Four Pence Beaded Oval of Victoria, 1860 to 1863

Introduction

The electros used to print the 4^d Emblems were coming to the end of their usable life. On December 1st 1859, Frederick Grosse was given an order to produce a die for the 4^d Beaded Oval. The die was produced at a cost of £12 and was delivered on February 13th 1860. These stamps were in high demand to pay the 4^d Intra-Colony rate, this high demand resulted in various papers being used as well as the issuing of rouletted and imperforate stamps. The Beaded oval design was much maligned in regard to its artistic merit and the wording on the stamp was too small to be easily read.

Purpose and Scope of Exhibit

This exhibit tells the story of the 4d Beaded Oval and the measures used to maintain a constant supply of these stamps. Goldfields Mail is included to show a gap in the Postal Network was covered by an enterprising business. Marginal Inscriptions are a much overlooked part of the Beaded Oval story. Also shown are the various papers used and the emergency methods of separation used while the perforating was being repaired. Through to when the 4^d Beaded Oval was replaced by the 4^d Laureated stamp.

Rarity Statement

In this exhibit the largest known multiple is shown and a reconstructed block of 12 with an almost complete Marginal Inscription. Items that have 1 to 4 known examples, are mounted within a **double line burgundy frame**, items that have 5 to 15 known examples, are mounted within a **single line burgundy frame**. Rarity has been established by referring to, Kellow: The Stamps of Victoria and my personal research. A © indicates the item has a certificate. Plate positions are shown as [C1].

Plan of Exhibit

Literature References

G. Kellow – The Stamps of Victoria

Hugh Freeman – Barred Numerals of Victoria

J. Wilson – The Royal Philatelic Collection

Philately from Australia March 1954 Pages 9-14

Goldfields Mail

Victoria Express,   S. Callou & Co

Goldfields Express Mail.

Sent Via Victoria Express, S. Callou & Co / Stationers of Inglewood. A shortage of Post Offices in the Goldfields, created an opportunity for enterprising shopkeepers. For the Express Post fee of 1/- a letter would be carried to a Post Office and posted to the destination. There are only two recorded examples of the Victoria Express handstamp.

Folded entire from New Inglewood to Melbourne,

Four Pence Beaded Oval, Rose Pink on Thick Course Paper No Watermark Perforated 12, tied by Barred Numeral 296 of New Inglewood.

Backstamped VICTORIA EXPRESS / S.CALLOU & CO / STATIONERS / News & Letter Agent / &Co / INGLEWOOD also a manuscript 1 in red to signifying that the express fee of 1/- had been paid, this partly obscured by the flap. This item was subsequently posted at New Inglewood, backstamp NEW INGLEWOOD / AU 21 / 60 / VICTORIA and arrival handstamp MELBOURNE / A / AU 23 / 60   Ex Silvasich.

Goldfields Mail

Victoria Express,   S. Callou & Co

Goldfields Express Mail.

Sent Via Victoria Express, S. Callou & Co/Stationers of Inglewood. The continuing shortage of Post Offices in the Goldfields, allowed enterprising shopkeepers to continue this service. In late in 1860 the Post Office put pressure on the service and had it discontinued. There are only two recorded examples of the Victoria Express handstamp.

Scan of S, Collou Stationers, Victoria Express hand stamp on the back.

VICTORIA EXPRESS / S.CALLOU & CO /
STATIONERS / News & Letter Agent / &Co /
INGLEWOOD

Cover sent from Sandy Creek to Melbourne,

Four Pence Beaded Oval, Rose-pink on Saunders FOUR PENCE Watermark Paper, Perforated 12, tied by Barred Numeral 116 of Sandy Creek, also on front a red line to signifying that the express fee of 1/- had been paid.

Backstamped SANDY CREEK / ✿ / MY*3 / 1860 / VICTORIA also MELBOURNE / A / MY 4 / 60 plus another red line to signifying that the express fee of 1/- had been paid. Ex Dubois.
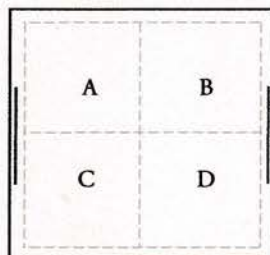
Marginal Inscription

Position D12
'VALUE TWO P

De La Rue Single Line 4 Watermark Paper. Dull Rose.

Position B18.
'ON'

Front of a cover, sent from Ballarat to Bendigo.

Inscriptions are centred on vertical sides only, positioned next to the gutter. Next to stamp positions in the left margin are C7, C1, A25, A19 and A13. In the right it is next to stamp positions in the left margin are B18, B24, B30, D6, D12 and D18.

Robinson introduced Marginal Inscriptions while printing the Emblems and continued to include the Marginal Inscriptions in the side margins on the Beaded Oval sheets. The purpose of the marginal inscription is to help with accounting, Post Office staff had to regularly total up the value of stamps they held.

Marginal Inscription

Saunders FOUR PENCE Watermark Paper,   Rose-pink,   Perforated 12

Used block of 24 with Original Gum, with left and bottom margins attached.
The left margin has a partial Marginal Inscription ONE HUNDRED AN
Left margin has a VICTOR watermark and the bottom margin has a VICTORIA watermark.

All are cancelled by KA 1 cancel of Melbourne in black. The reason for cancelling stamps
with intact gum, could be to pay bulk postage or possibly for usage as Specimens.
This is the largest known multiple. Ex Pack, Forster, Perry, Dubois.

De La Rue Single Line 4 Watermark Paper,   Dull Rose,   Perforated 12

Unused

Marginal Inscriptions were in use for the full time
that Beaded Oval stamps were printed.

Marginal Inscriptions were only on the sides of sheets,
reading upwards in the left margin and downwards
in the right margin.

The full Marginal Inscription read, ONE HUNDRED
AND TWENTY STAMPS IN EACH SHEET. VALUE
TWO POUNDS.

For some unknown reason, the 4^d Beaded Oval is the
only stamp where the marginal inscription is in
all capital letters.

This is a reconstructed block of 12, consisting of a
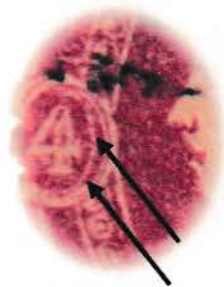block of 6, plus a block of 4, plus a pair.
This Unused block shows some staining
from the deep brown gum.

It is interesting to mention that the reason for there
being 120 stamps in a sheet is because there were
240 Pennies in a Pound.   Ex Perry, Hackmey.

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Thin Glazed Bordeaux Paper
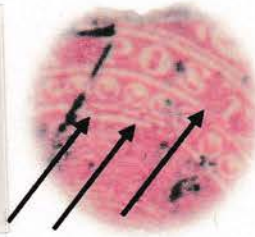
Rose-pink,   Perforated 12

Double Strike on the oval around the left 4.   Void area across top of stamp design.   Misshaped Oval, wider space between ST of Postage.
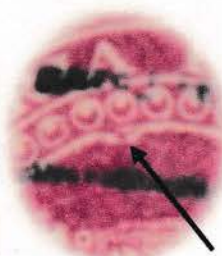
Double Strike on the left 4 and Oval Line above and below oval around left 4.

A deep V shape dent in left frame just under oval around left 4.

Rose,   Perforated 12

Misshaped inner oval below A of Victoria.

The late arrival of the FOUR PENCE watermark paper prompted a discission use up the remaining stock of Bordeaux paper on the 4ᵈ Beaded Ovals, there were only 720,000 printed on the Bordeaux paper.
This paper is very thin, sometimes referred to as 'Pelure Paper' which is best described as crisp hard thin paper, it is much thinner than other papers being only 60 µm thick. The earliest known date of use is April 21ˢᵗ 1860.
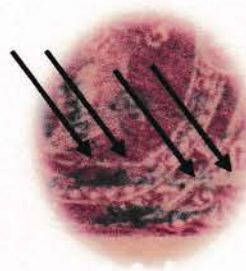
Thicker Courser No Watermark Paper

Rose-pink,   Perforated 12
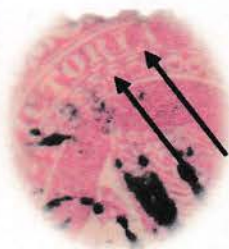
Double Strike
on VICTORIA
and the Beads
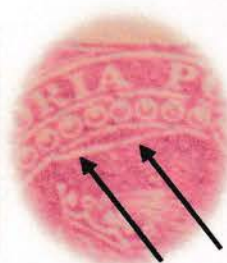next to it.

Cracked Electro
A break running
though top of F,
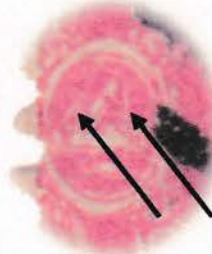under neck and
through the
BRC ornament.

BN 296 New
Inglewood.

[C5]   [C6]   [D1]
Interpanneau Strip[

A scratch
across the
Oval at top.

Double
Strike on
the left 4.

Delays with the FOUR PENCE watermark paper, together with all the Bordeaux Paper having been used, it was necessary to use this Thicker Courser Paper. A printing of only 180,000 stamps was delivered on July 16th 1860, this was a sufficient supply to take the Post Office through to July 31st 1860, when the first of the FOUR PENCE watermarked stamps were delivered. This was the last Victoria stamp printed on No Watermark Paper.

Saunders FOUR PENCE Watermark Paper

Rose-pink, Perforated 12

Reversed Watermark   Unused

Rose-red, Perforated 12

Post Office received the first of the FOUR PENCE watermark paper in early July 1860.
The earliest known usage is August 1st 1860

Saunders FOUR PENCE Watermark Paper

Rose-carmine, Perforated 12

Double
Strike on
the oval
around the
left 4.

Dull Rose,   Perforated 12

FOUR PENCE watermark paper was used to print 4^d stamps in four shades, Rose-pink, Rose-red, Rose-carmine and Dull Rose. There was a total of 7,740,000 printed between July 1860 and July 1862.
Deep brown gum that was used, caused permanent staining on some stamps.

Saunders FOUR PENCE Watermark Paper
Rose-carmine, Perforated 12

Cover sent from Sandhurst to London, England.

Strip of 3 tied by BN 4 Sandhurst also on cover is a handstamp SANDHURST / MA 25 / 61 / VICTORIA
also an arrival stamp LONDON / DY / MY 13 / 61 / PAID in red and a manuscript Via Marseilles
Backstamped MELBOURNE / H / MA 25 / 61

Folded entire sent from Raglan to Ballarat.

This the intended use of the 4^d Beaded Oval, to prepay intra-colony mail.

Tied by BN 97 Raglan also there is a transferred impression of the Ballarat arrival stamp.
Backstamped RAGLAN / FE 17 / 61 / VICTORIA and arrival stamp BALLARAT / D/ FE 18 / 61 / VICTORIA

Mint

Inverted Watermark.

SE 24 / 62 This is the
earliest known date.

All the usable sheets of FOUR PENCE Watermark paper had been used up and the delivery of Single Line 4 Watermark paper had not arrived from De La Rue. It was decided to use up the Saunders FIVE SHILLINGS Watermark paper, there were only 360,000 printed on the Saunders FIVE SHILLINGS Watermark paper.

De La Rue Single Line 4 Watermark Paper

Dull Rose-pink, Perforated 12

Unused

Cover sent from Geelong to Taunton, England.
Also on this cover is a 2^d Emblems, Pale Slate on THREE PENCE Watermark Paper
Perforated 12, both are tied by duplex handstamps GEELONG / 1 A / JU 25 / 63.
Arrival backstamp A / TAUNTON / AU 2[x] / 63   Ex Molnar.

Eventually the Single Line 4 Watermark paper arrived from De La Rue, the first delivery of the 4^d stamps arrived at
the Post Office on October 9th 1862. There were 3,360,000 printed in Dull Rose-pink, Dull Rose or Rose-red.

During July and August 1863, the perforating machine was out of use for repair.
When the need for 4^d stamps became urgent it was decided to Roulette 4^d stamps for use at Melbourne.
Less than 160,000 of these stamps were Rouletted in this Emergency rouletting, for the Melbourne G.P.O.

De La Rue Single Line 4 Watermark Paper

Imperforate

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During July and August 1863, while the perforating machine was being repaired, the 4^d stamps could not be rouletted fast enough to supply everywhere. As an emergency measure it was decided to supply Imperforate 4^d stamps, these were supplied to Post Offices in Ballarat, Buninyong, Geelong, Sandhurst, Streatham and Wallan Wallan. The only multiples recorded are less than 25 used pairs.

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Single Line 4 Watermark Paper
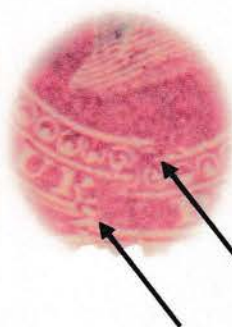
Dull Rose, Perforated 12

Reversed
and
Sideways
Watermark.

Single Line 4 Watermark Paper, Rose-red, Perforated 12

Reversed
Watermark.

Break
through the
Oval Lines.

After being used for 3 years and 5 months to print a total of 12,360,000 stamps,
it was decided, the 4^d Beaded Oval would be replaced. In September 1863 the
4^d Laureate was introduced bringing the story of the 4^d Beaded Oval to a close.