



Our churches and cathedrals house a rich legacy of stained glass and a distinctive contribution to that tradition was made earlier in the present century by the artists of the Arts and Crafts Movement. There could be no more fitting way of celebrating Christmas than by using characteristic details of their work in stained glass to illustrate the story of the Nativity.

Woodroffe, in Our Lady and St Peter Church, Leatherhead.

Karl Parsons (1884-1934) and Paul Woodroffe (1875-1954) were two interesting and important members of the Arts and Crafts Movement whose work has rarely received the broader recognition it deserves.

Charles Bergemann Parsons (known through-



The **18p** stamp (basic inland 2nd class rate) features the Angel Gabriel, part of the east window (1920) of St James's Church, Pangbourne, Berkshire, by Karl Parsons. The **24p** value (1st class inland and EC basic rate) shows another Parsons' window (1927) of St Mary's Church, Bibury, Gloucestershire.

The **28p** (non EC European countries) and **33p** (airmail postcards) stamps feature respectively King with crown (by Paul Woodroffe), and Three Shepherds (Parsons) from the churches of Our Lady and St Peter, Leatherhead, Surrey and All Saints, Porthcawl, Mid-Glamorgan.

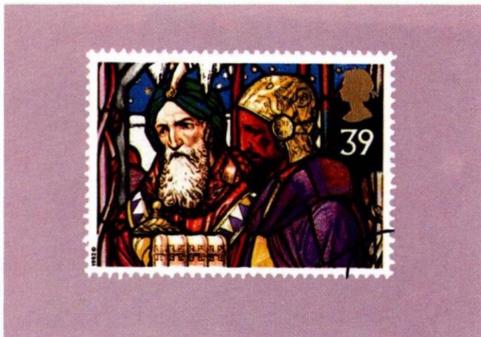
The final stamp, **39p** (basic airmail letter rate) shows two of the Kings bearing gifts, by

out his life as Karl) was born in Peckham, London. After leaving Haberdashers' Aske's School, he became a pupil of Christopher Whall (1849-1924), a hugely influential teacher and the undisputed doyen of artist-craftsmen in the field of stained glass.

Parson's first major work was a collaboration with Whall for the apse windows of Cape Town cathedral, commissioned in 1908. Their success gave him the confidence to set up his own studio in Fulham, and a significant early design was a memorial window to Charles Rolls, co-founder of Rolls Royce, who died in a flying accident in 1910. Originality of approach, allied to impeccable craftsmanship, brought Parsons a

growing reputation. For such a large-scale medium, his work showed a rare delicacy of touch, his sensitivity defined in the exquisitely intricate way he painted on glass to bring out fine detail. A fair proportion of his output was for Commonwealth countries where the strong, clear light of the southern hemisphere brought out the full richness of colour in his work.

Born in India, Paul Vincent Woodroffe was educated at Stonyhurst College in Lancashire and the Slade School of Art in London. Some years later he became a pupil of Christopher Whall. Unlike Parsons, however, Woodroffe did not devote his whole career to stained glass. He was a fine book designer and illustrator. In 1895 he published an illustrated book of nursery rhymes,



the first of many volumes to which he would contribute. His earliest known stained glass, (1901) is at St John's Catholic church, Alton, Staffordshire.

In 1904 Woodroffe moved to Chipping Campden in the Cotswolds, where he lived for over 30 years. He adapted a small, dilapidated cottage into a studio work-shop. Coming from a devoutly Catholic family, much of his work was destined for Catholic churches. Just as with Parsons's contemporary work, his windows reflect Whall's tutelage.

After the First World War (during which he worked at the Ministry of Munitions), Woodroffe was kept busy with commissions for war memorials. His largest project was for 15 windows for the Lady Chapel of St Patrick's Cathedral in New York. Started in 1909, the work was not completed until 1934.

These stamps are issued in the year that marks the 900th anniversary of the founding in 1902 of the Benedictine abbey that later became Chester Cathedral. They also anticipate the 1,200th anniversary in 1993 of the establishment by King Offa of a Benedictine monastery on the site of what is now St Albans Cathedral.

## The Designers

The stamps were designed by Carroll, Dempsey and Thirkell Limited who were responsible for the successful and popular 1991 Dogs issue. Mike Dempsey, of this partnership, designed the 1987 Victorian Britain and 1988 Europa-Transport and Communications issues. The photographs of the stained glass window were taken by the late Tony Evans, whose photographs were also used for the 1987 Studio Pottery and 1990 RSPCA stamps.

## Printing Details

The stamps measuring 41 x 30mm were printed in photogravure by Harrison & Sons Limited in sheets of 100. PVA Dextrin gum, perforation 14½ x 14. The 18p has one phosphor band, the others are on phosphor coated paper.

## Presentation Pack

The pack (No. 232) will cost £1.75. It was designed by Carroll, Dempsey & Thirkell Limited, with text by Tim Shackleton. Printing was by Raithby, Lawrence & Company Limited of Leicester. The pack features 17 fine examples of stained glass windows.

## Royal Mail Stamp Card

Cards, featuring enlargements of the stamp designs, will be available approximately two weeks before the stamp issue, price 21p each. They are numbered 148A-E.

## First Day Cover

The Royal Mail first day cover will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, philatelic counters and main post offices approximately two weeks before 10 November, price 21p. Three pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover service – one for the Bureau, the others for Bethlehem and Pangbourne.

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the stamps cancelled with the requested postmark. Application forms, available from the Bureau and main post offices, should be returned not later than 10 November.

Collectors may send their own cards/covers for the pictorial postmarks; these should be sent on the first day of issue in a stamped outer envelope endorsed "Pictorial First Day of Issue Postmark" to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT (Bureau postmark), or Wales & The West Special



ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER



Mrs J Robinson  
200 Manorbier Road  
ILKESTON  
Derbyshire  
DE7 4AB



... Roll, co-founder of Rolls Royce, who died in a flying accident in 1916. Originality of approach, allied to impeccable craftsmanship, brought Parsons a growing reputation. For such a large-scale medium, his work showed a rare delicacy of touch, his sensitivity defined in the exquisitely intricate way he painted on glass to bring out fine detail. Much of his work was for British churches, but a fair proportion of his output was for Commonwealth

uneven in thickness, and a rich variety in the overall density of colouring. Made by blowing glass into a box-shaped mould and cutting the resultant 'bottle' into slabs, it was one of the hallmarks of Arts and Crafts glass, despite being expensive and difficult to work with.

In the first years of peace after the Great War, during which he worked at the ministry of munitions - like so many of his contemporaries - was kept busy with war memorials. His most important work came from a client who commissioned windows for the Lady's Cathedral in New York. His work became involved in the war was not completed until 1934. His last recorded work was for the Catholic church in Surrey, in 1941. He died on 7 May 1954, but his work survives him.



11. Chancel window by Edward Burne-Jones, 1872, in St. Michael's, Worcester, Herefordshire



Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Cardiff, Penarth Road, CARDIFF CF1 1AA (Bethlehem postmark), or South East Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail Windsor, Peascod Street, WINDSOR SL4 1AA (Pangbourne postmark). Collectors wanting their cards/covers returned under cover should enclose a suitable addressed envelope. This need not bear additional postage stamps, the postage being already paid by the stamps affixed to the covers for postmarking.

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for those collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-philatelic "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

Details of special handstamps, sponsored by stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe, £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

### Souvenir Cover

A souvenir cover, of similar design to the first day cover, will be available from Collections and philatelic counters for one year from 11 November, price 21p.

### Christmas Stamp Book

A book containing 20 second class (18p) Christmas stamps will go on sale at post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections and philatelic counters on 10 November, price £3.60. The book will remain on general sale until 24 December unless sold out earlier; it will remain on philatelic sale for one year.

The book will be of similar format to the Greetings book; the stamps being in panes with margins at top and bottom.

The cover design is by Karen Murray, printing by Harrisons in lithography (stamps by Harrisons in photogravure).

### Christmas 18p stamp

Collectors are advised that it will be in order to affix just the 18p Christmas stamp to covers to receive all special cancels ("First Day of Issue", sponsored, and philatelic counter) in use on 10 November. The minimum 1st class rate rule is suspended on this day as the Christmas set includes a 2nd class rate stamp. It should be noted that this concession applies only to the 18p Christmas stamp; covers bearing other than Christmas stamps must bear at least 24p postage.

### Autumn Stampex

This year's **Autumn Stampex** will be held at the Royal Horticultural Society Halls, Greycoat Street and Vincent Square, London SW1 from 13 to 18 October. The exhibition will be open 12.00-19.00 on 13 October, 10.30-19.00 on 14-17 October, and 10.30-18.00 on 18 October.

Royal Mail involvement at the exhibition will include the usual sales stand and Stamp Bug area. The National Postal Museum is to put on a small exhibition, the theme of which will be "Moving the Mail". A cachet for NPM postcards will be available at the exhibition.

A special handstamp will be applied to mail posted at Stampex. Collectors unable to visit the exhibition may send covers to: London South Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail London South West, 53 Nine Elms Lane, LONDON SW8 5BB requesting the Stampex handstamp; please state date required.

The Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum is staging displays of stamps and postal history material from members' private collections, including postal history of north Wales; franks, impressions and mechanisation; postal stationery; Royal Events, British Empire Exhibition and Olympics. A feature on the displays will be found in the Stampex Catalogue.

### New Post Office Chief Executive

Sir Bryan Nicholson retires as Chairman and Chief Executive of The Post Office on 21 October. He will then remain as part-time Chairman until the end of the year to allow time for his part-time successor to be chosen by the Government. Sir Bryan has shown a keen interest in philatelic matters, particularly the future of the National Postal Museum. He outlined the Post Office's commitment to philately when he opened the Stamp World London '90 exhibition (see *Bulletin*, July 1990).

Mr Bill Cockburn, CBE, TD, Managing Director of Royal Mail since 1986, becomes Chief Executive of The Post Office from 22 October 1992. Mr Cockburn joined the then GPO in 1961.

The new Managing Director of Royal Mail will be Mr Peter Howarth, currently Managing Director of Parcelforce. A number of other changes of responsibility are also taking place amongst PO top management. Commenting on the appointments, Mr Cockburn, said: "Our top priority is to delight our customers with high quality services throughout the Post Office".