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N. Z. NOTES AND COMMENT

by Colin Hamilton

ESSENTIALS

It's a funny world, our world of stamps. Everyone knows how frequent an occurrence it is to find relatively common stamps misidentified as rarer varieties. Such is human nature, I suppose. There will always be those ready to see their geese as swans.

Nevertheless there is a strangely contradictory aspect to this "rose-tinted spectacles" attitude to stamps, and that is a peculiar inability to recognise as good something that really is good. Examples of this failing are admittedly much less frequent - but only, I suspect, because the good things are by their very nature that much less plentiful.

To illustrate my point, the King George V issues of New Zealand have been collected, and specialised in, so intensively over the last half-century that one could reasonably expect there was little, if anything, left to be discovered about them. Yet below we report not one, but two major new K. G. V finds. Neither of these was part of a suddenly-unearthed treasure, nor was there any magic formula required for their detection. In fact the only "tools" needed were: 1. an alert eye; 2. a knowledge of previously available information; and 3. the intelligent application of that knowledge.

Simple enough, but all three just as indispensable as the more tangible items in the philatelist's toolkit.

K. G. V - NEW DISCOVERIES

5d Recess Print

The existence of imperforate and partly-imperforate stamps of this value has been well-documented, and widely known, ever since the issue at Palmerston North and Wellington in 1926 of some sheets with the top five rows of stamps completely imperf. and the sixth row imperf. at the top, the remainder of each sheet having normal 14 x 13½ comb perforations.

It has long been accepted that shade was the conclusive factor in distinguishing the above genuine imperf. varieties from the fraudulently obtained imperforate 5d stamps which also exist. To quote from the footnote under K7a on Temporary Page K5 of our Catalogue: "... These (the fraudulent imperf.) are invariably in the 'ultramarine' or 'steel-blue' shades with colourless gum. The genuine imperf. is in 'blue' and has brownish gum.....".

So when confronted (as I was recently) with a partially imperf. block of 4 in the ultramarine shade,

the obvious reaction was that it was of the fraudulent variety. BUT, and again I quote from the footnote. mentioned above: "All known partial imperf. when in pairs or blocks are genuine". The basis for this statement is a categorical assurance, from an official source, given to Mr. Campbell Paterson that none of the fraudulently obtained sheets had been partly perforated.

Although I was in no doubt as to the shade of the block, comparison with a number of "two-perf." pairs and blocks (which exist only in pale ultramarine) confirmed this beyond all possible question. The perforations are equally above suspicion. Finally, the gum is brownish, identical in appearance to that found on the imperf. and partially imperf. varieties in the blue shade.

This, therefore, is a quite distinct and previously unrecorded variety, and the listings under K7a in our Catalogue will be re-written at the first opportunity to accord it full recognition.

Of course the possibility that other partially imperf. "ultramarines" exist cannot be excluded, and we'd be glad to hear from anyone who believes he may own such a piece. Likewise genuinely issued imperf. pairs or blocks in ultramarine may exist, although in the case of completely imperf. pieces the brownish gum would be the only feature readily distinguishing the genuine from the fraudulent.

Meanwhile the partially imperf. block (which is offered elsewhere in this Bulletin) stands as a remarkable "only known example".

1d Field Marshal.

The K. G. V 1d on Cowan paper with reversed watermark (K15c) will be familiar to many readers - certainly to those fortunate enough to possess blocks (or singles, even) in the five delightful shades as listed in the C. P. Catalogue.

Hitherto these stamps have been known only, as far as we are aware, in mint condition, and this has given rise to the notion that they may be colour trials rather than properly issued stamps. However, I can think of no earthly reason why they must of necessity be the one to the exclusion of the other. Indeed my own feeling has for long been that they were probably printed as colour trials originally, but that subsequently the small quantities produced were added to the regular stocks, and in due course were normally issued. Pursuing the hypothesis a little farther, if an alert philatelist had spotted these at the post office when they were issued, realised that they were something out of the ordinary, purchased all that he could lay hands on, and salted them away for a rainy day which in the event never came, this would provide a logical explanation for:

1. The non-appearance on the market, until less than five years ago, of the vast majority of the supplies now known to exist, and
2. The apparent total absence of used copies.

That two of the five shades - the rose-carmine and the scarlet - were recorded (albeit rare) some time before the remaining three (the rose-carmine has in fact been known for many years) points to the likelihood that our supposed philatelist did not quite "scoop the pool" of the existing supplies. Furthermore their very rarity suggests that the few which did escape were not recognised for what they were at the time of their purchase over the counter. If so, then it follows that there was always the faint chance that the odd used copy might be lying unidentified somewhere.

So much for theory. The reality came just a week or two ago. In a modest auction lot I was viewing, the occupant of the space for the humble S. G. 539a (it was a simple one-of-each collection), was a used copy of the reversed watermark variety in the rose-carmine shade. Like virtually every other stamp in the lot (a mixture of mint and used, by the way), its condition could legitimately be described as superfine. The collector, although apparently having limited aspirations as to the depth of his collecting, had obviously set himself a high standard of condition. It was this aspect, in fact, which had first attracted my attention to what was, on the face of things, a fairly mundane lot. The copy under discussion is beautifully clean and fresh, and the postmark is neat (though with not the slightest suggestion of a "cancelled-by-favour" look about it) and of a type entirely typical of the period. In short, a lovely stamp and to our knowledge, again unique.

At the subsequent sale I was pleasantly surprised to secure the lot at a price much below that to which I had been prepared to bid. It is perfectly evident that neither the auctioneers (who made no mention whatever of the stamp in their description), nor any rival bidder, had noticed this exceptional item, and this raises a point which we have made many times in the past, but which nonetheless bears repeating as being of obvious importance to anyone considering selling.

When purchasing at public auction, quite clearly we are under no obligation to anyone (except ourselves!). And our only requirements in these circumstances are one, to decide beforehand the maximum price we can pay for any lot, and two, to obtain that lot as cheaply as possible within the pre-determined limit. If on the other hand the collection mentioned above had been offered directly to us by the owner, we should again have calculated our best price - taking fully into account the unidentified item - and that would have been our offer. It does not require a statistical genius to work out which is more advantageous to the seller, even ignoring such matters as waiting time and commission charges. In addition, if we consider that a particular item or collection offered directly to us would for any reason be likely to fare better at auction (and there are undoubtedly occasions when this is so), we would, and indeed do, always advise the owner of this. Certainly a point well worth pondering for anyone wishing to sell.

1d KIWI, PERF. 13½ x 14

Our thanks to several correspondents who kindly produced plate blocks of the above following our request for information last month. Without exception, these blocks had been perforated from left to right across the sheet (i. e. there were no horizontal perforations extending through the left selvedge, and there were overlapping or near-overlapping holes at the bottom right corner of each stamp). Thus the plate block offered as lot 923 in the September Bulletin is confirmed as being abnormal, in that it was from a sheet perforated from right to left; as yet we know of no other similar piece.

A 1940 CENTENNIAL MYSTERY

Mr G. H. Wood of Orpington has shown me two covers, each bearing a relief cancellation 'WAITANGI AK/7 FE 40'. All records both Mr Wood and myself have been able to trace give the date of the 'WAITANGI AK' relief datestamp as 6 FE 40, this being the only day on which the office was open.

Furthermore, it is recorded that the first I in the word WAITANGI was damaged during the use of the datestamp, and the damage was progressive until the name appeared as WA TANGI. Examples exist with the date 6FE 40 and showing this damage, but one of two 7th February strikes seen certainly has the I complete and undamaged (the other is inconclusive, not being a full impression).

Can anyone throw any light on the puzzle posed by the evidence of these two covers?

21st BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

.....to the New Zealand Society of Great Britain. The actual birthday anniversary was earlier in the year, but official festivities culminate in London on 6th October with an all-day meeting followed by a celebration dinner.

We wish the Society many happy returns, and continuing prosperity.

(Any Bulletin reader who is not already a member of the N. Z. S. G. B. should seriously consider joining. Although it is a specialist society, "simple-lifer" and advanced student alike are assured of the friendliest of welcomes at the meetings held every two months, and for those who cannot attend, the Society's regular magazine, "Kiwi", is in itself full value for the moderate subscription. By arrangement with the Society, we have a supply of the necessary application forms (s. a. e., please), and we shall gladly act as proposer for any prospective member who is known to us. Alternatively,

full details are available from the Hon. Secretary, C. A. Gilders, 10 Southspring, Avery Hill, Sidcup, Kent, DA15 8DX)

1970-71 PICTORIAL COUNTER COILS

These have always been very difficult to obtain in any condition. All coil pairs offered below are of selected quality.

- 1001 Complete Set of all values issued in counter coil form. 7 coil pairs, being one pair each of the 3c, 4c, 5c, 6c, 8c, 10c and 20c. Mint £ 4.20
- 1002 Matched Set. 7 pairs as above, but with the added specialist attraction that each pair has the same coil number. Please state preferred number (giving alternatives if possible) and we'll try to oblige. The matched set, mint £ 4.35
- 1003 Wrapper and Centre Papers. Interesting and essential adjuncts to any display of counter coils.
- (a) 4c Moth. Wrapper and centre paper. The two 66p
 - (b) 5c Fish. Wrapper and centre paper. The two 83p
 - (c) As above. Wrapper only, each 41p
 - (d) 6c Fish. Wrapper only, each 50p
 - (e) 8c Fish. Wrapper and centre paper. The two £ 1.32
 - (f) 10c Coat of Arms. Wrapper only, each 69p
 - (g) 20c Tattoo Pattern. Wrapper and centre paper. The two £ 2.75

K. G. V RECESS - UNREPEATABLE!

- 1004 5d Pale Ultramarine. The partially imperf. block of 4 discussed in a note elsewhere in this Bulletin. The block comprises Rows 5 and 6, stamps 1 and 2 - proved by the presence of R5/1 in the re-entered state, with extensive doubling of the design at the top of the stamp. Not previously recorded, but will be given full C. P. Catalogue recognition. The spectacular variety block, mint.. £165

(We would consider breaking the above block into two partially imperf. vertical pairs. In this case, the left hand pair - with selvedge and the R5/1 re-entry - would be available at £90; the other pair at £85. Collectors are invited to let us know if they would be interested in either pair).

- 1005 1/- Orange-Brown. A superlative mint copy from the top left corner of a sheet, complete with top and side selvedge and showing the plate no. 41. An extremely rare item, the shade being absolutely guaranteed by us, of course. The connoisseur's piece..... £200

SECOND PICTORIALS

A series of interesting offers, mainly of out-of-the-ordinary material. After a lengthy period in the doldrums, (goodness knows why, because almost every value in the series has much to offer philatelically), these issues are in ever-increasing demand again.

- 1006 1d Clematis. Fine single-value collection mounted on 5 album leaves. All plate numbers are represented, on both Single and Multiple Watermark papers, by pieces of varying size. The small size 1A with mult. wmk. is in a block of 9 which includes the R8/1 clematis flaw, and there is a "plate" block of 21 from one of the unnumbered plates. Also included are some excellent shades in blocks, a single wmk. block of 6, three stamps having letters watermark, and a used copy

	showing the scarce R5/17 (unnumbered plate) major re-entry. In all 93 mint 10 used (count and price exclude 4 defective copies). The Collection.....	£27.50
1007	<u>As above.</u> Mult. wmk. issue, plate block of 12 (pl. 1A) incl. R8/1 clematis flaw, R8/3 without flaw, and also showing a minor flaw on R10/4. The block	£ 5.50
1008	<u>As above.</u> R8/1 clematis flaw, used single	£ 2.75
1009	<u>1d Kiwi.</u> An 8-page collection covering all aspects of this fascinating stamp - dies, perforations, plate numbers, plate varieties, inverted watermarks, shades and booklet panes (including the make-up of both types of booklet). 88 mint, 8 used, and much ancillary material besides	£21.50
1010	<u>As above.</u> The booklet issues. Two panes of the 1935 issue (die 2) with "Parisian" Ties advertisements, one with wmk. upright, one wmk. inverted; also one pane of the 1936 (die 3) booklet stamps. The three panes of 6 stamps each, immaculate mint	£ 8.25
1011	<u>As above.</u> A pageful of plate varieties, highlighted by a mint positional block of 4 of the original issue with the prominent plate crack, part of which shows as the attractive "Cap on Kiwi" on R7/1. Seven other varieties are noted, some being "plated". The page of 10 mint, 5 used and 1 unused (no gum).....	£ 5.50
1012	<u>1½d Maori Cooking.</u> Original issue. single wmk. perf. 14 x 13½. Superb mint upper left corner block of 16 (2 x 8), the bottom right stamp in the block showing the minor "basket handle" re-entry (8/2). The block.	£ 4.00
1013	<u>As above.</u> Large mint blocks of both Experimental "Wet" printings (perf. 13½ x 14). The first, with normal wmk. (L3b) shows the R5/2 re-entry in a positional block of 12 (3 x 4), and the second, with wmk. inverted-and-reversed (L3c) is a corner block of 14 (2 x 7). Both have the characteristic brownish gum of the "Wet" printings. The two large blocks, scarce.....	£11.75
1014	<u>As above.</u> Block of 4 of L3b with "burele" band in left selvedge. Evidence of this ornamental design in the 1½d is seldom seen, the selvedge normally being too narrow for it to show. The block	£ 2.25
1015	<u>As above.</u> Mult. wmk. issue (L3d). Block of 8 with plate number 1A, including the R8/2 re-entry, as well as the much more prominent "string" re-entries on R9/2 and 10/2. The variety plate block, with graphic hand-drawn illustrations of the re-entries	£ 6.75
1016	<u>2d Whare.</u> Extensive collection on 10 album leaves. Rich in blocks, incl. every plate number from 1A to 5B in mint blocks of 4. Varieties include the extensive crack on plate 1B, shown in a block of 12 (2 x 6), and a used copy of the scarce inv wmk. variety on coarse paper (L4f). Also present is a lovely range of shades, with a superb "brown-orange" of the first mult. wmk. issue. 184 mint, 13 used	£19.50
1017	<u>As above.</u> Perfect mint corner block of 4 on coarse paper (L4f) with brilliant and complete offset impressions on the back of all four stamps. Since part of one sheet only is believed to have shown the offsets, this block is probably unique. The spectacular variety block (see it on approval)	£45.00
1018	<u>As above.</u> Mint single with similar complete offset impression	£11.00
1019	<u>As above.</u> Four positional blocks of 6 of the first mult. wmk. issue (L4b), each including the R2/3 "Teko-teko" variety in clearly differing states, from its fullest extent (as illustrated on Permanent Page L7 in our Catalogue) to a much less prominent mark. The rare series of blocks.....	£41.25
1020	<u>2½d Mt. Cook and Lilies.</u> The two single wmk. issues, perf. 13-14 x 13½ and 13½ x 14 (L5a and L5b), each in a plate block of 4, mint. The two plate blocks	£ 3.85

- 1021 As above. Collection of the multiple wmk. issues, mainly in blocks, including the plate nos. 3 and 4 (the latter both with and without the burele band), and with all changes of perf. Of the scarce final perf. $14\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$, there are blocks of 6 and 4. A number of varieties are noted. The collection of 61 stamps, all mint. £17.50
- 1022 3d Maori Girl. 1936 issue with mult. wmk. (L6b). Plate block of 4 with the plate no. 2 complete. Scarce £ 4.25
- 1023 4d Mitre Peak. A rather untidily set out collection on 13 album leaves. Full of interesting material in this value of inexhaustible variety, with plate blocks, watermark and perf. changes, flaws, retouches and re-entries (there are no less than 4 examples of the remarkable R3/8 unnumbered centre plate re-entry, with very prominent trebling of the outline of the mountain!). Re-organised, this would make a fine basis for a study of the 4d. 137 mint, 46 used. £17.50
- 1024 5d "Cobalt Blue". A really outstanding copy of the final issue (L8f) from the unique doubly printed sheet, one albino. In addition to the striking shade and the blurring of the design (both characteristic of the variety), this example shows unmistakable evidence of the original, i.e. albino, impression, the uncoloured letters NE (of NEW) appearing in the left value panel, and much of the vertical linework of the frame design is discernible in the central part of the printed design. The rarity, in beautiful mint condition (very lightly hinged) £50.00

(This listing will be continued next month - if any of the material remains available!)

MISCELLANY

- 1025 K. G. V 6d Recess Print. Mint block of 4 on "Pictorial" paper with wmk. sideways. Superb! £ 1.35
- 1026 K. G. VI "Re-inserted 2". An unusually fine used copy of the 2d on $1\frac{1}{2}$ d with the major R10/10 variety "2 inserted at second operation". This was a corrective measure applied to some sheets which had been printed after serious damage had occurred to the original 2 in this position on one of the surcharging formes. The example offered shows clearly the remains of the original, damaged figure. The rare variety, finest used. £66.00
- 1027 1960 Black-Number counter Coil Pairs. We can offer a few of these scarce original issue coil pairs (the black numbers were replaced by red within a few months). Supplies are strictly limited, so early ordering is advised.
- (a) 2d Kaka Beak £ 1.40
 - (b) 4d Puarangi £ 2.00
 - (c) 1/- Timber £ 3.00
 - (d) 1/6 Tiki £ 3.00
 - (e) 1/9 Bistre £ 5.50
- 1028 1960 Pictorial 6d Chalky Paper Counter Coil Pair. Another scarce item (with red coil number, of course). The variety pair, mint. £ 1.65
- 1029 1967 Pictorial 50c Falls. PVA Gum issue. Marginal block of 4 with partial double perms. extending into the left hand stamps (the result of an extra strike of the perforating head). The block, perfect mint £ 8.25
- 1030 4c Puriri Moth. Booklet issue with sideways watermark. Mint single with a remarkable shift of the bright green colour to the right (over 3mm), resulting in the moth's having green veins on the rear wings. A most attractive variety (normal copy included for comparison) £ 4.75