

SPECIAL STAMP HISTORY

Universal Postal Union 75th Anniversary

Date of issue: 10 OCTOBER 1949



The first international postal congress was convened in Berne, Switzerland on 15 September 1874 (although a conference in Paris had been attended by the world's major postal administrations in May 1863). On 9 October 1874 Britain and 21 other nations signed a convention, effective from 1 July the following year, which embodied the agreements reached on the reciprocal exchange and unimpeded transit of letter posts and the uniformity of tariff levels. To maintain this co-operation the congress instituted the 'Union Generale des Postes'; at the following congress, held in Paris in 1878, the name was changed to 'Union Postale Universelle' or UPU (Universal Postal Union).

On 16 June 1947 Mr Herwich, head of the Polish postal administration and his country's delegate to the congress, proposed that an identical series of three stamps be issued in all countries of the Union on its 75th anniversary, to draw attention to the principle that it constituted a single postal territory. While member countries would naturally vary the wording and values to suit their own needs, the basic design would be identical. A single printer should be used for all the member nations, to ensure uniformity of appearance and emphasise the issue's importance as a symbol of postal unity. Mr Herwich felt such an issue would be of particular philatelic interest.

These suggestions were already circulating in international philatelic circles and greeted with interest. Although the delegates recognised their boldness and supported them in principle, it was obvious that full implementation would require an unattainable degree of international co-operation. Mr Herwich was careful to state that he was simply outlining suggestions rather than making a concrete proposal. The delegates of Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Greece and Lebanon variously recommended that each country should choose the design, denomination, number and printing of its stamps for itself; the Czechoslovakian delegate also made the interesting suggestion that if there were a uniform design, then

Britain, as the nation with the oldest stamp tradition, should produce it, although he realised Britain might find the onus 'too heavy, or unacceptable for other reasons'. On 20 June the congress agreed to adopt an unopposed joint resolution by Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary as follows: 'With a view to commemorating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Universal Postal Union, the Congress of Paris expresses the desire that the Administrations of the Union will find themselves able, in 1949, to issue a series of stamps to celebrate this event.'

ORIGINS OF THE BRITISH ISSUE

On 1 December 1947 this resolution came to the attention of the Home Mails Branch of the Postal Services Department of the GPO from the Overseas Mails Branch. The Colonial Office needed to know 'at a very early date' what plans the GPO had to commemorate the UPU anniversary before communicating with colonial administrations on the question of a special stamp issue. Mr Yates, the Director of Postal Services (DPS), stated in an internal memorandum dated 5 December that the Colonial Office be told the GPO intended to bring out special 2½d, 3d, 6d and 1/- stamps, issued on 9 October, the anniversary of the signing of the original Berne Convention. (Later it was realised that 9 October 1949 was a Sunday and the issue date was changed to 10 October.) These were only recommendations - the DPS added a footnote on 8 December that 'the question should be reopened 12 months ahead of the anniversary', namely in October 1948.

On 19 January a letter to the Colonial Office informed them, on behalf of the Postmaster General (PMG), Wilfred Paling MP, that 'so far as can at present be foreseen, the attitude of this Department is likely to be favourable to the issue', a copy going to the Commonwealth Relations Office responsible for liaising with the independent Dominions such as Canada. It seems that the PMG had not been made aware that ideas existed in any detail for a special UPU issue. On 4 March Mr Cade of the Colonial Office replied, asking for more detailed guidance. He felt it would not be appropriate for colonial governments to issue stamps unless there was a similar issue in the United Kingdom, and if so it would be necessary to take action within the next three or four months.

The GPO was being asked to give a lead; on 11 March the recommendations as made by the DPS on December 5 were put to the PMG, and on 19 March sent to the Colonial Office stating the values (2½d, 3d, 6d, 1/-), the issue date (10 October 1949) and that there would be a different design for each stamp rather than one common design. With this aim, work began preparing the 'Instructions to Artists', with an early draft sent to the Accountant General's Department (AGD) on 21 April for comment on the proposed financial arrangements.

SELECTION OF ARTISTS

The first intention was to invite 16 individual designers and the four stamp printing companies to submit ideas for a flat rate of 40 guineas per design; the AGD replied on 10 May expressing alarm at the prospect of paying out £3,360 (four denominations from 20 designers at forty guineas per design). As a result the list was scaled down to twelve designers and the four printers. On 13 May the DPS wrote to the Council of Industrial Design (CoID) with a further draft of the instructions, suggesting the following names: Edmund Dulac; Harold Nelson; John Farleigh; George Bellew (representing the College of Arms); Barnett Freedman; Stanley Anderson (the GPO's own recommendations); Percy Metcalfe; John Armstrong; Joan Hassall; John Minton; Abram Games; Reynolds Stone (recommended on previous occasions by the CoID).

Although its initial reaction was that twelve artists seemed excessive, in the reply on 1 June Mrs C G Tomrley, Design Advice Officer at the CoID, agreed that it was not so in view of the number of stamps to be designed and the scope for interpretation of the subject allowed by the Instructions. (In these the GPO had offered a few suggestions on the symbolism that might be acceptable – such as globes and ships; nevertheless ‘the UK special stamps should stand close comparison with those of any other country’ marking the UPU anniversary.) Mrs Tomrley's suggestion that John Minton, primarily a landscape artist, be replaced by Mary Adshead was accepted. Meanwhile the King had been informed of the plans, to which he gave his approval on 28 May, and promised that colour essays would be available for inspection in six months' time. The Instructions were sent to the twelve designers on 18 June, setting a maximum fee of 120 guineas per artist and a deadline of 30 September. On 30 June the four printers (Harrisons, Waterlows, De la Rue and Bradbury Wilkinson) were sent a similar invitation and set of instructions by the Supplies Department, with whom they were used to deal directly.

Of the individual artists contacted, Stanley Anderson declined on the grounds of ill health; John Farleigh never replied to the original invitation; Harold Nelson had died the previous February – his son and collaborator Edmund offered to take his place but had to be refused; Barnett Freedman declined with the words ‘Having examined postage stamps issued by the GPO during recent years, I am led to the conclusion that any work which I could submit would be considered unsuitable.’ Of the stamp printers, De la Rue refused to take part as the issue was as usual to be in photogravure – ‘we regret we are unable to submit designs for this method of printing’. The CoID therefore put forward Victor Reinganum and Blair Hughes-Stanton as reserve choices, and also, with GPO agreement, independently commissioned two young artists, Ronald Ferns and Miss F E Gorniot, to submit designs in accordance with the Instruction guidelines. Finally Harrisons took the unusual step of commissioning three freelance designers (H L Palmer, Lynton Lamb and Douglas Blake) to submit work on their behalf, on the grounds that the company's regular staff already had a

very full programme. R J Lewis of the Supplies Department was sceptical about their motives – ‘I understand Harrisons are afraid that if their men are successful they will lose them as in the case of Mr Knipe’, referring to George Knipe, who became freelance after designing the 2½d Silver Wedding stamp. H L Palmer had also worked for Harrisons for several years before freelancing.

CHOICE OF DESIGNERS

A total of 47 designs were available by the deadline of 30 September with £1,218 paid out by the end of October in fees; these did not include Harrisons’ artists or Gorniot and Ferns, who, as they had not been commissioned by the GPO, were considered to be contributors of unsolicited artwork, and not eligible to receive payment. The designs were shown to the PMG and Board in GPO Headquarters on 27 October, and the following day were seen by Sir Francis Meynell, Sir Leigh Ashton and Lady MacGregor representing the CoID. The designs were numbered as follows:

| | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1, 2, 3 | Mary Adshead |
| 4 | John Armstrong |
| 5,6,7 | George Bellew |
| 8 | Edmund Dulac |
| 9, 10, 11, 12 | Ronald Ferns |
| 13 | Abram Games |
| 14, 15 | Florence Gorniot |
| 16 | Joan Hassall |
| 17,18,19,20 | Percy Metcalfe |
| 21 | H L Palmer (for Harrisons) |
| 22,23,24,25 | Victor Reinganum |
| 26,27,28,29,30 | Blair Hughes-Stanton |
| 31 | Reynolds Stone |
| 32,33,34 | E J Jackman (for Bradbury Wilkinson) |
| 35,36,37 | W S Matthews (for Bradbury Wilkinson) |
| 38,39,40,41,42 | Douglas Blake (for Harrisons) |
| 43,44 | Lynton Lamb (for Harrisons) |
| 45 | Hugo Fleury (for Waterlows) |
| 46 | L D Fryer (for Waterlows) |
| 47 | Stanley Scott (for Waterlows) |

Four designs in order of preference were chosen for the 2½d, 3d, 6d and 1/- values respectively; it proved difficult to reach a decision on fourth place and two reserves but the final selection emerged as follows:

- 1) Design no. 3 by Mary Adshead with the King's head centred between two hemispheres of the globe (this was the artist's own preference of her designs).
- 2) Design no. 45 by Hugo Fleury showing a globe with compass points and the Roman goddess Concordia (the figure was not named in the files until December, when she was identified as such and her lineage traced back to 367 BC; however, as late as the following March, the artist's employers Waterlows were describing her merely as a symbolic figure representing 'Concord').
- 3) Design no. 19 by Percy Metcalfe showing the UPU monument at Berne erected in 1909.
- 4) Design no. 7 by George Bellew depicting the globe ringed within the circle of a posthorn. (Bellew had noted that the circular horn featured commonly on Scandinavian stamp design, at least once being used to mark a previous UPU Congress; prior to his use of the motif, this type of horn had no particular postal associations in Britain, unlike on the Continent. British mail coaches had used many types of horn without standardisation.)

Of the reserves, design no. 17 by Metcalfe was not dissimilar to no. 1 by Mary Adshead, while Abram Games' no. 13 showed the globe framed by a postage stamp and compass points.

The designs were handed over to Mr Rhodes of Harrisons for colour essays to be prepared during the next month, with the temporary exception of Hugo Fleury's on which he was asked to modify the lettering to a style closer to that used by Mary Adshead, which Fleury agreed to do on 2 November.

FIRST ESSAYS PRODUCED

On 23 and 24 November four sets of 13 essays reached the GPO from Harrisons; four more sets of two additional essays were ordered the next day by the DPS, Mr Yates, and these were ready on 29 November. Each set of 15 essays comprised the following:

| DESIGN | DENOMINATION | COLOUR | DATE OF SUPPLY |
|----------------------|--------------|--------|----------------|
| Metcalfe (reserve) | 3d | Violet | 24/11/48 |
| | " | Blue | " |
| Adshead (1st choice) | 6d | Violet | " |
| | " | Blue | " |
| Games (reserve) | 2½d | Violet | " |
| | " | Blue | " |
| | " | Umber | " |
| Bellew (4th choice)" | Violet | " | |
| | " | Blue | " |
| | " | Umber | " |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|----------|
| Fleury (2nd choice)" | Violet | " | |
| | " | Blue | " |
| | " | Purple | 29/11/48 |
| Metcalfe (3rd choice) | 3d | Purple | 24/11/48 |
| | " | Violet | 29/11/48 |

Unfortunately there is practically no information on file giving individual bromide or essay numbers for the period November 1948 to April 1949.

The denominations refer to those on the original artwork, and not to those intended for each design. The colours of the essays indicate the values for which the designs were being considered: blue (as with the definitives then current) representing 2½d, violet 3d, purple 6d and umber (dark brown) 1/-. Mr Yates ordered the Fleury in purple and Metcalfe in violet on 25 November because it was hoped the CoID would accept Metcalfe's UPU monument design as the 3d (instead of the 6d) and Fleury's Concordia design as the 6d (instead of the 3d). It was felt that as the 3d would be principally used for overseas postage, it was best to make use of the design most directly associated with the UPU, hence the new essays in the colours in which the two designs were most likely to appear. It seems from the files that during in the next few days Sir Francis Meynell of the CoID privately agreed to this.

The essays were sent to the King for approval on 10 December, the Adshead 2½d, Metcalfe 3d, Fleury 6d, Bellew 1/-, and Games and Metcalfe reserves being lettered (A) to (F) respectively. This was followed on 14 December by a note of explanation concerning the designs, at the King's request. He appears to have been particularly struck by the Fleury essay (C), which he incorrectly identified as an eight-pointed star. Once this and other matters were clarified he was glad to return the essays on 15 December, having selected essays (A) to (D) inclusive as recommended by the PMG. A minor matter was the question of copyright over the reproduction of the UPU Monument: on 31 December Fulke Radice, Vice Director of the UPU (1946-58) and formerly a senior GPO official, replied that there was no problem.

ARTISTS' CHANGES AND FINAL ESSAYS

On 13 January 1949 all four artists met the DPS at GPO Headquarters to discuss alterations to each design, with the ensuing results:

2½d - Mary Adshead was to retouch certain areas where the original drawing was inaccurate or lacked symmetry.

3d - Percy Metcalfe was to alter the number of meridians shown on the globe to 18.

6d - Hugo Fleury was to lower the King's crown so that its cross fell within the border of the design.

1/- - George Bellew was to equalise the left and right margins of his design, emphasise the globe more strongly against the posthorn, and move the value circle 1/16in to the left.

In addition, all values were to be altered to those approved for each design by the King, except for Metcalfe's which already showed the correct denomination.

Bellew and Fleury returned amended designs to the GPO by 18 January; Metcalfe and Adshead returned theirs direct to Harrisons on 20 and 24 January respectively (Mary Adshead was shown a sample printed stamp to help her finalise the work). Meanwhile the payment of 160 guineas for each adopted design was arranged: Metcalfe, Bellew, and Adshead were sent warrants on 2 February, and Fleury's employers, Waterlows, on 10 February.

Three new sets of essays were at GPO Headquarters for a meeting on 18 February, at which the DPS and Mr Rhodes of Harrisons were present. It was suggested by Rhodes that if George Bellew were agreeable, the size of the value circle on the 1/- might be reduced. The DPS concurred and Bellew supplied two alternative designs on 25 February. Harrisons was able to produce bromides of these (nos. 524 and 525) by 4 March, while the smaller of the two (no. 525) was adopted by 7 March. Plans for the issue were announced in Parliament on 23 February. At a meeting on 19 April attended by the DPS, members of the Postal Services and Supplies Departments, and Harrisons' representatives, the final essays were presented and approved.

PRINTING

A warrant was issued on 9 May for 1,210,000 sheets of 2½d, 165,000 of 3d, and 110,000 each of the 6d and 1/-, each sheet containing 120 stamps at twice the definitive size. On this occasion there was little internal dispute over the numbers to be printed, 1.1 million sheets of 2½d having been agreed on 21 March as a compromise between the requirement of one million estimated by the Postal Services Department and the 1¼ million urged by Supplies; 10% was subsequently added across the board to allow for waste in printing. The question of overprints for agencies abroad was also well in hand; as late as 6 May the figure of 6,000 sheets of each value was being considered, although by the time a warrant for overprinting was issued in late July this had been reduced to 4,500 sheets. This was probably due to a late decision to omit Morocco Agencies, use of this overprint now being restricted to Tetuan in Spanish Morocco.

There were problems with overprinting the 1/- stamp because of its dark colour, although by 19 April these were confined to Bahrain and Kuwait, where the placing of the overprint across the globe had been found unsatisfactory. It was decided to try placing the overprint

halfway between the circle of the posthorn and the King's nose, and lowering it to 'sit' on the dates at the foot of the design. As there being no further notes in the files on this topic, this was presumably successful.

The paper used for the final essays approved on 19 April had been the ordinary issue watermarked with the Royal Cypher on the 3d and 1/-, and a special variant loaded with 3% titanium and 7% china clay on the 2½d and 6d. Over the next four months, however, the Supplies Department conducted tests of 50% Esparto/50% chemical wood paper to compare with the other two varieties and Harrisons' own stocks of commercial 'Guard Bridge' Esparto paper. After these trials were completed on 18 August, bulk printing and delivery began with the 3d printed on Esparto/chemical wood, the 2½d and 6d on titanium/china clay loaded paper, and the 1/- on Royal Cypher 'Ordinary'. Harrisons found that the 3d stamps 'printed extremely well', adding that the titanium/china clay loaded paper was 'a great improvement' on the similar paper used for the Silver Wedding and Olympic Games issues the previous year. By contrast the paper of the 1/- stamp seemed dull, flat and dark (which may have contributed to the overprinting problems described earlier). Harrisons' own preference was for the 'Guard Bridge' Esparto 'which they consider to be superior in every way to any of the other papers for photogravure work': being a commercial paper this did not, of course, have the necessary Royal Cypher watermark. Harrisons' suppliers of the watermarked paper, Messrs Portals' of Ivybridge, Devon, were hampered in the production of Esparto paper in that they were not equipped to pulp the natural grass and had to re-pulp Esparto boards.

SALES AND SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

The stamps were issued on Monday, 10 October 1949 and withdrawn at the close of business on Saturday, 31 December. Total sales figures were as follows:

| | 2½d | 3d | 6d | 1/- |
|----------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Ordered | 145,200,000 | 19,800,000 | 13,200,000 | 13,200,000 |
| Waste | 9,282,000 | 2,202,000 | 769,560 | 1,079,280 |
| Good | 135,918,000 | 17,598,000 | 12,430,440 | 12,120,720 |
| Overprints | 540,000 | 540,000 | 540,000 | 540,000 |
| Specimens, etc | 7,019 | 7,019 | 7,139 | 7,019 |
| Dept waste, etc | 301 | 781 | 181 | 301 |
| Issued | 135,370,680 | 17,050,200 | 11,883,120 | 11,573,400 |
| Returns to Stores | 224,503 | 650,918 | 431,714 | 185,625 |
| Net sales | 135,146,177 | 16,399,282 | 11,451,406 | 11,367,775 |

The total value of sales was £2,467,438 and the total estimated cost of production some £6,500, or approximately £2,000 more than the same quantity of ordinary stamps. Of total sales, about £200,000 were later estimated as philatelic.

The 2½d stamps were found to include a fair number of retouches and flaws, the two gaining the most notoriety being the 'Lake in Asia' and 'Lake in India'. Originally it had been hoped to have the issue on sale for no more than a month, but it was eventually decided to retain supplies throughout the Christmas period in what proved a largely successful effort to clear remaining stocks.

A total of 30 first day covers, each bearing the four stamps and containing a brief description of the issue, were posted to various 'prominent persons', including the Prime Minister Mr Attlee and members of the cabinet, the 18 members of the Post Office Advisory Council and two surviving descendants of Rowland Hill. 3,000 sets of stamps (including each of the four separate overprinted issues) were also donated to the UPU at its request, to enable albums to be produced comprehensively detailing the worldwide response to the anniversary. Copies of these albums were ultimately returned to the participating administrations, in quantities varying from three to 75 according to their proportionate financial contribution to the UPU. Great Britain was to receive 45 albums, reflecting the combined contribution of the United Kingdom, Commonwealth and Crown Colonies. The Treasury agreed to the £1,468.75 postage face value for the sake of the goodwill involved.

OVERPRINTS FOR OVERSEAS AGENCIES

Issue and sales figures for the stamps overprinted for agencies abroad are available in detail, and are summarised below; they show that less than 65% of the overprints issued were sold, and that only 16,740 overprinted sheets (93%) were issued out of a total of 18,000 ordered. 400 of the missing sheets may have been donated to the UPU for use in albums.

| | 2½d | 3d | 6d | 1/- |
|---------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Tangier | | | | |
| Opts ordered | 180,000 | 180,000 | 180,000 | 180,000 |
| issued | 162,360 | 166,560 | 171,960 | 176,520 |
| sold (agency) | 15,563 | 14,135 | 17,430 | 12,766 |
| sold (dealers) | 66,310 | 59,968 | 59,768 | 59,635 |
| unsold | 80,487 | 92,457 | 94,762 | 104,119 |
| Persian Gulf | | | | |
| Bahrain | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 |

| | | | | |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Kuwait | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 |
| BPAEA * | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 |
| Opts ordered | 360,000 | 360,000 | 360,000 | 360,000 |
| issued ** | 320,760 | 342,600 | 336,360 | 331,680 |

Bahrain

| | | | | |
|----------------|--------|---------|--------|--------|
| sold (agency) | 30,000 | 478,000 | 48,000 | 24,000 |
| sold (dealers) | 63,689 | 57,246 | 57,064 | 56,853 |

Kuwait

| | | | | |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| sold (agency) | 26,674 | 32,282 | 35,412 | 21,040 |
| sold (dealers) | 64,107 | 57,686 | 57,485 | 56,864 |

BPAEA

| | | | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------|---------|---------|
| sold (agency) | 6,803 | 7,607 | 5,760 | 3,274 |
| sold (dealers) | 63,659 | 57,236 | 57,037 | 56,819 |
| Persian Gulf | (= Bahrain + | Kuwait + | BPAEA) | |
| Total sold | 254,932 | 260,057 | 260,758 | 218,850 |
| Total unsold | 65,828 | 82,543 | 75,602 | 112,830 |

Grand total (ie, Tangier + Persian Gulf)

| | | | | |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Opts ordered | 540,000 | 540,000 | 540,000 | 540,000 |
| issued | 483,120 | 509,160 | 508,320 | 508,200 |
| sold | 336,805 | 334,160 | 337,956 | 291,251 |
| unsold | 146,315 | 175,000 | 170,364 | 216,949 |

* British Postal Agencies in Eastern Arabia, ie, Dubai (including Sharjah) and Muscat; values only on overprint, no agency named

** No breakdown is available for total overprints issued to each of the three Gulf agencies.

The total costs of overprinting were about £280, this being made up of 16 overprint plates at approximately £12.95 each, and 16,740 sheets at (again approximately) £4.35 per 1,000.

During 1949 and 1950 postage stamps for the 75th anniversary were issued practically worldwide – it was described as ‘the nearest approach to an international postage stamp there had ever been’. From the British Commonwealth alone there were 65 different sets involving 310 separate stamps. Elsewhere the occasion was marked in additional ways: for example the Scandinavian postal administrations (Iceland, Finland, Denmark, Sweden and Norway) used it for the simultaneous launch of an aerogramme service. The response of

the GPO was if anything comparatively low key: there was no special postmark associated nor special stationery of any type.

REACTIONS TO ISSUE

Public and philatelic reaction to the issue was neatly summed up by STAMP COLLECTING on 15 October, 'The uninspired nature of the design may be held responsible for the public apathy.' On 14 October 14 PHILATELIC MAGAZINE rather unfairly criticised Metcalfe's 3d design because 'scores of other countries' had already featured the UPU Monument on their stamps. Generally, however, the 3d was found the best of the four, and the 1/- also received some kind words for its design (but not for its dull colouring). As usual, the GPO's failure to produce pictorial stamps was lamented. Some pungent comments were made by the columnist Joan Manton in the magazine SOCIALIST LEADER on 5 November: 'A beautifully executed production but completely lacking in imagination'. She continued: 'Any printer or philatelist will tell you that the quality of our productions is second to none, but the subject matter is usually inferior to that of the most obscure fairytale countries ... the more obscure is the nation, the larger and more dazzling will be its stamps - and it is a sound bet that they will come to this country to place their printing order.'

Another aspect which aroused strong debate was the standard of cancellation, opinion being divided over whether or not there had been any improvement over the dire levels of 1948. William Ferris of the Glasgow Philatelic Trade Society said the GPO had told him 'their orders are that two thirds of each stamp must be obliterated ... this is the only country where the postal authorities give no consideration to collectors'. Another Scottish philatelist, J G Lynch, echoed these comments in a letter to STAMP COLLECTING dated 18 October: 'Britain is, I believe, the only country in Europe and one of the few in the world, where such special mail is not separately handled.' He mentioned 'thick black postmarks plumb in the centre of each stamp', concluding that 'With a little imagination, even as little as the GPO apparently possess, it can be readily seen that philatelists are not trying to defraud the Exchequer; they want their stamps to be franked but not in such a way as to destroy all their philatelic value.' In its editorial columns STAMP COLLECTING thought the standard of cancellation was showing some improvement, but reminded the GPO that a 'killed stamp is not necessarily a sign of virtue on the part of the clerk'.

THE ARTISTS

MARY ADSHEAD was the wife of the artist Stephen Bone and the daughter of a professor of civic design and town planning at London and Liverpool Universities, who taught her to

paint in watercolours. After training at the Slade School of Art, she produced posters for the London Passenger Transport Board in 1937 but was most active during her career as a painter of murals. Her last major work in this field was done in 1982, though her occasional watercolour exhibitions were subsequently acclaimed. When invited to work on the UPU issue she had no knowledge of philatelic design beyond what she was able to glean from her teenage son's stamp collection. However, she was to remain regularly involved with stamp design until 1963, her work being adopted both for definitives and the World Scout Jubilee issue of 1957. She died in September 1995.

PERCY METCALFE, CVO, RDI, was born on 14 January 1895. He studied at the Royal College of Art and was to become an Associate of the College and a member of the Goldsmiths Company. He designed coins for Ireland, Turkey, Egypt, Iraq, New Zealand, Fiji, Greece and Bulgaria; in 1928 he designed the Great Seal of the Realm, and later the Great Seals of Ireland and South Africa, and Coronation medals. His work on postage stamp issues was limited to the brief period between the Olympic Games and Festival of Britain, during which his adopted designs also included the Olympic Games 2½d and the 10/- and £1 definitives of 1951. In WHO'S WHO he described himself merely as a 'sculptor and medallist'; he died on 9 October 1970.

HUGO FLEURY was first apprenticed to Waterlows as a lithographic artist in 1907. As well as designing banknotes, he designed nearly 200 foreign and colonial postage stamps, most famously the 1935 Silver Jubilee issue with the view of Windsor Castle. The UPU 6d was, however, his first successful British postage stamp design, a fact he recorded as giving him much pleasure. Sadly, although he worked on many issues for the GPO from the PUC stamps of 1929 up to and including the 1953 Coronation, it was to remain his only success in this field.

GEORGE ROTHE BELLEW, KCB, KCVO, was born in Dublin on 13 December 1899 and educated at Wellington and Christ Church, Oxford. His entire professional career, from 1922 to 1961, was spent at the College of Arms, apart from war service with the RAFVR during which he was promoted to Squadron Leader and mentioned in despatches. From 1926 he held the office of Somerset Herald; although his chief work was in genealogy and heraldry it fell to him in this capacity to produce stamp designs on the College's behalf when requested by the GPO. He therefore worked on most special issues between the 1940 Stamp Centenary and the 1951 Festival of Britain, and was also responsible for the 1939 10/- and 1948 £1 definitives. After promotion to Garter Principal King of Arms in 1950 he was heavily engaged in organising the ceremonies first of the King's funeral and then of the 1953 Coronation, his contribution to the latter being particularly acclaimed. He was knighted on retirement in 1961. Amongst other accomplishments, he was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and a Judo black belt. He died on 6 February 1993.

GILES ALLEN
25 FEBRUARY 1993

REFERENCES

PO Archive files
Post 102/13, 52/1004