



## GILBERT-AND-ELLICE-ISLANDS STAMPS AND POSTAL HISTORY

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Published by Camel Press NF



*Cover image:* The cover image shows Jo Bodeon, a back-roper in the mule room at Chace Cotton Mill. Burlington, Vermont. This and other similar images in this book were taken by Lewis W. Hine, in the period between 1908-1912. These images as well as social campaigns by many including Hine, helped to formulate America's anti-child labour laws.

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# INTRODUCTION



# *Postage stamps and postal history of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands*

The first mail service to the Gilbert and Ellice Islands was ad hoc, depending on which ships were calling at the various islands. A regular service began in 1911; Edward VII postage stamps of Fiji were overprinted GILBERT & ELLICE / PROTECTORATE and put on sale on 1 January of that year, followed in March by a set of four stamps depicting a Pandanus tree, inscribed GILBERT & ELLICE ISLANDS / PROTECTORATE.

## *George V*

These were followed in 1912 by George V stamps of the common type, inscribed GILBERT & ELLICE ISLANDS. A new definitive series came out starting 14 January 1939, featuring local scenery and a profile of George VI. These were updated in 1956 with a profile of Elizabeth II.

## *Queen Elizabeth II*

A set of four stamps on 1 May 1960 commemorated the 60th anniversary of the discovery of phosphate at Ocean Island. The definitive series of 1965 depicted daily activities of the natives, but a decimal currency conversion necessitated surcharges in 1966 and a reissue of the stamps in 1968. The colony issued about 10-15 stamps per year thereafter, usually as sets of four, until the end of 1975.

In 1976, the islands became two separate colonies and later independent as Kiribati and Tuvalu.

## *See also*

Postage stamps and postal history of [Kiribati](../kiribati/introduction)

Postage stamps and postal history of [Tuvalu](../tuvalu/introduction)