

Robinson Private Contract Period Ship Wreck Cover

Rescued from the Northam 20 August 1859

The Northam ran aground on Shab-barger reef in the red sea, all passengers and Australian mail were landed on the adjacent island of Myetta. Passengers and mail were picked up by the steamers Benares and Cyclops, then taken back in Aden, the steamer Simla took them on to Suez. There are less than 20 surviving covers recorded. No explanatory markings were applied, however it is known that the via Marseilles mail arrived in London on 13 September 1859.



Registered cover sent from Geelong to London UK.

Manuscript Per Northam / Via Marseilles and Registered. In places, the edges of the 1^d and 4^d stamps show the edge of perforation holes, proving they were trimmed before being attached to the cover. Stamps are 1^d Yellow-green on Good Quality Wove Paper Perforated 12, a 4^d Rose-carmine on Poor Quality Coarse Wove Paper Perforated 12, also a 1/- Octagonal Blue Perforated 12, all are tied by 5 hits of BN 2 Geelong. A stamp most likely a 3^d, to make correct postage via Marseilles, was originally at the top right corner and wrapped around due to lack of space, has floated off as part of the water damage while being rescued. The 1/- paid the registration fee.

Handstamped on front in red REGISTERED / 13 SP 59 / LONDON.

Backstamped GEELONG / B / JY-16 / 59 / VICTORIA plus in red LONDON / 12 / SP 19 / 59 / C.

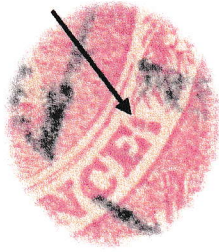


The left stamp is,
Flaw 11
A white dot on
inner edge of
right frame.
Position A2.
Setting 3.

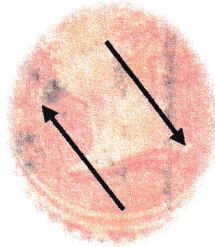
Robinson Private Contract Period

Good Quality Wove Paper, Dull Rose Shades, Perforated 12

Crust Flaw (i)
AKA Colon Flaw
Extra colour
above the dot
making a colon.
Setting 5.

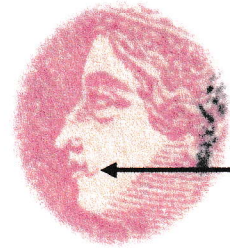
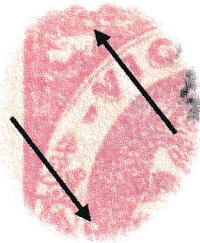


Mint



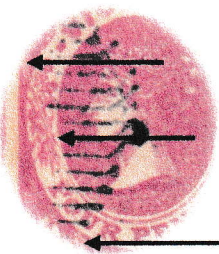
Flaw 12
White area near
chin and an
hourglass shaped
area at base of neck.
Setting 5.

Flaw 25
A white area
above cow's tail,
dot near oval.
Position B7.
Setting 5.



Flaw 61(c)
AKA Queen
with moustache,
a line of colour
with an upswing
from mouth.
Setting 5.

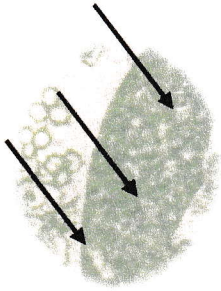
Flaw 44
A deep scratch from
above the berries
through the flowers and
out the bottom edge
under the U of Four.
Position B3
Setting 5.



Robinson took on a small contract to print, gum and perforate 1 million 4^d stamps, a total of 1,000,080 were delivered. These were the last Emblems printed before the equipment was moved to the G.P.O., in preparation for it's sale to the Post Office. Robinson continued as a contractor working in the G.P.O. till the end of 1859.

Robinson Private Contract Period

Thin Glazed Bordeaux Paper, Deep Yellow-green, Perforated 12



Flaw 19
White area opposite
mouth and a mottled
area opposite nose
and forehead.
Setting 3



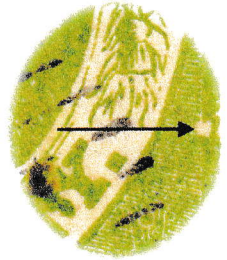
The handstamp dated 2.7.59
on this stamp proves, these
stamps cannot be from the
Bright Green printings of
1860. Ex Purves, Perry.



Ex Purves, Perry.

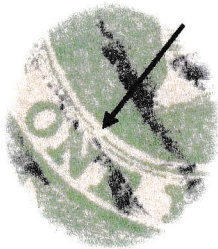


Ex Purves, Perry.
RPSV Certificate 5731.



Flaw 11
White dot on the
right border.
Position A2
Setting 3

There are only 12 to 15 known examples of this variety, an 1859 printing on Bordeaux Paper. This paper is named after the town it purportedly came from, it is a distinctive highly surfaced Pelure Paper of only 60 µm thickness, compared to the wove paper of the time which were 80 to 100 µm thick.



Flaw 22
Gap in oval lines
above N of ONE.
Position C30
Setting 3



Marginal Inscription
Twenty Stamps proves this is
Position C30. Tear at lower left.
RPSV Certificate 5519.
Ex Purves, Perry.



Flaw 2.1
Two white dots level
with the Queen's eye.
Position D19.
Setting 3.

This variety was once described by Purves as a Mystery Stamp, initially they were thought to be part of the 1860 printing in Bright Green. The stamp dated 2-7-59 proves that the Deep Yellow-green shade, predated the later Bright Green shade, which was printed in May 1860. The existence of this variety indicates, it was Robinson who purchased the Bordeaux paper and the remainder of this paper was part of the stock, which the Post Office purchased from him along with all his equipment.

Robinson Private Contract Period
Poor Quality Wove Paper, Dull Green, Perforated 12.



Ex Purves, Perry, Barelli.
 Perry Certificate 185019.



Flaw 12
 Dot in front
 of Diadem.
 Setting 3.



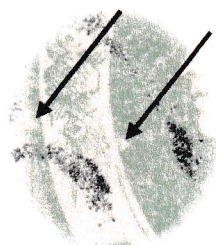
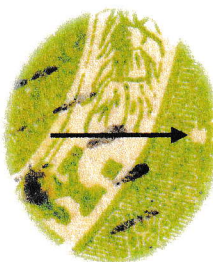
Mint



Poor Quality Wove Paper, Green, Perforated 12.

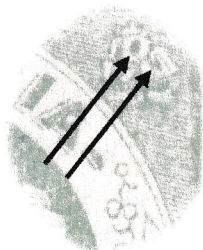


Flaw 11
 A white dot on
 inner edge of
 right border.
 Position A2.
 Setting 3.



Flaw 23
 Gap in left frame, white
 triangle on edge of oval.
 Setting 3.

Flaw 25
 Two colour
 dots on Sailing
 Ship. Position
 A8. Setting 3.



Ex Purves, Perry, Barelli.
 RPSV Certificate 5718.

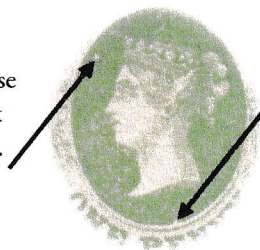


Flaw 10
 Line level
 with chin.
 Position A3.
 Setting 3.



Flaw 13
 Dot at base
 of Diadem.
 Position A9.
 Setting 3.

Flaw 3
 Dot level with base
 of Diadem, nick
 in colour over E.
 Setting 3.



Specimen Overprint
 McCredie Type 10.
 There were 5 overprinted
 SPECIMEN only 3 are extant, 1 of
 which is in the Royal Collection.
 RSPV Certificate 5291.

This paper is of a poorer quality than previous papers used by Robinson, it is a coarse wove paper with a Vertical mesh.

Robinson Private Contract Period
 Poor Quality Wove Paper, Dull Green, Perforated 12.

Cover sent from Ballarat to Hartford Connecticut.

Also on this cover is a 1/- Octagonal Perforated 12, all are tied by Barred Numeral 5 cancels, this makes the correct rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ for a $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce letter via Southampton and is rated with a manuscript 8 in red. Handstamped LONDON / EX / DE 14 / 59 / PAID in red and 5 / JAN / 2 / BOSTON / B^R PK^T. Backstamped BALLARAT / H / OC 13 / 59 / VICTORIA and MELBOURNE / A / OC.14 / 59.

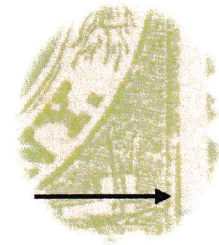


Ex Geitenbeck.

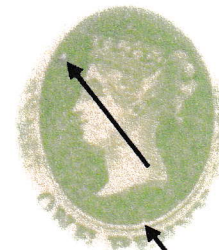


Cover sent from Sandhurst to Devonshire England

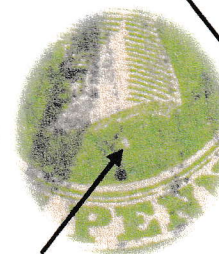
There are 2 strips of 3 stamps, the left hand strip has no identifiable flaws and the right hand strip is Flaw 37, Flaw 3 and Flaw 21 in that sequence. Paying the correct rate of 6^d for less than $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce when sent by the long Sea route. Handstamp SANDHURST / OC 16 / 59 / VICTORIA. Backstamped MELBOURNE / H / OC.17 / 59 and SIDMOUTH / A / DE 15 / [59].



Flaw 37
Right border
split running
up from
bottom
corner.
Setting 3.



Flaw 3 Dot
level with base
of Diadem,
nick in colour
over E.
Setting 3.



Flaw 21
White dot
under neck
over E.
Setting 3.

Robinson Private Contract Period
 Poor Quality Wove Paper, Dull Green, Perforated 12

Folded cover sent from
 Melbourne to Portland.

Also on this cover is a deep
 blue Halflength on wove
 paper, Campbell 6th printing
 of June 1854, perforated 12
 by Robinson.

Backstamped
 MELBOURNE / D / FE 9 /
 60 and PORTLAND / FE
 13 / 1860 / VICTORIA
 Ex Perry. Ceremuga
 Certificate 12894



Poor Quality Wove Paper, Green, Perforated 12



Backstamped
 DUNOLLY / JY-23 / 60
 / VICTORIA plus
 HDOPA.RAMBURG /
 21 / 9 / 10-11 and
 St. P.A. / 21 Sep 60

Registered cover from Dunolly to Denmark.

Also on this cover is a strip of 1/- Octagonal in blue perf 12, all are tied by BN 239 Dunolly. Handstamps
 REGISTERED / A / JY.24 / 60 / MELBOURNE in red also [Crown] / REGISTERED in red twice plus a P in
 oval and REGISTERED / 8 M / 19 SP 60 / LONDON. Manuscript Registered with accounting marks 2 and 62.

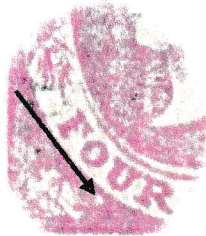
Robinson Private Contract Period
Poor Quality Wove Paper, Rose-carmine, Perforated 12

Flaw 61
 AKA Queen
 with moustache,
 a line of colour
 with an upswing
 from mouth.
 Setting 5.



Flaw 22
 White area at
 base of neck.
 Setting 5.

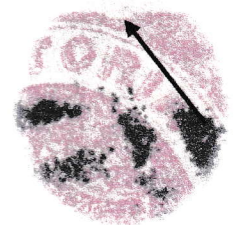
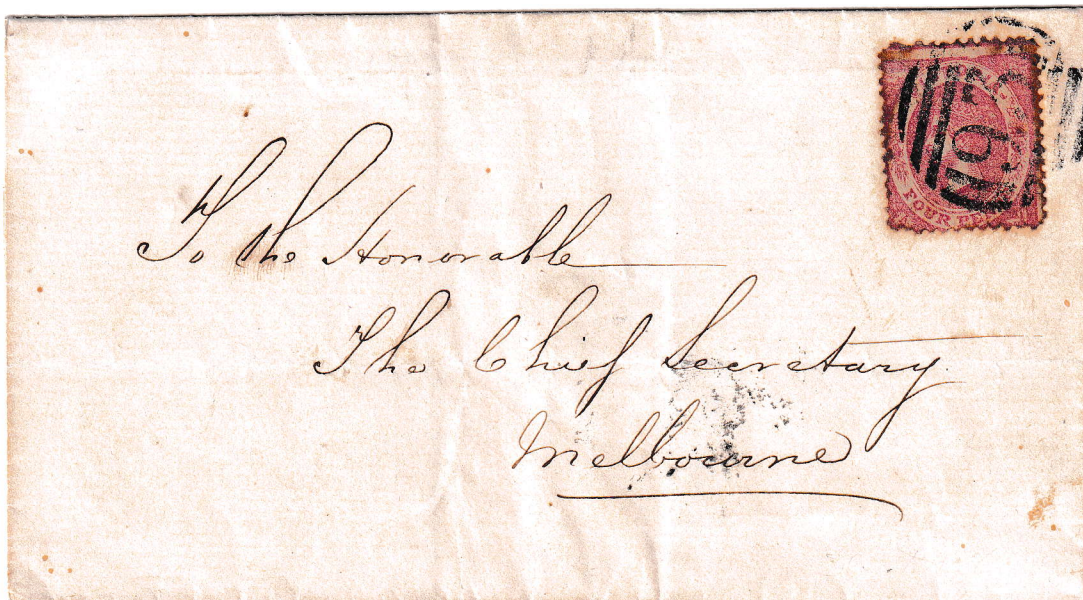
Flaw 20
 White dot
 under the left
 of the U.
 Position C28.
 Setting 5.



Unused



Unused Ex Purves, Perry, Barelli.
 RPSV Certificate 5767.



Flaw 41
 A dent in the
 top frame,
 above the R.
 Setting 5.

Folded cover sent from Ararat to Melbourne.

Tied by BN 93 of Ararat, backstamped ARARAT / A / MA-20 / 60 / VICTORIA and MELBOURNE / A / MA 22 / 60

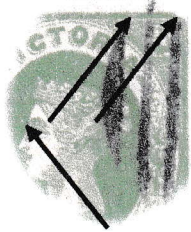
The paper used for this printing is of a poorer quality than the papers previously used by Robinson, it is a coarse wove paper with a vertical mesh. This machine made paper varies in thickness from 80 µm to 110 µm.

Robinson Private Contract Period

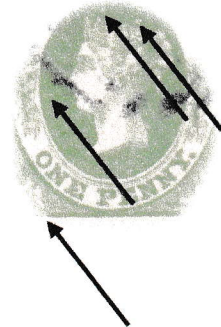
Horizontally Laid Coarse Paper Closer Lines, Dull Green, Perforated 12



Flaw 9.2
A notch at TRC,
small notch above A,
dot near eyebrow.
Position C22.
Setting 3.



Ex Purves, Perry, Barelli.
RPSV Certificate 5733.



Flaw 17.1
Two dots above
diadem, white line
level with mouth,
notch in border
near T Square.
Position C23.
Setting 3.

Horizontally Laid Coarse Paper Further Apart Lines, Green Shades, Perforated 12



Damaged Bottom Perfs.
RPSV Certificate 5732.



Flaw 2.1
Two white dots level
with the Queen's eye.
Position D5.
Setting 3.



Ex Molnar



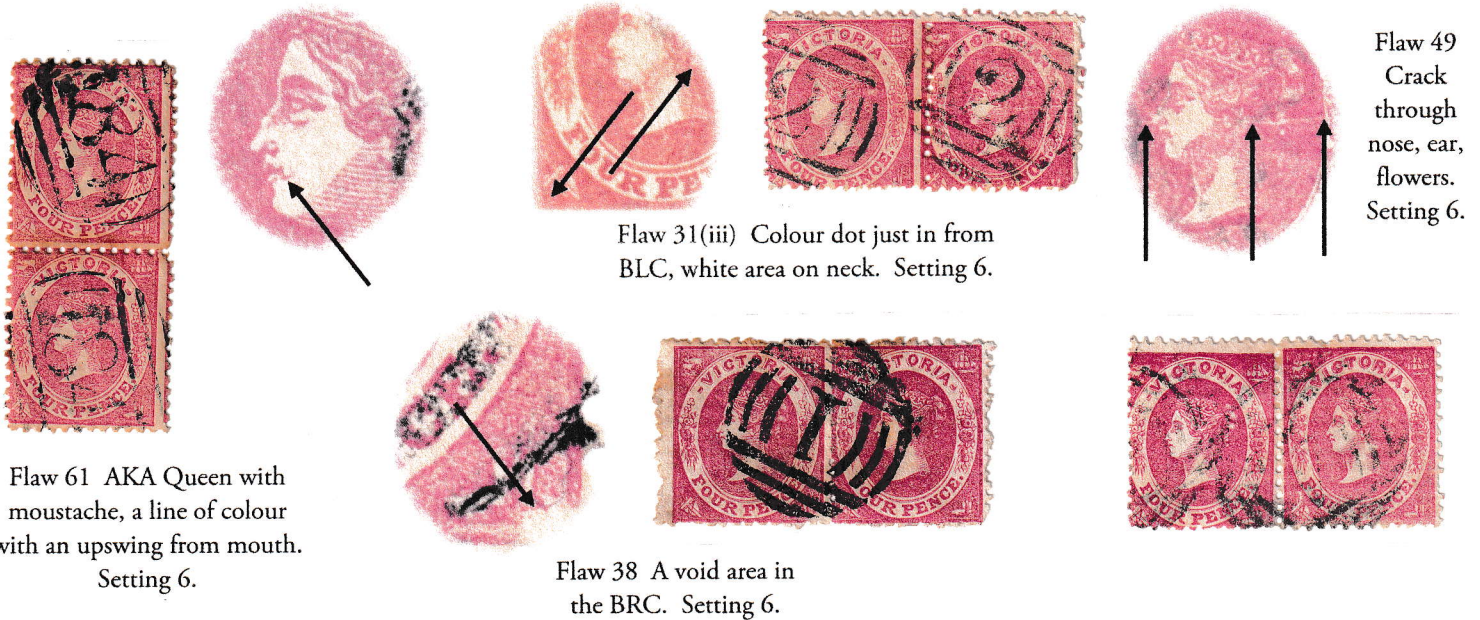
Unused



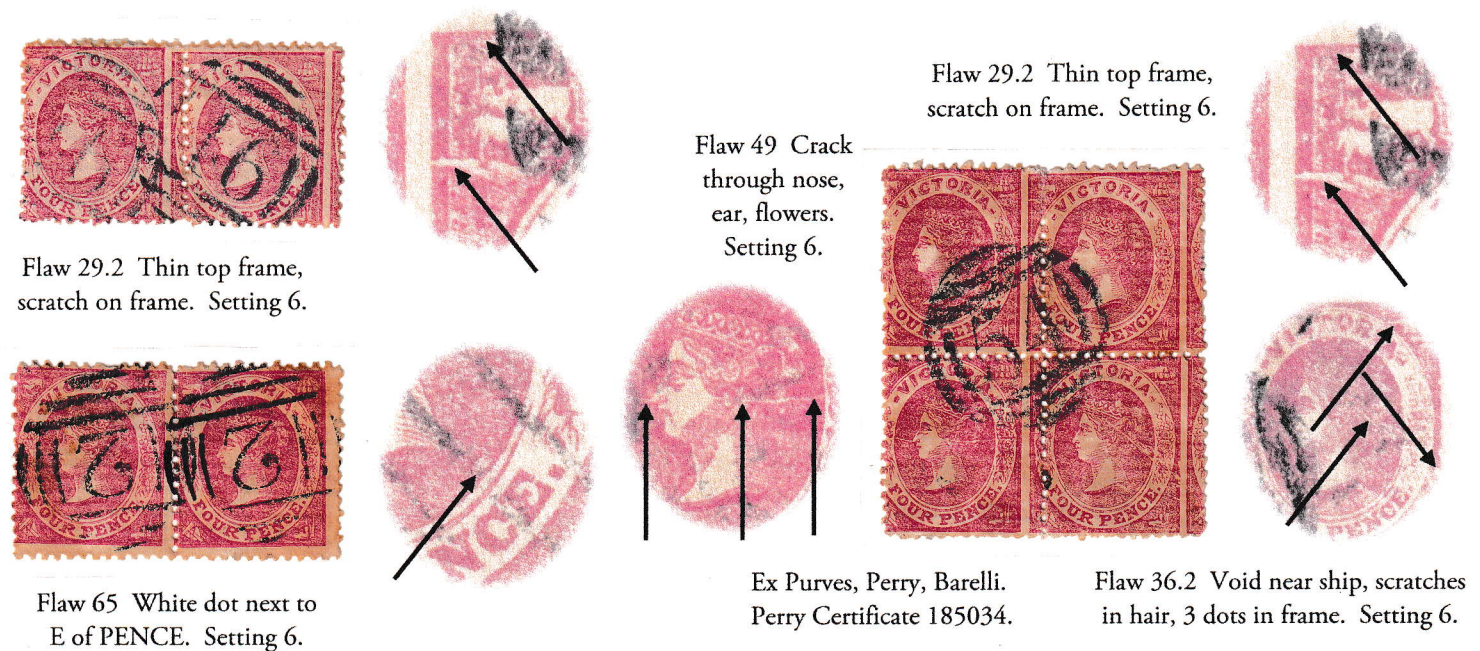
The post office purchased all Robinson's equipment, paper and ink for £200 these were then moved to the G.P.O., where Robinson printed these stamps under his last contract. The paper for the Dull Green, has the laid lines closer together, but the paper for the Green, has the laid lines further apart. The earliest recorded usage of the Dull Green is July 18th 1859, the Green shades were received in October 1859, but the earliest recorded usage of these is November 10th 1859.

Robinson Private Contract Period

Horizontally Laid Coarse Paper Laid Lines Further Apart, Rose-pink Shades, Perforated 12



Horizontally Laid Coarse Paper Laid Lines Closer Together, Rose-pink, Perforated 12



The Calvert affair lead to a discussion, the Post Office should no longer have stamp printing carried out by private contractors. Robinson working as a private contractor stamp printer, had proved to be reliable and demonstrated his printing abilities. On 01-01-1860 Robinson was appointed the Government Stamp Printer, the Post Office purchased all of Robinson's printing equipment and stock of paper for £200. This brought to a close the private contract stamp printing era in Victoria. These were the last printings of the 4^d Emblems. On 21-04-1860 the 4^d Emblems was replaced by the 4^d beaded Ovals.

Robinson Private Contract Period
Horizontally Laid Coarse Paper, Rose-pink, Perforated 12

Backstamped,
BIRREGURRA / MY 13 /
60 / VICTORIA and
MELBOURNE / A / MY
14 / 60.

Carried on the ship Benares,
departed Melbourne May
18th 1860, arrived Suez June
28th 1860, sent overland to
Alexandria, then on the
Panther departed June 29th
1860, arrived Marseilles on
July 6th 1860.



Entire sent from Birregurra to London.

Also on this entire is a 1^d Green Emblems Perforated 12, on Poor Quality Wove Paper, all tied with BN 214 Birregurra, and a Manuscript Via Marseilles. Ex Beatty, Forster, Perry, Barelli. Perry Certificate 185031.



On the reverse is a manuscript S^t Leonards and backstamps
SALISBURY / A / JU 17 / 60 and
WEYMOUTH / A / JU 18 / 60

Correct postage paid for Registered
letter to UK, being 1/- Registration
plus 6^d ship letter rate.

Sent on P&O Emeu departed April
24th 1860 after being delayed due to
collision with SS Williams, arrived
Suez on June 2nd 1860, overland to
Alexandria, then on the P&O Pera via
Malta to Southampton, arrived June
16th 1860, then Salisbury June 17th
1860 and Weymouth June 18th 1860.

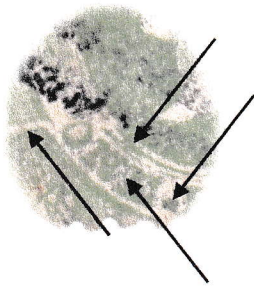
Registered cover from St. Leonards to Salisbury and re-addressed to Weymouth.

Manuscript S^t Leonards P.O. / 16 apl 1860 at top right, also on this cover is a 2^d Emblems Brown lilac on Laid Paper rouletted, all cancelled by manuscript lines, St. Leonards was open 19 March 1860, canceller had not yet been received so Postmaster cancelled with pen and ink, which was correct procedure. Handstamp REGISTERED / AP 17 / 60 / MELBOURNE in red and a manuscript 1 indicating the 1^d charge for re-addressed delivery.

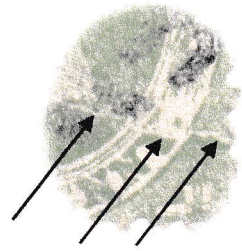
Ex Winchester. RPSV Certificate 3759.

Constant Flaws

Flaw 1, First State



Robinson was not at ease handling gutta-percha based electros, consequently he broke this electro into two. In this first state, the two halves have been fitted back fairly close together making it appear to be a crack. The break cuts across the full width and shows a dot between E P. All of the first state cracked electro, are from Setting 3 the last setting for the 1^d, this cracked electro is in the bottom row, to the right of the centre gutter, in Position D25.



Dull Green on Poor Quality Wove Paper, Perforated 12



Ex Purves.



Ex Purves.



Ex Purves.

Dull Green on Horizontally Laid Coarse Paper, Perforated 12



Wide Spaced Laid Lines.



Wide Spaced Laid Lines.
Ex Purves.

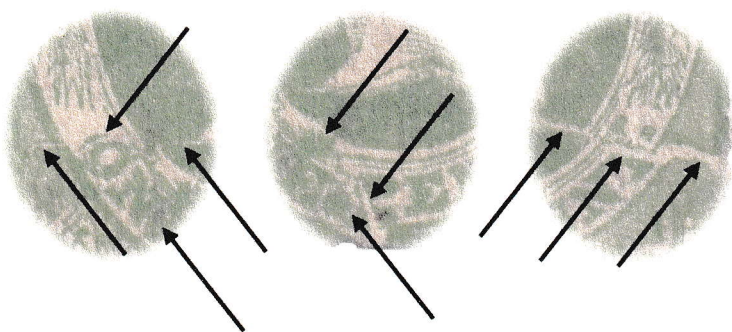


Narrow Spaced Laid Lines.
Ex Purves.

The first state of this cracked electro had a very short life, it is only in the printings between May 28th and June 26th 1859, in Dull Green on Poor Quality Wove Paper and Horizontally Laid Coarse Paper, both wide and narrow spaced laid lines, the total quantity of stamps printed within this period was 612,000 therefore there were only 5,100 stamps printed with the first state of the cracked electro.

Constant Flaws

Flaw 1, Second State



In the time between printing the last dull Green in June 26th 1859 and printing the first of the Green in September 2nd 1859, Robinson decided to anchor the 2 parts of the electro to the forme, using a pin or nail which caused a second break. The odd shaped colour over the E of ONE is the top of the pin that caused this second break splitting the P and pushing the alignment further out. The cracked electro remained in the bottom row, to the right of the centre gutter, in Position D25.

Dull Green on Poor Quality Wove Paper

Green on Poor Quality Wove Paper

Green on Horizontally Laid Coarse Paper, Perforated 12

Bright Green on Thin Glazed Bordeaux Paper.



Unused



Ex Purves.



Pale Yellowish Green on Saunders ONE PENNY Watermark Paper, Perforated 12



Flaw 44(c)



Flaw 44(c)

Ex Molnar

Yellow-green on Saunders ONE PENNY Watermark Paper, Perforated 12



Ex Purves.



Flaw 44(c)

Ex Purves, Perry, Barelli. Perry Certificate 185039.

Constant Flaws

Flaw 2, First State

This flaw is present from the very first printing, so it must have occurred in the production of the electro. In setting 1, it is in the left hand column of the sheet. In setting 2 it is in left hand column of a group where it is above Flaw 13, in position 7 or 13 of a group of 30. In setting 3 it is in position D19 above Flaw 1.2.

The second state was created during the printings on ONE PENNY watermarked paper, which was the last paper type used. This second state has a vertical scratch through the top border, through the bottom left corner of the A, then through the chignon and behind the neck, stopping above the second N of PENNY.



Yellow-green on
Star Paper, Imperf.



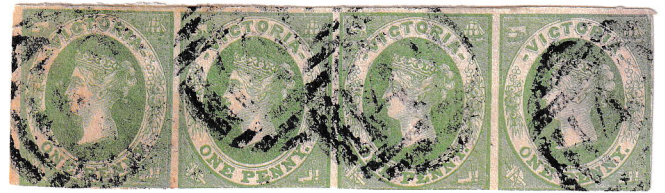
Deep Green on
Star Paper, Imperf.



Emerald-green White Wove
Good Quality Paper, Roul 7 to 9.



Emerald-green White Wove
Good Quality Paper, Imperf.



Yellow-green on Good Quality
Wove Paper, Roul 5½ to 6½.



Yellow-green on Good
Quality Wove Paper, Perf 12.



Dull Green on Poor Quality
Wove Paper, Perf 12.



Pale Yellowish Green on ONE
PENNY Paper, Perf 12.



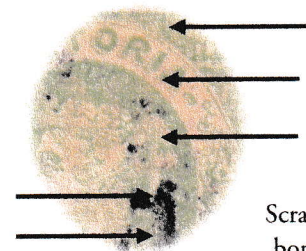
Ex Molnar

Constant Flaw 2, Second State

Pale Yellow-green on Saunders ONE PENNY Watermark Paper, Perforated 12



Flaw 1.2.
Ex Purves.

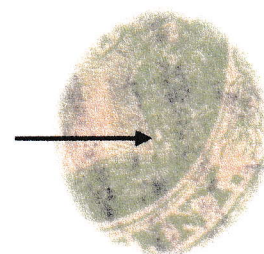


Flaw 2.2
Scratch from top
border through
chignon and down
to top of second.
Position D19
Setting 3.

Constant Flaws

One Penny, Flaw 4

Also known as the 'Boil on Neck' flaw showing a white flaw almost touching the back of the neck. This flaw is present from the very first printing, so it must have occurred in the production of the electro. In setting 1, it is the second stamp to the left of Flaw 3 and is in second column in the Group of 30. In setting 2, it is not on right edge of the group of 30. In setting 3, I have located it as position C16.



The third stamp is Flaw 3. A dot near oval level with Diadem and a white area on edge of oval.



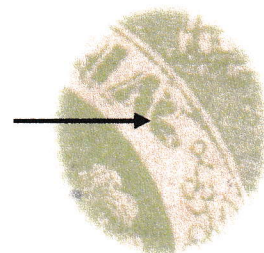
Yellow-green on Star Wmk Paper, Imperf. Setting 1.

Pale Emerald on White Wove Quality Paper, Roul 7 to 9. Setting 2.

Yellow-green on ONE PENNY Wmk Paper, Perf 12. Setting 3.

Flaw 5

Also known as the 'Victorial' flaw, colour above dash forms an L at the end of Victoria, plus a bulge of colour on the right side of the Y. This flaw is present from the very first printing, so it must have occurred in the production of the electro. In setting 1, it is not on left edge of the group of 30. In setting 2, it is in column 4 and is not in the top row of the group of 30. In setting 3, I have located it as position D7.



Yellow-green on Star Wmk Paper, Imperf. Setting 1.

Pale Emerald on White Wove Quality Paper, Roul 7 to 9. Setting 2.

Pale Emerald on White Wove Quality Paper, Imperforate. Setting 2.

Yellow-green on Good Wove Paper, Roul 5½ to 6½. Setting 3.



Emerald-green on White Wove Quality Paper, Imperforate. Setting 2.

Green on Poor Quality Wove Paper, Perf 12. Setting 3.

Green on Horizontally Laid Paper, Perf 12. Setting 3.

Yellow-green on ONE PENNY Wmk Paper, Perf. 12. Setting 2.

Constant Flaws

Flaw 9, First State

There is a white dot in the solid colour level with the Queen's eye. This flaw is present from the very first printing, so it must have occurred in the production of the electro. In setting 1, it is to the left of Flaw 24, which is proven by the yellow-green strip of 4 on star watermark paper.

The second state was created while placing the electros into the forme for setting 2, the second state is on all setting 2 printings. The second state has a large notch at in the top frame just in from the corner and a small notch above the A. In setting 2 it is in position A1. In setting 3, I have located it as position C22, below Flaw 4 and left of Flaw 17 second state.



Deep Green on Star Wmk Paper, Imperf. Setting 1.



The second stamp is Flaw 24. A small dent in the oval line and the edge of solid colour level with bottom of flowers.



Yellow-green on Star Wmk Paper, Imperf. Setting 1.

Constant Flaw 9, Second State



Emerald-green White Wove Quality Paper, Imperf. Setting 2.



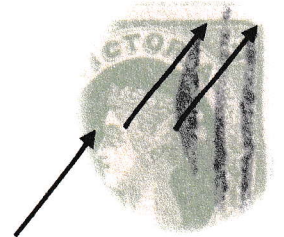
Green on Poor Quality Wove Paper, Perf 12. Setting 3.



Bright Green on Bordeaux Paper, Perf 12. Setting 3.



Green on Laid Paper, Perf 12. Setting 3.

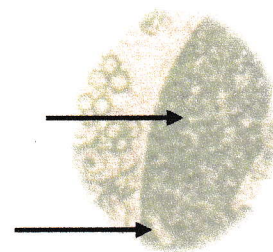


Second State. A notch at in the top frame just in from the corner and a small notch above the A.

Constant Flaws

Flaw 19

An angled white line near the edge of solid colour, level with mouth plus a motley group of dots in the solid colour, opposite the forehead. This flaw is present from the very first printing, so it must have occurred in the production of the electro. In setting 1, it is in position A1. In setting 2, it is to the left of Flaw 28 and is in the left hand 4 columns and is in the 2nd, 3rd or 4th row of the group of 30. In setting 3, it is below Flaw 40 and is in the 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th columns in the Group of 30.



Yellow-green on Star Wmk Paper, Imperf. Setting 1.



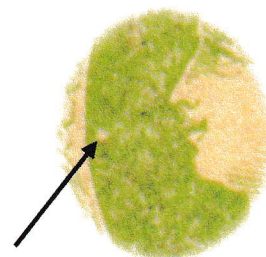
Deep Green on Star Wmk Paper, Imperf. Setting 1.



Pale Emerald on White Wove Quality Paper, Roul 7 to 9. Setting 1.

Flaw 20

A white dot near edge of solid colour, level with mouth. This flaw is present from the very first printing, so it must have occurred in the production of the electro. In setting 1, it is in 5th column and is in position 11, 17 or 23 in the Group of 30. In setting 2, it is in the top row and is in position 2, 3, 4 or 5 in the Group of 30. In setting 3, it is bottom row and is in position 26, 27, 28, 29 or 30 in the Group of 30.



Yellow-green on Star Wmk Paper, Imperf. Setting 1.



Pale Emerald on White Wove Quality Paper, Imperf. Setting 2. Unused Perry Certificate PP054.



Emerald-green White Wove Good Quality Paper, Imperf. Setting 2.



Dull Green on Laid Paper, Perf 12. Setting 3.



Green on Laid Paper, Perf 12. Setting 3.



Bright Green on Bordeaux Paper, Perf 12. Setting 3



Yellow-green on ONE PENNY Wmk Paper, Perf 12. Setting 3.