

PHILATELY

from

AUSTRALIA

A CHRONICLE OF AUSTRALASIAN STAMPS
AND THEIR COLLECTORS



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VOL. IV, No. 4

DECEMBER, 1952

CONDITION: THINNED STAMPS OF "FINE APPEARANCE"

The collector will call to mind many cases — in many countries — where, owing to the quality of paper employed (this particularly applies to the papers employed for *lithographic* printing, but includes many others such as those used for the early French and Greek stamps, and the wood-pulp varieties used for Canadian and U.S. stamps), there is quite a proportion of "*thinned stamps*."

Now a "thin" is, to use a legal phrase, rather of the nature of a "latent" defect — something that really has to be looked for and is not readily apparent — as opposed to a "patent" defect which is obvious to the naked eye. It is, of course, most annoying (to any of us) to find, in an item of otherwise pristine beauty, this particular heel of Achilles, and any "thin" is certainly "hammered" by buyers endeavouring to obtain a lower price. Provided, however, that the "thin" is of no great extent, we are inclined to think, particularly in classic stamps, that it is a defect which must, as time goes on, be regarded as a far less important factor in depreciation than the various classes of "patent" defect, and, in many cases, than the "closed tear."

Apart from the requirements of the collector of cancellations, what *are* the most important of the requirements which determine the condition of a classic stamp? I would place these, in order of their relative importance, as follows:

1. *That as much of the original design be showing as possible.* This must be so, whether from the aesthetic or student's point of view, and means a light post-mark, no obvious tear, no cutting into of the design.

2. *That the stamp be as "fresh" as possible.* This requirement comes very

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closely after the first, and means the preservation of the original colour and the absence of any staining, through the gum or otherwise.

3. *That, if the stamp be perforated, it be "well-centred."* This requirement, in my view, should come a bad last. Aesthetically, a badly-centred stamp can reasonably offend only if the perforations cut off part of the design. It seems, for instance, most illogical to devalue certain British and British Colonials because of "wing margins." A certain proportion of U.S. collectors, alas, concentrate on perfect centring as a first consideration, exclusive of factors 1 and 2. These fetishes — they are nothing else — on the part of collectors, have led to the delightful practice of cutting away most of a wide margin and *re-perforating* that side, in order to give the result so eagerly sought by the collector.

Likewise, an unduly heavy accent on "thinning," particularly in classic stamps of fine appearance (i.e., those combining the 1 and 2 factors), has led to another delightful practice, that of "*pulping*" the thinned area. This takes in the unwary, but to those who know its appearance is far more annoying than the "thin" itself.

One cannot, of course, be too dogmatic, but the collector of classic issues, given the 1 and 2 factors (and particularly where either is hard to find), is ill-advised if he refuses to purchase an item at an otherwise reasonable price, because of a modest "thin."

In many classic issues I believe that the stamp of "fine appearance" but with a "thin" (or "closed tear") is bound to cut, commercially, a more and more respectable figure. Recent auction results would seem to confirm this belief.

For pleasure *or* value — give me a thinned stamp of "fine appearance," nearly every time, in preference to a "sound" stamp of a less attractive aspect. — J.R.W.P.

ENVOI

Once again we come to the end of a volume, and this fourth one, we think readers will agree, has maintained the standard previously set. Indeed, so far as balance between the various interests for which we cater is concerned, it is probably the best yet. We thank all who have made it possible, whether as contributors, advertisers or subscribers.

In this issue will be found a subscription form. If your subscription for 1953 is due, it would greatly assist the Business Manager if it is paid early in the New Year. If you have already paid in advance, then the form is not intended for you, but we suggest you use it for some friend who is not yet a subscriber. Incidentally, the form can be used for more than one subscription.

We must apologise to the Rev. J. C. W. Brown for a slight error in his address as published in our last issue. This should have read No. 93 (not 94) Station Street, Malvern, S.E.4.

We regret that it has been necessary to hold over Mr Purves' feature, "The Other Side of the Picture," but it will appear as usual in our next issue.

Finally, we wish all our readers the compliments of the season, and all prosperity in the New Year.

The Trail



of Commonwealth

Conducted by J. C. W. BROWN

1½ K.G.V., Die 2

During the past eighteen months there has been considerable debate as to whether the plates from which this stamp was printed really were of steel as has hitherto been believed. In the June, 1951, Bulletin of the A.C.S.S. of G.B., Mr E. N. Palmer developed a theory that these plates actually consisted of some soft metal such as copper, electrolytically faced with nickel, for which chromium was later substituted. In the accidental stripping of parts of this outer coating, and in subsequent re-facing, he found the explanation for the re-entries that have so puzzled us. Mr Rosenblum in the Supplement to the Fifth Edition of his *Stamps of the Commonwealth* has accepted this theory, although certain other students such as Dr Gordon Ward and Mr H. S. and Mr R. S. Hughes have found themselves unable to do so.

A number of the *Australian Stamp Journal* that I have recently been reading would seem to settle the matter. While on a visit to Sydney in April, 1932, Mr John Ash, Australian Note and Stamp Printer, addressed a meeting of three leading Sydney philatelic societies, taking as his subject, "Postage Stamps in the Making." His paper was published in the *Australian Stamp Journal* for May and June, 1932. The following extract is taken from the June number. Mr Ash has just been describing the preparation of the die and the rolling-in of a recess-printing plate and turns now to the letterpress method of production. Italics are mine.

"The design is drawn somewhat differently, being entirely made up of a series of lines instead of a wash drawing; each line is followed out as closely as possible in the cutting of the die. To cut an original die for a letterpress stamp is much more difficult than for a recess stamp. The fine lines will only appear fine if they are cut as finely as a razor edge, consequently it is difficult to get a lot of detail to show up. . . .

"Having thus obtained the original steel die, it is hardened and *impressions* (note the plural — J.C.W.B.) from it are transferred to a soft steel roller, which in turn is also hardened.

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"As you know, the present 1d., 1½d. and 2d. stamps are *all* surface-printed from *steel* plates 480 set on (by 'set on' Mr Ash is referring to the number of subjects on the plates). This is a fairly expensive method, but it has compensations in the long life of the plates, consequently it is cheaper in the end. This is borne out by the life of the present 1d. and 1½d. plates from which thousands of millions of stamps have been produced. There is another method of producing plates other than rolling-in on steel plates, equally effective, but the plates do not stand up to the long runs, and are more easily damaged. We use this method in practically all values *over* 2d. partly owing to the fact that the runs on these values do not warrant the expense of steel plates, and the plates by this method are the more quickly manufactured.

"The same die is used in the preparation of the master plate, and 240 rectangular blocks of lead, the size of the stamps required, are cut exact to size and prepared. Each of these is impressed with the complete design of the working die by suitable mechanism in a powerful press. The lead blocks are then arranged in a shallow metal box or chase about 14 x 26 inches surrounded by other lead blocks to produce the guard lines and perforation points.

"The whole chase and leads are then placed in a depositing bath, where a thick copper electrotype is grown on to the leads. After the copper has grown for several days on the lead, the whole is extracted from the bath and the 'copper shell' is taken off. It is then backed with type metal and trimmed ready for the nickel deposit.

"Nickel facing, as we term it, prevents the face of the copper being attacked by any acids which may be in the ink and also hardens the printing surface against small pieces of grit or gum which would damage the stamp and cause varieties."

This section of Mr Ash's paper is of such considerable interest on several points of stamp production that I have quoted it in full. Note, for example, the reference to the transfer roller's receiving *several* impressions from the original die, and the absence of any reference to a flat strip of metal as the transfer medium. This is important to Dr Ward's theory of the method employed in the laying down of the 1½d., Die 2 plates. It also has some bearing on the theory advanced by myself several years ago to explain certain varieties of the King George V, 1d. plates. The purpose of a transfer roller with *several* impressions would naturally be to lessen the wear on the individual working die. The pressures involved in the manufacture of recess-printing plates are not so heavy, yet even in this field there are well known examples of transfer rollers with more than one impression. One need refer only to the first plates of the New Zealand 1d. "Universal" of 1901 for which Messrs Waterlow and Sons used as a transfer roller containing four impressions. For the Waterlow trial plates of 1906 there were five impressions on the roller. See *The Postage Stamps of New Zealand*, Vol. I, pp. 213, 238. If this multiplicity of impressions on the roller was found desirable in the manufacture of recess-printing plates, it is no matter for surprise to find it being used for steel *surface*-printing plates, which have to be rolled in more deeply, and which consequently involve greater wear and tear on the working die.

THE TRAIL OF COMMONWEALTH

According to Mr Ash's account what we have hitherto known as an "upper" and a "lower" electrotype plate are evidently grown together in one piece. This is worth remembering, although, since Mr Ash is speaking in 1932, we can only actually take it for granted in connection with the last 3d. and 5d. King George V plates. If this method of manufacture was employed for earlier electros such as those of the 1½d., Die 1, the upper and lower plates (of two panes each) must at any rate sometimes have been separated, since there is evidence of the one plate's having been used now in an upper and now in a lower position. I have heard of sheets identified as coming from the same plate one of which bore the positioning patch of colour by an upper corner, and another by a lower.

The reference to a master plate in connection with the manufacture of working electros is unfortunately not explicit. It seems to make possible the assumption that a master electro did form one stage in the manufacture of the printing plates for the last 3d. and 5d. King George V. There is, however, no evidence whatever of a master electro being used for the earlier electro printed stamps. If it had, one would naturally expect to find primary electro flaws (from the master plate) re-appearing on the various printing plates. Nothing of this nature has been discovered. Furthermore, the appearance of the three dies on the 1d. Kangaroo plates would be very strange indeed if all these plates had come from the one master. About the nickel facing of Commonwealth electro plates there is nothing novel. Even the Kangaroo plates of 1913 were nickel faced, and if my memory is correct there are references to this fact in some numbers of the *Australian Stamp Journal* for that year.

Finally, of course, Mr Ash's paper would seem to establish quite definitely what has always been believed — that the 1½d., Die 2 plates were *steel* plates like those of the King George V, 1d. With such plates a facing of nickel or chromium would obviously be quite unnecessary, and Mr Ash makes no reference to any such facing.

There is a moral to all this, and it has been stressed often enough before — the necessity of making oneself familiar with past literature on our subject. I am a comparative latecomer to such reading myself, but every day makes me more convinced of its value.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,
Philately from Australia,

Dear Sir,

Plate 1a of the K.G.V. 1½d., Die 2

I have been reading Mr I. Ash's interesting and informative article on this plate in the September, 1952, issue of *Philately from Australia*. The single reference to myself, as making an enquiry of a Victorian society in February, 1952, inadvertently conveys the impression that I had only shortly be-

fore noticed the large and small dots which distinguish Plates 1a and 1b.

Actually the problem they create had long been engaging my attention, as Dr Ward's reference to myself, in his September, 1951, article in *P. from A.*, indicates.

In my experience the large dot appears to be found only with perf. 14.

Yours, etc.,

H. F. McNESS.

Mt. Lawley,
West Australia.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

4d. KING GEORGE V

(COOKE PLATES — ORANGE, VIOLET, BLUE)

By W. S. TINSLEY

[Mr Tinsley of the Australian Commonwealth Specialists' Society of Great Britain began his researches into this value using as a basis Mr Norden's list of the more prominent flaws published in the September, 1949, issue of this journal, and following further correspondence with Mr Norden, published a tentative Check List in the Bulletin of the A.C.S.S. of G.B. for March, 1951. He continued his research, with the assistance of Messrs Ash, Lister, Watson, Hammond and Rowntree of the London Study Circle and others of his fellow members, but he particularly acknowledges the help of Mr W. M. Holbeach, one of the most prominent of our local Commonwealth specialists, who has made a particular study of the 4d. With this assistance Mr Tinsley was able to publish a revised Check List in the July, 1952, Bulletin. The list as published below represents a further revision, with some re-arrangement of the setting out.]

Under no circumstance can even this amplified Check List be considered anything but yet another attempt to invite further help: I think we must be getting near 100% accuracy in the number of flaws which are constant, but there is a lot to be done as regards date of appearance: in the Check List I have given the earliest date so far reported from dated postmarks but many flaws are believed to have been on the electro from the first printing issued in January, 1915. And without sheets known to be from those earliest printings who can say what flaws existed from the beginning.

A. A. Rosenblum has given the dates of the colour changes and it is not intended to re-write the whole history of the stamp again. Suffice it to say that J. B. Cooke made only one plate of electros consisting of an upper sheet and a lower sheet; that is, the printed plate of stamps was divided into two sheets (upper and lower) before issue to post offices and each sheet consisted of two panes of 60 clichés. In the attached Check List the left and right upper panes are termed Panes I and II respectively; Panes III and IV refer to the lower left and right panes.

Cooke's electro thus remained throughout the years from January, 1915, to August, 1923, when it was succeeded by a new Harrison electro. As "blue" was still the colour it follows that an entirely new set of flaws commence in the blues

AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH – GEORGE V, 4d.

from August, 1923, which continue throughout the olives of Harrison, Mullett and Ash, and the original flaws cease as stocks from the Cooke electros are used up.

Die Flaws

- (1) There is one obvious flaw, namely, a short shading line just outside the lower left-hand corner of RVT which creates a white spot.
- (2) There is a break in a short line of shading below the King's eye. This must not be taken for the flaws noted on II/6 and III/60.
- (3) Another less obvious flaw which is often inked in is a minute "inward nick on left side of solid colour of LVT 3½ mm. up, 1¼ mm. in." This nick can often be seen on any cliché, so is not an electro flaw.

Electro Flaws

There is hardly a single specimen which has not got a dot or spot or line or some sort of flaw somewhere. In consequence, beginners and those who are only just starting to collect varieties, are warned not to pay more than normal prices except for catalogued varieties or those which are definitely known to be constant. Moreover, constant flaws cannot *always* be recognised from a short description. All sorts of spots or flaws can be found near corners, several will be found with a dot between "A" and "L" of "AUSTRALIA" and only careful measurement or comparison with an authentic copy is a safe method of establishing a single. It is of great help if a cliché has two or more constant flaws, or even a marginal line watermark.

Notes on the Check List

All dots, spots, lines or flaws of any description are white unless described as coloured. Breaks or shortening of colour lines of shading are described as such although they may appear to the eye as white dots or spots. A "dot" is a minute flaw and a "spot" somewhat bigger.

Nowhere may the date of appearance be taken as that given in the column under Year. These are merely postmark dates on the earliest used copy I have seen or is possessed by a fellow member. I am not ready to accept shades as evidence of dates of printing.

Mm. measurements are taken to the nearest ¼ mm. from the relative outer edge of the frame: the word "in" is used for brevity when there is no doubt from which side the measurement applies.

The word "wattle" is used to define the area occupied by the whole spray of leaves and blooms. The words "leaf" and "bloom" are used to define a particular spot. Wattle "blooms" are numbered strictly in accordance with their distance below the top frame.

"LVT" and "RVT" mean the left and right value tablets respectively.

In the three columns O V B, "o" means that the flaw is known to exist in that colour, and "x" that, so far as I am aware, it does not.

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Check List

Pane 1

No.	Year	O V B	Description
1	9.15	o o o	Humped-backed "G." (There is a projection to the left half way down the "G").
3		o o o	Spot on lowest right leaf of left wattles 9½ mm. down, 1¼ mm. in.
5		o o o	Coloured flaw on top of Emu's back 1¼ mm. from right.
6	9.15	o o o	Dot on King's head N.E. of ear 8½ mm. down, 8½ mm. from right.
11		o o o	Coloured flaw above 3rd right wattle bloom 1 mm. down, 3½ mm. in.
		o o o	Dent in upper frame 5 mm. from right.
14		o o o	Dot below top right serif of "L" 6¼ mm. down, 7 mm. from right.
15	1.19	o o o	Dot in right frame 1¼ mm. down.
20	10.15	o o o	Inner edge of left frame dented 5 mm. down.
	10.15	o o o	Outer edge of left frame irregular approx. 3 to 7 mm. down.
22	8.15	o o o	Projection on right side of 2nd "A" 5¼ mm. down, 8½ mm. from right.
25	3.15	o o o	Apostrophe between "A" and "L" 5¼ mm. down, 8 mm. from right.
	.17	o o o	Flaw between "P" and "O" at top 5½ mm. up, 7½ mm. in.
			Many stamps will be found with a dot between "AL." This one is a distinct "apostrophe" and once identified can be easily recognised. In the first instance comparison with an authentic copy is recommended unless positioned in a block. Left marginal line wmk. is a help. Fortunately as early as 1917 another flaw appears between "PO" so that identification in violets and blues is simplified. (See note on III/13).
32	.20	o o o	Short shading line by 'Roo's hock 6¼ mm. up, 2 mm. in. (Late orange).
		x o o	"Cracked cliché."
		x x o	Dents on inside of left frame 3½ mm. and 1 mm. up.
			The first flaw to appear is what to the eye appears to be a dot left of 'Roo's hock: this was in the late oranges.
			Next, a crack develops in the electro first as a short line sloping upwards from the bottom frame to the lower point of the LVT. This occurs in the violets, not earlier than November, 1921.
			Next, the crack in late violets or early blues extends upwards through the "4" and curving outwards and upwards as far as the outline of 'Roo's back.
			Later, a dent appears on inside of left frame 3½-4 mm. up, shortly followed by another only 1 mm. up.
			Finally, these two dents join up and become a second crack line 6½ mm. long from near the corner to above end of 'Roo's tail, and the main crack extends faintly across the lines of shading upwards and outwards from 'Roo's back.
34		o o o	Dot on stem of top left wattle leaf 2 mm. down, 1¼ mm. in.
		o o o	Short shading line to right of RVT 3 mm. up.
37		o o o	Large flaw at 'Roo's back 13¼-14½ mm. down, 1-2 mm. in.
			This flaw is very like another on IV/49. There is, however, no difficulty in differentiating the two because there is a difference of ½ mm. in the distance down and on this cliché there are no other flaws. For some reason it is almost invisible in blues.
43		o o o	Break in right frame 7½ mm. down.
49		o o o	Spot on lower tip of slope of left "4" 3¼ mm. up, 2½ mm. in.
50		o o o	Line sloping from just above tip of King's nose towards left foot of 1st "A" (not early orange or lemons).
51		o o o	Spot between two top leaves of right wattles 1½ mm. down, 2½ mm. in.
		o o o	Colour spot extension to top left member of same 1¼ mm. down, 3 mm. in.

AUSTRALIAN COMMONWEALTH - GEORGE V, 4d.

Pane I

No.	Year	O	V	B	Description
52		o	o	o	Dot in LVT 2½ mm. up, 5 mm. in. (On some specimens the "dot" appears as a short line sloping downwards from left to right.)
		o	o	o	Dot above 'Roo's hind leg 7½ mm. up, 5 mm. in.
		o	o	o	Colour dot at top right 2½ mm. down, 1 mm. in.
53		o	o	o	Spot on Emu's tail 15¼ mm. down, ½ mm. in.
		o	o	o	Dot to right of 4th right wattle bloom 4 mm. down, 1 mm. in.
		o	o	o	Short shading line at right frame 7½ mm. down, ½ mm. in. (Early orange?).
54		o	o	o	Dent in right frame 9 mm. down.
55	.18	o	o	o	Dot in left frame 5¼ mm. up, ½ mm. in. (Early orange?)
56	8.15	o	o	o	Left frame damaged from 'Roo's tail downwards.
	8.15	o	o	o	Dot above 2nd "E" of "PENANCE" 2¼ mm. up, 7¼ mm. in.
		o	o	o	Dot in LVT below right edge of vertical line of "4" 2 mm. up, 4¼ mm. in.
57		o	o	o	'Roo's tongue out. (Appears late orange). A horizontal flaw from 'Roo's chin extending into coloured oval line. On the Harrison Plate there is a variety with 'Roo's "tongue" hanging out, i.e., it slopes down to right.
58	8.15	o	o	o	Lower left corner broken and splintered. The corner is shattered with a curved line running up the left frame 2¼ mm.
59		o	o	o	Very small nick in right frame 12 mm. down. Not in early orange and in blues the nick becomes a thickened right frame line at the same spot.
60		x	o	o	Flaw on inner oval under right foot of 2nd "A."

Pane II

No.	Year	O	V	B	Description
1		o	o	o	Dot in N.W. angle of LVT 5 mm. up, 2 mm. in. (Early orange?)
		o	o	o	Break in shading line left of LVT 3½ mm. up, 1¼ mm. in.
		o	o	o	Pointed spur below centre of base of left "4."
2		o	o	o	Faint flaw in front of 'Roo's left eye 10 mm. down, 4¼ mm. in.
		o	o	o	Colour dot at bottom right 3½ mm. up, 1 mm. in.
		o	o	o	Faint small horizontal flaw below left member of "N" close to inner frame line.
3	6.15	o	o	o	Spot in left frame 2¼-2½ mm. down. (Top frame wmk. assists).
	6.15	o	o	o	Short colour line sloping upwards and to right from near top of 2nd "E" of "PENANCE" towards RVT.
4		o	o	o	Small nick in upper frame 4 mm. from left. Not early orange; becomes small break in blue.
5	2.16	o	o	o	Top left corner bevelled off, slightly concave. (See No. 12).
6		o	o	o	Top left corner slightly rounded. (See No. 12).
		o	o	o	Break in 1st long vertical line of shading on King's cheek 11¼ mm. up, 8½ mm. from left.
7		o	o	o	Spot to left and just above horizontal member of right "4."
		o	o	o	Dot on Emu's tail 16 mm. down, ¼ mm. in. (Smaller than that on I/53).
8		o	o	o	Spot left of upstanding leaf top right ½ mm. down, 5 mm. in.
9	6.15	o	o	o	Spot on 'Roo's tail 7½ mm. up, 1 mm. in.
10		o	o	o	Spot on big leaf of right wattles 2 mm. down, 2½ mm. in. (Early orange?)
11	2.17	o	o	o	Vertical line through crown between "TR" to King's head.
	2.17	o	o	o	Dot in lower right quarter of RVT 2¼ mm. up, 2 mm. in.
		x	o	o	Nick in bottom frame 7½ mm. from left.

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Pane II

No.	Year	O V B	Description
12	3.15	o o o	Top left corner chamfered off, somewhat rounded. It would be difficult to identify Nos. 5, 6 and 12 from a brief description. No. 5 has more of the corner bitten off than either of the other two and is slightly "concaved." No. 6 has the tip rounded and there is a second flaw which is definite proof. No. 12 has the corner less bitten off than No. 5, but more than No. 6. (See No. III/60).
13		o o	Dot between "O" and "S" at top.
15		o o o	Break in shading line left of 'Roo 11½ mm. down, 1½ mm. in. (Early orange?)
20		o o	Right frame indented slightly 2½ mm. down. (Early orange?)
21		o o	Flaw in left frame - 2 spots one above the other joined by line 1½-2 mm. up.
		o o	Dot in lower frame 2¼ mm. from left.
25		o o o	Sloping gash in lower frame 1½ mm. from left. (Early orange?)
29		o o	Break in 7th shading line above point of curved inner frame line right of LVT. (No other flaw, not IV/53).
31	7.15	o o o	Large colour spot across white frame on right 3¼ mm. down. (Becomes a minute dot scarcely visible in violets and blues).
	7.15	o o o	Colour dot on right side 4¼ mm. down, ½ mm. in.
	? .17	o o o	Colour dot on right side 1 mm. down, 1¼ mm. in. (Not early orange).
36		o o o	Spot in angle in front of 'Roo's hind leg 7 mm. up, 3½ mm. in.
41		o o	Very short vertical line inside oval level with eyebrow 10½ mm. down, 5¼ mm. from left.
45	8.15	o o o	Small circle with colour centre on 'Roo's hock at top of LVT.
49		o o	Break in top shading line to right of Crown 7½ mm. in.
50		o o	Colour dot in shading at right 10½ mm. down, ½ mm. in.
51		o o o	Dot on wattle leaf at right 3¼ mm. down, 3 mm. in.
52	8.16	o o o	Two curved flaws in bottom frame 2½ mm. and 3 mm. from right.
56	7.15	o ? o	Colour dot inside right frame 4½ mm. down, ½ mm. in. Mr Holbeach reports this in orange and blue, but that it does not show on two positioned violet specimens. Comments are invited.
57	2.15	o o o	Spot on oval to right of base of Crown 4½ mm. down, 8 mm. from right.
58		o o o	Nick in right frame 3½ mm. up.
60	3.15	o o o	Vertical flaw right of Emu's rear leg.
	3.15	o o o	Large circular colour flaw on 'Roo's hock.
	3.15	o o o	Break in shading line at top right corner 1 mm. down, 1 mm. in.
	3.15	o o o	Both lower corners damaged.
	3.15	o o o	Top left corner rounded.

All flaws exist from very early orange, possibly from the beginning and continue constant throughout except the flaw down Emu's leg which is continually changing. Appearing faintly in early 1915, this flaw gradually broadens out and is one of the few flaws easily seen in the lemons. It reaches its maximum in 1918 and at some date after this the cliché was evidently repaired as in the early violets there is no trace of it whatever. In the later violets this flaw again commences to appear and is only just apparent in the earliest blues, but in the later blues, i.e., by mid 1923, the flaw has again widened out nearly as much as in 1918. The coloured circular flaw on 'Roo's hock is larger than that on II/45.

(To be continued)

VICTORIA

THE 2d. "POSTAGE," 1901-12

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

(Continued from page 87)

II: THE PRINTINGS: SHADES AND PERFORATIONS

A. Watermarked V Over Crown

This stamp was issued early in July, 1901, no "official" date of issue being available. My earliest postmark is 13/7/01. By accumulating, over the years, large numbers of copies with *dated postmarks* (over the whole period) it has been possible to make a reasonably accurate classification of the various printings, as follows:

(i) *Mauve* (rather dull) shades, earliest postmark found 13/7/01. May be met (a) with *comb perforation double*; (b) with the *same* but also with *repaired* perforation (a gummed strip being placed over the line of "off-centre" perforations to enable the user to tear the stamp down the extra "centred" line of perforations; (c) with "knife cut" to enable tearing down the line of the "cut" instead of providing an extra row of perforations.

(ii) *Mauve* (shades), brighter and deeper than (i), earliest postmark found 13/9/01. May be met with *double perforation* (comb).

(iii) *Violet-mauve*, rather *pale* — earliest postmark 22/8/02 — rather *coarser* in impression than the two preceding. I have this printing dated 16/3/03 with *mixed perforation* 12 x 12½ and 11, the latter being employed on the right side as a "centreing" perforation.

(iv) *Violet-mauve*, rather *deeper* and of a *finer* impression than (iii), making its appearance soon after. Is to be met with *sideways watermark*. This variety is really rare, and I have only encountered about *six* copies in 30 years. It used to be listed in the Yvert catalogue.

(v) *Purple*, wholly distinctive from any of the preceding shades. Earliest postmark found is 11/7/03. The shade remained very constant over the *last* printings from plates 1 and 2 and the *first* printing from Plates 3 and 4 (in April, 1904).

(vi) *Bright mauve, aniline*, from pale to deep. Likewise a most distinctive shade, earliest postmark found 17/8/04. This stamp is to be met *perf. 11*. The variety is of great rarity and I don't suppose I have seen more than half-a-dozen copies, *all used*. I possess four examples postmarked as follows: "Melbourne" 22/2/05, "Castlemaine" 7/3/05 (both these are singles in a *deep* shade) and a pair in a *pale* shade, perforated O.S. and postmarked "Melbourne" 16/5/06. The Gibbons Catalogue only lists the *one* 2d. V over Crown *perf. 11* but *two* varieties should be listed, as it is *also* found in the next printing. This printing (vi) may be also met with *double comb perforation* and with "knife-cut" *repair*.

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(vii) *Rosy-mauve*, earliest date found 26/5/05. Again a *very* distinctive shade, and unquestionably the printing described in the *Australian Philatelist* for June, 1905, when reference was made to the 2d. now being printed "in a much darker shade than previously." This printing, like (vi), is to be met *perf. 11*. This variety is also of great rarity and I have only seen about nine copies which, as with (vi), were *all used*. I possess four copies – a single postmarked "Melbourne" 8/6/05, a pair (this I regard as quite a treasure) postmarked "Melbourne" 10/6/05, and another single postmarked "Melbourne" 16/6/05.

B. Watermark Crown Over Double-Lined A

This stamp was, according to the Rundell records, issued on 13 September, 1905, my earliest postmark being 20/9/05 (in a pair). It was first reported in the *Australian Philatelist* for 2 October, 1905. Here again, through the years, we find a variety of well-defined shades, as follows:

(i) *Dull lilac* (medium to deeper), earliest postmark found 20/9/05. The impression of this printing is somewhat *coarse*.

(ii) *Rosy-mauve*, earliest postmark 29/11/05. Is rather rare and practically *identical* with the last V over Crown shade. It seems possible that these stamps were printed *before* the (i) printing but released *afterwards*. It is most distinctive.

(iii) *Mauve-lilac*, of a brighter quality than (i) and with a greater clarity of impression. Earliest date met is April, 1906. This stamp is to be met *perf. 11* but, as with the two previous cases, the variety is of great rarity. I possess three copies, one postmarked "Bairnsdale" 8/12/06, one with an "Up Train 15" cancellation dated 15/12/06 and the other with Post Office indecipherable but dated 24/12/06. The *Australian Philatelist* of 1 March, 1907, first reported this variety. All known copies are *used*.

(iv) *Bright lilac-mauve*, earliest postmark found 11/12/06. This printing has a *heavily inked* impression.

(v) *Violet, pale to deep*, of relatively *clear* impression, earliest postmark met 3/4/07. This was the *last* printing from Plates 3,4, which had now begun to wear very badly along the *lower* rows. The *Australian Philatelist* for 2 January, 1908, noted a copy of the 2d. *perf. 12 x 12½* with 11 at base. I have not seen this stamp, but it probably belongs to this printing.

(vi) *Violet*, not so bright as (v) and with less mauve, but very *light* and *clear* in impression. Was the first printing from Plates 5, 6, earliest postmark found 29/1/08. Is also to be met *perf. 11*. This time the variety, although scarce, cannot, as in the previous three cases, be said to be a great rarity. As with the 2d. V over Crown, Gibbons only lists the *one* shade as occurring *perf. 11*. Actually there are *three*, and at least *two* should be included in the catalogue. I have two mint singles and several used copies, dated between 8/6/08 (Melbourne) and 27/11/08 (Bendigo), the other postmark met by me being "St. Kilda Railway Station." It may also be met with "*knife cut*" and *repaired* perforation, and, punctured O.S., with a curious "*dry ink*" impression. (This is rare.)

VICTORIA

(vii) *Violet-mauve* (varying from pale and rather dull to rather bright), impression generally *coarse* and *heavily inked*, probably due to a failure to clean the plates. Earliest postmark found January, 1910. The new comb machine (the result of the conversion of an older one) with *small holes* and *blunt teeth* now makes its first appearance in this value.

(viii) *Pale mauve* to *bright mauve*, comb. perf. $11\frac{3}{4} \times 12\frac{1}{4}$, from about October, 1910. This printing is clearly from cleaned plates which, however, exhibit signs of *general wear*, possibly due, as previously noted, to the form of abrasive used in cleaning them. The new perforation appears to have been first introduced for the 1d. value in February, 1910, its appearance having been reported in the *Australian Philatelist* of 1 March, 1910. This 2d. printing evidently sufficed until July, 1912, since the *whole* of the overprinting of the "ONE PENNY" was done on it, the overprinted stamp only occurring $11\frac{3}{4} \times 12\frac{1}{4}$. We meet with yet another *perf. 11* variety in this printing. This is the easiest of all the 2d. 11's to obtain, more particularly in *mint* condition, in which form the local dealers obtained fair quantities at the time, although, compared with the normal perforation, it is still relatively scarce.

C. The 1d. on 2d. Provisional

This was, according to a "stop press" in the *Australian Philatelist* for 3 July, 1912, first issued on 1 July, 1912. This was a Saturday, which perhaps accounts for the fact that I have never come across a copy dated before 3 July, 1912, of which, however, I have three examples. Its appearance came by way of a surprise, if one is to judge from the remarks in the Journals of the time. Further, although some controversy appears in contemporary reports as to the reasons underlying its issue, I believe that, without question, it was due to the non-arrival of a shipment of the "*thin*" *white, ready-gummed* Crown over A paper on order from England. Incidentally, *two* forms of this paper are to be found. The *first* variety is *more opaque* than the second (the watermark also is less apparent) and this quality makes its comparative *whiteness* even more marked. My earliest date for the 1d. on this paper is 2/7/12 and I have other copies dated 9/7/12 and 11/7/12, so that it is apparent that it arrived *about* the time that the "Provisional" was being printed. The *second* variety has a limited *transparency* not found in the first and the watermark is *easy* to see. My earliest date found for the second variety is a 1d. postmarked 2/10/12.

The *first* variety was used for printings of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d. (in carmine-rose), and 2d., and the *second* for printings of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d., 1d. (*two* shades), 5d., 6d. and 1s. (*two* printings). The *Australian Philatelist* for 3 July, 1912, reported (inside the front cover) that 10,000 sheets (viz., 1,200,000 stamps) were printed. It was, however, one of those stamps that was bought in heavily by "speckers," and once again it provided no reward, as even in 1952 one occasionally sees it used for postage by philatelists. I have this stamp with *double comb perforation* on three sides.

The Overprint and its varieties will be found dealt with in an Appendix to this article.

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D. The Last Two Printings

(ix) The printing on *thin* paper, in a (rather delicate) *mauve*, varying in shade. This is quite a scarce stamp and, in my opinion, far scarcer than the 5d. and 6d. values on the thin paper. The earliest postmark found is 5/8/12. Perforated O.S. this stamp is rather commoner. In this printing and likewise the other thin paper printings the watermark is *normal* throughout, so that it seems that, perhaps due to the introduction of a new press, the complete sheet of 480 watermarks was cut into half before printing the stamps for which two plates were used.

(x) The printing on *Fiscal* paper, with a fifth type of V over Crown watermark, earliest date met 25/9/12. In *violet* to *bright violet*, and *lilac-mauve* (scarcer). The introduction of this paper (earliest date found is 9/8/12 on a 1d.) was due to the *non-arrival* of the *second* variety of the thin Crown over A paper, just as the issue of the "Provisional" had been due to the non-arrival of the *first*.

In the "reissue" we meet with an *interesting watermark* position. The complete sheet supplied was, as in the other cases from late 1896 on, of 480 watermarks, in four framed panes of 120 (12 x 10) watermarks each. Along the *top* margin of the *top* two panes were watermarked the words "VICTORIA DUTY" in the *normal* position, but along the *lower* margin of these panes there was *no* watermark.

For the two *lower* panes, on the other hand, there was *no* watermark in the *top* margins, but in the *lower* margins there was the watermark "VICTORIA DUTY" *inverted*. This did not affect the watermarks of the 1d. value (for which *four* plates were used) but it meant that for the ½d., 2d. and 9d. stamps (for which *two* plates were used) on "Reissue" paper (and for which the 1882-1912 press would appear to have been employed), *half* the stamps (as with the preceding Crown over A printings on normal paper) had the watermark in a *normal* position and the other half had it in an *inverted* position. Also in this printing *reversed* (and of course *inverted and reversed*) watermarks are to be met (particularly punctured O.S.). These cannot be called rare in the 2d., although they are rare in the case of the 1d. and 9d. stamps.

One interesting result of the above watermark pattern is that in the 2d. (and 9d.) if you obtain a block with *top* margin but with the watermark on the stamp *inverted*, it will also show portion of the marginal watermark "VICTORIA DUTY," the letters, however, being in a *normal* position!

APPENDIX

The Overprinting of the "One Penny" on 2d. Provisional

That only the *one* overprinting forme of 120 impressions (12 x 10) was used is proved by the following evidence, viz:

(i) I possess blocks from the same positions in the sheets from *both* Plates 5 and 6 (i.e., those numbered with three and four white dots respectively) showing the *same* overprint flaws in the *same* positions in *both* sheets. Particularly is this true of the so-called "I" variety in the overprint. This is found on No. 105 in

PHILATELY *from* AUSTRALIA

I N D E X

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AND THEIR COLLECTORS*



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both sheets. In the sheet from Plate 6 (four dots) the same stamp shows the main plate variety (a dent in left frame) already chronicled, while in the other sheet this variety is absent.

(ii) I possess complete overprinted sheets from both Plates 5 and 6 after the correction (see later) of the "I" variety. All the same "broken letter" varieties still occur on the same positions in both sheets.

Varieties in the Overprint: Beyond the "I" variety there is little of interest. Occasionally — and it is rarely — stamps will be found where there is a bad misplacement of the overprint to the *left*, the "O" of "ONE" having found its way into the left margin, while others show a bad misplacement to the *right*, the "Y" being outside the right edge of the stamp. More often, examples will be found of *low* overprints and again — more rarely — cases where the words of the overprint are half-way over the *base* of the stamp.

There are many constant "broken letter" varieties. The majority of these such as the broken "E" in "PENNY," the broken first "N" in "PENNY," the broken second "N" in "PENNY," the broken top right of "E" and top of first "N," etc., are all easy to see, but as they are of no philatelic importance and also almost inseparable from the use of stereos for overprinting (and stereos *were* certainly used), no good purpose can be served here by giving a detailed list of them. Further, from an optical point of view, the red largely *merges* in the mauve, and such varieties do not stand out with as much clarity as one might like.

There is, however, one constant variety of some interest. That is the "I" variety mentioned above, which shows what looks like a large "I" between the words "ONE" and "PENNY" on No. 105 in the sheet. This was recognised at the time, reference was made to the Printer, and it was reported (see *Australian Stamp Journal* for 10 August, 1912, at p. 160) that it was due to a piece of "roller composition" which had become "jammed" between the two words.

That it was corrected *during* the printing is shown by the fact that I have lower right corner blocks all covering this position, which show *three* states of the overprint, as follows:

(i) *Without* the "I" flaw, but showing the word "ONE" noticeably *higher* than the word "PENNY." The "P" is "dropped," being noticeably lower than the "ENNY." Save for the "P," the letters of "PENNY" are on the *same* level.

(ii) *With* the "I." Otherwise as (i).

(iii) *Without* the "I," but with the words "ONE" and "PENNY" on approximately the *same* level, and the "P" no longer "dropped." The letters "NY" are *higher* than the letters "PEN."

This evidence indicates, I think beyond question, that some time before the end of the printing, the offending stereo (and a stereo unit would most certainly have included *both* words) was removed and *substituted* by a new and more normal stereo.

(Concluded)

THE COOK ISLANDS

By *The Pacific Islands Circle of the Sydney Philatelic Club*

(Continued from page 99)

Date of Issue

The date when the stamps were first placed on sale to the public has been a matter of considerable controversy. Messrs Stanley Gibbons, in their catalogue, give the date of issue as 29 February, 1892; this, however, is certainly wrong, as the first supply of stamps was only printed by that date. Most authorities, for reasons which will be apparent, have selected 19 April, 1892, as the date of issue, but, in view of the conflicting nature of the evidence, it is necessary for us to examine it at some length.

From the Invoice of the New Zealand Stamp Printing Branch, which will be produced at a later stage, it is clear that the printing of the first supply of the stamps and post card was completed on 29 February, 1892. An examination of the New Zealand contemporary press shows that the first steamer (presumably carrying the stamps) to leave New Zealand for the Cook Islands after that date was the *s.s. Richmond*, which left Auckland on 26 March, and after calling at Tahiti, did not arrive at Rarotonga until 19 April.

Both *The Philatelic Record* of August, 1892, and *Te Torea* (a weekly newspaper published in Rarotonga) of 21 September, 1895, give 19 April, 1892 (the day of the arrival of the *Richmond*), as the date of issue of the stamps. Moreover, specimens of the stamps and of the post card are known to us postmarked by a rectangular date-stamp bearing the inscription "POST OFFICE" in the top line, the date (viz., "19 APR 1892") in the second and "COOK ISLANDS" at bottom, which will be fully described under the Chapter "Cancellations." This evidence might be considered as conclusive, were it not for the fact that we have the evidence of the two persons most likely to know the true facts, the Chief Postmaster and the Resident Commissioner, to the effect that the stamps were not placed on sale until nearly three weeks after 19 April.

The Chief Postmaster at Rarotonga, Mr Garnier, in a footnote to the Statement of Accounts of the Government of the Cook Islands for the year ending 30 June, 1892, states: "The use of Cook Islands Government Stamps did not begin until May 7th, and revenue is from that date." Moss, writing on 30 September, 1892, to the Secretary of the New Zealand Post Office, also mentions 7 May as the date of issue of the postage stamps. These two official statements, made so soon after the stamps appeared, are to us conclusive evidence that the stamps were not placed on sale until 7 May, 1892.

How, then, are we to account for the stamps postmarked on 19 April, 1892? We can only suppose that when the stock was unpacked on that day, specimens of the stamps and card were postmarked (to prevent their use) and given as souvenirs to some of the officials and their friends, who were present. In view of

THE COOK ISLANDS

the novelty of the stamps, the first issue of the Cook Islands Administration, such a proceeding would be quite natural. This explanation seems to us much more likely than that the stamps were unpacked, checked, counted and placed on sale (without any prior notification to the public) on the very day they reached Rarotonga.

Finally, no entire covers have ever been recorded postmarked on 19 April, and a specimen of the post card so dated, which we have seen, is obviously cancelled to order, having no address or writing on it of any kind.

We may add that the *Richmond* called again at Rarotonga, bound from Auckland to Tahiti, on 20 May, 1892, and this is the first date after their arrival that the stamps could have been used on letters to places outside the Cook Islands. Apart from the postmark of 19 April, the earliest date that we have recorded on a cancellation is 21 May, 1892.

Printings

The numbers printed were as follows, according to the Invoice of the Stamp Printing Branch of the New Zealand Government at Wellington. These numbers also tally with those given in the correspondence between Mr Grey, Secretary to the New Zealand Post Office, and Mr Moss, copies of which were given by the former to the late Mr Basset Hull, who, in turn, donated them to us shortly before his death:

1892	<i>1d.</i>	<i>1½d.</i>	<i>2½d.</i>	<i>10d.</i>	<i>Post Cards</i>
February 29th	2,820	2,640	2,880	540	500
March 19th	1,800	1,740	1,740	—	—
August 23rd	6,000	6,000	6,000	3,000	500
September 6th	6,000	6,000	6,000	3,000	500
October 3rd	6,000	6,000	6,000	3,000	300
November 11th	18,000	18,000	18,000	9,000	600
December 4th	250	200	150	110	253
December 14th	36,000	36,000	36,000	18,000	600
	76,870	76,580	76,770	36,650	3,253

Paper

The stamps were printed on a fairly thick wove paper, which varies from a pure white to a slightly yellowish or "toned" colour. This distinction was noted very soon after the stamps made their appearance and cataloguers and writers have, in consequence, generally divided the issue into two sets, one on white and one on toned paper. On the other hand, it has been argued that this distinction is unnecessary, and that any difference in the paper is due to the effect of climatic conditions subsequent to the printing.

We have examined many copies under the ultra-violet quartz lamp, however, and these tests reveal that three varieties of paper were used during the printings. Under the lamp the white paper appears even whiter, whereas the toned paper appears as a pale or deep shade of grey. This applies to all values, and a tabulation

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of the pieces examined does not disclose that any of the three colour reactions of the paper is markedly scarcer than the others.

It would seem, therefore, that the continued cataloguing of the stamps of this issue under white and toned paper is justified, although classification may be difficult without the aid of the quartz lamp.

As regards the order in which the different papers were used, scarcity of used material makes it impossible to dogmatise, except to say that all the specimens that we have examined with dates up to October, 1892, are on white paper.

It should be noted that the toned paper used is never of such a marked character as that used for certain printings of the following (Makea and Te Torea) issues.

Shades

There are slight shades in all values, some of which may be attributed to the nature of the paper (white or toned) on which the stamps are printed. None of them is marked.

Perforation

The stamps are perforated by a single-line machine gauging $12\frac{1}{2}$, all four margins being perforated through. We have noted the following varieties:

1d. Imperforate Horizontally. Poole records this as the omission of the perforation between the first and second rows of stamps on the sheet and specimens that we have seen confirm this. Probably it only occurred on one sheet; if so, only six vertical pairs imperforate can exist. Collins also records this value imperforate vertically, but we have never seen it.

1½d. Doubly Perforated Vertically. Poole describes a block of four "from the right-hand side of the sheet" on which the original vertical perforations of the right-hand stamps ran through the Greek border, and also, at the width of a stamp, through the right margin. The defect was noticed and strips of paper pasted on the back of the sheet, which was subsequently re-perforated in the correct position. We have seen two single copies (one used on 6 April, 1893).

2½d. Doubly Perforated Vertically. We have seen a block of four, re-perforated in a similar fashion to the $1\frac{1}{2}$ d., the position on the sheet being identical.

Proofs

Collins mentions the existence of imperforate proofs on white paper, and also specimens of the 1d. and 10d. denominations on gummed paper, perforated 10 (instead of $12\frac{1}{2}$). These latter are probably proofs; they are exceedingly scarce, and apparently neither the $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. nor the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. values have been reported in this condition.

Remainders

The stamps of the first issue were replaced in August, 1893, by the "Makea" series. The remainders then on hand in Rarotonga were destroyed on 28 November, 1893, in the presence of the British Resident, the Public Auditor, the Chief Postmaster and others. A certificate that the electrotypes used for printing the

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issue had been destroyed was forwarded by the Secretary of the New Zealand Post Office to Moss on 17 August, 1894.

Check List

Issue of 7 May, 1892.

White or toned paper. No wmk. Perf. $12\frac{1}{2}$ (line).

- 1d. black (six types)
 - a. imperf. horizontally.
 - b. imperf. vertically (not seen).
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. mauve (six types)
 - a. double perf. vertically.
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. blue (six types)
 - a. double perf. vertically.
- 10d. carmine (six types).

Forgeries

Dangerous forgeries exist of the 1d., $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. and 10d. denominations, typographed in Geneva by the notorious Fournier. Produced in single copies (so that only one type exists of each value) they were regarded by Fournier as examples of his best craftsmanship. Being reproduced by a photographic process, the designs are accurately reproduced, but differ slightly in size compared with the originals.

Fernande Serrane, in his *Vade Mecum*, says that these forgeries are usually found imperforate, but all that we have noted are perforated $12\frac{1}{2}$, in this respect resembling the originals, but with larger perforation holes. Also, in the example we have seen, the perforation is so close to the design that the overall size of the stamp is generally smaller than that of the genuine.

Each of the forgeries can be distinguished from the genuine by coloured dots or flaws in the design. Illustrations of these will be found in Serrane's *Vade Mecum*, the most prominent being the following:

1d. — A coloured dot between the "P" and "O" of "POSTAGE" and also in the lower part of the "R" of "FEDERATION."

$2\frac{1}{2}$ d. — A coloured line joining the foot of the "1" of " $\frac{1}{2}$ " to the right-hand end of the fraction bar.

A large coloured flaw joining the two inside lines of the Greek border in the right-hand bottom corner of the design.

10d. — A coloured line joining the left-hand side of the cross-bar of the "T" of "POSTAGE" to the upright of that letter.

Coloured flaws in the lower part of the "F" of "FEDERATION," in the top and bottom parts of the "E" of "TEN" and in the bottom part of the second "E" of "PENCE."

The forgeries exist unused and also "postmarked" with an oval cancellation inscribed "REGISTERED" (at top), "PALMESTON" (at bottom) and date in one line "2 SP 92" (in centre). In the copies that we have seen this is struck in black.

Less calculated to deceive are forgeries of the 1d. and $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. denominations that we have recently met with. These can be readily identified by the outer frame

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line, which is continuous around the four sides of the stamp, instead of being broken into sections as in the original. The Greek border also has a symmetry throughout which is not present in the genuine stamps. Printed in colours closely resembling the genuine, the forgeries are on granite paper and perforated $12\frac{1}{2}$, with large clean-cut holes. The examples that we have seen are cancelled in black with an oval of fourteen parallel bars, measuring 23 x 17 mm. (approx.). We know nothing of the origin of these forgeries, but the use of granite paper suggests they may have been produced in Switzerland.

In the Forgery Collection of the Royal Philatelic Society, London, there is a copy of the 10d. denomination, in unused condition, on deeply blued paper, but we do not know whether this is one of the Fournier forgeries or by another hand.

(To be continued)

CONVERSATION PIECES

Recorded by
HAROLD THIRKELL

No. 12 (and last): *How Used Is It?*

"If that's 'fine used,'" said Mr Hinge with a snort, "then I'm a blue-eyed Chinese!"

"At your age," said Mr Gauge, "you should know better than to buy a stamp, sight unseen, from anyone but a reputable dealer."

"Sometimes," retorted Mr Hinge mildly, "a not-so-reputable dealer gets hold of a stamp you badly want. If he lives across a couple of oceans, you can't hop over and look at it. If you ask to see it on appro, he probably won't be bothered, or he'll already have sold it. I actually wasted a cable to get that one."

"If that was described at 'fine used,'" said Mr Gauge, "the man is guilty of misrepresentation."

"But is he?" asked Mr Hinge. "There's no legal specification for 'fine used.' He could cross his heart and swear that by his scale of values that *is* 'fine used.'"

"In point of fact," said Mr Gauge, "there's only one classification which permits of no argument. 'Superb mint' or 'superb used' can only be applied to a stamp completely above reproach. The seller is offering the perfect article, and perfection can't be qualified. The buyer is fully protected."

"If I were a millionaire," said Mr Hinge thoughtfully, "'superb only' might be my motto — but I'm not sure. I recall feasting my eyes on an epicurean collection of the classics, every single stamp immaculate. And that's the point. It was less a stamp collection than a display of stamps as *objets d'art*. A bottomless purse couldn't buy a complete collection in superb condition of any country, barring moderns, of course, which have come into existence since new issue services were invented. Of the old stamps there just aren't enough superb copies to go round; of some they just don't exist."

CONVERSATION PIECES

"Now let's go back to our subject," said Mr Gauge, "which is how to interpret the description given in advertisements and auction catalogues."

"By reputable firms," added Mr Hinge.

"Of course," said Mr Gauge. "His blood be upon his own head who deals elsewhere. We can pass over faulty stamps, because it is standard practice to draw attention to such defects as thinned, off-centre, creased, and so on."

"And mint stamps are not much worry," added Mr Hinge, "mint's mint. Unused is a little harder but I generally take it to mean with little or no gum."

"Which leaves us with our problem — the used stamp," said Mr Gauge.

"Well," said Mr Hinge, "you have two extremes, just plain 'used' at the bottom, and 'superb used' at the top, with 'fine used' and 'very fine used' in between."

"Very fine used," said Mr Gauge, "is a stamp which lacks the glow of absolute perfection, but is still a faultless copy. You are quite safe in buying it."

"But not so safe with fine used," continued Mr Hinge. "The element of doubt is creeping in. Probably the postmark is pretty messy. Or it could be a stamp which has just escaped a number of faults by the skin of its teeth — a bit off-centre, a bit meagre in the margins, rather shaky in the perfs., short on 'bloom' generally."

"And plain 'used?'"

"Equivalent to the 'Halt' sign at crossroads," said Mr Hinge decidedly. "The seller's not committing himself. The stamp hasn't a fault you could pin him down to, no creases, thin spots, what-have-you. It's a paradox, a wrong 'un with nothing wrong with it. You'd hate the sight of it every time you saw it in your collection."

"So far as heavy postmarks are concerned," said Mr Gauge, "don't forget that allowance must be made for what is the norm in some countries, early Belgium for instance."

"I've seen collections of Great Britain," mused Mr Hinge, "so gloomy with ink that they should be labelled 'Zone night in Sydney.' Superb used for such countries is really something out of the box."

He paused for Mr Gauge's next profound pronouncement, but, silence continuing, said slyly:

"Since I'm expected to make some reference to the fair sex every time I open my mouth, I'm now constrained to point out that our whole classification, from 'superb mint' right down to 'badly creased,' could quite aptly be applied. . . ."

"Be quiet," said Mr Gauge sharply, "philately is one of mankind's completely sexless preoccupations."

"That's what you think!" retorted Mr Hinge, reaching for his hat. "Come on, it's ladies' night at the meeting."

(Your reporter regrets that he is no longer able to record the exchanges of wit and wisdom between Mr Gauge and Mr Hinge. He has ceased to be *persona grata* following an unguarded admission that he cherished a collection of Tannu Touva. While Mr Hinge would treat the matter as a joke, Mr Gauge has taken the gravest view. However, they both still nod to him at the meetings.)

QUEENSLAND NUMERAL CANCELLATIONS

By HARRY S. PORTER, M.C., F.R.P.S.L.

(Continued from page 102)

No.	Auth.	Post Office	Opened	Closed	Remarks
52					
53	G	Charleville	1865/6	20	Later used 549 (OW)
54				24	
55	OPW	Gatton	1865/6	32	
56				32	
57	L	Granchester	1865/6	30	
58	G	Lilly Vale	1865/6	1868	
59	GOP	Townsville	1865/6	31	Later used 528 (OPW) and 570 (OW)
60					
61	PW			31	
62					
63	GJOP	Bowen (Port Denison)		32	J says 4 bars in each ray. Already shown opened on 1/4/61
63	GJQW	Clermont		32 (J)	5 dots in each ray (J).
				34 (W)	Later used 612 (Z). Already shown opened 1862/4
64	S				
65					
66					
67	D	Inglewood	1866	32	
68	AW	Rocky Waterholes	1865/7	32	Called ROCKLEA from 1/1/85
	D			32	Re-issued to RAVENSBOURNE, see Oct., 1906
69				32	
70					
71	OW	German Station	1865/7	24	Called NUNDAH from 1/1/83
72	GW	Helidon	1865/7	32 (J)	
				34 (W)	
73					
74	DJX	Goondiwindi	N.S.W.	26	Known as CALLANDROON until 1861
75					
76					
77					
78					
79	G	Gainsford	1865/6	24/5/74	32
	M				Re-issued to HERBERTON, see 22/11/80
80	BGOW	Mitchell Downs	1865/6	24?	Later known as MITCHELL
81	BOP	Warwick	N.S.W.	24	(Figure "1" sans-serif)
				27	(Figure "1" with serifs)
82	Z	Forest Vale (Mararoa)	1862/4	31/12/72	23
83	G	Coppermine	1865/6	26	Later called COPPERFIELD

QUEENSLAND NUMERAL CANCELLATIONS

No.	Auth.	Post Office	Opened	Closed	Rays	Remarks
84	AL	Rainworth	1862/4		24	Moved to SPRINGSURE in 1864
85	B	Drayton	N.S.W.		24	
86	BP	Gayndah	N.S.W.		24	
87	BDOPW	Ipswich	N.S.W.		26	
					22	(Serif 7)
88					24	Re-issued to TORBANLEA, see 1/4/87
89					25	
90					24?	Called CAPALABA from 1874 to 8/6/75
91	M	Tingalpa	1867		34	
92	AS					Reported used at DUNROBIN but P.O. so named not traced
93	O	Jondaryan	1866		24	
94						
95	BPQW	Beenleigh	1866		36	No. 95 was allotted to BRISBANE by N.S.W. but not used after partition
96	BO	Maryborough	N.S.W.		20	In 'nineties used a duplex with "QL" on obliterator
	DO	Dalby	N.S.W.		Bars	Original N.S.W. allocation was 133
	GJP	Gympie	1867		24	Later used 450 and 547

Note: In the foregoing List, between 27 and 96, there are 31 blank numbers, or 38 if the N.S.W. allocations of Nos. 74, 81, 85, 86, 87 and 96 are neglected. To fill these spaces there are the following 33 additional Post Offices, opened during the period covered.

Seven Mile Creek	1862/4				
Theresa Creek	1862/4				Moved to PEAK DOWNS and closed in 1864
Fortitude Valley	1862/4	1864			Pillar box substituted
St. Lawrence	1862/4				
Retreat	1862/4	1867			
Western Creek	1862/4	31/5/68			
Avon Downs	1865/6	1867			
Beaufort	1865/6	1874			Re-opened in 1878
Bully Creek	1865/6	1/1/68			
Canal Creek	1865/6	4/1/90			
Ten Mile Rush	1865/6	1865			Does not appear in List of 1866, so closed in year opened
Carrangera (Barcoo)	1865/6				Became TAMBO in 1868
Highfields	1865/6				Called GEHAN from 17/9/76
Logan Downs	1865/6	?/7/68			
Mungindi, N.S.W.	1865/6	31/12/77			Re-opened in 1880
Mt. McConnell	1865/6	1/6/68			
Nerang Creek	1865/6	1875			Moved to NERANG, 17/2/74
Natal Downs	1865/6	1/1/68			
Richmond Downs	1865/6	31/12/69			Moved to MARATHON and then closed. Re-opened 1910

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No.	Auth.	Post Office	Opened	Closed	Rays	Remarks
		Rutherford	1865/6	30/12/65		
		Strathmore	1865/6	1865		Does not appear in List of 1866, so closed in year opened
		Talgai Reef	1865/6	1/1/68		
		Valley of Lagoons	1865/6	30/4/76		
		Breakfast Creek	1866	1893		Re-opened in 1894
		Burketown	1866	30/6/71		
		Crocodile Creek	1866	1/1/80		Disappears without mention in Report
		Lynd	1866	?		Possibly a misprint for LYNDHURST (also called CARPENTARIA DOWNS)
		Upper Mary	1866			
		Fassifern	1866	10/7/97		
		Morinish	1867	4/11/72		
		Ridglands	1867	30/6/71		
		Swee's Island	1867	13/12/80		Name changed to CARNARVON in 1868
		Spring Creek	1867			

Note: From 1/1/1868 the dates of opening and closing of Post Offices is generally given in an Appendix to the Report, which lists existing P.O.'s. The chronological listing by date of opening is therefore resumed.

99	D	Cape River Diggings	1/1/68	31/12/76	24	
201	L	Eight Mile Plain	1/1/68			201 is number given to Rockhampton by N.S.W.
		Telemon	1/1/68			
		Norley	1/3/68	31/12/69		
		Bowen Downs	1/3/68	1/11/84		
100	W	Cunnamulla	1/3/68		28	
103	P	One Mile Creek	15/4/68		24	103 was later in use at AVONDALE (see 1898) and 565 used here (O)
106	J					
		Pimpama	16/4/68	3/2/89		
23		Murphey's Creek	18/5/68			23 was used at Roma. Murphey's Creek is near Toowoomba, yet J says "Murphey's Creek of Roma." Probably 23 re-issued
108	P	Nanango	N.S.W.		20	First called GOODE'S INN, then BURNETT INN. Opened 1850
110	G	Surat	N.S.W.			See 110 at Tiaro also (1/10/68)
111	V	Isis Downs	1/6/68	27/9/76		
		Kilkivan	8/6/68			
114	A	Norman River	13/6/68			Later called NORMANTON
		Jimna	1/7/68	31/10/79		
109	P	Yandina	6/7/68		24	Called MAROOCHY, 1/1/82
		Owanilla	1/10/68	21/9/81		
110	BMO	Tiaro	1/10/68			Note allocation of 110 to Surat

QUEENSLAND NUMERAL CANCELLATIONS

No.	Auth.	Post Office	Opened	Closed	Rays	Remarks
		Carwarral	15/10/68			
		Mount Emu Plains	1/1/69	31/12/69		
		Rocklands	1/1/69	31/7/69		
		Tarawinaba	1/1/69	30/9/69		
120	GLPW	Cambooya	12/3/69		17	
127	L	Coomera	1/4/69			Now called Coomera Upper
		Lilyvale	19/3/69			Now re-opened. Closed 21/6/68 and was then using 58
128	J	Doughboy Creek	1/4/69		18	Name altered to HEMMANT from 10/6/69
		Mount Douglas	1/4/69	31/3/70		
121	GOP	King's Creek	20/4/69		18	Called CLIFTON from 20/4/69 to 26/6/69
		Pine Mountain	1/6/69			
124	OW	Ravenswood	11/6/69		18	or 20?
		Gilberton	1/7/69	31/12/73		Re-opened on 3/8/79
129	O	Gootchy	1/7/69		18	Called GUNDIAH, 1/1/82
130	OP	Burenda	1/9/69		16	Name changed to ELLAN- GORA on 31/8/77 and again to AUGUTHELLA from 1/1/83
131	OP	Caboolture	1/9/69		24	3 of 131 has flat top
131	BGW	Gladstone	N.S.W.		18	3 of 131 is rounded
126	P	Oakey Creek	1/10/69		18	Later called OAKEY
		Redbank Plains	1/10/69			
		Carpentaria Downs	?/2/69	31/7/73		Called LYNDHURST, 1/1/70. Lyndhurst previously closed in 1869. See LYND.
133	C	Dalby	N.S.W.			Opened in 1854. Later used 96 (O)
133	B	Village of Logan	1/1/70			Called LOGAN VILLAGE from 1886
134	Y	Thargomindah	1/1/70			First spelt THORGOMIN- DAH
		Mount Wheeler	1/1/70	30/6/71		Moved to ZEALAND GUL- LEY in 1870
137	P	Yandilla	1/3/70	30/9/78	23	Re-opened in 1892
138	SW	Walloon	16/4/70		24	Evidence is stamp with 138 and "LLOON" (W)
		Cania and Kroombit	18/6/70	7/10/72		Cania re-opened July, 1909
135?	W	Wivenhoe	6/7/70		24	Renamed FERNDAL, 9/6/77 (Evidence stamp with 135 and "FE")
		Imbil	9/7/70	15/8/72		Re-opened in 1877
307	A	Bulimba	1/9/70			
		Yatala	1/11/70			
148	BGOP	Bundaberg	1/1/71		24	A 148 (24) cancellor from here was used at THURS- DAY ISLAND in 1901 (DP). See also 51 and 336, used later at Thursday
		Gracemere	1/1/71			
		Rolleston	1/1/71			
		West Creek Diggings	1/4/71	31/12/71		

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No.	Auth.	Post Office	Opened	Closed	Rays	Remarks
151		Condamine	N.S.W.			Removed from Tiereboo in 1856
149	D	Cloncurry	1/6/71			C gives Cloncurry as 152
152	G	Taroom	N.S.W.			Opened in 1856
		West Creek Station	1/7/71	31/12/87		
		Emu Creek Diggings	1/7/71	31/12/71		
27	JD	Lower Herbert	1/7/71			Called INGHAM from 1/1/81

(To be continued)

THE BAR OBLITERATORS OF BRITISH NEW GUINEA

By *GERALD T. MUIR*

[Gerald Muir, as Papuan enthusiasts in this country are well aware, is not only an enthusiastic collector of these stamps, but has been, over many years, a literally ferocious searcher and student of its archival material. We are glad of this opportunity of publishing work by him and trust this will only be a first contribution.]

It has not been possible to find a record of the date of establishment of a post office in New Guinea, but it would appear that preparations were made for postal facilities immediately upon the arrival of Sir Peter Scratchley, appointed Her Majesty's Special Commissioner, on 22 August, 1885. Evidence of this will be found by reference to Sir Peter's report of 19 September, 1885, (published in the *Queensland Government Gazette* of 10 October, 1885), and *Report on British New Guinea* by G. Seymour Fort. This evidence is also supported by the existence of a piece of cover cancelled at "PORT MORESBY NEW GUINEA" on "AUG 26 85."

The current postage stamps of Queensland were used in British New Guinea until the possession brought out its own distinctive issue in 1901. The Queensland stamps so used can be distinguished by their distinctive obliterations.

Post offices in New Guinea were issued with cancelling stamps, consisting of an obliterator or "killer," in the form of an oval of 8, 9 or 10 bars with the letters "NG" or "BNG" inset, a circular datestamp with the town name and "NEW GUINEA," "B.N.G." or "BRITISH NEW GUINEA" around the outer rim and the date in the centre, and a "REGISTERED" mark.

Cancellation of the stamps was effected with the bar obliterator. The circular datestamp, which accompanied the bar, was usually impressed on the envelope beside the stamp. From 1901, however, the practice of using the datestamp to cancel the stamps was gradually adopted.

These cancelling stamps were used from August, 1885, until the end of 1906, when they were withdrawn and replaced by circular datestamps bearing the new name of the territory - "PAPUA."

THE BAR OBLITERATORS OF BRITISH NEW GUINEA

However, as some of the post offices were only open for a very short period, it was not unusual for the cancelling stamps from a closed office to be used at a newly-opened one until the appropriate lettered ones came to hand.

In this article it is proposed to deal principally with the bar obliterators, reference only being made to the circular datestamp in order to establish a date.

The following post offices were open during the reign of the bar obliterators:

PORT MORESBY (GRANVILLE)	1885 on
SAMARAI	1888 on
DARU	1893/4 on
TAMATA	1896-1905
IOMA	1905
WOODLARKS	1896-1899
KULUMADAU	1899-1905
BONAGAI	1905
SUDEST	1899-1903
NIVANI	1899-1902
KUMUSI	1901/2-1905
KOKODA	1905

A bar obliterator, circular datestamp and registered mark were made for GIRA (1899) but never brought into use.

Years of intensive research have revealed it is possible to distinguish the bar obliterator used by a particular post office.

With stamps that have been removed from their cover, no difficulty is experienced in determining the heavy 8-bar obliteration of Port Moresby, but greater difficulty is found with the 9-bar and 10-bar types in deciding at which post office the stamps were originally cancelled. A close study has shown that there are *differences* in the obliterations, making it possible to distinguish one from the other. The bars themselves have been ignored, as, due to inconsistent inking, they are not a reliable guide, either in length or width. They do, however, present minor differences. The main differences lie in the shape of the letters "BNG," the illustrations herewith show these differences clearly.

The *earliest* type of bar obliteration consists of the letters "N.G", in thick block letters, inset in an ellipse of eight thick bars (Fig. A). This obliterator was used at Port Moresby from August, 1885, until 1 July, 1890, when it was superseded by a new one bearing the letters "B.N.G." R. J. G. Collins, writing in the *New Zealand Stamp Collector*, mentioned the existence of a *second* "N.G" obliterator, but I have failed to confirm this.

In 1886, the name of the capital was changed to GRANVILLE, in honour of Lord Granville, then Foreign Secretary. The term "Port Moresby" only applied to the harbour, while the settlements of East and West Granville were known as "Granville."

The protectorate continued to be known as New Guinea until 1888, when the title "British New Guinea" came into use.

To fall into line with the change of names, *new* cancelling stamps were introduced and came into use during 1889 and 1890, gradually superseding the old

PHILATELY FROM AUSTRALIA

"N.G" bar and "NEW GUINEA" circular datestamp. The latter was used occasionally as late as 1896.

The *first* cancelling stamp for British New Guinea was the circular datestamp, lettered "GRANVILLE. B.N.G.". The original 8-bar "N.G" obliterator continued to be used with the Granville datestamp until the latter was retired in July, 1890, due to the original name of the capital being restored in October, 1889.

This change necessitated *new* cancelling stamps and an 8-bar obliterator, containing the letters "B.N.G" (Fig. B), and circular datestamp "PORT MORESBY · BRITISH NEW GUINEA ·", were brought into use on 1 July, 1890.

The post office at SAMARAI opened with an obliterator of 9-bars, with the letters "BNG" inset (Fig. C). The letters were very thin block capitals without stops between them.

Research has revealed three distinct types of 9-bar obliterations, all differing in the style of the letters. Fig. C has been found on stamps from the Queensland stamp period to the "large" Papua overprint issue of 1906, and is authenticated by the datestamp of Samarai appearing with it on entires.

An examination of Fig. D will show that it is essentially the same as Fig. C, but the letter "B" has a large flaw at the junction of the two loops. To date this obliteration has not been seen on entire with datestamp. It is found principally on Queensland stamps on small pieces of card with very black and fully inked impressions of the obliterator. I have not seen any examples of the first B.N.G. issue but it is quite common on the lithographed series of 1907-11 and the single-colour series of 1911-15. After discussion with other students, it is the considered opinion that it *is* the Samarai obliterator in a *later* and *damaged* state. The damage must have occurred after the obliterator had been officially withdrawn, and the many copies found been cancelled per favour of the postal officials. As Samarai did the majority of the postal work it is quite possible that a second bar obliterator was supplied, but this is not thought to be the case — it being extremely unlikely that a damaged one would be issued. A number of covers bearing both this bar obliteration and circular datestamp may prove a deciding factor.

The third 9-bar obliterator (Fig. E) has been found only on Queensland stamps, and is that of SUDEST. The influx of miners in a gold rush necessitated the opening of a post office, and when the Lieut.-Governor carried out a tour of inspection in 1899, he conveyed the materials necessary for conducting a post office. It was operated by a Mr and Mrs Mahony, who also ran a trading store. When the miners departed, postal business declined, and the post office was closed about 1903. The cancelling stamps, with the exception of the bar obliterator, were returned with the obsolete "Woodlarks" and "Nivani" early in 1907.

In the 10-bar type, with stops between the letters, *five* different obliterations have been found, also distinguishable by the shape of the letters.

Fig. F is that of WOODLARKS. A post office was opened at Busai at the end of 1896, but the cancelling stamps were not brought into use until December, 1899, just after the post office had been transferred to KULUMADAU. All mail originating at Busai was merely bagged and sent to Samarai. When the post office

THE BAR OBLITERATORS OF BRITISH NEW GUINEA

was transferred to BONAGAI on 1 July, 1905, the cancelling stamps were transferred also, but with the disappearance of the Queensland stamps the bar type served no useful purpose.

The 10-bar obliterator used at TAMATA is illustrated at Fig. G. Although postal facilities were available from 1896, the necessary post office requisites were not sent to Tamata until the end of 1899. When the post office was moved to IOMA in 1905, the cancelling stamps were sent with the other equipment, but the bar obliterator was not used. It was withdrawn the following year.

In February, 1890, Sir William MacGregor established a station at MABUDAUAN in the west, but it was abandoned in April, 1893, for DARU. No record can be traced of the opening date of the post office, but it is considered to be in the financial year 1893/4. Records exist of the despatch and receipt of mails for that year. A peculiarity of the circular datestamp is that no year is shown, which also provides a stumbling block to the allocation of an opening date. However, Queensland stamps will be found cancelled with an oval rubber stamp reading "H.M. CUSTOMS DARU B.N.G." and the date "AUG 95," "OCT 95," etc., at least proving that no obliterators had been supplied at that date. The bar obliterator used at Daru is shown at Fig. H.

NIVANI is situated about 120 miles east of Samarai. A postmaster was appointed in 1895 and his essential tools of trade were delivered in December, 1899, at the same time as the material for Woodlarks and Sudest. The bar obliterator is illustrated at Fig. J and is extremely rare. In 1902 the station was moved to KULUMADAU and the cancelling stamps eventually returned to Port Moresby early in 1907.

The KOKODA post office was opened in 1905, having been transferred from Kumusi, and for a short period, the Assistant Resident Magistrate's rubber stamp did duty as an obliterator. The 10-bar obliterator (Fig. K) *originally* made for GIRA, was issued to Kokoda about December of 1905.

It will be seen that all post offices, with the exception of KUMUSI, have been covered by bar obliterators. I would like here to draw attention to the brief paragraph and illustrations in *The Australian Philatelist* for 8 January, 1919, which describes two types of 9-bar obliterations. One stamp has, in addition to the bar obliteration, the circular date stamp of Kumusi, and would tend to the theory that a 9-bar obliterator *had* been issued. However, no other copy has been seen and the fact must not be overlooked that mails from Kumusi passed through Samarai en route to Australia and that the bar cancellation shown could be that of Samarai, although neither of the descriptions fit those given above.

The post office at Kumusi was opened in 1901/02 and transferred to KOKODA on 1 July, 1905. As the latter place was supplied with a bar obliterator in 1905, it is reasonable to assume that one would have been supplied to Kumusi which was opened some four years earlier.

I would be very pleased to hear, through the publishers, from anyone who can throw enlightenment on this problem.

REVIEWS

Cyprus, Its Postal History and Postage Stamps. By W. T. F. Castle. 144 pp. plus 20 art plates. 9¼ x 7¼ in. Published by Robson Lowe Ltd., 50 Pall Mall, London, S.W.1. Price 25s. (stg.), plus 1s. postage.

To date the collector of the stamps of Cyprus has been greatly handicapped by the lack of a comprehensive handbook, and if he also had a leaning towards postal history and cancellations, he had little to refer to even in philatelic journals. Mr Castle's book therefore fills a long-felt want.

Mr Castle was formerly an Assistant Chaplain in Cyprus and knows the island well, and as he has taken every opportunity to consult official records and the writings of earlier historians, it is not surprising that he can present a vivid picture of postal conditions on the island since the British took over its administration in 1878. Of the postal services operating under Turkish rule not so much is known. Mr Castle sets out what he has been able to discover, but we think that possibly there may be records available on the Continent giving more information about the Austrian Post Office at Larnaca.

Mr Castle makes no claim to be a philatelic specialist or a professional historian, which rather disarms criticism of any imperfections, but as he has made such an excellent job of the postal history side, we think it is rather a pity he did not include all available information of interest to the specialist on the philatelic side. For instance, on page 32, relative to the 30 paras. on 1d. provisional of 1881, there is a note: "Mr B. R. Brewer records six types of this o.p., which was done, he says, in six vertical rows." A description of the types would have been of great value to specialists. We are also rather surprised to find no reference in the book to the name of Pemberton.

There is a most interesting chapter on cancellations and many readers will no doubt be surprised to discover that there are several hundred post offices and postal agencies in the island. Some of these are in tiny villages, monasteries, diligence stations and forest stations, so it follows that many of the cancellations are rare.

The book concludes with a number of appendices, the final one comprising some notes on the Forgeries of Cyprus by Dr D. S. Patton, which should be of great assistance by collectors.

Considering the importance of this contribution to philatelic literature it is a pity that a better quality paper could not have been used. Typographical errors are rather frequent, and on page 32 the final sentence of the first paragraph under the heading "The Post Office Law of 1881" does not make sense. If there is a second edition we trust these minor blemishes will be corrected.

Taken all round, Mr Castle is to be congratulated on a very fine piece of research which we can confidently recommend to all our readers, whether they are especially interested in Cyprus or not. —H.M.C.

Osterreich Spezial-Katalog (Specialized Catalog of Austria) 1850-1918. By Edwin Mueller. 144 plus 35 pp. 8½ x 6 in. Published jointly by Julius Kunz, Vienna, and the Mercury Stamp Company, 522 Fifth Avenue, New York 36, N.Y. Price (U.S.) \$5.00, plus 40c. postage.

This is the fifth edition of a specialised catalogue of Austria written in German, first published in 1927, but for the first time it is published bi-lingually. It covers not only the issues of Austria and Austrian Italy to the end of the first World War, but also the Austrian mail service in Liechtenstein and in the Levant, and the issues of the Danube Steam Navigation Company and the Danube and Black Sea Railway.

To a collector accustomed to the ordinary catalogue lists the arrangement here will at first be very confusing—and the bi-lingual feature does not help in this—but once having mastered the intricacies he will find a great amount of useful information.

The author is well known as a student of Austrian philately and his long experience ensures that the information given is as accurate as possible, and that the prices quoted reflect the state of the market. This catalogue will be essential to those who desire to study this field.

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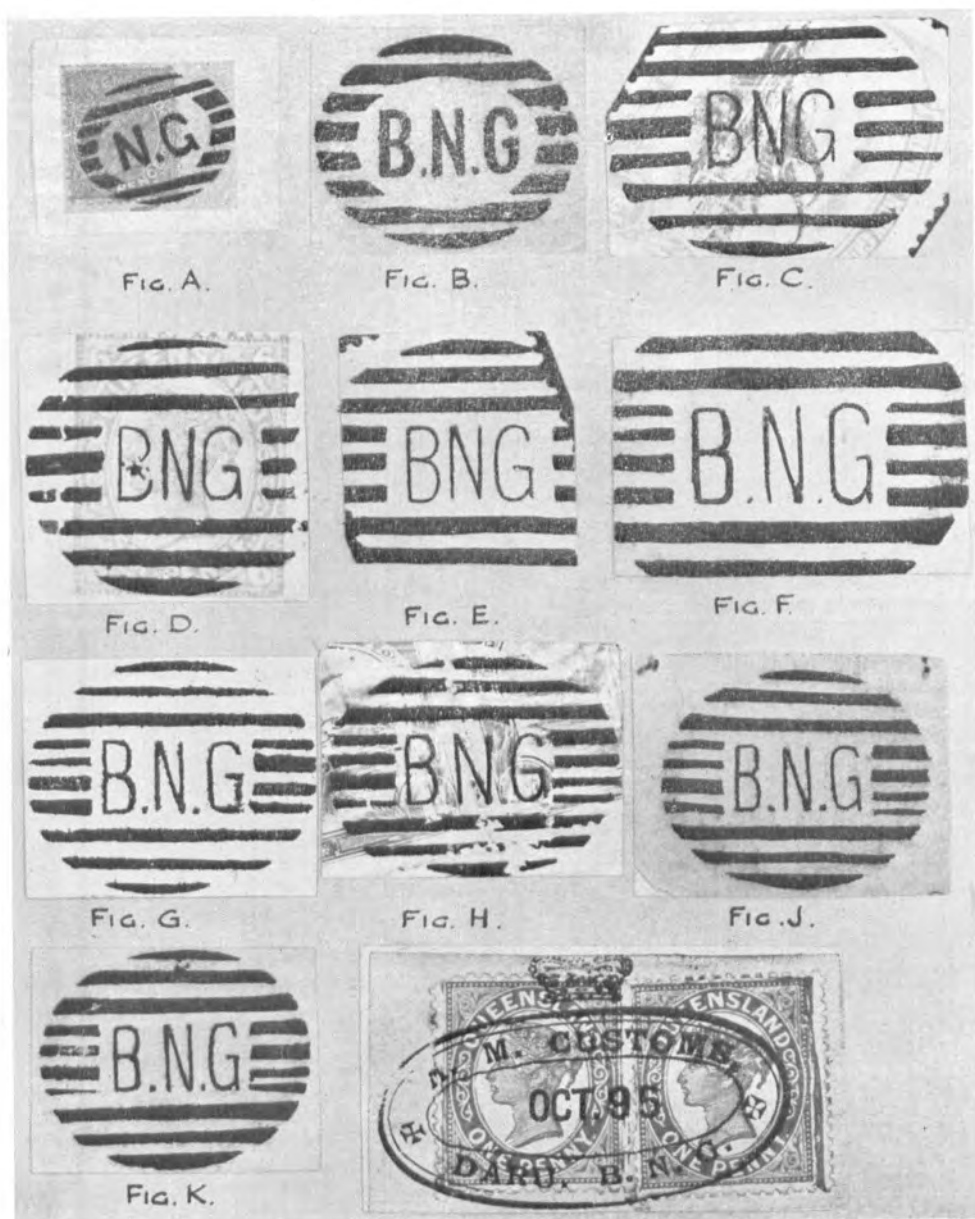
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