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THE MALTA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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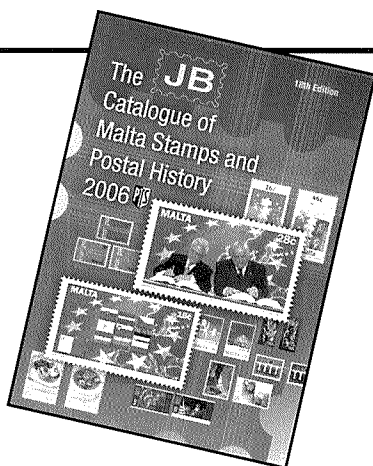
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‘Nizza’: A Method Used for Sealing Letters

Chev. Dr. Alfred Bonnici

Pietro Fanfani – Dizionario della Lingua Italiana (Firenze, 1881) defines NIZZA; “Quella linguetta con la quale si sigillavano le lettere in antico come si dichiara nell’ esempio: Sansovin, Segret. 23 [i.e. the erudite Francesco Tatti known as Sansovino (1521-1586) in his work “Del Segretario, libri VII, Venezia, 1568]. “La corte usa comunemente di chiuder le lettere dall’un de’ capi e Tagliando il garolo o nizza dal pie della carta, si fora quasi nel mezzo la lettera che e piegata, e vi si caccia dentro il girolo ec”

P. Petrocchi – Novo Dizionario Universale della Lingua Italiana (Milano, 1908) “Linguetta delle lettere antiche per sigillarle (Sansovin); Sopracarta (Cesare Coporali, perugino, Sec. XVI; Giovanni Gherardini, milanese 1778-1861)”

Salvatore Battaglia – Grande Dizionario della Lingua Italiana (Torino, 1981) “Linguetta di carta che un tempo era adoperata per chiudere le lettere: veniva introdotta con un apposito attrezzo attraverso il foglio piegato e fissata a questa con la ceralacca del sigillo”.

Nicola Zingarelli – Vocabolario della Lingua Italiana (Milano, 1930 e 1953), simply states “Linguetta di carta, Girolo” but he is the only one who indicates the possible etymology of NIZZA as being the Latin word “META”, and none of the above gave any indication why it was used.

One of the deadliest diseases that afflicted humanity was the **Black Death---Plague**. It was first reported in Europe in the middle ages and whenever there was an outbreak, it caused death to thousands of people, and disrupted economies of nations. Strict quarantine was imposed, and so no food could be imported or exported. The first plague epidemic that visited Malta according to A. Ferres, occurred in 1270. (2) In order that it did not spread to other countries, severe sanitary and quarantine precautions had to be imposed, by European States, and quarantine stations called Lazarettos were built, in all major European ports. (3).

John Howard in 1778 published a paper “An Account of the Principal Lazarettos in Europe” in which he describes the Lazarettos of Marseille, Genoa, La Spezia, Leghorn, Venice, Trieste, Naples, Messina, Venice, Trieste, Zanta, Corfu, and Malta. (4)

On the 20th March 1348 the first sanitary council was set up in Venice, which authorised the isolation of infected ships, etc (5)

In 1374, quarantine laws were first passed in Reggio Calabria by Count Bernardo, and in 1403 the Venetians, followed by Genoa in 1467, and by Marseilles in 1526. (6)

Quarantine measures were enforced in Malta during the Middle Ages, (7), but were more strictly enforced by the Order in Malta, on its arrival here, adopting the procedures which they had evolved during their stay in Rhodes. (8).

The first explicit claim to observation of a living micro-organism in causing plague was made in 1658 by the Jesuit Priest Athanasius Kircher (9), but the real cause and method of transmission of Plague remained unknown, - various causes being attributed to its cause, e.g. *bad air, and paper*, until 1894.

To day we know that the main transmission is: *Bacillus pestis in Rat - Flea - Man* (10).

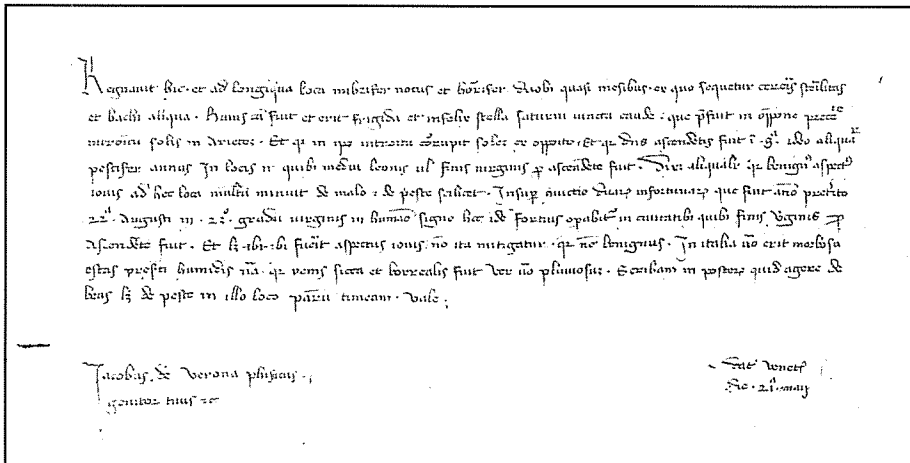
It was during an epidemic in Hong Kong (11) in 1894, that the causal organism was discovered by Yersin, and Kitasato independently (12), in infected rats *Rattus rattus* and *Rattus norvegicus* (13), the Bacillus being named *Bacillus Pestis*. (*Pasturella Pestis*. (14).

The method of transmission was by means of a flea *Xenopsylla cheopis*, and *Ceratophyllus fasciatus*, (15), which sucked the infected rat's blood, going on to a human or another rat, and by biting them infect them. So the transmission is Rat - Flea - Man.



Engraving by Geupy: 'A view of the city of Malta on the side of 'he Lazzaretto or Pest House, where ships perform quarantine.'

In Europe paper was always considered as being one of the methods of transmission of plague, so during the whole reign of the Order in Malta (1530-1798) letters, were strictly disinfected. This has been corroborated by various postal history authors among which we find;



Letter undated, (14th century), written in Latin, sent from Venice by Dr Jacobus de Verona to his son in Bologna, telling him that Plague was expected to break out, due to the bad humid weather.

G F Ingrassia p 171, stating; “Perche la carta e fatta di pezze di legno”, and “Le lettere pigliano infezione. benché meno per esser lisce” because it was considered as being susceptible for transmission, any substance, that was “peloso”, where the “miasma” disease, could hide (16).

C. FEDELE – M. GALLENGA, (1667), in Quaderni di Storia Postale - X, Prato (1988)- Strade, corrieri e poste dei Papi dal Medioevo al 1870, says “della qualita di carta da evitare in tempo di epidemia preferendo quella di qualita superiore, secca. (17), and L.A.MURATORI. Modena. (1722)., stating ; “Da altri si crede che la carta, e per conseguenza le lettere, non contagano l’infezione per cagione della loro superficie consistente e liscia. Trattandosi nondimeno di risparmiare I pericoli, s’ha da ritenere la saggia cautela di profumare.” (18)

There were various methods of cleansing or purification of letters. The most common 15th century method was the sprinkling of vinegar, or actually immersing it in a bucket of water or vinegar, which was frequently followed by smoking / fumigation /slitting (19)

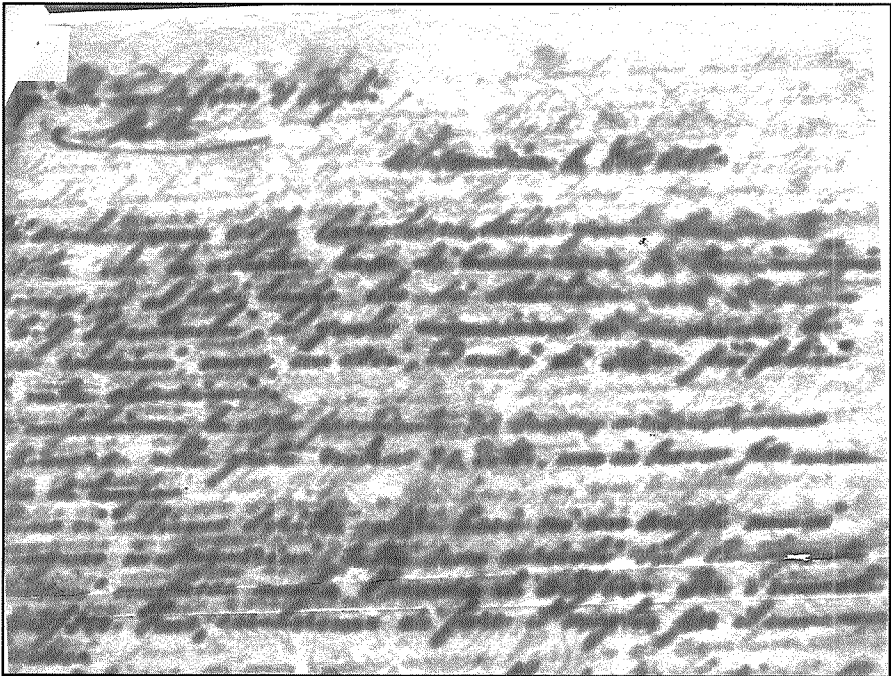
Teall 1947 says,. “The smoke from straw, burning tobacco, or sulphur, steam from charcoal fires, the evaporation of camphorated vinegar and smoke from pitch or gun powder all seem to have been used at one time and another”, and Ancona in 1951 stated “In Malta, in addition to dipping in vinegar letters from the orient were laid in a case on a wire grate under which straw and perfumes were burnt” (20)

These methods often made the contents of the letters undecipherable.

During early British rule the same sanitary and quarantine precautions continued to be observed, and Proclamations were issued from time to time, first by Captain Alexander J Ball, R.N. (1799-1801; 1802-09) (21), and later by his successors.

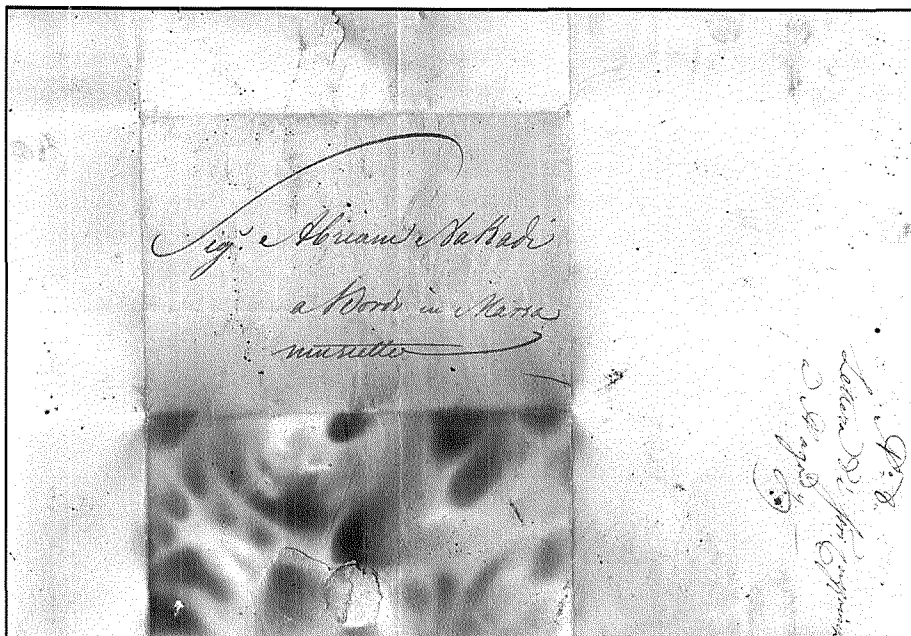
On the 7 November 1804, Sir Alexander John Ball appointed a “Comitato di Salute Publica” Per Le Isole di Malta, e Gozo, composed of; Head of Comitato di Salute Publica, Dr Luigi Caruana; Baron Gauci and Dr Vincenzo Azzopardi as Commissari di Sanita., Membri; Il Marchese Mario Testaferrata; Dr Franklin; Gregorio Mattei; Edmund Noble; Dr Fisico Giuseppe Cia;a; Il Cav. Paolo Sciberras Bologna; (22). Other *comitati di salute* followed from time to time.

An *Advertisement - Avviso* issued on the 12 May 1813 by J.Thomas, Presidente di Comitato di Salute, and J. Cast Miller Secretary, stipulated among other instructions that, “*papers (letters) had to be smoked*”.(23)



Lieutenant General Sir Hildebrand Oakes, G.C.B. (1810-13), Civil Commissioner issued the first Regulations for the Performance of Quarantine at Malta - Article XLI. (24)

“*All Communication by Letter with Persons in Quarantine in the Lazzaret, and on Board Ship is prohibited excepting through the medium of the Health Officers. All Letters must be received by the Health Officers and forwarded to the Post Office, the precaution of dipping such Letters in Vinegar and fumigating them being*



Smoked Letter

always observed, care also being taken when several Letters or papers are enclosed together that the Cover be slit open, and when parcels of Letters are very Bulky, or when they are suspected to contain Patterns of Cloth, they must be opened for the purpose of being fumigated, and sealed again with the Health Office Seal.”

This fumigation process necessitated that the letters when opened could be read, with the consequence that confidentiality was breached. In fact during British rule, when considerable intrigue, was going on about the future of Malta, prior to the treaty of Paris, it gave the government an excellent opportunity to scrutinise the contents of all incoming correspondence (25).

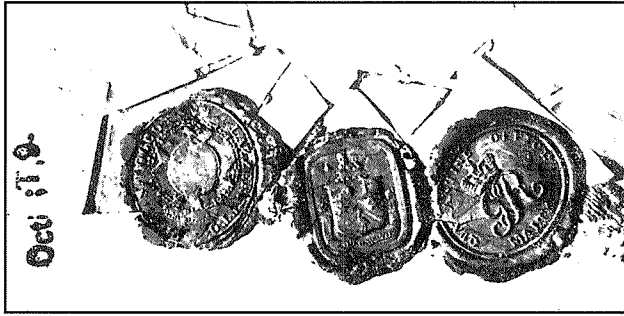
In order to preserve confidentiality, and at the same time fumigate letters, **“ONLY” Popes, Kings, Dukes, Grand Masters, Ambassadors, and the Courts in Italy** could make use of a specially designed wrapper called *NIZZA* to seal their letters, in such a manner, that two sides of the letter remained unsealed, and so fumigation could take place without the letter being opened, and therefore confidentiality respected.

Method of closing a letter by means of a nizza

There were two methods of closing letters by means of a *nizza*.

The first method, is normally found, when only one sheet of paper, was used:

1. A piece of right angled triangular paper (called *nizza*), was cut from the left



*Letter
opened
and sealed
during
British
rule.*

hand side of the letter, measuring about 1 to 2cm at the base, with a right angle side on its left, the right side tapering to a point, extending to three fourth's of the letter.

2. The letter was then folded in half, and
3. again in half horizontally, when
4. finally it was folded in half vertically.
5. A small slit was done vertically going through all the folds.
6. The tip of the tapering piece of paper was inserted through the slit and folded, the free end of its base was folded round the letter, the wide part passing on top of this pointed end, both ends being held together on top of each other by means of a special black adhesive, which was then,
7. subjected to a special hand press bearing the coat of arms of the sender, which become embossed on the *nizza*.

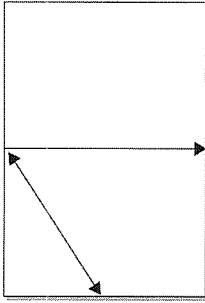
The second method, normally found when the letter consists of more than one sheet:

The same procedure as in the one sheet letter described is followed, with the difference that this time the *nizza*, is obtained from a different piece of paper, leaving the letter intact.

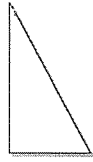
The incision going through all the folds of the letter is done this time horizontally, and the tip of the *nizza* is folded in the following manner.

1. the tip of the *nizza* is folded at its base, which is referred to as the base axis,
2. the middle of this base axis forms 90 degrees with the tip, which is then pleated forty five degrees on either side,
3. the tip is inserted through the horizontal slit, folding neatly at its insertion,
4. the wider part of the *nizza* is now folded neatly round the letter to go over the tip, holding it in place by means of an adhesive.
5. Finally the *nizza* is subjected to the pressure of a hand press and the coat of arms of the individual embossed on it.

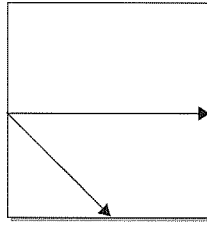
The first method



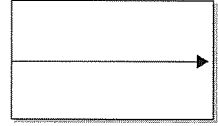
1. One sheet letter, showing from where the nizza is cut.



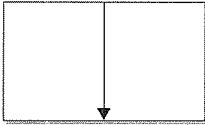
Right angled triangular piece is cut from right side of letter. This is called nizza.



2. The letter is folded horizontally in half.



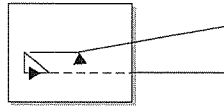
3. It is folded horizontally again in half.



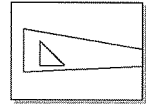
4. It is now folded vertically in half.



5. A vertical slit through all folds is made.



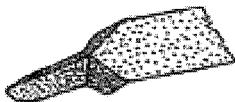
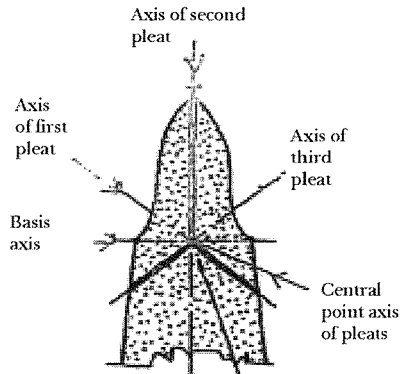
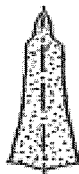
6. The tip of the nizza is inserted through the slit, and folded to the right



7. The wide base of the nizza is folded over the right side of the letter, so that this wide part will by means of an adhesive at the tip of the nizza. This wide part will be finally subjected to a hand - press showing the coat-of-arms of the individual.

The second method

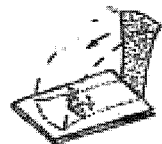
Diagram of nizza taken from another sheet.



How the pleats will appear



Final pleats of nizza





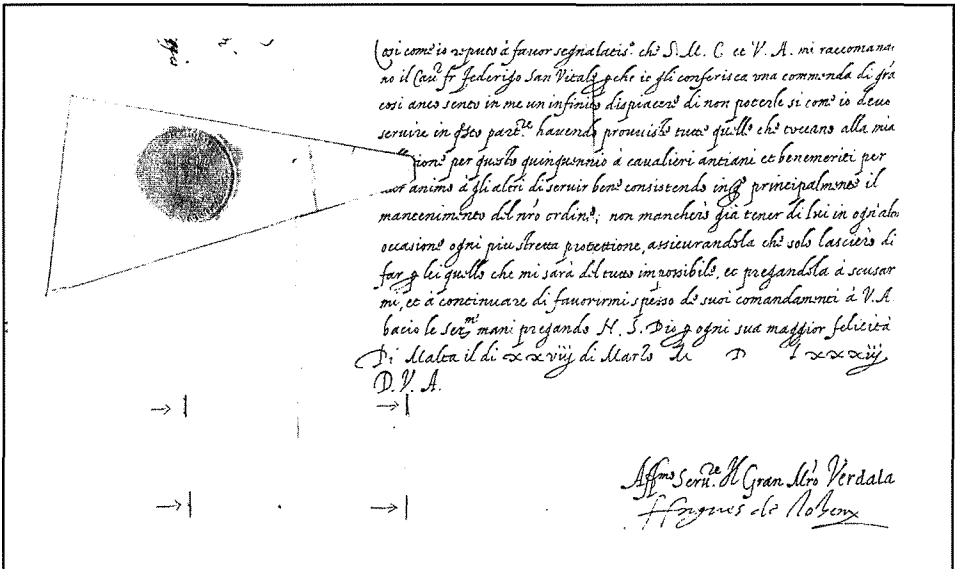
Letter by Grand Master Jean L'Aveque de la Cassiere showing Nizza with wafer seal of the Grand Master, addressed to Cardinal Farnese in Rome.(1)

Final appearance of the letter, bearing the **Address** on the front, and the **Paper Seal** on the back.

Both types of *nizza* have the advantage of sealing the letter, but at the same time the side of the letter over which the *nizza* passed remained open to the air, and could be fumigated without opening the letter, and hence confidentiality respected (26)

However, not all Kings in Europe made use of this method.

In the National Archives of Malta, there are letters dating to 1528, from Emperor Charles V, King of Spain, Head of the Holy Roman Empire, to G.M Philippe Villiers de L'Isle - Adam, (1530-34), when still in Italy, which are totally sealed. (27).



G.M. Verdalle 28.3 83, to Serenissima Madama Margerita d'Austria. closed by *nizza*.(28) showing insertion cuts.

Non fa altro scriveri a V. M. che di se a loro in Dio. Illeggo l'attento
 pendente qui ede sul' altro per servizio di lei l'assurto in ogni
 ogni mia avaricia per commodarla con le parti, ma non arando
 Napoli binanzi al Nunzio d'ordine di S. S. dove il Re
 di quelle parti per quanto mi vien offerto seguir pagliardam.
 desta cause, io non posso a tanto alcuno committarmi come sarebbe
 il debito e desiderio mio di fare in tutto la parte che desidero da
 V. M. la quale degnarsi l'assurto in questa parte per isussu,
 e come per ogni maniera sara assistita dal Re. La lettera, a chi
 mi rimetto e servirsi di me in ogni altro parte, dove si compiacera
 committarmi, come me ne fare ad ogni cosa gentia sua. Et a
 V. M. sarai le mani. Di Malta li 4. di Giugno 1596

G. M. Martin Garzes
 Malta a S. Giorgio
 M. Garzes

Di V. M.
 Ferr.
 Agn. m. affrey

Letter written by G.M. Martin Garzes (1595-1601) dated 4th, June 1596, to The Duke of Parma Ranuccio Farnese, (1569-1622), closed by means of a nizza (29).

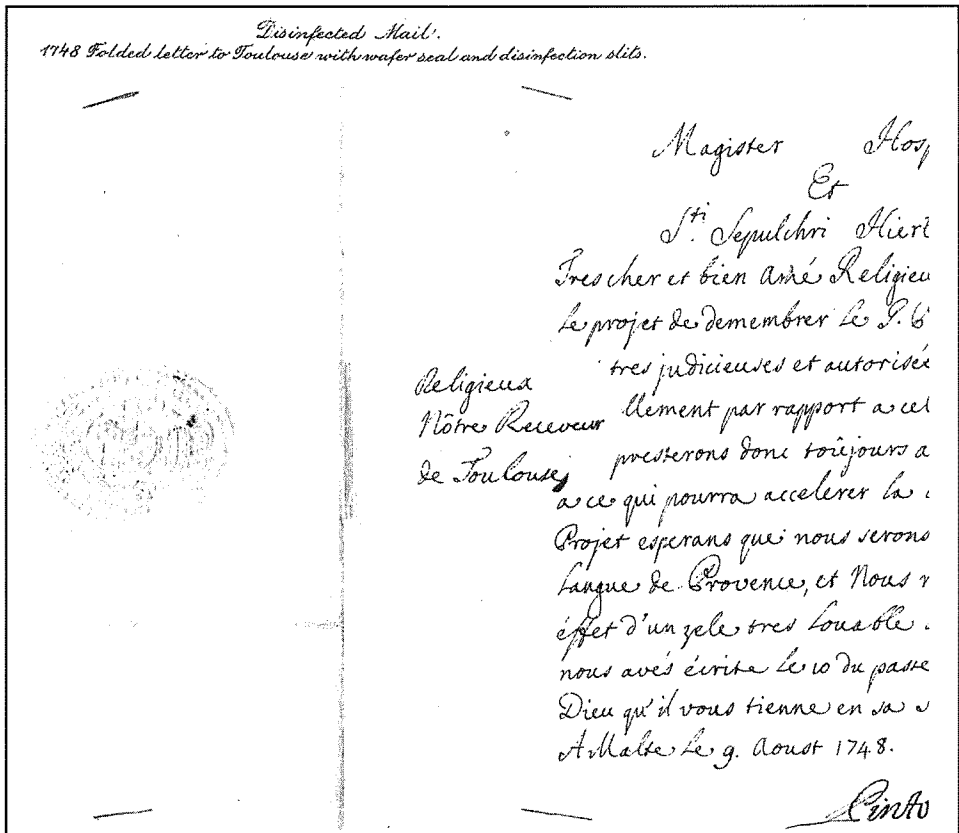
Another method used for fumigating letters, including MALTA, was by means of slitting them by various means, eg a chisel (30), (31)

From 1836 onwards, these chisel slits were accompanied by various hand stamps.

Letters sealed by means of a nizza, when opened up, will show the slit in every quadrant, through which the nizza went through, consequently Mr Godwin Said together with Messrs Christies Robson Lowe, and Messrs Harmers (33), have wrongly described these slits, as being the *Official Chisel Disinfection Slits* described by Meyer.(32)

In 1734 Messina in Sicily was invaded by plague, and Dr P.Pollacco a plague expert from Venice was called to Messina to conduct a general depurgation of the stricken city. After carrying out the depurgation he wrote a detailed report on the various steps he had taken to stamp out the plague. A copy of this report, dated 18 February 1744, was sent to Malta, and is included in a set of manuscripts in the

Disinfected Mail.
 1748 Folded letter to Toulouse with wafer seal and disinfection slits.



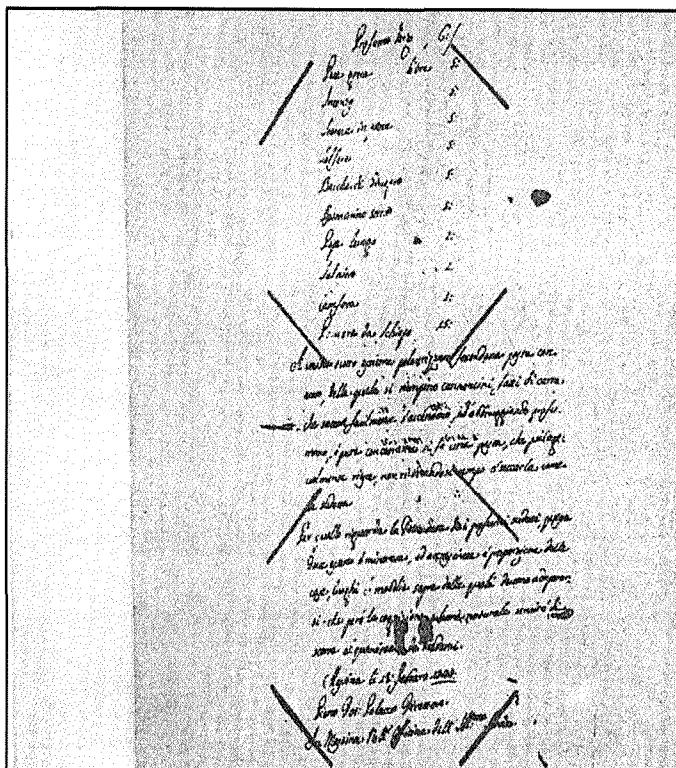
Magister Aloy
 Et
 St. Sepulchri Hier
 Tres cher et bien aimé Religieu
 Le projet de demembrer Le S. G.
 Religieuse tres judicieuses et autorisées
 Nôtre Receveur llement par rapport a cel
 de Toulouse presterons donc toujours a
 a ce qui pourra acceleser la
 Projet esperans que nous serons
 langue de Provence, et Nous r
 effet d'un zele tres louable.
 nous avés écrit le 10 du passé
 Dieu qu'il vous tienne en sa
 A Malte le 9. Aoust 1748.

Pinto

Grand Master Pinto's 1748 letter to Toulouse, wrongly described by Mr Godwin Said and others, as having disinfection slits. The slits shown, are the slits of the tip of the Nizza, which went through the letter.

<p>1822</p>	<p>1823</p>	<p>1824</p>	<p>1825</p>
<p>1826</p>	<p>1827</p>	<p>1828</p>	<p>1829</p>
<p>1830</p>	<p>1831</p>	<p>1832</p>	<p>1833</p>
<p>1834</p>	<p>1835</p>	<p>1836</p>	<p>1837</p>
<p>1838</p>	<p>1839</p>	<p>1840</p>	<p>1841</p>
<p>1842</p>	<p>1843</p>	<p>1844</p>	<p>1845</p>

Some chisel slits used from 1832 onwards in Malta, as described by Meyer.



Dr P. Polacco's report dated 18 February 1744, black lines showing the oblique slitting, (a piece of dark paper had been introduced in the cuts). (35)

Malta Public Library. It consists of ten handwritten sheets. Each sheet is incised by eight slits, four on each side, each slit about 3.5cm in length. This date is the earliest recorded use of slits for disinfection.(34)

Earliest recorded dates in Malta (as of to day), of letters by means of a *nizza* in;

1. Private Collections.
 - 27 March 1575.from G.M. Jean L'Aveque de la Cassiere, French (1572-1581).
 - To Cardinal Alessandro Farnese (1520-1589), nephew of Pope Paul 111 (1534)
 - Alessandro Farnese (1468-1549) (36).
2. Malta National Archives.
 - King Henry VIII letter dated 1522, to G.M. Philippe Villiers de L'Isle-Adam (1530-1534), when still in Italy.(37)
 - French King ? letter to G.M. Philippe Villiers de L'Isle Adam., when still in Italy, dated 9 March 1528 (38)

G.M.Jean de la Valette (1557-1568), letter sent to the Università at Mdina, *exhorting them to take care of art objects in the Cathedral., dated 27 May 1561* (39).

Museum and Library of the Order of St John, St John's Gate - Clerkenwell. U.K.

The earliest recorded letter in the archive sealed by means of a *nizza* is dated 14 June 1532. Written in French, by G.M. Philippe Villiers de L'Isle Adam, to the *Ambassadour pour il Roy*, concerning galleys of the Order that were sent against the Ottoman Empire.(40)

3. Mdina Museum

In spite of extensive research, helped by prominent Postal History colleagues both in Malta and Overseas, I have not yet found a satisfactory explanation why this piece of paper sealing these letters is called a “NIZZA”

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- Ferris, F, “The Church of Malta”, *Daily Malta Chronicle*, Special Eucharistic Congress Number, April 1913, p 24.
- Patton. (1951).
- ³ John Howard (1789) *An account of the Principle Lazarettos in Europe.*
- ⁴ John Howard, *ibid op cit.*
- ⁵ K.F.Meyer.M.D., Disinfected Mail – (1962). *Lazarettos, Quarantine, Contumaz and Disinfections Stations* p. 20.
- ⁶ *ibid., Quarantinable Diseases.* p.13.
- ⁷ Dr Paul Cassar (1965) *Medical History of Malta. Quarantine* chapter 31, p. 285.
- ⁸ *ibid., op. cit.* p. 286.
- ⁹ Meyer *op. cit., Quarantinable diseases*, p. 13.
- ¹⁰ C.H.Browning, & T.J. Mackie – (1949) *Textbook of bacteriology*, p.369/400.
- ¹¹ *ibid., op. cit.,* p. 364.
- ¹² *ibid., op. cit.,* p. 134.
- ¹³ *ibid., op. cit.,* p. 371.
- ¹⁴ *ibid., op. cit.,* p. 365.
- ¹⁵ *ibid., op. cit.,* p. 370.
- ¹⁶ G.F.Ingrassia. p. 171.
- ¹⁷ C.Fedele – M.Gallenga (1667) *Quadrini di Storia Postale* Prato (1988).
- ¹⁸ L.A.Muratori. – (1722), Modena.
- ¹⁹ John Howard., *op. cit* p.9
- ²⁰ J.Teall (1947)
- ²¹ 12 September 1806,- *Instructions for Commanders of Vessels under Quarantine, signed by Francis Laing, acting Public Secretary, by order of His Majesty's Civil Commissioner* (Sir Alexander John Ball).
- ²² 7 Nov 1804 – Proclamation – *Composition of Comitato di Salute.*
- ²³ 12 May 1813 – Advertisement-Avviso, signed by J Thomas, President, and J Cast, Secretary, on

- behalf of the Board of Health, *instructing the population what measures were to be taken against the scourge of plague.*
- ²⁴ 1813 - Very detailed *Regulations for the Performance of Quarantine at Malta*, consisting of 19 paragraphs together with: “*Instructions given to Commanders of Vessels including a tariff of fees, to be charged for every service given, issued by Lieutenant General Sir Hildebrand Oakes*”.
- ²⁵ W. Hardman. (1909) *A History of Malta during the period of the French and British occupation (1798-1815)*, P495.
- ²⁶ AOM. No 59/1.
- ²⁷ Luciano De Zanche (Padova 1997) – *Storia della disinfezione postale in Europa*. p. 22/23.
- ²⁸ Author’s collection.
- ²⁹ *ibid.*
- ³⁰ Elvezio (Venezia 1718). *Trattato de’ Rimedj contro la peste*. This book is in the National Library of Malta.
- ³¹ C.L.Dessoulavy, *Visitors to Malta, from the 15th to the 18th century*, The Sundial 1940. iii. 105 - P.Cassar. *op. cit.* p 289.
- ³² F.K.Meyer. *op. cit.* p.147.
- ³³ Messrs Christie’s Robson Lowe. 18/19 September 1991, Sale. Lot No. 2102.
“1859(Apr). E.L., **with disinfections slits**, written on behalf of Hugues de Verdalle and showing good arms wafer seals”.
- Messrs Christie’s Robson Lowe 9 June 1999, Sale, Lot No.1425.
“1583 (18 Sept.) E.L., **with disinfections slits**, from Hugues de Verdalle to Principe de Parma, signed Hugues de Lobenx” Lot No 1427. “1597 (8 May) E.L., **with disinfections slits** written by Martin Garzes to the Duke of Parma.”
- ³⁴ Dr. P.Polacco’s report dated 18 February 1744, in National Library.
- ³⁵ This report is in the National Library of Malta, and was reviewed by Dr P Cassar, in January 1967.
- ³⁶ Author’s collection.
- ³⁷ AOM. Vo I 57.
- ³⁸ AOM. Vo I 58.
- ³⁹ Univ. 5, f. 4r
- ⁴⁰ Museum of the Order of St John, St Johns Gate, Clerkenwell. U.K.
Grand Masters of Malta Letters; Old reference No. K 2/15 (M), new reference No.14/5. f. 1532.

F.I.P. Exhibitions

Praga 2008 – 12-14/09/2008

WIPA2008 – 18-21/09/2008

Full information may be obtained from our F.I.P. Commissioner,
Mr. John Cardona,
56, Triq Santa Marija, Tarxien - Malta - Europe
Tel: 2189 2141
johncardona@gmail.com

Mail from Marseille – Malta ;

Messageries / Nationales – Imperiales

1853 - 1874

Chev. Dr. Alfred Bonnici

MESSAGERIES NATIONALES – 28th February 1851

MARITIMES des MESSAGERIES NATIONALES – 19th January 1853

MARITIMES IMPERIALES – 3rd November 1853

MESSAGERIES MARITIMES (MM) – 1871

With the advent of steam, on the 2nd July 1835, the French Government set up a State owned steamship service - “**SERVICE DES PAQUEBOTS A VAPEUR DE LA MEDITERRANEE**”, inaugurated on the 7th April 1837, to operate between **Marseille and the Levant, calling en route at Malta.**

On the 7th April 1837, a notice was issued containing the following information.

“A regular paquebots ship service would start as from the 1st of May 1837, between Marseille and ports in the Levant.

The departure and return would be every ten days without interruption, departing from Marseilles on the 1st, 11th, 21st, and return from Constantinople every 6th, 16th, 26th, every month, stopping at:

*Livourne, Civita-Vecchia, Naples, **MALTHE**, Syra, Smyrne, and returning by the same route”.*

The notice continues giving details for Alexandria, Constantinople, departures, and passenger accommodation rates.

Ten steamers, were ordered and were operated by the French Navy’s Marine Corps. Initially, each was armed with canon, and was officially classed as a “ship of war”. Their commanders were classed as *Lieutenants de Vaisseau de Premiere Classe* and had 42 marines on board. The ships were to be used **to carry mail** and passengers. Letters were endorsed in manuscript “**Col Pachetto a vapore de Guerra Francese**”. (Figure 3)

The ships were: **RHAMISES, MENTOR, LEONIDAS, TANCREDE, DANTE, LYCURGUE, MINOS, SCAMANDRE, EUROTAS, SESOSTRIS.** R.Salles, La Poste Maritime Francaise.

The **LEONIDAS, MENTOR, TANCREDE, LYCURGUE, EUROTAS,**

SCAMANDER were transferred in October 1851 to “**Messageries Nationales**”.

In 1848, six more ships were added named:

CAIRE, ALEXANDRE, EGYPTUS, OSIRIS, NIL, LOUQSOR, and they were transferred to the “**Messageries Nationales**” in October 1851 (R. Salles p11, D. Haws p.2, H. Tristant p.20)

At this time in France, road communications were in the hands of a State operated concern known as: “**MESSAGERIES NATIONALES**”, carrying post by stage coach, but the growth of the private railway network was replacing this, and because of their postal experience, it was decided that the steamship postal services should be handed to them.

So, on the 28th Feb 1851, the first postal convention for a postal service in the Mediterranean, was signed between the **Ministry of Finance and Messageries Nationales**, ratified on the 8th July 1851, as law No 3,057.

The service consisted of:

Three voyages per month between **MARSEILLE** and **MALTA**, (calling at ports along the coast of Italy), so picking up mail from the Italian ports. This was called “**LIGNE INDIRECT D'ITALIE**” and remained in force up to August 1864. (Figures 1, 1a & 2)

Three voyages per month between **MARSEILLE** and **CONSTANTINOPLE**, via **SYRA, ATHENS** – **PIREUS**

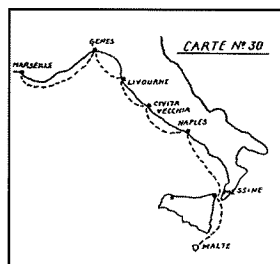


Figure 1.

Two voyages per month between **MARSEILLE** and **ALEXANDRIA**.

During September 1851 the Company acquired from Messrs Cie Rostand three paquebots, namely;

HELLESPONT, BOSPHORE, and ORONTE, and during October 1851 to February 1852 the Company acquired another thirteen paquebots, namely;

LEONIDAS, NIL(1), TANCREDE, ALEXANDRIA, SCAMANDRE(1), MENTO, THLEMAQUE, EGYPTUS, LYCURGUE, OSIRIS, CAIRE, LOUQSOR(1), EUROTAS.

On the 19th January 1853 the Company separated their road activities from their shipping ones and the; “**Compagnie des Services MARITIMES des MESSAGERIES NATIONALES**” was formed, **SESTORIS** being returned to the Navy. (Figure 3)

As these ships because of their size, poor cargo capacity, and navy type engines, were uneconomical, the company decided to buy the Louis Benet yard at La Ciotat, where the future Company fleet was to be built, the first vessel delivered on the 12th July 1852, being the **PERICLES**, followed more or less at yearly intervals by **THABOR Oct 53, SINAI June 54, CARMEL Jan 55, Danube I Dec 55, CYNBUS**

Dec 56, PHASE May 58, NEVA March 59.

In 1853 Napoleon III converted his Presidency into a Monarchy, and as the “*Compagnie des Services Maritimes des Messageries Nationales*” had Royal patronage, it changed its name on the 3rd November 1853 to:

“**Compagnie des Services Maritimes Imperiales**”, also known as “Royal Mail Company”. (Figures 4 & 5)

On the 13th April 1854 an agreement was signed with the Greek Government permitting calls at designated Greek ports – principally **Pireus**. The Company was also awarded a mail contract for the **Marseille - Algeria, Marseille – Bone- La Gollette, Tunis and Marseille - Oran routes**.

The departure time for these routes being 15.00 hrs every third day.

In 1854 to meet these new needs, fourteen new ships were ordered for delivery over an eighteen month period, and **EUPHRATE (I), GANGES (I), and INDUS (I)**, were bought from the bankrupt Australasian Pacific Mail Steam Packet Co, which on the outbreak of the Crimean war in October were used as troop transports to Constantinople and the Crimea. D.Haws.

The other ships being:

HYDASPE Dec 54, CLYDE Jan 55, TAMISE Jan 55, SIMOIS Mar 55, JOURDAIN July 55, MITIDJAH Aug 55, CHELIFF Sep 55, BORRYSTHENE Jan 56, MEANDRE Mar 56, MERSEY Mar 56.

In 1857 the fleet now numbered fifty seven ships, and on the 29th May 1857 being State owned, the mail contracts for the Levant were renewed, with the Black Sea destination added.

On the 4th September 1870 the Third French Republic was formed and all Royal titles were abolished, so the Company, in 1871, changed its name to: “**Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes.**” (MM), and continued to be the French State’s chosen carrier for the Indian Ocean and Asiatic seaboard, and Islands of the Pacific from Japan down to New Zealand.

Postal rates.

Between 1851 and 1856 the postal rate was **10 decimes (1Franc) per 7 1/2 grammes** – (1/4 ounce) if paid on departure, double rate if paid on arrival at destination. The rate being written in ink, on the front of the entire. (Figure 6)

On the 24th September 1856, a new Postal Convention had been concluded between, the G.P.O. London and the French Post Office, which stipulated a reduced rate of **8 decimes for 40. grs**, from 1st January 1857, (Figure 7) so Mr F. Hill of the London GPO, wrote on the 3rd December 1856, to the Malta Packet Agent, informing him about this new convention, stating;

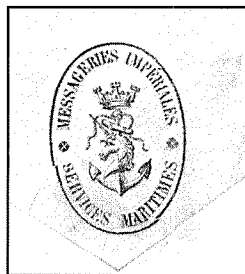


Figure 4.

“The total combined rate of postage upon letters posted in France or Algeria addressed to Malta, or posted in Malta addressed to France or Algeria, will be the same, (4d per ¼ ounce for prepaid letters, and 8d per ¼ ounce for unpaid letters) whether these letters are conveyed by a British or French Packet”

“The principle of charging a higher rate for unpaid letters received, than for paid letters despatched, will apply not only to letters between Malta and France, but also to letters conveyed by French packets between Malta and other places in Turkey, Syria, or Egypt, at which France maintains Post Offices, and, upon this last class of letters, the British Office will in future be entitled to be credited with a British rate both upon paid letters sent to Malta and upon unpaid letters sent from Malta, the postage upon which letters will be collected by the French Office”

“The rates to be accounted for to France by your office are as follows:

*Paid letters addressed to France or Algeria..... 1f.20c
per ounce.*

*Unpaid letters despatched from France addressed to Malta..... 3fs.40c.
per ounce.*

Paid letters addressed to Foreign Countries the correspondence of which shall be transmitted through France, or unpaid letters from those countries addressed to Malta, see the rates as set forth in Table H.

Paid letters conveyed by French Packet addressed to the French Offices in Turkey, Syria, or Egypt.....1f.10c per ounce.

Memo; The same rate is to be accounted for on letters for Salonica – at which France does not maintain a Post Office.

Unpaid letters received by French Packet from the French offices in Turkey Syria, or Egypt addressed to Malta.....1f.50c per ounce.

Memo: The same rate is to be accounted for on letters received from Salonica.

*Paid letters forwarded by French Packet to the Ports of Italy, or Greece...60c
per ounce*

Memo: Upon letters brought to Malta from Ports of Italy or Greece no rate will be accounted for to France by the British Office, as the French Post Office will have received payment of its postage from the despatching office”.

*“As only the French rate, however, will have been received and France will not, therefore account to the British Office, for any postage on such letters, a British rate of **one** penny per ¼ ounce, must in future be collected, on the delivery of the letters sent from Malta to the Ports of Italy or Greece.”*

Hand Stamps used

According to the convention of the 28th February 1851, “*Agents des Postes*” on board “**MESSAGERIES IMPERIALES paquebots**” (figure 8a), were



Figure 1a. "LIGNE INDIRECT D'ITALIE" – Marseille – Genes – Livorno – Cività Vecchia – Napoli – Messine – Malte.

M.I. ORONTE picked up this entire at Livorno on 21/02/54 – Malte 25/02/1854



Figure 2. "LIGNE INDIRECT D'ITALIE" – Marseille – Genes – Livorno – Cività Vecchia – Napoli – Messine – Malte.

M.I. HELLESPONT picked up this entire at Livorno on 21/02/54 – Malte 25/02/1854



Figure 3.

E.L. to Livorno from French Post Office at Alexandria on the 8th December 1849 by French ship SESOSTRIS endorsed "Col Vapore di Guerra Francese" in manuscript, calling at Malta, endorsed with 24mm Lazzaretto h.s., on to Livorno (Via Di Mare) arriving 21 December 1849.



Figure 5. Services Maritimes des Messageries Impériales official printed stationery.



Figure 6. "10" decimes, (1 Franc) per 7½ grams (¼ ounce).



Figure 7. New rate as of 1st Jan 1857 "8" decimes, per 7½ grams (¼ ounce).

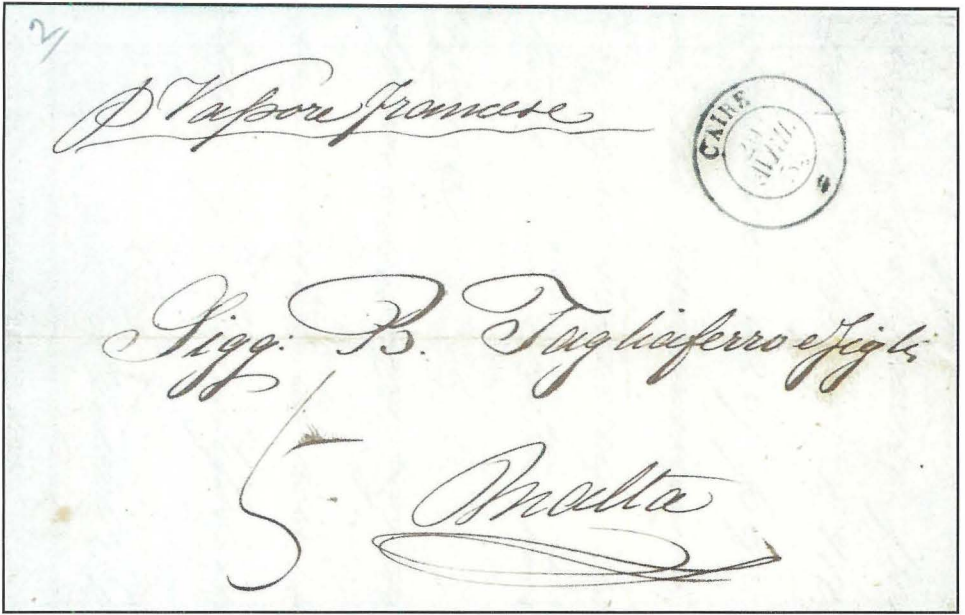


Figure 8. M.I. CAIRE (sh:p's name applied by postal agent).

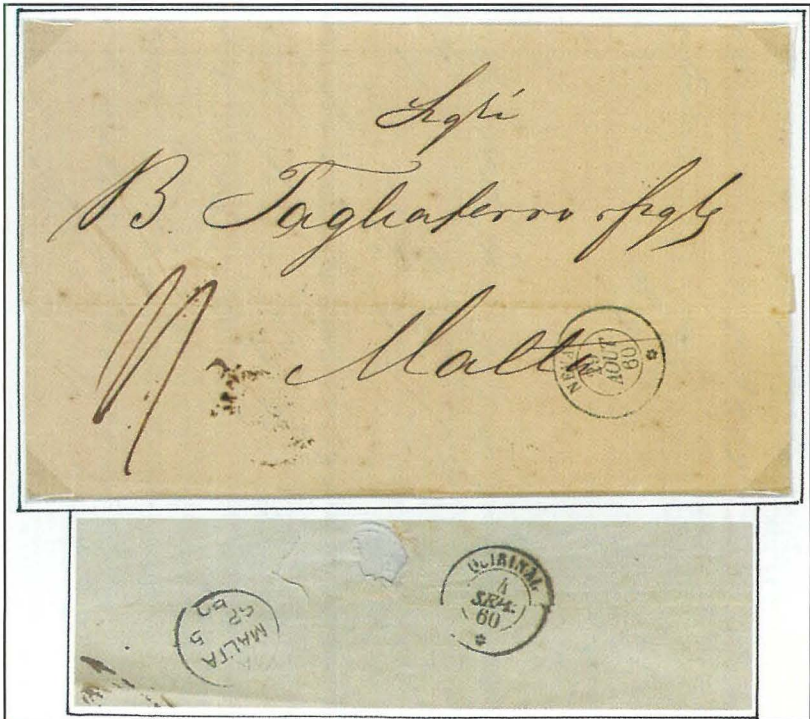


Figure 9. Double ship hand stamp endorsement - NIL, & QUIRINAL

N^o 64
Etat Nominal du Personnel du Vatican
~~~~~

Paquebot  
Le Vatican

Pelliot Emile cap<sup>me</sup>  
Groupe Martin suid  
Pellegrin Joseph S<sup>t</sup>  
Ollivier Louis dentier  
Bouvard Charles mecan  
Drozzi Charles mecan  
Dreuzis Andre m<sup>tr</sup> d'eq  
Pascal Jean m<sup>tr</sup>  
Herminie Jules "  
Mouillon J<sup>ms</sup> "  
Gatin Etienne "  
Duc Joseph "  
Pellegrin Salomon "  
Bidebender Henri "  
Stablier Felix "  
Flamencq Octave "  
Moral Antoni "  
Novaro Pascal "  
Poyrol Pierre "  
Philippe Victor "  
Denoit Pierre "  
Orsellini Joseph "  
Carpignia Laurent

Leur Desire chauffeur  
Léon Louis "  
Didot Charles "  
Peyroulan Blaise "  
Verrier Joseph "  
Weymier Bernard "  
Vivante Joseph "  
Lancini Bartholomy "  
Fater Antoine "  
Mosty Francis J<sup>ms</sup>  
Boty Alixandre "  
Emery Daniel "  
Pistella Gastone "  
Ragho Michel "  
Foussier Eugene "  
Ossier Pizanne J<sup>d</sup>. ch.  
Jacobut Jean restaurateur  
Faurcau Leon Cambrier  
Duroc Luyse cuisinier  
Woin Eugene "  
Desgats Joseph "  
~~...~~  
Dubomgnat agent des  
Postes

Arrive à Malte le 3 Janvier 1859

J<sup>ms</sup> Pellegrin

45

Figure 8a. Manifest of M.I. VATICAN showing name of Postal Agent on board – Dubomgnat



Figure 10. Lozenge of dots and 'Petits Chiffres 1896'.



Figure 11. Lozenge of dots and 'Gros Chiffres 2240'.



Figure 12. INDUS (Ship hand stamp together with 'lozenge of dots and anchor' obliterating the stamps).

responsible in collecting, taking care and transferring mail which had to be endorsed by a 22mm black double ring hand stamp which bore the” **name of the ship and date**”, (R.Salles.p 54) (Figure 8)

When mail was transferred to another paquebot, the entire was also endorsed with the handstamp bearing the name of the second paquebot. However this was not always observed. (Figure 9)

Entires franked by the Imperforate Louis - Napoleon, Empire Franc stamp during 1853-60, were hand stamped with the - lozenge diamond of dots with the ‘Petits Chiffres 1896’ (Marseille) in the middle. (Figure 10)

The earliest recorded entire to Malta by me being, 21st January 1857.

In 1862 entires with the perforated Louis – Napoleon EMPIRE FRANC stamp (1862), were hand stamped with the - lozenge diamond ‘Gross Chiffres 2240’ (Marseille) in the middle. (Figures 11)

The earliest recorded entire to Malta by me, being 5th January 1864.

From June 1863 the black doubling, 22mm hand stamp, bearing the name of the ship and date, was used together with another hand stamp in the form of a **“lozenge of dots with an anchor in the middle** “to frank the 1862 perforated Louis – Napoleon EMPIRE FRANC French stamp. (Figures 12)

The earliest recorded entire to Malta by me being 6th June 1863 AMERIQUE.

# Cholera Epidemic of 1837

Chev. Dr. A. Bonnici KM. MD.

Cholera was diagnosed on the 9 June 1837, at the Ospizio Hospital in Floriana, Malta, in two inmates, who fell ill with vomiting and diarrhoea, by Dr A Axisa. They were investigated and confirmed by Dr L Gravagna (Medico di Polizia) and another physician.

By the 13th June twenty seven inmates had been attacked with seventeen fatalities.

Because of this the Governor ordered the removal of six hundred and forty five out of seven hundred and fifty inmates of both sexes from the Ospizio to Fort Ricasoli (Fig 1.) in the hope of arresting the progress of the malady in the isolated and well aerated position occupied by the Fort. In spite of this precaution the epidemic exploded and two doctors who contracted the disease had to go home to be treated. Soon it became impossible to keep order at Ricasoli and insubordination was rampant. Eighteen convicts were discharged from prison on the 18 June to transport and bury the dead, but had to be re imprisoned because of various contraventions committed by them. Another nine convicts were liberated next day, but they also proved to be unreliable and were re imprisoned.

On the 21 June Dr A Speranza was entrusted with the administration of Ricasoli, and he quickly brought the situation under control.

In the mean time the epidemic had now spread to Floriana, Senglea, Birkirkara, and the military and naval hospitals, which alarmed greatly the population.

The method of transmission was unknown, and theories such as non contagious and contagious, were advocated among the Maltese and British Medical Profession.

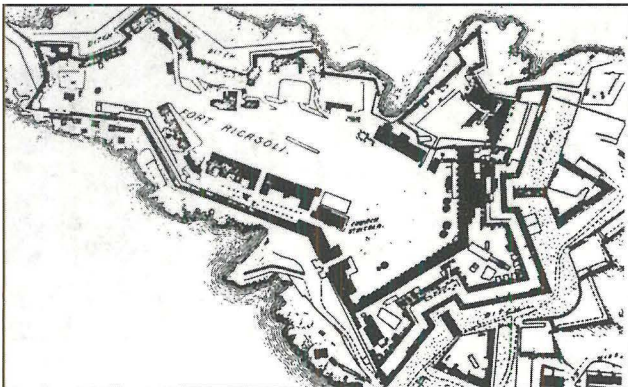


Figure 1. Fort Ricasoli.

At one point the Russian armies were blamed for introducing cholera from the East into Europe but it was generally admitted that the primary agent of the disease was unknown.<sup>1</sup>

While these speculations formed the subject of endless discussions, the disease

## RAPPORTO GIORNALE DI COLERA, pel 27 Agosto 1837.

| Luogo                        | Rimasti<br>dall'ult.<br>Rapporto. | Nuovi<br>Casi | Morti    | Guariti  | Rimasti   | Rimarche              |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------------------|
| <b>MALTA</b>                 |                                   |               |          |          |           |                       |
| Valletta . . . . .           | 3                                 | 1             | —        | 1        | 3         |                       |
| — Ospedale Civile . .        | 1                                 | —             | —        | —        | 1         |                       |
| Floriana . . . . .           | 1                                 | —             | —        | —        | 1         |                       |
| — Ospedale di Colera         | 10                                | —             | 1        | 3        | 6         |                       |
| Vittoriosa . . . . .         | 2                                 | —             | 1        | —        | 1         |                       |
| Cospicua . . . . .           | —                                 | 1             | —        | —        | 1         |                       |
| Senglea . . . . .            | 3                                 | —             | —        | —        | 3         |                       |
| Città Vecchia Osp. di Colera | 17                                | 3*            | 1        | 2        | 17        | * Dal Rabbato.        |
| — Rabbato . . . . .          | 5                                 | —             | 1        | —        | 4         |                       |
| Casal Birchircara . . . . .  | 4                                 | —             | 1        | 1        | 2         |                       |
| Casal Lia . . . . .          | 1                                 | 1             | 1        | —        | 1         |                       |
| — Osp. di Colera . .         | 6                                 | 1*            | 1        | —        | 6         | * Da C. Birchircara.  |
| Casal Zabbar . . . . .       | 1                                 | —             | —        | —        | 1         |                       |
| Casal Zebbug . . . . .       | 4                                 | —             | —        | —        | 4         |                       |
| — Ospedale di Colera         | 11                                | —             | 1        | 1        | 9         |                       |
| Casal Zeitun . . . . .       | 1                                 | 1             | 1        | —        | 1         |                       |
| Casal Siggieni . . . . .     | 1                                 | —             | —        | —        | 1         |                       |
| Casal Curmi . . . . .        | 1                                 | —             | —        | —        | 1         |                       |
| Casal Luca . . . . .         | 1                                 | —             | —        | —        | 1         |                       |
| Casal Nasciaro . . . . .     | 1                                 | —             | —        | —        | 1         |                       |
| Casal Crendi . . . . .       | 1                                 | —             | —        | —        | 1         |                       |
| Casal Musta . . . . .        | 3                                 | —             | —        | —        | 3         |                       |
| Casal Balzan . . . . .       | 1                                 | —             | —        | —        | 1         |                       |
|                              | 79                                | 8             | 9        | 8        | 70        |                       |
| <b>GOZO . . . . .</b>        | <b>15</b>                         | <b>9</b>      | <b>3</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>Del 26 Agosto.</b> |

N. B.—Le Spezierie aperte nella notte del 27 Agosto sono — Per la Valletta del Dr. Fenech, e del Dr. Duclos, tutti e due in Strada Reale.  
 Per la Floriana del Sig. Sammut, Piazza S. Anna. — Per la Cospicua del Sig. Raudon, Strada S. Teresa.  
 Per la Senglea del Sig. A. Pulficino, Strada Vittoriosa. — Per la Vittoriosa del Sig. Azopardi, Piazza S. Lorenzo.

**L. GRAVAGNA,**  
*Medico di Polizia.*

was causing havoc in the Island. The epidemic reached its peak in July when 6,286 cases were known to have occurred with 2,743 deaths.

On the 6th July the disease reached Gozo where five hundred and ten cases with one hundred and eighty three fatalities were registered by the end of the month.

The Parishioners of the Collegiate, Basilica Church of St George Martyr,



*Statue of St. George – Victoria, Gozo*

Rabat, Gozo sought Divine intervention for deliverance from the epidemic and a vow was made to have a new statue of St George, which was eventually done sculptured by Maestro Pietro Paolo Azzopardi, sculptured in wood, which became the first titular statue in Gozo. Statue of St George

The severity of the epidemic started to wane in August, as shown in the published daily report of the 27 August (Fig 3). It shows that there were eight new cases and nine deaths in Malta, and nine new cases and three deaths in Gozo, on the 26 August. It continued to diminish in September, and by the 11 October it had ceased completely, and a clean bill of health was issued by the Quarantine Office.

A total of 8,785 cases are known to have occurred in Malta and Gozo between the 9th June and 10 October 1837 of whom 4,252 lost their lives. The population at that time, being 120,000

Other notable epidemics occurred in 1847, 1850, 1854, 1856, 1865, 1867, 1887, 1911.

<sup>1</sup> The microbe was discovered by Koch in 1883, called by him the “comma bacillus” and generally known as *Vibrio Cholerae*, generally confined to the intestines, but may be present in the gall bladder and Biliary passages, commonly transmitted by means of water or food contaminated by the organism. (2) Textbook of bacteriology Browning. (P 402/415)

# Malta Visit by the Malta Study Circle (UK)

John Debattista and Hadrian Wood

The year 2006 was a memorable one for the Malta Philatelic Society and the Malta Study Circle (UK), as they both happened to be celebrating important anniversaries, the MPS its 40<sup>th</sup> year of existence and the MSC its Golden Jubilee.



*Dr. Roger Evans, Mrs. E. Bonnici, Mr John Lander, Dr. A. Bonnici, Mrs. Evans, Mr Graham Pound*

Because of the close ties that exist between the two Societies, it was felt that the event merited a joint celebration. This took the shape of a week-long visit to Malta by about 20 members of the MSC, accompanied by some of their wives, to coincide with Maltex VII Stamp Exhibition last October. The last time the MSC had paid an “official” visit was back in 1998.

A full schedule of activities was organised for the visitors, starting off with an interesting talk and display of the Knights of Malta given by the President of the Malta Philatelic Society, Dr. Alfred Bonnici, at Casa Lanfreducci, which is the Knights’ official headquarters in Malta. Trips to places of historical interest followed during the next few days which also included a day’s visit to Gozo. The official programme was obviously replete with activities of a philatelic nature, such as the opening of Maltex Philatelic Exhibition, the exhibition put on by the Gozo Philatelic Society and a visit to the Central Mail Room. Another two of the highlights were a lavish buffet dinner laid by Dr. Alfred and Mrs. Elda Bonnici in the gardens of their residence in Ta’ Xbiex, and of course the joint celebration dinner held at the Victoria Hotel.

Apart from the official programme, some members of the MSC took the opportunity to pursue their particular interests, seeking out information from primary sources and visiting places connected with Malta’s postal history such as the old village police stations which at one time were the homes of the handstamps that produced the popular village postmarks. Some MSC members were also given private viewings of collections of rare material in the possession of members of the MPS.

The visit allowed members from the two organisations to exchange views, make new acquaintances and get to know each other. The activities and ensuing exchanges will surely be viewed as a positive and enjoyable experience by all. Last but not least, they underlined the fact that the two bodies share the same goal - the study and preservation of Malta’s postal heritage.

The visit augurs well for a continuation in the years to come of the spirit and dedication that has inspired the two organisation over the last few decades. It is hoped that not too many years will pass before another joint event is organised. Congratulations and a big well done to both Philatelic Societies.

# Update of Malta Philatelic Society on Internet

John Debattista

Late in 2006 an exercise was carried out by the secretary in order to review the Society's undertakings with the aim of optimising its resources. As a result of this exercise, the MPS Committee of the time, amongst other issues, noted that the annual financial outlay being devoted to keeping the MPS website was not a good example of getting value for money spent and the situation needed to be addressed. In fact since its launching in 2001, the tangible outcome of this initiative had only resulted in a handful of communications and one application for membership. It also transpired that to update the website on a regular basis was going to become an added financial burden on the Society, as this could not be done automatically by the MPS itself but necessitated having to make use of the services of the original web designer for every update.

Notwithstanding this distressing scenario, some members argued that it was still desirable for the Society to keep some sort of presence on the internet as this exposure was beneficial for all concerned. This issue was debated and a number of proposals were put forward and reviewed by the committee. Finally, in February 2007, it was unanimously agreed by the newly elected committee that the proposal put forward by Mr. Joe Buttigieg, the Society's Vice President, who offered to host information relating to the MPS and its activities on his Company's private website at no charge was a feasible solution and was to be accepted.

Mr. John DeBattista was entrusted with preparing the format of the site together with its contents. This was ready in time for the March Committee meeting which gave the green light to the proposed structure submitted. At this stage, Prof. Victor Buttigieg, Mr. Joe Buttigieg's son, took charge of the technical aspect of this venture and in no time at all completed the project.

As of the 21st May, the Society's internet presence can now be found hosted in the JB Sliema Stamp Shop website with the address being: <http://www.sliemastampshop.com.mt/MaltaPhilatelicSociety>.

Besides information which had previously been available on the original website, new features have been added so that the site would be more relevant to both members and non-members alike. Amongst these is the Society's Newsletter, published monthly, which has now been made available online and will be updated regularly as soon as it is issued. Another innovation is the inclusion of an index to the Society's Journal, which covers the period from its very first issue in 1967 up to 2004. It is intended that in the near future an updated version will be available to cover the issues from 2005 to date. It is also hoped that this index will become a point of reference for those wishing to source more information with regards



to specific subjects. Furthermore, the list of links to other interesting philatelic websites has been increased.

While auguring that this new simpler format will be found more user friendly than its predecessor, we hope that more members will start availing themselves of the services provided online. I would like to close off this resumé by thanking on behalf of the MPS both Mr. Joe Buttigieg and his son Prof. Victor Buttigieg. Their help in making it possible for the Society to continue with its web presence was instrumental.

## **Maltex VIII Philatelic Exhibition**

The Eight Malta Philatelic Exhibition is being held from 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> September at the *Green Lounge, Phoenicia Hotel*. The Exhibition will be open to the general public as indicated hereunder:

|                                      |                     |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Friday, 28 <sup>th</sup> September   | 09.00hrs – 18.00hrs |
| Saturday, 29 <sup>th</sup> September | 09.00hrs – 18.00hrs |
| Sunday, 30 <sup>th</sup> September   | 09.00hrs – 12.00hrs |

The Exhibition will be inaugurated by H.E. The President of Malta Dr. E. Fenech Adami on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September at 18.00hrs.

All members are reminded that they are invited to attend the official opening.

# From Maltese Lira to Euro

John Debattista

The following tables are extracted from a document published by the National Euro Changeover Committee (NECC). The document, titled “Guidelines for the usage of Maltese Lira denominated value documents and stamps” is dated 17th October, 2006 and is referenced as Guideline: NECC/0010/06

Of particular interest to us and Postal Historians, is the fact that these guidelines establish the parameters for the currency changeover process from Maltese Lira to the Euro applicable with regards to stored monetary value items/documents. Such things include postage stamps, International Reply Coupons and Postage Paid Envelopes amongst others.

## Extract

### 5. GUIDELINES

#### 5.1 Issuing, selling and use of stamps during changeover period

Table 1 below indicates the options available to retailers and consumers during the changeover process, outlining the selling and/or purchasing and usage of stamps during the different phases of the euro changeover process

#### 5.2 Issuing, selling and use of stored value documents during the changeover period

Table 2 below indicates the options available to manufacturers/issuers, retailers and consumers during the changeover process, outlining the selling and/or purchasing and usage of stored value documents during the different phases of the euro changeover process.

TABLE 1

|                      | <b>Voluntary Dual Display – between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007</b> | <b>Mandatory Dual Display between 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008</b>                                                                                                                                         | <b>Postal dual display from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008</b>                   |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Maltapost plc</b> | Will issue dual displayed stamps as from 1 <sup>st</sup> January 2007.                            | Will continue issuing dual displayed stamps. The denomination is read as the Lm value prior to Euro day and the euro on/after Euro day.                                                                                              | Issues only euro-denominated stamps from 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2008 onwards |
| <b>Retailers</b>     | May sell any remaining Lm-only denominated stamps, as well as the issued dual displayed stamps.   | May sell ONLY dual displayed stamps.                                                                                                                                                                                                 | May sell dual display stamps indefinitely <sup>1</sup> .                   |
| <b>Consumers</b>     | May use Lm-only denominated stamps or dual displayed stamps                                       | May use Lm-only denominated stamps till the end of the dual circulation period (end of January 2008)<br><br>May use dual displayed stamps for the complete period<br><br>May exchange unused Lm denominated stamps until March 2008. | May use remaining dual displayed stamps indefinitely <sup>1</sup> .        |

<sup>1</sup> The stamp or document may be used indefinitely or to the end of a period of validity, where relevant.

TABLE 2

|                                                                   | <b>Voluntary Dual Display-between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007</b> | <b>Mandatory Dual Display between 1<sup>st</sup> July 2007 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008</b>                                                                                        | <b>Post dual display from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008</b>                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Organisations that produce or issue stored value documents</p> | <p>May issue Lm only or dual displayed stored value documents</p>                               | <p>Will issue dual displayed stored value documents. The denomination is read as the Lm value prior to Euro-day and the euro on/after Euro-day</p>                                  | <p>Will produce euro only stored value documents</p>                                                                                                                                  |
| <p>Retailers</p>                                                  | <p>May sell Lm only or dual displayed stored value documents</p>                                | <p>May sell ONLY dual displayed stored value documents</p>                                                                                                                          | <p>May sell remaining dual displayed or euro only stored value documents until end of July 2008</p> <p>Will sell euro only stored value documents from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008</p> |
| <p>Consumers</p>                                                  | <p>Both Lm only and dual displayed stored value documents may be used</p>                       | <p>Both Lm only and dual displayed stored value documents may be used</p> <p>May exchange unused Lm only stored value documents with their provider until the end of March 2008</p> | <p>Lm only, dual displayed and euro only stored value documents may be used indefinitely<sup>1</sup>.</p>                                                                             |

# Postal Diary

## 1 April 2007 - 15 July 2007

Joseph Fenech

### 7 April 2007

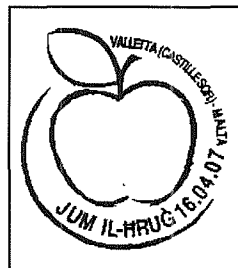
By agreement with the Malta Communications Authority, no mail delivery was carried out, and the Maltapost retail outlets did not open for business, on Saturday, 7 April 2007. Normal service was resumed on Monday, 9 April.

### 9 April

Maltapost announced the introduction of a new alphanumeric postcode, which is made up of three letters followed by four numbers. The three letters in the new postcode indicate the locality, and the first three digits refer to the road/or street with the last digit referring to the actual street segment. The definite change over date from the previous to the new postcode has been set as the end of October 2007. The new postcode can be viewed on the online directory on the Maltapost website, [www.maltapost.com](http://www.maltapost.com).

### 16 April

A sixteen-stamp sheetlet showing different varieties of fruits grown in the Maltese Islands was issued by Maltapost on 16 April 2007. The set, the work of stamp designer and artist Andrew Micallef, was offset printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The stamps are 35mm x 35mm square format, with a perforation of 14.28 x 14.28 (comb), and all carry a common value of 8¢/Euro 0.19. The stamps show the prickly pear, the grape, the loquat, the black mulberry, the fig, the lemon, the pear, the plum, the pomegranate, the tomato, the watermelon, the orange, the olive, the peach, the apple and the melon, respectively. A special commemorative handstamp inscribed “-----MALTA/JUM IL-HRUĠ 16.04.07”, was prepared by Maltapost to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No 2). The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No.249.



### 16 April

With effect from Monday, 16 April 2007, the Parcel Office was transferred from its location in Triq l-Iskultur, Qormi QRM 3580, to the Maltapost Head Office at 305,

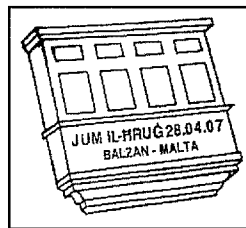
Triq Hal Qormi, Marsa MTP 1001. With effect from this date, all parcel collection, including Customs clearance, and all counter services were made available at the new refurbished premises within the Maltapost Head Office premises.

### 23 April

The Sub-Post Office at 51, Triq Ġorġ Borg Olivier, Mellicha MLH 1024, was closed for business between Monday, 23 April and Saturday, 28 April 2007, both days included.

### 28 April

A set of five stamps and a miniature sheet featuring Maltese balconies was issued by Maltapost on 28 April 2007. The stamps were designed by artist and philatelist Alfred Caruana Ruggie, and were offset printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The stamp size is 44.0mm x 31.0mm, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb), while the miniature sheet is 123.0mm x 86.0mm. The stamp within the miniature sheet is 41.0 x 30.5mm, with a perforation of 13.5mm x 13.5mm (comb). The stamps are available in sheets of ten. The stamps carry both decimal and Euro denominations, these being 8¢/Euro 0.19 (wrought iron balcony), 22¢/Euro 0.51 (ornate open stone balcony), 27¢/Euro 0.63 (balustraded balcony in the centrepiece of the façade of the National Library of Malta), 29¢/Euro 0.68 (Gozitan balcony, with a lower carved open stone balcony and with a glazed timber upper part), 46¢/Euro 1.07 (example of local Art Deco architecture of the 1930s) and 51¢/Euro 1.19 (detail of balcony accentuating the portal of Hostel de Verdelin in Valletta). A special commemorative handstamp inscribed “JUM IL-HRUĠ 28.04.07/----- - MALTA”, was prepared by Maltapost to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No 3). The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No.251.



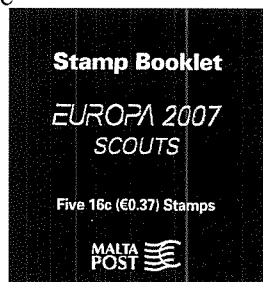
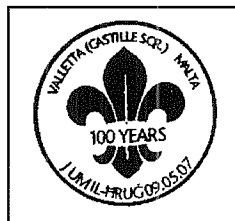
### 3 May

A special hand postmark – Essen 07 – was used at the Maltapost Retail Outlet, Dar Annona, Misrah Kastilja, Valletta VLT 1001, on Thursday, 3 May and Friday, 4 May, between 8.15 am and 3.45pm, and on Saturday, 5 May, between 8.15am and 12.30pm. The special hand postmark was also used on the Maltapost stand at the Essen Fair, Germany, during the same days. The special handstamp was inscribed “MALTAPOST/ESSEN/3-4-5 MAY/07”.



## 9 May

A set of two stamps in this year's Europa issue, commemorating the centenary year of the Scout Movement, was issued by Maltapost on 9 May 2007. The stamps, which were designed by Mark Anthony Vella, were offset printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The stamps, with face values in dual denominations of 16¢/Euro 0.37 and 51¢/Euro 1.19, are 35.0mm x 35.0mm in size, with a perforation of 14.28 x 14.28 (comb). The stamps are available in sheets of ten stamps, and the 16¢/Euro 0.37 stamp is also available in booklet form containing five stamps. The 16¢/Euro 0.37 stamp depicts the Chief Scout of the World, Lord Robert Baden-Powell, with District Commissioner (later Island Commissioner) Captain J.V. Abela in 1937 on his last of several visits to Malta, when he was 80 years old. The 51¢/Euro 1.19 stamp shows the Malta contingent marching past Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at the Golden Jubilee Jamboree near Birmingham, England, in 1957 to mark the centenary of the birth of Baden-Powell and fifty years of the Movement. The logos on the stamps show the emblem of the Scout Association of Malta, of the World Organisation of the Scout Movement, and the Centenary Badge adopted by the International membership. A special commemorative handstamp inscribed "----- MALTA/100 YEARS/JUM IL-HRUG 09.05.07", was prepared by Maltapost to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No 4). The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in 'The Malta Stamp' bulletin No. 252.



## 12 May

The Sub-Post Office at Globe Stationery, 16A Triq il-Kbira, Attard ATD 1027, was closed for business between Saturday, 12 May and Friday, 18 May 2007, both days included.

## 14 May

Industrial action was ordered by the Union Haddiema Maghqudin at Maltapost, and came into force on 14 May 2007. This industrial action affected the delivery of addressed door to door bulk mail and unaddressed mail. Following agreement reached between the parties on 6 June 2007, this industrial action was suspended and all postal services returned to normal with immediate effect.

## 21 May

On 21 May 2007, the National Statistics Office issued News Release 86/2007 outlining the post and telecommunications statistics for the quarter January – March 2007. According to these statistics, in the quarter under review, total postal traffic amounted to around 12.6 million items of which the absolute bulk represented letters and other printed items (up from 11.2 million items for the first quarter of 2006). The total number of parcels sent through the national post in the first quarter of 2007 was 12,031 (compared to 10,602 in the corresponding period of 2006).

## 28 May

A two-stamp set showing identical images of Dun Ġorġ Preca and the Blata l-Bajda chapel of the Society of Christian Doctrine headquarters, was issued by Maltapost on 28 May 2007. The stamps were designed by Edward D. Pirotta and were offset printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The face values of the stamps are 8ċ/Euro 0.19 and Lm1.00/Euro 2.33. The stamps are 35.0mm x 35.0mm in size, with a perforation of 14.28 x 14.28 (comb), and are available in sheets of ten stamps. A special commemorative handstamp inscribed “-----  
-- MALTA/JUM IL-HRUĠ 28.05.07”, was prepared by Maltapost to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No 5). The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No.253.



## 28 May

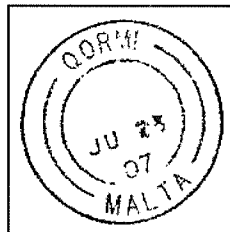
A silver replica stamp bearing the image of Saint George Preca in one of his characteristic poses, and with the chapel of the Society of Christian Doctrine in the background, was issued by Maltapost on 28 May 2007 to mark the canonisation of Dun Ġorġ by Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican on 3 June 2007. This stamp, which is a replica of the Lm1.00/Euro 2.33 stamp of the San Ġorġ Preca stamp issue, and which weighs 20 grams, is a “first” for Maltapost and for Maltese postal history. It was issued in Brilliant Uncirculated (proof-like) condition. Its size is 35.0mm x 35.0mm, with a thickness of 1.53mm. The silver stamp is struck in 99.9% silver and is individually numbered, and the issue is limited to a maximum of 2,000 pieces. The stamp is available in a presentation box, and includes a certificate of authenticity, and it sells for Lm15/Euro 34.94. The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured this silver replica stamp in ‘The Malta Stamp’ bulletin No. 253. A gold replica of the San Ġorġ Preca Lm1.00/Euro 2.33 stamp was presented to Pope Benedict XVI by Monsignor Alfred Xuereb, on the initiative of Gozo Bishop Mario Grech, on 4 June 2007 at the Vatican. Mons. Xuereb is a priest from the Gozitan diocese



who carries out duties at the Papal household at the Vatican. This first gold replica stamp is one of only three minted for the occasion. Of the other two, one is to be auctioned at a later stage, with proceeds going to the Dar tal-Providenza, and the third one is being retained by Maltapost for eventual exhibition in the Maltapost postal museum.

### **25 June**

Maltapost advised that from Monday, 25 June 2007, a new metal postmark was to be used at the Qormi Retail Outlet. Saturday 23 June 2007 was to be the last day of use of the previous postmark. Notwithstanding this notification, in actual fact, the new metal postmark started to be used at the Qormi Retail Outlet with effect from Saturday, 23 June 2007.



### **30 June**

Postal Retail Outlets, with the exception of the Retail Outlets in Castille Place, Valletta, Malta International Airport, Qawra, St. Julians, and Victoria, Gozo, did not open for business on Saturday, 30 June 2007. All Sub-Post Offices and licensed stamp vendors offered postal services as usual. Collection and delivery of mail was still carried out by Maltapost. All postal services resumed on Monday, 2 July 2007.

### **30 June**

All stamp vending machines were removed with effect from Saturday, 30 June 2007. These stamp vending machines were situated respectively at Malta International Airport, St. Luke's Hospital and at the Maltapost P.O. Boxes section in Old Bakery Street, Valletta.

### **7 July**

The seventh card in a series (numbered PB07) being issued by Maltapost on a date when the day, month and year coincide – 07.07.07 – was issued by the Philatelic Bureau of Maltapost on Saturday, 7 July 2007. The first card in this series was issued on 1 January 2001, with a date stamp carrying the same figures, 01.01.01. The last card in this series is expected to be issued on 12 December of the year 2012, and stamped with a date stamp showing the figures 12.12.12. This year's card, retailing at 26¢/Euro 0.61, carries an 8¢/Euro 0.19 stamp from the Maltese Crafts issue, stamped with the 7 July 2007 date, and will remain on sale until stocks last. Maltapost advised that this card could be sent through the post to any destination without additional postage, provided it was posted by not later than Monday, 23

July 2007. Cards similarly cancelled and posted after this date had to carry stamps to cover the required postage.

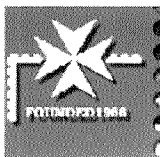
## 11 July

A set of five stamps showing a selection of children's toys from a bygone era was issued by Maltapost on Wednesday, 11 July 2007. The stamps, which were designed by Richard J. Caruana, were offset printed by Printex Limited on Maltese Crosses watermarked paper. The stamps are 44.0mm x 31.0mm in size, with a perforation of 13.9 x 14.0 (comb), and are available in sheets of ten. The stamps have five different values, these being 2ċ/Euro 0.05 (showing a rocking horse, tricycle and car, all made in England by Triang in the 1950s), 3ċ/Euro 0.07 (shows a pram made by Pedigree in the 1950s, and constructed out of chrome and rexine, a top drum from the same period and a bottom drum from the 1960s, both by Happy Nak, and a skipping rope, also by Happy Nak, made out of wood and tin), 16ċ/Euro 0.37 (depicts a sailing boat made in England out of tin and canvas by Triang, a spade made out of wood and tin by ACME, another British company, and a Japanese tin cabin cruiser going back to the 1960s; the sand pails on this stamp were also made in England out of tin by ACME), 22ċ/Euro 0.51 (shows a doll made in Italy by Lenci from composite materials, another doll made in England in the 1650s by Pedigree, also from composite materials and a third doll made in France by Armand Marseille in the 1930s; this latter model has a bisque head and glass eyes), and 50ċ/Euro 1.16 (shows a tin toy delivery van made in England by Chadvalley in the 1930s, a tin toy motorcycle with driver in it, made in Germany in the 1950s by P.N. (Niedermayer), and a tin toy clockwork racing car made in Japan during the same period by Alps). Maltapost issued a special commemorative handstamp to cancel the stamps on the first day of issue (on FDC No 6). The handstamp was inscribed "----- - MALTA/JUM IL-HRUĠ 11.07.07". The Maltapost Philatelic Bureau featured these stamps in 'The Malta Stamp' bulletin No. 254.



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The Malta Philatelic Society is a non-profit organisation set up on 7th March 1966 and aims to encourage the study of postage stamps and the educational hobby of stamp collecting.

Being Malta's national society supporting the study and collecting of stamps a major part of the Society's effort is in fact concentrated upon the education of collectors and the general public.

The Society specifically promotes the specialised study of Malta, its stamps, postal history and related areas. Within its own limitations, the Society attempts to preserve this part of our heritage, particularly (but not exclusively) by publishing and circulating its own prestigious award-winning Journal, at least twice a year.

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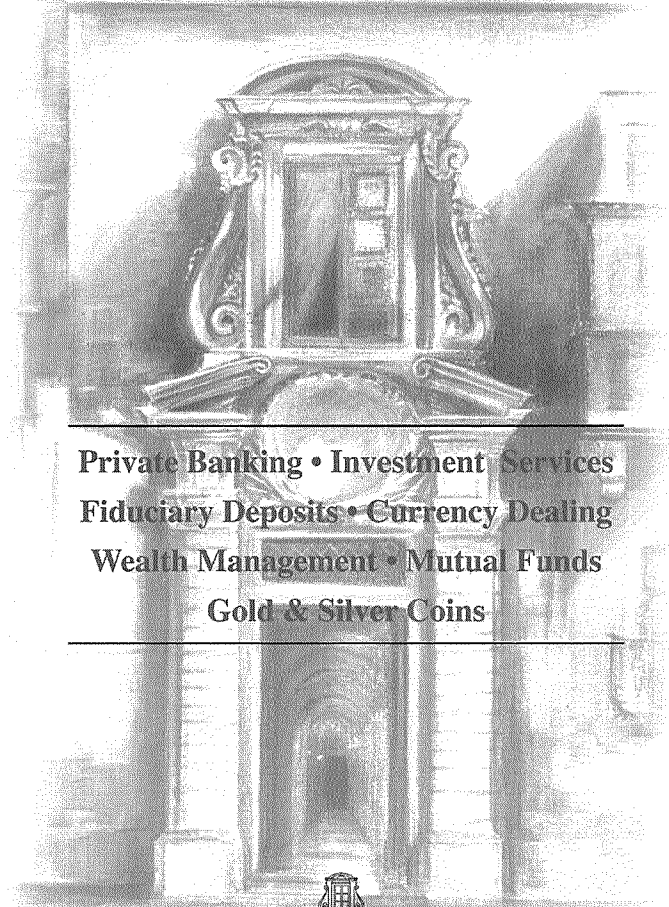


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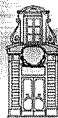
  
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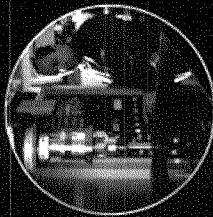
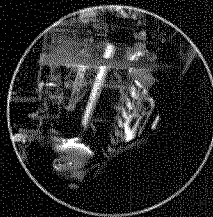
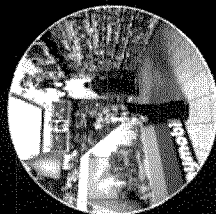
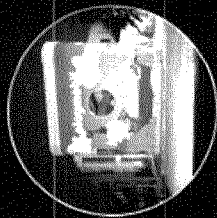
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