



THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY (Malta)

THE PSM MAGAZINE

SLIEMA STAMP SHOP

(PROP. J. BUTTIGIEG)

**CONGRATULATE
THE PHILATELIC
SOCIETY OF MALTA**

**ON THE
25TH
ANNIVERSARY**

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CONGRATULATE

**The Philatelic Society
of Malta**

**on the 25th Anniversary
of its Foundation**

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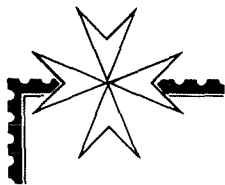
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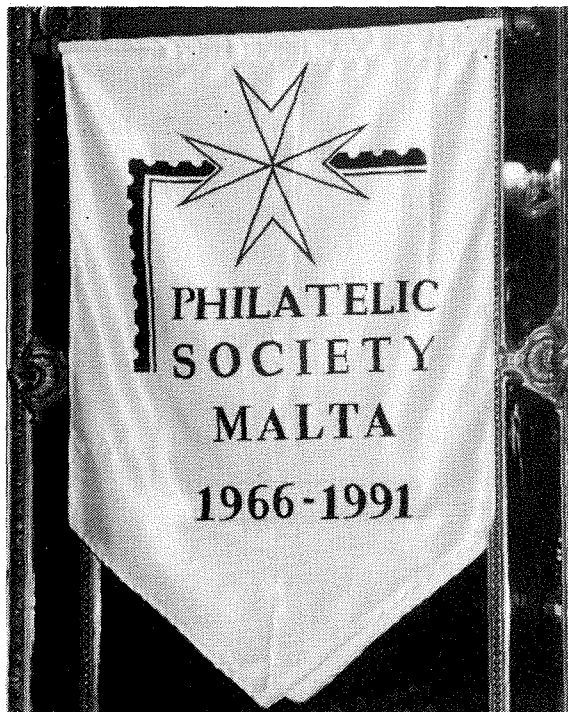


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Editor: Dr A Bonnici, Asst. Editor: Mr T. Camilleri
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August-December, 1991



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Speech delivered by Dr John H. Mercieca D.Sc. (Hon. Causa), D.D.S., President of the Philatelic Society of Malta, on Wednesday, March 6, 1991, at the Centru Sport Edukattiv, Floriana, on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the foundation of the PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF MALTA in 1966.



Ladies and Gentlemen!

When one sets his mind on achieving a given goal, or any other accomplishment, and with a dogged determination strives towards the attainment of that, which he is aiming at, great is his joy and his satisfaction if, and when his efforts are finally crowned with success and the stiffer the hurdles he has had to surmount, in the process of arriving at his aspired aim, correspondingly greater is his measure of gladness and contentment.

Exactly that great is my exhilaration and my satisfaction on this auspicious day, when I realise to have succeeded in healthily and safely landing, this my Society, to reach its 25th Birthday, which we are here this evening, together celebrating.

So, twenty-five years ago to the hour, a group of about forty stamp enthusiasts and philatelists, assembled at the luxurious and spacious Mgr. Gonzi Hall of the Catholic Institute, were busily organising the setting up and the formation of a philatelic society, led by the late Mr Louis Frank, after the short-lived previous one, had been dissolved twelve years previously.

After the Statute had been formally approved and the first Committee, composed of Mr Louis Frank (President), Dr Albert Ganado (Secretary), Mr Boris Darmanin (Treasurer) and Dr Charles Cassar, Dr John H. Mercieca, Magistrate Dr J. Soler and Mr Charles Whelpdale (Members) had been elected, an atmosphere of satisfaction and happiness was manifestly prevalent in the hall, as for the third time in twenty years, philatelists once again had their own Society, where they could meet fellow stamp lovers and exchange views, embark on mutually profitable stamp exchanges and learn more about their hobby, from talks and displays, organised for them by their Society.

However, only a few years later, this initial enthusiasm and euphoria started to dampen, and the spacious Mgr Gonzi Hall became too much of a luxury for the half a dozen hard-core members, who persevered to take part at these very scantily attended Society meetings. As time went on and the situation of attendances and participation did not show any signs of improvement, the then President, Mr Louis Frank, at one of the meetings, announced his decision to the handful of members present, to call it a day, and disband the Society for complete lack of interest in its activities.

And today, twenty-one years after, I feel indeed proud that supported by the hard-core members, outstanding amongst whom, my dear friend Mr Tony Fenech, here present, I vehemently intervened and pleaded the then President Mr Frank to desist from taking such a step, but to put our heads together and seriously try to find ways and means how to inject new life in the moribund Society. Were it not for my and my friends' timely and insistent intervention, we would not have been happily celebrating the 25th anniversary of this Society this evening, a super-record on all previous performances of local philatelic societies and a veritable landmark in the history of Philately in Malta, but it would have long been dead and completely forgotten like its two predecessors.

When twenty years ago, I accepted my election to the Presidency of this Society at the then Annual General Meeting and was subsequently reconfirmed at the past twenty successive Annual General Meetings, up to the present day, while thanking you for the continued confidence you have shown in me, I would like to assure you, that such an acceptance never stemmed from any desire to satisfy my personal pride and ambition, BUT has always been motivated by a strong and fervent desire to work always harder and harder in promoting the interest in this, my Society, whose continued existence, welfare and aggrandisement, have throughout all these years been my one and only concern and ambition and also to be at the service of the Society and to you, my dear friends, whenever and wherever the occasion arose and the situation demanded it of me.

As you are surely aware, since the last few years, interest in philately has dwindled considerably and is presently at a low ebb, as modern inventions and devices, such as computers, videos and the like seem to have attracted more than stamps the likings of the modern generations, who years back would have easily been enthusiastic candidates and followers of our hobby.

Under such circumstances, it is incumbent upon us and on our Society to find ways and means how to win back the younger generation, especially the school children to the fascinations and cultural values of our great hobby and at the same time to insist with the Postal Administrations throughout the world not to issue an excessive number of expensive sets, so as not to kill the goose that lays the golden egg and so to once again rally more and more followers to the hobby. At the same time let us fight with might and main the investment scope of stamp-collecting, the failure of which during these last twenty-five years or so has no doubt been one of the deciding factors for the decreased interest in stamps.

We, therefore, have to find ways and means to organise a sustained propaganda in favour of the taking up of Philately as a hobby in schools and in other institutions frequented by children that our hobby will once again take its place in the forefront of popularity amongst hobbies which it has for well over a century enjoyed with all classes of society.

During these 25 years of the Society's life, many are the members, who, at one time or another, and in a lesser or greater measure, have validly contributed towards its continued welfare, prosperity and progress, foremost amongst whom were: Dr Alfred Bonnici, Dr Albert Ganado, Mr Anthony Fenech, Mr Cecil Diamantino, Mr Godwin Said, Mr Albert Dimech, Mr Carmel Bonavia, Mr Joseph Buttigieg, Mr Hadrian Wood and Mr Tony Camilleri, Mr Joseph Farrugia, Lt Col William Attard, Dr Edwin Aquilina, Mr Mario Dimech, and Mr Nick Cutajar and to all of them go my most grateful, sincere and heartfelt thanks for the great help they have rendered to the Society and my genuine appeal never to let the flame of interest in the affairs of the Society and its continued prosperity and advancement, to get extinguished.

I would also like to thank all our members for their continued support and ardently appeal to one and all of them, to keep it up so that this our Society will continue to pass from strength to strength.

Although they can no longer physically get our message, my thanks and appreciation go to those who during the course of these twenty-five years have supported this Society by their membership or by serving on the Committee, but who, today do not longer dwell on this planet, outstanding amongst whom the late lamented Mr Vincent Mercieca, for many years the Society's Treasurer and organiser of the "Vote a Stamp" competition which since his demise has ceased to be organised.

My thoughts also go to those members, who, because of advanced age or infirmity are debarred from being here with us on this special Jubilee commemorative evening. And here I cannot fail to mention the name of Miss Daisy Formosa, a founder member of the Society, who up to four or five years ago has braved the elements, in darkness, the risks and other dangers and walked on her own from her residence in lower Britannia (now Melita) Street, to the Catholic Institute and back, never missing one Meeting, a living and glaring example of interest and steadfastness.

Our overseas members too, are to be thanked for their continued support and for the favourable and flattering letters, regarding our Society and Magazine, received from some of them. May I assure them that we shall, at all times, be pleased to have them with us, at our meetings whenever they decide to come over to Malta and to our Society.

My and my Society's thanks go also to the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Communications and to the Postmaster General and the Postal Administration for accepting my proposal to issue a stamp to commemorate this milestone in the Annals of Philately in Malta. While thanking the top officials from the Postal Administration for accepting our invitation to be with us on this historic evening, as well as each and every one of you, here present, for contributing towards the successful outcome of this evening's Silver Jubilee commemoration, may I direct my fervent and strong appeal to you all to patronise the activities which my Committee has prepared for the last week of May in order that these celebrations will never go forgotten but, on the contrary, shall by far surpass in importance and lustre those already held in 1976 and 1986 to celebrate the 10th and the 20th Anniversary celebrations respectively.

And winding up this Silver Jubilee Message of mine, may I sincerely trust that all those, who from time to time will be entrusted with the administration and promotion of this Society, and in whose hands will entirely rest its destinies, to continue without fail to give their valid contribution **willingly and wholeheartedly**, in order that transient phases of suspense and half-heartedness, that could rear their ugly heads from time to time, in the years that lie ahead in the Society's lifespan and endangering its very existence, would be happily **avoided and averted**. May I also look forward to the continued prevalence of the same spirit of collaboration which has all along guided this Society throughout these past twenty-five years and may they possibly shine with yet more brightness in the Society's future years, that the Society may yet march forward, ever stronger and stronger to arrive at yet greater and more important anniversaries in the years as yet to come.

THANK YOU.

LONG LIVE THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF MALTA.

Membership Dues for 1991 were due on 1st January. Please send your remittance immediately to Mr Dimech, our Treasurer together with 1992 dues, due on 1 January, 1992.

Members who have not paid their Membership Dues for 1988 / 1989 / 1990 are to send their remittance immediately to Mr Dimech.

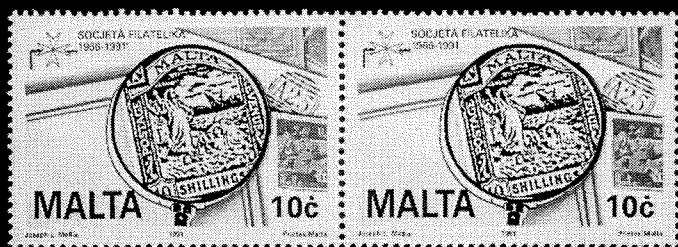
Membership Rates are:

UK - £5; USA - US\$15, Canada - Can \$ 20; Australia - Au\$25; Italy - L.It 12,000; France - FFr85; Germany - Dm 20; Switzerland - S Fcs 20; Holland - Gds 25; Malta - Lm1.50.

The Philatelic Society of Malta Celebrates its Silver Jubilee 1966-1991

By Dr. Alfred Bonnici

On the 6th March of this year the Philatelic Society of Malta befittingly commemorated the twenty-fifth Anniversary of the actual day on which the society was founded in 1966 and to mark this historic occasion Dr John H. Mercieca, the society's President for the past twenty-one successive years, delivered an appropriate commemorative address to a sizeable number of members who filled the hall of the Centru Sportiv Edukattiv, Floriana, which was followed by a reception.



On the very same day, ie on March 6, the Postal Administration of Malta issued an attractively-designed 10c stamp by the artist Mr Joseph L. Mallia together with a neat first-day handstamp to mark the event.

By a unanimous decision of the Committee the main events to celebrate this important occasion in the annals of the history of the Philatelic Society of Malta were fixed to take place during the last week of the month of May of this year, from the 22nd to the 29th.

It was decided to hold a PHILATELIC WEEK, during the course of which lectures and displays, an exhibition, a thanksgiving service and the jubilee Dinner were to be held.

To commemorate this Philatelic Week, the Postal Administration from the 22nd to the 29th May used a special oval handstamp, depicting the Society's logo and the wording - 1966-1991 - Philatelic Society - 22-29. V. 1991 - Philatelic Week - Valletta, Malta.



In addition to the philatelic items issued by the Postal Administration and the stamp firms for the first-day of issue of the 10c stamp in March, the Society printed and put on sale a limited number of attractively-designed envelopes, philatelic cards and folders with the Society's logo depicted thereon. In addition the Society issued a very limited number of

ON POSTAL SERVICE

REGISTERED
(RECOMMANDE)

25TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FOUNDATION
OF THE
PHILATELIC SOCIETY

R PHILATELIC BUREAU
VALLETTA MALTA
No. 529

**SOCJETA
FILATELIKA**
L-EWWEĠ JUM TAL-IRUĠ
6 - III - 1991
VALLETTA - MALTA



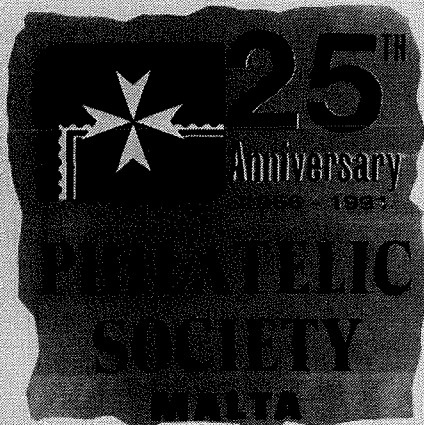
**SOCJETA
FILATELIKA**
L-EWWEĠ JUM TAL-IRUĠ
6 - III - 1991
VALLETTA - MALTA

DR A BONNICI
CASA BONNICI
SIR AUGUSTUS BARTOLO S'IR
TA' XBIEIX
MALTA

-1/91

First Day Cover issued by the Malta Post Office

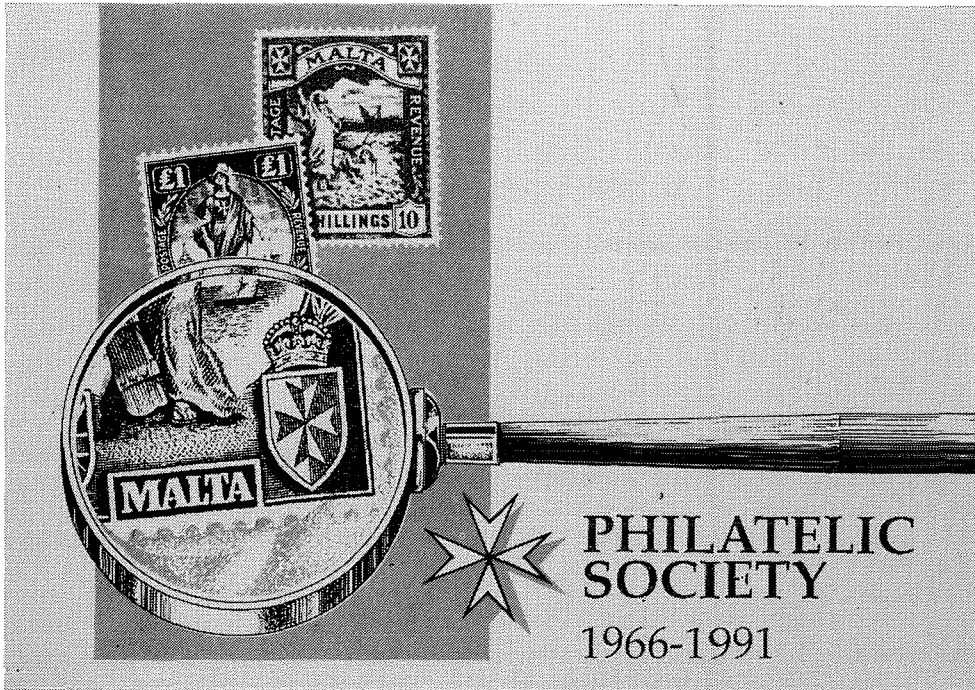
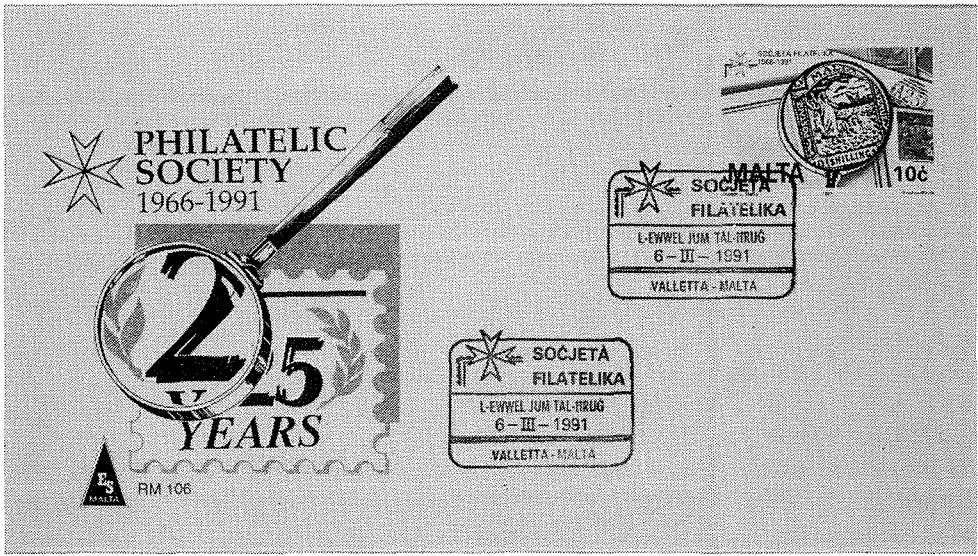
First Day Cover issued by the Sliema Stamp Shop



**SOCJETA
FILATELIKA**
L-EWWEĠ JUM TAL-IRUĠ
6 - III - 1991
VALLETTA - MALTA

**SOCJETA
FILATELIKA**
L-EWWEĠ JUM TAL-IRUĠ
6 - III - 1991
VALLETTA - MALTA

JB FIRST DAY COVER RM 107



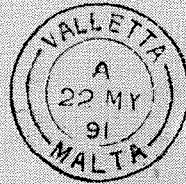
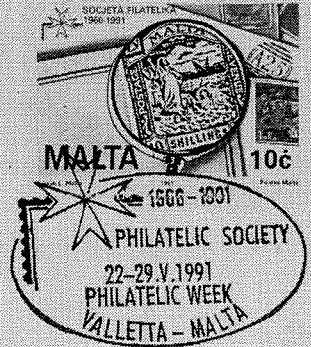
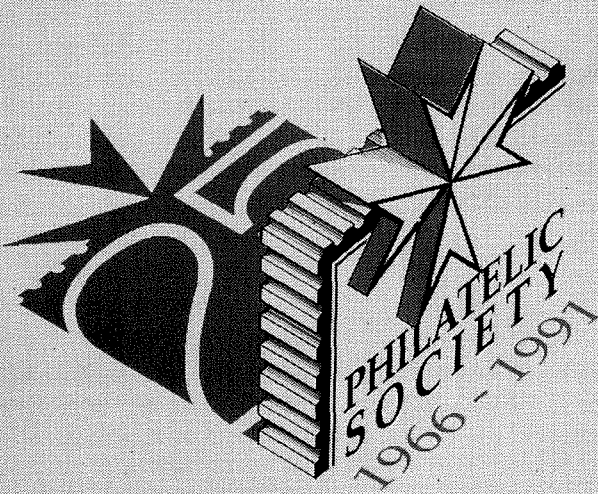
First Day Cover and Card issued by Messrs Said International



YEARS
PHILATELIC
SOCIETY
1966 - 1991



Dr. J. H. Mercieca
Dr. J. H. Mercieca
PRESIDENT



First Day Cover and Card issued by the Malta Philatelic Society

25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY

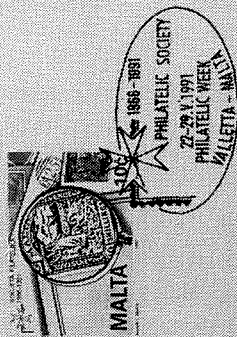
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The Society caters for all types of stamp enthusiasts but the major interest is no doubt the study of Maltese Stamps and Postal History.

Already in the Autumn of the same year of its foundation, the Society published its first humble newsletter. Thereafter, the PSM Magazine began to be published three times yearly, right up to the present day. This publication received several awards at different International Philatelic Exhibitions held under the auspices of the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie. (F.I.P.)

In 1975 the Society applied for membership of the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie and thus, its members became eligible to send exhibits to the philatelic exhibitions held in different countries of the world, winning prestigious awards for their collections.

This year a new logo, designed by our Council member Mr. Carmel G. Bonavia, was adopted. Our President, Dr. U.H. Mercieca, has been leading the Society for the last twenty-one successive years. The Society's Silver Jubilee of its foundation was marked by a commemorative stamp issued by the Malta Post Office.



25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDATION OF THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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SILVER JUBILEE DINNER

Fresh Vegetable Soup
or
Beurrecks à la Turque

Triad Chicken Provençale
or
Sicilian Steak in Madeira Sauce
or
Acciada in Capor Sauce

Vegetables in Sauson Cream and Corn Potatoes

Cassatella Siciliana

Coffee

Glass of Wine

IMPERIAL HOTEL - SUEMA

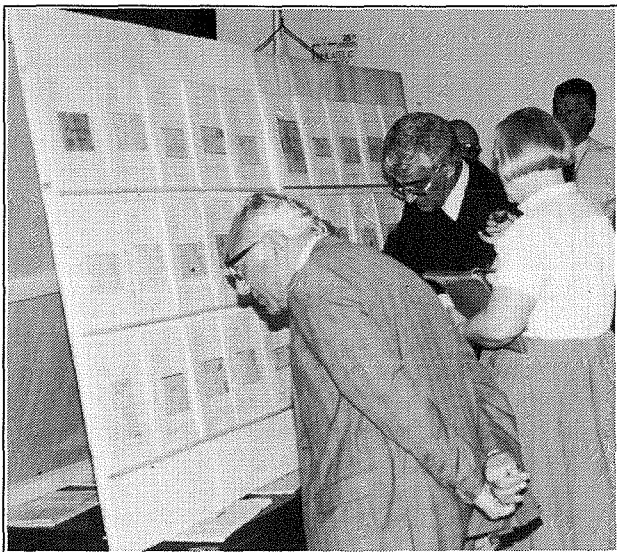
25 May 1991

special covers, each signed by the President, to be given to all Members, whose names were on the Society's books on December 31, 1990.



Accordingly the Philatelic Week was inaugurated by the President, Dr John H. Mercieca, on Wednesday, May 22, prior to a very interesting, informative and instructive lecture, illustrated by slides, on the History and Development of the

Post and Telegraph in Malta by Dr Giovanni Bonello LL.D., which was highly appreciated by the sizeable audience present.



A most interesting exhibition of choice Malta postal history items, which included Grandmasters' letters, Zeppelin Flight Covers, Maritime Mail and other covers, belonging to members, was held at the Centru Sportiv Edukattiv, Floriana, in the afternoon of Saturday, May 25. This Exhibition attracted a good number of local and foreign enthusiasts of this popular

philatelic speciality.

Prior to the inauguration of the exhibition, Mr C. Bonavia presented Dr Mercieca the new banner incorporating the newly-adopted logo of the society designed by Mr Bonavia himself.

The highlight of the Jubilee celebrations, however, was the festive dinner, held in the evening of the same day, at the Imperial Hotel, Sliema, at which the Hon Francis Zammit Dimech, Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Communications and the Postmaster General, Mr Alfred Costa and Mrs Costa were the Guests of Honour.



After proposing the toast "The President of Malta", the President, Dr John Mercieca, rose to deliver his after-dinner speech in the course of which he emphatically expressed his satisfaction and that of his Society at having succeeded in arriving to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of its foundation, a veritable landmark indeed in the history of Philately in Malta. Dr Mercieca availed himself of the presence of the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Communications and the Postmaster General to thank them for having acceded to his proposal to issue a special commemorative stamp and handstamp to mark the



Society's Jubilee. Dr Mercieca also thanked all members for the support they had given the Society during these twenty-five years and in a special way those who had served as Members of the Committee – Dr Albert Ganado, Dr Alfred Bonnici, Mr Cecil Diamantino, Mr Albert Dimech, Mr Anthony Fenech, Mr Carmel Bonavia, Mr Godwin Said, Mr Joseph Buttigieg, Mr Hadrian Wood, Lt Col William Attard, Mr Tony Camilleri and Mr Joseph Farrugia – with each of whom he exchanged a hearty handshake. The President then passed on to remember the deceased members of the Society, who had departed this life during these twenty-five years. Dr Mercieca then welcomed the overseas members at the Dinner and thanked them for coming all the way from the UK and from Italy to participate with their local friends at this truly festive and historic occasion.

Following Dr Mercieca's speech, the Hon Dr Francis Zammit Dimech proposed the toast "The Philatelic Society of Malta" and in his speech praised the Society for the sterling advice its experienced members gave the Posts Department on philatelic matters. He singled out Dr Mercieca for his leadership of the Society, which was accepted as a full member of the Federation Internationale de Philatelie during his term. He also praised the PSM Magazine for its high standard. Dr Zammit Dimech expressed his appreciation of the interest in philately, the Society and the Malta Study Circle generated through research. He concluded by wishing the Society continued success.

Dr Alfred Bonnici, Vice-President and Editor of the PSM Magazine, then thanked Dr Mercieca for his long and dedicated service in the welfare of the Society and said that Dr Mercieca was instrumental in leading the Society to this milestone and in the name of the Society presented him with an inscribed silver paperknife.



Dr Mercieca thanked Dr Bonnici and the Society for the unexpected gift, which, he said, would always be a memento of the long and happy connections he had with the Society.

Also present at the dinner were prominent members of the Malta Study Circle of London, together with Mr Lorenzo Mantegna of Milano.

Mr Brian P. Hobbs, past Chairman of the London Malta Study Circle, and Mr Mantegna congratulated the Malta Philatelic Society in their speeches.

An attractively-designed Menu Card, with the 10c Philatelic Society Jubilee stamp cancelled by the special Philatelic Week postmark, was given to the diners. Dr Mercieca then cut a special cake with the Society's name and anniversary dates kindly presented by the Manager of the Imperial Hotel.

The two priest members of the Society, Fr Anthony Galea, S.J., and Fr Louis Camilleri, con-



celebrated a Thanksgiving Mass at Sarria Church, Floriana on Sunday, May 26. The Mass was also offered for the repose of the deceased members of the Society and especially for the repose of Dr Edwin Aquilina, a past editor of the PSM Magazine and Miss Daisy Formosa, one of the Society's most active members, who passed away ten days before.



Monday, May 27 was allotted for talks and displays of postal history items brought over to Malta by two prominent members of the Malta Study Circle of London, Mr Bryan P. Hobbs, past chairman and Mr Conyers Rutter, immediate past chairman, both members of the local society as well.

On Wednesday, May 28, Dr Albert Ganado, a founder member of the Society and for over 20 years its Secretary, gave a highly interesting and informative talk on the 1926 3d. Postage stamp with the overprint inverted under the title "The 3d. Postage Stamp with Inverted Overprint – Was it a Forgery?" This lecture was indeed very well received by the audience and aroused much interest.

To bring the Silver Jubilee celebrations and the Philatelic Week to their conclusion, Dr Mercieca, after thanking Dr Ganado for his very interesting and enlightening talk, thanked all members for the support they had given the Society during the first quarter of a century of its lifetime and also for participating in the many activities which the Society had prepared to celebrate appropriately this milestone in its history, and was proud to affirm that they, by far outshine in magnificence those held in 1976 and 1986 for the celebration of the tenth and twentieth anniversaries respectively.

He assured that the Society would continue to cater for the interests of philately and philatelists in Malta for yet many more years to come.

Speech Delivered by Dr John H. Mercieca, D.Sc. (Hons. Causa), D.D.S., President of the Philatelic Society of Malta, at the Dinner held at the Imperial Hotel, Sliema, on Saturday, May 25 1991, on the occasion of the Philatelic Week, held between 22nd and 29th May, 1991 to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Society.





Honourable Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Communications, Mr Postmaster General, Mrs Costa, Ladies and Gentlemen!

We have made it! YES we have **indeed** made it!! Perhaps you may not appreciate enough with what great pride, satisfaction and happiness I have pronounced and again emphatically repeated this short but meaningful phrase, with which I have introduced this address of mine, on this memorable occasion this evening, for, when 25 years ago this Society was born, and even throughout the earlier years of its existence, judging by the then prevailing circumstances and prospects, I never for a moment believed or even entertained the slightest hope that what we already celebrated and are today still celebrating, ie the 25th Anniversary of this Society, could have possibly ever materialised. Thus we have every reason to rejoice and celebrate, for that which was not anticipated to occur, has indeed happened.

As a keen stamp lover and enthusiast, since my early childhood, it has always been my wish and my ambition to see in my country, as there are in many other countries of the world, a well-organised philatelic society, which I could join and possibly work for. As a matter of fact I was a Member of the Committee of the two previous Philatelic Societies, which I also struggled hard, but alas without

success, to save from their premature extinction. So, when in March 1966, this present Philatelic Society was formed it was with much pleasure that I joined it and at the First General Meeting, elected to serve on its first Committee which was composed of: Mr Louis Frank, President, Dr Albert Ganado, Secretary, Mr Boris Darmanin, Treasurer and Dr Charles Cassar, Dr John Mercieca, Mag.te Dr Joseph Soler and Mr Charles Whelpdale, Members.

May I, on this occasion, repeat once again, what some of you may have heard me affirm before. When in 1971 I accepted the mandate of the Annual General Meeting to serve as President of this Society, which was subsequently annually reconfirmed for the past 21 successive years, while thanking you for the great and sustained confidence you have shown in me, I would honestly like to assure you, that my acceptance to serve you as your President, for all these long years, was always motivated by my strong and fervent desire to work harder and harder in promoting the welfare and aggrandisement of this my and your Society, whose continued healthy existence and progress have throughout these 25 years always been my only concern and ambition and also to be at the service of this Society and to you, my dear friends, whenever and wherever the occasion arose and the situation demanded it of me.

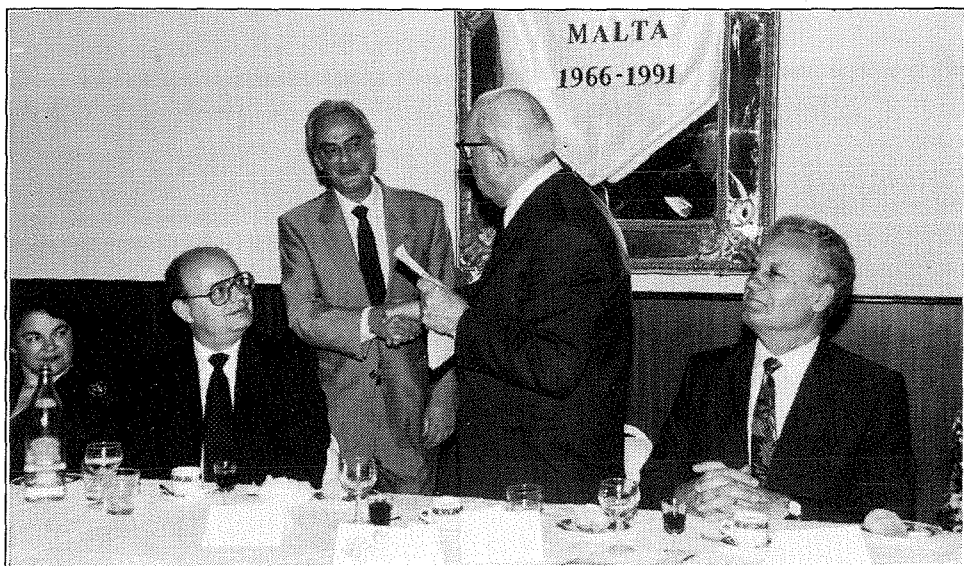
After this Society had befittingly celebrated and commemorated the 10th Anniversary of its foundation in 1976 and again, with still greater pomp, its 20th in 1986, my mind and my eyes were immediately set on the year 1991 and so I started preparing the Society to celebrate its third and definitely most important of all the anniversaries of the last 25 years - its Silver Jubilee.

As the five years, following the 20th Anniversary celebrations rolled relentlessly on, and the count-down, which I set in my mind, month after month, got nearer and nearer the long-awaited year 1991, indeed great was my elation when I realised that we had arrived at the post, **and that we had made it.**

And here, indeed I have to thank the Good God for having granted me the great favour, of the fulfilment of my great wish, that of being here with you this evening to celebrate this Silver Jubilee for, I must admit, that at one time I began to have serious doubts as to whether I was going to make it, when around Christmas time last year and again early last month, I spent altogether six weeks in hospital, rather seriously ill.

And now, my sincere thanks go to all our members, who by their support and cooperation, during these five lustres have made possible the continued healthy existence of this Society.

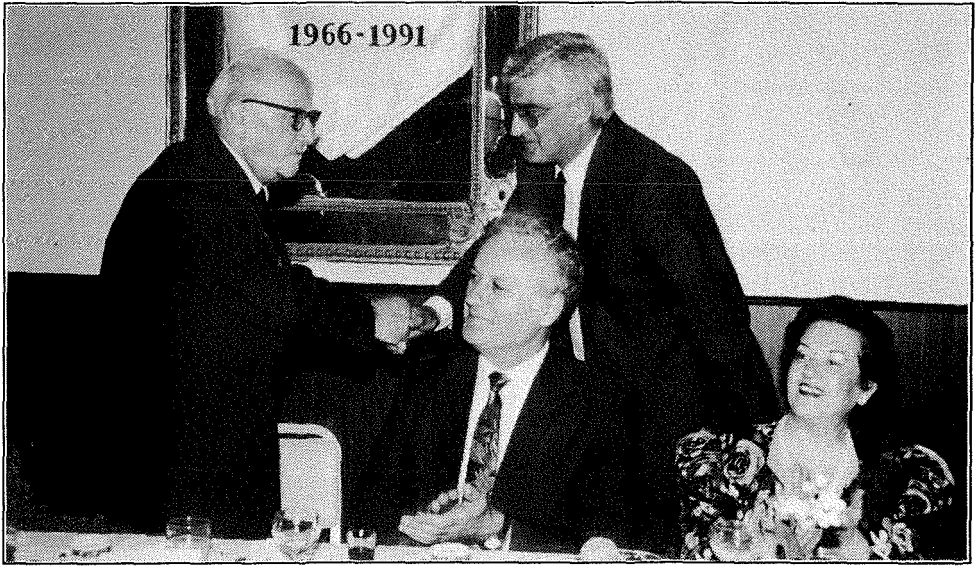
Again my most grateful thanks go to all those members, who from time to time during these 25 years have served on the Committee and have so unselfishly given their valid contribution in the different offices assigned to each and every one of them in the interests of the Society and I do feel that it would be a nice gesture if on this festive jubilee occasion, I publicly thank them for the good work they have put in on behalf of this Society and also exchange a hearty hand-shake with each and every one of them and thus I start by calling:



Dr Albert Ganado, one of the active founders of this Society and also its first secretary, which important key position he held with efficiency and distinction, for over 20 years.

Dr Alfred Bonnici, since many years the Society's Vice-President and for the past eight years editor of the PSM Magazine, which under his editorship has made gigantic strides forward, winning many prestigious awards at various international philatelic exhibitions and is also the life line with our overseas members.

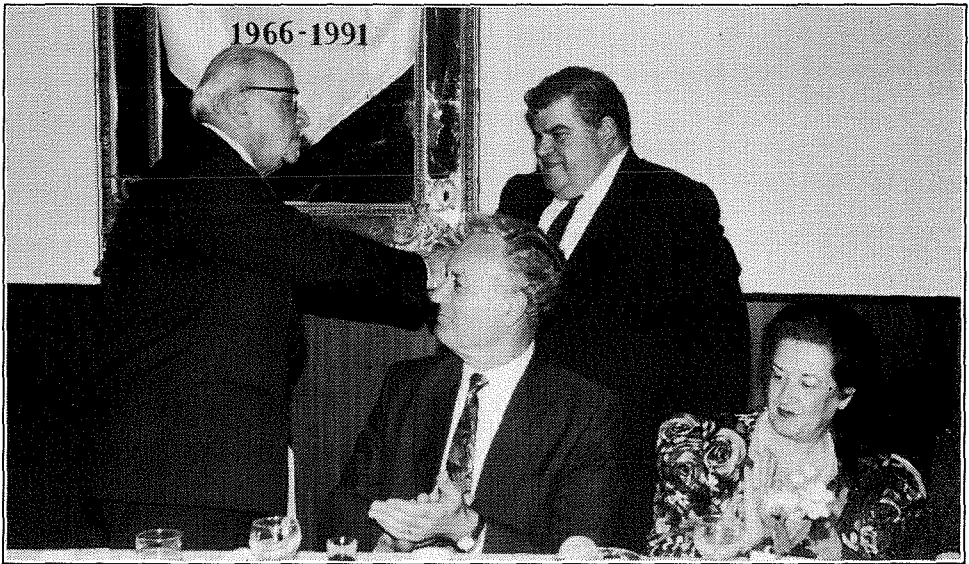




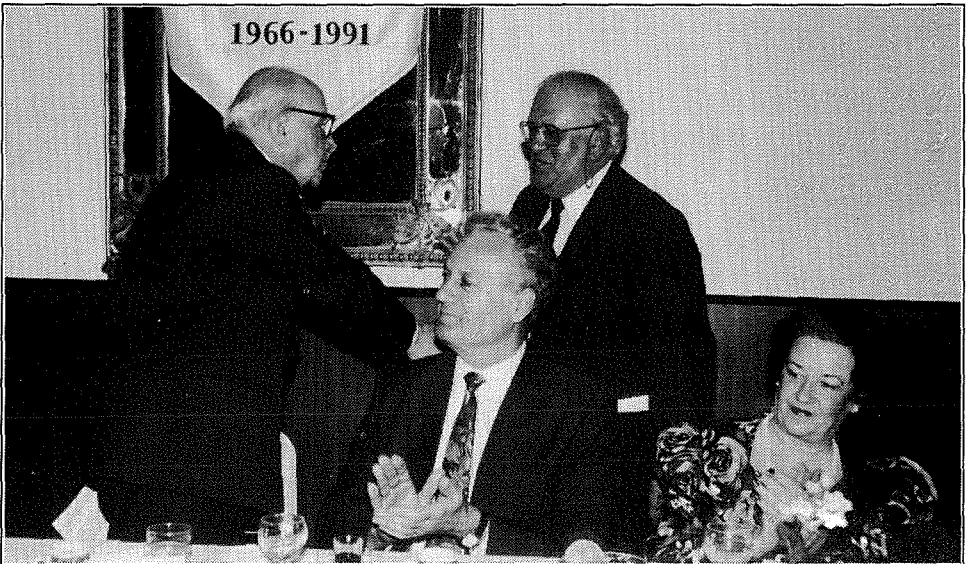
Mr Cecil Diamantino, our present, hard-working Secretary, who took over the secretaryship from Dr Ganado and who has always carried out his duties most efficiently and meticulously, with a gentle smile.

Mr Albert Dimech, the Society's second Treasurer in the late sixties and who after returning to the fold about six years ago, has again most scrupulously and efficiently been handling the Society's accounts and monies.





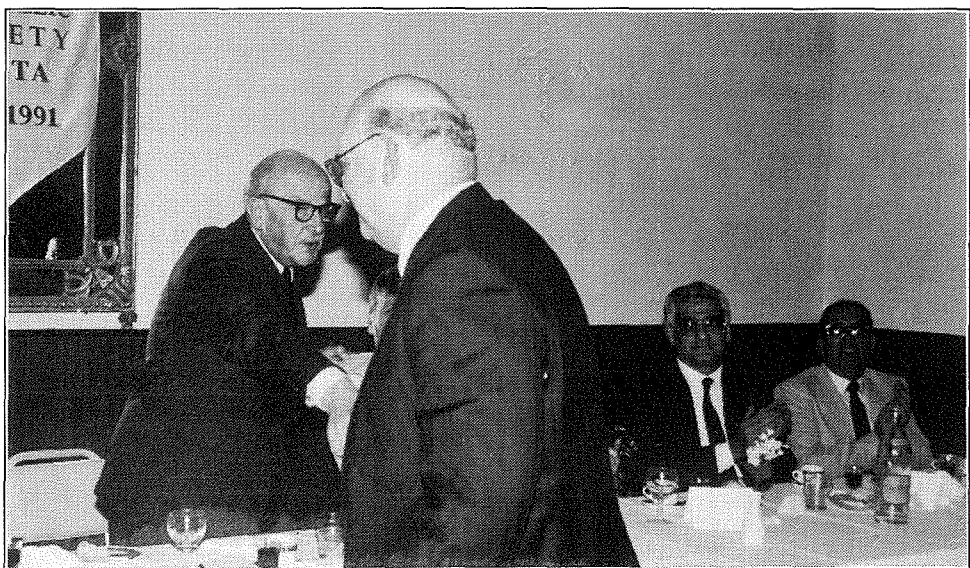
Mr Anthony Fenech, an active founder member, who as Exchange Superintendent has very efficiently and competently organised the Society's Exchange Packets and Auctions, a very time-consuming office, yet so much to his heart. **Mr Carmel Bonavia**, our hard-working Assistant Secretary, who is above all a veritable expert in matters of design and decoration. he is also the designer of the recently-adopted Society's neat logo and who has also put in a lot of hard work in the different spheres of the preparations for these 25th Anniversary celebrations.





Mr Godwin Said, who ever since the Society's election as a full member of the FIP has with much zeal and credit, carried out the duties of Exhibitions Commissioner. Mr Said is also to be thanked for placing his offices and staff at the disposal of the Society, in order that all the preliminary work connected with the 25th Anniversary celebrations could possibly be carried out.

Mr Joseph Buttigieg, who has always been most willing to help in connection with photocopying and other ancillary office work.





Mr Hadrian Wood, for his efficient liaison work between our Society and the Malta Study Circle of London.

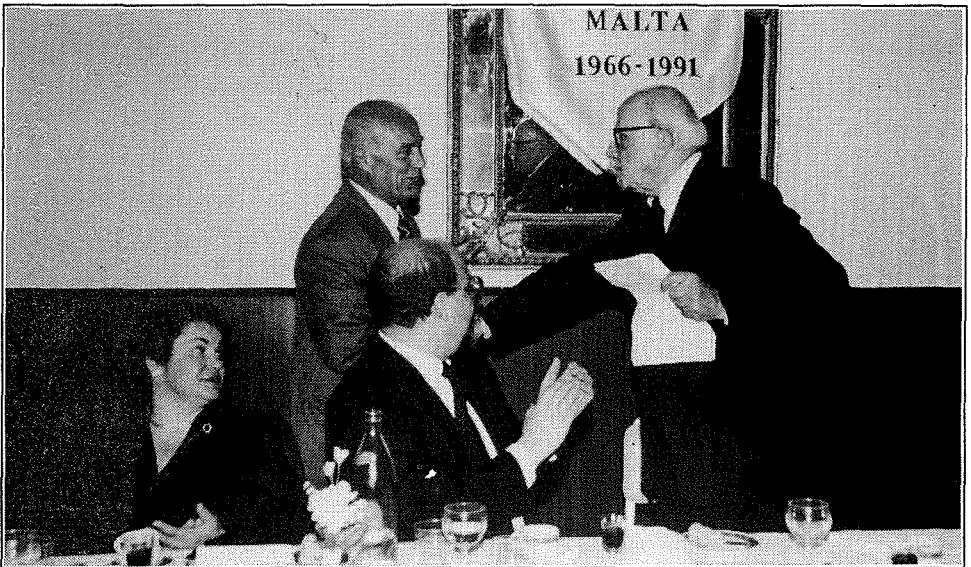
Lt Col William Attard, who for a number of years has efficiently given his contribution as a Member of the Committee.





Mr Tony Camilleri, a newcomer, yet very promising member of the Committee, deeply interested in the Society's affairs and work.

Mr Joseph Farrugia, who for a number of years was the Assistant Editor of the PSM Magazine and an active and competent member of the Committee. Mr Farrugia has also contributed immensely in the mailing of the PSM Magazine to members.



The support given and the work put in by deceased members of this Society is not to be forgotten and appreciated, so it is our duty too, to remember all our departed members, who would have surely enjoyed being with us on this historic and auspicious occasion, had they still been alive, outstanding amongst whom are the highly-efficient late Treasurer, Mr Vincent Mercieca and the two well-known members of this Society, Dr Edwin Aquilina, who was the PSM Magazine Editor from 1968 to 1973 and Miss Daisy Formosa, one of the most, if not the most, active members the Society has ever had, who never missed a meeting unless she was sick or was abroad, both of whom departed this life within the last ten days.



Availing myself of the presence amongst us, as our distinguished guests, of the Hon Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Communications and the Postmaster General, Mr Alfred Costa, I would firstly like to thank them for accepting our invitation to join us on this truly festive and happy occasion and secondly for having accepted and approved my suggestion and proposal to issue a stamp to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of our Society's foundation, which has met with the approval of both local and overseas philatelists and which I and other Society members proudly call or allude to as "our own stamp". May I here also avail myself of this opportunity to pledge my and my Society's support to the Malta Postal Administration and assure the Hon Parliamentary Secretary for Transport and Communications and the Postmaster General of our willingness to cooperate and advise on all matters pertaining to Philately, if and when required and demanded.

No better proof of the very pleasant and happy relations existing between our Society and the Malta Study Circle of London could be forthcoming than the very presence amongst us this evening of five prominent members of the Malta Study Circle of London — Mr Bryan P Hobbs, past Chairman, Mr Con Rutter, immediate past chairman and Mrs Rutter, Mr Frank Gray, Secretary and Mrs Ann Harris,



a prominent member as also Signor Lorenzo Mantegna, representative of the Malta Study Circle of London and our Society in Italy. May I take this opportunity to assure them of our warm welcome and of our great pleasure to have them here to celebrate with us, this evening, while thanking them for travelling hundreds of miles to come to Malta to celebrate in this happy event, not only as representa-



tives of the Malta Study Circle, but, what yet more, in their own right as full members of our local Society.

Concluding this Silver Jubilee address of mine, may I sincerely trust that the high spirit of fraternity and collaboration, so manifestly evident within this Society, which has guided us and seen us so successfully through this eventful quarter of a century of the Society's lifetime, be an inspiration to all of us and an incentive to consolidate all that has been achieved and also serve as a stimulus to yet further attainments.

May I also trust that those who, from time to time, shall be entrusted with the onus of managing and promoting this Society in the years that lie ahead and in whose hands will lie its destinies, shall continue without fail, to willingly and generously give their valid contribution, in order that periodic intermittent phases of apathy, suspense and inactivity that could appear from time to time, endangering the Society's very existence, be happily avoided and decisively overcome. And finally may the pride and the determination in maintaining the high name of this Society continue to be our guiding light in the years to come, that we may continue to keep this Society strong, active and flourishing for yet MANY, MANY MORE YEARS TO COME.

**LONG LIVE THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY OF MALTA.
THANK YOU.**

THE TELEGRAPHS IN MALTA DURING THE VICTORIAN ERA

By Giovanni Bonello LL.D.

Spoilt as we are by split-second communications world-wide, it is virtually impossible for us to imagine what it must have been like in the 1840s to receive or transmit messages and information over very long distances. A person who wanted to communicate with far away places had only one way open to him: the mail. No telephone, no radio links, no fax machines, no teleprinters, no telegrams, no satellites, no fibre optics. Just a slow-moving letter that could take weeks or months to reach its destination.

The discovery of electricity was to be a veritable turning point. A few visionaries, in an age of great scientific curiosity and experimentation, had the intuition that electricity could be disciplined to carry messages.

In 1837, Charles Wheatstone and William Cook patented the first telegraph system, which, however did not overcome the practical problems of crossing the seas. It was to be Samuel Morse (1791-1872), a talented painter from the USA, who married theory with practice and perfected electric telegraphy (tele = distance + graphos = writing). On May 24, 1844, Morse transmitted successfully the first telegraphic message from Washington to Baltimore "What God had wrought". It is ironic that the Morse code, which bears his name, was probably invented not by him, but by his partner Arthur Vail.

After Morse's successful demonstration, the new invention spread rapidly. The revolutionary reality that persons could communicate in seconds over great distances was nothing short of intoxicating. Six years later the first submarine cable had already been laid between England and France. In 1866, the Atlantic was spanned successfully for the first time.

Fig. 1. N° 7 Marsamuxetto Road, Valletta. From the earliest times one of the principal telegraph stations in Malta. Used by the Mediterranean Extension, by the Malta and Alexandria and finally by the Eastern. This photo is dated March 3, 1881 in pencil on the back, and also bears the manuscript indication "H. Agius Photo" (Horatio Agius was a leading photographer of the time). Five persons are visible on the balcony, probably the dependants of the Eastern or the Mediterranean Extension who worked there. The part of the shore opposite this building is known to bathers to this day as "Il-Cable"



**THE MEDITERRANEAN (EXTENSION)
TELEGRAPH COMPANY (LIMITED.)**

MESSAGES may now be forwarded by electric telegraph from Malta to any telegraph station in Europe. Rates for 15 words.—London, £1. 8. 1., Paris, £1. 3. 9., Marseilles, £1. 1. 3. For 25 words.—Berlin, £2. 2. 9., Vienna, £2. 0. 9., Constantinople, £3. 0. 9., Galatz, £2. 12. 9. For further information apply at the Company's Offices, Strada San Paolo, where messages will be received.

TH. ANDREWS, Superintendent.

Fig. 2. An Advert in the Malta Times and United Services Gazette dated December 22, 1857, informs the public that "messages may now be forwarded by electric telegraph to any telegraph station in Europe". This seems to establish the date of the first public telegram from Malta as December 22, 1857

From the north, the electric telegraph cobweb spread as far down as Cagliari in Sardinia, then an independent state. Malta, was in the 1850s still cut off.

These were the turbulent times of the Crimean War, which had started in March 1854. Originally France and England had declared war on Russia over Turkey to stem Russian expansion. On January 26, 1855 Sardinia joined Great Britain and France. The Crimea was distant, communications between the allies and the front, poor.

This was the background against which G. Bonelli, the Director General of the electric telegraphs in Sardinia, conceived the grand plan of linking telegraphically Cagliari to Malta, and thence to Alexandria and the Dardanelles. He sensed that England would be interested, and that it would not be too difficult to convince his British counterparts about the manifest advantages to both sides.¹

In a letter in French to Governor, Sir Villiam (sic) Reid, from Turin, Ingenier Bonelli offered to effect the connection. For £60,000 he would in six months connect Cagliari with Malta, then on to Candia where the cable would branch off, on one side to Alexandria and on the other to the Dardanelles, where Sardinia and Britain were allies in the war. If Britain opted for a Cagliari-Malta line only, he would do it in two months, and Britain's contribution would only be £10,000.²

The Governor of Malta, forwarded Bonelli's proposals to Lord Panmure of the War Department³ who was quick to reply that no permission had been granted by the British Government for "the project initiated by Mr Bonelli", but was equally

quick to note that the line from Cagliari to Malta offered very important advantages. "It is right that the Maltese, as well as the Imperial Treasury, should bear its part." How far was the Maltese Government prepared to cooperate? What conditions were to be required of the Sardinian Government in 'conceding' to it the right to lay the proposed line?⁴

Governor Reid replied by forwarding the draft of a Resolution to be proposed to the local Council of Government. I believe the Resolution to have been drafted by Adriano Dingli, later Sir, as his signature appears at the bottom. The draft Resolution stated that the Council of Government was of the opinion that the (Sardinian) proposal offers important advantages to the inhabitants of these possessions, gave *carte blanche* to the Governor to negotiate the deal, with only two limitations: to ensure for the inhabitants of Malta the same privileges as the Sardinian Government may deem fit to grant to its Sardinian Subjects, and, secondly, a financial provision. Malta was prepared to contribute any sum not exceeding one-tenth of that provided by the Imperial Treasury, provided this was not in excess of £6,000 for the whole project, or £1,000 for the Cagliari-Malta line only.⁵

In the following dispatch, the Governor informed Lord Panmure that a unanimous Council had "cheerfully" agreed to the Resolution, being strongly impressed with the important advantages that will accrue "as well as the danger of the commercial position of these islands being materially impaired should some other line be adopted for connecting the East with the West without touching Malta".⁶

Reid then hinted that the Indian Treasury might also be persuaded to contribute to the £60,000 requested by Sardinia. He adds an interesting aside. Though the money was not wholly available in the local budget, the deficiency could be made good "from the deposits made through the Courts of Justice and the Savings Bank". Generally he left it to H.M.'s government to negotiate with Sardinia to ensure all possible advantages "to this chiefly commercial community", stressing that among the conditions there should be the right to send messages in cypher and a general precedence of Government messages.⁷

Finally the Governor put forward a personal recommendation that was destined to reappear in later correspondence. Where was the submarine cable to emerge? The nearest and most obvious point would have been the western coast of Gozo. The Governor is strongly opposed to this. "I think that the wires should be brought from the sea direct into the fortress of Valletta, as they would by these means be more secure from malicious and hostile attack".⁸

The point of emergence of the cable from the sea troubled Reid. On July 9, 1857,

he wrote with some alarm to Secretary of State Labouchere: "Having read in the local newspapers an advertisement", he observed that the land connection was to be made at Fort St Julian. This is not good enough. The coast tower of St Julian is five miles distant from Valletta, and this is dangerous. "The point which appears best suited is that under St Elmo".⁹

His concern must have been deliberately leaked to the press. "A most important suggestion made by His Excellency the Governor will no doubt also be adopted — namely to lay a branch cable at a short distance off the mouth of the Grand Harbour, and to carry it to Fort St Elmo, for in the event of a Continental War, which however we trust is far distant, the cable could easily be cut away by an enemy at the landing point near St George's Bay".¹⁰

The following year, a long and detailed Memorandum, dated August 30, 1856 from the Lord Commissioners of the Treasury, reached the Governor, on "the proposed establishment of an electric telegraph with Malta and the Ionian Islands, and through them with Egypt and India". It dealt with financial considerations.¹¹

It took another year for the Government to receive a copy of the conditions, dated July 8, 1857, of the contract about to be completed between the Treasury and the Mediterranean Extension Telegraph Company, for the prolongation of the telegraph from Cagliari to Malta. It is not quite clear what had happened in the meantime. Originally a statal enterprise, by this time the venture had been privatised to a commercial company specially constituted for this purpose. The 'conditions' covered an arrangement for 25 years. The UK Government guaranteed a 6% return on the £120,000 capital invested by the Company. In practice this meant that the Government would pay £7,200 annually or so much as would be necessary to make up, with the other receipts of the Company, a dividend of 6%. Government would pay for making use of the telegraph according to the usual tariff rates agreed upon and not to be increased without the Government's consent. Government had the right to appoint one official Director in the Company.¹²

Sir John Pennefather, who as Lieutenant Governor was subordinate to Reid, but who as Commander-in-Chief of the military was the superior of the Governor, informed Labouchere that he had circulated the Conditions of the Contract to the

Fig. 3. The original of one of the earliest telegrams sent to Malta, dated May 27, 1858, only five months after the inauguration of the service. Addressed to Scicluna & Sons (later known as the Cisk) it was carried through the line established by the Mediterranean Extension in December 1857. This, and all other early incoming telegrams, are written through a carbon paper, on flimsy blued paper printed in red

MEDITERRANEAN EXTENSION TELEGRAPH COMPANY
[LIMITED]

No. ~~1111~~

Valletta Station.

Thursday the 27 day of May 1888

Received the following MESSAGE:

TO
Name Sciucuna sons

Address Malta

London 26th 2. 30 p m
Malta 27th 1. 16 a m 940

Received in Mercké calme, feris
invariables navire Brodigham
mis dans Malte avarie
chargement bils Galatz nous
appartient protéger notre
intérêt. Envoyez copie prova
fortune.

[Handwritten signature]

Name Milas.

Address _____

No Inquiry respecting this Message can be attended to without the production of this Paper.

Chamber of Commerce, and promised to afford all the assistance in his power to the Agents of the Company on their arrival in Malta.¹³

As the material works were about to be commenced, more and more of the exciting news started appearing in the local newspapers. The press reported that Mr Andrews, the Superintendent Engineer of the Mediterranean Extension Telegraph Company, had arrived in Malta with a staff of clerks to prepare the requisite instrument rooms in the old Borsa (St Paul's Street, Valletta). The *Elba*, having the electric cable on board, was to have left Birkinhead on the 16th October and was expected to start laying the cable immediately on arrival at Cagliari. In about a week's time, the paper said, "we hope we may be enabled to inform our readers of the success of an important undertaking which will connect our Island in Telegraphic Communication with the Continent of Europe". Hints are given that the cable to link Malta with Corfu was also on board the *Elba*.¹⁴

The cable from Cagliari would land at "Dragonara Point, between St George's and St Julian's" and thence the wires would be carried across the country upon posts from 18 to 21 feet high to Sa Maison, at the foot of Marsamuxetto Harbour.¹⁵

The resident Engineer, Mr Andrews, was meanwhile busy laying the wires from Sa Maison along the Marsamuxetto bastions, to the Jews Sally Port, and thence up Strada San Nicola to Strada San Paolo, on posts at a distance of about 100 feet, to the Old Exchange. The Civil and Military authorities had given every facility to the Company.¹⁶

The press report added that "our worthy Superintendent, the Hon. Admiral Sir Montague Stopford, had dispatched the Frigate *Desperate* to Cagliari to assist the *Elba*. It also informed its readers that the wires to the city would be changed as early as possible, and a subterranean line would be used in their stead."¹⁷

The paper then suggested that "as it is not without the bounds of probability" that one of the European states (which?) across which the telegraph passed, may in future be an enemy, "it would be desirable for our Government to lay a similar cable via Gibraltar to England".¹⁸

Looking forward, the newspaper foresaw "no doubt" many other lines to Sicily, Alexandria, Tunis, "and co". "The Governor's proposal to centre all telegraphic offices in the Old Exchange is an excellent idea". It reminded readers that 600

Fig. 4. Shortly after the Mediterranean Extension linked Malta with Cagliari and Corfu, a second venture, the Malta and Alexandria Telegraph started operating. This is the original of one of its earliest telegrams, received through it in Malta from Tripoli on March 12, 1862

PREAMBLE

MALTA & ALEXANDRIA TELEGRAPH,

Inst. M. KA Station Malta

No. _____

Foreign No. 66 At 8.45 a.m. on March 186 2

No. of Words 20 Received the following TELEGRAM:

From Nepali dated 12 Time 5.50 p.m.

To Annabile Grech

Address Strada Sant. Mikal
Malta

REMARKS.
P. Gump
Sender's Initials

*Estate è vicino ma
se credito necessario
assicurarlo fatto per
3 mesi.
In mail pagato*

Malta and Alexandria Telegraph.

Telegraphic Despatch.

Amabile Grech

Malta

Fig 5. An early envelope used by the Malta & Alexandria to deliver the telegram illustrated in Fig 4. It is sealed at the back with the handsome oval red wax seal of this enterprise

shares of the Company at par were available for purchase at the office of Notary George Page.¹⁹

A report on the Prospectus of the Mediterranean Extension Telegraph Company Ltd, purposely set up for this venture, was published a few days later. 12,000 shares at £10 each, deposit £2. 10s. 0d. per share. The chairman of the new Company was Mr P Samuel Gurney. Object of the Company was to extend the telegraph from Sardinia to Malta and Corfu "and to effect a junction at the latter island with the system which is about to be immediately carried out, for establishing telegraphic communication between England and India, via Alexandria, Seleucia, the Persian Gulf and Kurrachee. This would be offering an alternative route to India and Australia, to Britain and the East India Co., besides affording France and other south European countries direct communication with the East."²⁰

Among many advantages, the Prospectus said, "it will establish between England and the important government station and port of Malta, at present touched by the majority of vessels navigating the Mediterranean... communications to and from Malta are so numerous and important as to justify the belief that the telegraph would produce a very considerable revenue".²¹

The line would be 700 nautical miles long, and arrangements had been made with the telegraph companies at either end for the onward transmission of messages. The Government-guaranteed dividend of 6% was emphasised.²²

To entice investors, they are assured that responsible contractors have been employed who had assumed all the risks and were bound to hand over the lines in complete and efficient working order. "Shareholders are effectively protected from every hazard".²³

The Prospectus added that the submarine cables communicating Piedmont to Corsica and thence to Sardinia had never failed in perfect communication since they were laid down in 1845, and gave every promise of permanent durability free from all costs or need of repair.²⁴

500 shares were being reserved for applicants in Malta, available from Notary Page, at 43 Strada S. Giovanni, Valletta.²⁵ For some unknown reason, these were

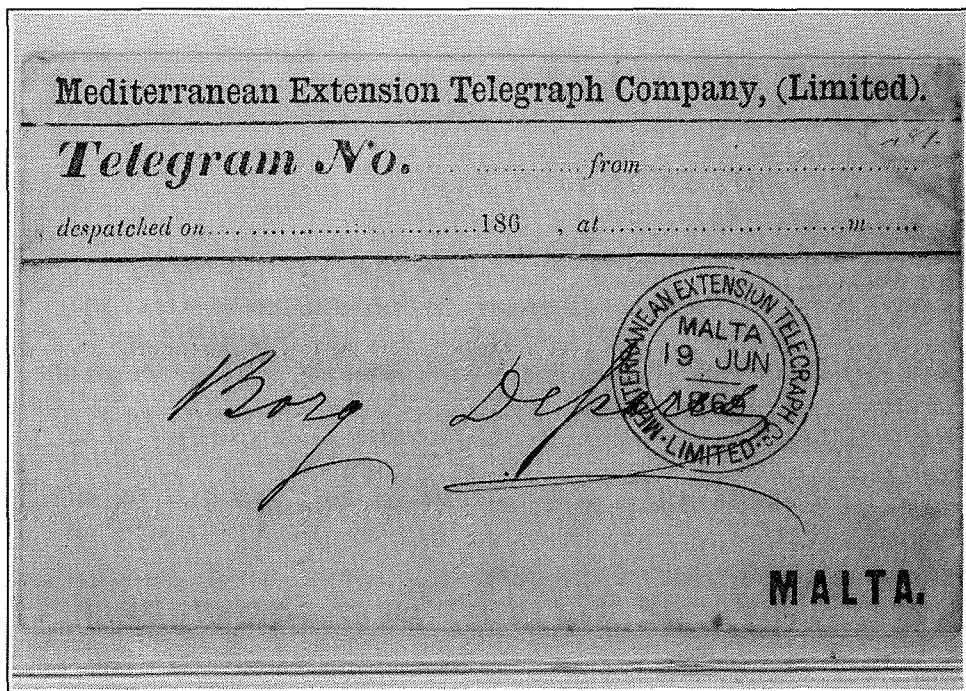


Fig 6. An envelope used by the original Company, the Mediterranean Extension, with a superb circular date stamp, June 19, 1869. On the back these envelopes carry an embossed seal of the Company. These have been seen in red on ivory envelopes, and in blue on rust envelopes

not instantly taken up by investors in Malta. An advert over four weeks later was still offering a “limited number of shares reserved for applicants at Malta and Corfu”.²⁶

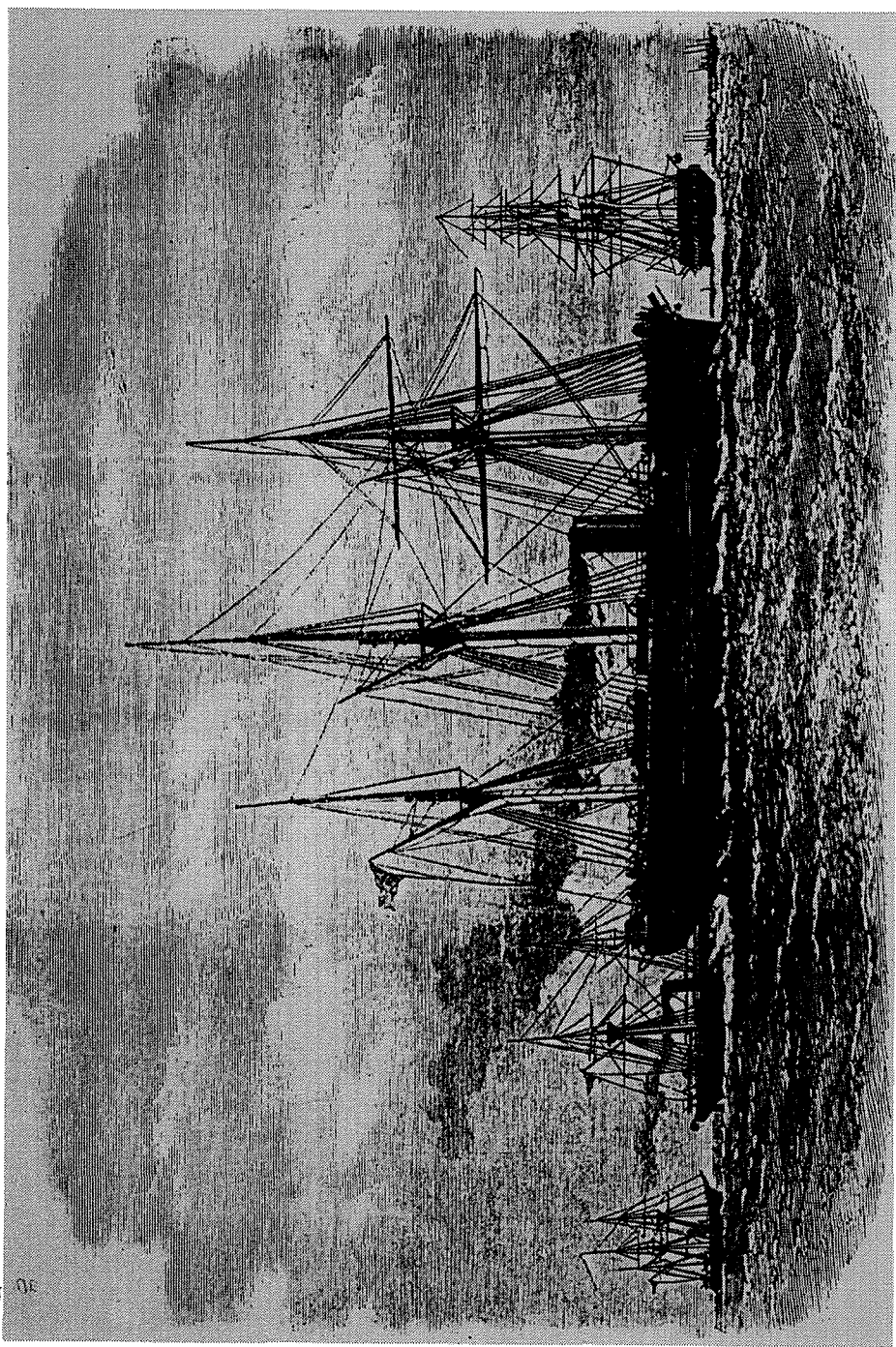
The great day was fast approaching. On December 20, 1857, Governor Reid personally sent the first telegram to London. The historical, if prosaic, message said: “At what o’clock is this received in London?” Unfortunately, the first transmission was a bit of a flop. It took two hours ten minutes to reach London as it was delayed one hour, “Corsica continually giving the signal ‘Wait’”.²⁷

The telegraph office must have been first opened to the public on or just before December 22, 1857. An advert in that day’s press informs the public that “Messages may now be forwarded by electric Telegraph to any station in Europe”. The long-awaited moment when the world instantly shrunk, had arrived. The rates, quite expensive ones, were itemised. Messages were to be received in the Company’s offices, Strada S. Paolo. The advert is signed by Thomas Andrews, the engineer responsible for laying the cable from Cagliari.²⁸ (Figure 2).

The press was well gratified with the results. “We are glad to find that the telegraph connecting the Island with the Continent and with England is now in good working order”. To exemplify the new wonder, the paper recounted how Her Majesty’s dispatch vessel, the *Coquette*, had on Wednesday arrived with news from Bombay. The Indian news were immediately relayed by telegraph to the home government and the leading London journals. Within four hours of the vessel’s arrival, the dispatch of the news to *The Times* in London had been completed. From London, telegrams reached Malta in less than one hour. From Malta to London it was much slower — two to three hours. Why?²⁸

The Sardegna-Malta-Corfu link was only the beginning of an enormous expansion programme which pivoted round Malta. To give a few examples, in 1859 a cable was laid between Malta and Sicily. The same year, the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Co. Ltd laid a cable from Malta to Alexandria, via Tripoli and Bnghazi. At first this line seems to have been reserved for official use by the British Government, but it appears that some time later it was opened for use by the public.³⁰

Fig. 7. “Laying the submarine cable between Malta and Alexandria”, a wood engraving after sketches by F. Hyndman, Paymaster of HMS Newport, published by The Illustrated London News in November 1868. The operation was considered important enough to feature in a leading London periodical. A long article accompanying the illustration recounts in detail the difficulties met by the Chiltern and the Scandera, the cable-laying steamships, in the the undertaking completed between September 26 and October 4. The operation ended with a “grand success”. The previous cable, laid in 1858, was constantly breaking down due to chafing against the rough rocky seabed. The new cable was



102
K
Dr



Fig 8. The seals and handstamps used by the Mediterranean Extension. Sets 3 and 5, 4 and 6, differ mostly in the decorative rosettes separating the oval lettering

This was the first step towards an intensive linkage between Malta and Alexandria. In 1868, and then in 1870, the Anglo-Mediterranean Telegraph Co Ltd. laid down two other cables. In all, five cables joined Malta to Alexandria, and another five to Gibraltar. Referring to Malta's quintuple link with Alexandria, the President of the Eastern and associated telegraph Companies could say in 1888 "Forty million pounds of capital have been sunk at the bottom of the sea; but where it had sunk, it lived".³¹

The time was long overdue for the Government to protect by legislation the precious submarine umbilical cord with the rest of the world. Only a few days after the inauguration, the press reported that already twice the telegraph wires had been vandalised "in the lower part of the town, it is believed by some ill-disposed person or persons... Our present laws are inadequate to meet offences of this nature, and some special provisions should be enacted to prevent crimes of this description". Editorially, it was suggested to follow the example of other countries with the promulgation of a special law which punished with well-merited severity, all malicious attempts.³²

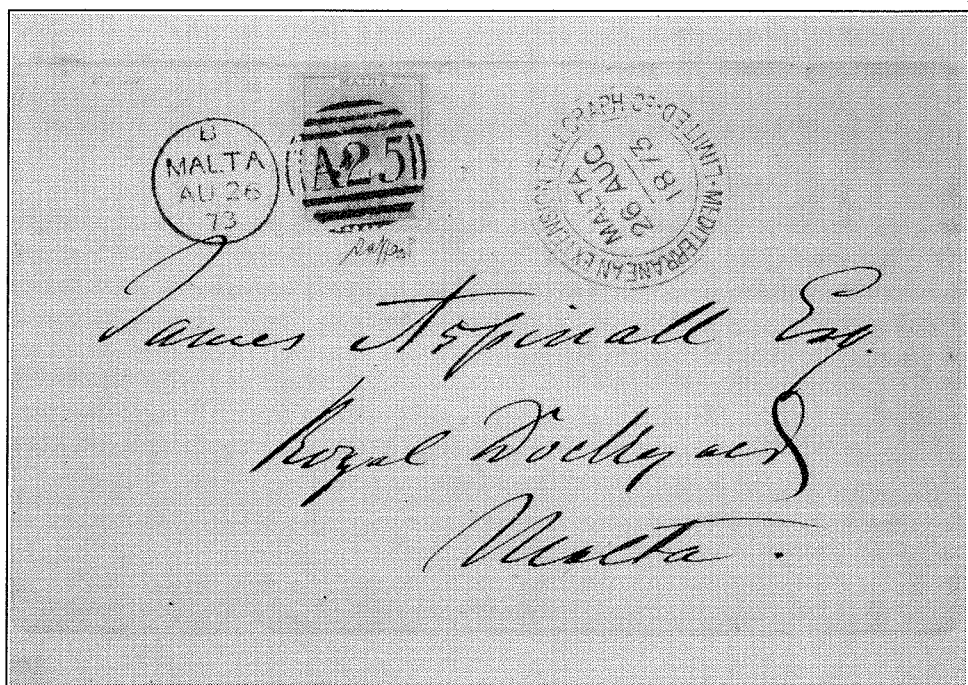


Fig 9. When the post married the telegram. An 1873 envelope, carrying both a halfpenny yellow tied by the A25 duplex, and the Mediterranean extension circular handstamp

On July 4, 1859, such a law was enacted: Ordinance III of 1859 "*For the better protection of Electric Telegraphs*". It was a short statute which made it a criminal offence to disturb overland and submarine cables. It was directed against whosoever should touch any wire of any electric telegraph, or should throw anything on any such wire, etc., even though no damage shall appear to have ensued.³³

Similarly hit by the sanction of the law was any person who "shall cast anchors, or shall fish in the harbours, bays or coasts wherein the cables of electric telegraphs are laid, except in places which may be designated by the Superintendent of the Ports, shall be liable to criminal punishment and for any damage caused."³⁴

It was possibly in consequence of this, or a subsequent enactment, that large boards showing capsised anchors painted in white on a black background were, until recently, prominently displayed where telegraphic cables came ashore, to prohibit the dragging of anchors which would have caused great damage to the cables.

International telegraphy was becoming more and more of an everyday reality. But telegraphy had possibilities even outside the sphere of international communications. Edward Rosenbusch, the ingenious and energetic Engineer and General Superintendent of the Mediterranean Extension Telegraph Co., was always on the alert for marketing the minor side-products of this revolutionary invention.

In 1862, the press published a feature which illustrated this marketing strategy: "We have received an invitation from Mr E. Rosenbusch to inspect several interesting specimens of telegraphic apparatus, lately brought out by him from Paris, with the object of introducing them into use in Malta. They consist of the ordinary Morse printer improved by Breguet, as used in all the telegraph offices in France, and different sets of rotation telegraphs, which any schoolboy having a knowledge of the common alphabet can easily manipulate... Through the recent enlargement of the telegraph establishment in Malta a source of employment has been opened to the young men of this Island, which would make it desirable that the study of electricity and magnetism and its applications, should form part of a regular course of instruction in the University".³⁵

The paper then adds that Mr Rosenbusch proposed at the same time to submit to the Military Authorities specimens of metal-covered and combined India-rubber

Fig 10. An early receipt of a telegram sent from Venice to Malta via Sicily, dated January 3, 1860. This telegram cost 13.4 florins "in valuta austriaca"

Ricevuta

delle competenze esatte per l'invio del Telegramma Nr. 128 con 19 parole
 da Palermo per Malta via Cava. Sicilia

Impostato il 27 1888 alle 2 ore 10 minuti 2 meridiane.

Furono pagati		Furono depositati	
a. per tassa della Lega		a. per competenze di staffetta	
b. " estera	<u>2 449</u>	b. " spedizioni con espresso	
c. " di moltiplicazione		Somma depositata	
d. " inoltro oltre la linea		Aggiuntevi le tasse come contro	
e. " per la risposta		In totale, valuta austriaca	
Somma in valuta austriaca	<u>13 499</u>		

Ricevuti 13 499

Dall'Imp. Regia Stazione del Telegrafo

Ricevuto da [Signature]

Non si accorda alcuna compensazione per un qualche svantaggio derivante forse dalla perdita, nullificazione o dal ritardo di dispacci.

and gutta percha insulated telegraph wires, which would prove very useful in establishing temporary telegraphic communications in target practice and such like, the cable being so light and flexible as to allow of its being coiled round a drum and moved about as required, and at the same time well protected from any outward injury. It is especially adapted for military purposes, as it dispenses altogether with the old system of movable posts and insulators; and it may also be used under water".³⁶

Four years later, Mr Rosenbusch was again in the news. "We are glad to see", reported the press, "that the modern appliances of science are being adopted in our little city. In addition to being well-lighted by gas, and having electric clocks, which very few capitals in Europe can boast of, as well as telegraphs across the harbours connecting the Palace with the principal forts, and others between the naval establishments, we have now to notice the introduction of private telegraphs by mercantile firms for their special use".³⁷

The first private telegraph is identified: "Mr Rosenbusch, the energetic and intelligent telegraphist who has the credit of having introduced these appliances of electricity into this city for domestic and commercial purposes, is now engaged in laying a line to connect the offices of Messrs G. Scicluna e Figli with the Marina, where a particular branch of their extensive business is chiefly conducted. We hope to see the spirited example set by Messrs Scicluna," the newspaper concludes, "followed by other leading merchants, the more so, as when the new harbour comes into general use, the adoption of telegraphic communication will effect a considerable saving of time and trouble and will, in fact, become a matter of absolute necessity".³⁸

I recall reading an amusing newspaper report, of which I have mislaid the reference, about Mr Rosenbusch offering to hotels in Malta a system of telegraphic communication between the rooms and the reception area. Each room would have its little transmitter (possibly in nature of a buzzer) linked to the reception desk. This would overcome, said the notice, the inconvenience of bells ringing continuously in hotels, clamouring for attention and disturbing the other guests.

Edward Rosenbusch was still teeming with ideas. Realising the commercial potential of ships and persons restricted to the Lazzaretto wanting to communicate with the outside world, he had a station installed on Manoel Island. On September 3, 1871 large posters were distributed advertising the telegraph

Fig 11. A telegram from Malta to Scutari on the Bosphorus, through Monastir in North Africa, dated January 10, 1867

SUBLIME PORTE.

MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES.

ADMINISTRATION IMPÉRIALE
DES TÉLÉGRAPHES

Modèle N° 1



Bureau de *Scutari*

De *Malte* Pour *Scutari*

Le *10 Janvier* 1807

Transmis par *Monastir*

Commencé à *11 h 37 m.* du *m*

Fin à *11 h 40 m.* du *m*

Signature du Stationnaire

Gabrich

Vu

Par le Chef de Station soussigné

N° d'arrivée *24*

Réexpédié à

à *11 h 15 m.* du *m*

Le *10 Janvier* 1807

Signature du Fonctionnaire

Ch

N° DU DÉPÔT	NOMBRE DE MOTS	DATE DU DÉPÔT	HOURS	MINUTES	MAJIN DU SOIR	VOIES	INDICATIONS ET TAXES
<i>243</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>1</i>		

Nous Désignons

pour Scutari

*Dote capitaine Cuccini pour mes-
sage de nos lettres avec l'écrite
pour la ligne Bruggate grande route
Lana*

Camilleri

*J. C. C.
10 Janvier 67
Catalani*

✓

Mediterranean Extension Telegraph Company Limited.

Telegraphic Communication between the Quarantine Establishment in Marsamuscetto Harbour and Valletta.

Telegrams are received at this Company's Station, 7 strada Marsamuscetto and the "Borsa" for transmission by telegraph to the Lazzaretto, where arrangements have been made for their delivery.

Tariff per telegram of 20 words exclusive of address and Signature One Shilling and if with Reply prepaid One Shilling and Nine pence.

Captains of Ships and Passengers detained in Quarantine are now offered the rapid means of intercommunication by telegraph with the town of Valletta and Countries abroad, for which the Officer in Charge of the Telegraph Station at the Lazzaretto will levy the following charges.

Telegram of 20 words exclusive of address & signature to *Valletta* including Delivery by Company's Messengers and to Localities beyond Valletta, the cost of means of conveyance, additional One Shilling.

Telegram of 20 words as above if with Reply prepaid £—1. 9.

Telegram of 20 words including name and address of Sender and Receiver to Destinations *abroad* will be taxed with the above charges in addition to the Rates as per the Company's published Tariff.

For further information, please address The Telegraphist in Charge of Quarantine Telegraph Station at the Lazzaretto or the Mediterranean Extension Telegraph Company Limited.

EDWARD ROSEBUSCH

Engineer & General Superintendent

Malta 3rd, September 1871.

COST OF A TELEGRAM OF 20 WORDS FROM MALTA TO

London 9s. 8d., United Kingdom 10s. 5d
 Austria 7s. 3d., North German Confe-
 deration 7s. 3d., Belgium 7s. 3d, Baden,
 Bavaria, Wurtemberg 6s.5d., Corfu, Cor-
 sica, France 7s. 3d., Greece 8s., Italy 4s.
 10d., Netherlands 7s. 3d., Norway 9s.8d.
 Portugal 10s., Spain 9s. 3d., Russia of
 Europe 11s. 3d., Turkey of Europe 8s.,
 Turkey of Asia 11s. 3d.—14s. 5d, Swe-
 den 9s. 3d., Denmark 8s., Switzerland
 and Sardinia 5s. 8d.

Fig 13. The back of a Mediterranean Extension envelope, probably late 1860s, advertising the tariff for 20 words. The rates are much lower than the ones in the first advert (Fig 2)

service between the Lazzaretto and Valetta: 20 words for one shilling; nine pence more with reply prepaid (Fig.12). In 1873 Rosenbusch was one of the most active promoters of the new railway venture.

But Rosenbusch was not alone in fostering the dissemination of telegraphy. Mr Gibson, the Government Inspector of Telegraphs, is also on record with some bright ideas. The first was linking Malta by submarine cable to Gozo. "A useful proposal has been made by Mr Gibson, Government Inspector of Telegraphs" said the press, "to establish telegraphic communication between Malta and Gozo, by submarine cable across the Straits of Frieghi (?) in connection with land lines to be laid between the capitals of the two Island and the principal casals. Mr Gibson has offered to supply the local Government with the necessary *materiel* from the surplus stores belonging to the Malta and Alexandria Telegraph. All that the local Government will be called upon to provide is the manual labour for fixing the posts for the land wires along the route, and to allow the men now employed on

Fig 12. Section of a large 1871 poster (37x47cm) in English and Italian, advertising the introduction of a telegraph service between Valetta and the Lazzaretto on Manoel Island. One of the many initiatives of Edward Rosenbusch

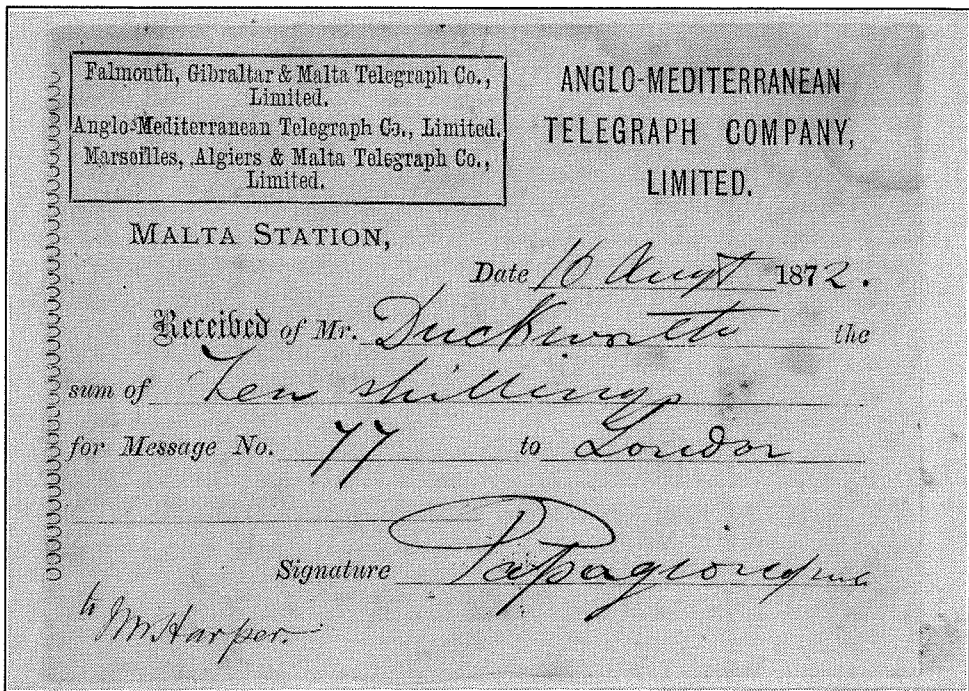


Fig 14. In 1872 several Telegraph Companies operating in Malta amalgamated into one large common enterprise: The Eastern Telegraph Company Ltd., which was to retain its predominance well into the next century. Here shown is a receipt for a telegram dated August 16, 1872, possibly from the transitional period immediately preceding the merger. Four different Companies are listed in the letterhead

semaphore service to be taught how to work the modern line".³⁹

Alas, the Malta-Gozo telegraphic line was to remain a festering sore for long. Nothing came out of Mr Gibson's proposal. In 1869 another public outcry was registered. "We hear that Mr Emmerson", said a press report, "lately proposed to Government to connect, at his own risk and expense, by electric telegraph, not only the Islands of Malta, Gozo and Comino, but also all the villages of these islands. For some unknown reason, probably with reference to defences, the Government has declined to entertain the proposition. It is much to be regretted that no telegraphic communication exists with Gozo, which prevents agents of steamers receiving early intelligence of thick weather of the approach of their vessels, or of disasters on the coast".⁴⁰

The report adds: "The flags of the Government Signal-Station at Gozo having, from not being used, become moth-eaten, and the authorities being unwilling to replace them, puts Gozo, in matters of communication, in bad weather at a greater

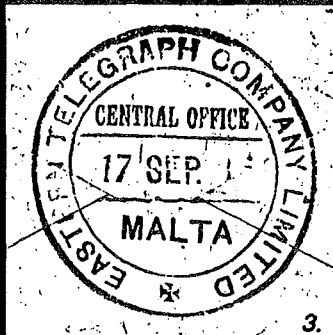
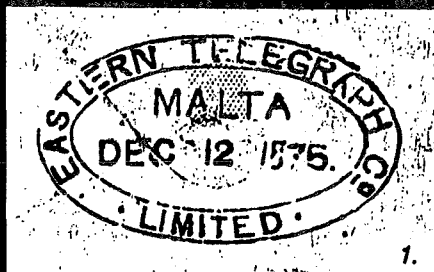


Fig 15. The date stamp and logos of the newly amalgamated telegraph company, the Eastern, established in 1872. The date of N° 3 is 1885. N° 4 was only used for a relatively short time. The slightly modified new graphic design (N° 5) was in use well into the following century

distance from Malta than Suez. On the recent break-down of a steamer, not many miles from Gozo, we are indebted to the Telegraph from Alexandria for the first intelligence of it, which was conveyed tither by a passing steamer".⁴¹

Then some meagre consolation: "Since the above was in type, we learn that the Government, yielding to the representations of the Mercantile Body, has consented to provide two new sets of flags for the Signal-Station at Gozo, and that a vote of £25 will be brought forward for this purpose at the next sitting of Council to be held tomorrow, 21st instant".⁴²

Eight more years had to elapse idly before Malta was finally linked to its sister island. It is ironical to reflect that for 20 years it was much easier and faster for Malta to communicate with the most distant places in the world, like Russia and Buenos Aires, than it was to send a message to Kercem!

Only 20 full years after the introduction of telegraphy in Malta, in January 1877, were lines between Malta and Nadur finally established or made available for civilian use. It appears that this was not a strictly commercial service, but that civilians were allowed to use the military lines. Messages for Gozo were received at the Palace *Turretta*. The delivery was not by private courier as with the commercial companies; the police took care to forward the telegrams to the addressee, provided he lived at a convenient distance.⁴³

Up to then, reliance had been placed on the military semaphore (the telegraph, as opposed to the electric telegraph). During the sitting of the Council of Government of April 21, 1865 Dr Sciortino asked why £46 for two persons employed on the *Giordan Hill* in Gozo to transmit signals, had been deleted from the previous year's budget. The Superintendent of Ports answered cryptically that the two persons had been removed "by order of the military authorities". What if some ship was in distress, was there no way to communicate? Yes, replied the Superintendent. There was a new military telegraph (a semaphore) in Gozo situated in a better position than the previous one.⁴⁴

Mr Gibson also thought of expanding the line to Sliema. Here is how the press reported the event: "A telegraphic line was laid between the Telegraphic Office in Town, and the residence at Sliema of Mr Gibson, the Government Inspector of Telegraphs. This will enable that officer to be in constant communication, not only with the Office in Valletta, but also with the intermediate stations between Malta and Alexandria, when necessary; and serve, besides, for experiments of a scientific nature".⁴⁵

This line is partly aerial and partly submarine. The submarine portion, which is

Fig 16. Telegram from Athens to Malta, dated September 17, 1885, carried by the Eastern

Receiving Form.

THE EASTERN TELEGRAPH COMPANY, LIMITED.

Inst. From

K

MALTA STATION.

Foreign No.

2735

No.

20

No. of Words

9

At

2:45 p.m. on 17 of 9

1895

REMARKS.

Received the following TELEGRAM:

From

Athens

dated

17/9

Time

via

To

Hsin Jerhat

Address

Malta

Prezzo Corrente

1719 Conforme Qualita

Leonardos

Client's Initials

H

No Inquiry respecting this Telegram can be attended to without the production of this Paper.

The Public are expressly requested to take Notice that Telegrams are only forwarded by this Company on the condition that no responsibility is assumed for delay in transmission or delivery, or for non-transmission or non-delivery, or for mistakes from whatever cause they may arise.

Waterlow and Sons Limited, Printers, London Wall, London.



Fig 17. A typical Eastern Envelope used to deliver incoming telegrams. This is handstamped on the back, July 26, 1879

one of the cables belonging to the Royal Engineer Department kindly lent for the purpose, crosses the harbour from the Government Cable Tank at St Rocco, to Fort Manoel, thence to the Steps at Fort Tigne, and is connected with the office, on the one side, and with Mr Gibson's house, on the other by wires raised on posts.⁴⁶

"We may add that Mr Gibson has asked us to say he is willing to forward to town, at any hour of the night, or in rough weather, any message of pressing importance, in cases of sickness or other sudden emergency".⁴⁷

The telegraph had become an indispensable part of Malta's life. The Principal Secretary, in the sitting of the Council of Government of January 21, 1867 requested a vote of £144. 12s 7d. for postal and telegraphic expenses. He justified the exorbitant vote, by reason of telegrams sent to foreign Consuls, during the absence of the Governor, to seek to keep the dreaded cholera epidemic from Malta. The expenditure was approved.⁴⁸

It is not easy to enumerate exhaustively how many Telegraph Companies were

Fig 18. A Gozo telegram, dated August 21, 1880. After 20 years of vain efforts, Malta and Gozo were finally linked in 1877, not by a private venture but only through a concession of the military telegraphic service

MILITARY TELEGRAPHS.

Dated Stamp of

Inquiries respecting this Telegram, or application for repetition of the same, may be made at the Delivering Office; but any complaint as to its delay, etc., should be made in writing, and addressed to the officer in charge. In either case this form must accompany such inquiries or complaint.

N.B.—The time at which a message is written is only telegraphed through if it be entered on the original telegram by the sender.

Handed in at the Army Office at N. Y. 20. 11. 1914 m. here at 11. 21. 1914 m.

Charged to pay to d.

0
21. 1. 10

Delivering Office.

From

ballaja

To

Supreme Sincero

Time at which message was written by sender

Justo Ma bene
preparato.

e tutto

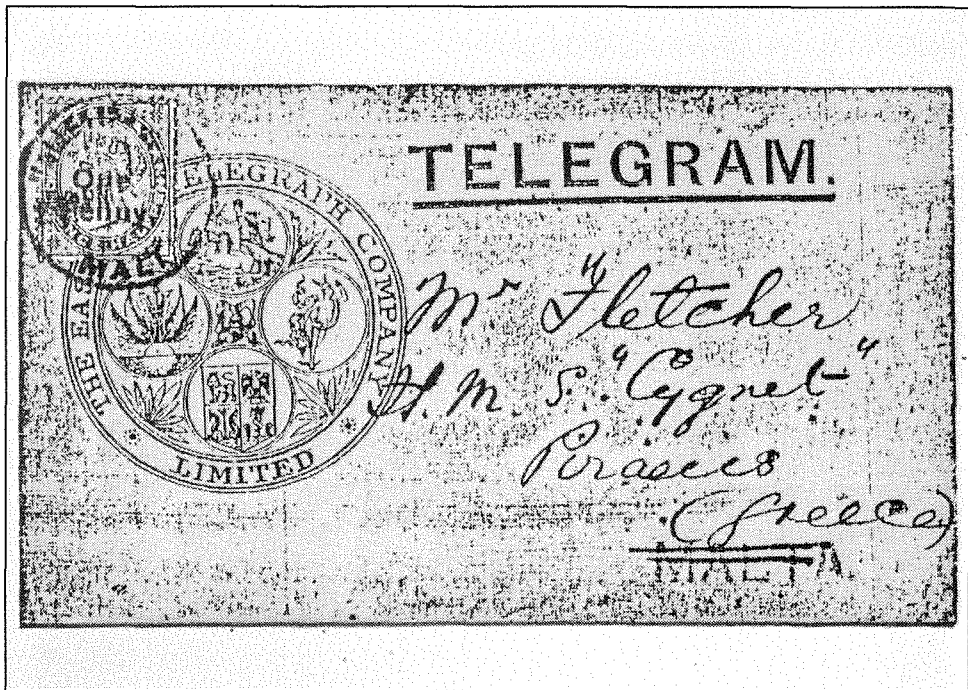


Fig 19. Another envelope for delivering incoming telegrams that went through the mail in July 1902, sent by post from Malta to the Piraeus in Greece

operating to and from Malta before they merged in 1872. Besides those already mentioned, in 1870 we find two other Companies starting business in Malta. The Falmouth, Gibraltar and Malta Telegraph Co laid a cable to Gibraltar which was joined to one extending to Lisbon and the UK.

Similarly, the same year the Marseilles, Algiers, Malta Telegraph Co., laid cables from Malta to Algiers (Bone) which bridged over to Marseilles. Also operating in Malta was the Anglo-Mediterranean Telegraph Co. Ltd. All these Companies, together with the British Indian Submarine Telegraph Co. Ltd. merged in 1872, to form the Eastern Telegraph Company Ltd. which together with the original Mediterranean Extension Telegraph were to remain sovereign of the communications system of the British Empire in Europe, Asia and Africa, well into our country.⁴⁹

In 1873, discussions between the Eastern and the Mediterranean Extension on the joint use of the Corfu-Otranto connection failed. In a half yearly report the directors of the Mediterranean Extension stated that business was better than the previous six months, but also that the Greek Government was defaulting in payment. Although representations had been made to the Greek Director of

Telegraphs, these “have not been attended with success, and that consequently the distribution of the dividend had to be postponed”.⁵⁰

The Telegraph enterprises operated in Malta from various offices. The Mediterranean Extension Telegraph Co Ltd. started its existence in 1857 in the old Borsa in St Paul's Street, Valletta. In the 1860s the Malta and Alexandria Telegraph is described as operating on the bastions overlooking Marsamuxetto. This probably was the handsome palace, N° 7 Marsamuxetto Road, where most of the telegraphic activity was concentrated up to the end of the century, and which was later to host the principal Masonic lodge in the Island. (Figure 1).

In the late seventies other telegraphic offices are recorded: 95a Strada Santa Lucia, Valletta, is an old edifice, corner with West Street, where the Wilson Bar is now located. Also active were the offices in 27, Strada Mercanti, Valletta, a building demolished during the war, across from St John's, where the Galea fu Filippo drapery and the Footjoy Shoe Shop now stand. An 1880 form lists four addresses of the Eastern. Besides Marsamuxetto and Strada Mercanti, it mentions the Borsa (the Exchange Building in Kingsway) and the Harbour extension Branch office (probably in Marsa).

To these must be added other stations, eg the Lazzaretto, and the Military stations which served the public, like Nadur.

In 1897 the Eastern bought a large plot of land at St George's and built the new main offices. This pleasant building, known as Mercury House, was later taken over by Cable and Wireless Company and eventually by Telemalta.

Acknowledgements:

I have been unable to come across any published work dealing systematically with Maltese telegraphy, except the two excellent articles by William O. Cutugno “Early Telecommunications in Malta” in issues N°2 and 3 (July 1990) of Il-Linja, the inhouse journal of Telemalta workers, which contain some valuable information.

I want to thank Mr Anthony Debono, General Manager of Telemalta, Mr Joseph Caruana of the National Archives, Mr Joseph Bonnici of the National Library, Mr Michael Cassar, Dr Albert Ganado, Mr Cecil Diamantino and Mr Carmel G. Bonavia for their generous and precious assistance.

SOURCES AND REFERENCES

NA = National Archives, S. Spirito, Rabat

MT = Malta Times and United Services Gazette

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- 2 Ibid
- 3 NA. Governor to Sec. of State, June 24, 1855

- 4 NA. Sec. of State to Governor, July 30, 1855
- 5 NA. Governor to Sec. of State, August 27, 1855
- 6 NA. Governor to Sec. of State, September 4, 1855
- 7 Ibid
- 8 Ibid
- 9 NA. Governor to Sec. of State
- 10 MT. October 27, 1857
- 11 NA. Sec. of State to Governor
- 12 NA. Sec. of State to Governor
- 13 NA. Pennefather to Sec. of State, August 4, 1857
- 14 MT. October 27, 1857
- 15 Ibid
- 16 Ibid
- 17 Ibid
- 18 Ibid
- 19 Ibid
- 20 MT. November 27, 1857
- 21 Ibid
- 22 Ibid
- 23 Ibid
- 24 Ibid
- 25 Ibid
- 26 MT. December 29, 1857
- 27 NA. Governor to Sec. of State, December 22, 1857
- 28 MT. December 22, 1857
- 29 MT. January 5, 1858
- 30 vide W.O. Cutugno, Early Telecommunications in Malta, *Il-Linja*, Issues 2 and 3 (July, 1990)
- 31 Ibid
- 32 MT. January 12, 1858
- 33 Government Gazette, 1859, p.40
- 34 Ibid
- 35 MT. July 10, 1862
- 36 Ibid
- 37 MT. May 30, 1867
- 38 Ibid
- 39 MT. June 18, 1863
- 40 MT. May 20, 1869
- 41 Ibid
- 42 Ibid
- 43 vide E. Attard, Dwar l-Imghoddi tal-Korp tal-Pulizija, *It-Torca*, May 5, 1991
- 44 Debates, p.93
- 45 MT. October 8, 1863
- 46 Ibid
- 47 Ibid
- 48 Debates, p.26
- 49 vide Cutugno, Op. Cit.
- 50 MT. (Supplement), September 13, 1873

MALTA — A DIARY

JANUARY-APRIL, 1991

By J. Farrugia

15-1-91

A Temporary Branch Post Office was opened at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta, from Tuesday, January 15 to Friday, February 8, 1991, from 9.30am to 3.30pm (excluding Saturdays and Sundays)

for the transaction of the following business:

- a) sale of stamps and postal stationery
- b) registration of postal articles
- c) issue and encashment of Money and Postal Orders
- d) encashment of Postcheques
- e) posting of letters and printed matters
- f) posting of parcels
- g) posting of E.M.S. Datapost

Postal articles posted at this Temporary Branch Post Office were postmarked by a date-stamp inscribed:

"Mediterranean Conference Centre — Valletta — Malta" including the logo of the C.S.C.E. meeting of Experts on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes.



4-2-91

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "Droga? Le — U Kburi — Zghazagh Kontra d-Droga" was used at the Central Mail Room from the 4th to the 9th February, 1991. The slogan also incorporates an appropriate motif. The slogan means: "Drugs? No — And Proud — Youth Against Drugs".

20-2-91

A Sub-Post Office was opened at "Salcon Bazaar", Fleur-De-Lys Junction, Santa Venera, on Wednesday, February 20, 1991.

A hand metal date-stamp with the words: Santa Venera S.P.O — Malta" is being used at this Sub-Post Office.

The telephone number at this Sub-Post Office is 488040.



6-3-91

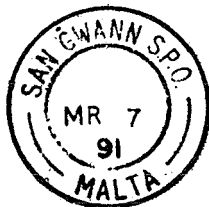
The "25th Anniversary — Philatelic Society" postage stamp issued today. A special hand-postmark incorporating the motif of the Philatelic Society was used for cancellation on the first day of issue.



7-3-91

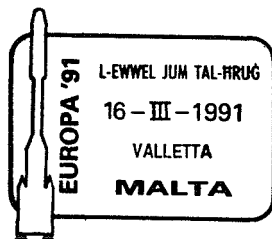
A new metal hand date-stamp inscribed "San Gwann S.P.O. — Malta" was used at the San Gwann Sub-Post Office as from Thursday, March 7, 1991.

The metal hand date-stamp which was replaced, was withdrawn from use at the close of business on Wednesday, March 6, 1991.



16-3-91

The "Europa 1991" postage set issued today. A special hand-postmark incorporating a motif was used for cancellation on the first day of issue.



20-3-91

A new metal hand date-stamp was used at the Valletta Branch Post Office as from Wednesday, March 20, 1991.

The hand date-stamp is inscribed "Valletta B.P.O. — Malta".

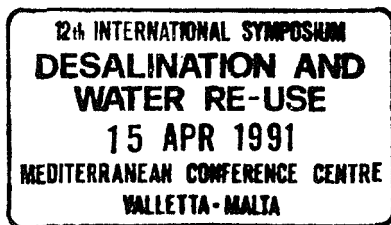


26-3-91

In today's Govt. Gazette, a call was issued for applications for the post of Sub-Postmaster at Iklin and Marsa. Applications were to be received up to noon of Tuesday, April 30, 1991.

15-4-91

A temporary Branch Post Office was opened at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta, from Monday, April 15 to Thursday, April 18, 1991, from 9.00am to 5.00pm for the transaction of the following business:



- a) sale of stamps and postal stationery
- b) registration of postal articles
- c) issue and encashment of Money and Postal Orders
- d) encashment of Postcheques
- e) posting of letters, printed matters and parcels
- f) posting of E.M.S. Datapost

Postal articles posted at this Temporary Branch Post Office were postmarked by a date-stamp inscribed: "12th International Symposium — Desalination and Water Re-use — Mediterranean Conference Centre — Valletta — Malta".

29-4-91

The "Religious Commemorations" postage set, issued today. A special hand-postmark incorporating a motif was used for cancellation on the first day of issue.

**29-4-91**

A machine stamp cancelling slogan worded: "Deaf Awareness Week 28.IV - 5.V.91" was used during the period 29th and 30th April and 2nd to 4th May, 1991 at the Central Mail Room. The slogan also incorporates the logo of the Association for the Young Deaf.

COMMEMORATIONS 1990 ISSUE—X BRITISH MEN OF LETTERS ISSUE—Y

By J. Farrugia

ISSUE	X	Y
Date of Issue	7-4-90	3-5-90
Values	3c, 4c, 19c, 20c	4c, 10c, 12c, 25c
Stamp Size	3c & 20c=31mmx44mm 4c & 19c = 44mm x 31mm	47.15mmx20.5mm
Designer	Tony Bugeja	Anton Grech
Printers	Printex Limited	Printex Limited
Process	Lithography	Lithography
Perforation	3c & 20c = 14x13.9 4c & 20c = 13.9x14	13.4x13.5
Watermark	3c & 20c Maltese Crosses Upright 4c & 19c Maltese Crosses Sideways	Maltese Crosses Sideways
Paper	Chalk Surfaced	same
Gum	P.V.A.	same

Colours

Issue X was printed in multicolours using the same four colours for each value. Issue Y was also printed in multicolours using four colours for each value, three of which are common to all values, the fourth being the colour of the border of each value.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin, next to the last stamp of the bottom row in issue X, (next to the last stamps of the two bottom rows, in issue Y), in each Pane, of each value,

in both issues. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from left to right, on all Panes, of all values, in issues X and Y.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins, printed in black in issue X (printed in the bottom colour of the colour checks, of each value, in issue Y), on all Panes, of all values, of both issues.

Issue X — The Printed Sheet of each value consisted of two Pane A and B. Each Pane has fifty stamps, made up of ten rows of five stamps, (3c and 20c) and five rows of ten stamps (4c and 19c). The 3c and 20c values are of the vertical format whilst the 4c and 19c values are of the horizontal format.

Issue Y — The Printed Sheet of each value, consisted of three Panes, A, B and C. Each Pane has fifty stamps, made up of five rows of ten stamps. All stamps are of the horizontal format.

Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of all values, in issues X and Y.

Issue X — 3c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4	Issue Y 4c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4
4c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4	10c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4
19c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4	12c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4
20c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4	25c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4

Perforation of Margins:

Issue X — The left hand margins of Panes A in the 3c and 20c values are imperforate whilst the other three margins of Panes A and the four margins of Panes B of these two values are all perforated. The top margins of Panes A in the 4c and 19c values are imperforate, whilst the other three margins of Panes A and the four margins of Panes B of these two values are all perforated. Cutting marks were seen on all Panes.

Issue Y — The top margins of Panes A, of all values, are imperforate, whilst the other three margins of Panes A and the four margins of Panes B and C of all values are perforated. No cutting marks were seen.

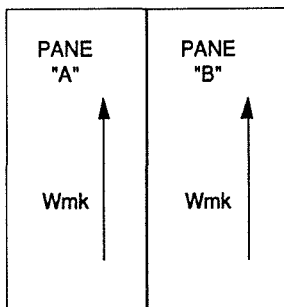


fig. A

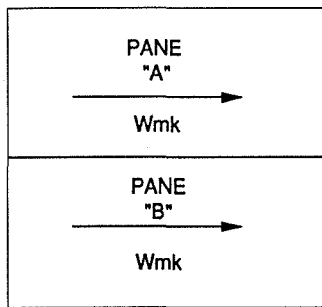


fig. B

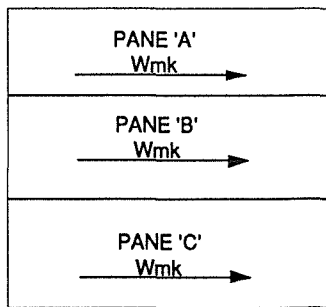


Fig. C

From a study of details given the Printed Sheets of all values, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown in fig (a) for the 3c and 20c values of issue X, in fig (b) for the 4c and 19c values also of issue X, and in fig (c) for all values of issue Y. Looking at the Printed Sheets as shown, stamps would be seen the right way up, hence why watermark is upright in the 3c and 20c value of issue X and sideways in the 4c and 19c values of issue X and all values of issue Y. Perforator ran from left to right in fig (a) and from top to bottom in figs (b) and (c).

Imprint Blocks

The imprint PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of all values, in issues X and Y. Letters are 1mm high and printed in black in issue X, but printed in the bottom colour of the colour checks, of each value, in issue Y. An Imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks in issues X and Y.

Special hand-postmarks were used for cancellation on the first day of both issues.

By 12.45pm on the first day of issue sales amounted to Lm24,565 (issue X) and Lm28,500 (issue Y). Stamps of these issues remained on sale up to Wednesday, April 3, 1991, (Issue X) and up to Wednesday, May 8, 1991 (issue Y).

VISIT BY H.H. POPE JOHN PAUL II ISSUE

By J. Farrugia

Date of Issue.....	May 25, 1990
Values.....	4c and 25c
Stamp size.....	29mmx47mm
Art Designer	Noel Galea Bason
Printers	Printex Limited
Process	Lithography
Perforation	13.6x13.85
Watermark	Maltese Crosses Sideways
Paper	Chalk Surfaced
Gum	P.V.A.

Colours

This set was printed in multicolours using the same three colours for each value.

Designs

The 4c stamp depicts St. Paul

The 25c stamp represents Pope John Paul II

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin, next to the last stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of both

values. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers, from left to right, on all Panes, of both values.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps, are seen in top and bottom margins, printed in black.

The Printed Sheet of each value, consisted of three Panes A, B and C. Each Pane has forty stamps, made up of eight rows of five stamps. Both stamps are of the vertical format.

Plate/Pane Numbers:

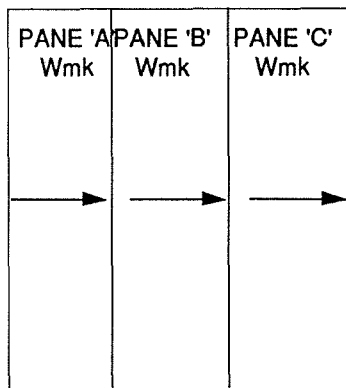
These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of both values:

4c = 1A x 3, 1B x 3, 1C x 3

25c = 1A x 3, 1B x 3, 1C x 3

Perforation of Margins:

The top margins of Panes A, B and C, of both values are imperforate, whilst all other margins of these same Panes are all perforated. Cutting marks or parts of them were seen in the top and bottom on the left hand margin of Panes A and in the top and bottom of the right hand margin of Pane C.



From a study of details given, the Printed Sheet of each value before cutting into Panes, would look as shown in figure. Looking at the printed Sheet as shown, stamps would be seen the right way up, hence why watermark in individual stamps is sideways. Perforator ran from top to bottom.

Imprint Blocks

The Imprint "PRINTEX LIMITED MALTA" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of both values. Letters are 1mm high and printed in black. An imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks.

Sheetlets

With the issue of Panes of forty stamps as have just been described, sheetlets of five se-tenant sets were also issued. The se-tenant 4c and 25c stamps, their perforation and their watermark are all the same as in the forty stamps Panes. The same gum, process, colours and paper were also used. The designer and printers are also the same, except that the Printers Imprint does not appear on the margins of the sheetlets as in the large Panes, but it appears on each stamp as in the larger Panes. I am saying this, because in most cases like these, you could distinguish single stamps as coming from large Panes or sheetlets or souvenir

sheets, either by perforation or direction of watermark. In this case there is nothing to distinguish single individual stamps and the only way is to have a se-tenant set.

The Printed Sheet of the se-tenant Panes consisted of six sheetlets, each sheetlet having five se-tenant sets. Each sheetlet is divided into twelve spaces, three rows of four. The top and bottom rows contain two se-tenant sets each. The first space of the middle row contains an extract from the Acts of the Apostles (28 1.2) in Maltese relating to St Paul's Shipwreck on Malta. The second and third spaces of the same row are occupied by a se-tenant set, whilst the fourth space of the same row has the same wording of the first space, in English. As for the margins of each sheetlet, in the top margin above each stamp, in the four spaces of the top row, from left to right, can be seen the coats of arms of the Pope, the Archbishop of Malta, the Bishop of Gozo and the three colour checks. In the bottom margin, and in the same order can be seen the Pane numbers and the same three coats of arms. In the left-hand margin the wording "Zjara tal-Q.T. il-Papa Gwanni Pawlu II — 25-27.V.1990", can be seen, and the same wording in English is seen in the right hand margin. The value of the whole sheetlet is not shown on any of the margins.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen, as mentioned earlier, above the fourth stamp of the top row, horizontally. The colours from left to right correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers also from left to right.

The Printed Sheet consisted of six Panes or Sheetlets A to F, each Pane having five se-tenant sets.

The Plate/Pane numbers are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, of each Pane of se-tenant sets.

Se-tenant Panes 1A x 3 to and including 1F x3.

Perforation of Margins

The top, left hand and right hand margins of Panes A, B and C are imperforate,

whilst the bottom margins of these same Panes are fully perforated. The left hand and right hand margins of Panes D, E and F are imperforate, whilst the top and bottom margins of these same Panes are fully perforated.

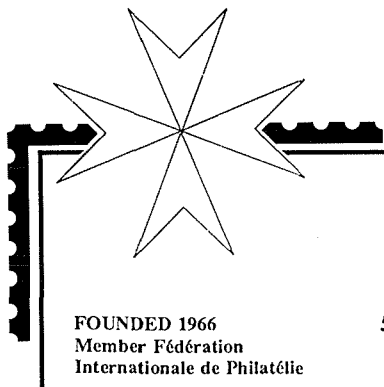
Pane "A" → Wmk	Pane "B" → Wmk	Pane "C" → Wmk
Pane "D" → Wmk	Pane "E" → Wmk	Pane "F" → Wmk

From a study of details given, I would say that the Printed Sheet of these se-tenant Panes, before cutting, would look as shown in figure, with a special setting of the perforator running from top to bottom. Looking at the Printed Sheet as shown, stamps would be seen the right way up, hence why watermark in indi-

vidual stamps is also sideways, the same as in the larger Panes.

Stamps from sheetlets and large Panes were to remain on sale up to Wednesday, May 22, 1991, unless stocks were previously exhausted. A special hand-stamp was used for cancellation on the first day of issue. Two other special hand-stamps were used on Friday, May 25, both in connection with the Pope's visit. One at the GPO and the other at the Temporary Branch Post Office at Dar l-Emigrant, in Valletta. Three other special hand-stamps were also used in connection with the same visit. One on Saturday May 26, at Victoria, Gozo, one at Rabat BPO on Sunday, May 27 and another also on Sunday, at the Temporary Branch Post Office at Floriana. For more information about these special hand-stamps see "Malta a Diary".

First day sales up to 12.45pm amounted to Lm74,600.



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Application for Membership

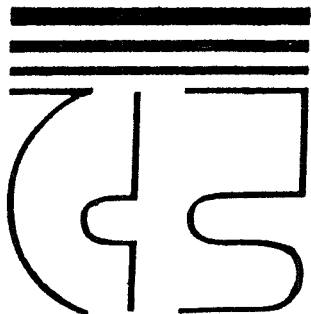
I, the Undersigned (1) *
of (2) **
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Applicant

Date: _____

* (1) Full name in Block Letters

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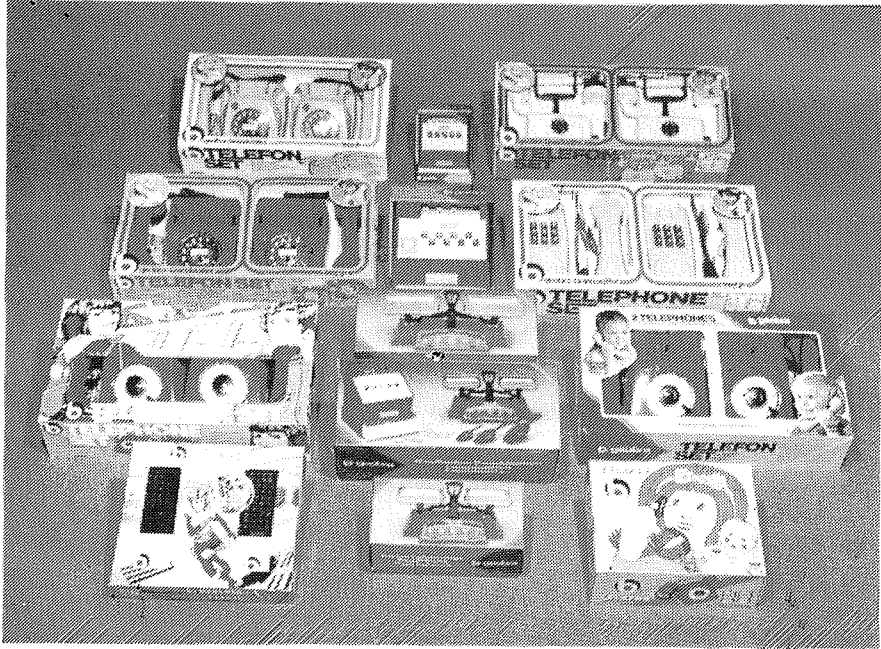
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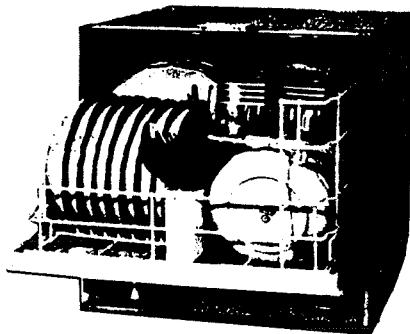
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AIR MALTA



Republic of MALTA

CHRISTMAS 1991



Date of Issue: 6 November 1991 Designer : Harry Borg

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