

# First adhesive postage stamp issued in Britain in 1840

by  
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The first adhesive postage stamp in the world was issued by Britain in 1840 - the famous Penny Black. Every stamp collector knows that.

The first Canadian stamp was the "Three Penny" beaver issued in 1851 (Scott No. 1).

That was a "Province of Canada" issue and there are a few who insist that the first true Canadian issue was the first stamp following Confederation, when it became "Dominion of Canada." That was the half-penny black in what has become one of the greatest of Canadian specialized fields, the "Large Queen's" first issued April 1, 1868.

Canadian stamps are among the most collected in the world, from 1851 to now. The first U.S. stamp was issued July 1, 1847, and the U.S. is, of course, an incredibly fertile field for collectors.

There are other stamp-issuing entities that have come and gone, done in by political accommodation or by war.

They are known in philately as "Dead Countries" or countries that no longer exist but issued stamps while they did.

This was brought to mind recently when I received a communication from the Croatian Philatelic Society (1512 Lancelot Rd., Borger, Texas, 79007) announcing that Robert D. Reton of Farmington Hills, Michigan, had been named chairman of the Bosnia Study Group, an affiliate of the society.

The stamp-issuing entity was Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Bosnia is from "Bosna" after the river of the same name. Herzegovina is from "Herzog" meaning duke.

In the historical overview, Bosnia-Herzegovina was dead before it was born. It was occupied by Romans, was overrun by Goths, occupied by Slavs, ruled by Croats and became part of Hungary about 1100. It was taken over by the Turks in the 1400s.

After the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78, it was occupied by Austria-Hungary, and on Oct. 7, 1908, it was annexed to the Austro-Hungarian empire.

The first stamps were issued in 1879, showing a coat of arms and no indication of place of issue.

It was thus through issues to 1907, when the

country name appeared for the first time (Scott No. 30).

The issue was a set of 16 stamps, an incredibly long issue for the time (Scott 30-45), considering only 29 stamps had been issued from 1879 to 1906.

The 1906 issue showed various scenes and Emperor Franz Josef of Austria-Hungary. They were engraved and printed in Vienna and, at the time and perhaps much later, were considered the finest example of philatelic engraving.

Bosnia-Herzegovina's capital was Sarajevo, the site of the 1984 Winter Olympics.

It was there that the

visiting Archduke Ferdinand and his wife Sophia were assassinated by a Serbian student, Gavrilo Princip. That was June 28, 1914.

That was the excuse that started the First World War.

Bosnia-Herzegovina stamps were issued until 1918 at the end of the war. In fact, the final issue of 13 stamps showing Emperor Karl I (Scott 128-140) were never sold there, but were available in Vienna for a few days following the Nov. 11, 1918 armistice.

Bosnia-Herzegovina became part of Yugoslavia following the First World War, and that's the situation today.

However, it is not the average "dead country." In its brief stamp-issuing existence, there were regular postage stamps, semi-postals (one of which, Scott B15,

shows the assassinated Archduke and Archduchess), postage dues, newspaper stamps and special handling stamps.

As if that were not enough to create a rich collecting field, there are a zillion varieties and more in the issues, especially the first

issue, to keep a specialist happy forever.

That's why the study group was reactivated, no doubt.

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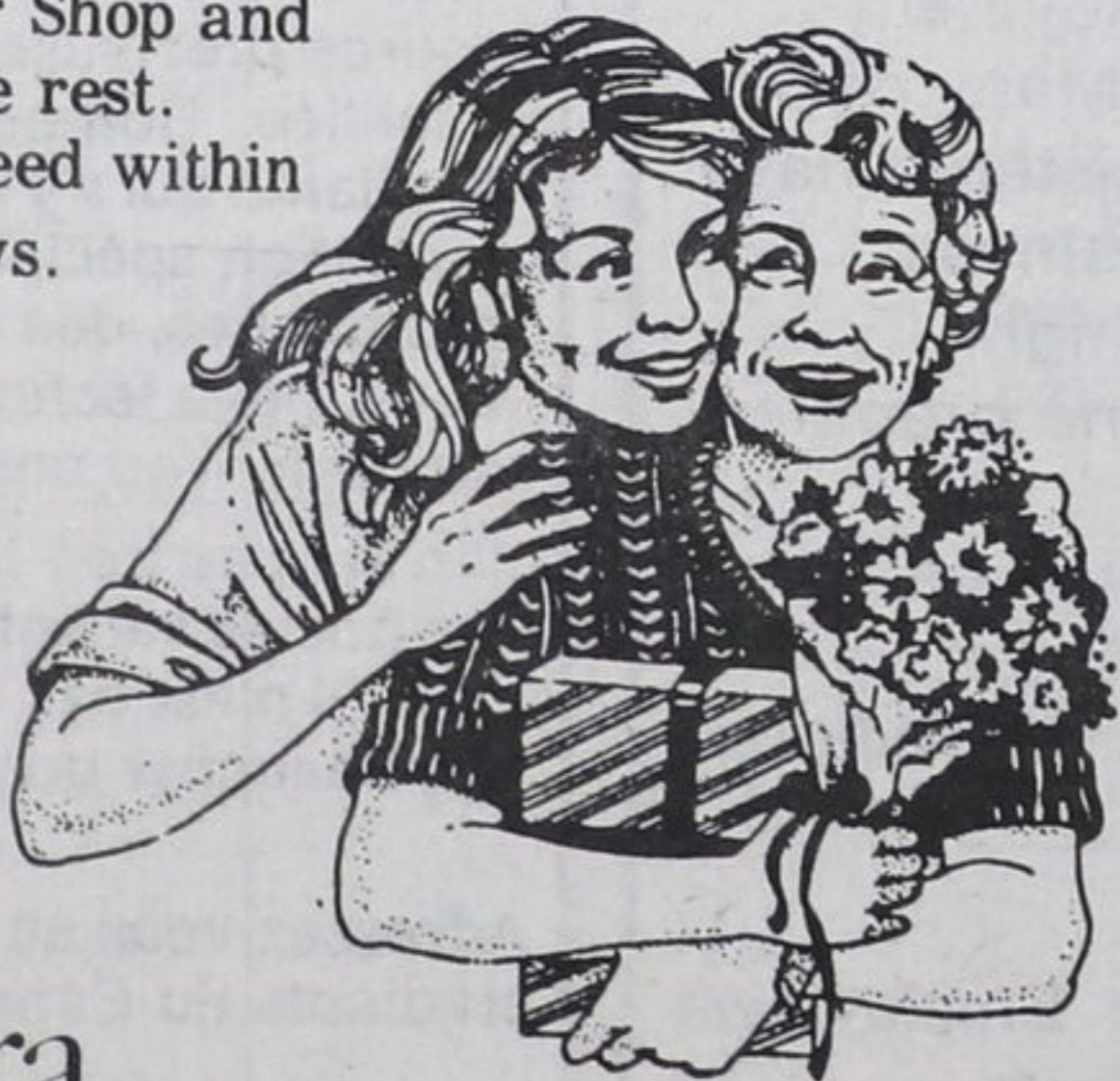
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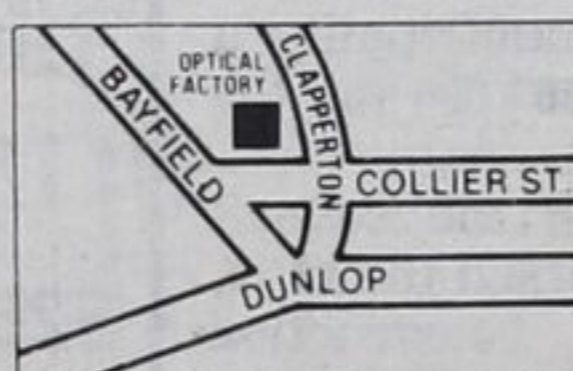
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