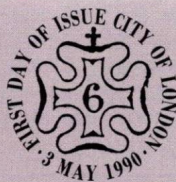


# Penny Black Miniature Sheet

3 May 1990



The highlight of Royal Mail Stamps & Philately's programme for 1990 must be the Penny Black Miniature Sheet to be issued on 3 May. The sheet is the third in the series of sheets issued to support the "Stamp World London 90" exhibition and marks the 150th anniversary of the issue of the Penny Black.

The sheet includes the 20p value of the Penny Black Anniversary definitive series (issued 10 January) and will sell at £1. Fifty pence of the premium will be used specifically for the Stamp World exhibition; further sums will be used in support of British philately.

In addition to the 20p special definitive, the sheet includes a reproduction, without lower corner letters, of the Penny Black itself and has as the background a detail from the famous Seahorse design of 1913. The Seahorse design was used on the George V 2s 6d, 5s, 10s and £1 High Values — Britain's first pictorial stamps.



*The famous Seahorse design*

The Seahorse design was by Bertram Mackennal, the dies were engraved by J.A.C. Harrison. The first stamp, the 2s 6d value in sepia-brown was issued on 30 June 1913, followed by the 5s rose-carmine on 4 July and the 10s indigo-blue and £1 green on 1 August. The stamps were initially printed by Waterlow Bros & Layton; later the contract for the 2s 6d, 5s and 10s passed to De La Rue (1915-18) and to Bradbury, Wilkinson (1918-19). All these printings were on GvR single cypher watermarked paper. The dies of the 2s 6d, 5s and 10s stamps

were re-engraved by J.A.C. Harrison and stamps from these issued in October 1934. The printing was by Waterlow again on single cypher watermarked paper. This magnificent piece of engraving has always been popular with British collectors, rivalling the fine St George and Dragon design on the 1929 £1 Postal Union Congress stamp, also engraved by J.A.C. Harrison (design by H. Nelson).

## Technical Details

The miniature sheet was designed by Sedley Place Design and printed by Harrison & Sons Limited in recess (intaglio) and photogravure on phosphor-coated paper. The sheet measures 122 x 90mm and has PVA Dextrin gum. The 20p Penny Black Anniversary stamp was designed by Jeffery Matthews and is perforated 15 x 14 as the stamps from normal sheets of 200, issued in January.

## Souvenir Book

On 3 May a Royal Mail Penny Black Souvenir Book will go on sale at the British Philatelic Bureau, philatelic counters and the National Postal Museum, price £6.95. The book contains the miniature sheet, the five Penny Black Anniversary Definitives and a replica Mulready lettersheet. Further details are given on page 179.

## First Day Cover

The Royal Mail first day cover will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, philatelic counters and main post offices approximately two weeks before 3 May, price 18p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover service — one for the British Philatelic Bureau, the other for London EC (location of the National Postal Museum).

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the miniature sheet cancelled with the requested postmark. Application forms, available from the Bureau and main post offices, should be returned not later than 3 May.

Customers requiring only the special pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue an envelope bearing the miniature sheet under an outer cover endorsed "Special First Day of Issue handstamp" to:

British Philatelic Bureau      20 Brandon Street  
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT

London EC

London North Special Handstamp Centre  
City of London LDO  
King Edward Street  
LONDON EC1A 1AA

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-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps. A pictorial First Day postmark, showing the arms of the City of London will be used at the London North Special Handstamp Centre, City of London LDO, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1AA. Durham Post Office will be using a pictorial First Day handstamp showing the cathedral. Items for this postmark should be sent to: Pictorial First Day of Issue Postmark Duty, Durham Post Office, 33 Silver Street, DURHAM DH1 3RE. Post Office First Day postmarks will be applied in red ink.

A number of special handstamps sponsored by stamp dealers and others, will be used on 3 May - details of these will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin*, available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau.

### Souvenir Cover

A souvenir cover, of similar design to the first day cover, will be available from all philatelic counters from 4 May, price 18p. This will be on sale for one year.

### Earlier Miniature Sheets

The first British Post Office miniature sheet was issued in March 1978 and contained the four Historic Building stamps. The sheet sold at a 10p premium towards the London 1980 international stamp exhibition. Two further sheets in support of this exhibition followed in October 1979 (Rowland Hill stamps) and May 1980 (London 1980 50p stamp). The premiums were 10p and 25p respectively.

The first of three sheets for the Stamp World London 90 exhibition was issued in September 1988 and contained the four Edward Lear stamps (22p premium). It was withdrawn from sale on 24 July 1989, the day before the issue of the second sheet containing Industrial Archaeology stamps (27p premium). This sheet remains on sale at the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters until 24 July 1990, price £1.40.

1840 1990  
**PENNY BLACK**  
**ANNIVERSARY STAMP**  
MINIATURE SHEET  
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER

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