

# The Postman's Chop

## Maltese Postmen's Personal Handstamps – 1888-1949

### Summary of display

This display consists of items of correspondence with the common feature of being franked with a Maltese Postman's personal handstamp (PHS<sup>1</sup>) along with the other postal markings. Most of the items are postcards sent to Maltese addresses from overseas destinations although also present are other items of mail and some items posted locally to local addresses. These handstamps were in use from 1888 to 1949, and were issued to Maltese postmen to frank mail which came under their area of responsibility for delivery.

The majority of handstamps were used in the large towns of Sliema and Valletta but as years went by and the postal service developed, rounds were assigned to the smaller towns and to the Casals or villages. In the 1980 edition of the Malta Study Circle *Handbook* the numbers 1 to 74 are identified as having been used while Proud's *Postal History of Malta* also identifies 1 to 74 but with subtypes a total of 107 different strikes are recorded. Some are exquisitely rare and as of 1980 the MSC *Handbook* was still recording no examples of 51 and 67, although all numbers have now been recorded. Included in the display are items with many of the interesting features found on mail to the Maltese Islands during the period of use, such as censorship strikes, field post office cancellations, the various types of Maltese early postmarks described in last year's display, some (very scarce) village postmarks etc. By collecting the same handstamp in reasonably close periods of time but used to different addresses some idea of the postmen's rounds can be gained.

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Five	PHS of the Casals and of Gozo

<sup>1</sup> The terminology of the Malta Study Circle (1980) *Malta – The stamps and postal history 1576 – 1960* Martin RE (ed) Robson Lowe (referred to as MSC) is used throughout this display unless otherwise noted

## Introduction – the origin of postmen’s personal handstamps

*“With a view of readily identifying individuals who may commit a misdelivery, a “numerical stamp” has been supplied to each Letter Carrier who is bound to impress therewith as near as possible to the Receipt Stamp every article of his ‘charge’ before leaving the Duty Room. On the misdelivery being brought to the knowledge of the office, the ‘numerical stamp’ will at once discover the officer in fault. To make sure that due attention is paid to this Regulation, the Chief Sorter before dispatching the letter Carriers to their beats, takes at random one or two charges and examines whether each article bears the number of the ‘Personal Stamp’. I have seen it adopted in all the Italian Post Offices. It has been in operation in this Department since the 14<sup>th</sup> of August last (1889) and has had the beneficial effect of reducing misdeliveries to one instance only during the remaining portion of the year.”*

From the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Report of the Post Office for the year 1889, page 51 (National Archives of Malta)

The above citation describes the origin of the personal handstamps assigned to Maltese postmen from their inception in the late 1890’s to the late 1940’s. As mentioned by this source, these handstamps were used in several other countries.



The handstamps consisted of small numbered ovals struck in black ink on the backs of mail delivered to addresses in the Maltese Islands. The number of the handstamp was the official number of the postman using it and also appeared on his uniform. They were issued to the postmen upon their appointment and were retained by the same

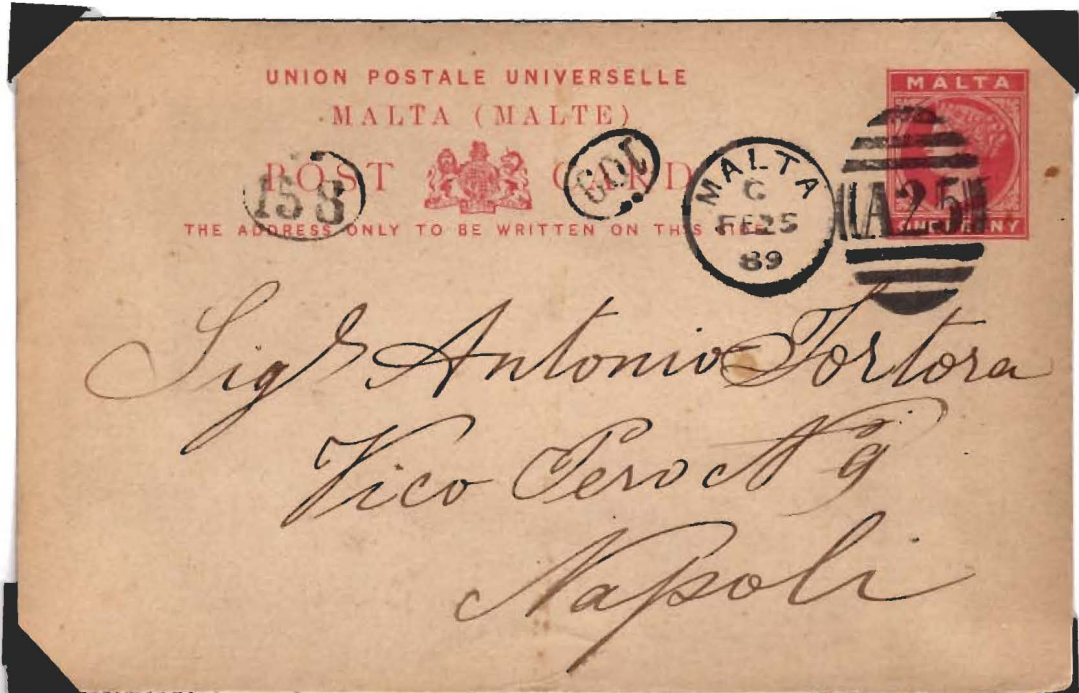
postmen, generally, until they retired, irrespective of the area which they served. Although they were supposed to stamp all the mail entrusted to them for delivery, the application of the handstamp appears to have been rather spasmodic and studies so far indicate that 25% to 30 % of the mail prior to 1914 received these strikes. Thereafter it was even less.

### Bibliography

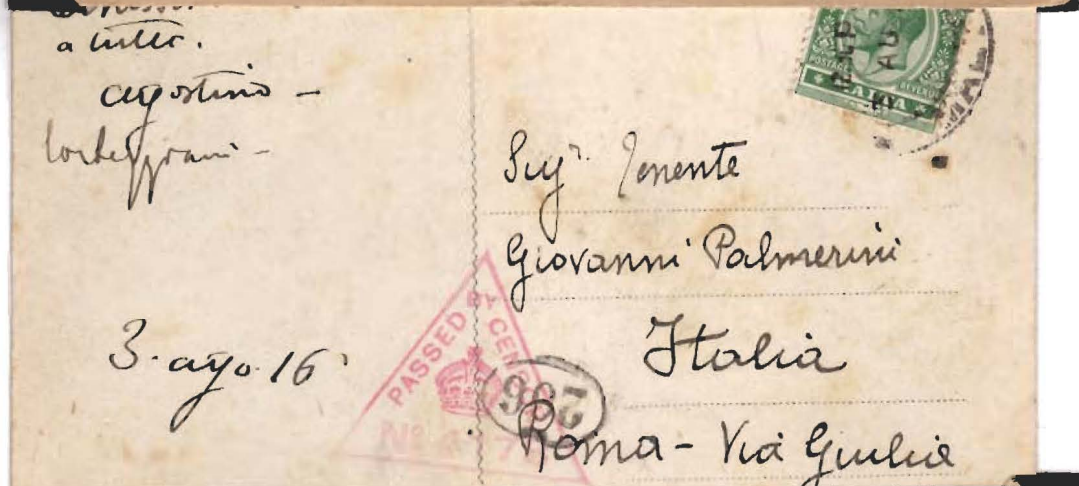
- Malta Study Circle (1980) *Malta – The stamps and postal history 1576 – 1960* Martin RE (ed) Robson Lowe
- Proud EB (1999) *Postal history of Malta* Proud-Bailey
- Wood H (1984) *Postmen’s Handstamps* Magazine of the Philatelic Society of Malta 13(1)
- Abela Medici A (2000) *Postman’s numerical stamp* Melita 15(2)

Postmen's handstamps outside Malta

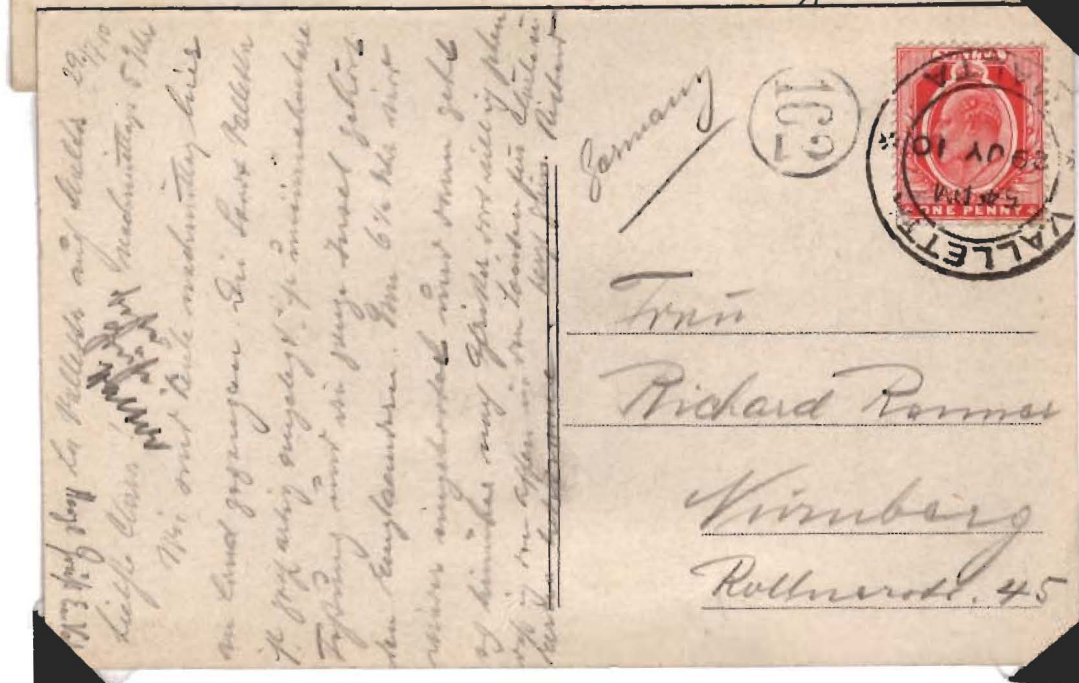
Maltese Postal Card to Naples, 1889, bearing two different Italian PHS. There is no indication that the card had to be redirected, which could have been a reason for having two stamps



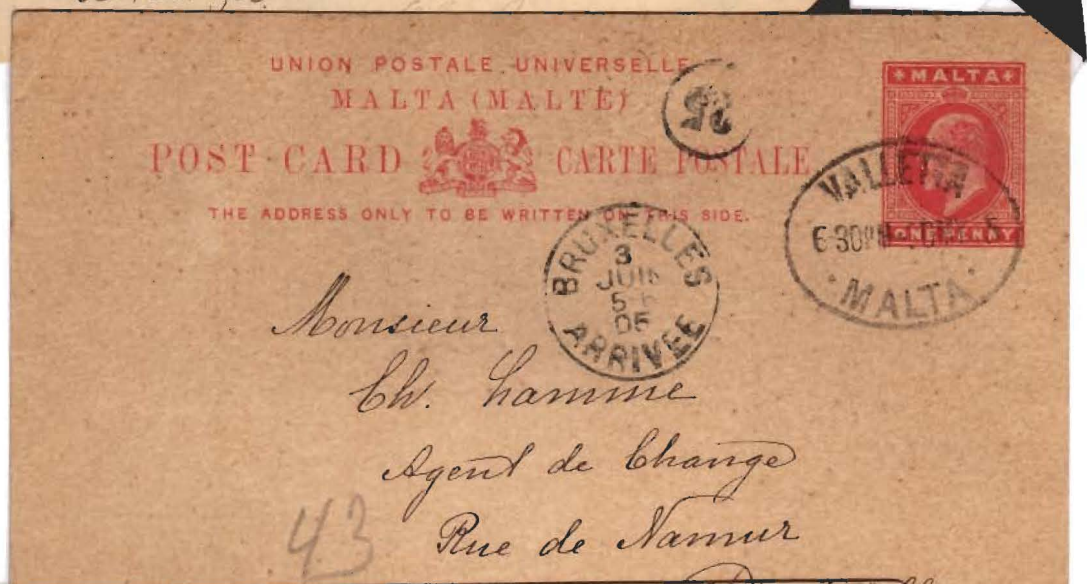
Maltese picture postcard to Rome, 1916, bearing Italian PHS and WWI censorship strike



Maltese picture postcard to Germany showing PHS



Maltese letter cards to Amsterdam and Brussels bearing PHS from the countries of arrival



Letters from Malta to Italy with British QV stamp used in Malta, and Italian Postman's Handstamp



132

MAY 10 1878

CORNO  
MAY 10 1878

MALTA  
MAY 7  
1878

25  
25  
25  
25

GOESAMUT  
MALTA

MALTA  
MAY 25  
78

2  
K

220 Calamatta

Raffaello Coen

Livorno

Piazza Novas

Postcard from Malta to Istanbul, 1931. The postcard is Greek, and bears a postman's handstamp from Turkey



1916 cover from Malta to Athens, bearing censorship and military marks, and Greek postman's handstamp



## Types of Handstamps

The Malta Study Circle has allocated six different types to the handstamps. As handstamps were worn out or lost, replacements with different types were also introduced, leading to different types for the same handstamp. Proud's "Postal History of Malta" lists 107 handstamps classified according to the six basic



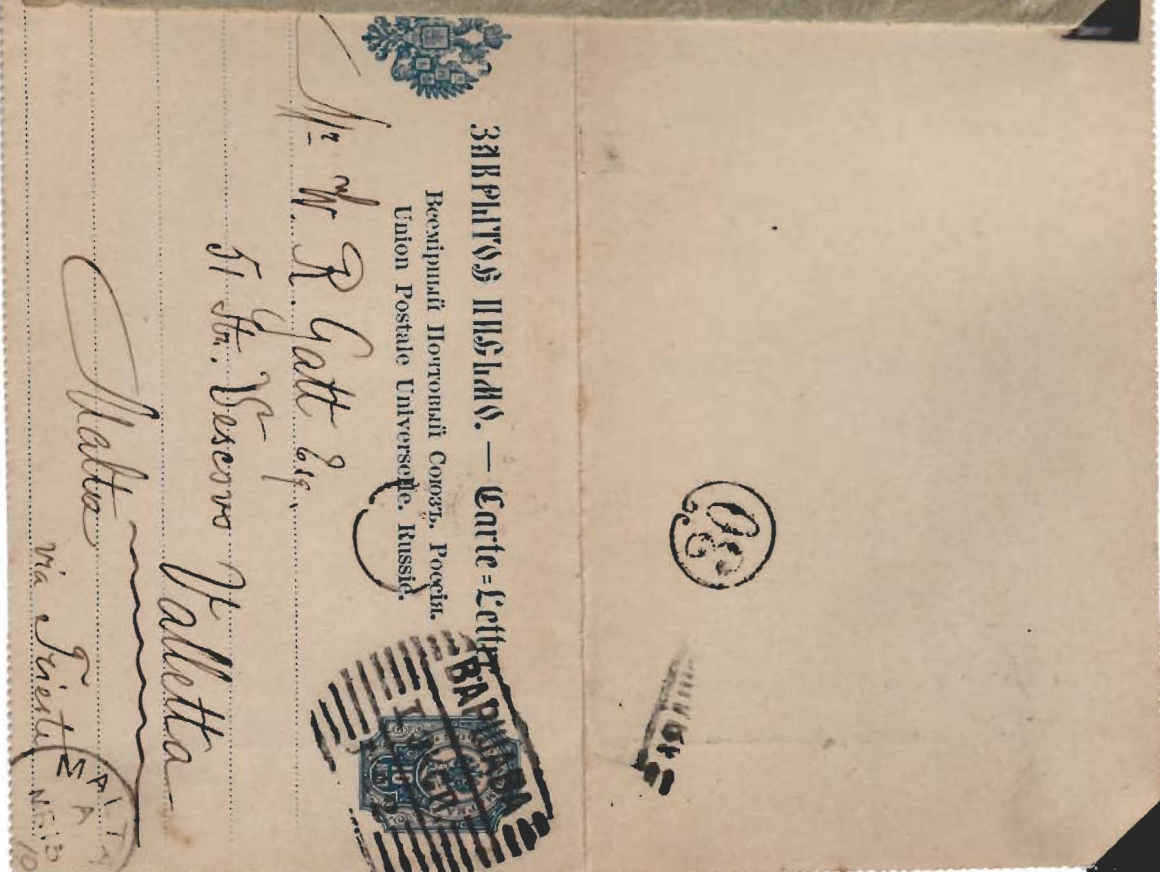
### Type A



Early use of PHS 1 on this cover received in Valletta five months after the introduction of handstamps

EKD: 30.12.1889

LKD: 04.04.1920



### Type B



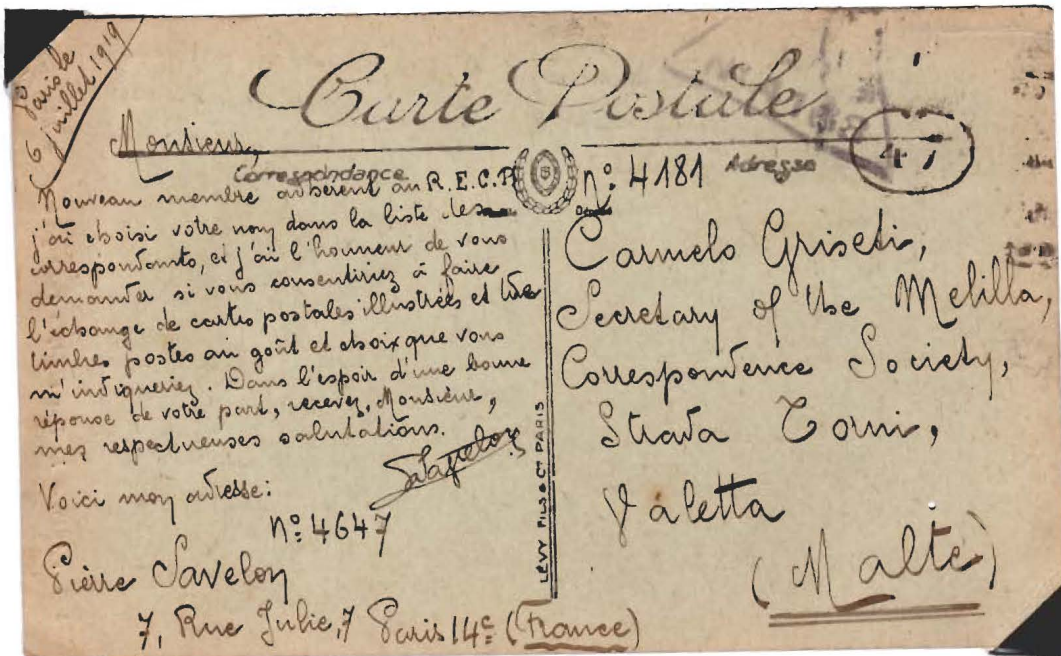
PHS 30B on a lettercard to the philatelist William Gatt in 1906

EKD: 15.08.1906

LKD: 20.05.1921

# Type C

37

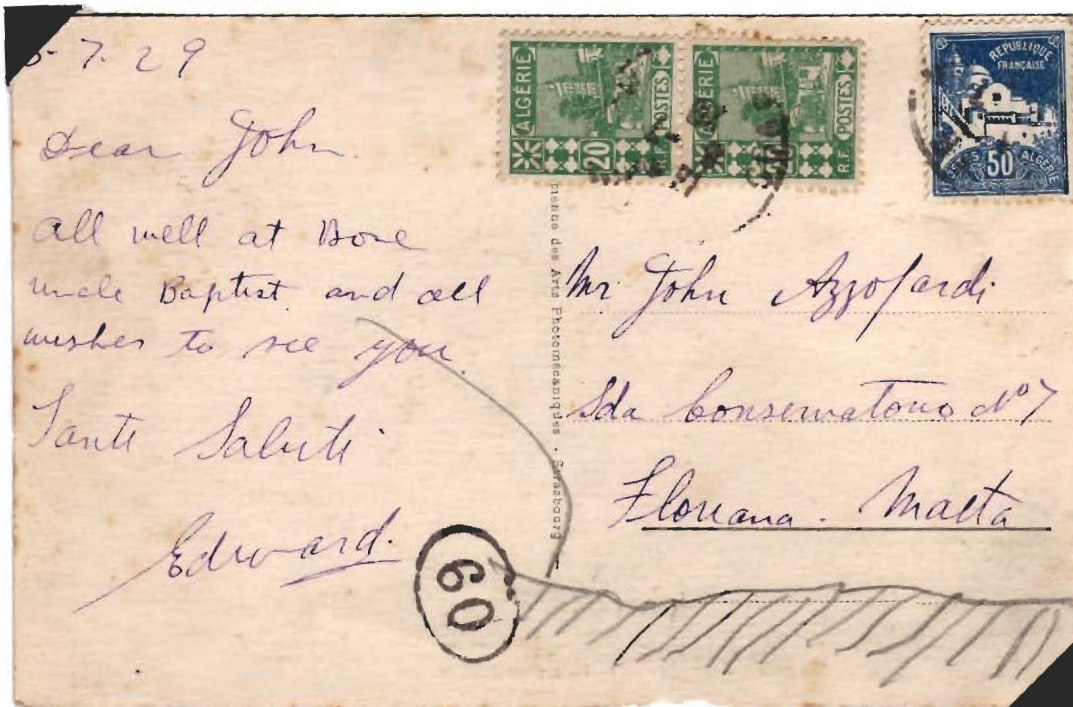


Postcard from France to Valletta showing PHS 47C in

EKD: 25.10.1912  
LKD: 29.03.1945

# Type D

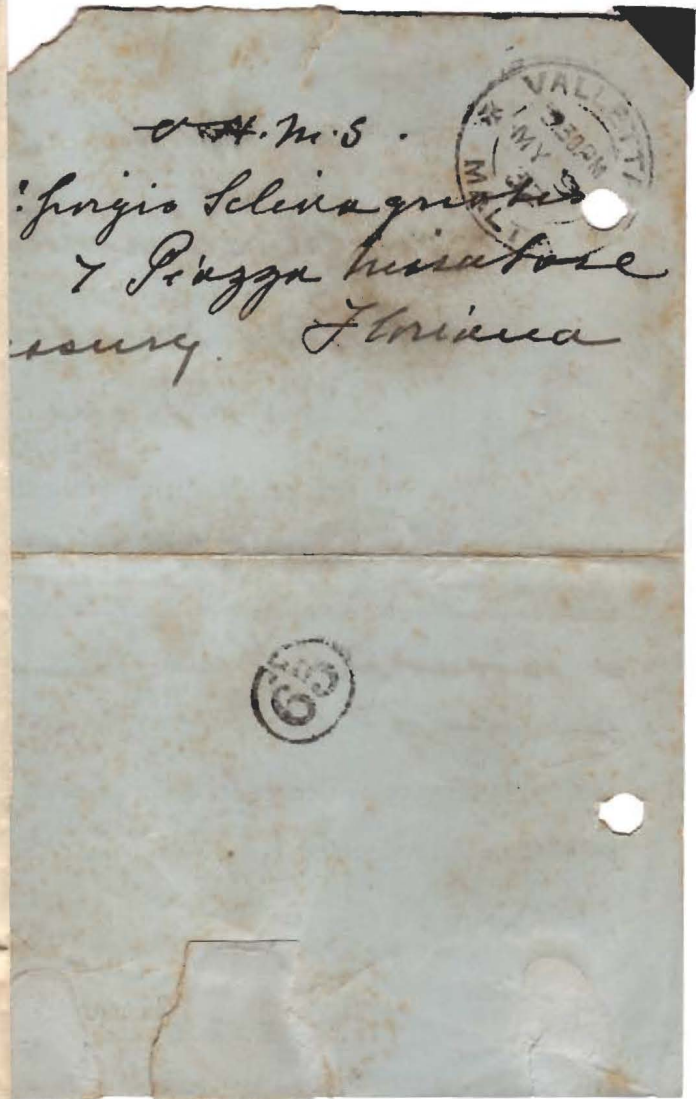
32



Postcard from Tunis to Floriana showing PHS 60D in 1929

EKD: 17.08.1926  
LKD: 25.11.1948





Type E

Type F



Official government  
correspondence to  
Sliema in 1946  
showing PHS 56E

Official  
government  
corresponden  
ce to Floriana  
on 9 May  
1932 showing  
PHS 65F -  
Earlier use  
than EKD in  
the literature

EKD: 01.12.1930  
LKD: 07.04.1947



Some handstamps do not conform to  
the mainstream types

The second type of PHS 9 has a dot after the 9 presumably to assist in distinguishing it from a 6. However, the general design is not conformant to the *E* type current during its usage period. This PHS is in fact a unique type

PHS 9A on postcard from Italy to Sliema in 1917.

EKD: 19.08.1893

LKD: 05.10.1937



PHS 9B on cover from Filed Post Office 154 in Egypt to Sliema 10 January 1944, which is just after the last known date of use.

EKD: 07.09.1933

LKD: 01.01.1944



Two of the three recorded types of PHS27 are shown. Handstamp 27 is known between the years 1905 and 1938 in Valletta, Sliema, Cospicua and Birkirkara. Useage in Valletta is in both the earliest and last known strikes. It is possible that one postman initially placed in Valletta was transferred to the other towns before rounding off his career in the desirable location of the general Post Office in Valletta.



PHS27B on a postcard from Rotterdam to Sliema in 1906

EKD: 04.10.1905  
LKD: 05.07.14



PHS27D on a postcard from Bethlehem to Valletta in 1935

EKD: 26.11.1926  
LKE: 09.01.1939

Il S. BAMBINO di Betlemme  
L'ENFANT JESUS de Bethléem  
El NIÑO JESUS de Belén  
The «BAMBINO» of Beth'chem  
Das JESU-KIND von Bethlehem  
DZIECIĄTKO JEZUS z Betleem

## One Handstamp – different types

Several handstamps exist as more than one type. It has been proposed that as handstamps were worn out through use, they were remade with the type then current. However, the significant intervals in time and the different locations of use sometimes evident suggest that remade handstamps were issued to different postmen.

PHS 6A on Italian post card to Valletta in 1902, also showing postage due strike.

EKD: 16.03.1891  
LKD: 15.09.1934

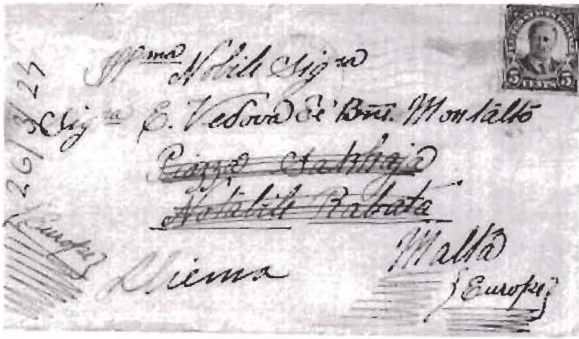


PHS 6B on Italian post card to Valletta in 1937.

EKD: 1930  
LKD: 02.07.1938

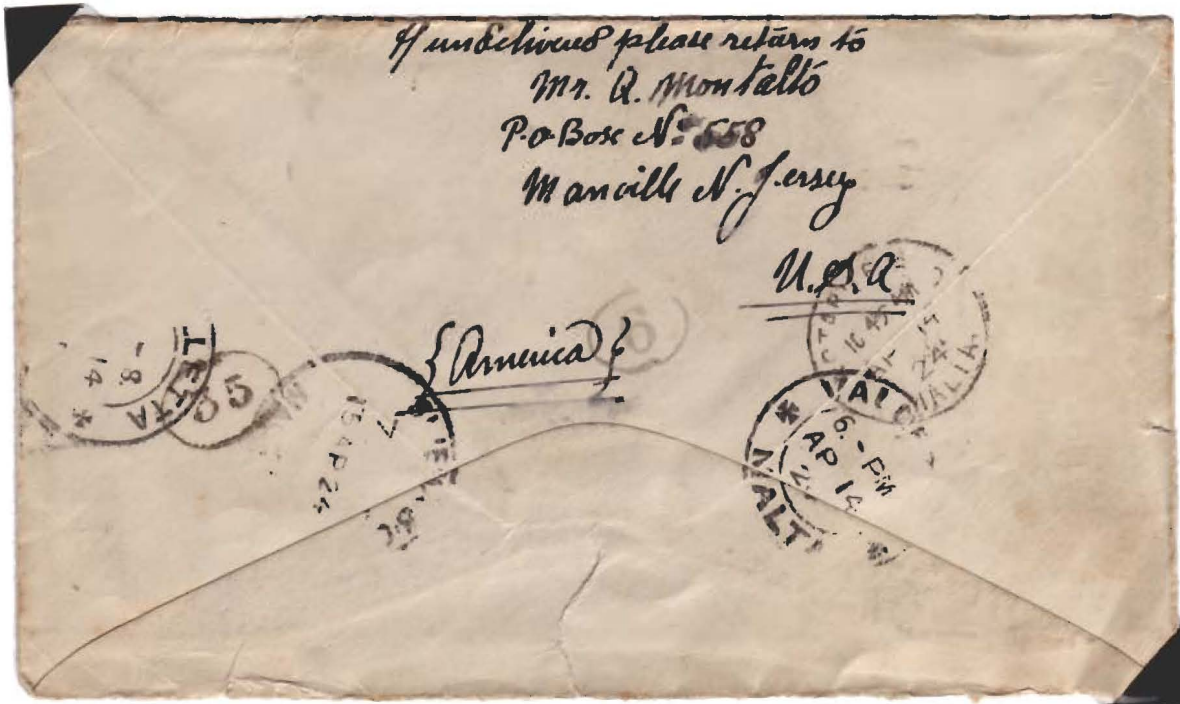


## One cover – different handstamps

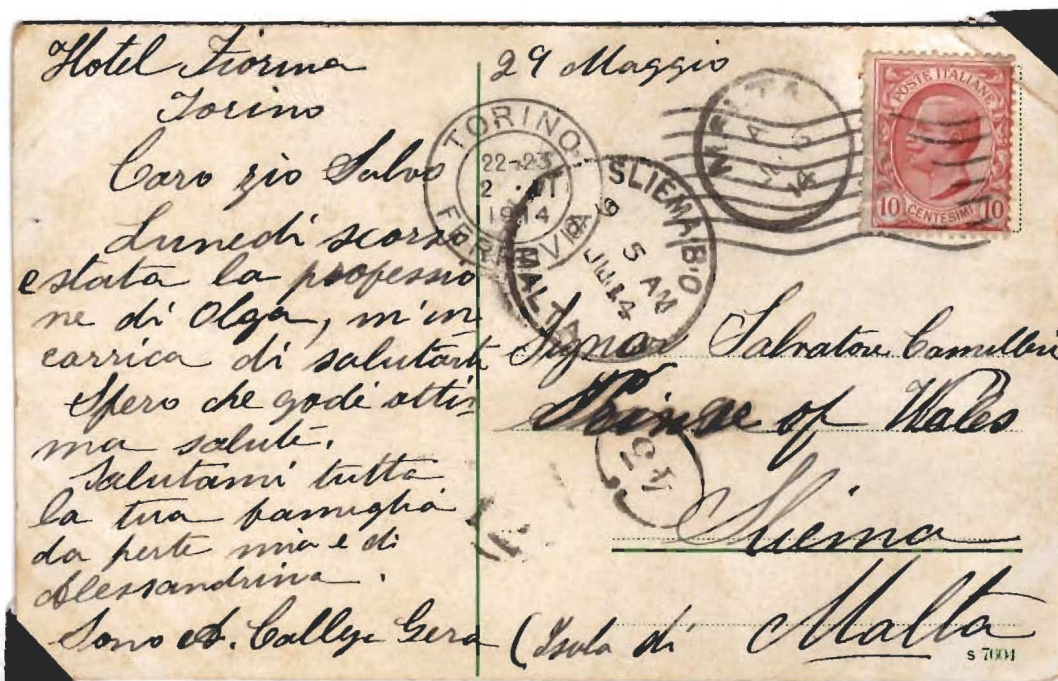


Less than 2% of recorded covers/cards show two or more postmen's handstamps. Such items can be divided into the following categories:

1. Re-direction
2. Incomplete address
3. Postage due
4. Difficulty in delivery in the absence of the recipient when the mail could not be passed through the letter box eg registered mail, size/absence of letter box etc.



This letter from New Jersey was sent to Notabile where it was stamped with PHS35C and then on to Sliema where it acquired PHS9A  
 PHS35C:  
 EKD: 19.03.1915  
 LKD:04.01.1949



Postcard from Italy to Sliema showing PHS43C and PHS12A. The reason for the use of two Sliema handstamps is unclear.



PHS10A and PHS15A on a registered cover from Denmark to Valletta. The registration status explains the use of two handstamps; presumably the addressee was absent when the first delivery was made. PHS10 used in Valletta is unrecorded by Proud and is considerably scarcer than its usage in Sliema – Frame . The MSC Handbook mentions usage in Valletta with an EKD of 1898, four years prior to this cover. Proud also does not record PHS15A in Valletta and the MSC’s EKD for this handstamp in Valletta is also 1899, five years prior to this item. This combination of two scarce handstamps in this location has not been seen by this author in any of several collections examined

## One address – different handstamps

Examination of a large number of items indicates that some streets had one postman for a number of years, while others had a number over the years and some had several simultaneously.



PHS9A and 56E to the same Sliema address within an 11 month period. Postman 56 was apparently in need of a new inkpad in September 1930 – the faint strike is found on two separate covers delivered to very close addresses within 9 days of each other



Archbishop street in which the Archbishop's Palace is located is one of Valletta's main streets and was served by several postmen in the late 1890s early 1900s. These two covers from the same sender to the Archbishop in 1910 and 1912 bear PHS29B and PHS14A within their period of recorded use.

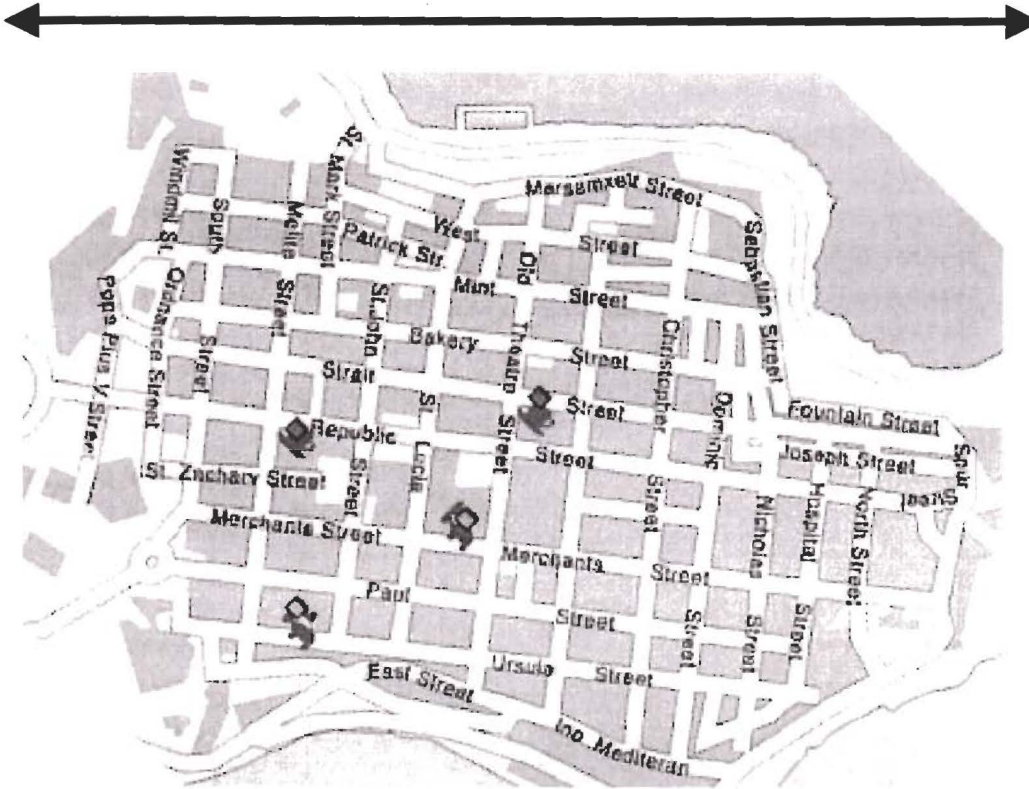
PHS14A  
EKD 19.08.1889  
LKD 12.1930

PHS29B  
05.10.1905  
09.1923



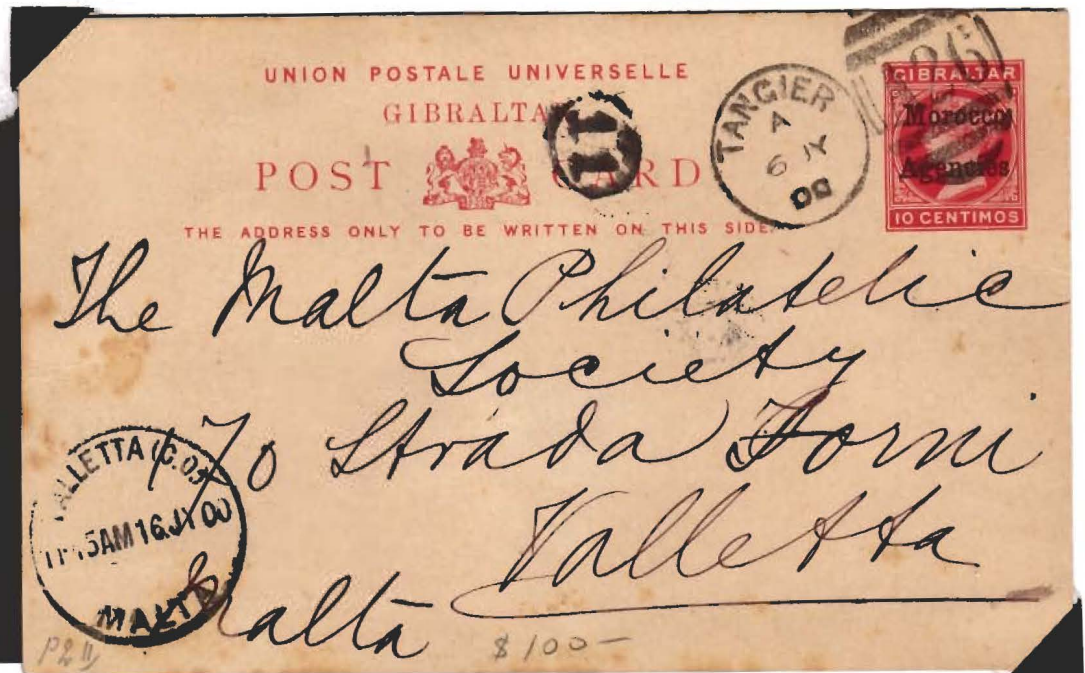
# Handstamps and postal routes in Valletta

1.2 kms



Of a total of 101 handstamps covering 74 numbers, Proud records 41 handstamps as used in Valletta. Malta's capital city and the local of the General Post Office made it the centre of postal administration. It is evident that as vacancies arose in other post offices, they were filled from Valletta – many handstamps have earliest use there and then are used elsewhere. It is also not unusual to find the converse, as postings in Valletta, with the opportunity for access to easier administrative jobs, were considered desirable.

The delineation of postal routes through the collection of items bearing handstamps and delivered within reasonably close time periods gives insight into the organisation of the postal service during this era.



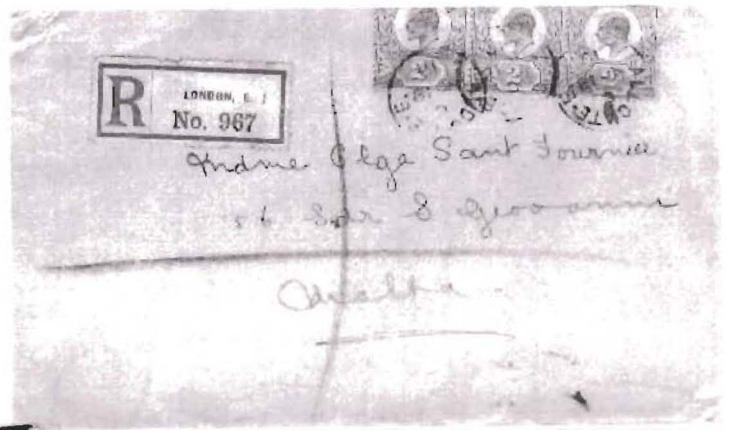
Postman no 11 – Joseph Saliba – operated in Valletta from 1894 until 1921. His brother was Paul Saliba – Postman no 9. The PHS11A handstamp is also known used in Garbo – Gozo in 1924.

2

PHS2A used in Valletta between 1889 and 1920. Also known used in Senglea in 1904 and in Gozo in the 1940s (see Frame 5)



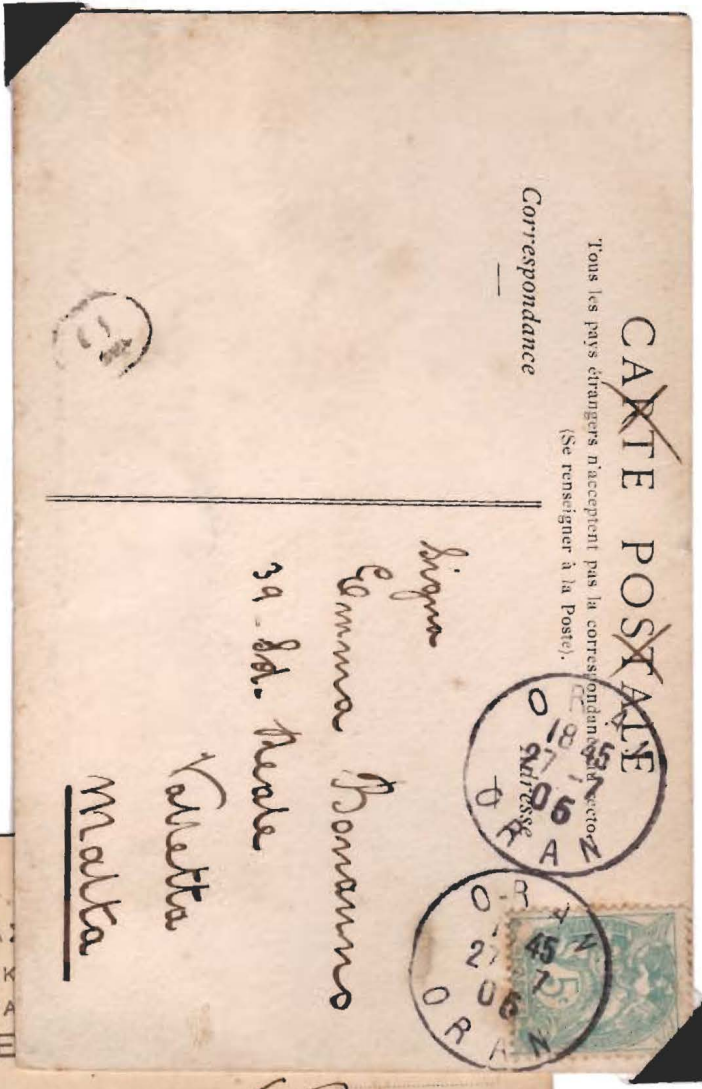
800 metres



2



800 metres



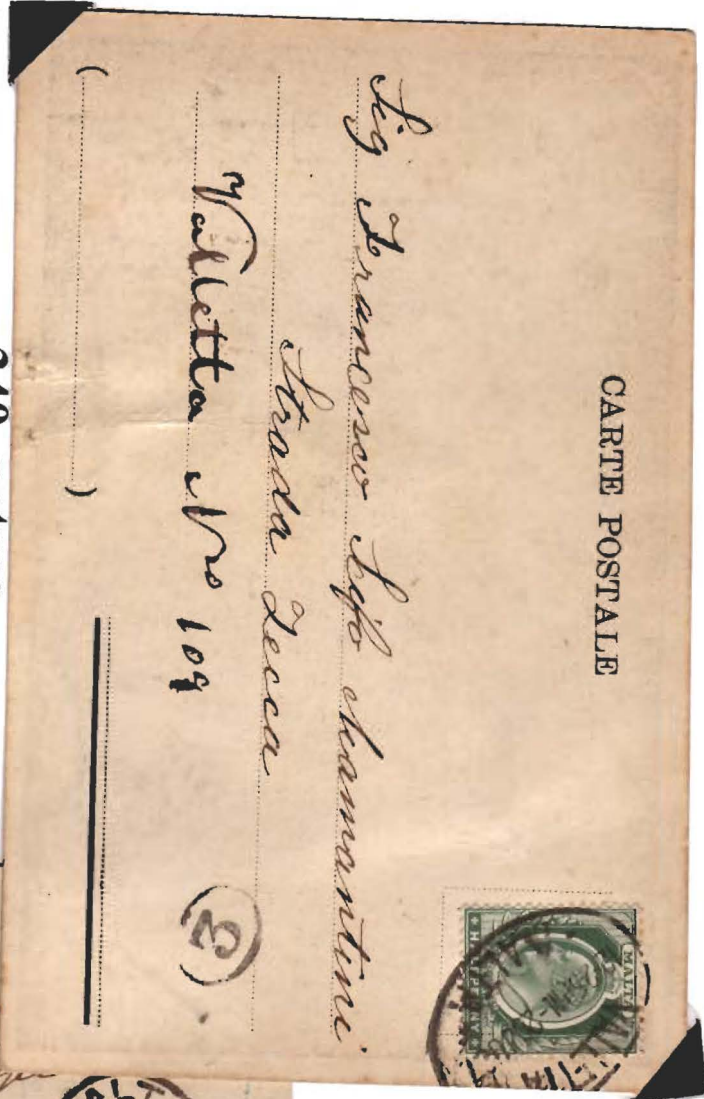
NAZZARENO CARUANA  
39 ST MARY STREET, VALLETTA  
ΕΛΛΑΣ  
ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΙΚΗ  
UNION POSTALE  
30 AUG 1959  
CARTE

POST  
This space may be used for comments  
for Inland Postage only, NOT FOR  
Keque tu chore  
Sperne, puer,  
del  
12.X.05

M. M. Signori Alberto Piloni  
Spada Zaccaria N° 23  
Valletta  
(isola di Malta)

Master Victor Trapani  
19 Sda Saluto  
Valletta

(3)



8-7-72

*Madame's no. 10. Perhaps from data and the old  
map have reached you. I am sure you find  
by for not giving you more details, from  
our journey, but it is most difficult.  
To find time for writing, since a fortnight  
we are at this charming place. But we  
and the Hotel is finely situated in beach  
As for gardens, only the coccoloba was not  
so hot as we expected, perhaps the warmth  
will begin now. At the end of March we  
intend to go to Spain and return in June,  
in May, from where I shall be able to write  
you. With kindest regards from my wife and  
children.*

Madame  
Lady Dingy  
Strada Formosa  
La Valetta.  
Malta.  
Europe.

MALTA  
MAR 20  
10

218785

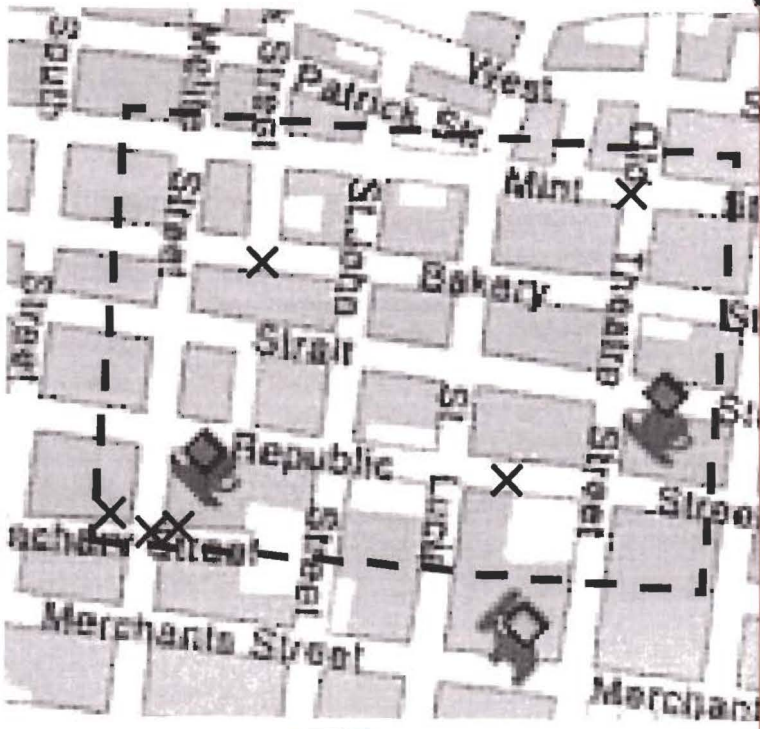
CORRESPONDANCE

ADRESSE

(3) M<sup>e</sup>  
C. Micallet  
Strada reale 312  
Valletta  
Malta

Benigue  
NICE

3



B. Breveglieri, St. Gallen

Comestibles und Südfrüchte  
Telegraph-Adresse: Breveglieri - Telephone 127



Postkarte.

*Agius Brothers*

*Malta*

3

*Bookpost*  
BRIEFKAART

(CARTE POSTALE).

ALGEMEENE POSTVEREENIGING (UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE.)

Zijde voor het adres bestemd (Côté réservé à l'adresse).



*Meer Agius Bros*  
*Sda Gaccaria*  
*Valletta*  
*Malta*

3

CARTOLINA

(CARTE POSTALE D'ITALIE.)

Nº 3 →



*Miss Mary Leuzou*  
*13 St Gaccaria*  
*Valletta*  
*Malta*



PHS3A on postcard from Sicily to Valletta, also bearing postage due strike

NB. Sul lato anteriore della presente si scrive soltanto l'indirizzo.

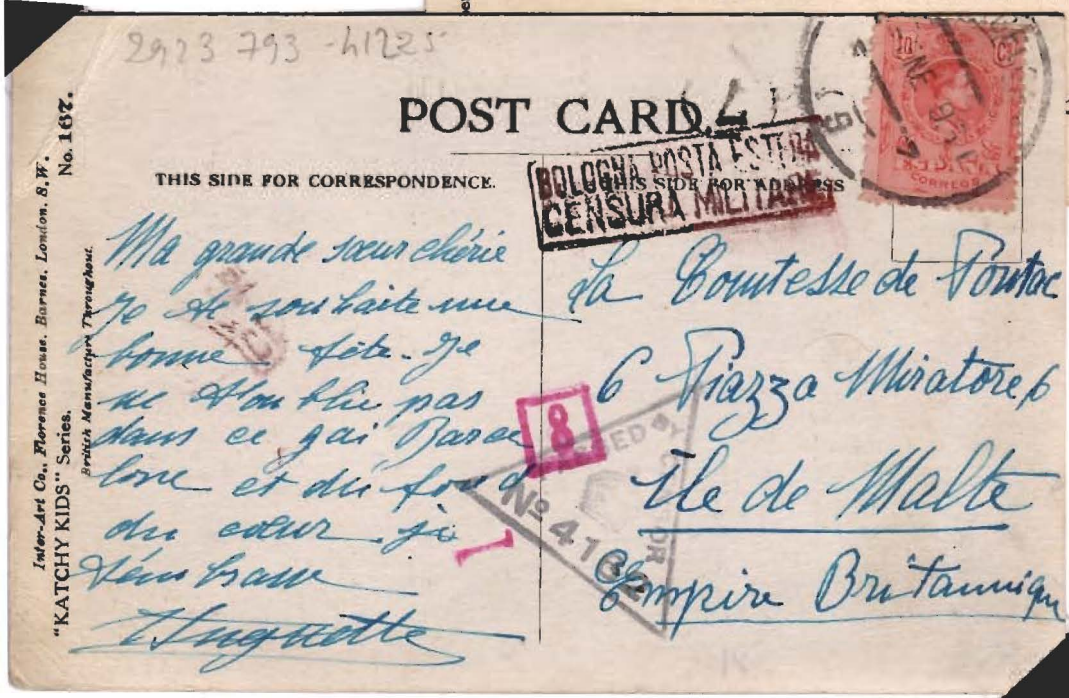
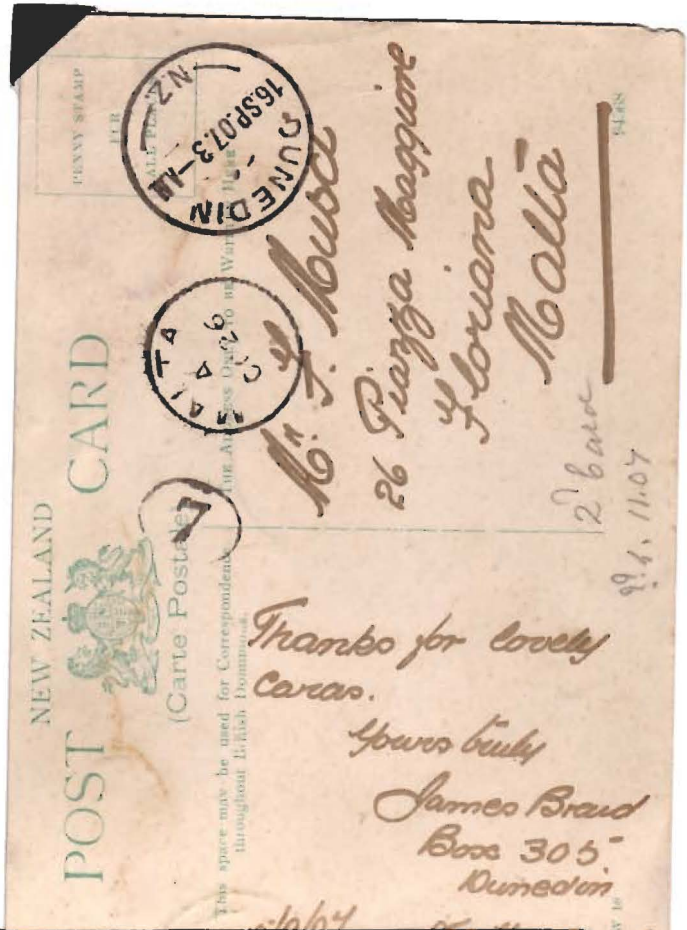
PHS7A used in Valletta between 1893 and 1914. Also known in Sliema in 1889 and 1906

7



X  
X

1.2 kms



Inter-Art Co., Florence House, Borneo, London, S.W. No. 167. "KATCHY KIDS" Series. British Manufacture Throughout.

THIS SIDE FOR CORRESPONDENCE.

THIS SIDE FOR ADDRESS

Ma grande sœur chérie  
je te souhaite une  
bonne fête. je  
ne t'embrasse pas  
dans ce qui paraît  
bon et du fond  
du cœur je  
t'embrasse  
Huguette

La Comtesse de Pontac  
6 Piazza Miratore, 6  
Île de Malte  
Empire Britannique

7



PHS7A on letter to the major commercial firm of Agius Brothers in 1902 – Many PHS-bearing items in the early 1900's in Valletta are to this firm

X  
X

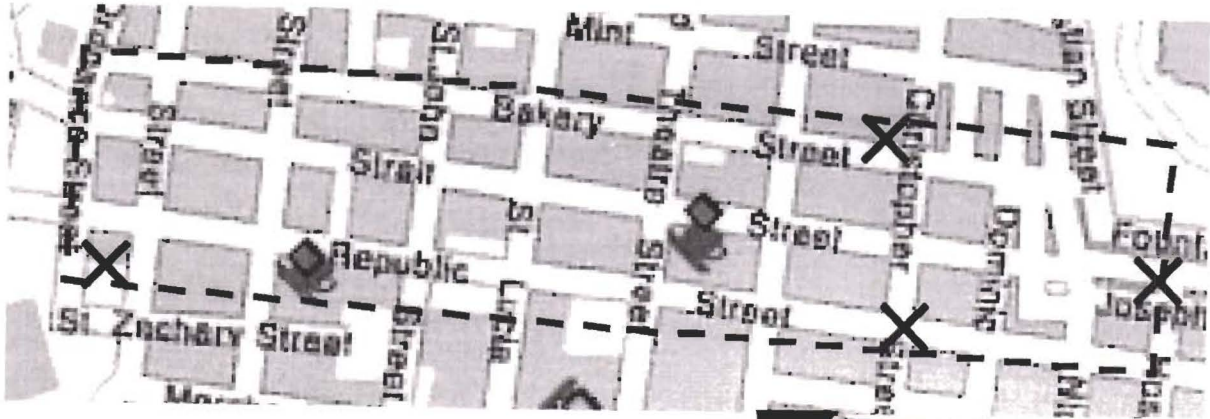


1.2 kms

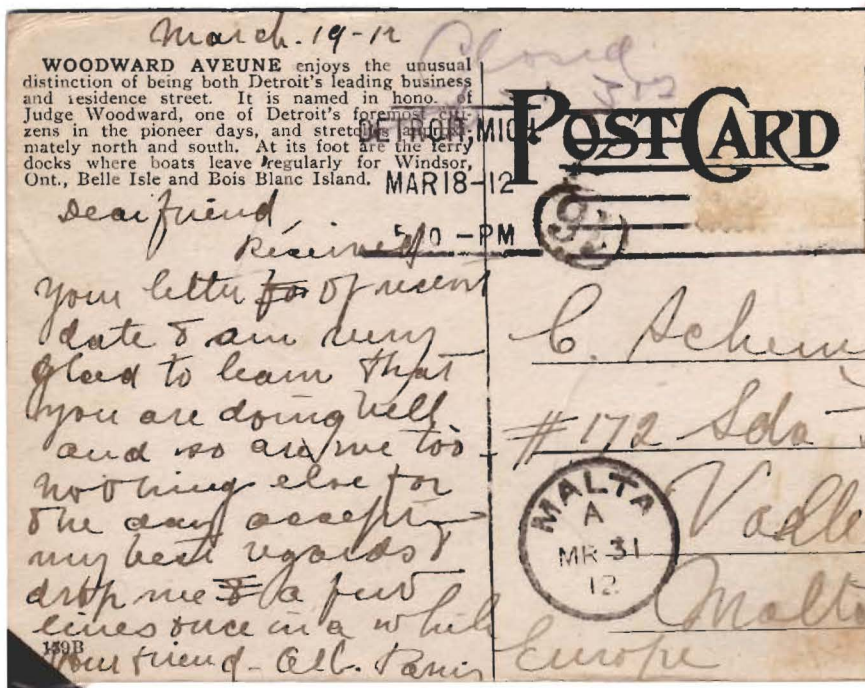


PHS16A used in Valletta between 1897 and 1913. Then used in S Sliema in between 1903 and 1913 (Frame 3)

16

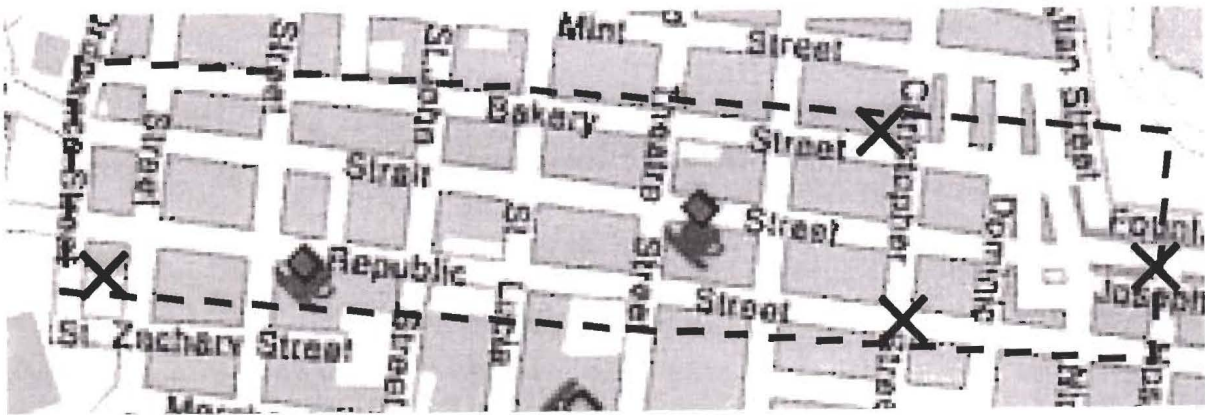


80 metres

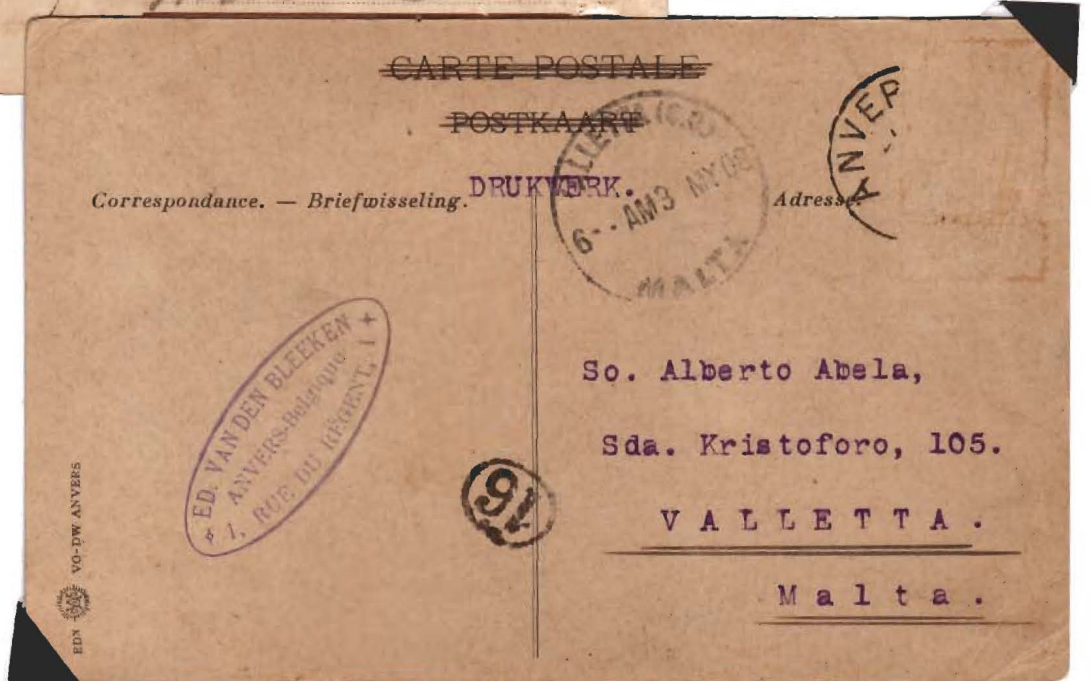




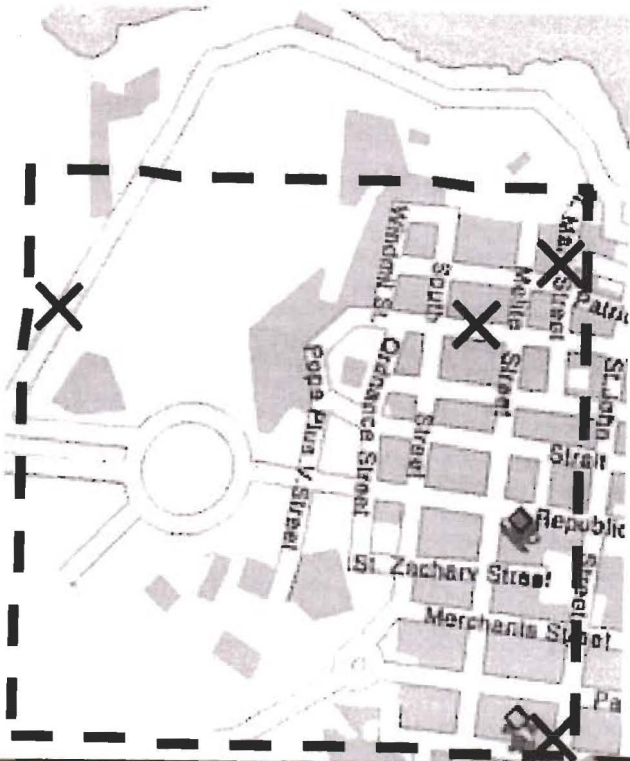
16



metres  
80



17



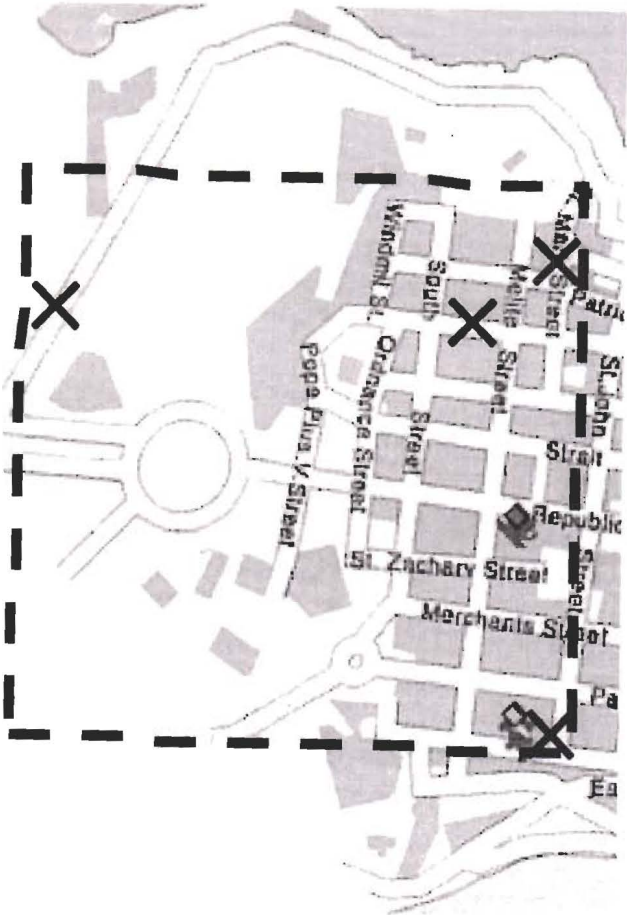
700 metres

POSTKARTE - CARTE-POSTALE  
Welfenstr. 11 - Union Postale Universelle  
Socio 42, No. 78  
Handwritten text in German and French, including 'Bitte nicht öffnen' and 'Bitte nicht öffnen'.

Handwritten address on the back of the postcard:  
Mr. W. J. G. ...  
11, S. S. ...  
Valletta  
Malta  
Via ...

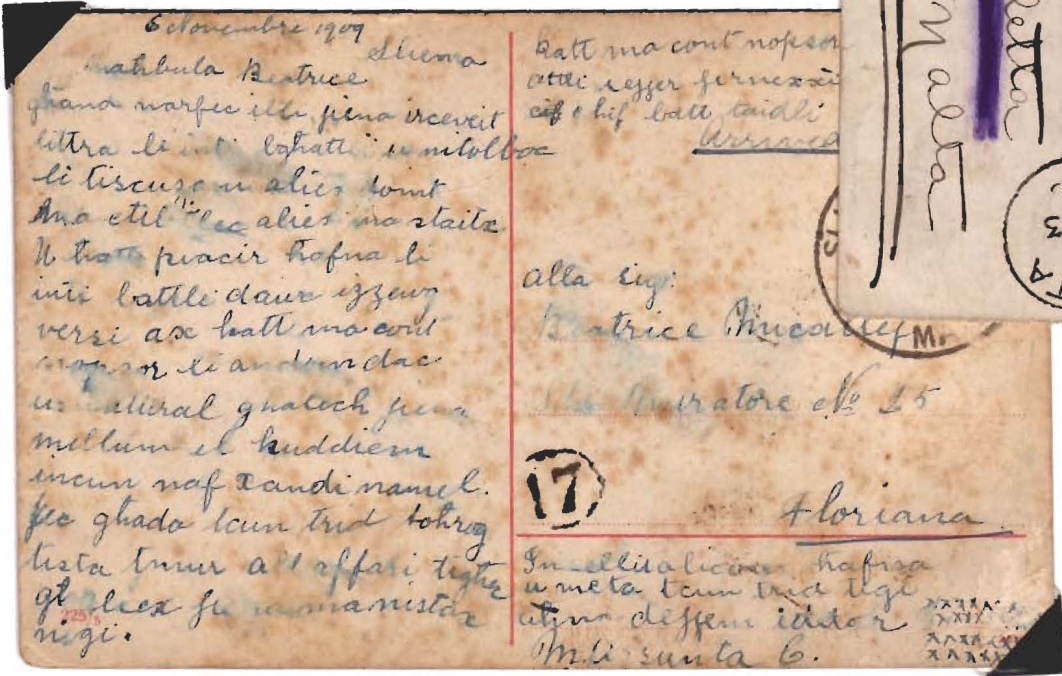
Handwritten address on the front of the postcard:  
Catania 8/5/33  
Salutissimi  
Baccioni  
Giusto  
Signora  
Mary Vella Farb  
St. Sda Zecca  
Valletta  
Malta  
Postmark: CATANIA PROV. TORINO  
Stamp: 25 L. ITALIANI

17



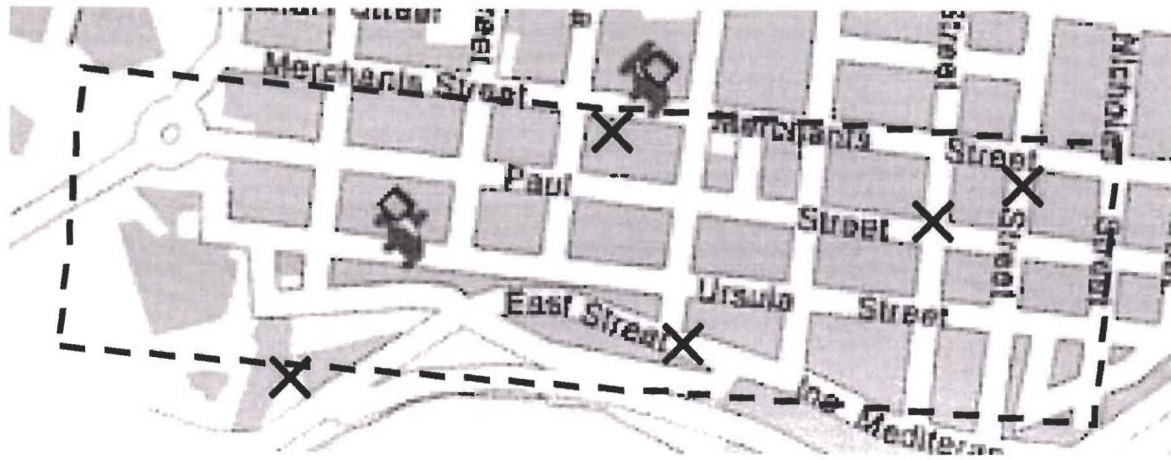
700 metres

PHS17A on postcard from Britain to Valletta also bearing postage due strike



PHS19A used in Valletta between 1905 and 1939. Also known in Sliema/St Julians in 1906 to 1911 and Cospicua 1896 to 1902

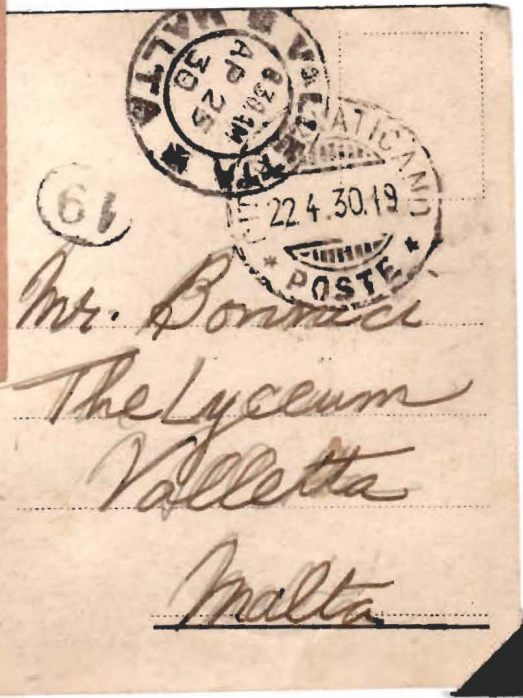
19



110 metres

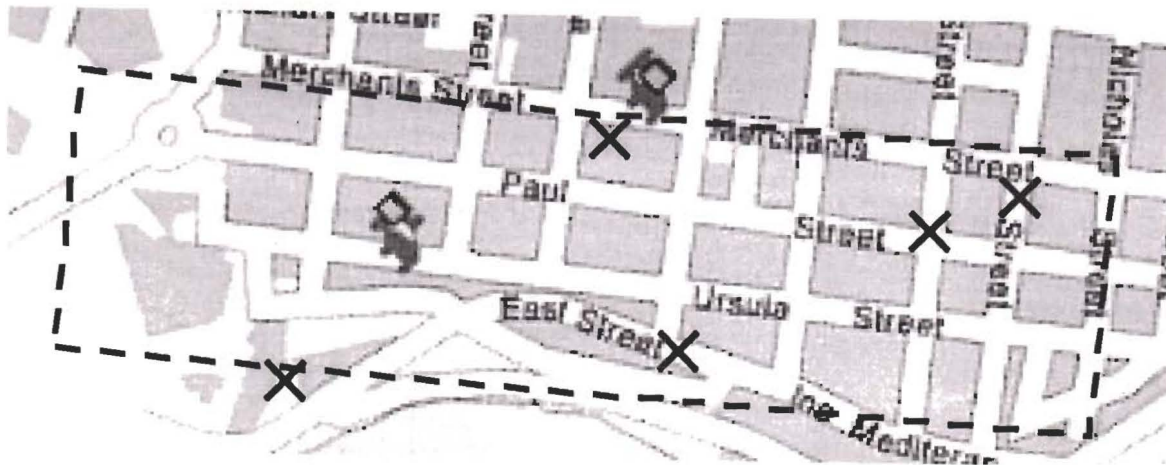


Per telegrammi: GIUSEPPE BOCCADIFUOCO.

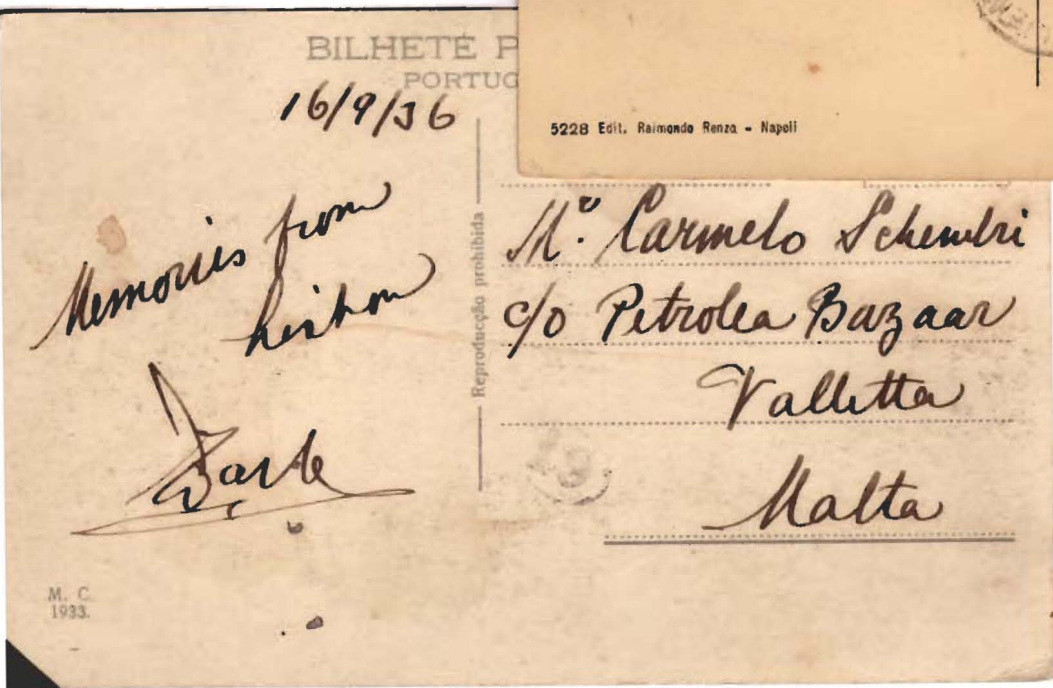


LA CONCILIAZIONE FRA L'ITALIA E IL VATICANO  
 • LA FOLLA IN PIAZZA COLONNA ACCLAMA IL DUCE -- LE DUE BANDIERE AL PALAZZO CHIGI •  
 EDIZIONE DELL'ISTITUTO NAZIONALE • LUCE •  
 Istit. Ital. d'Arti Grafiche - Bergamo

19



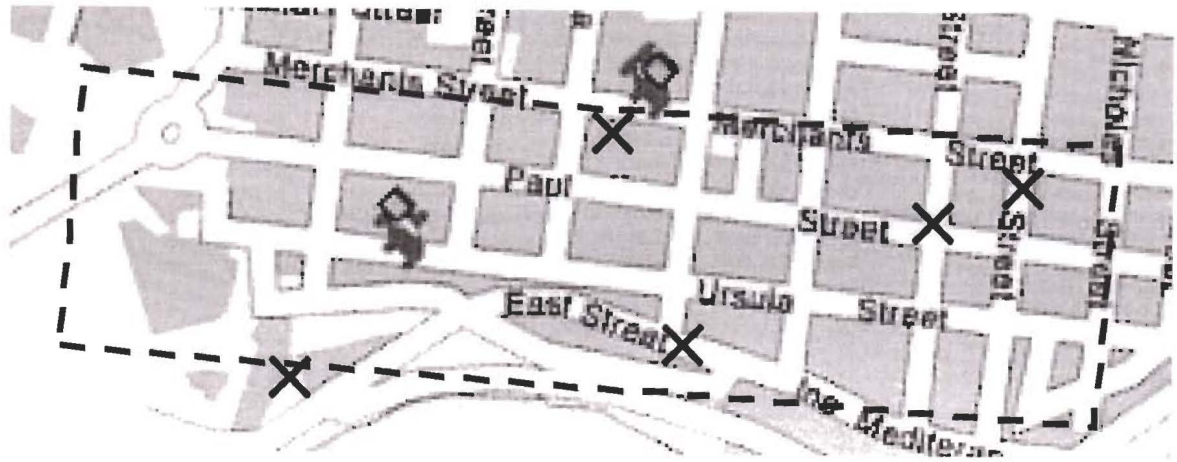
110 metres



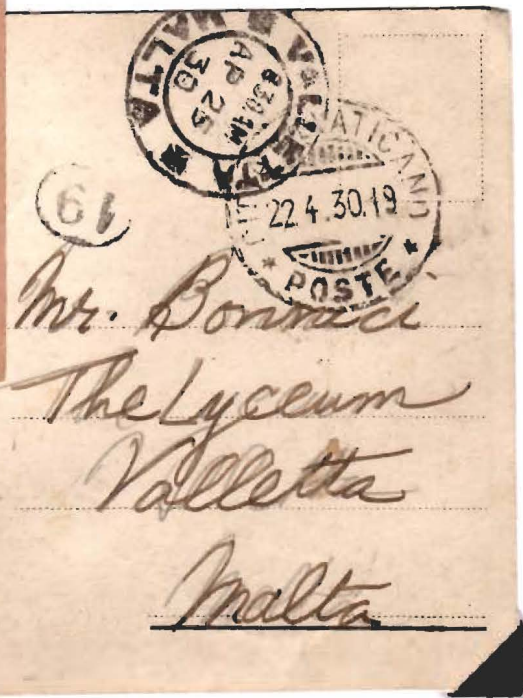
PHS19A on a postcard to the St.Julians suburb of St George's Bay in 1912. Usage in this area appears concordant with usage in Valletta

PHS19A used in Valletta between 1905 and 1939. Also known in Sliema/St Julians in 1906 to 1911 and Cospicua 1896 to 1902

19



110 metres



LA CONCILIAZIONE FRA L'ITALIA E IL VATICANO  
 LA FOLLA IN PIAZZA COLONNA ACCLAMA IL DUCE - LE DUE BANDIERE AL PALAZZO CHIGLI  
 EDIZIONE DELL'ISTITUTO NAZIONALE • LUCE •  
 Istit. Ital. d'Arti Grafiche - Bergamo

N<sup>o</sup> 9 Albert e Abela  
 105 Strada Cristoforo  
 Valletta  
 Malta

# Other handstamps used in Valletta

10

PHS10A was in widespread and long term use in Sliema over 1892-1939. Examples in Valletta are relatively scarce – of over 50 items bearing this handstamp examined by this collector, only two were from Valletta. Proud does not record this strike in Valletta. This postcard from Egypt in 1894 is 4 years before the EKND recorded by the MSC



37

The use of PHS37C in Valletta is also not recorded by Proud. The MSC records a brief period of use between March 1915 and May 1916 in Valletta. This example in 1916 from Field Post Office D.11 also bears a WWI censor strike.



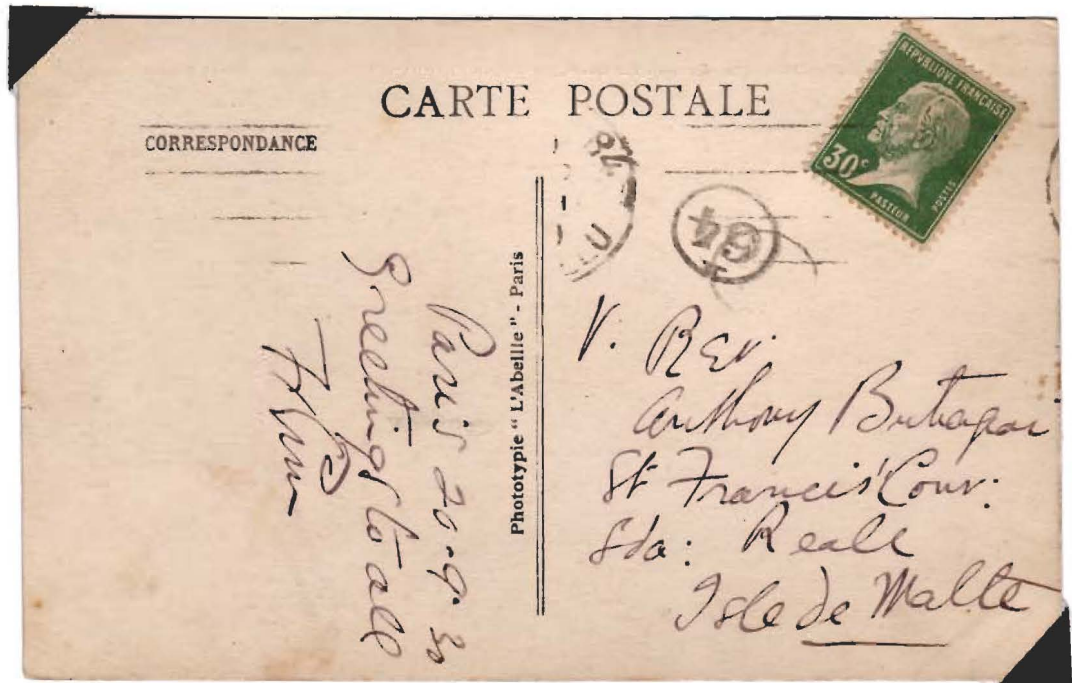
50

Letter from UK to Valletta in July 1914 – an example of PHS50C during its one year useage in Valletta between 1913 and 1914



64

Although Proud only records PHS64F in Sliema 1931-1944, the strike was also used in Valletta between 1930 – 1933. Postman no 64 – Paul Fenech – is known to have worked in Valletta from his appointment in 1920 until transfer to Sliema later in his career.





18

Another example of a Valletta PHS unrecorded by Proud. PHS18A on a postcard from Italy in 1903 bearing a 4d - sizeable amount - postage due strike

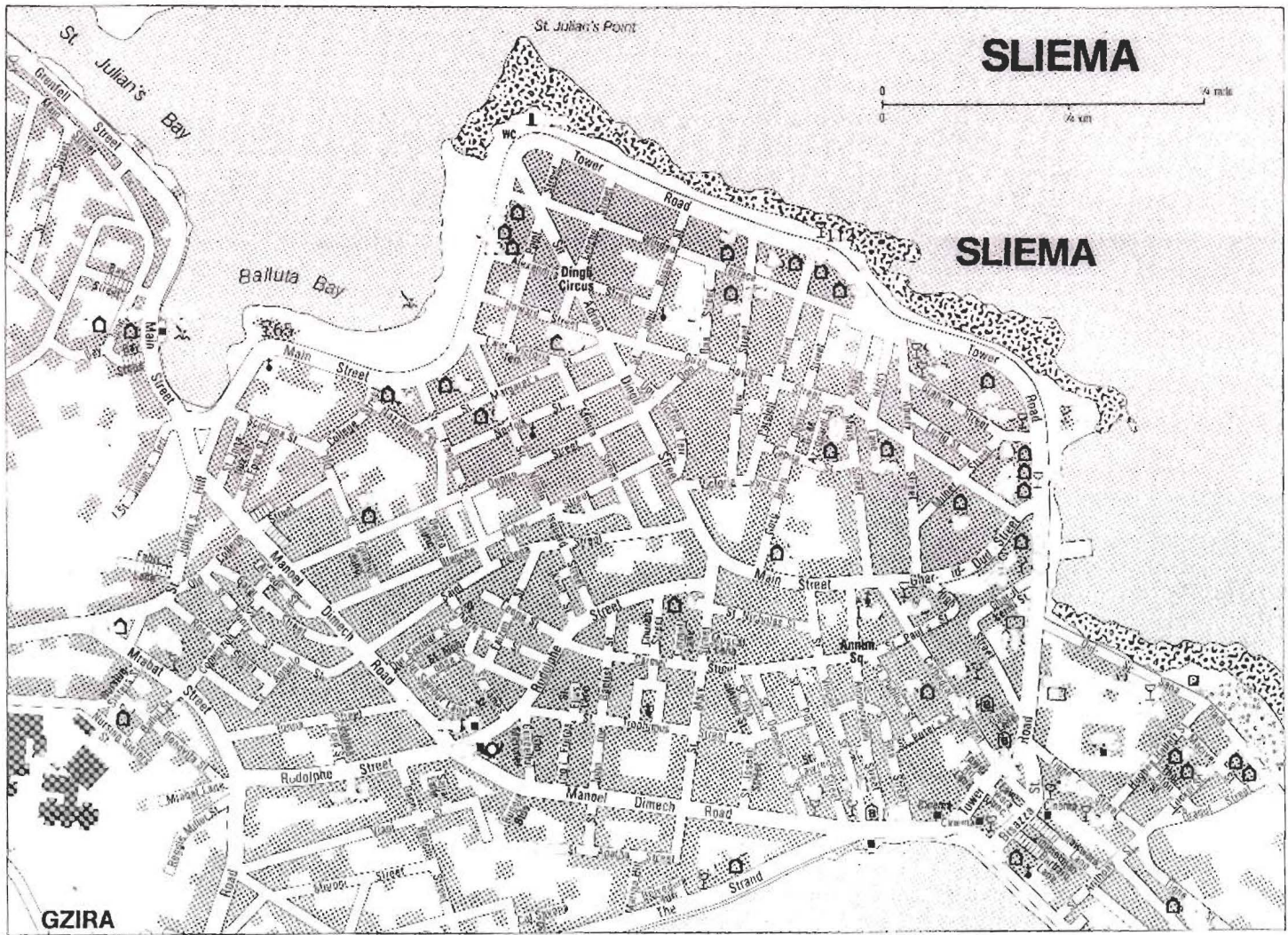


47

PHS47C on a card to Valletta bearing a postage due strike in 1920



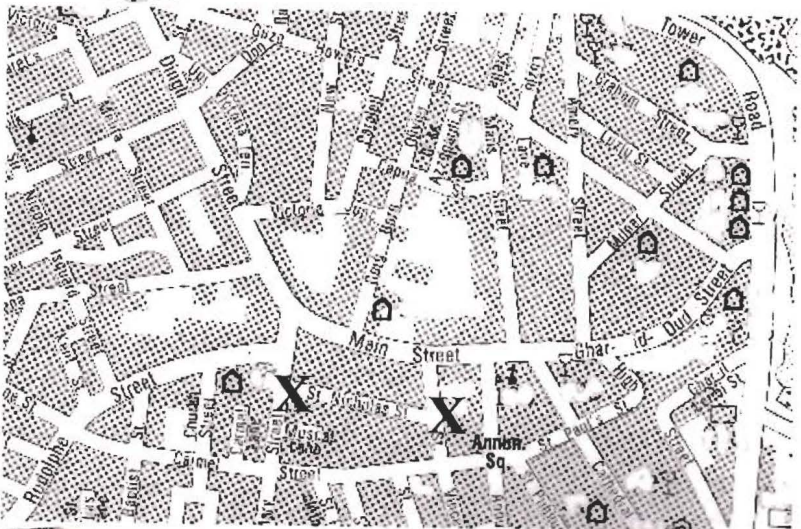
# Handstamps and postal routes in Sliema



After Valletta, Sliema has the highest number of PHS', with 26 different strikes recorded by Proud. During the handstamp era the population of Sliema expanded from a small coastal town to its current status as Malta's largest urban centre. Large numbers of the professional and upper classes maintained residences in Sliema as well as in Valletta in the late 1890s-early 1900s – Frame 4 – generating a significant level of correspondence. In addition to Sliema, the postmen covered the suburbs of Gzira and St Julians, which rapidly developed into towns in their own right.



Like most of the early PHS' PHS4A was used in Valletta until an extended period of use in Sliema between 1920 and 1944

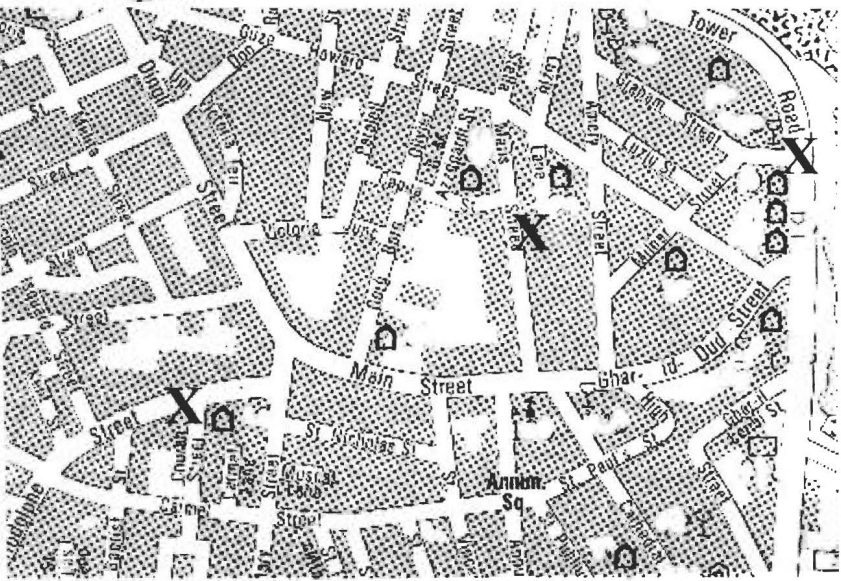


36-10<sup>th</sup> letter of Charles of 30 May 1930  
from Elliraltan

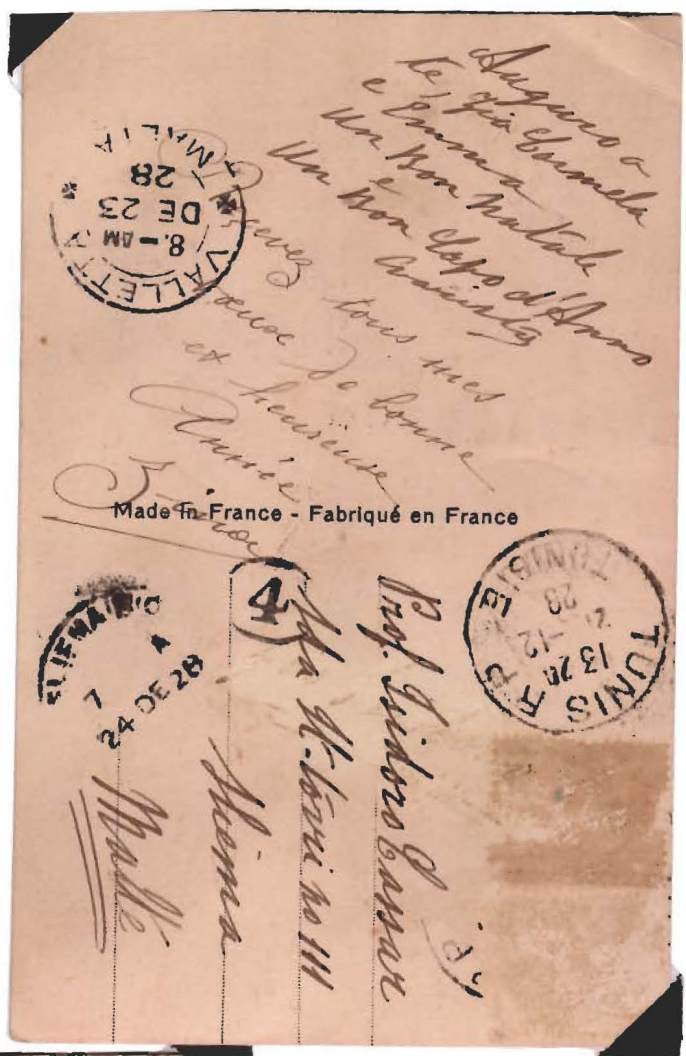


Mrs Rosina Zammit -  
Trade S. Vincenzo  
No 68 Sliema  
Malta





PHS4A on postcard from the UK to Sliema also bearing postage due stamp from 1929



Handwritten text on the postcard: 'MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN', 'MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN', 'Sliema Malta', 'MILWAUKEE WISCONSIN'.

...pregnamo il Santo Damiano Gesù e S. Antonio di Padova a concedervi grazie e provvidenza assai, in modo da farcene parte anche a noi affinché anche in questo nostro Asilo di carità non manchino i mezzi in questa nostra bisognosa età, in cui abbiamo bisogno di molto, e non possiamo in nulla aiutare chi ci sostiene e educa.

Handwritten address: 'Alla Liga Agius Strada Sella Maris Europa - Malta Sliema'.

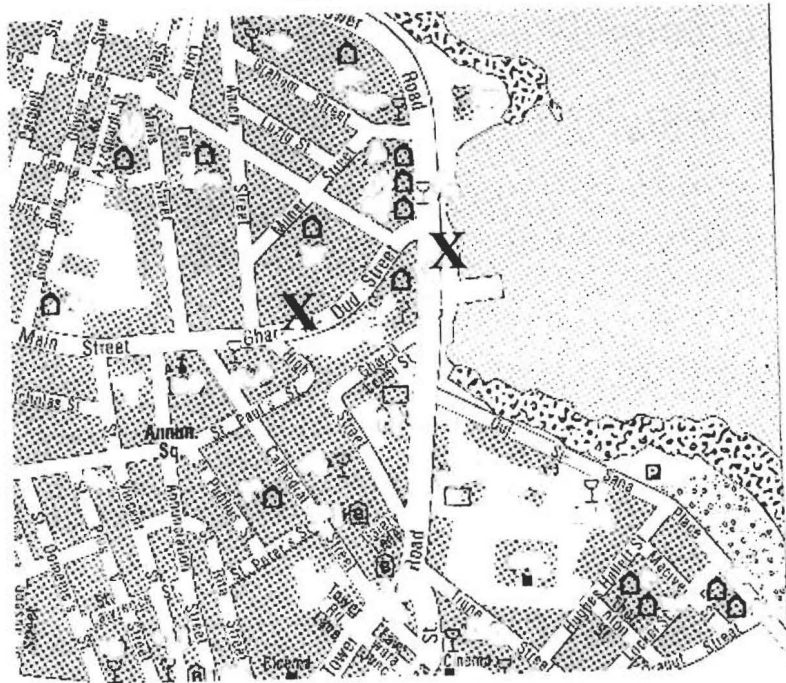
LA SUPERIORA e gli Orfanelli Antoniani di ROMA



(Prov. ....)



Postman no 6 started in Valletta but then delivered in Sliema 1899-1925, although useage in Valletta continued, suggesting that this postman was frequently called back to Valletta to fill in for absences etc



*I hear nothing near of*  
 Carte postale. - Postkarte. - Post Card.  
 Cartolina postale. - Tarjeta postal. - Breffkort.  
 Briefkaart. -  
 Levelezo-Lap. - Dopisnice - Dopianica. - Karta  
 korespondencyjna.  
 Открытое-письмо - Диплома Карта  
 We are now up in the nation,  
 your beautiful Roman Card  
 has done us much good.  
 We are now up in the nation,  
 your beautiful Roman Card  
 has done us much good.  
 We are now up in the nation,  
 your beautiful Roman Card  
 has done us much good.

Mr le Docteur  
 Y. Galizia  
 39, St. Ghar- id - dud  
 Sliema  
 Malta

TRAMPA  
 SLEIMA  
 24 JUL 1914  
 MALTA

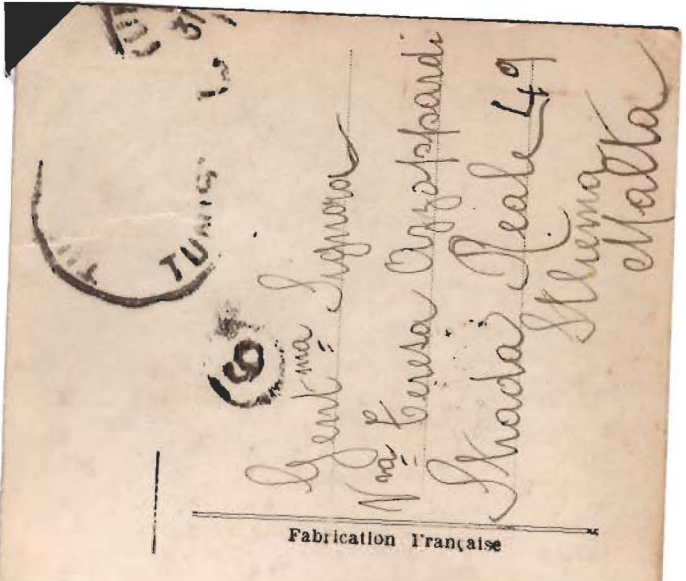
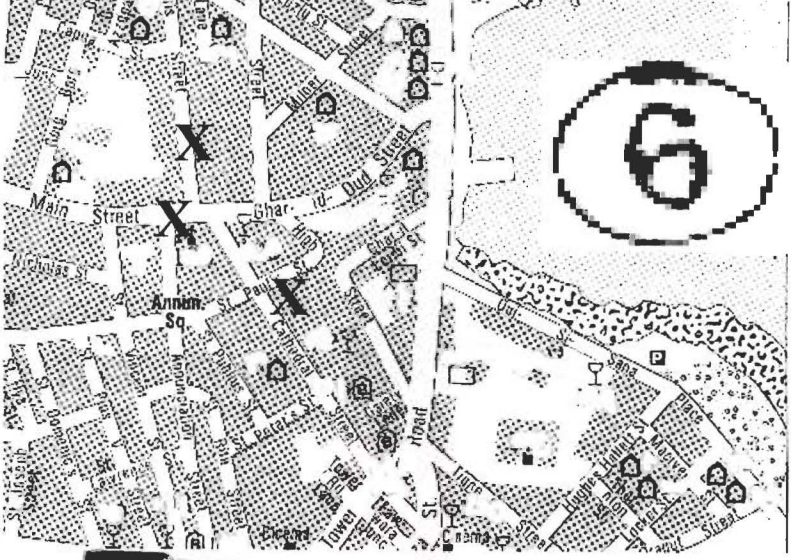
Postale  
 - POSTKAART  
 - TARIJETA POSTAL  
 MALTA

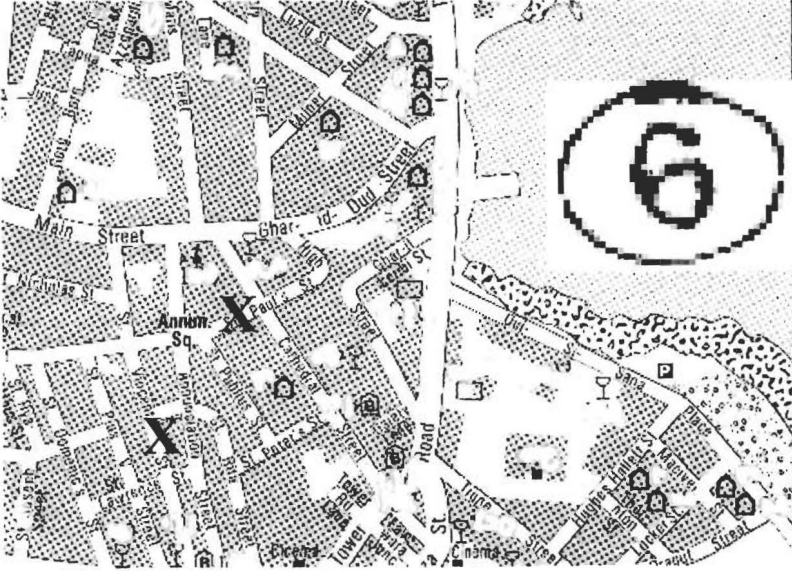
Gentiana Sijera  
 Carmela Cassar  
 Strada Corve 68  
 Sliema  
 Malta

6  
 MALTA  
 12

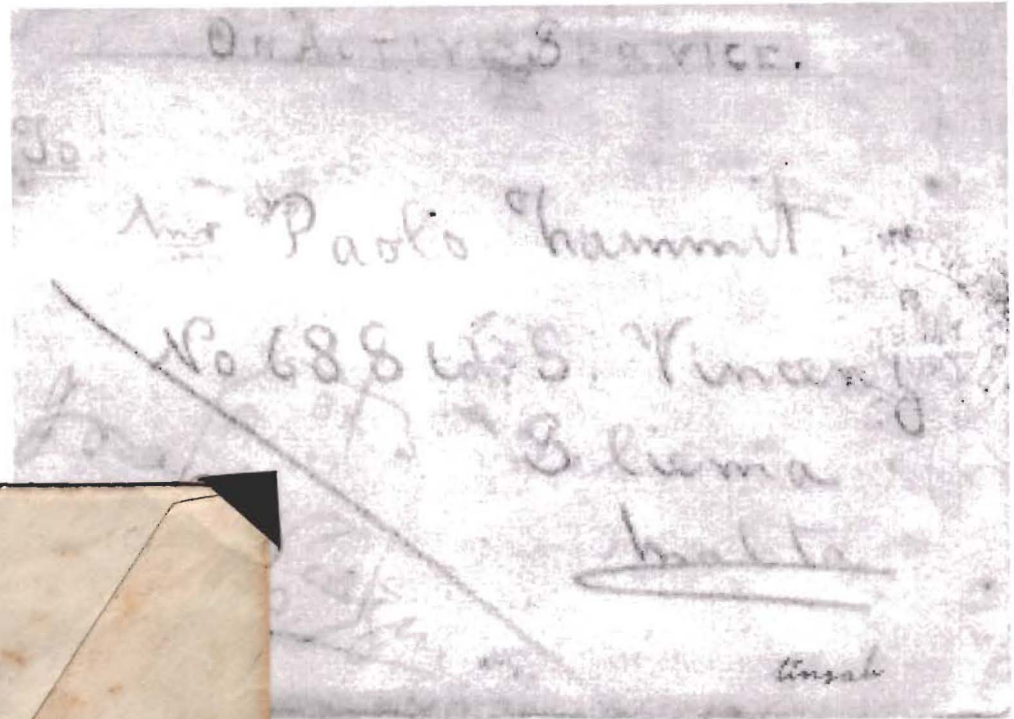
tuon a latte sprecat  
 mente alla casa  
 Emma e  
 Colomba

6  
 MALTA  
 12

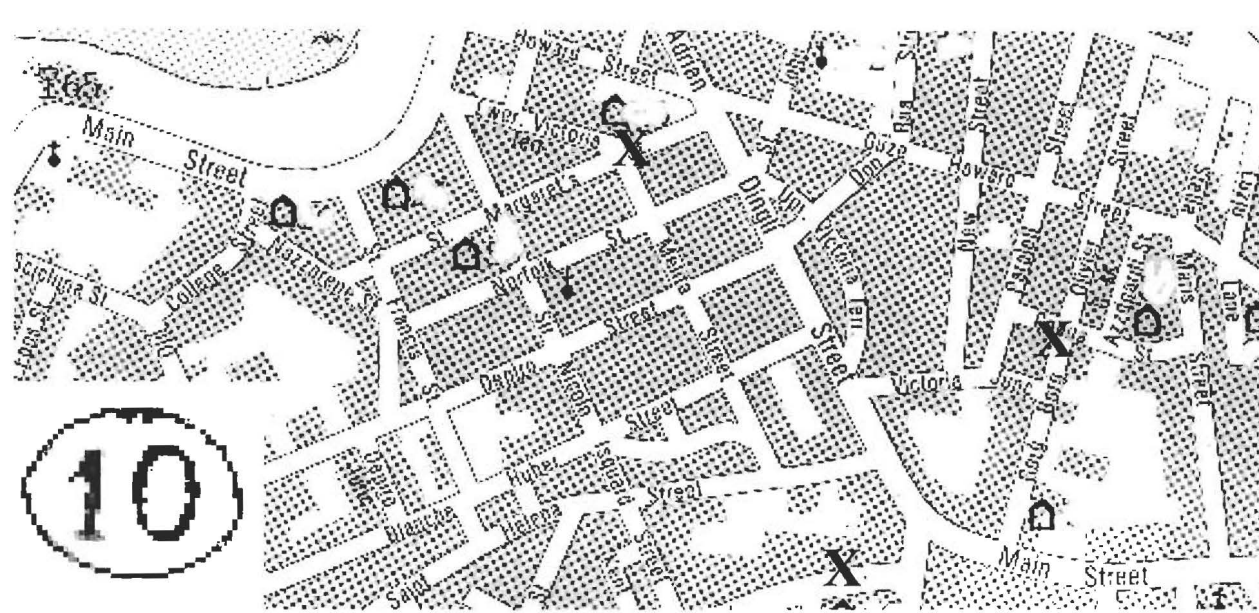




Letter to Sliema from Field Post Office in 1918 bearing WWI censorship strike



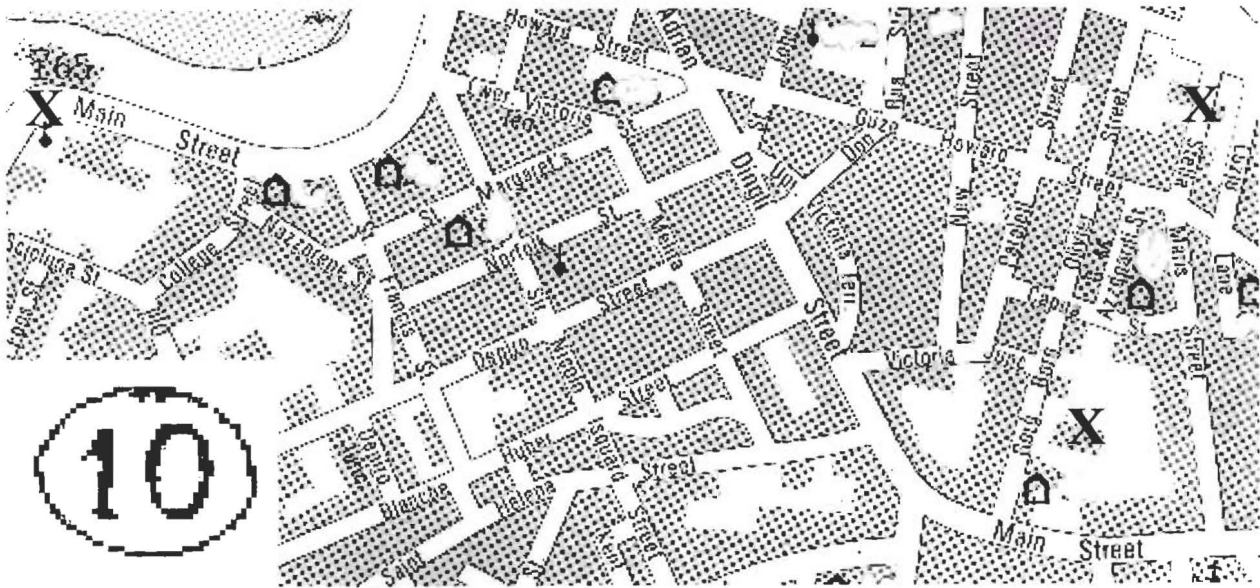
PHS 10A is fairly common when used in Sliema, and covered an extensive route for a long period : 1892-1941



10







10

A. Angus



POSTCARD - GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND



POST CARD



Mrs. Cather  
44 Belgrave St  
34 Strand Meads  
St. Julian's.  
Malta



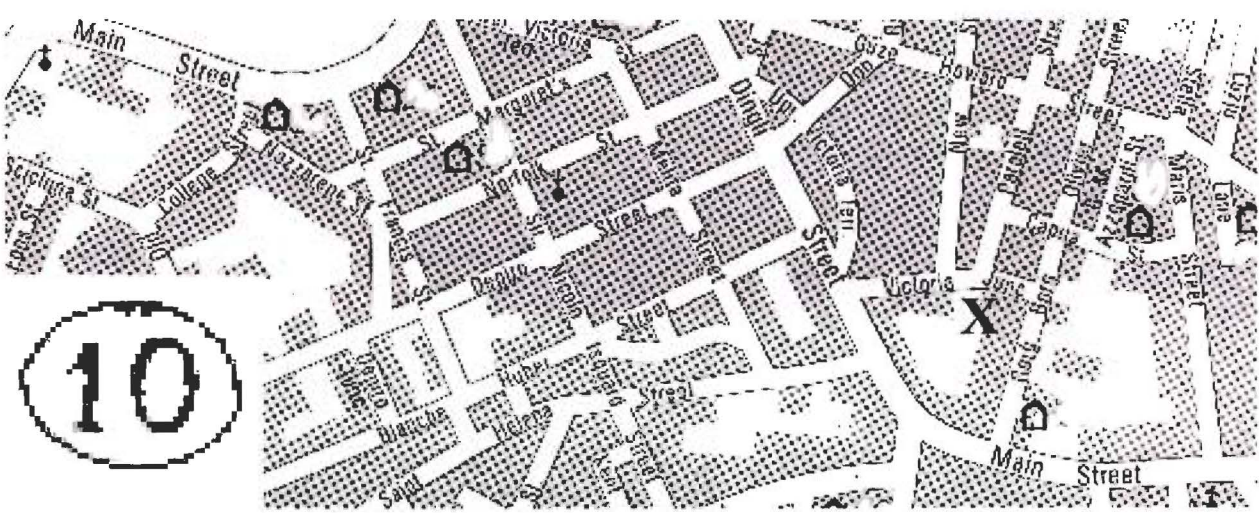
Rathmines Dublin.

Miss & Boy notes  
5 St. Andrew's Street  
Sluema  
Malta

Stampati  
CARTOLINA POSTALE ITALIANA  
(CARTE POSTALES ITALIENNES)



Miss Evelyn Diacono  
Victoria Terrace #10  
Eden House  
Sluema  
Malta



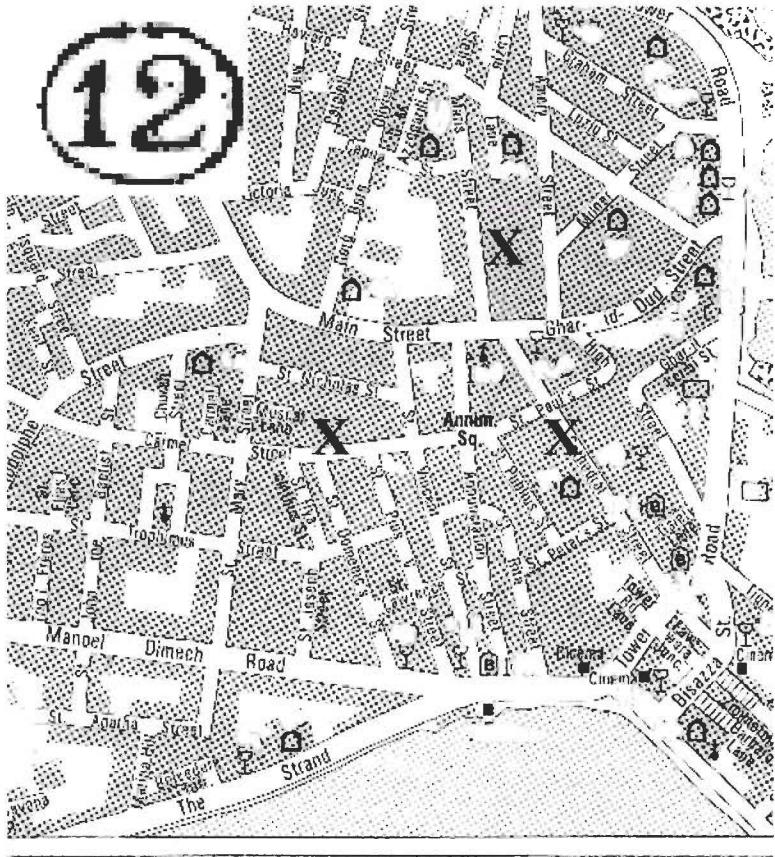
Apparent transition between postmen 10 and 5 for this address with the two PHS' succeeding each other within two months – further examples to the same address confirm the retention of PHS 5 in succeeding years.

25 July 1908

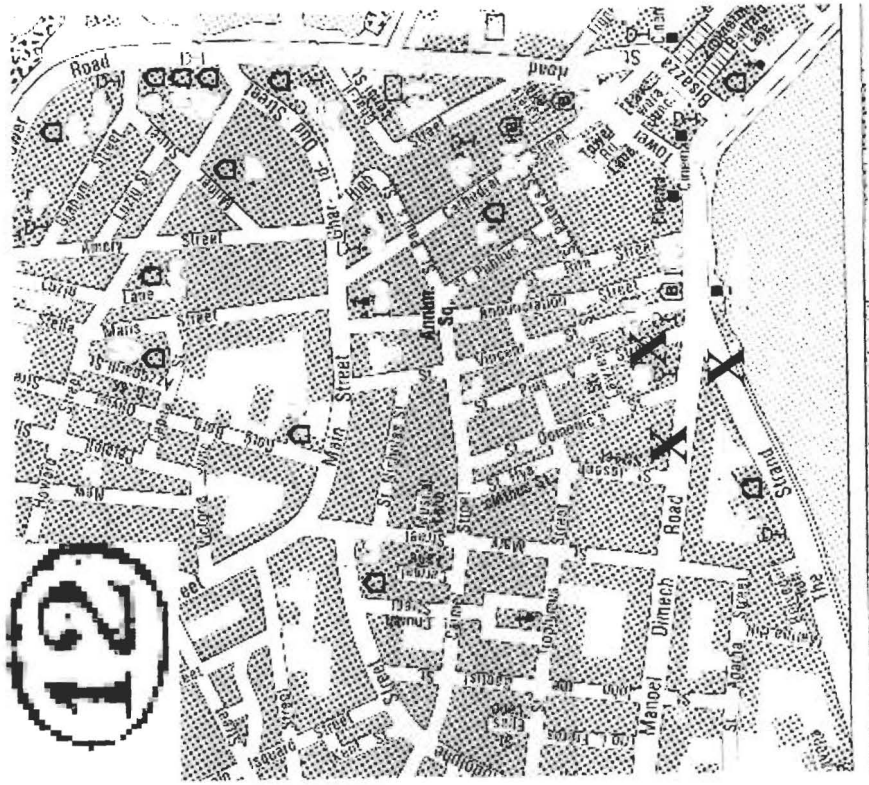
24 September 1908



PHS12A was used in Valletta between 1896 and 1905, and is then found in Sliema 1907 - 1938



I received the order  
 yesterday morning that  
 my copy will be to  
 you, will hope you  
 will hope you will  
 not time you will  
 in winter to please to  
 reach of slantic know  
 must to get  
 HILDESHEIMER &  
 SURREY VIEWS  
 fresh news  
 will hope you  
 will hope you  
 will hope you



BRIEFKAART  
(CARTE POSTALE)  
Algemeene Postvereniging (Union postale universelle)  
Zijde voor het adres bestemd. (Côté réservé à l'adresse)

AMSTERDAM  
22 9  
2-3  
1906

AAN *12*  
*Freneo Baruana Esq.*  
*Fovvita House*  
*Sda S. Pio T.*  
*Sliema*  
*Malta*

MALTA  
SLEMAN  
27 3 AM  
26 DE 18

*27/12/1908*

*Cairo, 27/12/08*  
**WALKER & WEINBAUGH** + 7  
Compiacetevi di mandarci  
mi dal più presto pos-  
sibile, il giornale di  
Malta che parla int  
l'incendio del Vapore  
Sardania avvenuto il  
15 corrente mentre era  
ancora l'ingiglio di  
S. da Malta. Salutate  
dov'è chiduntant' bene  
digiore in Prim' Offiz.  
N. S. Non ho ricevuto lettere  
questo settimana

*12*  
*Paolo Baruana Esq.*  
*Sliema*  
*Malta*

MALTA  
SLEMAN  
26 DE 18  
11 AM  
26 DE 18

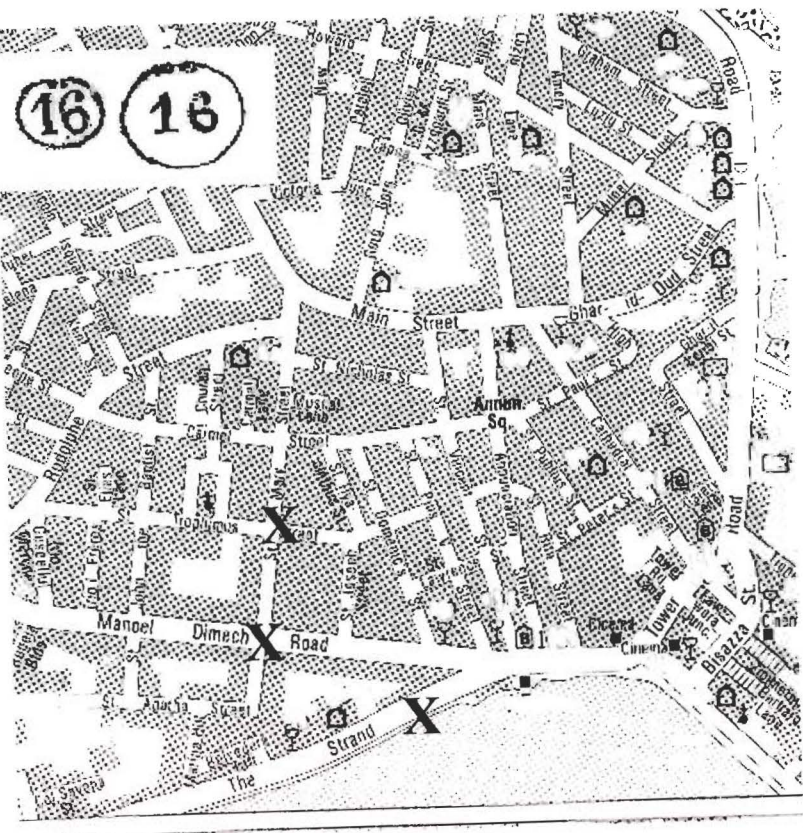
NOTIZIA  
DE  
MALTA

MALTA  
26 DE 18  
3 AM  
26 DE 18

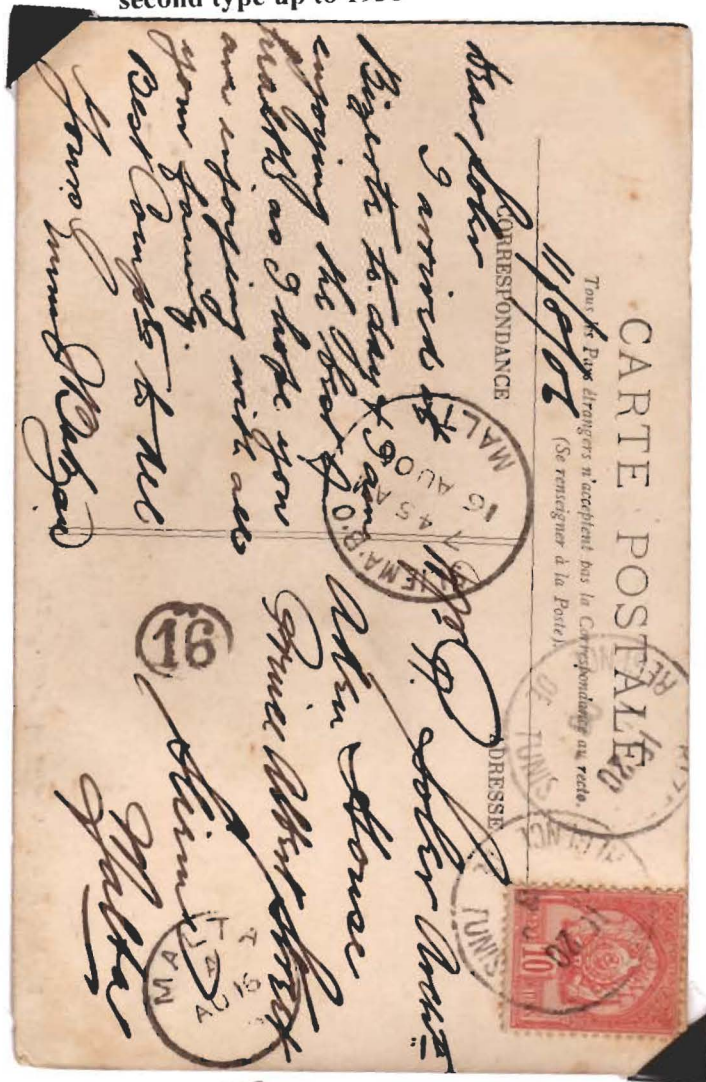
*12*  
*Paolo Baruana*  
*Sliema*  
*Malta*

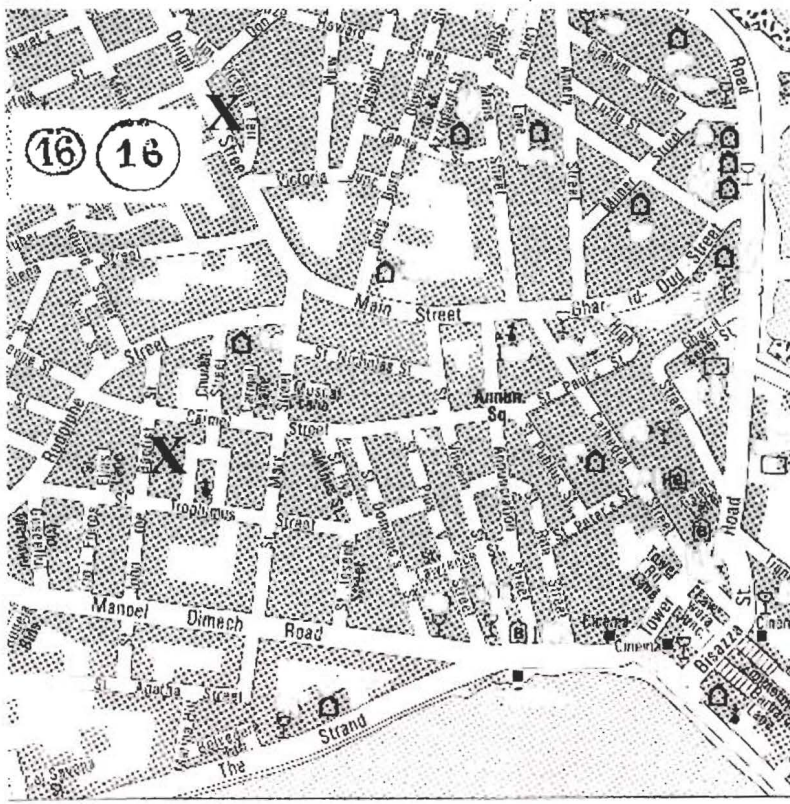
MALTA  
SLEMAN  
26 DE 18  
11 AM  
26 DE 18

*25-12-18*



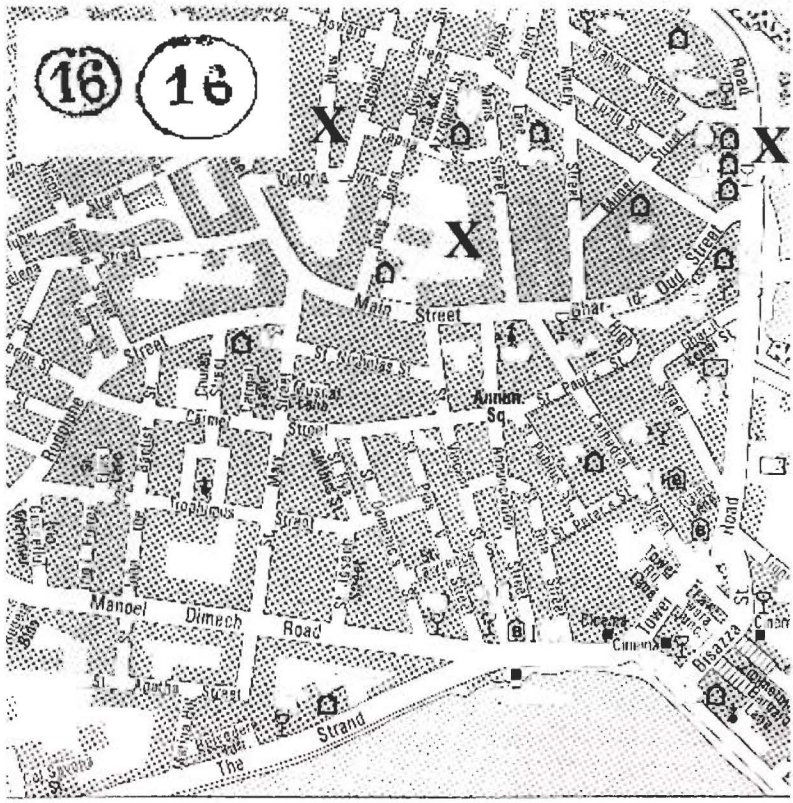
Handstamp 16 was used in Valletta 1897 - 1913, and then in Sliema 1903 - 1913 upon which it is found as the second type up to 1938





things today. we are  
 at a height 6770 feet.  
 It is as mild as an  
 October day at home  
 I have walked so much  
 and feel even the worse  
 for it. My love to Auntie  
 Lily and to all my darling  
 Hilda.





9.32

no partire per Segor  
de Siracusa

Guia Scipio Diamantino

col Postale Italiano,  
oppure col Maltese.

Prego avvisare a  
Chelmer, che viene col 51 Winston Terrace  
Aunto, come a necessità  
Saluti da Genova.

Slenna  
Malta

P. A. G. Cocheri Fotografia  
Ediz. F. Call - Genova - Rip. Vietata

Edwards & Young  
229 Tower Road  
Slenna  
MALTA

BRAUN & Cie, Imp., EDITEURS-CONCESSIONNAIRES  
PARIS FRANCE

PARIS 1931  
EXPOSITION INTERNATIONALE  
STALE

MILANO  
Parco e Castello Storzeseo.  
Parc et Château de Storza.  
Parch of Storza's Castle.  
Park von Schloss der Storza.

MILANO CORRISPONDENTE  
11-12  
59/114  
120 V

SLIEMA, MALTA  
10-AM  
15 AU 31  
MALTA

91  
A.31

LA LOTTERIA VI FARA  
RANO  
ARI

2/8/36

Cordiali Saluti  
da Milano  
Lucy

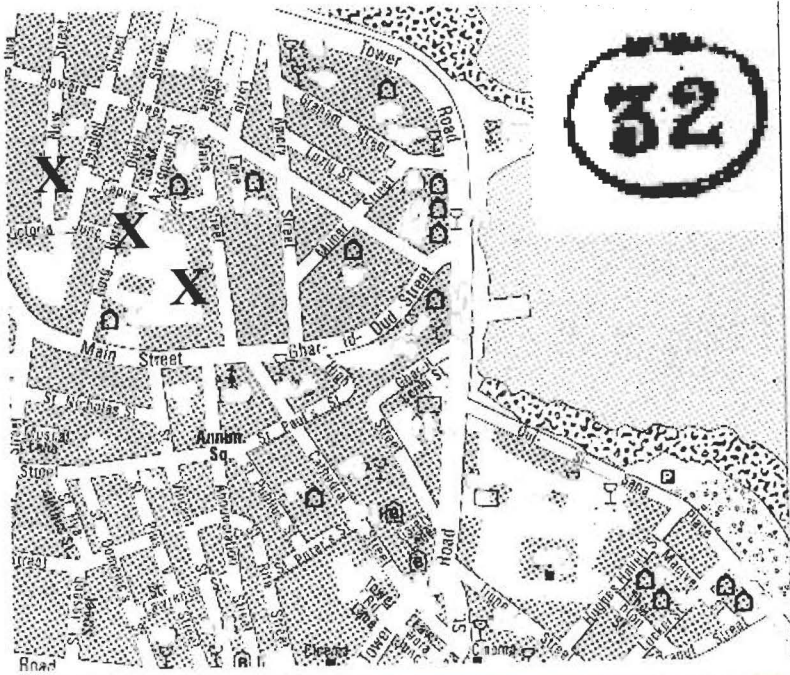
MILANO CORRISPONDENTE  
11-12  
59/114  
120 V

SLIEMA, MALTA  
2.50 PM  
6

Sig. Enrico Agius  
Sda. Nuova  
Lily House  
Slenna/Malta

16

PHS32D is known only in Sliema 1924 - 1942

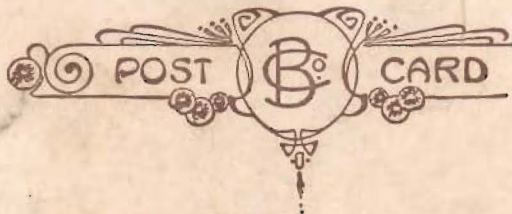


32

Redcar 1934

Dolly

BAMFORTH & CO., LTD., PUBLISHERS HOLMFIRTH AND NEW YORK.  
"SEASIDE COMIC" SERIES. No. 3958 PRINTED IN ENGLAND.



Mr. Eduardo J. Bonnici  
48 Victoria Avenue  
Sliema, Malta.



Cari saluti -

POST-

Cara Emma,

Mei farai piacere  
se vorrai scrivere  
a vedere il tempo.  
Di Camillo, pero ti  
consiglierei di venire  
merco, pero se vorrai in  
un altro giorno non potrai  
stare neanche un minuto con te riguardo  
le lezioni. La bato e domenica  
Sliema

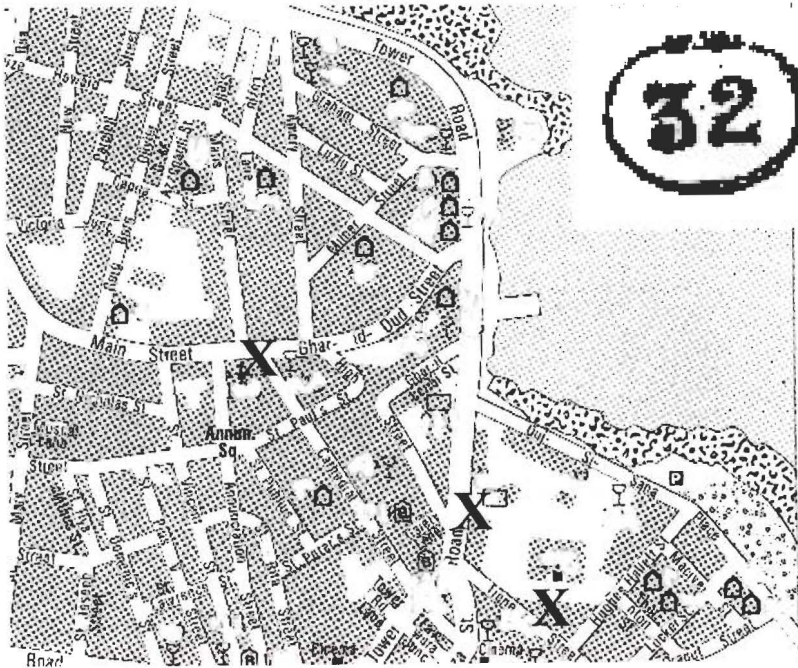
32

25 MAR

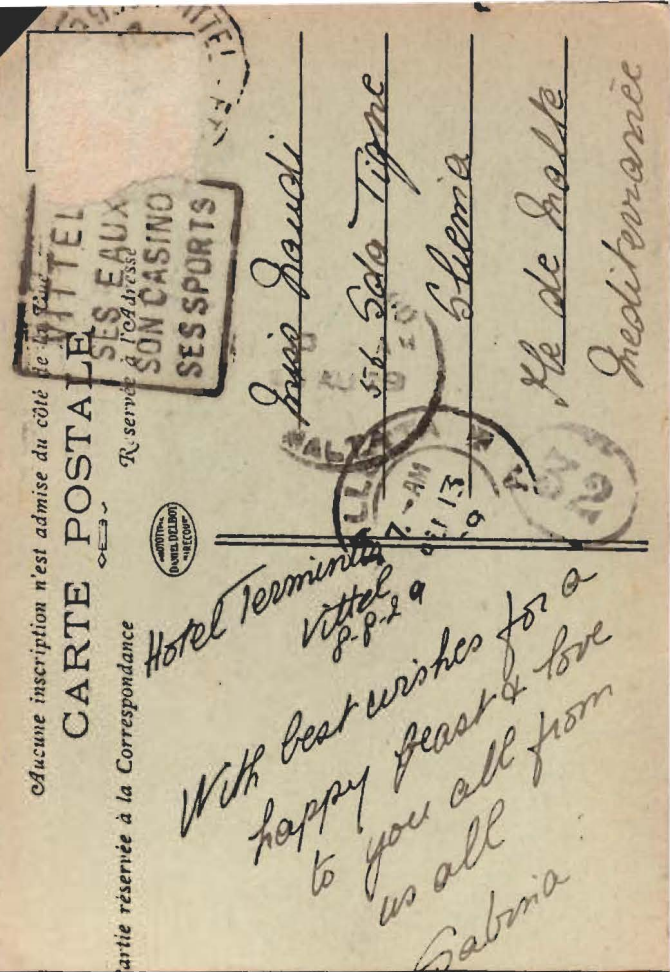
25 MAR

MAZZARENO CURIA  
58, ST. MARY STREET,  
SLIEMA





32

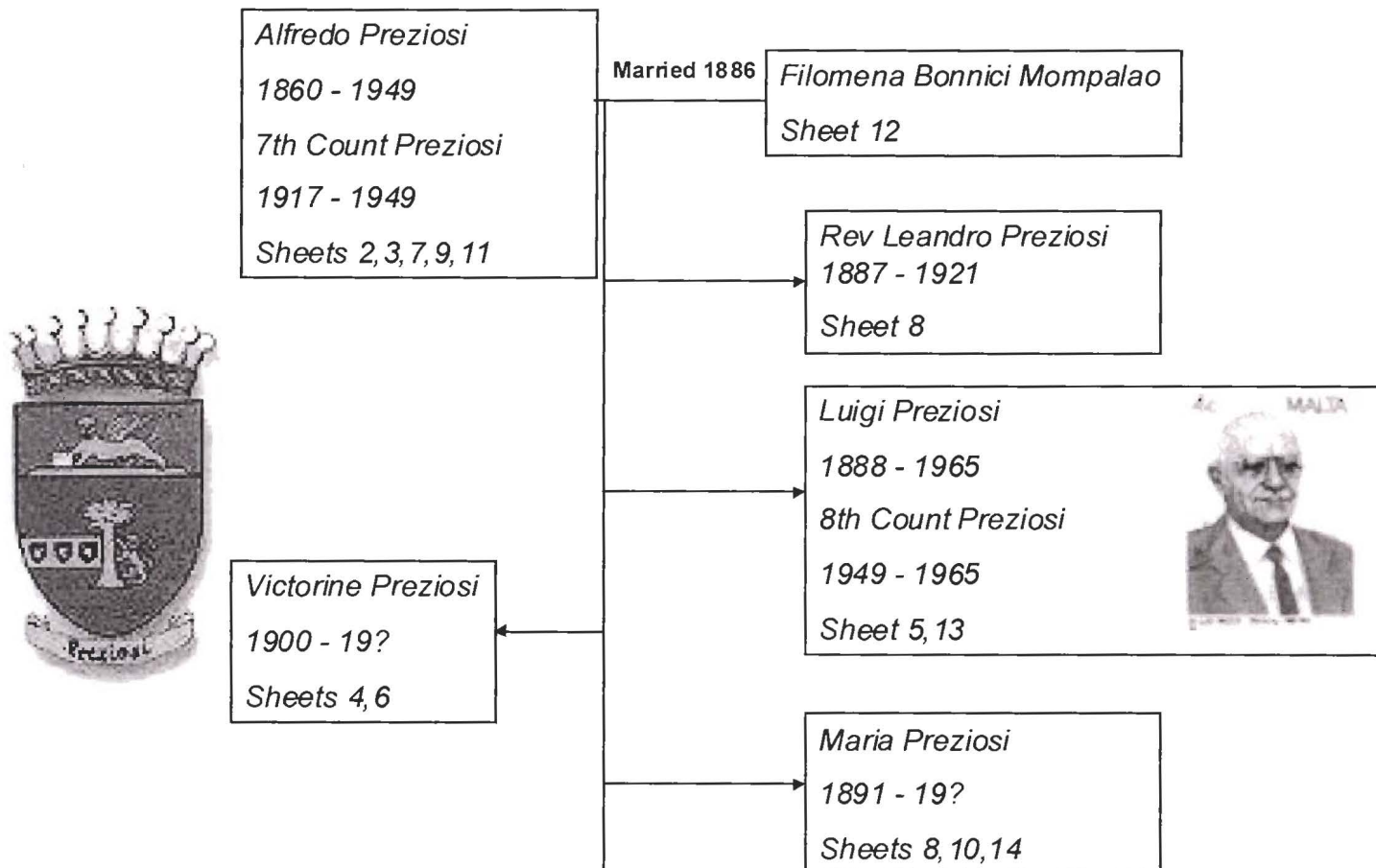


RESTAURANT HAMMA  
DE LA MOSQUEE DE PARIS  
BOUK - CAFE MAURE  
SPECIALITE DE METS ARABES  
Kelta - Tadjine - Couscous  
"CHEZ BRAHIM"  
Rue Geoffroy-St. Hilaire (Angle Rue Daubanton)  
Telephone : Gobelins 26-24

11. Oct. 1930  
Arriving by the  
Knight of Malta on  
Tuesday 14. at 11. p.m.  
Godwin  
Miss Galizia  
Sda. Ilhorri  
Sliema  
Malta

## One family's correspondence

This frame shows items of correspondence to different members of the Maltese aristocratic family of Preziosi. Count Luigi Preziosi was a noted physician, philanthropist and politician, and is commemorated on the Maltese stamp shown. The material affords an opportunity to examine the series of handstamps in use in the areas including the various residences of this family.



## Floriana residence – No 19 Piazza Britannica

Floriana, a suburb of Valletta which grew into an independent township, was served by several postmen, as shown by the series of handstamps evident on correspondence to the main Preziosi residence over 1906 – 1938. Piazza Britannica today is renamed to Piazza Luigi Preziosi to honour the family's most eminent son.

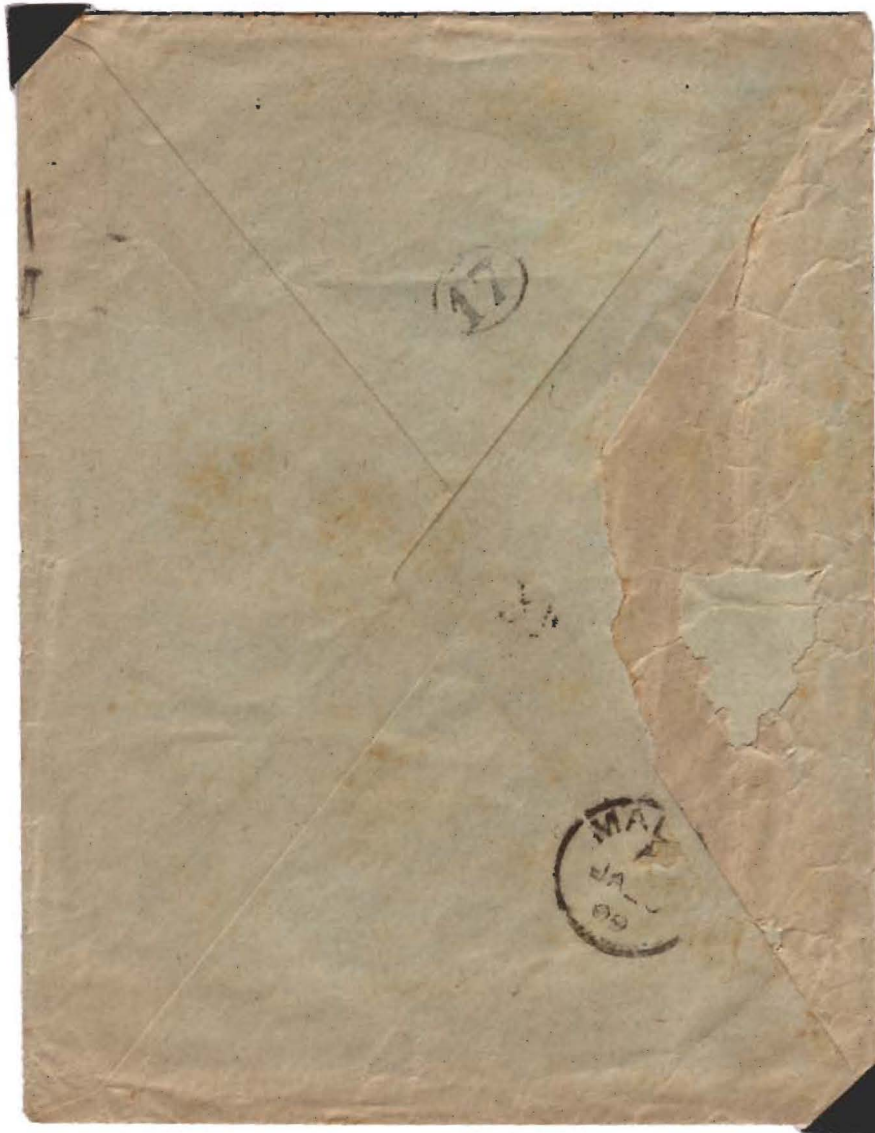


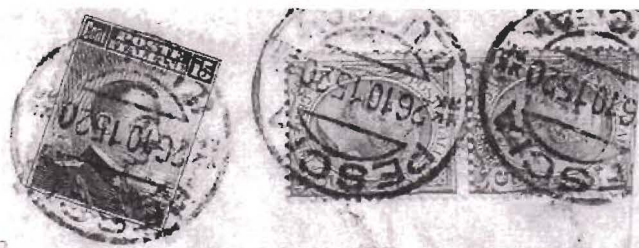
1906 letter from Italy to Preziosi Floriana residence bearing PHS28B. This handstamp's useage is recorded from 1907 to 1924 in Valletta, but its useage in Floriana is recorded only during 1905 – 1907.





Letter to Floriana residence in 1909 bearing handstamp PHS7A. Earliest recorded use in Floriana is 1913.





Gent. Signorina  
 Vittorina Pissari  
 Piazza Britannica 19  
 (Malta, Valletta) Floriana

Letter to the 7<sup>th</sup> Count's daughter at the Floriana residence in 1915, bearing WWI censorship strike and PHS45C. Proud assigns this handstamp to Notabile for one month in 1913, but it has been repeatedly found on correspondence to Valletta. However, no useage to Floriana is otherwise recorded. The postcard shown was delivered 4 moths before this letter and bears no handstamp. Overall, it is estimated that, despite the official requirement, only 30-40% of correspondence prior to 1914 actually received these strikes, and thereafter it was even less. Collectors have tended to keep items with handstamps, leading to their over-representation in collections.

OPENED UNDER  
 MARTIAL LAW



orina 1915  
 la sua lettera, e  
 to della fotografia  
 e un altro  
 e l'acquisto  
 biglietti. Nobile Signorina  
 appena Vittorina Pissari  
 prego porgerla  
 qui alla Piazza Britannica  
 Sabini 19 Floriana  
 Maltese S.  
 mio Diletto

ERROVIA  
 2162215

Maltese

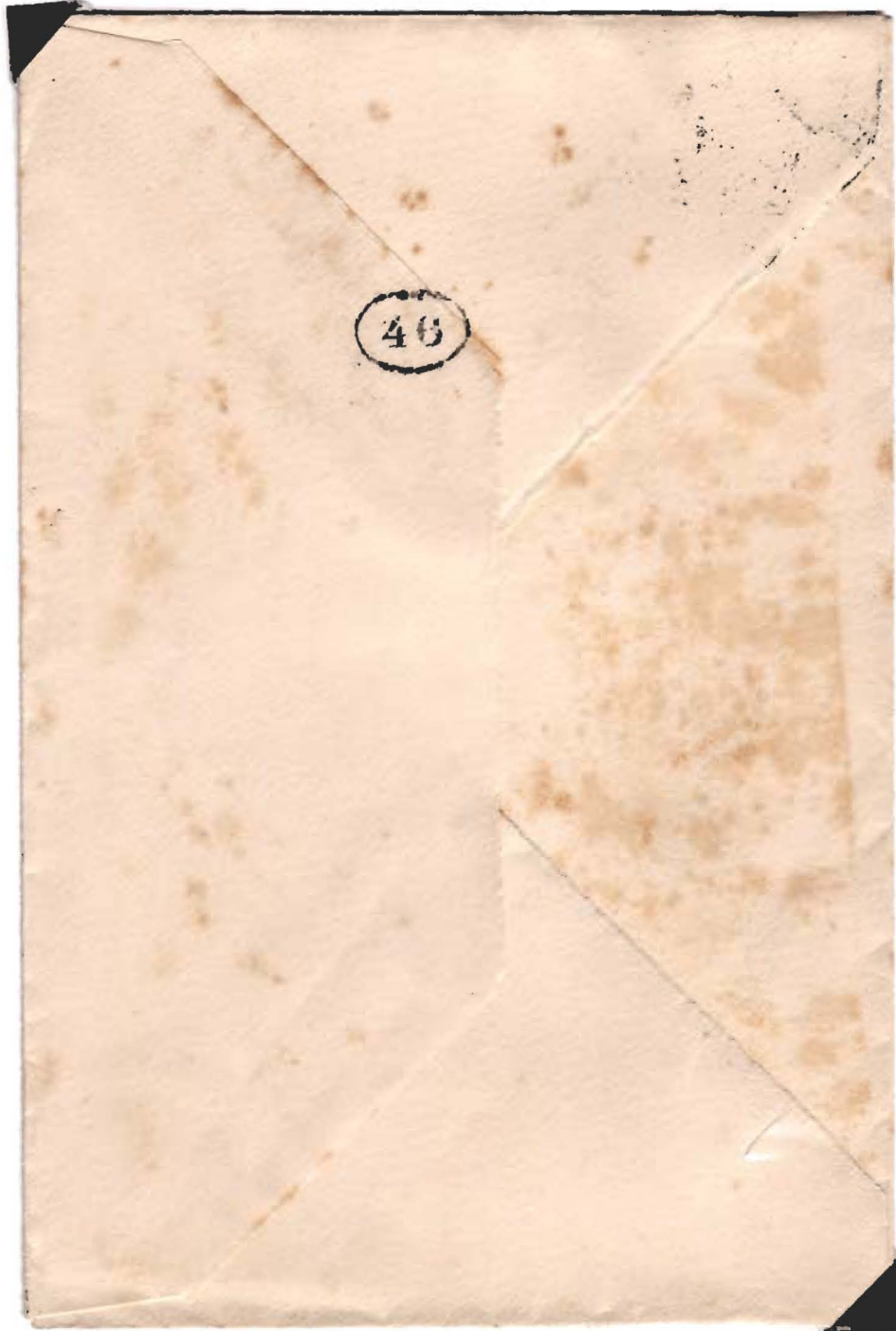


*Post. Signon Luis. Puyin*

*Post. Britanica*

*Loriana*

Locally posted letter to eventual 8<sup>th</sup> Count at  
Floriana residence from ca 1926 bearing  
PHS46C



Postcard to daughter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Count at the Floriana residence in 1928 bearing PHS 60D



gent<sup>le</sup> ma  
 Sign<sup>ora</sup> Victorine Preziosi  
 19 Plazza Britannica  
 Floriana  
 Malta

Miei cariissimi fratelli  
 Giovanni Paolo & belle  
 zelli: di ingrato, affarim  
 acciso fare un fucile fra  
 e l'imbria e la B. Orsani, e del  
 dimpartiva frange, st'anno  
 il tutto caro socio. S'anni  
 parturino per Pesca, e  
 poi l'aver e l'aver. E' av  
 l'anno un mondo. R  
 a G, e delati a fup. de  
 55319



Letter to Floriana residence in  
1929 bearing PHS60D

*The Most Noble*

*Count Preziosi*

*19, Piazza Britannica,*

*FLORIANA.*

---





24/1/30  
Corso Garofalo, 20  
Modica Alta

Cavissima Sella,

Per le feste di Natale  
inviare a tutti una cartolina  
di auguri e non ho finora  
ricevuto che un Christmas Card  
di Vittoria. Che cosa e' stato?  
Dommi subito notizie di casa.  
Loro anche chiesto a te e a Vit-  
toria qualche elemosina, e  
possibile. Non pare con cio' essere  
imfortunato. Ora pero' ti prego  
di mandarmi con la massima  
sollecitudine 6 giochi del  
dominio, come quelli che mi avevi  
mandati a te, di una composi-  
zione speciale, color nero, non di  
rosso, perche' i ragazzi li rompono  
facilmente. Vieni pure a darne  
non fine, ma resistenti. Perche'  
mi se sono curioso. Dimmi  
tutti, dommi notizie di tutti, per  
molto per me nelle tue Comuniste.  
Ringrazia Vittoria per gli auguri.  
Tanti saluti - Affettuoso padre Leonardo

Letter card to Floriana residence in 1930, between two of the children of the 7<sup>th</sup> Count. The handstamp 12 PHS21A, a strike used between 1912 and 1944 in a number of locations, including Floriana between 1924 and 1933



The Most Noble



Another letter to the 7t count  
at his Floriana residence in  
1930 and bearing PHS21A

Count Preziosi

19, Piazza Britannica,

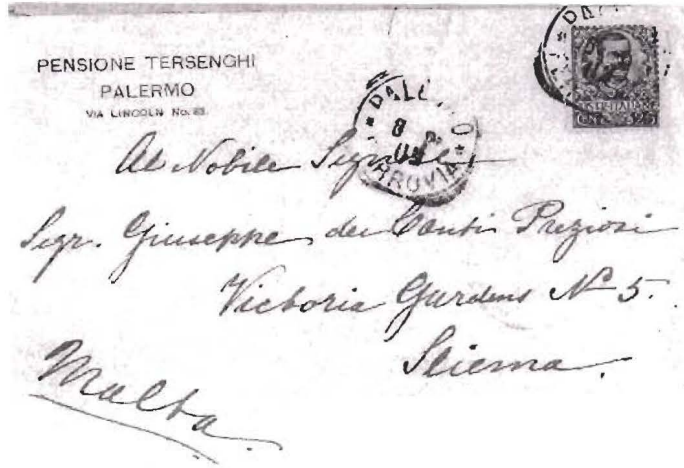
Floriana.





This postcard to the Floriana residence in 1938 appears to have been re-directed to a Sliema address, possibly explaining the use of PHS12A which is recorded by Proud as in use up to 20 August 1938 in that area (3 months before this usage), but not in Valletta.

## Sliema residence – no 5 Victoria Gardens



Letters to the Count and Countess from Italian addresses in 1906 bearing handstamp PHS5A, used in Sliema between 1892 and 1918.

This letter in 1906 to the Noble Mr and Mrs "Giuseppe" Preziosi is somewhat mysterious inasmuch as the Count's name was "Alfredo"



*Sigra Filomena De Conti Puzosi*  
*Torin garden*  
*Slenna*



St Julians Address – 7B Tower Road (Strada Torri)



Letter to the eventual and eminent 8<sup>th</sup> Count in 1909, bearing handstamp PHS15A, used in Sliema, of which St Julians was a suburb, between 1893 and 1912

*All' Egregio Signore*

*Sig. Luigi Preziosi*

*7<sup>B</sup> Strada Torri*

*Malta - S. Giuliano*

---



*Alla gentildonzella  
Sig.<sup>na</sup> Maria de' Conte Preziosi  
ecc. ecc. ecc.*

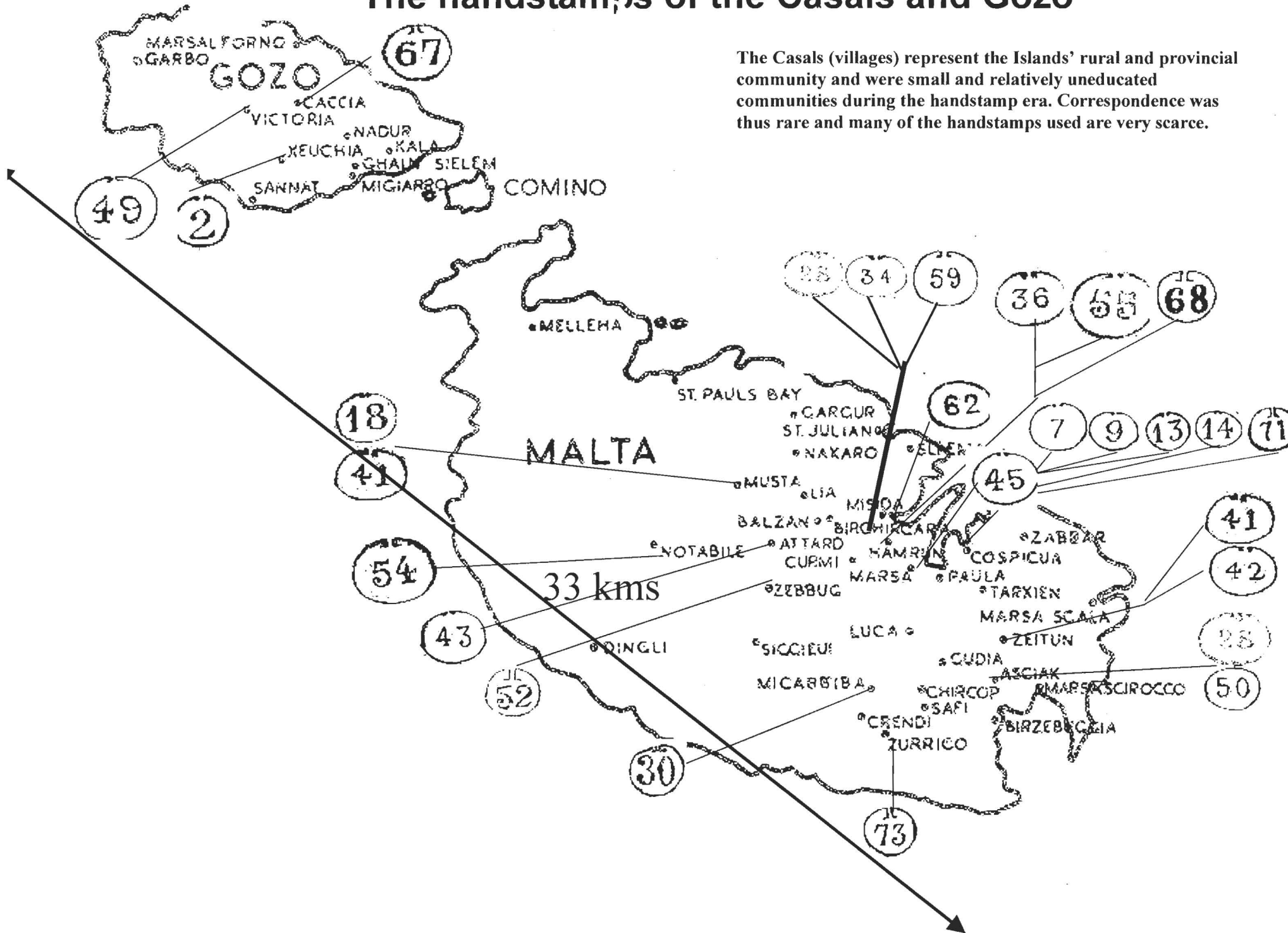
*Str. St. Torri 76.      San Giuliano*

Letter to the daughter of the 7<sup>th</sup> Count at the St Julians address in 1910, franked with PHS 12A. This strike is known in Sliema between 1907 and 1938



# The handstamps of the Casals and Gozo

The Casals (villages) represent the Islands' rural and provincial community and were small and relatively uneducated communities during the handstamp era. Correspondence was thus rare and many of the handstamps used are very scarce.





# Birkirkara (Birchircara)

R Forbes-Bentley was a philatelist living in the large rural-semi industrial town of Birkirkara in the 1920's/2930's. His prolific correspondence from overseas frequently turns up in offerings of Maltese material. These three covers bear the handstamps used in the town over the period 1925 – 1937.



PHS28C on registered letter in 1927, before the earliest date recorded  
 EKD: 06.03.1928  
 LKD: 25.09.1939



PHS34C on  
registered letter in  
1927

EKD: 05.09.1923  
LKD: 10.05.1934



PHS59D on registered  
letter in 1932

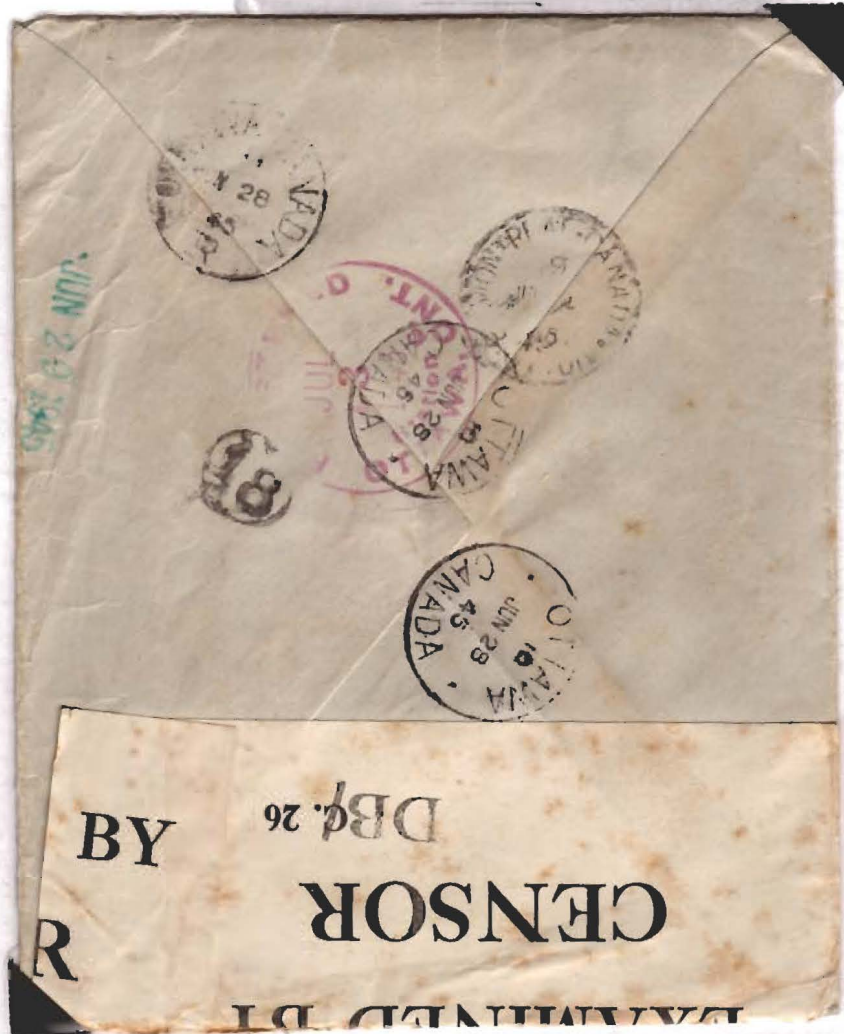
EKD: 17.09.1926  
LKD: 23.02.1928  
(also recorded in  
Cospicua in 1915)



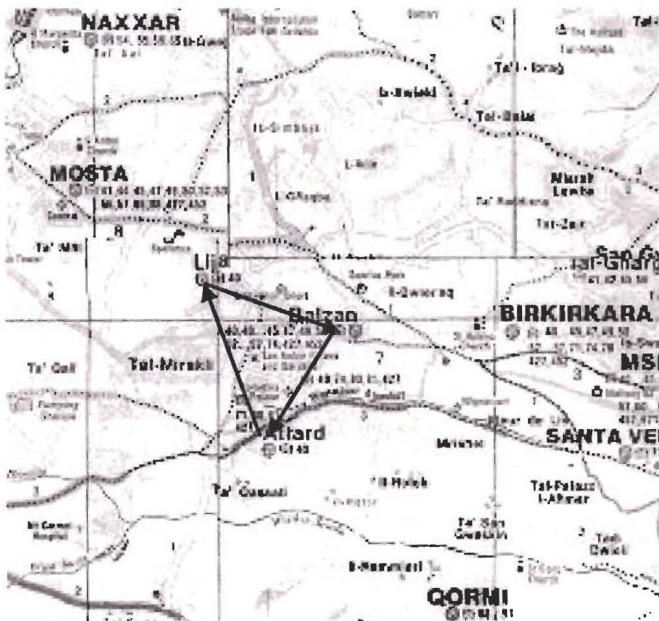
# Mosta (Musta)



The literature does not designate a handstamp for use in Mosta. This is curious considering this is a major rural town. The two covers shown are from the war-time correspondence of philatelist Joseph Schembri. Both covers were censored in Malta and bear censorship marks and tape. It is difficult to understand why the cover posted in 1938 is censored.



PHS18A was used in Sliema and Valletta up to the 1930's and is also known on the Attard-Lia-Balzan round 1936-39 (map). PHS41C was used in Cospicua and Zejtun until 1937 and in Hamrun in 1941. Their use in Mosta is unknown on other correspondence. Such "promiscuity" in handstamp use is generally due to the designated postman being absent for short periods and replaced by a postman from another locality. In this instance, the proximity of Attard suggests the temporary transfer of that postman to cover Mosta. The Zejtun stamp is harder to explain.



# Hamrun

During the handstamp era, Hamrun was served by the Valletta GPO, despite its status as a major town. Its position on Malta's sole railway line enabled mail processing and delivery to be effected in this way.

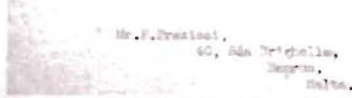
PHS36C on a postcard to Hamrun in 1920. This version of PHS 36 (left) is considerably scarcer than its successor



PHS36D (right)

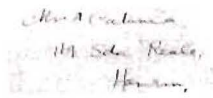
PHS68F on a cover to Hamrun in 1934.

EKD: 29.02.1932  
LKD: 05.06.1946

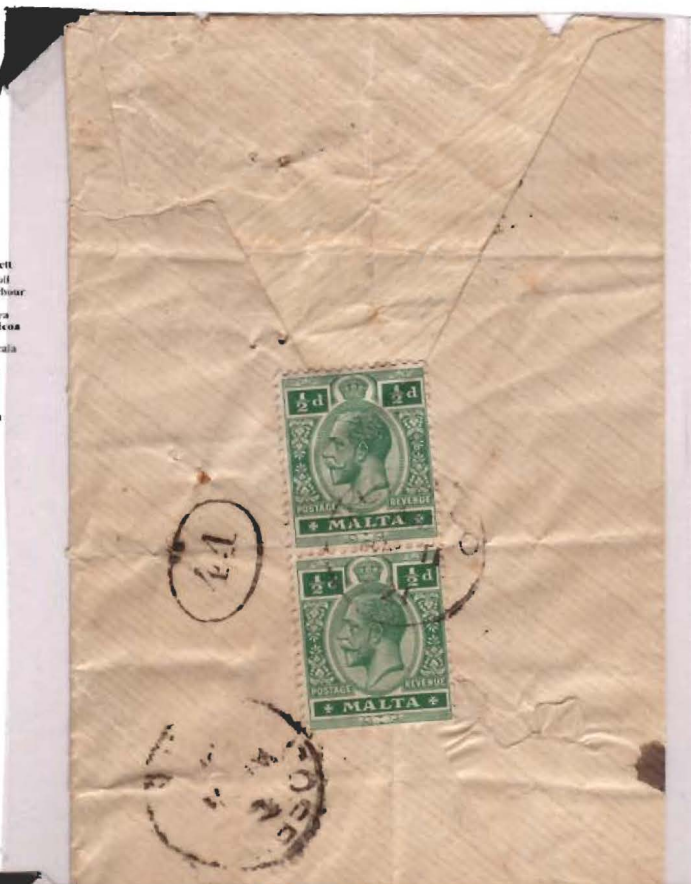
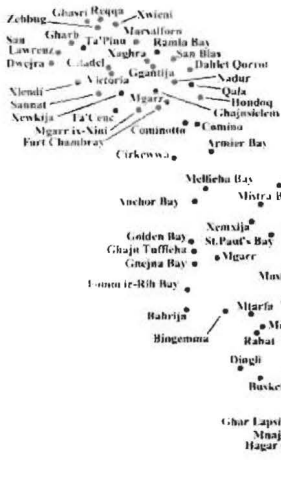


PHS55D on a cover to Hamrun in 1937.

EKD: 11.07.1927  
LKD:



# Zejtun (Zeitun)



PHS41C on a letter to Zejtun in 1920. The faint franking with the village postmark for Zurrico (Zurrieq) makes this a very scarce item

EKD: 17.09.1913  
LKD: 23.01.1937

PHS41C on a postcard from Turkey where the sender was on active service (hence no franking) to Zejtun in 1920. The Valletta (Maltese cross) handstamp used was withdrawn in 1922, but other indications of the date are unavailable. The message is in Maltese, which makes this item very scarce.

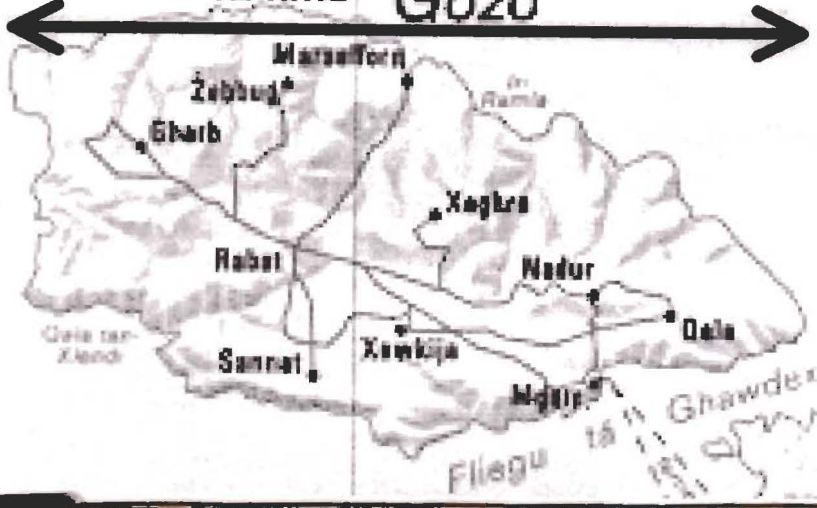
PHS42C on a postcard from Italy to Zejtun in 1930.

EKD: 16.08.1924  
LKD: 02.07.1944



12 kms GOZO

# GOZO



During the handstamp era Gozo was a rural community of less than 15,000 with a low literacy rate. Correspondence was scarce and items to the small villages are extremely scarce. Some of the rarest handstamps are those used in Gozo.

PHS49D used in Victoria (the capital, called Rabat in Maltese) Gozo in 1938. Proud does not give a designation for this handstamp. The MSC describes use in Valetta and Notabile, but not in any Gozitan location.

As recently as 1982, PHS 67 F had not been described. Since then some 8 examples have surfaced. Proud designates it as used on the round from Miggiarro (Mgarr) to Nadur to Caccia (Xaghra) between 1939 to 1946. The example shown is the earliest known use of this rare handstamp. Used on correspondence to a priest in 1935.



Valletta, the 1st May 1935

Dear Sir/Madam,

We beg to inform you that the Offices of this Bank will be installed as from the 7th instant, at the new premises situated in **147 Strada Sta. Lucia** of which please take note.



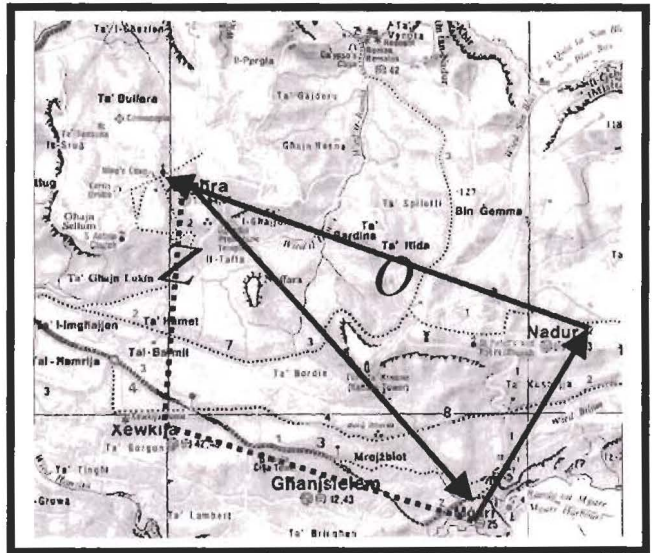
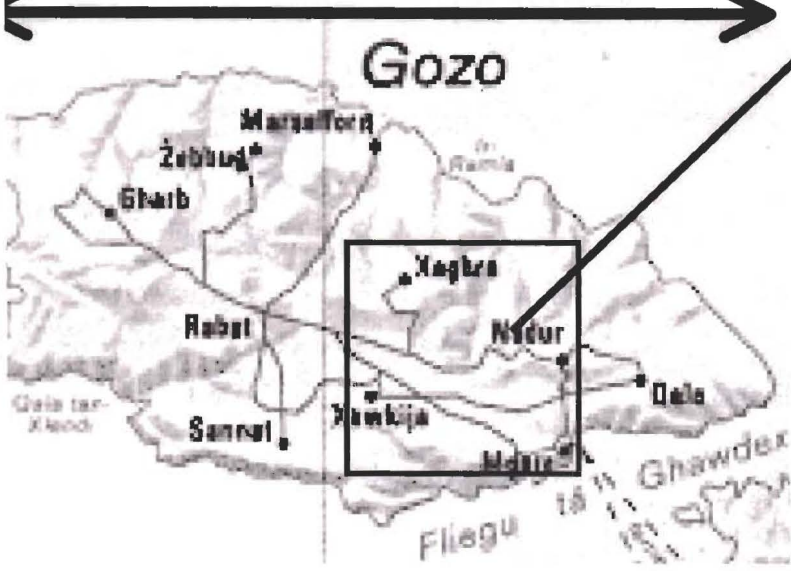
Yours faithfully

CRÉDIT FONCIER D'ALGÉRIE et de TUNISIE



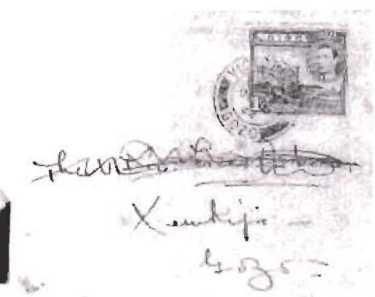
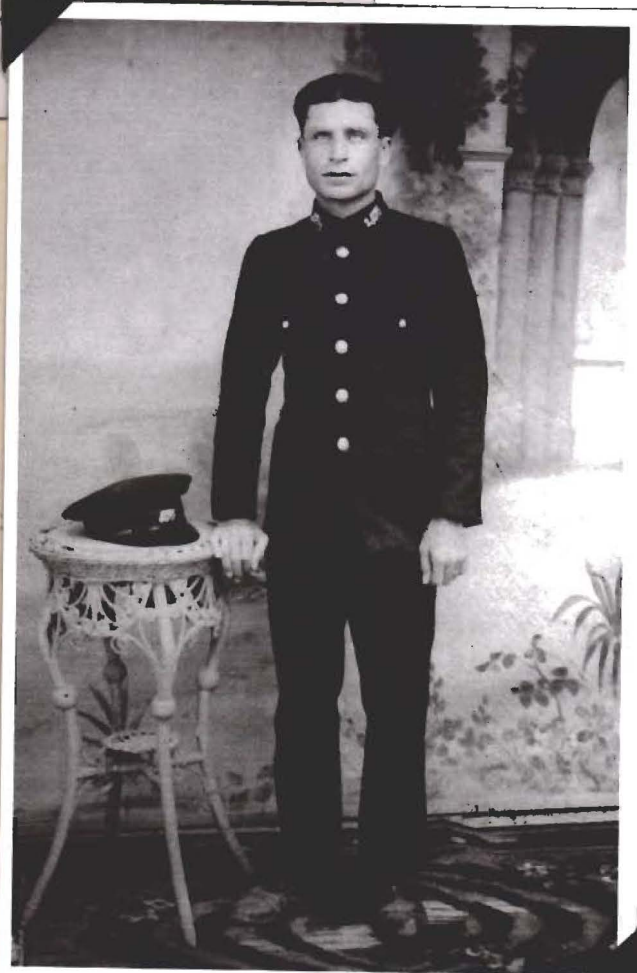
# GOZO

12 kms



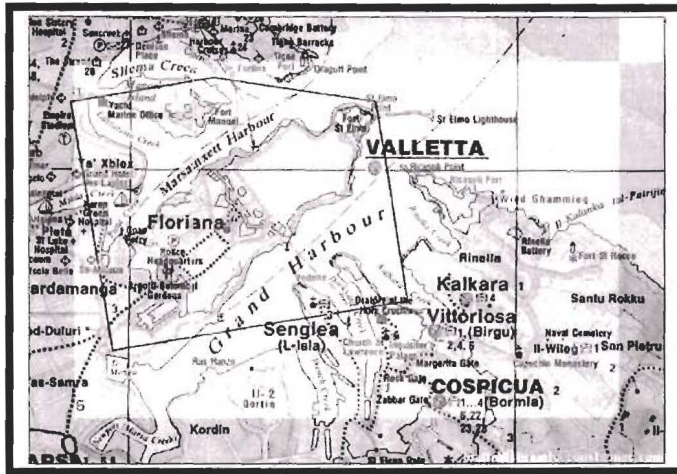
3.5 kms

PHS2A used in Valletta in the 1890s to the 1920s is relatively common. Its use in Gozo by postman P Zerafa (picture) is considerably scarcer. Mr Zerafa delivered mail from about 1923 to 1948 in Ghajnsielem, Mgarr and Xewkija. The example shown is on a cover to the small village of Xewkija in 1944. Proud mentions usage of this handstamp in Gozo up to 1942. Proud describes the handstamp as used on the round from Miggiarro (Mgarr) to Nadur to Caccia (Xaghra) [map]. The proximity of Xewkija to the round suggests that the little mail to this village was also served by this round



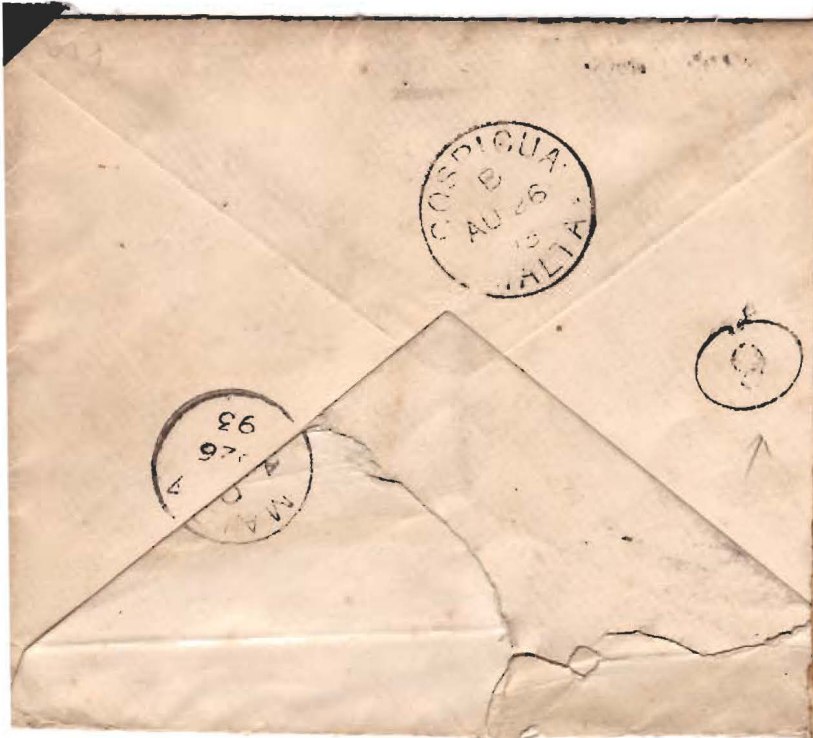


# The Three Cities



3.5 kms

The three ancient cities of Cospicua, Vittoriosa and Senglea (and adjoining suburbs) were served by a branch post office in Cospicua during the handstamp era. These cities serviced Malta's dockyards and had a population of skilled workers with a higher than average education. Correspondence is thus more plentiful than in other areas of the Islands.



PHS9A on a cover from England to Cospicua one week after the earliest known date recorded by Proud and the MSC. This handstamp was subsequently used in Sliema.

*M. R. Signor,  
Sac. Suseppe Muffa  
Saffellano del  
Riformatore  
Vittoriosa (Malt.)*

PHS71F on a letter to Vittoriosa in 1936.



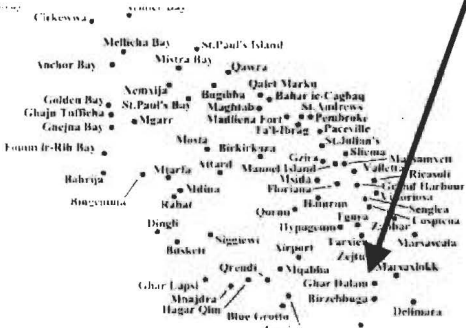
PHS7B is described by both Proud and the MSC as used in Notabile (Rabat) between 1929 and 1939. This usage on a postcard to Senglea (10 kms from Notabile) on 31 August 1935 is therefore unusual. The MSC records usage in neighbouring Vittoriosa on 20 July 1935, suggesting the temporary placement of Postman no 7 in the Three Cities area while the usual postman (presumably no 71) was absent.

2160 156 22 PHS14A used in Cospicua in 1907, two years after its usage period recorded by the MSC. This example of a handstamp on an internal lettercard is very scarce – such lettercards were seldom used with sales of 4677 of this particular card being recorded.

The MSC records PHS13A as in use in Cospicua between 1912 and 1914. This postcard from Colombia to Valletta was posted in 1914.

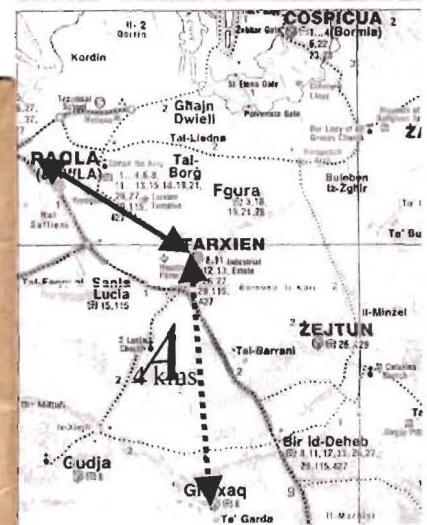


# Axiaq (Ghaxaq)

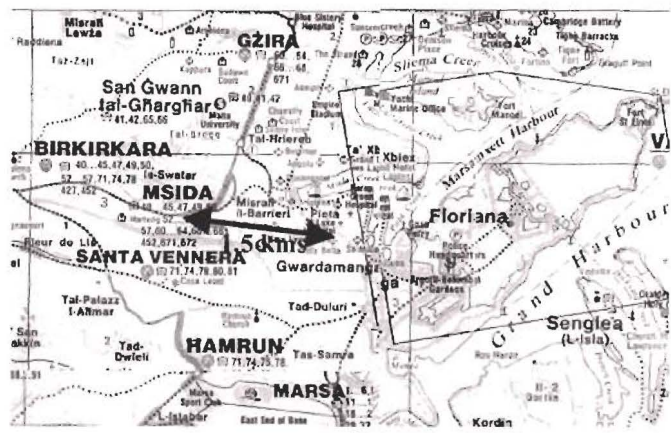
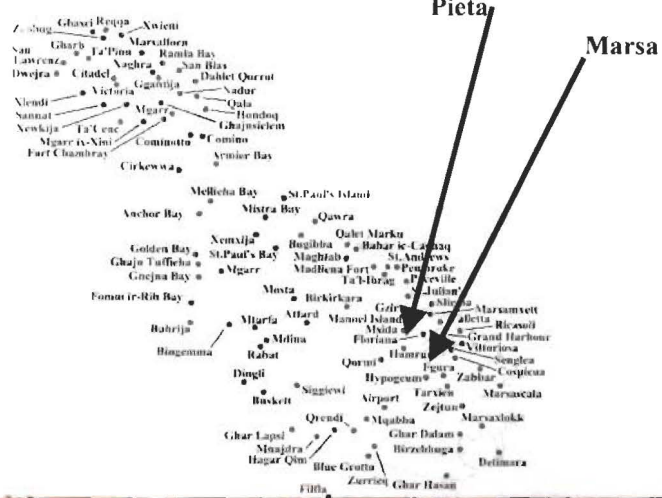


PHS50B is recorded by Proud and the MSC as being in use on the Paola-Tarxien round during 1930 – 1938. This example on a cover to Axiaq on 7 September 1939 shows very early useage of the censorship strike, in this instance unrecorded by the MSC. However, the “13” would have been expected to be in use considerably later during the war. The use of strike 50 is probbably linked to the Paola – Tarxien round (map) , although the (by Maltese standards) substantial distance of 4 kms made this extension of his round an unwelcome one for the relevant postie.

PHS28C is recorded by Proud and the MSC in Cospicua, Sliema, Valletta and Birkirkara. This example of use in Casal Axiaq is unusual. Postman 28 at this stage appears to have had a varied life.



# Pieta and Marsa



**Trieste**

Abt.	No.	Dikt.	Geschr.

In der Antwort wiederholen.  
**JOS. SRNEC & NEFFEN**  
**FILIALE TRIESTE.**

5 & 6 Bridge wharf Marsa

Trieste, 6th December 1937

Dear Sirs,

Wir bestätigen uns Ihnen anzusehen dass wir expedient haben  
 We beg to acknowledge receipt of your favour  
 and in that and have the pleasure of informing

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IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO:-  
 PALAZZO ARMERIA,  
 ZURRICO,  
 MALTA

*John Brown Esq  
 Proprietor  
 St Joseph's Garage  
 Pieta*

Letter to Pieta bearing PHS60E, used on the Pieta-Msida round (map) according to Proud and the MSC.

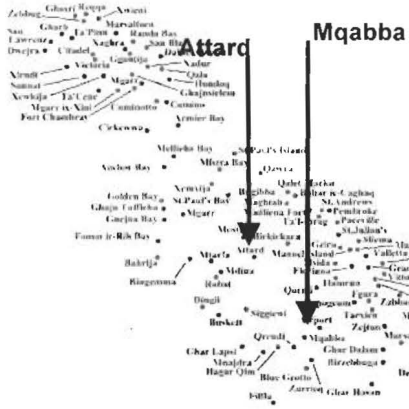
EKD: 19.08.1937  
 LKD : 13.08.1948

Letter card to Marsa with PHS45D one month after its earliest recorded use.

Also known used in nearby Hamrun.

EKD: 08.11.1927  
 LKD : 30.12.1938

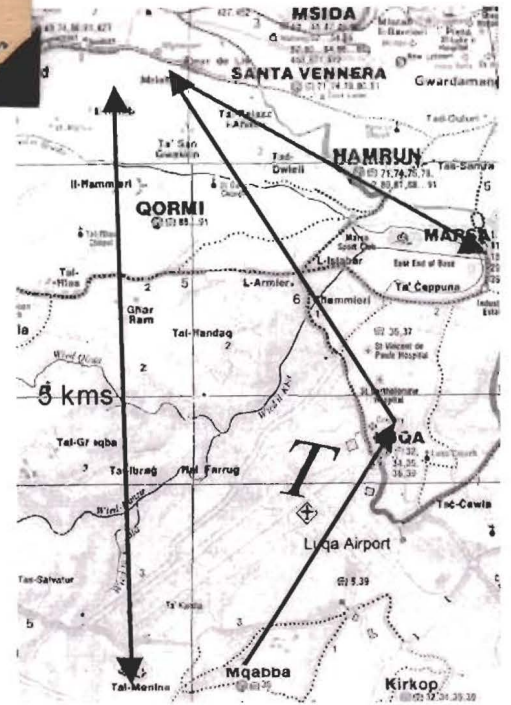
# Micabbiba (Mqabba) and Attard



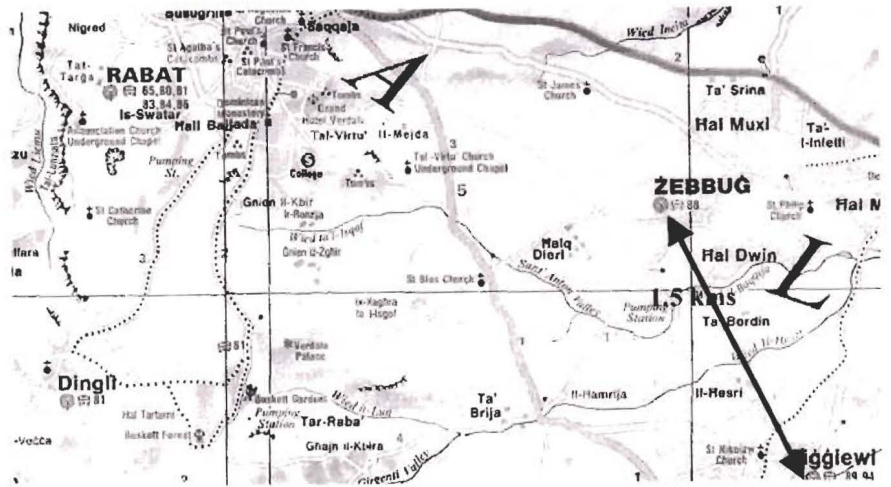
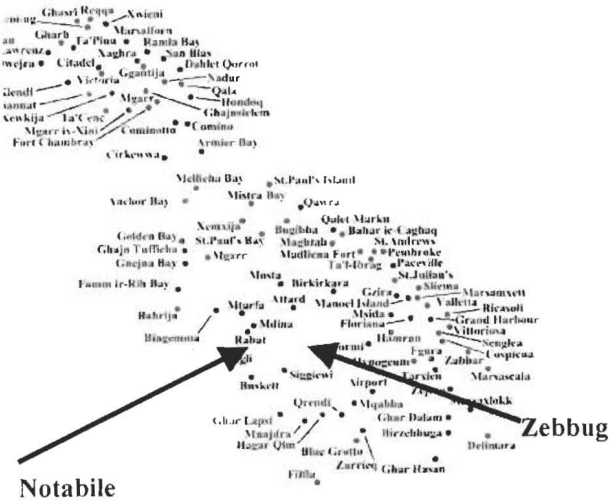
Proud and the MSC record PHS30B as being used in Luca (Luqa) from 1913. Its use on this postcard from Holland to Micabbiba (Mqabba) in 1919 is thus explained as this village was subsequently on the round which covered Luca, Mriehel, Albert Town (Marsa) and Micabbiba



Postcard to Attard in 1928, with PHS43D which was in use on the Balzan-Attard-Lia round (map left) until 1938. The mail was sorted and stamped in the Valletta GPO and then despatched by train to Attard, after which the postman delivered it to the local address.



# Notabile (Rabat) and Zebbug

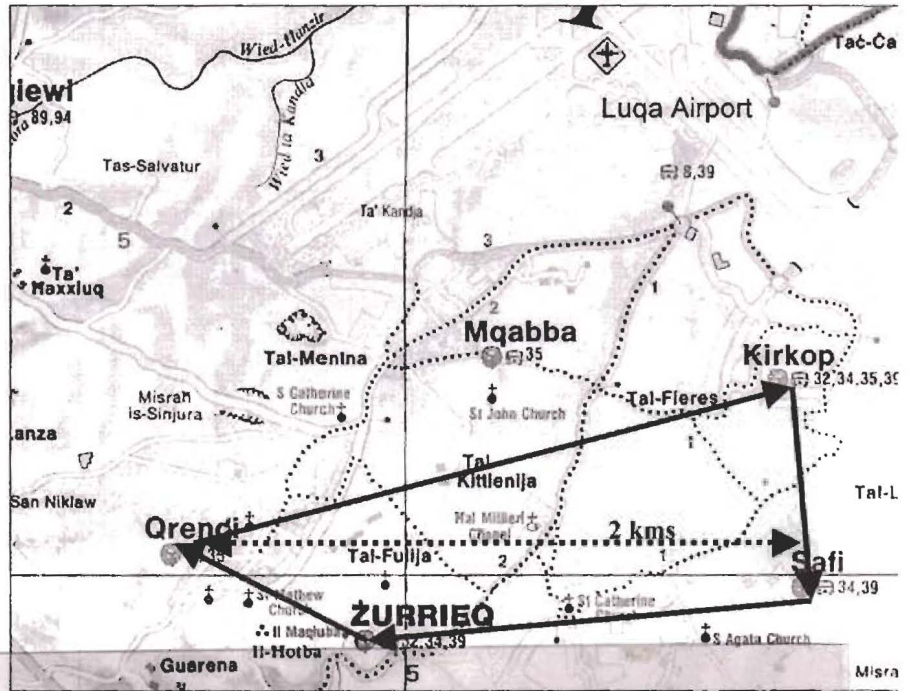
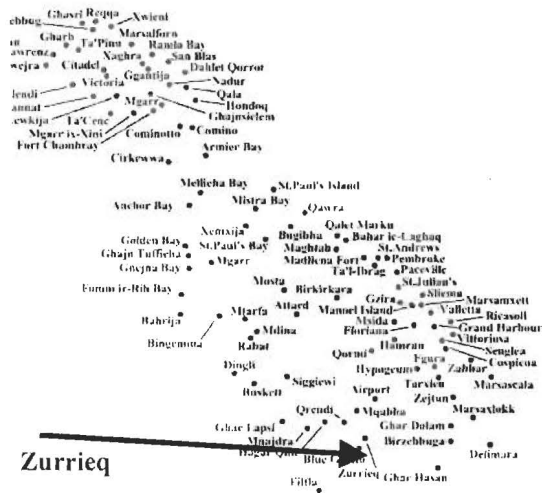


PHS54D on a card to Notabile also known as Rabato or Rabat. Used soon after the earliest known date.

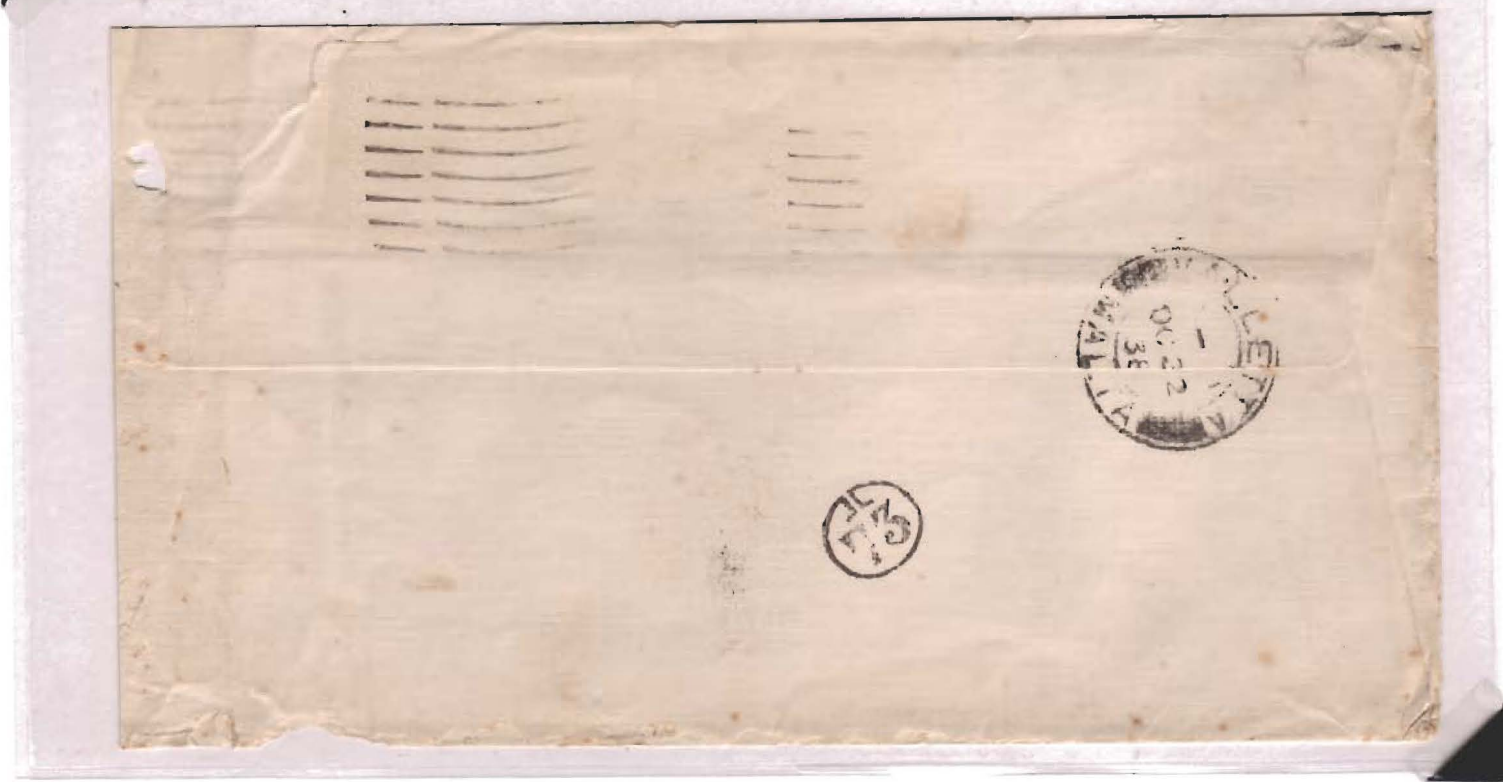
EKD: 12.04.1938  
LKD: 08.11.1948

PHS54D was used on the Zebbug to Siggiewi round (map) from 1930 to 1939. this example precedes by 5 weeks the last known date recorded by Proud

# Zurricco (Zurrieq)



*Mr John Bagija  
71 Britannica St  
Zurrieq  
Malta  
Europe*



PHS73F on a cover to Zurrieq in 1938, by which time this handstamp was, according to proud, used for the Zurricco-Qrendi (Qrendi)-Chircop (Kirkop)-Safi round (map).

## The End of Chops

In June 1949, the uniform issued to postmen changed to an outfit consisting of an open neck tunic, shirt and tie. The custom of allocating a number which was included in the collar was discontinued. This seems to have stimulated the concurrent withdrawal of handstamps as none are found after this year.