

# *Yesterday in STAMPS:* **The Lundy “Locals”**

by John D. Stanard

(From *STAMPS Magazine*, September 24, 1938, with images added)

*(We begin this article with the 1938 piece by John Stanard, who was described as “the leading authority on Lundy’s postal issues” by Martin Harman, the owner of Lundy Island, supplemented by images from other sources. JFD.)*



On November 1, 1929 the first printing of the Puffin stamps of Lundy Island appeared upon the mails of Lundy and philatelists whose sidelines consist of “Locals,” were given two new stamps for their



consideration—the 1/2 Puffin red and the 1 Puffin blue.

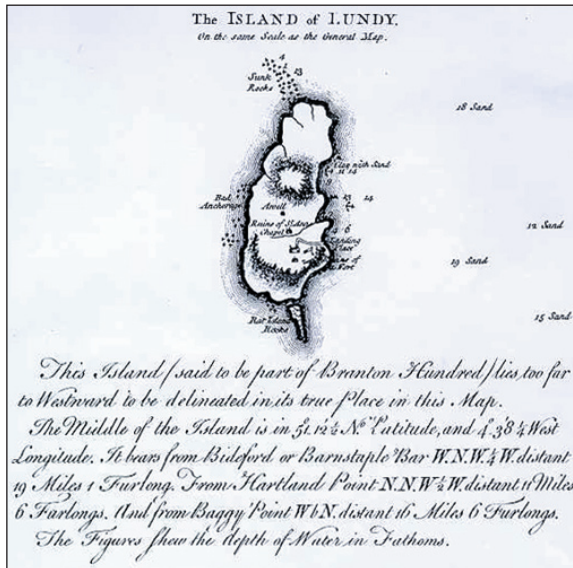
Lundy, located in the Bristol Channel of the Southwest Coast of England, is owned by an individual, Martin Coles Harman (see page 2), of London. Reproduced on the Puffin stamps is the parrot-like bird that a century, or more, ago provided feathers used as the “coin” of the islanders when trading with “the mainland,” England.



The 1/2 Puffin pictured a “bust portrait” of the Puffin and the 1 Puffin exhibited a “full length” reproduction. The stamps were designed and printed by Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co., Ltd., England, by the lithograph process and issued in sheets of 120 stamps, each sheet containing 4 panes of 30 stamps each. The initial printing—and only printing to date—of each value was 500,000 stamps.

The value of the Puffin in British currency—as far as Lundy was concerned—was one penny. The need for higher values—to prepay heavy letters and parcels—made it expedient to issue higher values and on June 1, 1930, stamps of 6 Puffin (Mauve); 9 Puffin (Brown) and 12 Puffin (Green) were issued. The printing of each value totaled 250,000 stamps and the method of production, and printer, was the same as stated for the 1/2 Puffin and 1 Puffin values. The new stamps had upon them the same number of Puffin birds as the denomination called for.

Although the printings of 1929 (1/2 and 1 Puffin values) and 1930 (6, 9 and 12 Puffin values) were the only printings of these stamps, according to Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co., there are in



1765 map of Lundy Island



1930 9 Puffin block of six with "Bradbury Wilkinson & Co. Ltd Engravers, New Malden, Surrey" imprint

existence copies of the 6 Puffin stamp in blue, instead of the mauve color now current at Lundy. The printer has also informed that “Our file copy of the 6 Puffin is blue.” Therefore, it is the opinion of the writer that the printing of the 6 Puffin stamp was started in blue and, for some unknown reason, the color was changed to mauve during the course of printing, as there is absolute proof that only one printing of the 6 Puffin stamp was made.



Certainly, the blue 6 Puffin stamp exists. A private individual at London owns a complete sheet (120 stamps) which the writer has examined and knows to be genuine; a correspondent informs he has a cover (which I have not examined) with a pair of these blue stamps, and I have a superb used single in my specialized collection of Lundy. These are the only copies known to be in existence and should any of my readers have the item I would certainly appreciate the opportunity of examining same.

Although the British Government considers that the Puffin stamps do no actual postal duty, it is a matter of official record that no letter can leave Lundy or arrive at Lundy without the Puffin stamps being placed upon the postal matter.

Such “Puffinage” is required at Lundy in payment of postal charges to the “mainland” (England) and from the mainland to Lundy, for the very good reason that since no of-



*Incoming mail: an August 2, 1938 cover flown from Kirkwall, Scotland to Lundy Island with the cachet of the Orcadian, “Best for News, Best for Advertisers, Published at Kirkwall, Orkney, Scotland.” The cover bears a Great Britain 1-1/2p, Lundy 1/2p definitive and 1937 1/2p Lundy Atlantic Coastal Air Lines (LACAL) airmail stamp.*

Outgoing mail: a cover mailed from Lundy to Carmarthen, Wales, August 16, 1937. A Lundy 1/2 puffin stamp was affixed to the back of the envelope and cancelled August 16, 1937. The LACAL airmail



stamp is cancelled: "Aug. 17 1937 / Barnstaple, / Lundy Island." The letter was flown from Lundy and entered the British mail stream at Braunton, August 17, 1937, for transmission to Carmarthen.

Official British post office is located on Lundy, and the postal affairs of the island are not under the direction of the British postal department, the owner of Lundy is completely justified in charging fees for the transportation of mail to and from England.

These are the actual facts, thoroughly verified and vouched for by the writer, regardless of what you may have read previously in the philatelic press. Shortly after the Puffin stamps first appeared, almost every leading English philatelic journal published articles concerning the new stamps, and, in most cases this data was incorrect. Mr. Harman was charged with trying to make himself a "King." Martin Coles Harman is a loyal British subject, with not the slightest desire to be a "King" but with a keen desire to have the right to do as he pleases with his private property. Visitors to Lundy are received as welcome guests and as it is an expensive matter to receive the thousands of visitors

who visit Lundy each year, the small fee (“Landing fee.”) of 1 shilling (25¢) is charged.

F. W. Gade, postmaster at Lundy, extends to visiting philatelists every courtesy and he fills mail orders for collectors at the face value of the stamps, plus postage. The face value, equals to about 59¢ in American money.

### Lundy Island Stamps, an Update



*This 2004 Souvenir sheet shows 1929 postmaster Gade at left and Lundy Island owner M. C. Harman at right*



*1967 “Help the R.S.P.C.A. Save Seabirds From Oil” English, French and German*



*Not an actual Lundy issue, but a clever fantasy based on the Great Britain “Postal Union Congress (PUC) London 1929” issue, Sc. 209, changed to “Puffin’s Union Congress Lundy 1929” and puffins replacing St. George Slaying the Dragon.*

The images on this page are from material supplied by Geir Sør-Reime for a "World of Stamps—Island Communities" article we will be publishing on Lundy in a future issue of Mekeel's & Stamps Magazine.



1971 decimal definitives showing local Lundy scenes



1994 souvenir sheet for the 25th anniversary of the establishment of The Landmark Trust that now runs Lundy. Following the death of Harman's son Albion in 1968, Lundy was purchased in 1969 for £150,000 by British millionaire Jack Hayward, who gave it to the British National Trust, who leased it to the Landmark Trust, which raises revenue by arranging day trips, renting holiday cottages and soliciting donations.