

Re Norway address

THE
PLAIN TRUTH
A MAGAZINE OF UNDERSTANDING

12th June, 1980

Craig White

Dear Mr. White,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 13th May.

I did not know that Dr. Hoeh had given a different view concerning the location of "Melita" in Acts 27-28. But I was familiar with his explanation which some scholars have put forth. Most scholars today favour the Malta explanation as I do, especially after reading the account in the book, Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul by Admiral James Smith first published in 1848. Admiral Smith wrote this book when he lived in Malta during the winter of 1844-45. He carefully analysed the words of Luke's account from a nautical point of view and charted the route of Paul's voyage from Crete to Malta. He also discusses the points put forward by Girogi, Bryant, Falconer and others who maintained that the shipwreck took place at Meleda in the Gulf of Venice off the coast of Dalmatia.

I will now briefly discuss the points you mentioned which are also referred to by Admiral Smith. The claim that the "Adria" or Adriatic was only between Italy and Yugoslavia can be proved not to be true. Ptolemy, who lived immediately after Luke, describes this sea often and leaves no doubt as to where it was. When describing the boundaries of Italy, he tells us that it is bounded on one side by the shores of the Gulf of Adria and on the south by the shores of the Adria (lib. iii. c. 1) and that Sicily is bounded on the east by the sea of Adria (Ib. c. 4). He further informs us that Italy is bounded on the south by the Adriatic Sea (Ib. c. 14), that the Peloponnesus is bounded on the west and south by the Adriatic Sea (Ib. c. 16), and that Crete is bounded on the west by the Adriatic Sea (Ib. c. 17). So there is ample evidence to show that the name Adriatic was given to the lower sea between Crete and Malta. It was also called the Ionian and Sicilian sea. And remember that Luke's account says that the ship was driven through the Adria after leaving Claudia before she reached Melita.

The sailors "knew not the land." This is understandable when you realise they would only be familiar with Valletta, the main harbour on the south side of the island. Only upon reaching shore did they learn the identity of the

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island. St. Paul's Bay on the north side was remote from the usual port of call and thus not well known.

Why did Paul describe the inhabitants of Malta as being "barbarous"? Since the Melitans were not Greeks, they were barbarians in Paul's mind (Rom. 1:14). If they did not understand the language Paul used to address them then they would be considered barbarous (I Cor. 14:11). Nobody called the Greeks barbarians, but Scylax calls the Phoenicians barbarous and Polybius makes one of his speakers, a Greek, call both the Carthaginians and Romans barbarians.

Although it is true that no poisonous snakes are on the Maltese islands today, that doesn't mean there weren't any in Paul's day. Numerous examples can be shown where snakes or other animals have become extinct in various areas after a period of time.

The term "fetched a compass" (Acts 28:13) does literally mean "to go about" or "to make a circuit." It probably refers to a tacking manoeuvre to make headway against unfavourable winds. Later they could go directly north because of the south wind. The route was from Malta to Syracuse in Sicily (verse 12) then to Rhegium (verse 13). The context doesn't prove Melita was Meleda on the Dalmatian coast.

There is one other reason why I think the Dalmatian Meleda was not Melita where Paul was shipwrecked. Those on Paul's ship did not see land until they were in 20 fathoms of water offshore from Melita. Near the Dalmatian Meleda is Cephalonia which is 5,300 feet high and can be seen at the distance of eighty miles. Before losing sight of it, the ship must have come within sight of the mountains of Corfu and the Acroceraunian range followed by the high land on both sides of the Strait of Otranto on the left by the mountains of Calabria and on the right by those of Albania -- till they came in sight of the mountain range of the island of Meleda. According to Lithgow in his Travels, Meleda can be seen from the entrance of the Gulf of Cattaro at a distance of forty miles.

Lady Strangford, who visited Dalmatia said: "It appears to me impossible to imagine for an instant, that the ship (of St. Paul) could have passed up the narrow way between the coast of Otranto and the Acroceraunian mountains without seeing land" (The Eastern Shores of the Adriatic, p. 215). Meleda should have been in sight for more than one whole day if it were the correct island. Nothing will account for the facts recorded by Luke except a low flat island distant from any mountainous region.

Your comments about the conspiracy theory were interesting. World events appear to be increasing in momentum as we approach the end of this age.

Craig White
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Thank you once again for writing, Mr. White. If you have further questions or comments, please feel free to let us know.

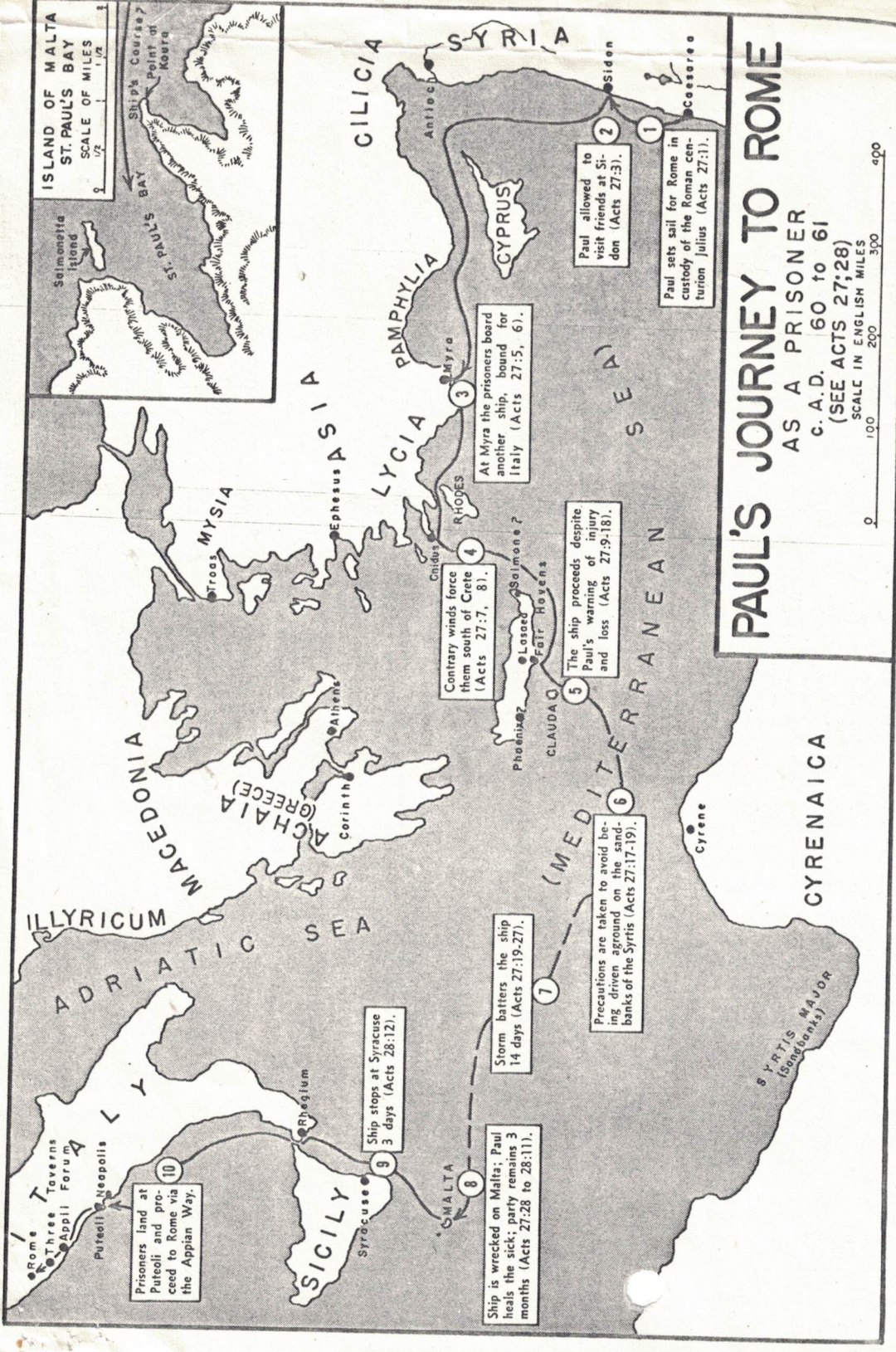
Yours sincerely,



R. C. Boraker

Personal Correspondence Department

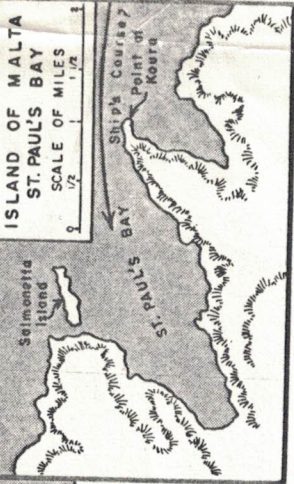
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PAUL'S JOURNEY TO ROME AS A PRISONER

c. A. D. 60 to 61
(SEE ACTS 27:28)

SCALE IN ENGLISH MILES
0 100 200 300 400



10 Prisons land at Puteoli and proceed to Rome via the Appian Way.

9 Ship stops at Syracuse 3 days (Acts 28:12).

8 Ship is wrecked on Malta; Paul heals the sick; party remains 3 months (Acts 27:28 to 28:11).

7 Storm batters the ship 14 days (Acts 27:19-27).

6 Precautions are taken to avoid being driven aground on the sandbanks of the Syrtyis (Acts 27:17-19).

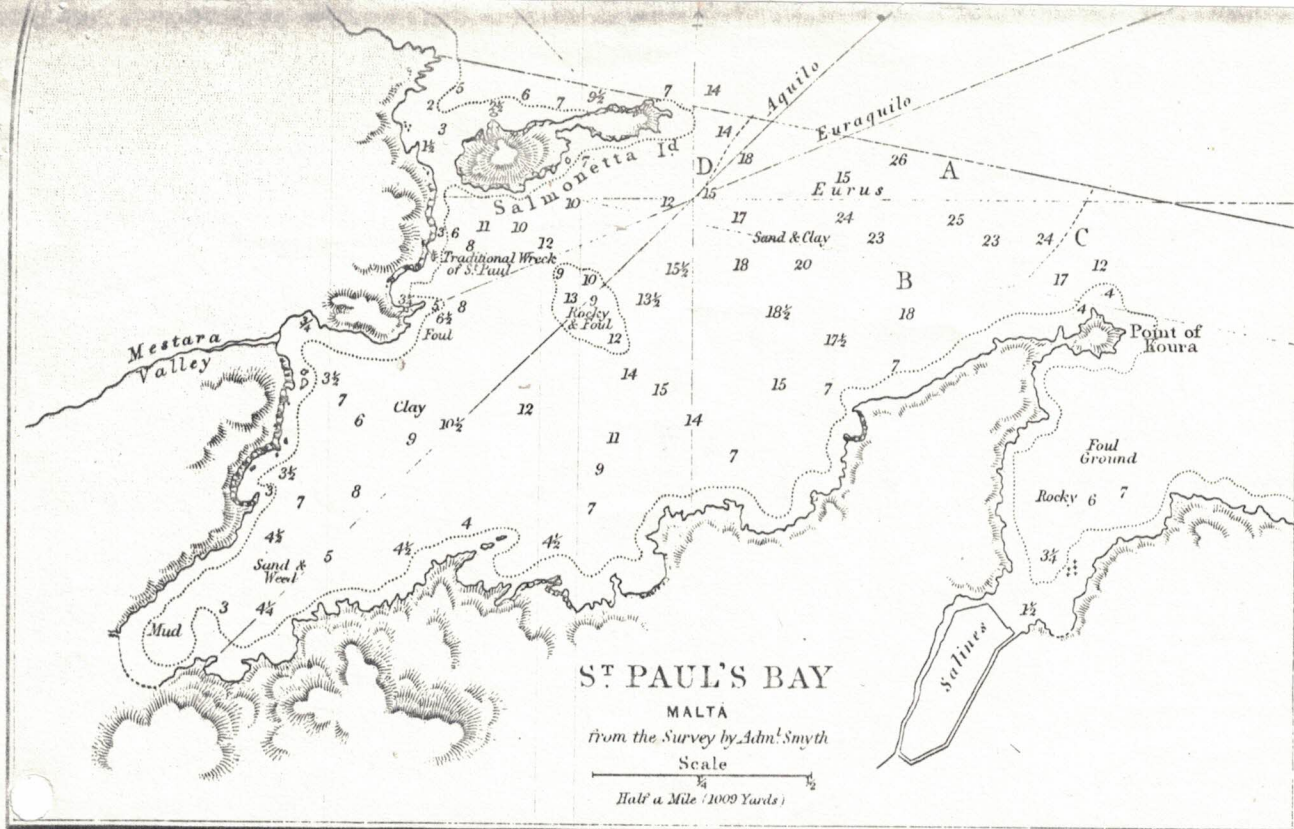
5 The ship proceeds despite Paul's warning of injury and loss (Acts 27:9-18).

4 Contrary winds force them south of Crete (Acts 27:7, 8).

3 At Myra the prisoners board another ship, bound for Italy (Acts 27:5, 6).

2 Paul allowed to visit friends at Sidon (Acts 27:3).

1 Paul sets sail for Rome in custody of the Roman centurion Julius (Acts 27:1).

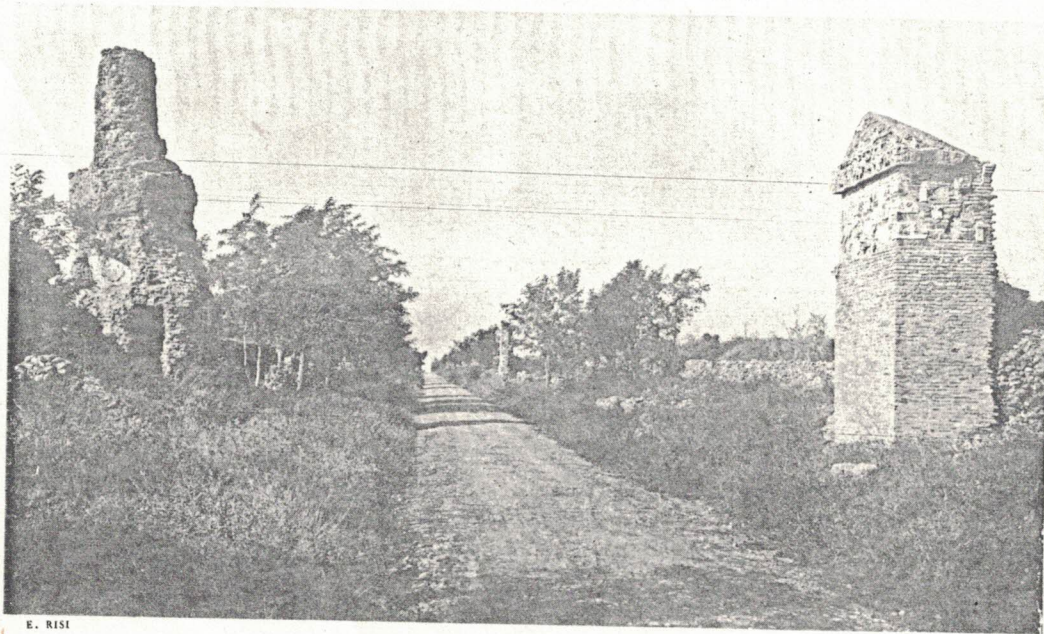




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MALTA: ST. PAUL'S BAY

This is the traditional site of Paul's shipwreck, 8 mi. northwest of Valletta (see p. 456; see on Acts 27:41). Salmonetta Island is in the center background (see map p. 444).



E. RISI

THE APPIAN WAY OUTSIDE ROME

The Appian Way, 18 ft. wide and with a sidewalk on either side, was one of the chief roads from Rome to the southern tip of Italy. Paul approached Rome by this road (see on Acts 28:14-16). Built in the 4th century B.C., it was constructed of four layers of stone of which the upper one, forming the pavement, was composed of polygonal slabs of basalt. The Appian Way is lined with tombs for nearly 15 mi., among them being many monuments to famous Roman statesmen. The entrance to the subterranean catacombs of Calixtus, in which Christians found refuge during persecution and in which they buried their dead, is beside this road.