

ROWLAND HILL'S LEGACY

AN IDEA THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

Rowland's postal reforms were enormously important because they changed the way people communicated with each other. It was as world-changing as the arrival of the internet in the late 20th century.

Prime Minister William Gladstone, September 1879

'...(Hill's) great plan had run like wildfire through the civilised world: never perhaps was a local invention and improvement applied in the lifetime of its author to the advantages of such vast multitudes of his fellow creatures'



© Royal Mail Group 2015, courtesy of The Postal Museum, POST 118/5507

A hero

Rowland Hill received many honours for his work. He was made a knight in 1860. He died in 1879 and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

From a ceremony to honour Rowland Hill with the Freedom of the City of London, 1879

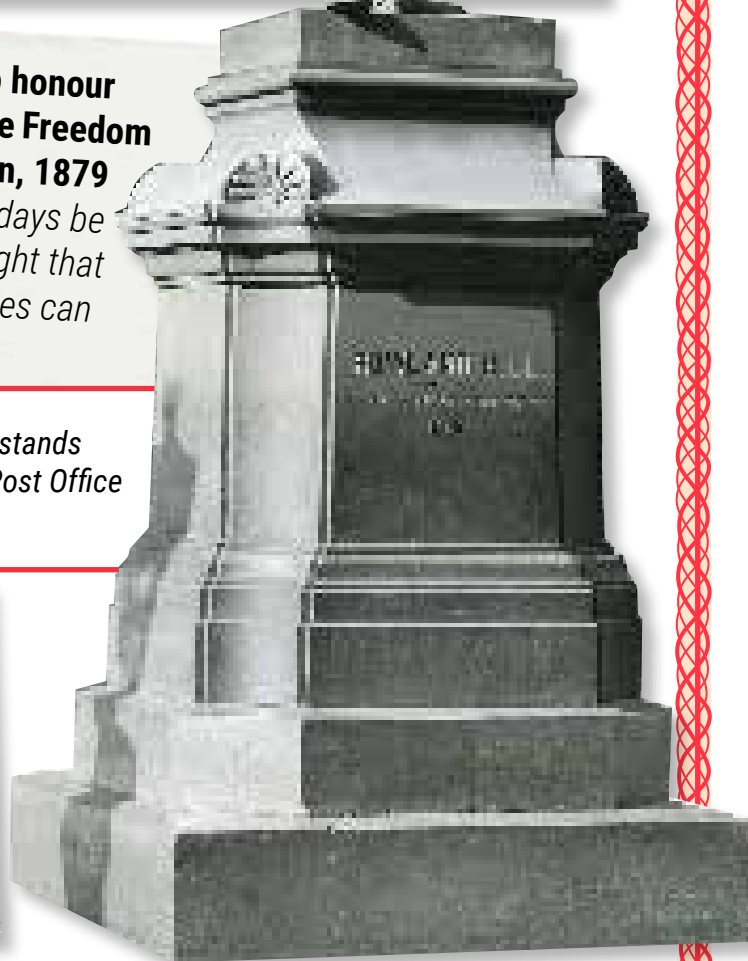
'May your remaining days be consoled by the thought that your name and services can never be forgotten'

Power POINT

This statue of Rowland Hill stands outside the former General Post Office headquarters in London

H.W. Hill (Rowland Hill's grandson)

'His name... (is) among the very foremost... who made the greatest contribution to the development of science, literature, and commerce whilst... vastly increasing the sum of happiness of the poorest of the poor'



The
Postal
Museum



LOTTERY FUNDED

Long-lasting ideas

Besides the introduction of postage stamps, Rowland introduced many other ideas familiar to us today.

Map of London postal districts, 1856

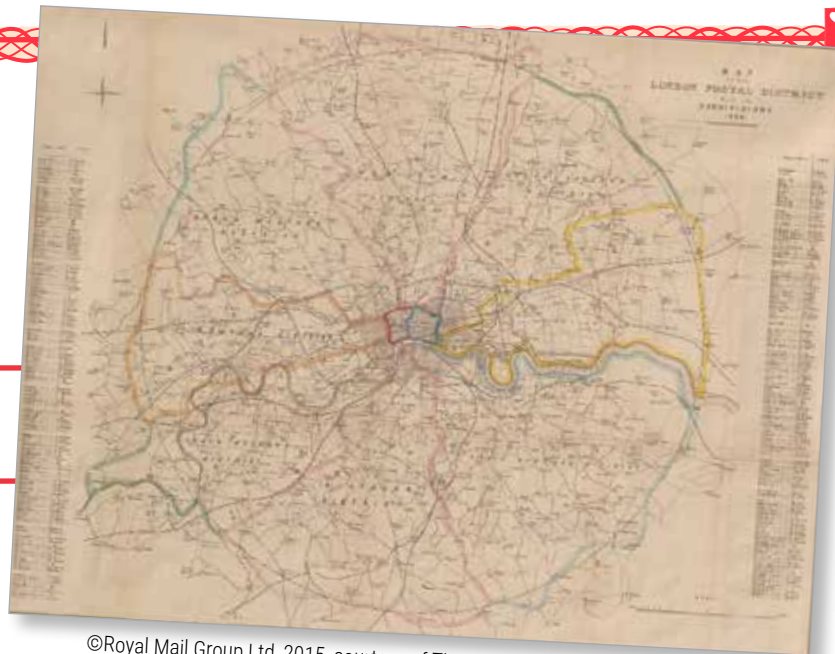
Postcodes

When Rowland became Secretary to the Post Office in 1854, he introduced postcodes to London. Rowland's plan was to divide London into 10 postal districts with letter carriers based at new District Offices. Other big cities were divided into postal regions in the 1860s, but elsewhere postcodes were not introduced until after the Second World War.

The parcel post

In 1883, the General Post Office started delivering parcels. Parcels weighing up to 1lb (under 500g) cost 3d (old pennies).

This cartoon of the first parcel post in The Illustrated London News shows the extra work involved in delivering parcels



©Royal Mail Group Ltd, 2015, courtesy of The Postal Museum, POST 21/71



©Royal Mail Group Ltd, 2015 courtesy of The Postal Museum, POST 118/1336



Wangford Post Office. c1900 with horse-drawn van outside

Horse-drawn vans

In towns and rural areas, horse-drawn vans were used for delivering the mail. In big towns a typical day would begin with drivers using a large van on a morning round, a midday run with a smaller delivery van, and an evening round with a one-horse letter cart.

Post Offices

By 1875, over a billion letters were sent each year. Many new Post Offices were needed and by 1900 there were 21,940 in the UK. Post Offices were places where people met to drop off and collect letters and to swap news and gossip.

Cardiff Post Office built in 1886. Post Offices were often very grand buildings

**Power
POINT**



©Royal Mail Group Ltd, 2015, courtesy of The Postal Museum



©Royal Mail Group Ltd, 2015 courtesy of The Postal Museum

Post Offices were opened in very remote places. This is Loch Ranza Post Office, Isle of Arran c1900

Postboxes

The number of postboxes grew too. The cipher on the postbox shows which king or queen was on the throne when it was installed.



©The Postal Museum, OB1994.45



The cipher of Edward VIII is very rare because he was king for less than a year in 1936



Post women

Until the First World War, most postal work was done by men, but some women were employed as letter carriers and post mistresses. In 1908, Mrs Elizabeth Dickson retired as a country post woman after more than 30 years service. It was said that she had never once been late for duty and had only taken off 14 days for illness.

Elizabeth Dickson walked thirteen and a half miles each day - a distance equal to more than five times round the world!

©Royal Mail Group Ltd, 2015, courtesy of The Postal Museum, St Martin's Le Grand, 1909, POST 92



The
Postal
Museum



LOTTERY FUNDED

Stamps around the world

Since the Penny Black stamp was introduced, stamps have spread around the world. But Britain is the only country that doesn't display its name on stamps.

An early Canadian stamp, 1898



©Royal Mail Group Ltd, 2015, courtesy of The Postal Museum

British stamps today

There are two types of British stamps. Standard stamps are called 'definitives' and show an image of the head of the reigning king or queen. 'Commemorative' stamps mark important events or achievements.

This plaster head of Queen Elizabeth II was made by Arnold Machin and is used on definitive stamps today



The first commemorative stamp was issued in 1924 to mark the British Empire exhibition

Rowland Hill and his postal reforms have been celebrated on several commemorative postage stamps



©Royal Mail Group Ltd, 2015, courtesy of The Postal Museum

Queen Victoria dies

By the time of Queen Victoria's death in 1901, new inventions such as electricity and photography had changed the way people in Britain lived. Some people think that one of the most important inventions was the Penny Black stamp because for the first time, everyone could afford to communicate with each other.

Overview of the lesson:

This activity relates to **Geography** and **Citizenship**. Pupils are given the task of making a map of the route to the nearest postbox.

Before undertaking this activity, pupils are likely to have:

- ◆ Talked about maps for different purposes (physical, tourist and political); terminology (scale, grids, coordinates)
- ◆ Learnt how to use compasses, coordinates and measuring equipment
- ◆ Found out about different types of postboxes e.g. wall mounted, free-standing
- ◆ Thought about why postboxes were introduced and when
- ◆ Looked at the design of postboxes and the information included on them including ciphers.

Extension activities could include:

- ◆ **Literacy:** Looking at the Post Office in literature (see pages 15, 16 and 50); invite an older person to talk about writing letters e.g. in the Second World War; writing a letter describing the route to the postbox as in the letter on page 11)
- ◆ **Local History:** Used the internet to research early postboxes in your area; linking this with the historical development and growth of your local area.

To do:

- ◆ Locate the nearest postbox and plan a visit to it
- ◆ Assemble equipment e.g. compasses and measuring devices; download copies of a large-scale map to include area to the postbox; source paper and drawing materials.

Success criteria

By the end of the project:

- ◆ All will be aware of different types of maps and their functions
- ◆ All will be aware of the purpose and location of the nearest postbox to the school
- ◆ Some may want look for other types of postboxes in the area.

Key terms

- | | |
|------------|-----------------|
| ◆ Location | ◆ Letter box |
| ◆ Cipher | ◆ Free-standing |
| ◆ Postbox | |

Your granny has just moved to be nearer to you. She likes writing letters to her old friends. She doesn't know the route to the postbox so you must make a map for her to use.

1 Start at your school. Note down things **YOU** think might help her to find the way to the postbox. For example:

- ◆ A post office
- ◆ Shops
- ◆ Trees
- ◆ Brightly painted front doors
- ◆ Railings
- ◆ Lamp posts
- ◆ Street signs
- ◆ Bus stops
- ◆ Public seats
- ◆ Names of streets

2 At school, mark things on your map which will help your granny to find the postbox. Remember to note down details e.g. the colour of a front door and where you saw it, numbers on a bus stop, the names of shops.

Did you

... In 2012, some postboxes were painted gold to commemorate gold medal Olympians and Paralympians

©Royal Mail Group Ltd, 2015

This map should help me find the nearest postbox



AIR MAIL

Did you know?

... In 1919, the first public overseas airmail service was launched between London and Paris. Airmail postboxes were painted blue.

©The Postal Museum



Now you must collect information about the postbox.

THE POSTBOX

Name

Date

1 The postbox is located ...
(write the name of the street or road)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

3 Which king or queen was on the throne
when the postbox was placed here?

Queen Victoria (1837-1901)
King Edward VII (1901-1910)
King George V (1910-1936)
King Edward VIII (1936)
King George VI (1936-1952)
Queen Elizabeth II (1952-)

I know this because ...

.....

2 Is it free-standing or set into a wall?
It is ...

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4 What other information can you find
out from the postbox?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

THE POSTBOX

5 Draw the postbox here





Overview of the lesson:

The design of the Penny Black stamp was based on an engraving of Victoria when she was 15. Stamps to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the stamp retained the same image enlarged, with a smaller profile of Queen Elizabeth II. This activity, linked to **D&T** and **Science**, shows pupils how to make a silhouette to create the same effect.

Before undertaking this activity, pupils are likely to have:

- ◆ Looked at the features of the Penny Black stamp including borders, background and value
- ◆ Found out about concerns surrounding forgery and the elements that were introduced to prevent it (see page 14)
- ◆ Discussed Queen Victoria's reaction to the design (see page 13)
- ◆ Talked about silhouettes (the art of cutting paper profiles)
- ◆ Discovered that silhouettes were very popular before photography became affordable in the 1850s
- ◆ Thought about how profiles/shadows might be created.

Extension activities could include:

- ◆ **Art & Design:** Comparing the elements of the Penny Black stamp with contemporary British stamp design (the Penny Black does not state the country of origin because it was the first postage stamp, a tradition which still exists today; all British stamps since have had the profile of the reigning king or queen)
- ◆ **Art & Design:** Designing stamps to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the Penny Black stamp
- ◆ **Art & Design:** Researching artists who have designed modern commemorative British stamps e.g. David Gentleman, David Hockney, Andy Goldsworthy – and school children who designed Christmas stamps in 1998
- ◆ **History:** Researching The Postal Museum collections to look at the design of stamps from the other countries which introduced stamps shortly after the Penny Black
- ◆ **Literacy:** Using the web and other sources to find out the origin of the word 'silhouette'.

To do:

- ◆ Assemble equipment: large sheets of white paper; sheets of black paper; thin white card; sticky tape, soft pencils, scissors, glue, a strong light source e.g. a desk lamp
- ◆ Divide the class into pairs.

Success criteria

By the end of the project:

- ◆ All pupils will be familiar with the design elements of the Penny Black stamp
- ◆ All pupils will be familiar with the way in which the Penny Black was conceived
- ◆ Some pupils may wish to create a silhouette using photographs and Photoshop.

Key terms

- ◆ Silhouette
- ◆ Profile
- ◆ Light source
- ◆ Value

The design of the Penny Black stamp was based on a profile of Queen Victoria's head made when she was just 15 years old.

YOUR TASK is to design a stamp based on a silhouette of **YOUR** head.

The same profile was used on stamps until I died aged 81!



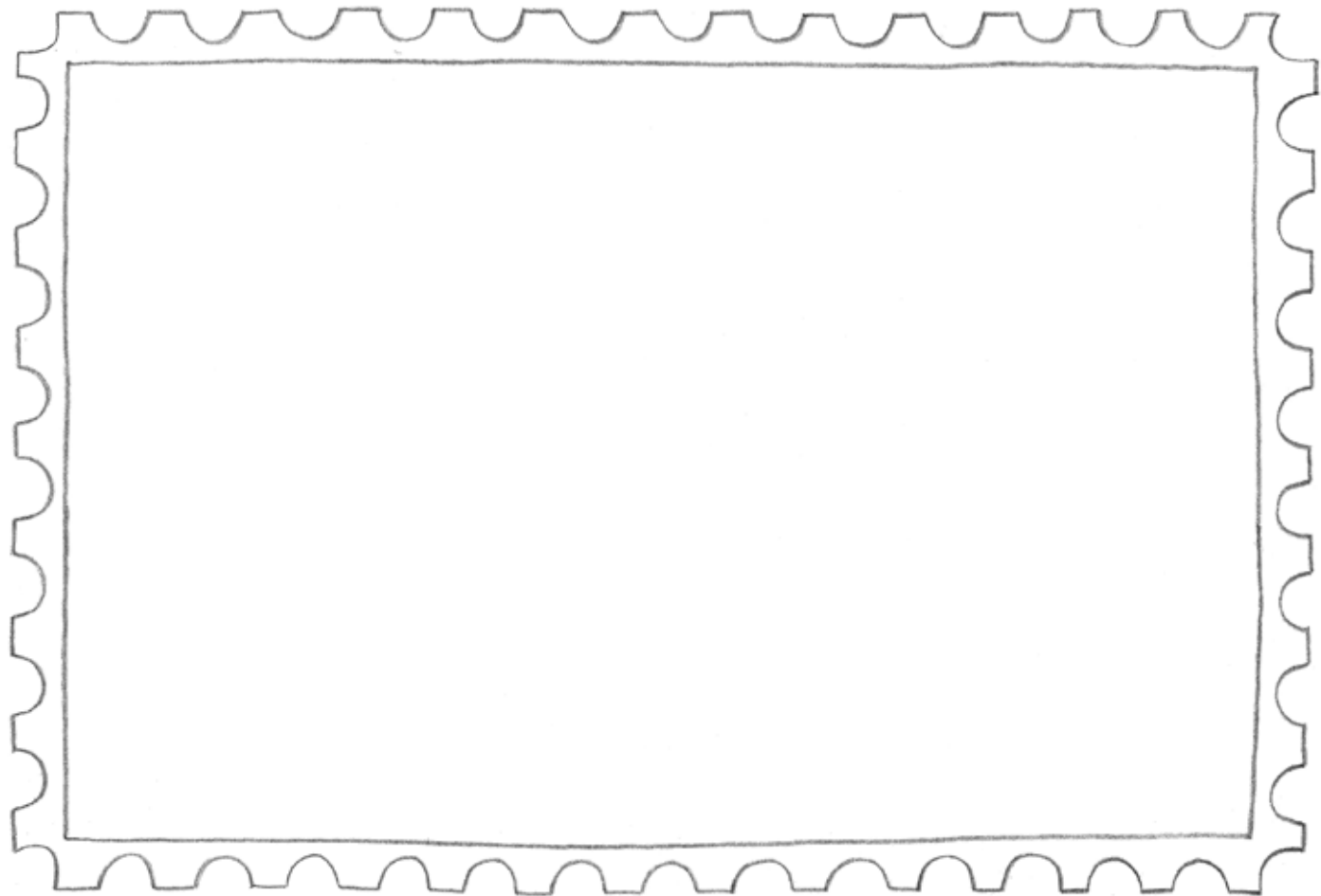
Things to think about

- ◆ Ways in which you could make an accurate drawing of your profile
- ◆ What you should add to your silhouette to complete the design of the stamp e.g. borders, colours, value
- ◆ How you can tell the value at a glance e.g. size and shape

To make a silhouette

- 1 Tape a large sheet of white paper on to a wall
- 2 Ask your partner to sit sideways on a stool so that their profile creates a shadow on the paper
- 3 Using a soft pencil trace the outline of the shadow on to the paper
- 4 Remove the paper from the wall
- 5 Cut round the profile to make a template for the silhouette
- 6 Trace round the template on to black paper to make a silhouette
- 7 Stick it on to thin white card
- 8 Now add colour, borders, value and background to complete your stamp.





Evaluate

Is the silhouette an accurate profile of your partner's face?

.....

Does your stamp include a border and value?

.....

Could you improve on the design?

.....

*Today,
Queen Elizabeth II
approves all new stamp
designs, just as Queen
Victoria did*



The
Postal
Museum

