

This Day in History... May 26, 1928

First US Airmail Booklet

On May 26, 1928, the US issued its first-ever Airmail booklet.

Charles A. Lindbergh made history on May 20, 1927, when he embarked on the first solo non-stop flight across the Atlantic. Completed in 33½ hours, the flight earned Lindbergh a number of honors, including a Legion of Honor from France and a Congressional Medal of Honor and a Distinguished Flying Cross from the United States. He also became an instant celebrity.

Lindbergh's rise to fame was so great that thousands of Americans wrote to Washington with requests for a commemorative stamp honoring his historic flight. While the post office wouldn't picture him, they did agree to honor him, creating the first US stamp that honored a living person.

That stamp was issued on June 18, 1927, less than a month after Lindbergh's famed flight. More than 20 million stamps were issued and it was very popular with the public.



Stamp pictures Lindbergh's plane and map of his Trans-Atlantic route.

According to the third assistant postmaster's announcement, there was an "enormous demand for airmail stamps in book form." So a year later, on May 26, 1928, the Post Office Department issued the same design in a booklet – the first US airmail booklet. Only 145,560 booklets of six 10¢ *Spirit of St. Louis* airmail stamps were distributed to post offices nationwide. The booklet carried an extra charge of 1¢ for its cover, which made the total cost of a booklet 61¢.

Unaware that the booklet pane differed from #C10, many stamp collectors overlooked the new format. Two months after #C10a was issued, postal rates decreased and the 1927 10¢ airmail stamp became obsolete.

It would be 15 years before the post office would issue another airmail booklet picturing a twin-motored transport plane.



Spirit of St. Louis Booklet Pane of 3



1943 6¢ Transport Plane booklet pane that paid the domestic airmail rate

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