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FOR COLLECTORS OF NEW ZEALAND STAMPS

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EXCELLENCE IN NEW ZEALAND STAMPS



LOT 500(a) LO3a MAORI GIRL (OFFICIAL) ON VM SINGLE WATERMARK
(W7) PAPER. ONE OF FOUR KNOWN - A MASSIVE RARITY THIS MONTH.

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NEW ZEALAND NOTES & COMMENT BY WARWICK PATERSON

INTERNATIONAL STAMP CATALOGUE PRICING - WINDS OF CHANGE?

Conventional wisdom has it that a catalogue is really a dealer's price list. Recent revelations and new policies from at least one major cataloguer may make some collectors wonder.

Very high over-rating of material in the major international catalogues is an anomaly with which most collectors have learned to live as long as anyone can remember. Major catalogues really mean Stanley Gibbons and Scott (USA), which between them must share the vast proportion of the international market. Stanley Gibbons moreover occupies a position of influence with regard to British Commonwealth stamps and this encompasses the New Zealand field.

The over-rating I refer to means that using and interpreting one of these major catalogues, traditionally, has been a matter of knowing first what the true market price of an item was (or at least what the market situation relating to that country or group of stamps was). Hence, if a dealer looked up the Scott price of a major New Zealand item and then attempted to charge the full amount, he would simply be demonstrating that he didn't know anything about the market. Similarly, a collector who paid more than say two thirds of Scott for virtually any item, would be demonstrating that he ought to know better. The situation with Stanley Gibbons became so confused that prices like "50% SG" were the going rate for some stamps, even though in the late 1970's successive issues of Stanley Gibbons British Commonwealth Catalogue regularly doubled the prices of many New Zealand issues year by year, until the inevitable reckoning came in the early 1980's.

Why, then, have catalogues at all if you need to be familiar with the market already in order to use them. Traditionally, what did Stanley Gibbons and Scott catalogues offer collectors new to the field, who believed that the regular and sometimes massive price increases in the annual catalogues represented genuine increases in values, and that the starting point itself was something you could rely on?

Before going any further, I should say that the policy of the CP Catalogue has been to attempt to state a price as near as possible to perceived market value and one related to a very fine copy of the issue in question. However, it would be idle to say that CP are immune from the difficulties of reflecting a changing market. The CP Catalogue even goes further and at least in most issues offers a range of prices for different grades and conditions, mint and used - at least for the simplified set. In the Full Face Queens it goes slightly further and has recently received approval from various quarters for listing a "less than fine" category in the classic issue.

Could one say that a cataloguer - who is also a dealer - has pressure on him to increase prices each year in order to justify the rather "anticipatory" prices he may have charged for fine material and to give the market the impression that it is on the up and up - that the stamps on offer have good investment appeal? After awhile regular increases in

prices would result in price levels unrelated to the true market. The fact that collectors and dealers never expect a market level at over, say, two-thirds of the catalogue price is another way of saying that they don't trust the catalogue! Has the cataloguer completely defeated his own purpose and is he producing a book which may give interesting relativities between different varieties and issues and "hopefully" show interesting trends from year to year, but as an arbiter of market price is almost useless unless used alongside a system of percentage adjustments? Scott's, by the way, who do not deal in stamps themselves are purely publishers, so in their case the explanation does not fit.

Another possibility is that over the years cataloguers generally, in order to sell new volumes, simply increase prices on a regular basis, thus encouraging catalogue users to buy new volumes in order to keep pace with the "new prices". If, for instance, the cataloguer was also a major dealer or auctioneer then he could be assumed to be basing catalogue prices on genuinely observed market movements and buying a catalogue could be a useful exercise - even if the prices quoted were at least 100% over true market value.

Other pressures could be high pricing to attract sellers and the worthy awareness in a major catalogue publisher of his responsibility to maintain confidence in the stamp market and avoid over-reaction to short term market factors.

In the 1980's something interesting happened. The factor of upward market movements was reversed and although few catalogues bring prices down across the board (many tinker and some attempt more wide-scale reductions in response to market forces) the cataloguers had to respond with at least some acknowledgement of what had happened. What was going on in the market place was the sale of numbers of stamps at prices very much cheaper - sometimes only a small proportion - of the levels they had reached in the late 1970's.

Through the 1980's (at least where New Zealand is concerned) the market became a very much better informed one and some of the true principles of stamp buying re-asserted themselves. Most collectors insisted on very high condition and concentrated on issues which could genuinely be considered as philatelically desirable and paying high prices only in those cases. In other words, the world stamp market took a short, sharp cold bath.

Inflation has continued at varying rates around the world, and despite the sharemarket crash the demand for good philatelic material has continued to strengthen throughout the decade.

Perhaps the major cataloguer, Scott and Gibbons, learnt something from the experience. Theoretically, if inflation continues and demand strenghtens for good philatelic material; and assuming that Scott and Gibbons do not increase their prices greatly, but even reduce some of them gradually, then the proportion of catalogue price representing true market price

FOUR

WARWICK PATERSON (Contd.)

will steadily increase until at some point they reach a meeting place and the catalogues will once again provide a useful and fairly accurate indicator of value for stamp buyers. This has happened in the case of Stanley Gibbons to a certain extent.

In the case of Scotts, however, a series of advertisements and publicity releases has appeared throughout the stamp world recently, announcing "Scott catalogue to reflect actual dealer selling prices". The articles do not reveal what Scott thought they represented before, or what the formula they worked on was, but the news can only be refreshing to collectors of stamps in the United States. Scott's say that they undertook a massive market survey involving "formal market studies in a formal poll and a vast number of letters, telephone calls and face-to-face conversations". It seems amazing that Scotts had to go through this process to find out something which must have been obvious to every user of Scott since Uncle Sam smoked grass. What's more, generations of Scott users must have told them so, so I assume that it's been a longterm poll.

Scotts now say that their 1990 values will be retail values - what collectors can expect to pay for a stamp from fine to very fine grade in the market place. "The practice of purchasing stamps at some varying fraction of the Scott value will not be valid with the 1990 catalogues".

Scotts go to some length to point out the realities of the market place - factors of condition, demand and dealer stocks - and they do a good service in doing so. Scott now claims that its 1990 values are based on a comprehensive study of hundreds of dealer retail price lists, public auctions and advertised prices. The firm also sought pricing information from dealers, knowledgeable collectors and specialty groups. Does this indicate, therefore, that Scott prices previously were set independent of all of these factors? There is to be a six-page section explaining the new valuations and how to use the catalogue and there will be an illustration of fine and very fine conditions, to show the stamp grades as Scott uses them.

Scotts rationalisation of the move says its research showed that a grading change was needed, because most collectors now seek stamps in better condition than the "fine" category previously used in the Scott catalogue.

"ARMS" STILL ON SALE

Further to our article last month regarding the withdrawal from sale of the \$6, \$8 and \$10 decimal Arms types, we have had a number of correspondents inform us that their Philatelic Sales Counter still had them available for sale - in some cases up to six weeks after their NZ Post "Official" withdrawal date of 18 April 1989. Anyway, we are now categorically assured by Wanganui that they are not available from any Philatelic Counter anywhere in the country - unless you know better

"Thank you for your excellent service - the quality of your stamps is beyond question". DK, Pahiataua

NEW ISSUES AND VARIETIES BY ANGELA NICHOLSON

The second issue in the Heritage series (The People) was released on 17 May, to be followed only three weeks later on 7 June by this year's Scenic issue - NZ Native Trees.

NZ Heritage - The People - This attractive set, designed by Dave Gunson of Auckland, features the various groups of people who have shaped New Zealand - The Moriori (40¢), The Prospectors (60¢), The Land Settlers (70¢), The Whalers (80¢), The Missionaries (\$1.05) and the Maori (\$1.30). The designer has cleverly utilised the fine line drawing technique to produce a finished product which, although printed by the lithographic process, is reminiscent of engraving. This, together with the variety of frame designs used, brings to mind early issues such as the 1898 and 1935 Pictorials.

The stamps were printed in Australia by Leigh-Mardon Pty. Ltd. Sheets are comprised of 100 stamps in 10 rows of 10 and each stamp measures perf. 14 x 14½. To date, the \$1.30 value has not been seen with perforations through the top selvedge. All other values exist both with and without perforations through the top selvedge.

Our English branch reports a sheet of the 70¢ value on which the chalk surfacing stops 1mm short of the top of the sheet, exposing the underlying unsurfaced paper. To date, we have been unable to locate any further examples of this occurrence.

This is a very innovative issue and contains a number of features which we have not seen before. Firstly, a toning effect is apparent in the background of each design - compare the relatively grey background colour with the white margin of each stamp. Secondly, on the 40¢ value, the blue background colour has been produced by a half-tone process - the pattern of the screen can be seen quite clearly. This does not occur elsewhere in the set. Finally, on the 80¢ value, the shading effect on the whale's back appears to be the result of the half-tone technique. Closer inspection reveals, however, that the designer has produced this effect with the clever use of cross-hatching in the drawing itself. All in all, this is a very thoughtfully produced issue and one which should prove of great interest to collectors.

1989 Scenic Issue - NZ Native Trees - This year's Scenic issue, also designed by David Gunson, depicts four types of tree native to New Zealand - the Kahikatea (80¢), Rimu (85¢), Totara (\$1.05) and Kauri (\$1.30). A miniature sheet costing \$1.80 and featuring the \$1.30 stamp was also issued. Fifty cents of the proceeds from each sheet sold will go to support the World Philatelic Exhibition to be held in Auckland next year. First Day Covers of both the set and the miniature sheet were available.

This set of stamps is the first to be printed for New Zealand by The House of Questa, England. Sheets are comprised of 100 stamps in 10 rows of 10 and each stamp measures perf. 13.3/4 x 14½. All sheets examined to date have perforations running through all four selvedges.

NEWSLETTER SUBS NOW DUE Please pay on the subscription form enclosed with this issue.

ANGELA NICHOLSON (Contd.)

With the exception of the \$1.30 value, two plate numbers were used in the printing of each stamp - 1A1A1A1A and 1B1B1B1B. To date the \$1.30 value has been noted with the 1A1A1A1A plate marking only.

New Definitive Reprint - A new 2 kiwi reprint of the \$1.00 kokako was released in June. This reprint is on white paper with a shiny green gum (the original white paper printing has white gum). The 2 kiwi reprint exists both with and without perforations through the left selvedge.

40¢ Brown Kiwi Reprints - As mentioned in last month's Newsletter, the 1 kiwi reprint of the 40¢ brown kiwi has not officially appeared in large sheet format. However, rumours were rife in Auckland last month that a few large sheets of this reprint had "unofficially" been sent out to various suburban post offices. There followed a period of frantic activity as collectors tried to track down the elusive plate blocks. The rumours now appear to have been quashed. Bruce Phillips of Christchurch informs us that enquiries by the Philatelic Bureau in Wanganui to Leigh-Mardon brought the reply that the entire 1 kiwi print run has been used in the manufacture of booklets. Thus, the only way to obtain a partially complete 1 kiwi Imprint is to purchase it in booklet form.

Rumour has it that the 1 kiwi reprint in booklet form may actually be quite scarce. According to the Bureau here in Auckland few of these booklets were actually issued to the various Philatelic outlets. Bruce Phillips again informs us that nearly all of the 1 kiwi booklets were issued to post offices as it was assumed that this reprint would be available in large sheet format. If you do not already have one of these booklets with Imprint marking, it may be wise to secure your copy now - before stocks disappear completely.

HAVE YOU DISCOVERED A NEW VARIETY? The CP Specialised Catalogue includes all known major New Zealand varieties, not only those discovered by our own staff. In the interests of philately and for the benefit of future New Zealand collectors, please inform us of your discoveries. Remember - it is in both dealers' and customers' interest to notify us - once listed, known varieties will increase in value.

TOP QUALITY "NEW ZEALAND"

Important Notice to Specialists

Much of the best material purchased by our company in markets throughout the world never appears in these pages. It is reserved for collectors who have favoured us with their wants lists and preferences.

MAY WE SUGGEST that you do the same. You will be rewarded by approvals of the finest New Zealand philatelic material in the world - in any price range!



500(a)



500(b)



956(a)



956(d)



957(a)



957(c)



957(e)



957(f)



957(g)



957(h)



957(i)



956(a)



950(c)



951(a)



954(a)



59.2.
ex 501

1935 PICTORIALS - TWO GREAT RARITIES

This month's special offers - two of the greatest glamour rarities in NZ Philatelic History.

- 500 (a) LO3a, 1½d. Maori Girl, Official, Overprint, Perf 14 x 13½, Vertical Mesh, Single Wmk (W7) Four copies are known to exist - one of them damaged. The variety appears to originate from a sheet with block of four "patched in" (a common practice in those days). Our copy is the damaged one. It has been plated for stamp and overprint we believe, and carries the certificate of the Philatelic Foundation, New York, Expert Committee. (See illustration this month).
A massive rarity POA
- (b) LO10c, 8d. Tuatara, p.14 x 13½, Wmk. W8 About twenty copies have been found - all used and all postmarked Whangarei. Our copy is superb used, carries a Whangarei machine cancel and the certificate of the RPSNZ Expert Committee. Catalogued at \$3250. A superb variety..... \$1495.00

POST-BID SALE No. 5

Now in preparation. Over 300 lots of superb, selected NZ postal history. From Full Face Queens to the present. Particularly strong are Chalons, Boer War, Marine Post Offices and the best line-up of NZ Postal Stationery we have seen.
Note: CPNLM subscribers will automatically receive the catalogue.

501 FULL FACE QUEENS - UNIQUE OFFER

This month tailor-made mini collections of stamps with faults. Each collection has been carefully selected and contains stamps to a catalogue value of between \$1000 and \$2000 NZ dollars. Each collection is priced at \$200 and contains not less than twenty stamps - all representing listed and identifiable varieties of New Zealand's classic stamp issue 1855 - 1873. To be sure, the condition of the stamps is not-so-fine (major faults), but each collection contains a proportion of items of superb appearance. Carefully expertised and selected - the perfect gift \$200.00

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX: All prices in this Newsletter are subject to the addition of GST where purchases are made within NZ. Overseas clients do not pay GST.

REFERENCE SETS

- 958 (a) SECOND SIDEFACE 1d ROSE - Set of the three Dies,
Nos. 1 to 3 Fine used. Includes D2a (Die 1)
 p.12 x 11½, horizontal mesh, wmk. W3: D2c (Die 2)
 p.12 x 11½, vertical mesh, wmk. W4: D2p (Die 3)
 perf.11. Lovely set (cat. \$20) \$15.00
- (b) SECOND SIDEFACE - 2d. Lilac D3a (Die 1) p.12 x 11½,
 horizontal mesh, wmk. W3: D3b, p.12 x 11½, vertical
 mesh, wmk. W4: D3k, perf. 11 (cat. \$14) \$12.50
- 959 (a) Watermarks and Paper Set In 2d. Lilac. Wmk. W3 -
 6 mm Horizontal mesh (D3a): Wmk. 4-7 mm vertical mesh
 (D3k): Wmk. W5-4 mm vertical mesh "Life Insurance"
 (D3e): Wmk. W6b Double-lined "Waterlow" paper, s.v.
 mesh (D3p). All fine used (cat. \$23) \$20.00
- 960 (a) 1d. DOMINION UHM copies - a complete set in superb
 condition.
J1a, De La Rue Paper (Wide spaced N and Z of watermark,
 brownish gum)
J2a, Jones Paper (Thicker NZ and Star close and
 evenly spaced - often a less fine impression due to
 surfacing of paper).
J3a, De La Rue (Unsurfaced brownish gum, deep dull
 shade - scarce).
J4a, De La Rue (Chalky paper - sideways wmk.).
J5a, Art Paper (Litho printed "watermark").
J6a, Cowan Paper (White N and Z of watermark close
 spaced).
J7a, Cowan Paper (Reversed watermark).
J8a, Wiggins Teape (VM paper).
 Superb and getting hard to find \$140.00
- 961 1d. Universal All fine used. (a) London print:
 (b) "Pirie" paper p.11: (c) Basted Mills p.14: (d)
 Cowan, no wmk: (e) Early local plates, p.14: (f)
 Reserve Plate: (g) Booklet Plate: (h) Dot plate:
 (i) Waterlow plates: (j) Royle plates: (k) Surface
 printing plate.
 The set of 11 \$45.00
 (Perfect for sorting 1d. Universals - descriptions
 provided if required - per CP Catalogue)

1935 PICTORIALS - SPECIALISED

- 50 (a) The collection in F.G. De Luxe Album. All mint
 (including officials). Lovely big lot priced to
 sell at well under catalogue price. Beautifully
 mounted, it features plate and variety positional
 blocks, inverted watermarks, etc. Noted clematis
 flaw in plate block, 1d. plate B2 (scarce perf.).
 L2d Booklet pane with inverted watermark. 1½d.
 Purple-brown shade, 2d., 5d., 1/- coil. Compre-
 hensive plate block coverage - view to buy P.O.A.

Some lovely pieces.

956 (a)	<u>A1e (SG.35), 1d. Carmine-vermilion</u> Imperf - superb - perfect - huge margins	\$700.00
(b)	<u>A2d (9) (SG.38), 2d. Plate 1, Blue</u> Early plate wear. Large margins right and bottom, otherwise close	\$225.00
(c)	<u>A2d (15) (SG.39), 2d. Ditto, Blue</u> Advanced plate wear. Three huge margins cut into lower right - fresh and superb colour	\$70.00
(d)	<u>A3a (SG.40), 3d. Brown-lilac</u> Enormous margins - one of the finest in existence - a <u>LOVELY</u> stamp. Unusually sharp print	\$750.00
957 (a)	<u>A1m (1) (SG.110), 1d. Carmine-vermilion, Perf.12½</u> Beautiful example well centred	\$175.00
(b)	<u>A1m (4) (SG.111). 1d. Vermilion, p.12½</u> Good-looking - very fine	\$175.00
(c)	<u>A2n (5) (SG.114), 2d. Deep Royal Blue, Perf. 12½</u> One of the best centred we have seen for some time - superb	\$200.00
	Or slightly o/c	\$125.00
(d)	<u>A2n(6) (SG.114), 2d. Dull Blue, P.12½</u> Nice copy....	\$100.00
(e)	<u>A3d(2) (SG.117), 3d. Bright Lilac, P.12½</u> Another stamp of dramatic appearance. Will contrast with 95% of copies as superb	\$135.00
(f)	<u>A4b (2) (SG.120), 4d. Yellow, Perf. 12½, Star Wmk.</u> Lovely pair - unusual	\$450.00
(g)	<u>A4b (5) (SG.120), 4d. Bright Yellow, P.12½</u> Dazzling colour - lift a page	\$200.00
(h)	<u>A5h (1) (SG.122), 6d. Deep red-brown, P.12½</u> Pair - nicely centred, superb colour. Exquisite	\$500.00
	Or single Red-brown o/c right	\$150.00
(i)	<u>A6m (4) (SG.125), 1/- Yellow-green, P.12½</u> Near-perfect centring - very fine copy	\$250.00

KING GEORGE V RECESS ENGRAVED - MINT UNHINGED PERF SETS

Offer of sets to suit varying tastes. All perfs, here all in UHM condition with a subsidiary offer of lightly hinged at a vastly reduced price. ACT NOW while this magnificent "classic style" issue remains available. Our experience suggests that UHM will become hard to complete over the next two or three years. ("The two perfs" indicate single copies p.14 x 13½ and p.14 x 14½).

300 (a)	<u>1½d. Grey</u> Lovely selected set of UHM, the two perfs in Cowan and "Pictorial" paper. Four stamps	\$17.50
	Or VIH	\$6.00
(b)	<u>2d. Violet</u> The two perfs UHM	\$25.00
	Or VIH	\$9.00
(c)	<u>2d. Yellow</u> The two perfs UHM, plus pictorial paper p.14 - 3 UHM	\$37.50
	Or VIH	\$13.00
(d)	<u>2½d. DeepBlue</u> The two perfs UHM	\$36.00
	Or VIH	\$12.00
(e)	<u>3d. Chocolate</u> The two perfs plus pictorial paper - UHM	\$40.00
	Or VIH	\$15.00

TEN

GEORGE V Perf Sets (Contd.)

300 (f)	4d. Yellow	The two perfs	\$24.00
	Or VLH	copies	\$8.00
(g)	4d. Violet (plate 20)	The two perfs - UHM	\$18.00
	Or VLH		\$14.00
(h)	4d. Purple (plate 44)	The two perfs - UHM	\$75.00
	Or VLH		\$35.00
(i)	4½d. Deep Green	The two perfs - UHM	\$60.00
	Or VLH		\$25.00
(j)	5d. Blue	The two perfs - UHM	\$40.00
	Or VLH		\$12.50
(k)	6d. Carmine	The two perfs UHM, plus pictorial paper	\$55.00
	Or VLH		\$20.00
(l)	7½d. Deep Brown	The two perfs UHM	\$60.00
	Or VLH		\$25.00
(m)	8d. Indigo Blue	UHM - the two	\$45.00
	Or VLH		\$17.50
(n)	8d. Red-brown	UHM - p.14 x 13½	\$35.00
	Or VLH		\$15.00
(o)	9d. Sage-green	UHM - perfs (2)	\$90.00
	Or VLH		\$37.50
(p)	1/- Vermilion	UHM - perfs	\$70.00
	Or VLH		\$25.00

1d. GREEN MT. COOK

Seldom offered - fine specialisation - mint.

950 (a)	F1a, Pirie Paper, p.11, Wmk. W6		
	Pale Yellow-green UHM block		\$150.00
	Yellow-green UHM block		\$40.00
	Green - super UHM block		\$40.00
	Deep Green UHM block		\$35.00
	Blackish Green UHM block - fine!		\$150.00
(b)	F1b, Pirie Ditto, Perf. 14	Block 2UH/2LH - superb item	\$200.00
(c)	F1c, Pirie Ditto, Perf. 14 x 11	2LH/2UH - superb item	\$100.00
(d)	F1d, Pirie Ditto, Perf. 11 x 14	Really beautiful well-centered 2LH/2UH block - outstanding	\$150.00
951 (a)	F2b, Basted Mills, Perf.14, Wmk.W6	Selvage block, 2LH/2UH. Nice scarcer item	\$250.00
952 (a)	F3b, Cowan, No Wmk., p.14	Nice LH block o/c to bottom, but good looks	\$100.00
953 (a)	F4b, Cowan, Wmk. W7	Green 2LH/2UH block	\$45.00
	Deep Green 2LH/2UH block		\$55.00
954 (a)	F4e, Cowan, W7, Mixed perfs 11 and 14	Top selvage block of four. One stamp thin, but a fine piece	\$225.00
955 (a)	F5a, New Plates, Perf. 14	Top selvage UHM block - Green	\$125.00
	Or top right selvage serial no. block centred left..		\$100.00
(b)	F5b, Ditto, perf. 14 x 12.3/4 - 13½	Dull Green UHM block	\$150.00
	Deep Yellow-green (minor crease)		\$30.00
(c)	F5c Ditto, Perf. 14 x 15	Deep Yellow-green - superb UHM block of six. Centred left	\$50.00

THE PENNY POST (Cont. from last month)
Rowland Hill takes an interest in Postal Reform

A picturesque and touching little illustration of the veritable hardships of the existing system seems to have quickened his interest in a reform of it. Miss Martineau thus tells the story:

'Coleridge, when a young man, was walking through the Lake district, when he one day saw the postman deliver a letter to a woman at a cottage door. The woman turned it over and examined it, and then returned it, saying she could not pay the postage, which was a shilling. Hearing that the letter was from her brother, Coleridge paid the postage, in spite of the manifest unwillingness of the woman. As soon as the postman was out of sight she showed Coleridge how his money had been wasted, as far as she was concerned. The sheet was blank. There was an agreement between her brother and herself that as long as all went well with him he should send a blank sheet in this way once a quarter; and she thus had tidings of him without expense of postage.

Most persons would have remembered this incident as a curious story to tell' but there was one mind which wakened up at once to a sense of the significance of the fact. It struck Mr. Rowland Hill that there must be something wrong in a system which drove a brother and sister to cheating, in order to gratify their desire to hear of one another's welfare.'

Mr. Hill gradually worked out for himself a comprehensive scheme of reform. He put it before the world early in 1837. The public were taken by surprise when the plan came before them in the shape of a pamphlet which its author modestly entitled "Post Office Reform; its importance and practicability." The root of Mr. Hill's system lay in the fact, made evident by him beyond dispute, that the actual cost of the conveyance of letters through the post was very trifling, and was but little increased by the distance over which they had to be carried.

His proposal was therefore that the rates of postage should be diminished to the minimum; that at the same time the speed of conveyance should be increased, and that there should be much greater frequency of despatch. His principle was, in fact, the very opposite of that which had prevailed in the calculations of the authorities. Their idea was that the higher the charge for letters the greater the return to the revenue. He started on the assumption that the smaller the charge the greater the profit. He therefore recommended the substitution of one uniform charge of one penny the half-ounce, without reference to the distance within the limits of the United Kingdom which the letter had to be carried. The Post Office authorities were at first uncompromising in their opposition to the scheme. The Postmaster-General, Lord Lichfield, said in the House of Lords, that of all the wild and extravagant schemes he had ever heard of it was the wildest and most extravagant. "The mails," he said, "will have to carry twelve times as much weight, and therefore the charge for transmission, instead of £100,000, as now, must be twelve times that amount. The walls of the Post Office would burst, the whole area in which the building stands would not be large

enough to receive the clerks and the letters."

It is impossible not to be struck by the paradoxical peculiarity of this argument. Because the change would be so much welcomed by the public, Lord Lichfield argued that it ought not to be made. He did not fall back upon the then familiar assertion that the public would not send anything like the number of letters the advocates of the scheme expected. He argued that they would send so many as to make it troublesome for the Post Office authorities to deal with them. In plain words, it would be such an immense accommodation to the population in general, that the officials could not undertake the trouble of carrying it into effect.

The committee gave the subject a very patient consideration, and at length made a report recommending uniform charges and prepayment by stamps. The part of Mr. Hill's plan which suggested the use of postage stamps was adopted by him on the advice of Mr. Charles Knight. The Government took up the scheme with some spirit and liberality. The revenue that year showed a deficiency, but they determined to run the further risk which the proposal involved.

Petitions from all the commercial communities were pouring in to support the plan, and to ask that at least it should have a fair trial. The Government at length determined to bring in a bill which should provide for the almost immediate introduction of Mr. Hill's scheme, and for the abolition of the franking system except in the case of official letters actually sent on business directly belonging to Her Majesty's service. The bill declared, as an introductory step, that the charge for postage should be at the rate of four pence for each letter under half an ounce in weight, irrespective of distance, within the limits of the United Kingdom. This, however, was to be only a beginning; for on January 10 1840, the postage was fixed at the uniform rate of one penny per letter of not more than half an ounce in weight. The introductory measure was not, of course, carried without opposition in both Houses of Parliament. The Duke of Wellington in his characteristic way declared that he strongly objected to the scheme, but as the Government had evidently set their hearts upon it, he recommended the House of Lords not to offer any opposition to it.

In the House of Commons it was opposed by Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Goulburn, both of whom strongly condemned the whole scheme as likely to involve the country in vast loss of revenue. The measure, however, passed into law. Some idea of the effect it has produced upon the postal correspondence of the country may be gathered from the fact that in 1839, the last year of the heavy postage, the number of letters delivered in Great Britain and Ireland was a little more than eighty-two millions, which included some five millions and a half of franked letters returning nothing to the revenues of the country; whereas, in 1875, more than a thousand millions of letters were delivered in the United Kingdom.

Concluded next month

NEW ZEALAND 1990

WORLD STAMP EXHIBITION