



Great Britain Four-Corner Penny Red

Visual Identification Program

(Stanley Gibbons #43 - Scott #33 / from most plates 71-225)

<https://www.pennyredfourcorner.com>

This application aids collectors in identifying plate numbers of 1858-1879 British penny reds based on the unique positions and characteristics of the letters in each of the four corners, as the plate numbers are not always clear or visible. By entering the two-letter combination and visible plate numbers (if any), while paying close attention to the spacing around each letter and the angles of the letters themselves, you should be able to make a positive match in the database of all 36,240 stamps!

Basics of the Stamp



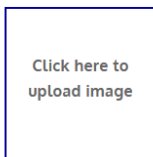
Every stamp sheet has 240 penny red stamps in a 12x20 matrix with letter combinations AA through TJ on the bottom, which is how stamp lettering is identified among collectors. These are reversed at the top. Each also bears the plate number from which it was printed and duplicated in middle of the right and left scrollwork border as shown in the yellow box.

Used or mint stamps can be checked with this application.

DETAILED STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS (see the last page for a Quick Guide)

Upload Image

Please upload an image of the stamp you would like to identify.



1. Insert a JPG image of the stamp needing identification by clicking the "upload image" box on the main screen, then double tapping the image when found in your file directory. Your stamp then appears in the program.

Identify Image

Please choose one of the following options.

Crop Image

Start Over

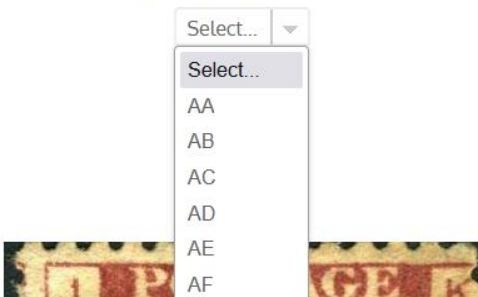
Skip Cropping and Continue

2. Several options appear above the stamp. It is best to crop the stamp image as close to the perforations as possible for the best results, and one of the options allows you to do so in the application itself.



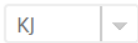
3. If cropping in the application, click “Crop Image” and white dots appear along the border of the stamp. Move the dots in and out to allow the best possible end result, then click “Apply” when done. You also have the option to “Cancel” the process and start again.

Please choose the bottom corner letters:



4. Click the “Select...” bar and a dropdown of letter combinations appears. Scroll down to pick the letters found at the bottom of the stamp- in this case, KJ-and click on it.

Please choose the bottom corner letters:



Can you read any of the plate numbers?



Currently Showing:

Previous

Plate 71

Next

Not a Match

Possible Match

Skip

5. Your letter combination appears at the top of this section. If you can absolutely identify any of the possible digits of the plate number, enter them here. Only blank, 1, or 2 is possible for Digit 1, while Digits 2 and 3 can be anything from 0-9. If you think the plate number only has 2 digits in it, insert “blank” as Digit 1 for plate number 99 or below. In the example here, Digit 2 is a bit unclear, but Digit 1 is 1 and Digit 3 is 5.



Can you read any of the plate numbers?



Currently Showing:

Previous

0

1

2

3

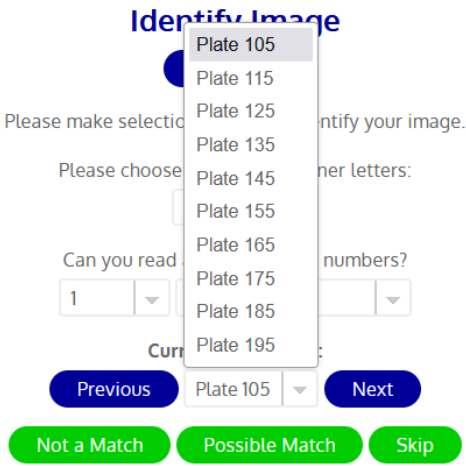
Next

Not a Match

Possible Match

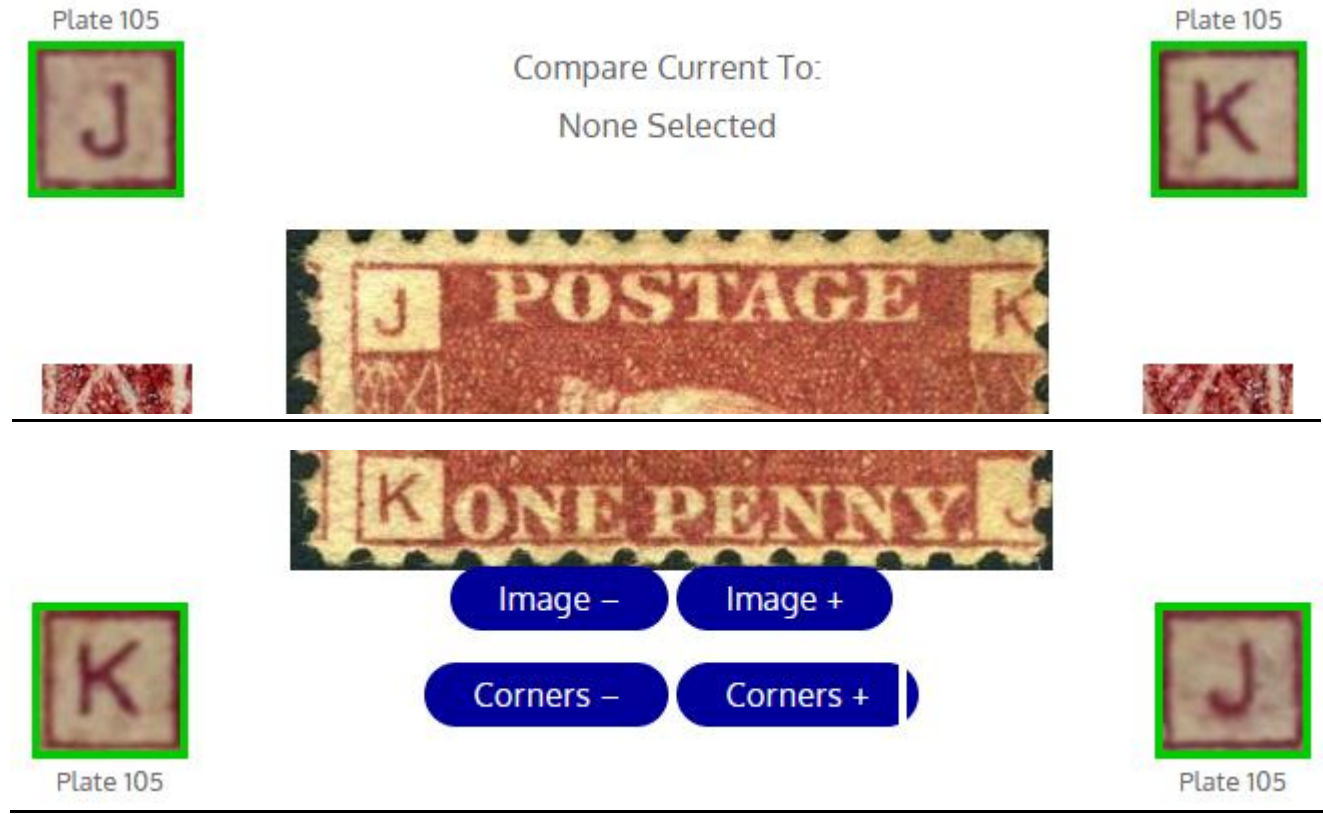
Skip

6. After entering those values, Digit 2 is the unknown, with values of 0-9 possible (i.e. plate 105, 115, 125, 135, etc.).



7. Upon clicking the Plate 105 bar all of these possibilities appear on the dropdown box. One of them will be a match to the stamp. Start with the first one by clicking "Plate 105".

8. Here is what will be seen for Plate 105. Images of the four check letters from known Plate 105 appear both above and below the larger image of the stamp in question in each corner surrounded in green. Compare their positions and shape. Use the + and - options under the stamp to increase or decrease the various corners or stamp image. Per below, J found in the northwest corner of the stamp is off-center, while the known J is more centered. Even worse is the letter J in the southeast corner of the stamp, which is way off center and to the right, but centered well on the known check letter. So this stamp cannot be from Plate 105. Repeat the process for the remaining plate possibilities. **Hint- Always look for the corners that most obviously knocks it out of contention from being from that plate.**



Currently Showing:

Previous

Plate 175

Next

Not a Match

Possible Match

Skip

Compare Current To:

Plate 125

Plate 165

9. Click the appropriate green “Not a Match” (which eliminates it from being reviewed again) or “Possible Match” button. The application automatically displays the next potential plate number. “Possible” plate numbers you select will appear as blue buttons under “Compare Current To:” as in the example at the left. Any can be reviewed immediately by clicking the blue button, or deleted by clicking its X in the upper right.

10. At this point we’ll jump ahead to Plate 125, with “2” being the most likely correct digit in the second position. Below is the matchup of stamp to check letters as the prior example. All four corner letters match up well. Disregard the fact that the perforations on the right cut into the stamp, as the boxes are incomplete. Click “Possible Match” and continue by reviewing the remaining possibilities.

Currently Showing:

Previous

Plate 125

Next

Not a Match

Possible Match

Skip

Plate 125



Plate 125



Compare Current To:

None Selected

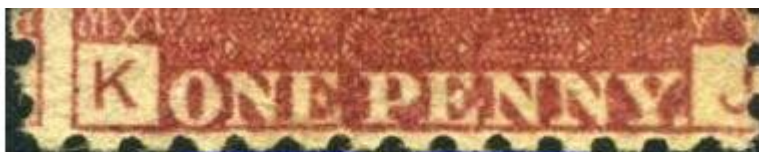


Image -

Image +

Corners -

Corners +

Plate 125

Plate 125

11. Once you've reviewed all potential options and have at least two "Possible Matches," you have the option to compare them for the absolute best match. First, pull up the most likely plate number. Then click the next likely under the "Compare Current To:" to allow viewing them side by side. Here, Plate 125 corners are compared to those of Plate 155, against those of the stamp being checked. Clearly Plate 125 has been confirmed as the correct plate for the unidentified stamp.

Currently Showing:

Previous
Plate 125
Next

Not a Match
Possible Match
Skip

Plate 125





Plate 155



Compare Current To:

Plate 155 ✕

Plate 155






Plate 125








Image -

Image +

Corners -

Corners +

Plate 125




Plate 155




Plate 155





Plate 125





12. Note that sample plate numbers appear to the left and right of the stamp under investigation relating to the "Currently Showing" plate number. They are shown as reference only to allow for comparison of numeral placement within the scrolls. They do not change based on the check letter combinations themselves.