



# RAILWAY PHILATELY

Journal of the Railway Philatelic Group

Vol. I

No. I

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## FROM THE EDITOR

**T**HE first thing I must do is to thank the many publications, and Associations, who have helped us to bring this first issue of *Railway Philately* into being.

To the Editors of *Stamp Collecting*, *Philatelic Magazine*, *Hobbies Magazine*, *Talyllyn News*, *Railway World* and many more at home and abroad, we acknowledge with grateful thanks your help in giving us space in your columns. In our own ranks, it is due to members such as A. Johnson, Mike Burrows, A. H. Braybrook, H. T. Jackson, D. P. Gowen, C. Angus Parker, Ted Turner, H. G. Parson, W. Korn, and many others, that this Journal is, we hope, of the quality you want.

Everyone will agree that we have a lot to learn, and it is only by trial and error that we shall achieve the right balance in our Journal, which must cater for all members' interests. If any member (or friend) has any criticism to make, please let me have your views, and we will do our best to introduce your ideas.

In this first issue, we have tried to produce a combination of introductory and specialised articles, which should help the specialist of one section to become familiar with another. There will be three regular features:—"RAILWAY ROUNDABOUT", giving information on a variety of railway subjects; "TALKING POINT", the members' own letter page; and "UNDER THE HAMMER", telling you all the latest news from the dealers. When news is

available, we shall keep you informed on books published, press references, and all new issues and railway postmarks.

A complete history of Railway Letter Post, Newspaper and Parcel Stamps is in the course of preparation, which will provide information previously unpublished. The first article on this appears in this edition, and will be the forerunner of many interesting articles by H. T. Jackson.

When sufficient material has been tabulated, we shall publish our own T.P.O. history, and plans are in hand to provide members with a map and route diagram of modern T.P.O.'s.

On the thematic side, we shall try to give brief histories of the railway systems illustrated, and where possible, information about the areas where the locomotives have worked. During the next year, we shall publish our own handbook on the world's postage stamps issued from 1860 to 1966.

Future articles planned are T.P.O.'s of the Boer War, Cyprus Railway postmarks, British Guiana T.P.O.'s, German station postmarks and T.P.O.'s, and also articles on the Talyllyn postal service, and the continuation of the excellent history of Railway Letter Stamps. Finally, may I appeal to all members to come forward with articles for publication, particularly on the subject of Great Britain T.P.O.'s. Any item of news, however small, will be acceptable.

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## LETTERS FROM MEMBERS

Jack Smith, of 48 Dean Road, Handforth, Cheshire, has a very interesting item. He has in his collection an intriguing post picture card bearing a printed note — "Written in the Dining Car of a G.W.R. Express *en route* for Devon". When were these introduced? why? and did other Companies have the same?

R. E. Pudsey writes that he would like to see specially printed R.P.G. covers for use on T.P.O.'s and railway cancellations. What is the feeling for this — will you let us know if you would like some printed, and how many you would want. At a rough estimate, we could produce a good quality envelope, with stiffener, bearing the Group emblem, for about 4s. 6d. per dozen.

## TALKING POINT

Mr. A. Johnson reports a "CARTAGE" stamp, issued by the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway, inscribed WYRE DOCK. Can someone say what could be carried from a dockside for 1d.?

The "Ed" would like to know how you arrange and write up your thematic collections. Can anyone put forward suggestions on this? What is important to one is of no interest to another, but do you include maps, photographs or histories? And most important, how do you keep your covers?

# A SHORT HISTORY OF THE RAILWAY LETTER POSTS OF GREAT BRITAIN

by H. T. Jackson

**R**AILWAY Letter Posts are operated by railway companies who receive, carry, and sometimes deliver, the missives; and who print and sell stamps for the prepayment of postage. It is still a Railway Post when it is run, by authority of the Postmaster, when the Post Office delivers the letters, if required, or when letters have to bear a Post Office, in addition to a railway stamp. Posts carried by a railway in sealed bags, under contract with the Post Office, are not Railway Posts.

## **The Stockton & Darlington Railway Local Post**

The earliest public railway to use steam locomotives was the Stockton & Darlington, although Stephenson's "Locomotion" was used to convey passengers at the opening on 27th September, 1825. At first, steam was employed only for goods traffic, the honour of being the first public railway to use steam traction for all services falling to the Liverpool & Manchester Railway in 1830.

The Stockton & Darlington established a post, which was quite legal, to carry orders and instructions between collieries, ironworks, engineering works, and their agents, along its line. Since, however, the post was cheaper than that operated by the Post Office, it contained all or any of the letters passing between them.

On 12th June, 1835, the directors of the railway, at their board meeting authorised the sale of stamps (known as "franks") at the rate of 1s. per dozen. These are the oldest adhesive 1d. stamps, as it was not until five years later that Rowland Hill copied the idea for the Post Office. As these were the only adhesive postage stamps in the world, naturally no one thought of collecting them; and none have survived.

In 1860, or possibly earlier, these stamps were succeeded by franked envelopes, and these were also used on the West Hartlepool & Harbour Railway. Again no copies have survived. The price of the stamped envelopes varied, according to size of the envelope and the number bought at one time, from 4s. 6d. for 100 small envelopes to £6 for 1,000 large size.

## **The North Eastern Railway Post**

In 1863, the Stockton & Darlington Railway was absorbed by the North Eastern Railway, which continued the post, both on this line and on the West Hartlepool section. In October 1904, the post was extended to include the Darlington and Durham section.

The North Eastern Railway issued stamped envelopes, the cost again depending on the size of the envelope and the number purchased, the price rising from 15s. 9d. for 200 small envelopes to £10. 10s. for 1,000 large envelopes. The printed stamp is shown on page 79 of Ewen's catalogue and does not bear any value, since the price varied from 1d. to 2½d. All stamps bear a black control number.

Although the post was supposed to be restricted to certain purposes, it is very evident that it was used far more extensively. Between 1885 and 1924, the Post carried three million letters, whilst between 1891 and 1924, the number of railway letters, carried with Post Office authority over the whole system of the North Eastern Railway, was only half a million, one-sixth of the total. But the local post now operated over a large area, which included Goole, near the Lincolnshire border, and Appleby in Westmorland. The stamped envelopes are very rare, but the varieties of the stamps and envelopes make an interesting study.

## **The London & North Eastern Railway Post**

On 1st January, 1923, the N.E.R. became part of the newly-formed London & North Eastern Railway, who continued the post. The envelopes and stamps were printed in magenta (instead of black and blue, ultramarine or purple) as the design of the stamp was altered with the name reading "LONDON & NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY", "NORTH EASTERN AREA".

## **The Railway "String" Letter Posts**

Although the Post Office offer an express letter service it is of little value, since it effects a very small saving of time at a considerably

increased cost. It soon became obvious, to persons needing a genuine express service, that the only way to achieve this was to hand a letter in at a station, to travel with the guard of the next passenger train and to be delivered, collected, or posted, on arrival at the station nearest to its destination. This could also be used for important letters which had missed the last post, or which had to be posted on a day when there was no collection.

The Post Office naturally objected to this breach of their monopoly, but someone now discovered that if a letter was tied with string it became, legally, a parcel, and that letters so tied could legally be carried by a railway, since the carriage of parcels is not a Post Office monopoly.

The oldest known cover, by these posts, is probably one sent by the Midland Counties Railway about 1840. The posts did not cease with the introduction of the Railway Letter service in 1891, or even with the nationalisation of the railways in 1947, and as recently as three or four years ago, letters were still being carried from Euston and Manchester franked with L.M.S. parcel stamps. Now, however, adhesive tape is often used in lieu of string.

The earlier covers are franked with a gummed label bearing the Company's name, the station where the letter was received and of its destination and either "carriage paid" or the postage in m.s. Later, when parcel stamps were issued, these were used for these letters.

The Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith Railway produced a set of stamps which read "FOR NEWSPAPERS, PARCELS AND LETTERS" and which were sold to the public and used for many years.

#### **The Railway News Letter Posts**

Probably no persons were more affected by the Post Office's inability to provide a really express service than editors and reporters. In these days of telephones, telegrams and teleprinters, the difficulty probably only applies to photographs, but in the middle of the last century, when the telegraph service was restricted to certain towns and railway stations and the telephone was unknown, reporters could only send their news by rail.

To take an example: suppose an important event happened one evening in Manchester. The reporters posted their news of it in Post Office letter-boxes that night. Next day the mail would go to London, where the editors would receive the news on the second day and would publish it on the third. Neither the editors nor the general public would stand for this, so the reporters would send their news by express train, travelling through the night.

This was a clear breach of the Post Office monopoly, and was forbidden by it

.... "carriers are specially prohibited from carrying letters. Railway Companies are carriers, and may not convey a letter save as part of a mail..."

(*Post Office Guide*)

but, since it supplied an important service, which the Post Office was helpless to provide, the Post Office officials ignored the breach.

Finally, and as late as 1935, the Postmaster-General admitted that this was an exception to his exclusive rights and the following clause was added to the list of exceptions in the *Post Office Guide*:

"Packets containing only 'News Intelligence', i.e. matter or photographs for publication in a newspaper".

As far back as about 1855, the Midland Railway issued a set of adhesive postage stamps inscribed "PREPAID NEWSPAPER PARCEL OR NEWS LETTER" which was used both for this post and for their newspaper post. Later, about 1890, they issued a set of smaller stamps for "news correspondence" only. The L.N.W. Railway issued news correspondence stamps from about 1880 and the Wirral Railway copied them about 1905.

The Great Northern started their issue of news letter stamps about 1890, with an attractive circular design showing the coat-of-arms of the Company. The stamps were sometimes overprinted with the name of a newspaper, before being issued, as a protection.

When, in 1890, the Postmaster-General required a standard design for the railway letter stamps, his designer produced one which, in the main, was a mixture of the Great Northern and the Midland news letter stamps.

The Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway were more cautious. It issued a prepaid News Parcel stamp which was exactly similar to its Prepaid Parcel stamps, except in the wording, and which passed unnoticed except by the persons concerned. Its newspaper stamps were a copy of its railway letter stamps.

The Monmouthshire Railway & Canal Company also issued a Prepaid News Parcel stamp, but in a pictorial design, which was quite unlike its Newspaper Parcel, the latter being of the Western "cheque" type.

When the railway letter stamps were issued, these were often used for news letters, especially by those companies which had not issued special stamps for that purpose. For heavier packets, two or even three railway letter stamps would be affixed. After October 1920, when the Postmaster-General authorised the railway companies to use any of these stamps on letters, the com-

panies sold parcel and newspaper stamps for this purpose. This post is still operated by British Rail.

### The Railway Clearing House Post

Little is known of this post, but it appears that letters and packets to and from the Railway Clearing House were carried free by the railways. Mail from the R.C.H. was franked with a double-oval dated handstamp. Legally, only railway accounting material could be sent, but the post also carried private letters.

In the author's collection is a letter (ex Col. Crouch collection) with "PRIVATE" written in large letters across the top left hand corner, sent from London to J. G. Rowe, Esq. at Aylesbury by this post. It is franked, where the stamp would normally appear, with a double-oval handstamp, with "RAILWAY CLEARING HOUSE" between the ovals, and the date "MAR 1/1880" in the centre.

### The Railway Letter Post

Although this Post was only commenced in 1891, an article which appeared in two London publications, a quarter of a century earlier, was so prophetic that it is difficult to believe that it was not the original inspiration for this Post.

On the 1st November, 1866, the *Stamp Collectors' Magazine* quoted the following article from the "Town Talk" column of the magazine *Punch*:

"Few Londoners live in London proper now; they have villas within half-an-hour's rail of town, and the posts at about that radius round the metropolis are not half so frequent, or so convenient as those places hundreds of miles from London. No wonder that men of business, who cannot always keep their business within the hours they spend in the city, complain! And the remedy would be easy. Let the Post Office come to an agreement with the railway companies, by which the latter will be empowered to issue — say a twopenny stamp even, which would ensure the carriage of any letter leaving it up to town by the latest train, to be posted by the guard in London pillar-box, by which means its delivery in the metropolitan districts the first thing in the morning would be attained."

A more direct cause of the introduction of the Railway Letter Post was the establishment of the Court Bureau in 1889. There was no collection of letters in London on Sundays by the Post Office, but the Bureau collected letters, on those days, from London clubs, hotels, and private houses and posted them, either at the nearest point outside the London area, or else

at the railway termini for carriage by T.P.O., so as to ensure delivery in the provinces by first post on Monday morning. Stamps were used from 1890. The Court Bureau was wound up in 1891, when the Railway Letter Post was instituted.

Faced with these growing infringements of the Post Office monopoly, the Postmaster-General was in a difficult position. The private posts were supplying an important service, which the Post Office was unable to provide. He, therefore, decided that as he could not beat the railway companies, he would join them.

His proposition for a Railway Letter Post was first submitted to the railway companies in a letter, written by himself, which was read at the Conference of General Managers, held at the Railway Clearing House on the 9th May, 1889.

This led to an agreement which was embodied in an "Agreement between Her Majesty's Postmaster-General of the one part and the several Railway Companies of the other part". Section 6 of this Agreement stated that "in carrying out this agreement the Companies shall act and shall be deemed to act solely as Agents . . . . of the Postmaster-General".

During the negotiations, it was decided that the Post Office should prepare special stamps for this post. These stamps would have a face value of 3d. and would be supplied to the Railway Companies, direct from Somerset House, at 1d. each. The Companies would sell them to the public at 3d. each and keep the 2d. for their service.

Messrs. De La Rue & Co., who printed the Post Office stamps, were instructed by the Post Office to prepare a design for this stamp. On 27th February, 1890, their designer prepared a design. It measured 33 mm. long x 19 mm. high and showed the Queen's head (which was small, even smaller than on the Telegraph stamps) with a double oval, and the value 3d. on each side. Between the ovals was the inscription "POSTAGE AND RAILWAY SERVICE". It bore the date "FEB. 27th 90" in pencil in the top right corner, and a pencil "1" in the top right. The colour of the stamp was green.

This design was not approved, and on 14th April, 1890, their artist prepared a second design. This is slightly taller, being 20 mm. high, and shows the Queen's head in a double square with rounded corners. The value, on each side, is now in a double circle, and the inscription, between the squares, reads "RAILWAY LETTER SERVICE". It is dated "APRIL 14/90" as before. The colour of the stamp is again green.

This design was again disapproved and there also appears to have been some criticism from the railway companies. There would be nothing to

prevent persons handing in to one railway company letters franked with stamps purchased from another. Also, most companies numbered their stamps for control purposes.

Accordingly, de la Rue's designer prepared a third design on 3rd July, 1890, with long rectangular tablets added at the top and bottom. The top tablet has "L.N.W. Ry Co." in black and the lower tablet "521006" also in black. The design has also been altered. The Queen's head is now in a double circle, broken at the bottom, with the wording changed back to "POSTAGE AND RAILWAY SERVICE". The figures of value are now in double squares, set diagonally; the stamp measures 40 mm. x 24 mm. and the colour is again green. "JULY 3rd 90" is in pencil as before, and the design is numbered "2d." in pencil in the top left corner.

These changes and official "dither" were losing time, and on 21st July, 1890, Mr. F. E. Baines of the G.P.O. wrote to Mr. F. W. Dawson of the Railway Clearing House as follows:—

"If the special stamp is not ready by 1st October, a supply of the ordinary 3d. postage stamps (issuable as in the case of the specially designed stamps at 1d. each) with the words "Railway Letter Postage" overprinted on them, will be obtainable on application to Somerset House . . . ."

For this purpose, a current 3d. postage stamp was overprinted by hand in black ink, "RAILWAY" (above the head) "LETTER POSTAGE" (below it). The letters were evidently all intended to be serified, but those in "RAILWAY" are mixed. This was sent to the printers as a copy. It is now in the author's collection, as are the essays mentioned above.

Possibly because of this vagueness, the printers produced three essays, all on current 3d. stamps, and similar in wording to the original. One has serified lettering, the second has square sanserif letters, and the third tall sanserif letters. The 3d. postage stamp, overprinted "RAILWAY LETTER POSTAGE", was never intended to be anything provisional, during the preparation of the plates for the other stamps.

However, in August, 1890, the Post Office discovered that these postage and railway service stamps could not legally be issued without the authority of an Act of Parliament and, on 1st September, 1890, Mr. Baines wrote—

"It has unfortunately been discovered that the Railway Letter Post stamp, of the face value of 3d. cannot legally be appropriated to the Railway Letter Service apart from Postage and Inland Revenue purposes

generally . . . and consequently the Railway Companies would have to provide the stamp."

The Post Office now prepared a master design for the Railway Companies to copy. The strange fate of this design will be described later; it is only necessary here to say that it is now lost. It is known, however, that it was similar to the first issue of the North Eastern Railway, in fact the N.E.R. stamp is an exact copy of it, except that the essay omitted the name of the railway company at the top, and was unnumbered. Like the N.E.R. stamp, it was red in colour.

This design bore the words "RAILWAY LETTER POST" in the bottom tablet and the inscription round the shield read "TO BE USED ONLY FOR LETTERS BEARING A POSTAGE STAMP". Later, Post Office officials took exception to the wording, on the grounds that it implied that it was a Post operated by the railway companies, not an extension of the Post Office service. They, therefore, had an amended design made, with different inscriptions, and, from this, proofs were printed in green. They bear the fictitious title "BENGAL AND NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY", occupying both tablets and an amended inscription round the shield.

On 23rd December, 1890, the Railway Clearing House forwarded drafts of the Agreement to the Railway Companies and stated, in the covering letters, that "The Post Office have determined (1) that the colour of the Railway adhesive label, value 2d. . . . shall be green; (2) that the lettering within the ring shall be altered from 'TO BE USED ONLY FOR LETTERS BEARING A POSTAGE STAMP' (as had been decided by the P.M.G. at an intermediate stage in the negotiations) to 'FEE FOR CONVEYANCE A SINGLE POST LETTER BY RAILWAY'." Copies of the design described in the previous paragraph were subsequently lithographed and distributed to the various Railway Companies, as the pattern of the stamps to be printed. The Companies sent them to their stamp printers and none seem to have survived.

There was one curious exception. The North Eastern Railway received, not the final design, but the earlier design in red. As the stamps were printed by their own printers, not by one of the big stamp-printing firms, the error was not discovered until after the stamps were on sale to the public. The Post Office vetoed the stamps but had to agree that all stamps, totalling 17,460 in number, already issued to stations, could be sold, so that the Post could continue to function.

*(To be continued)*

# G.B. TRAVELLING POST OFFICES IN 1966

THERE are 48 different Travelling Post Office routes in operation at the present time, which cover the main lines in England, Scotland and Wales. For the benefit of members new to T.P.O. collecting, a route commences at the first and terminates at the second named station. The exceptions to this are the trains which are given a name, such as "Special", "Caledonian" or

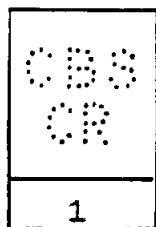
"North Eastern". More details on these services will be given in the next issue. It would be appreciated if any member who is able to offer posting facilities would contact the Secretary.

The old Whitehaven-Stalybridge service was extended to Huddersfield on 2nd January, 1966. The new Crewe-Peterborough route was introduced on 6th June, 1966.

Ayr-Carlisle	Highland Up (Southern)
Bangor-Crewe	Highland Up (Northern)
Birmingham-Crewe	Highland Down
Bristol-Derby	Huddersfield-Whitchaven
Bristol-Plymouth	London-York-Edinburgh
Caledonian Day Down	Manchester-Glasgow
Caledonian Day Up (Edinburgh Section)	Midland (Going North)
Caledonian Day Up (Glasgow Section)	Midland (Going South)
Caledonian Day Up (Perth Section)	North Eastern Down
Cardiff-Crewe	North Eastern Up
Carlisle-Ayr	North Western Night Down
Carlisle-Edinburgh	Norwich-London
Crewe-Bangor	Peterborough-Crewe
Crewe-Birmingham	Plymouth-Bristol
Crewe-Cardiff	South Eastern Down
Crewe-Glasgow	South Eastern Up
Crewe-Peterborough	Shrewsbury-York
Derby-Bristol	South Wales Down
Down Special	South Wales Up
East Anglian Down	South Western Down
East Anglian Up	South Western Up
Edinburgh-York	Up Special
Great Western Down	Whitehaven-Huddersfield
Great Western Up	York-Shrewsbury

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## Perfin Corner

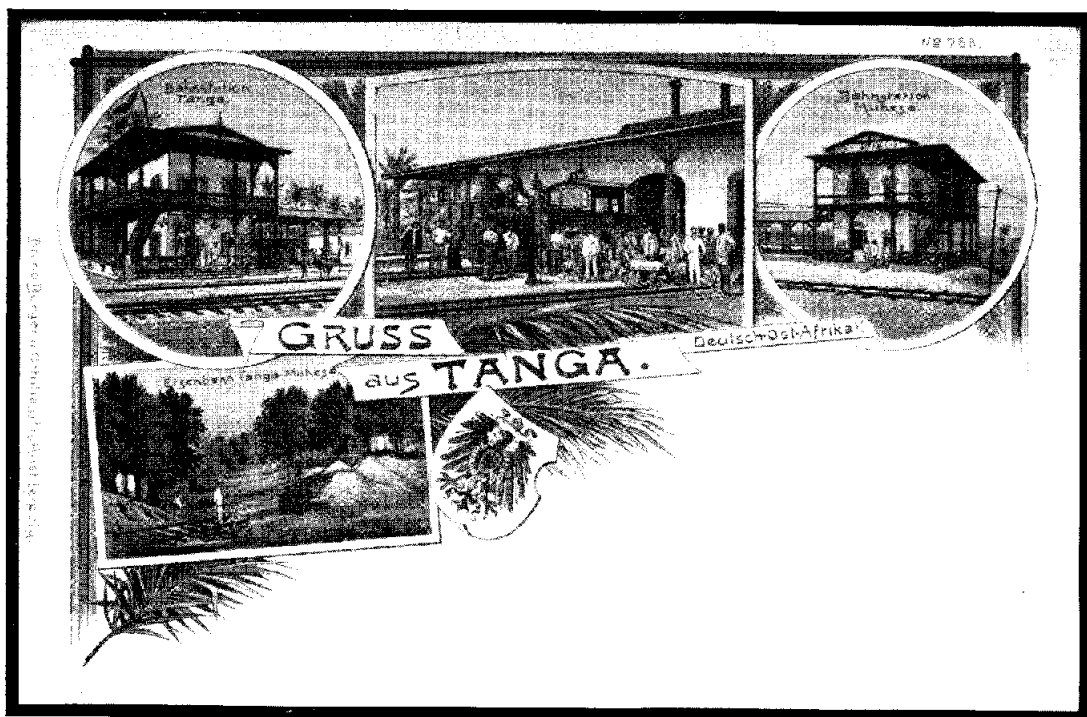


THESE are holes punched into postage stamps to represent a company's initials, and were used extensively by railway companies before the grouping in 1923.

No. 1 in our series illustrates the Cork, Bandon & South Coast Railway of Ireland. The Cork & Bandon Railway was incorporated on 21st July, 1848, and changed to Cork, Bandon & South Coast on 5th July, 1888. In accordance with the Railways Act of 1924, this company was merged into the network of the Great Southern Railways (Ireland).

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TRAVELLING POST OFFICES OF GERMAN EAST AFRICA

by D. P. Gowen



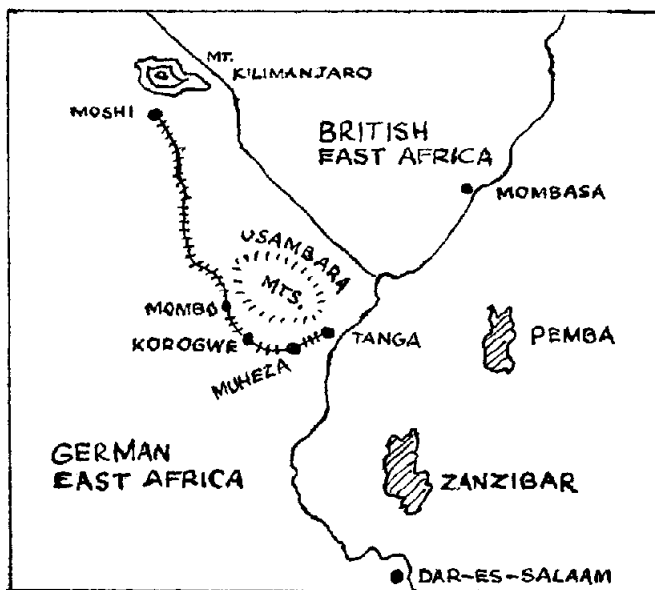
## (1) THE USAMBARA RAILWAY

THERE is a tremendous fascination in collecting the early Travelling Post Office cancellations from Germany and the German Colonies. Although covers are now quite scarce and difficult to obtain, a wealth of information may be obtained from single stamps off cover due to the German practice, carried out with Teutonic thoroughness, of applying the postmark squarely over each stamp. In the case of the larger "mark" values two strikes were made. Particularly has this practice helped collectors of T.P.O. marks to obtain and collate much useful information covering train numbers, dates, and check numbers. The issues from German East Africa are undoubtedly the most popular and typical

example of this, forming as they do a concise and captivating story of the franking of mail on railway trains in that Colony.

The Germans built two railways in their East African Colony and in this article we shall deal with the most northerly of the two lines, the Usambara Railway, which takes its name from the range of mountains of the same name alongside which it traverses until it reaches the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa. In 1891 it was decided by the German authorities that a metre gauge line should be built from Tanga to Muheza, and on to Korogwe. (The object was then to continue to Tabora and on to Lake Victoria, but this did





not materialise.) Construction actually started in 1893 and it was not until 1895 that the line reached Muheza, a distance of 25 miles. Progress was slow; labour was scarce and had to be imported from Mozambique. For three years the line stopped at Muheza and only reached Korogwe in 1902. A further delay of two years before the line was opened to Mombasa in 1905 and Moshi in 1911. An early "Greetings Card" from Tanga in the writer's collection depicts scenes during the construction of the line to Muheza (see illustration). The line was eventually extended from Moshi to Arusha in 1929 under the British Mandate.

Travelling Post Offices in German East Africa were first introduced in 1909 and these German "Bahnposts" used the familiar oval type date-stamps (see Fig. 1) which remained in use until early 1916 when the line was over-run by attacking British Forces during the First World War, and the retreating German Forces destroyed much of the line. It was German Colonial practice not only to number the trains but to number the cancellers used on their T.P.O.'s. Only six trains ran each week and were numbered 1 to 6. The odd numbers indicate trains travelling from the coast inland, and the even numbers for trains travelling to the coast. Two date stamps were in use on each train, and these may be distinguished

by the check letters "a" or "b" immediately below the date. Above the date in the centre the word "ZUG" (train) appears, followed by the service number of the train.

All T.P.O. cancellations from this Colony are increasingly in demand and now difficult to obtain in this country as they are finding their way back to Germany. This is particularly so in the case of the war dates, 1915 and 1916, as due to the British blockade this type of mail to Germany was almost non-existent. In this connection it is interesting to note that up to 1914 the "year" slugs for all T.P.O. cancellers were supplied to the Colony from Berlin and subsequently it was necessary for these slugs to be produced locally. They are easily distinguished from those produced in Germany, being much larger and very crudely cut. They are much sought after by German collectors today.

The T.P.O. cancellations of the Mittellandbahn (Midland Railway) in the central part of the Colony are very similar and when only part of the strike is visible it is often difficult to tell them apart. To determine from which railway the T.P.O. mark emanates it should be noted that in the case of the "Usambara Railway" the letter "T" of "BAHNPOST" falls immediately below the hyphen of "DEUTSCH-OSTAFRIKA".



Fig. 1

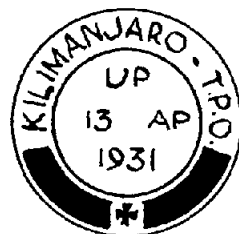


Fig. 2

## THE TANGA LINE

Following the First World War, the old Usambara Railway was patched up by the Army Engineers, and followed by the importation of locomotives from India, the line was taken over by a Department of the British Mandatory Government on 1st April, 1919. It was not, however, until 1927 that a T.P.O. was put into service, and this was known as the "Tanga-Moshi T.P.O." — these cancellations are very scarce indeed. Presumably after the extension of the line to Arusha in 1929 a new T.P.O. was introduced known as the "Kilimanjaro T.P.O.". The earliest cancellation known is dated 13 Apl 1931 (Fig. 2). This date-stamp remained in use until the 1950's, and showed the direction as "DN" (Down) indicating the route to the sea (Arusha

to Tanga) and "UP" for the reverse journey. In the early 1940's only "U" or "D" was used to signify the route.

The date-stamp in use at present follows the pattern of the modern British type, and was the first T.P.O. postmark from Tanganyika to show the time above the date. The only indication of route is obtained from the time mark.

Specialised studies have been made of these marks and train numbers by students of German Colonial philately. The earliest date seen is 2.3.1909 and the latest 10.2.16. The writer has insufficient material to give a complete check list and would be pleased to hear from any reader who can assist with dates, etc., in order to advance the study of these interesting T.P.O. marks.

## Books available

*British Postmarks* by R. C. Alcock and F. C. Holland - - - - - 30s. 0d.

This excellent work covers the whole of the British postmark scene, but does contain a fairly extensive section on the railway postmarks of Great Britain, and is worth having for this.

*Handbook and Catalogue of Canadian Transportation Postmarks* by T. P. G. Shaw 32s. 0d.

A long-awaited publication, which is already established as the reference work on the T.P.O.'s and railway postmarks of Canada. For anyone interested in Canada — A MUST!

*Norwegian Railway & Steamship Parcel Stamps* by A. Brofos - - - - - 21s. 0d.

Although not widely known in this country, the railway stamps of Norway have been in existence since the late 19th century, and have produced a wide variety of designs. For anyone looking for a new country as an interest, here is the ideal choice.

*Victoria — The Travelling Post Offices and their Markings, 1865-1912* - - - - - 15s. 0d.

A useful publication, which adequately covers the railway postal history of Victoria, and offers an additional (and in fact, necessary) interest to collectors of Australian material.

From Harris Publications Ltd., 27 Maiden Lane, Strand, London W.C.2.

# COMMUNICATION 66

by M. J. Burrows



**D**URING the past few years the advances in communication have been outstanding. At the present time it is possible for a close-up picture of the moon to be taken by a space-craft and transmitted back to earth and appear in a newspaper in a few hours.

It is communication between short distances that presents a newspaper with difficulties. To overcome these problems, a local newspaper office must have a system whereby all forms of contact can become available as and when required.

One of the methods used is the provision of large, distinctive envelopes, in bright colours, measuring 9½ in. x 6 in. by all newspaper correspondents. When one of the reporters wants to

send his work for publication, he hands the envelope in to the nearest railway station, to be sent by the next train. When there is no train service, the bus companies are used. It is on Bank Holidays (there being no normal postal services) and in emergency, that this method is extremely useful.

The cover illustrated was handed in at Elmswell Station on a Whit Sunday (see left hand panel). Although at this time the rate for conveyance by rail had been increased to 1/1d. only the 1/- newspaper stamp has been affixed and cancelled with the date: 30 MAY 1966. Elmswell station is one of the stations destined to be closed on 5th November, 1966.

# Introducing the Railway Theme

MANY millions of words have been written on the virtues of railways, and the atmosphere has been captured in photographs and paintings the world over, but undoubtedly one of the finest mediums of portraying the railway scene is found on the postage stamp.

One can find every conceivable kind of locomotive, carriage, station and track in the 900 different stamps of the world illustrating this subject, from "Puffing Billy" to Japan's latest Tokaido line. Collectors can find stamps depicting Robert Stephenson and Rudolph Diesel, ornamental stations in Viet Nam and lavish underground stations in Russia. Semaphore signals, valve gears, tunnels, viaducts, are all accurately shown in abundance.

To anyone just beginning on the quest for a thematic railway collection, it is not simply a matter of buying the first thing you see, but planning ahead. The mistake, quite easily made, is to choose an assorted railway packet, which although usually good value, very rarely provides anything complete. An ideal starting point is to aim for all the Railway Centenary sets which have been issued. This is well within the range of all members, and a comprehensive selection of the world's stamps can soon be accumulated.

The next step is to make very good friends with your dealer, and to persuade him to save all railway items which come his way. This is alright up to a point, but the crunch comes when you need one stamp from a set of four. Very few

dealers will do this, and steps are being taken through the Group to try to come to some agreement with a London firm. With patience, a collection can soon be assembled, and if you are prepared to accumulate a few duplicates, it will be worthwhile.

You may have doubts on how to write up the collection, and this will be dealt with in a future issue. One idea which appeals to many is to copy a map of the country's railway system, noting any important dates. Photographs of locomotives, and first day covers also help to make the page attractive.

The exception to the rule is Belgium, who are the only country which issue Railway stamps, which are recognised as postage stamps throughout the World. Here you will have to decide whether or not you will include the stamps which do not have a railway illustration, but bear an inscription or emblem. Also with this country there is a lot of repetition, and some very long sets.

But, the choice is yours, there are no rules, and if you decide to extend your collection to include Revenue stamps and T.P.O.'s, a whole new field is opened up. In each issue of *Railway Philately* we shall devote space to several selected issues, or the stamps of one particular country, and try to give as much information about the railway system as possible. Any suggestions on the method or choice of these articles will be welcomed by the Editor.

# Illustrating the Railway Theme

TO commence our studies on railways illustrated on the postage stamp, we have selected a cross-section of the world's issues, from 1937 to 1965. We shall endeavour to provide as much information as possible on the history of the railway concerned, and where available, details of where the locomotives have worked.

Fig. 1 shows an impressive streamlined Pacific locomotive of France, which was one of two issued on the occasion of the 13th International Railway Conference held in Paris in 1937. The other stamp (30c.) depicts an early electric locomotive of the S.N.C.F. This was the year when the national railway system was formed, on agreement by the French government and the former main-line railway companies. Al-

though deprived of the right to operate their own networks, there are still in existence five private companies. These are the Est, Midi, Nord, P.L.M. and P.O. Railway Companies.

The six large railway companies were divided into six regions, as follows: Eastern (former Est and Alsace-Lorraine lines), Northern (former Nord system), Western (former State lines), South Eastern (former P.L.M. system), South Western (former P.O.-Midi system) and Mediterranean.

The second illustration shows a steam express locomotive and train of the Deutsche Bundesbahn on the occasion of the Centenary in 1935. This was one of a set of four, the others being 6pf. "The Eagle" and early pioneer, 25pf. the "Flying Hamburger", and 40pf. a streamlined steam locomotive.

Railways in Germany in the early days of its history were grouped in eight constituent States, until 1871, when nationalisation began. They were State-owned from 1924, amended to an independent company in 1930, and again under authority of the German Reich in 1937.

The Deutsche Bundesbahn was reorganised on 13th December, 1951, within the Federal Republic.

One of the very latest electric locomotives of France, is shown on stamp No. 3, which was issued on the occasion of the electrification of the line between Valenciennes and Thionville. of the Calais-Basel line during 1955. These CO-CO locomotives are used for hauling heavy mineral trains on the northern lines.

Pakistan issued two well-designed stamps in 1961 to commemorate their Railway Centenary. This set is one of the best designed to come from the Commonwealth, and shows a fine example of an 0-4-2 steam locomotive, and one of the modern electric locomotives in use. The first railway, in what is now Pakistan, was built from Karachi City to Kotri, a distance of 105 miles, and opened on 13th May, 1841.

Illustration No. 5 shows one of an identical set of four, issued to mark the opening of a complete railway system by Swaziland on 5th November, 1964.

It was built to serve the iron ore mine at Ka Dake, in the western area of the territory, and to link up with a railway which runs through Portuguese East Africa to the port of Lourenco Marques. The length of track on Swaziland territory is 137 miles and steep gradients are to be found, rising from 1,000ft. to 4,530ft. in the last 58 miles to Ka Dake.

The Swaziland Railway was built to transport 12,000,000 tons of iron ore to Japan, over a period of 10 years.

Finally, the striking stamp from Southern Rhodesia shows a Beyer-Garratt in action, to commemorate the Cecil Rhodes Centenary.

Railways began in Rhodesia on 24th May, 1893 with the incorporation of the Bechuanaland Railway Co. Ltd. The first section of line was opened from Vryberg, on the South African Government railway system, to Mafeking, on 3rd October, 1894. Bulawayo was finally reached during 1897.

Fig. 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

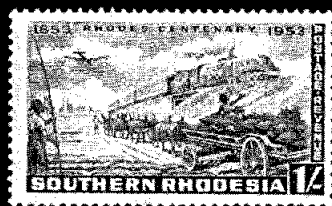


Fig. 4

Fig. 5

Fig. 6

# AN INTRODUCTION TO THE RAILWAY TRAVELLING POST OFFICES OF JAPAN

by A. H. Braybrook

R.T.P.O. Postmarks in Japan date from about 1889, when railway postal cars were introduced on the Japanese Railways. These postmarks fall into four major types as listed below:

- (1) BISECTED-CIRCLE TYPE (Fig. 1)  
Period 1889 - 1906
- (2) COMB TYPE 1 (Fig. 2)  
Period 1906 - 1913
- (3) COMB TYPE 2 (Fig. 3)  
Period 1913 - 1947
- (4) COMB TYPE 3 (Fig. 4)  
Period 1947 onwards

The illustrations are enlarged, the correct diameter being 23/24mm. The bisected-circle type was applied in black or red-brown ink and comb types 1-3 in black ink only. I have only seen these postmarks applied as cancellations, and never as transit postmarks.

NOTE.—On all Japanese R.T.P.O. postmarks, the direction of UP means in the geographical direction of TOKYO, and DOWN means in the direction away from TOKYO. It is the Japanese custom to describe all trains in this manner, even if they do not touch TOKYO. For instance, a train travelling on the route NAGOYA to KOBE, geographically towards TOKYO, is described as "UP" and a train travelling in the opposite direction as "DOWN". The route is not reversed.

The number of mails or trains on each route fluctuates according to the distance and importance of the connected stations. On some routes such as TOKYO to YOKOHAMA, five mails or trains seem to be the maximum number used, but most routes used fewer than this. On the above route, ten different postmarks can be found — 5 "UP" and 5 "DOWN".



FIG. 1.

## BISECTED CIRCLE TYPE

The characters and numerals in Fig. 1 are read from right to left.

- 1st line reads — RAILWAY POST  
 2nd " " — TOKYO-KOBE BETWEEN  
 3rd " " — 34th year, 7th month, 1st day  
 4th " " — UP 1st MAIL

Two sub-types of this postmark exist:—

- Sub-type A. The first line is written in an arc instead of a straight line.  
 Sub-type B. The first two lines are divided by horizontal line.

Both of these sub-types are considered rare, with Sub-type A being the rarer of the two.

To convert the Japanese year to the Western year in this type of postmark, add 1,867, e.g. year 27 becomes 1894.

In Fig. 1 the date is 1st July, 1901.

# COMB TYPE 1

TOKYO KOBE LINE  
DOWN 4th  
28 NOV 1910  
TOKYO-SHIZUOKA BETWEEN  
TOKYO DEPARTED 8.45 p.m.

The Japanese characters and roman numerals in Fig. 2 are read from right to left except the lower outer semi-circle, which is read from left to right. The name of this type is derived from the normal Japanese Post Office postmark which has the two inner segments filled with vertical lines resembling a comb.

In this type a major change has taken place—the date is now written in roman numerals. The route is written in the upper outer semi-circle and the train or mail designator in the upper inner semi-circle. In the lower outer semi-circle is written the station and departure time of the train (in roman numerals). In the lower inner semi-circle is written the section of the line on which the train is travelling at the time the postmark is applied. The two stations forming the section of line are written in an abbreviated form, one character is used for each station instead of the usual two or three characters.

This postmark spans two eras in Japanese history. A new era commenced on 30th July, 1912 to which 1911 must be added to the Japanese year to convert to the Western year.



FIG. 2

# COMB TYPE 2

TOKYO-AOMORI BETWEEN  
11 FEB 1943  
TOKYO-KORIYAMA  
DOWN 1st

The characters and roman numerals in Fig. 3 are read from right to left. In this type of postmark the upper inner semi-circle is filled with vertical lines but the upper outer semi-circle contains the route as in the previous type. The lower outer semi-circle contains the train or mail designator and the lower inner semi-circle the section of the line. On short runs, where no section of the line was required to be included, this segment is filled with vertical lines.

During the period of use of this postmark, a further era in Japanese history began on 26th December, 1926, and 1925 must be added to the year date to determine the Western year. The date of issue of the post-marked stamp will usually help to establish the era in which the postmark belongs.

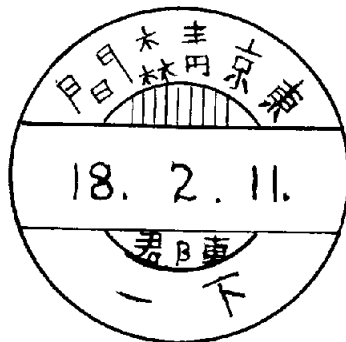


FIG. 3.

### COMB TYPE 3

TOKYO-MOJO BETWEEN  
18 JULY 1962  
UP 3rd HAMMAMATSU-OSAKA

The characters in Fig. 4 are read from left to right but the date remains as before, right to left.

The upper semi-circle contains the route and the lower semi-circle contains the train or mail designator, and the section of line. On short runs the section of line is omitted. There is in existence a sub-type where the comb in the upper inner semi-circle is replaced by two characters meaning "Western Route". No doubt an "Eastern Route" also exists and possibly other similar sub-types.

It is hoped that this article will assist members to recognise Japanese R.T.P.O. postmarks, a branch of Japanese philately sadly neglected in the philatelic press of English-speaking people. Should any member have any of these postmarks in their collections, Mr. Braybrook will be very happy to assist them with the translations of the routes.

Mr. Braybrook wishes to say that he is indebted to Mr. D. A. Robertshaw of Thornton, Bradford, for first introducing him to the study of these fascinating postmarks.

A check list of routes for each type of postmark is planned for publication in a future issue of the Journal.

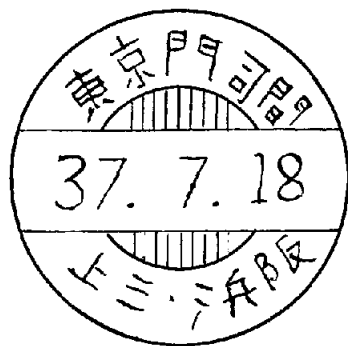


FIG. 4

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## A HISTORY OF THE TALYLLYN RAILWAY LETTER STAMPS

*(By kind permission of the Talyllyn Railway Co.)*

**T**HE Talyllyn Railway was incorporated by Act of Parliament on the 5th July, 1865. The line was constructed to a gauge of 2ft. 3ins., a narrow gauge railway. The real purpose of the Talyllyn was to carry slate from the Quarries of Bryn Eglwys near Abergynolwyn to the Cambrian Railway at Towyn, although passenger trains have also been run since the opening of the line. The railway was opened to traffic in December 1866. The passenger service

was between Abergynolwyn Station and Towyn Pendre Station. The present terminus at Wharf Station (then called King's Station) was primarily a wharf for the slate traffic and an exchange point with the Cambrian Railway.

Between 1900 and 1905 The Talyllyn Railway held a contract with the Postmaster General to carry H.M. mails between Towyn and Abergynolwyn.

As the slate trade deteriorated so did the



Talylyn Railway, and when its owner Sir Henry Haydn Jones died in 1950, it seemed as though the line must close. However, the Talylyn Railway Preservation Society was formed and arrangements made with Sir Henry's executors for the line to be taken over by the Society. The story of this part of the Railway's history and the first two years of operation by the Society are delightfully told by L. T. C. Rolt in his book "Railway Adventure".

Being a statutory railway company, authority was given by the Postmaster General for the carrying of Railway Letters, and together with British Rail and the Ulster Transport Authority the only railways in Britain permitted to do so.

Railway Letter Stamps have been issued by the Talylyn since 1957, and the first day of use of the original 11d. stamp was 23rd May, 1957. In 1958 the rate was increased by the Postmaster

General to 1/-. Prior to overprinting the 11d. stamps a circular rubber stamp was used worded "1d. EXTRA CHARGE"; this would appear to have been used for the first time on 3rd March, 1958, and was in use until the 14th June. The following day the 1/- overprints were used for the first time. These stamps were in use until the day before the Centenary. The 1/- Centenary Stamp was issued on 5th July, 1965.

On the 12th March, 1966, the rate for a Railway Letter was again increased by 1d. to 1/1d. and the "1d. EXTRA CHARGE" rubber stamp again came into use. However, since the G.P.O. did not advise the Railway until near the end of April, it was not until 27th April, 1966, that this was used, and continued in use until 1st June, when the 1/1d. overprint in red was introduced on the Centenary Stamp. On 8th August, 1966, a 1/1d. overprint in green was issued also on the Centenary Stamp.

The following covers were serviced on first days of issue:—

23.5.57	T.R. 11d.	2 Serviced
3.3.58	T.R. 11d. + 1d. Extra Charge	? Very few
15.6.58	T.R. 11d. (Overprinted 1/-)	? Very few
4.7.65	T.R. 11d. (Overprinted 1/-) Last Day	1000 Serviced
5.7.65	T.R. Centenary 1/-	9000 Serviced
7.2.66	T.R. Centenary 1/- + Welsh 4d. (F.D.C.)	1000 Serviced
27.4.66	T.R. Centenary 1/- + 1d. Extra Charge	12 Serviced
2.5.66	T.R. Centenary 1/- + 1d. Extra Charge (1/3d. Pictorial F.D.C.)	900 Serviced
2.5.66	T.R. Centenary 1/- + 1d. Extra (Welsh 3d.)	240 Serviced
1.7.66	T.R. Centenary overprinted 1/1d. in red (World Cup 4d. F.D.C.)	800 Serviced
8.8.66	T.R. Centenary overprinted 1/1d. in green (British Birds 4d. F.D.C.)	800 Serviced

## What is a Railway?

MANY varied viewpoints have been put forward throughout the years, but one of the best, and well defined, has been written by Michael Robbins, in his book "The Railway Age", published by Penguin 1966, 4s. 0d.

The description of a Railway as we know it is a combination of five features: (a) specialised

track, (b) accommodation of public traffic, (c) conveyance of passengers, (d) mechanical traction, and (e) some measure of public control.

All five features have to be present together before there is a railway; when one or more of them is absent, then there is a tramway, or a light railway, or a private means of transport, or something else.

## Railway Roundabout

**A**N unusual British handstamp was used by Swindon on 18th May, 1963. It was on the occasion of the Wiltshire Philatelic Federation Convention and depicts a Dean Single locomotive of the Great Western Railway Company. The North Eastern Philatelic Association incorporated the famous "Locomotion" on their Convention handstamp of 24th April, 1965. Instances of slogan cancellations illustrating locomotives are by Darlington, who featured "Locomotion" on dies used during 1964/5, and Carlisle who used an express train to advertise transport for industry during 1965/6. Any further news of handstamp cancellations in recent years will be acceptable.

: : :

David Gentleman certainly took a step forward in the right direction when he presented the late P.M.G. with his ideas on future British stamp design. Although leaving the National Press cold, his interpretation of early British Railway engineering designs would be acclaimed the World over, and offer our members the opportunity to have BRITISH stamps with railway illustrations. Just imagine the chaos of dealers offering first day cancellations on T.P.O.'s! One thing's for sure, we wouldn't have a shift of colour on the connecting rods, would we?

: : :

The Isle of Wight Locomotive Society are issuing a special cover on 31st December, to be posted on the last steam train on the island. They hope to have a special postmark, and orders for covers (1/- each) should be sent to 55 Bingham Road, Addiscombe, Surrey. The profits from this will help to save an "O2" class 0-4-4T and carriages.

## Philatelic Press References

S.C. — *Stamp Collecting*  
S.G.M. — *Stanley Gibbons Monthly*

Burmese Travelling Post Offices		
Vernon A. Rowe	S.C.	1/2/52
British Travelling Post Offices		
D. E. F. Burney	S.C.	17/9/54
T.P.O. and Railway Cancellations		
of the Rhodesias	S.C.	14/11/58
Wilf Nodder	S.C.	21/11/58
Railway Office Number Stamps		
W. G. Stitt-Dibden	S.G.M.	Oct. 1960
Station Office Stamps		
W. G. Stitt-Dibden	S.G.M.	Sept. 1965
Squared-circle Handstamps		
W. G. Stitt-Dibden	S.C.	17/12/65
British Railway Letter Stamps		
James A. Mackay	S.C.	28/5/65
British T.P.O.'s since 1945		
Cyril Kidd	S.C.	24/9/65

Any further additions to this list will be most acceptable, and an appeal is made to members to help if possible.

## 'Groupads'

Members' Advertisements: 3d. per line  
(Minimum 1s. 0d.)

A. JOHNSON, 8 LYPIATT MEAD, CORSHAM, WILTS. wants Railway Letter stamps, Parcel and Newspaper stamps of Great Britain and Commonwealth.

THE SECRETARY wants T.P.O.'s of Great Britain on cover, Railway Letters Post Parcels and Newspapers, Thematics (inc. covers), "Perfins" and Handstamps.

*Published on behalf of the Railway  
Philatelic Group, by R. A. Kirk, at  
59a Hartley Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield,  
Nottingham*

# Under the Hammer

*PLEASE MENTION THE  
RAILWAY PHILATELIC GROUP  
WHEN WRITING*

**M**EMBERS looking for Railway Letter stamps on cover should write to Mr. C. Angus Parker, at Argyll Stamp Company, 265 Strand, London W.C.2. Mr. Parker is an R.P.G. member, and will send a comprehensive selection, plus his very efficient service.

The Talylyn Railway is very unique, it being the only railway at present using Railway Letter stamps on cover, for conveyance on the line. Mint stamps and covers can be obtained from Mr. H. G. Parson, at Courier Stamp Company, 9 Christmas Steps, Bristol. Mr. Parson is also a member, and will appreciate your enquiries.

For the latest lists on philatelic literature, which contains books on T.P.O.'s, railway articles, Railway Letter stamps, send a 3s. 6d. P.O. to Harry Hayes, 48 Trafalgar Street, Healey, Batley, Yorks. He also does a very good Stamp Collectors' Companion, which is ideal to record your collection and wants. Price 27s. 6d., it is a really good investment, being stoutly made, and very compact.

We are now regularly receiving the catalogues from the four auction houses of Rigby, H. R. Harmer, Robson Lowe and Stanley Gibbons. Any member who would like details of railway lots up for auction can have these from the Secretary. If you will state the countries you are interested in, and enclose a S.A.E., we will forward a complete list. The sales are approximately once a month, and usually contain a fair selection of T.P.O.'s and occasionally an odd lot of Railway stamps.

We have an offer from British Railways to supply the complete set of current Newspaper Stamps in mint condition, for the nine values, 1d. to 1s. 0d. But we must purchase sheets of 30, and before we do this would like to know which members would be interested. The set of nine values would cost 13s. 6d. (post free) and blocks of four £2. 13s. 0d. (post free). Please let the Secretary know if you want to purchase any of these stamps.

Thematic collectors seeking a specialist dealer should write to Suburban Stamp Company, Tottenham Court Road, London. They have an extensive stock of railway thematics and will be only too pleased to help. For beginners, Mr. Fred Rowley, of "Jeremy", 16 Princes Arcade, London S.W.1., can supply most of the recent issues from 1964, and many of the Railway Centenary sets. Also from this firm is a fine range of pre-war railway locomotive photographs, taken on the L.M.S., L.N.E.R., M. & G.N., L.N.W.R., and G.W.R.

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## Exchange Scheme

**W**ILL all members who have any material for disposal please send it to the Exchange Secretary, Mr. J. Eaton, 49 Mapperley Orchard, Arnold, Nottingham.

All types of T.P.O.'s, Railway Letter Post, Newspapers and Parcels, and Thematic issues are wanted.

Please submit them in folders no larger than 7ins. x 4½ins., and have all stamps and covers plainly marked. The charge by the Group will be 10%, to cover circulation costs.

Any member who requires the exchange packet should let the Exchange Secretary know, immediately.

The scheme should be in operation by 10th November.

# Talyllyn Railway \_\_\_\_\_

items available from stock . . .

## FIRST DAY COVERS

3d Welsh Reg. with obsolete 1/- on 11d Railway Stamp	6/-
4d    "    "    "    "    1/- Railway Stamp . . .	4/6
Railway Centenary Stamp with 3d Welsh Reg., special G.P.O. "C33" postmark . . . . .	5/-
Provisional 1/1d on 1/- Railway Stamp with 4d Football used on Picture Post Cards depicting Company locomotives . . . . .	3/6
Covers stamped "1d extra" charge which preceded the 1/1d. on 1/- issue . . . . .	2/6

## MINT STAMPS

1/1d on 1/- Railway Stamp (now very scarce) . . . . .	each 1/5
Centenary 1/- Railway Stamp . . . . .	each 1/4
Blocks of above pro rata	
Miniature sheets of six different Locomotives (in different colours) . . . . .	per sheet 12/6

## CENTENARY RAILWAY STAMP

Proofs by De La Rue, printers . . . . .	each £4-4-0
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**COURIER STAMP COMPANY**  
**9 Christmas Steps . Bristol**