

SPECIAL STAMP

## Churchill Centenary Issue

Date of issue: 9 OCTOBER 1974



The first recorded suggestion of the issue to mark the centenary of Churchill's birth dates from 20 March 1972, when Robert Armstrong, Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, Edward Heath, wrote to Jean Goose, Private Secretary to the Minister of Posts & Telecommunications:

'Churchill College at Cambridge are looking ahead to the celebration of the centenary of Sir Winston Churchill's birth which will fall on 30 November 1974 ... they are likely to write to the Post Office to suggest that the centenary should be marked with a suitable commemorative stamp.'

He intimated that the Ministry would favour the proposal, 'if the Post Office were minded to agree'. A further letter on 28 March explained that the College was planning a fund-raising campaign to be associated with the centenary and would welcome any public relations 'fall-out' which might benefit their exercise. Meanwhile Miss Goose had passed the information on to the Director of Postal Marketing (DPM), E G White, although she warned Armstrong in her reply of 27 March: 'There might be problems in having another Churchill stamp not long after the issue that marked his death in 1965 ... but we can try to deal with these if and when they arise'.

In the meantime Postal Marketing was already researching suitable anniversary dates beyond 1973 for commemoration, and had written on 15 February to the Historical Research Unit, a commercial information service, emphasising interest in dates that could be linked to 'museums and other institutions of interest to tourists' (the Post Office was now thoroughly aware of the financial benefits of philately). On 5 April it received in return a list of dates for 1974-75 which included 'Winston Churchill born at Blenheim 1874', with the footnote that plans for some type of commemoration had been confirmed by the Chief Guide at Blenheim Palace. Postal Marketing's own ideas were first put forward on 19 May, in

a list of tentative preliminary suggestions for the 1974 stamp programme; this proposed that Churchill, in his capacity as a 'Man of Letters', might be included in another Literary Anniversaries series beside such figures as Somerset Maugham, Oliver Goldsmith and Milton, or given a stamp in his own right.

On 15 June a more detailed list of suggestions was put before the Stamp Advisory Committee (SAC), of which the DPM was Chairman; the Churchill centenary was once more included, with the added information that several private individuals, both at home and in the US, had now advocated a commemorative stamp, as well as Churchill College and the Prime Minister's office. No commitment was made at this meeting, as the Post Office had still to consult the opinions of regional directors and chairmen on the 1974 programme; however, a consensus of opinion on at least one issue seems to have been reached by the time a letter to the regions was finally drawn up in August:

Churchill (1874-1965)

It would be difficult to avoid this series even if we wished to. His life presents an excellent subject for a stamp issue which could represent the various roles he adopted during his life - soldier, writer, war correspondent, statesman, painter, historian.

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## CONSIDERATIONS BY SAC

At the meeting of the SAC on 7 September the suggestion arose that the stamps issued in 1965 to mark Churchill's death were so strong that they might not be easy to better, and the best solution might be to re-issue them. Serious consideration was given to this and discussion was carried over into the next meeting on 19 October, although still without result, the Chairman deciding to keep the Post Office's options open. Sir Paul Reilly, Director of the Design Council and a member of the SAC, announced that the artist John Spencer-Churchill, Sir Winston's nephew, was keen to contribute to the issue, and White promised that this would be considered if it was decided to commission fresh designs. (Spencer-Churchill's eagerness in this area had already been brought to the attention of the Chairman of the Post Office, Sir William Ryland, as early as 24 August - the general reaction was that he should be given an opportunity in view of the family connection, although, as the Design Director, Stuart Rose, pointed out, his abilities as a stamp designer were an unknown quantity.) The desirability of a special Churchill issue was not questioned; the DPM had made it clear in a meeting on 9 October that this was a 'high priority' for the 1974 programme, and the additional point was made on 19 October that 'we could not ignore the fact that other countries will issue a stamp for this anniversary'. Another factor which White undoubtedly bore in mind was that the backers of the proposal now included Associated Newspapers, publishers of the 'Daily Mail'.

On 6 November Postal Marketing produced a short list of possible subjects for consideration by the SAC to finalise the 1974 programme. This included the Churchill centenary as ‘thought to be essential’ and reiterated that ‘as many countries in the world are likely to issue a stamp on this subject we would be severely criticised if we did not’. The following options were suggested as treatment: (i) a re-issue of the 1965 stamps, amended as necessary, (ii) a grouping with other notable figures with birth or death anniversaries in 1974, (iii) as part of an issue on ‘Great British Prime Ministers & Parliamentarians’; this last suggestion had already been put to the SAC meeting on 7 September, although this is the first recorded occasion when it was associated with the Churchill centenary.

The argument in favour of option (i) was that ‘this is a very powerful and effective stamp’; however, a change from the Wilding cameo of the Queen’s head used in 1965 to either the Gillick-Gentleman or Machin head in current use would be required, and the colour and size might have to be changed also. More importantly, ‘it might be said that the Post Office is trying to commemorate the event on the cheap, or else lacks imagination’. Option (ii), described as the ‘Great Men’ treatment, had the advantage of disposing of most of the notable personal anniversaries in one set; against this, ‘the set would have no unity and the overall impact of the issue would inevitably be diminished in the way of a general anniversaries series’. There would also be weakening of future thematic issues, such as an issue on poets if Milton had already been included in a general set because of his death in 1674. It was also argued in the ‘shortlist’ that Robert the Bruce (born 1274) should be given a separate series with other mediaeval warriors, as a subject with such promise should not be diluted by association with figures from disparate contexts.

The final option was clearly that favoured by Postal Marketing; it was suggested that ‘this would be an ideal way of at once recognising Churchill’s greatness and yet putting him into the context of previous equally great and popular Prime Ministers’. It was thought that the set could form the first part of an ongoing series that might eventually include not only former Prime Ministers such as Gladstone, Disraeli, the Pitts Elder and Younger, or Lloyd George, but also other parliamentary notables such as Edmund Burke. It could be ‘a very powerful and cohesive set’, and a vivid contrast to the mediaeval warriors series envisaged as based around Bruce, in both content and style.

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### **AGREEMENT ON CHURCHILL SET**

Despite this recommendation, it was only after some discussion that the SAC, meeting on 30 November, agreed that a Churchill set should be produced; there appears to have been some anxiety that any new stamps might embarrass the Post Office by not being up to the standard of the widely admired 1965 issue. The ‘Great Prime Ministers’ issue was not subsequently pursued; White inclined personally towards the idea of the centenary

justifying a series on its own, and the meeting agreed with this. A suggestion that the series might feature places with which Churchill had been associated, such as Blenheim Palace, was quickly dismissed as inadequate to his place in public memory as a war leader.

On 11 January 1973 the 1974 programme was outlined by White to A Currall, Managing Director, Posts (MDP). This urged that Sir Winston's 'popularity and importance' justified a new set of stamps, despite the earlier 1965 issue, and repeated the argument that stamps marking the occasion were anticipated from other postal administrations. It was also pointed out that there is an established body of 'Churchilliana' collectors, with the implications for good marketing opportunities - the American-based International Churchill Society had recently enquired as to whether an issue was planned. In ensuing discussions with the DPM, Currall, who was hopeful of restricting the number of issues, asked on 13 January whether it was not too soon for another Churchill series. The point also seems to have been raised about this time that the 1965 issue had not been universally praised, as some had found the colours too sombre (although the stamps were to mark Churchill's death). The SAC discussed this at its meeting on 18 January and considered that it would be unwise to omit the subject from the 1974 programme.

In a reply to the MDP on 25 January White warned that Post Office could come under 'substantial political pressure' if it failed to issue stamps for the Churchill centenary. He needed to raise one further potential problem; this was that the stamps would probably be issued in the autumn of 1974 (although not on the actual centenary date of 30 November as this would clash with the Christmas stamps) and thus at about the time anticipated for the next General Election. The two 'parliamentary' members of the SAC - Brian Batsford, Conservative MP for Ealing South, and Eric Ogden, Labour MP for Liverpool West Derby - and White himself were in agreement that 'Churchill today stands apart from the party political scene ... no responsible person or organisation should claim any embarrassment if a Churchill issue of stamps happens to coincide with a General Election campaign'. The MPT's opinion had been canvassed and had informally agreed with this view; nevertheless White proposed to confirm this officially with the Home Office.

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## **POLITICAL PROBLEMS DISCOUNTED**

Currall's reply on 29 January was that he wished to avoid any embarrassment to the Post Office and would oppose the issue of any Churchill stamp if it were likely to clash with an election campaign. However, he had already promised on 13 January that he would not overrule any majority view on the basis of his personal feelings, and on this occasion he proposed to leave the final decision to the Chairman, Sir William Ryland. In the event Sir William's informal reaction, as recorded in a memorandum of 7 February, was that he was 'not greatly concerned' over the hypothetical question of political embarrassment arising

from the issue. Subsequently a reply dated 9 March from David Elliott of the MPT, answering White's formal approach, indicated that a proposed stamp issue for the centenary of Churchill's birth would present no difficulty under the terms of the Representation of the People Act, while the wider political implications could be resolved when the 1974 programme was finally presented to the MPT for consideration.

On 28 March the Churchill issue was discussed by the SAC again, the suggestions put forward including: an early portrait; a portrait of Churchill in his prime; a historic event such as the 1945 Yalta Conference, or the making of a famous speech. Meanwhile the SAC's final recommendations for the 1974 programme were put to the MDP and accepted on 9 April; in a briefing submitted to the Post Office Management Board for its meeting on 7 May, Currall proposed the Churchill centenary issue:

Such an item will be widely expected ... and sales prospects are good. The issue of Churchill stamps in 1965 at the time of his death is no barrier. Churchill today stands outside the political arena, and the possible coincidence of a general election with this stamp issue should not create problems.

At the SAC meeting on 9 May the suggestion arose that Churchill might be fitted into the 'British Heroes' issue: this was the latest variant of the earlier proposal for a series commemorating the anniversary of Robert the Bruce's birth, but also including other figures, which had run into difficulties over finding suitable candidates to make up a cohesive set of four. Churchill's inclusion in this series had already been debated and dismissed in November; it was as before opposed by White and rejected by the meeting. The Chairman's opinion that the Churchill centenary justified an entire set rather than a single stamp remained unchanged. Suggested themes for the set were once more advanced for consideration, as follows: four of Churchill's books; his various hats; dress related to his various roles as a cavalry officer, cabinet minister, 1914-18 soldier, or Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports; selected press photographs. Meanwhile an artist or artists for the series had still to be commissioned.

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## INVITATION TO JOHN SPENCER-CHURCHILL

After the meeting, however, Sir Paul Reilly reminded Stuart Rose of the interest in the issue shown by John Spencer-Churchill, so Rose met the artist for a 'very pleasant talk around the Winston Churchill' stamps in July. On 25 July he wrote to Spencer-Churchill inviting him to 'start work along the lines we discussed':

... taking four significant periods or events in Winston Churchill's life and showing his involvement maybe in terms of the hats or uniforms he wore. ... I would favour a portrait drawing rather than a painting, using colour in a more decorative than representational manner. Each stamp should be distinguishable by colour from each

other ... they may be either portrait or landscape in format, but not a mixture of both. ... The designs should not be larger than four times the printed stamp, that is 6 inches by 4.29 inches. The Queen's head, the value figures, and the caption, in this case 'Sir Winston Churchill 1874-1965', should be put down on a separate transparent overlay.

... In say a month's time ... we can look at your first scribbles and agree on a design approach for the set before you go too far on the finished work.

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## **CHURCHILL CENTENARY PROPOSAL APPROVED**

The Post Office Management Board approved the 1974 programme on 8 June, and Currall formally submitted it to the MPT on 14 June. The Minister, Sir John Eden, gave his approval on 4 July and details of the programme, headed by those for the Churchill centenary issue, were announced in a press release on 11 July. The date of issue had been provisionally fixed for 9 October 1974; the Christmas stamps were due to be issued at the time of Churchill's actual birthdate of 30 November. Similarly, the release of the UPU centenary set had been moved from the actual anniversary date in October to coincide with the events planned for June 1974 in Switzerland at the time of the UPU's Lausanne Congress. In fact, 9 October was the date of the UPU's foundation.

After fresh discussions with Rose at the end of August, Spencer-Churchill wrote on 6 September confirming their verbal agreement that he should prepare large-scale drawings in horizontal format of Churchill as (i) an officer cadet of 1897, (ii) in the South African Light Horse, 1900, (iii) in 'Parliamentary clothes', 1915, (iv) as a Warden of the Cinque Ports in 1940, and (v) a Knight of the Garter in 1953; details of the Queen's head, caption and value need not be included at this stage. He added that he was drawing the heads as large as possible 'but of course the various hats occupy a good deal of the design'.

On 6 August Rose had also commissioned designs from the artist Paul Branfield; details of the agreement reached with Branfield are not available but seems to have been on similar lines to that made with Spencer-Churchill. Although nowhere specified, it appears that both artists based their drawings on photographs, either by choice or direction; for instance each produced very similar portraits of Churchill in the uniform of the 4th Hussars during the Second World War that were clearly identical in source.

The SAC discussed the Churchill stamps on 27 September, when Rose announced details of the commission given to Branfield and Spencer-Churchill. A proposal that Churchill should be shown in naval uniform was held over for further consideration, while White referred to a suggestion that the marble bust of Sir Winston by the sculptor Oscar Nemon in Windsor



Castle might form the basis of a stamp design. Accompanied by a photograph of a plaster replica of the bust, this proposal had originated from Sir Martin Charteris, the Queen's Private Secretary, at the end of July. Subsequently it was taken up with enthusiasm by Nemon; however, Rose had already concluded by the beginning of September that the bust 'wouldn't make a good set'. The SAC discussed Nemon's offer but came to a similar conclusion. In a letter dated 8 February 1974 expressing the Post Office's regret, White explained to the sculptor: 'One of the problems about using your sculpture as the motif would be the need to show four aspects of the same piece and the Committee was of the view that four stamps depicting only one piece of sculpture would not have made a very satisfactory set.'

However, at least two other statues of Churchill by Nemon were later to appear on centenary stamps: these featured a bronze memorial statue in Luxembourg (issued by that country on 29 April 1974) and a public bust in Monte Carlo (Monaco, 8 May 1974).

On 19 September the stamp printers Bradbury Wilkinson submitted two 'pulls' to D H Beaumont of Postal Marketing - these were a plain engraving of Sir Winston derived from the famous photograph by Karsh of Ottawa as used in the 1965 issue, and a rough design based on it. These were not solicited by the Post Office in the first instance, but requested by Beaumont following a telephone conversation with William de Segundo of Bradbury Wilkinson earlier that day. Later they were passed to Rose, but were not subsequently shown to the SAC.

The record of drawings produced by Branfield, Spencer-Churchill, and succeeding artists and the dates on which these were supplied is only partial but has been reconstructed as far as possible from material in the British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA).

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## FIRST DRAWINGS EXAMINED BY SAC

On 25 September Branfield supplied six pencil sketches of Churchill as a child, a cadet, a cavalry officer, a rising politician, an elder statesman and finally as wartime leader. On 16 October Spencer-Churchill submitted two overlays of the Queen's head and five drawings on the lines agreed with Rose, with the remark that 'to get Winston's likeness was rather dependent on shading and consequently they are more drawn than etched or hatched'; on 22 October he supplied Rose with 'a second edition of the 4 designs you require in pen and ink, of which two I have placed upright' - these seemed 'more spontaneous and clearer' to the artist. He was, however, concerned whether 'pen and ink' was an ideal technique and tentatively proposed that 'pen and wash' as practised by the 17th-century old masters might be a satisfactory alternative. Rose replied next day indicating that the four drawings would be reduced and shown to the SAC in stamp size.

On 25 October the SAC examined the artists' preliminary drawings and expressed a strong preference for Branfield's work. Rose said that Branfield would develop his drawings more fully in a vertical format in time for the next meeting, and that Spencer-Churchill would be asked for revised drawings. White suggested that Branfield's drawing of Churchill as a child should be replaced by one showing him in young manhood.

Spencer-Churchill wrote to Rose on 28 October promising 'a new set of designs in miniature' for 30 October, with the added comment that 'the way to perfection is always hard and arrived at only by a great deal of experiment and elimination'. With a further note on 5 November he supplied an 'enlarged to scale drawing made from that very small note you liked ... I like it because it has a certain amount of mischief about the expression'. However, he was concerned that the drawing showed Sir Winston 'in parliamentary clothes' wearing a top hat, and experiment had already shown that this was liable to unduly crowd the Queen's head; he suggested that Churchill's Trinity House cap might be substituted. Rose's reply, on 13 November, was that 'the best thing now would be for you to put the other four drawings into this same style, so that they then become a set. I certainly think we should leave off the top-hat.' Spencer-Churchill supplied his revised set on 24 November with a substitute profile drawing of Churchill as parliamentarian – 'the style is such that it seems to me that the remainder is in keeping', plus two versions (one ink and one pencil) of the Garter portrait and two of the Light Horse portrait. The set also included a near-full face Lord Warden portrait, of which the artist added in a footnote: 'The eyes are wrong but will work on it if you wish'. Stuart Rose had the set reduced to stamp size for the next SAC meeting.

The SAC met on 6 December and examined Spencer-Churchill's revised drawings and Branfield's final artwork. Rough drawings by Ishbel McWhirter were also seen for the first time - the commission extended to Miss McWhirter was her first for the Post Office, and dated from a meeting with Stuart Rose in November. The description of the artwork seen on 6 December is largely based on the items retained by the BPMA and is probably incomplete.

The seven finished Spencer-Churchill drawings in the BPMA albums can only be loosely identified with those described in the above correspondence - all are in pencil, none in ink as mentioned. However, they include five finished head-and-shoulder studies of Sir Winston in Garter robes, as an officer cadet, as Prime Minister, as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, and in the bush hat of the Light Horse; in addition, there is a version of the Garter portrait in bolder lines and one of the Light Horse portrait with further detail and shading.

Paul Branfield's finished designs included: a portrait of Churchill as a child, with the inscription '1881' and the value 3½p; as a young politician with the inscription '1904' and the



value 5p; a more finely detailed version of this design with the value 5½p. Stamp size reductions of the 3½p and 5p designs in monochrome were also produced. The caption 'Winston S Churchill 1874-1965' is on all three designs. Branfield used a horizontal format despite Rose's previous statement to the SAC, as well as using the childhood portrait although White had opposed it.

Ishbel McWhirter's four rough sketches showed Churchill as a junior officer, as a politician in youth and middle age, and finally in his most recognisable role as Prime Minister. Stamp size reproductions of these, including values, were also produced, not altogether successfully; Rose wrote to Ishbel McWhirter on 7 December, the day following the meeting: 'I am sending you the miniature photographs for you to see what we have done to your drawings. Both the 5½p and 3½p are beginning to work, but not I fear ditto the 10p and 8p.'

'If you feel like doing any more work to overcome some of the devastating effects of reduction I would be happy for you to do so.'

Rose expressed dissatisfaction with all three sets of designs, which he blamed on the scarcity of both good portrait artists who could work from photographs and good photographs of Churchill during his early life. Two SAC members, Eric Ogden and Anthony Lousada, Chairman of both the Royal College of Art and the Friends of the Tate Gallery, argued that this could be overcome by concentrating on Churchill as a war leader; against this Rose pointed out that Churchill's family had specifically requested that the stamps should not only depict him as an old man (he had become wartime premier at 65). Another SAC member, Herbert Spencer, a publisher, typographer, graphic designer and editor of 'Penrose Annual', suggested that design work might be pursued in two directions - a review of Churchill's life, and celebration as a war leader.

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## NEW ARTISTS COMMISSIONED

Later in the month Stuart Rose had discussions with the artists Ruskin Spear and Louis Ward and the Maidstone-based design team of Clarke/Clements/Hughes Ltd (which consisted of the artists Collis Clements and Edward Hughes, their former partner Graham Clarke no longer being associated). Louis Ward's work had first been recommended to the Post Office in 1970 by John Grant of the Council of Industrial Design; Ward then contacted Stuart Rose directly in March 1972 about the possibility of a stamp design commission, as a result of which Rose promised to bear him in mind for the 1974 programme. This was possibly despite Ward's remark in a letter of 29 March 1972 that he regretted 'the continual need for speed' in the design work he had done to date, suggesting he was unaware of the pace frequently imposed on stamp designers.

Further commissions for the issue were extended: to Clements and Hughes on 13 December, and Spear and Ward on 27 December and 2 January 1974 respectively. The conditions as explained by Rose in these discussions were substantially unchanged from those given to Spencer-Churchill five months earlier; the requirement was a set of four portraits relating to four significant periods in Churchill's life, though not necessarily to specific dates, and that preliminary designs should if possible be available by the middle of January. The design of the stamps should be such as to produce a consistent set both in subject matter and style, with the dominant colour of each stamp different so as to avoid confusion between values. Designs should be 6 inches by 4.29 inches, that is four times the standard commemorative size of 1.5 inches by 1.07 inches or 41 mm by 30 mm printing area (1.6 inches by 1.17 inches perforation to perforation). If possible the Queen's head, value figures and caption for each portrait should be separately submitted as an overlay on a detachable clear acetate sheet. Ishbel McWhirter's commission, not formally confirmed until 31 December after she had confirmed that she would attempt to modify her drawings to meet with the SAC's approval, seems to have been in similar terms.

Also during December, John Spencer-Churchill met various members of the SAC informally, apparently at a party hosted by Stuart Rose, and gathered from conversation that they thought Churchill could be popularly and recognisably presented in a way 'which could be more than just the head and hat'. On 2 January 1974 he wrote to Rose enclosing eight sketches in varying sizes (retained in the BPMA albums), which he listed as follows:

- (1) Parliament and round top hat
- (2) 4th Hussars hat in Second World War
- (3) Victory broadcast
- (4) Knight of the Garter
- (5) Painting in stetson hat
- (6) Parliament and hat
- (7) Parliament and no hat
- (8) Warden of Cinque Ports.

From the evidence in the BPMA, (4), (8) and (3) are smaller versions of the Garter, Lord Warden and Prime Minister portraits seen by the SAC on 6 December, while the remainder were new. Spencer-Churchill also enclosed '3 variations of a painting I did in 1948 of WSC painting at Chartwell', of which (5) was also a version; unlike the sketches these were later returned to the artist.

Louis Ward submitted four designs on 9 January; these were not fully finished and Ward later complained that 'more time for consideration and a fuller brief for some guidance would help enormously' if he were ever commissioned again. Ishbel McWhirter supplied further artwork on 13 January with the comment 'I hope the committee has a massive

change of heart'. The SAC met on 16 January 1974 and saw designs by McWhirter, Ruskin Spear, Louis Ward, and Clements/Hughes.

Ward –

Soldier in South Africa

Politician pre-1914

Naval uniform (Cinque Ports)

Garter robes

Spear –

3½p, painting: in 'siren suit'

5½p, painting: addressing meeting

8p, painting: artist at work in south of France

10p, painting: cigar in hand.

McWhirter –

3½p (portrait in 1945), 5½p (portrait in 1919), unknown value, plus 10p (portrait in 1894), four designs submitted stamp size, but only three retained in the BPMA.

Clements/Hughes –

5p, photograph as soldier in South Africa (1900)

5p, photo as politician (1917)

5p, photo as Prime Minister (1940)

5p, no details known as not in BPMA

3½p, 5p, 8p and 10p, quotations: black and white, stamp size, mounted on board

3½p, five of the 5p, 8p, 10p, quotations: coloured, stamp size, board mounted; 5p in variants of Queen's head, heading, and lettering, including two full size of which one double length with photograph.

No details of the Louis Ward designs are known beyond those recorded above as they are not held by the BPMA.

Up to this point the SAC had been, to quote Stuart Rose, 'difficult about any drawings they have seen', and the present occasion was no exception. The meeting could not be persuaded to pursue further the artwork submitted by Spencer-Churchill, McWhirter or Ward. It was decided to essay the designs by Spear and the photographic set submitted by Clements and Hughes; Rose's subsequent comments in letters to McWhirter and Spencer-Churchill seem to indicate that he hoped to avoid a purely photographic approach but could not carry the meeting with him.

When commissioned, Clements and Hughes had decided ‘that there were really two possible design approaches that we could pursue’:

Churchill as orator, using quotations from speeches to identify major events and to recall the various periods in his lifetime.

Churchill as an immediately identifiable visual figure by virtue of physical appearance, dress, uniform, etc.

Feeling that ‘his words are probably more important and memorable than photographs or other illustrative material which had already received wide exposure’, the pair opted principally for ‘a completely typographical approach ... breaking new ground in terms of British stamp design’. From a lengthy preliminary list of quotations they selected those that would not only highlight significant periods in history and Churchill’s career but also reflect his spirit, and (not least) ‘be adequately accommodated on a stamp’. At the same time they elected to seek an alternative visual approach in the ‘newslite authenticity’ of contemporary photographs; here, as well as illustrating the high points of Churchill’s career, the material had to be readily identifiable and suitable for stamp sized reproduction. Through the Churchill Memorial Library at Cambridge, Clements and Hughes assembled ‘vast numbers of immensely interesting photographs’ from which they gleaned a suitable shortlist that, ‘in order to give continuity to the set’, showed him in a selection of the many hats for which he had a penchant. The Churchill family’s approval had to be confirmed for all the short-listed photographs.

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## FIRST ESSAYS PRODUCED

Clements and Hughes submitted designs following both approaches, although Rose was by his own account loath to accept the typographic ‘quotations’ set as being quite outside the terms of the prior agreement with all designers involved: ‘although the case for breaking new ground was fully discussed the typographical proposals were rejected’, on 16 January, ‘on the grounds that they lacked popular visual appeal’.

In the course of subsequent development Stuart Rose continued a process he had seemingly begun earlier with the Spencer-Churchill and McWhirter portraits; this was an exploratory series of rough outline sketches in pencil, testing how the desired portraits might be fitted into the design frame of the stamp. Examples of these in the BPMA are as follows (the captions that appear on the designs are given in brackets):

3½p Young officer 1894 (Winston S Churchill 1864 [sic]-1965)

3½p Young officer 1895 (Winston Churchill)

5½p Politician 1914 (Winston Churchill 1874)

5½p Opposition leader 1946 (Winston S Churchill 1864 [sic]-1965)

8p Garter robes 1954 (Winston Churchill 1874-39 [sic])  
10p Lord Warden 1945 (Winston Churchill 1874-39 [sic]).

It seems that another intention of these sketches was to indicate the desired wording and position of the caption (vertically along the left-hand edge of the design). The designs subsequently produced by Clements and Hughes were similar in style. It was decided that the full caption 'Winston Churchill Centenary 1874-1974' should be shortened on both the Clements/Hughes and Spear sets by omitting 'Centenary'. On the Clements/Hughes photographic set the inscription, showing the year to which each portrait was ascribed, was dropped, the correct values inserted, and the photograph of Churchill on the 8p changed. The first essays of both sets were made available by the stamp printers, Harrison & Sons Ltd, in time for the next SAC meeting.

The Churchill photographs finally selected for the Clements/Hughes essays were: (3½p) wearing the peaked cap of the Royal Yacht Squadron, 1942; (5½p) touring defences on the North-East coast, July 1940; (8p) Secretary of State for War and Air, 1919; (10p) in the uniform of the South African Light Horse as a Boer War correspondent, 1899. The 1899 photograph was supplied by the Radio Times Hulton Picture Library, 1919 and 1940 by Camera Press, and 1942 by Topix. Substantially the essays were as submitted in January except for the change from the 1917 photograph initially used on the 8p value. The initial date of 1900 on the 10p had been incorrect, and the photograph on the 3½p was incorrectly identified. It was believed to show Churchill uniformed as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports on his appointment in September 1941; this was due to a mistake in the original newspaper source from which Clements and Hughes had found the picture during their researches. This error was subsequently noted but not in time to rectify before the set was issued.

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## CLEMENTS/HUGHES ESSAYS CHOSEN

The SAC met on 27 February and decided to proceed with the designs by Clements and Hughes with the Queen's head in silver. It was agreed that the captions should be revised to 'Churchill Centenary' and printed along the base of the design in a colour other than silver (the BPMA holds another of Rose's outline sketches showing the 8p value with the new caption). On 5 March Rose and Miss F E Ladbury of Postal Marketing met representatives of LMS5 (London Materials Section, the Post Office chemists) to review the essays further; it was decided that the colours of the 5½p (grey) and 10p (yellow-sand) presented no operational problems, but that the current colours of the 3½p (pink-beige) and 8p (blue-green) should be interchanged. In the case of the revised 3½p the hue should tend more towards blue as it was important for operational reasons to ensure a good phosphor signal from the first class letter rate stamp. As it was proposed to move captions from the left-hand to the lower border of the designs, namely from lighter into darker areas, phosphor

coding would also be enhanced generally by printing the captions in black. These changes were subsequently incorporated by the printers in the revised essays, with the 3½p value changed to 4½p in line with the tariff change now scheduled for June 1974. In April Harrison's supplied amended essays, with the 4½p in blue-green, blue or pale blue-green, and the 8p in orange or maroon.

The revised essays were seen and approved by the SAC on 25 April, subject to the captions being printed in silver and the background colours blue for the 4½p and maroon for the 8p. On this occasion White took the opportunity to introduce the SAC to Edward Hughes, who had collaborated on the designs with Collis Clements.

Final essays came to hand during the following month.

White reported to the SAC meeting on 5 June that Lady Churchill, Sir Winston's widow, had seen the essays and was very pleased with them (the Churchill family was in fact consulted on designs throughout). On 18 June a set of the final essays was forwarded to the Secretary of State for Industry, Anthony Wedgwood Benn, now the minister responsible for the Post Office. Benn submitted these to the Queen on 28 June; her approval was confirmed on 3 July, and notified to the Post Office on 12 July. In the meantime an identical set of essays were returned to Harrison's on 28 June. The first proof stamp sheets, of the 5½p value, had already been produced by 21 July, when R F York of Harrison's wrote of these, in a note to Peter Shrivens of Postal Marketing: 'I was quite surprised to see that the print quality of these is far better than we were able to achieve with the essay. I suggest that rather than try and make it like the essay we proceed with this particular quality.' This was agreed the same day.

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## ISSUE AND SALES OF STAMPS

Full details of the issue were announced to the press on 28 August and the stamps were issued as scheduled on 9 October, in the following colours and values:

4½p (inland 1st class) - Prussian blue, pale turquoise-green, silver

5½p (European letter rate) - sepia, brownish grey, silver

8p (airmail letter Zone B) - crimson, light claret, silver

10p (airmail letter Zone C) - light brown, stone, silver.

The stamps were issued in sheets of 100 on paper with all-over phosphor coating; PVAD (polyvinyl alcohol dextrin) gum was generally used but an unknown number of 8p were gummed with PVA gum. Examples of the 5½p were reported on thinner paper or (by 'Stamp Collecting' on 17 October) without phosphor coating. The totals for stamps ordered, issued and sold are as follows:



	<b>4½p</b>	<b>5½p</b>	<b>8p</b>	<b>10p</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Ordered by Post Office</b>	67,000,000	15,300,000	13,000,000	10,400,000	105,700,000
<b>'Good' stamps printed</b>	55,355,000	9,803,000	8,828,000	8,552,800	82,538,800
<b>Sold</b>	54,000,000	9,110,900	7,925,000	7,752,800	78,788,700
<b>Percentage sold compared with issued</b>	97.6	92.9	89.8	90.6	95.5

The reasons for the unusually high proportion of 'waste' stamps printed, and the consequent shortfall between totals expected from the printers and actually received, are not recorded. The stamps were withdrawn from ordinary counters after two months and from philatelic sale after a year.

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## **PACKS AND COVERS**

There were 867,000 first day envelopes printed to meet advance orders; 114,434 PHQ cards reproducing the 5½p stamp were also issued, and 146,050 presentation packs were sold. The first day envelope and presentation pack were designed by Clements and Hughes, and were available from the Philatelic Bureau and all head post offices. A souvenir pack was also issued which was only available from the Bureau and philatelic sales counters; it was designed by David Harris and contained several fully illustrated fold-out pages and a comprehensive biography of Churchill. It was printed by Moore & Matthes Ltd and the stamps were unusually incorporated in a plastic 'bubble' strip slightly raised up from the body of the pack. There were 40,630 sold out of 50,000 printed: of these 19,000 were sold by the Philatelic Bureau, 4,000 by standing orders for souvenir packs; 8,000 by a promotional approach to 10,250 collectors with standing orders for ordinary packs; 7,000 in response to casual orders.

The texts for the first day envelope filler cards and both packs were written by Alan Martin Harvey. As well as the incorrect identification of the 4½p portrait perpetuated in the filler card text, it was noticed too late that the text of the packs included several spelling errors that the typesetters, designers and Post Office had overlooked during the production process, such as 'disasterous' and 'Dardenelles'. However, according to a market research survey on the special pack, whose findings the Philatelic Bureau reported to Postal Marketing on 19 November, this had not aroused public complaint, unlike the 'awkward size' of the packs, which did not fit the standard collector's album. There was also internal dissatisfaction over the covers; as Clements and Hughes admitted in a letter to Stuart Rose

on 6 September, they had not left enough room outside the design area on the first day envelope for the stamps to be attached in a continuous strip as considered ideal. Rose himself criticised the standard of printing of the envelopes, in a letter to R E Bonar, the Philatelic Bureau manager, on 9 October.

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## FIRST DAY HANDSTAMPS AND POSTMARKS

When Clements and Hughes were commissioned in mid-April of 1974 to design the first day envelope, filler card and presentation pack, they were also asked to design special first day of issue handstamps for the Philatelic Bureau, for London SW1, and for Woodstock, Oxford (where Churchill had been born at Blenheim Palace). Two finished designs were supplied by the beginning of June featuring a hand giving Churchill's 'V' sign, one with a cigar and one without; to the team's disappointment Stuart Rose felt obliged to reject these as liable to offend the minority through misinterpretation. In a letter of 3 June Hughes listed other possible treatments they had already considered and dismissed:

- (1) Hats - already on the stamps
- (2) Bow tie - 'has now become more synonymous with Robin Day'
- (3) Cigar - wrong shape if used in isolation
- (4) Bulldog - possibility
- (5) Union Jack - 'played to death'
- (6) Garter Cross - 'rather irrelevant'
- (7) Monogram - 'too commonly used'
- (8) Family crest - possibility
- (9) Siren suit - 'not really suitable'
- (10) Outline of head - portraits already on stamps
- (11) 'A completely typographical solution ... not very imaginative'.

Hughes suggested that if the 'V' sign designs were indeed unacceptable, they thought either (4) or (8) worth pursuing if Rose wished. Subsequently they reached the preliminary sketch stage on the themes of 'hats', the Garter Cross, the Union Jack and a purely typographical 'V', and produced four finished drawings based on alternative 'WSC' monograms. They also seized upon an 'excellent suggestion' by Peter Shrives of Postal Marketing that a design might be based on Churchill's signature; a specimen was obtained from the Churchill family solicitors and a version prepared. The monogram design finally chosen, plus minor amendments, was produced in separate variants for the three required cancellations, 'House of Commons' being incorporated into the London SW1 version and 'Blenheim' into the Woodstock handstamp. Clements pointed out in a note accompanying the final artwork on 25 July that lettering in the same typeface as on the handstamps had been used on the stamps, envelope, pack and supporting publicity material throughout; the team's bill of £201.42 for all work on the handstamps was presented on 31 July.

On 16 August special instructions on the handstamps were sent to the postmasters of Oxford and the South West District Office in London by Mrs A M Clarke of Postal Marketing. The following points were emphasised: 'Quality postmarking ... stimulates custom and assists in marketing ... The prime need with philatelic mail is careful postmarking and maintenance of cleanliness of the covers.'

Response to the facility was particularly gratifying in Oxford, where the Assistant Head Postmaster telephoned towards the end of the day to report first day postings as higher than anticipated. The standard 'First Day of Issue' cancellation was provided through special posting boxes at 186 main offices; the postmark from Tunbridge Wells, Kent was available with a 'Posted at Chartwell' cachet, this being where Churchill had made his home. Ordinary circular datestamps which also proved of interest included: Churchill, Bristol; Churchill, Oxford; Winston, Darlington; Marlborough, Wilts (he was a grandson of the 7th Duke of Marlborough); Sandhurst, Camberley (where he had been a cadet); Bladon, Oxford (where he was buried); the House of Commons and House of Lords.

Other special handstamps relating to the issue available on 9 October only were: 'Churchill's First Constituency', at Conservative Party Headquarters, Oldham, Lancs; 'Action This Day W S C', at the offices of the Wanstead and Woodford Conservative Association, Woodford Green (Churchill's final constituency); a forces handstamp numbered 'BFPS 1874' commemorating Churchill's rank as honorary Air Commodore in the Royal Auxiliary Air Force. This was associated with a cover illustrating the career of 12 Squadron RAF, part of a series benefiting the RAF Museum Appeal Fund; cancelled covers with a Churchill centenary stamp were available from either 12 Squadron, RAF Honington, Bury St Edmund's, Suffolk or at the forces postal depot at Inglis Barracks, Mill Hill, London NW7. Use of the 'Churchill Centenary Exhibition' handstamp, available at Somerset House WC1, was extended until 9 October, although it was originally meant to run only from 10 May to 30 September; the exhibition itself was extended until 14 October, the last day also being marked by a special handstamp. Other special handstamps available on the day of issue but unrelated to the stamps were: 'Universal Postal Union 1874 Clitheroe Lancs'; 'Rotary Club of Paddington Golden Jubilee London W2'; 'Golden Jubilee of Local Radio Nottingham 1924-1974'; 'Oldest Post Office in Britain 1763 Sanquhar Dumfriesshire' (this had been among the suggestions for the 1974 stamp programme).

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## COMMENTS ON THE ISSUE

The stamps were generally well-received, as indicated by the sales figures; however, 'The Times' of 10 September gave space to a German correspondent, Siegfried Koss, who complained that the benign image of Churchill on the 5½p stamp was taken from a larger

picture for which he had posed with a Thompson sub-machine gun when visiting coastal defences in July 1940. Herr Koss complained: 'The good-humoured grandpa seems to be looking down on his British grandchildren. But the twinkle in his eye immediately turns to hatred and brutal cynicism if you add to the upper bit the bottom half of the original picture' - as he also pointed out, the full image had been reproduced in a Nazi propaganda leaflet over the slogan 'Churchill - Gangster'. 'The Times' reported that these objections were shared neither by the co-designer Edward Hughes, the Churchill family, nor an anonymous Post Office spokesman. The full image from which the detail was selected for the 4½p stamp was already quite celebrated.

On 17 September Dalton Newfield of Sacramento, California, USA, wrote in his capacity as President of the International Churchill Society to praise the Post Office for the centenary stamps, but also to warn them that Churchill as portrayed on the 4½p stamp was not shown wearing the uniform of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports on his appointment in 1941, as described in the August press release and September 1974 'British Philatelic Bulletin': in any case Churchill had not worn the uniform until his formal installation in August 1946. Newfield thought that the peaked cap worn by Churchill on the 4½p might be that of an Elder Brother of Trinity House, which he had been fond of wearing. Replying on 9 October, James Berry wrote on behalf of Postal Marketing that enquiries put to the Imperial War Museum and National Maritime Museum had established that the uniform was actually that of the Royal Yacht Squadron (Berry had visited the Churchill Centenary exhibition to confirm this for himself).

The incorrect description of the 4½p was repeated in the presentation packs; however, it appears that only two other letters drawing attention to it were ever received, from a Mr Larkinson of Mansfield, Notts, in March 1975, and from David J Aggersberg of Stanley Gibbons Publications Ltd in April 1982, who like Newfield before him thought it might be a Trinity House uniform.

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## **PAYMENTS TO ARTISTS AND OTHERS**

Of the artists involved, Louis Ward, John Spencer-Churchill, Peter Branfield and Ishbel McWhirter were each paid £600 on 7 March 1974; Ruskin Spear was paid £600 on 14 March (and a further £60 in June, the Post Office being liable for 10 per cent VAT). These sums were based on £150 per submitted design up to a maximum of four.

Clarke/Clements/Hughes Ltd was also paid £600 on 7 March, plus extra costs of £53.12 for photographs and £54.26 for typesetting, a total of £778.11 including 10 per cent VAT. For the completed work on the accepted designs, the team was paid a further £694.57 on 25 June - £600 for four completed designs at £150 each, plus £31.43 for 'photoprints and

typesetting', plus VAT. The Post Office also paid copyright fees of £648 each to Topix (Thomson Newspapers) Ltd and Camera Press in September for the reproduction rights to photographs used on the stamps (no payment to the Radio Times Hulton Picture Library is recorded, however). Payments of £16.20 to Central Press, £4.54 to the Imperial War Museum, and £11 to the Illustrated Newspapers Group Ltd were also made for photographs used on the packs, and £10.50 to the Alden Press, Oxford, for the picture of the North Front of Blenheim Palace on the first day envelope.

Acknowledgements for illustrations used on the packs were also made to the Press Association, Popperfoto, Barratt's Photo Press, Central Press, Mary Evans Picture Library, the National Trust, and the Broadwater Collection (the Churchill family's private archive). Whether these also required the payment of fees is not recorded. Production costs of the issue were calculated the following year at £13,914.07 for 'development' (essays, cylinders, and so on) and £25,952.48 for printing.

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## THE ARTISTS

During the 1970s and 80s Collis Clements and Edward Hughes produced an impressive number of stamp designs, working together and separately. They first set up as a team with Graham Clarke in 1968, specialising in graphic design, typography and illustration. After several commissions for Post Office displays they were initially invited to produce stamp designs in 1970, and were first successful with the following year's Christmas issue. In 1973 Clements and Hughes collaborated the Royal Wedding issue. Subsequent to the 1974 Churchill stamps, Hughes designed the 1979 Year of the Child and 1988 Linnean Society Bicentenary stamps, while Clements was co-designer of the 1988 Sports issue presentation pack. Collis Clements became a freelance designer and art director, and won a number of awards for his work; he was a Member of the Chartered Society of Designers (formerly the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers) and for many years lectured in graphic design at Maidstone College of Art, where Hughes was also a part-time lecturer. Edward Hughes was the senior member of the original partnership, born in 1924 and brought up in the East End of London before attending St Martin's School of Art; as a child he witnessed the doomed maiden flight of the airship R101. His later work included wallpaper, posters, and publicity material, specialising particularly in logos for the corporate identities of large organisations. Hughes was an ARCA and a Fellow of the Chartered Society of Designers.

GILES ALLEN  
26 September 1995

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