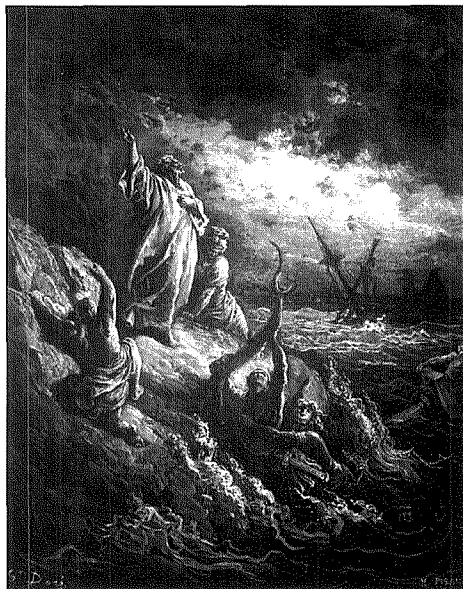


Further information on Saint Paul

by
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The figure of St. Paul has permeated in nearly all aspects of Maltese life since centuries ago. His providential landing in Malta in the year 60 A.D, after a shipwreck, has left an indelible mark on the character of the whole Island. This influence is even clearly reflected on Maltese stamps. Not less than 30 stamps in Maltese philately feature prominently St. Paul and 23 other stamps depict biblical personages, places or works of art closely connected with him. In this respect, Malta was the first country to issue a stamp commemorating St. Paul as early as 1899. (S.G. 35. J.B.21)

On July 7, 1896, the Postmaster General (Malta), Mr. Salvatore Camilleri (PMG 1895-1903) presented rough sketches for a new set of five Definitive pictorial stamps, including one featuring St. Paul's Shipwreck at Malta, to the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson. This



*From the Illustrated Bible by Gustav Doré
(No naked women seen in the engraving)*

first sketch was an adaptation of the titular painting by Matteo Perez d'Aleccio found at St. Paul Shipwrecked Parish Church in Valletta. (See Fig.B pg.35) The Lieutenant Governor forwarded the sketches, signed by P.M.G. Camilleri, to Crown Agents in London, asking for an estimate cost for the production of the set. The Crown Agents in their turn passed on the letter and sketches to De La Rue printers for the requested estimate.

On September 30, 1896, the printers returned the sketches and six *finished designs prepared in accordance with the sketches* to the Crown Agents (See Fig.A pg.35) and proposed to produce these stamps by the



copper plate process which was considered an efficient and less expensive way of production. At that time De La Rue were experimenting and improving on this new technology at their plant in Bunhill Road in London. Their new process was far easier, more efficient and faster than the previous process of engraving on a steel roller. An estimate of £180, which included the engraving of five original and six working plates, was quoted.

For some unknown reason, De La Rue did not fully agree with the original Malta Government suggestion of the D'Aleccio's titular painting in St. Paul's Church in Valletta (See Fig.B pg.35) and suggested an alternative design of the Shipwreck of St. Paul adapted from *The Illustrated Bible* by Gustav Doré. However they did not reproduce faithfully the original engraving, as they inserted "the serpent", and in the forefront women, among the survivors, a detail which is not mentioned in the shipwreck account in Chapters 27 and 28 of *The Acts of the Apostles*.

Doré's Engravings

Gustav Doré (1832-1883), although a French artist was also well known in England, for his paintings, engravings and book illustrations. He illustrated works by Lord Byron, Rabelais, Balzac, Milton, Dante and Cervantes and contributed pictures to the *Illustrated London News*. He even received commissions from English Publishers, including one for a new illustrated Bible which eventually was published in 1866 and which proved to be a great success. Doré held major exhibitions of his work which led to the foundation of the Doré Gallery in London.

The new St. Paul design based on Doré's engraving was forwarded by De La Rue to the Crown Agents on June 8, 1897 described as *Design F*. After two days the Crown Agents replied "*we think Design F would be improved by making the serpent*

falling into the fire more distinct". Ten days later, all designs were approved by the Malta Government who reminded De La Rue that the 2/6 and the 10/- stamps should be the same size as the current large 5/- stamp, whilst the others in the ordinary size.

In the meantime, De La Rue submitted fifteen trials of the approved design, in the following colours: (See Fig.E pg.37)

Dark blue	Red-brown	Deep bottle green
Blue-black	Sepia	Vermilion
Violet	Blue	Orange yellow
Lilac	Blue green	Red
Mauve	Olive grey	Sage green

Some of the above colour trials are sometimes described differently, depending on the editors of the auction catalogues. Colour description is very subjective.

Vol XLVI *Appendix D, Malta Reqⁿ 61/1896* in the De La Rue Archives showed only 15 (5 rows of 3) colour proofs (See Fig.E pg.37). Other shades may refer to one these.

The blue-black specimen was preferred and approved on September 9, 1899 by the Malta Government and it was circled in blue as shown in *Appendix D- Malta Reqⁿ 61/1896* in the De La Rue Archives. (See Fig.E pg.37). These colours may vary as the auction catalogue compilers may have not seen the originals before the breaking up of this series. They may have seen single proofs and relied only on earlier auctioneers' description or printed colour reproduction.

In his letter of June 10, 1897, the Lieutenant Governor also asked when these stamps would be made available. The printers soon replied that within the last two years, owing to the success of the recess printing process, on which they had long experimented, they found themselves overloaded with orders and could not specify any date for the consignment. In the meantime the printing plates for the 10/- and 2/6 consisting of 60 stamps each were prepared, whilst for the other values each sheet was made up of 240 examples and later cut into four with 60 stamps each pane. 60,000 10/- and 2/6 stamps were printed; 120,000 4½d and 119,040 5d stamps. Finally after more than two years, Malta's First Definitive Pictorial Set was issued on February 4, 1899.

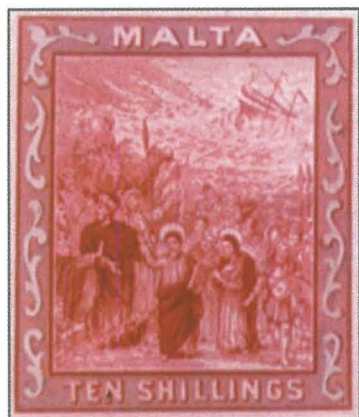


Fig. A



Fig. C



Fig. B

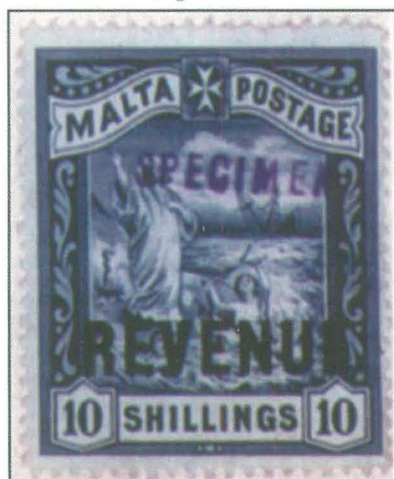


Fig. D





Fig. F



Fig. G



Fig. H



Fig. I



Fig. J



Fig. K



Fig. L

Sept. 9th 1898

Appendix D

Malta Regⁿ 61/1896.



Fig. E