

1st Flame or Orange/Red or Vermillion Machin Stamp

Prior to trying to break down identifying these stamps, I've taken the advice of a keen Machin collector and made up post-card size papers and identified them simply as:

- a. Old image
- b. EME
- c. Photo
- d. Litho
- e. 2-band yellow
- f. 2-band blue
- g. Standard perf
- h. Eliptical perf

These papers will keep you sane !!!

The first step is to identify in the Scott Catalogue all the different Scott Numbers of the 1st Flame stamp and jot down the basic characteristic of that stamp. From this point I printed out the Advanced pages of the Machin Catalogue, taken from the Adminware.ca/Machin website. Currently (2014) there are 16 different versions of the 1st Flame stamp, not including the "Recorded Signed For" issues.

The easiest sort is to separate the standard style perf stamps from those that have the eliptical or syncopated perfs. Set the syncopated or elipitcal stamps aside for later.

The Scott catalogue lists four (4) numbers for the standard perf type stamp: MH 186, MH 187, MH 188 & MH 189.

Of these four types, sort once again separating the lithograph stamps from the photogravure stamps. Photogravure (photo) stamps are easily identified by looking at the "1st" denomination. Photo stamps have rough, "bitten" edges under a 10x magnifier whereas the litho stamps have almost unblemished straight edges. Set the litho stamps to the side on a piece of paper identifying them as "Litho".

Only MH 186 comes in photogravure so this becomes your starting point. This stamp is only issued as 15 x 14 (or more precisely 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 14), but as it comes in booklet form you will find that this stamp also comes with one or more imperforate (and possibly) cut sides.

A further sort will find this stamp with either:

- A. an imperf top (edge),
- B. an imperf bottom,
- C. an imperf top AND a cut right side, or
- D. an imperf bottom edge AND a cut right side. There are no cut left edges.



MH 187, MH 188 and MH 189 are all lithography stamps i.e. the denomination is sharp! The *basic* difference between these three (3) stamps is the perforations measurement. You must sort them apart at this point. MH187 is perforated the standard 15 x 14, MH 188 is 14 x 14 and MH 189 is 13 X 13 ½.

Once finished that, MH 187 can be sorted into two further piles. One pile has cut sides, as it was issued in booklet form. Cut sides are different from imperf (no perf) sides as the edge has pristine cut edged perfs versus the torn perfs regularly seen. This stamp comes with either:

- A. a cut top edge,
- B. a cut bottom edge,
- C. a cut top AND a cut bottom edge,
- D. OR a cut bottom AND a cut right edge.

Once again, there are no cut left edges, nor are there imperf sides.

This stamp also comes with two bands, seen easily identified by holding it up to natural light. Held under ultraviolet light, one variety of this band further glows as yellow.

MH 188 is perforated 14 x 14 as stated earlier, and similar to MH 186 has:

- A. an imperf top (edge),
- B. an imperf bottom,
- C. an imperf top AND a cut right side, or
- D. an imperf bottom edge AND a cut right side. There are no cut left edges.

MH 189 comes perforated 13 x 13 ½. Exactly like MH 186 and MH 188, a further sort will find this stamp with either:

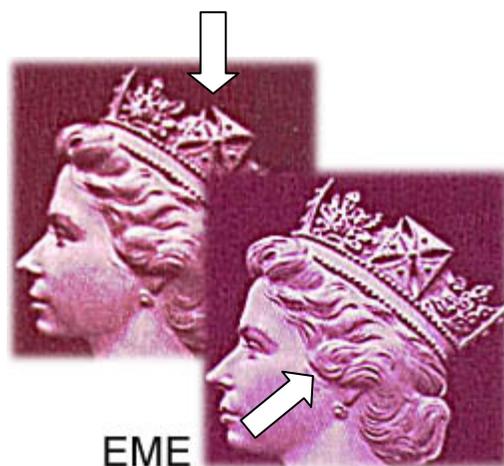
- A. an imperf top (edge),
- B. an imperf bottom,
- C. an imperf top AND a cut right side, or
- D. an imperf bottom edge AND a cut right side. There are no cut left edges.

At this point you should have no more standard style perforated 1st Flame Machin stamps in any pile.

Scott Catalogue lists all remaining stamps of the 1st Flame variety with the syncopated or elliptical style perf.



MH 240, MH 241 and MH 243 are the last stamps printed with the old image. At this stage, it is best to sort these from all the rest. The old image differs from the newer “EME” image in that the openings to the corners in the crown are open, almost resembling lobster claws in the old image. In the EME image the corners almost touch each other. Likewise in the old image the bun of hair directly above the ear is just a blob of hair, whereas in the EME image you’ll see distinctive lines of hair.



Once you’ve sorted out the old image from those with the EME image, put the EME stamps off to one side on a sheet of paper marked EME image.

MH 240 stamps are photogravure i.e. “bumpy denomination”. Sort these from the rest of the old image stamps. These stamps can be further sub-divided into “Band” varieties. There are those with no bands, those with 2-band (yellow) and also those with 2-band (blue). Holding them up to natural light will easily sort those with bands from those without.

Of those “without bands”, you will find several further varieties based on the edging. Similar to MH 187, this stamp comes with either: a cut top edge, a cut bottom edge or a cut top AND a cut bottom edge OR a cut bottom AND a cut right edge. Once again, there are no cut left edges, nor are there imperf sides.

MH 241 stamps are lithograph stamps ie. clear straight sides on denomination and all have the elliptical perforations. All are 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 14 perforation. These form the greatest challenge to the 1st Flame stamp.

One version, is a 2-band (yellow) version, printed by Walsall. The bands are 8mm. This stamp is best identified by the bands and under close scrutiny (magnification) you can separate them by:

- a. split band,
- b. left band insert,
- c. right band insert, or
- d. no band insert.

A second version, also 2-band (yellow) is identified by the edge of the stamp. It is identified through:

- a. sheet stamp,
- b. cut top,
- c. cut top and right edge,
- d. cut bottom and right edge or
- e. cut bottom.

This stamp also came as a mini sheet. Both the mini sheet stamp and the sheet stamp have thin values compared to the stamps with the cut sides.

Differing only slightly, a similar version is also 2-band (yellow), but the bands are 7.5mm vice 8mm wide of the version listed above (good luck)! This stamp has 3 different versions in itself; a thick value, a thin value and thin value but with pale phosphor; all of which have the following sub-characteristics:

- a. cut top,
- b. cut top and right,
- c. cut bottom and right, and
- d. cut bottom.

Another version of MH 241 has both 2-band (blue) and 2-band (pale blue) (8mm) bands. Both these versions come in common bands or have a left band insert or a right band insert.

Yet another version of MH 241 comes as 2-band (pale blue) and comes as:

- a. sheet (no cut sides),
- b. cut top and right,
- c. cut bottom and right, or
- d. cut bottom.

Or a 2-band (pale blue) (7.5 mm bands) which comes as:

- a. sheet (no cut sides),
- b. cut top and right,
- c. cut bottom and right, or
- d. cut bottom.

Finally, the last version of MH241 comes in a mini sheet, which I'll identify as MH241a. It comes in an EME image and has 2-band (pale blue) but the band width is 9mm!



MH 243 is the first of the horizontal 1st Flame stamp. This stamp measures 21 ½ mm x 17 ½ mm vice the normal picture frame, upright version of the stamp. This stamp is lithograph, but it is also the first self-adhesive version of this stamp. This stamp also bears the “old image” of the Queen versus the revised EME image. This stamp comes only as 2-band (yellow).

Skipping ahead, MH 309 is the only other horizontal, self adhesive 1st flame stamp. It also measures 21 ½ mm x 17 ½ mm, but this stamp is photogravure versus the litho of MH 243. This stamp also differs in that it comes only as 2-band (pale blue), the 2nd key factor in separating it from MH 243.

Scott stamps MH 288 and MH 289 are the first versions of the 1st Flame with the newer EME image. As discussed earlier the lines in the hair above the ear are much more defined.

MH 288 is printed photogravure and is the standard 15 x 14 (actually 14 ¾ x 14). This stamp was printed by several printers (Questa, Walsall and Eschende).

MH 289 is also photogravure but this stamp is perforated 13 ¾ x 14. This stamp was issued in booklet format and can be found either with cut top, cut bottom, cut top and right or cut bottom and right, sides. It was issued with 2 band (blue).



MH 297, MH 298 & MH 299 are all self-adhesive and of the vertical picture frame variety. They all come photogravure, all have the EME image (not portrayed above) and all come 2-band (pale blue). The difference is in the perforation type and the size of the image.

MH 297 is easiest to distinguish as all the perfs are flat topped. Questa is the printer for these stamps which are perforated 14 ¾ x 14.

MH 298 is slightly different as these are perforated 15 x 14 ¼. Walsall is the printer for these stamps. The distance from the crown to the right edge is .6mm.

This leaves MH 299, a slightly lighter shade of orange-red, this 14 ¾ x 14 stamp has a smaller image. Printed by Eschende, this stamp is identified by the fact that the distance from the crown to the right edge of the stamp is 1mm, slightly larger than MH 298.

The newest or latest of the 1st Flame stamps feature the security features. Although so new that they aren't even featured on the Adminware web page, the basics of the security features are the same.

MH 426 is self-adhesive and features an EME image; and has an iridescent overprint of "Royal Mail" in wavy lines for a background. I would suspect that you would see the # "13" near the forehead of the queen in amongst the "Royal Mail" lettering. This stamp has two oval slits and is perforated 14 ¾ x 14. This stamp is photogravure.

MH 428 is similar but is once again a large, horizontal stamp, with the same features as MH 426. This stamp is also photogravure.

MH 440 is litho, is also 14 ¾ x 14, but also has the iridescent overprint of "Royal Mail" in the lettering. It is listed as "bright red", but is NOT listed as self-adhesive.

As you can see there are many, many differences in the 1st Flame Machin stamp. As you become familiar with the ways in identifying the 1st Flame stamp, feel free to go back and check your earlier "identifications". More than likely you haven't glued them into your collection, so change them out if you've made a mistake. And more than likely you'll find a better looking stamp at sometime in the future!

In addition to the above stamps there are still those printed for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales....each with several identifying features other than the obvious symbol in the upper left corner.



Thanks to Robin Harris and his Adminware.ca/Machin website and Machin pages for 98% of the information and 100% of the images used in this presentation. The other 2% was taken from the 2015 Scott Stamp Catalogue 2015 G-I volume.

I have NOT gone into the depth that the more advanced Deegam catalogue collector might so, undoubtedly there will probably be additional versions with horizontal and vertical printing. And also the various booklet and minisheet varieties, etc.

Happy hunting!

1st Flame Machin Stamp

Perf	Scott #	Print	Image	Type	Perf #	Format
Standard	MH 186	Photo	Old	Water-Activated	15 x 14	Picture
	MH 187	Litho	Old	Water-Activated	15 x 14	Picture
	MH 188	Litho	Old	Water-Activated	14 X 14	Picture
	MH 189	Litho	Old	Water-Activated	13 X 13 1/2	Picture
Eliptical/Syncopated	MH 240	Photo	Old	Water-Activated	15 x 14	Picture
	MH 241	Litho	Old	Water-Activated	15 x 14	Picture
	MH 243	Litho	Old	Self-Adhesive	14 x 15	Horizontal
	MH 288	Photo	EME	Water-Activated	15 x 14	Picture
	MH 289	Photo	EME	Water-Activated	13 3/4 x 14 1/4	Picture
	MH 297	Photo	EME	Self-Adhesive	14 3/4 x 14	Picture
	MH 298	Photo	EME	Self-Adhesive	15 x 14 1/4	Picture
	MH 299	Photo	EME	Self-Adhesive	14 3/4 x 14	Picture
	MH 309	Photo	Old	Self-Adhesive	14 x 15	Horizontal
	MH 426	Photo	EME	Self-Adhesive	14 3/4 x 14	Picture
	MH 428	Photo	EME	Self-Adhesive	14 3/4 x 14	Horizontal
	MH 440	Litho	EME	Water-Activated	14 3/4 x 14	Picture