

Under the Magnifying Glass: No.11 A QV 4d Variety by Malcolm Barton and Kim Stuckey

On ebay recently there was a sale of the 1889-91 1d red-brown and 4d olive grey-black, both stamps mounted on a Stanley Gibbons sale card.

What was interesting about the item was that the Gibbons description for the 4d mentioned "The 4d Position 20 with constant variety 'Flaw on Point of Bust' ".

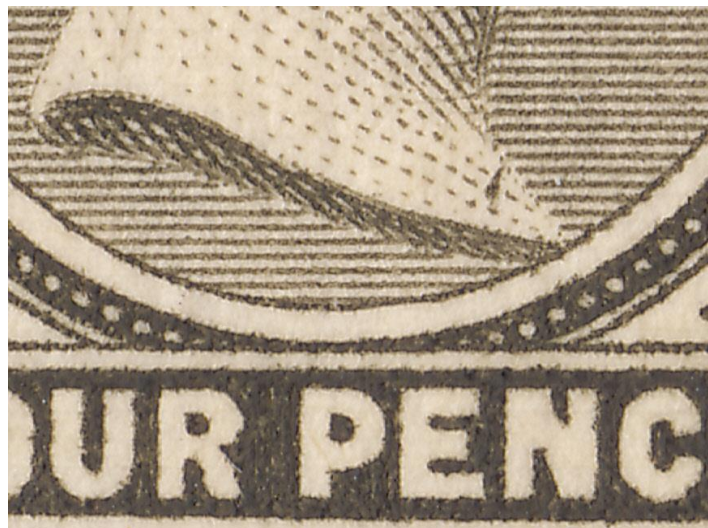


Figure 1 – The “Flaw on Point of Bust” Flaw

The illustrations shown here are not from the ebay lot, but from a sheet of the later May 1895 4d olive-black printing. The flaw is visible without a glass and shows up very well under magnification.

It appears that the flaw was constant on the 4d plate through the rest of its life from the 1889 printing. So we would expect it to be present on the 1894 brownish-black printing as well as the 1895 printing shown here.

But was it present on the earlier printings of the 4d as well? We would welcome any input on this flaw – have you an example and what printing is it present on? If you do have blocks or sheets it can be located on the last stamp of the second row or the bottom right stamp in a top right marginal block of four.