

A Journey of Errors

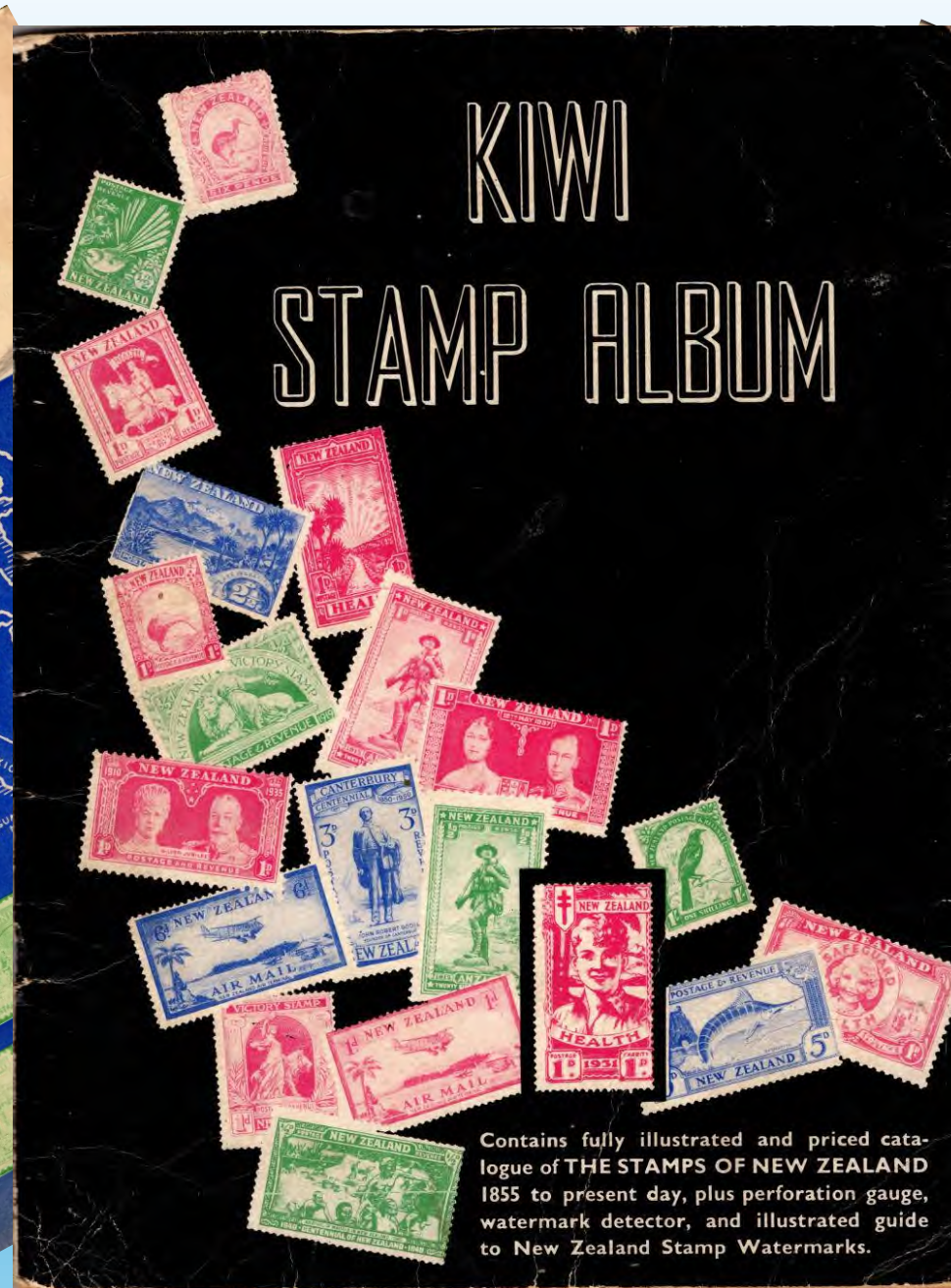
A Presentation to the
New Zealand Society of Great Britain
Zoom Meeting October 19, 2024
By Bruce Sergent



What did a schoolboy do with his spare time in the 60's?

There were no gadgets or technology, so other hobbies were required.

On my 8th birthday I was given a stamp album.



My first stamp album

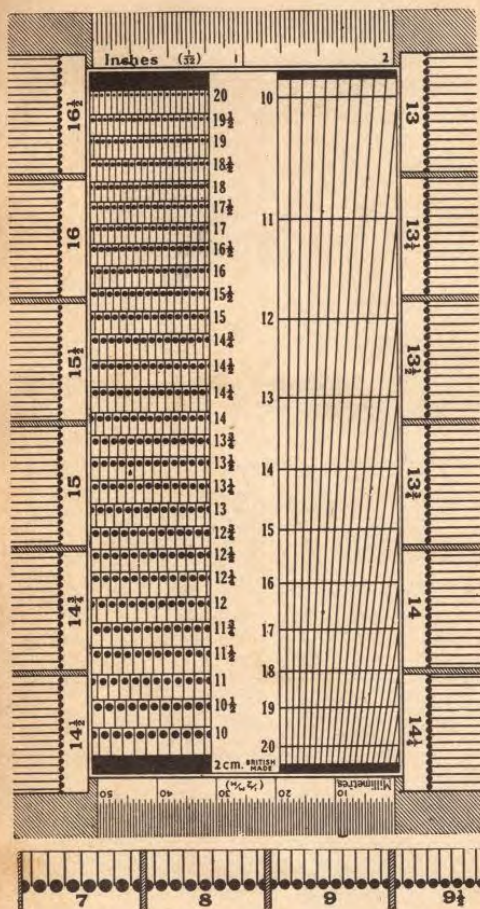
I spent my hard-earned pocket money and filled it and a few more albums with packets of “Stamps Of The World” that I purchased from the local newsagent.

At first, it was all about quantity, not quality. You had to have more than your school mates.



The stamps taught me a lot about identifying countries, measuring perforations, understanding watermarks, and that there can be subtle differences between similar stamps.

PERFORATION GAUGE



HOW TO "PERF" A STAMP

Move the stamp up or down gauge until the teeth of the perforations fit EXACTLY over the black dots. (It does not matter if the stamp is longer than the line of dots, as you are measuring two centimetres only.)

Should the four sides of the stamp measure, say 14, then the stamp is "perf 14" (or whichever other line it fits).

Should the top and bottom perfs fit the "14" line, and the sides fit the "15" line, then the stamp is "perf 14 x 15."

A "mixed perf" occurs when a sheet of stamps has been imperfectly perforated, and has been reperforated with a different machine with larger or smaller hole than the original.

Stamps perforated horizontally and vertically by different machines are termed "compound," and may have various combinations of the two gauges. A stamp with a compound perforation, say 10 and 11, may have three sides measuring 10 and the other 11, or vice versa, or any other combination of the two gauges.

WATERMARK DETECTOR PANEL

WATERMARK DETECTOR

To examine a Stamp lay it FACE DOWNWARDS on the black side of this watermark detector, when any watermark should become easily visible.

New Zealand Stamp Watermarks

WATERMARKS



STAMP SPOTTER

As explained in the introduction to this album, most stamps have the name of the issuing country either in English or in words so similar to English that you will have no difficulty in finding where they should be mounted. Some, however, are not so easily traced; this list includes a large proportion of those you are likely to find.

(A more complete list can be found in the booklet *Let's Collect Stamps*.)

(a) Words with letters in our alphabet:

BAYERN ...	...	Bavaria	LIBAN ...	...	Lebanon
BELGIQUE ...	...	Belgium	LIETUVA ...	...	Lithuania
BENADIR ...	...	Italian Somaliland	LOSEN ...	...	Sweden
BOHMEN UND MAHREN ...	...	Bohemia and Moravia			(Postage Due)
C.C.C.P. ...	...	Russia	MAGYARORSZAG ...	...	Hungary
CECHY A MORAVIA ...	...	Bohemia and Moravia	MAROC ...	...	French Morocco
CESKOSLOVENSKO ...	...	Czechoslovakia	MOYEN-CONGO ...	...	Middle Congo
COMMORES ...	...	Comoro Islands	NEDERLAND ...	...	Netherlands
COMUNICACIONES ...	...	Spain			(Holland)
COTE D'IVOIRE ...	...	Ivory Coast	NORGE ...	...	Norway
DEUTSCHES (REICH) or (POST) ...	...	Germany	OSTERREICH ...	...	Austria
EESTI ...	...	Estonia	OTTOMANES ...	...	Turkey
EIRE ...	...	Ireland	POLSKA ...	...	Poland
ESCUELAS ...	...	Venezuela	RAROTONGA ...	...	Cook Islands
ESPAÑA ...	...	Spain	REICHPOST ...	...	Germany
ETHIOPIE ...	...	Ethiopia (Abyssinia)	RODI ...	...	Rhodes
GEORGIENNE ...	...	Georgia	SACHSEN ...	...	Saxony
HAUTE VOLTA ...	...	Upper Volta	SARRE ...	...	Saar
HELVETIA ...	...	Switzerland	SAURASHTRA ...	...	Soruth
HOLKAR ...	...	Indore	SHQYPTARE ...	...	Albania
HRVATSKA ...	...	Croatia	SLOVENSKO ...	...	Slovakia
IRAN (—iennes) ...	...	Persia	SUIDAFRIKA ...	...	South Africa
ISLAND ...	...	Iceland	SUOMI ...	...	Finland
KPTH ...	...	Crete	SVERIGE ...	...	Sweden
K.U.K. MILITAR POST ...	...	Bosnia	TANGER ...	...	Tangier
LATVIJA ...	...	Latvia	THAI ...	...	Siam
			TOGA ...	...	Tonga
			TUNISIE ...	...	Tunisia
			TURKIYE ...	...	Turkey

(b) Words made from letters not in our alphabet:

БЪЛГАРИЯ ...	...	Bulgaria
СРБИЈА ...	...	Serbia
ΕΛΛΑΣ ...	...	Greece
ЈУГОСЛАВИЈА ...	...	Jugoslavia
ПОЧТА-СССР ...	...	Russia
РСФСР ...	...	Russia

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By the age of 12, with over 100,000 stamps of no real value, compared to all the pocket money I had spent, I got serious and started a proper collection of New Zealand stamps.

Over the next ten years I had accumulated a very nice mint collection.



**1977 travelled
to Sydney**



**Plan was to visit for 6 months. I met a
nice girl and have been here ever since.**

It didn't take me long to seek out all the stamp dealers in Sydney. There were a lot of stamp shops around the city area at the time. Unfortunately, today they have all basically disappeared into the world of on-line sales.

One of the dealers I found was originally from New Zealand and I soon became good friends with him and spent many hours and dollars in his store. He had good contacts and was able to source excellent items for me.

It was this dealer who first showed me a New Zealand error and suggested it would look good in my collection. I agreed, but was hesitant to buy it, as I didn't like the thought of just having one error. It would look out of place. Of course, being a dealer, he said "simple solution", buy some more.

So, I bought it, the 1960 5d Daisy, missing yellow, and thus began my journey into the world of errors.



Normal Issue



Yellow Shift

1962 5d Mountain Daisy



My First Error
Missing Yellow



What to Collect ?

What makes error collecting so interesting, is that there are many types of errors to collect. Each type has enough varieties, that you can specialise in a specific type if you want and find that it will keep you occupied and provide many challenges along the way.

For me, the error must be clearly visible. The more spectacular, the better. If you need a magnifying glass to see the error, I wasn't so interested. There are plenty of others to collect.

Missing colours are my favourite, and that is where I started, researching each one as I went.

Missing Colour Errors



Classic Period 1959-1966



Colour Shift Errors



Perforation Errors



Perforation Shift



Missing Perforations



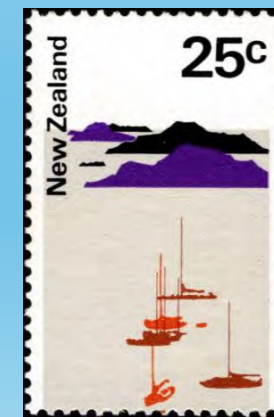
Double Perforations

Offset Errors



1970 Pictorials

21 stamps from the ½c to the \$2. Only the \$1 & \$2 haven't shown any significant errors.



What Happened To Missing Colour Errors

Since the 1966 \$3 Butterfly with two colours omitted, there has only been one newer example of a missing colour stamp, the 2008 Weather Extremes 50c.

Computer technology and single pass printing are now in place. But how did one sheet in 2008 occur ??

Most errors since 1996 have been perforation errors.



3984 2004 Olympic Games \$2 Peter Snell (gold medallist for 800 metres in Rome in 1960), error CENTRE INVERTED, as the prismatic plastic design is upside down! This spectacular error was found in a local post office in Hamilton & it is believed that only 1 pane of 16 was issued. This error was noticed by a customer who went to buy 1 stamp for his overseas mail. When he noticed the error he came back & purchased the remaining 7 stamps (by this time half the pane had already been sold to public and are likely to have been used on mail & subsequently discarded) & at this time these are the only 8 examples recorded. One of these has been sold back to New Zealand Post (!) and is currently displayed in the New Zealand National Museum at Te Papa as the most significant NZ stamp error after the 1905 4d Taupo inverted centre error. An extremely rare & important item for either the New Zealand or Olympics specialist or a collector of inverted centres of the world. 2005 Ceremuga photo-cert. (P)..... \$6000 \$10000

\$2.00

Peter Snell
800 metres Gold
Rome 1960

2004

New Zealand

3984



When To Buy

Purchased for \$14,000 plus buyer's commission of 16.5%. **\$16,766**

I was in the auction room to witness this sale, and there were three serious bidders fighting for the item. One very happy bidder went home with it.

A month later, another sheet of 16 was located and the price immediately dropped to around \$4,000 per copy.

I don't suppose he was happy anymore.

If you don't buy, you could miss out. It can be all about timing and luck.



Proving Pieces

Where possible, I try to collect proving pieces. This is where the error is attached to another item without the error or has selvedge to assist in locating its position.

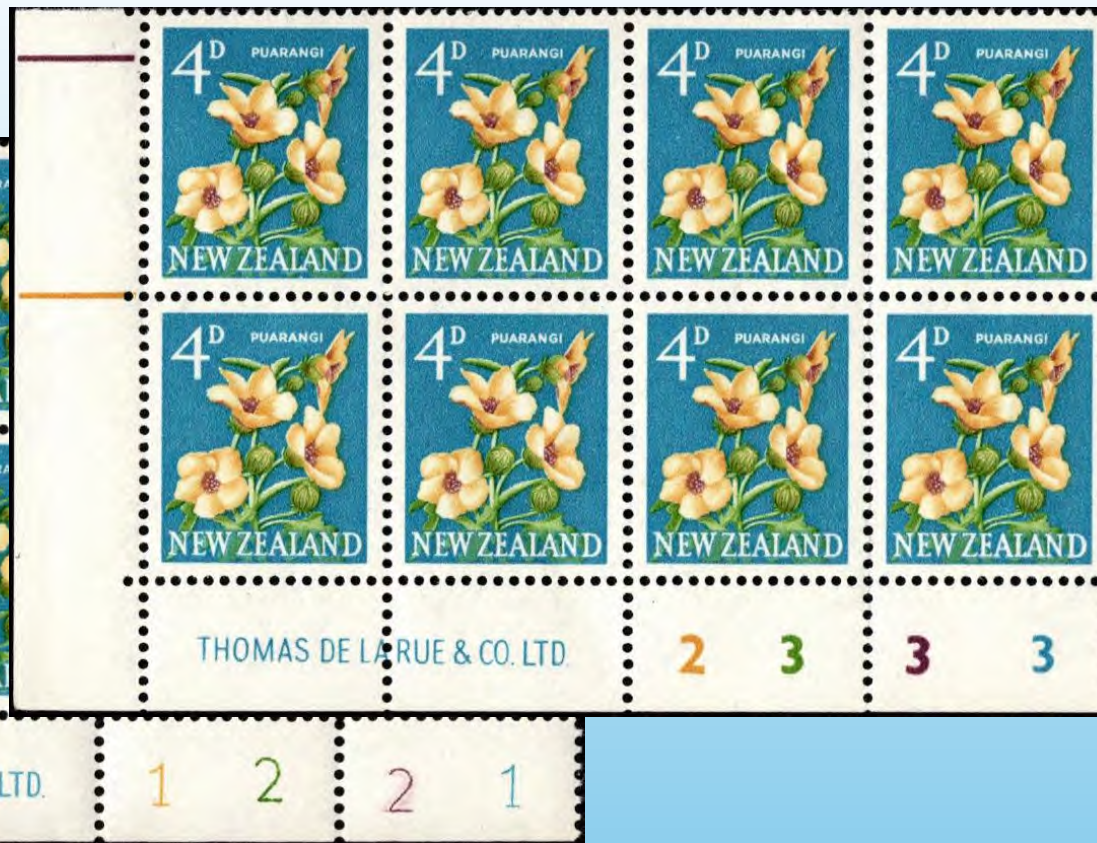


It took me a long time to find a selvedge strip like the error strip, as almost all the bottom left stamps from a sheet are separated for plate blocks.

When I found one, I noticed that the colour bars in the selvedge were in a different order, so I had to source the relevant plate blocks to see what was going on.

Between the printing from the first plate and the second plate, the order of the colour bars was swapped, thus proving that the error occurred on the first printing.

Without the selvedge, you would find it difficult to know which plate the only sheet found was from.





Challenging Errors

The CP catalogue describes an error on the 12c Telephone Centenary as “One of the two yellow colours (dark yellow) omitted”. Well, if you can look at the yellow on the two stamps and see a difference, then you have exceptional eyes and imagination.



Normal



Error

Challenging Errors

I spent years looking at the yellow, when I should have been looking at the brown. The dark yellow puts a distinct line on the brown, shown by the arrow. The error version doesn't show this line. Simple, when you know what to look for. The catalogue can list it but can't show you what to look for.



Normal



Error

Perforation Mystery

On August 4, 2000, two new issues were released. The Olympic & Sporting Pursuits and The Queen Mother – 100 Years. A very small number of examples showing a perforation shift on all six values from the Olympic issue have been seen on the market. They all show a perforation shift, resulting in New Zealand showing at the bottom of the stamp instead of at the top. They are catalogued as “Major perforation shifts in all values are known”.



Perforation Mystery

On the same day, The Queen Mother – 100 Years was issued. Three values, yet only the \$1.10 records a perforation shift and is priced. The perforation shift is the same as the Olympic issue. Good luck finding one, as I have the only recorded sheet, and I haven't split it up.



Ultimate Dream

When collecting errors, 99.9% of the time you are buying somebody else's discovery.

The ultimate dream is to make a discovery of your own.

After 65 years of dedication to the hobby, I fulfilled that dream earlier this year.

I found and had authenticated, a 1962 3c Puarangi with two missing colours. More detail can be found on Page 191 of the September 2024 “The Kiwi”.



Green & Purple Omitted

What To Do With My Collection

I feel that there is no point having a great collection, unless you can display it or show and talk about it to others. During the long COVID lockdowns, which caused my retirement, I had plenty of time, so I decided that I had enough material to be able to produce a book. I taught myself how to use good publishing software and after two years, the book was finished.

The real purpose of the book was not to make money, but to show other collectors examples of what you never see in a catalogue, and to help make their searches easier. I have also fully written up my collection and have done many presentations at local stamp societies and clubs, where members get to see the actual stamps.

The other interest of mine is New Zealand Stamp Booklets. This is another area of philately that has very little written about it. There are several articles out there, but nothing with it all in one place.

So, what better to do with my time, but write another book. The Error Book consists of 220 pages, whereas the Booklets consists of 390 pages. I am still determining in what format it will be available, but it is finished and will be released very soon.

The first printing of the NZ Error book quickly sold out, so a second printing was ordered, and copies are still available. If you want one, contact me at bsergent@iinet.net.au for more details.

