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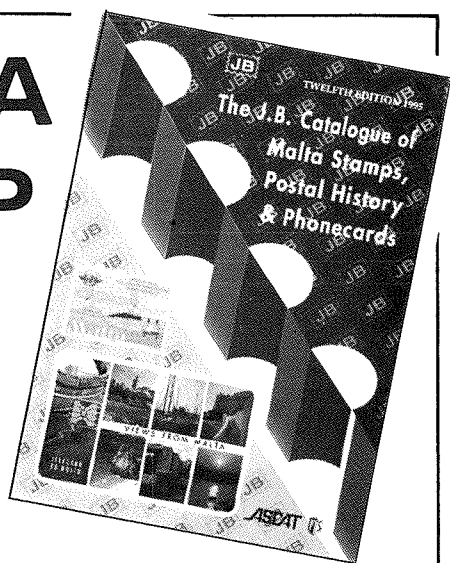
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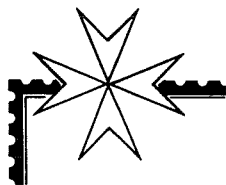
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Silver STOCKHOLMIA '86
Editor: Dr A Bonnici, Asst. Editor: Mr T. Camilleri
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Ta' Xbiex, Malta.
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Vol. 24 No. 1

April, 1995

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CAPTAIN ALEXANDER BALL AS KNIGHT OF MALTA – SOME AUTOGRAPHS

By Giovanni Bonello LL.D.

Few who are not professional historians seem to know that Captain Alexander Ball, one of the king-pins in the scheme to oust the Order of St John permanently from Malta, was himself a Knight of the Order.



*Fig. 1 Portrait of Captain Alexander Ball as Knight Commander of the Order of Malta.
Private Collection, Malta*

Ball's Maltese knighthood came about through the personal intercession of Lord Nelson, who brought pressure to bear on Paul I, the insane Czar of Russia, to bestow that signal honour on his mistress Lady Hamilton and on his trusted envoy in Malta, Captain Ball.

On October 31, 1799, Nelson wrote from Palermo to the Czar a long letter in French, of which the following is the free translation of an extract:

"Sir

"Your Majesty will deign to observe that, when you were elected Grand Master and the Order was to be reconfirmed in its rights over Malta, I never permitted any suspicion that Great Britain coveted the possession of Malta. I therefore ordered that the flag of His Sicilian Majesty should be hoisted as he is the legitimate sovereign of that Island.

"The quarrels of the nobility and the poor conduct of the leaders (of the Maltese) made it imperative that some prudent person be placed at the head of the Island. His Sicilian Majesty, following the unanimous desire of all the Island, appointed Captain Ball as Governor in Chief, and he will remain in that position until Your Majesty, as Grand Master, will appoint someone else.

"The painful task of keeping peace among the Maltese, following difficulties which your Majesty will readily understand, has been accomplished by Her Majesty the Queen of Naples who, in a moment of extreme need, sent £7,000 from her own and her children's purse, through the intercession of Lady Hamilton, wife of Sir William Hamilton, Minister of my Gracious Sovereign to the Court of the Two Sicilies, known personally to your Majesty, and through the brave conduct and prudence of Captain Ball.

*"Should your Majesty honour these two persons with the Order's decorations, I can assure you that none more than them deserve the Cross, and that this distinction will gratify Your Majesty's most humble and devout servant
Bronte Nelson"¹*

Czar Paul, little realising how treacherous Nelson's declarations of allegiance were, and how the decision to dispossess the Order and the Two Sicilies from any rights over Malta had already been taken, fell for Nelson's soft talk. He almost instantly conferred the Cross of Knight Commander of the Order of Malta on Captain Ball, and that of *Dame Petit Croix* on Nelson's mistress, Emma Hamilton.

Writing to Nelson from St Petersburg on December 21, 1799, Czar Paul said:



Fig. 2 Portrait of Lady Emma Hamilton, as Dame Petit Croix of the Order of Malta. She received her decoration the same day as Captain Ball. Painted by Schmidt in 1800

"I have received your letter of the 31st October. It is my great wish that the expedition against Malta will be successful. In that event, Major General Prince Wolconsky will stay there with three regiments of Grenadiers, and will remain on duty in his capacity as Commander of Malta, pending a definitive arrangement between the English, Russian and Neapolitan troops.

"I accord with pleasure, at your request, the Cross of Commander to Captain Ball, and that of Knight to Lady Hamilton, which you will remit to them with the letters I have addressed to them.

"The capture of Malta will add an extra branch to the crown of laurels for the Victor of Aboukir. Whom I pray God, my Lord Duke of Bronte Lord Nelson, to have under his saintly and worthy protection.

Paul I²

The letter addressed by Emperor Paul I to Lady Hamilton has been preserved:

"My Lady Hamilton,

"Having learnt with particular satisfaction the active part you have played in maintaining tranquillity and good order among the inhabitants of Malta, we have determined to give you evidence of our benevolence by decorating you with the Small Cross of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, which is herewith enclosed.

"With which we pray God, My Lady Hamilton, that He will have you under his saintly and worthy protection.

Paul I³

I have been unable to trace the other letter sent by the Czar to Captain Ball, accompanying his insignia as Knight Commander of the Order of Malta.

The demented Czar did not limit himself to awarding the decoration to Nelson's mistress; at the same time his own lover, Madame Lapoukhine was also made a Knight of Malta.⁴

Ball and Lady Hamilton must have been delighted by the important decoration. Both had their portraits painted, sporting the Maltese Cross, to leave to posterity a visual memento of so grand an honour.

Captain Ball's likeness in full uniform as Knight of Malta, proudly displays the coveted eight-pointed Cross of the Order. I believe the painting, now in a local private collection, has not been published before. Likenesses of Alexander Ball abound, but after Britain's machinations to take the Island away from its

Clifford 4 Fev^r 1802

Monsieur

Le conseil Miprieur
Les Deputes decrin officiellement
a Mi Lord Hobart Secritaire
D'etat pour annoncer Leur
arriue a Londres

J'ai l'honneur D'etre
Mons^r Le Marquis avec la
plus haute consideration

Votre tres humble Secritaire

Alex^r Ball

a Mons^r Le Marquis De Testaferrata

Fig. 3 Autograph letter by Ball to Marquis Mario Testaferrata. Private Collection, Malta

legitimate rulers, the Sicilian King or the Order of Malta, were put into full and manifest execution, Ball may have considered it politic not to ostentate the honour given to him by the Order he betrayed.

Elated, too, was Lady Hamilton. The artist Johann Heinrich Schmidt was in 1800 commissioned to paint her picture in Dresden as *Dame Petit Croix* of the Order of Malta. Of the many dozens of portraits of Emma Hamilton, this was Nelson's favourite. He had it hung in his dining cabin on the *Victory*, and it is this



Fig. 4 Portrait of Marquis Mario Galea Testaferrata. Private Collection, Malta

picture of his lover as Dame of the Order of Malta that he looked on when he died in action in Trafalgar in 1805.

We have the evidence of an eye-witness on how proud Emma Hamilton was of her Maltese decoration. A Swedish diplomat wrote "Milady Hamilton, once considered the most beautiful woman in Europe, is now the fattest I have ever set eyes on... she wears the Maltese Cross so that she now has all the titles that can impress people"⁵

Henceforth, Ball added the new title to his signature. He became Cav. Alexander John Ball.⁶ Similarly, on the marble inscriptions he set up in Gharghur and Zejtun, he calls himself *Cav. e Baronetto Ball*.

What a stroke of irony that Captain Ball, only shortly after flaunting proudly the new decoration, was to order that no one, including Bishop Ferdinando Mattei, should wear any insignia or decoration of the Order of Malta.⁷

The Testaferrata Delegation in London

I would like to add two original and unpublished manuscripts by Alexander Ball, to those recorded in this issue by Dr Alfred Bonnici.

One is a short letter addressed by Ball to *Le Marquis de Testaferrata*, to inform him that the Maltese deputies who wanted to meet Lord Hobart, Secretary of State, had arrived in London. It is dated Attard (S. Anton), 4 February, 1802.

Behind this brief note hides a whole volume of history. Marquis Mario Testaferrata led the first-ever official delegation of Maltese to London since the British connection. His personality is variously assessed. Being at that time, ardently pro-Ball and pro-British, Charles Cameron described Testaferrata most favourably in a secret memorandum:

"Marquis Mario Testaferrata, of the first family in the Island. One of his ancestors was made Grandee of Spain. The Marquis has been distinguished for his moderation in practice and his prudent though manly conduct in the various trying situations he was placed in since the invasion of the French. He was so well thought of by all parties that he was appointed one of those who drew up the capitulations to the French. The French laid heavy contributions on his family which is still one of the most opulent in the Island.

"He has always shown a great attachment to His Majesty's government, and is at the same time esteemed a well-wisher to his country, and conse-

quently he is very popular. As to his talents, he is a man of sound judgement and is well informed with respect to the ancient privileges, as well as the modern state of the Island".⁸

That picturesque maverick, Anthony O'Hara, the Irishman who was the last Russian Minister to the Order of Malta, had, obviously, less reason to like Testaferrata and his delegation, whom he calls traitors. Another secret memo, this time by O'Hara, states:

"It must be remembered that the delegates who have been induced to go to London in order to win support for the formation of a Maltese Priory, are the same gang of traitors — they are also the wealthiest people in Malta — who in conjunction with some of the French Knights have betrayed the Order in the hands of the Jacobins, in order to introduce into Malta the system of equality. The Army of the Directory came here at their invitation, to be the witness of their treachery.

"In creating a Langue of their own, these traitors calculated that they would not only escape the punishment of their base perfidy, but would soon be in control of the government of the Island".⁹

Deposed Grand Master Hompesh himself had some scathing things to say about the Testaferrata delegation:

"The Maltese who went to London are not at all what they would like to appear. They are six: The Marquis Testaferrata; a certain Castagna, a cotton merchant; a certain Cachia of Zejtun, an architect and surveyor; a certain Mallia from Gozo oppressed by debts; and two priests: one Mallia who teaches the A-B-C and the other, an ex-Capuchin monk, called Ricaud. Their going to London is the effect of intrigue".¹⁰

The mission of the Maltese contingent in London proved anything by plain sailing. Having gone there to offer Malta to the British Empire, they expected a royal welcome. Instead they were treated with disdain and contempt.

Lord Hobart refused to receive them, and eventually only condescended to do so unofficially in his private residence. When he did, he showed them in no uncertain manner that what they had to say did not matter.¹¹

To see the King, they had to waylay him on his way out of church at Kew on April 11, 1802. "It must create some surprise that those gentlemen who attended as Ambassadors from the State, should not be admitted officially to a regular audience".¹²

So humiliating was their treatment at the hands of the authorities that the rabidly pro-British member of the delegation, the ex-Capuchin monk Emmanuele Ricaud, lost his temper. "He suffered himself to be carried away by the violence of his indignation and expressed himself in terms the most energetic, and perhaps, most uncourtly".¹³

The Maltese were not alone in resenting the villanous manners of the masters they had gone to revere. William Miles, writing to Captain Ball on the Testaferrata delegation's debacle, confessed: "Our manners are not best calculated to win the affection of mankind. There is nothing seductive in them, and we have a coldness and a *hauteur* which not only offends, but disgusts other nations".¹⁴

Testaferrata and his delegation were finally asked to leave London as their presence there "would give jealousy to France".¹⁵

Marquis Testaferrata, from being Ball's ardent admirer, became one of his most outspoken critics, as can be seen from his letter to William Eton.¹⁶

The 'Victory' Medals

The last Ball autograph I wish to illustrate relates, rather than to a letter, to a certificate connected with the Maltese uprising against the French.

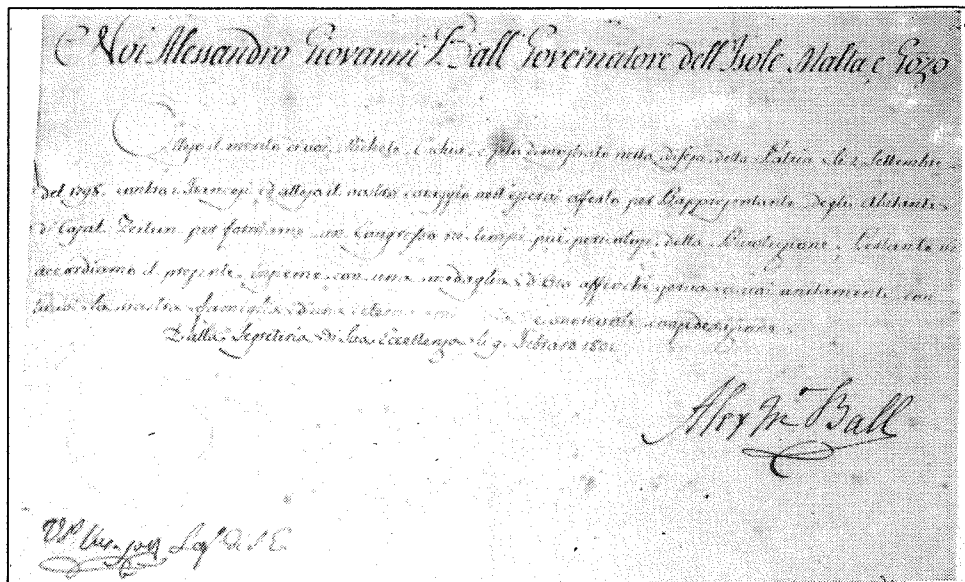


Fig. 5 Autograph certificate accompanying the gold medal awarded by Ball to Dr Enrico Scerri. Private Collection, Malta

A special gold medal was coined, which Ball, as representative of the King of Sicily, presented to the leaders of the Maltese. These medals are rare. Portraits of notables wearing the victory medals include those of Bishop (then Canon) Francesco Saverio Caruana, Emmanuele Vitale, Filippo Castagna, Vincenzo Borg 'Brared', Giovanni Gafà of Gharghur and Alexander Ball.

Mgr Alfredo Mifsud states he also saw those belonging to Giuseppe Fenech of Balzan and Pietro Buttigieg of Zebbug, besides three in private, and two in public collections.¹⁷

The attestation I am publishing, I believe for the first time, refers to Enrico Scerri, the representative of Hal Chircop: A free English translation from Italian reads:

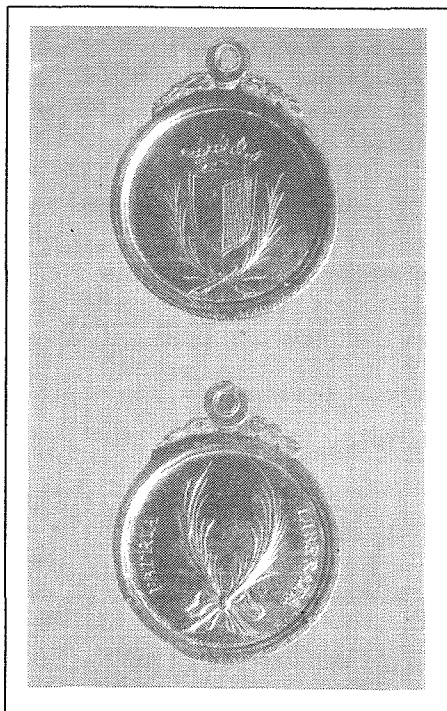


Fig. 6 The gold medal awarded in 1801 to the leaders of the Maltese by Captain Ball as representative of His Sicilian Majesty. Private Collection, Malta

"We Alexander John Ball, Governor of the Island of Malta and Gozo

"Having confirmed the merit and the zeal that you, Enrico Scerri, manifested in the defence of your native land on September 2, 1798 against the French, and having confirmed your courage in offering yourself as a representative of Casal Chircop to form a Company in the most dangerous time of the revolution;

"We therefore present to you this, together with a gold medal, to serve you and your family as everlasting memory and honourable consideration.

"From the Office of His Excellency's Secretariat.

February 9, 1801.

Alex Jn. Ball

*(Ball's Seal as
Representative of
His Sicilian Majesty)*

*Felice Cutajar
Secretary of His Excellency"*

Dr Enrico Scerri, a physician who graduated at Salerno University, the recipient of the Medal and Certificate, besides being the Representative of Casal Chircop was later Captain of the Port.¹⁸

A similar certificate, given to Michele Cachia, was published by Ganado-Sammut in their important study on Anglo-French Caricature on Malta during the Napoleonic period.¹⁹

Two other certificates like the one published today, are preserved in the National Library. They refer to Saverio Zarb of Attard, and Stanislao Gatt of Qormi.^{20, 21}

Notes and References

1. Raffaele Palumbo, *Carteggio di Maria Carolina*, Naples, 1907, p.117
2. *Ibid*, p.119
3. *Ibid*, p.118
4. Flora Fraser, *Beloved Emma*, London, 1986, p.267
5. H.J.A. Sire, *The Knights of Malta*, New Haven, 1994, p.243
6. E.g. Mgr. Alfredo Mifsud, *Origine della Sovranità Inglese su Malta*, 1907, p.440
7. *Ibid*, p.366
8. William Hardman, *A History of Malta*, Malta, 1908, p.419
9. Valentine O'Hara, *Anthony O'Hara*, London, 1938, p.197. A different version of the memorandum in Lib. Ms. 523
10. Lib. Ms. 419
11. Albert Ganado & Joseph Sammut, *Malta in British and French Caricature*, Malta, 1989, p.61
12. Cobbett's *Annual Register*, 1802-3, London, part iii, col. 705-706
13. *Ibid*
14. William Miles, *Correspondence on the French Revolution*, London, 1890, pp.322-324
15. Cobbett's, *op. cit.*, col.862
16. Letter of June 2, 1806
17. Mifsud, *op. cit.*, p.378
18. Hardman, *op. cit.*, p.49. For full biographical details about Dr Enrico Scerri (December 28, 1776 — February 8, 1841) see the funeral oration delivered in his honour by Dr Francesco Leone Gravagna in *Il Mediterraneo*, February 14, 1841, p.1442
19. Ganado-Sammut, *op. cit.*, p.49
20. Lib. Ms. 570, p.22
21. After completing this article, I read the exhaustive study by Chev. Joseph C. Sammut, *Maltese Blockade Medals*, in *Proceedings of History Week 1992*, Malta, 1994, pp.77-87 to which the reader is referred.

More Letters by Captain Alexander John Ball, R.N.

by Dr A. Bonnici

In May 1798, Capt. A.J. Ball R.N., was transferred to the Mediterranean Station to serve under the Command of Lord Nelson, and was soon promoted to Command HMS *Alexander*, a 74-gun ship of the line, with 500 men on board. He achieved distinction in the battle of the Nile, off Aboukir Bay in Egypt, on August 1, 1798, where Nelson destroyed Napoleon's French Fleet.

On Sunday, September 2, 1798, the Maltese rebelled against the French garrison under the Command of General Claude-Henri Vaubois, whom Napoleon had left as Commander of the French Forces in Malta, after taking Malta from the Knights of St John, and expelling the Grand Master Ferdinand von Hompesch from the Islands.

The Maltese leaders knew of Nelson's victory over the French Fleet at Aboukir Bay, and that he was now trying to capture or destroy the ships that had escaped, so they immediately wrote to him, requesting to blockade Valletta, so that no supplies could reach the besieged French, and no French ship inside Valletta Harbour could go out and attack any supply ship coming to the help of the Maltese from Sicily.

This request reached him on HMS *Vanguard* on September 13, 1798 and he immediately instructed the Marquis Pinto Guldes de Nizza Reale, commanding the Portuguese squadron of four vessels, to blockade Valletta which he did on September 19, 1798.

In October, Nelson reappeared off Malta at the head of three ships and two frigates and took over the blockade from the Portuguese leaving Ball in charge. On October 25, 1798 Nelson sent the following dispatch to Ball:

"You are hereby required and directed to take under your command the ships named in the margin [the Terpsichore, the sloop LA Bonne Citoyenne, and the fireship Incendiary], the captains having my directions to follow your orders, and to undertake the blockade of the island of Malta, and to prevent as much as in your power, any supplies of arms, ammunition or provisions getting to the French Army or Port in their possession, and to grant every aid and assistance to the Maltese, and consulting with the Maltese Delegates upon the best methods of distressing the enemy using every effort to cause them to quit the Island or oblige them to capitulate. And relying upon your

zeal and abilities in the service, in the event of a capitulation with the enemy the Island, Towns and Forts to be delivered to the Islanders, to be restored to their lawful sovereign."

From now on Ball was entrusted with the responsibility of the blockade, and among the British ships effecting the blockade under his command we find *Audacious, Goliath, Emerald, Stromboli, Incendiary, Alfonso and Benjamin, etc.*

In February, 1799, the Maltese insurgents needing somebody of authority who could coordinate their efforts and assume the responsibility of commanding the besieging troops, requested Capt A.J. Ball to preside over the National Assembly, and to have full command of the Maltese troops. He gladly accepted.

During the Congress held on March 16, 1799, Ball read out two important letters he had received from Admiral Nelson and from the British Ambassador in Naples, Sir William Hamelton, whereby he was instructed to assume in the name of the King of the Two Sicilies the Land Command of the Maltese Islands, with the title of Governor, a title he continued to use until he was relieved of his post in Malta in February, 1801.

DOvendo alcuni delli Maltesi aderenti a Francesi partire da questo Dominio, tra quali l'Avv. Calcedonio Fenech, Paolo Mallia, Antonio Pousiergues, ed il Fra Cappellano Stefano Libreri, ed essendo molto facile, che tali aderenti de' Francesi abbiano de' debiti in Malta; S. E. il Signor GOVERNATORE fa sapere a tutti quelli, che hanno o crediti, o altri affari da liquidare colli detti aderenti, dovere sino a tutta la prossima Domenica comparire in questa G. C. della Valletta, a dare nota di loro pretensioni colle opportune giustificazioni; altrimenti tali creditori, spirato detto termine, s'intenderanno aver perduto qualunque loro dritto, nè potranno mai più esercitarlo.

Dalla Segreteria di S. E. li 18 Settembre. 1800.

Sottoscritto = L'Uditor Felice Cutajar Segr.º di S. E.

Charles Cameron who succeeded Ball in May, 1801, and his successors including Ball when he came back to Malta in October 1802, began to be called Civil Commissioners up till 1813.

The following unpublished letter is the earliest recorded letter by Alexander John Ball, after the capitulation of the French occupying forces under Vaubois on September 5, 1800.

It is a historical letter written to His Britanic Majesty's Agent and Consul in Tripoli, Barbary Coast, Mr Simon Lucas on October 11, 1800, in which Ball announces the surrender of Valletta, and expressing his elation that this was achieved without having the need to bombard and damage the city, and without suffering any casualties among the British Troops.

He pays tribute to Vaubois who resisted for two years on seven month supply of rations, and for the French Troops not to have received any pay for nineteen months.

Ball expressed his wish to establish good relations with the Bashaw of Tripoli, and informed Lucas that he was enclosing a letter to be delivered to the Bashaw, with whom *"he hoped to establish Commerce between his Dominion and Malta, from which will arise great reciprocal advantages"*.

As soon as Malta passed under British protection all the North African states were informed, and consequently all Maltese slaves were to be set free, or face the consequence — Gun-boat diplomacy — but it worked. All Maltese Nationals were set free. This did not please everybody, as those slaves who were either born in slavery, or those who had been slaves for a very long time had lost all connection with Malta, their delivery from serfdom suddenly meant being without a guaranteed roof and food.

The supply of corn, the staple food of the Maltese, was always a big headache to the authorities. In the footnote, Ball asks Lucas to send him "Two thousand Salmi of corn, if the price is right".

Malta, 11th October, 1800

"My Dear Sir

"I have the pleasure to announce to you the surrender of La Valette the 5th of last month, without being driven to the necessity of Bombarding or Damaging the Town, or having a single British Soldier wounded. The French had only two days' provisions left — Vaubois had subsisted his garrison two years on seven months' rations; they had not received any pay for nineteen months. So that the wonder is under all these privations their

holding out so long. I send you a letter to the Bashaw, with whom I hope to establish a commerce between his Dominion and this Island, from which will arise great reciprocal advantages. I forward to you a letter from the Duke of Portland and a few papers. MaCauley is writing and will tell you the news.

"We have the most Sultry Weather that has been experienced for many years.

"I hope to go through without feeling any bad effects from it.

"Adieu my Dear Sir,

"Believe me with much esteem

"Your most faithful and obedient servant.

Alex J. Ball."

"Simon Lucas Esq.

"His Brit Maj. Agent & Consul in the state of Tripoli, Barbary,

"Pray send us two thousand Salms of Corn as soon as possible if the price is reasonable"

Malta. 10th Feb^r 1800.

My Dear Sir

I have the pleasure to announce to you the Surrender of la Vallette the 5th of last Month, without being driven to the necessity of Bombarding or Damaging the Town, or having a single British Soldier wounded. The French had only two days Provision left. Vaubois had subsisted his garrison two years or seven months.

rations, they had not received any Pay
for nineteen Months. so that the wonder
is, under all these privations, they hold
out so long. I send you a letter to the

Bashaw, with whom I hope to establish
a commerce between his dominions, and
this Island, from which, will arise
great reciprocal advantages. I forward
to you a letter from the Duke of Portland
and a few Papers. Macaulay is

writing and will tell you the News.
We have the most sultry weather
that has been experienced for many years.
I hope you ~~go~~ through without
feeling any bad effects from it.

adieu My Dear Sir

Believe me with much
Esteem

Your most faithful debtor

Alex^r John Ball

Simon Lucas Esq

His Brit^h Maj. Agent & Consul
in the State of Tripoly
Barbary

may send us two thousand Salms
of Corn as soon as possible if the price
be reasonable

Captain Alexander John Ball was recalled back to Naval duties on his ship HMS *Alexander*, leaving Malta on February 19, 1801 and was given a Baronet by the British Government on June 10, 1801. Ferdinand of the Two Sicilies bestowed upon him the blue ribbon with a narrow red border of Commander of the Order of St Ferdinand together with Troubridge and Hallowell and the Czar Paul I of Russia, on Nelson's recommendation, made him Knight Commander of the Order of Malta.

Cav. Sir Alexander John Ball, Baronet, was sent back to Malta on July 10, 1802 as Civil Commissioner and became Rear Admiral of the Blue in 1805, and Rear Admiral of the White in April, 1807, which meant that he was able to carry on with his Naval duties as well as those of Civil Commissioner, as the following unpublished letter shows:

By Sir Alexander John Ball, Baronet
Rear Admiral of the White

"You are required and directed to proceed without delay off Previsa in Albania, taking under your convoy the trade bound thither, or to any of the

ports in that quarter, and having seen them in safety to their destination proceed to join the squadron off Corfu, and having fallen in with His Majesty's ship Belle Poule, which you will probably find cruising off the Island of Faro, put yourself under the Orders of Captain Brisbane, and follow his directions for your further proceedings.

Given on board the Trident
at Malta the 2 November 1808

Alex J. Ball

To E.A. Down Esq,
Commander of HM Sloop Redwig

By Command of the Rear Admiral Francis Lang.

By Sir Alexander John Ball Esq
Rear Admiral of the White
do do do

You are hereby required and directed to
proceed without delay off Tunis in Albania
taking under your Command the Sloop bound thither
to any of the Ports in that quarter and having
seen them in safety to their destination proceed to

join the Squadron stationed off Corfu and having
fallen in with His Majesty's Ship Belle Poule, which
you will probably find cruising off the Island of
Tano put yourself under the orders of Captain
Brisbane and follow his directions for your further
proceedings.

Given on board the Frigate
at Malta, the 2^d November 1808

Albion Ball

To

L. A. Down Esq.

Commander of H. M. Ship

Hedding

By command of the Rear Admiral
Thomas Lewis

As Civil Commissioner Ball assumed enormous administrative and Executive powers. All petitions were addressed to him and he had the power to grant or deny the requests made.



Castellanza

Calisto C. G. Singson 1889.
assegnano alla Supt. come vedova del 1^o M. M. M.
monti in attuale servizio la pensione di 1000 lire
al mese da conseguirsi dal p. m. del corrente giugno.
Il Regio Cir. Com. 1889

Allegato 1889

calisto vedova dell' Uditore Ferdinando M.
cat. Ser. Una, ed Avee di 1. C. si fa licito
nel presente ricorso richiamare alla mente
di 1. C. i coniugi prestati dal Defensor
per una somma di 1000 lire di cui, essendo
stato impedito fin dal 1. C. o mica, e quelli

specialm^{te} prestati nel tempo dell'insur-
rez.^{ione} a sotto il felicissimo Governo Inglese
di V. C. che lo reggeva, & continua a
reggere coll'universale sodisfazione, per
delle grazie che si vive, & si gode, perfino
che si compiacce destinare quell'aspe-
gnaz.^{ione} mensile che suol esser l'at-
testato della gratitudine, & della ricono-
scenza del governo verso i servizi presta-
ti dal Defunto i che formerà nello stesso
tempo una parte di consolazione per la
vedova. Orce nelle sue affezioni ed ec-
citerà un nuovo motivo d'obbligaz.^{ione} a
V. C. a cui della grand.
G. F. Torregiani

The above petition was written on May 16, 1809 to Ball, by Advocate G.F. Torregiani, on behalf of the widow Carla Muscat whose husband Ferdinand Muscat had died while holding the Office of "Uditore". Ball granted Mrs Carla Muscat the monthly pension of 30 scudi (Private Collection)

LINES,

ON HIS LATE EXCELLENCY,

SIR ALEXANDER JOHN BALL, BARONET,

Kc. Kc. Kc.



VICTOR at last, Death strikes one Hero more,
Who faced his shafts unnumbered times before.
He, whom the Battle's rage so often spared,
Who NELSON's dangers with his glory shared;
Undaunted BALL, who sailed o'er every wave,
With Victory's wings, fit leader of the Brave;
Now only vanquished, ends a bright career,
And leaves his Glory, where he stamped it, here.

Where HE first bade Britannia's standard fly,
MALTA receives her Hero's parting sigh;
Now doomed to see funereal banners waved
O'er the blest Isle His arms and Genius saved,
And bid the walls he rescued from her foes,
Attest, at once, his Valour and repose.

Where her brave son, her ABERCROMBIE, sleeps,
Fame on those walls eternal vigil keeps;
And while each grateful Isle * shall grave the name
Of BALL, 'midst towers as lasting as his fame,
To Her award let future ages trust,
To tell his worth, and consecrate his dust.

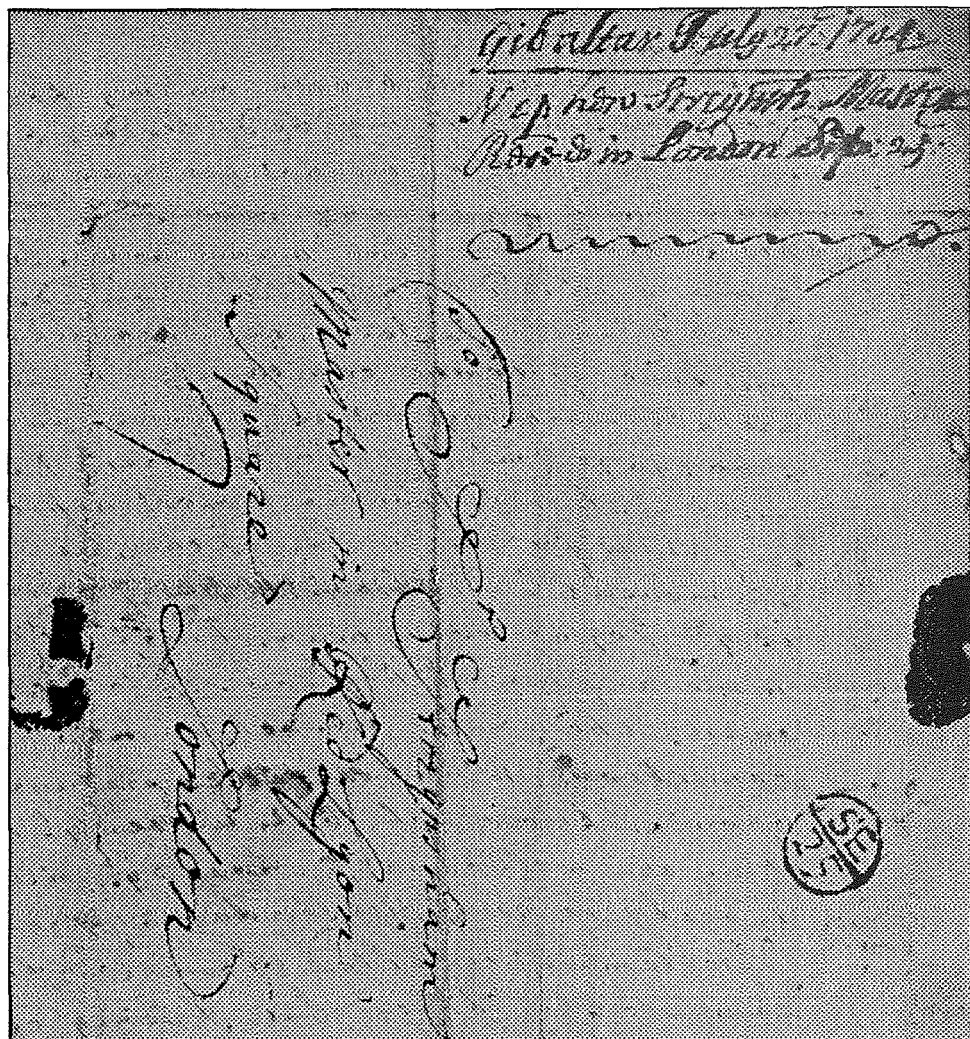
* Great Britain
and Malta

H. F.

The Capture of Gibraltar in 1704

by George Coates

One definition of postal history is the evolution of systems available to the public for sending and receiving letters. For the postal history of Gibraltar, some knowledge of the social and political history of the Rock is needed; and for the British collector of Gibraltar, history must be viewed from the British viewpoint.



Our connections with Gibraltar go back over 300 years. Cromwell expressed an interest in it as a base for the Royal Navy to command The Straits. However, that remained an idea until Samuel Pepys, Secretary to the Admiralty in the reigns of Charles II and James II, visited and assessed the naval base at Tangier, which had come to England as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza on her marriage to Charles II. He found it inadequate and expensive. It was therefore closed, and prior to 1684 a Victualling Office was set up in Gibraltar by arrangement with the Spanish authorities.

By 1686, one Jonathan Gauden was British Naval Factor on the Rock, and in 1687 a whole English squadron operated from there. These facts explain two quite early Gibraltar letters of 1683 and 1684 written by Englishmen and addressed to London, both having arrival Bishop Marks. Naval stores and Victualling Offices would need regular supplies from England and personnel to manage them, so a British community must have been resident there for a time.

The capture of Gibraltar in 1704 by Sir George Rooke is graphically covered in the letter of Streynsham Master reproduced here. Gibraltar over the years of British occupation was subjected to many sieges. The most serious and longest was that of September 12, 1779 which lasted over three years until February 3, 1783. It will be recalled that England was at that time preoccupied with the American Revolution and the Spanish considered that she would be unable to reinforce the garrison of the Rock due to lack of troops and shortage of transports. However in 1780 Sir George Rodney brushed aside the Spanish Fleet and brought in urgently needed food and military supplies. In addition the garrison with a successful sortie destroyed most of the siege works on the Spanish land side.

Two technical advances were instituted by the garrison — firstly the mounting of guns on a carriage which allowed a large angle of depression, enabling the gunners to fire at the Spanish vessels with considerable accuracy. Secondly, the use of heated shot against wooden ships, nothing new, but employed more successfully than ever before.

In 1782, the Duke of Crillon had specially built ten ships, considered unsinkable and armed with heavy guns with armoured protection above to allow the solid shells to slide off. The walls of these vessels were of green timber six to seven feet thick.

The attack began on September 13 and at first seemed to be successful however the guns on the Rock opened fire with their red hot shot and by Noon the next day all the fleet had either been sunk or burned to the waterline.

The Siege was kept up for several months but the heart had gone out of the

invaders and General George Augustus Eliot and his garrison had survived the Fifteenth Siege of Gibraltar.

All this time Gibraltar had the status of a Fortress and a Garrison. It was administered by a Governor, always a military officer, and much later by a Governor-in-council. It was not a Colony. The civil population was small and subject to military orders, with curfews, control of exit and entry from Spain and a requirement for letters to and from Spain to go through the Civil Secretary's office for censoring if need be.

Letters from Gibraltar in the eighteenth century fall into two groups. Those from the Garrison, that is army or navy or establishment personnel, and those from the civil community in the town, including letters from ships' captains calling at Gibraltar. They travelled by one of two routes: by sea either in naval or merchant ships, or 'overland', the term used for letters sent across the Lines into Spain for onward transmission by the Spanish Post Office.

Overland mails were of course subject to relations with Spain, and with France if their destination was England. throughout the eighteenth century a state of war existed with either or both of these nations as often as not. In fact, for only 37 years between 1704 and 1804 was the border open.

The Battle of Trafalgar, 1805, gave Britain undisputed command of the seas. Next year the Falmouth Packets extended their service to Gibraltar and Malta. A Packet Agent was sent out from England to set up the Gibraltar Packet Office, dealing solely with the receipt and despatch of packet mails. Overland mails continued with the Civil Secretary's Office. Most ship letters generally avoided both post offices for another fifty years. The Battle of Waterloo finally ended hostilities in Europe, so from 1815 the overland mail continued without interruption. Europe settled down and gradually trade and commerce increased. Commercial shipping through The Straits, much of it calling at Gibraltar, increased. So the Town became responsible for more of the correspondence we collect today.

Steam vessels replaced sail in the Falmouth Packet Service in the early 1830s, and in turn were replaced in 1837 by contract steamers of the Peninsular Company, later to become the P & O Line. With the extension to India and the opening of the Suez Canal, Gibraltar became even busier and more prosperous.

It was in 1857 that the great improvement in postal services took place. The two post offices, that is the Packet Agency and the Civil Secretary's Post Office amalgamated and came under the GPO London. Stamps of Great Britain were provided and are recognised by the "G" and the "A26" cancellations. Spanish postage stamps, which had been required for letters for Spain, were also sold at

the new combined Post Office until 1875. A decade later, from January 1, 1886, the GPO turned the administration of the Post Office over to the Gibraltar authorities who set about providing their own adhesive postage stamps. The modern postal system had arrived.

Bibliography:

Mediterranean Portrait of a Sea, Ernle Bradford, Hodder & Stoughton Ltd, 1971
Gibraltar Postal History to 1885, G.A. Osborn GM, Gibraltar Study Circle, 1995

Transcript of the letter sent by Streynsham Master, Lieut. HMS *Ranelagh*, 'off Gibraltar' to his uncle in London written in very bad spelling and English:

Sir,

The Charles Galley going for England to give an acct of our transactions in these parts and what hath happened since we have been out is as followeth We have mett with no French Fleet tho Sir George Rooke was in Sight of them in the Streights but they made for Thoulonne where they now lie.

Upon our goeing towards ye Streights we met Sir Geo, Rooke wht all his fleet lieing off Lagos whereupon a councill of war being called ye result of wch was to goe tup to Malaga but before our arrival there my Bro was ordered wth some ships for Cadiz in order to exchange Prisoners from thence having joynd Sr Geo. we saild for Fungeroll neare Malaga where we landed our Marines to secure our watering but ye countrey People drawing into Parties & alarming ye camp & continually firing at us from ye Hills we burnt four or five houses & a mill or two & so left yon poor Souls frightned & terrified, & not without Cause & maeing ye best of our way out of ye Streights we met with an Express from Lisbon wth orders from ye King of Spaine to take some towne in Andalousia so my Bro wth abt sixteen English and Six Dutch Ships and two Dutch Bombs was ordered in to Batter against Gibraltar & upon Sunday ye 23rd of this month being July we drew into a l;ine of Battle & about five in ye morn we began to bomb & canonade ye town wch is built all of Stone & lies at ye foot of ye Hill fortified with may Strong batteries; but we plyd yre so briskly wth our shot they ceased firing by one of ye Clock abt wth time peveiving a fort to be extremely battred & ye gund Dismounted we mand ye boats & attacked it wth sword and pistoll in our hand being Landed and marching up to ye castle, Ye spaniards sprung a mine & blew up ye castle ye stones of which as big as mountains fell upon some of our men & smote yon on hip & tigh, crushed some to death, bruised others on their heads Legs & arms, no parts escaping. What befell me was one knock on my pate wch made me to bend and a great many were maimed by this Stratagem but many are killed and many will die of their wounds & many will for ever be disabled; abt this time ye towne capitulated & they are all marching out wth their bagg & baggage men, women, children, horses asses mules all laden.

A most deplorable sight as for their houses they are immovable as also ye terra firma wch is ye joy of every mans heart, so that move anyone wch had bowells to see so many thousands in such a miserable condition.

What articles are agreed upon I know not but those that will stay are welcome & those that will have liberty to goe;

Yesterday a French gentleman revolted from Cadiz and came to this place but I being confined to my bed heare nothing of him nor what acct he gives so hopeing youl consider my condition youl pardon what is a miss, but believe me to be

*Yor most Dutyfull Nephew
& humble Servt
Streynsham Master*

*Feww men lost in ye
Engagement no body
of note*

Service to my Lady & Co.

of Gibraltar

July 27th, 1704

EUROPA 1993 ISSUE

By J. Farrugia

Date of Issue	April 7, 1993
Values	10c and 35c
Stamp Size	10c = 31 x 44mm; 35c = 44mm x 31mm
Designer	10c = Pawl Carbonaro; 35c = Alfred Chircop
Printers	Printex Ltd
Process	Lithography
Perforation	10c = 14 x 13.9; 35c = 13.9 x 14
Watermark	10c = Maltese Crosses Upright; 35c = Sideways
Paper	Chalk Surfaced
Gum	P.V.A.

Colours

This set was printed in the four-colour process using the standard CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black) process colours for each value.

The 10c stamp is of the vertical format and the 35c stamp is of the horizontal format. A Pane of ten stamps, of each value, is divided into twelve spaces, three rows of four in the 10c value and four rows of three in the 35c value. In the first

two spaces of the top row, in the 10c Pane, can be seen an enlarged section of the same 10c stamp. In the first spaces of the top and second rows, in the 35c Pane, can also be seen an enlarged section of the 35c stamp. In both cases "Europa '93" is also included. The value of a whole Pane of stamps is seen in the middle of the top margin of each Pane, of both values, printed in black.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin of each Pane, of both values, next to the last stamp of the bottom row. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers, from left to right, in all Panes, of both values.

The Printed Sheet of each value, consisted of six Panes of ten stamps, A to F.

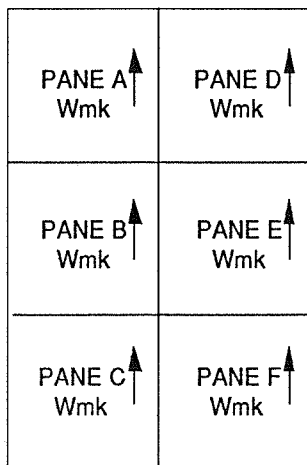


Fig (a)

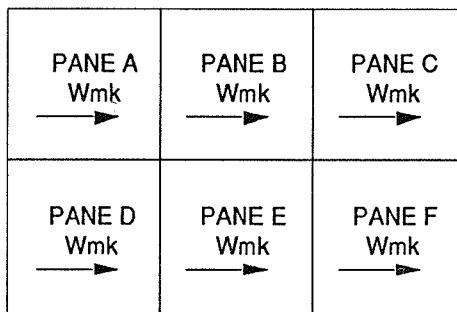


Fig (b)

Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp, of the bottom row, in each Pane, of both values.

10c = 1A x 4 up to and including 1F x 4

35c = 1A x 4 up to and including 1F x 4

Perforation of Margins

In the 10c value, the right hand margins of Panes D, E and F are imperforate, whilst the other three margins of these same Panes, and the four margins of Panes A, B and C are all perforated. In the 35c value, the top margins of Panes A, B and C are imperforate, whilst the other three margins of these same Panes, and the four margins of Panes D, E and F are all perforated. Other printing marks could have been seen at the top left hand corner of Pane A and at the bottom left hand corner of Pane C in the 10c value. In the 35c value these could have been seen at the bottom left hand corner of Pane D and in the bottom right hand corner of Pane F.

From a study of details given, the Printed Sheet of each value, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown in Fig (a) for the 10c value and as shown in Fig. (b) for the 35c value. Looking at the Printed Sheets as shown, stamps of both values

would be seen the right way up, hence why the watermark is upright in the 10c value and sideways in the 35c value. Perforator ran from right to left in fig. (a) and from top to bottom in fig. (b).

Imprint Blocks

The Imprint "Printex Limited Malta" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row, in each Pane, of both values. Letters are 1mm high and printed in black. An Imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks. A special handstamp, incorporating a motif, was used for cancellation on the first day of issue.

This set will remain on sale up to April 6, 1994.

First day sales by 12.45pm amounted to Lm79,474.

5th GAMES OF SMALL NATIONS OF EUROPE —X SCOUTS AND GUIDES ISSUE —Y

By J. Farrugia

ISSUE	X	Y
Date of Issue	4-5-93	21-7-93
Values	3c, 4c, 10c, 35c	3c, 4c, 10c, 35c
Stamp Size	38mm x 20mm	31mm x 44mm
Designer	Richard J. Caruana	Luciano Micallef
Printers	Printex Limited	same
Process	Lithography	same
Perforation	13.6 x 14	14 x 13.9
Watermark	Maltese Crosses Upright	Maltese Crosses Upright
Paper	Chalk Surfaced	same
Gum	P.V.A.	same

Colours

These two issues were printed in the four-colour process using the standard CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black) process colours for each value in issue X and the three values, 3c, 10c and 35c in issue Y. In the 4c value of issue Y, the third colour from the top is mustard instead of yellow, as in all other values.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin, next to the last stamps of the two bottom rows, in each Pane, of all values., in issue X but next to the last stamp of the bottom row in issue Y. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers, from left to right, on all Panes, of all values, in issues X and Y.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins, printed in black, in all Panes, of all values, of issues X and Y.

Printed Sheets

Issue X – the Printed Sheet of each value consisted of four Panes A, B, C and D. Each Pane has fifty stamps, made up of five rows of ten stamps. All values are of the horizontal format. No other printing marks were seen on any of the margins.

Issue Y – The Printed Sheet of each value consisted of two Panes, A and B. Each Pane has fifty stamps, made up of ten rows of five stamps. All values are of the vertical format. Other printing marks or parts of them, could have been seen in the top and bottom of the left hand margin of Panes A and at the top and bottom of the right hand margin of Panes B.

Perforation of Margins

Issue X – The left hand margins of Panes A, B, C and D are imperforate. The other three margins of these same Panes are all perforated.

Issue Y – The left hand margin of Pane A of all values, is imperforate. The other three margins of Panes A and the four margins of Panes B are all perforated.

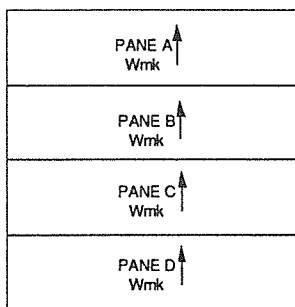


Fig (a)

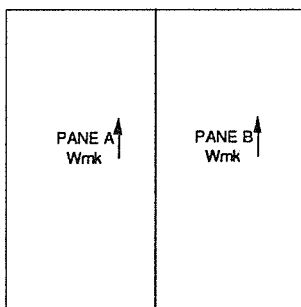


Fig (b)

Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of all values, of issues X and Y.

Issue X 3c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4, 1D x 4
 4c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4, 1D x 4
 10c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4, 1D x 4
 35c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1C x 4, 1D x 4

Issue Y 3c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4
 4c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4
 10c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4
 35c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4

From a study of the details given, the Printed Sheets of all values, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown in fig. (a) for all values of issue X and as shown in fig. (b) for all values of issue Y. Looking at the Printed Sheets as shown, all stamps would be seen the right way up, hence why watermark in all values of issues X and Y is upright. Perforator ran from left to right in figs. (a) and (b).

Imprint Blocks

The Imprint "Printex Limited Malta" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row in all Panes, of all values, in issues X and Y. Letters are 1 mm high and printed in black. An imprint Block of four will also include the colour checks. Special hand postmarks, incorporating motifs, were used for cancellation on the first day of issue.

Issue X remained on sale up to May 11, 1994 and issue Y up to July 21, 1994, unless stocks were previously exhausted.

Up to 12.45pm on the first day of issue, sales amounted to Lm42,535 (issue X) and Lm31,420 (issue Y)

With Issue X, a souvenir sheet, measuring 120mm x 80mm was also issued. The four values are printed in this souvenir sheet, the watermark being Maltese Crosses Sideways, instead of Maltese Crosses Upright as in the normal Panes. Thus individual stamps of any value, can be checked whether they formed part of a souvenir sheet or a normal Pane, by means of the direction of the watermark. The Printed Sheet of the souvenir sheets, consisted of sixteen souvenir sheets, made up of four rows of four souvenir sheets.

As a point of interest, I would like to mention that I have seen a very unusual Pane B, of the 3c value of issue X. For some reason, when the Printed Sheet of this 3c value was cut into Panes, the bottom margin of Pane B was cut so short that the Pane numbers 1B x 4 and the Printer's Imprint are not seen. On the other hand, the top margin was cut so wide that Pane numbers 1A x 4 and the Printer's Imprint are seen, obviously from the bottom margin of Pane A which was printed above Pane B. Hence that left a Pane A having a bottom margin without the Pane numbers 1A x 4 as well as the Printer's Imprint and a Pane C having a top margin with Pane numbers 1B x 4 and a Printer's Imprint.

EUROPEAN YEAR OF THE ELDERLY ISSUE —X 50th ANNIVERSARY – G.W.U. —Y

By J. Farrugia

ISSUE	X	Y
Date of Issue	23-9-93	5-10-93
Values	5c, 35c	4c
Stamp Size	31mm x 44mm	26.4mm x 35mm
Designer	Maurice Tanti Burlò	Harry Borg
Printers	Printex Limited	same
Process	Lithography	same
Perforation	14 x 13.9	13.5 x 13.5
Watermark	Maltese Crosses Upright	Maltese Crosses Sideways
Paper	Chalk Surfaced	same
Gum	P.V.A.	same

Colours

These two issues in the four-colour process using the standard CMYK (Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, Black) process colours for each value, in issues X and Y.

Colour checks in the form of coloured discs 3mm in diameter are seen in the right hand margin, next to the last stamp of the bottom row, in each Pane, of all values, of issues X and Y. The colours from top to bottom correspond to the colours used for Pane numbers, from left to right, on all Panes, of all values, of issues X and Y.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins, printed in black, in all Panes, of all values, of issues X and Y.

Printed Sheets

Issue X – The Printed Sheet of each value, consisted of two Panes A and B. Each Pane has fifty stamps made up of ten rows of five stamps. Both values are of the vertical format.

Issue Y – The Printed Sheet of this value, in my opinion, consisted of three Panes, but instead of being printed as A, B and C, they were printed A, B and another A. The reason for this conclusion is the following: The usual printing marks seen in the margins, consisting of a small circle enclosed in an oval and both crossed by two lines at right angles, are always seen in the four corners of the Printed Sheet. For example, if a Printed Sheet consists of three Panes A, B and C, with Pane A on the left, Pane B in the middle and Pane C on the right, the mentioned printing marks, would be seen at the top and bottom of the left hand margin of Pane A and also at the top and bottom of the right hand margin of Pane C. In the case of this issue, these same printing marks are seen at the top and bottom of the left hand margin of Panes A and also at the top and bottom of the right hand margin of the other Panes A, with Panes B, being in the middle, having none of these printing marks. In this case the watermark is sideways and the perforator ran from top to bottom, so the top margin of both Panes A and Pane B are all imperforate. If the watermark had been upright and the perforator ran from left to right, (as in the case of issue X) the Pane A on the left would have had the left hand margin imperforated whilst the Pane A on the right would have had all four margins perforated, and that would have made the printing error more obvious.

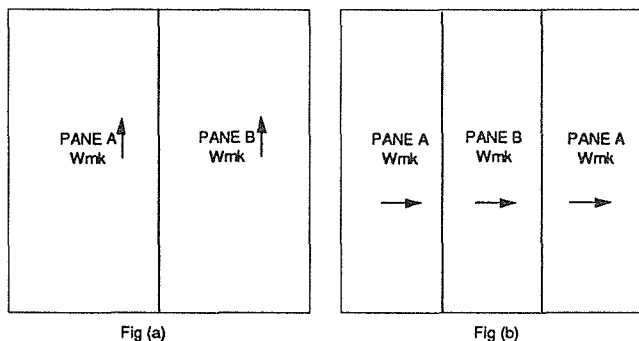
Each Pane of this value has fifty stamps, made up of ten rows of five stamps. This value is of the vertical format.

Perforations of Margins

Issue X – The left hand margin of Panes A of both values is imperforate. The other three margins of these same Panes and the four margins of Panes B are all perforated. Other printing marks or parts of them could have been seen in the top and bottom of the left hand margin of Panes A and at the top and bottom of the right hand margin of Panes B.

Issue Y – The top margins of both Panes A and Pane B of this value are imperforate

whilst the other three margins of these same Panes are all perforated. As mentioned earlier on, other printing marks were seen at the top and bottom of the left hand margin of some Panes A and at the top and bottom of the right hand margin of other Panes A.



Plate/Pane Numbers

These are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of all values of issues X and Y

Issue X 5c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4

 35c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4

Issue Y 4c = 1A x 4, 1B x 4, 1A x 4

From a study of details given, the Printed Sheets of all values, before cutting into Panes, would look as shown in fig (a) for both values of issue X and as shown in fig (b) for the value in issue Y. Looking at the Printed Sheets as shown, all stamps would be seen the right way up, hence why watermark in issue X is upright and sideways in issue Y. Perforator ran from left to right in fig (a) and from top to bottom in fig (b).

Imprint Blocks

The Imprint "Printex Limited Malta" is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes of both values, of issue X. Letters are 1mm high and printed in black. The same Imprint is not seen in any Pane of the value of issue Y. An Imprint Block of four, of issue X, will also include the colour checks. Special hand postmarks incorporating motifs, were used for cancellation on the first day of issue.

Issue X remained on sale up to September 15, 1994 and issued Y up to July 6, 1994, unless stocks were previously exhausted.

Up to 12.45pm on the first day of issue, sales amounted to Lm22,000 (issue X) and Lm4,428 (issue Y).

Correction: Vol 23 N° 1/2, page 38

"Historical Buildings" issue. The watermark for the 4c and 25c values, should read "Maltese Crosses Sideways".

MALTA — A DIARY

October - December, 1994

By J. Farrugia

3-10-94

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "La Stella — Levantina — Soċjetà Muzikali — 1894-1994" was used from October 3 to 8, 1994, at the Central Mail Room.

9-10-94

A special hand-postmark commemorating World Post Day, was used at the Malta International Airport Post Office, Malta from 7.00am to 7.00pm on Sunday, October 9, 1994. The hand-postmark, which incorporates the emblem of the Universal Postal Union, is inscribed: "World Post Day — The Post — Your Best Choice — 9-X-1994 — Malta International Airport - Malta".



10-10-94

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "World Food Day — 16-X-1994 — Water for Life" was used from October 10 to 15, 1994 at the Central Mail Room. The slogan also incorporates the World Food Day logo.

26-10-94

The "Christmas 1994" postage set issued today. A special hand-postmark was used for the cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



27-10-94

A machine stamp cancelling slogan worded: "First International — Paralympic Committee — World Swimming Championships — 2-8.11.1994" was used, on and off, from October 27 to November 8, 1994 at the Central Mail Room.

The slogan also incorporates the logo of the Paralympic Committee World Swimming Championships.

28-10-94

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "International Peace — Research Association — XV General Conference — 31.X-4.XI.1994" was used, on and off, from October 28 to November 4, 1994 at the Central Mail Room. The slogan incorporates an appropriate motif.

2-11-94

Two new stamp booklets issued today. The first booklet has a blue cover showing 36

the two shillings stamp of the 1926 Definitive postage issue, depicting Notabile, on the front.

The contents consist of a block of ten stamps of five cents value, from the 1991 Definitive postage set. It is intended for local mail use and costs fifty cents.

The second booklet has a red cover showing the one shilling stamp of the 1926 Definitive stamp issue, depicting a Grand Harbour scene, on the front.

The contents consist of a slip of five stamps of the fourteen cents value from the 1991 Definitive postage set. It is intended for European air mail use and costs seventy cents.

It may be of interest to mention here that only four other booklets were issued previously to the two above. Two were issued in 1970 and another two in 1971. The contents of the two booklets issued in 1970 and one of those issued in 1971 were similar, but the colour of the cover and the picture on the front were different. The contents of six stamps of one penny and twelve stamps of two pence, in panes of six stamps. Each booklet cost two shillings and sixpence.

The other booklet of 1971 had a white cover and on the front showed a picture of Fort St Angelo. The contents consist of twelve stamps of five pence, in two panes of six stamps and cost five shillings.

14-11-94

A machine stamp cancelling slogan worded: "30 Years — Malta Institute — Of Management — 19.XI.1994" was used from November 14 to 19, 1994 at the Central Mail Room.

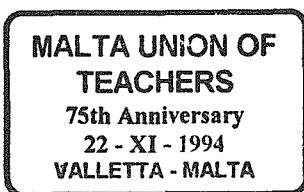
The slogan also incorporates the logo of the Malta Institute of Management.

18-11-94

In today's Government Gazette a public competition was notified for the selection of designs of the Europa 1995 stamp issue. This postage set will consist of two stamps which features different designs on the theme "Peace and Freedom". The competition is open to Maltese citizens and designs are to be delivered not later than 1.00pm on Tuesday, December 20, 1994.

22-11-94

A special hand-postmark was used to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Malta Union of Teachers. The postmark is inscribed as follows: "Malta Union Of — Teachers — 22-XI-1994 — Valletta-Malta" was used on November 22, 1994 at the Philatelic Counter at the GPO from 8.00am to 12.45pm and at the Central Mail Room, from 8.00am to 6.00pm.



28-11-94

The Postmaster General notified that a new metal hand date stamp was put in

use at the Bulk Posting Section of the GPO on Monday, November 28, 1994. The new hand date-stamp is inscribed: "General Post Office — Malta — Paid".

The old date stamp which has been replaced was withdrawn from use on November 19, 1994.

7-12-94

A special hand-postmark was used to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the signing of the Convention on International Civil Aviation. The postmark is inscribed as follows: "50th Anniversary — Valletta-Malta — 7.XII.1994 — Convention On — International Civil Aviation". It was used on December 7, 1994 at the Philatelic Counter of the GPO from 8.00am to 12.45pm and at the Central Mail Room from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

The postmark also incorporates the logo of the ICAO.



12-12-94

The "Antique Maltese Silver" postage set issued today. A special hand-postmark, incorporating a motif, was used for cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



17-12-94

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "St Patrick's — Salesian School — 90 Years Service — To The Community" was used from December 14 to 17, 1994 at the Central Mail Room.

The slogan also incorporates the logo of the St Patrick's Salesian School.



17-12-94

A special hand-postmark was used to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of the St Patrick's Salesian School. The postmark is inscribed: "90 Years Service To The Community — St Patrick's Salesian School — 17-XII-1994 — Sliema-Malta".

It was used on December 17, 1994 at the Sliema Branch Post Office, from 7.30am to 12.45pm. The postmark also incorporates the logo of the St Patrick's Salesian School.

**PLEASE SEND YOUR DUES FOR 1995
IMMEDIATELY TO:
MR. A DIMECH. 39 TONNA STREET,
SLIEMA, MALTA**

Collecting Self Adhesive Registration Labels

by Hadrian Wood

"Buying" and "Selling" advertisements of registration labels, which have recently appeared in some sections of the philatelic press, have induced me to start a collection of locally used Self Adhesive Registration Labels. This *new* type of label was introduced in Malta, and used for the first time at the Gzira Post Office in 1984. It has since gradually replaced the normal registration labels in almost all Post Offices on the Islands. I say "almost" as at the time of writing, Wied-il-Ghajn and Fgura Sub Post Offices in Malta, and Mgarr Branch Post Office in Gozo, are still using up old stocks of registration labels.

To my surprise I discovered that keeping a collection up to date by trying to obtain an example of every variety of label issued is no easy task. Having a regular source of commercially used registered mail is an enormous help, but is unlikely to solve all your problems. My supply of this type of material mainly originates from Government Departments, the GPO and major BPOs, and seldom includes covers from Sub Post Offices or from Post Offices in Gozo.

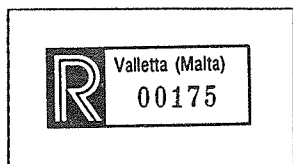
Nor is it enough to visit a Post Office and post oneself a registered cover, in the belief that you have secured the only label in use, as I found at my cost. One has also to find out whether other labels, of another variation, are being used at that same office. The GPO and one or two of the larger Branch Post Offices may, at times, be using two, or perhaps even three, different labels concurrently.

Another problem I encountered is that, unlike stamps, no advance notice is given whenever a fresh supply replaces an exhausted stock. The new labels usually turn out to be of a different design to the ones used previously. In order to keep abreast, one has to exchange notes with friends who have similar interests, as well as "inspect" labels in use whenever the need arises to visit a Post Office.

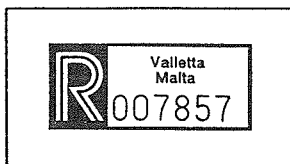
Some collectors are reluctant to remove labels from their registered covers. This is understandable. I experienced the same hesitation myself at first, and still do at times. I solved this problem by cutting out labels *only* from duplicate, damaged or extra large covers, which I consider surplus to my collection of registered mail. In this way I eased my conscience and satisfied my collecting whim at the same time.

MALTA
SELF ADHESIVE
REGISTRATION LABELS
GENERAL POST OFFICE

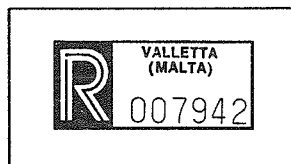
VALLETTA



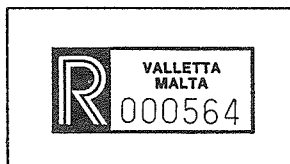
09 DEC 86



25 FEB 88



17 APR 89



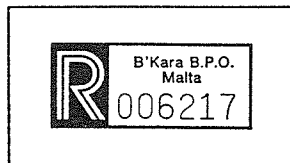
17 APR 89

BRANCH POST OFFICES

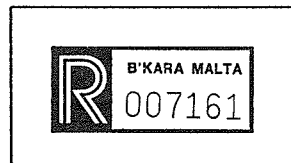
BIRKIRKARA



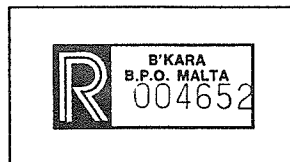
06 MAR 85



04 MAR 88



20 AUG 90



16 SEP 94

BALZAN



25 JAN 88*

BIRZEBBUĠA



22 OCT 92*

MALTA
SELF ADHESIVE
REGISTRATION LABELS
BRANCH POST OFFICES

COSPICUA



13 AUG 88



10 NOV 94

GZIRA



23 APR 84



08 OCT 86

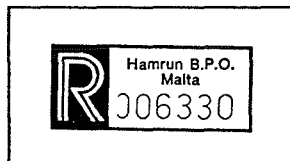


29 SEP 94

HAMRUN



07 OCT 86



07 APR 89

LUQA

**LUQA
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

LUQA



16 FEB 89



23 APR 92*



08 MAR 91

MOSTA



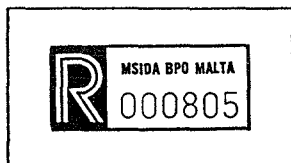
12 NOV 85



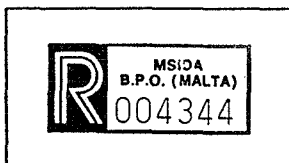
24 APR 90

MALTA
SELF ADHESIVE
REGISTRATION LABELS
BRANCH POST OFFICES

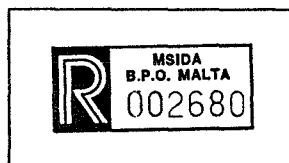
MSIDA



31 MAY 88



26 JAN 94



25 NOV 94

NAXXAR



20 NOV 91*

PAOLA



07 OCT 93

QORMI



-- MAY 88

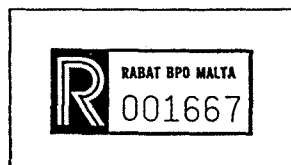


28 AUG 94

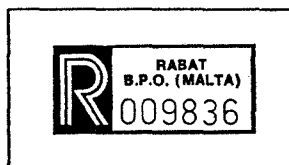


12 DEC 94

RABAT



02 APR 88

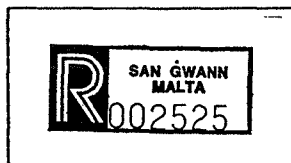


03 NOV 93



27 SEP 94

SAN GWANN



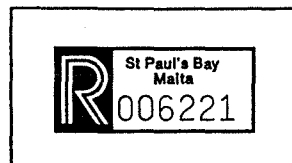
25 JUL 91*

ST. JULIAN'S



05 NOV 91*

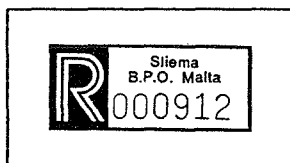
ST. PAUL'S BAY



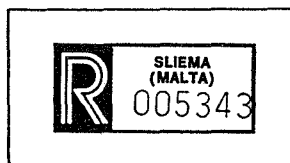
27 SEP 88*

MALTA
SELF ADHESIVE
REGISTRATION LABELS
BRANCH POST OFFICES

SLIEMA

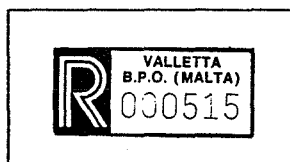


22 APR 88

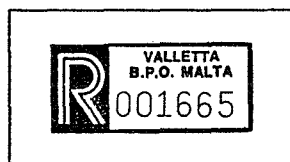


06 NOV 92

VALLETTA

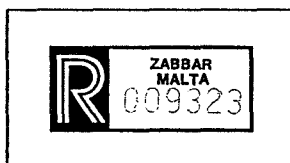


29 MAY 93



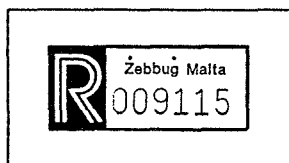
17 SEP 93

ZABBAR



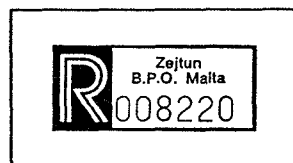
20 OCT 90

ZEBBUG



05 AUG 87

ZEJTUN



13 OCT 88

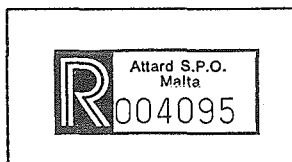
ZURRIEQ



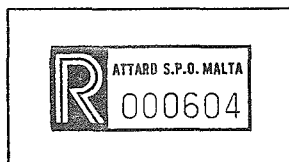
02 FEB 94

MALTA
SELF ADHESIVE
REGISTRATION LABELS
SUB POST OFFICES

ATTARD



29 MAY 89*



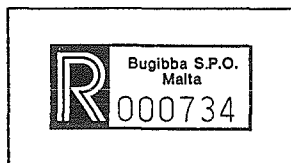
03 NOV 92

BIRZEBBUGIA



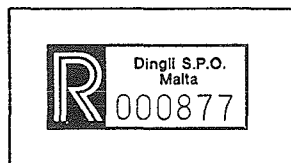
23 MAY 90

BUGIBBA



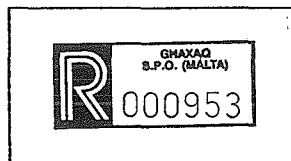
04 JAN 88*

DINGLI



13 FEB 89*

GHAXAQ



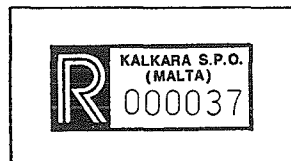
28 AUG 90*

IKLIN



15 OCT 91*

KALKARA



21 JUL 94*

MARSAXLOKK



01 APR 93*

MELLIEHA



11 APR 94

MGARR



07 SEP 89*

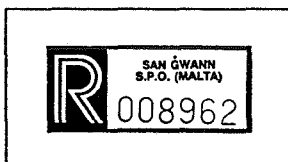
MALTA
SELF ADHESIVE
REGISTRATION LABELS
SUB POST OFFICES

QRENDI



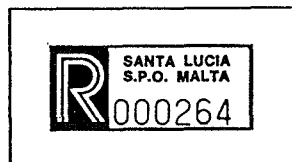
11 DEC 89*

SAN GWANN



01 APR 91

SANTA LUCIA



18 OCT 90*

SANTA VENERA



24 MAR 88*

ST. JULIAN'S



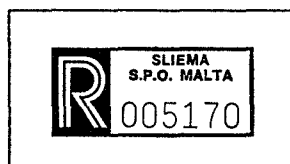
30 JUL 90

SIGGIEWI



16 AUG 89*

SLIEMA



14 APR 94

TARXIEN



22 JAN 87*

TA' XBIEX

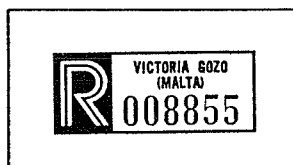


18 FEB 92*

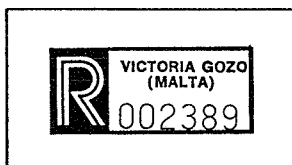
GOZO

SELF ADHESIVE REGISTRATION LABELS BRANCH POST OFFICES

VICTORIA



08 JAN 87



13 JUL 90



20 OCT 93

GHAJNSIEM



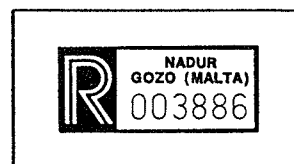
19 SEP 89*

GHARB



18 MAY 91*

NADUR



13 OCT 88*

XGHARA



13 OCT 88*

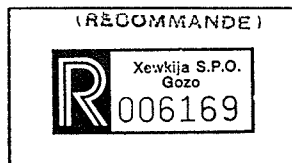
SUB POST OFFICES

QALA



27 NOV 89*

XEWKIJA



15 FEB 88*

XLENDI



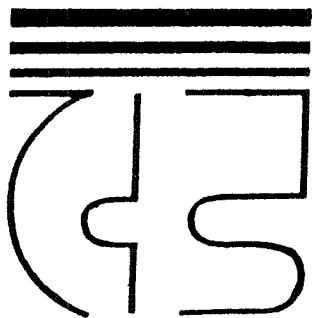
10 JUN 92*

* SIGNIFIES USE ON FIRST DAY OF OPENING OF POST OFFICE.

NOTE: OTHER DATES GIVEN ARE THE EARLIEST DATES OF USE KNOWN TO ME.
SOME LABELS MAY HAVE BEEN IN USE MUCH EARLIER.

Grateful acknowledgement is given to the following:
MSC Study Paper on Registered Mail by Arthur Moyles.
Comments by G.T. Davies in MSC Newsletter of Spring 1994.
Mr. Anthony Fenech, Mr. Carmel Bonnici and Mr. Michael Zammit.





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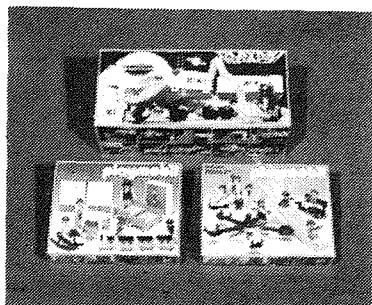
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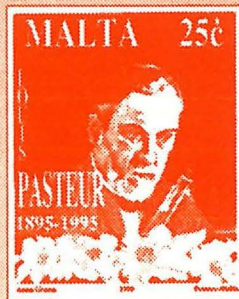
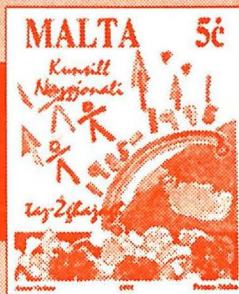
A BRANDSTATTER COMPANY

20, Bulebel Industrial Estate, Zejtun-Malta

Telephone: 878310-878737 Telex: 1285 MW

COMMEMORATIONS 1995

MALTA



Date of Issue: 27th February 1995
Designer: Anna Grima

Please send me details of your Philatelic Bureau Services

Name

Address



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 GENERAL POST OFFICE, Valletta CMR 01, Malta.
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 Telefax (+ 00356) 23 61 91