

SOUTH PACIFIC PERFIN BULLETIN

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EDITORIAL

One of the few really frustrating things about collecting (including perfins) is "the one that got away". There was the time I was offered the £1 Robes MUH perfin G/NSW ... and the time I could have bought those postcards perfin OS/NSW ... and the time (actually yesterday) that I could have bought that accumulation with the £1 Arms perfin G/NSW on eBay..... Well, I still need the £1 Robes and I could have used the others as I know collectors who need those issues. There is no solution to this situation except buying everything which is not only outside of my finances, but would leave one with a lot of unwanted material and help push prices sky high.

Maybe better to concentrate on those that 'didn't get away' as there are many more of these. Most collectors have a few or more of those unusual items tucked away in their collections that will be of interest to others. Quite a few members share some of these items with other Club members via the Bulletin but there is certainly room for many more to do so. It is even easier to report additional items related to an article in the Bulletin, such as the listing of 'NZ' perfins in this issue. Quite a good range of articles in this Bulletin, so hope you enjoy it.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members since the previous issue:

- #194 Allan Cowan, Tamborine, Queensland
- #195 Greg Drusch, California, USA
- #196 Peter Young, Neutral Bay, Sydney NSW

CLUB AUCTION

Auction 2/2000 was another success with 75% of lots sold, and most vendors and buyers sharing in the sales. As usual, there were several lots with tied highest bids, and these were decided in favour of the first of such bids received as usual. Lots unsold are available at reserve from John on a first-in, first-served basis.

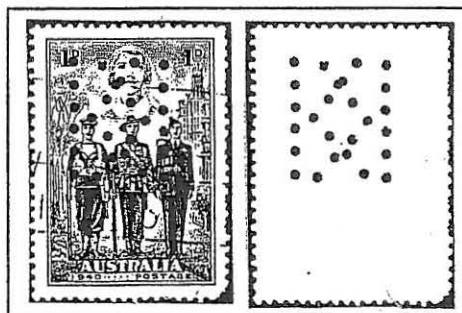
Commission is now only 5%, so if you have material suitable for auction, lot it up (with a reserve price if required) and send it to John. Closing date for the next catalogue will be first week in April.

FOR CIRCUIT MEMBERS

So far we have had a good run with circuit books through the postal system, but just in case we ever need to trace books, can members please always include a return address on packets of books sent around the circuit? Thanks.

A PERFIN QUIZ

Here is a test of identification to start off the new Millennium! The illustrations show the front of the stamp to indicate period of usage (1d green AIF – 1940), and the pattern itself, which has the orientation as seen from the front of the stamp. The current owner has kindly offered to donate it as a prize to the first correct entry received by your Secretary.



To make it fair, entries from Australian members will only be accepted for consideration of the prize if sent by "snail-mail", but overseas members (yes, that includes NZ!) may submit entries by e-mail (address on page 1). If you need further clues, see a later page.

A PERFIN DISPLAY

At Glasgow 2000, a National Philatelic Exhibition held in November 2000, one of our members living in Scotland, Colin Clark Hutchison, was invited to show a one frame display of Australian Commercial Perfins. Congratulations go to Colin on this honour, and our thanks for placing this area of collecting before another philatelic audience.

USE OF STAMPS FOR PAYMENTS

It is now 6 months since the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in Australia, and after this "period of grace" Australia Post has announced that from 1 February 2001, mail within Australia must have only GST-paid stamps affixed, and overseas mail must have only non-GST stamps affixed. Those on which GST has been paid include 49c denominations, 45c stamps issued after 1 July 2000, and others issued since 1 July 2000 such as the recent \$2.00 Federation stamps. Those on which no GST has been paid include the "International Post" series, and decimal stamps issued before 1 July 2000.

In view of this, your Secretary requests that stamps used for payment of amounts owing, including circuit books, auctions and subscriptions, be restricted as follows:

1. For small amounts, 45c stamps (post - 1 July 2000 issues) and stamps of 49c (or multiples of 49c if these are ever issued), or stamps with a denomination which is a multiple of 50c (50c, 1-00, 1-50, etc).
2. For larger amounts, stamps with a denomination which is a multiple of 50c (50c, 1-00, 1-50, etc).

I regret that I will not be able to use quantities of pre - 1 July 2000 stamps, with denominations of less than 45c because they will only be able to be used on overseas mail and envelopes are not big enough to put large numbers of them on.

If members cannot send the exact amount under these guidelines, any excess amount can be held in credit against future amounts owing.

NEW ITALIAN PERFINS CATALOGUE

Your Secretary recently received an unsolicited e-mail from the editor of a new catalogue of Italian perfins, with text in Italian and English.

Details are given on the Web site (in Italian):

http://www.vaccari.it/_2_editoria/madeinv/1413e/perfin.htm

The e-mail lists the Contents of the catalogue as:

"CONTENTS

Introduction - Valuations - Notice - catalogue reading code - XIX century perfins known till now - list of patterns - Monograms and logos - Non commercial perforations - patterns non easily understandable - Constantinopoli Italian office - Austrian perfins of Trieste and other territories part of Italy (1918-1945) - ex. of perfins of Italian companies abroad - ex. of perfins of foreign companies operating also in Italy - Bibliography - index of names and places - Italian provinces initials".

Anyone who would like a copy of the e-mail can get one from John.

NATIONAL LEVEL STAMP EXHIBITION IN NEW ZEALAND

A National level stamp exhibition is to be run by the Southland Philatelic Society in Invercargill from 16 - 18 March 2001. It will be officially known as "2001 - A Stamp Odyssey". Souvenir items featuring the "PC/NZA" perfin on NZ stamps are to be available. Details can be obtained from the Southland Society at P.O. Box 300, Invercargill, New Zealand. The organisers have generously indicated that they are hoping to make available one type of souvenir cover free to Perfin Club members, to be distributed with an issue of the Bulletin.

Because of the location of Invercargill, it has been considered that a formal meeting of Club members is not feasible, but it is hoped that some members may be able to attend and meet each other.

REPORTS OF FAKE "OS" PERFINS

One of our Queensland members has reported that there are a number of fake "OS" perfins circulating in local club circuit books in Brisbane in recent times, especially the more expensive ones. This, of course, is a most unfortunate situation for collectors, and it is to be hoped that the perpetrators will soon be exposed or shamed into stopping this practice which can only be self-defeating in the long run. It is not known if there is any connection with the spate of fake "VG" perfins from that area a few years ago.

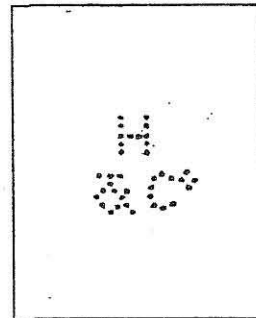
On the eBay Internet auction, there was also a 10/- Kangaroo and Map issue with large "OS" perfin but the vendor openly described it as a "forgery" – the stamp has watermark CofA and a 1939 postmark! The vendor says he bought it, knowing it was a forgery, a few years ago from a Brisbane auction house. This puncture is very similar to those shown in the article in the January 1999 issue of this Bulletin.

A NEW NEW ZEALAND PERFIN

(Robert Samuel)

Mr M Harder, of David Holmes Philatelists Ltd, has shown me a 1d Universal perforated with the letters, H&Co. The stamp is printed from one of the Royle plates and would have been used about 1906-08. However, I am unable to establish the town or city where this perfin was used, let alone offer any clue as to the user.

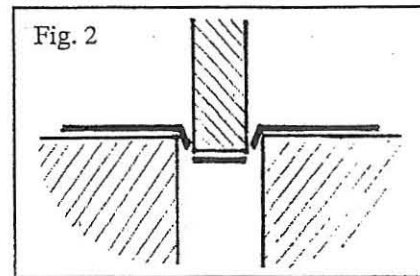
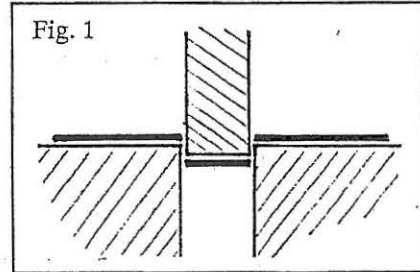
The perfin shows the distinctive Sloper flat-topped ampersand. It is probable that, in this case, the firm did not obtain it's own punch but sent a supply of stamps to Sloper for perforating.



A NEW VARIETY OR NOT – THE PROBLEM OF “BLIND” PINS (John Mathews)

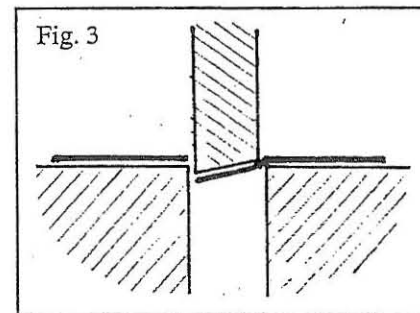
For perfins the peak usage period was about one hundred years ago. Theft of stamps by company employees had been a problem, and the answer had been seen in a process which had been in use in another area which was also susceptible to fraudulent practice – marking cheques in some way which ensured they could not be altered. At a time when inks were not “permanent”, various perforators punctured cheques to indicate the name of the payee, or to indicate that a cheque had been paid.

Looking to the actual punching process, each hole got punched out of the paper as the perforating pin penetrated the paper resting on the base plate with a corresponding hole under the pin position. To make a “clean-cut” hole, a high degree of precision engineering was required. Readers will be aware of the difficulty in trying to cut paper with a pair of scissors with loose cutting blades. Likewise, if the punching pin does not have a very close fit with the hole in the base plate, then the paper tends to be stretched somewhat before it breaks, rather than being “cut” – see Figure 2. This results in a more ragged edge to the hole. This is particularly evident with the perfins produced by the Victorian perforating service, for which most holes are “rough-cut”.



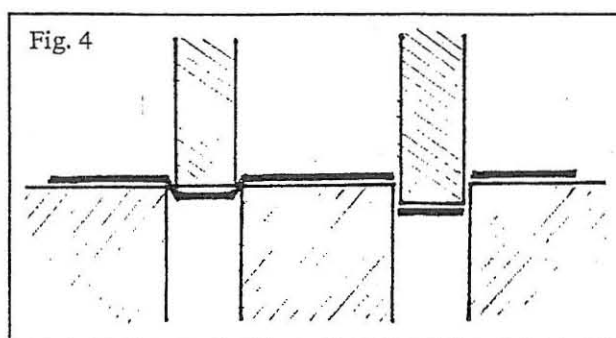
One of the other causes of these is seen in the many examples where a lost or damaged pin has been replaced by one of slightly smaller diameter than the original, giving a different degree of roughness to the hole.

Research into the Sloper workbooks and ledgers revealed that their pins were made of ordinary wire. Another situation can arise if the end of a perforating pin is not “square”. In this case, the longer part of the pin cuts the paper first, and a flap of paper may fold down before the circular cut is complete (see Figure 3). Subsequently, this “flap” may regain its original position, either when the pin is withdrawn from the base-plate hole, or when the stamp is affixed to the envelope. While the stamp is still affixed to the paper, it may appear (even under a magnifier) that this hole does not exist. But after the stamp is soaked off, it becomes obvious that the hole was meant to be there.



In the period of manufacture of the early perforators, the metals from which the pins were made were relatively brittle compared with modern alloys. If a pin became even slightly bent, it might strike the edge of the hole in the base plate and snap under pressure resulting in it being shorter than the others around it, perhaps barely penetrating the hole in the base plate from then on, as shown in Figure 4. Evidence of this can be seen where the paper is slightly indented, but not cut at all.

Detection of these can often be difficult without a good magnifier and with light incident on it at an oblique angle to cast a shadow. Nonetheless, that is sufficient to verify that a hole was intended in that position, rather than this perfin pattern being different to the one with all holes cleanly punched.



As other examples where holes not cleanly punched out could have had severely detrimental consequences, we might recall the paper tapes used with teletype machines (how many can remember these?) and the punched tapes and punched cards which have now become very much part of the “history” of computers.

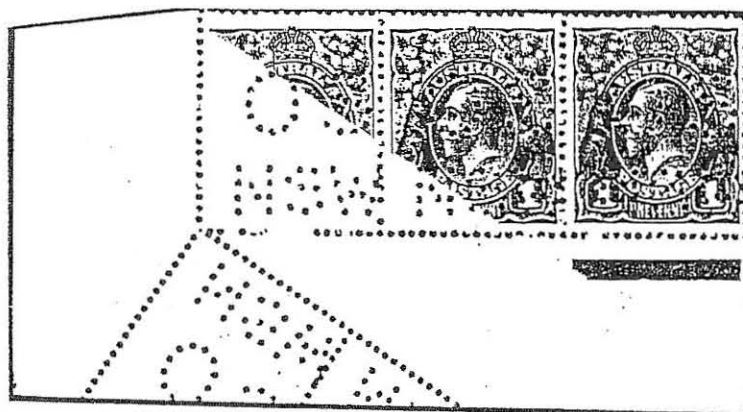
“SELDOM SEEN” ITEMS ON eBay INTERNET AUCTION

Recently, a “BELL” perfin on a New South Wales 1/- black Queen Victoria was offered on eBay. This is one of the few “design” or “symbol” patterns among Australian perfins, so it was not surprising to see some keen bidding for it. Unfortunately (or perhaps “fortunate” for the lucky successful bidder!), the postmark was light, and the scan did not offer any location or date clues which would help to positively identify the user. It remains frustrating that such a distinctive pattern should not have been positively identified. This is about the sixth example known of this pattern, four of which are on this 1/- issue. Such a high amount of postage in the mid-1880s may itself be a clue to the occupation of the user.

A SPECTACULAR PAPER FOLD WITH PRINTING AND PERFORATING ERRORS

Ray Bennett has sent a copy of a current auction catalogue with a photo of one item from a bulk lot which shows a spectacular effect of a sheet having been both printed and perforated with a fold in the corner of the sheet.

Such printing examples are occasionally offered at auction, but it seems quite unusual for the fold to be missed again during the perforating process.



HOW MANY PERFIN PATTERNS ARE YET TO BE DISCOVERED? (John Mathews)

As I compile the updated listing of perfin patterns, I have asked myself this question many times. Certainly, I had been aware that the rate of reporting of new patterns had been slowing noticeably in recent times, but I had not pursued this assessment more exactly than that.

Now my attention has been drawn to an article that appeared in "The Economist" in 1998. It describes research by Charles Paxton of Oxford University, who estimated the number of yet undiscovered saltwater species whose length exceeds 2 metres, using a technique invented in 1943 by a British statistician, Ronald Fisher. The discovery of new perfin patterns is a closely similar situation to that studied by Paxton. As the article in "The Economist" did not go into the theory of the technique, I had to delve back into a bit of my early Mathematics.

I took the starting point for the count as the time the first reports of "new patterns" were submitted following the publication of "Commercial Perfins of Australia" in 1992. There were two reasons for this. First, the rate of search activity from 1992 has probably been significantly higher than prior to 1992. Second, it has only been since 1992 that I have recorded the dates of reports of new patterns!

The progress of reports of new patterns fits the theory very closely. The result indicates that at the time of publication of the book in 1992, there were about another 1100 patterns not yet discovered. From then until the end of 2000, 1000 have been reported. From the theory, half the remaining number at any given time should be discovered in each subsequent 3-year period. That is, 50 remaining at the end of 2003, 25 at the end of 2006, 12 at the end of 2009, etc.

(Reference: Science and Technology: Myths, Monsters and Maths, "The Economist", page 87, 28 November, London, England.)

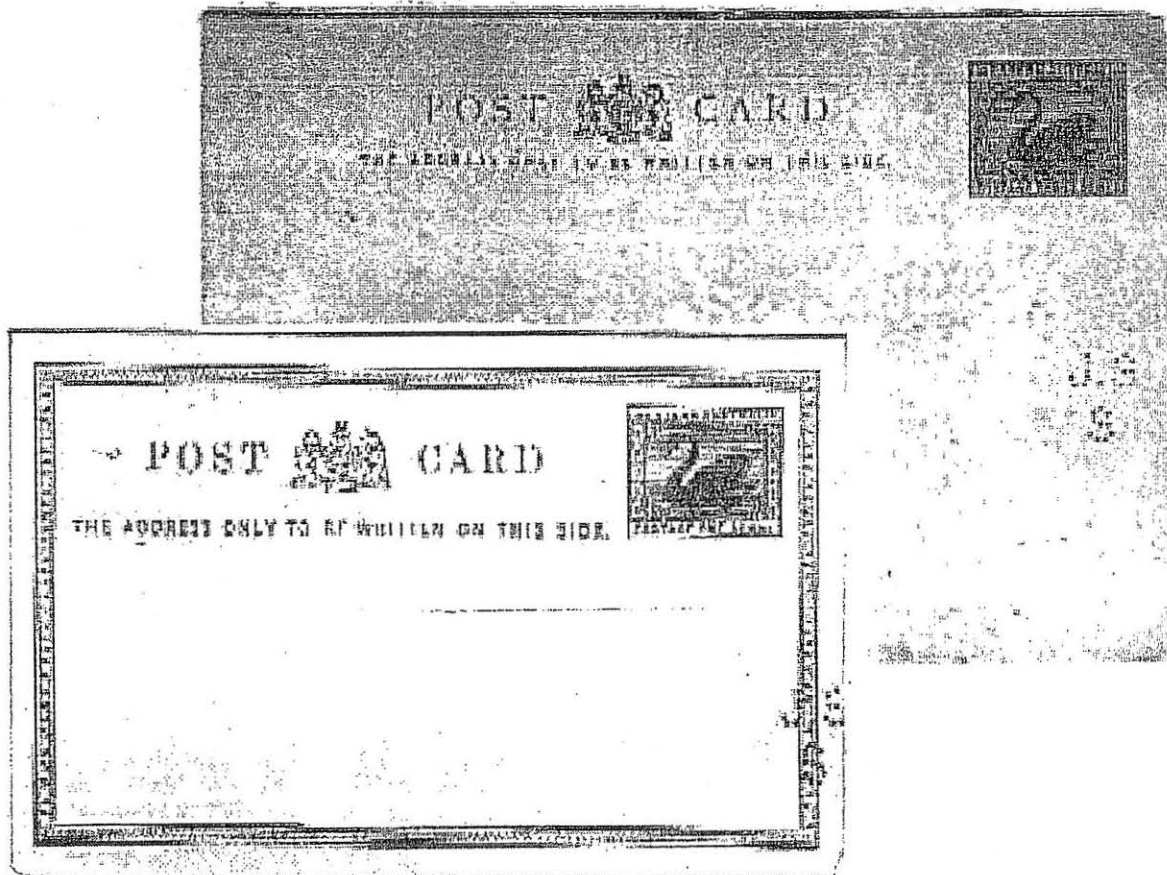
THREE INTERESTING (AND CURIOUS) PERFINNED POSTAL STATIONERY ITEMS

In a recent public stamp auction, three postal cards with perfins were offered and sold. The cards were from Western Australia's 1890 (2 items) and 1903 (1 item) series. On all three cards was the perfin JSS.4 of Justus Scharff (Sydney), in each case positioned about 4.5 cm down from the top of the card, so well away from the imprinted stamp area, and very close to the right edge. This perfin is known used from 1893 to 1914 and so far only reported on New South Wales and Commonwealth postage stamps and New South Wales Duty Stamps.

Unfortunately, none of these three cards has been used, so it remains a mystery when and where the perfin was applied to them. Because postage stamps of the States were allowed to be used in any other State in the period at the beginning of the Commonwealth just prior to the introduction of the first Commonwealth stamps in 1913, it may be that

the same applied to postal stationery – do any of our members have any information about this?

Post Office Directories of that era do not list Justus Scharff as having an office in Western Australia, so it is perhaps more likely that the cards found their way to the perforator in Sydney rather than the perforator going to Perth. But was the perfin done for the normal reasons, or as an experiment to see if should be introduced on other postal stationery, or perhaps as a “souvenir”? So far, this pattern has not been reported on any other postal stationery items.

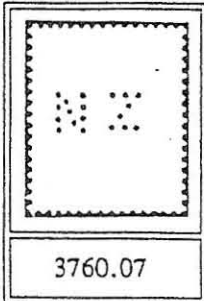
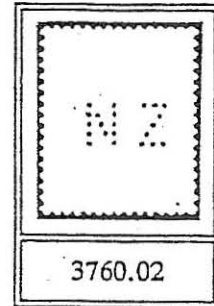


BRITISH 'NZ' PERFIN : NEW ZEALAND OFFICIALS 1922-1969

Quite a few articles and handbooks record these patterns and provide useful listings of issues used. Robert Samuel provided a good deal of explanatory information in his article "The stamps of Great Britain perforated 'NZ'." in the July 1993 issue of the Bulletin. A listing of issues perforated is provided in the Gault catalogue "Perfins of Great Britain". The information provided here is a compilation based on a list provided by Barry Pawson, the two sources mentioned above and information from a few other collections. Gault catalogue numbers are used where possible.

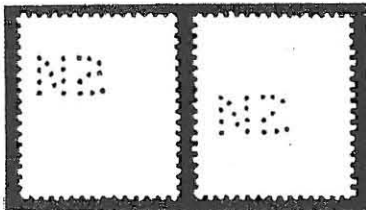
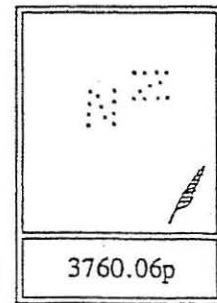
All of the 'NZ' perfins were produced by Slopers in London and the damage suffered by Slopers from bombing in 1941 resulted in a range of interesting patterns being used.

At least as early as 1922 the NZ - N3760.02 pattern was introduced. Usage continued to around 1940 by which time quite a few of the pins had been damaged and removed, there being a range of "missing hole" items noted. As this perforin was in use for a considerable period this is a common pattern. This pattern is reported used by the High Commissioner for New Zealand.



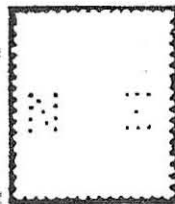
In 1939 the NZ - N3760.07 pattern (3mm between letters) was introduced. It appears that this machine was destroyed in the bombing of Sloper's premises in May 1941 though usage continued until 1943 suggesting that a large stock had been obtained before the bombing. Usage is reported by the High Commissioner for New Zealand and the N.Z. Patriotic Fund Board, N.Z. Prisoner of War Packing Centre, London.

Following the bombing a range of "provisional issues" were introduced. The first of these patterns NZ - N3760.06p was used during June 1941 and July 1941. As Slopers had lost all of their customers' dies they started back in business by manufacturing single dies for the most commonly used letters. This pattern was produced by first perforating with the letter 'N' and then perforating again at 90°. The spacing between these letters will of course vary somewhat.

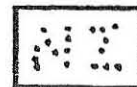
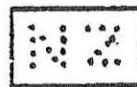


Slopers later modified a NB/IC die to produce the NZ - N3760.05 pattern where the Z looks a bit like a '2'. Three types have been reported with one, two or three holes in the cross bar of the 'Z'. Usage started during July 1941 and possibly due to large stocks issues are found postmarked until 1945.

A number of other 'NZ' patterns have been reported. NZ - N3760.03 is thought to be a modified N?E perforator that Robert Samuel suggests may have been produced by Sloper subcontracting their perforating work to another supplier of perforated stamps. Robert has also listed a number of other booklet stamps with what appear to be patterns punctured one hole at a time due to their irregularity. All of these patterns are rare.

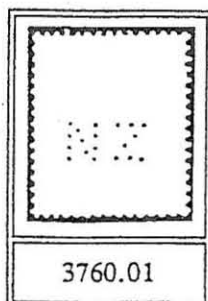
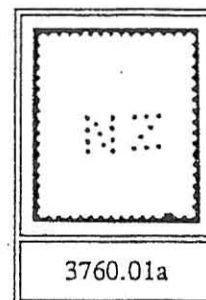


NZ - 3760.03



booklet stamps

Following the problems caused by the bombing of Slopers premises the NZ – N3760.01a pattern (2mm between letters) was introduced probably in 1942 and issues continued to be used until at least 6 Sept 1964, though puncturing probably stopped somewhat earlier. It is reported to be a single head die. Usage is reported by the High Commissioner for New Zealand, London, the New Zealand Scientific Office in London and the New Zealand Red Cross N.Z. Prisoner of War Packing Centre.



The last pattern used was NZ – N3760.01, a multihead die similar to the previous pattern (N3760.01a) except that the bottom of the 'Z' drops a little. In general the holes are also smaller than the previous pattern. Usage is reported from January 1957 to May 1969. In addition to the High Commissioner for New Zealand, it is reported used by the Inspector of NZ Dairy Products, London.

It is clear that the NZ perfins were used by a range of New Zealand Government organisations in Britain, as some of the organisations mentioned above are not located at the same address as the High Commissioner for New Zealand. Further information on usage of these perfins would be most interesting to see how wide this usage was. For example, were New Zealand Navy ships issued with 'NZ' perfins in British waters as Australian ships were issued COFA perfins ?

The following issues have been reported. Please send reports of any further issues with these perfins to the editor for later inclusion in an update article in the Bulletin.

Issue	3760.01	3760.01a	3760.02	3760.03	3760.05	3760.06p	3760.07
KGV 1/2d green Royal Cypher			X				
KGV 1 1/2d red-brown 1924-26			X				
“ 6d reddish purple “			X				
“ 1/- brown “			X				
“ 2/6 Seahorse			X				
KGV 1 1/2d brown 1934-36							
“ 2 1/2d ultra “			X				
“ 3d violet “			X				
“ 4d green “			X				
“ 1/- brown “			X				
KE VIII 1/2d green 1936			X				
“ 1d scarlet “			X				
“ 1 1/2d red-brown “			X				
KGVI 1/2d green 1937-47			X		X		X
“ 1d scarlet “			X				X
“ 1 1/2d red-brown “			X				
“ 2d orange “							X
“ 2 1/2d ultra “			X	X	X		X
“ 3d violet “			X				
“ 6d purple “		X	X	X	X		X
“ 1/- brown “		X	X		X		X
“ 2/6 brown 1939-45			X		X		X
“ 2/6 yellow green “		X					

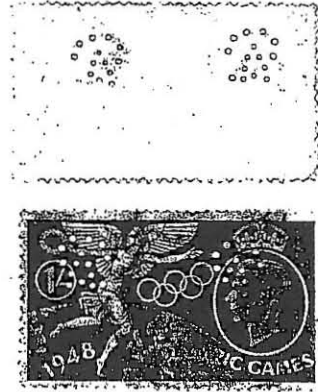
Issue	3760.01	3760.01a	3760.02	3760.03	3760.05	3760.06p	3760.07
" 5/- red "		X	X		X	X	
" 10/- dark blue "					X	X	X
" 10/- ultramarine "		X					
KGVI 1/2d pale green 1941-42		X			X		
" 1d pale scarlet "		X			X		
" 2 1/2d pale ultra "		X			X		
" 3d pale violet "		X			X		
KGVI 1 1/2d pale green 1950-51		X					
" 2d pale red-br. "		X					
" 2 1/2d pale scarlet "		X					
" 4d ultra. "		X					
KGVI 2/6 green 1951		X					
" 5/- red "		X					
" 10/- blue "		X					
" £1 brown "		X					
QEII 1 1/2d green Tudor Crown		X					
" 2d red brown "		X					
" 2 1/2d carmine "		X					
" 3d deep lilac "		X					
" 6d reddish pur. "		X					
" 1/- brown "		X					
" 1/6 grey-blue "		X					
" 2/6 blk-brown "		X					
" 5/- red "		X					
" 10/- blue "		X					
QEII 1d ultra St Edwards Crown	X						
" 3d deep lilac "	X						
" 6d red purple "	X						
" 1/- brown "	X						
" 1/6 grey-blue "	X						
" 2/6 blk-brown "	X						
" 5/- red "	X						
" 10/- blue "	X						
QEII 1/2d orange Multiple Crown	X						
" 1d ultramarine "	X						
" 1 1/2d green "	X						
" 3d deep lilac "	X						
" 6d deep claret "	X						
" 1/- brown "	X						
" 1/3 green "	X						
" 1/6 grey-blue "	X						
" 2/6 blk-brown "	X						
" 5/- red "	X						
" 10/- blue "	X						

A FURTHER CLUE

If you have not already identified the "mystery" pattern earlier in this Bulletin, it may help to know that it is a double strike.

OLYMPIC UPDATE

Peter Simpfendorfer has come across another British 'Olympic' perfin. The SA (monogram) perfin is incomplete though recognisable, as this is a rather distinctive pattern. This perfin was used by the Salvationist Publishing & Supplies Ltd, London.



AUCTION WATCH

Items of perfin interest from auctions/direct sales since the last Bulletin include the following. Thanks to Tony Nobilo, Bryan Magee, Derek Pocock, Ray Bennett and John Amiet for passing on their keen spotting of perfin lots in these auctions. Prices in A\$ unless indicated.

		Est.
a.	NZ "AC&S" perfin on 2d 2 nd sideface (Stirling & Co sale, Oct 00)	NZ \$ 5
b.	NZ "B.E.T.CoLD" on ½d Mt Cook (David Holmes Sale, Oct 00)	NZ \$150
c.	NZ "HB" perfin on 2d purple (David Holmes Sale, Oct 00)	NZ \$ 20
d.	Adv. env of Burroughs, Wellcome & Co Sydney to NZ with 3 stamps Perf "BW&CO" (David Holmes Sale, Oct 00)	sold for NZ \$ 50
e.	1924 cvr Sydney to USA with "A+R" perfin, ident on flap (Premier Philatelic Auctions, Aug 00)	sold for \$ 70
f.	NZ "M&C/Ltd" perfin on 2d orange 1935 Pictorial (Ashford Stamps Auction, Nov 00)	NZ \$ 40
g.	NZ "MGM" on 5/- QV Duty Stamp (eBay, Oct 00)	unsold at US \$9.95
h.	NZ "MGM" on 2/6 QV Duty Stamp (eBay, Oct 00)	unsold at US \$5.00
i.	McCLTD.1 perfin on 5d and 6d NSW Railway Parcel Stamps (eBay, Oct 00)	sold for US \$18.50
j.	1937 NZ High Commissioner cover to USA with 1½d KEVIII perf "NZ" with HC's cachet on front (eBay, Nov 00)	sold for US \$ 25
k.	1942 NZ High Commissioner cover to Switzerland with 3d KGV perf "NZ" and censor tape, no cachet (eBay, Nov 00)	unsold at US \$74.50
l.	2 copies 1/- ANZAC perf NASC.2, VOCO.6 resp. + 2 copies 2d ANZAC perf "ET" and "AA" (eBay, Nov 00)	unsold at US \$ 10
m.	Accum of 1200 Australian KGV 1d red with private perfins (eBay, Nov 00)	sold for US \$ 50
n.	NZ 15/- QV Duty Stamp o/p "DENOTING" with "DUTY PAID" + date perf (Donald Ion Auction, Dec 00)	NZ \$350
o.	1932 Mutual Fire Ins Co of Tasmania receipt with 3 duty stamps perf "RI/Co" (Launceston Phil Soc, Nov 00)	sold for \$ 32
p.	1913 cover & 14 stamps with "RR/&CO" (Launceston Phil Soc, Nov 00)	sold for \$ 16
q.	NZ ½d SSF (x2) with mirror pair of "NZF" (David Holmes Sale Jan 01)	NZ \$ 25
r.	NZ ½d Mt Cook (x2) with mirror pair of "DB/&Co" (David Holmes Sale Jan 01)	NZ \$ 25
s.	NZ 2d Pembroke perf "FB/LTD" (David Holmes Sale Jan 01)	NZ \$ 10
t.	NZ "DB/&Co" on 1d SSF (Stirling & Co Auction Jan 01)	NZ \$ 40
u.	NZ "S&S" on ½d 1900 (Stirling & Co Auction Jan 01)	NZ \$ 30
v.	NZ "S&S/W" on 1d Universal (Stirling & Co Auction Jan 01)	NZ \$ 30
w.	Accum. of 632 private perfins on SA state stamps. Heavy duplication. (Philatelics (Aust) Sale Jan 01)	\$150
x.	1918 cover to USA with Censor marking with 2 x 1d red KGV perf "G O & Co". Identity of H.S. Ward, (formerly trading as Glover, Onians & Co.). (Ashford Stamps Auction Jan 01)	NZ\$150
y.	C.3 perfin of Co-operative Wool & Produce Co on ½d green of NSW. (Jimbo's Direct Sale Jan 01)	\$ 6
z.	Accumulation of 750 private perfins on Aust. Roos and KGV (eBay auction, Jan 01)	sold for US \$120
aa.	Accumulation of 189 private perfins on Aust. State stamps (eBay auction, Jan 01)	sold for US \$40+
ab.	NZ "DB/&CO" (x 2) s/w on pr 1d SSF (Stirling & Co Auction Dec 00)	NZ \$ 80