

## New Zealand's First Stamps – Full-Face Queens

New Zealand's first stamps featuring the Chalon portrait of Queen Victoria, were issued 15 years after the world's first stamps – Great Britain's 1d black and 2d blue. Unlike Great Britain, in May 1840 New Zealand had a very small population. European settlement of the colony commenced during the 1840s, stamps featuring the arrival of settlers were issued in 1940 (3d centenary of immigrants landing on Petone Beach), 1948 and 1950 (centenaries of Otago and Canterbury, respectively). As in Britain, prior to the supply of stamps, New Zealanders had the option of prepaying the cost of sending letters, or alternatively they could send letters so that the recipient paid the postage.



Fig 1 1d, 2d & 1/- Full-Face Queens.



Fig 2 Large star wmk.

Figure 1 depicts 1d, 2d and 1/- Full-Face Queens, which were first placed on sale in Auckland, on 20 July 1855. These were printed by Perkins, Bacon & Co., in London, without perforations in sheets of 240 stamps in 20 horizontal rows of 12, on watermarked paper featuring a large six-pointed star, illustrated in Figure 2. The printing plates were also shipped out to New Zealand along with the supplies of stamps. Of the 1d 12,000; 2d 66,000 and 1/- 8,000 were initially printed.



Fig 3 13 August 1855 earliest known use cover bearing pair New Zealand SG1.

Featured in Figure 3 is a cover bearing a pair of 1d dull carmine Full-Face Queen stamps from Auckland to Birmingham, in England and manuscript *d6*, indicating that 6d was to be paid upon delivery to addressee. Prior to 27 March 1857, New Zealand stamps issued in 1855, could only be used to pre-pay mail within New Zealand. Mail to overseas could not be prepaid at all. The 2d for a ½oz. letter was the Colonial rate set down from 1 April 1851 to cover all letters passing through any post office in the Colony. From 27 March 1857, it was still only possible to prepay the overseas postage on mail sent to the UK or via the UK. Mail sent direct to other countries could not be prepaid until 1 January 1859, and this included Australia, at which time the rate for a ½oz. letter was 6d<sup>1</sup>.

This is only one of three covers recorded bearing a 1d dull carmine pair, and believed to be the earliest recorded date of use of the 1d value, 13 August 1855. This cover, part of New Zealand's heritage, formerly part of the Joseph Hackmey collection of New Zealand is now held in The Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa.



Fig 4 1d with "CANCELLED" obliterator.

Figure 4 features one of only six 1d London print FFQs handstamped with part oval obliterator and CANCELLED in the centre. Blocks of 6 of the London print 1d, 2d and 1/- FFQs were presented by Perkins Bacon & Co to a relative of Sir Rowland Hill in 1861. The stamp featured in Figure 4 was offered for sale by Mowbray Collectables in their 16 March 2019 public stamp auction.

Perkins, Bacon & Co., along with stamps and printing plates also sent out to New Zealand 18 different numbered obliterator, these to be used to cancel stamps. Two of each number (i.e. 3 dozen) were despatched from London, however, only 17 were used. Obliterator number 6 was withheld to avoid confusion with obliterator number 9<sup>2</sup>. The numbered obliterator were initially distributed to the following towns:

- 1 Auckland
- 2 Russell
- 3 Hokianga
- 4 Mongonui
- 5 Bluff Harbour (Campbelltown)
- 6 –
- 7 Wellington
- 8 Wanganui
- 9 New Plymouth
- 10 Wellington
- 11 Ahuriri
- 12 Wanganui
- 13 Rangitikei
- 14 Nelson
- 15 Nelson
- 16 Port Victoria
- 17 Christchurch
- 18 Dunedin

Later, some other towns received the second numbered obliterator<sup>3</sup>.

Occasionally, one may find Full-Face Queen stamps cancelled by manuscript, and sometimes overstruck by a cancellation applied at a nearby town En-route to its destination. Such situations, arose with the expansion of localities across the country at a faster rate than the New Zealand Post Office could supply them with date stamps. Postmasters were instructed to cancel stamped mail where they did not have any official form of date stamp by writing the name of the town (or an abbreviation thereof) in black ink across the stamp. Figure 5 features two manuscript cancelled 2d Full-Face Queen stamps: *K* & *Ho Ho* being, respectively from Kowhai & Ho Ho Creek.



Fig 5 Manuscript cancelled 2d stamps.

J. Richardson, of Auckland, used these plates and produced the first locally made New Zealand stamps in November 1855, when 1d, 2d and 1/- Full-Face Queens appeared on unwatermarked, but smooth surfaced blue coloured paper. At least four different makes of paper were used since four different *papermakers watermarks* have been identified: a) SANDS & McDOUGALL MELBOURNE in double lined upper-case letters; b) CHARLES SKIPPER & EAST LONDON in somewhat similar lettering; c) SANDS & KENNY in similar lettering; and d) IPM Co 1852 in copper-plate upper-case letters<sup>4</sup>. Stamps showing papermaker watermark a) are scarce in this form and exceedingly rare in the other three<sup>5</sup>.

In 1858, Richardson abandoned the use of blue paper in favour of white, unwatermarked paper which continued to be used until the production of *large star* watermarked paper in 1862. There are two basic types of this watermarked paper: a) thick soft paper with a blotting paper like texture, and b) a thin harder paper<sup>6</sup>.

Until 1859, only the three initial denominations could be used for postage when the 6d brown stamp appeared. Additional denominations followed in 1863 (3d) and in 1865 (4d)<sup>6</sup>. However, bisected 1/- stamps were used in Otago during the period March 1857 to 1859 when 6d was the ½oz. rate for letters to Britain but no 6d stamps existed<sup>7</sup> and the stocks of 2d stamps was almost non-existent.



Fig 6 1857 1/- London print bisect used on cover.

According to Odenweller<sup>8</sup>, there are 8 recorded 1/- London print bisects used on cover; the earliest being 11 May 1857 and the latest being 12 October 1858. Figure 6 illustrates the 6<sup>th</sup> such cover. Odenweller has recorded the existence of 28 1/- Richardson print bisects on cover; the earliest being 17 July 1858 – this used to Bremen – and the latest being 19 July 1859. Figure 7 features the 21<sup>st</sup> such cover. Apart from the first Richardson print bisect used on cover, all the remaining covers or fronts were addressed to Great Britain; all the London print 1/- bisect covers and five of the Richardson print 1/- bisect covers were sent to the Mottram family, in London. All bisected 1/- stamps were bisected vertically.



Fig 7 1859 1/- Richardson print bisect used on cover.

During the 1860s considerable experimental methods of separations were undertaken; including perforating, rouletting, serrating and pin perforating machines.



Fig 8 1/- roulette 7.

Duty Stamps sold Perforated free of charge  
 THOMAS WATTERS  
 RETAIL AND MANUFACTURING STATIONER,  
 BOOKBINDER, PAPER-RULER AND  
 ACCOUNT BOOK MANUFACTURER  
 SHORTLAND STREET, AUCKLAND.

Figure 8 illustrates a 1/- bluish-green Full-Face Queen with experimental roulette 7 on two sides. This SG unlisted variety has been cut horizontally, probably indicating that the rouletting was applied after the strip of stamps had been removed from the sheet of stamps. The number 7 obliterator of Wellington can also be clearly seen on this stamp. A licensed stamp vendor's advertisement in the 5 April 1867 *New Zealand Herald* newspaper selling perforated New Zealand imperf 1<sup>st</sup> series QVLT Die I revenue stamps indicates a source of experimental separations in Auckland.

Similar adverts may have appeared earlier, and no doubt similar operators at least in Dunedin, Nelson, and Wellington were responsible for other types of perforating or experimental separations of Full-Face Queen postage stamps.

The Dunedin Postmaster contracted a local firm of printers (Messrs. Ferguson & Mitchell) which had a perforating machine gauging 13 to perforate sheets of stamps. The use of a perforating machine was the personal decision of the Dunedin Postmaster. Following the discovery of gold in Otago the usage of stamps was much increased, and his only interest was to expedite the separation of the stamps<sup>9</sup>.

The colour of the 4d rose stamp issued in 1865 was changed to yellow as some confusion with the 1d red stamp was possible, especially in the relatively poor light conditions in post offices at the time. Colour changes were also made in 1871 to three denominations; the 1d was changed from red to brown, the 2d was changed from blue to orange, and the 6d from brown to blue.

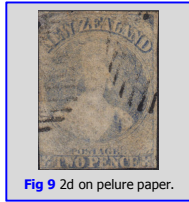


Fig 9 2d on pelure paper.



Fig 10 NZ watermark.

In 1862 New Zealand's Full-Face Queen stamps were printed on a very thin or, pelure paper. This is easy to detect as the ink colour often shows through to the rear owing to the paper's thinness. Unfortunately, the 2d stamp printed on pelure paper usually appears to be washed out, as may be seen in Figure 9

From 1862 J Davies was the printer of New Zealand's stamps and initially used large star watermarked paper. From 1864 stamps were printed with a change of watermarked paper – featuring only the letters NZ. Stamps such as those with NZ watermark, depicted in Figure 10, may frequently be found with the watermark inverted, indicating that the printing machine operator did not worry about the orientation of the paper when preparing to print stamps.

The final watermarked paper used to print stamps was employed in 1873. 2d vermilion stamps may very occasionally be found on lozenges watermarked paper, or with part INVICTA doubled lined upper-case letters. The trade name *INVICTA* occurred four times in each sheet in the centre reading vertically.

The foregoing details the birth of New Zealand's stamps in 1855, which ends in 1873, when the start of their replacement designs (1<sup>st</sup> Side Face series), the ½d Newspaper Stamp was issued. However, it is possible today to still acquire Full-Face Queens mint with gum, though many have had their gum washed off to prevent damage from the gum cracking. Many Full-Face Queens on the market today are used and are collected either on a simplified basis [8 imperforate and 11 perforated], or on a more specialised basis by perf, watermark and shade. SG lists some 142 variants in their catalogues; many more may be sought after when shades are taken into consideration.

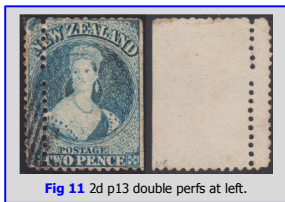


Fig 11 2d p13 double perfs at left.



Fig 12 1d R7/3 re-entry.



Fig 13 1d & 2d pre-printing paper creases.

In addition to these 142(+) Full-Face Queens, there are collectors who enjoy chasing after varieties. Figure 11 features an eminently collectable variety: a 2d blue (SG 96a), p13, on unwatermarked thick, soft paper with double perfs at the left – together with the reverse of the stamp.

Figure 12 illustrates a 1d vermilion Full-Face Queen with R7/3 re-entry. Other printing plate retouch varieties, most notably of the 2d orange stamp are also eagerly sought after by aficionados.



Figure 13 depicts another type of collectable variety – pre-printing paper creases. Both the imperf 1d orange (SG 8) & 2d blue (SG 115) stamps were printed on paper less than perfectly flat. After printing over the extant paper creases very impressive, but odd shaped stamps resulted.

New Zealand's Full-Face Queens and 1<sup>st</sup> Side Face definitives were only valid for POSTAGE purposes as they were inscribed thus.



Fig14 1d fiscally used Full-Face Queens.

The *Stamp Duties Act, 1866* made provision for the use of POSTAGE stamps (i.e. Full-Face Queens) for fiscal purposes from 1 January 1867 when fiscal stamps were unavailable. An article in *The Christchurch Press* of 14<sup>th</sup> January 1867 indicated that there was an immediate shortage of duty stamps, as shown by two examples in Figure 14. The first was used by the Bank of New Zealand in Blenheim (dated 2/1/67).

The origin of the second example can probably be identified as being from Governors Bay, on Banks Peninsula, near Christchurch. Part of the cancel is that of a generic PAID rubber stamp, frequently seen on revenue stamps; the other part is a manuscript GB. This style of manuscript cancel is very like others which emanated from Governors Bay.

#### Later Full-Face Queen stamps:

Published in 1950, *The Postage Stamps of New Zealand, Volume II* contains officially sanctioned reprints of New Zealand's first stamps, or Full-Face Queens. These were printed from the original Perkins, Bacon & Co. dies but in altered colours, on thick unwatermarked cream paper. The colours were altered from those that appeared on the original denomination stamps to one that appeared on a different coloured denomination stamp, viz., 1d blue; 2d vermilion; 3d green; 4d violet - see Figure 15, 6d purple and 1/- orange.



Fig 15 4d violet reprint.



Fig 16 6d brown.

In 1988 New Zealand's oldest philatelic society celebrated its centenary. To mark the occasion, New Zealand Post issued two 40c stamps and a \$1.00 miniature sheet. The latter contained an impression of an imperforate 6d brown Full-Face Queen that was printed on phosphorescent paper with poly vinyl alcohol gum and dextrin added (pvad gum), shown as Figure 16.

Eight years earlier in 1980, to celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of New Zealand's first stamps, a set of three 14c stamps perf 13½ x 13¼ was issued. Each depicted either a 1d, 2d or 1/- imperforate Full-Face Queen stamp. Issued in sheets of 100, these may be found in horizontal se-tenant strips of 3; whilst vertical se-tenant strips of 3 perf 14¼ x 14 emanated from the accompanying miniature sheet. Several errors are known in this issued. Illustrated in Figure 17 depicts a double strip of three with black colour omitted. This error is also known on vertical strips from miniature sheets. The colours of the three stamps in sheet format are also known doubled.



Fig 17 Double strip of three 14c (1d, 2d & 1/- Full-Face Queens) error: missing black.

Finally, in 2005 to celebrate the sesquicentenary of New Zealand's first stamps an imperf 1d Full-Face Queen was depicted on one of the three 45c stamps released for this event, Figure 18. This can also be found in miniature sheets of the same issue.



Fig 18 1d FFQ on stamp.

David Smitham

#### Acknowledgements:

The author wishes to thank Mowbray Collectables for help with illustrations used in this article.

#### References:

- 1 Spink Shreves Galleries, *The Joseph Hackmey Collection of New Zealand (1855-1872) Part I*, lot 1030.
- 2 Royal Philatelic Society of New Zealand, *Postage Stamps of New Zealand*, Volume VII, page 202.
- 3 *ibid*, pp 198-206.
- 4 Campbell Paterson, *Catalogue of New Zealand Stamps*, Temporary page A5.
- 5 *ibid*, Permanent page A4.
- 6 *ibid*, Permanent page A3.
- 7 *ibid*, Temporary page A13.
- 8 Robert Odenweller, *The Postage Stamps of New Zealand 1855-1973*, 2009, Royal Philatelic Society, London, page 280.
- 9 Campbell Paterson, *Catalogue of New Zealand Stamps*, Temporary page A2.