

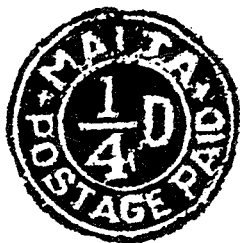
An unrecorded Postage Paid handstamp?

By Dr. Giovanni Bonello

Two ‘negative’ postage paid handstamps have already been recorded: the one farthing circle (PP¼ – 1a) and the one farthing oval (PP¼ – 1b). These are referred to as ‘negative’; differently from other handstamps, white lettering appears on a black background. As the handstamps have no date, their period of use is difficult to establish: they are usually found on undated wrappers or covers. The Malta Study Circle handbook dates them 1924 – 1925, but they were still in use in 1928.

I am here recording a third one: a *halfpenny* Postage Paid in an oval upright. This has the same measurements as the farthing ones (3 cms diameter) and I do not exclude that it is the same as the farthing one with the central oval substituted. The ones I have seen are in red a date around 1951. I propose to list this handstamp as PP½ – 1c.

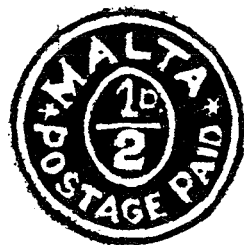
The illustration at page 367 of the Handbook shows dots between ‘Malta’ and ‘Postage Paid’. The items I have seen show stars. This either means that there may have been two handstamps or, more probably, that the stars were misinterpreted as dots owing to the frequent smudginess of the impressions.



PP¼ – 1a



PP¼ – 1b



PP½ – 1c