

Dummy Stamps

Walsall and Harrison's - Banknote Printers

An attempt at getting into this lucrative market

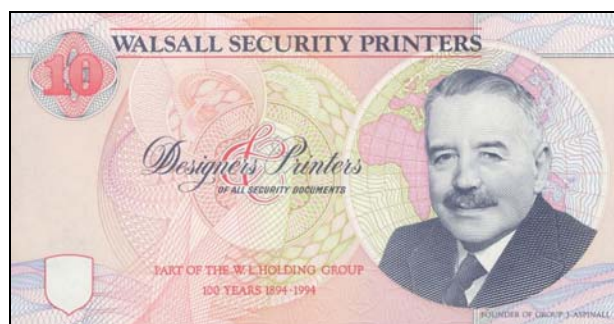
Worldwide banknote printing is a specialised area of security print dominated by De La Rue.

Changes in market-forces (such as events in the Soviet Union) were seen by some security printers as an opportunity to enter this lucrative market and take orders away from the mighty DLR.

Walsall and Harrison's had both decided to diversify into this field and each produced a sample banknote design as an advertising tool to assist its sales team when touting for business.

Walsall chose to print its notes by offset litho, as this was their area of expertise, while Harrison's went for intaglio (recess). The former decided not to progress the idea, while some say that the latter was purchased by DLR simply to remove what had become a thorn in their side, as Harrison's had apparently secured about 5% of the worldwide banknote market in a very short time.

Unlike these printers, *Dummy Stamps* will not be diversifying, but I thought readers might like to see the notes produced. The H&S sheet exists in navy blue (not shown) or brown (alongside) 📄



(above)
H&S face
& reverse

(left) WSP
face

(below)
WSP
reverse
o/printed
for IBNS
Congress

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There are advertising notes from the Bank of England, DLR, Bradbury Wilkinson, Waterlow's and others. They form a fascinating collection.



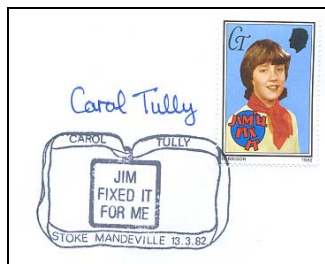
Jim'll Fix It Harrison Label

A girl gets her wish to see stamps being printed

"Now then, now then, now then." Readers of a certain age (most stamp collectors, these days!) will recall the highly successful Saturday evening BBC TV series in which Jimmy Saville made wishes come true, mainly for children. The programme ran to a staggering twenty series, amounting to no less than 295 35 minute episodes and it is still talked about with affection.

The episode on 13 March 1982 was of particular interest to stamp collectors because a young teenage girl called Carol Tully had asked to see stamps being printed. Harrison and Sons was happy to oblige and went so far as to produce a unique 'stamp' commemorating her visit to the plant.

The souvenir was printed by lithography using four colour cylinders (CMYK) in sheets of 25 labels. Cylinders 1A1A1A1A and 1B1B1B1B were utilised and two recent eBay auctions saw full sheets on sale for £50-£125 each, with signed Cotswold covers at £35, or unsigned at just £3.



Carol was presented by Harrison's with a leather folder of H&S stamps, plus imperforate and colour progressive sheets of her souvenir. She was photographed holding one of the imperforate sheets of two panes while in the Harrison factory (see *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, May 1982, page 41).

Label Details

<i>Value and design</i>	Undenominated Carol Tully portrait with silhouetted head of Jimmy Saville, CT and Jim'll Fix It logo
<i>Designer</i>	A member of Harrison's design studio
<i>Issue date</i>	March 1982
<i>Producer</i>	Harrison and Sons Limited, High Wycombe
<i>Process</i>	Lithography
<i>Paper</i>	H&S Stamp Paper
<i>Gum</i>	PVA Dextrin (PVAD)
<i>Perforator used</i>	Grover Comb
<i>Label colours</i>	Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black (CMYK)
<i>Marginal markings</i>	"PRINTED BY HARRISON & SONS LTD., LONDON" at bottom centre, cylinder numbers bottom right and traffic lights in right margin alongside row four
<i>Price</i>	The stamps were sold in a block of four or as a single copy on cover by Cotswold Covers at £1 for either format, with all proceeds benefiting the Jimmy Saville Stoke Mandeville Hospital Appeal

Carol's time at Harrison's was hosted by works director John Orford who showed her a separated colour transparency that was to be used as part of the 'pre-press' phase, moved on to the various stages of production and finished-up in the area where sheets of her special label were being perforated and checked by the inspection team.



Medal of the kind awarded to Carol



Logo of the programme

Carol was born in Galashiels, Scotland and was just 13 at the time of her appearance on television. So, what became of her in adult life? I set about finding out and tracked her down working at the Department of Modern Languages, University of Wales Bangor, where she is a senior lecturer in German and Head of Department.

She had gained a degree in German and Spanish, moved to London and completed a PhD on German and Spanish Romanticism and taught at King's College while working as a freelance translator. She then taught at the University of Leeds before taking up her current position. Carol has many books, edited volumes, translations, editions and articles to her name and appears lots of times on the results pages of internet search engines.

In March 2007 it will have been 25 years since she visited Harrison's and I asked her whether she continues to have an interest in stamps. Sadly she does not, for when not involved in her academic work, Dr Tully is most likely to be found in the garden, travelling or on the golf course.

To quote another TV celebrity of the period, Larry Grayson of Generation Game fame, "Didn't she do well!".



Did Questa Tender for Christmas Stamps?

A unique run of the 24p Christmas 1991 stamp

From 1966, Harrison and Sons had the exclusive responsibility for printing the annual Christmas stamp issue. These stamps were way ahead of any other commemorative set in terms of production requirements and were, it can be presumed, very lucrative to the printer.

The 1991 24p Christmas value exists printed by Questa instead of Harrison's and it appears that it might have been an attempt at securing the contract to print the festive stamp issue.

Alternatively, this trial print run could have related to testing the gravure printing press that Questa had installed at Royal Mail's request.

Whatever the answer, the stamps were certainly produced with Royal Mail's awareness, as Questa would have needed the artwork from them!

I have not seen a complete pane of this unusual sheet format, so I am unaware if any marginal markings exist, or how many rows there are.

There is a pale blue 'wash' over the entire area of the design left white on the Harrison printing, with a very faint Queen's head impression, smaller and lower than on the issued stamp.

Can any reader please expand on the limited information recorded here? 📧



Background image area darkened to show Queen's head nestling between base of Q balloon logo and top of stylised flower



The issued 1991 Harrison printing of the 24p Christmas stamp

Questa Visit Hong Kong 97

New gravure press promoted at show reception

At the *Hong Kong 1997* stamp show, Ashton Potter and The House of Questa held a joint private reception for postal service contacts and honoured guests from all around the world.

The host, Dick Ashwell (Managing Director of Questa), presented each guest with a very limited edition souvenir sheet that had been printed on Questa's newly-acquired 850-screen printing gravure press. No copies of the sheet were made available to the general public or collectors. 📧



(left)
Stamp image
area enlarged

(below)
Close-up of the
dragon's head



American Dummy Coverage

The US Dummy Stamps Group sets out its scope

The US Dummy Stamp Study Group, which is located at www.usstamps.org/dssg.html, has defined what it regards as dummy stamps.

Their definition has been slightly edited to exclude material that is simply not applicable to the British stamp scene, such as 'demonetized embossed envelopes'.

"A general listing of the types of materials that the group would be interested in would include, but not be limited to: stamps or stamp like objects used to develop and test stamp production equipment; stamps or stamp like objects used to develop, test and adjust stamp vending equipment; stamps or stamp like objects used to develop, demonstrate and test stamp affixing equipment used by private mailing companies; facsimile stamps used for training students at business colleges and postal training centres; postal stationery, tokens used in place of coins to test/demonstrate and train postal clerks to use postal vending machines; booklet covers, coil leaders/seals on dummy rolls; dummy coil roll and dummy booklet labels or box labels; and meters."

I think that definitions have now been covered sufficiently in *Dummy Stamps* and I will leave it to the collector to decide what is included, or indeed excluded, from their personal collections. 📧

...and finally

I always welcome details of any new dummy finds from printers of British stamps, past and present, and so cordially invite you to drop me a line via the Guest Book facility provided on my website at www.stampprinters.info/guestbook.htm

Business, family and other commitments to the hobby mean that I am not in a position to guarantee that I can rigidly stick to a publishing programme and therefore suggest that you go to www.stampprinters.info/dummystamps.htm every so often where PDF files of this and all future and previous issues of *Dummy Stamps* will be available to download and print-off. Thank you.

Glenn H Morgan FRPSL