

Postage Stamp Designs.

BY GEORGE DOLLAR.



It may look easy, but it's really very hard to do, especially when the postage stamps are used for purely decorative purposes, such as the screen and plate shown later in this article. It takes a lot of stamps, a deal of time, and a maximum of patience. But lovers of the curious are not to be put off by such obstacles, and postage stamp designs are becoming more popular every day. France and Germany are very fond of them, and there is hardly a philatelic exhibition on the Continent which does not contain one or more of these interesting curiosities.

As a not uncommon illustration of the time and labour spent in such work, let us take the splendid map of England and Wales

shown on this page. It was made by D. M. Murrow, Esq., 74, Finsbury Road, Wood Green, N., and although it took Mr. Murrow only two months to draw the outline of the map and to affix the stamps, yet the entire collection, which is valued at two hundred guineas, was begun at the age of seven years. The exact number of stamps in the map is 2,139, and no two stamps are alike. All the coast and prominent inland counties are formed of contrasting colours. Mr. Murrow has sent us an accurate list of the nineteen shades used in the map, as well as the number of stamps of each shade, and adds: "The map and frame weigh $1\frac{3}{4}$ cwt., and is 6ft. by 5ft." Quite an armful—certainly a cleverly-executed idea.

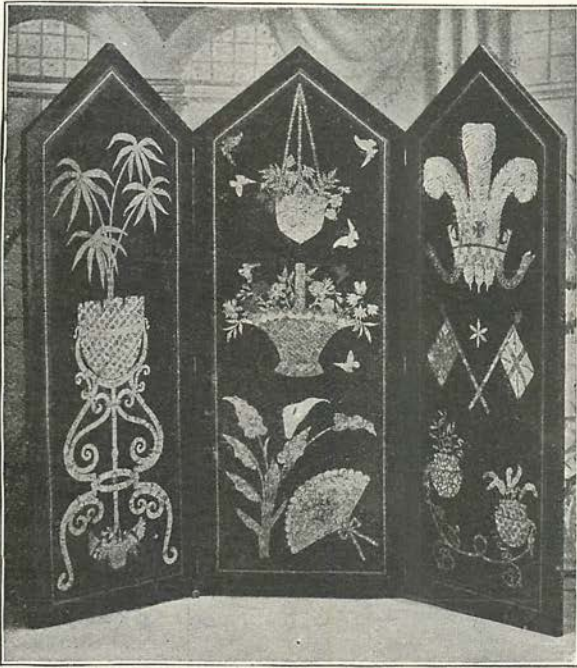
The "Jubilee Screen," one side of which we show on the next page, is one of the most carefully thought out and delicately-executed stamp designs which we have seen. It was designed by Mrs. Willis, 35, Colveston Crescent, West Hackney, to whom we are indebted for the photograph. The amount of work in such a decorative screen may be judged from the following details. The wire stand shown on the left-hand panel is made of English penny stamps, banded with red halfpenny stamps. The pot is made of English halfpenny stamps, and contains a graceful palm made of Indian and French green stamps. Hanging from the centre of the middle panel by a triple cord of



From a Photo. by]

MAP OF ENGLAND AND WALES, MADE WITH STAMPS.

[George Newnes, Ltd.



A SCREEN ORNAMENTED ENTIRELY WITH STAMPS.
From a Photo. by John J. Avery, Kingsland, N.E.

halfpenny stamps is a pot made of English "pennies," containing flowers and ferns. Underneath is a fancy basket of French stamps, filled with flowers made of English and foreign denominations. The butterflies are also made of English and foreign stamps. In the left corner is an arum lily, the flower of English and the leaves of Colonial stamps. In the right corner is a fan made of English stamps with green and orange centres.

The Prince of Wales's plumes at the top of the right panel are made of Indian blue stamps, the crown showing old English blues and various others. The motto "Ich Dien" is written in old penny red English stamps, and the Star of India in red Indian stamps. Below this is the Union Jack of English stamps, with the staff of halfpenny wrapper stamps. The other flag is composed of old English red, cornered with Malta, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Victoria stamps, while the centre is made of Cape of Good Hope denominations. The fancy wire stand at the bottom of the panel is made of halfpenny wrapper stamps with pots of red halfpenny stamps throwing out green ferns, etc.

The other side of this screen, the panels of which are 5ft. 8in. long by 2ft. 3in. wide, shows a massive jar of bulrushes, a bamboo-table from which are hanging pots, and a patriotic 1837—1897 design suitable to last

year's Jubilee, showing the crown, trident, rose, shamrock, and thistle, as well as the familiar monogram, "V.R.," all done in British stamps. The screen, as may be seen from our illustration, is remarkably effective, and reflects great credit on the patience and skill of the designer.

Accompanying the screen is a reproduction of a plate beautifully decorated with stamps cut into tiny pieces. The colours are true to Nature, and Mrs. Waugh, of Midsomer Norton, near Bath, to whom we are indebted for the photograph, says, in a letter, that "the trunks of the trees consist of many hundreds of pieces of brown five-cent United States stamps." The foliage is beautifully shaded in various green stamps, the flowers and birds are brilliant in colour, various stamps being employed most ingeniously. "The whole," adds Mrs. Waugh, "was designed and carried out by a poor man, an invalid—Thomas Chivers—of Midsomer Norton, who is prevented

from earning his living owing to the state of his health."

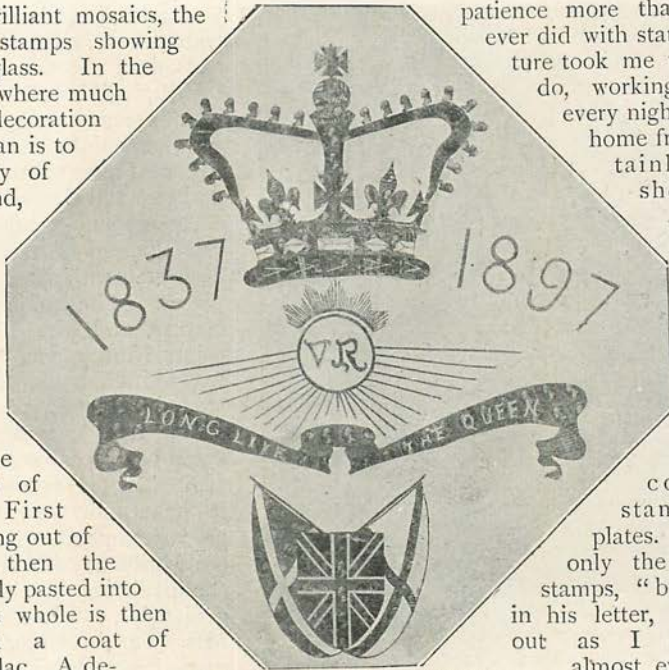
The idea of decorating china in such a way is not new, but is capable of much variation, and it is a pretty work. In its earliest form, which is fairly old, stamps of various countries were selected and carefully matched on the back of glass plates, forming



PLATE DECORATED WITH POSTAGE STAMPS.
From a Photo. by Mr. Charles Shearn, Midsomer, Norton.

curious and brilliant mosaics, the face of the stamps showing through the glass. In the United States, where much of the modern decoration is done, the plan is to have a variety of U.S. stamps, and, after clearing the back from paper, cut out various portions of the stamps, which may be arranged effectively, according to the artistic ability of the worker. First comes the laying out of the design, then the pieces are neatly pasted into place, and the whole is then covered with a coat of colourless shellac. A demand has recently sprung up for these plates, and they are now manufactured expressly for this purpose.

The interesting Jubilee design reproduced at the top of this page is the work of Mr. Robert Callander, of 16, Moncrieff Terrace, Edinburgh. Every detail in the design is made with stamps, the crown being composed almost entirely with one and two cent American stamps. The bottom part is made with English 2½d. stamps. The scroll is made of two-cent stamps, in red and blue. The shields and flags are made of one and two cent red and blues. The figures "1837—1897" are made up of one-cent newspaper stamps. Mr. Callander writes: "The most trying work in the whole picture was the making of the rays round the 'V.R.' It tired my fingers and my eyes, and tired my



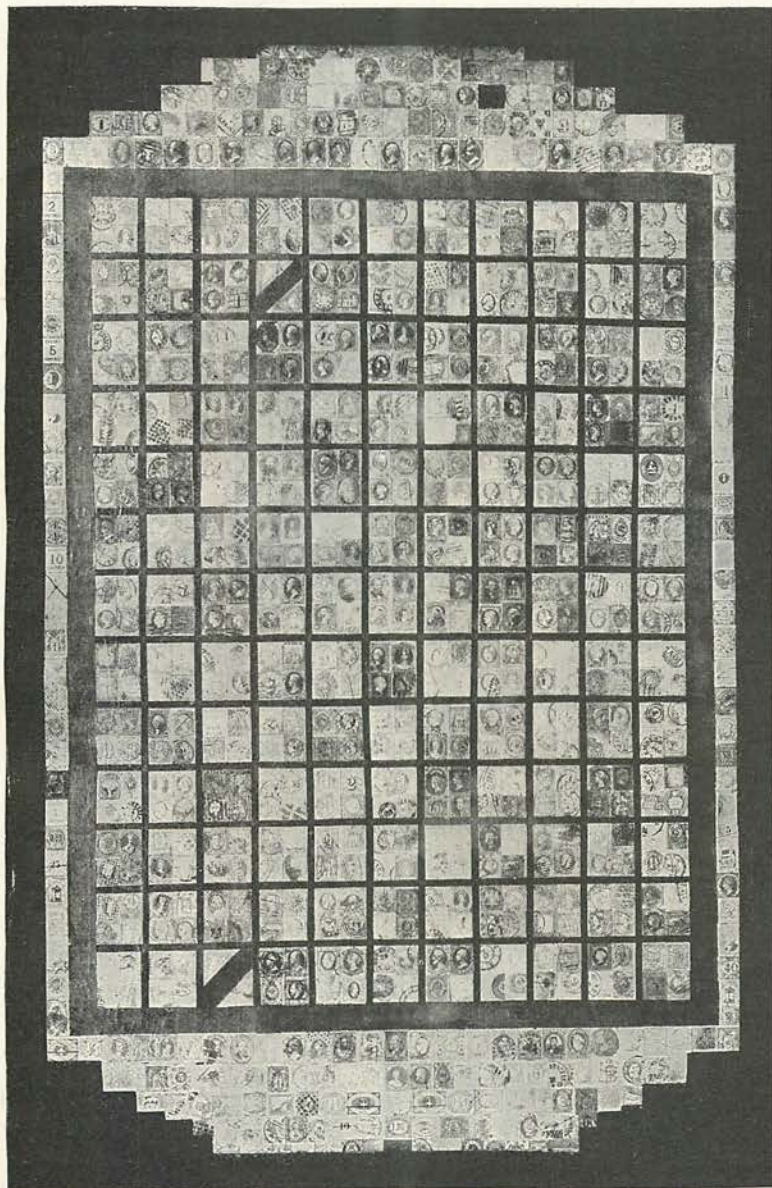
JUBILEE DESIGN, MADE WITH STAMPS.
From a Photo. by Mr. James Smith, Edinburgh.

patience more than anything I ever did with stamps. The picture took me two months to do, working three hours every night, after coming home from work." Certainly the design shows minute labour, but its effectiveness was worth the trouble.

It may be added, in passing, that Mr. Callander has a fine collection of stamp-decorated plates. He first used only the heads of the stamps, "but," as he says in his letter, "I soon found out as I went on that almost every part of the stamp could be used."



ORNAMENTAL WREATH OF STAMPS.



From a Photo. by]

MOSAIC ENTABLATURE OF STAMPS.

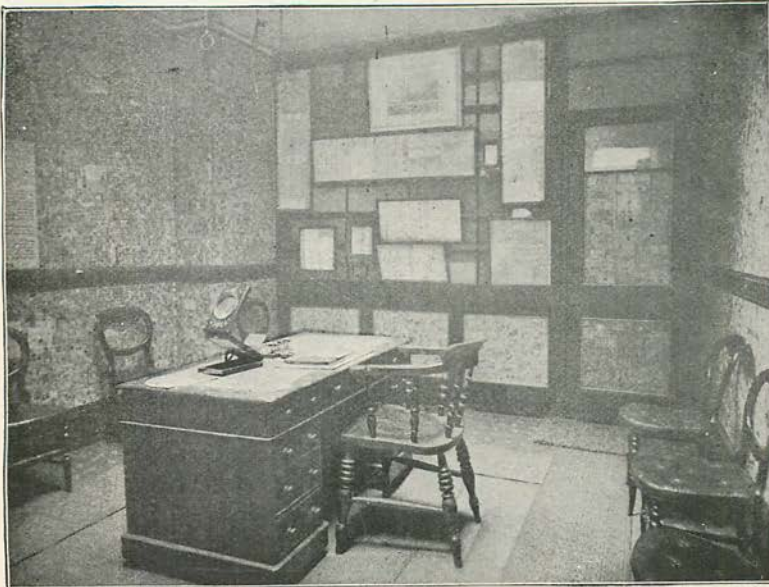
[George Newnes, Ltd.

Nothing could show this more successfully than the remarkable postage stamp wreath that has been lent to us for reproduction by Mr. W. S. Lincoln, the well-known stamp dealer, of 2, Holles Street, W. The wreath was made in France of French Empire stamps, and, although the niceties of the design may not be seen from the reproduction, they are very patent when one is looking at the original. Mr. Lincoln keeps this design on exhibition in his rooms, and he has been offered large sums for it by philat-

elists with an appreciation of the beautiful. It was done more than a quarter of a century ago, probably by a French lady, but no trace now exists either of the lady or her name.

The postage stamp design on this page is merely a collection of stamps made during his school-days by Mr. Murrow, the designer of the map of England shown at the beginning of this article. It is composed of 823 different stamps, with four stamps of like colour forming a square. "As a whole it looks like a mosaic entablature," writes Mr. Murrow, and we may well believe it, although our reproduction can give no idea of the variety of colour in the design. The collection is used for a wall ornament.

One of the genuine curiosities of London is the room papered with stamps at 281, Strand, where Mr. J. W. Palmer, the well-known stamp-dealer and forgery-fighter, has been situated for years. The room is now called a "museum," and the "stamps" on the wall are all forgeries and reprints, to the number of 70,000, which, if genuine, would be worth £1,000,000. There have been numberless rooms papered with stamps, and the rooms are always very effective, but this room, with its overwhelming exposure of open-faced frauds, is certainly the most remarkable. It is interesting to know that the impending demolition



From a

ROOM COVERED WITH 70,000 STAMPS.

[Photograph.]

of the old building which contains this room will not injure or destroy this curious collection, as the "stamps" have been attached to removable canvas, and will soon decorate Mr. Palmer's new home.

Probably the strangest of all stamp collections used for ornamentation is that of Mrs. George Wilson, of 191, Vestal Avenue, Binghamton, New York. Not so much does the oddness lie in the stamps themselves as in the method of arrangement. They completely cover every portion of a bedroom set, consisting of bedstead, dresser, commode, and chairs. The stamps are secured to the set with the aid of glue, and then covered with heavy spar varnish. The stamps can be washed, in their present condition, without injury.

The beginning of this strange collection dates back many years. The first chair of

the set that was decorated was owned by a coloured family in Virginia in the middle of the last century. Gradually the chair passed from hand to hand and from cabin to cabin, until at last it came into the possession of Mrs. Geo. Yancey, a coloured woman, who now lives at Ovid, New York.

Since this ancient relic of colonial days has been adorned in the unique manner shown in the picture, thirteen other

articles of furniture have received similar treatment, until now the whole forms one of the most peculiar results of the curio-collector's art that is extant. There are nearly 2,000,000 stamps in the entire collection, and this set of bedroom furniture has become famous throughout the United States. Cornell University, it is said, has offered \$200 for it. The set is constantly increasing in value, for Mrs. Wilson is constantly adding to the pieces.



COMPLETE SET OF BEDROOM FURNITURE DECORATED WITH 2,000,000 STAMPS.

From a Photograph.