

Cinderella Corner

The Ashes

Welcome to the November edition of Cinderella Corner. With the 2017/18 cricket season about to start, it is an appropriate time to remind readers that England will be in Australia to defend The Ashes. The Ashes originated from the solitary Test which the two nations contested in 1882. England lost the match, played at the Oval in London, and a mock obituary was posted in *The Sporting Times*, declaring the death of English cricket. It stated that: "The body will be cremated and the ashes taken to Australia." This issue explores several cricket labels that commemorate The Ashes.

SS Great Britain carried the first English Cricket team to Australia, arriving 24 December 1861, which initiated a now famous sporting rivalry. Figure 1 illustrates this, with a setenant vertical pair of FameFace poster stamps printed by Novelty Printing for David Kirby and released at the Melbourne World Stamp Expo 1999. Singles are 42mm x 28mm and perforated 12½ x 13½.

The three cricketers shown in Figure 2 are two Englishmen, Herbert Sutcliffe and Wally Hammond, and our Don Bradman. Each measures 32mm x 42mm with perforation 11. These labels were produced by Amalgamated Press London as part of a 1935 set of 64 titled 'Champion Record Breakers'.

Thirteen years after the Amalgamated Press labels were issued, in 1948, marked the final tour for Bradman. The Team, captained by Bradman was invincible, not losing a single match of 34 played.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Figure 3 illustrates a setenant pair of FameFace stamps produced for David Kirby in 1998 for the 50th anniversary of this Tour and the 90th birthday of Don Bradman. Singles are 28mm x 42mm, perforated 13½ x 12½.

As part of the Ashes Series 1954/55, Seven Seas Stamps Dubbo issued sheets (red, purple or green) of 18 labels showing the English touring party. Team Australia



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

never made it on a stamp because the exercise was a marketing flop as stated by Bill Hornadge. The purple sheet and a single in red were illustrated in Cinderella Corner (November 2016). A single in green showing Len Hutton who captained the winning side is presented in Figure 4. Monty Wedd of Sydney was the designer with printing by Dubbo

Printing Works. It measures 34mm x 52mm with 11½ perforation.

Some years later, the 1970/71 Ashes Series in Australia, was an important part of the cricket landscape. Perth staged its first Test Match in December 1970, making it a six-match series, and it shifted into the first ever seven-match affair because one Test was washed out and crickets' administrators wanted a result as the Series could have gone either way. It was a pretty heated Series with claims of cheating and a walkout staged by England in the 7th Test in Sydney played from 12-17 February 1971. England regained the Ashes winning 2-0.

During that time, a massive post office strike occurred in the United Kingdom that commenced on 20 January 1971. To cope with this major disruption to all postal services, the British Post Office authorised organisations and individuals to provide for the carriage of mail throughout the nation. Before the nearly eight week strike ended on 7 March, more than 600 services were granted a licence to



Fig. 8



Fig. 6



Fig. 7

handle mail. Four of the authorised services issued 'stamps' to pay for the service with a cricket theme. These are described below and illustrated across Figures 5 to 10.

Barnard's Pirate Postal Service operated by an Australian expatriate, Fred Barnard from his shop in

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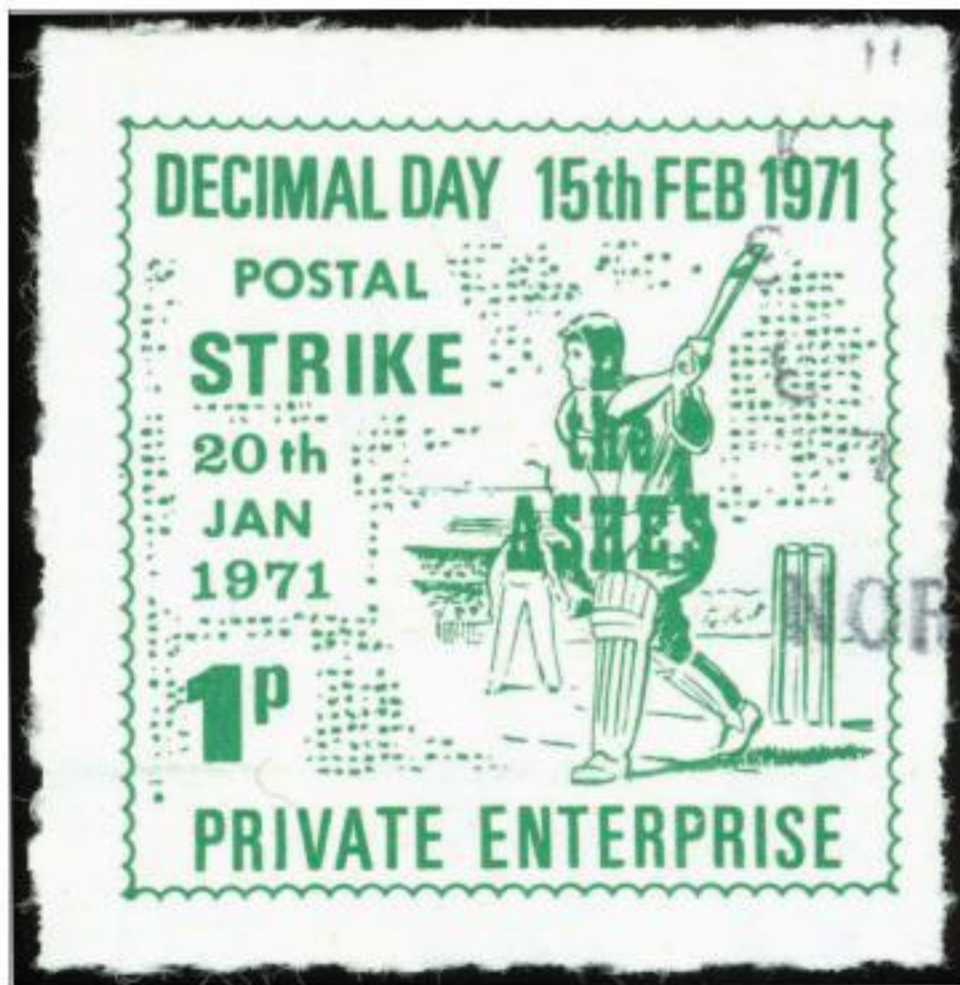


Fig. 10

Attleborough in Norfolk. Being a cricket enthusiast he issued eight stamps devoted to cricket with five of the eight relating to The Ashes being played in Australia at the time. Figure 5 illustrates a set of three of these five, captioned First "Seventh" Test Series, in pale olive, blue and green showing Kangaroo and Lion, with each measuring 45mm x



Fig. 9

30mm. Figure 6 highlights a single in green colour, with a 48mm x 35mm size, showcasing the Ashes Retrieved with Lion holding The Ashes Urn. Figure 7, the last in the five issued, illustrates a single in light green captioned 'All Over' with an umpire drawing stumps. Its size is 44mm, square. All five stamps are rouletted 9 printed on white gummed paper.

Gloucester Emergency Postal Service was organised by mail order stamp dealer, Paul Montanaro of Monty Stamps in Longlevens, Gloucester. Two stamps of the set showing Gloucester Cathedral, as illustrated in Figure 8, were over-

printed in black 'England Win The Ashes 1970/1971 Tour'. Of note, the old currency is obliterated because of the introduction of decimal currency on 14 February 1971. The imperforate labels are printed red on blue and red on green on gummed paper and measure 37mm x 57mm.

London Express handled a considerable amount of mail in the London postal district from 27 January. Mark Purnell of Guthrie Street London pro-



Fig. 11



Fig. 12

Vito Milana

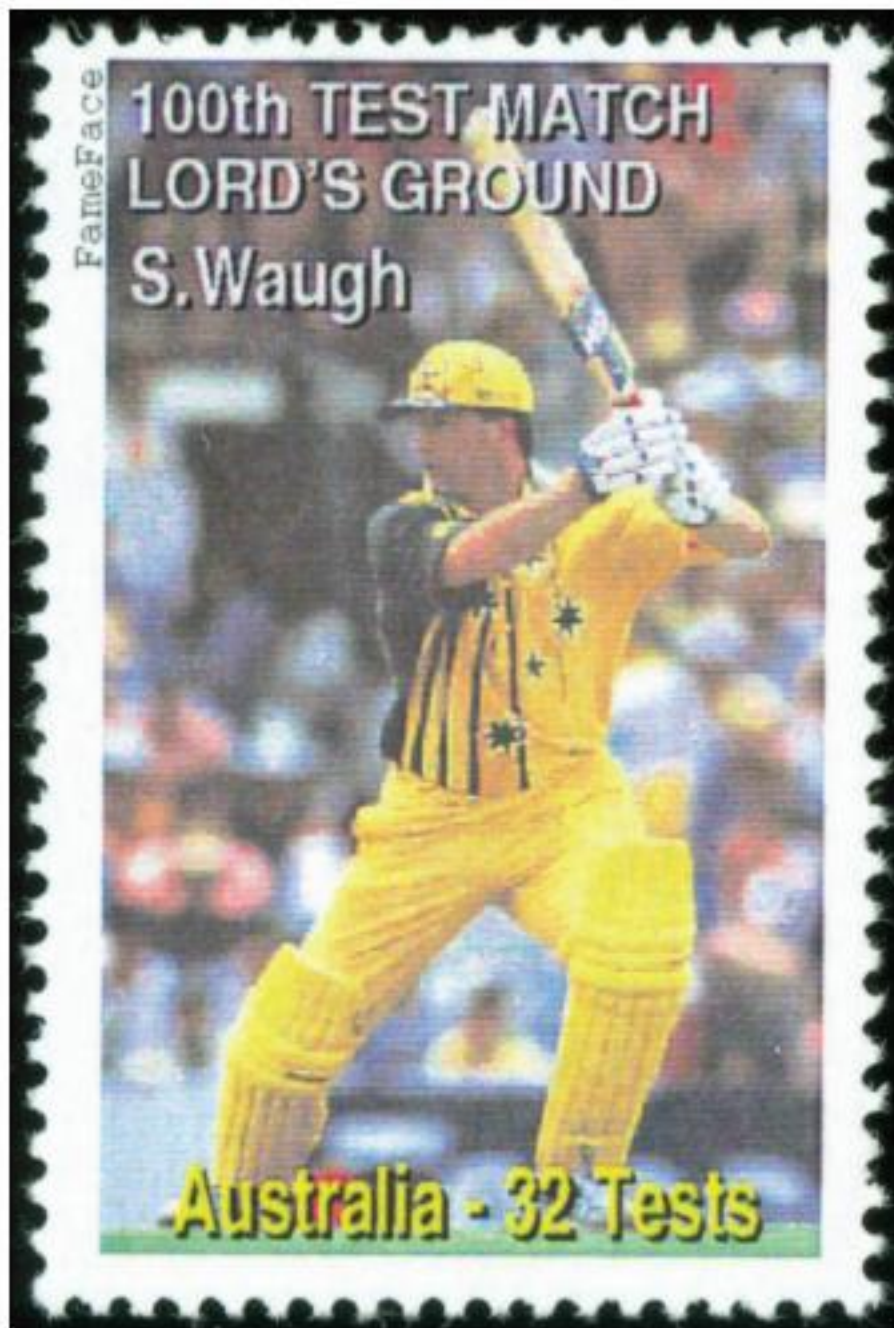


Fig. 13

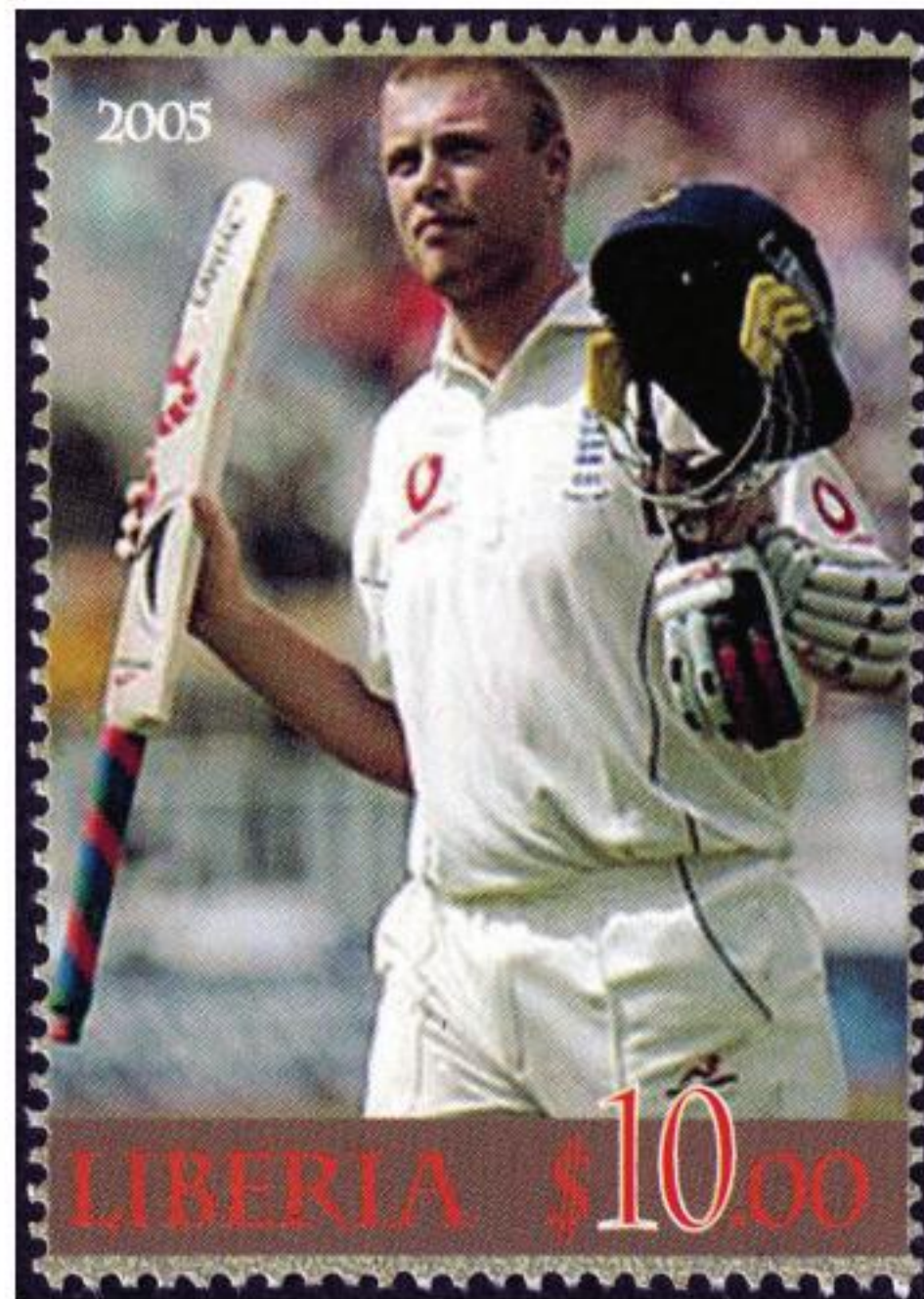


Fig. 14

vided the service. Three stamps of the same design with the boxed inscription 'The Ashes Return' in black on pale blue, black on dark blue and black on green were produced and measure 40mm x 35mm, 6 roulette, on gummed paper. This is a very scarce issue, mint or used on cover. A cropped example of the latter is shown as Figure 9.

Norwich Local Post was organised by Colin Ward of Colin Ward Enterprise Ltd in Norwich and it too processed a large volume of mail. Five issues comprising thirteen stamps were issued, with one being cricket related, as illustrated in Figure 10. This 1p green label has the caption 'the ASHES' superimposed on a batsman. It measures 38mm, square, and is rouletted 6 on gummed paper.

During the 1972 Ashes Series in England, the London tabloid *The Sun* wrote about the 1970/71 tour won by England and the friction on that Tour. It issued a sheet of 18 stamps titled 'England Stars 1972'. John Snow was named the Man of the 1970/71 Series taking 31 wickets bowling short and fast. His commemorative label is illustrated in Figure 11 and measures 35mm x 52mm, roulette 9 on gummed paper.

A FameFace poster stamp showing The Ashes

urn, was printed for David Kirby, marking the 116th anniversary of The Ashes played in Australia in 1998/99. Figure 12 illustrates this 28mm x 42mm label, with 13½ x 12½ perforation. Australia retained The Ashes winning 3-1.

Steve Waugh, who was Player of the 1998/99 Series, was depicted on the FameFace stamp produced for Stamp Publicity of Sussex in 2005 for the

Marylebone Cricket Club commemorating the 100th Test Match at Lord's Cricket Ground. Waugh was Captain in 2005. This label, featured as Figure 13, measures 28mm x 42mm and is perforated 13½ x 12½.

After 16 long years of Australian dominance, England regained the Ashes in 2005, with much rejoicing and fanfare having won 2-1. Andrew 'Freddie' Flintoff was the Player of the Series taking 24 wickets and was awarded an MBE for this effort. Figure 14 illustrates a stamp of Liberia, with no postal validity, of Andrew Flintoff. It measures 35mm x 50mm, perforated 13½ on gummed paper.

The Ashes have been back and forth since 2005 and are currently held by England. The story behind this small terracotta vase containing the mythically Ashes since 1892 is simply amazing.

References

1. All images shown in this article are from the collection of Noel Almeida, Honorary Life Member, Cricket Philatelic Society, London.
2. Smith, Clive, *British Private Posts 1680-1980*, Self-Published, Effingham, Surrey, 1980.