

Great Britain Stamps Used in Malta

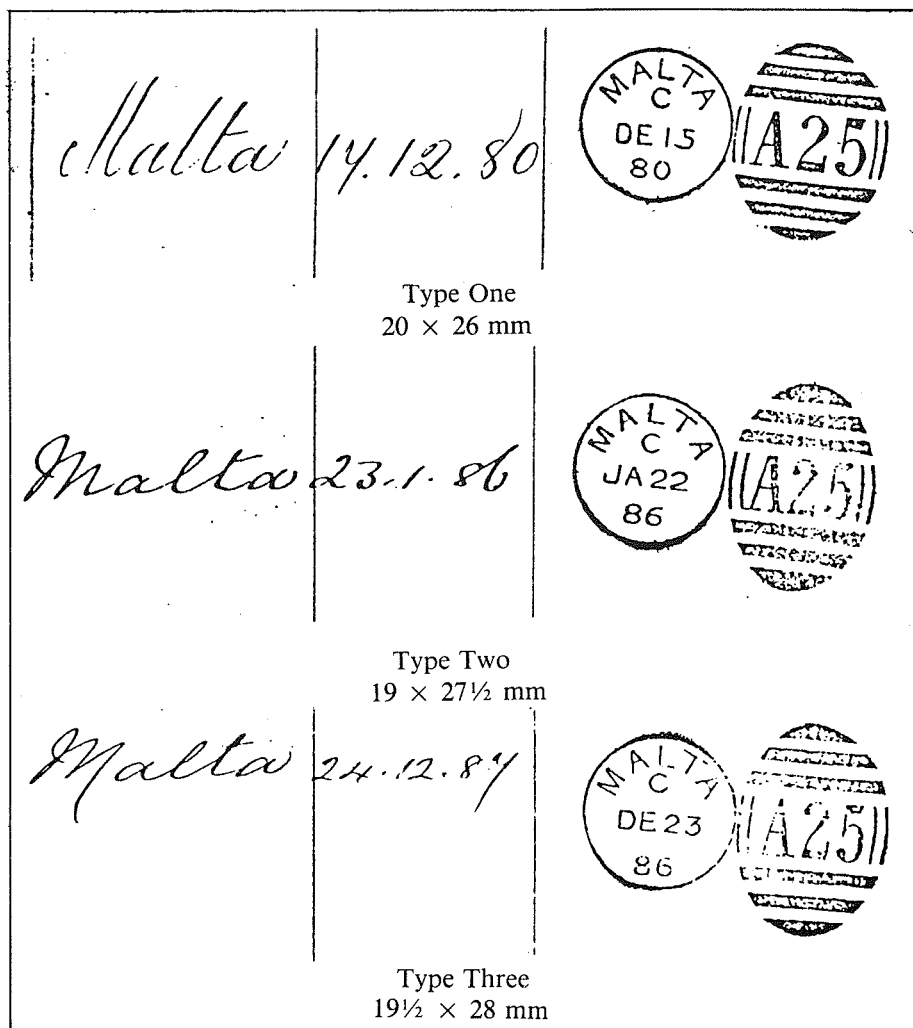
Continued Part 5

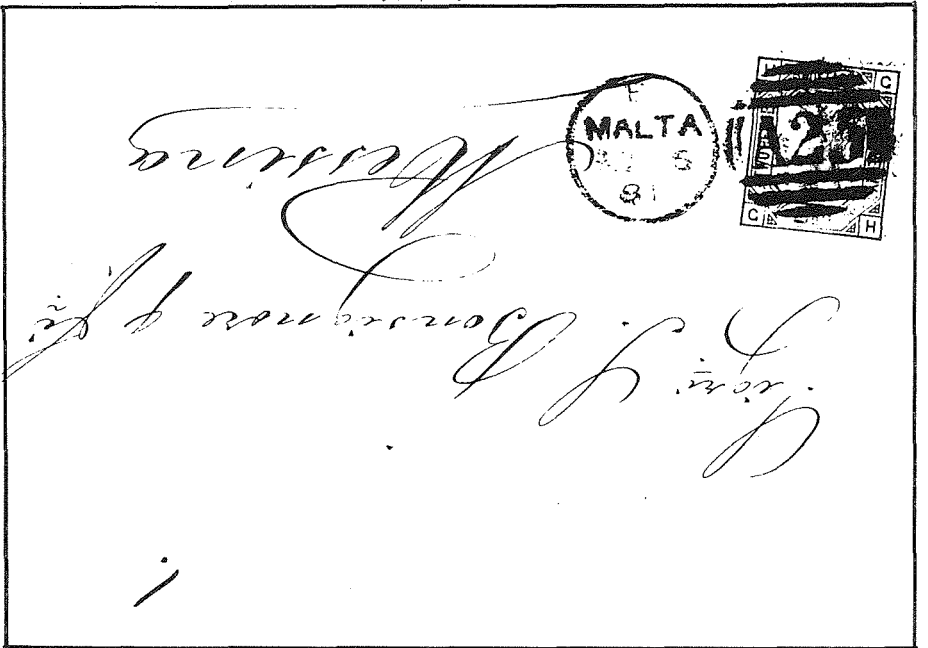
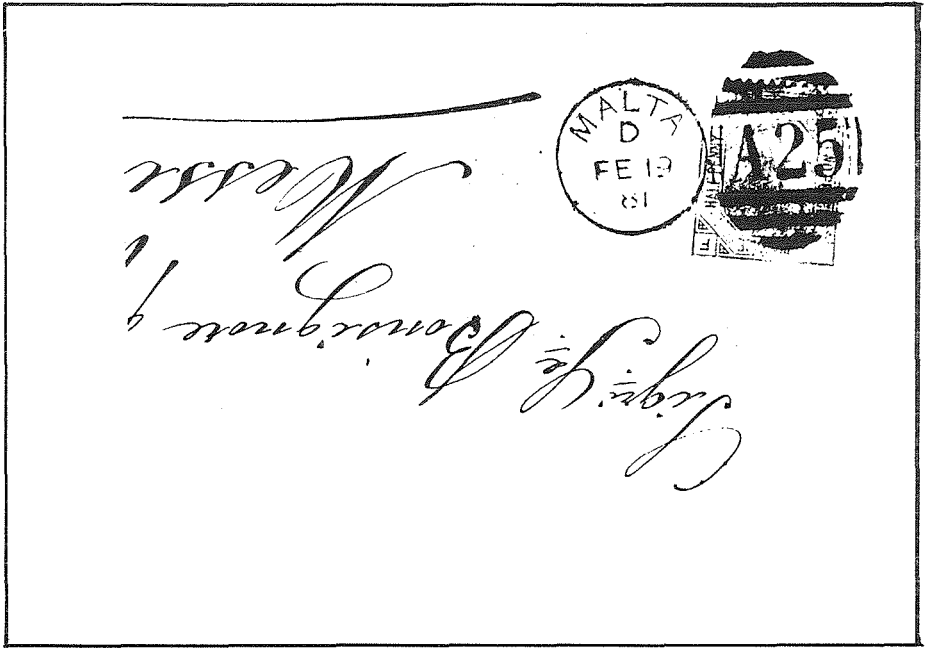
By Anthony Fenech

The A 25 Duplex Vertical oval Handstamps

The first of this type of cancellers was dispatched from London on the 17th December 1880. It consisted of a combined date-stamp and obliterator 'A 25'. The date mark shows 'MALTA' round the rim, instead of across, as in the circular duplex types. Code letters 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' and 'E' are known used. Code letter 'E' on Great Britain stamps is very scarce and only very few examples are known.

The date stamp is 20 mm in diameter and the obliterator is 20 × 26 mm. The 'A 25' has three bars above and below the numbers and two curved lines on either side.



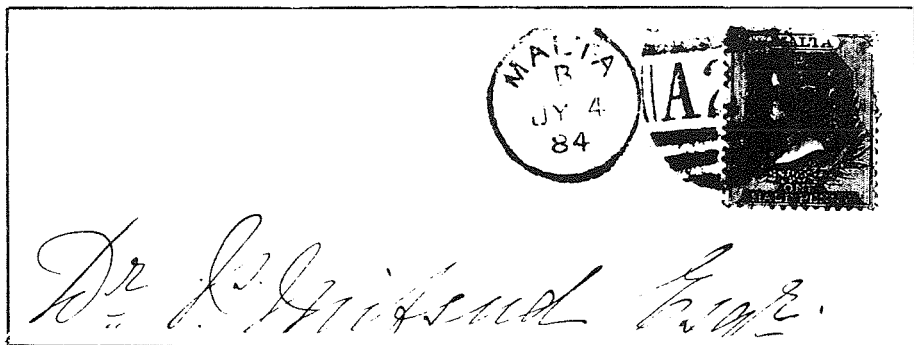


The earliest date recorded of Type One duplex handstamp (page 12) is January 1st, 1881, on the 1880 2½d blue (Wmk Orb) Plate 20 (S.G. Z23 – Said No. 53), the code letter on the postmark being a ‘C’. (See fig. below).

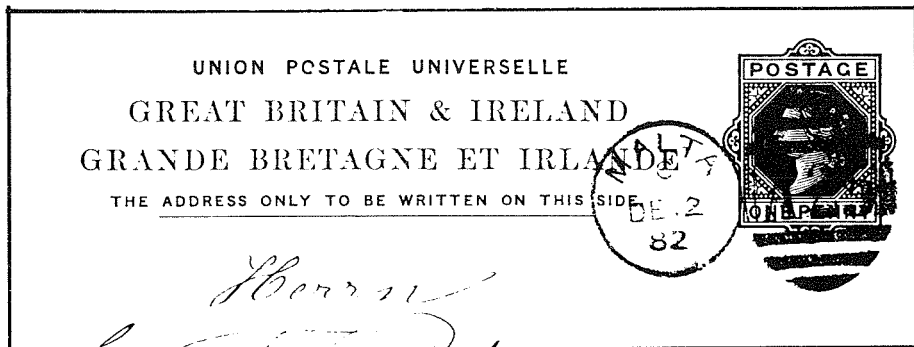


Earliest date recorded (1.1.81)
presumably the first day the canceller was used.¹

However, the ‘A 25’ Circular duplex cancellers continued to be used concurrently with this Oval type until the 29th September 1881². Besides Great Britain stamps, the Malta Half-Penny Yellows, since the 23rd printing, are known obliterated by this duplex handstamp³.

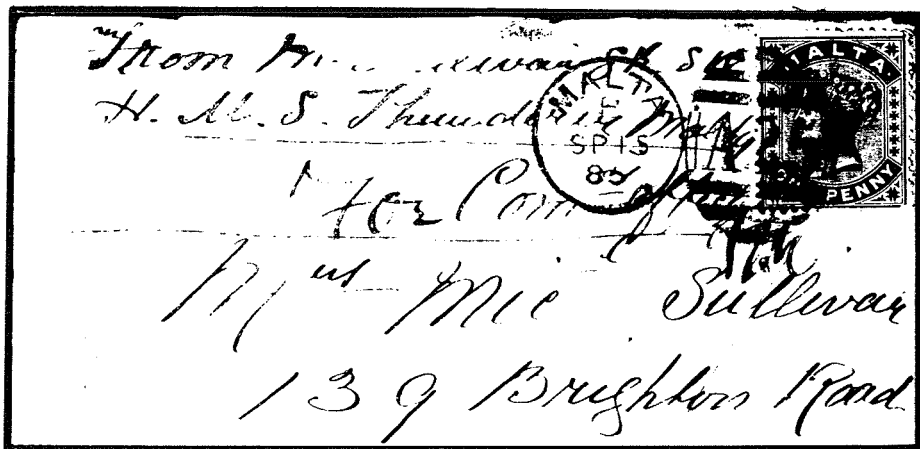
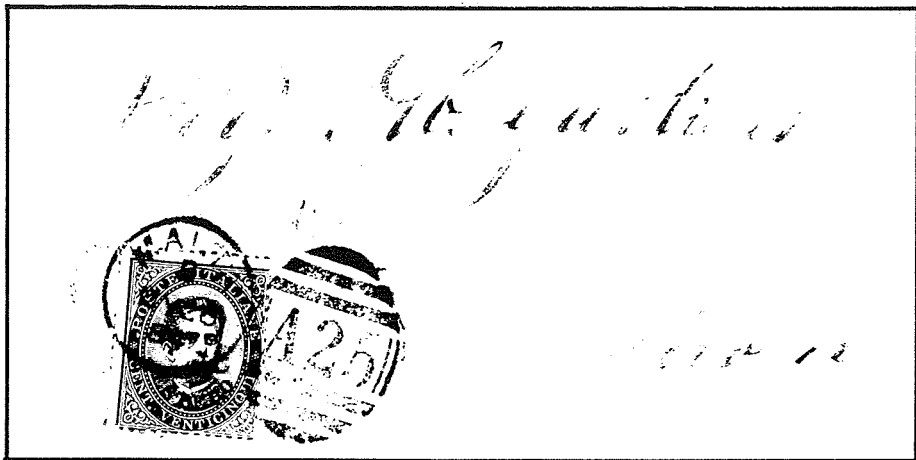


From 1882 to 1885 different types of official printed Great Britain postcards can be found obliterated by the ‘A 25’ Oval type canceller. GBS3 (1d – 1879), GBS4 (1d – 1883) and GBS5 (2d – 1883), all Brown Post Cards with the superscription – UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE/GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND/GRANDE BRETAGNE ET IRLANDE – are known cancelled with this type of canceller.⁴



1d Postcard (GBS) Malta -
A 25 Duplex ‘C’ code

The other entries of this type of 'A 25' canceller are recorded in the General Post Office Proof Book, both in Volume 22; the first on Page 128, and dated 23.1.86, and the other on Page 130, and dated 24.12.87.⁵ The latter two cancellers vary in size from the one sent to Malta in December 1880, the dimensions being 19 × 27½ mm and 19½ × 28 mm respectively. (Types Two and Three p. 12). Obviously these were used on Malta stamps, until 1905, as well as on foreign stamps which franked letters and postcards, posted on High Seas and endorsed with the PAQUEBOT cachets. On these cancellers, Code letters A – Q (except L) have been employed.



References:

1. From Commander Bush's Collection.
2. The Malta Study Circle, Malta – The Stamps and Postal History 1576-1960 Handbook compiled by The Malta Study Circle, Edited by R. E. Martin p. 33 (The 'A 25' Handstamps – AD 2 canceller).
3. The Philatelic Society, Malta – The P.S.M. Magazine – Vol. 7 No. 2, Chapter 6, p. 7 – The Queen Victoria Halfpenny Yellow Stamp (23rd printing) by Dr. Alfred Bonnici.
4. The Malta Study Circle – Study Paper 35 – 1983 – 'G.B. Used in Malta' pp. 10, 11.
5. Arthur Moyles, London – Malta Postal History Notes and Documents.