



The Overprint

Newsletter of the Reading Stamp Collectors' Club

Editor: Stan Raugh, 4217 8th Avenue, Temple, PA 19560-1805 Tel: 610-921-5822

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Meetings held at Calvary Lutheran Church, 1009 Elizabeth Avenue in Laureldale. Elizabeth Avenue crosses Kutztown Road in the Muhlenberg Township area. Most meetings are the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. See you there!

Tuesday, July 4th
No Meeting - Enjoy the Holiday

Next Meeting Tuesday August 1st - Topic to be Determined

NEW POSTAGE RATES

USPS announces second increase for the year: On July 7th rates will be increasing from 63 cents to 66 cents. From what I have been reading we can expect two increases per year for the foreseeable future.

Editors Notes:

Don't complain as a first-class letter in England costs GBP 1.10 or \$ 1.37, over double the new rate. Also, this is convenient as I have quite a few 33 cents stamps that I bought at half price!!

Treasurer's Report:

We currently have \$ 1,113 in our checking account plus our CD of \$ 3,076.00

"This is an abbreviated edition of the Overprint due an unexpected death in my wife's family"

British stamps celebrate May 6 coronation of King Charles III and his public service.

Courtesy of Linns Apr 27, 2023, 7 PM



By Denise McCarty

Great Britain’s Royal Mail unveiled on April 28 the design of its souvenir sheet commemorating the May 6 coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla at Westminster Abbey in London.

The souvenir sheet, called His Majesty King Charles III: A New Reign, will be issued May 6.

The sheet contains four se-tenant (side-by-side) stamps. One illustrates a coronation ceremony, and the designs of the other three reflect “some of the causes His Majesty has dedicated his years of public service to: cultural diversity and community; the global ties of the Commonwealth, which he now leads; and sustainability and biodiversity,” according to Royal Mail. The detailed stamp designs are based on newly commissioned wood engravings by British artist and stamp designer Andrew Davidson.

The theme of the stamp is inscribed in the lower left of each design. For example, “Coronation” is written on the first of the two nondenominated stamps for the first-class rate (currently £1.10).

The other first-class stamp represents “Diversity and Community,” according to the inscription. Royal Mail said this design reflects “a multi-faith community and the cultural diversity of contemporary British society.”

The other two stamps are each denominated £2.20 to pay the rate for standard letters weighing up to 100 grams sent worldwide. One is inscribed “The Commonwealth,” and the other “Sustainability and Biodiversity.”

The Commonwealth stamp depicts “an outward-looking United Kingdom, global trade, cooperation, democracy and peace,” Royal Mail said.

Each stamp design also shows the silhouette of King Charles in the upper right and either “1st” or “£2.20” in the upper left.

Like the stamps, the selva of the souvenir sheet features a new wood engraving by Davidson.

A BLAST FROM THE PAST

CURIOSITIES OF THE POST OFFICE BY COSMOPOLITAN

(The American Journal of Philately, Vol. 2, No 14, February 20, 1869)

When Mr. Rowland Hill's cheap postage system went into operation, the articles sent were extremely various. One office had, for contents, as officially described, "three dozen bird's eyes." A letter from Hull to London contained "one boiled lobster." From Norwich to Cheltenham, a live blackbird, which was actually transported, kept and fed, and safely delivered to the address. An affectionate mother sent to her son a pottle of strawberries. This was reduced to a jam on the way, and, out of pure sympathy, it jammed its next neighbor, whose original contents consisted of a quantity of valuable lace, and its prospective owner – the person addressed – was the queen dowager. A black bottle, with no wrapper, only a label addressed "Tim M-----" ----- "a wee drop o' the crater" – was mailed at Dublin for Bradford, in Yorkshire. From Perth to Berwick, a salmon. Not unfrequently bank notes are sent in the mail without any envelope or covering, merely by fastening the two ends of the note together with wafers, and then addressing it. Notes as large as £50 have been sent this way. From Aberdeen to Ayr two hares and a grouse; from Wooten Bassett to Sawbridgeworth, six packages of wedding cake and one plum pudding in the same mail. Live leeches have been sent in bladders, and the bladders bursting, the leeches have been found investigating and exploring the interior of her majesty's mails. A live mouse, a corkscrew, a paper of shoe nails, a roast pheasant to Mrs. -----, Brighton: part of a human limb for dissection (detected by the smell), rolls of cigars, Lucifer matches, detonating powder, prussic acid, a pistol loaded to the muzzle, a poodle dog, a sailor's jacket, bottles of perfumery, a sheath knife, a full suit for an infant to Lady I-----, "with love:" a jar of pickles, a porcelain tea set, a box full of live spiders, a young alligator or horned lizard, alive, "to Master I----- H-----, to assist him in his natural history studies;" a case of dentist's instruments, daguerreotype portraits, and a live frog, are among the multifarious articles that are sometimes sent as letters. There is a regulation that requires all glass, edged tools, pyrotechnics, liquids, and whatever is liable to injure the mail to be stopped, but many of these things travel, unobserved, to their journey's end.

Sometimes newspapers are made to carry brief messages, the sender supposing there can be no harm in sending "just a word." Here are samples of writing attempted to be concealed in a newspaper, with the penalty attached, double letter postage – fourpence for every ounce:

"With my love," - 1s 4d

"All well," - 1s 0d

"Send your dangerrotype," - 1s 4d

"Baby well," - 1s 0d

"Now postman, don't you steal this paper," - 1s 4d

"My dearest," - 0s 8d

"Pray, come soon" - 1s 4d

"I leave tomorrow," - 1s 4d

Most of these singular packages are prepaid, but if the person to whom they are addressed will not take the letter or package, it may be returned, and the sender compelled, by summary process, to pay the full amount of postage, being double the sum it would have been if paid in advance.

The articles that pass through our own post office are quite as varied as those of our English neighbors. A writer in *Hours at Home* says:

"I have once more visited the dead letter office – a visit that always give pleasure and gratifies curiosity. Here I saw clerks taking \$500 a day out of the letters so profusely scattered over their desks, and among the various articles recently taken out of their envelopes I noticed the following: slippers, valentines, a duck's head, thermometers, false teeth, pistols, mittens, fern leaves, false hair, laces, paper

collars epaulets, horns, pipes, watch cases, hoops, albums, dolls (one of them two feet high – it must have required a monster envelope), butterflies, mats, medicines, silver goblets of full size, earrings, butter knives, spoons, gold and silver watches (very little gold and silver about them, however), shells, purses, soap, sugar, tea, coffee, bows and arrows, books, pictures, a box of cigars, a bottle of Jamaica ginger, a squirrel's tail, prisms, combs, boxes, &c."

It used to be a common source of amusement to the clerks to repeat the old story of rural members of Congress sending home under the official frank their dirty linen for the wash. How true the report is I cannot say.

TOPICAL TIME

I have always had a fascination with lighthouses. Curious designs and placed on precarious outcrops of rock or even on remote islands, battered by storms and yet still standing.

So this editionscontains an article courtesy of Mystic Stamp Company on USA Lighthouses issues. Plus I have added a selection of Lighthouses on stamps from around the world.

This would make a great topical collection and I bet there are far more Lighthouses on Stamps than one would first imagine.

Does anyone out there have a lighthouse collection. If so let me know or better still send me an article that I can do as a follow up in the next issue,

Lighthouses Stamp Series

<https://info.mysticstamp.com/learn/lighthouses-stamp-series/>

Since ancient times light has been used as a navigational aid for ships. The Egyptian King Ptolemy I ordered the creation of what was probably the world's first lighthouse, which was completed in 285 B.C. This structure was about four hundred feet tall, and had an open fire as its light source. It was located on the Island of Pharos, and survived for nearly 1,500 years.

Introduced in 1990, the Lighthouses stamp series commemorates "the classic coastal sentinels that reflect our nation's seafaring past."



US #2470-74 Lighthouses

This set of five booklet stamps was issued to celebrate the U.S. Lighthouse Service's Bicentennial. The Lighthouse Service is still an important part of today's modern Coast Guard, which also celebrated its bicentennial in 1990. The lighthouses pictured here are Admiralty Head (WA), Cape Hatteras (NC), West Quoddy Head (ME), American Shoals (FL) and Sandy Hook (NJ).



US #2969-73 Great Lakes Lighthouses

These five stamps depict five historical lighthouses, each from one of the Great Lakes: Spectacle Reef from Lake Huron, Thirty Mile Point on Lake Ontario, Split Rock from Lake Superior, Marblehead on Lake Erie, and St. Joseph on Lake Michigan. Since the early 19th century, these historic lighthouses have aided mariners on the nation's "inland seas," which have many of the dangerous features of oceans, including violent storms, gale winds, fog, and ice.



US #3787-91 Southeastern Lighthouses

The original Cape Henry Light was abandoned as an active lighthouse in 1881. Despite several cracks in walls six-feet thick at the base, the tower still stands today. The Cape Lookout Lighthouse was painted in 1873 with the black-and-white, diagonally checkered pattern that still identifies it today. Threatened by erosion, the Morris Island Lighthouse was abandoned in 1962. Today, it stands surrounded by water, about 1,600 feet from the shore. The Tybee Island Lighthouse is still an important aid to ships navigating the mouth of the Savannah River. The 70,000-candlepower light can be seen for 18 miles. The Hillsboro Inlet Lighthouse is a cast-iron skeleton with a central stair cylinder. It was displayed at the 1904 St. Louis Exposition before being erected at Hillsboro Inlet to guard the Florida Reef at Pompano Beach.



US #4146-50 Pacific Lighthouses

Located off California's northern coast, St. George Reef Lighthouse marks a hazardous reef six miles from California's shore, near Crescent City. Winchester Bay, Oregon, is the site of the Umpqua River Lighthouse. It was originally lit in 1857 to mark dangerous shifting sandbars that had caused many shipwrecks. Washington's Gray's Harbor lighthouse was first lit in 1898 to mark the channel into one of America's most important lumber ports. Located in fog-prone northern Washington state, the light was also equipped with a windmill that powered two trumpet foghorns. Discovery of gold in the Yukon created a need for the Five Finger Islands Lighthouse in Frederick Sound, Alaska. The island of Oahu, Hawaii, is the site of the Diamond Head Lighthouse, built on the side of an extinct volcano. The lighthouse, which stands 147 feet above sea level, was first lit in 1918.



US #4409-13 Gulf Coast Lighthouses

Lighthouses built along the Gulf Coast of the United States faced two remarkable forces – Mother Nature's fury plus the devastation of America's tragic Civil War. The few that survive bear witness to decades of hurricanes, erosion, and man's attempts to save these towering sentinels.



US #4791-95 New England Lighthouses

Many of New England's lighthouses guarded the Eastern shorelines before the U.S. became a country. Since then, they have become beloved landmarks to seafarers and "landlubbers" alike.

In Colonial times, the British established beacons at the busy ports of Boston and New London. During the American Revolution, the lighthouses were destroyed then rebuilt by opposing forces. When the nation gained independence, President George Washington understood the significance of the New England lighthouses and commissioned the first keepers, contracts for oil, and completion of a new station in Portland Head, Maine. The role of lighthouses in history continued during the War of 1812. In Boston Harbor, the keeper and his wife witnessed the battle when American Captain James Lawrence declared, "Don't give up the ship!" The lamps from Rhode Island's Point Judith station were stolen by the British, and later found in Bermuda, returned, and reinstalled.

In the 20th century, the lanterns were extinguished along New England's rocky coast to prevent the nation's enemies from navigating the waterways and busy harbors.



US #5621-25 Mid-Atlantic Lighthouses

In 2021, the USPS continued the Lighthouse Series with five Mid-Atlantic Lighthouse stamps picturing: Montauk Point Lighthouse, Navesink Twin Lighthouses, Erie Harbor Pierhead Lighthouse, Harbor of Refuge Lighthouse, and Thomas Point Shoal Lighthouse. These were the last stamp designs created by artist Howard Koslow for the Lighthouse Series. He also created the rest of the stamp designs in the series. If the lighthouses could speak, they would recall over 200 years of history...of shining their lanterns across the seas during storms and battles, faithfully guiding thousands of ships that passed their way.

