

# SOUTH PACIFIC PERFIN BULLETIN

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#### EDITOR'S COMMENT

Unfortunately, I don't often get the opportunity to attend major stamp exhibitions and the opportunity to meet other perfin collectors, so I have been looking forward to Pacific Explorer 2005. Hope to meet some of you there.

It will also give you an opportunity to ask about progress on the next edition of "Australian Official Perfins". Well, a little bit of good news on that front is that my home PC has been replaced by a rather faster machine which I hope will help. The old one used to take a couple of minutes to go from one end of one of the large sections to the other ! Rather slow and frustrating. Still that doesn't solve all of the restraints but progress is being made.

However, I would like some assistance fairly soon in scanning some of the illustrations. For example I would like to expand the information about postal stationery and some of these really need to be included as do illustrations of patterns etc. There will also be a few areas I need assistance in compiling information such as the MBW patterns but will get these listed soon.

David Andersen

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#### CORRECTION TO SEQUENTIAL NUMBER

Keen-eyed perfin collectors will no doubt have noticed that the October 2004 edition was inadvertently given the number 66 instead of 67. Please amend your copy.

## NEW MEMBER

We extend a warm welcome to the following new member since the previous issue:

#225 Gordon Monk, Rostrevor South Australia

Although relatively new to perfin collecting, Gordon has recently published (through BSAP) a book on plating the KGV 1d die 2.

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## MORE ON RECENT SUSPICIOUS PERFIN MATERIAL OFFERED AT AUCTION

In addition to the report mentioned in the October 2004 Bulletin about suspicious NSW official perfin material offered at public auction, other reports have been made of similarly dubious material. John Sinfield, a highly respected collector and prominent philatelic judge, has written a detailed article in "Postal Stationery Collector" of November 2004 (pages 76 – 82) about the probable fake NSW Government punctures on Australian postcards.

One of our Club members has reported that he purchased a quantity of "VG" material from the same auction house in June/July, and using the same plating of KGV technique as Neale Scott has discovered that they are fakes. Other official perfins sold through the same auction house included some 'T', 'OS' and 'W/A' perfin material. It is most unfortunate that someone has chosen to inflict this practice on collectors for personal gain. We can only advise people to follow the same caution as being offered in relation to the so-called "Nigerian email scam" – "if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is".

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## MEMBERS' RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS ARTICLE

Member Matt Hancock has provide confirmation that the "AWCO" underprints reported in the October 2004 edition of the Bulletin were indeed applied by Melbourne stamp dealer Arnold Wheeler. Mr Wheeler is said to have applied it to all stamps which went through his approval service. As his approval service was mainly aimed at the "budget" market, that would explain why they are usually seen on cheaper stamps.

Member Geoff Legge has some NZ revenue stamps (QVic and Arms type) with the "AWCO" underprint, which he bought at auction some time ago. This confirms that the use of this underprint was not confined to Australian

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## AUCTIONS

As anticipated, bidding in auction 3/2004 was early and strong, so having the 3 auctions in consecutive quarters was obviously not a strain on buyers! A list of prices realized is enclosed with this Bulletin. The catalogue for auction 1/2005 will be sent with the April 2005 Bulletin.

## PACIFIC EXPLORER 2005

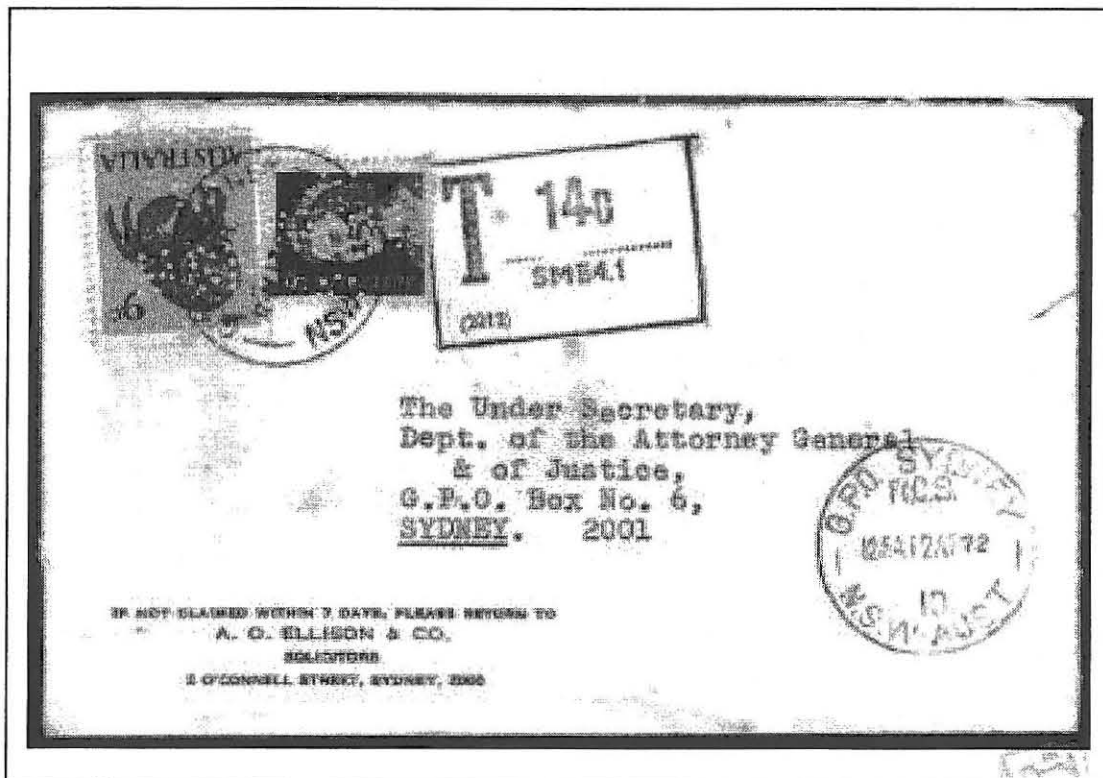
This exhibition will be held from Thursday 21 April to Sunday 24 April 2005 at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre at Darling Harbour in Sydney. The Club has been allocated a meeting time of 10.00 am on Sunday 24 April.

One of our Club members, Steve Zirinsky from New York, has advised that he will have a table at the exhibition and would be delighted to meet other Club members there.

## PERFINS ON A TAXED COVER (John Mathews)

In November, the cover shown was offered (and sold) on eBay. It illustrates an example of the relationship between State and Federal funding, something that citizens of Australia used to see hotly disputed on a regular basis before the Federal allocation to the States was replaced by proportions of the GST.

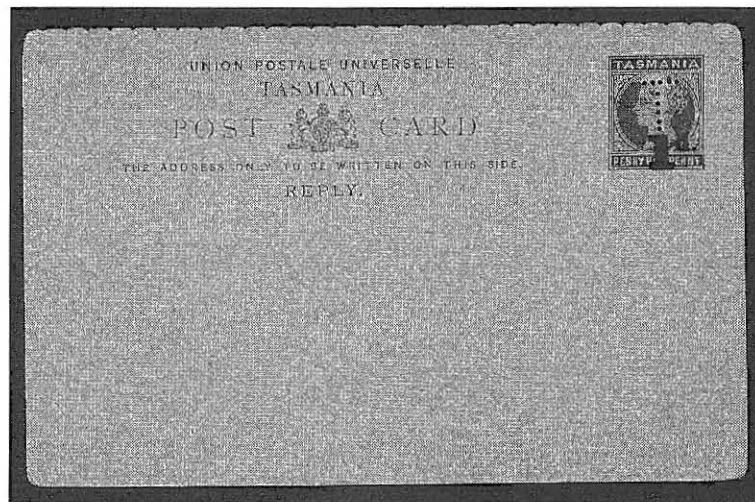
Ironically, the cover had been sent by a firm of solicitors to the NSW State Department of Attorney General & Justice without a stamp! There is a boxed tax marking for 14 cents (double the local rate of postage in 1972) and this amount has been paid by the addressee using two stamps with "G/NSW" perfin. The tax paid has of course gone to the Federal postal department!



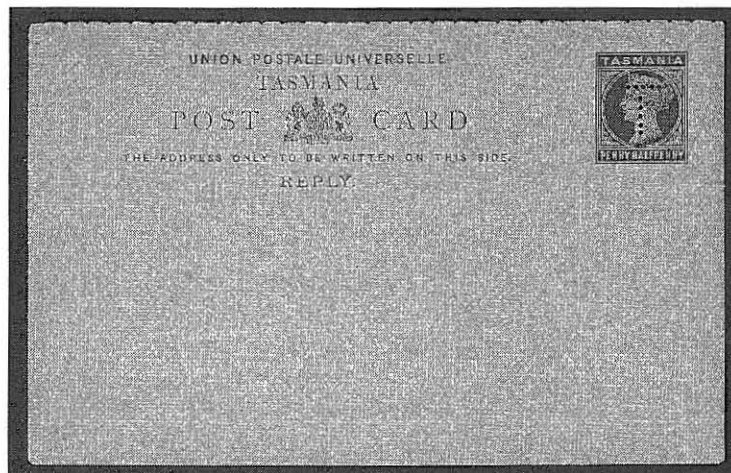
## IMPROBABLE PERF "T" POSTAL STATIONERY ISSUES David McNamee

Over the past year a number of Tasmanian postal stationery items with perf "T" have come to market that had never before been seen in the 102 years since the introduction of perf "T" for use by Tasmanian State Government departments. When the first two items appeared one at a time spaced over several months, excitement overcame caution, especially when the buzz was "possibly unique" or "never seen by us." When four more items showed up on the market, this time marked "as is," it was time to take a hard look at what was happening.

I own the first two items -- one bought at auction, and the other swapped with another collector who had beat me out for the item at auction. The first item is Higgins & Gage 10, the revalued 1d on 1½d H&G 4. This card was issued in 1906. It is plausible that such cards were perforated "T" for State Government use. This particular item is the unused REPLY half. It is plausible that the reply half of such a set might survive unused. In addition, I had earlier possessed a used cut square of this issue perf "T," which gave me a sense of confidence in my new acquisition.



**Figure 1: 1906 Issue Reply Card**



**Figure 2: 1892 Issue Reply Card**

The second item that I acquired by exchange was the companion piece, Higgins & Gage 4, the unoverprinted 1½d Reply card issued in 1892. Again, the piece I had acquired was the unused REPLY half. I confess to being a bit excited to own two such pieces for my perfin collection.

I wondered, however, if I had something really special, or just one copy of a limited few. So I took a short survey among a group of very advanced postal stationery collectors looking for Tasmanian postal stationery perf "T." I also used the 7000+ records in my Tasmania auction lot database. The following summarizes my findings:

<u>Higgins &amp; Gage Numbers</u>	8 mint and used
3b mint	9a mint
3c mint	11 used
3d mint	12 mint
7a mint and used	14 mint and used
7b used	14a mint and used

The total number of perf "T" postal stationery items that exist is quite small. No more than handful of any of these items has survived. Neither of my H&G 4 or 10 cards appeared in any other collections, although the overprinted version, H&G 14 and 14a are reported both mint and used, one set of each.

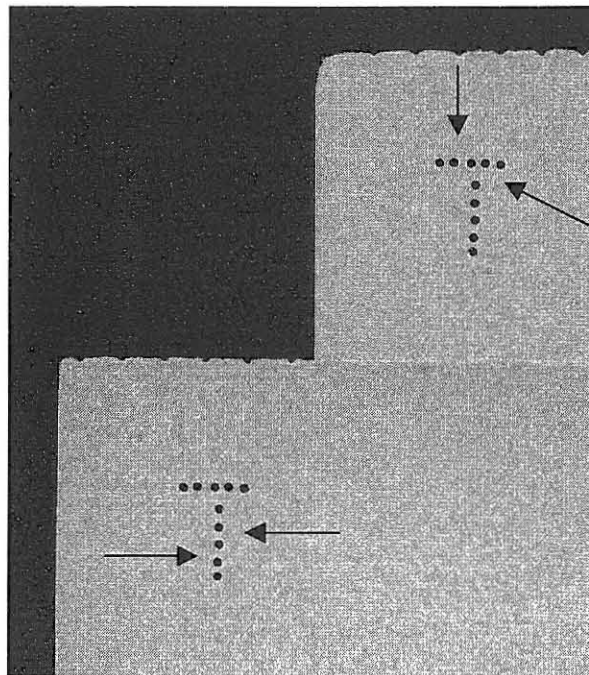
Just when I was getting excited, another four lots of questionable Tasmanian postal stationery appeared at auction, including another Perf "T" on a mint copy of H&G 4. The other three Perf "T" lots were on mint copies of H&G 3c, 9a and an improbable H&G KE2. This last item can be described as PTPO embossed ½d red on a blue wrapper printed *Newspaper Only*. A further handstamp at the top reads **ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE**.

The wrapper attracted attention from a number of collectors, all of whom generally agree on the following line of reasoning:

- KE2 was "Printed to Private Order." Higgins & Gage never found any PTPO wrappers prepared for official use for Tasmania State Government. There are PTPO 1d Savings Bank envelopes properly used in the 1890s, but that is as close as it gets.
- Prior to 1 November 1902, government departments used frank stamps and had no need of postage stamps or embossed stamped postal stationery. Therefore, it is unlikely there would be remainders in Government Department hands in 1902 that needed to be perforated against private use.
- KE2 was available from 1882. Most usage is found prior to the introduction of perf "T" in 1902.
- It seems unnecessary to perforate a wrapper which was already marked for Official Service only.
- The production of perfin "T" for stamps was a two-step process using a single line perforator gauge 12. It is unclear whether a special head was used for stationery (which might cause all pieces to have the exact same pattern), or if it was the line perforator that was used. Used stationery with messages from Government

officials which have been perf "T" is known perfin "T" 5x5, 5x6, 6x6, and 7x7. This argues against a single head hand perforator. If the line perforator was used, the two-step process would make it an amazing feat to get even two sets of holes identical. The two items I own can be held up to the light and all of the holes match. We do not have access to the other four items, but they appear to have the same distinctive pattern.

Our interest now raised, we examined the perforations illustrated by the auction house. On all four pieces, the perf "T" pattern was nearly identical (an equivocation only because we all worked from small scale photos and did not examine the originals). What is more, I noted that the distinctive pattern of these four items matches exactly the pattern on my two new acquisitions. The implications are that either all six pieces (5 different types originally issued years apart) were either created perf "T" at the same time or on the same machine, or both.



**Distinguishing Features:**

1. Gap between horizontal row holes #2 and #3.
2. Gap between horizontal and vertical rows.
3. Bottom two holes on vertical row closer together than the other three.
4. Vertical bar slight bend in the middle.

**Figure 3: Close-up of Perfin Pattern "T" on "Improbable" Postal Stationery**

In my high school algebra class, when  $A=B$  and  $B=C$ , then  $A=C$ . If the perf "T" wrapper is improbable, then all of these items with the same perfin pattern are likewise improbable.

In the midst of all of this, the November 2004 *Postal Stationery Collector* arrived with an article by John Sinfield, "NSW Government Punctures on Australian Postcards Buyer Alert!" Sinfield's article identifies a number of Australian postcards with perf "OS/NSW," which he states that in his judgment are faked. He was able to demonstrate that the damaged (genuine) perfin seems to have miraculously been repaired for a period of time before once again showing the exact same damage to the perfin head. The undamaged perfins on stationery items issued in this middle period are suspect because that scenario seems totally improbable.

Unfortunately, anomalies in the perfin "T" patterns on Tasmanian postal stationery are not as easy to catch. Only by matching the hole placement with an improbable piece can further suspects be identified. During the research for this article, two more pieces came to light that were identified by two colleagues perusing the Commonwealth era postal stationery in recent auctions.

The two additional stationery items from the Commonwealth era have the same distinctive perf "T" characteristics as the suspected Tasmanian items. These two items are used PTPO envelopes from the Hobart Savings Bank to branches of its counterpart in Victoria in 1931 and 1932, both carrying the improbable perf "T" pattern. The way PTPO stationery is created makes it highly unlikely any of it was ever punctured for official use -- there would be no reason to further protect preprinted preaddressed business envelopes, and the extra steps that would be required would not be tolerated by the staunchest bureaucrat.

The 1d PTPO envelope used in 1931 has been uprated by the addition of a ½d KGV adhesive stamp. The embossed stamp has been punctured perfin "T," but the adhesive stamp has not. The 2d PTPO envelope used in 1932 was perf "T" without any additional adhesive. The usage of the same distinctive pattern from 1902 into the 1930s, which had never before been seen and on stationery which never would have been punctured, is the type of error usually associated with fakes. To be fair, I have not examined the originals, just the published illustrations using a magnifier. But I am satisfied that these two items are the same pattern as the improbable wrapper and the five cards of Tasmanian postal stationery.

In his article, Sinfield suggests that buyers of perfin official stationery from any State or the Commonwealth period-- at least until the suspect material on offer has been validated or cleaned out of the system -- should avoid mint stationery with no other printing. If the piece has been postally used by a government department and contains a manuscript or preprinted message from a government official, it is more likely to be genuine and collectible, with the exception of PTPO items. That seems to be prudent advice. Otherwise, the piece could wind up in your cinderella collection as one more bit of "improbable" perf "T" postal stationery.

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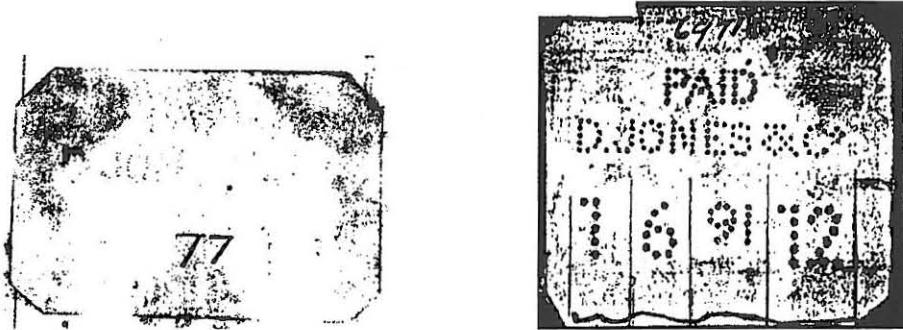
#### eBay AUCTION PRICES

"Market forces" (more buyers for the available material) seem to be pushing prices for perfins steadily higher, judging from some recent prices seen on eBay. While dealers regard auction results as a barometer by which to set their asking prices, it does of course take only two very keen bidders to push the price of a particular lot well beyond what the majority of collectors consider reasonable for the material. The possible consequence of this happening consistently is that the majority of collectors might feel that they have no chance of acquiring extra material for their collections, and may give up collecting. Eventually this would cause the price pendulum to swing the other way perhaps, but in the meantime it may also mean that Clubs such as ours might feel the effect as a loss of membership. Let us hope that sanity prevails, and that perfin prices do not follow the trend in oil prices!

## DAVID JONES' PERFORATORS (John Mathews)

A recent circuit book contained a strike of a perforator of David Jones & Co which had not previously been recorded. By coincidence, shortly after I saw this one, member David Coath sent me a photocopy of another strike of the same style.

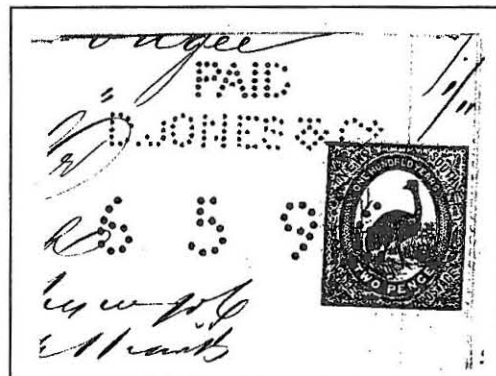
David Jones & Co had long been a customer of Joseph Sloper & Co of London before they bought their first stamp perforator from that company. The first entry for David Jones I found in Sloper's Workshop Impression Books was serial number 5110, a "No. 2 Machine, J.S.& Co. principle with set of dies with ordinary year die". No date of manufacture is recorded at that period, but from the sample strike, it must have been in 1877. The illustration shown is not very clear but the style of the pattern is identical to the 1891 machine. Usually these perforators came with a set of dies for the days (1 - 3 and 0 - 9) and for the months (1 - 12), and with a single die for the current/next year. Part of Sloper's on-going business was then generated by customers having to order subsequent year dies! Such perforators were in common use around the world to mark commercial documents in a way that could not be altered or removed.



The next strike of a David Jones' perforator was serial number 6971 in 1891. No description of this device was recorded in the Impression Book, no doubt because devices of such a style were in such common demand that all the staff knew what sort of device it would have been from the pattern.

I found no impression in the company books which corresponds to the 6 May 1896 strike which was offered in the Club circuit book. The style of the "PAID / D. JONES & C<sup>o</sup>" is identical to the 1891 device so one would be justified in assuming that it was a Sloper perforator.

But why no record of it in the Workshop Impression books? One possibility, which I favour, is that the staff at David Jones used their imagination and initiative and realized that they did not have to keep ordering year dies for the 1891 device, as was the normal practice which gave Slopers much of their on-going business! For example, for the strike shown, they would

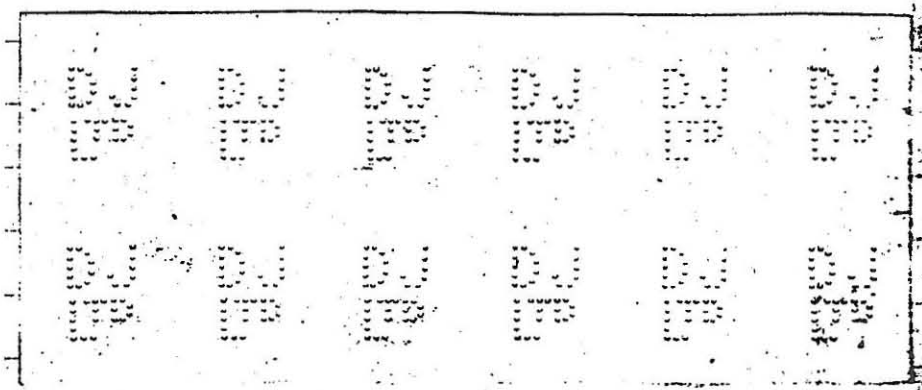




have had a '6' as a day digit and another as a month digit in the original set, and could make up such a date in day/month/year order from the dies they had! Altogether, they would have had 3 each of digits 1 and 2 (plus a '12'), 2 each of '3' to '9' (cannot have day '33'), probably only one '0' (for days 10, 20 and 30), and a '10' and '11'. The only dates they could not make from their day and month dies would have been those with four '1's or four '2's (such as 11.1.01), 3 of digits '3' to '9' (such as 9.1.99), or two zeroes (such as 10.6.05). In these cases they probably did their perforating the following day instead!

David Coath's example has date 1.6.92 with the same size numerals as the above 1896 example. This example is from the year immediately following the manufacture of the perforator with its original year die. It is also on a piece of document and cancels a joined pair of 1d NSW 1888 series stamps.

David Jones & Co started using stamp perforators shortly after it became a public company and changed its name to David Jones Limited (in 1906). The first of David Jones' stamp perforators was serial number 60832 (Sloper & Co changed their numbering system in 1905 after reaching nearly 10,000 in the earlier system. It is not known why they chose to add a '5' digit in front rather than let the count tick over to 10,000!). This perforator was delivered, presumably to David Jones' London office, on 23 March 1908. It is described as "one small bridge screwfly machine". With 12 punch heads, it would have taken considerable pressure to penetrate even a single thickness of paper and a lever-operated device would have been considered inappropriate. Hence the device was a miniature version of what we have probably all seen as old book presses. The pattern's catalogue reference number is DJLTD.2.



Strike of perforator DJLTD.2 (serial number 60832) from Sloper's Workshop Impression Books

This machine was replaced by a 2-rows-by-3 perforator which was made by Joseph Sloper & Co in 1949 (serial number 68941) and which is a lever-style device. This last stamp perforator, DJLTD.1, has recorded use to 1976, at which time the company again had changed its name. For those who are wondering about the respective catalogue reference numbers not being in chronological order, the only discernible difference between the dies of the two devices is in the number of holes in the small 'D' – the earlier one has two holes in the right side of this 'D' whereas the later one had only one. I think we decided to designate them as .2 and .1 respectively on that basis!

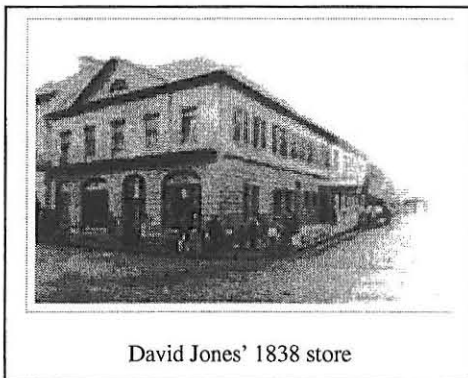
## DAVID JONES LIMITED (John Mathews)

David Jones was the son of a Welsh farmer, but he did not want to be a farmer. Instead, he became apprenticed to a grocer and soon afterwards went to London where he first thought about migrating to the Colonies. He became a partner with a Mr. Charles Appleton who had business interests in Sydney and Hobart, and this influenced David further to emigrate.

He arrived in Hobart in 1834, but soon afterwards moved to Sydney and became a partner in an Appleton store. Following a disagreement, David Jones decided to go his own way and in May 1838 opened his first store in George Street on the corner with Barrack Street, opposite the General Post Office, under the name "D. Jones & Co.". The company continued to trade from this site until 1986!



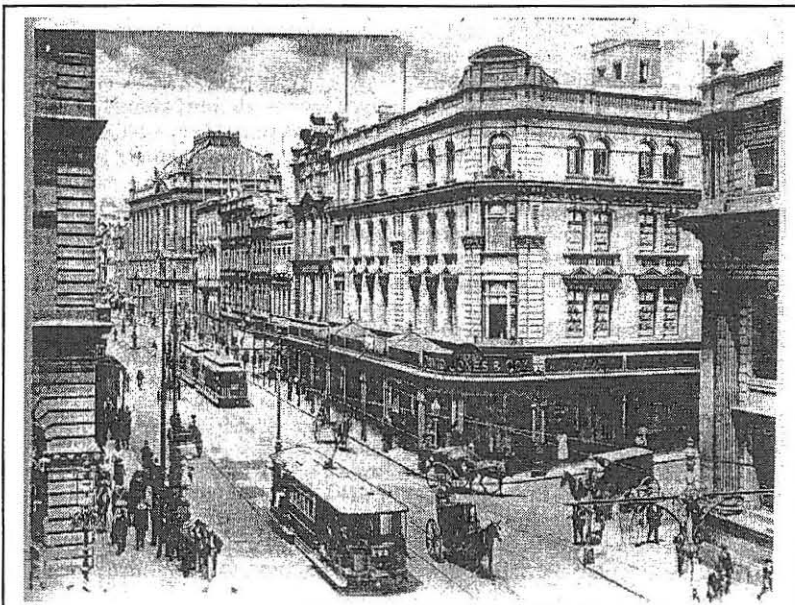
David Jones



David Jones' 1838 store

By 1846, the company had outgrown the original premises and he leased adjoining premises as well. In 1877, these were demolished and replaced by a 4-storey building. His trade was in all aspects of home-making supplies and clothing. The firm's motto was "David Jones for Service" and they introduced a "money-back-if-not-satisfied" policy.

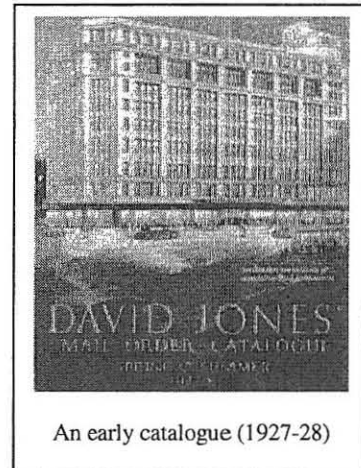
In 1853, David Jones decided to retire, but after that the business began to fail, so he came out of retirement and worked with his son Edward Lloyd Jones to restore the business to its former success. David Jones died in 1873 but Edward carried on in charge of the business. He introduced the concept of a "department store".



David Jones' George Street store in the early 1900s

In 1887, the George Street store was rebuilt and this included the city's first hydraulic lift. The company introduced mail-order catalogues in 1890. Orders over £2 were delivered freight-free to the nearest railway station. In 1920, they started deliveries to country areas with a plane which had "David Jones – Sydney" in large letters on the side.

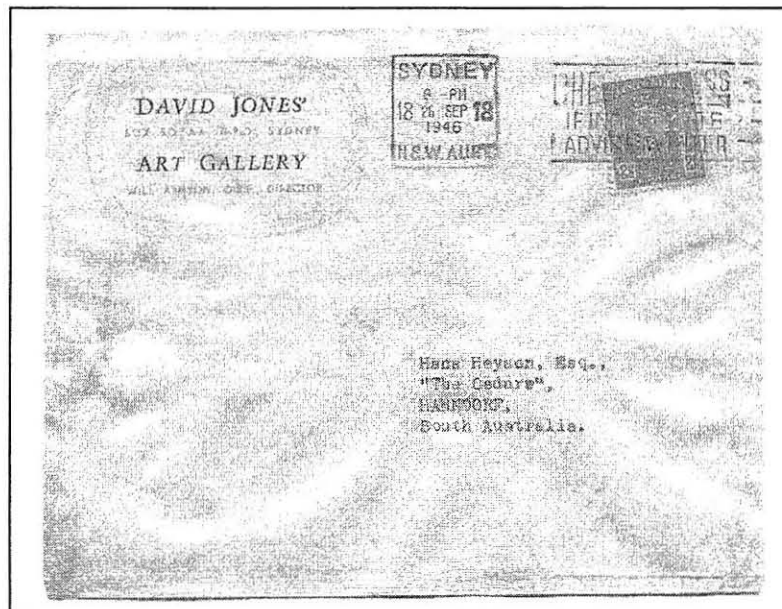
On the death of Edward Lloyd Jones in a railway accident in 1894, the other senior partners were joined by Edward junior. In 1906, the company became a limited liability company under the name of "David Jones Limited", and Edward Lloyd Jones' other son, Charles Lloyd Jones joined the board. Later, Charles Lloyd Jones became chairman.



An early catalogue (1927-28)

David Jones Limited purchased land on Market Street, between Castlereagh and Elizabeth Streets, in 1920 and the new Elizabeth Street store opened on this site in 1927. It became the flagship of the company. The Market Street store was built on the diagonally-opposite corner of Market and Castlereagh Streets in the 1940s and was opened in 1938.

After the 1939-1945 war, David Jones Limited kept the public up to date with overseas trends in fashion, and also sponsored art and other cultural activities. The cover shown is addressed to renowned South Australian artist Hans Heysen. The stamp has perfin DJLTD.2.



David Jones also had an extensive cafeteria which achieved some notable history of its own. In 1927, when the American Fleet arrived on an official visit, the David Jones Ltd cafeteria was in charge of all banquets in the Sydney Town Hall. In 1954, when Queen Elizabeth II became the first reigning British monarch to visit Australia, the Great Restaurant on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor of David Jones' Elizabeth Street store was chosen as the venue for a State banquet in her honour.

## ANOTHER PERFIN ON RAILWAY PARCELS STAMP

Member Dave Elsmore has reported a lovely perfin item – a 3d Tasmanian Government Railways Parcels Stamp with “Launceston” station name with perfin DWMLTD.2. Although this perfin had previously been reported on a Tasmanian Railways Parcels Stamp, this one is on the rare first issue “Garratt” black issued in December 1917 and only in use for less than 12 months.

Train enthusiasts will no doubt remember the awesome sight of these powerful engines with their distinctive twin tenders front and back in a single unit.



## AUCTION WATCH

Items of perfin interest from auctions/direct sales since the last Bulletin include the following. Thanks to Tony Nobilo for passing on his spotting of perfin lots in auctions. Prices in A\$ unless indicated.

	Est.
a. Selection of 6 Roos perfin Large “OS”, mint (2/- heavy hinge) (Mowbray (NZ) auction, Nov 04)	NZ \$1,250
b. GB censor cover 1944 to International Red Cross in Switzerland with 3d KGVI perfin “NZ”. (eBay, Nov 04)	sold for US \$ 27
c. Set of 15 CTO Victorian stamps to £2 perfin “OS” (eBay, Nov 04)	sold for \$500
d. £1 Robes perfin “G/NSW”, GU (eBay, Nov 04)	sold for \$ 32
e. 2 receipts of Royal Insurance Co Ltd, Hobart, each with “Platypus” Duty Stamp perfin “RICO” (eBay, Nov 04)	sold for \$ 21
f. 1929 5/- Roo perfin “OS”, FU. (eBay, Nov 04)	sold for \$ 35
g. Victoria 1901 ½d green complete sheet of 240 perfin “OS”. MUH. (Mowbray (NZ) auction, Dec 04)	NZ \$475
h. 1907 Queensland postcard with 1d QV perfin tied by Toowoomba pmk. (Holmes (NZ) Sale, Dec 04)	NZ \$ 20
i. 5/- Roo with perfin F.1 (or .2?), parcel cancel, blunt cnr. (eBay, Dec 04)	unsold at \$ 14
j. 1941 OHMS cover from NZ High Commissioner, London, to USA with 2 ½ d KGVI perfin “NZ”. (eBay, Jan 05)	sold for US \$ 20
k. Advertising cover of Law, Somner & Co with perfin LS&CO.1. (Prestige Philately sale, Jan 05)	sold for \$230
l. Imprinted envelope of Hill, Clark & Co with perfin HC&CO.1 through stamp image. (Prestige Philately sale, Jan 05)	sold for \$125
m. Victoria KEVII £1 perfin “OS”, CTO. (eBay, Jan 05)	sold for US \$ 88
n. Victoria KEVII £2 perfin “OS”, CTO. (eBay, Jan 05)	sold for US \$ 85
o. Proving cover of the Gordon Technical College, Geelong, with perfin GTC.1. (An article on this will appear in the next Bulletin - jhm) (eBay, Jan 05)	sold for \$150
p. Pre-printed 1d postal card of The Australian Museum, Sydney, with perfin “OS/NSW” through stamp image, plus addl. ½d QV perfin “OS/NSW” affixed, to USA (eBay, Jan 05)	sold for US \$130
q. NZ 1898 8d perfin “R.G./W”. (eBay, Jan 05)	sold for US \$ 17
r. Collectioun of 1000+ “OS” perfins, inc 150+ on Roos to 2/- brown (eBay, Jan 05)	sold for US \$286
s. NZ “FB/LD” on 1900 2d used. (Stirling & Co auction, Jan 05)	NZ \$ 12
t. Air France FFC 22/4/1936 Saigon – Marseilles with 5c & 2 x 20c BI (Bank of Indochina) perfins. (Stirling & Co auction, Jan 05)	NZ \$150