BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON MELITENSIA – 2

Albert Ganado

In continuation of the bibliographical notes I started publishing in Melita Historica in 2003, I thought of turning my attention to the earliest descriptions and/or guide books of the Maltese islands published under British rule.

A resident officer
Without any doubt the first description of Malta under British rule was that written in Malta by an officer residing here for quite some time during the French occupation. It is entitled: A description of Malta, with a sketch of its history and that of its fortifications, translated from the Italian, with notes, by an Officer resident on the island. The Preface is signed and dated as follows: “The Translator, Malta, 30th December 1800”. The book (19 cm) was published in Malta in 1801. It consists of these pages: preface (iv), index (one unnumbered), text (95), and one unnumbered with errata and two notes. It was dedicated to Major-General Henry Pigot “Commanding the Allied Forces, at the surrender of the important islands of Malta, and its Dependencies”.¹

The anonymous translator stated in the preface that the account he was publishing was written in French in 1792 by an anonymous traveller, but his translation was made from an Italian copy. The description of Malta therefore was to be considered a fair picture of the general appearance of Malta previous to the French occupation. This description was accompanied by a short ‘abridgement’ of the island’s history. The Italian copy of the French original had ‘accidentally’ fallen into his hands ‘during a residence on the Island’.

A geographical description of Malta is followed by a tour of Valletta, Città Vecchia, the interior of the island, and Gozo. The account then passes on to various headings, namely, population, fertility, commerce, ancient usages, manners and customs, festivals, language, poetry and climate. Apart from a sketch of the history of Malta, the book contains also observations on the physical constitution of the islands and a ‘historical abridgement of the fortifications of Valetta and its dependencies from the arrival of the Order of Saint John of Jerusalem’. The translator warned that this latter abridgement was an extract from another author.

The anonymous translator added to the text some footnotes of his own which make interesting reading. For instance, after recording that the French with their usual

¹ This book is not listed in the bibliographies of Hellwald (1885) and Rossi (1924).
rapacity stripped the beautiful Church of St John of almost everything valuable; he added that even statues of bronze were pillaged merely for the value of the metal. A large statue of Grand Master Cotoner was taken from the entrance to the work which bore his name and it was found on board ‘the Athenian Man of War’ when the British entered Valletta. Another footnote gives the Maltese version of the Pater Noster.

The book being examined is a translation of the book published anonymously in 1791 entitled Malte par un voyageur Français. The translator was therefore right to state that the French original was written by a traveller, but he mistook the date. Possibly, the date 1792 was on the Italian version he came across. Whoever undertook the Italian translation might have intended to publish it in that year. This Italian version is not known.

The author of the French book was François-Emmanuel Guignard, comte de Saint-Priest (1735-1821), but the authorship remained obscure for a long time. The text is illustrated with various engravings, including a plan of the harbour area and a map of the Maltese islands signed by Sebastiano Ittar (1768-1847). The English translation being examined does not have any illustration.

In the page at the end of the book containing the errata, the translator apologized for the errors and explained that these were due to the difficulty of printing English correctly in a foreign press (meaning Malta) without a person on the spot to superintend its progress. He added that these errors had delayed the publication of the book. Proposals for subscriptions had been published, and the work was sent to the press just a week later, on 3 January 1801. This could be an indication that the proposals met with a favourable response.

The question to be resolved is an intriguing one: who was the author of this book? The two officers that come to mind as having resided in Malta in 1800, when

2. Mention is made of a lamp of gold, suspended by a chain of the same metal, lighting the Chapel of the Virgin.
4. 'The Athenian' was the last ship of the Order of St John built in its own dockyard at Malta. She was given the name San Giovanni and was to be the 64-gun new designate flagship. She was completed by the French invaders and renamed L'Athenier. When the French capitulation was signed in September 1800 the ship was incorporated in the British Navy and retained her name. On 27 October 1806 she was wrecked in a storm off Sicily. (J. M. Wismayer, 'San Giovanni: The last ship of the Order of St John', in The Sunday Times, 23 August 1987, 15).

Nicholas Cotoner's bronze bust was saved and it still adorns a niche in Notre Dame Gate.
5. Note on page 47.

The Maltese version of Our Lord's prayer was probably copied from the book of Christian Doctrine in Maltese published by the Reverend Dom Francisco Wizzini in the eighteenth century.
6. For a biography of Graham see A. Brett-James, General Graham - Lord Lynedoch, London 1959. He revisited Malta on 16 December 1840 and stayed till 25 May 1841. On his residence in Malta in 1840, Lieut. Aeneas Anderson on his way to Egypt in that year wrote: "Such were his amiable manners, and so far had he conciliated the affections of the Maltese, that they acted under him with a zeal, confidence, and spirit, which proved, on various occasions, that their ancient valour was not extinguished" (A. Anderson, A Journal of the Forces which sailed from the Downs in April 1800 on a Secret Expedition, London 1802, 119). Graham died on 18 December 1843 in his ninety-sixth year.

7. Thomas MacGill wrote in his guide book: "Near Gudia, is a pretty miniature palace, of the late Marchioness Dorell... this may be called the prettiest place in Malta". See E. E. Montanaro, 'Villa Dorell, the Pride of Gudia' in Journal of the Malta University Literary Society, II (1935), 291-5; A. Crotchait, 'The prettiest place in Malta. The garden of the Palazzo D'Aurel', in Country Life, 22 March 1979.

8. Luigi was the 3rd Count Preziosi, a member of the renowned family of corsairs. On 27 April 1790 in Senglea he married Matilde Camilleri, whose family was also involved in privateering. He contracted a second marriage at Porto Salvo in Valletta with Marianna Maurin on 27 September 1808.


A corpus of Weir's watercolours is in the present writer's collection. A few are dated between March 1799 and 9 July 1801; two others, 29 April 1802 and 28 October 1806.

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Fig. 1. Map of the Maltese islands by Sebastiano Iitar published in Chevalier Saint-Priest's book Malte par un voyageur François, Malta, 1791.

(© Albert Ganado collection)

Fig. 2. Map of the Maltese islands published by William Miller, of Old Bond Street, London, for the book by Charles Wilkinson
Epitome of the history of Malta and Gozo, London, 1804.

(© Albert Ganado collection)
In his preface the author stated that, from the information he had been able to collect on the subject, it appeared "that we possess no historical account of the Islands of Malta and Gozo in our own language". The British public, the author considered, would welcome some description of the ancient and modern state of the islands, their productions, and inhabitants, since England had added them as a bulwark to her Mediterranean trade.

Wilkinson wrote that he knew about the works of Count Gio. Antonio Ciantar, Jean Hoïel, Chevalier St Priest and the anonymous Francophile pamphlet Recherches Historiques et Politiques sur Malte. Patrick Brydone's observations on Malta he dismissed as 'the cursory remarks of a traveller'. Consequently, he had endeavored to collect all the information which might be useful and satisfactory.

In view of the fact that 'Malta owes all her grandeur and wealth to the Order, and, as the history of the latter is so intimately blended with that of the Island', Wilkinson decided to include in his book a short account of 'that illustrious body of Knights'.

Wilkinson made no mention of the anonymous 1801 description of Malta discussed in the first part of the present paper. It is possible, though unlikely, that he did not know about it. As regards the account of Malta, the author of the 1801 publication frankly stated that his was just a translation of St Priest's book. On the other hand, Wilkinson plagiarized St Priest's account without acknowledging the source. All he stated in the preface was that St Priest had compiled a small work in 1791, but probably very few copies had reached England as the book was printed in Malta. In contrast, he gave the reader to understand that the short account of the Knights had been culled from the works of Abbé Vertot.

As already stated, St Priest's book contained a map of the Maltese islands engraved and signed by Sebastiano Ittar; it is a small map (100 x 235 mm) in the French language. Wilkinson's book has a map of approximately the same size (115 x 250 mm) in the English language which was not signed by the engraver but it carries the publisher's imprint and the date: Published Jan'y 11th, 1804 by Wm. Miller Old Bond Street. On this map there is the following note in the 'Errata' page:

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"By an inadvertency of the Engraver the words Città Vecchia should have been engraved over the word Rabato in the island of Malta".

Wilkinson's book was followed in 1810 by William Domeier's work: Observations on the climate, manners and amusements of Malta published in London. It was described by Dr Paul Xuereb as a detailed vademecum for the visitor. Unfortunately, the present writer had no opportunity to examine the original as the copy at the National Library of Malta is missing and the University Library has only a microfilm copy.

Pericciuoli Borzeli

The first proper guide book was printed and published in Malta in 1830. Written by Giuseppe Pericciuoli Borzeli of Siena, it was entitled: The historical guide of the Island of Malta and its Dependencies, and it was dedicated to Mr Henry Ponsonby. It had 90 pages of text, with an index in two pages, and it was printed at the Government Press. Uncut it measured 16 cm.

The text was preceded by two unnumbered pages with the dedication in English and Italian. These were followed by a map of the Maltese islands facing the first page of the text. Like the book by St Priest, this guide book is divided in three parts; the first part deals with the history of Malta, the second part, the most interesting section, guides the visitor round the towns and villages of the island of Malta, while the third part describes Gozo and Comino.12

Henry Ponsonby, whom the author addressed as 'the Noble young Gentleman', was the eldest child of Major-General Frederick Cavendish Ponsonby (1783-1837) who governed Malta between 1827 and 1836. When Sir Frederick and Lady Emily Ponsonby arrived in Malta in February 1827, Henry was their only child. They were to have another five children, four of them born in Malta. In his dedication of the book to Henry Ponsonby, dated 8 March 1830, Pericciuoli Borzeli noted that he had been encouraged in the preparation of his 'little work' by the hope that it might afford the young gentleman some beneficial entertainment then in his first years. He trusted that it might thereafter be an introduction to a more mature examination of the subjects of which it treated.13


11. Ittar's map, one of the largest printed maps of Malta (382 x 1350 mm) made by Gervais De Palmeus in 1752 entitled: Carte générale de la Principauté Souveraine des Isles de Malte et du Gozo dressée sur les Mémoires des Grand Officers de l'Ordre. In 1794 Ittar published a fine plan of Marsa in a book written by Marchese Carl' Antonio Barbara. At the same period he produced another map of Malta Carte générale des Isles de Malte et Gozo and he later prepared in ink and colour washes a beautiful plan of the harbours of Valletta, flanked by six inset views, which he subsequently engraved with the title Porto e Fortezza di Malta. A second state of this engraving was published in 1798 or 1799 dedicated to the French Directory.


14. The guide book was on sale immediately after the 8th March as the copy in the present writer's collection has a manuscript date '20th March 1830' after the owner's signature which however is illegible.

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The map, measuring 98 x 230 mm, is a faithful copy of the map engraved by Ittar for St Priest, with some slight differences. For instance, the place name of Ramla Bay in Gozo has been omitted and the scale bars have also been left out.

This guide book was mentioned in the report on the freedom of the press submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on 10 March 1837 by the Royal Commissioners John Austin and George Cornwell Lewis. They recorded that 500 copies of the book had been printed. They added that for the first sheets of this work the author had paid the expenses of printing, but not meeting with the number of subscribers he expected, the charge of printing was abated for the latter part of the work; this notwithstanding he incurred a loss, and left the island in poverty, the sale of his book being very slow.

In the light of what is stated in the Royal Commissioners’ report, it is rather curious to discover that there was a second edition of Pericciuoli Borzesti’s guide book. The title page, the dedication and the whole ninety pages plus index are exactly the same as those in the first edition. However, there are two additional features. Firstly, a nineteen-page short dissertation written in Italian intended to prove that the Maltese islands were the remains of the lost continent of Atlantis, entitled Che Malta, Comino e Gozo stiano gli avanzi della antica Atlantide. Secondly, a two-page list of subscribers to the book.

The dissertation on Atlantis is unsigned, but it was almost certainly written by the renowned Giorgio Grognét (or Grongnet) de Vassé, the architect who designed the parish church of the village of Mosta, whose dome is the third largest in the world. In his investigations and research on the ‘mythical’ Atlantis, Grognét became convinced that it was not mythical at all and that the Maltese archipelago in the Central Mediterranean stood as a testimony of its existence and its site. He upheld this theory with undeterred fanaticism.17

In his guide book Pericciuoli Borzesti wrote that in front of the Auberge de Provence there was the study of Grognét, adding that: “This very capable engineer


An Italian translation of the Report was published in Malta by Filippo Izzo c.s.o. entitled Traduzione. Copie ovvero estratti di Rapporti dei Commissionari..., Malta 1838, 6-47. In the Italian version the reference to the 1830 guide book is on page 40.

17. There is at the National Library of Malta a manuscript detailed dissertation in two volumes by Giorgio Grognét de Vassé Atlante dei disegni dall’Atlantide, beautifully illustrated (Libr. Ms. 614), as well as another manuscript Atlante Atlantico Maltese... che doveva essere stupendo nei tempi F. W. Franz, 1856 (Libr. Ms. 615). In 1854, when Grognét was eighty years of age, he published an abridgment of his work entitled Compendio ossia Eflplora Antiqua... della famosa somma vis isola Atlantide, in which he printed a Sonetto by Pericciuoli Borzesti in praise of Grognét’s theory. For recent publications supporting Grognét’s pet theory see A. Mifsud, S. Mifsud, C. Agius Sultana, C. Savona Venture, Malta – Echoes of Plato’s Island, Malta 2001 (2nd edn.); F. Galea, Malta fals Atlantide, Malta 2002.
preserves in lithography the form of a stone which is said to be antediluvian, found at Città Vecchia, and which he afterwards sent to Paris for trial of its antiquity". A Latin translation of the inscription engraved on this stone was then given, together with a transcription of another Latin inscription found on the side of the stone, signed by T. Sempronius, certifying that the stone was Atlantean.18

In this dissertation inserted in the second edition, the writer stated that the stone, which was in a perfect state of conservation, was found in May 1826 and the Atlanteo-Phoenician inscription engraved on this precious relic placed its seal and settled for ever the great vexed question of Atlantis. He added that the signature referred to Tiberius Sempronius Longus of 218 BC.19

Grognnet had in his possession a letter dated 7 May 1826 signed by Don Giuseppe Felice Galea addressed to him from Città Vecchia (Notabile or Mdina), informing him that during deep excavations carried out in the foundations of the yard of his house, a large stone had been found, covered with what looked like a Phoenician script. This stone he was donating to Grognnet, for him to discover the significance of the inscription.

During his stay in Rome between 1810 and 1814, Grognnet had befriended Marquis Agricol de Forgia d'Urban, Membre de plusiers Académies en France, en Italie, et en Allemagne. Grognnet therefore decided to inform his friend of the exciting discovery. On 13 June 1827 he sent him a copy of Galea's letter, with a copy of the inscription and the alphabet of its text. On 30 August 1827 Don Giuseppe Felice Galea wrote separately to the Marquis from Città Senglea confirming his casual discovery and informing him that he had presented the stone to Grognnet as a gift. On 7 January 1828 the Marquis addressed in Paris the Asiatic Society on the matter and presented the lithographs which had been made from the copy sent by Grognnet.

This discovery created a sensation among the European savants. In Italy, for instance, Auguste personages like Mezzofanti in Bologna, Valeriani in Florence and Lanzi in Rome were devoting all their time to the study of this exceptional archaeological monument. On 10 March 1829 this 'precious' stone reached Marquis de Fortia through the services of M. d'Aiguiullé, the chancellor of the French consulate in Malta, accompanied with a report on the nature and character of the stone drawn up by the Maltese sculptor Sigismondo Dimech (1769-1853).20

20. Dimech's stone work was much admired and appreciated by his contemporaries: 'I vasi di pietra notarie di bellissimo lavoro fregiati, i bassorilievi, e le statue nella medesima pietra eseguite, in dimostrando l'attitudine della nostra pietra ad ogni genere di scultura fanno maravigliosamente spiccare lo ingenio dello artista (Il filologo maltese, no. 23, 27 ottobre 1840, 150).

In 1802 Dimech executed the small marble bust of the Venetian Admiral Angelo Enzo placed on a sarcophagus in the church of Our Lady of Victory in Valletta (A. Ganado, The funeral of Angelo Enzo', op. cit., 16).

For a recent biographical note in English on Dimech see J. F. Grima, ‘Monthly Anniversary Story: Sigismondo Dimech', in The Democrat, 26 May 1990.

Fig. 4. Portrait of Sir George Cornelius Lewis (1806-1853), finely engraved by D. J. Pound. 215 x 170 mm. Lewis was one of the royal Commissioners appointed in 1836 to inquire into the affairs of Malta. In 1847 he was elected to the House of Commons.

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As time went on various savants started having serious doubts about the authenticity of the Grognet stone, which by 1832 had deteriorated considerably. On 7 September 1832, M. Louis-Doreau de Rienzi, Membre de plusieurs Académies et Sociétés Savantes, de France, de Rome, des Indes, etc., etc., wrote a letter to Marquis de Fortia in which he accused Grognet, whom he had known in Rome, as an imposter with a fertile imagination, not to be trusted. The letter was published in Paris in 1832 with the title: Question importante de manuscrits et inscriptions antiques. Réponse à M. le Marquis de Fortia d’Urban.\(^{21}\)

Even before the publication of this letter, Grognet must have got wind of what was brewing in Paris. Indeed, in a footnote to the dissertation in the guide book, the writer, presumably Grognet, remarked unconvincingly that the interpretation of the stone made by the savant Baron Saci (Sacy) had not yet reached him, but he had been assured that it was only slightly different from his own.\(^{22}\)

It is extremely likely that this second edition of the guide book was published at the instance of Grognet with the intent of vindicating his stance on Atlantis by inserting the dissertation on its site. Perhaps Grognet even bore part of the expense. Although the date on the title page was not changed, it does not necessarily mean that the book was reprinted in 1830. The year 1832 is more likely. Certainly, the reissue was planned before September 1832 because two of the subscribers, namely, Lt. George Whitmore and Jane Frere, left Malta on 11 September 1832,\(^{23}\) while another subscriber, Baron Paolo Sciberras Bologna, passed away on 4 October 1832.\(^{24}\) The list of 104 subscribers included the Governor and Lady Ponsonby, as well as the Hon. J. Ponsonby.

In 1834 an anonymous pamphlet was published at the Malta Government Press on the volcanic island which appeared to the north-west of Malta in 1831.\(^{25}\) According to the Royal Commissioners’ report mentioned above it was written by Periccioli Borzesti, the author of the guide book. The report says that 500 copies

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21. The information contained in this paragraph and the preceding three paragraphs is derived from a volume of documents assembled by Marquis de Fortia d’Urban having a manuscript index entitled Pièces relatives à la pierre Atlantique-Phénicienne de Male. It has his ex libris with his name and address: M. le Marquis de Fortia, Rue de la Rochefoucauld No. 12. The gilt title on the leather spine reads PIERRE ATLANTIQUE. The volume is in the present writer’s collection.


24. MGG, no. 1132, 10 October 1832, 309.

25. Narrative of the volcanic eruption on Graham Island, which appeared in the Mediterranean, off Sicily, between Sciacca, and the island of Panarea, in the summer of 1831, Malta 1834, 32 pp. The pamphlet contains a small map (125 x 190 mm) signed by L. [ug]t. de Brocktorff (1814-1857), entitled SITUATION OF GRAHAM ISLAND.
were printed at his expense and he left Malta shortly afterwards in very reduced circumstances. 26

Martin
The next book to be considered is much more than a simple guide book. It deals with Malta extensively as one of Britain’s possessions in the middle sea. The book (17.2 cm), in a hard cover, is entitled History of the British Possessions in the Mediterranean: comprising Gibraltar, Malta, Gozo, and the Ionian Islands, written by Robert Montgomery Martin, F.S.S., published in London in 1837 as the seventh volume in the series ‘The British Colonial Library’. It consists of 408 pages, but the largest section is devoted to Malta; it occupies the pages from 112 to 296 of Book II.

The volume contains an engraved view of Gibraltar facing the frontispiece and maps of the three possessions described in the book. The Malta map entitled MALTA AND GOZO shows the Maltese islands, with an inset of VALLETTA AND ITS FORTIFICATIONS at the bottom left corner. Measuring 100 x 170 mm, it was drawn and engraved by J. & C. Walker, and published by Whittaker & Co., of Ave Maria Lane, London.

Dealing with Malta and Gozo, the second book of the volume is divided into four chapters. The first chapter gives a synopsis of the history of Malta, but it dwells extensively on the history of the Order of St John in Malta and the Great Siege of 1565. The second chapter starts with the geography and physical aspect of the island and passes on to describe the fortifications, the capital city of Valletta, the catacombs, the villages, the geology, the climate and diseases, agriculture and the ‘animal kingdom’.

The population at different periods, the language, religion, education, manners and customs of the inhabitants, together with an account of various institutions, fill the pages of the third chapter. Finally, information is given on the government, the traditional rights and privileges of the Maltese and their grievances under British rule, military defence and the barracks, legislation, revenue and expenditure, the monetary system, commerce, imports and exports, manufactures, and shipping.

The liberal minded author ended his highly detailed description of Malta (in which a few errors crept in) by a plea to the colonial government to restore to the Maltese the political liberty for which they had fought bravely and ‘which we so shamefully deprived them of’. He added: “Let a representative assembly be given to the Maltese, with power, of course, to remedy the numerous existing abuses, and to revise the system of taxation now in force... It will cost England nothing to render Malta once more flourishing and happy”. 27


One of the documents Martin had before him when he wrote the history of Malta was a Memoir presented to him in London on 4 August 1835 by Giorgio Mitrovich, one of the leaders of the Comitato Generale Maltese. In a letter sent to Martin the day after Mitrovich stated: “General Pigot and Sir Alexander Ball were the first who deceived the Maltese in their expectations and good faith; the former by the Capitulation of 1800, and the latter by the suspension of their National Council... Ball, who, after having promised its rigorous preservation, when the vicissitudes of the war were over and the fortifications in the hands of the British troops, despotically and shamefully suspended it.” 28

The Appendix in the last five pages of the volume refers to the system of French navigation which the French Government had adopted for the Mediterranean. It gives a number of tables showing the organization of the service, the tariff of the tax on letters conveyed and the tariff on the fares for passengers.

The Maltese table shows that the packet from France arrived at Malta on the 7th, 17th and 27th of each month at noon, leaving Malta twenty-four hours later. To Constantinople the packet arrived on the 5th, 14th and 24th of each month at 10 a.m. The postage rate of a single letter destined for Alexandria or Constantinople was 2 francs, while 1 franc was charged for the other destinations (Smyrna, Syra, Athens, Leghorn, Civita Vecchia, Naples, Marseilles).

In the section dealing with the Ionian Islands, one finds an occasional reference of Maltese interest: “The palace of St. Michael and St. George, occupying one side of the esplanade [in Corfu], along which its front extends, is built of Malta stone, and ornamented with a colonnade of fluted Doric”. 29

Badger
George Percy Badger was the son of Edward and Ann Badger. His father was a Quarter Master Sergeant of the 80th Regiment of Foot, ‘The South Staffordshire Regiment’, which was stationed in Gibraltar since autumn 1820. 29 In October 1821 this regiment was transferred to Malta. The first detachment under the command of Major George D. Pitt arrived in Malta with the transport Chapman from Gibraltar on 19 October 1821, while the remainder under the command of Major Maclean came on 26 October on board the transport Star. 30

When Edward Badger died in Malta on 26 July 1823, his widow decided to stay here to bring up their three children of minor age, George Percy and his two sisters. In those days only commissioned officers’ widows were entitled to a pension.

27. Correspondence between Mr George Mitrovich... and R. Montgomery Martin, London 1835?


29. R. H. Melville Lee, British Infantry of the Line stationed in Malta since 1799, Malta 1969, 41.

30. MGG for 1821, 2809 and 2816.
described ‘Map of St. Paul’s voyage’, in the said list. It faces page 286. The first map is signed *Lui. Brocktorff*, and it is uncoloured, while the second one has no signature, and green has been used for hatching the coastlines and for the waterways. The place names of the latter map are in black ink, but the places touched by St Paul on his voyage to Rome are printed in blue: *Fair Havens. I. Claudus. Melita. Syracuse. Regium. Puteoli. Via Appia. ROME. Forum Appii.* Both maps are lithographed.

Some copies of Badger’s guide book are printed on thick paper, which makes the book 25 mm in thickness, while the illustrations of views and costumes are tinted (in two cases tinted only in part), although in some pictures the tint has worn off in one particular copy of the guide book which was examined. In another copy which has the same thickness all the lithographed illustrations are heavily tinted, with only one illustration having a black and white centre where the musical score of a folk song is printed. This indicates that there were two editions printed on thick paper. There are other differences between these two copies of the guide book on thick paper. The illustration facing page 83 is entitled *Zaqq player* in both cases. However, in the first copy mentioned above the picture is vertical, in keeping with the text of the book, with villagers playing *bocci* in the background, while in the second copy the picture is horizontal, and therefore wider, depicting the two musicians in front of houses in *STRA'DA FORNI*.

Another difference lies in the Malta map. Instead of *Lui. Brocktorff., the signature in this last printing is *Lui. Brocktorff. fec.* The other difference is to be noted in the map of St Paul’s voyage, when it was presumably reprinted for the second edition. The place names printed in blue ink are now printed in red ink. Besides, an imprint has been added at the bottom left corner which reads: *Brocktorff* (in green ink) *Scrip.* (in red ink). The last word stands for *Scripsi.*

Other copies of Badger’s guide book are printed on thin translucent paper which makes the book only 13 mm instead of 25 mm in thickness, more suitable to be carried in the pocket of the traveller. In this particular printing, which was probably the very first one, all the illustrations were in black and white, but the map had green colouring and a few blue place names, like the map in the first edition of thick paper above mentioned.

What may be considered the first printing of the guide book contained these black and white illustrations:

41. This reads: *Luigi Brocktorff*. Luigi Brocktorff, son of Charles Frederick, was born on 22 October 1814 and he died in Valletta on 2 January 1857. He spent some time in Italy in 1835. He went to Constantinople with his family in 1843 and again in 1844, where his brother Federico had settled with his wife and family.


43. Both these copies are in the author’s collection.

All these illustrations were included in the other printings of the guide book without any change in the titles or the imprints, except that, as already pointed out, the illustrations were tinted yellow in the copies printed on thick paper, and the *Zaqq player* horizontal lithograph measures 95 x 137 mm, instead of 90 x 77 mm, height always given first. George Percy Badger did not enjoy much popularity among the Maltese. His guide book was published at a time when there was considerable political agitation led by the *Comitato Generale Maltese* in its quest for the abolition of censorship and the attainment of an elected legislative assembly. In his guide book Badger brought forward his reasons in support of the colonial government’s opposition to grant representative government to the Maltese, one of his reasons being ‘the general unfitness of the inhabitants, at present, to govern themselves’. In 1839, the year after the publication of the guide book, Badger brought out another book entitled *Sullo stato della educazione pubblica in Malta* which further deepened the wound. He criticized the higher classes of the population, and in a special manner the Catholic clergy, as the cause of the religious prejudices and state of ignorance of the Maltese people.

His guide book on the other hand must have enjoyed immense popularity. Apart from the various printings of the 1838 edition, revised editions of the guide book appeared right up to 1881.

44. The Maltese General Committee was composed of almost 100 members representing the various classes of the population as well as all the towns and villages of Malta and Gozo chosen by 11,712 electors in an election organized by the political leaders. Its main function was to lay the Maltese grievances before the Royal Commissioners appointed in 1836.
The second edition appeared in 1851. It was entitled *Description of Malta and Gozo* by George Percy Badger: with some additional illustrations of the present state of the Islands by the Editor, and it was printed and published by Paolo Cumbo at 208 Strada Sant’Ursola, Valletta. The price was 2s. 6d. The editor brought the first edition up to date both in the text and by the insertion of footnotes. It contains 372 pages (13 cm). The illustrations are tinted, copied from the 1838 edition with some differences, but freshly made. For instance, the first lithograph is entitled ZAPP (instead of Zaqq) PLAYER, while there are two ladies in walking dress instead of one in another lithograph. The views and costumes average 97 x 63 mm and they are variously signed Brocktorff Malta, Lith. Brocktorff Str. Reale 111, Brocktorff Valetta. The mausoleum of Perellos is signed. G. Brocktorff e Fra., which stands for Giuseppe Brocktorff and his brother. This edition contained a MAP of MALTA and its Dependences (sic), measuring 220 x 300 mm.

The third edition appeared in 1858. It was entitled *Description of Malta and Gozo improved on that by George Percy Badger*, published by G. Muir, printed by Paolo Cumbo, ‘Army Printer, 77 Strada Britannica, Malta’. It has VI + 385 pages (15 cm) + 14 unnumbered pages of advertisements. Facing the preface it has a map entitled MAP of MALTA and its Dependences (sic), Lith. Brocktorff, Malta, probably made by Giuseppe Brocktorff, quite similar to the one in the 1851 edition. A complete copy has twelve tinted lithographs of views and costumes, each averaging 65 x 105 mm, without any imprint. The illustration of the Maltese song is in black and white, measuring 140 x 175 mm., with the imprint Lith. Brocktorff, Str. Reale 111, Malta at the bottom left corner. The book was published with a hard cover of a light red colour, with the title page repeated on the front cover and a full-page advert of G. MUIR OF MALTA who kept a circulating library at 247 Strada Reale, Valletta, on the back cover.

A fourth edition was published in 1860 with the following title: *Description of Malta and Gozo improved on that of George Percy Badger, with additions and corrections according to the present state of the Islands*, published by Paolo Cumbo. It has VI + 385 pages (14 cm). The only copy known to the present writer has only eight illustrations, one of which is the Maltese song which seems to be the same as that in the 1858 edition, but it has no imprint.

The guide book was then taken in hand by the prolific and versatile author Dr Nicola Zammit (1815-1899) who brought out the fifth edition in 1869 with a new title: *Historical Guide to Malta and Gozo by G. Percy Badger, improved and augmented by N. Zammit M.D.* Printed by F. Cumbo. Published and sold by P. Calleja. It consists of 366 pages (12.5 cm).

45. Giuseppe Brocktorff was born in Constantinople in 1818 or 1819. He died on 30 December 1893 at Msida where he carried on his business in lithography with his brother Leopoldo (1826-1886).

46. Before the Brocktorff family established its business at 111 Strada Reale, it had at least two other addresses in the same street at numbers 81 and 104. When the survivors were Giuseppe and Leopoldo, they moved their business to Msida Seafra.
The book starts with an 'Advertisement' which states that: "The third Edition of this very interesting and useful work being exhausted, a new and improved one has been compiled containing the latest information as to the trade, commerce, laws, festivals, Public buildings, Churches, and other things and places of interest to gentlemen visiting these Islands." Besides, many fresh statistical tables were included to correct errors and note changes, and whatever was of little use or interest in former editions was suppressed. The editor thought that this was the fourth edition of Badger's guide book but in reality it was the fifth.

Facing the title page is a MAP of MALTA and its DEPENDENCIES, (220 x 330 mm sheet size), without any imprint, but probably lithographed by Giuseppe Brocktorff. There are in all sixteen lithographs, including the Maltese song which is not the same lithograph published in the 1858 edition. There are two new views, namely, the NEW OPERA HOUSE and the CHURCH OF CASAL MOSTA, but St John's Church is not included. All the illustrations are in black and white, averaging 60 x 105 mm, except the lithograph of the Maltese song which measures 140 x 178 mm and which is the only picture with an imprint Lith: Brocktorff. 111 Str: Reałe Valetta.

The sixth edition was published in 1870. It is a reprint of the 1869 edition with the same title, imprint and number of pages, a sure indication that the 1869 edition was quickly sold out. The views and costumes are the same in both editions, but the caption of the musicians facing page 108 has now become ZAKK-PLAYER instead of ZAPP. PLAYER. One of the two copies examined has the same map as that in the 1869 edition, but the Maltese song is wanting in both examples. Possibly, but in this case not likely, it was taken out. It is not easy to come by a complete Badger guide book, and this applies to all editions. All the illustrations are black and white, like those in the 1869 edition.

The seventh edition, which was stated to the fifth edition, was published in 1872. The title and imprint on the yellow front hard cover read as follows: Historical guide to Malta and Gozo by G. Percy Badger. Fifth edition. Malta. Published by P. Bonavia, - Printer. Sold by L. Critien, 28, Sirada S. Giovanni (Opposite St. John's Church). The date of MDCCCLXXII is given on the title page, while PRICE 2s. 6d. is printed on the spine. The book has 323 pages (14.3 cm).

The uncoloured lithographed map and illustrations were copied from the 1869 edition of Badger's guide book improved and augmented by Dr Nicola Zammit.

Fig. 8. A lithograph of the new Mosta parish church, still without the lantern, published in the 1869 edition of Badger's guide book improved and augmented by Dr Nicola Zammit.

(C) Albert Ganado collection

47. The Mosta church, designed by Giorgio Grognet de Vassé, was still under construction in 1869. His Ronunda consisted of a main body, circular in form, having an internal diameter of 39.60 metres, and an external diameter of 55.20 metres, crowned by a catenary-shaped dome. By 1860 the dome was closed, when Grognet was 86 years old. Work on the lantern was started in 1889 (D. De Lucca and H. Bonnici, 'Urban development in Mosta', in Mosta, the heart of Malta, ed. L. J. Scerri, 59-82).

48. L. Critien was a bookseller, stationer and printer. He kept a large assortment of English and Foreign books, Murray's Hand Books, Dictionaries, School books, Bibles and prayer books, portfolios, etc. He also took orders for bookbinding and engraving (Advert on page 91 of The Malta Almanack and Directory for the year of Our Lord 1868).
edition, but they were redone with some differences. For instance, the stone bench between the doors of the Governor’s Palace is no longer there. The illustration with the Maltese song is wanting.

While the name of Dr N. Zammit was left out in the 1872 edition, it reappeared again in 1879 when the eighth edition was published, stated to be the sixth edition. The title is now exactly the same as in the 1869 edition. It was printed by P. Bonavia, published and sold by F. Calleja. It has 320 pages (14 cm). A sale offer quoted a copy with four plates.49

The ninth and probably the last edition was published in 1881 with the title A guide to Malta and Gozo by G. Percy Badger. It was printed by Paolo Bonavia, at 23 Strada Cristoforo, Valletta, and consists of 320 pages (13.8 cm), without any illustrations. However, a copy recently advertised for sale had a folding frontispiece map, taped to rear.50

MacGill

The next guide book was written by Thomas MacGill and published in 1839. It is entitled A hand book, or guide, for strangers visiting Malta, and it was printed by Luigi Tonna.51 Although licences for the setting up of presses by private individuals started being granted in 1838, the law of the freedom of the press and abolition of censorship was only proclaimed a year later, on 15 March 1839. That is why MacGill stated in his Prefatory Note that this book was the first work in English “published from the Free Press of Malta”.52

It seems that by this time the stock of Perciociuli Borzesi’s guide book had been exhausted. This induced MacGill to write: “As up to the present day, in which we write, there is neither Hand-book, Guide or Valet de place, to assist strangers in their rambles through these interesting islands… we have attempted to compose,
what we consider may be both useful and entertaining to them”.

MacGill’s guide book was written in anticipation of the abolition of censorship and it was actually published even before the official enactment of Ordinance IV of the 15th March 1839. Indeed, an advert appeared a month before this date announcing that the hand book was available in the shops of Mrs Kilburn and Mr Watson. The author must have known that the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Lord Glenelg, had sent a despatch to the Governor on 20 November 1838 authorizing him to follow the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners for the abolition of censorship. Besides, the relative Ordinance was published in draft form on 16 February 1839 awaiting the approval of the Council of Government set up in 1835, which of course was a foregone conclusion. So, MacGill’s guide book was not published, strictly speaking, ‘from the Free Press of Malta’, although on the very eve.

Queen Adelaide, the widow of William IV (1830-1837), who was seeking a warmer climate because of her frail health, sailed into the Grand Harbour on 30 November 1838 and stayed in Malta till the end of March. The title page of the guide book is followed by the dedication to her, “Dedicated through Royal condescension, to Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Dowager of England by Her Majesty’s most humble and most devoted servant Thomas MacGill”.

When this guide book was published, the dust had not yet settled apparently on Grogen’s controversial stone which had attracted the severe contumely of de Rienzi when he described him as un fabricateur impudent et un a droite imposteur. In fact, in the very first paragraph of the introduction MacGill wrote as follows:

“This truly eccentric genius has set all the savans (sic) of Europe by the ears, with this stone, and volumes have been written on the subject. - One, of two things must be true, - the stone is either real or false; if it be a true piece of antiquity, he is a very fortunate man; if it be false, he is a remarkably clever fellow, to have made such an imitation, as to have created so much controversy”.

Thomas MacGill, one of the first English residents in Malta, settled here around 1806. He died at Valletta on 8 October 1844.

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53. MacGill, 20 February 1839, 71. Anne Kilburn kept a fashion shop at 271 Strada Reale, Valletta, at least since 1816. John Watson was born in Preston, Lancashire, around 1776. He formed part of the commercial community in Malta since at least 1812-13. His partnership with David Grant was dissolved in 1815, and that with A. Wright in 1818. Around 1838 he tried to introduce into Malta the Brazil cotton plant and he had an interest in the Malta Tanning Company. He kept a bookshop at 277 Strada Reale, Valletta, and lived at Villa Belvedere in Saint Julians at least since 1831. He passed away in July 1848, leaving seven sons and a daughter.

54. As from 1811, if not before, Thomas MacGill resided in a house at 27 Strada Stretta, Valletta, which he rented from the government at 600 scudi a year, equivalent to Lm50. In 1815 he associated with a group of persons to take over the impresario of the Theatre. In 1820 he was a member of the Committee of the Societé delle Scuole Normali della Valletta. Between 1813 and 1821 he imported timber from Lampedusa, wine and carpets. In 1829 he had an interest, like A. Wright, in the Malta Tanning Company.