

YET MORE HOUSES IN VALLETTA

by

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SOUTH STREET

In the early days of Valletta, South Street was named "Strada del Palazzo" as it was the original intention to build the magisterial palace somewhere near the site at present occupied by the Auberge de Castille. Later this street became known as the "Strada dell'Albergia di Francia". The French renamed it "Rue du Genie" whilst up to the beginning of World War II it was known as "Strada Mezzodi".

The first house of any importance in this street is that numbered 60. This property belonged to Grazia Torrensi and on January 4, 1726 it was sold for Sc. 4,000 by the Procurators of the Common Treasury to Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena (1) who applied the premises to the Foundation which he had established, (2) stipulating however, that this house was to be enjoyed by his three grand-nephews, sons of Don Sancio Manoel, and then by all knights in the male line of Don Sancio Manoel, when these were residing in the Convent. By a judgment of the "Tribunale delle Cause Delegate" of January 12, 1745, it was ordered that those who enjoyed the house were to pay 5% of the yearly rental value to the Foundation to defray expenses for repairs and maintenance which the Foundation would have to make. (3)

If no knights of the male line of Don Sancio Manoel resided in the Convent, the Manoel Foundation was then to enjoy the rents deriving from this property.

On July 1, 1860, the British Government granted the premises on long lease to Gio. Batta Schembri (4) and in due course they passed to Miss Agnes Schembri. Miss Schembri died in 1919 and in her last will dated June 17, 1918 left the 'utile dominium' of the property, by way of legacy, to the local Government with the obligation of the Government using the income thereof for the maintenance abroad of one or more Maltese youths who desired to become proficient in an art or trade, including that of motor mechanic or piano tuner. (5) The value of the scholarship has been fixed by Government at £200 per annum and the course of training is for a period of two years.

Contiguous with the Casa Torrensi was the palace and property of the noble de Lussan family. From old plans of Valletta it would seem that the premises, of which nothing remains today, were built at the beginning of the

- (1) *Repertorio compre Stabili Fondazione Manoel* fo. 29 R.M.L. Treas. A. 25.
Records of Not. Giuseppe Callus of 4 January 1726.
- (2) Records of Not. G. Domenico Chircop of 14 January 1726.
- (3) *Conti del Economo Fondazione Manoel* fo. 18 R.M.L. Treas. A. 28.
- (4) Records of Not. Luigi Vella of 1st July 1860.
- (5) Records of Not. Francesco Zarb of 17 July 1918.

17th century by Fra Pierre Desparvez de Lussan, Prior of St. Giles. The St. Andrew Scots' Church today stands on part of the site once occupied by this property.

At the corner formed by South Street with Old Bakery Street once stood the house belonging to Fra Christopher le Bolver dit Montgaudri, Bali of Lango, who was Governor of Valletta in 1571, Captain General of the Galleys in 1573 and Grand Hospitaller in 1577. It is probable that the entrance to this house was from Old Bakery Street.

When the French Langue decided to transfer their Auberge in 1588, this house was incorporated with the new building. (6) No trace remains of these premises which were completely destroyed by enemy action in 1942. On the site the Union Press, belonging to the General Workers Union, has now been built.

Opposite the Auberge de France were three fine houses belonging to the French Langue, known as the Demandolx houses. These passed to the Monte di Pietà e Redenzione in 1800. One of these houses had the misfortune of being destroyed by a German bomb and on its site a building has been erected which is completely out of harmony with the two remaining houses.

We now come to the Admiralty House (No. 53 South Street) about which Sir Hannibal P. Scicluna has written an excellent monograph (7) to which there is but little to add.

This palace was among the first to be erected in the city of Valletta, as we find that the site was acquired as early as 1569, by Chev. Fra Jean de Soubiran dit Arafat (8) of the Langue of Provence, who had taken part in the Siege of Malta of 1565 and who was captain of the galley "San Giovanni" in 1602. (9) It would seem that on the site which he acquired Chev. de Soubiran built two houses, one large and one small. (10) Later, the premises passed to Comm. François le Petit de la Guerche, also of the Langue of Provence, captain of the galley "Santa Maria" in 1654. (11) When this knight died outside the Convent on June 21, 1663, the Treasury took possession of the property on September 1st, 1663. (12)

From May 17, 1668 to November 16, 1669, both houses were let to Comm. Fra Eustachio Bernard d'Avernes for a yearly rent of Sc. 120. The premises were then let successively to three members of the de Fleurigny family: Chev. Fra François Octave de Fleurigny from November 17, 1699 to May 16, 1670, Chev. Fra Louis de Fleurigny from May 17, 1670 to October 31, 1670 and Chev. Fra Hugues de Fleurigny Vauvilliers from November 1st 1670 to July 31, 1671. On August 1st, 1671, they were taken on lease by Comm. Fra Simone Rondinelli of the Langue of Italy who held them up to January 31, 1673.

(6) *Liber Bullarum 1588-1589* fo. 2 R.M.L. Arch. 444.

(7) SCICLUNA, Han. P., 'Notes on the Admiralty House, Valletta' Archivum Melitense Vol. IX, pp. 57-72.

(8) Records of Not. Placido Habel of 7 Oct. 1569 & 8 July 1570.

(9) ROSSI, Ettore, 'Storia della Marina dell'Ordine', S.E.A.I. Roma-Milano 1926.

(10) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 33 R.M.L. Treas. A. 1.

(11) ROSSI, Ettore, op. cit. page 144.

(12) Records of Not. Aloysio dello Re of 1st September 1663.

The Treasury again leased the property to Chev. Hugues de Fleurigny Vauvilliers and to his brother Jacques from February 1st, 1673, to the end of January 1682. (13) In virtue of a deed dated January 27, 1682, the premises were given on lease to Chev, now Commander Louis de Fleurigny for the duration of his lifetime, (14) but at the reduced rent of Sc. 110 per annum, and on January 16, 1697, it was agreed that Chev. Fra Jacques de Fleurigny Vauvilliers should also enjoy the use of the house during his lifetime, together with his brother Comm. Louis, (15)

Louis de Fleurigny was a gallant naval commander who took part in many a naval engagement against the Moslems and who was appointed Captain General of the Galleys of the Religion in 1709 (16) and later promoted Bali "ad honores". Bali Fra Louis de Fleurigny died in the Convent in 1716 and was interred in Conventual Church. (17)

After the Fleurignys the house was given on lease to Chev. Fra. Boniface de Castellane of the Langue of Provence on May 14, 1720, (18) though, Sir Hannibal Scicluna states that, before this, the brothers Jean and Charles Dou had taken the house on lease but had later renounced their rights to the continuance of same. (19)

We now find the premises occupied by the wealthy Bali of Lessa, Fra Raimondo de Sousa y Silva. It is averred that the Grand Master was anxious to get Don Raimondo to fix his abode in Malta in order to secure his wealth for the Religion on the making of his spoglio, and for this purpose, persuaded him to take the house under review on lease for his lifetime, (20) however, at the request of Don Raimondo, the Treasury consented to allow him to occupy the premises on ordinary lease and for his benefit rebuilt the house in its present form between 1761 and 1763.

After enjoying several important positions in the Order, Bali Raimondo de Sousa y Silva died in the Convent on January 13, 1782 at the age of 94 and he too was buried in the Conventual Church. (21)

Following the death of the Bali of Lessa, we find the house divided into several apartments and occupied, from March 1783 to April 1785, by several knights among whom we find the names of Fra Luca d'Argence, Fra Vincenzo Perelli and Fra Daniele Berlinghieri who later represented the Order at the Congress of Vienna.

On April 7, 1785 the premises were again let as a private residence to the renowned French naval commander, the Bali Pierre André Suffren de Saint Tropez, Captain General of the Galleys of the Order in 1780, who occupied them until his death outside the Convent on December 8, 1788. After his death they were let, on the same conditions, to his brother, Comm. Fra Paul Julien

(13) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"*, fo. 33 R.M.L. Treas. A. 1.

(14) Records of Not. Aloysio dello Re of the 27 January 1682.

(15) Records of Not. Aloysio dello Re of the 16 January 1697.

(16) ROSSI, Ettore op. cit. page 138.

(17) CARUANA, Pietro Paolo, "*Monumenti Chiesa di San Giovanni*."

(18) *Decreti della Ven. Camera del Tesoro* fo. 207 R.M.L. Arch. 648.

(19) SCICLUNA, Hannibal P. op. cit. page 5.

(20) *The Admiralty House at Valletta* R.M.L., Mss. 399.

(21) CARUANA, Pietro Paolo op. cit. Vol. II Tav. CCLXXXI.

Suffren de Saint Tropez, until June 1795 when the palace was taken on lease by Chev. Fra Antonio Miari di Belluno, Secretary to Grand Master Ferdinand von Hompesch, (22) who occupied it, at the yearly rent of Sc.250, until the Order was driven out of Malta by Napoleon in June 1798.

The French Republican Government offered the palace to the Bishop, Monsignor Vincenzo Labini, as an episcopal seminary, (23) but owing to the revolt of the Maltese this project was never effected.

After the capitulation of the French garrison, "Casa Miari", as the palace was then known, was occupied by the Commander of the Anglo-Maltese troops, Captain Alexander Ball R.N.; the house having been refused by Canon Francesco Caruana, to whom it had been offered by the British Commissioner in recognition of his services during the campaign against the French.

The next occupant of the residence was Mr. Alexander Macaulay, Secretary to the Civil Commissioner, who leased it from August 1802 to June 1803 at a rent of £24, 15. 6 per annum.

By an Order given on. May 12, 1808, His Excellency the Governor ordered that the palace be reinstated for the immediate reception of His Royal Highness the Duke of Orleans. (24)

Mr. G. Darmanin Demajo (25) relates that Louis Charles, Vicomte de Beaujolais, and his brother, Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, arrived in Malta on May 16, 1808 on board the French warship "Voltaire" and lodged in the "Casa Miari" where the Vicomte de Beaujolais died on May 29, 1808. The Vicomte, who was a Knight of Malta, was buried in St. John's Conventual Church, however, before expiring he directed that his heart was to be embalmed and interred in the Church of Our Lady of Liesse in Valletta. The Duke of Orleans, together with his two sisters, returned to France on January 2, 1809.

From 1808 to 1820 the house was occupied by the British Military Authorities without payment of rent.

On January 1st, 1821 the premises were given on lease (26) to the Naval Authorities for twenty one years and the palace remained the official residence of the Commander-in-Chief of the British Mediterranean Fleet, until 1961 when it was taken over by the Maltese Government.

Contiguous to the Admiralty House is the house (No. 52 South Street) of Fra Aloysio Mazzinghi, Prior of Capua and later Bali of Santo Stefano, (27) who in 1630 donated the premises to Giacobbo and Ugolino, sons of his nephew Filippo Mazzinghi, (28) and to all those in the male line of the Mazzinghi family who, at any time, might be members of the Order. Bali Mazzinghi stipulated that should the male line of the Mazzinghi family become extinct the property was then to pass to the Religion.

(22) *Libro Esigenziale dei Beni del Tesoro* 1781-1790 fo. 133 R.M.L., Treas. A. 3.

(23) *Stati Beni Urbani* R.M.L. Treas. B. 89 fo. 7.

(24) *Libro Ordini* 1800-1813 fo. 73 R.M.L., Treas. B. 210.

(25) DARMANIN DEMAJO, G., *Archivio Storico di Malta* Vol. II page 75.

(26) Records of Not. Dr. Diego Vella of the 15 June 1822.

(27) *Libro dei Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 52 Treas. A. 1.

(28) Records of Not. Salvatore Ciantar of the 26 February 1630.

The Bali Mazzinghi seems to have been very partial towards his nephews, for when the galleys "San Giovanni" and "San Francesco" were lost, off Augusta, in 1625 in a battle with the Tunisian galleys and the Capitana of the Religion broke action and set sail for Malta, the Bali Mazzinghi was among those who clamoured most vehemently for the punishment of the person guilty for the flight of the flagship. However, when after investigation it resulted that his nephew, Chev. Fra Francesco Mazzinghi, was the person responsible, the Bali completely reversed his attitude and by his machinations contrived to protract the proceedings to such an extent that they were finally abandoned. (29)

On January 1st, 1862 the house was given on lease for 99 years to Sir Victor Houlton, Chief Secretary to Government, and from July 1st, 1900, the lease was taken over by His Serene Highness Prince Louis of Battenberg who later transferred it to Mr. Charles Strickland, brother of Lord Strickland — it is now in possession of the Schembri family.

Another house in this street is that of Chev. Fra Giovanni Battista Mimbretta of the Langue of Italy which, on the death of Chev. Mimbretta, passed to the Italian Langue. This house today bears number 33.

Among the occupants of the premises were Chev. Fra Lutis Alimento in 1684, (30) Comm. Fra Orazio Bovini 1697-1701, (31) Comm. Fra Gaetano Lapparelli, who took the house on lease on September 23, 1739 after the death of Comm. Fra Francesco Citta, (32) and Chev. Fra Alessandro Rovida who leased it after it had been vacated by Chev. Fra Amadeo Baratri on January 16, 1743. (33)

We now come to the "Casa Scaglia", at Nos. 47 and 48, which has often erroneously been shown as occupying the site of the "Casa Mazzinghi".

Bali Fra Bernardino Scaglia, Prior of Capua, availing himself of the facility accorded by the Chapters General of 1569 and 1574 which permitted knights who erected buildings in the new city to dispose of their property without a dispensation, erected these premises (34) and, in 1588, donated the property to the Chapel of Our Lady of Philermos in the Conventual Church, subject to the celebration of one daily low mass, one high mass on the first day of each month and one requiem mass on the anniversary of the donor's death. After the payment of all expenses, the remainder of the rents was to be devoted to the endowment of two spinisters. This last clause was rescinded in 1694.

Fra Bernardino Scaglia was appointed Admiral of the Order on September 12, 1582. (36)

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- (29) DAL POZZO, Bartolomeo *Historia della Sacra Religione Militare di S. Giovanni Gerosolomitano* Vol. I. p. 743 Giovanni Berno, Verona, 1703.
 (30) *Deliberazioni della Lingua d'Italia fo. 251 R.M.L. Arch. 2133.*
 (31) *Deliberazioni della Lingua d'Italia fo. 201 R.M.L. Arch. 2135.*
 (32) *Deliberazioni della Lingua d'Italia fo. 339 R.M.L. Arch. 2141.*
 (33) *Deliberazioni della Lingua d'Italia fo. 339 R.M.L. Arch. 2142.*
 (34) *Cabreo della Ven. Cappella della B.V. di Filermo fo. 1 R.M.L. Treas. B. 30.*
 (35) Records of Not. Jacobo Sillato of the 12 February 1588.
 (36) Rossi, Ettore op. cit. page 128.

In 1594 the Prior of Capua was deeply involved in the dissensions which arose in the Convent between certain Balis and other high dignitaries of the Order and the Grand Master, Cardinal Hugues Lubens de Verdalle. The chief cause of discontent was the arming and maintenance of private galleys by the Cardinal Grand Master. The malcontents sent a memorial to the Supreme Pontiff setting forth their grievances, to which the Grand Master responded with dignity rebutting the various charges.

By a Brief dated June 25, 1594, Pope Clement VIII exhorted the conflicting parties to compose their differences in face of the difficult times through which the Church was passing. This Brief was read in the Council and for a time there was an apparent reconciliation. The matter soon flared up again and the Pope, seeing this, cited the five dissident Grand Crosses, including the Bali Scaglia, to appear before him, at the same time, the Cardinal Grand Master was invited to send his own representatives. Hearing both sides the Holy Father did not push the investigation further.

The Grand Master was taken dangerously ill on March 23, 1595 and calling the members of the Council to his presence read to them his spoglio by which he left all his wealth to the Religion without even reserving to himself the one fifth to which he was entitled.

When Prior Bernardino Scaglia donated the house under review he disposed that the property could be alienated. Bali Scaglia died in the Convent on January 13, 1600 at the age of 78 (37) and the premises were sold, in 1606, to Comm. Fra Puccino Puccini for Sc.2, 600. (38)

We next find the "Casa Scaglia", in 1764, occupied by Bali Fra Claude de Saint Simon who had bought it and deposited the sum of Sc.1,100 in the Bishop's Court as per judgment of the said court of July 23, 1768. (Bali de Saint Simon vs. the Augustinian Priory, Valletta). Bali de Saint Simon was also to pay a yearly burthen of Sc.45 to the Rev. Alessandro Gouffre during his lifetime. (39) On the death of Bali de Saint Simon, in the Convent in 1777, (40) the premises reverted to the Treasury.

On February 13, 1794, the house was sold by the Treasury to Comm. Fra Bartolomeo Mignanelli for the sum of Sc. 3,140. (41) Comm. Mignanelli donated this house to Teresa Palamida on March 12, 1794 (42) and disposed that the premises were to be enjoyed by her during her lifetime. This donation was made in recognition of the care which Teresa had taken of Comm. Mignanelli's household. After Teresa's decease the property was to pass to the Hospital for Incurable Women, of which Comm. Mignanelli was a Protector, on condition that a certain number of masses were to be celebrated for the repose of the donor's soul and for that of Teresa Palamida. When Teresa died the British Government took possession of the premises.

Adjoining the Casa Scaglia (at the corner formed by South Street with

(37) Caruana, Pietro Paolo op. cit. Vol. III Tav. CCCI.

(38) Records of Not. Francesco Imbroli of the 11 May 1606.

(39) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro* "B" fo. 394 R.M.L. Treas. A. 1.

(40) CARUANA, Pietro Paolo op. cit. Vol. I Tav. CXXXIV.

(41) Records of Not. Giuseppe Natale Monreal of the 13 Feb. 1794.

(42) Records of Not. Vittorio de Caro of the 12 March 1794.

St. Andrew's Street) once stood the palace of the noble Guadagni family of Florence. Today nothing remains of this palace which was erected, most probably, at the end of the 16th. century. It was demolished by the building speculator towards the end of last century to make way for a modern block of flats known as the Alexandra Mansions.

BRITANNIA STREET

Britannia Street, which runs parallel to South Street, was first named Strada Pia in honour of Pope Pius V who took a great interest in the building of the new city, later, this street became known as the Strada della Falconeria due to the falconry being situated here — the French renamed it "Rue de la Felicité Publique".

The house number 13, now number 8, belonged to Chev. Fra Bernardino della Ciaja and was sold by him, for Sc. 800, to Comm. Fra Giulio Accarigi, Admiral of the Order in 1638 and later Prior of Venice, in virtue of two instruments recorded in Siena in the Acts of Notary Santo de Cennis of March 4, 1647 and May 26, 1649. Comm. Accarigi then donated the house to the Hospital for Incurable Women. (43) In 1698 the premises were given on perpetual emphyteusis to Dr. Pier Damiano Caxar. (44)

The Collegio del Gesù or Jesuit College owned house No. 181 in this street, (45) whilst the houses numbered 160 and 163 belonged to the Priory of Castille and were built by the Castilian Langue. (46) The house which today bears number 155 belonged to the Langue of Italy.

The house adjacent to the Auberge de Provence (No. 137 Britannia Street) was built by the Provençal Langue in 1574. (47)

House No. 133 formed part of the building known as "La Peintressa" which was bought by the Manoel Foundation in 1726 and which later was divided into two houses, one being the house under review, whilst the other had its entrance at No. 11 Old Bakery Street. (48)

At the corner formed by Britannia Street with Old Mint Street stands a fine house (No. 121 Britannia Street) which once belonged to Comm. Fra Jean Baptiste de Gallean Chateauf. (49)

In a disproprium made in Syracuse on October 11, 1634, Comm. de Gallean Chateauf left this property to the Commandery of Nice with the obligation for the Commander pro tempore of having two masses celebrated every week, one for the repose of the soul of the donor and the other for the repose of all the souls in purgatory. This building is at present being used as a Labour Office and a tablet on the first floor records the disposition of Comm. de Gallean Chateauf anent this house.

Close to the above property was the house known as the "Casa della Falconeria" or the Falconry (49) No. 122 Britannia Street).

(43) *Cabreo Ospedale delle Donne* fo. 7 R.M.L., Treas. B 307.

(44) Records of Not. Pietro del Fiore of the 8 July 1698.

(45) *Libro Maestro della Comp. di Gesù "V"* 1739-48 fo. 122. R.M.L., Treas. A. 122.

(46) *Liber Bullarum* 1610-11-12 fo. 31, R.M.L., Arch. No. 457.

(47) *Liber Bullarum* 1574-75- fo. 48, R.M.L., Arch. No. 435.

(48) *Repertorio della Fond. Manoel* fo. 33, R.M.L. Treas. A. 25.

(49) *Cabreo Fondazione Lascaris* fo. 7 R.M.L., Treas. B 301.

The premises originally belonged to Chev. Fra Ludovico Caminado who sold them, for Sc. 1,000, to Canon Don Alfio D'Arca and who, in his turn, sold them, for the same price, to the Lascaris Foundation in 1636. (50)

During the lifetime of Grand Master Lascaris the house was never let in conformity with the reserve which he had made in the usufruct and was used by him as a falconry.

According to the Act of Donation of the Island of Malta by the Emperor Charles V to the Order of St. John dated March 23, 1530, the Islands of Malta and Gozo and their dependencies, together with Tripoli, were donated to the Grand Master of the Religion and the Order of St. John to be held by them in feudal tenure under the sole acknowledgement of a hawk or falcon, which, every year, on the festival of All Saints, was to be presented, by the person or persons duly authorised for that purpose, into the hands of the Viceroy of Sicily in token and recognition of fealty. The offering of falcons was later extended to France, Portugal and Naples.

The person responsible for the delivery of these falcons was the Falconer, a member of the Grand Master's household, who was a Commander or at least a Knight of Justice and who was appointed to his office by the Grand Master in person. (51)

According to Boisgelin the expense for the keeping and presentation of these birds amounted to Cr. 1039. 3. 19 equivalent to £103. 18. 7. (52)

The Falconer was also in command of the corps known as "Cacciatori" or Chasseurs.

The "Casa della Falconeria" has been rebuilt and now consists in apartment dwellings.

Opposite to the Falconry is the palace (No. 77 Britannia Street) of the Bali Fra Gio. Batta d'Afflitto, Prior of Lombardy. This house originally formed part of the property which, in 1632, was sold by Grand Master de Paule to the Bali Carlo Valdina, (53) of whom more will be heard. These premises passed to the Lascaris Foundation in 1655 and were sold by the Treasury to the Bali d'Afflitto in 1766, the proceeds of the sale being deposited with the Università.

In his disproprium, the Prior of Lombardy disposed that after his death the house was to go to his nephew, Don Nicolò d'Afflitto, Count of Lizzanello, and to his legitimate descendants in the direct line, and failing this, to the collateral line of his descendants. Should there be more than one collateral line, it was to be understood that the line nearest to the direct line of the said Count Nicolò was always to be preferred. The Prior further stipulated that, should the d'Afflitto family become extinct, the house in question was to revert to the Religion with the burthen of a certain number of masses. (55)

(50) Records of Not. Lorenzo Grima of the 30 July 1636. *Beni della Fondazione Lascaris* — R.M.L., Ms. 1302.

(51) L'Heritte — *Essai sur l'Ordre des Hopitaliers de St. Jean de Jerusalem* page 7.

(52) Boisgelin, Louis, *Malta Ancient and Modern* Vol. I, p. 317, T. Davidson 1805.

(53) *Cabreo della Fondazione Lascaris* R.M.L. Treas. B. 301.

(54) Records of Not. Vincenzo Grillet Xiberras of 14 Oct. 1766.

(55) *Dispropriamenti Italiani "H"* fo. 7 R.M.L. Arch. 928.

Bali Gio. Batta d'Afflitto died in the Convent in 1778 and was interred in the Conventual Church. (56)

It would seem that by the year 1788 the Casa d'Afflitto had again reverted to the Treasury as, from the Rent Books of the Order, (57) we find that it was leased to Bali Pignatelli from September 1st, 1788 to June 30, 1791 and from July 1791 to June 1796 to the Bali Fra Giovanni Battista Tomasi who was elected Grand Master of the Order in 1803.

Today the house is in possession of the Royal Air Force and is named "The Falconer's House" which misnomer is apt to lead one into thinking that this house was the old Falconry.

SCOTS STREET

At right angles to South Street and Britannia Street is Scots Street. This short street stretches from Windmill Street to St. Mark's Street.

The houses numbered 1 and 2 at the head of this street were donated, together with house No. 10 West Street, by Chev. Fra Pietro Maily to the Assembly of Conventual Chaplains, in 1617, (58) subject to certain pious burthens. The adjacent house, number 3, belonged to the Langue of Italy.

Comm. Fra François de Budes Tetreiouan of the Langue of France owned house No. 9 Scots Street. (59) This he donated to Comm. Fra Olivier de Budes Tetreiouan stipulating that, after the death of Comm. Olivier, the premises were to pass to the Noble Arnaud and the Noble Claude Budes Tetreiouan. On the decease of these, the property was to be enjoyed by the descendants, in the male line, of Christopher de Budes Tetreiouan, and failing these, by the descendants of his sister, Marie Budes, who were received into the Order. Failing all these, the premises were to pass to the Religion. (60)

On the death, outside the Convent, of Comm. Fra Rinaldo de Budes in 1688, the Treasury took possession of the house, (61) and from 1728 to 1733 we find the premises let to Comm. Fra Fabrizio Francone at a rent of Sc. 50 per annum. (62)

In virtue of a decree dated May 2, 1780, the premises were given on emphyteusis to the distinguished French geologist and mineralogist, Chev. Fra Deodat de Gratet de Dolomieu, at Sc. 130 per annum, to be enjoyed by him during his lifetime and then by a person to be nominated by him, the latter, however, having to pay Sc. 140 per annum. By a judgment of the Court of Appeal of May 30, 1806, the house reverted to the Government. (63)

Deodat de Dolomieu was born at Dolomieu (Isere) in 1750 and was admitted into the Order of St. John during early childhood. He was one of the most brilliant members of the Langue d'Auvergne. At the age of 18 we find

(56) Caruana, Pietro Paolo, op. cit. Vol. III Tav. CCXCII.

(57) *Libro Esigenziale dei Beni del Tesoro "B"* 1781-90 R.M.L. Treas. A. 3.

(58) *Cabreo Assemblée Fiernalda* Vol. I fo. 30 R.M.L. Treas. B. 297.

(59) *Libro dei Beni Stabili del Tesoro* fo. 64 R.M.L. Treas. A. 1.

(60) Records of Not. Michele Ralli of the 30 April 1633.

(61) Records of Not. Aloysio dello Re of the 12 June 1688.

(62) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 64 R.M.L. Treas. A. 1.

(63) *Registro Beni del Tesoro e Fond. Lascaris* fo. 322 R.M.L. Treas. B. 96.

him Lieutenant to the Grand Marshal of the Order. Whilst on his first caravan he killed one of his comrades in a duel, was condemned to death but pardoned by the Grand Master. (64) Dolomieu took an active part in the turbulent politics of the 18th Century, and in 1798, forming part of Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, he again visited Malta. He seems to have enjoyed high favour with Napoleon as Chev. Miari had recourse to him in the Grand Master's name asking him to intercede on behalf of the Order.

During the time that he was Lieutenant to the Grand Marshal of the Order, Dolomieu formed a rich collection of natural history. General Vaubois, commanding the French troops in Valletta, was so anxious to have this collection sent to France that General Graham, later Lord Lynedock, promised to have it sent over after the evacuation of Valletta by the French; this he did on board the vessel "Triton". (65)

Dolomieu died at the age of 51 at Chateaufneuf (Saone-et-Loire) in 1801.

Fronting the Casa Budes is the Casa Valdina (No. 14 Scots Street) which, together with the house later known as the Casa d'Afflitto, was bought in 1632 by Fra Carlo Valdina, Bali of Santo Stefano, from Grand Master de Paule for the sum of Sc. 6,000. (66)

Towards the end of April of the year 1599 Fra Carlo Valdina was involved in an incident which caused widespread commotion in the Convent. Whilst Chev. Valdina was in the yard of the old Hospital at Borgo (Vittoriosa), he felt himself provoked by some indiscreet remarks made by the Inquisitor's Secretary and proceeded to box his ears. On hearing of this the Inquisitor, Monsignor Antonio Hortensio, insisted on arresting this knight and inflicting meet punishment on him. All the Langues were moved by these pretensions and to obviate any disorder the Grand Master first sent three Balis and then the Bishop to appease the Inquisitor. Hortensio would not hear of appeasement and persisted in his pretensions. The Grand Master then referred the matter to Rome representing to His Holiness the state to which the Convent had been reduced by the Inquisitor's claims. He also asserted that this prelate had the right to try cases which purely affected matters of faith only. (67) Valdina was exiled from Malta for one year. (68)

In 1631 the Grand Cross "ad honores" was conferred on Fra Carlo Valdina by his bosom friend Grand Master Antoine de Paule.

The Bali Valdina, in his disproprium, left the house under review as to one half to his nephew, Comm. Fra Geronimo Branciforte.

Comm. Fra Carlo Valdina who owed the Università of Valletta a large sum of money wanted to settle his debt and Fra Carlo's brother, Prince Valdina, and his familiar, Gio. Batta Pugliese, a native of Palermo, both wished to help him in effecting a settlement. Fra Carlo gave, in part payment, the undivided half of the property which had come to him through his uncle's spoglio which was valued at Sc. 4,500, whilst Prince Valdina and Pugliese

(64) Larousse du XXeme Siecle — Dolomieu

(65) DARMANIN DEMAJO, G., Arch. Storico di Malta Vol. II Fasc. IV p. 205.

(66) Records of Not. Lorenzo Grima of the 16 June 1632.

(67) Dal Pozzo op. cit. Vol. I pages 415-418

(68) Mifsud, Ignazio Saverio, R.M.L. Ms. 2 page 293.

paid, out of their own private means, the difference required to make up the total sum of Sc. 12,488. (69)

As the Università of Valletta, at that time, owed the reigning Grand Master the sum of Sc. 15, 000, the jurats ceded this property in part payment of their debt. (70) The house was then applied to the Lascaris Foundation.

In 1658 the premises were occupied by Comm. Fra Pietro de Blacas Carroz at a rent of Sc. 100 per annum. Previously they had been let to Comm. Count Saro. From 1668 to 1670 the house was leased to Comm. Fra Bernardo Gilibert Cappel and from 1670 to 1671 it was leased jointly to Chev. Merodes, Chev. Schenkinigh and Chev. Falche. Other occupants of this house were the Bali Dumiers 1672-1687, Comm. Fra Gio Batta de Semesons 1687-1719 and Bali Fra Sextio de Ricard 1719-1728. (71)

STRAIT STREET

Between and parallel to Kingsway and Old Bakery Street lies Strait Street, once a residential quarter, now mostly occupied by sailors' bars, restaurants, cabarets and cheap lodging houses.

Behind the Franciscan Friary stood the house owned for a short while by Comm. Fra Gaspero Gabuccini da Fano of the Langue of Italy (72) who, after having been captain of the galley "San Nicola" in 1652, succeeded Fra Giovanni Bichi to the Priory of Capua in 1676. (73) Comm. Gabuccini bought this house from Gregorio Carbone on May 3, 1666 for Sc. 2,000 (74) and sold it to the Treasury on the 24th of the same month (75) for the same price at which he had bought it. It is not possible to ascertain the exact locality of the house in question though possibly it may have been either No. 187 or No. 188 Strait Street.

In 1788 the Langue of Provence erected a number of houses on the site of the garden of their Auberge, the money for this purpose being borrowed from the funds of the Langue. (76)

These premises today bear Nos. 163 to 170 Strait Street. The houses numbered Nos. 163 to 168 were built by Stefano Ittar, a well known architect who also built the Bibliotheca or Royal Malta Library in Valletta.

Through the spoglio of the Bali of Gaspe, Fra Antonio Sans de Lalloza, who died in 1701, the Treasury came into possession of the house (No. 27 Strait Street) which Fra Antonio had bought for Sc. 1,650 at a public sale of the Court of the Castellania. (77) The premises were let to Chev. Fra Giuseppe Maxado de Mendoza from June 1st, 1763 to April 30, 1774, and to Comm. Fra Martino la Plata from 1774 to 1776. From 1776 to 1796 the property was tenanted by Chev. Gio. Francesco Sanfelix.

(69) *Beni della Fondazione Lascaris* fo. 115 R.M.L. Mss. 1302.

(70) Records of Not. Michele Ralli of the 3 March 1655.

(71) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 6 R.M.L. Treas. A. 1.

(72) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 35 R.M.L. Treas. A. 1.

(73) DAL POZZO, Bartolomeo, op. cit. p. 208.

(74) Records of Not. Tommaso Agius of 3 May 1666

(75) Records of Not. Aloysio dello Re of 24 May 1666.

(76) *Delibrations de la Langue de Provence, 1772/1795* fo. 203 R.M.L. Arch. 2089.

(77) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 331 R.M.L. Treas. A. 1.

The Langue of Auvergne owned the premises Nos. 149 to 153 Strait Street.

Fra Tommaso Gargallo, Bishop of Malta (1578-1614) donated half of his house (No. 45 Strait Street) to the Chapel of Our Lady of Montserrat in the Jesuit Church, Valletta. The other half he donated to the chapel of the same name and also of St. Eulalia and St. Sebastian in the Parish Church of St. Lawrence, Vittoriosa. (78)

Near this house is the Casa Falzon-Debono (No. 49 Strait Street) where the Venerable Ignatius Falzon was born and where he lived and died. Ignatius Falzon, son of a Maltese judge, was born on July 1st. 1813. At the age of 21 he graduated at the Malta University as Doctor of Canon Law. Though not ordained priest, he received minor orders and devoted the whole of his life to the welfare of souls. Ignatius Falzon died on the July 1st. 1865, his fifty second birthday, and was interred at "ta' Gesu" Church in Valletta. (79)

Opposite the Gargallo house was the house of the Bali of Aquila, Fra Ottavio Bandinelli, (No. 144 Strait Street) who left the premises to his nephews Chev. Fra. Scipione Badinelli and Agostino Bandinelli, giving them the faculty of selling the property if they so desired. In 1672, Chev. Fra Ottavio Tancredi, as attorney of the Bandinellis, sold the house to the Monte della Redenzione de Schiavi, represented on the deed by Comm. Fra Stefano Maria Lomellini, Prior of England. (80)

The house was very badly damaged during the blitz of 1942 and has been completely altered.

The Order built house No. 142 Strait Street for use by the Treasury and this was a dependency of the Casa del Comun' Tesoro in Kinsway.

The Religion further built a house (No. 141 Strait Street) for the use of the Pages of Honour of the Grand Master. This was later reduced, at the expense of Grand Master Lascaris, to its present form of four shops and various other small tenements the rent of which was to be applied as salary for the teachers employed for the instruction of the pages. (81)

Originally the pages were eight in number, but, in 1612 this was increased to sixteen, at the discretion of the Grand Master. It was decreed that no person under the age of twelve years was to be admitted for this service and that no one absent from the Convent was to be received. It was further stipulated that those received as pages were to remain in the service until they had attained the age of sixteen.

At the corner of Strait Street with Old Theatre Street stood another house (No. 58/59 Strait Street) of the Tressina Commandery. This house, which was badly damaged by enemy action, has been rebuilt with the main entrance in Old Theatre Street.

The Assembly of Conventual Chaplains, through a donation inter vivos, acquired from Comm. Fra Cristoforo Granier, his house No. 66 Strait Street,

(78) Records of Not Gio. Domenico Debono of 25 October 1604

(79) AGIUS, Salvo — *Il Chiericu Venerabili Serv t'Alla Nazju Falzon* Empire Press 1936.

(80) *Cabreo Originale del Monte della Redenzione de Schiavi* fo. 37 R.M.L., Treas. B. 309.

(81) *Liber Conciliorum* 1647 fo. 91. R.M.L., Arch. 116.

with a perpetual burthen of masses for the repose of the soul of the donor. This donation was ratified by the Procurators of the Assembly on March 15, 1644 and, after improvements having been carried out in the house in question, it was let at Sc. 65 per annum which sum was employed in accordance with Comm. Granier's dispositions. (82)

The Conventual Chaplains Fra Pietro Stiges and Fra Giovanni Cirviglias, uncle and nephew, who owned house No. 71 Strait Street in common, each donated his part of the house to the survivor on condition that after their death the house was to pass to the Assembly of Conventual Chaplains with a burthen of the celebration of masses for the repose of their souls without, (83) however, their having stipulated the number of masses to be celebrated. When the Assembly took over the house, it was decreed that the number of masses should be twenty four each year. (84)

In 1713 the premises were given on perpetual lease to Dr. Gio. Batta Glinsciano. (85)

Comm. Fra Nicole de Cintraj was the original owner of house No. 122 Strait Street. This he sold to Virgilia Fioccarei (86) who, in her will, left it to her grand child Olimpia, daughter of Giacobbo Corogna. (87) Olimpia donated the property to her brother Francesco, reserving the right of enjoying the usufruct. (88) In 1731 Francesco and Olimpia sold the premises to the Manoel Foundation for Sc. 2,875. (89)

Casa Viani (No. 119 Strait Street) was bought by Vincenzo Viani at an auction sale of the Seneschal's Office. Vincenzo Viani entailed all his property, with the exception of this house which was left, free of entail, to his son Isidoro, 1st Baron Viani, who in his turn entailed the abovementioned premises, as primogeniture, in favour of his son, Gio. Batta.

Baron Viani owed the Università a sum of Sc. 80, 000 and in 1734 he and his son petitioned the Grand Master to disentail part of their property in order to pay this debt. Permission was granted and the house under review was ceded to the Università as part payment of the amount due.

The premises were sold on July 13, 1734, at a public auction of the Seneschal's Office and were acquired by the Manoel Foundation. (90)

The Bali of Caspe, Fra Agostino Sans de Lalloso, owned another house (No. 114 Strait Street) which came to the Religion through the spoglio of Fra Agostino who died in the Convent on December 26, 1701.

In Strait Street there are many other fine houses of which, unfortunately, it has not been possible to trace the origin owing to the present owners not having any records in their possession.

(82) *Cabreo Assemblée Fiernalda* Vol. I fo. 31 R.M.L., Treas. B. 297.

(83) *ibid.* fo. 35.

(84) Records of Not. Giorgio Zelivo of the 28 May. 1596.

(85) Records of Not. Giuseppe Simon of 16 March 1713.

(86) Records of Not. Gio. Luca Mamo of 10 December 1676.

(87) Records of Not. Giuseppe Callus of 4 October 1702.

(88) Records of Not. Pietro Paolo Natale of 8 February 1729.

(89) *Repertorio della Fond. Manoel* fo. 45 R.M.L. Treas. A. 25.

(90) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 33 R.M.L. Treas. A. 1.

ST. JOSEPH STREET.

Humble St. Joseph Street at the eastern end of Valletta, together with St. Anne Street, was once known as the "Strada dei Francesi". This street has two houses which may be included in this work.

The Casa Ferrari (No. 45 St. Joseph Street) was owned with certainty by the Assembly of Conventual Chaplains from the year 1646. For, although there appears to be no document showing how the Assembly acquired this property, Procurator Cagliola, in 1646, stated in his books that the premises first belonged to a certain Gio. Batt. Ferrari and then to Tommaso Scaglia who transferred them to the Assembly of Conventual Chaplains in settlement of a debt. (91)

In 1762 the house was given on lease for 99 years to Michele Farrugia.

House No. 82 St. Joseph Street was assigned to the Lascaris Foundation by Clara, widow of Giacomo Paschali, in settlement of a debt contracted by Pic Paschali with the said Foundation and for which Clara had stood as surety. (92)

HOUSES ON THE BASTIONS AND OTHER HOUSES

On the Castile Square, near the Upper Baracca, is a house (No. 2 Castile Place) which belonged to Fra Girolamo Caraffa, Prior of Barletta. The Prior donated this house, in 1599, (93) to the Langue of Italy under certain conditions, one of which was that the property was to be enjoyed by the senior Italian knight, present in the Convent, capable of succeeding to a Commandery. (94)

Close by, under the walls of the St. James Cavalier, is a small low building over the door of which is a latin inscription which has been translated as follows:—

"Do not be surprised if under the auspices of Grand Master Gregorio Caraffa a granary was joined to a fort, for here Ceres joins Bellona for the common weal. This granary was erected in 1686 under the care of the Jurats Giuseppe de Allard, Salvatore Mangion, Alessandro Ramozzetti and Vincenzo Viani". (95)

In this building, often referred to as the "Casa dell'Annona", all business in connection with the importation of cereals and other foodstuffs (Annona) was transacted.

Also under the shadow of St. James Cavalier is another small building over which is a marble tablet recording that it belonged to the Manoel Foundation, this was known as the "Casa del Giuoco" (House of Games). This house was built in a public space, in the year 1735, at the expense of the Manoel Foundation and was let to a certain Grezio Falzon for Sc. 80 per annum. Falzon was granted the sole and exclusive privilege of holding bowling games in the open space between the posts of Italy and France. (96)

(91) *Cabreo Assemblea Fiernalda Vol. I* fo. 36 R.M.L., Treas. B. 297.

(92) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 357 R.M.L., Treas. A. 1.

(93) Records of Not. Ascanio Scaglia of 9 September 1599.

(94) *Fondazioni della Lingua d'Italia Tom. I* fo. 346 & 360 R.M.L., Arch.

(95) Translation from "Valletta" by Sir Them. Zammit p. 62.

(96) *Cabreo Fondazione Manoel Vol. II* fo. 18 R.M.L., Treas. B. 311.

Saveria Campion or Champion owned house No. 1 Alexander Street, now completely demolished, which she sold to the "Congregazione di Guerra" (War Ministry), in 1786, for the sum of Sc. 450, for the use of the Regiment of Malta. (97)

At the time of the elevation of Francisco Ximenes de Texada to the Grandmastership there was widespread discontent in the Island. This was greatly fomented by a tax on bread which the new Grand Master levied. In 1775 a plot to overthrow the regime of the Order was hatched and carried into execution by a priest, Gaetano Mannarino. After some initial success, the rising failed miserably, some of the ringleaders being executed and others, including Gaetano Mannarino, imprisoned. In order to prevent any similar risings in the future the Grand Master and Council established a new force known as the "Regimento di Malta" for the protection of the city of Valletta. This regiment was to consist of 1,200 men of which two thirds, at least, were to be foreigners recruited at Marseilles, Naples and Genoa. (98) The new force, which was composed of the riff raff of Europe, caused so much trouble, and desertions were so numerous, that it was disbanded in 1795.

The house No. 2 St. Andrew Street was built at the expense of Comm. Fra Antonio Stefano Toupard following a decree which he obtained from the Grand Master on the 29th. December 1792. (99)

The Treasury came into possession of house No. 5 in the same street through the spoglio of Chev. Fra Martin Chevalier who died in 1635. It was sold by the Treasury, in 1648, to Prior Fra Dionisio de Pollastron de Lailliere for Sc. 720. (100) who donated the property to the brothers Girolamo and Andrea de Cassar, and it was divided between them, Girolamo getting the portion facing Marsamxett whilst the other portion was seized by the Treasury on July 29, 1667 on account of a debt which Andrea owed the Treasury. (101) In 1783 we find the premises given on lease for the duration of two lives to Chev. Fra Domenico Paradines Barsac and in 1803 they passed to Teresa Delatra Paris. (102)

Both houses in St. Andrew Street have been totally destroyed.

A house which has been totally demolished by the building speculator is that which once bore number 135 Marsamxett Street. This, together with house No. 108 Britannia Street, was bequeathed to the Nice Commandery by Comm. Fra Jean Bap'tiste de Gallean Chateauneuf in his disproprium made in Syracuse on the 11th. October 1634.

In the same street is the house (No. 61 Marsamxett Street) which was owned by Fra Ippolito Malaspina, Bali of Naples, (103) General of the Pontifical Galleys in 1603. The Bali left the fifth part of his spoglio, amounting to Sc. 2,000, to the Convent of the Magdalenes, the interest on which capital

(97) *Cabreo Congregazione di Guerra* fo. 731 R.M.L., Treas. A. 104.

(98) PORTER — Major General Whitworth — *Knights of Malta* Vol. II page 424 Spottiswoode & Co. London.

(99) *Registro Suppliche Congregazione di Guerra Letter K* fo. 327 Arch. 1023.

(100) Records of Not. Michele Ralli of the 28 July 1648.

(101) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 37 Treas. A. 1.

(102) *Urbani, Vol. III* 1808-1814 fo. 31 R.M.L., Treas. B. 107.

(103) CIANTAR, Giovan Antonio, "*Malta Illustrata*" Vol. I Lib. I, Not. I XVI.

was to be applied to the endowment of repentant women who wished to take the veil.

The house under review was bequeathed to Marchese Malaspina who sold it to Chev. Fra Ottavio Costa. In his will dated January 13, 1639, Chev. Ottavio left this house, after the death of Chev. Fra Antoniotto Costa, to the members of his family, in the male line, who, at any time, formed part of the Order, and failing these to members in the female line; the senior member of the male line being always preferred. (104) Chev. Fra Antoniotto Costa died outside the Convent on August 27 1674.

The Noble Filippo del Carretto claimed the usufruct of the house in 1688, and his claim was upheld by the Camera dei Conti. (105)

During the 18th. Century this house is often referred to as the "Casa Ferretti" and we find that, in 1763, in accordance with the terms of the will of Fra Antonio Costa, the Treasury took possession of the premises on the death of the Bali of Turin, Fra Benedetto Ferretti, probably the last beneficiary under the terms of Chev. Costa's will. (106)

Giuseppe and Antonio brothers Manuso, sons of Giovanni and Diana Manuso, owned house No. 38 in this street. This they sold in 1673, to the Monte della Redenzione degli Schiavi for the sum of Sc. 1,200. (107)

The three fine houses numbered 31, 32 and 33 Marsamxett Street were built at the expense of the Langue of Aragon in 1692 and assigned to the knights of the Priory of Catalogna.

Also in this street is house numbered 7 and 8 which is referred to in the rent books of the Order as the "Casa Vaini". It is so named as it probably formed part of the property of the Vaini Family. The entrance of this house was originally at No. 10, St. Michael Street, but, when the level of this street was lowered the entrance was transferred to Marsamxett Street.

From 1767 to 1784 we find the premises let to Comm. Fra Alberto Mirelli and after him to the Conventual Chaplain Fra Gio. Domenico Barbaro. (108) It was later the Malta Head Office of the Eastern Telegraph Company and is today used as a Masonic Temple.

In Irish Street, house number 11 was purchased in 1714 by the Cottoner Foundation from Michael'Angelo Sguero and Maria Madrenza for the sum of Sc. 650. (109) This house is found in the records under the name of "Casa Sguero" although it is sometimes referred to as the "Casa Madrenza".

On the St. Barbara Bastion houses Nos. 2 and 6 were built at the expense of Grand Master Nicholas Cottoner and were included in his Foundation, whilst houses Nos. 12 to 37 were built at the expense of Grand Master Gio. Paolo Lascaris Castellar. (110)

Here we also find a house (No. 40 St. Barbara Bastion) which was built

(104) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 29 Treas. A. 1.

(105) *Liber. Audienza* 29. 3. 1689 R.M.L., Arch. 670.

(106) *Deliberazioni della Ven. Camera del Tesoro* 21. 2. 1763 fo. 87 R.M.L., Arch. 634.

(107) *Cabreo Originale Monte della Redenzione de Schiavi* fo. 56 R.M.L. Treas. B. 309.

(108) *Libro Esigenziale dei Beni del Tesoro 1767-81* Treas. A. 2.

(109) Records of Not. Giuseppe Callus of the 7 November 1714.

(110) *Liber Concil.* 1647, 1648 & 1649 fo. 9 R.M.L. Arch. 116.

by the Treasury, in 1666, to serve as the residence of the Chief Master Gunner (Capo Mro. Bombardiere). (111)

Another house (No. 41/43 St. Barbara Bastion) was known as "La Niviera". In the records we read that, on November 19, 1760, the Congregation of War acceded to a request made by the shareholders of the concern for the importation of snow, and allotted them this locality for the storage of the snow which they imported from Sicily. (112)

In Malta, snow was then considered as one of the chief necessities of life and it was imported mainly for the use of the hospitals, the Grand Master, and the Auberges. The hospitals always received a priority and when there was a scarcity of this commodity, the whole supply in the Island was reserved for the use of the sick. (113)

Although it was not the intention to mention any of the Auberges in this work, an exception has had to be made in the case of the Auberge de Baviere.

This palace was built in 1696 by Fra Gaspare Carnerio, Bali of Acre, on the site of an old lime kiln which was leased to Bali Carnerio for the term of two lives. On the expiration of this term, the Treasury was to receive Sc. 21 per annum, corresponding to the rent of the pre-existing building, and the remaining balance was to be invested in the purchase of bronze guns for the defence of the fortress or for the galleys or in the purchase of a "gioia" or gift for the Conventual Church. (114)

From September 13, 1702 to April 13, 1719 the palace was let, for Sc. 260 per annum, jointly to Fra Ottavio Tancredi, Prior of Messina, and Comm. Fra Marc' Antonio Zondadari, nephew of Pope Alexander VII. (115) Fra Marc' Antonio Zondadari was elevated to the Grandmastership in 1720, and tradition says, without confirmation, that the Grand Master continued to reside in his palace up to the time of his death.

By a letter from the Ambassador of the Religion to the Holy See, dated January 17, 1725, Grand Master Antonio Manoel de Vilhena was informed that, in view of the great merits of the Religion, the Supreme Pontiff, Pope Benedict XIII had signified his intention of presenting the Grand Master with the Stoc and Pilier, (116) and that these would be brought to Malta by the Papal Legate, Monsignor Giovanni Francesco Abbati Olivieri. This news caused universal jubilation in Malta, and as this signal honour had never been conferred on any other Grand Master, a commission was set up to regulate the ceremonies and procedure; this consisted of Bali Count Nesselrode, the Prior of St. Giles Grimaldi, the Prior of Lombardy Solaro and the Bali of the Holy Sepulchre Contreras.

The Papal Legate arrived in Malta from Leghorn on April 19, on board a French vessel and was conducted with due pomp to the Palazzo Carnerio, which had been magnificently furnished to receive the distinguished visitor.

(111) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 64 Treas. A.1.

(112) *Deliberazioni delle Congregazioni di Guerra 1759-93* fo. 20 R.M.L. Arch. 1015.

(113) Bo'sselin op. cit. Vol. I page 120.

(114) MIFSUD Monsignor Alfred — *Knights of the Ven. Tongue of England* page 106.

(115) *Libro Beni Stabili del Tesoro "B"* fo. 336 Treas. A. 1.

(116) "Sword and Hat" signal honour conferred by the Pope on heads of State.

On the morning of May 3, a procession, composed of the Papal Legate, all the Convent, and the Prior of the Conventual Church, left the Carnerio Palace and passing beneath numerous triumphal arches lavishly decorated in the rococo style of the period, which had been erected in Strada San Giorgio (Kingsway), wended its way to the Conventual Church where the Grand Master was formally presented with the Papal gifts.

When Grand Master Emanuel de Rohan instituted the Anglo Bavarian Langue, the Carnerio Palace was bought to serve as the auberge of the new Langue. The site was then valued at Sc. 11,656 irrespective of the value of the building which was fixed at Sc. 39,602. The palace was made over to the Anglo Bavarian knights for the sum of Sc. 20,000 which was less than one half of the real value of the property.

In 1824 the building was handed over to the British Military Authorities and it was only returned to the Civil Government after the grant of Self Government in 1921. It is today a government school and though it suffered minor damage in the Second World War it is still in its original state.

With the Palazzo Carnerio this story of the palaces and houses of Valletta draws to a close. Many of the houses and palaces have disappeared and their sites can hardly be identified, however, it is hoped that this short work may, perhaps, serve future generations in tracing these forgotten mansions and conjure up a vision of this city which was the crowning glory of the Knights of St. John.