

1995 YEAR END - CATALOGUE EDITOR'S REPORT.

This year the "New Illustrated Catalogue" has seen the completion of the huge letter 'S', as well as two smaller letters 'T' and 'K'. Figures from the 12 sections published so far are tabulated below.

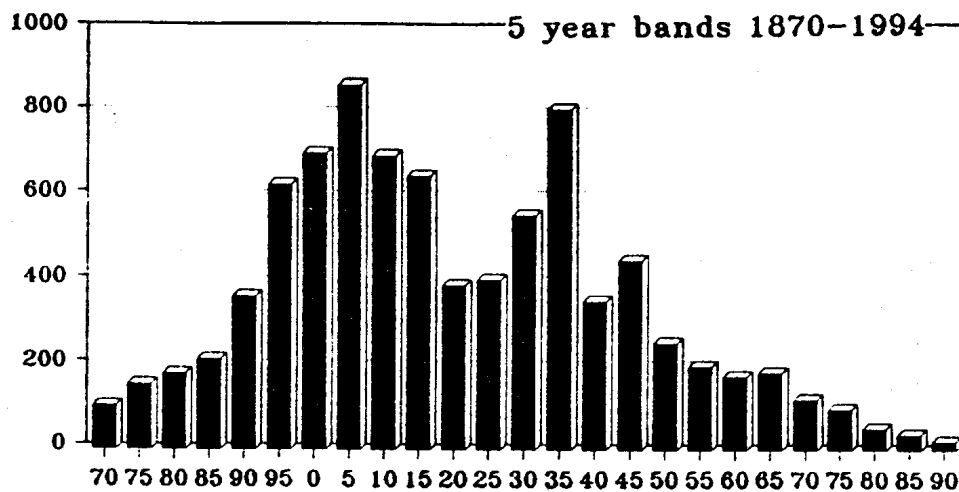
Letter	No of Dies		Avg Life Yrs	No. of Idents	1d Lilac	1d E7	Dies with NO Details	No. Hand Drawn
	Old Cat	New Cat						
I	352	348	8.0	156(45%)	63	75	36	2
K	304	325	11.1	159(49%)	81	80	13	4
0	280	286	8.6	104(36%)	47	41	23	4
0	39	45	8.1	20(44%)	8	8	5	0
\$	1564	1686	9.7	662(39%)	385	373	112	8
0	194	209	6.9	110(53%)	26	23	22	5
V	159	172	8.4	55(32%)	32	45	20	3
X	20	22	2.6	7(32%)	1	2	3	1
y	87	100	8.1	42(42%)	22	15	8	0
z	16	16	4.5	7(44%)	1	3	2	0
Deo	84	78	10.3	35(45%)	19	21	6	4
Nos	63	62	6.6	26(42%)	8	6	14	0
Total	3162	3349	9.0	1383(41%)	693	692	264(8%)	31

The increase in the number of dies in the New Illustrated Catalogue compared to the Old Catalogue is currently 6%. Assuming this remains constant for the remaining sections, a total of 22,728 different perfin dies on GB stamps can be expected. Incidentally, the two-horse race for the title of "most frequently perfined GB stamp" now has the 1d Lilac of Queen Victoria leading the 1d Red of Edward VII by a nostril.

S1210.04M	SC	1895-1990	95yrs
U1170.01M	U.L	1905-1992	87yrs
O0380.01	O.C.	1895-1975	80yrs
Y0610.01M	YK/C	1906-1979	73yrs
S5840.01	S.P/&C°	1869-1940	71yrs
K0340.02M	KC/L	1895-1965	70yrs
O1180.02	O&N	1891-1960	69yrs
S0460.03bM	SB	1891-1960	69yrs
S4340.04	S&L	1905-1971	66yrs

Although the average life of a die is 9 years, a growing number of long lived dies are coming to light. The table above shows "The Pensioners", i.e. dies with lives greater than 65 years.

One of the original objectives set for the New Illustrated Catalogue was to illustrate at least 99% of the dies with a photocopy showing the edge of the stamp rather than rely on inaccurate hand drawings. I am pleased to report that this is being met. However, the target of showing details (ie dates, issues, pinks etc.) for at least 95% of the dies is falling a little short at 92%. Inevitably, these 'missing' dies will be somewhat rare, but if you are lucky enough to have examples of any of them I would be very pleased to hear from you.



The bar chart above shows the number of dies in use at any one time. The pattern first shown last year with two distinct peaks is still very much in evidence, one during the Edwardian era and the other immediately preceding World War II. The trough between them no doubt accounts for the depression in the 1920's. On a pro rata basis, there may well have been as many as 5,500 - 6,000 different dies in use during each of these peak periods.

Finally, I would like to officially thank the team who are helping me with the New Illustrated Catalogue - Harry Skinner & Arthur Smith (for access to their material), John Nelson (for company details), Rosemary Smith (for cover information), and Stephen Steere (Sloper records information and for the arduous task of proof reading). Many others help indirectly by providing me with details (and often material) from their own collections - Barry Pawson, Gerry Soutar, Robert Dedecker, John Donner, John Bonney, Kim Bjarnt, Alastair Walter, and over the years many, many more too numerous to mention. Thank you all!