

PHILATELY

from

AUSTRALIA

A CHRONICLE OF AUSTRALASIAN STAMPS
AND THEIR COLLECTORS



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86	4d black & sepia	2/9	4/6	97	4d pale olive-green	1/6	1/9
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88	1/- black & orange	2/3	3/-	99	1/- yellow	3/6	3/6
89	2/6 black & brown	—	5/6	100	2/6 rose-carmine	6/-	7/-
90	2/6 black & brown	4/6	—	102	½d pale scarlet	4/6	5/6
93	½d yellow-green	1/-	1/3	104	3d black & brt. blue-green	7d	8d
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PHILATELY *from* AUSTRALIA

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LET'S BE PERFECTLY HONEST

In order to clear away any possible misconceptions, we would make it clear at the start that we shall not be dealing with the ethics of stamp dealing, or the relations between collector and collector. Breaches of the recognised codes of morality in these respects are, fortunately, rare amongst the philatelic fraternity.

No, the appeal for honesty is not to dealers or collectors as such—there is no need for that—but to writers of reviews in the philatelic press. Philatelic literary criticism, we feel, has not advanced with the rest of the hobby, a state of affairs which is bound in the long run to have a detrimental effect on philately as a whole.

Very few reviews of recent philatelic publications which we have seen have contained any really worth while criticism, and in some cases, even, the amount of praise awarded seems to have been based on the number of pages in the book, rather than on any intrinsic merit. Other reviewers, unable to reconcile such methods with their conscience, dismiss unsatisfactory works in a few lines; damning with faint praise, but at the same time giving the reader no assistance by pointing out the faults. In any case, reviews in the philatelic press at the present time give the collector little guidance as to what he should read, and how much reliance should be placed on it.

This was not always so. In the period up to 1914, when the possession of a wide knowledge of the whole field of philately was a *sine qua non* in a philatelic editor, a review of an important work was often as good as an article on the subject, and formed a valuable adjunct to the main work. The picture began to change between the two World Wars, as the great increase in the number of collectable items made it impossible for any one man to have a detailed knowledge of all, and at the same time there were few outstanding contributions to philately to review, as it was a period when most of the important research being done saw the light of day

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as articles in the periodicals, and did not attain the dignity of publication as a handbook.

Today the wheel has turned again, and almost every month, particularly in Great Britain, important handbooks—general and specialised—are coming off the press, but students and advanced collectors are not getting the advice as to their merits to which they are entitled. Perhaps this is partly due to the fact that the followers of the hobby are notoriously loth to read on the subject, and it is felt by the reviewers that adverse criticism would further increase sales resistance, with unfortunate effects on the volume of overseas credits that might otherwise be built up. This conspiracy of silence as to faults will, we feel, in the long run have an effect opposite to that desired, as the collector will come to place no trust whatsoever in the recommendations of philatelic reviewers, and so may pass over something of vital importance to his own studies.

At the same time, we are not suggesting that undue stress should be laid on minor errors in a work which is otherwise an important contribution to philatelic literature, though they should be mentioned briefly for the guidance of readers. It is, however, against those works in which conjecture and exploded fallacies are mixed with established fact in an inextricable jumble that the unwary reader needs protection, if his studies are not to end in confusion and disgust, and it is the duty of the philatelic press to provide it. Only thus can the hobby continue on a sound basis.

There is one aspect of the matter, however, with which the philatelic reviewer need not concern himself, and that is the literary style of the writer whose work is before him. We recently read a review of an outstanding publication on the technical aspects of philately in which, although there were a few errors in the work in question, the only adverse criticism was that the author's style was difficult to read. We do not agree that this criticism was altogether justified, but even if it had been, we defy anyone to be bright and chatty *all* the time when discussing a technical subject. Those readers who had the benefit of a classical education will no doubt recall that the Roman poet Lucretius was not altogether successful in his efforts to turn the science of natural philosophy into verse. When he gave free rein to his imagination he wrote some of the most beautiful poetry known to man, but in the more technical parts it is, frankly, doggerel. (And he ended his life in the Roman equivalent of a mental hospital!) In other words, you cannot expect a technical work to be as easy to read as a detective story.

The manner of presentation is, therefore, of minor importance in most cases, but the reader *does* want to know about the scope and reliability of the publication in question, and this information a review should supply. It will be our objective to provide reviews of this nature of works which are submitted to us for notice in this journal, and as we cannot lay claim to the wide general knowledge of the giants of the past, our policy will be to obtain authoritative criticisms from well-known specialists in the subjects treated. We hope in this manner to give fair treatment to both author and reader.

H.M.C.

The Trail



of Commonwealth

Conducted by C. E. NORDEN

Postage Dues

In reference to the forthcoming Exhibition Exhibitors have been advised that a general collection of a country should include Postage Dues, as these are listed in Stanley Gibbons' Catalogue, which, after all, is the average collector's guide. Commonwealth Specialists should take special note of this, as only too often the completeness of a collection is spoiled by the absence of the Postage Due issues. It is good to know that these issues, neglected as they are to-day, will come, at least to some extent, into their own.

2d. Red Geo. V Single Crown Watermark

I strongly recommend students looking for suitable research fields to take up the study of the above issue, which has received very little attention in the Handbook. Apart from many retouches, there are a number of plate flaws, some of which grew more and more prominent during the time a particular electro was in use. The main catalogued varieties are: "retouched face", "recut right 2" and "retouched King's nose". In the Handbook, the "retouched face" is stated to be of "considerable rarity owing to the short life of the particular electros." This is not correct, as the electros in question were in use for many months. Furthermore, the letter rate at that time was 2d. and large quantities would have therefore to be produced at each printing.

Some years ago I "went through" a batch of about 100,000 2d. red Single Crown wmk. and accumulated over 80 copies of each of the above varieties. From this and later experiences, I have found that if you can obtain a quantity which has not been "gone through" you will get a similar number of respective varieties, which works out, on an average, at approximately one of each per 1,000 copies.

They are, therefore, rather common and, in my opinion, priced far too highly in the catalogue. Incidentally, the three mentioned varieties should be equally rated as far as price is concerned.

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High Value 'Roos.

Mr. Jack Cato has again come to light with a helping hand — this time a little article about an interesting discovery of his.

Being one of our leading photographers, he invariably supplies his own illustrations, and being an author of note, he has the happy knack of giving to his articles the same quality of human interest as you will find in his books.

Naturally, I cannot here "plug" his fascinating autobiography, *I Can Take It*, nor advise you, oversea readers in particular, to acquire his publication, *Melbourne, Pictured by Jack Cato*, but I can ask you to take note of the little philatelic story to which I have taken the liberty of supplying a title. Readers, Mr. Jack Cato presents:

"THE TALE OF A TAIL"

"Some years ago, when I was trying to plate the high value 'Roos', I found that a well-known variety I had always called 'The Pointed Tail' also had a break in the foot of the 'Roo'.

"Over the years I have been able to collect a page of these stamps of every different high value, showing these two flaws.

"The high value 'Roos' were printed on two different machines. One machine printed only the 'Roos'. Then the sheets were transferred to another machine that printed the rest of the stamps. This one plate that printed only the 'Roos' was used for 25 years, for all the centres of the 5s., 10s., £1 and £2 bi-coloured stamps issued by the Commonwealth. It was too much for any 'Roo'. In real life its full span is generally accepted as twenty years. As our 'Roo' plate grew older it began to decay from the tail upwards. We had so many varieties of its decline ('short tails,' 'broken tails,' 'thin tails,' 'worn tails,' etc.) that no enterprising dealer ever sold a high value 'Roo' as a normal — signs of its dissolution were certain to be found somewhere.

"So, at sometime late in the small mult. watermark issue, John Ash decided to have these faulty tails retouched, and a large number of them was done. As anyone who has studied these stamps knows, many of the tails in the 'C. of A.' watermark print black and strong, without any definition in the shading, and they are usually cut square at the tip.

"What does this page of illustrations show? Stamps of every different high value, each containing a 'Roo' printed from the same single impression of the plate. Stamps of every different watermark — 1st, 2nd, 3rd, small Mult. and 'C. of A.', all showing the pointed tail and the break in the leg, *excepting only the 'C. of A.'* This one shows the pointed tail retouched, and this we are able to identify because the break is still showing in the 'Roo's' leg. The £1 1st Wmk. block was — as the cancellation shows — used as an office receipt for the payment of a telephone account. It was the custom then to puncture such stamps with a large hole and file them. The 5s. 2nd Wmk. is cancelled at a W.A. Money Order Office. The 10s. 3rd Wmk., punctured O.S., is from a P.O. Specimen set. The two £2 stamps are from P.O. sets. Note that the words 'specimen' are printed from different varieties of type. I think

THE TRAIL OF THE COMMONWEALTH

these also show that stamps that are of little intrinsic value because of their condition can still be of considerable philatelic interest.

"I don't know how this break in the 'Roo's' leg occurred. Perhaps it was caused by a chisel dropped on the plate. Perhaps the 'Roo' bit himself! I merely offer the first suggestion because I've heard it so often. The other you may ignore, though I believe it equally possible. For over twenty years I've listened to philatelic lectures given by experts — strangely enough, most of them were men with science degrees, but they seem to toss the scientific attitude aside when dealing with their stamps. After all, that's what a hobby is for! Whenever I've asked what caused a flaw in a plate or an electro, I've heard the one about the chisel. My mind, like that of most children, sees things in terms of pictures. Years ago I formed the picture in my head of a butter-fingered fiend whom I named 'Dropsical Dan', who waited until every new printing plate was finished, then gave a maniacal laugh and got to work with his chisel!

"I don't really believe in 'Dropsical Dan.' I'd sooner believe in the Loch Ness Monster."

Correspondence.

Mr. W. S. Tinsley, Dymchurch, Kent, U.K., writes that he is very interested in a recent note on 4d. Geo. V first plates (*P. from A.*, Vol. 1, No. 3) and requests more details. According to him, "nobody (amateur or professional) has any sheets, panes or even blocks of this value." Mr. Tinsley also complains that the list of varieties of this issue, given in the Handbook "is not only quite incomplete, but inaccurate." *This is true, and proves again how badly a comprehensive and accurate handbook is needed.*

Mr. David R. Taylor, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, U.K., has written a flattering letter, but better still has offered some constructive ideas re the proposed new catalogue and handbook. He states: "I heartily endorse the necessity for all of them," i.e., catalogue, handbook and study circle. Certain recent developments may, it is thought likely, lead to a speeding-up of this project.

REVIEW

Jamaican Obliteration Numbers. By L. C. C. Nicholson. Published by W. & S. Stamps Ltd., 309 Old Kent Road, London, S.E.1. 9½ x 7½ in. 16 pp. Price, 7s. 6d., sterling.

This little publication really needs no review from us, as the name of Nicholson is already a by-word for authoritative and methodical work, so that the specialist in the fields which Mr. Nicholson touches automatically buys any new work from his pen. This latest one fully maintains his standard.

To-day the study of cancellations, and particularly numeral obliterations, is more popular than ever before, and as those of Jamaica are by no means easy to identify, this pamphlet will be all the more welcome to students of West Indian stamps. Mr. Nicholson supplies the fullest information available in a form which is very compact, but at the same time easily followed.

Well produced on good quality paper, *Jamaican Obliteration Numbers* will prove a worthy addition to the specialist's library.

COMMONWEALTH: 1d. GEO. V. BOOKLETS

By Major H. DORMER LEGGE

||| [*We need make no apology for publishing in our journal an article by Major Dormer Legge; we are pleased to have the opportunity. As President of the Commonwealth Specialists' Society of Great Britain, and author of "The Kangaroo Issues of Australia," he is already well-known to most of our readers, who will therefore be interested in this article on a little-known aspect of a very popular stamp.*]

A recently discovered booklet of £1 of the 1d. Geo. V has added zest to the ever-growing interest in this Commonwealth issue.

I suppose few stamps have aroused such widespread interest and research, and for the number of varieties, this stamp must compare favourably (? Ed.) with any other famous single stamp, e.g., the 1d. Black of Great Britain.

Certainly no stamp can compete in the number of shades — and not fanciful names, either — and it has required a close search of the dictionary to procure the necessary number of colours to describe its many definite shades. It is, without doubt, the prime favourite of all Commonwealth issues, and the constant advertisement of its varieties points to this fact.

The late Mr. D. M. Neil, in his Handbook on this 1d. stamp, made only a brief reference to its appearance in booklet form, and stated that it was made up by cutting small blocks from the normally printed and perforated sheets from the London plates, and that no detailed record appeared to have been kept as to whether blocks were taken from all four London plates, or only from one or more of them.

Rosenblum's Handbook is even less informative, and in consequence the illustrations accompanying this article should prove of interest.

The Stamp and Note Printer of the Victorian State Government had issued in early Commonwealth days booklets of 2s. and £1, the one containing 12 of the ½d. Queen Victoria's Head (the little stamp in green), and 18 of the 1d. (SG. 468 or 510, 524, 554, etc.) and the other 240 of the 1d.

The latter was arranged by folding two sheets in half, and then folding again into four, with thin interleaving tissue paper between the gummed sides, the whole clipped together into the cover by a metal stitch on the normal left-hand side of the booklet, so that on opening the booklet the right-hand stamps had still unsevered perforations until slit by ruler, paper-knife or other means.

Almost the same procedure was adopted for the 1d. George V in the 2s. booklets, but how many were issued has not to my knowledge ever been announced by the P.M.G., nor appeared in any periodical.

In the case of the 2s. booklets, these followed in shape and appearance the

COMMONWEALTH: 1D. GEO. V. BOOKLETS

Kangaroo pattern, i.e., the sheets were divided into panes and then folded vertically into halves and torn into five horizontal strips of two rows, and only in this particular differed from the previous method of folding. It is believed, however, that other means of dealing with this division of sheets were employed, and that several booklets can be found showing these differences. As long as there was some marginal paper left on the left-hand side of the booklets, it did not matter how the stamps were inserted in the booklet, provided tissue paper was always between the gummed sides. The upper and lower margins were always removed, except in the case of the £1 booklets, where quite a proportion remained, and in the case of the 1d. Victoria the *whole* margin remained on *all* sides, complete with Control monogram.

Returning to the illustrations, one is struck by the fact that the purchaser of the particular booklet recorded the date of purchase (Oct., 1914) and this can be seen in the top left-hand margin of the cover, also that the stamps had the watermark inverted. Perhaps its greatest interest, however, is that it was from a *left-hand* plate, and the solitary page now left in the booklet contains Nos. 31-60, which, of course, contains No. 40, "Thin retouched 'G' of Postage", and 34 and 35 *before* rusting.

It is therefore evident that *all* four London plates were used for these booklets, and that they were in issue as early as October, 1914.

The P.M.G. also thoughtfully provided ruled columns on the inside cover for a record of postages, as well as illustrating the chief Post Office. This booklet shows a photograph of the G.P.O., Sydney, but it is thought that he provided the other States with views of the G.P.O. in *their* capitals.

The small 1d. George V booklets were not so ornate, and my two examples have only two pages left, and these are already slit for use, so that the method of folding can only be presumed to follow the Kangaroo pattern.

The P.M.G. in this case provided no illustrations on the covers, but included a list of postal charges which make quite interesting reading now. The covers were thin card and were tinted light buff, grey-green, pink, and, in one issue, a highly glazed marone surface was used.

I am indebted to Mr. A. H. Davis, of Birmingham, a dealer who lived in Australia many years ago, but now resident in England, for much of the information regarding these booklets, but he says he now has to rely upon his memory, as unfortunately he acquired the bad habit of stripping the booklets for blocks of six, particularly if they contained any of the flaws or retouches, and again, because of the popular demand for blocks of four, of reducing the sixes to fours. He states that, to the best of his belief, only left-hand portions of sheets were used for the 1d. Geo. V, so that the left-hand margins were always available for stitching into the booklets.

This at once raises the question of what the P.M.G. did with the other half of the sheets. These could hardly have been wasted, and, judging by the make-up of the Victorian, South Australian and Queensland booklets by the State Printers

PHILATELY FROM AUSTRALIA

concerned, it would seem that the same practices would be followed, especially seeing that one of them — J. B. Cooke — was now the Commonwealth Printer. (NOTE: J. B. Cooke printed all South Australian *and* Victorian stamps in Melbourne from late 1909 on.)

It is significant, however, that the 1d. seems sometimes to have been torn across the whole sheet and folded over right to left, so that the right-hand edging comes over the left into the binding, with the outer right-hand edging intact until slit apart for use by the purchaser.

Mr. Davis also states that he cannot remember any being inverted as to position in the booklets, as was adopted for the 1½d., which (totalling 18 stamps in three pages) were folded 3 x 2 downwards, so that the top and bottom pages would be normal, whilst the middle was inverted, all the top and bottom perforations being again unbroken until torn apart by the purchaser. When it became necessary to use the right-hand portions of panes, these were just turned round, so that the right-hand margins were now on the left, but the top and bottom pages would now be inverted as to position whilst the middle page would be the right way up.

Further, there is reason to believe that this was also varied, for booklets can be found where obviously a pair of sheets was folded and an odd block of six put in to make up the 18.

It seems, therefore, that there was no fixed rule for dealing with the booklet arrangements, and that different individuals making up the book used their own methods, merely seeing that the booklets contained the correct number of stamps.

The £1 Booklet did not die out with the 1d. when it was no longer the postal rate for inland letters.

John Ash printed a book to hold 160 of the 1½d., and it is presumed that he must have used the remainder of the sheets for the 2s. booklets.

The £1 booklet measured approx. 6¼ in. x 4¾ in., but I have not seen one of these nor have any knowledge as to how they were arranged internally.

There is no way of folding a sheet to fit in with these measurements, and one is forced to conclude that a sheet was folded into a convenient size, and with a portion of another sheet, to make up the 160 stamps. It is certain that they were not clipped or stitched into the cover, *for there are no stitch holes whatever*. The stamps were then just inserted, users were handed the "outers", and paid the £1.

Since writing the foregoing notes on the £1 Booklets, I have been fortunate in seeing two more examples, but these were of the immediate predecessors of the Georgian booklets. These proved at once the use of the other State capitals' G.P.O.'s as illustrations on the back cover, and in this case the Melbourne and Adelaide G.P.O.'s were the subjects.

These books also proved that *any* method was used by the makers-up of the booklets, and that apparently the only consideration was that each book had £1's

CONVERSATION PIECES

worth of stamps, and that as long as this condition was present, the sheets could be put together to suit the maker-up.

The Adelaide cover had four top half sheets folded in half again so that each top half sheet was folded gum side to gum side, and then stitched.

In the case of the Melbourne cover, the sheets were all the bottom halves of sheets, complete with the imprints "JBC" and "AC", but unfortunately the folded right-hand edges were severed, so that it is impossible to say if the sheets were folded only in issue, or had been broken during the make-up.

It is interesting to note that these booklets contained quite a number of sheets printed on the Victorian Duty paper (SG. 586), for I was able to see several independent sheets or half sheets — away from their covers, that is to say — and no longer stitched, but all having the tell-tale stitch marks in the edging.

CONVERSATION PIECES

By HAROLD THIRKELL

No. 3—Of Philatelic Morals

"In the jungle," said Mr. Gauge, putting aside the small blue approval book he had been studying, "every creature instinctively mistrusts the motives of every other creature."

"You are not by any chance comparing your fellow collectors to animals?" queried Mr. Hinge.

"Not this time," said Mr. Gauge. "As a body, their confidence in their fellow man is a bright spot in a world gloomy with suspicion. In diplomacy, in politics, in commerce, in the relationship between employer and labour, mistrust is the rule to-day. Any gesture of goodwill is immediately scrutinised for the ulterior motive, for the hidden predatory purpose. Failing a revival of trust and toleration, civilization is headed back to the jungle."

"But," objected Mr. Hinge, "stamp collectors are not a race apart, but a cross-section of humanity. They include your diplomats, politicians, business men, and so on."

"Then possibly," said Mr. Gauge, "they may eventually prove to be the little necessary leaven through the whole mixing, simply because they *are* international and classless. My thought was really that certain of their practices are refreshingly guileless. It can be demonstrated, for instance, that the stamp trade is based on trust in human nature. Here is an English dealer with whom I have never done business, and who got my name and address heaven knows how. He sends me some two hundred pounds' worth of his stock on approval, and commits it without a qualm to be carried twelve thousand miles by airmail, across continents and oceans, with no greater precaution than mere registration.

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"Then again," he continued, "consider the average club exchange book, worth a substantial sum. It wanders about the country for a couple of years, passing through the post possibly a hundred times, often with no more protection than a flimsy wrapping and a thin piece of string. I have no doubt that some members leave it lying about within reach of their deplorable children. Others smoke over it, prod the stamps with tweezers, or even maul them with bare fingers. In fact, it runs the gauntlet of all manner of risks — yet members entrust their stamps to it without hesitation, and their confidence is justified. Losses are comparatively negligible."

"By and large," said Mr. Hinge, "I agree that we collectors are fine types, but some of us can be remarkably mean, too."

"Take the floor," invited Mr. Gauge indulgently.

"When I was very young," said Mr. Hinge, "I owned a Sydney View, until a smooth-tongued blackguard came along, and persuaded me to swap it for a set of brand-new Seebecks, and it still sticks in my gullet that I was proud of the deal for quite a long time. Exploiting the innocence of the young is a dirty trick."

"He probably considered it a duty to rescue the View from the indignity of remaining stuck in your exercise book," said Mr. Gauge.

"It wasn't an exercise book," protested Mr. Hinge. "It was a 'Strand' album, and all the stamps were hinged."

"Another low form of philatelic life," he went on, "is the worm who substitutes his rubbish for good stamps in exchange books. The more subtle of them specialise in replacing a fine copy of a stamp by a damaged one of the same stamp. And I despise the collector who hoards stamps he does not really value rather than part with them to the collector who needs them badly."

"Seeing we are on the subject of ethics," said Mr. Gauge, "when is one entitled to profit by the ignorance of others, the young and defenceless excepted, of course?"

"A matter of conscience," said Mr. Hinge. "A man who has taken the trouble to know his stamps is entitled to profit by his knowledge. A dealer, or a collector for that matter, who offers stamps publicly for sale, has stepped into the arena, and must expect to be worsted if he meets a better man. I'll snap a bargain from a dealer with a clear conscience. And I'll do my fellow collector in the eye, too, unless I feel that he merits special consideration. Friends, youngsters, and poor widow women come into the exempt class."

"And I suspect," said Mr. Gauge smoothly, "that you are apt to deal generously with beautiful blondes."

"Aren't we all?" chuckled Mr. Hinge, reminiscently.

"Come on," said Mr. Gauge, "let's go along to the meeting, and foregather with our fellow criminals."

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The Other Side of the Picture



Conducted by J. R. W. PURVES, F.R.P.S.L.

VICTORIA

(i) *Thoughts on the present Gibbons' List, with some indelicate reflections on the collecting of "popular" countries.*

I know that my good friend, Mr. Stanley Phillips, the presiding genius at "391", will accept these remarks in the kindly way he always receives anything that may be said to be of a constructive nature, however critical. The whole trouble is that during his regime the Bible of British Empire Collectors has achieved such an incredible standard that, to a "perfectionist" like myself, a bad list shrieks aloud for remedy.

Victoria, alas, is one of the very few, possibly the only really bad list, that remains, at least among the British countries. The fault certainly does not lie with our good friends at "391", but as a crusader who desires to see all catalogue listings serve the dual purpose of indicating the fields of interest in a country and of presenting an accurate listing I propose to continue barking (in the manner of my own faithful dachshund) until something is done about it. As a student of the stamps of this State for nearly thirty years, I can claim to speak with authority when I say that it is one of the most "difficult" Specialist Countries in the world. It produced 99% of its own stamps, but bought all of its paper and much of its ink from England. English mails, also, particularly in the early days, were rarely punctual and took a long time on the voyage. These simple facts (I will not elaborate on them further here) are sufficient to explain the "difficult" nature of the country. This "difficulty," further, is the main key to its present comparative unpopularity, which must be cheerfully admitted.

I have always held the opinion that it is healthier, for both collectors and dealers, to have interest well spread over many countries rather than to have it concentrated on the so-called "popular" countries of the moment. They are popular largely because they receive the most effective propaganda, and it is therefore up to the collectors of less popular and more difficult countries, who have the interests of the real enthusiast at heart to provide a little propaganda for *their* pets (I exclude my dachshund) without too much delay. *Two* main lines of attack occur to me. In the first place

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the real enthusiast is seldom a person blessed with a great share of this world's goods. He does, however, want a problem to tackle, and material to hunt for. He is not satisfied to exchange over a dealer's counter lovely shiny new notes of high denomination for the similarly lovely shiny new products of the latest recruit to the ranks of our dealers — I refer to the Colonial Office. Our real enthusiast then wants as much interesting or problematic material as he can get for his money. I suggest to him that he can do a lot worse than "go" for an "unpopular" country. If he does, his collecting friends will probably say — with a superior air — "but, of course, deah boy, there are no investment prospects."

Without embarking here on a debunking of this popular misconception, I can safely say this — that comparing, in the respective cases of "popular" and "unpopular" countries, the ratio between a reasonable purchase price and a reasonable selling value, it is *quite* certain that, particularly if the collection be "better than average," the unpopular country will *not* suffer from the comparison. It also follows that the seeker of the unpopular is more likely to obtain what our American friends call "the tough numbers" than his friend planted in the middle of the mass of worshippers at the Shrine of the Colonial Office and similar factories. There is, of course, the further fact — if he gets into the fray early — that some dealers of his acquaintance who hitherto took little notice of him, will now, if not exactly prepared to embrace him on both cheeks (this, in any event, would be embarrassing) be prepared to take him into their inner sanctum and expound the virtues of purchasing stocks which had lain in their coffers — unhonoured, unsung, unsold — over many years of exchanging those bright and shiny but far from sterling factory products for crisp sterling notes. This is no place, either, to talk about devaluation, but many of us — looking on at the crazy scramble from afar — are now inclined to place a higher rate of depreciation than ever on the lustrous (some even say "lousy") products of recent years. This brings me to the *second* line of attack.

Most people, looking round for a new country to collect, take a "squint" at the Catalogue listings first. In the case of Victoria, one "squint," at the present time, is about all they will take. The fright received, or in most modern terms — the shock element — will be such that they will plump for Central Lithuania or Lundy Island without further delay. To start with a long and complicated list of the classic Half-Lengths (based on a classification now shown to be incorrect) is made even more repellent by the adoption of the HORRID system of *differential pricing*. I have at times been chided, with some justice, for using capitals for emphasis, but here horrid *is* HORRID to me. Whatever its merits, this pricing system has two crowning de-merits. It means that nobody, dealer or collector, eventually has *any* idea of the value — buying or selling — of a particular item. The condition "range" is so terrific. Presumably the top price is for the miraculous (perhaps never seen) perfection copy for which only a very few could pay. The lowest price *can't* be that of a "hopeless" copy, because those are popularly supposed to be valueless! But what *does* it represent? What do the uncharted fields between low and high represent? In a country where condition varies so much as in Victoria, "average fine condition" should be the standard, and the sole standard. As long as the present system obtains, it will be our factory products (whose generally superb condition presents

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no comparable problem) which will appeal. Apart from a few researchers like myself, who wants to wander into a jungle of some 200 items — all priced differentially? Gunga Din might have "had a go," but Gunga Dins are few and far between.

Coming now to the List itself — research over many years has placed a totally new perspective on at least four groups of issues — viz.: (1) the "Half-Lengths" and "Queen on Thrones"; (2) the "Emblems"; (3) the "Beaded Ovals" and "Laureates"; (4) the Watermarks on the Issues of 1867-1905.

Many of these stamps were printed by more than one printer. This angle has only been referred to in the "Half-Lengths," but there are *numerous* other interesting cases, with marked points of differentiation.

In the next place the list (like that of New South Wales and other Australian States) is made to look even more complicated than necessary by the separate listings of varieties of perforation, many of which are contemporaneous with one another and do not belong exclusively to one period. I collect perforation differences, like any other specialist, but believe these should generally be grouped (save where they differentiate *printings*) in different vertical columns but in the *same* horizontal line, as has been done in the lists of Holland, Danzig (watermarks), etc. The specialist can then go after them all, but the more general collector, since he only wants the one Catalogue Number, will only require the *one* variety. Likewise with *shades*—I think these should be listed separately, but as a, b, c, d, etc., after the first shade, as in the Hong Kong list. Here again the Specialist can collect all, the general collector, if he so desire, can reject all but one. With the list as it stands, the more general type of collector is nauseated by complexity.

In the next place, there are many of the big countries, like Victoria, New Zealand, etc., which can, from either or both historical and philatelic points of view, be conveniently "*sectionalised*." I suggest that such sections can be fittingly denoted in a Catalogue. This also may gather recruits. Collectors who might not tackle the Country as a whole may be attracted to collect one or more sections of it. In the case of Victoria — there are *four* of such sections or periods, viz: (i) the period of Private Contract, to 1860; (ii) the first ("Postage") period of Government Stamp Printing, to 30/12/83; (iii) the second such period — the "POSTAGE AND REVENUE" period, beginning 1/1/84; and (iv) the "Commonwealth" period, beginning 1/1/1901. In addition to these four sections, there are two other sections, i.e., the so-called "Postal Fiscals" (most of which really belong to the (iii) Classification), and the Postage Dues.

There are also a number of *specific changes* which should be made in the arrangement of the list, as follows:

- (a) At the present time the "Half-Lengths" are listed value by value. As I will show in my Book, the Ham Printings can be dealt with, except for the last three of the 2d., as *Issues*, taking the three values at a time. This treatment will, I believe, make them less forbidding and more capable of comprehension.
- (b) The 2d. "Queen-on-Throne" printings should be included, to accord with their correct chronology, amongst the "Half-Lengths." The 2d. Engraved should follow the last Ham 2d. "Half-Length," and the various Lithos should

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be included with the respective Campbell and Campbell and Ferguson "Half-Lengths." At the moment, presumably because they are a "type" of their own, they are isolated in a separate group, an arrangement which scarcely conforms with historical facts.

- (c) The "notes" to the different issues require modifications and additions. If sufficiently graphic (they should also be concise) they will help in no small way to demonstrate the interest that lies behind bare listings. I feel, personally, that more of this type of note, used judiciously, would greatly add to the colour of our Standard Catalogue.
- (d) The "emergency" printings of the ½d., 1d. and 2d. on various coloured papers in 1878 require listing as a separate group.
- (e) There are, of course, numerous other individual items which require attention in view of recent work, e.g., the various types of "V over Crown" watermark, the three dies of the little ½d. green "POSTAGE," certain inaccuracies in the Postage Due listings, and a number of additions and corrections to the "Postal Fiscals" section.

I suppose, since I have largely concerned myself with Victoria over many years, that others will consider me biased on this particular subject. However, as the authority with which a Catalogue List speaks largely derives from specialist information and advice placed at the publisher's disposal, I can only say that I *am* prepared to help with all the information and advice at my disposal. The re-writing of such a list may well take two to three years before it comes to full fruition. It seems, nevertheless, better to take the "one bite at the cherry" than many, since the necessary alterations extend over the entire field (1850-1912).

It may be, of course, as some dealers tell me, that I am wasting my time. "Victoria," they say, "is as dead as mutton." Now I have never discovered, and I speak as an Australian, the precise condition which mutton must achieve before it is a fit subject for the undertaker, but I refuse to believe that the stamps of this State have been permanently embalmed, whether by way of mummification or something worse. Such crimes as have been committed against them have been on the part of collectors. The stamps, given the smallest chance, will speak for themselves.

(ii) Later Perforation Varieties.

Readers will recall that, in a previous issue, I queried (not myself having ever come across them) the existence of S.G. 514a, 520, 521, 563, 572 and 574. I am most interested to learn, from *Gibbons' Stamp Monthly* for January, 1950, that the existence of 520, 521, 563 and 574 is now vouched for by no less an authority than Sir John Wilson. Also, since I first wrote, I have myself acquired a block of four 3d. Crown A perf. 12½ (and have seen another block) from the right of the sheet, doubly perforated at right, the inner line of perforations being perf. 11. This *may* be 572, but it is in the *orange-buff*, not the *orange-brown* shade, so that if 572 is correctly described, then a new S.G. number 572a should be added.

These blocks came, I believe, from the Pack Collection, and their authenticity is

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undoubted. 514a is the only other number queried by me which hasn't popped up, but, of course, it may. I hope later this year to have the opportunity of examining the copies of 520, 521, 563 and 574 referred to. 563 (5d. perf. 11 all around) will be of peculiar interest to me. In the case of "compounds" the result of additionally perforating the side of a sheet, it can easily be appreciated that in certain cases only one sheet may have been so treated, which would mean a total of only 12 or 10 "compound" items, as the case might be. In such a case the fact that I had no proof of their existence is not to be wondered at.

NEW GUINEA

North-West Pacific Islands Overprints.

In an article by the writer appearing in the *Australian Stamp Journal* for October, 1945, November, 1945, and April, 1946, it was proved beyond question that the so-called rare "third setting" was in reality an early stage of the so-called "second setting." What we in Australia previously called the *second* setting therefore becomes the *third*, and what we called the *third* becomes the *second*. The Gibbons' note on these settings could, I think, be more satisfactory than it is, since it does not clearly set out the *five* settings recognised here. Incidentally, another point of interest in the article referred to was the demonstration that the "fourth setting" was an entirely new setting, being a *deliberate imitation* by Cooke (presumably with philatelists' pockets under consideration) of the third setting.

NEW ZEALAND

I am pleased to learn that the article on the "Second Side-faces" is already bearing fruit in New Zealand. Mr. McNaught, in a long letter, indicates that he is already able to fill in many of the chinks, crevices and holes necessarily left by me, and we look forward soon to publishing an article covering this new work by him.

TASMANIA

(i) T.P.O.'s.

Since Mr. Porter's article was written I have found three earlier dates as follows (the previous "record" being that in parentheses):

T.P.O. No. 1.	Type C	3/6/12	(22/1/13)
T.P.O. No. 2.	Type C	6/3/12	(22/10/12)
T.P.O. No. 5.	Type B	27/7/03	(?/8/03)

Since the "T.M.L. Ry. No. 2" cancellation is known with a date 20/2/12, it follows that we are now getting very close to the date of issue (probably simultaneous) of T.P.O.'s 1, 2 and 3 (Type C), which would now appear to have taken place late in February or very early in March, 1912.

(ii) *Early date of Error: 1d.V.D.L. Wmk. Double-lined "2" (S.G. 109).*

I have recently had in my possession a pen-cancelled copy of the above error, clearly dated 31/7/69 (Gibbons gives the date as November, 1869). I have some

THE "TOWN NAME AND DATE" CANCELLATIONS FOUND ON THE PICTORIAL STAMPS OF TASMANIA (1900-1912)

By J. R. W. PURVES, F.R.P.S.L.

In Collaboration with K. E. Lancaster (Launceston).

and with sincere acknowledgment to T. E. Petterd (Hobart), V. J. Colbeck (Hobart), L. C. Viney (Launceston), the "Records" section of the Central, Victorian and Tasmanian administrations of the P.M.G.'s Department and others, for most helpful assistance.

INTRODUCTORY MATTER

How It Started

The above subject may appear, at first sight, barren and uninteresting. I suppose the greater proportion of my own researches has been of a technical nature, associated with the processes of engraving, plate-making, printing, perforation, etc., but of late years I have given a certain amount of time to the study of cancellations, and can only say that even in fields like that now presented, where 99% of the cancellations are of a stock *official* design, the hunt for scarce items and the general picture cancellations present of the Postal Services of a particular country gives this line of study a charm peculiarly its own.

I have mentioned in this Journal that, having accumulated huge quantities of the "Pictorials" through the years and studied them for all the technical aspects, I bethought myself of building up a cancellation study as a sort of "annexe" to the main collection. Having gone through all my own material and made a list of the names found, it was obvious that this was to be no annexe but a building of its own. Then, knowing that Messrs. Lancaster and Viney of Launceston and Petterd of Hobart had already been long in this field, but had been hiding their light under the proverbial bushel, I got into touch with them and we exchanged "lists." It was not until this stage was reached that a start was made on the *archival* aspect.

Here Mr. Lancaster lighted upon some Records in Tasmania and sent us off to a splendid start. I was able to follow this up in the two P.M.G. "Records" Sections in Melbourne and then Mr. Lancaster, through the kind agency of Mr. Colbeck, was able to fill in the remaining holes in Tasmania.

The Attractions of the Subject

In the *first* place, it must be admitted that Tasmania is a relatively small place and philatelists who like cancellations reckon that there is less work involved and a much better chance of completion here than if they embarked on similar work in the stamps of a country of larger population. I must confess I had some such idea at the back of my own mind, but the results of the study to date have

TASMANIAN "TOWN NAME AND DATE" CANCELLATION

completely shattered it. The work is *not* complete, and it is not likely to be. Actually, to find, over a period of thirteen years, in a country whose population was 172,900 in 1900 and 195,007 in 1912, a total of over 450 different names, was staggering. More, as will be seen later, *may* turn up. Theoretically, there is nothing against them doing so. The whole, as I have said before, is a tribute to the service afforded in areas of small population by the Postal Authorities of the time.

In the *second* place, the Tasmanian postage stamps (which, of necessity, had to continue through the period to be based on the original De La Rue models (were definitely "*outrage*," whether one compares them either with their predecessors (the De La Rue "Queens" and "Tablet" types), or with the stamps of the other States printed in Melbourne during the Commonwealth regime from 1901. With only a few exceptions, the cancellations found on the pictorials were manufactured with stamps of a *smaller* size in mind. In those cases before 1900 the "State" cancellers had been prepared for use on the various smaller sized stamps preceding this issue. From the end of 1903, as will be seen, cancellers were manufactured by the Commonwealth, and the *same* models and sizes were followed as can be found *also* supplied to Victoria, Western Australia and, later, Papua. *These* sizes again were produced with the normal smaller-sized stamps of those States in mind.

In the result, it is nearly always possible, on these bigger-sized stamps, to find the *whole* of the cancellation on the one stamp. Not only this, but, as Mr. Porter (dealing with the T.P.O.'s) already has pointed out, the greater proportion are struck *clearly and legibly*, which suggests either that there was a specific official instruction in that regard or that Tasmanians were much more conscientious than their friends on the mainland. It follows from this that, in the case of the smallest centres, where the canceller was little used, the postmark (when one *does* find it) is very clearly struck. In these respects a collection of these cancellations has very great points of superiority, from the dual angles of attractiveness and legibility, over a similar collection, say, of New South Wales or Victorian cancellations of the same period.

The Preceding Method of Cancellation.

Up to some time in 1900, with certain exceptions in use at Hobart, Launceston and other large centres, only the old *numeral cancellers* are found. These are comparatively scarce on the Pictorials and well worth making a collection of. All of a sudden, in the twinkling of an eye, they were gone, and were entirely replaced by cancellations of the type with which we are dealing. I have *never* found a numeral canceller on other than a member of the De La Rue Pictorial series, which will illustrate the sharp separation of the two systems, since the first "Local" prints made their appearance on the 16th January, 1902. Most of the *new* cancellations now employed were in reality *old* products which, however, before their introduction as "*cancellers*," properly so-called, had been used as "backstamps" of despatch or receipt.

Changes of Name — Changes of Cancellation.

There were many changes of name during the period under review, as our lists will show. It is important, however, to realise at the start that, although the name

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of a Post Office was officially changed, it rarely, if ever, followed that the cancellation was altered at the same time. Rather was the rule to the contrary. The old canceller (with the old name) was used until it wore out (and, with steel cancellers, this took a long time), when it was replaced with a canceller bearing the correct name. A good example of this (there are many) is "Kelly's Basin." The name of this office was changed to "Pillinger" on 1st June, 1899, and, for that reason, the name "Kelly's Basin" does *not* appear (though "Pillinger" does) in the Post Office Lists of late 1899 to 1912. However, only the cancellation "Kelly's Basin" is found up to 1910, and "Pillinger" does not supersede it until 1912 (or 1911 at the earliest).

Types of Cancellation

These fall into *two* main classes, each with a number of *sub-types*, viz.:

I: Those with the date in *two* lines. These were all of *State* origin and all cancellers supplied prior to late November, 1903, were of this type. There are many sub-types, some of which will be illustrated. This class varied greatly in age (some being already many years old when introduced as cancellers), character, and size. They were doubtless the product of various contractors at various times. If the same contractor made a number round the same date, it followed that they were of the *same* type, whereas another contractor who followed was almost certain to produce something of a different size or pattern. Take the "Star" type (to be illustrated), for instance. I have been able to find this in about 24 cases. Another "thin letters" type is common to a lot of P.O.'s (e.g., Steppes, Riana, Linda, etc.), and so on. I don't think any purpose can be served by any great elaboration of this angle here, since the great majority of P.O.'s only employed the *one* canceller throughout the period. It was generally only in the big centres that replacement of a steel canceller through wear became necessary. There are, however, a few notable exceptions to this, e.g., Bichenon, Mills Reef, Surges Bay, etc.

II: Date in *one* line. *All new cancellers supplied from about November, 1903, to the end of 1912 were of this type.* They were all *Commonwealth* products and, as we have seen, conformed both in type and size with cancellers made during the same period for Victorian, West Australian and, later, Papuan P.O.'s. By far the greater proportion of the postmarks we will be listing belong to I, the proportions I: II being roughly 1, 4: II, 1. Under II likewise there are various "sub-types." For instance, round the end of 1910, a bigger type, with the name of the P.O. in much larger letters was introduced (see Wynyard(b), Penguin(b), Campbelltown(b) later). The earliest date met so far on a II cancellation is "Launceston 9/12/03", with a similar one for Hobart a few days later.

Differing Status of Post Offices

This subject, interwoven as it is with the amount of postal business done (and therefore the rarity of the cancellation), is of some interest to us.

In those days there were *four* classes of Post Office which, in descending order of importance, were:

TASMANIAN "TOWN NAME AND DATE" CANCELLATION

OFFICIAL SEMI-OFFICIAL ALLOWANCE RECEIVING HOUSE

These classifications were altered, I believe, in the '20's but "old-timer" friends in the "Records" Branches have assisted me in the framing of definitions as follows:

OFFICIAL: These, of course, were the top class. They were formed wherever the population and the volume of business warranted the setting up of a permanent establishment, staffed by permanent officers. The site and the building were, in most cases, owned by the Government, although on occasions the building was rented. These offices, of course, performed every service — postal, telegraphic, telephonic, Savings Bank, Money Orders, old-age pensions and, after the war of 1914-18, the payment of soldiers' pensions and military allotments. In 1901 there were 57 "official" P.O.'s. and in 1912 44. At the end of 1906 there were 51, the following being a complete list of these:

Alberton	Franklin	Macquarie Plains	Sandy Bay
Bellerive	Geeveston	Mathinna	Scottsdale
Bothwell	Gladstone	New Norfolk	Sheffield
Burnie	Glenorchy	New Town	Stanley
Campbell Town	Gormanston	Oatlands	Strahan
Cressy	Hamilton	Ouse	St. Helen's
Deloraine	Hobart	Penguin	St. Mary's
Derby	Huonville	Perth	Ulverstone
Devonport East	Kempton	Pontville	Waratah
Devonport West	Latrobe	Queenstown	Westbury
Evandale	Launceston	Richmond	Wynyard
Fingal	Longford	Ringarooma	Zeehan
Forth	Lovett	Ross	

SEMI-OFFICIAL: There was none of these in 1901, whereas there were twelve in 1912, so it would seem that the status was evolved somewhere between these dates. This classification is no longer in existence. It was, so to speak, a step below "official" grading. Such an office possessed a Post Master who engaged in no other business, but the conduct of the office was obtained by means of tenders to the Department from would-be contractors. The contractor who was successful usually employed persons to whom the Postal Department felt it was under some moral obligation, such as widows and dependants of Postal employees. It offered *all* the facilities obtainable at the "Official" P.O.'s.

ALLOWANCE: These formed the majority of P.O.'s. At 31/12/01, out of 372 P.O.'s (including "Receiving Houses"), 310 were "Allowance"; and at 31/12/10, out of 429 P.O.'s (including "Receiving Houses"), 335 were "Allowance". The term "non-official" is now given to such offices, having gradually supplanted the description "allowance". The 1924 regulations defined an "allowance office" as an

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office conducted by a person (these were usually storekeepers) *not* in the classified service. He was required to furnish accommodation, light, heat, etc., and the necessary clerical assistance. The office extended such postal, telegraphic, telephonic, money order and Savings Bank facilities as were necessary to meet the requirements of the locality and, after 1918 and later, also undertook the payment of pensions and military allotments. Such offices were created following a recommendation by an Inspector (a) that it was a public necessity and (b) — this in 1924 — that the mail work alone warranted the payment of not less than £12 to an acting Postmaster and (c) that there was no indication of a falling-off in business over the next 12 months. The persons in charge of these offices were paid on a scale proportionate to the volume of business handled. In the period under consideration, I am told that the only facility they could not offer was a direct telegraphic service in Morse code. They did, however, telephone such messages through to the nearest Official or Semi-official Office.

RECEIVING OFFICES: These constituted the *lowest* order and possessed only very limited functions. They were managed by private individuals (like the "allowance" offices) who received a *fixed* allowance from the Department which then varied between £1 and £10 per annum, a sufficient indication in itself of the small amount of business transacted. They were allowed to sell stamps (on which they received a commission) and could register letters. In most cases, no telephonic, telegraphic, Savings Bank or money order facilities were available, but, in special cases, they were allowed to sell postal notes, send parcels and give telephone and telegraphic service (the latter by telephoning the message). Their name describes their main functions. They received — and transmitted — mail.

They were established when the convenience of the public could not be met by the "Free Bag" Service and, as long as they handled an annual total of 600 letters or more, from six or more residences! This latter requirement perhaps best emphasises the small volume of business handled.

The Records show that on 31/12/01 there were five "Receiving Offices", at 31/12/10 there were thirty-eight, and these were, as the lists will show, considerably increased over 1911-12.

Archival Material Consulted

The main sources consulted for information were:

(i) The *Tasmanian Government Gazettes* for the period 1897-1902. These supplied certain opening and closing dates, and changes made in the names of various Post Offices, e.g., "Kelly's Basin" to "Pillinger" (see before), not available elsewhere. However, as a result of the hand-over of the Postal Service to the Commonwealth, this type of information was, from 1903 onwards, no longer included in the State Gazettes.

(ii) The *Tasmanian "Postal Guides"* for the years 1901-1909 and the succeeding *Commonwealth "Postal Guides"* 1910-12, also, before we turned up the *Tasmanian Guides*, the similar *Victorian Guides* (which included lists of P.O.'s in other

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States) for the period to 1909 inclusive. These Guides normally were issued quarterly but in some years only three numbers seem to have appeared. In Tasmania, priced at 6d., they were available for purchase by the public, but all efforts to locate copies (apart from those perused in the Archives) have failed. Normally, then, in any year, one finds Guides for January, for April, for July and for October, and the state of affairs reflected is that pertaining towards the end of the month preceding, viz., December of the previous year, March, June and September respectively. The contents of the Guides provide us with two especially useful sources of information, viz.:

(a) Each State "Guide" (not the Commonwealth Guide) provides us with the details of P.O.'s closed, of P.O.'s opened, of changes of name, of alterations in status (these details *only* in respect of the State issuing the Guide) since the publication of the previous Guide. It is not quite all-embracing in these particulars and from 1910 onwards this information had to be sought elsewhere.

(b) Each State Guide contains a complete list of P.O.'s, arranged alphabetically, together with their status and certain facilities if available, e.g., Telegraph, etc. When a P.O. was closed, it ceased to appear in the list which, however, is constantly altered by the addition of *new* names. These may be new Post Offices *or* they may be the new names of old P.O.'s. In this regard, it must be remembered that the name of the P.O. appearing in these lists did not necessarily correspond with the inscription of the cancellation in use at that Post Office. For instance, the name "Pillinger" is found in the lists from 1900 on, but at this Post Office, right up to 1911 or so, the old canceller inscribed "Kelly's Basin" was in use. Cross-references to name changes, e.g., "Lune River (late Ida Bay)" are sometimes found, but these are far from complete.

(iii) *The Tasmanian "Postal Directories"* of 1901-12. These Directories were, in the main, as is the case at the present day, lists of persons under their correct *postal* address. Where, for instance, persons were listed under, say "DARWIN" in an early Directory, it can be taken that there *was* a P.O. *named* "DARWIN". Where, in a later Directory, the *same* persons are listed under "CROTTY" and the name "DARWIN" has disappeared, the inferences are inescapable. The P.O. names are given here as headings, and *new* P.O.'s appear as *new* names in the year in which they are created. *Name changes* are almost invariably recorded, the old name being included, in at least the first Directory issued after the change, as "X (old name), see Y (new name)" and with no further reference. Perusal under "Y" shows the same persons listed as residents as had previously been listed under "X". Sometimes the "substituting" P.O. was located in the same locality, but was not on the site of the old one.

(iv) Certain Official Statements for the years 1907-1912 compiled for the use of the Postal Department itself, giving lists of P.O.'s, their status and the volume of business. They are unique in the latter respect, and when one studies the number of letters handled annually at certain places and then looks over one's own collection, the scarcity of many cancellations is promptly explained. These

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reports, as already indicated, were unearthed by Mr. Lancaster with the co-operation of a friend in the Postal Services, and gave us a splendid kick-off.

Despite the fairly intensive Records "cover", there are still a number of cancellations, e.g., "CLARENCE PLAINS", etc., which constitute mysteries to which the records perused afford no answer. This suggests, in a rather comforting way, that stamps themselves *can* sometimes be the original source from which a *new* historical detail emerges, in much the same way as old coins.

Scarcity — Rarity

To assist other collectors in their hunt and to let them know just how hard they have to look, I have indicated, in the last column of the lists that follow, the various cancellations that can be said to be "*rare*". Four of us estimate that between us we must have now been through some 500,000 copies of the 1d. and 2d. Pictorials. I have therefore used the following descriptions:

R — rare — indicates that 12 to 24 copies have been found.

RR — very rare — indicates that from 7 to 12 copies have been found.

RRR — a "Post Office" Mauritius in this field — indicates that up to 6 copies only have turned up, e.g., Beltana (3), Blythe Road (2), Bridgenorth (1), Bronte (1), Clarence Plains (1), Darwin (1), Ellerslie (1), Farrell Siding (1), Ida Bay (1), King River (1), Long Island (1), Macquarie Heads (1), North Franklin (1), Preston South (2), Ridgeway (2), Risdon (3), Strickland (4), Westwood (2), Wilmot Lower (1). Other copies of these are certain to turn up eventually, but they are mentioned here because, if some unbeliever reckons there's no fun chasing postmarks, we just can't agree with him.

To illustrate further the difficulty of building up a complete collection, the writer, hard though he has worked, still does not possess *eleven* of the cancellations known to date. If the list of over 450 "knowns" is perused, it will be seen that some 110 rate "R" or better, and this is another indication of what fun the hunting is in this line of country.

In general, the most desirable cancellations, both because of their rarity and their departure from the orthodox, are the "Crown Seal" Types (used at three P.O.'s) and the "Manuscript" cancellations. The first appear to have only been used at certain "Receiving" Offices and the second, especially in those cases where *only* mss. cancellations have been found, also emanated usually from Receiving offices, but *other* cases can be found, either the result of a worn canceller or a dry inking pad. We are perhaps too late in the field to find all the mss. usages, since I feel that when bulk material was assembled years ago, most if not all of the pen-marked copies were discarded as valueless, under the erroneous impression that they were used fiscally. To sum up, the only really *common* cancellations are those of the 50 or so official and semi-official P.O.'s, and of those the Hobart and Launceston markings constituted the greater proportion.

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Hobart and Launceston Cancellations

The cancellations of these two big centres (they comprised together about two-fifths of the island's population) provide a big study in themselves. It has not been neglected, but will be published in a separate "appendix" at a later stage. The variations found are too extensive to be included in the lists now given without entirely destroying the balance of the whole, and it is better to list them separately.

Method of Tabulation

(i) *Alphabetical* order has been selected because in this class of work there is no doubt whatever that it is best for purposes of reference.

(ii) *Known* cancellations are printed in *Capital* letters and cancellations which should, theoretically, exist, but have not been found to date, are printed in *Italics*. It will be seen that there are quite a few of these (totalling 60) and that most of them were "Receiving" offices. If some of these are located, it may be that most will be in mss. Mr. Petterd, whose long experience in these matters qualifies him to speak with some authority, is of the opinion that few, if any of them will turn up, since he believes that it was, particularly at a late period, *not* the practice to issue "Receiving" Offices with cancellers. He also adds that the great majority of the "Receiving Office" cancellations known are cases where the office originally had been an "Allowance" Office and later had been "demoted" to the lower order. This, in general, appears to be true, but it will be seen that normal type cancellations *are* known of some of the later "Receiving" Offices, e.g., Erriba and Nicholl's Rivulet, while in the middle period (1906-8) Farrell Siding and Verona, both Receiving Offices, are known. In the earlier period, there are also examples of normal cancellations (e.g., Kelso) for Offices which, as far as we know, were always "Receiving". Two "Receiving" Offices established in the 1908-10 period, viz., Oldina and Strickland, appear only with mss. cancellations. All of which doesn't help to bring a feeling of conviction, one way or the other, as to what the *possibilities* are in relation to the P.O.'s *italicised* in the list. Anyway, I shall be very glad to learn of any new discoveries and chronicle them. Some, at any rate, are certain to be made.

(iii) *Design* of cancellation. These are referred to simply as "1" (State types—date in *two* lines) or "2" (Commonwealth types — date in *one* line).

(iv) Note that the names in capitals in the first column are the *actual* inscriptions found on the cancellations. These are *not always* found in the P.O.'s lists, either because the Office had been renamed (e.g., "Kelly's Basin" to "Pillinger") or because it had closed. Also, the spelling sometimes differs from that used in the lists, e.g., "GEEVESTON" is the spelling in the lists, whereas the cancellation reads "GEEVES-TOWN". For the real specialist, the "comments" column aims to be of most assistance, in relation to the kind of cancellation, opening and closing dates, changes of names and changes of status.

(*To be continued*)

THE POST OFFICES AND POSTAL CANCELLATIONS OF FIJI

By H. M. CAMPBELL

In collaboration with E. A. Barnett and W. Finigan

PART I.

INTRODUCTORY

The subject of our article is a most interesting one, and has amply repaid the intensive study which has been given to it by a number of Australasian philatelists over recent years. In endeavouring to present the results of this research for the benefit of readers of this journal, I have been most fortunate in the calibre of my collaborators. Mr. E. A. Barnett, of Melbourne, is a retired officer of the Fiji Police, who, during his period of service in the Colony, made a detailed investigation into all available postal records, and has also given us the benefit of his personal knowledge of conditions at that period. He has, moreover, a very fine collection of the stamps of Fiji, and has given special attention to the cancellations, and we are particularly indebted to him for the excellent job he has made of the illustrations accompanying this article. Mr. W. Finigan, of Sydney, is probably our best-known specialist in Pacific Island postmarks, and some of his contributions on this aspect of Australasian philately have appeared in local philatelic journals. He has been most helpful with his notes and comments on items in his own collection and the results of his own research, not to mention his help in revising the draft of the article.

The work has, however, been a real community effort, and we acknowledge our debt to a number of friends for their invaluable assistance cheerfully and unstintingly given. Our thanks are due in particular to Mr. J. R. W. Purves, F.R.P.S.L., since without the help of his earlier work, published as an addendum to his book, *The Postage Stamps of Fiji, 1878-1902*, our task would have been immeasurably more difficult, and he has also given us the benefit of his advice in bringing the present project to fruition. Mr. Harry S. Porter, M.C., F.R.P.S.L., has been another staunch supporter, particularly in regard to the cancellations used on inter-island vessels. Our friends in Fiji, Rev. A. R. Tippett, Mr. J. B. Turner and Mr. A. P. Ward, have placed their extensive local knowledge at our disposal, and have not spared themselves in attempting to provide satisfactory answers to a formidable questionnaire which was sent to them. Mr. Turner has also very kindly sent us his own collection of Fiji postmarks and has been most diligent in gathering information from the Records Section of the Postmaster-General's Office at Suva. In this connection, we should like to express our very sincere appreciation of the courtesy extended to Mr. Turner by the Postmaster-General of Fiji, Mr. W. F. Hayward, in making this information available. The Postmaster of Suva has also been most helpful to Mr. Turner in every way. Then, many of our dealer friends have helped us by

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letting one or other of us go through their stocks in search of hitherto unrecorded items, and we are also in the debt of a number of Fijian postmasters, who, when sent covers for cancellation and return, not only did that, but sent with them accumulations of used stamps, amongst which have been quite a number of unexpected prizes. Finally, we have had the good fortune to have forwarded to us for examination the fine collection of Fiji postmarks formed by the late Mr. G. N. Morris, of Auckland, and our thanks are extended to his family for their courtesy in making the collection available to us.

The postal history of Fiji may be said to begin in 1857, when the Rev. William Pritchard was appointed British Consul at Levuka on 28th September. A post office was established at the Consulate for the receipt and despatch of mails on behalf of white settlers, but there were no arrangements for distribution through the islands, letters remaining at the Consulate until called for. At that time there were only about thirty whites in Levuka, and they were few and far between in the rest of the group. The chief of Bau was nominally the overlord of all the other chiefs, but lawlessness was rampant, so it is not surprising that postal arrangements were primitive. We do not know whether any postal markings were used at the consular post office, as we have not seen any Fiji covers from that period, but we consider it doubtful. As the consular offices and all documents in Levuka were destroyed by fire in 1862, we can get no help regarding the very early period from contemporary records.

By 1870 the islands were in a more settled condition, and the white population had increased, but there was still no organised system for the distribution of mails through the group. This led to the establishment of an independent postal service by the proprietors of the *Fiji Times*, centred on Levuka, and with agencies at Ba River, Rewa, Suva, Nadi, Nadroga, Ra Coast (Viti Levu); Bua (Vanua Levu); Wairiki, Vuna, Somo Somo (Taviuni); and Kadavu. The well-known *Fiji Times* Express stamps were used in connection with this service, but no obliterations were provided (apart from the solid eight-pointed star, which emanated from Bua—see later under that Post Office), the stamps normally being cancelled with one or two pen strokes. Occasionally they are found with New South Wales postmarks, but these, of course, were applied on arrival.

In 1871 King Cakobau (pronounced "Thakombau") was assisted by certain Englishmen to set up a constitutional government, and an official postal system was introduced for the first time, the Postal Act of that year providing for a General Post Office at Levuka, and the following country postal areas: Upper and Lower Rewa, Bau, Suva, Navua, Raki Raki, Ba, Tavua, Nadi (Viti Levu); Waikuku, Savu Savu, Natewa Bay, Macuata, Dreketi (Vanua Levu); Vuna Point and Wairiki (Taviuni). The British Consular Post Office continued to function under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce, Levuka. The new Fiji Government issued the "C.R." stamps, and on the unoverprinted issue we find the first cancellation used at Levuka, of which more anon. Other places were not provided with date-stamps, but manuscript cancellations are known for some, such as Suva. On 10th October, 1874, Fiji was ceded to Great Britain, and became a Crown Colony. The Colonial Government took over the administration of the Post Office, but

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Levuka was the only place to possess a date-stamp before 1882. In that year, however, the seat of government was transferred to Suva, and the General Post Office was established there. Official obliterations were therefore provided for Suva, but other places had to wait until the end of the century before receiving date-stamps.

In the detailed study which follows we shall for convenience keep to the same order as that adopted by Mr. Purves, dealing first with the postal cancellations of Levuka, followed by those of Suva, then an account of the country post offices and their cancellations, the cancellations of inter-island vessels, and so on.

PART II.

LEVUKA

This was the capital of old Fiji. It is the main town in the province of Lomaiviti, on the island of Ovalau, a relatively small island, but important because of its central position. It was the earliest white settlement in Fiji where Europeans became firmly entrenched, and was the official seat of government until 1882, when principally because of the lack of scope for enlargement the capital was moved to Suva (and with it the General Post Office). Levuka has always been one of the ports of entry, but in the present century has diminished in importance.

(a) *Circular Date-Stamps*

Type I. This, as Purves says, is rare, as it is only found on the unsurcharged "C.R." stamps, which were on issue for but 41 days. All examples known are indistinct and give the impression of wear, which has given rise to the theory that it may previously have been used at the British Consular Post Office, but no pre-adhesive covers are known whereby this theory might be checked. This cancellation, however, has a distinctly "home-made" appearance, being seemingly constructed locally of rubber, wood or other softish material, since it does not "bite" into the paper in the same way as do steel obliterations, and this may account for the "worn" look. The centre line, although presenting a printing surface, is invariably illegible. It may be intended to represent a date, but on the other hand it may not. The circle is 25 mm. in diameter. (See Fig. 1.)

Type II. This was introduced early in 1872, the earliest recorded date being 15/1/72, and was superseded by Type III in 1875. External diameter, 22 mm. (Fig. 2.)

Type III. Introduced 1875 (earliest date as a back-stamp on cover, 12/10/75), and superseded by the next type in 1882. For the first years of its use the year is given in full, but in all 1882 dates which we have seen it has the last two figures only, the '8' in the position of the *second* figure in the full date, and the '2' in the *fourth* position. External diameter, 22 mm. (Fig. 3.)

Type IV. Apparently introduced at about the time when Suva became the capital, the earliest recorded date being 18/9/82, and had a life of about ten years (last date seen 31/3/92). Usually the month comes before the day, e.g., "AP 7", but occasionally they are the other way about. In these early cancellers the date consisted of movable type, which had to be picked out and replaced when a change of date was required, so that mistakes are not infrequently met with. I have a pair of the 1d. "V.R." cancelled with this type in which the year is given as "†190" (13 JA). Diameter of circle 23 mm. (Fig. 4.)

Type V. This was introduced in 1892 (earliest date 12/4/92) and lasted well into the present century (probably until 1905, although we have not seen later than 7/11/04). It differs from the previous type in that it is 24 mm. in diameter, the date is in *three* lines and

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the year is abbreviated, and there are no short inner bars (Fig. 5). We have seen this (dated 3/1/94) with the year inverted.

In 1902, from about 5th September to 12th November, this type is found in greenish blue exclusively.

Type VI. Introduced circa 1905, and in use until 1916. This is similar in make-up to Type IV, but is 24½ mm. in diameter, the lettering is thicker and slightly taller, the inner bars are differently placed, and the month usually follows the day (Fig. 6).

Type VII. Introduced about 1910, and still in use in 1935, which is a commentary on the diminished postal business at Levuka. It corresponds to Country Type III (see later), and measures 28 mm. in diameter (Fig. 7).

This obliterator evidently came into the hands of an unauthorised person at some stage, as it is known with date "30 MAR 19" (last two figures of the year missing) applied to postage stamps, particularly the 1s. Queen, with fiscal cancellations, and also to the 1d. Queen fiscal. The dates of the manuscript cancellations are much earlier than the introduction of this type, and in any case the cancellation is also known applied over the rubber stamp of a Bank, so that the possibility of postal use can be ruled out. The fraudulent use of the obliterator is therefore obvious.

Type VII(a) is similar, but is only 27 mm. in diameter, has stops instead of dashes after "P" and "O", the letters shorter and the curved bars slightly longer. It was apparently in concurrent use with Type V.

Type VIII. This was introduced about 1935 and remained in use until about 1947. It corresponds to Country Type V, having the date in one line. It is 30 mm. in diameter (Fig. 8).

Type IX. Corresponds to Country Type VI, which otherwise was used only for Ba and Lautoka. The Levuka Type seems to have been used very little to cancel stamps, as we have seen only five or six examples (dates in 1945). It is about 31½ mm. in diameter (Fig. 9).

Type X. Introduced about 1947, and is in current use. It corresponds to Country Type VIII, which is apparently the type which is now being supplied to all main post offices as replacements are required. It differs from the previous Country Type (V) in that it is larger (33½ mm.), a figure representing the time follows the year in the central date-line, and there are curved inner bars (Fig. 10).

(b) "Killer"

This is the "Sunburst" illustrated as Figure 11, which differs from the Suva type in that the bars are shorter and it has a large elliptical core. It was introduced probably about 1874-75, and apparently went out of use about the end of 1901 or beginning of 1902. It is not found in the greenish-blue ink used for the circular date-stamp from September to November in the latter year. It was, however, resurrected temporarily about 1916, as we have seen several examples on the King George V ¼d. issued in that year. For fuller details, readers are referred to the excellent account given in Purves' book.

PART III.

SUVA

Suva is in the Province of Rewa, on the south side of Viti Levu. It was created a "port of entry" in 1880, was declared a town on 2nd July, 1881, and became the capital of the Colony in 1882, the actual transfer of the Government offices taking place during August and September of that year. There had been an earlier period of importance when sugar mills were operating here, but after these were closed

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down in 1875 and moved to Tavuni, the population of Suva fell considerably, and did not recover until 1882.

Suva was one of the early post offices, being one of the country postal areas created by the Postal Act of 1871. It had, however, no circular date-stamp until 1882, so we shall first deal separately with the earlier period.

(a) Pre-1882 Arrangements

(i) Having no date-stamp, the postmasters of those days had recourse to pen and ink, and manuscript cancellations of Suva are more easily found than those of any other place on the "C.R's" and monogram "V.R's". They are known on the unsurcharged "C.R's" (only on issue December, 1871 - January, 1872), and from then onwards up to about 1876.

The effect of the closing of the sugar mills is shown by the fact that we know of no Suva cancellations between 1877 and 1881 inclusive. Such letters as there were were apparently postmarked on arrival at the G.P.O. at Levuka.

There is, however,

(ii) another cancellation which there are reasonable grounds for believing was used at Suva during the latter part of the above-mentioned period, or early in 1882. It is very scarce, only one incomplete example being available to us (the lettering thereon being "...VA, FIJI"), but the complete impression is probably as depicted in Figure 12.

We believe this to be an early Suva type for the following reasons:

- (a) The first word can scarcely be anything else but "SUVA";
- (b) The stamp on which it appears is a 1d. "V.R." of an 1879-80 printing; i.e., before the introduction of the first Suva date-stamp;
- (c) The impression is in violet, which was the colour used exclusively for all Suva cancellations from June to September, 1882.

However, the question cannot be finally answered until further examples turn up.

(b) Circular Date-Stamps

Type I is shown in Figure 13, being similar to Levuka Type IV. It is 22 mm. in diameter, and the month precedes the day. The earliest known date is 27/3/82, and from June to September of that year it is found in violet exclusively (it comes in black from late September onwards). Purves states that this type remained in use until 1893, but as a matter of fact this *first* date-stamp had a comparatively short life, being replaced by *another*,

Type I(a), which is similar in type, but is larger (24 mm.), has taller lettering, and has rather shorter bars at the side. It is found with the month both before and after the day, and even (in 1888) with the year in the *top* line, and the day and month in the *second* line. Errors in the date to be found include the year shown as "8188" for "1888", and the month ("AU") inverted, in 1891. It is this second date-stamp which remained in use until late in 1893 (Mr. Turner has 13/12/93), when it was retired in a very worn state.

Type II is lettered "G.P.O. SUVA" at the top, with a small stop after "SUVA", has square dots at the sides and the date in three lines, and measures 24½ mm in diameter (Fig. 14). The earliest date known for this type is 9/3/93. From January to about April, 1894, it is found in what Purves calls a "dirty violet", containing varying amounts of black, which he says may be due either to the introduction of a new ink, or to deterioration of the normal black ink. In those days cancelling ink was supplied in block form, and was dissolved as required, so that in making up a new lot incorrect compounding might easily result in a different shade.

From about 15th September to 31st December, 1894, this cancellation is found exclusively in *red*.

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Purves states that this type continued in use until the present century, but here again we find a case of a *new* date-stamp of a very similar type—

Type II(a), which came into use some time *after* 1894, as it is not found in *red*. The points of difference from the previous variety are small, but sufficiently distinctive to separate the two without difficulty. The "G" and "P" are broader, the "G" also having a vertical stroke projecting downwards from the junction with the tongue, the square stops are replaced by short dashes, and there is no stop after "SUVA" (Fig. 15). This canceller continued in contemporaneous use with the next type until 1902, when it was withdrawn from regular use. It is, however, found used occasionally later (we have it on Edwards with various dates in 1905, 1906 and 1907), but it is *not* found on the "remainders".

Type III, with a small Maltese cross at foot and date in *three* lines, is another extremely interesting cancellation. Purves pointed out that it was at first used in conjunction with the "FIJI in bars" "killer", but Barnett has been able to prove that the two in fact formed a "duplex" cancellation. When found together, they invariably bear the same position in relation to each other, and are always the same distance apart (5 mm. at the nearest point). See Figure 16. This "duplex" was introduced early in 1895 (Purves says January and Mr. Turner has it 16/1/95), and remained in use until about the end of March, 1896 (latest date known 26/3/96), when the two parts were detached, and Type III continued in use by itself. It lasted far into the present century (circa 1912), and about 1907 is again found with the "killer" attached. It was one of the cancellers employed on the 1906 "remainders", dates found on them with this type being 15/12/00, 15/12/01 and 21/6/02.

From about June to December, 1910, this type is found in *blue*.

Type IV differs from Type III in that the date is in *two* lines, there is an asterisk at the foot, and the bars flanking it are longer and further from the circle. It is also slightly smaller (24 mm.) (Fig. 17). It was introduced in July, 1902 (earliest date 15/7/02), but is frequently met, with dates in 1900 and 1901, used on the 1906 "remainders". These dates are 28/12/00, 16/12/01, 15/12/02 and 21/12/02, and stamps found with the first two *must* be "remainders", as Type IV was not in use on those dates. It continued in use until about 1913, and is to be found, like Type III, in *blue* in 1910.

Type V is somewhat similar to Type II, as it includes the initials "G.P.O.", and the date is in three lines. It is, however, larger (27 mm.), the year is shown in full, and there are short bars on the flanks (Fig. 18). It was manufactured at the end of 1913 or beginning of 1914 by a Sydney die-caster (whose proof book for the years 1912-14 is now in Mr. Finigan's possession), and remained in use until about 1921.

Type VI differs from Type V in that it is 28 mm. in diameter, and the date is in *two* lines (Fig. 19). The month is found both before and after the day, and we have seen dates from 1919 to 1926.

Type VI(a) is similar, but is 29 mm., and the lettering is appreciably larger. The month is found after the day. It was in use from 1921 to 1927.

Type VII, lettered "GENERAL POST OFFICE — FIJI" with the date in one line in a circle of 28 mm. diameter (Fig. 20) marks a distinct departure from the usual run of Suva date-stamps in that the name is not included. It is found between 1923 and 1929, but is not particularly common, as its normal use was on newspaper packets and letters for local delivery. It is usually in black, but Mr. Turner has it in *red* dated 14/12/29.

Type VIII is again distinctive, with two concentric circles 26 mm. and 17 mm. and thick bars at the sides (Fig. 21). It is not particularly common, being confined to the years 1923 to 1929.

Type IX, introduced about 1928, was the first of a series, of which the latest example is still in use to-day, with the date in one line followed by the time (Fig. 22). This first variety measures 30 mm. in diameter, and the lettering is shorter (3½ mm.) than its successors. These were:—

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Type IX(a). Circle 30½ mm. Letters 4 mm. high.

Type IX(b). Circle 31½mm.

Type IX(c). Circle 31½ mm. Lettering larger (4½ mm.) and considerably thicker than the other sub-types, for which reason this variety is one of the least attractive of all Suva date-stamps.

Type IX(d). Circle 34½mm. Lettering thinner than in IX(c). Still in use contemporaneously with Type XI.

Type X was introduced in 1932, but apparently had a very short life, as it is by no means common. It is smaller than all the previous group (25 mm.), it has no bars at the side, and the date covers almost the full diameter of the circle (Fig. 23). It came into use again in 1937, but without the time indication, instead of which there are quad marks, and is also found on the First Trans-Pacific Air Mail (1941).

Type XI, introduced about April, 1945, is still in use. Like Type IX(d), it measures 34½ mm., but the lettering is shorter and more closely set. Its most distinctive features, however, are that the curved bars at the side are longer, and the time is represented by a number only (Fig. 24). It is similar to Levuka Type X and Country Type VIII.

(c) "Killers"

(i) "Sunburst". This, as Purves points out, differs from the Levuka "Sunburst" in that the lines are longer and there is a small circular core (Fig. 25). Introduced in 1882, it had a long life. Its employment on the ordinary issues (its main use was on packets of newspapers) appears to have been discontinued about the beginning of World War I, but it was later brought into use again to cancel Postage Due stamps, on which it is the cancellation most frequently found. It is found in violet (1882), red (1894) and blue (1910), for which colours see under "Circular Date-Stamps" above.

(ii) "FIJI" in bars". As mentioned earlier, this formed part of a "duplex" cancellation with Type III date-stamp, at first from the beginning of 1895 until March, 1896, and again about the middle of the Edwardian period.

(iii) A "sunburst" with twelve unbroken bars (Fig. 26). Purves suggested that this might have been a special "killer" used for registered letters, but Mr. Turner has ascertained that it had *no postal significance*. It was made specially for "cancelling-to-order" the remainders of the 1s. Queen (last two printings) and the 5s. Queen purchased by Sir Henry Marks.

(iv) A "Sunburst" with eighteen unbroken bars (Fig. 27). This has turned up on single copies of the 1d. "V.R." and of the 5s. Queen, but its origin and status are unknown.

(d) Machine and Slogan Cancellers

(i) The machine cancellation shown as Figure 28 came into use in 1906 and continued until about 1938. It is in black, except in 1910 (*blue*). In many examples the top bar does not show, apparently due to wear. We have also seen a copy with what appears to be an additional line along the bottom (making seven in all), but it is very blurred, and was probably caused fortuitously by an edge of the machine. The long existence of this canceller explains why many of the Suva date-stamps in use during that period are not particularly common.

(To be continued)

NEW HEBRIDES: MILITARY FRANCHISE ESSAYS

By P. COLLAS

||| [Phil. Collas needs no introduction from us. As Editor of a widely-read contemporary, and author of a number of philatelic works, he ranks amongst the best-known writers on our hobby. He is at present engaged in exhaustive research into the stamps and postal history of the New Hebrides, and this short article is but the first of several which we hope to publish from his pen.]

Essays for stamps proposed to be issued as *timbres de franchise pour les troupes stationées aux Nouvelles Hébrides* have an interesting historical background. The suggestion that such a stamp, or stamps, be issued had its origin in New Caledonian army circles. Military franchise stamps had made their appearance in this French possession in 1893 for the use of troops in New Caledonia and its dependencies, where, at the time, a strong military establishment was maintained. These franchise stamps, although issued free to troops, represented a concession of 10 centimes, and soldiers had then only to affix an ordinary 15 centimes stamp to make up the full amount of 25 centimes—the letter rate to France.

Responsible military officers in New Caledonia recognised that by the Declaration of 1888 both France and Britain, through the Joint Naval Commission, exercised a dual protectorate over the New Hebrides. There was also practical appreciation of the fact that because of the bloodthirsty nature of many tribes it was not possible to establish settlements on some New Hebridean islands without adequate military protection, and it was for this reason, and to avenge the slaying of French colonists, that troops from New Caledonia had been stationed in the New Hebrides a few years earlier.

The military franchise stamps which were suggested in 1893 pre-supposed more active steps towards subduing the wild native tribes. Again, if a joint military occupation could be brought into being, military and political expediency might then have subsequently brought about a division of the New Hebrides into two distinct spheres of administration and its possible disintegration as a political unit. However, much as the French favoured military enterprise in the New Hebrides, British policy was against a show of arms, so, perforce, the Anglo-French Protectorate continued as an ill-defined political concept, most unsatisfactory from the point of view of military circles in Noumea.

The practical factors which had prompted the submission of the essays included the consideration that separate stamps would be provided for troops in a protectorate territory and that such stamps should possess features which would render them acceptable to both French and British soldiers. These bi-national characteristics are, of course, evident in stamps subsequently issued by the Condominium government.

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The non-acceptance of the essays in principle by the New Caledonian postal authorities was a factor which would probably have prevented their adoption if stamps had been needed. The first Military Franchise stamps of New Caledonia met with civil post office disapproval because a denomination was expressed thereon and the military authorities were thereupon forced to withdraw the initial issue and provide another upon which there was no expression of value. Although the New Caledonian Post Office reluctantly recognised this second series there were apparently representations made at high level to the Government in Paris. At all events, the use of Military Franchise stamps in New Caledonia came to an abrupt end.

As the anticipated occupation of the New Hebrides did not eventuate, the



actual need for stamps of any kind for use there did not arise. The essays therefore fall into the "wishful thinking" class, not unknown in philately. These essays, prepared to support the Army proposal, were in four variations of one general design and were reproduced by lithography at Noumea, all labels being imperforate. The number of units in each sheet and the quantities printed are not known, but they were apparently in small quantity only, possibly just sufficient for distribution to the authorities likely to be concerned.

It is possible to illustrate only one of the essay designs. The others are similar in general appearance but, as remarked, differ slightly in detail.

The essay illustrated is in red, yellow and grey-green colours, and the two extremely poor portraits represent Queen Victoria and Francois Marie Sadi Carnot (1837-1894). The latter was elected President of France in 1887 and was assassinated in 1894.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,
Philately from Australia.

THE FIRST ISSUE OF NAURU

Dear Sir,

I read the Rev. T. P. Davis' very informative article in the June and September issues

on the above subject, with a great deal of interest, and as I include the stamps of this small Island in my Pacific Island group, his notes prompted a search among my stamps for some of the details he touched upon. For instance, he referred to the horizontal line and dot in the centre top margins of the lower values. I find I have a block of the

CORRESPONDENCE

½d. value with this marking in the lower margin and would like to know if this is usual. Again, he refers to printing of the overprint as having been by means of type. In this connection search amongst pairs and blocks shows errors in the alignment, both vertical and horizontal, which seems to suggest that the printing plate might have been made up of a number of electros taken from type-set groups joined together to form the plate for the printing of the overprint. These errors in alignment apply to all values and to the various printings. One of the most marked of these is in a pair of the Waterlow 10s., which shows the vertical distance between overprints to be 27½ mm.

and collectors all over the world, but the Administrator had given instructions that no sales of these stamps were to be made until a much larger supply then on order had been received. Upon this official obtaining leave in 1916 to return to Australia to join the A.I.F., he sought and obtained the Administrator's permission to purchase blocks of four of each of the values, which he cancelled with the Post Office canceller, dated 2nd September, 1916. Of these blocks the lower values and pairs of the higher values now repose in my collection.

Speaking of cancellations brings me to the concluding comment on this most interesting issue. I find there are two cancellations used



"A"
26½ mm.



"B"
28½ mm.

instead of the normal 24 mm., and an error of 1½ mm. in the vertical alignment. In general, the overprint is placed 3 mm. to 4 mm. below the top frame, but I notice several De La Rue prints of the 2s. 6d. value have the overprint close to the top frame.

I was fortunate enough some years ago to acquire from a former official of the Nauru Administration blocks of four of the lower values ½d., 1d. and 2½d., and pairs of the 2s. 6d., 5s. and 10s. values of the first printing. Originally they were all blocks of four, but singles of the higher values had been dispersed to N.S.W. and England before the remainder came my way. The official referred to joined the Administration in June, 1915. At that time the whole of the first printing was held in the Post Office at Nauru. He confirms the face value of this first printing as approximately £100 and included the six values ½d., 1d., 2½d., 2s. 6d., 5s. and 10s. At that time, he states, a large number of requests had been received from dealers

on the first issues of Nauru, which are very similar, but have very important differences as the sketches hereunder will indicate. It will be seen that cancellation "A" reads "P.O. PLEASANT ISLAND (NAURU)" with the date in two lines, while cancellation "B" reads "P.O. NAURU (PLEASANT ISLAND)" with the date in one line. As far as I can ascertain, "A" was in use from 1916 to December, 1920(?), and "B" from January, 1922(?), to 1924. The latest date I have for "A" is 14/12/20 and the earliest date for "B" is 29/1/22, which seems to indicate the change was made in 1921. The existence of these cancellations has been confirmed by Mr. Davis in the last issue of your journal.

Many thanks to the Rev. T. P. Davis for thus stimulating my interest in "The First Issue of Nauru."—Yours, etc.,

F. V. THOMPSON.

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THE POSTAL MARKINGS OF FIJI

PLATE I

SUVA



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22



23



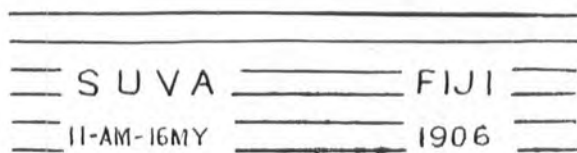
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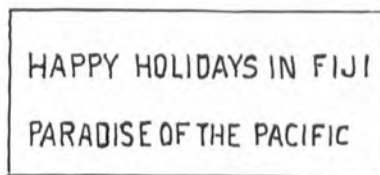
28



27



29



OPEN A
SAVINGS BANK
ACCOUNT TO-DAY.

30

SUVA



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40



41



42



43



44

PAQUEBOT

45

THE POSTAL MARKINGS OF FIJI

PLATE III

THE COUNTRY POST OFFICES
GENERAL TYPES



Type I
46



Type II
47



Type III
48



Type III(a)
49



Type IV
50



Type V
51



Type V(a)
52



Type V(b)
53



Type VI
54



Type VII
55



Type VII(a)
56



Type VII(b)
57



Type VIII
58

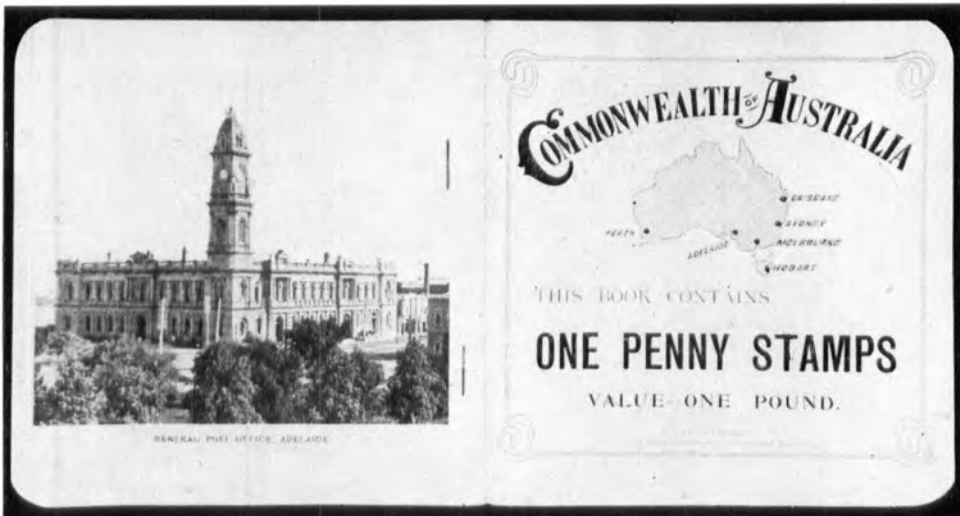
THE POSTAL MARKINGS OF FIJI
PLATE IV



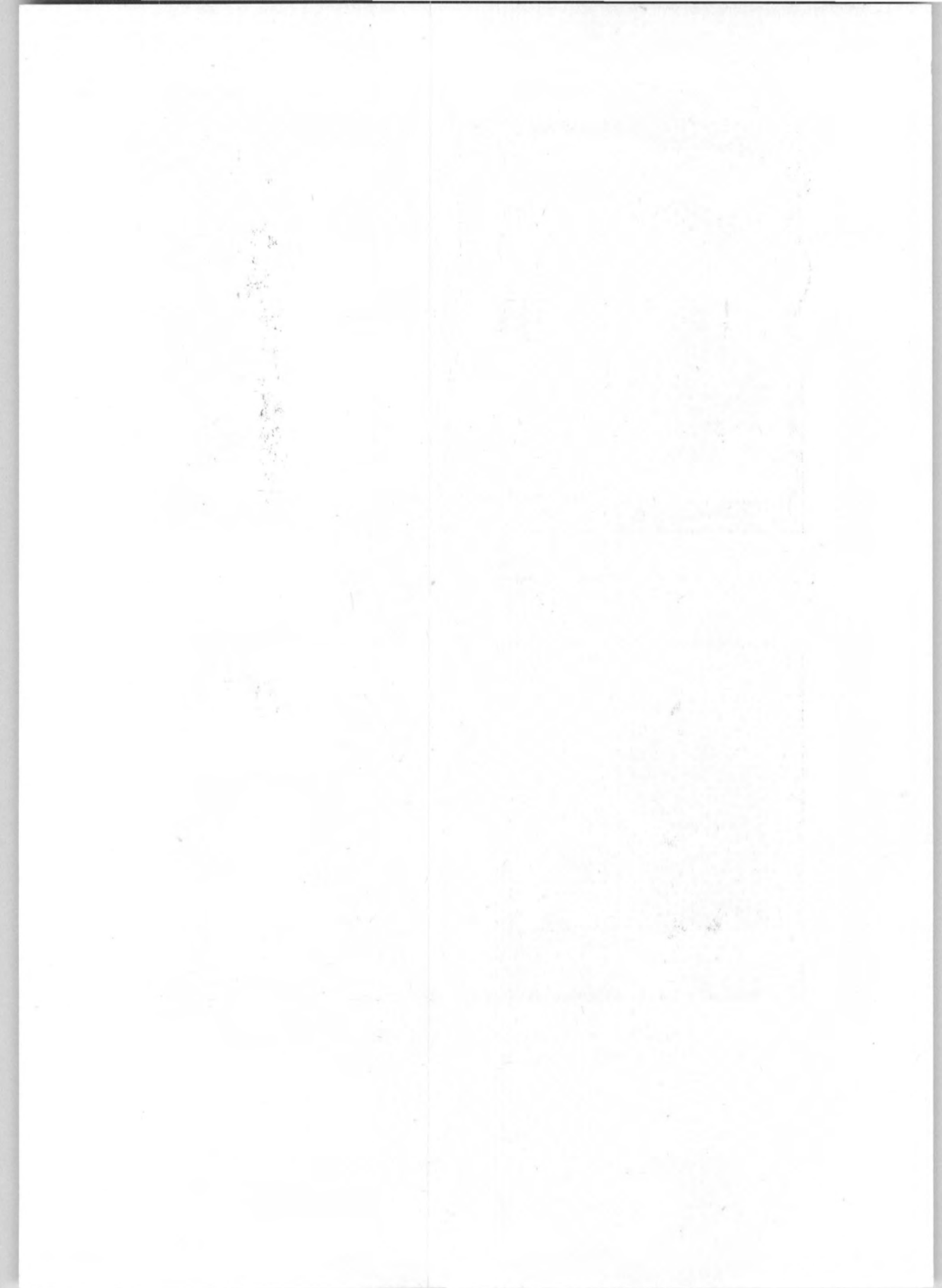
The 1d. Geo. V £1 Booklet.

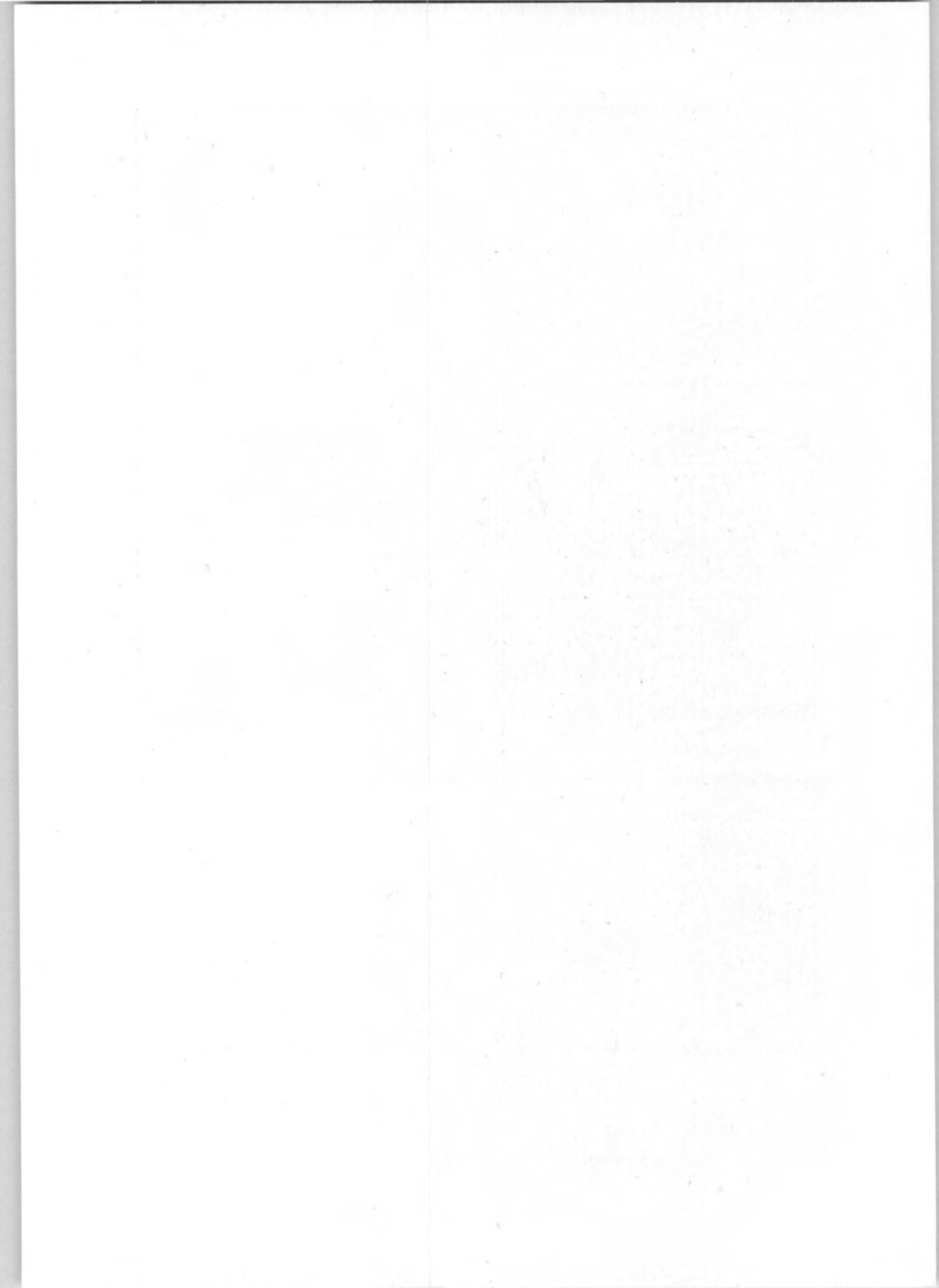
Showing cover, date of purchase, and note that the stamps had inverted watermark.

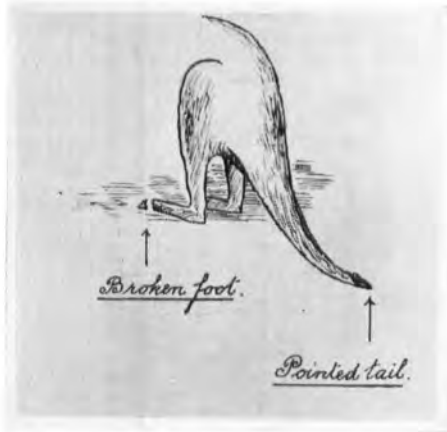
The Adelaide Booklet Cover, with the upper half sheets unsevered at right edges, and as issued.



The outer cover of the Adelaide booklet. The same ruling inside as for the Geo. V issue, allowed for the buyer any accounting of postages.







1st WMK.



2nd WMK.



3rd WMK.



SMALL MULT. WMK.



C. OF A. WMK.

