

Campbell Paterson's NEWSLETTER

FOR
COLLECTORS OF
NEW ZEALAND STAMPS

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WHAKATANE WE WISH YOU WELL!

April 19th sees the commencement of the National Philatelic Exhibition at Whakatane. May we extend our heartiest good wishes and felicitations to the organisers and committee (and competitors of course) whose sheer hard work over the past few months cannot fail to make this one of the most momentous events in our Philatelic History. We are sure our many readers and friends overseas and those who cannot attend will join us wholeheartedly. — **We wish you well!**

Our own representatives, Warwick Paterson and Denis Bean will be in Whakatane throughout the Exhibition and are both looking forward immensely to meeting correspondence friends and making plenty of new ones!

NEW ZEALAND NOTES AND COMMENT—By Warwick Paterson Modern Stamp Printing by Photogravure

As mentioned last month I commence here my series of notes on the principles of the Photogravure process.

The first concern in any article of this type is not to become too technical and readers may be sure that I have tried to be as readable as possible. Where necessary I have used the technical terms applicable with full explanations as to their meaning.

I shall deal with the subject under two main headings, firstly the **nature and description of the process**; and secondly the **varieties which occur and their causes**. In the interests of clarity I have ignored the more scientific aspects and the many variants on the process. I hope I may be forgiven this by those who know the subject well already. The fact that the highest security attaches to the production of postage stamps in the factories means that intimate details of the processes used are, unfortunately, not available.

Nature and description of Photogravure

This is an intaglio process; viz the areas of the printing plate which carry the ink and deposit it on paper (reproducing the required design) are **recessed** into the surface of the plate. The "plate" is normally a cylinder with a copper surface and throughout these articles I shall refer to it as the "cylinder."

The Production of the Plate or Cylinder

- (a) The first major piece of equipment is the **cross lined ruled screen**—a sheet of glass or film covered with a pattern of close-spaced (parallel) clear lines intersecting at right angles. The squares between are opaque.
- (b) The second is the **Carbon Tissue** consisting of light-sensitised gelatine (treated with bichromate or potassium and pigment) coated on paper. Gelatine has the property of being hard and clear when dry, capable of absorbing water and dissolves when heated. The effect of light on this tissue is to make the gelatine more or less insoluble according to the amount of light it receives. When arc lights are projected through the ruled screen on to the carbon tissue a criss-cross pattern of (insoluble) lines is formed in the gelatine by the action of the light and this tissue is now ready to receive the image of the sheet of stamps.
- (c) The **multipositive plate** is a photographic positive of the whole sheet of stamps developed on film or glass. One negative of the stamp design may be used to project its image onto this plate mechanically by a "step and repeat" process. In other words this impression on the multipositive plate is in fact 120 (or however many stamps there are in the sheet) separate photographs of the design of the stamp developed individually from the same negative. This photograph is a "continuous tone positive."

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PHOTOGRAVURE (continued)

- (d) **The Carbon Tissue** (with the criss-cross design of insoluble gelatine) is now exposed again to light projected this time through the multipositive plate and the light again has the effect of hardening the gelatine on the tissue now, in the form of the design of the stamps. The light areas of the design are hardened (more or less according to the amount of light filtering through the multipositive) and the dark areas remain soluble as no light reaches them through the multipositive.
- (e) **The Cylinder** has a copper surface ground and highly polished until it has no blemishes or scratches. This is the basis for the printing cylinder. The carbon tissue (carrying the criss cross design of hardened lines and the impression of the design of the sheet of stamps described above) is now mounted (gelatine coated side down) on the surface of the cylinder and the paper backing removed. The cylinder with its coating of gelatine is now ready for "developing."
- (f) Developing the cylinder comprises rotating it in hot water at a high temperature. This melts those portions of the gelatine coating which were not hardened in the previous processes. It will be seen that the effect of this process is to leave on the surface of the cylinder a coating of hardened insoluble gelatine in the form of (a) a series of close spaced criss cross lines and (b) the design of the sheet of stamps (whose light portions are represented by the hardened gelatine—dark portions by the bare copper surface of the cylinder). This is a negative image in relief and the hardened gelatine is known as "resist." The thickness of the resist on these light parts of the design depends on their intensity—in other words the "tones" or shading of the design from light areas through to dark areas are represented by the thickness of the resist.
- (g) **Etching.** The cylinder is now ready to receive the image of the stamps' designs. This image is produced on the surface of the cylinder by etching (or eating-away) by acid. Under a carefully regulated process acid is poured over the surface of the cylinder—it attacks first the thinnest coatings of resist and in time penetrates the thicker portions of resist soaking through them and attacking the metal underneath. It will be seen that when the process is completed and the resist cleaned away the cylinder will be carrying on its surface a series of tiny "cups" or depressions, in the form of an image of the sheet of stamps of which the dark portions are represented by more or less deeply etched "cups" according to their depth of shade and the light portions by shallow cups or even smooth metal.

This cylinder may be chrome plated for protection against wear and is now ready for use.

It should be noted that revisions and repairs are carried out throughout all the above processes and some of these will be dealt with more fully in the subsequent articles.

- (h) **Printing from the Cylinder** is carried out by means of a machine with an impression roller and inking roller. These machines may use sheets or paper in a continuous reel. Ink is deposited on the revolving printing cylinder by the inking roller, a "doctor blade" cleaning the ink from the raised portions of the plate. The doctor blade is of flexible steel and operates with a slight traversing movement.

At this stage the cylinder is carrying ink only in the depressed parts of its surface—the "cups." These cups carry more or less ink according to the depth of the dark areas of the design which they represent. The ink is transferred from the cups to the rubber impression roller in the form of the design and it is this impression roller which conveys the design to paper—the printing of the stamps is complete.

For multicolour work several printing cylinders are used. Each carries its own portions of the design of the stamp the separations having been effected by the use of filters in the original photography of the design and addition of the negatives. The result after the sheet of stamps has been under each cylinder is a reproduction in multicolour being a combination of shades and colours to produce a composite design.

Next month I continue these notes and shall deal with the flaws and errors prevalent in this process—with a view to giving an indication of their causes, frequency and relative importance.

Good reading for further information may be found in "Practical Printing and Binding" (Odhams) and "Printing Theory and Practice—Photogravure" by Frank Wood (Pitman).

ODDS AND SODS

P.O.S.B. 4d and 9d. The 9d certainly seems to be in short supply, C.P.O. Auckland revealed to me that they received only 1500 sheets in the first consignment—that quantity to supply the area from Wellsford south to Mercer (excluding of course the 15 or so “direct requisitioning” offices supplied from Wellington). Wellington itself seems to have been similarly short supplied with 1000 sheets—that quantity to distribute as far north as Palmerston North. Many offices were sold out in Auckland and Wellington after seven days and further supplies have not as yet been forthcoming—I’m picking the stamp will be scarce. Postal Division in Wellington stated early last month that they still held supplies at that time.

The 4d plate 2A has quite a different shade in the maroon—somewhat lighter in hue. Most of these “2As” seem to have been distributed in the South Island and most of the used we have received from the Mainland are in that shade.

Mr. W. A. Greathead of Miramar one of our prolific researchers of yesteryear has come out of retirement with some very welcome items. He sent us the top three rows of one of the estimated seven sheet, 4d Pos B which hit the headlines in Wellington—they have defective printing in the gold. In many of the stamps the lower portion of “1967” and “Post Office Savings Bank” was partially missing. No isolated portion of the sheet was affected—the defect appeared here and there throughout these rows and I feel that faulty inking or doctor blade action is probably responsible for it. In this 4d stamp I have seen a number of examples with folded top left corners and consequent faulty perforations—hence the stamp must be printed on a sheet fed press. Certainly the coloured blobs, paper creases, colour shifts and bad centering which characterised last year’s Healths have been equalled in this issue by a flood of similar or worse aberrations. I think it’s nothing short of disgraceful. The printers seem to have lost any conception of what constitutes a decent job of work!

Mr. Greathead also sent me a block of 24, current 2/- stamps with defective black printing—almost a “dry print” caused I think by underinking of the black cylinder. The Taniwha in the rock drawing has almost no ribs! I believe half the sheet was affected.

Mr. P. J. Francis of Dunedin showed me a vertical block of 14 (two wide from the right selvedge) of N40a the 1½d brown QE11 2d surcharge with a light offset surcharge in the top right corner on the face of some of the stamps. An explanation of the variety given to Mr Francis by the late **Ray Collins** suggested that occasionally through the inefficiency of the printing machine operator some ink was taken up from the plate by the tapes in the machine (in the impression of the surcharge) and then deposited on the next sheet printed.

Chalk-surfaced 1d and 3d stamps have appeared in the public slot machines and I thank **Miss N. A. Williams** for the report. I have also seen 3d and 6d chalky paper in the counter coils—these will be scarce so coils collectors should make sure of their examples.

The chalky 6d is another stamp which may be in short supply. Latest P.O. Bulletin listed 1d and 3d chalky surfaced as available—but not the 6d so it may be well to make sure of a block now!

CATCH UP WITH SOME GOOD VARIETIES AT BARGAIN PRICES

With D.C. Day fast approaching you may not have another chance to secure some of the following **Modern Varieties**. All have received “Newsletter” **References and full descriptions will be found in the numbers mentioned.**

344—1960 PICTORIALS.

- | | |
|--|------|
| (a) ½d Manuka. R1/4 in block of 8 (VOL 18 No. 2) | 1/- |
| (b) Ditto. R20/11 in block of four (VOL 18 No. 2) | 1/- |
| (c) 1d Karaka. R20/1 in block of four (VOL 12 No. 3) | 3/- |
| (d) 2d Kaka beak. R9/12, R9/11 plate 3263 (VOL 15 No. 1 and 2) positional block | 22/6 |
| (e) Ditto. R19/12 (VOL 15 No. 1) block of four | 20/- |
| (f) Ditto. R1/9 plate 2232 (VOL 12 No. 8) | 10/- |
| (g) Ditto. In fine used copies the rare. R3/1 which appears in black cylinder 2 | 35/- |
| (h) Ditto. A rare block of four showing plate 3263 R9/12 in the unretouched state—broken second u of NGUTU (VOL 15 No. 2) | 22/6 |
| (i) 3d Kowhai. Plate 3335 R4/6 2 blocks of 24 showing flaw and retouch respectively (VOL 18 No. 2) | 25/- |

(j) 4d Puarangi. Plate 2333 block of 8 showing flaw R9/9 (VOL 18 No. 2)	7/6
(k) 7d Koromiko. Plate 1B block of four showing flaw R20/5 (VOL 17 No. 11)	5/-
(l) 8d Rata. R1/1 (VOL 12 No. 3)	4/6
(m) Ditto. R1/9 (VOL 12 No. 6)	4/6
(n) 3/- Tongariro. R1/6 block of four second state (VOL 18 No. 2)	30/-
(o) 10/- Skier. R9/1	25/-
(p) Ditto. R16/4 in pair (VOL 17 No. 2)	27/6

COMMEMORATIVES—BARGAINS

345—4d Meat Export	
(a) WMK inverted. (C.P. cat. 20/-)	10/-
(some blocks available.)	
8d Meat Export	
(b) R10/1 flaw 1.882 in \boxplus	12/6
(Stamps cat. ea. 3/6)	
3d Red Cross	
(c) R1/1 flaw in \boxplus	5/-
(d) RARE! R13/6 Flag flaw—original state (cat. £20) in block of six	£15
3d Southland Centennial	
(e) \boxplus Value block with plate crack	4/-
4d Road Safety	
(f) "Bar of Black" on wrist R5/8 in block of six	4/6
(g) "Flaw in D of Roads" R4/6 in \boxplus	4/-
(h) "Nick in N of New" R5/3 \boxplus	4/-
(i) Apostrophe flaw in positional block of 6 R/3/2—given away	7/6
(j) A magnificent corner block including R3/2 and R5/3	12/6
8d Compac	
(k) R7/4 in \boxplus (stamps cat. at 3/-)	10/6
I.C.Y. 4d	
(l) WMK inverted	25/-
Jamboree 4d	
(m) Retouching R2/17—20 in spectacular (value) block of 12	12/6
Anzac 4d	
(n) Set of two positional blocks—block of six including R9/4 "sail on shore" and R10/7 "soldiers on beach" in \boxplus	12/6

HEALTH VARIETIES—MINT

346—T35b PRINCE ANDREW 3d Claret	
The "Finger flaw" in its original state (plate 1B R3/5) in a magnificent corner block of 15 at the crazy price of	55/-

MISCELLANEOUS

Thanks to a couple of accumulations we have put together some embryo collections designed to whet the appetite of the collector who delights in something a bit different.

347—(a) A series of early meter marks, official paid, postage due, and permit markings in a small stock book. Frankly (ouch!) there could be something unusual here. Includes General Assembly Frank. Virtually all pre World War II	70/-
(b) Again in a small stock book one dozen attractive postmarks on 1d and 2d second sidefaces—squared circles, coin type etc. Good selection of fine strikes	40/-
(c) Half a dozen early registered labels on cover. The basis for an interesting study	12/6

OUR RECORD YEAR came to an end on March 31st and I thank all our customers and friends sincerely for the support they have given me and my new staff. The day of the personal contact between Dealer and Collector is not dead and will not die as far as we are concerned—we are pledged to give you the best service in our power!

FULL FACES: YET AGAIN! UNUSED THIS TIME! EARLY HEALTH STAMPS

We never cease to be amazed by the pressure on us to produce really fine Chalons, and when we advertise them the scramble to be first has to be seen to be believed. We won't sing the praises of this issue any further. Suffice to say that every stamp listed below is a magnificent unused example in beautiful condition.

348—All are Davies prints perforated 12½ watermark, large star

(a) S.G. 110 1d Vermilion o.g.	92/6
(b) S.G. 110 1d Carmine-Vermilion	80/-
(c) S.G. 110 Ditto	90/-
(d) S.G. 111 1d Orange-Vermilion	97/6
(e) S.G. 132 1d Reddish-brown	32/6
(f) S.G. 132 1d Ditto	35/-
(g) S.G. 117 3d Lilac—a pair	80/-
(h) S.G. 120 4d yellow	80/-
(i) S.G. 135 6d Pale blue	55/-
(j) S.G. 136 6d Blue	45/-
(k) S.G. 124 1/- Green a rare shade this; it carries our unconditional guarantee	£17/10/-
(l) S.G. 127 1d Brown p 10 x 12½	60/-
(m) S.G. 127 Ditto	45/-
(n) S.G. 138 2d Vermilion No WMK	40/-

And one or two more choice items

349—

(a) S.G. 2. The London 2d a lightly cancelled full-margined of fine appearance with striking "Ivory head" altogether a wonderful chance (S.G. £70)	£35
(b) S.G. 37 Examples of the scarce "slate blue" Davies imperf. wmk. large star at (CP cat. £22)	£5/10/-
and	£10
(c) S.G. 122 pd p12½ red brown wmk large star on cover pmk Auckland JN2 68 (Duplex)	30/-

EARLY HEALTH STAMPS

A miscellany of singles, pairs and blocks in unmounted mint condition. A few only.

350—(a) T1a Nurse	Single	12/6
	Pair	25/-
	田	50/-
(b) T2a Nurse	Single	27/6
	Pair	55/-
	田	110/-
(c) T4a Hygeia	Single	40/-
	Pair	80/-
	田	160/-
(d) T5a Pathway	Single	17/6
	Pair	35/-
	田	70/-
(e) T6a Crusader	Single	15/-
	Pair	30/-
	田	30/-
(g) T7a Lifebouy	Single	8/-
	Pair	15/-
	田	30/-
(f) T7a Keyhole	Single	7/6
	Pair	8/-
	田	16/-

EARLY HEALTH'S (continued)

(h) T9a Hiker	Single	7/6
	Pair	15/-
(i) T10a Children	☐	30/-
	Single	5/-
	Pair	10/-
	☐	20/-

POSTAL HISTORY

- 340 (a) On S.G. 117 3d Lilac Full Face perf. 12½ the rare "STAFFORD" Large S in circle a magnificent strike. Hard to repeat—no, unrepeatable—at **£10**
- (b) On S.G. 43 6d Davies' imperf. Full Face Red Brown. The elusive "HEADQUARTERS" Maori Watermark illustrated on page PH4 of the C.P. Catalogue. NOT a perfect strike but clearly identifiable on a lovely full-margined stamp **£9/10/-**
- (c) Early meter marks on piece items "Wellington N.Z. Post Paid 3d"; "Napier postage paid 1d" both unused a clean and the Napier mark used 18DE O8. Rare unused and lovely items to have (3) **£12/10/-**

1898 PICTORIALS

- (d) E5a 2d Pembroke Peak brown-lake
Pair imperf. vertically. Lovely! unused **£25**
- (e) E18c 1/- Kea and Kaka orange-red
Abnormal WMK W4 on fine used copy **£27/10/-**

1d DOMINION

- (f) J5a on Art paper, WMK Lithographed
The rare colourless watermark. Horizontal mesh in mint block of four. Hinged but impressive at **£9**

KING EDWARD VII

- (g) H8a 1/- orange vermilion
The scarce "plate number" two dots. The only "plate blocks" in this issue showed these dots **£19**

KING GEORGE V

- (h) K13d ½d Green on art paper
Blue watermark on horizontal mesh paper—scarce in mint block of four **£5**
or singles **25/-**

HEALTH

- (i) T5a Pathway to Health
Retouch "Health" and flaw "clouds" in mint ☐ **£4**

KING GEORGE VI

- (j) M14c 1/3d Brown and Light Blue upright Watermark
The rare plate 3A-2 **£30**

1935 PICTORIALS

- (k) L2d 1d Kiwi Red die 3
Booklet pane with two die 1 re-entries. Rows 7 and 8 numbers 13 and 15 a must for the 1935 specialist **£9**
- (l) L3d Maori Cooking Red Brown p. 14 x 13½
Block of four plate 1A shows 2 re-entries **30/-**
- (m) L5c 2d Mt. Cook and Lilies Choc. and blue slate p. 13-14 x 13½
Watermark inverted mint single **10/-**
- (n) L13g 2/- Capt. Cook green
Mint block of four from Plate III shows heavily blurred impression — spectacular **50/-**
- (o) L14c 3/- Mt. Egmont sepia and yellow brown "Wet printing"
WMK inverted and rev. mint single **£12/10/-**