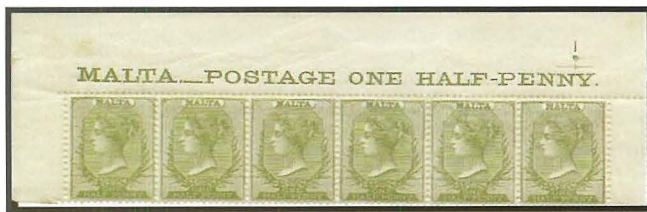


MALTA STUDY CIRCLE N° 86

by Adrian Patrick



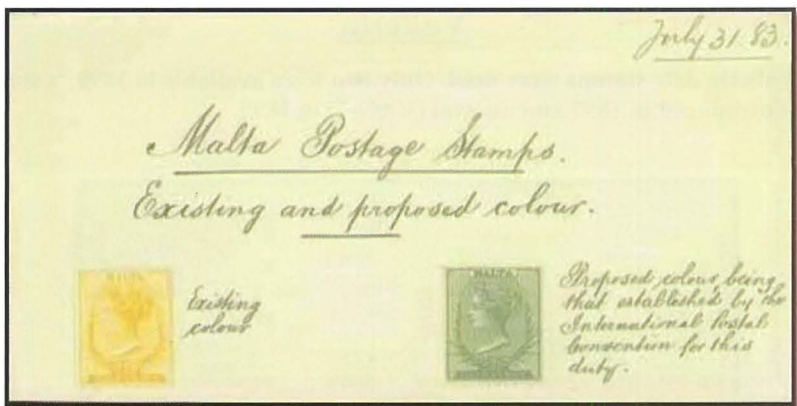
1885 ½d GREEN DEFINITIVE



This display concentrates on the use of this stamp during 1899.



Following the 1860 introduction of the ½d buff/yellow/orange - and most shades in between - there was a gap of 25 years before Malta introduced its first set of definitive stamps.



1883 proposed colour change - a ½d buff alongside a ½d green

“Proposed colour being that established by the International Postal Convention for this duty”

On 1st (some sources have 2nd) January 1885 six stamps were issued, the lowest denomination is the ½d green - Stanley Gibbons 20 (Joseph Buttigieg 10, Michel 4, Scott 8, Unificato 5, Yvert 5).

This Victoria stamp was designed by Jean Ferdinand Joubert de la Ferté, photographer and artist/stamp engraver for De la Rue. He was born in Paris on 15th September 1810, became a naturalized British Citizen on 19th October 1855 and died, just six weeks before the definitive set was issued, on 17th November 1884.

MALTA

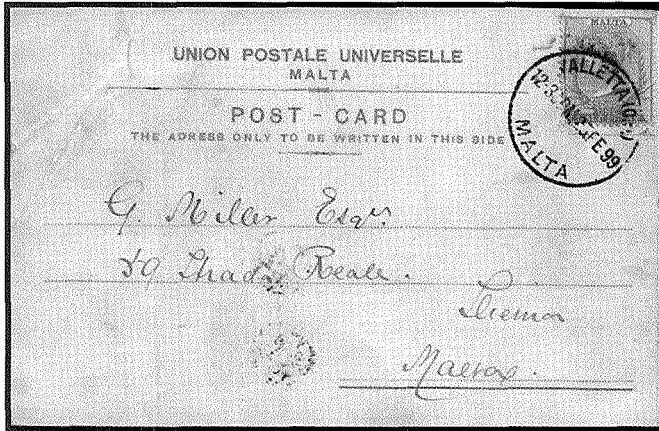
A single ring date stamp with a curved ‘Malta’ (MAL-12) was used at the General Post Office, Valletta from approximately 1876 until 1922.



Malta (MAL-12, code K) dated 5th January

Valletta

Several Valletta date stamps were used. Only two were available in 1899; a single ring (VAG-2) introduced in 1897 and an oval (VAG-7) in 1899.



Valletta (VAG-2) dated 23rd February

N.B.

Interesting text reads - "Malta is not included in the Imperial penny postage"

Also PHS 11 on picture side - very unusual and against Malta Post Office regulations



Valletta (VAG-7a) dated 1st August

Sliema

A Branch Office (B.O.) for Sliema District, including St Georges and St Julians, opened in 1895 at 95 Prince of Wales Road. The SLM-21 handstamp was the only one used in Sliema during 1899.



Sliema single ring (SLM-21) dated 3rd January



Sliema single ring (SLM-21) dated 16th February

Birkirkara (Birchircara)

The Birkirkara B.O. was opened on 1st April 1898 and was closed on 30th April 1899. Thereafter, the single ring, 21mm (also recorded as 20½mm) date stamp was applied at the local Police Station. Codes 'B' and 'C' were also in use during 1899.



Birkirkara 21mm single ring (BRC-1, code A) dated 17th April

Bormla (Cospicua)

From 1890 to 1903 Cospicua Post Office was at 147 Strada San Paolo (St Paul's Street). A 20mm single ring date stamp, Cospicua around the top, no 'Malta', (COS-1) with codes 'A' and 'D', may have been applied to the ½d green in 1899, but it was rarely used to cancel stamps. A 23mm, Cospicua over Malta, datestamp (COS-21, Codes 'A' to 'G') was more regularly applied.



Cospicua 23mm single ring
(COS-21, code A), 13th February



Cospicua 23mm single ring
(COS-21, code B), 1st October



Cospicua 23mm single ring
(COS-21, code C), 26th April



Cospicua 23mm single ring
(COS-21, code D), 18th January

Mdina (Notabile)

The old capital was called Melita (Roman), Mdina (Arab) and Citta Vecchia by the Knights of Malta (who built Valletta as their new capital). Notabile was used for many years and then Mdina was re-introduced. The Notabile Branch Office was on St Paul's Street, Rabat, just outside the walls of Mdina. Codes 'A' to 'F' have been recorded.



Notabile 19mm single ring
(NTB-1, code A), 6th November



Notabile 19mm single ring
(NTB-1, code E), 7th July

GOZO

Victoria

The capital city of Gozo is known to the Maltese and Gozitans as Rabat, its name prior to 10th June 1887, when it was renamed in honour of Queen Victoria during her Silver Jubilee year. The first post office in this city was at 5 De Soldanis Street from 1885 to 1900.

A single ring date stamp, Victoria over Gozo, was used from 1887 to 1900. During 1899, Codes 'A' and 'B' are common, Code 'C' scarce and Codes 'D', 'E', 'F' and 'G' are rarely noted.



Victoria 21mm single ring
(VIC-1, code A), 2nd October



Victoria 21mm single ring
(VIC-1, code C), 17th May



Victoria 21mm single ring
(VIC-1, code B), 17th October

Mgarr (Migiarro)

This village houses the Gozo-Malta ferry terminal. The post office was opened in 1885 in Victory Street. Only Codes 'A' and 'B' were used ('B' has been noted sideways, indicating that the slug is interchangeable) and Code 'A' is approximately twice as common as Code 'B'.

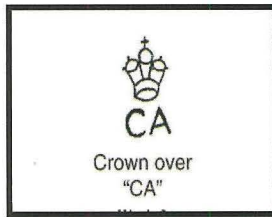


Migiarro 20mm single ring
(MIG-1, code A), 14th December



Migiarro 20mm single ring
(MIG-1, code B), 6th September

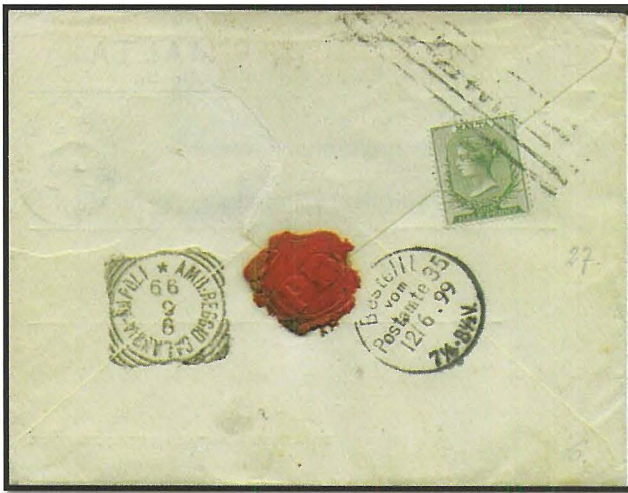
Watermark



It is reported that two sheets (480 stamps) of this stamp are known with an inverted watermark. Mint and used examples are recorded, including several with 'village' postmarks.

REGISTRATION

From 1893-1903 most Malta registered mail had stamps cancelled by the handstamp 'MALTA' amid five horizontal bars. This handstamp appears to have been designed to cancel a number of stamps in a row. One version has the middle line running through 'MALTA' (MAB-1) and the other with the line interrupted (MAB-2).



MAB-1 x 3 and registered oval handstamp (REG-71, code L) dated 8th June 1899

REVENUE

The following examples of the ½d green, overprinted 'Revenue' or 'REVENUE' were issued during 1899.

9th August:



'Revenue' in mixed case, 17mm long, perforation 14
22nd November

November:



'REVENUE' in capitals, 15.5mm long, perforation 14

..... AND FINALLY

The last legal and officially accepted use of the Victoria ½d green is shown below.



QV ½d green and three KEVII stamps - 5pm, 30th November 1938

A local, philatelic envelope addressed to Mr George Mallia at 10 Falzon Street, Sliema.

(Sold on eBay by Dave Foster (ID daveinne) for £26.00 on 11th June 2017)

N.B.

Handstamp references are those used by the Malta Study Circle