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N. Z. NOTES AND COMMENT

by Colin Hamilton

Sterling Pictorial 1d and 3d coil of late 1963. These special slot-machine stamps (02b and 05b) are to my mind one of the more interesting "sideline" issues of post-war N. Z. Consider the following:

1. They represent a major change of watermark (from upright to sideways) and of perforation (from $14\frac{1}{2} \times 14$ to $14\frac{1}{2} \times 13$).
2. They are unique in being the only N. Z. stamps produced specifically for slot machines (all other coils before and since have been made up from ordinary sheet stamps).
3. They had a comparatively short life.
4. They are accorded (as they must be) a listing in all but the most simplified of stamp catalogues.
5. They are undoubtedly undervalued.

Yet strangely, despite all of those points in their favour, these stamps seem to have been consistently ignored by collectors, a situation which in my view will surely change, and probably sooner rather than later.

Thus far, I have discussed these stamps solely from the collecting point of view. But for another and quite different reason they are also something of an enigma. On the face of it, continuous (i. e. joinless) coils supplied by the printers ready for use ought to have been a godsend to the N. Z. Post Office, eliminating entirely the laborious and time-consuming procedure of making up coils from sheet stamps. Yet as already indicated, they had a relatively fleeting period of use, before a return to the earlier rather crude methods of coil manufacture. Meanwhile joinless coils have been in constant and wide use for a number of years in other countries, notably Britain, so there is obviously nothing basically wrong with the idea. Why, then, did N. Z. apparently drop it like a hot potato?

IF YOU HAVEN'T YET

RENEWED YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

IT IS NOW OVERDUE

I believe the answer is that in use these particular coils were thoroughly unsatisfactory, individual stamps proving to be virtually impossible to remove undamaged from a machine. Why? For two reasons: (a) the change to sideways watermark automatically involved a similar change in the direction of the paper mesh, from vertical to sideways-vertical, so that the naturally stronger direction of the paper was now across the coil; and (b) the widening of the gauge of the perforations between the stamps from 14 to 13. Either of these changes by itself would have made the stamps more difficult to detach; the combined effect would be catastrophic. For a practical demonstration (and at the grave risk of damage!) try separating one of these stamps from a strip by pulling horizontally, and without first folding and refolding along the perforations. It's fiendishly difficult!

I further suggest that when this disadvantage was discovered, there was no investigation of the reason for the difficulty, or whether it could be rectified (and it could have been overcome simply by the use of a perforating head with a much narrower vertical gauge). Instead, I suggest, it was decided to revert to the reasonably satisfactory - if very much less convenient - system which had operated previously, and the making up of coils from sheets is still the method used today.

On a more general level, the relationship of perforations to mesh is a subject which seems to receive scant attention. Even in ordinary sheet stamps, where a compound gauge of perforations is used, the smaller gauge (for example the '15' in a '14x15' combination) should, for optimum results always be used across the mesh of the paper. Yet if one takes N. Z. stamps as a yardstick, the choice is apparently quite haphazard. As often as not, such compounds are "the wrong way round" for the stamps concerned.

The 35/- and 35/- on 35/- Arms Types. I suppose most collectors of N. Z. are aware (even if the point is, to the majority, of only academic interest!) that the unsurcharged 35/- stamp of 1931-35 is the rarest of all the 'Arms' issues. However, it may not be so well-known — except, that is, to careful readers of our Catalogue — that such a rare stamp in fact exists in two quite separate and readily identifiable forms. The first, and "commoner", is on the Cowan paper with horizontal mesh and distinctive 'woven blanket' appearance on the back; the second, and much the rarer, is on the single watermark Wiggins Teape paper with vertical mesh.

By far the greatest requirement of this value was for fiscal purposes - and even its fiscal usefulness was apparently very limited - so the total number sold must have been extremely small. Within that context, the sparseness of copies on Wiggins Teape paper, relative to 'Cowans' - coupled with the fact that only the latter are known with the later surcharge - is a clear indication of the extreme rarity of the W. T. paper issue.

Incidentally, the reason for the bold surcharging with the same value in 1939 - 40, of all unsold stocks of the 35/- is itself interesting. Because of the large number of denominations in the Arms series (about 40), and the limited range of different-coloured printing inks available, some duplication of colours occurred. For example, the 7/- and the £4 were very similar, as were the 8/- and the £5. In these circumstances it was almost inevitable that human error would occur sooner or later, and occur it did when a postal clerk confused his stock of the 1/3 and 35/- values (both being an almost identical shade of yellow). Relative philatelic values were of no concern to the Post Office, of course, but face values were very much so, and such a mistake was obviously a serious one. To obviate any repetition, it was decided to clarify the values of certain higher denominations by means of a conspicuous surcharge in black. The 35/- and some values from £5 upwards were duly surcharged, as were four new values issued soon afterwards, the 3/6, 5/6, 11/- and 22/- (in the case of these last four, none exist unsurcharged). Curiously, though, there was one remarkable oversight. Neither the 7/- nor the £4, mentioned earlier, was ever so treated although both, as far as I know, remained on sale until 1967. Surely a glaring error of omission.

Set of 5 imperf plate proofs in unissued colours and overprinted CANCELLED in black. The set comprises 1d in orange-brown, 2d in blue, 3d in mauve-lilac, 4d in carmine-rose and 6d in brown. A few slight surface marks (as usual) but a most attractive and colourful set of proofs £20. 00

FIRST SIDEFACES - ISSUED STAMPS

- 802 3d Deep Brown. An exceptional mint copy, perf. $12\frac{1}{2}$ (C3a). Fresh colour, full gum, wonderfully centred (with, unusually, large gutters on all four sides). Mint First Sidefaces are as difficult to find as any other issue one cares to name - this is a premium example if ever there was one. The mint 3d £10. 00
- 803 1/- Green. Another marvellously fine copy of the original issue perf. $12\frac{1}{2}$ (C6a). Centring not quite so perfect as in the 3d offered above, but still excellent for this stamp. The 1/- mint (rare thus) £85. 00

804

ADSON - MINT !

Short set of 6 values (1d, 2d, $2\frac{1}{2}$ d, 4d, 6d, 1/-) all with advertisements on the back - $2\frac{1}{2}$ d ad. is printed in green. Mint 'Adson' are seldom seen in even the commonest values - such a spread of values as this is a real bonanza. The six mint Adson £54. 50

805

O. P. S. O. (On Public Service Only)

Mint block of 6 of the Second Sideface $\frac{1}{2}$ d, perf. 10, each stamp overprinted O. P. S. O. in rose/magenta by rubber handstamp. Unused "O. P. S. O. 's'" are impossible to distinguish from later reprints, but in any event, a scarce block. One stamp has a small corner thin spot on the reverse, condition otherwise exceptionally fine. The block ... £45. 00

806

FIRST PICTORIAL 2/- and 5/-

These top values are, of course, the keystones of the whole set, and whether mint or used they are, in fine condition, very elusive. We have a limited stock of both values, perf. 14 (E20e and E21e), in superfine postally used, all with circular cancellations and dated during their period of currency. A marvellous opportunity to fill those yawning gaps with stamps of the highest quality. The 2/- and 5/- used. The two £45. 00

807

EARLY OFFICIALS

Simplified set consisting of $\frac{1}{2}$ d Mt Cook, 1d Universal, and First Pictorial 2d, 3d, 6d (original and redrawn), 1/-, 2/- and 5/-. A few faults, but fine appearance, and becoming very scarce. Min. Cat. \$56+ (= £33. 50+) and rising fast. The set of 9 early "Officials", unused £12. 75

Supplies of 'normal' Edward blocks offered last month were totally inadequate to meet the demand. So too will this lot of "Officials" - but someone at least will be lucky. This set, all in blocks of 4 includes the $\frac{1}{2}$ d (HO1a), 6d (HO6b), 8d (HO7c) and 1/- (HO8b). Thus all three main perfs - 14x15, 14x14 $\frac{1}{2}$, 14x13 $\frac{1}{2}$ - are represented. The Edward 'Officials', scarce in blocks

£42. 50

809

SECOND PICTORIAL 2d 'OFFICIAL'

The perf. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ issue of this stamp overprinted 'Official' is one of the scarcest stamps in the entire set. In plate block of 4, as here, (with plate no. 2A) it is a rarity. The seldom seen plate block, superfine mint

£27. 00

1960 PICTORIALS -
UNUSUAL AND ATTRACTIVE OFFERS

- 810 (a) Stitched 4/3 Booklet. Complete booklet, comprising 1 pane of $\frac{1}{2}$ d, two of 1d and two of 3d. All panes unnumbered.
The booklet (C. P. W8c(a))

£2. 70

- (b) As above. Complete booklet, all panes with number in selvedge (W8c(b)). Numbers available are 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 - if ordering specific number, please give alternative if possible. The "stitched, numbered" booklet

£3. 60

N. B. All booklets offered above include at least one pane with clear example of Chambon perfs.

- 811 (a) Chambon Perforations. Set of seven plate blocks of 16 (4x4), all with clear Chambon perfs. The set includes the $\frac{1}{2}$ d, 2d, 4d and 8d, and the original paper 1d, 3d and 6d - thus being a complete showing of 'Chambons' on this paper. The set, seldom seen in this form ...

£30. 00

- (b) As above. Vertical block of 14 (2x7) of the 2d value, including four examples of the Chambon peculiarities (which occur of course as variations in the spacing of the holes at the centre of the vertical perfs in alternate horizontal rows of stamps). In this case, these variations result in "teeth" which are, consecutively from top to bottom, wide, wide, narrow and normal. It is the first two which make this a remarkable piece - consecutive wide strikes are rare. The 2d Chambon block

£12. 50

- (c) As above. Chambon perf. block of 6 of the 1d on chalky paper. Extraordinarily good example, and very scarce on chalky paper. .

£4. 80

- 812 (a) Slot Machine Stamps. Strip of 13 from the special jointless coil issue of the 1d (O2b). A strip of this length is the minimum required to show that these coils were not made up from sheets (which were 12 stamps wide). The strip

£4. 50

- (b) As above. Strip of 4 from one of the more conventional "made-up-from-sheets" coils. The strip includes a blind join, and the stamps are on chalky paper (O2c). The coil join strip

50p

- 813 (a) 2d Kaka Beak. The Catalogued "Spur to 2" variety on R16/11 from green plate 5 (OV3f) in mint corner block of 10 stamps. This variety is seldom seen in a positional block - and so far as stocks will allow, we will select blocks showing good Chambon perfs at no additional charge! The variety block £2. 75
- (b) As above. Large plate block of 60, being the bottom left quarter of a sheet from plates 2251. In addition to the plate number and imprint the block includes the "Defective D" variety at R14/4 (OV3a), and no less than 15 other minor but constant varieties. Finally, there are some excellent Chambon perf. characteristics, with both wide and narrow "teeth". The large block £10. 50
- (c) As above. Marginal block of 10 including the Catalogued variety at R14/4 (as described in previous lot) and R14/5 constant green flaw under A of ZEA. The double variety block £2. 50
- 814 (a) 2½d Titoki. Mint block of 4 with vertical perforations widely misplaced to the left (2½mm) - at first glance the stamps appear to be imperf vertically! The block £5. 00
- (b) As above. Corner block of 42, with imprint/plate nos. 3A2A2A2A. A horizontal doctor blade flaw in green, and 4mm wide, affects six of the stamps. The spectacular variety block £15. 00
- 815 (a) 4d Puarangi. Two plate blocks of 25 stamps each (5x5) showing the prominent flaw and subsequent retouch on R18/3 from blue plate 1 "A" (specialists will know that two different blue plates, each numbered 1, were used). Both blocks also include the R18/5 retouch to D, R20/1 flaw on L, and R20/5 flaw on D which were peculiar to blue plate 1 "A". The two blocks (one of which has good Chambon perfs) £9. 75
- (b) As above. Specialist set of 5 plate blocks - three from blue plate 1 "B" and two from blue plate 1 "A", which clearly demonstrate the use of the two different blue plates, with the same plate number. The "B" blocks (of 16, 25 and 25 stamps respectively) include the R20/3 flaw and retouch states (OV6b/c), and two states of the R16/5 developing flaws; the "A" blocks (both 5x5) are exactly as described in lot (a) above. The set of five blocks (all with Chambon perfs) £22. 50
- 816 8d Rata. Imprint/Plate block of 8 with the rare plate number combination II21. Cat. \$150 (=£90), but with minor gum disturbance on one stamp, hence the bargain price of £57. 50
- 817 3/- Multicolour. Another rarity, being an imprint block of 4 with watermark inverted. (O18bZ). The stamps are from the later printing (C. P. shade 2). The rare block, perfect mint £62. 50

CHRISTCHURCH EXHIBITION, OFFERS

- 818 ½d Green. Very fine fresh mint (marginal) block of 4. Scarce £35. 00
- 819 3d Brown/Blue. Excellent-looking unused copy, marred only by a little thinning on the reverse, hence a gift of a space-filler at £5. 50
- 820 6d Pink/Green. An absolutely flawless copy in every way - pristine freshness, good colour, well-centred and full gum (never hinged). A rarity in this condition £75. 00

- 821 (a) Complete set, $\frac{1}{2}$ d - 6d. To call such an attractive-looking set "second grade" does them an injustice. Nevertheless, while all sound copies none of the four is quite perfect, though the faults (heavy hingeing, toned perfs, etc.) are apparent only from the backs. First-grade sets are now fetching three-figure prices, so this is an opportunity for someone at, the set £40. 00
- (b) Short set, $\frac{1}{2}$ d - 3d. Definitely second-grade ($\frac{1}{2}$ d and 3d have defects), but again of super appearance The short set £9. 50

1920 VICTORY

- 822 (a) Complete set, $\frac{1}{2}$ d - 1/-, including the 2d on $1\frac{1}{2}$ d provisional of 1922. Perfect mint (unhinged) £22. 75
- (b) As above. The same set of 7 in glorious mint blocks of 4 £110. 00
- 823 (a) 1/- Orange-Vermilion. Mint, never hinged, and superfine £10. 50
- (b) As above. Same pristine condition, but mint block of 4. Superlative £50. 00

1947 PEACE 4d - INVERTED WATERMARK

This variety was first reported as recently as three years ago ("Captain COQK", March 1973) and until now we had never actually seen a copy. It is undoubtedly extremely scarce (we understand only a part sheet was found, and due apparently to careless storage, perhaps by a non-philatelic owner, many of the stamps were creased). We shall of course be listing the variety in our Catalogue at the earliest opportunity, and meantime we have a very few copies available as follows:

- 824 (a) Uncreased and superfine mint £27. 50
- (b) With horizontal crease, frontal appearance unaffected £10. 50
- (c) Rather more-badly creased, but marginal copy £5. 50

1946 PEACE - COMPLETE MINT SHEETS

Fine research material - all sheets (of 120 stamps each) being of the philatelically-rich Waterlow-printed values. One or two sheets have a few split perfs, otherwise condition is very good.

- 825 $\frac{1}{2}$ d Lake Matheson. From frame plate 42785/centre plate 42724 .. £5. 50
- 826 4d Army. From frame plate 42787/centre plate 42789 or 42795/42789. Each sheet £6. 50
- 827 5d Navy. Three different combinations of frame and centre plates available at, each sheet £7. 50
- 828 6d Industry. From frame plate 42853/centre plate 42852 £7. 50
- 829 9d Waiho Chapel Window. The frame plates of this value are perhaps the most prolific of all in re-entries etc. (being from frame plate 42878, the sheet offered includes at least 26 re-entries and one retouched impression). In addition to some splitting of the perfs, there is a little creasing. But Cat. over £21 as normals, must be a bargain at £10. 50

EARLY HEALTHS

These are rising very fast - mint blocks are particularly desirable.

830		<u>1929 Nurse.</u> Block of 4, superfine mint	£24. 00
831	(a)	<u>1930 Nurse.</u> Top right corner block of 4 with full selvages and sheet serial number. Brilliant mint	£65. 00
	(b)	<u>As above.</u> Another block of 4 (non marginal). Superfine mint	£60. 00
832	(a)	<u>1931 1d + 1d.</u> A very fine fresh mint copy (<u>lightly</u> hinged) of the "Red Boy"	£26. 50
	(b)	<u>As above.</u> Another equally fine looking once-mounted example, but with the merest hint of a thin spot on the back caused by the removal of the hinge, hence	£13. 50

HEALTH MINIATURE SHEETS

Like many other areas of N. Z. stamps, these are under considerable pressure - in this case because they have a strong thematic interest. Our stocks of most years' issues are good at present, so take the opportunity to fill those gaps now. Number of miniature sheets in each set in parenthesis.

1957 (2)	wmk sideways	£2. 88	1966 (2)	£2. 40
1957 (2)	wmk upright	£6. 00	1967 (2)	£2. 40
1958 (2)		£2. 40	1968 (2)	£2. 40
1959 (2)		£2. 40	1969 (2)	£2. 65
1960 (2)		£6. 00	1970 (2)	£2. 60
1961 (2)		£3. 60	1972 (2)	£1. 80
1962 (2)		£3. 90	1973 (2)	£1. 80
1963 (2)		£2. 88	1974 (1)	60p
1964 (2)		£4. 20	1975 (1)	60p
1965 (2)		£3. 90		

833		<u>Miniature Sheets - Complete set.</u> The 36 sheets listed above, plus the two issued in 1971. If the purchaser so desires we shall delay sending until the arrival of the 1976 issue (due in our hands about August 10th) which we will be pleased to include at no extra charge. The complete set of Health Miniature Sheets	£50. 00
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Varieties - all in complete miniature sheets.

834	(a)	<u>1958 3d + 1d.</u> Sheet no. 8 in the second state, with retouching to tents on stamps 3 and 6	£6. 00
	(b)	<u>As above.</u> Sheet no. 4, with tent retouch on stamp 6	£3. 60
835		<u>1959 2d + 1d.</u> Stamp 4 (R2/1) on sheet no. 2 was extensively touched up, resulting in the well-known "Black-Eyed Gull" variety. Attractive, and very obvious to the naked eye	£2. 40
836		<u>1964 2½d + 1d.</u> Miniature sheet with, on R1/4, a prominent white flaw on the smaller bird's wing. Constant on sheets from one position (plating of this particular sheet is not known to us). Another first-class naked eye variety	£3. 60

LONG FISCAL PLATE PROOFS

All items offered below are imperf. , and printed in the colours indicated on white card.

837	Values to 10/- . Set of 15, consisting of 4d red-brown, 6d dull purple-claret, 8d deep green, 1/- pale rose, 2/- blue, 2/- mauve, 2/6 grey-brown, 3/- mauve, 4/- purple-claret, 5/- green, 6/- rose, 7/- ultramarine, 8/- deep blue, 9/- orange, 10/- venetian red. A few small faults, but a most attractive, colourful and scarce set of proofs	£120. 00
838	<u>2/6 Error with "COUNTERPART" included in the design. Plate proof in yellow, very fine</u>	£15. 00
839	<u>15/- Deep Green, very fine</u>	£15. 00
840	<u>£1 Rose-Pink, small fault, but fine appearance</u>	£7. 50
841	<u>25/- Blue, very fine</u>	£15. 00
842	<u>30/- Brown, very fine</u>	£15. 00
843	<u>£2 Mauve, fine</u>	£13. 50
844	<u>£4 Ultramarine, good</u>	£10. 50
845	<u>£5 Deep Blue, fine</u>	£15. 00
846	<u>£6 Deep Orange, fine</u>	£15. 00
847	<u>£10 Deep Blue, very fine</u>	£17. 50
848	<u>£20 Yellow, fine</u>	£17. 50

WELPEX '72

For the N. Z. National Stamp Exhibition held at Wellington from 15th - 20th May, 1972, two special envelopes were issued, a 4c blue and a 22c orange (registered), each bearing an attractive motif incorporating the Wellington coat-of-arms in full colour. On each day of the Exhibition the temporary post office there used a different special cancellation, all of which were based on cancellations used at Wellington in the 19th Century. We can offer the following:

- | | | | |
|-----|-----|--|--------|
| 849 | (a) | Set of seven 4c envelopes, one being unused, and six showing the complete set of special cancellations. A superb set | £7. 50 |
| | (b) | An exactly similar set, except that the envelopes are the 22c registered type, and the used bear a special Welpex '72 registration label | £9. 50 |

850 $\frac{1}{2}$ d VICTORIA LAND

A superfine used pair of the King Edward VII $\frac{1}{2}$ d overprinted 'VICTORIA LAND' (for use by the 1910-12 Scott Antarctic Expedition), cancelled by the BRIT. ANTARCTIC EXPD. circular datestamp. The fact of their being a joined pair excludes the possibility that they have been removed from the special certificates to which unsold remainders were applied and cancelled. The rare used pair (RD2a) £210.00