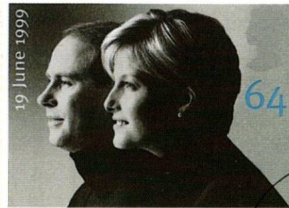
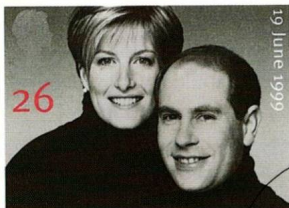


## Royal Mail news Royal Wedding stamps • New designs for Scotland and Wales • New N Ireland country stamps • Aerogrammes

The photographs are by John Swannell, taken in March 1999 to a special Royal Mail commission. Mr Swannell has photographed members of the Royal Family, including the Princess of Wales with the Princes William and Harry, the Princess Royal, and Viscount Linley, as well as Sir John Gielgud, Sir Elton John, and (Lord) Melvyn Bragg. He is also a noted photographer of scenery in Scotland, Australia and the USA.



**Royal Wedding** Two stamps will be issued on 15 June to mark the wedding of HRH Prince Edward and Miss Sophie Rhys-Jones. The wedding takes place at Windsor on 19 June. Both stamps, designed by John Gibbs, feature portraits of the couple specially taken for Royal Mail by John Swannell. The 26p value covers the basic 1st class inland letter rate, the 64p stamp the second step airmail letter rate.

Prince Edward Antony Richard Louis was born at Buckingham Palace on 10 March 1964, the third son of HM The Queen and HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. He was baptised in the private chapel at Windsor two months later. The Prince was educated at Gordonstoun School, where he was Head Boy, and at Jesus College Cambridge where he studied anthropology and archaeology. He taught briefly at Wanganui Collegiate School in New Zealand before joining the Royal Marines in 1983. He left four years later and has since followed a career in theatrical management and film making, including TV programmes on Royal London and his great uncle, Edward VIII (Duke of Windsor).

Miss Rhys-Jones is the daughter of Christopher and Mary Rhys-Jones of Brenchley, Kent. She was educated at Dulwich College preparatory school, Kent College for Girls, and a secretarial college. Keen on sports, particularly skiing, sailing and windsurfing, she and Prince Edward first met at a real tennis match in 1993. The Prince proposed to Miss Rhys-Jones, a partner in a London public relations consultancy, shortly before Christmas and their engagement was announced from Buckingham Palace on 6 January. After their marriage they will live at Bagshot Park, Surrey, former home of Queen Victoria's third son, the Duke of Connaught.

Their marriage takes place at 5pm on 19 June at St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. The ceremony will be conducted by the Bishop of Norwich who regularly preaches at Sandringham Church when the Royal Family are in residence at Sandringham House. St George's Chapel was begun during the reign of Edward IV and is considered a fine example of the Perpendicular Gothic style. It is the spiritual home to the Order of the

Garter and burial place of George III, IV, V and VI, Edward VII and William IV. Edward VII, as Prince of Wales, was married there in 1863, as were Princess Alice (grand-daughter of Queen Victoria) to Prince Alexander of Teck in 1904, and Lady Helen Windsor (daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Kent) to Mr Tim Taylor in 1992. The Chapel featured on the top stamp in the 1975 Architectural Heritage series.

**FIRST DAY FACILITIES** Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 15 June, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Windsor must reach the Bureau by 15 June. Price £1.48 UK (including VAT) or £1.26 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA (Windsor postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9913' (Bureau), or 'FD9914' (Windsor). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Windsor postmark. A non-pictorial Windsor postmark will also be available, by sending covers to the Slough Handstamp Centre, requesting 'FD9914 NP'.

Bilingual Welsh/English versions of the Windsor pictorial and non-pictorial handstamps can be obtained by sending covers to the Cardiff Handstamp Centre quoting reference FD9914 Bil (pictorial) and FD9914 NP Bil (non-pictorial). Sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere).

**PHILATELIC PRODUCTS** A well-illustrated pack (£1.25) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets •

**New Northern Ireland stamps** The new postal rates necessitate new country stamps for Northern Ireland. These will be in the existing design, introduced in 1971, and comprise 38p and 64p values, covering airmail postcard and airmail letter second step rates. They will be issued on 8 June; the 19p olive green NI stamp (first issued 1993) will be re-issued at the same time for the reduced 2nd class UK rate. The stamps will be printed by Walsall in gravure; the previous 19p stamp was produced by Questa in litho.

A first day cover envelope will be available, price 25p. Serviced covers bearing just the 38p and 64p stamps (the 19p is not regarded as a new stamp) with Bureau or Belfast pictorial first day postmarks must be ordered from the Bureau by 8 June. Price £1.62 UK (includes VAT), £1.38 overseas (no VAT). Collectors may send covers bearing the 38p and/or 64p stamp for these postmarks to the Bureau (postmark reference FD DEF 9907) or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, 57 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3AZ (for Belfast postmark, FD DEF 9909). A non-pictorial Belfast postmark will also be available from the Glasgow Handstamp Centre, reference FD DEF 9909 NP. A pack of the current stamps, ie the re-issued 19p, the existing 26p, and the new 38p and 64p, will be available from 8 June, price £1.80 •

**The designer** The stamps were designed by John Gibbs, known to collectors of British stamps for the 1981 Year of the Disabled, 1986 Parliamentary Conference, 1990 Thomas Hardy and Gallantry, and 1993 Roman Britain issues.

#### Technical details

**Printer** De La Rue Security Print

**Process** Gravure

**Size** 41 x 30mm

**Sheets** 100

**Perforation** 15 x 14

**Phosphor** Two bands

**Gum** PVA

