

ST. CHRISTOPHER-NEVIS, THE EARLY YEARS

A Study and Display of Adhesive Postage stamps used in the Leeward Islands of St Kitts and Nevis from their introduction, to their withdrawal at the introduction of the period of exclusive use in the two islands of the early Leeward Islands Federation issues.

The display illustrates the issue and use of the stamps and Postal Stationary of the individual Presidencies of St Christopher and Nevis from 1861 to 1890 **Frames 1 & 2.**

The background. St Christopher-Nevis was one of the five presidencies of the Leeward Islands and comprised three islands. St Christopher, Nevis and Anguilla. St Christopher and Nevis were separate colonies, divided by a shallow channel 2 miles wide, with Anguilla some 60 miles North West. Prior to 1890, when the Islands joined the Federation of the Leeward Islands, St Christopher and Nevis issued their own postage stamps as shown in this display. Anguilla was part of the presidency, but had no stamps of its own and presumably used those of St Christopher.

The political situation The display reflects the complex political situation during this period. Prior to 1870 i.e., from 1816- 1832 there was separate government for St Christopher, Nevis, Anguilla and the Virgin Isles, then the group united with the Leeward Islands, Nevis and the Virgin Islands no longer being administered by St Kitts. St Kitts and Anguilla remained united under a Lieutenant Governor. A new Presidency was established in 1871 for St Kitts and Anguilla. In 1882 it was replaced by a Presidency for St Kitts and Nevis including Anguilla, which eventually seceded in 1967 and is now a British colony. Prior to 1861 the Stamps of Great Britain were used in Nevis from May 1858 to 1860, and in St Kitts from June 1858 and withdrawn 2 years later.



A GB 6d lilac
used in Nevis



A pair of Great Britain 1d rose red, used
in Nevis, less than 10 are thought to have
survived



A GB 6d lilac
used in St Kitts

From 1861 to 1890 the Presidencies had their own stamps.

On 23 January 1890 the Governor of the Leeward Islands wrote to the Colonial Office with a proposal for "*one uniform set of stamps for postage and revenue purposes*" that would be used in Antigua, Dominica, St. Kitts, Nevis, Montserrat, and the Virgin Islands. Statutory authority followed in the Leeward Islands General Stamp Act (No 3) of the 3rd February 1890 coming into force in St Kitts and Nevis on the 31st October.

The separate issues of the Presidencies were simultaneously withdrawn from sale.

Bibliography

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The Leeward Islands by M.N. Oliver FRPSL. British West Indies Study Circle 2000.
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1963 Harmer Rooke Auction Catalogue of the H Douglas Bessemer Collection of the Leeward Island Group.

NEVIS

Nevis was the first of the Leeward Islands to issue adhesive postage stamps.
Stamps of Great Britain were used in Nevis from 1858 to 1860 Cancelled A09

1861 Recess- printed by Nissen & Parker on un-watermarked greyish wove paper.
Perforation 13 line. Sheets of 12- 3x4



1d dull lake



4d rose



6d grey-lilac



1s bluish green

1866 Recess printed. White un-watermarked paper.
Perforation 15.



1d pale red



1d deep red



4d orange



4d deep orange



1s blue green



1s yellow green

1871-78 Un-watermarked paper Perf 15 or 14½ line.
Lithographed by transfer from the engraved plates by Nissen & Parker Sheets of 12 3x4.



1d pale rose red



1d deep rose red



1d vermilion red
(1878)



4d orange



6d grey (1878)



1s pale green (1878)



1s deep green

NEVIS

1876-78 Issue Lithographed by transfer from the engraved plates by
Nissen & Parker. Sheets of 12 3X4.

A complete sheet of the penny rose red and a reconstructed plate of mint values.
This has been accomplished by using the information given by Fred J Melville in
his 1909 stamp handbook, Nevis, where he indicates the definite points of difference
for each individual stamp on each of the 4 plates.

A full sheet of the 1 penny pale rose red
value from the 1876-78 issue on Un-
watermarked paper Perf 14½ line.



A reconstructed sheet of the 1876-78 issue
on un-watermarked paper Perf 14½, line,
illustrating the variety of shades to be found
in this issue

NEVIS

Reconstructed plates of used values

This has been accomplished by using the information given by Fred J Melville in his 1909 stamp handbook, Nevis, where he indicates the definite points of difference for each individual stamp on each of the 4 plates.



A reconstructed plate of used values of the 1866 1 shilling green on white paper perf 15.

A reconstructed plate of used values of the 1866 4d orange on white paper perf 15.



NEVIS

1861 Recess- printed by Nissen & Parker on unwatermarked greyish wove paper.
Examples of Plate Proofs and Colour Trials.



1d in green on card



4d in grey blue on card



6d in orange on card



1s in pale rose on card



4d value in issued orange on medium wove paper



6d value in bluish slate on thinner wove paper



An example of an 1861 colour trial of the 1/- value in rose on white card



Block of 6 of the 1 shilling value in deep lilac rose,



Plate proof of the 1861 1/- in deep blue green on thinner wove paper from position 8

Nissen and Parker produced four steel plates, each with 12 subjects, 3x4. Each subject was individually engraved by hand, and minute variations therefore enable sheets to be reconstructed. In 1931 50 numbered sets containing one sheet each of the four values were printed. The 4d plate had had been previously defaced. After this printing, all the plates were defaced and presented to The Royal Philatelic Society's Museum. Examples of full sheets of 2 values from set 5 of this series can be seen on sheets 26 and 27 of this display.



Examples of the 1931 reprinted proofs from position 12, the lower right hand corner. Printed in black on wove paper. The 4d from the defaced plate showing chisel cuts through the design.

NEVIS

1879-80 Watermark Crown CC. Perforation 14.
Sheets of 60 -6x10. Typographed by De La Rue.



1d lilac



2½d red brown

1882 Watermark Crown CA. Otherwise as last.



1d lilac mauve



2½d red brown



4d blue

1883 Nov-84 as last but new colours



½d green



½d green shade



1d carmine 1884.

Top left triangle detached variety,
Plate 2. R.3/3 of the right pane. Also
known as the "Thompson flaw".
one of a possible 213 out of the
25,740 printed in 3 dispatches



1d dull rose



1d carmine (1884)



2½d ultramarine



4d grey (1884)



4d grey shade



6d green

NEVIS

In 1882 and 1883 recourse was made to various provisional stamps for postal use. The stamps of the old lithographed and the new typographed series which had been overprinted 'REVENUE' were requisitioned. In addition to the above both old lithographed and new typographed One Penny stamps were bisected for use as One Halfpenny initially without surcharge



A cover sent from Nevis to St Kitts on November 7th 1883 franked with a penny lilac bisected to pay the Halfpenny Book Post rate. The cover has a St Kitts receiving mark for November 19th 1883 and the stamp is cancelled with the Nevis A09 cancel. It is of philatelic interest that there is a minute cachet in the bottom right hand corner "5913 Szekula BUDAPEST.". A stamp dealer at the turn of the twentieth century.

NEVIS

1883 1d lilac mauve bisected and surcharged NEVIS ½d overprinted locally. The overprint can be found printed both upwards and downwards



Violet surcharge



Black surcharge



A cover sent from Nevis to St Kitts in 1883 franked with 5 copies of the 1d mauve-lilac to pay the inter island rate of 2½d that was in force from 1875 to 1898. The cover is postmarked with Nevis circular date stamp code A, dated SP 10 83 and a St Kitts cds code C for SP 11 83. The stamps are cancelled with the horizontal "killer" A09.

1888-90 Colours changed



6d chestnut 10/88



6d chestnut 10/88
overprinted SPECIMEN



6d chestnut 10/88 top left
triangle detached variety,
Plate 2. R.3/3 of the right pane



1s violet 3/90
Overprinted SPECIMEN



1s violet 3/90

NEVIS

1861 Recess- printed by Nissen & Parker, on un-watermarked greyish wove paper. Perforation 13 line.
.Used examples.



1d dull rose



4d rose



6d grey lilac



1s bluish green

Used examples of the 1879-80 Watermark Crown CC. Perforation 14.



1d lilac



1d lilac used, bisected as 1/2 d, probably philatelic



2 1/2d red brown

Used examples 1882 Watermark Crown CA. Otherwise as last.



2 1/2d red brown



4d blue

Used examples 1883 Nov-84 as last but new colours



1/2d green



1d dull rose



1d carmine (1884)



2 1/2d ultramarine



4d grey (1884)



6d green
a very scarce stamp used



6d chestnut
(1888-90)

ST. CHRISTOPHER



1 April 1870-71 Watermark Crown CC
Line Perforation 12½
Sheets of 20 5x4.



1d dull rose



1d dull rose
Wmk sideways



1d magenta 1871



1d magenta (shade)



6d green 1871

Watermark Crown CC Line Perforation 14.
1875



1d magenta



1d magenta (shade)



6d green

1879 as above but U.P.U. colours



2½d red-brown



4d blue



June 1882 Watermark Crown CA.
Comb Perforation 14



½d green



1d magenta



2½d pale red brown



2½d deep red brown



4d blue

ST. CHRISTOPHER

1884 Watermark Crown CA
Comb Perforation 14 New colours.
Sheets of 20 5x4.



1d carmine rose



2½d ultramarine



4d grey

1884 (Dec) 6d green surcharged 4d at the local newspaper office of *The Advertiser* The need for this was caused by the small supply of the 4d grey received in October 1884.



Four pence on 6d green
No full stop after pence



Four pence on 6d green,
full stop after pence

1885 1d carmine rose bisected and surcharged Halfpenny at the Basseterre post office when supplies of the ½d green ran short.



Halfpenny on half 1d
carmine rose



Halfpenny on half of 1d carmine
rose, un-severed pair



Halfpenny on half 1d
carmine rose



Halfpenny on half 1d carmine rose with
surcharge inverted on un-severed pair

ST CHRISTOPHER

1886 (June) 6d green surcharged ONE PENNY or 4d at the Basseterre Post Office



ONE PENNY on 6d
green



4d on 6d green

1886 Sept Watermark Crown CA Comb Perforation 14

The first shipment (4,000) in August 1886 was a pale shade. The second and last shipment in March 1890 was bright mauve.



1s mauve 6.86.



1s bright mauve 1890



1886 1s overprinted
SPECIMEN

Delay in ordering the supplies of those values in greatest use resulted in more provisionals up to 1890.

1887 May ½d green surcharged ONE PENNY at Basseterre Post Office, an ink line being drawn through the original value.



½d green overprinted
ONE PENNY

1888 May 2½d ultramarine surcharged ONE PENNY at Basseterre Post Office, It is believed that only one sheet of 20 was printed without the bar through the original value



2½d ultramarine surcharged ONE PENNY

ST CHRISTOPHER

1870-79 Crown CC, Perf14, 1d vertical bisect on piece with two 1d's tied by 'APMY' cancel.
On 11 March 1882 the postal rates to the West Indies were reduced to 2½d per oz. for letters, and ½d per 2oz for Book Post or printed matter, and 1 penny for postcards. As the halfpenny stamps did not arrive until June, the bisection of the one penny stamps was officially sanctioned.



1890 Feb - Mar .Antigua 1d cancelled A12

A supply of these stamps was sent by Antigua during the shortage of the 1d value



1890 March Watermark Crown CA

Comb Perforation 14. Sheets of 20 -5x4. Number printed 500



6d olive brown overprinted
SPECIMEN



6d olive brown



6d olive brown used a
very scarce stamp

This stamp was only in use for a few months and it is possible that any unused stock was included in the remainders of the 1875 6d green.

ST. CHRISTOPHER

USED



CROWN OVER
"CC" (SMALL)



CROWN OVER
"CC" (SMALL)

1 April 1870-71 Watermark Crown CC
Line Perforation 12½ Sheets of 20 5x4.



1d dull rose



1d magenta 1871



6d green 1871

Watermark Crown CC Line Perforation 14.
1875



1d magenta



1d magenta (shade)



6d green

1879 as above but U.P.U. colours



2½d red-brown



4d blue



CROWN OVER
"CA" (SMALL)

June 1882 Watermark Crown CA.
Comb Perforation 14



CROWN OVER
"CA" (SMALL)



½d green



1d magenta



2½d pale red brown



2½d deep red brown



4d blue

ST CHRISTOPHER

USED

1886 (June) 6d green surcharged ONE PENNY or 4d at the Basseterre Post Office



ONE PENNY on 6d
green



6d green, used with forged
double surcharge



4d on 6d green
full stop after d



4d on 6d green
no full stop after d

1886 Sept Watermark Crown CA Comb Perforation 14

The first shipment (4,000) in August 1886 was a pale shade. The second and last shipment in March 1890 was bright mauve.



1s mauve

Delay in ordering the supplies of those values in greatest use resulted in more provisionals up to 1890.

1887 May ½d green surcharged ONE PENNY at Basseterre Post Office, an ink line being drawn through the original value.



½d green overprinted
ONE PENNY

1888 May 2½d ultramarine surcharged ONE PENNY at Basseterre Post Office, It is believed that only one sheet of 20 was printed without the bar through the original value



2½d ultramarine surcharged ONE PENNY

ST. CHRISTOPHER

USED

1884 Watermark Crown CA
Comb Perforation 14 New colours.
Sheets of 20 5x4.



1d carmine rose



2½d ultramarine



4d grey

1884 (Dec) 6d green surcharged 4d at the local newspaper office of *The Advertiser*. The need for this was caused by the small supply of the 4d grey received in October 1884.
1885 1d carmine rose bisected and surcharged Halfpenny at the Basseterre post office when supplies of the ½d green ran short.



Four pence on 6d green



Halfpenny on half 1d carmine rose

The undated ST KITTS PAID used between 1861 and 1864 in red, as below, was used again in black in 1889 between October and December as a provisional, very rare



Used during shortage of ½d, 1½d, 2½d and 4d stamps.

ST. CHRISTOPHER



1d carmine rose, used bisected on cover below



Leeward islands 1d pink postal stationery envelope with an additional Leewards 1d dull mauve and rose together with a St Christopher Halfpenny overprint on half of penny carmine rose. The envelope was sent from St Kitts to Scarborough Tobago, postmarked St Kitts A12 Duplex code C in cds, SP ?? 92, and a Tobago receiving mark for SP 15 92. The cover demonstrates the mixed use of Leewards postal stationery with adhesive stamps of both the Leewards and St Kitts to make up the inter island rate of 2½d. Robson Lowe states that the Halfpenny provisional bisect is normally bisected from the upper left to the lower right corners with the surcharge reading downwards. Bisected and surcharged the other way are rare.



Block of four Leeward Islands 1d dull mauve and rose as used on cover above

ST. CHRISTOPHER



A cover posted in St Christopher on October 29 1887 bearing a specimen of the 1884 4d grey to pay the 4d rate to the U.S.A., cancelled by the A12 vertical obliterator and a separate c.d.s with code C. The cover is inscribed 'pr Bermuda'.



1882 1d Rose post card used in 1887 to New York with an additional 1882 1/2d green adhesive to make up the overseas rate.

ST. CHRISTOPHER

1882 ½d green printed June 1882
Full sheet of 20 from plate 1, serial No 40



Numbers Printed 124,700
Numbers remaindered 36,821.

ST. CHRISTOPHER

1884 1d carmine rose, printed February 1884

Full sheet of 20 from plate 1, serial No 40

Numbers Printed 203,160

Numbers remaindered 42,631



Note stamp 1 row 2 is an example of the Distorted E in One variety.

ST. CHRISTOPHER

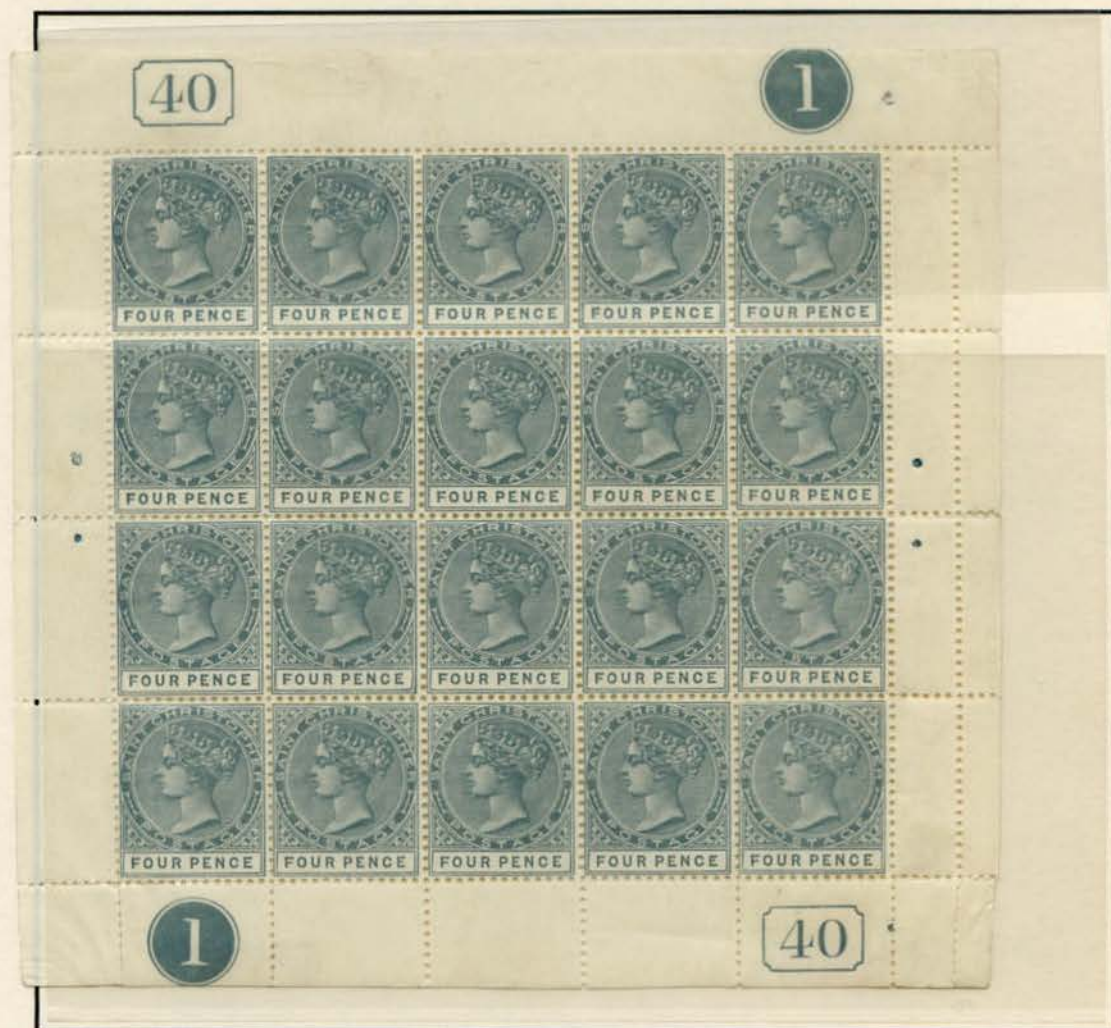
1884 2½d ultramarine printed Feb 1884
Full sheet of 20 from plate 1, serial No 40



Numbers Printed 53,500
Numbers remaindered 13,944.

ST. CHRISTOPHER

1884 4d grey, printed October 1884
Full sheet of 20 from plate 1, serial No 40
Numbers Printed 113,780
Numbers remaindered 29,122



Note stamp 4 row 4 is an
example of the Damaged E in
Pence variety.

ST CHRISTOPHER

The early postal Cancellations of St Christopher

The cancellation introduced when the first supply of British stamps left London on the 14th of April 1858 was A12 and is a transverse oval.



With the introduction of St Christopher adhesive stamps, a date stamp (as below) was introduced and was used normally but, about 1895 an obliteration was introduced which has always been a mystery. The diameter is 23mm. and in the first stage it is a roughly shaped bar. Later there were shorter bars above and below the central bar. In the 3rd state, obviously some cleaning was done and the letters read APMY. The theory is that the type was made with a movable type in the centre deliberately reversed, so that the impressions were made with the blank end of the type. Later the type was replaced by APMY (the normal abbreviation for APRIL and MAY) and over the years this got dirty. The instrument was still in Basseterre post office in 1936.



Circular date stamp for DE/1/1870 on a 1870 1d dull rose wmk CC, First year of issue, dated copies seldom seen



APMY



The obliteration in its first stage



ST.KITTS PAID code A cds in black on QV 6d green for FE/27/1873. a most elusive cancel on adhesives

In 1879 an upright oval containing A12 was introduced which was used to cancel the Antigua stamps which were used provisionally in that year.

About 1880, this was used in duplex with the c.d.s.



Examples of the A12 vertical oval cancel on the stamps of St Christopher and Antigua.

NEVIS

1861 Recess- printed by Nissen & Parker on un-watermarked greyish wove paper.
This envelope contained set 5 of the 1931 reprinted proofs from the original plates.

NEVIS.

The following Prints only have been taken in Black, in July, 1931,
from each of the following Plates.

1 ^d	50	Sheets,	Spoilages,	4	Sheets.
4 ^d	50	"	"	5	"
6 ^d	50	"	"	5	"
1/-	50	"	"	5	"
and 1/-	6	"	Trial Proofs for Paper.		

This is Set No. 5 of the Series of 50 sets of Good Prints.

The Plates were then defaced and presented to the
ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY, LONDON.

In 1931 50 numbered sets containing one sheet each of the four values were printed. The 4d plate had had been previously defaced. After this printing, all the plates were defaced and presented to The Royal Philatelic Society's Museum.

NEVIS

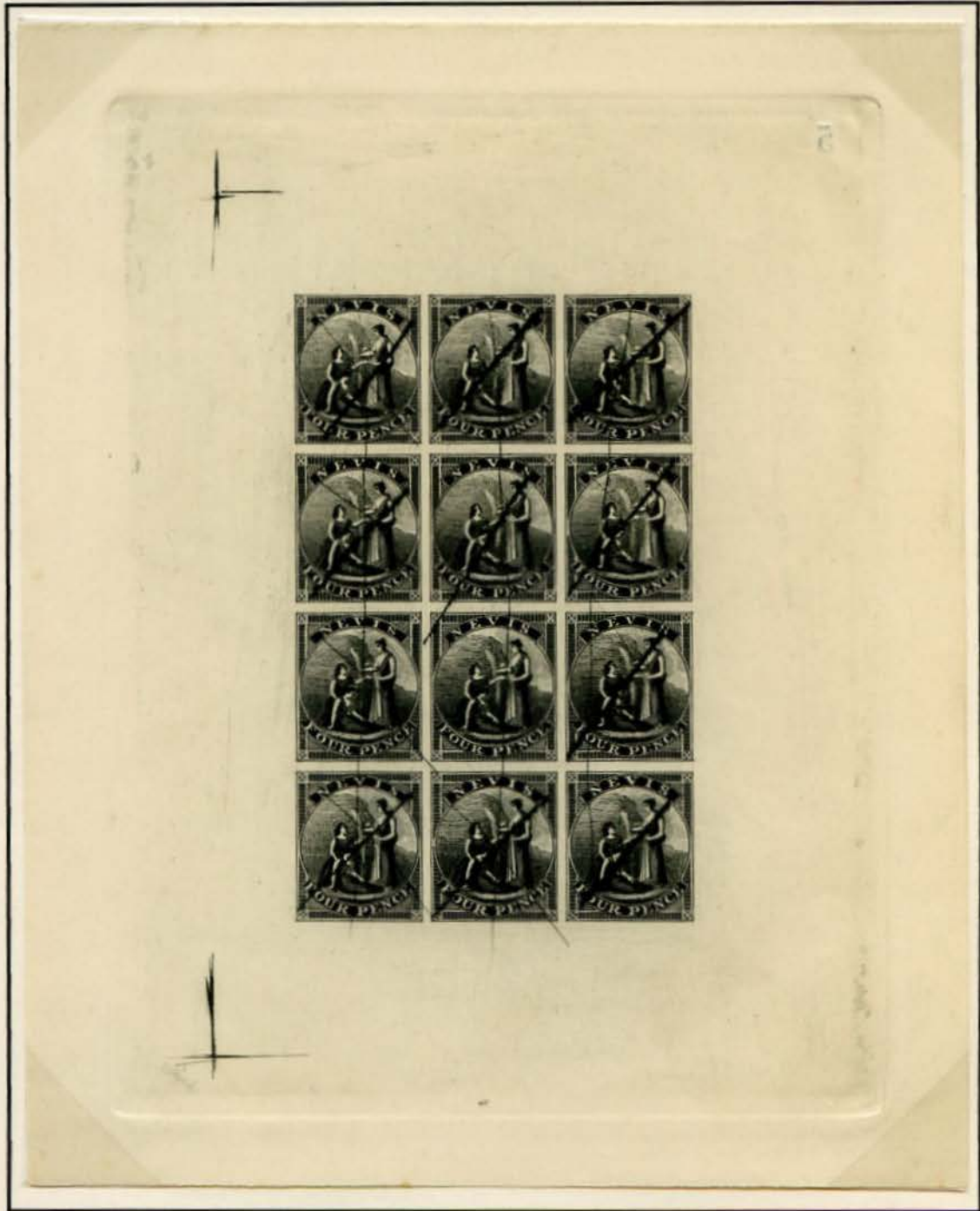
1861 Recess- printed by Nissen & Parker on un-watermarked greyish wove paper.
Examples of a Plate Proof of a complete sheet of 12 in black of the 6d value from set 5 of the
1931 reprinted proofs from the original plates.



In 1931 50 numbered sets containing one sheet each of the four values were printed. The 4d plate had had been previously defaced. After this printing, all the plates were defaced and presented to The Royal Philatelic Society's Museum.

NEVIS

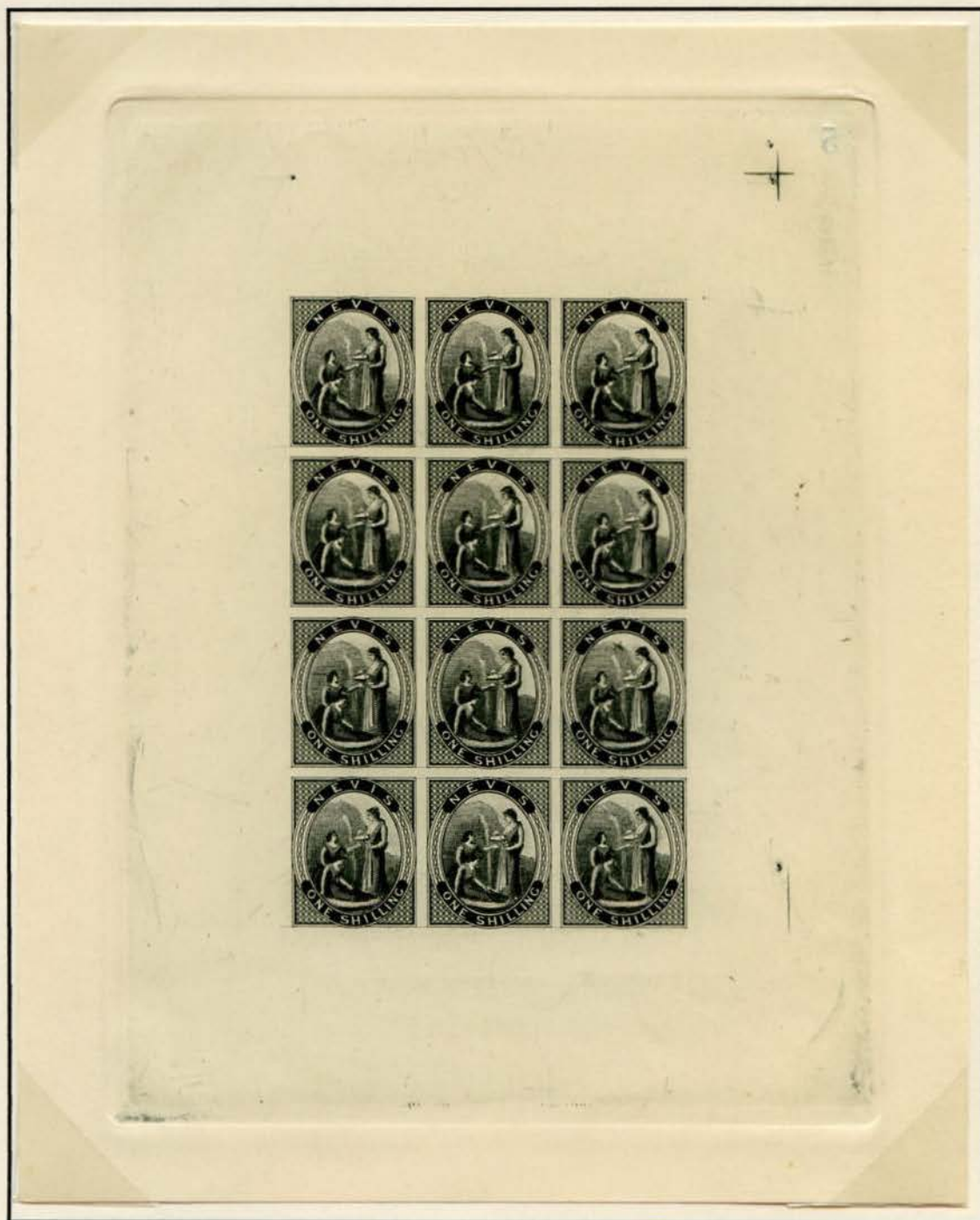
1861 Recess- printed by Nissen & Parker on un-watermarked greyish wove paper.
Examples of a Plate Proof of a complete sheet of 12 in black of the defaced 4d value from set
5 of the 1931 reprinted proofs from the original plates.



In 1931 50 numbered sets containing one sheet each of the four values were printed. The 4d plate had
had been previously defaced. After this printing, all the plates were defaced and presented to The
Royal Philatelic Society's Museum.

NEVIS

1861 Recess- printed by Nissen & Parker on un-watermarked greyish wove paper.
Examples of a Plate Proof of a complete sheet of 12 in black of the defaced 1 shilling value
from set 5 of the 1931 reprinted proofs from the original plates.



In 1931 50 numbered sets containing one sheet each of the four values were printed. The 4d plate had had been previously defaced. After this printing, all the plates were defaced and presented to The Royal Philatelic Society's Museum.

NEVIS

1861 Recess- printed by Nissen & Parker on un-watermarked greyish wove paper.
Examples of a Plate Proof of a complete sheet of 12 in black of the defaced 1d value from set
5 of the 1931 reprinted proofs from the original plates.



In 1931 50 numbered sets containing one sheet each of the four values were printed. The 4d plate had had been previously defaced. After this printing, all the plates were defaced and presented to The Royal Philatelic Society's Museum.