

The 1956 3d. Value with inverted Watermark

by
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Many specialists in Maltese stamps have never seen an example of this variety and the question is regularly asked “does it exist?”. The simple answer is that if it is listed in Gibbons then it certainly does exist because the catalogue editor will only list items he knows exist, generally by seeing an example of each.

Personally I can say “YES” because sitting in my collection is an example – possibly the only one in existence. When I started to collect way back in 1964 I focused on Malta because the first stamps I purchased were from the GPO whilst I was on a “Sunspot” exercise with four Vulcan bombers at

Luqa Airport. About five years later an example in a small auction house, North West Philatelic Auctions, caught my eye simply because I didn’t have the item in my collection. A bid placed and a short while later I became the proud processor of the stamp.

As the years have gone by I have come to realise that it is very rare and probably unique. Gibbons lists it at £850 but they have never actually sold one in the last forty five years and the figure is just one at which they would sell the stamp if they had it. My example is used – Gibbons only list it as used – and I presume it is the item the listing came from. As can be seen from the illustration the stamp has a slogan postmark which dates from early 1957 so it must have been used on commercial mail. This almost certainly means that the other examples were used in the same manner and the others have either been lost or not yet identified.

Incidentally the 6d. of the same issue also exists with inverted watermark. This is a different ball game as I was told that Gibbons purchased a complete mint pane many years ago and they were sold over a period of time to collectors. My own example was purchased in the early 1970’s and it regularly comes up for sale in different places.



