

British Special Stamps

9. Olympic Games, 1948

Perhaps only once or twice in a lifetime does one have the opportunity of viewing—in one's own country—the greatest of all international athletic events, the Olympic Games. They are held every four years in a different country, and for the host nation the Games are both an honour and a colossal expense. The first really international meeting was the fourth Olympic contest of 1908, held in London which was again the venue in 1948.

one or two instances, by the dull monochrome colours. The one uniform feature was the usual profile of King George VI—Dulac's own—with the crown in 'suspense' above his head.

Percy Metcalfe's design for the $2\frac{1}{2}d$ ultramarine indicated that the artist, who was best known as a designer of coins and medals, was 'playing safe' with a kind of formal 'stock' design—the Globe within a laurel wreath (the



The Post Office apparently gave the event a 'four star' rating, issuing four commemorative stamps on 29 July 1948, the opening day of the Games at Wembley in north-west London. The designs, in horizontal format, were all symbolic and emblematic, representing the individual concepts of four well-known artists—Percy Metcalfe, CVO, Abram Games (whose name was his good fortune!), Stanley D Scott and the erudite Edmund Dulac. They were four basically sound designs, somewhat marred by the different styles of lettering and layout and, in



honorary wreaths of the ancients), and the Olympic rings in a straight line, which is not the way they are usually arranged and which, strictly speaking, were not the recognised Olympic symbol. The main motif and the King's head were, however, nicely balanced within the dark centre panel. The lettering 'OLYMPIC GAMES' was suitably 'Greek' in appearance, especially the seemingly 'hand-carved' 'M's.

Abram Games, FSIA, designed the $3d$ violet which was perhaps the most original of the four designs. His experience in designing

posters was evidently applied to good purpose, the poster technique being apparent in the theme—an athlete's thrusting head emerging from the Globe, symbolising 'speed', the Olympic rings superimposed thereon and most of the toned background a void suggesting 'space'. Stanley Scott, who was then employed by Waterlows and is now a leading light of Harrison and Sons design studio, placed the King's head squarely in the centre of his 6d bright purple, backed it with the Olympic rings and flanked the whole ensemble with two upright fronds of laurel. The colour was extremely garish.

For the 1s brown, Edmund Dulac selected the classic figure of the Winged Victory crossing the Globe, described by a critic at the time as 'a half-dressed soubrette in an old-look petticoat'. The stamps were photogravure-printed by Harrison and Sons, and were sold, by present-day standards, in enormous quantities—155 million of the 2½d, 32 million of the 3d and 1s, and 24 million of the 6d. The stamps were surcharged for use in British Post Offices in Bahrain, Kuwait, Muscat and Morocco.

JAMES WATSON

Philatelic Music Circle

During the fortnight commencing Saturday, 21 June 1975, the Scottish National Orchestra is holding its Promenade Concerts in the Kelvin Hall, Glasgow and at the same time, also within the Kelvin Hall, the Philatelic Music Circle is presenting an international exhibition of music on stamps.

Exhibits have been invited from members of the society, which caters for collectors of musical philately and has over three hundred members in thirty-one countries of the world. These frames will be devoted to a variety of subjects within the music theme—the lives of composers, opera and national anthems being but a few. As most of the displays will have been successful entries in previous competitions, they will be of high standard and will be pleasing even to non-collectors.

The Scottish National Orchestra's Promenade Concerts are a great attraction each year and are an extremely successful venture. It is hoped that the 'promenaders' will also wander along to take a peep at this display of 'Music in Miniature'.

Any enquiries regarding either the Philatelic Music Circle or the Kelvin Hall exhibition should be sent to the Hon. Secretary of the Philatelic Music Circle.

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First Day Cover Services

Sailing

To mark the occasion of the many sailing anniversaries taking place in 1975, four new postage stamps, values 7p, 8p, 10p and 12p are to be issued on 11 June. The following first day cover services will be offered by the Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh.

Service A

This consists of the official Post Office cover, addressed as requested and bearing the full set of stamps.

The cover will be cancelled 'Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh' and despatched for a charge of 50p. For deposit account customers the charge will be 47½p.

Service B

Customers own pre-addressed covers will be given the full set of stamps, cancelled and despatched for 43p.

Service C

For bulk orders of 50 or more covers all to the same address, under the conditions of Service A, the charge is 47½p per item. The usual first day of issue facilities will be available at offices with philatelic posting boxes.