

# ***THE KIWI***

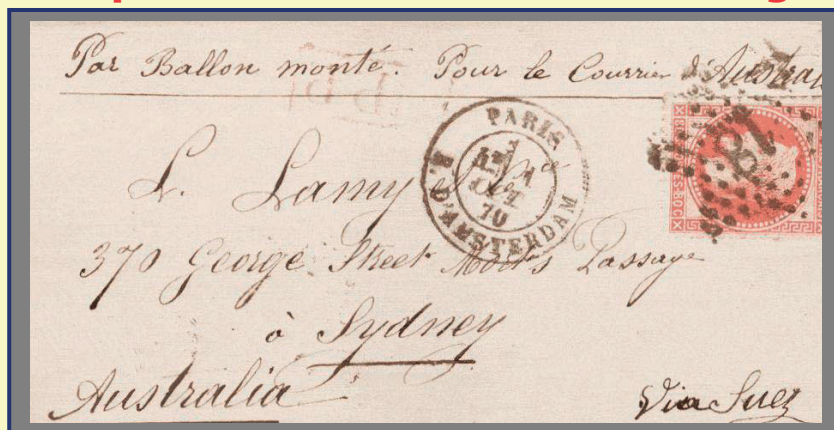
**JOURNAL OF THE NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN**



*New Zealand's 'FRAMA' Labels*



## Superb material for the discerning



The above cover was an example of the world's first airmail and is the only known Paris ballon post cover addressed to Australasia. In 2009 Mowbrays Australia sold this 1870 Siege of Paris ballon monté cover for NZ \$238,625 – then a record Australasian price for a philatelic item.



The above 13 August 1855 cover from Auckland to Birmingham, England, bears a pair of New Zealand's very first 1d full-face queen stamps. Only three covers bearing 1d SG1 FFQs are known – this being the earliest recorded date. It was acquired in 2009 by John Mowbray for a client for NZ \$138,000.

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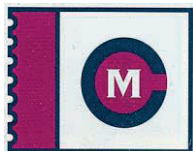
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## CONTENTS

Editorial	32
- 'The Kiwi' – Advertisers in this Issue	
- 'The Kiwi' – Current Advertising Rates	
- 'NZSGB' – Current Subscription Rates	
- Publications Available	
Membership News	33
- New Members	
Francis Field Aero-Philatelic Material	33
Society Auction - 2014	33
London 2015 – Advance Notification	33
Forthcoming Meetings	34
- London	
- North of England Regional Group	
- Midland Regional Group	
- Scottish Regional Group	
- Glasgow Weekend	
Notes of Meetings Held	
- London	35
- North of England	36
New Zealand Post – Stamp Issuing Programme for 2014	36
New Zealand's Frama Labels – and their Errors ( <i>Terry Hancox</i> )	38
Recent Auction Realisations	42
Cardigan Bay – Artist's Preliminary Sketch ( <i>Jeff Long</i> )	43
Mail Service to Rhodesia During the 'U.D.I.' Period ( <i>Paul Wreglesworth</i> )	44
Mrs Purdon Illustrated Covers - Revisited ( <i>Paul Wreglesworth</i> )	46
Experimental Flights in April and May 1931 – Connections with New Zealand ( <i>Robert Clark</i> )	47

*The Society is affiliated to: The Association of British Philatelic Societies  
the New Zealand Philatelic Federation  
and the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies.*



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# EDITORIAL

Response to articles published in *The Kiwi* continues to be excellent. But recent feedback from members following the article on 'Purdon' covers has been exceptional enabling us to scan more than 200 images. These will be placed on the NZSGB web site for all to admire (see page 46 for further details).

If there is a subject close to your heart that has not been covered in *The Kiwi* then please let me know. Even better put pen to paper and write something. It can be a full article or a page. If you have a single item that you think others would like to see, or that you know nothing about but believe others may be able to shed some light upon then do get in touch. The more we share the more we all learn.

You will notice some new adverts in this issue. I am very grateful for these as they do help to defray some of the cost of producing *The Kiwi*. Please support the dealers who support us.

Finally, the Glasgow weekend may feel a long way off but it will be here before you know it. If you want to take advantage of the Society rates for accommodation at The Marriott Hotel please book as soon as possible. Details were on the flyer distributed with your January *Kiwi* and can be found on the web site.



## THE KIWI – ADVERTISERS IN THIS ISSUE

ADVERTISER	PAGE
Mowbray Collectables	Inside Front Cover
Cavendish Philatelic Auctions	37
John & Jan Fitzpatrick	45

ADVERTISER	PAGE
Steven Zirinsky	45
Classic Stamps Ltd.	Inside Back Cover
Auckland City Stamps	Back Cover

## THE KIWI - CURRENT ADVERTISING RATES

	Full (single insertion)	Full (3 or more consecutive)	Half (single insertion)	Half (3 or more consecutive)	Quarter (single insertion)	Quarter (3 or more consecutive)
Colour	£90	£75	£75	£60	£50	£40
B&W	£75	£60	£60	£45	£40	£35

## NZSGB - CURRENT SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Membership rates are £20 (within the UK) and £25 (overseas). Payment can be made by various means including PayPal ('gift' option). Details from Derek Diamond ([drdiamond@mac.com](mailto:drdiamond@mac.com)), or via the web-site.

## PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Orders for any of our Special Publications should be sent to Derek Diamond (contact details on 'Contents' page):-

SP3	The Kiwi Volumes 1-50. Full text on CD.	£10 incl. P&P
SP5	Index to The Kiwi, Volumes 1-60. Published on CD only.	£ 5 incl. P&P
SP6	Gems of Australasian Philately.	£10 incl. P&P



# SOCIETY NEWS

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### New Members:

*A warm welcome to:*

K. Baker, Derbyshire



## FRANCIS FIELD AERO-PHILATELIC MATERIAL

There was keen competition for the folder of archive material that was gifted to the Society last year and offered to members.

Against a target price of £50 the final sum raised, for Society funds, was a magnificent £110.

Many thanks to all members who took the time to submit very generous offers for the material.



## ***SOCIETY AUCTION - 2014***

The Annual Auction will be held at 14:00 on Saturday November 29<sup>th</sup> 2014

This is always a popular event in the Society's calendar and much of the material offered last year fetched good prices whilst offering members the opportunity to acquire some nice material to add to their collections.

**Search out your surplus material now and put it to one side for this year's auction.**

Further details will appear in future issues of *The Kiwi*.



LONDON 2015 EUROPHILEX will be held at the Business Design Centre, Islington from 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> May 2015. There will be a meeting of the Society on the Saturday.

## FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

### NEXT MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

The next meeting of the Society will be held on Saturday **March 29<sup>th</sup> 2014**

at the **Union Jack Club**, Sandell Street, London, SE1 8UJ .

11:00 **Customised Advertising Labels (CALs)** Mike O'Keefe

14:00 **Advertising Covers** John Stimson

Members are invited to bring material of interest relevant to these subjects.

### NORTH OF ENGLAND REGIONAL GROUP

The next meeting of the North of England Group will be held on Saturday **May 17<sup>th</sup> 2014**. Further details will appear in the May issue of *The Kiwi*.

*Group Contact:* - Jack Lindley ☎ 0161 705 1074; **e-mail:** lindleyjack@aol.com

### MIDLAND REGIONAL GROUP

The next meeting of the Midland Group will be held in the autumn. Further details will appear in *The Kiwi* nearer the time.

*Group Contact:* - Ian Samuel ☎ 0121 449 0849

### SCOTTISH REGIONAL GROUP

The next meeting is an informal gathering, at 13:00 on Saturday **12<sup>th</sup> April 2014**, at the ASPS Congress in Perth. Meet in the cafe on the balcony of the Dewar Centre.

*Group Contact:* - Michael Kirwan ☎ 0131 447 3420; **e-mail:** michael@kirwans.net



### THE NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN GLASGOW

3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2014



Guest Speaker: - **David Beech**, former curator of Philatelic Collections at the British Library.

More details of the programme of events will be published in forthcoming issues of *The Kiwi*.

Book your accommodation **NOW** – details on the flyer sent in January, or see the web site.

# MEETINGS HELD

## NOTES OF THE MEETING HELD, IN LONDON, JANUARY 25<sup>th</sup> 2014

At this, our first meeting of the year, **Paul Wreglesworth** displayed the **1960 Definitives**, New Zealand's 'Third Pictorials'.

Paul began by pointing out that it was the first of New Zealand's definitive series to be printed by the photogravure process. This, then relatively new, technique should have created an opportunity to showcase the country and its scenery in glorious colour. In that respect it was a spectacular failure with the use of drab single colours for many of the key values. By contrast it proved to be a gold mine for collectors with 'doctor blade' flaws, misplaced or missing colours, flaws and retouches across most values. A broad range of these errors was displayed, some of which are quite spectacular (Figure 1).



*Figure 1: Misplaced red on the 1s 9d value*



*Figure 2: Double strike of the comb head*

The issue is noted for the use, by De La Rue, of an experimental perforating machine which was widely used on the lower values. The 'Chambon' perforating head or 'H-comb' perforated a complete row of stamps, together with half the vertical perforations on the rows above and below. Where two strikes are misaligned narrow or wide perms result. These are keenly collected yet, as Paul pointed out, misalignment of the standard comb can create a similar feature where strikes of the comb meet at the corners of a block and these are also of interest. Double strikes of the comb head are found on a number of values (Figure 2).

In an attempt to improve the quality of print there was a change to a chalk surfaced paper during the life of the issue. These are relatively easy to find, with the exception of the 4d value which is uncommon used and scarce in mint condition. Paul put up a scanned copy of a 16 sheet display of the 4d on chalky paper put together by Australian based member Jim Shaw.

Booklets, which can be found with comb and Chambon perforations, and coils also provide further interest in this period. The 1d and 3d values were produced in coil form for vending machines, initially from standard sheets and then, in 1963, in continuous rolls with sideways watermark and a different gauge of perforations.

Paul then explained two further coil formats. Firstly 'Lightning' coils designed for use with a hand held dispenser employed by small businesses. 2d, 2½d, 3d and 4d stamps were produced in special rolls for this device and examples of the start and end papers are scarce. 'Counter' coils, unique to New Zealand, and intended to assist counter clerks in determining the quantity of stamps sold, are well known and available for most of the lower and middle values (Figure 3). Examples of pairs and start/end papers were displayed.



*Figure 3: Counter coil pair*

The afternoon was rounded off with examples of the issue used postally with some unusual rates and destinations including Libya, Afghanistan, Vietnam, Korea, Falkland Islands and Rhodesia during the UDI period - see page 44.

## NOTES OF THE NORTH OF ENGLAND MEETING, HELD ON FEBRUARY 8<sup>th</sup> 2013

Seven members were present, with two apologies, for the group's first meeting of the year. This was a member's meeting and the following was shown:-

**Harold Howard:** Displayed QEII registered envelopes, postmarks from Ashburton and a fine block of the 1d Dominion exhibiting the 'Globe' flaw.

**John Hepworth:** Registered stationery envelopes from Queen Victoria through to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pictorial Issue.

**John Atkinson:** Showed the range of stamp formats issued in 2003 displaying Military Uniforms. As usual these were superbly presented by John to illustrate the detail in the designs and the story behind the issue.

**Paul Wreglesworth:** Described a cover to Rhodesia sent during the UDI period (see page 44), an undelivered cover from the UK to Auckland Island endorsed "No Post Office" and a series of Enschedé paper control marks on a set of stamps from Niue.

**Stuart Potter:** Showed a range of covers with American patriotic labels attached and a series of pilot signed airmail covers.

**Jeff Hook:** Brought along an Airgraph for discussion showing the 1½d Centennial stamp overprinted 10d.

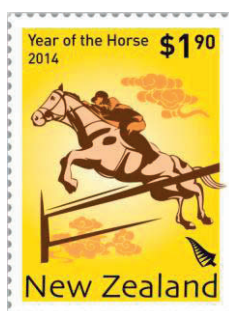
**Jack Lindley:** Displayed modern issues from 2008 to 2010. There was much discussion regarding the number of issues during that period and how few of the stamps that those present had seen used on commercial covers.



## NEW ZEALAND POST – STAMP ISSUING PROGRAMME FOR 2014

The programme announced by New Zealand Post for this year is as follows:

January 8 <sup>th</sup>	2014 Year of the Horse and the 2013 Collector's Folder
February 2 <sup>nd</sup>	2014 Game Bird (New Zealand Game Council)
February 5 <sup>th</sup>	New Zealand Native Seaweeds
March 5 <sup>th</sup>	Construction of a Nation
April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Anzac 2014
May 7 <sup>th</sup>	Special Issue
June 4 <sup>th</sup>	Matariki 2014
July 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Kiwiana
August 6 <sup>th</sup>	WWI Centenary
September 3 <sup>rd</sup>	2014 Children's Health, Annual Collector Packs and a Special Issue
October 1 <sup>st</sup>	Christmas 2014
November 5 <sup>th</sup>	The Hobbit: There and Back Again
November 14 <sup>th</sup>	Baypex 2014
November 19 <sup>th</sup>	Ross Dependency and the Annual Album



*Four stamps issued on January 8th by New Zealand Post to celebrate the Chinese New Year (Year of the Horse)*





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Lot: 1130

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# NEW ZEALAND'S FRAMA LABELS – AND THEIR ERRORS

*Terry Hancox*

Scrutiny by security printers allows us to use stamps in the image that the designer originally intended. But what would happen if you printed the stamps individually, in the denomination of your choice, when you wanted?

Such was the intention of the trial undertaken by NZ Post back in 1984, when they introduced 'print as you go' labels to the public. This article shows that the printing of postage labels mimics closely that of normal stamps, producing similar printing errors, albeit, done in front of the customer.

New Zealand Post introduced new technology in 1984 in the form of 'stamp label vending machines' to allow customers the flexibility to purchase 'stamps' other than across the Post Office counter or at times when the Post Office was busy or closed. The original label was relatively crude, and printed in red on plain paper.

Frama AG of Switzerland provided the machines and had already installed them successfully in Great Britain and Australia, where the term 'Frama' became synonymous with the label as opposed to the manufacturer of the machine.

The early trial machines in 1984 had buttons relating to preset label values - 24c, 30c and 35c (Figure 1). Later machines (*illustration on the front cover*) had a numerical keypad through which labels to any value, between 1c to \$99.99, could be obtained (Figure 2). Neither of the machines gave change but a residual label was produced automatically that could be used for postage or redeemed at any Post Office.

The 1984 trial was somewhat of a success, but the initial machines were monopolised by collectors and those in the trade with limited public use.

Since the initial Frama trial in 1984, there have been six designs of backing paper (Figures 3 – 8 below). All these latter production issues have a consistent forme in red showing the value and country name.



*Figure 1: 1984 Trial label*



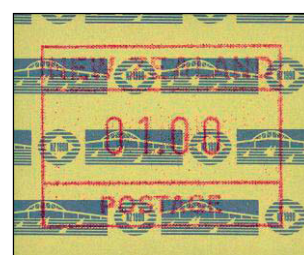
*Figure 2: 'Non-button' label*



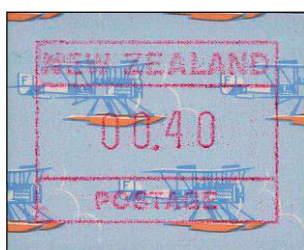
*Figure 3: 1986 Map Design*



*Figure 4: 1988 Flag Design*



*Figure 5: 1990 Exhibition*



*Figure 6: 1990 Seaplane*



*Figure 7: 1992 Maori Design*



*Figure 8: 1996 Rafter Design*

## The '00.00' Testing Label – Proofs

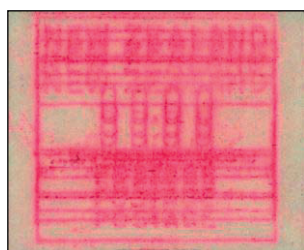
Just like any home printer, there is a significant amount of user intervention required to replace paper, print ribbon (ink), or to correct misfeeds. The Post Office clerk undertook this role, typically in front of the customer. Once the mechanism was maintained, the clerk had the ability to 'test' the function of the machine by depressing a 'test button' inside the machine, producing a nil value (00.00) label. The '00.00' testing label (Figure 9) is therefore relatively common and equates somewhat to the security printer producing proof material. The question still remains 'why were they made available to the public in such numbers'?



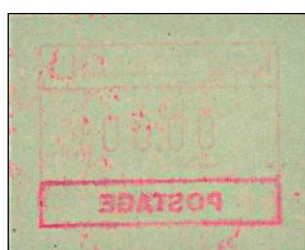
*Figure 9: Examples of the nil value test labels from the 1984, 1990 and 1992 Frama issues*

## The '00.00' Testing Label Errors – Printer's Waste

Not all testing labels were perfect. Errors appeared and varieties are common from all Frama printings. It is interesting to note that a significant amount of this kind of material is available on the market when perhaps it should have been destroyed by the clerk.



*Figure 10: 1988 Flag Design testing label with at least four prints on the reverse*



*Figure 11: 1990 Seaplane Design testing label with partial offset on the reverse*



*Figure 12: 1992 Maori Design label with double print of the '00.00' on the the testing label.*

## Printed on Plain Paper – Paper Variation

Apart from the original trial Frama issue, all others have identical footprints and those on plain papers cannot be differentiated.



*Figure 13 and 14: 1986 Map Design '00.05' and '00.25' values printed on plain paper.*

It is not uncommon to find examples of '00.00' testing labels printed on plain paper from zealous clerks wishing to conserve the printing rolls. Labels on plain paper with values other than '00.00' are either due to the testing paper being left in the machine by accident, or as the result of the clerk clearing a fault with the delivery of the label.



## Printed on the Reverse

Because of the machine testing process it is common to find '00.00' value testing labels with printing on the reverse, but other values are scarce.

This error is relatively easy to understand. If the roll of blank paper requires replenishment, the operator may inadvertently insert the new roll with the 'face' reversed, giving a normal print of the form - but on the wrong side of the label. The printing is oriented correctly but the ink spreads across the gum, resulting in a blurred appearance.

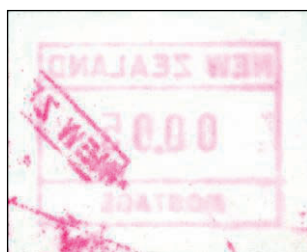


**Figure 15:** 1986 Map Design  
'00.25' printed on reverse.



**Figure 16:** 1990 Seaplane Design  
'00.40' printed on reverse.

## Offset Prints on the Reverse



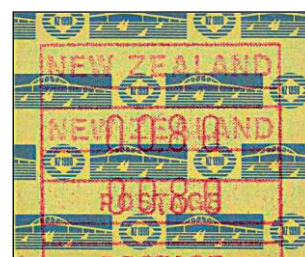
**Figure 17 and 18:** '00.40' Flag Design and '00.05' Maori Design offset on the reverse of the label.

As with sheet stamp printing, when the press cycles with no paper and leaves an image on the roller, an image is picked up on the reverse of the next sheet through. So it is here, in miniature, with the offset initially quite strong, weakening as subsequent labels are printed. Often these images are blurred, or contain multiple images. Examples offset on the reverse present a mirror image of the forme.

Partial offsets are found, but are relatively scarce. These arise where part of the forme is 'printed' onto the backing plate, due to 'end of roll' or paper continuity problems, where only part of a label is dispensed.

## Double or Multiple Prints

Errors caused by jamming or improper operation of the paper advance mechanism results in labels with double or multiple prints of the footprint. Miscut labels may also be produced in this manner, being either shorter or longer than normal. Other than the '00.00' testing label, these are one of the most common errors found.



**Figures 19:** 1986 Map Design with '00.01' and '00.10' printed together.  
**Figure 20:** 1990 Exhibition Design with a double print of '00.80'.

## Partial Prints – Colours Partially Omitted



**Figure 21:** 1988 Flag Design '00.40' partial print.  
**Figure 22:** 1986 Map Design '00.40' dry print with 'POSTAGE' omitted.

It is not uncommon to find labels with parts omitted due to either bad positioning of the printing ribbon, or damage to it. For Frama labels, partial prints can also be produced when print head and backing plate are out of alignment. Only the top or bottom portion of the footprint is printed as a result. This type of fault can be corrected by the clerk's intervention.

## Circular Stickers – Confetti Flaws

With labels issued from 1988 onwards, small green, large green, red or purple circular stickers were used to secure the start of the roll of paper and would normally be removed when a new roll was inserted into the machine. The Frama machines operated on the principle that they would dispense some 1200 labels and then ‘close’. The roll of paper would normally last for some 1300 labels allowing the clerk to prime and test the machine. Such ‘waste’ is also found on the market in unprinted lengths.



**Figure 23:** 1988 Flag Design with small green sticker



**Figure 24:** 1990 Exhibition with large green sticker



**Figure 25:** 1992 Maori Design with large purple sticker

## Reel Joins



**Figure 26:** 1990 Seaplane Design with reel join – lower part has design inverted

As described previously, the print rolls contained sufficient paper to correspond with a fixed printing allowance by the Frama machine. However, labels exist where they are obviously printed across a join between two reels.

Cost conscious clerks would create ‘new rolls’ from those lengths left unprinted when the Frama machine indicated ‘end of roll’; some 100 labels before the actual end. Several ‘waste’ ends, when combined, would be sufficient for significant additional usage of the machine.

## Variations in Printing – Dry or Heavy Prints



**Figure 27:** 1986 Map Design with dry print of ‘00.01’



**Figure 28:** 1988 Flag Design with pronounced over inking



**Figure 29:** 1992 Maori Design - over inked, obliterating the top panel with blurring elsewhere

Labels that are faintly printed or have extraneous blotches of red ink are relatively common. The Frama machine operated with continuous rolls of red print ribbon. When new it produced relatively heavily inked impressions and, unless replaced when the machine was maintained, would continue to print until the ink was exhausted at which point the prints were either very faint or completely illegible.

## Joined labels – Imperforate



**Figure 30:** 1992 Maori Design strip of three joined '00.01' labels due to poor operation of the blade designed to separate the labels

## Varieties

Examples, though unusual, are found with the second and third '0' of the value broken - bottom right and mid right respectively. These occurred at Wellington on the first day of issue of the 1986 Map Design paper.

The 1992 Maori Design can be found with a red flaw, which developed between the 'N' and 'E' of 'NEW', from the Frama machine installed at the Philatelic Bureau in Wellington.



**Figure 31:** 1986 Map Design '00.00' testing label with broken third '0'.

## Conclusion

The production of Frama labels and regular postage stamps, by security printers, is similar in many respects. Printing problems happen with both. With labels, these occur in front of the customer and, when it happens, present the opportunity to gain an interesting error that will either frustrate or amuse.

## RECENT AUCTION REALISATIONS

### Argyll Etkin Ltd, London. 4th October 2013

Lot	Description	Realised (Est.)
302	1891 Bock & Cousins progressive Die Proofs in black on unwatermarked paper numbered 1, 4, 7 or 8. Fine and scarce.	£800 (600 - 700)
307	1905-6 1d Universal, from 'dot' plate, in mint imperf strip of four with large holes at sides. Sold in penny-in-the-slot machines. S.G. 365	£250 (160 - 200)
309	1906 Christchurch Exhibition ½d -6d set of four fine used. S.G. 370/3, £375.	£180 (100 - 120)
320	1935 Perf 14x15 3d Chocolate airmail stamp in a block of four, superb unmounted mint. S.G. 548a £520+	£270 (140 - 160)
321	1958 2d Surcharge applied to the 1953 issue 1½d brown-lake in error, in a mint corner block of six with plate number '13', lightly mounted. S.G. 763b, £780++	£430 (300 - 350 )
323	Great Barrier Island Pigeon Post. Complete flown 'Flimsy' pigeongram bearing 1/- blue-green pigeongram stamp tied by violet handstamp (Oct 27), with printed 'Pigeongram Services' envelope for local delivery.	£700 (500 - 600 )



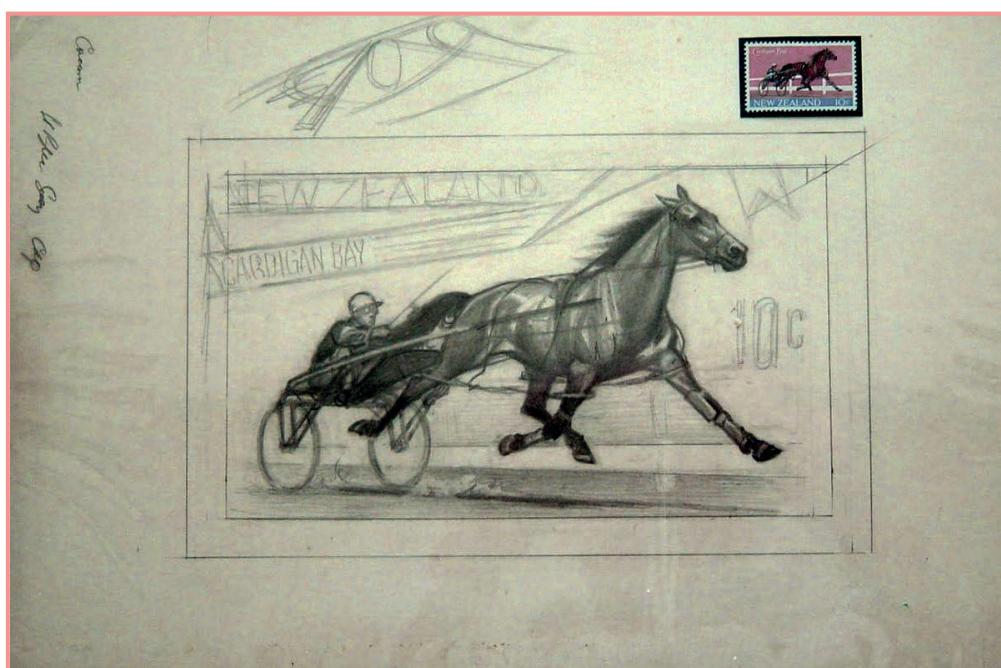
# CARDIGAN BAY – ARTIST’S PRELIMINARY SKETCH

*Jeff Long*

In the November 2013 issue of *The Kiwi* a series of colour separation plate proofs for the 1970 stamp were shown which depicted the famous pacer Cardigan Bay (Ref. 1). These give an insight into part of the process used in modern stamp production.

Before the printer’s work begins however artwork needs to be prepared. This may go through a number of iterations before a suitable image is ready to be turned into a stamp and I thought members would like to see an early stage sketch, from my collection, produced by artist L.C. Mitchell for the Cardigan Bay issue.


This preliminary sketch (Figure 1), which is at a much larger scale (almost A3 in size) than the finished stamp, captures the designer’s early ideas which ultimately were translated to the issued stamp.



**Figure 1:** *The Artist’s preliminary sketch for the 1970 Cardigan Bay issue.*

[reduced]

**Reference:**1. Wreglesworth P., ‘Cardigan Bay – Colour Separation Plate Proofs’, *The Kiwi*, vol.62, no.6, pp132, November 2013.



### Have you got a computer and access to the web?

Then check out the Society’s web site for details of meetings, ‘Discussion Board’ and articles on New Zealand stamps and postal history originally published in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*.

Check out the recently added information on ‘Mrs Purdon’ covers – more than 200 images.

[www.nzstamps.org.uk/nzs gb](http://www.nzstamps.org.uk/nzs gb)

## MAIL SERVICE TO RHODESIA DURING THE 'U.D.I.' PERIOD

*Paul Wreglesworth*

In November 1965, Rhodesia, under Prime Minister Ian Smith, declared independence from the United Kingdom. Following Unilateral Declaration of Independence (U.D.I.) many countries refused to recognise the new Rhodesian government and, having declared it illegal, applied a range of economic sanctions.

Stamps issued by Smith's regime were considered invalid and mail bearing them was treated as having been posted unpaid and taxed accordingly. Some countries suspended all postal services with Rhodesia.

The cover here (Figure 1), posted from Waitara on January 11<sup>th</sup> 1966 to Umtali, was a victim of the suspension of postal services between Kenya and Rhodesia in the months immediately after UDI was declared. On arrival at Nairobi (from where it would normally have been forwarded on to Rhodesia) it was intercepted and forwarded to the 'Returned Letter Office' (RLO) where it was endorsed 'NO SERVICE', backstamped 'Nairobi RLO', 16 JA 66, and returned to New Zealand by surface mail.

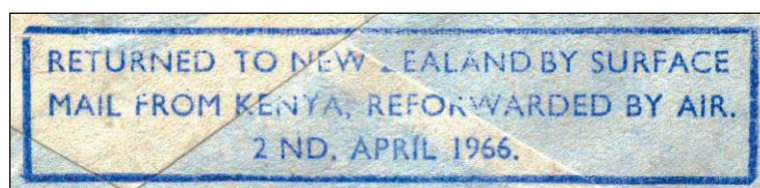


**Figure 1:** Posted shortly after UDI was declared this cover was undelivered, as Kenya had suspended mail services with Rhodesia, and was returned to New Zealand. It was re-sent, via South Africa, three months later.

The New Zealand Post Office re-forwarded the letter by air on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1966, via South Africa, and endorsed the cover, on the back, with a special, three line, rubber cachet explaining to the addressee why there had been a delay in delivery (Figure 2).

This particular cover was part of one of two known consignments of mail posted in the first two months of 1966 and held by the Kenyan Post Office before being returned by surface mail to New Zealand.

Mail from the second known  
*The Kiwi* Volume 63, No.2



**Figure 2:** A boxed cachet, added to the reverse of the cover, giving an explanation to the addressee for the delayed delivery.



consignment was treated in exactly the same way and re-forwarded, via South Africa, on April 16<sup>th</sup> (Figure 3). On this occasion however the explanatory cachet applied by the New Zealand Post Office was modified. The original 2<sup>nd</sup> April date was crossed out by pen and a new date added by rubber stamp indicating the mail was re-forwarded on April 16<sup>th</sup> 1966.

Examples of mail from New Zealand to Rhodesia are known re-posted on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April 1966. It is possible that other consignments were handled in this way and I would be interested to hear of other covers, particularly with different dates of posting.

*I am indebted to Keith Harrop of the Rhodesian Study Circle for information regarding my cover and for the additional example shown in Figure 3.*



**Figure 3:** Aerogramme (right) from Wellington (9 FE 66) to Salisbury, returned from Kenya and re-forwarded by air on April 16<sup>th</sup> 1966. The explanatory cachet (enlarged, left) is a modification of the original mark used on 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

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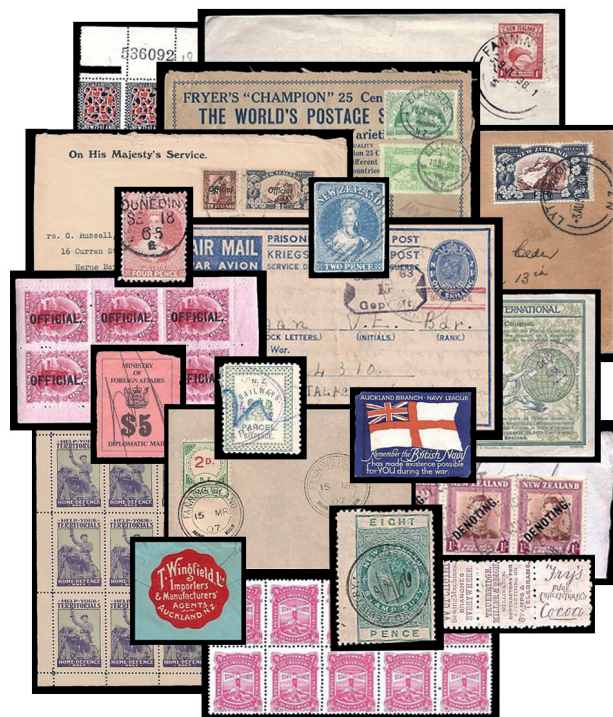


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# MRS PURDON ILLUSTRATED COVERS – REVISITED

*Paul Wreglesworth\**



John Watts' article on this subject last year (Ref. 1) created a lot of interest.

Several individuals have shared details of covers in their collections and this, together with information on others that have appeared at auction in recent years, has enabled us to analyse both the quantity and range of subjects that Mrs Purdon covered.

So far we are aware of 235 different covers between 1947 and 1961; there will certainly be more that we have yet to record. 99 separate events, or issues, are represented and whilst some appear to be unique others were painted multiple times by Mrs Purdon with just slight changes to the design. For example, seven variants of the 1954 Health Issue are recorded. She was at her most prolific in the early 1950s.

The numbers are summarised in the table below showing, for each year, the number of covers recorded and then the number of unique issues or events studied by the artist. A few covers are known from New Zealand's dependencies and three from other countries. These are listed separately.

All 235 images have been scanned and will be placed on the Society web-site. A separate pdf file has been created for each year with all the images together with any additional relevant information concerning each cover. If anyone spots any errors or, more importantly, has covers not included then please contact the editor.

YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF COVERS	UNIQUE IMAGES OR EVENTS
1947	1	1
1948	0	0
1949	3	1
1950	39	14
1951	42	18
1952	29	13
1953	24	9
1954	21	7
1955	8	3

YEAR	TOTAL NUMBER OF COVERS	UNIQUE IMAGES OR EVENTS
1956	21	7
1957	8	3
1958	8	3
1959	1	1
1960	9	8
1961	1	1
Dependencies	17	7
Other Countries	3	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>99</b>

*\* This review, the analysis shown in the table and the files which will be placed on the web site are based on information supplied by Auckland City Stamps, A. Baker, A. Hope, S. Jones, J. Lindley, S. Potter, I. Samuel and Paul Wreglesworth.*

## References:

1. Watts, J., 'Mrs Purdon Illustrated Covers', *The Kiwi*, vol62, no.5, pp100-103, September 2013.



# EXPERIMENTAL FLIGHTS IN APRIL AND MAY 1931

## – CONNECTIONS WITH NEW ZEALAND

*Robert Clark*

By 1931, the Dutch airline KLM were operating a regular mail service between Amsterdam and Batavia in the Dutch East Indies (modern day Jakarta in Indonesia) while the Imperial Airways service to the East only went as far as Delhi. Keen to extend their service to Australia KLM planned an experimental flight between Batavia and Melbourne to take place in May, 1931.

This panicked Imperial Airways who felt that their prestige depended on being the first to fly an official air mail from Europe to Australia. The decision that there would be two experimental air mails from Britain to Australia with the first on 4<sup>th</sup> April and the second on 25<sup>th</sup> April was made on 28<sup>th</sup> March 1931, only a week before the first flight (Ref. 1). The plan was for Imperial Airways to fly the mail to Darwin in Australia from where it would be flown by Qantas from Darwin to Brisbane and by Australian National Airways (ANA) from Brisbane to Melbourne. Despite the Post Office only having seven days to inform the public, 15,000 items were sent on the first flight to destinations beyond Delhi including 5,940 to Sydney with the Sydney number including mail addressed to New Zealand (Ref. 2).

This article shows examples of covers to and from New Zealand sent on the Imperial Airways and KLM flights and makes use of Douglas Walker's excellent detailed account of the experimental flights in volume 2 of 'Airmails of New Zealand' (Ref. 2). It also includes information from contemporary reports in the 'Auckland Star' and the 'Evening Post' of Wellington (available online at: [www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz](http://www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz)) that is not in Walker's work.

### First Experimental Flight

The registered cover to Auckland (Figure 1) is franked with 1s 7d, made up of 1s 4d postage and 3d registration fee. The cover is postmarked in Birmingham on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1931 and has a Sydney backstamp on 29<sup>th</sup> April. The normal Imperial Airways service to Delhi left Croydon on 4<sup>th</sup> April and arrived in Karachi on the 12<sup>th</sup>. The mail was flown from Karachi on 13<sup>th</sup> April on the DH 66 'City of Cairo', but on 19<sup>th</sup> April it crashed at Koepang in the Dutch East Indies. The mail was saved, but the aircraft could not continue. ANA were contacted and Kingsford Smith flew from Sydney to Koepang in the 'Southern Cross' on 21<sup>st</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> April to pick up the mail which was flown from Koepang to Darwin on 25<sup>th</sup> April. Qantas then flew it from Darwin to Brisbane on 27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> April and ANA from Brisbane to Sydney on 29<sup>th</sup> April where the mail for New Zealand was off-loaded.

Walker reports that the mail arrived in New Zealand on 5<sup>th</sup> May, but according to contemporary newspapers, the mail was split and sent from Sydney to Auckland on the 'Niagara' on 30<sup>th</sup> April - 4<sup>th</sup> May and to Wellington on the 'Maunganui' on 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> May. According to the 'Auckland Star' on 5<sup>th</sup> May:



**Figure 1:** Britain to New Zealand on the first experimental flight  
*[reduced to 70%]*



*"Among the mail which arrived in Auckland by the Niagara yesterday were letters by the first direct air mail from England to Darwin, Australia. ... The number of letters which arrived in Auckland via the air route was small; in fact, the postal officials did not at first notice them among the mail from Australia. Once they reached Darwin they lost their identity, said a postal official, and just became part and parcel of the ordinary mail."*

The 'Evening Post' of Wellington for 6<sup>th</sup> May reported:

*"Included in the mail which arrived in Wellington by the Maunganui yesterday was a number of letters which formed part of the first air mail service from London to Australia."*

The 'Evening Post' article goes on to report that the time taken by the air mail was the same as that for the sea mail from Britain via the USA.

## Return of the First Experimental Flight



**Figure 2:** New Zealand to Great Britain on return first experimental flight.  
[reduced to 70%]

Mail was accepted in New Zealand for the return of the Imperial Airways service and Walker reports that the number of items sent from New Zealand to Britain was 335 (209 ordinary, 106 registered) with a further 115 to intermediate destinations. In comparison, more than 31,000 items were flown from Australia to Britain (Ref. 1). The air fee per ½oz was 1s0d to the Straits Settlements, 1s 3d to India, and 2s 0d to Britain and Europe in addition to ordinary postage of 2d.

This was considerably higher than the rate from Britain of 1s 4d. The 'Evening Post' on 6<sup>th</sup> May put the blame on Australia, reporting:

*"... rate is based on the 2s charge made by Australia, the only additional charge made by New Zealand being by 2d per letter."*

However, this does not really hold water as the air fee on the service from Australia to Britain was 1s 9d.

The registered cover to England (Figure 2) is postmarked at Auckland on 16<sup>th</sup> April and has a Sydney backstamp of 21<sup>st</sup> April along with the official Australian first flight cachet on the back. It is franked with 2s 6d, made up of 2d ordinary postage, 2s 0d air mail fee and 4d registration fee.



**Figure 3:** New Zealand to Karachi on return first experimental flight.  
[reduced to 70%]

Mail was accepted from New Zealand for intermediate destinations. The cover postmarked in Christchurch on 16<sup>th</sup> April (Figure 3) is addressed to Karachi where it was backstamped on 6<sup>th</sup> May. The cover is correctly franked with 1s 5d, but is spoiled by having a fake Kingsford Smith signature.

The New Zealand mail was sent from Wellington to Sydney on the 'Ulimaroa' on 17<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> April and joined the return experimental flight at Sydney on 24<sup>th</sup> April. It was flown to Brisbane by ANA on 24<sup>th</sup> April, from Brisbane to Darwin by Qantas on 25<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> April, by Kingsford Smith from Darwin to Akyab, Burma on 27<sup>th</sup> April - 3<sup>rd</sup> May and by Imperial Airways to Delhi on the 'City of Karachi' on 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> May. The mail was transferred to another plane and flown Delhi - Jodhpur on 5<sup>th</sup> May and on to Karachi on 6<sup>th</sup> May when the cover in Figure 3 was backstamped on arrival. The mail arrived in London on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

## Second Experimental Flight



**Figure 4:** Great Britain to New Zealand  
on the second experimental flight. [reduced to 60%]

The cover addressed to Christchurch (Figure 4) is postmarked in London on 24<sup>th</sup> April and has a Sydney transit of 14<sup>th</sup> May and a Christchurch backstamp for 19<sup>th</sup> May. The franking is 1s 4d. Only 272 items were addressed to New Zealand out of the 5,231 that arrived in Australia (Ref. 1).

The second experimental flight left Croydon on 25<sup>th</sup> April arriving in Delhi on 5<sup>th</sup> May. As discussed above, the 'City of Karachi' had arrived there that day with the return of the first experimental service and flew back from Delhi to Akyab on 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> May with the mail from the second flight. The mail was then flown from Akyab to Darwin by Kingsford Smith on 6<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> May, Darwin to Brisbane by Qantas on 12<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> May and then by ANA to Sydney on 14<sup>th</sup> May where the mail for New Zealand was off-loaded.

Walker does not give the ship that carried the mail to New Zealand although he reports that it was delivered in Wellington on 18<sup>th</sup> May. According to the 'Evening Post' of 18<sup>th</sup> May, the 'Maunganui' sailed from Sydney to Wellington on 14<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> May and so would have carried the mail.

## Return of Second Experimental Flight

The cover postmarked in Christchurch on 6<sup>th</sup> May (Figure 5) is addressed to England where it has a datestamp of 5<sup>th</sup> June. It is franked with 2s 2d and was sent from Auckland to Sydney on the 'Maunganui' on 8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> May. The number of items sent from New Zealand was 301 out of a total of 14,939 from Australia (Ref. 1).

It joined the second experimental flight in Sydney and was flown to Brisbane on 16<sup>th</sup> May. The pilot of the Qantas flight from Brisbane to Darwin on 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> May was Hudson Fysh and the cover has his signature. He was



**Figure 5:** New Zealand to Great Britain on the return  
of the second experimental flight. [reduced to 60%]



a co-founder of Qantas and this was the last time that he flew a scheduled service as he was now the Managing Director (Ref. 1). Kingsford Smith was not required to fly the mail from Darwin as Imperial Airways had purchased a 'DH 66' from West Australian Airways and it flew the mail from Darwin to Delhi on 19<sup>th</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> May where it joined the regular Delhi – Croydon service that was flown on 27<sup>th</sup> May - 4<sup>th</sup> June.

## KLM Experimental Flight

The KLM experimental flight took place as an extension of the normal Amsterdam – Batavia service of 30<sup>th</sup> April - 9<sup>th</sup> May. On arrival at Batavia, the mail was cancelled with a special 'Abel Tasman' postmark/cachet showing 'Batavia Centrum' on 11<sup>th</sup> May. A special 1 Guilden stamp was issued in both the Netherlands and the Dutch East Indies to pay the airmail postage. KLM accepted mail from London to be flown on the flight from Amsterdam to Australia and New Zealand at a postage rate of 2s 6d.



**Figure 6:** Dutch East Indies to New Zealand on the KLM experimental flight.  
[reduced to 60%]

The Batavia – Melbourne extension was flown on 12<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> May. The landing in Australia was not at Darwin, but at Wyndham which was reached on 16<sup>th</sup> May. Mail was picked up at the various stops in the Dutch East Indies and cancelled with a variation of the 'Abel Tasman' postmark/cachet showing the dispatch point.

Walker reported that he was not aware of mail for New Zealand being sent from any of these intermediate stops and so the registered cover (Figure 6) must be quite rare. It is postmarked in Djokjakarta on 6<sup>th</sup> May and addressed to Netherton in New Zealand from where it was redirected. It was forwarded to Soerabaja where it joined the extension flight on 12<sup>th</sup> May. The 'Abel Tasman' postmark/cachet for 9<sup>th</sup> May shows 'Soerabaja' rather than 'Batavia Centrum'. The cover has backstamps for Sydney, 18<sup>th</sup> May, Paeroa (near Auckland), 26<sup>th</sup> May, Netherton, 27<sup>th</sup> May and Te Awamutu, 29<sup>th</sup> May, as well as a Netherton datestamp on the front for 28<sup>th</sup> May. The franking includes the special 1 Guilden stamp.

The New Zealand mail was off-loaded at Sydney on 18<sup>th</sup> May before being sent to Auckland on the 'Ulimaroa' on 22<sup>nd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> May. That fits with the datestamps on the cover.

No mail from New Zealand was accepted for the return of the KLM experimental flight. There was an experimental flight by ANA between Australia and UK in November 1931, but it was the end of 1934 before a regular UK – Australia air mail service was started and 1940 before there was a regular UK – New Zealand air mail service.

## Sources:

1. 'Auckland Star' and 'Wellington Evening Post', available online at: [www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz](http://www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz)

## References:

1. Wolf E., 'The 1931 Imperial Airways Experimental Airmail Flights'. *Imperial Airways Gazette*, Issue 30, pp2-18, December 2006.
2. Walker D.A., *Airmails of New Zealand*, vol. 2. Air Mail Society of New Zealand (1986).



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