

FLEMISH TAPESTRIES THIRD ISSUE

Date of Issue	24th January 1979.
Values	2c, 7c, 11c and 25c.
Stamp Size	48mm x 39.5mm.
Art Designer	Chev. Emvin Cremona.
Printers	Printex Limited Malta.
Process	Lithography.
Perforation	14 x 14 (comb.).
Watermark	Maltese Crosses pointing sideways.
Paper	Chalk Surfaced.
Gum	P.V.A.

Colours

The colour of these stamps was produced by the multi-coloured process.

Designs

This is the third set of four stamps in the Flemish Tapestries series. The first set was issued on the 30th March 1977 and the second set on the 26th January 1978.

These priceless 17th Century Tapestries were specially commissioned by Grand Master Ramon Perellos, on his election in 1697, for the Cathedral of St. John in Valletta.

The 1979 set reproduces four Tapestries woven from paintings by Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640). They formed part of the series of fifteen "Triumphs" commissioned by the Infanta Isabella, Archduchess of Austria, for the Poor Clares Convent of Madrid, and executed by Rubens in 1625-29. The Tapestries were woven by the firm of Josse de Vos. They are hung in St. John's Co-Cathedral during the special liturgical functions which take place in June and are on exhibition at St. John's Museum, Valletta, during the rest of the year.

The scenes represented in this set are, "The Triumph of the Catholic Church" (2c), "The Triumph of Charity" (7c), "The Triumph of Faith" (11c), "The Triumph of Truth" (25c).

Colour Checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin, next to the last stamp of the bottom row. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from right to left on all Panes of all values.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins of Panes. Figures are 2.5mm high and printed in black. The Printed Sheets of all four values consisted of two Panes, "A" and "B". Each Pane has 40 stamps made up of eight rows of five stamps. All stamps are of the horizontal format.

Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row.

2c = 1A x 6, 1B x 6.

7c = 1A x 6, 1B x 6.

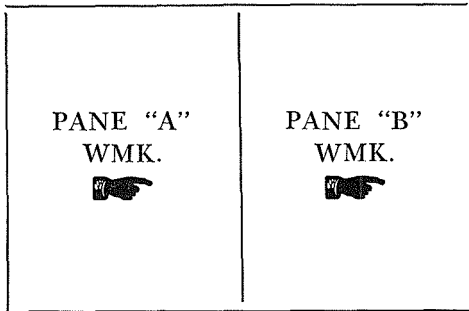
11c = 1A x 6, 1B x 6.

25c = 1A X 6, 1B x 6.

Perforation of Margins

The top margins of Panes "A" and "B" of all values are imperforate. The left hand, right hand and bottom margins, of Panes "A" and "B", of all values are fully perforated.

The Printed Sheets of all values had four registration crosses, one in each corner, of the Printed Sheet. When the Printed Sheets were cut into Panes, these crosses could still be seen, at the top and bottom of the left hand margins on Panes "A", and at the top and bottom of the right hand margin on Panes "B". It looks as if they were also used as guides for cutting the Printed Sheets, because half of the horizontal part of the bar is rarely seen. A Plate Block from Pane "A" and an Imprint Block from Pane "B" will show the two bottom crosses or part of them.



From a study of all the details given, the Printed Sheet of each value, before cutting, would look as shown on left.

In this way, stamps would be seen the right way up, hence why the watermark is sideways.

Imprint Blocks

"PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row. Letters are 1mm high and printed in black. An Imprint Block of four, of any value, will include the colour checks, and a registration cross if it is from Pane "B".

A special handstamp was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. £M62,364 worth of stamps were sold on the first day. This set will remain on sale up to Friday, 22nd June 1979, unless stocks are previously exhausted.