



# PHILATELIC OPINION

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#### DESCRIPTION

1840 1d black lettered QF on cover obliterated by a Maltese Cross of Burton-on-Trent.

#### OBSERVATIONS

Comparisons with the letter positions and descriptions in Nissen indicate that the stamp is from Plate 2. The cover was sent from Burton-on-Trent (15 Nov. 1840 c.d.s.) to London (16 Nov. 1840 Inland Office morning duty c.d.s.).

Rockoff & Jackson listed Burton-on-Trent crosses described variously as being in shades of 'magenta', 'pink', 'bright reddish purple', and 'pinkish red' from May 1840 to Jan. 1841. The crosses on the last three covers listed by R&J, dated in Aug. and Oct. 1840 and Jan. 1841, were described as 'pink' or 'pinkish red'. Under magnification, the Maltese Cross appears as if two differently coloured inks were used, but I believe that is largely because of the way the ink has behaved differently on the printed and unprinted parts of the stamp; generally, the ink on the black parts of the stamp has more blue in it, tending towards pink. The Burton c.d.s. is in a similar shade, probably from the same inkpad, but is slightly different, probably due to the paper of the cover absorbing a different amount of oil in the ink. The shape of the obliteration is that of a normal Common cross.



London c.d.s.

#### SOURCES

Charles Nissen, *The Plating of the Penny Black Postage Stamp of Great Britain 1840*, 1922.

S. David Rockoff & Mike Jackson, *Encyclopaedia of the Maltese Cross*, Vol. 3, 2011.

Stanley Gibbons, *Great Britain Specialised Catalogue*, Vol. 1, 16th edn, 2011.

#### CONCLUSION

In my opinion, the cover bears an 1840 1d black Plate 2 lettered QF on cover obliterated by a Maltese Cross of Burton-on-Trent in a Pinkish Red shade, and is genuine. SG Spec. AS15(var.).

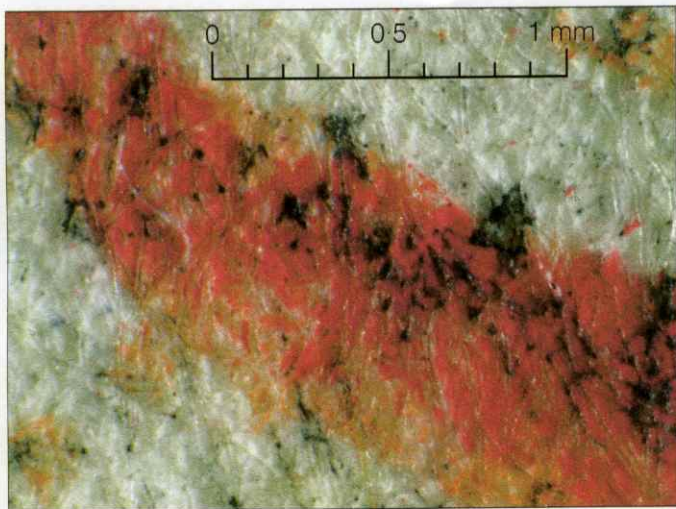
*Mike Jackson*



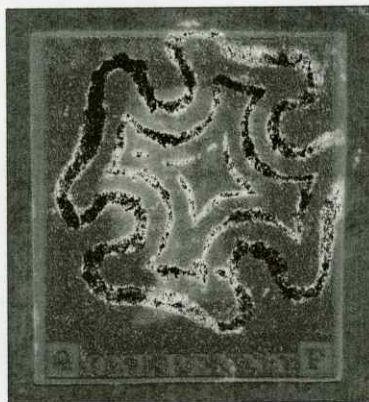
Digitally enhanced image to show the shape of the Maltese Cross more clearly.



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*Photomicrograph of the inner cross on the Queen's forehead.*



*Digitally enhanced image; the dark areas on the Maltese Cross correspond to the pinker ink (see below for a close up of the isolated area of ink to the left of the diamond).*

