

A few rarities from members of the Club de Monte Carlo exhibited in New York

Some of the rarities that will be exhibited by members of the Club de Monte-Carlo are directly linked with the world postal history. This is certainly the case of the item shown.

Robert Wallace (1773–1855), was one of the foremost Postal Reformers of the 1830s and 1840s, he was at that time, the radical Member of Parliament for Greenock in Scotland. According to Sir Rowland Hill's autobiography, Robert Wallace was '*One who was in the field (of Postal Reform) more than two years before I began my investigations*'. Wallace in fact, began the campaign that led to cheap postage and the 1d. black, in 1833. He was a principal witness for the Commission of Revenue Enquiry into the Post Office from 1835 to 1836, and it was on his casting vote - as Chairman of the Parliamentary select Committee on Postage, in 1838 - that the original proposals for cheap postage were recommended to the British Parliament.

During this time Robert Wallace compiled a unique archive which included this document. This consists of a proof of the Mulready, without the value tablet, printed in black on India paper, laid down on a sheet of stout paper which Wallace endorsed in pencil - '*1st Proof of Penny Postage Stamp Comp.[lete], presented to Mr. Wallace by the Right Honble. the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Francis Thornhill Baring, April 10th 1840*'. Wallace then later affixed a 1d. black from the first plate, lettered AI, endorsed '*Universal Penny Postage Fly or Loose Stamp, presented to me as above (the 10th of April)*'. Wallace later added '*These came into public use on the 6th of May 1840*'.

The 1d. black affixed, comes from the plate completed on the April 8th, 1840 - plate 1, the first plate – which was put into production on April 11th and officially registered on April 15th. This stamp came from the first row of a sheet.

April 10th, 1840 was also an important day in the history of the Mulready, being the day on which the design was shown to, and enthusiastically approved by, the Council of Royal Academicians.