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VOLUME XVI

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KING GEORGE V PERFORATIONS

by A. B. Johnstone.

A perusal of the notes in Volume VI on the perforations of the G.V. recessed issues led me to a re-examination of a recent acquisition in the form of a used block of four of the 6d with the characteristic misalignment of the two-perf operation. This block proved to be perf. 14 x 13¼ top and bottom, which is not recorded in Volume 6, other than the proof sheet of the 9d in the Post Office reference collection mentioned on page 24, where the inference is that the machine was stopped, the sheet re-adjusted and then the remaining rows perforated.

However close examination of my 6d block revealed that whereas the top perfs were ragged in the extreme, the bottom perfs were crisp and clean-cut, a situation which could only have arisen provided the sheet had been removed from the machine before perforating the bottom rows, in fact a two-perf operation, not a simple re-adjustment of the sheet. Moreover, the upper rough perfs are the mis-aligned perfs whereas the lower clean-cut perfs are almost perfectly positioned between the stamps.

Now accepting that the two-perf operation was designed to correct mis-alignment, then logically the upper perfs were the first operation which had progressively got out of alignment, and the lower perfs the correction. Otherwise, why would it be necessary to stop the machine at all when it was functioning so finely and accurately?

Again, it is generally accepted that with a comb head, the short rows of pins lead, but is this necessarily so? The evidence of this block tends to suggest that the sheet was perforated from the top, with the long row of pins leading, (thus perforating the top selvage with the first strike) and progressing down the sheet to the upper row of perfs in this block. (Note that the middle row of horizontal perfs definitely belongs to the upper stamps).

Editor's footnote: Mr. Johnstone raises some interesting new points (as well as re-introducing some that are not so new!).

It is possible, of course, that both his premise (as to the reason for perforating in two operations) and his surmise (as to the direction of perforating) could be the correct ones. But in the absence of hard and incontrovertible facts about the purpose of "two-perfing", we are as in the past driven back to weighing the balance of probabilities.

That two-perfing was a device to correct progressive misalignment has for long been put forward as a neat and logical explanation for the method. Neat it may be, but it is not in my view logical, and does not really stand up to close examination. For instance, taking Mr Johnstone's theory of "top-to-bottom" perforating, if the misalignment had become so serious as to warrant correction after four rows, what would it be like in row 10, after completing the bottom six rows, with the same head, in one operation? Logically, another adjustment would be necessary, say after row 7 or 8, yet stamps from the bottom of sheets do not support such a contention, nor is there any evidence whatsoever to suggest a "three-perf" operation! Conversely, if we accept the conventional view that sheets were perforated bottom-to-top, i.e. with the 'open' side of the comb pointing towards the direction of feed, there is no satisfactory accounting for the two-perf vertical pairs one frequently comes across in which the lower stamp is well-centred, and the upper stamp (with the "corrected" perfs) is badly centred.

With regard to the difference in sharpness of the upper and lower perfs noted by Mr. Johnstone in his 6d block, there are, it seems to me, only two possible explanations, and either one implies a two-perf operation. Possibility no. 1 is that when the lower (clean) strike was effected, the head was in good condition, whereas when the upper (ragged) strike was made the head was in a worn state. Possibility no. 2 assumes that sheets were perforated in sheaves; the sheet whence Mr. Johnstone's block came would be at or near the bottom of a sheaf (i.e. closer to the cutting edge) when the clean strike was made, and at or near the top of a sheaf when the ragged set of perfs occurred. (For those not familiar with the mechanics, it should be explained that the action of the perforating head is very similar to that of a paper punch -- blunt-ended pins force the paper into matching holes drilled into the base of the machine, and it is the edges of the holes, not the pins, which form the actual cutting edge).

Unlike Mr. Johnstone, I am firmly of the opinion that perforating of these issues was invariably bottom-to-top. In this connection, all the recorded imperforate and partly imperforate varieties come from the upper parts of sheets. Apart from those where the omission was of the topmost strike only (found in the 4d plate 44), it is significant that in every case the fourth or fifth horizontal row plays a prominent part, either as the only row involved or as the lowermost of several rows affected -- a powerful indication that these varieties are aberrations directly attributable to the two-perf method. And surely it is much more probable that errors of omission or partial omission, if they were to occur at all, would occur in sheets already partly perforated?

Summing up, I suggest that whatever the reason for two-perfing (if indeed there was any specific reason), (a) it was not a means of improving the overall registration of the perforations, and (b) it was a much commoner practice in the Edward VII - George V period than is demonstrated by those cases where different heads were used for the two operations. Indeed I believe that it may well have been the normal method of working at that time, and that quite possibly all sheets of the stamps concerned were perforated in two separate operations. Where the head used was the same throughout the sheet it is in many cases impossible to prove a two-perf operation, of course, but Mr Johnstone and I certainly are agreed that his block (I have seen a few others in other values with the same general characteristics) is conclusive proof that the 14 x 13½ head was used in this way. Incidentally, some of the partly imperforate sheets mentioned above (5d, 6d, 9d and some of the 1/-) provide further strong evidence of the intended use of this head in two operations.

Obviously there are many questions to be answered, and as suggested in Volume 6, it is almost certain that other pieces exist which will help to that end. Blocks of either perf, showing misaligned strikes and/or clean and ragged perfs in combination should be watched for carefully -- if such blocks can be plated to the horizontal rows whence they came, they will be particularly informative.

Q. V. SECOND SIDEFACES – MINT BLOCKS OF FOUR

A magnificent listing of these elusive issues – as a group, among the most difficult of all N. Z. stamps to find in collectable condition, yet general quality of the lots that follow is outstanding.

1101(a)	½d Black, Perf. 11 (D1e). Lovely fresh mint block. Minor gum bend.....	£7.50
	(b) As above. Superfine block on coarse paper (D1eV)	£12.50
1102(a)	1d Rose, Perf 11 (D2p). Delightful block in deep rose, beautifully fresh and well-centred. One stamp shows prominent flaw on Queen's neck	£9.00
	(b) As above. Another block in bright carmine. A few minor perf. tones do not mar appearance. Very attractive	£13.50
	(c) As above. Yet another block in pale dull carmine, on coarse paper (D2pT). Fresh, well-centred – in a word, superb.....	£15.00
1103(a)	2d Lilac, Perf. 11 (D3k). Lovely block in mauve-lilac, one stamp showing variety "scratch from base of hair to CE of PENCE" (Pl. 5, bottom left pane, R7/4)	£16.50
	(b) As above. Another variety block from Plate 5, all four stamps being the sub-type with coloured spot in shading below S of POSTAGE, which occurred on 22 impressions in the top right pane (See Vol. 4, Page 30). This block, in bright mauve, is superbly centred – one or two very faint perf tones do not intrude on lovely appearance	£15.00
	(c) As above. Block in purple-mauve, one stamp with thin spot on back, otherwise immaculate.....	£13.50
1104	2½d Blue, Perf. 12 x 11½, 7mm Wmk (D4c). Fresh mint block centred a little to the right	£40.00
1105	2½d Blue, Perf. 10 (D4e). Well-centred block in blue, fresh and fine.....	£45.00
1106(a)	2½d Blue, Perf 11 (D4j). Block in the blue shade, superfine.....	£45.00
	(b) As above. Another block in dull blue, centred slightly left, otherwise quality matches the previous lot	£37.50
1107(a)	3d Yellow, Perf 11 (D5h). Superlative block in the yellow shade.....	£62.50
	(b) As above. Another block, equally fine, in pale yellowish-orange, from the bottom left corner of a pane, and showing the marginal watermark lines at left and foot	£70.00
	(c) As above. A breathtaking block in a deep bright orange – as distinctive a colour as we have ever seen. Condition is brilliant, too	£95.00
1108	4d Green, Perf. 12 x 11½, 6mm Wmk (D6a). Superfine well-centred block in pale blue-green, from the original issue on paper with horizontal mesh	£100.00

1109	4d Green, Perf 10 (D6e). Fine mint block in dull green	£75.00
1110	4d Green, Perf 11 Delectable block in deep green on coarse paper (D6gX), including the prominent variety "White flaw below A of LAND" (bottom left pane, R9/4). Condition simply superb.....	£60.00
1111	5d Olive-Black, Perf 10 x 11 (D7e). Block of beautiful pristine appearance. One stamp with tiny gum-thin, otherwise faultless	£62.50
1112	5d Olive-Black, Perf. 11. Fine block on coarse paper (D7fZ)	£70.00
1113(a)	6d Brown, Perf. 11 (D8m). Block in brown, well-centred and finest mint	£72.50
	(b) As above. Deep brown block, again very fine, but not quite so well-centred as the previous block	£65.00
	(c) As above. Sepia-brown block on the coarse paper (D8mY), centred to upper left, but again fresh and fine.....	£55.00
1114	8d Blue, Perf. 11 (D9d). Insignificant surface abrasions on one stamp do not detract from this block's charms — superb colour, good centring and crisp freshness. The block of 8d's, of considerable rarity.....	£97.50
1115	1/- Red Brown, Perf 11. (D10k). A wonderful block, of glorious rich colour, and general condition to match. A true gem among gems	£125.00

1913 — 1978 LIFE INSURANCE

1116	1913 — 1937, ½d - 6d set. Set of 11 mint stamps, complete between S. G. L24 - L31, including 'a' and 'b' nos. Seldom available	£30.00
1117(a)	1925 — 1937, ½d - 6d, Perf. 14. One of each value, ½d, 1d, 2d, 3d, 6d (S. G. L32 - L36), very fine mint	£12.50
	(b) As above. Short set, comprising ½d, 1d, 2d and 3d values, all perf 14, and each in beautiful mint block of 4. Stamps are unmounted throughout (the 2d block being hinged in the selvedge), and only the 6d block is needed for completion..	£27.50
1118(a)	½d Green, perf. 14 (X7c). Mint copies of the two listed shades	75p
	(b) As above. Wiggins Teape single wmk paper (X7d). Mint block of 30 (stamps are unmounted), includes the R6/4 vertical coloured flaw above lighthouse.....	£4.00
	(c) As above. Two corner blocks of 6 (stamps unhinged) on Wiggins Teape paper, each with differing sheet serial number. One block has registered wmk (X7d), the other multiple wmk (X7e), the latter block with buffer bar in selvedge — in addition there is a superb shade variation between the blocks	£1.25
1119(a)	1d Red, Cowan paper, Perf. 14 x 15 (X8d). The two Catalogued shades, mint..	£6.00
	(b) As above, perf. 14 (X8e). Deep and pale scarlet, each in mint block of 4	£9.50

	(c) As above. Three shades of scarlet, mint singles	£3.60
	(d) As above. Mint block of 4 with side selvage, one stamp showing a white horizontal dash on the lighthouse (a variety which occurred at both R5/2 and R7/2 in the printed sheet). The side selvage is abnormally wide and shows a complete extra strike of the 14 comb perforating head. A most unusual block ...	£7.50
1120(a)	3d Chocolate, perf. 14 (X11b). Two superb blocks of 4 (all but one stamp being unmounted), in chocolate and very pale chocolate. Spectacular contrasts	£58.00
	(b) As above. The same two shades, but mint singles.....	£14.50
	(c) As above, perf. 14 x 15 (X11c). Superb unmounted mint blocks of 4, in the two Catalogued shades. Beautiful	£45.00
	(d) As above. The same two shades, but mint singles	£11.25
1121(a)	6d Pink, De La Rue Paper (X12a). Mint singles in pink and deep rose	£9.00
	(b) As above. Mint corner blocks of 4 on Wiggins Teape Paper – one single wmk (X12c) with a black serial no., and the other multiple wmk (X12d) with pink sheet serial no. A lovely pair of blocks	£37.50
	(c) As above, W. T. single wmk paper (X12c). Unmounted mint block of 4	£18.00
	(d) As above. Two mint singles, in pink and deep pink, as listed	£9.00
	(e) As above, W. T. multiple wmk paper (X12d). Unhinged block of 4	£18.00
	(f) As above. Although no shades of this stamp are listed, these two singles show superb contrasts. Mint.....	£9.00
1122	1947 Pictorials (X13a-X20a). One plate/imprint block of each value (½d, 1d, 2d, 2½d, 3d, 4d, 6d, 1/-). A superb set of 8 blocks – the 1/- block includes the R10/1 re-entry. Cat. £46	£35.00
1123	1d Pictorial (X14a). Plate/imprint block of 4, in a definite and distinctive green-olive frame, rather than the normal grey-olive (mint single in the usual colour included for comparison)	£10.00
1124	2d Pictorial (X15a). Two unmounted mint stamps, one on normal paper, the other on a very notably thin paper (subject unsold, we can offer unmounted blocks of 4 of both papers, at £6)	£1.50
1125	2½d Pictorial (X16a). Issued in 1963, this stamp had a 'life' of only 4 years and is consequently missing from many collections. We can offer the following:	
	(a) Unmounted mint single	£3.00
	(b) Unmounted mint block of 4	£12.00
	(c) Unmounted mint plate/imprint block of 4	£15.00
	(d) Superb used single	£3.00

1126	1/- Pictorial (X20a). Plate/imprint block of 6, includes the R10/1 re-entry	£3.00
1127	1967 Decimal Provisionals. Plate/imprint block of each value. Mint set of 6 blocks, scarce. Cat £70	£45.00
1128	2c on 2½d Provisional (X22a). Unmounted mint copy of the variety "Double Surcharge" (X22aZ). The second impression of both 2c and obliteration appears to the right of the surcharge. Rare.....	£60.00
1129	1969-1978 Pictorials. Complete set of plate/imprint blocks, between ½c and 25c (X27a-X34a), absolutely complete as per C. P. Catalogue. In addition a 15c plate (111) block is included showing the R10/1 lighthouse flaw (illustrated in our Catalogue). A lovely set of 22 blocks	£30.00
1130	2½c Pictorial (X28a). Two mint blocks of 4 showing good shades in both the blue and yellow colours. Attractive!	£5.00

KING GEORGE VI SHADES IN MINT BLOCKS

1131	½d Green (M1a). No less than seven blocks of 4, each in a differing shade of green	£7.00
1132	½d Chestnut. Four blocks of 4 in contrasting shades, all on fine horizontal mesh paper (M1b).....	£1.00
1133	1d Scarlet (M2a). Five matching corner blocks of 4, ranging in shade from scarlet to rose-red	£4.50
1134	1d on ½d Green (M3a). Three blocks of 4 in varying green shades.....	£1.25
1135	1d Green. Three superb contrasts, each in block of 4 on fine vertical mesh paper (M2c)	£1.20
1136	1½d Chocolate (M4a). One of the scarcest of all K. G. VI stamps, here represented by two blocks in delightfully different shades.....	£12.00
1137	1½d Rose-red. Three shade blocks on fine HM paper (M4b)	£1.35
1138	2d on 1½d Chocolate (M5a). Three contrasting chocolate shades, each in block of 4.	£1.25
1139	2d Orange. Wow! Orange, through to bright yellow-orange. Four blocks of 4, all on VM paper (M6a).....	£2.00
1140	2d Orange. The two Catalogued shades, each in block of 4, on HM paper (M6b)..	£1.25
1141	6d Carmine, fine paper (M10a). Two shades each in block of 4	£2.25
1142	8d Violet, fine paper (M11a). Two delicate shades of violet, each in block of 4	£3.00

- 1143** 1/- Upright wmk, Centre die 1 (M13a). Two blocks of 4, featuring vastly different shades of the claret frame, Striking contrasts..... £3.60
- 1144** 1/3 Sideways wmk, frame die 1a (M14a). Lovely shade variations of both the blue frame and brown centre. The two mint blocks £4.50
- 1145** 1/3 Sideways wmk, frame die 1b (M14b). Two blocks of 4, in differing shades of the blue frame £3.60

ADSON

- 1146** 1d Reconstructed Sheet. Complete reconstruction of 240 in the Second Setting form (with 20 "Cadbury" advertisements), printed in mauve. The vast majority of the stamps used have c.d.s. or squared circle cancels. Condition, as usual in such exercises, is somewhat mixed (a reflection of the difficulty of the task), but is better than average. The reconstruction sheet of Adson £175.00
- 1147** Starter Lots. Each consisting of 12 different Adson. Ideal for those eager to become 'hooked', or for those who are simply looking for a nice, small representation of these interesting issues
- (a) 1d Value, second or third settings £9.00
- (b) 2d Value, second or third settings £9.00
- (c) 2d Value, all with green adverts (second setting). A few defects, but scarce £42.50
- (d) 4d Value, brown adverts (second setting). All sound copies. 4d's with adson are by no means common..... £45.00
- 1148** Complete Set. Before Messrs Truebridge Miller and Reich's contract was terminated just over a year after it began, the advertisements appeared on nine of the ten denominations of the Second Sideface issue, the 1/2d being the sole exception. We can offer a set of the nine values, all with Adson (second or third settings), and all selected used with c.d.s. A truly magnificent set for the discerning collector who appreciates quality £55.00

OFFICIALS – MINT AND USED

- 1149(a)** K.G.V Recess Prints. Simplified used set of 6 stamps (3d, 4d, 6d, 8d, 9d, 1/-). Condition very fine, especially so in the case of the scarce 8d and 9d. The complete simplified set £100.00
- (b) As above. A similar set of 6, but fine, fresh mint £140.00
- (c) As above. Marginal block of 4 of the 3d with the two-perf 14 x 13½ and 14 x 14½ se-tenant. The stamps show pronounced plate wear. The "two-perf" block (KO4cZ), superfine unmounted £57.50
- (d) As above. "Two-perf" block of the 6d value, very fine (lightly hinged) mint (KO8c)..... £90.00

	(e) As above. 6d "two-perf" vertical pair, mint.....	£35.00
	(f) As above. Fine mint copy of the high-flying 8d (KO10d) – now listed in Gibbons at £130. Our price	£108.00
	(g) As above. Probably the pick of the listing – a superfine mint block of 4 of the 9d (KO 11a). As we have mentioned previously, this is a much scarcer stamp than is generally realised, and in multiple it is rare. The 9d stamp is lightly hinged	180.00
	(h) As above. Finest mint block of the 1/-, perf. 14 x 14½ (KO12b) in a delightful full vermilion shade. Fresh and perfectly centred	£45.00
	(i) As above. Another 1/- block, in palish orange-vermilion, with full top selvage. Centring again immaculate. The block, mint unmounted	£30.00
	(j) As above. Completing as attractive a trio of 1/- blocks as one could ever hope to see, this one is in the distinctive salmon shade. Slightly off-centre to the left, otherwise fine mint	£37.50
	(k) As above. 1/- "two-perf" vertical pair (KO12c) in vermilion, and showing definite signs of plate wear (similar to that seen in the later 3d and 4d plate 20 stamps). Fine mint.....	£47.50
1150	K. G. V ½d Green. Mint blocks of 4 on De La Rue paper (KO13a) in the listed shades of green and yellow-green. Excellent contrasts	£1.25
1151	Second Pictorials. Simplified set of 12 used (½d – 2/-, one of each value, complete). The majority of these Pictorial officials are extremely elusive, especially in used, so the purchaser of this set will avoid literally years of frustration	£42.50
1152(a)	1940 Centennials. Yet another Official issue which is continually under pressure Mint set of 11 values (½d – 1/-) complete.....	£35.00
	(b) As above. The same set of 11 but fine used	£19.75
	(c) As above. Complete set of eight "Joined ff" varieties (½d, 1d, 2d, 2½d, 3d, 4d, 6d, 8d), each in pair with normal. The variety set, finest mint	£97.50
1153	Long Fiscals. Very fine used copies of the 2/- (perf. 14) and the 5/- (perf 14 x 14½), both with c.d.s.....	£27.50

RECENT ISSUES

4/10/78	1978 Christmas 7c, 16c, 23c. Set of 3 mint	42p
	Imprint/plate blocks. Complete set of 3 blocks of 4 (one each value).....	£1.85
	Official Illustrated First Day Cover (Wanganui pmk)	55p
1978	Collectors Pack. Mint special issues from December 1977 to October 1978 (Fire Engines, 1978 Centenaries, Agricultural Science, Sea Resources, Healths, Christmas) housed in an attractive folder. The Collectors Pack, post paid	£3.95