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GREAT BRITAIN: QUEEN VICTORIA ISSUES 1840-1901.

**GREAT BRITAIN, „VR“ OFFICIAL STAMP :**

1840, prepared for use but not issued, „VR“ - One Penny Black, TB, a very deep shade, Michel Cat.-No. D1, St. Gibbons Cat.-No. VR.1, unused without gum, is

----- **genuine** -----

The stamp (dry printing area behind the Queen's neck) has very large and regular margins all round and is in a very fresh state of preservation. -----

A very rare stamp. Of a total printing of 3323 successfully printed sheets 3302 sheets were destroyed on 25 January 1843, after the concept of special stamps for government offices was abandoned. Of the surviving 21 sheets, 13 sheets were used for distribution with the Postmasters' Notice in May 1840 (each with a pair of the VR 1d Black attached); others were used in attempts by the postal authorities to remove the cancellations. -----

**Provenance:**

1937: ex **Micheal Stephens collection** of Rare Postage Stamps, Harmer auction 25./26.Oct.1937, lot 108 (in a pair TA-TB described by the auctioneer: *"...superb unused horizontal pair from lower left corner of sheet, has scissor cut between stamps clear of frames"*). The pair has been separated between 1937 and 1972 into single stamps. The adjoining single stamp TA was later in the A.Phillips collection, offered in a Stanley Gibbons Auction in February 1972.-----

For identification see photos attached. Experts h/s. 'Georg Bühler' and 'Drahn' on reverse.-----



Photo of stamp TB



The stamp TB re-joined to the illustration of stamp TA in the February 1972 Stanley Gibbons auction catalogue to demonstrate the original pair TA-TB from the Micheal Stephens collection (sold in 1937).