

The Postage Stamps of Great Britain, Part 4

by W. Ward (*From Mekeel's Weekly, February 24, 1917*)

The plates made from the original die by Charles Heath were only in use a year after the official introduction of perforation, and at the same time the scale of perforation was altered from 16 to 14. It was found that the unused stamps fell apart in stock by the smaller perforation in conjunction with the thick heavy gum of the period.

Check List:

January 1841.

1d orange brown non-fugitive ink, paper quite white or yellowish.

1d orange brown, fugitive color, blue paper.

1d deep orange brown, fugitive color, blue paper.

1d pale red brown, fugitive color, blue paper.

1d deep red brown, fugitive color, blue paper.

1d red brown, fugitive color, blue paper.

Check List:

March, 1841.

2d deep full blue, with white lines.

2d violet blue, under "postage."

2d blue, and over value.

2d pale blue, and over value.

Check List:

Private Roulettes, Perforations.

1847-49. Rouletted 10, 12.

1d red brown.

1850-52. Perforated 16.

1d red brown.

2d blue.

Check List:

1854. Perforated 16. Watermarked small crown.

1d red brown.

1d pale brown.

2d blue.

2d pale blue.

1855. Perforated 14. Watermarked small crown.

1d red brown.

2d blue. 1855. Watermarked large crown. Perforated 16.

2d blue.

Ditto Perforated 14.

2d blue.

In 1855, a new die was made for the penny value, and the 2 penny die was slightly altered. The engraver was William Humphrys of Perkins, Bacon & Co. The new die shows the nostril curved and the shading round the eye heavier—whereas in the Heath die the nostril was straight and the eye shading very light and delicate. A little study between a large crown perf 14 and an imperforate penny red will speedily illustrate the difference. The two penny die was also slightly altered to make plate No. 6—inasmuch as the white lines are very much thinner than the preceding plates.

Check List:

1855-58. New dies. Watermarked small crown, Perforated 16.

1d red brown.

Ditto. Perforated 14.

1d red brown.

1d pale brown.

Watermarked large crown. Perforated 16.

1d red brown, white paper.

1d red brown, blued paper.

2d blue, white paper,

Ditto. Perforated 14.

1d orange.

1d red brown.

1d pale brown.

1d rose red.

1d deep rose red.

1d pale rose red.

2d blue.

CHAPTER II.

Line Engraved, Cont.—Plate Numbers.

A slight alteration of the dies in 1858, provided philately of later years with a subject that has created numerous controversies and the use, I might hazard, of tons of printers' ink and paper.

In order to lessen the opportunities of forgery, the lettering originally in the lower corners only, was duplicated in reverse order in the upper corners. As previously, the lettering of the lower corners, denoted the position of that stamp on the sheet, for example, a stamp lettered B-F in the lower corners, would be the sixth stamp of the second row—and the upper corners would, of course, be lettered F-B.



Sc. 33, Plate 187, Position B-F



Sc. 29, Plate 12, with computer enhanced number 12

In this new series, in the "engined"



turned" columns was inserted in uncoloured figures the number of the plate. In the 1/2p, 1p and 2p values, the plate number is found reading from the profile, upwards on the left and downwards on the right, always half way. In the 1-1/2 penny value, the only plate number so designated on these stamps, occurs just over the lower corner letters.



Sc. 33, Plate 3, with computer enhanced number 3

During the long life of these stamps of over twenty-one years, no fewer than 152 separate plates were used from numbers 71 to 225.



Sc. 33, Plate 225

Many plates were known to have been issued only in certain postal districts,

as Manchester, Birmingham, Cardiff, Dublin, and Edinburgh as apart from London. Plate 116 was in fact sent to Cardiff in an imperforate condition toward the end of the year 1868. [See photo for another Cardiff imperf. JFD.]



1864 1d Imperforate on Dr. Perkins Paper (Blued), "Cardiff Penny" Plate 121 Pair

As each plate was "profiled" and passed by the authorities, it was 1864 (Nov 29)

Entire from Ballymena, Ireland to Mexico City with 1864 1d red pl.73, 1859 2d blue pl.9 and 1862 1s green pl.2, tied by "46" Irish numerals.



"registered". Sometimes, however, a certain plate was in issue before it was actually proof-registered as stamps are known date cancelled on original before their registration date.

The following dates will represent either the date of registering or earliest known date of use. The first four plates were issued before and up to March 14th, 1861, and seemed to have been in concurrent use for two or three years, as will be seen from the list of dates.

Plates 75, 126 and 128 were withdrawn through damage and thus never issued. Plate 77 was issued, but immediately withdrawn for the same reason and the few that were sold to the public now represent one of the scarcest British Stamps. Plates 226, 227 and 228 were made, but never issued. So far as the value of the plates is concerned, all are common, but numbers 223, 224 and 225 are the most difficult to procure. The latter number has always commanded the highest price, but seems no rarer than the other two immediately preceding it.



A rare 1p red Plate 77, from the Royal Philatelic Collection.

The stamp lettered "S-A-A-S" in plate No. 81 has the lower S inverted. Many minor flaws of lettering and indistinct numbering occur.

The following is a list of dates of issue or Registration of penny plate numbers:—

- 76 to 81—earliest date Feb. 7, 1863.
- 82 to 86—earliest date March 1, 1864.
- 87—earliest date March 7, 1864.
- 88—earliest date March 17, 1864.
- 89—earliest date March 22, 1864.
- 90—earliest date March 30, 1864.
- 91—earliest date April 5, 1864.
- 92—earliest date April 12, 1864.
- 93—earliest date April 19, 1864.
- 94—earliest date April 26, 1864.

- 95—earliest date June 4, 1864.
- 96 and 97—earliest date Oct. 5, 1864.
- 98—earliest date Mar. 10, 1865.
- 99, 100 and 101—earliest date Jan. 1, 1866.
- 102 to 107—earliest date April 4, 1866.
- 108 to 111—earliest date Mar. 23, 1868.
- 112 to 116—earliest date Apr. 12, 1868.
- 117 and 118—earliest date June 9, 1868.
- 119 to 124—earliest date Aug. 15, 1868.
- 125, 127, 129 to 132—earliest date Feb. 5, 1869.
- 133 to 138—earliest date Mar. 31, 1869.
- 139 to 144—earliest date Feb. 2, 1870.
- 145 to 149—earliest date Dec. 23, 1870.
- 150 to 155—earliest date Apr. 24, 1871.
- 156 to 161—earliest date Jan. 12, 1872.
- 162 to 167—earliest date Oct. 24, 1872.
- 168 to 173—earliest date Apr. 9, 1873.
- 182 to 186—earliest date Oct. 14, 1874.
- 187 to 190—earliest date Apr. 20, 1875.
- 191 to 194—earliest date Sept. 3, 1875.
- 195 to 200—earliest date Mar. 9, 1876.
- 201 to 205—earliest date Nov. 16, 1876.
- 206 to 209—earliest date May 10, 1877.
- 210 to 212—earliest date Feb. 25, 1878.
- 217 to 220—earliest date Aug. 4, 1878.
- 221 to 225—earliest date Dec. 31, 1878.

The colours of the various plates range from pale and rose red to a dark brownish shade, all more or less affected by de-oxidisation. (Color photos, front cover)

The two-penny value had nearly a year's longer life, but only seven plates were ever issued, all comparatively of the same philatelic value. The numbers range from 7 to 15, with the exception of 10 and 11, which never got further than the die stage.

The last three plates show very much



Sc. 33 Lake red shade

2p. Sc. 29, plate 14.



thinner lines above the words of value and beneath the word "Postage". The colour of the 2p was fairly even of shade during its long life, but it, too, is greatly affected by de-oxidisation.

A value for newspaper postage was contemporary with these plate numbers of the value of three half pence [1-1/2p], bearing the usual profile of the Queen in a heart shaped design containing up the left, the words "Postage", at the top "Three", and down the right "Halfpence".

The first plate was not numbered, but the other, for only two were issued, is figured "3" as already described (page 12).

To Be Continued

100 Years Ago in Mekeel's:

The Postage Stamps of Great Britain, Part 5

by W. Ward (From Mekeel's Weekly, February 24, 1917)

CHAPTER II, Cont..

An imprimatur—from the first sheet printed—of the 1870 rose-red three halfpence stamp from Plate 3.



Sc. 32d, OPPC corner letters error.



Line Engraved, Cont.—Shades

On the first plate occurs the well-known error lettered in the corners "O-P P-C" instead of "C-P P-C". This plate had been printed and registered in a bright mauve colour, the ink completely tinting the paper bluish, but was never officially issued for sale in this colour.



Sc. 32 shades, left Rosy Mauve (unissued color), right Lake Red

Both plates are of equal value, but cannot be considered very common despite their low price.

In 1870, the postal rate for certain weights of newspapers was lowered to one half penny, which necessitated a stamp of that value. It was about half the size of the ordinary issue and was printed in sheets of 480 stamps, lettered A to T in the rows and A to Y down the rows.

This stamp ran through a series of fifteen different plates,



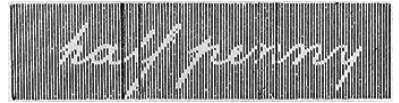
Sc. 58



Scarce Sc. 58, plate 9

numbered one to twenty, numbers 2, 7, 16, 17 and 18 never being issued. Plate 9 is a scarce stamp and difficult to obtain in perfect condition, but the others are fairly easy of access even today.

Unlike the other line-engraved stamps, the crown watermark was not used, but the paper was watermarked with the words "half penny" in Script. italics running the length of three stamps.



Several plate numbers are known imperforate and partly imperforate, especially in the margins vertically at either right or left, or both.

As with plate 81 of the penny value, plate 13 bears the letter S inverted.



Sc. 58a, Imperf

The Post Office was urged about 1868 to discard the low value line engraved stamps in favor of the surface printed ones as already in use for the higher values. This was advocated by W. W. de la Rue of the firm that had already printed the values over 2p, as a further preventative against the cleaning of used stamps. A committee accepted the view and the whole of the contracts were given to Messrs. de la Rue. Check List.

1858-1879. Watermarked large crown.

1p pale red to brown-red, shades, plate #s 71 to 225 with exceptions.

2p blue to violet-blue, shades, plate numbers 7 to 15 with exceptions.

1860-1870. Watermarked large crown.

1 1/2p red and rose-red, plates (1), 3.

1 1/2p bright mauve, unissued plate (1).

1870. Watermarked words "half-penny" over 3 stamps.

1/2p rose and rose-red, plate numbers 1 to 20 with exceptions.

To be Continued

100 Years Ago in Mekeel's:

The Postage Stamps of Great Britain, Part 6

by W. Ward (From Mekeel's Weekly, April 21, 1917)

CHAPTER III.

The Embossed Stamps

The one shilling stamp of Great Britain, issued Sept. 11, 1847, may well claim to be the first orthodox "international" postage stamp, since it was primarily issued to prepay postage on over-seas letters and outside the British Empire. It was probably most used on American letters. Like many of the early stamps of higher than inland rate, they were for many years procurable only outside the country of their issue.



Scott 5

Ish green Embossed (Sc. 5a)—paying foreign letter rate to Cape of Good Hope from December 14, 1850 to April 1, 1857, per -1/2 ounce—with



central strike of blue "266" numeral in grid cancel with matching blue "Dunstable AU 13, 1852" c.d.s. on back, to Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope, with Toddington transit and manuscript "4" (pence) due for carriage beyond Cape Town, addressed to the Royal Observatory at Grahams Town.

GB Ish pale green Embossed (Sc. 5) with wide sheet margin at right, cancelled by "309" in oval grid and tied by red "Boston



Paid 24 Jun. 13" credit circular datestamp (c.d.s.) on 1855 folded letter to Salem, Mass., with manuscript "U.S. Mail Steamer via Liverpool", red "21 Cents" credit handstamp, cover also with Gateshead origination and Liverpool transit backstamps.



Scott 6

The shilling value was quickly followed, November 6, 1848, by one for ten pence, an overseas rate fixed between certain Colonies and near by European countries. It is necessary to point out that in these pre-Universal Postal Union days, a letter could not be wholly prepaid from one country to another. Letters were

generally taxed for the inland postage of the country of destination. Hence letters from USA to Great Britain and vice versa were surcharged "postage due" for the inland rate. The Mexican "Porte de Mar" stamps are a single example of stamps for the extra postage demanded. [Note: those "Porte de Mar" stamps indicated the amount of cash to be paid to captains of the mail steamers taking outgoing foreign mail. JFD.]

Folded letter from Mexico City, 30 June to Madrid, franked with perforated 25c, carried by "Ebro" to St. Thomas and "Nile" to Plymouth (arriving July 29th), then through France and overland to Spain. On reverse, there is 10 centavos Porte De Mar black (Sc. JX10). The "T" handstamp and manuscript "110" indicate credit to the British per U.P.U. Regulations.



GB 1847, 1 shilling green embossed (Sc. 5), three singles, tied by "20" in barred oval handstamp on folded letter to Paris, France, two stamps also tied by Calais transit, cover also with red "PD" in oval handstamp, receiving backstamp, and "F.U., L.S., 26 NO 1856" in Maltese Cross backstamps.



1848 10p red brown Embossed (Sc. 6) tied by "11" numeral in grid on folded letter to Genoa, Italy, with Calais routing datestamp, manuscript due marking, red "P.P." in oval handstamp, also with "B J J U - 14 1850" backstamp.



Cover to Saxony with 1847-54 6d embossed (Sc. 6, left) and 1854-57 2d blue both tied by an early use of the Manchester sideways duplex (issued Jun 1), reverse with Oxford Rd, London and transit datestamp.



1847-48 1sh pale green and 10p Red Brown (Sc. 5, 6) slightly overlapping and tied by "26" in grid on folded cover from the Heard Correspondence, to



Canton, China, endorsed "Via Marseilles", also with neat "Hong-Kong 24 AP 1853" transit and "DG MR-8, 1853" backstamps.

Unlike the other postage stamps of Great Britain which for over seventy years were contracted out to private firms, the embossed stamps were made and printed entirely by the Government. The dies were engraved by William Wyon from whose design of the Coronation Medal of Queen Victoria (shown), the head on the engraved stamps printed by Perkins, Bacon & Co., was taken.



Left, 1847 Embossed Issue Essay right margin proof of the head taken before the pendant curl was added, without frame or value inscription, printed in pale green on gummed paper with blue and red horizontal lines to simulate Dickinson silk thread paper; above right, 1847 1s Embossed essay in brown on gummed Dickinson silk thread paper, also without pendant curl, as seen on the medal;

Immediate right, 1848 10p red brown Embossed, with "Specimen" handstamp (Sc. 6S) Type 1



The plates were produced by the Royal Mint in London, and the stamps printed at the great revenue department, "Somerset House." The paper used was that invented by Dickinson, showing continuous silk threads. The irregularity of placing the paper in the press gives one or even two threads through a stamp vertically and horizontally, though rarely in the latter position. The stamps were die struck singly, so there are many known instances of stamps overlapping through careless workmanship. A very fine example of a vertical pair of the 10 penny, one stamp (the lower) being half way over the other, was sold from the famous Avery collection by Mr. W. H. Peckitt. 1847 1sh pale green (Sc. 5) block of four showing the uneven spacing between stamps on the sheet and why it is so challenging to find a single with four margins.



1853 10p red brown Embossed (Sc. 6) Die 3 horizontal block of ten with full sheet margins.

1848 10p red brown Embossed (Sc. 6) with sheet margin at top and portion of the adjoining stamp overlapping at bottom.



Singly printed strips of the shilling value will be found in deep green, bright green and very pale green, and the 10 pence in light and full brown shades.

The die numbers of these stamps are found together with the engraver's initials (W. W.) on the lower edge of the bust in, of course, colourless relief with the sole exception of the first die of the 10 penny, which bears no number.

Both values as well as the succeeding six penny have advanced greatly in value during the past few years. Cut square in fine condition, they are gilt edged securities of philately.

To be Continued

100 Years Ago in Mekeel's:

The Postage Stamps of Great Britain, Part 7

by W. Ward (*From Mekeel's Weekly, April 21, 1917*)

March 1, 1854, a 6 pence embossed stamp was issued, but this time printed on hand made wove paper watermarked "V. R." in large sans serif single lined capitals, though very often the watermark is not distinguishable. Though the die is Die 1, no number appears as on the earlier values.

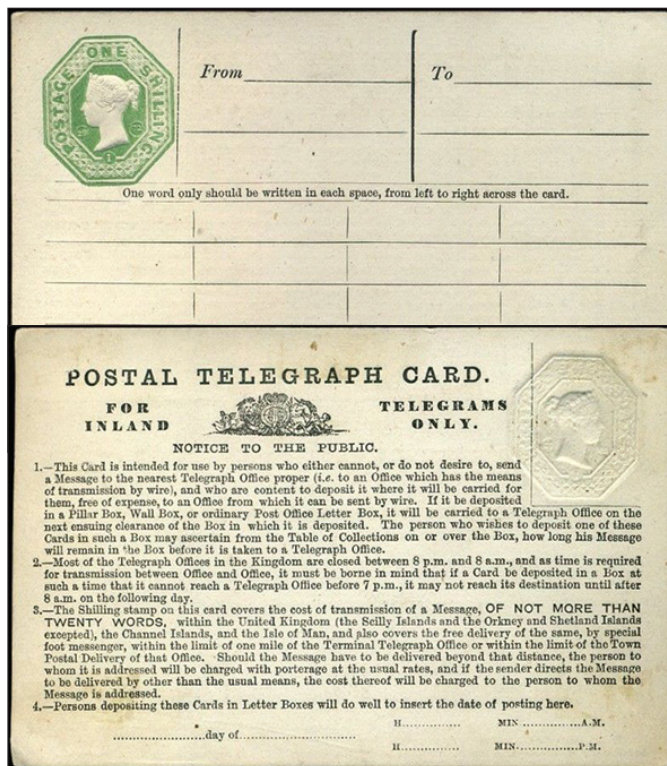
It is interesting to note, and also as a caution to the collector, that these dies and dies taken from them, of all the three values were used up to 1902 on deed and telegraph forms. Often they can be cut from these forms showing no other printed matter, but since they are on thin common wove paper quite white or canary yellow and with a freshness of coloring in the ink, they should only deceive the merest tyro.



Scott 7



1854 6p red violet Embossed (Sc. 7) paying sea route rate to New South Wales in effect from October 1, 1854 to January 1, 1857, per 1/2 ounce, tied by barred numeral cancel on petite 1856 mourning cover from London to Sydney, New South Wales, with London August 19, 1856 origin backstamp, carried by clipper ship White Star to Melbourne and onward to Sydney per steamer Yarra Yarra, also with large black "Ship Letter Sydney Nov. 10, 1856" receiving backstamp and red "1d" Colonial credit handstamp on front.



An example of a Telegraph Card with the imprint from the same die as that used for the stamps.

Check List.

Embossed 1847-1853, on "Dickinson" Silk Thread Paper

(All are imperforate.)

- 1 shilling, pale green, die 1, 1847.
- 1 shilling, bright green, die 1, 1847.
- 1 shilling, deep green, die 1, 1847.
- 1 shilling, pale green, die 2, 1853.
- 1 shilling, bright green, die 2, 1853.
- 1 shilling, deep green, die 2, 1853.
- 10 pence, brown or light brown, no number, 1848
- 10 pence, brown or light brown, die 1, 1848.
- 10 pence, brown or light brown, die 2, 1850.
- 10 pence, brown or light brown, die 3, 1852.
- 10 pence, brown or light brown, die 4, 1853.
- 10 pence, brown or light brown, die 5, 1853.

Check List.

Embossed 1854-1856 on thick wove paper water marked letters VR upright, inverted, up right reversed, and inverted reversed.

- 6 pence, pale lilac.
- 6 pence, dull lilac.
- 6 pence, bright lilac.
- 6 pence, mauve.
- 6 pence, purple.
- 6 pence, deep purple.

To be Continued