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THE LINE ENGRAVED AND EMBOSSED ISSUES OF GREAT BRITAIN. 1840 - 1880

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DISPLAY BY JOHN. O. GRIFFITHS.

The Display shows the History of Perkins, Bacon their rise and fall into disfavour. In April 1840 they had two printing machines while in 1878 there were 38. But they lost one constant battle - that of fugitive inks, by its very nature the line engraved postage label destroyed itself, for short of mutilating the paper it was printed on, the image could not be removed. Yet virtually any cancellation put upon it could. It will be seen at the end of the display that the modern line engraved counterpart is in the same situation which upholds the principle that the quality of Recess Printing is too good. With regard to the higher value Embossed issues printed at Somerset House, the Government Department of the Commissioners of Stamps and Taxes later becoming the Inland Revenue, were not made of the stuff of private enterprise and never stood up to any increased volume, even delaying the Sixpenny until the Tenpenny was terminated. When this had an increased demand because of registration and cheaper rates to the Colonies, they very soon gave up all to Thomas De La Rue winner of three prizes in the Paris Printing Exhibition of 1850 and who already produced the stationery for embossing at Somerset House as well as Fiscals. The Display also demonstrates the methods by which the Post Office copes with continual increase of mail by cutting handling times - the best examples of which are shown by the aiding of separating by perforation and the various Duplex Cancellation experiments carried out. Throughout is a preponderance of Twopenny plates (1 - 15, Plates 10 & 11 were never issued) 13 in all. These act as stepping stones over the period of 40 years telling the story of what occurred to 210 plates of One Penny Die I and 227 Plates of Die II in clearer detail than an explanation in terms of pennies.

- FRAME 1 The story of Perkins, Bacon from its earliest beginnings.
- FRAME 2 The development of the Uniform Penny Post including various proposals.
- FRAME 3 The various Dies - Wyons first with Charles Whittings comments in manuscript a unique document, the rejected Die of Perkins, Bacon, the Master Die, the Die of the One Penny just prepared and the Die marked 'Old Original' after 4,000 impressions were taken from it. Also a composite embossed essay of Charles Whiting who was his challenger - again the only one.
- FRAME 4 Plate I both un-hardened and re-entered. Also the First Postmaster's Notice April 1840.
- FRAME 5 Plate 2. There is the largest known multiple of Penny Black used (28) also part of the Second Postmaster's Notice, May 7th with an unused pair of V.R.
- FRAME 6 Plate 1 Twopenny. One of two known covers on the first day of issue - 8th May. A large dated piece on the second day.
- FRAME 7 Plates 3, 4 & 5. Used and unused singles and multiples, the latter with an unused block of six with selvedge.
- FRAME 8 Plates 6, 7 & 8 used and unused including a sheet of Paper Trials with

various gums. The stamps being obliterated with concentric rings - the unused block of 9 is probably the largest known of Plate 8.

FRAME 9 Plate 2 Twopenny showing a variety of cancellations.

FRAME 10 Plates 9, 10 & 11. The latter having a matched pair of Black & Red prints with red crosses, possibly the only ones known.

FRAME 11 The various trials carried out to the Postage Label, many of which are rare.

FRAME 12 Various Twopenny Trials & the Postmaster's Notice of 1841.

FRAME 13 A part reconstruction of Plate 12 with its notes - the first truly Red Plate.

FRAME 14 Twopenny Plate 3 (white lines) with unused pieces in its various states.

FRAMES 15 & 16 Part reconstructions of Plates 13 & 14 showing the plating aspect of the collection.

FRAMES 17 & 18 Plates 17 - 59, demonstrating their various Fresh entries and characteristics as well as types of Maltese Cross.

FRAME 19 Plates 57 - 92. The 'Union Jack' re-entry in strip of 8. Late use of the Cross. The bad laying down of plates around the 80's. The 'KB' Fresh entry on piece.

FRAME 20 Plates 90 - 101. The so called Archer Plates. It also covers the 1849 period when France issued its surface printed Ceres Head which by its very design and make up was to shake Perkins, Bacon and eventually usurp their position. Two album leaves are shown to demonstrate the clarity of any cancellation however delicately applied or designed. Also in the frame is the largest used multiple of the Penny Red (72).

FRAME 21 The Archer Perforations & Alphabet II. Also a Prince Consort essay in blue without legend, the only others at present known are either in the Postal Museum or the Queen's collection.

FRAME 22 Penny perforated 16 & 14 including the two lower corner copies of Plate 195 with plate numbers from the imprimatur sheet. Examples of weak 'heads' due to the wearing original die.

FRAMES 23 - 26. Plate 4. Twopenny imperforate & perforate including many unrecorded re-entries. The Largest unused block of Twopenny white lines imperforated (36) and an unused copy in the violet blue shade, also a vertical Archer perforated strip - cancelled Frank Ives Scudamore.

25-*Albion*
large

FRAME 27 The Embossed issue. Early Wyon dies in proof form, both clear and uncleaned, few known. The One shilling. A Yellow essay, another in brown without pendant curl with trial cancellation and in yellow-green without. A notice to all Postmasters 1847 and a complete Post Office sheet of 20 used. There is an unused sheet in the Postal Museum but this is overprinted specimen.

FRAME 28 The Tenpenny. A primary die with green background. The only other known is in the Postal Museum. An essay with simulated threads in green. An unused Block of 16, the largest known multiple of any Embossed issue.

A die proof of the Sixpenny which a letter in the Postal Museum makes reference to. A Block of 6 unused. One of the three largest known multiples (block 6 & 12 in the Postal Museum). A used block of 4, one of four known.

FRAME 29 The work of William Humphrys who was chosen to re-engrave the original die by deepening the lines of engraving but not to change its character.

FRAME 30 A Die Proof of One Penny Die II - Die II Alphabet II Plates 1 - 7. Perforated 16 & 14, small and large crown watermark.

FRAME 31 Die II Alphabet II Plates 8 - 21. Also examples of Perkins, Bacon New South Wales Laureated issue which was held up due to the laying down of Pl. 1 - 21 and pointing to the fact that only one transfer plate was used for all plates.

FRAME 32 Twopenny Plate 5. Use of perforation 16 & then 14, also small and large crown. The rarities, strip of 3 SC 16 unused largest known multiple, LC 16 unused, LC 14 block of 4 unused with 'DB' Fresh Entry and Large crown used imperforate. Unused SC 16 with inverted watermark.

FRAME 33 One Penny Alphabet III Blued. An unused block of 9 Plate 22, the first plate (showing tall L's and semi-gothic K's) the only known unused examples. Crimea Covers.

FRAMES 34 & 35 The story of the English Spoon and Duplex.

FRAME 36 Irish Spoons.

FRAME 37 The complete story of the Mullingar Spoon. As the Irish Post Office was burnt down in 1922 all records were destroyed, but through Mullingar these records can to an extent be re-constructed.

FRAMES 38 - 41 The Scots Experiment. This shows how in 1854 Local cancellations used on the reverse of covers were placed as an obliteration of the labels, therefore, cutting by half the work required by the main offices. Some examples displayed have only three known strikes. The roller cancellation experiment is also shown as is the Leath Duplex. The Scots Duplex, dotted circles, Brunswick Stars & Too Late varieties are also shown.

FRAME 42 The Transitional issues on creamy toned paper and the Rose Reds, an Album sheet of Plate 27 rarities are included.

FRAME 43 Plate 6. The two most interesting items, a vertical imperforate pair the only known, and the beginning of the 'MA' damaged large crown, unrecorded on Plate 6 - the new Die of the Twopenny also shown.

FRAME 44 Plate 7 of the Twopenny. The first of the so called Plate number series, for added security, and first applied to the Perkins Bacon higher value, to overcome the cleaning of cancellations. Rose Reds to Plate 47.

FRAME 45 Twopenny Plate 8. Showing a third state so far unrecorded - also an album page showing the only time reference was made in the records of softening of a plate prior to re-entering.

FRAME 46 The Stop Gap Plates. The reserve plates and Alphabet IV. Plate 50 has a most unusual piece in showing an unused block of 8 with complete centre dividing ornament.

FRAME 47 Twopenny Plate 9. showing an unused Block of 96 in State 1, an unused Block of 72 in State 2, and an unused Block of 12 in State 3, all of which

are at present unique.

FRAME 48 Plate Numbers include a roller impression of unissued Plate 75 on Blue paper for more fugitive inks, Plate 12 & 13 of the Twopenny, the latter having a block of 4 on Dr. Perkin's security paper.

FRAME 49 Various Twopenny Proofs, including one in Rosy Mauve as an experiment for more fugitive inks in 1878 to save the contract. A Maltese Cross cancel dated 1866. Plate 14 Twopenny.

FRAME 50 Penny Plate numbers 133 onward. Plate 15 Twopenny includes a complete sheet as issued by the Post Office. The only other known to be in existence is in the Postal Museum of Plate 4 but is over-printed specimen.

FRAME 51 The Halfpenny including the Die Proofs.

FRAME 52 The Threepenny including Die Proofs and a pair on safety paper. Ridgeway essays, the Perkins Bacon Endeavour for the 1879 Tender lost to Thomas De La Rue.

FRAME 53 The 1969 Line Engraved Machin High Values. The Tenpence became too greater task for modern line engraving. The Twentypence printed in successively larger multiples to improve production. The various types of One Pound produced by modifications to get better production and an improved impression. Also how with all the built in modern security methods, cancellations can still be cleaned within two minutes.

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