

Themes on GB Stamps

Original manuscripts of Jeff Dugdale's long running series in *STAMP Magazine*



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Medicine and Public Health Jeff Dugdale 10.2018

This is a strong theme in GB stamps being addressed on a regular basis since the first relevant issue in 1965. In addition to five major sets which mainly relate to research, discovery and breakthroughs, a large number of important personalities in the history of British Health are referenced within sets not always directly related to that topic.

Joseph Lister, the developer of antiseptic surgery is celebrated in 1965 and 2010, **Alexander Fleming's** work on penicillin in 1967, 1999 and 2010, **Florence Nightingale** in 1970, Nobel Chemist laureate **Dorothy Hodgkin** (1996), **Edward Jenner**, developer of smallpox vaccine (1999 and 2010) Nurse **Mary Seacole**, (2006), **Elizabeth Garret Anderson**, and **Marie Stopes** respectively pioneers in Women's Health and family planning (in 2008), **Judy Fryd** of MENCAP (2009), **Max Perutz**, Nobel Prize winning chemist (2014)...and in British Humanitarians of 2016 the quartet of **Sue Ryder** (who founded a charity providing homes for elderly and disabled people), **John Boyd Orr** (pioneer in nutrition), **Eglantyne Jebb** (crusading founder of Save the Children) and **Joseph Rowntree**, a champion of workers' welfare.

Two sets issued sixteen years apart demonstrate major technological advances in diagnosis and treatment of patients. The earlier one in **1994 called Medical Discoveries** was designed by Halpin Grey Vermeir and using dramatic graphics references Ultrasonic Imaging, developed in Glasgow University, a Scanning Electron Microscope developed at Cambridge, an MRI machine (crediting the Universities of Aberdeen and Nottingham) and CT technology which won Godfrey Hounsfield a share of the Nobel Prize in 1979.

This is complemented in **2010 with the Medical Discoveries** set of six, which addresses only one of the topics in the earlier set—CT scanning. Designed by Howard Brown, this group illustrates heart regulating beta blocker drugs, the antibiotic properties of penicillin, modern hip replacement technology, artificial lens implantation and the vital discovery in 1897 of the true vector of malaria. Each references the British scientists associated with these achievements.

In 2015 in the Inventive Britain set the development of the Bionic hand is featured, as is DNA sequencing which had been treated very amusingly in cartoon style stamps in a five stamp set in 2003. This marked the Fiftieth anniversary of 1953 James Watson and Francis Crick's publishing the findings of their ground breaking work delineating the first correct double-helix model of DNA structure in the journal *Nature*. The set parodied the boffins who worked on the discoveries

Only a handful of nurses appear on our stamps, for example a District nurse in 1976 and a group of four on one stamp in the Patients' Tale (1999). Nurses from bygone days like Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole are shown as are two from The Great War in the 2017 commemoration set. Even fewer doctors are shown, one possibly on a 1984 British Council stamp, though the person here might be a nurse. A handful of stamps also show patients, notably the 1981 International Year of the Disabled set, which contains one of two stamps showing wheelchairs.

The other wheelchair stamp (from 1975) is a most unusual one as—bearing the legend "4½+1½p for health and handicap charities" - the stamp clearly indicated to the purchaser that 25% of its value was an extra voluntary donation at a time when the basic First Class letter rate was 4½p. The idea of asking the public for extra contributions for charity in this "experimental issue" did not catch on and was not repeated.

The Fiftieth Anniversary of The National Health Service was celebrated in 1998 with a set of four using the motif of helping hands, but curiously ignored in 2018, when several frivolous topics were shown on stamps. Odd priorities ?

1965 Centenary of Antiseptic Surgery

1967 Discoveries: Penicillum Notatum

1970 Anniversaries: Florence Nightingale

1975 Health and handicap Funds

1976 District Nurse (Telephone Centenary)

1977 R.I.C. Centenary: Vitamin C—Synthesis

1981 International Year of the Disabled

1984 50th anniv British Council : Nigerian Clinic

1989 150th anniv Royal Microscopical Society

1994 Europa: Medical Discoveries

1996 Europa: Dorothy Hodgkin

1998 50th anniv of N.H.S.

1999 The Patients' Tale

2001 Nobel Prize: Medicine

2003 50th anniv of Discovery of DNA

2006 Modern Architecture: Maggie's Cancer Centre, Dundee

2006 Nat Portrait Gallery : Mary Seacole

2008 Women of Distinction: Elizabeth Garret Anderson,
Marie Stopes

2009 Eminent Britons: Judy Fryd

2010 350th anniv Royal Society: Edward Jenner, Joseph Lister

2010 Medical Breakthroughs

2014 Remarkable Lives: Max Perutz

2015 Inventive Britain: DNA Sequencing and Bionic Hand

2016 British Humanitarians: Sue Ryder, John Boyd Orr, Eglan-
tyne Jebb and Joseph Rowntree.

2017 The Great War: Nurses Mairi Chisholm & Elsie Knocker

Philatelic Vexillology

Jeff Dugdale 9. 2018

This topic which would cover national flags, flags of national and international organisations, pennants, bunting and banners is one which promotes real study of your stamps and requires considerable research skills—and a good glass and eyesight!

It's not difficult to predict in advance what the most popular flags on British stamps are. You'd be right in supposing that the Union Flag, followed by the Cross of St George, the Scottish Saltire and the White and Red ensigns lead the competition, but you might be surprised at just how many times each of these features as seen in the checklist, as few stamps use flags as a major part of their design and they are tiny incidental and missable features in scores of others. You will also find some very unusual flags appearing, like those flown on Tudor theatres and those representing organisations as disparate as The Salvation Army, The Girl Guides and The Suffragists of the WSPU. And because of Britain's historical conflicts with our now European friends you'll see the French Tricolour (Drapeau français) and the Bandera de España featuring on quite a few occasions as well.

The first GB stamp to show a flag is the £1 definitive in 1955 where one flies above the Round Tower of Windsor Castle, but the detail is so tiny you cannot tell if it is the Union Flag or the Royal Standard, indicating The Queen in residence. Almost all of the stamps featuring The Tower of London also show the Union flag fluttering.

The sets which include most examples of the Union Flag are the 2012 issues featuring British Gold medallists at the London Olympics and Paralympics, in which depending on whether you count part of the Union Flag adapted for kit design there are upwards of twenty incidences mostly showing happy champions draped in or waving the flag.

A version of the Union Flag appears in several sets relating to British sea going vessels, notably in the 2001 Centenary issue for Royal Navy submarines where we see the White Ensign (flown by Royal Navy ships) and the "Union Jack" which is what the Union flag is sometimes called when flown on a ship. This set also amusingly contains a version of the Jolly Roger. The Red Ensign of the British Merchant marine can be seen for example in the 2013 issue for the Merchant Navy and on occasional stamps showing British cargo or passenger ships, as in the 2018 Voyage of the *RMB Endeavour* set.

The St George's Cross appears mainly on stamps celebrating English participation in sporting events like the World Cup in Football, for example in 2002, where it is gloriously spread over four stamps or four years later where it is just one stamp in six celebrating previous winners, along with the

national flags of Italy, Argentina, Germany, France and Brazil. One stamp in the 2003 set of four issued for England being World Rugby Union Champions features a group of fluttering St George's Cross in a crowd scene.

The St Andrew's Cross for Scotland first appears in the British Army Uniforms set of 1983 alongside members of The Royal Scots regiment and again in the 2014 issue for the Twentieth Commonwealth Games, held in Glasgow. In this set of six a clever visual pun, placing the saltire over a second X suggests the number of times the Games have been held. The Scottish Lion Rampant (the Royal Standard of Scotland) appears beside Robert the Bruce in the 1992 Soldiers' Tale issue whilst The Welsh flag is most prominently seen in the 1969 set for the Investiture of the Prince of Wales but also above Harlech Castle in the 2011 A-Z of UK issue.

Arguably the most interesting flag designs are those shown fluttering above the various Thames-side theatres in the 1995 issue which marked the reconstruction of the Globe Theatre. Here the flags can clearly be shown to echo the names of the various theatres like The Swan and The Rose.

Other quirky flag stamps include flagpoles on golf courses in 1994 and the Semaphore flags in the 2013 Merchant Navy set.

1955 Windsor Castle
1958 Scottish Regionals
1965 Salvation Army
1967 EFTA Nations
1969 Concorde
1969 NATO anniversary
1969 Princes of Wales Investiture
1971 Joining EU
1978 Tower of London
1979 Elections to European Assembly
1979 150th anniversary of Metropolitan Police
1980 London 1980
1982 Youth Organisations
1982 Christmas Carols
1983 British Army Uniforms
1987 St John Ambulance
1987 Victorian Britain
1988 Bicentenary of Australia
1988 Spanish Armada
1989 Lord Mayor's Show
1992 Olympic Games
1994 Scottish Golf Courses
1995 Elizabeth Theatres
1999 Settlers' Tale, Soldiers' Tale
1999 Scottish Regionals
2001 Centenary of RN Submarines
2002 World Cup Football
2003 Extreme Endeavour
2003 50 anniversary of Coronation
2003 England's Rugby World Cup victory
2004 Ocean liners
2005 London 2012 Olympics
2005 Battle of Trafalgar
2006 World Cup Football
2007 Beside the Seaside
2008 Houses of Lancaster and York
2009 Age of Tudors Minisheet

2011 A-Z of UK Edinburgh and Harlech Castles
2012 Age of Windsor Minisheet
2012 London Olympics and Paralympics
2013 Merchant Navy, including minisheet
2014 Buckingham Palace
2014 Commonwealth Games, Glasgow
2014 Seaside Architecture
2015 Battle of Waterloo
2016 Shackleton's *Endurance*
2016 Queen's 90th birthday
2018 Votes for Women
2018 Hampton Court

999 ... Which Service ? Jeff Dugdale 10.2018

This is a curious theme exploration of which suggests that there is no systematic overview of what topics appear on our stamps. Because although it's been touched on in a dozen



issues since 1963 (Lifeboat Conference) including five dedicated sets it references Rescue at Sea disproportionately—with 14 stamps out of a total of 38. It then makes no

allusion at all to the NHS ambulance service, shows police officers on only 5 stamps and the whole subject is completely ignored for the twenty years from 1987 to 2008! If I was a collector who worked for the police or as a paramedic I might feel a bit unloved and neglected by Royal Mail issuing policy.

The first major set, celebrating the work of the Metropolitan



Police, comes in 1979 and shows five police officers (including one female) in various roles : on the beat (presumably helping two lost children), directing traffic (at a road incident), on horseback and

river patrol. As such this is a well balanced set but since then no police officers have featured on our stamps, other than those possibly detectable after scrutiny of crowd scenes.

Six years later the Safety at Sea set shows a lifeboat being launched in response to a distress flare, Beachy Head Lighthouse, a Marecs comsat and sea buoys marking danger spots. Since all our lighthouses are now completely unmanned, only one of these stamps truly represents emergency services.



Twenty three years, later the Rescue at Sea set uses very dramatic photography to demonstrate the heroes of the RNLI and RAF-coordinated rescue helicopters, two of them showing the precarious and

dangerous work of the helicopter winchmen. This is an

excellent set updating the technology referenced earlier.



And an equally good job is done the following year in asset for the Fire and Rescue Service using the same approach and capturing the drama of putting

out fires and saving lives in chemical incidents, road traffic accidents, floods and the collapse of buildings. This is certainly a far better tribute to fire fighters than images of four fire engines dating from 1766 to 1904 that comprised a set in 1974.

The paramedic service is touched on but also only in an historic context in 1987 referring to the St John Ambulance Service, the voluntary NGO promoting First Aid, which complements the National Health Service. St John Ambulance personnel like doctors, nurses and paramedics may be seen at hundreds of public events across the country



from the London Marathon to the humble village fete. The stamps show personnel working in late Victorian times, during the Blitz, helping a girl who has fainted in public and transporting human organs.

Yes and that's it! The one tribute to our amazing and much maligned National Health Service came in 1998 and using the simple motif of hands suggested the kinds of support given by the service in general. This was followed a year later by one allusion to nurses in The Patients' Tale.

This treatment of our emergency services just doesn't seem fair and major sets illustrating the work of the modern police force from the bobby on the beat to counter-terrorism activities and the work of NHS ambulance crew are called for.

What number should I dial to set these ideas in train ?

- 1963 Lifeboat Conference
- 1964 Red Cross Centenary Conference
- 1972 Coastguard (19th Century)
- 1974 Fire Prevention Act Bicentenary
- 1976 Police (Telephone centenary)
- 1979 Metropolitan Police 150th anniversary
- 1985 Safety at Sea
- 1987 St John Ambulance Centenary
- 2008 Working dogs—Mountain rescue
- 2008 Rescue at Sea
- 2009 Fire and Rescue Service
- 2014 Working horses—Police horses

Fashions Jeff Dugdale 10.2018

A frequently made comment made about a nation's stamps is that they reveal much about its social history and this is certainly true with regard to what its citizens dressed in and how they wore their hair. Whilst there is a small number of issues directly related to aspects of *haute couture*, (e.g Fashion Hats in 2001 and Clothes 2013) so many British stamps do this inadvertently that it is possible to illustrate a short history of popular fashion and style using them....

The earliest representation of what the people of England looked like comes in the 1986 set for the 900th Anniversary of the Domesday Book, where the lowest two values depict lieges in agricultural and town scenes.

The 1976 issue for the 500th Anniversary of British printing depicts artisans working in the printing house at the end of the 15th century, whilst the 13p value in 1978 Christmas issue shows Christmas entertainers a hundred years later in Elizabeth times. In both of these stamps the men portrayed wear doublet and hose.

The ruff was very popular amongst Elizabethan courtiers—the Queen herself wore ruffs from time to time. In addition to being in vogue, it had a practical function protecting the doublet being smeared with facepaint, food or drink and when marked or stained it could be detached and another put in its place. See stamps for Elizabeth and British Explorers.

However towards the end of the Sixteenth Century ruffs were replaced by wide collars and pairs of bands, a transition illustrated by stamps showing Shakespeare with an elaborate ruff-like collar and then the plainer wide collar.

Today the word “cavalier” expresses a sense of carelessness and a supercilious attitude, derived from the style which followed the style of the new King Charles I, who wore his hair long and developed a flamboyant style of dress and behaviour, imitated by his supporters as seen in these issues for Charles (2010), and the Civil War (1999 and 1992)

The next well illustrated period of British fashion is the late 18th and early 19th Century thanks mainly to stamps for the novels of Jane Austen in 1975 and 2012, complemented by some examples of formal portraiture.

This period saw a reaction to the lace, brocade and powdered wigs worn by the well-off at the end of the 18th century and the return to classical lines, with women wearing “Empire line” dresses often made of muslin had a fitted bodice just below the bust and long sleeves. Voluminous petticoats were out as the dresses seemed to just skim their wearers' figures.

Well-off gentlemen were inspired by Beau Brummel, a personal friend of the Prince Regent. This style required

perfectly fitted and exquisitely tailored dark double-breasted full-length greatcoats with standing collars some times of a contrasting material like fur, as with the left hand figure in the *Persuasion* stamp.

Covering your head was required when outside with the gentlemen wearing silk top hats, sometimes slightly conical (as in the stamps for Mr Darcy and the Rev Walker) and ladies typically covering most of their hair with poke bonnets.

Worn as a fashion statement in the 16th Century, wigs were thought to improve one's appearance and allowed the wearer to shave his or her hair, so avoiding the problem of lice.

Largely because of long sets for writers such as Charlotte Bronte (2005), Dickens (1970, 1993 and 2012) and Conan Doyle (1993) the Victorian period (1837-1901) is very well represented in suggesting what people of all classes wore, in early, mid and late Victorian times, respectively.

Almost without exception, however, stamps illustrate middle – or upper-class people looking at their best in formal contexts.

The 7p value in the 1978 Christmas depicts festive celebration in mid-19th Century with the gentlemen in frocks coats (one sporting mutton chop whiskers) and cravats and the ladies in crinoline dresses supported by hoops. The girl is alone is showing her fancy lace pantaloons. Both women (Jane and Adele Rochester reciting) in the 57p value for the Jane Eyre issue of 2005 are dressed in a fashion similar to those in the Christmas scene.

One of Dickens' favourite characters, Mr Samuel Pickwick is shown in his finery in the 2012 issue, wearing a short black satin jacket over a white cravat, waistcoat and breeches with black gaiters with a gold pocket watch hanging ostentatiously.

Sir Rowland Hill is shown in typical formal attire with cravat, waistcoat and frockcoat and wearing mutton-chop whiskers. In the “Six Napoleons” stamp in the 1993 Sherlock Holmes set, Watson and Inspector Lestrade are dressed in similar fashion to Hill but wearing long ties observe Holmes sporting a long maroon velvet smoking-jacket.

Unusually, in the stamp for *The Old Curiosity Shop* in the 2012 Dickens set we see a lower-class Victorian, the ironically named “The Marchioness” a household skivvy in her working clothes—long sack-cloth apron and a dirty white linen mutch covering her dishevelled hair.

In the 1979 15p Penny Post issue we see a lady walking to post her letter. She is dressed in a modesty covering full length brown dress with a woollen shawl and matching parasol. On her head is a straw poke bonnet decorated with flowers. The child with her is dressed in a miniature version but she also shows her white pantaloons.

The earliest images of our citizens last century to appear on stamps did so in the 2013 London Underground issue which shows a carriage of Edwardian ladies and gentlemen, whose appearance is little different from the Victorians we have seen earlier—unsurprisingly.

A series of monochrome photographs of citizens during World War Two used on stamps give us a strong sense of what our grandparents looked like. For example, both the 60p in the 2010 Britain Alone set and the 68p within the 2012 House of Windsor mini-sheet show the men wearing their hair very close cropped and the flat cap or brown fedora popular head gear.

Three stamps illustrate important style changes taking place roughly 20 years after the end of the war. Many young people like to copy the appearance of their celebrity idols such as The Beatles who both at the beginning of their stardom and later in the group's career are illustrated by a 2007 set. Designer Mary Quant is forever associated with shocking new mini-skirt sold from her Chelsea clothes shop Bazaar. The short bob haircut of the mini-skirt model was also influenced by the popular Beatle-cut.

Following the end of World War Two there was a tremendous influx of immigrants from the (then) Empire and as a result today three generations on Britain has a very different look, and diverse tastes in food and music, which the 2005 Gastronomy set and stamps in the 2006 Sounds of Britain set record, showing influence from so many different parts of the world—and not just from Commonwealth countries.

1968	British paintings
1970	Charles Dickens
1972	Polar Explorers
1973	Explorers
1973	Inigo Jones
1973	British paintings
1975	Jane Austen
1976	500th anniv of British printing
1978	Christmas
1979	Rowland Hill
1982	Maritime Heritage
1986	900th anniv of Domesday Book
1987	Christmas
1988	Australian Bicentenary
1992	The Civil War
1993	Sherlock Holmes
1993	Christmas: Charles Dickens
1994	Centenary of Picture Postcards
1999	The Christians' Tale, The Settlers' Tale, The Soldiers' Tale, The Explorers' Tale
2005	Charlotte Bronte
2005	Gastronomy
2006	Sounds of Britain
2006	National Portrait Gallery
2007	Bicentenary of Abolition of Slave Trade
2007	The Beatles
2009	The House of Tudor
2009	British Design Classics
2009	Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution
2009	Eminent Britons
2010	The House of Stuart
2010	Britain Alone
2011	The House of Hanover
2011	First UK Aerial Post
2012	Great British Fashion
2012	Charles Dickens
2013	Jane Austen
2013	150th anniv of London Underground

Industry Jeff Dugdale 8.2018

The first references to British Industry on our stamps appear as icons for Farming and Factory production in the 1946 2½d stamp for Victory in World War Two in which our citizens were constantly being exhorted to Dig for Victory. With the war over industry of all types would have to play a vital part in renewing and rebuilding the nation after the devastation to towns and our infrastructure caused by German bombing. Over the next 60 years there have been regular references to the development of heavy and light industries across four centuries.

The first set to reference Industry directly was called **Energy Resources and issued in 1978** and showed a North Sea Oil Rig, a Modern facility for the coal production, the Extraction of natural gas from the seabed and a Nuclear Power Station.

The Oil Industry is also referenced in one stamp in the 1983 Engineering Achievements set, showing an emergency support vessel whilst Coal mining is also touched on in the 1976 Social Reformers set and the Industry Year set ten years later.

The Fishing Industry received a dedicated set in 1981 when four stamps were issued showing various aspects, from just off shore cockle dredging and lobster potting, to deep North Sea Trawling and Seine netting. A fishing boat can also be seen in the 1993 Inland waterways set.

The Farming Industry, as covered in this series in *STAMP* for April 2018, is treated in 1986, 1989 and 1999 issues. The Motor Industry is the subject of a dedicated 1986 set showing the development of models by four well-known car firms, Austin, Ford, Jaguar and Rolls-Royce over the course of the Twentieth Century: see also the feature on Automobiles in *STAMP* for June 2016.

Two other niche industries are referenced in the 1986 Industry Year set—Pharmaceuticals and Steel Production whilst the carpet industry is alluded to in a 1990 issue showing the Templeton Factory in Glasgow and in 2011 six stamps reference the production of textiles by Morris and Co.

However, as you'd expect heavy industry gets the most attention. The first reference comes in the 1976 Social Reformers set with the allusion to Robert Owen, best known for his attempt to improve the lot of his textile workers at his New Lanark Village, featured in the 1989 Industrial Archaeology set. That set also references Lord Shaftesbury who in the 1830's and 1840's campaigned to introduce Factory Act legislation improving the working conditions and hours of labour for children in the cotton and woollen industries.

The **1989 Industry Archaeology** set also illustrates the Tin Mine at St Agnes Head in Cornwall and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, built by Telford and Jessop as part of the Ellesmere Canal an uncompleted industrial waterway intended to create a commercial link between Shrewsbury and Liverpool. **The 1999 Workers' Tale** set references industries producing wool, worsted cloth and ship building.

Finally the largest set featuring heavy industry is **Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution in 2009** which depicts important men from this time beside images of their related projects: Matthew Boulton / factories, James Watt / steam engineering, Richard Arkwright / textile spinning jennies, Josiah Wedgwood / ceramics, George Stephenson / railways, Henry Maudslay / machine tool innovation, James Brindley / canal engineering and John McAdam / road building enhancements.

1946 Victory

1962 National Productivity Year

1976 Social Reformers—coal mining and factories

1978 Energy Resources

1981 The Fishing Industry

1982 British Motor Industry

1983 Engineering Achievements

1986 Industry Year

1989 Food and Farming Year

Industrial Archaeology: Ironbridge etc

1990 Templeton Carpet Factory, Glasgow

25th Anniversary of Queens Award for Export & Technology

1993 Inland Waterways

1999 The Workers' Tale/The Farmers' Tale

2005 British Journey: SW England—Wheal Coates tin mine

2009 Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution

2011 150th anniversary of Morris & Co textile manufacturers

2011 A-Z of Britain #1—Ironbridge

May I have this dance? Jeff Dugdale

This would be a fascinating theme to undertake, requiring research into the various relatively obscure dances referenced. Only one full set contributes, the Nottinghill Carnival one, whilst most of the other items are singletons, though curiously one of the dances alluded in the first relevant issue showing Trinidad **Carnival dancers** might well be reflected in some of the Nottinghill performances in the modern era. The Trinidadian dancers show three figures from the celebrated Shrove Monday Carnival, an event of “uninhibited revelry” allegedly. The design of the stamp shows the central figure supporting fish-like wicker Coelacanth.

The other stamp shows Canadian Folk Dances performed by the French-Canadian dance company Les Feux Follets (“The Will o’-the-Wisps”). **Folk dances** from other countries appear across this theme, for example in the 1976 Cultural Traditions set two stamps show English Morris dancers and kilted Scottish Highland dancers apparently in a competitive event. In the 1996 set for Robert Burns the 60p stamp shows country dancing, which is unconnected to the poem quoted “Auld Lang Syne”. By the way “Country” dancing has less to do with a rustic setting than standing opposite or *contra* your partner. One of the 1995 Greeting in Art stamps shows girls performing a Seventeenth century Kathak dance from India whilst in the 2006 Integration stamps alongside a sitar we see a female dancer performing a bhangra dance, originating in India’s Punjab region.

The **earliest dance** referenced occurs in the 1973 Inigo Jones set where participants are shown in a court masque from the early 17th century, a cross between elaborate pageantry and drama presented with a lot of formalised and stately perambulation from figures in fantastic costume and wig.

The **modern era** is represented with Salsa, the only ballroom reference in all of our dancing stamps, in the 2006 Sounds of Britain set, unless the actors partially revealed by the curtain in the 19p World of the Stage can be said definitely to be doing the tango or Argentinian tango or lambada or even The Pride of Erin waltz?

The remaining two stamps in our list are definitely related to **ballet** with the genre name checked in the 1982 British Theatre issue and *Prima ballerina assoluta* Dame Margot Fonteyn featured in the Europa Famous Women issue of 1996.

But perhaps there are **two more stamps** we can squeeze into this set. The first of these is found in the miniature sheet of the Bees issue of 2015. In the first stamp in the strip of 1st class issues we see bees performing the Waggle Dance, which apparently is a form of apian communication to indicate

1965 Commonwealth Arts Festival
1973 Inigo Jones: Stuart Court masque
1976 Cultural Traditions
1982 Europa : British Theatre
1995 Greetings in Art
1996 Robert Burns
Europa : Famous Women
1998 The Nottinghill Carnival
1999 The Artists’ Tale—World and Stage
2006 Europa: Integration—Sounds of Britain
2012 The House of Windsor
2015 Bees

where the best pollen bearing flora lie.

The second is the one showing King Edward VIII in the House of Windsor issue of 2012. Because as the uber-socialite Prince of Wales he was the inspiration for the song written by Herbert Farjeon in the late 1920’s which began...

I've danced with a man, who's danced with a girl, who's danced with the Prince Wales

Farjeon was apparently referencing a ballroom dancing champion called Edna Deane

So this is a niche theme, but a delightful one. There are not enough stamps showing dancers and it is now up to the meretricious Royal Mail executives to push for a long set showing winners of *Strictly* to make a presentation on this time much more viable.

Take your partners.....



Inventors and Innovators Jeff Dugdale 8.2018

“All right... all right... but apart from inventing the hovercraft, radar, jet engines, television, mail sorting machines, the postage stamp, the steam engine and railway, the chronometer, photography, the computer, the angle poise lamp, the underground map and a code braking machine without which we would not have won the Second World War what *have* the British done for *us*?”

The above Pythonesque skit is based only on how British invention has been portrayed on our postage stamps since the 1960s.

Historically the earliest invention referenced on these stamps is **John Harrison’s H4 clock** of 1693, celebrated in 1993 with four beautiful stamps showing various aspects of its design. Harrison’s invention of the marine chronometer helped to solve the calculation of longitude and made navigation across great distance so much safer and simpler.

Another early invention is **Thomas Newcomen’s atmospheric steam engine** of 1712 within the Britons of Distinction set 300 years later. This invention was vitally important at the start of the Industrial Revolution as it provided a greatly enhanced means of pumping out water from deep mines.

Abraham Darby III’s Iron Bridge across the River Severn in Shropshire which opened in 1779 was the first of its size to be constructed from cast iron. Within the 2007 World of Invention issue it is pictured inspiring the “Colossus of Roads” Thomas Telford, who would go on to design scores of bridges across Britain.

The Liverpool-Manchester Railway set of five stamps in 1980 celebrating its 150th anniversary is relevant here representing the creation of the first ever passenger and cargo carrying railway in the world exclusively powered by steam and thus the product of many component inventions such as the locomotive and the railway itself.

Four other sets contribute much to this theme, starting with the **Inventors’ Tale in the 1999** Millennium series. In this the four stamps reference Harrison’s chronometer, James Watt’s improved steam engine of 1781, Henry Fox-Talbot’s experiments in photography in the 1830’s and Alan Turing’s work on computers a hundred years later.

In **2007 the World of Invention** set references the cast Iron bridge, steam locomotion, the telephone, the TV camera and television, the internet and space travel, all technologies which changed lives. Three of the last four mentioned there acknowledge important developments in their respective fields by Alexander Graham Bell, John Logie Baird and Tim Berners-Lee.

The **2009 British Design Classics** issue illustrates 10 British icons, not all them exactly inventions, but within the group are George Carwardine’s anglepoise lamp, Sir Giles Gilbert Scott’s K2 telephone kiosk, Robin Day’s polypropylene chair and the much imitated London Underground schematic map produced by Harry Beck in 1931.

Finally a set of 8 stamps called **Inventive Britain was issued in 2015** referencing the electronic digital computer (Tommy Flowers, 1943), the World Wide Web (Tim Berners-Lee, 1989) the cats eyes road safety feature (Percy Shaw, 1934), fibre optic technology, Charles Kao and George Hockham, 1960) stainless steel (Harry Brearley, 1914) carbon fibre (William Watt, 1964) and the I-LIMB bionic hand (David Gow, 2007).

“OK Ok, I think you’ve made your point !”

1966 British Technology—Hovercraft

1967 British Invention—Radar, Jet Engines, TV

1968 B.P.O. Technology—mail sorting machine etc

1969 Broadcasting technology

1976 Telephone Centenary

1976 500th anniversary of printing in England

1979 Rowland Hill—postage stamp/penny post

1980 Liverpool– Manchester railway

1982 Information Technology: the world wide web

1991 Electric motor/computer/radar/jet engines

1993 Harrison's chronometer

1995 Pioneers of Communication, Rowland Hill and Guglielmo Marconi

1999 Inventor's Tale: chronometer, photography, steam engine, computer

2004 Within RSA issue, Rowland Hill's penny post

2007 World of Invention: iron bridge, internet, camera and Tv

2009 Design classics: angle poise lamp, underground map diagram etc

2009 Pioneers of Industrial revolution: enhanced steam engine, spinning machine, road surface technology

2012 Britons of Distinction: atmospheric steam engine, code breaking machine

2012 Underground railway

2015 Inventive Britain: digital computer, world wide web, catseyes, stainless steel, bionic hand etc

Uniform Practice Jeff Dugdale 10.2018

"Oh Nelly Gray, Oh Nelly Gray
Is this your love so warm?
The love that loves a scarlet coat
Should be more uniform."

Thomas Hood *Faithless Nelly Gray*

Discounting uniform worn by members of the Royal Family shown in formal portraits, the first such clothing appears in the 1965 pair celebrating the Centenary of the Salvation Army.

But, of course, it is the British Army whose uniforms dominate this theme, with examples of various styles appearing in no fewer than 16 sets from 1971 to the present day. Naval uniforms come a poor second, appearing within six sets. For those with an interest in the history of military matters this theme could become an absorbing one, requiring research to link each stamp to particular fighting eras.

There are nine major sets, each contributing a handful of stamps showing military personnel in uniform, with Army Uniforms featuring strongly in the first four in 1983, 2004, 2006 and 2007, two of these being entitled "Army Uniforms" and another five exemplifying such uniforms across the years: The English Civil War, Crimea, Waterloo, World War Two and The Home Guard of WW2.

Army Uniforms in 1983 covers a range of 250 years. Designed by Eric Stemp the stamps show uniforms worn by Musketeer and Pikeman of the Royal Scots in 1633, a Royal Welch Fusilier and Ensign from the mid-18th century, Riflemen of the Royal Green Jackets (the 95th Rifles) in 1805, a Sergeant in khaki and a Guardsman in full dress of The Irish Guards in 1900 and members of the Parachute Regiment in 1983, the year after the Falklands War. The same topic is reprised with six stamps in **2007** again covering three centuries, starting with a Trooper from the Earl of Oxford's Horse in 1661 through to an NCO in the Royal Military Police in 1999 and this set also references a rifleman from the 95th Rifles, in 1813.

Some of the more flamboyant of Army uniforms can be seen in issues for the Lord Mayor's Show (1989), Gilbert & Sullivan (1992) and All the Queen's Horses (1997),

In 2008 and 2009 RAF and Royal Navy uniforms respectively are treated in the same way as the Army in 2007 with the RAF group ranging from 1918 to 2007 and the Senior Service from 1795 to 2009.

RAF uniforms can also be seen in the 1971 and 1986 sets mentioned in the checklist whilst Navy uniforms appear also in 1971, the 1982 Maritime Heritage and the 1999 Travellers' Tales sets and 2018 Captain Cook's voyage issues

In addition to military uniforms, those sported by members of Youth organisations can be seen in 1982 and 2007, by police in 1976, 1979 and 1990, by postmen in 1979, 2014 and 2016 and by nurses in 1971, 1976 and 2017.

Most of the uniforms on display are shown on anonymous figures but a number of named and famous persons also feature, notably in Maritime Heritage (1982) and History of the RAF (1986) where we see such famous military men as Lord Nelson, Lord Fisher, Lord Dowding and Lord Trenchard. The Victoria Cross issue of 2006 also features famous heroes like Captain Noel Chavasse and Captain Charles Upham.

Balancing this eminence are three ordinary soldiers who fill the "people" slot in The Centenary of the First World War issues—Private William Tickle (2014), Rifleman Kulbir Thapa (2015) and 2nd Lieut Walter Tull (2018).

1965 Salvation Army Centenary

1971 Anniversaries: British Legion

1976 Telephone Centenary : Policeman, district nurse

1977 Cultural tradition: Highland bagpiper

1979 Rowland Hill Centenary: postmen

1979 150th anniv of Metropolitan Police

1982 Youth Organisations

1982 Maritime Heritage

1983 Army Uniforms

1986 History of the RAF

1989 Lord Mayor's Show, London

1990 Greetings—Smiler: Laughing Policeman

1992 English Civil War

1993 Gilbert and Sullivan: Beefeater

1997 50th anniv of British Horse Society: All the Queen's Horses

1999 The Travellers' Tale: Captain Cook

2004 150th anniv of The Crimean War

2006 150th anniv of The Victoria Cross

2007 Centenary of Scouting

2007 Army Uniforms

2008 RAF Uniforms

2009 Royal Navy Uniforms

2010 Britain Alone (1st and 2nd issues)

2014 Classic Children's TV : Postman Pat

2014 Centenary of First World War #1: Private Tickle

2015 Centenary of First World War #2: Rifleman Thapa

2015 Bicentenary of Battle of Waterloo #2

2016 Centenary of First World War#3: Post Office at War

2017 Centenary of First World War #4: Nurses

2018 Dad's Army TV sitcom

2018 Captain Cook's voyage

2018 Centenary of First World War #5: 2nd Lt Tull

A Novel Theme Jeff Dugdale 8.2018

Of course, given the fame of English literature across the world this is a very major theme. As you might guess there are three default designs for stamps celebrating a novelist: using a portrait, using a scene or character(s) from a well known text and a combination of the first two types. And occasionally a fourth approach is taken—showing a place, building or object which was a specific or generic influence upon that writer, whose portrait may accompany the image.

Numerically the most popular British author on our stamps is, unsurprisingly, Charles Dickens with characters represented on 19 stamps, closely followed by Lewis Carroll (15) and Beatrix Potter and J.K.Rowling (each with 14). Other authors whose stamps make it into double figures are Jane Austen (10), Roald Dahl (13) and A.A.Milne (11). In terms of particular issues, however, Lewis Carroll is the champion with six sets including stamps which reference his work, closely followed by Beatrix Potter, whose characters have been marked in five different years.

Given some of the relatively minor novelists who have been celebrated, (Daphne du Maurier, Enid Blyton and Ian Fleming) the most surprisingly neglected is Thomas Hardy, whose massive output has been recognised with only one stamp and the likes of W.M. Thackeray, George Orwell, E.M.Forster, D.H.Lawrence and Graham Greene totally ignored. Moreover that Sir Walter Scott is represented only by two stamps showing his portrait is a travesty, given his vast output. Depiction of Walter Scott characters 0, J.K.Rowling characters 9 ! And perhaps the devotion to the cuddly creations of Beatrix Potter is overdone ? But images of Peter Rabbit and Benjamin Bunny sell no doubt !

However, for those who *are* celebrated the designs are of very high quality. Particularly striking are the caricature drawings of characters from the Dickens, Carroll and Roald Dahl canons, which will bring smiles to the faces of those who know these bizarre creations and invite others to read into and about them, which can only be a good thing in promoting reading. Look for example at the 1993 Christmas issue for *A Christmas Carol* and all the stamps in the 2012 Roald Dahl celebration.

In contrast, some stamps about dark novels are particularly good in suggesting the nature of the plots celebrated: see the 2005 set for Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* and the two *Discworld* characters in the 2011 Magic Realms issue. On the other hand images of Richmal Crompton's William Brown and Capt W.E. Johns' war hero Biggles are colourful nostalgic reminders of past ages which ought to be revisited in print, as least in the way in which Winnie the Pooh and friends are across almost a dozen stamps. Particularly charming are the two sets for the Jane Austen characters in 1975 and 2013 and the Sherlock Homes issue of 1993 which also well illustrate the dress fashions of the day.

If you want to reduce the challenge of collecting all British novelists you can divide the task into two by discriminating between works especially written for Children and those for adults but that will throw up some interesting challenges to your thinking. For example are *Alice In Wonderland* and *A Christmas Carol* really just children's books?

With notable exceptions a very representative list of major characters from English literature can be presented from early Victorian times to the present day, starting with the first characters to appear on our stamps in 1970.

(Note: I have deliberately ignored writers who have been celebrated for their short-stories or short stories like Kipling, The Rev Wilbert Awdry, etc

1970 Charles Dickens (4 designs)

1971 Sir Walter Scott (1)

1972 Jane Austen (4)

1973 International year of the Child (4)

B. Potter, K. Grahame, A.A.Milne & L.Carroll

1980 Famous Authoresses (4)

C. Bronte, G.Eliot, E. Bronte, Mrs Gaskell

1987 150th anniv of Q. Victoria— Benjamin Disraeli

1990 Thomas Hardy

1993 Greetings—allusions to 6 R.L.Stevenson, L.Carroll, R.Crompton, K.Grahame, B.Potter, R.Dahl

1993 Conan Doyle (5)

 Christmas:Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*

1993 Greetings—allusions to 6 L.Carroll, B.Potter, Capt Johns, M.Bond, K.Hale and O. Postgate

1995 H.G.Wells (4)

1996 Europa: Famous Women—Daphne du Maurier

1997 Europa: Tales & Legends—(4) B.Stoker, M.Shelley, R.L.Stevenson & Conan Doyle

1997 Enid Blyton (5)

1998 Children's Fantasy novels: 5 JRR Tolkien, C.S.Lewis, E.Nesbit, M Norton, L.Carroll

1999 Artists' Tale—The World of Literature

2000 Tolkien—50th anniv of publication of two novels (10)

2001 Charlotte Bronte (6)

2002 Animal tales: 4 B.Potter, R. Dahl, M.Bond, L.Carroll

 National Portrait Gallery: Sir Walter Scott, Virginia Woolf

2007 J.K.Rowling's Harry Potter (12)

2008 Ian Fleming's James Bond (6)

 Br. Design Classics: Penguin books—V. Sackville West

2009 Eminent Britons—Conan Doyle

2010 Winnie the Pooh (10)

2011 Magical Realms: Terry Pratchett's *Discworld*, JK Rowling's *Harry Potter* & C.S.Lewis' *Narnia*

2012 Roald Dahl (10)

 Britons of Distinction: Montagu Rhodes

 Charles Dickens (10)

2013 Jane Austen (6)

2014 Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (10)

2015 Agatha Christie (6)

2016 Games of Thrones (10)

 Based on GRRM's novels (but he's American)