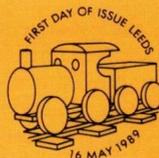
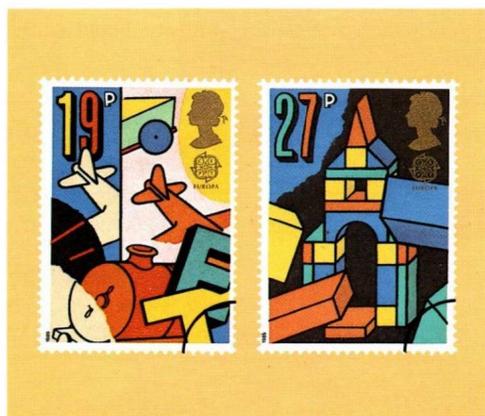


Games & Toys

16 May 1989



The theme of this year's Europa issue is Games & Toys – stamps depicting this subject will be issued by member countries of the Conference of European Postal & Telecommunications organisation. The four colourful British stamps, to be issued on 16 May, feature an artistic impression of a number of popular games and toys.



The 19p stamp (inland first class and EEC basic rate) features building bricks, the 27p (airmail postcards) a toy aeroplane and train, the 32p (airmail Zone B) board games and the 35p (airmail Zone C) toys in general.

Until the 19th century children tended to be treated as miniature adults, were required to be useful members of the family and were often dressed in a similar way to their elders. For children of the working class (the vast majority of the population) toys were almost non-existent. The children of the better-off did have toys and most of those which have survived have come from the homes of the upper middle class and the aristocracy. Visitors to many stately homes now open to the public can see delightful examples of the toys played with by the sons and daughters of the nobility.

Toys have survived from ancient times – such as pull-along animals, spinning tops and balls from Ancient Egypt and knucklebones and clay dolls from ancient Greece and Rome. In 16th century Europe, tops, hobby horses,

hoops, marbles, kites, pull-along carts and toy animals were sold by travelling packmen. In the next century the doll's house developed from the cabinets used by ladies for displaying miniature treasures. In the 18th century the rich often had their estate carpenter build a model of their home for their children. Board games, intended to instruct as well as amuse, made their debut. Some of these games had rather grandiose titles, for example the *Royal Game of Goose* (1775) and the *New Game of Human Life* (1790) which stressed its "utility and moral tendency".

The Napoleonic Wars may well have inspired the appeal of metal toy soldiers at the end of the 18th century – the first type consisted of little flat figures cast, wafer thin but marvellously detailed, in tin. The family firm of Britain Ltd became the great name in the manufacture of toy soldiers – by 1900 they offered about a hundred sets, of all different regiments, at a shilling a set.



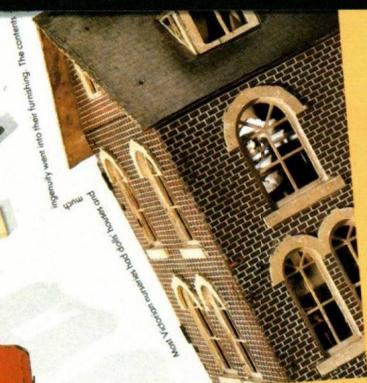
Toy replicas of forms of transport have proved popular with children (and some adults!) throughout the ages. Soon after the first passenger-carrying trains ran in the 1820s and 1830s, they became subjects for the toy manufacturers. The early toy trains were of a simple, pull-along nature, referred to as "carpet trains"; later working models were produced with water-filled boilers heated by a methylated spirit burner – nicknamed "dribblers" or "piddlers" after the



...or 'pocket' toys...
 were accurate and up-to-date...
 thing driven by efficient clockwork...
 could be bought in sets with balls, tops...
 stations, wind-up engine parts, etc...
 From 1925 there was the Hornby train which
 has proved one of the best-loved
 children's toys.

Amazing clockwork toys like this mouse could be bought at the end of the nineteenth century.

Since the 1920s every budding engine driver's perfect present has been a Hornby train set.



GAMES & TOYS
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