

Civil War

16 June 1992



Four stamps will be issued on 16 June to mark the 350th anniversary of the Battle of Edgehill, the first battle of the Civil War. Of all the major events which have shaped Britain's history and the society in which we live, few have been more controversial than the Civil War. There were in fact three Civil Wars – the first fought between 1642 and 1646, the second of 1648 led to the execution of Charles I; and the third, between 1649 and 1651, saw attempts by his son (later Charles II) to regain the throne.

The four stamps feature some of the soldiers, of the Crown and Parliament, who took part in the wars. The 24p stamp (inland 1st class and EC basic rate) shows a Pikeman. "This", writes designer Jeremy Sancha, "is of a common soldier pausing whilst on a march, an occupation that was very common during the Civil War. The idea for this design came from old



engravings although without the finery or lace, just the breastplate, tassets, etc, of which there is an abundance in the Tower of London."

The 28p value (Europe, non-EC basic rate) features a Drummer; the idea for this design, and that for the 39p stamp, came from looking at a picture of the stained glass window at Farndon, Cheshire (depicting portraits of men at



THE CIVIL WAR 1642-51 fought between the forces of KING & PARLIAMENT: Musketeer



THE CIVIL WAR 1642-51 fought between the forces of KING & PARLIAMENT: Standard Bearer

arms) although the background detail showing soldiers going into battle comes from looking at a detail of an engraving of the wars in the Low Countries which were raging at this time. Mr Sancha "felt the drummer was a potent symbol of the sound of battle."

The 33p stamp (worldwide postcard rate) depicts a Musketeer. Mr Sancha derived the idea of this design from looking at engravings of the period in the British Museum Print Department; he writes "of course it was only the wealthy who could afford to have themselves represented in this way. I wanted to show that the Civil War reached all parts of the country and that country houses were attacked and defended frequently."

The 39p denomination (basic airmail letter rate) features a Standard Bearer wearing a sash which was used as an identification emblem. He is shown wearing a gorget (armour protecting throat) and a buff coat. Mr Sancha comments on the standard: "apart from being a symbol of war, it is a marvellous visual device". The idea for this design also came from a study of stained glass windows at Farndon.

The Pikeman and Drummer are portrayed with battle scenes in the background, the Musketeer in front of a 17th century country house,

and the Standard Bearer backed by riders, one firing at the other. All four stamps bear the inscription THE CIVIL WAR 1642-51 fought between the forces of KING & PARLIAMENT.

The Designer

The stamps are the work of Jeremy Sancha who designed the covers of the £1 books showing Mills issued in 1989-90 (S.G. FH18-21). These are his first stamps for Royal Mail. Mr Sancha was born in Lincolnshire in 1951. His background was in the arts as his father is a portrait painter and his mother an illustrator and writer of historical books. He studied Art at the Central School of Art & Design and painting and printmaking at Winchester College of Art. In 1971 he set up as a printmaker working on private commissions, exhibitions and selling work in galleries. Other work at this period included murals, trompe l'oeil, and pub signs. In 1988 he began working as an illustrator.

Mr Sancha writes of his research for the Civil War issue: "To try and get the details in the pictures as correct as possible I used David Blakemore's book *Arms & Armour of the English Civil Wars* and showed him roughs of the subject matter. I also consulted Avril Hart, Assistant Curator of Textiles & Dress, at the Victoria & Albert Museum to identify peculiarities of dress from this period. Both were invaluable for pointing out mistakes and misconceptions. I also photographed members of the English Civil War Society during their annual march from St James's to Whitehall in commemoration of the execution of Charles I. I am grateful to individual members who put aside time to pose in their respective dress for photographing."

Printing Details

The stamps, printed in photogravure by Harrison and Sons Limited, are of "almost square" format (35 x 37mm), printed in sheets of 100 on phosphor coated paper with PVA Dextrin gum. Perforation measures 14½ x 14.

First Day Cover

The Royal Mail first day cover, designed by Roundel Design Group, will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, philatelic counters and main post offices approximately two weeks before 16 June, price 21p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover service — one for the Bureau, the other for Banbury, the nearest town to Edgehill battlefield.

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 16 June.

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 Midlands Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail Birmingham, BIRMINGHAM B1 1AA (Banbury 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-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

Details of special handstamps, sponsored by stamp dealers and others, to be used on 16 June 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: £9.35 UK, £11.25 Europe; £20.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

Presentation Pack

The pack (No. 228) will cost £1.55. It was designed by Roundel Group Design with text by Andrew Robertshaw, National Army Museum. Printing was by Raithby, Lawrence & Company Limited of Leicester. The pack features documents relating to the Civil War, including a facsimile of the death warrant of Charles I (the original is in the House of Lords Record Office).

Royal Mail Stamp Cards

Cards, featuring enlargements of the stamp designs, will be available approximately two weeks before the stamp issue, price 21p each. They are numbered 144A-D.

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 17 June, price 21p.

I am obliged to Jeremy Sancha for his help in the preparation of this preview feature on the Civil War issue. Ed.

