

# Early G.B. Exhibitions

A talk by Mr. R.A. Rostron

given to the members of the Malta Philatelic Society on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010

My talk concentrates on non-philatelic shows and exhibitions and excludes Agricultural and Horticultural Shows. The period is 1901-1925. Postcards (and later stamps) were issued for promotion and commemoration purposes, coupled with special postmarks.

Printing of picture postcards really only started in the 1890's and it is hard to find examples dated pre 1900. These are often in vignette form with the message written around the smallish picture (see Fig 1), because on the other side was inscribed "The address is to be written on this side"

This article includes a selection of the material displayed on 6<sup>th</sup> May and commences with the **1901 Exhibition of Glasgow**. The first card is of the "Industrial Hall" (Fig 1). It was sent to Ireland and bears a Queen Victoria ½d green with perfin J.W. /Co and dated Glasgow 19<sup>th</sup> June 1901.

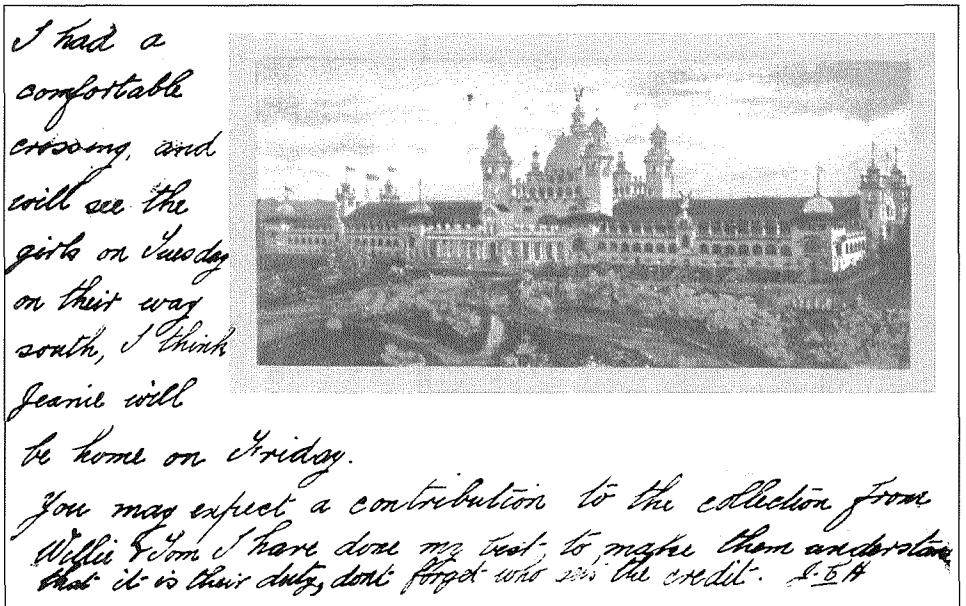


Fig 1

**1902 Wolverhampton Exhibition** is next and shows the “Canada Section” and was posted at Shiffnall on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1902 (Fig 2).

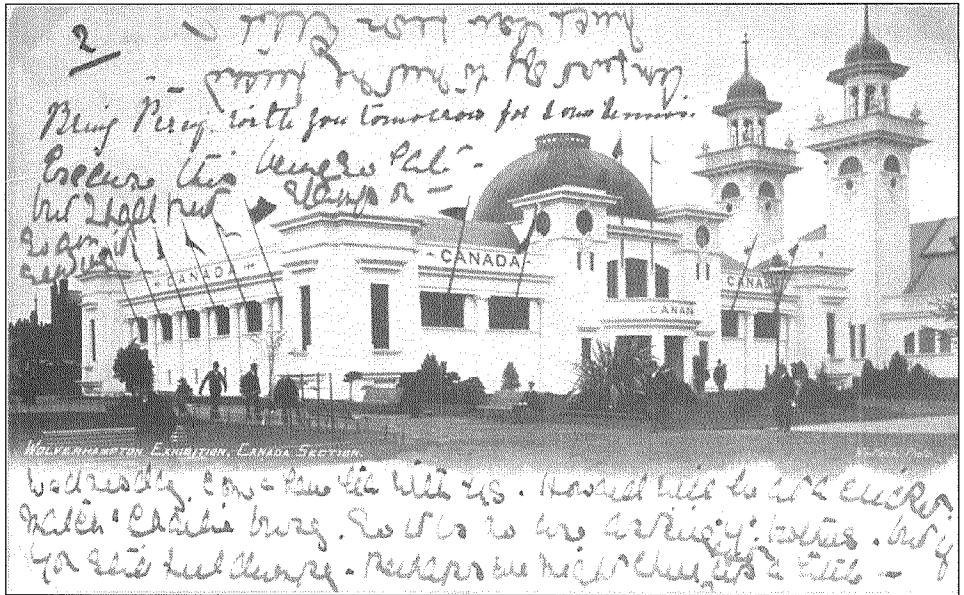


Fig 2

**1907 Dublin Exhibition** follows with a woven “silk” postcard by L.O.H. Grant. Flag colour varieties were noted (Fig 3).



Fig 3

The next item shows the special “Exhibition B.O. Dublin” Postmark (Fig 4) which was on a colour postcard of Dublin Castle. It should be noted that included in this talk were clear examples of the design of the “Official” postmark to be found on the item displayed and hence the dates do not correspond. The third item is a postcard entitled “The Irish International Exhibition 1907” and shows the ‘waterchute’(Fig 5). It has amusing comments about rescuing ladies from an upturned boat.



Fig 4



Fig 5

**The 1908 Scottish National Exhibition** was held from 23<sup>rd</sup> May to 31<sup>st</sup> October 1908. The first card (Fig 6) is an artist’s impression of the site. It is dated 24th March 1908, i.e. about two months prior to opening date.

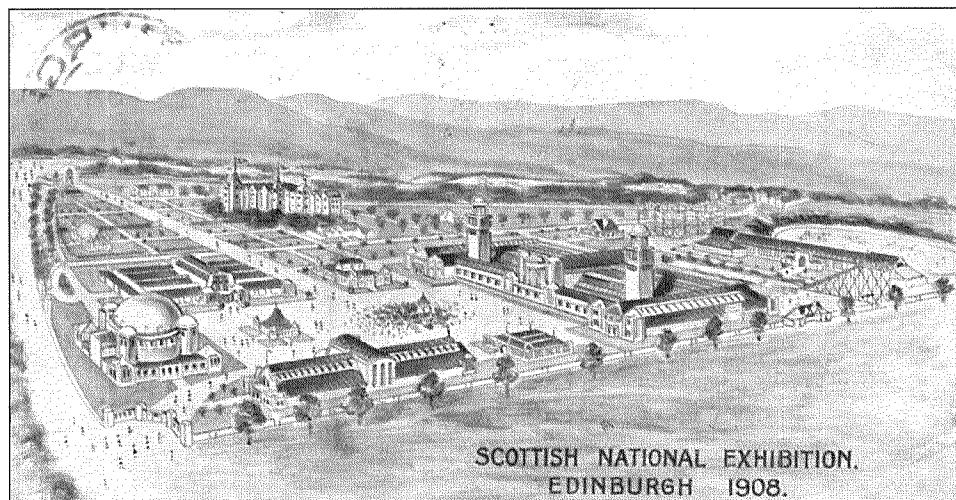


Fig 6

The second card (Fig 7) is a colour ‘overview’, painted by D.B.E. and postmarked 16<sup>th</sup> October 1908.

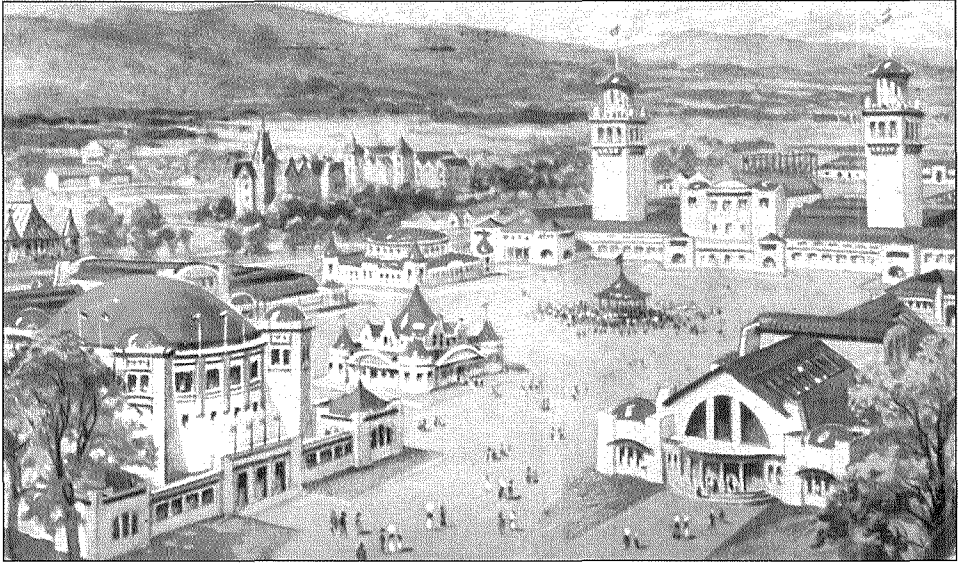


Fig 7

**The 1908 Franco – British Exhibition** almost exactly overlaps the Scottish National dates. The first card (Fig 8) shows H.R.H.’s Prince and Princess of Wales (future King George V and his Queen) together with four exhibition scenes, followed by a postcard of the Stadium (Fig 9). Next is an aerial view of “The Court of Arts”(Fig 10). The card bears the official “Franco – British Exhibition” postmark dated 26<sup>th</sup> June 1908. Also shown the “Colonnade in British Applied Arts Palace” (Fig 11), bearing two exhibition postmarks dated 12<sup>th</sup> June 1908.

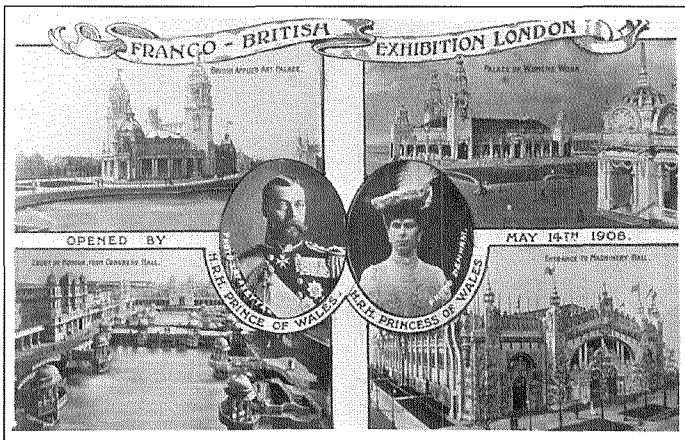


Fig 8

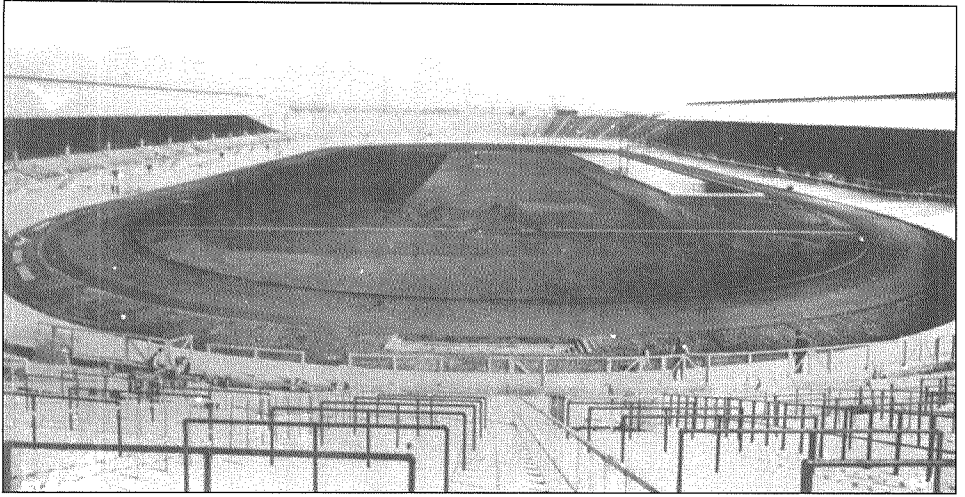


Fig 9

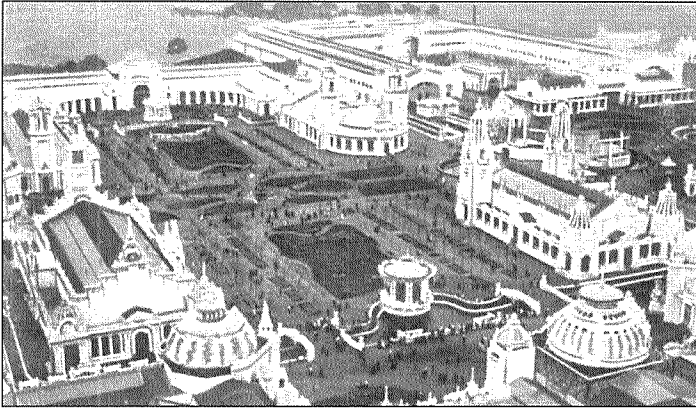


Fig 10



Fig 11

Fig 12 shows the “Franco – British pavilion” with flag colour varieties. It should be noted that the flag between the towers was black whilst another card showed it as red.



Fig 12

Fig 13 is a view of the “Flip-Flap” and the scene as viewed from it.

Elephants giving rides up an artificial mountain is shown in “Hagenbeck’s Ceylon Village and Indian Arena”(Fig 14). It bears the official exhibition postmark 9<sup>th</sup> September 1908.



Fig 13

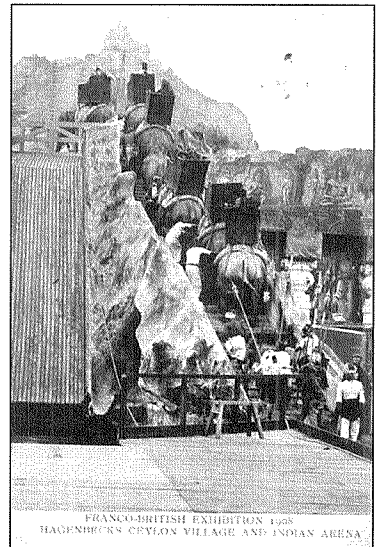


Fig 14

There were many more postcards of this exhibition shown in the display due to the high investment in buildings, other exhibitions used the facilities.



**The Ballymaclinton / Shepherds Bush Exhibition 1908.** The card of “Ballymaclinton Colleen” (Fig 15) bears the official postmark 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1908 (Fig 16).



Fig 15



Fig 16

**The Imperial International Exhibition 1909** the “Court of Honour card (Fig 17) has the official postmark (Fig 18). Due to most of the buildings being white, the site became known as the “White City”. Subsequently most were demolished, but the stadium was retained and the ‘Tube’ railway station “White City” still exists.



Fig 17



Fig 18

**The Scottish Village / Shepherds Bush Exhibition 1909** was held between 1<sup>st</sup> July and 14<sup>th</sup> September 1909. The card (Fig 19) shows “tweed making” and bears the official postmark 7<sup>th</sup> August 1909 similar to that shown in (Fig 20).

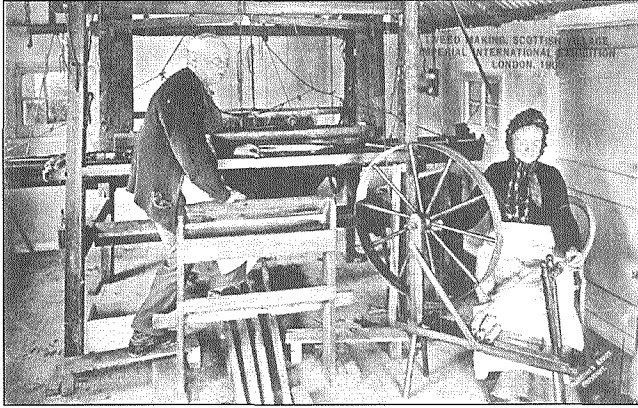


Fig 19

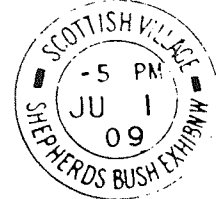


Fig 20

Continued use of the site was made for the **Japan – British Exhibition 1910**. The postcard (Fig 21) has an official Exhibition postmark (Fig 22).



Fig 21



Fig 22



The Scottish Exhibition, Glasgow 1911 was next. The interesting card (Fig 23) depicting a typical village street and nicely franked with the official exhibition postmark as shown (Fig 24). It has a green “Clan-Clachan” cachet on reverse.

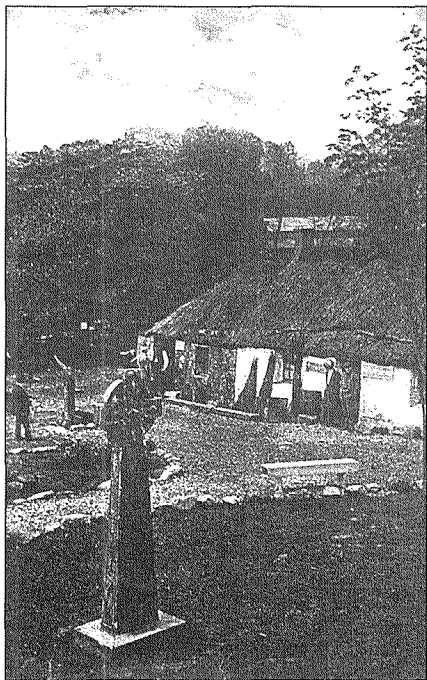


Fig 23



Fig 24

The Festival of Empire / Imperial Exhibition 1911 followed at the Crystal Palace (Fig 25). It concentrated on our history from ancient to modern times. It had a distinctive ‘flag’ official postmark (Fig 26) and the exhibit has examples of this nice early slogan cancel (Fig 27).

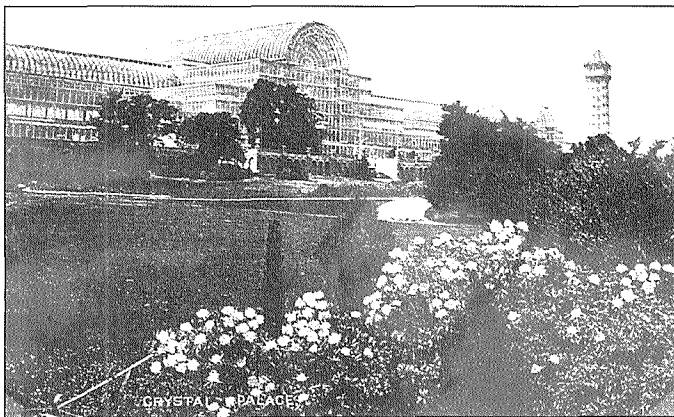


Fig 26

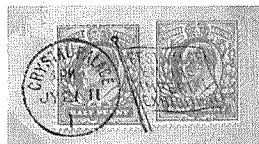


Fig 27

Fig 25

**The Coronation Exhibition 1911** was the last to use the White City Exhibition buildings and the second card (Fig 28) carries the official postmark 9<sup>th</sup> September 1911 (Fig 29). The ‘coronation’ was of course King George V’s.

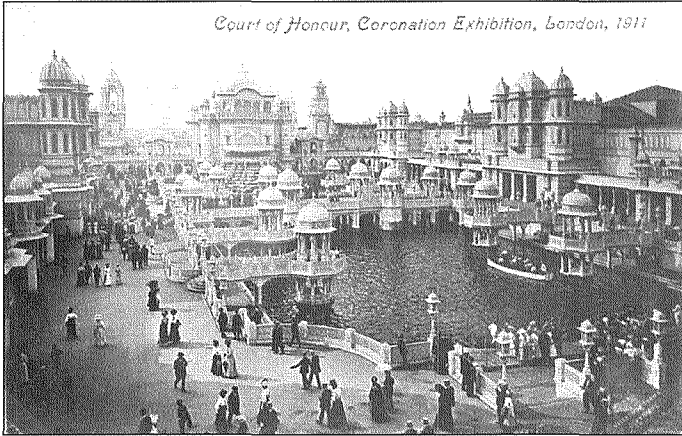


Fig 29

Fig 28

The First World War put an end to many planned exhibitions.

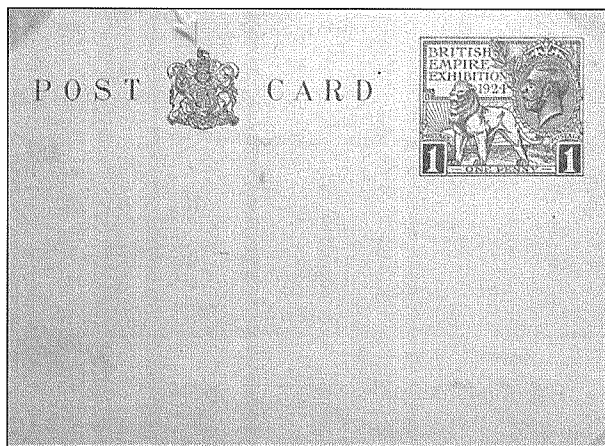
**The British Empire Exhibition / Wembley Park 1924** was the next major attempt after World War I and although planned to open in 1923, the State opening (Fig 30) was not until April 1924, as shown.



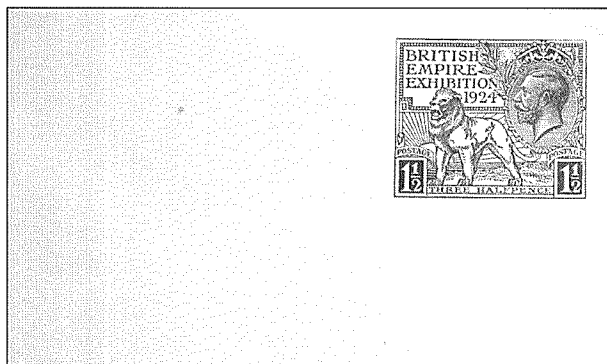
BRITISH EMPIRE EXHIBITION - State Opening Ceremony  
THEIR MAJESTIES LEAVING THE ROYAL DAIS.

Fig 30

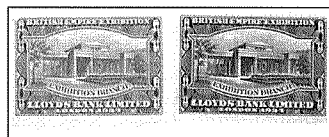
For this Exhibition there were produced souvenir labels and G.B's first commemorative stamps (1d and 1½d) with corresponding postal stationery. Circular and machine special Exhibition postmarks were available, with a variety of slogans. Unused and used examples of stamps are shown, including a pair on piece with 1<sup>st</sup> day of issue cancel and included is a postal stationery card with a broken mane variety, an example is shown in Fig 31.



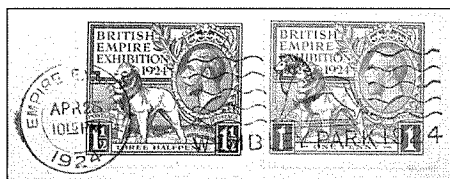
*1d. Red postal sty. card showing broken mane variety*



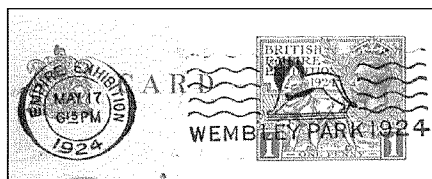
*Unused postal sty. envelope, 1½d. brown, (there was also 1d.red)*



*Souvenir Labels*

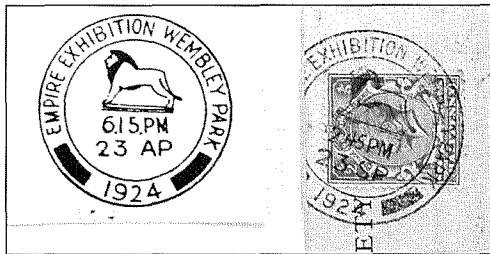
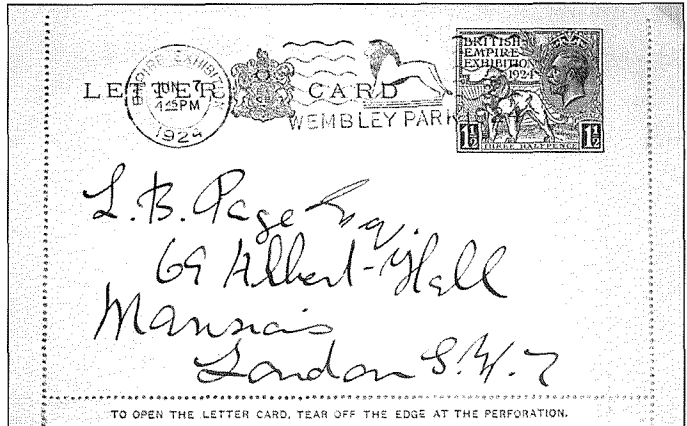


*This piece has the Wembley pair cancelled by a similar postmark, but being for the 1<sup>st</sup> Day of Issue 23<sup>rd</sup>. of April 1924.*



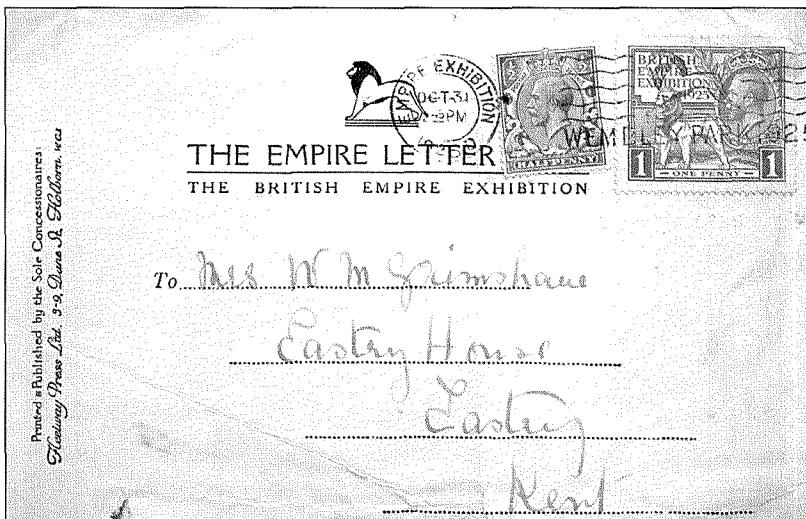
*This piece shows normal mane to lion's head. It is cancelled by the Wembley Park wavy line lion slogan pmk.*

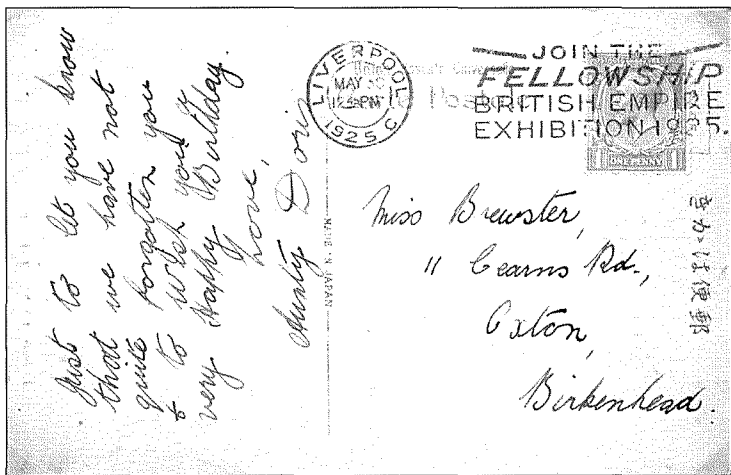
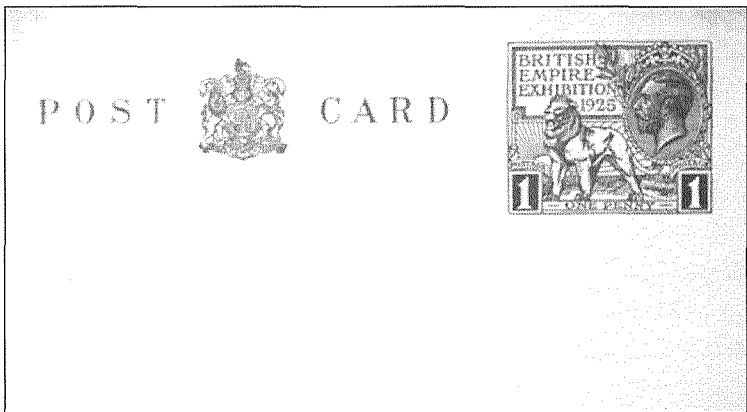
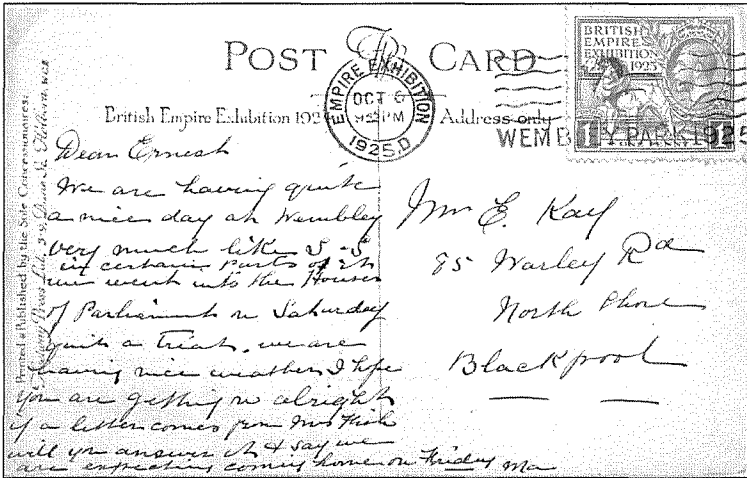
This 1½d. reply letter card shows the wavy line lion slogan Exhibition postmark.



The alternative circular Empire Exhibition - Wembley Park, but incomplete, on piece.

Due to the poor 1924 summer and public response 'The British Empire Exhibition 1925' was created using the same buildings, stamps and postmarks but with the dates altered and several examples are shown.







There is much material of this nature and subject still readily available on the market for those interested.

I appreciated the warm and enthusiastic response given at the end of my talk and as usual, I enjoyed giving it to the Society.