

IMPERFORATE ISSUES OF GREAT BRITAIN 1841-1854

SYNOPSIS

The use of the Penny Black caused Postal Officials great concern because of the fraudulent reuse of the stamp. The purpose of the exhibit is to study the development, printings and usages of the subsequent 1841 imperforate issue which purpose was to lessen the fraudulent reuse. The 1840 Penny black revolutionized the way mail was paid for, and the 1841 issue rectified the flaws and was the issue that satisfied the expansion of the volume of mail both domestic and foreign. The Post Office issued a 1d in Red and a 2d in Blue. The 2d blue 1841 blue can be distinguished from its 1840 counterpart by a white line above the bottom header

The exhibit starts with an example of postal fraud which sets the theme of the exhibit.

Production material

In the early fall of 1840 the process of producing various colour trials began. The exhibit shows examples of the Rainbow colour trials including two sheets of twelve. There are 4-5 known pink sheets in private hands, the others of which are in the royal collection. There is also an example of important Cancellation trials which determine the various inks that could be used. The section also contains imprimaturs including a black imprimatur from the Plate 2 of the black plates. An example of the Postal Notice to postmasters that was sent by ES Lees announcing the issue to all Postmasters in early 1841 with a 1d red example and a proof copy of the 2d

Black Plate Printings in red

Black plates 1b,2,5,8,9,10,&11 were used to print the initial 1841 Reds, due to the urgency to start production for circulation of the Reds. Highlights in this section include a mint corner plate block of Plate 10, also in under Plate 10 is a section mint single which is more scarce than the Black mint Plate 11 and a single printed on the Dickson Silk thread paper. A block of six on cover with a Plate 1B repair and subsequent repaired impression of plate 1C. A combination cover with a red Plate 9 and Black Plate 8 is included under Plate 9.

Die I Alphabet I Plates 12 -131

This section starts with a rare plate 12 corner imprimatur which there are less than 5 recorded. A plate 18 cover displays the use of a Penny red from France correctly paying the arrival rate charge a Christmas Plate 61 usage is displayed. Other highlights include Plate 62 cover to New York franked with a block of 12, and a Plate 95 block of 16.

Alphabet II Plates 132-177

These plates were the work horses of an ever increasing demand on the postal system. Rare or unusual items are more difficult to find for these plates. In this exhibit there are two outstanding items being a Plate 176 "lake" red cover to Hull. The last imperforate Plate 177 is represented by a pair of inverted watermark. There is only one other single known.