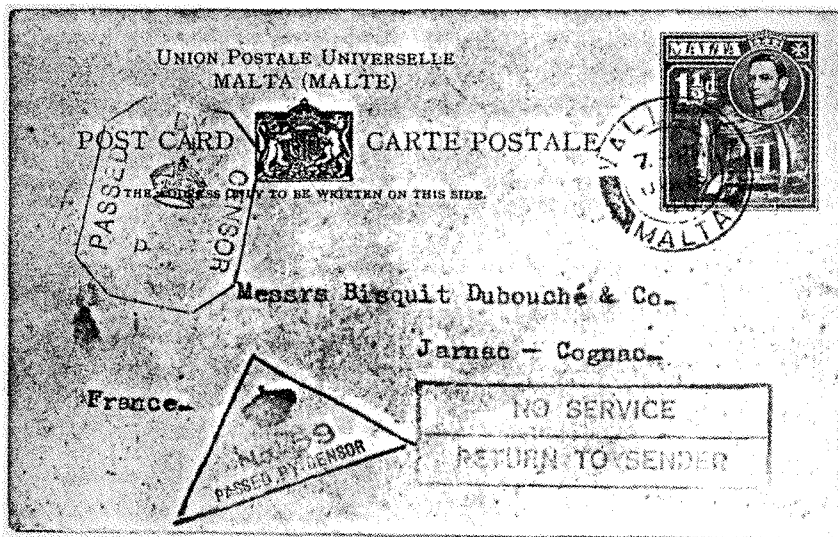


# History in a Postcard

by Dr. Giovanni Bonello



On June 8, 1940, a Maltese businessman addressed a postcard to Messrs Bisquit Dubouche, the world famous producers of Bisquit Cognac in the French region from which that brandy takes its name.

That postcard never reached its destination.

Many things were then happening in Europe. Two days before, Hitler had launched his second major offensive against France. The Nazi armies were over-running, with lightning speed, the South-East of France, bypassing the Maginot line close to the Swiss border. The German arm entered Paris on June 14.

Only two days after the card was posted, Italy declared war on the Allies. Malta found itself in the thick of the Second World War. The postcard to the Cognac producers was returned undelivered to the sender with a handstamp, which, as far as I am aware, has not yet been recorded: NO SERVICE/RETURN TO SENDER. Malta had suspended Air Mail service to Italy that very same day.

The postcard bears another cachet which, I believe is also unrecorded: an octagonal censorship handstamp similar to CS-OC, but with the inscription PASSED BY CENSOR running inside the margin, instead of the usual PASSED in the centre of the cachet.

*Details:* On a King George VI 1½d postal card (type 11) dated and post-marked June 8, 1940:

- 1) Rectangular cachet 59×17mm in violet: NO SERVICE/RETURN TO SENDER on two lines;
- 2) Triangular censorship cachet CS-T2 No. 59 PASSED BY CENSOR in violet;
- 3) Octagonal cachet 34×27mm, PASSED BY CENSOR, with royal crown and P, in blue.