

## THE £1 STAMPS OF MALTA.

By M.E. Jetten.

Malta, which began issuing its own stamps 107 years ago, has in all that time had only five £1 stamps. It has been said that there is no need, except for fiscal purposes, for a stamp of such high value.

It is true that Malta managed with values of 2s.6d., 5s., and 10s., up to 1922, with the first 5s. value in 1886, and first 2s.6d. and 10s values in 1899. Nevertheless, it is certain that all the £1 values have been used on registered and highvalue packets and on official, and private, larger packets and parcels; but it must be admitted that many £1 stamps have been seen with purely philatelic cancellations.

On a design basis, the number of £1 stamps could be said to be merely four, the only practical difference between the issues of 1922 and 1925 being that of a watermark; the 1922 issue with sideways watermark and the 1925 issue with upright watermark.

The £1 black and carmine-red of 1922, S.G. type 22, watermark Crown and Script CA, perf. 14 (comb) was recess printed by De La Rue in sheets of 80 (8×10). It had no plate numbers, but two narrow red lines frame the outer edge of the sheet. The design by C. Dingli who has been said to have been a Government servant, shows the allegorical figure of Melita, "a half-sister to Britannia". The values are in two tablets top left and right, and the inscriptions POSTAGE and REVENUE, at left and right sides with MALTA at the foot between two shields. These shields show, at the left, the Union Jack, and at the right, a Maltese Cross.

The £1 of 1925 is the same design but with the difference of watermark mentioned earlier. It is also in a different colour, being on a paler shade of paper and in black and bright carmine as distinct from carmine red.

There was no £1 value in the King George VI definitive stamps and so it was 14 years (from 1935 to 1949) before the next one appeared, this being the Royal Silver Wedding commemorative "omnibus" issue for the colonies. Malta's Silver Wedding £1 is different from general issue in that "MALTA" appears between a Maltese Cross and the George Cross, national symbols of which she is rightly proud. All the £1 Silver Wedding stamps were printed in recess by Bradbury, Wilkinson and Co. Ltd., with the country name typographed except Malta, her name being printed in recess. The watermark is Mult. Script C-A, perf.  $11\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ . The date of issues varied, Malta's being January 4th, 1949. The £1 stamps of the Silver Wedding are becoming increasingly sought-after and Malta's may prove to be one of the best. First day covers of the set are difficult to get today.

There was a period of eight years before the next £1 value appeared, on January 5th, 1957, to complete the 1956 definitive Queen Elizabeth II issue.

It featured the Queen's portrait and the great marble group, "The Baptism of Christ", by Guiseppe Mazzuoli, which dominates the choir of the Co-Cathedral of St. John in Valletta. The name of the country appears at the top of the stamp flanked by the now familiar Maltese and George Crosses, and beneath the Queen's portrait the value and POSTAGE/REVENUE. This stamp was recess-printed by Waterlows. Watermark Mult. Script C-A; perf. 14×13½. Another eight years and two days passed before the next £1 appeared at the top value of the first post Independence definitives on January 7th, 1965. Designed by Chev. E.V. Cremona, the 19 values were symbolic of every period of Malta's long history. The £1, printed in photogravure by Harrison and Son, Ltd., on Maltese Cross watermarked paper, perf. 14½, depicts the Island three patron saints, Paulus, Publius and Agatha. St. Paul, of course, was shipwrecked on Malta as recorded in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians. St. Publius was the Roman Governor whom St. Paul converted to Christianity and who became the first Bishop of Malta. St. Agatha was the daughter of a Sicilian nobleman who fled to Malta to avoid marriage to the man to whom her father had betrothed her. Being devoutly religious, she had wanted to dedicate her life to the Church. On returning to Sicily, she was brutally martyred.

One wonders what turn of events, what accident of history, or to what extent of modern desire for constant change will decide how long we wait for the next £1 stamp of Malta.

Acknowledgements to Stamp Collecting.

## POST OFFICES OF ISRAELI OCCUPIED TERRITORY

After the six day war against the Arab states Israel opened a number of post offices in Jordan and Gaza. The postmarks and dates are:—

Jerusalem Old City P.O.	5. 7.67.
Hevron	9. 7.67.
Bethlehem.	10. 7.67.
Ramalia.	11. 7.67.
Jericho.	12. 7.67.
Nablus.	13. 7.67.
Gaza.	13. 7.67.
Tul Karem	16. 7.67.
Genim.	17. 7.67.
Direl Balah.	20. 7.67.
Han Yunes.	20. 7.67.
Rafiah.	23. 7.67.

First day covers were available with the following inscription printed in six languages "WE STRIVE FOR PEACE AND AMNITY WITH THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD".