

# The 1840 1d Black

**History** The first plate of the 1d Black was registered on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1840 and the stamps were officially released for sale from 6<sup>th</sup> May.

The printing was in sheets of 240 impressions, in 20 horizontal rows of 12, on 'Small Crown' watermarked paper.

The design incorporated letters in the lower corners in order to prevent fraudulent reuse of cancelled stamps. The lettering commenced with 'AA' for stamp #1 to 'AL' for stamp #12, 'BA' for #13 to 'BL' for #24, and so on to 'TL' for stamp #240.

**Plates** Eleven plates were used for production until 1841. Seven of the eleven were used to produce the 1d Red-Brown of 1841. The change in colour was made to reduce the cleaning and reuse of stamps, which was difficult to prevent in the case of the original black. This cleaning is apparent in the second plate 4 stamp below.













## Plate Identification

Plate 1a, along with Plate 2, was used for the first printing run. Plate 1a was not hardened and soon showed signs of wear resulting in the need for extensive repairs. This repaired plate is designated 1b and its earliest known date for postal use is 12<sup>th</sup> June 1840.

Plate 4 is known as the 'spotted' plate as numerous minute black spots are scattered in the clear parts of the stamps. Its earliest known date for postal use is 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1840, just under three weeks *before* plate 1b.

Plate 5 was repaired at least four times from its first printing run on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1840 until it's withdrawal in November 1841. The earliest known date for postal use is 17<sup>th</sup> June 1840.

Plate 10 was put to press on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1840 but withdrawn from use in early in 1841 owing to rapid plate wear.

<p>Characteristic N.W. corner star</p>  <p>Plate 1a      Plate 1b</p>	<p>Characteristic 'spotted' corner letters</p>  <p>Plate 4</p>		<p>Slight Doubling of 'H'</p>  <p>Plate 5</p>
 <p><u>Plate 1b</u> <u>Die 1, Alphabet 1</u></p>	 <p><u>Plate 4</u> <u>Die 1, Alphabet 1</u></p>	 <p><u>Plate 4</u> <u>Cleaned</u></p>	 <p><u>Plate 5</u> <u>Die 1, Alphabet 1</u></p>
 <p><u>Plate 1b</u> <u>From the 'Black' Plate</u></p>	 <p><u>Watermark</u> <u>'Small Crown'</u></p>	 <p><u>Plate 10</u> Stumpy 'H'</p> 	 <p><u>Plate 5</u> <u>From the 'Black' Plate</u></p>