reducing back to $1\frac{1}{2}$ d in 1922 after which the rates stabilised at this level for the remainder of George V's reign.

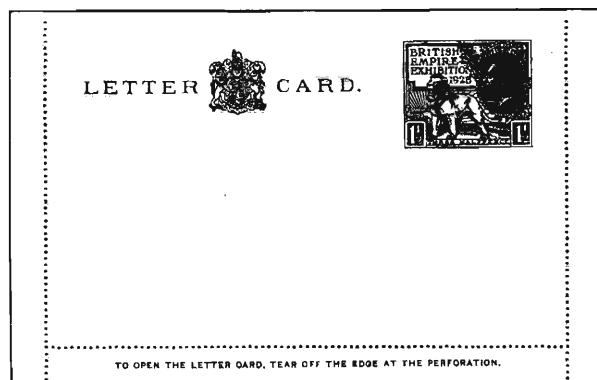


Fig. 2 The 1924 lettercard which carried the special British Empire Exhibition letter press stamp. The lettercard was also issued the following year, but with the date incorporated into the stamp design changed to 1925

The first issue of George V lettercards carried the same three quarter face portrait that was also used for postcards and wrappers, and was printed in the same carmine colour, as had lettercards issued during the previous two reigns. However the King was not happy with the appearance of these stamps and in 1917 a revised portrait and stamp design was

introduced and subsequently used for all George V stationery printed by the letterpress process, including of course, lettercards. This featured the King in profile as he was in later life, with both his face and beard appearing more full.

When the basic letter rate was increased in 1918 the lettercard incorporated a new 1½d brown stamp. As only one printing process was used in the manufacture of lettercards, the colour of the printing on the remainder of the lettercard also changed colour. Similarly in 1920 when the stamp colour changed to orange for a rate increase to 2d, the rest of the lettercard changed with it. The reduction in 1922 caused the colour of the lettercard to change yet again, reverting to brown to match the colour of the 1½d stamp.

Following the death of George V on 20th January 1936, Edward VIII came to the throne, but of course his reign was so short that no postal stationery was produced carrying his portrait. He abdicated on 11th December 1936 after reigning for little more than 10 months, when his younger brother Albert, Duke of York, became the reigning monarch, to be known as George VI. It took an enormously long time to prepare the new postal stationery stamps carrying the new monarch's portrait, and it was not until 1940 that the new 1½d letterpress die was made ready. The George VI lettercards were released in March 1940, but only 2 months later on 1st May of that same year the basic letter rate rose to 2½d, a consequence of Europe being at war for a second time that century. No 2½d die was ready at the time as it had not been considered necessary to produce a die in this value, since no stationery carrying a 2½d stamp had been anticipated. To overcome the problem, an additional 1d stamp was added to the 1½d lettercard (Fig. 3), making the value up to 2½d, the 1d die having already been prepared for use on inland postcards. Shortly after these lettercards were issued, however, the new 2½d die became available. Therefore both the 1½d and 1d + 1½d lettercards were sold for a very limited period and are not that common.

However, the Post Office's troubles did not end there, for in their haste to introduce lettercards with the new value stamp, they forgot that the instructions on the reverse referred to a postage rate of 1½d, and not the

new rate of 2½d. Thus the first issue of the George VI lettercards using the new 2½d stamp printed in blue contained a howling error. This was quickly spotted and corrected in subsequent printings.

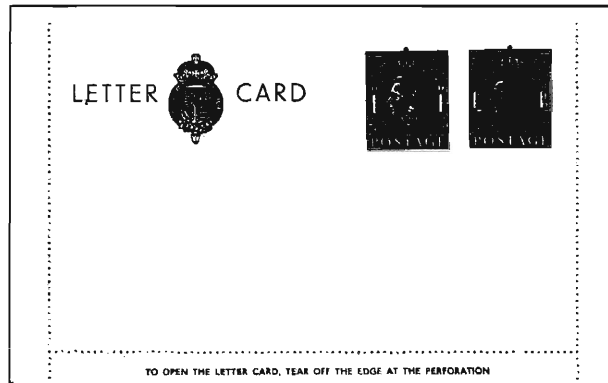


Fig. 3 The second George VI lettercard issued in June 1940 had a lifespan of a few weeks.

In 1951 the colour of the 2½d stamp impressed on lettercards was changed from blue to carmine. It had been many years since the British Post Office had complied with the UPU ruling on basic stamp colours, which required all member countries to issue basic rate stamps for prepaying postage on items to foreign destinations in specific colours to facilitate their easy identification the world over. This requirement also applied to postal stationery intended for overseas destinations. The chosen colours were:

Green for the basic overseas printed paper rate

Red for the basic overseas postcard rate

Blue for the basic overseas letter rate

Although the lettercard was only prepaid for inland use, the overseas postcard rate at the time was also 2½d and so this stamp served both uses. However, the UPU ruling only lasted another year, and in 1952 the idea of identifying foreign stamps by their colour alone was abandoned. There were too many other things that mattered, besides which the increasing use of multicoloured commemorative stamps made a mockery of the system.

During the first 30 years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, the Post Office continued to issue lettercards. The first design to be put on sale on 16 May 1955 (over 3 years after the death of her father) incorporated the new 2½d carmine letterpress stamp, but continued with the same format of lettercard as had been used previously, based on a folded rectangle of card gummed and perforated around the three free edges. Various changes were made in subsequent years, both to the layout on the front of the lettercards and to the instructions on the reverse, not just to the value of the stamp (a consequence of rising inflation and increasing postage costs) but to the position of the coat of arms. The use of coats of arms was eventually abandoned with the issue made in May 1968.

Up to 16th September 1968 it had only been necessary to issue one value of lettercard at any one time, but with the introduction of the two tier postal system on that date, two different values of lettercard were needed to cater for both 1st and 2nd class postage rates. The postage rate increases which occurred on a near annual basis from the early 1970s onwards, required the printing of new values of stationery. This meant a great deal of expense and wastage for the Post Office. Sometimes addition stamps were added to designs in an attempt to avoid the need to destroy existing stocks unnecessarily, but even so the Post Office suffered excessive costs as a result of the many changes in rates of postage.

Lettercard usage gradually declined during this period and this type of stationery was eventually discontinued with the postage rate increase on 1st February 1982. From this date onwards the postnote took over. The postnote was an A4 sheet of heavy duty paper, folded into three, with space for a return address on the reverse, very similar in format to the aerogramme with its gummed flaps, which is still popular today. With the creation of the postnote came the use of non value indicator stamps, which showed that a post office service had been prepaid rather than an actual rate of postage having been purchased. These stamps at last avoided the need to issue new stationery at every postage rate increase, since they showed (in the case of the postnote) that first class postage was prepaid up to a weight limit of 60 grammes. How much you

paid for your postnote depended on when you bought it, but it was always valid for transmission by first class post (and still is even though they are no longer sold) without the need for additional stamps.

Private lettercards carrying a postal stationery stamp were put on sale in the United Kingdom before the Post Office brought out their own issue in 1892. The earliest known example dates from about 1887 and carried an embossed penny pink stamp. However, the most prolific period when privately produced lettercards were in use seems to have been during George V's reign. These were impressed with a whole range of values using the 1d carmine, 1½d brown and 2d orange embossed stamps and the 1½d letterpress stamp. Some were prepared by private firms to promote their own goods and services, while others are blank both inside and out and it is presumed they would have been sold to the public via stationers, alongside other stamped to order prepaid stationery. A few private lettercards are recorded, having been produced in both George VI's and Queen Elizabeth's reigns, but the majority of these appear to have been philatelically inspired.

In addition to having their own lettercards printed and stamped, some firms also had the Post Office issues printed on the inside with a variety of advertisements, although there are few examples in existence today.

Overall, the number of private lettercards produced was very limited in all reigns, even during that of George V, and examples are seen very infrequently compared with the mass of stamped to order postcards which fill dealers display racks today.

Finally, the term lettercard not only applied to items of postal stationery, but also to unstamped issues, and there are numerous examples of other types of unstamped lettercards which required the addition of adhesive stamps before they could be put in the post-box. These included private lettercards sold through the stationery trade and the lettercards containing a concertina of photos which were intended to be sent to relatives and friends, popular with tourists frequenting the seaside towns and other tourist areas in the last century.

THOSE MARTIANS AGAIN

Tony Chilton

Editor's Note: For those of you who are unfamiliar with this story 'so far', 'Martians' refers to the GB KEVII & KGV printed to private order embossed stamp impressions, printed as multiples on sheets of paper. Many of these appear used on envelopes addressed to H. Edgar Weston.

In his book, 'Victor Marsh' states "*.. I, the writer, obtained, as a lay member of the public, all issues of King Edward and King George from ½ d. to 1s. in sheets of forty-eight stamps - four panes of twelve, with the centre rows inverted.*"

The abnormally embossed GB stationery stamps of Edward 7th, George 5th and George 6th have been frequently mentioned in the pages of this journal. Members will also remember that in 1998, Peter van Gelder organised a reprinting of Victor Marsh's original brochure (Victor Marsh's Great Britain: Abnormal Embossed Postage Stamps of King Edward VII & King George V) on how these items came into existence. I also especially refer to Peter's article "A Case of Identity" at PS 15, pages 15 - 17.

The names associated with this story are Oswald Marsh, Victor Marsh and H. Edgar Weston. In PS 9, page 21 Philip Cockrill muses that Oswald and Victor were brothers or maybe son and father. On page 22 of the same issue, Peter van Gelder states that Victor Marsh was the pseudonym of H. Edgar Weston, a view which he also refers to in his introduction to the reprinted brochure as emanating from the British Library catalogue listing. This though was apparently denied by Victor's daughter (see PS15, page 17).

There are also several addresses associated with these three names, to which envelopes bearing these embossed cut-outs were either sent from or to; notably 385, 386 and 389 Brixton Road, London SW9; 3 Belvedere Road and 18 Hamlet Road, Norwood SE19; and 13 Sion Road, Twickenham, Middlesex. Living as I do near to all those addresses, I have made some enquiries in the local council archives.

The Post office Directory for 1915 lists 383-385 Brixton Road as the Gaiety Cinema,

386 as the abode of Herbert Edgar Weston and 389 as Colquhoun's Confectioners. Brixton Road escaped much of the bombing of the Second World War and later developments have left much of the area as it was at the beginning of the last century. The street-level floors are now mixed business premises but the upper floors of number 386 are still what must have once been elegant living apartments. On the other side of the road, number 385 is still the original building, though the cinema is long gone; the upper floor shows no evidence of ever having been suitable as a residence. Number 389 has been replaced by a later single-story building. PS15, page 15 refers to Weston as being at number 385 and Victor Marsh at number 389 but I am sure that these are typing or transcription errors and that Weston was the only one of the trio living in Brixton Road, at number 386. This is confirmed by the Electoral Registers for 1910, 1911 and 1912 which list Herbert Edgar Weston at number 386 and no electors at number 389.

Kelly's Directory first lists Weston as living at number 386 in its 1907/8 edition, in the residential rather than the business section. He also appears at the address in the 1923 edition, the last I was able to check in the Lambeth Archives. The Post Office Directory for 1926 contains no entry relating to number 386.

PS15, page 16 refers to Oswald Marsh at 3 Belvedere Road or 18 Hamlet Road, Norwood in the period before the end of 1912. Kelly's Directory for 1910 has Salmon and Chives, ladies outfitters at 3, Belvedere Road and a Mrs Scott at 18 Hamlet Road. In the 1912 edition, Salmon and Chives are still at number 3 but Oswald Marsh is now listed at 18, Hamlet Road. In the Post office Directory for 1920 Oswald is now shown as living at 26, the Avenue, Norwood; in the 1941 Directory, the name of that road has been changed to Dulwich Wood Avenue and Oswald is still at number 26.

References to Victor Marsh's address, rather than his name as author of the 1923 brochure are less common. PS15, page 16 mentions him using the address of 13, Sion



386 Brixton Road, Residence of H. Edgar Weston.

Road, Twickenham in 1935. In PS9, page 20 there is illustrated a cover with the *tete-beche* cut-outs addressed to him there in 1957 (not 1951 as captioned) and Peter van Gelder's reprinting of the brochure includes an advertisement from Victor Marsh, including his Junior (now National) Philatelic Society membership number, at 13 Sion Road in 1958.

However the Electoral Registers for the Central Ward of the Twickenham constituency tell a different story. The 1935 Register lists Herbert Edgar Weston and Edith Flora Weston as living at 13 Sion Row. This is the first time their names appear in the Twickenham Register. The entry remained the same, apart from a change sometime during the Second World War when Sion Row was renamed Sion Road. In the 1951 Register only Herbert's name appears; in 1956 he is joined by Mira M Weston and there two names appear each year until 1963 when only Mira is listed. Now, it is one thing to use a pseudonym for trading purposes, quite another to continue the subterfuge on the Electoral Register.

There therefore seem to be two possibilities as to the identity of Victor Marsh. One is that using his real name he was a

stamp dealer and the organiser of the abnormally embossed stamps but that he arranged to use the address of his accountant, Weston, as his mailing address for nearly 60 years. Such an arrangement is not unknown today and could explain why Victor Marsh was still trading in 1958 when Weston would have been 84 years old and how Miss Marsh could have claimed that her father never traded as Weston. It is unlikely that Victor always lived with the Westons but was not a British subject and therefore could not register as an elector.

The other possibility is that Weston took his philatelic partner Oswald's surname while retaining his own for his separate accountancy business. It has long been thought by some that "Victor Marsh" was indeed the pseudonym of Herbert Edgar Weston. He was born in 1874 (PS15, page 16) and lived at 386, Brixton Road, SW9 from 1907 until early 1920's and at Sion Road (formerly Row), Twickenham from 1934 until his death in 1962. His wife Edith died in 1950 and in 1956, when aged 82, he was joined by Mira who I assume to be an unmarried daughter. Could this have been the "Miss Marsh" who reportedly attended stamp fairs in later years?

THE AIRGRAPH STORY - 1941 - 1945

Laurie Farrell

In Great Britain, Prior to 1939 mail for overseas and distant destinations was conveyed by ship, train and aircraft, all operating speedily and regularly. A large fleet of aircraft also conveyed mail to the British Empire Countries and the Far East.

When war was declared on 3rd September 1939 the position altered drastically overnight. Ships could no longer sail where they wished or to any regular schedule. In the interests of safety and security all shipping was controlled by the Royal Navy, the convoy system introduced and all movement was under their protection.

With the closing of the Mediterranean all surface mail from Great Britain to the East had to be sent via South Africa and the Cape of Good Hope. Those aircraft that remained available continued to operate to the Middle East by way of Lisbon in Portugal but this entailed an initial flight of some 1,200 miles with another 1,500 miles to cover before reaching its destination afterwards. The heavy load of petrol needed for these journeys meant a drastic reduction in the pay load and with high priority passengers and stores having first claim the space available for mail was very limited.

The British Government and the Post Office both realised how important the speedy transmission of mail to and from H.M. Forces serving overseas was, particularly as they could listen to news bulletins over the radio which gave information regarding the damage being inflicted on British cities by the German Airforce. The lack of actual domestic news to each individual member of the Forces was causing unnecessary worry and it was considered that early receipt of mail was the greatest morale booster available at that time to both sender and recipient.

As a result of these considerations the Post Office, in the Spring of 1941, introduced the **AIRGRAPH SERVICE** from the Middle East and it proved to be an instant success.

Letters written on special forms were handed in at Field Post Offices then sent to Cairo where they were microfilmed ready for despatch to Great Britain. Here the real

advantage of the Airgraph system was achieved, two bags of mail weighing 50 lbs (22.7 kgs) contained approximately 1,500 letters, whereas a roll of film containing 1,700 messages weighed only 5½ ozs (156 gm). In addition to this weight reduction the space required was also minimal therefore valuable economies were achieved in this direction. On arrival in the U.K. the film was processed by Kodak at their premises in Harrow and within 24 hours the messages, each measuring some 5 inches by 4, (12.7 cm x 10.2 cm) were on their way to the G.P.O. in London who placed them in special Airgraph Envelopes (Fig. 1) and despatched them for normal delivery. At that time mail from Egypt, by the conventional methods, was taking an average 77 days, the new system reduced this to about 15.

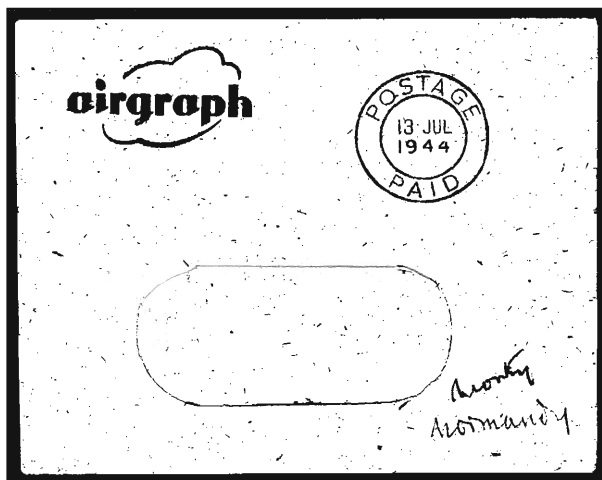
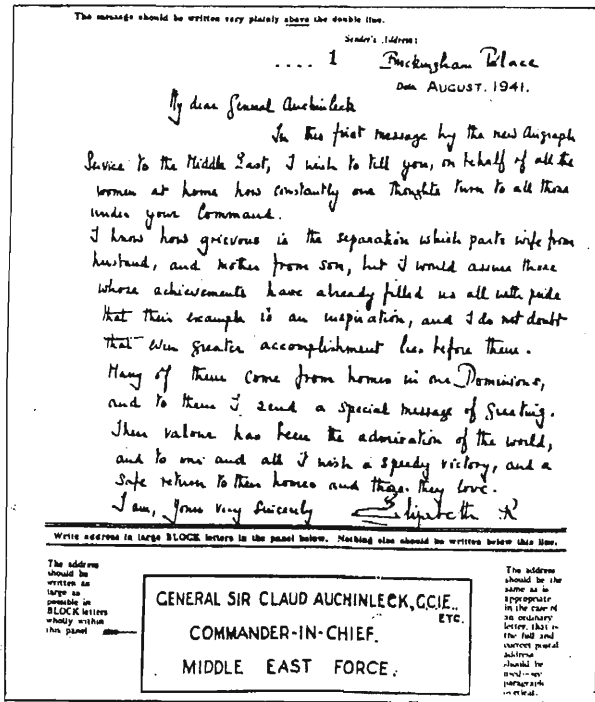


Fig. 1 Airgraph envelope with 'open' window to show the address printed on the airgraph

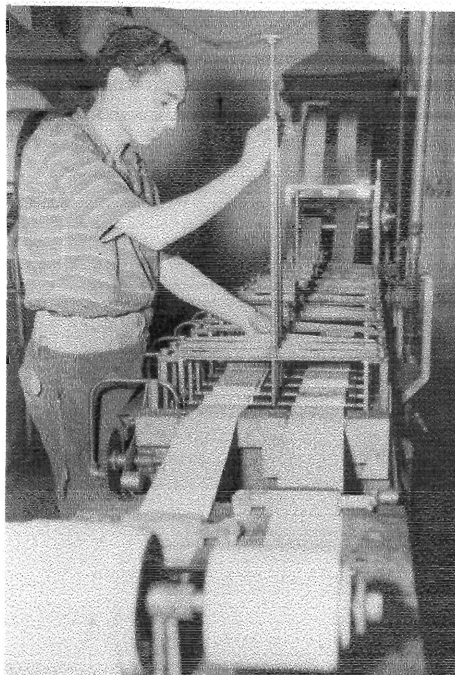
The service quickly caught on and in its first year of operation just over 20,000,000 airgraphs were processed by Kodak Ltd, Harrow. To counteract possible loss by enemy action, a duplicate film was retained. When receipt at its destination was confirmed, this duplicate film was destroyed.

In August 1941 forms became available at Post Offices throughout Great Britain and a service was introduced which allowed the general public to send messages to members of the Forces in the Middle East, the first batch being despatched on 15th August 1941. The service rapidly gained in efficiency and

popularity and by late 1942 it had been extended to cover most areas where servicemen were stationed including Canada and Newfoundland.

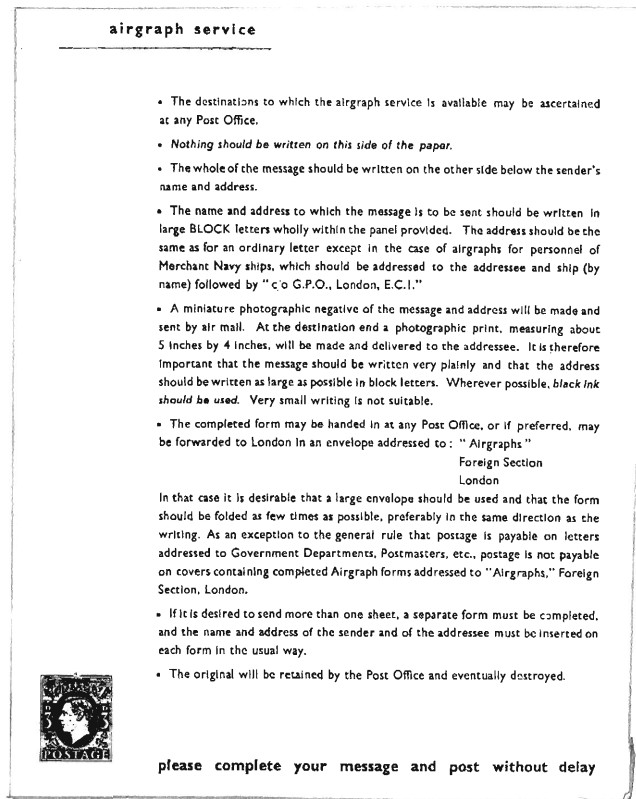


(Fig. 2) Airgraph sent on the first service to the Middle East by the late Queen Mother



(Fig 3) Printing the Airgraphs in the Kodak Laboratories at Harrow

At Christmas, servicemen sketched greetings on the forms which resulted in a kind of private 'Airgraph Christmas Card'. This led the Post Office to issue, in 1943 and 1944, special Airgraph Greetings Forms (Fig. 4 & 5) which were made available to the general public.



(Fig 4) Christmas/New Year Greetings Form with imprinted 3d KGVI violet stamp

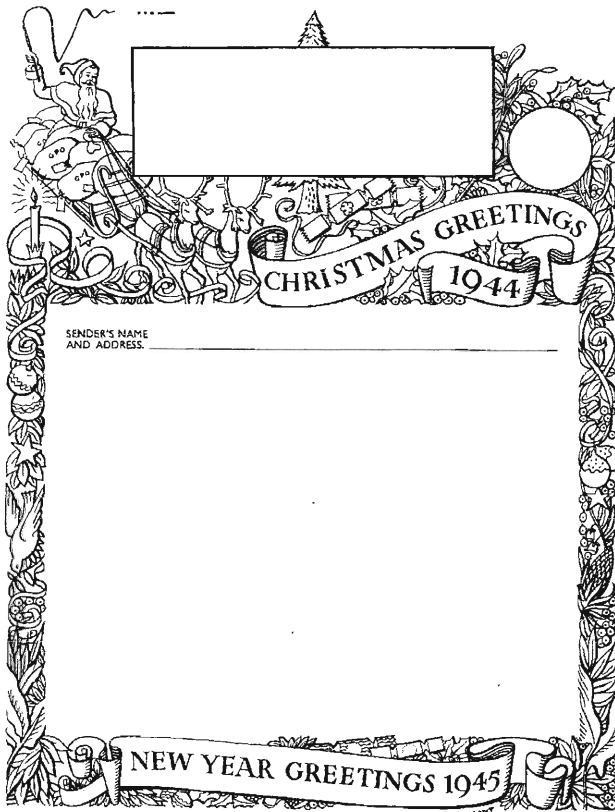
Official versions still continued to be produced overseas and by Headquarters and Commands, the wide variety of both official and unofficial Christmas Greeting Airgraphs provide a study that can be very rewarding although they are now becoming very difficult to obtain.

The defeat of the Germans in North Africa, together with the re-opening of the Mediterranean and the invasion of Europe in 1944 made the conveyance of mail easier and more satisfactory, consequently the usage of airgraphs declined considerably.

The service therefore ceased on 31st July 1945.

From its commencement in 1941 over 350,000,000 messages were processed thus proving its undoubted success. The effect it had on servicemen and their families, especially during the early days of the war,

can never be truly assessed. All were agreed, service personnel or civilians, that the receipt of mail was one of the greatest morale boosters available during that period, whether they were at home or abroad.



(Fig 5) Christmas/New Year Greetings Form

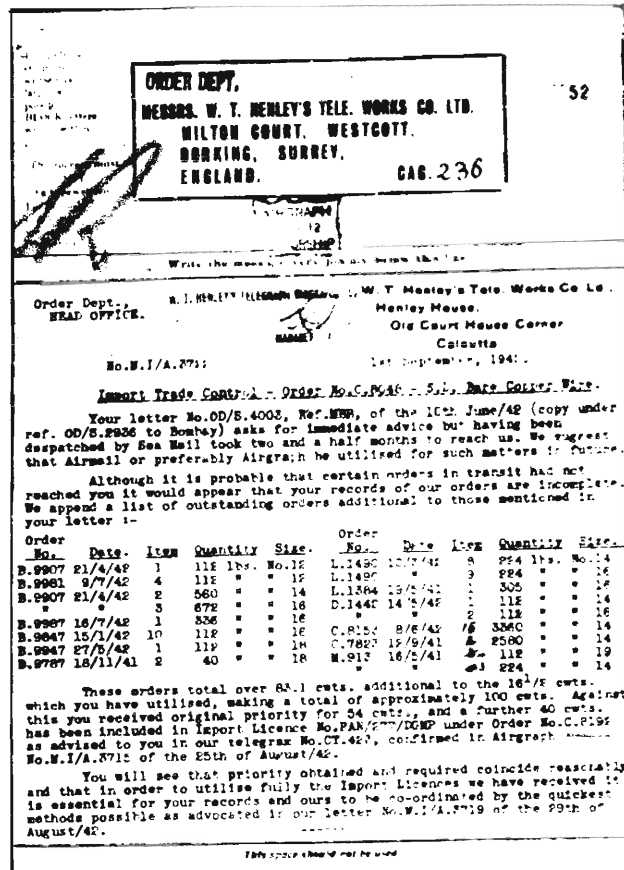
It was a truly successful venture, and mention must be made of Kodak Ltd, without whose efforts it might not have succeeded so well. They operated the system at each end, filming and developing both at home and abroad under very difficult wartime conditions.



(Fig. 6) Sorting Airgraphs

It can be modestly claimed I feel, that in some small way it paved the way for our

modern micro-film methods of storing information and also had some influence on our present Airmail letter system.



(Fig. 7) Commercial use of the Airgraph service: an airgraph from the office of a cable manufacturer in Calcutta to their parent company in Dorking, Surrey. U.K.

DATES OF IMPORTANCE:

- 21st April 1941 first rolls of airgraph film despatched from Cairo to U.K., contents 46,000 letters.
- 13th May 1941 first airgraphs arrived in U.K. from Cairo.
- 15th Aug 1941 first airgraphs from U.K. to Middle East, confined solely to mail for servicemen.
- 16th Feb 1942 first airgraphs to and from Aden, Iraq and East Africa.
- 17th Feb 1942 first airgraphs arrived from India, the first ten deliveries amounted to 539,500 letters.
- 21st May 1942 first airgraph service from U.K. to India.
- 6th Aug 1942 first airgraph service to Canada and Newfoundland.
- 31st July 1945 last airgraphs processed and service discontinued.

QUERIES AND REPLIES

RESPONSE: Postal Stationery -

Insurance Cards. (Vol. 10 No. 1)

Larry Parks has sent photocopies of a number of Insurance cards of the Ocean Accident & Guarantee Corporation Limited. They are all addressed to different individuals in Belgium and were posted on dates between 1952 and 1963. As each card carries a serial number, it may be possible to work out how many were printed. Larry's examples fit into a sequence:

Date of Posting	Serial Number
13 September 1952	ME 7997
11 June 1954	MN 3656
12 June 1960	PJ 4378
13 April 1962	PS 4078
17 July 1963	QL 0607

As regards the location of the machines from which these cards were purchased, could any information be derived from the cancellations, assuming that most of the cards would have been filled in and posted on the spot?

If members have any other examples of Insurance Cards, or can provide more information on these, please let me know. Perhaps we may be able to publish an article on this topic some time in the future.

RESPONSES: Money Letter. (Vol. 10 No. 1)

1. Anthony Bowers replies:

These envelopes exist in several forms, their use was to send 'Money' from the Accountant General's office to Head Postmasters and others were for sending cash from the Head Post Office to Sub Post Offices. Other variations are from the Post Office Telegraph Office to Post Masters, and the Accountants Office at Edinburgh GPO had their own envelope for sending money to Post Masters. In addition to bank notes coins were also sent in the envelopes. Of these I have examples with brass eyelets at the corners for greater strength and to secure the flap (Fig. 1).

[The oldest form of 'Money Letter' official mail seen by me is in the form of folded letters on blue or green paper and date from around the 1838-42 period with printed text:-

'MONEY LETTER / To the Postmaster of ..'
(Fig. 2)]

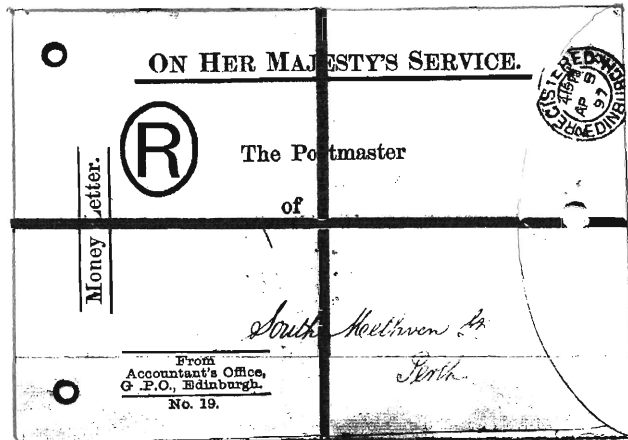


Fig. 1 Money Letter with brass eyelets

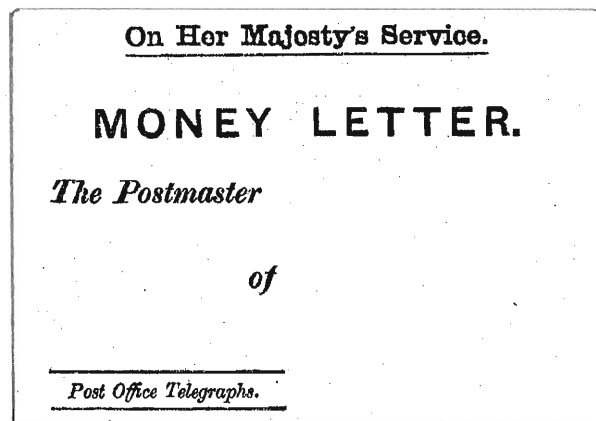


Fig. 2 Money Letter on folded blue paper

These envelopes were later replaced with 'remittance' envelopes by the post office in many variations and sizes usually with the letters 'REM' printed at the top. The examples I have date from the 1930's to 1980's.

From the illustration Derek provides, this envelope 'No. 27' was for sending money from a head post office to the sub office. It has provision for a registration label and will date from after 1907. Most (but not all) have linen 'scrim' linings as used on regular post office issued registered envelopes of the same period.

The envelopes were also used by post masters on occasions to send money to individuals usually in connection with the 'Money Order and Savings Bank' and in this

way acted as official free registration envelopes.

Another example of a money letter is shown below (Fig. 3). If sufficient interest is shown perhaps a 'listing' of the types may be considered.

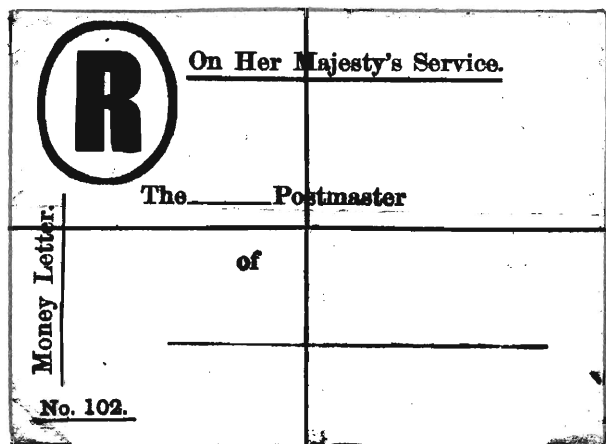


Fig. 3 Envelope No. 102

The only reference book (I know about) that mentions these is *Registered Mail of the British Isles* by James A. Mackay page 276/7.

2. Roy Malston has sent a photocopy of a money letter similar to Derek's but 'No. 102' [similar to Antony's example (Fig. 3) above]. Roy sold his at auction last year for £55 but this could well have been because it was addressed to the Postmaster of Kirkwall giving it additional 'Postal History' interest!

QUERY: Registered Envelope with Royal Seal. From F. Upcraft.

Could any member provide information on the envelope illustrated (Fig. 4)? To all intents and purposes it is a registered envelope, except in place of an embossed stamp the Royal Seal appears on the flap; GR cachet is in mauve, the Windsor Castle post mark in black and the official paid mark (top right corner) is in red. The registration label partly covers a printed box with the wording -

**REGISTRATION LABEL
TO BE AFFIXED HERE.**

I have never previously seen such an item, and limited enquiries thus far have drawn a blank. Any information about these Royal envelopes, including rarity/scarcity, would be

greatly appreciated as would details of sources of said information.

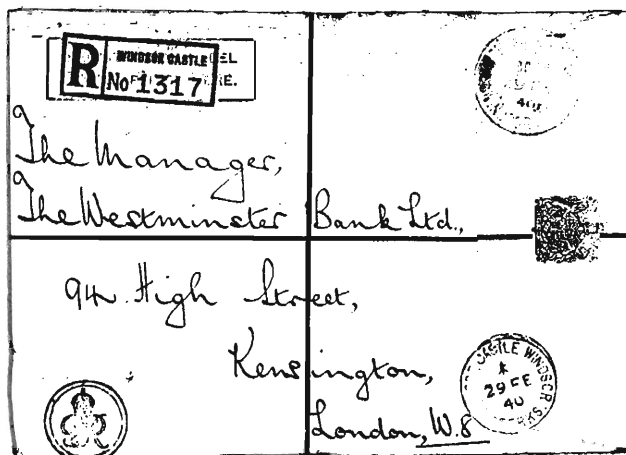


Fig. 4 Registered envelope with Royal Seal

QUERY: Postage Paid NVI Postal Stationery. (GB) From Ransom Bradford

Has anyone done any cataloguing of the Queen's Head postal stationery of the type illustrated below (Fig. 5)? I would like to learn more about these covers.



Fig. 5

Ransom also collects older Philatelic Bureau postal stationery and would like to hear from any members who may have such material. His address is; Postfach 1709, 48006 Münster, Germany.

QUERY: Mounting and Displaying Large Aerogrammes.

From Maurice Brown

Maurice would like any useful tips and suggestions on how to display GB aerogrammes which, when left unfolded, are too large to fit onto standard album sheets.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following letter was addressed to the Secretary and has been included here together with the reply as this may be of interest to members outside of the UK.

Use of GB Postal Stationery Envelopes

I read with interest in your notes, Postal Stationery Society Journal, February 2002, the comments regarding British postal stationery. Specifically the point regarding the use within the UK only for the preprinted envelopes.

From what I have seen, the *for use in the UK only* requirement (if indeed it is one) was printed on the new issue envelopes in 1985. Since then I have received several of these envelopes without difficulty in Switzerland; all had been uprated with the necessary postage. Recently I have received two second class PTPO envelopes from members of the Postal Stationery Society. The first was a standard Society PTPO letter size envelope (rose colour) uprated with an additional 18p. postage. Another example was in an uprated Society PTPO business size envelope (green colour) - all these were delivered without problem. More interestingly the business size contained the standard *for use in the UK only* on the reverse. The rose coloured version had nothing on the reverse suggesting that the Society has two types of PTPO stationery. From this experience I still cannot understand why it is not possible to send Society communications via PTPO stationery to overseas members.

Dr. J.D. Jennison.

Reply from the Secretary, Colin Baker.

Thanks for your letter of 5th March 2002 and your comments on the use by the Society of British postal stationery.

As I understand it, the official position is that postal stationery envelopes as produced by the British Post Office cannot be used to foreign countries because the "stamp" does not indicate the country of origin. UK airletters, for example, include the words "Great Britain Postage Paid". Now I know you are going to tell me that no UK adhesive stamps include the name of the country, since by international agreement, this is signified by an image of the reigning monarch, either in silhouette or as a real photograph. But this is the explanation I have seen (crazy as it is) when this subject has been raised in the past.

I appreciate that you will have received items of postal stationery sent from this country, but this is because generally the Post Office here is very slack about what stamps can and cannot be used. Hence letters get through without surcharge. I have a collection of envelopes sent in this country, some of which have no stamp or postal markings at all, and yet they still have been delivered to me without any postage dues being raised. The Society is willing to use postal stationery envelopes to foreign countries providing members realise that there is a slight chance that these could get stopped, surcharged and possibly delayed.

Colin Baker

Note from the Editor:

When the Journal was first issued in A4 format (February 2001), prepaid second class C4 envelopes were used for mailing to members in the UK. The envelopes used were available in units of 100 from Royal Mail Direct. These were privately printed by the Society with the Society logo. However, due to the envelopes having an exposed self adhesive flap, unlike the DL envelopes (220 mm x 110 mm) used for general correspondence, this printing did not prove to be very successful. Consequently later batches did not carry the Society logo. Another problem with the C4 Royal Mail Direct envelopes is that they are relatively thin which results in rather 'dog-eared' envelopes and Journals arriving through the letter boxes of some members. Since using up existing stocks, I have been mailing the Journals in stronger 115 GSM plain Manilla envelopes which I hope are being delivered to members relatively free from damage.

However, the November Newsletter will be folded in half to fit into second class prepaid C5 envelopes for distribution to all UK members. I could use the same envelopes, with additional adhesives to make up the appropriate rate, for mailing to members abroad. If you reside abroad, and normally receive your Journal direct, and would like to have the Newsletter posted in a prepaid envelope, please let me know by 1st October, but bear in mind that I cannot take any responsibility for problems related to delays or surcharges should they arise!

John Barker

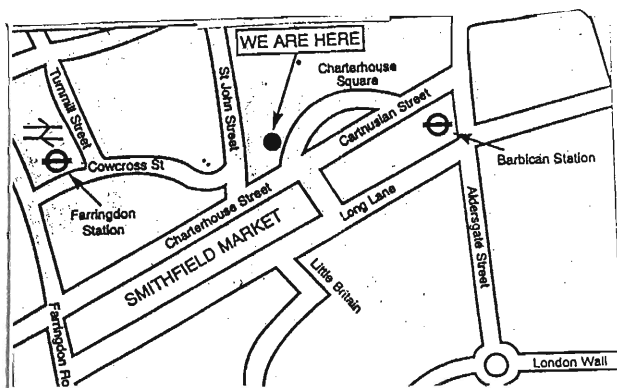
The following letter has been received from Peter van Gelder:

To correct any possible misunderstanding about the change of editorship, I wish to state that I was willing to continue in the post for 2002 and notified the Secretary accordingly.

Peter van Gelder.

As members will be aware, the revised constitution, which was discussed and agreed at the AGM last October, changed the way in which a number of Society officers are appointed, including the position of Journal editor. Following that decision, the committee agreed that although Peter was willing to continue in the post of editor for 2001/2, it was time for a change and appointed John Barker to be editor for the next twelve months. This decision, which was unanimous except for Peter, was made to try and develop a fresh approach to the Society's publications and to bring in new ideas and material. However, the committee are also unanimous in their appreciation of Peter's hard work over the previous 8 years.

**Location of the British Philatelic Trust, 107
Charthouse Street, London E.C.1**



The Postal Stationery Society Meetings for 2002 and 2003 listed in the Calendar on page 3 will be held at the location shown above. The British Philatelic Trust is situated a short walk from Farringdon and Barbican underground stations.

EXHIBITION SCENE.

Congratulations to the following members on their Postal Stationery Displays which received awards at major philatelic events.

APS AmeriStamp Expo 2001 - Tuscon, Arizona. USA.

Single Frame Champion of Champions:

Jerome V.V. Kasper (USA) - *New Zealand Prisoner of War Aerogrammes.*

Single Country Reserve Grand and Platinum:

Jerome V.V. Kasper (USA) - *SCADTA Postal Stationery.*

BELGICA 2001

Gold Award:

Stephen D. Schumann (USA) - *New Zealand Postal Stationery 1876 - 1936.*

Michael Smith (UK) - *Orange Free State Postal Stationery.*

Ronald E. Strawser (USA) - *Postal Cards of Belgium Congo.*

PHILANIPPON 2002

Large Gold Award:

Alan K. Huggins (UK) - *GB King Edward VII Postal Stationery.*

Large Silver Award:

Ian McMahon (Australia) - *Postcards and Lettercards of New Zealand.*

DISPLAYS TO LOCAL SOCIETIES

South Birmingham P.S.

Tuesday 29th October 2002.

Postal Stationery for a Purpose - John Barker

If you are giving a postal stationery display to a local society please let me know as far in advance as possible so that I can include a mention of it in the Journal. Not all members are able to attend the London meetings and may welcome the opportunity to visit a society which meets nearer to them.

MEETING REPORT: 23rd March 2002

The Society's London spring meeting, which was to be held at the British Philatelic Centre on Saturday 23rd March this year, was turned from a near disaster into success. Unfortunately the custodian of the Philatelic Centre where the meeting was to be held failed to arrive to open its doors, leaving 14 members of our Society to study the pavement rather than displays of postal stationery. However, thanks to our Chairman, Iain Stevenson, generously providing a suitable room for our use at very short notice, the meeting managed to start shortly before midday, and turned out to be an extremely successful spring meeting, despite the lack of display frames (sheets were laid out on tables in the middle of the room).

There were no apologies for absence. The Chairman reminded everyone of the regional meetings planned for Swindon on 6 June, and Tunbridge Wells on 6 July and asked that as many people as possible support these.

The main display of the day was given by **Iain Stevenson**. He had intended to show Canadian postal stationery, but as Iain has just moved house he had been unable to get this ready in time. Instead he showed a pot-pouri of stationery from several countries, starting with Great Britain and the Mulready 1d and 2d envelopes and letter sheets, including a number of the latter which had been printed internally with advertisements, examples of the Whittaker's Almanac version based on the Mulready design, followed by copies of registered envelopes prepared for use in Britain and abroad. Iain continued with some beautifully prepared French private lettercards and commemorative stationery. He concluded his display with postal stationery from Tonga showing lettercards, registered letters and the only known copy of a Registered Letter Packet which was used by the Tonga Post Office to send bundles of registered mail to foreign countries.

After a fairly quick snack lunch came the turn of the other members to give short displays taken from their collections.

Tony Chilton started off with South African aerogrammes and postcard colour trials, also showing Belgian publicity cards produced for use to overseas countries.

Peter O'Keefe came next with George V postal stationery from Great Britain, including uprated cards, rate reduced envelopes and private material impressed with both embossed and letterpress stamps. He later showed GB official paid forms and other items, including the insurance cards which were described and illustrated in the January 2002 edition of the Society's Journal.

Geoff Rosamond showed Chinese stationery, with the first issue in 1897 used on the second day of issue and a revenue stationery card used to pay taxes.

Keith Hanman gave a display of pneumatic mail used by the German Post Office up to the mid 1960s (called the Rohrpost). To speed up the despatch and delivery of mails within a town, a system of tubes was laid along main roads, linking various post offices, which allowed mail to be transmitted in small containers drawn along by vacuum. Such mails were stamped or marked to ensure they went by this more speedy means.

Bill Meredith showed printing errors on British stationery where mistakes had happened, but had not been spotted in the checking process.

Sheila Matthews displayed Guernsey air letters from 1974 to 2000, a subject she told the meeting she and a colleague are researching with the intention of publishing a book on the subject.

Colin Baker showed a collection of papers and stationery relating to the Jubilee of the Uniform Penny Post celebrations in 1890.

Alan Huggins gave a display of GB registered envelopes used in Levant, both with and without overprints, including examples of the George V provisional issues.

John Barker showed German stationery which was sold with a charity surcharge and lottery cards, from which it seemed it was a lottery whether it included a stamp or not!

Bob Avery displayed some more of his Liechtenstein stationery with examples of Austrian stationery used in that country.

The chairman thanked everyone for attending the meeting and helping to make it such a success. He added that the material displayed by members had once again shown how wide and interesting a field postal stationery is. The meeting closed at about 4.15pm.

BOOK REVIEWS

NEW CATALOGUE OF RUMANIAN POSTAL STATIONERY ASSOCIATED TO RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS, 1928 - 2000. By Hans Eriksson. Published by the Author, Storstretsvägen 141, SE - 16347 SPÅNGA, Sweden. e-mail hans_eriksson00@hotmail.com Price \$15, £10 or €17. Postage extra: £3.50 for UK, €6.0 elsewhere in Europe and \$7.50 for airmail to the rest of world.

This book is A4 size having 156 pages spiral bound with laminated cover. Nearly 1000 items are listed including postal cards, envelopes, pre-paid cards with views on the back and receipt cards.

The catalogue is in three languages, Swedish, English and German. Listing is in table format and includes Higgins and Gage and Michel catalogue numbers together with those of a Rumanian Catalogue. Most important is the inclusion of the Rumanian Post Office's identification number and date code which appear on most of the stationery items. Each item has a brief description of its railway feature and is illustrated in a separate section following the table. Aerial rope ways (i.e. cable cars and gondola systems) are listed in a separate section.

John Barker

THE MAN FOR THE POST (Henry Fawcett and Postal Reform) by W Iain Stevenson MA PhD FRGS FRPSL.

In this fascinating booklet, Stevenson recounts the life of Henry Fawcett (1833 - 84), who was blinded in a shooting accident in 1857 shortly after graduating from Cambridge University. The careers of other men would have ended there and then, but Fawcett triumphed, becoming in turn a professor at his old university, Cambridge, entering Parliament as the elected member for Brighton, and eventually being appointed as the Post master General under Gladstone's government. Stevenson recounts Fawcett's ability not only to overcome disease and the loss of sight in the prime of his life, but his determination to rise to the highest echelons of government and to introduce the parcel post, postal orders,

cheap telegrams, reply paid postcards and to combine postage and revenue into one stamp, instead of two separate systems used previously.

This well researched and presented work is full of interesting details such as Fawcett's proposal to use tablets on pillar boxes so that users would know when the next collection would take place and his knack of making people believe he could see when it was patently obvious that he could not. Stevenson's work is fully illustrated with contemporary prints and reproductions of other Post Office related material to enhance the text.

This booklet is well worth adding to your bookshelf if you have any interest in this period of postal reform. Published as a supplement to The London Philatelist, December 2001.

Colin Baker

LIBRARY - Recent Additions

- 11 (Michel Ganzsachen Katalog Deutschland 1991 having been withdrawn) The Evolution of British Stamped Postcards & Letter Cards by H. Dagnall.
- 55 (Webb's P.S. Catalogue of Canada & Newfoundland 1993 having been withdrawn) The Postal Stationery of Hawaii by Hawaii P.S. Study Group of the U.P.S.S.
- 72 The Collectors' Guide to Postal Stationery by Peter van Gelder.
- 73 Michel Ganzsachen Katalog Europa West 2000/1 (N.B. includes Great Britain).

Re. item 40 November 2001, January 2002 & March 2002 issues of "Postal Stationery" have been received from U.S.A

Re. item 9 March 2002 issue of "L'Intero Postale" has been received from Italy.

Peter van Gelder

AEROGRAMMATICS

Forces Aerogrammes - New Printings

Arthur Roberts

The printing of H.M. Forces Aerogrammes are the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and my request for information on the 2001/2002 printings has not yet produced a response so these notes are based solely on observation of acquisitions from Post Office counters over the past few months.

Aerogrammes inscribed 'Royal Mail/MOD Form 674' at the lower left with 'Postcode' 2mm above last line of the senders address panel, were first issued in 1994 and have been reprinted several times. At the end of 2001, I found a few sheets in a North West Post Office without phosphor bands. Presumably an error of the manufacturers, but see below.

In October 2001 a new print, on a similar pale azure paper to the above, was available at counters worded at lower left 'Royal Mail/MOD Form 674 (4/01)' (Fig. 1 & 2). This date presumably being the date of printing. At the foot of the form are new words 'Why not use the Electronic Bluey: www.bfpo.org.uk'. Two gum lengths of 153 mm and 149 mm are known which may indicate two prints. All had two phosphor bands.

Two other prints have appeared in Post offices this year. One is on azure paper with a blue/green tinge and the 'www.bfpo.org.uk'

words are printed below the words 'An aerogramme should not contain any enclosure' with a gap of 26 mm as in the first 4/01 print.

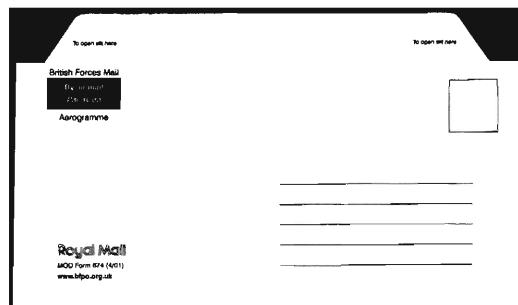


Fig. 1 New print 4/01

Royal Mail
 MOD Form 674 (4/01)
www.bfpo.org.uk

Fig. 2 Detail of the imprint in the lower left corner

The second print on paper with a greater green tinge has the above words with a gap of 16 mm. Both prints are without phosphor bands and the gum length is 140 mm.

Do members know of other prints of the 'www ...' sheet not recorded above.

ARTICLES NOTICED RECENTLY IN THE PHILATELIC PRESS

USPS says it can't revalue cards and envelopes - Rob Haesler. (Linn's Stamp News 11th March 2002)

Postal Stationery Matters- Sloper cancellations, Australian provisional (H&G 8a) at auction, A Country to collect : Germany - Peter van Gelder (Gibbons Stamp Monthly March 2002) Fake U.S. Envelope Entire Found: Rumoured to Exist for a Century - Rob Haesler. (Linn's Stamp News 1st April 2002)

Postal Stationery Matters - Catalogues from Belgium, German, American and British Pioneer Dealers - Peter van Gelder. (Gibbons Stamp Monthly June 2002)

Foreign postal stationery issued in 2000/2001 - Geir Sør-Reime (Gibbons Stamp Monthly June and July 2002)

MEMBERSHIP LIST

A warm welcome is extended to the following member who has recently joined the Society. Collecting interests are given in brief.

George King
 (Surrey UK)

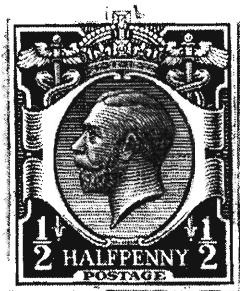
Mint stationery of the British Isles, including Royalty, Military, Official and PPIs.

WANTS

Money order cards (Postanweisungen) of Germany and States. (Formular items and items with imprinted stamps). John Barker, 35 Portia Avenue, Shirley, Solihull. B90 2NW

Our Next Auction

of Great Britain and All World Postage Stamps and Postal History, for which we are currently accepting material, is now in preparation.



Detail of a die proof of the 1914 1/2d. postcard die, endorsed in pencil 'PC Head on Chromo 30/7/14'. A recently discovered item from the private record book of an Inland Revenue Official and offered in our April 16 2002 auction.

Postal Stationery from around the World features regularly in our specialised auctions. Complimentary catalogues are available on request.

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Please send copy and remittance to the Editor by:-
1st September for the October issue
1st January for the February issue
1st May for the June issue

EDITOR'S NOTES

With this copy of the Journal you should have received:-

the Auction list for 19th October 2002 together with a bid form.

the Index to issues 1 - 21 of the Postal Society's Journal

(February 1993 - October 2001)

If you find that there are areas of interest missing from the pages of the Journal, then you may be the person who I am looking for to contribute to future issues. Please send in articles for publication together with good quality photocopies of items for illustration or, if possible, send the originals for me to scan directly into the pages. Short notes, news items, queries and 'wants' are always welcome. My address is on Page 2.

Copy date for the October Issue (Volume 10 No. 3) is 1st September 2002

John Barker (Editor)