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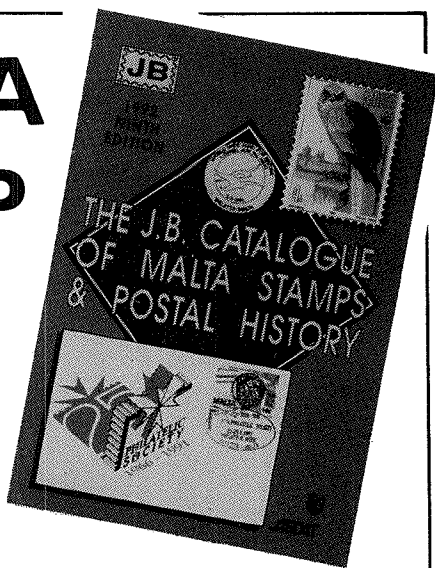
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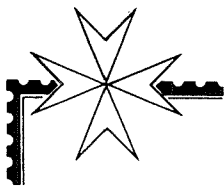
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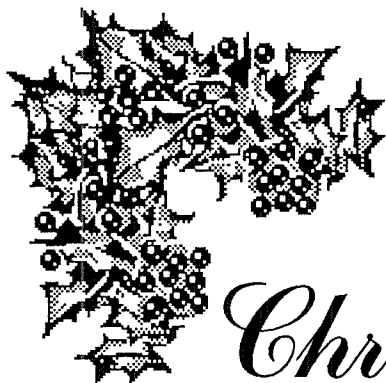


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*Wishing all
our Members*

*Christmas
Greetings*



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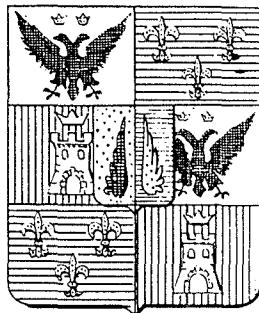
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Count Federico de Lazara Cavaliere in Malta. 1662-66

by Dr A. Bonnici

In September 1987, Mr Robson Lowe, published an excellent study on the Lazara correspondence, which at that time, was the property of Dr George Camillery(i) living in the USA.¹ On his demise, his collection together with the Lazara archives were sold by Christie's Robson Lowe – Auction Sale N° 4519, on May 14, 1991.² This study is based on the information contained in these two publications together with extensive research in the National Library in Valletta.

Federico was born in 1647 and died (cause of death unknown) in Padua in 1668 at the young age of 21 years. His father was Count Giovanni de Lazara, and his mother Contessa Angela nee Malfatti².



Padua passed under Venetian rule in 1405, and remained so up to 1797. The city was governed by two Venetian nobles, a "podestà" for civil, and a "captain" for military affairs, each elected for sixteen months.³ In 1661 Count Giovanni probably occupied this important post of "Captain for military affairs".

In 1661, young Federico became a member of the Grand Priory of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in Venice⁴, and came to Malta in September 1662, after staying in Gaeta and with the Lazari of Messina, for a considerable time, as they had "*supplied him every day with a carriage*".⁵ He returned to Padua in 1666^{6,7}.

His first recorded letters from Malta were on November 4, 1662, to his mother "La Signora Contessa Angela de Laze(a)ra and to his father Count Giovanni de Laze(a)ra.

Federico probably arrived in Malta in September 1662, because Sigismos Antonio de Minto and Federico's God Father in Malta Gio Francisco Brazza both wrote to Count Giovanni regarding Federico's welfare on September 20, 1662⁸ and September 26, 1662⁹ respectively. But if Federico did actually arrive in Malta in September 1662, why did he wait until November 4, 1662, to write to his mother and father?

The probability is that there was no transport available during October, and as soon as he knew that in the first week of November transport would be

available he wrote to his mother, and father on November 4, 1662.

Carlo Forcahera also wrote to Count Giovanni on November 4, 1662¹⁰, no doubt wanting to use the same transport as Federico.

The letters written by Segismos Antonio de Minto and Gio Francesco Brazza although written in September, probably did not leave Malta before November.

In both Federico's letters to his parents he gives them details about his trip. To his mother he says "*I have made a good trip—and while standing on the Galley, have seen dolphins, that is a fish larger than a man*" and "*in Gaeta he saw the brother of the King of France, the one who had besieged Rome, etc*". (letter N^o 1)

In another letter written to his mother on February 15, 1663, he tells her "*that a Chalice containing a consecrated Host was stolen from a Church, etc*"¹².

This sacrilege took place in the Parish Church of Gudja. The College of Cardinals in Rome authorised the Holy Roman Inquisitor in Malta, Gerolomo Casanate to take the matter in his hands and request the help of the Inquisitor in Sicily if he thought that the culprit had taken refuge there. The empty "pyx" was found but the culprit never caught¹¹.

Other letters were of a personal nature.

Five letters have been recorded addressed to his mother Contessa Angela in Padua from Malta: all written on a single water-marked sheet of paper, with the address written on the back of the same sheet. These letters do not have any postal rate markings.

The dates recorded are: 4.11.62; 15.2.63; 27.6.65; 29.8.65; 10.5.66.²

Only two of these letters have the arrival date in Padua written on them. The letter written on the 27.6.65, has the arrival date of 25.7.65, thus taking 29 days, and the letter written on 29.8.65 arrived on 25.10.65, nearly two months five days later. This time does not reflect the actual transit time, as letters were often kept waiting deposited with the dispatcher in Malta, until transport was available (letter to his father of Feb 7, 1663)². According to Robson Lowe the average time taken in transit was from 32 to 34 days.

The following letters have been recorded from his mother Contessa Angela de Lazara to Federico in Malta.²

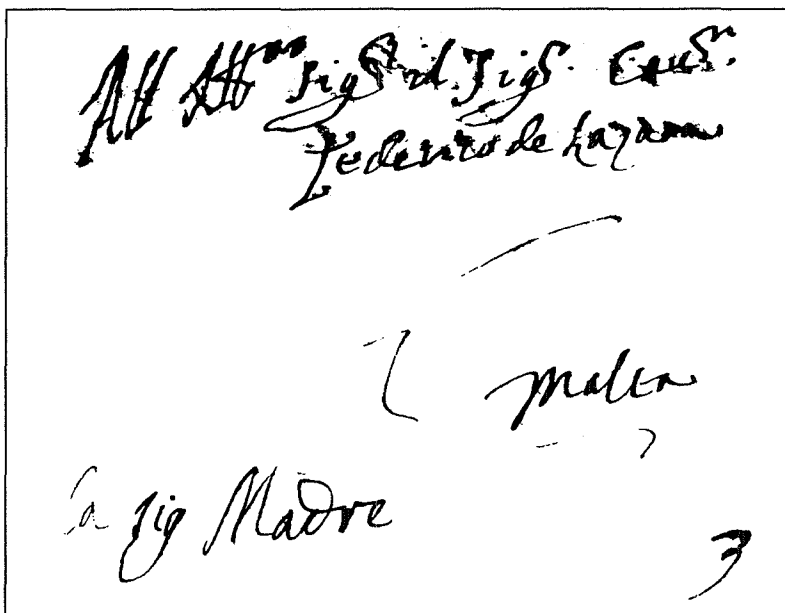
1 7.12.62 This is the first letter sent to Malta, by his mother, in reply to

Federico's letter to her of November 4, in which she says "*that with great relief she had received his letter about his safe journey, etc*". Although this letter is endorsed "Ricevuta in Malta" the date is missing (Letter N° 2).

On November 4, 1662, Federico wrote to his father acknowledging his father's letter of August 3, 1662 (Letter N° 3). From this date we can assume that Federico had left Padua prior to August 3, 1662, and so it is no wonder that his mother was greatly relieved when she received Federico's letter of November 4, 1662, after not having had any news of her fourteen year-old son for four months.

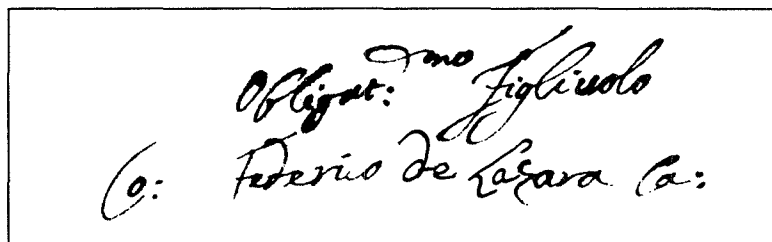
She addressed her son as:

All Ill(ustrissimo) Sig (nore) il Sig (nore) Cav (aliere) Federico de Lazara/ Malta, and is rated 3 at the back. Probably this is the rate from Messina to Malta.



All' Ill^{mo} Sig^{no} il Sig^{no} Cav^{aliere} Federico de Lazara
 [Malta
 La Sig Madre 3

Both his mother and his father address their son as Cav (aliere), and when he writes to them he signs as Co (nte) Federico de Lazara Ca (valiere) from the very beginning of his stay in Malta.



Obligat: no Figliuolo
 Co: Federico de Lazara Ca:

Maria la prima
figlia di Luigi e Maria Teresa

Da quella del Signor Dade ho inteso il salire di tua S.
casa che e il simile anche di io ti lo pare come ho sapu-
to. Ho bon uisio et nel star sopra la galera ho uisio dell.
Dottor che e un poe piu grande che ne ha un homo
et ancho re honno che somare bugiano et si loro fu mero
il mare son star in uno peto che si domanda Galera dove
ho uisio un frate di u. R. di Francia il quale si domanda
carbon che fu quello che vide l'ultimo saccheggio la prima

Venir alla Parichia con L'Orinale. In piedi ^{per di} ha ancora
Vell. cap. di. In testa ^{di piedi} L'Anghone per una corda con il Barone
per mano - et per lo uero alre bella casa. Qui gran grazia
salutare pure a L'Orinale et ha Dr. Officiario d'essenzia

Spedia. Dr. Dr. Officio L. 7. Novembre 1662

Obbligato: ^{Dr. Dr. Officio} Federico de Lazara Ca:
Co:

Letter N^o 1

4th November 1662. Federico's first letter to his mother Contessa Angela de Lazara

Sig. Fig. 5^{to}

Con gran consolazione spò ricevuto la vostra lettera
dove ho visto il vostro buon stato. e a lode di
Ddio come siete con ben visto il beato.
portatem' sempre bene, regolatevi con prudenza,
leggete spesso i ricordi di vostro pre.
come vi bisogna quel che con, avviate anticipa
tamente, perche abiate sempre tutto quel che vi occorre
quando i vostri saranno serviti, so che avete tutto
il vostro pre, subito vi manderemo.

con i paggi, mandate sempre il bene.
Fate gran cura de' padri poveri, e di tutti quelli
Cav.^{ti}, ripartite loro di quelli che vi favoriscono
tanto, per quel che intendano dalla persona di partito
nostro Cavatino, quel desiderano tutti, che gli
abbiate affetto. Figlio mio governatevi e viate
divoto, facete amar la vita. come l'onde stano
tutte bene e vi saluterò. come vi per voi salutano
nostro bene e fratelli, et io con tutto il cuore vi resto

D. V. S.

Madre affetto. di cuore

pad. 7 dicembre 1662. Angela de' Lazara Co:

Letter N° 2

7th December, 1662. From Contessa Angela de' Lazara to Federico in Malta

Mrs. J. C. Lee
J. C. Lee

Edo. Niccolini and J. T. Niccolini all re J. Agostini che ora
vive in Messina. Ma il Padre propizia la famiglia al Padre
Caro qui ex da questa ho inteso con grande consolazione
la salute di tutti i casa che e il simile anche, Dio, —
Vale la salute di Niccolini sono. Ho scritto ogni giorno
della loro salute ex da J. T. Niccolini: Dio ho tutto ~~il~~ ~~la~~
sono. Dio ex da J. T. Niccolini che vuole farli fino

Admission into the Order came in two stages. First an aspirant knight could be admitted as a Member of the Order, the ceremony being held either in Malta or in the country of origin if there was a Priory. In the case of Federico, as there was a Priory in Venice, he became a Member of the Grand Priory of the Order of St John of Jerusalem in Venice⁴. This entitled him to be called a Cavaliere, as indeed we find in all his correspondence addressed to him, and himself signing as Cavaliere.

The second stage was when the knight took his vows and was professed. In fact in the *Lista dei Cavalieri, Cappellani, e Serventi d'Arme, ricevuti nell'Ordine di S. Giovanni di Gerusalemme dal 1555 al 1797*, (1886 Edition, in page 426) we find Federico as having been received officially in the Order on October 18, 1665.

de La Haye Girolamo Francia 13 Agosto 1665
de Lazzara Federico Italia 18 Ottobre 1665

However, in page 246/247, Bartolomeo del Pozzo, in his *Ruolo Generale de Cavalieri Gerosolimitani della veneranda Lingua d'Italia, con le loro Dignità, Nomi, Cognomi, Patria, Giorni, Mesi, & Anni, della lor Ricettione*, we find that Fr Federico Lazara di Padua was received officially on September 5, 1663.

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Ruolo Generale de' Cavalieri Gerosolimitani della Veneranda Lingua d'Italia.

Fr. Antonio	Paredes	di Barletta.	li	30.	Luglio	1663
Fr. Achille Maria	Sampieri	di Bologna.	il	1.	Settembre	1663
Fr. Federico	Lazzara	di Padoua.	li	5.	Settembre	1663

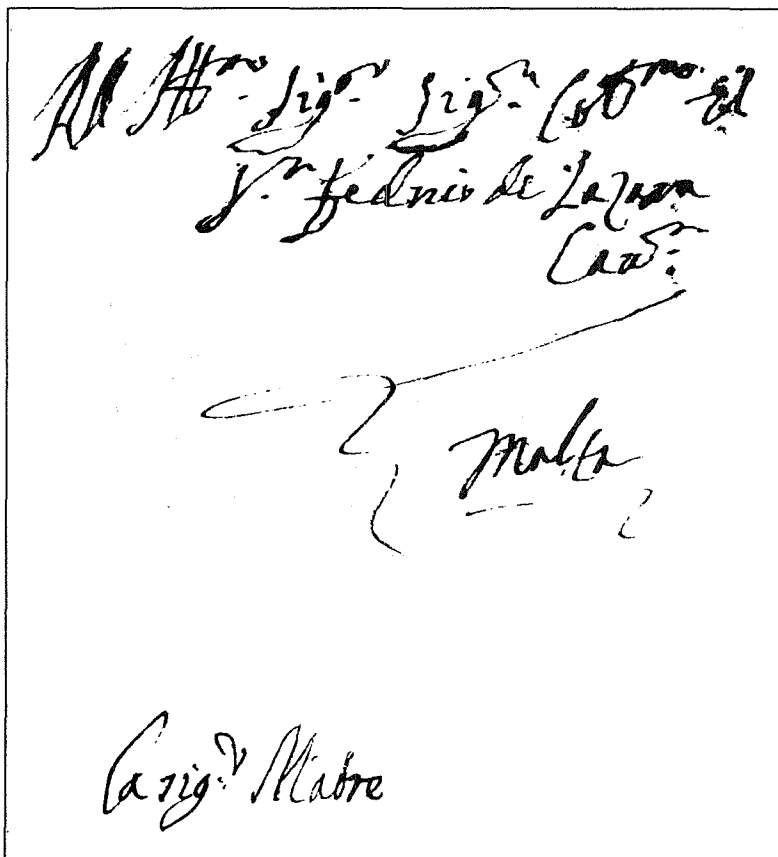
On November 10, 1663, Federico informed his father that he had in his previous letter, informed him that he had become a PAGE to the Grand Master (Letter N° 4). He does not mention that he had taken his final vows, which surely he would have done, if he had done so, as this was more important than becoming a Page. Nor does Gio Battista Pescatore mention anything about Federico taking his final vows in his letter of April 20, 1664, to his father in which he only says "*that Federico was being trained as a Page to the Grand Master*"¹².

Moreover Count Giovanni in his letter to Federico of 16.8.65 tells his son, that he would make "*adequate fiancial provisions until Federico made his final vows*" and continues to say "*you will be sent money that is enough for your return when you have had three years residence etc.*"¹³

On January 6, 1666, Count Girolamo Gabuccini wrote to Count Giovanni¹⁴ discussing plans for Federico's return home and on May 20, 1666 Federico himself wrote to his father asking his father's permission to "*return home by Galley to Messina, from there by Felucca to Naples, avoiding the galleys of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, to Rome, Ancona, Venice, Padua*"¹⁵.

Probably Del Pozzo's entry refers to when Federico became a Page.

2. March 2, 1663 with a postscript from his Grand Mother Casandra Malfatti who calls him Ill (ustrissimo) Sig (nor) nipote. This letter without an arrival date or postal rate is addressed, All Ill (ustrissimo) Sig (nore) Col (endissimo) il Fra Federico de Lazara, Cav (aliere), Malta, and at the back beneath the sealing flap "La Sig Madre".



All Ill^{mo} Sig^{no} Sig^{no} Col^{endo}
 J.^{no} Federico de Lazara
 Cav.
 Malta
 La sig^{na} Madre

Ho ricevuto ora di V. V. ^{prima}
 e che disse negli che V. V. ^{stima}: non ha ricevuto
 una mia con la quale gli scrissi che sono entrato
 peggio. ¹⁷

Aff. ff. ff. sig. et vran. mio

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Letter № 4

10th November, 1663. Letter from Federico to his father informing him that he had become a Page

3. April 18, 1663 with a post script from his father. This letter is addressed to him as Al Sig (nore) Cav (aliere) Federico de Lazara, Mio Figlio, Malta. There is no postal rate or arrival date except an endorsement Ricevuta a Malta and signed beneath the sealing flap "La Sig (nora) Madre".

Fifteen letters to his father Count Giovanni have been recorded².

1 November 4, 1662 is the first recorded letter to his father in which he gives further details of his trip, and thanks his father for his letter of August 3, which came via Messina.¹⁶ He addresses his father as: Al Ill (ustrissimo) Sig (nore), Sig (nore) Pad(ron) Col (endissimo)/il Sig (nore) Co (nte) Gio de Lazara, Padua. There is no arrival date or postal rate.

2. November 22, 1662. He sends Christmas greetings to his father. There is no arrival Padua date or postal rate and signs himself as Oblig (atissimo) Figliolo Co (nte) Federico Lazara Ca (valiere).¹⁷

3 February 7, 1663. He informs his father that *"his letter had been held up in Malta for about five or six days because of no transport etc"*. This is the first recorded letter which was enclosed in a wrapper, having the father's name and address written on it. There is no postal rate but the date received in Padua is written as April 6, 1663 (Letter N^o 5).

4 April 13, 1663 arrived 7.6.63 (38 days). This letter is probably the first recorded with a postal rate. V(enice) in Black 6. P(adua) in red 7.¹⁷

5 April 18, 1663 rated V12. P 13.¹⁸

6 November 18, 1663. This letter arrived in Padua on January 25, 1664 and rated V24 P26. In this letter he informs his father that "*Grand Master Rafael Cotoner had died*" (October 20, 1663) and that "*his brother Nicola Cotoner had succeeded him*" (1663-80). "*A Page had died during his apprenticeship, and he had been informed by the Italian Admiral about the big size of Capons found in Padua*". In this letter we find a very important footnote, stating "*that from his father's letter he had assumed, that his father had not received his letter in which he had informed him, that he had become a Page*" (Letter N° 4).

The fact that he had become a Page was also confirmed by Gio Battista Pescatore, a Jesuit and the Padovian Nuntio in Venice, who was managing Federico's financial affairs in Malta, in his letter to Federico's father of April 20, 1664, in which he had informed him that "Federico was being trained as a Page to the Grand Master".

It was the custom within the Order, that the Chief of the Langue of Italy was the Admiral, and by coincidence, the Italian Admiral that Federico had the conversation with about the size of the "Caponi" in Padua, was called "Cappon Capponi" who was the Admiral from 19.11.61 to 19.5.69, whose job was to organise and protect, the lines of communications, between the centre of the organisation (at that time, Malta) and its branches all over Europe.¹⁹

Federico's letter to his father of the 18.11.1663 enclosed in a wrapper, went via Venice which was rated 24 in black, and then to Padua rated 26 in red. This is an unusually high rate, and according to Robson Lowe only one other example is known.

7 April 26, 1663 arriving June 4, 1663, one month nine days later "*enquiring if a box had been received...*" No postal rate.²⁰

8 October 20, 1664 arrived December 6, 1664, one month six days later acknowledging receipt of 50 ducats payable to "*Father Savoia*".²¹

9 October 22, 1664 arrived January 25, 1665, two months and three days later. Although this letter was written two days later than the previous one it arrived one month later... the address panel hand written is endorsed "*con una scatola*" and in red chalk "Scat(ola)". There is no postal rate.²²

10 August 3, 1665 arriving Septmber 9, 1665, one month and six days later. This letter is rated V8 and P9, the Courier being Alessandro del Brazza to whom "100 ducats were to be paid".²³

11 October 30, 1665 arrived October 4, 1665 one month and four days later



HIERONYMVS S.R.E. PRESBYTER CARDINALIS
CASANATE NEAPOLITANVS
EIVSDEM S.R.E. BIBLIOTHECARIVS
CREATVS DIE XII. IVNIJ. M.D.C.LXXIII.

Obiit die 2. Martij 1700. hora 6. noctis sequentis.

L. M. Morandi pinx.

B.F. Audinard sculp.

Reperitur in Bibliotheca Vaticana de Rubrica. hinc in Is. Inskilde Rubrica ad Templ. S. M. de Rubrica cum P. Paul. S. P. et Sup. perm. In 16

reporting that "*Count Girolomo Gabuccini a brother of the Order of St John had paid 190 Venetian ducats and 190 scudi from the sale of 190 minor glasses*".²⁴

12 January 16, 1666 arrived March 28, 1666, two months and twelve days later in which he informs his father that he was not allowed to join the Caravan²⁵. A Caravan was a full year of military service with the Land Forces, or on the Galleys. The earliest age of joining up to 1631, was 17 years, when it was then increased to 20 years. Consequently Federico was unable to join because of his age.

13 January 16, 1666. A brief note carried by Fiorano the assistant of Commander Ferretti.²⁶

14 April 18, 1666 arriving June 12, 1666, one month and twenty-four days later. "*On her way to Venice the Lady Monica Barlotti is visiting the shrine of St Anthony of Padua*".²⁷

15 May 20, 1666 arriving June 11, 1666, twenty-one days later, asking his father "*if he could travel home by galley to Messina from there by Felucca to Naples, avoiding the galleys of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, to Rome-Ancona-Venice-Padua*".²⁸

Other family letters to Federico recorded are:

From his brother Nicola in Padua²

From his Grand Mother Cassandra Malfatti on: 20.6.63, 13.9.63, 9.10.64, 11.1.66 and 11.6.66²

From his Grand Father Alba Malfatti: 22.12.62²

Count Giovanni de Lazara in Padua was kept well informed by very important personalities in Malta about his son, as the following all wrote to him about Federico².

1 From Grand Master Nicola Cotoner:

9/1/65 arriving 8.3.65 rated V6 P7. This is the only known example of a letter from a Grand Master having a Postal Rate. In this letter the Grand Master tells Count Giovanni that in the best interest of his son he had released him from his Page duties. (Letter N° 6)

8.5.68 about Federico's death. (Letter N° 7)

2 From the Holy Roman Inquisitor in Malta, Gerolamo Casanate (1658-1663) 25.6.63 arrived 6.7.63 rated V9 P26. (Letter N° 8)

This is the only letter from the Inquisitor Casanate found in the whole archives, as he left Malta for Rome on July 13, 1663 at the age of 43 years. During

B. C. Aprile 1863

Caro D. sig. di F. F. F. F.

Dopo che io avevo consegnato le mie lettere al dispartito;
 resto cirque, o vi rimani senza partire et mi hanno
 ridotto di pregare che mi mandasse due pezzi di panni
 perché uno delle miei si ha romputo et per non più
 tabacca li -cio pernilissima rinverenza, et etc.

Malta Di V. V. ^{giorno} ~~di~~ 7, Febroo 1863

[illegible]

H^{no} 10
 et Aligar: Fy Lindo
 Co: Fabrico de Lanza Ca:

[Handwritten signature]

Done

Letter № 5

6th April, 1663. This is the first letter in the Archives that was enclosed in a wrapper

Benche il nobile Federico fig. lo di V. sia uscito dal mio servizio di
 paggio, io non lasciarò di hauerlo sempre in particolar protezione
 meritandolo egli sì per le sue attai buone parti, come per esser fig. lo
 V. di cui ho sempre fatta particolar stima; di che non mancarò di
 rendere ogni più vuo attestato in tutte le occasioni, ch'è ne presen-
 terranno. In tanto resto pregando alla persona di V. et à tutta sua
 casa ogni più desiderata prosperità. Di Malta li 9. Gen. 1665.

Al Seru. di V. J. Al Gran Mro

Cottoner

Letter N^o 6

9th January, 1665. Grand Master Nicola Cottoner (1663-1680) to Count Giovanni de Lazara

Molto mi è dispiaciuta la morte del Cav. Fra Federico figlio di
V.S. perchè egli colla sua bontà s'havenu guadagnato gran parte
del mio affetto. Però il tener per certo che il Sig. G. L. S. ha brio
chiamato alla gloria del Cielo, moderno non poco il mio dispiacere
e l'istesso effetto deve operar questa considerazione nell'animo non
dente di V.S. a cui resto per fine pregando il ritorno di questa
perdita con molti felici ~~ben~~imenti. Di Malta li 5 Maggio 1668

A Servo W. J. Il Gran Maestro

Letter N° 7

5 May, 1668. Grand Master Nicola Cottoner to Count Giovanni mourning the death of Federico

M. mo l.
N. sig. mio Don. etc.

Non so di meritare le benigne espressioni di V. M. Ma
nella sua de 15. gho rest. giuntami non prima d'ora,
se non forti per la diuisione infinita che ho proposto, e
che sempre mi s'è desiderat congiungere da potermi acqui-
star la sua pregiat. grazia. Ho. S. Federico suo figlio
non ha bisogno per mantenersi l'asilo, e s'ama di suoi
quasi 20. nè de miei melli, nè s'è di Dio dello cacem.

mandatoni M.^{mo} S.^{mo} M.^{mo}, hauendo egli solo qualità sì rare
e riguardandosi, che lo rendono sommam^{te} amabile appresso
ognuno. Ond'io mentre mi rallegro di ciò con V.^{mo} S.^{mo} M.^{mo}, e
le auguro, che l'operanza che conseruo uero di lei, non ce-
derà di dilatarsi anche nella persona del sig.^{ro} suo figlio
facendo uero grato per quelle fauemi colla sua. e
le bacio humil^{te} le mani. Malta 26. Maggio 1663.
M.^{mo} S.^{mo} M.^{mo}

in
Aud. et off. S.^{mo}
Gerolamo Casanate

S.^{mo} Gio: Mazarin / Pad.^{ro}

Letter N° 8

26 May, 1663. This is the only letter in the Archives by the Holy Roman Inquisitor in Malta,
Gerolamo Casanate (1658-1663) to Count Giovanni

his five years in Malta he showed exceptional organising and Diplomatic qualities, and was held in great esteem both in Malta by the Grand Master and in the Vatican. At the age of 43 years he was recalled to Rome, and occupied very important posts there, becoming the Librarian of the Holy Roman Church on December 2, 1663 and Cardinal on June 2, 1673. He was the founder of the "Casanatense" Library which bears his name up till today. Cardinal Gerolamo Casanate died on March 3, 1700 at the age of 80 years.²⁹

3 Gio Francesco Brazza, Federico's God Father in Malta.

Recorded letters bear the following dates: 22.5.62; 29.9.62; 3.1.63; 8.1.63; 18.1.63.²

The letter of 22.5.62 must have been written when Federico was still in Padua.

4 From Gio Batta Pescatore in Malta, a Jesuit and the Padovian Nuncio in Venice. He managed much of Federico's financial affairs²:

17.12.62, arrived 25.1.63, one month seven days, rated V6 P7; concerning financial matters;

23.2.63 arrived 6.4.63, one month thirteen days;

27.4.63 arrived ? ;

10.6.63 arrived 7.7.63, one month P2 (for local delivery);

19.9.63 rated V18 P20 The only example of this rate;

16.1.64 arrived 12.4.64;

4.1.64 arrived 10.2, one month and six days rated V17 P18. The only example of this rate;

25.2.64 arrived 12.4.64 one month fourteen days;

15.4.64 arrived 29.5.64, one month fourteen days;

27.5.64 arrived ? rated P14;

27.5.64 arrived ? rated P 14;

29.12.64 arrived ? rated V12 P13;

18.5.65 arrived 19.6.65 rated V34 P36;

2.8.65 arrived 9.9.65 one month six days;

12.9.65 arrived 25.10.65 rated V4;

20.10.65 arrived 5.11.65;

15.1.66 arrived 23.2.66;

15.2.66 arrived 10.4.66.²

5 From Count Girolamo Gabuccini, a brother of the Order of St John²:

18.10.63, 3 pages rated P2 for local delivery

15.6.64 arrived 1.8.64, four pages

29.5.65 arrived 24.6.65

15.7.65

3.10.65 arrived 3.1.66, three pages

6.1.66 arrived 25.2.66, three pages plans for Federico's return home

10.2.66 arrived 12.4.66, two pages

- 27.7.66 arrived 29.10 rated V9 P10
- 27.9.66 arrived 5.11.66
- 26.5.68 about the death of Federico²
- 6 From Pietro Savoco, a Jesuit Priest²:
 - 26.2.65 arrived 12.4.65
 - 25.9.66, three pages rated V24 P26
 - 10.3.67 rated V8 P9
 - 10.2.68 arrived 10.4.68 rated V6 P7
 - 3.5.69 after Federico's death rated V7 P8²
- 7 From Alessandro del Brazza.²:
 - 3.5.66 and 1.6.66.
- 8 From Prior de la Geriele²:
 - 6.9.63, 13.2.67, 20.1.68², 18.4.68 rated V15 P16
- 9 From the Knight Paul Lana²:
 - 25.5.68²
- 10 Father Antonio Tuna²:
 - 27.5.68

References:

- 1 The Lazara Correspondence by R. Lowe September, 1987
- 2 The Dr GL Camilleri Sale. Christies R. Lowe, (C.R.L.) May 14 1991, Sale N° 4519
- 3 Encyclopaedia Britannica 1962 Edition Vol. 17 p. 24
- 4 Bertini Frassoni. *Il Sovrano Militare Ordine di San Giovanni di Gerusalemme* etc. Capitolo Processi dei Nobiltà. Busta N° 534 p. 178
- 5 Federico's letter to his father of November 4, 1662, Letter N° 3
- 6 Letters from Count Gerolamo Gabucchi, 6.1.66 C.R. L. Sale Item 39
- 7 Federico's letter to his father of 20.5.66 C.R.L. Sale Item 14
- 8 C.R.L. p.14, Item 25
- 9 Ibid, p.12, Item 22
- 10 Ibid, p.14, Item 25
- 11 *Story of the Inquisition in Malta* Vol II p. 53 by Father Alexander Bonnici, OFM Conv.
- 12 C.R.L. Sale, p. 14, Item 32
- 13 Ibid, p.12, Item 18
- 14 Ibid, p. 14, Item 39
- 15 Ibid, p. 14, Item 12
- 16 Ibid, p. 12, Item 5
- 17 Ibid, p. 12, Item 6
- 18 Ibid, p. 12, Item 7
- 19 Ettore Rossi. *Storia della Marina dell'Ordine di Malta*, Padua p. 130
- 20 C.R.L. Sale, p.12, Item 9
- 21 Ibid
- 22 Ibid, Item 10
- 23 Ibid, Item 11
- 24 Ibid, Item 12
- 25 Ibid, Item 12
- 26 Ibid, Item 13
- 27 Ibid, Item 13
- 28 Ibid, Item 14
- 29 *Story of the Inquisition in Malta* Vol II p. 53 by Father Alexander Bonnici, OFM Conv.

Grateful thanks in acknowledgement to Dr Albert Ganado, Dr Giovanni Bonello, Fr Gabriel Grech, and Fr Alexander Bonnici. The portrait of Mgr G Casanate was published by courtesy of Canon John Azzopardi, Curator of the Cathedral Museum.

THE PLANNED INVASION OF MALTA – POSTAL HISTORY

By Giovanni Bonello LL.D.

I do not propose to relate in detail the plans for the capture of Malta during the Second World War – an invasion that fortunately never materialised but which, throughout the conflict, occupied the minds of the ablest strategists on the Axis side. A huge mass of literature, some very authoritative, based mostly on Italian sources, has clarified the subject. On the other hand I know of almost no published material in English which is not merely divulgative or, at worse, war propaganda.

A serious study, tapping all the archives – British, German, Italian and Japanese – is long overdue. This magazine cannot be the right venue for such an important historical enterprise. The drama, the deceit, the rivalries, the indecision which characterised the operation would, I am sure, make captivating reading.

The conquest of Malta by the Axis troops had obsessed the High Commands from the beginning of the hostilities. The Island was a thorn in the side of their systems of communications, supplies and provisions for the troops in North Africa. Plans to invade and hold Malta had simmered from day one. Napoleon's detailed studies had been unearthed and studied; Japanese officers, considered the experts on amphibious landings, had been roped in.

Hitler and Mussolini played a constant see-saw of yesses and noes. Whenever the go-ahead became imminent, the order came to postpone. Extremely detailed studies, plans and projections had meanwhile been worked out by the High Commands of the Axis forces.



Fig. 1 Admiral Vittorio Tur, head of the special naval force destined for the invasion of Malta during World War Two. Some of the letters illustrated in this feature were addressed to him



Fig. 2 A letter, dated October 10, 1940, addressed to Admiral Tur. Although handstamped 'Exempt from Censorship' the contents were equally examined, as evidenced by the CDS 'Censura del Ministero della Marina'

The planned invasion of Malta was repeatedly discussed at the highest levels, with Hitler taking active, and contradictory, stances. First in January 1942 in Garmish, a meeting headed by Admiral Raedar, decided on the capture of Malta. In Klessheim and Berchtesgaden in April 1942, a military summit which included Hitler, Mussolini, Jodl, Keitel and Kesselring reviewed the situation. On his part, Count Ciano the Foreign Minister, later executed, never believed in the real existence of a political and military determination to see the invasion of Malta through. He seemed certain that, despite the big words, the main actors were busy deluding themselves and each other.

Field Marshal Rommel, in North Africa, the Commander most interested in neutralising Malta to launch a successful counter-offensive, seemed to have considered the capture of the Islands a waste of military effort and time.

That the invasion was never formally ordered depended on many factors, foremost the almost total dearth of fuel (an estimated 40,000 tons); but Rommel's impatience and Hitler's dithering gave the final blow to an event that, if successful, could have turned the tides of war in their favour.

COME SI DOVEVA SBARCARRE A "MALTA"

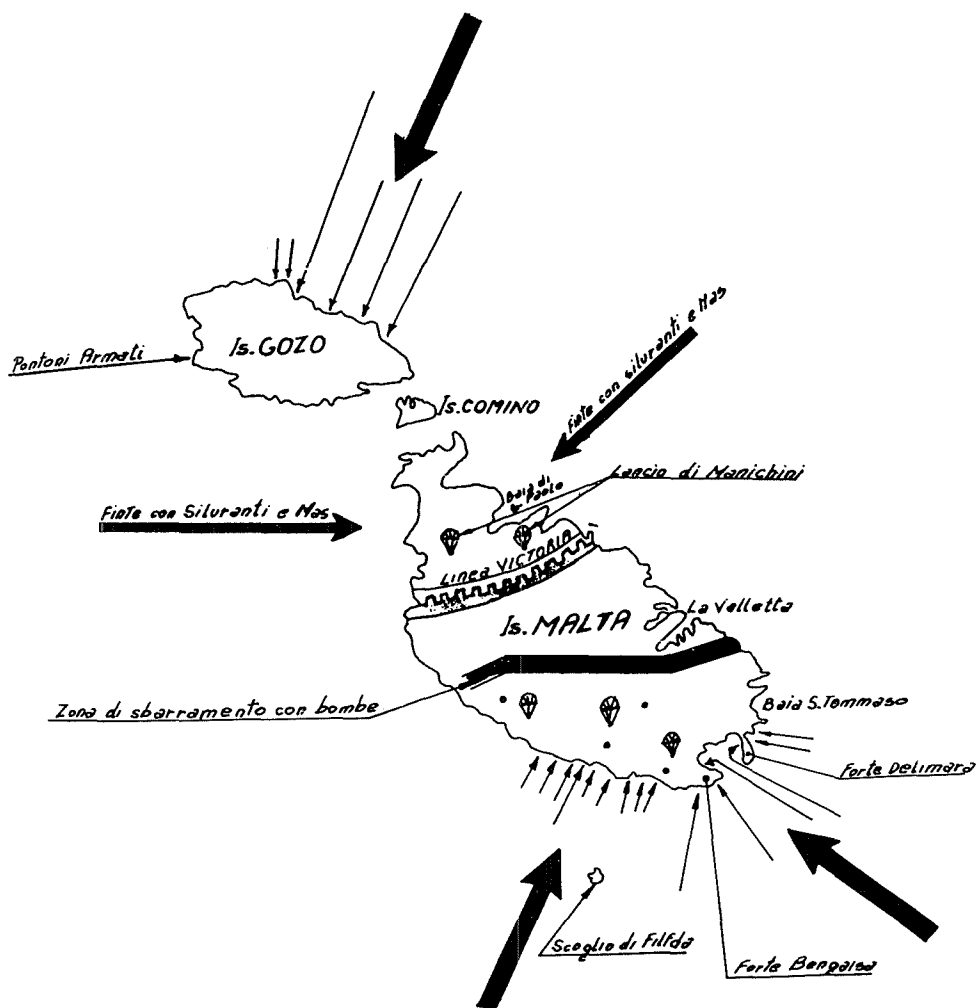


Fig. 3 Detailed plan for the invasion of Malta, from Mariano Gabriele's book on the Operation C 3



Fig. 4 A military postcard dated November 20, 1941 showing the 'POSTE MILITARI – M (SEZIONE A)' This was the special handstamp assigned to the troops training in Sicily for the invasion of Malta. In this case, the card originated in Castelvetro



Fig. 5 Enrico Paolo Tur, the admiral's brother, and a spy attached to De Gaulle's intelligence service for the collection of information on the invasion of Malta

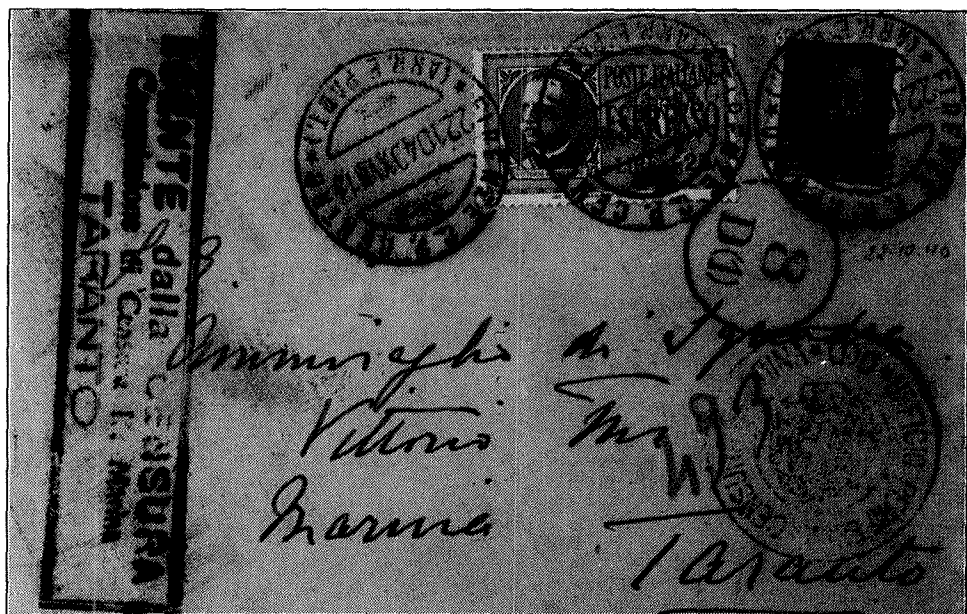


Fig. 6 Letter addressed to Admiral Tur on October 22, 1940 from Florence to Taranto. This cover bears prominently a rectangular handstamp certifying that the letter was not to be subjected to censorship

The plans, often changed and refined, consisted broadly of diversionary attacks on the North of the Island, while the brunt of the troops would land on the South, concurrently with airborne forces using gliders. In all, some 62,000 had to take part, with 1600 land transports and 700 guns. They were to be ferried over by 16 ships, 270 landing craft and 50 other vessels, escorted by 30 torpedo boats. The troops destined for Malta would leave from Catania, Licata and Porto Empedocle; those for Gozo from Syracuse.

The parachute corps were directed to land in the Dingli-Zurrieq area, the gliders near Kalafrana and Benghisa. The actual landings were to be effected near Qrendi and in the North of Gozo, with special troops at Marsaxlokk.

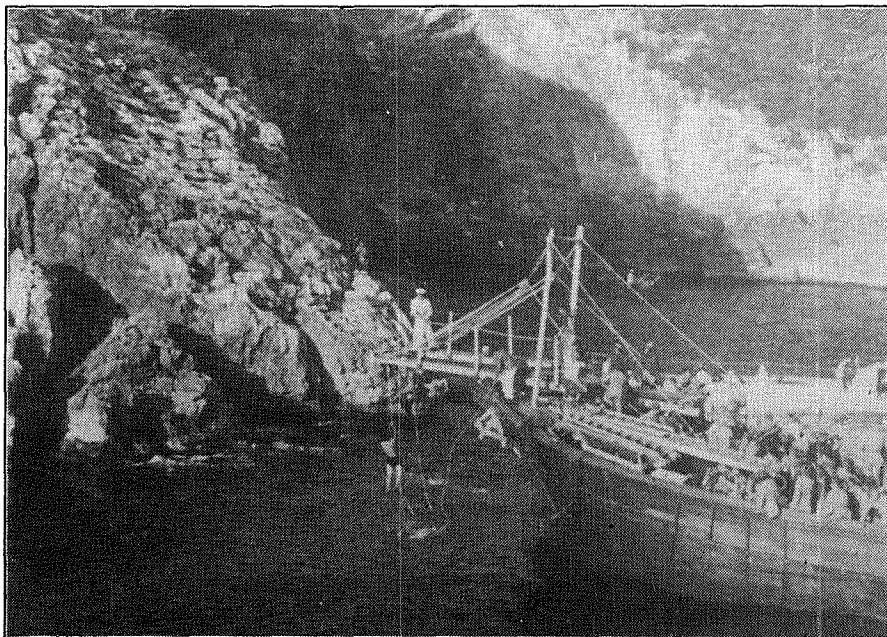
Plans for the invasion of Malta were definitely and finally abandoned on July 27, 1942.

This short study looks at some interesting postal-history aspects of that non-event, which, if translated into reality, could have radically threatened the democratic history of Malta and possibly the destiny of the whole European war. The Maltese operation went by the name of *Esigenza C 3* for the Italians, and *Hercules* for the Germans.



Fig. 7 View of the Valletta harbours from the air during an attack by the Savoia Marchetti bombers. An S.M. 79 is clearly visible in the foreground

Fig. 8 Italian troops training for the invasion of Malta, possibly near Gaeta. Shorelines with rock formations similar to those of Malta were chosen



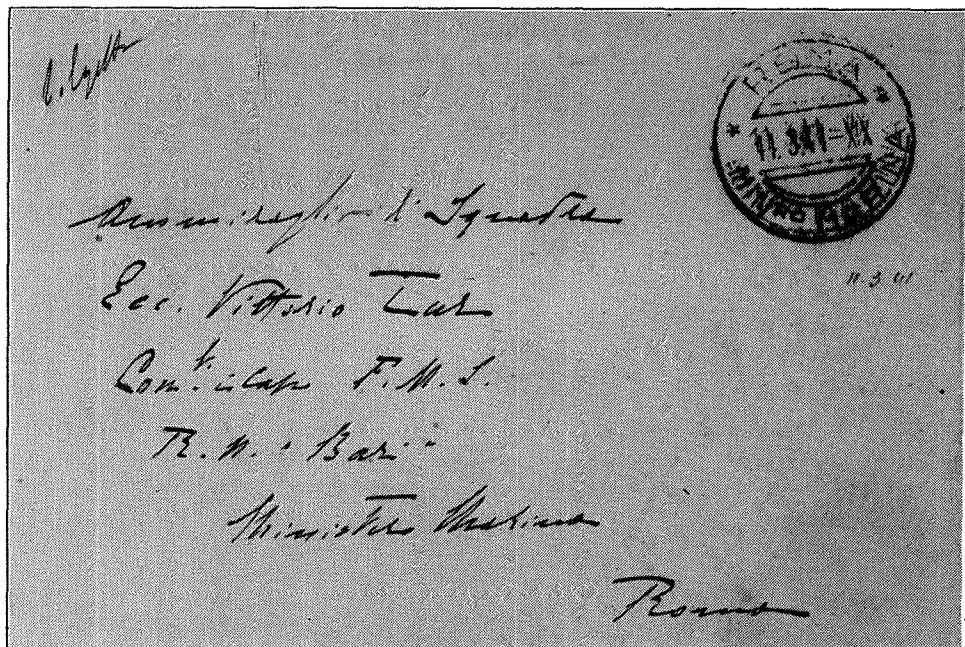
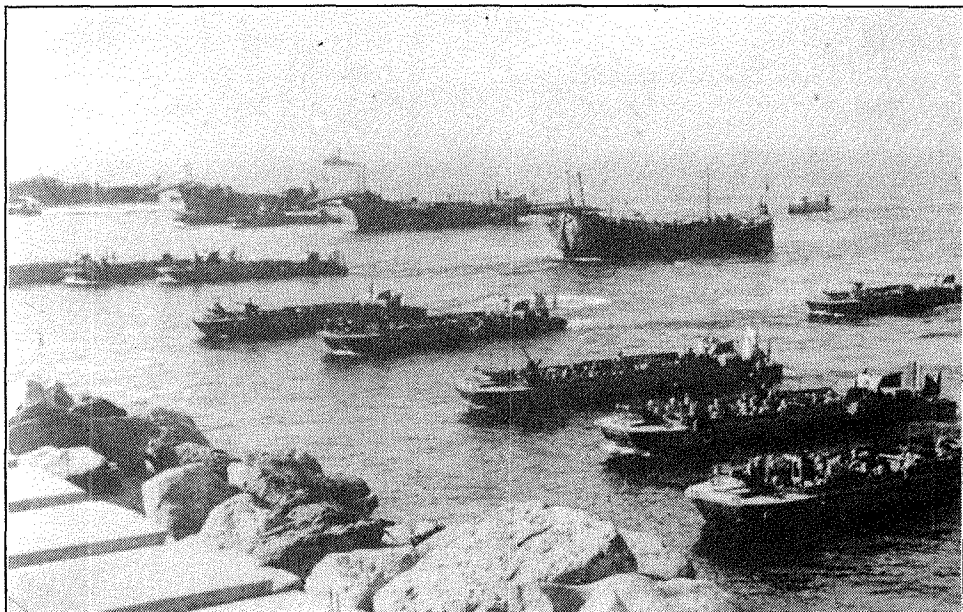


Fig. 9 Letter sent by Admiral Piccolomini to Admiral Tur when he was already head of the 'Malta' seaborne forces. Uncensored and unstamped

Fig. 10 Training for the invasion of Malta. Military landing craft in exercises near Livorno



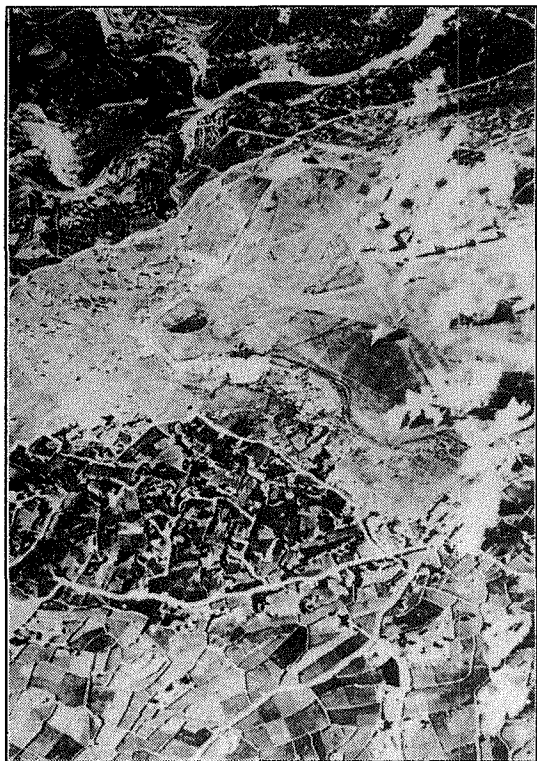


Fig. 11 A photo of Imqabba, in the vicinity of the airport, during an air raid. Taken by an Italian plane

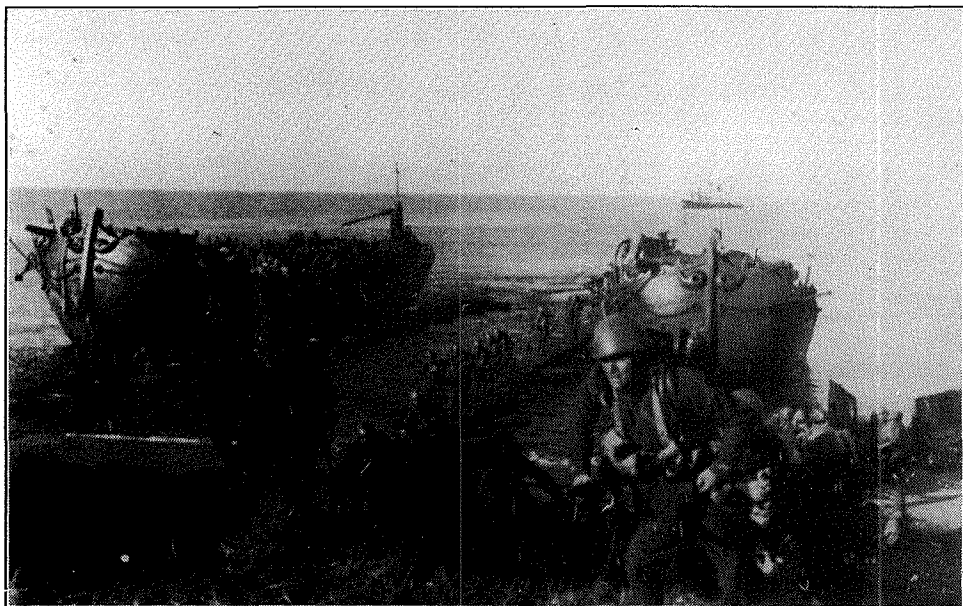


Fig. 12 Sailors of the San Marco Division training for the invasion of Malta

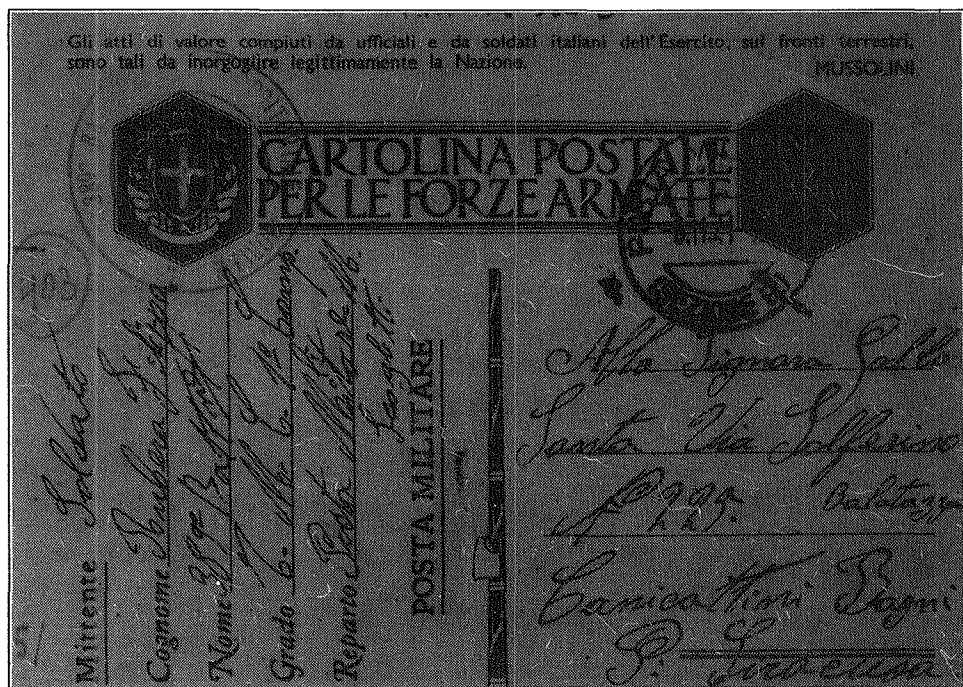


Fig. 13 A military postcard sent on November 8, 1941, from Scoglitti by a soldier destined for the invasion of Malta. It shows the special CDS "M (SEZIONE B)"

Fig. 14 Specially designed armoured launches intended for the Malta operation, during naval exercises



The naval contingents earmarked for the Malta landings concentrated at Taranto, while thousands of troops destined for the invasion trained actively in various localities in Sicily whose physical characteristics resembled those in the South of Malta. The postal organisation was modified to serve the 'Malta' troops.

At the head of the sea operations was placed Admiral Vittorio Tur, a brave officer who believed ardently in the necessity and feasibility of the invasion of Malta. He offered his only son to join the first wave of landings. Tur never wavered in his determination to bring C 3 to a successful conclusion. The saddest irony for him proved to be his brother Paolo Francesco Tur, an anti-fascist spy in charge of an important section of the De Gaulle French intelligence service detailed specifically to obtain information about the Malta landings.

This notwithstanding, the British, though extremely anxious to penetrate the C 3 organisation, never managed effectively to elicit much that was substantially useful about the invasion plans.

This little collection of 'Malta invasion' mail, some of it addressed to Admiral Tur himself, is given as an example of war letters from the other side – correspondence that intimately connects with the organisation for the conquest of Malta. It would have been instructive and fascinating to balance these items with others related to the British plans to resist that invasion. Of these designs I know very little and have never managed to identify any covers that have some bearing on the event.

Sources:

Giovanni Alberto, *Il dramma di Malta*, Milan, 1991.

Filippo Cifarierllo, *I preparativi per l'occupazione di Malta*, in *Filatelìa*, August 25, 1980, N° 168, p.15.

Carlo De Risio, *Perche nel 1942 non riuscimmo a occupare Malta*.

Mariano Gabriele, *Operazione C 3: Malta*, Gaeta, 1st Edition 1965; 2nd Edition, 1990.

Tullio Marcon, *La mancata occupazione di Malta*, in *Melita Historica*, Vol. VII, N° 3 (1978), p.258.

Vittorio Tur, *Come si doveva sbarcare a Malta*, in *Il Tirreno*, 12-16 November, 1952.

Vittorio Tur, *Plancia Ammiraglio*, Rome, 1963, Vol III.

MALTA — A DIARY

May-September, 1994

By J. Farrugia

5-5-94

A commemorative postal card was issued on the occasion of the participation of the Malta Post Office in the Xth International Stamp Fair – Essen '94, which was held in Essen, Germany from May 5 to 8, 1994. The card has imprinted the two stamps of the Europa '94 postage set and an appropriate motif.



The card could have been purchased in mint condition or with the stamps cancelled with a special hand-postmark inscribed: "Post Office — Malta — 5-8.V.94 — Messe Essen '94".

The postmark was used on May 5, 6 and 7, 1994, at the Philatelic Counter of the GPO from 8.00am to 12.45pm.

An identical postmark was used at the Malta Post Office stand at Essen '94.

10-5-94

The 'Commemorations 1994' postage set issued today. A special hand-postmark was used for cancellation on the first day of issue.



11-5-94

The Malta Post Office was represented by its authorised Philatelic Agent for Italy and Switzerland, in the "Regiophil XXV Bellinzona" Philatelic Exhibition which was held at Bellinzona, Switzerland from May 11 to 15, 1994. To commemorate the occasion a special handstamp inscribed: "Bellinzona — 11-15.V.1994 — Valletta - Malta" and including an appropriate motif, was used at the Philatelic counter of the GPO and at the Central Mail Room, from 7.30am to 12.30pm and from 7.30am to 6.00pm respectively, from May 11 to 14, 1994.



An identical handstamp was used from May 11 to 15, 1994, at the exhibition stand at Bellinzona.

9-6-94

The "FIFA World Cup 1994" postage set issued today. A Souvenir Sheet was also issued with this set. A special hand-postmark was used for cancellation on the first day of issue.



14-6-94

A Temporary Branch Post Office was opened at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta, on Tuesday, June 14, 1994, between 8.30am and 6.00pm and on Wednesday, June 15, 1994, between 8.30am and 4.00pm for the transaction of the following business:

- (a) sale of stamps and postal stationery
- (b) registration of postal articles
- (c) issue and encashment of Money and Postal Orders
- (d) encashment of Postcheques
- (e) posting of letters, printed matter and EMS Datapost

Postal articles posted at this Temporary Branch Post Office were postmarked by a hand datestamp inscribed: "European Ministers — Of Justice Conference — Mediterranean Conference Centre — Valletta - Malta" as well as an appropriate motif.



21-6-94

A Sub-Post Office was opened at "Just Jase", 19, Islets Promenade, Bugibba on Tuesday, June 21, 1994.

A metal hand datestamp with the words "Bugibba S.P.O. — Malta" is being used at this Sub-Post Office.

The telephone number at this Sub-Post Office is 571388.

24-6-94

In today's Govt. Gazette it was notified that a stamp design competition was to be held for the Xmas postage set. Rules for the competition were also included in the notice.

26-6-94

A Temporary Branch Post Office was opened at the International Fair of Malta, Naxxar, from Sunday, June 26 to Sunday, July 10, 1994, from 6.00pm to 9.30pm for the transaction of the following business:

- (a) sale of stamps and postal stationery
- (b) registration of postal articles
- (c) issue and encashment of Money and Postal Orders
- (d) encashment of Postcheques
- (e) posting of letters, printed matter and EMS Datapost

Postal articles posted at this Temporary Branch Post Office were postmarked by a datestamp inscribed: "37th International Fair of Malta — Naxxar - Malta".



2-7-94

The "Aviation" postage set issued today. A special hand postmark was used for cancellation on the first day of issue.



12-7-94



A special hand postmark was used to commemorate the 180th Anniversary of the Malta Police Force. The postmark is inscribed as follows: "Korptal-Pulizija ta' Malta—1814-1994—12.7.94—Valletta - Malta". The postmark, which also incorporates the logo of the Malta Police Force, was used on July 12, 1994, at the Philatelic Counter of the GPO from 7.30am to 12.45pm and at the Central Mail Room, from 8.00am to 6.00pm.

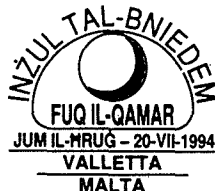
19-7-94

A special hand postmark was used on the occasion of the Colloquium of the World Union of Catholic Teachers which was held in Malta on July 19, 1994. The postmark is inscribed as follows: "UMEC Colloquium — July 19th. 1994 — Rabat - Malta — Union Mondial — Des Enseignants — Catholiques". The postmark was used on July 19, 1994 at the Rabat Branch Post Office, from 7.00am to 12.45pm.



20-7-94

The "First Man on the Moon" postage stamp issued today. A special hand postmark was used for cancellation of philatelic mail on the first day of issue.



21-7-94



A Sub-Post Office was opened at Briffa Stationery, 68 Archbishop Gonzi Square, Kalkara, on Thursday, July 21, 1994.

A metal hand datestamp with the words "Kalkara SPO - Malta" is used at this Sub Post Office.

The telephone number at this SPO is 661903.

22-7-94

A machine stamp cancelling slogan reading: "Niltagghu — Ma' Hutna — l-Emigranti — Qawra - Malta 26.7.1994" was used on July 22 and 23, and on 25 and 26, 1994 at the Central Mail Room.

The slogan reads: "Meeting — Our Brethren — The Emigrants — Qawra-Malta 26.7.1994".

22-7-94

In today's Govt. Gazette a call for applications was issued for the post of Sub-Postmaster at Swieqi.

Applications were to be received up to noon of Friday, August 19, 1994.

29-7-94

In today's Govt. Gazette a call for applications was issued for the post of Sub-Postmaster at St Julians (Balluta Area). Applications were to be received up to noon of Friday, August 26, 1994.

16-8-94

The Malta Post Office was represented by one of its authorised Philatelic Agents at the "Phila Korea 1994" Philatelic Exhibition which was held at Seoul, Korea, from August 16-25, 1994.

To commemorate the occasion, a special handstamp inscribed: "Phila Korea 1994 — 16-25 August — Malta Post Office" and including an appropriate motif, was used at the Philatelic Counter of the GPO and at the Central Mail Room, from 7.30am to 12.30pm and from 7.30am to 6.00pm respectively, from August 16-20 and from 22-25, 1994. An identical hand-stamp was used from August 16-25, 1994 at the Exhibition Stand at Seoul.

PHILAKOREA 1994



**16 - 25 AUGUST
MALTA POST OFFICE**

19-8-94

With reference to the notice which was published in the Govt. Gazette of June 24, 1994, the first three winners were notified in today's Govt. Gazette. The designs submitted under the nom-de-plume "Ilwien" by Mr Harry Borg was placed first. The set of designs submitted under the nom-de-plume "Stained" by Mr Frank Ancilleri and the nome-de-plume "Carioca" by Mr JP Smith have been placed second and third respectively. The designs of the set placed first, will be reproduced on the "Christmas 1994" postage stamp set.

31-8-94

The Malta Post Office was represented by one of its authorised Philatelic Agents at the "Singpex" Philatelic Exhibition which was held in Singapore from August 31 to September 3, 1994.

To commemorate the occasion a special hand stamp inscribed: "Singpex 94 — 31 Aug - 3 Sep — Malta Post Office" and including an appropriate motif, was used at



the Philatelic counter of the GPO and at the Central Mail Room, from 7.30am to 12.30pm and from 7.30am to 6.00pm respectively, from August 31 to September 3, 1994.

An identical hand-stamp was used from August 31 to September 3 1994 at the Exhibition Stand in Singapore.

2-9-94

The Department of Posts, issued the sixth in a series of Year Packs today. The 1993 Year Pack, which features on the outer cover an internal view of the Grand Master's Palace, Valletta, is made up of a colour folder with a description in four languages (English, French, German and Italian) regarding all stamps issued in 1993, which are mounted in clear acetate strips. A colour reproduction of the artwork of the 35c stamp of the 1993 European Year of the Elderly issue depicting the Red Admiral butterfly is also included.

The Year Pack is sold at Lm4.20 from the GPO and from all Branch Post Offices and Sub Post Offices in Malta and Gozo.

2-9-94

The Malta Post Office was represented by one of its Authorised Philatelic Agents at the "Riccione 1994" Stamp Fair which was held in Riccione, Italy, from September 2-4, 1994.

To commemorate the occasion, a special handstamp inscribed: "Riccione 94 — Valletta — 2-4 Sept — Malta Post Office" and including an appropriate motif was used at the Philatelic Counter of the GPO and at the Central Mail Room from 7.30am to 12.30pm and from 7.30am to 6.00pm respectively, from September 2-3, 1994.

An identical handstamp was used from September 2-4 at the Exhibition Stand in Riccione.

26-9-94

A Temporary Branch Post Office was opened at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta, from Monday, September 26 to Wednesday, September 28, 1994, from 8.30am to 5.00pm for the transaction of the following business:

- (a) sale of stamps and postal stationery
- (b) registration of postal articles
- (c) issue and encashment of Money and Postal Orders
- (d) encashment of Postcheques
- (e) posting of letters, printed matter and EMS Datapost



Postal articles posted at this Temporary Branch Post Office were postmarked by a date stamp inscribed as follows: "Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting — 26 Sep 1994 — Mediterranean Conference Centre — Valletta - Malta" as well as an appropriate motif.

28-9-94

The Acting Postmaster General notified that a metal hand datestamp "Zurrieq — Malta" was withdrawn at the close of business on Wednesday, September 28, 1994.

29-9-94

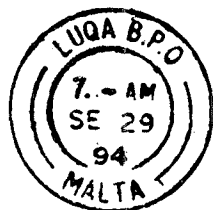
A Branch Post Office was opened at 9th April Street, Luqa, on Thursday, September 29, 1994.

The hours of business and the business to be transacted at this Branch Post Office shall be those laid down in the VIth Schedule to the Inland Post Regulations, 1985.

With effect from September 29, 1994, postal articles posted in street letter boxes in the areas served by the Luqa Branch Post Office are being postmarked by a datestamp inscribed "Luqa BPO — Malta".

Post Office Private Delivery Boxes are available and may be rented on application.

The telephone numbers of the Luqa Branch Post Office are 692491/2.



Corrections

Vol 23. N° 1/2, Page 43, Date 27-10-93:

Temporary Branch Post Office was open on Wednesday and Thursday, October 27 and 28, between 8.00am and 6.00pm

Page 44, Date 29-11-93:

Temporary Branch Post Office was also open on Thursday, December 2, 1993, between 9.30am and noon.

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

POSTAGE DUES 1993 ISSUE —X 75th ANNIVERSARY LIONS INTERNATIONAL —Y

By J. Farrugia

ISSUE	X	Y
Date of Issue	4-1-93	4-2-93
Values	1c, 2c, 5c, 10c	4c, 50c
Stamp Size	20mm x 16mm	35mm x 26.43mm
Designer	Martin Bonavia	Harry Borg
Printers	Printex Limited	same
Process	Lithography	same
Perforation	13.8 x 13.6	13.45 x 13.45
Watermark	Maltese Crosses Sideways	Maltese Crosses Upright
Paper	Chalk Surfaced	same
Gum	P.V.A.	same

Colours

In issue X, two different solid colours were used for each value, one being a very lighter shade of the main colour. The main colours are red, blue, green and yellow for the 1c, 2c, 5c and 10c values respectively.

Issue Y was printed in multicolours, using the same four different colours for both values.

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 all Panes, of all values, in 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, in issues X and Y.

Cumulative totals of progressive columns of stamps are seen in top and bottom margins, in all Panes, of all values, in issues X and Y. In issue X they are printed in red (1c), blue (2c), green (5c) and yellow (10c). In issue Y, they are printed in black.

Printed Sheets

Issue X – The Printed Sheet of each value consisted of four Panes, A, B, C, and D. Each Pane has one hundred stamps, made up of ten rows of ten stamps. This means that the Printed Sheet of each value, before cutting into Panes, contained four hundred stamps. All stamps are of the horizontal format.

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

Perforations of Margins

Issue X – The top margins of Panes A and B, of all values are imperforate, whilst

the bottom margins of these same Panes and the top and bottom margins of Panes C and D are all perforated. The left and right hand margins of Panes A, B, C and D of all values are imperforate. Other printing marks may have been seen at the top of the left hand margin of Panes A, at the top of the right hand margin of Panes B, at the bottom of the left hand margin of Panes C and at the bottom of the right hand margin of Panes D, of all values.

Issue Y – The left hand margins of Panes A, B and C are imperforate. The other three margins of these same Panes are all perforated. Other printing marks may have been seen at the top and bottom of the right hand margins of Panes A and C respectively, in both values.

Plate/Pane Numbers

In Issue X, these are seen at the bottom of the left hand margin, in all Panes, of all values. In issue Y these are seen under the first stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of both values.

Issue X	1c	=	1Ax2, 1Bx2, 1Cx2, 1Dx2
	2c	=	1Ax2, 1Bx2, 1Cx2, 1Dx2
	5c	=	1Ax2, 1Bx2, 1Cx2, 1Dx2
	10c	=	1Ax2, 1Bx2, 1Cx2, 1Dx2
Issue Y	4c	=	1Ax4, 1Bx4, 1Cx4
	50c	=	1Ax4, 1Bx4, 1Cx4

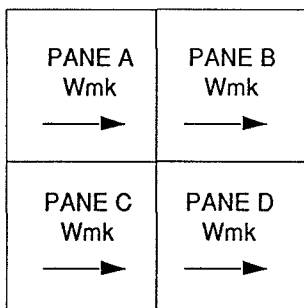


Fig (a)

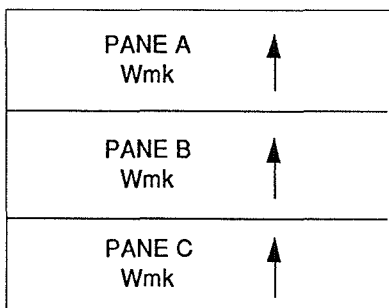


Fig (b)

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

Imprint Blocks

The Imprint “Printex Limited Malta” is seen in the left hand margin, printed

vertically, next to the first stamp of the two bottom rows, in all Panes, of all values, in issue X. The same Imprint is seen under the last stamp of the bottom row, in all Panes, of both values of issue Y. Letters are 1mm high and printed in red (1c), blue (2c), green (5c) and yellow (10c) in issue X but printed in black in issue Y. In issue X, an Imprint Block of four will include the Plate/Pane numbers, but not the colour checks. In issue Y, an Imprint Block of four will include the colour checks.

No special hand postmarks, official first day covers or folders were used on the first day of issue X. It is of interest to note here, that the postage due set issued on April 28, 1973, was last available for sale on Thursday, December 31, 1992.

A special hand postmark, incorporating a motif, was used for cancellation, on the first day of issue Y. Issue Y remained on sale up to February 3, 1994, unless stocks were previously exhausted.

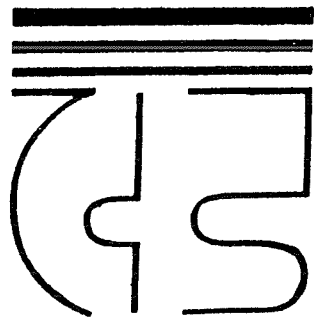
Up to 12.45pm on the first day of issue Y, sales amounted to Lm23,573.

ANOTHER TWO BARS FROM THE SYMPHONY IN STAMPS

By Chev. Peter Paul Vassallo, SMOSJJ







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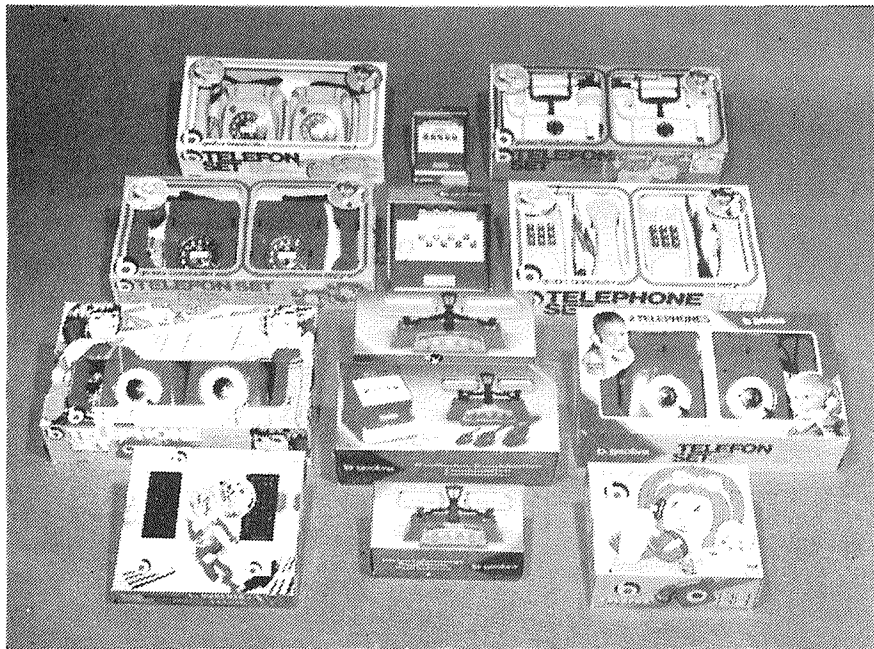
27/28 Pinto Wharf, Valletta, Malta.

Tel: 225607, 220898, 239630.

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A.O.H. 370897, 312168, 313185. Contact: John M Calleja.

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MALTA

Christmas '94



Date of Issue:
26th October 1994

Designer:
Harry Borg

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