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MIXED AND IRREGULAR COMPOUND PERFORATIONS

by Colin Hamilton

Today we are all familiar with the catch-phrase 'Save It' in the context of fuel and power. But for a period of some 30 years - from about 1871 to the early 1900's - that same phrase could well have been the motto of the Government Printer in Wellington. Extraordinary and often complex measures were taken to avoid consigning imperfect sheets of stamps as waste, particularly those which had been spoiled by faulty perforating. This, coupled with the sundry different perforating machines then in use, gave rise to some interesting varieties in the issued stamps.

It is evident from both casual conversation and correspondence (not to mention the annotation in many collections one examines) that there is still a widespread misunderstanding of the terminology used to describe the variants encountered, so some definitions will be useful:

Line Perforations. These are effected by a machine which at each operation produces a single row of holes. It follows that the horizontal rows and the vertical rows are punched quite independently of each other - this is the vital difference between line perms. and any form of comb perforating.

Rotary Perforations. A variation of line perms., in which a series of parallel rows of holes are produced simultaneously by pins projecting from the circumference of a set of rotating wheels mounted on an axle.

C. P. in G. B.

Mr. Campbell Paterson, founder and still very much the active principal of C. P. Ltd., is planning a visit to the U. K., combining both business and pleasure. Present arrangements are that he will arrive on 1st March, 1976, and will be here for about two months. During that time, he will be travelling widely throughout the country, renewing old acquaintances and, hopefully, making new ones.

Contact with Mr. Paterson can readily be arranged through our Woking offices, and he will be particularly pleased to hear - as indeed we are at any time - from anyone contemplating selling good N. Z. material. In order to facilitate any necessary arrangements, please get in touch with us, by telephone or by letter, as soon as possible.

Compound Perforations. Strictly, the use of more than one line or rotary machine (or any combination of these) to perforate a sheet of stamps. In practice, however, the term is used as an abbreviation for "regular compound perforations", where one machine has been used for all the horizontal perfs, and another one of a different gauge for all the vertical perfs., e. g. $10 \times 12\frac{1}{2}$.

Irregular Compound Perforations. A variation of "Compound Perfs" in that at least two machines of different gauge were used either for the horizontal perforations or for the vertical perforations (or, in theory, at least, for both). Usually, but not invariably, this involved the employment of the machine used horizontally, in the perforating of one or more rows of holes vertically, or vice-versa, thus producing individual stamps with three sides of one gauge, and the fourth in another, e. g. $10 \times 12\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$.

Double Perforations. An extra row of holes, usually parallel to and more or less close to, and of necessity in the same gauge as, another row. Exceptionally there may be two extra rows, resulting in "triple" perforations.

Mixed Perforations. Similar to double perforations, but the two adjacent rows of holes are of a different gauge. This variety arose when the original row of holes was misplaced, and was corrected by re-perforating with a different machine. Frequently, but not invariably, the original row of holes was patched over with a strip of paper gummed to the back of the sheet prior to re-perforating.

Of the above categories, regular "Compound Perforations" are the result of a perfectly normal and deliberate procedure. The remaining three - "Irregular Compound", "Double" and "Mixed"-all derive from some form of mechanical malfunction or human error. Irregular Compound and Mixed invariably result from measures taken to correct an earlier error. Double Perfs. in some cases have a similar origin, on the other hand this variety is the odd one out in that sometimes it is itself an error (e. g. "stutter" strike of the perforating head). In other words, Double Perfs. can stem from two entirely separate sets of circumstances. However, I cannot recall an instance of Double Perfs. with patching (such as is frequently found in Mixed Perfs), so one can seldom if ever differentiate between the 'corrective' and the 'accidental' varieties. Incidentally, the consistent absence of patching strongly suggests that the corrective action, when it occurred, was always taken immediately, possibly without removing the sheet from the machine. This is in contrast to Mixed Perfs, in which the remedial operation was invariably a wholly separate procedure.

Turning now to Irregular Compounds, these too can originate from two quite different situations, but in both cases they are a corrective measure. To illustrate the differences, it is simplest to take a hypothetical example. Let us suppose a sheet of 4d First Sideface stamps has been perforated horizontally by a rotary machine gauging 10, and vertically by a line machine gauging $12\frac{1}{2}$. But due, say, to a malfunction of one of the rotary wheels, a horizontal row of perforations has been omitted, and this is subsequently put right by adding the missing row of holes with the $12\frac{1}{2}$ line machine. Then either one complete row of stamps (if the added perforations are the top or bottom row) or two complete rows of stamps (if the added perfs. are anywhere else in the sheet) will have Irregular Compound Perfs. Now suppose that, instead of being omitted, a row of horizontal perfs. is misplaced upwards - due, say, to faulty positioning of one of the rotary wheels. To correct this, the $12\frac{1}{2}$ line machine is used to add a properly aligned row of holes. While unsevered, one row of stamps immediately above and below the re-perforating will have Mixed Perfs. But if the sheet is separated along the added row of perforations, the stamps in the row immediately below will have Irregular Compound Perfs. In my opinion, only stamps produced by the first of these two procedures qualify as true Irregular Compounds, but to be identified with absolute certainty an unsevered pair (in the example, a vertical pair) would be required. Individual stamps resulting from the second procedure, even if they may appear to be Irregular Compounds, are in reality "Mixed Perforation" varieties, in my view. Official patching would allow identification of these

individual copies, but as previously mentioned, patching was not invariably used, and where there was none, an unsevered pair would again be essential for certain identification.

I selected the First Sideface 4d deliberately for the hypothetical example above, because there is a mystery surrounding this stamp, which, as far as I am aware, has never been satisfactorily explained. No attested copy of this stamp (the 2d value of the same series is a similar example) with Mixed Perfs. has ever been recorded to my knowledge. With justification, therefore, all stamps with three sides gauging $12\frac{1}{2}$ and the fourth side gauging 10 are taken to be true Irregular Compounds. Yet in my experience, copies with Regular Compound perfs. (i. e. 10 at top and bottom, and $12\frac{1}{2}$ at the sides) are very much scarcer than Irregular Compounds in these values. Because of the absence of official records, there is some doubt about the precise form of the perf. 10 machine involved (which was first brought into operation in 1871, and was used for some of the later Chalon Head issues). It is generally accepted, however, that it was a rotary machine - rather than a conventional single-line machine - and it has been theorised that there were not sufficient wheels to complete the horizontal rows of perforations at one 'pass'. The theory continues that the rows left imperforate were completed by the $12\frac{1}{2}$ line machine. However, this does not offer a logical solution to the problem set by evidence of the stamps. The only explanation which seems to fit the facts is that no 4d sheets (and possibly no 2d's either) were ever run through the '10' machine in its multiple-wheeled form, and that any of these stamps perf. 10 on one (or both) of its horizontal edges is from a sheet which was intended to be perf. $12\frac{1}{2}$ all round, but in which one of more rows of perforations had been unintentionally omitted. If the rotary machine with only one wheel fitted was used to correct these omissions, this would explain:

- (a) the existence of both Regular and Irregular Compounds, and
- (b) much more importantly, the relative scarcity of the former, since one 'corrective' row of holes gauging 10 would, in most instances, produce two complete rows of stamps with Irregular Compound Perfs., whereas it would require two consecutive corrective rows (thus pre-supposing two consecutive missing strikes by the $12\frac{1}{2}$ machine - a much less likely occurrence than a single omission), to produce a single row of stamps with Regular Compound Perfs.

I appreciate that this, like many aspects of philately, may be a difficult subject to grasp from the written word, but it is no less interesting for that. I trust that all have been able to follow the reasoning, and that some will be able to shed further light on the points discussed.

PROOF MATERIAL

- 201 'Hausburg' Sheet. A complete imperf. sheet of 240 of the 2d Full-Face Queen, plate 2, printed in black on thin card. Exceptionally fine and without folds or creases (to preserve its condition the sheet will be supplied to the buyer in a stout cylindrical container). All the damaged areas of the plate, and the subsequent retouches, show clearly. A superb item in its own right, and a marvellous guide for plating single copies of the issued stamps. The Hausburg sheet £45. 00
- 202 Long Fiscals. Really magnificent long set of 26 imperf. plate proofs, mostly in the issued colours, printed on white card. Values range from 4d to £20. A few small faults, but a brilliant display of colour. Highly desirable, and (of course !) an unrepeatable lot. The 26 proofs £250. 00

$\frac{1}{2}$ d NEWSPAPER STAMP

- 203 Wmk Small Star, Perf. $12\frac{1}{2}$. A marvellously fresh mint, lightly mounted block of 6 in the scarcer deep dull rose shade, C. P. B2a (2). Somewhat off-centre to the left, but most attractive, and seldom seen in blocks of this quality £4. 95

- 204 Wmk Small Star, Perf. Nearly 12 (C. P. B2b, S. G. 150). A really scarce stamp (our stock envelope is more often empty than not !) here offered in a quite remarkable marginal block of 25. Centring is exceptionally good for this issue. Some light age-staining, but overall of fresh appearance. Light mount marks on four stamps at top and in selvage, otherwise full gum. An exhibition item. £110. 00
- 205 Wmk NZ and Star, Perf. 12½. No less than 10 used shades, plus a copy with wmk letters. A really pretty page in the making £1. 65

FIRST SIDEFACES, MINT AND USED

Some further unusual offers, individual and collective, of these scarce and still underestimated issues.

- 206 (a) Used Multiples. An incredible set of the perf. 12½ issues, complete in values and virtually complete in shades per C. P. Catalogue listings, all in selected used pairs, with 1d (3 shades), 2d (3 shades), 3d, 4d, 6d (2 shades, the deep blue being on deeply blue paper), and 1/- . Have you ever seen a similar set ? We haven't ! The 11 lovely pairs £32. 50
- (b) As above. Strip of 3 of the 1d on blue paper, perf. 12½ (C1aY). First class used £8. 25
- (c) As above. 1d pair, again on blue paper, but perf. 10 x 12½ (C1bZ). Tiny puncture (caused by the c. d. s.) on one stamp, invisible from the front. A rare pair, used £6. 50
- (d) As above. 2d pair, perf. 12½, blue paper (C2aX). Beautiful used £4. 25
- (e) As above. 3d pair, perf. 12½ (C3a). Another tip-top used pair £7. 50
- (f) As above. 4d perf. 12½ (C4a). Pair, fine used, dated £7. 50
- (g) As above. 6d value, two pairs in striking shades of blue and deep blue, perf. 12 x 11½ (C5c). Wellington duplex cancellation on one pair is a little heavy, but all four stamps are perfectly centred (most unusual !) . An attractive pair of pairs £4. 25
- 207 2d Perf. 'Nearly 12' (C. P. C2c, S. G. 158). Copies of the common perf. 12 x 11½ issue are frequently and optimistically mistaken for this stamp, which is of very considerable rarity. Our offer is of a vertical pair, unconditionally guaranteed the real thing. A little off-centre, but as close to perfection as one could hope for. The rare pair, used £25. 00
- 208 1d Perf. 'Nearly 12' x 12½. (C. P. C1c, S. G. 164a). A used (dated) copy of a stamp which is missing from 99.9% of collections. So seldom seen, in fact, that we make no provision for it in our stock-drawers ! A very fine-looking copy, but a few clipped perfs. at one corner allow a price of £12. 50
- 209 (a) 2d "Large Star" Wmk (C2e). Fresh unused (part gum) copy of this provisional issue - the 2d and the 1d were the only stamps outside of the Chalon Heads to be issued on this paper £10. 50
- (b) As above. Unused, without gum £8. 25
- (c) As above. Two top grade used copies in very pronounced shades of deep bright rose and deep dull rose. The two used £1. 35

210	(a)	<u>Perf. 12$\frac{1}{2}$ Unused !</u> Short set of 4 (1d, 2d, 3d, 4d), all nice copies with full or part gum. Very seldom seen nowadays. The short set ...	£19. 25
	(b)	<u>As above.</u> Unused copies of the 1d, without gum but otherwise excellent, each	£1. 35
N. B. Unused copies of the Full-Face Queen issues without gum are widely accepted and collected, even at the very highest level. In our opinion, similar acceptance will surely follow in later issues (at least up to and including the First Pictorials). Our advice is to buy such items now, while they can still be offered at a considerable discount on "Mint" prices.			
	(c)	<u>As above.</u> Fine unused copy, of the 3d deep brown, without gum	£4. 25
211	(a)	<u>Perf. 10 x 12$\frac{1}{2}$ Unused !</u> 1d Lilac, well centred, part gum	£5. 50
	(b)	<u>As above.</u> 3d deep brown, an attractive unused copy without gum	£4. 95
	(c)	<u>As above.</u> 6d blue, fine mint, with large part gum	£11. 00
	(d)	<u>As above.</u> Similarly fine copy in deep blue, but without gum	£6. 50
212	(a)	<u>Irregular Compound Perf. Unused !</u> 3d deep brown, perf. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 10 x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$, good mint (lightly hinged)	£10. 00
	(b)	<u>As above.</u> 4d Indian red, good mint (hinged). A rare stamp	£22. 50
	(c)	<u>As above.</u> Another copy, this one without gum and in a much deeper, brighter shade	£13. 50
213	(a)	<u>Comb Perf. 12 x 11$\frac{1}{2}$ Unused !</u> 4d Indian red, no gum but otherwise superb in every way	£4. 00
	(b)	<u>As above.</u> 2/- and 5/-, both with small faults, but eminently collectable copies of stamps which are under extreme pressure whenever they come on the market (and that is not very often !) The two high values	£22. 50
214	(a)	<u>1/- Green.</u> Set of three used - one in each of the three main perfs, 12 $\frac{1}{2}$, 10 x 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 12 x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ (C6a/b/c). The complete set, all top grade copies	£12. 25
	(b)	<u>As above.</u> Two contrasting shades of green and deep green, perf. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$, as listed in C. P. Very good used	£6. 50
	(c)	<u>As above.</u> Perf. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ copy with the variety <u>Watermark Inverted.</u> Centred a little high, otherwise superfine used	£6. 60

"OFFICIALS" MINT AND USED

215	(a)	<u>First Pictorials.</u> A near complete collection (excepting the rare mixed perf. varieties), of the 2d (2), 3d (3), 6d (3), 1/- and 2/- values. The 10 used stamps, all in fine condition	£7. 50
	(b)	<u>As above.</u> 3d (EO9d) and 6d (EO14g) values in used blocks of 4, each with "letters watermark". The two blocks, unusual	£6. 50

- 215 (c) As above. Three used copies of the 1/- (EO18e) showing the watermark sideways, sideways-inverted, and sideways-inverted-and-reversed. Although these watermark varieties are quite common in the 1/- value, the three stamps here offered form an attractive set £4. 00
- 216 (a) King Edward VII. A complete simplified set of five stamps, includes one of each value, $\frac{1}{2}$ d, 3d, 6d, 8d, 1/-. The five stamps, superfine mint .. £6. 50
- (b) As above. Exactly the same simplified set as described above, but superb used (all five stamps have c. d. s.) £5. 25
- (c) As above. An attractive used copy (with c. d. s.) of the 3d perf. 14 x 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ value (HO3c). Condition of this scarce stamp is exceptionally fine £9. 50
- 217 (a) K. G. V "Recess" Printed. A collection of 11 used stamps, complete in both the main perforations, and comprising 3d (2), 4d (2), 6d (2), 8d, 9d, 1/- (3, incl. a 'salmon'). Condition is fine to superb, with the rare 8d - KO10d - being a particularly nice example. The 11 used stamps, one set only at £32. 50
- (b) As above. Nice mint copy, from plate 20, of 4d perf. 14 x 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ with R1/6 major re-entry (KO5dZ). The mint variety £5. 50
- 218 K. G. V "Surface" Printed. A magnificent collection of 31 stamps including $\frac{1}{2}$ d (7), 1d (4), 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ d (6), 2d (6), 3d (7) and 2/- Admiral. All C. P. Catalogue numbers - with the exception of KO13g - are represented and extra shades abound. The 31 used stamps, to form a superb near-complete collection £12. 00
- 219 (a) Second Pictorials. A simplified used set of 12 stamps, containing one of each value $\frac{1}{2}$ d - 2/- . Seldom available, so seldom offered ! £5. 50
- (b) As above. The 2/- Captain Cook (LO13), represented here by six used stamps. Four plate 1 and one each plate 2 and 3 examples are included, and the set covers every major perforation and paper change. The set ... £4. 75

INTERESTING MISCELLANY

- 220 (a) First Pictorial Re-entries. 22 used stamps, each one with a different and pronounced re-entry. Includes London Print 1d (3), 2d (4), 3d and 4d (6), and the Local Print 2d (6 - a lovely range of shades, too !), 3d and 4d (the really big one at R1/3). The 22 used varieties, a philatelic bonanza for someone £27. 50
- (b) As above. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d WAKATIPU, London Print showing the major R12/7 re-entry, with prominent doubling in and around the value. This copy is unhinged mint, and beautifully centred £5. 50
- 221 (a) $\frac{1}{2}$ d Green Mt Cook Re-entries. Three mint copies (2x F1a, 1 x F4b) all with different re-entries £4. 50
- (b) As above. First-class, well-centred, mint copy on Basted Mills paper, perf. 11 (F2a) - a scarce stamp at any time - with a clear re-entry showing as doubling of the top frame lines £7. 50
- (c) As above. The $\frac{1}{2}$ d postal stationery envelope of 1899 had the local $\frac{1}{2}$ d Mt Cook design printed in the colour of the London Print stamp of similar design. A number of electrotypes were taken up from Local Plate 1

- and more than one of these electros was used to print the 'stamps' on these envelopes. As proof of this, we offer two unused envelopes, one of which has the re-entry at R1/4 from that plate, while the other is without varieties. The two postal stationery items of true stamp interest ! £2. 75
- 222 1d Dominion Variety. Excellent used copy on Jones paper, with the variety Watermark Inverted £3. 30
- 223 (a) K. G. V Surface Prints. 56 mint stamps, including $\frac{1}{2}$ d (20), 1d (6), $1\frac{1}{2}$ d (9), 2d (15) and 3d (6). Every C. P. Catalogue number is represented, except K15d, K17d, K19d, with an abundance of additional shades. Condition is of a high standard throughout. The superb collection (Cat £57+) £49. 50
- (b) As above. Superfine mint single of the 2d on Cowan paper, perf. 14, with the Catalogued variety "Offset on back" (K18dZ) £3. 40
- 224 (a) Q. E. Used Varieties. A 20-stamp collection of the Q. E. 1/- (N10a) value. Included is one centre plate variety, frame plate 1A flaw and retouch, six further F. P. 1A varieties and eleven F. P. 1B varieties. All are described in Volume 4 of the Handbooks, with 10 being listed in our Catalogue - full annotation will of course be supplied. The 20 used stamps, extremely fine condition throughout £16. 50
- (b) As above. A set of four used 1/- stamps showing the F. P. 1B re-entries at R1/10, 2/10, 3/10 and 4/10 (NV10k) £1. 10
- 225 6c Sea-Horse Coil Pairs. Set of two coil pairs, each with the same coil number - but these numbers are in totally different colours (not shades), one being orange-vermilion, and the other close to carmine-lake ! Very striking £1. 00

COVERS

- 226 Marine P. O. U.S.A. postal stationery envelope (with 3c adhesive added), addressed to U.S., but posted on board the R. M. S. Niagara. The stamps are cancelled by a PACKET BOAT marking in double-lined rectangle, and alongside - clear of the stamps - is a superb strike of the distinctive second-type 'Niagara' datestamp (with 'NEW ZEALAND' in full above the date). A superb Marine P. O. cover £15. 00
- 227 Q. E. First Day Covers. 50 Commemorative, Health and Christmas First Day Covers from the 1953 Coronation issue to the latest 1975 Christmas set. An ideal basis for expansion £18. 00
- 228 1970 - 71 Definitive F. D. C. Complete set of 7 covers bearing the original issues of all 21 values from $\frac{1}{2}$ c - \$2. Sets of the whole range of values are already very difficult £7. 50
- 229 N. Z. Meter Marks. 25 covers with various meter marks, including some early, the period covered being 1914 - 1974. One (of 1924) has 2 x 1d impressions to cover the Late Fee rate, cancelled by the Wellington 'Late Fee' datestamp. An interesting lot £13. 75

230 SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Part registered 'front' addressed to U. K. and bearing four different counter coil pairs of the Queen Elizabeth issues. No doubt "philatelic", but used coil pairs are seldom seen £6. 50

SECOND PICTORIALS

- 231 (a) 'Registered' Watermark. A simplified mint set of 14 values, $\frac{1}{2}$ d - 3/-, all on the original 1935 single watermark paper. The 14 mint stamps ... £6. 25
- (b) As above. 19 used stamps, on single wmk. paper, including examples of all 14 values $\frac{1}{2}$ d - 3/-. Changes of perforation and die are included, as is a fine $1\frac{1}{2}$ d with watermark inverted-and-reversed (L3c). The 19 used stamps £5. 50
- 232 (a) Multiple Watermark. The fine paper, multiple watermark issues are represented here by 31 mint stamps. All values are included, and the collection is complete as C. P. Catalogue numbers with the exception of L13d. The superb mint collection of 31 £23. 50
- (b) As above. 12 mint stamps, all on the final coarse paper, with multiple watermark, form a virtually complete collection - only the 5d perf. $12\frac{1}{2}$ (L8e) is missing. Very fine £10. 50
- (c) As above. A collection of 44 used stamps, from the fine and coarse paper, multiple watermark issues. Again all values are represented and the collection is complete - except for L7c £9. 00

RECENT ITEMS

6c Fish. Counter coil pair on unwatermarked paper with bluish gum (to be listed in our Catalogue as PC8b) 40p

Varieties

1975 Christmas 10c. Mint marginal block of 8 including, on R5/4, a prominent white flaw in the sea below the ship at top right, hence our description "Mine to Port". A most attractive constant variety block £1. 00

1975 Christmas 10c. R7/8 Tail of pennant missing on ship at top right. Another easily seen constant variety, offered in positional block of 6, mint ... 80p

Special Cancellations on Cover.

5 DEC 1975 Wellington Cricket Assn/Centenary/Celebrations/1875 - 1975/
Wellington N. Z. 12p

22 DEC 1975 Kingston Flyer/Lumsden N. Z. 12p
(an annual event, this one !)

PANPEX '77

The exhibition authorities have produced a most handsome and attractive souvenir sheet, depicting reproductions of the 1906 Christchurch Exhibition set (including the 1d Claret) in the issued colours. Both the organisers and their printers are to be congratulated for a superb job. We have available a limited quantity of these sheets, each with its own serial number printed on the back. Price each, post paid 45p