reasons that we shall never forget — and the script was eventually salvaged from the rubble that had been my house. It was then meant, by recalling the privations so stubbornly endured by our people during those memorable years, to help us tighten our belts and nerve ourselves to brave the determined Axis attempts to pound us and starve us into submission”.

Dr. Critien offered the script for publication to Sir William Dobbie, the then Governor and Commander-in-Chief of these Islands, the proceeds to go to some Fund for the relief of those who had suffered the loss of their property through enemy action.

We are happy to print hereunder the appreciative letter of Sir William to Dr. Critien:

THE PALACE.
MALTA.

3rd February, 1942.

No. 804/42,

Dear Dr. Critien,

I am most grateful to you for sending me your booklet about the events of 1798 to 1800. I have read it with great enjoyment and I hope you will allow me to congratulate you upon it. You managed to collect some most interesting facts. You suggest that the booklet should be published for the benefit of a charity and I want to thank you for this very generous offer. At the same time we are exceedingly short of paper at present and could not put up the book on the market in any useful quantity. For the time being, therefore, I do not see how we can arrange for its publication.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd.) W. G. DOBBIE.

Dr. Critien’s work has lost much of its topical interest; but we are sure the readers of “Scintia” will even now be interested in a close view of the wretched life had and endured with unbroken spirit by the Maltese during the eventful and glorious months of their insurrection.
Commune shook the ancient Order off its feet. Not only were the Order's possessions in France suppressed, but Jacobinism, fomenting anti-Order feeling, secured a foothold in these islands and paved the way for the final decision of the Directory which led to Napoleon's capture of the island in 1798.

Historians of this period have already dealt with this field of enquiry in a fairly extensive way, and it is not my intention here to recount the well-known deeds of the Knights. My aim is rather to present as true a picture as possible of the effects of the Order's rule on the mind of the people; in other words, to give the popular rendering of the history of the age, reflected in local legends, traditions and folk-memory. A complete picture is evidently impossible. The common people do not care about details normally and will, at the most, react only to such measures or events as concern their daily life and affect their material aspirations. Small wonder, therefore, that in this brief analysis of Maltese folk-memory we shall find that sulky Grand Master Lascaris, good-natured Zondadari and magnanimous De Redin are preserved in folk-memory much more than De Rohan, whose code of laws forms a landmark in the history of Maltese legislation.

Within this broad framework we shall now classify the traditions and record the folk-memories relating to the days of the Knights as they have come down to us. And here I must warn the reader that it is quite possible to trace a historic cause for some of these traditions. For the period under review has been extensively studied and written records, either directly or indirectly, invariably affect public opinion. Nor must we lose sight of the fact that for a very long time a common danger united the Maltese with the Order in their defence against the forces of Islam, and this undoubtedly softened the first adverse reactions to the rule of the Knights. That is why Maltese folk-memory does not, on the whole, show the Order in an unfriendly light.

For the sake of simplicity this vast material of traditional lore may be classified under two main headings:

1. Local legends, including stories about churches, place-names, memories of the Inquisition and popular derivation of surnames;

2. Other memories, including village coats of arms, names of bandclubs, popular ballads and everyday expressions.

The following are examples of local legends:

IL-PALAZZINA (lit. small palace). This is the name given to a large house adjoining St. Theresa's Convent at Bormla. There is a legend about this building which says that the owner was a knight who, in his younger days, frequented a house of ill repute where he always left some of his ill-spent money. Once, returning to the sinful house after a long absence, he found it empty and uninhabited. On the table he saw to his surprise all the money which he had left years before. The knight interpreted this as a divine warning to change his way of life. When he returned to Malta he bought the Palazzina which he later bequeathed to the Convent (1).

IL-QASAM TA' SELMUN (Selmun Estate). Students of local history are aware of the origin of the “Monte di Redenzione” (1607), which was later incorporated by De Rohan (1787) with the “Monte di Pietà” founded in 1597. The first great benefactress of the “Monte di Redenzione” was Caterina Vitale, a charitable lady of noble birth, who bequeathed most of her property, including the Selmun estate, to this institution. Caterina Vitale died at Syracuse in 1619 but her remains were brought here and buried in the Carmelite church, Valletta. A suitable inscription on the wall of one of its side chapels recalls her liberality (2).

Apart from this, however, Catarina Vitale figures in folk-memory as *Is-Sinjura ta' Vital*. Among the peasants in the neighbourhood of Selmun Palace there is a popular story recalling how the Selmun estate came into her possession. The story runs that when Caterina came to be married her father offered the bridegroom a choice between two estates, Ghajn Rihana and Selmun — hardly a reasonable choice as from what followed the father seems to have wanted him to choose one estate and not the other. He praised the advantages of the respective estates in the following terms:

Ghajn Rihana warza mohtara,
 u Selmun qasam majjur.

(Ghajn Rihana is the pick of my estates (lit. finest flower), while Selmun is an excellent (i.e. very fertile) estate). The bridegroom’s choice fell on Selmun and the father, who in reality prized this estate above everything else, took it so much to heart that he shot the bridegroom. Whether he killed him or not, however, the legend does not tell (3).

In-Dar ta' Pultu. This large country house is situated in Wied Zembaq, within the limits of St. George’s Bay, Birzebugia. It takes its name from the knight who built it — Ippolito. Mgr. A. Mifsud refers to the building as “la casa formatasi dal Bne. Ippolito Novanteri nel 1626 nella contrada di S. Giorgio di Birzebugia sul villone di Wied Zembu (sic)” (4). According to tradition the knight Pultu had tried more than once to entice to his house a certain peasant girl, Katarina, who lived in the farmhouse called “Ta’ Gellieda”, in the locality known as “Ta’ Imsiefer” near Kirkop. Her father, resenting the knight’s impertinence, took the law into his own hands, shot Ippolito out of sight and buried him beneath a small mound known as “Il-Qlajja”, half-way between “Ta’ Gellieda” farmhouse and “Il-Palazz ta’ Pultu”. The building is now used as a farmhouse and part of it has been turned into a store for animal fodder, while cobwebs galore encumber the arches of its spacious rooms. (5).

“Tal-Hlas” Church, overlooking Wied is-Sewda, between Qormi and Zebbug, forms part of the parish of Qormi. Tradition has it that a knight of dissipated habits once lived in the large house in front of the church. But one day he was taken ill and, feeling that death was nigh, sent two servants to call a priest. They went off in opposite directions, one to Qormi and the other to Zebbug. The priest from Qormi, who was the first to arrive, confessed the dying knight and gave him Extreme Unction. When he died, the knight was taken to Qormi and ever since this village has claimed “Tal-Hlas” church as its own (6).

Il-Warda tal-Kavaliieri. This is the name given to the seed of a creeper commonly believed to grow within Fort St. Angelo between May and September, and nowhere else. In pre-war days people were allowed to enter Fort St. Angelo for the Divine Service which was held in the church of the Nativity on the 7th and 8th September, the occasion being the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin and the anniversary of the Maltese victory over the Turks in 1565. People from the Three Cities and from other places used to look for this special plant which, according to tradition, sprang out of the blood shed by the Knights in defence of that Fort. The seed or “flower” has the form of the eight-pointed Cross of the Order, but two of its points on one side are slightly tilted at an angle with their opposite points.

3. I heard this legend from a 50-year old woman who is the owner of the only shop at Selmun.


5. For this legend and for the Bettina stories I am indebted to a certain Mikael, known as “Ta’ Paipusu”, whose farmhouse lies at a short distance from Ta’ Lorca Church, Gudja.

An interesting parallel with the *motif* of this tradition occurs in the Polydorus episode in Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book III (Lines 22-68). Lately I have come across the following extract on "The Pasque Flower" by Ida M. Whitworth in "The Country Life" of June 14th, 1946. The writer says: "In 1937 I found *Anemone Pulsatilla* growing not very far from Cambridge. It is said to grow wherever the Danes fought on English soil. Hence its local name "Danes' Blood".

**The Chapel of Bones.** This small chapel was demolished by enemy action during the war. It contained a great number of human skulls which, according to tradition, belonged to the soldiers who fell fighting in the Great Siege. Bradley (7) refers to the belief in these terms: "I visited the famous chapel of bones in Valletta, the decorations of which are given to be the remains of Maltese soldiers who fell in the Turkish wars, but, according to the best expert evidence, are more probably the result of a general exhumation from a neighbouring Maltese cemetery, the site having been required for building purposes". In this respect one might mention similar beliefs that those who fell during the Siege lie buried within Fort St Angelo or, according to others, in the cemetery attached to St John's Co-Cathedral.

**Duellng in Strait Street.** Ancient writers record the belief that this narrow street in Valletta was the scene of many duels and affairs of honour in which the knights were often involved. Lately, however, it has been contended, and not without good reason, that it was not Strait Street but Strada Frederick, a narrow street flanking the Palace, where duelling took place (8). P. Brydone thus upholds the tradition in his "Tour through Sicily and Malta": "The duellists are obliged to decide their quarrels in one particular street of the city; and if they presume to fight anywhere else, they are liable to the rigour of the law. But

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IL-GNIEJ TA’ BETTINA. The tower within this garden, wrongly pronounced and written Shilieji Tower, instead of Xulilelta Tower, by Englishmen in Malta, lies half way between Gudja and Ghaxaq. It dates from the latter half of the 18th century and it belonged to the Marquise Bettina Muscat-Dorell, who figures in popular stories both as a woman of loose morals and as a benefactress.

According to tradition, the villa originally belonged to a Knight who was an intimate friend of Bettina. Later on she managed to exchange her house in Valletta for this country place where she began to lead a life of gaiety and merry-making. She kept no female servants and only men were allowed to enter her house. Knights of all nationalities went to visit her and, Circe-like, she had them all killed and robbed as soon as she grew tired of them. They were then buried in the garden where some graves are still shown as their burial place. Later on in life Bettina went to Italy whence, as if to atone to her past misconduct, she brought back with her the statue of St. Sinfoljano, whom Gudja villagers still hold in great veneration. While in Italy she was saved from a horse accident by an Italian peasant, and in return for his timely help she promised him her daughter’s hand. Eventually the foreigner came to Malta as her son-in-law, undertook the administration of the estate and raised the field-rent (M. il-qbiela), to the great annoyance of the farmers, who so resented his interference that they called upon Bettina and told her that she should never have allowed an Italian to suppress them. Whereupon she promised to compel her son-in-law to leave her house and he did so. In her later years the grateful farmers working on her estate used to ask her to stand godmother at their christenings, which she always accepted on condition that she would be allowed to give the child the name she liked. And she called them all Sinfoljanu, after that saint she had brought from Italy, and at each christen-

ing she gave a sum of one hundred skudi to the parents of the new-born babe (11).

Thus much tradition says. Undoubtedly popular fancy has been at work here in elaborating the Bettina stories. But one can trace some historical connection with reality, which must have helped to give rise or add details to the legends. Thus house No 13, Merchants’ Street, Valletta, known as “Casa Dorell” may well be the house belonging to Bettina which is mentioned in the folk-story. The graves in the garden of the villa at Gudja are in reality the graves of some officers serving on General Graham’s staff during the French Blockade, when Il-Gnien ta’ Bettina served as General Graham’s headquarters. Mgr. Mifsud writes on these graves: “L’alta torre alla Gudja, la figura circolare sulle moderne mappe topografiche chiamato Torre Xullita, fu fatto costruire un cento cinquantina anni addietro dalla marcheshe Bettina Muscat Dorell a mo’ di scudri e postumo mausoleo di quella trascorsa architettura, destinata solo a dare un estesa visuale agli abitanti del bel villino che lo comprende, oggi proprietà dei Signori Trapani di S. Marciano e dei Signori Galea Testaferrata. Il Generale Graham venuto ad assistere i Maltesi, insorsi contro i Francesi nel 1798, colle truppe da lui levate, risiedette in questo villino. Qui morirono e venivano sepolti nel giardino due dei aiutanti del Graham, e nel più lontano angolo della villa si vede al muro una lapide portante uno stemma,

11. For the cult of St. Sinforiano at Gudja vide Ferras, Op. cit., p. 350, where we read the following:— “In essa (chiesa parrocchiale) venerasi il sacro deposito di san Sinforiano, martire. Conservavasi al tempo dell’Ordine nella Chiesa conventuale di san Giovanni al tempo dell’Ordine nella Chiesa convenzionale di san Giovanni al tempo dell’Ordine nella Chiesa convenzionale di san Giovanni al tempo dell’Ordine nella Chiesa convenzionale di san Giovanni al tempo dell’Ordine nella Chiesa convenzionale di san Giovanni al tempo dell’Ordine nella Chiesa convenzionale di san Giovanni al tempo dell’Ordine nella Chiesa convenzionale de...”
they show very clearly that the people of the land never accepted a place-name unless it first suited their taste and conformed to their pattern.

Towers. I give here a few examples of traditional Maltese tower-names taken from Mgr. Mifsud’s article on Maltese towers (14). In Malta we have: (a) Il-Torri tal-Kaptan (The Captain’s Tower) at San Pawl tat-Targa; (b) Il-Torri tal-Kavalier (The Knight’s Tower) at Qrendi; (c) Torri Tejef or Torri tal-Ors, nowadays Fort Ricasoli, so called after the Knight Alessandro Orsi at whose expense the tower was built in 1629; (d) Torri tal-Vandomu (Vendôme’s Tower), so called after the Grand Prior of France, Vendôme, who in 1716 constructed batteries and other fortifications at Marsaxlokk and at St. Paul’s Bay. In Gozo we meet with (e) Torri ta’ San Martín (St. Martin’s Tower) or Torri Garzż, erected on the promontory of Ras it-Tafal by Grand Master Martino Garzżes.

Other Buildings. Among names of other buildings and bastions which correspond more closely to the designation given to them by the Knights may be mentioned: (a) Torri tal-Arlojż at Birgu, now totally demolished; (b) Il-Maċina, which recalls the crane constructed at the Old Arsenal about 1629, which designation is now substituted by the word biqra, although a street in Senglea is still called Strada Macina (15); (c) Ta’ Frankuni, originally derived from Villa Franconi at Floriana, which was used as a Lunatic Asylum — a designation persisting today to indicate the Hospital for Mental Diseases at Attard; (d) Il-Kamra at Valletta, first built in 1593; (e) L-Iśkola tal-Habs, used as a slave prison in the days of the Knights, then in the 19th century as a naval hospital and as an elementary school and later, up to the start of hostilities in 1940, as an examination hall; (f) L-Abatija tas-Sultan, originally built by Manoel de Vilhena in 1725 for housing poor girls and teaching them

sewing and reading, then converted into a House of Industry by Lord Hastings in 1825 and since 1850 used as a Central Civil Hospital; (g) Bartala, near Zabbar — a corruption of Verdala — used to designate the military barracks in that locality; (h) Il-Barriera, literally meaning “quarry” but here used in connection with quarantine measures (It. barriera, Eng. Barrier) near the present day fish-market at the Marina; (i) Laskri, meaning Lascaris Ditch; (j) Ta’ Pintu alias Pinto Stores, at the Marina; (k) Il-Pixkertija, or fish-market, a name originally denoting the place known as Is-Suq il-Qadim but nowadays given also to the new fish market; (l) Il-Furmarija, a corruption of Infirmeria, being the Holy Infirmary of the Knights, still preserved in the expression it-tabib tal-Furmarija; (m) Il-Kistlanija, a corruption of the word Castellania, the ancient Law Courts now used as the Medical and Health Office, Valletta; (n) Il-Gardjola and Is-Sirena at Senglea; (o) Il-Palazz l-Ahmar at Lija; (p) Dar il-Ljuni, the residence of the Lieutenant-Governor of Malta, so called from the four stone lions on the terrace; (q) Il-Mandragg, a word originally meaning “mooring place” but eventually applied to slummy parts of Valletta, Birgu, Ghaxaq and Victoria, Gozo; (r) the various buildings known as l-Armerija, such as those at Valletta, Żurrieq, Siġġiewi and Qormi; (s) Tigné, so called after the famous engineer who built Fort Tigné, — a designation which has supplanted the older one of Ponta ta’ Dragut; (t) is-sur tad-Deredin at Imdina, so called after one of the Grand Masters; (u) Tal-Fama, being that corner of the Palace Square where Kingsway meets Bishop Street, so called, according to Sir Temi Zammit, because a pillar surmounted by a stone wolf was erected there in 1558 to commemorate the grant of a Cardinal’s hat to Verdala, the expense of replacing the pillar in 1672 being borne by the Grand Master’s nephew who lived in the Hotel de Verdalin, now used as the Civil Service Sports Club (16); (v) Il-Prezza


18. G.A. Vassallo, Antichità dell’Industria e della Civiltà in Malta, in L’Arte, No. 37, p. 1
Street flanking the Castellania. Here slaves were bound to the large nail (M. ganċ), which still exists, pilloried and left there after being flogged; (k) Taħt il-Qanpiena, marking the street corner where the bell of the slave prison was hung; (l) Bieb il-Lħud, the city gate opening on Jews’ Sally Port, marking the boundary of the Jewish quarter; (m) Ġnien is-Sultan (The Grand Master’s Garden) outside Victoria Gate; (n) L-Ifran tas-Sinjuġi, where the bakery of the Order stood, whence the street name Strada Forni (Bakery Street). (o) il-Lampier tas-Sultan (the Sultan’s Lamp), offered by Grand Master Perellos to Our Lady of Mellieħa on recovering from an illness in 1708.

It is not out of place to recall here the various attempts on the part of the Order to impose a village or a city name on the people. These attempts were invariably foiled by the tenacity of folk-memory and of the traditional place-names. As far back as 1420, before the Order came to Malta, Imdina had been honoured by the appellation of Notabile, for which name Le Sengle in 1554 substituted Ċittà Vecchia, or Old City, to distinguish it from Birgu, “La Città Nuova”. Both Notabile and Ċittà Vecchia, however, could never oust the popular name Imdina, which has outlived the two other official designations. The same thing happened when the names Cospicua, Senglea and Vittoriosa were given by the Knights to Bormla, l-Isla and il-Birgu respectively. These Maltese names have survived in general everyday conversation, though the former ones are still used in private correspondence and in the English section of the local Press. During Pinto’s Grandmastership the village of Qormi was raised in status, being re-named Ċittà Pinto, and this, in a way, substituted the Casal Fornaro which had previously designated this village. But the popular name Qormi survived every attempt to suppress it. Pinto’s association with the village, however, has been perpetuated by the adoption of his coat-of-arms as the village devise and, in comparatively recent years, a village band-club has been named after the Grand Master. żebbuġ, żejtun, Siggiewi

and Żabbar were likewise changed to Ċittà Rohan (1777), Ċittà Beland (1797), Ċittà Ferdinand (1797) and Ċittà Hompesch, but here again the official designation was short-lived, for it ended with the inglorious exit of the Knights. Yet another example is Paula, named after De Paule, the Grand Master who encouraged people to settle there by offering indemnity to those persons in debt who resided in the new town. But here as at Qormi the people, while appreciating the Grand Master’s liberality and cherishing his memory, have stuck to the old name Rahal Ġdid. The above also explains the popular nickname Il-Mitqunin given to the inhabitants of Rahal Ġdid. Subborno Vihienna likewise has not been able to oust the more popular Furjana, named after the engineer P.P. Floriani (1634).

Parallel examples from the period of British rule in Malta may be cited. The capital of Gozo was declared a City in 1887 (19) on the occasion of Queen Victoria’s Silver Jubilee, but the Gozitans still refer to their capital as Ir-Rabat. Similarly Albert Town, Marsa, named after Albert, the Prince Consort, has never taken ground among the Maltese, who still refer to the place as Il-Belt il-Gżida.

The Inquisition. This institution, which flourished in Malta under the Knights, figures also in Maltese tradition. Besides the two palaces Tal-Inkistur, one at Birgu and the other on the outskirts of Siggiewi, the name of the Holy Office is a popular synonym for repression, cruelty and torture. People still refer to a harsh law as inquisitorial, Din Inquisizzjoni! Of the tools of torture employed l-Imqass, il-Kavalett and Il-Bir tas-Skieken are the ones which are best remembered.

Popular imagination has created the following legend about Don Matteo Falzon, is-Sahhar Falzon, who was accused and condemned by the Inquisition in 1575. The story runs that while the Inquisitor was at table with his friends, they called Falzon from his dungeon to amuse the

19. Vide Government Notice, No. 75, of the 10th June, 1887.
guests. Falzon asked for a cask of water and for a piece of string. Taking the end of the string in his hand and giving the clew to a Knight, the wizard jumped head foremost into the cask and disappeared. And nothing was heard of him till the Inquisitor received a letter from Sicily in Falzon's handwriting with the words "Remember me". Later, Falzon ordered his Sicilian servant to cut him up into pieces and bury him in the cellar, whence he would arise and become the Anti-Christ. Every week the servant was to send a letter to the Inquisitor at Malta. But it so happened that the servant by mistake sent a letter which he was supposed to send at a much later date, with the result that the Inquisitor grew suspicious and asked the Viceroy to investigate the whole thing. Thus they were able to extract the whole truth from the unfortunate servant, how Falzon had left him a number of letters, carefully dated at weekly intervals, of which he was to send one every week. They took out of the cellar the dead man's bones, which were already beginning to reunite, and burned the remains. And that was the end of Sahhar Falzon!

Another legend dealing with the Inquisition tells the story of a Knight who fell in love with a Maltese girl. The latter, acting on her confessor's advice, rejected his amorous advances. The disappointed knight, however, managed to bribe a woman whom he persuaded to accost the same confessor under pretence of confessing and then accuse him of misconduct to the Inquisitor. As a result the innocent priest found his way into prison, where he remained for a good number of years. On her death-bed, the wicked woman confessed how she had maligned the good priest in order to obtain the reward promised to her by the Knight. Thus vindicated, the priest was freed and carried home in triumph. But his triumph was short-lived for he died soon after (20).

for a prize, hunting and hawking, and country dancing, traces of which survive in the well-known Maltese kontradanza. There were also bonfires on Midsummer Eve. But more often than not the sounding of the tocsin or the firing of a signal from our watch-towers announced an approaching Turkish attack. Our farmers, thus warned, left their crops and retreated with their womenfolk and their children behind the fortified towns, there to lead a miserable existence behind the festering ditches of the citadels. But even when there was no Turkish attack one had to do one's share in building the fortifications when one's turn, called newba or angara, came. Or else one had to stand guard away from hearth and home in some coastal watch tower, expecting one's hours of furlough to return to the dear ones at home. Occasionally our forefathers had the good fortune of being visited by the Viceroy, or by the King himself, and then there would be the usual enthusiastic reception, the tournament at the Marsa and the distribution of money by way of royal largesse.

Bearing all this in mind we can realise the great change and the tremendous impulse given by the Knights to popular entertainment in these islands. With the gradual decline of Turkish power and the menace of Islam the sons of St. John ostensibly discarded their religious garb and added new life to already existing sports, introducing new customs and pastimes, primarily for their own enjoyment, and secondarily to provide amenities to the dwellers of the cities and to the tillers of the soil. And when the Order left these islands, there remained a rich legacy of entertainment. There were the Carnival celebrations, held for the first time in 1535, when the Christian armada was assembling in Malta Harbour; the horseraces, sanctioned by the official presence of high officials of the Order, including the Grand Master himself; the bonfires on the Palace Square lighted by the Grand Master and his Balis on St. John's Eve. There was also the Maypole merrymaking in the same square on the first of May of each year, the blessing of animals on the feast of St. Anthony Abbot, when the Grand Master went to Rabat for the usual ceremony outside St. Augustine Church, the Imnarja festival at Buskett, which was announced by a Bandu, originally read in the streets of Rabat and Imdina, a practice traces of which survive to this day. The memory of all this has come down to us, together with other popular spectacles and entertainment, such as the 8th September celebrations with the dphajja regatta in the Grand Harbour, out of season Carnivals known as Karmnu ifleb and the pilgrimage to Mellieha which gave rise to great fun and merry-making, as may be seen from the following folk-songs:

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M Elder morna tal-Mellieha
Konna wieh u nhuxin,
Hadna l-kunjat tal-maghna
U l-dinxun tar-rookitin.

M Elder morna tal-Mellieha
Silba hofta wara hofta,
Duk lizopp jizzani lqnni,
Jien nixiriu sieq hofta.

Il-Mellieha djejja u swira
U l-Mellieha nerga' mnur;
Ghax-xemx ghandi Lombrulla
Ghall-gharq ghandi l-maktur.
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one or other of the Grand Masters. The Qormi coat of arms, for example, bears the five crescents on a field, characteristic of Pinto’s arms. Other examples are the armorial bearings taken by the people of Rahal ġdid from De Pawla’s coat of arms; and the devices of Żabbar, Senglea and Valetta taken from the arms of Hompesch, Le Sengle and La Valette respectively. A modern instance of the influence of the Knights is evident in the names of several band clubs, such as La Valette Band in Valetta, Beland Band in żejtun, so called after Grand Master Hompesch whose mother’s surname was Beland, and L’Isle Adam Band at Rabat.

BALLADS. Of the period of the Knights two ballads have survived. One of them relates the story of a Maltese lady who fell victim to the fair words and compliments of a Knight of St. John, how her husband, finding out that she had betrayed him, stabbed her and how she finally repented and made her last peace with God. I have already published some stanzas of this ballad in my study on Maltese Ballads in “The Sundial” 1943. I am now giving the full text as recited to me by a 60-year-old lady from B’Kara:—

**The Auditor’s Daughter**

X’siegħa sewda kienet dina
Meta morna il-Giżwita!

Morna nihebu l-ilma mbierk
— Kavalier ghemiżha fidha.

Rigalilha il-kafina —
Rigalilu id-djammant:
Kelma ġgib il-obra
Sa ma waslu il-palazz.

Gie ssinjur minn barra,
Saqqa: “Is-sinjura fejnha?”
— Qaltlu: “Is-sinjura l-Giżwita

How dark was the hour
When we went to the Jesuits’ Church!

We went to take holy water
— And a Knight pressed her by the hand.

He gave her a pendant —
And she gave him a diamond:
And they joined in conversation
Till they reached the palace.

When the master came home
He asked: “Where is thy mistress?”
She answered: “At the Jesuits’ Church

Qieghda tisna’ il-quddies...”
Is-sinjur mar ifittixha
U l-Giżwita ma sabbieix!
Rega’ gie ssinjur minn barra — “Ghidli ssinjura fejnha
GĦax noqtol lilek minn flokha!
— “Is-sinjura fuq... fis-sala
Titkellem mal-Kavalier...
Nitbolok la tqotolhix!!
Huwa tela’ l-eewwel sala
L-eewwel sala ma sabbieix —
Dahal fit-tieni sala...
Qabadha minn dūriha...
L-abhar tarġa li niżel
Tikkel fil-puntuflija...
Seba’ stalletti taha
Mal-abhar laħqet il-vina.

“My mistress is hearing Mass”
The master went out to look for her
And he did not find her in that Church!
The master returned home
He insisted ‘Tell me where your mistress is
Or I’ll kill you in her stead!’
— “My mistress is upstairs, in the drawing room
Conversing with the Knight...
I pray you, do not kill her...

He went up to the first hall
But she was not to be found there —
He passed on to the second hall
He caught her by her hair...
And at the last stop
He stumbled over her train...
He hit her seven times with his dagger
And the last stab reached the vein.

All was over, as we say
She sent for the doctor:
He said: “Forgive, my daughter, forgive
Because you are past human help”.

“All was over”, as we say,
She sent for the parish priest:
He said: “Forgive, my daughter, forgive,
Because you are past all cure”.

“All was over”, as we say,
She sent for the barber-surgeon:
He said: “Forgive, my daughter, forgive,
Because there is no remedy anywhere”.
Kumparsa kuddiem is-Sultan
Qalal: “Dina kif inhija?
K ma spidejthix mur u spediha”
“Ommi, meta mmutlek jiena
Ghaddini minn triq bla nies;
La rridek qniepen iddoqqi
W anqas tqaddisli quddies.
“O my mother, when I am dead
Let them carry me through a quiet street
Toll no sad bells for me
And do not celebrate any masses.
“O my mother, when I am dead
Carry me through an out-of-the-way road
So that one neighbour may tell another:
“This is Balzan’s daughter who has been murdered.”
“O my mother, when I am dead
Let my corpse pass by the bastions,
So that one neighbour may tell another:
“This is the Auditor’s daughter.”
“O my mother, when I am dead
Bury me under the threshold
So that whenever you go in or out
Your love will remember me”.
“O my mother, when I am dead
Leave an opening in the coffin,
So that if he re-marries
I’ll hear his banns proclaimed”.

We now pass to the second ballad, which appeared in one of the first newspapers printed in Malta, i.e. “L’Amico della Patria” of the 15th March, 1840. It is a soldier’s song and I am including it here because internal evidence such as references to the coinage of the Order (kruċ il-habba) to the Sultan and to the Turks fixes its time of action well within the period of the Knights. It tells the story of a lovesick Maltese soldier far from his native land who thinks of his beloved and comforts himself at the thought that one day, having triumphed over the Turks, he would return to his love. The song contains some beautiful ideas expressed in simple language with feeling. It runs into twelve stanzas of four lines each, but the ballad must have been much longer as it is described in the abovementioned paper as a “fragment” of an old Maltese song. I give the text of the ballad:

X’dawl ta qamar jiddi!
Jien fiha narr kruċ il-habba;
Ohorgu, xbejbiet, ohorgu
La intord ward minn fal-imhabba.

Ftit sighat minn tat-tgawdija
Thalluhomx hekka jaharbu;
Meta tistghu, xbejbiet, gawdu
Qabel tibdu l-weggha gqarbu.

Jien garrabtu dan l-uqigh
Uqigh qawwi u wisq kieser;
Meta l-qalb ta’ qalbi qalti
“Kemm inhoobbok” — kelli nisfier.

Kelli nisfier, immur il-boghd,
I-irsiera njib lis-Sultan tiegh;

What a brilliant moonlight!
I can even see the cross on the grain;
Come out, ye maidens, come.
For you are the flowers of love.

A few fleeting hours of joy
Let them not pass away so soon.
Enjoy yourselves whenever you can, maids.
Before you begin to experience pain.

I have myself experienced this grief
A pain most cruel and intense;
When my beloved told me
“How I love you” — I had to go away.

I had to go far, very far away.
To bring slaves to my Grand Master;
The Order of St. John in Maltese Folk-Memory

---Le! Narak jiena żgur negra.---
Alla ghad żgur ihallasni.
---No! I shall certainly see you again.
God will surely reward me.
---Jien narak: tara mixxhuta
Għuxar Tork fejn riglejx.
---I will see you; And there will be
Ten Turks prostrate at your feet.
---Jitolbu l-ħniena tiegħek
Hajthom jieħdu min idejk.
---Imploring your pity
Expecting life at your hands.

Everyday Expressions: The following sayings and expressions, which are still heard in everyday conversation, are in some way or other connected with the period of the Order's rule:

Il-Habba tas-Sultan, i.e. in the Grandmaster's pay;
Habba tad-dirwan, a coin struck by De Rohan, the word being a corruption of the Grand Master's name.

Il-Bejta tas-Sultan, which literally means the Grand Master's nest, is used when referring to Valetta, the capital, where the Sultan exercised his official functions.

Wiċċ Laskri, a far from complimentary reference to a sulky person, originally applied to Grand Master Lascaris who not only interfered with women's drees unduly but also forbade women to wear masks during Carnival.

Pesta ta' Paulu Miltu, a plague which was no plague at all, so called after one Paolo Emilio Ramurri, a sanitary official who took every precaution against plague in 1623 only to find that it was a false alarm, with which compare the disease known as ta' Ghio (Ghio's Disease) in the 19th century.

L-Għatba tal-Kistlianija, literally meaning "the Castellania's doorstep" an expression denoting a thing accessible or applicable to all, irrespective of age or sex or class, usually heard in connection with litigious persons;
It-Tin ta' San Sidor, a kind of fig which, according to tradition, was introduced in Zondadari's time, whence the corruption San Sidor. Zondadari's refusal to take the usual vows on assuming office is thus recorded in a local saying: "Zondadari mhux bhal ta' dari" i.e. Zondadari is not like previous Grand Masters.

Parrot, another kind of fig believed to have been introduced by Grand Master Parisot de la Valette, whence the popular designation (M. Parsotta) of the fruit; Banavvolja, from the Italian buonavoglia, a term applied in Maltese to ruffians of the worst type. In those days buonavoglia were employed by the Knights on the galleys and other ships.

Il-Karrakka, recalling the Order's ship La Gran Carracca, a word which nowadays denotes an unwieldy person, anything awkward and obsolete, an old ship, a car which easily breaks down etc.

Il-Midjunin, meaning the debtors, a nickname given to Pawla residents, originating from Grand Master De Paul's offer of a free pardon to debtors who were willing to reside in the new suburb named after him. As early as 1750 the new village had given rise to the following saying recorded by De Soldanis in his Ms. dictionary (23): Kollu wiehed ir-Rahal gdid, i.e. whether it is a village or not makes no difference, because it is not a parish.

De Redin, a Grand Master who was also Viceroy of Sicily and who facilitated the importation of corn into these islands to such an extent that it was possible to sell it at six tari per salma, has given rise to the following saying:

Il-Gren Mstru De Redin
U l-qaum biss-sei tarin.

L-Imtiehen tar-Rih (The Windmills), an uncomplimentary reference to the Knights, whose eight pointed cross bore some resemblance to the sails of a windmill.

In this study I have attempted to show the main lines which the student of folk-lore in Malta has to follow in dealing with the traditional, as opposed to the historical aspect of the Order's rule. There are many other memories and traditions which are still waiting for the patient research worker to be brought within the range of human knowledge. It is my sincere hope that others will join me in my task of exploring the hidden treasures of the popular mind in these islands before they are completely lost amidst the turmoil and complexities of modern life.