

that they have saved the purchase price of the new catalog but have lost many times the amount on missed opportunities to buy or by selling "sleepers" to better informed philatelists. The catalog will be offered at a reduced pre-publication price. More details and a subscription form will be published in the next issue.

The FIPEX 1956, the International Philatelic Exhibition, held in New York from April 28 to May 6, 1956, will without doubt be *the great event of 1956*. In this country, it has become customary to organize great international philatelic shows at intervals of ten years and this fact has made them really outstanding, eagerly awaited by all philatelists. In Europe, where there is at least one international philatelic exhibition each year, collectors have become wary of attending such shows and only a small group of veteran show visitors—among them the group of international judges, which almost automatically are called to judge every

show—can be counted on to attend each show. A great international philatelic exhibition in the United States of America, occurring only once in a decade, is therefore a much more outstanding event and, supported by the great resources of this country, should overshadow by far all other shows held during the decade. This time the conditions are especially favorable. Not only are we going through a period of great prosperity but New York has in the meantime become the seat of the United Nations and is therefore the unofficial capital of the world. The exhibition will be one of the opening shows of the gigantic Coliseum, erected at Columbus Circle, the most modern and advanced exhibition building in existence. Therefore, predictions for a great success, a record attendance and a very memorable show are in order. If you have a suitable collection it will be the right place to show it and if you want to see the biggest and most interesting collections in the world, FIPEX 1956 will be the place you will have to visit.

EUROPEAN CLASSICS

XIV. GIBRALTAR

Gibraltar, a British Crown Colony, is a fortress on a small rocky peninsula at the southern coast of Spain, $2\frac{1}{2}$ mi. long and 550 to 1550 yards wide. The territory of the colony covers only a little over 2 sq. mi. and had a population of 16,500 civilians in 1871, as well as a variable British garrison, which at all times amounted to at least several thousand men, aside from the navy personnel on the British war vessels which were steady visitors of the harbor.

Gibraltar was probably founded by the Phoenicians and was known to the Greeks and Romans as Calpe, forming together with the hills near Ceuta on the African side of the Straits of Gibraltar—which separates the peninsula from the African mainland—the famous "Pillars of Hercules". The strategic value of the "Rock", as Gibraltar is called frequently, was recognized rather early and after Tariq ben Said, an Arabic conqueror, had captured it in 711, he made it a fortress in 742. He also gave the territory the name *Jebel Tariq*, which means Mountain of Tariq, from which its present name is derived. Although attacked many times, the fortress remained in the hands

of the Arabs until the Spanish captured it in 1309, but lost it again in 1333. Only in 1462 were the Arabs definitely driven out and in 1502 the territory became a Spanish crown domain. For over two hundred years the fortress remained in Spanish hands when, in 1704, during the war of the Spanish succession (1702-13), it was captured by British and Dutch forces. It was ceded to Great Britain by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. Several attempts were made by Spain to recapture the fortress—the last and most serious one during the "Great Siege" of 1779-83—but all were unsuccessful and Gibraltar is still a British crown colony. The language of the population has remained Spanish, with English as a second language, usually spoken only on official business.

There is little known about the early *postal history* of Gibraltar. It is probable that a branch of the London General Post Office was opened there late in the 18th century and it is documented that in 1807 the first regular mail service from England to Gibraltar was established. During the whole classic stamp period, which runs to 1873 and is identical with the classic stamp

period of Great Britain, the Gibraltar post office remained under the administration of the London General Post Office.

Although the Gibraltar post office was only a branch of the London General Post Office, it had in turn its own branch office at the British Consulate at *Tangier* in *Morocco*. This branch office, which must have been opened not later than 1857, was administered by an officer of the consulate, who acted as Postal Agent and directed the mail service to Gibraltar on the one hand and to the other British consulates in *Morocco* on the other hand. At these consulates, letter agencies were established in the middle of the Sixties. At the same time, a regular mail boat service was opened between *Tangier* and *Gibraltar*.

Currency, as well as measurements for *weight* and *distances* were the same as in Great Britain.

Postage Stamps were introduced in *Gibraltar* in *September 1857*, namely regular postage stamps of Great Britain, without any overprint or other distinction. It seems possible or even probable that also *Postal Stationery* (Envelopes, Letter Sheets, Wrappers and Postal Cards) of Great Britain were issued, but we have not seen any proof of actual use during the classic stamp period.

Almost all postage stamps used in Great Britain during the classic stamp period since 1857 are also known used in *Gibraltar*. No detailed official lists of stamps sent there from London are available; therefore we cannot distinguish between stamps actually issued and used in *Gibraltar* on the one hand, and stamps carried to *Gibraltar* by travellers or sent for return postage and used there on the other hand. The following classic stamps, including their plate number or other varieties, have been recorded used in *Gibraltar*:

1854-55 (Wmk. Small Crown):

- 1p, Die I, perf. 16 (Scott #8)
- 1p, Die II, perf. 16 (Scott #9)
- 1p, Die II, perf. 14 (Scott #12)
- 2p, perf. 14 (Scott #13)

1855 (Wmk. Large Crown)

- 1p, blued paper, perf. 14 (Scott #16)
- 1p, white paper, perf. 14 (Scott #20)
- 2p, white paper, perf. 16 (Scott #19)
- 2p, white paper, perf. 14 (Scott #21)

1856-64

- 1p, Plates 71-74, 76, 78-125, 127, 129-134, 136-140, 142-225 (Scott #33)
- 2p, thick lines, Plates 7-9, 12 (Scott #29)
- 2p, thin lines, Plates 13-15 (Scott #30)
- 4p (Scott #26)
- 6p (Scott #27)
- 1sh (Scott #28)

1862 (Small colorless letters)

- 3p (Scott #37)
- 4p (Scott #34,34a)
- 6p (Scott #39,39b)
- 9p (Scott #40)
- 1sh (Scott #42)

1865 (Large colorless letters, wmk. heraldic emblems, 4p garter)

- 3p (Scott #44)
- 4p, Plates 7-14 (Scott #43)
- 6p, Plates 5, 6 (Scott #45)
- 9p, Plate 4 (Scott #46)
- 1sh (Scott #48)

1867-73 (Large colorless letters, wmk. spray of rose)

- 3p, Plates 4-10 (Scott #49)
- 6p violet, with hyphen (Scott #50)
- 6p violet, without hyphen, Plates 8, 9 (Scott #51)
- 6p brown, Plates 11, 12 (Scott #59)
- 6p grey (Scott #60)
- 9p (Scott #52)
- 10p, Plate 1 (Scott #53)
- 1sh, Plates 4-7 (Scott #54)
- 2sh, Plate 1 (Scott #55)
- 5sh, Plate 1 (Scott #57)

1870

- ½p, Plates 4-6, 8, 10-15, 19, 20 (Scott #58)
- 1½p, Plate 3 (Scott #32)

As can be seen, stamps of almost all plates and of many printings are known used in *Gibraltar*, which seems to prove that relatively large quantities of stamps were used up there. Even some scarce shades and varieties are known used in *Gibraltar*, for example the blued papers of the 6p and 1sh of 1856 (Stanley Gibbons #70a and #73a), and the encircled "K" variety of the 1sh 1862 (Stanley Gibbons #90a).

During the classic stamp period only the *letter rate* to England was a uniform one, namely 6p per ounce. To other destinations the rates varied and depended not only upon the destination but also upon the

route which the letter took or the nationality of the ship which carried it.

Covers mailed at Gibraltar until the end of the 18th century show no *postmarks* applied there. Only in the first years of the 19th century—the first known examples are of 1807—the post office seems to have started to use postmarks. The first postmarks were without date indication and show a framed curved GIBALTAR, sometimes with an added PAID below. In 1843, the British standard type of dated double circle postmarks—the inscriptions breaking the circles—was introduced, with GIBALTAR-PAID for paid letters and GIBALTAR only for unpaid ones, all in sans-serif letters. In 1848, new postmarks were introduced, in the same double circle type as the preceding ones, but the paid letter postmark erroneously with PIAD instead of PAID, and the unpaid letter postmark now with GIBALTAR in Roman letters. For ship letters, special markings were used, first from 1841 GIBALTAR-SHIP LETTER in Roman capitals, then from 1851 GIBALTAR-date-SHIP LETTER in sans-serif letters. To letters routed through Spain or Portugal, other special markings were applied from 1839, reading PAID-POSTAGE ACCOUNTED FOR BY-SPAIN (or PORTUGAL) to G.P.O. LONDON. All these postmarks, together with a few rare markings were in use before the introduction of postage stamps. First only red ink was used for all postmarks—sometimes with a magenta tint—from 1831 black ink came into use almost exclusively, with only occasional red or blue postmarks.

When postage stamps were introduced in 1857, the London General Post Office supplied with them two *special cancellers*, both being ovals of 12 horizontal bars with a "G" in the center. The two cancellers, which were put in use simultaneously, can be distinguished by the shape of the "G" and by their size, $10\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ mm. and $9\frac{1}{2} \times 6$ mm. They were in use until February, 1859, when they were replaced by two new cancellers, ovals of three horizontal bars each at top and bottom and two curved vertical lines each at left and right, with "A26" in the center. These two cancellers, which were in use continuously until 1870 and from then on only occasionally, can be distinguished only by the shape of the letters. The "G" and

"A26" cancellers were used only to cancel the stamps, while a town postmark was stamped alongside on the face of the letters. For this purpose, first the double circle GIBALTAR of the pre-stamp period was used. It was replaced in April 1858 by a single circle GIBALTAR, of 20mm. diameter, with control letter "A" at top, which in turn was replaced by a similar circle town postmark of $19\frac{1}{2}$ mm. diameter in 1865; this comes with the control letter "A" as well as with the much rarer "B". From 1871, for registered letters a special postmark with the inscription REGISTERED-date-No. . . . GIBALTAR was used, sometimes replacing the town postmark.

As in the mother country, *duplex cancellers*, which combined a canceller with a town postmark, were also introduced for Gibraltar. The first such duplex was introduced early in 1861; it had a regular circle town postmark of 20mm. diameter at left and, spaced 1mm., a "A26" canceller of $22\frac{1}{2} \times 20\frac{1}{2}$ mm. at right. It was used for about half a year and then remained idle until April 1870, when it was put to use again. The town postmark comes with control letter "A" and also with a "B", but only from 1876. A second duplex canceller was used for only a short period, from November 1867 to April 1868, and was then permanently withdrawn. This duplex had a regular circle town postmark of 20mm. diameter at left and, spaced 3mm., a "A26" canceller at right, but which now was an upright oval of 20×28 mm., with four horizontal bars each at top and bottom and two vertical curved lines each at left and right. Due to faulty manufacture or damage suffered during shipment, the two curved lines at right have disappeared or show in traces only.

The *ink* used for the cancellers and duplex cancellers was black, while for the town postmarks until 1860 blue ink was used; from then on black ink was employed. But the "A26" cancellers and duplex cancellers can be found occasionally also after 1860 struck in blue.

The branch post office at *Tangier* had a circle town postmark of 24mm. diameter similar to the contemporary Gibraltar town postmarks, but with the inscription TANGIER (with reversed "N"), always with control letter "A". It was used only along-

side the stamps on the letters, while the stamps are always cancelled by a "A26" or a "A26" Gibraltar duplex canceller. It is claimed that both cancellers were applied in Gibraltar, but we cannot exclude the possibility that the "A26" canceller was later sent to Tangier and used there.

The "G" canceller is known only on the 1p and 2p stamps of 1854-55, the 1p and 2p stamps of 1855, the 2p (Plate 7 only) of 1858 and the 4p, 6p and 1sh of 1856, while the "A26" canceller can be found on these and all other stamps listed above, except the 1p and 2p of 1854-55 and the 2p, perf. 16, of 1855. Rather frequently, we can find Gibraltar town postmarks on all these stamps but they are usually parts of the duplex cancellers and only as exceptions the single town postmarks. The scarcest of these postmarks is the second "A26" duplex canceller (with "A26" in upright oval) which is known only on the 1p of 1864, the 6p of 1865, as well as the 6p and 1sh of 1867. It should not be confused with similar later duplexes, in which the "A26" canceller has only three (instead of four) bars at top and bottom. The "G" canceller is generally considerably scarcer than the "A26" canceller and cancellations with town postmarks, which are not part of a duplex, are rare. Covers from Tangier are among the most sought after items in the field; they are very rare. Rather frequently the Gibraltar cancellers and town postmarks can be found on stamps of other countries, mostly from the use on ship letters posted there.

Fakes exist of all Gibraltar postmarks and cancellers; these are made either by applying imitated handstamps on common unused or lightly cancelled used stamps, or by changing similar numeral cancellations into "G" or "A26".

Classic Gibraltar is a small field and there is not much *literature* easily available. But good listings of the existing values can be found in the Stanley Gibbons Catalog, as well as in Robson Lowe's "Encyclopaedia of British Empire Stamps", the former also providing rather reliable prices. The Kohl Handbook under its "British Used Abroad" also lists and describes the Gibraltar cancellations (Volume III, pages 855-860). Generally, the field has been covered quite well in several publications by Charles Nissen and little additional research, except

improvement in regard to some earliest dates of use, will be possible. As there is sufficient material available—especially in off-cover copies—and as there are no great rarities in the field of Gibraltar cancellations—at least as far as the prices paid for them reveal—it is an ideal field for the collector of small means. Not only is there hardly an item which will sell for more than \$100, but many a "G" or "A26" cancellation can be picked up for a song in approval books or in dealer stocks. Of course, the most interesting items are the covers with Gibraltar postmarks which are not too plentiful. Some of them may be had for a couple of dollars, others may prove quite elusive and will sell considerably higher. But classic Gibraltar is neither a very exciting nor a very difficult field. With moderate patience and fortitude every collector will be able to have success in this field and assemble a collection which will stand out among collections on which much more effort and money was spent.

(Next: XV. Great Britain)

MERRY CHRISTMAS

and a

HAPPY NEW YEAR

May the year 1956

be a year of peace

and continued

prosperity

Publishers and Editor

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