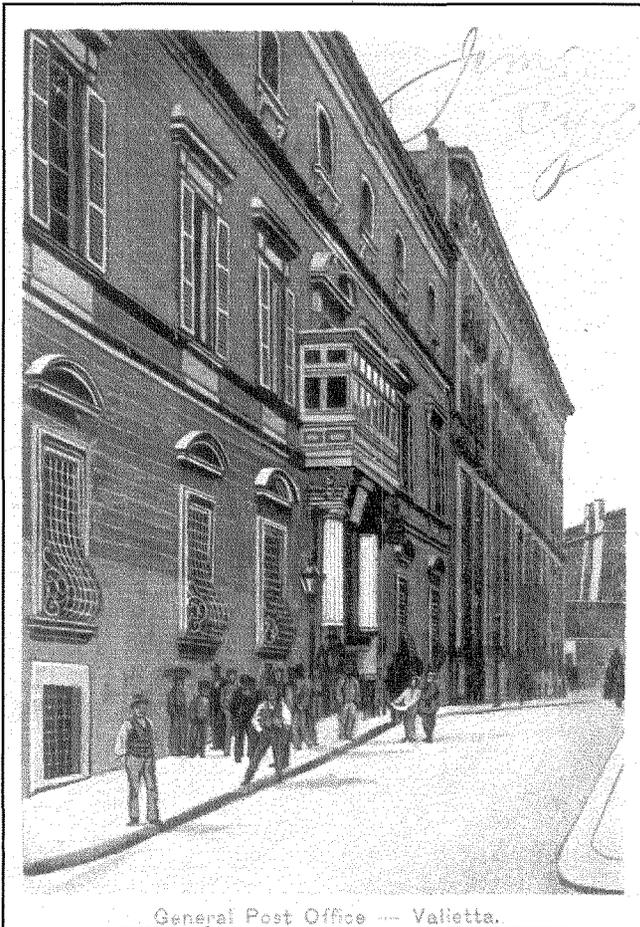


Postal Information from Guide Books

by Mr. G. Dougall

During the late 19th century most guide books or handbooks for visitors to Malta carried little or no postal information. But in the year 1900 *A Guide to Malta and Gozo* appeared, written by G.H. Evans and published by W. Watson & Co. of Valletta. It carried a whole chapter on Postal Information, with details of the time of opening of the GPO, the rates of having a Private Box and of postage on foreign and inland mail; departures and arrivals, Money Orders, Postal Orders, and Parcel Post.



General Post Office — Valletta.

GPO at 4 Strada Mercanti – Valletta

The General Post Office at 4, Strada Mercanti opened from 7.00am till 7.00pm on weekdays and on Sundays from 7.00am to 11.00am and from 4.00pm to 7.00pm. *All Correspondence etc. must be prepaid by means of Malta postage stamps.* Any person could have a Private Box on payment of a guinea fee yearly in advance. This gave him the privilege of getting his letters at the GPO and some time before the general delivery by postmen.

Rates of Foreign Postage were 1d per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz for letters except those for Australia, New Zealand and a few small places. Newspapers, books and printed matter; $\frac{1}{2}$ d per 2oz up to 4 lbs. Postcards were sold at 1d single, Reply 2d each. Registration fee was 2d in addition to the normal postage and $2\frac{1}{2}$ d if an acknowledgement of delivery of a registered article at the time of posting was requested. Unpaid or insufficiently prepaid correspondence attracted a delivery surcharge of double the deficient postage.

Although Postal Orders were sold and cashed at the GPO, and the Branch PO's at Cottonera, Sliema and Notabile, no postal Order could be issued to be cashed in Malta.

We are told that Mail for United Kingdom, and Continental States of Europe including Sicily, Greece and Turkey, North and South America, Cape of Good Hope, West Coast of Africa, Australia and New Zealand left by three routes: by Packet subsidized by the government of Malta via Syracuse – made up daily at 7.00pm; by Transatlantic Company's Packet via Tunis and Marseilles on Monday at 3.30pm, and by Italian Packet via Syracuse on Tuesdays at 8.30am. There was a late fee of 2d on ordinary letters and 4d on registered letters if posted within 15 minutes of closing time.

Inland Post

Letters and letter packets were forwarded from any part of the Islands to another at the following rates: $\frac{1}{2}$ d for a letter not exceeding $\frac{1}{2}$ oz and 1d for those up to 1oz with an additional $\frac{1}{2}$ d per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz over 1oz. Newspapers were delivered free. Letters and newspapers were delivered at their addresses in Valletta, Vittoriosa, Senglea, Cospicua, Pietà, Misida, Sliema and St. Julians, if the street and number of the house were clearly written on the letters, or if the addressee was known. In the country districts, letters were also delivered at the house, if it was within the official delivery.