

Banknote Postage Due Varieties

Preface

In 1975 Morrison Waud wrote the first comprehensive article on banknote postage dues, and stated there were no double transfers or re-entries. Warren Bower concurred and passed that information along to George Arfken, who made the same statement in his seminal work on banknote postage dues. Arfken did, however, display several varieties, including pre-printing foldovers and scratches.

Synopsis

This is the first comprehensive overview of banknote postage due varieties. Included will be the Irwin flaw found on the one cent stamp and several of the flaws mentioned by Arfken.

Using those examples as a foundation, numerous other flaws will be examined, which will include die flaws, plate flaws, and production errors. The banknote dues offer a rich, but limited, research environment to find many more specimens of interest for the specialist.

The exhibit will flow through the outline below.

Exhibit Outline

- 1 Die Flaws
 - 1 Cent
 - 10 Cent
- 2 Plate Flaws
 - Marginal Inscriptions
 - Gouges and Scratches
 - Corrosion
 - Double Transfer
- 3 Production Flaws
 - Perforations
 - Pre-printing Foldovers

Banknote Postage Due Varieties

Die Flaws

1 cent

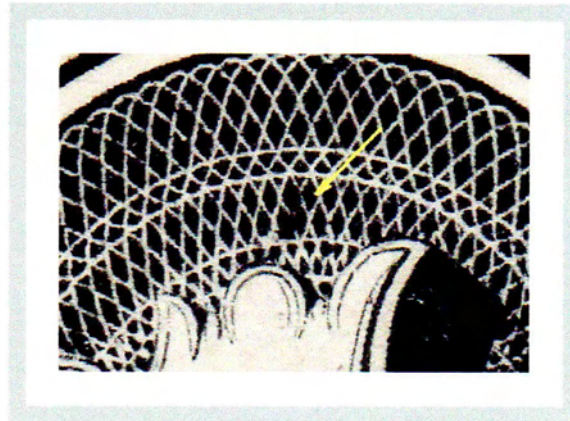


The arrows point to a dot which is found on every stamp, die proof, and plate proof. It is a die flaw.

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Transfer Roll Flaw

1 Cent



John Irwin discovered the flaw above the large numeral one, indicated by the yellow arrow, on the black trial color plate proof on card of the 1 cent stamp.

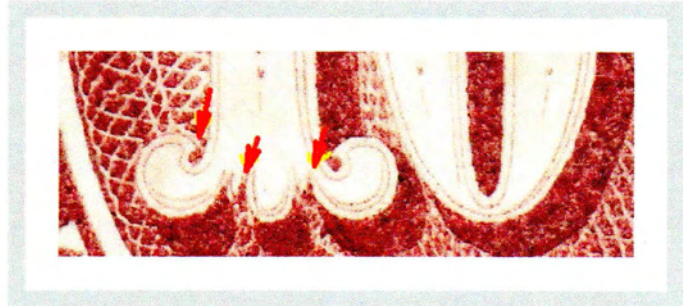
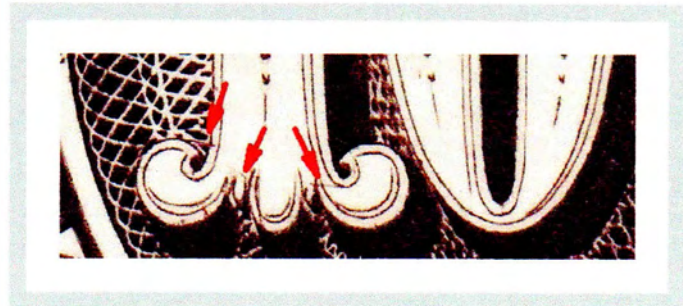
An analysis of plate proofs and stamps has uncovered it has almost exclusively been found on the claret stamps which were printed beginning in 1891. The definitive characteristic of claret stamps is their fluorescence under UV light. There is a single example of a non-claret stamp which shows the flaw.

The one cent die had the small dot flaw which is found on all die proofs, plate proofs, and stamps. The Irwin flaw is only found on the claret plate proofs, card and india, and the black trial color proof on card (probably an inspection proof). Because the Irwin flaw is not found on the Roosevelt die proofs, Irwin concluded the flaw occurred on the transfer roll. He further concluded "new" plates were laid down with the damaged transfer roll, even though American retained the old plate numbers.

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Die Flaws

10 cent

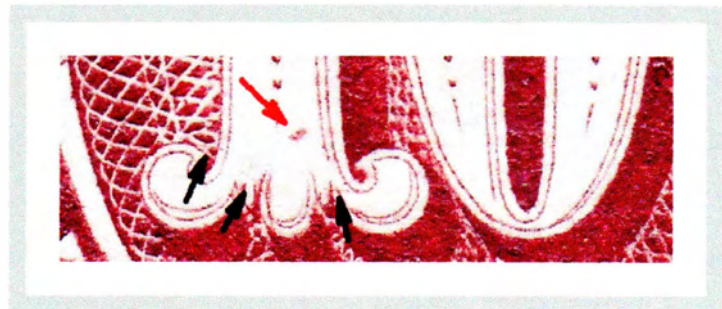
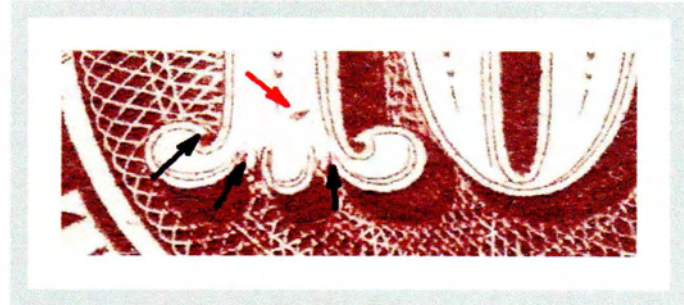


The arrows in both of the above illustrations point to three small scratches which are found on all die proofs, plate proofs, and stamps. The black brown plate proof on india shows the scratches best. As the plate was used the lines, because they are small, gradually disappear but can still be seen under high magnification.

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Die Flaws

10 cent continued



The black arrows point to the initial three scratch die flaw. The red arrow points to a flaw only seen on the Roosevelt small die proofs. Some time after the 10 cent plate had been produced in Sept 1879 and 1903 when the Roosevelt proofs were produced, the die incurred a small bump, causing a flaw.

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Plate Flaws

Plate # 315



Top Left



Lower Left

American Banknote had a standard configuration for marginal inscriptions. The inscriptions would include an arrow, plate number, and the name of the company.

As an example, in the top right margin, the "arrow" would be above R1. The "Plate No. XXX" would be above positions R2 and R3. The name, "American Banknote Company", would be above positions R5 and R6. The bottom positions would follow the same pattern, but under positions R91, R92 and R93, and R95 and R96.

In the above examples the top plate number should be over positions L8 and L9 and the bottom plate number should be under positions L98 and L99.

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Plate Flaws

Plate # 315 continued



Top Right



Lower Right

From the previous description, the top right margin, the "arrow" would be above R1. The "Plate No. XXX" would be above positions R2 and R3. The name, "American Banknote Company", would be above positions R5 and R6. The bottom positions would follow the same pattern, but under positions R91, R92 and R93, and R95 and R96.

In these examples the top plate number is in the standard position, however the bottom plate number is incomplete. It should read Plate No. 315.

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Plate Flaws

Gouges



Arfken displayed this flaw in his seminal work on banknote postage dues published in 1993. It is known in positions L15 and L16 of plate number 315. It is only known on red-brown stamps which suggested to Bower and Arfken the plate had been re-entered to "fix" the problem. The proof will be to find stamps in claret from those positions.

The stamp on left shows an earlier state of the flaw.

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Plate Flaws

Gouges Continued



Dr Charles Discovery stamp



The upper left illustration is Dr Charles discovery scan found on the black trial color plate proof designated as J1TC4.

This gouge has been found on several stamps now as seen in the examples.

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Plate Flaws

Gouges cont III



Additional gouges and scratches.

The example on left, line through "P", has been confirmed on an imperforate pair plate proof on stamp paper.

The middle gouge between stamps is another Arfken listed variety, position L75, plate number 314.

The one on the right has not been confirmed as a plate variety.

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Plate Flaws

Major Scratches



A spectacular example of many parallel scratches and gouges. It reminds me of a meteor shower. On the left the arrows point to some of the scratches. On the right black lines have been added to the illustration to enhance the scratches.

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Plate Flaws

Plate Corrosion



Corrosion stains are not generally seen in any period. The three joined arrows in the lower right corner point to the flaw in the plate.

Banknote Postage Due Varieties

Plate Flaws

Double Transfer



In the first comprehensive treatment of banknote postage dues, Morrison Waud stated there were no double transfers or re-entries. Warren Bower agreed and George Arfken restated this in his seminal book on banknote postage dues.

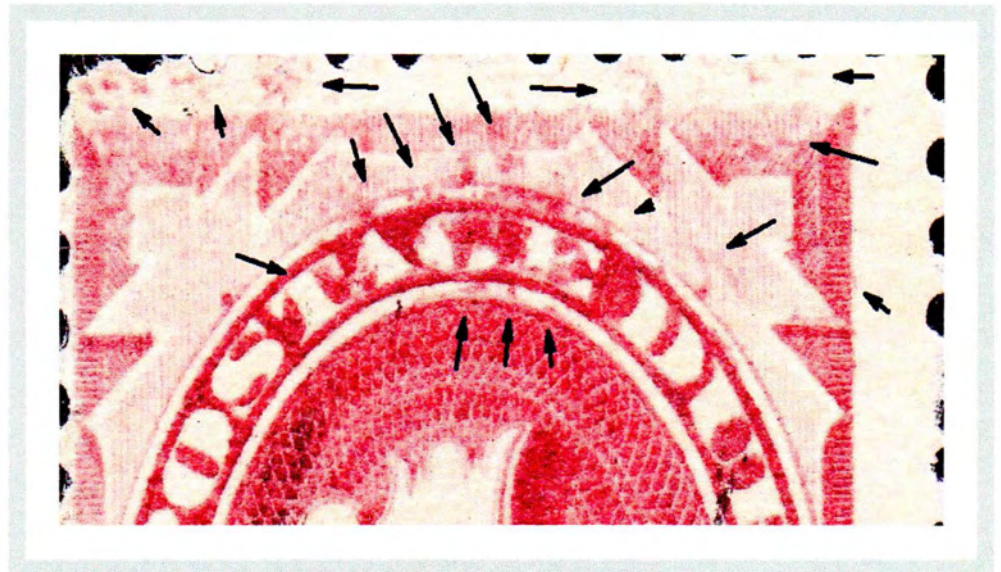
However, the arrows point to a large number of artifacts illustrating a downward shift probably made at time of original entry. While this is not a nicely doubled image from re-entry, it does demonstrate an error at time of plate production.



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Plate Flaws

Major Plate Damage



The examples above show two aspects of major plate damage.

The top illustration shows extensive damage across the upper half of the stamp, which may be the result of a dropped transfer roll.

The lower example shows damage in only one corner of the stamp.

Banknote Postage Due Varieties

Production Flaws

Perforations



Double Perforations



Blind Perforations



Imperforate

Double perforations are seen more often than blind perforations in the banknote period.

Sometime after 1891, the Post Office ordered the production of a pane of each value imperforate to trade with collectors for rarities. This production of imperforates are now considered proofs on stamp paper.

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Production Flaws

Pre-printing Paper Foldover



ex. Arfken



Pre-printing paper foldovers are a relatively common production error.