

L1: Campbell Paterson's Notes ½ d

Here begins a series of Notes that I hope will be instructive. They are concerned with the accumulation of knowledge that I have built up over the years; not to do with printers or dates but with how to recognize certain difficult stamps, how to sort at speed, what to look for in varieties and perhaps occasionally an anecdote or two. I start with the 1935 Pictorials as a particularly large field for the student -- and for the picking up of unconsidered trifles of great value.

From the CP NZ Bulletin - August 1964, NZ STAMPS AS I HAVE COME TO KNOW THEM, by Campbell Paterson.

½d Fantail. First to deal with identification. The sequence of plates and their numbers is interesting -- we list them in the CP. There are only two major headings, Single and Multiple Watermarks, and there is an infallible method of telling one from the other in a twinkling, that is, by the recognition of the mesh of the paper.

The Single Wmk issue (L1a) is always with vertical mesh, the Multiple (L1b) always with horizontal mesh. The papers look quite different when one gets used to seeing the mesh, but that is by the way; the mesh is the thing and to anyone with normal eyesight, either with or without glasses, it is easy to see. The looking for the watermarks, with or without a detector, is unreliable in these cases and withal a waste of time.

Some good Plate varieties (by which I always mean re-entries or retouches as well as flaws) exist in both Fantail issues. The three best are illustrated in the CP Catalogue. One of them, the "Clematis" flaw, is much scarcer in the Single than in the Multiple. Inverted watermarks are relatively common in both issues. A real rarity exists in the form of a double print, one print being albino, i.e., colourless; however, it is so excessively rare that no one is likely to find it.

As a side comment here I may say that terms such as "mesh", re-entry, retouch, "albino" and hordes of others are all explained in the CP Catalogue. To explain them each time is impracticable so please excuse the omission -- and perhaps consider getting our Catalogue! Still, I will explain "albino" as far as is possible. "Albino" is a loose term for a stamp from a sheet that has been twice through the printing press, the first time with another sheet that has prevented the "albino" from getting any of the ink. It has however received a clear impression off the plate and when used again, if it is, it will receive another, normal, inked impression. Provided that the two impressions do not exactly coincide it is usually possible to see the early impression; the whole stamp is classed as a "double print, one print albino". I recall one client writing to say that he had hunted in vain for a then-current albino of the 2/- Capt. Cook. He wanted to know what to look for: "Should Capt. Cook have pink eyes?"

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