



L4: Notes from Campbell Paterson

Campbell Paterson NZ Bulletin, NZ STAMPS AS I HAVE KNOWN THEM November 1964

This stamp shows the facade of a Maori building of some importance; one would suppose it to be a meeting house for the tribe rather than a dwelling for some individual. An excellent example of this type of Meeting House is preserved in the Auckland Museum and there are similar buildings still in use in Maori villages such as Whakarewarewa near Rotorua. The building is called a “whare”, this word being pronounced in two syllables, wha-re.

The stamps of this design had a long and varied career and there are no less than six variations of watermark and/or perforation; these were mainly the result of wartime conditions, including the destruction of the printer in England and the enforced usage of paper of low quality.

The six variations (as everyone knows who has our Catalogue) are the original issue L4a having the Single Watermark and perf. $14 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$; then the multiple watermark stamps: L4b perf. $14 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$; L4c the wartime perf. 14; L4d the wartime perf. 14×15 ; L4e the wartime perf. $12\frac{1}{2}$; and finally L4f, the war and post-war issue in the $14 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ perf on the low-grade coarse paper.

Recognition of these issues is not generally difficult and is easy for those who can recognize the vertical mesh of L4a from the horizontal mesh of all the others. The late coarse paper is readily recognized by its discolouration and the clarity of the watermark. This coarse paper varies in thickness but is as a rule much less opaque than the paper of the earlier $14 \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ stamps. The wartime issues are particularly in-

teresting. They were the result of close co-operation between three big printing firms in England. L4c and L4f were printed and perforated by De La Rue's; while L4e was also printed by De La Rue & Co. but was perforated by Waterlow & Sons, while L4d was printed by De La Rue's and perforated by Harrison & Sons. The wartime issues are readily identified by their perforations and need give no trouble at all; it is as well to know that the L4d perf, always called 14×15 , is in fact $14 \times 14\frac{3}{4}$.

The watermarks of the “Multiple” papers are not difficult but no time need be wasted looking for watermarks since the only one that differs from the rest, L4a, is recognizable by its vertical mesh.

Varieties are numerous, especially in the final L4f issue where lots of dots and spots can be found. They are generally of a minor size and interest but a few, such as “Cat on roof” are mildly amusing. The best variety of this nature is the one known as the Tekoteko re-entry. It takes the form of a partial duplication of the figurehead (on the gable) in the sky to the right of the stamp. It is illustrated clearly in our Catalogue. It had the peculiarity that it became more noticeable as time went on. I have seen it once only on L4a and in that issue it is certainly a great rarity; in the following issue, L4b, it is found in varying form from slight to prominent. It occurred on Plate 1B R2/3 and it never occurred on L4c, d, e or f for the good reason that the Plate 1B was withdrawn before these issues were printed.