

1962 – Independence Commemoratives



On the 6th August 1962 Jamaica will achieve her independence and, to mark this historic event, the Jamaican Government will issue four new stamps.

The stamps have been designed by Mr. V. Whiteley from preliminary sketches received from Jamaica, and printed by Thomas De La Rue & Co. Ltd., on CA (Block Capitals) watermarked paper in horizontal format, size 40 x 29.5 mm. perforation to perforation. The values and colours are:

2d. Brown, red, yellow and bottle green. 4d. Brown, red, yellow and blue.
1/6d. Red and grey. 5/- Blue, yellow and green.

In addition, the following values of the current Jamaica definitive issue have been overprinted in black with the words "Independence 1962". The stamps have been printed on CA script watermarked paper:

1/4d., 1d., 2 1/2d., 3d., 5d., 6d., 8d., 1/- and 2/- by Thomas De La Rue & Co. Ltd.
3/-, 10/- and £1 by Bradbury, Wilkinson & Co. Ltd.

All the above stamps will be released together and will then become the current definitive issue of Jamaica.

SPECIAL DESIGNS

2d. and 4d.: The bugler, in the colourful and historic Zouave uniform of the Jamaica Military Band, is superimposed on a silhouette map of Jamaica.

According to tradition Queen Victoria, seeing the colourful Zouaves at a review of French colonial troops, expressed the wish that such a uniform be assigned to some unit of her army. In 1858 it was allotted to the West India Regiment. It was adopted as the uniform of the Jamaica Military Band after the disbandment of the West India Regiment in 1926. The Band was, in fact, organized by former members of the Regiment.

1/6d. : Gordon House: George William Gordon, son of a Scottish planter and a slave woman, became a well-to-do businessman and landowner. He was a champion of the people and a fearless adversary against injustice and dishonesty as he fought to better the way of life of the masses. He entered politics and was elected to the House of Assembly and to the Kingston Common Council. It was believed that Gordon was implicated in the Morant Bay Rebellion of 1865 and on the instructions of Governor Eyre, he was arrested, hastily tried and hanged. Historians have shown that Gordon was innocent of the charges made against him and his name has been commemorated by giving it to the new Legislative Building which was opened in October 1960.

Jamaica is a multi-racial community and this feature is indicated at the left of the design where the hands of several ethnic groups are represented raising the banner proclaiming Independence on the 6th August, 1962.

5/-: The stamp depicts a silhouette map of Jamaica rising out of the Caribbean sea before a brilliant dawn. The traditional agricultural crops of sugar cane, bananas and pineapple are depicted in the foreground, while educational and industrial developments are indicated on the horizon by a representation of the new Ministry of Education to the left and an industrial plant to the right.



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OVERPRINTS

1d. Coconuts, 1d. Sugar Cane, 2½d. Bananas. These represent traditional agricultural crops.

3d. The Blue Mahoe *Hibiscus elatus*, is a woody member of the large Hibiscus family and is native to Jamaica. The tree is relatively quick growing and has been used extensively in Jamaica in the afforestation programme; the resulting timber is excellent for general utility purposes. It is a favourite for furniture manufacture—the wood being variegated in shades of grey, green and blue. It has been selected as the National Tree.

5d. The Ackee: *Blighia sapida* (Sapindaceae). Ackee trees, adorned with ripening fruit, never fail to attract the attention of visitors to Jamaica. This tree is not native to the island but was brought from West Africa probably on a slave ship during the 18th century: the exact date of introduction is unknown. When Captain Bligh successfully brought the breadfruit and other plants from the South Pacific to Jamaica in 1793, he also conveyed a sizeable collection of plants from Jamaica to Kew Gardens in England. Amongst this collection was an ackee plant which at that time was unknown to science. In 1806 the German botanist Koenig named the tree *Blighia* in honour of Captain Bligh who had brought it to

England from Jamaica which he thought was its native land. In point of fact, the African origin was unknown in Europe until some years later. In the western hemisphere the ackee has been introduced by Jamaicans into the other islands of the West Indies, and into Central America and Florida. The fleshy yellow aril of the fruit, combined with saltfish, is used to prepare one of Jamaica's favourite dishes; the fruit, however, must ripen on the tree and the pod open naturally before picking otherwise it is poisonous. "Salt fish and ackee" was served at King's House to Her Majesty the Queen during her visit to the island in 1953. The ackee has been selected as the National Fruit for Jamaica.

6d. Doctorbird or Streamer-tail Hummingbird (*Trochilus polytmus*), like all hummingbirds, is adept in flying forwards, backwards, sideways and hovering without changing its position while feeding on the nectar of a flower. This particular species, one of the most beautiful of all hummingbirds, is found only in Jamaica where it is widespread and common. There are two forms: one with an orange bill occurs over most of the island; the form with an all black bill is found in the eastern parishes of Portland and St. Thomas where the orange-billed form does not occur.

Only the males possess streamer tails and, in flight, the friction of the air on these trailing feathers—sometimes over 7 inches in length—produces a whirring sound which is characteristic. The name "Doctorbird" is probably derived from several features. The streamer-tails suggest the swallow tail coat, and the black erectile crest the top hat—characteristic attire of the doctor in the early days. The lance-like bill, used to puncture the base of the flowers to reach the nectar or to extract insects, is also a reminder of the old-time doctor who practised blood-letting for many ailments. Country people seeing the bird hovering over a flowering tree, are apt to say that the Doctorbird "medicines the tree". The Doctorbird has been selected as the National Bird for Jamaica.

8d. Blue Mountain Peak: Blue Mountain Peak in the Blue Mountain Range is the highest mountain in Jamaica: 7,402 ft. The plant life of the Blue Mountains is luxurious especially in the gaps and on the northern slopes. The fern flora of Jamaica contains more than 525 native species and is one of the most important areas in the world for this class of plant; many of the most interesting species occur in the Blue Mountains. The famous Blue Mountain coffee is grown on the slopes of this mountain range.

1/- Hope Gardens: Following the visit to the Gardens in 1953 by Her Majesty the Queen these gardens were renamed the Royal Botanic Gardens. Located at Hope on the outskirts of Kingston, in a magnificent setting against the foothills of the Port Royal Mountains, they are a favourite beauty spot for residents and visitors alike. There are extensive lawns, ornamental trees and hedges, flowering beds and borders, an orchid house, a sunken garden, a band stand, where concerts by the Jamaica Military Band are held regularly, and the recently established Caribbean Zoo. Many varieties of bougainvillea have been used extensively in the landscaping. The name derives from the original owner of the land, Major Richard Hope of the English Army of Occupation. The area now occupied by the Gardens was formerly a sugar estate; the gardens (about 150 acres) were established in 1873.

2/- Fort Charles: The first fortified building at Fort Charles in Port Royal was a martello tower erected in 1656, the year after the English occupation. The fortification, which quickly developed there, was named following the restoration, Fort Charles after Charles II, the reigning sovereign. Fort Charles was severely damaged in the earthquake of 1692 which destroyed Port Royal then described as the "wealthiest and richest city in Christendom". Nelson was in command in 1779 and his "quarterdeck" may be seen through the open gate and gun embrasures. It was along this deck that Nelson paced scanning to windward for a glimpse of the French fleet which was expected but never arrived.

3/-, 10/- and £1: bear the Jamaica Coat-of-Arms. The Coat-of-Arms was granted by warrant in 1661 and is represented with the Royal Helmet and Mantling; Jamaica has been the only Colony afforded this privilege obtaining from the fact that Charles II included in his title "Lord of Jamaica". Only Canada amongst the Dominions has the privilege of using the Royal Helmet. In order to clarify certain points of details, which were in doubt, a new warrant was issued in 1957.

With Independence it has been decided the motto will be changed from "INDUS UTERQUE SERVIET UNI" to "OUT OF MANY, ONE PEOPLE". The Coat-of-Arms will remain otherwise unchanged.

COLLECTORS CAN OBTAIN THESE STAMPS FROM THEIR USUAL DEALERS



JAMAICA

Jamaica is the largest of the British islands of the West Indies. It is situated in the Caribbean Sea about 90 miles south of Cuba. The name is from the Arawak Indian meaning "land of wood and water". It is 152 miles long and its greatest width is 52 miles; the Blue Mountains in the east rise to 7,402 feet. Kingston, the capital, has a population of about 350,000 people and lies on one of the six largest harbours in the world. The population of Jamaica, which is mostly of African descent, is approximately 1½ million. The economy of the country traditionally has been based upon agricultural productivity; sugar and bananas being the most important crops with coconuts, coffee and tobacco and ginger also well known. The discovery of large deposits of bauxite during the 1940's has made Jamaica the largest producer of that mineral in the world. Gypsum and other minerals are now being exploited and industrial development is underway. The tourist industry has become important especially along the north coast.

Jamaica was first settled by the Arawak Indians, probably not much before 1,000 A.D. Columbus discovered Jamaica on his second voyage in May, 1494, and Spanish settlements were established mainly as bases for expeditions to the mainland. The island was captured by the British in 1655 and British rule has prevailed unbroken since that time. After a brief period of military government the first civil Governor was appointed in 1661. The people of Jamaica were given the rights of citizens of England and the right to make their own laws. Until 1865 the people of Jamaica were largely self-governing but up-risings in that year caused the old Constitution to be replaced by the Crown Colony system of Government with the Governor in full control. It was not until 1944 that Jamaica regained representative Government. Then a fully elected House of Representatives with a nominated Upper House replaced the single Legislature. Ministerial Government was established in 1953, and Cabinet Government came in 1957. Jamaica became a member territory of the West Indies Federation when it was proclaimed on the 23rd February, 1958, but in a Referendum held on the 19th September, 1961, the island voted to leave the Federation and attain independence alone.

A Crown Agents Announcement

