

NEW ZEALAND BULLETIN

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N.Z. NOTES AND COMMENT

by Colin Hamilton

Plate Blocks to Watch For (concluded). We now come to the issues of the current reign, and here the general tendency is for the scarcity value of plate blocks to be related to that of the basic stamps of which they are made up. Nevertheless, there are numerous exceptions to that rule, and it is these we shall concentrate on here.

Plate blocks of the original 3d Q.E. 'Head' (N5a) are common — not surprisingly, since these stamps were printed from no less than 16 different plates. But two of these, numbers 32 and 33, stand out as very much better than the others. Coincidentally, they were the only two plates laid down from the modified 3d die, consequently all stamps from sheets with these numbers are 'die 1b'. In the 1/-, it is always worth remembering that the centre plate (black) numbers 3A and 3B are also indicators of the modified die in this value, and are really good. It's unlikely you will find plate blocks unrecognised, but you never know. On the other hand, the 2½d on 3d Provisional (N42a/b) offers a definite chance of a find, if you know what to look for. Sheets from all four plates of the redrawn 3d were surcharged, and plate blocks with all four numbers — 17, 18, 19 and 20 — exist in combination with both the narrow and the wide setting of the surcharge (but **never** it should be noted, with **mixed** settings in a standard plate block of six stamps). Thus there are eight different plate blocks, four of which are common and unremarkable. The other four, however, should certainly be committed indelibly to memory. These are **plates 17 and 18** with **narrow** surcharge setting, and **plates 19 and 20** with **wide** surcharge setting. Of these so-called "abnormals", plate 17 is scarce, while 18, 19 and 20 are of great rarity.

Among the ordinary redrawn designs, there is one outstanding possibility. Always take a second look at the bottom left stamp in a 1d plate block (of 6 stamps) numbered 11. 999 times out of 1000, it will be 'normal', in that the bottom of the design will be extensively retouched. But the 1000th one may show a pronounced weakness in the same area (which of course necessitated the retouching). Just a few blocks in the pre-retouch state have ever been found. No high-power glass is needed to spot this one, in fact no glass at all — it's clearly visible to the naked eye.

We must not leave the Q.E. Heads without a word about the Officials. Plate blocks are not, and never have been, common, and as a group they are in my opinion seriously underrated, (all the more surprising in view of the pleasantly attractive design of the stamps). For no obvious reason, I have always found the 2d on thick white paper to be particularly elusive in plate block form.

In the 1960 Pictorials, the 4d on chalky paper is probably too well known to need a mention here. Bear in mind that the plate number **must** be 2333, but note especially that the vast majority of blocks with this plate number are not the good variety. This last point will be evident to any user of the C.P. Catalogue, but I emphasise it because on at least two occasions

I have seen a 2333 plate block on the common paper with certificate stating it was on chalk-surfaced paper. There are no confusing factors surrounding the other scarce plates of this series — the 8d 1121, and the 9d 14A15. Find either of these, and you can be sure it's good, the 9d one particularly so. On a somewhat lower plane, the 2d plates 2212 and 2222 are unquestionably scarcer than their catalogue rating would suggest, as are the 3d 2112, 2124 and 2126.

Plate 2A2A2A3A of the 10c Queen/Coat of Arms (P12b) is something of a mystery. Very few blocks with this plate number have been recorded; one possible explanation is that the bulk of the sheets were used to make up \$1 booklets. Since some sheets are known to have been issued, though, it is clear that further plate blocks may be waiting to be discovered.

In the 1969 Law Society 18c, plates 1221 and 1a2a2a1a are very considerably scarcer than the others found in this value (Curiously, this same 18c also provides a little mystery. 'Tandem' plates were used for printing, and since 1111 exists, so too should 1a1a1a1a, but no block with the latter plate number has ever been recorded. Could it be that the entire printing of the '1a' sheets was seriously defective, and was scrapped? If so, it must have been the yellow plate — represented by the third '1a' of the four — which was faulty, for it will be seen, from a study of the plate number combinations extant, that the same black, blue and red plates, represented by the first second and fourth '1a's', were used subsequently.)

The 4c Life Insurance (X30b) is a similar example, but with a difference. Again tandem plates were used, and plate no. 22 was widely available in 1975. Its companion no. 2a2a was listed as being available from the P.O. Bureau in the 'Philatelic Bulletins' of April and October 1977, but it was not until late 1979 that the first example of this plate block became known to us, and since then we have heard of only one other. Definitely one to keep an eye out for.

With the advent in the last year or two of "print markings" and "reprint markings", it seems likely that the current definitives will produce more than their fair share of elusive plate blocks. The problem, of course, is that as always there is no way of knowing in advance which will be difficult. The only means of overcoming this is to make every effort to acquire all changes as they occur.

KING EDWARD VII TWO-PERF. PAIRS

Scarce material! And all of very high quality, too.

901(a)	5d Brown (H5d). Pair in deep red brown. Brilliant, unhinged	£65.00
(b)	As above. Same shade, but lightly hinged pair	£50.00
(c)	As above. Pair in a bright red-chocolate, contrasting beautifully with the above. Lightly hinged	£50.00
902	6d Carmine (H6e). Superb pair in a bright pinkish shade. Lightly hinged ...	£225.00
903(a)	8d Indigo Blue (H7d). Pair in deep indigo blue. Lightly hinged	£50.00
(b)	As above. Pair in a dazzling deep bright blue. Unhinged	£62.50
(c)	As above. Another pair in the same shade, lightly hinged	£50.00
904	8d Official (H07d). Pair in indigo-blue, lightly hinged	£47.50

K.G.V RECESS-PRINTED MINT (concluded)

905(a)	9d Sage-Green, Perf. 14x13½ (K11a). Single copies in sage-green and yellow-olive. Brilliant contrasts, and finest condition	£30.00
(b)	As above. Single with plate number 25 in top selvage (no side selvage) ...	£25.00
906(a)	9d Sage-Green, Perf. 14x14½ (K11b). As in the 7½d, and for the same reasons, stamps in this perf. are much scarcer than 14x13½s. Perfect unhinged	£24.00
(b)	As above, lightly hinged but very fine	£18.50
907(a)	1/- Vermilion, Perf. 14x13½ (K12a). Unmounted copy in orange-vermilion	£18.00
(b)	As above. Shades of deep orange vermilion and pale orange-vermilion in superfine mint pairs. Beautiful contrasts	£62.50
908(a)	1/- Vermilion, Perf. 14x14½ (K12b). An even more glorious set of shades, again all in superb mint pairs — one in rich vermilion, one in pale bright orange vermilion, and one in a lovely pale salmon. Like the 8d brown set we offered last month, absolutely gorgeous. The three pairs	£120.00
(b)	As above. Similar set of magnificent shades, but mint singles	£60.00
(c)	As above. Corner copy (full selvages) with plate no. 41. Superfine	£32.50

7d BLUE "TRANS TASMAN" AIR MAIL

Some unusual offers of unused copies without gum (and therefore very cheap indeed). All are of brilliant appearance.

909(a)	Single copy	£10.00
(b)	Vertical pair from rows 4 and 5 in the sheet, thus the upper stamp shows the good 'Broken N' flaw	£22.50
(c)	Left marginal block of 4 from rows 4 and 5. Interestingly the R4/2 Broken N is much less prominent than usual — whether this is a constant feature we don't know. The block	£45.00

1935 'BELL BLOCK' AIR MAIL

910	Plate Blocks. The set of 3 in corner blocks of 4 with plate number and sheet serial number. Superfine mint	£45.00
911	Blocks of 4. The set of 3 blocks (1d and 3d marginal). Finest mint	£32.50
912(a)	1d Shades. Set of four mint shades as listed in C.P. Magnificent contrasts ..	£9.50
(b)	As above. Marginal blocks of 4 in carmine and carmine-pink. Lovely!	£8.00

MISCELLANY

- 913(a) 2½d Lake Wakatipu.** Vertical pair (no wmk., perf. 11) showing major variety Imperf. Horizontally (E8bX). Superfine mint £175.00
- (b) As above.** Single stamp with the same variety, but being a top marginal copy, a perfectly adequate alternative to a pair which is usually desirable in imperf. varieties. Again finest mint £97.50
- 914 1/- First Pictorial Rarity.** A really superb used copy of the only 1/- on upright watermark paper (E18c), all others having either no watermark, or sideways watermark. Unknown mint, and the few known copies all, like this one, in fact have "upright watermark inverted". Probably the best example extant £625.00
- 915 1d Field Marshal.** A delightful and unusual album pageful of this stamp, all mint, comprising: (i) Cowan paper, perf. 14 — six superb shades, all in pairs, plus a booklet pair with 'Parisian Ties' advert., plus a booklet single without advert.; (ii) Cowan paper, perf. 14x15 — three brilliant shades, including the scarce rose-pink, again all in pairs, plus a booklet pair ('Parisian Ties' adverts.) one of which has the major re-entry (W4jW); (iii) Wiggins Teape paper, perf. 14 — a pair, plus a single on notably thick white paper, plus a single with offset on the back. Lovely £95.00
- 916(a) King George V 2/- and 3/- Admiral.** The pair of high values on Jones paper. Condition superb — previous hingeing is so light as to be negligible £160.00
- (b) As above.** Similarly fine pair on Cowan paper £150.00
- 917(a) 1d Kiwi.** Block of 4 with multiple watermark inverted (L2dZ). Superb unhinged mint £2.25
- (b) As above.** A magnificent positional block of 30 from plate B3 (also with wmk. inverted), including the prominent and constant flaw on R4/13. The block must be from an early printing, proven by the fact that this impression (R4/13) shows no signs of re-entry, nor does R5/18 show any flaw. The variety block £19.50
- 918 Q.E. 9d — 1/9d Sheet Values.** A collection of 15 different value blocks (9d x 5, 1/- x 6, 1/6d x 1, 1/9d original paper x 1, 1/9d white paper x 2), showing the original sheet values, and the interesting altered values which were necessary when half-sheets were issued due to spoilage during printing. The collection is complete excepting the altered value from the 1/- plate 1B1B. The makings of an unusual little display £92.50
- 919 1960 Pictorial 4/3d Booklet.** Complete booklet, all panes having coloured number printed in selvage (W8c(b)). If you require a particular number (these range from 1 to 6), please specify when ordering, and we'll try to oblige. Each booklet £15.00
- 920 1967 Pictorials.** The complete set of 18 (½c — \$2) as originally issued, on First Day Cover with the special 'Introduction of Decimal Currency' cancellation. Superb condition. (Stamps alone cat. \$58) £25.00

921	1913 Auckland Exhibition. Finest mint set of 4, fresh, lightly hinged and with the 3d and 6d exceptionally well-centred	£295.00
922	Auckland Exhibition 1d Used on Cover. Tied by Exhibition c.d.s. of 8th Dec. 1913 (one week after issue). Small faults, but quite attractive, and very scarce	£32.50

1936 CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE – F.D.C.'S

First Day Covers of this 1936 issue (C.P. S20–24, S.G. 593–7) are not uncommon. Indeed we have several in stock at present, the following being a listing of those different covers available (each cover is cancelled with the special conference cancellation 1 OC 36).

923	Special Envelope (228mm x 102mm), lettering in brown and green at left, with map of N.Z. within the Chambers of Commerce seal – this is perhaps the most unusual of all the covers found	£6.00
924	Special Envelopes (163mm x 108mm), issued by Napier (N.Z.) Philatelic Society, with a picture of Napier over black lettering at left. A set of 5 identical covers, each with a different stamp value	£10.00
925	O.H.M.S. Envelopes (228mm x 102mm). Set of 5 cream 'Official' envelopes, a block of 4 of one of the values being on each envelope	£37.50
926	Plain Envelopes (120mm x 95mm). Set of 5, each with a different stamp ...	£7.50
927	Plain Envelope , with a complete set of stamps	£7.50
928	Plain Registered Envelope , with complete set of stamps	£7.50

1970 PICTORIALS – CONCLUDED

The final part of this variety listing. All stamps are unhinged, although there is the occasional marginal mount.

929(a)	4c No Wmk, white gum (P6c) Part imprint/plate (1A) strip of 4, with Dark Green (wing veins) omitted – an added attraction of this piece is that the dark green plate number is missing	£17.50
(b)	As above. Marginal block of 14, including R4/5 – 7 plate scratch in the blue panel	£5.00
930	5c Wmk'd (P7a) Corner block of 6 (pl. 1A), with R3/2 variety (PV7a)	£3.00
931	8c Wmk'd (P9a) Marginal block of 10 (pl. 1B), R1/14 retouch (PV11a)	£4.50
932(a)	15c Wmk'd (P13a) Inverted wmk variety (P13aZ). Cat. \$50 offered at	£17.50
(b)	As above. We can offer a Sheet Value block of 4, also with watermark inverted. Scarce	£70.00
933	18c Wmk'd (P14a) Inverted wmk variety (P14aY). Cat. \$50, offered at	£17.50

934(a)	18c No Wmk (P14b). Marginal block of 4, with R6/9 and 6/10 varieties	£6.00
(b)	As above. Single stamp with black shifted to the right. Cat. \$75	£12.50
935	23c Park (P16a). Marginal block of 6 (from the second printing), including R6/3 flaw (PV16a)	£10.00
936	25c Perf. 13¼x13½ (P17a). Both listed shades. Cat. \$8 and a bargain at (blocks of 4 pro rata)	£2.50
937	30c Perf. 13¼x13½ (P18a). All 3 catalogued shades (superb contrasts of both blue and stone colours) — blocks of 4 pro rata	£1.50
938	50c Park (P19a). Marginal block of 9, (from the scarce second printing), with the R3/6 error (PV19a). Cat. \$90 as singles	£30.00
939(a)	4c on 2½c, Photogravure Surcharge (P30a). Marginal block of 8 (pl. 1A2A), with R4/13 surcharge flaw	£4.00
(b)	As above. Marginal block of 16 (pl. 1A2A) with R9/6 and 10/13 surcharge varieties	£5.00
(c)	As above. Large corner block of 36 (9x4), plate 1A2A, showing missing perforating pins from the 4th and 9th vertical columns of perforations. Three stamps mounted	£7.50
(d)	As above. Marginal block of 4, with R2/14 flaw (Prov. 14a variety)	£4.00
940	4c/2½c Local (P30c). Two matching corner blocks of 6, with the R10/20 variety in both flaw and retouched states (Prov. 4a and b)	£12.50

PRE-DECIMAL Q.E. VARIETIES

All blocks are mint — unmounted will be supplied where possible — full annotation included where necessary.

941	1953 Royal Visit 3d (S64a). Block of 8, with R9/5 doubling, from plate 45983	£6.00
942(a)	1955 Aircraft 4d (S68a). The two listed shades of the 4d, lovely blue contrasts, in blocks of 4	£2.00
(b)	As above. Single stamp (unhinged mint) of the major variety Blurred Centre (S68aZ), with a normal for comparison (Cat. \$75)	£22.50
943(a)	1957 Lamb 4d (S72a). Top marginal pair with R1/5 and 1/6 varieties	£5.00
(b)	As above. Block of 4 including R5/8 variety	£4.50
(c)	As above. Marginal block of 4, including R12/7 variety — a few splitting perms. otherwise fine	£4.00
(d)	As above. Top marginal single with vertical Doctor Blade flaw	£3.00
944(a)	1957 Lamb 8d (S73a). Corner block of 4, including R10/1 flaw (SV73a) ...	£8.00
(b)	As above. Corner block of 6, including R8/11 and 9/12 varieties	£10.00

945	1958 Marlborough 2d (S81a). Marginal block of 6, including R14/3 second state retouch (SV81a(b))	£12.50
946(a)	1958 Marlborough 3d (S82a). Bottom marginal block of 4 with partial double perfs.	£4.00
(b)	As above. Marginal block of 4, including the R9/1 retouch	£4.00
947(a)	1959 Red Cross (S84a). Corner block of 4, with R1/1 variety	£3.50
(b)	As above. Marginal block of 4, including R7/5 flaw	£3.50
(c)	As above. Marginal block of 6, including R11/6, 13/5 and 13/6 retouch (SV84a(b))	£6.00
(d)	As above. Marginal block of 4 with R12/2 variety	£3.50
948(a)	1962 Telegraph 3d (S88a). The three listed shades, including the scarce pale chocolate	£5.00
(b)	As above. Mint single with large areas of green missing, plus a normal for comparison. Unusual, and attractive	£10.00
(c)	As above. Corner strip of 5 (1 x 5), with white line running vertically through the brown colour	£6.00
(d)	As above. Vertical strip of 3, the brown colour being abnormally printed (the top stamp is near normal, while the bottom shows much loss of design on the hand).	£7.50
(e)	As above. Marginal block of 4, includes the R7/5 variety	£3.50
(f)	As above. Mint pair, with R11/2 retouch	£2.50
(g)	As above. Marginal block of 4, including R14/1 variety (S88aX)	£4.00
(h)	As above. Block of 4, with the R15/4 retouch (S88aW)	£3.50
(i)	As above. Bottom marginal block of 4, including R19/4 and 20/3 varieties ..	£5.00
949(a)	1963 COMPAC (S92a). Marginal block of 4, from right hand pane, including the R7/4 flaw (now Cat. \$20 as single stamps)	£8.00
(b)	As above. Corner sheet value block of 4, from LH pane, with R1/3 flaw	£8.00
(c)	As above. Marginal block of 4, also from LH pane, with the nice R10/4 "break in cable" flaw	£10.00
950(a)	1964 Road Safety (S93a). Two block of 4 with "yellow" and "stone" arm respectively. Nice shades	£2.00
(b)	As above. Corner block of 6, including the well-known R3/2 Apostrophe flaw (S93aZ). Cat. \$10	£1.50

(c) As above. Pair, with R5/3 variety	£1.50
(d) As above. Pair, with R5/8 variety	£1.50
(e) As above. Pair, with R9/6 variety	£1.50
951(a) 1965 ANZAC 4d (S94a). Marginal block of 4, with R5/11 variety	£3.50
(b) As above. Marginal block of 4, with R6/2 flaw	£3.50
(c) As above. Marginal block of 4, with R6/12 and 7/11 varieties	£5.00
(d) As above. Marginal block of 4, including R8/1 retouch	£3.50
(e) As above. Bottom marginal block of 4, with R9/4 flaw — a bargain at	£1.50
(f) As above. Bottom marginal block of 8, including not only R9/4 flaw, but also R10/7 retouch (S94aZ and W)	£7.50
(g) As above. Again the R10/7 retouch, this time two differing states, each in marginal block of 4	£7.50
952(a) 1965 ANZAC 5d (S95a). Marginal vertical strip of 6, top 4 stamps normal, 5th stamp paler red poppy, bottom stamp very pale poppy. Attractive!	£7.50
(b) As above. Four pairs, including R2/4, 6/5, 7/12 and 10/10 varieties	£5.00
953 1965 I.T.U. (S96a). Pair with R2/4 variety (S96aZ)	£2.00

RECENT ISSUES

1983 Beautiful N.Z., 35c, 40c, 45c, 70c (issued 1/6/83)

Mint set of 4	£1.40
Complete set of 4 imprint blocks (6 stamps each block)	£9.50
Illustrated F.D.C. (Wanganui pmk.)	£1.50
Presentation Pack (post paid)	£2.60
Set of 4 postcards	£1.00

1983 Healths (Cats) 24c + 2c two stamps se-tenant, 30c + 2c (issued 3/8/83)

Mint set of 3	63p
Complete set of 4 imprint/plate blocks, two each value (24c blocks of 8, 30c blocks of 6)	£6.60
One imprint/plate block each value	£3.30
Miniature Sheet (2 sets se-tenant)	£1.25
Illustrated F.D.C. (Wanganui pmk.)	73p
Set of 7 Health Camp Postmarks (the usual six Camps, plus Rotorua, new this year). Post paid	£7.15

24c Map perf. 14½x14, new plate dots 3 : 2 : 3, bottom selvage perforated and not perforated. The set of 2 plate blocks (6 stamps each)	£3.00
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