

History as Told by Stamps



Martha Washington



Pocahontas from Yale University Press



Queen Isabella



Yes,
Row
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The World's First postage Stamp

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

THE recent announcement from London that the world's first postage stamp had been placed on sale in that city attracted unusual attention not only from stamp collectors but from the public in general, because it emphasized the fact that this present-day common convenience, millions of which are used every day, is of comparatively recent adoption. For this stamp, an English one bearing the likeness of Queen Victoria, is still attached to the envelope on which it was used and bears the postmark "Bath, May 2, 1840." This means that the postage stamp in its present form is less than a hundred years old.

The first postage stamps in the United States were put on sale in New York on July 1, 1847. Previous to that time, postage stamps were issued by private companies doing a general express or local delivery service of letters. On January 1, 1842, the City Dispatch Post, otherwise known as Greig's Post, was established in New York city, and it is said that this Post issued the first adhesive stamp used in this country. But the use of these private stamps proved such an annoyance to the government that it was suppressed and in its place the United States City Dispatch Post was established.

In the early days of the United States postal system the receiver of a letter paid for its delivery according to the number of sheets of paper which the letter contained. In 1845 this system was discarded and the weight system was adopted with a lower rate. About the same time came the envelope to give secrecy to letters. Prepayment of postage and the use of gummed stamps were put into use in 1847. During the first fiscal year of their use postmasters were supplied with 860,380 postage stamps to be sold to the public. Now, 83 years later, the Post Office department is supplying some 14,000,000,000 stamps every year to the 50,000 postmasters in the United States!

Since the first gummed stamps were issued in 1847, there have been a dozen distinct series of regular postage stamps with additions to each after their issue. Only 16 of our Presidents have been honored by having their portraits appear on our stamps, while 19 other persons prominent in American history have been thus remembered.

Washington and Franklin have been honored in every regular series of stamps from the beginning and Jefferson and Lincoln have seldom been omitted. The other Presidents pictured on various issues are: Madison, Monroe, Jackson, Taylor, Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Cleveland, Harrison, McKinley, Roosevelt, Harding and Wilson. Memorial stamps also have been issued for Lincoln on his one hundredth birthday anniversary in 1909, for Harding shortly after his death, and for John Ericsson, the inventor, on the occasion of the unveiling of a statue to him in Washington in 1926.

The other men whose portraits have been selected for stamp issues are, besides Franklin, Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, Winfield Scott, Alexander

Hamilton, O. H. Perry, Edwin M. Stanton, William T. Sherman, John Marshall, David G. Farragut, Robert B. Livingston, William H. Seward, Nathan Hale, Capt. John Smith, Christopher Columbus and Vasco Balboa. Only three women have had that distinction. Martha Washington was the first, as was befitting the "First Lady of the Land," and the other two are Queen Isabella of Spain and Pocahontas, the Indian princess.

Most interesting of all the stamps issued by the government, perhaps, are the special series, issued from time to time, known as commemorative stamps. The first of these appeared in 1893 to commemorate Columbus's discovery of America. There were sixteen of these stamps, ranging in denomination from one cent to \$5, each one telling a little of the story: Columbus in Sight of Land, the Landing of Columbus, the Flagship of Columbus, the Fleet of Columbus, Columbus Soliciting the Aid of Isabella, Columbus Welcomed at Barcelona, Columbus Restored to Favor, Columbus Presenting Native, Columbus Announcing His Discovery, Columbus at La Rabida, Recall of Columbus, Isabella Pledging Her Jewels, Columbus in Chains, Columbus Describing His Third Voyage, Isabella and Columbus, and Columbus alone.

After five years another commemorative series followed, known as Transmississippi-Omaha stamps, issued during the Transmississippi and International exposition. The nine denominations, ranging from one cent to \$2, were titled Marquette on the Mississippi, Farming in the West, Indian Hunting Buffalo, Fremont on Rocky Mountains, Troops Guarding Train, Hardships of Emigration, Western Mining Prospector, Western Cattle in Storm and Mississippi River Bridge.

The Pan-American exposition at Buffalo in 1901 was marked by another series, depicting means of transportation. A lake steamer was shown on the one-cent stamp, a railway train on the two-cent, a steel-arch bridge on the five-cent, ship canal lock on the eight-cent and an ocean steamship on the ten-cent stamp.

The next special series celebrated the purchase of Louisiana from France. The stamps bore severally the portraits of the men most responsible for accomplishing it—Robert R. Livingston, minister to France at the time; Thomas Jefferson, President, and James Monroe, special ambassador to France.

The Jamestown series of 1907 followed, depicting the landing of the colonists 300 years before and bearing the likenesses of Capt. John Smith and Pocahontas. The first single commemorative stamp—that is to say one that belonged to no series—was that of 1909 to mark the development of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific territory, having for its design the portrait of William H. Seward, who as secretary of state negotiated the purchase of Alaska from Russia.

In 1919 a special three-cent stamp was issued to commemorate the successful outcome of the World War. It depicted a figure of Liberty victorious against a background of the flags of the United States, England, France, Italy and Belgium.

In 1920 the Pilgrim Tercentenary was celebrated with three stamps illustrated by the Mayflower, the landing of the Pilgrims and the signing of the Mayflower Compact aboard that historic ship. The coming of the Huguenot-Walloons to America was celebrated in a tercentenary series in 1924 and the arrival of the first immigrants to the United States from Norway in 1695 was also the inspiration for another series, known as the Norse-American series.

During the past five years the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of many of the stirring deeds of the Revolutionary war has given the impetus to a large number of patriotic issues. The first of these came out in 1925 with the issue of the three Lexington-Concord stamps. Then came the Sesquicentennial stamps with the Bell of Liberty in 1925, closely followed by the White Plains Battle stamp in the same year, the Green Mountain Boys of Vermont and the Burgoyne Surrender in 1927, Washington at Valley Forge, and Molly Pitcher in 1928, and the George Rogers Clark and the General Sullivan stamps in 1929.

During 1930 other events of the Revolution probably will be commemorated and a movement has already been started for a special series to celebrate the tercentenary of the Massachusetts Bay colony founding.

Two special stamps, honoring great Americans, have appeared in the last three years. In 1927 Lindbergh's epic flight across the Atlantic was honored in a special all-mail stamp and during the past year Thomas Edison was honored with a stamp commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the invention of the incandescent lamp. In connection with the latter two, many persons wondered why portraits of Lindbergh and Edison did not appear on the stamps which bore the message of their fame. The reason was that the law of the land prohibits the use of the portrait of a living American on the postage stamps of our country. (And for a similar reason this article is not illustrated with reproductions of any American stamp. It is "agin the law" to illustrate United States stamps, the same as United States currency or coins!) So the Lindbergh stamp showed his famous plane, the Spirit of St. Louis, and the Edison Light Golden Jubilee stamp showed a picture of the first incandescent light.

Another interesting fact about the Lindbergh stamp is that 15,000,000 of this issue were printed. Virtually all of them have been bought up, giving Uncle Sam a net profit of \$1,000,000, post office officials estimate. Since only a few of the stamps have been used, the officials estimate that at least 10,000,000 of them will be retained as souvenirs. The fact that these stamps contain an error will make them more valuable in later years, it is predicted. The error is that Newfoundland is shown as several islands instead of a large piece of land fringed with indentations.

About 10,000,000,000 postage stamps are printed for our Post Office department each year by the bureau of engraving and printing at Washington. Dies are made and stamps are printed in sheets of 400 each. After being printed and dried the sheets are taken to the gumming machines. Each machine is surmounted by a tank from which a carefully regulated stream of special gum is fed into a pan, at one end of which it comes into contact with an adjustable revolving roller. After being gummed the sheets pass into a tunnel where the temperature is kept at 130 degrees. This tunnel is 72 feet long and the stamps take a minute and a half to traverse it.

Although the postage stamp is a comparatively recent innovation in usage by mankind, the idea of a postal service conducted by the government for the carrying and distributing of the written messages between its people goes back to ancient times. The first "postal systems" were in Babylonia, Egypt and China, but they were little more than mere courier services to keep the kings and emperors and government officials in communication with their subordinates.

Community Building

Rural Sections Served Well by Library Truck

Library trucks running out of cities lying near large rural stretches are now carrying reading matter into the most remote corners of the country, according to a survey made by Anna Steene Richardson, of the Woman's Home Companion.

The largest library truck runs out of Rochester, N. Y., serving Monroe county. Its shelves hold 1,000 books and its librarians act as chauffeurs to save room and expense. Each library center must be visited once in seven weeks. The date of library day is announced by mail to several interested people who in turn notify their neighbors by messenger and telephone. At the appointed time farmers within a radius of a mile and a half come to the center with baskets large enough to hold a supply of reading matter for the whole family. If a book not on the truck's shelves is called for, it is noted and sent immediately from Rochester by mail.

Greenville, S. C., finally secured a library through the enterprise of its citizens and last year 282,000 books were circulated among 33,000 persons, many of whom are listed as illiterate in the census report. The call was greatest for biography and more history than city people read.

The Durham (N. C.) library circulated 41,000 volumes in 1928, a 500 per cent increase in five years. In many other cities library trucks have been donated by clubs or philanthropists and as a result reading has been widened within the past few years as never before, says the article.

People Awake to Value of Artistic Roadside

The advantages and pleasures to be derived from an artistic roadside seem so apparent that it would appear unnecessary to comment on the matter, but as we travel about the country and see the borders of our highways cluttered with shacks, billboards and hideous barbecue stands and filling stations, we are forced to the conclusion that as a nation we do not yet sufficiently appreciate appearances, says James H. Duthie, chairman of the Cleveland committee on public information, Cleveland chapter American Institute of Architects. That we are beginning to do so, however, is evidenced by the improvement gradually made during the last ten years in our roadside suburbs. Perhaps this signifies the coming of another renaissance of architecture. The crude and ugly houses, that for so many years in this country sprang up like mushrooms, are in many places giving way to houses of architectural merit. In time, without doubt, the influence of this architectural revival will extend outward from our metropolitan areas and make itself felt along our country roadsides. The ugly shacks, billboards and other structures devoid of any artistic conception will disappear and be replaced by more graceful types.

Urge City Planning Study

Pointing out that men in the business of real estate are the only group whose purely selfish interests, if no higher motive exists, demand that study of the subject of city planning or land planning be a part of their daily office routine, the Arkansas Real Estate association is asking for the initiation in every community in the state of a program of public education as to the need for proper planning and execution of civic improvement programs. Effective land or city planning must come as a demand from a public better informed as to the need of development of land resources to their highest use and the preservation of land values, the association holds in resolutions passed at its annual convention just closed.

Select Material With Care

The small house is typically American. Thousands are being built every year, many of them on the supposition that the art of small house architecture is independent of its material. Sense of proportion and the laws of structure are based in great part on the material employed. The material, in turn, has an important bearing upon the design. Since lumber will continue to be the favorite material for small house construction, those who build small houses should be familiar with the best practices in planning and designing.

Move for Highway Beauty

It is encouraging to see that the Vermont chamber of commerce has decided to make a national campaign out of its program for the beautification of highways. The movement is worthy of the co-operation of every chamber of commerce in the United States, and it seems that these bodies should be eager to give their help.

New Houses From Old

Buying an old house and modernizing it is becoming more and more popular. Frequently such a house can be obtained at a reasonable figure, and through the expenditure of several thousand dollars made into a residence worth much more than the investment.



Needless Pain!

Nowadays, people take Bayer Aspirin for many little aches and pains, and as often as they encounter any pain. Why not? It is a proven antidote for pain. It works! And Bayer Aspirin tablets are utterly harmless. You have the medical profession's word for that; they do not depress the heart. So, don't let a cold "run its course." Don't wait for a headache to "wear off." Or regard neuralgia, neuritis, or even rheumatism as something you must endure. Only a physician can cope with the cause of such pain, but



you can always turn to Bayer Aspirin for relief. Bayer Aspirin is always available, and it always helps. Familiarize yourself with its many uses, and avoid a lot of needless suffering.

BAYER ASPIRIN

Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monocetacidester of Salicylicacid

Made Shoes Last
When a woman recently applied to the authorities of Cardigan, Wales, for a new pair of shoes, she declared that the ones she was wearing had lasted 27 years.

Worth Remembering
Scratches can be removed from patent leather by applying a mixture of olive oil and jet black ink with a fine brush and repeating several times if necessary.

Home, Has More Danger Than Savages of Brazil

JOHN J. WHITEHEAD, explorer and lecturer, has just returned from eight months in the jungles of South America, where he was searching for traces of the lost Colonel Fawcett and his son.



John J. Whitehead, explorer and lecturer, with a Jungle Warrior

Dangerous as he found the jungle, he encountered a worse danger at home. But let him tell it.

"One of the great problems of a trip of this kind is keeping in healthy condition. When we started, some of the members of the party had laxatives with them, but made wise by experience I carried Nujol. All too quickly my stock ran out. Soon I was in bad shape—what with a diet of rice and beans, lacking vitamins and green vegetables. "When we finally got back to civilization, entertained first in Brazil and later in the United States, I became positively ill. Severe stomach pains and poor elimination made me realize that Nujol would again prove the reliable, trusty keeper of health. Sure enough, with the first bottle the trouble disappeared.

Don't think Nujol is a medicine. It is as tasteless and colorless as clear water. It brings you, however, what your body needs like any other machine—lubrication. Just as a good bath washes our bodies clean, Nujol

sweeps away, easily and normally, those internal bodily poisons (we all have them) that make us feel dull and headachy and sick. Nujol cannot hurt even a little baby; it forms no habit; it contains not one single drug. Doctors and nurses use it themselves and tell you to use it, if you want to be well. Take Nujol every night for two weeks and prove to yourself how happy and bright and full of pep you can be, if your body is internally clean. Get a bottle today at any drug store. It costs but a few cents, and makes you feel like a million dollars. Start traveling the health-road to success and happiness—this very day!

No, Regardless
Office Boy—Sorry, but the editor won't even read your article.
Embryo Writer—But did you tell him that if he read it he would surely accept it?
Office Boy—Yes; that's why he won't read it.—London Tit-Bits.

Had Taken Precautions
"My dear, it's no use you looking at those hats. I haven't more than \$2 in my pocket."
"You might have known when we came out that I'd want to buy a few things."
"I did!"—Stray Stories.



When Babies FRET

There are times when a baby is too fretful or feverish to be sung to sleep. There are some pains a mother cannot pat away. But there's no time when any baby can't have the quick comfort of Castoria! A few drops, and your little one is soon at ease—back to sleep almost before you can slip away. Remember this harmless, pure vegetable preparation when children are ailing. Don't stop its use when Baby has been brought safely through the age of colic,

diarrhea, and other infantile ills. Give good old Castoria until your children are in their teens! Whenever coated tongues tell of constipation; whenever there's any sign of sluggishness that needs no stronger medicines to relieve. Castoria is pleasant-tasting; children love to take it. Buy the genuine—with Chas. H. Fletcher's signature on wrapper.