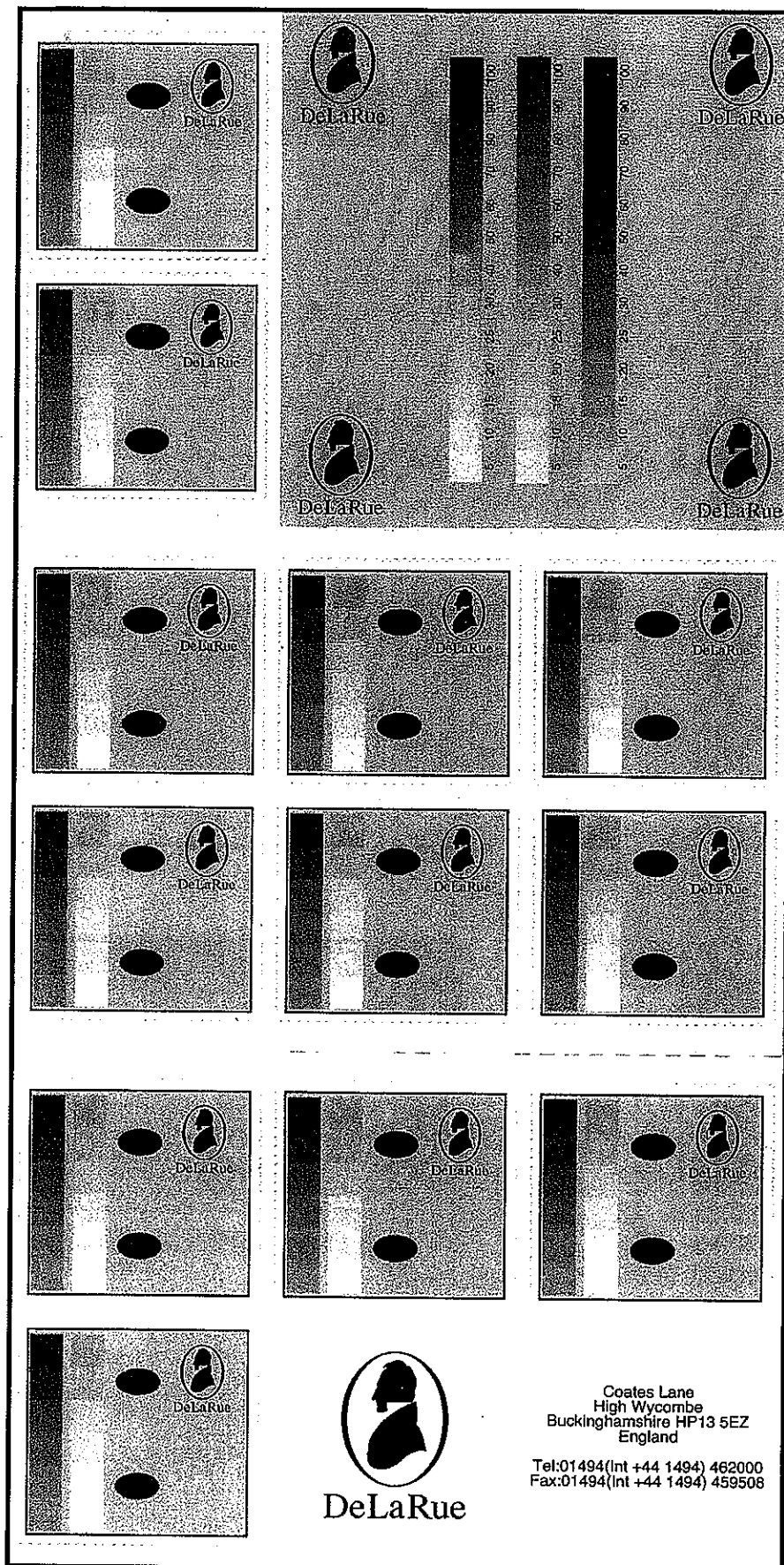


Christmas - Trial Special Issue

by Glenn Morgan



Glenn Morgan, has kindly provided the following information and image relating to a test sheet by De La Rue that was used as part of the trials to prepare for the 2001 Christmas special issues.

For Christmas 2001, Royal Mail required products for stamps in both self-adhesive stamp books of 12 and 24 and in sheets of 50 stamps. Initial guidance was given to De La Rue, by Royal Mail, as to the formats and design.

These included a requirement for single stamp removal from the sheets - this had not been undertaken before with a self-adhesive product.

De La Rue, worked with the manufacturers of the self-adhesive die cutting and folding equipment.

The main result of this collaboration was a modified stamp book size, which gave more stamps on a pane and a larger cover area, enabling the designers to obtain maximum sales impact.

The process also involved fewer folding stations on the equipment and, therefore, enhanced manufacturing efficiencies.

The single stamp removal from the sheets was solved by the development of a dual height die-cutting tool.

Illustration showing only three of the five panels (the other two middle panels are not visible in the scan, but are identical to the middle panel of the scan).



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Christmas - Trial Special Issue (continued)

This perforated the backing sheet and also completely cut through the face paper, so that when a stamp was required a complete square of material was removed leaving none of the self-adhesive carcass behind.

The illustration on page 78 shows only three of the five panels of the initial stamp booklet layout and each measure 122mm x 80mm. The other two middle panels not visible, are identical to the middle panel of the scan.

The overall size of the booklet is 122mm x 400mm approximately . The booklet has been rouletted in four separate places to facilitate the folding and the forming of the five panels (three of which are shown).

The example shown here is in the colours of the 2nd-class rate, although it is different in layout to the currently issued style.

The background colour of the stamps is light blue. Each stamp has two colour bars at the left with colours ranging from white to dark blue.

The two elliptical dots are printed in red, while the De La Rue logo is printed in black. The reverse of all five panels is unprinted.



While on the subject of Christmas material, Glenn has also provided the two images below. The top is the outside cover and the bottom is the inside pane.

The booklet was produced by Joh.Enschedé and the pane demonstrates their printing capabilities. This was then given as a Christmas card to their customers.

