



Patron Her Majesty The Queen

# **Great Britain Queen Elizabeth II Registered Envelopes of the Tudor Rose Design**



**Lecture to  
The Royal Philatelic Society London  
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## Background

The Tudor Rose embossed design featuring the head of Queen Elizabeth II for the postal stationery of Great Britain was used for Registered Envelopes, Post Office Envelopes and Stamped to Order Envelopes, Paper & Postcards. The artist was Cecil Walter Thomas CBE FRBS (1885-1976), who had a long and successful career as a sculptor. His other commissions included designs for British Elizabethan coins and the Crawford Medal for the Royal Philatelic Society London.



1953 Florin issued in the United Kingdom.

The reverse was designed by Cecil Thomas and Edgar Fuller. The Tudor Rose motif in the centre bears a great resemblance to the design of the postal stationery. Note the initials EF and CT in the design above 'SHILLINGS'.

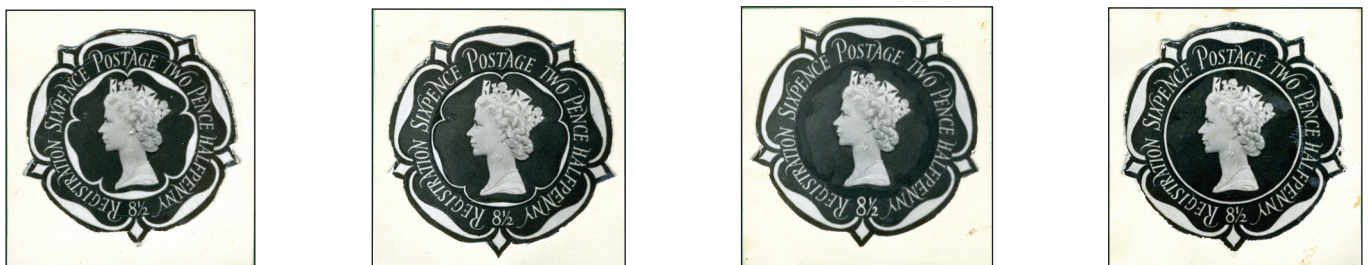
## Scope

The first envelopes were issued in November 1954, being superseded from 1970 with the introduction of the Machin design. This display benefits from including material from Cecil Thomas' personal archive, which has been preserved in its entirety after being acquired from the Thomas family. All of this material is unique as similar items are not held in the Postal Museum, or in the Royal Philatelic Collection.

All envelopes printed for the Post Office were made by McCorquodale & Co Ltd who were based in Wolverton, Buckinghamshire, England. Specimen envelopes have come on to the market from the printers' archive; such material is unique in private hands.

## Design of Master Die

Cecil Thomas drew heavily on his design for the reverse of the new Queen Elizabeth florin which was issued in 1953. The outline of the central Tudor Rose is identical, and his early essays for the inner border was also inspired by the coin design.



Photographic essays from the Cecil Thomas archive showing different borders between Her Majesty's head and the text.



Progressive die proofs of chosen design.

The master undenominated die was used to create a master for each value. This in turn was used to generate multiple working dies for each denomination; these dies had a small die number inserted in the base of The Queen's neck.



## Artist's Photographic Essays for Master Design Die

The first registration denomination to be commissioned was the 8½d, i.e. the minimum combined inland registered letter rate. The artist, Cecil Thomas, used this value to refine the design for the whole series.

These photographic essays show a succession of minor changes, most notably the boundary between The Queen's head and the text.



No ring



Tudor Rose outline

The first has a solid black background, the second has a hand-painted outline of the Tudor Rose, and the third has a simple line. The remnants of the Tudor Rose can be seen to have been retouched away on the final design, which most closely resembles the issued die.



Circular ring



## Colour Trials

The completed die for the 8½d value was used to produce colour trials for the indicium on the registered envelopes. Although different colours were chosen for the overseas and forces envelopes, all inland Registration & Postage dies were printed in grey ink on the issued envelopes. *ex Cecil Thomas Archive*



Shades of blue



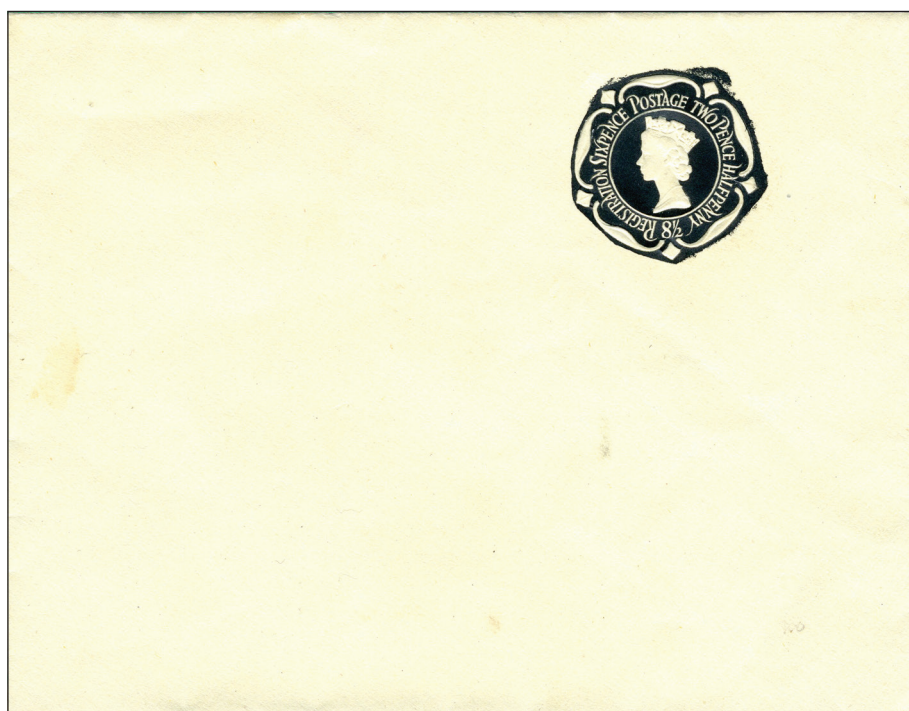
Red



Shades of purple and green



Trials close to issued grey colour



Black die on cream Size H Post Office envelope



Contract Specimen

For Official  
Registration Label

G size envelope

REGISTERED LETTER

This letter must be handed  
to an officer of the Post  
Office and a receipt obtained

REGISTRATION AND POSTAGE  
SPECIMEN  
3/4

One Registered Envelope size G approved as standard  
specimen referred to in clause 4 of conditions of co  
ommenced 1st July 1963.

To.....

Chief Executive Of  
27 Feb.  
G. Boeldington  
Contractor  
10 Feb  
MCCORQUODALE & C  
WOLVERTON, BUL.

Registration  
Fee.....s.....d. paid

Ex McCorquodale & Co Ltd archive

Contract Standard Specimen Size G

The legal contract between the Post Office and McCorquodale & Co Ltd required samples of all finished envelopes to be approved by both parties.

The letter indicates that the new 3s 4d registered envelopes were issued on 12 May 1967, although none are recorded until the following month.

The embossed stamp is overprinted SPECIMEN (Samuel & Huggins Type PS21).

D

DELIVERY NOTE FOR SPECIMENS

(Copy for Recipient)

Nº 8691

POST OFFICE SUPPLIES DEPARTMENT,  
MAYLANDS AVENUE,  
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, HERTS.

MESD. MCCORQUODALE & CO LTD. 15. 5. 1967

The undermentioned items {uncancelled  
marked "SPECIMEN"} are forwarded  
herewith for CONTRACT STANDARD  
Will you be good enough to complete and return the attached form of  
acknowledgment.

Quan- tity	Item		Value of each £ s. d.	Total Value		
	Description	Nature of Variation		£	s.	d.
1	G REGISTERED ENVELOPE	NEW 3/4 EMBOSSED DIE	3/7		3	7
	FIRST DAY OF ISSUE	12/5/67 NEW 3/4d die				
					3	7

May 1967

SD2712P

P2111 P4486/32/64976 55 pads 8/65 R. Ward 843