



THE PHILATELIC SOCIETY

THE PSM MAGAZINE



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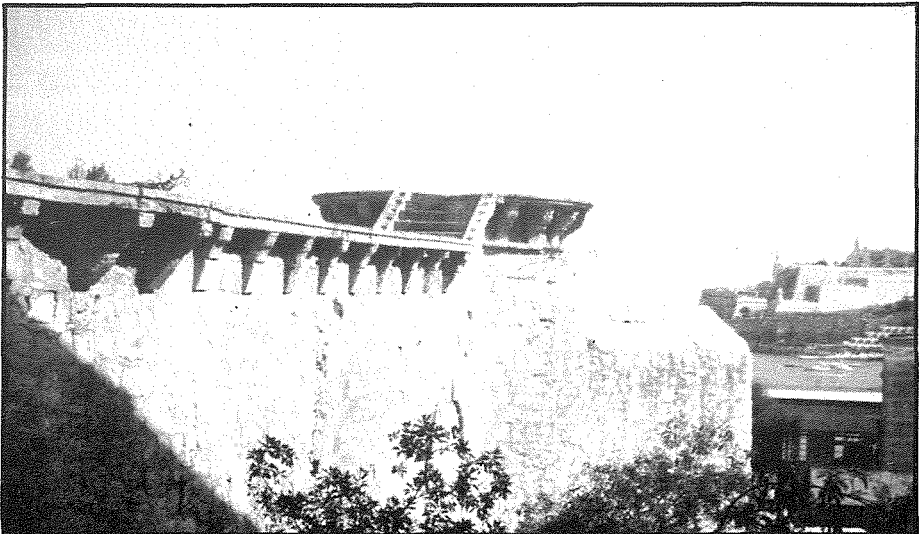
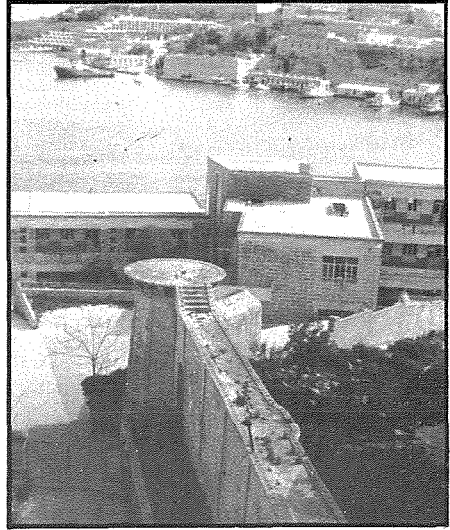
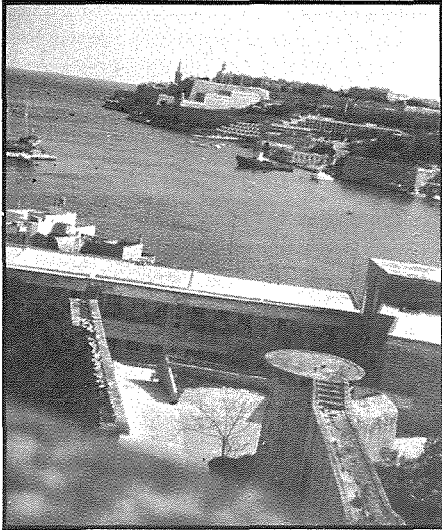


Bronze-Gilt Medal at VIIth Malta Philatelic-1977
Bronze Medals at PRAGA '78; PHILASERDICA '79
NORWEX '80

Editor: Dr. A. Bonnici Ass. Editor: Joseph Farrugia
Filmset and printed by ABC Press Ltd.

Vol. 12 N°3

Summer 1983



The Post of the Major Guard at Guardamangia Point

Committee 1983

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Mr. J. Farrugia	Ass. Editor
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Mr. H. Wood	Member and Liaison Officer with Malta Study Circle
Mr. G. Said	Member

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17	German Marks
14	Swiss Francs

May Philatelic Meeting -

by the Editor

The affinity and excellent harmony that exists between the U.K. "Malta Study Circle" and our Society, was quite in evidence on the 2nd May 1983, when a group of their members led by their chairman Mr. P.P. Hobbs, attended our monthly meeting.

Dr. Mercieca opening the meeting expressed his satisfaction at the fact that for the first time both Societies, with more or less a common aim, i.e. the study and advancement of Malta Stamps and Postal History were meeting under the same roof expressing the wish that both Societies would keep up this now long established collaboration, and would continue to attract members in order that new avenues be opened.

The evening's main speaker was Mr. Victor Wickman, an expert on the theme of ships and Maltese Maritime History. His lecture was interesting, and profusely illustrated with slides.

The meeting ended with Dr. Mercieca thanking Mr. Wickman for his educative talk, and presenting the Malta Study Circle members with the last two issues of our magazine.

Both Societies signed a document in triplicate reproduced on opposite page, as a memento of this First Joint Meeting. The Chairman of the Malta Study Circle invited all the members of the local Society to attend their Malta meeting on the 5th May 1983.

Thanks and Congratulations should go to the organisers of both Societies for making this First Joint Meeting a success.

Let us hope we will have more in the future.

The Philatelic Society
- Malta -

Floriana, Malta, 2nd May 1983.

The present document, duly signed, on the right by the Chairman and Members of the Group from the Malta Study Circle of London and, on the left, by the President and Members of the Committee of the Philatelic Society in Malta, has been drawn up to serve as a Memento of the first-ever Meeting, which both Societies have held together.

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John White

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J. Farrugia
.....
J. Farrugia - Ass. Editor

H. Wood
.....
H. Wood - Member & Liason Officer
of the Malta Study Circle.

G. Said
.....
G. Said - member

Dear Dr. Bonnici,

First of all I must congratulate you for the great job you have done with the magazine, in such a short period of time as editor. The contents, the printing and even the paper used are first class.

Now that the stamps of G.B. used in Malta are being dealt with, I thought the following remarks may be dealt with in the future.

The first photostat is of a cover in my collection, showing A25 cancellation dated 8 JA 1881. The earliest date for this postmark in the M.S.C. Handbook, page 33, is 6 April 1881.

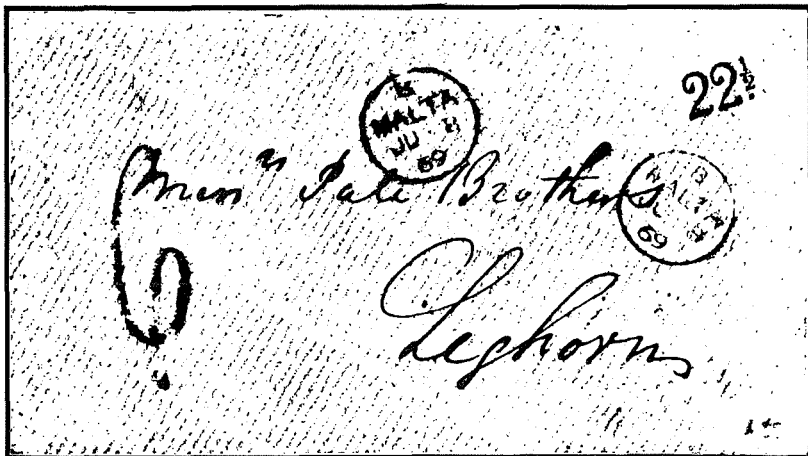
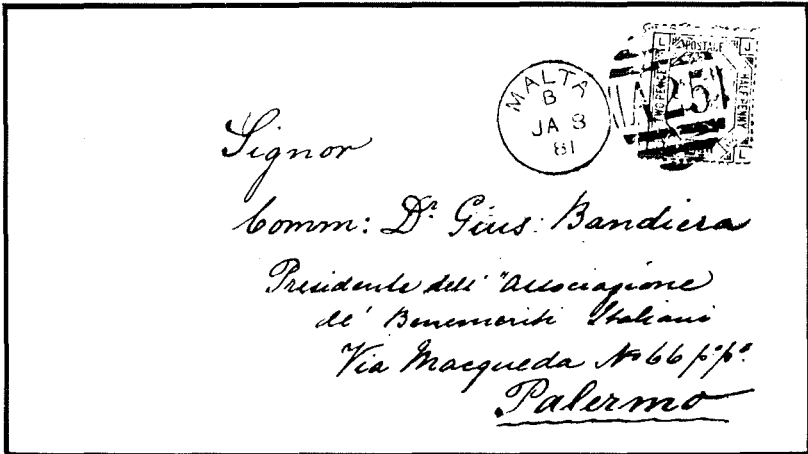
The second is more complicated. It is a stampless cover of 8 JU 1869, showing the manuscript "6". Until recently I was under the impression that this was used during a shortage of G.B. stamps in Malta. (According to Robson Lowe's Encyclopedia of British Empire Postage Stamps, volume 1 1952, page 380, such a shortage did exist). In volume 10 page 2 of the M.S.C. Newsletter, Mr. John Trory claimed that the manuscript "6" appearing in both the M.S.C. Handbook, and Said's Catalogue, is an Italian marking applied only in Messina.

As can be clearly seen, the circular date stamps were not part of any duplex cancellation. There is no trace of any postage stamps on this cover, except for the marking 22 1/2 in the top right corner.

The single circle date is also an oddity, as it bears the code letter "B". According to the M.S.C. Handbook page 32, only the code letter "A" has ever been recorded on the single ring date stamp, Large MAL-11.

Any opinion concerning this cover and its markings will be appreciated very much.
Thank you and best wishes for continued success as Editor of the P.S.M. Magazine.

Joseph Scicluna



Disinfection

Middle Ages to 1789

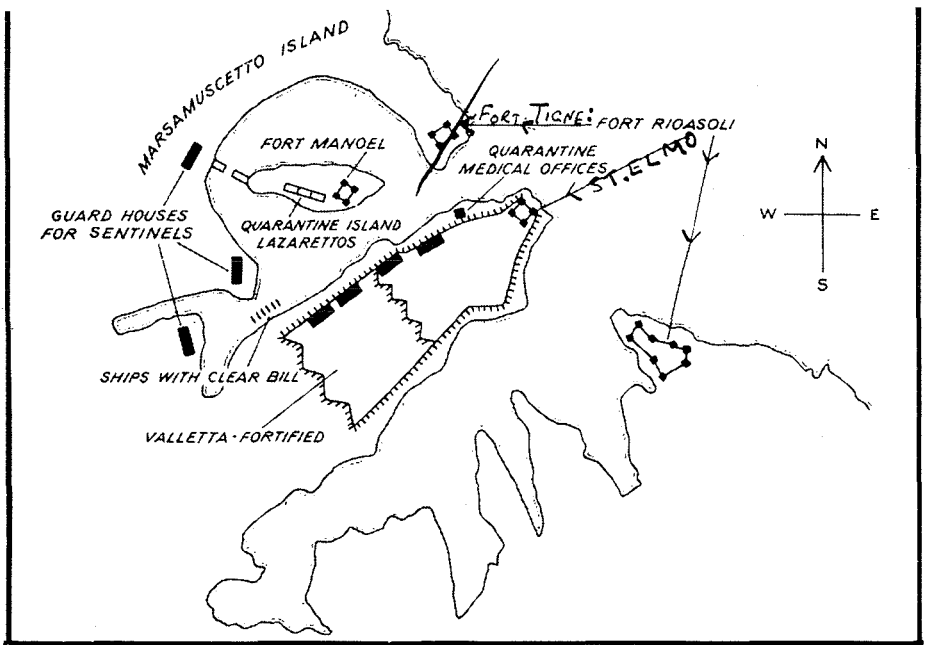
By Dr. A. Bonnici

Part 2

The Council of the Order issued quarantine regulations which were comprehensive and strict, enforced by an Authority called the Commissioners of Health. In Vilhena's Code of Laws we find:-

“Every ship not found with a clean bill of health entering port for shelter or for supplies, was obliged to anchor below Castile Bastion near the Baviera. Two quarantine boats had to remain on water around the ship day and night. If the master of such a ship wished to discharge cargo or to acquire a clean bill of health, he was directed by the Captain of the port to proceed to the Lazzaretto in Marsamxett Harbour (Quarantine Harbour) where he landed his merchandise and afterwards remained anchored for the requisite period of quarantine. Likewise ships returning from a privateering cruise were directed to the Lazzaretto anchorage where they discharged cargo or slaves and remained for a period of observation; meanwhile all passengers and crew on board such ships were requested to send to the quarantine station their personal effects for disinfection and fumigation (including papers and letters). Whilst a ship was undergoing quarantine restrictions, no one without a permit from the Commissioners of Health was allowed to approach it or buy or receive any object from it. Cargo and merchandise were discharged into warehouses allotted by the Guardian of the Lazzaretto and were to remain there until he gave his permission for release. All passengers kept in quarantine had to undergo disinfection twice as well as all cargo in storage, the first time on admission, disinfection was carried out under the supervision of the Guardian, and the second time, two days before release, under the supervision of the Officer in Charge of disinfection, who was known as (Purificatore).” (1)

The Commissioners of Health had ample means to enforce their authority. Prof Galea tells us “They had under their command patrol boats carrying gun crews, and fully armed soldiers to police the harbour. One of the boats was always moored by the Barriera Wharf to watch for ships entering the Grand Harbour and every craft sailing in or going out of the harbour was bound to report to the Master of the patrol boat. Strict discipline was maintained on the boat, shore leave was only granted to two members of the crew at a time and they had to return on board in the evening because during the night, the full complement of men had to be available. Every week each patrol boat was inspected by one of the Commissioners”. The staff under the Commissioners consisted of Guardians of Health, some of whom did duty afloat, some guard duty on top of Guardamangia Hill (Guardia Maggiore hence the corrupted name Guardamangia); on top of the Hill at Ta' Xbiex point, and on top of the Hill behind the Forestals showroom on the Strand; (as shown in the illustration); others were employed at the Lazzaretto. Originally there were twelve of them, but later their number was increased to eighteen; they were selected for their honesty and integrity and were prohibited to engage in any other trade or



Quarantine Installations

occupation. Before their appointment those Guardians of Health promised under oath to be diligent and honest in the performance of their duties.

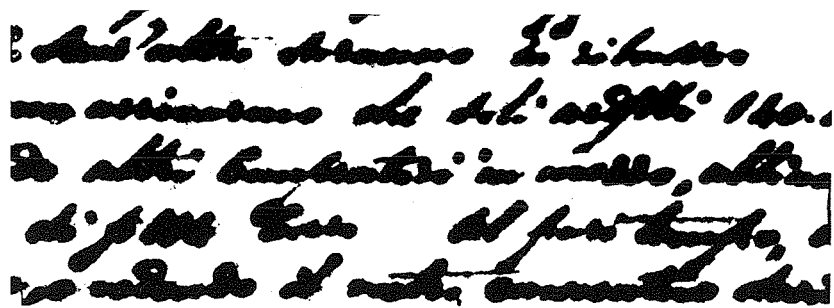
Prof Galea tells us that supervision of ships was so strict that two watch boats were detailed for duty with each ship, so that if one of the boats had to carry some message from the ship to shore, or was engaged on some other errand, there was always the other boat to keep watch. The Master paid a tariff of nine "tari" (6.25c) for the service of each boat, which later was reduced to four "tari". These fees were passed on to the boatmen as part of their salary.

The watch boats had the duty of preventing any communication with ships undergoing quarantine. No other vessel was allowed to approach a ship held in quarantine or to drop anchor near it. On no account were foodstuffs or other articles to be collected from other ships or dropped into the sea. Provisions were delivered on board only with the permission of the Guardian of Health.

The principal Officer of the Lazzaretto the "Purificatore", was appointed by the Grand Master on the recommendation of the Commissioners of Health, and had overall control. He was responsible for the smooth running of the establishment, the strict isolation and proper disinfection of letters of persons and their belongings. He was a very important man and later during the early British occupation, was allowed almost absolute power.

The disinfection of mail brought by ships from infected ports was an integral part of the quarantine imposed in Malta.

In a letter dated April 30, 1678 addressed by the Commissioners of Public Health, de Janon and Don Augustin Delallosa to the Superintendent of Public Health at Marseille, we find the following. (2)



Specimen of script not clear due to immersion for fumigation.

“We are sending you a package of letters coming from the Levant, addressed to Marseilles, with a “dirty” certificate because of disease in Smyrna and surrounding country. We had them perfumed. You can first before accepting them submit them to your ordinary precautions.....”. Carnevale is of the opinion that the “flame of cannon powder” was used to fumigate the letters and that many letters purified at Malta were disinfected again at Marseille. This double disinfection led to complaints. The following letter published by Carnevale in 1958 is dated 24th November 1749 from the Superintendent General of the Quarantine Service of the Island to the Public Health authority at Marseille is historically important and interesting: (3)

“As we are obliged at times, Sirs, to place the bundle of our letters on some ships which are in quarantine - the majority of the people to whom these letters are addressed complain that the strength of the perfumes used at Marseille spoils them to such a manner that often they cannot be read. His High Eminence the Grand Master gave me the honour of writing to you that, knowing how delicate the matters of public health are, His Eminence does not want to beg your indulgence in something which might be against your rules - that, by lessening the precautions which you will be taking from now on, the perfumes used on these letters in Marseille should be less strong. We shall place our letters in a case. Simon the General Agent of our Order, will have a key to the case in Marseille, and the Secretary to the Grand Master will have a similar one here. This case will be backed with a key and tied with a string which will be sealed with the Arms of the Secretary of Malta. Therefore when you see the package untouched, you will rightly think that “the letters have not been touched, and therefore, your perfumations can be lighter, and the lighter perfumes will not spoil the correspondence. Cecil G. Teal says “This recommendation to shipmail in iron boxes anticipated by a century, a similar procedure adopted for mail coming from India”.

(to be continued)

1. Leggi e Costituzioni Prammaticali, Malta 1724.
2. Cecil G. Teall - Malta - The Quarantine Officer (1962),
3. Marino Carnevale - Marzan (1958).



Palazzo 13 Aprile 1807.

IL Regio Civile Commissionario ed il Generale Comandante avendo con particolare soddisfazione ammirata la buona condotta tenuta dai Maltesi, e la fermezza da loro manifestata durante l'ammutinamento seguito nel Forte Ricasoli, si fanno un piacere di esprimere a tutt' i Maltesi di qualunque grado i sentimenti della loro stima e della lor gratitudine. Questa sarà una prova addizionale dell' attaccamento della Nazione Maltese al Governo Britannico, ed alle insegne di un Monarca che sa apprezzare l'amore e la fedeltà dei suoi sudditi.

A. J. Ball. W. A. Villettes.

More news about the Fort Ricasoli Mutiny see vol. 10No.2 by Dr. A. Bonnici.

Postmen's Handstamps

By Hadrian Wood

A stamp collector's first introduction to Postal History has often been the result of acquiring an interest in Postmen's Handstamps. The reason for this is mainly due to the fact that many of these handstruck markings are too difficult to acquire. Any collection of pre-war picture postcards, either locally used, or incoming to Malta, is bound to produce a number of Postmen's Handstamps. Whereas in previous years these same markings were generally ignored, the inclusion of a section on this subject in Said's catalogue in recent years has understandably aroused considerable interest among collectors.

Once having acquired a number of these handstamps, usually without initial outlay, a collector is then tempted to start a collection, often with the result of "discovering" other interesting markings whilst doing so; and of inducing him to take a keener interest in other aspects of Postal History.

It now seems almost certain that Postmen's Handstamps were introduced in Malta in the year 1889, and for the first few years were used only on mail to Valletta and Cospicua. (Postman's Handstamp '13' has been recorded on a cover to Sliema in 1888, but it is likely that these handstamps originated within the Sliema area prior to the opening of a Branch Post Office there in 1895).

The first series of Postmen's Handstamps comprised of numbers '1' to '24'. A second series, '25' to '30', in a completely different style, followed in 1905. The third series, '27' to '50', was issued in 1913 and it is interesting to note that it was with the introduction of this series that Postmen's Handstamps first appeared on mail to the 'Casals', or villages.

A fourth series, with numbers up to '61', also included, and thus replaced, several of the numbered handstamps issued in the first, second and third series. The only 'new' numbers in the fifth series were '62' and '63'. Other numbers in the fourth series, were used to replace Postmen's Handstamps bearing the same number which had either become too worn, damaged or lost.

The sixth and final series, '64' to '74', was issued in the late 1920s. In this series, '67' has never been recorded in use and is the only number in the whole sequence of '1' to '74' of which not a single example, in any series, is known to exist.

Finally, we find a few Postmen's Handstamps which are unique in style and cannot be classified as belonging to any series in particular. These include '12', '38', '49' and '63'.

The impression one gets in trying to 'complete' a collection of Postmen's Handstamps is that those used on mail to towns and large villages are reasonably common, whilst the ones applied on mail to the Casals, or small villages, are usually scarce. Some very scarce indeed for obvious reasons. However, exceptions exist in both cases.



1st. Series



2nd. Series



3rd. Series



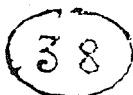
4th. Series



5th. Series



6th. Series



Unique in Style.

Detailed Information about:-

Maltese Ships Issue 1982

By J. Farrugia

Date of Issue.....	13th. November, 1982
Values.....	3c, 8c, 12c and 20c
Stamp Size.....	47mm x 29mm
Art Designer.....	Norbert Attard
Printers.....	Printex Limited Malta
Process.....	Lithography
Perforation.....	13.85 x 13.6
Watermark.....	Maltese Crosses pointing upright
Paper.....	Chalk Surfaced
Gum.....	P.V.A.

Colours:-

- 3c - Brown, beige, ochre, red and black
- 8c - Green, beige, yellow, red and black
- 12c - Green, beige, brown, red and black
- 20c - Blue, beige, green, red and black

Designs:-

This is the first set in a series featuring Maltese Ships. Congratulations to Norbert Attard for a beautiful set.

The 3c stamp features the Brigantine (Brigantin), a small and fast ship. This ship was built in Malta and was in use before 1530. The Brigantin ran errands to and from Italy, undertook spying missions and carried cargo to all parts of the Mediterranean.

The 8c stamp depicts the Tartana. This ship carried most of the local grain trade from Sicily, and was the most important cargo vessel owned by the Maltese.

The 12c stamp shows the Xebec (Xambekk). It was a typical corsair vessel, and one of the fastest of her time. Maltese owners recognised her capabilities as a cargo vessel which could be used in all kinds of weather conditions.

The 20c stamp reproduces the Speronara (Xprunara). This typically Maltese vessel was small and quite fast. It was widely used to carry passengers and despatches to and from Italy. The Speronara accompanied warships as an auxiliary vessel and was also employed on guard duties at the entrance of the Grand Harbour.

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. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers from left to right, on all Panes of the four 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 five rows of eight stamps. All four values are of the horizontal format.

Plate/Pane Numbers:-

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row:

3c = 1A x 5, 1B x 5, 1C x 5
8c = 1A x 5, 1B x 5, 1C x 5
12c = 1A x 5, 1B x 5, 1C x 5
20c = 1A x 5, 1B x 5, 1C x 5

Perforation of Margins:-

The left hand margin of Panes A, B and C of all four values, is imperforate. The top, bottom and right hand margins of these same Panes are fully perforated. Some bottom margins of Pane C, of all four values may be found as not fully perforated. The reason for this is, that the width of the bottom margin where it is not fully perforated is wider than that of a fully perforated bottom margin. But in every case, the number of perforations in the bottom margin is the same, i.e. ten.

PANE "A" WMK	↑
PANE "B" WMK	↑
PANE "C" WMK	↑

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

Imprint Blocks:-

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

A special hand-postmark inscribed “Bastimenti Maltin - L-Ewwel Jum Tal-Hrug - 13 Nov '82 - Malta” and the name of the respective locality, was used on the first day of issue. The inscription means “Maltese Ships - First Day Issue - 13 Nov '82 - Malta”. A line drawing of a ship's helm is also incorporated in the postmark.

Sales from this issue amounted to Lm35,466 up to 12.45 p.m. on the first day of issue . This set was to remain on sale up to Thursday, 2nd June, 1983, unless stocks were previously exhausted.

Maximum Card No. 2:-

With this set, the Malta Post Office issued Maximum Card No.2. This Maximum Card reproduces the same design featured on the 12c stamp. This stamp could have been affixed on the image side of the Maximum Card and cancelled with the Maltese Ships first day issue postmark. The Maximum Card was available for sale, mint, at 5c each from the G.P.O. and all B.P.O.'s and S.P.O.'s.

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The Officina Della Posta and its Functionaries

By Dr. Albert Ganado

Attempts have been made in recent years to write the postal history of Malta. The results achieved so far may be termed substantial, especially when one considers the dearth of published material on the subject. Much, however, remains to be done and the study of the organisation of the Post Office is a case in point.

With the advent of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in 1530, correspondence between Malta and other countries, whether official or otherwise, increased in volume and importance with every decade that passed (1). By 1587, the carriage of letters in the various countries of origin and destination was costing the Order about 2500 scudi per annum (2). A century later, the cost had reached 12,117.10.8 scudi on a total yearly expenditure of 482,636.5.1, that is 2.5% of what the Order was spending a year (3).

Earliest postal rates

The high cost of running a postal service must have alarmed the Treasury and, in 1694, private individuals were notified that they would have to pay for the carriage of their letters out of the country. Two speronaras were engaged *per commodità del pubblico* to carry the mail to Sicily, and rates based on the size, weight and destination of the letter were established as follows:

	Sicily	Reggio-Rome
Simple letter	S. 0. 0. 5	0. 0. 12
Double	0. 0. 10	0. 1. 4
Per ounce	0. 0. 15	0. 1. 16

Those who chose to send letters abroad by ships other than the speronaras were not obliged to make any payment to the Treasury; they were free to make their own arrangements with any vessel.

Letters destined to any place in Italy beyond Rome were to pay postage rates up to that city, whilst letters directed to Germany were to pay postage up to Venice, at the following rates:

	Rome	Venice
Half sheet	S. 0. 1. 9	S. 0. 2. 4
One sheet	0. 1. 12	0. 3. 1
One sheet and a half	0. 2. 19	0. 5. 3
Per ounce	0. 5. 3	0. 8. 1

Letters sent to Spain paid postage as far as Genoa at the same rates as Malta - Venice, whilst letters for France paid postage up to Rome (4).

The Postal Service

This order was not carried into effect at once. In 1707, the *Venerandi Procuratori del Comun Tesoro* decided that the finances of the Order did not allow of any further delay and that the Treasury must once and for all be relieved of the burden of footing the bill for the carriage of private letters. The matter was referred to Bali Marcantonio Zondadari (later Grand Master) and Commendatore Fra Mario Bichi for their consideration. Each one of them came up with different suggestions.

On the 20th July 1708, the *Procuratori* submitted the following proposals to the Grand Council of the Order:

1. A circular letter should be sent to all the Officers of the Order wherever they might be, ordering them not to receive any private letters not duly franked, and when letters were registered with them they were to be debited to the person who had commissioned them and not to their own accounts.

2. In order to ensure immediate implementation of these orders, the Officers should immediately bring them to the notice of those from whom they usually received letters; later, these orders were to be communicated to the Assembly convened for the purpose. The Treasury would then reimburse its Officers solely for those letters written by them in their official capacity. Letters coming from beyond Rome were to be franked as far as Rome; those originating this side of Rome were to be franked up to the place of embarkation or from the place they were sent to the Convent.

3. Two *martingale* were to be constructed without delay to operate a regular service every fortnight for the carriage to Rome of letters written in the Convent and to bring to Malta letters from abroad. In the meantime, two speronaras could be used for the purpose. On both journeys, they were to touch at Naples and Messina. However, when trade was reopened between Naples and Messina the mail could then be carried overland to Sicily for transmission to Malta by a speronara.

4. Letters were to be paid for by everyone, without distinction. Those carried overland were to be paid for according to the cost involved, whilst those transmitted by sea were to pay according to the tariff proposed by the Commissioners.

The *Procuratori* concluded that, as it was not possible to foresee all the problems that might arise, it was expedient that they should be empowered, subject to the Grand Master's approval, to regulate from time to time all matters that might require attention (including the expenses of the boats) as well as to give directions to the Officer supervising the distribution and carriage of letters.

The Grand Master in Council appointed a Commission to study these proposals and to report back (5).

The Commissioners' Report

The Commissioners directed their attention mostly to letters coming from abroad. It seems that this was the most thorny problem the Treasury had to face.

They estimated that, whilst the current practice should be maintained in regard to letters sent from Malta to the *Provincie*, new regulations should be introduced for mail carried in the opposite direction.

The Commissioners acknowledged that, in those Provinces where the Order had no representative, its members could not possibly pre-pay postage fees on their letters. Consequently, when these letters reached the 'Convent', the Treasury officials, before releasing them for distribution, were obliged to pay rates due and register the charge *nella sopracarta* for the purpose of obtaining reimbursement. The franked letters, on the other hand, were to be sent to the addressee without any further charge.

Letters sent to Malta via Italy were to be directed to Reggio whence they would be picked up by a sponnara sailing direct from Malta without touching at other ports if time did not permit. On the way back, the mail from Sicily would be collected. In order to defray the expenses of the boats, all simple letters between Malta and Sicily would pay 5 grani and, between Malta and Reggio, 12 grani, other letters paying in proportion (6). This service would be open to all, but no one would be forced to make use of it.

Bulky parcels addressed to the Convent, as, for example, records of the proof of nobility, would not be sent by the regular Post (or *stafetta*), but other less costly opportunities would be sought for their transmission, unless the sender marked them "Urgent".

The Commissioners then turned their attention to letters reaching the Provinces from Malta. The Order's Ministers in the Provinces were to accept, pay for and transmit to their destination only those letters that were sent under the Seal of the Convent; they were not allowed to handle other letters. However, if any individual wished to send letters abroad in the same parcels containing letters from the Convent, he could do so provided they were franked in accordance with the tariff.

In regard to those letters circulating within the Provinces, the Order's Ministers were not to debit the cost to the accounts of the Treasury, but the expense was to be collected from the interested party. These Ministers would be in duty bound to report to the Treasury those who failed to withdraw their letters, or, having withdrawn them, failed to pay for them. The Treasury would then apply the appropriate remedies.

The Commissioners then considered the postal route Malta - Palermo. They submitted that, whenever it was not allowed to send the sponnara to Reggio, it would be necessary to continue to receive letters via Palermo, from which feluccas were used on regular service to carry letters destined for Rome and Naples. They pointed out, however, that the letters which at the time were brought by the said feluccas paid Scudi 0.4.7. per ounce according to the Tariff sent to the Treasury by the *Ricevitore* at Palermo. Consequently, the carriage of letters via Palermo came to double the cost of carriage via Reggio. The Messina route would once again be plied when trade was re-opened between the Kingdoms of Naples and Sicily when it was desired to receive letters more frequently and regularly.

Finally, the Commissioners recommended the appointment by the Grand Master of an individual of integrity and ability to manage the postal service (7) whom adequate remuneration was to be paid in proportion to the work involved.

Commissioners' Report and they ordered its immediate implementation (8).

Postal Functionaries

Thus were the foundations laid for what eventually became the Department of Posts. In its embryonic state, it flourished under the aegis of the Treasury, and postal business under the Knights seems to have been carried out in the building housing the Treasury (9).

The Knight in charge of the postal service came to be known as *Commissario della Posta*, and in the discharge of his duties, he was helped by Maltese employees working at the Treasury on other assignments. Gradually, there were some who became whole-time employees at the Post Office. One of these was a Conventual Chaplain, Fra Enrico Savona (10), First Clerk at the Post Office, but, when he retired in 1771, three clerks who had other duties to attend to were appointed to do work at the post office, namely, Stanislao Lauron (11), Giuseppe Psayla Chapelle (12) and Emmanuele Farrugia. (13)

It appears that the total of the salaries to be paid to them for postal work was to be equivalent to that obtaining in the old establishment of the Post Office and it was to be distributed among them by the Commissioner of Posts in relation to the greater or lesser work which he would assign to each, without any consideration to their respective seniority in the taking up of their appointment as clerks at the Post Office (14).

On the 29th November 1777, the *Procuratori* of the Common Treasury decreed some changes in the *Ufficina della Posta*. In his half-yearly balance sheet the Commissioner was to include only the cost of the letters. The expenses of the boats carrying despatches (*Barche del Dispaccio*), whether ordinary or extraordinary, the *ricognizioni particolari* requested by the *Segreteria d'Italia*, and the salaries of the letter-carriers of the Post Office were to be paid for by the *Conservatoria* (15).

The hours of work of the First Clerk at the Post Office were to be those kept at the Treasury and he was free on all holidays and days of obligation; it appears that the same conditions governed the other two clerks *destinati per ajutanti*. An exception was made on the occasion of the arrival or departure of the *Dispaccio*, when their presence was essential (16).

Francesco Piscopo was appointed First Clerk, and five years later he was awarded a gift of 50 scudi in consideration of his good services in this capacity. By 1787, he was earning 120 scudi yearly. He was then eighty years old and he requested to be allowed to retire without losing anything of his salary and emoluments. At the same time, he undertook to continue helping the Post Office staff during those hours consonant with his old age. His request was granted on the 24th October 1787. Three years later, his pension was increased to 170 scudi (17).

One of the "Adjutants" at the Post Office in 1777 was Domenico Montanaro.

Montanaro was born on the 25th June 1759. By a decree of Grand Master Pinto dated 17th September 1770, he became a *Cappellano d'Ubbidienza* (18). For this purpose, the usual *Processo* was held. Witnesses were produced to

prove his legitimacy, and they all agreed that he had always applied himself to his studies, that his character was beyond reproach and that he was an obedient son. He had never exercised any vile art - *arte vile, o officio sordido, e meccanico*. His ancestors had no relationship (*mescolanza*) with the Turks or other Infidels. His talents augured well for the future and it was expected that he would be able to support himself without becoming a burden to the Order. At the age of 16 (or 17), he was employed at the Treasury as Adjutant to the Clerk of the Registers of Secular Debtors and as Clerk at the Post Office (19).

On the retirement of Francesco Piscopo, on the 27th October 1787, he was chosen to replace him as First Clerk (*Primo Scrivano della Posta*). It has been written that, some time after 1790, he was created a Donat of the Order and, as a result, he was able to hold office as Commissioner of the Post Office, a post formerly held by a Knight of the Order. (20) This is not borne out by records of that period, which clearly show that, until the Order left Malta in 1798, the office of *Commissario della Posta* was invariably held by one of its Knights. Indeed, the situation of Commissioner of the Post Office was considered of such importance that the first rich Commandery that became vacant was usually bestowed on the Knight who had held the office for at least three years. (21)

The Commissario della Posta

It has not yet been established when the title "*Commissario della Posta*" first came into use. Between 1735-1738, Fra Nicolò Frisari (1680-1742) was passing to the Treasury *il Dritto della posta*, that is, the revenue collected from the Post Office,(22) and it is therefore reasonable to assume that at the time, he was the Knight in charge of posts. In 1747 it was Fra Ludovico Bacci (1679-1751) and, between 1773-1774, Fra Francesco Mazzei (1721-1791) who were collecting the revenue. In at least one entry, Mazzei is referred to as *Commissario della Posta* (23).

From the records examined, it has been possible to compile a list of the holders of the office during the last two decades of the Order's rule:

- 1779 (possibly before) - 31.8.1785 Fra Simone Monfort (1729-1785)
- 1.9.1785-30.5.1787 Com. Giuseppe Rogadeo (1722-1791)
- 1.6.1787-31.10.1795 Com. Ugolino Tommaso Cambi (1734-?)
- 1.11.1795-31.1.1797 Fra Charles Humbert de Mont d'Or (1734-?)
- 1.2.1797-31.7.1797 Com. Michelangelo Arezzo (1738-?)
- 1.8.1797-June 1798 Com. Carlo Candida (1762-1845) (24)

On the 31st October 1786, it appears that there were four Maltese employees at the Post Office, namely:

First Clerk - Francesco Piscopo

Clerk - Domenico Montanaro

Messenger (*Portiere*) - Giovanni Carlo Biancardi (25)

Letter-carrier (*Portalettere*) - Paolo Zammit

As from the 1st November 1786, Giuseppe Azzupardi replaced Zammit (26). Over four months after Montanaro became First Clerk, Lorenzo Pisani served as

June 1788, Raimondo Mallia was appointed in his stead (28), whilst Emmanule Farrugia was appointed Clerk on the 23rd November 1791 (29).

There were no further changes until the French occupation, and the establishment was therefore as follows:

- First Clerk - Domenico Montanaro. Salary 180 scudi per annum, increased to scudi 216 as from the 1st January 1793
- Clerk - Emmanule Farrugia. Scudi 60 per annum.
- Assistant Clerk - Raimondo Mallia. Scudi 30 per annum.
- Messenger - Gio. Carlo Biancardi. Scudi 12 per annum.
- Letter-carrier - Giuseppe Azzupardi Scudi 60 per annum.

The French invasion brought to an end a long chapter in the history of the Maltese Islands. The articles of capitulation were signed on the 12th June, 1798. A number of decrees followed one another in quick succession, showing Napoleon's determination to change overnight the pattern of life that had remained fossilised for centuries. However, there was no innovation in the postal services. A decree of the 18th June 1798 laid down:

Article 1 - Les impôts seront provisoirement maintenus. Le Commissaire du Gouvernement et la commission administrative en assureront la perception.

.....
Article 13 - La Poste aux lettres sera organisée à couvrir par la tax des lettres la dépense qu'elle occasionne. (30)

Montanaro and Farrugia seem to have retained their employment under the French government at least up to June 1799 (31). During the first six months of 1799, the French were masters of the seas surrounding the island, and communications were kept open. Early in July, the blockade of the French in Valletta and the Three Cities was again taken up and it became ever more stringent as the months wore on. It is quite likely that, in this situation, the services of postal clerks were no longer required.

If, on the one hand, the blockade isolated the French troops from the Continent, on the other hand, it opened up to the sea-routes for the Maltese insurgents, who had chosen Captain Alexander Ball as their leader to conduct the siege against the oppressor.

On the 7th October 1799, from his headquarters at San Antonio, at Balzan, Ball issued a Notice stating that he had decided to set up a regular postal service as commerce had suffered considerably through its absence. The inhabitants were therefore advised that there would henceforth be a regular service for the delivery of mail, at the usual charges, according to the laws in force under the Knights. For this purpose, a few rooms at the Palace of San Antonio had been set apart as a Post Office. Furthermore, with effect from November, mail would be conveyed by boat to Sicily every Thursday in the early afternoon (32).

Revival of the Post Office



When General Vaubois raised the white flag in September 1800, the civil administration moved back to Valletta. The two-year siege left in its wake a period of political uncertainty and confusion in the civil government. Ball was soon recalled to rejoin the Navy and Major General Henry Pigot, the Officer Commanding the Troops, took over the administration until Charles Cameron arrived in June 1801 as Malta's first Civil Commissioner. On the 20th July 1802, Ball succeeded Cameron.

It appears that during the first few months of British rule no Post Office existed. Domenico Montanaro had severed his connection with the office of posts, possibly because he had been in the employment of the French invaders. However, he was certainly back at his job as *Scrivano della Posta* in June 1801 at a salary of 20 scudi per month, which was raised to 30 scudi as from the 1st August. With effect from the 28th May 1802, Cameron increased his salary to 40 scudi.

Throughout this period, Montanaro was the only clerk in charge of posts. Mail from the Continent was sent to Malta by Vice-Consul Giovanni Battista Raimondi, and Montanaro was entrusted by the Treasury to pay his bills.

It is true that, in the two petitions submitted to Government by Montanaro for an increase in salary, he used a different designation when referring to his employment. In the first one, he described himself as *Scrivano della Posta*, whereas he stated in the second one (decreed on 28 May 1802) that he was *Direttore delle Poste* (33). This may be quite misleading, and other writers have been induced to think that Montanaro was the first Postmaster General under British rule (34). Research undertaken by the writer disproves this assertion.

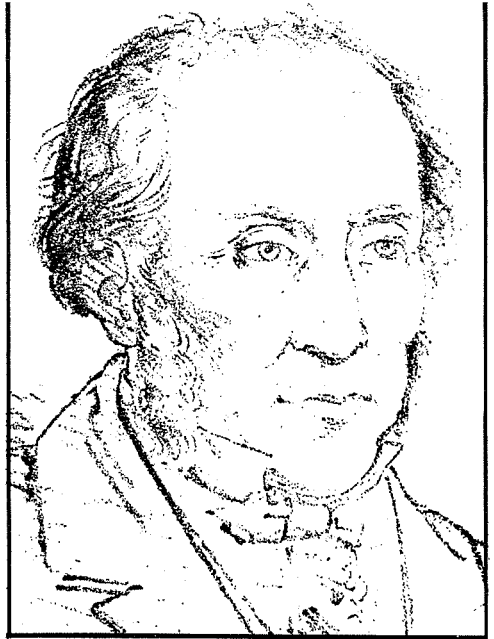
In the books of account kept at the Treasury, Montanaro is invariably referred to as *Scrivano della Posta*, both before and after the petition in which he described himself as *Direttore delle Poste* (35). One should keep in mind that the official title of the head of the Post Office was known in those days as *Commissario della Posta* (36). By calling himself director of posts (which, in any case, is different from director of the post office), Montanaro merely intended to stress the importance of his position to earn the increase in salary. He was, after all, the only clerk engaged on postal work and he was the person responsible to the Treasury for the proper functioning of the postal service.

However, important changes were in the offing and they were to bring about the revival of the Post Office.

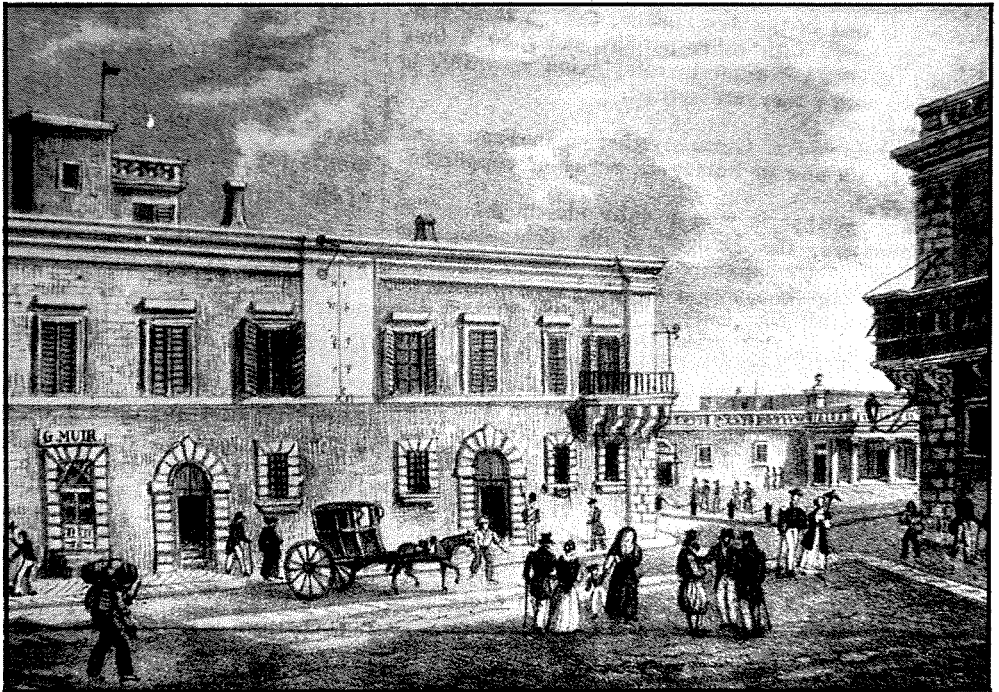
In those days, the financial year ended on the 24th July. Shortly after Ball became the Head of Government in 1802, the next financial year was due to start. Ball, who already realised in 1799 the importance of a regular postal service, must have decided that this was the right opportunity to set up a Post Office on a proper footing and he recreated the situation of *Commissario della Posta* which Fra Carlo Candida had left vacant in 1798. Although Italian was the official language of the island, Ball thought it best to entrust this office to someone well-acquainted with the English language (37).



Com. Carlo Candida
Commissario della Posta
(1897 - June 1798)



Gio Antonio Micallef
First Postmaster under British Rule



The Post Office

First Postmaster under the British rule.

It is likely that Montanaro did not possess this qualification, for the choice fell on Giovanni Antonio Micallef, a prolific writer, well-versed in several languages, who had connections and acquaintances both in Rome and Sicily. (38)

Micallef was born in Valletta on the 30th August 1777 (39) and, at the age of eight years, he was enrolled as a Chaplain of the Order by his father, Vincenzo, who wished to secure for his son the advantages afforded by the Knights to their Conventualists. Later, he became a *Donato*.

Vincenzo Micallef was rather wealthy, he held the position of *Computista del Tesoro* under the Order and was Consul for the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. When his son gave up the ecclesiastical habit, Vincenzo sent him to Palermo on family business in May 1801. Gio. Antonio spent three months in Sicily before proceeding to Rome (40).

Gio. Antonio was quite well off in those days and he accepted in an honorary capacity the appointment offered him by Ball. His fortunes changed, and, in 1828, in "a state of extreme distress", he petitioned Government for compensation for the services he had gratuitously rendered as *Commissario della Posta* "with zeal and integrity and to the perfect satisfaction of the Government". He had already made a similar request the previous year (41).

In his Memorials, Micallef failed to mention the date of his appointment. He had no exact record of it, and referred at times to the year 1801, at other times to 1802. The approximate date can be established from the Treasury Registers extant. In the *Libro di Casa della Tesoreria*, until the end of the financial year 1801-1802, all debit entries concerning postal business were registered in the name of Montanaro, *Scrivano della Posta*. On the 6th September 1802, the expenses incurred in Sicily for letters sent to Malta were, for the first time, paid (forward transmission to Vice-Consul Raimondi) to *Gio. Antonio Micallef come Commissario dell'Ufficio della Posta*. The last payment made through Montanaro is dated 1st September, which probably covered the accounts till the end of August.

On the credit side of the accounts (*Introiti*) between the 3rd August 1801 and the 24th July 1802, the entries were registered thus: at first, *Introito della Posta*, then *Dalla Posta*, and, later, *Dalla Posta delle lettere*. The first entry that occurs in the next financial year was registered *Dall'Ufficio della Posta delle Lettere*, dated 1st September 1802.

In another book entitled *Introiti della Tesoreria*, under the heading *Posta delle Lettre*, the entry dated 1st September 1802 reads: *Dallo Sc.no* (Scrivano) *Montanaro*, whereas the next entry, dated 1st October 1802 (covering the revenue for September) reads: *Dall'Ufficio della Posta* (42).

These records show that the Post Office, with Gio. Antonio Micallef at its head, was re-established at this period. The indications are that this occurred on the 1st September 1802.

A short while before, Vincenzo Mamo, another ex-Conventualist, addressed a petition to the Civil Commissioner requesting employment *nell'officina della Posta*, in which, he stated, there was only one clerk (an

15th July 1802, Cameron acceded to the request and Mamo's salary was fixed at 15 scudi per month (43). It seems that this decree was not immediately implemented since Mamo drew his first monthly salary on the 1st October 1802, that is, with effect from the 1st September 1802 (44).

Therefore, on the 1st September 1802 the Post Office staff was as follows:

Commissario della Posta - Gio. Antonio Micallef	
Scrivano (Senior)	- Domenico Montanaro
Scrivano (Junior)	- Vincenzo Mamo

Micallef resigned on the 12th April 1804, but no immediate decision was taken to fill the vacancy. Eventually, the post was abolished and it was only in late 1804 or early 1805 that Montanaro attained a higher status: he became *Direttore della Posta*. (45) At this time the Post Office seems to have been autonomous department, but it underwent several changes until it became a General Post Office. Therein lies another tale!

REFERENCES:

1. Cassar Paul, *Malta. The early days of the Postal Services*: in *The Stamp Magazine* (USA Edition) July, 1962.
2. Donna d'Oldenico, Adalberto, *Redditi e spese dell'Ordine Militare Gerosolimitano di Malta nel 1587*. Ciriè, Giov. Cappella, 1964, p.27.
3. NLM, Ms. 24, p.136. The scudo was divided into 12 tari, and 1 tari consisted of 20 grani. A carlino was equivalent to 10 grani.
4. NLM, Ms.24, p.95.
5. NLM, AOM 265, ff.210 and 210v. The members of the Commission were: Fra Giovanni de Filip Saint Viance (Marshal of the Order), Fra Carlo Leopoldo Conte d'Herberstein (Gran Bali), Fra B. Romeo Fardella (Prior of the Bailiwick of S. Stefano) and Fra Filippo de Tavora y Noronha (Bali of Leza).
6. No other details are given. It may reasonably be assumed that the rates established in 1694 were to apply *in toto*. In 1792 the fortnightly service between Malta and Sicily became a weekly one.
Consequently, the rates were "doubled" as follows:
half sheet, one tari; whole sheet, three carlini; per ounce, five tari (NLM, AOM 634, p.328).
7. *Per distribuire li pieghi, incaminare le lettere, riscuotere la spesa fatta nelle Provincie, e l'affrancamento de farsi quà*. Translation: to distribute the packets, forward the letters, encash the expense incurred in the Provinces, and (attend to) the franking to be made here.
8. NLM, AOM 265, ff.211v - 212v.
9. *La Casa del Comun Tesoro* is the building now occupied by the Casino (1852), better known as the Casino Maltese, at 247 Republic Street. During the first half of the 19th century, both the British Packet Office and the Island Post Office were situated in rooms on the groundfloor of this building. The Island Post Office was on the right hand side and the British Packet Office on the left hand side of the entrance (see *The Mediterranean Magazine for the diffusion of useful knowledge*, No.4, 26 November 1842). For details concerning the postal service, see Bonavia, Silvester, *Postal services in Malta 1776-1816* (Malta, 1968) - Unpublished dissertation. A copy is in the University of Malta Library.
10. Savona worked at the Treasury at least from 1 November 1756 at a yearly salary of 67 scudi, as first clerk of the Post Office; he was pensioned on 20 June 1771 because of his advanced years and state of health. The pension was 29 scudi a year (NLM, AOM 998, f.30; 999, f.39; 634, ff.207, 207v).
11. Lauron was appointed Supernumerary Clerk at the Treasury on the 1st July 1756. Between

- 1756 and 1762 five of these clerks were appointed. In 1767 he was Adjutant to Savona at 30 scudi a year. He was now placed in charge of the Stores and his salary was increased to 60 scudi (NLM, AOM 998, f.39; 999, ff.44, 46).
12. Psayla Chapelle was at least from 1 April 1757 a Supernumerary Clerk serving at the Treasury. By a Decree of the Common Treasury of 5 May 1767, he was appointed, with effect from the 1st May, Adjutant to Francesco Trinchant, *Copista delle Lettere di Francia*, at a salary of 24 scudi a year. It was increased to 55 scudi as from 1 June 1771. (NLM, AOM 998, f.39; 999, ff.44, 46). F. Trinchant died on the 20th June 1771.
 13. Farrugia was detailed to keep certain books at the Treasury, including the *Controllibri* and the Registers of the Bills of Exchange. Besides, he was instructed to help the Copyist of the Letters of Italy. On 23 November 1791, Farrugia became a full time clerk at the Post Office at a yearly salary of 60 scudi.
 14. NLM, AOM 634, ff.207 - 8.
 15. The *Conservatoria* was the place where the coffers, plate, diamonds and other effects belonging to the Treasury, were kept. The *Grand Conservator* was in charge of supplies, and he purchased all necessaries for the troops and hospitals. The post was occupied by the Head of the Langue of Aragon.
 16. NLM, AOM 634, f.265. For details on the conveyance of official despatches at this period see *The diplomatic courier of the Order of St. John in eighteenth century Malta* by Paul Cassar in *Scientia*, Vol.28, 3, pp.119 - 125.
 17. NLM, AOM 672, f.160; 634, f.310; 1000, f.52. Piscopo was born in 1707 and he died on 16 January 1793. Before his appointment at the Post Office, he had served for three years at the biscuit factory of the Order, together with Giorgio Grognet, without any remuneration.
 18. Montanaro was then eleven years old. It seems that there was no age limit for such appointments. In the same way, several Knights were received into the Order during their minority.
 19. NLM, AOM 5243 (Tom.XXIV), *Prove di legittimità del Discreto Domenico Montanaro ricev.to sotto Titolo della Cappella di St. Agata V.M. eretta nella Torre dell'istesso nome. Li 17 Settembre 1770*. Domenico Montanaro was born on 25 June 1759 to Saverio and Maddalena nee Agius.
 20. Cutajar, Nick A., *The History of the Maltese postal service - (Part) 3: in Heritage (Malta) No.21 p.401*.
 21. Memorial by Gio. Antonio Micalfef: in Despatch 30 June 1829 Secretary of State to Governor. PAV.
 22. NLM, AOM 700, f.70 et seq. For the succeeding decades, the payments made by the Commissioner of the Post Office to the Treasury (or to the "Conservatoria") were entered as "dritto della posta or "denaro esatto in detta posta".
 23. NLM, AOM 681, entry 16 November 1747; AOM 684, entries 9 January 1773 and 2 Mayo 1774.
 24. NLM, AOM 685 (15, 66, 76, 356), 692 (41), 693 (44), 694 (39), 705 (231 to 233) for Monfort; AOM 685 (388, 419), 694 (39). 695 (391) for Rogadeo; AOM 686 (26, 471, 484), 687 (33, 418) 688 (2, 454), 689 (4, 33, 52, 105, 126, 145, 240, 269, 301), 695 (391), 696 (39), 697 (41), 698 (52), 699 (52) for Cambi; AOM 690 (3, 23, 48, 72), 699 (52) for Mont d'Or; AOM 690 (89, 112, 200, 228, 249) for Arezzo; AOM 690 (297, 332), 691 (3, 119, 202) for Candida.
 25. Biancardi had been *Primo Portiere* at the Treasury since 1768. His salary between 1786 and 1798 was 12 scudi a year (NLM, AOM 659, p.197; 672, p.81; 1000, f.53; 1001, f.54).
 26. Zammit had a yearly salary of 60 scudi (NLM, AOM 1000, f.53).
 27. Pisani was employed at the Treasury in 1780 and, since 1782, besides his work at the Treasury, he had been helping at the Post Office as supernumerary clerk without any additional remuneration (NLM, AOM 672, pp.133, 176). His yearly salary was 30 scudi (AOM 1000, f.54).
 28. Mallia had been working at the Treasury since 1773. His yearly salary of 90 scudi was increased by 30 scudi when he was given additional postal duties (NLM, AOM 672 p.190; 1000, f.54).

29. Parfugia was given a salary of 60 scudi per annum for his work at the Post Office (NLM, AOM 1000, f.54)
30. Scicluna Hannibal P., *Documents relating to the French occupation of Malta in 1798-1800*. Malta, Empire Press, 1923, p.97-98.
31. NLM, AOM 6523c, pp.436, 510. Each one of them is referred to as *commis. de la poste*, and they had a monthly salary of 10 scudi. A note on p.177 states that the post had been organised imperfectly, on a provisional basis.
32. NLM, Mss. 430/I, p.31 and 1118, p.16.
33. The original manuscript petitions with the relative decrees are in the possession of the writer. They have been published in N.A. Cutajar's article already mentioned.
34. Cutajar, N.A., op. cit. Also *Malta. The stamps and postal history 1576-1960*. London, Malta Study Circle, 1980, p.23.
35. NLM, Ms. 5 (Tesoreria), *Libro di Cassa de 'a Tesoreria del Governo Dal di 3 Luglio 1801 a tutto Febraro 1803* under *Esito*, the first entry being dated 4 July 1801 and the last 1 February 1803. Also unclassified volume *Introiti della Tesoreria*, p.37 (entry dated 1 September 1802).
36. At this period, most titles of Heads of Department used under the Knights had not been changed. Thus we come across *Commissario della Stamperia, Commissario delle Fontane, Commissario del Monte di Pietà*. It appears that the title "Direttore" was as yet unknown.
37. G. A. Micallef's Memorial already quoted.
38. Vassallo, Gio. Antonio, Biografia (of G.A. Micallef); in *L'Arte*, 1866, IV, 81,2-4.
39. St. Dominic Priory, Valletta, Baptismal Registers, Vol.XI. p.34. Mifsud Bonnici, R., *Dizzjunarju Bijo-Biblijografiku Nazzjonali*, Malta, 1960, p.340 gives 1781 as the year of Micallef's birth.
40. Vassallo, G. A., op. cit. On 27 June 1802, Micallef married Rosa Ricau (St. Dominic Priory, Valletta, *Matrimoni 1801-1807*, p.4.
41. PAV, Despatch 30 June 1829 SOS to G (quoted above) and its Enclosures. See also SOS to G 14 November 1829, G to SOS 20 August 1829. Eventually, as an ex-chaplain of the Order, he was granted a pension of £40 per annum on the 1st January 1834 (NLM, Duplicate Despatches, G to SOS, 7 April 1834 and PAV, Letter book 13, p.288; See also *Colonial Pensions. Return of the Amount paid for Pensions..... from the Colonial Revenues of Malta, Ceylon etc.*, Parliamentary Paper 596,5 August 1840, p.5. Micallef died on the 2nd October 1841.
42. Supra (35).
43. The original document is in the possession of the writer. It has been published in N.A. Cutajar's article quoted above. Vincenzo Mamo was born on the 3rd February 1789. His salary was raised to 20 scudi on the 1st January 1806. A year later, he was transferred to the Public Secretary's Office. He was Acting Superintendent of the Island Post Office from March 1816 to the 18th March 1817, and from the 5th April to the 1st November 1830.
44. NLM, Ms. 5 (Tesoreria), f.109.
45. *Diario, Lunario e Calendario delle Isole di Malta e Gozo per l'Anno 1805*. Malta, (1805), p.39. Montanaro's name was inserted in the Supplement added in the last two pages after the almanack had already been printed. In the *Almanacco delle Isole di Malta e Gozo* for 1806 and for 1807 the complement at the Post Office was given as follows: *Direttore della Posta*, Domenico Montanaro; *Scrivano*, Vincenzo Mamo; *Portiere*, Giuseppe Azzopart. Montanaro retired in 1816. By that time his monthly salary had increased to 60 scudi (£5) and he started drawing a pension of £50 per annum as from the 1st January 1817. The situation of *Direttore della Posta* was abolished on Montanaro's retirement.

ABBREVIATIONS USED:

- AOM - Archive of the Order of Malta.
 NLM - National Library of Malta.
 PAV - Palace Archive, Valletta.

MALTA - A DIARY

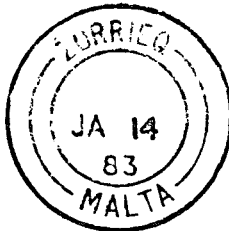
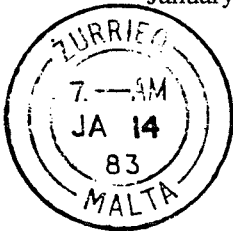
January - April 1983

By J. Farrugia

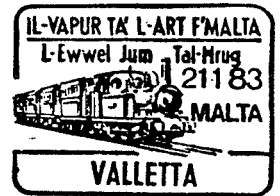
- 9-1-83 I am sorry to start my diary for 1983 on a sad note. It was announced to-day that Mr. S. V. Psaila, the Postmaster General, died suddenly at St. Luke's Hospital, at the age of 60. He was appointed P.M.G. on January 1st 1982.
- 14-1-83 Three new metal hand date-stamps were put in use on Friday, 14th January, 1983, as follows:

B.P.O.	No. of hand-stamps	Inscription
Zurrieq	2	Zurrieq - Malta
Valletta	1	Valletta B.P.O. - Malta

The three metal hand date-stamps, which were replaced, were withdrawn from use at the close of business on Thursday, 14th. January, 1983



- 21-1-83 "Malta Railway" set issued to-day. A special hand postmark incorporating a line drawing of a train, was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail, on the first day of issue.



- 10-2-83 On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the introduction of the Public Lotto, a machine stamp cancelling slogan, was used, on and off, during the period 10th.-17th. February, 1983, at the Central Mail Room, Castille Place, Valletta. The slogan reads: "Lottu - Eghluq Is-60 Sena - 1923-83". The inscription means: "Lotto - 60th Anniversary - 1923-1983".

- 10-2-83 A special hand-postmark, to mark the Silver Jubilee Year of the Lions Club (Malta) was used on the 10th, 11th, and 12th, February, 1983, at the :-

Philatelic Counter G.P.O. Valletta
from 8.00 a.m. to 12.45 p.m.
Central Mail Room, Castille Place, Valletta
from 8.00 a.m. to 7.30 p.m.

The special hand-postmark is inscribed:
"1958 - 1983 Lions Club Malta - We Serve" and "Malta Post Office - 10-12 Feb 1983".

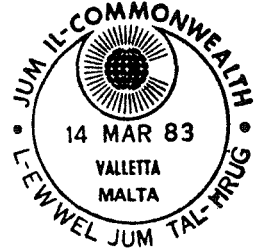


1958 - 1983
LIONS CLUB
MALTA
WE SERVE



The Logo of the Lions International and a Maltese Cross are also incorporated in the postmark.

- 21-2-83 A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading:
"Ma Nismax - Nifhem - Nhoss" was used from the 21st. to the 26th. February, 1983, at the Central Mail Room. The slogan means: "Cannot Hear - I understand - I Feel".
- 14-3-83 "Commonwealth Day" set issued to-day.
A special hand postmark also incorporating the Commonwealth Symbol, was used on the first day of issue.
- 28-3-83 A machine cancelling slogan reading:
"Kburin Bil-Helsien 31 Ta' Marzu, 1979, was used on the 28th, 29th, 30th March 1983, at the Central Mail Room. The slogan means: "Proud of Our Freedom - 31st March 1979".
- 4-4-83 A machine stamp cancelling slogan inscribed: "10th Anniversary Airmalta" was used from the 4th to the 9th April, 1983, at the Central Mail Room.
- 6-4-83 A special hand-postmark was used at the Philatelic Counter of the G.P.O. and at the Central Mail Room, Valletta, from 8.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. on the 6th April, 1983. The hand-postmark is inscribed: "Airmalta 10th Anniversary - 1973-1983 - Valletta Malta".



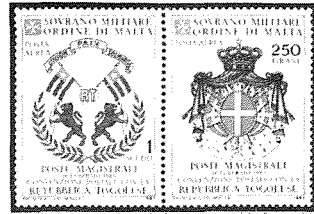
AUSIPEX 84

Australia's first world philatelic exhibition, AUSIPEX 84, under the patronage of the Federation International de Philatelie, will be staged in Melbourne from 21 to 30 September 1984.

The Malta Commissioner for AUSIPEX 84 is Mr. Godwin Said of "Scorpio", 114 Tower Road, Sliema, from whom provisional entry forms can be obtained. Completed provisional entry forms must reach the Malta Commissioner by not later than 1st December, 1983.



REPUBLIC OF CHILE
S.M.O.M.



REPUBLIC OF TOGO
S.M.O.M.

The Sovereign Military Order of Malta (SMOM) has this year signed Postal Conventions with the Republics of Chile and Togo and further ones are scheduled for later this year. Currently Postal Conventions are in force with Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, Liberia, Nicaragua, The Philippines, Togo and Uruguay.

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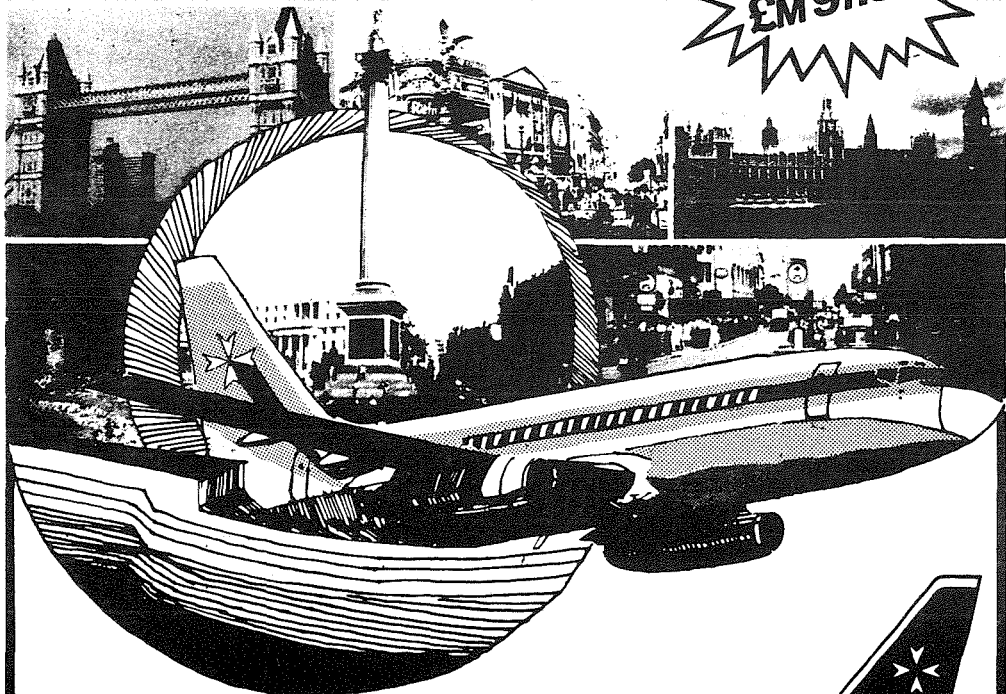
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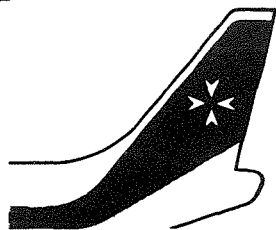


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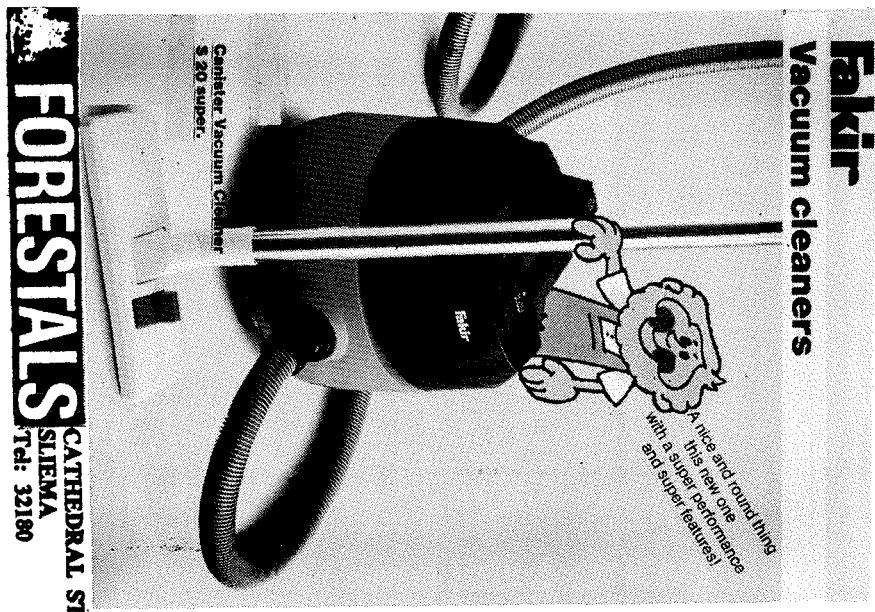
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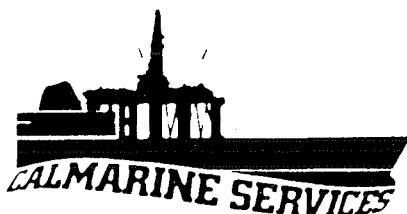
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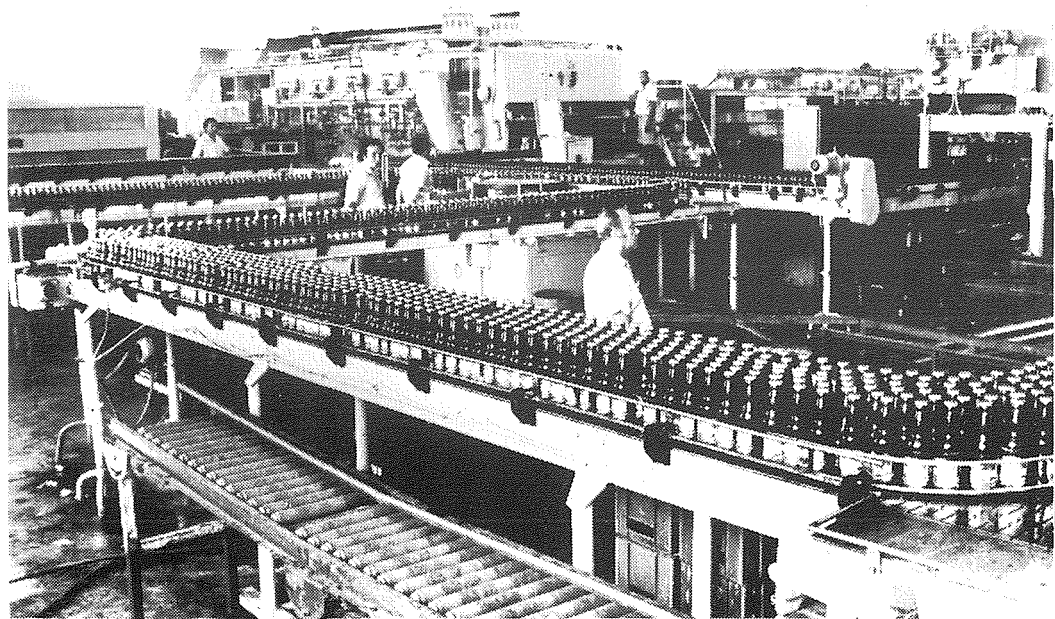
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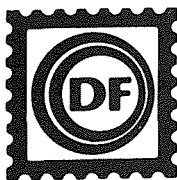
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