



HELLENIC POST
PHILATELIC SERVICE
1, APELLOU STREET
ATHENS 111



SERIES OF COMMEMORATIVE STAMPS
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 150th ANNIVERSARY
OF THE GREEK WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1821)
PART IV: THE WAR ON LAND

DEPICTIONS—QUANTITIES

1. 50 lepta — 2,000,000 pieces.
The battle of Corinth, during the campaign conducted by Dramali Pasha (1822). From a lithograph by the German artist, Krazeisen (National Historical Museum, Athens).
2. 1 drachma — 5,000,000 pieces.
The sacrifice of Kapsalis, during the Siege of Misolonghi (1826). From a work of the same title by T. Vryzakis (National Historical Museum, Athens).
3. 2 drachmae — 6,000,000 pieces.
Suliot women in battle. From a lithograph by the French artist, Deneuille (private collection).
4. 5 drachmae — 1,000,000 pieces.
The battle of Athens (1821). Detail from the popular art painting by P. Zographos, illustrating Makriyannis' history of the war (National Historical Museum, Athens).
5. 6.50 drachmae — 3,400,000 pieces.
The battle at Maniaki (1825). By an unknown lithographer (National Historical Museum, Athens).
6. 9 drachmae — 600,000 pieces.
The death of Marcos Botsaris during the battle of Karpenisi (1823). From a painting, bearing the same title, by T. Vryzakis (Benaki Museum, Athens).

OTHER DETAILS

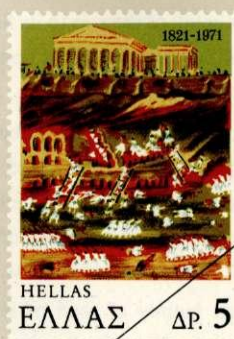
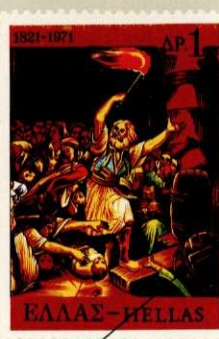
Designs and adaptation in the 1 and 9 drachmae categories by the engraver G. Velissarides; the rest by the painter P. Gravalos.

SIZE : Stamps in the 6.50 and 9 drachmae categories: 52 × 36,5 mm; the rest: 31 × 43,5 mm. All in sheets of 50 pieces.

METHOD OF PRINTING : Multi - coloured offset.

PRINTERS : Aspioti - Elka Graphic Arts, Ltd., Athens.

RATE OF EXCHANGE : \$ 1 = 29.85 drachmae.



CIRCULATION

The above - mentioned stamps will be released on 21st September 1971 and will be on sale until 20th September 1972, unless the supply is previously depleted.

FIRST-DAY COVERS

Illustrated FDC's stamped with a special commemorative seal will also be issued. Each pair bearing all the stamps in the series will have the face value of the stamps themselves, i.e. 24 drachmae.

THE WAR ON LAND : WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1821)

The exploits of the land forces of a regenerated Greece constitute the prelude to the struggle for national liberation of 1821. These forces consisted of klephts and *armatoloi*, whose feats of patriotism were a feature of the entire period of the Turkish occupation. The inhabitants of the whole country, from Mt. Olympus to Cape Tainarum, owed their martial training during the Ottoman domination to the activities of these military units, which, both vigorous and battle-trained, constituted the assault troops of the insurrectionary forces from the moment of the outbreak of the war to its final triumphant conclusion. The martial centres of Sulji and the Mani hold pride of place in this turbulent world of invincible fighters.

It was from these bands of klephts and *armatoloi* that the leaders of the campaigns of 1821 emerged. Many of them had served in foreign armies (among others, the French and Russian, the British in the Ionian Islands and the forces of Ali Pasha in Epirus). They soon revealed their superiority over their opponents.

Composed mainly of men of the Greek countryside, the land forces were formed within the framework of the world of klephts and *armatoloi*, inspired by them with the spirit of revolt against the tyrant. Farmers and shepherds, under the leadership of chieftains, who were experienced in warfare, constituted a large proportion of the land troops in revolt against the occupying power. Accustomed to privations, long marches and the ways of rural life, capable of coping with the hostility of the elements, against which they were only protected by their shepherd's cloak, these men were obviously cut out for the role of an élite corps. Inspired by the great vision of national revival, impervious to the superiority in numbers of the occupying forces, indifferent to their own lack of equipment and other supplies, they left their homes and entrenched themselves around the besieged citadels, placing themselves spontaneously under the command of leaders dedicated to warlike action and justly accepted as such by public opinion.

Specialists in the tactics of guerilla warfare, capable of confronting superior numbers with decisive results, the military leaders succeeded in harrying the enemy forces and in preventing them from reaping the benefits of their tactical organisation and superiority in numbers, arms and supplies.

As a result of the adoption of this form of tactics, the Greek forces

generally possessed the initiative in the choice of the time and place for hostile operations and were able to advance or retreat according to will, to exhaust their opponents, to capture supply dumps and to cut their lines of communication.

The main body of land forces, which, together with the small tactical force of Greeks and foreign philhellenes, never exceeded 30,000 men, remained throughout the entire duration of the struggle an army of unruly volunteers, deprived of artillery, tactical training, staff organisation and sometimes even of bread. It nevertheless succeeded in achieving outstanding victories, thanks to its unshakable faith, which it shared with the entire Greek nation, in the ideal of the triumph of Hellenism.

Thus the words of Plato were once more verified: «Every quantity and all wealth is inferior to virtue» (Plato, *Menexenus*, 240).

When then did the revolutionary operations of 1821 actually begin? The outbreak of the national struggle is generally associated with the insurrectionary activities that occurred during the middle of March 1821 in the province of Kalavryta and subsequently at Patras and Kalamata, before the bells rang out the signal of revolt on March 25th. Historical veracity, however, demands recognition of the fact that the struggle of land actually began at an earlier date: that is to say, when Alexander Ypsilantis unfurled the banner of Greek revolt at Jassy on the banks of the Pruth in Moldavia on February 24th, 1821. Irrespective of the unfortunate outcome of this revolt, Alexander Ypsilantis must be considered the first in a long line of martial leaders who commanded the nation's land forces during the War of Independence. Without exception, all these leaders, in spite of their human defects, rendered outstanding services to the nation in revolt and, possessing a true perception of the nature of the struggle in which they were engaged, proved themselves to be incomparable warriors. It would be invidious to draw comparisons between them. Nevertheless, both in Greek and world public opinion, a special glamour is attached to the names of Theodore Kolokotronis, George Karaiskakis, Markos Botsaris and Demetrios Ypsilantis, victor of the last battle fought on land at Petra in Boeotia on September 12th, 1829.

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