

SOUTH PACIFIC PERFIN BULLETIN

NO. 53 APRIL 2001

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EDITORIAL

Over the years many collectors accumulate a significant number of very common perfins that have been sorted through and from which more useful items have been withdrawn for sale, exchange or one's collection. In my case this includes mainly G/NSW or VG perfins as these are the most common Australian perfin types. Most of the remainder are very common issues that are not in great demand. Possibly such material may be of interest to either new collectors or perfin collectors who collect these issues with varieties.

If club members would like a free packet of a few dozen different (and very common) G/NSW or VG issues please contact me.

Any ideas in what to do with this type of material ?

David Andersen

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members since the previous issue:

#197 Rod Sell, Harbord NSW

#198 Lindsay Parker, Naracoorte SA

CLUB AUCTION

The catalogue for auction 1/2001 is enclosed with this Bulletin. There are some new vendors again this time, and a good range of material, Australian and overseas countries, covers and loose stamps (singles and bulk). Plenty for everyone's collecting interests. As they say, bid early and confidently!

A DISPLAY FEATURING PERFINS

Congratulations to member David McNamee for being awarded a Gold Medal at the State level in the Social Philately class at Launpex 2000 (November 2000) for his display of "The Tattersall Story". Tattersalls is a popular topic for philatelists because of the long-running dispute George Adams had with postal administrations, particularly in Victoria. David's display included the various "A" perfins used by Tattersalls, and featured many interesting and scarce items.

2001 – A STAMP ODYSSEY

This National level exhibition was held in Invercargill, New Zealand, in March 2001. The Club donated NZ\$75 for a prize to be awarded at the judges' discretion. Robert Samuel reports that the exhibition was very successful, and that the prize was awarded to John Wilson, of Timaru, New Zealand for his exhibit of NZ King George VI stamps which included a page of perfins. John's exhibit received a Large Vermeil award.

Our Club perforator was used to perforate stamps for the exhibition committee to use on souvenir covers, which also provided good publicity for our Club. The exhibition committee has very generously provided souvenir covers for PCNZA members, and these are enclosed with this issue of the Bulletin. Our grateful thanks go to the Southland Philatelic Society and the exhibition committee.

EXCHANGE SOUGHT

Your Secretary is seeking to exchange stamps, not perforated. John is looking for recent and current used issues from New Zealand and Canada, and can offer fine used Australian issues over an extensive period in return. John's postal and email addresses are on page 1.

WORLD-WIDE PERFINS FOR SALE

Member Joe Laura (USA) has many duplicate perfins from many countries around the world. If anyone would like to exchange or buy such items, please contact Joe at 76 Great Hill Drive, West Wareham, MA 02576-1251, USA.

NZ UPDATE

Harold Waite has reported a couple of additional NZ perfins on British stamps to add to the list in the last bulletin.

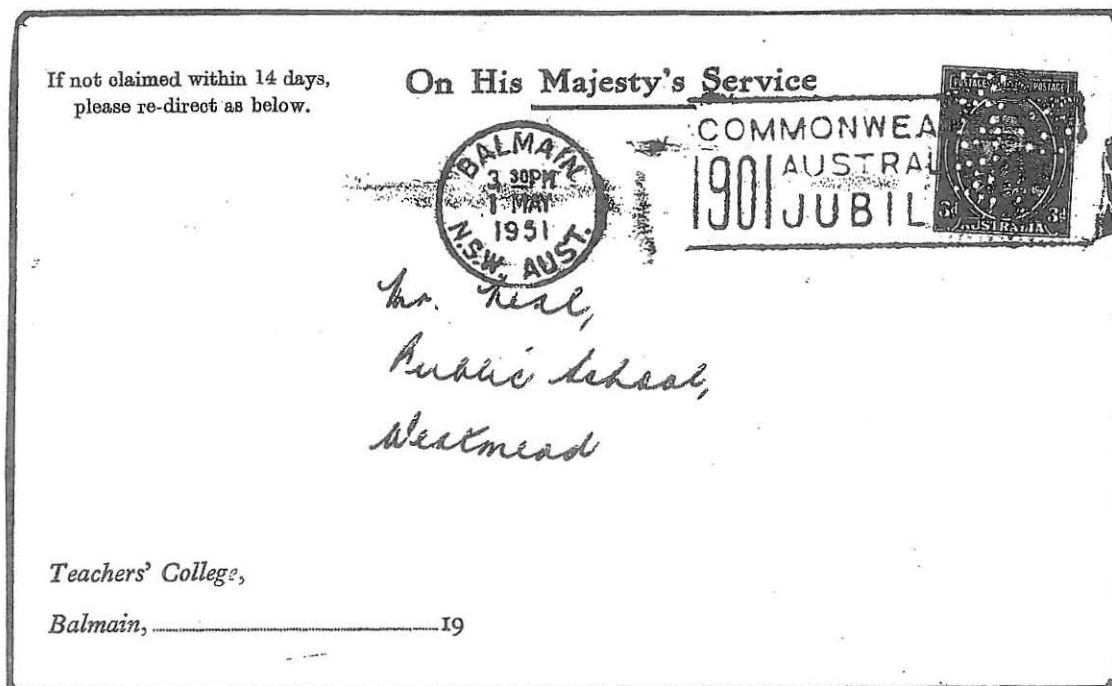
NZ 3760.02 on GV 5/- red Seahorse
 NZ 3760.01a on QEII 4½d Wilding Multiple crown

ADDITION TO LIBRARY

Ray and David Coath have kindly donated to the Club's library (held by your Secretary) a copy of the publication by the Hong Kong Study Circle on Security Markings on Hong Kong stamps (published in 1992). It includes a list of Hong Kong perfins. If anyone is interested in borrowing this, please contact John.

A FEDERATION COVER

Every now and then we can come up with a topical perfin item. So far I have not seen any perfin Federation (100 years since the establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901) items so a cover from the Jubilee year will have to do. The G/NSW cover below bears a postmark COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA JUBILEE 1901 1951.



FURTHER NOTES ON EARLY TASMANIAN "A" PERFINS
(David McNamee, F.R.P.S.L.)

A new early date of July 4, 1899, for the introduction of "A" perfins in Tasmania has been found on a QV Sideface 2d. In addition, study of more examples of early perfins shows that there are *two* distinct sub-types of the first perfin "A" on QV stamps based on the position of the two holes in the second row and an overlap in dates.

Type 1a (G&M types A.3, A.4) consists of 14 holes 11 mm x 8 mm with a single hole cross-bar. It is found only on Queen Victoria Sideface and Tablet issues. Type 1b (a provisional classification until more copies are found) is known on a single QV Sideface 2d of August 25, 1899, having the second row of holes noticeably wider than type 1a. A similar style is found only on the Pictorial Issue, 12 mm high by 9 mm wide, and I assigned this type 1c (G&M type A.1).

Type 1a "parallel row" (G&M type A.4) has the two holes in the second row on the same horizontal line. All perfins are found "normal" with the complete set of 14 holes:

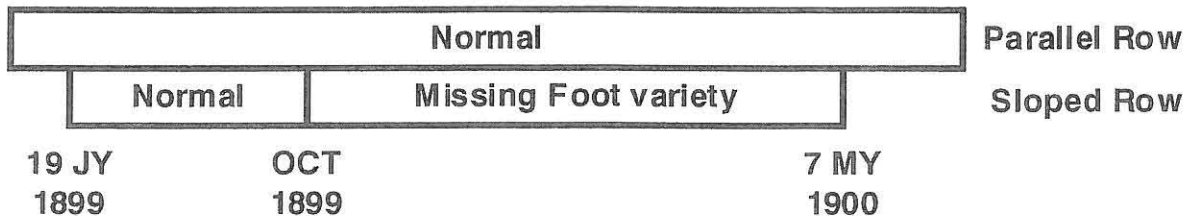
Early Date	July 4, 1899 on 2d QV S/F (new earliest date of all perfin "A")
Late Date	June 7, 1900 on 2-1/2d QV Tablet

Type 1a "sloped left" or "sloped right" (punctured from front or reverse – G&M type A.3) has the two holes not in a horizontal line. These appear in both "normal" and "missing foot" (one hole missing from one leg) varieties.

	<u>Normal (all 14 holes)</u>	<u>Missing Foot (only 13 holes)</u>
Early Date	July 19, 1899 on 1d QV S/F	October 26, 1899 on 1d QV S/F
Late Date	October 16, 1899 on 2d QV S/F	May 7, 1900 on 2d QV S/F

4 JY
1899

7 JE
1900



The conclusions I draw are that at least two separate heads are involved, "parallel" and "sloped" positions on the second row, and that the head with the slope broke a pin on the foot sometime between October 16 and October 26 in 1899. It is still not known whether the device was a multiple head perforator or two different single head perforators. I would be interested to obtain more data on Tasmania perfin "A" types and dates of use to extend this study. Interested collectors can contact me at dmcnamee@aol.com.

[Note added by John Mathews. Type A.3 can also be distinguished from A.4 by its "hip" on the leg with the higher pin in the second row. In my own collection of types A.3 and A.4, there seem to be several minor variations of pin positions, most notably in the vertical position of the pin in the centre of the cross-bar relative to the pins either side. However, the differences are so small that they may be due to slight flexing of the perforating pins not fitting snugly in the base plate holes. The difference between A.3 and A.4, and their parallel periods of usage, suggests that these two formed a 2-head die.]

Since the last article on this series of perfins appeared in this Bulletin, many more usage dates have been seen or reported. Earliest and latest dates known are now:

	Earliest date	Latest date
A.1	25 January 1900	7 July 1900
A.2	7 February 1900	3 December 1908
A.3/A.4	4 July 1899	29 August 1900
A.6	19 August 1901	3 August 1905 (29.3.06 reported ?)
A.7	19 October 1906	26 April 1907
A.8	22 April 1907	14 June 1909

John would be keen to hear of any postmark dates of usage during the following periods:

A.2 - (18 Jan 02 – 7 Mar 03, 5 Apr 02 – 22 Jul 02, 24 Jul 02 – 1 Sep 02, 25 Oct 02 – 18 Dec 02,
1 Dec 06 – 31 Aug 07, 1 Nov 07 – 31 Oct 08)
A.6 - (November 1901, September 1902)
A.8 - (January 1909, March 1909)].

NEW ZEALAND EARLIEST DATES (Robert Samuel)

Mr. S Jones reports a copy of the SBICo perfin postmarked 2 November 1883, and the WT (large) perfin used on 24 July 1889. Avon Stamp Auction Sale no.5 of 23rd February 1901 included an example of the first VCo perfin postmarked 7 December 1901. All of these dates are earlier than I have previously recorded.

Mr. Jones also reports a copy of the J. NATHAM & Co. perfin fiscally used on 11th June 1885. This is only the third example of this perfin of which I have a record.

EARLIEST NEW SOUTH WALES OFFICIAL ?

John Mathews has discovered a copy of GR.1, which was used by the New South Wales Government Railways, with a clear "AU 24, 95" postmark. This date of 24th August 1895 is earlier than the previously recorded early date of 12th September 1895 by a few days making the new discovery the earliest reported New South Wales official perfin.

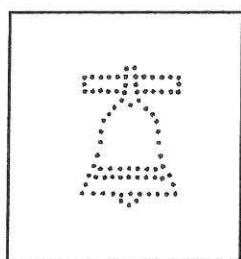
"COMMERCIAL PERFIN OF AUSTRALIA" ON eBay!

During April, a copy of the book appeared as an auction lot on eBay. After some spirited bidding, it finally sold for US\$48.

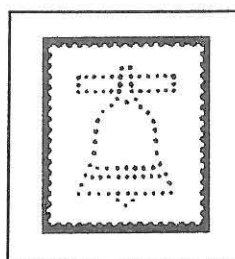
FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS (John Mathews, with help from Roy Gault and Rosemary Smith)

Recently, and not for the first time, I had been in e-discussion about the “Bell” perfin with Roy Gault who is editor of the GB Perfin Society’s New Illustrated Catalogue of Great Britain Perfins. Joseph Sloper’s workbooks show two identical sample strikes of the NSW “Bell” perfin associated with machines 6200 and 6208 made by them in the early 1880s. Roy had noted that there was a difference between those strikes and the example of that pattern he had on a GB stamp, so I sent him my copy on NSW stamp for a direct comparison.

Roy confirmed that there were slight differences between the GB and NSW versions. For example, the “shoulders” of the GB “Bell” are distinctly rounded, whereas those on the NSW version appear straight. Also, the two pins in the centre of the cross-arm are horizontal in the GB version and at a slight slope in the NSW version. The lower rim of the NSW “Bell” shows some pins out of alignment, while the GB “Bell” has a straight lower rim.



The NSW “Bell”
(Symbol.1)



The GB “Bell”
(Des0010.01)

Neither the GB user nor the NSW user was known in 1993 when I turned my attention to this pattern, thinking that such a symbol should be easy to identify. The known postmarks were, respectively, London and Glasgow, and Sydney. The GB pattern was known used from 1882 to 1884 (now known used until at least 1907), while the Sydney one was only known used over a short period in the mid-1880s with dated copies in mid-1887 (now has a known early postmark date of December 1886). My research suggested that the Bell Organ and Piano Company might be a candidate for the user of this pattern, as it was located in both London and Sydney at the right time, and it used a “Bell” symbol as its Trade Mark which closely resembled that perfin pattern. Pursuit of this quest took me via Guelph in Canada on my way to UK in 1993, Guelph being the later “headquarters” of that company and the civic museum there had an abundance of the company’s material. That company was then provisionally considered to be the user in both the GB and Australian perfin catalogues.

In his latest correspondence, Roy mentions that copies of this pattern on GB stamps in the collections of Rosemary Smith and himself both have postmarks “....AR. E” as late as

1907, and Roy's also has '11/B' in a barred oval which Roy identifies as Poplar, London E. This has sent me back to the Directories for London and Sydney.

Poplar is the area immediately north of the River Thames near the present Blackwall Tunnel. One hundred years ago, apart from the dockside area, most of the commercial area was occupied by shopkeepers and small businesses, none of whom was likely to use a perforator, let alone have an office in Sydney. However, one larger business in the northern part of the Poplar district seemed a possible user – R. Bell & Co Ltd, makers of matches and wax vestas. Unfortunately, they were not listed in the Sydney directories of the mid-1880s and their entries in the Australian Trade Marks applications did not show that they used the "Bell" symbol as a trade mark. There was no connection of the Bell Organ and Piano Company with the Poplar area.

After searching nearly all of the larger streets in the Poplar district in the Directory, I found in the dockside area there was a warehouse for David Storer & Sons. The bell tolled! I recalled seeing the "Bell" symbol registered for this company in the Australian Trade Mark records. The London directory entries for David Storer and Sons also illustrate the "Bell" trade mark, and show that their headquarters was in Glasgow in 1880, and moved to London a short time later and was located near Joseph Sloper's office.



They had a warehouse in the wharf area of Poplar in 1880 right through to 1909 and beyond, but there was no city office in 1909, so it seems that the perforator moved to the warehouse before then. The Sydney Directory of 1885 lists this company as merchants and shipowners at 163 Clarence Street "and at Glasgow". The following year, their listing is much more prominent and describes them as Oil & colour merchants and importers at the same address, and at London, Liverpool and Glasgow. The same directory entry continued until the 1892 edition, after which there is no listing for that company in Sydney. These London and Sydney directory entries correspond very closely to the known usage date ranges of the respective "Bell" perfins.

The 1909 London Directory shows "Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark Lim, proprietors" for the company. In Australia, Wilkinson, Heywood and Clark also perforated their stamps, but only in Victoria, after 1909, and using the initials of their company.

(This article has also been submitted to the Editor of the Bulletin of the GB Perfin Society)

THE PERFORATING OF "T" FOR THE TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT (John Mathews)

It has long been agreed that the "T" perfins on State and Commonwealth issues was done in a two-stage process using a line perforator to do the horizontal part with the sheet upright, and the vertical part with the sheet turned sideways. In the current auction, there is a full pane of the 2d green Queen perforated "T" (5x5) which confirms this and allows a detailed study of the pin positions in the line.

The alignments along the rows and down the columns, together with consistency of pin positions, indicates that complete rows and complete columns were perforated with a single strike.

In fact, because there are no holes in the surrounding selvedge, it can be concluded that there were two sections of the line perforator used, or two line perforators – one with 8 groups of 5 pins each at this time to do the cross-bars and one with 10 groups of 5 pins to do the upright sections.

Across the rows from left to right (sheet face up), the holes correspond to pins 1-5, 13-17, 25-29, 36-40, 48-52, 60-64, 71-75, 83-87. From top to bottom, the pin numbers are 1-5, 15-19, 29-33, 44-48, 58-62, 72-76, 86-90, 99-103, 113-117, 127-131. The perforator gauge is 11½.

A similar analysis could be done on blocks, rows, and columns of stamps of different size (for example, Tasmanian State stamps, KGV Heads and commemoratives), and where the numbers of pins in each group is other than 5.

PUBLIC AUCTION PRICES (John Mathews)

Normally, I refrain from commenting publicly about prices paid by others for perfins, as I am a believer in "market forces" for transactions on items such as perfins (or indeed stamps themselves) which have no intrinsic value. My attitude was even stronger in years gone by when our Club was much younger and trading in perfins was in its infancy, both within the Club and through dealers.

For the last 14 years, however, the Club has conducted auctions and exchange circuits, and these have established "agreed" prices for perfin trading amongst Club members. There are, of course, many collectors who do not take part in our auctions and exchange circuits (both Club members and non-members), so I do not know what they might use as a guide to market prices – maybe they blindly follow the "estimates" of auction houses (who might be selling their own material).

Now it worries me considerably to see some of the prices paid at public auction for some perfin material. This concern is based on the temptation of the unscrupulous to put holes in a stamp "second", and have it sell for much more than the stamp itself was worth. We

have already seen this with “VG” punctures, and more recently reports of fake “OS” punctures. By comparison, how often do you see a used stamp catalogued at a significantly higher price than its mint version? If this happened, one would only have to get some “cancelled-to-order” to increase their value!

Recently, I received some “prices realised” from a public auction and was amazed. I will not name the auction house for obvious reasons, but even so, if the buyers recognise the items below please be assured that I am not making a personal attack on any of them (even if such prices are likely to “kill” perfin collecting for everybody else). I have checked our past auction results and exchange book prices, and the “prices realised” below are approximately 500% (5 times!) prices from Club sources.
(All stamps are Australia or Australian States)

	Est (A\$)	Sold for (A\$)
50c Architecture perf ‘T’ used	10	18.50
\$1 Painting perf ‘T’ used	10	12.50
(I have 2 of these in my collection – anyone want one for half this price?)		
Accumulation of 100s of 1d, 3d, and 4d Tas		
Pictorial issue, some on piece, some in blocks and other multiples, most perf ‘T’	100	330
AWF x 4, McK/S/McK x 7, IHC (?2) x 4)	60	105 (\$7 per item!)
Accumulation of Tas Duty Stamps to 5/-,		
DWMLTD x 3, LL/G x 16, RI/CO x 4, RI/CO/LD x 3, plus 2 x triangle punches	75	170 (\$5.50 per item!)
½d & 2d Tas Pictorials perf ‘A’	8	21 (\$10 each)
IHC (.2 probably) on Tas 4d Pictorial	15	23
(check out Australian catalogue prices of this stamp used)		
IHC (.2) on 9d QV sideface	25	56
Tas 3d, 6d and 3 x 9d o/p “Platypus” Duty Stamps (5 in total) perf “AACo” (obviously		
AACO.3, rated “Common” – JM)	30	36 (\$7 each)
KGV 2d o/p on 1½d perf ‘T’ on cover	20	56

(The views expressed in the above article are those of the author, and are in no way an official comment on behalf of the Club or any of the other members of the Club. JM)

GOLD BARS IN AUCTION LOT? (John Mathews)

Since I wrote the above article, several members have reported on an auction lot in a February auction in Melbourne, described as:

“Large box with amazing accumulation of commercial and official perfins completely unsorted. Rare opportunity to enter this increasingly popular field. Ex Liljedahl.”
The lot was estimated at \$200. The floor bidding was reported to have started at \$1600, and the lot eventually sold for \$3400. Was it gold, or perhaps oil, that the bidders saw at the bottom of the box?

Hopefully, the new owner will check the private perfins and pass on any new information.

VOCO – VACUUM OIL COMPANY (Robert Samuel)

I have been shown two New Zealand “Long Type” Queen Victoria stamps perforated with the Australian “VOCO” perfin, recorded in *Commercial Perfins of Australia* (Grant and Mathews) as VOCO.6, and used at the Melbourne Head Office of the Company. The date of use for this perfin is given as 1924-1956.



The existence of this perfin on New Zealand stamps posed something of a problem. My first reaction was to think that, maybe, high value stamps had been perforated at Melbourne or even that a supply of New Zealand stamp was held there and documents requiring payment of New Zealand stamp duty were handled by the Melbourne Head Office. A close examination of the stamps, however, suggested some other explanation.

The two stamps - both cleaned fiscals with evidence of removed pen cancellations - were the 2/- (upright watermark, perf “nearly 12”) and 4/- values (sideways watermark, perf 14) of the “Long Type” Queen Victoria issue. This issue had a very long life, from 1880 until replaced with the “Arms Type” issue in 1931. I would date the 2/- stamp as “circa 1891-95” and the 4/- stamp “circa 1905-10”.

It is unlikely that, even if Melbourne did have a supply of New Zealand stamps, they would come from two different printings so far apart. Even more suspicious is the fact that the stamps pre-date the known use of the perfin by about 15-35 years. A third factor is that larger businesses almost invariably cancelled fiscal stamps with rubber stamps, rather than pen and ink. It all added up to a rather knotty problem. The answer when I found it was obvious. The VOCO.6 punch is still in existence ! I am quite sure that, over the years, many collectors have had access to this punch.

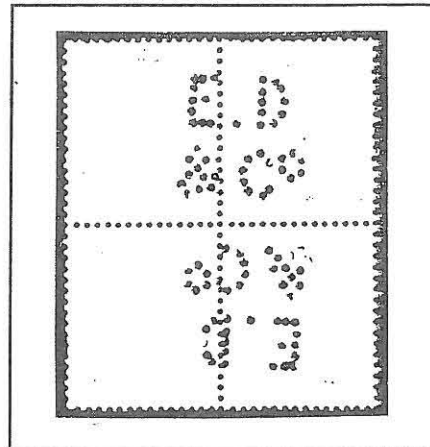
So the most probable answer is that a couple of valueless New Zealand fiscal stamps have been used to “trial” the VOCO punch, and that these stamps have wended their way onto the philatelic market. Their most likely status is “per favour”.

PARTIAL STRIKES – CARELESS OR NOT ? (John Mathews)

Stamp collectors do not like stamps which are damaged, including missing perforations, blunt corners, etc, and in the same way perfin collectors look for complete strikes of perfin patterns. Most perfin collectors would probably support the idea of some penalty being imposed on a careless office boy who did not ensure that the strike of the die fell completely within the boundary of each stamp. Fortunately, attention to such detail seems to have prevailed for most of the period when perforated stamps were used.

However, most of us will have partial strikes in the back of the collection, defying identification. Sometimes it is not even obvious that a pattern is a partial strike if the letters present are individually complete. One pattern which does occur very frequently as partials is ED&CO.2 of the Sydney office of Edwards, Dunlop and Company. Typically, one finds strikes reading “E/&” which are obvious partials, or “D/CO” which may be overlooked as partials.

Recently, one of this company’s covers came up for auction, with a joined pair of 2d red KGVII stamps with a single strike of ED&CO.2 such that the “E/&” was complete on the left stamp, and the “D/CO” complete on the right stamp of the pair. Somewhere behind my eyes, a light went on! On checking my copies of this pattern, I found that all the KGVII definitive issues and (from 1938) similar small size stamps have such “half strikes”, whereas larger stamps have complete strikes on each stamp, as late as one of the 1945 Peace set. One exception is a pair of individual large size 1954 ANARE stamps, one with “E/&” and the other with “D/CO”.



The overall height and width of ED&CO.2 are nearly the same as the width of the KGVII definitives, Zoological series and small commemoratives of that era. So it seems possible that the office boy(s) at Edwards, Dunlop and Company’s Sydney office of the 1940s were not careless after all, but rather following instructions to perforate pairs of stamps with a single strike of the die and were doing so with such precision that the line of perforations separating the stamps regularly fell neatly between the “E” and “D”, and between the “&” and “CO”. In this case, 2 stamps each with half of the pattern could be considered to be a fair sample of the complete strike.

“CANCELLED” PERFIN ON DUTY STAMPS OF VICTORIA

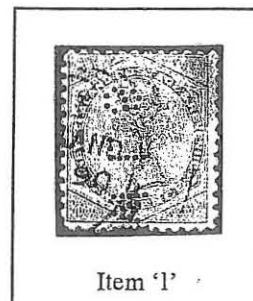
A recent lot offered on the eBay auction site included 10 Duty Stamps of Victoria with the “CANCELLED” perfin at various angles. Some had readable dated cachets which showed, in part, “Land Office”. One included the town name “Mildura”. This would confirm the idea that this was applied after the stamp was affixed to a document.

THE PERFIN QUIZ

The perfin featured in the quiz last issue was a double strike of the pattern K.4 of Kodak Limited. John Tyson (Tasmania) was the first with the correct identification and has received the item courtesy of John Amiet. Richard Smolnicki (New Zealand) provided the first correct from outside Australia, and only a few hours after John, and received a "consolation prize". Thanks to all those who submitted entries.

AUCTION WATCH

Items of perfin interest from auctions/direct sales since the last Bulletin include the following. Thanks to Tony Nobilo, Geoff Legge, John Amiet, David Richards, Arthur Taylor, Frank Hermsen and Bryan Magee for passing on their keen spotting of perfin lots in these auctions. Prices in A\$ unless indicated.



			Est.
a.	B&WPTYLTD.1 on Victorian Railways Parcels Stamp (2d) (eBay, Jan 01)	Sold for	\$ 25
b.	"QUEENSLAND / GOVT RAILYS" on 1/- Queensland Railways parcels stamp (eBay, Jan 01)	Sold for	\$ 400
c.	Tatts mixed franking Tas 5d Tablet and ½d Pictorial both perfin "A" on registered cover to South Africa and returned (Premier Philatelic Auctions)		\$ 1000
d.	"NZ" on KGV OHMS cover from NZ High Commissioner in London (eBay, Feb 01)	Sold for	\$ 34
e.	OHMS cover of Melbourne Botanical Gardens to India 1906 with 1d and ½d both perf "OS" (eBay, Feb 01)	Sold for	\$ 60
f.	Tattersall's cover with 2d green QV perf 'A' (A.3) postmarked SE 18, 1899. Tickets inside. (PHILAS auction, Mar 01)	Sold for	\$ 120
g.	1/4d KGV with VOCO.1 perfin, VGU with Ship Mail Room, Melbourne pmk, 1931. (Tasmanian Stamp Auctions, Apr 01)	Sold for	\$ 20
h.	1937 cover from NZ High Comm., London with 12 x 1½d brown KEVIII (eBay Mar 01)	Sold for	\$ 40
i.	Advertising cover of Henry Berry & Co "Invicta Groceries" with HB&CO perfin (eBay Apr 01)	Sold for	\$ 46
j.	Company cover of A Simpson & Sons with perfin AS&S (eBay Apr 01)	Sold for	\$ 43
k.	Company cover of Goode Durrant & Co with perfin GDCOA (eBay Apr 01)	Sold for	\$.24
l.	NZ "MLS" perfin on 2d SSF with part (Auck?)LAND squared circle cds. (Stirling & Co Sale Apr 01)	Res NZ\$	90
m.	1/4d KGV with NASC perfin, VGU, with Melbourne cds. (Tasmanian Stamp Auctions, Apr 01)	Sold for	\$ 31
n.	1890 WA 3d green p/card PC4 with "J.S/S" perfin below stamp area. Unused. (Premier Philatelic Auctions, Mar 01)	Sold for	\$200
o.	Long type commercial envelope of Patterson, Laing & Bruce, Sydney, used 1902 to Fiji, with 3 stamps perf PL&B (NZ Stamp Auctions, Sale 160, Mar 01)		NZ\$125
p.	Advertising cover of "The Australian Brewers' Journal" used 1909 to USA with 1d QV Perf AL&CO. Melbourne machine cancel (eBay, Apr 01)	Sold for	US\$ 56
q.	"NZL" perfin on GB 10/- QV, Lombard St B.O. cds (J R Mowbray Auction, May 01)		NZ\$175