
Mailcoaches on Stamps



1984 must surely go down in the stamp annals as being the year of the mailcoach. In case you failed to notice, this year saw the 200th anniversary of the first British carriage of mail by this means of transport. The purpose of this article is to publish a checklist of stamps that have appeared over the years depicting this most elegant of eras.

The story behind the British mailcoach service has been amply told by all of the philatelic magazines. I shall not repeat the information here, sufficient to say that our postal service owes a great debt of gratitude to John Palmer for his idea and for the loyal postal employees that even sacrificed their lives in an attempt at ensuring that the mails got through.

The story of the overseas mailcoach service has been less well documented, but through research an outline history of each countries service can be put together. If there is a specific country that is of interest, I suggest that the standard philatelic reference work be consulted as there is bound to be a mention in the chapter covering the evolution of the postal service.

In the listings that follow will be found details required to positively identify the stamp and, as with most thematic subjects, it will probably be necessary to purchase full sets that may / will contain stamps that are unwanted as they do not depict a mailcoach. I have found that eventually the spares tend to fit into one of my other collections, so do not despair.

Despite undertaking a thorough search of Gibbons 'Stamps of the World' catalogue, I do not claim completeness. There must be some designs that depict, say, a street scene where a mailcoach is depicted but is not mentioned in the catalogue description or even where I have simply missed an item. Details of such omissions would be welcomed.

Listing unlikely to appear do to change of collecting interests and available time! Sorry, but above may be of some use.

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