

## THE GRAMMAR OF PHILATELY

It is our intention to publish a series of articles which deal with the grammar of this fascinating hobby. The idea was set forward by Dr. C. Cassar (well known in our Newsletter through his several contributions) who did hand in an article some time back, on the type of paper used in the printing of stamps. As this subject struck us 'bull's eye,' we availed ourselves of the opportunity; thus we gathered and elaborated the fundamental basis of Postage Stamp Production, together with the meaning of technical words, and laid them down in chronological order for the full perusal of all those interested.

### PART I

#### PHILATELIC GLOSSARY

The following has been taken from the Stamp Collectors Diary published by Stanley Gibbons.

- ADHESIVE** — A stamp intended to be affixed by means of a gum, as distinct from the one printed or embossed on postal stationery.
- ANILINE COLOUR** — Strictly a colour derived from coal-tar, used by philatelists to signify inks of particular brilliance especially when they show through the back of the stamp.
- BALLON MONTE** — The nickname applied to letters carried out of besieged Paries by crew-manned balloon in the Franco-Prussian war.
- BISECTED STAMPS** — Stamps cut in half (bisects) and used for half their postal value.
- BLEUTE** — Blued paper.
- BOGUS** — A label which purports to be a postage stamp and is not.
- BURELE** — Having a burelage or network on front or back of the stamp.
- CACHET** — A device often pictorial, hand stamped on an envelope or card, indicating that it has been carried in special circumstances.
- CANCELLATION** — A defacing mark on a stamp to prevent use or re-use.
- CHALKY PAPER** — Paper with a chalky surface, designed to prevent removal of the cancellation and re-use of the stamp.
- COMB PERFORATION** — Perforates three sides of a stamp in a row at one blow.
- COMPOUND PERFORATION** — Perforation of the various gauges on the different sides of a stamp.
- DEMONETISED** — Stamps no longer valid for postal use.
- DIE** — The engraved original from which printing plates or stones are produced.
- EMBOSSING** — Stamping a design in coloured or colourless relief.
- ESSAY** — A suggested but unadopted design for a postage stamp.
- FISCAL STAMPS** — Stamps employed for revenue purposes.
- FORGERY** — A fraudulent imitation of a stamp design.
- GRANITE PAPER** — Paper with coloured fibres embodied in it.

GRILLE — An embossed pattern of dots intended to break the fibres of the paper to hinder removal of a cancellation.

HARROW PERFORATION — Perforates a whole sheet of stamps at one blow.

IMPERFORATE — Without perforation or other means of easy separation of stamps.

IMPRINT — Inscription of the printer's name on the sheet margin.

LAID PAPER — Paper watermarked with closely-set parallel lines.

LINE — ENGRAVING — Printing from plates engraved in recess by means of a burin.

LITHOGRAPHY — See section on 'Printing Processes'.

LOCALS — Stamps whose validity is limited to a town, district, or route or between certain ports.

MINT — A stamp in its original condition as issued by the post office with full gum (if issued gummed).

OBSOLETE — Stamps no longer in current use.

ORIGINAL GUM (O.G.) — The gum applied to a stamp during manufacture.

OVERPRINT — Something, other than the face value, printed on a stamp subsequent to manufacture.

PANE — Part of a sheet of stamps surrounded by a margin.

PERFORATION — A method of facilitating the separation of stamps by punching rows of holes between them.

POSTAGE DUES — Labels affixed by postal officials to indicate that unpaid postage or a fine is due for payment on delivery.

POSTMARK — Any mark struck upon letters, etc, passing through the post.

PRE-CANCELLED — Stamps obliterated before issue, used by firms posting printed matter, etc., in bulk.

PROOFS — Trial impressions taken at various stages during the manufacture of a postage stamp.

PROVISIONALS — Temporary emergency stamps, often created by overprinting or surcharging existing stamps.

RECESS-PRINTING — See section on 'Printing Processes'.

RE-ENTRY — A kind of variety found on line engraved stamps in which the whole or part of the design is duplicated or deepened.

SEEBACKS — Stamps made for certain Central and South American States in the nineties, by a printing firm whose principal was N.F. Seebeck. A proviso of his terms of supply was that the plates and remainder stock should become his property after a limited period of sale.

SE-TENANT (Joined together). Stamps of different denominations or showing different varieties, when joined together in a pair.

SPECIMEN — Sample stamps bearing the words 'SPECIMEN'.

SURCHARGE — An overprint which alters or confirms the face value of the stamp.

- SURFACE PRINTING — see Typography.  
 TETE-BECHE — stamps printed upside down in relation to one another.  
 TYPOGRAPHY — see section on 'Printing Processes'.  
 UNUSED — A stamp that has not been used or obliterated.  
 USED — A stamp that has been employed for postal or revenue purposes.  
 USED ABROAD — Stamps of a country that have been used extra-territorially.  
 VARIETY — Any stamp showing differences from the normal.  
 WATERMARK — A device, pattern or inscription produced in the substance of the paper during manufacture.  
 WOVE PAPER — Paper of a plain, even texture.  
 P.S. Part II in the next number, will deal with with papers and watermark.

### THE EXHIBITION SUB-COMMITEE

The idea of Malta staging her own Philatelic Exhibition has been mooted by many members of the Soc., but only of late has any constructive action been taken in the matter.

Recently a sub-committee of the general committee was formed with the job of investigating the matter and producing a report for the general committee on the feasibility of such a project.

Members co-opted to this committee were:—

- Mr. L. Frank F.R.P.S.L. to act as chairman,  
 Mr. W. Scoble, and  
 Mr. R.J. Walley, to act as secretary.

It would be premature at this point to publish any of the committee's findings, since, this will be covered fully by their report and published in the Soc magazine. But this much can be said: Should such an exhibition be staged, its most probable 'catch phrase' name would be "PHILEXMA" (Philatelic Exhibition Malta) and organization would be very similar to exhibitions like STAMPEX and the British B.P.E. national events.

The committee realise of course that many members may hold very definite views on this subject, possibly, greatly at variance with those of the committee, therefore, in order that as many ideas as possible may be assimilated by the committee before a report is drafted, readers are invited to put their ideas and views on paper and send them to the:—

'PHILEXMA' Committee,  
 Secretary,  
 3, Hilltop Flats,  
 School Street,  
 Msida.

All suggestions so received will be acknowledged.

R.J. WALLEY  
 Secretary, 'PHILEXMA' Committee.