

Jamaica: The Queen Victoria Key Plates

On 17 April 1888 the Jamaica government approved De La Rue's new design for unified postage and revenue stamps. De La Rue typographed the issue in sheets of 120, 2 panes of 60, using separate key and duty plates. The sheets were watermarked Crown CA and comb perforated 14.

The key plate was the same design for all values, printing the Queen's head, inscription and frame. The die and the first key plate, 60 set, were invoiced on 22 October 1888. For the first printing, invoiced on 7 February 1889, the key plate was increased in size to 120 set. The key plate wore out and was replaced three times: with plate 2 in 1890, plate 3 in 1893 and plate 4 in 1897.

Key Plate 1



Die proof of key plate 1, 22 June 1888, struck before hardening. This is as used for the initial 60 set plate.

Ex Vokins.



Die proof of key plate 1 initialled GN.

Dated 13 Nov. 88 on its page in the De La Rue Collection and 13/11/88 in pencil on the reverse.

This proof marks when the die was used to produce an enlarged 120 set plate, for which De La Rue sought permission on 2 November 1888.

Ex De La Rue Collection and Swarbrick.

Key Plate 2

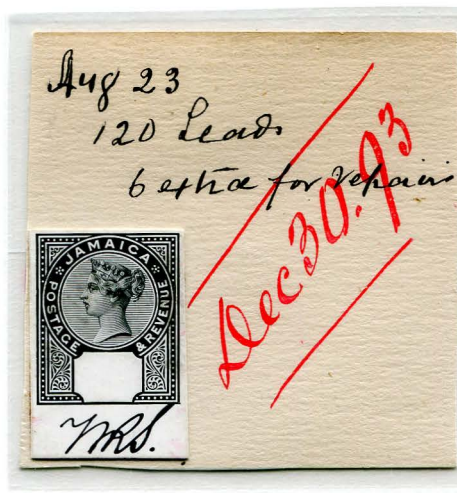


Die proof from the De La Rue striking book initialled GN.

Dated 16 June, 90 on its page in the De La Rue Collection and 16.6.90 in pencil on the reverse, so this is key plate 2, authorised on 6 May 1890 and invoiced on 7 August 1890.

Ex De La Rue Collection, Swarbrick and Mahfood.

Key Plate 3



Key plate 3, die proof from the De La Rue striking book.

120 leads and 6 spares were struck. The plate was authorised on 15 August 1893, this entry is dated 23 August 1893 and the red ink date is that of the invoice, 30 December 1893.

Ex Vokins.

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SPECIMEN overprints

Specimen set from the De La Rue Works Progressive Specimen File. Each value was in sheets 120 set. The dates February 1889 (1d and 2d) and January 1891 (2½d) are those of the first printings.

*Ex De La Rue Collection
and Mahfood.*



De La Rue supplied 400 copies of each value overprinted SPECIMEN for the Crown Agents' own use and for distribution to the countries of the Postal Union.



1d with the local SPECIMEN overprint, Samuel type J5, from the Jamaica Post Office collection. Unique.

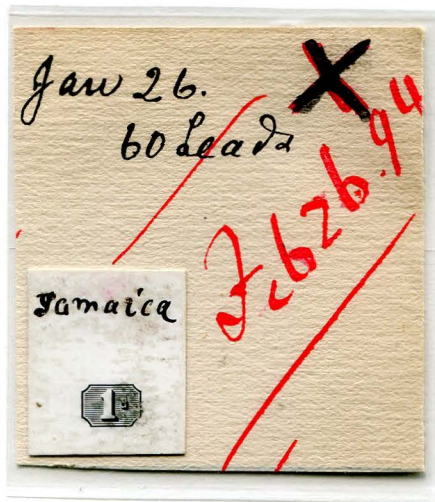
Ex Hemmings.



Jamaica: The Queen Victoria Key Plates

One Penny

The duty plate printed the value tablet for each value in a separate printing operation, only 60 set. De La Rue prepared four successive duty plates for the 1d, the last of which was not used.



Duty plate 2, die proof from the De La Rue striking book. 60 leads were struck. The plate was authorised on 19 January 1894, this entry is dated 26 January 1894, and the red ink 26 February 1894 is probably the invoice date.

*Ex De La Rue Collection
and Swarbrick.*



Duty plate 3, die proof dated 22 January 1897.

The plate was authorised on 26 November 1896 and invoiced on 2 March 1897.

*Ex Britton-Stitt,
Swarbrick
and Baillie.*

Duty plates showed no numbers. The numbers in the margins of each sheet are of the key plates. All four key plates were used for the 1d in combination with the three different duty plates.

There were 15 printings of the 1d between 1889 and 1898, totalling 32,871,360 stamps. Each printing shows different wear and colour shades in each of the two plates used.



Key plate 1, used for the first 7 printings of the 1d, 1889 to 1891.



Key plate 2, used for 2 printings of the 1d, 1892.



Key plate 3, used for 4 printings of the 1d, 1893 to 1896.



Key plate 4, used for 2 printings of the 1d, 1897 to 1898.

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Two Pence

Key plate 1 and one duty plate were used for both the two printings of the 2d, invoiced on 7 February 1889 and 3 February 1890, a total of 1,245,120 stamps.



Two Pence Half-Penny

The 2½d was ordered by telegram on 2 December 1890, because of the urgent need to replace the Vendryes provisional. The duty plate and the first printing were invoiced on 3 February 1891.



Die proof of the 2½d duty plate, before hardening, 3 January 1891.



2½d duty plate, die proof from the De La Rue striking book. 60 leads were struck.

The plate was authorised on 8 December 1890, this entry is dated 8 January and the incomplete red ink date should be that of the invoice, 3 February 1891.

Ex De La Rue Collection and Mahfood.

Key plates 1, 2, 3 and 4 and one duty plate were used for 12 printings, in total 3,302,040 stamps.



Key plate 2, used for 2 printings, 1892.



Key plate 3, used for 4 printings, 1893 to 1896.



Key plate 4, used for 5 printings, 1897 to 1902.

Jamaica: The Vendryes Provisional

A new Jamaican postage rate of 2½d per half ounce was introduced from 1 June 1890. No 2½d stamps existed, so pending a regular issue, the Post Office ordered a local provisional overprint.

An initial order of 200 sheets was placed with Vendryes and Co, who had already supplied the first printing of the OFFICIAL provisional. Vendryes made three printings of the 2½d provisional, an estimated total of 80,000 stamps. Each printing was from a different setting, of 10, then 12 then 3, with the type being broken up and reassembled each time.

2½d provisional, setting 1, position 5, with the local SPECIMEN overprint, Samuel type J5, from the Jamaica Post Office collection. No other SPECIMEN overprints of the Vendryes provisionals were made. Unique.



Ex Winter.

First setting.

The first printing, of 48,000 stamps (800 panes), was printed between 30 May 1890, when the decision to overprint 4d stamps is recorded, and 4 June, the earliest known date of use.

This first setting of the overprint was set up as a single vertical column of 10 distinct varieties, struck 6 times to complete each pane. So all stamps in each row are from the same position.

First setting: overprint omitted, in pairs with overprinted stamps.

These pairs come from a single defective pane of printer's waste. Columns 1 and 2 were overprinted and then, perhaps because of the accidental ink smearing, the pane was discarded, leaving columns 3 to 6 without overprints.

10 examples might exist, one from each position (row) in the first setting, showing overprinted stamps of column 2 joined with unoverprinted stamps of the adjacent column 3.

The Royal Collection has position (row) 7 in a strip of three.



Position (row) 1,
columns 2 and 3.

*Ex Winter and
Swarbrick.*

*Certificate Holcombe
10041/95.*



Position (row) 5,
columns 2 and 3.

*Ex Surtees and
Swarbrick.*



Position (row) 9,
columns 2 and 3.

*Ex Ferrari and
Swarbrick.*

Jamaica: The Vendryes Provisional

First setting: the only known complete pane.

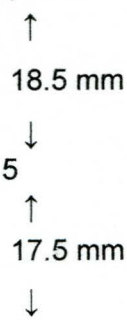
The differing alignment and inking of the vertical columns shows that each was struck separately. It is likely that all panes were first printed with column 1, then all were printed with column 2 and so on from left to right.



Position (row):

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

The spacing between rows is 18.5 mm but 17.5 mm from 5 to 6.



Ex
 Ferrari and
 Swarbrick.
 Certificate
 Holcombe
 10039/95.

Column: 1 2 3 4 5 6

Jamaica: The Vendryes Provisional

First setting: misplaced and double overprint types.

Misplaced overprints occurred when the paper was wrongly positioned or shifted during printing. Misplacement might be vertical, sideways or at a slant, shifting strikes onto neighbouring stamps.

Double overprints were nearly always corrections of a misplaced first strike. In the first setting the corrective second strike is usually a repeat of the same position as the first strike, and is usually heavy, with ink pressed into loops, similar in appearance to the first impressions in column 5.

Vertical misplacement of the column.

Reunited vertical strip of 3, showing positions 4 to 7.

Misplacement this bad was usually corrected with a second strike.



Double overprints correcting vertical misplacement.



Positions:

← 1, correction (with typical pressed ink).

← 1, misplaced down.

← 2, correction (with typical pressed ink).

← 2, misplaced down.

*Ex Winter and Swarbrick.
Certificate Holcombe10040/95.*

Horizontal misplacement.

Position 2, with part of another strike of the same position straying onto the left-hand side from the adjacent column. Not a true double overprint.



Double overprint correcting horizontal misplacement.

Y of PENNY misplaced to right from position 6 in next column →



← 6, correction (with typical pressed ink).

← 6, misplaced to right.

Slanting misplacement.

In the first setting, with a vertical column of 10 impressions the full height of the pane, a very slight angle of slant could misplace one end of the column badly.



The top of a column, position 1, where a slight angle of tilt has put the overprint over the left edge.

Correcting slanting misplacement.



← Position 10, correction (with typical pressed ink).

← Position 10, slanting slightly.

The foot of a column, position 10. The slight angle of tilt will have thrown out the top of the column, so a corrective overprint has been applied.

Jamaica: The Vendryes Provisional

First setting: double overprints plated.

The second strikes correct misplaced first overprints. In each case the correction is the upper strike. All the corrective strikes on this page show the characteristic heavy ink pressed into the loops of letters.



Row 1.
← Position 1.
← Position 1.

Ex Swarbrick.



Row 2.
← Position 1.
← Position 2.
← Position 2.



Row 3.
← Position 2.
← Position 3.
← Position 3.



Row 4.
← Position 4.
← Position 4.



Row 5.
← Position 5.
← Position 5.



Row 6.
← Position 6.
← Position 6.



Row 7.
← Position 6.
← Position 7.
← Position 7.



Row 8.
← Position 8.
← Position 8.



Rows 9 and 10.
← Position 8.
← Position 9.
← Position 9.
← Position 10.
← Position 10.

The bottom of a sheet showing the current number, with position 10 misplaced into the sheet margin.

Certificate BPA 26491, 1988.

Jamaica: The Vendryes Provisional

Second setting.

The second setting in February 1891 was 12 overprints in 2 horizontal rows of 6, spaced 19 mm apart, struck five times to complete the pane.



The worn, cut and broken type used by Vendryes and Co means that every stamp has plateable characteristics so that all the three settings can be reconstructed from single stamps. The second setting exhibits the most eye-catching varieties of cut and broken type.

F for E in PENNY, position 3.



E in PENNY broken like an F and cut K for Y, position 10.



E in PENNY broken like an L, position 12.



Second setting: watermark inverted and overprints misplaced.

These two marginal pieces are from the top left and top right of the same pane with watermark inverted. The top strike of the setting, which should cover rows 1 and 2, is a stamp too high, so positions 1 to 6 are into the margin. An isolated stamp from these would appear to show a slight shift down, not up.

Columns 1 and 2.

Positions: 1 2
7 8
1 2



Ex Swarbrick.

Column 6, positions:

6
12



Jamaica: The Vendryes Provisional

Second setting: misplaced and corrective double overprints, columns 1 and 2.

In the second setting, as in the first, double overprints were corrections of misplaced overprints. Double overprints are almost always from two different positions in the same column, unlike the first setting, where nearly all doubles are two strikes of the same position.

Column 1, positions 1 and 7.



Positions 1 and 7, a reunited pair with overprints misplaced down.



← Position 1 misplaced.
← Position 1 correction.
← Position 7 misplaced.

Ex Swarbrick.

Position 1 misplaced down. The separate strike above is also low, traces of position 7 are at the top.



Ex Ferrari and Swarbrick.

Position 7 correction. →

Position 1, misplaced, shadowed by a kiss-print part second strike. →



Sismondo opinion, 2009.

Column 2, positions 2 and 8.

Position 2 misplaced down. This is the first row, so the position above does not appear.



Position 8 misplaced down. This is the second row, so traces of position 2 appear at the top.



Position 2 misplaced. →

Position 8 correction. →

Positions 8 and 9 misplaced. →



Ex Winter and Swarbrick. Certificate BPA 66023, 1969.

Columns 1 and 2, positions 1, 2, 7 and 8.

Misplaced diagonally, positions:

1, 2 and 3 →

7, 8 and 9 →

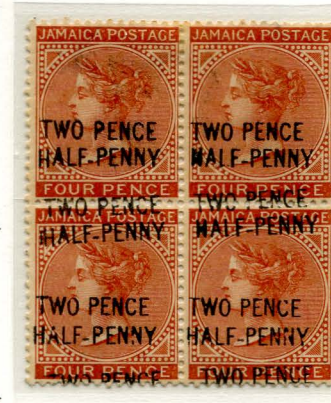


Positions 1 and 2 corrections. ←

Positions 7 and 8 corrections. ←

Positions 1 and 2 misplaced. →

Positions 7 and 8 misplaced. →



Positions 1 and 2 corrections. ←

Positions 7 and 8 corrections. ←

Ex Swarbrick.

Jamaica: The Vendryes Provisional

Second setting: misplaced and corrective double overprints, columns 3 to 6.

Columns 3 and 4, positions 3, 4, 9 and 10.

Misplaced down, positions:

3 4



9 10

Position 3 misplaced. →



Position 9 correction. ←

Position 3 → misplaced.



Position 9 correction. ←

Position 9 misplaced. →

Columns 4, 5 and 6.

Misplaced, high and slanting.

Positions:

4 5 6



10 11 12

← Position 4 misplaced.



← Position 10 correction.

← Position 10 misplaced.

Column 5, positions 5 and 11.

Position 5 is placed normally. The separate strike above is low, so traces of position 11 appear at the top.



Position 5 → misplaced.



Position 11 correction. ←

Column 6, positions 6 and 12.

Position 6 misplaced down so badly that only the words TWO PENCE appear. This is the first row, so the position above does not appear.

Ex Ferrari and Swarbrick.



Position 12 misplaced. ←

Position 12 misplaced. →



Position 6 → correction.



Position 12 misplaced down. This is the second row, so traces of position 6 appear at the top.

Jamaica: The Vendryes Provisional

Third setting.

This setting gives every appearance of having been printed by Vendryes and Co. using the same type and press as the other two settings. However, it is printed on a different shade of the basic 4d stamp, it is known only unused and did not appear on the market until about 1921.

3 overprints in a single horizontal row, with 1.5mm between the lines of each overprint, struck twenty times to cover each pane.



Block of 18, six strikes of the setting.

*Ex Swarbrick and
Baillie.*

Third setting: double overprints.

The double overprint in the third setting is not mentioned in published accounts of the provisional. The examples on this page all show the closely doubled repetition of the same position on each stamp, unlike double overprints in the other settings. One of each strike is slightly fainter than the other, suggesting either a kiss-print or that the second, stronger strike was added to reinforce the first, faint one.

Block, setting 3, positions:

2 and 3 double →

2 and 3 normal →



Overprint double,
setting 3, position 2.



Holcombe opinion, 1991.