

Admirals 8d Die II Plate 4 “Cap Smear” Mystery

by Allen Kirkpatrick

It has come to light, in recent months, that a “new” Plate printing has been found showing the “Cap Smear” flaw, which has been documented on other Admirals denominations as a Plate 4 (State 1/2) printing. This flaw appearing on an 8d Die II is proof that a Plate 4 printing exists for the Admirals Series (1913-1923) which is not documented in any previous reference material!



The existence of this one-of-a-kind finding raises many questions, of which the following are just a few:

- Was Bulawayo the distribution point for stamps entering the country?
- Was there a natural disaster (fire or flood) that prevented further distribution in early 1918 and destroyed stamps in storage for distribution?
- Did the arrival of following plate printings overcome the use and/or distribution of the 8d Plate 4 printings?
- Was there a decision by the Post Master General to pull the 8d Plate 4's from further distribution and is there documentation to support that?
- Where are the other 8d Plate 4 copies used in Bulawayo?

