

# QEII Definitives - A Beginners Guide

If you are reading this section, there are only two possible reasons why. Either you already are a definitive enthusiast and are wondering what the first questions were that arose in your mind so you thought you would remind yourself or, secondly, you really are a beginner and a little bemused at the first glance through this (or any other) Specialised catalogue.

There are several very important points to remember. What you see listed and described in these pages has been issued during the last 54 years or so and all the changes that have occurred were gradual. Secondly, every format of collecting definitives, from singles, books, cylinder blocks, coils etc. is shown and there are few of us that could have the time, space or money, come to that, to collect everything.

The best advice that can be offered to any new prospective collector is to spend a little time reading through these pages, and possibly talking to other collectors, to get a 'feel' of the hobby before deciding which area of collecting interests you the most. To help you decide we have included in this beginners guide as much information as possible, which should answer most of the questions that are usually raised at the outset.

Some of the information here is included in the Introductory section that follows but here we are concerning ourselves more on practical advice and tips. If you still have questions on any aspect of this fascinating subject then we can thoroughly recommend membership of the Machin Collectors Club (well, we would, wouldn't we?), whose members would be only too pleased to pass on their knowledge and expertise.

So let's begin - Firstly there are four essential pieces of equipment that you will need.

## UV (Ultra Violet) lamps

Both a short wave and a long wave model are needed. The short wave model should have an optical filter. These lamps are used to detect the differences in paper, phosphors and the fluorescent component of the phosphor.

## Magnifying glass

A magnification of about x10 is needed.

## Perforation gauge

These are dealt with in more detail in the introductory notes in Section A, but let's assume we now have these four items and read on.

We have divided the rest of this section into 3 parts covering (1) Papers and Phosphor bands, (2) Adhesives and perforators, and (3) Locating material - the three areas where beginners often have problems.

## Papers and Phosphor Bands

This applies mainly to the later Wildings and all Machins.

**Warning:** Never look directly at a UV lamp when it is switched on.

**Fluorescence** is the reaction obtained under the UV lamp whilst it is switched ON. i.e. the stamp 'glows' while the lamp is on.

**Phosphorescence** is the afterglow seen after the lamp is turned OFF.

When determining either fluorescence or phosphorescence it is advisable to do so in a dark room and allowing your eyes to become accustomed to the light for about 5 minutes. You will also find it easier to look at the white - unprinted - or light coloured part of the stamp.

To determine **Fluorescence** hold the lamp about 1" (25mm) above the stamp(s) and turn it on. The paper will fluoresce at a level dependant on the type of paper used. This is described more fully for each type of paper on the next page.

For **Phosphorescence** a slightly different method is used. Place the lamp ON the stamp, turn it on and leave it for about 5 seconds. Then, **at the same time**, turn the lamp off and lift it away from the stamp. You will now see the phosphor (if present) glowing.

It will take a little time and practice to identify each type of paper and phosphor used, but one useful idea is to obtain some known cylinder singles, or other examples, as 'KEYS' for comparison. This will make positive identification much easier and quicker.

Papers can be checked under natural light and under UV light. When checking papers under natural light it is strongly advised that it is done under bright natural lighting conditions, but NOT direct sunlight. Artificial light can be used with care, but it often leads to incorrect conclusions.