

The Christians' Tale

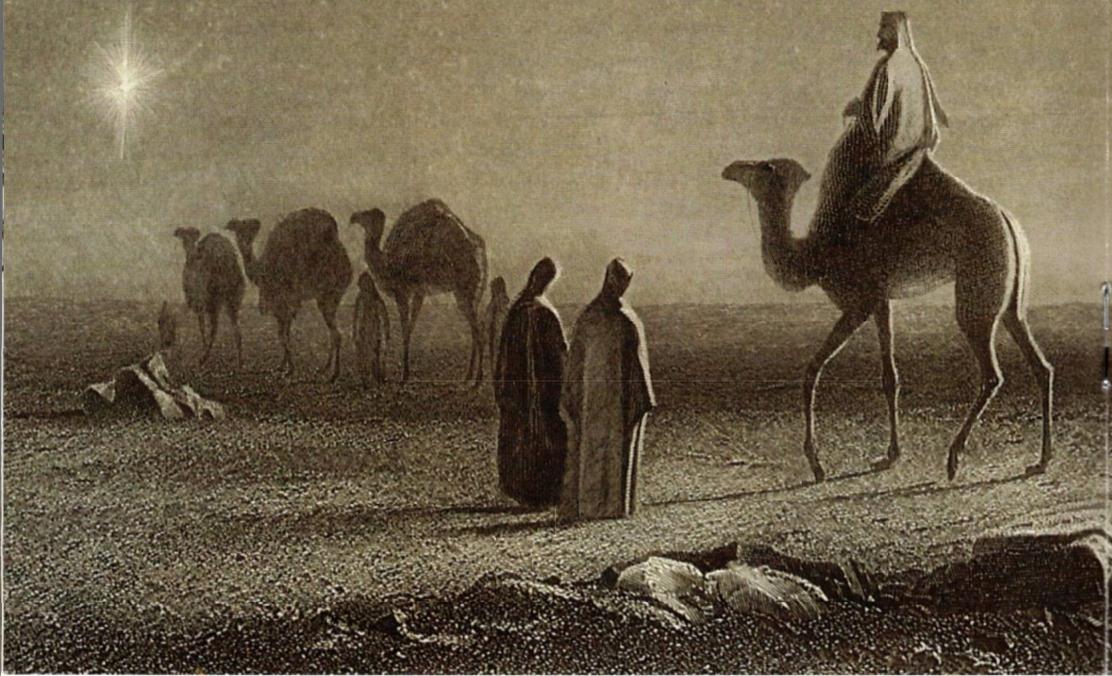
The eleventh of the 12 sets of Millennium stamps to be issued during 1999 is on the theme of Christians.

The Christians' Tale stamps will go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 2 November.



The design of the **19p** stamp, by American calligrapher and collage artist Brody Neuschwander, features the words from Charles Wesley's famous hymn 'Hark, the Herald Angels Sing', joyously sung in many churches during the Christmas season. Written in 1739, the line 'Hark, the Herald Angels Sing' was actually coined by George Whitefield, an open-air preacher. The theme of Christmas hymns and carols also features on the Christmas aerogramme (see page 40).

The **26p** value, by Clare Melinsky, depicts King James I (VI of Scotland) with his authorised version of *The Bible* (1611). The work, commissioned in 1604, took nearly 50 scholars seven years to complete. The translation had a marked influence on English church style and literature; it was generally accepted as the standard English Bible for over three centuries. James, a noted theologian, was described as the wisest fool in Christendom.





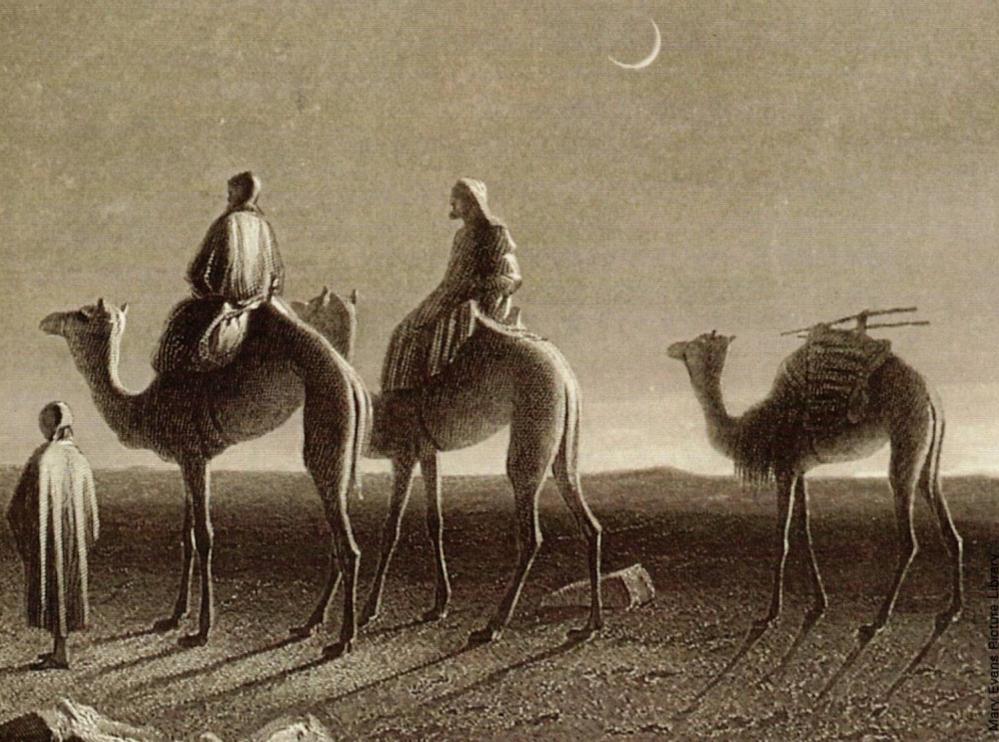
The 19p stamp, *Wesley*, by American artist and calligrapher Brody Neuschwander, features words from the hymn 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' by Charles Wesley. Wesley published over 4500 hymns and left some 3000 more in manuscript.

The 26p, by Clare Melinsky, shows King James I (VI of Scotland), with his authorized version of The Bible. This is Clare Melinsky's second set on a Christian theme, following the Missions of Faith stamps commemorating Saints Columba and Augustine in 1997.



Catherine Yass's 44p stamp recalls medieval pilgrimages, in this case to the cathedral at St Andrews in Fife, Scotland. The cathedral, which developed from a shrine for the saint's bones, was in disrepair by the mid-17th century. It was featured on the 1993 Scottish aerogramme honouring St Margaret.

The 64p stamp, titled *First Christmas*, is by one of Scotland's most celebrated artists, Craigie Aitchison RA, awarded the CBE in The Queen's Birthday Honours this year. His paintings were used on five aircards in September 1997.



Major Evans Picture Library

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 2 November, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or St Andrews must reach the Bureau by 2 November. Price £2.22 UK (including VAT) or £1.89 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, 57 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3AZ (St Andrews postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9925' (Bureau), or 'FD9926' (St Andrews). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the St Andrews postmark. A non-pictorial St Andrews postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre: request 'FD9926 NP'.

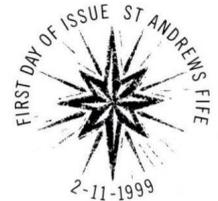
Bilingual Welsh/English versions of the St Andrews handstamps can be obtained by sending covers to the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 1AA, quoting reference 'FD9926 Bil' (pictorial) and 'FD9926 NP Bil' (non-pictorial).

Please note that there will be no Royal Mail first day handstamp for Bethlehem this year; any sponsored handstamps for this small Welsh village will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. Covers may bear just the 19p Christians' Tale stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 2 November.

MILLENNIUM PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated Christians' Tale pack (price £1.90) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets. A Millennium Stamps Album, with pages for the 1999 issues, is available from the Bureau. Price: album and slipcase £19.99; sets of pages only £9.99. A presentation case has been produced to display the Millennium packs and covers. Enquiries: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT.

Future Millennium issues The last 1999 set – Artists' Tale – will be issued on 7 December, featuring specially commissioned paintings by Allen Jones, Bridget Riley, Lisa Milroy, and Sir Howard Hodgkin. In addition a Millennium miniature sheet containing four new 64p stamps, designed by David Gentleman, will be issued on 14 December 1999, and a Millennium definitive for use during 2000 will follow on 6 January. Further information will be published shortly.

The 2000 series begins on 18 January with a set entitled 'Above & Beyond', followed by Fire & Light (1 February), Water & Coast (7 March), Life & Earth (4 April), Art & Craft (2 May), People & Place (6 June), Stone & Soil (4 July), Tree & Leaf (1 August), Mind & Matter (5 September), Body & Bone (3 October), Spirit & Faith (7 November), and Sound & Vision (5 December). The titles of issues are subject to change; further details are to be announced ●



Technical details

Printer De La Rue Security Printers

Process Gravure

Size 37 × 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14.5

Phosphor One band 19p ●
two bands others

Gum PVA

Central gutter Vertical

