

NEW ZEALAND BULLETIN



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N.Z. NOTES AND COMMENT

By Colin Hamilton

The Emergency Earthquake Flights of 1929 and 1931. Covers carried on all earlier N.Z. flights have always excited collector interest, and few more so than those resulting from the major earthquakes of June 1929 (affecting the west coast of the South Island) and February 1931 (affecting the Hawkes Bay area on the east coast of the North Island).

Basic information on most of these emergency flights is included in the Air Mail Society of New Zealand's excellent 1955 publication "The Air Mails of New Zealand, Vol. 1 — the Internal Flights," but the most comprehensive details are to be found in an earlier (1931) book by R.J.G. Collins, published by the same Society, and entitled "The Air Mails and Pigeon Posts of New Zealand". Unfortunately, the latter work is very scarce (apart from our shelf copy, only three or four others have come to our notice over the years). By kind permission of the A.M.S. of N.Z., we are reproducing the more or less contemporary accounts of these interesting series of flights of nearly 60 years ago.

18th June 1929. Earthquake Emergency Flight: Christchurch to Westport and Return.

On the 17th June 1929, a disastrous earthquake devastated a portion of the West Coast of the South Island of New Zealand.

The force of the upheaval was sufficient to damage the railway line, and to break the telegraph wires which connect Christchurch with the West Coast; and, as land slides had blocked the road over the Buller Gorge, the only remaining regular means of communication with Westport was by sea. But this method of restoring contact with the isolated areas would have occasioned considerable delay and, as an emergency measure, the officials of the Post and Telegraph Department decided at once to requisition the services of the New Zealand Air Force.

Consequently, on the 18th June, two members of the Permanent Air Force, Flight-Lieutenants M.W. Buckley and H.B. Burrell, left Sockburn Aerodrome at 9.30 a.m. and arrived at North Beach, Westport, at 11.25 a.m.

Two wireless operators were carried as passengers, and a bag of mail, which had been made up at Christchurch, was also entrusted to the pilots. Flight-Lieutenant Buckley left Westport on the return flight at 2 p.m., and arrived at Sockburn at 4 p.m.

Unfortunately, no records were kept of the number of letters comprising the mails, and no special cachet was employed.

As the last mail despatched from Christchurch by train had closed at 7.30 a.m. on the 17th of June, the outward air mail comprised letters received after that time, and, in addition to local mail, included a small batch of letters from Australia that had arrived at Christchurch from Wellington early on the 18th.

The mail carried by Flight-Lieutenant Buckley on his return comprised only a handful of letters and a batch of telegrams, and the mail was so small that the pilot was able to carry it in the pocket of his flying suit.

Neither mail was backstamped at Westport or at Christchurch.

21st June — 3rd July, 1929. Earthquake Emergency Flights: Westport to Karamea and Return
Flight-Lieutenant Burrell, on arrival at Westport, was allotted the special work of conveying urgently needed medical supplies to the sufferers in the outlying places affected by the earthquake.

On the 21st June, a flight was made to Karamea, 65 miles north-east of Westport, and, in addition to medical supplies, a mail was carried to Karamea from Westport, and a mail was also brought back from Karamea.

The 'plane left Westport on the outward flight at 2 p.m., and the return flight from Karamea was commenced at 4.50 p.m.

A second flight was made on the 22nd June, the 'plane leaving Westport at 2.45 p.m. and returning at 4.30 p.m.

Subsequent to this flight and while the 'plane was standing on the beach at Westport, a heavy gale did considerable damage, and repairs could not be effected until the 30th of June, so that the third flight was not made until 11.22 a.m. on the 1st of July. The return flight on this occasion was made at 12.55 p.m.

On the fourth flight the 'plane left Westport at 8.40 a.m. on the 2nd of July, but on arrival at Karamea the wing of the machine was damaged and the flight from Karamea to Westport was not made until 3.20 p.m. the following day.

Again no record was kept of the actual number of letters carried, but from notes made at the time by the pilot, it appears that the first mail from Westport to Karamea on the 21st of June was a large one, and that on no other occasion did the mails consist of more than a handful of letters. Parenthetically, it may be mentioned as a curious fact that, although several covers carried from Christchurch to Westport, from Westport to Christchurch and from Karamea to Westport are known to exist, not more than four have been traced of the largest mail carried, namely, that from Westport to Karamea on the 21st of June.

Owing to the lack of ordinary writing materials at Karamea, on each flight from that place the pilot allowed short messages of an urgent nature to be written in pencil on the wings of the 'plane, and on arrival at Westport, these messages were transcribed by a postal official and were then forwarded to the addressees, from whom the postage was collected.

No extra postage was charged in connection with these flights and no cachet was used.

(To be continued)

Note: The Air Mail Society of New Zealand may be contacted at P.O. Box 29144, Fendalton, Christchurch 4, N.Z. We are advised by the Society's secretary, Mr. Alan Tunnicliffe, that "The Airmails of New Zealand" Volume 1 (Internal Flights) and Volume 2 (External Flights) are still available from the Society at NZ \$28 and \$59 respectively, registered surface mail postage paid.

1970 PICTORIAL VARIETIES, Concluded

301(a)	7c Fish, Watermarked Paper (P9a). Positional block of 6, plate 1B, R8/11 and R10/12 flaws	£7.50
(b)	As above. Imprint/plate (1B) block of 10 with R10/5 retouch (PV9c)	£7.50
302	7c Fish No Wmk. Paper (P9b). Imprint/plate (1B) block of 10 with R10/5 retouch (PV9c) — incidentally this retouch shows up much better on this unwatermarked paper. A scarce block	£20.00
303	7½c Fish (P10a). Positional block of 24, plate 1B, Row 7 plate scratch across stamps 5 to 10, and Row 10 scratch across stamps 5 to 7 (PV10a) ..	£27.50
304	8c Fish (P11a). Positional block of 10, plate 1B, R1/14 retouch (PV11a) ..	£7.50
305	10c Queen (P12a). Inverted Watermark variety (P12aZ)	£5.00
306(a)	15c Fish Hook, Watermarked Paper (P13a). Imprint/plate (1A) block of 6, with R9/3, R10/1, R10/2, R10/3 retouches (PV13a)	£15.00
(b)	As above. Inverted watermark variety (P13aZ)	£20.00
307	15c Fish Hook, No Wmk. Paper (P13b). Imprint/plate (1A) block of 6, with R9/3, R10/1, R10/2, R10/3 retouches (PV13a)	£5.00
308(a)	18c Club. Inverted watermark variety (P14aY)	£20.00
(b)	As above. Marginal block of 4, with R6/9 retouch and R6/10 flaw on unwatermarked paper (P14b)	£10.00
309(a)	20c Tattoo. Imprint/plate block of 6, watermarked paper (P15a) with R9/1 retouch	£17.50
(b)	As above. The same R9/1 variety, imprint/plate block of 6, but on No Wmk. paper (P15b) — the variety is easily seen on this paper	£11.50
(c)	As above. Corner block of 15, No Wmk. paper (P15b) with brown scratch across the top selvage, also across the centre of Row 3	£25.00
310	23c Park (P16a). Marginal block of 6 with R6/3 flaw (PV16a)	£15.00
311(a)	30c Park (P18a). Positional block of 4, plate 2A2A1A2A, with R6/9 flaws. Very prominent variety	£15.00
(b)	As above. Corner block of 4, also plate 2A1A, with R10/10 flaw	£10.00
312	50c Park (P19a). Marginal block of 9 with R3/6 flaw (PV19a), from the second printing — Cat. \$135 as single stamps	£45.00

313(a)	4c on 2½c, Photogravure Surcharge (P30a). Sheet value block of 10, with R1/20 and 2/17 retouches, from plate 1A (Prov. 1b and 3b)	£10.00
(b)	As above. Sheet value block of 10, R1/20 and 2/17 retouches, from plate 3A (Prov. 1e and 3e)	£11.50
(c)	As above. Sheet value block of 10, R1/20 flaw from plate 2B (Prov. 5a)	£7.00
(d)	As above. Corner block of 8 with R10/17 and 10/18 flaws (Prov. 6a/b)	£12.50
(e)	As above. Two marginal blocks of 8, plate 1A, with R4/15 flaw and retouch (Prov. 12a/b)	£15.00
(f)	As above. Marginal block of 4, plate 1B2B, with R2/14 flaw (Prov. 14a)	£5.00
(g)	As above. Marginal block of 8, plate 1A2A, with R4/13 flaw in surcharge variety	£7.50
314	4c on 2½c, London Letterpress Surcharge (P30b). Sheet value block of 10 with R1/20 and 2/17 retouches from plate 3A (Prov. 1e and 3e)	£6.00
315(a)	4c on 2½c, Local Surcharge (P30c). Corner block of 6 with R2/3 retouch (Prov. 2b) and R2/3 surcharge variety (P30cZ)	£9.00
(b)	As above. Marginal block of 6 with R1/13 surcharge variety (P30cY)	£1.50
(c)	As above. Two corner blocks of 6, plate 1B, with R10/20 flaw and retouch (Prov. 4a/4b) — one block shows the R10/20 surcharge variety	£17.50

1931 — 1934 AIRMAILS, STAMPS AND COVERS

316(a)	1931 Airm (V1a — V3a, S.G. 548 — 550). Mint set of 3 (Cat. \$110)	£32.50
(b)	As above. A spacefiller set of 3, no gum, but facially brilliant	£10.00
(c)	As above. Two mint copies of the 7d (V3a), fine brown-orange contrasts ...	£25.00
317(a)	1931 3d perf. 14 x 15 (V1b, S.G. 548a). Many examples of this stamp are found foxed, and/or, off-centre. This unhinged mint copy is, quite simply, perfect	£145.00
(b)	As above. A similar quality example, but with the lightest trace of a hinge ..	£90.00
318(a)	5d Provisional (V4a, S.G. 551). Unmounted mint	£15.00
(b)	As above. Hinged mint, fine	£9.00
(c)	As above. Marginal vertical pair, unhinged mint, one perf. hole in each row of perforations is extremely small, due to a damaged or faulty perf. pin. Most unusual	£30.00
(d)	As above. Twelve blocks of 10 stereotypes (each block 2 x 5) were clamped together to make the surcharging forme, and stamps from six of the ten stereotypes in each block can be recognised by plating variations (as listed in	

Volume 1 of the N.Z. Handbook). All six are here, fully written-up and illustrated, together with introductory notes, on 8 album leaves (stamps are unhinged mint). A superb and unusual little collection	£120.00
(e) As above. The same six surcharge flaws, each on a 1931 or 1932 first flight cover. Never previously offered. The set of six covers	£90.00
(f) As above. Also recorded in Volume 1 is the R2/10 constant surcharge flaw. Unmounted mint, and on an illustrated page	£20.00
(g) As above. Another example of the R2/10 flaw, but used on 1932 first flight cover	£15.00
319(a) 7d Trans-Tasman (V5a, S.G. 554). Unmounted mint	£42.50
(b) As above. Hinged mint	£22.50
(c) As above. A spacefiller, no gum, facially superb	£9.00
(d) As above, used on Feb. 1934 Trans-Tasman cover, backstamped Sydney ...	£35.00
(e) As above. The Catalogued broken N stereo variety (V5aY) – mounted mint ..	£32.50
(f) As above. Marginal block of 4 (light hinge on one stamp only) showing two examples of the broken N variety (which is found on all stamps from row 4 in the sheet). A superb block	£150.00
(g) As above. Another example of the broken N variety, used on Feb. 1934 Trans-Tasman cover	£40.00
(h) As above. Volume 1 mentions a further stereo flaw, from Row 9 in the sheet (nick in back of 'F'). Here offered in fine lightly hinged mint copy	£30.00
(j) As above. The same row 9 stereo variety, used on Feb. 1934 Trans-Tasman cover	£35.00

1958 HEALTH MINIATURE SHEETS

Each value was printed in sheets of eight-up, which were subsequently guillotined into miniature sheets as issued. The miniature sheets are plate-able, by means of small but constant characteristics, to each of the eight positions on the sheets as printed.

Moreover, in the 3d + 1d, a total of seven individual impressions were retouched **during the course of printing**. The retouching invariably affects the shading of the tent at the extreme right of the design, and sheets from five of the eight positions in this value exist in pre-retouch and retouched states. In three of these (sheet nos 3, 4 and 6), one impression received attention, and in the remaining two (sheet nos 7 and 8), two impressions show the retouching. The following offers include all the retouched sheets.

320 Sheet Nos. 1 – 8. Complete replated sets of both values, the 3d + 1d all being in pre-retouch form. All unhinged mint except one, which is lightly hinged in selvage. 16 miniature sheets, with full plating details supplied	£75.00
321(a) 3d + 1d Sheet No. 3. Unhinged mint, with stamps no. 6 showing the tent retouch	£7.50
(b) As above, but lightly hinged in selvage only	£6.00

322(a)	3d + 1d Sheet No. 4. With tent retouch on stamp no. 6. Selvedge hinge	£6.00
(b)	As above, but fine used sheet	£10.00
323	3d + 1d Sheet No. 6. Unhinged mint, with tent retouch on stamp no. 6	£7.50
324	3d + 1d Sheet No. 7. Superb used sheet, with tent retouches on stamp nos. 3 and 6	£15.00
325	3d + 1d Sheet No. 8. Superb used sheet, again with tent retouches on stamp nos. 3 and 6	£15.00

Q.E. MIDDLE VALUES — CENTRE PLATE 2B, R6/10

This is one of several particularly interesting stamps among the Q.E. Middle Values. During the printing lifetime of the plate, the impression which printed this position passed through no less than five distinct states, and all are clearly identifiable on the issued stamps. At first R6/10 was quite normal (State 1). Later it developed a prominent flaw, which appeared on the shading of the sleeve at the right (State 2). This flaw was subsequently removed, and the site retouched (State 3). Later still a further prominent flaw developed, quite different from the first flaw, although in exactly the same area (State 4). Finally this flaw too was removed, and the surrounding area extensively retouched (State 5). Because plate 2B was involved in the printing of all four middle values, the various states are distributed throughout the 9d, 1/-, 1/6d and 1/9d, though no one value is known in all five states. Food for a specialised collection in miniature, as the following offers demonstrate (all are plate blocks of 6 stamps, with plate no. 1B2B, of course, and the variety occurs on the upper right stamp in each block).

326(a)	Pre-Flaw State (NCV5(a)). Shown here on the 9d	£11.00
(b)	As above, but on the 1/9d (original paper)	£25.00
327	First Flaw State (NCV5(b)). On the 1/9d (original paper)	£25.00
328	First Retouch State (NCV5(c)). On the 1/9d (original paper)	£25.00
329(a)	Second Flaw State (NCV5(d)). On the 1/-	£6.50
(b)	As above, but on the 1/6d	£8.50
330(a)	Final (Second Retouch) State (NCV5(e)). On the 1/-	£7.50
(b)	As above, but on the 1/6d	£8.50
(c)	As above, but on the 1/9d (thick white paper)	£22.50

331 UNIVERSAL POSTAL CONGRESS, CAIRO, 1934

Souvenir booklet (10" x 8½") from the above, entitled "Nouvelle Zelande", and containing nine pages (thick, embossed cartridge paper), comprising title page, four pages of contemporary stamps of New Zealand, Cook Islands and Niue, and four pages of indigenous photographs. The N.Z. stamps (which include 2/- and 3/- Admiral, 2/- Admiral Official, 5/- Arms Official vertical overprint, and Airmail) alone have a simplified Cat. value of over \$1550.

Unusual and attractive **£75.00**

- (a) **Q.E. Counter Coil Pairs.** The complete set of five values on thick white paper (NC8a – e), unhinged mint. Cat. \$130, and scarce. The set of 5 coil pairs £30.00
- (b) **As above.** The key 4d thick white paper pair (NC8c). Cat. \$50. Mint unhinged £11.50

1898 – 1907 PICTORIALS, MINT AND USED

- 333(a) **½d Mt. Cook Purple (E1a).** Single copy, mint unhinged £2.50
- (b) **As above.** Set of three shades as listed. Super contrasts, and finest mint £8.50
- (c) **As above.** The same three shades, but in superfine mint blocks of 4 £35.00
- (d) **As above.** Again the three Catalogued shades, but finest used £2.25
- 334(a) **1d Lake Taupo (E2a).** Three mint copies showing fine shades of the frame .. £7.50
- (b) **As above.** Similar set of three used, with yellow-brown, chestnut and brown frame contrasts £5.00
- 335 **1d White Terrace (E3a).** A wonderful all-red rainbow of eight used, in shades ranging from the palish rose-reds through the bright gaudy crimson to the deep rich lakes. Lovely! £11.50
- 336(a) **1½d Boer War Contingent, Perf. 11 (E4a).** Numerous shades in this stamp, but here we offer just two mint – one is the scarce **brown**, the other a typical chestnut. The beauty of limiting the choice to two is that each shows off the other to absolutely brilliant advantage. A more striking pair you could never wish to see £32.50
- (b) **As above.** Set of two superb shades (brown **not** included), fine used £7.50
- 337(a) **2d Pembroke Peak, London Print (E5a).** In mint, this is an elusive stamp, but we have available fine copies in either listed shade (brown lake or rosy lake) at, each £18.00
- (b) **As above.** Set of two, in the listed shades, finest used 25p
- 338(a) **2d Pembroke Peak, Local Issue, Perf. 11 (E6a).** Set of three listed shades – dull violet, mauve, purple. Mint £8.50
- (b) **As above.** The same three shades, but finest used £2.00
- 339(a) **2d Pembroke Peak, Local Issue, Perf. 14 (E6b).** Dull purple, purple, and the very distinctive reddish-purple – again the complete set of listed shades, mint .. £8.75
- (b) **As above.** Similar set of three, but fine used £1.00
- (c) **As above.** The same three shades, but in **used blocks of 4**. Minor imperfections, but most unusual in used blocks £8.50

340(a)	2½d Lake Wakitipu (E7a). Single copy of the error-of-spelling stamp, mint unhinged	£4.25
(b)	As above. Four first-class shades, again all unhinged mint	£18.00
(c)	As above. Another set, of three blue shades, but in superb mint blocks of 4 ..	£50.00
(d)	As above. Considerable numbers of this stamp were used philatelically (but quite legitimately) as late as the 1930s — until they were demonetised on 31/12/34. Late-used copies are obviously less desirable than those here offered, all of which have pre-1900 datestamps. Each, fine used	£14.50
341(a)	2½d Lake Wakatipu, London Print (E8a). Unhinged mint copy	£5.50
(b)	As above. but finest used (again with pre-1900 cancellation)	£2.25
342(a)	2½d Local Print, Perf. 11, No Wmk. (E8b). Superb unhinged mint copy ...	£7.50
(b)	As above, hinged but very fine	£5.00
(c)	As above. Brilliant unhinged mint block of 4 in a deep bright shade	£32.50
(d)	As above. Used set of four superb shades	£8.00
343	2½d Local Print, Perf. 11, Wmk'd (E8c). Three lovely shades, used	£18.50
344	2½d Local Print, Perf. 14 (E8d). Set of two used, in fine shades of deep and dark blue	£3.00

(to be continued)

RECENT ISSUES

1988 Electricity, 40c, 60c, 70c, 80c (issued 13/1/88)	
Mint set of 4	£1.70
Complete set of Imprint blocks of 6 (one block each value)	£11.75
Official Illustrated F.D.C. (Wanganui pmk.)	£1.90
1988 Centenary of Philately. 40c x 2 se-tenant, \$1 Miniature Sheet (issued 13/1/88)	
Mint set of 3 (40c se-tenant pair, \$1 stamp from miniature sheet)	£1.28
One 40c imprint block (four 40c se-tenant pairs)	£2.75
Official Illustrated F.D.C. of the 40c (Wanganui pmk.)	75p
Miniature Sheet. An attractive illustrated sheet, featuring the full length Chalon Q.V. portrait, with a \$1 stamp forming the centrepiece. Issued in commemoration of the Royal Philatelic Society of N.Z. Centenary	73p
The above miniature sheet on official F.D.C. (Wanganui special cancellation) ..	£1.00
New \$4 and \$4.40 Booklets (covers feature Wellington by night, and Katiki Point, Otago, respectively), include a pane of 10 (2 x 5) 40c Bird stamps. We understand the \$4.40 Booklet (i.e. that sold by non post office outlets — dairies, hotels, etc.) was only on sale for three weeks before being withdrawn and all remaining stocks destroyed.	
(i) Pair of booklets, plain selvages	£9.00
(ii) Ditto, with sheet value marking in selvedge	£9.00
(iii) Ditto, with imprint and 2 Kiwi reprint markings in selvedge	£9.00