

DEFACING MALTA POSTAL PILLAR BOX, AND HOW THEY WERE SAVED

Dr A. Bonnici



Fig.1 Workers obliterating heraldic symbol

Courtesy of Mr Anthony Camilleri

Way back in March 1974, I received a phone call from our late colleague Mr Tony Fenech, who told me that he had just been informed, that Government workers were sanding off, postal inscriptions on the red Postal Pillar boxes in Valletta, Fig 1,2,3, and that instructions had been given to sand off all British Period postal inscriptions on all Postal boxes including the Queen Victoria ones, and others, which were installed in the wall next to Police Stations in the villages. Fig. 4., Fig.5, Fig 6.

At that time I was a Member of Parliament (1962-1978), and immediately rang up The Hon Minister, Mr Wistin Abela, and told him that what the Labour Government of the day was doing was a repetition, of what Napoleon in 1798 had done, when he ordered to destroy all heraldic symbols on buildings belonging to the Order of St John, which he had just expelled from Malta, and repeated by Governor Maitland in 1818, on the instructions of the Colonial Office to destroy the remaining Order's heraldic symbols, that were not destroyed by the French, history condemning both events later.



Fig.2 E.II.R (Elisabeth II Regina)



Fig.3 Pillar box with obliteration



Fig.4 V.R. (Victoria Regina)



Fig.5 V.R. wall letterbox at Attard Police Station



Fig.6 G.R. (George Rex)

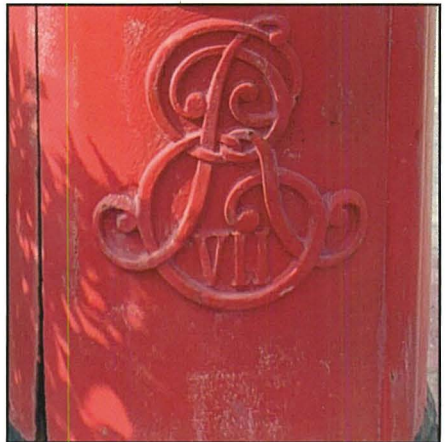
Fred he told me, I fully understand, but the "Order to sand off inscriptions" came from upstairs, meaning the Prime Minister - The Hon Dom Mintoff. I am not promising you anything, but I will see what I can do. I knew that he had a big job on his hands, and very much doubted whether he was indeed brave enough to confront Mintoff on this issue, and stop the decision.

Half an hour later, he rang me up, and joyfully told me, that he had spoken with Mintoff, and after some initial difficulty, (knowing Mr Mintoff well, I can imagine

what the initial difficulty was), managed to finally convince The Prime Minister, who had given orders to stop eradicating the postal symbols on all postal pillars & boxes with immediate effect.

In the meantime the ones in Republic Str had been rubbed off, but the rest all over Malta and Gozo were saved.

Thank you Wistin.



King Edward VII
(1901-1910)

Timing to collect and clear Letterboxes

The Postmaster,

Taking as basis the distance from the General Post Office to each Letter Box in Valletta, as ascertained and timed by the Chief Porter, according to the attached Statement, the time for clearing each box for the local mails and Deliveries, will be as stated on the accompanying sheets.

In timing the distance an average of two minutes has been allowed for opening each Letter Box, and counting and noting U. correspondence cleared out of the same.

Spent. No. 19/3/87.

Collection of Valletta Letter Boxes

Left the Post Office at	5 - 50.
Box No 1	6 -
" No 2	6 - 5
" No 3	6 - 10.
" No 4	6 - 15
" No 5	6 - 20
" No 6	6 - 25
arrived at the Post Office	6 - 28.

(The whole tour is therefore complete in 38 minutes)

I will put the total of 20 min. for the "Hours of collection" of each Box & Pillar, for my information & guidance - St. Augustin
10/3/07 M.C.

New Inscriptions

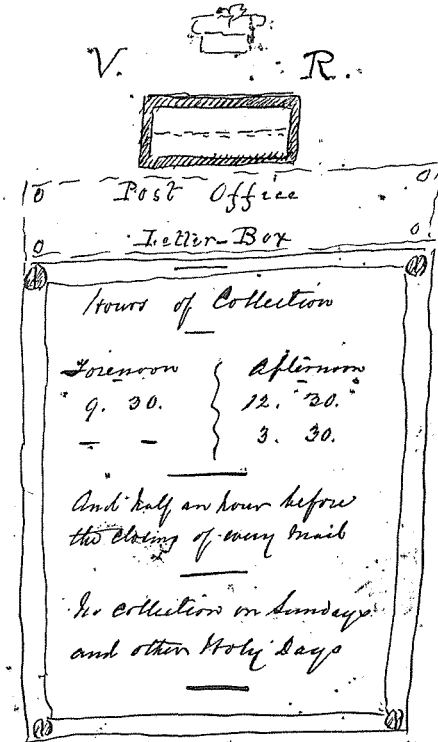
The Chief Clerk

The Annexed "New Inscriptions" for the Vallery Letter Pillars & Wall Boxes to be prepared - Also for the Boxes to be on "Line-Plate", cut from the sheets we have in store. Specimens to be shown to me.

Mr. L. L. ...
J. Hammond

J. V. ...
21/3/57

Original Hand Drawing



To be a "Line Plate" secured on, which will allow the Boxes to be printed, without being altered.

Inscriptions on the Wall and Pillar
Letter Boxes, in Valletta, at the Marina,
Sliema and Floriana.

Letter Boxes in Valletta.

Box Cleared

at 9.30 A.M. for Valletta, Three Cities and Villages
" 12.30 P.M. " Valletta, Sliema, Floriana and Goro.
" 3.30 P.M. " Valletta. Also half an hour before
each Foreign Mail is made up till gun fire.

Letters for the early Goro Mail must
be posted at the General Post Office before 6 A.M.

Letter Box at Floriana

Letter Box cleared daily
at 6.30 A.M.

Except on Sundays and Holidays

Letter Boxes at Sliema

Box at Strada Redolfo, corner of Prince of Wales Road

Box cleared daily, at 3 P.M. except on
Sundays and Holidays

From 3 P.M. to 7 A.M. Letters should be posted at
the Civil Police Station, Strada Reale.

N.B. The Police Station has since been removed to
Strada Ghar H-Lombi.

Box

K. S. /

Pillar Box, Marina (Valletta)

Hours of Collection

** 9. 30 am - 12. 30 P.M.*

3. 30 P.M.

and 1/2 an hour before the closing of every mail

No Collections on Sundays and other Holy Days

V. (S) R



HOURS OF COLLECTION	
FORENOON	AFTERNOON
9. 30	12. 30
- -	3. 30

**AND HALF AN HOUR BEFORE THE CLOSING
OF EVERY FOREIGN MAIL,**

NO GUN-FIRE

**NO COLLECTION ON SUNDAYS AND
OTHER HOLY DAYS, EXCEPT WHEN
THERE BE A FOREIGN MAIL**

**NO COLLECTION AFTER
GUN-FIRE**

off. To be returned to me when done with
A. H. M. S.

21/2/87

Wall Box, Strada Levante (Valletta)

No 2

Hours of Collection

9. 35 A.M. - 12. 35 P.M.

3. 35 P.M.

And 25 Minutes before the closing of every mail

No Collections on Sundays and other Holy Day



POST OFFICE
LETTER BOX

HOURS OF COLLECTION

FORENOON	AFTERNOON
9. 35.	12. 35
- -	3. 35

AND HALF AN HOUR BEFORE
THE CLOSING OF EVERY FOREIGN
MAIL, ~~WHEN~~ GUN-FIRE

NO COLLECTION ON SUNDAYS
AND OTHER HOLY DAYS, EXCEPT
WHEN THERE BE A FOREIGN MAIL,
NO COLLECTION AFTER GUN-FIRE.

Copy to be returned to me when done with

J. H. G. M.

21/3/07

No 3

Wall Box, Strada I Paolo (Valletta)

Hours of Collection

9.40 A.M. - 12.40 P.M.

3.40 P.M.

and 20 minutes before the closing of every mail

No Collections on Sundays and other Holy Days



POST OFFICE

LETTER BOX

HOURS OF COLLECTION

FORENOON } AFTERNOON

9.40. | 12.40

- - | 3.40

AND HALF AN HOUR BEFORE THE CLOSING OF EVERY FOREIGN MAIL, ~~UNTEL~~

~~GUN-FIRE~~

NO COLLECTION ON SUNDAYS AND OTHER HOLY DAYS, EXCEPT WHEN THERE BE A FOREIGN MAIL

NO COLLECTION AFTER GUN-FIRE

affo to be returned to me when done with

21/3/07 J. V. M. G. M.

H

Wall Box, Strada Vescovo. (Valletta)

Hours of Collection

9.45 A.M. - 12.45 P.M.

3.45 P.M.

And 15 minutes before the closing of every mail

No Collections on Sundays and other Holy Days.



POST OFFICE
LETTER BOX

HOURS OF COLLECTION

FORENOON | AFTERNOON

9.45. | 12.45

- - | 3.45

AND HALF AN HOUR BEFORE THE
CLOSING OF EVERY FOREIGN,
MAIL, ~~UNTIL GUN-FIRE.~~

NO COLLECTION ON SUNDAYS
AND OTHER HOLY DAYS, EXCEPT
THERE BE A FOREIGN MAIL.

~~NO COLLECTION ON SUNDAYS
AND OTHER HOLY DAYS, EXCEPT
WHEN THERE BE A FOREIGN MAIL.~~

NO COLLECTION AFTER GUN-FIRE

copy and to be returned to me when done with

21/3/07 N. Hughes M.C.

100
Pillar-Box, Palace Square, (Valletta)

Hours of Collection.

9. 50 A.M. - 12. 50 P.M.

3. 50 P.M.

And 40 minutes before the closing of every mail

No Collections on Sundays and other Holy Days



POST OFFICE

LETTER BOX

HOURS OF COLLECTION

FORENOON | AFTERNOON

9. 50. | 12. 50.

- - | 3. 50.

AND HALF AN HOUR BEFORE THE
CLOSING OF EVERY FOREIGN
MAIL, ~~UNTIL GUN-FIRE~~

NO COLLECTION ON SUNDAYS AND
OTHER HOLY DAYS, EXCEPT WHEN
THERE BE A FOREIGN MAIL.

NO COLLECTION AFTER
GUN-FIRE

App^o and to be returned to me when done with

21/3/87
J. H. H. M. M.

No 10

Wall Post, Made Re 'e. (Valletta)

Hours of Collection

9. 55 A.M. - 12. 55 P.M.
3. 55 P.M.

And 5 minutes before the closing of every mail.

No collections on Sundays and other Holy Days.

V  R

POST OFFICE
LETTER-BOX

HOURS OF COLLECTION

FORENOON	AFTERNOON
9. 55.	12. 55.
- -	3. 55.

AND HALF AN HOUR BEFORE
THE CLOSING OF EVERY FOREIGN
MAIL, ~~UNTIL GUN-FIRE~~

NO COLLECTION ON SUNDAYS
AND OTHER HOLY DAYS, EXCEPT
WHEN THERE BE A FOREIGN MAIL.

NO COLLECTION AFTER
GUN-FIRE

app and to be returned to me when done with

V. Meyer
21/3/07 *1700*

Floriana Gardens



V  R

POST OFFICE

LETTER BOX

HOURS OF COLLECTION

8. A.M. | 3. 30 P.M

NO COLLECTION ON SUNDAYS
AND OTHER HOLY DAYS

Memo

Repairing the Floriana Letter Box

Floriana Letter Box

was removed on the 2nd May
and replaced on the 15th " 1886

J. Zammit

Esq. P.O. Valletta 27th May, 1886.

Walking distance to the following letter boxes, at Sliema

From Mauna to Strada Redolfo 7 minutes
" Strada Redolfo to Ghar Ghar 11 " ~~7.30~~
" Strada Ghar Ghar to Mauna 4 "
4 July 1907.

N.B. Between 3.30 P.M. and 4. A.M., Letters may be posted at the Police Station, Strada Peale.

N.B. The Police Station has since been removed to Strada Ghar St. Lembi. (Sliema)

(Strada Redolfo) (Sliema)



POST OFFICE

LETTER BOX.

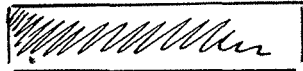
HOURS OF COLLECTION

8. ~~10~~ A.M. 3.30 P.M.

AND ONE HOUR BEFORE THE CLOSING OF
THE CONTINENTAL MAILS.

NO COLLECTION ON SUNDAYS AND OTHER
HOLIDAYS.

(Strada Ghar Illembi) (Sliema)



Post Office

~~POST OFFICE~~ LETTER BOX.

HOURS OF COLLECTION.

8. 15. am { 3. 45. p.m.

And $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour before the closing
of the Continental mails.

No collection on Sundays and other
Holydays.

REQUISITION FOR REPAIRS &c. (Island Post Office)

Marina Pillar Letter Box.

Box cleared

no 1 - at 9-30 am for Valletta, Three Cities and villages.
 at 12-30 pm. for Valletta Sliema Floriana and Gozo.
 at 3-30 pm for Valletta
 also half an hour, before each foreign mail, is made up till gun fire.

Letters for the early Gozo mail must be posted at the G. P. O. before 6. a.m.

State of Boxes

no 1 Letters scratched

no 2. Letter Box at Strada Levante
 as above

no 2 Slightly damaged

no 3. Letter Box at Strada S. Paolo
 as above

no 3 In good condition

no 4 Letter Box at Strada Vesuvio
 as above

no 4. In good condition

no 5 Pillar L. B. at the Palace square
 as above

no 5 Letters scratched

no 6 Letter Box at Strada Reale
 as above

no 6 In good condition

● Inland Post Returns ●

Antonio Caruana da Valletta, Misida, basal Curm
 Casal Tebbug, una Lira al mese £ 1. 0. 0
 Giovanni Bonnici basal Curmi " 4. 2
 Spiro Zammit basal Tebbug basal Siggini " 8. 4
 Angelo Grima Notabile, Casal Singhi " 8. 0
 Carmelo Lebrej da Valletta basal Tarsina
 e basal Teiten " 15. 0
 Nicola Borg basal Turrico. Casal Circop
 Casal Hal Sapi Casal micabba basal Kindi " 10. 0
 Giuseppe Schembri Casal Naxxar, Casal musta,
 basal Gargur " 8. 0
 Giuseppe Vassallo Casal Berdara basal Poljan
 e basal Lira, " 9. 0

Rec^d from Vin^o Salitro 4. 3
 on 5 March 1886

J. J. M. J. M.

Total wages paid by the contractor per month in 1887

Total Wages paid by the Contractor per month.
£ 5. 4. 8

General Post Office
 June, 1887

Gaet. Piro.
 Clerk.

Inland Mails - Runners



District	Name, Age, & of Runner	Trade or Occupation	Resides at
Murnico, Safi, Chiricop, Micahiba, and Grendi	Nicola Bong, Aged 18, Son of Police Sgt Giuseppe	No trade	Grendi Strada San Rici
Gurmi	Angelo Bonnici, Aged 10, Son of Police Constable Andrea	Goes to School	Gurmi Pietretta die Chiesa, No. 1
Zebbug and Siggieui	Spiridione Yammitt Aged 18, Son of Police Constable John	No Trade	Zebbug Strada San Gu No. 84.

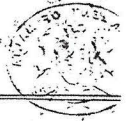


employed by Contractor

Wages paid by Contractor	Remarks
10¢ per month	Carries the letters in his hand. Cannot read, but his brother aged 14, who can read in Italian, accompanies him on his walk, and reads for him the addresses of letters. The area of his walk being very extensive, he is sometimes able to effect the whole delivery by Sun-set, on other occasions he returns any undelivered letters to a Police Station, and takes them again for delivery early on the following morning.
2 d. per working day	Can read in Italian. Unprovided with a pouch. In the delivery carry the letters, &c. in his hand. In the List of Runners furnished by the Contractor Giovanni Bonnicci, appears as the runner employed a boy of 14 years of age, who stated to me, in presence of the Postmaster, that he left the service of runner about 10 months ago. He is now employed in the Water Works Department.
1 9/4 per month	Can read in Italian. Carries, as a rule the letters in his hand. When the correspondence to be delivered is numerous, the Post Office, Leather Pouches.
	The Mail Contractor has given notice, this day that he has re-employed Giovanni Bonnicci, the former runner, brother of Angelo, who appears on the List furnished by him.

1/4/84. *g.f.*

Inland Mails - Runners



District	Name, Age, & of Runner	Trade or Occupation	Resides at				
Birkirkara, Birkon. Lia, Attard, Lunatic Asylum	# Giuseppe Zammit, Aged 14, Son of Police Constable Michele	No Trade	Birkirkara Strada Reale No				
Misida, Gormi, and Zebbug	Antonio Casuana, Aged 16, Nicknamed "Manegga", Married	Cicerone at the Catacombs Notable	Zebbug Strada Reale				
Tarnon and Zebbug	Carmelo Liberi, Aged 30, nicknamed "Fal Lebia", Single	Barber	Zebbug Strada Reale 71				
 <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 100%;"> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </table> 							

employed by Contractor

Wages paid by Contractor	Remarks
9/4 per Month	Can read in Italian. He is a smart looking man and looks at you full in the face when he speaks to. Carries a bag in his walk, which he provides his own expense.
1/2 per Diem	Carrier of Mails from Valletta only, not a runner. Employs from Valletta to Misida, 15 minutes; from Misida to Gormi 25 minutes; from Gormi to Zebbug 30 minutes. Illiterate.
6d. per Working Day	Carrier of Mails from Valletta. Can read in Italian. Employs from Valletta to Farnion 1 Hour; from Farnion to Zebbug 30 minutes.
<p>#</p>	<p>This man died from cholera on the 13th August, 1887, since which date, Giuseppe Cauchi, ^{his step son,} aged 15, son of the late Filippo, has been employed in his stead, at 5/- per month. Cauchi resides at Zebbug, Strada Reale, No. 24.</p>
	<p>N.B. At Misida, Pietà, Kammion, Lucca, and Farnion, the Deliveries are effected by the Police; the Contractor does not employ any runners for the Deliveries from house to house at these basals.</p>

Inland Mails - Runners



District.	Name, Age, &c. of Runner	Trade or Occupation	Resides at
Notabile, Rabato Sngli, Bongemma, & Boscetto	*Angelo Grima, Aged 15, Son of Police Constable Lorenzo	No Trade	Musta Strada Reale
Zabbar & Marsascala	Carmelo Rondello, Aged 14, Son of Police Constable Paolo	Goes to School	Zabbar Vicolo della Chiesa No. 1.
Naxaro, Gargua, Musta	Angelo Vella, Aged 12, Son of Police Constable Giovanni	Shoemaker	Naxaro Strada Reale
Zjettun, Delimara, Marsascirocco, Ta Site	Giuseppe Zammit, Aged 14, Son of Police Constable Giovanni	Goes to School	Zjettun Strada S. Angelo
Asciak, Rozzibegia, St. George, Gudia	Mose' Agius, Aged 14, Son of Police Sgt Major Gregorio	Goes to School	Asciak 57 Piazza S. Gregorio
/			

employed by Contractor.

Wages paid by Contractor	Remarks.
1 ^d . 1 st pr. month	Can read and write in Italian, in English and in Maltese. Carries the letters in his hand, but when numerous, uses the Leather Mail Truck despatched from the General Post office.
8 ^d . pr. month	Can read in Italian and in English. Effects the Delivery in a canvas bag, which he provides at his own expense.
1 st . pr. month	Can read in English and in Italian. Effects the Delivery in a bag which he provides at his own expense. Intelligent and smart looking lad.
18 ^d . pr. month	Can read in Italian - Carries the letters of his work in a Bag, which he provides at his own expense
18 ^d . pr. month	Can read in English and in Italian. Carries the letters of his Delivery in a Bag, which he provides at his own expense.
/	<p>7: This lad was discharged on suspicion of dishonesty, on the 10th of July, 1887, in compliance with Postmaster's Minute dated 3/7/87. Pubbli Spiteri, Aged 16, Fruit-seller, son of Carmelo Spiteri, a Mason, was employed in his stead. He resides at Rabato, Strada San Pietro-Lonneo; No. 14.</p>
	<p>10/7/87 G. J.</p>

Circulation of

District	Casal	Mode of Const
		To
1 st	Notabile	Contractor
	Rabato	Court from Valletta
	Dingli	Police from Rabato
2 nd	Zebbug	Court from ^(in 1840) Curium
	Siggiewi	Police from Zebbug
3 rd and 4 th	Birchircara	Court from Valletta
	Attard	
	Balzan	Court from Birchircara
	Gargur	Contractor
	Lia	Court fr. Birchircara to Balz
	Musta	Contractor
5 th and 6 th	Naxaro	Police
	Curium	Contractor (in 1840)
	Chircop	Police from Curium
	Trendi	Police
	Luca	" "
	Micabiba	" "
	Safi	" "
Zurrico	" "	
7 th	Zeitun	Court fr. Three Cities
	Paola	"
	Tarxien	Police to Paola?
	Asciak	Contractor
	Gudia	"
	Zabbar	"

Island Correspondence

From	Delivery effected by	Remarks
Contractor	Contractor	J. J. J. (13)
Court to G. P. O.	"	do
Police to Rabato	Police (by) ^{Salazar} _{bag}	do
Contractor	Contractor	J. Zammit (17)
Police to Libbug	"	do
Court to Valletta	contractor	J. Zammit (14)
Police	"	do
"	"	do
"	"	J. Schamber (13)
"	"	J. Zammit (16)
"	"	J. Schamber (13)
Police to Birzebucca	"	do
Contractor	Contractor	J. Donnici (15)
Police to Curioni	"	M. Ang (16)
Police	"	do
"	"	do
"	"	do
"	"	do
Contractor	Contractor	V. De Biquena
"	"	? C. Libreri
Police from Paola?	Police ?	? C. Libreri
Police	Contractor	do
"	"	do
"	"	do

Circulation of Island Correspondence

District	Casal	Mode of Conveyance	
		To	From
	Melleha	Contractor	Contractor
	S ^t . Paul's Bay	"	"
	S ^t . Julians	Police	Police
	Strema	"	"
Delivery effected by		Remarks	
Police		No mail during the winter, the 1 st of Feb?	
Police " and Letter Carrier		S ^t . Julians and Strema would require a daily local Post with two deliveries independent of the S.P.O. delivery.	
Three Cities	Cospina	Police	Police
	Vittoriosa	"	"
	Senglea	"	"
	Floriana		
Delivery effected by		Remarks	
Police		The Three Cities should have a daily local Post with one delivery independent of the S.P.O. delivery	
"		within S.P.O. delivery	
"			