

Princess Elizabeth stays in Malta

(The Malta 1950 “Royal Visit” issue)



A photographic proof the 1d stamp. Hand stamped on the reverse “Compliments of the Times of Malta”. Found in the collection of John Mercieca (Sr.) by his grandson John Mercieca (Jr.). [John Mercieca \(Sr.\) was the driving force, a founding member, and Honorary Life President of the Malta Philatelic Society. No further information about the photo is available, the Times of Malta archives were destroyed by fire in 1979.](#)

Original research or new findings outlined in green. Social / historical text in blue.

Interesting / unique items outlined in black. Important information in bold text.

INTRODUCTION:

Purpose and Scope:

To illustrate the stamps and uses of the Malta 1950 Princess Elizabeth “Royal Visit” issue; by showing examples of postmarks, instructional marks, First Day Covers, and postal and revenue usage, including postal rates, some routings, and destinations.

Princess Elizabeth:

From the late autumn of 1949 to spring 1951, Princess Elizabeth of Great Britain had four extended private stays (rather than “visits”) on the island of Malta to be with her husband, the Duke of Edinburgh, who was stationed there serving in the Royal Navy. During these stays she was on the island privately, primarily as a naval officer's wife; though she also carried out official engagements. **During the third stay (Nov. 25, 1950 - Feb. 12, 1951), Malta issued a three stamp set to mark her presence, which became known as the “Royal Visit” issue, though in fact this was not a “Royal Visit”.**

The issue's significance:

This was Malta's first “stand alone” commemorative stamp set. Previously (1935-1949) Malta had participated in 5 omnibus British Empire commemorative issues. The issue garnered significant interest, and both the stamps and First Day Covers (FDCs) were popular with local and international collectors and non-collectors alike.

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