

The Maltese Calesse : Visitors' Impressions in Nineteenth Century Travel Narratives

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Introduction

The Calesse is the crude precursor to the Karrozzin used in Malta. It was the main source of public transport up to the nineteenth century. A writer in 'Notes and Queries' for 1864 says that the calesse was introduced in Malta by the Knights of the Spanish Langue '*more than one hundred and fifty years ago*'ⁱ This assertion presupposes that the calesse was extant in Malta from the late seventeenth century. There are indeed several references to the calesse in eighteenth century literature. A Venetian chronicler in his description of Malta during 1716 describes how calesses were used by prostitutes during carnival days.ⁱⁱ **Michele Acciardi** in his narrative of the conspiracy of the slaves in 1749 mentions that when Mustafa Bassa di Rodi was discharged from quarantine, Grand Master Manuel Pinto da Fonseca sent to him a calesse to take up his lodgings at Fort St. Elmo.ⁱⁱⁱ **Giovanni Scarabelli** writing about the Sacra Infermeria in the eighteenth century, mentions that '*l'ospidale e dotato di un calesse, quindi di rimessa e di stalla per I cavalli.*'^{iv} A treasury record relating to the obligations of the 'Unita della Citta Nottle., ed isola di Malta' dated 1 January 1751 refers to the hire of calesses on Christmas days, Easter and the Feast of St. Gregory.^v **Charles Nicolas Sigisbert Sonnini de Manoncourt**, the French naturalist, in 1799 published the French edition of 'Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt'. While in Malta during the year 1777, he noted that only '*the officers of the order, and other inhabitants, had, for the same purpose, chaises drawn by a single mule, which a man led by a leathern thong.*'^{vi} An early description written in 1777 by **Le Comte De Borch** compares the vehicle to a stretcher-cabriolet supported by a powerful mule, of a similar size of a Neapolitan horse, driven by a very agile Maltese rider^{vii}. **Patrick Brydone**, the Scottish traveller, relates how on 7 June, 1770 he had toured the island '*in coaches drawn by one mule each, the only kind of vehicle the place affords*'^{viii} When the historian, **Johan Meerman**, accompanied by his wife, visited Malta in 1792, he observed that the calesse was the only means of travelling although unsuitable to reach certain locations^{ix}. The manuscript diary of the Norwegian clergyman, **Peder Pavels**, who journeyed on the frigate '*Thetis*' during the years 1796 and 1797, makes reference to a tour from Valletta to Rabat on 26 December 1796 using the local calesse^x. **Comte Francois Emmanuel Guidnard de Saint-Priest**, writing in 1791, describes how calesses were allowed to drive in St. George's Square, Valletta, on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday of Carnival days which square was invariably closed with chains during the year to prevent intrusion. He also mentions that calesses were ornamented with tree leaves when being used and driven to the feast of '*Mnaria*'^{xi}. When **Carlo Castone della Torre di Rezzonico**, an Italian polygraph and cousin of Pope Clement XIII, visited Malta in 1794, he complained to Grand Master Emmanuel de Rohan about the damaged state of the roads as a result of having been eroded by the wheels of carts and calesses.^{xii} **Thomas Freller** writes that '*The Russian Count Chernishev was among the distinguished visitors who toured Mdina and Rabat in a calesse in June 1782.*'^{xiii}

The ownership and use of calesses were subject to rules and regulations from time to time. During the eighteenth century, calesses could not be driven by slaves or young men under the age of eighteen. Nor could they be driven in certain locations in Valletta and during night-time those for hire '*debbono di notte tempo trasportarsi dentro la posta d'Italia sotto pena d'onze sei.*'^{xiv} Similar regulations were included in the Dritto Municipale compiled under the Grand Master Emmanuel De Rohan in 1843.^{xv} Rules covering the manufacture and use of studded wheels appeared in the Bando of 29 January 1805

issued by **Samuel Taylor Coleridge** under the administration of Sir Alexander Ball. Police laws and regulations during the nineteenth century imposed several conditions on owners of caleses for hire. Each calesse was designated a number, could not be driven without a licence, tariffs were established and locations were assigned where they had to be stationed.^{xvi} According to **Martin Montgomery**, the number of caleses which paid licences on 1st January 1835 totalled 264 in Malta and 14 in Gozo.^{xvii}

With the advent of the British presence in Malta in 1800, the number of visitors to the island increased dramatically. The Malta garrison comprised not only soldiers and officers but also doctors, architects and those in charge of the island's administration. British officers and their families travelling to and returning from East India sojourned in Malta temporarily before continuing their journey. Malta became a coaling station in the late nineteenth century when steamships powered by coal began to replace sailing ships, thus obliging vessels to stop for coaling in Malta's Grand Harbour. The island became a favourite destination for invalids seeking milder climates to regain their health. Prominent personalities and scholars, including women, also visited the island for some reason or other. Malta had become a favourite destination for British visitors and their published personal accounts provide illuminating details on the conditions prevailing in Malta at the time of their visit. Throughout the nineteenth century accounts given by travellers were considered in Victorian Britain as a highly significant source of information on the Mediterranean. Guide books started to be published to provide visitors with all the pertinent information regarding the island. The wealth of travel literature relating to Malta provides illuminating details on the aspects of life on the island and references to the 'calesse', are found in many narratives.

Guidebooks

Guide books on Malta were written by George Percy Badger, Thomas McGill, J. Quintana and Giuseppe Periccioli Borzesi. Badger's seems to have been a popular book with editions continuing up to 1881. Several foreign guide books also provided information to travellers intending to visit the island.

George Percy Badger, the English Anglican missionary and a scholar of oriental studies, passed his youth in Malta marrying Maria Wilcox in Valletta on 8 January 1840. In 1838, he published his guide to the Maltese islands. He writes:

*The common vehicle used for travelling in Malta is called a calesse: a kind of carriage with two wheels, drawn by one horse or mule. Some of these conveyances are intended for two persons only, others carry four. The driver is obliged to walk or run at the side, with a small piece of wood, called a **niggieza**, in which two short nails are fixed, pricks the animal in order to urge him onward. The roads in the country, especially those leading to the principal villages, are in general sufficiently good for the run of these vehicles; but in the uninhabited part, they are rugged, and in some cases travelling on horseback would be dangerous^{xviii}.*

An unknown author, writing in 1801, when making references to the 'ruins of a citadel built by the Arabs near the temple of Hercules' in Kasar (old village name for Tas'Silg), remarks that 'the route described is not practicable in a calesse (a vehicle of the country drawn by a mule) and therefore must be performed on horse.'^{xix}

William Domeier, of the London Royal College of Physicians, arrived in Malta in April 1806 as physician to the foreign forces. In 1810, he published a guide primarily intended to provide information to invalids taking residence in Malta for the purpose of regaining their health. His description of the calesse makes interesting reading.

The carriages, though pretty inconvenient, differ much from those of other countries, having only two wheels, and nearly the shape of an English post-chaise; are drawn by one horse or mule, close to which the coachman runs bare-footed, commonly with a red cap on his head, without a neckcloth, the arms stripped from the sleeves of his shirt, a waistcoat (often silken) without sleeves, at which a double row of round silver buttons hang, a scarf, and a pair of pantaloons, carrying no whip, instead of which, he pinches the animal with his nails, and guides him by a single rope, flung round the nose. Even if there are two reins, (which is commonly the case with those belonging to English gentlemen) the coachman ties them both behind, at the harness, and guides the horse by the additional rope slung over the nose.

It is remarkable, that though the drivers run on foot, they commonly gallop the horse.

The monthly hire of a two, or four seated calesse, animal and coachman included is sixteen Spanish dollars, or one dollar a day, if taken by that time. There is, however, an exception to this price, on particular days, viz. St. John's, Gregory's days, &c. when they are dearer, because they are more wanted.

With respect to shape, they model the two seated ones after English post-chaises, and their form becomes consequently more elegant than they formerly were^{xx}.

Thomas MacGill describes in his hand book, published in 1839, how on the feast of St. Peter and St. Paul 'Valletta appears to have changed character with its progenitor; the streets are deserted, and not a calesse, or even a humble donkey, can be procured for love or money'^{xxi}.

J. Quintana, when referring to excursions to the countryside, suggests that the calesse is the preferred use of transport. Even in Gozo, for those travelling through the countryside, the calesse is the preferred vehicle. He reiterates how difficult it is to obtain the services of the calesse, and indeed, horses, on the feast of 29 June, which he says '*si chiama l'Imnaria*'. Calesses can be hired from Morrell, '*un grande stabilimento in strada Forni No. 150*. Complaints regarding the service of calesses may be lodged with the '*uffici di polizia interna No. 15 strada Mercanti*'. The tariff for the hire of calesses is included in Quintana's guide^{xxii}.

In 1845, **John Murray** published a new and revised edition of 'Handbook for travellers'. The entry for Malta excursions read:

Having now briefly described the principal objects of interest in Valletta and its suburbs, we shall proceed to notice some of the excursions which may be made into the interior of the island. The usual mode of travelling is either on horseback or in a carriage on two wheels, peculiar to Malta, clumsy in construction but not altogether disagreeable. The only apology offered by the natives for retaining such vehicles is that 'if anything happens to go wrong, everybody knows how to set it right'^{xxiii}.

Hints to travellers by the overland route were published in 'The Popular Overland Guide' in 1861 with reference to the Maltese calesse being made:

The Strade Reale is the Bond Street of La Valette, where everyone is to be seen, and all things are to be purchased for which Malta is famous, especially laces, mittens, and silver jewellery. We therefore, as a matter of course, take a stroll through this busy thoroughfare, entering a shop or a café occasionally, observing the different manners and costumes of the people, not forgetting those of the calesse drivers – the cabmen, or rather the cab-boys, of the place – with their red caps and crimson sashes, walking or running by the side of their strange-looking vehicles, something like the Irish cars, but drawn by mules, with the shafts on the very top of their backs. The general feature of the town, mostly up and down

hill, will account for the driver not being seated, excepting when he has a good bit of road before him, when, after urging his mule into a good pace, he will vault with ease, and even grace, upon the shafts, and carry his passengers along as fast as he can go, careless of the jerks and the jolting they receive.^{xxiv}

Mariana Starke in her ninth edition of ‘Travels in Europe.....’ explains how ‘*the carriages in general use are caleches with two wheels and one horse by whose side the driver runs. There are, however, a few four-wheeled carriages drawn by two horses*’. She also indicates the tariffs for hiring calesses.^{xxv}

The entry relating to Malta in ‘The Penny Cyclopaedia of the Society for the diffusion of useful knowledge’ for 1839 under ‘Roads and Appearance of the Country’ says:

The inland modes of transport are by a single-horse carts, and horses, mules or asses of burden. The calesse of Malta is an uncouth-looking vehicle, slung upon a clumsy pair of wheels and shafts, and is made to carry four persons, but always drawn by one horse, by the side of which the driver runs.^{xxvi}

In 1850, **James Barber** published an overland guide book intended to provide information for the traveller to India and Egypt and vice-versa. He described the most prominent edifices in Malta and provided information on the excursions to the country. In a footnote, he writes:

A calesse, the common carriage of Malta, a sort of Brobdignag imitation of a Dutch toy, can travel anywhere; but those who wish to see the country must adopt some other conveyance. Fortunately, under the Government of Lieut.-General Sir F. Bouverie, such attention was paid the roads in the island - a source of advantage to the population, in every point of view, and the public in general - that where, some twenty years ago or less, only two or three carriages on four wheels, the property of private individuals, could be found, they are now in pretty general use, and may be had for hire.^{xxvii}

Travellers’ narratives

There are innumerable references to Malta in the wealth of travel literature of the nineteenth century. Visitors who sojourned in Malta did not fail to visit the principal places of interest of the island. The narratives do not lack observations and remarks regarding the personal experiences and attitudes of the travellers towards the geographical and social aspects of the island. Although most visitors spoke favourably of Malta, their perception of social life of the island contrasted with those of their country. In particular, protestants were at times unable to reconcile the religious attitudes and traditions of the Maltese.

In many instances, references to the Maltese calesse were made when the traveller toured the island to visit places outside Valletta which necessitated the use of this vehicle. The calesse appeared to visitors a ‘*strange-looking vehicle*’ peculiar to Malta. It was drawn by a single horse or mule, compared to a sedan chair on wheels or a carriage of ancient times, one writer saying it looked like an imitation of Dutch toy. The cabin had windows on the front and on the sides with bold leather curtains. It could accommodate from two to six persons, a writer saying that those intended for two passengers were unsuitable for obese travellers. The calesse had large wheels at its back without any springs. The movement made passengers uncomfortable, with jolts even when the vehicle was not moving, one writer narrating its ‘*annihilating*’ effect on the lock of hairs of lady passengers. The driver ran along the calesse barefooted, occasionally with leather sandals, and mounted on the shaft when driving in the open country. He pricks the animal in order to urge him forward *with a small piece of wood, called a niggieza, in which two short nails are fixed*. The dress of the driver appeared that which was worn centuries ago. It consisted of a coarse shirt, a waistcoat without sleeves, studded with silver or gold

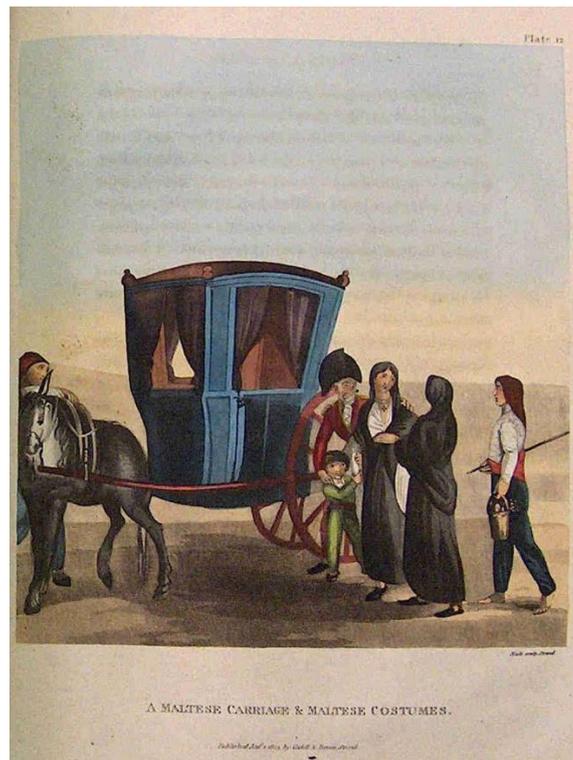
buttons *a life time savings*, a pair of loose trowsers tightened with a coloured sash, his dangling cap kept ‘*a la Figaro*’ in which were held the cigars and meal for the day. Travellers endeavoured to describe and compare the calesse to other vehicles intended for public transport. A uniform comparison could not be found and travellers visualised the calesse according to their own perception.

An early observation during the advent of the British in Malta is given by **Aeneas Anderson** of the 40th Regiment when he accompanied the British fleet on its expedition in the Mediterranean and Egypt. In December 1800 he arrived in Malta. He says:

In La Valetta there are a great many two-wheeled carriages for hire, which are numbered as in London. They are of a very clumsy construction, of a square shape, and large enough to contain six persons. With this unwieldy machine, and so loaded, one horse or mule will go at the rate of four or five miles an hour. The latter, however, are more generally used, as they are remarkably large and strong in this island. For about twopence a person may be taken from one end of the city to the other; while for a little tour in the country, or the use of the whole day, a dollar is considered as very ample satisfaction. The driver uses neither whip nor spur, but keeps a sharp nail in his hand, with which he picks the side of the animal in order to quicken his motions. He runs along by his side with the reins in one hand and a swinging kind of movement of the other. These drivers are seldom seen either with shoes or stockings but on a holiday. Their general dress is a pair of loose trowsers, a coarse shirt, a waistcoat, round which they tie a long, red, worsted sash, and a woollen cap. On their festivals some little addition is made to their dress, in the way of decoration according as their finances will allow them.^{xviii}

Thomas Walsh, a young captain in the British Army, was on his way to join General Eyre Coote’s troops in Egypt when his ship stopped at Malta on 1 December 1800 to pick up supplies and troops. His observations on the Maltese calesse read:

The modes of conveyance used here are carriages without springs, made to contain two or four persons, and drawn by single mule, driven by a man on foot, whose station is close to the vehicle, and who, sometimes at a trot, but most generally at a gallop, keeps pace with the animal. They are very clumsy awkward carriages, and, as they pass over the rough pavement, shake the unfortunate passenger almost to pieces. A long string of these vehicles, numbered, always stands in the Strada Reale for hire. Drays also, drawn by one mule, are found in every part of the town, and are very useful. The mules in this island are very tall and strong; it is surprising how they go up and down the steep slippery streets, some of which are literally flights of steps, without ever stumbling.^{xxix}



The French writer, **Pierre Marie Louis de Boisgelen**, is the well-known author of 'Ancient and Modern Malta' which he published in 1804 when he emigrated to England. He observed that the wealthy rented a calesse, 'a kind of local vehicle, with two big wheels and pulled by a mule.' In referring to the excursion itinerary to the ruins at Tas-Silg and the temples of Hercules to the east of Marsa Sirocco, he says 'the road of which the above is an itinerary is not passable for a caleshe; that is to say, if the traveller quits the direct one, which leads from one casal to another: this journey must therefore be performed on horseback, and, indeed, in some parts, on foot. A caleshe is a carriage of the country, with two large wheels, and drawn by a single mule.'^{xxx}

In his travel narratives for 1809, 1810 and 1811, **John Galt**, the Scottish novelist, entrepreneur, and political and social commentator, writes:

The common mode of travelling in Malta, is in single-horse close carriages, which hold two persons. They are called calishes, and are a very tolerable sort of vehicles. The driver never rides, but runs, all day, by the side of the horse or mule; and the fatigue which he will sustain, even under the influence of the scirocco, is almost incredible. Nor is he extravagant in his charges: for a dollar, a calish may be hired all the afternoon and evening. This carriage is the only thing in the shape of a machine that has struck me as peculiar to the Maltese. They are not, I suspect, a people remarkable for inventions; on the contrary, they seem to have reached a Chinese state of self-sufficient perfection, and are satisfied with their attainments. They have the most beautiful breed of asses in the world, and they keep them in a handsome sleeked condition.^{xxxii}

Reference to the Maltese calesse is made by an anonymous writer in 'The Quarterly Review,' for March 1813, a literary and political periodical which started in London in 1809. The author says 'an Englishman sees with wonder the driver of his calesse, during the most oppressive days of summer, running by the side of his horse for miles together, and keeping up with him, whatever may be his pace.'^{xxxiii}

Edward Blaquiere, author and philhellene, an Irishman of Huguenot descent, joined the Royal Navy in 1794 and served chiefly in the Mediterranean. Speaking of the inhabitants of Malta, he states *'the velocity with which a calissieri accompanies his calisse, the favorite vehicle of Malta, has always surprized strangers.'*^{xxxiii}

Sir George Cockburn, a Royal Navy Officer, became Admiral of the Fleet on 1 July 1851. During his tenure as Lieutenant General he was on board the *HMS Lively* in 1810 which vessel formed part of the fleet transporting supplies to Malta. He visited the island once more in 1811. He recounts how on the night between Thursday 9 and Friday 10 of July 1810 the *Lively* was shipwrecked at Qawra Point (St. Paul's Bay). He made direct and indirect references to the Maltese calesse in his narrative of the voyage. Shortly after the shipwreck, *'General Oakes, who commands here, sent two carriages, a sort of one-horse machines, peculiar to Malta; - the Major and I went in one, the Admiral in the other.'* On the 14 July, *'the Admiral and I set off in a calashe for St. Paul's Bay to visit the wreck.'* He describes the calesse:

The calashe, a sort of one-horse or mule carriage, peculiar to Malta, is very convenient, and a boy runs almost all day along with the horse, sometimes jumping up for ten minutes on the shafts, to rest. It is astonishing how these poor creatures hold out.^{xxxiv}

Edouard Rene' Pierre Charles Dubois of Montule' was a French traveller. From October 1818 to February 1819 he travelled through Egypt visiting Malta in September of 1818. His publications of travel are remarkable for the illustrations adorning his works. In his letter dated 15 September 1818 he remarks:

Voulant aller a Cita-Vechia, ancienne capitale de l'ile, j'avais pris une voiture; c'etait un cabriolet a-peu-pres de la forme de ceux don't on se sert dans les campagnes en France; une mule le conduisait, et le conducteur suivait a pied; quand le chemin se trouvait beau, quelque grande que fut la chaleur, il me menait au trot. La fatigue qu'eprouve le conducteur, rend la promenade desagreceable; sa journee est certainement plus dure que elle d'un negre a la Jamaique.^{xxxv}

A cursory reference to the calesse is made by **William John Monson**, 6th Baron Monson, who toured the Continent in the years 1817, 1818, 1819 saying *'I made a little excursion into the interior of the island, April 25th, in one of their vehicles, termed a 'calesse'; which is the body of a chariot on two wheels, drawn by a single mule, while the driver, runs by the side.*^{xxxvi}

The **Rev. Samuel Sheridan Wilson**, of the London Missionary Society, arrived in Malta at the commencement of 1819 to continue the promotion of the knowledge of the Gospel among the Greeks. He spent sixteen years in Malta and Greece returning to London from Malta on 28 July 1835 together with six children. On one occasion, desirous of exploring the remote places of the island, he hired a calesse *'and at six A.M. we began our journey, and reached the end of Malta, sixteen miles from Valletta, at noon.'* He writes:

The calesh is a clumsy carriage, drawn by a mule, with gear truly patriarchal. The driver runs by the side, holding the hempen halter in his left hand, and in his right either sways a whip or stick, or more generally the loose end of the halter itself. This notable postilion is dressed in a check or an ought-to-be white shirt, a waistcoat bestudded with silver buttons, the savings of his life, loose trousers, a long red or blue cap resembling in shape an English nightcap, the end dangling down his back, containing his cigars and dinner, a girdle, so often spoken of in scared writ, bound several times round his waist. He is generally barefoot, but sometimes wears a pair of sandals. The tout ensemble is uncommonly striking to a stranger, and forms a comment on scriptural allusions to oriental apparel.^{xxxvii}

On the 14 December 1824, the **Rev. Charles Swan**, chaplain to ‘*HMS Cambrian*’ made a journey to San Antonio prompting him to state that ‘*in some places it is impossible for a caleche to travel*’.^{xxxviii}

Joseph Woods, an English Quaker architect, botanist and geologist, the founder of the London Architectural Society, arrived in Malta on 8 July 1818. He made various excursions in the island. In one of these excursions he recounts how ‘*we dined on the ground, and then remounted our caleshes, (covered carriages, each with one horse, and the driver running by the side) to return to the races at Citta’ Vecchia; the ground may be three quarters of a mile long, not quite straight, and rather uphill from the starting point*’.^{xxxix}

Captain John Hanson in 1820 published a series of letters when he accompanied Sir Miles Nightingall on his overland route from India on his return to England. In a letter which he wrote from the Palace on 2 June 1819, he writes:

The wheeled carriages in use here are very extraordinary machines, they are called caleeshes, the wheels of which are at one extremity, and the horse at the other, so that the whole weight of the carriage would appear to be thrown on the shoulders of the animal. At first sight you would suppose it impossible the poor brute could drag a weight so disadvantageously; but notwithstanding this apparently mechanical imperfection, they drag you without any great effort the whole length of the island, whilst the driver guides the horse on foot, and runs at the side of the carriage with astonishing speed. The caleeshes are exceedingly comfortable, and said to be very safe.^{xl}

Anne Katherine Curteis Elwood, a British traveller, writer and biographer, published her journal in a series of letters describing her journey, when she accompanied her husband, from England to India in 1825. In letter XII, she narrates her impressions of the Maltese calesse.

The caleeshes, which, from the nature of the country, are almost the only vehicles in use, even with the English, are singular-looking conveyances. First of all comes, full drive, a wildish-looking little horse in shafts, and by its side, at a long swinging trot, runs the bare-footed calesheer, his immense nightcap alternately sweeping one shoulder or the other, as the sun or rain requires the additional defence. Then, not upon springs, comes a sort of box or sedan chair, supposed to carry two, though that number is frequently doubled, nay, trebled. Last of all, like an after-thought, comes tearing away, a pair of wheels; and in this machine, off the traveller jolts, apparently to the eminent danger of dislocation either to his neck or limbs; but, though I frequently wished Cinderella’s kind god-mother would have transmuted one of the enormous pumpkins sold in the market into a coach for my accommodation, I believe accidents are of a very rare occurrence.^{xli}

William Rae Wilson is known for his agreeable and popular travel narratives of foreign countries that achieved such popularity resulting in the publication of various editions of his ‘*Travels in Egypt and the Holy Land*’ first published in 1823. When in Malta, he observed that ‘*there are carriages in use here, which are for the conveyance of persons, in the form of a chaise without springs, drawn by one mule; the driver does not sit, but runs alongside the animal with great swiftness, being assisted by a rope, which is attached to its head and held in his hand.*’^{xlii}

John Kitto, the biblical scholar, arrived in Malta on 3 August, 1827. On coming ashore,

Our luggage was seized by about a dozen Maltese, and a thing upon two wheels, drawn by a mule, was also loaded, although a dozen English porters would have carried all, including, perhaps, the Maltese themselves, the mule, and the thing upon two wheels, into the bargain.

The American Evangelist, **Andrew Bigelow**, published his travel narrative in 1831 after three years his tour of Europe was completed. On 6 February 1827, he made an excursion into the country.

A carriage was called, and as it belongs to a class of curiosities, it demands a cursory notice. The body is shaped something after the form of an old-fashioned chariot. It has dark painted panels, and is accommodated with a single seat. There are glasses in front and at the sides. The carriage is mounted on one pair of wheels, and dragged by a mule. The animal is loaded with various kinds of gear showily contrived and arranged. The vehicle, termed a caleche, has no place for the driver. He holds the whip and reins, and runs manfully a pied. His habit has the gala dress of the native Maltese. Over a vest ornamented with an abundance of large gilt buttons, he wore a short cloak, called a caban, reaching rather below the small of the back. A broad red sash was twisted several times around his waist. The seams of his small clothes were lined with an unconscionable row of buttons; and his feet were protected by a rude sort of sandal – a leathern sole being fastened with strings laced about the ankle. The peak of his long red cap decorated with a tassel, hung in front the invariable style of wearing that covering by the Maltese.

The driver cracked his whip, and in bright balmy morning we set forth. Whether to show the speed of the mule or his own fleetness of foot, he put the animal up to a brisk trot. Leaving Porta Reale, we dashed over the draw-bridge, through gate and portcullis, and entered the splendid esplanade of Florian. Emerging from this by military pass through bulwarks of surprising strength, I found myself fairly abroad a la champagne. Here I expected the ardour of my feathered mercury would cool; but no, he drove on as though racing against time. I called him to rein up, out of pure compassion to himself, but he had his orders where to go before starting. Vicary had translated them; and as for other topics I found I must wait till returning to my interpreter. Coachey know nothing of my English, and I was quite as ignorant of his native patois.^{xliii}

In 1829, **Enoch Cobb Wines**, an American Congregational minister and prison advocate, became a teacher on board the United States ship ‘*Constellation*’ and journeyed in the Mediterranean and the Levant in the years 1829, 1830 and 1831. The first day he was in Malta he ‘*rode in the evening with Mr. Goodell to St. Paul’s Bay, so called from its being the supposed place of the shipwreck, described in the twenty-seventh chapter of the Acts. It is about eight miles from La Valetta. Our driver went on foot, and trotted the horse nearly all the way. On leaving the city, I observed that he put a loaf of coarse bread into the carriage, and to an inquiry whether he intended to eat while we were gone, he replied ‘non, signore, e mangiare pel cavallo’^{xliv}*

John Hennen, on being appointed head of the medical department in the Mediterranean in 1821, took the most effectual steps to render himself acquainted with the medical history of the different islands occupied by the British forces, including Malta. In writing of the employments, amusements and customs of the Maltese, he states:

There is a very active and robust class of men called ‘Calessieros’, or drivers of the single-horse carriages of the country; these men run along at the mules’ head, and continue their laborious employment for hours together, both by day and night. The exertion is violent, and the consequences are, that the Calessieros are the shortest lived individuals in the island.^{xlv}

The French writer, **Alphonse Marie Louis de Prat de Lamartine** travelled to Lebanon, Syria and the Holy Land with his family, in 1832 and 1833. In narrating his first impressions of the inland on 23 July 1832, he writes:

Add to this coup d'ceil, Arabian horses mounted by English officers, and galloping with their floating manes on the sand of the quay;-Maltese carriages, a kind of sedan chair on two wheels, to which a Barbary horse is harnessed, which the conductor accompanies on foot at a gallop, his waist bound with red belt with long fringe, and his head covered by a crimson cap, the point hanging down the back like that of a Spanish muleteer....^{xlvi}

After some years of professional exertions in England, **Edward Hogg** repaired to Italy and then proceeded on a tour to Alexandria, Damascus and Jerusalem in the years 1832-1833. He arrived in Malta on 6 May 1832 and in narrating his observations in the island, he remarks:

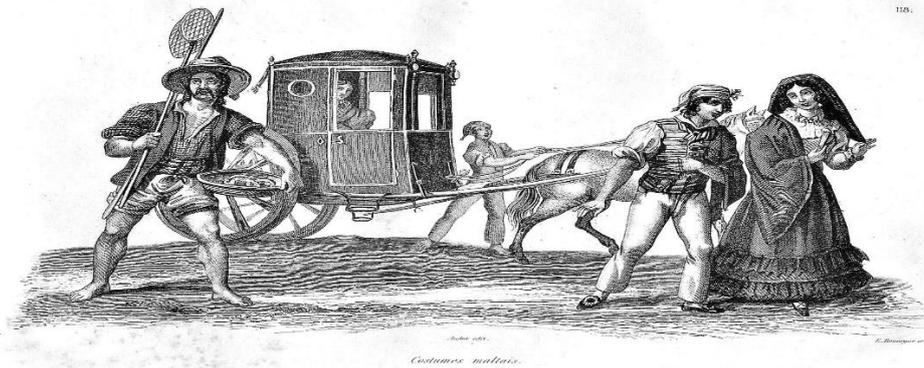
We went on a subsequent day to St. Antonio, about three or four miles from the town, to see the garden, which belongs to the governor's country residence. We made this expedition in a calash, the usual vehicle of the country, which consists of a chariot body placed upon two wheels, and drawn by one horse, the driver running by the side with a long whip, holding the reins in his hand. The whole is of clumsy construction, and to be hired in every street; but although convenient for short distances in an uneven country, its unwieldy shape and uneasy movements seem capable of being improved.^{xlvii}

The Rev. Robert Walsh was an Irish clergyman, historian, writer and physician. In 1820, he went out as a chaplain to the British consulate in Constantinople. He arrived in Malta on the 2nd December 1820, departing on the 8th after a sojourn of six days. He did not fail to visit the principal locations of the island, writing:

From the church of St. John it was a natural transition to the cave of St. Paul; so, with a friend, I took a calise and proceeded thither. This is a carriage of very ancient form, and peculiar to Malta. It stands upon two high wheels without springs, and is drawn by a mule between two shafts. The driver never mounts, but holding the reins he runs beside it, and, with extraordinary speed and perseverance, he keeps up with the mule at whatever rate you choose to go.^{xlviii}

M. D. D. Farjesse writing in 1835 says:

L'aspect des campagnes autour des villes e des villages de Malte est poudreux; on aperçoit ca et la quelques bouquets de verdure. La terre legere qui compose le sol de l'île produit une poussiere si epaisse qu'il est absolument impossible de se promener a pied ou de monter a cheval. Pour obvier a cet inconvenient, on se sert de petites voitures couvertes (Pl. 118), trainees par un seul mulet, sous la conduit d'un muletier qui va constamment a pied, et cela pendant des journees entieres du plus fatigant voyage.^{xlix}



The **Rev. Nathanael Burton**, assistant chaplain to the garrison in Dublin and to the Royal Artillery, sojourned in Malta between 11 and 17 November, 1836. He also did not fail to visit the places of interest of the island. On November 12, 1836,

Being desirous of seeing St. Paul's bay and grotto (this being the Melita where he was shipwrecked) I hired a caleche, a covered vehicle drawn by one horse or mule with a very high straddle, the driver walks by the side or occasionally sits on the shaft.¹

The calesse seems to have been a favourite transport vehicle for British sailors. The Penny Magazine for 3rd August 1839 captures vividly a pictorial representation of the vehicle demonstrating the delight of British sailors in its hiring for 'the better to indulge their freaks'.¹ⁱ

THE PENNY MAGAZINE

OF THE
Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

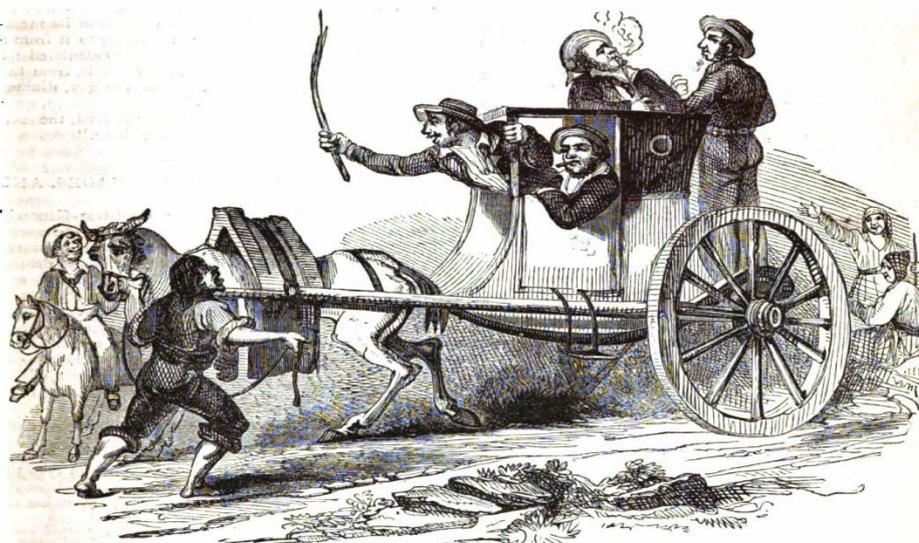
471.]

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.

[August 3, 1839.

MALTA AND THE MALTESE.

[Concluded from No. 468.]



[English Sailors and Maltese Calese.]

Another visitor to Malta, whose visit to the old world was mainly induced by an impaired state of health, was the **Rev. John A. Clark**, rector of St. Andrew's church in Philadelphia. Embarking in the latter

part of the year 1837, he proceeded by the way of Gibraltar and Malta to Italy. On 13 July 1838 he arrived at Malta and during his stay he did not fail to observe the mode of travelling in the island.

Almost the only mode of travelling on this island is by caleche, a two-wheeled carriage, drawn by a single horse, at whose side the driver runs on foot. From two to four persons are carried in this vehicle. We had the full quota on this occasion, being accompanied not only by my travelling clerical companions, but by Mr. Andrews, the American consul at Malta, who very obligingly offered to attend us in our projected excursion in Gozo. I am sure our appearance, had we gone through the streets of Philadelphia, would have excited the risibles of not a few of the staid and grave inhabitants of that sober city. Our driver was a complete Maltese, the Arabic origin predominating in his appearance far over the Italian. He wore nothing but pantaloons and a shirt, and a Maltese woollen cap, below which hung, in long ringlets, his dark elfish locks. The horse by which we were to be drawn, realised in appearance, my idea of 'a wild ass's colt', more than anything I have ever before seen. This animal was fastened to the caleche by a harness most rude and antique in appearance. The shafts were supported by straps attached to a huge elevated saddle, large enough to have borne a knight of the eleventh century in full armour. The carriage was drawn by rope traces, and the animal guided by a rope halter. At the descent of each hill, the driver would dart between the shafts behind the horse, adjust the breeching, and in this position regulate the animal's movements.^{lii}

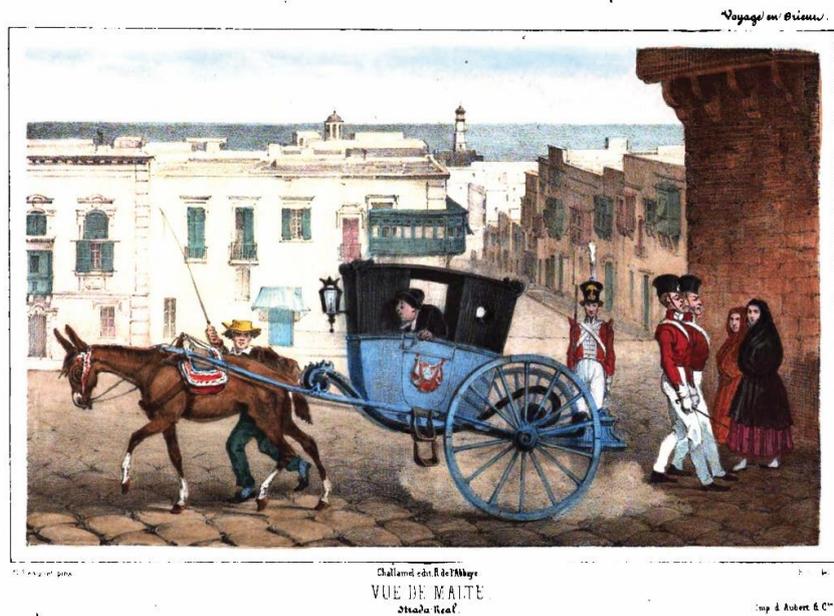
Maria Johanna Elselina Versfelt, also known as **Ida Saint-Elme**, was a Dutch writer and stage actress known for her adventurous life. She travelled to Italy, Egypt, Germany and Russia. During her stay in Malta, she was invited for dinner but before having the chance of refuting the invitation she found a calesse next to her door awaiting to take her to her destination.

Mais avant de dire l'agreable surprise qui remplaça la plus desagréable des apprehensions, je veux tacher de faire connaître les voitures qui à Malte font office des cabriolets et des fiacres de Paris. Ces voitures ressemblent à de très-grandes chaises à porteurs, de la forme du règne de Louis XV; au lieu de bâton transversal, un brancard pour un cheval; point de siège; et le cocher vêtu d'un veston léger, d'un pantalon retroussé à la cheville, pieds nus, la taille serrée d'une ceinture de différentes couleurs, les cheveux nattés comme les Catalans, un bonnet pareil à la ceinture, et le chapeau à la Figaro. Ils trottent à côté du cheval, tenant les rênes d'une main, s'appuyant de l'autre sur le brancard à la gauche du cheval, quelquefois se juchant dessus, mais rarement. On ne peut tenir que deux dans ces voitures, et il ne faut pas des personnes d'un excès d'embonpoint.^{liii}

The French painter of battles, portraits and oriental subjects, **Emile, Jean-Horace Vernet**, arrived at Malta on the 'Scamandre' on the 26th October, 1839. His journey to Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Constantinople in 1839-1840 is narrated by his companion M. Goupil Fesquet. On seeing a calesse on the road, Fesquet was struck by its strange appearance. He observed how the wheels were placed behind the vehicle and how the coachman ran by its side. The calesse had a coat of arms painted on the door. He saw a priest coming out of the vehicle and noticed his thin legs which, he says, are characteristic of the Maltese. He had an opportunity of examining the dress of the driver which, he gathered, was the same in use centuries ago. The dress of the driver consists of a large cotton shirt, trimmed with metal buttons, and trousers held by a large red belt. The jacket is worn on the shoulder, a long woollen cap and footboots of leather, called 'gotzch'. But, the observation in his own words reads:

Mais le temps nous presse, et nous reviendrons à Malte. Disons seulement deux mots de ce véhicule original qui, vient en ferrailant derrière nous; comme il est bizarrement attelé, les brancards sont fixés au garrot de la mule énorme qui le traîne! Et quel curieux système de roues placées derrière la caisse! C'est la carrossa ou cabriolet de place du pays. Le cocher court à côté de sa voiture qui manque de siège pour lui, et dont le coffre descend

au-dessous et plus bas que l'essieu; de vieilles armoiries peintes sur la portiere parlent en faveur de son anciennete'. Elle s'arrete, un abbe' en descend; la maigreur de ses jambes, caractere particulier a tous les Maltais, est l'object d'une remarque de la part de M. Fabreguette; et nous ne tardons pas a en reconnoitre la justesse. Le conducteur, pendant qu'il recoit son salaire, nous donne l'occasion d'examiner son costume, qui est, dit-on, le meme qu'on portait il y a un siecle. Il consiste en un large chemise de coton, un gilet de drap garni de boutons de metal, un pantalon de toile retenu par un vaste ceinture rouge, une veste qui se porte souvent sur l'epaule, un long bonnet de laine a longue flamme, qui se replie en plusieurs doubles sur la tete; des semelles de cuir de boeuf appeles gotzch, nouees autour des jarrets completent son habillement, qui est celui des gens de la campagne et du peuple. Le caban est un manteau ou paletot de gros drap a manches et a cape, don't il se garantissent du froid.^{liv}



M. Miege, the French Consul in Malta, writes:

La calesse, qui sert au transport des individus, est aussi d'une forme qui ne se voit qu'a Malte. Cette forme est parfaitement appropriee au pays, et meme aux cites, ou l'on trouve a chaque instant des montees et des descentes fort rapides. C'est une caisse a quatre ou a deux places, montee a soupentes, sur un brancard excessivement long, et porte par un essieu a deux roues tres-elevees. Ces roues et la caisse sont places a l'arriere-train, de maniere que le poids ne fatigue point le cheval attelle a l'autre extremite. Les chevaux ou les mules que l'on emploie pour le service des calesses sont d'une tres-grande vigueur, et on le pied parfaitement sur. Il est tres-rare de le voir s'abatre, meme dans les descentes les plus rapides. Mais, ce qui est a'autant plus remarquable qu'on y retrouve un usage particulier a l'Espagne, c'est que le chevaux or les mules sont conduits avec un simple muserolle a noeud coolant, en maniere de bride, par un homme courant, a pieds nus, l'espace de cinq ou six milles sans s'arreter, a cote du bidet, toujours lance au grand trot.^{lv}

In 1841, **Capt. Basil Hall**, a British naval officer from Scotland, a traveller and an author, published a 3-volume work under the title of 'Patchwork', comprising a series of miscellaneous papers the major part of which consist of recollections of foreign travel. The ground embraced in the travel reminiscences included a voyage to Malta. These are his personal experiences:

On casting about for some occupation to fill up the interval between our being perfectly ready to start and the moment of the sea-wind falling, it was suggested by an obliging friend that we might visit the ancient capital of Malta – Citta Vecchia, distant only six miles. The same kind person lent us a calesse, a queer, rumbling, very shaky, one-horse conveyance, in use, frequently, nowhere else in the world. It somewhat resembles a gig, but still it is a very different thing. It may be described as a very small post-chaise, or, more nearly, a large sedan chair, on two shafts, between the foremost ends of which is placed the horse, while the other ends are inserted into the axletree of two carriage-wheels; thus the body of the calesse is not over the wheels, as in the case of a gig - and merciful it is that it is not - but lies between them and the horse. Relief from springs there is none, except what results from the elasticity of the shafts. The driver always runs by the side of his horse; and as the streets and roads are exceedingly rough, the bumping and shaking to which passengers by this rudest of vehicles are exposed, have no parallel that I know of except in an American stage on a corduroy road. What is even more disagreeable than the jolting of the calesse in actual progress, is the wretched period when it is said to be standing still; not only are any rough motions of the horse multiplied by the leverage of the shafts, but his smallest inclinations to the right or left jolt you from side to side: his impatience under the bite of a gnat almost pitches you out, and even his breathing is felt; in short, the slightest tremors are all transmitted by the position of the body of the carriage to the unhappy passengers. It is the oddest fact in the world that the inhabitants come to like this mode of conveyance, or to say they do, and perhaps to persuade themselves into it; just as people who have resided long in Germany come to fancy they like the horrid close stoves and tobacco-pipes of that smoking, but otherwise charming, country. I do not think, however, that any extent of experience would bring me to like the Maltese calesse; and I rather suspect that the cunning native drivers are secretly of this opinion, too; at all events, no consideration will induce them to mount the shafts, however fatigued they may be.

A lady told us that on first coming to Malta she could not bear to see the driver running all day long in the sun by the side of the horse; and that after repeatedly suggesting to him to get up, she desired him to stop, and insisted upon his seating himself upon the shafts. The fellow declined, at first respectfully, but on her still further urging him, he fairly got angry, and, feeling himself insulted, declared he would not only leave her service, but leave her to shift for herself on the open highway, if she required him to do anything so very improper.^{lvi}

Hans Christian Anderson, the prolific writer best remembered for his fairy tales, made a one day stop in Malta on 17 March 1841 whilst on his route to Germany, Italy, Greece and the Orient. He writes ‘we rode out of the gate in one of the light, elegant, two-wheeled carriages, with one horse, and the driver running by the side. Our destined excursion was to Citta Vecchia.’^{lvii}

The English traveller and writer, **Emma Roberts**, on her journey to Bombay travelled in the ‘Megara’ from Marseilles arriving at Malta on the 25 September 1839. On her arrival,

We found a caless in waiting for us; a very singular description of vehicle, but one common to the island. I had seen representations of these carriages in old engravings, but had not the least idea that they were still use. They have only two wheels, placed behind, so that the horse has to bear the weight of the vehicle as well as to draw it; and there is something so inexpressibly odd in the whole arrangement, that it put me in mind of the equipages brought on the stage in a Christmas pantomime. Our caless held four persons very conveniently, and was really a handsome vehicle, gaily lined with scarlet leather, and having spring seats. We saw others plying for hire, of a very inferior description; some

only calculated for two persons, and of a faded and dilapidated appearance. They seem to be dangerous conveyances, especially for the poor horse; we heard of one being upset, on a steep hill, and breaking the neck of the animal that drew it. In driving, we were obliged to take rather a circuitous route to our inn, though the distance, had we walked, would have been very inconsiderable.^{lviii}

Elizabeth Mary Grosvenor, Marchioness of Westminster, toured the Mediterranean on the yacht ‘*The Dolphin*’ in the years 1840-1841. In her diary entry for 6 September 1841, she writes:

Mrs. B. took me an extensive round this morning in her calass, for the purpose of shopping. The calass is a carriage universally used in Malta, and is like what we should call a coach-fly, on two wheels, drawn by one horse; the disagreeable part attending which is, that it is driven by a man who runs by the side of the carriage; and though this appears no exertion to the drivers at the time, the feeling is not pleasant to oneself, and this race of people are, in fact, said to be short-lived.^{lix}

Charles Rockwell served as a chaplain on the frigate ‘*Potomac*’ which arrived in Malta on 15 July, 1835. He makes a brief reference to the Maltese calesse when he says:

The common vehicle for riding in Malta, is a close two wheeled carriage, with a door on one side, and windows on both sides and in front. It is called a caleche, and is drawn by one horse; the driver, with a red cap and sash, and his vest and small clothes ornamented with a multitude of gilt buttons, much in the style of a Spanish muleteer, runs along on foot, holding the whip and reins in his hands.^{lx}

Volume XII of Bentley’s Miscellany for 1842 included an article under the title of ‘A visit to Malta’, written by Richard Johns. He briefly describes the calesse thus:

Now, with an active driver running by its side, rattles along the clumsy calesse, a cross-breed between the body of an old-fashioned English post-chaise and a sedan-chair, slung by leathern thongs upon the straight shafts of a water-cart. The better sort are well-painted, and have gilt-mouldings, but all are of the same awkward construction, while the ill-contrived harness of the single horse which drags the machine at its heels, is apiece with the rest of the equipage.^{lxi}

An unknown Swiss author, in the service to the King of the Two Sicilies, left Naples on the ‘*Marie-Therese*’ on 29 April 1842 and arrived at Malta in the summer of the same year. Whilst in Malta, he remarked:

Les voitures dont on se sert habituellement, tant celles de maître que celles de louage, sont d'une construction particulière. Ce sont d'élégants coupés à deux roues, tirés le plus souvent par un seul cheval; la carcasse de la voiture repose sur les membrures attenantes au brancard, laissant ainsi un grand espace vide sur le train de derrière; le cocher ne monte jamais sur le siège, et cela par une raison péremptoire, ces voitures n'en ont pas: il court à côté du cheval, trotte et galoppe avec lui sans se fatiguer, ou du mois sans jamais en avoir l'air.^{lxii}

The British artist and zoologist, **George French Angas**, published a description of his journey to Sicily and Malta in 1842. He arrived at Malta on the clipper schooner ‘*Prospero*’ on 20 September 1841. He made minor references to the Maltese calesse but in one instance he says ‘*as this vehicle differs considerably in its form and fashion from an English carriage, a brief description of it may not be uninteresting to my readers*’.

They have no wheels in front, but are furnished instead with a species of prop for a support, which is let down when the calise is at rest, and is fastened beneath the body of the carriage

when travelling. They are constructed somewhat in the Spanish fashion, and those used in Valetta are, many of them, very neat, though it occasionally happens that they are to be met with in the villages of the most outlandish form and structure conceivable. They are drawn along by one horse or mule, the driver running along by the side, and with a small piece of wood called a 'niggieza', in which two short nails are fixed, he pricks the animal in order to urge him forward. These calise-men will run for many miles in the sun and dust, yet they never seem tired. Indeed they take a delight in travelling as fast as possible; and should another calise appear in sight in the distance, the passenger has only to point it out to the driver, and away he starts to overtake it. When the other calise-man sees his rival he starts off likewise, and both gallop away, neither choosing to give in till they arrive at their ultimate destination.

We found this plan succeed admirably when we wished to get back to Valetta in time for any particular engagement.^{lxiii}

This is perhaps the only writer who refers to the 'niggieza', possibly borrowed from the description given by George Percy Badger in 1838.

Isabella Frances Romer, English novelist, travel writer and biographer, came to Malta on the vessel 'Polyphemus' in the summer of 1842. During her short stay in Malta, she observed:

This aridity of appearance, coupled with the painful glare produced upon the eyes by the chalky soil, renders excursions into the interior of the island far from agreeable; and it also requires habit to render the bumping movement of the native carriages (calesas)-the only come-at-able conveyance for strangers-tolerable. These calesas are the beau-ideal of awkwardness; they are in shape something like the old-fashioned French close cabriolet, and are placed upon two enormous ungainly wheels in such manner that, when they are empty, the bodies hang back-wards in the most fearful looking way, and it is only when you step into them that your weight causes them to right themselves into a proper position. They are drawn by a single mule or horse, and driven by a barefooted driver who runs alongside on foot as long as they continue in town, but when they get outside of the gates the driver is permitted to seat himself upon the shafts.^{lxiv}

Sir John Gardner Wilkinson, an English traveller, writer and pioneer Egyptologist, stopped at Malta on his way to Egypt and wrote 'Modern Egypt and Thebes: A description of Egypt' which he published in 1843. In this publication, he provides details of the costs relating to carriages and horses in Malta.

CARRIAGES AND HORSES – Carriages, with a pair of horses, let at 43 dollars a month; a pair of horses, without carriage, 40 dollars; by the day 3 dollars; half a day 1 and a half dollar. A saddle-horse for the whole day 5s to 6s; half a day 2s 6d; from 9 AM until evening 4s to 5s; from 9 to 2 o'clock 3s to a dollar; and from 3 o'clock till 9, 2s 6d to 3s. If you keep a calesse with one horse, the food of the horse will cost 10d a day; and the calessier, besides attending to the horse and carriage, is expected to wash the floor of your house - an instance of the multifarious occupations of servants in this part of the world.^{lxv}

Maxime Du Camp, the French writer and photographer, travelled to Europe and the East between 1844 and 1845 and again between 1849 and 1851 in the company of Gustave Flaubert. Du Camp arrived at Malta on the 27 May, 1844 on board the 'Scamandre'. In his writing about Malta, searching for local colour and bizarre, Du Camp observed in his style the typical habits of the Maltese which he appreciated at first sight. He narrates how going down several streets, and up again, he found himself in a large naked square in which were carriages of singular shapes to which were harnessed horses of fantastic meagreness. He 'stuffed' himself in one of the inconvenient boxes and began to seek a balance difficult to find. He observed how the calesse had bold leather curtains. He compared the calesse to the ancient Spanish carriages mentioned in the old editions of Don Quixote. The driver tightened his belt to run,

rolled up his sleeves to strike better, took in one hand the halter of the unfortunate beast and with the other a respectable club. Surprised by these preparations, Du Camp silently examined what was going to happen. The driver looked at him and then gave the horse a vigorous and loud beating. The animal remained motionless for a moment, munching dried straw; he shook his head slowly, and the horse and the driver made a slow trot, one dragging the other. Bumping in his calessina, and eating oranges, Du Camp crossed a dull, flat and dusty landscape. In his own words:

Je descendis plusieurs rues, j'en remontain d'autres, e je me trouvai sur une sorte de grande place nue ou etaint echouees ce et la quelques voitures de forms singulieres attelees a des chevaux d'une maigreur fantasqitue. Je m'introduisis tant bien que mal dans une de ces boites incommodes, et je me pris a chercher un equilibre difficile a trouver. La caisse a la forme' d'un trapeze renverse', perce de petites fenetre a rideaux de cuir gras. Les blancards s'allongent demesurement, et le roues s'ecartent en arriere a proportion. Ceux qui, sur la quais, feuilletent d'un doigt distrait les cartons des etalagistes, ont certainement vu la portraiture de mon equipage; il ressemblait a ces antiques carrosses espagnols que nous avons tous vus dans les vieilles editions de Don Quichotte. On ficela entre des deux brancards, une rosse retive et peu fringante; le conducteur serra sa ceinture pour mieux courir, retroussa ses manches pour mieux frapper, prit d'une main le licou de la malheureuse bete, e de l'autre un respectable gourdin. Etonne des ces preparatifs, j'examinais silencieusement ce qui allait a passer. Il me regarda en souriant avec un air d'intelligence, puis il administra a son quadrupede une vigoureuse et sonore bastonnade, en l'accablant d'un feu d'artifice d'intraduisibles injures. L'animal resta un instant immobile, machant quelques brins de paille dessechee; il secoua lentement la tete, et cheval et conducteur partirent au petit trot, l'un trainant l'autre. Quant aux essieux, ils ne portaient pas la voiture, ils la suivaient.

Cahotte dans me calessina, et mangeant des oranges, je traversai un paysage terne, plat et poussiereux; tout est gris, les arbres, les Chemins, les pierres, les maisons.^{lxvi}

Gustave Flaubert, the French novelist, is known especially for his novel 'Madame Bovary'. Flaubert was an armchair traveller writing copiously about his travels in Corsica, Italy, Brittany and Egypt. He visited Malta, with his family in May 1845 and again in 1851 in the company of Maxime Du Camp. His 'Notes de voyages, de Malte a Alexandrie' include notes of his visit in 1845. Whilst in Malta, he hired a 'calessina' when visiting Citta Vecchia. He referred to the excellent description of the calesse given by Maxime Du Camp but was charmed when he saw a priest in his ecclesiastic attire being driven in such a vehicle prompting him to remark '*souvent les cures en compagnie de dames; il y auriat de jolies petites chose a ecrire la-dessus*'.^{lxvii}

Lucinda Darby Griffith travelled with her husband, Major George Darby Griffith, on their way to England from Ceylon arriving at Malta on the 27 July 1844. Her diary relates the travel experiences on her journey from Ceylon to Marseilles with sketches of Aden, the Red Sea, Lower Egypt, Malta, Sicily and Italy. She was in Malta between July and September 1844. On being discharged from quarantine on the 16th August,

By eight o'clock we were ready for starting, and stepped, this time, into a very pretty little awning-boat, that soon wafted us across to Floriana, where Captain Maxwell had sent a caleche to meet us at the quay called 'Sa Maison'. These carriages, universally used in Malta, are of a very singular construction. The bodies of some are shaped like landualets, but the best kind are similar to coaches: they have no springs; they are, however, rendered less necessary by the wheels (of which there are but two) being placed very far back, and the extreme length of the shafts, which are raised nearly to a level with the back of the horse. By this means the body of the carriage is hung higher in front than behind, and the trot of the horse gives it a sort of springy motion peculiar to itself. A very strong horse

indeed it must be to draw a caleche, and, at the same time, to bear on its back the immense weight of harness that completes the equipage, and supports the shafts. This harness is studied thickly over with brass nails and ornaments. The reins are very long, and the driver holds them while running by the side, nearly as far back as the carriage window. He is generally dressed very smart, but is almost always without shoes.^{lxviii}

Edward Delaval Hunerford Elers Napier served with his regiment in India and Gibraltar. He became lieutenant in 1826 and a captain a few years later. After returning home from India, a few years later left for Gibraltar joining the 46th regiment in 1837. When in Malta, he made keen observations, at times in rhetoric style, as the following extract demonstrates:

Having been – as before stated – comfortably installed into that general medium of conveyance here: a caleche, we may as well give the uninitiated reader a short description of this extraordinarily constructed, though peculiarly convenient locomotive.

Imagine not – ye Knights of the whip and ribands! Ye Members of the Four-in-hand Club! That a start for a journey at Malta in any way resembles a similar move either from the Bull and Mouth, or the White Horse Cellar, Piccadilly. Picture not to your heated imagination the compact and well-equipped vehicle, the dapper coachman, the shining harness and well-fed team, which-as the magic word ‘all right’ is pronounced-start like firebolts from under the warm rugs, which-sole records of their presence-are now left waving in charge of the obsequious ostlers; whilst, appearing to devour both space and distance, the high mettled steeds tear off as if on the wings of the wind.

In no one particular does the Maltese caleche resemble these earthly meteors. Picture yourself, most sapient reader, a lineal descendant of the vehicle which conveyed Madame Noah and family to the ark-or one of the Phoenician ancestors at the time of the siege of Tyre by that ‘great Conqueror, Alexander-or a cousin-german of My Lord Mayor’s coach, stuck on two wheels instead of four-and you may form some idea, though a very faint one, of these antique-looking chariots, which are nevertheless particularly adapted to the locality, and the nature of the duty required of them.

The ‘ground-work’ of one of these constructions consist, first, of a pair of enormous wheels some six feet at least in diameter: these, supporting an axle running completely abaft, or at the sternmost extremity of a pair of immeasurably long shafts, form one point d’appui, of which the horse or mule becomes the other-and support the body of the carriage, a large and cumbersome sort of abode, occasionally of sufficient capacity to locate four inside, and suspended by leathern thongs to a very poor apology for springs.

From the length of the shafts, and the axle being situated so much behind, the horse is placed very far from his work; but this disadvantage is perhaps counterbalanced by the little weight the consequently is made to bear, which, with a two-wheeled vehicle, is matter of some importance over roads occasionally running down the most precipitous declivities.^{lxix}

The Rev. Thomas Wilson, minister of the church of St. Peter’s Moncroft, in Norwich, visited Malta whilst on his pilgrimage to Egypt, the Red Sea, Syria and Jerusalem. He stopped in Malta for one day but did not fail to make visit across the island. He made a very brief reference to the calesse, saying ‘we hire a caleche and drive across the island, the driver running by the side, reins in hand, and much amused at our notion of making him take a seat; but they often, poor fellows, get suddenly chilled by the north wind, and die of inflammation’.^{lxx}

A brief mention of the calesse is made by **Logegott Friedrich Constantine Tischendorff**, the leading biblical scholar, who arrived in Malta on 26 March 1844, when he says:

I made a Sunday’s excursion in a very agreeable society to St. Paul’s grotto. We went in a carriage from La Valetta to the Citta.vecchia, which consists chiefly of stately villas. I thus

became acquainted with a peculiar class of people, the Maltese drivers, who, as their two-wheeled vehicles have no seat for them, gallop along beside it, in spite of heat, storm, or rain.^{lxxi}

Penry Williams, an artist who settled in Rome, arrived in Malta on the steamer ‘*Oriental*’ having departed from Southampton in the winter of 1841. He left Malta on the 14 June 1842 on the vessel ‘*Mongibello*’. On arriving at Malta:

The rest of our party were despatched by a circuitous route in a Calesse, a luxury peculiar to the place, but one which, putting the honour of riding out of the question, I would much prefer declining. How these people still persevere in manufacturing those clumsy uncomfortable machines is, to say the least, most surprising; there is positively nothing to recommend them, and ingenious must be he who discovers one redeeming quality. The appearance and motion of the contrivance rival each other in absurdity. Take a post-chaise, amputate the front wheels, and substitute shafts for a pole, and behold your Calasse. The driver runs by the side of the horse, and when tired jumps upon the shaft; a proceeding in England frequently visited by a broken limb or even loss of life; but these individuals seem exempt from such casualties. Notwithstanding my condemnation of these vehicles, I must at the same time confess that occasionally a fine young fellow, with his red cap and crimson sash, springing gracefully by his horse’s side, forms a picturesque effect, by no means to be despised, and may be contemplated from the pavement with great satisfaction, all I beg to be excused is the occupying a seat in the machine. There are occasionally certain traces of the ridiculous attending a ride in these carriages. A lady, for instance, goes to a party, rejoicing in luxuriant ringlets; these appendages are kept in such a perpetual saltatory motion, that unless very well got up, they will inevitably be annihilated before the conclusion of her drive.^{lxxii}

It is amusing when the author narrates how the jolting movements of the calesse affect the curly lock of hair of lady passengers.

J. P. Fletcher, Badger’s lay companion, was sent by the Archbishop of Canterbury to begin work among the Nestorians in 1842. On his way to Nineveh (modern day Mosul, Iraq) he stopped at Malta.

And now I must ask the reader to mount a calesh and take a drive with me in the country. A calesh is a most original vehicle of its kind; it has two shafts of a singular and primitive construction, protruding from beneath a body resembling somewhat in shape that of a post chaise. As it jolts along the stony roads of the country, you wish in vain that you had trusted to the sagacity of a hired saddle-horse, to find his way over the island, and not have shut yourself up in box of wheels. The driver runs by the side of the horse, and when weary seats himself on the shafts.^{lxxiii}

Mary Eliot Carmichael Montauban accompanied her husband on the way to India, stopping at Malta on their outbound and inbound journeys. She narrates how on their arrival at Malta during their voyage to India:

Of the strife of tongues on landing, the heavy verbal cannonade with which we were greeted by the swarthy boatmen and owners of caleches, words can give but a faint impression. Of that barbarous vehicle, a genuine Maltese caleche, a drawing conveys an inadequate idea; the springs seem to sway ad libitum, and the body to be suspended aloft in ‘caller’ air. In this Purgatorial machine we proceeded to Valletta, a clean, white, bright-looking, handsome town, and obtained apartments not far from the palace.^{lxxiv}

William Edward Baxter, the Scottish businessman, liberal politician and travel writer, arrived in Malta on the ‘*Osiris*’ on a tour which he commenced in March 1849. He makes a brief reference to the calesse

when he says ‘we cannot forbear mentioning the cabs of Valetta, than which nothing could be considered more clumsy, and at the same time curious. They are high, covered noddies, raised on two monstrous wheels, with their shafts resting on the horse, and apparently bearing him down unmercifully.’^{lxxv}

A reference to the calesse is made by **Mrs. F.M. Fitz Maurice**, wife of John Fitz Maurice, of the Rifle Brigade, when she writes:

The calesse is a carriage peculiar to Malta, and is generally drawn by small Barbary horses, and driven by a bare-footed Smiche, who, tightening his particoloured sash or girdle about him, will keep up with the animal at full trot, without any apparent fatigue. At first, this struck me as a very uncomfortable arrangement, but custom soon reconciles one to anything; though I did not quite agree with a lady, who assured me ‘it was quite constitutional to a calesderi to go at this pace’-reasoning worthy of Mrs. Malaprop, or the cook who skinned the eels, and said ‘they are accustomed to it’.^{lxxvi}

William Henry Bartlett, the British illustrator, is best remembered for his steel engravings. Around the middle of the nineteenth century he went on a grand tour to Malta, Gibraltar and Granada recording his experiences which he published in 1851. He died of fever on board the French steamer ‘*Egyptus*’ on 13 September 1854 and was buried at sea. He wrote extensively about Malta touring the island on various occasions. He made use of the calesse when visiting St. Pauls Bay, Citta Vecchia, Bengemma and other remote localities. In one of his excursions, he describes:

After breakfast, on a brilliant morning, according to previous appointment, we found a caleche waiting for us at the door of our lodgings, in the Strada Britannica, to take us to Hagiar Chem.

This vehicle is old-fashioned affair, with hangings and trappings, and like other old-fashioned things, more comfortable than appear at first sight, experience having demonstrated its suitability for the roads of the island. By its side is the bare-footed driver, or rather runner, who, in loose trowsers and jacket, and girt around the loins with a crimson sash, trots merrily along for miles, occasionally, when over-fatigued, leaping up on one of the shafts. At first starting the movement of the machine, half shuffle half jolt, is not a little uncomfortable-but one soon gets used to it; and with these few words as to our conveyance let us at once jump into it, and jog off, at a quiet easy-going pace of four miles an hour, towards Macluba and Hagiar Chem.^{lxxvii}

Ida Laura Pfeiffer was an Austrian traveller and author. She visited Palestine and Egypt and returned home through Italy. On 15th September 1842 she disembarked in Malta spending several days in quarantine when she was released on 2nd October 1842. In her writings, she makes a brief reference to the calesse saying ‘it seemed much more the fashion to drive than to ride here. The coaches are of a very peculiar kind, which I hardly think can be found elsewhere. They consist of a venerable old rattling double-seated box, swinging upon two immense wheels, and drawn by a single horse in shafts. The coachman generally runs beside his vehicle.’^{lxxviii}

The French writer and poet, **Theophile Gautier**, arrived at Malta on the ‘*Leonidas*’ in the summer of 1852 before continuing his journey to Constantinople. In narrating his impressions on the island, he describes how:

As we stand here, the large-wheeled red carts already mentioned are passing along, intermingled with vehicles of a singularly droll shape, having the wheels thrown far behind the body, and which recall in some degree the carriages of Louis XIV., as shown in the landscapes of Van der Meulen. I believe vehicles of this kind to be peculiar to Malta, for I certainly have never seen them elsewhere. Their circulation is, however, restricted to

certain of the principal streets, the others being rendered impassable for carriages, by flights of steps, or precipitous descents.^{lxxix}

The **Rev. John Overton Choules**, a Baptist minister, emigrated to America in 1824. In early 1853, he accompanied Cornelius Vanderbilt, one of the wealthiest businessmen in American history, who took his family on a grand tour of Europe on his steamship yacht, the 'North Star'. The yacht arrived off Malta in the early morning on the 16 August, 1853. The Rev. Choules describes how:

After dinner, our party took carriages, and we rode out to Citta Vecchia, sometimes called La Notabile. The hack-coach here in use is new to us. It is a close coach-body, of antique style, capable of holding four persons, but with no box for the driver; and rests on two leather stretchers, which run from the axle to the cross-bar behind the horse. It has but two wheels, the ends of the long shafts being mortised into the axle, and thence running straight to tugs formed in a strap traversing a huge saddle, at which point they are made fast. The entire weight of the carriage is thus thrown on the shafts. The collar and breeching are very rude affairs, and the driver runs barefooted at the head of the horse, governing him by a long rope, the spare length of which he carries in a coil in his hand.^{lxxx}

John Gadsby, a London printer, after being diagnosed with tuberculosis was advised 'to go to Malta' to regain his health. He himself wrote that 'the cause of my travelling was the state of my health.' He was a fervent protestant and a harsh critic of the Roman Catholic Church commenting rather adversely on religious practices in Malta. He arrived in Malta on the 'Volcano' on 10 November, 1846.

It was in Malta that Paul was wrecked, an account of which is given in Acts xxvii., &c. On the 14th November, I engaged a calesse to take me to the spot where it is said he landed; but we found the roads washed up, and so many walls and even several cottages blown down, by the late storms, that we could not proceed, and so passed along another road to the Ancient City, or Citta Vecchia, where the people say Paul dwelt, and where Publius, the chief man of the island, resided.

And in a footnote:

A calesse is a clumsy two-wheeled vehicle, something like a Blackpool or Ramsgate bathing machine, hung on leather instead of springs. It jolts us worse than a common English cart. Carriages with metallic springs are now more common on the island.^{lxxxi}

Hall Herbert Byng, the author of 'Sayah, or the courier to the East', writes:

The Malta caleche, so called, is a vehicle peculiar to the island. I am not aware that I ever beheld any similar carriage in any other country; and, generally speaking, they are used alike for public and private conveyance. I can compare them to nothing else than good-sized sedan-chairs on wheels, with windows in front as at the sides, having no seat for the driver, who, without shoes on his feet, a red sash round his waist, and a Maltese cap on his head, runs by the side of the horse for miles, keeping pace with a fast-trotter, and this with inconceivable wind and stamina. These carriages are used on all occasions, as are cabs in London and elsewhere, for a drive into the country, as for dinners and balls; while some few of the superior officers of the garrison, the Governor, and some of the more wealthy inhabitants, keep their own, in which they are bumped about the ill-paved town. I do not at the moment recollect whether they have the advantage of springs, but I fancy not, as the nature of Sayah, being of a lean kind, he certainly bears in mind having been considerably jolted and bruised during sundry drives in the country, as well as nightly gaddings which he made, in order to partake of the festivities which in other days were so kindly offered to those whom chance led to the island. At all events, every motion of the horse is felt, inasmuch as the heavy shafts, suitable to the heavy sedan on wheels, are

placed high on the animal's back. In fact, the bodily inclination of him who rides within has a tendency first backwards, then forwards, not dissimilar to the rolling of a ship. But they are, nevertheless, a very useful means of conveyance in hot weather or wet, and are in all respects fitted to the wants of the island which claims them^{lxxxii}.

David Millard, a professor of biblical antiquities and sacred geography in the theological school at Meadville, toured Egypt, Arabia, Petraea and the Holy Land. His journey from Boston to Malta lasted 36 days arriving on the 21 November 1841. He toured the principal places of interest in the island.

On the 24th, I made an excursion out to Citta Vecchia, some seven miles from Valetta. My object was to visit the Cathedral in that place, St. Paul's Cave and Catacombs. I was conveyed out in a carriage called a callesse. It has but two wheels, and is not unlike a cab, except that it has no springs. It was drawn by a mule, and the driver, a lad of about fifteen, trotted alongside the animal, and was continually lashing him up with a short piece of rope. On a trot, the motion of the vehicle is jolting and uncomfortable. I was thus trundled out and back again at the lazy jog of a mule. The road, however, was good, and scenery rather pleasant and inviting.^{lxxxiii}

'Wanderings in the Land of Ham' is a book written by an anonymous writer, a young lady who accompanied her mother and her invalid brother to visit Egypt (referred to as the land of Ham) for the health of her brother. She made two visits to Malta, on 16 November 1854 and again on 6 April 1855. She describes the calesse thus:

I must not forget to mention among the strange sights at Malta the antediluvian-looking vehicles they call 'calisses'. These are square box-like carriages perched up very high and resting upon the shaft; they have two huge wheels, which are situated far behind and appear to have very little connection with the rest of the carriage. Some of them are provided with steps, but generally you are obliged to have a chair brought down to the door to help you get in, which is after all a matter of some difficulty; box or rumble there is none; the driver either runs beside his horse or else sits on the shaft. The Maltese care capital runners; I have known some men run eight or ten miles by the side of a two-horse carriage, and then only stop to give the horses a few minutes to refresh themselves.^{lxxxiv}

Count Joseph, Francis, Mary D'Estourmel, a politician who ended his career as a state councillor, travelled through Asia Minor, Greece, Syria and Egypt, accompanied by the Swiss artist Wolfensberger, from June 1832 to September 1833. He arrived in Malta on the 2nd August 1833. On 3rd August, he made a tour to the localities leading to St. Paul's Bay saying '*je montai dans une voiture, non sans me recrier sur la commodite' de cette invention, que depuis quatorze mois m'etait devenue etrangere*'. After observing and commenting about the scenery leading to his destination, he continues '*je reviens a ma promenade en voiture, qui m'amusa comme un enfant, et autant pour la voiture que pour ce que je vis.*^{lxxxv}

The prolific lawyer, novelist and journalist, **M. Louis Enault**, visited the sacred places of the Orient in 1853. Among his various works of travel narratives, in his 'La Mediterranee ses siles et ses bords', he makes reference to his stay to Malta. He recommends visitors to proceed to a square where calesses could be hired.^{lxxxvi}

Lord De Ros, at the time a Cavalry Brigade Major, arrived at Malta on the *HMS Barham* on the 17 August 1835 whilst accompanying Lord Durham on his way to the Crimea. In his journal, he writes:

The conveyances are strange machines, like post-chaise bodies fixed upon clumsy two-wheeled under-carriages, drawn by large mules, and the driver running or walking by the side, an inconvenience little felt, because the steepness of the streets down to the water renders it seldom practicable to go out of a slow pace with safety.^{lxxxvii}

Michael Gatt in the Summer 2011 issue of *Treasures of Malta* wrote about James Smith's visit to Malta in 1844-45 discussing Smith's most important literary work as well as correspondence by members of his family. James Smith of Jordanhill, the Scottish scholar, is best known for his work *'The voyage and shipwreck of St. Paul, with dissertations on the life and writings of St. Luke, and the ships and navigations of the ancients.'* The author refers to a letter written by Sabina, one of Smith's daughters, narrating the family experience on arrival in Malta.

It took them about an hour to disembark, and upon landing the Maltese 'calessa' was her next surprise for it was the 'queerest looking machine ever seen – with only two wheels far behind extraordinarily large. Mama would not trust herself in it and walked here with Papa and Jane. Our calessa had no seat for the driver and he walked and ran besides his horse the whole way.^{lxxxviii}

Edwin Galt, anxious to visit the Crimea, left London in October of 1855 and stopped in Malta to join his cutter, *'Sparrow Hawk'*. In his observations of the island, he writes:

The carriages of Malta are called caleches. They have wheels far behind, and a horse far in front, so that you are balanced, as it were, on a pair of spring boards. The driver always runs by its side.^{lxxxix}

The following is an extract from a visit to Gozo reported in the Colonies and India Newspaper of 14 April, 1877:

*After breakfast we inquired for a calense to convey us to the **Hagra tal Giral**, or 'Generals' Rock', but had considerable difficulty in procuring one. At last a vehicle made its appearance, which certainly surpassed anything of the kind I had previously seen. It looked as though it had been dug up out of the earth, and might have belonged to the Phoenicians for aught we know. It was all over of a rusty brown colour, patched up here and there with bits of old leather; there were no springs; the door was tied together with a piece of string, and we feared at every jolt that the bottom would fall out. However, it was the only carriage obtainable; and in this antique and fearful conveyance, drawn by a most magnificent mule more than 14 hands high, we underwent a thorough shaking over a terribly rocky and uneven road, until we arrived at the brow of a hill that overhangs the small bay of **Duejra**, at the western extremity of the island. Here we left our calesse, and proceeded on foot down a steep path....^{xc}*

The travel literature of the nineteenth century includes numerous works in which reference to Malta is made. The majority of visitors to the island did not fail to visit the principal places of interest including those outside Valletta. There are several instances where such visits are vividly described although the writer did not indicate the means of transport used on his journeys. As can be demonstrated from the observations made by visitors, the only means of public and private transport in Malta in the nineteenth century was the calesse. It is therefore logical to infer that most visitors made use of this means of transportation.

The calesse seems to have survived until late in the nineteenth century when improved vehicles were introduced leading to today's 'Karrozzin. **N. R. Raven** writing in October of 1887 remarks:

One of the changes in Malta worthy of notice is the disappearance of that hideous vehicle the caleche, which ought to have become obsolete half a century since...the introduction of Carrozzini or Four wheelers in lieu of the above, is an immense improvement, for now, one can travel about with ease and comfort.^{xc1}

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- ⁱⁱ Victor Mallia Milanes. *Descrittione di Malta – Anno 1716*, 1988, 96 : ‘*Si fa il carnevale negl’ultimi 4 giorni; le meretrici compariscono all piazza in certi callessi sgratiati, e tirrati da una mulla; concorrono a tutte le parti del calesso li Cavalieri senza maschera; s’affollano a parlare, a stringere chi quella, che l’altra, portando loro fazoletti di cose dolci, et il Gran Maestro sopra una righiera sta godendo il carnevale.*’
- ⁱⁱⁱ Michele Acciard. *Mustafa Bassa di Rodi schiavo di Malta*, 1751, 61.
- ^{iv} Giovanni Scarabelli, *La Sacra Infermeria a Malta nel settecento*, 2008 (no page number)
- ^v *Monastic manuscripts – Malta, Treasury Series A, Project 152-153*. ‘Nota delli oblighi dell Unita della citta Notle. ed Isola di Malta dal primo Gernnaro 1751’, folios 335-37.
- ^{vi} C. S. Sonnini, *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt* (The travel was undertaken by order of the Old Government of France), English translation by Henry Hunter DD, 1808, Vol i, 59.
- ^{vii} The description is given by Le Comte De Borch in *Lettres sur la Sicile et sur L’Ile De Malte.*, vol.i, 1782, 210/202. It reads: ‘*Les voitures du pays sont des cabriolets a brancards, supportes par des mules puissantes de la grandeur des plus beaux chevaux Napolitans, e conduits par des coueurs Malthais tres-agiles.*’
- ^{viii} Patrick Brydone, *A Tour through Sicily and Malta*, 1773, Vol. i, 322.
- ^{ix} Johan Meerman, *Eenige Berichten omtrent de Pruisische, Oostenryksche en Siciliaansche Monarchien...* 1794, 353. For an English translation of the Malta visit refer to *Malta from the Hague*, edit by Adrian Strickland, 2005.
- ^x The manuscript diary is kept at the National Library of Norway, Oslo, reference M08 709.
- ^{xi} Comte Francois Emanuel de Saint-Priest, *Malte Par un voyageur Francois*, 1791, part 2, 56-60.
- ^{xii} *Opere del Cavaliere Carlo Castone conte della Torre di Rezzonico, raccolte e pubblicate dal professore Francesco Mocchetti*, Tomo 5, 1817, 256/257. The text reads: ‘*in oltre osservai che le route de’ carri, e de’ calessi arano profondamente il suol petroso, e il viaggiarvi riesce pieno d’incomodo e di pericolo. Ne’ molta cura qui si prende per riattare le strade, che potrebbero essere assai buone sovra un fondo si solido purché si praticasse la diligenza de me lodata in Inghilterra. Se adunque fosse provveduto dal saggio Governo, che le ruote de’ carri avessero la forma di un cilindro, ed una misurata crassizie, come le inglesi, allora in vece di aprirvi larghi e profondi solchi, appianerebbero le volubili ruote il cammino, e si potrebbe volare senza paura sov’esso colle rapide mule. Questo mio divisamento appalesai al gran Maestro, ed egli mi rispose, che era impossibile fare I Maltese recedere dagli antichi usi, e che in cio’ ritenevano tenacemente il carattere arabeso ed orientale.*’
- ^{xiii} Thomas Freller. *Malta and the grand tour*, 2009, 179.
- ^{xiv} *Leggi e Costituzioni Prammaticali, renovate, reformate, ed ampliate del Serenissimo, ed Eminentissimo Fra D. Antonio Manoel de Vilhena. Gran Maestro della Sacra Religione Gerosolimitana In Malta*, 1724.
- ^{xv} *Dritto Municipale di Malta compilato sotto De Rohan GM nuovamente corredato di annotazioni*. Tomo II, 1843, 296/297 ‘*I calessieri non ardiscano far condurre I loro calessi da schiavi infedeli, ne’ da giovani minori d’eta d’anni diciotto, ne’ possano i condottieri conduceudo mettersi a cavallo, or sull’aste del calesse, ne’ di note tempo farli andare per le strade di questa citta’; sotto pena in ciascu di questi capi di pagare al fisco once sei. Tutti I calessi e carri d’affitto debbono di notte tempo trasportarsi dentro alla posta d’Italia, sotto pena d’once sei*’. The Dritto municipal was abolished in 1854 during the British period.
- ^{xvi} *Leggi e Regolamenti di Polizia per l’Isola di Malta e sue Dipendenze*, various nineteenth century editions.
- ^{xvii} Martin Montgomery, *Malta and Gozo*, 1844, 224.

^{xviii} George Percy Badger, *Description of Malta and Gozo*, 1838, 246. Other editions were printed in 1851, 1858, 1869, 1870, 1872, 1879 and 1881.

^{xix} ‘A description of Malta with a sketch of its history and that of its fortifications translated from the Italian with notes by an officer resident in Malta’, 1801, author unknown.

^{xx} William Domeier. *Observations on the climate, manners, and amusements of Malta – principally intended for the information of invalids repairing to that island for the recovery of health*, 1810, 56/58. William Domeier arrived in Malta in April 1806 and left in June 1808.

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^{xxii}J. Qunitana. *Guida dell’isola di Malta e sue dipendenze*, 1844(?), 93/94, 130, 159, 200.

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^{xxvii} James Barber, *The overland guide-book; complete vade-mecum for the overland traveller to India and Egypt*, 1850, 15-16.

^{xxviii} Aeneas Anderson, *A journal of the forces which sailed from the downs in April 1800*, 1802, 182/183.

^{xxix}Thomas Walsh, *Journal of the late campaign in Egypt: including descriptions of that country, and of Gibraltar, Minorca, Malta, Marmarice, and Macri*, 1803, 32. An engraving of the Maltese calesse is shown between pages 32 and 33.

^{xxx}Pierre Marie Louis de Boisgelen, *Ancient and Modern Malta*, 1805, Vol. 1, 59.

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