



L7: 4d MITRE PEAK, TYPE (Recess) Notes from Vol 2, The Postage Stamps of New Zealand.

The principal feature of this design was Mitre Peak which stand at the head of the Milford Sound.

The drawing was made by Mr. J. Fitzgerald, of Christchurch

The original plates laid down for this value contained 160 impressions in two groups of 80, but when the proof sheets were run off, it was found that one part of the frame plate and one part of the centre plate were unsatisfactory. The plates were therefore cut in half and the unsatisfactory portions were not used. They were destroyed, together with a number of worn plates of the other value, in March, 1939.

The frame plate had the number 1 under the second stamp in the bottom row, but the centre plate was unnumbered.

Printings with the multiple watermark were first issued in August, 1936, and in December of that year 66 sheets were placed on sale with the watermark inverted.

The centre ranged in shade from black through deep grey-black to deep grey, while the frame is found in sepia-black, sepia and blackish-brown.



LV7a (R7/8)



LV7a (R7/10)

In R7/8, the I in MITRE as elongated. In R7/10, and R8/10, the I was doubled and in R8/5, there was an extra line to the left of the first stroke of the M.

Flaws which developed appeared in R3/9, where the O in POSTAGE appeared as Q, and in R3/7, where a large dot appeared to the left of the crown and just inside the inner line, of the circle.

In 1937 a new centre plate numbered 2 was laid down and two new frame plates numbered 2A and 2B respectively were also made. The plate numbers for the new frame plates appeared on the selvedge under the

ninth stamp of the bottom row. The number for the centre plate appeared under the second stamp of the bottom row. Both frame plates were used in conjunction with the new centre plate as well as with the original un- numbered plate. Hence it is possible to have strips from the bottom row of the sheets with the bottom selvedge attached and showing the following four plate markings:

- unnumbered centre and 2A frame;
- unnumbered centre and 2B frame;
- 2 centre and 2A frame
- and 2 centre and 2B frame.

In sheets where the bottom selvedge was wider than usual, an engine- turned design, printed in the colour of the centre, may be found. Some damage apparently occurred to the impression on the original centre plate, printing R3/8. This was corrected by re-entry, which shows as a trebling of the right-hand side of Mitre Peak and of the right-hand side of the hill in the left foreground.

Until late in 1940 all supplies of the 4d. were printed by De La Rue & Co. on a good quality esparto paper and the perforations gauged 14 x 13 ½. The perforating was effected by means of a comb machine.

In 1940 a third centre plate was laid down and the number 3 appeared on the bottom selvedge under the second stamp of the bottom row. This plate, together with the frame plate numbered 2B, was handed over to Waterlow & Sons who printed 54,000 sheets from the plates during November and December. These sheets were delivered unperforated to De La Rue & Co. who were to complete the work but the bulk of the supply was lost in the fire; 40,005 sheets had been perforated and 2,995 sheets were awaiting perforation. On February 28, 1941, De La Rue shipped 2,000 sheets.

Although the records are incomplete because of the disorganisation of De La Rue's business, it seems possible that this consign-

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ment comprised stamps that had been perforated by means of a single line head gauging 14. This particular item is the scarcest of the Pictorials of 1941, the bulk of the supply having been overprinted for official use. It was printed on a good quality esparto paper distinctly white in appearance. The ink used for the centre was a deep grey-black while the frame was printed in deep sepia-black. This stamp was placed on sale in November, 1941.

On February 21, 1941, an order was lodged for 51,000 sheets of the 4d. These were printed by Waterlow & Sons from the centre plate numbered 3 and the frame plate numbered 2B. The paper contained less esparto than formerly but was still of good quality. The colours of the centre and the frame resembled those of the perf 14.



This printing was perforated by means of a line head gauging 12 ½ and the stamps were placed on sale in August, 1941.

A peculiarity of the stamps perf. 14 and perf. 12 ½ is that a series of dots appeared on the top selvage above the fifth and sixth stamps of the first row. The first sheets printed and perf. 14 were without the dots but other sheets are found with two rows of three dots in the colour of the centre and two rows of one dot in the colour of the frame, or with two rows of five dots in the colour of the centre and two rows of three dots in the colour of the frame.

Sheets perforated 12 ½ have either two rows of seven or two rows of ten dots in the colour of the centre with two rows of three dots in the colour of the frame. Messrs. Waterlow & Sons have explained that these dots are markings of their Bank Note Department which indicate to them on which shift the sheet was printed. Varying numbers of dots on sheets of the same value indicate different shifts.

When De La Rue & Co. resumed printing of the Stamps they used the "Royal Cypher" grade paper and the machine which they

had installed for the perforating was a comb one gauging 14 x 14 ½. Printings on this paper and with this perforation were made at first from the centre plate numbered 3 and from the frame plates 2A and 2B.

The sheets from centre plate 3 and frame plate 2B had the rows of ten and three dots respectively on the top selvage as these had been cut in the plate by Waterlow & Sons. These stamps were issued in July, 1942.

Two impressions on the frame plate 2B had become damaged and were corrected by means of re-entry. The stamps affected are:

R4/1 Doubling of the right outer vertical frame-line, of portions of the inner circle, of the A and K in PEAK, of the N, U and E of REVENUE and of the lines of the design in the right half of the crown.

R6/1 Doubling of the leaves in the right side panel, of both inner circles in the right half, of the A and K of PEAK and the letters of REVENUE, and of the lines of the design in the right half of the crown.

In April, 1943, sheets appeared on issue printed from a new centre plate. This plate was a double plate containing 160 impressions in two groups of 80. The plate number 4 appeared under the second stamp in the bottom row of the left-hand group and there was no plate number for the right-hand group. This centre plate was used in conjunction with the frame plates 2A and 2B and it is possible to obtain strips from the bottom of the sheets showing the four plate markings:

- 4 centre and 2A frame;
- 4 centre and 2B frame;
- unnumbered centre and 2A frame;
- and unnumbered centre and 2B frame.

The sheets printed with 160 stamps were divided into sheets of 80 before issue.

In March, 1945, printings were placed on



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sale made from the original frame plate numbered 1 and from the original unnumbered centre plate together with a new centre plate numbered 5. The number of this new centre plate appeared under the first stamp in the bottom row. In addition to the



LV7c (R3/8)

variety with the trebling of the mountain on R3/8, the original unnumbered centre plate had received further attention, R1/6, having the right-hand

side of Mitre Peak doubled and R5/8, showing a doubling of all the lines of shading of the face of Mitre Peak.

The original frame plate still showed the varieties in R7/8, with the long I and R8/5, with the extra line to the left of the first stroke of the M, but the doubling of the I in R7/10 and in R8/10, was less apparent. One impression had been strongly re-entered. This was:



LV7h

R5/7: Doubling at the top showing particularly in the frame both above and below POSTAGE & REVENUE;

doubling of the crown and of the letters of MITRE PEAK.

This appeared on sheets with the centre from the original plate but not on sheets with centre from plate 5.

The centre of the stamps on the "Royal Cypher" grade paper was printed in black with variations depending upon the amount of pressure exerted in the printing machine. In some sheets the top rows showed an irregularity in the "make-ready" and in extreme instances stamps may be found where Mitre Peak has almost disappeared. The frame printed in sepia black or blackish-brown. In some instances, the plates were over-inked with the result that the frame appears heavy and blurred. Some sheets on the "Royal Cypher" grade paper had the watermark inverted.

In all sheets of the 4d. perforation guide marks appeared on the top and bottom selvages and there was also guide marks on the sides. The original unnumbered centre plate had two vertical lines which appeared on the top and the bottom selvages above and below the left hand side of the first vertical row. Centre plate 3 had horizontal lines which appeared on the side selvedge in line with the fourth horizontal row of stamps.

This value remained on issue until superseded on May 1 1947.