

THE KING'S HEAD

A display to the Royal Philatelic Society London

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on
25 February 2010

Introduction

This display examines the various stamp issues that appeared bearing the head of King George V to 1924. The first eight frames concentrate upon the Great Britain issue and in particular the change from the three quarter 'Downey' head to the Profile head. The final four frames look at the issues that appeared in the Commonwealth.

King George V acceded to the throne on 6 May 1910. He was an ardent philatelist and one of the foremost collectors of his generation. He took a great interest in the design and production of stamps and liked to receive copies of essays, proofs and colour trials from which he selected his preferred choice often making comments on how they could be improved! The King had expressed the wish that the Colonies would adopt the same head as designed for the English stamps and it will be shown how the problems with the 'Downey' head stamps was to impact on that desire.

The purpose of this display is to put the issues of Great Britain together with those of the Commonwealth in order to compare the quality of the engraving and printing. Collectors have their preferences, but an objective judgement can be made upon the relative success of the various engravers and printers.

FRAME 1 – Downey Head



Downey Head Die I

The King had selected a photograph by W & D Downey that Queen Mary and he particularly liked to be used as the basis for the head portrait by the designers of the Great Britain issue. The idea was to have a real likeness rather than an idealised impression.

A copy of this was sent to J.A.C. Harrison (JACH), no relation to the printers, in September 1910 for engraving the head. He first sketched the head and then engraved a die which he initially proofed on 14 November 1910. He continued to work on this through to January 1911. The approved head die was used to make roller impressions which were inserted into the ½d and 1d frames and the stamps were issued on Coronation Day 22 June 1911. Following the King's disappointment with public reaction to the issue, work continued on improving the dies and in July 1911 stamps printed from die 1B were issued, but these were also considered unsatisfactory. Subsequently a new die II head was engraved. However, by the time this was ready the decision had been taken to replace the Downey head.

Coinage Head

The disappointment of the King with the issued Downey ½d and 1d stamps led him to suggest the replacement of the three quarter head with one showing the King in profile. As the Mint was already using a profile head which had been modelled by Bertram Mackennal from a picture, also by Downey, for the coins of the realm the decision was taken in November 1911 to use this for the stamps.

JACH was given a bromide of the original plaque sculpted by Mackennal and he first sketched and then engraved the Coinage head. Die proofs were taken at various stages and he completed the engraving in late February 1912.



Coinage Head
Die proof

FRAME 1 & 2 – Mackennal's Wreath Frame 2d and 3d values – Coinage Head

Mackennal had originally submitted five designs to the Mint, one of which was a modified form of the Lion frame, substituting a bow inscribed 'Postage and Revenue' for the lion, and adding ribbons to the upper corners. The design with little amendment was initially accepted for the 2d and 3d and was subsequently used for the 4d.

A die was engraved by JACH of this frame incorporating the Downey Head, but this was not used to print stamps. In June 1912 a roller impression was taken from this and the head and tint lines removed. The Coinage head was then rolled into the die and JACH completed the engraving, with proofs being taken on 19 June 1912. The 2d value was the first Profile head stamp to be issued, on 21 August 1912. The first printings did not bear control numbers. During 1913 the colour was officially changed from 'orange' to 'reddish orange' for stronger visual effect. 2d stamps are known overprinted 'cancelled' which are thought to be from a new colour standard produced by Harrisons in 1913. There is an interesting range of shades of this value, including the 'intense bright orange' which occurs in later printings.

In 1921, increased demand for the 2d stamps, when this became the letter rate, required the production of extra printing plates. When the old master die proved unsatisfactory it became necessary for a new die to be engraved. Stamps from Die II are distinguished by the fewer background lines above the head.

For the 3d value an impression of the 2d was taken, the values removed and the new values engraved. The finished die was proofed on 20 August 1912 and the stamps were issued on 8 October 1912. Confusion between the 3d 'reddish violet' and the 6d 'purple' led to a change of colour to 'bluish violet' in August 1913. Amongst the range of shades for the 3d is a 'very pale violet' found during 1916–17.



Die Proof of Laurel and Oak Leaf Frame with Medal Head

FRAME 2 & 3 – Mackennal's Laurel and Oak Leaf Frame 1d and 2½d – Medal Head

The Downey head 1d stamp appeared in a frame incorporating a lion that had been designed by Mackennal.

When it was decided to use a Profile head in place of the Downey head a trial was carried out inserting the Coinage head in the Lion frame for the 1d and 2½d values. The head was considered too cramped in the frame and Mackennal first tried to amend the frame and subsequently the head to make it fit, both without success.

Mackennal was then asked to produce a new design with the lion removed. In early February 1912 he produced a clay maquette of a 'Laurel and Oak Leaf' design with a new Medal head based upon the medal he produced to commemorate the opening of the first Parliament of the Union of South Africa in October 1910 and subsequently used for the naval and military medals. The King had expressed a preference for this head. The Coronation medal is not the source of the Medal head as is often quoted, as this has the King wearing the Coronation Crown. The frame design was approved, but it was decided the head was too small and accordingly Mackennal enlarged the head. A photograph of this was given to JACH who made a pen and ink sketch from which

he engraved a composite die, rather than separate head and frame dies. Progressive proofs were taken and the die was completed with the 1d values engraved on 5 June 1912.

A series of eight colour trials were carried out in September 1912 from which the selected colour was chosen by the King. Examples of these are known in private hands which have been handstamped 'colour trial' on the reverse and lettered 'A' to 'H'. The 1d stamp was first issued on 8 October 1912 and during the next 12 years some 16 shades occur. Imperforate stamps overprinted 'cancelled' type 24 are known and these are believed to come from an experimental printing during 1915 on surplus currency paper. The results were considered acceptable and the paper was used for printing 1d stamps which were sold in rolls for vending machines. Imperforate stamps overprinted 'specimen' type 26 are known in private hands and these are thought to come from a series of colour trials carried out during June and July 1913. Perforated stamps overprinted 'cancelled' type 24 are from dye trials carried out in 1918 and from stitching trials for booklet stamps.

The 2½d was produced from a roller impression of the 1d which then had the values removed and the new values engraved on a fresh die at the end of July 1912. Plates were then produced and the first stamps were issued on 17 October 1912. Harrisons produced a colour standard under control C13 and examples of this are known in private hands overprinted 'specimen' type 26.

Nineteen shades are catalogued for the 2½d and of particular interest are the two 'Indigo-blue' and 'Dull Prussian blue' on toned paper. Only these two values are catalogued on toned paper, but examples of other values are known. Research has revealed that the Post Office complained to Harrisons during 1919 concerning the colour of several of the stamps, particularly the 2½d value, and several tests were made upon samples of the printed stamps. It appears that the problem with the 2½d stemmed from the inability to obtain ink supplies from Germany and the ink being used did not compare favourably with the pre-war colour.

However, the Government chemist discovered during the analysis of the ink it contained a small amount of arsenic. This led to several experiments with different inks and dryers and it is speculated that the varieties known as printed on toned paper arose in consequence. The problems of shade were finally resolved during 1921 when a new colour standard was produced; the stamps were overprinted 'specimen' type 23.

Toned paper examples of several values also appear during 1916. Personal research at British Postal Museum and Archive has revealed that the size of the mill sheets was changed in that year and it is possible that the toned paper varieties occur from printings on old stock paper that was used up before the change to the new size.



Mackennal's Wreath Frame

FRAME 4 – Eve and Mackennal's Wreath Frame 4d – Coinage Head

The development of the 4d stamp is perhaps the most fascinating of all the values. Eve's Wreath frame design was accepted in October 1910 and trials were made with half tone essays and colour trials from zinc blocks from January 1911 onwards by Hentschel & Co. In March 1911 Eve produced an amended design and from this a die was engraved in September 1911. Work was then suspended following the rejection of the Downey head. Work recommenced during May 1912 using the Miller Motley Printex machine to produce trials of the frame with the Coinage head. Eve carried out various amendments to the frame including a repositioned Crown and a new value tablet. The King was shown a bromide of the amended design and he thought the shading and background too dark. Accordingly Eve amended the design and trials were taken in various colours. The King approved the amended design and requested a die to be engraved. JACH was too busy to carry out the work and his assistant Lewis carried out the engraving. Proofs were taken at various stages and a pull from the completed die was approved by the King on 12 October 1912.

The PMG then decided the Coinage head was too large in Eve's Wreath frame. So despite having an approved engraved die, it was decided to use the Mackennal Wreath frame as used for the 2d and 3d values. A transfer roller of the completed 2d die was used to lay down a fresh die from which the values were removed. The 4d values were then engraved. The first printings were made on 19 December 1912. Seven shades of the stamp are catalogued and a new colour standard appears to have been prepared during 1923 and is overprinted 'specimen' type 23.

FRAME 4 & 5 – Mackennal's Dolphin Frame - ½d and 1½d – Downey and Coinage Head



Die Proof of the Accepted Dolphin Design with the Downey Head

The Dolphin design was submitted by Mackennal in September 1910 and was accepted for the Downey issue of ½d and 1½d stamps. The ½d was issued on 22 June 1911, but with the rejection of the Downey head the 1½d did not appear with this head.

In May 1912 trials of an impression of the dolphin die were taken, the head and values removed along with the backgrounds and foreheads of the dolphins. A fresh die was then laid and an impression of the Coinage head rolled in. JACH then engraved the values and completed the work to the dolphins and background. The first die produced was for the 1½d and later another die was prepared for the ½d and the stamps appeared 15 October 1912 and 16 January 1913 respectively.

The Profile head stamps of 1912–24 are well known for the proliferation of shades brought about to a large extent by the problems of obtaining good ink supplies during the First World War. The catalogue lists 18 shades for the ½d and 16 for the 1½d values and examples of most of these are shown. Whilst the exhibit

does not generally include flaws the 1½d 'PENCF' is included as an example of how original personal research at the British Library Philatelic Collections revealed that the flaw occurs on just two plates, ending many years of speculation.



First Stage Proof of Medal Head II

FRAME 6 – Medal Head II

The need for a third engraved head arose when it was realised that the Coinage head was too large for Eve's Wreath frame for the 4d value. Accordingly Eve continued work on his Wreath and Pillar frames using an interpretation of a smaller head. It was not until March 1913, when the frames had been approved, that JACH was able to commence engraving the head. The King had stated his preference for the Medal head and so JACH made fresh drawings from Mackennal's plaster cast of the Medal head. He then engraved a die working from the sketches and the first proofs were taken on 17 March 1913.

He continued to work on the engraving during March and early April, and at least four stages of the die can be distinguished from existing proofs, all in black, a few of which are in private hands. The completed die was proofed on 3 April 1913 and it was hardened the following day.



FRAME 6 – Eve's Pillar frame 5d, 6d and 7d – Medal Head II

The original intention was that the 4d to 7d values would be in the Eve Wreath frame which he had produced during work on the 4d value.

Medal Head II in Eve's Pillar Frame

In February 1913 the PMG decided to adopt Eve's Pillar frame for the 5d, 6d and 7d values. This change was made to help emphasise the difference between the 3d and 6d stamps.

The development work for the Pillar frame was done under the 5d and 8d values. JACH completed the engraving of the Pillar frame during May 1913 and roller impressions were taken from this into which the newly engraved Medal head II was inserted and the values added. The 5d stamp was issued on the 30 June and the 6d and 7d values on 1 August 1913. The colour standards produced for all three values were overprinted 'specimen' and a very few examples of these are known to exist outside public institutions.

The Mint printed all the 6d stamps, which were used extensively for fiscal purposes as well as postal matters. To help prevent any attempt to remove the cancellation, they were printed on chalk-surfaced paper in doubly fugitive ink. The similarity of the 6d 'dull purple' with the 3d 'reddish violet' led to a change in the shades in August 1913 and the 6d was changed to 'reddish purple'. Eight shades are listed for the 6d value of which 'slate-purple' is the scarcest occurring during the 1913 printings. In September 1920, and for some months following, this value appeared perforated 14x14, instead of 15x14. It is believed the Mint perforator broke down and the old machine used for the Edward VII issues was brought back into use. Printings were made under just two controls Q.20 and R.21.

The 7d value was introduced for parcel and telegram work. Following the increase in postage rates during 1915 and 1918 there was little demand for it and it was discontinued in August 1918. Consequently only four shades are recorded for this value.

FRAME 7 – Eve's Pillar Frame 8d – Medal Head II

The Pillar frame design submitted by Eve was approved for the planned Downey 8d to 1s values. With the change to a Profile head, trials were carried out in October 1912 for the 8d value using the

Coinage head. In November, Eve carried out further trials using a reduced Coinage head and the frames were amended with even shading to the background.

When the King decided he preferred the Medal head Eve carried out a further series of trials with his interpretation of the Medal head. In these trials Eve again amended the frame, increasing the space for the head and altering the layout of the words 'Postage' and 'Revenue'. In common with the 7d value, background trials were carried out during January 1913. In this case four different backgrounds were trialled: solid, part solid, graduated shading and even shading and the King selected the latter on 3 February 1913.

With the design now approved, JACH proceeded to engrave the frame which he completed in May 1913 and a roller impression was taken from this into which the newly engraved Medal head II was inserted and the value added. The 8d stamp was issued on 1 August 1913 and was printed on yellow paper at first, but was changed during 1917 to a yellow buff paper containing many impurities, generally known as granite paper. The source of stamps overprinted 'Essay' appear to come from two colour schemes put together by the Stamping Department on 10 December 1912 and 20 May 1913. With little usage of this value it was decided to discontinue printing 8d stamps when the stock of paper was exhausted, which occurred towards the end of 1918.



Eve's Wreath Frame

FRAME 7 & 8 – Eve's Wreath Frame 9d, 10d & 1s – Medal Head II

Eve's Wreath frame had been developed during the trials for the 4d value and a die proof was produced in October 1912. When work commenced on the 9d, 10d and 1s values in February 1913, Lewis was provided with a roller impression of Medal head II. It is unclear if he managed to remove the head and values from the 4d die and roll an impression into this or he engraved a new Wreath

frame around the head impression. A new die was proofed on 2 May 1913 and was finally completed on the thirteenth. Roller impressions were taken from this and the values removed and then fresh impressions taken into which the 9d, 10d and 1s values were engraved.

The first printings of these values by Somerset House were done under control B.13 for the 9d value and C.13 for the 10d and 1s values. Stamps exist from these printings overprinted 'specimen' which were produced as colour standards. A few examples are known of the three values overprinted 'cancelled' which appear to come from colour standards prepared for the first printings by Harrisons during 1914.

The 9d was issued on 30 June and the 10d and 1s on 1 August 1913. In 1922 it was decided to change the colour of the 9d value from 'Agate' to 'Olive green' to enable cancellations to be more easily seen.

Postcards and Newspaper Wrappers – Medal Head II

Whilst stationery is not part of this display, proofs of the head used for the postcards and wrappers are included as they are often wrongly described as postage stamp proofs. The head and frames were separately engraved by JACH in March 1914 and the head is a modified version of Medal head II. Because the Mint were engaged on more urgent work the first postcards bearing the profile portrait did not appear until December 1916.

Seahorses

The origins of the King's head for the Great Britain high value stamps, often called the Seahorses, has been inconclusively debated for many years. Official papers of January 1912 refer to the effigy as coming from two different



Waterlow Printing

sources “the engraver will work from the photograph of the coin head” and “The head will be the Colonial one”. Close examination of the head with contemporary proofs reveals a closer likeness to the Medal head used for the 1d and 2½d stamps. JACH carried out the engraving and it appears he prepared one composite head and frame die.

Waterlow & Sons were awarded the first contract to print the stamps and the engraved plates were given to them for the recess printing. The 2s 6d and 5s were issued on the 30 June 1913 and the 10s and £1 on the 1 August 1913.

In 1915 the contract was awarded to De La Rue (DLR) who utilised the same plates and although they were later supplied with new ones the resulting stamp printings were so poor that the original plates, by now worn, continued to be used. Further new plates were used on a new printing press, but the results were not satisfactory and in 1918 the contract was awarded to Bradbury, Wilkinson. Their printing press required curved plates which they made from roller punches produced from dies lent to them by the Mint. Examples from the three printers are shown which illustrate the varied quality of printing.

Savings Stamps

The Post Office Savings Bank coupons are included in this display as they employed the Downey die II head and were letterpress printed by DLR. The design is attributed to Mackennal. The Mint supplied a master die II of the Downey head to DLR, which they rolled into the engraved frame. The coupon scheme was launched on 1 January 1912. It was not until 1920 that a change was made from the Downey to a Profile head. It appears a master die of the Medal head II was used and this was rolled into an impression of the original design. The 1s coupon system ceased and the coupons were withdrawn from sale on 29 January 1936.

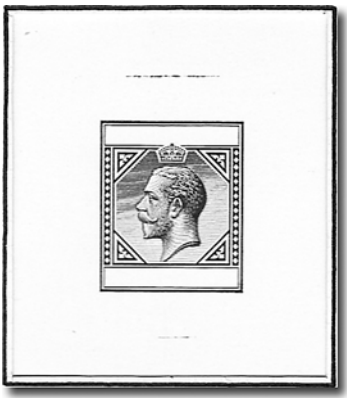
FRAME 9 & 10 – Commonwealth Issues – De La Rue Printings for the Colonies

As a result of his disappointment with the Great Britain Downey head stamps the King wrote, in September 1911, to John Tilleard, his philatelic advisor, enclosing two Downey photographs. He asked him to "get the best engraver" and have a really good engraving of the Profile head done and sent to His Majesty at Balmoral. Tilleard went to DLR and within a few days they had produced a die which they amended following comments by Tilleard and a proof of this was approved by the King shortly afterwards. This was the Colonial head, type I, which DLR used for their letterpress printings.

They engraved two further heads one a larger version, type II, for letterpress printings and a new head, type III, for recess printings. No less than 28 Colonies adopted the same frame designs they had used for the Edward VII issues, but with the new head rolled in.



Die Proof with Colonial Head Type 1



Die Proof with Colonial Head Type II



Die Proof with Colonial Head Type III

In 1913 DLR did produce a new standard design for the Grenada letterpress issue which was later used by Malta and St. Lucia. This design incorporated the larger, type II, head.



New 9.2mm Head

The Jamaica issue of 1919 had one value, 1½d, which required a new smaller head for recess printing. This was based on type III, but is only 9.2mm high and has close horizontal lines. In the same series the 10s value incorporated the type III head.



New 10.5mm Head

The recess issue for Gambia in 1922 required a new head of 10.5mm for the ½d to 7½d values. The shading is by dotted lines from left to right downwards. The 1s to 10s values incorporated the type III head.

In 1922 DLR engraved a new larger 'formal' head for recess printing and this first appears in the Turks and Caicos issue of that year. The head is 13mm high and the shading is a series of diagonal dashes with cross hatching on the back of the neck. The design of the frames was an adaption of the 1913 issue with the value tablets replaced by two large crowns.



New 13mm Head

DLR had printed most stamps in this period by letterpress, but from the 1920s they moved to more recess printings.

It is questionable from the examples shown that the results were an improvement particularly when compared with the Dominica issue of 1923 which must be one of their finest Colonial letterpress issues.

India 1911–1922



Die Proof

The issue that appeared from India was the inspiration of the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, who called for a 'proper' treatment of the King Emperor in his state robes. DLR responded with an issue of the highest quality in design and engraving. The head with the King wearing the crown was cut in meticulous detail. The shading of the background is light and is obtained by horizontal lines with a slight thickening from the level of the shoulders. The engraving of the 4a was particularly fine. The issue composed of 10 lower values, each of a different frame design, and six higher values to a standard design. The stamps were printed in letterpress and compare favourably with other issues of the time. The first values were issued in December 1911.

FRAME 11 – Newfoundland 1899 Forerunner and 1910 and 1911



1910 Lithographed Issue

In 1899 Newfoundland issued a 5c stamp portraying the Duke of York as part of the Royal Portraits recess printed issue. The three quarter portrait of the Duke is based upon a photograph taken by Russell & Sons of London and may be considered as a forerunner of the Downey portrait later used by Great Britain for the 1911 stamps. In 1910 as part of the Guy Tercentenary issue a totally different portrait was used for the 15c value. This has a three quarter view of the King, but looking to his left. The stamps were lithographed by Whitehead Morris and Co. Issued on the 15 August 1910, this is the first stamp to appear with the head of King George V. The printing quality was not satisfactory and the following year new dies were engraved by Macdonald and Sons for the six higher values, including the 15c, and the stamps were recess printed by A. Alexander & Sons.

In 1911 as part of the recess printed Coronation issue the 2c value incorporated a three quarter head. The DLR records show that they printed the lower values, including the 2c, for Whitehead Morris and Co. and it seems they employed the head die they had used for the Union of South Africa issue the previous year.



Die Proof

Union of South Africa – 1910

The original design for the stamp planned to commemorate the proclamation of the Union of South Africa carried the head of Edward VII. With his death on 6 May 1910 urgent work was required to replace the head with that of King George V in time for the issue on 4 November 1910. The source of this head has recently been attributed, by Christopher Board (*The London Philatelist* May 2009), to a Downey photograph of the then Prince of Wales in 1905. H.S. Wilkinson designed the stamp and it was recess printed by DLR.

A very similar head had been used by the American Bank Note Company, Ottawa in 1908 for the Tercentenary issue and similarities with that used in Newfoundland in 1899 can be drawn.



Rhodesia – 1910

The Double head stamps were issued to commemorate the Royal visit of the Duke of Connaught to Rhodesia in November 1910. The portraits of the King and Queen were based upon photographs taken by W & D Downey; the Queen as Princess of Wales in 1902 and the King as Prince

1913 Admiral Head Issue Die II

of Wales in 1905 in his Vice Admiral's uniform. It appears the King's head is a copy of that used by DLR for the South African issue of 1910 and similar to that used by the American Bank Note Company, Ottawa in 1908 for the Tercentenary issue ½d. The stamps were recess printed by Waterlow & Sons.

The Double head stamps were not considered successful and were replaced three years later by a new design which showed the King in the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet from a photograph by Russell & Sons of London . There were nineteen values recess printed by Waterlow & Sons and in fifteen of them the portrait was printed in a second colour from separate dies. The more common values were printed in one colour from a single plate. The engraving for the head is more detailed than for the preceding issue and the use of horizontal, vertical and crossed lines to the background immediately behind the head gives it more life and perspective.

Canada 1908 Forerunner and 1911–1925



Die Proof

In 1908, Canada as part of the Quebec Tercentenary issue produced a ½c value which portrayed the Prince and Princess of Wales. The portrait of the Prince is believed to be taken from a Downey photograph and may be considered a forerunner of the head used by DLR in 1910 for South Africa.

The 1911–25 Admiral issue by the American Bank Note Company, Ottawa was a logical development of the 1903 Edwardian stamp which the King, when Prince of Wales, and Tilleard had designed. They decided on a three-quarter face portrait and the success of this may have influenced his choice of the Downey photograph of himself for the British stamps. The 1911–25 portrait of the King in the full dress uniform of the Admiral

of the Fleet was based upon a composite of various portions of photographs by Downey and H. Walter Barnett, also of London. The engraving was done by Robert Savage and the high quality of the engraving is particularly noticeable in the treatment of the hair and beard, the care given to the decorations and the achievement of a real likeness. The stamps were recess printed and the first values issued on the 22 December 1911.



1913 Recess Issue

Australia – 1913

The change of Government in June 1913 brought with it a request from the new Postmaster General for a stamp to replace the Kangaroo and Map series. A design for the new 1d stamp was developed from a prize-winning design by Hermann Altmann. The head was based generally upon the Medal head, but lacked the finesse and detail of the British version. T.S. Harrison engraved the die and four plates were used for the two recess printings which were made at the end of 1913.

It was realised that the recess printing process would not be able to produce the required annual requirement of some 500 million stamps and enquiries were made in London regarding the provision of a letterpress printing plate. An order was placed with Perkins Bacon for these, but the work was sub-contracted to DLR. The head, shading and Crown were modified by them and the completed dies and plates were shipped to Australia in May 1914.



Letterpress Plate Proof

The stamps were letterpress printed by the Stamp Printing Branch of the Commonwealth Treasury Department in Melbourne and appeared from July 1914.

Frame 12 – New Zealand 1915

The design by H.L. Richardson, of Wellington, was influenced by the Penny Black and the head was a formal representation in the Wyon tradition. The plates were engraved by Perkins Bacon in London and sent to New Zealand for printing in Wellington by the Government Printer. All values were recess printed except the ½d which was printed by letterpress and the first values were issued on 30 July 1915.



Die Proof for Recess Printing

With the introduction of a ½d War Tax far greater demand for the 1½d developed and it was decided to change to a letterpress printing of this value for economic reasons. A new die was engraved by W.R. Bock and a plate made by the Government Printing Office for a 1½d which is referred to as the 'local plate'. Printing was done in Wellington and the stamps issued in April 1916.

The stamps printed from the 'local plate' were considered unsatisfactory and accordingly Perkins Bacon in London were asked to produce a new die for letterpress printings for the 1½d, 2d and 3d values. From the new die, steel plates were produced and these were sent to the Government Printer in Wellington for printing. The 1½d and 2d values from these plates were issued in September 1916 and the 3d in May 1919.



In 1920 New Zealand issued six stamps to commemorate Victory and Peace. They were printed in letterpress by DLR and it is believed that the 1/- value bearing a large portrait of the King was also engraved by them. This head is unusual in its size and composition and is based upon a Downey photograph.

Letterpress Printing



Photographic Essay

Cayman Islands 1921

Commissioner Hugh Hutchings, on assuming office in 1919, requested a new series of stamps using a design similar to that issued by New Zealand in 1915. The resulting design by De La Rue expressed the independent identity of the Colony. It required a new version of the King's head based upon the Mackennal Coinage head. It was recess printed and the first four values appeared on multiple crown watermarked paper in April 1921. This may be considered as one of the best treatment of the King's head in terms of engraving and printing and compares well with the Great Britain issue.

Reference to catalogue shades and overprints of the Great Britain issues refer to *Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Volume 2* specialised stamp catalogue.

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