

FINE ARTS ON MALTA STAMPS

Part III

by LOIS L. CORBIN

(Editorial Note: All the following subjects refer to the 1965-1970 'Historical' Issue).

SCOTT

SAID

- 312 *Neolithic Sculpture of Sleeping Woman*, 5' long statuette of c. 1600 BC, known as "The Sleeping Lady", found in the Hypogeum at Ħal Saffieni, now in the National Museum, Valletta. Hypogeum discovered in 1902. Statuette, arms folded, is lying on wooden framed couch covered with reeds, has thickly stuffed pillow beneath head. Screen in background is finely carved on stone and originally coloured. Detail from interior of megalithic temple and shows a symmetrical composition of four spirals arranged in double oculus pattern; spirals in red ochre said to be feature of pre-historic religious art. ½d stamp. 310



- 313 *Cippus, Phoenician and Greek Inscriptions*. Votive 'cippus' (memorial pillar) of marble with bilingual inscriptions cut on the base, now in the National Museum, Valletta. Found in 17th century on the site of a temple of Melkart (Moloch), the god Hercules of Phoenicia, at Tas-Silġ, above Marsaxlokk. Similar pillar presented to Louis XIV of France by Grand Master De Redin, now in Louvre. Important because of parallel inscriptions in Phoenician and Greek on base; basis for reconstructing the Phoenician alphabet in same manner as Rosette Stone offered the key to the hieroglyphics of ancient Egypt. It was dedicated by the brothers Abdosir and Osirxamar (Dionysius and Serapion in the Greek). 1d stamp. 311
- 315 *Lamp, Roman Temple: Proto-Christian*. Features characteristic protochristian terracotta lamp bearing the monogram of Christ. An old ecclesiastical structure and an "alpha" topped by a cross 313

are shown on the lower portion of stamp. St. Luke, companion to Saint Paul in his travels, relates how the Apostle Paul with 275 men of the crew were honoured during the 3 months of their stay on Malta after their shipwreck. St. Paul preached the new faith and healed various people, including the father of Publius (the 'Protos' of the Island), afterwards consecrated first Bishop of Malta. 2d stamp.

- 316 *Stele: Saracen, 12th century in memory of Majmuna died 1174 AD*, carved on a fragment of Roman entablature. The contents of the inscription tell us that this was the tomb of Majmuna who "God's mercy be upon her" died "testifying that there is no other God but God alone who has no equal". One of few remains of period. The highly artistic sculptured lettering justifies its inclusion. 2½d stamp. 314

- 317 *Siculo-Norman Arch, Palazzo Gatto-Murino, Notabile; the Siculo-Norman window is that of the Palazzo Gatto-Murino at Notabile (Malta). After the surrender of Syracuse in 1091 both Sicily and Malta became integral parts of the Sicilian Realm, with Maltese responsible for local government. The capital, the Roman Melita, called "Mdina" by the Arabs, was entitled "Notabile" by King Alfonso in 1427, or by the Università (local council) in honour of Chales V at a later date. 3d stamp.* 315

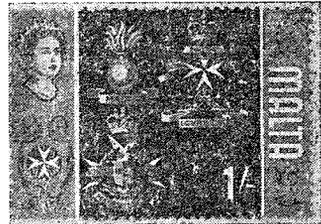
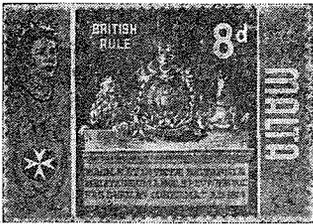


- 318 *Lamp, Base, Cross, Armour: Knights of Malta.* Stamp reproduces characteristic support of a triple lantern of the stern of a galley (see also 4½d value), the white 8-pointed Maltese Cross and the coat-of-arms of the Order of St. John, together with a breast-plate and other pieces of 16th Century armour. Malta was transferred by Charles V as fief to the Order in 1530. In 1798 the Island was captured by Napoleon and the rule of Knights was ended. 4d stamp. 316

- 319A *Fortifications.* 5d stamp. 318

320 *Cathedral of Mdina: French Occupation. Emblems of the French Republic, the "fasces" and the Frisian Cap, which were placed on the Cathedral of Mdina (Notabile) in 1798. Original wooden oval painted ensign with French Republic's emblem which was actually hoisted on the facade of the Cathedral is still preserved in the Church (St. Paul's Cathedral) Museum at Mdina. 6d stamp.* 319

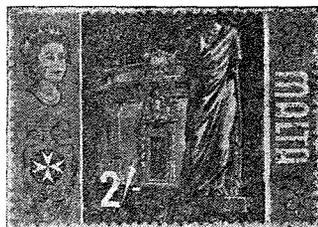
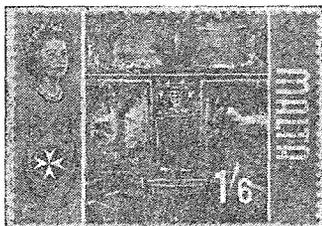
321 *British Arms, Armoury, Valletta. Coat-of-Arms of Great Britain surrounding a Latin inscription recording the British Sovereignty over the Islands, which was placed over the main entrance of the Main Guard in the Palace Square. A single story building with Doric columns which faces the Square, built by the Maltese, occupying the SW side of the Square and the corner of the Kingsway was the Treasury of the Order. It is now the Casino Maltese. 8d stamp.* 320



321 *Naval Arsenal. 10d stamp.* 321

322 *British Army Insignia: Crests of two major Maltese Units of the British Army, and the Grenade symbolizes the Malta Fortress Squadron, Royal Engineers. The Auberge de Castille at Leon, Castille Palace, now houses the military headquarters. 1/- stamp.* 322

324 *Knights of Malta Hall: Self-Government 1921; now assembly seat. Palace of the Grand Masters, completed in 1574 on the main square; its Council Chamber and Hall of St. Michael and St. George complete with one another in sheer magnificence. Girolomo Cassar was the architect here. Hall here represented now used for sittings of the Malta Legislative Assembly. Coffered ceiling of the Hall made of highly decorated wooden rafters; frieze running around its four sides painted with scenes showing 17th century naval victories of the Knights. On the walls 10 large Govelin tapestries, reproducing paintings by F. Desportes (?), donated by Grand Master Ramon Perellos, representing scenes of tropical hunting and jungle life. The Speaker's seat, just under the Crucifix, is placed where once stood the Grand Master's throne. 1/6 stamp.* 324



- 325 *Statue of Livia*: Civic Council, Gozo; in Gozo City Hall. On It-Tokk Square, Grand Master de Vilhena built the ornate bow-fronted building to the east of the square. It housed the municipal or governing body of the island, the "Banca Giuratale", the seat of the **Gozitan Commune** where the "Giurati" assembled. It dates from 1733 and has some 19th century additions. The draped mutilated statue now in the Gozo Museum is held to be Livia, daughter of Drusus and wife of the Emperor Augustus. An inscription on the base of a statue of Livia, erected after the death of the Emperor, explains that the statue was offered by Lutezia, her priestess. The base is also preserved in the Gozo Museum. 2/- stamp. 325
- 326 *Seated Woman and George Cross*: State of Malta. The symbolic figure of Malta holding a weapon firmly in both hands. Fragment of a classical fluted column at her feet indicates her glorious past: her arm rests on the traditional red and white coat-of-arms, to which has been added the George Cross. On the upper left is the Mural Crown that heradry assigns to cities and countries that have distinguished themselves at war. 2/6 stamp. 326
- 327 *Symbols of Independence*: *doves, U.N. emblem, British Crown and Pope's tiara*. Malta became independent on 21st September 1964. 3/- stamp. 327
- 328 *"HAFMED"*: *headquarters and Insigne* of the Allied Forces Mediterranean. Headquarters building, located in Floriana, taken over by NATO in 1953. Original HAFMED Staff first occupants of the building, designed as a block of flats. Crest of Allied Forces Mediterranean shows the Mediterranean with an eagle on top (symbol of Air power) and an anchor below (symbol of Sea power). 5/- stamp. 328
- 330 *Statues of St. Paul, St. Publius, St. Agatha*: Catholicism. Stamp portrays the establishment of Catholicism on the Islands, the 3 saints being patrons of Malta. According to Chev. Cremona, there are no statues that are comparable to these designs in Malta. The designs are the creation of Cremona. £1 stamp. 330