



Journal of
THE MALTA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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Wartime Air Mail



Airmail services via Rome operated by Ala Littoria continued after the start of WW2, as Italy was neutral until June 1940. Malta GPO airmail rates were also unchanged, with one rate where the air sector finished at Rome and a higher rate for routes with onward air service from Rome.



1939(17NO) Airmail cover from Malta to Holland using the Italian air service to Rome. Franked 4d with two KG.VI definitives, this pays the $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. rate for airmail to Italy. From Rome to Holland, the letter went by surface, probably by train via France. The cover has a Par Avion Jusqu'a ROME handstamp to indicate the end of the airmail sector. Probably flown on a SM.75 landplane of Ala Littoria, departing on 18 Nov 1939.



Savoia-Marchetti SM.75 airliner of Ala Littoria, showing wartime national identification bands.

Ala Littoria's November 1939 timetable shows two routes from Malta to Rome. Each operated three days per week on alternate days, except Sunday.
On Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, a seaplane service from Tripoli which landed in Marsaxlokk Bay at Malta. From Malta, this service called at Syracuse and Naples en route to Rome
On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, a landplane service using Ta Kallit aerodrome. This service originated in Malta and called at Catania, Palermo and Naples en route to Rome.



Wartime Air Mail



From September 1939, airmail to France could be sent by Imperial Airways to Marseille, or by Ala Littoria via Rome to Marseille and Paris. The Italian service operated six times per week (except Sun), while Imperial Airways was only weekly (Wed). As the postage rates were similar, it is likely that mail would be sent by the Italian service unless specified to the contrary.



1940(MY3) Airmail double rate registered cover from Malta to France. The 1s2d franking matches the Italian airmail rate for a letter under 1oz. (Registration fee 3d + airmail first $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. 6d + additional $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. 5d).

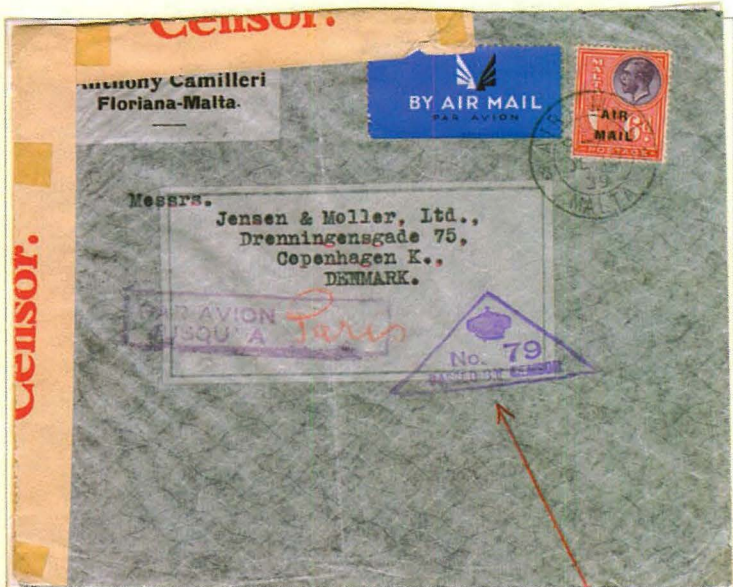




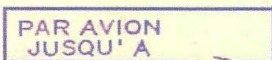
Wartime Air Mail Malta - Denmark



Government Notice No.195 of May 1934 set the airmail letter rate from Malta to France at 6d (1st half-oz.), with the route to Paris operated via Rome and Marseilles. This rate also applied to mail that continued by surface from Paris, although few examples are recorded with Par Avion Jusqu'a markings. Denmark was one destination served in this manner, with Paris as the Air Mail terminal. The Paris airmail service came to an abrupt end in June 1940, when Italy entered WW2 with the Axis forces.



1939(DE19) Censored 6d rate airmail cover from Malta to Copenhagen via Paris with boxed PAR AVION JUSQU'A Paris & Malta censor No.79. Opened and resealed in Malta with label type CSL-5B. No backstamps.



55x12mm framed handstamp with space for transfer location to be inserted manually. 'Paris' recorded between Aug.39 & Mar.40.



Wartime Air Mail

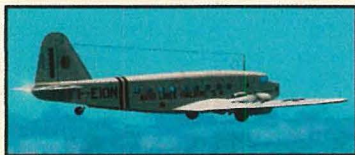


Airmail from Malta could be flown throughout to England via Rome at one-third of the cost of the less-frequent Imperial Airways service. The sector from Malta to Turin via Rome was operated by Ala Littoria, with Turin to Paris operated by Avio Linee Italiane. Prior to the outbreak of war, the ALI service continued to London (Croydon).



1939(DE20) Airmail cover from Malta to UK at the 5d rate via Italy, without any censor markings. Inscribed 'via Ala Littoria'.

Probable routing for this airmail cover:
 20.12 Cancelled at Sliema Branch Office
 21.12 Ala Littoria landplane service 422 to Rome
 22.12 Ala Littoria service 563 Rome to Turin
 22.12 Avio Linee Italiane service 570 Turin to Paris
 22.12 Paris to Heston Imperial Airways/Air France
 22/23.12 overnight train London-Carlisle.



Avio Linee Italiane (ALI) used the Fiat G18V airliner on its route from Venice to Paris via Milan & Turin.



Wartime Air Mail



In early 1940, Airmail services using the Italian routes to and from Malta operated normally. At 5d per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz., this was cheaper than using Imperial Airways. This rate was introduced in May 1934 and used until Feb 1940.



1940(5FE & 13JA) Censored Airmail covers from Malta to England, using the Italian air services and franked at the European rate of 5d per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.



Multi-purpose triangular Censor marking. No.40 was used from Sep 39 to Feb 43.



RAF Censor marking used from Sept 39 to Sept 40, although there were few RAF units during this time.



Wartime Air Mail Malta-Switzerland



Mail to and from Switzerland was initially unaffected by the outbreak of WW2 and continued to use routes through Italy, until June 1940.



(Top) 1940(23.V) Incoming cover from Switzerland with 5x 10c Landscapes. Opened and resealed by the Malta censor.
(Lower) 1940(FE28) Censored Airmail cover to Switzerland via Rome, opened and resealed by the same Malta censor.

PAR AVION
JUSQU' A ROME.

56 x 12mm boxed cachet, introduced in January 1937 and used until 1940.



Wartime Air Mail



European services continued to use the Italian routes until June 1940. The rates to central European countries were unchanged at 4d per ½ oz. For destinations beyond Italy, the air sector often terminated at Rome.



(Top) 1940(27JA) Censored Airmail cover from Italy to Malta with 25c & 1L75 stamps, which have been examined by the censor. (Lower) 1940(A17) Censored Airmail cover to Switzerland, by air to Rome only, as shown by the Par Avion Jusqu'a ROME marking.



Ala Littoria CANT Z.506 floatplane I-GORO. Painted in a red scheme, this aircraft flew the last pre-war service Tripoli-Rome via Malta and Syracuse on 5 June 1940.

PAR AVION
JUSQU' A ROME.

56 x 12mm boxed cachet, introduced in January 1937 and used until 1940. The above cover is the latest recorded use.



Wartime Air Mail



In May 1939, Pan American started Transatlantic mail services with a southern route from New York to Marseilles via the Azores and Lisbon. This was followed in June 1939 with a northern route from New York to Southampton via Newfoundland and Ireland. The northern route was suspended in October 1939, but the southern route, now using Lisbon as its terminus, continued throughout the war. Route code was FAM18.



19406MR) Airmail cover from Malta to New York via Lisbon, franked at 1s9d per ½oz. rate and carried on the Pan Am Clipper service. Apparently not censored.



Four Boeing 314's were used by Pan American on transatlantic services from 1939. They were called 'Clippers' after the names of the aircraft. Over 1800lb of mail was carried on the first service.



Lisbon backstamps on the above item are dated 12Mar40. Sector from Malta was most likely flown by Ala Littoria via Rome and Mellilla to Lisbon.

Clipper Dixie had arrived at Lisbon on schedule on 11 March 1940, but departure was delayed until 21 March, by which time the next flight operated by Clipper American had arrived. Both Clippers departed for the Azores on 21 March, but it's likely that Clipper Dixie carried this cover.



Wartime Air Mail



On the outbreak of war in 1939, Pan American's FAM18 Clipper service terminated at Lisbon, instead of Marseille. Similarly, services to Europe from the UK were suspended. For transatlantic airmail from Malta, the only option was an Italian route via Rome, Melilla and Seville to Lisbon connecting with the two times per week PanAm service to New York.



1939(SP24) Censored airmail cover to USA with 1s9½d franking. Two stamps (½d & 1d) on reverse, 'cancelled' by the censor, with a Lisbon air mail transit postmark (1OC39). Overfranked by ½d.



The transatlantic airmail rate from Malta to USA was 1s7½d per ½oz. plus postage (1½d per oz)

The transatlantic sector was flown from Lisbon by Clipper Dixie. The flight was due to depart on 1 October 1939, but was delayed four days, arriving in New York on 6 October 1939.



Wartime Air Mail

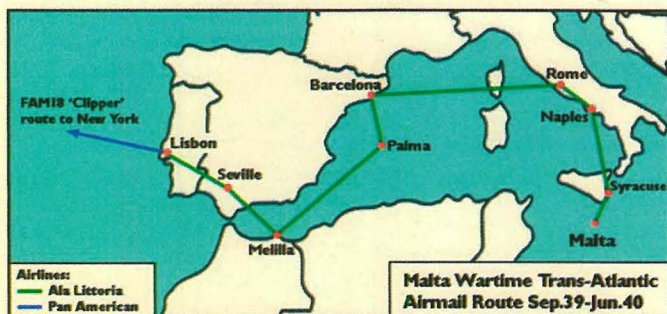


The Pan American FAM18 service provided the transatlantic sector of airmail services from Malta to Canada, via Rome, Lisbon and New York.



1939(NO11) Airmail $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. rate cover to Canada with 1s9d franking. Sent by Capt. J.S.Symons, Royal Artillery and censored with handstamp no.40.

The transatlantic airmail rate from Malta to Canada was 1s7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. plus postage (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d per oz)



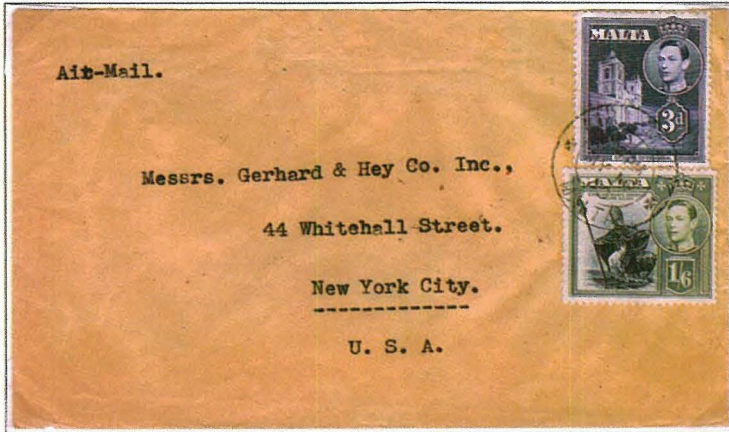
Malta to Rome was flown six days per week by Ala Littoria, alternating between landplane (Tu/Th/Sa) and seaplane (W/W/F) services. From Rome, Ala Littoria flew six days per week to Lisbon via Melilla, with a night-stop in Seville. The transatlantic sector was flown from Lisbon by Pan American, in this instance by Clipper Atlantic. This flight departed on 21 November 1939, arriving in New York the following day. From New York, Canadian Colonial Airways operated daily services to Montreal with DC3 aircraft.



Wartime Air Mail

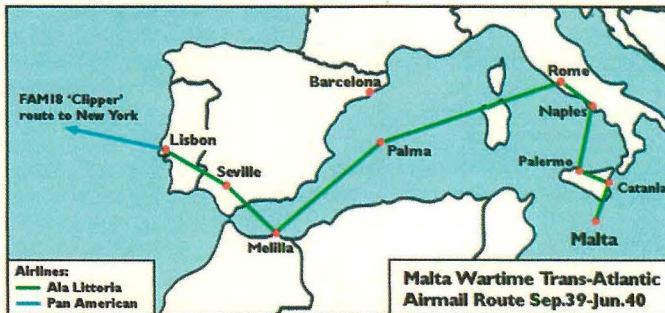


The 1940 Ala Littoria summer timetable shows an acceleration of the Rome to Lisbon service. This deleted the stop at Barcelona, allowing Lisbon to be reached in one day and avoiding a night-stop at Seville.



1940(MY14) Airmail cover to USA with 1s9d franking, with no sign of any censorship. The Lisbon transit postmark (23MY40) on reverse shows this cover was delayed between Malta and Lisbon. If all flights were operating to schedule, it should only have taken two days and would then have connected with an earlier Pan Am Clipper flight.

The transatlantic airmail rate from Malta to USA was 1s7½d per ½oz. plus postage (1½d per oz.)



The transatlantic sector was flown from Lisbon on 25 May 1940 by Clipper Atlantic. Pan American flight 128 arrived in New York on 26 May 1940.



Wartime Air Mail



In May 1940, an unusual destination of Buea, British Cameroons for some airmail covers prompted use of a PAR AVION JUSQU'A *Nigeria* handstamp.

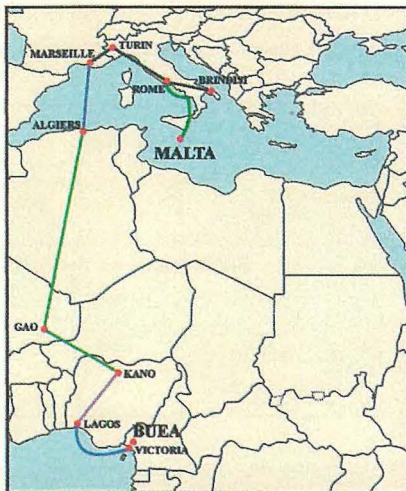


1940(MY11) Registered airmail cover from Malta to Buea, Br. Cameroons with various stamps and PAR AVION JUSQU'A *Nigeria* handstamp. The cover has a manuscript endorsement *Aerea Via Roma* in red crayon.

The probable itinerary for this 1940 cover:

- 11 May Stamps cancelled at Malta GPO
- 13 May Ala Littoria seaplane to Rome
- 13 May AMB Roma-Bari TPO datestamp
- 14 May AMB Roma-Torino TPO cancel
- 15 May Torino Ferrovia/Racc datestamp
- 16 May- Turin-Marseille by train
- 18 May- Marseille-Algiers by Air France
- 24 May Algiers-Kano by Régie Air Afrique
- 27 May Kano Registered datestamp
- 1 June Kano-Lagos by BOAC DH86A Danae on flight KL227
- 1 June Lagos Registered datestamp
- 3 June- Lagos-Victoria by sea
- 6 June Victoria Br.Cameroons cancel
- 8 June Buea Br.Cameroons datestamp

The items in bold are present on the cover, mostly on the reverse. Other dates are from airline information or estimated (-).





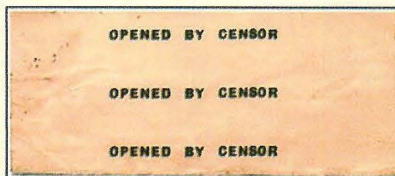
Wartime Air Mail



Imperial Airways 'Empire' routes were initially not affected by the outbreak of war with Germany in 1939. Airmail to and from Malta for these services connected in Italy, as previously. Censorship of mail was announced on 26 August 1939, allowing all items of mail to be opened for examination.



1939(29AU) Incoming airmail cover from Egypt. This arrived in Malta on 2SP39 (Air Mail BS). It was censored and resealed locally using the first type of label, the day before war with Germany was formally declared.



This type of resealing label was locally produced and used for about two weeks. This is the earliest recorded use.

Probable itinerary for this cover:

- 29 Aug - posted at Sidi Gaber
- 29 Aug - BS Alexandria
- 30 Aug - Imperial flight DN226
- 31 Aug - DN226 arrives Rome
- 1 Sep - Ala Littoria to Malta
- 2 Sep - Air Mail Malta BS
- 2 Sep - Cospicua BS; redirected
- 4 Sep - Valletta BS



Wartime Air Mail



A new Imperial Airways service between UK and Egypt included Malta as an overnight stop in each direction. The inaugural service arrived on 17th September 1939, with the return departing to the UK on 20th September. The Malta GPO announced new postage rates of 1s3d per half ounce for this service. The service connected with the Empire routes in Egypt and the rate applied to all Empire destinations. The first service was operated by *Frobisher* class DH.91 Albatross G-AFDJ, named *Falcon* by Imperial.



Top: 1939(OC24) Censored airmail cover to UK at 1s3d rate and endorsed Imperial
 Lower: 1939(SP20) Censored airmail cover to UK at 5d rate. Although posted on the inaugural day of the Imperial Airways service, it probably went on the Italian route.



Wartime Air Mail



The UK airport for the Egypt service via Malta was Heston, near London, succeeding Shoreham after the first month. The service was operated by Imperial Airways DH.91's and British Airways Lockheed 14's.



1939(28OC and 19NO) Two covers from UK to Malta at the Imperial 1s3d rate. Both were carried by British Airways Lockheed 14's, the upper item on G-AFMR *Leander* operating flight CE165 on 30.10; the lower item on G-AFKE *Lothair* operating flight CE171 on 20.11. They arrived in Malta 1.11 and 22.11 resp.



Photo of British Airways Lockheed 14 G-AFKE *Lothair* taken at Heston Airport in 1939.

Lothair was a regular visitor to Malta with twelve return visits recorded on the UK-Malta-Egypt service until it ceased in June 1940.



Wartime Air Mail



The UK-Egypt service was organised by the National Air Communications, a department of the Air Ministry. Gradually, the DH.91's were replaced by Lockheed 14's, with the transition completed by the end of 1939.



1939(DE12) and 1940(JA2) Two covers from Malta to UK at the 1s3d rate. The top item was carried by Imperial Airways DH.91 *Falcon*, leaving Malta on 15.12.39 operating flight CW173. The lower item was carried by British Airways Lockheed 14 *Lafayette*, operating flight CW180 on 5.1.40. The flights arrived at Heston on 17.12.39 and 8.1.40 respectively.



Imperial Airways DH.91 G-AFDJ Falcon



British Airways L.14 G-AFGR Lafayette



Wartime Air Mail



The new air service from England to Calcutta via Malta was operating effectively, with DH.91's or Lockheed 14's flying as far as Alexandria, from where HP.42's continued to Karachi and AW.15's took the final sector to Calcutta. However, aircraft shortages on the Mediterranean sector in December 1939 created schedule problems, at a time when mail volumes were increasing for pre-Xmas delivery.



1939(DE12) Airmail cover from Malta to India at wartime 1s 3d Empire rate, with Par Avion Jusqu'a *Delhi* handstamp. Backstamped Lahore 21 DEC 1939. Note the absence of any censor markings from Malta or India.

This cover was posted in time to catch the normal weekly departure from Malta on 13 DEC 1939. However, the DH.91 aircraft operating flight CE177 had engine problems in France and returned to England. Two Lockheed 14's operated the delayed flight CE177, arriving at Malta on 15 DEC 1939. The delayed arrival in Alexandria was still in time to connect to the Empire service to India.

This cover's probable itinerary and mode of transport

- 16 DE 39 - depart Malta on flight CE177 (Lockheed 14 G-AFKE or G-AFMO)
- 17 DE 39 - depart Alexandria on flight SE203 (S30 Champion G-AFCT)
- 18 DE 39 - aircraft change at Karachi: to S23 Coeee VH-ABF
- 19 DE 39 - depart Karachi on flight SE203 (S23 Coeee VH-ABF)
- 19 DE 39 - arrive Gwalior; mail for Delhi transferred to Tata Airlines
- 19 DE 39 - depart Gwalior to Delhi by Tata Airlines (DH.89 or Waco YQC6)
- 19 DE 39 - end of air segment at Delhi - transfer to rail
- 21 DE 39 - arrive Lahore Cantonment.



Wartime Air Mail



The 6d AIR MAIL overprint stamp was introduced in 1928 and initially was restricted to airmail using the Cairo-Baghdad service. Later on, this was relaxed, but stamps remained available from the GPO until 1940.



1940(MR14) and (MR2) Two covers from Malta to UK at the 1s3d rate, both with pairs of the 6d AIR MAIL overprint. The top item was carried by Lockheed 14 *Lafayette*, operating flight CW199 leaving Malta on 15.3.40. The lower item was carried by Lockheed 14 *Lothair* on 4.3.40 operating flight CW198. The flights arrived at Heston on 16.3.40 and 5.3.40 respectively.



Wartime Air Mail R.A.F. Censor



The Royal Air Force was not well prepared at the outbreak of war with Italy on 10 June 1940. There were only 5 Swordfish target-towing aircraft and 8 Sea Gladiators, half of which were still in packing cases at RAF Kalafrana - hardly a force to counter potential Italian air raids! Nonetheless, a Fighter Flight was formed at Hal Far on 19 April 1940 and had trained a number of pilots on 4 Sea Gladiators made operational by the start of the conflict.



1940(JA3) Censored airmail cover from Malta to England at the 1s3d Imperial Airways rate, with first type of RAF Censor marking.



RPPC of a Gloster Gladiator, similar to those used by the Fighter Flight from 19 April 1940.



Wartime Air Mail



As events in 1940 unfolded, airmail through Italy and France became more difficult. As a result, the alternative route via Bordeaux got more use. This route continued until the fall of France in June 1940, when services through the Mediterranean, including Malta, were abandoned.



1940(15FE) Censored Airmail cover from Malta to England, franked at double the 1s3d per ½oz. rate. Has received RAF Censor No.37 marking.



RAF Censor marking used from Sept 39 to Sept 40, although there were few RAF units during this time.



'Tombstone' RN Censor marking. Recorded on Malta covers between April 40 and Dec 44.



1940(5AP) Censored Airmail cover from Malta to England, franked at the 1s3d per ½oz. rate. Sent from an RN ship or shore establishment and has received an unsigned 'Tombstone' censor mark.



Wartime Air Mail



Records in the National Archives show concerns about delays to mail, resulting in approval to use Italian mail routes, unless the contents were sensitive. As tensions with Italy rose, more mail was sent using the Imperial Airways service, particularly from military personnel in Malta. Some alleviation to airmail delays was achieved by increasing the frequency to twice-weekly. By 1940, this service was using Heston aerodrome, west of London, replacing Shoreham as the UK terminus.



1940(AP3) 1s3d Imperial rate airmail cover from Malta to England with Naval censor marking, which is initialed E.C.H. This is almost certainly Surgeon Captain Ernest Charles Holton, who was appointed in 1938 to the Royal Naval Hospital at Bighi. The letter was written by his wife and sent to their daughter - notably, it was censored before affixing stamps.



Bighi Naval Censor (2x full size) - recorded from Nov.39 to Nov.40.



Wartime Air Mail



From February to April 1940, 25% of the twice-weekly BOAC services from the UK to Egypt via Malta were cancelled due to aircraft shortages. A similar situation developed between Egypt and Karachi, resulting in the use of AW.15s on an extended route between Calcutta and Egypt.



1940(MR20) Airmail cover from Malta to India at wartime 1s 3d Empire rate, with Par Avion Jusqu'a *Delhi* handstamp. Backstamped in Secunderabad on 29 MAR 40. Note the absence of any censor markings from Malta or India.



The use of *Delhi* as the air terminal for mail from Malta is scarce, possibly as only the AW.15 landplane services from Karachi operated through Delhi.

This cover's probable itinerary and mode of transport
 24 MR 40 - depart Malta on flight CE206 (L14 *Lafayette*)
 25 MR 40 - dep. Alexandria flight AC206 (AW15 *Astraea*)
 27 MR 40 - aircraft change at Karachi to AW15 *Atalanta*
 28 MR 40 - end of air segment at Delhi - transfer to rail
 29 MR 40 - arrive Secunderabad



Armstrong-Whitworth AW.15 *Astraea* at Aboukir. Operated flight AC206 from Egypt to Karachi.



Wartime Air Mail



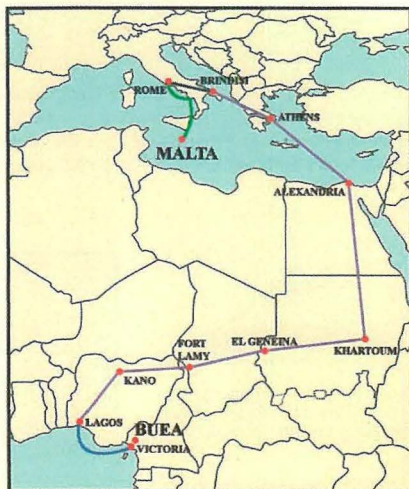
In May 1940, an unusual destination of Buea, British Cameroons for some airmail covers prompted use of a PAR AVION JUSQU'A *Nigeria* handstamp.



1940(MY11) 3d Registered envelope by airmail from Malta to Buea, Br. Cameroons with various stamps and PAR AVION JUSQU'A *Nigeria* handstamp. The cover has a manuscript endorsement *Aerea Via Roma* in red crayon. Note that there is no evidence of postal censorship.

- The probable itinerary for this 1940 cover:
- 11 May Stamps cancelled at Malta GPO
 - 13 May Ala Littoria seaplane to Rome
 - 13 May AMB Roma-Bari TPO datestamp
 - 19 May Brindisi-Khartoum by BOAC flying boat *Circe* on flight DS271
 - 22 May Khartoum-Lagos by BOAC DH86A *Demeter* on flight KL226
 - 24 May Lagos Registered datestamp
 - 26 May- Lagos-Victoria by sea
 - 29 May Victoria Br.Cameroons cancel
 - 29 May Buea Br.Cameroons datestamp

The items in bold are present on the cover, mostly on the reverse. Other dates are from airline information or estimated (-).





Wartime Air Mail



At the end of April 1940, an additional UK-India flying boat service was introduced, resulting in the reduction of the landplane service via Malta from twice to once per week. During May 1940, a small number of special BOAC flights using C-class flying boats called at Malta, both eastbound and westbound, carrying mails. These were probably investigating routes avoiding Italy, in anticipation of Italy's alliance with the Axis forces.



1940(MY28) Censored cover from Malta to UK at the 1s3d rate, with censor handstamp and resealing label on reverse. Censor signature belongs to Lt. H.F.Clode of The Devonshire Regiment. Probably flown Malta to England on BOAC S.33 flying boat *Clifton* on flight XW221.



Censor No.30 recorded used by 2nd Battalion, The Devonshire Regiment from Dec. 1939 until Apr.1943.



Resealing label type CSL-5A, used between Feb.40 and Oct.40



Wartime Air Mail



In the week leading to outbreak of war with Italy, BOAC diverted all its African and Australian Flying Boat services via Malta. This affected 7 flights from the U.K. and 5 flights to the U.K. before hostilities made operations unsafe. The last flights left Marsaxlokk Bay on 10-Jun-1940.



1940(JU3) Airmail cover from U.K. to Sudan, carried on *Cleopatra* (flight DS277), which called at Malta 6-Jun. Backstamped on arrival in Khartoum on 8-Jun-1940.

A RARE ARCHIVE OF STAMP DESIGNS ACQUIRED BY THE MALTA POSTAL MUSEUM

Lara Bugeja B.A. (Hons.), M.A. (Lond.)
Curator, Malta Postal Museum

In 2005, two sisters were clearing out a house in Essex following the passing of their aunt. In the back of a wardrobe in a spare bedroom they discovered what could only be described as nothing less than a philatelic treasure trove.

Unbeknownst to them, they had stumbled upon a rare archive of stamp and bank note designs executed by their grandfather. The archive included sketches and essays¹ for 40 bank notes as well as some 270 original stamp artworks. The majority related to designs for foreign countries (Spain, Turkey, Uruguay, Lebanon, Honduras, etc.) as well as some countries of the Commonwealth (Ceylon, Nigeria, Cyprus, Jamaica, Antigua, St. Lucia, Southern Rhodesia, etc.). Thirty of these pertained to stamps intended for Malta – specifically the King George V 1926-7, 1928 (Overprinted) and 1930 and the King George VI 1938-43 Definitive issues, as well as some essays for unadopted designs.

In 2019, these miniature designs were divided into 127 separate lots and sold at auction for an astonishing six-figure sum. This is their story and that of their designer – the late Leonard Fryer.

Leonard Douglas Fryer (b.1891) worked for the London-based *Waterlow and Sons*² – initially printers of lithographic copies of legal documents and subsequently engravers of postage stamps, currency, stocks and bond certificates. He joined Waterlow's in 1906, when just a teenager and appears to have followed in his father Augustus' footsteps who had worked there as a steel engraver.

In 2019, part of this archive found its way to the Malta Postal Museum. An initial look at the newly acquired designs revealed an interesting approach to stamp design of the first half of the 20th century. In the broader context of other stamps in the archive, it emerges that designs for countries falling under the Commonwealth 'umbrella', conformed to a set of predetermined rules: there had to be a portrait of the monarch, an iconic image of the nation in question and the stamp's denomination – all depicted quite simply and clearly. This was a tall order for anyone working on a design measuring no more than 3 x 2.5cms. It soon became apparent that designs

¹ For *essays* read also *designs*. In philately these terms are used interchangeably.

² *Waterlow and Sons* was acquired in 1961 by De La Rue.



Fig. 1

for British colonial stamps³ tended to follow a template – probably one designed by Fryer and / or his contemporaries. Either way, these stamps are immediately recognizable – almost comforting in their predictability.

Stamp designs for non-Commonwealth countries⁴ share common ground in that clearly none contain a portrait of the English monarch and from a design point of view, are perhaps more interesting. There are some striking, if a little avant-garde, triangular essays for Costa Rica stamps (late 1930s) as well as a set of four Brazilian stamps showing bold design and strong colour (all of which were unadopted). Perhaps they were too advanced for their time? However, they remind me of our innovatively shaped Cremona-designed stamps that made their appearance in Christmas issues of the late 1960s.

But let me not digress. The Malta essays are especially accomplished and here I speak of the King George V 1926-7, 1928 (Overprinted) and 1930 issues. There are 12 essays in total which loosely correspond to the 7 stamps illustrating Malta scenes [Fig. 1].

Indeed, they conform to the standard template (with a few exceptions here and there). Fryer's artwork is a joy to behold - his hand is assured as he paints scenes typical of Malta's urban and rural landscape with confidence. He evidently draws inspiration from photographs and images seen in contemporary publications⁵ sometimes repeating a design *in toto* like that of the 3/- stamp [Fig.2]. His style, although quite sketchy (pencil markings and watercolor washes) at times, clearly conveys a true sense of place in its treatment of depth and expert use of perspective.

The miniatures are a feast for the eyes – full of a freshness and spontaneity – notwithstanding (or perhaps due in part to) their unfinished state. Fryer's watercolors move from delicate washes to bold concentrated areas of paint. Note also how the construction of the design is a two-part affair - the vignette painted separately and subsequently inserted into the more formal structure of the 'architectural border' drawing upon the prevalent artistic climate of the art deco style. The ornamentation, in this case the border, is sleek and stylized in keeping with a yearning for modernism

³ Antigua, Ascension, Barbados, Bechuanaland, British Guiana, British Honduras, Cayman Islands, Ceylon, Cyprus, Dominica, Falkland Islands, Gilbert and Ellis Islands, Gold Coast, Grenada, Jamaica, Malaya, Malta, Nigeria, Pitcairn Island, St Lucia, St. Helena, Southern Rhodesia and Turks and Caicos Islands

⁴ Belgian Congo, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Cuba, Guatemala, Lebanon, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, El Salvador and Saudi Arabia.

⁵ Such as that from the front cover of *Malta, The Colour and Life of Malta from Original Paintings by Chev. Edw. Caruana Dingli* which shows precisely this scene of Neptune towering over the Grand Harbour. A scene imagined by Caruana Dingli and copied by Fryer.



Fig. 2

and sophistication and dare I say, “anti-traditional elegance”. A closer look at the designs, reveals exquisite detail – the kind of detail that requires both patience and time. There is a photograph of Fryer as he paints with a magnifying glass [Fig. 3].

I have found no records of his education and assume that Fryer was self-taught, honing his skills as he matured.



Fig. 3

In those pre-digital days, competition was stiff, and designers would often submit several re-workings of a single design. Sometimes just a single element of someone’s work would make it to the final concept of a given stamp. It was indeed a laborious and painstaking process.

In 1938, just over a year after the new King George acceded to the throne, a new set of Definitive stamps was issued by the Maltese postal authorities. Like their predecessors they made use of the medallion portrait, this time of George VI, and included local scenes from Malta and Gozo. The 10 essays shown here [Fig. 4] belong to that set of stamps issued between 1938-43.

Once more, we admire Fryer’s artistry. In this collection he has included, albeit somewhat tentatively the 8-pointed cross (see the 1½d, 6d and 2/- values). He has also toyed with the orientation of the King’s portrait – is it to be full frontal staring directly out at the viewer? Or will it be a three-quarter view, more in keeping with



Fig. 4

the shy king? Subsequent Definitives were to follow a similar format, including that of his daughter Queen Elizabeth in 1956.

The handsome visage of George VI is conveyed with a few expert brush strokes and appropriate shading in a space the size of one's little fingernail! Fryer is clearly a natural at portraiture. Twin



Fig. 5

portraits [Fig. 5]⁶ painted of his parents Augustus and Emma are almost photographic in execution, using light and shade to expertly capture the very essence of his sitters.

Five essays acquired from the same archive include three preliminary

⁶ Image from <https://hansonsauctioneers.co.uk>



Fig. 6

sketches listed as King George V - Revenue stamps (2 in purple and 1 in blue) and two striking designs listed as King George V – Revenue stamps: Essays for Workmen’s Compensation Revenue [Fig. 6]. These are the 1d in red and 2d in blue. Notwithstanding their fine design, none of these made it to stamp status.

In 1956 Fryer had completed 50 years of service with *Waterlow and Sons*. A typewritten letter from the Chairman P A Waterlow congratulates him and seeks to commemorate this momentous occasion by offering to engrave a souvenir of his choosing. He is asked to notify the company Secretary of the name and address of a shop from which his souvenir (to a value of £25) can be bought. He appears to have continued working for Waterlow’s a few years longer and retired around 1960, eventually passing away in 1965.

The discovery of this archive is hugely significant in that not only does it yield a fine cache of philatelic essays, but also helps identify the often faceless and forgotten designers of some of our most elegant stamps. We are now privy to the design process of these ‘early’ stamps which helps further our appreciation and understanding of what many of us have come to take for granted.

DAZZLING BRIMSTONE BUTTERFLY WHICH WAS THE REASON OF THE WHOLE FAMILY OF ‘BUTTERFLIES’

Vladimir Kachan, Belarus



One of the joys of a spring day is watching a fluttering, lemon-yellow brimstone alight on a flower - an early sign that the seasons are changing. It is commonly spotted in gardens, woodland and parks (**Figure 1 - Imperforated stamp of Great Britain 1963 with nature and bright Brimstone butterfly**).

The Brimstone butterfly does occur locally on Maltese Islands. This butterfly's range extends from the southern edge of Scandinavia down to the northern fringes of Africa and eastwards to western Siberia and Mongolia. These large and impressive butterflies have a wingspan ranging from 6 to 7.4cm. The males are on average slightly smaller than the females.

The name Brimstone has been in use for over 300 years. It is commonly believed that the word “butterfly” is derived from “butter-coloured fly” which is attributed to the yellow of the male Brimstone butterfly, the female being a much paler whitish-green (**Figure 2 – Imperforated stamp of Andorra 1995 with male and female of Brimstone butterfly**). It is thought that the yellow Brimstone butterfly is the species that

literally put the ‘butter’ into ‘butterfly’ (**Figure 3 – Stamp of New Zealand 1960 with butter**). The sulphur-yellow colour of the male Brimstone was not only the reason for its own name but also that of the whole family of ‘butterflies’. The firstly butterfly was described by Carl Linnaeus in the 10th edition of *Systema Naturae* in 1758 with scientific name *Gonepteryx rhamni*.



Figure 1

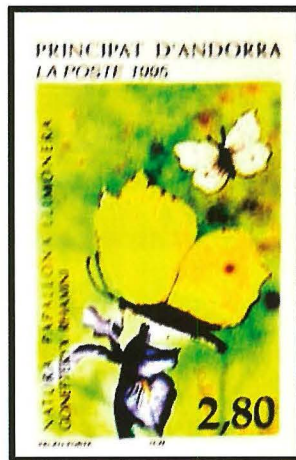


Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

Brimstone is often cited as one of the first butterflies of the year because adults hibernate over winter in woodlands and emerge on warm spring days (**Figure 4 – Entire postal of USSR 1964 - boy catching Brimstone butterfly**). New adults emerge from their chrysalis in July. These butterflies will stay on the wing until September or October before finding a safe place to hibernate. If the brimstone can make it through the winter then it will have lived in its adult form from July one year to May the next making it one of the world’s longest-lived species of butterfly. This is one of the few species of butterflies which hibernates as a winged, fully grown insect outdoors. The Brimstone butterfly is unprotected in vegetation from late autumn onwards and exposed to the weather without any protection. So that its body does not freeze solid in temperatures below zero, it enriches it in a timely manner with an “anti-freeze agent” that consists predominantly of glycerine compounds. At the same time, the butterfly reduces its quantity of liquid and can thus withstand temperatures of down to minus 20° C without harm. When it has thawed again, life continues, even from as early as mild February days. Thanks to this unique lifecycle, Brimstone butterflies live much longer than all other indigenous butterflies. In spring Brimstones often bask on the ground with their wings closed and canted over to present the maximum area towards the sun (**Figure 5 – Stationery card of Czech Republic 2003 with Brimstone butterfly**).

The Brimstone is a beautiful insect and a grand master of camouflage. The pale greenish underside, raised wing-veins and falcate wing tips combine to disguise

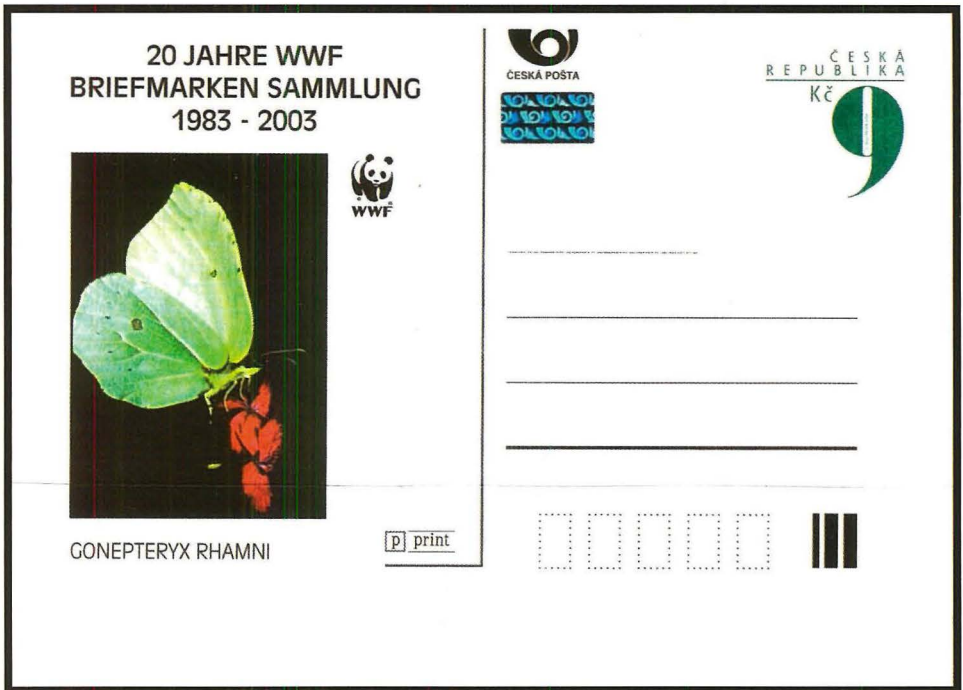


Figure 5

the butterfly as a leaf, making it near invisible when at rest under bramble or ivy (Figure 6 – Meter mark of Germany 2002 with resting Brimstone butterfly). Both male and female Brimstone have a beautifully shaped wing, which closely resembles a pale yellow leaf such as we might find on ivy in the autumn. Since ivy is an evergreen, offering good protection through the winter, the Brimstone often chooses to hibernate in it.

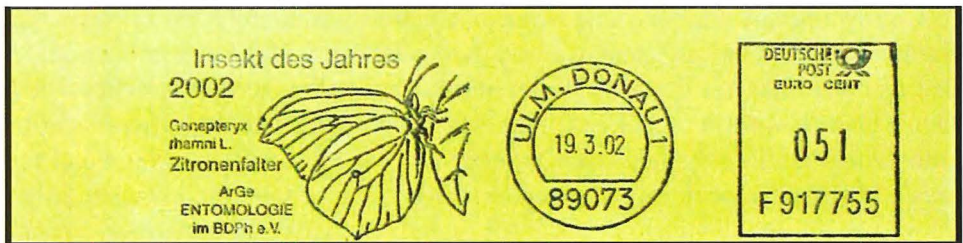


Figure 6

The Brimstone butterfly to have an innate preference for certain colours in nectar plants – red and blue inflorescences are common in heavily used nectar sources. *Gonepteryx rhamni* also has a stronger reliance on visual indications such as colour compared with other butterfly species, which rely more on odour. They prefer to drink from purple flowers, and bluebells are an important early nectar



Figure 7

source (Figure 7 – Telegram of Poland 1960 – Brimstone butterfly nectaring from purple flowers).

The Brimstone is a great wanderer and can be found in almost any habitat, from chalk downland to woodland rides to gardens. In flight they move fast and often high, forever changing direction – a good defence strategy against predatory birds (Figure 8 – Germany 2000 unissued draft of postage stamp with Brimstone butterfly). You'll rarely see one in the evening: they are early to bed, going to roost among the leaves between 3 and 4pm even in high summer. Whereas most butterflies have very strict habitat requirements and are thus localised in distribution, the Brimstone is highly mobile and can be seen in almost any habitat within its distribution range. A given insect may wander many miles from its emergence site, breeding with insects from other areas. This helps it to maintain a high level of genetic diversity, resulting in a hardy species that is highly adaptable, and not prone to major population fluctuations from year to year. The Brimstone is commonest on scrubby chalk grasslands and deciduous woodlands but it will breed almost anywhere where its larval foodplants grow,



Figure 8

including heathland, farmland, railway cuttings and coastal habitats. It is also regularly seen in gardens and parks or meandering along roadsides when dispersing in search of new habitats.

In the spring adult Brimstones are a chief pollinator of primroses both in the wild and in our gardens (**Figure 9 – Guinea Equatorial 1976 imperforate proof on presentation card depicting Brimstone butterfly**). They have an exceptionally long tongue which enables them, in the summer, to reach down into the deep flowers of Buddleia, teasels, thistles and knapweeds.

The Author is ready to help for philatelists in creating of philatelic exhibits on butterflies and moths. His address: Vladimir Kachan, street Kulibina 9-49, Minsk-52, BY-220052, Republic of Belarus, E-mail: vladimirkachan@mail.ru

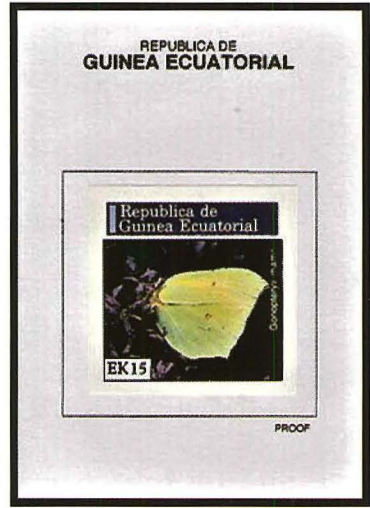


Figure 9

PLEASE ENROL A MEMBER

Membership renewal

becomes payable from 1st January,
and not later than 31st January 2021,
as per Clause 14(a) of our Statute.

Subscriptions are the same as last year namely:-
Australia - Aus \$40.00; Euro Countries - €20.00;
U.K. - £15.00 and U.S.A. - US \$21.00;
Local Members Juniors €3.00, and Seniors €10,
remittances as usual.

Members are reminded that payments by overseas personal cheques
are no longer acceptable by our Bankers.

You are kindly requested to remit payment through a bank transfer
using the details indicated hereunder:-

1. IBAN: MT 85 VALL 2201 3000 0000 4002 6085 661.
2. Bank's BIC VALLMTMT.
3. Account Name: The Malta Philatelic Society.

AN UNKNOWN PHILATELIC JOURNAL AND UNKNOWN PHILATELIC SOCIETIES

Albert Ganado

An unknown nineteenth-century philatelic journal, with past philatelic societies and philatelic jottings was published by Alfred Muscat of 270 Strada Reale, Valletta. It was named *The Melita Philatelic Chronicle and Advertiser*. The first number of the first year was dated 1st January 1898, while the last number '12' of the second year was dated 1st December 1899.

It is not listed in Sapienza's checklist of Maltese periodicals which means there is no copy at the National Library or the University of Malta Library.¹ It was printed by Zefrino Micallef at 68c Strada Reale.² Besides the title, the journal also sported a logo composed of two shields with the British and Maltese flags with the motto *Urbis et Orbis* inside a scroll underneath which indicated that the publisher wanted the journal to be international. The shields are tied with a ribbon at the top centre.

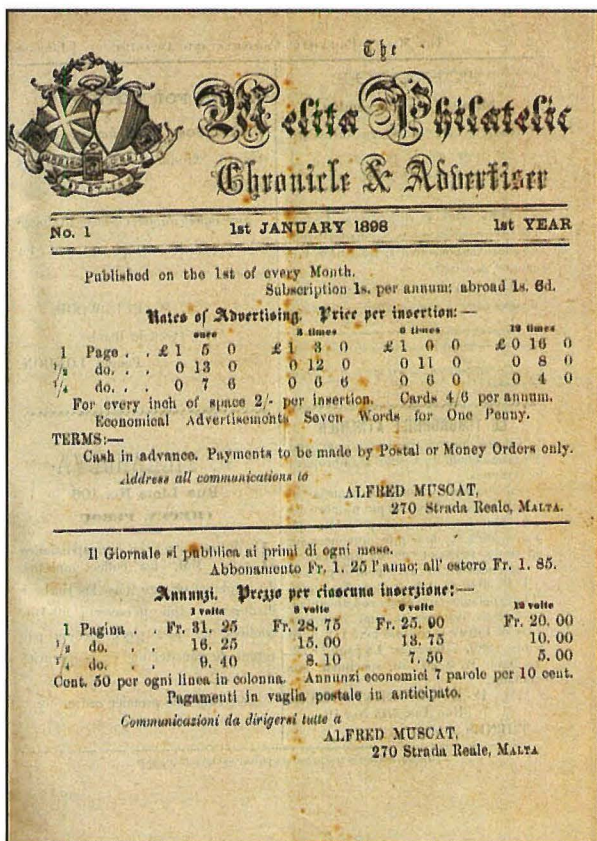


Fig. 1 The first issue of *The Melita Philatelic Chronicle and Advertiser*, 1st January 1898. Albert Ganado Melitensia Collection

¹ Anthony F. Sapienza, *A checklist of Maltese periodicals and newspapers in the National Library of Malta and the University of Malta Library*, Malta 1977.

² The Tipografia Zeferino Micallef was founded in 1860 at 6, Strada Teatro, Valletta (*Il Compagno per tutti 1888 (Advert)*).

Three Malta stamps, the one penny stamp, the Malta half-penny stamp and the Malta two-penny stamp link the composition together.

From a cutting present in the first number of the journal in my collection, it appears that 1898 was the twentieth anniversary of the Philatelic Society (Malta). It was preceded by an unofficial Stamp Circle whose members used to meet at the bar of the Anglo-Maltese Club where the business of selling, buying and the exchange of stamps was carried out over a cup of tea.

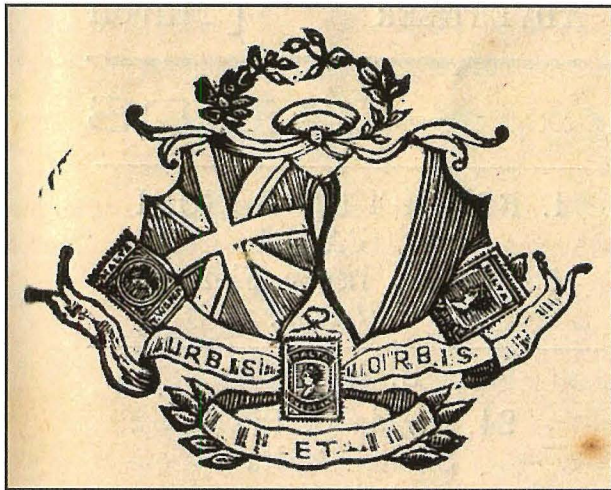


Fig. 2 The logo of the Journal

There is no clue what happened to this Association but it was perhaps the forerunner of the Philatelic Society (Malta). The Malta Philatelic Society, whose Rules were published on page 9 of the issue of the Journal dated 1st May, 1899. The President was Lt. Col. L. Manché M.D.,³ while the Hon. Secretary was Mr Edmund Rizzo. The members were shareholders. The seat of the Society was at 134D, Strada Brittanica, Valletta. Mr G. Bugeja was the Treasurer. At a Committee Meeting held on 8th August 1899 the balance sheet for the quarter ending 30th June was read and approved. Mr C. J. Micallef and Mr A. E. Calleja acted respectively for the Treasurer and Secretary during their absence from the island.

The 11th sitting of the Committee took place on the 29th October 1899 under the Presidency of Lt. Col. Manché. Present also were Mr C. J. Micallef, Asst. Hon. Treasurer, Dr Naudi, Mr Miller, Mr A. Muscat and Mr W. R. Gatt, Acting Hon. Secretary. Following the resignation of Mr Rizzo and Mr Calleja, Dr Robert Naudi LL.D. became Hon. Sec. and Mr W. R. Gatt Assist. Hon. Sec.

The following were elected as members: Mr Piani (France), Mr Nannoni (France), Mr Baxter (Scotland), Mr Moses (Bombay), Mr Daskalkis (Greece), Mr Munn (Canada), Mr J. Fenech and Major Clarkson (both Malta), Mr J. C. Darmanin (Malta).

³ Lt. Col. Lorenzo Manché M.D. was born on 25 November 1846. He was commissioned Surgeon of the Royal Malta Fencible Artillery on 27 February 1875; Surgeon Major 27 February 1887; Surgeon Lt. Col. Royal Malta Artillery 27 February 1895. Retired 25 November 1901. Died 16 February, 1921.

Apart from the members of the Malta Philatelic Society, there were various philatelists, including G. DePiro D'Arnico P.M.R., W. Micallef Eynaud, J. C. Darmanin, the Stamp Dealers, E. Busuttill Naudi & Co. and others. In the issue of 1st September 1898 there was a note that was indeed desirable that the gentle sex in Malta should follow the example of young Ladies abroad to become philatelists.

For some reason the Malta Philatelic Society ceased to function in 1901. The *Malta Stamp Society* was formed in its stead but Dr Manché felt the need to write a signed note in the *Daily Malta Chronicle* of 20 April 1901 saying that the new society was in no way connected with the former Malta Philatelic Society or with himself as its Honorary President.⁴

Alfred Muscat's Journal travelled far and wide. It had agents in Great Britain, Canada, the United States, Peru, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Sweden, Florence, Turin, and Catania and it fostered an exchange of philatelic papers with various countries in Europe and America.

The Journal also gave information on errors in watermarks, specimen stamps and the half penny 1/2d yellow. Among other items a very interesting advertisement appeared on 1 December 1899, no. 12 of the Journal. It read as follows: FOR SALE. The late Chev. F. d'Ancona's magnificent stamp collection containing 13,000 stamps all in first rate condition and guaranteed genuine. Valued £3,000 sterling. Apply to Mr Alfred d'Ancona⁵ No. 27 Str. Zaccaria, N. 14 Str. S. Ursula, Valletta – Malta. An astounding collection.

The present-day Malta Philatelic Society was created *ex novo* on the initiative of the Dutch philatelist, Louis Frank on 7 March 1966 with the title 'The Philatelic

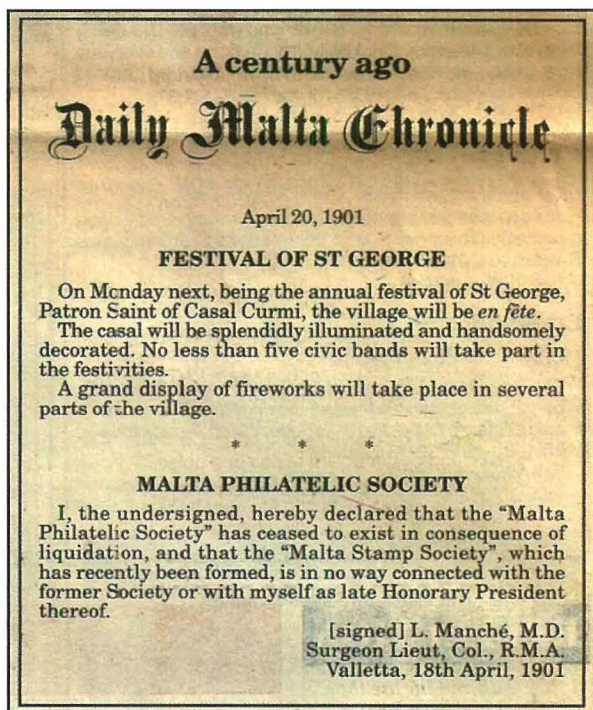



Fig. 3 Note in the *Daily Malta Chronicle* of 20 April 1901

⁴ I thank Louis Borg Manché for bringing this note to my notice.

⁵ In the 1880s Chev. D'Ancona was a Shipping Agent.



The
Malta Philatelic
Chronicle & Advertiser
OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE MALTA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

No. 121st DECEMBER 18992nd YEAR

— FOR SALE —

The late Chev: F. d'Ancona's magnificent stamp collection containing 13,000 stamps all in first rate condition and guaranteed genuine.
VALUED £3,000.

Apply to
M^r ALFRED d'ANCONA
N. 27 Str. Zaccaria, N. 14 Str. S. Ursola,
Valetta-Malta
or to the Publisher of this Paper.

ERRORS
5s. MALTA

Recently issued with letters of watermark reversed.
 Sent POST FREE to any part of the world on receipt of Postal or Money Order
 for 1/-
ALFRED MUSCAT,
 270, Strada Reale,
 Valletta—Malta.

Fig. 4 The advert showing the astounding collection of stamps of Chev. F. d'Ancona

Society of Malta'. Its first newsletter appeared in autumn 1966. I was the Honorary Secretary of the Society for twenty years.⁶

A comprehensive history of philately in Malta has still to be written.

⁶ See *Albert Ganado Hajja mhux tas-soltu* edited by Austin Sammut, Sergio Grech, Joseph Schirò, Malta 2020, p.155 et seq.

POSTAL DIARY

20TH DECEMBER 2019 – 06TH MARCH 2020

Compiled by John V. De Battista

20th December *(Continued from Vol. 49/3 December 2020)*

MaltaPost issued a media communication that the Sub Post Offices listed below will be closed on Thursday 26th December.

- Fgura Sub Post Office situated at “Happy Kids Stationery”, Triq San Tumas, Fgura, FGR 1608
- Floriana Sub Post Office situated at “Future Focus”, 9, Triq l-Imhazen, Floriana, FRN 1119
- Għarghur Sub Post Office situated at “Aquavel”, Triq San Bartilmew, Għarghur, GHR 1014
- Iklin Sub Post Office situated at “Tronic Peach”, Triq iċ-Ċitru, Iklin IKL 1081
- Kalkara Sub Post Office situated at “Troy DVD Rentals”, Pjazza Arcisqof Gonzi, Kalkara KKR1502
- Gudja Sub Post Office situated at “CND Stationery”, 144, Vjal it-Torri, Gudja GDJ 1704
- Mellieħa Sub Post Office situated at 51, Triq Ġorg Borg Olivier, Mellieħa MLH 1024
- Msida Sub Post Office situated at “Wigwam Stationery”, Triq il-Qroqq, Msida, MSD 5134
- Qrendi Sub Post Office situated at “Papel Stationery”, 1, Triq is-Salvatur, Qrendi, QRD 1701
- San Pawl tat-Targa Sub Post Office situated at “Zaky’s Stationery”, Triq San Publiju, San Pawl Tat Targa NXR 1421
- San Gwann Sub Post Office situated at “SGS Stationery”, 6, Triq Felic Borg, San Gwann, SGN 2040
- St Paul’s Bay Sub Post Office situated at “Paul’s Arcade” Triq il-Kahli, St Paul’s Bay, SPB 3015
- Tarxien Sub Post Office situated at “Forex Stationery”, 16, Misrah tas-Suq, Tarxien, TXN 1951

23rd December

MaltaPost informed the general public that by agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, all Post Offices will be closed and there will be no collection or delivery of mail on Thursday 26th December 2019 and Thursday 2nd January 2020.

Normal service will resume on Friday 27th December 2019 and Friday 3rd January 2020, respectively.

The second media communication for the day was the release of a Company Announcement dated 20th December, issued pursuant to the Malta Financial Services Authority Listing Rules, whereby it stated that the Board of Directors of MaltaPost had approved the audited Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30th September 2019 and that these same statements will be submitted for approval at the company's AGM to be held on 26th February 2020.

27th December

MaltaPost today made a number of announcements. In the first one it informed the public that the letterbox situated at Triq il-Qamħ in Żebbuġ, is now back in service. Another notification was that the letterbox situated at Triq Tigne' in Sliema too is now back in service.

In its third media communication for the day, MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Office at 'Tronic Peach', Triq iċ-Ċitru, Iklin IKL 1081, will be closed on Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd January 2020.

On these days, the public was directed to use the postal services provided from the Naxxar Post Office situated in Ċentru Ċiviku, Vjal il-Wiehed u Ghoxrin ta' Settembru, Naxxar NXR1018.

Another notice informed the public that the Sub Post Office at 'Needs Stationery', situated at 1, Triq il-Vajrita, Marsaskala MSK 3306 will remain closed until the 2nd of January 2020.

On these days, Marsaskala residents were advised that if they so wished they may make use of the postal services provided from Żabbar Post Office situated at the Civic Centre, Triq il-Kunvent, Żabbar ŻBR 1351.

In its final media communication for the day, MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Offices listed below will be closed on Thursday 2nd January 2020.

- Fgura Sub Post Office situated at "Happy Kids Stationery", Triq San Tumas, Fgura, FGR 1608
- Floriana Sub Post Office situated at "Future Focus", 9, Triq l-Imhazen, Floriana, FRN 1119
- Gharghur Sub Post Office situated at "Aquavel", Triq San Bartilmew, Gharghur, GHR 1014
- Gudja Sub Post Office situated at "CND Stationery", 144, Vjal it-Torri, Gudja GDJ 1704
- Iklin Sub Post Office situated at 'Tronic Peach', Triq iċ-Ċitru, Iklin IKL 1081

- Marsascula Sub Post Office situated at “Needs Stationery”, 1, Triq Vajrita, Marsascula, MSK 3325
- Mellieha Sub Post Office situated at 51, Triq Ġorg Borg Olivier, Mellieha MLH 1024
- Qrendi Sub Post Office situated at “Papel Stationery”, 1, Triq is-Salvatur, Qrendi, QRD 1701
- San Pawl tat-Targa Sub Post Office situated at “Zaky’s Stationery”, Triq San Publiju, San Pawl Tat-Targa NXR 1421
- St Paul’s Bay Sub Post Office situated at “Paul’s Arcade” Triq il-Kahli, St Paul’s Bay, SPB 3015
- Tarxien Sub Post Office situated at “Forex Stationery”, 16, Misrah tas-Suq, Tarxien, TXN 1951

30th December

MaltaPost informed the general public that by agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, on Tuesday 31st December 2019, the Customer Care Centre at MaltaPost Head Office will close at 13.00.

Normal service will resume on Friday 3rd January 2020.

15th January

On 17th January 2020, MaltaPost was to launch the 2019 Year Pack which includes all stamp sets, in mint condition, issued during that year, namely:

Maritime Malta Series VII - ‘Vessels of the Order’, 70th Anniversary Council of Europe , Europa - ‘National Birds’, 100th Anniversary - Sette Giugno Events 1919 - 2019, Malta At War - ‘The Map Plotters’, Euromed Postal - ‘Traditional Costumes’, 50th Anniversary - Man On The Moon, SEPAC Series - ‘Old Residential Houses’, Maltese Festa Series III, 20th Anniversary of the EMS Cooperative, The Stage Commandos & Popular Entertainers, Birth of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi - 150th Anniversary, Malta - Romania Architecture, Palaces, Apiculture in Malta and Christmas 2019.

The Year Pack is presented in a specially designed folder which besides the stamps also includes all technical details related to all of the 2019 issues.

29th January

Today MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Office situated at “Malton”, 7, Triq Censu Scerri, Sliema SLM 3062, will no longer operate as a Sub Post Office as from Friday 31st January.

Residents were invited to use postal services provided from the Sliema Post Offices

situated at 118, Triq Manwel Dimech , Sliema SLM 1055 and 39, Triq Sir Adrian Dingli, Sliema SLM 1902.

In a separate media communication, MaltaPost also informed the public that the Sub Post Office situated at “Future Focus”, 9 Triq l-Imħażen, Floriana FRN 1119, will also no longer operate as a Sub Post Office as from Friday 31st January.

Residents of the locality were invited to use the postal services provided from the Floriana Post Office situated at 4, Triq San Kalcidonju, Floriana FRN1520 as an alternative.

31st January

Today the public was informed that the letterbox situated at Triq San Bartolomew, Ħal Għargħur will temporarily be out of service as from Monday 3rd February.

As an alternative, the public was directed to make use of the letterbox situated at Triq Tal-Balal, Ħal Għargħur.

04th February

In today’s media communication, MaltaPost informed that the Sub Post Office situated at ‘Electroit Stationery’ in Fredrick Maemple Square, Qormi QRM 1011, will be closed on Saturday 8th February.

On this day the public was advised that as an alternative it may make use of the postal services provided from the Qormi Post Office situated at 343, Triq il-Vitorja, Qormi QRM 2504.

07th February

MaltaPost today informed that the letterbox situated at Triq San Bartolomew, Ħal Għargħur, has now been relocated to near the Police Station which is located in the same street. (*Ref. to 31st January entry*)

13th February

Today it was announced that on the 14th February, MaltaPost will issue the second set of stamps from the Old Residential Houses series. This stamp issue consists of four stamps, two of which feature the front and back facades of Villa Francia in Ħal Lija, one of an old medieval house situated in the old capital Mdina and the other of Villa Gourgion which is also situated in Ħal Lija. Photographs used for the stamps are by Angela Spiteri.

The stamps will be issued in a sheet of ten stamps, with each stamp measuring 44mm x 31mm, having a comb perforation of 14.0 x 13.9 and bearing the Maltese Cross

watermark. The sheets measure 185mm x 114mm and were printed in the offset process by Printex Ltd. The issue consists of 100,000 of the €0.20 stamp, 800,000 of the €0.30 stamp, 200,000 of the €0.59 stamp and 80,000 of the €2.00 stamp.



MaltaPost prepared an occasion hand stamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No.1/2020). The single severed-ring hand stamp is inscribed “OLD RESIDENTIAL HOUSES” along the outside bordering the ring and “* MALTAPOST ----- - MALTA *” on the lower inner side of the ring. The words and issue date “JUM IL-ĦRUĠ/14-02-20” in straight lines are to be found below an outline image depicting the house entrance shown on the €2.00 value positioned at the top centre of the hand stamp. MaltaPost’s Philatelic Bureau featured the issue in Stamp Bulletin numbered as No. 398.

18th February

On this day MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Office at ‘Step In’, Misrah ir-Rebħa, il-Birgu BRG 1300, will be closed between Saturday 22nd and Monday 24th February.

During this period, the public was directed to use the postal services provided from the Bormla Post Office at Block No 14, Flat No. 12, Fuq San Pawl, Bormla BML 1910.

In its second media communication for the day, MaltaPost also informed the public that due to the suspension of flights to China (People’s Rep.), the transfer of mail into China has been suspended with immediate effect until further notice.

19th February

MaltaPost reminded the general public that as a result of the emergency associated with the novel coronavirus, partner airlines have been obliged to significantly reduce or cease their air transport capacity into The People’s Republic of China.

As a consequence, MaltaPost was regretfully constrained to temporarily suspend outbound operations of mail items destined to The People’s Republic of China with immediate effect and until further notice.

MaltaPost also informed that mail from The People’s Republic of China arriving into Malta was still being delivered, although delays are being experienced due to the minimal air transport capacity out of China.

21st February

MaltaPost informed the general public that, by agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, on Wednesday 26th February, the last collection of mail from all letterboxes will be carried out at 1:00 p.m. and that the Parcel Office at the MaltaPost Head Office in Marsa will close at 4:00 p.m.

28th February

In its media communication for today, MaltaPost informed that the Sub Post Office at Happy Kids Stationery, Triq San Tumas, Fgura FGR 1608 will stop operations as from Wednesday 1st March.

In the same communication, it also advised Fgura residents that in cases of unsuccessful attempts at delivering postal items that require a signature or do not fit into a letterbox, arrangements have been made for the collection of such items from the Post Office at Ċentru Ċiviku, Pjazza Antoine De Paule, Paola. It was also advised that one may also choose to get the items delivered to a 24/7 Easipik locker.

06th March

MaltaPost informed the public that the Sub Post Office at ‘Fleet Stationery’, Testaferrata Street, Ta’ Xbiex XBX 1402, will be closed on Saturday 7th March.

On this day, the public was advised that if it so wishes it could make use of the postal services provided from the Gzira Post Office situated at 21, Pjazza Meme’ Scicluna, Gzira GZR 1120.

To be continued in future editions

AT THIS HOUR, WE STAND TOGETHER.

Protecting the health, safety, and well-being of our members, attendees, and ultimately our country is paramount. Following guidance from the World Health Organization, which on March 11, 2020, elevated the status of novel coronavirus outbreak to a pandemic, and the regulations issued by the Malta Public Health Authorities, serves as the reason for the MPS Committee’s decision to suspend all our Society meetings for the first time in our 55-year history. Put simply, postponing further the statutory Annual General Meeting (2021) is the right thing to do during this historic difficult time.

The situation is being actively monitored and we look forward to when health regulations allow that we can all safely be physically meeting together again. Until then, stay safe and indulge in our hobby.

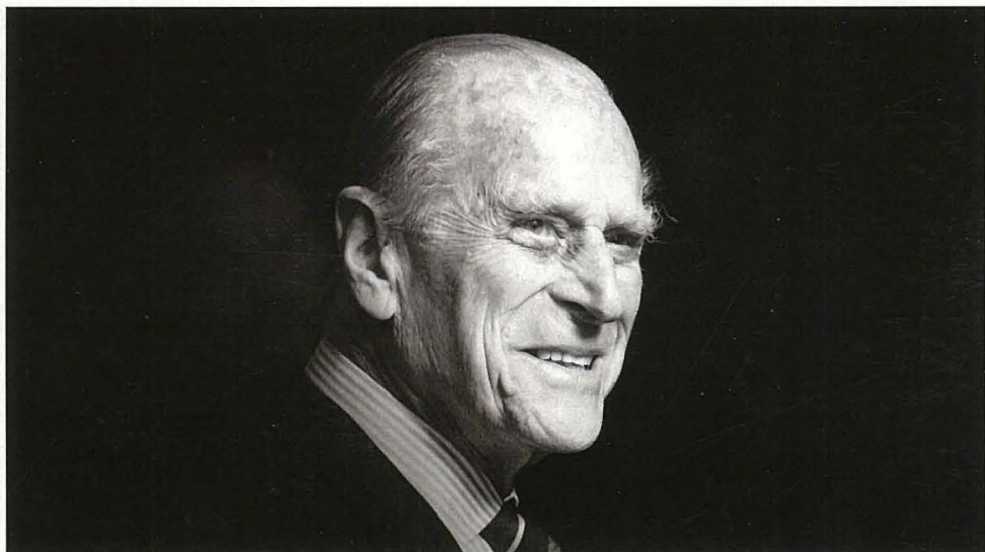
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