

PLATING THE 10¢ 1847

The following descriptions cover a section of the right pane and include a number of the most easily recognized and therefore most easily plated varieties. In this group of 24 positions, which comprise the upper eight stamps in the second, third and fourth vertical rows, are included one of the four well-known shifts (No. 2R), the position on which the lower right corner was least successfully recut (No. 22R), and the position showing the most and heaviest scratches in the right margin (No. 44R). Several of the positions in this group also have the top frame very heavily recut and one of these positions (No. 62R) is an excellent example of the extension of the left frame line beyond the top frame.

Illustrations of the position dots can rarely be exactly correct and are intended merely to give approximate shape, size and location of the dots. As the largest dot will not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ mm. in its greatest dimension, it can readily be understood that very slight variations in printing may produce comparatively large variations in the shape or size of these tiny marks.

The drawings were made by comparing as many clearly printed copies as were available of each position and drawing the dot to approximate the average as shown on those copies. The relative position of the dot to adjacent portions of the design can vary only slightly on any position, that is to say, a dot which is placed relatively very high on a certain position will never be found very low on other copies of that position. Copies from the same position may show larger or smaller dots but these will be so located that if the stamps were exactly superimposed the smaller dot would be included in the area covered by the larger one.

Many positions on the plate show traces of a very fine horizontal guide line crossing the edge of the design through or very near the position dot. Parts of this line are most readily seen in the white border between the trifoliate and the left frame and in the white oval between the trifoliate and the edge of the background. A continuation of this line may also sometimes be found similarly located at the right side of certain positions. It seems probable that in burnishing this line away before the designs were transferred to the plate, the workman was careful not to come too close to the position dot lest he burnish that away also.

On the stamps the lines of color are relatively heavier - that is, thicker - than as shown on the illustrations of the trifoliate, and are relatively less sharp. For this reason and the additional fact that the design often did not transfer perfectly, closely adjacent to the position dot, the appearance of the tiny part of the design between the edge of the background and the

upper and middle segments of the trifoliate may appear different on the stamps than as shown on the drawing. On a number of positions detail of the design adjacent to the position dot is missing thus leaving a tiny colorless area which makes the position dot itself stand out more strongly than on other positions.

No.2R:

The position dot is medium size and touches the middle leaf of the trifoliate. It extends to the edge of the background. This position is one of the four well known shifts and was named Shift "C" by Dr.Chase. It greatly resembles Shift "A" which is the next stamp to its left, the most noticeable difference being found in the right "X" which contains a line of color close to the right side of the upper left arm and the lower right arm. This duplication of the design slopes upward to the right, the opposite direction to the line of duplication on the right "X" of No.1R. Duplication of the design is also clearly seen in the "U" and "S" and less plainly in several of the letters of "POST OFFICE." The horizontal lines of the medallion background extend into the white oval at the left as on No.1R. There are also traces of duplication in the word "CENTS" and near the lower right corner, particularly below the bottom frame.

No.3R:

The position dot is larger than average and its left side coincides with the edge of the background; its lower end forms a point which nearly touches the middle leaf of the trifoliate. The top frame is heavily recut and is somewhat thicker in the middle than toward the end. The right frame is rather heavily recut and is quite even. The left frame is also quite evenly recut. This position is apt to give trouble. The identification mark most easily recognized is a very fine vertical scratch at the lower left corner about half way between the "X", crossing the lower frame and for a short distance below. Scratches extending vertically are also found in the white border at the right opposite the upper arm of the right "X" and near the lower leaf of the right trifoliate.

No.4R:

The position dot is larger than average and its left side coincides with the edge of the background. It does not touch the middle leaf of the trifoliate. The top frame is rather heavily recut and is not quite so thick at the ends. The right frame was

recut downward from the top frame to opposite the middle of "S" and upward from the bottom frame to a point slightly above the upper leaf of the right trifoliate. This lower half of the line is neither straight nor even. The left frame was recut quite evenly for its whole distance, except for about 1 mm at the upper end, where it is weaker. This position is most easily identified by the peculiarities of the right frame line and by two short vertical dashes in the margin outside this line. One of these dashes is opposite the middle segment of the lower oak leaf $\frac{3}{4}$ mm. outside the right frame and the other, which is a shorter and heavier mark, is opposite the foot of the right "X", $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. outside the frame. The lower dash is about $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. high and may be continued upward as a very fine blur for nearly 2 mm., ending in a fine dot.

No.12R:

The position dot is about average size and oval shaped. It is placed about half way between the upper segment of the trifoliate and the edge of the background and its lower end touches the middle segment of the trifoliate. The top frame was evenly recut. The left frame was recut down to the foot of the left "X." The portion of the line from this point down to the bottom corner is the original frame. This position is readily identified by the upper ends of the right and left frame lines. On careful examination, both lines are seen to be doubled for a short distance, the left line down to about opposite the middle of "U" and the right line down to about the top of "S". On the left the finer line is outside, while on the right it is on the inside. Possibly this doubling is caused by a slight shift and some copies of this position show other slight indications which may have come from shifting. However, recutting not quite skillfully enough done would probably produce the same doubling of the frame line.

No.13R:

The position dot is average size and tear shaped. It is placed midway between the upper segment of the trifoliate and edge of the background, with its point touching the middle segment of the trifoliate. The top frame was evenly recut. The right frame was recut less heavily than the top and is irregular and not perfectly straight. Left frame is entirely recut except for a fraction of a millimeter at the bottom where it does not properly join the bottom frame. This position is quite easy to identify. There are several scratches in the white frame at the right and in the margin between this position and No.14R. There is a short vertical scratch in the white border at the upper right corner, extending

down to opposite the top of "S" or even further. A long vertical scratch, broken in its upper part, starts near the lower segment of the right trifoliate and continues close to the background to the foot of the right "X" and curves toward the right frame joining the frame at the lower right corner of the stamp. There is a short vertical scratch extending from opposite the foot of the right "X" downward as far as the bottom frame, just outside the frame. The most noticeable scratches are in the margin near the right frame. One of these is about 4 mm. long and parallels the right frame $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. outside, ending a little higher than the tip of the lower segment of the trifoliate. At about this position on the right frame line another scratch begins and extends diagonally downward out into the margin for about 3 mm. A fainter scratch extending downward slightly toward the right may be found 1 mm. outside the right frame and a fraction closer to the left frame of No.14R. This scratch is heavier for about 1 mm. at its upper end - opposite the middle segment of the right oak leaf - and gradually fades away to invisibility at its lower end.

No.14R:

The position dot is medium size and diamond shaped. It is placed close to the edge of the background with the upper end higher than the top of the trifoliate. Top frame is rather heavily recut and is quite even, though perhaps a bit thicker at the left end. The right frame is recut irregularly, the strongest part being opposite "E" and near the foot of the right "X." The left frame is entirely recut and is weaker at its lower end from the top of the left "X" down. On stamps showing sufficient margin at the left, the scratches noted outside the right margin of No.13R will appear. There is a faint scratch extending downward and slightly outward from the level of the top frame about $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. outside the upper left corner. This scratch is perhaps 2 mm. long. There are several faint scratches paralleling the right frame just outside it, which extend downward from the middle part of the "S" and gradually fade away. Indications of a very faint scratch close to the right frame may also be found in the upper right corner. This scratch starts about opposite the top of "S" and extends upward and slightly outward past the upper right corner of the stamp.

No.22R:

The position dot is medium size and placed midway between the trifoliate and the edge of the background, the lower point touching the middle segment of the trifoliate. The top frame is strongly recut but tapers off somewhat toward the left end. The

right frame was recut for nearly its entire length. The left frame was also entirely recut and is quite straight and even, except for $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm. at its upper end, where it is slightly weaker and for 1 mm. at its lower end where it fades away to a point and makes a weak corner with the bottom frame. This position can be identified without trouble. The lower right corner is not closed as the bottom frame line stops opposite the edge of the background and does not join the right frame by nearly a full millimeter. There are several strong vertical scratches at this corner, both inside and outside the right frame. One might imagine that the engraver made several attempts to redraw the lower half of the right frame and never succeeded in obtaining a perfect result. One scratch starts just below the bottom frame and extends upward through the shading at the right foot of the "X" along the right edge of the background and finally ends in the white border between the lower segment of the right trifoliate and the frame. Another scratch starts at the same point and parallels the first one slightly to the right nearly to the top of the "X."

No. 23R:

The position dot is medium size and tear shaped and placed nearer the edge of the background than the upper segment of the left trifoliate with its top about level with the upper tip of the trifoliate. The top frame was evenly but not heavily recut. The right frame was entirely recut and is fairly straight and even. The left frame was recut upward from the bottom to a point near the top of the left "X." It is a fine continuous line downward from the upper left corner to opposite the "P" of "POST" and this perhaps is the original line of the die. The remainder of the line which is its middle part is very faint and much broken. This position can often be identified by the left frame line, but if the left frame is not complete it can also be identified by scratches in the white border at the right. One of these scratches is about 2 mm. long and crosses the white border diagonally extending upward toward the left, midway between "E" and the right trifoliate. Another scratch merges into the right frame and extends upward to the left into the white border about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm. opposite the top of the right "X." There is also a vertical scratch in the margin between No. 23R and No. 24R. This scratch is about 2 mm. long and a little more than $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. outside the right frame. Its upper end is a bit lower than the bottom of the "E" of "OFFICE."

No. 24R:

The position dot is medium size and shaped like a half moon.

Its lower end touches the middle segment of the trifoliate and the curved side is close to the edge of the background. The top frame is recut but is not very even. It is heavier at the left end and over the "OFF" of "OFFICE" and tapers off toward the right end. The right frame is less heavily recut and is irregular. The left frame is recut in places and is very irregular. This position can easily be identified by the peculiarities in the left frame line, particularly the swelling opposite the upper part of the trifoliate. The line is much thinner opposite the lower part of the trifoliate and there are a few very faint scratches extending downward and outward from it outside this point. The left frame is also very faint opposite the middle of the left "X" and then rapidly grows wider towards the bottom until just before it reaches the bottom frame where it tapers off sharply to a point at the lower left corner of the stamp.

No. 32R:

The position dot is nearly round and smaller than average and is placed close to the upper tip of the trifoliate. The upper frame is heavily recut and quite even. The right frame was partially recut. It is strongest for about 5 mm. downward from opposite the top of the right trifoliate, again for about 2 mm. opposite the top of the right "X" and again from the foot of the right "X" to its lower end. The left frame is also partially recut and is quite irregular. It is weak from opposite the base of "U" to the upper end and for 2 or 3 mm. at its lower end. This position is easily identified by the lower right corner which was left slightly open instead of being closed by proper joining of the frame lines. There are vertical scratches in the margin, outside the upper right corner. These are the lower ends of scratches which extend upward for about 10 mm. outside the right frame of No. 22R. The outer of these scratches extends upward from a point opposite the top of "S," $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. outside the right frame but is extremely faint and usually only its lower end appears as a dot or a very short dash opposite the top of "S" and a bit lower than the lower end of the outside scratch.

No. 33R:

The position dot is elliptical and smaller than average and is placed about midway between the upper segment of the trifoliate and edge of the background, resting on the middle segment of the trifoliate. The upper frame was recut and is quite even. The right frame was partially recut and is very weak opposite the upper half of the right "X". The left frame is also partially

recut and is irregular from opposite the "P" of "POST" downward. It is broken just below the top of the left "X," and then is much heavier from the middle of the "X" to the lower corner. Along there it appears to slant outward slightly. This position is most easily identified by the irregular left frame and by the very weak section of the right frame opposite the upper half of the right "X." There is also a short vertical dash in the white border close to the right frame opposite the lower segment of the right trifoliate. This dash which curves outward slightly is about $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. long. There are several small blurs of color extending diagonally upward and outward from the right frame line about $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. above the top of the right trifoliate.

No.34R:

Medium size position dot, oval in shape, placed about midway between the upper and middle segment of the trifoliate and edge of the background. The top frame is recut strongly. The right frame is entirely recut but is quite irregular. The left frame is recut slightly, if at all. It is strongly suggestive of the hop, skip and jump game of boyhood days, being weak and broken in many places. This position is readily identified by many scratches along the right frame and in the margin between No.34R and No.35R. Several of these scratches meet to form points, particularly just outside the upper right corner opposite "S" and opposite the right trifoliate. One or more of these scratches merge into the frame line for about 5 mm. from opposite the bottom of "S" downward, making the line very heavy at this section.

No.42R:

The position dot is round and smaller than average. It is close to or touching the middle segment of the trifoliate and edge of the background. Close beside it at the right appears another and smaller dot located exactly in the corner where the upper and middle segment of the trifoliate meet. Upper frame is recut evenly but not heavily. The right frame is recut more heavily from opposite the upper part of the trifoliate to opposite the lower part of the right "X" and is weaker above and below that section. The left frame was partially recut. It is quite strong opposite the left "X" and for a short distance above the "X" and nearly to the bottom frame line. A fraction of a millimeter at the lower end was not recut and a bit of the fine original line forms a weak corner with the bottom frame at this point. The middle section of the frame line is rather ragged and the upper third is a fine continuous and fairly even line. This position is likely to give trouble.

Careful study of the left frame line is necessary. A faint blurry line may be found parallel to and just outside the upper end of the right frame line for several millimeters opposite "S." (See No.43R.)

No.43R:

The position dot is medium size, wedge shaped and is placed about midway between the upper segment of the trifoliate and the edge of the background. The top frame is recut but less strongly than on other positions. The right frame is entirely recut and is noticeably uneven. The left frame is recut and is quite even, though a bit weaker for 4 mm. at its upper end. This position is readily identified if the stamp shows a little margin at the upper left corner. A blurry scratch beginning close to the lower right corner of No.33R extends diagonally downward touching the upper left corner of No.43R and continuing for about 4 mm. below the corner. Opposite the upper part of "U" a section of this scratch about $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. long is noticeably strong. All of this scratch below this section and just above this section is much weaker. Another scratch considerably fainter merges into the right frame line opposite the "S" and extends upward just outside, but very close to the frame, nearly to the upper right corner of the stamp.

No.44R:

The position dot is pear shaped with its outer corner at the edge of the background and its lower corner close to or touching the trifoliate. The upper frame is strongly recut. The right frame is recut less strongly and is quite weak at its lower end. The left frame was recut and is weak opposite the top of "U." Unless the right frame line is cut away, this position can instantly be identified. Much of the margin between No.44R and No.45R is filled with vertical scratches in the form of long narrow loops with pointed ends, as if a sharp instrument had been drawn back and forth on the plate. There are more scratches in this margin than anywhere else on the plate. Several points are found opposite the lower part of the right "X," and one shorter loop ends in a point about half way between the trifoliate and "E." There are also several scratches in the white frame to the right of "S." One of these is curved something like a long letter "S" and continues upward in the corner of the stamp and across the top frame line. Between this scratch and the corner is a short vertical scratch or blur, and continues upward from the outside corner of the stamp is another faint blur.

No. 52R:

The position dot is medium size and located about midway between the upper segment of the trifoliate and the edge of the background. The upper frame is recut, but not heavily and tapers slightly at its left end. The right frame is recut for most of its length, but is weaker at the lower end. The left frame is a fine continuous line showing little variation. This position requires very careful study. Comparison of the left and right frame lines with copies that are in pair with other positions whose identification is questionable should be made. No. 52R may show a long blur along the outer side of the right frame from the top of the stamp, nearly to the upper part of the right "X." There are a few very faint vertical scratches in the white border at the right. One of these is opposite the lower part of "S." Another may be found between the foot of the right "X" and the right frame line. Another very faint vertical scratch may be found just outside of and parallel to the left frame line. It is about 3 mm. long and its lower end is a fraction of a millimeter below the bottom frame.

No. 53R:

The position dot is medium size and being placed closely against the upper segment of the trifoliate may easily escape notice. The upper frame is recut strongly and evenly. The right frame is recut but is noticeably uneven. The left frame is also recut, and although quite straight, shows thick and thin places. This position is difficult to identify. Fortunately not many other stamps have the position dot located as on No. 53R. Careful comparison must be made of the left and right frame lines, particularly at the lower end of the right frame. Perhaps the most easily recognized mark of identification is found on copies which show it at all, at the lower right corner. There is a noticeable swelling in the frame line opposite the middle of the right "X," and outside the frame line is a vertical blur commencing about opposite the foot of the "X" and extending below the bottom frame, about $\frac{1}{4}$ mm. outside the lower corner. Another short blur is an extension of the right frame for about $\frac{1}{4}$ mm. below the bottom frame.

No. 54R:

The position dot is of average size and its outer side coincides with the edge of the background. The top frame is strongly recut and is heavier over "OFFICE," tapering off towards both ends. The right frame is entirely recut and except at the lower end is fairly even. The left frame is recut and is fairly even,

except at its extreme lower end. The lower end of the line for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. at the corner is weak or missing. This position is difficult to identify. There are many vertical scratches in the margin between it and No.55R, but these are often extremely faint and not readily recognized. The left frame is a bit swollen for about 2 mm. opposite the "P" of "POST," and the right frame is very crooked from the upper arm of the right "X" downward to the corner. Copies with sufficient margin at the right may show fine parrallel vertical scratches opposite the "E" of "OFFICE," and a long vertical scratch which commences opposite the middle segment of the trifoliate and extends upward, midway between No.54R and No.55R, until it becomes merged with other scratches in the margin near the left side of No.45R. A very faint vertical scratch may also be found in the left margin opposite the middle of the left "X." This scratch is about 1 mm. long and is a small fraction of 1 mm. outside the left frame.

No.62R:

The position dot is medium size, tear shaped and located about midway between the upper segment of the trifoliate and the edge of the background with its lower end resting on the middle segment of the trifoliate. The top frame is entirely recut and quite even though not very heavy. The right frame was recut extensively and is irregular with three quite noticeable heavy places, one opposite the trifoliate, one just above and another opposite upper part of the right "X." The left frame was recut and is rather uneven. Two millimeters at the upper end are quite weak and this weak line projects about $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. above the top frame. The last $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. at the bottom is also quite weak or broken. This position is readily identified by the peculiarities of the right frame line, by the extension of the left frame line beyond the top corner and by a series of faint scratches about $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. outside the left frame about midway between the trifoliate and the top of the left "X." There are two of these vertical scratches parrallel to each other and to the frame line, but they are broken and appear as a succession of dots or dashes. The inner scratch shows as a vertical dash, little more than $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. long opposite the upper segment of the oak leaf and again as a dash about 1 mm. long opposite the lower part of the middle segment of the oak leaf.

No.63R:

The position dot is medium with its left side close to the edge of the background. The top frame was quite heavily recut, but appears much less strong owing to the very noticeable "short transfer" at the top. The right frame was extensively recut, but

is quite uneven. From a point about midway between the "E" of "OFFICE" and the right trifoliate downward to opposite the top of the "X" it is quite heavy, especially for the first 2 mm. this heavy section stops abruptly and above it the line is much weaker. The left frame was recut for about 5 mm. opposite the left "X," being especially strong toward the lower left corner of the stamp. It bends inward noticeably opposite the upper arm of the left "X" being a trifle closer to the edge of the background above this point. The remainder of the line is faint, ragged and broken, being particularly weak opposite the middle of the "U." This position may be readily identified by the "short transfer" at the top, and by the recutting of the right and left frame lines, also by several scratches near the right frame. Opposite "S" there is a faint scratch nearly 2 mm. long, very close to and just inside the right frame. Another faint scratch about 2 mm. long is found just outside the right frame opposite the top of the "X," this merges into the right frame about 1 mm. above the top of the "X."

No. 64R:

The position dot is medium size and located about half way between the upper segment of the trifoliate and the edge of the background with its lower end or side resting on or close to the middle segment of the trifoliate. The upper frame was evenly recut except at the extreme right, where it tapers off nearly to a point. The right frame was recut and is characteristic. It is fairly strong except for about 2 mm. opposite the top of the right "X" and stops a full $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. short of the top frame, leaving the upper right corner of the stamp open. The left frame was entirely recut and is quite even. The bottom frame appears to have been entirely recut, except at the extreme right end where it does not quite reach the right frame, leaving the lower right corner of the stamp open for a fraction of a millimeter. This position is readily identified by the incomplete and lower right corners, and by several scratches near the right frame line. There is a heavy blurry scratch which merges into the right frame about 2 mm. above the top of the right trifoliate and extends upward for about 5 mm., roughly paralleling the right frame but curving outward slightly at its upper end, which extends nearly to opposite the bottom of "S." There is a sharp fine scratch in the white border at the right, commencing midway between the middle segment of the trifoliate and the right frame extending downward diagonally along the edge of the background to the tip of the upper segment of the oak leaf.

No. 72R:

The position dot is somewhat larger than average and is placed slightly nearer the edge of the background than to the trifoliolate, its lower end nearly touching the middle segment of the trifoliolate. The top frame is evenly recut but is not very heavy. The right frame was quite carefully recut, but is a bit thinner for about 3 mm. opposite "E" and for $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. at its extreme upper end. The left frame was partially recut. For 3 mm. downward from the top corner and 2mm. upward from the bottom corner, the line is fine and appears to be the original line of the die. The middle part of the line between the section mentioned is somewhat irregular, being heavier for about 3mm. from opposite the bottom of "U" downward; again for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mm. opposite the upper segment of the lower oak leaf, and again for about 3mm. opposite the top of the left "X." This position may give trouble. It is most easily identified by the left frame line, the upper and lower ends of which appear not to have been recut.

No. 73R:

The position dot is crescent shaped and placed about midway between the upper segment of the trifoliolate and the edge of the background. Top frame was strongly recut and is somewhat heavier to the right, except at the extreme right end. The right frame was recut except for about 1mm. half way between "E" and the right trifoliolate, where it is weak. Below this point the line is very irregular and decidedly crooked, bending inward slightly toward the trifoliolate and then outward for several millimeters, finally curving toward the left again at its extreme lower end. The left frame was recut only slightly, if at all. It is a fine line with occasional weak places and breaks, particularly at its extreme upper end, where it does not quite join the top frame, so that the upper left corner of the stamp is not well joined. Commencing directly opposite the top of the left "X" for $1\frac{1}{2}$ mm. upward the line is noticeably heavy. This position is not easily identified. Careful comparison of the right and left frame is necessary. The most easily recognizable mark is a series of fine scratches or blurs in the lower right corner. These may extend upward into the white border as high as the middle of the right "X" and downward across the bottom frame and the bottom margin and into the top of No. 83R, inside and outside the upper right corner of No. 83R.

No. 74R:

The position dot is rather large and elliptical with its left side coinciding with the edge of the background; it is close to or touching the upper curve of the middle segment of the trifo-

liate. The top frame was recut quite evenly but not heavily, but owing to a "short transfer" at the top of the stamp may not appear as an even continuous line. The right frame was recut and is noticeably irregular. Starting at a point a little below the bottom of "S" it is quite heavy to a point about opposite the middle of the trifoliate and much thinner below, especially for about 2mm. opposite the upper arm of the right "X." Directly opposite the shading at the foot of the right "X" there is a noticeable swelling in the outer side of this line. The left frame was entirely recut and is fairly even. A swelling may be found about 1mm. above the top of the left "X" and a weak place a little lower than the middle of the left "X." This position is most readily identified by the right frame line, particularly the heavy section opposite the "E" of "OFFICE." A very fine and faint scratch appears to merge into the right frame near the swelling in the line at the foot of the right "X." This scratch extends upward diagonally across the white border and if continued would come very close to the shading opposite the upper right arm of the right "X."