Tribute to a Fabulist: Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue

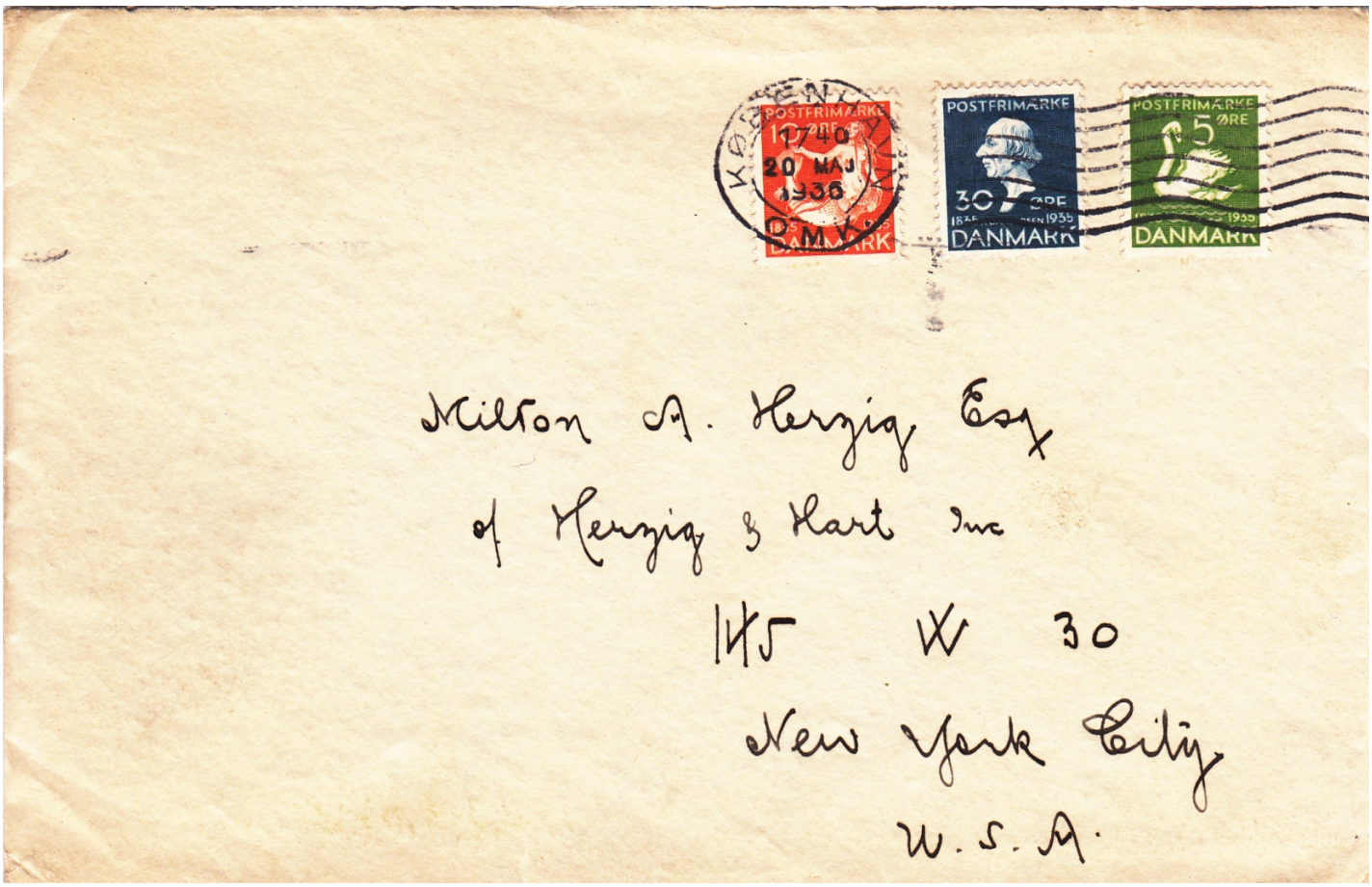


On 4 October 1935, Denmark issued a set of stamps to commemorate the first publication of what became known as Hans Christian Andersen's "fairy tales." That the early tales were artistic retellings of stories Andersen had heard in his youth and frequently not about fairies was of little concern to the public. In the collective mind of the public, they were his tales, and they became an essential component of Danish literature.

Hans Christian Andersen (2 April 1805 – 4 August 1875) attained a worldwide reputation as a writer of short stories, novels, poetry, and drama, but it was his early retelling of folk tales embellished with details of his own creation which caught the attention of the public and upon which his international reputation is based. Through tightly constructed renderings of traditional plots with richly evocative descriptions, Andersen placed characters in difficult and often tragic situations to examine moral and ethical principles. The mature moral situations and themes presented in a sophisticated prose style made his stories much more than children's tales. They are allegories and fables for adults with themes which still speak to readers 150 years or more after their first publication.

The centenary stamp issue of 1935 had six denominations with a likeness of Andersen in the 1860s on four values (7, 15, 20, and 30 øre) and "The Ugly Duckling" published in 1844 (5 øre) and "The Little Mermaid" published in 1836 (10 øre) depicted on the other two. Individually or in combination with other stamps, the six denominations could be used to pay a variety of Danish domestic and international postage rates.

Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue



This cover with a machine postmark from København (Copenhagen), Denmark, dated 20 May 1936 is franked with one stamp in each of the three designs in the 1935 Andersen issue:

- 10 øre tale of "The Little Mermaid" published in 1836.
- 30 øre depiction of Hans Christian Andersen in the 1860s.
- 5 øre tale of "The Ugly Duckling" published in 1844.

Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue



This cover is franked with one copy of the 5 øre stamp depicting the tale of "The Ugly Duckling" and five copies of the 5 øre stamp showing the Nikolai Church which was issued as part of a set marking the 400th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation in Denmark. Together, they pay the postage rate for delivery between Odense, Denmark, Andersen's birthplace, and Oakland, California. The bridge-style postmark is dated 12 May 1936.

Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue



The domestic postcard postage rate is paid on this card by the use of the 7 øre Andersen stamp with two denominations from the 1933 Numeral Issue. The *Landbrugsudstillingen 1938* mentioned in the commemorative København (Copenhagen) postmark dated 17 June 1938 was an agricultural exhibition which opened on the date of the postmark at Bellahøj, a former large estate near central Copenhagen.

Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue



This cover with a machine postmark from København (Copenhagen), Denmark, dated 23 December 1935 is franked with a 10 øre stamp depicting the tale of "The Little Mermaid" which paid the domestic postage rate.

Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue



This business reply envelope addressed to Haand I Haand is franked with a 15 øre Andersen stamp with the "HiH" perforated initials of the company. The stamp pays the domestic postal rate for local delivery. The slogan cancellation – *ENHVER DANSK BORGEM ER AKTIONER I D.S.B.* – appears with a København (Copenhagen) postmark dated 4 December 1935.

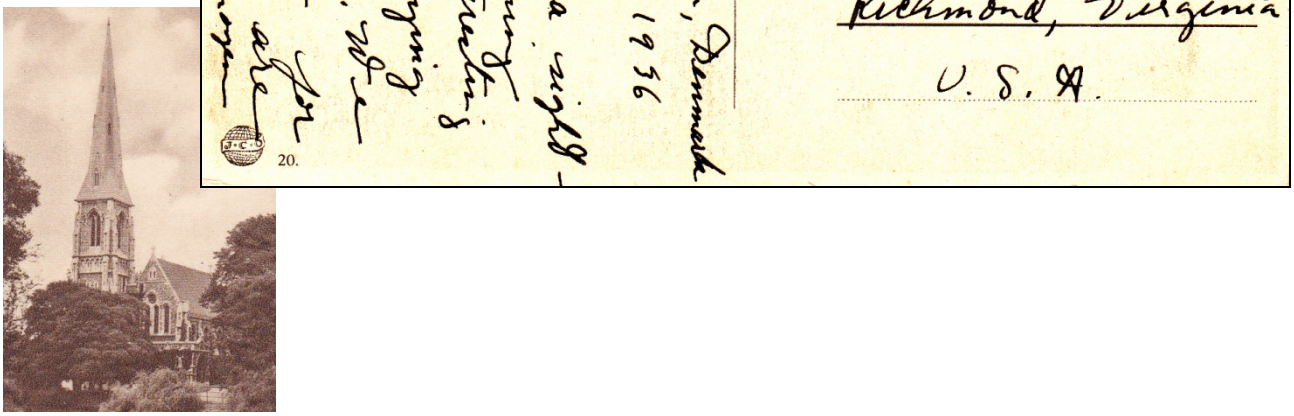
Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue



This cover addressed to København (Copenhagen) with a slogan cancellation from Randers, Denmark, dated 22 December 1935 is franked with the 15 øre stamp depicting Andersen. The slogan in the cancellation – *HVOA SOVEJEN MODEN / 13 LANDEVEJE* – is the motto of the city of Randers – "Where the sea meets the 13 highways" – a reference to the location of the municipality on the Randers Fjord and at the intersection of major land routes serving the region.

The cover also has a 1935 Christmas stamp depicting Jesus seated on the lap of Mary. In 1904, Denmark began issuing annual Christmas stamps to raise money for charity, especially for causes which focused on child welfare and the treatment of lung disease. Because these labels did not pay postage, they were only charity stamps, not semi-postal issues.

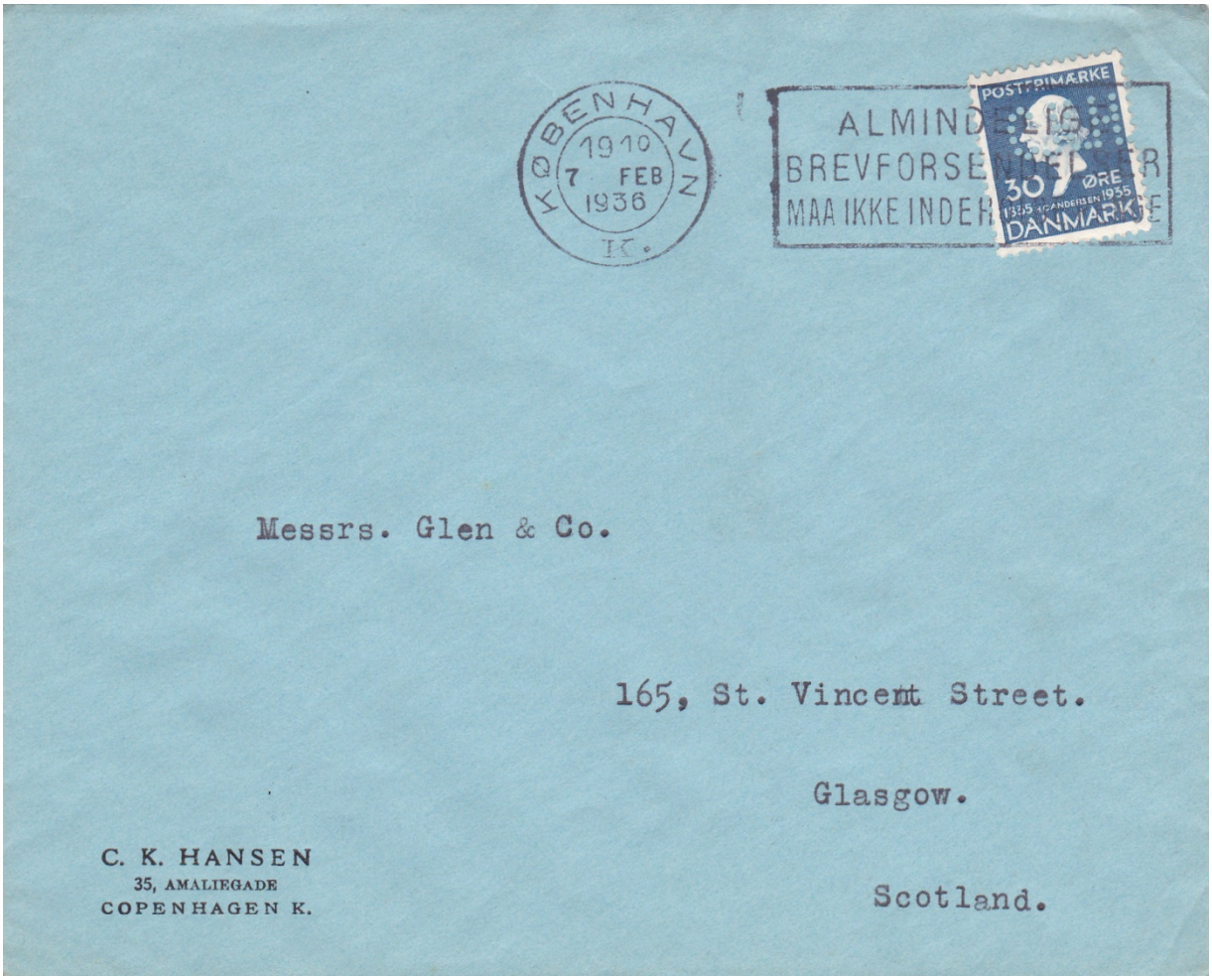
Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue



The single 20 øre stamp depicting Hans Christian Andersen paid the international postage on this postcard addressed to Richmond, Virginia, and postmarked in København (Copenhagen) on 17 July 1936. The slogan cancellation – *Postvæsenet beder om fuldstændig og tydellu Adresseangivelse* – advises mailers to use full addresses on mail.

Den Engelske Kirke (The English Church) depicted on the postcard was built in the 1880s to serve the growing English population in Copenhagen. Formally named St. Alban's, this Anglican church was commonly referred to by the Danes by the nationality of its parishioners. Its Gothic Revival architecture attracted visitors then and now. For the British, the church had an English connection through the marriage of Danish Princess Alexandra Caroline Marie Charlotte Louise Julia to Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales. When he ascended to the throne as Edward VII, Alexandria became Queen consort.

Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue



The 30 øre stamp depicting Hans Christian Andersen on this cover pays the postage rate from København (Copenhagen), Denmark, to Glasgow, Scotland, and has the perforated initials "C.K.H." of the sender C.K. Hansen. The machine slogan cancellation - *ALMINDELIGE BREVFORSENDELSER MAA IKKE INDEHOLDE PENGE* - dated 7 February 1936 advises the public that "general correspondence must not contain money."

Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue



On this cover, the 30 øre Andersen stamp is used in combination with a 20 øre air mail stamp issued 9 June 1934 depicting a plane flying over the towers of Copenhagen to pay the air mail postage from Copenhagen, Denmark, to Berlin-Charlottenburg, Germany. The København (Copenhagen) 21 "bridge" postmark is dated 10 October 1935, and the Berlin-Charlottenburg 5 "bridge" backstamp is dated 11 October 1935.

Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue

The 1935 centenary stamps have format options in addition to single stamps and stamps on cover with which to develop a representative collection.



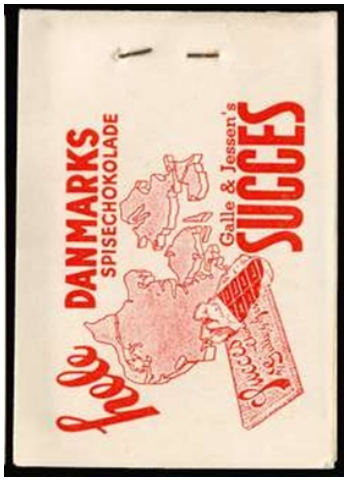
Tête-bêche Pairs Without Gutter



Tête-bêche Gutter Pairs

Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue





In 1935, Denmark issued booklets of Hans Christian Andersen stamps. Each booklet had three panes of four 5 øre stamps ("The Ugly Duckling" design), two panes of four of the 10 øre stamps ("The Little Mermaid" design), and one pane of four of the 15 øre stamp (Andersen's image). Each back cover advertised a product of the Galle and Jessen Company with a total of five different products: Gul Brud, Ga-Jol, Success Chocolate, Lita Vert, or Marcipan). The booklet panes were separated by interleaving with coupon (three different in all) and Andersen stories, either "The Little Match Girl" ("*Den lille pige med svovlstikkerne*"), "The Angel" ("*Engelen*"), "It's Quite True" (*Det er ganske vist!* "), "The Shirt Collar" ("*Flipperne*") or "The Butterfly" ("*Sommerfuglen*"). One booklet style even featured a simulated leather cover. In all, 76 possible combinations of covers and interleaving may exist/

Denmark's 1935 Hans Christian Andersen Centenary Issue



Photograph of Andersen by Franz Hanfstaengl, July 1860



Booklet Pane with København (Copenhagen) Cancellation



Photograph of Andersen by Thora Hallager, 1869