

SOUTH PACIFIC PERFIN BULLETIN

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EDITOR'S COMMENT

Unfortunately once again the most newsworthy story in relation to Australian perfins is to do with the sale of forgeries both on ebay and from a few professional dealers. It is likely that many more forgeries of a wide range of official perfins will be released onto the market as there is at least one current forger and ebay seems unable to deal with the issue in a satisfactory manner. There are of course a number of things that we can do. First and most obvious is to minimize the incentive for those selling the forgeries and not to buy them. Unfortunately, it is the substantial prices that many are willing to pay (hardly surprisingly) for scarce perfins that has led to this problem appearing. Second, if you are going to pay substantial prices for any official perfins, it is essential to learn how to tell if an item is a forgery.

In the longer run it may be safer to concentrate collecting on areas that are not affected by the forgery problem at the moment and, when doing so, acting in a responsible manner in relation to what you are willing to pay for an item and thereby not creating the incentive for the forgers to get busy. My own preference is to spend time collecting/researching what I am collecting rather than spending a significant amount of time and energy trying to determine if it is genuine. A couple of suggestions appear elsewhere in this Bulletin of some areas that appear to be safe at the moment.

It seems likely that any area where the price of an item can be greatly increased by adding a perfin will in due course attract forgery. In this category I would have to include at present Australian customs duty stamps with perfins and railway stamps with perfins. In both of these cases the value of a common item can be very much increased by adding a perfin. The Victorian service punctures are also a bit of a concern as the forger doesn't even need to match an existing pattern. Your comments would be appreciated.

David Andersen

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members who have joined since the previous issue:

- #272 Jack Wansborough, Auckland, New Zealand
 - #273 Bob Andrews, Geraldine, New Zealand
 - #274 David Hopper, Toronto, Canada
-

CLUB MEETING, CANBERRA STAMPSHOW 2012

Canberra StampShow 2012 will be held from Friday 16 March to Sunday 18 March 2012 at the Hellenic Club, Woden, (Canberra), A.C.T. The StampShow committee have allocated a meeting room for a meeting of PCNZA members and visitors at 12 noon, Saturday 17 March. We hope to see many members able to attend – bring any interesting perfin items along to “show and tell”.

ELECTION OF OFFICE-BEARERS 2012

As only one nominee has been put forward for each of the Club’s Council positions, a ballot will not be necessary for this year’s elections and the nominations are expected to be ratified at the Club meeting in March. Thanks to those who submitted nomination forms.

AUSTRALIAN EXCHANGE CIRCUIT MANAGER

We are pleased to announce that Mark Saxby has accepted nomination for this position. Mark has been a member of PCNZA since 1996, and has been on the circuit distribution list for several years. This is very welcome news for those who use the Australian Circuit. Mark will receive the circuit material in March.

AUCTION 2/2011

This auction had many more lots than the last couple of auctions, and the material has again proved to be popular with the bidders. Results are enclosed with this Bulletin. Unsold lots are available at reserve – first in will win.

ARTICLES NEEDED FOR THE BULLETIN

Articles of all types are needed for the next Bulletin which will be sent out in April 2012. For many years we have been able to issue a quarterly 12 page Bulletin and it would be a pity not to continue to do so. Covers of interest, articles and news items are always welcome. We can also publish requests for perfin material that you would like to purchase or exchange.

Please contact the editor – contact details on the front page.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION

In accordance with the Club's Constitution, notice is given of the following motion to amend the Club's Constitution :

- “That the Constitution of the Perfin Club of New Zealand and Australia be amended as follows:
1. Under ‘Section VIII: Officers’, paragraph 15.
 - a. Add new sub-paragraph
‘(h) Auctioneer.’
 - b. Delete ‘and’ from end of sub-paragraph (f), and replace ‘.’ with ‘; and’ at end of sub-paragraph (g).
 2. Under ‘Section XI: Finance’ and all following sections.
 - a. Renumber paragraphs 32 to 49 inclusive to be numbers 34 to 51 respectively.
 3. Under ‘Section Section X: Duties of Officers’, insert after paragraph 31 new paragraphs as follows:
 - a. ‘32. The Auctioneer shall be responsible for the conduct of postal auctions for Club members. It is desirable that at least two postal auctions per year be conducted. Catalogues for these auctions should be distributed to members with the Club's Bulletin. Bids shall only be accepted from financial Club members. Commission on sales shall be at a rate set by the Council. There shall be no buyer's commission but buyers shall pay for postage of lots won by them, including registration and insurance as appropriate.’
 - b. ‘33. (Spare)’ “

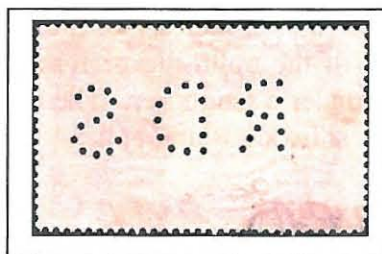
This motion will be put to the meeting of Club members on March 17, 2012. If you are unable to attend that meeting, you are strongly urged to submit a vote to the Secretary by Post or email by no later than 3 March 2012. In accordance with the Club Constitution, there need to be no fewer than 20 votes in total, and votes from at least two Australian States and/or New Zealand.

The purpose of this motion is to make the auctioneer an office bearer of the Club as is the case in the GB Perfin Society, US Perfins Club, etc.

The purpose of the “spare” paragraph 33 is to allow for the addition of another office-bearer in the future (e.g. a webmaster) without having to renumber subsequent paragraphs.

KUT - RDS PATTERN

Can anyone help with information about this RDS pattern from Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika which is not listed in the old catalogue “Perfins of Africa”.



THE DARK SIDE OF PERFINS – FAKES (John Mathews)

After the publication of “Commercial Perfins of Australia”, three consequences were seen. First, many collectors of Australian perfins “came out of the closet”. Second, stamp dealers realised that perfins were collectable, no longer relegated them to the waste paper basket, but put them in the back of stock-books usually with prices on them. Third, some people saw this as an opportunity to produce and sell these items. Just as it is easy to convert a poor quality “mint” stamp into a used copy (sometimes rare in this format?), it is also easy to convert a low value (used) stamp into a “rare” perfin. The temptation to do this is increased by some high prices paid for “rare” perfins.

Having seen several thousand perfins prior to the publication of “Commercial Perfins of Australia”, I looked very carefully at any subsequent reports of “new” perfin discoveries which appeared to be from “customised” perforators. Of course, it is difficult to assess “new” Victorian Service Punctures as possible fakes because of their nature, and the only real cause for doubt among these is when a completely new letter combination comes to light.

I have classed some “new” customised perfin patterns reported on Australian stamps as “status doubtful”. Examples are “A&E/TCL” (a known GB Perfin), “B&K” (on stamps of Malaya with known user in Malaya) and “McN/Co”; for none of these letter combinations can companies with those initials be found in Australian Post Office Directories. As there are only isolated examples of these, it is possible that they were done in error, or as a mischievous “prank”.

Australian official perfins have been collectable for a much longer time, and the Commonwealth “OS” perfins have been included in various catalogues for many years.

Several years ago, some “rare”, “new” “VG” perfins started to come onto the market. Fortunately, the perpetrators of this made some fundamental mistakes such as – “VG” perfins on stamps post-marked in other States; “VG” patterns (apparently from a genuine old multi-die perforating head) on plated stamps from positions in the rows from the sheets which did not match the positions of the “VG” die, etc. Excellent research work on these was done and published by a PCNZA member to expose this scam. However, many of these items no doubt found their way into collections and bulk accumulations belonging to those who were unaware of the scam and will come to light in future years with no hint of their bogus nature.

More recently, the Internet has provided a means for trading which affords a degree of anonymity for vendors and buyers. CAVEAT EMPTOR! For some time now, there have been many Australian “OS” and “OS/NSW” perfins offered which have aroused suspicion, and much good research is being done on these. However, this is much more difficult than in the case of the “VG” scam because the differences between the various dies of the multi-die perforating heads are extremely small, and difficult to detect even under a magnifier. The advent of more sophisticated computer scanning and graphics software is aiding the detection of these scam items.

Even with sophisticated technology now available to produce such bogus items, humans are still prone to make mistakes which defy logic, and so suspicions arise in the mind of the beholder.

Recently, an eBay vendor (a well-known Melbourne stamp dealer) was caught out selling bogus Australian official perfin. Probably his biggest logical “mistake” was to use his well-known trading name as his user name on eBay! After much exposure of many of his items on a well-known stamps blog site, he finally admitted to the scam, and suffered a consequent blow to his professional reputation, although he may still be trading.

Other suspicious official perfin items on eBay are coming out of south-west Sydney, although sometimes “item location” is said to be “Queensland”. Again, the human frailty of making logical mistakes has caught this perpetrator out. I recently received a report from a PCNZA member to say that he had asked an eBay vendor to check the watermark of a Kangaroo issue with “OS/NSW” Perfin, saying that if the watermark as described on eBay was correct then the perfin must be a fake. The vendor’s response was “MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS”!! The vendor’s user name is one of the ones on the diagrams below.

This vendor had been under suspicion, and his items monitored, for some time. Another recent mis-match of his was an “OS” with 12-hole ‘S’ on a stamp which had only a short issue period well before the short usage period of that “OS” type.

But it has been pointed out to me that this vendor has recently really “shot himself in the foot” by offering on eBay 5 Kangaroo stamps with “OS” perfins which had been sold previously on eBay without perfins! The “before” and “after” eBay images are shown below (these images may not be exact size).





and later,



I will leave it to the reader to come to his/her own conclusion about these items. These items also suggest that the perpetrator uses more than one user name to stay one step ahead of the eBay process to eliminating such scammers. A well-known Sydney stamp dealer has been monitoring this vendor for some time, and has compiled a list of over 50 different user names used by this same person and has been able to tie several of these to the same Post Office box in Padstow, New South Wales (a southwest Sydney suburb). The above three user names have been linked by this list to this person. Another characteristic of this scammer's listed items are that they are "private listings" so no bidders' coded identities are revealed on the web page.

So, what can the average collector do to avoid becoming a victim of such scams? Would you buy from a stranger in a back alley who says "Psst, do you want to buy a cheap Cartier watch?". Of course not. Would you buy, from a transient vendor in a local market, perfume or clothing with those top brand names at market "bargain" prices? Presumably not. If you are looking at a "new" perfin discovery, or even a perfin item rarely seen, the best advice would probably be to ask around and get a second opinion before taking the risk.

STAMPBOARDS

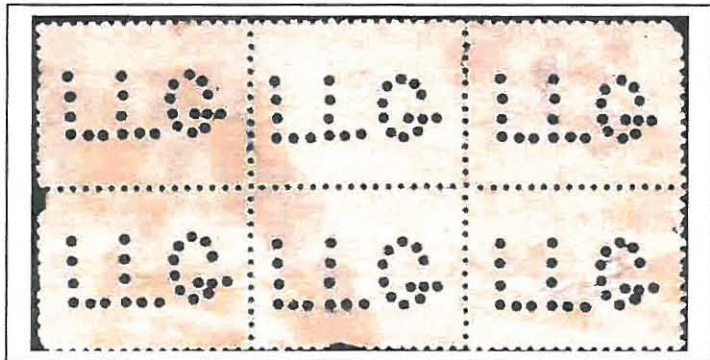
"Stampboards" is a postage stamp chat board and stamp bulletin forum set up by Glen Stephens, an Australian dealer. The group is prominent in the fight against forgeries on eBay including perfins. It is well worth a visit at <http://www.stampboards.com/>

LLG.2 and LLG.6 – A 4-HEAD PERFORATOR (John Mathews)

The “Handbook of Australian Private Perfin’s” (HAPP) lists two very similar perfin patterns, LLG.2 and LLG.6, the separate listings being based on the slight difference in height of the letters for these two “customised” patterns. HAPP also records that a second “type” of LLG.2 had been seen (same height, but very small differences in pin positions).

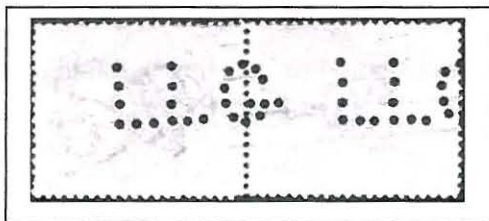
In SPPB, January 2007, page 9, David Coath reported a study of these patterns which confirmed the two types of LLG.2, and added a second type of LLG.6.

Now, some stamp multiples have been seen which show that one perforator produced all these types of both LLG.2 and LLG.6, and had at least 4 heads (2x2). The best item is the block of 6 (6d blue Roo) consisting of 3 rows each of 2 stamps (shown sideways). The pair is of 2d orange KGV. The HAPP image for LLG.2 is strike D, and that for LLG.6 is E. The other types appear to be strike F for David’s other LLG.2, and strike C for his second LLG.6.



A	C	E
B	D	F

(stamps are sideways)



The vertical shift from strike A to strike B is 22.5 mm, which is the same as the width of the Kangaroo issue. There are several minor differences between A and B, notably in the appearance in the cross-bar of the ‘G’ (almost straight in A and concave upwards in B), and the bigger separation between

holes in the top-left portion of the ‘G’ in A (the image shown in HAPP). This means that the two rows A-C-E and B-D-F are not duplicates of each other. Likewise, the same sort of differences between A and C and between B and D show that the columns A-B and C-D are not duplicates of each other. It can also be seen that A-B matches E-F, so there are only two columns of heads and this block of 4 is either A-C/B-D or C-E/D-F, with a horizontal shift of 27mm and 30 mm respectively (the stamp height is 28mm).

The strikes on the joined pair shown above match C and E, and the amount of space to the left on this pair shows that the block must be C-E/D-F, rather than A-C/B-D.

From this block of 6, it is not possible to determine whether there are more than 2 rows of heads on this perforator. If anyone has a pair (or bigger multiple with strikes vertically above each other), with a strike of type C below one of type D (or one of type E below one of type F), this would show that there are only 2 rows. Otherwise, if type C is not immediately below type D, additional rows are indicated.

SILVERTON TRAMWAY COMPANY (John Mathews)

The Silverton Tramway Company was formed in 1886 to build a railway connecting the mining town of Silverton, near Broken Hill, in far western New South Wales to the South Australian border town of Cockburn. It was opened in 1888 and linked up with the South Australian railway network at Cockburn, and was therefore built with the standard South Australian narrow gauge instead of the New South Wales standard gauge. It also terminated in Broken Hill at a different station to that used by the New South Wales railway. This 35-mile (56 kilometre) link enabled ore from the mines in the Silverton area to be taken to Port Pirie in South Australia where it was smelted and from where the products could be shipped overseas.

In 1949, the Commonwealth acquired this line from the Silverton Tramway Company (which still operated services on it) as part of the Trans-Australian Railway from Sydney to Perth and it was converted to the standard gauge. In 1970, the company's business was lost to the South Australian Railways.

In the Philatelics (Australia) auction of 15 December 2011, lot 730 was a group of 1887 parcels stamps of the Silverton Tramway Company which sold for \$700. Of the denominations of 1d red, 1½d green, 3d brown and 6d blue (all perf 12) and 1d red roulette, the 1½d stamp had the perfin WCR.1 of W.C. Rigby, printer and stationer of Adelaide. This perfin is also known on the parcel stamps of the South Australian Government Railways.



PERFINS ON THE WEB

Faroe Perfins <http://www.jaysmith.com/Lists/Faroe/Faroe-Perfins-DDPA-and-VL-Perfins.html>

Illustrates a couple of perfins used in the Faroe Islands including one that is found on Danish stamps. May be worth checking your Danish V.L perfins for Faroe postmarks!

Perfin Club Nederland <http://www.perfinclub.nl/eng/index.php> The home page for the Netherlands Perfin Club. While most of the website is in Dutch there is some information in English.

Perfins of the Queen Victoria Period
<http://www.members.tripod.com/~pennyreds/perfin.html> An interesting site covering both precancels used by various firms and perfins.

Perfins on the Stamps of Cuba.
<http://www.cubafil.org/MemberPages/RRoy/Perfins.html> Rudy Roy's pictorial exhibition of Cuban perfins. Includes illustrations, user, stamps perfin reported on, covers. A very helpful catalogue.

Romanian Perfins <http://www.romaniastamps.com/perfin/perfins.htm>
 An online catalogue of Romanian perfins including illustration, period of use, rarity and Eros number (the old Romanian catalogue number).

OS/NSW TYPE B FAKES

A range of Kangaroo issues 1/2d to 1/- with the OS/NSW Type B perfin were offered for sale on ebay during January 2012. These are known to be fakes, some even having non NSW postmarks. The vendor was contacted and advised. He added information to these lots indicating they were fakes. These items had been sourced from overseas with other material and the low "buy-it-now" price that they were offered at clearly indicated the ebay vendor had no knowledge that they were unusual in any way. A very responsible and appropriate reaction from a good ebay vendor.



With the exception of one stamp (the first 6d) all appear to be the same die that has previously been encountered.

EXPANDING COLLECTING HORIZONS - OFFICIALS

As the area where most forgeries have and are appearing are official patterns where one collects as many issues as are available with one or a restricted number of patterns. While there have also been forgeries of some British officials and the Canadian OH/MS patterns there are still numerous similar areas that one could collect in much the same way as OS or VG patterns.

The first area that comes to mind are the officials used by the States of the United States. Those States using perfins include Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Montana, New Jersey, North Dakota, South Dakota and the Territory of Hawaii and no doubt there are departments of other states that also do so.

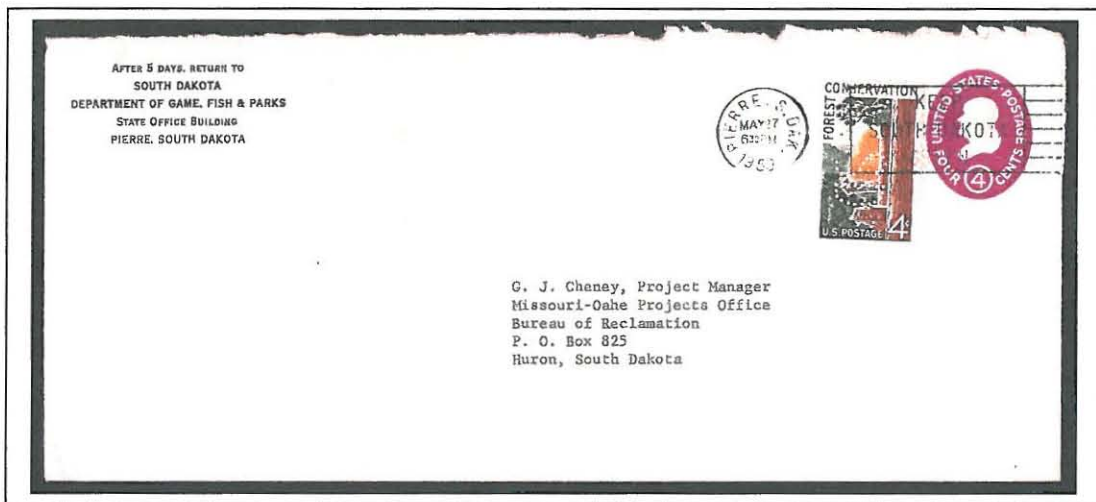
Some of these patterns are quite attractive and occur on a wide range of definitive and commemorative issues, some still being in use. While there are no doubt collectors of these issues and I have little doubt lists of issues available they are certainly not given as much prominence as State Officials in Australia. Most seem to

be available fairly readily and would certainly be a challenge. A few examples are shown below.



Illinois (I inside map) Iowa Michigan (M in Circle) Wisconsin (WIS)

Collecting these issues on cover should also be quite fun. A lovely example is shown below from South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks bearing a SD perfin on a Forest Conservation issue which seems rather appropriate.



Similarly there are the Canadian State Officials including those from Ontario (LA) and Saskatchewan (PS) plus a number of Federal Departments including the Department of National Defence (ND), Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and the Canadian National Railways (CNR). The issues found with these patterns are listed in the Canadian perfins catalogue. Usage of some of these has continued until recently as the cover below from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources illustrates.



DECIMAL PERFINs

David Andersen

For some reason I have always been attracted to commercial perfins on decimal Australian stamps possibly as they represent the swan song of commercial perfins in Australia or that some unusual issues were used. I have included a quick list below of those I am aware of as I suspect some others may also find some interest in this area.

AGI.1 – 5c 1968 Christmas

BP.3 - 10c Fish

DJ/LTD.2 – 1c to 7c QEII, 5c Thornbill, 7c,9c and 10c Fish, 4c 1966 Christmas, 4c Bible Society, 4c Dirk Hartog, 8c National Development, 5c Expo 70, 5c 1969 Christmas, 7c Wentworth and 7c Clarke, 5c Education, 5c Pioneer, 7c,8c and 10c Gemstones and 18c Helichrysum.

HB.5 – 4c Royal Life Saving Society

HB&Co.3 - 20c Expo

HS.2 - 3c QEII 1966

IDH.1 - 5c 1966 Thornbill, 4c 1966 Christmas, 7c High Court, 3c Crab, 10c Telecom, 40c Performing Arts and 18c Helichrysum

IH.18 – 30c Ibis, \$1 Flinders and 4c Gynecological

IHC.1 – 6c Dairy Congress 1970

JD&CO.1 - 4c QEII 1966

JKS.1 - 30c National Development, 7c Metric Conversion- Mass

MM.6 - 5c Building and savings Societies

OK.4 - 20c Wool

R.4 – 7c QEII 1966, 22c Waltzing Matilda

RICO.2 - 5c 1967 Christmas

SH&CO.1 – 3c and 4c QEII 1966, 10c Anemone, 20c Golden Whistler, 25c Robin, 4c Gynecological, 4c YWCA, 5c Grassland Congress, 5c 1968 Christmas, 5c ILO, 6c Australian Natives Association, 10c Henry Handel Richardson, 40c and 50c Pioneer

VPC.1 – 5c QEII 1966, 18c Nationhood, 10c Gemstone, 20c Performing Arts

If there is any interest in these issues I would be more than happy to compile a listing. Please contact the Editor with other reports.

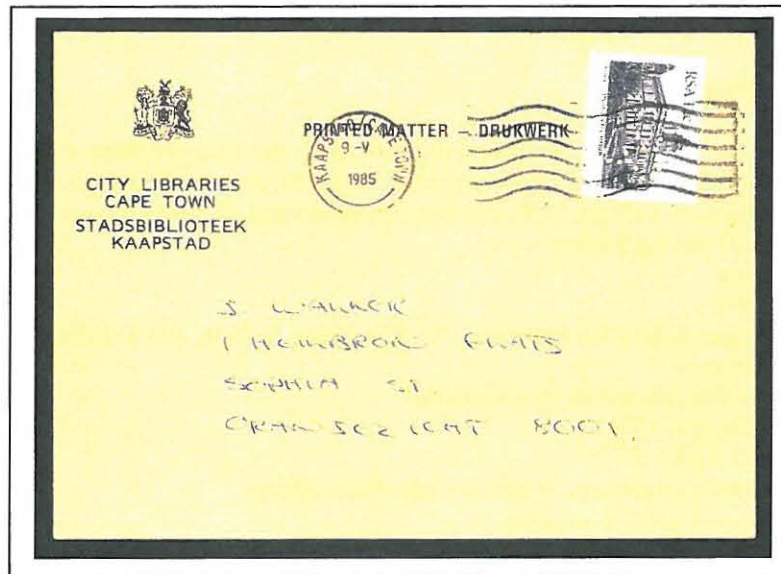
OS TYPE I ON COVER

The postcard below sold recently on ebay for GBP 454.44 and bears a 1d with the large OS used by New South Wales Departments during 1933 - very rare usage on cover. As only one side was illustrated it is not clear if it was used by a New South Wales Department of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.



LIBRARIES AND PERFINS

Libraries are great generators of paper and it is hardly surprising that many perfin covers were created by library operations. The card below advising a borrower to pick up a book was used by the Capetown City Library who used the CC/C perfin.



AUCTION WATCH

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

		Est.
a.	Western Australia 6d railways parcels stamp perf WS&Co.1. (Prestige Philately sale, Sep 11)	\$250
b.	WA railway parcels stamps - F&G.1 on 6d, GDCO.1 on 2/6 and WSCO.1 on 9d & 1/- on parcel tag. (Prestige Philately sale, Sep 11)	\$500
c.	Victoria KEVII £1 red perf "OS". (eBay, Oct 11)	sold for US \$127
d.	5/- Roo, 3 rd wmk, perf HS.4. (eBay, Oct 11)	sold for \$ 81
e.	6d claret engraved Kooka perf J&BS.5 (part lot) (eBay, Oct 11)	sold for US \$ 51
f.	NZ 6d Kiwi perf "HB" (joined). (eBay, Oct 11)	sold for US \$ 21
g.	NZ ½d green Pictorial perf "S&SW". (Auckland City Stamps auction, Nov 11)	NZ \$ 30
h.	NZ ½d Mt Cook perf "HB". (Auckland City Stamps auction, Nov 11)	NZ \$ 25
i.	NZ 2d Pembroke perf "FB/LD" (Auckland City Stamps auction, Nov 11)	NZ \$ 10
j.	Joined pr 1/- black ANZAC perf GRW.1. (eBay, Nov 11)	unsold at \$ 58
k.	NZ Vacuum Oil Co cover with ½d KGV perf "VOC". (Classic Stamps (NZ) sale, Nov 11)	NZ \$300
l.	NZ Vacuum Oil Co cover with 1d Admiral perf "VOC". (Classic Stamps (NZ) sale, Nov 11)	NZ \$250
m.	NZ "DB/&/CO" on pr 1d SSF. (Classic Stamps (NZ) sale, Nov 11)	NZ \$ 60
n.	NZ MGM cover with ½d green KG6 perf "M/G/M". (Classic Stamps (NZ) sale, Nov 11)	NZ \$200
o.	NZ 1d Universal perf "GNB/LD". (Auckland City Stamps auction, Dec 11)	NZ \$ 75
p.	"WA" Perfin on WA 5/-. (eBay, Dec 11)	sold for \$ 36
q.	WA 6d Railways Parcel stamp perf F&G.1 (two dies of multi-die perforator). (eBay, Dec 11)	sold for US \$ 61
r.	Qld Govt Railways 1d red Newspaper & Parcels stamp perf SH/&CO. / (eBay, Sep 11)	sold for GBP 17
s.	GB - "N.Z.L." on 10/- blue QVic. (Len Jury auction, Jan 12)	NZ \$ 76
t.	\$4 Navigator G/NSW Type D (eBay Feb 12)	sold for \$ 38
u.	£1 Arms DJ/LTD (eBay Feb 12)	sold for \$100