



# Topical Tidbits

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## Dragons, Part 2

If you're thinking, "Wait! There was already an issue about dragons," you're right! The January – March 2016 issue of *Topical Tidbits* DID feature dragons. Since the USPS issued new dragon stamps this August, we thought it a good idea to do another issue on the scaly creatures.

Here's some information from the USPS about the new stamps:

Throughout history and across the globe — from Europe to the Middle East to Asia to the Americas — people have enjoyed tales of mythological creatures. Though these legendary animals vary in shape, size and color, they're most often described as lizard-like with four legs, sharp claws, scales, wings and spiky tails. The stamps feature four colorful dragons set against four unique backgrounds.

In the Far East, dragons are ubiquitous [found everywhere]. The wingless orange dragon weaving its way around a pagoda is inspired by creatures found in Asian art, architecture, folk religion and ancient lore. The Chinese, in particular, have venerated [revered] the dragon for thousands of years.

European folklore inspired the dragons on two other stamps. The purple dragon with orange wings and sharp black armor on its back snakes around a white castle that evokes [brings to mind] Camelot. The green fire-breathing dragon towers over a medieval-inspired castle. The fierce beasts have even become part of the identity of many countries.

Enjoy this issue and if you missed the first one on dragons, it can be found on the ATA website under "youth." There is also a video on the Rocky Mountain Philatelic Library's page called "Dragon Lore on Stamps" that you might find very entertaining.

<https://www.rmpldenver.org/publications/videos.html?start=12>



The U.S. Postal Service unveiled four colorful stamp designs depicting dragons at APS StampShow/National Topical Stamp Show, Aug. 9-12 in Columbus, Ohio.

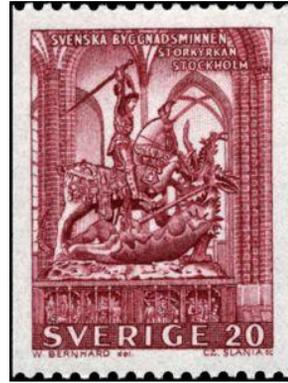
# Dragons from Around the World

St. George is famous around the world because he killed a dragon to rescue a princess. He is the patron saint of England as well as other countries. He's usually depicted as a knight mounted on a horse in the process of slaying a dragon. All the stamps below show St. George. See if you can guess which country issued them. Answers are below.



**1. LIECHTENSTEIN:**

- a. Liberia
- b. Lebanon
- c. Lichtenstein
- d. Latvia



**5. SVERIGE:**

- a. Switzerland
- b. Sweden
- c. Suriname
- d. Sri Lanka



**2. ROSSIJA:**

- a. Portugal
- b. Poland
- c. Russia
- d. Romania



**6. :**

- a. Scotland
- b. Ireland
- c. Great Britain
- d. United Nations



**3. HELVETIA:**

- a. Hungary
- b. Switzerland
- c. Honduras
- d. Serbia



**7. DEUTSCHES REICH:**

- a. Germany
- b. Netherlands
- c. Denmark
- d. Spain



**4. ΕΛΛΑΣ :**

- a. Egypt
- b. Estonia
- c. Gabon
- d. Greece



**8. BELGIQUE:**

- a. Belize
- b. Benin
- c. Bulgaria
- d. Belgium

# East Versus West

Read about the differences in dragons from the East and West below. Then, circle all the stamps that fit the description of dragons from the West.

Eastern Dragons	Western Dragons
Have a snake-like body	Look like giant lizards
Don't have wings	Have large, leathery bat-like wings
Have whiskers	Have sharp teeth and strong legs
Are considered very auspicious and lucky	Bring harm, suffering, and fear to humans
Symbolize strength and wisdom; bring good luck	Seen as evil or malevolent
Hangouts include mountains, heavens, and seas	Hangouts include mountains, castles, and swamps
Like to eat rice-wraps	Like to eat humans and livestock



# Dragon Boats



The Dragon Boat Festival, held annually on the fifth day of the fifth month on the Chinese lunar calendar, is a traditional holiday. Boats race against each other as one team member sits at the front beating a drum in order to ensure that the rowers keep in time with one another.



Honoring  
*Leif Erikson*



11th Century  
Norse Explorer



FIRST DAY OF ISSUE

Viking long ships had dragons carved onto the prows. On the ship *Drakkar*, which means "ship-dragon," Leif Ericson reached the shores of America in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

# Boat Races

The boats pictured below are part of the Transportation Series issued in the 1980s and 1990s. Do you think one of these boats could beat a dragon boat or a Viking long ship? Look closely at the name on each stamp and see if you can put them in ABC order. Answers below.



# Dragon Fun

## FEED THE DRAGON:

Don't read the story out loud yet! First, get one person to read out what kind of words are needed (adjective, noun, etc. as shown in bold) to fill in the blanks of the story. Have the other person call out words to fill in those blanks. When all the blanks are filled, read the story out loud and try not to laugh too hard!

Everyone in the village worried about the dragon. He was \_\_\_\_\_ (ADJECTIVE) and \_\_\_\_\_ (COLOR) and came out of his cave every week to eat up a dozen \_\_\_\_\_ (ANIMAL, PLURAL). We wished for a hero who would \_\_\_\_\_ (ACTION) the monster, but no one ever came.

I went to see the old blind man whose house was perched on a/an \_\_\_\_\_ (OBJECT). All the children were scared of him because his hair was \_\_\_\_\_ (ADJECTIVE) and he \_\_\_\_\_ (ACTION) when anyone came near. But someone so old might be very wise, so I summoned my courage and rode my \_\_\_\_\_ (MODE OF TRANSPORTATION) to his home.

He appeared at the door and I covered my eyes with my \_\_\_\_\_ (BODY PART) to keep fear at bay. "Please tell me how to stop the dragon!" I cried as bravely as I could. The old man replied. "It's simple. Dragons love \_\_\_\_\_ (TYPE OF CANDY). Why didn't you ask before?" The door slammed and I departed, filled with \_\_\_\_\_ (EMOTION)!

Back in the village, I ran to the square and stood on a/an \_\_\_\_\_ (OBJECT) to share the good news. Candy would keep the dragon happy and our animals would be safe! Everyone shouted " \_\_\_\_\_ !" (EXCLAMATION) and carried me around town on their \_\_\_\_\_ (BODY PART, PLURAL).

We celebrated with a huge feast of \_\_\_\_\_ (FOOD) and \_\_\_\_\_ (LIQUID) and the dragon never \_\_\_\_\_ (ACTION ENDING IN "ED") us again!

*Written especially for this issue of Topical Tidbits and used with kind permission of Zephyr Hill Blog.*

## DRAGON PUZZLE:

Use the stamps as clues to solve these words that have DRAGON in them. Fill in the blank with the missing letters. Answers at bottom.

Dragon \_ \_ \_



\_\_\_\_\_ Dragon

\_\_\_\_\_ Dragon



Answers: FLY, KOMODO, SNAP



What do you think is written on the note the knight is holding? Write it below.



# Dragons

