

THEMESCENE

September 2021

In this issue we:

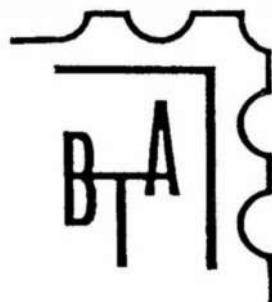
Look at a leader

Kim Il-sung

With Mark Humfrey



BRITISH THEMATIC



ASSOCIATION

Continue our Australian Odyssey

Colonisation of New South Wales

With Chris Wheeler



Travel on two wheels

Mail carried by motorcycle

With John Hayward

Explore writers from the Isle of Man

Sir Hall Caine

With Jeff Dugdale



Enjoy themed issues

Europa and its 2017 theme

With Flavia Del Giudice

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

Volume 38, No.3. Whole Number 144

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Mail carried by motor-cycle, page 83



Fig 1: Penhalonga, Southern Rhodesia, to Cleator Moor, England, 15 Jan 1909

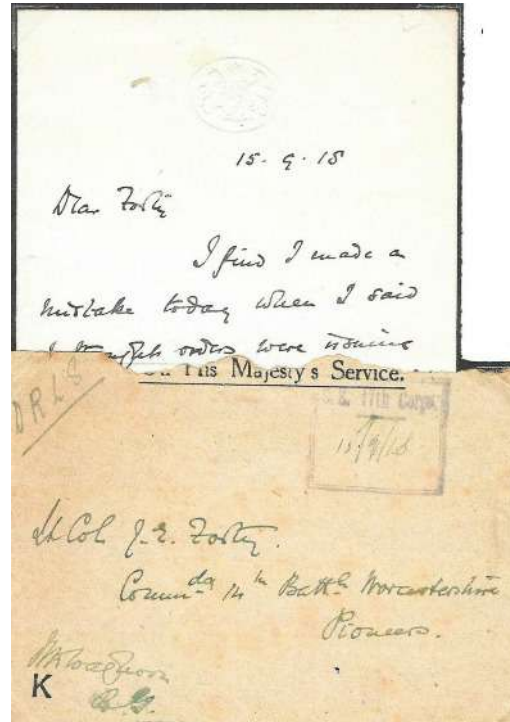


Fig 2: OHMS envelope with mss DRLS sent to 14th Battalion Worcestershire Pioneers



Fig 3: DRLS plus Royal Signals handstamps



Fig 4: Army Signals Office to Command HQ in Nairobi, Kenya, with mss "DRLS"

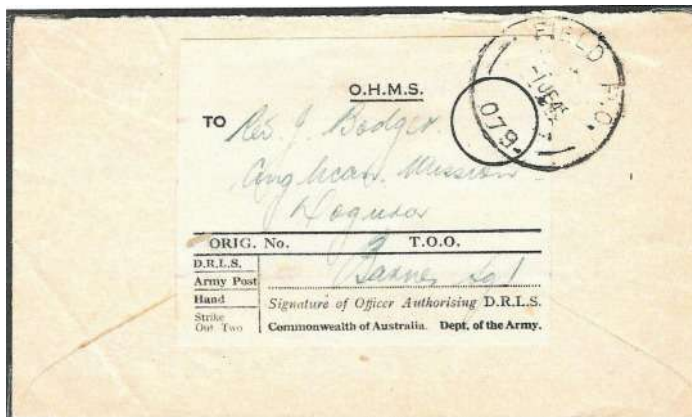


Fig 5: Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea, to Dogura

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Vol. 38, No. 3, Whole Number 144

SEPTEMBER 2021

THEMESCENE

Journal of the
British Thematic Association
which is a member of the
Association of British
Philatelic Societies
ISSN 0268-2508

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EDITORIAL

Wendy Buckle

How do you tell a story? You can do it admirably with a wide selection of stamps, as illustrated in this issue with stories about the Colonisation of New South Wales (page 79) and the novelist Sir Hall Caine (page 89). Or you can really dig deep into both subject and philatelic knowledge to use covers to show how one specific mode of transport (in this case motor-cycles) delivered the mail (page 83). Many of us I suspect use a mixture of approaches, using both stamps and postal history (plus postal stationery etc) to come up with a story, as illustrated here with Kim Il-sung (page 76). We all collect in whichever way pleases us, with an outcome of interest firstly to ourselves, but so often of interest to other people too. This is something which has really been brought home to me this year with our series of Zoom talks (page 100) on a very wide range of topics, most of which I knew nothing about beforehand, but all of which I unfailingly enjoyed. Would you like to share your interest? We are looking for speakers for a whole session (around 30 minutes), but also on 26th October we will be having a 'Members' Displays' session. This is your chance to share a maximum of eight sheets from your collection and give a brief talk.

Life is clearly getting back to some sort of normality for most of us. At last I actually need a diary again! Local club programmes are being drawn up. Autumn Stampex is planned to be a physical event (page 102). And now I find myself short of articles for the December issue of *Themescene*. All that lockdown enthusiasm generated some great copy, but I've worked through it. Would you like to send me something? I do not set upper or lower limits on length of article or number of illustrations. Please [contact me](#) if you have any questions or ideas.

Finally I extend a warm welcome to new member Michele Bresso from California. 📖

CHAIRMAN

Barry Stagg


Into the future

Who would have thought that COVID would still be a dominant factor in our lives eighteen months after the first cases? It may be getting better, and there might be light at the end of the tunnel (for the UK anyway), but there is still uncertainty regarding the future. But I did venture out to Midpex and I was glad I went. I saw a few friends and colleagues and it was good to talk face to face. I must admit I was a little nervous but I did get the car into 4th gear and I did do a 100 mile round trip without incident. It was worth going if only to break the 'Covid' ice! The organisers were brave to press ahead with the event and I'm glad they did. Now I'm waiting for Stampex which is just six weeks away as I write this. I feel a little more confident, less nervous, that all will be well. I hope!

And talking of Stampex, I am looking forward to seeing all the BTA exhibits at the show (page 102). At the last count we had over 30 entries, totalling over 100 frames, with the competitive/non-competitive split about even. Of course we hope we get a few more! This is a great opportunity to showcase theme collecting to the philatelic community.

One success for the BTA this year is the introduction of the Zoom presentations (page 100). With eight or nine such events already completed and another three or four in the calendar, and with around 40 attendees at every event they have been a great success. May I bring to your attention the October Zoom presentation (Tuesday 26th October) when BTA members are encouraged to show one or more pages of their collection. It should be fun. We hope to continue the Zoom presentations and include them in our yearly meetings. Perhaps not one a month but certainly a number of them a year. And may I thank Jon and Wendy for all their effort in putting the meetings together and running them on the night.

I know Stampex is too far to travel for many of you, especially in the current circumstances. But if you do come then please say hello if you see me. And if you feel brave enough to try the new technology of Zoom then give me a wave. It's always good to see members.

Keep well and safe. 



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KIM IL-SUNG: ETERNAL PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF NORTH KOREA

Mark Humfrey

Kim Il-sung was born in 1912 as Kim Sung-ju at Mangyungbong, a small village near Pyongyang. The village had the name Namni at this time as it was part of the Japanese Empire. This birthplace features on many stamp issues, but as with much of the propaganda surrounding the cult of the Kim family it contains a powerful reminder that 'Kim become the sun', the literal meaning of his adopted name Kim Il-sung, and the stamp illustration has an exaggerated sunrise (fig 1). A version of this motif appears on many stamps and pieces of postal stationery.

The Kim family, like many Koreans, migrated to Manchuria in 1920 to escape from the oppression of the Japanese government and/or to escape the famine conditions in the countryside. The freedom that the family sought was short lived, as in 1931, following an incident at Mukden, the Japanese Imperial forces occupied Manchuria and set up the puppet state of Manchukuo (map page 78). The Emperor of Manchukuo, Henry Pu Yi, was enthroned by the Japanese as K'ang Te. He visited Japan in 1935 (fig 2) and the puppet government continued to proclaim the unity of Manchukuo and Japan with propaganda of a type that Kim Il-sung would use later to make his leadership appear legitimate, shown in stamps from Japan and postal stationery from Manchukuo (figs 3a-3b).

Kim Il-sung became a member of the Northeast Anti-Japanese United Army in 1935, which was a guerrilla group sponsored by the Communist Party of China. The celebration of liberation from Japan is shown in fig 4 with Kim shown as a young administrator.

Kim has claimed that he had been thrown out of the Korean Communist Party in his youth because he was too nationalistic.

In 1940 Kim and his guerrilla army escaped to the Soviet Union. The group were sent to Soviet army training camps and so he began to be shaped by the USSR. He eventually reached the rank of major in the Red Army. He served in a unit designated the 88th Separate Rifle Brigade until the end of World War II in 1945. Kim has been awarded the Order of Lenin on two occasions.

In 1945 the Soviet army occupied the Korean peninsula north of the 38th Parallel. Stalin was given the name of Kim Il-sung as a possible leader of the Korean state. Kim was duly installed as a Soviet controlled leader until the Chinese army intervened in the Korean War.

The cementing of his position included his election as the party chairman of the Workers' Party of Korea (fig 5). In this period the first of many statues appeared and he referred to himself as the "Great Leader" (figs 6a and 6b),

The ambition of the North Korean leader was to unify Korea. He eventually gained permission from Stalin to invade the south if he could get the backing of Mao Zedong and the Chinese government.

The Korean War began in June 1950 with the invasion of the south. Initially the advance was successful, but once the U.S. Army was deployed and supported by the United Nations



Fig 1: Namni / Mangyungbong with sunrise. North Korea 1975



Fig 2: Visit of Emperor K'ang Te. Japan 1935

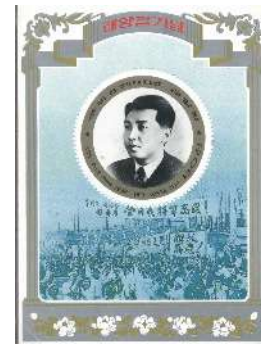


Fig 4: Kim as administrator. North Korea 1998



Symbolic representation of the Chinese Spring Orchid, *Cymbidium ensifolium*, in the Imperial seal of Manchukuo.

Official state flower of Imperial Japan is the 16 petal Chrysanthemum.

Cymbidium goeringii the state flower, as it was the favourite of the Emperor.

This small image is a triumph of visual propaganda. The orchid growing and supporting the chrysanthemum is a strong representation of the idea of the harmony that supposedly existed between Manchukuo and Japan.

Fig 3a, 3b: Japanese propaganda Manchukuo postal stationery



Fig 5: Chairman of Workers' Party of Korea. North Korea 2000

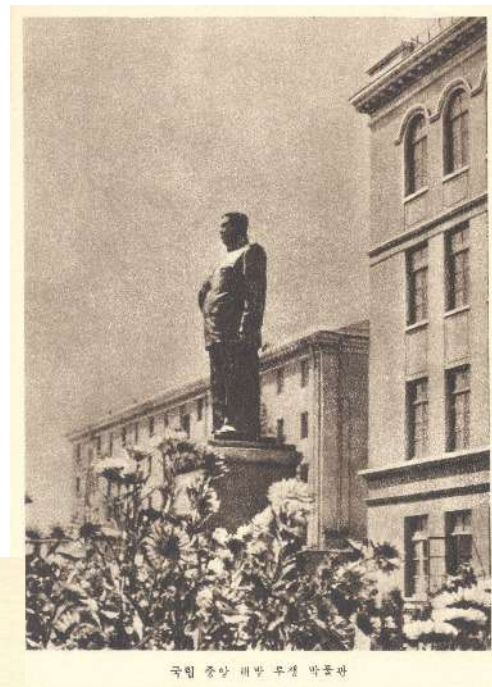


Fig 6a, 6b: Statue of the 'Great Leader'. North Korea postal stationery



forces the North Korean army were pushed back north of Pyongyang. This triggered the deployment of the Chinese army in support of the North Korean forces. Kim is depicted as leading the forces across the Yalu River (fig 7). British units were part of a Commonwealth Division (figs 8a, 8b). The Belgian contingent was made up entirely of volunteers. In Flemish this is 'Vrijwilligerskorps' which literally means 'free will corps' (fig 9). The war rumbled on but has never officially ended. An armistice agreement was signed in July 1953.

Kim continued to consolidate his power after the war which he claimed as a victory.

The legend that the cult of personality has produced includes hundreds of works of art that are shown in public buildings throughout the country. He died in 1994 and was proclaimed 'Eternal President'. 📖



Fig 7: Kim leading the forces across the Yalu River

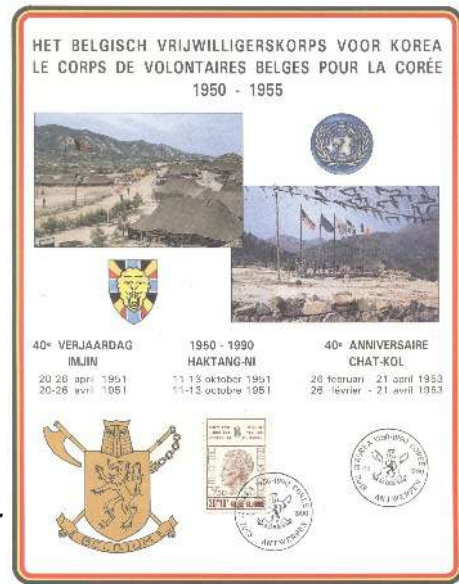


Fig 9: Belgian contingent in the Korean War



Figs 8a, 8b: British unit in the Korean War



Japan and Korea, with Manchukuo in green.

(Source: Wikimedia Commons)

THE PENAL COLONISATION OF AUSTRALIA (1788 - 1868). PART 2: NEW SOUTH WALES (1788 - 1825)

Chris Wheeler

In the Introductory article, we saw that having set sail on 13 May 1787 leading the First Fleet, Captain Arthur Phillip (fig 1) founded the first British settlement in Australian history as a penal colony. On 18 January 1788, the first ship of the First Fleet, HM Brig *Supply* (fig 2), with Phillip aboard, reached Botany Bay. However, Botany Bay was found to be unsuitable by Phillip, so he travelled some 30 miles further north, reaching Port Jackson on the northern side of the Parramatta River. He then sailed across the Parramatta River estuary and reached Sydney Cove on the night of 25 January 1788. On the morning of 26 January, men on board his ship went ashore (fig 3) and started clearing land for a camp. In the late afternoon, they erected a flagpole, raised the Union Jack (fig 4), and the officers ashore made toasts to the Royal Family and the success of the colony. Likely, some, or all the ships of the First Fleet were present for the flag raising. Then, on the morning of 27 January, all the fit male convicts, marines, and some of the ships' crew went ashore to establish the camp and find food. The female convicts came ashore on 6 February 1788. About midday on 7 February 1788, the convicts, marines and others who were staying, were gathered by the Governor for the reading of the Proclamation of New South Wales and a long explanation of the rights of the convicts and others. Previous to that, British naval administration, as aboard the ships, had applied. Thus, the Colony of New South Wales was founded on 7 February 1788. Australia remained a Penal Colony until it was formally constituted as a Crown Colony on 11 August 1824 (fig 5).

Many had died en-route as conditions below decks were appalling (fig 6), but though weak and listless, once ashore, everyone was put to work, the priority being food production and accommodation. Soon public buildings and a small village were established. The seeds brought from England were far more suited to Europe than to Australia and subject to native pests of all sorts, so hunger prevailed for a long time. The sawyers were given extra rations as their work of cutting down, carrying and making planks and posts for the accommodation buildings was urgent and needed extra energy. The model settler's accommodation was a small home with a semi-attached kitchen (as a fire prevention measure) at the rear, with a three-sided veranda (fig 7). Scouting parties went out to discover the hinterland (fig 8), occasionally meeting the dispossessed aborigines, who had no hesitation in ambushing and killing them when the opportunity arose. Some were captured and brought back to the settlement to assist in the construction of the colony. They were paid, fed and given some basic English and religious education. In the Spring the foragers discovered that thousands of petrels were arriving on the coastal cliff sides. The birds were totally unafraid and were collected in their hundreds for their meat and the single egg the females were about to lay (fig 9).

In 1790 Government House was completed (fig 10), and the following year the Government Farm (fig 11) had been laid out. To obtain a wider range and better supplies



Fig 1: Australia 1986
Captain Phillip



Fig 2: Australia 1983
H. M. Brig 'Supply'



Fig 3: Australia 1937
Landing at Sydney Cove



Fig 4: Tuvalu 1999
Raising the flag at Sydney Cove



Fig 7: Australia 1972
Pioneer shelter

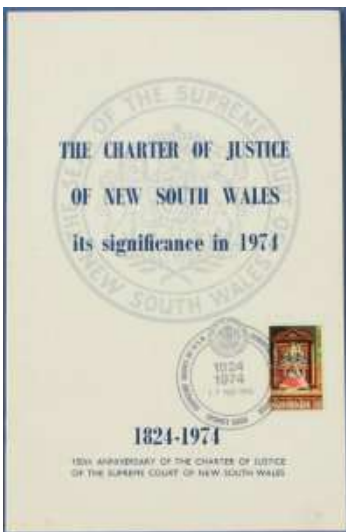


Fig 5: Australia booklet
1974
NSW as Crown Colony



Fig 6: Norfolk Island 1987
Below decks



Fig 8: Norfolk Island 1987
Scouting parties



Fig 9: Pitcairn Islands 1988
Murphy's Petrel

of goods such as more suitable seeds, some of the ships were despatched back to Cape Town and to South East Asia, their despatch being timed with the winds and currents. This eventually cut the journey time from England to Australia to just over four months, a vast improvement on the year it took for the First Fleet. Later, as the convicts completed their sentences, they were granted their freedom, receiving their 'tickets of leave'. Many of them moved inland or up the coast, establishing farms growing crops more suitable to the local soil and climate, supported later by new mixed race citizens resulting from liaisons between the various races.

In 1789 former convict James Ruse produced the first successful wheat harvest in New South Wales. He repeated this success in 1790 and, because of the pressing need for food production in the colony, was rewarded by Governor Phillip with the first land grant made in New South Wales. His 30-acre grant was at Rose Hill, near Parramatta on the northern side of the river. This was the colony's first successful farming enterprise, and Ruse was soon joined by others. The colony began to grow enough food to support itself, and the standard of living for the residents gradually improved. From about 1815 the colony expanded rapidly as free settlers arrived and new lands were opened up for farming. Despite the long and arduous sea voyage, settlers were attracted by the prospect of making a new life on virtually free Crown land. In Australia, a convict who had served part or all of his time would apply for a 'ticket of leave', permitting some prescribed freedoms. This enabled these now ex-convicts to resume a more normal life, to marry and raise a family. They usually remained in Australia as free settlers and were able to take on convict servants themselves. They were given land and began to contribute to the development of the colony as settlers, now being allowed to sell their produce, which they certainly did!

However, a number of convicts refused to comply with the conditions at Sydney Cove, committed other crimes, and because they harmed the more complicit and resigned life of the other convicts, were banished to a separate and stricter institution, firstly in Newcastle under Lieutenant Shortland R.N. (fig 12) and then from 1821 at Port Macquarie, 250 miles up the east coast. Newcastle went on to be an industrial town with coal and steel production, its history well laid out in a Cinderella set of 5 pictures from its 2003 Stamp Show (fig 13). The country's first lighthouse was built on the Heads at Port Macquarie (fig 14). Newcastle fulfilled its role for two decades, but lost its need for isolation. A new site was required for 'dumping' these irredeemable criminals, as the Hunter Region was opened up to settling farmers, and the cedar trees in the area needed for new buildings had run out as the settlement grew in size. The Hunter Valley was also found to be an excellent area for growing sugar cane. The Barbados stamp (fig 15) shows the sugar cane breeding programme, and the misprinted stamps from Brazil show the structure of the sugar cane itself (fig 16).

Port Macquarie, however, with its thick bush, tough terrain and the local aborigines who were keen to capture escaping prisoners in return for tobacco and blankets, provided large amounts of both isolation and hard labour to keep the criminals under control. By 1825 some 1500 hardened convicts were being held there.

During this time, the need for transport and communication increased, and firstly a rudimentary road was constructed south of the river system from Sydney to Parramatta (fig 17). It wasn't until the late 1850s that land communication for passengers and mail from the more distant settlements up the coastline to Sydney was established, so ships continued to be used for this purpose for several more decades.


The story of Queensland continues in Part 3. 



Fig 10: Australia 1988
Government House,
Sydney, 1790



Fig 11: Australia 1988
Government Farm,
Parramatta, 1791



Fig 12: Australia 1947
Lieutenant Shortland
Mis-perf block



Fig 13: Stamp show labels 2003
Views of Newcastle



Fig 14: Australia 1968
Macquarie Lighthouse,
1818



Fig 15: Barbados 1950
Sugar cane



Fig 17: Australia 1988
Parramattta Road to
Sydney, 1796

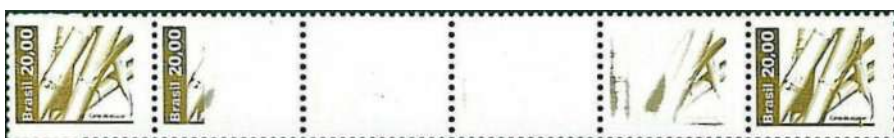


Fig 16: Brazil 1982
Structure of sugar cane
Printing error, with normal



MAIL CARRIED BY MOTOR-CYCLE

John Hayward

This article embraces a selection of worldwide correspondence carried by motor-cycle by postal authorities and official bodies, including the military. It concentrates in particular on covers, and for reasons of limited space does not include telegrams or the numerous stamps which depict collection and delivery of mail by motor-cycle.

Pre-World War I

Post offices throughout the world and official bodies, most notably various armies, were quick to adopt motorised transport after its invention towards the end of the nineteenth century to speed up the carriage of mail, and although motor-cycles were first used for this purpose in Hungary from 1899, the earliest item I have found that undertook at least part of its journey from the sender to the addressee by motor-cycle is in 1909. Surprisingly, after over 40 years of collecting this subject, it is from Southern Rhodesia in 1909 (fig.1 inside front cover). This is a postcard posted in Penhalonga, a mining community in Southern Rhodesia, on 15 January 1909 to Cleator Moor in England. There was no railway at Penhalonga at the time, so for a few months from 1 January 1909 mail was carried as far as Umtali by motor-cycle and thence by car and rail.

British and Commonwealth Forces

The advent of World War I in 1914 considerably changed the use of all motorised vehicles, and the British Army was not slow then to adopt the use of motor-cycles for the urgent delivery of despatches. Telegraph and bicycle communications used in the Sudanese and Boer Wars for urgent despatches had been too limited, slow and insecure. So at the start of World War I the British Army concluded that a safe, swift and secure means of conveying despatches would be by motor-cycle. On 25 September 1914 it created, as part of the Corps of Signals, the Despatch Rider Letter Service, the "DRLS". Despatches were sent in OHMS envelopes (fig.2) with a DRLS cachet in manuscript. The item illustrated together with its contents was sent by the Chief Engineer 17 Corps, Brig-General Waghorn, backstamped "ARMY TELEGRAPHS R 15 IX 18" with manuscript cachet "DRLS" (top left) to Lt-Col Forty commanding the 14th Battalion Worcestershire Pioneers in the area of Cambrai. Unfortunately, very few DRLS envelopes from the front in World War I have survived unscathed from opening by hand, as is the case here.

The arrangements for military post improved for World War II so far as the DRLS was concerned. Royal Signals dated handstamps appeared and DRLS cachets were more frequently applied by rubber handstamp (fig.3) rather than in manuscript. The cover illustrated was sent on 26 October 1940 to the Commander North Hants Sub-Area by registered DRLS and bears a Royal Signals dated handstamp and "D.R.L.S. Registered" rubber handstamp.

British Commonwealth forces also used the DRLS during World War II in various theatres of war. Figure 4 illustrates the use of confiscated Italian stationery by a South African Unit in Ethiopia. The envelope was sent in December 1941 via the Army Signals Office to Command HQ in Nairobi, Kenya, endorsed "DRLS" in manuscript. It is backstamped 24 December 1941 Express Letter Service Nairobi and would have completed its journey in Nairobi by motor-cycle. Figure 5 shows an envelope used by the Australian Forces in

Papua New Guinea on 1 June 1945. As can be seen the Department of the Army clearly had a special label printed authorising use of the DRLS. Here the envelope was sent from Field Post Office 079 Milne Bay by motor-cycle to the Anglican Mission at Dogura.

The development of the Cold War in Europe necessitated courier services overseas, especially in the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR). The Security Courier Service was set up by the Royal Engineers (Postal Section) and this gradually took over from the DRLS. Figure 6 illustrates a letter sent on 8 June 1959 from HQ 2nd Allied Tactical Air Force, Monchen Gladbach, by despatch rider of the Security Courier Service to 2 POC Sundern, BFPO 39, with Courier Service handstamp and NAG 9 (Northern Army Group) registered label affixed. Interestingly, a famous fictional character posing as a despatch rider in BAOR is commemorated philatelically by Great Britain – James Bond (fig 7).

Post-World War I

Returning to the post-World War I period and the commercial usage of motor-cycles for the carriage of mail, the Daily Weather Report was produced by the Meteorological Office in London immediately the 1300 GMT UK chart was available. To expedite its despatch to important locations it was taken by messenger, a motor-cycle courier, to London rail termini and sent as a Railway Letter “To be called for”. The envelope in figure 8 illustrates the advantage of speed a motor-cycle can bring to the delivery of urgent weather reports from the Meteorological Office. Upon delivery by motor-cycle to Charing Cross station on 19 March 1919 it received a “Railway Letter To be called for” label, a three-halfpenny postage stamp (although it did not go through normal mail) and a 2d South Eastern & Central Railway letter charge for carriage to the RAF Observers School at New Romney, Kent.

The next carriage of mail by motor-cycle came to the author’s attention by complete surprise. On a very poignant trip to the deserted village of Tyneham in Dorset, evacuated for use by the Army in 1943 and never re-occupied, a visit to the photographic display of earlier village life in the remaining church showed a picture of the former village post office with a GPO sidecar parked outside. The accompanying inscription read that mail was delivered to Tyneham between 1925 and 1935 by sidecar from Wareham, although no mention was made of mail posted in Tyneham. Assiduous searching since then has unfortunately failed to locate any such mail addressed to Tyneham in that period. A photocopy from any reader would be hugely appreciated.

United States

The United States Post Office was continually looking to speed up the delivery of mail. It was recognised that airmail moved quickly from airport to airport, but that delays getting the mail to and from aeroplanes wasted much time. In 1928, to gain time and allow a later closing time for airmail, Colonial Air Transport in New England proposed a motorised feeder line calling at neighbouring towns to pick up the airmail and deliver it to Hartford, Conn., in time to connect with Colonial’s Contract Air Mail route #1(C.A.M.1) to New York. However, a motor truck was ruled out as too large and expensive, but the Indian Motorcycle Co in nearby Springfield, Mass., took the opportunity to propose one of their motor-cycles attached to a sidecar be used instead. On 15 March 1928 a three month trial period was authorised by the Post Office Department on a feeder route by sidecar from Holyoke, Mass., with pickups at Northampton, Westfield and Springfield en route to Hartford (65 miles) a journey of 2hrs 30mins. Unfortunately, the experiment was underused and proved too expensive and not quick enough. The sidecar had simply not



Fig 6: Monchen Gladbach, to
2 POC Sundern, BFPO 39



Fig 7: GB 2008 James Bond

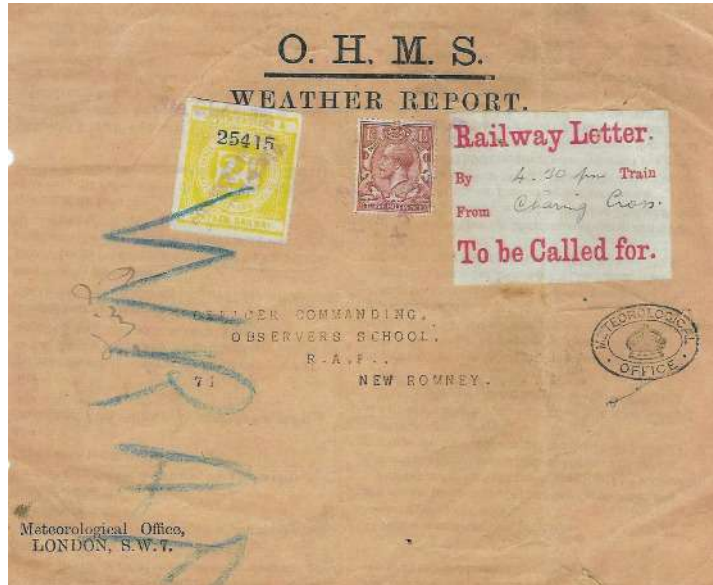


Fig 8: Meteorological
Office Daily Weather
Report



Fig 9: Westfield to Medford, Mass.



Figs 10 - 11: Front and back
of much-travelled cover which
missed the boat.



Fig 12: Coban to New York



Fig 13: Arnberg Police to Dortmund



Fig 14: Berlin-Tempelhof



Fig 15: Postschnelldienst showing etiquette and cross

convinced the public that airmail would be a speedier form of transport. So the experiment ended on 15 June 1928. Figure 9 illustrates a philatelic cover sent from Westfield on the first day of the experiment, 15 March 1928, to Medford, Mass., via motor-cycle to Hartford. It bears the “First Experimental Airplane Motorcycle Courier Service” illustrated cachet and a further cachet (bottom right) reading “This letter is dispatched by first trip of Courier Auxilliary to Air Mail in United States from WESTFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS”. Staying with the United States, between 1922 and 1944 various special delivery stamps were issued by the Post Office to expedite delivery of mail which depicted a Harley-Davidson motor-cycle, but did not necessarily involve the use of a motor-cycle. It can be a problem to discern from the postal markings on envelopes that have been the subject of special delivery if any part of their journey has been by motor-cycle, but the much travelled cover shown at the final stage of its journey, because of the absolute urgency, almost certainly did. Figure 10 (front) and figure 11 (reverse) illustrate that this envelope was sent by special delivery on 23 January 1936 from the Ingersoll company in Newcastle, Indiana, to Miss B. Ingersoll a ship’s passenger sailing from New York at noon on 25 January 1936. It was carried by train to New York – backstamped Railroad Post Office and Railroad Mail Service and received at the GPO New York at 0930 hrs 25 January 1936. In view of the ship’s imminent departure, the cover was delivered to the ship by motor-cycle. Unfortunately it arrived 12 minutes after the ship had sailed, a special cachet on the reverse side stating “Offered at ADDRESS 1/25 1212” and cause of non-delivery “.....boat sailed”! A further cachet was added to the reverse recording the delivery was *inter alia* “too late for delivery” and another on the front “REC’D TOO LATE”. Subsequently “opened by mistake” was endorsed on the reverse, the address deleted, a French address added, the envelope sent to France and backstamped “Levallois” on receipt on 11 February 1936 at 5.15.

Guatemala

From 20 June 1940 to 4 December 1944 an express postal service by motor-cycle was operated in Guatemala from Coban to Guatemala City – 86 miles – as there was no railway. The then current 4 centavos stamp was overprinted “ESPRESSO” solely for use on mail using this service. Figure 12 illustrates a cover which travelled on this route by motor-cycle posted in Coban on 30 May 1944, addressed to New York, and backstamped 1 June 1944 1700hrs in Guatemala City. Why it took over two days to travel just 86 miles is not explained. It may have been bad roads, or the motor-cycle only travelled each way on alternate days. The cover then journeyed on to the USA by rail and ship where it was opened and examined by a wartime censor.

West Germany

Between 1945 and 1964 a police motor-cycle courier service carrying official mail was run in West Germany between police stations and government bureaux. The cover in figure 13 was sent from Arnsberg Police to the Chief of Police in Dortmund and endorsed with the Police Courier Service cachet.

Staying in West Germany, the Postschnelldienst (Express Mail Service), operated from post offices in West Berlin from 1 March 1949 to 30 November 1951 at a premium rate for fast delivery by sidecars and scooters in their distinctive yellow livery, solely to addresses in the British, French and American Zones of West Berlin. Figure 14 illustrates an envelope postmarked Berlin-Tempelhof 1 at 1640hrs on 1 March 1949, the first day of operation of the service, sent to another address in Berlin-Tempelhof. It is endorsed

“Postschnelldienst” and crossed, both in green manuscript, signifying use of the service. Specially printed postal stationery envelopes for the use of Magistrates in Greater Berlin with a 1DM stamp overprinted “BERLIN” affixed were also available from 1 March 1949 to expedite official correspondence via the Postschnelldienst. Figure 15 shows such an envelope with the distinctive pre-printed green Postschnelldienst etiquette and cross, sent at 0840 hrs on 1 March 1949, the first day of operation, from Magistrates in Berlin-Charlottenburg 9 to the Alliance Insurance Co Ltd in Berlin-Charlotteburg 2. Later on 1 November 1949 a 2DM booklet (fig.16) was issued showing a sidecar of the Postschnelldienst on the reverse “...doing its duty quickly and promptly”.

Paris Pneumatic Post

A pneumatic post was operated in Paris for many years up to 30 March 1984 using special postal stationery. From 1968 until closure of the system a special service was available at some of its terminals by paying an additional fee for delivery by motor-cycles to certain neighbourhoods. This is stated on the reverse of the postal stationery: “b) *par preposes motocyclistes: Certaines localities de banlieu*”. Figure 17 illustrates a pneumatic postal stationery envelope sent on 26 March 1984 (four days before the system closed) with 12F in stamps added to pay for the carriage by motor-cycle beyond the pneumatic post terminus.

St Helena

On 4 January 1965 a local mail service operated by scooter was established on St Helena (fig.18) between its eight post offices. Figure 19 illustrates an envelope sent on 10 March 1986 from Sandy Bay, St Helena, delivered by the local post scooter (noted in manuscript) to the nearest post office for the addressee to collect. His actual address is omitted but was obviously well-known on such a small island.

New Zealand

Finally, coming more up to date, many postal authorities worldwide have been privatised in recent years by their respective governments and have ceded their postal monopolies to private operators. One such authority is the New Zealand Post Office. Figure 20 illustrates an envelope sent on 1 October 2002 from Wellington, New Zealand, and delivered by scooter of Pete’s Post Ltd, a private delivery company authorised by the New Zealand Post Office to deliver mail within New Zealand. Ironically, Pete’s Post was taken over once more by the New Zealand Post Office in December 2012!

Acknowledgement

Originally published in the *London Philatelist* volume 130 pages 208 to 216 in May 2021.



Fig 16: Booklet showing Postschnelldienst motor-cycle and sidecar

SIR HALL CAINE ... NOVELIST OF MAN

Jeff Dugdale

The Isle of Man is a strange entity, a “Crown Dependency” of the United Kingdom with its own laws, tax system and stamp issuing policy, yet still part of the British Isles. In the historical map (fig 1) the Island can be seen lying in the middle of the Irish Sea. Legend has it that it was created when the angry giant Finn McCool stuck his hand in the ground of what is now Northern Ireland, creating Lough Neagh and flinging that soil into the sea, as the arrows suggests! Today the Island is famous for motor cycle racing, as a very pleasant tourist destination and for celebrity immigrants like the late famous actor Norman Wisdom and the former world champion racing driver Nigel Mansell.

However 100 years ago it was famous also as the abode of the prolific writer of Manx heritage Sir Thomas Hall Caine (1853-1931) who has been celebrated on the Island’s stamps three times, once in caricature in 2006 (fig 2) and in 2003 and 2018 for the novels he wrote. In the period immediately after the death of Queen Victoria Hall Caine was a best selling author, his works translated into many languages dramatized for the stage and several filmed by Hollywood. At one point he was being compared to Tolstoy for the insight shown in his novels, the most popular of which were *The Christian* and *The Eternal City*. Writing fifteen novels, on subjects like adultery, divorce, domestic violence, illegitimacy, infanticide, religious bigotry and women’s rights, he became an international celebrity, selling ten million books. Caine was the most highly paid novelist of his day. But today hardly anyone has heard of him. One Internet source explains his popularity and demise (1):

“His moralistic and Romantic novels pitched the protagonists against the corruptions of “passion”, a battle only ever won through punishment and atonement. His novels addressed some of the most important and pressing issues of the day, challenging and outraging by their investigations of the place of women in society, the hierocracy of modern society, the pervasiveness of sin, the nature of justice and much else besides. Another great draw of Caine’s novels was their highly eventful and melodramatic plots including murder, madness, revolution, execution, shipwreck, death-bed reunions, volcanic eruptions, riots, suicide, prison-breaks and a lot of swooning.

It was this style of Caine’s writing that saw him fall from favour from the publication of *The Christian* onwards, as the 20th century brought literary tastes entirely opposed to Caine’s then ‘old-fashioned’ works.”

I have a particular connection to Caine as my father John J. Dugdale (1901-81) was an engineer-mechanic to Caine’s collection of cars when the great man returned to live at Greeba Castle on the Isle of Man.

The approach taken to celebrate Caine in 2018 was to associate his novels with some of the early stars of the silent cinema who appeared in films based on his plots. Caine wanted all the novels which he had set on the Island to be located and filmed there but financial pressures meant that the studios got their way, when he got their money!

Plot summaries below have been lifted from various sources (2, 3).

The Bondman (fig 3) was an 1890 best-selling novel set in the Isle of Man and Iceland. It was the first novel to be released by the newly established Heinemann publishing company. It was a phenomenal success and was later adapted into a successful play and two silent films.

The story behind *The Manxman* (1894) (fig 4) is one of two half-brothers in love with the same woman. The innate goodness of the simple Ramsey fisherman, Pete, leads him to trust completely both his friend the Deemster, Philip, and his wife, Kate, even after she secretly has the other's child and flees to live with him in Douglas. Philip watches as he drags both himself and Kate through ever-deepening levels of moral degradation, until he is called upon to confess and atone for everything.

Unlike *The Manxman* and other earlier novels set in apparently remote and rustic locations like the Isle of Man, Caine chose to place his characters right at the centre of London in *The Christian* (1897) (fig 5). The story revolves around Glory Quayle and John Storm setting out from their home at Glenfaba to pursue careers in London. However, instead of becoming a nurse and a respectable member of the church, they become a music hall entertainer and a fanatical Christian set to rail against society's moral wrongs.

The Eternal City (figs 6 - 7) was published in 1901. The story opens in London, where Prince Volonna, who has been exiled for conspiracy against the Italian government, lives a life of charity under an assumed name, being known as Dr. Roselli. The story, with its background of Rome the Eternal city, is thrilling in detail and holds the reader's attention by the intricacies of its plot and the brilliancy of its author's dramatic style.

The Master of Man: The Story of a Sin (fig 8) was a best-selling 1921 novel set on the Isle of Man and is concerned with Victor Stowell, the Deemster's son, who commits a romantic indiscretion and then gives up on all of his principles in order to keep it a secret. The penultimate of Caine's novels, it is romantic and moralistic, returning to his regular themes of sin, justice and atonement, whilst also addressing 'the woman question'. It was adapted for a film entitled *Name the Man* in 1924 by Victor Sjöström.

In *Barbed Wire*, based on the novel *The Woman of Knockaloe* (fig 9) (1923) but relocated to Normandy, Pola Negri plays a Frenchwoman whose family's farm is commandeered by the authorities as a prison camp for captured Germans.

None of Caine's novels is currently in print but their texts are freely available on the internet, as are second hand copies.

Other Manx Literary Connections

Famous British crime writer Dame Agatha Christie features in Manx sets in 2003 and 2006 on account of her story *Manx Gold* (figs 10 - 11). In 1930 Christie accepted the grand sum of £60 to write this story. It came as a request from the people responsible for boosting tourism on the Isle of Man. The clues were written in a 'treasure hunt' format and were published by Manchester's *Daily Dispatch*, and distributed in pamphlet form to hotels throughout the island. It was first published in the US collection *The Harlequin Tea Set and Other Stories* in 1997 and later that year in the UK collection (4). Like the Hall Caine Eternal City stamp in this set the stamp design includes around 100 words about the text and author which can be read with a micro-reader.



Fig 1: Isle of Man and Northern Ireland



Fig 2: Hall Caine

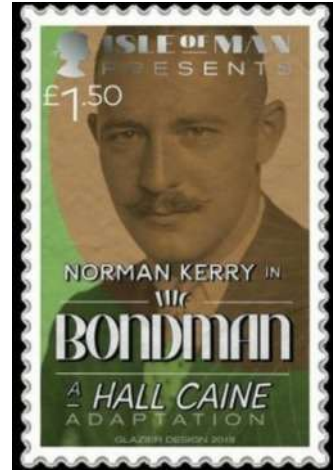


Fig 3: The Bondman



Fig 4: The Manxman



Fig 5: The Christian



Fig 6: The Eternal city



Fig 8: Name the Man / The Master of Man



Fig 9: Barbed Wire / The Woman of Knockaloe



Fig 7: The Eternal City

There are four other stamps in that set about literary works with connections to the Isle of Man:

Islanders by Mona Douglas (1898-1987) (fig 12). Mona Douglas MBE was a Manx cultural activist, folklorist, poet, novelist and journalist. She is recognised as the main driving force behind the modern revival of Manx culture and is acknowledged as the most influential Manx poet of the 20th century, but she is best known for her often controversial work to preserve and revive traditional Manx folk music and dance. She was involved in a great number of initiatives to revive interest and activity in Manx culture, including societies, classes, publications and youth groups. The most notable and successful of these was Yn Chruinnaght, a cultural festival in the Isle of Man which celebrates Manx music, language and culture. *Islanders* (1944) is a Collection of Manx Stories.

(Some catalogues indicate that the 40p value in the set is about *Pevekil of the Peak* by Sir Walter Scott and not *The Islanders*. Most of the story takes place in Derbyshire, London, and on the Isle of Man, so it may well have been a candidate novel for the set concept. To my knowledge this is a catalogue error, perhaps to do with earlier plans for the set.)

Quatermass and the Pit by Nigel Kneale (1922-2006) (fig 13). Kneale was a British screenwriter who wrote professionally for more than 50 years. He was a winner of the Somerset Maugham Award, and was twice nominated for the BAFTA Award for Best British Screenplay. In 2000, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Horror Writers Association. His family came from the Isle of Man, and returned to live there in 1928, when Kneale was six years old. He was raised in the island's capital, Douglas, where his father was the owner and editor of the local newspaper *The Herald*. He was educated at St Ninian's High School, Douglas, and after leaving studied law, training to become an advocate at the Manx Bar. Predominantly a writer of thrillers that used science fiction and horror elements, he was best known for the creation of the character Professor Bernard Quatermass. Quatermass was a heroic scientist who appeared in various television, film and radio productions written by Kneale for the BBC, Hammer Film Productions and Thames Television between 1953 and 1996.

Flashman at the Charge by George McDonald Fraser (1925-2008) (fig 14). In 1966, Fraser got the idea to turn Flashman, a fictional coward and bully originally created by Thomas Hughes in *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857), into a hero, and he wrote a novel around the character's exploits. The book proved popular and sale of the film rights enabled Fraser to become a full-time writer. He moved to the Isle of Man where he could pay less tax. There were a series of further Flashman novels, presented as packets of memoirs written by the nonagenarian Flashman looking back on his days as a hero of the British Army during the 19th century. The series is notable for the accuracy of its historical settings and praise it received from critics.

Emma's Secret by Barbara Taylor Bradford (b.1933) (fig 15). This 2003 novel is the fourth in the Emma Harte Saga by this Yorkshire-born author. The first two, quite well known thanks to TV adaptations *A Woman of Substance* (1979) and *Hold The Dream* (1985) begin the series of seven novels set early in the twentieth century about the fortunes of a family who create a retail empire and the machinations of the business elite across three generations. To discover the connection to the Isle of Man you will have to read and learn *Emma's Secret*, but according to Amazon reviews, you shouldn't really bother!





Fig 10: Agatha Christie



Fig 11: Manx Gold



Fig 12: Islanders



Fig 13: Quatermass and the Pit



Fig 14: Flashman at the Charge



Fig 15: Emma's Secret

References

- (1) [Manx Literature: Hall Caine](#)
- (2) [Manx Literature](#)
- (3) [Wikipedia](#)
- (4) [Agatha Christie](#)

EUROPA AND ITS 2017 THEME

Flavia Del Giudice

The Europa postage stamp, known as EUROPA – CEPT until 1992, is an annual joint issue of stamps with a common design or theme by the postal administrations of member countries of the European Communities (1956- 1959), the European Conference of Postal and Telecommunication Administration (CEPT) from 1960 to 1992 and the Post Europ Association since 1993.

The Europa issues started in 1956, when member countries issued a stamp all showing the same illustration: a tower formed by the letters of the word “Europa” surrounded by scaffolding (fig 1).

In 1959 CEPT was formed, and from 1960 the initials “CEPT” were displayed on the jointly issued stamps. In 1956 and from 1958 to 1973 the stamp had a standard design although this was not adopted by all countries. From 1974 the standard design was replaced by stamps with different designs, but with a common theme. The first to be chosen was “Sculpture” with 23 countries issuing 49 stamps (fig 2).

The purpose of the Europa stamp is to promote philately and the common European roots of the countries of which is composed. The Europa stamps underline cooperation in postal systems, taking into account promotion of philately. They also build awareness of common roots, culture and history of Europe and its common goals. From the 1970s the success of these issues among collectors prompted many postal administrations of small countries or territories such as the Channel Islands to join in. The collapse of the communist block in 1989-90 brought new issuers, reaching 57 countries in the late 90s.

When in 1993 CEPT decided to focus more on telecommunications, Post Europ took over the management of the Europe issue. The CEPT logo was replaced by a new logo created by PostEurop, with the word “Europa” in capital italics (figs 3,4). From January 2011, the new Europa logo - wording preceded a symbolic reminder of the mail box - became compulsory (fig 5). Since 2002 there has been an annual competition for the best stamp design.

The 2017 theme was “Castles and Fortresses”, and stamps from sets of a few of the issues are examined here. The Austrian issue shows the Schonbrunn Castle (fig 6). From the sixteenth century, Schonbrunn (which means Beautiful Spring) was the site of a hunting lodge and summer residence of the Hapsburg family in Vienna. After a fire destroyed the original structure in 1683, it was rebuilt in 1695 by the architect Johann Bernard Fischer von Erlach to become an imperial palace. The main part of the palace is largely the work of N. Pacassi, which is little changed today from its original Baroque design.

The Belgian postal authority chose an innovative ‘sandcastle’ theme. They asked a Belgian illustrator to design a castle with a sand texture, based on existing Belgian castles, so that the design is a composite of different castles. The sheet as well as the stamps have a “sandgrain” effect, applied with a varnish with a sand texture (fig 7).

Gibraltar was more traditional in its interpretation, showing the “Moorish Castle” a name given to a medieval fortification of buildings, walls and gates, now a popular tourist attraction (fig 8). Part of the castle was also Gibraltar’s prison until a purpose-



Fig 1: Joint design 1956



Fig 2: the first common theme but different design - 1974 Sculpture



Figs 3 - 4: CEPT in 1992, Europa in 1993



Fig 5: 2011 logo



Fig 6: Schonbrunn Castle



Fig 7: Belgium 'sandcastle'



Fig 8 Gibraltar castle



Fig 9: Jersey Grosnez Castle



Fig 10: San Marino Cesta

built building opened in 2010.

Grosnez Castle is situated on the far north-west of Jersey, in the parish of St. Ouen (fig 9). Sir John des Roches ordered the castle to be built in the 14th century, around the time of the start of the Hundred Years' War, to provide refuge for farmers in the west of the Island during French raids. It fell into disrepair in the 16th century, and the ruins are now open to the public free of charge.

San Marino issued two stamps, designed by Antonio Giuffrida. The Republic is famous for its "Three Towers" located on Mount Titano and overlooking the city of San Marino, the country's capital. The first stamp shows the second tower of San Marino, called Cesta, located on the highest point of Mount Titano, 755 meters above sea level. It was an ancient Roman watchtower and in 1956 it became the site for the Museum of Ancient Arms (fig 10).

Vatican City issued two stamps (fig 11). The 0,95 Euro stamp features a façade of the papal palace in Castel Gandolfo where the Vatican Observatory telescope can be seen. The palace, built on ruins of the Albanum Domitiani, the country residence of the Emperor Domitian, originally belonged to the Gandolfi family. It became a patrimony of the Holy See under the pontificate of Clement VII. Over the centuries various works to enlarge and renovate the structure took place. It was traditionally used as a papal vacation location until the beginning of the 1600s when Urban VIII made it his summer residence. Pope Francis, the only one not to have holidayed there, decided to allow public access to the building and its most exclusive rooms and places by transforming it into a museum. The 1,00 Euro postage stamp depicts the Palace of the Belvedere, currently part of the Vatican Museums, built by Innocent VIII (1484-1492) and located at the far northern part of the Vatican Hill. The stamp shows part of the facade with its characteristic bastions adorned with decoration of vases.

Finally, while there aren't any castles in Greenland, Greenland Post has found a very creative solution to this by illustrating designs drawn from nature (fig 12). 



Fig 11: Vatican City



Fig 12: Greenland ice formation

Postscript:

- The back cover features the 2018 theme 'Bridges'
- The 2022 theme will be "Stories and Myths"

EXHIBITING PAGE: SWISS METERMARKS PRE WORLD WAR II

John Hayward

Knowing that metermarks from pre World War II were more preferable in an exhibit than post World War II versions, I was pleased to include the two Swiss metermarks illustrated below in my thematic exhibit. What did not please me so much was the Swiss postal handstamp on both of them, to my mind spoiling two rather nice items and presumably stamped in error by some officious postal clerk. Anyway, I was able to add some philatelic knowledge to the items by describing them in the philatelic text underneath as produced by “Stambaugh metermark machine A2c” and that has remained the explanation for many years.

Then along came Covid, and with it the opportunity during lockdowns to spend a good deal of the time available on reading philatelic literature and research material which I was disposing at various auctions for a seriously ill philatelic friend. I must admit I had put some of it aside as it was not my cup of tea and would probably bore me stiff. How wrong I was in June this year when I finally plucked up the courage to read *Postal Cancellations and Markings in Switzerland* by Felix Ganz published in 1970. This is 240 pages long, printed in black and white, the source of intense research, most erudite and certainly not boring, especially when I came to the chapter on metermarks. There this tome informed me that Swiss metermarks from 1925 to 1939 had oval value tablets like my two that were then replaced or gradually phased out by 1970. Either side of the value in centimes are the letter “P” being the abbreviation for “Port Payé” (Postage Paid) and underneath the value is a number designating the individual machine and thus the firm using it. In my case the number is 1028 and the firm Motosacoche, a Swiss manufacturer of Motor-Cycles. Then, to my surprise I came across the answer to the conundrum of some years ago - all Swiss metermarks with these oval value tablets had to be cancelled by the post office where they were handed in for posting!

Well, if any readers have such Swiss metermarks with an added postal cancel in their exhibits here is the opportunity to display your philatelic knowledge by adding the relevant text in the philatelic text next to such an item. If you do not have this type of metermark, look out for them as the additional postal cancellation clearly does not spoil them!



Metermark 21/10/29: from Motosacoche celebrating its win at the Swiss G P the previous Sunday handstamped at Les Acacias post office

Metermark 30/4/35: from Motosacoche advertising perfect Motor-Cycles hand stamped at Les Acacias post office



BTA SECOND VIRTUAL ONE-PAGE COMPETITION

The BTA is very pleased to announce the launch of its 2nd Virtual One-Page Competition after the success of its inaugural competition which closed in January. Entries from seven countries and positive feedback from many of the entrants encouraged us to 'roll this dice' again.

You can find details and rules below. The closing date is 31st January 2022. Entries should be sent to our [Competition Officer](#) Andrew Millington who will be happy to answer any questions, but beware he will strongly encourage you to 'have a go' if you contact him! He can also be contacted at the above link.

We received exhibits on a very diverse range of topics last time. Lost for inspiration? Why not look at [last year's exhibits](#): or the exhibits for the [ATA's My One-Page Exhibit](#). All entrants will be judged, so that we can determine some 'best in class' entries, and all entrants will receive feedback from an accredited judge.

Have a go and showcase your philatelic interests. We'd love to see them!

Rules of the competition

1. Exhibits can be on any aspect of pictorial, thematic or topical collecting on any subject you like. Stamps, covers, postal stationery, slogan or commemorative postmarks, picture postcards, etc. are allowed: i.e., anything within the remit of a Thematic, Topical, Picture Postcard or Open Philately class in an organised competition.
2. Exhibits can either be one A4 page or up to an A3 sheet (i.e. 2 x A4) in either portrait or landscape format. We may decide to judge different size sheets separately.
3. Your page must have a title and a short introduction. Do not include your name on the page.
4. The exhibit must tell a story.
5. The balance of philatelic material-to-text is your choice. Try to make the presentation of the page attractive.
6. Your page can be printed, typed or handwritten but it must be in English.
7. The closing date for entries is 31 January 2022.
8. There is no fee to enter this competition (though in future years there may be a modest entry fee).
9. Points will be awarded as follows:
 - Title and Introduction (maximum 10)
 - Presentation (15)
 - The story (40)
 - Quality of material (10)
 - Non-thematic information (15)
 - Variety of material (10)

Total 100

HERE AND THERE

AMERICAN TOPICAL ASSOCIATION MY ONE-PAGE EXHIBIT!

“My One-Page Exhibit!” is a virtual program that encourages both experienced and novice exhibitors to tell a story related to philatelic materials from their collections. In this inaugural year “My One-Page Exhibit!” has attracted philatelists worldwide, including some BTA members. The site is available for viewing until October 31, 2021. Entries are arranged under thirteen headings. Go to [the page](#) and click on a heading to view the exhibits it contains (pdf).

CALL FOR SPEAKERS

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PowerPoint; 30 - 40 minutes

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ZOOMING ALONG

Our monthly programme of Zoom meetings has proved very popular. It's a chance for members to give a talk on their favourite subject from the comfort of their own home, and as such has hugely widened the range of topics we have been able to cover.

16 June witnessed a truly different and unique philatelic presentation. Jean Alexander presented her *Stamp Advisory Committee Christmas Menus*. And what a treat that was! For thirty years, from 1980 onwards, Jean was a member of the Stamp Advisory Committee and every year Royal Mail provided a Christmas Lunch for the committee. Every lunch had a menu that was presented in a different format every year and it was these menus that formed the basis of Jean's talk. Menus with a Christmas tree, with each branch showing a stamp from that year. Menus as a bookmark, or menus placed in a booklet with the story of each Christmas stamp alongside the actual stamp. I particularly liked the menu with the enclosed quill and the menu shaped as a holly leaf. Robins, Father Christmas and stained glass windows all featured throughout the years, along with copies of the stamps and a wealth of information. A truly fascinating collection which was enhanced by the fact that each year Jean had the other guests sign her menu card - or Christmas hat on at least one occasion! And all of this presented in Jean's relaxed and enthusiastic style. If you missed this presentation then I do recommend you go to our web site and watch it. You will not be disappointed.

13 July we were treated to a lovely presentation entitled *The history, culture and civilization of Spain* given by Edith and Rodney Knight. Using largely Spanish stamps they showed some wonderful early cave paintings depicting hunters and their prey. Other stamps showed early sculptures, and I particularly liked the detail in the 450BC warrior bronze. Such beautiful stamps. As you might expect, the Spanish Roman period is well covered by stamps including Roman civil engineering works that still stand today. Post the Roman period Spain is littered with famous events and individuals, and many are depicted on stamps. Edith and Rodney showed us depictions of Egeria, a Nun, who went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and brought back details of how Christians worshipped in that city. Well covered was the great influence the Moors had on Spain: politically, culturally and in the art of warfare, all depicted with wonderful stamps and narrated so well. Charlemagne got a mention, as did El Cid. Edith told us that early Kings of Spain received nicknames: Wilfred the Hairy and Charles the Fat, a tradition that lasted for centuries. And of course Columbus was mentioned in many stamps. Edith told us that he was THE cultural person of the time and that Spain had issued many stamps commemorating his travels. Lastly, we were shown stamps from the Day of the Stamp; one day a year in which the Spanish post office issues a stamp to mark the manner and various aspects of postal history and events. A pity the UK does not do something similar. Thank you Edith and Rodney for a most interesting presentation and I note this is only Part 1!

On 10 September we welcomed our first non-BTA member as guest speaker. Katrin Raynor-Evans presented *Exploring Astronomy and Space Through Philately*. Katrin is a highly regarded scientist, being a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. She has been widely published in various astronomy magazines and even has an asteroid named after her - 446500 Katrinraynor. But she is

also an advocate for philately, spreading the word about stamp collecting to a whole new audience. Her enthusiasm for and joy in the hobby come across so clearly, and she tells a great story. For those who like the structured approach she outlined the scope of the Astronomy story under headings first proposed some years ago by Margaret Morris:

- Observers: going back to the earliest students of natural phenomena, the Babylonians, Egyptians and Chinese.

- Observables: those things which could be studied from earth, our solar system and comets.

- Observations: that which has been recorded, including the work of famous astronomers from Copernicus and Galileo to Einstein, and famous observation sites including Stonehenge.


- Explorers: the space race; from Sputnik 1 (USSR 1957) to the present, including some highly collectable signed covers.

Along the way we learnt about the first astronomy stamp (Brazil 1887, showing the Southern Cross) and discovered that the Apollo 15 astronauts smuggled 400 unauthorised covers on their flight to the moon. NASA was furious and they never flew in space again. This was a wide-ranging talk with a wealth of illustrations enjoyed by everybody.

Note

The programme for the next few Zoom meetings is on page 105.

The 26 October will be a members' evening. If you would like to contribute please prepare up to eight sheets in PowerPoint and [email them](#) by 24 October. Our webmaster will organise them into a programme for the evening.

Previous presentations are all available to members only on the 'Events' page of our website. You will need to log in to the site first. 



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AUTUMN STAMPEX 2021: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

BTA INVOLVEMENT

We are anticipating over 100 frames of BTA competitive and non-competitive displays. Thank you to everyone who has supported us. A particular thanks goes to Maureen Mathieson who has coordinated at least twenty entries from the Glasgow Thematic Society, many of them first-time entrants. In addition there will be one frame featuring high quality scans of highlights from our first virtual one-page competition.

BTA Chairman Barry Stagg will be giving a wide-ranging talk on pictorial collecting on the Saturday morning. Come along if you can.

The BTA has been promised a table near the entries, which we hope to have staffed for as much of the time as possible. Please do drop by and say hello.

STAMPEX ENTRY CHARGE ON FIRST DAY

Unusually, Stampex has taken the decision to charge an entrance fee of £10.00 on the first day. All other days (Thursday to Saturday) will be free entrance.

ENTRY TO STAMPEX IS BY TICKET ONLY

For those of you planning to attend Stampex please note admission is by pre-booked ticket only. Booking for the first day automatically registers you for the remaining days, otherwise you need to register for the day(s) you wish to attend. Like so many events these days pre-planning is essential. If you are unable to attend but would like to access the live talks and tours you can buy an online pass for £5.00.

Full details and booking for all these options can be found on their [website](#)

Please note: all arrangements for Stampex, including admission charges and entrance rules, are decided and implemented by the Stampex organisers, the Philatelic Traders' Society.

STAMP ACTIVE AT AUTUMN STAMPEX

The Stamp Active Network, the voluntary organisation that promotes stamp collecting for children in the UK, will be at Autumn Stampex providing free stamps and goodie bags for young collectors. There will be a range of free activities with prizes including Stamp Art fun. It is also hoped that it will be possible to run the popular free children's auction on the Saturday with appropriate social distancing measures in place. The event will be fully compliant with any Covid restrictions.

Stamp Active will also be giving vouchers to fifty youngsters under 18 that attend Stampex, worth £20 each, to spend with dealers at Stampex. Ten vouchers will be available on each of the first three days with a maximum of fifty vouchers overall to be given out during the show.

The Kids Zone will be located in the Gallery Bay G12 on the right-hand side of the Stampex Hall.

For further information, look at the [Stamp Active website](#)

BTA NEWS

AWARD OF LIFE MEMBERSHIP

The Committee of the BTA is delighted to announce that they have awarded Life Membership of the Association to Brian Asquith. Brian was the originator and long-time committee member of the Concorde Study Circle until its closure a few months ago (after 42 years!). His wonderful Concorde collection was awarded the Court of Honour at Stampex in 2019, and his earlier collection and exhibition 'On Dragon's Wings' was exhibited at the Court of Honour at an airmail exhibition in China in 2009 (see next page). We are delighted to recognise his many national and international philatelic achievements plus his support for local societies through the many talks and displays he has given over the years.

BTA WEEKEND 2022

Unfortunately the dates of this event have had to be changed yet again, as the PTS has announced that Autumn Stampex will be held on the dates we had chosen. Those who have already booked have been notified of the new dates:

16 to 18 September 2022.

There will be one change to the published programme due to the original speaker not being available. Full details and booking form will be published in December *Themescene*.

FRANCESCA RAPKIN MEMORIAL BOWL

As announced in June *Themescene* the Francesca Rapkin Memorial Bowl for the best article in *Themescene* has this year been awarded to John Davis for his series of articles on Venice. John was presented with his trophy by Wendy Buckle in John's garden one very hot day in July.



POSTAL STATIONERY POSTCARD BEIJING 2009 AEROPEX

Brian L. Asquith



The AeroPex Jury at Beijing. Brian Asquith is second from right

In 2009 I was invited to show my eight frame, Gold Medal collection “On Dragons' Wings – Chinese Airmails” in the Court of Honour of an Airmail Exhibition in Beijing. I was also invited to be a judge. The exhibition was a splendid affair and we were very well looked after. Subsequently the Chinese Post Office published a book of my exhibit in Chinese and English. They published three books of other exhibits but I was the only westerner to have this honour.

I received the above Chinese postal stationery card just before Christmas 2012 which came as a complete surprise. The card shows members of the Jury and the accompanying experts. The actual picture and descriptions were first published in the catalogue for the Palmares banquet.

The “Merry Christmas” section looks to be detachable and on the reverse is an inscription which my good friend Gregory Loh has kindly translated. It reads:

This is a new type of raffle ticket to be drawn on 24.2.2013. Winners will be required to collect their prize between 1 April and 31 August 2013. Results will be announced on 24.2.2013 on website www.chinapost.com.ca, and on 26.2.2013 in newspapers “People's Daily News” and “China Post News”. Winners must produce this Greeting Card together with valid personal identity. Any erasure, forgery numbers will be considered null and void. Each winning card is entitled to obtain one red packet only. Your card is No. 1 20 2016 547534 2018 as depicted on the card”.

This makes this a Christmas, Postal Stationery, Picture Postcard together with a Lottery Ticket. Other than this one I have not seen any cards incorporating these four elements. Perhaps something new to look out for. 📖

BTA PROGRAMME 2021

- 25 September
14.30 for 15.00
- ZOOM MEETING
Dawn Hamman *The thematic scene in the USA*
Dawn is President of the American Topical Association,
- 26 October
19.00 for 19.30
- ZOOM MEETING
Members' displays. *Pages from your collection.*
Please send pages to website@britishthematic.org.uk by 24 Oct.
- 17 November
19.00 for 19.30
- ZOOM MEETING
John Davies *A Jubilee Reminiscence*
A philatelic history of the Great Britain 1890 Penny Postage Jubilee
- The 'Events' page of the BTA website has details of the remaining 2021 monthly programme of ZOOM meetings*
- 29 September -
02 October
- Autumn Stampex**
At Business Design Centre, Islington
Lead society BTA. BTA Table at the event.
Talk by Barry Stagg, national judge and BTA Chairman
- Please note that this meeting is **provisional** subject to COVID restrictions
- 09 October
- South of England Stamp Fair**
At Ardingly Showground, RH17 6TL
Over 40 dealers, free parking and cafe facilities.
- Please note that this meeting is **provisional** subject to COVID restrictions

THE OLYMPIC and PARALYMPIC GAMES!



Did you see the Olympic and Paralympic games this Summer?

Which sport was your favourite?

Start a new collection finding

at least one stamp
for each sport played



OLYMPIC GAMES FACTS:

The Olympics started in ancient Greece in 776 BC. Only Greek men and boys could take part, and the only prize was a laurel wreath!



Far fewer sports were played than today. They included running, long jump, discus throwing, shot put, javelin, pankration (a violent combination of boxing and wrestling), chariot and horse racing competitions. The athletes taking part were often naked to show off their bodies!!

The Games ended in 393 AD after a fire burned down the temple of the Greek god Olympian Zeus. These games are known as the Ancient Olympic Games.

The Modern Olympic Games started in 1894 and were inspired by the ancient Olympic Games. There are now Summer and Winter Olympics, and Paralympics for athletes with disabilities, as well as Youth Olympics. Thousands of athletes from more than 200 nations around the world can take part.

The Olympic Flag shows the Olympic Games symbol - five connected rings representing the five continents of the World taking part. You'll see this symbol on many Olympic Games stamps.

Can you work out which sport is shown on these stamps? All of these games were played in the 2021 Olympic and Paralympic Games.



- Archery
- Athletics
- Badminton
- Baseball
- Basketball
- Beach Volleyball
- Boccia
- Boxing
- Canoe
- Cycling
- Diving
- Equestrian
- Fencing
- Football
- Goalball
- Golf
- Gymnastics
- Handball
- Hockey
- Judo
- Karate
- cont.....





cont.....
 Pentathlon
 Powerlifting
 Rowing
 Rugby
 Sailing
 Shooting
 Skateboarding
 Sport climbing
 Surfing, Swimming
 Table Tennis
 Taekwondo
 Trampoline Gymnastics
 Triathlon
 Volleyball
 Sitting Volleyball
 Water Polo
 Weight Lifting
 Wheelchair Basketball
 Wheelchair Fencing
 Wheelchair Rugby
 Wheelchair Tennis
 Wrestling.



**Write to us and tell us about your favourite sport and receive some free stamps (children only) to:
 Just4Kids, c/o The Editor, Themescene, 87 Victoria Road, Bournemouth BH1 4RS.**



You can download a **FREE** activity book and album called 'Sport on Stamps' from the Stamp Active website;



<https://www.stampactive.co.uk/fun-games/>

In the activity book you'll find lots more information about the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and there are spaces for you to collect your stamps.

Where can I get stamps from? Here are a few suggestions;

Ask the person who looks after you to help you with the following;

- Let family and friends know that you are collecting stamps - they might have some they can share.
- You will receive free stamps if you join Kidstamps, a free postal club for young stamp collectors, supported by the Stamp Active Network;
<https://www.stampactive.co.uk/kidstamps-club/>
- Look online to find out if you have local stamp dealers, or a local Philatelic Society. Some areas have local Stamp Fairs.
- You may have a local coin or medal shop which also sells stamps.
- Hundreds of dealers advertise online. Bags of stamps and individual stamps can easily be found on Ebay, Etsy etc
- Main branches of W.H.Smith sell packets of stamps, albums and accessories.
- Oxfam sell stamps in some of their shops and online.

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