

THE JAPOS BULLETIN

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AUTHORS, AND POETS ON STAMPS

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JAPOS News

Clete Delvaux

JAPOS president Clete Delvaux is sad to announce that JIM BYRNE (1940–2023) closed his album on April 1. Our sympathies go out to his wife JANICE BYRNE—also a JAPOS member—and family. Although Jim lived in Illinois, he was a member of many Wisconsin stamp organizations, including the Wisconsin Federation of Stamp Clubs and the Green Bay Philatelic Society—both of which your president/editor is a member.

JIM BYRNE's article "The Dumas Family on Stamps of Haiti" was voted the best JAPOS article of 2021. He was an excellent writer. If you would like to read the article again, see it on the JAPOS website:

www.authorsonstamps.org.

HELP! JAPOS member DOUGLAS MOREHOUSE, a Sherlock Holmes topical collector, is looking for dealers who specialize in "postmarks and Cinderella/locals." If any JAPOS members are aware of such dealers, please email Douglas at dammad17@verizon.net.

BLACK AUTHORS: Some months ago, our secretary/treasurer suggested that JAPOS writers look at USPS's "Black Heritage" series for doing writeups on authors. Many in this series are authors—for example, this year's Ernest Gaines and last year's playwright August Wilson.

But what has happened to USPS's "Literary Arts" series. I've always bewailed the fact that this series never used the term "Literary Arts" on the stamps, which makes it difficult to find an accurate list of authors in that series. Was last year's Silverstein's "The Giving Tree" a "Literary Arts" selection? Is this year's Toni Morrison stamp a "Literary Arts" selection? Can anyone find me an accurate USPS listing of the stamps in this series?



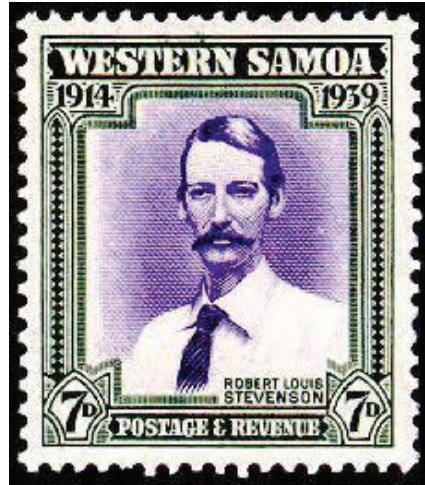
Robert Louis Stevenson: Poet

Part 1

Michael Hennessy

According to the Robert Lewis Stevenson website (robert-louis-stevenson.org), Stevenson published an astonishing 32 books in a career that lasted only 20 years, not counting 7 more that appeared shortly

after his death. He wrote fiction, non-fiction, travel books, plays, and poetry. But he is most remembered for three novels: *Treasure Island* (1883), which he called “a story for boys”; a horror tale called *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886); and *Kidnapped* (1886), a work of historical fiction.



Portraits: left, age 30; middle: Samoa Sc# 184 (1939); right, Samoa Sc# 671d (1994)

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894) lived only 44 years and was in poor health during much of his life, but he squeezed a great deal of living—and writing—into that brief span. He was born in Scotland into a family of engineers. His interests did not incline in that direction, so to please his father, he earned a law degree. But by his early thirties (see photo above), he had engaged his real passion: writing stories. Stevenson maintained his Scots identity his entire life, but he was also a citizen of the world—marrying an American woman he met in France, traveling in the United States, and sailing around the Pacific and making friends with the Hawaiian king. Then, during his later years, he settled in the Samoan Islands, where he was a beloved figure, known as Tusitala (“teller of tales”).

Poems for Children: *A Child's Garden of Verses*

Stevenson is less well known as a poet. But he did publish a book of poems for children, *A Child's Garden of Verses* (1885), that is considered a classic. He wrote this book after finishing *Treasure Island* while recuperating from a debilitating illness. The collection consists of 64 short poems written in the voice of a child. Some scholars suggest that the poems were inspired by Stevenson's memories of a lonely childhood, during which he was often confined to bed because of his chronically weak lungs.

In one of the best-known poems from the book, “The Land of Nod,” a child describes the magical



Christmas 1986 issue; illustrations by Millicent Sowerby; original poem titles (left to right): “System,” “Time to Rise,” “Auntie’s Skirts,” “Good and Bad Children.” Samoa Sc# 656–659

world encountered each night in dreams. It begins: “From Breakfast on through all the day / At home among my friends I stay, / But every night I go abroad / Afar into the land of Nod.” Another famous poem, “From a Railway Carriage,” uses sound and rhythm to capture the sensations of a child riding in a train and watching the scenery whiz by: “Faster than fairies, faster than witches, / Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches; / And charging along like troops in a battle, / All through the meadows the horses and cattle.” Other well-known poems in the book include “My Shadow” and “The Lamplighter.”

In 1986, for Christmas, Samoa issued four stamps based on poems from *A Child’s Garden of Verses*. The stamps use illustrations that Millicent Sowerby (1879–1967) created for a 1908 edition of the book, though the titles of individual poems do not appear on the stamps.

The first stamp depicts a reward “system” whereby a child receives an orange each day for proper behavior. The second illustration is for a poem that touts the virtues of rising early: “A birdie with a yellow bill / Hopped upon the window sill, / Cocked his shining eye and said: / ‘Ain’t you ‘shamed, you sleepy-head?’” And the third illustration is based on this poem:

Auntie’s Skirts

Whenever Auntie moves around,
Her dresses make a curious sound,
They trail behind her up the floor,
And trundle after through the door.

The fourth stamp in the set portrays children who are “good” (the girls playing in the foreground) and “bad” (the boys playing in the background). All the poems in the book are highly didactic, which is characteristic of children’s verse in the Victorian Era.

Poems for Grown-ups: *Underwoods*

In 1887, two years after publishing *A Child’s Garden of Verses*, Stevenson published *Underwoods*, a collection of poems for adult readers. The book contains 54 poems, 16 of them written in Scots dialect. The longest poem is “The Lowden Sabbath Morn,” a delightful 144-line satire directed at a preacher in a rural church in Lothian (Scots = Lowden), the area of Scotland where Stevenson grew up. The poem describes villagers preparing for church and then notes their various

states of disengagement during the service. In the end, the fire-and-brimstone preacher’s sermon fails to “steer” (stir) the parishioners from their sleep, and “in their restin’ graves, the deid (dead) / Sleep aye (all) the deeper.”

The shortest poem in *Underwoods* is the first one, called “Envoy,” in which the poet sends forth his “little book” with good wishes for all readers:

Go, little book, and wish to all
Flowers in the garden, meat in the hall,
A bin of wine, a spice of wit,
A house with lawns enclosing it,
A living river by the door,
A nightingale in the sycamore.

Perhaps the best-known poem in *Underwoods* is “Requiem,” which is inscribed on Stevenson’s tomb, and which I discuss in the second part of this article. Four lines from the poem appear on a stamp issued by Niue in 1994. The image on the stamp is the work of renowned stamp designer Vásárhelyi Gyula László (1929–2013), who designed 7,500 stamps for more than 150 different countries. The stamp is part of a block of four, with the other three depicting scenes from Stevenson’s novels.



Lines from “Requiem”
Niue Sc# 671d (1994)

Grahame and His Fable

Clete Delvaux and Wikipedia

The University of Wisconsin at Green Bay offers over 150 courses to retirees. One of the courses that definitely caught my eye for the spring 2022 semester was named “Of Toads and Cars: The Wind in the Willows.” The blurb describing the course states, “Kenneth Grahame’s *The Wind in the Willows*, published in 1908, has never gone out of fashion.”

The stamp pictured here is one of a set of four issued by Great Britain in 1979 to celebrate “The Year of the Child.” The other three in the set feature scenes from *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter (9p; Sc# 867), *Winnie the Pooh* by A. A. Milne (11p; Sc# 869), and *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll (13p; Sc# 870).



Great Britain’s gutter pair, Sc# 868 (1979)

The *Wind in the Willows* is a book of linked animal tales by British writer Kenneth Grahame (1859–1932) that began as a series of bedtime stories for his 4-year-old son Alastair. In 1908, when he retired from his position as Secretary of the Bank of England, Grahame decided to publish the stories in book form.



Kenneth Grahame

The story of four anthropomorphized animals (Mole, Rat, Toad, and Badger) “was published as children’s literature, but the story has a great deal to say to adults too—particularly in our era of concerns about environmental sustainability.” As author Kenneth Grahame originally told the stories to his only small son Alastair,

it reminds us of *Alice in Wonderland*, “The Tale of Peter Rabbit” and other great stories later written for the sake of one child. So, the book may be chiefly for youth. And yet, just as in *The Little Prince* (See the 2022 spring issue of the JAPOS BULLETIN), many see that it is not only for youth.

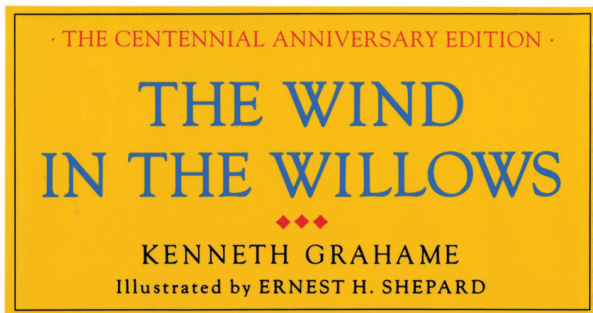
Although the stories are alternately slow moving and fast paced, the beautifully written work, with its evocative descriptions of the countryside, is interspersed with Toad’s exciting adventures, making it a classic of English literature.

Written between 1907 and 1908, *The Wind in the Willows* reflects the English Edwardian era in which it was written (1901–1910). In popular culture, this time was often portrayed as more idyllic than it actually was. Artists and writers alike were inspired by the rising popularity of the automobile and the development of electricity. It’s also possible to read *The Wind in the Willows* as a response to rapid industrialization in the latter half of the 19th century. The book is sometimes considered a pastoral novel, or one that portrays rural life as simple and happy, with nature. For wealthy English landowners, which the novel’s four main animal characters represent, leisure activities (like boating, hunting, and horse riding) were extremely popular.

The Wind in the Willows is considered to have been published during the Golden Age of children’s literature—roughly from the mid-1800s to the start of World War I (1850–1914). Although Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* wasn’t technically the first book of the era, it’s often considered the first—and one of the most important, as it represented a move away from didactic stories toward those that were more imaginative and fun. Similar books published during this time include J.M. Barrie’s *Peter Pan*, Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *The Secret Garden*, Kipling’s *The Jungle Book*, and the works of Beatrix Potter.

Fans of *The Wind in the Willows* included A. A. Milne, whose *Winnie the Pooh*’s adventures somewhat resembled those of Toad, Badger, Mole, and Rat. In 1929, Milne extracted Toad’s adventures for his play *Toad of Toad Hall*, the first and most popular of numerous stage adaptations. Several film versions were also made, including an animated version by Disney in 1949.

The original *The Wind in the Willows* was plain text with a frontispiece by Graham Robertson, but later editions were published with illustrations. “The most popular illustrations are probably by E. H. Shepard,



originally published in 1931 and believed to be authorized, as Grahame was pleased with the sketches, though he did not live to see the completed work.” (See the book cover above for a sample of his illustrations.) *The Wind in the Willows* was also the last work by the noted illustrator Arthur Rackham.

According to Wikipedia, Grahame began to publish light stories while in his twenties. These appeared in London periodicals such as *St James’s Gazette*. Some of these were collected and published as *Pagan Papers* in 1894, and two years later as *The Golden Age*. These were followed by *Dream Days* in 1898, which contains “The Reluctant Dragon.” And yet *The Wind in the Willows* remains the sole accomplishment of Grahame’s writing career.

Grahame died in Pangbourne, Berkshire, in 1932, aged 73. He is buried in Holywell Cemetery, Oxford. Grahame’s cousin Anthony Hope, also a successful author, wrote his epitaph:

To the beautiful memory of Kenneth Grahame
 Husband of Elspeth and father of Alastair
 Who passed the river on the 6th of July 1932
 Leaving childhood and literature through him
 The more blest for all time.

Tomie dePaola Honored

Christopher D. Cook

One May 5, the United States Postal Service issued a stamp honoring children’s book author and illustrator Tomie dePaola (1934–2020). The stamp features his best-known character Strega Nona (Grandma Witch), from the eponymous book. Published in 1975, *Strega Nona* won a Caldecott Honor the following year. A 2012 *School Library Journal* poll ranked the work as one of the “Top 100 Picture Books” of all time. Over a fifty-year career, dePaola created more than 260 books which have sold 25 million copies. (Wikipedia)

From the USPS press release: “There are many gifted children’s book authors and illustrators, but Tomie dePaola’s genius is unique in so many ways: He could communicate with—and without—words, and touch readers across cultures and generations,” said Steve Monteith, chief customer and marketing officer, who was the dedicating official for the ceremony. ‘At the Postal Service, we feel great kinship in this idea. We help Americans of all backgrounds and generations stay connected, no matter where they are.’ ...

[DePaola] produced an extraordinarily varied body of work that encompasses folktales and legends, informational books, religious and holiday stories, and autobiographical tales. Deceptively simple, his stories contain layers of emotional meaning that appeal to readers of all ages. ... In all his books, dePaola tried to convey three fundamental truths: Success depends on hard work, happiness relies on embracing one’s true self, and love and kindness underscore all. In 2011, the American Library Association awarded him the Laura Ingalls Wilder Award (now the Children’s Literature Legacy Award) for his ‘substantial and lasting contribution to literature for children.’”



United States Sc# 5797 (2023)

Soldier, President, Writer: Eisenhower as an Author

William D. Pederson

U.S. Army Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890–1969) emerged from World War II as a battle-tested, five-star American war hero who subsequently eclipsed his own military legend by becoming the 34th President of the United States (1953–1961). Both of these careers played out on the international stage and have overshadowed his third career as a writer for most. However, at least some philatelists consider Eisenhower as the almost-Emily Dickinson of the White House. His success across multiple careers isn't too surprising considering he was a military leader experienced in developing strategies for battles on multiple fronts. It's also not surprising that Eisenhower was influenced directly and indirectly by Abraham Lincoln, another strategic thinker who commanded U.S. troops at war and was a writer. Like Lincoln, Eisenhower was known for his moderation.

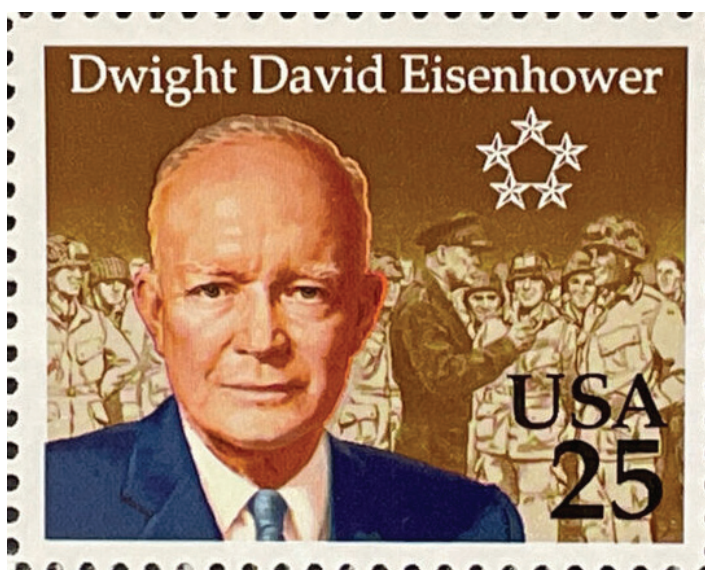
The fact that Eisenhower had an uncle named Abraham Lincoln Eisenhower is evidence of the Eisenhower family's admiration for the 16th President and national icon. Ironically, Eisenhower attended Lincoln Grade School in Abilene, Kansas. Ike, as he later became known to millions around the world, was the third of seven sons in his family. His two older brothers opted for professions—banker and lawyer, and he was the jock. He retained his interest in playing sports after he arrived at West Point, but injured his knee while there. Much to his chagrin, Eisenhower's foot-

ball participation during the first decade of his Army career consisted of coaching football teams. Given that Lincoln reminders permeated his boyhood, it is ironic that Eisenhower's early Army assignments were located in Gettysburg, which would also become his eventual retirement home.

Largely apolitical as an adult, Eisenhower had never voted in a presidential election before 1948 when he cast his ballot for the Republican candidate. A frequently invoked Republican Party moniker is "The Party of Lincoln," and when Eisenhower ran for the presidency it was as a Republican.

Like Lincoln a century before him, Eisenhower prevailed over an opponent of towering intellect and reputation but physically shorter. Abe faced "The Little Giant" Stephen A. Douglas, another politician-lawyer, and largely defeated him in the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates by exposing Douglas' Sophist approach to slavery. Ike's nemesis was a military Goliath, Gen. Douglas A. MacArthur (1880–1969), the son of a U.S. Civil War Union Army general. MacArthur became chief of staff, the youngest-ever chief of staff in the U.S. Army. His diminutive stature was counterbalanced by his soaring ego. MacArthur, for example, made sure photographs taken of him were carefully staged so he appeared much taller. Eisenhower at first was impressed by MacArthur's pedigree and intellect, but quickly identified his boss's authoritarian streak that confirmed the truism, military culture discourages dissent, apparent in MacArthur's handling of the "Bonus Army" in 1932.

Between Eisenhower's early football team coaching assignments and his later elevation, he was assigned to a military writing project that laid the groundwork for his later writing career. He served with Gen. John J. "Black Jack" Pershing in Paris after World War I, assigned to head a staff of military officers appointed to the American Battle Monuments Commission and charged with writing a guidebook to the American battlefields of Europe. Eisenhower expanded the project beyond a mere guidebook and in six months produced a 262-page volume. His diligent and detailed research for the European battlefield "guidebook" positioned Eisenhower as the general best prepared for America's participation in the European Theater of World War II. The U.S. Army published the volume without crediting individual authors. The guidebook was an example of Eisenhower's dedication and work ethic, also evident from his learning to read and write French while stationed in France. He made up for



United States Sc# 2513 (1990)

lack of eloquence in writing with his thoroughness. In 1992, the Army republished the guidebook under the title *American Armies and Battlefields of Europe*. Eisenhower's work on the book reflects his tendency to be a team player rather than seeking personal acclaim. Unlike Gen. MacArthur, Eisenhower was not a prima donna using his position to further himself.

Later, Eisenhower would witness MacArthur's demagoguery that resulted in President Harry Truman firing him. A former World War I captain, Truman fired MacArthur for violating the principle of civilian supremacy. MacArthur was not the only demagogue that Eisenhower would encounter, however. In his second career as president, he had to deal with Sen. Joseph McCarthy. Rather than confront the headline-grabbing McCarthy directly, Eisenhower did so indirectly, and was criticized for his approach. Eisenhower defenders tend to justify his style as a "hidden-hand" one (1982).

Speechwriters are common on modern presidents' staffs. Some are well known publicly during their tenure as speechwriters, and some presidents rely more heavily than others on their speechwriters. Eisenhower used his speechwriters but did not give them carte blanche. He would pore over their work for hours, retaining final control over what he communicated through his presidential addresses. His edits typically involved removing the pronoun "I", flowery rhetoric, and superlatives.

Eisenhower, like Lincoln, was not a demagogue and preferred plain talk to puffery. And, also like Lincoln, Eisenhower's domestic agenda focused especially on

national infrastructure. For the young nation emerging from its frontier beginnings, Lincoln championed construction of canals, roads, and railroads. A century later, Eisenhower advocated for similar improvements that literally and figuratively have transported America into the 21st century. His major domestic achievements include the St. Lawrence Seaway and the U.S. Interstate Highway system.

Eisenhower signed legislation for the St. Lawrence Seaway project on May 13, 1954. Five years later it opened to provide ocean-going vessels a channel between the Atlantic Ocean and Lake Superior. The seaway spans 2,342 miles from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to Duluth, Minnesota, on the western shore of Lake Superior, opening industries and agriculture along that corridor to international trade. In a sense, it was a characteristic Eisenhower "team effort" with America's ally Canada without trumpeting his role in the effort.

A half-century later, the Marshall Islands issued a souvenir sheet to highlight the continuing close relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom.

The two stamps on the souvenir sheet (shown on the next page) are harbingers of how things have changed when it comes to recognition of the First Lady's role. For decades historians ignored or derided Mary Todd Lincoln's contributions to Lincoln's political success and to the modern presidency. In contrast, one of these stamps affirms the First Lady's importance by showcasing Mamie Eisenhower while the other features the president.



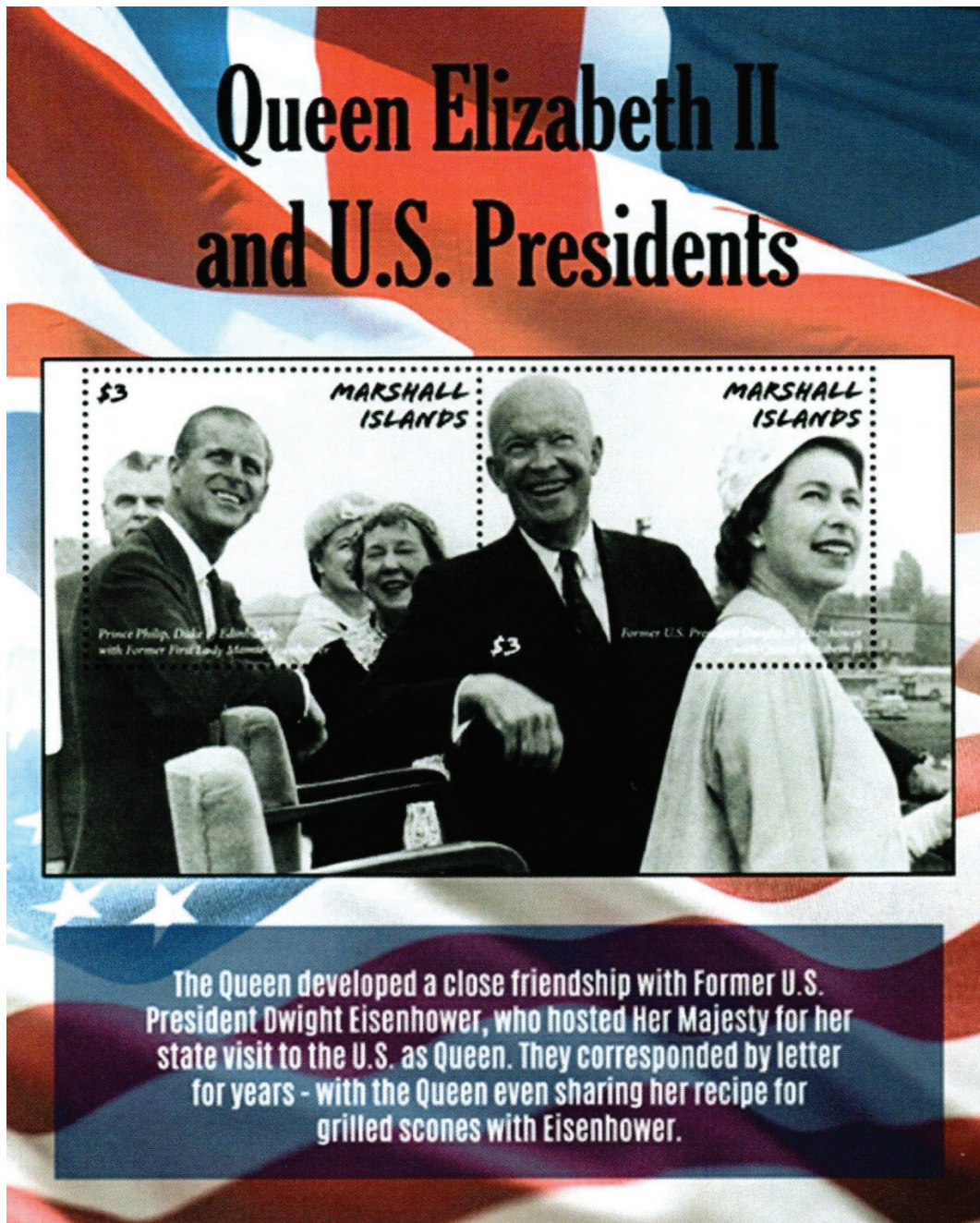
St. Lawrence Seaway FDC, joint issue, Sc# 387 (1959)

The St. Lawrence Seaway may have been Ike's first major domestic achievement, but it was dwarfed two years later by his most spectacular domestic success: getting the Congress to pass legislation to build the national Interstate Highway System. His understanding of the need for the interstate highway system was rooted in his experience in 1919 when he participated in the first transcontinental motor convoy that traveled from Washington, D.C., to California to test the so-called Lincoln Highway's adequacy in case of national emergency and found it inadequate for such use. That experience was contrasted with the autobahn that Eisenhower had observed in Germany. It became the largest U.S. public works project in

history. It is so massive it can be seen from outer space along with the Great Wall of China and the Suez Canal.

Ike outdid Abe when it came to infrastructure projects. Ironically from a philatelic perspective, no stamp has commemorated it!

Eisenhower's third career as an author ended with his three volumes of *Memoirs* (1948, 1963, and 1965). While highly regarded, they did not reach the level of U.S. Grant's two-volume *Memoirs*. Ike's writing extended well beyond the Army guidebook and his *Memoirs* to include diaries, letters, and speeches that give us additional insights to this important military and political figure, in his own words.



Marshall Islands souvenir sheet (2021)