

Dummy Stamps

Issue 25

A Newsletter Covering British Stamp Printers' Dummy Stamp Material

Quarter 2, 2012

Harrison Timeline, KGII - KGV

Updated and extended key-dates supplement

This issue of *Dummy Stamps* includes an updated 18 page Harrison & Sons Timeline that has also been extended to the end of KGV to mark 15 years since DLR took over the company. QEII will follow. ☐

Post Office Decimal Training, 1971

Further essays found recorded in the philatelic press

In preparation for change-over to decimal currency five training stamps were produced (*sample value below*). These were the subject of a research paper by the compiler of *DS* and downloadable from www.stampprinters.info/dummystamps.htm



These labels are quite common and still cheap owing to the quantity 'liberated' by staff at the time. Less well known are the essays previously recorded in green with purple hand-stamped value (*above*).

In *Stamp Collecting Weekly* [GB], 2 April 1971, the following small piece was included:

DECIMAL TRAINING LABELS

The Curator of the National Postal Museum, A G Rigo de Righi, reports that he has reference sheets of earlier, provisional examples. They take the form of perforated labels without inscription, in yellow, green, orange-red, pale blue and pink. There are also examples of the same labels overprinted in purple by hand-stamp in new pence as follows: 1p on yellow, 2p on pink, 2 1/2p on blue, 3 1/2p on green (*ED: as image above*) and 5p on orange-red. These were "essays" which were not adopted.

It is almost certain that copies of these essays are not in private hands, but solely at BPMA. ☐

Training Stamps for 1924 BEE?

Genuine, or yet more dodgy items?

The scans below are of the 1924 British Empire Exhibition commemorative stamps that were recently offered by a reputable British auction house with an estimate of £150 to £170.



They look plausible enough, but did such overprints exist for Post Office staff training purposes as far back as the 1920's, or is it yet another attempt by a vendor at extracting money from the ill-informed collector? Proof either way welcomed, please. ☐

Harrison Dummy Stamps found in Canadian Stamp Printers Archive

Why were Thos. R Harrison labels sent to / used in Canada?



The out of alignment gutter strip above comes from sheets of 310 (10 x 31) dummy stamps. They are often offered in Canada and purport to have been found in the BABNC printing archive. Invariably scuffed, they make for an interesting addition to a British dummy stamps collection. They are recorded as "contemporary to Canadian Centennial issue". ☐

Bradbury, Wilkinson Prueba Label

Mexican dummy stamp incorporates PROOF wording

An April 2012 US auction sale included a Mexican stamp that incorporated the wording PRUEBA (PROOF) into the actual artwork, as distinct from the more normal overprinting method.



Mexico, 1895, 1c blue, 'Prueba' essay.
Scott No. 242E; Estimate \$100 - 150.

The lot description stated: "Designed as a sample by Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co. for their bid on the production of the upcoming new 1899 issue, to be similar to the then current 1c issue with the upper left test banner incorporated into the design."

The item remained unsold at close of auction.

Surprisingly, only a couple of days previously a poor quality photostat of a presentation or salesman's folder was seen that incorporated this very stamp, albeit pin-perforated SPECIMEN. (Second panel below with stamp given a red frame.)

Festival of Britain Cards Revisited

Numbers produced are in some doubt

In DS24 your compiler sought help regarding the cards produced to mark the event. A reader kindly supplied a PDF of an article that had appeared in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* [GB] in September 2011, written by Derek Connell, that held the answers.

It appears that the philatelic magazine *Stamp Mirror* held a competition to design FoB and High Value stamps and in December 1950 the winners were announced. A Mr C W Elsworth won the best commemorative with his outline map design, while Mr AT Derbyshire won the best high value with his George and the Dragon design. Each card was signed by the artist and placed on sale at the Festival stamp shop, selling out on the first day.

The reader went on to write: "If you do a follow up article in *Dummy Stamps* I would like to know whether the limited edition of 100 is correct, since I bought one on eBay with a number higher than 100."

Can anyone assist with the answer to this question on volumes? Maybe a reprint was made? ☒

1948 London Games Facsimiles

Reproductions of the set of four to be released



A facsimile pack is to be produced by Royal Mail. It will include unadopted designs from the 20 artists and printers who were invited to submit designs for consideration.

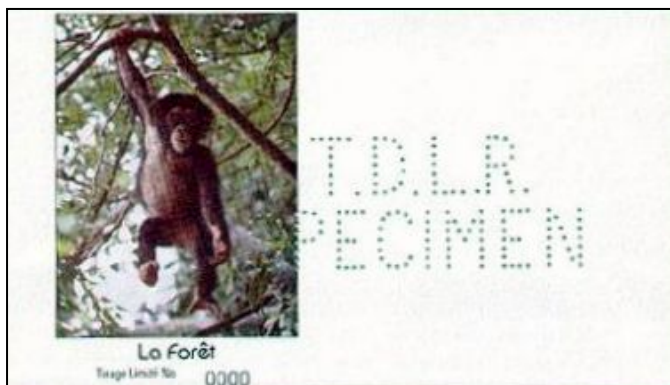
A non-postally valid facsimile sheet of the four stamps will be included in this limited edition pack.

It will be printed by the gravure process in a block of four stamps. ☒

DLR FDC Specimen

An example of Sloper-type pin-perforating

De La Rue clearly also printed FDC envelopes when the client requested, as this 1991 example for a Togo issue on Forests proves.



The pin-perforations are usually only seen used on postage stamps and generally only on those affixed to a presentation or proofing sheet. Note how the French text translates as "The Forest / Circulation Limited No. 0000". ☒

Free Advertisements

A chance to buy and sell between yourselves

As a free service to readers, advertisements are now accepted in *Dummy Stamps*, subject to the rules recorded below.

1. Adverts must relate to worldwide dummy stamps only and no other area of collecting.
2. All correspondence and disputes must be between reader and advertiser and must not involve the publisher of *Dummy Stamps*, Glenn H Morgan.
3. Adverts will appear in one issue of *DS* only, as all back issues are available online for consultation at any time.
4. Adverts must be text only and comprise no more than four lines of one column, excluding address or email details.
5. Only one advert per person, per issue is allowed.
6. The publisher reserves the right to exclude or amend any advert submitted. ☒

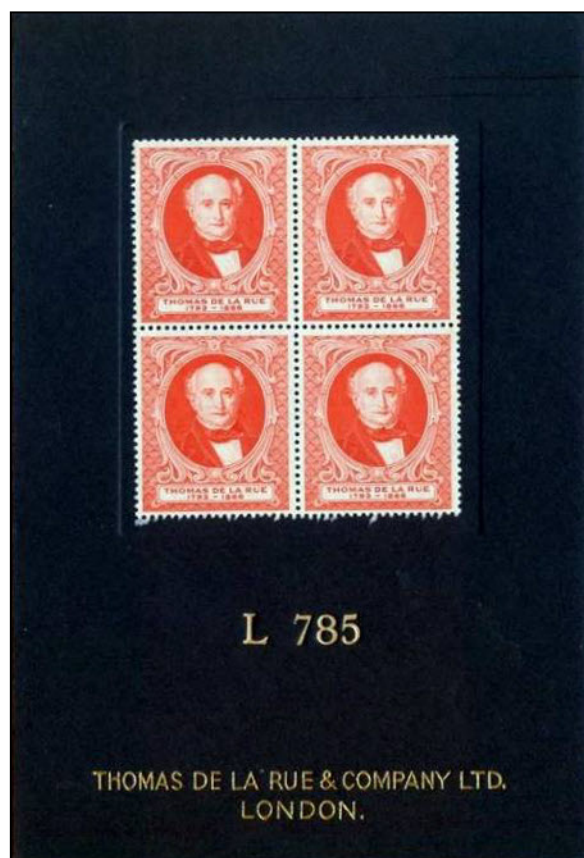
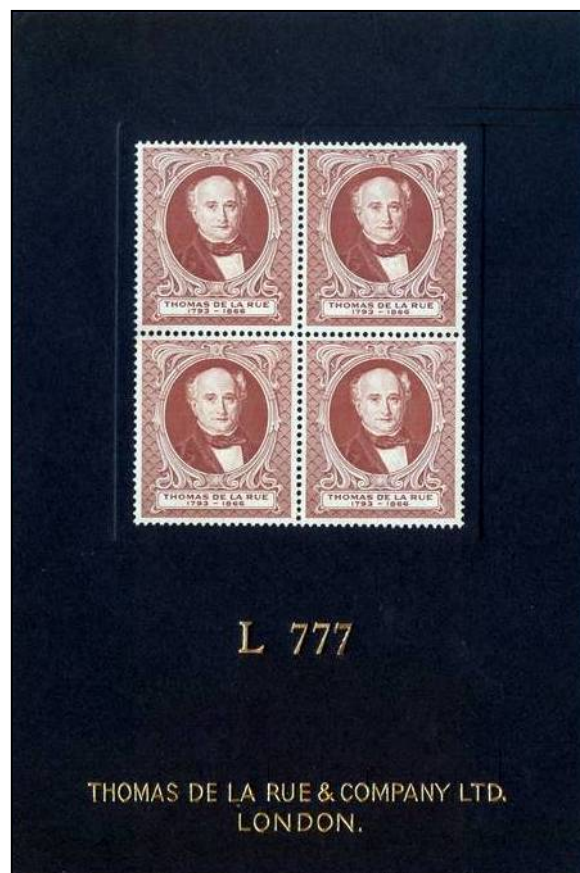
Advert from John Larson:

I collect, buy and sell world-wide test stamps, and would welcome correspondence from others with similar interests. My email address is j_larson1@mac.com

De La Rue Colour Sample cards

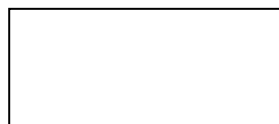
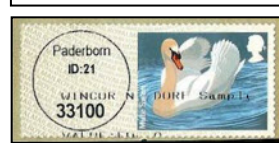
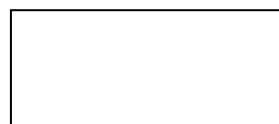
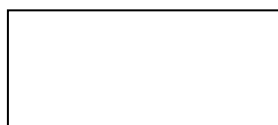
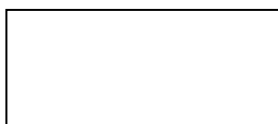
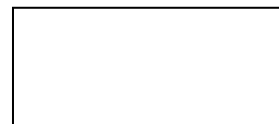
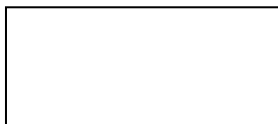
Further to the DS18 discoveries...

...two more colours have been discovered. ☒



Birds Post and Go Test Labels PO staff can generate test labels to help them adjust the equipment

With the early Birds designs being restricted to a mere 30 machines nationwide, it is no surprise that the initial test labels are proving especially difficult to obtain suitable scanned images of. Apologies for gaps! ☒



Images are from the Internet and most are therefore of a poor quality, for which apologies.

Charles Whiting Treasury Competition Essay Reprints

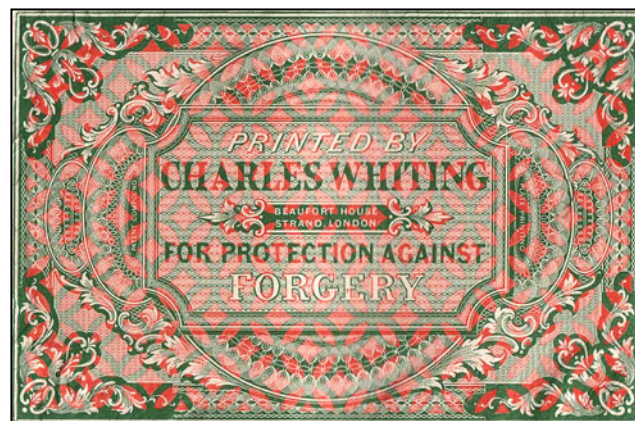
The Congreve process produced lovely output of high quality



Art Journal page bearing reprints of four of Whiting's treasury competition essay entries including embossed Queen Victoria head in oval with 'PAID' above and the square 'Beaufort House' essays in one and two colours.

The reverse side has a complex 'PRINTED BY CHARLES WHITING FOR PROTECTION AGAINST FORGERY' design.

The tipped-in page appeared as part of an 1847 article on printing. ☒

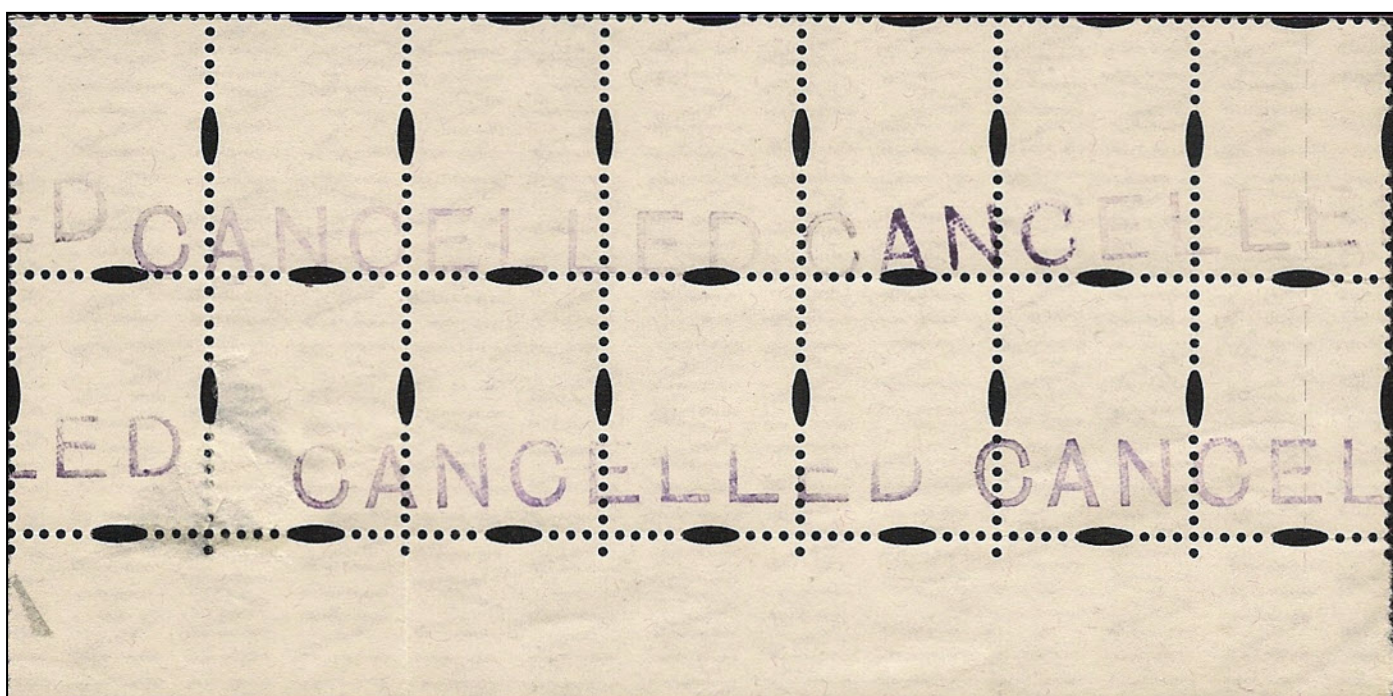


The design that appeared on the reverse of the sheet.

Unprinted Blank Stamps Overprinted CANCELLED by hand

Note roulettes at right and elliptical perfs on all four sides. The arrow in margin possibly signifies a Harrison production

Part sheet of blanks thought to relate to National Savings, National Insurance or trading stamp issues. ☒



Caledonian Philatelic Society and the Harrison Old Masters Sheet

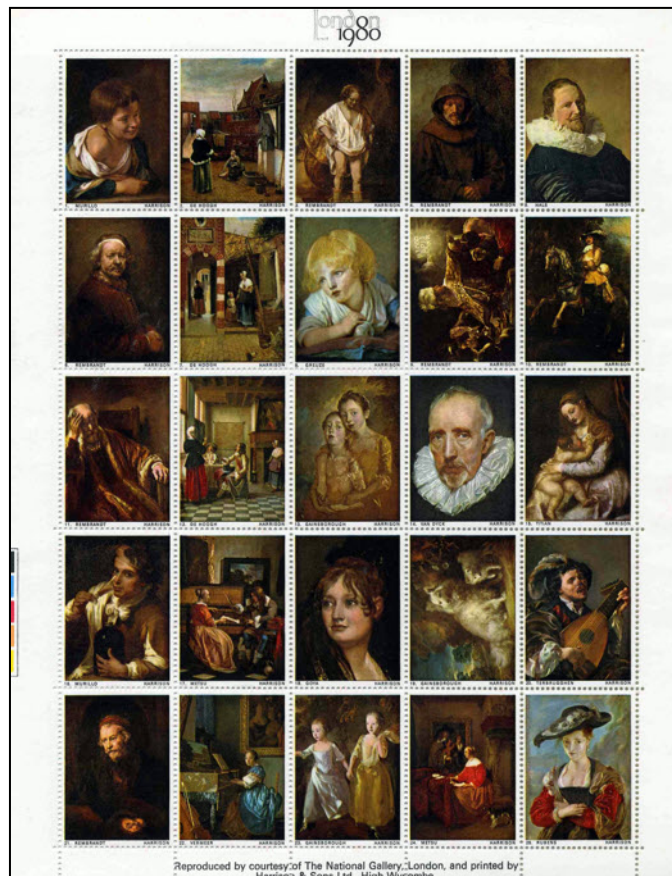
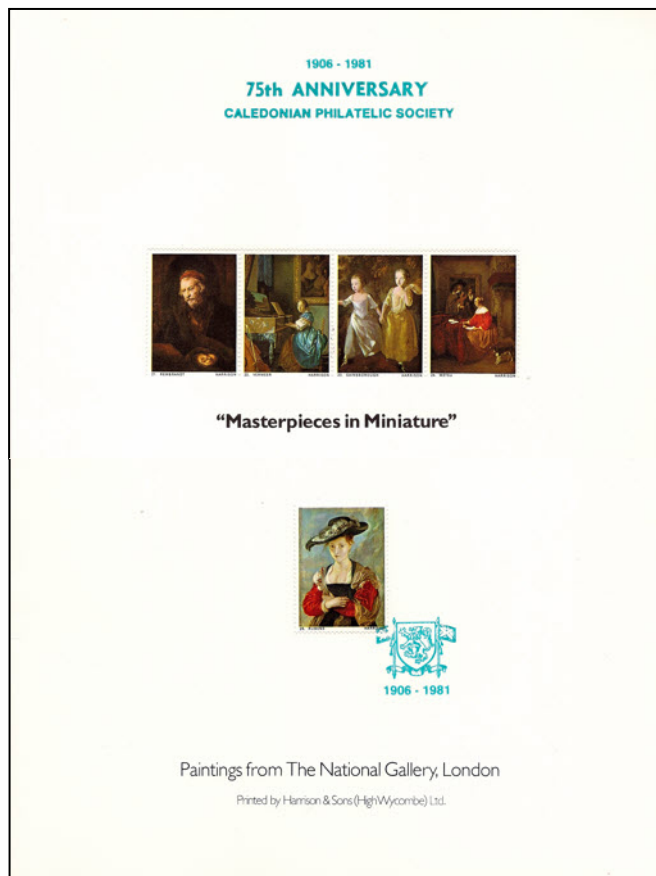
Newly discovered overprint on London 1980 souvenir

In 1980, Harrison produced a sheet entitled "Masterpieces in Miniature" which was enclosed in a folder and made available at London 1980, the international stamp exhibition.

Thanks to a reader, it is possible to show here a variant of the sheet that bears privately applied overprints commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Caledonian PS in 1981.

The dummy stamps were printed in printers sheets comprising two panes side-by-side prior to guillotining into single panes at Harrison and so conceivably examples might exist with colour bars in right or in left sheet margins on the variant.

The original London 1980 sheet is depicted immediately below - note that it has left margin colour bars, while CPS version has right bars. ☒



Harrison Clipped Corner Wildings

A set on a card mock-up folder has recently been seen

Readers may be familiar with the set of Wilding definitive stamps with clipped corners and overprinted **CANCELLED** in serif black text. Rarely seen, they command a high price when offered for sale and are often sold as broken sets or as singles when not in their original book.

The set exists on a folded card produced by Harrison and the album page text accompanying it adds "A design mock-up for a sample card using Wilding stamps". Note how to the left of the stamps are many hand-drawn straight lines, designed to mimic where text would go. ☒



The outside cover depicts sheets of definitive stamps drying as they pass through a press at Harrison & Sons, High Wycombe.



A full set of Wilding definitive stamps (including the later 11d value).

Coates Ink Presentation Cards

Do other versions exist beyond these three?

Thanks to two friends, three Coates presentation cards can be shown. These are hard to find and are rarely offered. Is any reader aware of any similar examples?

It was pointed out that all three cards are on identical base card stock. I had wondered why stamps were duplicated, but missed the blindingly obvious! The cards were probably printed by Harrison. ☒



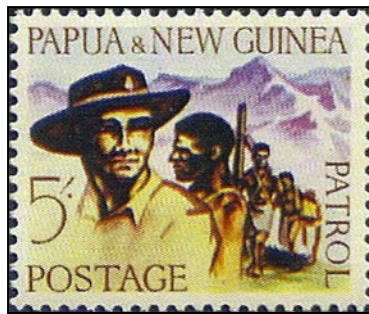
Festival of Britain, Wilding Defins and Coronation Cards.

Chambon: Australia and Papua & New Guinea

Update on the London-based part of the company

In DS24, mention was made of the probability of the colour separation sheets depicted in the last issue having been sent to Iran with the printing press. This is all the more likely now that your compiler has seen notes relating to a Chambon press purchased by Note Printing Branch (NPB) [AUS].

In 1958 approval was given for NPB to obtain a new photogravure printing press from Chambon in London. Trials were undertaken in London (hence inclusion in DS) using various designs that had been submitted from Australia.



According to Arthur W Gray of Sydney (who recently displayed some of his wonderful Australian collection to members and fellows of The Royal Philatelic Society, London) "*Records held at the Note Printing Branch indicate that cylinders for the above two designs, a number of printed sheets including colour separation trials* were sent to NPB by Chambon*". (* Compiler's emboldening.)

The above designs comprise a Papua New Guinea 5/- value that was rejected owing to the Native Patrolman being depicted armed, while the bird design by Betty Temple-Watts of a Black-Backed Magpie was also rejected, but for unknown reasons.

Both artworks were, however, deemed appropriate for the photogravure trials undertaken in London.



The above image is another bird design comprising a full sheet of 16 (4 x 4) dummy stamps depicting a Red-Backed King-Fisher. This specific sheet is in the archives of Australia Post and is thought to be the only *truly* complete sheet in existence.



However, a second sheet is in private hands in the collection of the aforementioned Arthur W Gray, but there is a difference between Mr Gray's copy and that held at Australia Post - his copy has the CHAMBON LTD. / LONDON header cut-off, as can be seen above by the scissor-cut top edge. This sold for €1,300 last year at a German auction. ☒



A 10d airletter form of a Stockman was also printed in London as part of these early trials.

Chambon: Burma Test Stamp

Update on the London-based part of the company

While discussing Chambon, further information has now been seen regarding the Burma bird stamp previously mentioned in *DS*.

Unusually, it was printed in three colour photogravure using carmine, blue and yellow inks, but no black. This is borne out by marginal examples having been seen with rules in each of these colours.

The second image below is part of a page from a Chambon catalogue, clearly confirming that they were responsible for the production.



Stamp Magazine [GB] for September 1996 includes a piece written but the late Norman Williams as a follow-up to his earlier queries posed in the April and August 1982 issues (yes, 14 years earlier!).

The Burmese government ordered a photogravure press from Chambon, London, to print its stamps with. It was due to be the first of two presses, but a change of regime stopped the second order from being fulfilled.

The test stamp is described by Williams as being on unwatermarked paper, white wove, gummed and perforated 13.2.

An ex-employee wrote to a collector with details



Ornithologists are unsure as to the exact bird on the dummy stamp, but it may be a *Wilson's Bird of Paradise*.

of the story, which Mr Williams quoted in full. It is repeated here with the kind permission of www.stampmagazine.co.uk

"Burma Test Stamps Printed by Messrs Chambon of Hammersmith, circa 1960

The Burmese Government ordered two stamp printing machines in the 1960s. The first was delivered but, so far as is known, was never used. For Chambon, these were early machines where the printing was by the photogravure process. Extensive trials were therefore required to test the quality of the plate preparation, printing and perforating. A 3-colour process was used (see printer's marks in the margin in yellow, blue and red).

"The test printings we have were made on a second machine built in anticipation that an order for another machine would be forthcoming. These machines are quite complex and cost around £500,000 each. There was probably a reasonable interval between the delivery of the first machine and the manufacture of the second.

"I understand that a military junta took over control of the country about this time and so a definite second order never materialised. The machine remained at Hammersmith with its final fate being unknown. Somewhere around 1980 Chambon went and no longer exists. (ED: *Now Komori-Chambon.*)

"Sheet details: two panes of 100 labels (10 x 10). Gutter between panes. On unwatermarked wove paper. Ungummed (gumming is too expensive to use during trials of this kind). (ED: *gutters never seen.*)

"Perforation 13.25. Design: Peacock on tree branch against a yellow background. This simple design therefore had all the features likely to be associated with a proper stamp of this period."

The former employee went on "I have three sheets, all of which have the same "blind" perfs where the paper has not cleared the punch holes. It is probable that many sheets were produced during the tests which went on as the machine was improved. Most of these sheets would have been destroyed as waste material - there was no security worry."

The odd detail above varies from the report by Mr Williams, but an interesting story. ☒

A British Summer of Sport and Stamps

'Instant' stamps to be produced for the greatest of all sporting events

All eyes are on the UK this summer and official dummy mock-ups for the instant stamps have been sent to the media. Design is subjective, but the arrow-head shaped live action shots work well.

The Gold Medal stamps will be on sale by lunchtime the next day after each Team GB win, at 500 selected Post Offices across the UK. At the same time the stamps will go on sale at royalmail.com, while a further 4,500 Post Offices nationwide will be issued with the latest Team GB Gold Medal winners' stamps three times during the Games.

Royal Mail is keeping specifics of its print and distribution effort under wraps, but base stock will be "under the control of Walsall Security Printers" with digital overprinting at six secret regional locations.

I am curious how well teams will fit into the arrow shape and how names of team members will fit onto the stamps, but these aspects will have been resolved by now.

This is a mammoth task for Royal Mail and its printers, but one that they will excel at, I am sure. ☒



Single miniature sheet from an A4 sheet of four MS in a vertical column with 18mm selvedge. (above)

Royal Mail photo of dummy stamp mock-up of the design to be used for each gold medal Team GB win. (left)

Examining a press sheet. (below left)

Guillotining press sheets into A4 counter sheets. (below centre)

Packing sheets for despatch to Post Office outlets. (below right)

Photo credits: Royal Mail / P A Wire.

The official Emblems of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games Ltd are © 2007 The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic



Australia's Digital Games Experience at Sydney in 2000

Admittedly this is to one-side of normal DS content, but is deemed to be relevant at this time

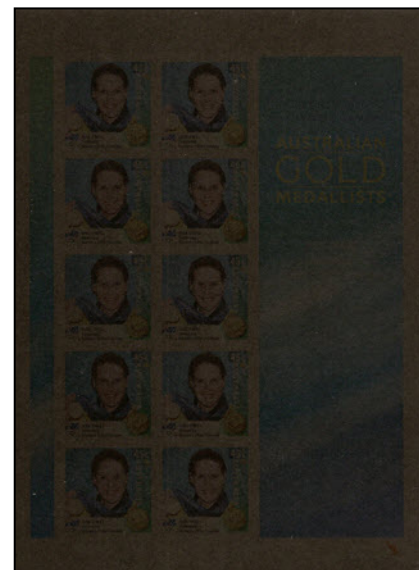
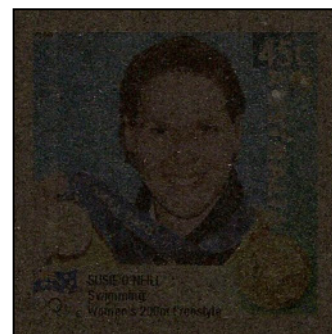
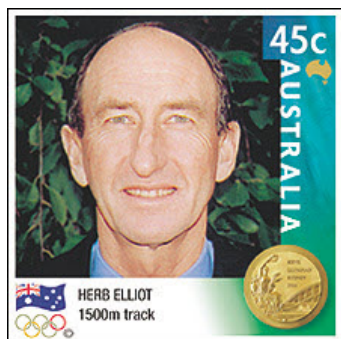
It is common knowledge that Australia Post pioneered the use of digitally printed "instant stamps" at the Sydney 2000 Games. It is no surprise that Royal Mail has improved the process, as the table below shows. Sources: Media Releases from AP and RM.

| | <u>AUSTRALIA POST</u> | <u>ROYAL MAIL</u> |
|---|--|--|
| Design Type: | Templated with square images for flexibility, especially for teams. | Templated with arrow-shaped images. |
| Paper: | Pre-perforated, water-activated. | Pre die-cut, self-adhesive. |
| Printing process (overnight stamps): | Fully digitally printed. | Digital overprint onto litho base stock. |
| Printing process (follow-up stock): | Fully litho on pre-perforated stock. | Fully litho, or digital/litho combination? |
| Sheet dimensions: | A4. | A4. |
| Sheet content: | Two A5 panes of 10 stamps. | Four Miniature Sheets of six stamps. |
| Image type: | 'Action photos (note 1) as they are actually competing, or as they stand on victory dais.' | Action shots. |
| Image processing: | Electronically sent to a design studio in Sydney. | Electronically sent to Royal Mail's design team who will have one hour to choose an image and complete design. |
| Number of regional printing locations: | Six Fuji Xerox sites in capital states. | Six secret locations nationwide. |
| Overnight distribution to Post Offices: | 68 outlets by noon next day. | 500 PO's by noon next day (inc Sunday). |
| Follow-up stocks: | Printed same day, and at 80% of outlets within 48 hours. | 4,500 PO's nationwide within week, replenished three times during Games. |

Note 1: In the end, action shots were not utilised in Australia and all are dais shots. Why the change of heart, I wonder if difficulties were encountered?

In order to test all aspects of this massive project, a full rehearsal was carried-out at the swimming trials held in Sydney in May 2000. The project brought together many different fields including design, photography, research, information technology, finance and accounting, marketing, production, printing, distribution, logistics, security, public affairs and retail.

Some Herb Elliott test sheets escaped into the market and command huge prices. A second sheet with a "Who Will WIN?" design was circulated to journalists, but only as a laser sheet, not as actual dummy stamps. Thirdly, every issued digital sheet had a black spacer sheet to keep the Xerox drum clean and had the actual stamps printed on it. Copies should not exist, but do. ☒



Harrison & Sons Wedgwood Sweet Dish from 1984

One for the Machin head fans out there, this souvenir is rarely encountered as it was a presentation piece.

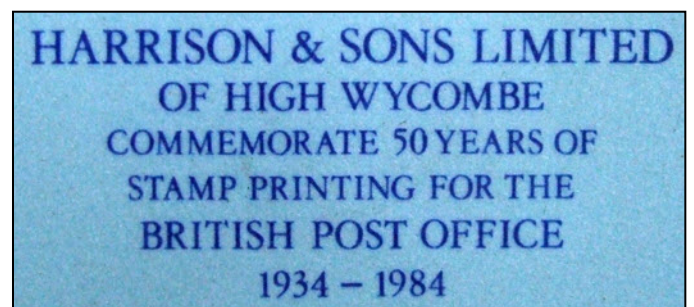
In 1984, Harrison & Sons celebrated 50 years of stamp printing for the GPO with a Wedgwood sweet dish depicting an undenominated Machin head. With a vivid imagination, this could possibly be regarded as the world's first ceramic dummy stamp! In [an unlucky] 13 years later the company would be no more. ☒



Horizon Training Labels

'Void' stamps recently discovered

The white Horizon labels have been seen in five VOID versions with a fictitious postcode area of AA1 and dating back to 2003. Other service types may exist, but have not been seen at this time. ☒



The reverse text actually celebrates 50 years of *photogravure* stamp printing for the British Post Office, not just stamp printing in its widest sense, as it disregards all previous letterpress work.

...and finally

I always welcome details of new dummy finds from printers past and present, and so invite you to write via my Guest Book at stampprinters.info/guestbook.htm, where requests to subscribe to *DS* can also be made.



Business, family and other commitments to the hobby mean that I cannot guarantee that I can rigidly stick to a publishing programme and therefore suggest that you visit stampprinters.info/dummystamps.htm

every so often where PDF files of this and all future and previous issues of *Dummy Stamps* will be available for downloading and to print-off. ☒

