

## Celebrating the Century versus the Millennium

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In the United States the US Postal Service (USPS) has focused upon issuing stamps to celebrate the century. These stamps have focused upon stamps with supposedly represent significant events that occurred in each of the decades composing the century. Great Britain has assumed a different perspective. While Great Britain is focusing upon English events of significance, the theme is the millennium. Other differences also come to mind when comparing the stamps of our British cousins and the USPS. The USPS actively seeks public input into the designs of the stamps, whereas the Royal Mail has commissioned a variety of artists to design stamps around a series of twelve “tales” which signify and celebrate important events in the past 1,000 years of British history. These “tales include the following themes: 1) the inventors’, 2) the travelers’, 3) the patients’, 4) the settlers’, 5) the workers’, 6) the entertainers, 7) the citizens’, 8) the scientists’, 9) the farmer’s, 10) the soldiers’, 11) the Christians’ and 12) the artists’ tales.

All told Great Britain will issue forty-eight (stamps) with as much hoopla as can be generated by a £1.5 million direct marketing campaign. Thus far, twenty of the forty eight stamps have been issued. It is anticipated that a total of twenty-five sets of Millennium stamps, 12 issues in 1999, 12 issues in 2000 and one final issue in January 2001.

For those interested, the British stamps of this series issued between 1/99-2/2000 will be on sale through 2/2001, and those issued between 3/2000-1/2001 on sale for one year after their issue date.

