RMS Queen Mary

Cruise Ship, Troop Transport, Hotel

The 2$^{1/2}$-penny cover postage meets the foreign 1-oz rate, but which is an overpayment of 1 penny. The mail qualified for Transatlantic Penny Postage Rate, a reduced rate on mail to the USA, which matched the Empire (in-UK) Rate. (shown actual size)

Launched September 26, 1934, the HMS Queen Mary initiated her maiden voyage on May 27, 1936 from Southampton, Southern England. The 81,000-ton Cunard White Star ocean liner arrived in New York the following day. A marvel of her age, RMS Queen Mary is longer than the Eifel Tower is tall and measures about the length of two Washington Monuments stacked end to end. Legend has it that the ship was to be named for Queen Victoria. When Cunard asked permission of King George V to name the ship for "Britain's greatest queen," he replied that his wife would be delighted.

Above: poster stamp, Mary of Teck, wife of King George V (actual size)

Prime Minister Winston Churchill reviews British troops—from Great Britain 2010 Prestige Pane: Britain Alone

In 1939, the Queen Mary became a WWII troop ship. Painted gray and retrofitted with close-quarter bunks, she was dubbed the *Gray Ghost*, hauling nearly 16,000 troops in seven years. In her lifetime, RMS Queen Mary traveled more than 3,700,000 miles, equivalent to about 152 times around the globe. Her final voyage brought her to Long Beach, California, USA where she resides as a museum and hotel.

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Below: Queen Mary Hotel room keys. The hotel is currently closed.