

# The History of Philately in Great Britain and Ireland - A Bibliography of Monographs, Grey Literature and Selected Texts

[Version 2 – August 2021]

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## Introduction

The history of philately is a rather neglected subject although its significance has become better understood in recent years. This comparative neglect is unfortunate for it is not only the history of a philatelic society or organisation that is this subject, but the very way in which collectors collect or philatelists' study that tells us so much and explains where we are today. An understanding of the development of the subject of philately helps us to see why certain things occurred. An example of this is the fashion of what types of material have been collected or studied such as both Postal Stationery and Revenue Philately that were strong subjects before the 1914-18 World War, after which they declined only to recover in fashion and so philatelic importance and status in the last thirty or forty years or so.

It is to help those who may wish to research the history of philately that this geographically limited bibliography has been compiled. Some of the listed texts are short and lacking in detail but may well be all that has been published and so are included here. Users should pay particular attention to entry 3 *British Philatelic Societies. A Collection of Histories to 2004*.

A considerable amount of work, on a world basis, has been undertaken by the scholar Brian Birch FRPSL and which I list as entry numbers 29 to 58 in addition to his other standard works listed below. His *Histories of Philatelic Societies in the Philatelic Bibliophile's Companion* and his *Bibliographies of Philatelists and Dealers* is to be found on the internet on the website of the Global Philatelic Library. Brian has kindly permitted me to use his work to add to data already collected and to form new entries. I am

delighted to acknowledge his help and encouragement, not to mention his pioneering work.

I had hoped to include that class of philatelic literature I term directories, that is lists of philatelists, societies or study groups and dealers, etc. I have determined to return with some further text, for obtaining details is not as straight forward as might be expected, especially in the period up to 1914. I would just mention here the directories of the British Philatelic Association, the British Philatelic Federation, the Association of British Philatelic Societies and the Philatelic Traders' Society which will join those of the Handbooks of the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain, and the "*Who's Who*" titles of Albert H Harris and Tom Morgan. In addition, philatelic exhibition literature is not so far included. Thus, this article may be regarded as work in progress.

A number of the texts are to be found in Society presentations or display/meeting notes available at a meeting of The Royal Philatelic Society London. These are so described thus: "Meeting notes ["handout"] for The Royal Philatelic Society London" (RPSL). Usually, some brief history of the Society is given and sometimes a separate chapter title given in inverted commas with a page number or note of the number of pages involved. These meeting notes are printed but most are available on the website of RPSL who have made great efforts to include them in recent years. In addition to those listed as being at the British Library they are also to be found in the John Sacher Library at The Royal Philatelic Society London.

A description of grey literature, as mentioned in the title, might be useful. It is: semi-published material, for example reports, internal documents, theses, conference or congress literature, etc. not formally published or available commercially and consequently difficult to trace bibliographically. The Meeting notes ["handout"] for The Royal Philatelic Society London are a good example.

As little has been written, in recent years, on this subject this work should be viewed as a work in progress with a special focus on Philatelic Society history. The author would be pleased to learn of any candidate for inclusion in any further version of this listing, or of further information, improvements, corrections, etc at email: DRBeech@btinternet.com

The order of the entries is A to Z by author, or corporate author that is the name of a society or organisation where a person is not given as the author. The subject index at the end of the article should make it possible for to items to be found. A Second Author Index is also included.

Users should be aware that some Society histories may be by individual author(s) or by a corporate author the name of the Society in question, and it is recommended that the Subject Index is used to find all such histories.

The entries are arranged as follows:

Author or Corporate Author, Title, Place of publication, Publisher, Date of publication, Edition, Pagination, Illustrated, Bibliography, Index, Language if not English, ISBN. Notes giving further details or context.

Details usually to be found in published and unpublished works which are missing from those works cannot be included in an entry, but such details derived from other sources are included, as is usual, within square brackets thus [ ].

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## Listing

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Beech, David [R], "The Philately of the Edwardian Era as shown in its Literature", [88<sup>th</sup> Philatelic Congress of Great Britain Celebrating the Centenary of the Caledonian Philatelic Society. Congress Handbook], 2006, pages 23-26. In addition, on the Internet at the websites of: Henley and District Philatelic Society, and Barnet and District Philatelic Society.

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