

REPORTS

ON THE WORKING OF

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

DURING THE FINANCIAL YEAR

1952-53.

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The following terra-cotta objects were recovered from the burial chamber:

One amphora, ht. 26 in., max. d. 12 in., decorated with dark red horizontal bands. Impressed upon the underside of one of the two opposite handles is a potter's mark representing an arrow-head.

One cinerary urn containing calcined human bones, ht. 11 in., max. d. $8\frac{1}{2}$ in.; damaged.

Two aryballoi:

- a) ht. $5\frac{1}{2}$ in., max. d. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.
- b) ht. $5\frac{1}{4}$ in., max. d. 4 in.

One oinochoë, ht. $5\frac{1}{4}$ in., max. d. $3\frac{1}{4}$ in.; damaged.

Two jugs:

- a) ht. 7 in., max. d. 5 in.
- b) ht. $4\frac{3}{4}$ in., max. d. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Five bowls:

- a) ht. 3 in., max. d. 4 in. with two vertical handles.
- b) ht. 3 in., max. d. $3\frac{3}{4}$ in., damaged.
- c) ht. 3 in., max. d. $3\frac{1}{2}$ in., damaged.
- d) ht. $2\frac{1}{2}$ in., max. d. $3\frac{3}{4}$ in.
- e) ht. 2 in., max. d. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.

One calyx, ht. $1\frac{3}{4}$ in., max. d. 6 in.

A cylindrical vessel with slightly convex sides and a flat base, ht. 4 in., max. d. $6\frac{3}{4}$ in.; its sides are pierced with a number of perforations, $3/16$ in. in diameter, arranged in horizontal rows. This type of vessel has not been recorded before in Malta. Damaged.

Six dishes:

- a) d. $6\frac{3}{4}$ in.
- b) d. $6\frac{3}{4}$ in.
- c) d. $5\frac{3}{4}$ in.
- d) d. $5\frac{1}{2}$ in.
- e) d. $5\frac{1}{2}$ in.
- f) d. $5\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Two bilychnis lamps:

- a) max. d. $3\frac{1}{2}$ in., used.
- b) max. d. $2\frac{1}{2}$ in., used.

One Romano-Maltese lamp, ht. $1\frac{1}{2}$ in., d. $2\frac{1}{2}$ in.; used.

On the floor of the chamber were lying the human skeletal remains, mostly in a fragmentary state, of three adult males.

ROCK TOMB AT 'L-ERBGHA MWIEŻEB', ST. PAUL'S BAY

On the 10th Januray, 1953, a rock-cut tomb was accidentally discovered at 'L-Erbgħa Mwieżeb' limits of St. Paul's Bay, by workmen who were widening the road in that locality (Malta 2" Map Ref. 381318).

The tomb consisted of a vertical shaft leading to a laterally situated burial chamber. The long axis of the tomb, passing through the shaft and chamber, ran in a north direction.

The rectangular shaft measured 8 ft. in length, 4 ft. 6 in. in width and 10 ft. in depth. A stone slab, 4 ft. 10 in. in height, 2 ft. 7 in. in width and 6 in. in thickness, was found covering the entrance to the burial chamber on the north side of the shaft. On the south side of the shaft was cut an irregular cavity, 3 ft. in height, 2 ft. 7 in. in width and about 1 ft. in depth, indicating the intention of excavating another burial chamber on this side of the shaft.

The entrance to the burial chamber measured 4 ft. 6 in. in height, 2 ft. 4 in. in width and 1 ft. 10 in. in depth; its sill being 4 in. above the level of the floor of the shaft.

The burial chamber, rectangular in plan with a flat ceiling, measured 9 ft. in length 6 ft. in width and 5 ft. 7 in. in height; its floor being 4 in. below the sill of the entrance. A trench, 6 ft. 7 in. in length, 10 in. in width and 4 in. in depth, was excavated in the floor of the chamber along the west wall. A lamp hole, 6 in. in height, 5 in. in width and 5 in. in depth, was cut in the centre of the west side of the chamber at a distance of 3 ft. 2 in. from the floor; it contained the disintegrated remains of a terra-cotta oil lamp.

The following terra-cotta objects were recovered from the chamber :

Two amphorae :

a) ht. $20\frac{1}{2}$ in., max. d. 12 in.; damaged.

b) ht. 21 in., max. d. $11\frac{1}{2}$ in., decorated with red horizontal bands.

One oenochōē, ht. 11 in., max. d. $5\frac{3}{4}$ in., decorated with dark red horizontal bands; damaged.

Two dishes :

a) d. $6\frac{1}{2}$ in.

b) d. $3\frac{3}{4}$ in., damaged.

Fragments of several vessels.

Dispersed on the floor of the chamber were the fragmentary remains of a human skeleton belonging to a female aged 12 years.

EXHIBITION AT THE PALACE ARMOURY

In connection with the yearly celebration of festivities to commemorate the raising of the Great Siege of Malta, on the 8th September, 1565, an exhibition was held at the Armoury of the Magisterial Palace, Valletta, lent for the occasion by courtesy of H. E. the Officer Administering the Government.

The exhibits included 16th century arms and armour, a collection of rare books and manuscripts, engravings, paintings, plans, photographs, commemorative medals and models. These specimens were selected from the collections preserved in the Palace Armoury, the Royal Malta Library and the Valletta Museum.

The exhibition was open to the public from the 1st to the 14th September and was visited by 4014 persons.

RESTORATIONS AT THE MAGISTERIAL PALACE, VALLETTA

During the year under review restoration works were undertaken in the frieze of the Hall of St Michael and St George, formerly the Supreme Council Chamber. The first section taken in hand was scene 9 described hereunder.

The Frieze was painted in fresco, late in the sixteenth century, by Matteo Perez de Alesio.

Matteo Perez, commonly known as Matteo d'Aleccio, was born in Rome in 1547 and studied under Michelangelo. In 1583 he went to Spain, where he executed fresco paintings in the Cathedral of Seville and a year later he was commissioned to paint for the same church a huge picture of St. Christopher. He is supposed to have died round 1600.

The frieze in the above-mentioned room depicts twelve episodes in the Great Siege of 1565 and allegorical figures of Virtues alternating these scenes.

The scenes represent :

- 1) A bird's eye view of Malta with the arrival of Suleiman's fleet.
- 2) The Turks disembarking in Marsaxlokk.
- 3) Attack on Fort St. Elmo by the Turks.
- 4) The Infidels capturing St. Elmo.
- 5) The Island of St. Michael being attacked by the Turks.
- 6) The small relief to the Borgo.
- 7) The attack on the Borgo.
- 8) The Turks launching an attack by sea and land on St. Michael on July 15th.

- 9) Assault on the post of Castille on 21st August.
- 10) Demonstration of the Siege, showing the position of the batteries.
- 11) The arrival of the Christians to the aid of the besieged.
- 12) The defeated Turks re-embark their armies and flee from Malta.

RESTORATION OF THE PALACE TAPESTRIES

The set of Gobelins Tapestries, comprising ten larger and seven smaller panels, as is well known, was donated by Grand Master Ramon de Perellos y Roccafull (1697-1720), on his election to the Grandmastership of Malta. It was customary for a Grandmaster, on being raised to the supreme dignity of the Order, to make some important gift which came to be known as "bijou".

One of the smaller panels bearing the coat of arms of Perellos, was restored during the financial year under review, as it was in a bad state of preservation.

RESTORATION OF PAINTINGS

Valletta Museum

Consecration of Mons. F. S. Caruana as Bishop of Malta; by P. P. Caruana.

The Magisterial Palace, Valletta

Landscape attributed to Annibale Carracci.

Landscape attributed to the same artist.

A. Carracci was born in Bologna and formed his early style on the works of Correggio and Parmigianino. He then went to Venice where he was greatly influenced by the art of the great Venetians. His mature years Annibale spent in Rome where, together with assistants, he produced the magnificent decorations at the Farnese Palace, which are still considered as a major work of art, despite the decline in admiration for the Carracci. Annibale exercised a great influence on the development of landscape painting. He died in Rome in 1609.

Portrait of Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena.

Portrait of Grand Master Ferdinand Von Hompesch.

Cupids sporting; attributed to C. Ferri.

Though this picture figures as by Ciro Ferri in the old inventories, it is more likely by a lesser baroque master.

"Head of a child"; by P. P. Caruana.

"St Jerome".

This picture is given in the old catalogues to the Flemish school, but it is probably by a Dutch Master in the circle of De Koninck.

Royal University of Malta

Portrait of Marcus Mallia.

Portrait of Michelangelo Bonnici.

Portrait of Albertus Zammit.

Portrait of Raphael Camilleri.

Portrait of Aulus Licinus.

Portrait of St. Publius.

Portrait of Fr. Maurus of Malta.

Portrait of Don Faustinus Xara.

Portrait of Fr. Maurus Cali.

Portrait of Prof. G. B. Schembri, M.D.

Sarria Church

Two lunettes by M. Preti depicting "St John giving the habit of the Order to Malta" and "St Michael overthrowing the rebel Angels".

These two canvases were in a very bad state of preservation. They were relined and partially restored.

Liesse Church

Crucifixion.

Episode from the legend of Liesse.

Jesuits Church

Holy Ghost.

Fort Ricasoli Chapel

Portrait of Grand Master Nicholas Cottoner.

Law Courts

Crucifixion.

Restoration of other works or Art

Statue of Hastings, at Hastings Gardens.

Statue of the Madonna, in papier maché, at Liesse Church.

ACCESSIONS

By Gift

1. One medal struck in commemoration of Frederick II — Presented by the Comitato Siciliano Onoranze a Federico II nel VII Centenario della morte — Palermo.

2. One mahogany show-case with the sword of honour, presented by the Officers "The K.O.M.R." to the late Colonel A.G. Biancardi, C.V.O., C.M.G., and also his decorations and his framed portrait — Presented by Jos. M. Manara Esq., testamentary executor of the late Miss Beatrice Manara.

BY PURCHASE

Paintings

1. Consecration of Mons. F.S. Caruana as Bishop of Malta; by P. P. Caruana. (22" x 25").

Pietro Paolo Caruana was born in 1794, studied in Rome under Tommaso Minardi and died in 1852. Amongst his best works are the "Visitation", in the Church of Porto Salvo, Valletta, of which the bozzetto is preserved in the Museum, and the two companion pictures of St. Michael and St. George, in the staircase leading up to the Armoury in Valletta. His copy of Lawrence's George IV, in the dining room of the Palace, Valletta, is very freely handled. He also executed a "Shipwreck of St Paul" for a Church in Tripoli.

2. "St John preaching in the wilderness"; by a central Italian mannerist of the late Cinquecento. (39" x 29½").

3. Two companion pictures representing the "Moor of Venice" and "Mary Stuart"; by G. Calli (19½" x 15½").

Drawings

1. View of the Granaries, Floriana; by P.A. De Angelis (19th Century) — gouache — (12½" x 8¼").

2. The Grand Harbour from Marsa; by the same artist in the same medium (12" x 8¼").

3. Pietà Creek, from Pietà; by the same artist, in the same medium. (12" x 8¼").

4. The Grand Harbour from the Upper Barracca; as above.

5. Malta Harbour, c. 1860 — pencil (16½" x 10½").

6. Recto: The profile of a hooded figure possibly a study by M. Preti for the figure in green, in "The taking of St. John" (4th bay on the left, in the vault of the Co-Cathedral) — red chalk — (18" x 14").

Verso: A genre scene — red chalk and wash — by A. De Favray, signed (14" x 18"). — From the collection of G. Hyzler.

Favray is represented in the Louvre, Paris, by "A Maltese young lady" which hangs in the Salle La Caze and by "Maltese Ladies" in the Salle Daru.

7. A sheet of studies in red chalk on recto and verso, attributed to Favray, but probably by another artist of the period working in Malta.

8. The scourging of Christ; attributed to Bartholomaeus Spranger — pen and wash heightened with white (12" × 8").

Prints

1. Madonna della Nuvola; engraving by G. Farrugia (14" × 10").

Giovanni Farrugia was born in 1798. He studied first under Michele Busuttil, then in Rome where he was sent in 1817 by Sir T. Maitland. In 1826 he worked in Milan under Giuseppe Longhi where amongst other works he produced the Ethiops after Rubens. He spent the last six years of his life in dejection in Gozo where he died in 1861.

2. "Deposition" after Raphael; by T. Madiona — Lithograph — (26½" × 18").

3. Eleven litographs. Details of the above. Rome 1829-30.

Tommaso Madiona was born in Senglea in 1803. After being awarded the gold medal by the University, he proceeded to Rome where he formed his style on the Renaissance Masters. He was an able litographer and a correct draughtsman. In the field of painting his two pictures of St. Publius and St. Agatha, flanking the main altar-piece in the Cathedral of the Gran Castello, Gozo, display good draughtsmanship and delicate sense of colour. He died in 1864.

4. Six views of Malta — coloured engravings — by Gouaz (14¼" × 9¼").

Yves Marie Le Gouaz was born at Brest in 1742 and studied under Aliamet and Ozanne in Paris, where he died in 1816.

5. A map of the "Islands of Malta and Gozo" by S. Neale, dated 1803 (8¼" × 11").

Besides the abovementioned objects the following manuscript was purchased :—

"Segni che fa La Capitana in tutte le occasioni".

NUMISMATIC COLLECTION

AR one Scottish shilling, 1948	George VI (1936-1952)
AR two shillings, 1949	do
AR one shilling, 1949	do
AR one shilling, 1950	do
AR one Scottish shilling, 1950	do
AR one sixpence, 1951	do

ADMISSION OF VISITORS TO MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS FROM THE 1st APRIL, 1952 TO THE 31st MARCH, 1953

	Admission on payment	Admission Free
The Valletta Museum	—	—
The Museum of Roman Antiquities	1,344	2,377
The St Paul's Catacombs	1,800	1,182
The Tarxien Neolithic Temples	1,275	785
The Halsafleni Hypogeum	1,359	1,155
The Ghar Dalam Cave & Museum	827	383
The Ġgantija Temples, Gozo	—	947
The Palace Armoury	7,691	7,828