



The Kiwi



The Official Organ of the NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY of GREAT BRITAIN.

Affiliated to: BRITISH PHILATELIC FEDERATION
and to NEW ZEALAND PHILATELIC FEDERATION

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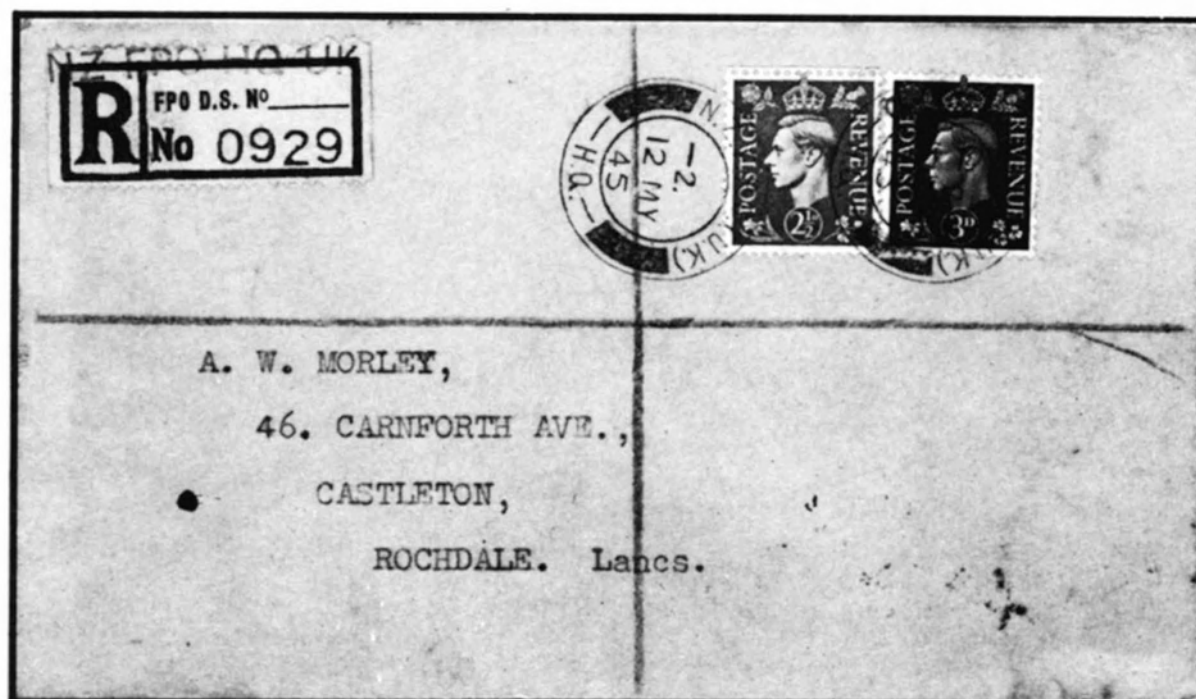
WHOLE 208

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, 26TH MARCH, 1988,
AT THE Y.W.C.A. CENTRAL CLUB, 16 - 22, GREAT RUSSELL STREET,
LONDON, WC1B 3LR, STARTING AT 2.30 P.M.

THE ANNUAL COMPETITION WILL TAKE PLACE, DETAILS OF WHICH MAY
BE FOUND ON PAGES 10 AND 11 OF THE LAST ISSUE OF 'THE KIWI'.

WHILE THE JUDGING TAKES PLACE, MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO SHOW ANY
PROBLEM ITEMS, OR RECENT INTERESTING ACQUISITIONS.

N.Z.F.P.O. (U.K.) - H.Q.



SEE PAGE 27

EDITORIAL.

The next meeting is devoted to the Annual Society Competition. This is often the first step for the collector on the path through National to International Exhibition. Even if you do not win one of the many trophies on offer, at least you can learn a great deal from the comments of the Judge.

While the judging is taking place, members are asked to bring along new acquisitions, items of interest or problem material. If you have something of interest, do let us see it. You may get the answer from another member present.

ALLAN P. BERRY

MEMBERSHIP

NEW MEMBERS. We welcome

R.C.S.Brown, 3, Salisbury Close, Willingdon,
Eastbourne, Sussex, BN22 034.
R.Craig, 36, Cornhill Crescent, North Shields,
Tyne-&-Wear, NE26 8LW.
I.H.Foster, 3, High Mill Road, Hamsterley Mill,
Rowlands Gill, Tyne-&-Wear, NE39 1HE.

RESIGNED

T.D.Canton, Stampand Ltd., P.O.Box 517, Napier, New Zealand.
Mrs. M.B.Cox, 2, Exeter Road, Dalvyhulme, Manchester.
E.A.Greatrex, 46, Knowle Park, Cobham, Surrey.
S.H.Herbert, 40, Lumley Road, Newton Hall, Durham.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

L.Bestow, P.O.Box 66, Chester, CH3 6RZ.
(previously of Sheffield.)
Dr. J.D.Hepworth, 2, Carnoustie Close, Fulwood,
Preston, Lancs., PR2 7ER.
(previously of 1, Moorgate, Fulwood.)
Mrs. T.B.Hudson, 'Earlsdon', 31, Avondale Road,
Coventry, CV5 6DZ.
(previously of Warwick.)
M.D.Jackson, 3, Seymour Grove, Aragon Court, Warwick, CV34 6LS.
(previously of Hemel Hempstead.)
A.G.Mathieson, Westbourne House, Mill Lane,
Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7DY.
(previously of Leicester.)
M.Tilley, 8A, Slimbridge Road, Burgess Hill,
West Sussex, RH15 8QE.
(previously of Abingdon, Oxon.)
R.Valentine, 140, Itchen Stoke, Alresford, Hants., SO24 0QZ.
(previously of Cavendish Square, London.)
J.E.Webster, 'Wattles', Lower Houses, Bulmer,
Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 7ES.
(previously of Clacton-on-Sea.)

MEETING HELD SATURDAY, 30TH JANUARY, 1988.

NEW ZEALAND CENTENNIALS AND EXHIBITIONS.

Alan Baker, our new Chairman, opened the Meeting at 2.30 p.m. with twenty members present. He introduced C.Goodwin from Brighton who was attending a Meeting for the first time. Apologies for absence

were received from Bert Harrad and George Riley. Alan reminded members to produce entries for the Competition to be held at the next Meeting and then handed over to Ernie Leppard who was leading for the afternoon.

Ernie started with the 1940 Centennial, showing Maori Maiden and Centennial Tower labels, a full sheet of the poster stamps produced for the Centennial Philatelic Exhibition and the set of six officially produced covers. The stamps were shown in plate blocks of all values, including the 'Official' overprints. Also shown were the joined 'ff' varieties, and the two re-entries, one each on the 1½d. and 2½d. values. Wartime covers of Intercepted Mail and one addressed to a member of the forces Reported Missing in Crete were shown to demonstrate unusual use of the stamps. This was followed by plate blocks and covers for the Otago, Canterbury, Marlborough and Westland Centennials, the latter with the 3d. value showing the colour change in blue. From the 1962 Telegraph Centennial issue there were missing colours and the vertical strip of the lower value showing colour change down the strip, ex. the Michael Burberry collection.

The second showing started with the 1963 Centenary of Railways issue, with a contemporary coloured newspaper picture of 1864, on through to the last sterling issue of the Centenary of the Post Office Savings Bank, with missing colours, flaws and inverted watermarks. The decimal issues were shown in plate blocks also, with the 1967 Centenary of the Royal Society showing the Plate Block with five numbers and inverted watermarks, the 1969 Captain Cook Bi-Centenary issue, the Centenary of the Law Society with the three cent value showing top marginal shift of the blue colour, and concluding with the 1986 Centenary of the New Zealand Police. The frames were filled by Allan McKellar showing commemorative covers with special postmarks for the Centenaries of Riverton and Petone, and various Mail Coach runs; and by John Buchanan who showed Health Stamp Covers with the 1940 Centennial slogan postmarks.

A third showing started with Ernie showing stamps, cover and labels from the Christchurch, Auckland and Dunedin Exhibitions. A postcard was shown from the 1924-1925 Wembley Exhibition and also from the 1911 Crystal Palace Exhibition, where New Zealand had pavilions. This was supported by Allan McKellar showing Exhibition and Centennial Covers, C. Goodwin with a full range of stamps with varieties for the three Exhibitions, the highlight of which was a cover from Christchurch with the full set of stamps cancelled by one of the Exhibition postmarks. Alan Baker showed a comprehensive range of postcards from the three Exhibitions, the 1906 labels including a half sheet of number 2 and plated examples of Number 7. Comparison was made between a lettercard of the Christchurch Exhibition with one from the Dunedin Exhibition shown by Allan McKellar, possibly produced by the same printer.

A fourth display, possibly a record for the Society in the time available, was shown by Allan McKellar. This was devoted to various Philatelic Exhibitions, including the Society's 21st Anniversary at the British philatelic Exhibition in 1973 for which a special date stamps was produced; Panpex in 1977, Palmplex in 1982 and Tarapex in 1986.

A vote of thanks was proposed by Alan Gardiner, who remarked on how much can be learned from the displays. The meeting was closed

by our Chairman at 5.15 p.m., with renewed thanks to Ernie for leading the afternoon, and to the members present who had helped provide such an interesting afternoon's entertainment.

E.W.L.

SPECIAL DATESTAMPS

1987 NEW ZEALAND ROYAL SHOW



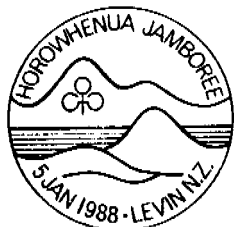
A special pictorial date stamp was used at Addington Post Office on Wednesday, 11th November, 1987, to commemorate the 1987 New Zealand Royal Show and 125th Canterbury Show.

21ST NATIONAL SCOUT REGATTA



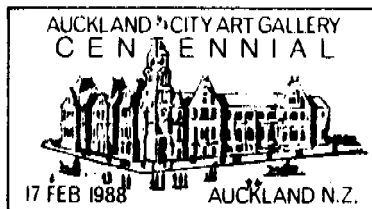
A special pictorial date stamp was used at Tauranga on Tuesday, 5th January, 1988, to commemorate the 21st National Scout Regatta.

HOROWHENUA JAMBOREE



A special pictorial date stamp was used at Levin on Tuesday, 5th January, 1988, to commemorate the Girl Guides Jamboree 1988.

AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY CENTENNIAL



A special pictorial date stamp was used at the Chief Post Office Auckland on Wednesday, 17th February, 1988, to commemorate the Auckland City Art Gallery Centennial.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL DAHLIA SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND



A special pictorial date stamp was used at the Christchurch Philatelic Sales Centre on Monday, 29th February, 1988, to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the National Dahlia Society of New Zealand.

JUNIOR MEMBERS

ALAN BAKER, CHAIRMAN.

From time to time, young people ask whether they can join the Society, and on what terms. The Committee recently considered this and felt that such interest should be encouraged.

The Committee therefore decided to create a Junior Membership for young people under the age of 18 years. They will be welcomed at Meetings of the Society, will be eligible to enter the Competition and will receive copies of 'The Kiwi'. They would not be eligible to join the Packet Circuit, but could borrow books from the Library on the counter-signature of an adult, and could arrange for an adult to bid at the Annual Society Auction on their behalf.

The reduced subscription for Junior Members will be £4-00 per annum for the time being.

DISPLAYS TO LOCAL SOCIETIES.

Ernie Leppard will be giving a display to the Philatelic Section of the Addlestone Community Association on Friday, 8th April, 1988. This Society meets at the Addlestone Community Centre, Station Road, Addlestone, and the meetings start at 7.30 p.m.

All members of the New Zealand Society of Great Britain are invited to attend this meeting.

N.Z.F.P.O. (U.K.) - H.Q.

E.W. LEPPARD

The cover illustrated on page 23 is dated 12th May, 1945, four days after the end of the Second World War. It shows the postmark of the United Kingdom Reception Area for the repatriation of New Zealand Prisoners of War. The post office was opened on 10th March, 1945, at Westgate-on-Sea, Margate, Kent, and was finally closed on 30th November, 1945. The cover also carries the registration label from this post office; there are two further strikes of the datestamp on the reverse of the cover, to which is also applied the oval registered datestamp of Margate, Kent, thereby providing further proof of the location of the post office.

New Zealand Prisoners of War from Germany and Italy were received at this reception area before repatriation to New Zealand. Other reception areas were formed towards the end of the War in Great Britain for the repatriation of serving New Zealanders, all of which used a similar datestamp, but with a number instead of the 'H.Q.' as shown. Robin Startup in his book 'New Zealand Post Offices in England' records these numbering from 1 to 9 and reports that all are fairly scarce. I should be pleased to hear from any member with examples of these datestamps, through our Editor.

THE RARE 1886 POSTAL CARD - A PUZZLE

ROBERT SAMUEL

George Branam's article on the 1886 'abnormal' postcard published in 'The Kiwi', Volume 37, pages 1 and 16 - 19, January, 1988, is an excellent report on this interesting item of New Zealand Postal Stationery. Coincidentally, I had written a similar article on the

same subject and this was published in 'The New Zealand Stamp Collector', Volume 67, pages 163 - 167, December, 1987. In retrospect I realise that I have missed an important point.

The printing record for the 1886 reply card has not been located. This, along with the printing record for the 1886 abnormal postcard (if it can be identified), may well answer some of the unsolved questions. There were, however, only two postcard printing plates manufactured in 1886. One of these would have been for the normal 1886 postcard with frame of intertwined ribbons; the other plate must have been the reply card plate.

The 1886 reply card was printed on a thin grade of buff card. The normal 1886 postcard was printed on a thick grade of card. In my article in 'The New Zealand Stamp Collector' I put forward the theory that, after printing the 1886 reply card, the words 'REPLY CARD' and '(WITH REPLY CARD)' were removed from the individual impressions on the reply card forme, and this modified forme was used to print a small supply of postcards on the remaining supply of this card - which had probably been cut to fit the reply card plate and which, if not utilised in this manner, may otherwise have been wasted. I still hold to this theory - but there is a problem.

On the normal 1886 postcard the distance between 'NEW ZEALAND' and 'THE ADDRESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE' is 9 mm. On the reply card the upper portion has a similar spacing of 9 mm between 'NEW ZEALAND' and the 'THE ADDRESS' inscription. On the lower portion this space is only 7 mm. I had missed this point in my article in 'The New Zealand Stamp Collector' and stated that the 7 mm spacing was common to both portions. George Branam made no such mistake.

If, as I have suggested, the modified reply card forme was used to print the 1886 abnormal postcard, then we should expect that about 50% of the known copies of the card would show the 9 mm spacing and 50% the 7 mm spacing. In fact I have only ever noted card with the 7 mm spacing. This still does not preclude the reply card forme being used - but the modification must have been more extensive than I originally thought. There would be little point in altering the spacing on the upper impressions as these were already identical with the spacing for the normal 1886 postcard. If any spacing was to be changed one would think it would be to increase the distance on the lower impressions from 7 mm to the 'normal' 9 mm. What seems likely is that only the lower ('REPLY CARD') impressions were modified by the removal of the wording (in this case the words 'REPLY CARD'); the upper ('WITH REPLY CARD') impressions must have been completely removed from the reply card forme. The plate would then be 'closed up' to about half its original size - and this would account for the difference in size of individual cards noted by George Branam. The smaller plate would still have been suitable for a small printing of postcards, but the sheets of card would have had to be guillotined in half beforehand.

I accept, at this stage, we can only put forward theories. The passage of time and the absence of the printing record leave no alternative. The abnormal 1886 postcard is becoming more common, but it is still a very popular item and, because it has been recognised from the earliest days of postal stationery collecting, it still deserves the title of a classic rarity. I have recorded now fourteen examples, thirteen used and one mint.

NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL PARKS

(2) EGMONT NATIONAL PARK

CECIL BRISTOW

The park area surrounds the almost perfect cone of Mount Egmont which stands over the plain of Taranaki and is regarded as New Zealand's most prominent landmark.

Captain Cook is said to be the first Pakeha to see the mountain and he named it after John Percival, Earl of Egmont and First Lord of the Admiralty, in 1770.

The first aviators who crossed the Tasman Sea from Australia in the late 1920's, when pioneering the first air routes, found Mount Egmont a most useful guide when bound for Bell Block Aerodrome, near New Plymouth.

The Maori called the mountain Taranaki and they have a legend which says that Taranaki once stood with Tongariro, Ruapehu and Ngaruhoe in the centre of the North Island, but Taranaki made passes at Tongariro's wife, Pihanga, which stands near the southern end of Lake Taupo, and they quarrelled. Taranaki lost and had to flee westwards at speed. On his way to the coast he gouged out a great furrow which became the path of the Wanganui River.

What an ingenious interpretation of the forces of nature, over the passage of time, when cooling of the earth brought great land movements and glaciers!

And how presumptuous of Captain Cook to change the mountain's already existing name. There is, as a matter of fact, an official proposal to change the name back to Taranaki though there are many dissenting voices.

The mountain was first climbed by Europeans in 1839 and by 1870 summer ascents were a popular pastime and a permanent track was established.

It was realised quite early that there was a need to protect the area, and in 1871 land within a 6 mile radius - 9.6 km. - was reserved under the Land Act.

In 1900, after the Kaitake Range had been included in the Reserve, the Government officially designated it a National Park. It has an area of 33,500 hectares.

Whilst much vegetation one would expect to find on Egmont is absent, there are varieties of common plants such as broom, koromiko, tussock grass, harebell, mountain daisy and ourisia which are not found elsewhere in New Zealand.

The forests of the park suffer from the depredations of goats and opossums. Waterfalls abound everywhere and it is said that there are as many streams as days in the year on the mountain. This helps to irrigate the surrounding farmland and produce the luscious grass for the dairy herds.

Whilst it is a relatively easy climb to the summit in summer, guidance should be sought from those who know as the weather conditions are apt to change rapidly.

Mount Egmont is one of the most accessible parks and this, in turn, has helped to give it a bad reputation. 33 lives have been lost on its slopes and a rapid weather change can turn a pleasant climb into a fatal venture.

With the winter snows there is a chance to enjoy the ski slopes.

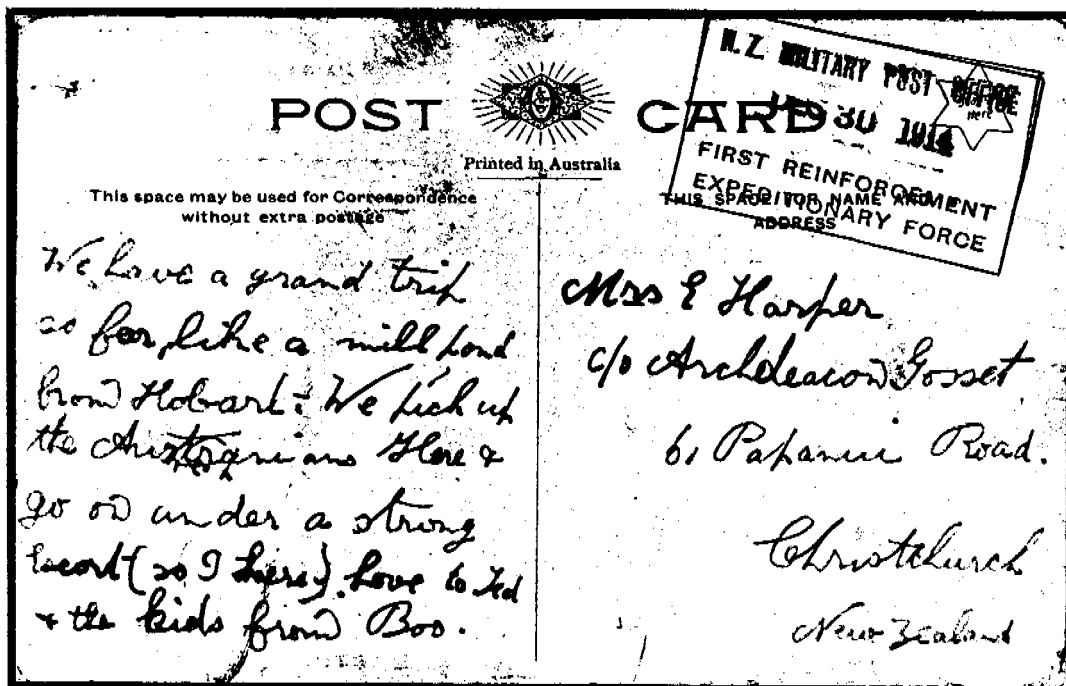


Figure 1

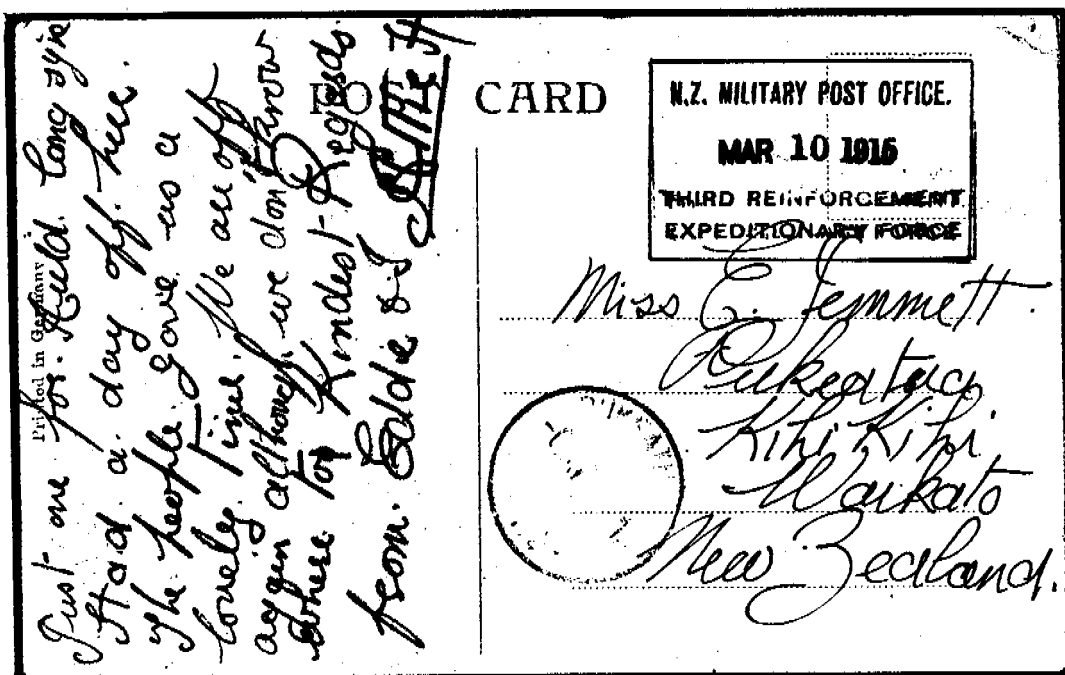
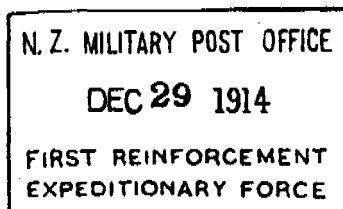


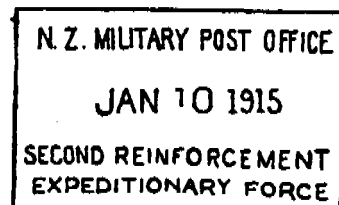
Figure 2

1915, and arriving at Suez on 26th March, 1915. Two of these three ships had earlier carried part of the Main Body.

The Official Listing of 'The New Zealand Transports of the Main Body' shows a total of 8,568 all ranks, a discrepancy that is quite insignificant. Neither of these tables mentions the First Reinforcement.



15



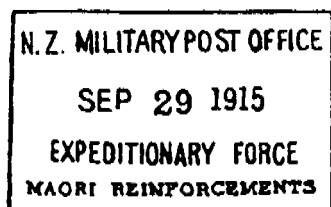
16

Volume 111 of the Postage Stamps of New Zealand illustrates the datestamps of the First and Second Reinforcements as Types 15 and 16 on page 351. These are reproduced above. Records of covers which I have been able to obtain show, however, that the datestamps of the First Reinforcement was used at least between 22nd December, 1914, (from Hobart), and 27th January, 1915, which period is during the voyage of the Second Reinforcement, which title now appears to be a misnomer.

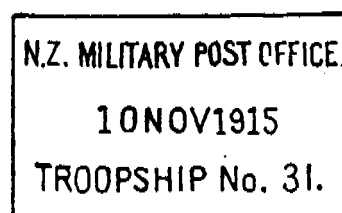
The First Reinforcement datestamp was almost certainly used in the 'Verdala', the headquarters ship of the four, since the First Maori Reinforcements sailed in another ship at the same time.

Illustrated at Figure 1 is a postcard showing use of the First Reinforcement datestamp dated DEC 30 1914, the picture being of Middleton Beach, Albany, Western Australia. The question now arises as to whether or not the Second Reinforcement datestamp was ever used. There is clear evidence that it was prepared for issue, as illustrated above. If anyone knows the full circumstances I would very much like to hear from them. If anyone has a card or cover showing its use, I would also very much appreciate a photocopy.

The Third Reinforcement sailed on 14th February, 1915, and examples are known used between 24th February and 25th March, 1915, from 'Maunganui', the headquarters ship, the latter date being the day before arrival. An example dated MAR 10 1915, also on a card from Albany, Western Australia, is illustrated at Figure 2.



18



19

Numbered Reinforcement datestamps were now being used in accordance with the Embarkation Table and this arrangement lasted for the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Second Maori Reinforcements, when the series was superseded by the Troopship series, Type 19 from page 351 of Volume 111 of the Postage Stamps of New Zealand, illustrated above. This series started with No. 30, the 'Maunganui',

making her fourth voyage. I would also like to obtain photocopies of covers or cards bearing the Maori Reinforcements datestamps, Type 18 from page 351 of Volume 111 of the Postage Stamps of New Zealand, also illustrated on the previous page.

I acknowledge with thanks the valuable assistance from Ken Humphreys, of Caloundra, Australia, and I owe the usual debt of gratitude to Volume 111 of the Postage Stamps of New Zealand. All replies to these notes, sent via our Editor, will be gratefully acknowledged.

NEW ZEALAND ONE PENNY BROWN CHALON HEAD.

ROBSON LOWE

Many years ago I attended the auction of the Mann collection of New Zealand and among my purchases was a page of the imperforate 6d. black-brown with star watermark issued in 1862. Several of the finest examples were selected for my Chalon collection when I noticed that one of the unused stamps was a one penny value. In due course this was sent to the Expert Committee of the Royal Philatelic Society, London, whose opinion stated that this was of proof status. The impression was quite early.

Recently, I have come across three used examples:-

- a) An early impression with the oval 5/OTAHUHU/A cancellation. This is definitely the black-brown colour.
- b) A medium impression in a brown shade cancelled 16 (Port Victoria).
- c) A medium impression in a greyish-brown shade cancelled 014 (Tokomairiro).

Thinking that these stamps might be colour changes caused by extreme oxidisation, I suspended half of each stamp in peroxide of hydrogen overnight. After twelve hours there was no alteration in the colour.

It is not credible that there should be three different printings of the one penny shades of brown between 1862 and 1863 so one seeks another solution. The 1862 1/- bottle-green is known as the 'Colombo' shade as it was the result of being used on a letter carried on the P. & O. Steamer 'Colombo' which struck Minicoy Island on 19th November, 1862. Most of the mail was under water for up to three months.

Many years ago I acquired an album which had been the victim of the San Francisco earthquake in 1906 and all of the engraved stamps had changed colour so as to be distinctive and attractive. So I wonder if these used examples of the New Zealand one penny brown are the result of exposures to the air in the neighbourhood of a hot spring, a solfatara or a fumarole. The stamps have been carefully smelt and there is nothing to remind one of Rotorua. Can anyone come up with any other suggestion to account for these curious stamps?

THE 1938 HEALTH STAMP DESIGN

JOHN WATTS

The designer of the 1938 Health Stamp was James Berry based on a

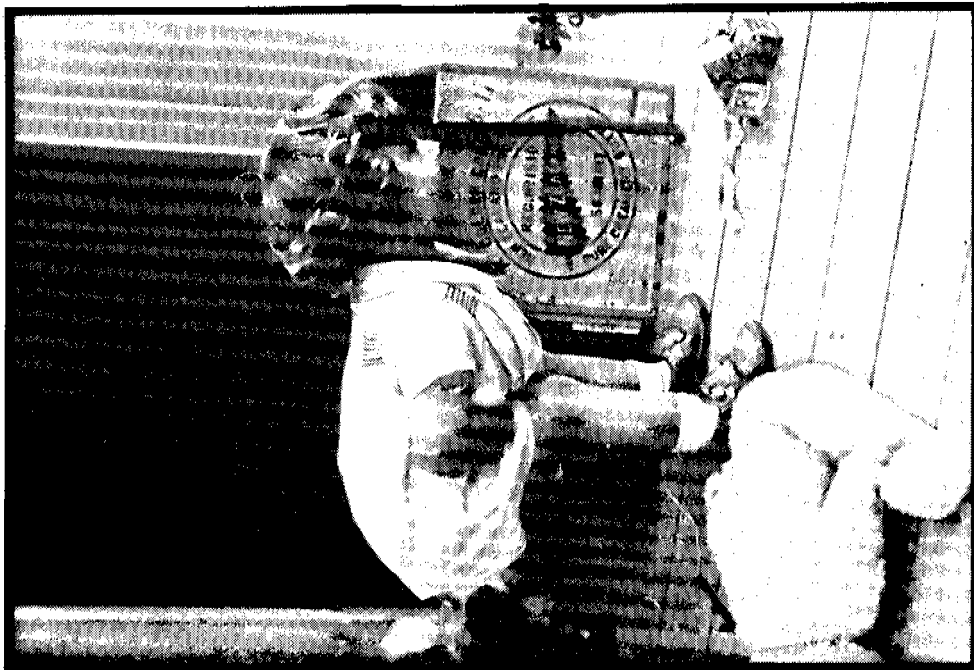


Figure 1

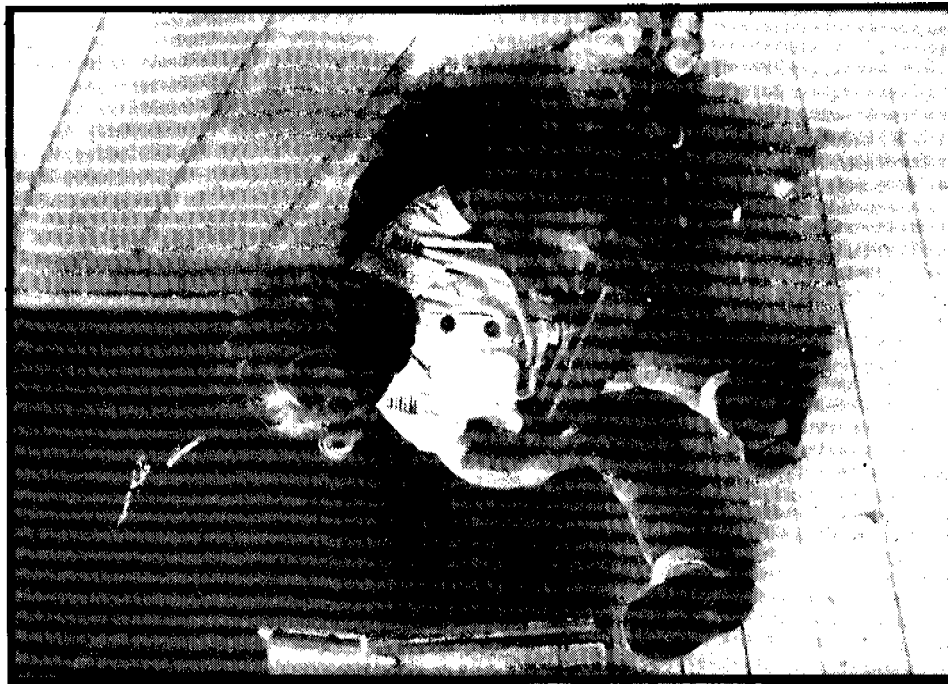


Figure 2

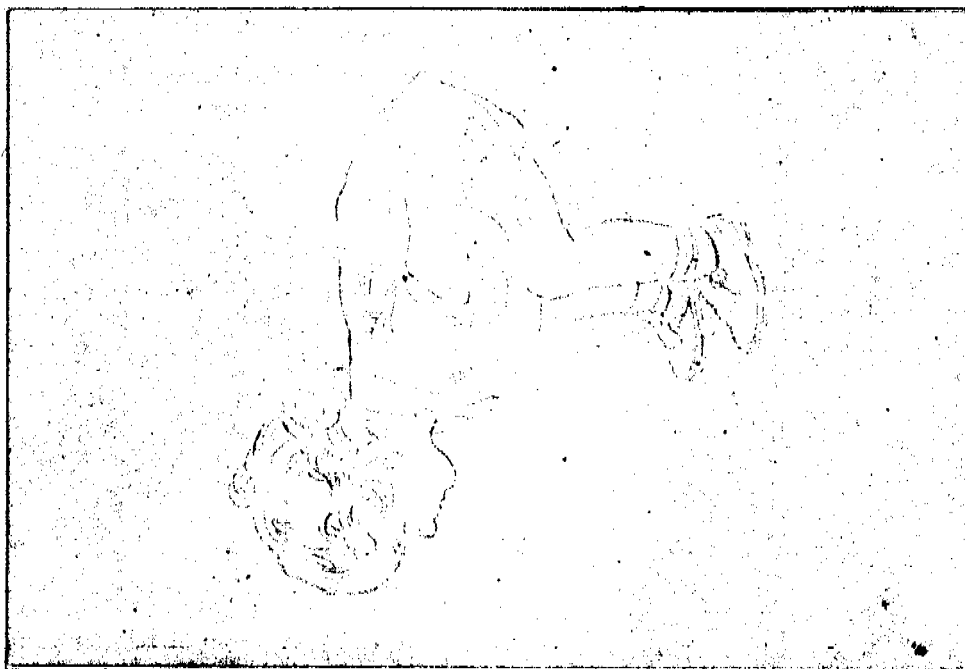


Figure 3

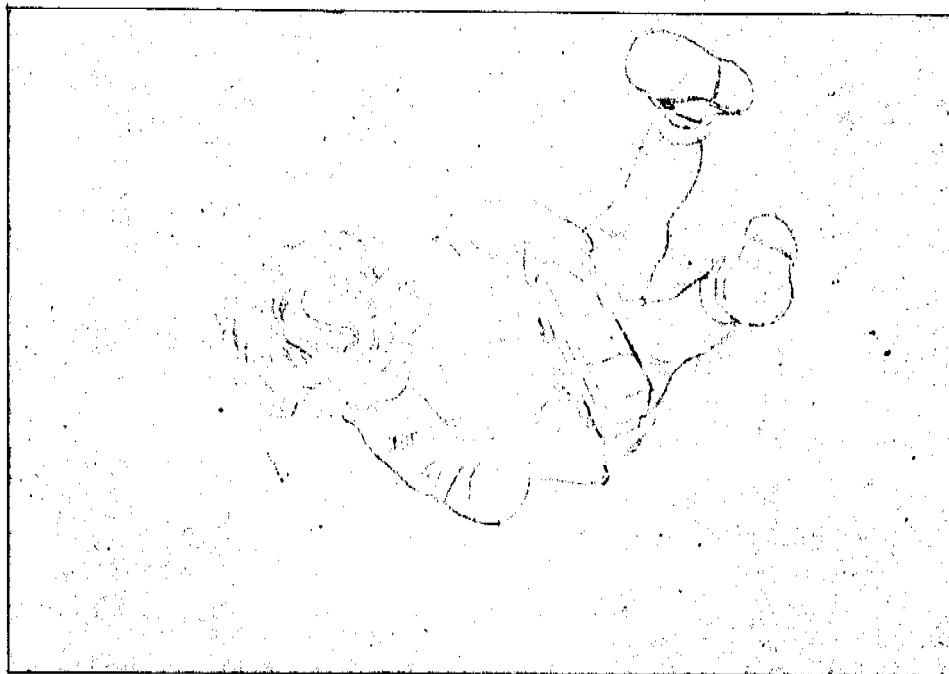


Figure 4

theme suggested by S.Hall and G.Bull of the Postal Department. The stamp depicts two small children playing on a lawn, emphasising the importance of fresh air in the life of the young child, a feature of the Health Camp movement. The manner in which the stamp design was created should be of interest to the collector of Health Stamps.

There were not two children - it is, in fact, the same child. Figures 1 and 2 show copies of the original photographs which, as an educated guess, were taken on the 'deck of the back porch'. The box in Figure 1 is seen again in Figure 2, but this time with the hinged flap top laying down - a butter box used to store children's toys!

To obtain the pose of the children for the stamp, the outline of the child has been followed on the face of the photograph with a sharp pointed instrument, such as a knitting needle, scribe or something similar. By placing a sheet of carbon paper between the photograph and a sheet of paper, the outline of the child would be transferred to the sheet of paper, and could be inked in at a later date.

Figures 3 and 4 show how the outline of the child has been transferred to the back of the photographs by picking up the top surface of the carbon paper. James Berry was now able to use the child poses and mount his tableau adding his favourite ferns and other background details.

Comparing the line diagrams with the figures on the stamp it is seen how the shading that has been added gives life to the scene and completes the picture that portrays two children.

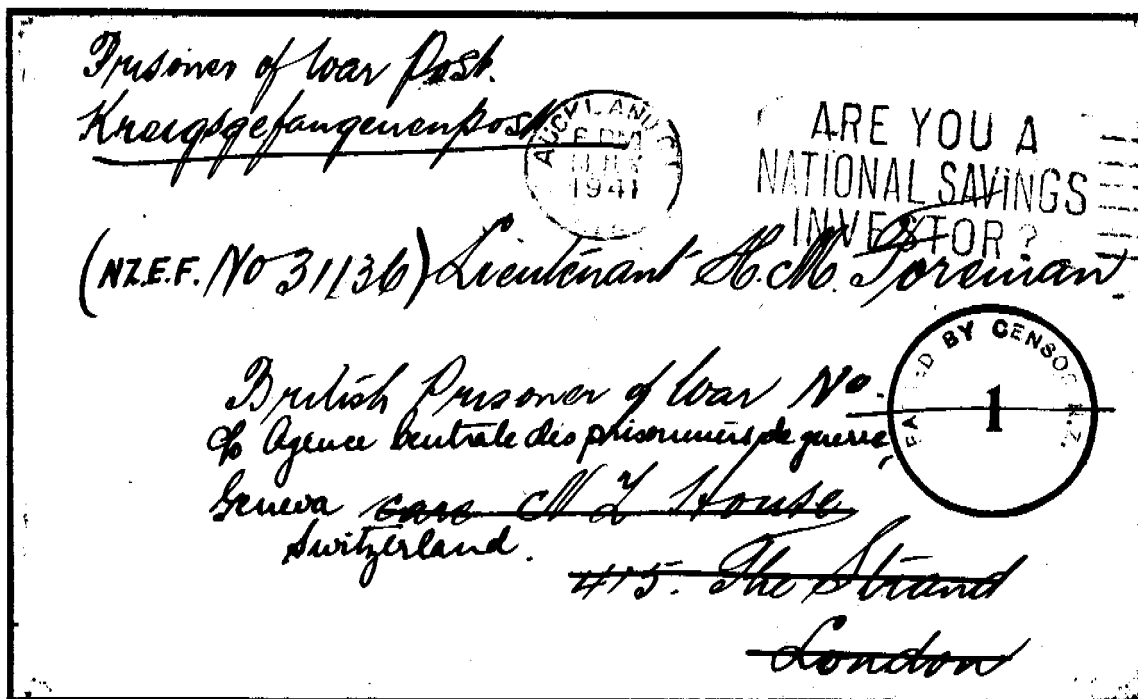
NEW ZEALAND EXPEDITIONARY FORCE BRITISH PRISONER

R.M.STARTUP

This cover was illustrated and commented on by E.W.LEPPARD on pages 63 and 66 of Volume 35 of 'The Kiwi', July, 1986. First of all, items of mail addressed to Prisoners of War must be scarce and few would have been kept by the Prisoners of War during their tribulations. I have a similar cover to the one illustrated, which is also addressed to a New Zealander in Greece. It has the surname underlined and a Stalag address endorsed in red pencil. My thinking is that such Prisoner of War mail after posting in New Zealand would be concentrated on Auckland Mail Room and there bagged to the New Zealand High Commission in London. The High Commissioner's Office by this time had built up an index as to the whereabouts of New Zealanders in Prisoner of War Camps and was far better situated to re-route mails than New Zealand. I think the rubber stamped cachet may have been applied there in London before the mail was sent on to Geneva and thence into Germany.

E.W.LEPPARD writes:-

The cover illustrated on the following page clearly adds to the points made by Robin Startup. The cover is endorsed 'Prisoner of War Post / Kriegsgefangenenpost', and is addressed to an Officer care of New Zealand House, then at 415, The Strand, London. The cover has been re-directed in red ink, 'c/o Agence Centrale des prisonniers de guerre, Geneva, Switzerland.' The superscription has also been underlined in red ink, and the brackets and 'N.Z.E.F.' added in the same manner.



It is unusual, in that it has passed free of charge through the post. This is the first example of such free mail that I have seen, and is an indication of the varying postal rates, or lack of them, that can be found. I would like to know if such free post at the time this cover was posted, 18th July, 1941, was official policy, or just a relaxation of the normal postal rates for Prisoner of War enquiries. There is no indication on the cover, by backstamp or other means, of the time the cover took to reach its destination.

MAJOR CHANGES IN NEW ZEALAND POST OFFICES.

R.M.STARTUP

From my note published in 'The Kiwi', Volume 36, pages 83 - 85, September, 1987, readers will be aware that the former New Zealand Post Office was separated into three State Owned Enterprises or Corporations from 1st April, 1987, New Zealand Post Ltd. taking over the postal services. Further, as a considerable number of individual post offices were being operated at a fiscal loss, this was covered by a Government subsidy variously said to be between \$40 and \$50 million a year.

Since the September, 1987, notes

- a) One third of New Zealand's rural delivery services were put up for public tender.
- b) Location and clearance of posting boxes throughout the country have been examined and numbers of little used boxes removed, or clearance times rationalised.
- c) There is increased containerisation/tray carriage for internal movement of mails.
- d) On 15th October, 1987, it was announced that over one third of

all New Zealand's post offices would be closed on 5th February, 1988.

- e) 'Post Shop' concept was introduced at a growing number of post offices, whereby a range of wrapping and similar stationery was marketed.
- f) There is increased attention being paid to quality measurement and control.
- g) Centralised mail processing has been introduced in most urban areas.
- h) Culler-facer-cancelling machines are to be installed early in 1988 at Auckland (two machines) and Wellington (one machine), with others possible later for South Auckland, Tauranga, Hamilton and Palmerston North.

The major shock was the announcement of the closure of 432 post offices. When the operations of individual offices were examined it was found that 60% to 75% of most transactions were for Postbank, with 10% to 15% for New Zealand Post and 10% for Telecom. As Postbank does not want a network of 1,200 branches, it will withdraw from 400 to 500 offices and, as New Zealand Post would not have a viable operation at most of these and could provide an alternative service, both corporations obtained the approval of the Government to withdraw the subsidy (a cost of \$23 million to February, 1988) and to close 432 offices.

But it seems to have been overlooked in the subsequent uproar that a further 115 offices are to be converted from permanent, that is 'staffed', offices to agencies, that is, run by a local storekeeper. Further, non-subsidised offices have also been examined and where unprofitable, alternatives are being looked at. 13 post offices were closed in October to November, 1987, for example.

Public protest meetings have been held, dozens of letters have been written 'to the Editor', petitions are flooding into the House of Representatives, but it is thought that this will have little effect in stopping the proposed closures.

Since February, 1987, when introduced in New Plymouth, more and more urban centres have introduced centralised mail processing. Readers are used to this in the United Kingdom, but this is new for New Zealand. Until now most mail posted at suburban or city branch post offices was postmarked at those offices before being taken to the central office for sorting and either onward despatch or for local delivery. Under the new system mail posted at all offices is 'strip cleared' to the central office where it is postmarked. In August, 1987, mail from all the 29 offices in the Hutt Valley started being cleared to Lower Hutt for processing. The latest change was on 16th November, 1987, when a new processing facility, South Auckland Mail Centre, was opened at Manukau City, and mail from nearly all offices in the South Auckland district is now cleared to the centre. In February, 1987, it was estimated that about 340 post offices operated postmarking machines. With the introduction of the South Auckland Mail Centre over 60 of these have had their machines taken out of use.

The postal world in New Zealand is being subjected to some

drastic and substantial changes. Though these are being greeted with very mixed feelings - dismay from localities where offices are to close, or excitement from permanent staff looking to the future - the Post Office in New Zealand will definitely never be the same again.

B.O.A.C. COMET JET SERVICE, NEW ZEALAND TO LONDON.

ANN CARTER

Can anyone help? Whilst reviewing the Airmail Catalogue by James Stapleton, I found among my own covers two apparently identical items. First Flight, B.O.A.C. Comet Jet Service, New Zealand to London, 6th April, 1963. Identical, that is, until they are turned over to show the backstamps. One reads - aircraft arrival - 0950 - 6 APR 63, the other - aircraft arrival - 1506 - 6 APR 63. Was there more than one 'First Flight'?

WHAT HAPPENED TO NEW ZEALAND'S ARCH?



Following the publication of the articles on New Zealand's Arch in Whitehall, published in 'The Kiwi', Volume 35, page 81 and page 93, September, 1986, and Volume 36, pages 18 to 19, January, 1987, our member GEORGE GIBSON has sent a further postcard showing the Arch from a different location, and with the State Coach passing through. This view should enable anyone to place its location accurately. But as GEORGE GIBSON points out, it does not help answer the question as to what happened to it after the Coronation. Any member who has information on this point is asked to write to the Editor.