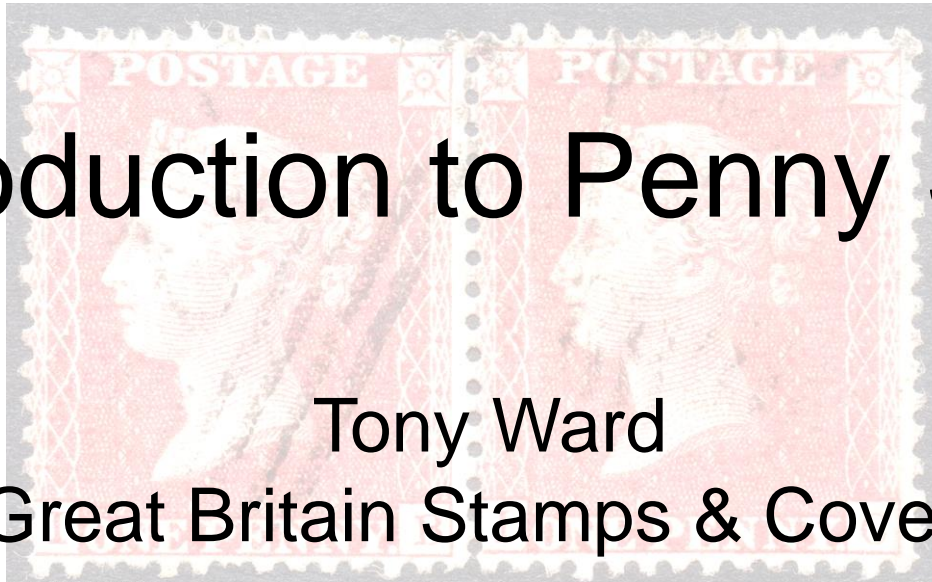


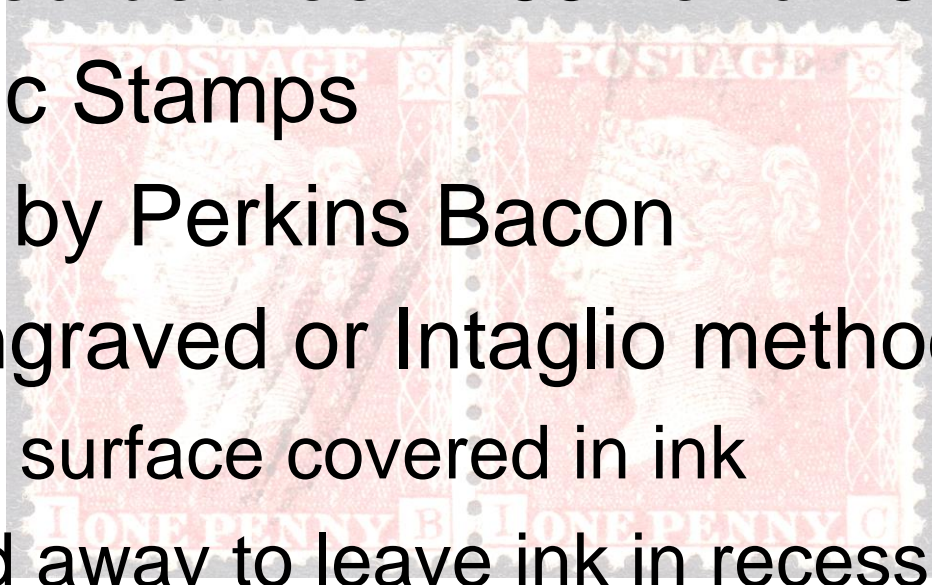
Introduction to Penny Stars

Tony Ward
Great Britain Stamps & Covers



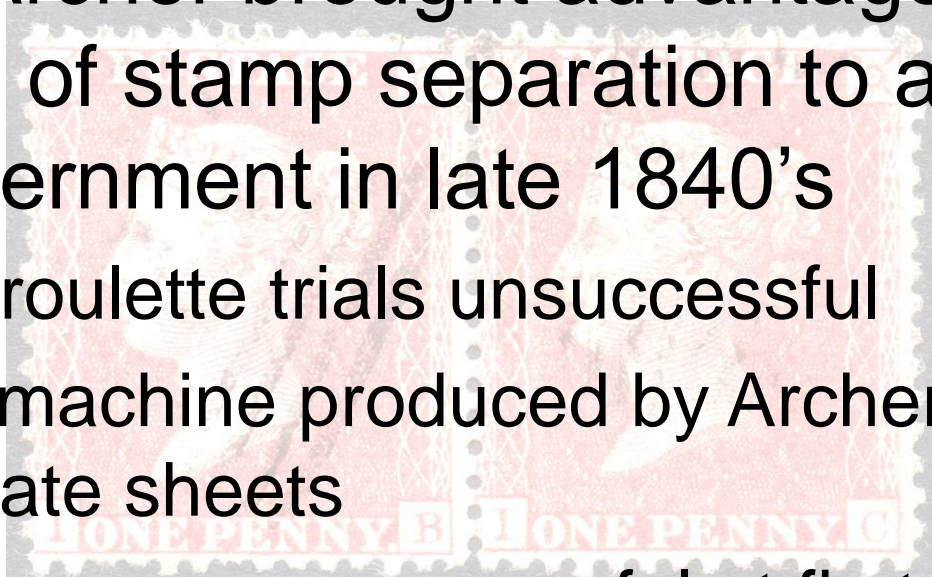
Penny Stars

- Produced between 1854 and 1862
- 14 Basic Stamps
- Printed by Perkins Bacon
- Line Engraved or Intaglio method
 - Entire surface covered in ink
 - Wiped away to leave ink in recessed areas
 - Damped paper placed on plate and forced down by roller to pick up ink in recesses



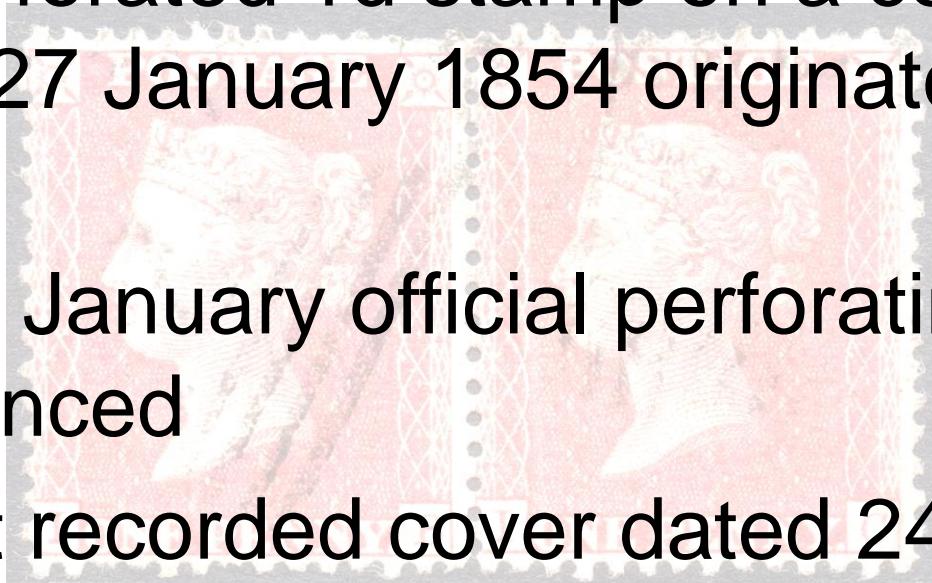
The Archer Experiments

- Henry Archer brought advantages of easy method of stamp separation to attention of UK government in late 1840's
 - Initial roulette trials unsuccessful
 - Third machine produced by Archer was to perforate sheets
 - Machine was unsuccessful at first but approved following a series of modifications



The Archer Experiments

- Any perforated 1d stamp on a cover dated before 27 January 1854 originate from the trial
- On 27th January official perforating commenced
- Earliest recorded cover dated 24 February

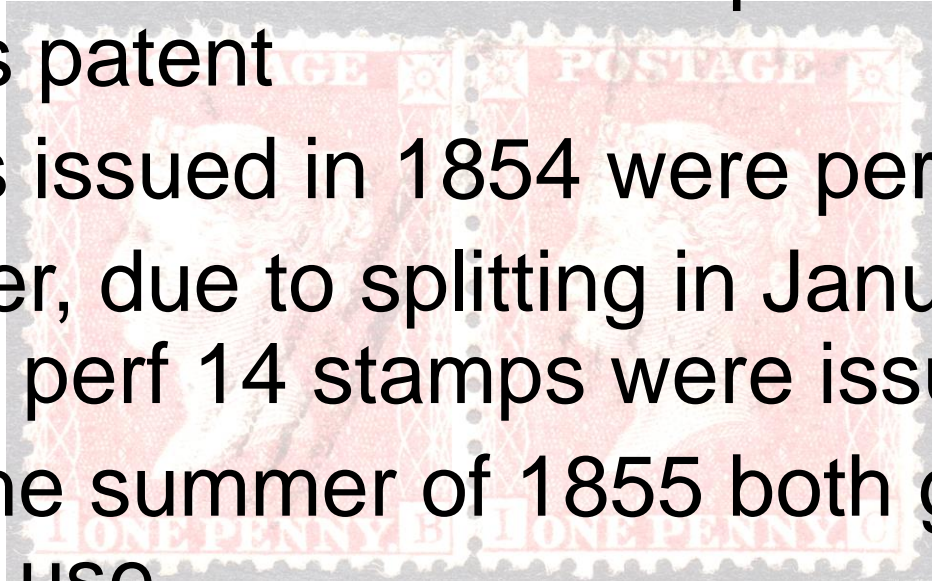


Identifying Archer Stamps

- In the absence of dated cover or piece Archer trial can be identified by studying corner letters
 - Archer was provided with imperf stamps from plates 92 to 101 (& possibly plates 90-91) to conduct his trials
 - Corner letters for these plates are all Alphabet I
 - All officially perforated issues have corner letters from Alphabets II, III & IV

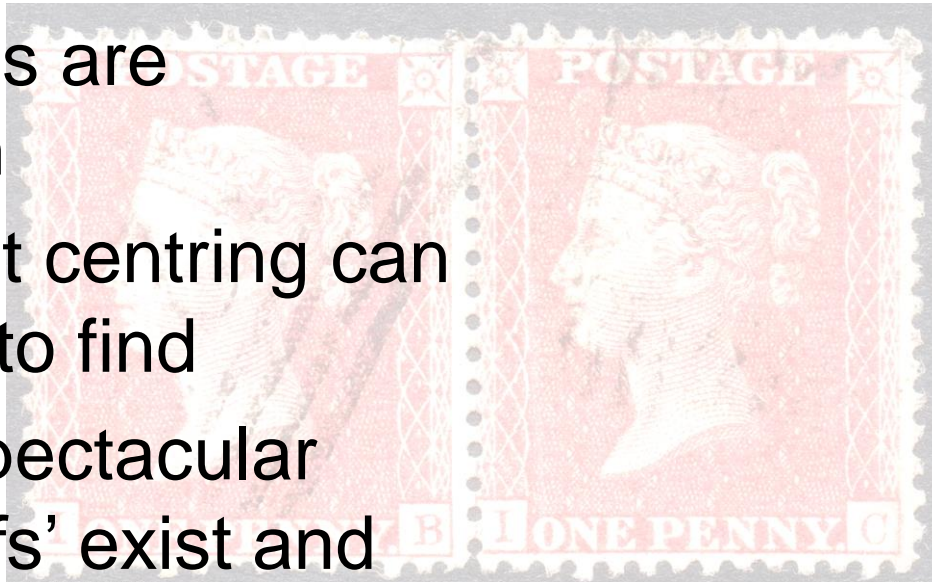
Official Perforations

- In June 1853 Government purchased Archers patent
- Stamps issued in 1854 were perf 16
- However, due to splitting in January 1855 the first perf 14 stamps were issued
- Up to the summer of 1855 both gauges were in use
- After this point 16 gauge punch sets were kept in reserve



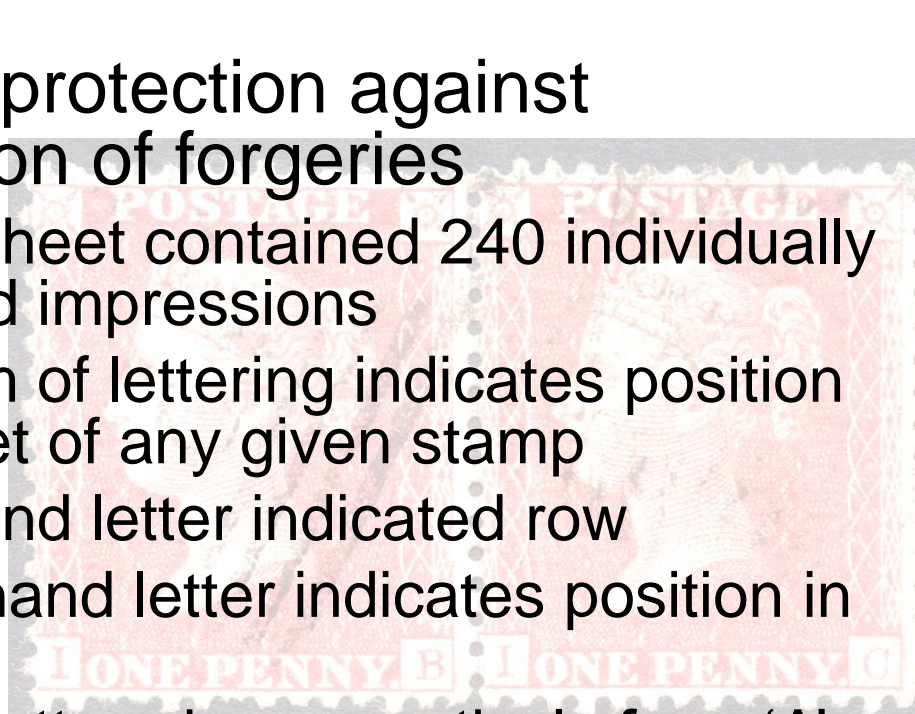
Appearance

- Badly centred examples are common
- Excellent centring can be hard to find
- Some spectacular 'mis-perfs' exist and can command a good premium



Corner Letters

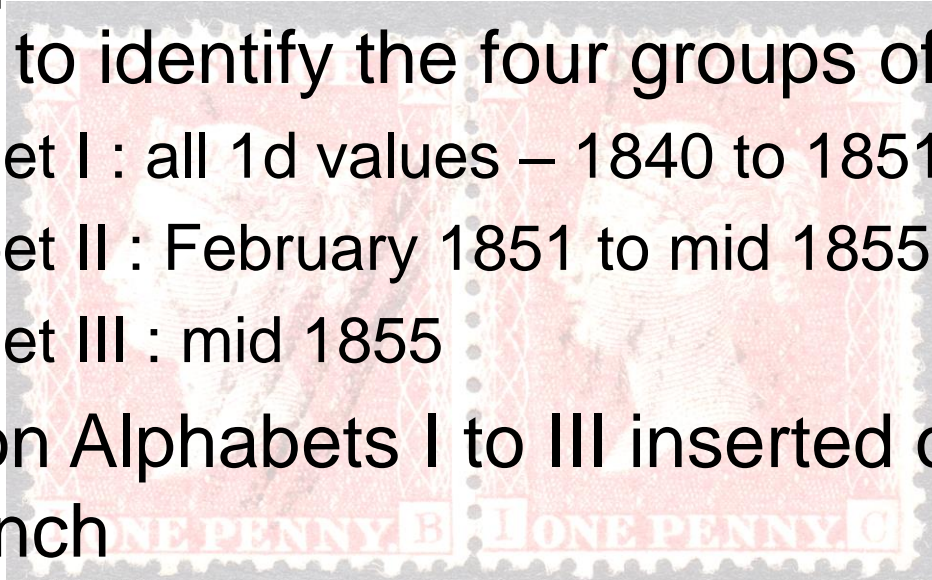
- Form of protection against production of forgeries
 - Each sheet contained 240 individually lettered impressions
 - System of lettering indicates position in sheet of any given stamp
 - Left hand letter indicated row
 - Right hand letter indicates position in row
 - Rows lettered consecutively from 'A' to 'T'
 - Positions from 'A' to 'L'



AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	AI	AJ	AK	AL
BA	BB	BC	BD	BE	BF	BG	BH	BI	BJ	BK	BL
CA	CB	CC	CD	CE	CF	CG	CH	CI	CJ	CK	CL
DA	DB	DC	DD	DE	DF	DG	DH	DI	DJ	DK	DL
EA	EB	EC	ED	EE	EF	EG	EH	EI	EJ	EK	EL
FA	FB	FC	FD	FE	FF	FG	FH	FI	FJ	FK	FL
GA	GB	GC	GD	GE	GF	GG	GH	GI	GJ	GK	GL
HA	HB	HC	HD	HE	HF	HG	HH	HI	HJ	HK	HL
IA	IB	IC	ID	IE	IF	IG	IH	II	IJ	IK	IL
JA	JB	JC	JD	JE	JF	JG	JH	JI	IJ	JK	JL
KA	KB	KC	KD	KE	KF	KG	KH	KI	KJ	KK	KL
LA	LB	LC	LD	LE	LF	LG	LH	LI	IJ	LK	LL
MA	MB	MC	MD	ME	MF	MG	MH	MI	MJ	MK	ML
NA	NB	NC	ND	NE	NF	NG	NH	NI	NJ	NK	NL
OA	OB	OC	OD	OE	OF	OG	OH	OI	OJ	OK	OL
PA	PB	PC	PD	PE	PF	PG	PH	PI	PJ	PK	PL
QA	QB	QC	QD	QE	QF	QG	QH	QI	QJ	QK	QL
RA	RB	RC	RD	RE	RF	RG	RH	RI	RJ	RK	RL
SA	SB	SC	SD	SE	SF	SG	SH	SI	SJ	SK	SL
TA	TB	TC	TD	TE	TF	TG	TH	TI	TJ	TK	TL

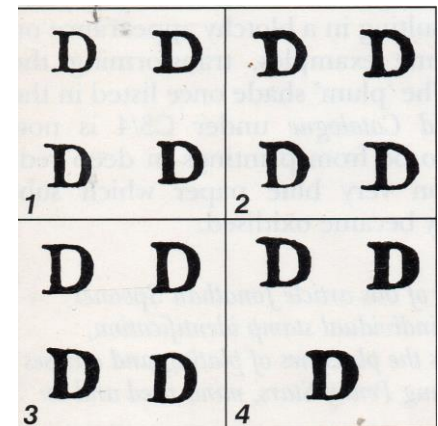
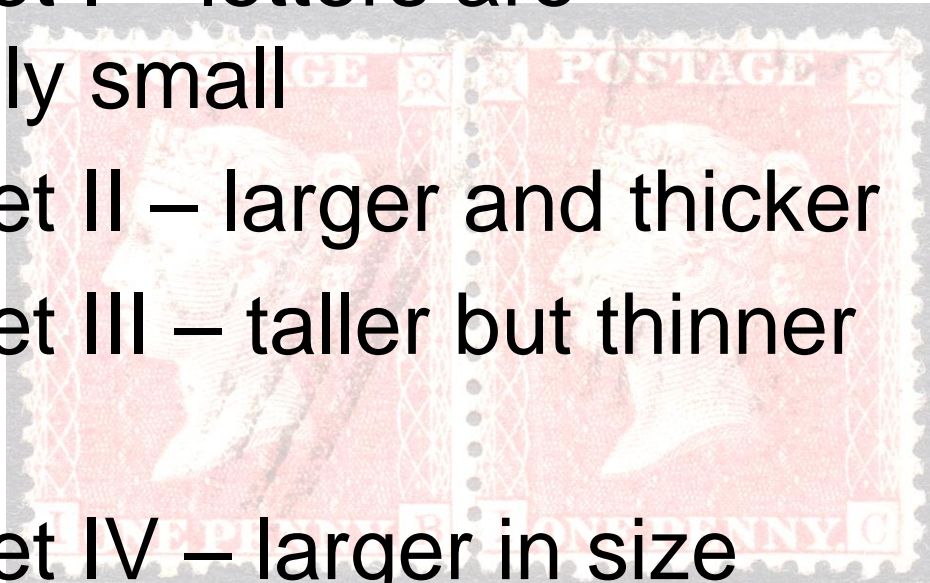
The Alphabets

- The shape and size of corner letters make it possible to identify the four groups of Alphabets
 - Alphabet I : all 1d values – 1840 to 1851
 - Alphabet II : February 1851 to mid 1855
 - Alphabet III : mid 1855
- Letters on Alphabets I to III inserted on plates by hand punch
- Plates 50 and 51 were hand engraved and issued during 1861 which led to Alphabet IV



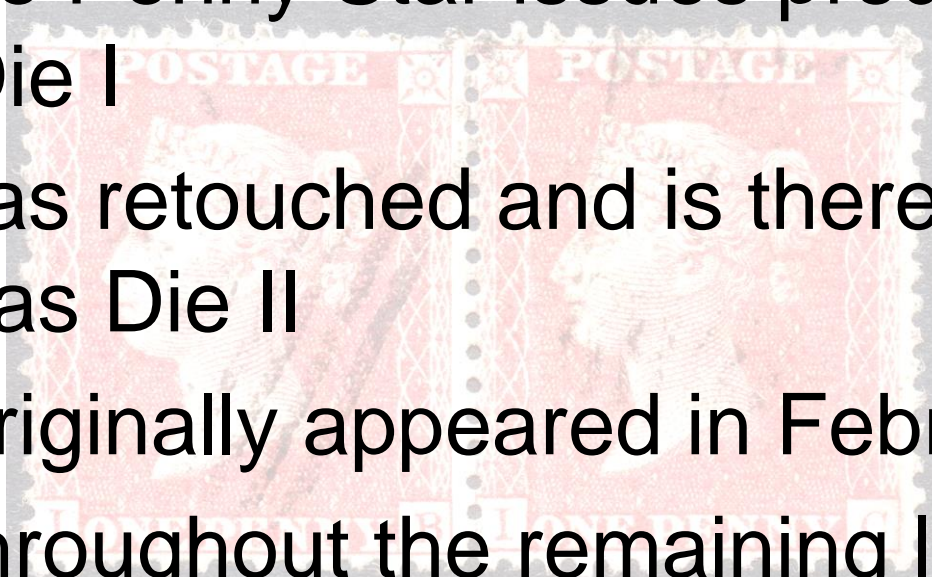
Characteristics Of Alphabets

- Alphabet I – letters are generally small
- Alphabet II – larger and thicker
- Alphabet III – taller but thinner than II
- Alphabet IV – larger in size and often distinctive but no two are exactly alike



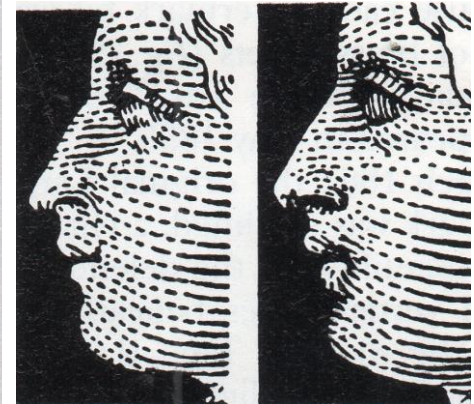
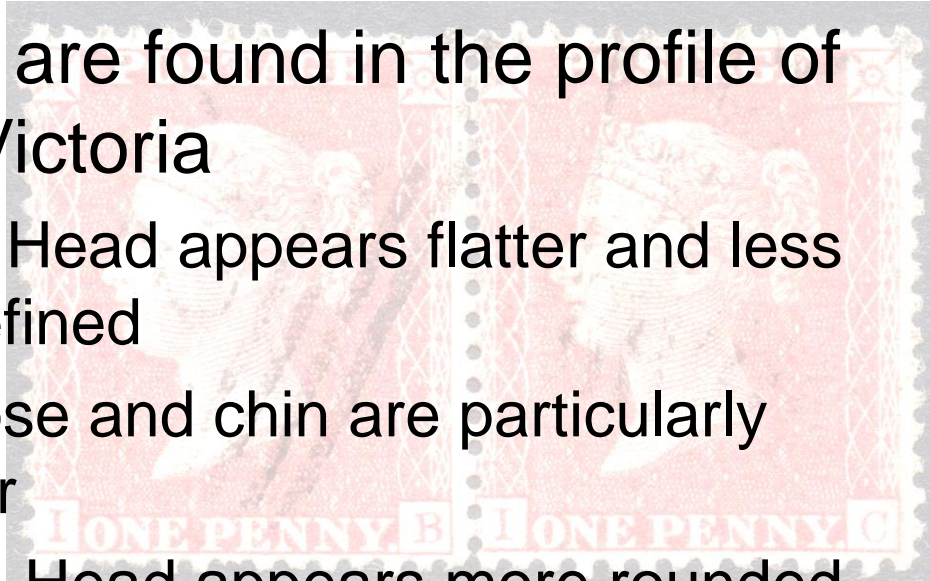
The Two Dies

- First two Penny Star issues produced using Die I
- Die I was retouched and is therefore known as Die II
- Die II originally appeared in February 1855
- Used throughout the remaining lifespan of the Penny Star issues



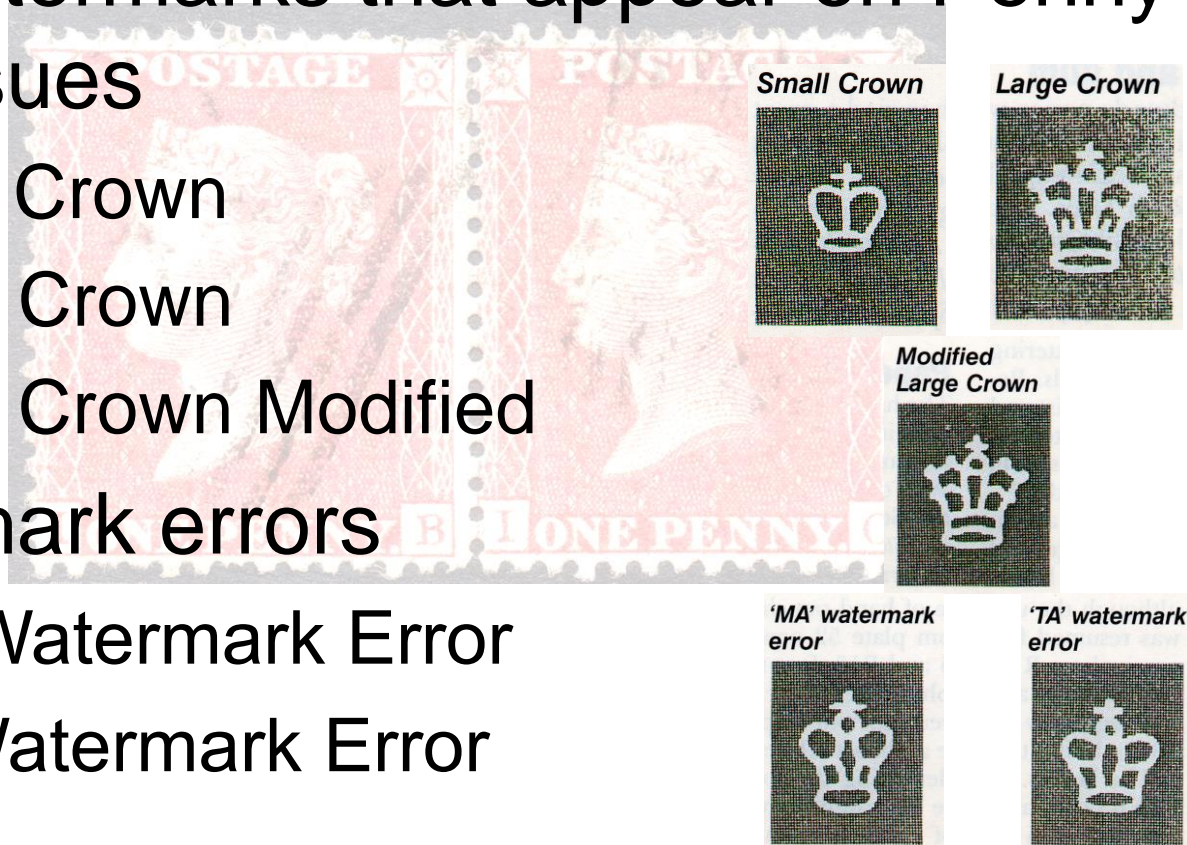
Recognising the Two Dies

- Obvious differences between the two dies are found in the profile of Queen Victoria
 - Die I – Head appears flatter and less well defined
 - The nose and chin are particularly angular
 - Die II – Head appears more rounded
 - The eyes, lips and nostrils are more defined and fully formed



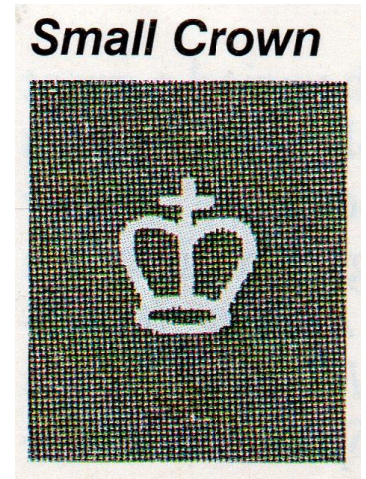
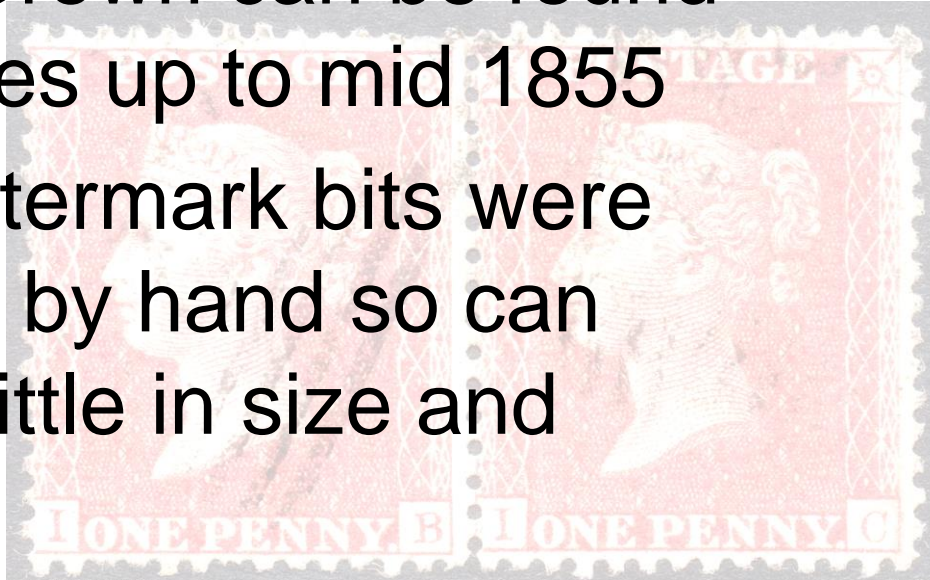
Watermarks

- The watermarks that appear on Penny Star issues
 - Small Crown
 - Large Crown
 - Large Crown Modified
- Watermark errors
 - ‘MA’ Watermark Error
 - ‘TL’ Watermark Error



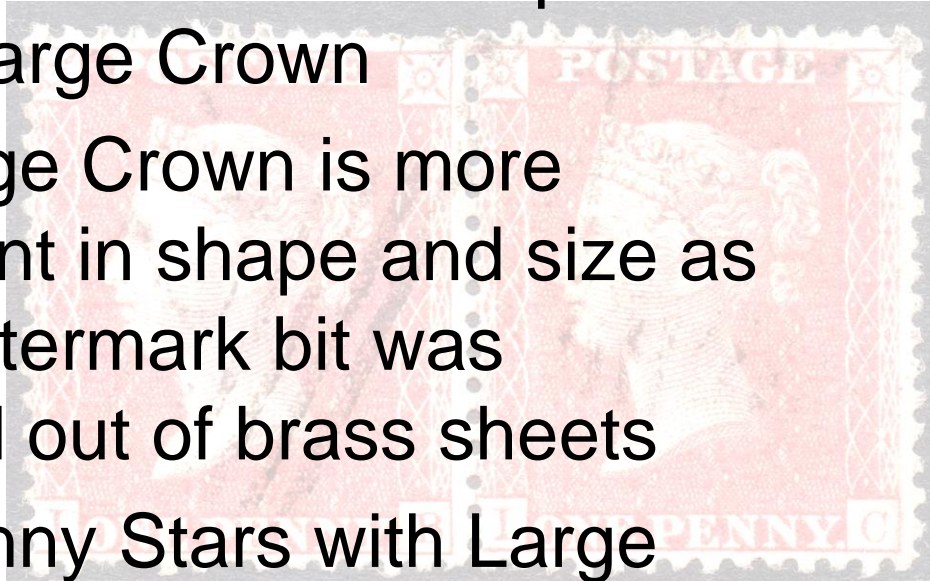
Small Crown

- Small Crown can be found on issues up to mid 1855
- The watermark bits were shaped by hand so can vary a little in size and shape



Large Crown

- The Small Crown was replaced by the Large Crown
- The Large Crown is more consistent in shape and size as each watermark bit was stamped out of brass sheets
- First Penny Stars with Large Crown appeared in May 1855

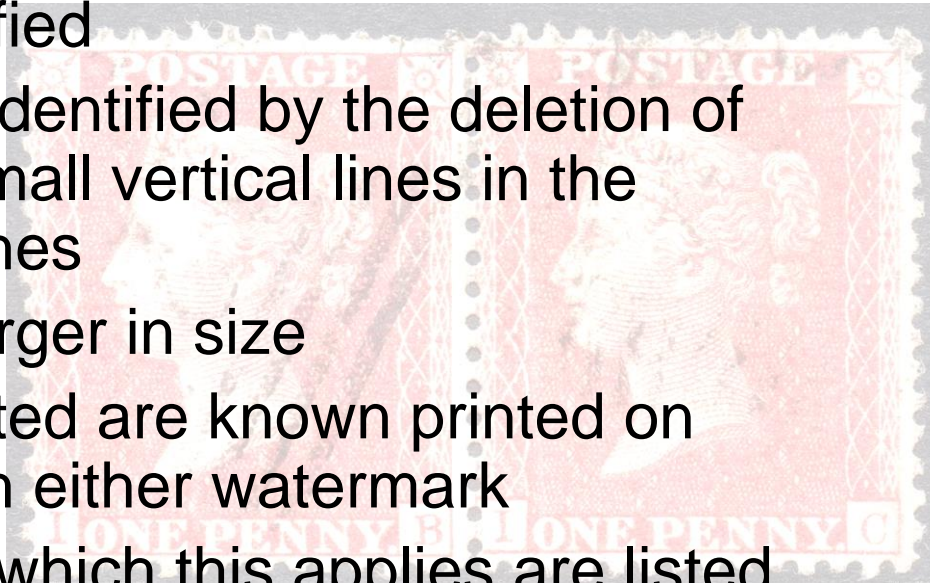


Large Crown



Modified Large Crown

- Around March 1861 the Large Crown was modified
- It can be identified by the deletion of the two small vertical lines in the lower arches
- Slightly larger in size
- Some plated are known printed on paper with either watermark
- Issues to which this applies are listed as C10, C12 and C13 in the Stanley Gibbons specialised catalogue (Volume 1)

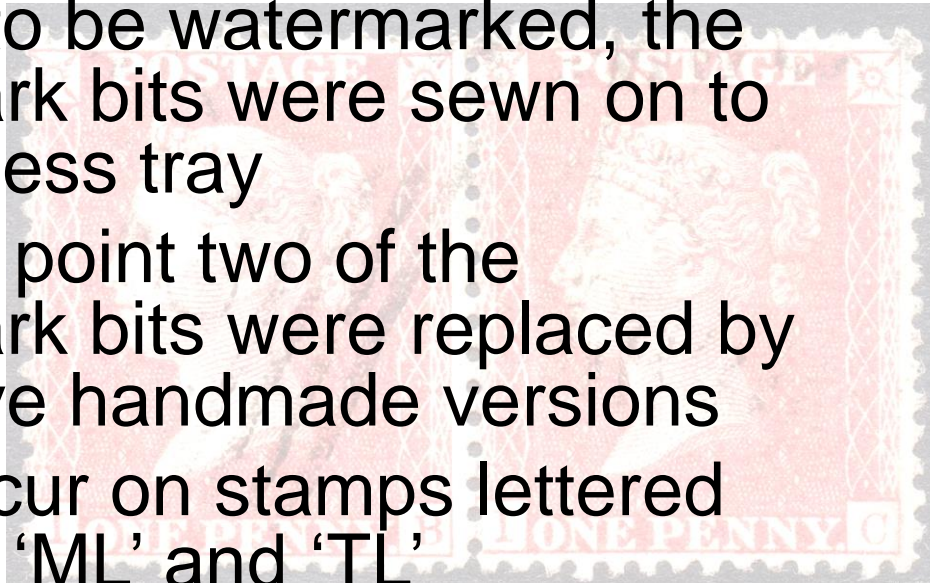


**Modified
Large Crown**



Watermark errors

- To enable a whole sheet of stamps to be watermarked, the watermark bits were sewn on to a wire mess tray
- At some point two of the watermark bits were replaced by distinctive handmade versions
- They occur on stamps lettered 'MA' 'TA' 'ML' and 'TL'
- Plate 42 (23 June 1856) is the first known to occur with the watermark error



'MA' watermark error

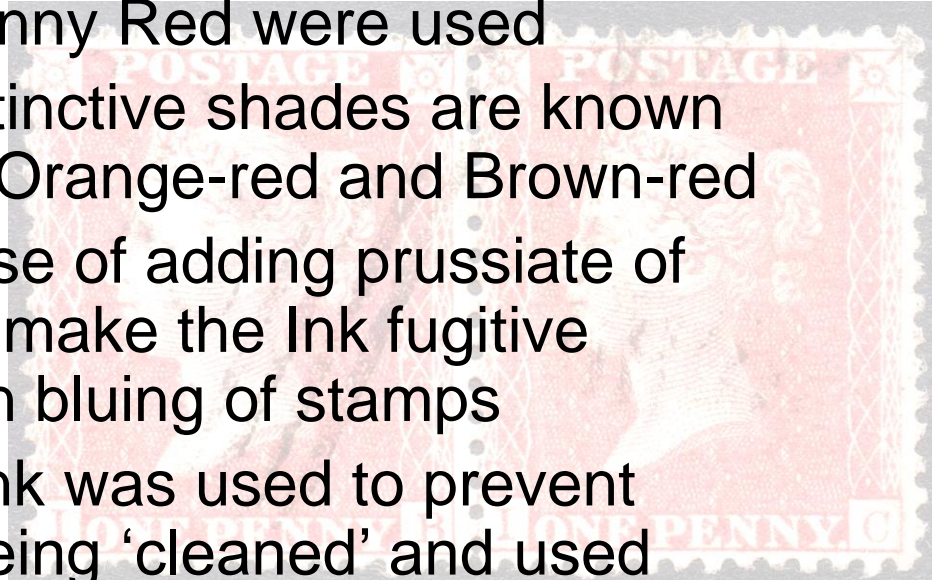


'TA' watermark error



Inks and Shades

- At first red-brown inks of type used on imperf Penny Red were used
- Some distinctive shades are known including Orange-red and Brown-red
- The practice of adding prussiate of potash to make the Ink fugitive resulted in bluing of stamps
- Fugitive ink was used to prevent stamps being 'cleaned' and used again



Inks and Shades

- During the transition period between October 1856 and September 1857 the printers firstly eliminated the bluing of the paper
- Then worked on consistency of shade
- First Rose-red on white paper appeared in March 1857
- Thereafter a much more consistent colour
- A number of specialised shades printed on blued or toned paper are known

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