

Napoleonic Period

June 1798 - September 1800

By:- Dr. A. Bonnici

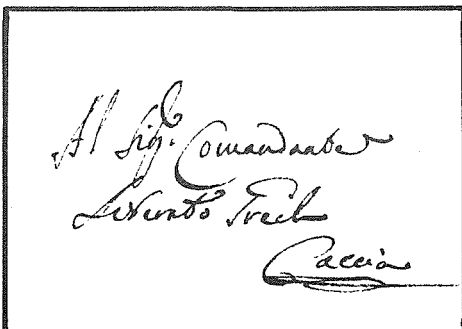
Napoleon arrived off Malta on the "Orient" on the 9th June 1798, entered the Grand Harbour on the 13th at 4.30 p.m., disembarked where the Customs house is today, and after refusing the Grandmaster's personal "Kales" carriage, walked triumphantly through the Harbour Gate up Strada Levante, to St. Christopher Street and Merchants Street to the "Banca Giuratale". The next day 14th he moved to the Palace owned by Baron Pawlu Parisio, in Merchants Street next to the Auberge De Castille, which was up till some time ago The General Post Office. Here he remained up to the 18th when he left for Egypt, after stationing in Malta 3053 soldiers from 5 regiments. Gozo was occupied by General Reynier on the 13th, and on the 14th Napoleon, ordered his Chief of Staff to reinforce Gozo with 200 French soldiers.

The Insurrection against the French Occupation started on the 2nd September when precious Church sacred objects were to be sold by Auction at Rabat and Mdina.

The rebellion spread also to Gozo and during the Congress held in Gozo on the 18th September, Dun Saver Cassar, the Archpriest of the Cathedral Chapter, was elected as the head of the Temporary Gozitan Government and General Superintendent of the Gozitan forces. The French capitulated on the 4th September 1800, and Malta passed under British Rule.

The following letter was written by Archpriest Cassar is one of five existing letters to the Commander of the Gozitan forces in Caccia - Liberato Grech.

Because of the Blockade the 3253 French soldiers stationed in Malta and Gozo could not send letters to France, and this is the reason why letters from Malta during this period are so hard to come by.



*All sig. Comandante
Liberato Grech
Caccia*



Archpriest Cassar,
Head of Gozitan Government
and General Superintendent of the
Gozitan forces.

Sento dalla vostra lettera ciò tutto, che: ac-
caddo jeri a notte. Io vi ringrazio dell'attenzione,
e protezione nelle mie incumbenze. Questo mattina
li due Canonici si persuasero di andare carienti
nella città di Cambro, e sono già spediti, e
pertanto il corpo di gente più non mi recitano
per l'esecuzione della cattura, e giacchè questi
due sono al sicuro, e non possono praticare
gente non potranno catturarla.

Lei dispiace di ciò, che si fece al nob. Pae;
Io già scrissi alli Madurini di lasciarlo in vi-
uoto; mentre il mio sospetto fondato è contro
li suoi figli; L'ant. Luigi, e Daniele, che
annoj il piacere di arrestare.

Sento con mia sorpresa, che la Figlia Petta
del nob. Pae è stata in qualche Caccia
condotta, e poi rimandata ignuda; apien-
tasi, che questa cosa vada all'occhio
non solamente alli Sacconi, ma anche
alli Fossieri, e sono cose, che se anche
le fanno li Turchi, o altri Esteri; avvista
al Popolo, che non faccia simili eccessi, per
sarsi abbandonati da Dio, e dalla protezione

in grta indulgenza se diparti da vero cristiano,
e non lascioni memoria di qualche barbaria
come fecero i Francesi, che hanno conciliato
l'odio di tutto il mondo.

Voi altri fatevi bene di conoscere per
soccorrere il ~~Re~~ al Duomo, che ha
fatto di speso, una grazia al cielo non
a-~~pi~~ niente: Sinf.

Li 13. Ottobre 1798.

aff. suo te.
Arcip. S. Cassar

Now read on:-

Commander Liberato Grech

I learn from your letter everything that happened yesterday night. I thank you for your prompt attention to my task. This morning the two Canons were persuaded to be imprisoned in Chambray City, and they have already been sent, and consequently I no longer need the men to effect the arrest, and as these two are in a secure place and cannot communicate with people they will not be able to win them over.

I regret what has been done to Notary Pace; I have already written to the men in Nadur to leave him in peace, whilst my well-founded suspicion is against his sons, advocate Luigi and Daniele, whom it would give me pleasure to arrest.

I am surprised to hear that the unmarried daughter of Notary Pace has been taken to Casal Caccia and then sent back naked; rest assured that such a thing offends the eyes not only of the local people but of foreigners as well, and these are things that are done not even by Turks or other heretics; warn the people not to do such excesses, because they will be abandoned by God and they will also lose the protection of the Powers. Let us ensure that in this Revolution the People behave like true christians and will not leave a record of any barbarity like the French who have attracted the hate of all the world.

You did well to rush to the aid of Rabat at the noise of shots, but thank Heaven nothing happened. I am.....

13 October 1798

Your affectionate servant

Archpriest S. Cassar

To The Commander
Liberato Grech
Caccia