

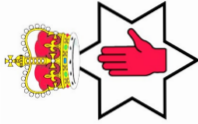
Northern Ireland Regional Issues

Introduction

In 1946, there was a proposal for regional stamps for each of the countries of the United Kingdom but the idea was dropped by the Post Office. Later, in 1953, a campaign for national pictorial definitives was launched but again this idea did not find favour with the Post Office. Instead in 1956, after a debate in the House of Lords., the Postmaster-General announced the issue of regional stamps which would incorporate appropriate local symbols but with the Queen's portrait remaining the dominant feature.

Scope and Objective

The object of the exhibit is to set out in chronological order the stamps issued in sheet format by the British Post Office for Northern Ireland, from their inception in 1958 to 2002 when the Machin plus emblem design was replaced by a new pictorial set. The exhibit details the changes in printers, the introduction of phosphor and the various changes in paper and gum. Apart from the various printer contract changes, there were frequent releases of new values arising from the constant change in rates due to high inflation in the 1970/80's. All of these changes are recorded in the exhibit as are all significant cylinder and plate changes (including phosphor cylinders) linking all changes to rate increases during the period and showing their usage in the mail to both inland and overseas destinations..



The symbol included on the 3d, 4d & 5d pre-decimal stamps and all but the last first class stamp in the decimal series incorporates a Red Hand inside a six-pointed star with a crown representing the six counties of Northern Ireland.

Plan

- 1. Pre-decimal Issues
 - 1.1 Designs
 - 1.2 Initial 3d, 6d and 1s3d issues
 - 1.3 Rate Increase – New 4d Value
 - 1.4 Introduction of Phosphor Bands
 - 1.5 Rate increase – 9d and 1s6d stamps
 - 1.6 Tw0-tier First and Second Class
- 2. Decimal Currency Issues
 - 2.1 Harrison & Sons Limited - 1971 to 1981
 - 2.2 House of Questa - 1981 to 1993
 - 2.3 House of Questa – Elliptical Issues - 1993 to 1996
 - 2.4 Walsall Security Printers – 1997 to 2000
- 3. Change to new pictorial issues



4d – no phosphor bands with double perforation on second row



Imperforate House of Questa proof stuck down on card – ex. House of Questa archives

Specific items of note are the watermarked 3d (non-phos.) with perforated left margin (frame 1, page 5), the pair of 6d imperforate (frame 1, page 6), the 4d PVA (frame 1, page 12), 10p and 11p cylinder blocks with full inter pane gutter (frame 2, page 16), the proofs of the 11½p above and similar proofs of the 12½p, 15½p, 19½p and 26p (all in frame 3), the short lived 17p printing with type 2b emblem (frame 4, pages 7 and 8)), the 39p printing on non-phosphor paper (frame 5, page 7). The foregoing and any other unusual items including covers not often seen are indicated with a .

Bibliography

Northern Ireland Country Issues by the exhibitor (published as a series of articles by Royal Mail in the Philatelic Bulletin)

Machin Watch columns by John M Deering (published by Stanley Gibbons Limited)

The Connoisseur Catalogue of Machin Stamps

Guideec (published by The British Decimal Stamps Study Circle)