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N.Z. NOTES AND COMMENT

by Colin Hamilton

"Two-Perfs" and all that. Much has been written (and much more still has been spoken) on the subject of perforating sheets in two separate operations. But I make no apology for returning to it yet again.

For many years (right up to 1977, in fact) it was believed that this peculiar method of working was confined to the recess-printed King Edward VII and George V Heads, and then only to a proportion of the sheets issued. Furthermore, with just a few isolated and rare exceptions, the comb machines used were always of a different gauge, i.e. 14x13 $\frac{1}{4}$ and 14x14 $\frac{1}{4}$, thus resulting in the very well-known "two-perf pairs" in both issues. The rare exceptions occurred in the 3d, 4d orange and 6d Edwards, where an apparently minute number of sheets were perforated using two different heads of the same gauge. These resulted in the much less known, but every bit as valid, two-perf pairs listed by us as H3d, H4c and H6d, which are not even mentioned in other catalogues.

Then, in 1977, a few blocks of the 1907-08 $\frac{1}{2}$ d Mt Cook were discovered which clearly proved the use of two different 14x15 heads within the same sheet in that issue. And just a few weeks ago my colleague Warwick Paterson reported (in the C.P. Newsletter, Feb. 1982) his discovery of a similar occurrence in the reduced 3d Huia. Obviously knowledge is by no means complete and it is highly probable (I would go as far as to say it is certain) that other finds are waiting to be made.

Much of the discussion and argument surrounding "two-perfing" has been centred on rationalising, or guessing at reasons for, its use. The usual theory is that using one head over the whole of a sheet produced an unsatisfactory job, and it was to overcome this that two different heads were used. Erudite articles have been written purporting to "prove" this theory, but there is an inevitable and fatal flaw in any such line of reasoning — it just does not stand up to examination. The crunch question is (if one accepts the theory): how does one explain away sheets (which unquestionably exist) which have been perforated by one head throughout, and in which the perforations are perfectly registered and perfectly aligned over the whole sheet?

For some time I have been toying with a rather different idea — that the comb machines in use at that time simply **did not have the capacity** to perforate a whole sheet in one continuous operation, and consequently those many sheets which are demonstrably the product of the same

head throughout were in fact also perforated in two entirely separate operations, which may have been hours, days or even weeks apart.

It's one thing to form such a theory, but quite another to prove it of course. Up to the present there has been some evidence in its favour. For example, one occasionally sees a block in which two consecutive strikes of the comb are misaligned either laterally or longitudinally (or both), but an equally plausible explanation of this would be that it is the result of a momentary stopping of the machine, with a minor adjustment to either the machine or the sheet to correct faulty registration. Indeed the latter is the conclusion arrived at when these misalignments are discussed in the N.Z. Handbook (Vol. 6, page 24).

Although I have no proof that all sheets under discussion were "two-perfed" (and I cannot imagine how such comprehensive proof might ever be forthcoming), I do now have incontrovertible evidence that in at least some instances where the same head was used throughout the sheet, the operation was quite definitely two-perf.

Two complete sheets of the ½d Mt Cook perf 14x15 (F5c in the C.P. Catalogue) were available for examination. That these were from the supply made to Mr Dickie for his slot machine experiments (all stamps being defaced by two black vertical lines) is of no consequence here. The sheets were from plates 1 and 2. All the perforations on both sheets were the product of the same head, and between horizontal rows 5 and 6 on each there was some minor misalignment of strikes as discussed above. But the vital evidence was to be found between vertical columns 10 and 11 (counting from the left). In the bottom five rows of both sheets, the central perf hole of short row no. 11 was missing (not just 'blind', but completely omitted), while in the top six strikes — although there are only ten rows of stamps, eleven strikes of the comb head are necessary to complete the perforating of a sheet — the holes in this line were all present. The only possible explanation is that after the lower halves of these sheets had been perforated, but before the upper halves were run through, the head was removed and repaired. As clear an indication of a two-perf operation as it is possible to get! Strangely, another pin was missing from the head (in short row no. 20) but it was not replaced at this time — the missing hole repeats throughout both sheets.

The sheet from plate 2 also provided some other interesting information, in connection with the two prominent flaws which appeared at some time during the life of this plate, on R7/24 and R10/8. According to Volume 1 of the Handbook: "After this plate had been in use for some time, it suffered minor damage which shows in two interesting flaws." The results of some research done on these flaws by Mrs P.E. Capill were published in the Dec. 1978 issue of the "N.Z. Stamp Collector" (and incidentally necessitated the expansion of our Catalogue listing of R7/24 to all three perforations). Mrs Capill commented that copies showing the R10/8 flaw appeared very scarce in relation to those with the R7/24 flaw, but the question as to exactly when the flaws occurred remained unanswered. We can now go at least some way to resolving this point, and to confirming Mrs Capill's observations on relative scarcity. The sheet seen showed the R7/24 flaw, but R10/8 was normal!

KING GEORGE V RECESS

A continuation of this magnificent listing — unless otherwise stated all items offered are in mint blocks of 4, and in exceptionally fine condition.

- 501(a) 5d Blue. Perf. 14x13¼ block (K7a) in a magnificent intense deep blue.
Unmounted, and absolute perfection £37.50
- (b) As above. Block in the distinctive steel-blue shade. lightly hinged. £37.50

(c)	As above. Perf. 14x14½ block (K7b) in light blue (scarcer in this perf). Unhinged and superfine, if fractionally centred to left	£85.00
(d)	As above. Lightly hinged block in ultramarine	£42.50
(e)	As above. Steel-blue block. Slightly short corner, and minor gum imperfections (light adhesions and faint red mark)	£22.50
(f)	As above. Two-perf block (K7c), very fine, light hinge	£100.00
502(a)	6d Carmine, Cowan Paper. Beautiful deepish carmine block perf. 14x13¼ (K8a). Fresh lightly hinged	£32.50
(b)	As above. Block in carmine-pink, and showing pronounced worn plate characteristics. Superbly centred, barely hinged (and that on one stamp only)..	£65.00
(c)	As above. Unmounted marginal block, perf. 14x14¼ (K8b) in a dazzling bright carmine-pink (again with marked plate wear). A real eye-catcher this one	£65.00
(d)	As above. Two-perf block (K8c) in bright carmine. Lightly hinged, and superfine	£180.00
503(a)	6d Carmine, 'Pictorial' Paper (K8d). Lightly hinged block, very fine	£17.50
(b)	As above. Marginal block with perforation guide dot in right selvedge (it is of interest to note that in comb-perforated sheets these dots are pierced through by pins which held the sheet in position on the machine; in line-perforated sheets, the dots remain intact). Again lightly hinged	£20.00
504(a)	7½d Deep Red-Brown. Lightly hinged block, perf. 14x13¼ (K9a). Very fine..	£37.50
(b)	As above. Block in the scarcer perf. 14x14¼ (K9b), very light hinge	£70.00
505(a)	8d Indigo-Blue. Perf. 14x13¼ block (K10a), almost imperceptible hinge on one stamp only	£32.50
(b)	As above. Perf. 14x14¼ block (K10b). Unhinged, and perfect	£42.50
(c)	As above. Two-perf block (K10c). Again immaculate unmounted	£70.00
(d)	As above. Another two-perf block in a lighter and quite different shade. One very light hinge	£60.00
506(a)	8d Red-Brown Block in deep red-brown. Centred left, otherwise very fine, very light hinge	£60.00
(b)	As above. Plate block (pl. no. 39) in a strikingly pale shade with a high red content. No side selvedge, but top selvedge intact. Hinged in selvedge only, stamps superb unmounted	£100.00
507(a)	9d Sage-Green. Superb block perf. 14x13¼ (K11a) in sage, one very light hinge	£57.50

(b)	As above. Top marginal block in brilliant deep yellow-olive and showing (unusually in the 9d) definite plate wear. Pristine unmounted	£110.00
(c)	As above. Two-perf block (K11c), brilliant unmounted	£185.00
(d)	As above. Two-perf pair in the same unsullied condition	£90.00
508(a)	1/- Vermilion. Perf. 14x13¼ block (K12a) in a really bright orange-vermilion shade. Although unquestionably all the perforations are the product of the same head, there is lateral misalignment of the two strikes seen in this block, and the quality of the individual holes of one strike is clearly different from that of the other. The latter peculiarity strongly supports our contention that misaligned strikes are not merely evidence of an on-the-spot adjustment of the machine (as argued in Volume 6 of the N.Z. Handbook), but rather that sheets were perforated in two quite separate visits to the same machine, exactly as in the more familiar two-perf operation, when different heads were used. The block, very fine lightly hinged	£62.50
(b)	As above. Perf. 14x14¼ block (K12b) in vermilion — a scarcer shade in this perf. Minute gum thin one stamp, otherwise very fine, and attractively priced at	£55.00
(c)	As above. Lovely block in pale orange-vermilion (K12b(5)) — quite distinct from the salmon. Very light hinge	£55.00
(d)	As above. Marginal two-perf. block (K12c) in vermilion. Brilliant unmounted.	£195.00

Officials

509(a)	3d Chocolate. Perf. 14x13¼ block (K04a). Superb, single light hinge	£20.00
(b)	As above. Similar block in similarly fine condition, with variety Watermark Inverted (K04a(X))	£40.00
(c)	As above. Perf. 14x14¼ block (K04b). Tiny corner crease (invisible on face), otherwise superb, and unhinged	£25.00
(d)	As above. Two-perf block K04c), with the R4/12 re-entry first mentioned in our February 1982 Bulletin. This block is non-marginal, but like the previously offered example, is superb unhinged	£90.00
510	4d Violet, Plate 20 (K05d). Brilliant unhinged block	£55.00
511	4d Deep Purple, Plate 44 (K05g). Yet another magnificent unmounted block..	£42.50
512(a)	6d Carmine. Perf. 14x13¼ block (K08a) in deep carmine, single hinge, superb	£15.00
(b)	As above. Equally fine block in a bright shade	£15.00
(c)	As above. Two-perf pair (K08c) in deep bright carmine, superb unmounted ...	£62.50

- 513 8d Red-Brown (K010d).** Just one of the many gems in this listing – a lovely fresh, nicely-centred block, once hinged, and very, very lightly at that. Rare! .. £625.00
- 514 9d Sage-Green (K011a).** Very lightly hinged block in an unusually bright shade, with more than a hint of a yellowish tinge £200.00
- 515(a) 1/- Vermilion.** Perf. 14x14½ block (K012b) in an intense bright shade of vermilion. Well-centred, unhinged – glorious! £110.00
- (b) As above.** Beautiful block in the true salmon. One very minor perf. tone. Very lightly hinged £90.00
- (c) As above.** Two-perf block (K012c) in vermilion. Upper stamps hinged, but very fine indeed £125.00
- (d) As above.** Two-perf pair in deep orange-vermilion. Very light hinge £75.00
- 516 Used Two-Perf Pairs.** Last but by no means least a complete set (ordinary and Official) of 18 pairs – excepting the 4d plate 44, of course. One or two appear c.t.o., but the majority are obviously genuinely used. As a bonus the 4d violet includes the R4/10 re-entry, and the 3d Official pair has the watermark inverted. One or two minor imperfections (inevitable in properly used) but as fine a set as we have seen £950.00

DIFFICULT UNHINGED MINT

A selection of stamps seldom if ever available in this condition – all absolutely guaranteed full original gum, never hinged, and superbly fresh.

- 517 5/- First Sideface (C8a).** Magnificent, if centred slightly left £625.00
- 518(a) ½d Second Sideface.** Perf. 10 (D1b) £2.00
- (b) As above.** Perf. 10x11 (D1c) £2.75
- (c) As above.** Perf. 11 (D1e) £2.00
- (d) As above.** 'Pirie' paper, double-lined wmk sideways (D1h) £2.00
- 519(a) 1d Second Sideface.** Die 1, Perf. 12x11½, HM paper (D2a) £25.00
- (b) As above.** Die 3, perf. 12½x10 (D2kY) £150.00
- 520(a) 2d Second Sideface.** Die 1, perf. 12x11½, HM paper (D3a) £30.00
- (b) As above.** Die 3, perf. 10x11 (D3j) £5.00
- (c) As above.** 'Pirie' paper, double-lined wmk sideways (D3p) £5.00

521	5d Second Sideface. Perf. 11 (D7f)	£30.00
522(a)	2d First Pictorial. London Print (E5a)	£16.00
	(b) As above. Local print, perf. 14, aniline reddish-purple shade (E6b)	£3.25
523	2½d First Pictorial WAKATIPU. London print (E8a)	£7.50
524(a)	3d First Pictorial. London Print (E9a)	£12.50
	(b) As above. Local print, perf. 11, unwmk'd (E9b)	£7.50
	(c) As above. Local print, perf. 14 (E9d). Pale yellow-bistre shade, marginal copy	£16.00
525(a)	3d Reduced Design. Perf. 14 (E10a)	£18.50
	(b) As above. Perf. 14 x 12¼ – 13¼ (E10b)	£20.00
	(c) As above. Perf. 14x15 (E10c)	£20.00
526	6d Green First Pictorial. London print (E14a)	£45.00
527	8d First Pictorial. Local print, perf. 11, unwmk'd (E16b)	£11.50
528	1/- First Pictorial. London print (E18a)	£37.50
529	2d First Pictorial Official. Perf. 14 (E06b). Aniline red-purple	£4.75
530	2/- First Pictorial Official. Perf. 14 (E020e). Brilliant, perfectly centred	£125.00
531	5/- First Pictorial Official. Perf. 14, wmk sideways (E021e)	£350.00
532(a)	½d Mt Cook, Perkins Bacon Plates. Perf. 14x12¼ – 13¼, dull green (F5b(1))..	£6.00
	(b) As above. Perf. 14x15 (F5c)	£2.00
533	1d Universal Official. Booklet plate (G07a)	£6.00
534	2d Edward (H2a). Deep mauve	£25.00
535	3d Edward. Perf. 14x14½ (H3a)	£17.50
536(a)	4d Edward. Red-Orange, perf. 14x14½ (H4a)	£25.00
	(b) As above. Yellow, perf. 14x14½ (H4d). Bright shade	£22.50
537	6d Edward. Perf. 14x14½ (H6b). Deep carmine	£35.00

538	8d Edward. Perf. 14x14½ (H7b). Indigo	£10.00
539	1/- Edward. Perf 14x14½ (H8b)	£80.00
540	6d Edward Official (H06b)	£27.50
541	8d Edward Official. Perf. 14x13½ (H07c). Indigo	£17.50
542	1/- Edward Official (H08b)	£80.00
543	1920 Victory. Complete set of seven, ½d — 1/-, incl. 2d on ½d provisional (S9a — S15a)	£95.00
544	1926 Dunedin Exhibition. Complete set, ½d — 4d (S17a — S17b)	£85.00
545	1903 Express Delivery. The first issue, perf. 11 on unsurfaced paper (U1a)	£27.50
546(a)	'No VR' Life Insurance, De La Rue Paper. 1d Carmine (X8c)	£3.95
	(b) As above. 1½d orange-brown (X9b)	£1.50
	(c) As above. 6d pink (X12a)	£15.00
547(a)	1899 First Type Postage Due. ½d Large 'D', large 'N.Z.' (Y1a)	£12.00
	(b) As above. 8d (Y2a)	£72.50
	(c) As above. 1/- (Y3a)	£72.50
	(d) As above. 2/- (Y4a)	£125.00
	(e) As above. 10d (Y7a)	£72.50

548

1934 ROYAL TRAIN

Cover with 1d Field Marshal tied by superb strike of the special "Royal Train New Zealand" postmark provided for the Duke of Gloucester's visit to New Zealand in 1934-35. Examples are rare, for care was taken to ensure that only legitimate correspondence from the Royal party was posted on the train. This one is dated 24 DE 34 (during the period of 16 days when the datestamp was in use in the North Island — it was subsequently used over a period of 7 days in the South Island). The rare cover

£67.50

549

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY FOR A COILS ENTHUSIAST

An enormous accumulation of wrappers and centre papers (all with one or more stamps attached) from both counter and slot machine rolls, and covering the issues of K.G.VI, Q.E., 1960, 1967 and 1970 Pictorials. In all, over 400 separate items — a wonderful lot for research and study, the like of which we would never expect to see again. Catalogue of the stamps alone must be more than double our asking price of

£125.00

DECIMAL ARMS TYPES

- 550(a) Line Perf.** The original 1967 issue (with wmk W.8b), \$4 — \$10, complete set of 4, unhinged mint £35.00
- (b) As above.** Short set of two, \$4 and \$6, unhinged mint or fine used £13.50
- 551(a) Comb Perf.** The 1968 issue (with wmk W8a), complete set of 4, unhinged mint £22.50
- (b) As above.** \$6 only, superb used, in very distinct shades of deep green or apple-green, each £3.50
- (c) As above.** \$10 only, finest used copy £5.75

552

KING EDWARD VII LAND

Superfine used vertical pair with overprints in notably different intensities of green, and markedly out of alignment in relation to each other. These peculiarities demonstrate clearly that the overprinting of each quarter sheet of 60 stamps was effected in two separate operations. A lovely proving piece £95.00

Q.E. COIL PAIRS, MINT

NC1a	60p	NC4c	£2.50	NC7b	£1.25
NC1d	£5.00	NC4d	£1.80	NC7b (Y)	£1.25
NC1j	90p	NC5a	£6.25	NC7b (X)	£2.25
NC1k	90p	NC5c	£6.25	NC7c	£1.50
NC3a	75p	NC6a	£1.50	NC7d	£6.00
NC3d	£1.00	NC6c	£3.00	NC8a	£1.80
NC3e	£1.00	NC6d	£1.50	NC8e	£6.00
NC4a	£1.25	NC7a	£1.50		

OFFER OF THE MONTH

Three superb bargain offers to choose from here.

- 553 King George VI Definitives.** Unhinged mint set of 22, ½d — 3/-, comprising one of each value and colour change, plus all provisionals, C.P. normal price £18 (S.G. cat. £15.55 as mounted mint) £9.00

- or 554 As above,** but long set of 41, to include all changes of die, paper and watermark, complete as listed in C.P. Normal price £60. The set all unmounted mint £30.00

- or 555 As above,** but high (shilling) values only, again with all die and watermark changes, all in unmounted mint blocks of 4. The set of nine blocks (3x1/-, 3x1/3d, 2x2/-, 1x3/-) normal price £52.50 £25.00