

# Country Stamps

7 December 1993



New 19p, 25p, 30p and 41p Country stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales will be issued on 7 December. They will be on sale at post offices in the respective countries and at the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus and Philatelic Counters. The designs will be the same as previous issues, the colours of the new stamps being as the national definitives: 19p olive green, 25p salmon pink, 30p sage and 41p stone.

independent, the stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have been referred to as "Country" issues. Many new values have resulted from postal rate increases and the stamps enjoy popularity with many collectors who have built up specialised collections.

The background story to the introduction of the "Regionals" was given by Jean Ferrugia in a series of articles in the *Bulletin*: August 1978 (Scotland), September 1978 (Wales), October



*Only the above were available at the time of publication.*

These values cover the basic second class inland rate; the basic inland first class and EC countries rate; the non-EC European rate; and the rate for basic weight airmail letters to the rest of the world. These new rates were introduced from 1 November.

Country stamps, then referred to as "Regional Issues" made their debut in 1958 with 3d stamps for Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man and 3d, 6d and 1s3d stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Various additions to the range of values followed – 2½d stamps (postcard rate) for the three islands in 1964, 4d and 5d stamps for each region in 1966 and 1968 respectively and 9d and 1s6d stamps for the three main regions in 1967. The stamps for Guernsey and Jersey were taken off sale when the islands became "postally independent" in 1969.

New decimal stamps for the remaining four regions were issued in July 1971. Since 1973, when the Isle of Man became postally

independent, the stamps for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have been referred to as "Country" issues. Many new values have resulted from postal rate increases and the stamps enjoy popularity with many collectors who have built up specialised collections.

## Technical Details

*Printers:* House of Questa  
*Process:* Offset-lithography  
*Size:* 20 x 24mm  
*Sheets:* 200

*Perforation:* 15 x 14, elliptical perfs on vertical sides

*Phosphor:* 19p one band, 25p, 30p, 41p 2 bands. All bands include fluor

*Paper:* OBA free (OBA = Optical Brightening Agent)

*Gum:* PVA

## First Day Facilities

First day cover envelopes, price 25p each, will be available from the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, Philatelic Counters and main post



SCOTLAND  
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER  
NEW DEFINITIVE STAMPS



CYMRU  
AMLEN DWYNOOD CYNTAF  
Y POST BRENHINOL  
STAMPIAU DIFFINIOL NEWYDD  
WALES



NORTHERN IRELAND  
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER  
NEW DEFINITIVE STAMPS

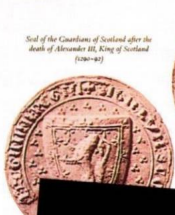


SCOTLAND WALES NORTHERN IRELAND

The thistle badge has been extensively used since the reign of King James III (1489-93), whereas the saltire was formally recognised as a national badge at least a century earlier. Associated with a crown, they both became royal badges and, as such, have appeared on earlier definitive stamps. The two uniforms featured on the highest value of the earlier stamps are the supporters of the royal arms of Scotland. Each holds a lance, the one on the left is supported by a lion banner and the one on the right by a saltire banner.

royal badge for Wales, and a century later, differentiated by a silver label (collar), it was assigned by Edward VII as a badge to be borne by the Prince of Wales. In 1953 Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II approved an augmented version of the royal badge for Wales of the Red Dragon. Other emblems have been used for Wales. Ascribed to David, Patron Saint of Wales, the leek has been used since the eighteenth century. The daffodil was first used on the National Health stamps of 1912 and is also on the first designs of Queen Elizabeth.

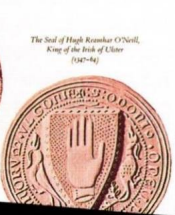
the six counties of Northern Ireland: Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry and Tyrone. This is the sole heraldic device used on the current series, but before the decimalisation of the currency in 1973 the Northern Ireland stamps also included a reference to Northern Ireland's connection with linen. For although only a small percentage of flax is now grown there, and this for experimental purposes, the soil of Northern Ireland and the long tradition of flax-growing gave birth to a textile industry of great importance.



Seal of the Guardians of Scotland after the death of Alexander III, King of Scotland (1286-87)



Reverse of the Great Seal of Queen Elizabeth II



The Seal of Hugh Rumbur O'Neill, King of the Irish of Ulster (1047-48)



SCOTLAND WALES NORTHERN IRELAND

Illustrated here are earlier designs of country definitive stamps. The Scottish stamps featured the saltire, the thistle, and two unicorns supporting the royal arms of Scotland - a lion banner and a saltire banner. The Welsh stamps portrayed the Dragon of Wales and also showed a leek. The Northern Ireland stamps featured the Red Right Hand of Ulster and some flax.



offices in the respective countries. Pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmarks will be available at the Bureau and for the three country capitals: Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff. First day covers will be provided in sets of three - one set with the Bureau postmark, the other with the postmarks for the three capitals. Application forms, available from the Bureau, should be returned by 7 December.

Collectors preparing their own covers may send them for the pictorial postmarks to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT (Bureau postmark); Scotland & N Ireland Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, George Square, GLASGOW G2 1AA (Edinburgh and Belfast postmarks - state clearly

which is required) or Wales & West Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, CARDIFF CF1 1AA (Cardiff postmark).

First day posting boxes will be available at all offices which normally provide them in each of the three countries and at all Collections, Post Shop Plus, and Philatelic Counter offices in England. Covers posted in these boxes will receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

**Presentation Pack**

A "New Issue" Pack containing all 12 stamps will be available from the Bureau, Collections, Post Shops Plus, Philatelic Counters and main post offices in the respective countries from 7 December, price £3.80.