



MALTA

ANNUAL REPORT
ON THE WORKING OF THE
MUSEUM DEPARTMENT
1948-49.

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MALTA

Report on the work of the Museum Department for 1948-49.

THE MUSEUM,
Auberge d'Italie,
Valletta.

15th October, 1949.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report on the Museum Department for the financial year 1948-49.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. G. BALDACCHINO,

Director.

The Hon.

The Minister for Education.

RESTORATION OF HAGAR QIM NEOLITHIC TEMPLES.

During the spring of the year under review the works of restoration at Hagar Qim Neolithic Temples were resumed.

These operations consisted chiefly in the reinstatement of a slab of Globigerina Limestone, 10 feet square and 1 foot 5 inches thick, which had been dislodged from its original position where it capped the entrance to the temple on the south-east side.

Two courses of masonry, overlying the orthostats of the façade, were also rebuilt.

TARXIEN NEOLITHIC TEMPLES.

Part of the deposit lying in front of the main entrance of the western temple was removed. It showed no important stratification.

A rectangular block of Globigerina Limestone, 5 feet long, 2 feet 10 inches wide and 1 foot 7 inches high, with rounded edges, was uncovered. On one of its sides it presented a notch, 2 feet 6 inches in length and 9 inches wide. This block is very similar to others which occur in the Maltese Neolithic Temples; they encircle the base of high pillars.

THE TAL-LIEDNA TOMBS.

From the 28th October to the 21st December, 1948, six tombs were discovered at Tal-Liedna Road (Malta 2" Map ref: 487230). They were irregularly clustered in an area of about 722 square yards and their long axis, passing through the shaft and chamber, did not exhibit any particular orientation.

TOMB No. 1.

Discovered on the 28th October, 1948. Orientation north-west. Shaft rectangular and burial chamber roughly ellipsoidal posteriorly and rectangular in front. In the floor of the chamber, behind the sill, was excavated a quadrilateral cavity.

Inside the chamber were found the following terra-cotta objects: one empty urn, one oinochoë, one unguentarium, one plate, two dishes and two bilychnis lamps.

Lying on the floor of the chamber were the fragmentary remains of two human skeletons, probably both belonging to males, one adult and the other advanced in years. Animal remains were also represented by a metapodial bone, and two isolated teeth of a goat or sheep.

TOMB No. 2.

Discovered on the 29th October, 1948. Orientation north-east. Shaft rectangular and chamber apsidal in shape. In the floor of the chamber, immediately behind the sill and parallel to it, was excavated a trench drained by a groove cut in the sill.

Inside the chamber were found two empty urns, one oinochoë, one aryballos, one small jug, three dishes, one plate and three bilychnis lamps.

On the floor were lying the skeletal remains, mostly in a fragmentary state, of four human adults. The cephalic index of two crania, one of a male and the other of a female, is 72.39 and 72.06 respectively.

TOMB No. 3.

Discovered on the 30th November, 1948. Orientation north-west. The shaft was circular in plan and the burial chamber apsidal in shape. A trench with sloping sides was cut immediately behind the sill and parallel to it. At the west corner of the floor was a shallow concave excavation.

The following objects were recovered from the chamber: seven urns, an amphora, two oinochoë and a fragment of another one, an aryballos, ten unguentaria, a bowl, seven plates, four dishes, three calices, nine bilychnis lamps and one monolychnis lamp. Fragments of a bronze bracelet were also found.

Fragmentary remains of four human skeletons belonging to adults, one of which exhibited traces of the action of fire, were dispersed in the ashy deposit on the floor of the chamber.

TOMB No. 4.

Discovered on the 1st December, 1948. Orientation north. Shaft and chamber ellipsoidal in plan. No sill was present and in its place was cut a trench, bounded anteriorly by a ledge.

Inside the chamber were found two empty urns, three calices, two plates and two bilychnis lamps.

Fragmentary remains of three human skeletons belonging to adults were scattered on the floor of the chamber.

TOMB No. 5.

Discovered on the 6th December, 1948. Orientation east. Both the shaft and chamber were rectangular in plan.

Inside the chamber were found three urns, an amphora, a jar, an oinochoë, one aryballos, two unguentaria, four plates, three dishes, fragment of a calix and one bilychnis lamp.

Human bones were heaped up on the floor of the chamber. They represented three males and two females. Two of the males were adults and the other aged about sixteen years. Both females were adults. The cephalic index of the male adults is 72.5 and 78.03, and that of the females 73.01 and 75.32 respectively.

TOMB No. 6.

Discovered on the 21st December, 1948. This tomb, having been unnoticed prior to blasting, was totally destroyed. From the debris were recovered a calix, a bowl, and two bronze bracelets, one in a good state of preservation and the other in fragments.

THE GHAJN DWIELI TOMBS.

From the 20th to the 27th January, 1949, six tombs were discovered at Ghajn Dwieli Road (Malta 2" Map ref: 479235). They were irregularly grouped in an area of about 444 square yards, and presented no special orientation. On the 31st March, 1949, another tomb was met with, situated at a distance of 320 yards to the east-north-east of the other tombs (Malta 2" Map ref: 482236).

TOMB No. 1.

Discovered on the 20th January, 1949. Orientation north. Both the shaft and burial chamber were rectangular in plan. A trench was cut in the floor of the shaft just in front of the sill of the entrance to the burial chamber and parallel to it. A T-shaped trench was also cut in the floor of the chamber.

Inside the chamber were found an amphora, one oinochoë, one dish, two plates and one bilychnis lamp.

Dispersed on the floor were lying the fragmentary remains of a human skeleton belonging to an adult male.

TOMB No. 2.

Discovered on the 20th January, 1949. Orientation north. The shaft and the chamber were rectangular in plan. In the floor of the chamber was cut a trench.

Inside the chamber were found an empty urn, two oinochoë and a fragment of another one, three dishes and one bilychnis lamp.

Human bones, some of which in a fragmentary state, were dispersed on the floor of the chamber. They represented two adults, one advanced in years and the other aged about sixteen years, and a child of about three years. The cephalic index of the two adults, a male and a female, is 69.94 and 77.96 respectively.

TOMB No. 3.

Discovered on the 22nd January, 1949. Orientation east. Both the shaft and the burial chamber were rectangular in plan. Inside the chamber were found an amphora, one oinochoë and a bilychnis lamp.

Scattered on the floor of the chamber were fragments of two human skeletons belonging to an adult and to an individual advanced in years.

TOMB No. 4.

Discovered on the 22nd January, 1949. Orientation east. Shaft and chamber rectangular.

In the chamber were found an amphora, one oinochoë, one bilychnis lamp and a fragment of a plate.

On the floor were lying the fragmentary remains of two human skeletons belonging to adults. The cephalic index of one of these, a male, is 72.43.

TOMB No. 5.

Discovered on the 26th January, 1949. Orientation west-north-west. Rectangular shaft and oval chamber. This tomb was opened a long time ago and its contents completely rifled.

A copper needle was recovered from the silt covering the floor of the chamber.

TOMB No. 6.

Discovered on the 27th January, 1949. Orientation north. The shaft, somewhat oval in plan, served two oval burial chambers situated one on the north side and the other on the opposite side.

Inside the north chamber were found an oinochoë, two dishes, three plates and one bilychnis lamp. A silver pendant and a fragment of a decorated silver tube were also recovered from the silt deposited on the floor.

From the south chamber were obtained three urns, one oinochoë, two dishes, one plate and two bilychnis lamps.

A few fragments of a human skeleton, belonging to an adult, were dispersed on the floor of the north chamber. In the south chamber were found some fragments of a human skeleton.

TOMB No. 7.

Discovered on the 31st March, 1949. Orientation east. Shaft and chamber rectangular in plan. In the middle of the floor of the chamber was cut a trench.

An amphora, a calyx and a bilychnis lamp were found in the chamber.

On the floor were the fragmentary remains of a human skeleton, representing a male advanced in years.

ST. PAUL'S CATACOMBS, RABAT.

In St. Paul's Catacombs, as indeed in all other Maltese Catacombs, epigraphs and decorative features are very scarce. This is partly explained by the fact that, centuries ago, these underground early Christian cemeteries were ransacked and wantonly defaced; even up to the end of the 19th century they were still in a deplorable condition.

Lately, the remains of a latin epigraph were discovered and transcribed. Originally, it consisted of two inscriptions, one above the other, the upper one being nowadays almost completely defaced. The lower one reads as follows:

IN HOC LOCO IACET BENE MEMORIE DESIDERIUS VIXIT ANNOS XXI
DECESSIT III IDUS MAIAS INDICTIONE DECIMA.

In Catacomb No. 13, one of a group situated not far from St. Paul's Catacombs, a greek inscription was discovered on the side of one of the graves. The epigraph records the burial of the head of the senate of the jewish community and of Eulogia his wife.

Two greek inscriptions, a seven-branched candlestick and a boat were also discovered in Catacomb No. 14. All these were engraved and painted red on one of the sides of a canopied table-grave.

I wish to express my thanks to the Rev. Fr. Prof. A. Ferrua, S.J., for his valuable help in transcribing these epigraphs.

MUSEUM OF ROMAN ANTIQUITIES.

Work has been proceeding at the Roman Villa Museum at Rabat with a view to reorganize it as a Museum of Roman Antiquities. In the existing collection there are specimens pertaining to different periods. It is intended to exhibit material belonging exclusively to the time of the Roman occupation of these Islands.

EXHIBITION.

An exhibition of the archaeological material recovered from the rock-cut tombs discovered in the Tal-Liedna and the Ghajn Dwieli Roads, was opened to the public on the 21st March, 1949. It remained on view until the 11th April, 1949. Models, photographs and designs, illustrating the material displayed, were also exhibited.

This exhibition proved to be very popular and was visited by a great number of school children who, hitherto, had not had occasion to profit from similar opportunities.

THE PALACE ARMOURY.

On the 1st April, 1948, the Armoury of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, in the Magisterial Palace, Valletta, became the responsibility of the Museum. It had been, hitherto, under the charge of the Public Works Department.

This collection is a valuable and reliable record of past history. Less than fifty years ago, Guy Francis Laking, M.V.O., F.S.A., Keeper of the King's Armoury, wrote that amongst the 5721 pieces which it then contained there was not a single forgery, an assertion, it is safe to say, which scarcely one armoury in Europe dare venture to put forward. All the specimens are true pieces and have acted the part in history for which they were intended.

The first record relating to the Armoury of the Knights of St. John, after their occupation of Malta, would appear to be in 1531, when a vessel arrived from England laden with large pieces of ordnance and small arms, a gift from King Henry VIII to the Order, in fulfilment of a promise made by him in 1526 to L'Isle Adam, when the Grand Master visited England. At least one specimen, an early 16th century buckler, still remains of this magnificent gift in the Armoury collection.

In 1555, a statute enacted under the Grand Master Claude de la Sengle provided that all arms of whatever description left by deceased Knights, either in Malta or abroad, were to become the property of the Common Treasury and had to be properly kept so as to be available when required. Daggers and swords were, however, sold by public auction. The Armoury, progressing on these lines, must have steadily grown to large dimensions. During the memorable siege of Malta by the Turks in 1565 the strain put upon it was very severe and large quantities both of armour and arms were unavoidably lost.

Bastia in the Island of Corsica.
 Cape Brun to Sepet, Toulon.
 Bay and watering place, Porto Ferrajo.
 Porto Ferrajo from within the bay.
 Four framed oil paintings:
 A wooded valley; figures in the foreground.
 A road in a wood; figures in the foreground.
 A valley with bridge; figures in the foreground.
 A lake; sailing craft and figures.
 Three framed engravings:
 The Nativity of Our Lord. By Pietro Bettelini.
 The Deposition from the Cross. By Pietro Bettelini.
 A scene in Windsor Castle. By T. L. Atkinson.

The Commissioner of Police:

A specimen of "Stocks".

LIST OF ACCESSIONS.

A calcareous operculum of a sea shell, mounted on a gold ring (14 cts.) (Curkett tal-Qarnita).

A pair of 18 cts., gold earrings. Enamelled Maltese Cross in beaded elliptical frame, hanging from a bow-knot. 20th century.

One bronze mortar and pestle. The mortar is provided with two handles and decorated by acanthus leaves. It bears the symbol I.N.S. and the inscription *Opus Antonio Picenini M.D. CCXXIII.*

Two cylindrical majolica vessels. Monochrome ornamentation. 18th century.

Two majolica jars; cylindrical in shape, decorated with a polychrome design representing two palm trees entwined by a snake and foliage.

Spherical majolica jar with polychrome design, representing leaves, a blue flower and a bunch of grapes. 18th century.

An oil painting:

"The road to the sea". By Theodore Hines. 19th century.

An oil painting:

"Portrait of a gentleman". English School. 19th century.

An engraving:

Portrait of Lt. General The Right Hon. Sir Thomas Maitland. By Thomas Lupton.

An engraving:

"Città e Fortezza di Malta colle nuove e proposte fortificationi". Venice 1686.

APPENDIX.

ADMISSION OF VISITORS TO VARIOUS SITES UNDER THIS DEPARTMENT,
 FROM THE 1ST APRIL, 1948, TO THE 31ST MARCH, 1949.

	Admission on payment.	Admission free.
The Museum, Valletta	—	—
The Roman Villa Museum	1,028	5,049
The St. Paul's Catacombs	1,209	4,776
The Tarxien Neolithic Temples	466	1,775
The Halsafleni Hypogeum	1,370	2,391
The Ghar Dalam Cave & Museum	674	362
The Ggantija Temples, Gozo	—	947

In 1670 stringent decrees came from the Venerable Procurators of the Common Treasury to the Commandant of Artillery for the effective control of the arms belonging to the Order. In 1674 the Armoury was furnished with 8938 muskets, 10,296 guns and arquebuses, 8,000 bandoliers, 550 breastplates, 4,400 headpieces and 4,000 pikes. During the grandmastership of Pinto it contained sufficient arms for 25,000 men; but the Procurators of the Common Treasury, in 1763, directed that the Commandant of the Artillery was to clear the Palace Armoury of old and obsolete arms.

The advent of Napoleon, at the end of the 18th century, could not have had a good effect upon the keeping of the Armoury, and when the British took possession of Malta the old armour and arms that remained in the arsenal were thrown aside as useless lumber to make room for the more modern armaments sent hither by the British Government. The arms delivered in Malta at this time consisted of 19,555 muskets with bayonets, 1,000 pistols and 30,000 boarding pikes. These armaments were later shipped back to England.

Sir Gaspard Le Marchant, the Governor from 1858-64, seeing and deploring the condition into which the once splendid collection had fallen, set himself energetically to recover the valuable relics of a bygone age and, under his personal direction, they were duly restored, classified and arranged. By the desire of Lord Grenfel, Governor of Malta from 1898 to 1903, the Armoury Collection had been again classified and better displayed. Till 1942 no material changes had been effected.

On the 7th April, 1942, almost two years after the entry of Italy into the Second World War, explosive bombs dropped by enemy aircraft caused damage to the gallery in which the exhibits were still displayed. All the specimens which could be easily moved were then hurriedly transferred to the basement of the Valletta Palace and to the Inquisitors Palace at Ghajn-il-kbira. Owing to the unfavourable conditions in the storage places some of the material sustained not a little damage.

After the cessation of hostilities the collection was returned to the Armoury where it is being attended to. A part of the specimens have already been put in their place and it is hoped that the reinstatement will be completed in the near future.

BURIAL CHAMBERS IN ST. JOHN'S CO-CATHEDRAL.

On the 9th April, 1948, investigations were conducted in the crypt of Our Lady of Graces, also known as the crypt of Bartolott, which underlies the Oratory in St. John's Co-Cathedral. The purpose of these operations was to ascertain the presence of certain burial chambers which were supposed to exist in this underground chapel.

The crypt of Bartolott was constructed in 1603, during the Grandmastership of Fra Alofius de Wignacourt. It served as a burial ground for those members of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem who had not the privilege of being interred in the nave of the Conventual Church. This practice was temporarily suspended during the occupation of Malta by the French but it was immediately resumed after their departure and lasted until 1808.

After the removal of some stone slabs, which seemed to be sealing slabs of tombs in the floor of the crypt, flights of steps were found leading down to three independent burial chambers. Plans and photographs of these chambers are now available for reference.

In connection with these investigations I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the Ecclesiastical Authorities for their help and cooperation.

RESTORATIONS AT THE MAGISTERIAL PALACE, VALLETTA.

A section of the frieze in frescoes in the state drawing-room has been restored.

The panels treated are the following:

A seated figure of Achaz.

A seated figure of Joel.

A scene representing Grand Master Fra Philippe Villiers de L'Isle Adam and his convent proceeding to Viterbo, in the year 1524.

A scene representing Grand Master Fra Philippe Villiers de L'Isle Adam and his Hospitallers leaving Rhodes, in the year 1522.

RESTORATION OF OIL PAINTINGS AND OTHER HISTORICAL OBJECTS. DAMAGED BY ENEMY ACTION.

OIL PAINTING BELONGING TO THE VALLETTA MUSEUM.

Half-length portrait of Grand Master Ramon Perellos.

OIL PAINTINGS BELONGING TO THE MAGISTERIAL PALACE, VALLETTA.

Lunettes:

The Chevalier Chambray, Lt. General of the squadrons of the Order, cruising against the Tunisians, takes the Contro Ammiraglio of the Grand Signor, in the waters of Damietta. 16th August, 1732.

An engagement in Calabrian waters between the "San Giovanni" and the Capitana of Tripoli which, with the tartane her escort, was burnt by Commander Fra G. di Langon under orders of Commander De Fleurignay, Governor General of the two squadrons. 25th June, 1709.

An engagement between the ship "St. George" and three Tunisian vessels, and capture of one of them called the "Porco Spino" by the Commander d'Allogny de la Croix in the Malta Channel. 23rd May, 1721.

Capture of the Sultana "Benghen" of 80 guns, in the waters of Lampedusa, by the Venerable General Bailiff Spinola. 8th October, 1700.

OIL PAINTINGS BELONGING TO THE JESUITS' CHURCH, VALLETTA.

The apparition of Our Saviour to St. Ignatius Loyola. Altar-piece by F. Romanelli.

Our Lady and Child with St. Ignatius Loyola and St. Francis Xavier. Altar-piece by G. D'Arena.

Our Lady of Sorrows.

Portrait of St. Peter, founder of the "Secreta".

The Immaculate Conception.

The Holy Family.

St. Carlo Borromeo.

OIL PAINTING BELONGING TO THE PILAR CHURCH, VALLETTA.

The Annunciation.

OIL PAINTING BELONGING TO THE CHURCH OF ST. CATHERINE, VALLETTA.

Our Lady of Sorrows. Altar-piece by Luti.

OIL PAINTING BELONGING TO THE AUBERGE D'ARAGON.

Full-length portrait of Grand Master Despuig.

HISTORICAL OBJECTS BELONGING TO THE CONVENTUAL CHURCH OF THE ORDER.

An inscription painted on wood with carved and gilt edges:

EM. M. M. F. EMMANUELI PINTO
QUOD PRESBYTEROS CONVENT. MAGNO PALLIO COCCINEO INSIGNIRI,
ECCLESIAE EPISCOPALIBUS INDUMENTIS ORNARI CURAVERIT,
EISQUE DICANTH USUM DEDERIT, POMPA IN SOLEMNITATIB.
AUCTA, ALIISQUE BENEFICIIS MUNIFICENTIA CONLATA.
AN. R. S. MDCCXLVII.

A decorated wooden box for the storage of candles. 18 century.

RESTORATION IN THE CITADEL, GOZO.

The badly weathered parts of the old clock tower in the Citadel were restored.

The remains of a defaced inscription, carved below the cornice facing the square, were removed to Casa Bondi for preservation.

This tower was erected by the citizens of Gozo, in 1641, during the rule of Grand Master Fr. Jean Lascaris Castellar (1636-57), under the governorship of Fr. Jerome Galleani Castelnovo.

NUMISMATIC COLLECTION.
DONATION.

Mr. Costanzo Busuttill—

One silver three-pence 1936. George VI.

ACCESSIONS.

One Half-crown	1816. George III.
One Silver Sixpence	1821. George IV.
One Copper Farthing	1821. George IV.
One Copper Penny	1825. George IV.
One Copper Farthing	1827. George IV.
One Copper Farthing	1831. William IV.
One Copper Farthing	1834. William IV.
One Copper Halfpenny	1838. Victoria.
One Copper Penny	1841. Victoria.
One Copper Penny	1846. Victoria.
One Copper Penny	1847. Victoria.
One Copper Penny	1848. Victoria.
One Copper Halfpenny	1848. Victoria.
One Copper Halfpenny	1851. Victoria.
One Copper Penny	1854. Victoria.
One Copper Penny	1859. Victoria.
One Silver Three-pence	1926. George V.
One Crown	1927. George V.
One Half-crown	1927. George V.
One Half-crown	1927. George V.
One Florin	1927. George V.
One Shilling	1927. George V.
One Sixpence	1927. George V.
One Three-penny piece	1927. George V.
One Crown	1929. George V.
One Copper Halfpenny	1933. George V.
One Crown	1935. George V.
One Silver Sixpence	1935. George V.
One Copper Halfpenny	1935. George V.
One Crown	1937. George VI.
One Crown	1937. George VI.
One Half-crown	1937. George VI.
One Florin	1937. George VI.
One Shilling	1937. George VI.
One Shilling	1937. George VI.
One Sixpence	1937. George VI.
One Silver Groat	1937. George VI.
One Silver Three-penny piece	1937. George VI.
One Silver Three-penny piece	1937. George VI.
One Silver Two-penny piece	1937. George VI.
One Silver Penny	1937. George VI.
One Copper Three-penny piece	1937. George VI.

VIII

One Copper Penny	...	...	...	...	1937. George VI.
One Halfpenny	...	...	...	...	1937. George VI.
One Farthing	...	...	...	...	1937. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1938. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1939. George VI.
One Twelve-sided Three-penny	...	...	...	...	1939. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1940. George VI.
One Silver Three-pence	...	...	...	...	1940. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1941. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1942. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1943. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1944. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1945. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1946. George VI.
One Copper Halfpenny	...	...	...	...	1946. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1947. George VI.
One Shilling	...	...	...	...	1948. George VI.
One Florin	...	...	...	...	1948. George VI.
One Copper Penny	...	...	...	...	1948. George VI.

LIST OF DONATIONS.

Comm. Alberto Eduardo Camilleri:

- One medal; St. Gregorius Magnus.
- One medal; Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice.
- One medal; Camera Pontificia Maltese.
- One medal; Religious "Donat" of Honour and Devotion. Second Class.
- One medal; Religious "Donat" of Honour and Devotion. First Class.

Director of Public Works:

450 majolica tiles, originally in the Chapel of the Magisterial Palace, Valletta.

Rear-Admiral Glennie:

Fragments of an old Greek amphora.

The Postmaster General:

A complete set of Malta Postage Stamps surcharged "Self Government 1947", issued on the 25th November, 1948: ½d., 1d., 1½d., 2d., 2½d., 3d., 4½d., 6d., 1s/-, 1s/6d., 2s/-, 2s/6d., 5s/-, 10s/-.

A 1d. Postage and Revenue stamp commemorating the Silver Wedding of their Majesties the King and Queen. Issued on the 4th January, 1949.

A Pound (£) Postage and Revenue stamp commemorating the Silver Wedding of their Majesties the King and Queen. Issued on the 4th January, 1949.

Mr. Peter Psaila:

A Roman grinding mill.

Mr. C. M. R. Balbi:

Six framed coloured prints:
Balaquiere Point, Toulon.
St. Fiorenzo in the Island of Corsica.