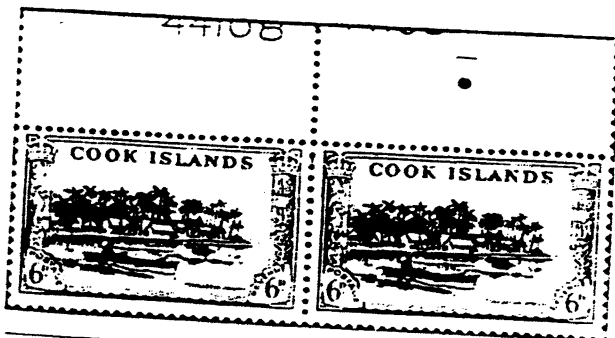
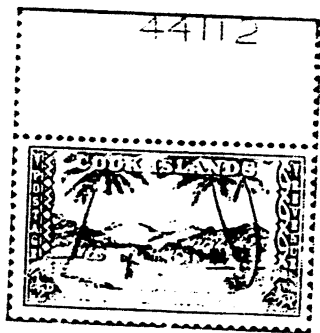


KING GEORGE VI VARIETIES

Part 23—The New Zealand Peace Issue

Richard Lockyer OBE



Robson Lowe aptly summed up the philatelic attraction of the 1946 New Zealand Peace issue in a footnote on page 449 of Volume IV of his *Encyclopaedia of British Empire Postage Stamps*. He wrote, 'The Waterlow productions (mostly from two centre and two frame plates) provide an enormous field for study of their retouches and re-entries.' The series had already attracted interest before 1962 when the *Encyclopaedia* was published. Indeed, those wishing to gain a firm grounding in the topic can not do better than ensure that they are familiar with the account contained in Chapter VI of Volume II of *The Postage Stamps of New Zealand* published by the Royal Philatelic Society of New Zealand, while reference to Campbell Paterson's excellent loose-leaf catalogue will give brief details of the more prominent varieties. In addition, it would be most remiss not to mention the sterling work of P. L. Evans, R. E. Heath and A. B. Johnstone in the 1960s and 1970s.

The purpose of this, and the following two articles in this series, is to provide information about the majority of the known varieties occurring on stamps in what is still a reasonably priced set. As a bonus, all the stamps are attractive and as a testament to this it is relevant that, when readers of *GSW* were asked in 1947 to nominate the best stamp design since 1939, the 9d. topped the poll. The 1d. was placed sixth and the 1 1/2d. seventh in a list of ten.

Harrison and Sons, Waterlow and Sons and Bradbury Wilkinson were all involved in the production of the 11 value set. This split between printers was to avoid delay in fulfilling the order. This is understandable as the total number of stamps eventually printed came to 309,500,720. However, as Robson Lowe noted, it is the stamps recess printed by Waterlow that hold most interest—the 1d., 3d., 4d., 5d., 6d., 8d. and 9d. are well worth scrutinising through a good magnifying-glass. The sheets are all the same size. All the values, except for the 8d., were printed with horizontal designs in 15 rows of eight vertical columns. The 8d. has a vertical design with eight rows of 15 stamps.

Serial numbers on Waterlow printed stamps

Plate Numbering by Waterlow

It was a Waterlow practice to give their plates a five figure serial number. This was engraved in the margin well away from the impressions. When the sheets were trimmed the number was cut off but very occasionally marginal stamps can be found with traces of the numbers clearly visible. The accompanying photographs of the Sierra Leone 3d. and 4d., both using the same centre plate, and the Cook Islands 1/2d. and 6d. illustrate this. The 6d. is particularly interesting as it not only shows the frame plate number 44108, but also traces of the centre plate number. For collectors of Cook Islands it is worth mentioning that the frame plate used for the 5d. was 44102 and for the 2s. 44114. These items have a philatelic significance and it was most fortunate that nearly all the proof sheets of the Peace issue, sent to the New Zealand authorities for their approval, showed the relevant numbers in the margins and that these were noted. So far as I know there are no post office sheets or marginal stamps in existence from the Peace issue showing such numbers. However, by 1950 there had been a change of policy, at least for the 2d. stamp issued to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Southern Rhodesia, as the two plate numbers are clearly printed in the margin over R1 1-2. In spite of this some sheets can be found bearing the same numbers engraved in the old style as well as the new.

The Half Penny

Shades. In the February 1946 *GSW* a report, based on information from the New Zealand Post Office, listed all the selected colours for the issue. The 1/2d. was to be deep green and brown-purple. Over nine million stamps were printed and this inevitably led to some shade differences. In the event, different catalogue editors saw different colours. *Commonwealth* lists dull myrtle and deep brown and dull myrtle and chestnut-brown, with the latter rated the better on price. 'Part 1' and Robson Lowe stick to green and brown. However, in Volume II of the *Postage Stamps of New Zealand*, although the centre is described as deep green the description of the frame colour ranges over a number of shades. The first, a very pale brown, approaching cinnamon, comes from a portion of the first supply, most of which were used to frank covers addressed to an English stamp dealer, with the consequence that the shade is hard to find in mint condition. The others are chocolate-brown, through to greyish-brown for the bulk of the printings, with one printing in reddish chocolate. Campbell Paterson lists green and brown, green and red-brown and green and grey-brown, with the last two rated the same and higher than the first.

Plate Numbers and Markings. It is known from proof sheets that 42724 was allocated to one of the centre plates and 42725 and 42790 to the frame plates. In an article in *Stamp Collecting* (8 November 1973) RE Heath maintained that two centre plates had been used and interchanged with the two frame plates. On the other hand, PL Evans when writing in *Stamp Collecting* on 11 March 1976, reported that, although a second centre plate (numbered 42791) had been made, it was not used as it cracked when being curved and was, according to the register, 'scrapped in former'. Conventional Waterlow markings appear on the sheets with the imprint under R15/4-5. Sheet markings are, as usual, a help when locating varieties. Centre plate horizontal guide lines show between the seventh and eighth rows at the right-hand edge of the first stamp and the left-hand end of the eighth. Both frame plates have guide lines between the seventh and eighth rows at the start and end of the rows. A large cross shows between the seventh and eighth rows and the fourth and fifth stamps. Vertical lines occur between the fourth and fifth stamps in the top and bottom rows. In addition, sheets from frame plate 42790 have horizontal lines between the sixth and seventh rows at the right-hand end of the first and left-hand end of the last stamp.

T-Marks. The sideways T-mark or printer's guide mark at R12/3 (Frame plate 42725), now listed as SG 667a, was first featured in *GSM* in July 1949, after C.P. Rang, who was responsible for 'Through the Magnifying Glass', received a letter from Campbell Paterson drawing attention to its existence and similarity to the T-mark on the Malta 5s. (now known as the 'Semaphore' Flaw 230a), previously described by Rang in December 1948. These marks have already been mentioned in this series when describing KGVI stamps of Fiji and Malta (*GSM* February 1987 and February 1988). The study of T-marks deserves a section in its own right and will appear in 1993. Meanwhile it will suffice to say that a fine example can be found on R12/3 from later printings (*Fig 1*), with traces in the same position on other impressions. Very clear T-marks also occur in the margins and can assist plate identification. For example, a

sideways T-mark by the perforation dot or bulls-eye in the left and right margins by the seventh row identify frame plate 42790. The marks are absent from plate 42725.

Plate Cracks. Plate cracking was a hazard facing the security printers. The example on the Malta 2d. (238ac) was described in Part 8 of this series. (*GSM* May 1988). A less prominent, but nevertheless nice example can be found on the 1/2d. Peace issue as a crack developed on frame plate 42725 affecting R5/6. It shows as a tenuous diagonal line from the fish hook, to the right of 'REVENUE', upwards through the '1' of 1/2d. and further into the rushes at the side of the lake (*Fig 2*). A flaw, probably a scratch rather than a crack, also shows on some sheets below the bottom outer frame line on R4/6 (*Fig 3*). In my experience it always shows with the crack at R5/6. The opportunity is now taken to digress slightly as any collector wishing to inspect evidence of other plate cracks on New Zealand stamps of the period should examine the right half of a sheet of the 1948 2d. Centennial of Otago (593). The frame plate must have suffered a lot of stress as long, horizontal and irregular hair-lines can be seen between impressions. Digressing even further, followers of this philatelic by-way may also like to search for evidence of the frame plate crack which developed between the top and adjacent corners of R3/4-5 of the KUT 1c. printed from frame plate 2 with Centre plates 5A and 5B (when the crack first appeared), 6A and 6B (when the brown mark almost joins the two stamps) and 'A' and 'B' (when the mark was erased by hand presumably because it was noticed by an inspector. In fairness, authentic examples can only come in sheet form!).

Centre Plate Varieties. A flaw affecting later printings occurs on R12/2. It gives Mount Cook the appearance of an erupting volcano (*Fig 4*). There is a distinct difference in frame shades between stamps with and without flaw, indicating that it developed on the centre plate during printing. Furthermore, judging from sheets I have examined, thanks to the kindness of Mr Barney Kleinberg, it appears that the flaw came into being some

time after the T-mark appeared on R12/3. In later printings slight doubling of the lines of shading on the left side appeared on R1/3-4, 2/1 and 12/6.

Frame Plate Varieties. At least five impressions show doubling on FP 42725. Those at R5/1, where the Kowhai spray at the right is doubled (*Fig 5*), and R7/8 (*Fig 6*), where the left spray and the inner frame line are similarly affected, can be found on every sheet. On R6/3 a small flaw above the right value occurs on early printings (*Fig 7*). Heath suggested that this was removed and the impression re-entered leading to the very slight doubling of the largest Kowhai in the top left corner. He also reported that the scratch at R4/6 and crack at R5/6 were repaired and that the only sign is a slight doubling of the lower flower at the bottom right of R5/6. During his study of FP 42725 Heath discovered that three states occur on R12/4. The first, when the third and fourth stamps in the row are normal without a T-mark on R12/3. The second, when R12/3 is still without a T-mark, but a large crescent shaped flaw appears on R12/4—it runs from the 'A' of 'MATHESON' down to the 'N' of 'REVENUE' (*Fig 8*). The third state, when the T-mark occurs on R12/3, shows on R12/4 as a strong re-entry in the bottom left corner. There is general doubling of the design with the horizontal lines of shading much strengthened, traces of doubling in the bar of the '1' of 1/2d. and the figure '2' as well as the adjacent flower. The general impression to the eye when viewed in a multiple, is that the affected area is darker than normal (*Fig 9*). For the record only minor instances of doubling have been reported on FP 42790 at R1/1, 6/3, 8/3 and 13/7. I have not been able to detect them.

Other Varieties. Some sheets were issued with double perforations in the top selvage. They are listed by Campbell Paterson who also list an inverted watermark. One sheet was issued in Christchurch in September 1947 with the frame double printed and it is recorded in the RPSNZ description of the series that, 'one impression was about a millimetre lower than the other and was relatively faint'. It is listed, but unprinted, by Campbell Paterson.

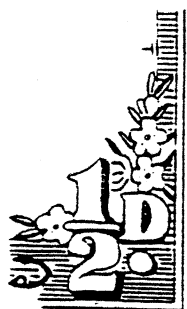


Fig.1



Fig.2



Fig.3

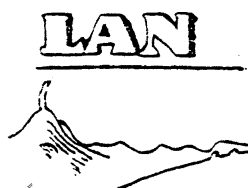


Fig.4

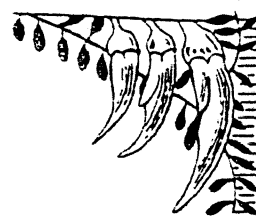


Fig.5

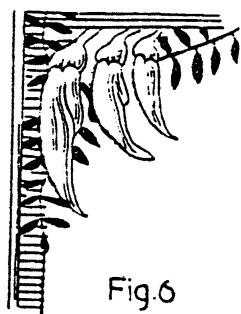


Fig.6



Fig.7

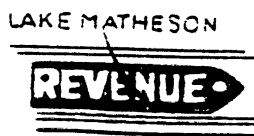


Fig.8



Fig.9

The Threepence

Shades The New Zealand Post Office described the colours as blue and grey-green. The RPSNZ account points out that a few sheets had blurred centres and opts for greenish-grey for the frame shade. It also notes that the frame of one sheet issued at Ngutunui had a blurred appearance and was much deeper and contained more green than normal. This was attributed to either cleaning fluid being left on the plate or over-inking. Robson Lowe and Campbell Paterson prefer ultramarine and green. The latter describes the blurred centre as bright blue. Ultramarine and green are the chosen colours for 'Part 1', but *Commonwealth* prefers ultramarine and slate-green. Even though just over one hundred thousand sheets were printed the absence of disagreement speaks highly of those mixing the inks. The inland airmail rate was 3d., hence the aeronautical flavour of the design featuring a Lancaster and Spitfire on the left and a Short Empire flying-boat and York on the right, thus illustrating the change from war to peace. The badge of the RNZAF is in the centre.

T-Marks. Good examples of sideways T-marks can be found on sheets printed from either frame plate. They are located inside the inner frame line on the left side in the diagonal lines of shading, just above the tip of the bird's wing. The mark on Frame plate 42856 at R1/2 and R3/5 looks more like a cross as the horizontal line is too long and protrudes through the vertical (Fig 10). However, R2/2 features a fine example (Fig 11). Traces of the vertical line also appear on the majority of impressions in the first four stamps of the first four rows. This is not surprising as PA Waterlow, the Chairman of Waterlow, stated unambiguously in a letter published in *Stamp Collecting* that the marks were cut into the original die on both sides of the design and were taken up together with the impression when the transfer cylinder of the die was made. They were eventually burnished out, but now and again although not visible to the naked eye traces were left sufficiently deep to take up ink and print. On Frame plate 42798 a 'cross-style' T-mark is clearly visible on R3/4, R4/8 and R10/2. A minute dot, sometimes accompanied by a trace of a vertical line, occurs between the left hand vertical frame lines in the mid-way position (Fig 12). On stamps printed from Frame plate 42856 the dots are just below the level of the horizontal of the T-mark and on the other plate they are just above. It is possible that they were in some way associated with the T-marks and were so small that no attempt was made to buff them out. The 'T' variety on the 3d. has been catalogued by *Commonwealth* for some years.

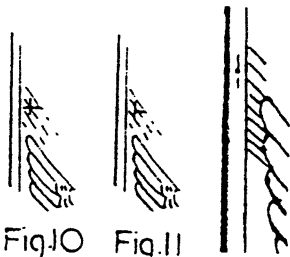


Fig 10

Fig 11

Fig 12

Plate Cracks. There is evidence on sheets from Frame plate 42798 that plate cracking affected R2/6, as a very small mark occurs in the sky between the aircraft on the right side (Fig 13). On R4/8 two fairly strong horizontal lines show in the bottom left corner. The first, runs from under the 'S' of 'POSTAGE' to the 'N' of 'NEW' and the second, is parallel through the 'G' and 'E' (Fig 14). They could be crack marks. They are certainly unusual.

Plate Numbers and Markings. Frame plates 42798 and 42856 and centre plates 42796 and 42883 were made and used in combination to print the sheets. Both frame plates show horizontal guide lines between the seventh and eighth rows at the start and end of the rows. Frame plate 42798 also has guide lines and dots between the sixth and seventh rows at the right end of the first stamp and left end of the last. On both centre plates guide lines and dots show between the seventh and eighth rows at the right end of the first stamp and left of the eighth. Centre plate 42883 also has guide lines in similar positions between the sixth and seventh rows.

Centre Plate Varieties. Pride of place must go to the 'Plane Tail Retouch' as listed by *Commonwealth* (S22a) or, by its name in 'Part 1', 'Completed Rudder' (671a). The Peace issue was released on 1 April 1946 and in the August edition of *GSM* it was reported that RKG Blaker had discovered that on R2/4 a well marked line defined the rear edge of the tail of the flying-boat, whereas on all other stamps only the leading edge was drawn. In addition, a few dots of shading had been added in the sky above the tip of the uppermost wing. It so happened that Stanley Gibbons stock did not contain an example of R2/4, instead, a similar piece of retouching was found on R3/2 with dots in the sky above and behind the rudder. It was concluded that if retouching of the plate had occurred on one value it might also have happened on others—a forecast that proved correct. The RPSNZ investigation revealed that after a small printing had been made from Centre plate 42883 an imperfection was noticed in one impression and it was re-entered. In addition to the re-entry, however, the impression was retouched, the rudder of the flying-boat being strengthened by having the trailing edge redrawn and appeared as R2/4. Evidence of the re-entry is indicated by a slight doubling of the lines of shading of the sky on the left side below the Lancaster. In addition, there are also extra dots of colour to the left of the retouched rudder (Fig 15). It was also noted that on all impressions from Centre plate 42883, with the exception of R2/4, the rudder outline was incomplete, although most of them in the proof sheet showed a faint line to indicate a complete rudder. It was also found that in Centre plate 42796 the majority of the impressions showed a faint line at the back of the rudder and in heavily printed sheets from initial supplies the rudder was relatively well-defined. On this plate the rudder was retouched without a trace of doubling, but extra dots of colour occur in the sky on either side (Fig 16). Waterlow and Sons explained that the retouch had been needed as the plates had suffered damage during printing. In doing this the engraver had cut the line slightly deeper than the original, thereby producing the 'Completed Rudder'. I have not seen any report concerning an example showing the damage mentioned by the printers. However

I have seen a large corner block without retouch at R2/4 or 3/2. It was priced at £60 and was quickly sold by a West Country dealer. Such examples are listed by Campbell Paterson with a footnote that only two or three are known. W M Royale when writing about the retouches in *Stamp Mirror* (1 September 1951) mentioned that to form a complete history of the affair four block were needed. However, he too had only seen one example without a retouch and 'no amount of persuasion would bring it any nearer to my NZ pages'.

There are five other varieties on Centre plate 42796. The first occurs on R6/7 where the right side of the rudder is doubled (Fig 17). The second, at R7/4 shows as slight doubling, or to be more descriptive, a general fuzziness, in the lines of the sky on the right. The third at R9/8 has traces of doubling under the bodies of the two aircraft on the right (Fig 18). The fourth and fifth are unusual—R4/6 has a vertical line above the starboard engines of the flying-boat (Fig 19) and on R7/1 another vertical line runs down from just below the tip of the first lower leaf on the spray in the top left corner to a point under and left of the nose of the Lancaster (Fig 20).

Frame Plate Varieties. Frame plate 42798 offers four more varieties. On R5/8 the outer frame line on the left shows doubling (Fig 21). At R11/1 there is strong doubling at the right (Fig 22) and slight doubling occurs in the top right corner of R13/6 (Fig 23). It appears that R14/1 was re-entered deliberately as the lines in the bottom right corner are strongly doubled, together with the lower half of the inner vertical frame line (Fig 24). Minor doubling also affects the right side of R14/8 and 15/7. The second frame plate, 42856, has another five varieties. The first is on R1/1 where the dove has a fuzzy outline and the slanting lines of shading behind and below it are strongly doubled (Fig 25). The three short vertical lines to the right of the badge on R2/1 are easy to see, but the four much shorter vertical lines at the base of the same leaf really need a glass to identify them (Fig 26). A small plate flaw affects the dove on R8/1 and this, together with the minor doubling of the diagonal shading lines and the doubling of the inner right frame line throughout almost its entire length, makes the stamp an easy one to spot (Fig 27). Slight doubling of the dove's body also occurs on R12/2 (Fig 28). The strong doubling at the right on R9/6 bears close similarity to that occurring on R11/1 from FP 42798 except that the inner frame line is doubled from the 'd' of '3d.' to the top right corner as well as the diagonal lines to the left of it (Figs 29 & 30).

Other Varieties. The RPSNZ noted that some sheets were issued with double perforations in the top selvedge. However, of more importance, *Commonwealth* and Campbell Paterson list the 'Centre Omitted' variety and the former states in a footnote that 'one sheet was found with corner folded causing centre omitted'. It is listed as S22c and priced at £2000.

Part 24 (GSM February 1992) will describe the varieties occurring on the 4d and 5d values of the 1946 New Zealand Peace Issue

The King George VI Collectors' Society will be meeting in the British Philatelic Centre, 107 Charterhouse Street, London on 22 February and 25 April 1992. Details of membership can be obtained from Richard Lockyer, General Secretary, KGVCS, 24 Mourne Road, Bournemouth, BH6 3QP

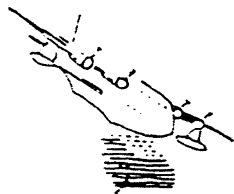


Fig.13

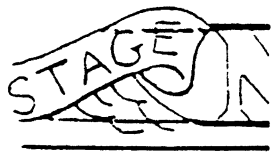


Fig.14

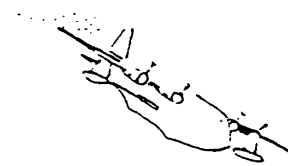


Fig.15

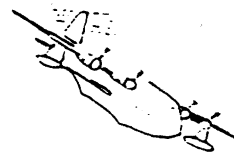


Fig.16

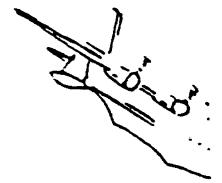


Fig.17

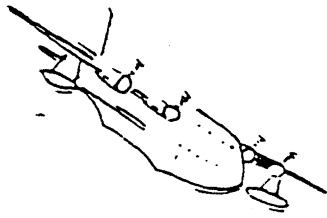


Fig.18

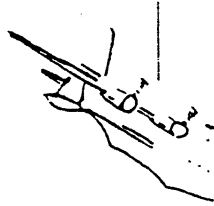


Fig.19



Fig.20

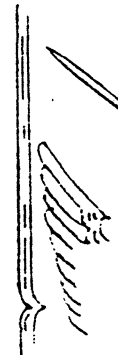


Fig.21

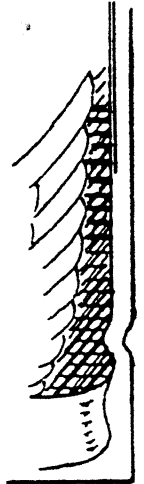


Fig.22

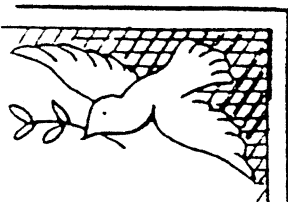


Fig.23

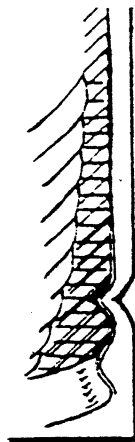


Fig.24

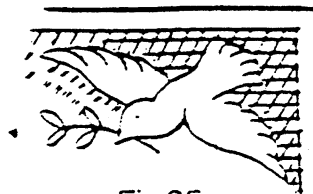


Fig.25



Fig.26

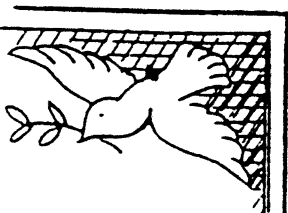


Fig.27

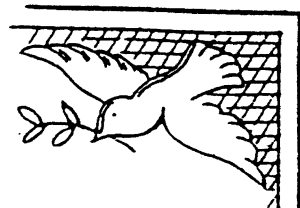


Fig.28

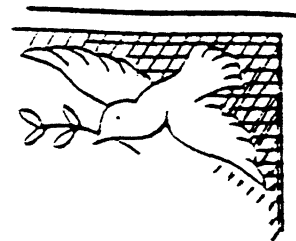


Fig.29

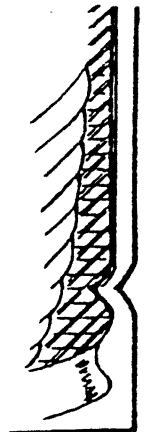


Fig.30