

# The attraction of thematic philately

Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023

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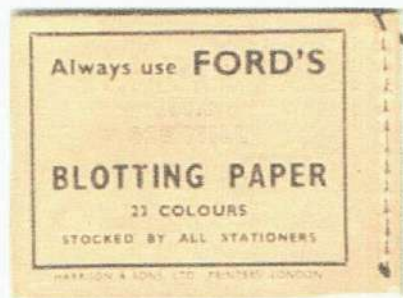
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# What is thematic collecting?

- It is no more than collecting on a theme.
- It is not confined to philatelic collecting!

### 5.3 Characteristic types of paper

Lightweight papers have various uses.



Thickness and weight do not always correspond. Blotting paper is very thick, but with no sizing it is lightweight  
Edward VIII booklet. Ford Blotting Paper advertisements, Type D. Issued in 1936. Eight different colour advertisements were used



Lightweight

Weight could sometimes be critical, for instance for items carried by air. This is an item of siege mail on flimsy paper



Official Feldpost printed on very lightweight paper during Siege of Przemyśl. Feldpost 'cards' were individually numbered, this one 29942, carried on 18 January 1915, landing at Brzesko, southern Poland. Przemyśl to Marienbad, Bohemia. With flight mark Fliegerpost Przemyśl 1915

Circular IX/54 control "camouflage" (where "IX" stands for Galicia and "54" for Przemyśl). Red ZENSURIERT applied at Brzesko



Envelope lined with purple lightweight tissue paper which has fallen foul of wartime censors. Lined envelopes were not allowed since they could conceal messages.

Prague to USA 22.7.1940 with return to sender cachet on the front and explanatory cachet on reverse: cross against "lined envelope not allowed."

Plus boxed German censor numbers applied in Munich and German censor tape secured to envelope flap.





### 2.3 The increasing use of gold requires new sources

The success of the Portuguese in exploiting the wealth coming from the Indies caused King Ferdinand of Spain to want some of these riches. Therefore Christopher Columbus was sent to find a new westward route to the Indies. He found an entire new continent.



The new land was to supply unimaginable quantities of gold to the Spanish crown.

King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella ordering Columbus to 'go and get gold' on his voyage to discover a new route in 1492.



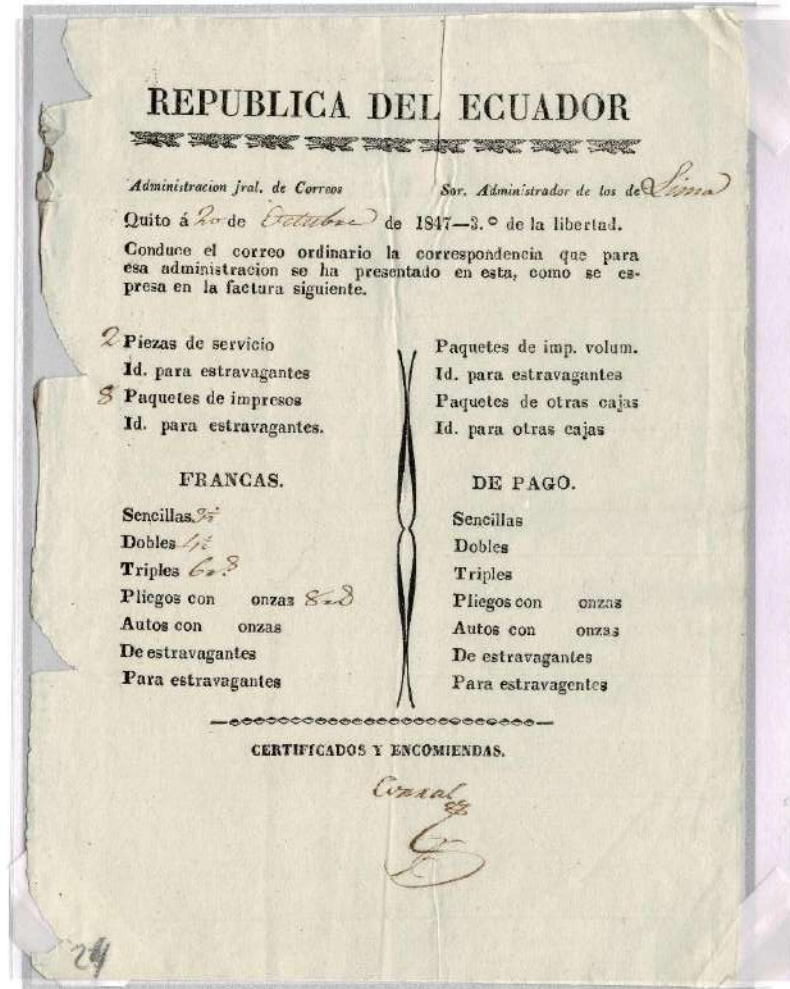
Pizarro imperf block from Waterlow archive.

In 1530 Spaniard Gonzalez Pizarro heard of gold in Peru and set out to conquer this Inca lands across the Andes. He found vast quantities of gold which made the Spanish Crown the wealthiest in Europe.



El Salvador Postal Stationery illustrating the Caribbean and the Isthmus of Panama.

2nd October 1847. Ecuador postal docket which accompanied a mail packet from Quito to Lima across the top of the Andes through the old Inca Empire.



## BORDEAUX MIXTURE: A FUNGICIDE

In the 1750s Tessier exploited copper's biocidal properties when he dressed wheat seeds with copper sulphate powder to prevent wheat bunt. It is still used on cereals. A century later Professor Millard found that copper sulphate and slaked lime sprayed on grape vines reduced downy mildew. Named Bordeaux Mixture, it has been used widely by agriculturalists and gardeners ever since.



Havas P8932 meter.

Entire from Bordeaux wine negociants A. Maury & Souviron (cochet) to Toulouse. 2 x 10c stamps tied by 2 x 532 dotted lozenge cancellations. Additional double ring BORDEAU/LES S...VIRES/22 JANV 85 cancellations on front and reverse. Circular double ring TOULOUSE/23 JANV 85 cancellation on reverse.

Bordeaux Mixture is applied in winter when vines are dormant.

Vineyards in cooler climates suffer most from mildew. *Vitis* is the genus that includes grape vines, and a town in Austria's Wienviertel wine region.



Austria: Skr postal stationery envelope from Vitis to Vienna. Indicum tied by VITIS 25 3 95 single ring cancellation.

Spray at the right time! Grapes on the top 'vine' have wrongly been sprayed with Bordeaux Mixture in the summer; they have blue residue on them. The ripe grapes on the lower 'vine' were sprayed in the winter, have no residue, no mildew and can be harvested.



USSR definitives overprinted by Tipografi Leova with grape bunches designed by Posta Moldovei, were litho printed and issued Oct 20 1992. These six stamps above were issued circulated by Posta Moldovei.



Monaco, 1987. Monochromatic denominated engraver's sunken die proof of a grape vine in winter, from a set showing vines in the four seasons. Signed by Georges Bétemps. 19 COPIES OF EACH SET OF FOUR PROOFS EXIST.



# Clarification of talk

This presentation is about collecting and not exhibiting.

# A question for you

How many of you have a thematic collection?

Hands up

# What attracts collectors to thematic collecting?

- Creating your own story
- Connection
- Research
- Visual
- History
- The extra items in a collection
- Never finished



# Creating your own story

A collection can be on any theme and the theme can be developed into a story.

Animals, Birds, Fish, People, Places, Events, Geographical features, Numbers, Buildings, some aspect of technology, Vehicles, Weapons, Olympics, Books, Minerals, War and Religion to name but a few themes.

The American Topical Association has over 1700 themed lists of stamps .

# Creating your own story

A collection of say just parachuting stamps can be greatly enhanced by items that support parachuting e.g. aircraft, training establishments, famous parachutists and parachute styles just to name a few.

It is a small step from this point to developing a story that ties the collection together.

The story can be fictional!

# Connection

What is the connection between a collector and their collection?

Many collectors (but not all) collect a particular theme because they have a relationship to it such as work, sport or past hobby.

As an example, I collect philatelic items based on parachuting because I used to parachute.

It means that the collector already has extensive and practical knowledge of the topic.

# Connection

It may not be obvious to a non-parachutist but one of the strong memories of parachuting is how quiet it is hanging under a parachute. Knowing this enabled me to include this stamp.





# Research

Philatelic and Theme research

All collectors are inquisitive.

Keen to find out the back story to a philatelic item.

Collecting for the theme comes first then comes the philatelic research.

Like all categories it requires in-depth research but theme collecting requires wide as well as deep research.

Need to read widely around the theme to get new ideas for new pages or chapters.

# Research



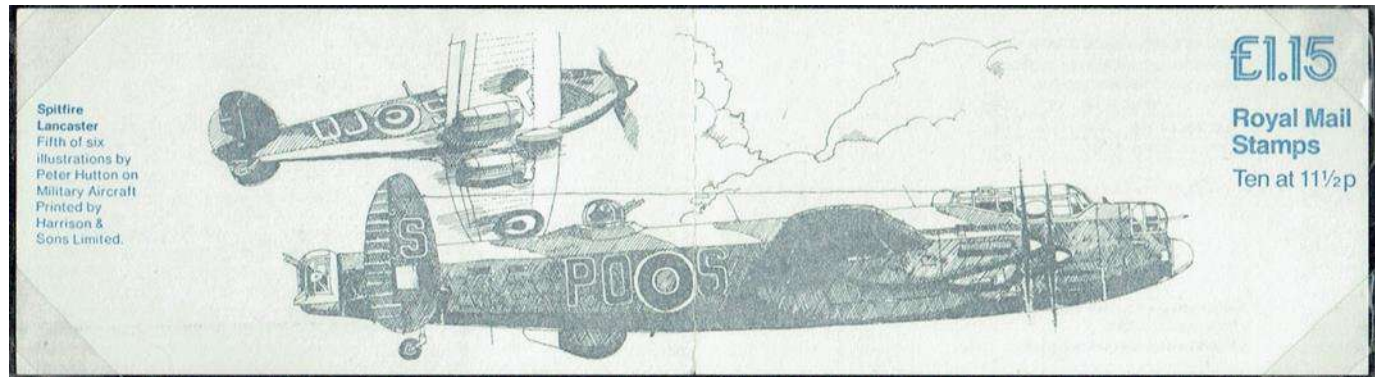
Marilyn Monroe worked in a munitions factory and checked parachute packing.

In 1932 Smaranda Braescu from Romania, jumped from 24,000ft over Sacramento USA to establish a world altitude record.

# Research



Why has this parachute got a hole at the top?



Flight Sergeant Alkemade was a tail gunner for an RAF Lancaster bomber during WW2 who survived a fall of 18,000 ft. without a parachute

# Visual

Different sizes, shapes, colours and philatelic items can make a very attractive collection.



## PILLAR BOX PERSECUTION!

**INTRODUCTION:** British pillar boxes have been subjected to criminal acts by people 'posting' explosive and dangerous items, damaging the letters inside and/or causing harm to property and major injuries to the public if the box shatters.

1. **SUFFRAGETTES**...threw bombs, acid and ink into pillar box apertures across the country from 1912-14, as part of the 'Votes for Women' campaign.



'London Opinion'  
postcard No.5033,  
artist: Alfred Leete.

...fireworks were also dropped into pillar boxes, usually around Bonfire Night.



**PLAN:** Running through the entry, numbered section headings are in **bold**. Descriptions are in *italics*.

2. **'ER' NOT 'EIR'**...was coined by protesters in Scotland, who blew up a pillar box in 1953 because it had an 'EiR' cipher. They argued that the new queen was the second Elizabeth of England, but the first of Scotland.



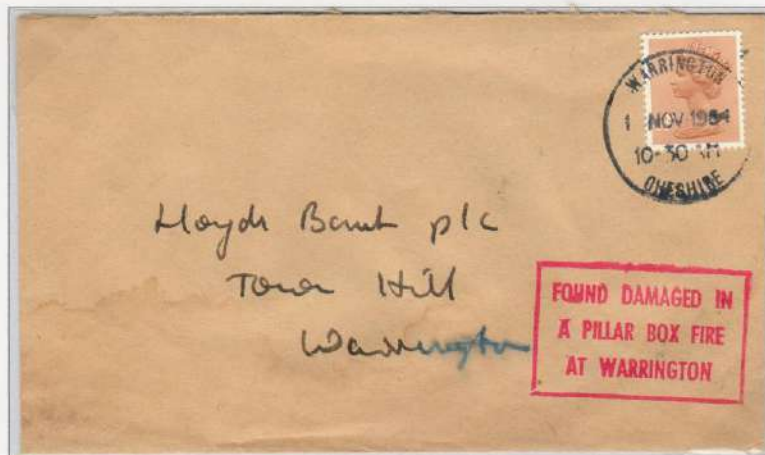
3. **THE PROVISIONAL IRA**... placed timed devices inside five pillar boxes in the centre of London in 1974. The blasts injured twenty people.



1971 'Patriotic Seal'  
propaganda label

Matchbox  
label

4. **ANTI-SOCIAL ARSON**... was a problem in north-west England in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The number of pillar box fires led the Post Office to obtain handstamps to apply to affected mail. The culprits posted lit matches;...



Cover salvaged from a pillar box fire in Warrington. There is also water damage, from where the fire was put out.



3.0 A gentle ride to the ground – Heading for a painful landing?



Circa 1940s, -, Hutson Brothers London, unused, Halftone.

Landing on a building is an occupational hazard for a parachutist. Landing on the lightening conductor is particularly unfortunate!

On 6<sup>th</sup> June 1944 John Steele from the 505th Parachute regiment landed on the church tower at Ste. Mère Église, Normandy.



1942, Reg Manning, Curteich USA, used, Linen using Colortone.

A parachutist landing whilst holding holly seems a very brave decision. It could be another very prickly landing!



I am sure this parachutist is going to get the point!



Circa 1920s, -, -, unused, Lithography.



1943, -, Curteich, used, Linen.

Some landings start badly and just get worse!



Circa 1940s, -, - but USA, unused, Linen.

This is going to be a soft landing for somebody!

Tandem jumping is now very popular, especially for those wishing to do a charity jump.



### 3 Supremacy

### Part 2 Golds' Impact on Mankind

#### 3.1 The ownership of gold becomes an expression of power

Gold does not have the properties for use as tools and weapons, too soft and malleable, but, because of its beauty, resistance to tarnishing and rarity it is ideal for personal and other decorative purposes. It became a symbol of wealth, status and power throughout the ages. Gold Crowns, in particular, have been used as an expression of power or authority for centuries. In England William the Conqueror began the now symbolic tradition of being crowned during his coronation service. Many other countries also use a crown to denote power.



Official mail: Crown Paid handstamp of 1842 on a letter from the Office for Stamps and Taxes.



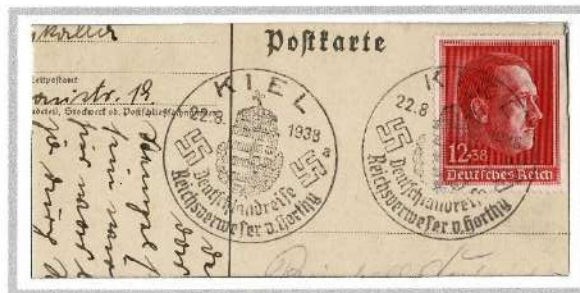
Gold Coronation Jewels for King William 1st 1066.



Swedish Triple Crown:- Three gold crowns adopted as a heraldic symbol, also that of the Monarchy in the late 13th century. They are used in the Coat of Arms of Sweden - three gilded or yellow coronets on a blue background. Pre-printed postal stationery was posted 31 December 1890.

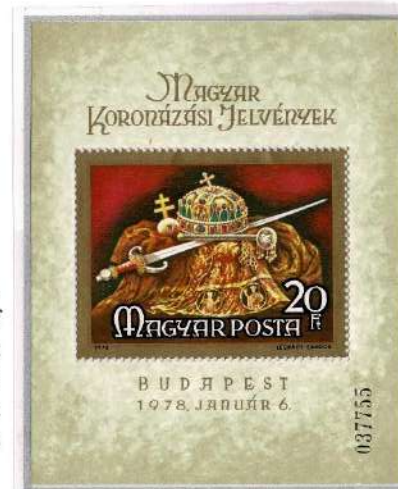


King William wearing the Crown at his coronation.



The Hungarian Crown postmark was used during the Hungarian Head of State's visit to Kiel August 23-27th 1938 . His relationship with Hitler was good and while there he attended the dedication of the German Naval Ship the Prince Eugene.

Commemorating the return of Hungary's Crown . During the Soviet occupation of Hungary at the end of WWII the crown was hidden on a train to Austria. It was taken to America, and kept at Fort Knox until 1978. The crown is reputed to have been sent to St Stephen by Pope Sylvester III, 1000-1063 and has always played an important part in Hungarian History.



# History

Many theme-based collections have a place in history.

This makes a collection of greater interest to the wider population.

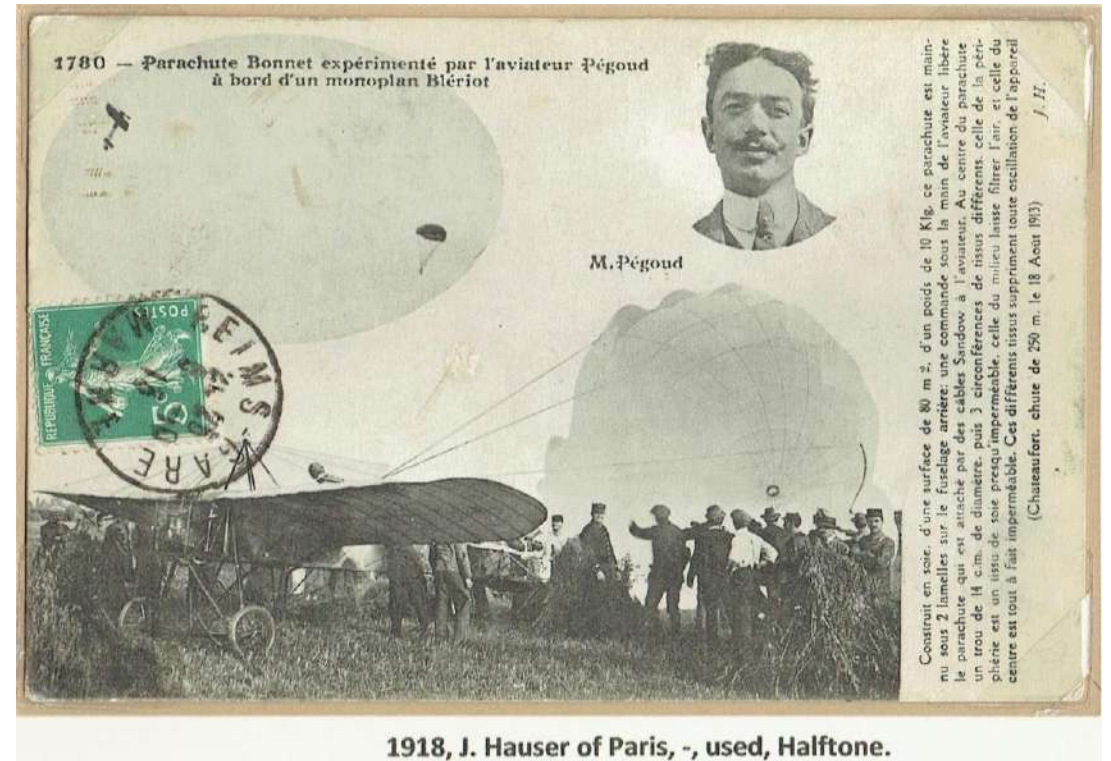
Social History has a growing audience.



# History



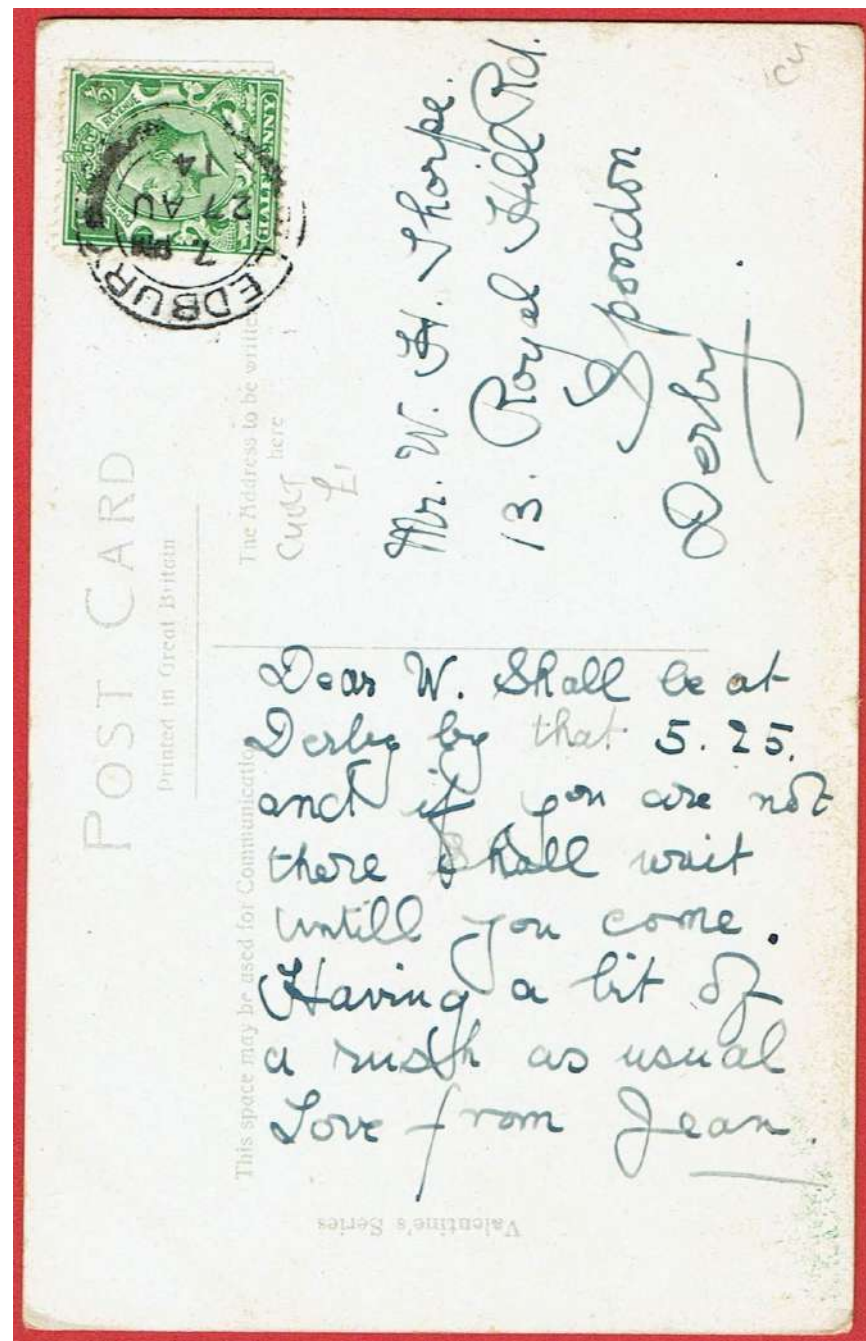
Dolly Sheppard. Parachutist



1918, J. Hauser of Paris, -, used, Halftone.

Pigoud, parachutist and pilot

# History



# The extra items in a collection

Who has one or more items in their collection that is not philatelic or a postcard?



# The extra items in a collection



**THE METHODIST CHURCH**  
CORNWALL DISTRICT

CHAIRMAN: THE REV. FRANK H. PRITCHARD      SECRETARY: THE REV. STANLEY LUKE

**RE-BUILDING JOINT APPEAL FOR WAR-DAMAGED CHURCHES**

DISTRICT TREASURER: WILLIAM TAYLOR, 1 DANIELL ROAD, TRURO      DISTRICT SECRETARY: W. W. CHAMPNESS, ST. AGNES

The illustration on the front is a picture of a Missionary Ship which makes voyages among what were once called "The Cannibal Isles." They aren't called that now, because the people there have accepted the Gospel, have given up cannibalism with their other evil practices, and have turned to Christianity. When, during the War, our boys from Australia, and the G.I.s, landed there, the Church was what they found in places where only a few years ago they would have met with cruelty and evil treatment.

On one of his voyages to visit the churches during the War, the missionary who went in the ship tells us:—

"The people were greedy for news, but there was no sign of despondency. On one island, the people, hearing of the bombing of churches in England, on their own initiative made a gift of over £67. On another, a sum of £115 was raised for the same purpose, but, before this money could be handed over to the missionary on his return visit, the people's own church had been destroyed by an enemy bomb. Yet they insisted on the money being devoted to the purpose for which it had been collected . . ." ("They Found the Church There" S.C.M. 6/-)

So, you see, this missionary ship "The John Williams V" carried funds from former savages to help the bombed churches in this country. And some of that money came from people who had been blitzed out of their own church in the "Cannibal Isles." Even though they needed funds themselves, they gave generously to help ours.

The purpose of this folder is to appeal to you to give something to help the same fund in our own land.

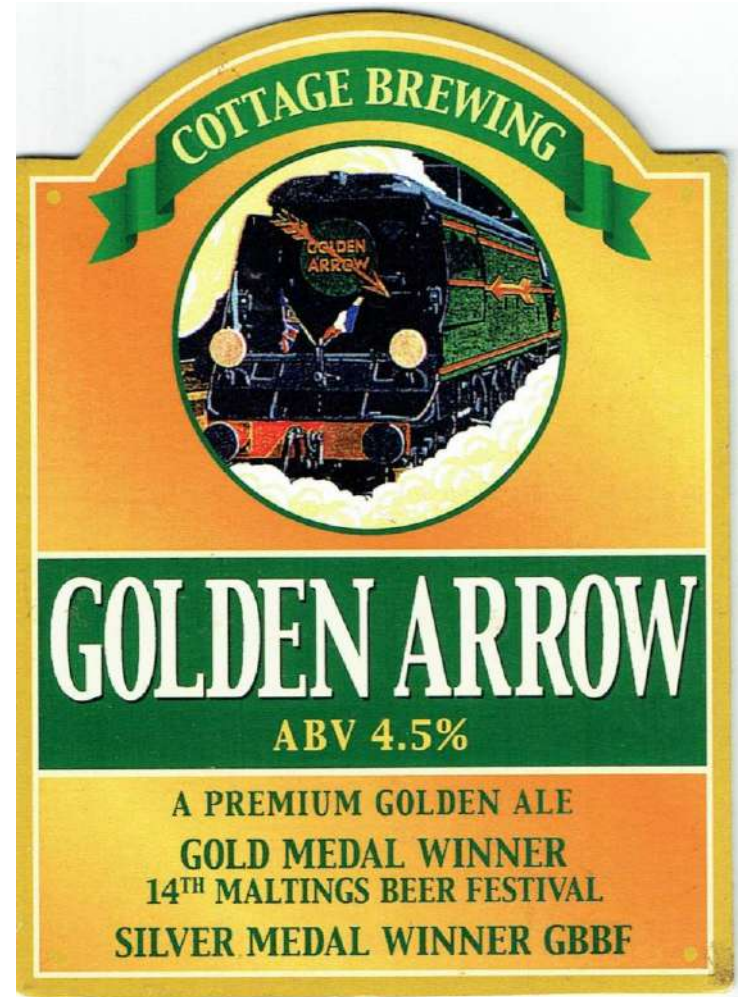
In our District we have suffered very little from the effects of enemy action. We have nearly all our churches intact. If you are a Trustee you will appreciate the fact that you have not to consider the spending of all your funds in hand on repairing damages caused by enemy action, and, still more, you have not to appeal to outside funds for help. Surely therefore you will also appreciate the prompt willingness of these former cannibals to help churches that have suffered, and be equally ready to support the idea of giving something from your balance in hand for the same needy object.

Wherever you are, too, you will want to have a share in the effort being made in this District to raise a worthy sum for your fellow-Methodists in the 2,600 churches in this country, as well as your fellow-Methodists in China, Burma, and other places abroad where there has been extensive damage to Methodist property.

Suppose it had been **your** church that had suffered; you would need, and expect, help from other Methodists. Now they appeal to you, and so you will respond, in thankfulness that your church has been spared and your home left to you. It is a matter for your own conscience, and there it will remain till you have given what you can afford. Large gifts are needed, but small ones will not be refused. Please do your best.

**GIVE ALL YOU CAN AFFORD**

# The extra items in a collection





# The extra items in a collection



The John Williams V was in use from 1930 until 1948 when it was wrecked in Samoa



Beru Island was the location of the headquarters in the South Pacific of the LMS from 1900 to 1960 when it moved to Tarawa.



The last LMS ship was the John Williams VII. Built in 1962 and withdrawn in 1968, its function now overtaken by aircraft.



At a pleasing ceremony on August 5, Princess Margaret drew aside the flag from the bow of the London Missionary Society's new ship and named her John Williams VI, in the succession of missionary ships named after the great pioneer missionary, John Williams. Sunday school children have long contributed to the support of these ships, and the occasion was marked by the presentation of presents by nearly ninety boys and girls. The ship leaves for the South-West Pacific in October.

In 1948 Princess Margaret named the next London Missionary Society (LMS) ship John Williams VI on the 5th August.

A hard-to-find receipt from the LMS for a donation.



The John Williams VI was built in 1946 and used from 1948 in the Gilbert and Ellis Islands (now Kiribati).



John Williams, missionary and martyr, spent just over 20 years in the South Pacific. Missionary work continued after his death and today 98% of Samoans and 86% of Rarotongans consider themselves Christian.

The blue plaque can be found at Tottenham High Road London, near the site of John's birth.

# Never Finished

Unlike other disciplines theme-based collections are never finished.

Not just new issues of philatelic material.

New collecting ideas and new avenues to explore are part of the life of a theme-based collector.

This is a challenge. Where do you stop!

# How can I summarise theme-collecting?

That relentless search for an item that may, or may not, exist so that our collection can tell a better and more attractive story.